

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

To Accompany the Planning and Listed Building Application for:

BRISTOL AND WEST ARCADE, READING, RG1 1JL

.173- 175 Friar Street

.27- 32 Market Place

FEBRUARY 2018

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CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION
- 1.1 Application Overview
- 1.2 Consultant Team
- 1.3 The Applicant

2.0 SITE CONTEXT
- 2.1 Central Location
- 2.2 The Site, Surroundings & Immediate Context
- 2.3 Routes, Access and Amenity
- 2.4 Heritage Context

3.0 CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES (TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS)
- 3.1 Targeting Reading's Development Plan
- 3.2 Short-cut to Nowhere (loss of route to Broad Street and M&S)
- 3.3 Poor Quality Arcade
- 3.4 Concealed and Poorly Treated Listed Buildings
- 3.5 Previously Consented Scheme

4.0 ANALYSIS & STRATEGIC VISION
- 4.1 Restoration of the Listed Buildings
- 4.2 Evolution of the Urban Block and Pedestrian Route / Circulation
- 4.3 Arrangement of Uses to Suit the Site; Retail, Office and Residential

5.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT
- 5.1 The Design Process
- 5.2 Massing, Scale and Critical Townscape Views
- 5.3 Elevations and Fenestration
- 5.4 Precedents and Materials
- 5.5 Process (Pre-Application Enquiries) and Consultation
- 5.6 Comparative Renders
- 5.7 Overlooking and dual aspect apartments

6.0 PROPOSALS
- 6.1 Plans
- 6.2 Verified Views

7.0 ACCESS / SAFETY
- 7.1 Access
- 7.2 Crime Prevention
- 7.3 Refuse Storage
- 7.4 Cycle Parking Arrangements

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Application Overview

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of the Applicant, Sonic Star Properties, in support of a detailed Planning and Listed building application for the comprehensive redevelopment of the Bristol and West Arcade site in Reading city centre. The site has sat derelict for ten years since an abortive redevelopment by the previous owners. The new owner is keen to develop the site into a vibrant collection of properties to bring new life to this corner of Reading town centre.

This document sets out the design proposals for the construction of three floors of office space, 43 new-build and refurbished apartments with associated amenity spaces and 8 ground floor retail units, including a public house within a new-build multi-use building to Friar Street and the renovated Listed buildings to Market Place. The existing arcade and pedestrian route is adjusted across the site.

From the outset of the project, the client has been keen that the consultant team work closely with Reading Borough Council (RBC). This submission is the culmination of two years of work in close contact with Reading Borough Council and Historic England and represents the conclusion of a pro-active and productive working relationship, and has delivered a design which we feel best meets the aspirations of all stake-holders. The proposal will provide a sustainable and viable future for this maligned town centre site.



Rodic Davidson Architects



Savills Planning



Turley Heritage

1.2 Consultant Team

The core project team and their roles include:

Rodić Davidson Architects
Savills (Planning Consultants)
Turley (Heritage Consultants)
Price and Myers (Energy and Strategy and BREEAM)
Motion (Transport and Travel Plan Statements)
Andrew Goddard Associates (CDM Advisor)
Building Control Approval (Approved Inspector)
Affinity Fire Engineering (Fire Engineer)
Delva Patman Redler LLP (Rights of Light & Sunlight/Daylight)



143-149 Kensington High Street, London



Ostro House, Finchley Road, London



380 Lea Bridge Road, London



5-6 Gliddon Road, London

1.3 The Applicant

The applicant has been developing property in the UK for over twenty years. They, alongside the consultant team mentioned above, have worked on over 10 projects together- three of which are currently under construction. The type of work varies though these projects are always centred around providing superb accomodation - whether it be in central London or the suburbs.

Recent projects include:
- 9 apartments and 23 HMO units on Kensington High Street, Central London
- 18 Apartments on Finchley Road, North London
- 25 bedroom extension to a homeless hostel, East London
- 16 apartments within an existing building in West London

From the initial stages of the project, the applicant has been keen to work collaboratively with Reading Borough Council to achieve the best possible solution for the town as well as themselves. By engaging with RBC through a series of Pre-applications, with The council's Design Review panel, Historic England, key local stakeholders and the public, through a pubic exhibition the submission proposal has reached a blended solution taking as many opinions as possible into account for the redevelopment of this site. The proposal is one which seeks a balance of these differing viewpoints to achieve the best possible design.



Friar Street >
1893 Photograph

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

2.1 Central Location

This proposal concerns a central Reading site which has been largely vacant for the last decade. The site comprises four properties:

173- 175 Friar Street – a large, deep site with the old arcade passing through at ground floor level.
27- 28 Market Place – a small Grade II Listed shop unit
29- 31 Market Place – a Grade II Listed public house
32 Market Place – an old Grade II Listed building society building

The site sits within a larger urban block. To the West, the site is adjacent to the large Marks and Spencers. Immediately to the North of the site is Town Hall Square where the building faces Saint Laurence Church and the old Town Hall. To The South, the Friar Street property adjoins Market Way – the arcade through 173- 175 Friar Street links this passageway to Town Hall Square. To The East, the Market Place buildings face onto Market Place Square. Some other smaller properties complete the block.

The existing properties on Market Place directly adjoin the Friar Street property at the back and have been built up to the boundary such that there is no longer any space between them.

173- 175 Friar Street is currently vacant. When it was last occupied it was used as offices at first, second, third and fourth floors with an arcade of small shop units at ground floor. New construction works were commenced and then halted in approximately 2007/8. These works are very evident to the rear of the site where the previously granted consent has been partial implemented.

27- 28 Market place is one of the oldest properties in Reading. It is also vacant and appears to have been last in use as a martial arts shop. 29- 31 Market place is a vacant Listed pub and 32 Market Place is a Grade II Listed, vacant building society building. All of these buildings are in a poor state of repair at the time of works halting in 2008. Works to these buildings had not yet commenced and they are clearly very dilapidated.



< Aerial View of Reading
(Google Earth)



^ Site Overview
Showing site buildings in context

2.2 The Site, Surroundings & Immediate Context

Reading Station is within approximately 200m of the site. Its central position offers excellent transportation links, access to a wide variety of shops and restaurants, and Forbury Gardens is within a 50m short walk. Kings Meadow and the river Thames are within 300m of the site.

The property has a number of neighbouring properties and urban features which directly affect it:

• St. Laurence Church. This high-quality Grade I Listed church sits immediately opposite the front elevation of Friar Street. It is built in sandstone and flint.

• The Town Hall Council Chambers. Another high-quality Grade II* Listed building in traditional red and grey Reading brickwork.

• Town Hall Square. The square currently feels rather underused and unappreciated, in part because the applications site fails to engage it currently in its vacant state. The square represents an important opportunity to develop this part of Reading town centre.

• 172 Friar Street. This is the last remaining part of the original arcade building. Although fairly modest in red and blue Reading brickwork it remains a high quality façade at upper levels, sadly the shopfront has been eroded by the current occupier.

• Market Place Square. Another square with a fairly mixed series of building frontages, some of high quality and otherssomewhat lower quality. Importantly, the square is undergoing a successful upgrade as new restaurants move into several units.

• 23- 26 Market Place. A series of Grade II Listed buildings read as three elevations. These turn the corner between Friar Street and Market Place and are effectively held on either side by the application site.



< Site Plan

Showing property names and outlines

A key to critical townscape views





a. Blagrave Street and Reading Town Hall



f. 23-26 Market Place



b. Town Hall Square and Queen Victoria Jubilee statue



c. 173-175 Friar Street



d. Town Hall view from Town Hall Square



e. The Forbury and St Laurence Church



g. 23-26 Market Place



h. Market Place Square



i. Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance



j. The Arcade



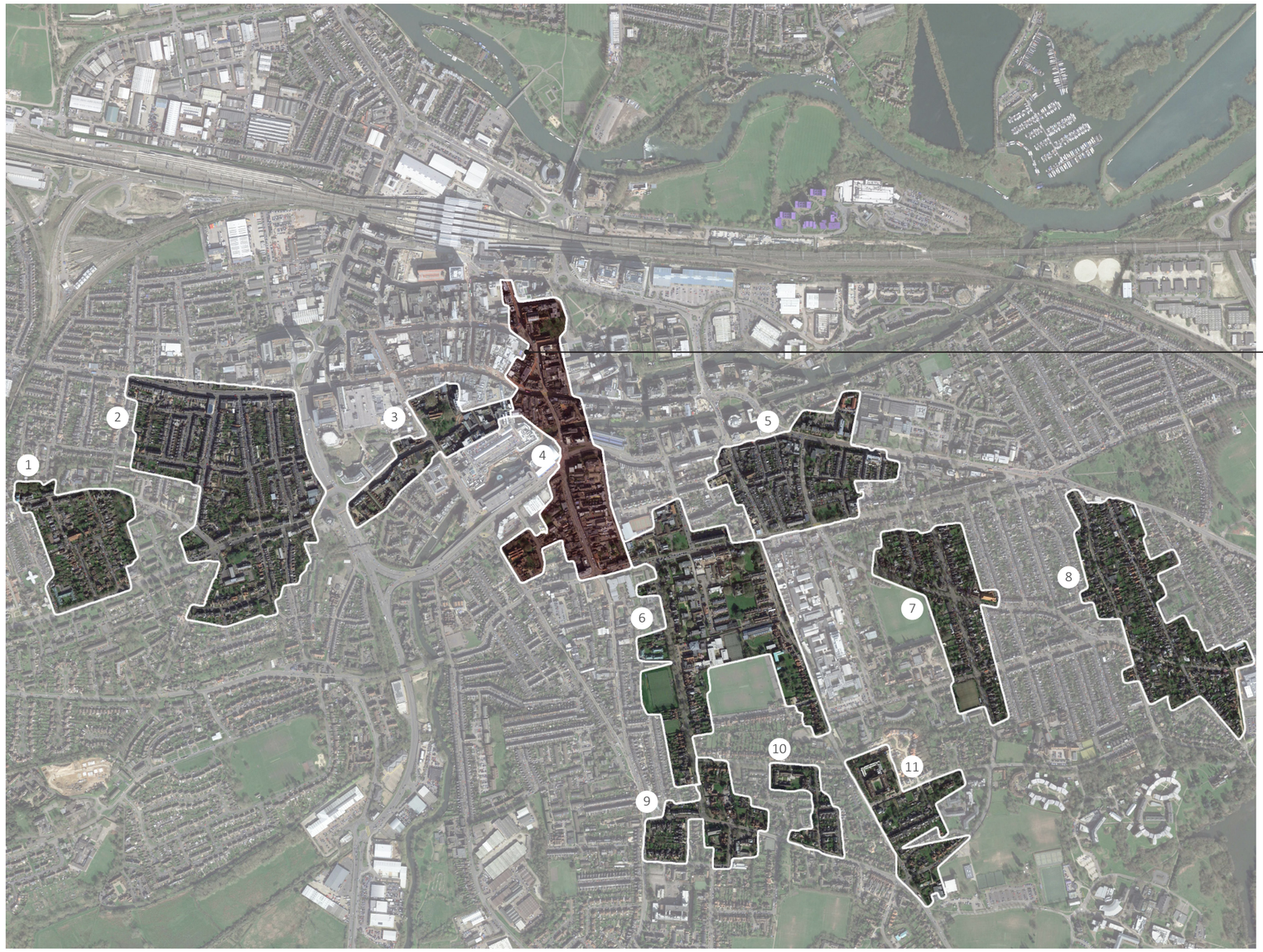
2.3 Routes, Access & Amenity

The section of Reading Town centre around the application site is one of the oldest parts of Reading. Routes and byways have become established over hundreds of years.

Road routes have been changed in recent years to better manage the flow of buses and service traffic to the shops and many years ago the road route cutting between Friar Street and Market Place was extinguished creating Town Hall Square. Town Hall Square and Market Place Square provide two large, open public areas to each side of the proposal site. Both Squares make up part of a primary pedestrian route into town from the train station to the North West.

Pedestrian routes through central Reading are very important and radiate out from the fully pedestrianised Broad Street. Several Roads have been made pedestrian and a number of old walkways between blocks have been retained alongside both old and newer access routes through larger shopping developments such as Marks and Spencers, The Oracle and John Lewis. A number of arcade routes also exist; Harris Arcade to the North West of the site provides a direct and useful short-cut towards the station and is well provided with small shops. The arcade route across the application site has been underused for many years. This is explained in section 3.3.

A large park, The Forbury Gardens provides high quality public amenity space close to the application site.



Reading Conservation Area Map

A map of Reading Conservation Areas. The application site sits partly within the Market Place / London Road area. Although not all of the site is within a conservation area, the quality of nearby buildings makes the site a particularly important one.

Bristol and West Arcade Site

1. Downshire Square
2. Russell Street/Castle Hill
3. St Mary's Butts/Castle Street
4. Market Place/ London Road
5. Eldon Square
6. Kendrick Road
7. Alexandra Road
8. South Park
9. Christchurch Road
10. The Mount
11. Redlands

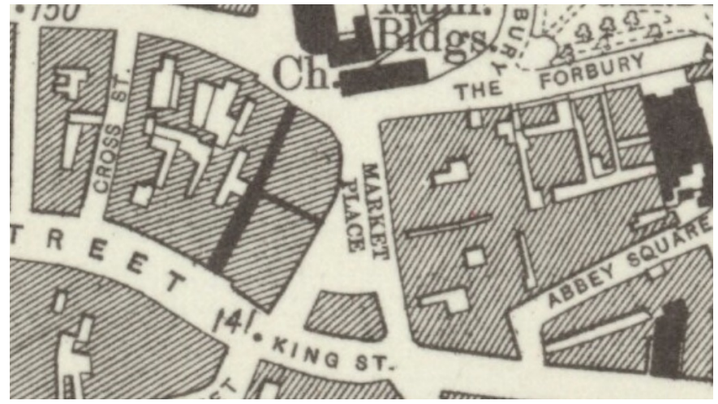
2.4 Heritage Context

The application site sits within one of the first areas developed as part of Reading. Indeed the Listed building no. 27 – 28 dates to C17 or possibly earlier. As such the entire site is one within what can be considered the very earliest outlines of the original town. Evidence of this importance is clear from the number, age and proximity of Listed buildings nearby (see next page). Several of these have critical significance for the town, particularly St. Laurence Church and the Town Hall.

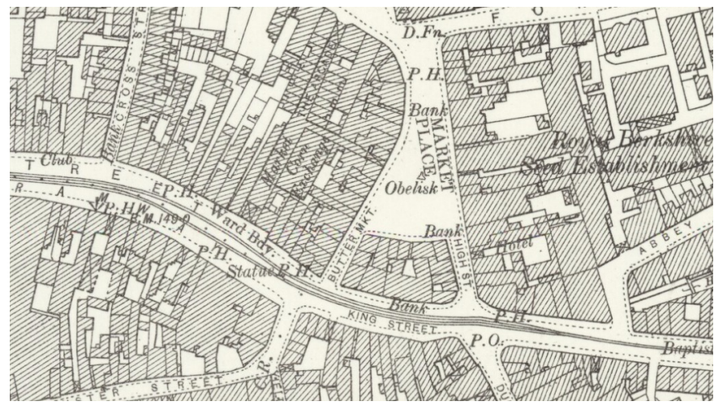
The application site has developed and changed through several centuries. During the Second World War the original arcade building on the site was partly destroyed in a bombing raid and most of the rest of the building was subsequently demolished (a part remains immediately to the West of the application site). The town's Corn Exchange also used to sit directly behind the site. The only remaining evidence of this building is the entranceway clock tower to Market Place.

Until the creation of the Sainsburys to the South of the site there was a useful cut-through between Friar Street and Broad Street. Once Sainsbury's was built this route was effectively extinguished – though you can still pass through this route along the back of the Sainsburys cash register line.

A full and detailed analysis of the heritage context of the site has been prepared by Turley Heritage and accompanies this submission. The proposal has taken account of the site's history.









View of the partly demolished arcade building following WW2 bomb damage.



A view from Market Place of St. Laurance Church . The application site is the Listed buildings to the left in the photo.



An etching of the now lost Reading Corn Exchange.



The large archway to the centre of the photo is the old route from Broad Street through to Friar Street. This archway was replaced by Sainsburys.



The now lost Reading Corn Exchange can be seen in the top left of this photo.

The proposal site sits in close proximity to a number of heritage assets. They have a bearing on development on the site, and the impact of the proposal should be considered in light of these nearby buildings / monuments.

1. Queen Victoria Jubilee Statue
2. Town Hall Chamber, Offices and Clocktower
3. Church of St. Laurence
4. No.23-26 Market Place
5. No.27- 32 Market Place (part of application site)
6. No.33- 34 Market Place
7. Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance, Market Place / Market Way

The Heritage Statement by Turley Heritage which accompanies this submission includes considerable detail on these nearby assets and makes an assessment of the impact the scheme would have on them.



3.0 CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES (TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS)

3.1 Targeting Reading's Redevelopment Plan

The applicant has sought to develop a proposal which is as Planning policy compliant through a close working relationship with RBC. To ensure compliance, the design team have met and discussed the proposal on several occasions with RBC and other stakeholders.

A full planning Statement has been prepared by Savills Planning and accompanies this application.

The application accords with Reading Borough Council's aspirations for the site. The provision of retail uses at ground and basement level, office space at first to third floors and residential accommodation above is in accordance with RBC's current development plan and the site is noted in the Council's emerging Local Plan as being assigned for retail, office and residential use.

The applicant is pleased to be able to offer 30% affordable housing across the residential apartments. At the request of RBC, these apartments have been "pepper-potted" throughout the scheme and share the same entrance as the market housing.

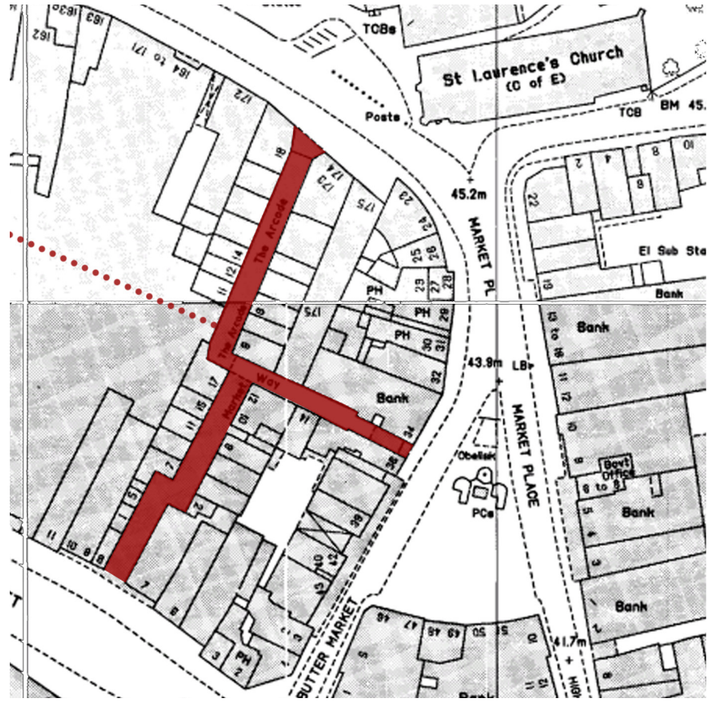
1879 Reading Town Centre map



1900 Reading Town Centre map



1980 Reading Town Centre map



3.2 Short-Cut to Nowhere (Loss of route to Broad Street and M&S)

Over the last 100 years the arcade route across the application site, which used to join Town Hall Square with Broad Street, has been eroded. The above series of maps show the pedestrian routes through this city block and how it has changed.

By 1900 the full link through was fully established. The Southern end of the passageway incorporated a part-enclosed and part-open market, while the Northern section was the old arcade building, damaged and then demolished during the Second World War.

By the late 1970s / early 1980s, the pedestrian route was further improved as the newly opened Marks and Spencers included doors into their store which were accessed midway along the passageway onto Market Way. Combining these routes led to much increased pedestrian traffic.

Sadly, in the late 1980's Marks and Spencers closed its access doors onto Market Way in an effort to counter increased shop-lifting.

At the turn of the century the lower section of the market was demolished and replaced with the current Sainsburys supermarket. Although the supermarket still allows access through it's shop from Broad Street to Market Way, this has significantly reduced pedestrian footfall through the passageway.

2016 Reading Town Centre map



This in turn led to shops along the arcade failing and the route itself feeling unsafe and empty of shops. The final shop closed in 2014.

The route has been little used and does not contribute positively to Reading Town centre.

(Today the applicant has been obliged to temporarily close the arcade route due to safety concerns relating to the previous aborted buiding project.)





3.3 Poor Quality Arcade

An important aspect of the existing building is the arcade which traverses the site, from Town Hall Square to Market Way.

As explained in 3.2, the arcade is no longer in use and represents an old, disused route. This arcade route used to extend from Town Hall Square to Broad Street, but the Southern half of the arcade has been effectively closed by the Sainsbury's development. This has changed the nature of the arcade; critically, it no longer represents a useful pedestrian short-cut in the town. In fact, the existing arcade and Market Way route is now a longer pedestrian route than walking around the street side of Market Place.

Although Reading is home to a number of high-quality small and larger scale shopping arcade routes, the development team do not believe this site is now suitable for a new arcade route; the site is no longer a primary shopping area (The success and development of Broad Street take away from Friar Street which now has few shops), the arcade is no longer in use and creating an adequate attraction to a new passageway represents a commercially unviable option (please refer to Savills Planning Statement) and most importantly the arcade in its current form does not present a natural thoroughfare route for pedestrian traffic now that the Southern end of the arcade route has been removed.

The team believes a better civic contribution can be delivered to Reading by re-thinking the route of the byway and how its increased use can be encouraged through this new development. Pedestrian routes thrive when they are highly used, so increasing pedestrain flow will be critical to making the re-opening a success.



A view of the front of the arcade on Town Hall Square.



A view through the arcade



A view through the arcade



The rear entrance of the arcade opposite Sainsburys


NOTICE
Arcade permanently closed in advance of redevelopment.
Route to be diverted on completion of redevelopment.
Any queries or concerns to be addressed to
Scottish Properties Ltd.
c/o 12 Upper Berkeley Street, London W1H 7QD.
Tel no: 0207 724 9979
NO ENTRY
TO DANGEROUS
DERELICT BUILDING

3.4 Concealed and Poorly Treated Listed Buildings

The three Grade II Listed properties to Market place are very dilapidated. Turleys heritage statement draws attention to the current state of the buildings, and how they have been extended and reconfigured. It is clear that all three properties have been extensively altered, subdivided and extended over the years and some of these alterations have been handled and excuted very poorly.

To the back of all three properties, the buildings have been extended, in single-storey additions, to the full depth of the site. These poor quality extensions have largely hidden the qualities and character of the original buildings located behind. This work has happened piecemeal over several decades but the overall effect is to diminish the buildings as a whole. While the rears are not currently visible from the public realm, there remains an important opportunity to improve their quality by removing the poor quality extension work to reveal and restore the parts of the building that do possess significant heritage value.





A view through the partly complete Friar Street development towards the Listed buildings of Market Place.



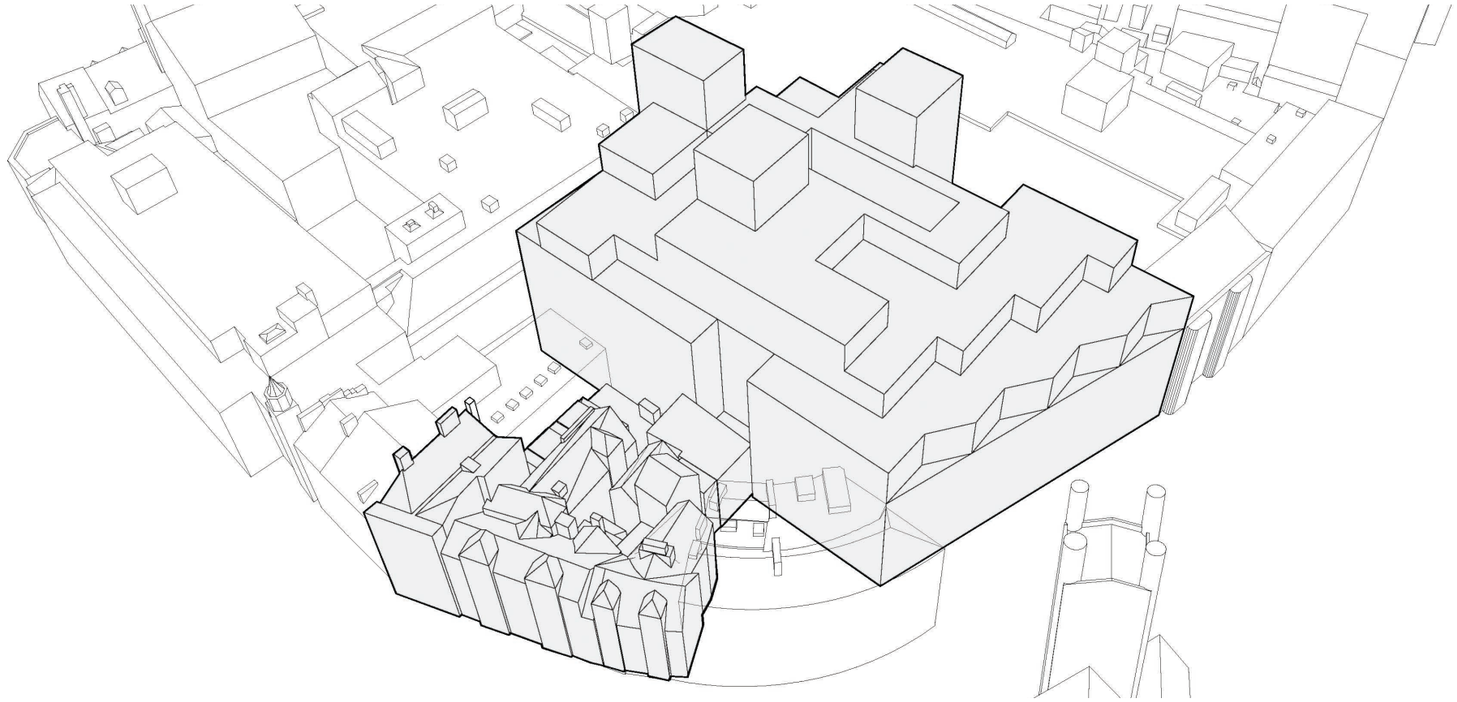
3.5 Previously Consented Scheme

As mentioned above, the site was the subject of a previous uncompleted development. This development, although incomplete, represents an important development benchmark for the site. This was discussed at the beginning of this current planning process with the council in January 2016 and it was agreed that this development represented a ‘line in the sand’ as regards the development potential for a new scheme.

The previous consents sought to amalgamate and heavily redevelop the various properties. The Friar Street site would have been demolished and rebuilt considerably larger than the existing building. The mixed-use building was proposed to include shops, offices, a very large health club and new residential accommodation.

In terms of size, the new scheme rose to the same height as St. Laurence Church and was evidently quite bulky with massing proposed across the entire footprint of the existing building. Of particular note; the volume, height and proximity of the new building to the Listed Buildings at Market Place did not provide much respect for the existing structures.

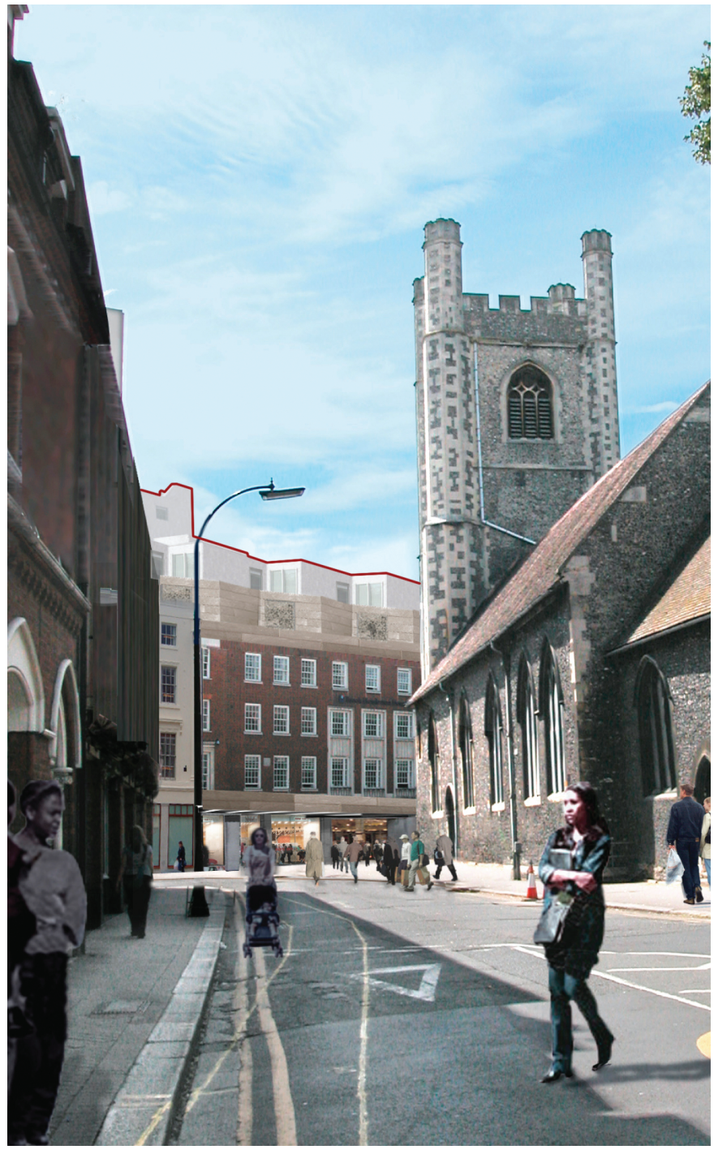
The buildings at Market Place were also due to be heavily refurbished with a new public access route connecting through the pub entrance joining to the existing arcade.



3D Visual of Previously Consented Scheme




KAREN MILLEN





4.0 ANALYSIS & STRATEGIC VISION

4.1 Restoration of the Listed Buildings

Turley have prepared a heritage statement assessing the three Listed buildings. The rears of two of the buildings are relatively contemporary and very poor quality.

We propose to demolish and remove these poor-quality Twentieth Century extensions, taking the building back to reveal their more valuable and high-quality earlier fabric. In removing these additions we create a space to the rear of the Listed buildings, pulling the buildings away from the block of the new-build building to Friar Street. This helps delineate the Listed buildings from the new-build part of the development.

The remaining buildings will be sensitively refurbished to provide high quality, retail and residential accommodation.



Plan view of LIsted properties taken from Turley Heritage Statement



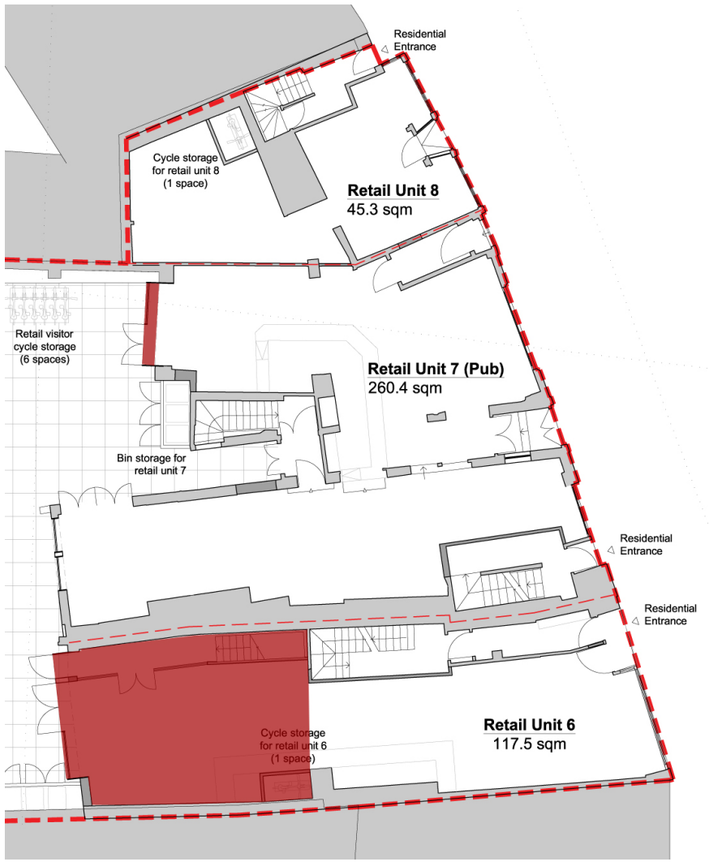
Sketch view of the rear of the Listed properties





Residential entrances to the upper levels of the Listed buildings will be renewed. To no.27-28 an existing entrance door to the far North is re-opened and the staircase behind enclosed from the retail unit. No.29- 31 has one entranced door enclosed with new partitioning to provide a dedicated entrance to the uppers. At no.32 a new staircase is returned to the building where the original staircase had been lost to separate the residential use and retail.

The Market Place elevation of the three Listed buildings will be renewed and repaired. The non-original and poor quality entrance canopy into the pub will be removed and the existing building repaired.



Where the poor-quality extensions will be demolished two new extensions are created to provide additional accommodation for the retail uses and allow the units to open-up to the rear yard allowing improved flexibility in how the units can be managed and accessed.

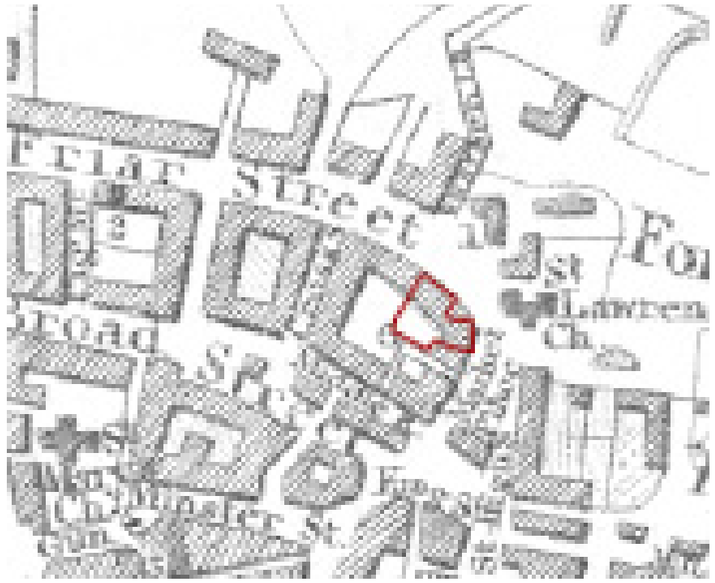


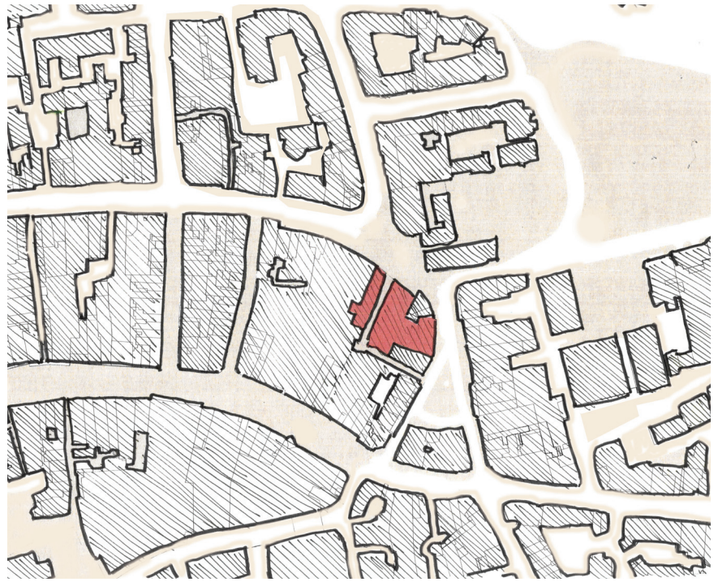
The new extensions will be completed in red-stock brickwork to match the existing buildings. New openings will have expressed stone lintels and coping stones with black-painted metal framed windows.

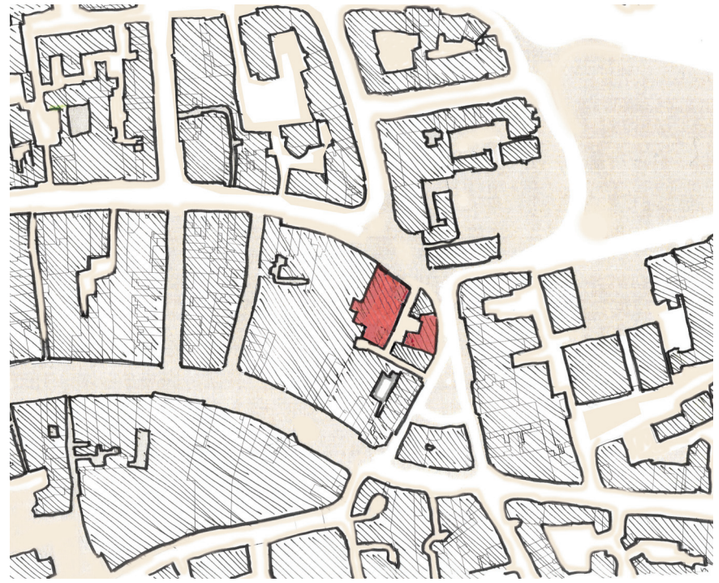
The timber framed extension with brick infill will have fixed glazed panels incorporated between the timber frame.




New dormer with sash window added to match neighboring dormer
Rear wall rendered
Black painted, timber boarding to match neighboring building
Four windows installed in rear elevation between existing timber frame. Black painted 'crittal' style framed windows
Timber bin storage
Red brick extension to match adjacent brickwork with stone copings, stone cintel and black painted, metal framed windows.
Existing window openings uncovered and restored with white painted, timber sash windows
White painted timber sash windows to replace pvc windows
Door removed , window opening restored with new timber sash window
Town Hall Square
Market Way







4.2 Evolution of the Urban Block and Pedestrian Route / Circulation

Central Reading is well pedestrianised and has a number of narrow, historic routes that remain in use today. These help define the town centre as a historic town and contribute positively to both the built environment and the way in which the town can be enjoyed by the population.

These pedestrian routes help break down some of the larger urban blocks, allowing pathways into the centre and through these blocks. This can unlock these interior spaces both practically and for the enjoyment of more sheltered courtyard environments.

As the town has developed, many of these routes and courtyards have been adversely affected as the interiors of large urban blocks have been over-developed and gradually in-filled. The urban block in which the enquiry site sits is similarly affected. It used to house the Corn Exchange which sat detached within the block. After this was lost the interior has gradually been consumed until there is effectively almost no internal space left – Market Way, the passageway linking the old arcade route to Market Place, is the only remaining external area.

It is important to also note the usefulness of the arcade route has been effectively extinguished now that the southern section has been eroded (by the construction of Sainsbury's). The arcade no longer represents a useful short-cut route through the urban block.

Our proposal seeks to re-open a section of the interior of the urban block to improve the quality of the proposed accommodation (improved outlook for accommodation, daylight and sunlight)

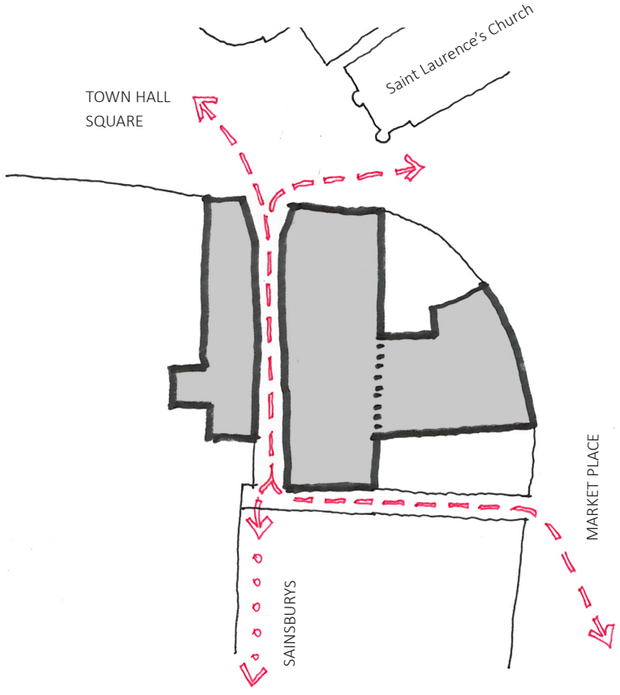


Diagramme A (existing)

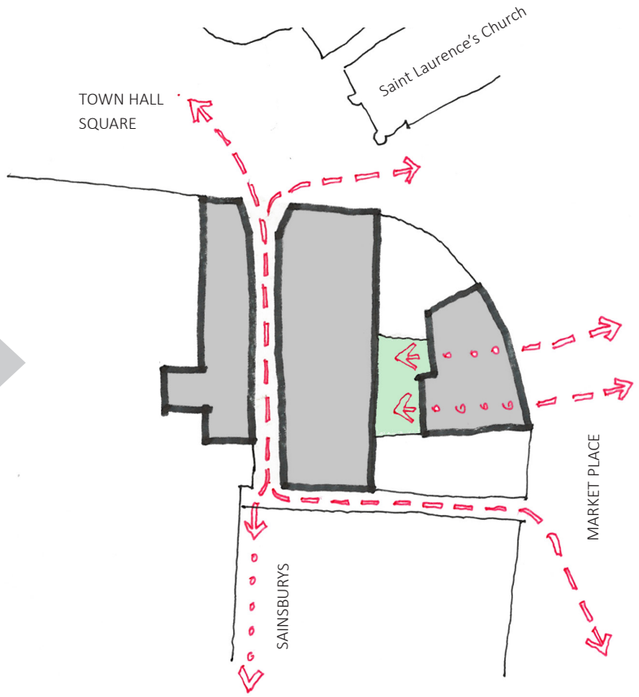


Diagramme B (Listed building rear yard opened)

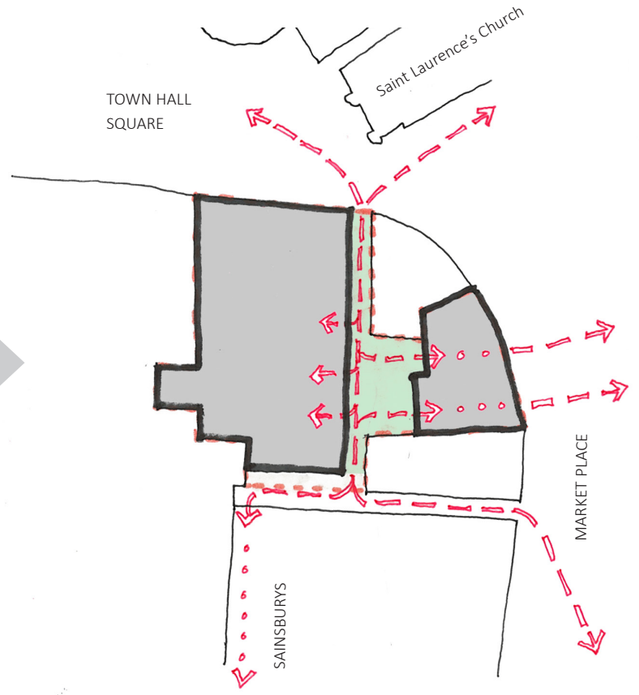


Diagramme A (Rear yards opened and access route moved)

Diagramme A shows the existing condition. Here the public passageway represents a longer route round than the pavement route. The dotted route through Sainsburys is maintained but is underused. This routing has led to the failure of the arcade shops.

Diagramme B shows the improvements to the Listed Buildings proposed previously. Here new circulation is created through the Listed buildings into their rear yards. These rear yards are only accessible through the Listed buildings and no improvement is yet made to the main passageway.

Diagramme C represents the proposed relocation of the passageway across the site. By aligning with the boundary edge of the new-build and Listed building properties a series of benefits are created; the space between new and old buildings is enlarged, more opportunities for access and pedestrian usage across the site are created and the external space is enlarged and improved, improving Daylight and outlook.

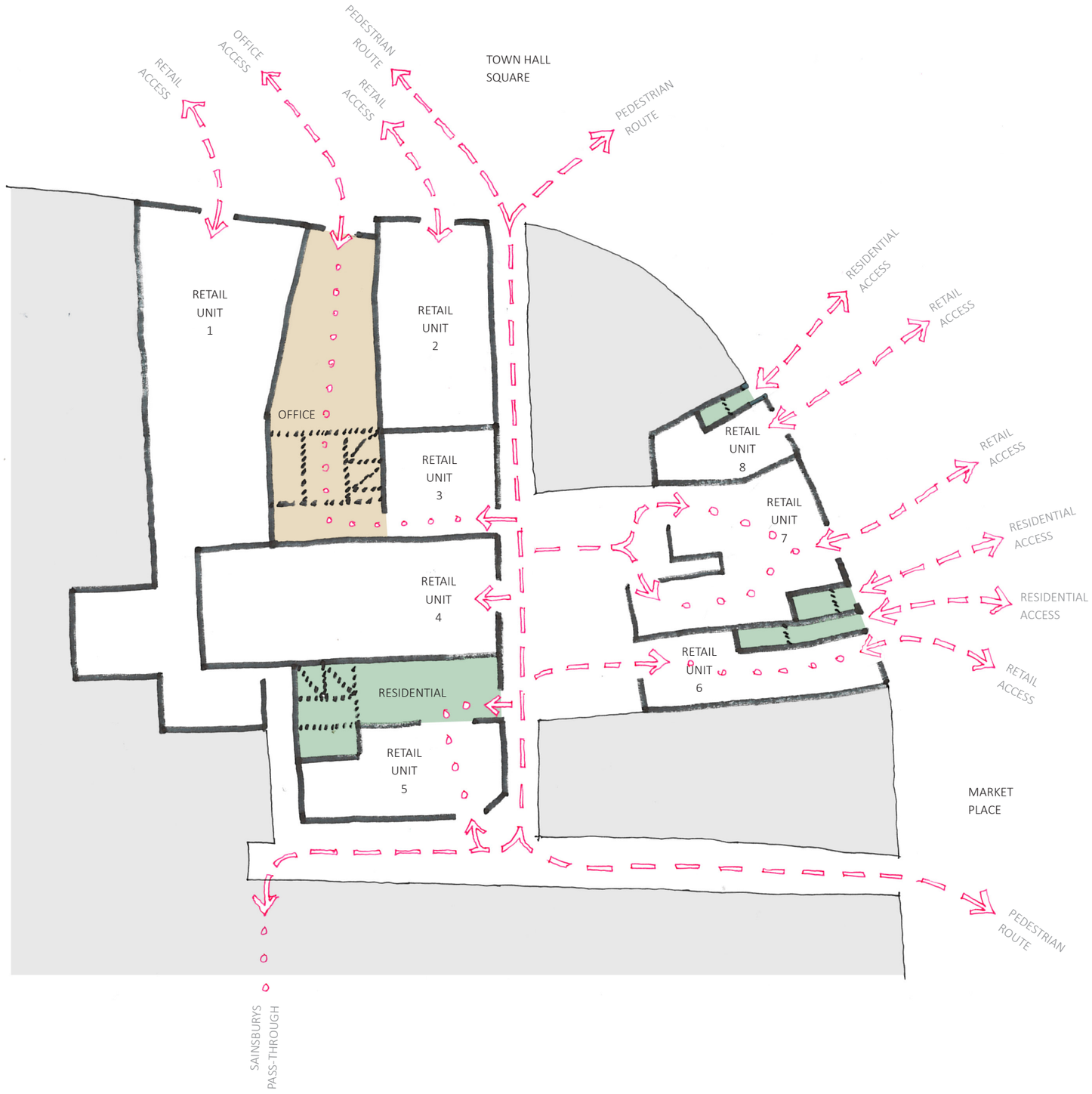
4.3 Arrangement of Uses to Suit the Site; Retail, Office and Residential

This diagramme explains the ground floor layout across the scheme. As explained previously the main access route across the site has been relocated along the boundary between the new-build and Listed buildings and adjoins the rear yards of the Listed buildings. This leads to a larger rear yard for the Listed buildings which in turn improves daylight and outlook for the rear of the properties.

Primary access for retail units 3, 4 and 5 come from the passageway. Secondary access to retail units 7 and 8 are also provided here alongside the only entrance to the new-build residential units on Friar Street. This overlapping of access requirements will lead to increased use of the passageway, improving safety and usage of all the units.

To further improve access and usage, retail unit 3 includes a secured interior pass-through into the office space. This allows office works secured access directly into the retail unit and for both businesses to benefit from their close proximity. A similar arrangement is provided for retail unit 5 and the residential entrance. During hours when the retail units are closed, this access route will be shut.

Access to the passageway will be controlled and managed during evening hours. At night-time gates at the entrance from Town Hall Square and Market Way will be closed and access only provided to residential and retail owners. Opening and closing these gates will be managed by the residential concierge.

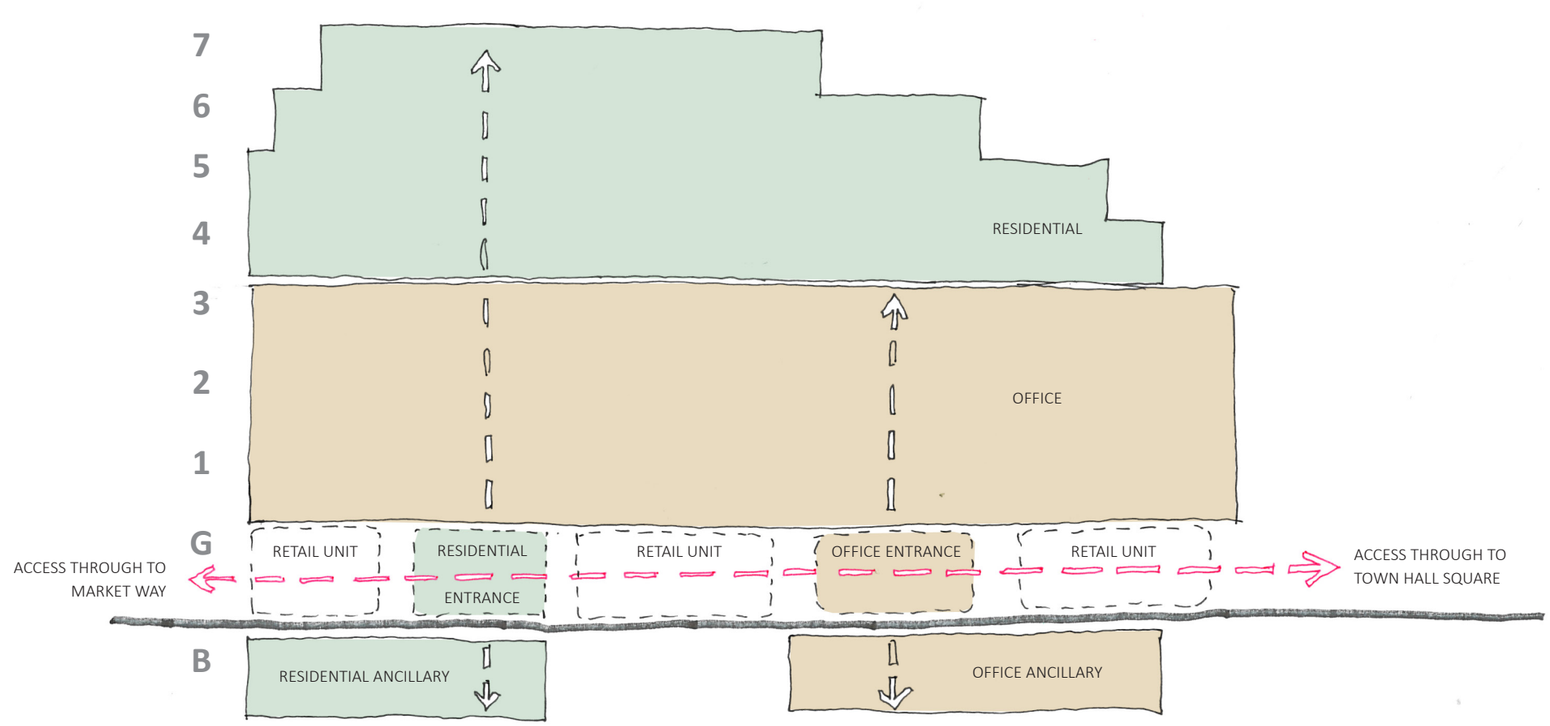


Vertical circulation is managed through the ground floor, and largely around the pedestrian passageway.

The office entrance at ground floor level allows access up to the first, second and third floors and down to the basement where ancillary space is provided (bike store, waste collection, showers, etc).

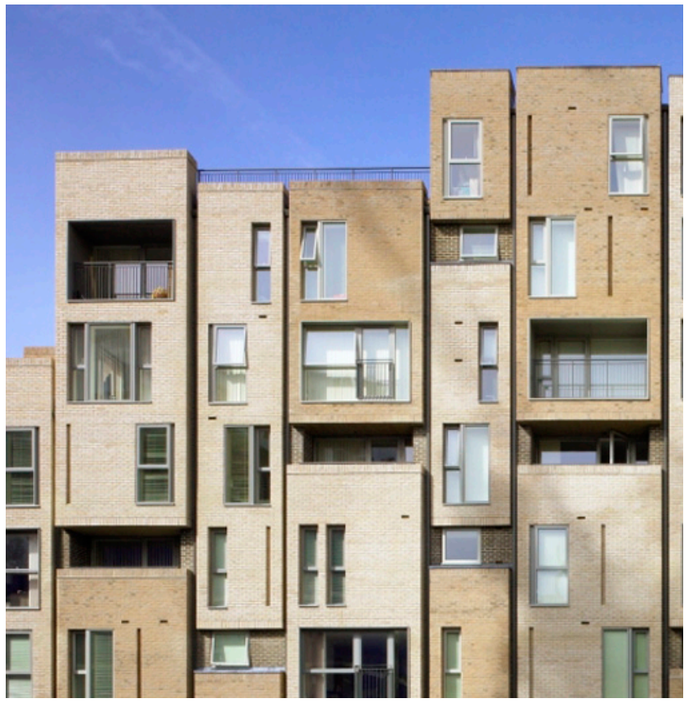
The residential entrance allows circulation to the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh floors and down into the basement where ancillary space provides for waste and bicycle storage.

Retail units are accessed from ground floor and some have additional basement accommodation.









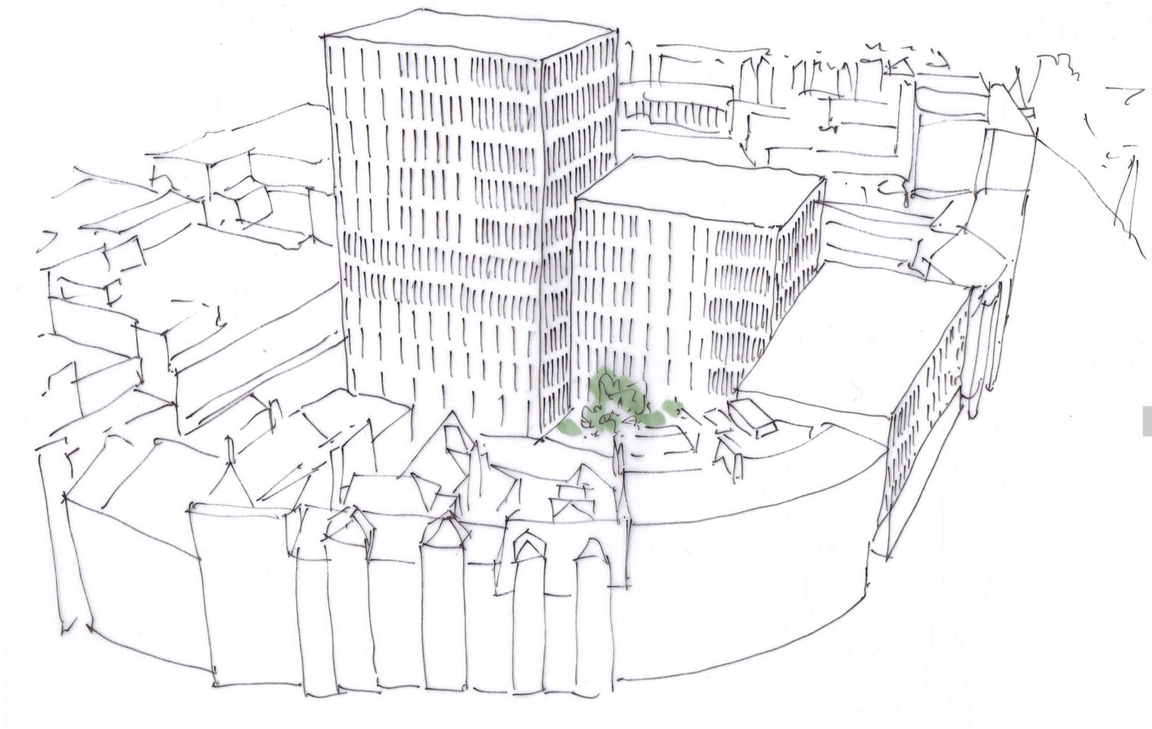
5.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

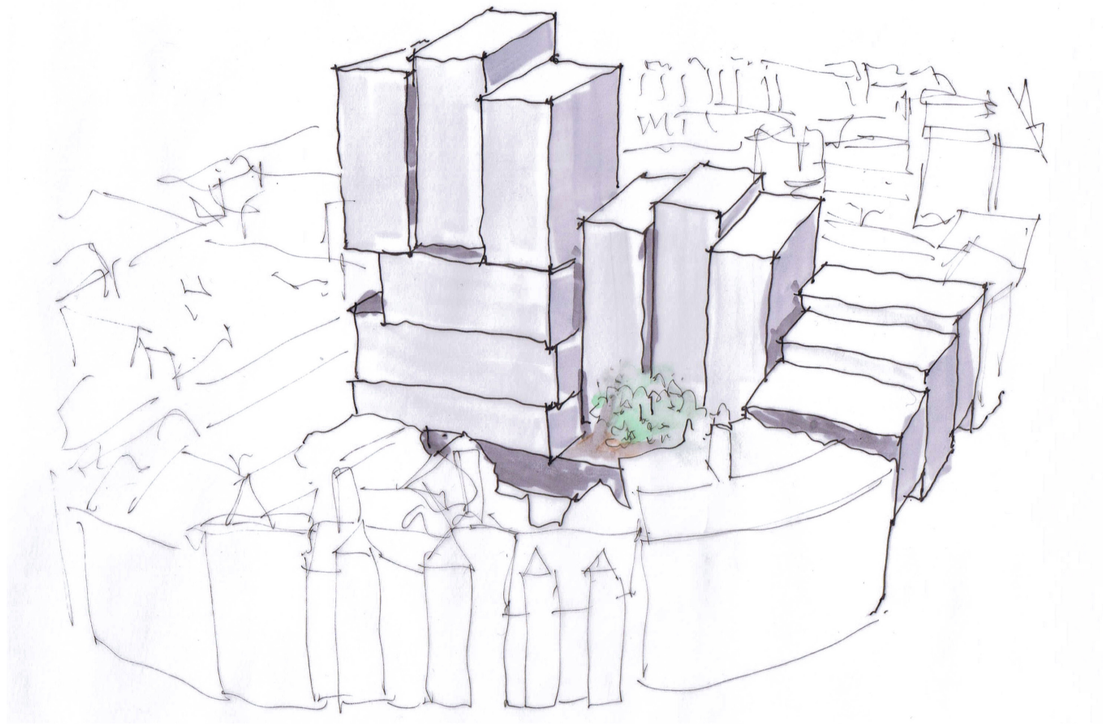
5.1 The Design Process

The Site Context and Reading's Town Centre Character

Reading town centre has a number of exceptionally crafted, relatively small buildings. Often in brick with stone detailing, these buildings have collected together to create a rich tapestry of elevations. Although neighbouring buildings vary in height and styling, they present a predictable pattern and urban grain to the town.

In considering how variety can lead to strong, legible patterns we looked to examples of buildings where sizes and volumes change but are linked by form, materiality and solid to void ratios.

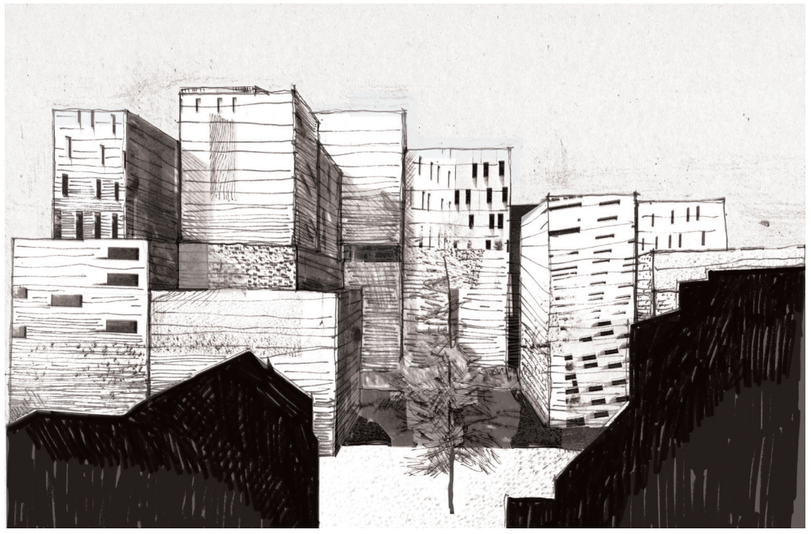


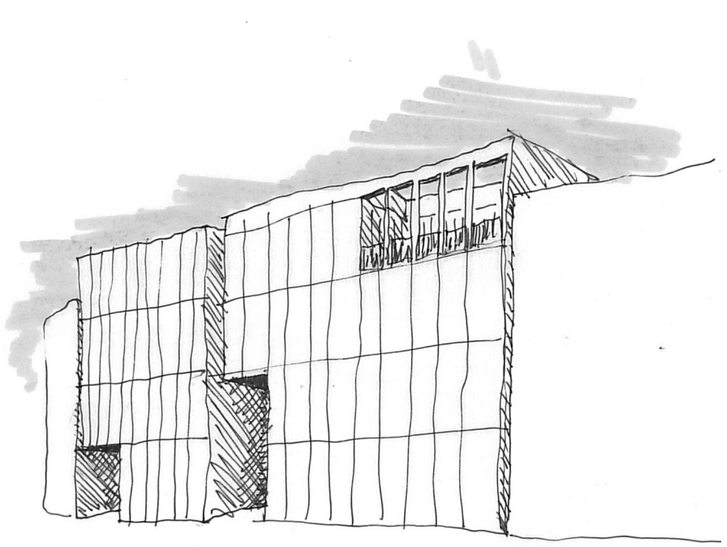


Reflecting the Local Vernacular Through Massing

Our very first designs considered the massing diminishing towards Town Hall Square. However initial large blocks gave way to smaller mass forms which related more closely in scale to the Listed buildings to Market Place than to the larger volumes of Friar Street. In breaking down the massing into smaller fragments the impact of the mass is reduced and the building is better joined into the townscape.



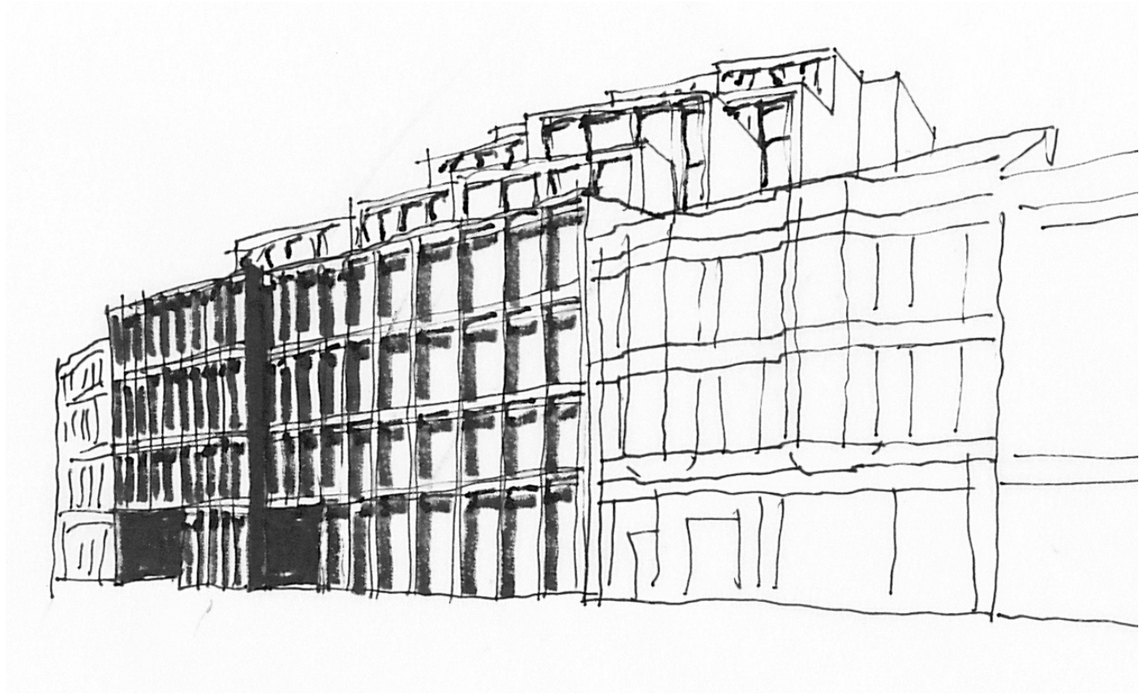




Applying a Materiality and Closer contextualisation

The new building faces a series of Listed buildings, both within the scheme and outside of it, across the redefined pedestrian access route. The relationship of these competing structures needs to be carefully managed and the new building not dominate the Listed properties. Our proposal sets the new building apart from the Listed buildings, providing space for the different structures to breathe. To the Town Hall Square elevation two façades emerge; each engaging with the buildings to either side.

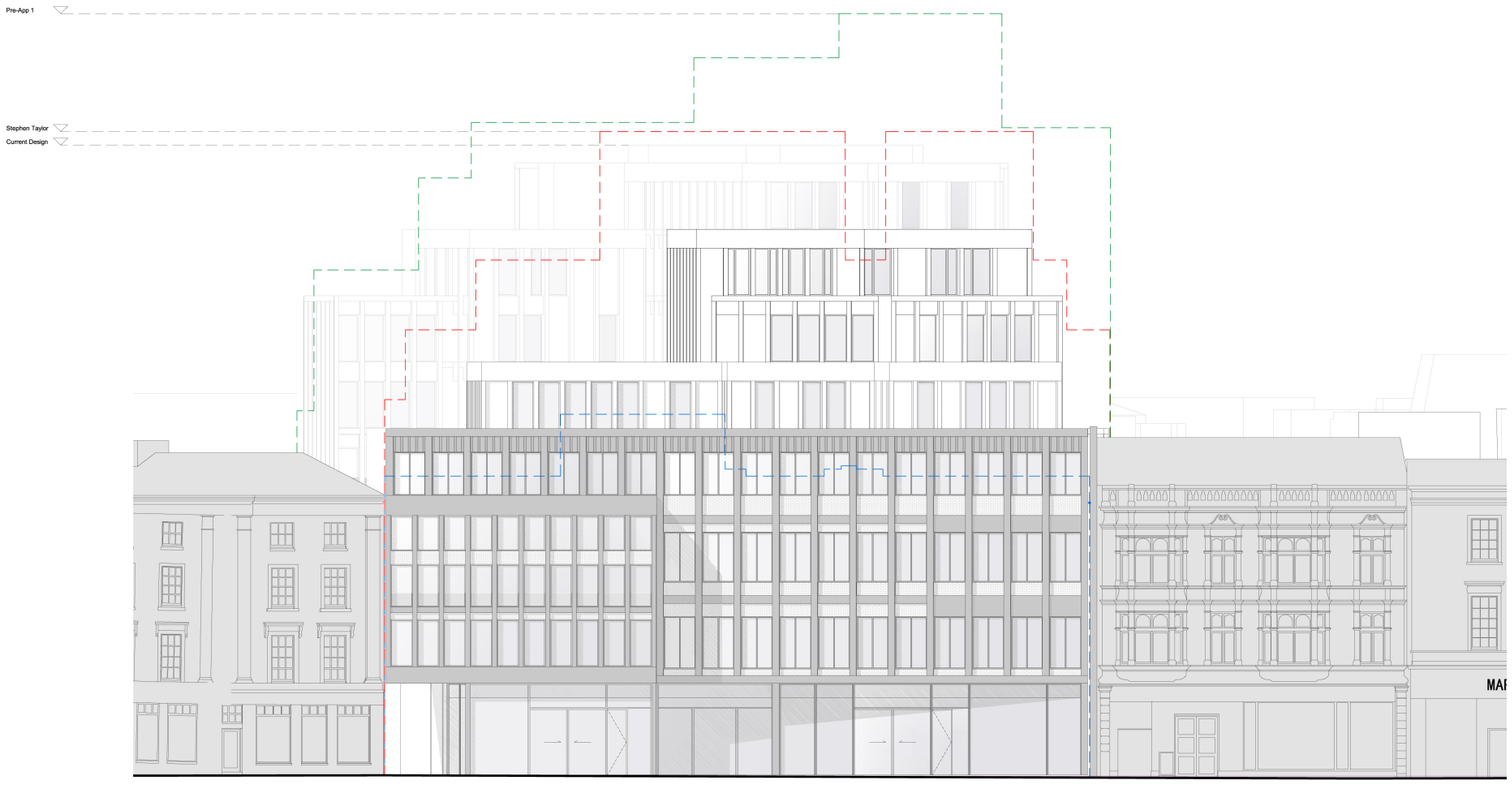




Working with Reading Borough Council and Historic England

Through a series of pre-application meetings, a design review panel and design workshops we have continued to refine and improve the building design alongside Reading Borough Council and Historic England. The result has led to a reduction in the massing of the Friar Street elevation, a calmer, more rhythmic façade treatment and a clear delineation between uses while retaining a design rigor across the building, tying it together strongly.

The higher level elevations which disappear from view behind the primary façade are linked through the same fenestration pattern to the rest of the development. A subtle change in window and brick ratio signify a change of use, from the highly glazed office floors to the more private, solid walled residential accommodation above.



5.2 Massing, Scale and Critical Townscape Views

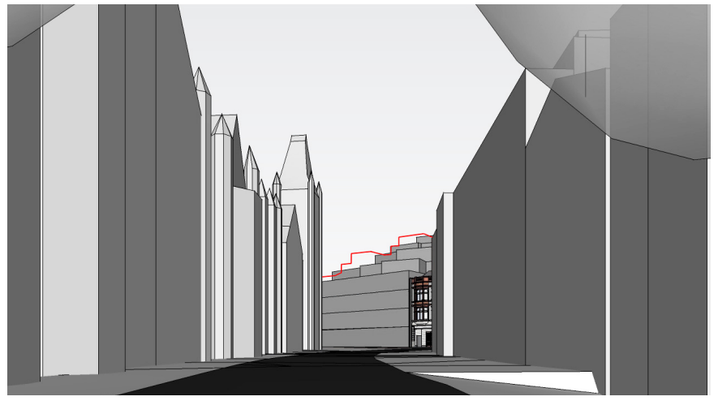
Throughout the design process a dialogue with RBC has shown that the height and apparent massing of the development plays a crucial role in determining the acceptability of the proposal. From our initial pre-application enquiry (shown in green to the left) we have reduced the height of our proposal by more than two storeys. Our proposal is now shorter than the previously consented scheme (shown in red).

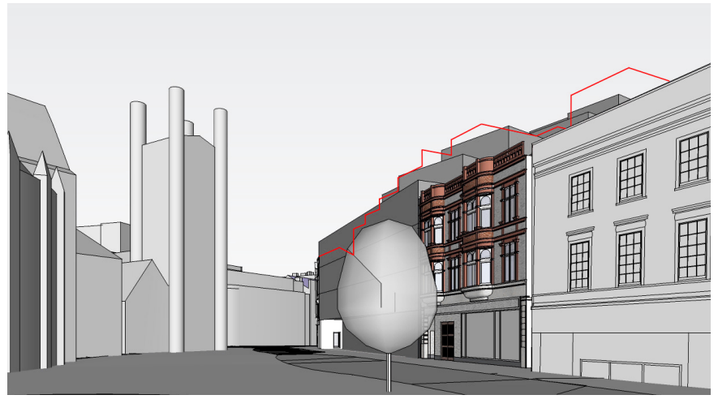


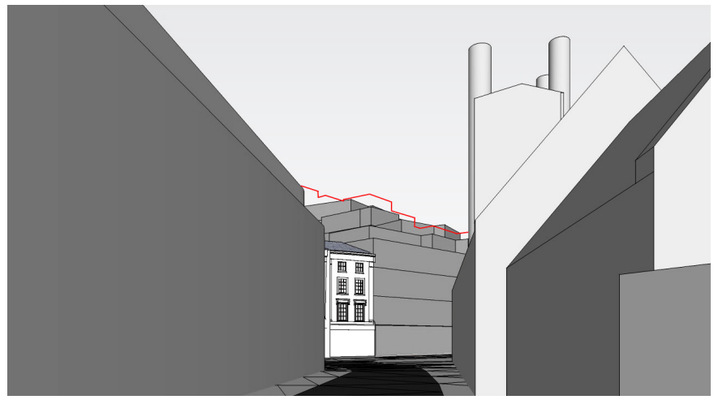
Agreed Critical Views for Massing / Townscape Impact Assessment

Six views have been agreed with RBC officers for a critical appraisal of the impact of the new proposal in terms of massing and scale in comparison to the permitted development which represents a benchmark for development. These views represent critical streetscape views from which the building can be seen- particularly the higher levels of the building (previous consented scheme shown in red):

1. The approach from Blagrave Street
2. The Corner of the Road on Friar Street
3. Approach along The Forbury
4. Market Place view 1
5. Market Place view 2
6. Broad Street view

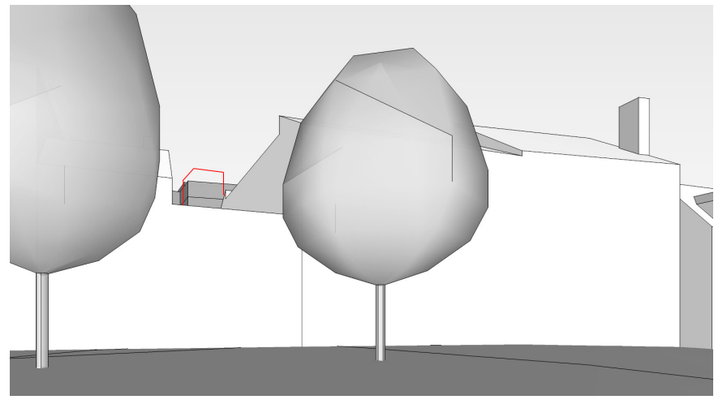
1.


2.


3.


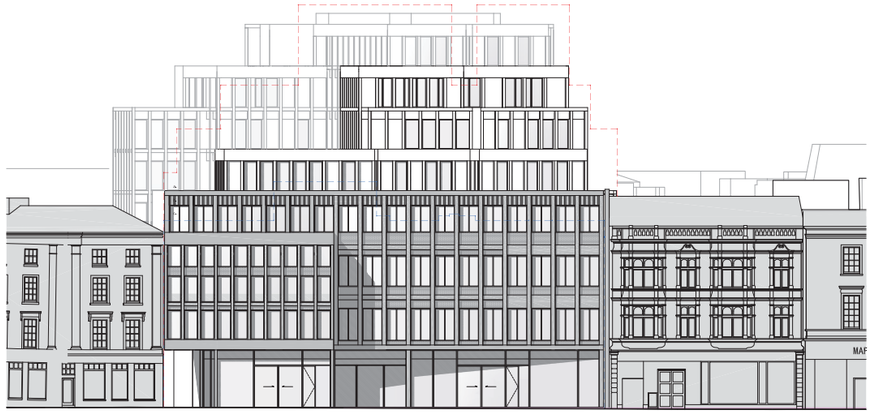
4.


5.


6.




2007 consented and implemented scheme



New proposal

5.3 Elevation and Fenestration

Comparative Massing and Elevation Treatment

The 2007 consented scheme sits as a critical benchmark of the redevelopment of the site. Through a detailed series of Pre-applications and stakeholder consultations the new proposal seeks to integrate itself into the street context and keep, as much as possible, within the envelope fo the building scale established by this previous consent.

The new design seeks to provide an exceptionally high-quality design for this important town centre location.

The new proposal is less tall than the consented scheme.

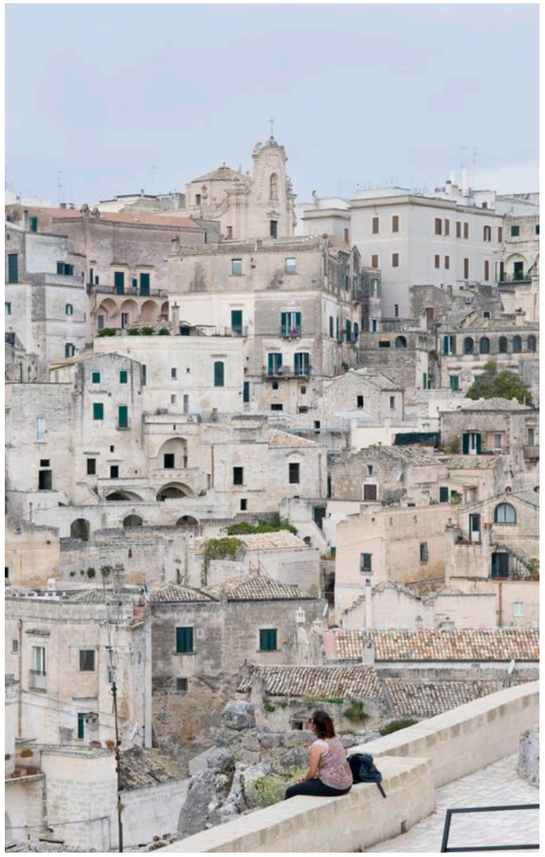
The design of the new proposal is that of a consistent building unlike the previously consented scheme.



Contextualising the Front Façade

Facing both St. Laurence Church and the old Town Hall buildings across Town Hall Square the proposal building sits within a complex and varied context. The façade sits between two very different neighbours – the Listed, white painted, stucco fronted townhouses of 23-26 Market Place and the remaining red and grey brick elevation of the old arcade building. In order to relate positively to both facades the elevation is broken down into two parts; one aligning with and referencing the smaller townhouses and one the larger facades further down Friar Street.

Across both parts of the façade neighbouring window sizes and traditional hierarchies are directly referenced. Where possible windows are aligned with neighbours. The detailed parapet of the old arcade building is referenced with a contemporary parapet design in the new proposal, helping to bed the design into the street-scene.









5.4 Precedents and Materials

Precedent images by others.

As explained previously, in thinking about the new building and its location a critical appreciation of the materials and their juxtaposition with neighbouring buildings has been crucial – the building sits within a context of extremely differing material palette with no particularly dominant material.

We have chosen to carefully reference the materials of the building opposite- St. Laurence Church; reflecting the sandstone and flintwork with a similar coloured new sandstone and a grey / beige multi-stock brick with enough variation in its colour provides similar interest to the comparative flintwork. These contrasting materials share a tonal range which keeps them together while adding textural warmth and depth.

In looking to use these materials in a contemporary, rhythmic style we hope to take advantage of the play of shadow throughout the day. Window-bay widths and sizes are reflected in the new proposal while detailing is kept crisp and minimal.



Building Materials

A mixed, handmade brick in beige, grey colouring

Sandstone

Grey painted metal window frames.

5.5 Process (Pre-Application Enquiries) and Consultation

Below are listed the timings and changes of each application or stakeholder consultation and key alterations.



2007 / 2008

Previously Consented Proposal

This nine-storey above ground scheme included retail, office, a large gym and residential uses was granted planning permission in 2007. Construction work began in 2008 and was halted later the same year.



September 2016

Pre-Application Enquiry 1

Our first proposal sought a restructured use with retail at ground floor and residential accommodation from first floor upwards.



March 2017

Pre-Application Enquiry 2

Our second proposal provided a series of alterations following RBC comments on Pre-Application 1:

- Revised the external fenestration design and proposed a red-brick facade.
- Reduction in massing including removal of a floor of accommodation.
- Courtyard redesigned.
- Apartment layout adjusted and window sizes increased.
- Additional retail unit included.

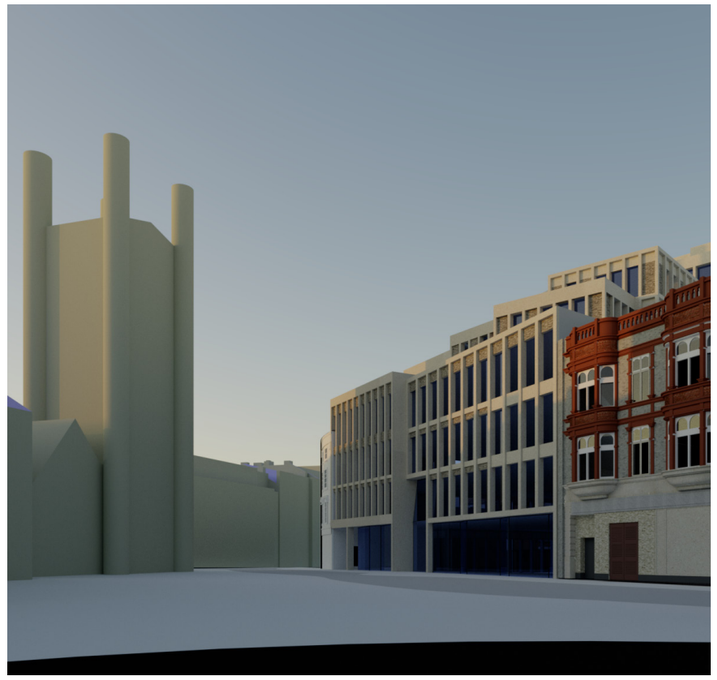


May- July 2017

Pre-Application Enquiry 2.1

Our third proposal was reviewed by Readings Design Panel and we held a public exhibition in Reading Town Centre, presenting the scheme to the public. It provided a series of alterations following RBC and HE comments on Pre-Application 2:

- Significant redesign to front elevation and massing following design workshop with Richard Peats (Historic England).
- Massing reduced, particularly from significant views.
- Material proposal adjusted to reflect materials of St. Laurence Church.
- Apartment layout adjusted, window sizes increased and additional terraced added.



January 2018

Pre-Application Enquiry 3

Our fourth proposal included a change in client requirements to include three floors of office space within the first to third floors.

- Office area included with entrance to Town Hall Square.
- Scheme allows for a 30% affordable housing offering (13 of 44 units).
- Massing and height reduced. Eighth floor omitted.
- Redesign to front elevation and massing to allow for change of use- while retaining rhythm established with RBC and HE previously.
- Upper levels more carefully terraced to reduce visible impact from key views.
- Additional retail unit included.



February 2018

Pre-Application Enquiry 3.1

Our fifth proposal adjusted the front facade following RBC and HE feedback.

- Massing and height of left-hand side of facade reduced to match neighbouring parapet.
- Window fenestration adjusted to better match neighbours.
- Window hierarchy adjusted to match more classic proportions.
- Detailing added to primary parapet to echo neighbouring building parapet.

2007 consented and implemented scheme



New proposal



5.6 Comparative Renders

Final Proposal as seen from Friar Street (previously consented scheme to left)

Viewed from the corner of Friar Street the proposal presents a consistent, calm and ordered elevation facing on to Town Hall Square. Immediately apparent is the close material relationship to St. Laurence Church and the hierarchy of fenestration across the façade. Window sizes reference the immediate neighbouring building to the right hand side. To the left hand edge, the new parapet matches the neighbouring building. At low level the shop frontages are continued along the restored, original building line.

In comparison to the previously consented scheme the new proposal is more ordered and calm. Across the façade the materiality is treated in a similar way rather than the hard horizontal-banding previously consented which does not show any windows at higher levels.

2007 consented and implemented scheme



New proposal



Final Proposal as seen from The Forbury (previously consented scheme to left)

With the proposal building viewed sitting between St. Laurence Church and the post office building the material selection for the proposed scheme beds into the location seamlessly. The neighbouring Listed buildings in white stucco are clearly referenced by the matching parapet line of the new building.

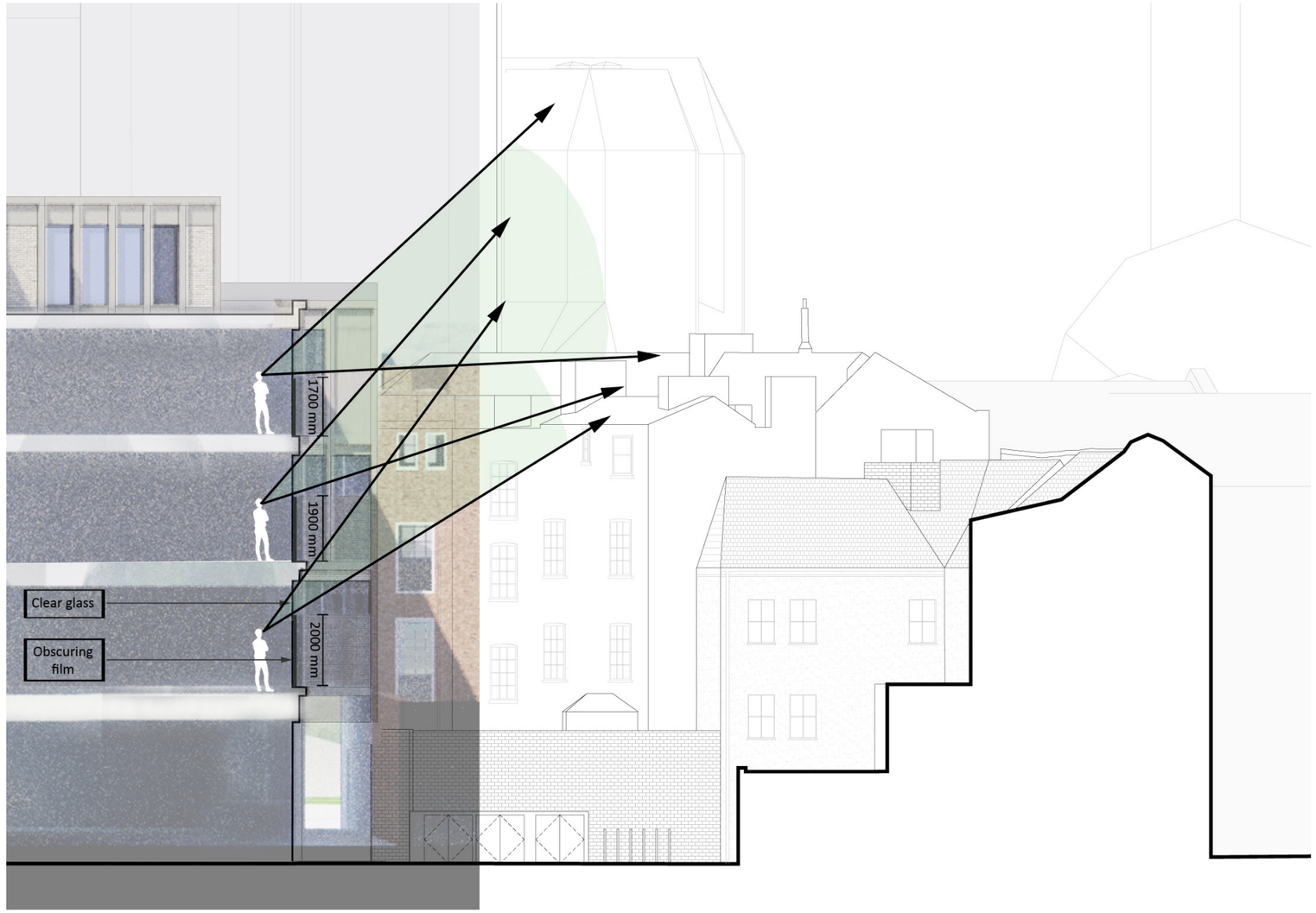
Higher levels of the scheme are progressively stepped away from Town Hall Square, limiting their impact on the Church and Town Hall building.

When compared to the previously consented scheme the consistency of materials and styling help the building read as a calm elevation rather than the busy, horizontally-banded design of the previous building.

5.7 Control of Overlooking and Dual-aspect apartments

Opposite the rears of the Listed buildings are three floors of office accommodation with floor to ceiling windows. These windows sit in close proximity to the existing buildings and to avoid any overlooking the office windows are partially obscured. To the first floor obscuring film is 2000mm tall from the floor level, on the second floor it is 1900mm tall and the third floor is 1700mm tall. These differing heights reflect the level of control necessary to protect the amenity of the residential apartments. The frosted film still allows light through but prevents views out of the offices while allowing clear views out at high level towards the sky.

To further improve the amenity of the neighbours, all Listed building apartments are dual aspect and enjoy views to the front towards market Place as well as to the rear.

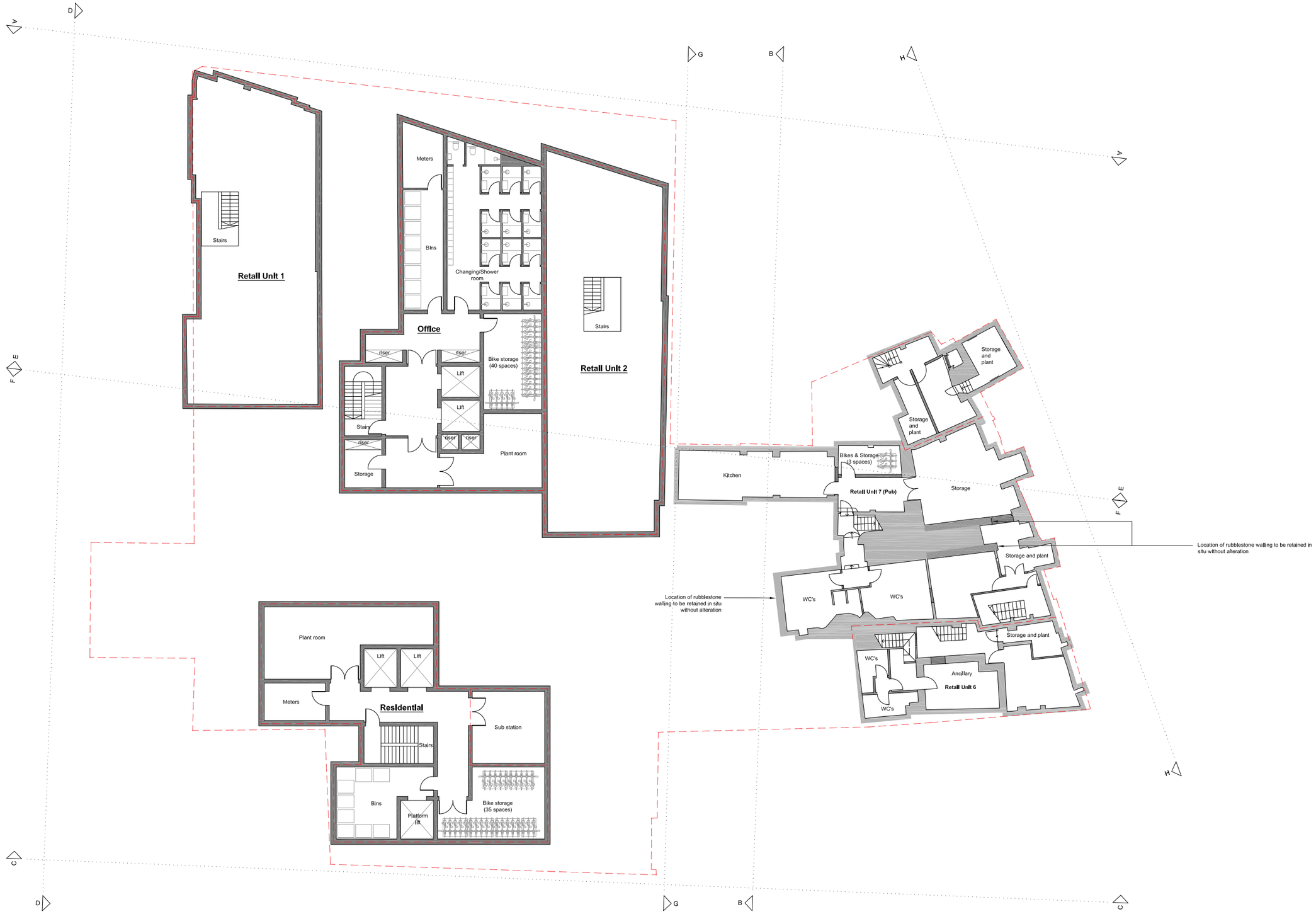


Sectional sketch through the office building and LIsted buildings showing controlled views.

6.0 PROPOSALS

6.1 Plans and Elevations

6.2 Verified Views



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Scale 1:125 @ A1, 1:250 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

REVISIONS:

A	19.01.2018	Layout amended
B	01.01.2018	Bin lift added

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Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale: 1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3

Drawn by: ER

Drawing Title: Basement Floor Plan

Project No.: RD_0899

Date: FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by: ID

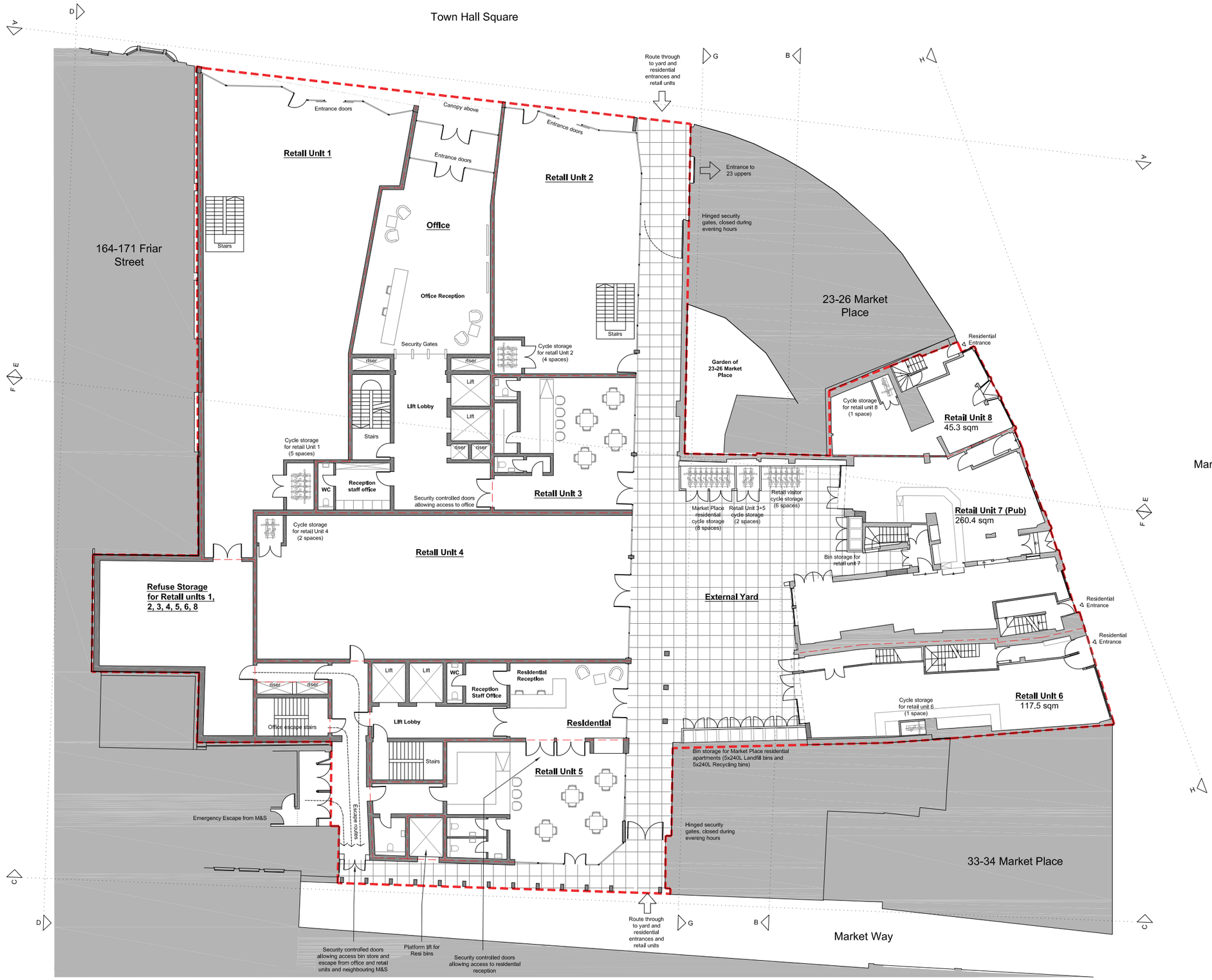
Drawing No.: P.101

Rev: B

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Scale 1:125 @ A1, 1:250 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

REVISIONS:

A	19.01.2018	Layout amended
B	01.02.2018	Office entrance enlarged, general amendments
C	05.02.2018	Unit 2 and 3 amended

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Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited		Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1	
Scale: 1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3	Drawn by: ER	Drawing Title: Ground Floor Plan	
Project No.: RD_0899	Date: FEBRUARY 2018	Checked by: ID	Drawing No.: P.102 Rev: C

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Friar Street

Market Place

OFFICE SPACE

164-171 Friar Street

23-26 Market Place

33-34 Market Place

Terrace at first floor level, void above

Terrace at first floor level, void above

Fixed, frosted view obscuring film

Fixed, angled louvres to block direct views out

Lift Lobby

riser

Lift

Stairs

Storage

WC

Office escape stairs

Apartment 38
1b,2p / 56.3 sqm

Apartment 37
2b,4p / 100.8 sqm

Apartment 36
1b,1p / 49.4 sqm

A B C D E F G H

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Scale 1:125 @ A1, 1:250 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

KEY NOTES:

Affordable housing units

REVISIONS:

A	15.11.2017	Office NIA and split into three units shown
B	19.01.2018	Layout amended
C	01.02.2018	Two units amalgamated
D	02.02.2018	Unit 37 adjusted

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Client
Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project
Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale
1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3

Drawn by
ER

Drawing Title
First Floor Plan

Project No.
RD_0899

Date
FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by
ID

Drawing No.
P.103

Rev
D

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Friar Street

164-171 Friar Street

OFFICE SPACE

23-26 Market Place

Apartment 41
2b.4p / 83,4 sqm

Apartment 40
3b.5p / 101,7 sqm

Apartment 39
1b.1p / 49,3 sqm

33-34 Market Place

Market Place

Market Way

Fixed, frosted view obscuring film

riser
Lift
Lift
Lift Lobby
Stairs
riser
riser
Storage
WC
WC
WC
WC
WC
riser
riser

riser
Lift
Lift
Office escape stairs
Lift Lobby
Stairs

A D E F G B H C

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Scale 1:125 @ A1, 1:250 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

KEY NOTES:

Affordable housing units

REVISIONS:

A	19.01.2018	Layout amended
B	01.02.2018	Two units amalgamated

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N

Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale: 1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3

Drawn by: ER

Drawing Title: Second Floor Plan

Project No.: RD_0899

Date: FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by: ID

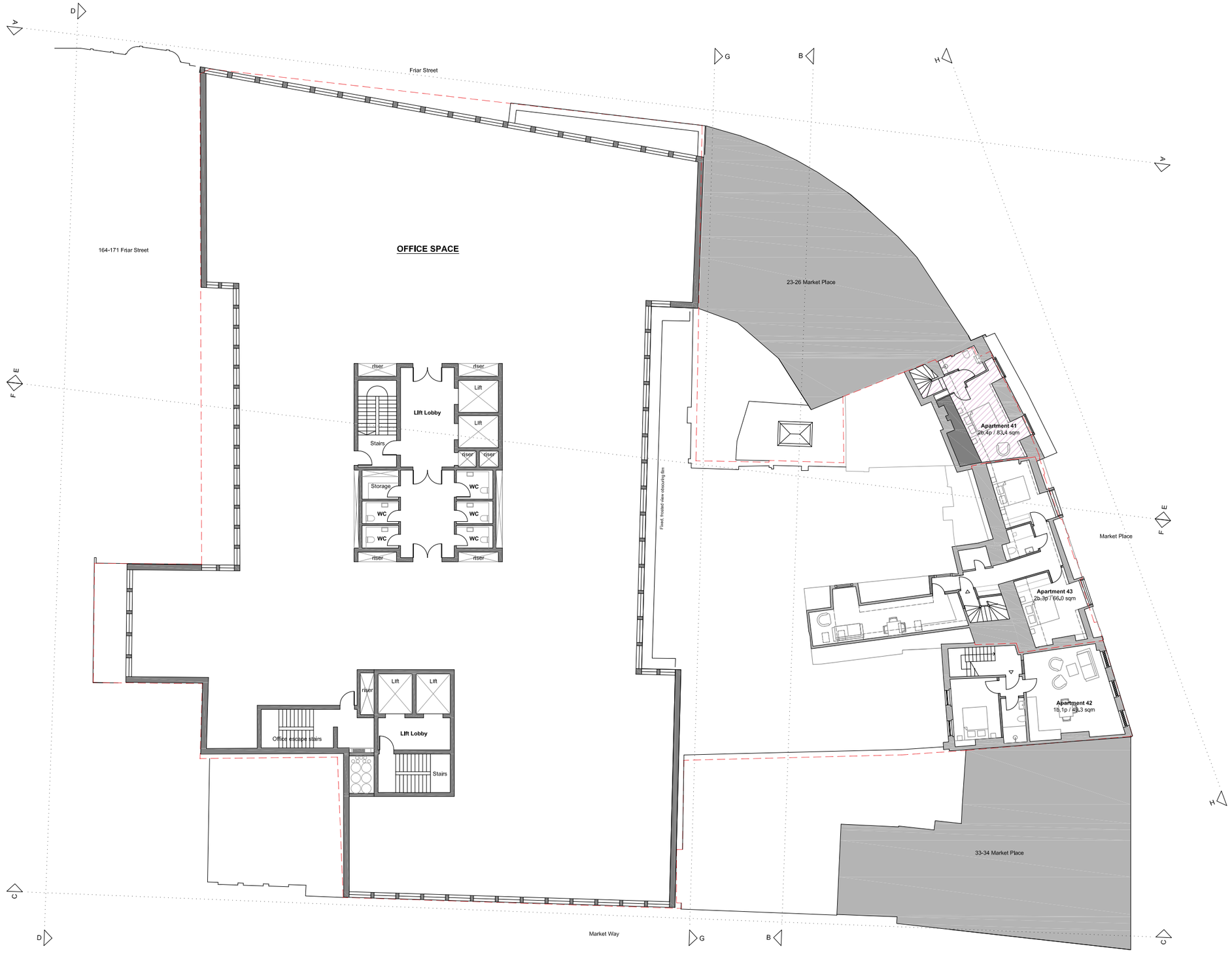
Drawing No.: P.104

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Scale 1:125 @ A1, 1:250 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

KEY NOTES:

Affordable housing units

REVISIONS:

A	19.01.2018	Layout amended
B	01.02.2018	Apartment numbering adjusted

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Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale: 1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3

Drawn by: ER

Drawing Title: Third Floor Plan

Project No.: RD_0899

Date: FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by: ID

Drawing No.: P.105

Rev: B

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Scale 1:125 @ A1, 1:250 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

KEY NOTES:

Affordable housing units

REVISIONS:

A	19.01.2018	Layout amended
B	14.02.2018	Affordable Units adjusted

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Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited			Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1
Scale: 1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3	Drawn by: ER		Drawing Title: Fourth Floor Plan and Market Place Roof Plan
Project No.: RD_0899	Date: FEBRUARY 2018	Checked by: ID	Drawing No.: P.106 Rev: B

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Scale 1:125 @ A1, 1:250 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

KEY NOTES:

Affordable housing units

REVISIONS:

A	19.01.2018	Layout amended
B	14.02.2018	Affordable Units adjusted

RODIĆ DAVIDSON ARCHITECTS is the trading name of bdAr ltd

Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited			Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1
Scale: 1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3	Drawn by: ER		Drawing Title: Fifth Floor Plan
Project No.: RD_0899	Date: FEBRUARY 2018	Checked by: ID	Drawing No.: P.107 Rev: B

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Scale 1:125 @ A1, 1:250 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

KEY NOTES:

Affordable housing units

REVISIONS:

A	19.01.2018	Layout amended
B	02.02.2018	Layout adjusted
C	07.02.2018	Windows adjusted
D	14.02.2018	Affordable Units adjusted

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Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale: 1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3

Drawn by: ER

Drawing Title: Sixth Floor Plan

Project No.: RD_0899

Date: FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by: ID

Drawing No.: P.108

Rev: D

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Scale 1:125 @ A1, 1:250 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

REVISIONS:

A	19.01.2018	Layout amended
B	08.02.2018	Unit 32 and 33 slight adjustments

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Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale: 1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3

Drawn by: ER

Drawing Title: Seventh Floor Plan

Project No.: RD_0899

Date: FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by: ID

Drawing No.: P.109

Rev: B

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DO NOT SCALE - ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE

Scale 1:125 @ A1, 1:250 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

REVISIONS:

A	19.01.2018	Layout amended
B	19.02.2018	PV and mansafe added

RODIĆ DAVIDSON ARCHITECTS is the trading name of bdAr ltd

Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited			Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1
Scale: 1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3	Drawn by: ER		Drawing Title: Roof Plan
Project No.: RD_0899	Date: FEBRUARY 2018	Checked by: ID	Drawing No.: P.110 Rev: B

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Key notes:

a. Reconstituted stone cladding

b. Brickwork

c. Windows

d. Back-painted glass panels

KEY:

Previously Approved Scheme from 2007

Existing Building

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Scale 1:100 @ A1, 1:200 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

REVISIONS:

A	01.08.2016	Parapet adjustment and texture/fenestration change
B	27.10.2017	Fenestration adjusted
C	01.02.2018	Design adjusted

RODIĆ DAVIDSON ARCHITECTS is the trading name of bdAr ltd

Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited			Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1
Scale: 1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3	Drawn by: ER		Drawing Title: Section AA (Friar Street Elevation)
Project No.: RD_0899	Date: FEBRUARY 2018	Checked by: ID	Drawing No.: P.301 — Rev: C

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Key notes:

a. Reconstituted stone cladding

b. Brickwork

c. Windows

d. Fixed , frosted view - obscuring film

KEY:

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Existing Building

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DO NOT SCALE - ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE

Scale 1:100 @ A1, 1:200 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

REVISIONS:

A	08.08.2016	Windows addition
B	06.02.2017	Fenestration and Height Revision
C	27.10.2017	Fenestration adjusted

RODIĆ DAVIDSON ARCHITECTS is the trading name of bdAr ltd

Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited		Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1	
Scale: 1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3	Drawn by: ER	Drawing Title: Section BB (Section through 23-26 and 33-34 Market Place)	
Project No.: RD_0899	Date: FEBRUARY 2018	Checked by: ID	Drawing No.: P.302 Rev: B

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Key notes:

a. Reconstituted stone cladding

b. Brickwork

c. Windows

d. Fixed , frosted view - obscuring film

e. Back painted glass

KEY:

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Existing Building

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DO NOT SCALE - ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE

Scale 1:100 @ A1, 1:200 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

REVISIONS:

A	27.04.2017	Windows on opposite building on Market Way indicated

RODIĆ DAVIDSON ARCHITECTS is the trading name of bdAr ltd

Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale: 1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3

Drawn by: ER

Drawing Title: Section CC (Market Way Elevation)

Project No.: RD_0899

Date: FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by: ID

Drawing No.: P.303

Rev: A

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Key notes:

a. Reconstituted stone cladding

b. Brickwork

c. Windows

KEY:

Previously Approved Scheme from 2007

Existing Building

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Scale 1:100 @ A1, 1:200 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

REVISIONS:

A	27.10.2017	Fenestration adjusted

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Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale: 1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3

Drawn by: ER

Drawing Title: Section DD (Section through M&S)

Project No.: RD_0899

Date: FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by: ID

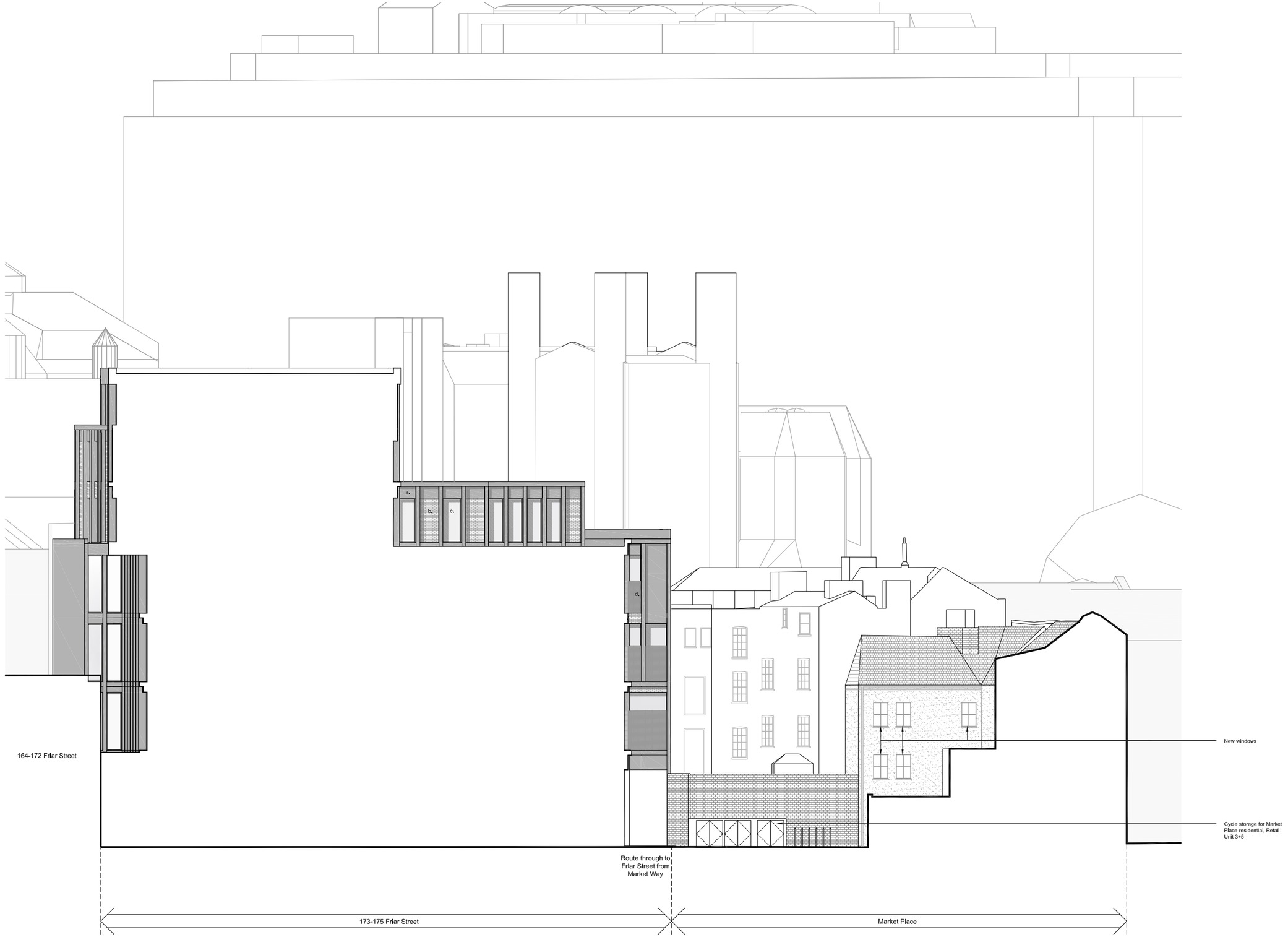
Drawing No.: P.304

Rev: /

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Key notes:

a. Reconstituted stone cladding

b. Brickwork

c. Windows

d. Fixed , frosted view - obscuring film

KEY:

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Scale 1:100 @ A1, 1:200 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

REVISIONS:

A 27.10.2017 Fenestration adjusted

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Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale: 1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3

Drawn by: ER

Drawing Title: Section EE (Cross Section Facing St. Laurence)

Project No.: RD_0899

Date: FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by: ID

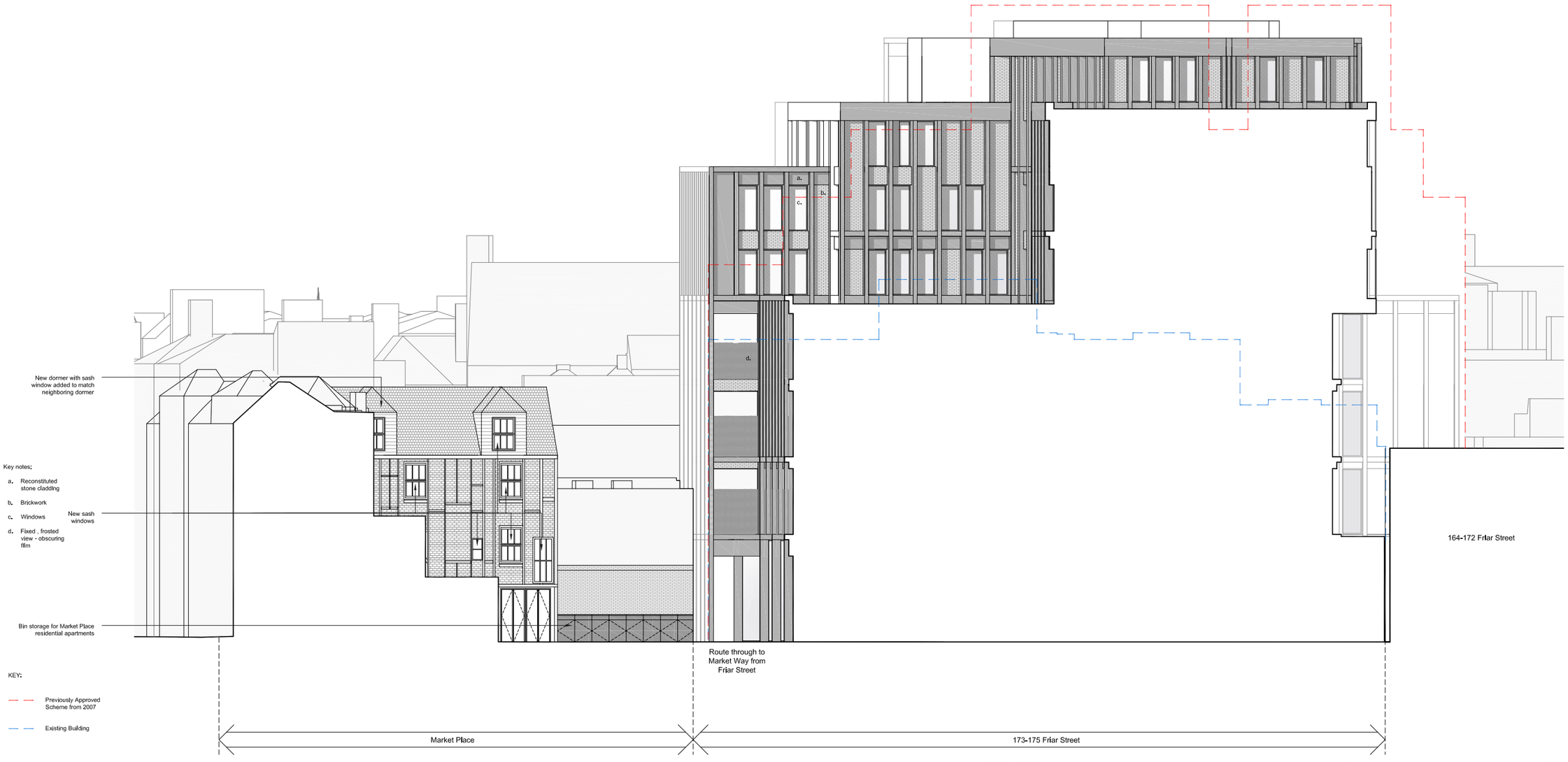
Drawing No.: P.305

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Key notes:

a. Reconstituted stone cladding

b. Brickwork

c. Windows

d. Fixed , frosted view - obscuring film

KEY:

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Scale 1:100 @ A1, 1:200 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

REVISIONS:

A 27.10.2017 Fenestration adjusted

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Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale: 1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3

Drawn by: ER

Drawing Title: Section FF (Cross Section Facing South)

Project No.: RD_0899

Date: FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by: ID

Drawing No.: P.306

Rev: /

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KEY:

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Scale 1:100 @ A1, 1:200 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

REVISIONS:

RODIĆ DAVIDSON ARCHITECTS is the trading name of bdAr ltd

Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited		Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1	
Scale: 1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3	Drawn by: ER	Drawing Title: Section GG (Rear Elevation of Market Place)	
Project No.: RD_0899	Date: FEBRUARY 2018	Checked by: ID	Drawing No.: P.307 / Rev: /

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Key notes:

a. Reconstituted stone cladding

b. Brickwork

c. Windows

KEY:

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Scale 1:100 @ A1, 1:200 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

REVISIONS:

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Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale: 1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3

Drawn by: ER

Drawing Title: Section HH (Market Place Elevation)

Project No.: RD_0899

Date: FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by: ID

Drawing No.: P.308

Rev: /

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7.0 ACCESS / SAFETY

7.1 Access

Residential: new-build

- Level access is provided throughout the new build property on Friar Street. All apartments are served by a pair of lifts, with level thresholds into dwellings on each floor and level thresholds at the entrance into the building from the yard.
- All apartments have bathrooms which are either disabled accessible or which can be converted to suit disabled access.

Residential: Listed Buildings

- Due to the nature of the Listed buildings no lift access is provided. All apartments are accessed from communal stair cores. Several of these include historically important staircases which are retained. Apartment thresholds are level.
- Most apartments have bathrooms which are disabled accessible.

Retail units: new-build

- Units 1- 5 have level thresholds into the units and wide, accessible doors.
- Units are not planned but all have capacity for disabled accessible WCs on the ground floor.
- Units 1- 2 have basement floors accessible only by staircase, through both can be configured with lift access to the basement if required.

Retail units: Listed building

- Units 6- 8 have level thresholds into the units and wide, accessible doors.
- Units 6 and 7 have WCs at basement level only.

Office unit: new-build

- Level access and flush thresholds are provided throughout the development. Two lifts provide access to all floors.
- All floors have disabled access WCs.
- All doors are wide and accessible.

7.2 Crime Prevention

- Crime Prevention has been discussed with Anne Chalmers, Crime Prevention & Design Advisor, Berkshire and her comments have been incorporated.

- Critical to the safety of users of the building and members of the public will be the pedestrian route through the site. It was agreed that closing the yard during evening hours was advisable (hours to be confirmed) and that the on-site concierge should be responsible for ensuring gates are closed and locked at night and reopened in the morning. The owner of the residential premises will take responsibility for maintaining these gates at all times. Residential residents and retail unit owners will have fob access to the yard.

- The yard will be lit at night so that passive surveillance can happen naturally during nigh-time hours.

- At the gate entrances retail units are highly glazed to allow clear views of the gates from several angles on approach towards them.

- Within the development residential entrances are ‘air-locked’ with double sets of doors to ensure improved security for residents. On each floor of the residential building doors to corridors will be access controlled with fob or card access for specific residents only.

7.3 Refuse Storage

Residential: new-build

- All residential refuse and recycling is stored at basement level within the building.
- A management team will ensure bins are brought to street level and the pavement on Market Place for collection via a dedicated bin lift.

Residential: Listed Buildings

- All residential refuse and recycling is stored at ground level within the rear yard.
- A management team will ensure bins are brought to the pavement on Market Place for collection.

Retail units: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8

- Units share a dedicated refuse storage space within the Friar Street building.
- A management team will ensure bins are brought to the pavement on Market Place for collection.

Retail units 7

- Unit 7 refuse and recycling is stored at ground level within the rear yard.
- Unit 7 occupier will ensure bins are brought to the pavement on Market Place for collection.

Office unit: new-build

- All office refuse and recycling is stored at basement level within the building.
- A management team will ensure bins are brought to street level and the pavement on Market Place for collection via a dedicated bin lift.

7.4 Cycle Parking Arrangements

Residential: new-build

- Residents have 35 dedicated cycle spaces within a basement bike storage space. The space is accessible by lift and stairs

Residential: Listed Buildings

- Residents have 8 dedicated cycle spaces within an enclosure stored at ground level within the rear yard.

Retail units: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8

- Have bicycle storage space at ground floor level within the units for staff.

Retail units: 3 and 5

- Have 2 dedicated cycle spaces within an enclosure stored at ground level within the rear yard.

Retail visitors

- Are provided with 6 bicycle hoops within the rear yard.

Office unit: new-build

- Office users have 40 dedicated cycle spaces within a basement bike storage space. The space is accessible by lift and stairs