

35-43 Greyfriars Road
Reading, Berkshire

Design and Access Statement



Revisions	
Rev -	08.01.15 - Draft Issue for Pre-application #1
Rev A	15.01.15 - Updated Draft for Pre application meeting #1
Rev B	29.01.15 - Updated Draft for Pre application meeting #2
Rev C	27.02.15 - Planning Submission
Rev D	23.09.15 - Draft issue of Revised Planning Submission
Rev E	25.09.15 - Draft issue of Revised Planning Submission
Rev F	08.10.15 - Planning Submission

Client: Croudace Asset Development 1 Ltd

Issue Date: 08 December 2014

Reference: 30747-DAS

Contents

01 Introduction	04	
– Introduction		
– Site Location		
02 Planning Policy	06	
03 Site Analysis	08	
– Existing Use		
– Existing Amount		
– Existing Site Layout		
– Existing Building Layout		
– Existing Landscape		
– Existing Appearance Context		
– Existing Appearance Application Site		
– Existing Scale		
– Existing Access		
– Constraints & Opportunities		
04 Conceptual Approach	20	
05 Design Evolution & Pre-application	21	
– Pre-Application Process		
– 26.11.2014 - Pre-application scheme		
– 15.01.2014 - Pre application scheme Option 01		
– 15.01.2014 - Pre application scheme Option 02		
– 15.01.2014 - Pre application scheme Option 03		
– 15.01.2014 - Pre application scheme Option 04		
– 15.01.2014 - Pre application Stanshawe Road Elevation		
– 15.01.2014 - Pre application Summary		
– 15.01.2014 - Pre application Feedback		
– 29.01.2014 - Further Pre application Meeting		
– 29.01.2014 - Pre application Precedents		
– 29.01.2014 - Pre application Option 01 Evolution		
– 29.01.2014 - Pre application Option 03 Evolution		
		– 29.01.2014 - Pre application Stanshawe Road Evolution
		– 29.01.2014 - Pre application Option 01A
		– 29.01.2014 - Pre application Feedback
		– 29.01.2014 - Pre application Conclusion
		06 Planning Application and Refusal
		44
		– Planning Application Scheme
		– Refusal Summary
		– Initial Response
		– 22.06.2015 - Pre Application
		– 10.08.2015 - Informal Pre-Application Discussion
		– Summary of Response to Refusal
		07 Proposed Scheme
		54
		– Proposed Use
		– Proposed Amount
		– Proposed Site Layout
		– Proposed Building Layout
		– Proposed Scale
		– Proposed Sun-light Study
		– Proposed Landscape
		– Proposed Appearance
		– Proposed Access
		08 Sustainability, Transport & Flood Risk
		67
		Sustainability Statement
		– Transport Strategy
		– Flood Risk
		09 Conclusion
		68
		A Appendix A - Flood Risk Assessment
		70
		B Appendix B - Architectural Drawings
		72

01.00 | Introduction

01.01 | Introduction

This Design and Access statement has been prepared by Broadway Malyan on behalf of Croudace Properties Limited for a detailed planning application at 35-43 Greyfriars Road, Reading.

This statement provides information on the application site, on how the proposals have been developed and what the proposed development will consist. This statement explains how the design has been developed to reflect the specific contextual requirements of this key site in Reading. From the examination of this context, the statement demonstrates how the design has been approached to produce a scheme which will enhance the local area architecturally, socially, economically and be respectful to the site's unique characteristics.

This Design and Access statement is to be read in conjunction with the supporting drawings and documentation submitted with the application for detailed planning consent to Reading Borough Council.

The structure of this document is based upon guidelines published by CABE. We have used this Design and Access statement not only as a vehicle for presenting and explaining the final scheme, but as a tool for developing the design through a process of assessment, consultation and evolution. To explain the design, we will utilise the following CABE criteria:

- | | | |
|--------|------------|-----------------|
| Use; | Amount; | Layout; |
| Scale; | Landscape; | Appearance; and |
| Access | | |

01.02 | Site Location

The proposed site for the development is 35-43 Greyfriars Road, Reading (RG1 1NP). 35-43 Greyfriars Road is a single building which is located in central Reading, Berkshire.

Located within the Inner Distribution Road (IDR), the building sits on the corner of Greyfriars Road and Stanshawe Road. The building forms the south eastern corner of the urban block defined by Greyfriars Road, Stanshawe Road, Caversham Road (IDR) and Tudor Road.

The site is less than 5 minutes walk from Reading Central Railway Station and a 10 minute walk from the Oracle shopping centre.



View looking north down Greyfriars Road towards application site



View looking East down Stanshawe Road



Google Earth Aerial Image

02.00 | Planning Policy

02.01 | Planning Policy Statement

1. Planning policies which are relevant to this application are found within the National Planning Policy Framework and within the policies of Reading Borough Council's Development Plan.

2. This section provides a summary of the relevant policies and includes a response as to how the proposal accords with them.

02.02 | National Planning Policy Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework

3. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 coming into force with immediate effect for plan-making and development management decisions.

4. The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

5. The NPPF identifies at paragraph 6 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies at paragraph 7 that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental and that the planning system must therefore perform a number of roles:

- An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;
- A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities;
- An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

6. The proposed refurbishment and extension will create approximately 845 sqm of additional floor space, representing an opportunity to enhance employment

opportunities within walking distance from public transport, in addition to services and facilities in the Reading town centre. Further, the enhancements to the building's appearance are planned to increase its attractiveness while respecting the character of the surrounding environment. Overall, the proposal is considered to be consistent with the three dimensions of sustainable development.

7. Section 2 relates to promotion of competitive town centres and identifies that such areas should be seen as sequentially preferably locations for new office development (amongst others). Given the location of the proposal within the Central Area of Reading it supports this aspect of the NPPF.

8. Section 4 sets out the approach to sustainable transport. The close proximity of the site to Reading Station and accessibility to town centre facilities and services on foot and bicycle is supportive of the aspirations for sustainable transport.

02.03 | Local Planning Policy Considerations

9. For the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the 'development plan', against which the application proposal will be determined, comprises:

- Adopted Core Strategy (January 2008)
- Reading Central Area Action Plan (January 2009)
- Sites and Detailed Policies Document (October 2012)

10. The following sections provide summaries of how the proposal accords to the relevant policies contained in each of these documents.

The Adopted Core Strategy

11. The Adopted Core Strategy (ACS) sets out the key elements of the planning framework for Reading. The applicable policies are summarised below.

12. Policy CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design) stipulates that the refurbishment of existing buildings, will be acceptable where the design of buildings use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources

appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change. These considerations have been incorporated into the design process for the refurbishment, which is to include new energy efficient services and a new high performance façade to the south and east elevation. The building will seek to achieve an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of 'B', and the BREEAM pre-assessment report identifies the building will have a 'Very Good' rating. As such the proposal represents a sustainable design that is in accordance with Policy CS1.

13. Policy CS4 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development) discusses the need for new development to be accessible by a range of modes of transport. Given the proximity of the application site to Reading Station, the town centre, and the fact it is very accessible via key pedestrian routes offering unimpeded access to a variety of services and facilities, it is considered to be consistent with this aims of this policy.

14. Policy CS7 (Design and Public Realm) states that all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. As described later in this document, the proposal is representative of good, high quality built form. Further to this, careful design consideration has been applied given the location of the application site next to the Stanshawe Road terraced housing. The design, in particular the west facing 'party wall' has been approached in a sympathetic manner, including the careful use of materials as to sensitively maintain the amenity of the street scene. The applicant has engaged in pre-application dialogue with Council Planning Officers in respect to considerate design.

15. Policy CS10 (Location of Employment Development) states that major office development (more than 1,000 sqm of floor space) will take place in the centre of Reading and along the A33 corridor. Albeit the proposed refurbishment is not classified as a major scheme, given it will create less than 1,000 sqm of additional employment, its location conforms to the sequential approach of office development within the Reading town centre. Therefore the proposal is consistent with this policy.

16. Policy CS35 (Flooding) restricts developments, in high flood risk areas, which would reduce the capacity of the flood plain to store floodwater, impede the flow of floodwater or in any way increase the risks to life and property arising from flooding. As stated later in this document, this application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment, which confirms the application site is located in the Flood Zone 2 and there will be no cumulative impact on flood risk as a result of the extensions proposed.

The Reading Central Area Action Plan

17. The Reading Central Area Action Plan (AAP) was adopted in January 2009 and sets out detailed policies in relation to the management of development within the town centre.

18. The AAP promotes the prioritisation of locations which benefit from development for employment uses and confirms the area centred near the Reading Station should be the focus of development given it offers the greatest accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling. This provision is expressed in Policy RC6 (Definition of the Centre) which states all major office development (of over 1,000 sq m) should be located within the town centre. The application site is in close proximity to the town centre and Reading Station, and is well serviced by pedestrian routes, signifying it as an appropriate location for employment land in accordance with the aims of the AAP.

19. Policy RC5 (Design in the Centre) outlines the appropriate attributes for all development within the Reading central area. For the reasons outlined later in this document, including the architectural details and quality of materials incorporated into the design and consideration of the form and quality of other developments in the area, the proposal will contribute to the diversity of the central area in a way that is consistent with the aims of this Policy.

20. Policy R12e (Terraced Housing in the Centre) deals with the protection of the character of traditional town centre terraced housing located on Stanshawe Road and states development should not result in a loss, nor have a detrimental effect on the character of this area. As described later in this document, careful consideration has been given to the design of the building to make sure it relates with these properties and respects the amenity of the Stanshawe Road street scene.

21. Policy RC10 (Active Frontages) deals with uses of ground floor on designated active frontages. This policy does not apply to the proposal, given neither Greyfriars Street, nor Stanshawe Road is designated in the AAP.

Sites and Details Policies Document

22. The Reading Borough Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) was adopted in October 2012, at which time it replaced all previously saved policies contained within the Local Plan 1991 – 2006.

23. Policy SD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) endorses the approval of all planning applications that are made in accordance with the policies in the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the NPPF.

24. Policy DM1 (Adaption to Climate Change) promotes the adoption of measures to adjust to climate change is incorporated into development. This proposal is supported by a BREEAM pre-assessment report that demonstrates the development has a BREEAM rating of 'Very Good', and therefore supports the aims of Policy DM1.

25. Policy DM4 (safeguarding amenity) states that development will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties. The nearest residential properties are located immediately to the west of the application site along Stanshawe Road. This application is supported by a noise assessment in relation to fixed mechanical plant and sunlight/shadow study, which confirm the proposal will not give rise to any significant detrimental impacts. Further to this, no additional private car movements over and above those generated by the existing development are expected, and therefore, the amenity of the area will not be affected by any additional traffic movements. Overall, for the reasons outlined above, in addition to the respectful approach to the building design described later in this document, the amenity of the surrounding living environment will be upheld by the development.

26. The application site is located within the Reading Air Quality Management Area, where Policy DM19 (Air Quality) applies. This policy provides for the Council's proactive approach to managing air quality, requiring development to have regard to the need to improve air quality. The provision of on-site car parking is to be reduced from 7 to 6, and as noted above, no additional traffic movements are expected to be generated by the proposed B1 use. Therefore, the proposal will not result in any additional detrimental air quality impacts.

Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

27. The Council produced the Parking Standards and Design SPD to provide guidance on the levels and design of parking that should be provided to developments. This document was formally adopted in October 2011.

28. The SPD indicates that the application site is located within Zone 1 (Central

Core Area) and identifies that one cycle parking space should be provided per 200 sqm of B1(a) floor space located in this zone. Currently, there is no cycle parking on site. Based on the 868 sqm extension a total of 5 cycle parking spaces should be provided. In accordance with BREEAM guidelines the scheme involves the creation of 8 cycle parks. As outlined in the submitted Transport Note, this represents an improvement in the cycle provision on-site.

29. In respect to car parking the SPD identifies a maximum of one car parking space should be provided per 250 sqm of B1(a) floor space located in Zone 1. As per the SPD the development, a 2,166 sqm B1(a) building in Zone 1, could provide a maximum of 9 car parking spaces. At present there are 7 car parking spaces on-site and in order to accommodate the 8 cycle spaces this number will be reduced to 6. Therefore, the proposal is in accordance with the Council's car parking standards.

30. Overall, the proposal is considered to be consistent with the SPD in relation to the provision and design/lay-out of cycle and car parking.

Community Infrastructure Levy

31. To comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010) (as amended), the Council has developed a charging schedule that should deliver an appropriate balance between the desirability of funding infrastructure from the levy and the potential impact upon the economic viability of development.

32. The Inspector's report on the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule was received by the Council on 17 December 2014 and the schedule can now be approved. The new schedule, which the Council are looking to implement by April 2014, replaces the 'Revised Supplementary Planning Document on Planning Obligations under S106' (November 2013).

33. Under the new schedule new office space in the Central Core are to be charged at a rate of £30 sqm (gross internal area). On this basis the application will provide a levy of approximately £26,040 (£30 x 868 sqm) for the uplift in office floor space.

03.00 | Site Analysis

Use, Amount & Layout

03.01 | Existing Use

The existing use of the application site is B1 (office) [A] [consented under ref:131671] but yet to be implemented. Previous to this, the site had D1 (Education Use). Prior to this, the site was B1 office use.

The neighbouring building to the north (49-51 Greyfriars Road) [B] is also office use whereas the buildings to the immediate west of the application site are terraced residential (along Stanshawe Road) [C].

Directly opposite the site to the east is the office building, Xafinity House [D] and to the south is The Gateway public house [E].

The site lies within the Reading Office Core Policy area (RC06) and as such this is reflected by the extensive office buildings fronting Greyfriars Road. The urban grain of the immediate area to the west predominantly consists of rectangular urban blocks with terraced residential dwellings 'book-ended' by commercial office buildings. To the east the urban grain becomes more coarse with larger floor plate office buildings and retail spaces.

The defunct bus station with Bingo Hall above [F] and Friar's Walk Shopping centre [G] are located to the east of the application site, both of which are planned to be redeveloped within the Station Hill development [ref: 130436] which we understand is currently being prepared for a further detailed planning submission to Reading Borough Council. The Station Hill scheme proposes a range of uses including residential, office, retail/leisure and enhanced multi-storey car parking together with an enlarged area of public realm.

A temporary park/event space is proposed following the demolition of the Western Tower building. This application [ref: 130440] was consented in January 2014

03.02 | Existing Amount

The area of the application site is approximately 542 sq.m and accommodates a building of approximately 1,309 sq.m Gross External Area (GEA) over 3 floors which equates to a plot ratio of 242%.

By comparison, the recently consented Station Hill outline application scheme [ref: 130436] suggests a plot ratio range of 418-790%.

These plot ratios give a brief indication of the existing density of development within central Reading, with the Station Road scheme identifying the intent for further densification.



03.03 | Existing Site Layout

35-43 Greyfriars Road sits on the application site as an L-shaped building de marking the corner of Greyfriars and Stanshawe Road. The building negotiates the corner via a chamfered plane on the ground floor and parallel bay windows on the upper floors. Party walls are formed with the residential dwellings to the west and the adjoining office building (49- 51 Greyfriars Road) to the north.

At ground floor level the building sits within the site's curtilage and over-sails the public footpath at first floor and above with projecting heavily detailed window bays.

The main pedestrian entrance to the application site is located on the east elevation.

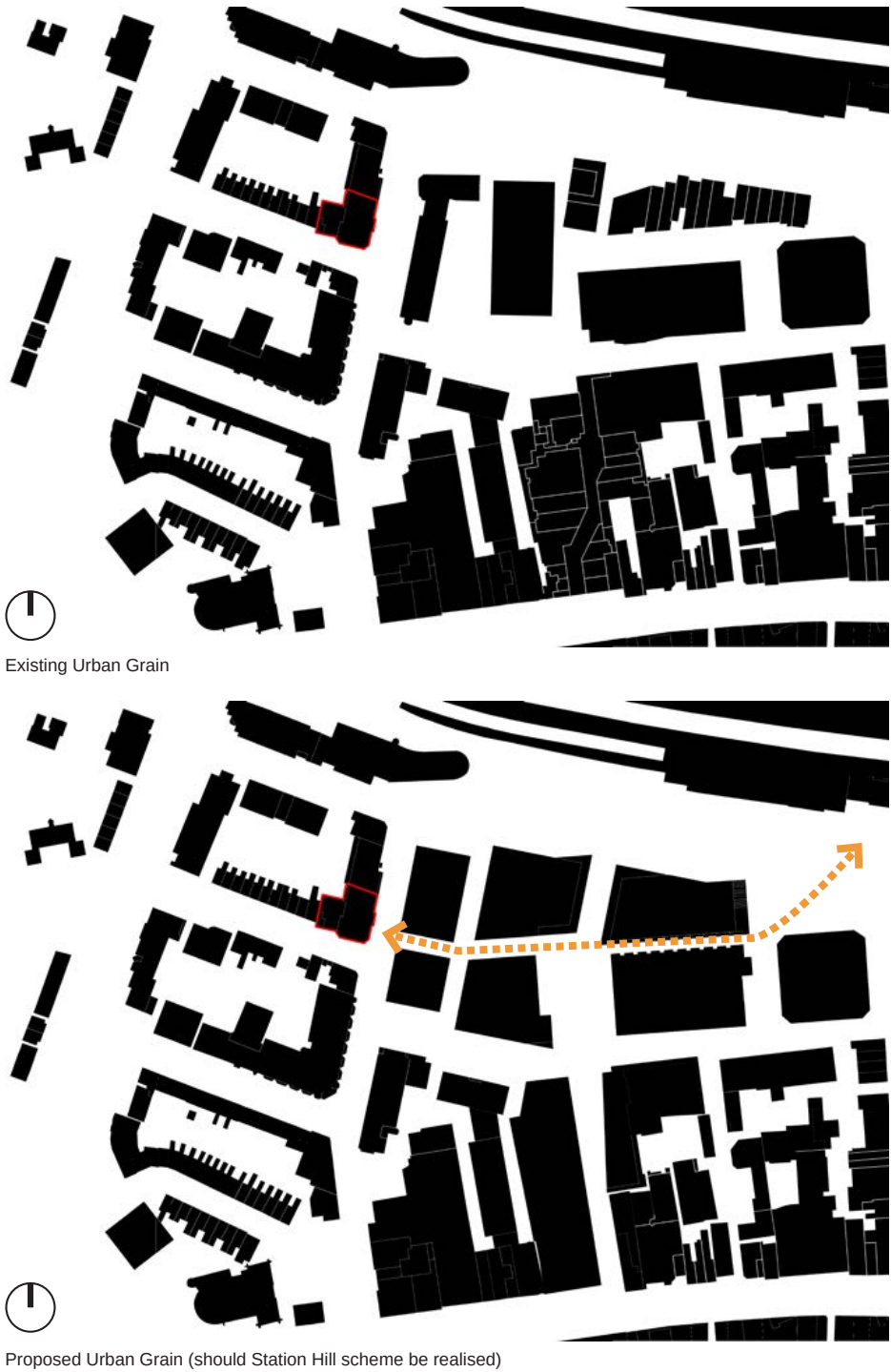
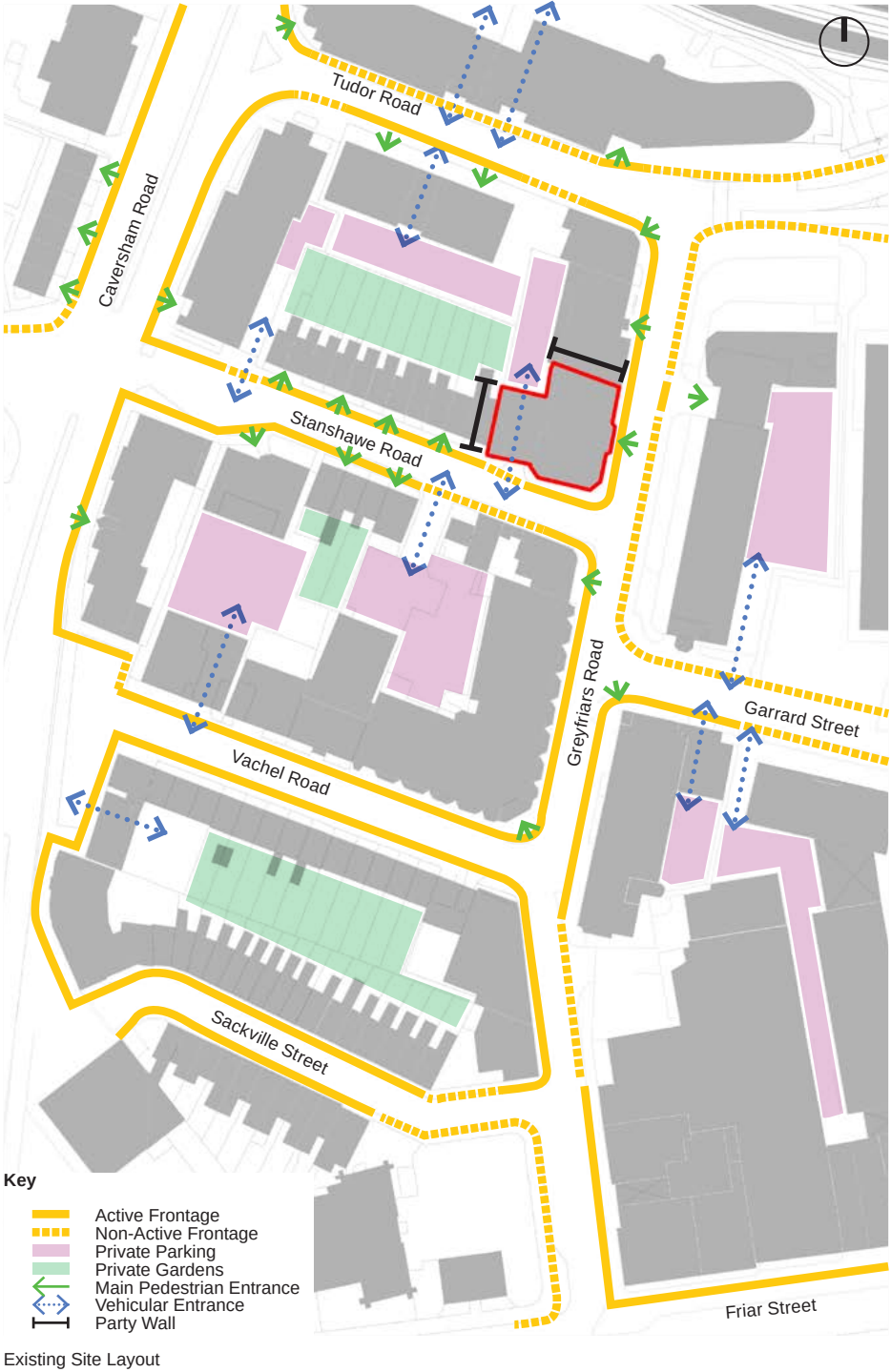
The south elevation provides vehicular access to the shared parking area for 35-43 Greyfriars and 49-51 Greyfriars via a gated opening in the elevation at ground level. A pass gate also on the south elevation provides secondary pedestrian access to the rear of both buildings as well as providing means of escape egress.

35-43 Greyfriars Road links the active frontages of Greyfriars Road and Stanshawe Road. It's east and south facades are populated with windows onto the office floor plates internally. Smaller windows are located on the west and north facades looking onto the residential gardens.

To the east of the application site the façade of Xafinity house provides limited active frontage restricted by a blank storey at ground floor which is set-back from the public footpath by a hard-landscaping feature.

However, should the Station Hill scheme [ref: 130436] be realised, Xafinity House would be demolished and replaced with an office building with active frontage directly onto the public footpath.

The Station Hill development would introduce a new pedestrian route directly from the Station to the application site, whereby 35-43 Greyfriars Road would terminate this new route. The application site would therefore become an important focal/orientation point at the end of this route.



03.00 | Site Analysis

Layout & Appearance

03.04 | Existing Building Layout

The main entrance on Greyfriars Road provides access to the building's primary vertical circulation core which includes a lift and staircase. Passing through the core leads to open plan office floor space.

A secondary escape stair is accommodated as part of the western elevation. The primary stair core provides access to all three office floors, where the escape stair provides access to the screened roof plant and lift motor room.

03.05 | Existing Landscape

35-43 Greyfriars Road fills the application site and therefore there is no soft landscaping present. There is evidence of previous window boxes to ground floor windows, but these appear to have been filled in by a previous owner.

The boundary between the back of the public footpath and the application site is de marked by brick paviors. However, patchwork service installations and repairs have fragmented this line and have introduced varying qualities of tarmac to the public footpath.

The surface of the parking area and access off the public highway is via a tarmac drop kerb and bell-mouth.

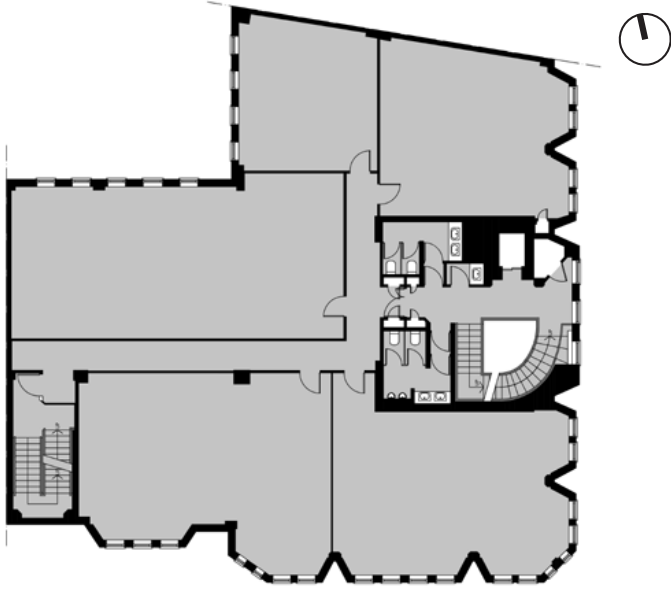
Street Furniture is limited to the 'Stanshawe Road' free standing road sign on the south elevation.



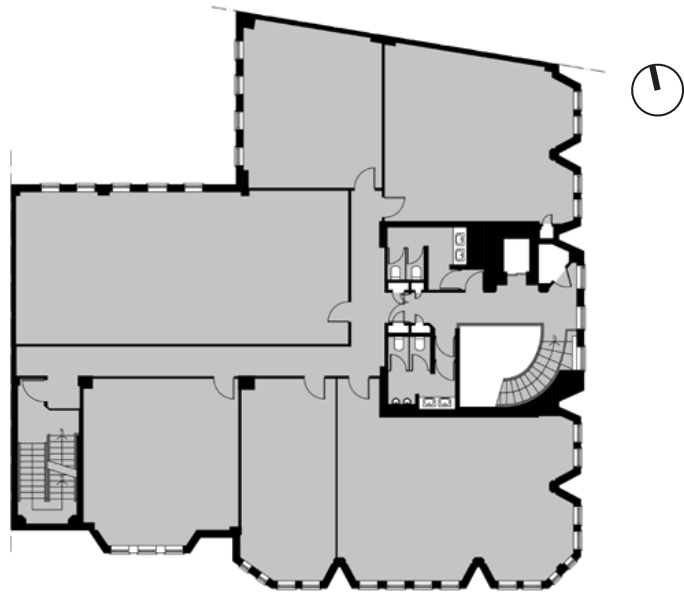
Brick Pavors de marking site boundary & filled-in window boxes



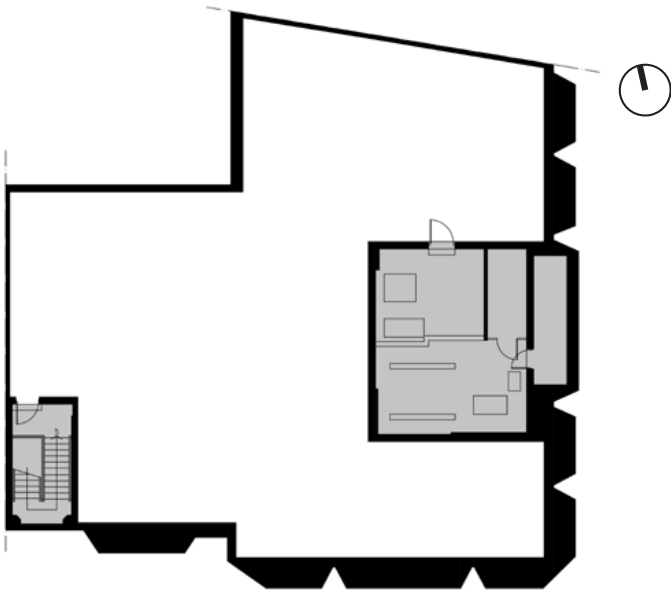
Existing Ground Floor Plan



Existing First Floor Plan



Existing Second Floor Plan



Existing Plant Floor

03.07 | Existing Appearance Context

The area surrounding the application site contains a wide range of architectural styles including vernacular, Modern and Post-Modern buildings.

Residential properties are typically constructed with pitched slate roofs and red facing brick walls (stretcher bond), which in places have been painted or have painted rendered panels. A number of dwellings as well as The Greyfriars public house are fully rendered with rusticated feature banding. Similarly, a number of properties on Stanshawe Road have a traditional Reading brick and flint wall cladding in a Flemish bond or red brick quoins. Residential windows are typically white painted/UPVC and are sliding sash or have transoms located to appear as sliding sash respectively.

Immediately to the north of the application site, 49-53 Greyfriars Road is a red brick clad building with a mansard tiled roof. The styling of the building is Post-Modern with expressed white stone window reveals, dormers and cornice which picks up various architectural features across the facade.

Phoenix House to the far north is also Post-Modern with classical detailed elements such as rusticated base, Tuscan capitals to pilasters and entablature.

To the east of the immediate application site, Xafinity House has a Modern appearance with flat roof, horizontal ribbon curtain walling windows and horizontal infill panels of red brick.

Greyfriars House to the south of the application site is a Hi-tech-Post Modern hybrid, with a heavy polished granite rusticated base and tinted glazed curtain wall with expressed panel joints and cleaning cradle rail.

9-27 Greyfriars Road is clad in a dark buff brick with a light buff concrete profiled frame to it's main elevations facing Greyfriars Road. Tinted glazed windows have concrete panels with stacked brick in-fill spandrel panels between floors, some of which project to act as brise-soleil.

Although being of different styles, a common theme of an elevational grid runs through many of the office buildings in the immediate vicinity of the application site. This grid is reflected in the emerging design proposals for the Station Hill scheme [ref: 130436], whereby the gird varies according to use, smaller grids for residential uses and a larger grid for commercial uses. Buildings have a hierarchy of parts, a base (defined by colonnades), a middle and top where floor plates are either expressed horizontally or recessed to express the verticality of the structure. Relief to the facades adds depth and interest, enabling shadows to vary the appearance of the building day to day.

In summary, the architectural appearance of the immediate area of the application site is varied which adds interest and vitality to the Reading streetscape. Some styles have stood the test of time well whereas Post-Modern schemes have become dated. The absence of any overall style enables new developments whether they be commercial or residential to be inserted into the urban fabric with stylistic freedom providing scale, rhythm and detailing are carefully and sensitively considered.



Greyfriars House



Post Modern Phoenix House



Party Wall between existing building and terraces on Stanshawe Road



Looking south down Greyfriars Road with 49-53 Greyfriars Road in the foreground



Xafinity House

03.00 | Site Analysis

Appearance

03.08 | Existing Appearance Application Site

Clad in a multicoloured red stock brick with a profiled lead mansard roof, 35-43 Greyfriars Road has a heavy somewhat fortress-like appearance. This is emphasised by the relatively small vertical sash windows and battered wall rampart detail below the ground floor windows. The undulating brick façade of the upper floor bays are divided horizontally at each floor by a face-fixed profiled grey composite panel which is also used to express the projecting eaves. Heavy green rainwater down-pipes are located vertically between bays.

Window reveals are picked out in chamfered brick specials with a shallow brick arch to upper floor window heads. Ground floor windows have radiused corners where the brick reveal follows the radius to form a solidier course at the window head.

Typically, windows are paired within each bay, however, on the east elevation, the main entrance bay hosts three windows and the central bay on the south elevation consists of four windows. A three window bay is centred over the car-park entrance also on the south elevation. Furthermore, these bays vary in the extent to which they over-sail the public footpath. The impact of a non-standard bay width and projection is seen on the hipped lead roofs to each bay and the height at which they return to the mansard roof.

The mansard roof ridge line also varies in height along the principle elevations where it increases to accommodate the escape stair and the plant room over the lift core.

The party walls, are simply brick clad with a stone coping. The mansard roof projects above the party wall on the west elevation to cover the escape stair access to the roof plant.

The north and west elevations of the application site are brick clad and rectangular sash windows have a flat solidier course at the window head. The mansard roof to these elevations is a profiled aluminium sheet in lieu of lead. The horizontal face-fixed profiled grey composite panel is repeated at each floor level on these elevations.

The horizontal projections to the rear elevations have resulted in a pigeon infestation, which is both unsightly and a Health and Safety risk. Pigeon netting has been employed on the south and east elevations as mitigation.

Despite being a functionally successful office building, the relatively small footprint of the building and the numerous architectural details has resulted in a over detailed and heavy external appearance. There are competing horizontal and vertical emphasis which presents a somewhat confused aesthetic.

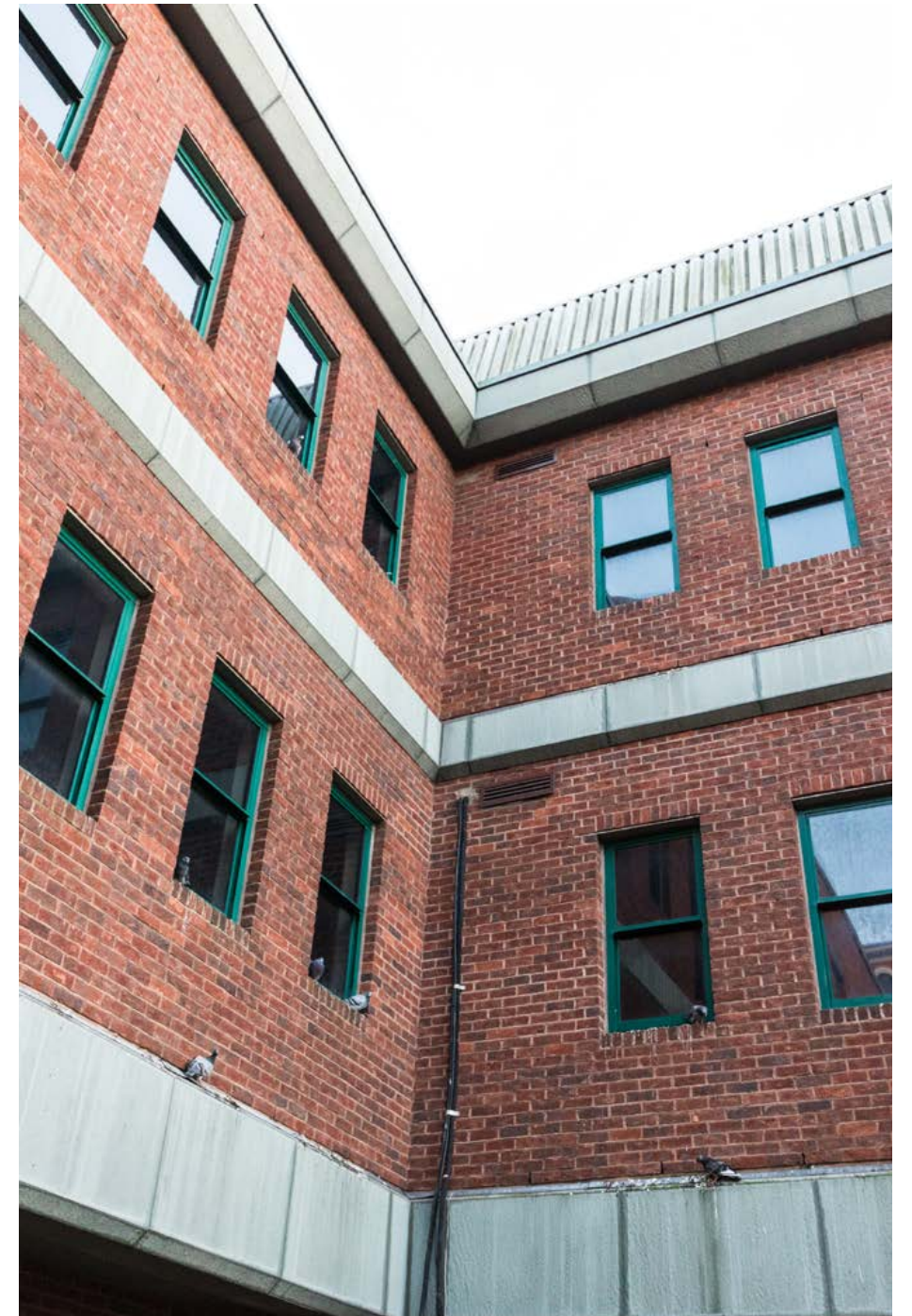
Internally, the small vertical windows restrict natural daylight into the floor plate. However, the in-situ concrete soffit with coffered bays provides a point of visual interest.



Existing East Elevation to Greyfriars Road



Existing South Elevation to Stanshawe Road



Rear Elevations from within site



Existing Roof looking East towards Xfinity House & Great Western Tower



Roof West Party Wall Elevation



Ribbed internal concrete soffit



Existing West Elevation to Stanshawe Road Part Wall



Roof North Party Wall Elevation



Ribbed internal concrete soffit

03.00 | Site Analysis

Scale

03.06 | Existing Scale

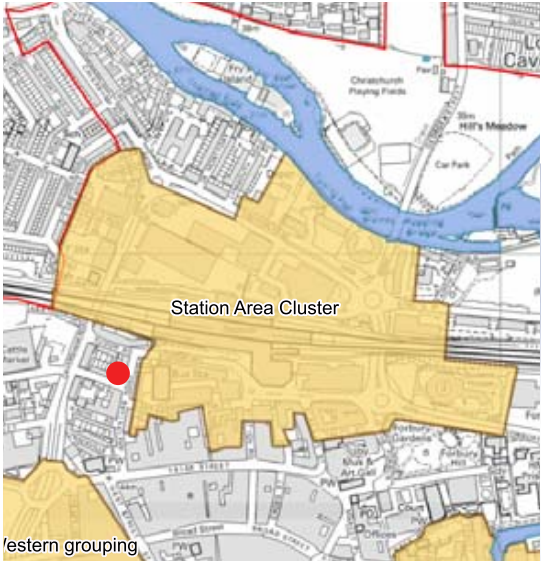
The existing building provides 3 commercial storeys of office accommodation, however a screened roof plant area provides overall massing consistent with an office building of 4 storeys.

Stanshawe Road streetscape: The application site itself occupies a key location with regard to scale transition when reviewed against planning policy. To the immediate east of 35-43 Greyfriars Road is the Central Tall Buildings Cluster [policy: RC13] which hosts the Station Hill scheme [ref: 130436]. The edge of which [Plot A] proposes a building of between 7 & 13 commercial storeys (67-93m AOD). To the immediate west of 35-43 Greyfriars Road are the terraced houses of Stanshawe Road at 2 to 3 storeys whose character is required to be respected within policy RC12e. Therefore the application site remains as the only variable to negotiate the transition of scale from 3 residential storeys to a minimum of 7 commercial storeys.

Stanshawe Road street-scape: Primarily residential in character, the terraced houses on Stanshawe Road are book-ended at either end of the street by commercial office buildings of a greater scale.

Looking east, the terraced houses increase in scale from 2 storey to 2.5 storeys to 3 storeys before the party wall junction with the 4 storey application site (35-43 Greyfriars Road). The view looking east down the street is terminated by the 6 storey Xafinity building.

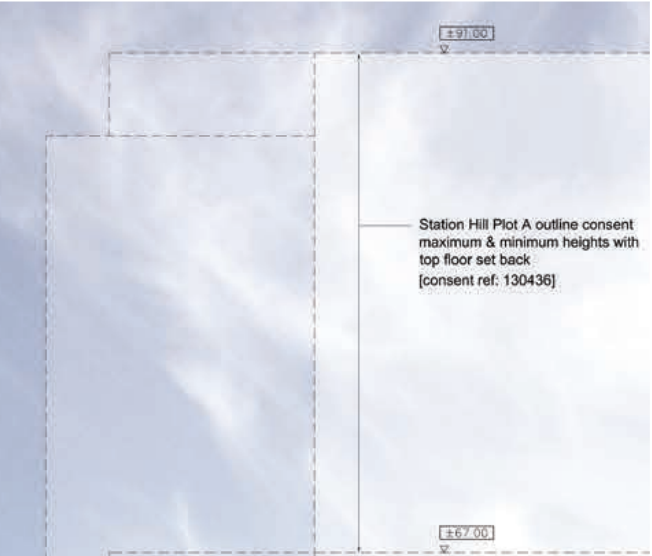
Looking west, Stanshawe Road is not well terminated with the street ending



Extract from Tall Building Strategy showing application site in context to preferred location for tall building cluster



View of site from top of Greyfriars Road looking north



Station Hill Plot A outline consent maximum & minimum heights with top floor set back [consent ref: 130436]



Existing Streetscene along Stanshawe Road

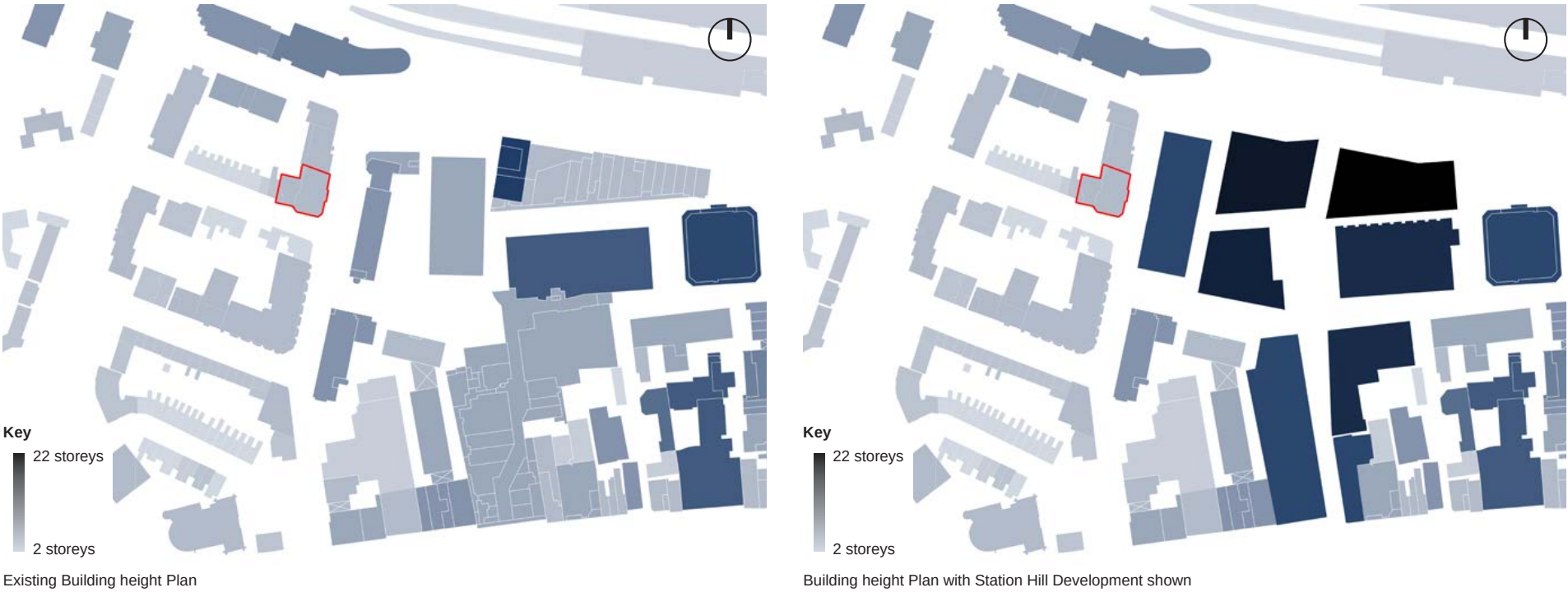
abruptly by the IDR and the off-axis alignment of Great Knolly's Street beyond.

Greyfriars Road street-scape: To the north of the application site, 49-51 Greyfriars and The Greyfriars public house share an equal massing of 4 storeys thereby presenting a uniform scale to the west side of Greyfriars Road before increasing to Phoenix House.

To the south of the application site, the ground level of Greyfriars Road climbs towards its junction with Friar Street which represents an overall level change of approximately 5.7m from the level outside the main entrance of 35-43 Greyfriars Road. The impact of this level change on the street-scape is that the 4 storey consented 9-24 Greyfriars scheme [ref: 140123] is perceived as a building mass of approximately 5 storeys when compared to the application site.

The Gateway public house punctuates the street-scape, it's reduced scale differentiating itself from the surrounding office building types.

With respect to scale, the overall feel of Greyfriars Road when viewed looking north is that the street is successfully terminated by the mass of the Phoenix Building (20 Tudor Road). The increase in scale from the west side of the street to the east side of the street is an indicator to the direction of an important location (e.g. Station/transport interchange). This indicator will be further emphasised upon the realisation of the Station Hill scheme). With regard to consistency of scale, the east side of the street presents a consistent scale of building, whereas the west side is somewhat fragmented between the extended 9-25 Greyfriars and the application site beyond. In this context, the corner of Stanshawe Road is not well defined from a massing perspective by the application site.



Existing Streetscene along Greyfriars Road

03.00 | Site Analysis

Access

03.09 | Existing Access

The application site is well served by the existing public footpath network with good visibility along Greyfriars Road and Stanshawe Road. The existing building benefits from a level threshold main entrance and passenger lift to all occupied floors. Currently disabled WC provision is only to the ground floor.

Links to public transport are close by with Reading Central railway station less than a 5 minute walk from the application site. The train station also hosts the main bus interchange and taxi rank for the town.

Should the Station Hill scheme be realised a further direct pedestrian link to the Station from 35-43 Greyfriars Road will be introduced (see image to the far right).

Both Greyfriars Road and Stanshawe Road provide two way vehicular access to the application site. Vehicular access to the western end of Stanshawe Road from the IDR is prohibited, with egress from Stanshawe Road onto the IDR and Great Knolly's Street beyond restricted to Buses, Taxis and Bicycles via Traffic lights and road markings. Similarly, vehicular access south to Friar Street from Greyfriars Road is prohibited as one way beyond Sackville Street.

Vehicular access to the application site is gated with a pedestrian pass gate. The application site provides 7 number standard car parking spaces. Currently there is no cycle parking on site.



Existing Footpath Network



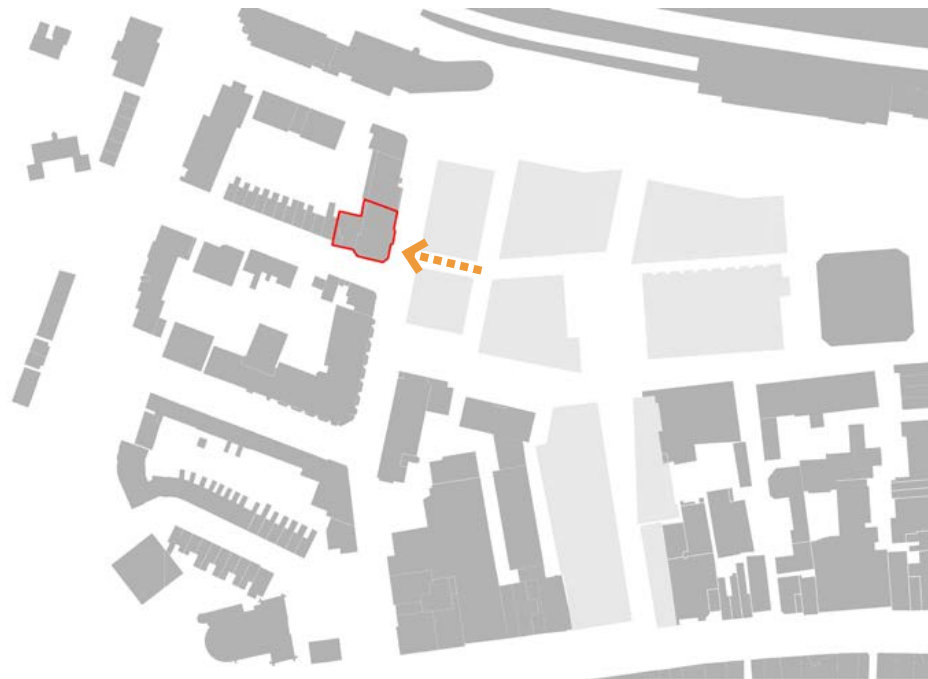
No Entry to Southern end of Greyfriars Road



Restricted egress from Western end of Stanshawe Road



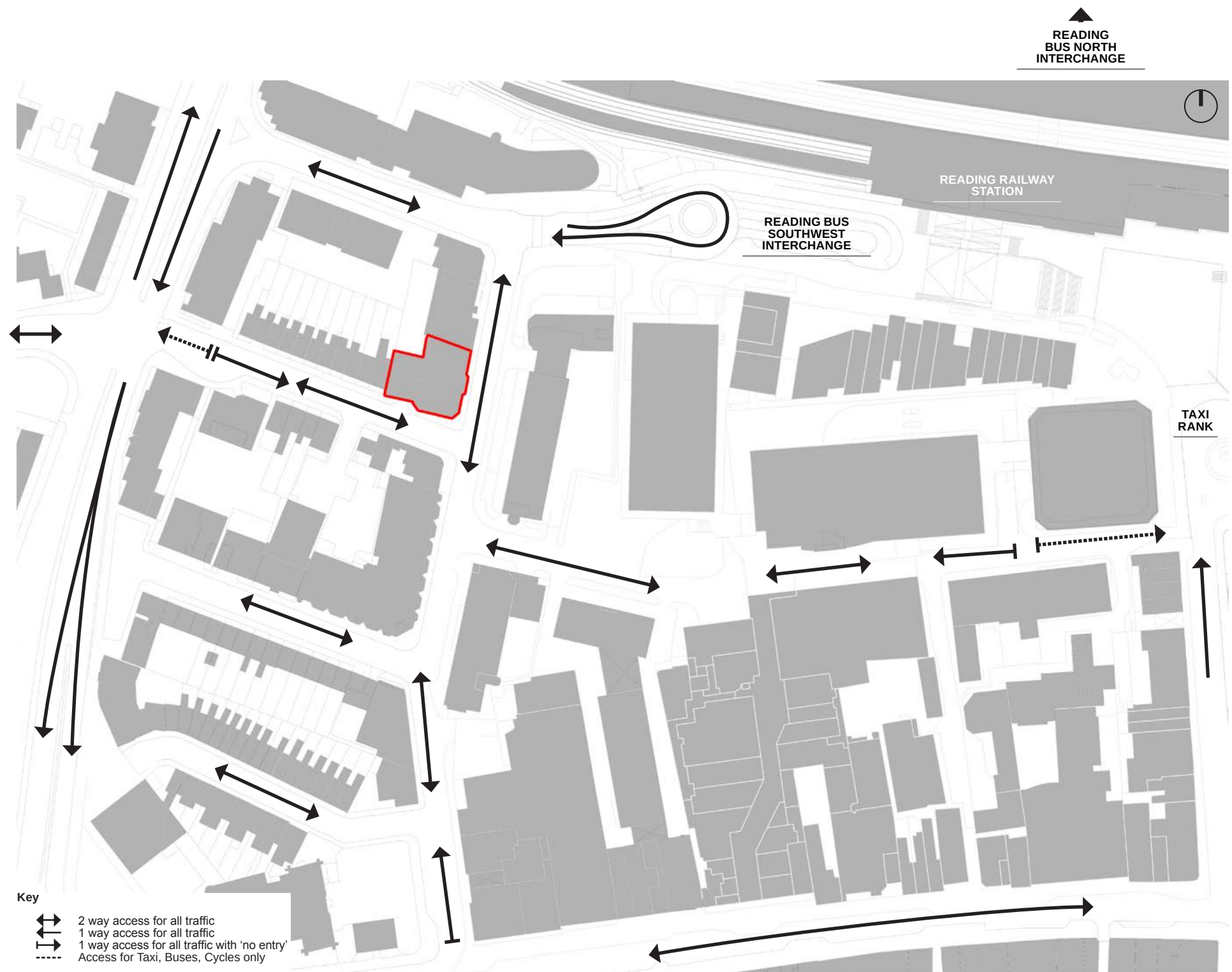
Private parking and service access to application site from Stanshawe Road



Urban grain diagram showing location of view through Station Hill scheme to application site



3D view showing view through Plot A of Station Hill scheme to existing building



Existing Road Network

03.00 | Site Analysis

Constraints & Opportunities

03.10 | Constraints & Opportunities

Following the above analysis of the existing site, diagrams to the right summarises the key constraints & opportunities for the application site.

These include the following:

- The ground floor sits within the site boundary, whereas the upper floors project and oversail the public highway. The blue shaded area on the diagram to the right shows the extent to which the facade oversails the ground floor. These are dimensioned at key points.
- The existing structure will be reused within the building, therefore existing entrances, staircases and lifts will be retained in their existing locations.
- The site is within Flood Zone 2, therefore existing entrances will be retained and used to provide a dry means of escape.
- Stanshawe Road has a residential character, whereas Greyfriars Road has a commercial office character.



Existing Cross Section A-A



STANSHAW ROAD

GREYFRIARS ROAD