

16 - 18 FRIAR STREET



16 - 18 Friar Street was built in 1919 and is a period-style office building with a restaurant at ground level.

This building is similar to the 20-30 Greyfriars site as it also has a strong presence on a corner. It uses red brick to blend in with the older Victorian buildings surrounding it, and imitates their strong grid fenestration. Strong banding is used to define separate bottom, middle and top sections. The roof level is capped to match the height of surrounding buildings. Additionally, the mansard roof is stepped back from the perimeter so it does not impose or overbears visually from street level. The mansard roof features a series of dormer windows, which is typical of the time.



16 - 18 Friar Street

Defined Base Fenestration Grouping Dormer Windows Facade Divisions Window Alignment

Planning Context & Emerging Developments

PLANNING POLICIES

The site falls within the jurisdiction of Reading Borough Council and the site covers the following planning designations:

- Central Area Policy (CR1-10)
- Air Quality Management (EN15)
- Major Opportunity Area (CR11-13 & SR1-3)
- Station/ River Major Opportunity Area (CR11)
- Tall Building Cluster Policy (CR10)
- Central Core Policy (CR1)
- Office Core Policy (CR1)
- Allocated Development Site (CR11b)

These planning designations have been considered within the design proposal.

Key:

Site



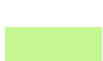
Allocated Development Site



Area of Archaeological Potential Policy



Terraced Housing in Central Reading Policy



North of Friar Street & East of Station Road Policy



Tall Buildings Cluster Policy



Classified Highway Network

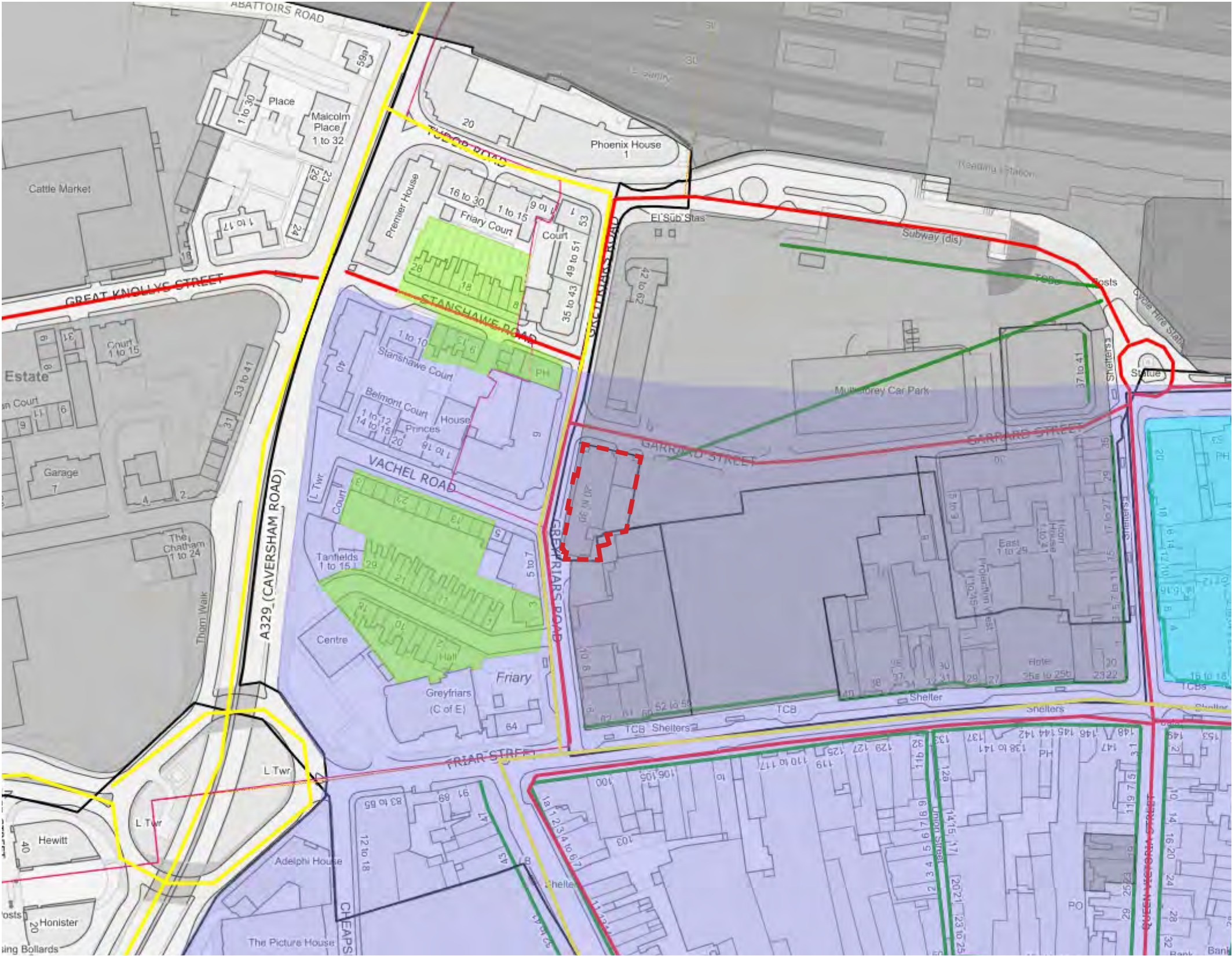


Cycle Routes



Designated Primary Frontage in Central Reading Policy





Policies Map Taken from Reading Borough Council

STATION HILL SOUTH PLANNING
& URBAN DESIGN BRIEF

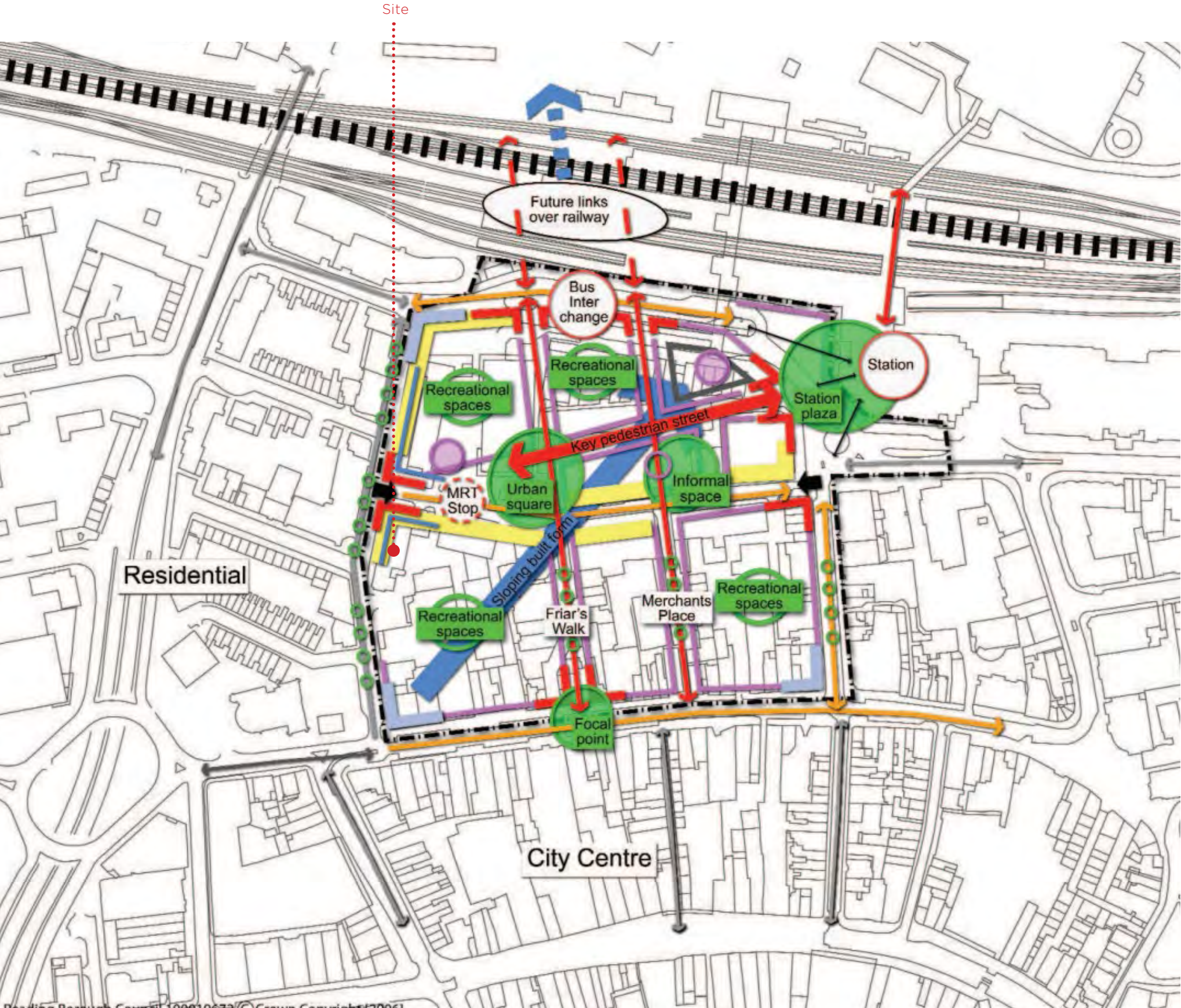
The urban design brief laid out by Reading Borough Council aims to raise the profile of the town. The map to the right identifies opportunities for development within the Station Hill South area. The site, Greyfriars House, has been marked as:

- A vehicular street edge
- A gateway building
- Strong entrance point
- 8 fl. Shoulder height
- Area for improved street-scape

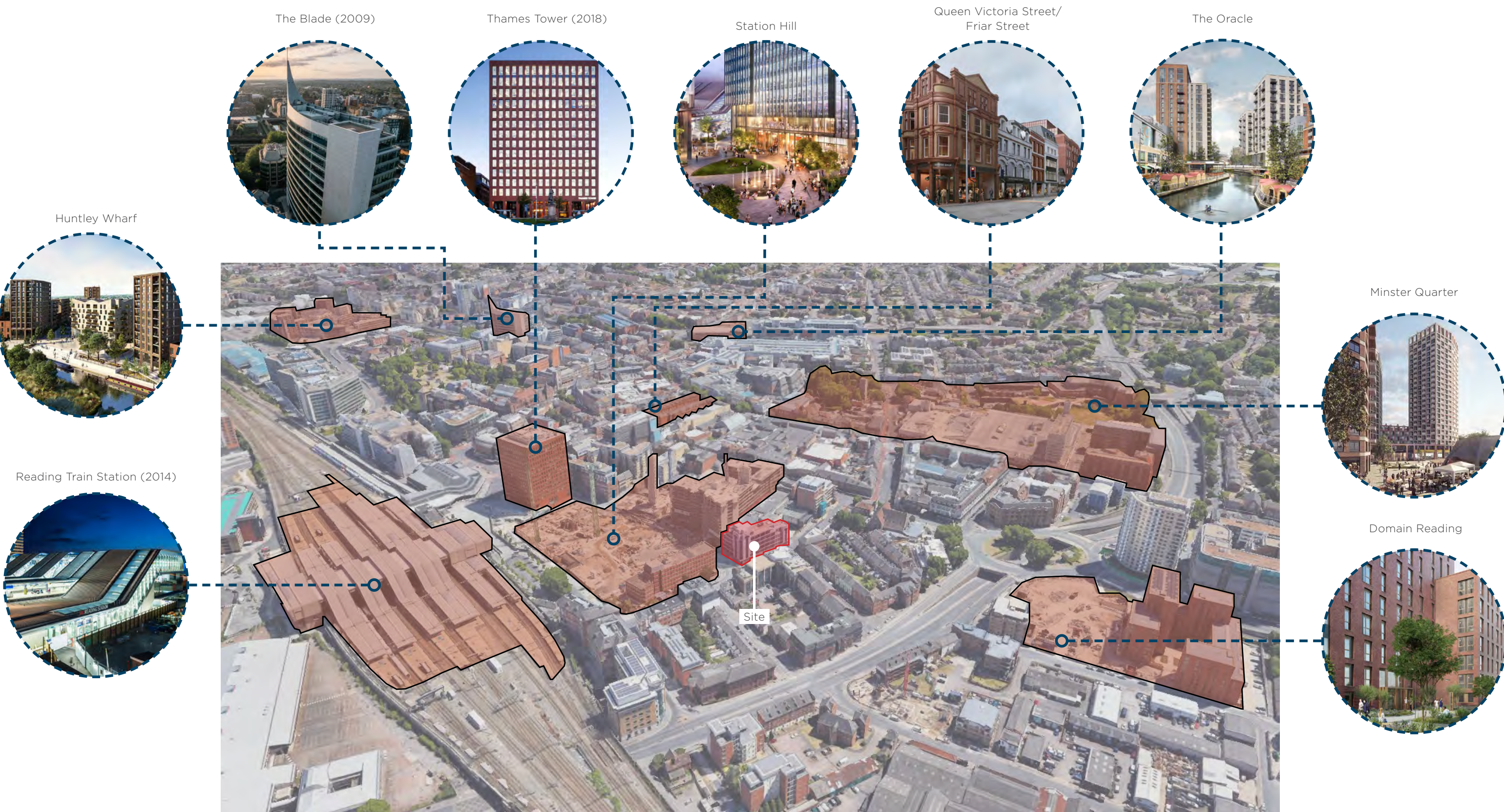
These points should be used as a road map in the proposal to help guide the scheme to the desired standard sought after by the council.

Key:

	Landmark feature
	Vehicular street edge
	Pedestrian street edge
	Gateways
	Strong entrance points
	Public open space
	Private open space
	8 fl. shoulder height
	Accentuated built part
	Accentuated corner
	Iconic structure
	Bus or taxi only
	Pedestrian street
	Vehicular street
	Improved streetscape
	Boundary



Station Hill South Planning and Urban Design Brief: Figure 1.5 "The Vision" (2007)



NEW AND EMERGING DEVELOPMENTS

STATION HILL - DEVELOPMENT SITE

Station Hill is a mixed-use regeneration project that looks to introduce new residential, commercial, leisure and open green spaces into the area. The proposed scheme has been broken down into 3 phases, with phase 1 directly next to the site and will consist primarily of build to rent apartments which will be ready to start moving in occupants from the third-quarter of 2023.

Two acres of Station Hill will be public realm, and made up of restaurants, retail, food halls, community and leisure spaces, and outdoor spaces. A new pocket park adjacent to the station will create areas of play, adventure and rest, whilst a new public plaza running down the centre of the scheme aims to be a stage for curated events and performances.

The Greyfriars House proposal will respond to the emerging context of Station Hill by following the policy in-line with CR10a “Station Area Cluster”. This requires new developments to follow some of these key considerations:

- Follow a pattern of the tallest buildings at the centre of the cluster and step down in height from that point towards to lower buildings at the edge of the cluster.
- Contribute to the creation of a coherent, attractive and sustainable cluster of buildings.
- Ensure that adequate space is provided between the building to ensure a spacious townscape.
- Design to fit with wider planning framework for the area.



Station Hill Indicative Masterplan

Site

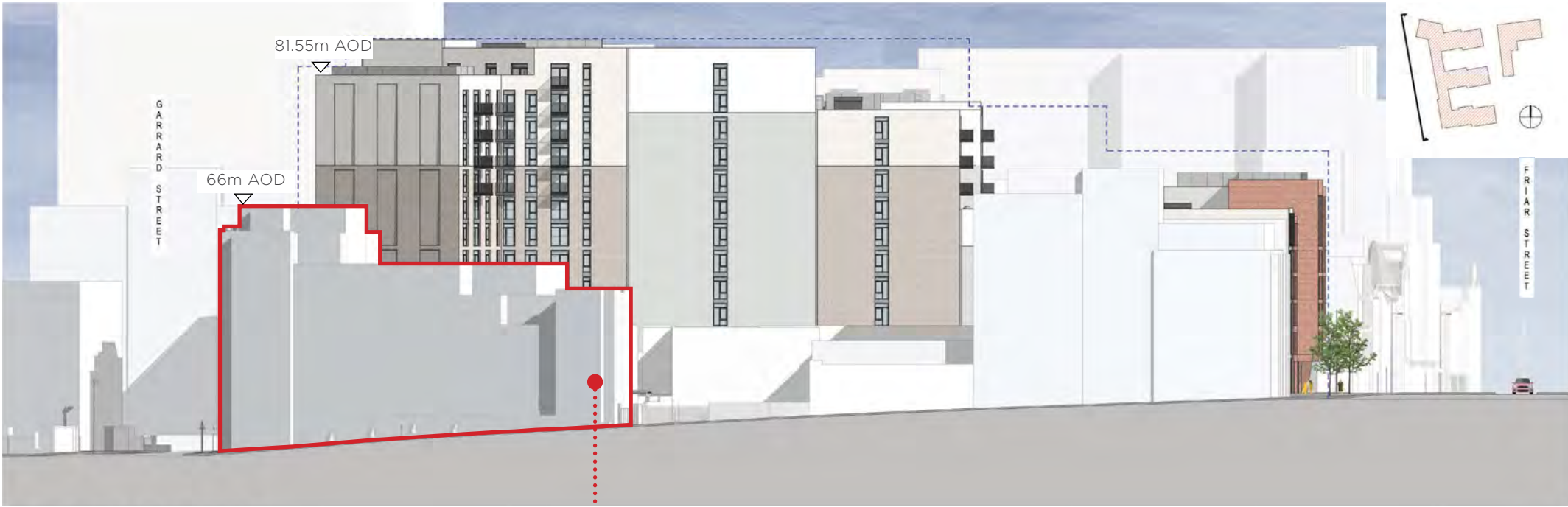
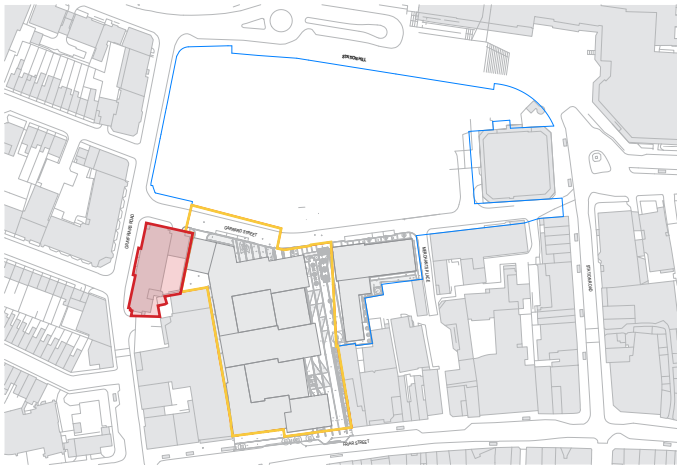
STATION HILL - PHASE 1

The Station Hill development borders Greyfriars House and will be delivered in 3 phases, with Phase 1 being almost complete. Phase 1 features residential buildings with heights of 81.55 meters above Ordnance Datum (AOD). Greyfriars House currently has a height of 66 meters AOD, meaning there is justification to extend further upwards if needed.



Garrard Street Elevation (Drawing Produced by CallisonRTKL)

Greyfriars House



Greyfriars Road Elevation (Drawing Produced by CallisonRTKL)

Greyfriars House

EMERGING CONTEXT OF STATION HILL

Greyfriars House is located in an area of significant development. Neighbouring and forming the eastern boundary is the new Station Hill development, of which is split into 3 phases: Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3. Immediately to the east of Greyfriars House is Phase 1 (grey), which celebrated its topping out ceremony March 2023, and is expected to be completed in 2024.

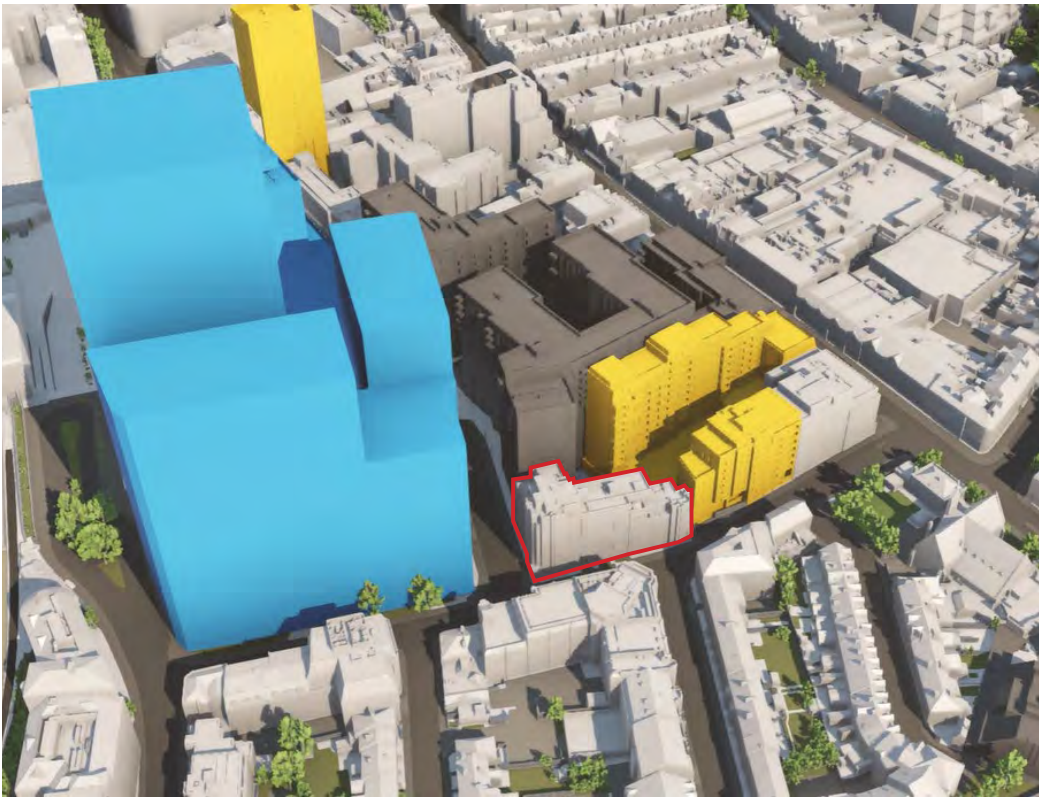
Immediately to the rear of the site is the servicing and delivery entrance for the Sainsbury's which fronts Friar Street. Planning was approved for a residential scheme (yellow) consisting of 3 buildings and 135 units. However, this has since lapsed. Regardless, it's important to ensure that the proposed scheme does not have an adverse impact of future development in this location as it is possible a new proposal will follow similar principles.

Major developments are currently taking place across Garrard Street with phases 2 and 3 underway. Phase two (One Station Hill), celebrated it's topping ceremony September 2023, and due to finish later in 2024.

Due to the height of the emerging context of Station Hill, it allows for scope on an extension in height from the current building.

Key:

- Site 
- Previously Consented 
- Under Construction 
- Completed Construction 



Existing Site & Building

THE SITE

The site is located a 3-4 minute walk south of Reading Rail Station on the corner between Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street.

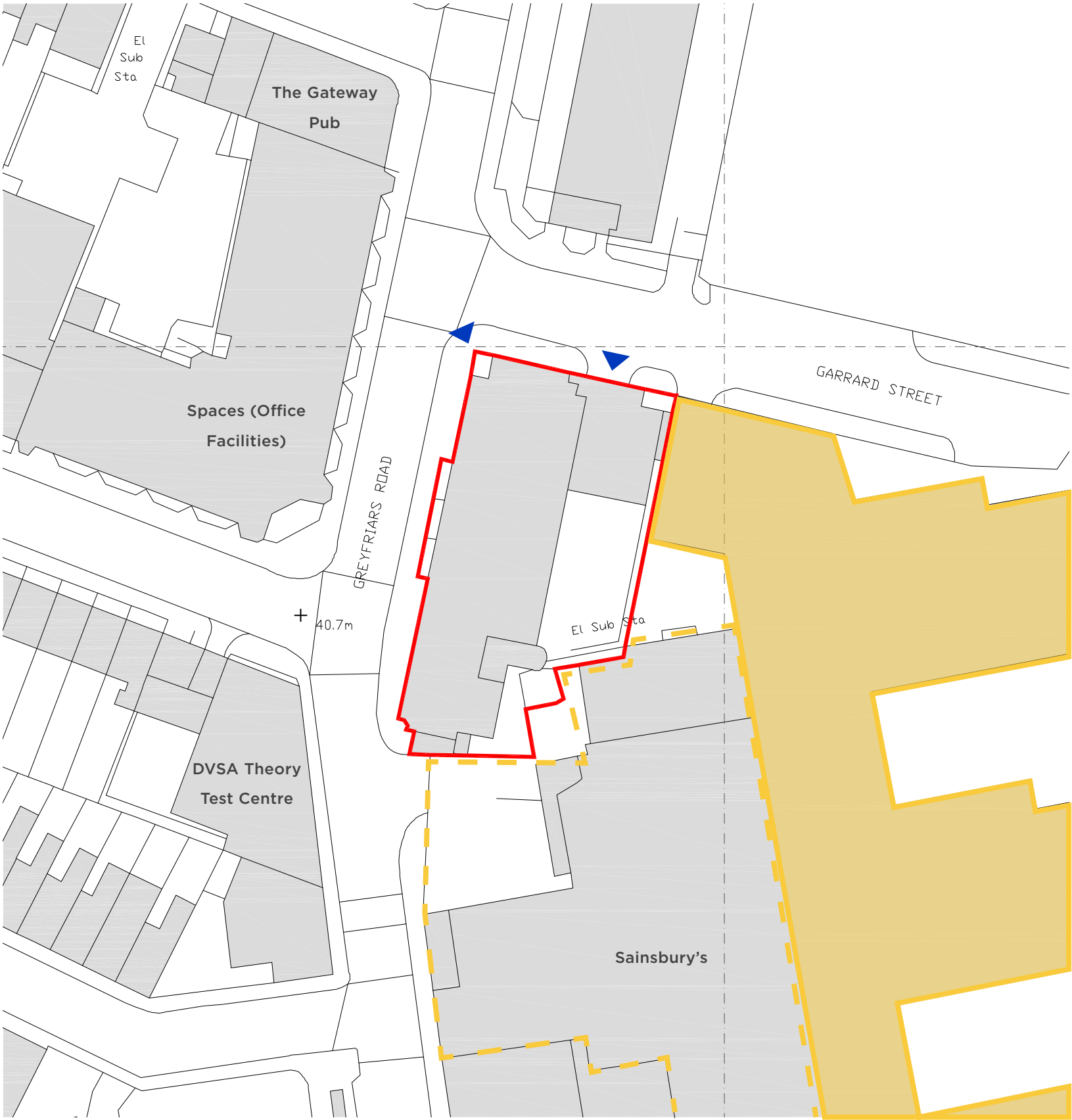
The site, approximately 0.117ha, is the location of Greyfriars House, an office building that previously accommodated multiple companies. The site is partly occupied but the long-standing tenants will not be renewing their lease. By December 2024 the property will be vacant. It was designed in the 1980s and requires modernisation to become more energy efficient and accessible.

The properties immediately surrounding the site are predominantly commercial, with the exception of a couple of small pockets of residential streets. Greyfriars Road provides easy access to the town centre. Other surrounding roads do not suffer from that much traffic.

The development site also comprises of a courtyard area (0.02ha), which has been used for private parking.

Key:

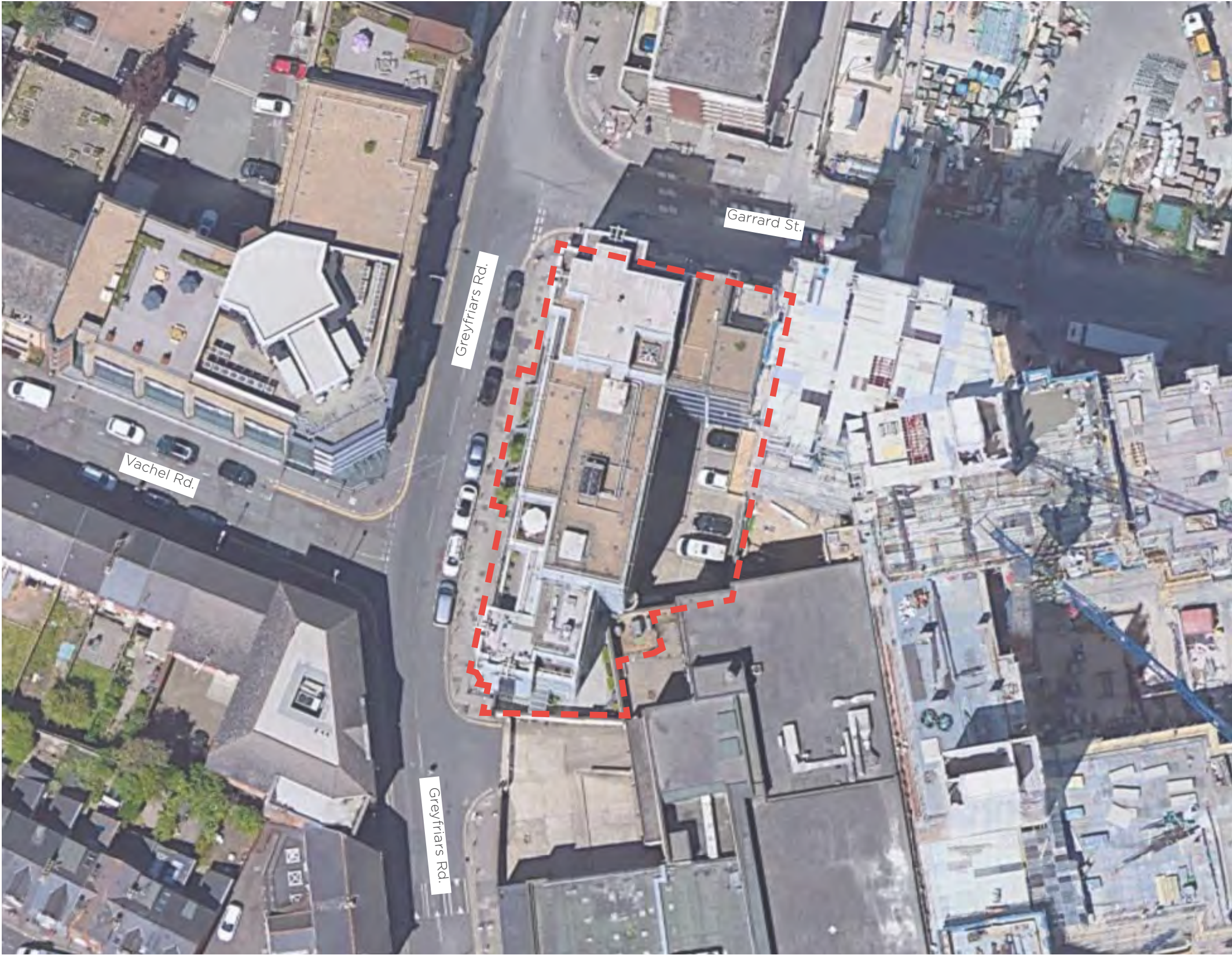
- Site
- Station Hill - Plot E
- Current Entrances
- Potential emerging scheme boundary



Existing Site Plan.

CURRENT CONDITION OF THE SITE

- The site is currently occupied by Greyfriars House, an office building constructed in the 1980s.
- The building sits on the corner of Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street. Although the surrounding area is relatively flat, Greyfriars Road slopes down towards the north.
- Inside the site there's a 0.02ha courtyard that was previously used for private parking. There is additional street parking on the east side of Greyfriars Road.
- There is a change of elevation on the site going north to south down Greyfriars Road.
- The current building uses retaining structures on the south boundary.
- There is very little vegetation on the site apart from three planters on the western boundary of the current scheme.
- There is an access point located on the corner between Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street which is suitable for pedestrian access as it sits on the pavement. Additional vehicular access is currently located off Garrard Street, leading into a small courtyard within the site.



Existing Aerial Plan

EXISTING BUILDING



The site currently comprises of an offices building designed and developed in the 1980s.

The site is 0.117 hectares/0.29 acres with main access on the corner of Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street. A small courtyard behind the building currently serves as private parking for occupants. The existing building spans over 7 floors, with storeys 5 - 7 stepping up in height and provides a total of 5219 sqm (56177 sqft) of Gross Internal Floor Area (GIA). The site is covered by local policies, such as the Reading Council's Station Framework 2010 and the Tall Building Cluster Policy CR10, allowing for redevelopment of the existing structure to accommodate a more modern Co-living scheme.

As of right now, there is minimal landscaping on site. We intend to significantly improve landscaping within our proposals at ground and on upper levels, as discussed later in this presentation.

The current building has an EPC rating of E, which will likely be downgraded after poor performance result. In addition to this, the cooling systems are affected by low insulation values of the building envelope. This causes the uncomfortably high heat in the summer, and a substantial energy demand to heat in the winter.



V1 Looking south on Greyfriars Road.



V2 Looking North up Greyfriars Road.



V3 The existing buildings west elevation.



V4 The existing scheme's east elevation (prior to construction of Station Hill Development).

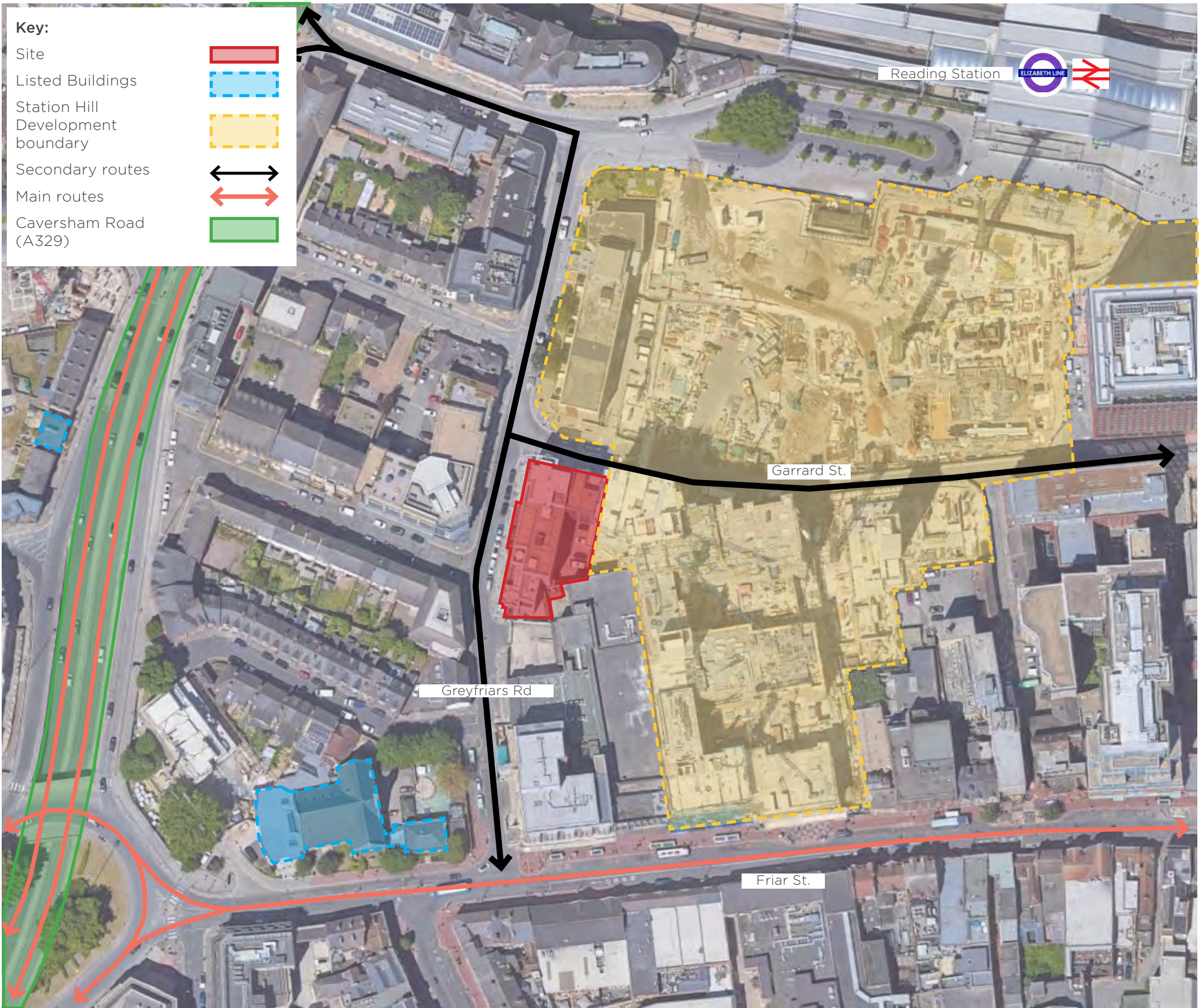
SITE CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

The two most notable factors that influence the site are the Station Hill Development, which forms a hard border on the sites eastern side, and the junction between Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street, forming the northern and western boundaries. Additionally, the noise pollution projected by the A329 which is located to the west of the site is another factor to consider. There are some listed buildings dotted around the area, including Greyfriars Church to the south, but nothing within an immediate proximity to the site.

One of the main opportunities for the site is its proximity to Reading train station. The station is the second largest interchange outside London, taking just 30 minutes to reach London Paddington via train. The scheme’s opportunity to compliment the new mixed-used development of Station hill is also advantageous.

Additionally, the site’s position on a corner, means it plays a prominent role in the street-scape, and has the unique opportunity to be a focal point on Greyfriars Road and compliment the established massing of the adjoining Station Hill. Reading Borough Council has identified the potential of Greyfriars Road for improved streetscaping. This provides the chance to potentially add some much needed greenery around the site and contribute to improving the streets character.

The proposal will take into the consideration the Station Hill Development which will add a new pedestrian link between the station and Friar Street, along with a plaza and new pocket parks.



Site constraints and opportunities

Co-living

LARGE SCALE PURPOSE BUILT SHARED LIVING (CO-LIVING)

The co-living sector in the UK is rapidly gaining momentum. London is leading the way; however, we are now witnessing an increasing trend of the **UK’s regional markets embracing co-living.**

Co-living offers a compelling solution to some of the most pressing challenges in the housing market, including **the rising cost of living, changing lifestyles, and the appetite for higher quality, more flexible living arrangements.**

In recent years, co-living has become increasingly popular in the UK, with many new co-living spaces opening in major cities such as London, Manchester and Birmingham.

Sometimes compared to purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) and houses of multiple occupation (HMOs), Co-living caters to a diverse demographic seeking a combination of convenience, community, affordability as well as a significantly higher quality of product and professional management compared to PBSA and HMO accommodation.

Co-living combines the best of community and independence, offering residents private studio apartments within purpose-built structures and communities, often with shared amenities such as co-working spaces, gyms and cinema rooms.

(The data in this report is provided by VervLife’s UK Co-living portfolio comprising of over 1,600 studios.)

WHAT IS CO-LIVING?

Co-living in its simplest form is purpose-built rented housing, where residents have their own self-contained units arranged with living and bedroom space, a small kitchenette and en-suite, with buildings benefiting from generous communal amenity space. This area can range from kitchens and common rooms to cinema rooms, terraces, gyms, laundry rooms and co-working space. In the typical co-living model, bills are all inclusive and lease lengths are more flexible than in the traditional PRS (Private Rented Sector) or Build to Rent (BTR).

The purpose built nature of co-living buildings allows for optimal design and management.

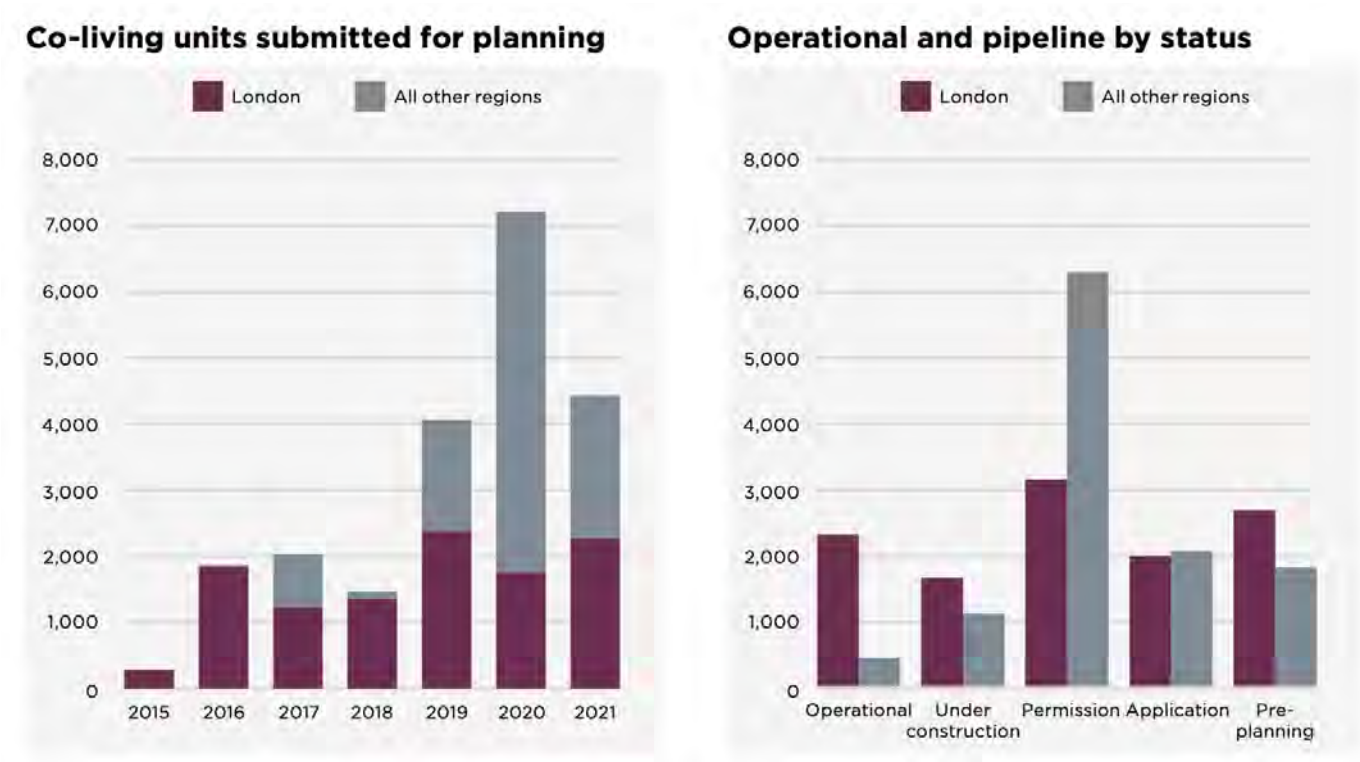
The benefits of co-living for residents include:

- **Ability to use a wide range of high-quality communal spaces.**
- **Flexible lease lengths, with no deposits, available.**
- **Residents pay an all-inclusive monthly charge, which includes bills and use of shared amenities.**
- **24hr community with on-site security and maintenance.**
- **Private and convenient rooms of varying sizes.**
- **Strong sense of community and neighbourhood.**
- **Designated spaces to work, relax, exercise and socialise generally all included.**

LONDON HAS LED THE WAY, BUT REGIONAL CITIES ARE CATCHING UP

Similar to the trend we saw previously in the Build to Rent (BTR) / Multifamily market, London has led the way in the emergence of co-living. This is perhaps no surprise given that affordability constraints are most severe in the capital and so there is heightened demand for high-quality rental accommodation. However, the regions have since caught up, with 60% of units submitted for planning over the past three years being outside of London.

The total operational and future pipeline now stands at around 24,000 units. This is split 50/50 between the regions and London. Again, similar to the wider BTR market, outside of London it is Manchester with the largest pipeline, followed by Sheffield, Glasgow, and Birmingham.



Source Savills

This could be one of Reading’s first co-living developments in a town that benefits from a vibrant commercial district as well as an excellent hospital, education, retail amenities and transport links. Greyfriars House is ideally located in the town centre to deliver a high quality Co-living development, given its proximity to both the train station and commercial centre.

WHO LIVES IN CO-LIVING SCHEMES?

Co-living attracts a diverse range of people from across the age, social economic and wider demographic spectrum. Generally, though, a high proportion of those living in co-living schemes are under 35 years old and are seeking two key benefits from their choice of housing:

- **Convenience:** The best co-living developments are in well connected locations combined with simplicity and protections of all inclusive monthly payments that cover utilities, wifi, shared amenities and living spaces. Contracts of a flexible length are also appealing.
- **Community:** The opportunity to make new social and professional connections is a key draw for residents in co-living communities. This is facilitated by a blend of well-designed communal space along with a creative, compelling, and vibrant events programme.

Target residents are recent graduates and young professionals who want to live in vibrant urban centres with a strong sense of community and access to high quality amenities.

Co-living provides an attractive option for people moving to a new town/city, providing them with an ideal environment from which to establish new roots, due to tenancy flexibility and the vibrant social scene within schemes that makes it easy to meet new people.

It offers an alternative to a house share (HMO), which are often poorly managed, but also have limited shared amenity and living spaces.

Co-living offers numerous advantages, including providing a high-quality of managed residential accommodation, which, due to the sharing of facilities, is cost effective

New co-living developments also have the added benefit of relocating tenants in house shares within the local housing stock, therefore freeing up more homes for families.

WHY ARE RESIDENTS CHOOSING CO-LIVING?

- High Rents in Build to Rent developments.
- Shortage of rental stock.
- High quality professional managed accommodation.
- Range of amenities available – co-working, gym, cinema etc.
- Bills all inclusive in the rent.

CO-LIVING OFFERS GREATER CHOICE FOR THOSE UNABLE TO BUY, OR WHO WANT THE FLEXIBILITY OF RENTING

Housing values have risen to a point in comparison with average earnings that has made buying increasingly unaffordable for many, especially young people, who wish to live in cities, close to their jobs and amenities.

Average first-time buyer deposits are at record highs, meaning that generally, only those lucky enough to benefit from the ‘Bank of Mum and Dad’ have a chance to get on the housing ladder. This has meant the private rented sector has continued to grow.

Across the UK there were nearly 2 million more households in the private rented sector (PRS) in 2019 than there were in 2011. This represented a 50% increase, with the total number rising from 3.9 million to 5.9 million. In London alone there are 1.1 million PRS households, an increase of more than 300,000 over the same period.

While this is not a new trend, the extensive house price growth over the past 18 months has pushed home ownership even further out of reach for first-time buyers, adding to the attractiveness of Co-living.

Impact of house price growth

Key Stats	London	UK
Average first-time buyer deposit	£158,196	£60,718
Affordability ratio (median income to house price)	13.7	8.9*
% increase in number of PRS households (2019 vs 2011)	38%	50%*

England and Wales* **Source UK Finance, ONS, Census, Experian

Rental values in co-living schemes are often mistakenly thought to be at a premium to the wider residential market and therefore only available to higher earners. However, the reality is that co-living rents are targeted at a c.20% discount versus the all-in cost of living in other PRS accommodation.

For many tenants, having high-quality amenities within their building and everything included in one simple monthly rental payment, more than compensates for the smaller bedroom space and makes Co-living a compelling offer.

DESIGNING CO-LIVING SCHEMES – LESSONS LEARNT FROM EARLIER MODELS

Amenity spaces play a crucial role in fostering a sense of community. Certain developments offer outstanding facilities, including modern gyms, swimming pools, cinema/gaming rooms equipped with the latest technology and stylish kitchens designed as a central hub for social interaction within the building. Furthermore, co-working areas and outdoor spaces like terraces are thoughtfully designed to help residents strike a harmonious work-life balance.

As co-living evolves in the UK, unit sizes are getting bigger. The smallest studio sizes in early co-living buildings, start from 13sqm.

Designing co-living requires developers to think both creatively and commercially in equal measure to maximise resident experience and returns.

Special attention should be paid to the unit design to ensure that space is being used intelligently and with resident usability and wellness in mind.

In co-living units little details can make a big difference. For example, the absence or presence of an extra storage space for a suitcase can influence whether a resident decides to let the studio or not. Studio apartments in a Co-living space tend to be a smaller size than a standard market rented studio apartment. They typically contain a sleeping area, a kitchenette, and an en-suite bathroom.

However, we are now seeing room sizes increasing for co-living assets, where they now start from 18sqm and larger. Local planning

policy is also a consideration of course. The GLA key design guidance has been set out in their Large-scale Purpose-built Shared Living London Plan Guidance 2022.

External amenity is one of the key-learning points from the pandemic and the requirement to maximise external amenity where possible.

A Master-chef style kitchen acts as the hive of social activity - key aspect of building a community and living together.

Since co-living is a relatively new type of housing, guidance and design standards are relatively new and still being introduced by various councils. However, the Greater London Authority (GLA) published guidance on ‘large scale purpose built shared living’ in Feb 2024 which provides information on how this type of housing differs from other forms and how to ensure these developments are of acceptable quality and well-managed. The guidance is aimed at developments in London but is also used as a reference for co-living schemes across the country.

The key standards of the guidance set out that standard private co-living rooms should be between 18-27m² and accessible private Co-living rooms should be between 28-37m². A min of 5sqm of internal amenity and 1m² of external amenity is also listed as the requirement of co-living schemes, ideally distributed over all floors.

The Emerging Local Plan for Reading also suggests that co-living proposals should provide adequate communal space for future residents, as well as appropriately sized rooms. The emerging policy suggests at least 3sqm of internal communal space per resident and minimum room sizes of 20sqm.



Communal Space The Collective Old Oak



Co-Working The Collective Old Oak

SUNDAY MILLS

Sunday Mills is an innovative co-living development focused around shared amenity spaces, community uses and landscaping.

The scheme offers Londoners an alternative form of living with extensive shared amenities, including a gym, yoga studio, rooftop terraces, library/ lounge and multi-station kitchen, that encourage social interaction.

Client: DTZi + Halycon Development Partners

Architect: Assael

Location: Wandsworth / London

Rooms: 315 rooms

Completion Date: 2023



DANDI LIVING

Developer Dandi aims to redefine co-living by delivering a new standard of rental design reminiscent of a luxury hotel. The Dandi Wembley co-living scheme offers studio and one-bedroom apartments with space management solutions that allow each home to be configured into five different modalities throughout the day: sleep, exercise, work, eat and play. The scheme also includes amenity spaces and access to a curated cultural and social events programme.

Client: Dandi + Dukelease

Architect/Developer: Dandi

Location: Wembley / London

Rooms: 355 rooms

Completion Date: 2022



THE GORGE

The Gorge, a high-rise block of 133 new homes for young people and key workers in Exeter. Close to the city centre, the scheme benefits from transport links and proximity to Exeter’s hospitals and the university. The residents benefit from spacious and fully furnished co-living studios, social spaces and events, which are all included in monthly rent.

Client/Manager: Fresh

Architect/Developer: Watkin Jones

Location: Exeter, Devon

Rooms: 133 rooms

Completion Date: 2023



ARK WEMBLEY

Ark Wembley is a 13-storey co-living scheme located in North London’s Wembley Park. The scheme introduces a truly flexible serviced co-living model through a conversion of a former hotel. The building has been re-imagined and reconfigured into a new urban retreat in collaboration with London design studio Holloway

Amenities at the co-living scheme span multiple levels and include a top floor, high spec communal kitchen and dining area, lounge, multimedia room, laundry room, co-working spaces and gym.

Client: ARK

Architect/Developer: Crosstree Partners

Location: Wembley / London

Rooms: 300 rooms

Completion Date: 2023



THE NEED FOR CO-LIVING

With growing affordability constraints and the increasing desire for many to live in highly sustainable urban locations, co-living is becoming a popular way to offer more affordable and professionally managed housing choices to renters, with bills all inclusive.

A growing number of renters and a shortage of rental homes in most cities has led to rapid growth of the sector. The rising costs within the private rental market are causing renters to look for alternative housing options. This is particularly the case in well connected areas, such as London & other key regional towns and cities such as Reading, where renters in the PRS market are slowly being priced out of living there.

The increasing need and demand for co-living, and location of the site, has driven the design of our proposal. Our aim is to provide high-quality rental accommodation and design a building which supports communal living by creating spaces that are more than just places to live.

The site’s specific location in Reading, adjacent to the commercial district and the connections Reading Station benefits with into London and out to the rest of the UK, make it very suitable for a high quality co-living scheme.

OUR VISION

Our vision for a co-living scheme at Greyfriars Road involves designing to the following principles and features:

- Designing a range of co-living units, of various sizes, across 12 floors, to maximise space, provide high quality living space and cater to multiple needs.
- Providing an alternative form of living accommodation in Reading through the provision of market co-living units and affordable discount market rent co-living units.
- Creating high quality architecture and a build-able, viable and deliverable scheme.
- Ensuring well-designed and generous amenity space is at the heart of our proposal by designing the best community spaces within our development.
- Facilitating this sense of community through the provision of a variety amenity space, including an upper level floor and terraces with views of the town, which provide areas for social, community and working uses.
- Creating a scheme which is well suited to the area and fits into the surrounding context, both current and emerging.
- Providing a building which can be managed effectively and allows the provision of resident facilities within.

THE BENEFITS OF INTRODUCING OUR CO-LIVING SCHEME IN READING:

SOCIAL	▪ Affordability: all inclusive rental product (particularly with on-site discounted market rental (DMR) units to support key workers & the local community). ▪ High quality rental product with flexibility to cater to those who may need 3-12 month stays (given normal PRS tenancies are 12+ months). ▪ Promotes community living with a mix of areas for people to meet and engage. ▪ Reduces and addresses urban loneliness. ▪ 24/7 on-site support, ambassadors and management promoting resident engagement, wellness, well-being and mental health. ▪ Communal amenities can be used by the community to promote engagement with new residents and the local area. ▪ Responsive to changing living and working patterns.
ENVIRONMENTAL	▪ Targeting BREEAM Excellent & EPC rating ‘A’. ▪ Sharing amenities and spaces = lower embedded emissions. ▪ Urban greening and BNG uplift on-site. ▪ Urban communal allotments and growing food on-site by residents. ▪ Technology enabled. ▪ Promotes sustainable travel lifestyle.
ECONOMIC	▪ 250+ residents living within local area = strengthen town centre and wider area. ▪ New Class E unit suitable for SMEs close to Reading Station. ▪ Work from home spaces, which have become a more popular need in response to the pandemic. ▪ Opportunities to network and support local businesses. ▪ Operational on-site job creation. ▪ S106 contributions.

CREATING WELL-DESIGNED SPACES WITHIN CO-LIVING SCHEMES

As well as an alternative way to live, co-living schemes provide a range of amenities for residents, alongside their fully furnished rooms, to help create a convenient and comfortable living environment, and foster a sense of community through their provision of communal spaces.

To ensure this scheme provides well-designed and quality spaces which respond to resident needs, Elder have partnered with a market-leading operator and rental specialist, VervLife, to aid in the design process and layouts of all communal spaces the scheme will provide. Some key factors they have highlighted to be incorporated into the design include:

- Creating private rooms which give each residents their own space to relax, sleep and store their belongings. All rooms should be well ventilated and provide as much daylight as possible.
- Providing communal Kitchens with ample space for cooking, eating and socialising with other residents.
- Gym and other fitness facilities.
- A Resident's lounges for activities, entertainment and socialising.
- Co-working area providing a designated work space, particularly useful for hybrid workers.
- A designated dining area for more social eating.
- Laundry facilities.
- Media/Games/Entertainment spaces.
- Outdoor terraces & courtyards with space for allotments and organised activities.



Private Rooms



Communal Kitchens



Co-working area



Gym



Resident's Lounges



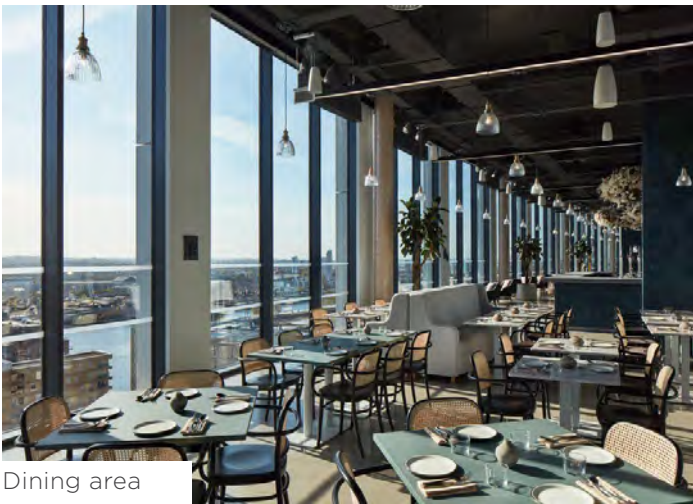
Laundry



External terraces



Media/Games Room



Dining area

Design Strategy & Layout

DESIGN STRATEGY

We aspire to deliver a design-led, high-quality co-living scheme within the centre of Reading that will provide 266 co-living units and high-quality amenity spaces across all floors for the town. It will respond to the needs of the changing property market and ever-evolving housing and renter requirements in the town.

The design approach is centred on maximising the site to create a building which houses a range of spaces required to foster a strong and welcoming co-living community. It will also look to connect with it's surroundings, both existing and emerging, through its architecture, the creation of active frontages and it's upper level terraces.



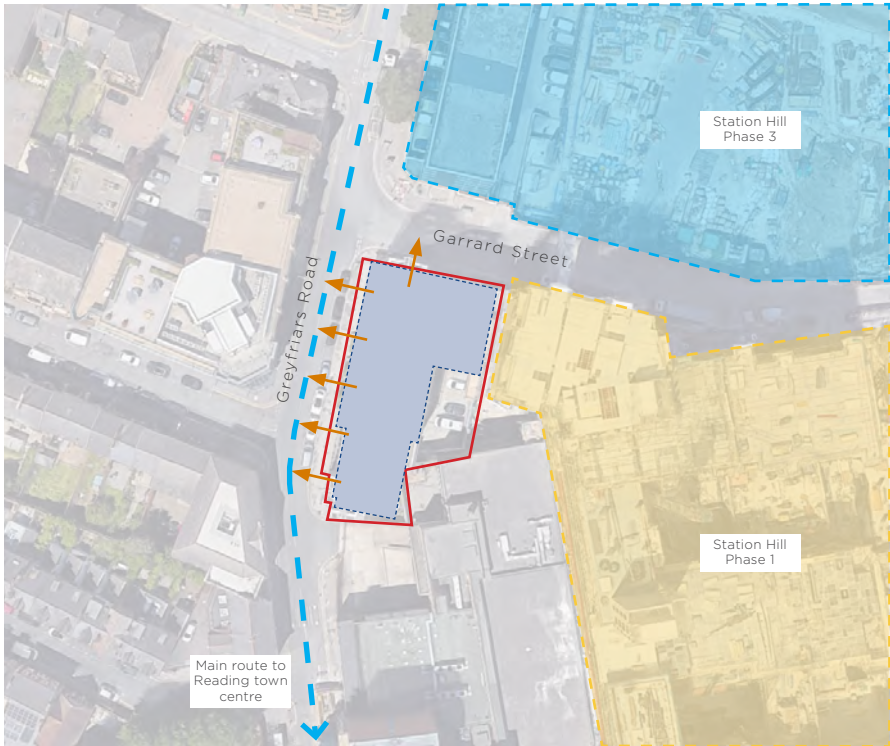
LAYOUT PRINCIPLES



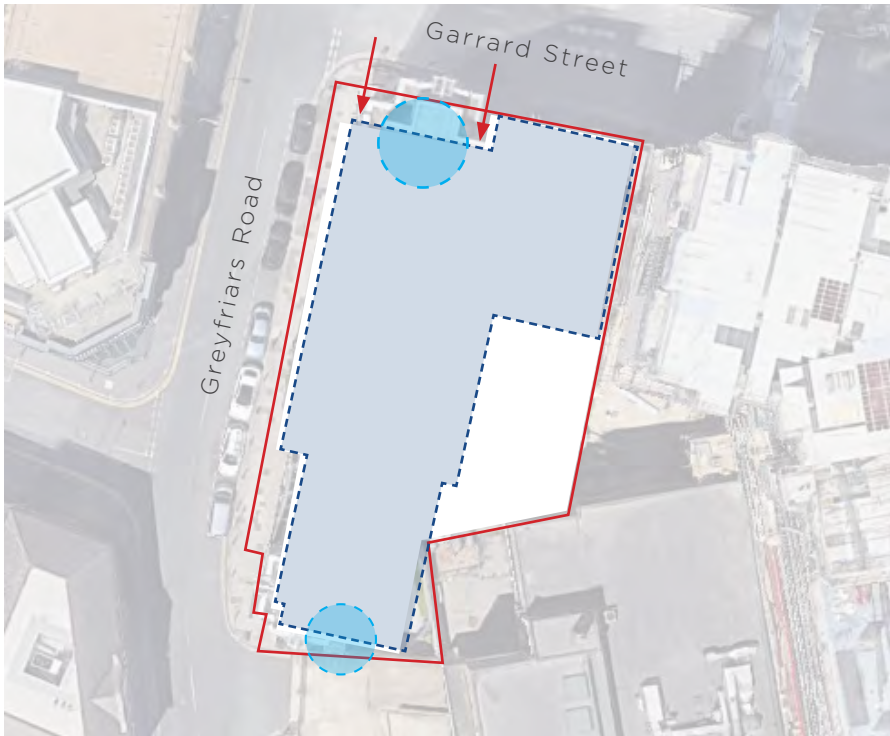
1 Footprint of the proposed scheme identified within the boundary, taking shape based on the existing building.



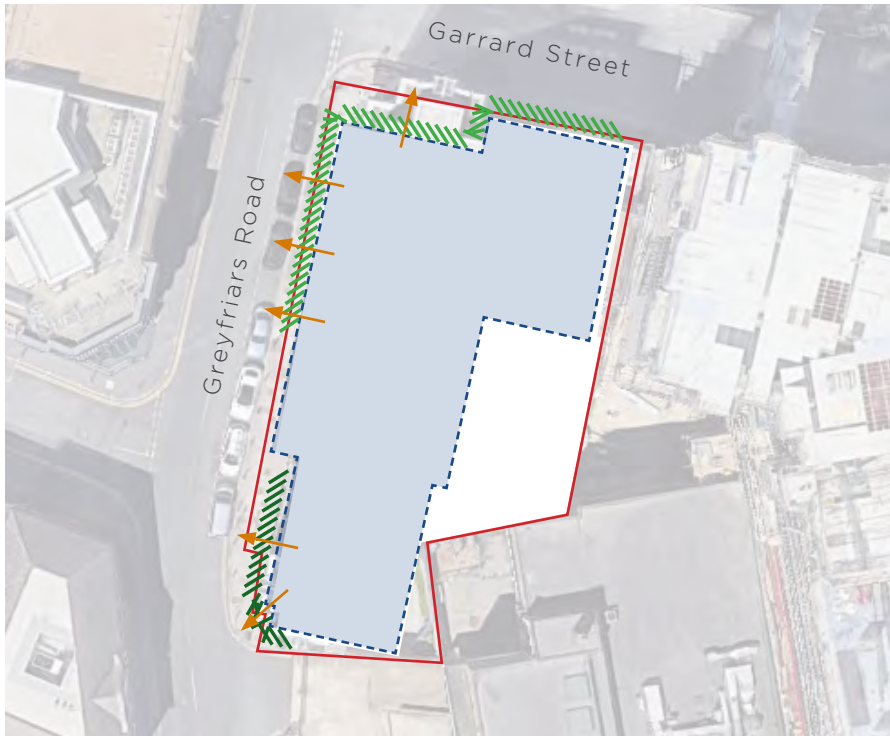
2 Local pedestrian/vehicular routes were identified, all of which converge at the corner of Greyfriars House.



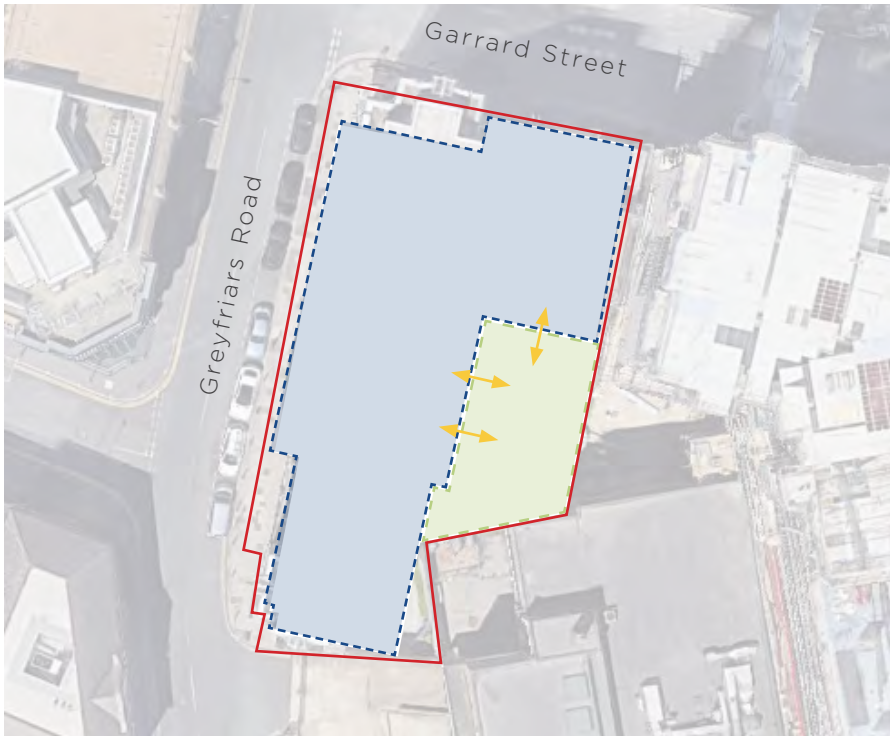
3 The main route into Reading town centre and emerging development sites have also been used to inform the frontage.



4 Earlier point where routes converge used to inform main entrance space, which has been set back from Garrard Street. A secondary entrance is located to the rear of the proposal, at first floor level.



5 The internal ground floor and first floor spaces will be designed to activate the building frontage along both Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street, and the south-west corner of the building at first floor level, allowing for increased interaction with the

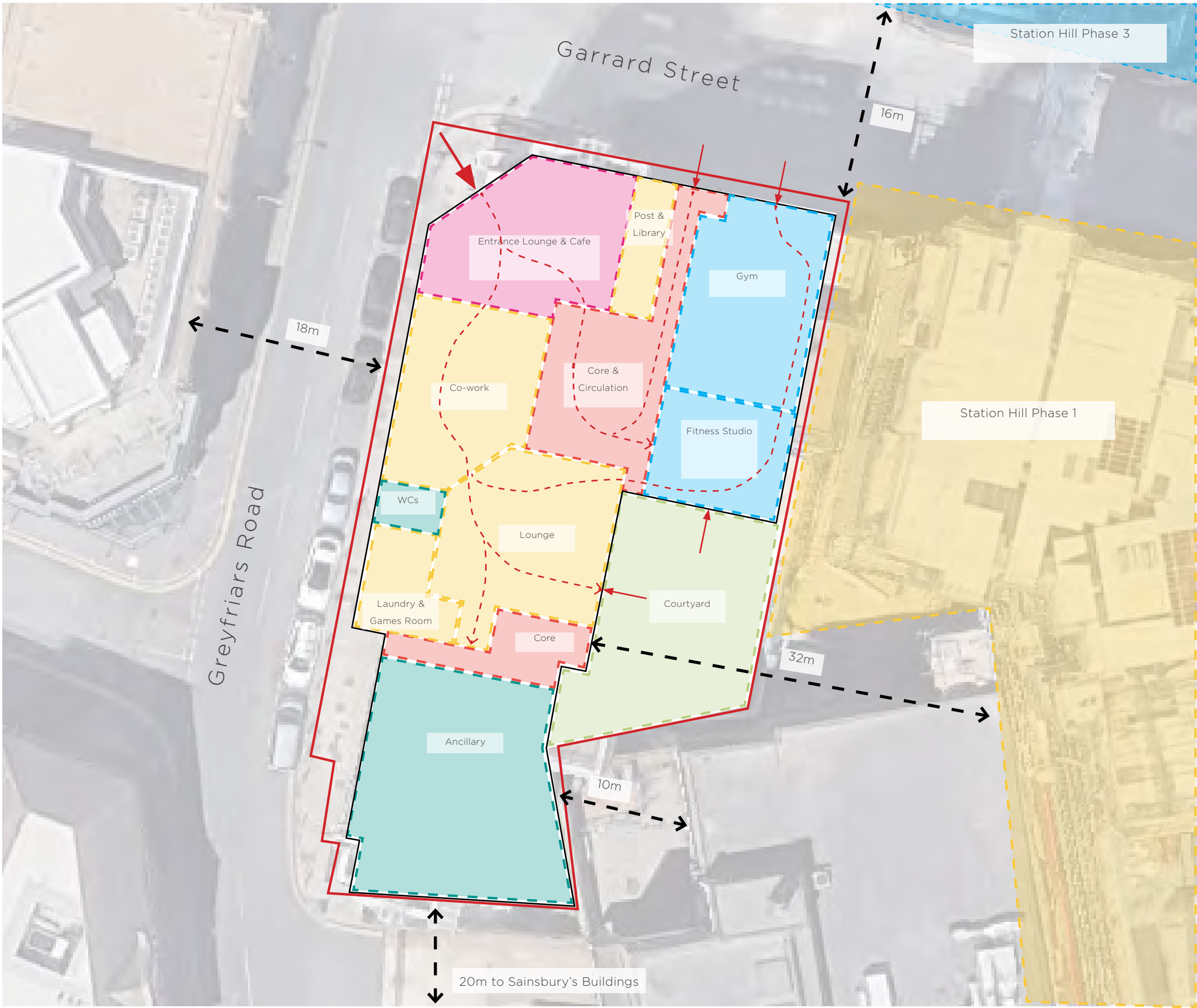


6 The existing courtyard to the rear of the site has been retained and converted into a landscaped courtyard for resident use.

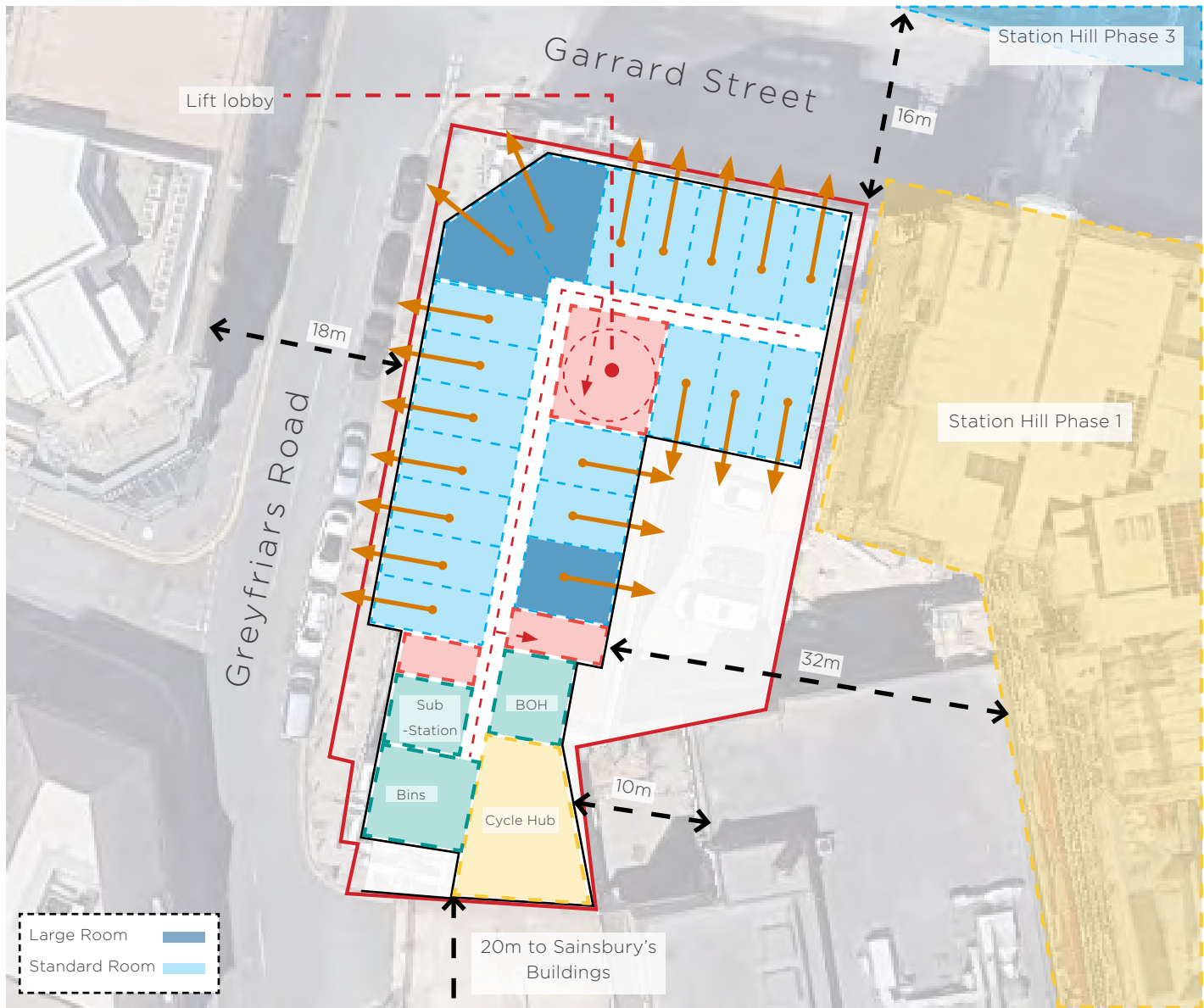
GROUND FLOOR LAYOUT RATIONALE

Key Changes:

- The ground floor spaces has been designed to maximise the building footprint and create strong visual and physical connections throughout to create a generous and welcoming set of spaces for the residents to use.
- The amenity spaces have also been positioned to help activate the western and northern façades of the building, and connect back to the courtyard provided at that level.
- The north-west corner is chamfered to provide a more defined building entrance, and to the south to maximise the site and provide sufficient ancillary space.
- All cores can now be accessed from the facade to follow appropriate fire safety regulations.

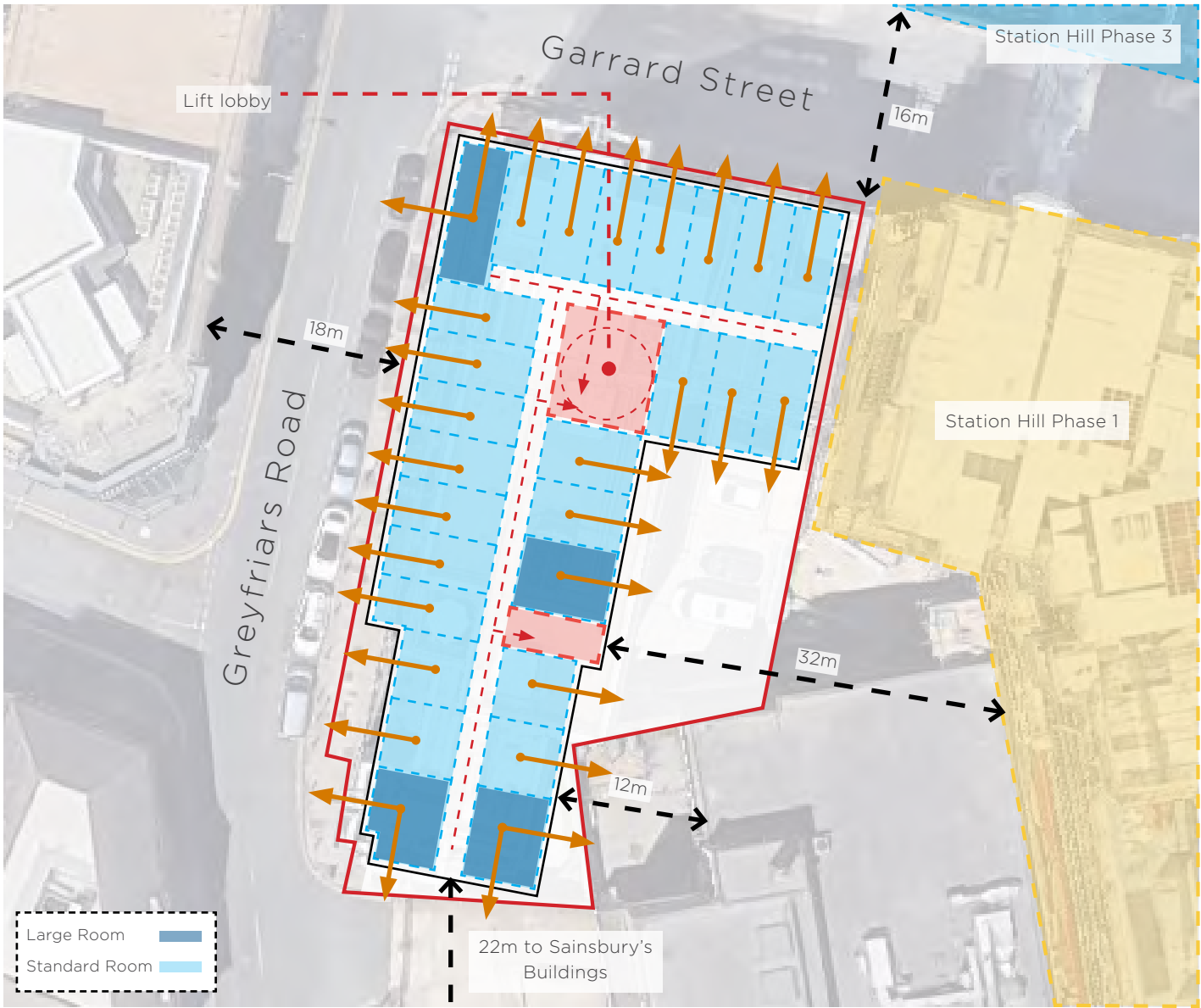


LAYOUT RATIONALE



LEVEL 01

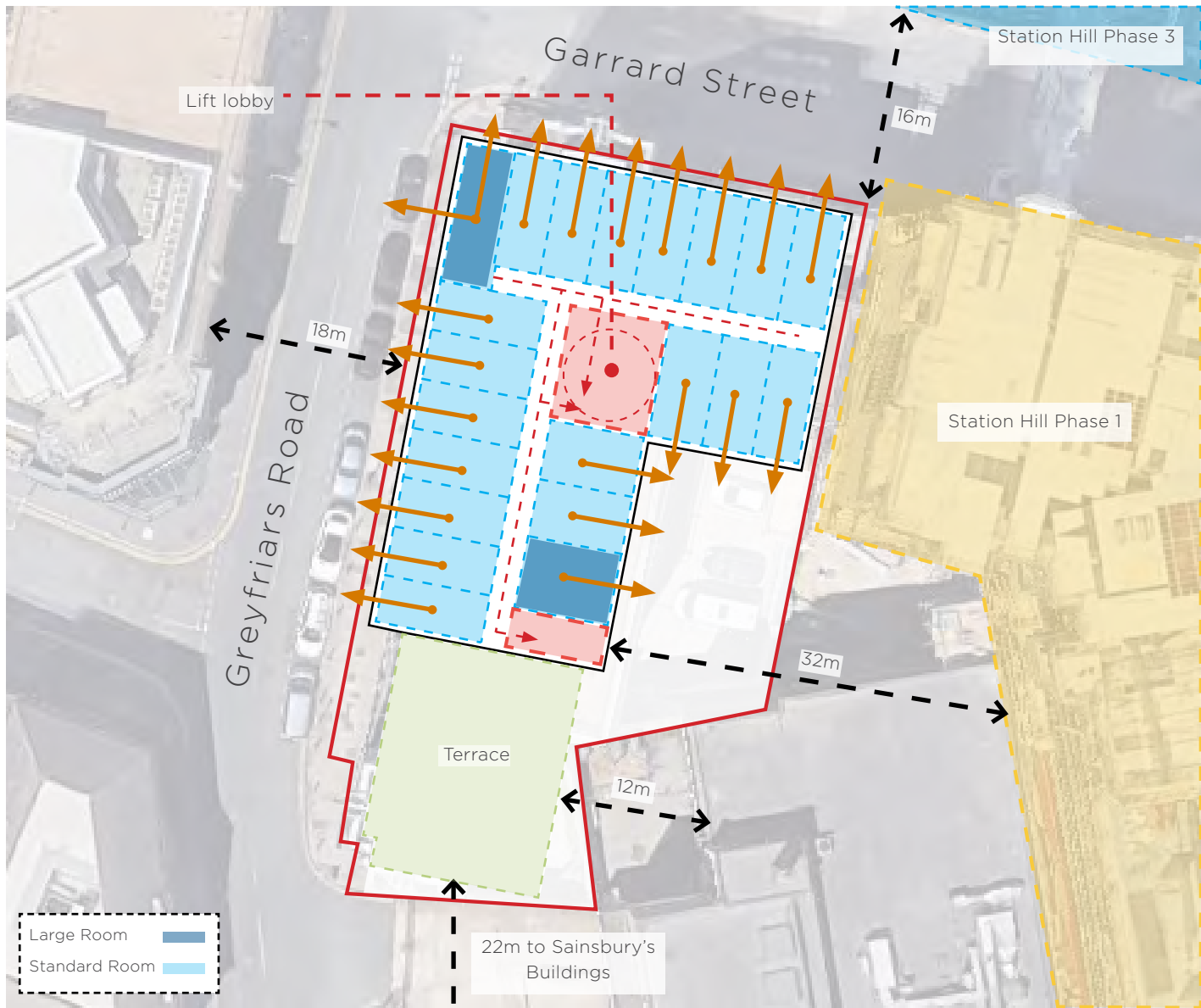
- There are two different sizes of residential dwellings available: large (28 m²+), standard (20 m²-25 m²).
- Due to the sloping Greyfriars Road, the cycle hub, substation and bin store have been introduced at this level, so they can be accessed from street level at the south of the building.
- Additional space for the building management has also been introduced at this level.



TYPICAL FLOOR (LEVEL 02)

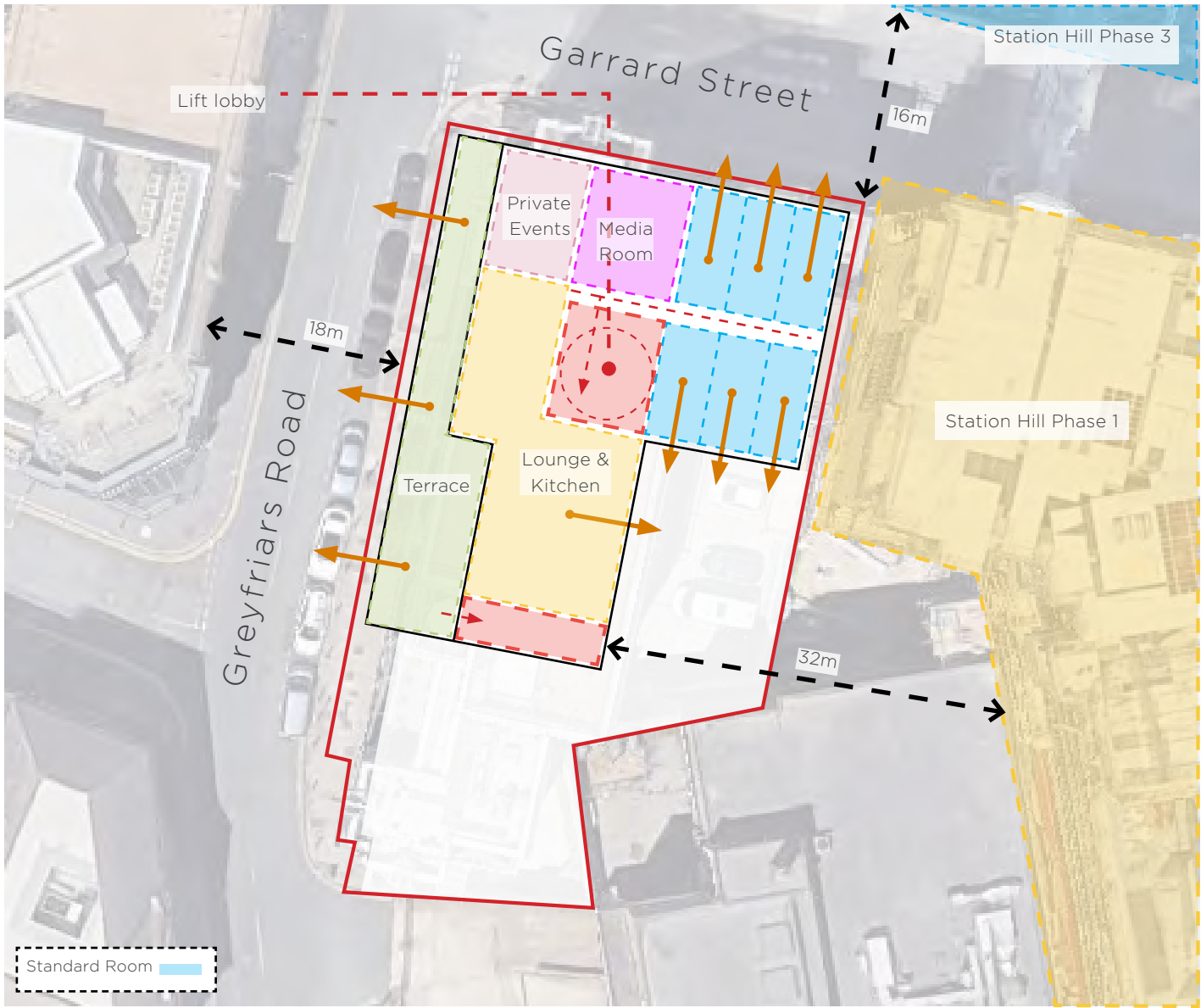
- There are two different sizes of residential dwellings available: large (28 m²+), standard (20 m²-25 m²).
- Lift lobby (main core) is larger than usual, providing a meeting place to encourage interaction between residents.
- Residential units are oriented away from Station Hill development to minimise overlooking and increase daylight levels. Distances from neighbouring schemes are sufficient to avoid unwanted overlooking.

LAYOUT PRINCIPLES



RESIDENTIAL & AMENITY (LEVEL 07)

- A south-facing external terrace has been provided at this level to create additional external amenity space. This will be solely for residents and be suited for socialising, entertainment and group activities.



AMENITY UPPER FLOOR (L12)

- Further amenity space, both internal and external, has been provided across the floors of the development to create various spaces for meeting, socialising and entertaining throughout.
- A resident's lounge and master-chef style kitchen will make up a large part of the internal amenity on Level 11, and is directly connected to a large high-quality external terrace for resident use.
- Additional smaller spaces, including a media/cinema room and private event space with it's own terrace access, will also be provided,
- Some Co-living units will be provided at this level. Their grouping to the end of the building will allow for them to be physically and audibly separate from the amenity spaces on this level,

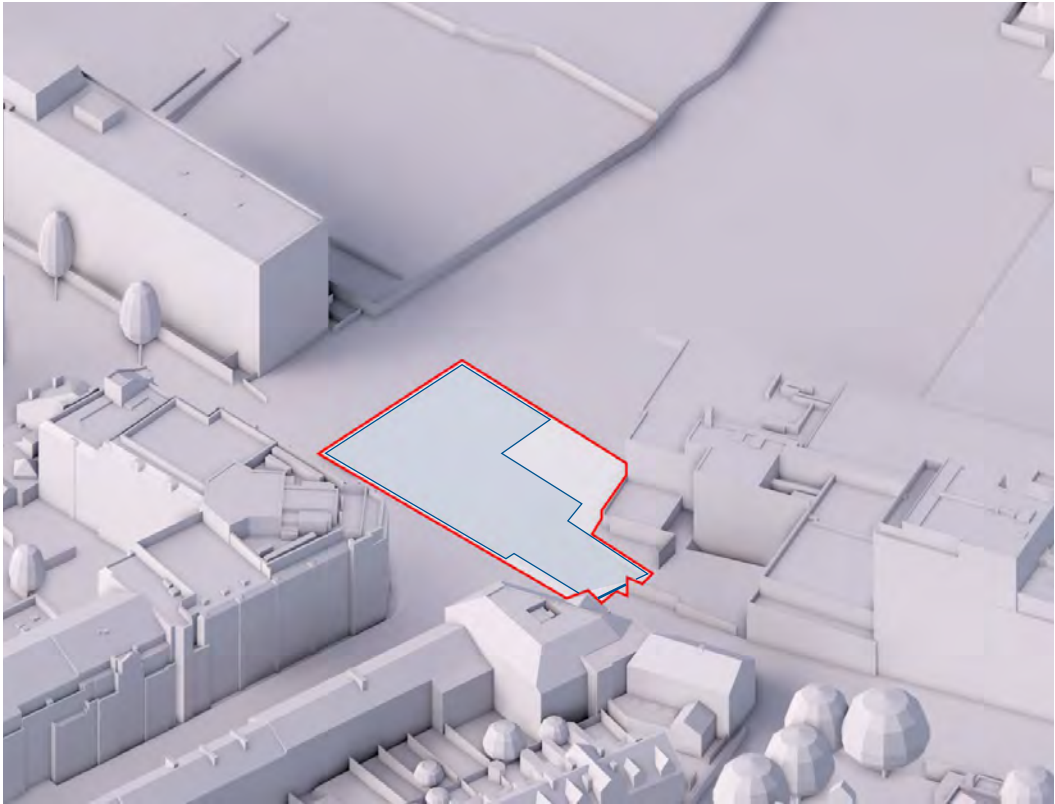
MASSING & FORM DEVELOPMENT

The massing of the proposed scheme continues to be informed by the site’s location and surrounding context. The first step taken was to identify the footprint of the proposed scheme, which will ultimately determine the space at ground level and the massing of the building. The footprint aims to dedicate a sufficient amount of space for amenity, co-working, gym, reception and plant areas. An external courtyard area to the east of the site creates the “L” shaped footprint.

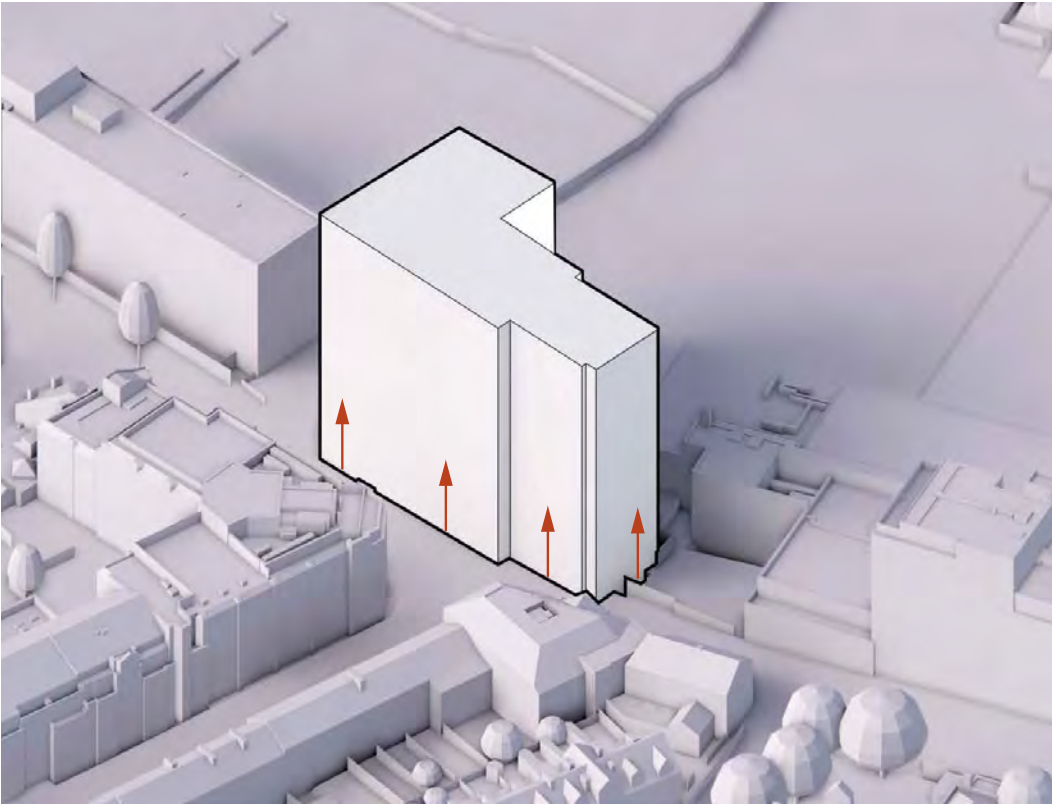
The footprint is then extruded to G+12 storeys, stepping down from the neighbouring Station Hill Phase 1 directly to the east. Multiple levels are then established to create a “stepping down” effect to the south of the site.

At base level, the north-western corner is chamfered to reveal a double height entrance to the scheme. This height is then used to define the plinth of the proposal, which is used to activate the frontage and create a relationship with the street.

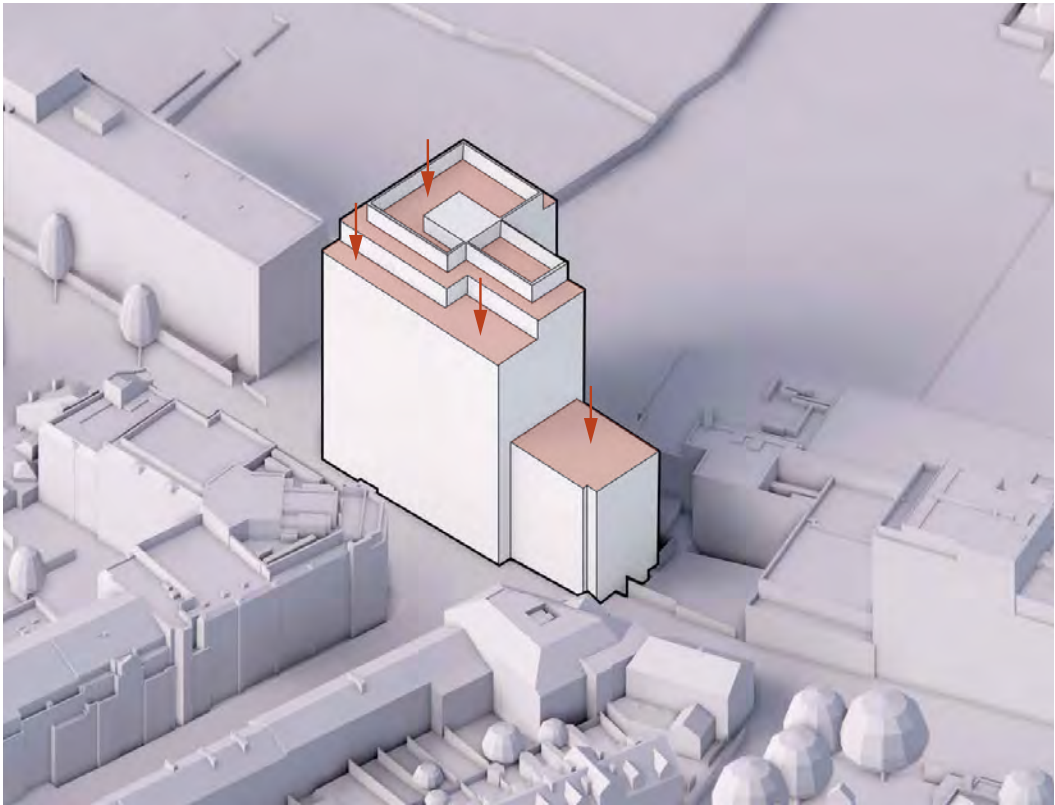
A number of levels created are selected to become amenity terraces for the residents to use, establishing a relationship with the outdoors.



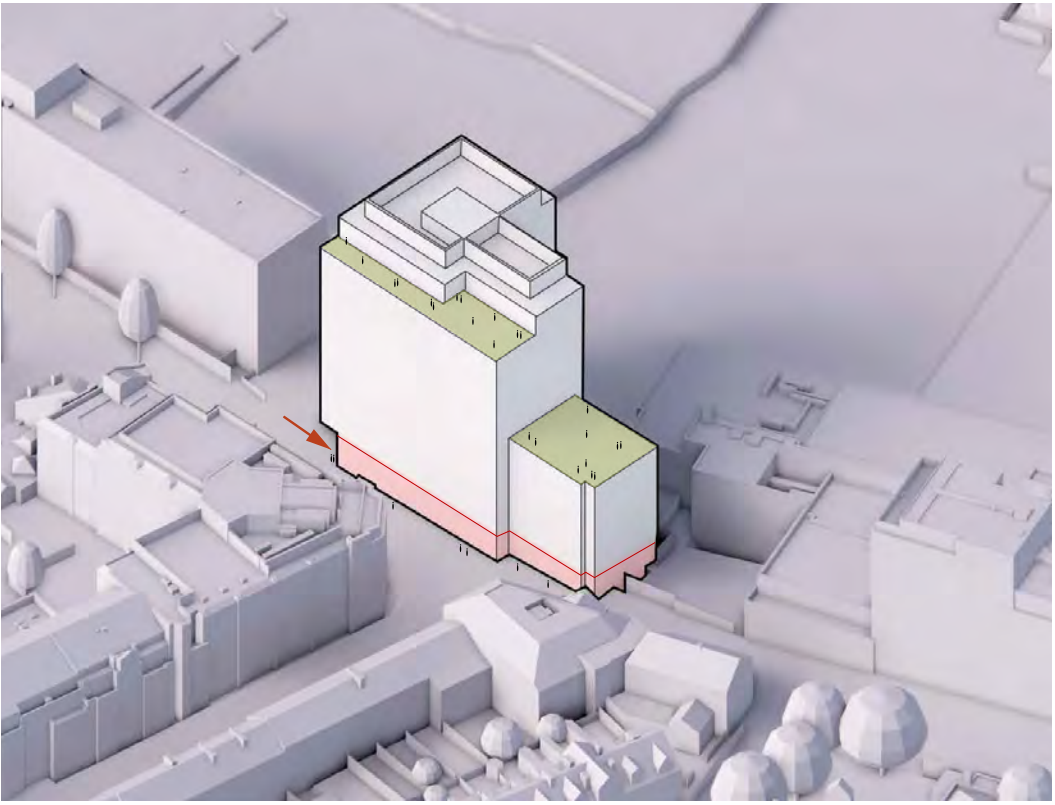
1 The foot print of the proposed scheme is identified.



2 The proposed foot print is extruded upwards



3 The extruded massing is then cut away to reveal a variety of levels stepping down to the south.



4 Entrance pushed back to reveal a double height space. A plinth follows this around the base of the proposal and used to activate its frontage. Stepped levels turned into amenity terraces.

DEVELOPING WITHIN THE EMERGING
CONTEXT OF STATION HILL

As highlighted previously, the existing site is located in an area with significant emerging developments, including the Station Hill development which forms the east-side of the site and will eventually wrap around to the north.

The existing building sits within the CR10a Station Area Cluster of tall buildings. Reading Borough Council has stated that “tall buildings should follow a pattern of the tallest buildings at the centre... And step down in height towards the lower buildings at the fringes”. This is in an effort to contribute to a coherent, attractive and sustainable area.

In this instance, the tallest buildings in the area will be located in Station Hill under phases 2 and 3, of which are highlighted in green in the diagrams to the right. Phase 1 (blue) is limited to a height much lower than the later phases, and steps down towards Friar Street. The proposal continues this trend, with multiple levels stepping down, creating an effect of the building fragmenting towards Greyfriars Road. Effectively, the proposal bridges the heights of Station Hill and the surrounding lower residential town houses.



1 The site prior to Station Hill phase 1.



2 Station Hill site identified.



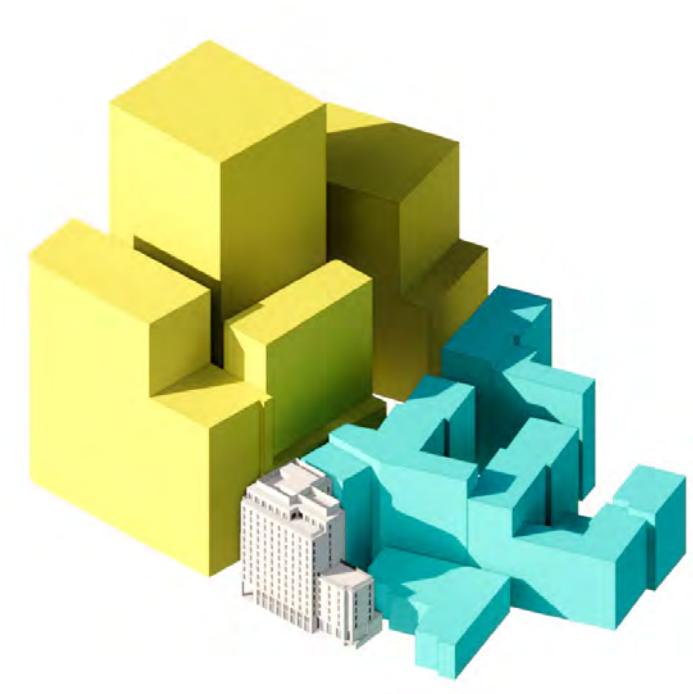
3 The site after construction of phase 1, highlighted in blue (site at present).



4 Site after construction of phase 2 and 3, highlighted in green.



5 Proposed Greyfriars House inserted.



6 Massing of Station Hill, demonstrating how the proposed scheme continues the trend of stepping down in height.

Design Consultations

CONSULTATION TIMELINE

16th January 2024 - Pre-Application 1 (Reading Borough Council)

Initial proposals and vision presented to Reading Borough Council and feedback received.

13th June 2024 - Pre-Application 2 (Reading Borough Council)

Design proposals updated to respond to the feedback received to date.

13th June 2024 - Meeting with Abbey Ward Members, Cabinet Member for Planning and Assets & Reading Civic Society

18th July 2024 - Pre-Application 3 (Reading Borough Council)

Updated design proposals responding to previous feedback was presented to Reading Borough Council.

14th August 2024 - Design Review Panel (Frame Projects)

Walking site tour followed by a presentation of initial proposals and vision to Frame Projects with feedback received.

W/c 9th September 2024 - Public consultation invite sent to local area

18th September 2024 - Public Exhibition (& website launched)

Local community, councillors and stakeholders were invited to a preview of the design proposals and to provide their feedback on the scheme.

17th October 2024 - Pre-Application 4 (Reading Borough Council)

Updated design proposals responding to previous feedback was presented to Reading Borough Council.

PRE-APPLICATION MEETING 1

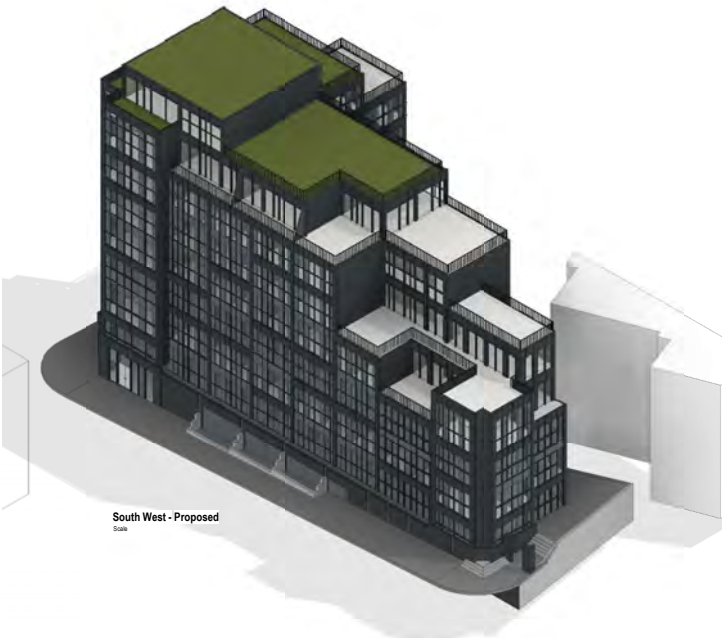
The initial massing and concept for the proposed scheme was presented to Reading Borough Council on the 20th March 2024.

The form of the proposed building closely followed that of the current office building, with an extension upwards. The base of the scheme accommodated kitchen dining spaces, co-working areas and reception. Co-living rooms and terraces formed the upper floors.

Reading Borough Council recognised the use of the original structure and form of the building, and highlighted that if this is the chosen route then their preference would be for “a more interventionist approach...” That would address the unattractive nature of the existing building and significantly improve it in setting”. They proceeded to express the need on emphasis on strong horizontal lines across the elevations, rather than vertical, a justification for increased scale of massing in relation to emerging developments, and the proposed schemes interaction with the existing street scene.



Looking north up Greyfriars Road



Looking south down Greyfriars Road



Massing within emerging context

FEEDBACK & DESIGN RESPONSE - PRE-APPLICATION MEETING 1

The following is a summary of Reading Borough Council's feedback from our meeting on 20th March 2024.



- The proposals would provide a co-living scheme in a well-connected, sustainable location. Additional information regarding the nature of the use would need to be provided, and it must be demonstrated that the management arrangements of the scheme would ensure appropriate levels of amenity for future occupiers.
- Given the site forms part of an allocated site, any application should demonstrate that the quantum of residential units proposed in the Local Plan could still come forwards on other parts of the allocated site. The loss of office space should be robustly addressed in the application submission.
- The current design would not be acceptable. Further work on the design approach and how increasing the massing and scale can ensure that the building is significantly improved in townscape terms must be demonstrated and a suitable design approach implemented. Simply re-cladding an unattractive building would not be sufficient to provide the high quality design that both the Local Plan and NPPf require. The interaction between the site and the surrounding streets will be integral to the success of the scheme, and an innovative approach to the Greyfriars Road elevation should ensure that there is an improved relationship in this regard. Further meetings to discuss design changes and the Design Review process are strongly encouraged.
- Should an application be forthcoming, the proposals should consider the suggested changes and information provided by Reading Borough Council.

PRE-APPLICATION MEETING 2

Our design proposals were updated to respond to the feedback from Pre-App 1 and developed further to include all the spaces required for a successful Co-living scheme. This development was presented at a Pre-Application 2 Meeting with Reading Borough Council on 13th June 2024.

Below is a summary of the key design amendments we made in response to the feedback received:

- After taking into consideration the feedback received from the Council regarding re-cladding existing building, the current fire regulations and the state of the existing building, the design team decided to propose a new-build development which would make better use of the site and produce a higher quality design for the area.
- The co-living use was maintained after gaining a positive response from the Council on this. More research was conducted into the provision and management of a co-living scheme and VerveLife , a co-living operator, was consulted to begin advising on the design of the proposal.
- The proposal now looked to provide over 250 co-living rooms and high quality amenity spaces across 12 floors. The design approach is centred

on maximising the site, while keeping to the existing building’s footprint, and integrating a Co-living community into the centre of Reading.

- An improved ground floor layout was proposed which incorporated the existing courtyard and allowed for generous amenity, reception, co-work, gym and ancillary spaces. Additionally, the new scheme created a Class E space on the first floor, which due to the site levels, meant it would have street level access.
- Two external terraces and amenity spaces on L11 were also proposed to help provide ample amenity space for the co-living residents.



Pre-App 2 Scheme (north-west corner)

FEEDBACK & DESIGN RESPONSE - PRE-APPLICATION MEETING 2

The following is a summary of Reading Borough Council's feedback from our meeting on 13th June 2024.



- Reading Borough Council highlighted that they are supportive of co-living for the site, and advised that it will be key to outline why it is different to BTR or student accommodation as part of the application.
- It was noted that the Council is generally comfortable with the loss of office use from the site and the proposed Co-living use within the scheme. It was advised that further justification will have to be provided in the full planning application.
- It is acknowledged that the site's allocation under CR11b allows for a variety of uses on the site.
- The Council advised that the proposals are much better than the very first pre-app scheme (not done by this design team) and that the only design comments are whether there should be a more pronounced step down from Station Hill.
- The drop down to Station Hill was highlighted as quite significant and the Council advised the design team to reconsider the height of the building's shoulder.
- Some rearrangement to the layout of the ground floor was suggested to ensure that the street is activated by the internal uses. Also the bike store and bin storage were highlighted as an area which needs to be considered further to ensure residents wouldn't have to carry bikes through the amenity spaces and the bins would have direct access to the street.
- The Council was pleased that the emerging policy requirement of 5sqm amenity space is being met, given the central location of the site and constraints.
- It was advised that on-site provision and how this would work should be thought about within the scheme.

PRE-APPLICATION MEETING 3

In response to feedback received from our Pre-Application 2 meeting with Reading Council, we further developed the scheme and presented a update at a Pre-Application 3 Meeting on 18th July 2024.

Below is a summary of the key design amendments we made in response to the feedback received:

- The shoulder of the building has increased in size by 1 storey, from G+5 to G+6. This has raised the terrace which sits on top of this part of the building to Level 07.
- A comprehensive re-design of the ground floor internal spaces has increased active frontage and access to the building along Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street. It now incorporates a co-working space to the north-east corner, large entrance lounge with managed reception and BOH space, gym with changing facilities, fitness studio, laundry room and external courtyard. Where the building sits below street level to the south, there will be plant and ancillary space.
- Two bike stores and a large bin store have been incorporated into the south of the building at Level 01, giving them direct access from the street. As a result, the Class E space on this

level has become smaller (from 7-m² to 40m²), however it is still positioned to the south-west corner to activate the street frontage.

- A Level 11, the resident’s lounge has been re-designed to include a masterchef style kitchen space for residents and divided off spaces for a media/cinema room and private meeting/ event space with it’s own access to the external terrace at that level.
- Brick colour has changed from red to grey & black. Building material has remained the same and still takes design cues from the local area and Station Hill.



Pre-App 3 Scheme (north-west corner)

FEEDBACK & DESIGN RESPONSE - PRE-APPLICATION MEETING 3

The following is a summary of Reading Borough Council’s feedback from our meeting on 18th July 2024.



- The Council were pleased with the progress that had been made to the proposals since the last meeting.
- It was advised that some sections through the proposals to understand the relationship of the internal uses to the sloped elevation of Greyfriars Road would be useful to ensure the frontage is as activated as possible.
- The change in materiality and windows were welcomed by the Council.
- The increase in the shoulder height was acknowledged as fine and works well, mentioning that it suits the scheme more now.
- The southern facade was highlighted as needing further development. The amount of blank panels was mentioned as a concern and questioned as to whether they can be activated further.
- The Council agreed with the changes to the internal layouts and positioning of the amenity spaces, bike store and bin store. Sections through these spaces were requested.
- The landscape strategy was considered to be successful and made the most of the spaces the scheme has.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL (FRAME PROJECTS)

After developing the scheme further based on all previous feedback received, we presented our design proposals at a Design Review Panel (DRP) with Frame Projects on 14th August 2024.

Below is a summary of the key design elements that were presented at the DRP:

- The proposed building houses a co-living scheme, providing 257 rooms and high quality spaces across one building.
- A range of standard and large units have been designed in line with relevant co-living standards. All rooms will be fully furnished and have been designed to be a comfortable place for residents to sleep, relax, eat and store their belongings.
- Generous internal and external amenity spaces have been included across the ground, seventh and eleventh floors, to help create a welcoming and high quality co-living community.
- The ground floor incorporates a co-working space to the north-east corner, large entrance lounge with managed reception and BOH space, gym with changing facilities, fitness studio, laundry room and external courtyard. Where the building sits below street level to the south, there will be plant and ancillary space. The

arrangement of the spaces aims to increase the active frontage of the scheme to the north and west.

- Two bike stores and a large bin store have been incorporated into the south of the building at Level 01, giving them direct access from the street. A Class E space is also provided on the corner to help activate that part of the site.
- A resident’s lounge, masterchef style kitchen, media/cinema room, private meeting/event space and external terrace has been provided at Level 11. An additional external terrace has been provided on the building’s shoulder at Level 07.
- Building material has remained the same and still takes design cues from the local area and Station Hill.

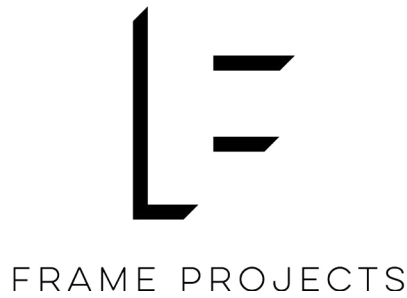


Design Review Panel Scheme (north-west corner)

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL (FRAME PROJECTS) - KEY COMMENTS AND DESIGN TEAM RESPONSES

The following is a summary of Design Review Panel (Frame Projects) feedback & the design team responses to the key comments made in our meeting on 14th August 2024.

All design team responses are shown in green. Further details on all design responses are included later in this document.



DRP Key Comment - Scale & Massing

1. Opportunities to simplify some of the massing should be explored. For example, the tenth floor includes a small step in the plan which adds limited value, either internally or in townscape terms, and this could be removed.
- The massing has been simplified to remove an unnecessary stepping in the facade, including at the tenth floor, whilst still maintaining the initial design intent of stepping the building down towards the south.

DRP Key Comment - Internal Layout

2. Careful consideration is needed of how each space will operate, including any requirements for servicing. Additionally, many of the outstanding assessments, including for fire safety, will have significant implications and urgently need to be understood to develop a more compelling and credible approach.
- The Client has now appointed a range of consultants to review and input into the developed internal layouts, ensuring that all spaces now operate efficiently and meet all standards.
 - There has been deliberate engagement of Orion Fire, who are a dedicated fire consultant, to input into the design and approach of all spaces within the scheme.

DRP Key Comment - Internal Layout

3. Further thought should be given to the location and layout of the ground floor entrances. The panel welcomes the intention to create a more generous pavement area outside the entrance, but alternative approaches to achieving this should be considered, including the option to chamfer the corner of the building to help make the entrance more
- A chamfered edge has been added to the north-western corner of the building, and the main building entrance has been moved here to create a more distinctive and generous entrance to the building. The double height chamfer continues to create a generous pavement outside and provides a more welcoming sense of arrival for residents and visitors.

DRP Key Comment - Internal Layout

4. Further consideration of the floor-to-floor heights is needed to ensure spaces feel generous, particularly in the amenity areas, and can accommodate any necessary servicing.
- The heights at ground level, and the top amenity level have been adjusted to provide 4m floor-to-floor heights at these levels. This helps create more generous amenity spaces for residents at these floors.

DRP Key Comment - Internal Layout

5. The panel is concerned by the liveability of the first-floor bedrooms. Their privacy is heavily compromised by their proximity to street level, particularly as you move up the hill towards Friar Street and in the colonnaded space along Garrard Street.
- The design team has adjusted the western facade of the building, which runs along the public-fronting Greyfriars Road, and has adjusted the floor heights so that, at it's shortest point, the first floor FFL will sit 2.58m above street level. This will eliminate any overlooking that could be caused by pedestrians, cyclists or drivers using Greyfriars Road and provide privacy to the first floor bedrooms facing out that way.

DRP Key Comment - Internal Layout

6. There is a conflict between the eleventh-floor outdoor terrace and the bedrooms which overlook it. The panel suggests re-organising the building to move the terrace and associated internal shared spaces to the top of the building to help avoid these conflicts and create a more generous terrace.

Design Team Response

- The top level amenity spaces have been re-located to the 12th floor, with the units above now below, to remove any overlooking of the terrace and maximise the terrace space.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL (FRAME PROJECTS) - KEY COMMENTS AND DESIGN TEAM RESPONSES

DRP Key Comment - User Experience

7. Further consideration should be given to the experience of using and moving through internal spaces. The panel highlights the importance providing a welcoming and generous sense of arrival.
- The ground floor layout has been redesigned to improve the experience of someone using and moving the spaces at this level. The relationship between the more public spaces (i.e. entrance lounge and cafe) and the more private spaces (i.e. lounge, gym , courtyard) is now much stronger and maximises the viability of these uses from outside on the street.
 - The building entrance has been moved to the north-west corner, along the chamfered edge of the building, to provide a more defined and generous sense of arrival.

DRP Key Comment - Public Realm & Landscape

8. The site is in area with poor access to parks and open spaces. Therefore, the provision of external amenity space as part of the scheme will be key to the quality of life of residents. Robust evidence for the amount of amenity space proposed is important.
- There has been further engagement with Henshall Green, our appointed landscape architects, to develop the design and usability of all external amenity within the scheme
 - Further details are included in the landscape strategy.

DRP Key Comment - Public Realm & Landscape

9. Sections through the street, including the buildings both sides, are needed to help better understand the pedestrian experience.
- Both building and site sections through the context have been included within this document.
 - Further details are included in this document & the landscape strategy.

DRP Key Comment - Public Realm & Landscape

10. Greyfriars Road is currently quite a hard environment, and further consideration is needed of lighting, surface materials and planting to improve the quality of the street. Careful thought should be given to the space required for the proposed cycle route and any street tree planting.

- Planting along Greyfriars Road has been carefully considered to ensure there is sufficient space for trees.
 - Further details are included in the landscape strategy.

DRP Key Comment - Elevations & Appearance

11. Further consideration should be given to more clearly defining the base, middle and top of the building. Moving the main amenity space to the top of the building could help in this, and a consistent ground floor treatment would also improve its legibility and the relationship with the street.

- The high level amenity spaces, and western external terrace, have now been moved to the top floor of the building (level 12) to help define the top of the building and reduce any overlooking from units above.
 - A chamfered edge has been introduced to the north-west corner of the building, at ground and first floor, to create a more defined entrance and establish the height of the material change, which now extends across both the northern and western elevations.

DRP Key Comment - Elevations & Appearance

12. The panel highlights the need for a stronger rationale for the proposed materiality. It cautions against incorporating the materiality of Greyfriars Church, which should read separately, favouring instead a well-crafted and complimentary material palette.

- Extensive research and testing of colour options has been conducted by the design team to ensure the materiality and colour is suited to the site.
 - The existing building has been a strong influence for the proposed development, using the shades of grey within the scheme.
 - Although building materiality has been influenced by the existing building and it’s surroundings, the overall choice of material and colours has been intentionally chosen based on what the design team believes works best for the site and previous feedback received about the building’s appearance.

DRP Key Comment - Sustainability

13. The panel welcomes the initial approach to sustainability, including the intention to deliver a BREEAM Excellent building. However, further detail should be provided on the proposed sustainability targets, including clear commitments for construction and operation.
- An initial BREEAM assessment has been carried out, showing that the proposed scheme is on track to achieve an ‘Excellent’ rating.
 - There has been deliberate engagement with Greengage & Meinhardt to ensure the proposed sustainability targets are achievable for both construction and operation.

DRP Key Comment - Sustainability

14. Detailed assessment of daylight, sunlight and shading across the site is needed, including insight into the quality of daylight that the courtyard, amenity space and each bedroom will receive, and also any impacts on the adjoining development.
- There has been deliberate engagement with Point 2, who are a dedicated daylight and sunlight surveyors, to input and review the scheme and ensure the quality of light in the proposed spaces is sufficient, both today and in the future.
 - RWDI have also been appointed to assess the scheme against wind and micro-climate impacts, to ensure the building and external spaces are adequate and comfortable for use.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

A public exhibition for the proposal was held on 18th September 2024 to provide a full and fair opportunity for all interested residents, businesses, community based groups and other stakeholders to give their feedback on the emerging proposals.

A community leaflet was sent out a week before the event to 1,086 homes and business around the site, and notices were placed on Nextdoor and InYourArea, providing the details of the consultation. Press releases were also sent to Reading Chronicle, Reading Today and Thames Tap, who published details of the event in their respective publications and online. A website (www.greyfriarsreading.co.uk) where information about the proposal and a feedback form were also available. This went online on 18th September 2024 to coincide with the public exhibition.

A specialist community engagement consultancy, Opus Works, was appointed to carry out this work.

Summary

- A total of 12 people attended the public exhibition and overall their feedback was positive. The web page attracted 144 individual users over the engagement period.
- Some key themes emerged from the feedback received including, the need for more housing, especially for key workers, in Reading and the justification of reuse vs new build.
- More detailed information on the responses received can be found in the Statement of Community Involvement which has been prepared by Opus Works as part of the planning application and should be consulted for the full assessment.



PUBLIC CONSULTATION BOARDS

ELDER Greyfriars House

WELCOME

Welcome to our public exhibition, which identifies our proposals for the redevelopment of Greyfriars House in Reading. The proposals seek to bring forward a new form of 'Co-Living' accommodation in the town centre that will create significant environmental, economic and social benefits.



Current Site



Site Location within Reading town centre

- Much needed housing
- More jobs, skills and businesses
- Support for daytime and nighttime economies
- Providing more affordable accommodation
- Delivering high levels of sustainability
- High quality design that responds to the local area

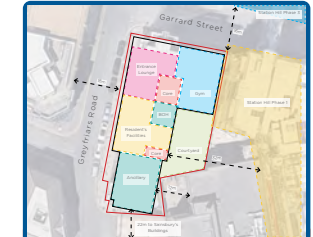
This exhibition presents our plans for the site, providing detail on use, design, layout and emerging, adjacent development. Before we submit our application, we would welcome community feedback on our scheme.



ELDER Greyfriars House

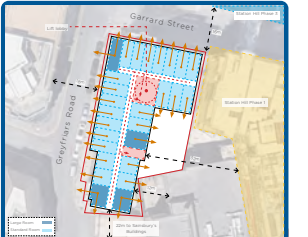
DESIGN STRATEGY

LAYOUT RATIONALE



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

- Entrance located to the north of the site where pedestrian and vehicular routes converge. An additional entrance to the rear provides access to the first floor commercial units.
- Active frontage used across the west and part of the north elevations, encouraging public interaction and establishing a relationship with the existing streetscape. Public areas are located on the western boundary for this reason, however due to the level change along this road, ancillary space has also been located to the south, where the space will sit below ground level.
- Private spaces are separate from public zones, providing exclusive spaces for future residents.



TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN

- There are two different sizes of residential dwellings available: large (70 sq m+) standard (70 sq m-23 sq m).
- Lift lobby (main core) is larger than usual, providing a meeting place to encourage interaction between residents.
- Residential units are oriented away from Station Hill development to minimise overlooking and
- increase daylight levels. Distances from neighbouring schemes are sufficient to avoid unwanted overlooking.

SCHEME MASSING



The first part of the proposed scheme is contained



The proposed first part is contained within



The second part of the scheme is contained within



The second part of the scheme is contained within

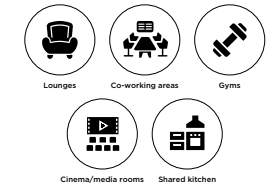
Scheme massing has been designed to complement both existing and emerging surrounding character. In this manner, the building steps up to Station Hill to the north and east and steps down towards Greyfriars Road and adjacent streets to the south and west. This stepped approach allows amenity terraces and roof level greening to be maximised. Utilising topography which slopes down to the north also allows for a double height space to be provided to the building entrance as well as an undercroft area along street level to provide active frontage, lighting and surveillance to the street, creating a more sensitive and appropriate relationship than that currently existing.

The approach taken allows for a significant amount of supporting space within the building to accommodate amenity spaces, a gym, a co-working area, reception and back of house/plant.

ELDER Greyfriars House

WHAT IS CO-LIVING?

Co-Living is a relatively new housing typology that provides a high-quality, professionally managed solution comprising smaller studio units alongside significant communal amenities, including:



What Does Co-Living offer?

Co-Living provides flexibility to a broad range of tenants seeking convenient and community-focused town centre accommodation. It provides a genuine alternative to house sharing and enables entertainment and enables resident connection.



THE BENEFITS OF OUR CO-LIVING SCHEME

- SOCIAL**
 - Affordability: all inclusive rental product (particularly with on-site discounted market rental (DMR) units to support key workers & the local community).
 - High quality rental product with flexibility to cater to those who may need 3-12 month stays (given normal PBS tenancies are 12+ months).
 - Promotes community living with a mix of areas for people to meet and engage.
 - Reduces and addresses urban loneliness.
 - 24/7 on-site support, ambassadors and management promoting resident engagement, wellness, well-being and mental health.
 - Communal amenities can be used by the community to promote engagement with new residents and the local area.
 - Responsive to changing living and working patterns.
- ENVIRONMENTAL**
 - Targeting BREEAM Excellent & EPC rating A.
 - Sharing amenities and spaces = lower embedded emissions.
 - Urban greening and BNG uplift on-site.
 - Urban communal allotments and growing food on-site by residents.
 - Technology enabled.
 - Promotes sustainable travel lifestyle.
- ECONOMIC**
 - 250+ residents living within local area = strengthen town centre and wider area.
 - New Class E unit suitable for SMEs close to Reading Station.
 - Work from home spaces, which have become a more popular need in response to the pandemic.
 - Opportunities to network and support local businesses.
 - Operational on-site job creation.
 - 510k contributions.

Other Reasons Why Co-Living is Popular?

- Higher rents in the Build to Rent and Private Rented Sector
- Shortage of rental stock
- Access to community building, organised social events
- Shorter tenancy lengths on offer
- Well located near services, amenities and transport connections



Typical Amenity Area

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SCHEME LAYOUT

The following images identify how the various spaces within the building are proposed to be arranged throughout the building. At ground floor, in addition to the built form, it is proposed to incorporate the existing courtyard to provide a generous external space, central space to provide a generous external space, on-site green, gym and shared studio, post room, laundry and back of house.

At first floor, on-site units start to be introduced. Given the change in topography from north to south, spaces towards the front are used for bike and bike storage and a flexible Class E unit. These spaces benefit from direct access from Greyfriars Road. Typical floors comprise c. 27 units, split between standard and larger, accessible rooms. Significant internal and external amenity spaces including a residents' lounge, private room, gym, media room and landscaped terrace are provided at this and 11th floor levels.



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PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

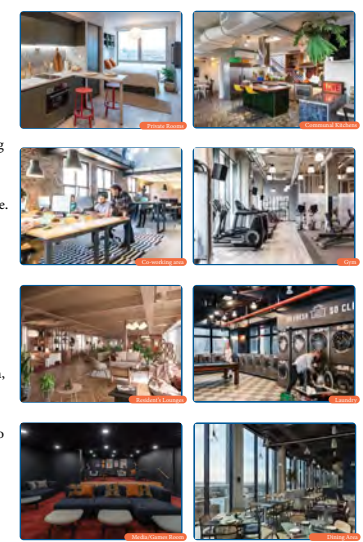


ELDER Greyfriars House

OUR VISION

Our vision for a co-living scheme at Greyfriars Road involves designing to the following principles and features:

- Designing a range of co-living units, of various sizes, across 12 floors, to maximise space, provide high quality living space and cater to multiple needs.
- Providing an alternative form of living accommodation in Reading through the provision of market co-living units and affordable discount market rent co-living units.
- Creating high quality architecture and a build-able, viable and deliverable scheme.
- Ensuring well-designed and generous amenity space is at the heart of our proposal by designing the best community spaces within our development.
- Facilitating this sense of community through the provision of a variety amenity space, including an upper level floor and terraces with views of the town, which provide areas for social, community and working uses.
- Creating a scheme which is well suited to the area and fits into the surrounding context, both current and emerging.
- Providing a building which can be managed effectively and allows the provision of resident facilities within.

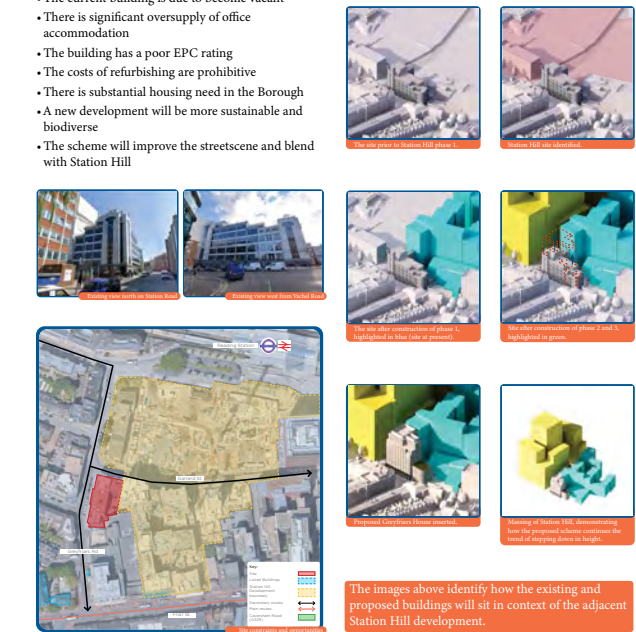


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WHY REDEVELOP THE SITE?

Greyfriars House was built in the 1980's. It has a number of constraints hindering re-use. Redevelopment is being considered as:

- The current building is due to become vacant
- There is significant oversupply of office accommodation
- The building has a poor EPC rating
- The costs of refurbishing are prohibitive
- There is substantial housing need in the Borough
- A new development will be more sustainable and biodiverse
- The scheme will improve the streetscene and blend with Station Hill



ELDER Greyfriars House

SUSTAINABILITY

Our aspiration is to create a truly sustainable building in the heart of Reading. The building will be thermally efficient to reduce heating requirements and heat loss. Natural and mechanical ventilation systems are proposed to ensure fresh air to units and to offset potential overheating. The building is targeting an excellent BREEAM rating and is proposing to use photovoltaic (solar) panels and heat pumps to provide an all-electric solution power by renewables in order to reduce carbon emissions.

In addition to our commitment to highly sustainable built form, it is proposed to provide a 10% biodiversity net gain on site and a number of habitat improvements through the following measures:

- Biodiverse Roof to provide habitat for invertebrates and a foraging resource for birds and bats
- Swift bricks, Bat boxes, Black Redstart nesting sites and House Sparrow terraces
- Climate resilient planting
- Fruiting trees and shrubs
- Green roofs and rainwater interception

Sustainability Targets



Target BREEAM 'Excellent'



EPC Target 'B' Rating

Specification



Water Efficiency

The development will be fitted with effective management and monitoring of water consumption.



Energy Efficiency

Solar panels and heat pumps to provide an all-electric scheme and renewable energy generation.



Ventilation

The building has been designed to maximise opportunities for natural ventilation and to reduce potential for overheating



Biodiversity

Bio-diverse roofs and garden terraces will be combined with on-site renewable energy generation.



Health & Wellbeing

The wellbeing of the building's occupants will be considered at all stages.

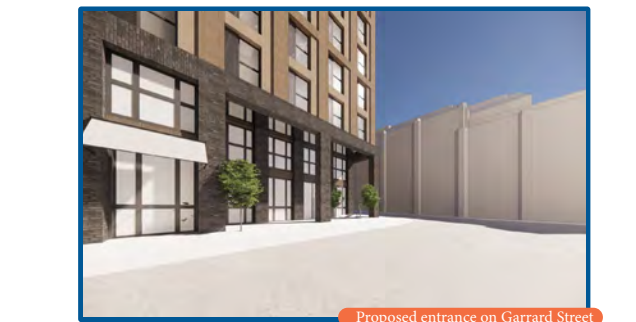


Green Spaces

Providing rooftop terraces and extensive landscaping/throughout the scheme.

ELDER Greyfriars House

NEXT STEPS



Proposed entrance on Garrard Street

PROJECT TIMELINE:



August 2023: Consultation with Woking Borough Council
September 2023: Public Consultation
October 2023: Submit Planning Application
February 2024: Anticipated Planning Decision
July 2024: Anticipated Start on Site
July 2026: Anticipated Completion of New Homes

Have your say:

We are keen to hear your views on our scheme. There are several ways you can provide your comments:

- Completing the feedback form at this exhibition
- Completing the feedback form on our project website www.greyfriarsreading.co.uk
- Writing to us at feedback@greyfriarsreading.co.uk

Once the planning application is submitted to Reading Borough Council you will also be able to submit formal comments to the Council directly. These comments will be considered by the Council when they determine the planning application



PRE-APPLICATION MEETING 4

We had a final Pre-Application meeting on 17th October 2024, with Reading Borough Council where we presented our updated scheme which incorporated feedback we received from our Pre-Application 3 meeting, Design Review Panel with Frame Projects and public consultation. Below is a summary of the key design amendments we made in response to feedback received:

- The building entrance has been moved to the north-west corner of the building, along a now chamfered edge, to create a more defined and welcoming entrance to the building.
- A comprehensive re-design of the ground floor internal spaces has increased active frontage and access to the building along Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street. It now incorporates a gym, fitness studio, co-working space and lounge for residents use, as well as a main entrance lounge which includes a cafe and managed reception. The residents spaces will all continue to feed onto an external courtyard at this level. Where the building sits below street level to the south, sufficient ancillary and plant space has also been provided for the operation of the building.
- A large cycle hub and a large bin store have been incorporated into the south of the building at Level 01, providing residents with

direct access from the street. Additionally, a substation with access out to Greyfriars Road and an additional management space have been included at that level.

- The amenity spaces and upper external terrace of the scheme have been moved up to Level 12.
- At Level 12, the resident's lounge has been designed to include a masterchef style kitchen space for residents and divided off spaces for a media/cinema room and private meeting/event space with direct access to the external terrace at that level.
- Brick colour has changed from red to grey & black, taking influence from the existing building on the site. Building material has remained the same and still takes design cues from the local area and Station Hill.
- The overall elevations and building appearance has been adjusted to provide more depth and articulation to the fenestration, and clearly define the base, middle and top of the building.



Pre-App 4 Scheme (north-west corner)

FEEDBACK & DESIGN RESPONSE - PRE-APPLICATION MEETING 4

The following is a summary of Reading Borough Council’s feedback from our meeting on 17th October 2024.



- It was acknowledged that all design changes made since the Design Review Panel were positive. The change to the entrance was welcomed, as was the new brick colour and differentiation of the lower floors. The detailing to the souther facade was also highlighted as positive.
- Further detail on ground floor toilet provisions and use of the shared ancillary spaces was highlighted.
- Concerns about the units which sit adjacent to the amenity space on Level 12 was raised, where it was mentioned that it should be demonstrated that sufficient noise insulation to protect these rooms should be specified in the full planning application. A suitable detail for this is to be considered by the applicant.
- Location of cycle and waste store is acceptable.

Design Proposals