

Packaged Living Ltd
Waterfront Square, Norman Place, Reading
Statement of Community Involvement
July 2024

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Introduction

This document provides a detailed record of engagement undertaken in relation to the planning application for the development of Waterfront Square, by Packaged Living Ltd (“the Applicant”). The pre-application engagement has been undertaken by Cratus Group (Cratus) on behalf of the Applicant.

The Consultation Process & Objectives

Cratus was appointed to undertake a comprehensive programme of consultation and engagement with the local community, elected representatives, and interested stakeholders in relation to the proposals for Waterfront Square.

The Applicant felt that it was important that the local community, elected representatives, and interested stakeholders be engaged with from an early stage in order to inform them of the plans and gain valuable feedback on the proposals.

To this end, an appropriate programme of engagement and consultation has been undertaken, which has included an in person public consultation event, and discussions with elected representatives at Reading Council and interested community groups.

Background and Approach

Policy Framework

The process of consultation undertaken has been in accordance with both national and local guidance on best practice of pre-application consultation. The details of the guidance followed is listed below:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (2023)
- The Localism Act (2011)
- Reading Council Statement of Community Involvement (2014)

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England. The document states that applications which can demonstrate early, effective, and proactive engagement with communities and other interested parties should be looked upon more favourably than those that cannot. It specifically sets out the following:

“Pre-application engagement and front-loading

39. Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality preapplication discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.

40. Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.

41. The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits. For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. This assists local planning authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs.

42. *The participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle, even where other consents relating to how a development is built or operated are needed at a later stage. Wherever possible, parallel processing of other consents should be encouraged to help speed up the process and resolve any issues as early as possible.*

43. *The right information is crucial to good decision-making, particularly where formal assessments are required (such as Environmental Impact Assessment, Habitats Regulations assessment and flood risk assessment). To avoid delay, applicants should discuss what information is needed with the local planning authority and expert bodies as early as possible.*

44. *Local planning authorities should publish a list of their information requirements for applications for planning permission. These requirements should be kept to the minimum needed to make decisions, and should be reviewed at least every two 14 years. Local planning authorities should only request supporting information that is relevant, necessary and material to the application in question.*

45. *Local planning authorities should consult the appropriate bodies when considering applications for the siting of, or changes to, major hazard sites, installations or pipelines, or for development around them.*

46. *Applicants and local planning authorities should consider the potential for voluntary planning performance agreements, where this might achieve a faster and more effective application process. Planning performance agreements are likely to be needed for applications that are particularly large or complex to determine.”*

The Localism Act (2011)

The Localism Act (2011) is intended to empower local communities to participate in the planning processes in their areas and the consultation process has accorded with the key principles established therein for consulting with the public. Principally, these are:

- The publication of the proposed application widely, to an extent that can be reasonably said to bring the proposed application to the attention of the majority of persons who live at, or otherwise occupy, premises in the vicinity of the land
- To make clear how interested persons may contact the applicant team should they wish to comment or collaborate in relation to the proposed development
- To give such information about the timetable to ensure that persons wishing to comment on the proposed development may do so in good time
- Have regard to the responses to consultation that have been made following the consultation process

Reading Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement (2014)

Cratus, under the instruction of the Applicant, has conducted its community consultation work in line with guidance issued in Reading Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement (2014)¹.

The Statement of Community Involvement offers the following guidance:

- “The Council agrees with this emphasis on engaging the community from the outset. It can result in an improved scheme which takes the needs of the existing community into account, and a better relationship between the developer and the community that carries through the application process and beyond. This is particularly the case for proposals that are sensitive or of a significant scale.”

¹ [Reading Borough Council SCI \(2014\)](#)

Reading Borough Council's SCI defines significant development as that which provides "a net increase of more than 50 units" in terms of housing and identifies that those promoting "Significant Developments" should undertake the following community involvement:

- *Developers should prepare circular information on the developer/applicant's intentions to make a planning application and develop a particular site.*
- *Developers should widely distribute such information as may be agreed by the local planning authority by posting to household addresses and other addresses determined in conjunction with and agreed by the local planning authority.*
- *Developers should arrange and provide at least one interactive involvement event*
- *Developers should provide a website of relevant information or provide digital images and information*

The Applicant has sought to undertake an open process of pre-application consultation on the proposals, with involvement from local residents and locally elected representatives. This activity is set out in greater detail in this report.

The Engagement Process

This section details the actions taken by the Applicant to enable the local community, elected representatives, and interested stakeholders to take part in the consultation process and provide feedback on the proposals for Waterfront Square.

The Applicant has endeavored to conduct a consultation process which ensured the local community were properly informed of the plans for Waterfront Square and had the opportunity to comment on the plans.

The community consultation carried out comprised the following:

- A public consultation letter sent to 1,231 addresses surrounding the site on Monday, 15th January 2024
- The creation of a public consultation website – normanplace.co.uk– which has been live since Monday, 15th January 2024
- Boards promoting the consultation event attached to the site's riverside boundary to raise awareness amongst those who use the riverside
- An in-person public consultation event on Wednesday, 24th January 2024 at Thames Lido, Napier Rd, Reading, RG1 8FR
- A series of meetings with interested local stakeholder groups;
- Engagement with members of Reading Borough Council;
- A direct phone line for consultation enquiries; and
- A direct email address for consultation enquiries.

Consultation area

From an early stage and to maximise local participation in the consultation exercise, the Applicant instructed Cratus to undertake an extensive process of pre-application consultation in the local area, to both identify and address any outstanding issues and to enable the local community to shape the application.

The consultation area was informed by the context of the site and the local community.

A map of the consultation distribution area is available to view in Appendix 1.

Consultation leaflet

In order to introduce the proposals to the local community, and to advertise the public consultation event which took place on Wednesday, 24th January 2024, the Applicant produced a consultation leaflet which was distributed to 1,231 addresses around the site on Monday, 15th January 2024.

The letter contained background context on the site and The Applicant, details of the public consultation event, contact details for the project team and information on how to access the project website.

The consultation letter can be viewed in Appendix 2.

Consultation website

A project website – normanplace.co.uk – was used to host information on the public consultation and has been live since Monday, 15th January 2024. The website contains information on the following:

- Contact details should people wish to speak with a member of the project team;
- Information on the proposals and key benefits;
- An online feedback form;
- Information about Packaged Living;
- Information regarding the public consultation;
- An online feedback form; and
- Public consultation documents (including a digital copy of the exhibition boards displayed at the consultation event)

The project website was updated throughout the consultation process in order to keep the community informed and allow them to engage with the consultation.

The project website can be viewed in Appendix 3.

Boards promoting the consultation event on the site boundary

Two boards promoting the consultation event were attached to the site's railings along the riverside to raise awareness of the consultation event amongst those who use the path along the River Thames.

The boards provided the details of the consultation event, the benefits of the proposals and information on how to access the project website.

The boards can be viewed in Appendix 4.

Public consultation event

In order to maximise community involvement, it was agreed a public exhibition event would take place at Thames Lido on Wednesday, 24th January 2024 from 3pm-8pm.

The public consultation event was advertised through a variety of different methods which include:

- A dedicated project website;
- Two boards promoting the consultation event on the site's boundary along the riverside;
- A public consultation letter distributed to 1,231 properties surrounding the site; and
- A press release issued to The Reading Chronicle and BBC Berkshire

At the exhibition, attendees were able to view a series of exhibition boards which went into greater detail about the context of the site, the proposals and next steps. These exhibition boards were available to

view and download on the project website following the public exhibition. Members of the project team proactively engaged in discussions with visitors and were on hand to answer any questions which arose.

A copy of the exhibition boards is available to view in Appendix 5.

In addition, visitors were encouraged to fill out feedback forms once they had viewed the exhibition. A total of 15 feedback forms were completed at the event. A copy of the feedback form is included in Appendix 5 of this report.

In addition, eight feedback forms were completed online via the project website.

In total, 47 people attended the public consultation.

Invitations to the public consultation event were sent to Thames ward councillors and Reading Borough Council Planning Applications Committee members.



Image from consultation event at Thames Lido

Public consultation feedback

To provide an opportunity for attendees to give feedback on the scheme, the team created a dedicated feedback form that was available on the day of the public consultation event to be completed on the day or sent in after the event. The feedback form is available to view in Appendix 6.

In total, 15 feedback forms were completed and a further eight responses were received online via the project website.

Of the 15 physical feedback forms completed, 33% of respondents were aged 56-70, 33% were aged 70 and over and 33% chose not to answer this question.

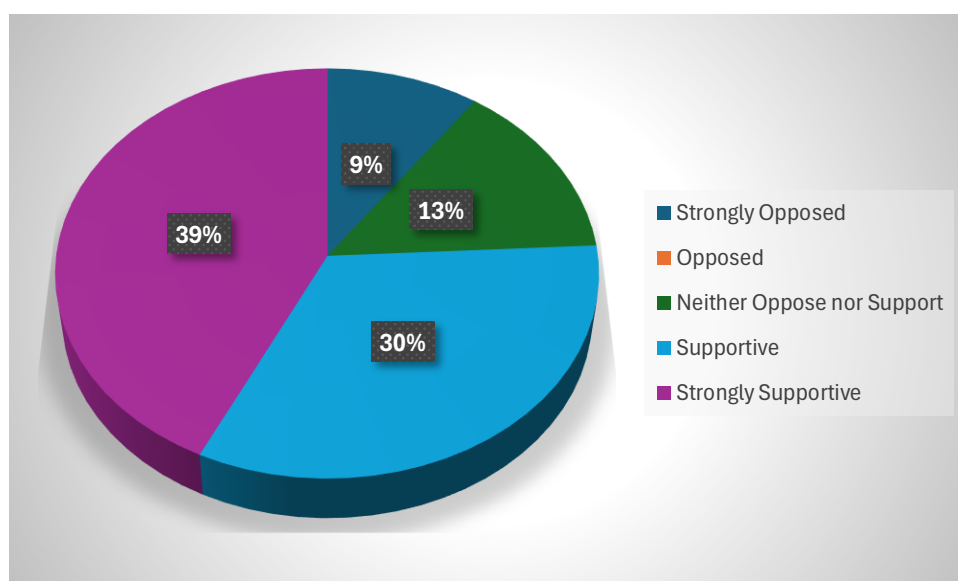
Comparatively, of the online forms completed, 50% of respondents were aged 36-55, 38% were aged 18-35 and 12% were aged 56-70.

On some questions, residents were asked to indicate a score on a scale of '1' (strongly opposed) to '5' (strongly supportive).

A sample of the feedback received via both the physical and online feedback forms is provided below:

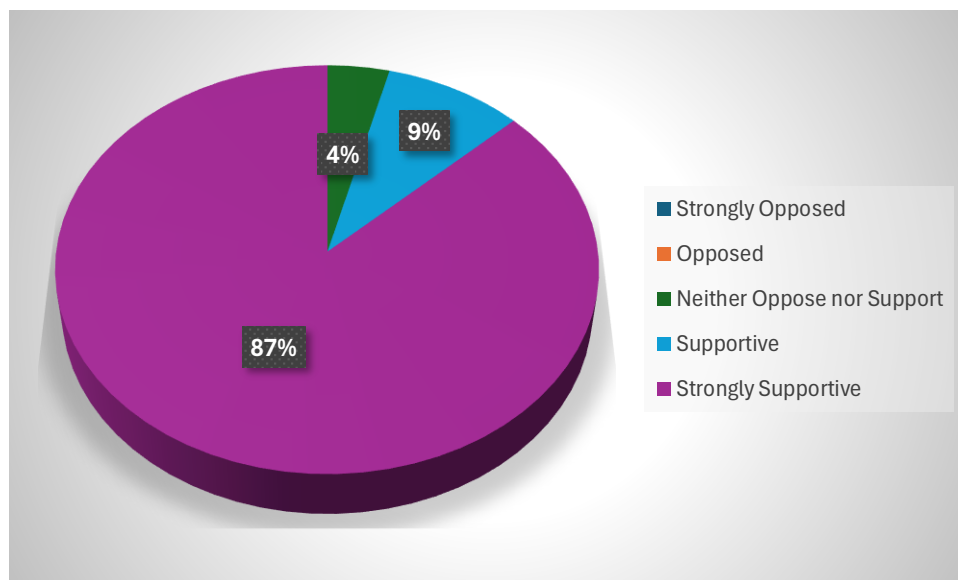
How do you feel about adding professionally managed, rented accommodation with longer term tenancies in the centre of Reading?

- *"5 - Rather have long-term tenants than short term, who use our facilities, give little back and leave."*
- *"3 - Residents already suffer from shortage of doctors and dentists etc. More residential building will only add to the pressure. Buildings way too high, plain and ugly. A prime riverside development needs more character and beauty."*
- *"3 - Currently on fence about the development as there is considerable development already approved for the riverside area in this locality. Integrating the numbers of people it will provide for into the community is key alongside providing necessary infrastructure."*
- *"Strongly supportive - It's better when people stay longer and can get involved with local life."*
- *"Supportive - Supportive if this development will mean more people actually live in the centre of Reading, rather than the area around the train station being dominated by office blocks."*



How do you feel about delivering a new, best in class riverside public realm open to the public?

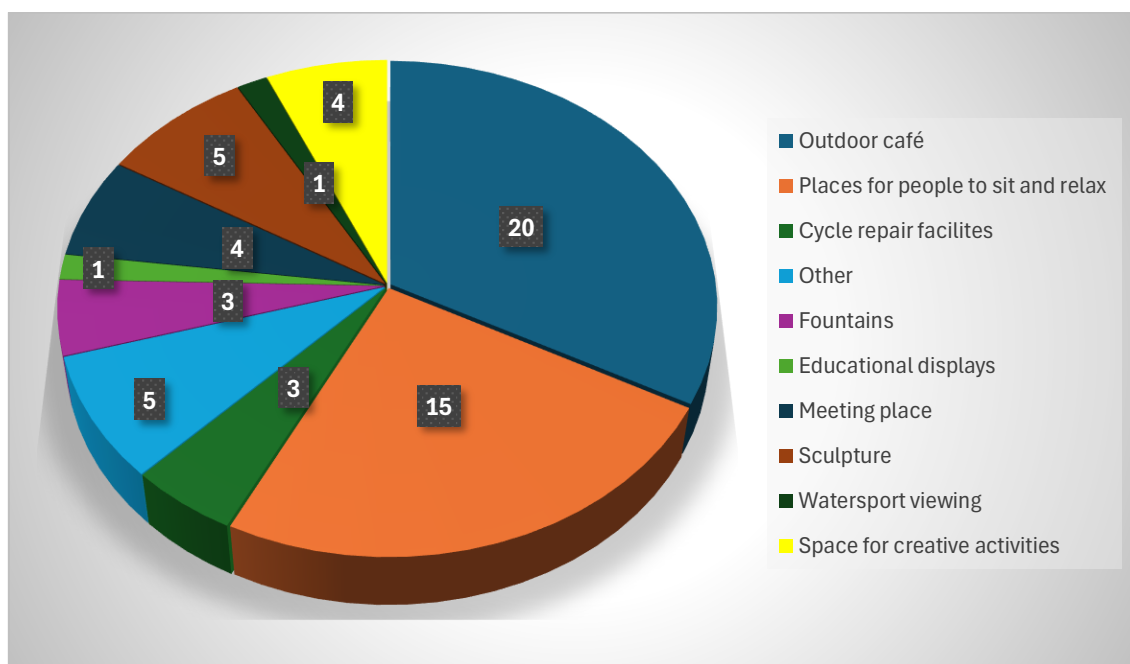
- “5 -The river and frontage have to stay open to all. It is one of Reading's best and top assets.”
- “5 - Reading needs more green space. The square should be more of a public garden with much less hard surfacing, less paving and more grass and trees.”
- “4 - But not towered over by tall 11-storey buildings and no cycling on tow path.”
- “Strongly supportive - Very important for Reading to make better use of the Thames”
- “Supportive - Definitely needed since, as you comment in your public proposal boards the Thames riverside in Reading does feel closed off to the majority of the town. Furthermore this riverside space will connect to Christchurch Bridge and Christchurch Meadows which is one of the nicest parks in the town.”



How can the riverside public square reflect the identity of its surroundings and communities in Reading?

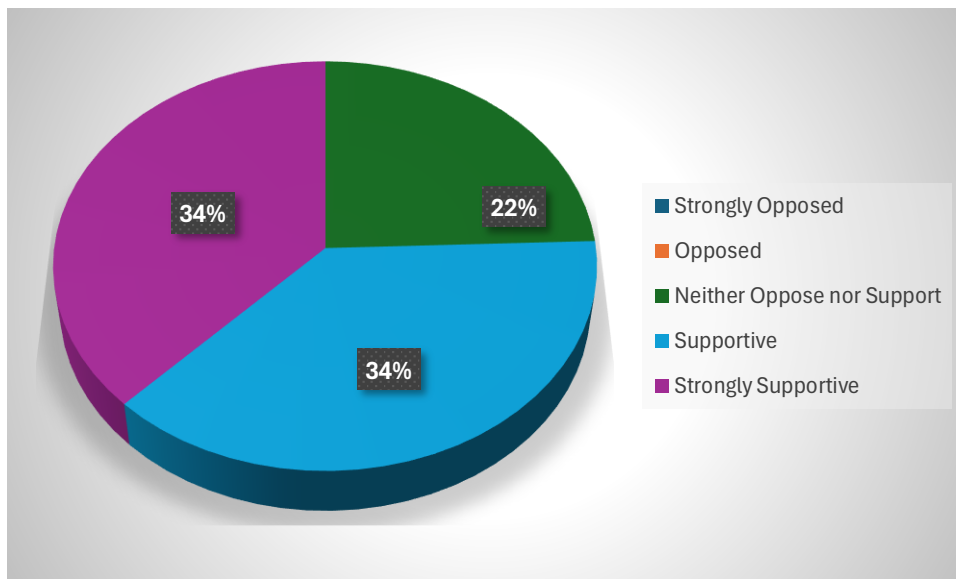
- *“Just make full use of the beautiful riverside.”*
- *“Host for clubs and societies that use the river for conservation work and sports.”*
- *“Reading is a lovely multicultural town where people of all backgrounds really get on with each other. This is not by accident. There are a multitude of voluntary and community sector groups that work hard to promote good relations and are supported in this by the Council, Police, etc. The public square needs to be a highly social space that really helps promote conversations and inclusivity. A family orientated space, broken down into smaller, more intimate, spaces (e.g. through seating layouts). It needs to be a well-managed space so that visitors feel safe. Please also factor in the Reading Festival! It gets very busy, particularly where this site is. Have a think about how to manage this in a way that allows safe and healthy interaction between festival-goers and locals.”*
- *“The spot will become a feature for walkers of the Thames Path, so consider amenities and points of interest they might value. Maps or signage to point out local spots. Certainly a place to grab coffee or tea. Also, we could do with a pub on the riverside!”*
- *“Reading has a history of brickmaking which could be incorporated into the design of any surface treatment. Also there is the history of moving goods along the Thames and the adjacent railway which could be reflected.”*

Please tick the top three things you would like to see in the riverside public square:

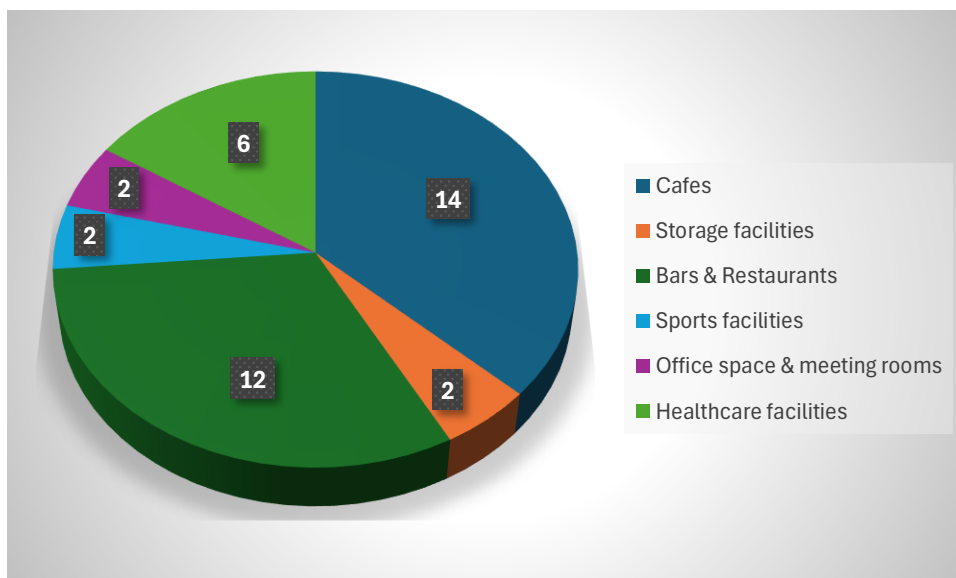


How do you feel about providing new commercial space along the riverside?

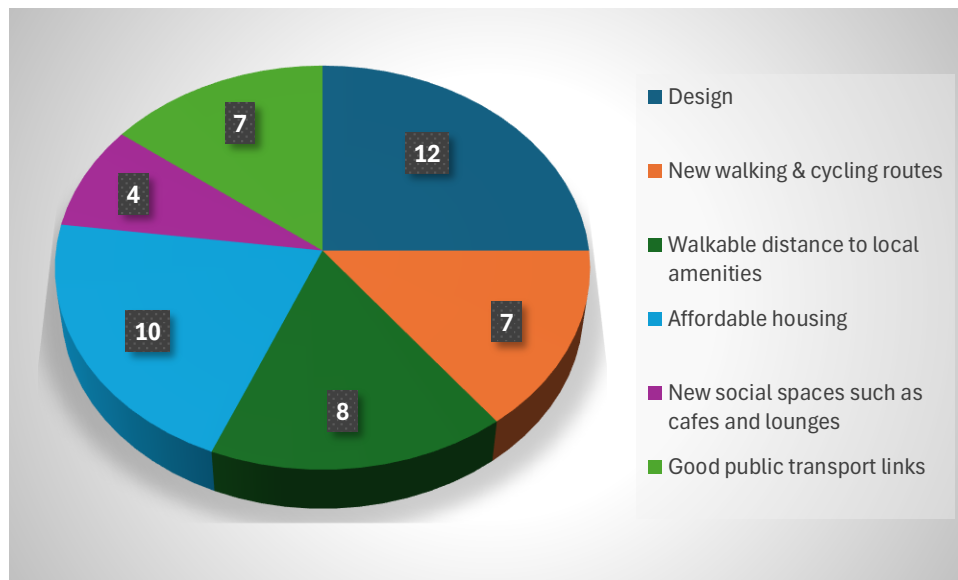
- “3 - What commercial space? Do you mean retail? Reading needs a cafe/coffee shop like a hole in the head.”
- “5 - There should be small units that small businesses can afford. The prices in the town centre are so high, only huge brands can afford them and Harris Arcade is being closed by the owners.”
- “3 - It is a quieter green area and this shouldn't be lost. Overdevelopment be it commercial or residential needs to be balanced with how the communities currently leaving here use the locality.”
- “Supportive - could it help struggling independent businesses in the town? A commercial space providing food and drink near to Christchurch Meadows could be an asset”
- “3 - No more offices”



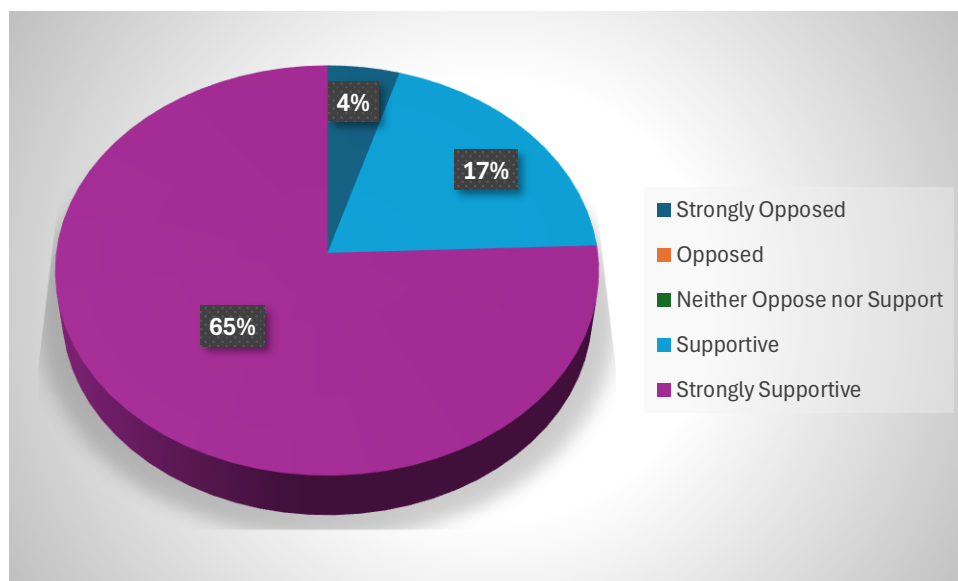
Please tick the top three things you would like to see in the commercial space:



**When considering new build to rent homes, which features do you think are most important?
Tick as appropriate.**



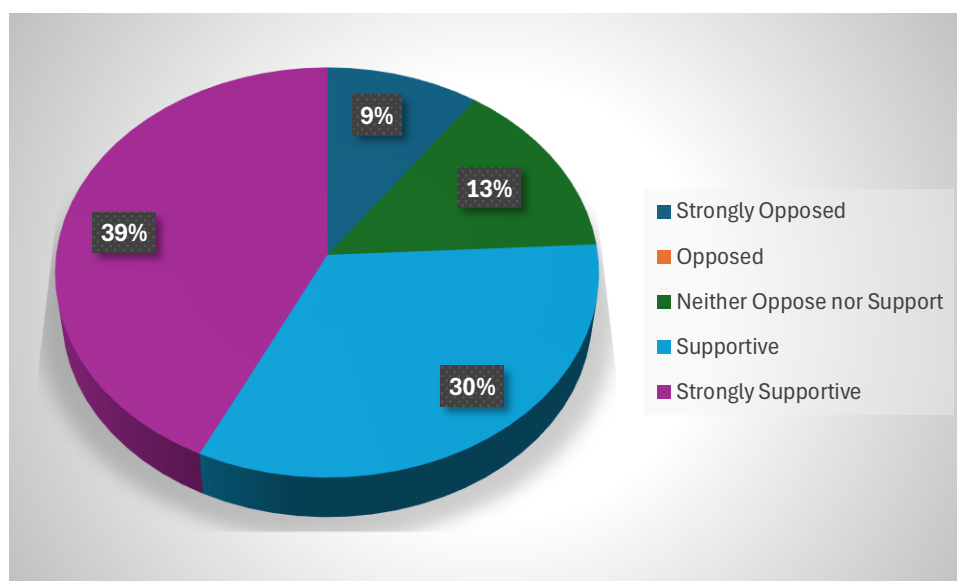
Do you feel the development is sustainably located close to Reading Station?



Do you have any ideas for the name of our scheme?

- "Anything with a wildlife theme"
- "Christchurch View"
- "Fry's Island close by used to be called De Montfort Island."
- "Five islands house (After the five Thames islands in the central Reading area)"
- "Bridge Square"

Overall, how do you feel about the plans to deliver build to rent accommodation and a new waterfront destination at Norman Place?



Attendees were also encouraged to record their suggestions for the use of the Waterfront Public Square, and a log of these suggestions is provided below:

Public garden with cafe.
Moorings car for visitors opposed to current illegally moored live-aboard.
Cafe and restaurant, family friendly public garden.
More trees, grassed areas on the river frontage.
Public garden.
Pub.
Buildings illustrated and too tall!
Residents dog poo garden.
Need a cycle rack and buggy parts.
Cafe restaurant / performance art space / family friendly space
More trees and grass and much less parking.
Include a skate park. People use the station subway as a skate park which is not good for the pedestrians and damages the floor.
A public toilet would be helpful. Only one small one for playing fields, playground, frontage etc.

Response to feedback

The Applicant places the utmost importance on community consultation in the planning process. It is at the centre of their approach to development.

With this in mind, the following considerations have been given to feedback received during the community consultation process:

Feedback	The Applicant's Response
How will the public realm be managed, particularly around community safety and waste management?	Packaged Living Ltd is the developer and will also be the long-term operator. There will be professional management across the site 24/7 once in operation, with the provision of concierge, maintenance and security professionals. The presence of residential use on the site will introduce natural surveillance in this location. In addition, external CCTV will also be provided. Both of which will support community safety.
How will the development promote tenure security?	Waterfront Square will be professionally managed by Packaged Living Ltd and offer longer lease options, compared to traditional rental properties - providing stability and security for tenants. This professional management also ensures that properties are well maintained, and that tenants' needs are promptly addressed.
How much affordable housing will the scheme provide?	Chiefly, the rents charged for homes within the development are intended to be good value for money, ensuring a good quality of life at a rent that local people can afford. Regarding affordable housing, we are in discussions with Reading Borough Council about the level which will be provided, and this will be determined further in the planning process. We recognise the need to bring forward affordable housing and that other consented schemes haven't done so (SSE) and we are committed to the scheme providing Affordable Housing.
How much parking will be provided?	This is a brownfield site in a town centre, opposite a train station, with excellent public transport which means there is a very positive dynamic with regards to cars, parking and the way people live. The new homes will be marketed to prospective residents as car-free living with shops, leisure, and entertaining experiences all within 15-minutes' walk. The train station and bus services are within easy access and 2 no. Car Club spaces will be provided so that residents and people in the area can make use of a car when they occasionally need to drive.

	As a result, we intend to only provide 23 no. car parking spaces and do not expect the development to have a significant impact on the road network. The applicant will look to prioritise those spaces to customers who require their vehicle for their employment – i.e. have a job which involves driving their own or their works van. All parking spaces will be provided with EV chargers.
Will the proposals improve walking and cycle infrastructure?	The applicant has engaged with Sustrans and Reading Cycle Campaign to ensure that the proposals maximize the improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure. The substation on-site will be relocated to create a dedicated route from Vastern Road, along Norman Place and to the riverside, which will also include a 3-metre allowance for a dedicated cycle route. There will be clear indication of the designated paths for cyclists and pedestrians. This route will connect into Route 5 of the National Cycle Network (NCN). The scheme greatly enhances the public realm along the riverside, opening up the river path with a public square and introducing landscaping suitable for the environs. The Thames Path will have a different surface treatment, to specifically note its importance and role as Route 5 of the NCN. Furthermore, we are exploring the opportunity for a potential cycle repair café/facility or tool workstation as part of the multi-use public realm.
Concerned about height	The scheme has been completely re-designed following public consultation so that height is focused around Vastern Road, rather than the riverside. Height being focused around Vastern Road has the benefit of enabling wayfinding from the train station towards the riverside and maximizing the benefit created by enhancing the public realm along the riverside and opening up the river footpath with a public square.

Political and local stakeholder engagement

The Applicant has undertaken a series of meetings with local politicians and broad variety of community groups from across the charity and voluntary sector in Reading which are outlined below.

First round of meetings

Date	Stakeholder	Issues discussed
30/11/2023	Cllr Micky Leng (Lead Member for Planning & Assets, Reading Borough Council)	• Principle of development • Public realm • Affordable and key worker housing
18/01/2024	Cllr Richard Davies and Cllr Adele Barnett-Ward in their capacity as Thames ward councillors	• Principle of development • Public consultation • Public realm • Affordable and key worker housing
21/02/2024	Sustrans, Reading	• Outline of proposals and principle of development • Improvements to cycleways
23/02/2024	Food4Families, Reading	• Outline of proposals and principle of development • Community food growing and the public realm
23/02/2024	Cllr Karen Rowland (Lead Member for Environmental Services & Community Safety, Reading Borough Council)	• Outline of proposals and principle of development • Public realm • Design
15/03/2024	Reading Cycle Campaign and Reading Bike Kitchen	• Outline of proposals and principle of development • Potential for collaboration • Public realm • Cycle path along the river
24/04/2024	Reading Civic Society	• Outline of proposals and principle of development • Riverside views and public spaces • Design • Naming ideas for the site
22/05/2024	Caversham District Residents Association (CADRA)	• Outline of proposals and principle of development • Design, height and massing • Type and tenure of homes • Public realm • Landscaping • Ecology and biodiversity • Pick-up / drop-off areas

08/07/2024	Cllr Micky Leng (Lead Member for Planning & Assets, Reading Borough Council) and Cllr Liz Terry (Leader of the Council, Reading Borough Council)	• Revisions to the scheme as a result of public consultation • The fixed proposals for submission
09/07/2024	Reading Civic Society	• Revisions to the scheme as a result of public consultation • The fixed proposals for submission
11/07/2024	Caversham District Residents Association (CADRA)	• Revisions to the scheme as a result of public consultation • The fixed proposals for submission
11/07/2024	Food4Families, Reading	• Revisions to the scheme as a result of public consultation • The fixed proposals for submission
11/07/2024	Reading Cycle Campaign and Reading Bike Kitchen	• Revisions to the scheme as a result of public consultation • The fixed proposals for submission
11/07/2024	Sustrans, Reading	• Revisions to the scheme as a result of public consultation • The fixed proposals for submission

The Applicant has sought to respond feedback raised during these meetings appropriately through the formation of the final application.

Summary & Conclusion

A comprehensive process of pre-application community consultation has been undertaken to support the submission of the planning application.

It is evident that the Applicant has adopted a grassroots approach to the consultation and design process. The Applicant has undertaken a comprehensive consultation process to shape the direction of the design and content of the proposals which have formed the final planning application.

Engagement from stakeholders has been sought using an appropriate mixture of methods (both in person and online) and feedback has been fed into the development of the application.

The Applicant has sought to amend its final planning application to reflect the broad variety of consultation feedback received. Packaged Living is confident that many of those concerns identified have been appropriately addressed through the development of the planning application or can be properly managed at a later stage in the development process.

The project website remains live and will do so throughout the duration of the planning application so that local residents and community groups can view the scheme and get in contact with the project team if required. The Applicant is committed to maintaining a productive dialogue with local community groups who have been engaged throughout the pre-application consultation process from submission through to operation.

The Applicant will continue to engage with the local community until the planning application has been determined, to ensure residents, stakeholders and community groups remain informed as the application progresses.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Public consultation area





Public Exhibition

Wednesday 24th January, 3.00 - 8.00pm

Thames Lido Events Room, Napier Road, Reading, RG1 8FR

Packaged Living, a developer and manager of high quality homes to rent, are bringing forward proposals to redevelop an obsolete, vacant office site at Norman Place, Reading. The proposals provide c.260 rental homes as well as dedicating part of the site to creating a new waterfront public square which enhances the public realm and reconnects Reading town centre to the riverside.

We would like to invite you to our public exhibition to meet the project team, view the emerging proposals, and give you the opportunity to ask questions and provide your feedback.

You can also find out more about the plans by visiting our project website. All information displayed at the event will be available to view on the website after the public exhibition event.

If you are unable to attend the exhibition and would like to provide feedback or ask a question, please do get in touch using the contact details below or completing the online feedback form at our project website.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSALS?

- A new high quality public space for local people on the River.
- Re-use of an empty, obsolete office and replacement with new homes – targeting net zero carbon development and enhanced ecological biodiversity.
- Good use of a brownfield site to provide significant economic and social value to the town.

WHO IS PACKAGED LIVING?

Packaged Living is an experienced investor, developer and operator within the private rented sector.

Packaged Living is focused on creating good quality rental homes which foster a sense of community, working with local people and organisations to deliver wider regeneration benefits from development opportunities.

You can find out more about Packaged Living and their community-led approach at: **www.packagedliving.co.uk**

CONTACT US

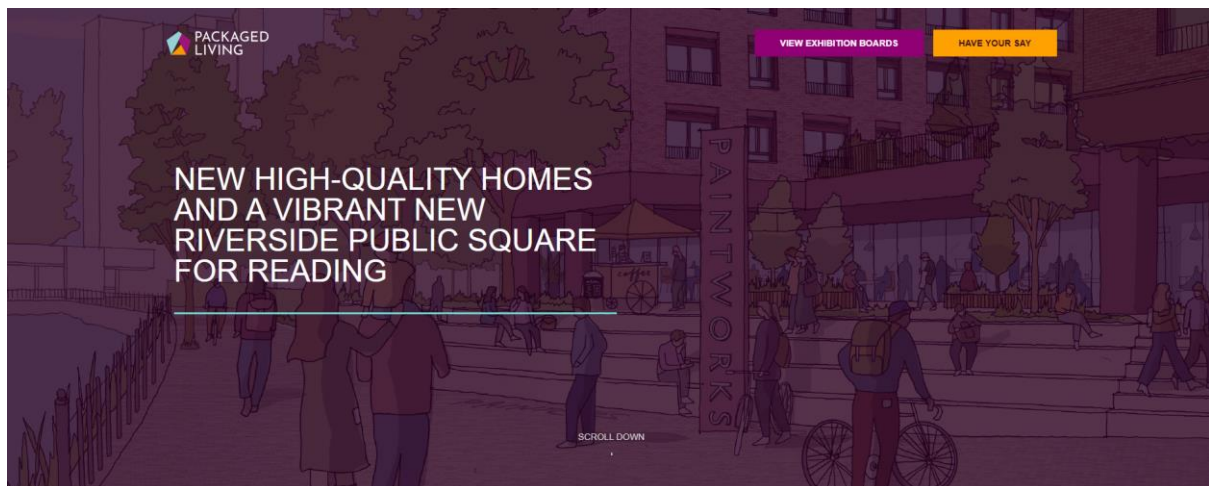
 normanplace.co.uk

 0203 026 3143

 Freepost CRATUS COMMUNICATIONS
(no further address details or stamps required)

 info@normanplace.co.uk

Appendix 3 – Project website



THE PROPOSALS

Packaged Living, a developer and manager of high quality homes to rent, are bringing forward proposals to redevelop an obsolete, vacant office site at Norman Place, Reading.

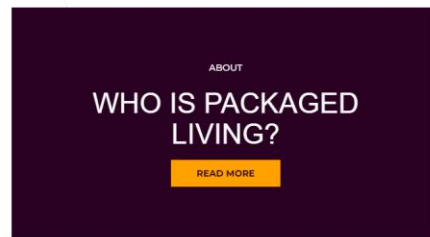
The proposals provide c.260 rental homes as well as dedicating part of the site to creating a new waterfront public square which enhances the public realm and reconnects Reading town centre to the riverside.



WHAT ARE THE KEY BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSALS?

-  A new high-quality public space for local people on the river
-  Re-use of an empty, obsolete office and replacement with new homes – targeting net zero carbon development and enhanced ecological biodiversity
-  Good use of a brownfield site to provide significant economic and social value to the town





GET IN TOUCH

EMAIL:

info@normanplace.co.uk

PHONE: 0203 026 3143

FREEPOST CRATUS COMMUNICATIONS
(No further address details or stamps required)

Name

First Last

Email

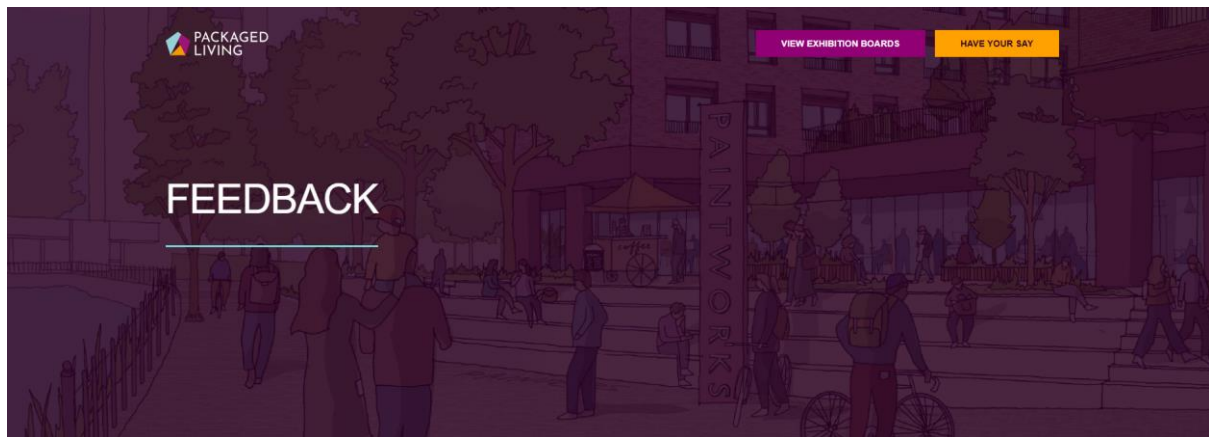
Comments

Do you agree to storage of your data? *

☐ Yes

By submitting this form, you hereby agree that we may collect, store and process your data that you provided.

SUBMIT



GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK

Thank you for attending our public exhibition today. Using this form, you can give your feedback on our plans to re-envision Norman Place and the adjoining riverside frontage.

EMAIL:
info@normanplace.co.uk

PHONE: 0203 026 3143

FREEPOST CRATUS COMMUNICATIONS
(No further address details or stamps required)

Name:

FirstLast

Email:

Phone:

Postcode:

Age:

☐ Under 18

☐ 18-35

☐ 36-55

☐ 56-70

☐ Over 70

☐ Prefer not to say

Are you a:

☐ Local business

☐ Councillor

☐ Community group representative

☐ Resident

☐ Prefer not to say

Question 1: How do you feel about adding professionally managed, rented accommodation with longer term tenancies in the centre of Reading?

☐ Strongly opposed

☐ Opposed

☐ Neither oppose nor support

☐ Supportive

☐ Strongly supportive

Historically, public squares were the centre of communities and helped shape the identity of towns and cities. Packaged Living is really excited to be able to present a new riverside public square as part of the scheme and would value your thoughts on what this space could be used for and how you envisage this space.

Question 2: How do you feel about delivering a new, best in class riverside public realm open to the public?

- ☐ Strongly opposed
- ☐ Opposed
- ☐ Neither oppose nor support
- ☐ Supportive
- ☐ Strongly supportive

Question 3: Please tell us how you think the riverside public square can reflect the identity of its surrounding communities and Reading.

Question 4: Any great square has a variety of smaller 'places' within it to appeal to a broad range of people. Please select the top three things you would like to see in the riverside public square.

- ☐ Outdoor cafes
- ☐ Fountains
- ☐ Sculpture
- ☐ Places for people to sit and relax
- ☐ Educational displays
- ☐ Watersport viewing
- ☐ Cycle repair facilities
- ☐ Meeting place
- ☐ Space for creative activities
- ☐ Other

Question 5: How do you feel about providing new commercial space along the riverside?

- ☐ Strongly opposed
- ☐ Opposed
- ☐ Neither oppose nor support
- ☐ Supportive
- ☐ Strongly supportive

Question 6: Please select the top three things you would like to see in the commercial space:

- ☐ Cafes
- ☐ Bars and restaurants
- ☐ Office space and meeting rooms
- ☐ Storage facilities
- ☐ Sports facilities
- ☐ Healthcare facilities

Question 7: When considering new build to rent homes, which features do you think are most important?
Select as appropriate.

- ☐ Design
- ☐ Affordable housing
- ☐ Walkable distance to local amenities
- ☐ New walking and cycling routes
- ☐ Good public transport links
- ☐ New social spaces such as cafes and lounges
- ☐ Other

Question 8: Do you feel the development is sustainably located close to Reading Station?

- ☐ Strongly opposed
- ☐ Opposed
- ☐ Neither oppose nor support
- ☐ Supportive
- ☐ Strongly supportive

Question 9: Do you have any ideas for the name of our scheme?

waterfront destination at Norman Place?

- ☐ Strongly Opposed
- ☐ Opposed
- ☐ Neither oppose nor support
- ☐ Supportive
- ☐ Strongly Supportive

DATA PROTECTION: Data will be collected and held securely by Cratus Group Ltd on behalf of Packaged Living in accordance with the latest GDPR standards. Anonymised comments will be provided to Reading Borough Council as part of a future planning application.

Do you agree to storage of your data? *

☐ Yes

By submitting this form, you hereby agree that we may collect, store and process your data that you provided.

SUBMIT

Appendix 4 – Boards promoting the consultation event on the site boundary

**PACKAGED
LIVING**

NEW HIGH-QUALITY HOMES AND A VIBRANT RIVERSIDE PUBLIC SQUARE FOR READING

Packaged Living are bringing forward proposals to redevelop Norman Place, Reading. The proposals provide c.260 rental homes as well as dedicating part of the site to creating a new waterfront public square.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSALS?

- ▶ A new high-quality public space for local people on the River
- ▶ Reuse of an empty, obsolete office and replacement with new homes - targeting net zero carbon redevelopment and enhanced ecological biodiversity
- ▶ Good use of a brownfield site to provide significant economic and social value to the town



HAVE YOUR SAY

Public Exhibition

Wednesday 24th January, 3.00 - 8.00pm

Thames Lido Events Room, Napier Road,
Reading, RG1 8FR



You can find out more about Packaged Living and our community led approach by scanning the QR Code or visiting packagedliving.co.uk

Appendix 5 – Public exhibition boards

WELCOME



Welcome to our public exhibition and consultation for Norman Place in Reading town centre. This is an exciting development of new homes and opportunity to create a new waterfront public space next to the Thames.

The proposals comprise:

- Circa 260 high-quality homes for rent with shared resident amenity spaces
- Best-in-class riverside public realm, for full public use by local people
- New commercial space along the riverside animating this public space
- A major focus on sustainable development – targeting net zero carbon housing and improving local walking and cycle routes
- Delivering long-lasting social and economic benefits to central Reading

Before submitting a planning application, we want to engage with you about our proposals. This exhibition is your opportunity to review the designs and provide feedback. Once you have reviewed our boards, please take the opportunity to return a feedback form to share your views.



Packaged Living is a bespoke build-to-rent operator and developer that has grown a pipeline of over 5,000 homes since its inception in 2018, with major developments spanning the UK. Packaged Living have a strong track record of developing homes and creating communities in the private rented sector.

You can find out more about Packaged Living and our community led approach by scanning the QR Code or visiting packagedliving.co.uk



Shawbrook work.



What is Build to Rent?

Build to Rent refers to high-quality purpose-built homes designed for rent rather than sale.

Build to Rent developments are purpose-built homes with professional management by a single company, rather than individual landlords, and longer-tenancies for those who want them, offering security in the private rented sector.

Build to Rent is well suited to a wide range of customers – from young professionals including key/essential workers to older people wanting to live close to all Reading town centre has to offer.

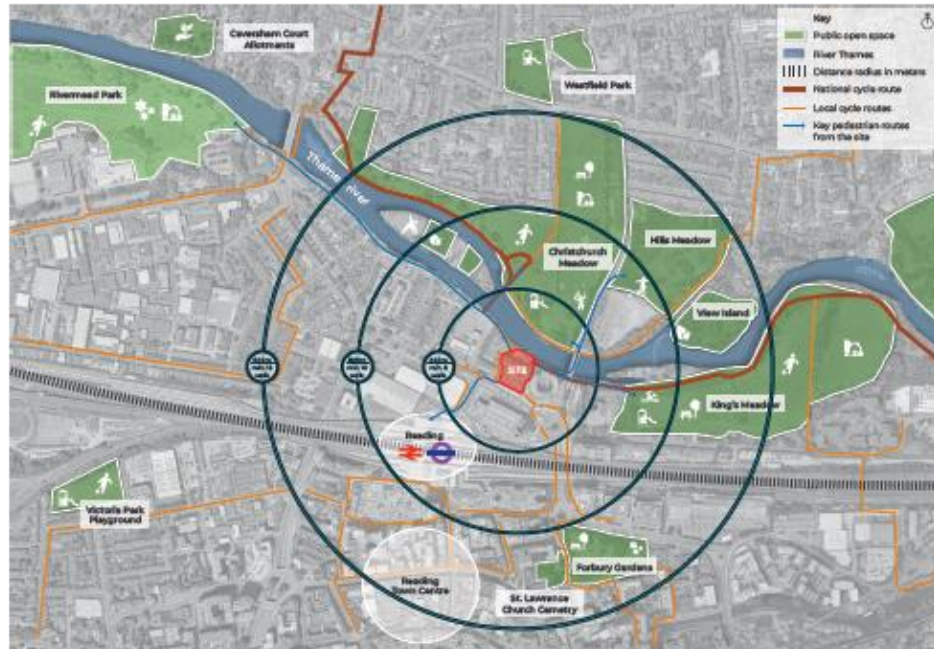
Norman Place, Reading

Assael

SITE OVERVIEW & CONTEXT

The site is located at Norman Place, to the north of Reading Railway station between Vastern Road and the River Thames. The site currently comprises an existing vacant office building with a surface car park to the south of the building, and a hard landscaped area serving the former office use, adjacent to the Thames Path and River Thames.

In the wider area the site benefits from excellent access to the train station, local amenities and nearby Local Green Space such as Christchurch Meadows. The proposals would provide new housing and complementary uses in a sustainable location whilst also creating a new public space adjacent to the river, with enhanced pedestrian and cycle access.



Planning context

- **Brownfield land** - In line with national and local planning policy, the proposals maximise the use of a brownfield site in a highly accessible and sustainable location to provide homes and a new public open space
- **Flood Management** - The majority of the site, and all of the proposed buildings are within Flood Zone 1, which has the lowest probability of flooding. The proposals provide the opportunity to reduce flood risk by integrating a well-considered drainage and landscaping scheme.
- **Responding to the surrounding context** - In line with local planning policy, the proposal will enhance pedestrian and cycle access and create high-quality public realm, responding positively to nearby open green spaces and water spaces.



Key plan



05 - View from Vastern Road looking towards the site



01 - View of northern courtyard and existing tree along the north and eastern boundary



02 - View looking south over the Public Right of Way



03 - View looking east along the Thames River path



04 - View from Christchurch Meadows looking towards the site

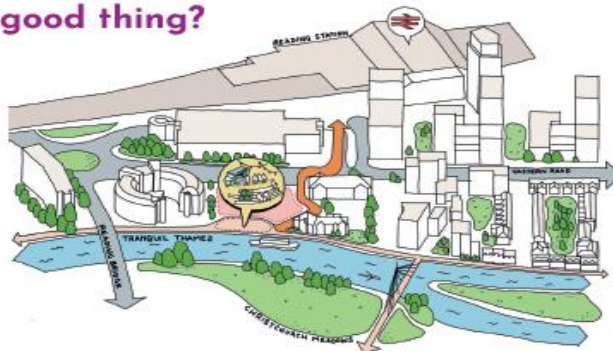
THE VISION



Why is this a good thing?

This area of Reading is a hidden gem, with the waterfront currently underutilised and those coming out of the station cut off from the river by this vacant office building.

We want to open up and improve the public realm along the riverside so that many more people can enjoy the waterfront, creating a fantastic place to live and a new waterfront destination for the wider community.

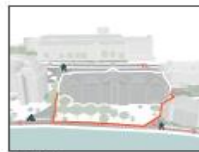


We are seeking to create:

- A thriving neighbourhood, offering a unique and vibrant place to live and space for local businesses to flourish
- A place that reconnects Reading town centre to its waterfront and open spaces to the north
- A place where people feel safe and comfortable to walk and cycle
- A place where the streets and homes are built to high standards of design and sustainability
- Homes oriented to maximise views of the river

Key moves

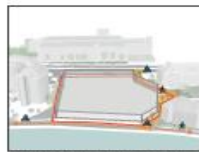
The design principles and outline strategy for the site are:



Existing site



Regulating the streetscape and creating active edges. Block of houses positioned centrally and screened by active uses



Significantly enhanced pedestrian and cycle route through to the river. New public realm and active uses bring the river



Public space at the heart of proposals formed by community use



High-quality residential homes wrapping around generous resident's courtyard gardens



Sculpt and split the buildings to step down to the river and respond to local townscape context



Maximise biodiversity, residents roof terraces and views to the river



Flexible community-led amenity and public space at ground floor, open to local groups and bringing together existing and new residents



THE RESIDENT'S JOURNEY



Zone 1 - Front of House

- ▶ Single main entrance lobby which all residents pass through, promoting social interaction and fostering a sense of community
- ▶ Active frontage along Vastern Road, Norman Place and the riverside to promote interest and vibrancy at lower levels
- ▶ Concierge desk providing residents with 24/7 on-site support
- ▶ Opportunity to support pop up community events and initiatives at ground floor



Zone 2 - Shared amenity

Residents rent the whole building and have access to a range of communal amenity spaces such as:

- ▶ Lounge areas
- ▶ Co-working spaces with printing facilities
- ▶ Resident kitchen and private dining areas
- ▶ External landscape spaces designed to promote health, wellbeing, and biodiversity
- ▶ Roof terraces with panoramic views overlooking the city centre and the River Thames



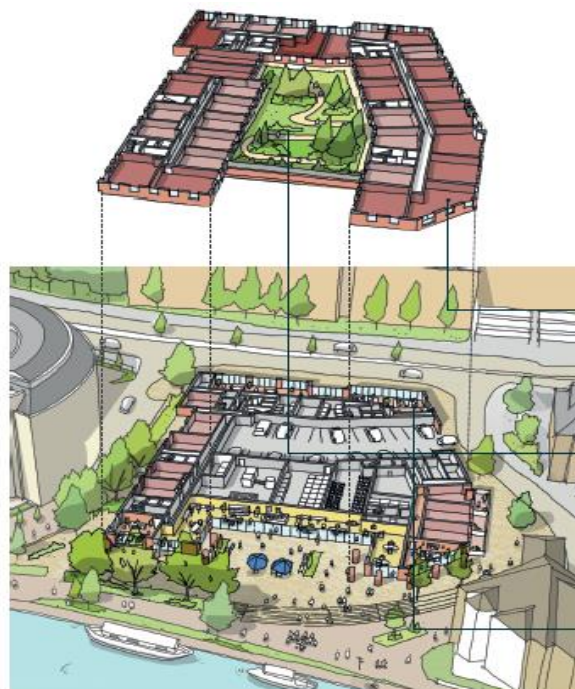
Zone 3 - Apartments

- ▶ Spacious open plan living, kitchen and dining rooms
- ▶ Maximised window sizes to ensure apartments are bright and airy
- ▶ Equal size bedrooms with built in wardrobes and ensuite bathrooms
- ▶ No single aspect north-facing dwellings
- ▶ Juliet balconies to living rooms



Zone 4 - Back of House

- ▶ Servicing is positioned to the centre of the site and screened by active frontages and accessed from Norman Place
- ▶ Secure cycle spaces
- ▶ Refuse and recycling stores which are easily accessible to residents



Zone 4 - Back of House



Zone 3 - Residents' apartments



Zone 2 - Residents' shared amenity



Zone 1 - Front of House

A WATERFRONT DESTINATION



An important aspect of the proposal is to reconnect local people to the waterfront in Reading town centre.

At the heart of this scheme is a new public square located along the riverside. A great public square can become a central destination and reflect the identity of the surrounding community. We relish the opportunity to work with the local community to create a fantastic destination that will be a focal point on the Thames Path.

Our aim is to create a vibrant place where people want to spend time with family and friends throughout the year. Any great square has a variety of smaller zones to attract a range of people and is flexible throughout the seasons.

The plans will also provide active frontage along Vastern Road and Norman Place, incorporating commercial space to meet the needs of the local community. Furthermore, the plans seek to improve the pedestrian and cycle route along the river, which leads to the public square, creating a focal point and celebration of the Thames Path.

What would you like to see here?

We want to hear your ideas about what you would like to see within the public square and how the square can reflect the identity of its surrounding communities. Please take a post-it note and write down your ideas on the next board.



Potential ideas for the public square include but are not limited to:

- Coffee cart
- Playspace
- Places to sit and relax
- Adaptable spaces for events
- Art and wildlife trails
- Food growing space
- Meeting spaces for local clubs



YOUR IDEAS



What would you like to see within the public square and the surrounding commercial space?

DESIGN & APPEARANCE



The design of the buildings has been inspired by the various architectural styles throughout Reading. Taking inspiration from the wider context, the design uses Reading red brick, with playful detailing from tiles to create visual interest at the ground floor and top of the buildings.

The building layout and form has undergone a thorough design process to ensure the proposed scheme positively enhances the townscape views, with significant focus on the views from Christchurch Meadows.

There is an opportunity to mark the riverside, and therefore a building of 11 storeys with elegant proportions has been included to support wayfinding from other parts of Reading.

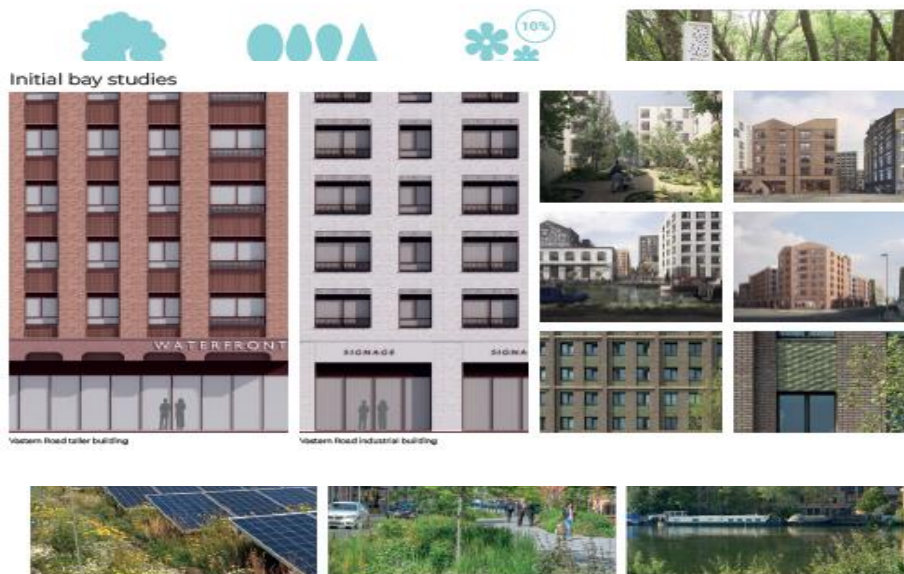
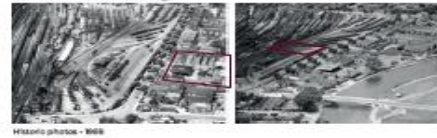
Design principles

- Create a clear and attractive building geometry that complements the neighbourhood and provides a distinctive and elegant view from a distance
- Create interest at ground level with active frontage that leads to the public square
- Provide a distinct character
- Be built predominantly of red brick – a high-quality, enduring material
- Provide buildings that recognise Reading's history and look to the future
- Express the joy of living next to the riverside

Reading red bricks, tiles & pottery



Historic Reading





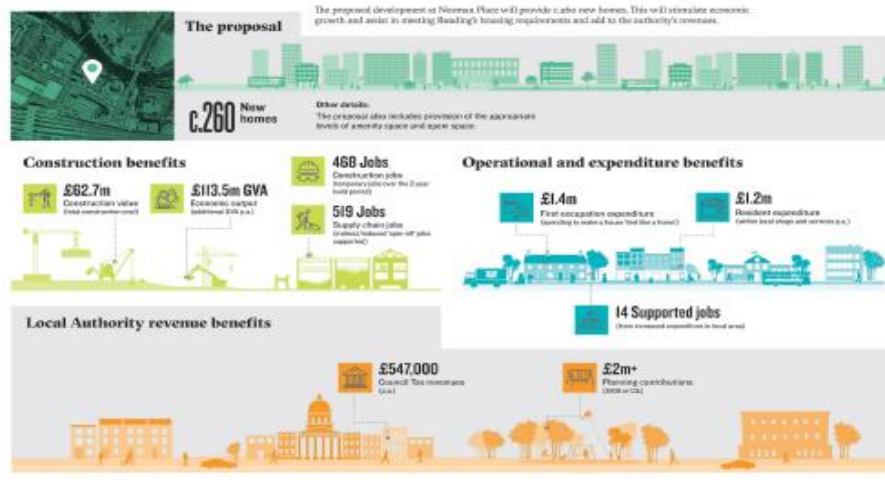
Thank you for taking the time to view our proposals for Norman Place in Reading. We would be grateful if you could complete a feedback form to let us know what you think.

Indicative timeline



Construction Management Plan will be submitted with the planning application and committed to using considerate constructors.

Key benefits



Have your say

normanplace.co.uk

Freeport CRATUS COMMUNICATIONS
(no further address details or stamps required)

0203 026 3143

info@normanplace.co.uk

NORMAN PLACE

FEEDBACK FORM



Thank you for attending our public exhibition today. Using this form, you can give your feedback on our plans to re-envisage Norman Place and the adjoining riverside frontage.

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Postcode:

Age:

☐ Under 18

☐ 18 - 35

☐ 36 - 55

☐ 56 - 70

☐ Over 70

☐ Prefer not to say

Are you a:

☐ Local business

☐ Councillor

☐ Community group representative

☐ Resident

☐ Prefer not to say

1. How do you feel about adding professionally managed, rented accommodation with longer term tenancies in the centre of Reading?

Strongly opposed 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly supportive
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Historically, public squares were the centre of communities and helped shape the identity of towns and cities. Packaged Living is really excited to be able to present a new riverside public square as part of the scheme and would value your thoughts on what this space could be used for and how you envisage this space.

2. How do you feel about delivering a new, best in class riverside public realm open to the public?

Strongly opposed 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly supportive
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3. Please tell us how you think the riverside public square can reflect the identity of its surrounding communities and Reading.

4. Any great square has a variety of smaller 'places' within it to appeal to a broad range of people. Please tick the top three things you would like to see in the riverside public square.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Outdoor cafes | ☐ Watersport viewing |
| ☐ Fountains | ☐ Cycle repair facilities |
| ☐ Sculpture | ☐ Meeting place |
| ☐ Places for people to sit and relax | ☐ Space for creative activities |
| ☐ Educational displays | ☐ Other |

5. How do you feel about providing new commercial space along the riverside?

Strongly opposed 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly supportive
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

6. Please tick the top three things you would like to see in the commercial space:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Cafes | ☐ Storage facilities |
| ☐ Bars and restaurants | ☐ Sports facilities |
| ☐ Office space and meeting rooms | ☐ Healthcare facilities |

7. When considering new build to rent homes, which features do you think are most important? *Tick as appropriate.*

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Design | ☐ Walkable distance to local amenities |
| ☐ Affordable housing | ☐ Good public transport links |
| ☐ New walking and cycling routes | ☐ Other |
| ☐ New social spaces such as cafes and lounges | |

If other, please explain:

8. Do you feel the development is sustainably located close to Reading Station?

Strongly opposed 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly supportive

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

9. Do you have any ideas for the name of our scheme?

10. Overall, how do you feel about the plans to deliver build to rent accommodation and a new waterfront destination at Norman Place?

Strongly opposed 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly supportive

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

GET IN TOUCH

☎ 0203 026 3143

✉ Freepost CRATUS COMMUNICATIONS (No further address details or stamps required)

🌐 normanplace.co.uk

✉ info@normanplace.co.uk

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