

Broad Street Mall Masterplan Landscape Strategy

October 2018

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REVISION STATUS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION



1.0

Introduction | 1.1 Introduction

This Landscape Statement has been prepared to support the Planning Application for a mixed use development at Broad Street Mall, Reading, on behalf of Moorgarth.

The development is to include a significant upgrade to the existing Broad Street Mall, and to make provision for new residential units

This document sets down the proposed strategy for the residential amenity roof terrace which will be provided to complement and enhance the proposed apartments.

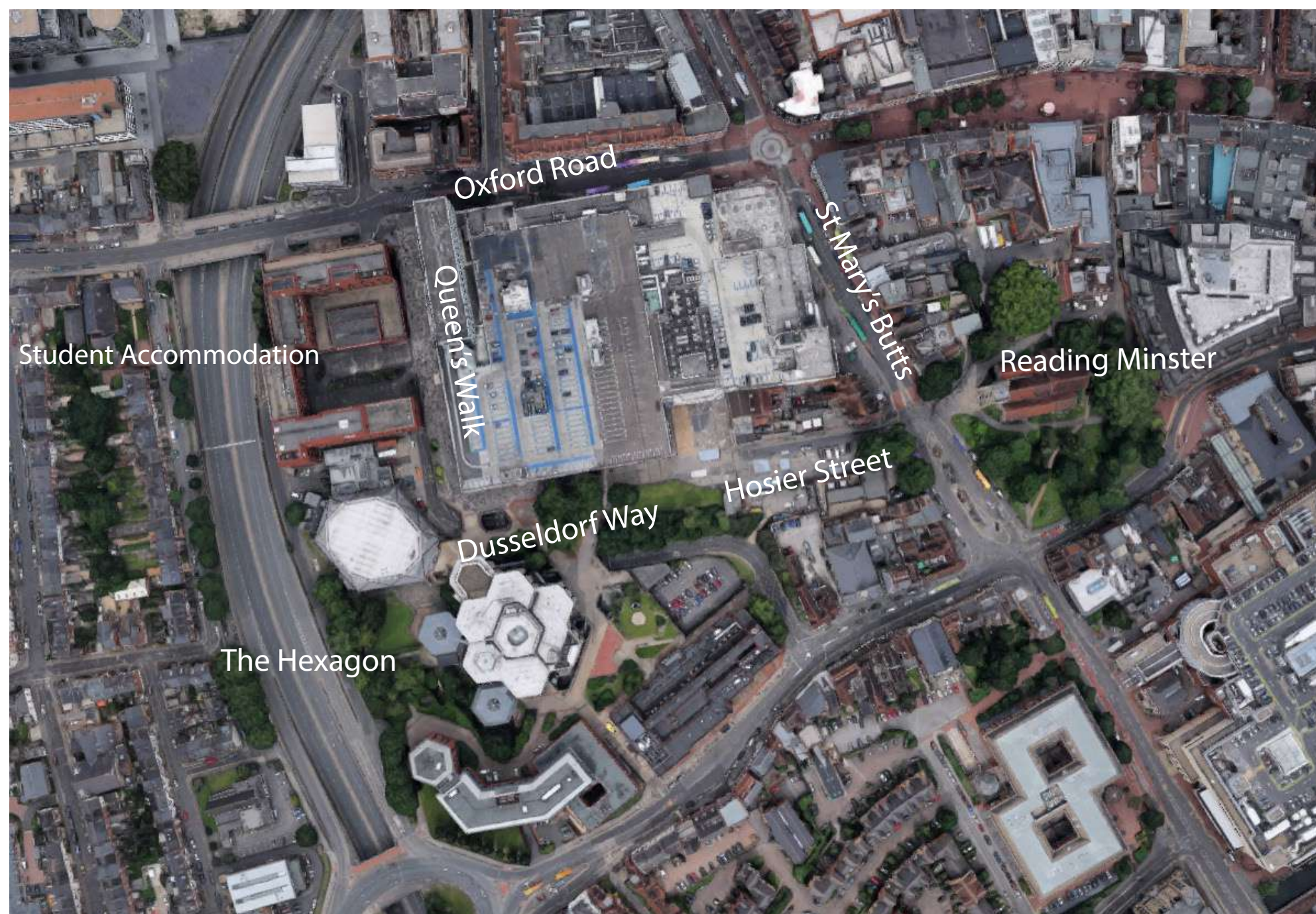
The document also illustrates the aspirations for improvements to the wider streetscape beyond the immediate planning application boundary. The proposals shown beyond the application site boundary are for illustrative purposes only, but are intended to provide the context within which the development might sit.

The document is structured in two parts:

The first section provides a summary of existing site conditions, in order to ensure that the proposals are sensitively and seamlessly integrated within the existing site setting, and to identify opportunities and constraints which might inform the landscape strategy for the roof terrace scheme.

The landscape strategy set out in the second part of the document builds upon these opportunities and constraints to ensure that the landscape proposals maximise the development area's assets and fits seamlessly within its setting.

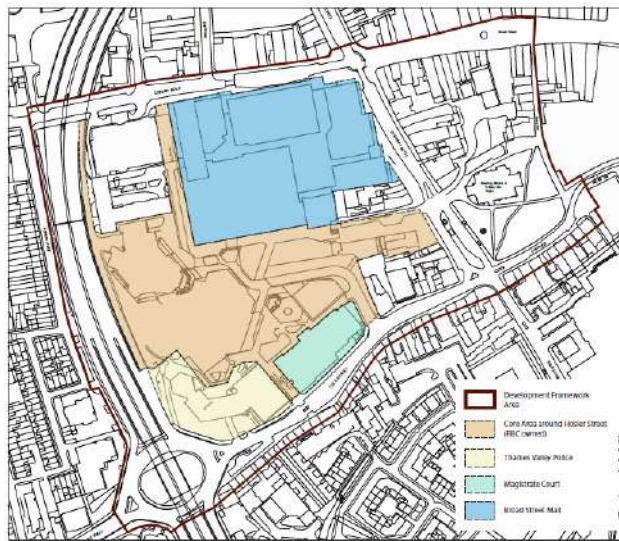
This document forms part of a wider suite of documents and drawings which will be submitted as part of the application for the redevelopment of the Broad Street Mall, and should be read in conjunction with those documents and drawings prepared by both the landscape architect, and the wider team of consultants.



1.0

Introduction | 1.2 Planning Background

A summary of Planning Policies which are most relevant to the provision of public realm and landscape to the Broad Street Mall redevelopment are set down below :



Extract from the Hosier Street Area Outline Development Framework

Aerial view of Hosier Street and Broad Street Mall Proposals



Hosier Street Area
Outline Development Framework June 2018
Reading Borough Council

This document provides a development framework for the regeneration of the Hosier Street Area which lies immediately to the south of the Broad Street Mall development site.

The vision and guidelines set down in this document will be taken into account when considering options for the design development of the Broad Street Mall site, given the close proximity and interfaces of the two sites.

The Vision Statement

The Hosier Street/Broad Street Mall Area will be a distinctive and high quality, high density, mixed use area within Reading's Central Core. 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.

Development will contribute positively to conserving and enhancing the adjoining conservation area and to protecting and enhancing the listed St Mary's Church and its setting.

The area will host a wide range of uses and activities that will contribute to an active, well designed public realm throughout daylight and evening hours. There will be a mix of residential, office/commercial/retail and leisure/community facilities, built to high densities that will include tall buildings, complemented by high quality open spaces that together will create a new destination and a desirable place to live and be at ones leisure. The area will appeal to all sectors of Reading's population as a place to live in, work in, study in and visit.

Public Realm Parameters

The Outline Development Framework goes on to say that the site should ensure public open space is multifunctional and high-performing

- Areas of open space and interconnecting public realm to be well designed, functional, adaptable and capable of efficient maintenance. These spaces must be designed to ensure a vibrant, lively and thriving public realm.

- The public spaces will provide both a place to stop and reflect, while also acting as an important network of thoroughfares.

- Development to improve and enhance St Mary's Butts as a multi-functional shared public space that manages buses and other traffic within a shared surface area and integrates with an extended open space area including the graveyard, the churchyard, associated open areas and the historic structures in St Mary's Butts.

- The (possible) removal of the disabled/temp car parking from Hosier Street to provide a new shared surface market space.

- Private communal amenity areas within developments that also provide some visual benefits and sense of openness within the development.

- Significantly enhanced existing routes including Queens Walk and Düsseldorf Way as active multi uses spaces with high quality landscape treatment that mitigates against uncomfortable micro climatic impacts. Each space should have it's own distinctive character – soft landscape for Queens Walk and hard landscape (reflective of Düsseldorf's cobbled 'Altstadt') for Düsseldorf Way.

- Welcoming shared surface streets at podium level and that relate to the surrounding development in terms of active frontages and entrances and include appropriate

lighting improvements. New streets should be comfortable and appropriate for their localised use in terms of wind/microclimate considerations

- Two principle 'pedestrian crossroads' within the development: the westerly junction will be to the southwest of the entrance to the Hexagon Theatre and the easterly one shall be within the open space park. Development shall front these key junctions and not intrude on sightlines, thereby maintaining legibility and way-finding throughout the development

- The new shared surface market space is likely to be restricted at its junction with St. Mary's Butts where the electricity sub-station is likely to be retained. There is potential here for the market to more visibly re-connect with the street pattern in this area, via hard surface improvements and could potentially mirror the triangular area to the west of The Minster, opposite. This area should include facilities to enable higher quality stalls to be erected quickly and then removed to allow this area to be used for other activities when the market is not operating. The tea hut could be relocated into this space into an enlarged kiosk with long opening hours, to help to animate this space.

- Designs that utilise existing trees as far as practicable. New street trees should be planted into the ground wherever possible, but where over the podium, planters or tanks should be used.

With regards to the selection of materials the Development Framework goes on to say;

The combination of red brick pavements and granite detailing is a robust and recognisable hallmark of the town centre.

There is an ambition to more fully intergrate the wider site area into the same, or similar palettes continuing to employ the same materials, although with variation



1.0

Introduction | 1.2 Planning Background

around form and scale of paving units.

Complete reinvention of a new palette for the site should be avoided, although materials should respond to a hierarchy of movement.

With reference to the selection of Street Furniture the Development Framework says:

Much of the street furniture in the town reflects the high percentage of Victorian architecture in the town centre, and this traditional approach contrasts with contemporary architecture and the regeneration of the area. Consequently, a fresh approach to street furniture could be taken to the wider site

Public Art/Play

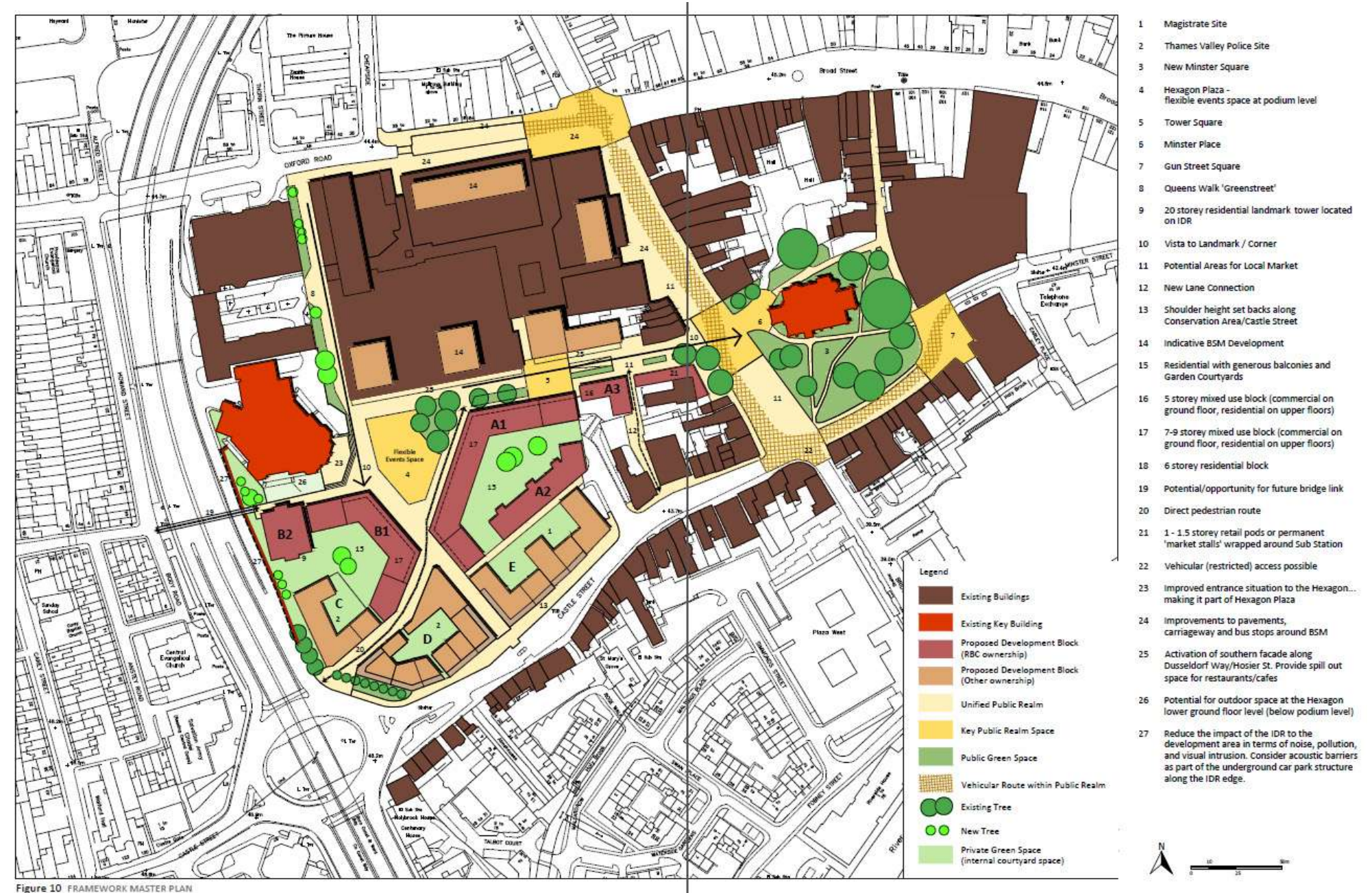
'...public art and play should be integrated into the very essence of the public realm. Play, where specifically provided, should cater for all age ranges (children and adults as well as make provision for accessible and disabled play.

General Principles for Private/Communal Space

'Particular attention should be given to the siting of play equipment, which should generally be avoided within private blocks, but substituted by stimulating landscapes designed to encourage community participation.

Podium Landscape

Where very tall buildings are proposed, podium level gardens should be maximised to ensure a sense of 'living in green' is achieved



HOSIER STREET AND BROAD STREET MALL PROPOSALS
Extract from the Hosier Street Area Outline Development Framework

1.0

Introduction | 1.2 Planning Background

Sites and Detailed Policies Document Adopted
October 2012 (Revised January 2015)
Reading Borough Council

This document sets down a number of planning policies which relate to the provision of open space in new residential developments: in Reading

5.6.1 DM10: Private and Communal Outdoor Open Space

Dwellings will be provided with functional private and communal open space that allows for suitable sitting out areas, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage and drying space. Houses will be provided with private outdoor space whereas flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and /or roof gardens.

The design of outdoor areas will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity, clearly identify whether they are private or private communal spaces, ensure that they are appropriately related to main entrances, enhance safety and the perception of safety for future residents and the general public, and not be compromised by the relationship of other buildings which may be detrimental in terms of overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing.

5.6.10 In the past, the Council has sought the following minimum provisions for private or communal outdoor space for each type of accommodation:

a/ Houses: Useable private outdoor space should be no less than the gross floor area of the dwelling to which it relates

b/ Flats outside central Reading:

1 and 2 bedroom	25sqm per flat
3 or more bedrooms	40sqm per flat
Sheltered units	20sqm per unit

c/ Development in central Reading will not always be expected to comply with the standards set above. Open space is nonetheless required, unless exceptional circumstances prevail, to accommodate modest sitting out areas and clothes drying facilities.

8.1.2 DM16 Provision of Open Space

The amount and type of publicly accessible open space to be provided shall be as laid out in the most up-to-date Open Spaces Strategy. The provision of open space shall satisfy the most urgent need in terms of the type of open space to be provided in a particular location having regard to the size of the site and shall be subject to considerations of particular site specific deficiencies.

8.1.12 The Open Spaces Strategy states that, 'All guidelines recommend that at least some open space for children to play, whether publically or privately owned, be available within 100-200m of every home. This will primarily affect very high-density developments, like flats....

Reading Open Space Strategy
Update Note January 2018

This note reinforces the importance of Public Open Space within Reading:

'Public Open Space helps to achieve various Council aims including improving the quality of life for residents, providing good access to open space and waterspace, adapting to climate change, enhancing the natural environment to contribute to economic success, ensuring Reading is healthy and enhancing biodiversity and wildlife. The town's open spaces contribute significantly to defining its character'.

'The OSS notes the contribution that planting on the street frontage can make to increase street tree cover ...,

Reading Tree Strategy June 2010

The Reading Tree Strategy sets down the following Objective for trees in new developments:

Objective 6: The role of new developments.

New development will be expected to make a positive and sustainable contribution supporting the objectives of this strategy in enhancing Reading's urban environment.

Such planting should be used to enhance streets and other public realm as part of planning permissions for all relevant new developments, particularly in higher density urban developments.

	Description	Size	Transport mode	Radial catchment
Borough park	Varied character and facilities; open parkland, natural, formal, sport, play and relaxation; catering	60 ha	Car; public transport; cycle	
District parks	Varied character and facilities (but fewer than above); natural, formal, sport, play and relaxation	20 ha	Car; bus; cycle; foot	1.2 km
Local parks	Relaxation, play and ball games	2 ha or 1-2 ha equipped	Cycle; foot; wheelchair	0.8 km
Neighbourhood park	LEAP (local equipped area for play) + informal space	0.1-.02 ha equipped	Foot; wheelchair	0.4-0.8 km
Small recreational open spaces	'low-grade' recreation	0.1-0.2 ha	Foot; wheelchair	0.4-0.6 km
Linear open spaces	Relaxation; green link		Foot; cycle	
Semi-natural sites	Comparatively undisturbed sites, managed for wild flora and fauna		Cycle; foot; wheelchair	1.5-2.0 km

Reading Open Space Strategy - Hierarchy and Access



1.0

Introduction | 1.2 Planning Background

St Mary's Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area

The St Mary's Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area was designated in 1972.

The special interest which justifies designation of the St Mary's Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area derives from the following features:

- Its position at the Saxon centre of Reading at a cross-roads of the main east-west and north-south routes through the town, just north of an original crossing point across the River Kennet, upon which river the town grew.
- The Grade I listed Church of St Mary in St Mary's Butts, a Reading landmark, originally Norman, and mentioned in the Domesday Book, but now mostly Medieval in origin, which is the focal building of the Conservation Area.
- St Mary's Churchyard, an important open space in the centre of town.
- Other important landmark buildings including the Grade II* listed St Mary's Church in Castle Street.
- The architectural and historic interest of the area's other buildings, with examples dating from the sixteenth century to the present day, but the majority of which show a coherence of scale within their various architectural styles.
- The presence of some of the oldest surviving buildings in Reading, including 3 existing public houses ("The Allied Arms", "The Horn" and "The Sun") dating from the 16th and 17th centuries, and the former "Shades" public house at 15 Gun Street dating from the 17th century. "The Sun" is also reputed to be on the site of the former Reading Gaol.
- Important Grade II* listed buildings at 15 and 17 Castle Street (both 16th century), 19 Castle Street (early 18th century), 63 Castle Street (circa 1750) and the Church of St Mary, Castle Street (1798).

• 35-37 St Mary's Butts ("County Delicacies") and 57 St Mary's Butts ("The Allied Arms"), which also date from the 16th century.

- The Queen Victoria Jubilee Fountain in St Mary's Butts, a local landmark.

- The Grade II* listed Holy Brook Culvert to the rear of numbers 1-31(odd) Castle Street, plus the remainder of the Holy Brook which links the rear of the properties on the south side of the conservation area.

- A high percentage of listed buildings, listed individually and for their group value, dating from before 1875.

Character Area 2: Features that make a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of the conservation area:

- The traditional 16th century buildings at the southern end of St Mary's Butts (numbers 35-37 St Mary's Butts and "The Horn" adjoining them to the south), and at 57 St Mary's Butts, the latter retaining its cobbled access and passageway and cobbles in front of the building;

- The Victorian Fountain and kiosk, which are local landmarks on the "island" in the centre of St Mary's Butts;

- Views to St Mary's Church and Churchyard.

Character Area 2: Features that have a negative impact on the historic character and appearance of the conservation area:

- The relative dominance of large modern buildings to the north (Broad Street Mall) and smaller buildings to the west (32-34 St Mary's Butts, the Electricity Sub-Station) and the Civic Centre complex beyond these to the west;

- The wide, vehicle dominated thoroughfare of St Mary's Butts itself;

- Modern carriageway and pavement materials (concrete and tarmac) which do not respect the historical importance of the street;

• A plethora of street furniture associated with the function of the street as an important vehicular, particularly public transport, route.

- The current unattractive appearance of the Hosier Street market area immediately adjoining and affecting the setting of the Conservation Area.

St Mary's Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area



Reading Biodiversity Action Plan 2005-2015

The Reading Biodiversity Action Plan sets down the following objectives for the habitats in Urban environments:

Short term:

Protect and/or replicate habitats found to be used by rarer species of plants and animals.

Require nesting provision for birds and bats as part of development.

Medium term;

Manage selected sites for optimum wildlife habitat. Developments should contain materials and designs that provide opportunities for use by identified BAP species.

Long term:

Maintain a mosaic of suitable sites, including ground, green and brown roof and wall sites.

Species on the long list occurring in this habitat (but not necessarily found at all sites)/

Birds:

- Black Redstart
- House Sparrow
- Linnet
- Kestrel
- House Martin
- Sand Martin
- Swift

Mammals

- Bats (Brown Long Ear, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Natterer's)

Invertebrates

- Buttoned Snout (a moth)





2.0 EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



2.0

Existing Site Conditions | 2.1 The Site

The Broad Street Mall fronts onto the busy retail streets of Oxford Road and St Mary's Butts, in the commercial heart of Reading.

Both streets are primarily Victorian and Edwardian, with extensive use of red brick and detailing typical of the era.

A few buildings date from earlier times, and there are a few half timber buildings in the vicinity adding to the visually rich setting of the site.

The existing Broad Street Mall was constructed in the 1970s and now appears rather tired.

The adjacent streets are rather cluttered, with numerous bus stops, lighting and bins. There are limited opportunities for seating.

The Queen's Walk is a pedestrian link from Oxford Road to the Hexagon Theatre, and this is in particularly poor condition, with no trees, planting or seats, and very poor surface materials. Parts of this route are over car park decks and access roads beneath.

Hosier Street provides vehicle access from St Mary's Butts, and becomes pedestrianised near the Theatre. A market is held at the eastern end, and there is an area of green space half way along which varies in level. Again the quality of the materials in the public realm is very poor, with a number of level changes, and access issues. The western end of this street becomes Dusseldorf Way and is in part also over deck and access roads.

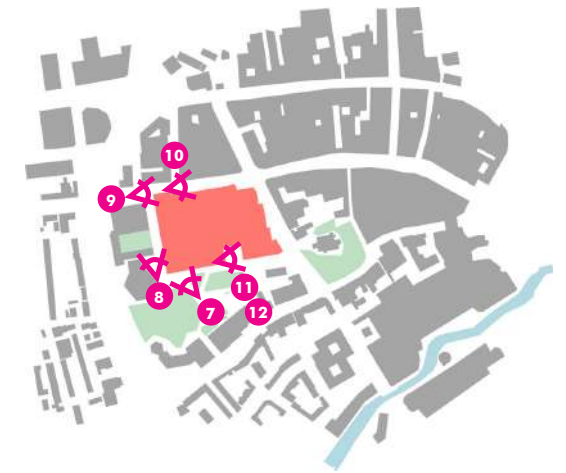
There are pedestrian links onwards to the Police Station and Magistrate's Court.



HOSIER STREET AND BROAD STREET MALL PROPOSALS
Extract from the Hosier Street Area Outline Development Framework

2.0 Existing Site Conditions | 2.2 Visual Appraisal

The following images provide a summary of the key characteristics and condition of the architecture and public realm in the vicinity of the redevelopment area.



OXFORD ROAD



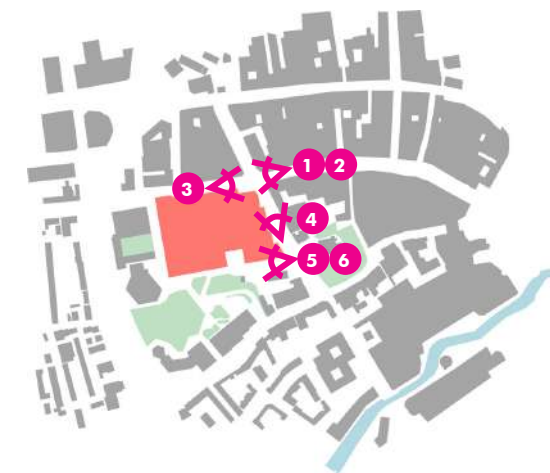
The public spaces in Oxford Road are cluttered and a wide variety of tired looking surface materials are used. The existing crossing points area poorly finished. At the junction of Oxford Road and St Mary's Butts, railings have been installed to the roundabout contributing further to the sense of clutter.

ST MARY'S BUTTS



The public spaces in St Mary's Butts are cluttered and a wide variety of tired looking surface materials are used. The existing street trees to this road are too small for the scale of the space and adjacent buildings. The Hosier Street Market spills out onto the main road. It is not clear where the entrances to the Broad Street Mall are located.

2.0 Existing Site Conditions | 2.2 Visual Appraisal



HOSIER STREET



The eastern end of Hosier Street is characterised by mature trees and the market stalls, At the midway point the street opens out to a green space with further trees, and the location of a weekly market.

QUEEN'S WALK



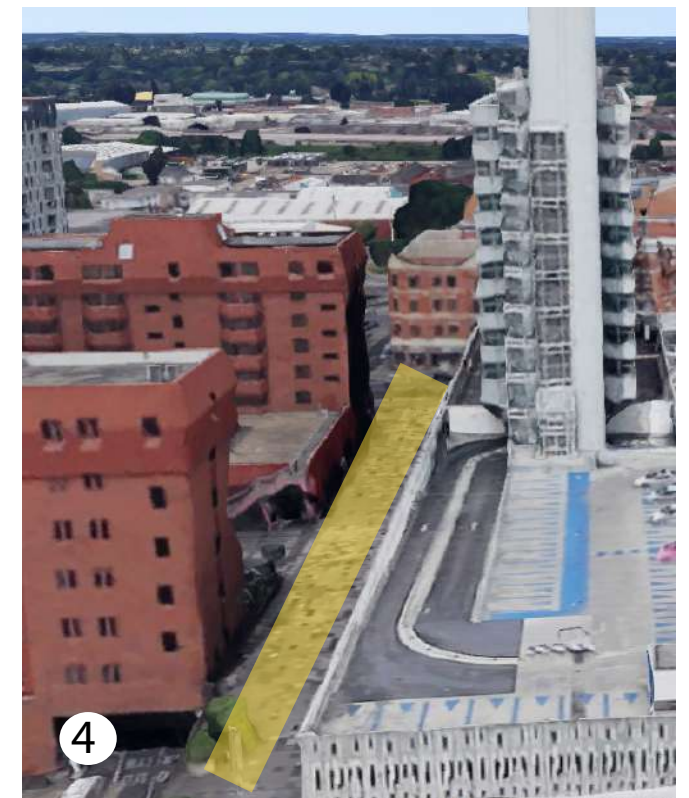
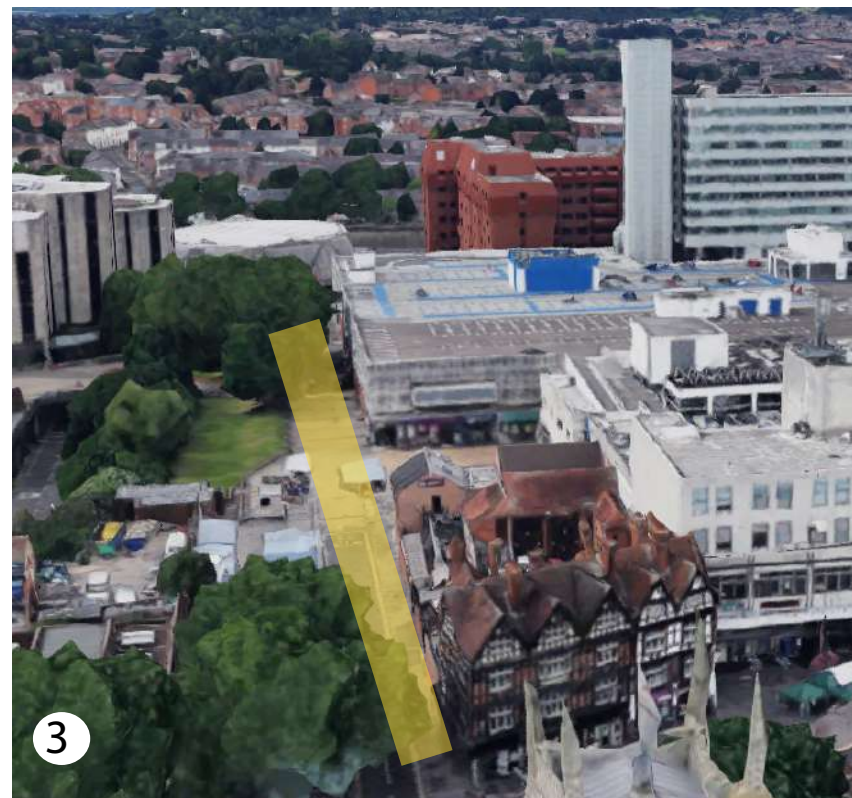
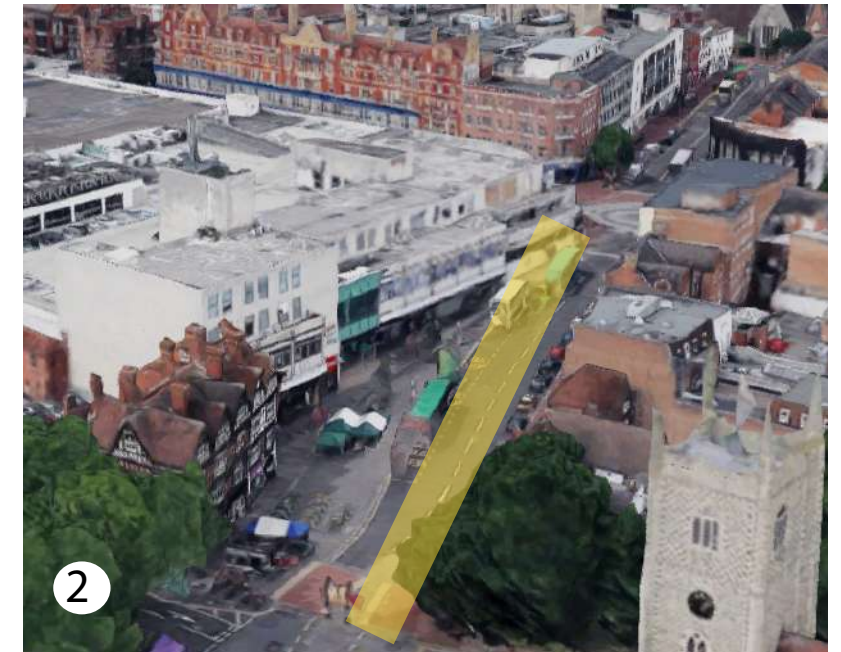
The Queens Walk provides a pedestrian link to the Hexagon Theatre from Oxford Road. It is characterised by poor quality paving and inactive frontages. The southern half of the Queens Walk is suspended over undercroft car parking and access roads, and in part the walkway overlooks these spaces, where these emerge below..

2.0 Existing Site Conditions | 2.3 Existing Boundary Conditions

As described above, the site is bordered by existing retail streets and access road and podium walkways.

The level changes to the Queens Walk and Hosier Street/ Dusseldorf Way, in particular create difficult interface conditions for redevelopment and new landscape works.

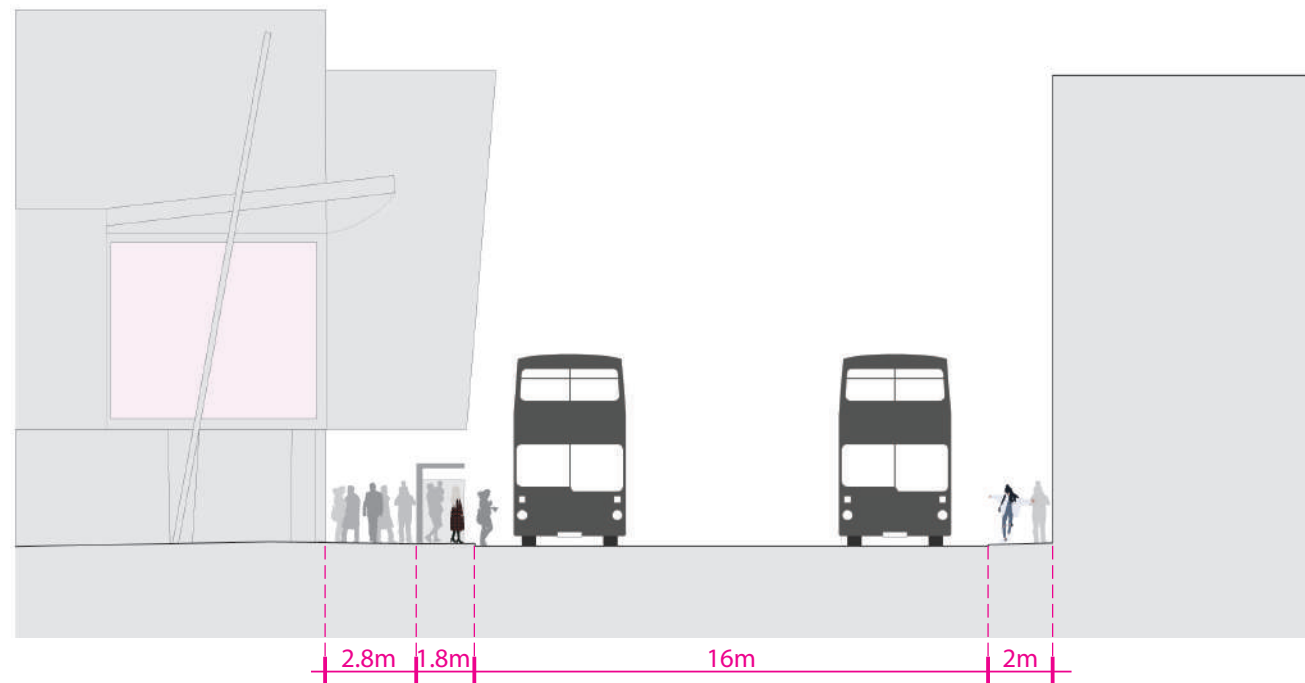
The sections on the following pages illustrate the site boundary conditions in more detail.



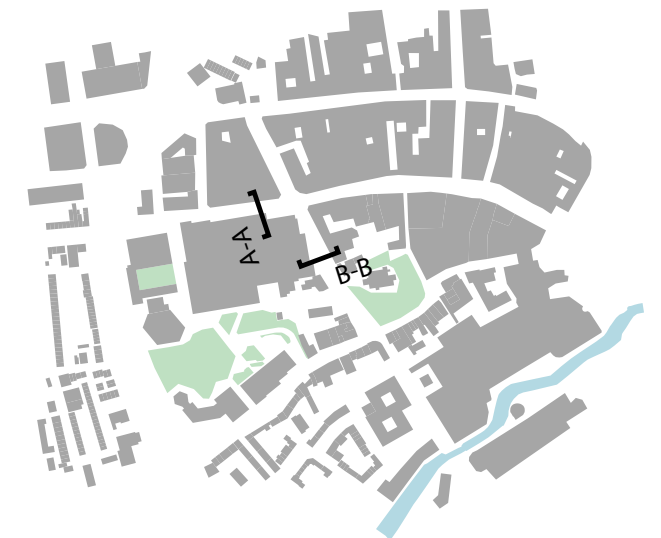
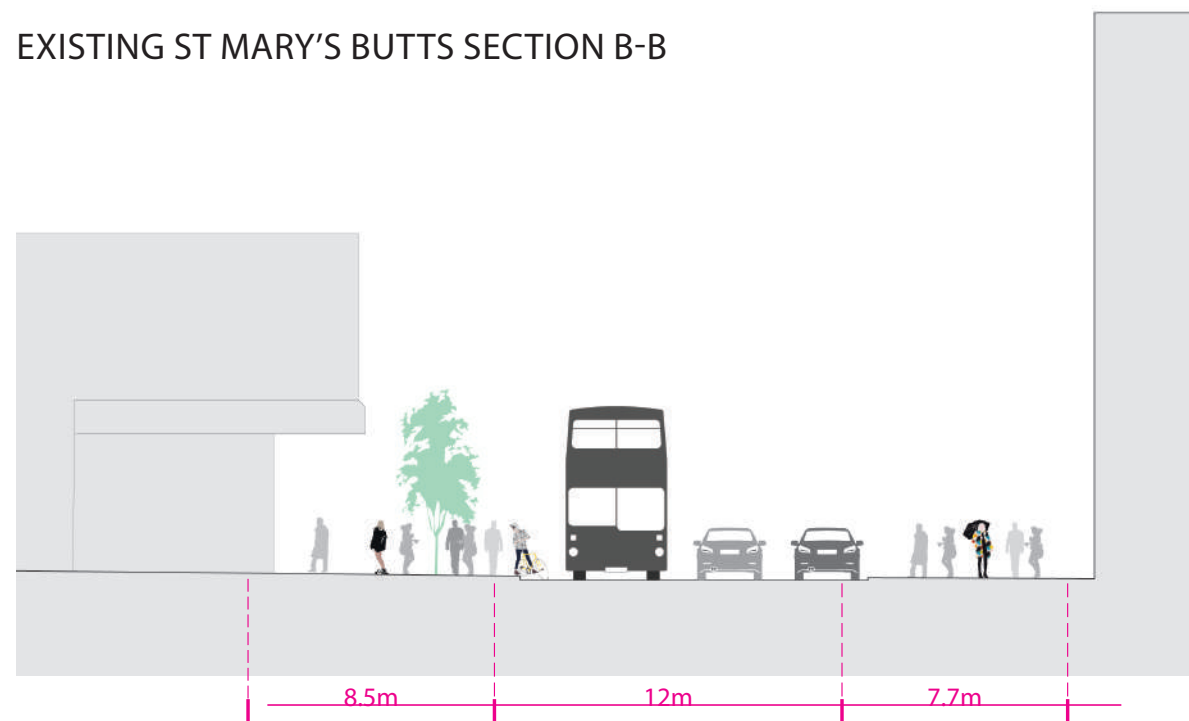
1. Oxford Road
2. St Mary's Butts
3. Hosier Street/Dusseldorf Way
4. Queens Walk

2.0 Existing Site Conditions | 2.4 Existing Site Sections

EXISTING OXFORD ROAD SECTION A-A

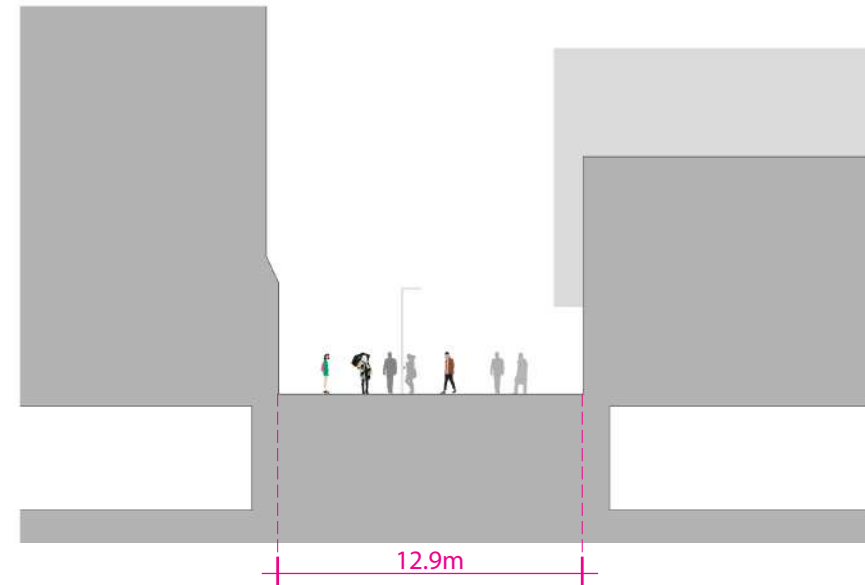


EXISTING ST MARY'S BUTTS SECTION B-B

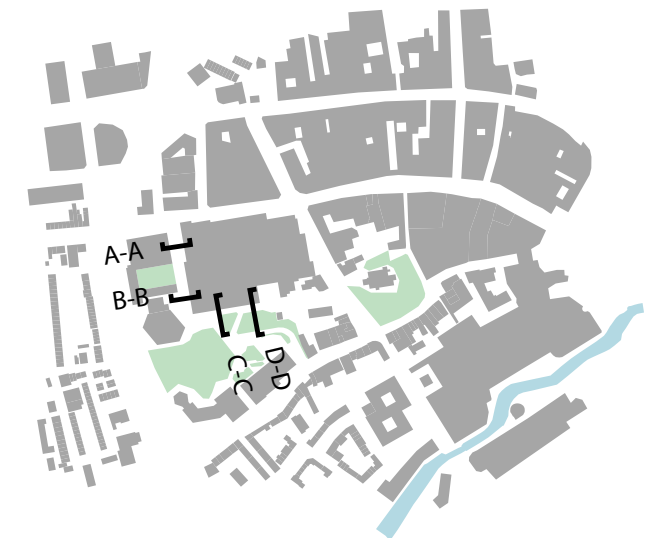
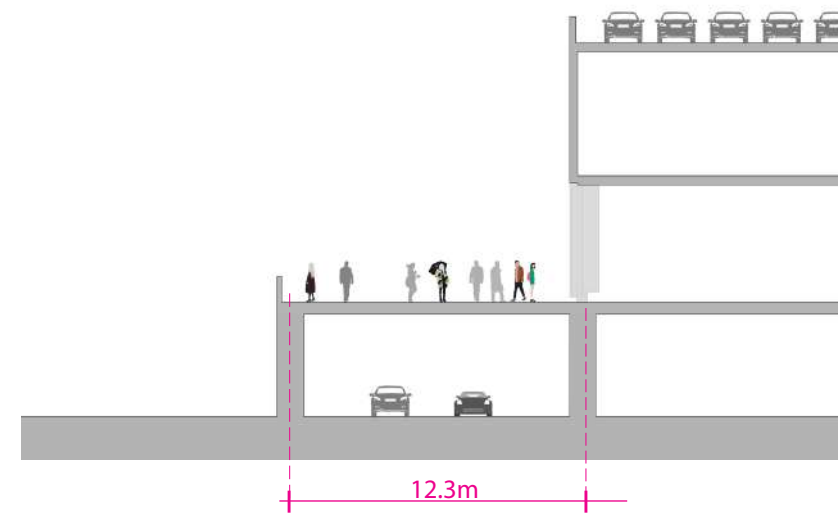


2.0 Existing Site Conditions | 2.4 Existing Site Sections

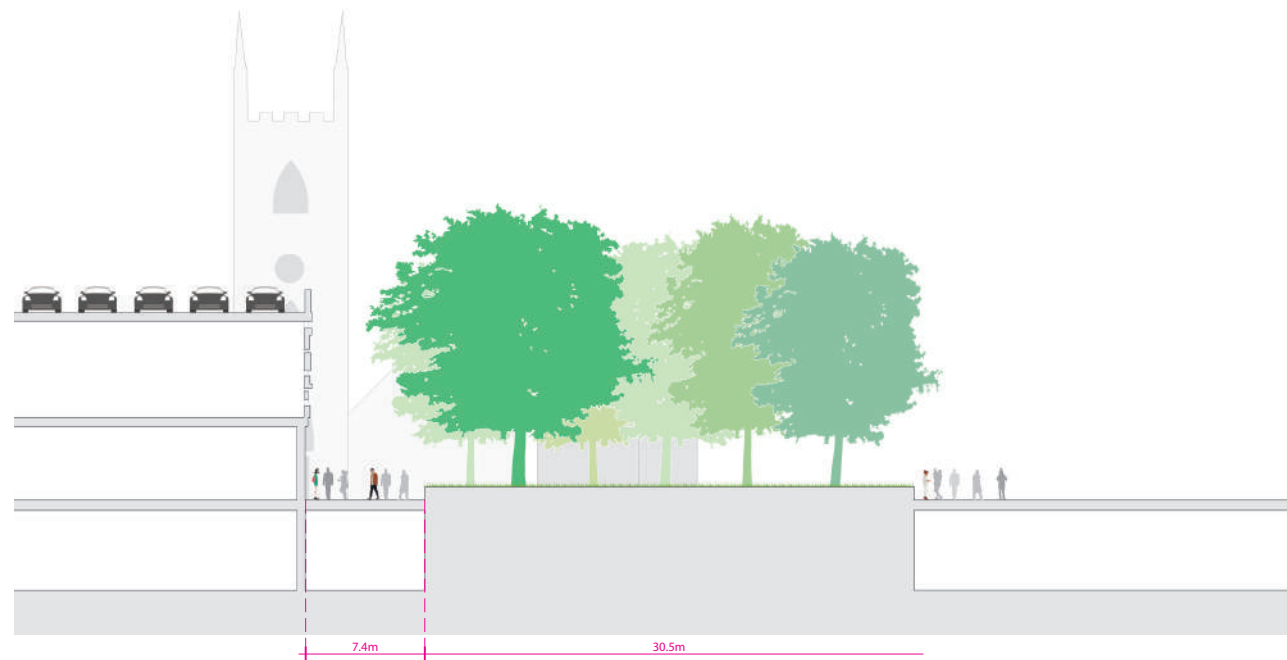
EXISTING QUEEN'S WALK SECTION A-A



EXISTING QUEEN'S WALK SECTION B-B



EXISTING DUSSELDORF WAY SECTION C-C



EXISTING DUSSELDORF WAY SECTION D-D



2.0 Existing Condition | 2.5 Existing Vegetation

There are a few street trees which characterise the perimeter of the Broad Street Mall.

There are three trees along Oxford Street. These are ash species, which have become distorted as they try to grow away from the building.

There are two very small trees which have recently been planted on St Mary's Butts. These appear to be plane trees, but are have been planted so small that they do not make an impact on the street.

There is a group of mature plane trees at the junction of St Mary's Butts and Hosier Street which make a positive contribution to the streetscape in this location, in combination with trees in the open space of The Minster.

A further group of mature trees enhances the small green space immediately to the south of Dusseldorf Way.

