



 BROAD STREET MALL, READING
QUEENS WALK PUBLIC REALM
DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
JULY 2017

SECTION 1

Introduction:

This Design and Access statement accompanies a Planning Application for the enhancement of Queens Walk in Reading.

The application covers proposed works to include:

- New external seating areas to retail units
- New retractable awnings to existing elevation



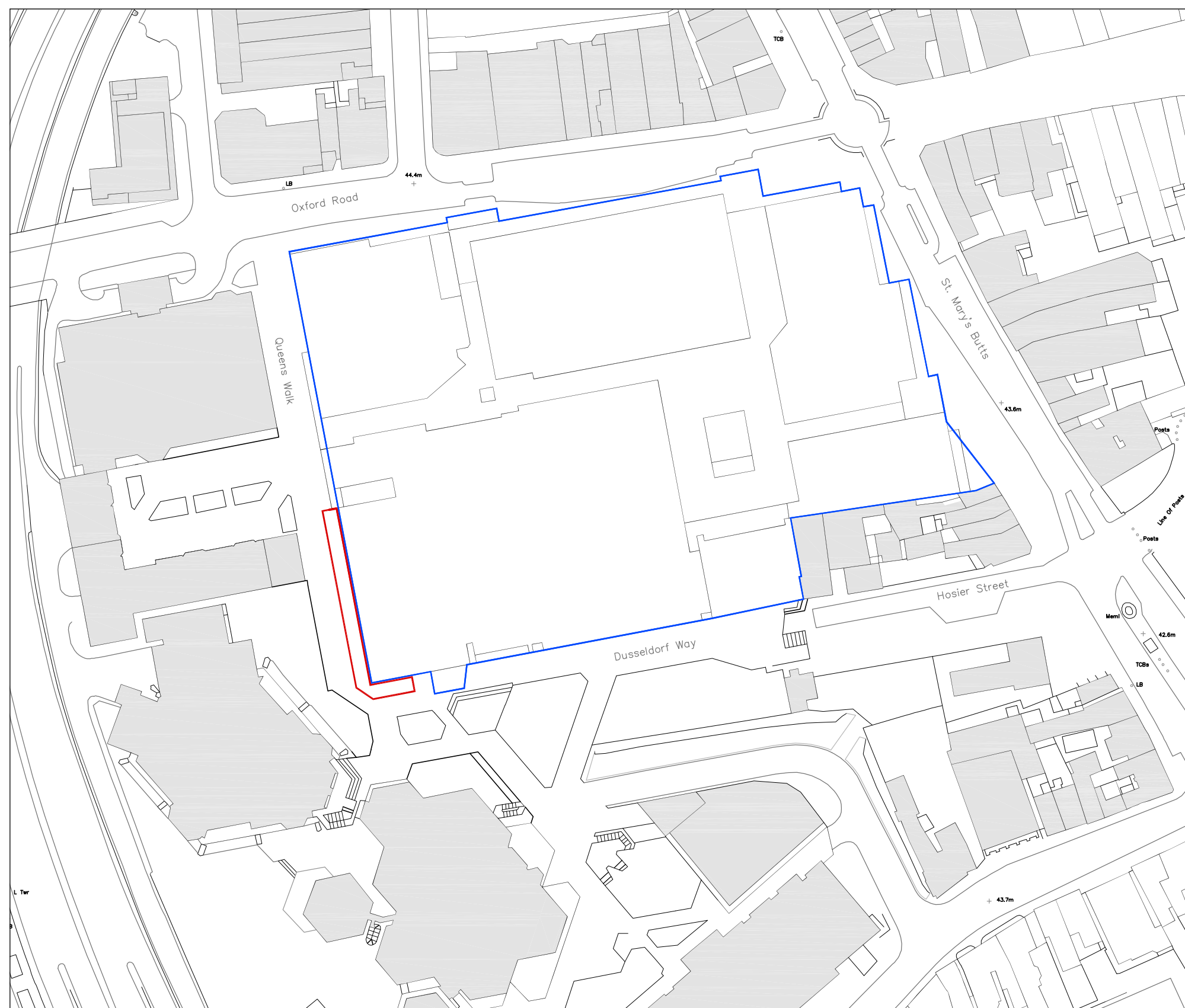
Existing Site: Location Plan

The site is located on Queens Walk, adjacent to Broad Street Mall, Reading RG1 7QE.

Queens Walk is a pedestrianised area which links Oxford road, a key arterial route, to Dusseldorf Way at the South of Broad Street Mall.

There are a number of established restaurant and retail units which sit at the Southern edge of Queens Walk and form part of Broad Street Mall. The main reception for the Fountain House office block is also situated at this point.

On the Western edge of Queens Walk are number of varied tenants, including the Pentahotel, Hexagon Theatre and recently completed Student Residential complex.



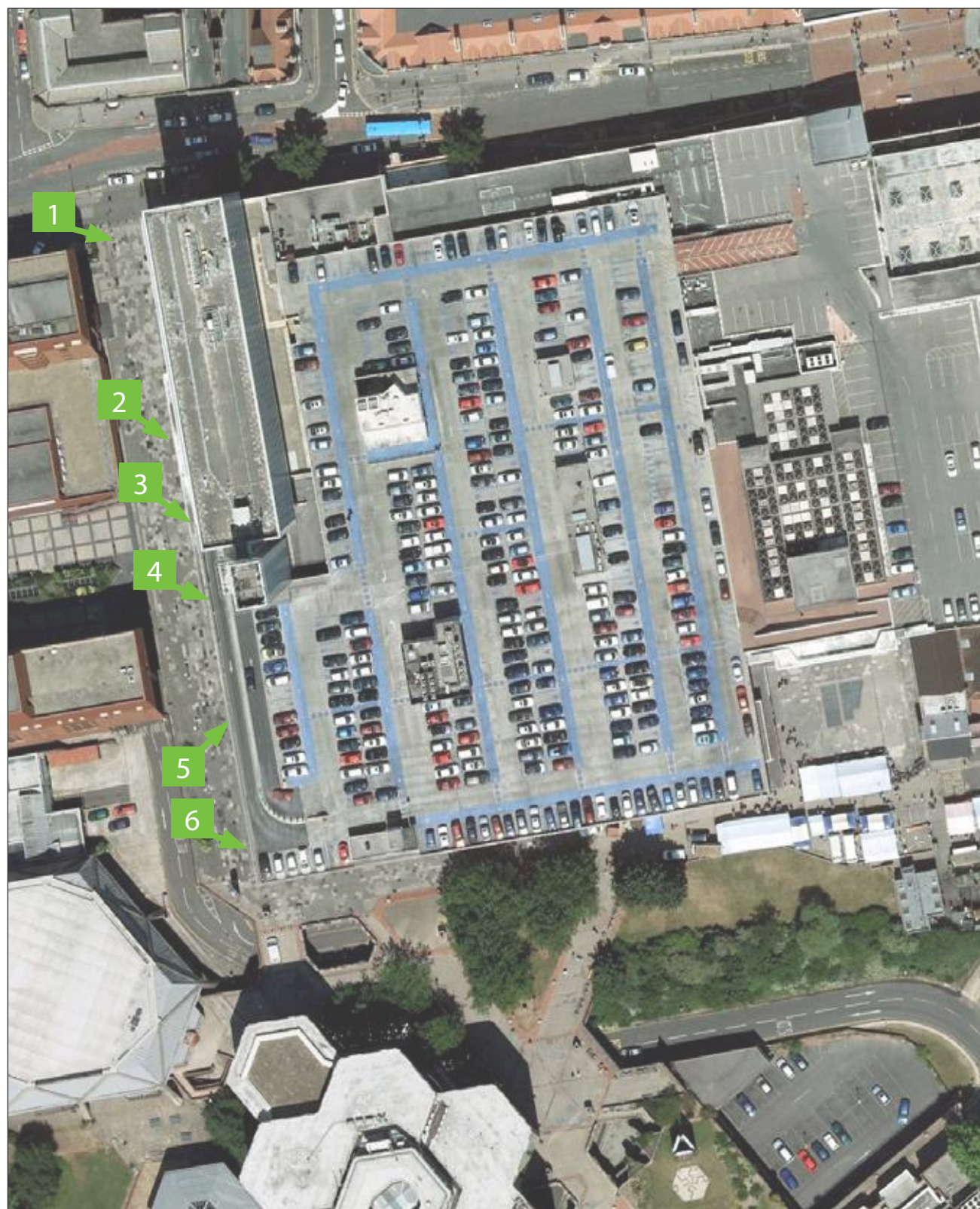
Planning Application Boundary



Extent of Applicant Ownership



Existing Site: Photographs



Existing Site Overview - Photograph Key Plan



Existing Site View - Queens Walk (Looking East)



Existing Site View - Queens Walk (South-East)

Existing Site: Photographs



Existing Site View - Queens Walk (South-East)



Existing Site View - Queens Walk (North-East)



Existing Site View - Queens Walk (East)



Existing Site View - Queens Walk (East)

Review of Existing Site Conditions

External Finishes

The external finishes along Queens Walk show significant signs of deterioration and damage, with evidence of multiple small-scale repair works visible throughout.

Large areas of paving slabs have become cracked and are gradually becoming trip hazards, particularly in the immediate proximity of the retail units at the South of Queens Walk.

Whilst the entire area of Queens Walk is in need of attention, the areas transitioning into tenant's units / sites are particularly vulnerable at present.

Street Furniture

The street furniture along Queens Walk is outdated and, in many places, damaged. Several of the refuse bins no longer appear fit for purpose and many of the lamp posts are not fully functional.

This has led to the area being seen as somewhat undesirable, affecting trade of the adjacent retail units and a loss in visibility/identity for Fountain House.

Shopfronts

Many of the existing shopfronts which form the Eastern elevation of Broad Street Mall, along Queens Walk, are dated and undesirable to incoming tenants.

The variation of finishes, signage zones and quality of install/refurbishment is not in keeping with the rest of Broad Street Mall, nor the ambitions of its owners.

Streetscape

The overall streetscape along Queens Walk is drab and dated, creating an undesirable area during both daylight and evening hours. Due to this, it is the least frequently used edge of Broad Street Mall.

Queens Walk has potential to be a key linkway between Oxford Road and the numerous evolving developments along Queens Walk.

With the recently completed Student Residential scheme and newly refurbished Fountain House, there is an opportunity to further enhance this area, creating a lively and high-quality space which could adequately offer the standard of city centre public realm that this area deserves.



Urban Analysis: Street Width

A street width was undertaken to identify the character and potential of the spaces along Queens Walk.

The primary street width along Queens Walk exceeds 12 metres. This offers sufficient space to allow daylight to fully enter the space throughout the day. Given the scale of the buildings on either edge, it also offers a suitable scale for its urban location.

The width of the road is also partially governed by the requirement for emergency vehicle traffic to travel along Queens Walk in order to access both the existing tenant buildings, but also Dusseldorf Way to the South.

Due to the ample width of the Queens Walk there is potential to offer a series of enhancements to the existing public realm whilst retaining both the scale and usage requirements for the area.



SECTION 2

Proposal: Creating a Vibrant Public Space

The key theme for the proposal is to create a vibrant, contemporary and high quality series of spaces along Queens Walk. Revitalising the area to make it an inviting and desirable public space at all hours of the day and night.

The proposal will consist of several key components:

Creation of outdoor seating areas:

The creation of outdoor seating adjacent to the retail unit will activate Queens Walk, creating a lively and vibrant environment. This will draw footfall from Oxford Road and Dusseldorf Way, increasing the activity of the area. In order to maintain accessibility for emergency vehicles and retain the urban scale of the scale, the seating area will be limited to 4.5m from the shopfront.

Installation of retractable awnings to shopfronts:

The installation of retractable awnings will support the creation of an outdoor seating area along Queens Walk. As well as offering shading/shelter, the awnings will further activate the retail frontages and draw attention to the space. In order to retain quality and consistency, the awnings will be uniform in colour, with tenant branding to the edge only.



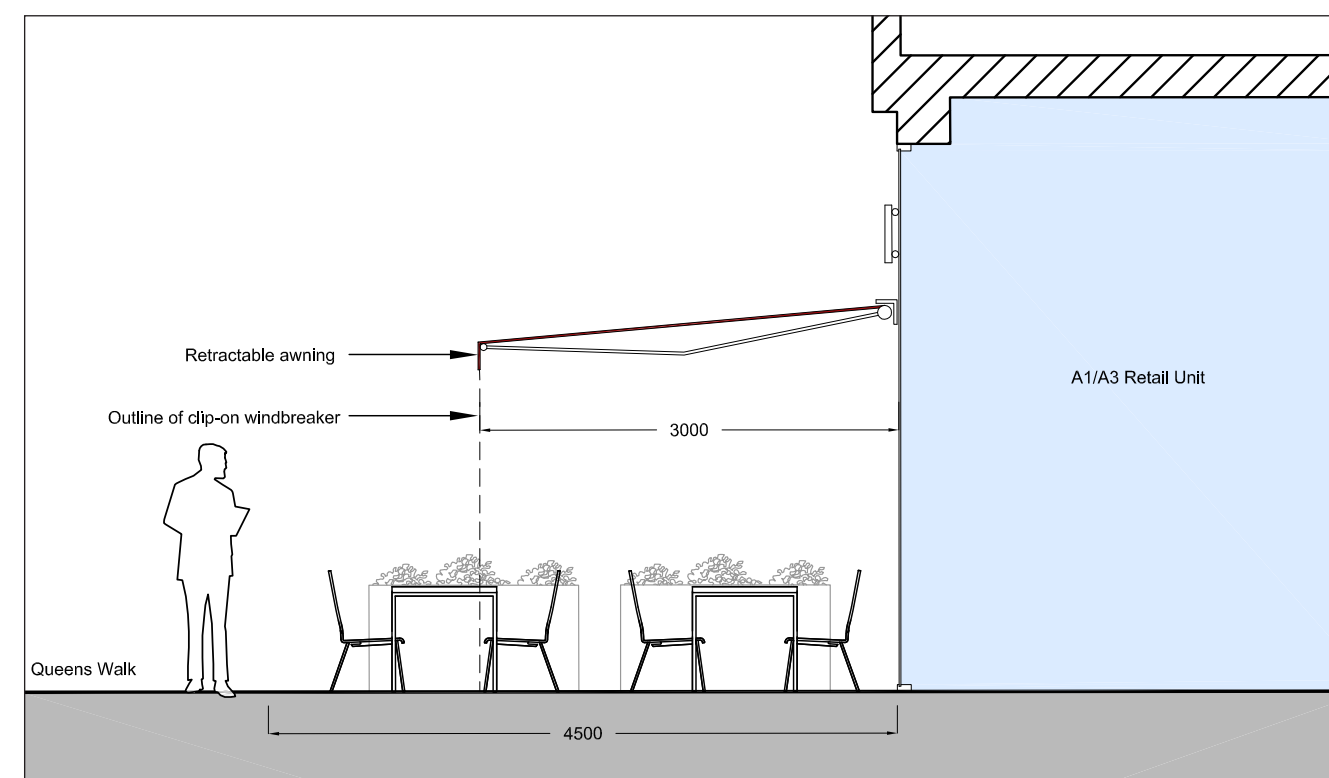
Proposal: Principles

The proposed design has been guided by the following principles to ensure the creation of a high quality public space which compliments its surroundings which offering vibrant, contemporary environment.

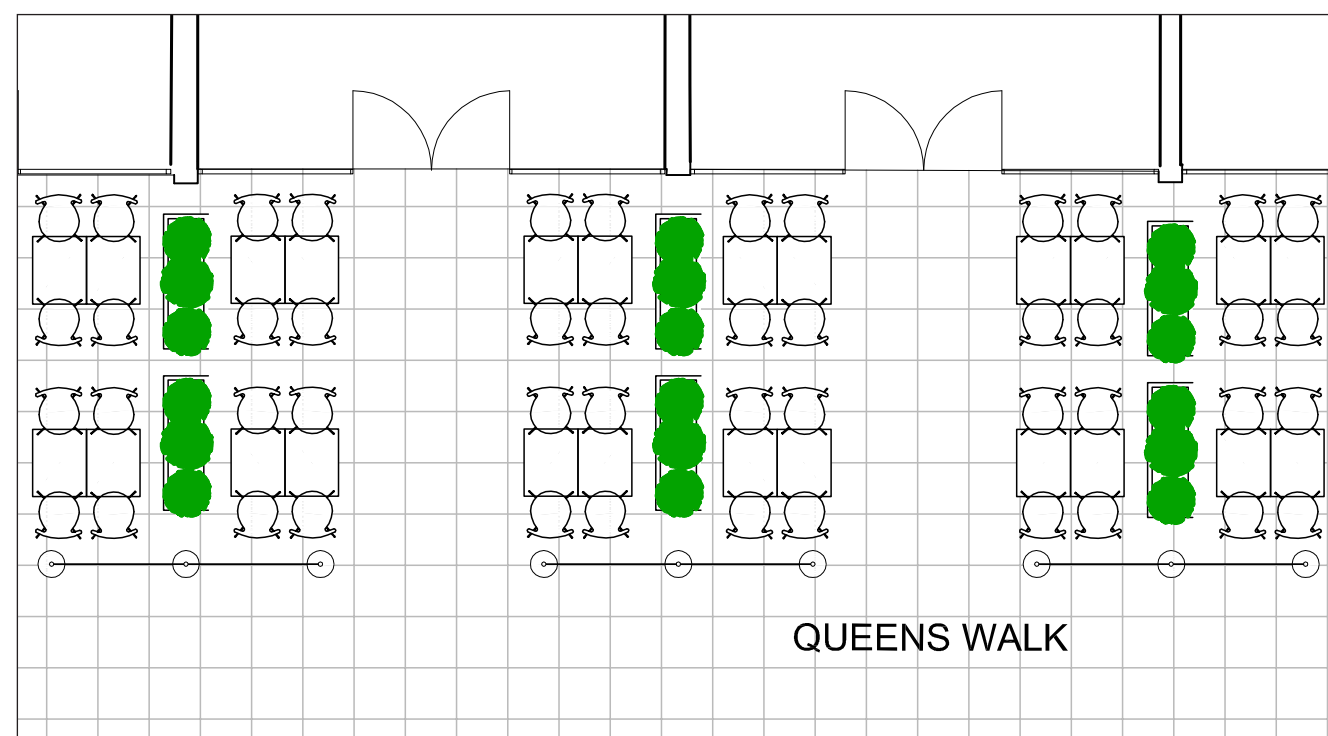
Retractable Awnings will not only give solar shading but give the outdoor seating space a pleasant sense of enclosure. This has already been utilised by one of the existing tenants to serve as a visual indicator for an eatery. In architectural terms they also help to break down the façade to a more human scale. The oversailing of the awnings will be limited to 3 metres in order to retain visibility along Queens Walk.

Box Planters between the units will not only demarcate the unit threshold but enhance the outdoor dining experience. These will also help to soften the urban environment.

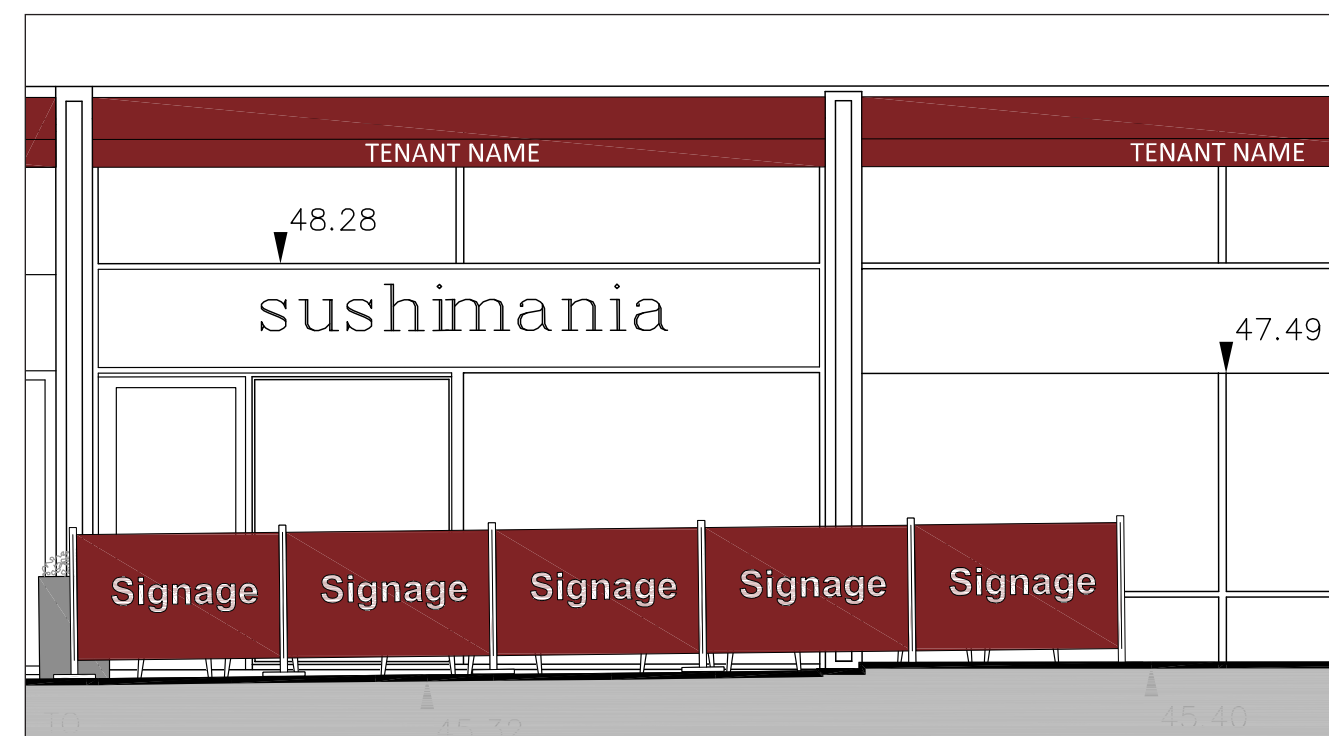
Movable low level fabric screens will help to demarcate the extent of the seating and present an opportunity for tenant branding.



Proposed Section: Typical Unit

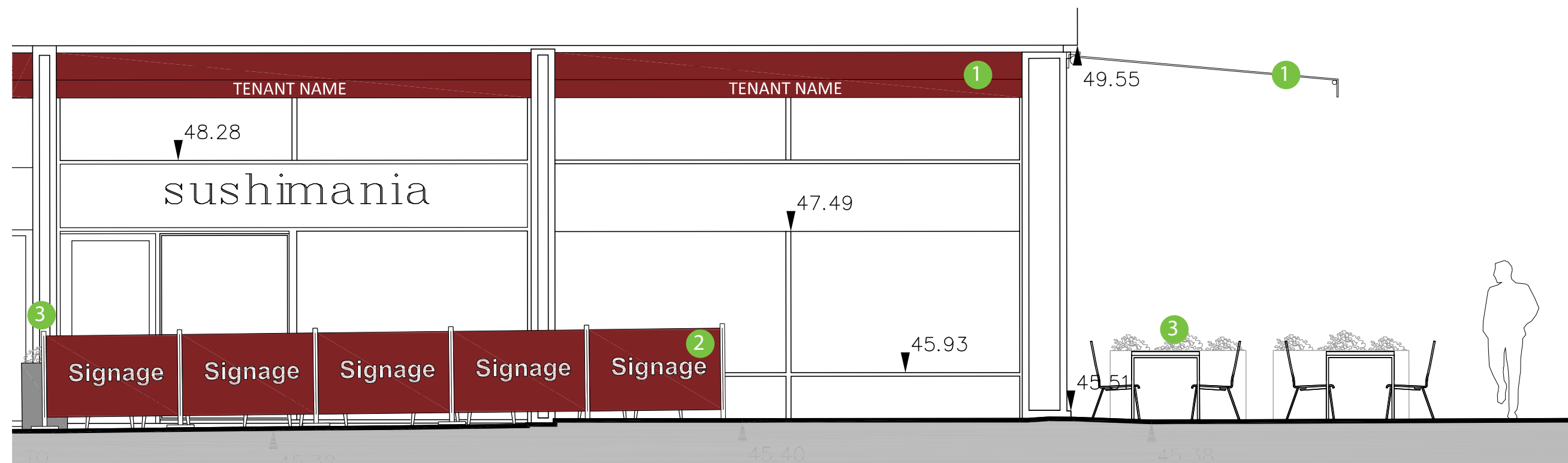


Proposed Plan: Typical Units



Proposed Elevation: Typical Unit

Proposal: Material Palette



Proposed Elevation - Typical Retail Unit



- 4 Retractable Awnings:
Fabric awnings with tenant branding to edge.
Over-sailing 3m. Colour: RAL 3011



- 5 Fabric Windbreak Screens:
Fabric screens with powder coated posts.
Height 1.1m Colour: RAL 3011



- 6 Planters:
Powder coated steel planters with landscaping

Proposal: Plans & Elevations

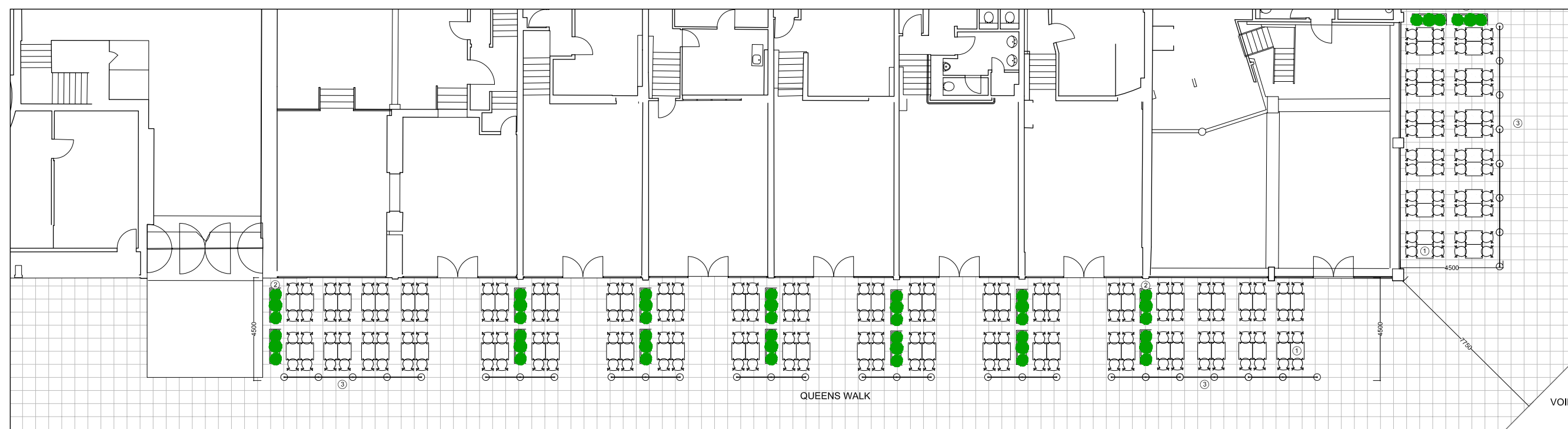
In order to create a vibrant and desirable space, the proposal transforms the areas adjacent to the existing retail units to offer a series of public spaces linking Oxford Road to Dusseldorf Way and the Hexagon Theatre.

To achieve this, the proposal would be phased, ensuring that the area could remain in operational throughout. The first phase would involve the installation of awnings and the creation of external seating areas to a number of existing units, offering an immediate increase in the quality of public realm within the area.

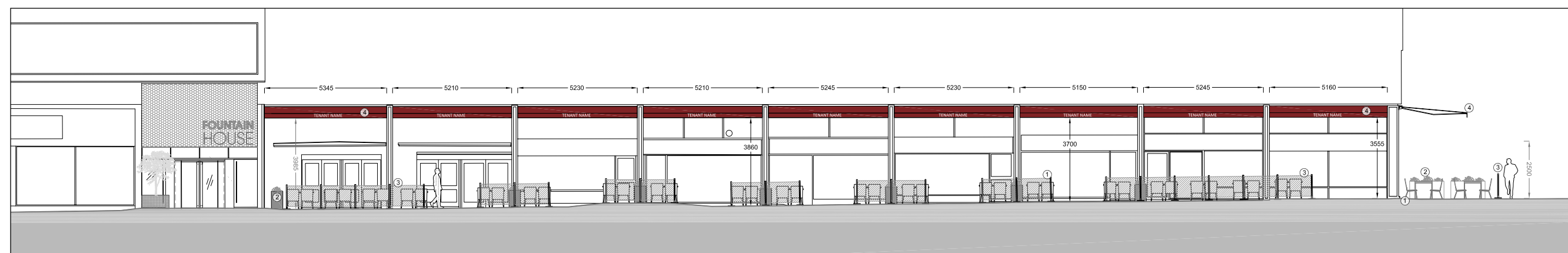
The proposal will create a public space to help reinvigorate Queens Walk and create a contemporary and enjoyable space in the heart of Reading.

KEY:

1. External Seating
2. Low-level moveable planter
3. Low-level fabric winbreak barriers
4. Retractable Awning with fabric cover fitted to face of shopfront



Proposed Plan



Proposed Elevation

Proposal: Visualisation



Proposed View - Queens Walk (Looking South-East)

Proposal: Visualisation



Proposed View - Queens Walk (Looking North-East)

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