

Station Hill Phase 3A

Plot AB & D Planning Statement

Revision 1
March 2026



Station Hill Phase 3A

Planning Statement



Planning Statement

DP9 Ltd

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GLOSSARY	
Term to be used	Definition
Applicant	SH Reading Master LLP
The Site	Phase 3, Station Hill, Reading, RG1 1NF
Phase 1 (the South Site)	Plots E and F, comprising land between Friar Street (south) and Garrard Street (north), bisected by Friars Walk. This has been constructed and is now known as 'Ebb' and 'Flow'.
Phase 2 (Plot G)	Plot G building in Phase 2 situated east of Friars Walk. This building has now been constructed and is known as One Station Hill.
South Site Planning Permissions	The South Site (Phase 1) was developed pursuant to two outline planning permissions with ref. 201532 and 201536, granted by Reading Borough Council in July 2021.
Hybrid Planning Permission	Planning permission ref. 192032, granted by Reading Borough Council in July 2021, comprising detailed consent for Phase 2 and outline consent for Phase 3 of the Station Hill North Site, as amended by the Section 96A Amendments.
Outline Planning Permission	The outline element of the Hybrid Planning Permission, relating to Phase 3.
S106 Agreement	The S106 Agreement dated 19 December 2019 associated with the Hybrid Planning Permission and the South Site Planning Permissions.
Section 96a Amendments	Minor material amendments to the Hybrid Planning Permission have been approved under Section 96A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. These include the Section 96A approval dated 5 December 2025 which amended the approved Parameter Plans and associated documents for Phase 3 (application ref: PL/25/1609)
RBC	Reading Borough Council



1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by DP9 Ltd ('the Agent') on behalf of SH Reading Master LLP ('the Applicant') in support of a Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032, relating to Phase 3A at Station Hill, Reading, RG1 1DX ('the Site'). This Reserved Matters application relates to Plot AB and D.
- 1.2 This application is hereby submitted to Reading Borough Council (RBC) and this Planning Statement sets out the planning case in support of the proposals in the context of relevant national, regional and local policy guidance.
- 1.3 The operative planning permission for the Site is the Outline Planning Permission element of the Hybrid Planning Permission, ref. 192032, granted in July 2021. The Hybrid Planning Permission, along with the South Site Planning Permissions, established a comprehensive masterplan for the phased redevelopment of the wider Station Hill site, divided into a number of phases and development plots. The Applicant has now prepared detailed proposals for Phase 3A, comprising Plots A, B and D, for which this submission seeks approval of the Reserved Matters of layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and access. The proposals have been developed in accordance with the approved Parameter Plans, Development Specification and Design Code.

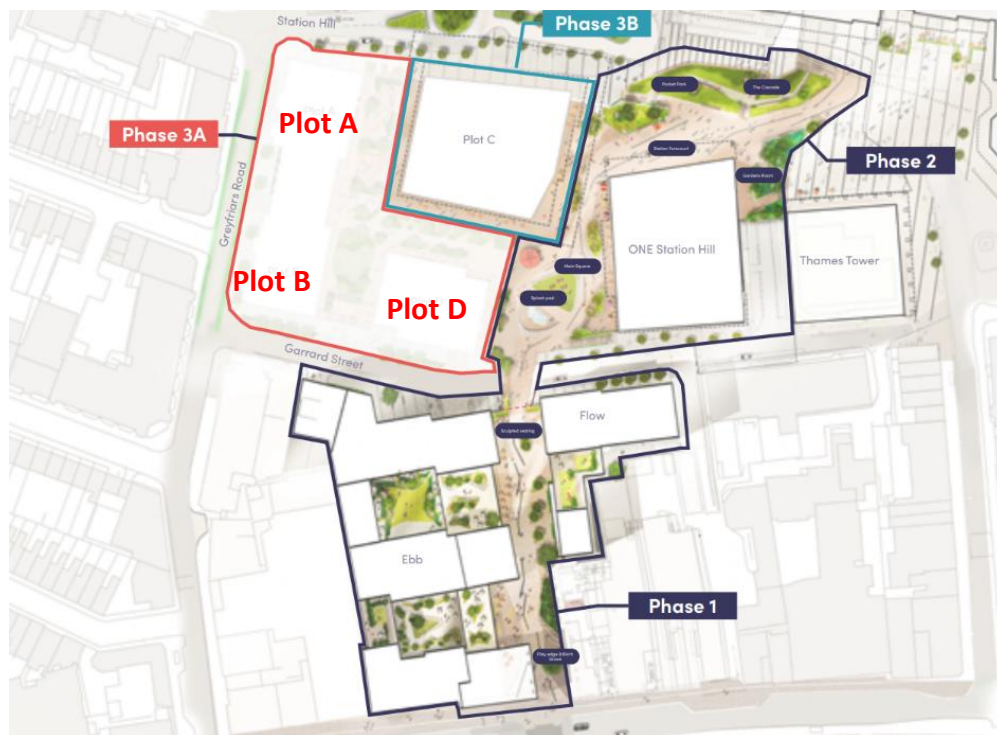


Figure 1: Station Hill, Phases 1-3



- 1.4 This Reserved Matters Application ('RMA') seeks approval of the Reserved Matters for the following development ('the proposed development'):

"Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032 for the development of Plots A, B and D at Station Hill, Reading, comprising the erection of two buildings to provide residential units (Use Class C3), including affordable housing, ground floor flexible commercial units (Use Class E), resident amenity space, associated landscaping and public realm works, including Station Hill Gardens and enhancements to Station Hill Square, new pedestrian routes, cycle parking, servicing, refuse storage, plant and ancillary infrastructure, with all associated works."

- 1.5 This RMA has been prepared to include all information required to discharge those conditions which are expressly triggered "with the Reserved Matters Application". This includes Conditions 54(iii), 63, 75, 76, 86, 94, 95, 96, 99, 107 and 112, together with the relevant Section 106 obligations to be addressed at this stage. The necessary details are provided within the submitted drawings, Design and Access Statement, Environmental Statement Addendum and supporting technical reports, and are submitted for approval as part of this application.
- 1.6 This RMA has been subject to extensive pre-application engagement with RBC since December 2024. Further information regarding these discussions is provided in Section 4 of this Planning Statement.
- 1.7 The RMA submission comprises a full suite of planning documents which together describe, justify and assess the detailed proposals for Phase 3A. The applications are as follows:
- An application for approval of reserved matters for Phase 3A, pursuant to Condition 54 of the Hybrid Planning Permission.
 - Details pursuant to associated conditions of the Hybrid Planning Permission (discharge of conditions application) and obligations of the S106 Agreement alongside the RMA submission, as follows:



Item	Requirement	Supporting Material
Conditions and Trigger		
Condition 54(iii) (Phase 3 Reserved Matters) Prior to commencement (except demolition)	Approval of details in respect of access, scale, layout, appearance and landscaping	The RMA includes a full set of detailed planning drawings prepared by Gensler and LDA which satisfy all of the required details. In addition, a suite of technical documents support the application.
Condition 63 (Architectural drawings) With RMA	Details of the residential numbers, mix, size of units and tenure (both for open market and affordable dwellings) in respect of the relevant Plots	The RMA includes all of the required details. Section 7.3 of the Design and Access Statement prepared by Gensler specifically indicates the mix, size and tenure of the homes.
Condition 75 (Materials) With RMA	Details and samples of the types of materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces for each Plot.	Design and Access Statement prepared by Gensler. Please refer to section 7.5.2. Physical samples available on site as agreed and will be available at Planning and Transportation Committee
Condition 76 (Maintenance and cleaning systems) With RMA	Plans and details of building maintenance and cleaning systems in respect of the relevant Plot	Design and Access Statement prepared by Gensler. Please refer to section 7.4.7.



Item	Requirement	Supporting Material
Conditions and Trigger		
Condition 86 (Wheeling ramp) With RMA	Details of a wheeling ramp to assist in cycles being wheeled up and down the public steps between the Phase 3 public realm and Greyfriars Road	Landscaping details within the Design and Access Statement prepared by Gensler. Please refer to section 7.6.
Condition 92 (Sustainable Drainage Strategy) Prior to commencement (except demolition)	Submission of Sustainable Drainage Strategy including details of the design, management and maintenance of surface water drainage for the relevant Plot using SuDS methods	Drainage Strategy and SuDs Report prepared by Ramboll. Drawings: SHP3-RAM-XX-XX-SK-C-000002 and SHP3-RAM-XX-XX-SK-C-000003
Condition 94 (Wind Tunnel) With RMA	Wind tunnel testing shall be undertaken for the relevant Plot and public realm and a report detailing the required mitigation	Wind and Microclimate assessment is included within the Environmental Statement prepared by RWDI and Waterman, Section 14
Condition 95 (Solar Glare) With RMA	A Solar Glare assessment details of mitigation measures, and a timetable for provision for the relevant Plot	A Solar Glare assessment is included within the Environmental Statement prepared by GIA and Waterman, Section 14



Item	Requirement	Supporting Material
Conditions and Trigger		
Condition 96 (Daylight and Sunlight) With RMA	A detailed Daylight and Sunlight assessment including details of mitigation measures, and a timetable for provision for the relevant Plot	A Daylight and Sunlight Assessment is included within the Environmental Statement prepared by GIA and Waterman, Section 14
Condition 99 (Habitat Mitigation) With RMA	Details of habitat mitigation works A. Locations and specifications for Bat roosting and habitat enhancements B. Locations and specifications for bird nesting habitats for Black Redstarts, Swifts and Peregrine Falcons C. Details of integration with the ground level planting scheme (demonstrating how it has been designed to maximise its benefit to wildlife within the context of the scheme). D. Green and Brown Roofs which shall cover 25% of the roof area of each Plot.	An Ecological Management Plan accompanies the application, addressing requirements (A), (B) and (C). Drawings: SHP3-GEN-XX-21-D-A-011231, SHP3-GEN-XX-22-D-A-011232 and SHP-GEN-XX-16-D-A-011226 identify the provision of green and brown roofs across the development and demonstrate that at least 25% of the roof area of each Plot is covered, thereby satisfying requirement (D) of Condition 99.
Condition 101 (Noise)	A detailed scheme, informed by an assessment of the	A Noise and Vibration Assessment is included within the Environmental



Item	Requirement	Supporting Material
Conditions and Trigger		
Prior to occupation	current noise environment, for protecting the residential development within the relevant Plot from the external noise environment of the area	Statement prepared by Waterman, Section 11
Condition 107 (Refuse and Recycling) With RMA	Details of refuse and recycling bin stores	Transport Assessment and Travel plan prepared by Stantec. Drawing SHP3-GEN-XX-P2-D-A-011208
Condition 109 & 110 (Air Quality) Prior to commencement (except demolition and groundworks)	A detailed Air Quality Assessment for the relevant Plot to determine whether mitigation is required to protect occupiers of all residential floorspace from the effects of poor air quality	An Air Quality Assessment is included within the Environmental Statement prepared by Waterman, Section 10
Condition 112 (Accessible) With RMA	Details demonstrating that all proposed dwellings will be accessible and adaptable in accordance with M4(2) of the Building Regulations, unless built in line with M4(3) and that at least 5% of the proposed dwellings will be wheelchair user dwellings in accordance	Drawings and Design and Access Statement Section 7.3.1 prepared by Gensler



Item	Requirement	Supporting Material
Conditions and Trigger		
	with M4(3) of the Building Regulations	
Obligations		
Schedule 6 Para 18.1 – 18.2	Biscuit Tin	Two potential locations have been indicated outlined within Section 7.2 of the Design and Access Statement prepared by Gensler. The final location will be considered by discharge of the S106 obligation prior to the demolition of the biscuit tin.
Schedule 6 Para 5.5 With RMA	Public Realm Areas Phase 3 Plan identifying the Public Realm Areas to be provided within each Plot	Details have been provided in: Drawings: SHP3-LDA-P3-ZZ-PL-L-100-101, SHP3-LDA-P3-ZZ-PL-L-100-102 and SHP3-LDA-P3-ZZ-PL-L-100-103. Design and Access Statement, Section 7.6 prepared by Gensler
Schedule 6 Para 4.6 With RMA	Observatory location, layout and design	This has been discussed with RBC and its been accepted in principle that the Observatory will not come forward on the residential plots in Phase 3. The S106 states “unless a later date is Approved”. We hereby seek to formally agree a later date for approval of these details, being the submission of an application for Plot C.

1.8 This Planning Statement should be read and considered in conjunction with the following accompanying documents outlined below:

- Application Form, CIL Form and Ownership Certificates



- Site Location Plan
- Existing and Proposed Drawings
- Maintenance Strategy
- Phasing Strategy
- Fire Statement
- Sustainable Drainage System Proposals
- Affordable Housing Statement
- Overheating Assessment
- Energy Efficiency Statements (Energy Strategy, PV Assessment, Broadband Strategy)
- Sustainability Statements
- Environmental Statement Addendum
- Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment
- Wind and Microclimate Assessment
- Air Quality Statement
- Daylight/Sunlight Assessment
- Solar Glare Assessment
- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan (Cycle Strategy, Waste Assessment)
- Ecological Management Plan
- Health Impact Assessment
- Statement of Community Involvement

1.9 This Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2 describes the Site and the surroundings;



- Section 3 outlines the planning history of the site;
- Section 4 describes the pre-application process and consultation;
- Section 5 sets out the proposed development;
- Section 6 identifies the relevant national, regional and local planning policies;
- Section 7 assesses the development against the relevant planning policies;
- Section 8 sets out the proposed approach to varying certain obligations in the S106 Agreement; and
- Section 9 provides the overall conclusions.



2. Site Context

- 2.1 The Site forms part of the wider Station Hill Masterplan and is located immediately south of Reading Station. Part of the application site is currently occupied by Xafinity House together with areas of temporary car parking and hardstanding. The surrounding area now comprises the completed Phase 1 and Phase 2 developments at Station Hill, including residential buildings at Ebb & Flow, One Station Hill, new public realm and enhanced pedestrian connections.
- 2.2 The wider Station Hill North Site redevelopment is governed by Hybrid Planning Permission ref. 192032, granted in July 2021. This established a flexible, parameter-led framework for the comprehensive redevelopment of the Site, with Phase 3 approved in outline and subsequent RMA's to come forward within clearly defined controls.
- 2.3 The outline consent for Phase 3 fixes the overall structure of development plots, maximum building envelopes, height parameters, land-use ranges, access arrangements, public realm framework and townscape strategy, while allowing flexibility in detailed design to respond to evolving architectural, technical and operational requirements.



Figure 2: Site Context



- 2.4 Phase 3 is organised into four principal plots (Plots A–D) arranged around a network of new streets and public spaces, including Station Hill Gardens and enhancements to Station Hill Square. The approved framework establishes a clear height hierarchy, safeguards appropriate building separation distances and secures key pedestrian connections between Station Hill, Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street.
- 2.5 This RMA relates to Phase 3A, comprising Plots AB and D. The proposals have been developed in accordance with the approved Parameter Plans and Design Code, as updated through the non-material amendment approved in December 2025 (ref. PL/25/1609). This amendment introduced the 'Scenario 2' parameter plans and Design Code, which facilitated refinements to the layout, including the amalgamation of Plots A and B into Plot AB and the creation of an increased separation between Plots B and D. The proposals therefore reflect the approved evolution of the masterplan framework and form the next stage in the delivery of the Station Hill Masterplan. A future RMA will be required to bring forward Plot C.
- 2.6 Phase 3A will complete important elements of the masterplan by reinforcing established movement routes, frontages and public realm and by integrating with the built form and material quality delivered as part of earlier phases. The proposals support the continued regeneration of Reading town centre by extending the live, work and play environment established at Station Hill and contributing positively to the life, activity and identity of the area.
- 2.7 The Site occupies a highly accessible location within Central Reading, immediately adjacent to Reading Station. With Phases 1 and 2 now operational, the surrounding area forms an established mixed-use environment characterised by new homes, employment space, public realm and improved pedestrian connectivity.
- 2.8 Phase 3A is brought forward pursuant to the Outline Planning Permission, which establishes the parameters for detailed development across the site. That consent allows for up to 750 homes within Phase 3 (Plots A, B and D). The current proposals deliver 600 homes, representing a reduction from the maximum permitted in order to prioritise apartment quality, generous resident amenity, landscaped terraces and high-quality public realm. Together, the development will bring around 1,000 new residents into the heart of Reading, supporting the vitality of the town centre and reinforcing Station Hill as a thriving, mixed-use neighbourhood.
- 2.9 Since the Outline Planning Permission was secured in 2021, planning consent has been granted or is sought for other nearby relevant developments. These are summarised in the Table below:

Scheme / Address	Application Reference	Description of Development	Decision / Status
Elder Developments	PL/24/1501	Demolition of the existing building and the erection of a part-7, part-	Approved 29/08/2025



Scheme / Address	Application Reference	Description of Development	Decision / Status
(Greyfriars) Ltd Scheme at 20-30 Greyfriars Road, RG1 1NS		13 storey co-living building (Sui Generis) and associated communal amenity facilities, refuse storage, cycle parking and plant equipment.	
Shaviram Group scheme at 35-39 Friar Street, RG1 1DX	PL/22/0933	Demolition of existing buildings and installation of basement and erection of part 7, part 11 storey mixed use building comprising 103 upper floor residential units (Class C3) and Class E uses at part basement, part ground floor level plus landscaping and other works (amended description).	Approved 20/11/2025
Hermes Property Unit Trust scheme at 80 Caversham Road, RG1 1AA	PL/18/2252	Outline application considering access, landscaping, layout and scale for redevelopment proposal involving the demolition of all existing buildings and structures (Classes B1a & B2) and erection of new buildings ranging between basement and 2 – 24 storeys in height, providing 620 (72 x studio, 196x1, 320x2 & 32x3-bed) residential units (Class C3), office accommodation (Class B1a), flexible ground floor shop (Class A1), financial and professional services (Class A2) or restaurant/café (Class A3) uses, a community centre (Class D1), health centre uses (Class D1) and various works including car parking (94 spaces (70 at basement level)), servicing, public and private open space, landscaping, highways, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement (amended description).	Approved 29/03/2023
Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited	PL/20/0328 (Appeal ref.	Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale	Allowed on appeal on 21/03/2024



Scheme / Address	Application Reference	Description of Development	Decision / Status
scheme at Vastern Court, Caversham Road	APP/E0345 /W/21/ 3289748)	reserved for later determination. A demolition phase and phased redevelopment (each phase being an independent act of development) comprising a flexible mix of the following uses: Residential (Class C3 and including PRS); Offices (Use Class B1(a); development in Use Classes A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public house), A5 (take away), D1 and D2 (community and leisure); car parking; provision of new plant and renewable energy equipment; creation of servicing areas and provision of associated services, including waste, refuse, cycle storage, and lighting; and for the laying out of the buildings; routes and open spaces within the development; and all associated works and operations including but not limited to: demolition; earthworks; provision of attenuation infrastructure; engineering operations.	
M&G RPF Limited Partnership, Thames Quarter Ltd & Lochailort Thames scheme at Thames Quarter, Kings Meadow Road	PL/19/0809	Erection of a part 13-storey, part 23 storey building comprising 335 apartments in a mix of studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three- bedroom units, residents' lounges, tech-hub, dining room, and cinema room, various rooftop outdoor amenity spaces, concierge/reception with coffee meeting area, gym, residents' storage facilities, post room, ancillary back-of-house facilities, 335 secure cycle parking spaces, car parking spaces, landscaping, and associated works (revision to planning permission 162166 dated 23/11/2017)(Part Retrospective)	Approved 10/03/2020



Scheme / Address	Application Reference	Description of Development	Decision / Status
McLaren Ltd and UREF III LP scheme at Broad Street Mall	PL/24/0173	Part-demolition of existing retail units, car park and service areas, demolition and rebuild of car park ramp, and construction of a residential-led, mixed-use development fronting Queens Walk and Dusseldorf Way, including all necessary enabling and alteration works required.	Awaiting determination
The Oracle Limited Partnership scheme at Existing Vue Cinema Complex, Land West of Yield Hall Place / London Road, The Oracle, RG1 2AG	PL/22/1917	Mixed use development comprising demolition of existing buildings and erection of new building comprising up to 218no. build-to-rent residential dwellings (Class C3) & up to 3,046 sqm commercial floorspace comprising cinema (Sui Generis) and ground floor commercial uses within Use Class E and/or Bar (Sui Generis Use). Associated public realm and infrastructure works (amended description) (accompanied by an Environmental Statement)	Awaiting determination
The Oracle Limited Partnership scheme at Former Debenhams Department Store, West of Yield Hall Place, The Oracle, RG1 2AS	PL/22/1916	Mixed use development comprising part demolition of former department store and erection of new buildings comprising up to 218 build to rent residential dwellings (Class C3) & 1,209sqm commercial uses within Uses Class E and/or bar (Sui Generis Use). Reconfiguration and change of use of up to 5,866sqm remaining department store floorspace (Class E) to uses with within Use Class E and/or bar (Sui Generis Use) and/or experiential leisure use (Sui Generis Use). Associated public realm, infrastructure works & external alterations to shopping centre, including creation of new shopping centre entrance(amended	Awaiting determination



Scheme / Address	Application Reference	Description of Development	Decision / Status
		description)(accompanied by an Environmental Statement).	
John Lewis Partnership BTR Ltd scheme at John Lewis Customer Collection Point, Crossland Road, RG1 2HT	PL/24/1155	Demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site comprising erection of a new building for 170 build to rent residential dwellings (Use Class C3) together with flexible community space (Use Class F1 (a-b; d-e) F2 (a-b), residents' facilities, landscaping, public realm, amenity space and cycle parking. (Amended description)	Awaiting determination



3. Planning History

- 3.1 The Hybrid Planning Permission (ref. 192032) was granted in 2021 and authorised the development of Phase 2 (in detail) and Phase 3 (in outline).
- 3.2 The Outline Planning Permission for Phase 3 reserved all matters. The Outline consent was deliberately flexible and allowed for a range of development scenarios and uses to come forward. The outline consent secured a maximum set of parameters for a development on Phase 3. This included a maximum height, bulk and floorspace of development. The maximum parameters were to be controlled by a series of key documents secured in the permission as summarised below. Any future RMA would need to show compliance with these key controlling documents.
- 1) **Parameter Plans.** The outline consent included a number of parameter plans. These indicated key size parameters in relation to height, breadth and width of each development Plot. They set key rules in relation to the physical parameters of future development plots and effectively created a 'jelly mould' that a future RMA scheme would need to fit within. The outline application assessed the potential impacts of the 'maximum parameter' scheme to understand the possible effects. In addition, a number of 'illustrative schemes' were prepared to help explain the type of development that could come forward within the maximum parameters set. These were not approved schemes or had any planning weight, but were a useful device to explain how a future Reserved Matters Application would assess its impacts compared to the maximum parameter scheme.
 - 2) **Design Code.** A detailed Design Code was secured with the outline consent. This set out more detailed design rules that any buildings would need to follow and adopt where relevant. For example, design rules included requirements relating to building height and massing, the location and treatment of tall elements, minimum building separation distances, active ground floor frontages, the articulation of building bases, middles and tops, materials and façade quality.
 - 3) **Development Specification.** This document set out the maximum (and minimum) quantum of floorspace allowed under the outline consent to come forward at Phase 3. For example, it set a maximum limit of 750 homes within the Phase 3 area.
 - 4) **Planning Conditions.** The Decision Notice for Ref:192032 included a series of planning conditions that a future building at Phase 3 would need to adhere to. Many of these conditions require submission of details concurrently with the Reserved Matters Application. Other conditions required details prior to



commencement or occupation. This Planning Statement summarises the response to these conditions for this Reserved Matters application.

- 5) **Section 106.** The planning consent for Ref:192032 included a Section 106 legal agreement. This included a series of planning obligations in relation to all phases of the Masterplan. It included some specific requirements for the Phase 3 Plots. This Planning Statement summarises the response to the relevant obligations for this Reserved Matters application.

- 3.3 Since outline planning permission was granted in July 2021 (ref. 192032), the Applicant team has undertaken extensive pre-application discussions with RBC. This consultation highlighted some opportunities to enhance the scheme from the maximum parameter scheme and the 'illustrative schemes' compared at the time. This included the creation of a gap between Plot B and Plot D to improve residential quality and the public realm/ permeability strategy. A non-material amendment application (reference: PL/25/1609) was subsequently submitted to amend the approved Design Code and parameters plans to allow for this improved layout. This was known as 'Scenario 2' in the updated Design Code. This application was approved on 05/12/2025.
- 3.4 Planning permission (ref: 240622) was also granted on 2 July 2024 for a temporary car park on the Phase 3 land (predominantly where Plot C is situated). This car park is to be used by the office workers at One Station Hill (Phase 2) on an interim basis. Temporary permission was granted for a maximum of 5 years (until 4 July 2029) and the site would need to be restored to its original condition at this time (or earlier if required for Phase 3 construction).
- 3.5 Table 1 below sets out a summary of the key relevant planning history for the Site. The Phase of the masterplan that each permission relates to is highlighted in the table. Please note that these only record the specific applications of direct relevance to this submission, rather than to the Masterplan site as a whole.

Reference	Description of Development	Decision
251609 Phase 3	Application for a Non-Material Amendment Following a Grant of Planning Permission PL/19/2032 to facilitate amendments to Parameter Plans, Design Code, and Conditions: 54, 57, 58, 77, 86 & 97.	Approved 05/12/2025
250446 Phase 2	Amendments to details relating to Conditions 2 (approved drawings), 15 (reception layout), 22 (parking spaces layout and timetable), 24 (vehicle	Approved 10/04/2025



Reference	Description of Development	Decision
	accesses), 26 (EV charging) and 31 (BREEAM) of planning permission ref 192032.	
220594 Phase 2	Non-Material Amendment to permission 192032. Amendments to Plot G: Internal changes to office entrance lobby layout; Additional entrance to retail units; Reconfiguration of office toilet layouts; Provision of glazed 'box' meeting room at first floor; Amendments to terrace access doors at eight and fifteenth floors.	Approved 01/07/2022
201533 Phase 1	Application for the approval of reserved matters (access, scale, appearance, layout and landscaping) and submission of details (Conditions 12, 13, 15, 16, 17,18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 52) for Plot F within the development site known as Station Hill, submitted pursuant to the Outline Planning Application ref. 201536/VAR. The proposals comprise the construction of a ground plus 12 storey building comprising 184 Build to Rent residential units, 762 sqm (GEA) of flexible retail, leisure and business floorspace (Use Class E, Sui Generis, F.1 and F.2), cycle storage, car parking, servicing, plant areas, landscaping, new public realm and other associated works.	Approved 23/07/2021
190465 Phase 1	Application for the approval of reserved matters (access, scale, appearance, layout and landscaping) for Plot E within the development site known as Station Hill submitted pursuant to Outline Planning Permission ref. 190442, and submission of details for approval pursuant to Conditions attached to that permission. The proposals comprise the construction of a 12 storey building (plus basement storey) containing 370 Build to Rent residential units (Use Class C3), 1,151sqm (GEA) of flexible retail floorspace (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5), cycle storage, car parking, servicing, plant areas, landscaping, new public realm and other associated works (amended description)	Approved 10/12/2019
190466	Application for approval of reserved matters (Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and	Approved 10/12/2019



Reference	Description of Development	Decision
Phase 1	Scale) for Plot F within the development site known as Station Hill submitted pursuant to Outline Planning Permission ref. 190441, and submission of details for approval pursuant to Conditions attached to that permission. The proposals comprise construction of a 12 storey (plus basement storey) building containing 168 Build to Rent residential units (Use Class C3), 390sqm (GEA) of flexible retail floorspace (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D2), 656sqm (GEA) of leisure floorspace (Use Class D1 or D2), cycle storage, car parking, servicing, plant areas, landscaping, new public realm and other associated works (amended description).	
240622 Temporary Permission on Phase 3 land (Plot C)	Full planning permission for the construction of a Temporary Car Park, including vehicular access from Garrard Street	Approved 02/07/2024



4. Pre-Application Discussions and Consultation

Planning Pre-Application Discussions

- 4.1 A comprehensive programme of pre-application engagement was undertaken with Reading Borough Council between October 2024 and December 2025. This was supported by a Planning Performance Agreement to ensure sufficient time and resource of RBC to provide the detailed and considered feedback needed.
- 4.2 These discussions directly informed the evolution of the Phase 3A proposals and provided an opportunity for RBC to understand the emerging design and options being considered in the context of the approved maximum parameter plans and Design Code of the approved Outline Planning Permission (ref. 192032).

Pre-application discussions with Reading Borough Council

- 4.3 Pre-application discussions focused on the detailed design of Plots AB and D, including layout, scale and massing, the relationship of the buildings to surrounding streets and public spaces, residential quality and amenity provision, architectural approach and materials, and the integration of landscape and public realm. Officers also reviewed the proposals in relation to transport, servicing, drainage, sustainability, fire strategy, inclusive design and compliance with relevant planning policy and guidance.
- 4.4 Key themes arising from officer feedback included:
- Understanding the benefits of various options explored including the option to create a gap between from Plot B to Plot C (compared to the illustrative scheme).
 - Refinement of building separation and massing to enhance daylight, permeability and townscape quality;
 - High quality architectural detailing, including clearly articulated building tops;
 - Strong ground floor activation and engagement with surrounding streets and spaces;
 - Integration of landscape proposals with the public realm delivered as part of earlier phases;
 - Discussion of the transport strategy and compliance with transport, drainage, sustainability and other technical requirements.
 - Discussions in relation to proposed unit mix, residential quality and entrances.
 - Ensuring compliance with the approved Parameter Plans and Design Code; and



- 4.5 Particular attention was given to the role of Phase 3A in reinforcing the primary pedestrian connection between Reading Station and Friar Street. The layout, massing and ground floor uses were reviewed to ensure that this route is legible, well overlooked and integrated with the wider Station Hill public realm network. Discussions also considered the activation and pedestrian environment along Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street.
- 4.6 The feedback received throughout the pre-application process has informed refinements to the layout, architectural design, public realm strategy, and transport and has contributed positively to the development of the proposals now submitted.

Reading Design Review Panel (DRP)

- 4.7 The proposals were also presented to the Reading Design Review Panel (DRP) in November 2025 as part of the iterative design process. The Panel provided constructive comments focused on the refinement of building form and massing, façade articulation, the expression of building bases and the activation of ground floor frontages, as well as the relationship between the buildings and surrounding public realm. The DRP feedback has been addressed through the design evolution set out in Section 6.4 and 6.5 of the Design and Access Statement.

Public Consultation

- 4.8 A programme of community engagement was undertaken in advance of submission and is set out in detail within the accompanying Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Redwood. A public exhibition was held at One Station Hill on 7 and 8 November 2025, with the exhibition boards remaining on display until 24 November 2025. The event provided an opportunity for local residents, businesses and stakeholders to review the proposals and provide feedback. Overall responses were positive, with comments generally supporting the continued regeneration of the area and the delivery of new homes and public realm.

Additional consultation

- 4.9 In addition to the public exhibition, targeted stakeholder briefings were undertaken during October, November and December 2025. Stakeholders included the local Member of Parliament, Reading Borough Council leadership and ward councillors, Reading Civic Society, REDA, local Business Improvement Districts and businesses in the vicinity of the site. Discussions focused on the success of Station Hill Phases 1 and 2 to date to enhance the role of the urban fabric around the Station, the role of Phase



3A within the wider Station Hill development, its relationship to completed phases, and its contribution to public realm, movement and town centre activity.

- 4.10 The consultation approach was proportionate to the nature of a RMA, recognising that the principle of development, land uses, development parameters and maximum quantum were established through the outline planning permission. Engagement therefore focused on the detailed design of the proposals and their integration with the surrounding area.
- 4.11 Where appropriate, feedback received through the consultation process has informed refinements to the detailed design of Phase 3A, particularly in relation to public realm quality, pedestrian connectivity, building articulation and ground floor activation.
- 4.12 Overall, the proposals have been developed through a collaborative and iterative process involving the local planning authority, independent design review, stakeholders and the local community. The accompanying Statement of Community Involvement provides further detail on the consultation undertaken and the feedback received.
- 4.13 The following section provides an overview of the application proposals.



5. Application Proposals

Description of Development

- 5.1 This RMA seeks approval of the Reserved Matters for the following development:

“Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032 for the development of Plots A, B and D at Station Hill, Reading, comprising the erection of two buildings to provide residential units (Use Class C3), including affordable housing, ground floor flexible commercial units (Use Class E), resident amenity space, associated landscaping and public realm works, including Station Hill Gardens and enhancements to Station Hill Square, new pedestrian routes, cycle parking, servicing, refuse storage, plant and ancillary infrastructure, with all associated works.”

Proposed Development

- 5.2 It is worth noting that Phase 1 and Phase 2 developments at Station Hill have been completed now which includes the residential buildings at Ebb & Flow and One Station Hill. This application will build on the success of the award-winning Phase 1 Built to Rent homes at Ebb and Flow. Phase 3 will form 600 new high-quality homes that complement the existing provision at Phase 1. The Phase 3 homes will adopt the same quality, level of management and types of amenity space as Ebb and Flow to further build on what has been successfully delivered to date.
- 5.3 This RMA is submitted pursuant to Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032 and relates to Station Hill Phase 3A (Plots A, B and D), Reading. The application seeks approval of the reserved matters of layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and access for the development of two residential buildings (Use Class C3), including affordable housing, together with flexible ground floor commercial floorspace (Use Class E). The proposals include residential amenity space, associated landscaping and public realm works, including the delivery of Station Hill Gardens and enhancements to Station Hill Square, new pedestrian routes, cycle parking, servicing arrangements, refuse and plant areas, and all associated infrastructure in accordance with the approved masterplan framework.
- 5.4 The proposals comprise two residential buildings across Plots AB and D, delivering 600 build-to-rent homes, including 75 affordable homes (12.5% of homes in accordance with the Section 106 legal agreement). The development also includes flexible retail, F&B, community space and service uses, a range of resident amenities and significant



new areas of landscaped public realm. This includes the creation of Station Hill Gardens, new north–south pedestrian connections between Station Hill and Garrard Street, improved east–west links, children’s play space and enhancements to Station Hill Square.

5.5 In total, the scheme includes the following quantum of amenity space.

Type	Quantum (sqm)
Internal residential amenity space	1,280 sqm
External residential amenity space(terraces)	389 sqm
New public Realm	1,184 sqm
New play space	222 sqm
New green space/ soft landscaping	842 sqm
Enhanced S278 areas	1,431 sqm
TOTAL	5,348 sqm

- 5.6 Phase 3A forms part of the wider Station Hill regeneration area and represents the next stage in the delivery of the approved masterplan, reinforcing the established network of routes, spaces and active frontages delivered through earlier phases.
- 5.7 The 2021 Outline Planning Permission establishes development parameters for Phase 3 (Plots A–D), including provision for up to 750 residential units. The current proposals deliver 600 homes, allowing for high quality residential accommodation, generous internal and external amenity provision and a high standard of public realm. The quantum of homes is below the maximum permitted in order to prioritise apartment quality, generous resident amenity, landscaped terraces and high-quality public realm. Together, the development will bring around 1,000 new residents into the heart of Reading, supporting the vitality of the town centre and reinforcing Station Hill as a thriving, mixed-use neighbourhood.
- 5.8 The homes will be delivered and professionally managed as part of a build-to-rent development, consistent with the operational approach established at Station Hill. The scheme is designed as a car-free development, with limited accessible parking only (with two Blue badge spaces each in AB and D), and will be supported by extensive cycle provision, shared residential facilities and active ground floor frontages. Together with the delivery of Station Hill Gardens, improvements to surrounding streets and enhancements to Station Hill Square, Phase 3A will make a significant contribution to the continued delivery of the Station Hill Masterplan.



- 5.9 In total, Phase 3A provides 55,549 sqm (GIA) of built floorspace, as shown by each block in the table below. The approved Development Specification allowed for a maximum quantum of 128,000 (GEA) on Phase 3, which includes floorspace in Plot C. The proposed floorspace falls significantly below this maximum quantum and still allows for a significant quantum of floorspace to be brought forward on Plot C in accordance with the parameters set in the Outline Planning Permission.

Block	Plot AB (GEA) sqm	Plot AB (GIA) sqm	Plot D (GEA) sqm	Plot D (GIA) sqm	Plot AB and D TOTAL GEA sqm	Plot AB and D TOTAL GIA sqm
Residential	39,761	36,827	19,852	17,918	59,613	54,745
Commercial	459	299	543	490	1,002	789
Total (m2)	40,220	37,126	20,395	18,408	61,536	55,534

- 5.10 The residential mix for Phase 3A comprises a mix of units for Block AB and Block D, as illustrated in the tables below. In total, 600 residential units are proposed across Phase 3A.

Unit Type	Block AB	Block D	TOTAL	Total %
Studio (ST)	15	19	34	5.6%
1 Bed	249	81	330	55%
2 Bed	138	76	214	35.7%
3 Bed	15	7	22	3.7%

- 5.11 In regard to the affordable housing provision, 75 affordable homes equivalent to 12.5% of units across the Site is proposed. The affordable homes will be tenure blind.
- 5.12 The full extent of the proposals is shown on the submitted scheme drawings and described within the accompanying Design and Access Statement.



Car and Cycle Parking Provision

- 5.13 The Proposed Development will be car free, with no additional car parking provided, with the exception of two on-street Blue Badge parking bays for each Building (Block AB and Block D).
- 5.14 A total of 337 new cycle spaces will be provided, as shown by the table below.

Cycle Parking (by Land Use)	Long Stay
Plot AB	
Residential	228
Commercial etc	8
TOTAL	236

Cycle Parking (by Land Use)	Long Stay
Plot D	
Residential	94
Commercial etc	7
TOTAL	101

Compliance with the Development Specification

- 5.15 The Proposed Development has been designed fully in accordance with the approved Development Specification forming part of Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032. The Specification establishes the maximum quantum and range of uses for Phase 3 (Plots A–D), including up to 750 residential units, a maximum of 65,000 sqm (GEA) of Class C3 residential floorspace, up to 4,500 sqm (GEA) of flexible commercial, retail and leisure uses, associated podium and plant space, and the provision of significant public realm and landscaping.
- 5.16 The Phase 3A delivers 600 residential units across Plots AB and D, comfortably within the overall maximum unit allowance. The development provides a total of 61,536 sqm (GEA) (55,534 sqm GIA), comprising approximately 59,613 sqm (GEA) residential floorspace and 1,002 sqm (GEA) flexible commercial floorspace, and therefore remains well within the maximum residential and commercial parameters established by the Outline Planning Permission and Development Specification.



- 5.17 The distribution of uses is also consistent with the Development Specification, which allows residential (Class C3) on upper floors of Plots A, B and D with flexible commercial and active uses at ground and podium levels. The proposals incorporate active ground floor frontages, resident amenity, F&B, community space, building services and plant within podium and ancillary areas, in accordance with the approved development framework.
- 5.18 Overall, the Proposed Development sits comfortably within the approved quantum, land use parameters and spatial framework established by the Development Specification and therefore fully accords with the principles and limitations secured through Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032.

Scale, Layout and Appearance

- 5.19 The design of Phase 3A has been developed in accordance with the development controls established by the Outline Planning Permission. These comprise principally:
- The approved Parameter Plans, which define the maximum building envelopes, heights and land use distribution;
 - The Development Specification and planning conditions, which establish the permitted development quantum; and
 - The Station Hill Design Code, which sets out mandatory and discretionary requirements to ensure a coordinated architectural, townscape and public realm response across the wider masterplan.
- 5.20 Following the grant of Outline Planning Permission, a non-material amendment (ref. PL/25/1609), approved in December 2025, introduced updated 'Scenario 2' Parameter Plans and an associated Design Code to allow for refinements to the approved layout. These amendments facilitate the amalgamation of Plots A and B into Plot AB and provide for increased separation between Plots B and D, resulting in improved residential quality, daylight and permeability. The proposals subject to this Reserved Matters Application have been developed in accordance with these approved Scenario 2 Parameter Plans and Design Code, which form the basis for the detailed design brought forward.
- 5.21 The Outline Planning Permission includes the approved Parameter Plan (Ref: SHRN – CRL – S3 – ZZ – PL-A-0705 Rev P03), which establishes maximum building heights of 126.5m AOD for Plot A, 97.4m AOD for Plot B and 116.5m AOD for Plot D. The Parameter Plan also identifies that the tallest element of Plot A should be located toward the northern part of the plot, with the building stepping down from north to south. The proposed buildings sit fully within the approved height and the approved



massing envelope (the ‘jelly mould’) and do not seek any amendment to the outline parameters.

- 5.22 The Design Code and Development Specification also establish requirements relating to building massing, scale transitions, plot separation, façade composition and the relationship between buildings and public realm. These requirements, together with the evolving context created by the delivery of Phases 1 and 2, have informed the detailed design approach for Phase 3A. Further detail is provided within the Design and Access Statement.

Scale and Layout

- 5.23 The layout for Phase 3A comprises two principal residential buildings across Plots AB and Plot D, arranged to frame new areas of public realm and to reinforce the established network of routes and spaces within the Station Hill masterplan. The disposition of built form responds to the approved plot structure and safeguards key north–south and east–west pedestrian connections, including the primary route linking Station Hill and Reading Station with Garrard Street.



Figure 3: Station Hill Plots AB and D

- 5.24 A key component of the layout strategy has been the provision of generous separation distances between buildings, most notably the widened gap between Plots B and D. This increased spacing improves daylight penetration, enhances visual permeability through the site and contributes positively to townscape legibility and residential amenity, representing an improvement when compared to the maximum development scenario assessed at outline planning permission stage.



- 5.25 The scale of development responds to the approved height hierarchy for Phase 3. Building heights step down toward the south and west, ensuring an appropriate transition to the surrounding context and maintaining consistency with the broader masterplan strategy.
- 5.26 The proposals deliver a total of 600 residential units, which is below the maximum of 750 homes permitted across Phase 3 (Plots A–D) under the Outline Planning Permission. This reduction has allowed for a more refined building form, improved spacing between plots and enhanced provision of residential amenity space and public realm.
- 5.27 The ground floors have been carefully arranged to maximise active frontages and strong engagement with surrounding streets and spaces, including Station Hill, Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street. Residential entrances, community space, shared amenity spaces and flexible commercial units contribute to activity and natural surveillance, reinforcing the pedestrian-focused character of the development.
- 5.28 The layout also facilitates the delivery of Station Hill Gardens as a new central landscaped space, together with enhancements to Station Hill Square and improvements to surrounding streets. These spaces are designed to be legible, well-overlooked and integrated with the architecture, providing a clear hierarchy of public realm that supports movement, dwelling and informal activity.

Appearance

- 5.29 The architectural approach for Phase 3A has been developed to provide a coherent yet distinctive addition to the Station Hill townscape, drawing on the material quality and contemporary character established by earlier phases while responding to the predominantly residential function of this part of the masterplan.
- 5.30 The façades are organised to express a clear base, middle and top composition, providing visual structure and legibility at a range of scales in compliance with the Design Code. The base is designed to respond to the human scale at street level, with greater depth, texture and articulation to reinforce the relationship between the buildings and the public realm. The middle sections express the primary residential floors. The upper levels are articulated to provide a well-defined roofline and to reduce the perceived mass of the buildings.
- 5.31 Vertical articulation is a key component of the design strategy, helping to emphasise the slender proportions of the buildings and to break down the overall mass into a



series of legible elements. Variations in façade depth, brick tone and balcony arrangement introduce visual rhythm and interest while maintaining an overall coherent architectural language.

- 5.32 The facing material palette is predominantly brick, reflecting the character of central Reading and the wider Station Hill development. Three complementary brick tones are proposed to provide variation and to emphasise the vertical expression of the buildings. Higher levels of detailing and textural quality are incorporated at lower floors, where the buildings are experienced at close range.
- 5.33 Windows and balconies are arranged to respond to orientation, outlook and internal layout, maximising daylight and providing private outdoor space for residents. Balcony structures are integrated within the façade design to maintain a consistent architectural expression and to avoid visual clutter.
- 5.34 The façades also differentiate key elements such as entrances, communal spaces and commercial units, ensuring a legible and active ground floor environment. Larger areas of glazing and more open frontages are used at street level to support activity and visual connection with surrounding public spaces.
- 5.35 At the wider townscape scale, the massing and architectural composition contribute to the emerging Station Hill skyline, reinforcing the approved height hierarchy and complementing the built form delivered through Phases 1 and 2. The proposals have been designed to ensure that the buildings are read as a coordinated group within the wider masterplan rather than as standalone elements.
- 5.36 The design has also been developed with long-term durability and maintenance in mind, with robust materials and integrated façade access strategies to ensure the continued quality and appearance of the buildings over time.

Landscaping

- 5.37 The landscape proposals for Phase 3A have been developed in accordance with the approved Parameter Plans, Development Specification and the Station Hill Design Code. Full details of the landscape strategy are provided within Section 8 of the submitted Design and Access Statement. The proposals respond to the predominantly residential character of Phase 3A and introduce a greener and more informal landscape that complements the more civic character of Station Hill Square and other public spaces delivered as part of earlier phases.
- 5.38 The landscape strategy has been guided by the following key objectives:



- Integrating Phase 3A into the wider Station Hill masterplan and the surrounding town centre context;
- Reinforcing and enhancing pedestrian connections through the site, particularly the north–south route between Reading Station and Garrard Street;
- Creating a strong residential character with high quality green spaces that support everyday use and informal recreation;
- Providing a safe, well-overlooked and accessible public realm environment;
- Delivering high quality communal amenity space that supports community interaction and wellbeing;
- Increasing urban greening through substantial planting, trees and lawn areas;
- Delivering a durable and sustainable landscape that contributes positively to biodiversity and climate resilience; and
- Improving microclimate conditions through appropriate wind mitigation



Station Hill Gardens

- 5.39 Phase 3A delivers Station Hill Gardens as a new central landscaped space located between Plots AB and D. This space forms a key component of the approved masterplan, providing an attractive and legible pedestrian route linking Station Hill and Reading Station with Garrard Street.
- 5.40 In contrast to the more formal civic character of Station Hill Square, the Gardens provide a quieter and more sheltered environment suited to the residential context. The design prioritises soft landscape over hard paving, with generous areas of lawn, tree planting and planting beds creating a green setting for relaxation and informal activity.
- 5.41 The space incorporates seating areas, sunlit lawns and an integrated sculptural play feature, providing opportunities for a range of users including families and residents. The surrounding buildings provide strong levels of natural surveillance, contributing to a safe and welcoming environment.
- 5.42 The layout balances movement and dwell space, maintaining a clear and direct pedestrian route through the Gardens while creating a series of smaller areas for sitting, play and social interaction. The design also ensures that views are maintained through the space, supporting legibility and wayfinding within the wider development.

Public Realm Works

- 5.43 The landscape proposals also include improvements to the surrounding streets, including Greyfriars Road, Garrard Street and Station Hill. These works include new tree planting, wind mitigation structures, widened pedestrian routes and enhanced surface materials, creating a more comfortable and attractive pedestrian environment.
- 5.44 Along Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street, the buildings are set back where appropriate to provide generous footway widths and to accommodate tree planting and soft landscape. The public realm has been designed to create a visually continuous and pedestrian-focused environment that integrates with the wider Station Hill streetscape.
- 5.45 Enhancements to Station Hill Square form part of the proposals, including additional planting and soft landscape to increase greening and to complement the established civic character of this space.



Residential Amenity Landscape

- 5.46 In addition to the public realm, Phase 3A provides significant areas of landscaped residential amenity space at podium and terrace levels. These spaces include planting, seating and informal recreation areas and are designed to provide a high-quality environment for residents while also contributing to the visual amenity of the development when viewed from surrounding buildings.
- 5.47 The landscape design has been developed to promote a sense of community, support wellbeing and provide visual relief within the built form. The arrangement of open areas also allows sunlight and daylight to penetrate into the development and maintains visual connections between private and public spaces.
- 5.48 All residential units will benefit from balconies or terraces, the majority of which will have the benefit from usable private amenity space. Where projecting or inset balconies are not provided, units are served by Juliet balconies which enhance daylight, outlook and natural ventilation. An assessment of private and communal amenity provision is provided within the Design and Access Statement.

Interaction with Phase 2

- 5.49 The landscape design for Phase 3A has been developed in close coordination with the public realm delivered as part of Phases 1 and 2 to ensure a coherent and integrated approach across the wider Station Hill development. The proposals reinforce the established hierarchy of spaces, with Station Hill Square providing a primary civic space and Station Hill Gardens introducing a complementary residential green environment.
- 5.50 As the detailed design for Phase 3A has evolved, it has been necessary to make minor adjustments to the interface with adjoining Phase 2 public realm areas in order to ensure alignment of levels, materials, planting and movement routes. A Non-Material Amendment (NMA) application will be submitted separately to update the approved Phase 2 landscape details where necessary to reflect the coordinated design approach.
- 5.51 These refinements ensure that the public realm across Phases 2 and 3 will function as a seamless and cohesive environment, consistent with the vision and objectives of the approved Station Hill Masterplan.

Access



- 5.52 The principles of access established through the approved Outline Planning Permission remain unchanged. The Phase 3A proposals have been developed in accordance with the approved Parameter Plans, the Station Hill Design Code and the wider movement framework for the Station Hill masterplan. Pedestrian access is prioritised, with multiple step-free routes provided through the site, including a primary north–south connection linking Station Hill and Reading Station with Garrard Street via Station Hill Gardens, alongside east–west connections connecting to Greyfriars Road and the wider public realm network. Vehicular access is limited to servicing, refuse collection and emergency access, primarily from Garrard Street and Greyfriars Road, consistent with the established servicing strategy for earlier phases. A summary of the access arrangements for the development is set out below.

Car Parking

- 5.53 The development is designed as a car-free scheme, reflecting the highly sustainable town centre location immediately adjacent to Reading Station. No general resident parking is provided. A limited number of Blue Badge parking spaces are proposed to meet accessibility requirements, together with electric vehicle charging provision. This approach is consistent with the sustainable transport strategy for the wider Station Hill development and represents a reduction from the maximum parking assumptions assessed at outline stage.

Cycle Storage

- 5.54 Secure long-stay cycle parking is provided within the buildings and at podium level, accessed directly from Station Hill, Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street. Cycle storage is designed to accommodate a range of cycle types and usage frequencies and will be accessed via secure, controlled entry points. Visitor cycle parking is also provided at ground level within the public realm. The overall provision exceeds the requirements of relevant local standards and supports sustainable travel choices.

Pedestrian Access and Inclusive Design

- 5.55 The development prioritises pedestrian movement and permeability. Multiple access points are provided to create clear and legible north–south and east–west routes through the site, including a primary step-free pedestrian connection through Station Hill Gardens linking Station Hill and Reading Station with Garrard Street.
- 5.56 All public routes, footways, ramps and external surfaces will be designed in accordance with Building Regulations and inclusive design best practice. External paving will provide smooth, level and accessible surfaces, and all principal building



entrances will be step-free. A public lift is provided adjacent to the steps from Station Hill Square to Garrard Street to ensure full accessibility to the surrounding streets. The public lift is provided on a key pedestrian desire line to provide step-free access between street, podium and plaza levels to reinforce the podium as a genuinely public and permeable layer within the masterplan.

- 5.57 Ground floor layouts, entrance lobbies and concierge facilities are designed to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations. Five percent of dwellings will be provided as M4(3) wheelchair accessible or adaptable units in line with RBC Local Plan Policy H5, and the development has been designed to provide inclusive access for all residents and visitors.

Servicing, Refuse and Plant

- 5.58 Servicing, deliveries and refuse collection will be accommodated via dedicated on-street loading bays located on Garrard Street and Greyfriars Road, together with operational servicing areas within the development. This approach aligns with the servicing strategy established for earlier phases and operates within the parameters assessed as part of the Outline Planning Permission.
- 5.59 Plant, substations and service areas are integrated within the building footprint discreetly at lower levels and along secondary elevations to minimise visual impact and to avoid conflict with pedestrian routes and public realm areas.
- 5.60 The servicing arrangements have been designed to ensure safe and efficient operation without adverse impact on pedestrian movement or the operation of the surrounding highway network.
- 5.61 Further detail on the access, servicing and movement strategy, including cycle provision, servicing demand and highway considerations, is provided within the Transport Statement submitted in support of this application. The assessment confirms that the proposals fall within the transport impacts previously assessed and approved in the Outline Planning Permission.

Energy and Sustainability

- 5.62 The Proposed Development has been designed to deliver a high level of environmental performance and to support the transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient built environment. The scheme has been developed in accordance with the sustainability principles established through the Outline Planning Permission and responds to the



requirements of the Reading Local Plan in relation to climate change mitigation, resource efficiency and environmental quality.

- 5.63 The energy strategy follows the recognised energy hierarchy of reducing energy demand, improving efficiency and maximising the use of low-carbon and renewable technologies. A fabric-first approach has been adopted, incorporating a high-performance building envelope to minimise heat loss, reduce energy consumption and improve internal comfort levels.
- 5.64 The proposals also incorporate urban greening and biodiversity enhancements. Extensive planting is provided within Station Hill Gardens, along surrounding streets and within podium and terrace areas. Brown and biodiverse roof areas will be incorporated where appropriate, contributing to urban greening, habitat creation and ecological value. The scheme is designed to deliver a measurable biodiversity net gain in accordance with local requirements.
- 5.65 Surface water management has been designed in accordance with sustainable drainage principles, incorporating attenuation, controlled discharge and climate change allowances to manage runoff and reduce flood risk. Further details are provided within the submitted Drainage Strategy.
- 5.66 The development has also been designed to support sustainable travel, with a car-free approach (apart from accessible parking), high levels of secure cycle provision and excellent access to public transport. This further contributes to reducing transport-related carbon emissions.
- 5.67 Whole life sustainability considerations have informed the design, including the efficient use of materials, durability, adaptability and the application of circular economy principles to minimise construction waste and support long-term resource efficiency.
- 5.68 Further detail on the energy and environmental performance of the scheme is provided within the accompanying Energy Statement and Sustainability Statement. These documents outline the pre-application discussions undertaken in relation to the energy strategy and demonstrate that the proposals meet the relevant local and national policy requirements and represent a high-quality, low-carbon and climate-resilient form of development.



6. Planning Policy Framework and Overview

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires any determination under the planning acts to be in accordance with the development plan (i.e. Planning Policy), unless 'material considerations' indicate otherwise. This section provides a brief summary of the key planning policies relevant to the Site and its redevelopment. The planning policy context comprises three levels of adopted and emerging policy from national, regional and local policies. Within each level, there is both planning policy and guidance which combine to provide the framework for the consideration of the proposed development.

National Planning Policy

- 6.2 National planning policy is set out in the form of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was most recently updated in February 2025. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11), with three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental. These are to be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of policies within the NPPF. To note, a draft NPPF has been published and was consulted on from December 2025 to March 2026. These draft policies have limited to no weight at this stage and have not been included in the planning assessment.
- 6.3 In addition to the NPPF, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) in March 2014. The NPPG is a web-based resource which delivers planning procedures and practical guidance in an accessible format and is continually updated when necessary. Both the NPPF and NPPG are material considerations in the determination of a planning application.
- 6.4 For decision making, the presumption of sustainable development means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay and where the development plan is absent, silent or out of date, granting planning permission unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of development, or specific policies in the NPPF indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan

- 6.5 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals are determined in accordance with the statutory Development Plan unless



material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there is a difference in policy, Section 38(5) requires that the most recently adopted policy takes precedence.

6.6 The adopted Development Plan for the Site comprises the following:

- Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

6.7 In addition to the above, the RBC Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) are material considerations but do not form part of the Development Plan.

6.8 The relevant SPD and SPG documents include (but are not limited to):

- Affordable Housing (2021)
- Design Guide to Shopfronts (2022)
- Employment, Skills and Training (2013)
- Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (2011)
- Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)
- Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (2019)

6.9 Other relevant RBC documents include (but are not limited to):

- Reading Station Area Framework (2010)

Site Designations

6.10 The adopted Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) identifies the following designations applicable to the Site:

- Central Core (Policy CR1)
- Office Core (Policy CR1)
- Tall Buildings Cluster (Policy CR10)
- Station/River Major Opportunity Area (Policy CR11)

6.11 The Site is not in or in close proximity to a Conservation Area and there are no TPOs in or in close proximity to the Site. There are no listed buildings on or in close proximity to the Site.



Site Allocation

- 6.12 The Site is allocated in the Local Plan within the Station/River Major Opportunity Area, under the sub-area 'Station Hill & Friars Walk'. This allocation provides site-specific development guidance as follows:
- Mixed-use at high density, including retail and leisure on the ground and lower floors and residential and offices on higher floors
 - Enhanced connectivity and linkages through the site, including in a north-south direction to the Station Hill area and through to the station, alongside a network of streets and spaces
 - Active frontages on key routes through the site
 - Edge of site nearest to traditional terraced housing to the west of Greyfriars Road should have careful design treatment.
- 6.13 The Site Allocation covers a total area of 2.87 ha and provides an indicative potential of 380-570 dwellings, alongside 80,000-100,000 sqm of office space, retail and leisure, with no significant net gain assumed. The updated Site Allocation in the emerging Local Plan (see below) increases the indicative capacity to 490-934 homes and lowers the quantum of office floorspace.
- 6.14 To note, the Site Allocation extends beyond the application site boundary for Phase 3A of the development.

Draft Emerging Policy

- 6.15 RBC are in the process of carrying out a partial update to their existing Local Plan to ensure that the key parts of the plan are as up to date as possible. RBC published a Local Plan Partial Update in November 2024 and consulted on the pre-submission draft of the Partial Update to the Local Plan which ended on the 18th of December 2024. The Local Plan Partial Update was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 9th of May 2025. Stage 1 hearing took place on the 11th and 12th of November 2025. Stage 2 hearings took place on the 3-6 and 10-12 of February 2026.
- 6.16 The document seeks to update key policies of the adopted Local Plan. This includes increasing the annual housing target to 825 homes per year (an increase of 20%), policies in regard to energy, Co-living and changes a number of Site Allocations (such as increasing the housing capacity figure of allocation CR11c). These policies are at an advanced stage and therefore have been considered where relevant as part of this planning assessment.



7. Planning Policy Assessment

7.1 This section assesses the RMA for Phase 3A against the requirements of Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032. Where relevant, the proposals are also considered against the adopted Development Plan, having regard to the Site's location within the Central Core, Tall Buildings Cluster and the Station/River Major Opportunity Area.

7.2 This section seeks to appraise the Proposed Development against the relevant planning policies. This section is structured as follows and should be read alongside the accompanying Statement of Compliance:

- Description and assessment of the Phase 3A submission against the provisions of the Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032:
 - Matters reserved by the outline planning permission comprising scale, appearance, landscaping, layout and access;
 - Other matters controlled by the Development Specification such as the distribution of land uses;
 - Matters relating to the discharge of planning conditions comprising:
 - Design, Townscape and Heritage;
 - Residential assessment;
 - Landscape and Public Realm;
 - Transport, Access and Servicing;
 - Energy and Sustainability;
 - Biodiversity and Ecology;
 - Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing;
 - Wind and Microclimate;
 - Noise;
 - Air Quality;
 - Flood Risk and Drainage; and
 - Health

Matters Reserved by the Outline Planning Permission

Quantum and Land Use

7.3 The approach to quantum and land use was set out and secure in the outline consent. This was a highly flexible consent and allowed for a variety of uses and development types to come forward on Phase 3. The key controls were set out in the approved Parameter Plans and the Development Specification.



- 7.4 The Development Specification sets the following flexibility in use classes for Plot A, Plot B and Plot D.

“Podium level and below to be Flexible Residential, Residential Institution, Hotel, Retail, Non-residential Institutions, Office, Assembly and Leisure (Class C3, C2, C1, A1-A5, B1, D1, D2)

Upper floors to be Flexible Residential, Residential Institutions, Hotel, office Uses (Class C1 / C2 / C3 / B1)”

- 7.5 The proposal is for a residential-led development. Residential (and ancillary residential spaces) is proposed on the upper floors of each Development Plot. The Podium level includes ancillary residential, commercial/retail (now known as Use Class E) and flexible community space. These uses classes are in total accordance with the approved Development Specification and land use parameter plan.
- 7.6 A proportion of the approved podium-level floorspace across Phase 3 is not brought forward as part of this Reserved Matters Application. This reflects the phasing of development across the wider masterplan, with elements of the podium and associated flexible commercial and community uses to be delivered as part of a future Reserved Matters Application for Phase 3B (Plot C). The Development Specification allows for flexibility in the distribution of floorspace across the Phase 3 plots, and the approach taken ensures that the overall quantum and mix of uses can still be delivered across the site as a whole. The current proposals therefore represent a coordinated and phased delivery strategy, rather than any departure from the approved parameters.
- 7.7 The approved Development Specification allowed for a maximum quantum of 128,000 sqm (GEA) on Phase 3. This upper limit is secured by Condition 59 of Outline Planning Permission 192032.
- 7.8 In total, Phase 3A as proposed in this RMA provides 61,536 sqm (GEA) of built floorspace, as shown by each block in the table below (this does not include Plot C). The proposed floorspace falls significantly below this maximum quantum and still allows for a significant quantum of floorspace to be brought forward on Plot C in accordance with the parameters set. The total quantum therefore accords with the parameters of the outline consent.
- 7.9 The Proposed Development delivers 600 residential units across Plots A, B and D, which is within the maximum of 750 homes permitted across Phase 3 under the



Outline Planning Permission. The reduced quantum has enabled improvements to building separation, residential amenity and public realm provision.

7.10 The Development Specification also sets a number of minimum and maximum floorspace parameters by land use. This was set out in Table 3 of the document and referred to the maximum parameters in Condition 60 of the 2021 Outline Planning Permission. These floorspace parameters included Plot C (which is not part of this application). The Development Specification was also prepared before the changes to the Use Classes Order in September 2020. A number of the use classes approved, now fall within Use Class E as considered in the table below.

7.11 In summary, the table below demonstrates that this RMA is in full accordance with Table 3 of the approved Development Specification and the respective type and quantum of uses is going forward on Plot AB and D as envisioned in the outline consent.

Land Use	GIA (sq m)	GEA (sq m)	GIA (sq m)	GEA (sq m)	Comment for RMA Application
Phase 3 – Plots A, B, C & D					
	Maximum		Minimum		
Office (B1)	85,600	86,500	25,000	28,000	No office floorspace is proposed within Plots A, B and D. As envisioned in the Outline Consent, the office floorspace will be provided within Plot C. The Development Specification only permits office floorspace on the upper levels of Plot C.
Residential (Class C3)	63,500	65,000	0	0	A total of 59,613 sqm (GEA) of residential floorspace is proposed. This comfortably sits under the maximum floorspace set in the



Land Use	GIA (sq m)	GEA (sq m)	GIA (sq m)	GEA (sq m)	Comment for RMA Application
					Development Specification.
Residential Institutions (Class C2)	23,500	26,000	0	0	No C2 floorspace is proposed. The Development Specification includes a maximum, not a minimum quantum of C2 floorspace.
Hotel (Class C1)	23,500	26,000	0	0	A hotel is not proposed with the Reserved Matters. The Development Specification includes a maximum, not a minimum quantum of C1 floorspace.
Flexible Retail, Office and Leisure (A1-A5, B1, D1 & D2)	3,500	4,500	450	500	The proposal includes 1,002 sqm (GEA) of retail floorspace. This is now classed as Use Class E. Whilst the Development Specification minimum target also includes Plot C, it has been met within this RMA application.
Podium and Basement	22,500	23,000	13,000	14,000	The Development Specification allows for up to 23,000 sqm (GEA) of podium and basement floorspace across Phase 3, to be used for plant, servicing, storage, access and associated infrastructure. A



Land Use	GIA (sq m)	GEA (sq m)	GIA (sq m)	GEA (sq m)	Comment for RMA Application
					proportion of this floorspace is delivered as part of this RMA across Plots AB and D, with the remaining quantum to be provided as part of a future Reserved Matters Application for Plot C. This phased approach is consistent with the flexibility inherent in the Development Specification and ensures that the overall parameters for Phase 3 can be met.

7.12 In conclusion, this RMA is in full accordance in relation to the quantum and types of use proposed as set out and controlled by the Development Specification and Parameter Plans of the outline consent.

7.13 The Site is located within the Station/River Major Opportunity Area, where Policy CR11 supports high-density, mixed-use development with active ground floor uses and enhanced connectivity. The proposals deliver residential-led development with flexible Class E uses at ground floor level and active frontages along key routes, consistent with the site allocation requirements as consented in the Outline Planning Permission.

Residential Quality

7.14 The development is proposed as a professionally managed Build to Rent scheme. The proposals will be secured and operated in accordance with the requirements of Policy H4 (Build to Rent Schemes), including long-term single ownership and on-site management arrangements. Affordable housing provision for Phase 3A will be delivered in Block AB..



- 7.15 This product will build on the success of the Phase 1 Built to Rent homes known as Ebb and Flow. These are award winning buildings that are hugely popular in Reading and have excellent customer feedback – including being rated as the #1 residential development in Reading on Homeviews. The Phase 3 homes will adopt the same quality, level of management and types of amenity space as Ebb and Flow. They will form 600 new high-quality homes that complement the existing provision at Phase 1. The masterplan and public realm will create a mixed-use and cohesive community at Station Hill.
- 7.16 The residential density reflects the Site’s highly accessible town centre location and is consistent with Policy H2, which supports higher density development where it is supported by good accessibility and high-quality design.
- 7.17 The delivery of a key strategic site in the heart of Reading Town Centre for the next stage of regeneration is a key public benefit of the proposals. The draft Local Plan has increased the indicative capacity of the Site Allocation to deliver homes and attaches more importance to this site as part of their 5 Year Housing Land Supply. The delivery of these homes, particularly given the proposed increased annual housing target, is a substantial public benefit.

Unit mix

- 7.18 The proposed residential mix has been carefully considered in relation to the Site’s location and feedback from the hugely successful Ebb and Flow buildings.
- 7.19 Policy H2 (Density and mix) sets out the need for a range of homes. It sets specific guidance for unit mix for major developments outside of the ‘Central area’. This site is within the Central Area and at the heart of Reading, adjacent to the Station.
- 7.20 The Developed Specification approved with the Outline Planning Permission set out an expected unit mix for Phase 3. This was not a fixed mix, but guidance on the type of residential unit mix that would be expected to come forward on this Phase of the Masterplan. This unit mix is indicated below and compared to what is proposed in this application.

Unit Type	Development Specification indicative mix	RMA Proposed Unit Mix	Comparison
Studio	10%	5.6%	Reduction in studios.



1 bed	46%	55%	Small increase in 1 beds to respond to evidence and demand from Ebb and Flow.
2 bed	42%	35.7%	Small reduction in 2 beds to respond to evidence and demand from Ebb and Flow.
3 bed	2%	3.7%	An increase in 3 beds in response to local needs and RBC comments.

- 7.21 As outlined above, the proposed residential mix closely aligns with the indicative mix set out in the approved Development Specification. The small deviations respond to local need, RBC feedback and importantly key evidence and local demand data gathered from leasing-up the highly successful Ebb and Flow.
- 7.22 In summary, the proposal consists of high-quality homes that respond to, and build on, the success of Ebb and Flow and the evidence and feedback gathered on local demand. This mix has been discussed with RBC at the pre-application stage and agreed to respond to the Site's location in the 'Central area'.

Affordable Housing

- 7.23 The outline planning permission secured the delivery of 12.5% of homes as affordable within Phase 3. The Proposed Development is fully compliant with this quantum, with 75 of the 600 homes provided as Affordable Private Rent Units in accordance with the Section 106 obligations.
- 7.24 Notwithstanding the above, the Section 106 Agreement anticipates that the 12.5% affordable housing provision would be distributed across Plots A, B and D. The Proposed Development instead delivers the full 12.5% affordable provision (75 units) within Plot AB. This approach has been developed in response to detailed design, management and operational considerations associated with delivering a high-quality Build to Rent scheme. The consolidation of affordable homes within a single building enables a more efficient and coherent management model, ensures consistent access



to on-site services and amenities, and supports the delivery of a tenure-blind environment with no discernible difference in quality, appearance or access to facilities. The affordable homes will be fully integrated within the building and will benefit from the same entrances, circulation and amenity spaces as market units. This approach does not alter the overall quantum of affordable housing secured through the Outline Planning Permission and is considered to represent an appropriate and deliverable solution in the context of a professionally managed Build to Rent development, subject to agreement through the relevant Section 106 mechanisms.

- 7.25 The affordable homes mix will reflect the wider unit mix outlined above (as required by the Section 106).

Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS)

- 7.26 Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) of the Reading Borough Local Plan seeks to ensure that new residential development provides a high standard of accommodation. Part (a) of Policy H5 states that *all new build housing outside the Central Area, as defined on the Proposals Map, will comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS)* unless this would render development unviable. The policy does not require NDSS compliance for sites located within the Central Area.
- 7.27 The Site is located within the Central Area and therefore Policy H5 is not relevant. Notwithstanding this, the residential accommodation has been designed having regard to the NDSS to ensure a high standard of internal living environment.
- 7.28 The proposal includes a wide range of home types and sizes to respond to local need and affordability. This includes a proportion of homes (77% of homes) at or above the minimum gross internal areas set out within the NDSS (despite policy not requiring this). Where some units fall below these benchmarks, this reflects the highly accessible town centre location and the Build to Rent nature of the scheme, with all residents having access to the additional shared amenity spaces throughout the building. The overall quality of accommodation is clearly of very high quality as demonstrated at Ebb and Flow. The internal layouts are efficient, have good levels of daylight and outlook, include private balconies where appropriate, and access to extensive communal amenity space and shared resident facilities.
- 7.29 Given the Site's location within the Central Area and the overall quality of the proposed residential accommodation, the development accords with the objectives of Policy H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.



Scale and Layout

- 7.30 The scale of the proposed buildings sits fully within the maximum building envelopes established by the approved Parameter Plan (Ref: SHRN–CRL–S3–ZZ–PL-A-0705 Rev P03). The outline consent establishes maximum heights of:
- 126.5m AOD for Plot A;
 - 97.4m AOD for Plot B; and
 - 116.5m AOD for Plot D.
- 7.31 For Plot A, the Parameter Plan requires the tallest element to be located toward the northern part of the plot, with the building stepping down from north to south. The submitted proposals fully comply with this requirement.
- 7.32 The detailed design has been developed to reinforce the approved height hierarchy for Phase 3, with building heights stepping down toward the south and west. Generous separation distances between Plots, including the widened gap between Plots B and D, improve townscape legibility, daylight penetration and visual permeability compared to the maximum development scenario assessed at outline stage.
- 7.33 The Site lies within the Tall Buildings Cluster identified by Policy CR10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. The proposed scale and massing are consistent with the outline consent and contribute positively to the emerging Station Hill skyline. The proposals therefore fully accord with the approved Parameter Plans and with Policy CR10 and are acceptable in principle.

Appearance

- 7.34 The architectural approach for Phase 3A has been developed in accordance with the Station Hill Design Code and responds to the evolving character established through Phases 1 and 2. The design adopts a coherent contemporary architectural language that reflects the predominantly residential function of this phase while maintaining consistency with the wider masterplan.
- 7.35 The façades are organised using a clear base, middle and top composition, providing articulation at street level and a well-defined roofline. Vertical expression, variation in brick tone and façade depth help to break down the overall mass of the buildings and emphasise their slender proportions.
- 7.36 The material palette is predominantly brick, reflecting the character of central Reading and the material strategy established across the Station Hill development. High-



quality detailing is concentrated at lower levels to reinforce the human scale and strengthen the relationship between buildings and the public realm.

7.37 Condition 57 of the Outline Planning Permission requires reserved matters submissions for scale, layout and appearance to comply with the mandatory elements of the Design Code. This approach and compliance with the Scenario 2 Design Code (dated October 2025) has been discussed in detail with RBC during pre-application discussions. The accompanying Statement of Compliance confirms that the proposals accord with these requirements. Detailed visual material and architectural information are provided within the Design and Access Statement.

7.38 The appearance of the Proposed Development is therefore consistent with the Design Code and accords with Policies CC7 and CR10 of the Local Plan.

Design, Townscape and Heritage

7.39 At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places significant importance on achieving high quality design, recognising good design as a key element of sustainable development. Paragraph 135 states that development should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate landscaping, and should establish a strong sense of place through the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials.

7.40 At the local level, Policy CC7 (Design and the public realm) of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires development to achieve a high standard of design that responds positively to local character and contributes to the creation of safe, inclusive and attractive places. Development is expected to address layout, scale, density, architectural quality and public realm, and to contribute positively to character, movement, legibility, enclosure and public realm quality.

7.41 The Site lies within Central Reading and the Station/River Major Opportunity Area, where Policies CR2 (Design in central reading) and CR11 (Station/River majority opportunity area) support comprehensive, high-density mixed-use redevelopment that enhances connectivity, provides high quality public spaces and delivers active frontages along key routes. Policy CR10 (Tall buildings) identifies the Station Area as a Tall Buildings Cluster and requires tall buildings to be of exceptional architectural quality and to contribute positively to the townscape and skyline.

7.42 The Site is located to the east of areas of traditional terraced housing west of Greyfriars Road, identified within the Central Reading character areas under Policy CR9. Policies EN1 and EN6 require development to respect and respond appropriately



to the historic townscape context and to avoid harm to the character of adjacent areas. Policy CR11 similarly identifies that the edge of the Station Hill site closest to the traditional terraced areas requires careful design treatment and appropriate transition.

Assessment

- 7.43 The principle of tall buildings, the overall scale parameters and the strategic townscape approach for Phase 3 were established and assessed through the grant of Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032, including the Environmental Impact Assessment. This RMA provides detailed design that sits fully within the approved Parameter Plans and height envelopes and therefore accords with the established townscape strategy for the Station Hill masterplan.
- 7.44 The detailed design has been developed in accordance with the approved Station Hill Design Code and responds to the evolving context created by the delivery of Phases 1 and 2. The proposals reinforce the approved height hierarchy for Phase 3 and building heights stepping down toward the south and west. Increased separation distances between plots, particularly between Plots B and D, improve visual permeability, daylight penetration and the overall townscape composition when compared with the maximum development scenario assessed at outline stage.
- 7.45 The architectural approach adopts a coherent contemporary language that complements the character established across the wider Station Hill development. A predominantly brick material palette reflects the prevailing character of central Reading, while a clear base–middle–top composition and vertical articulation help to break down the perceived mass of the buildings and reinforce a strong relationship with the public realm at street level.
- 7.46 At ground level, the layout and façade treatment provide active frontages and strong engagement with Station Hill, Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street. The proposals also deliver Station Hill Gardens and enhancements to Station Hill Square, creating a high quality and well-connected public realm environment that supports the movement framework established through the masterplan and accords with the objectives of Policies CC7, CR2 and CR11.
- 7.47 The relationship with the lower-scale residential areas to the west of Greyfriars Road has been carefully considered. Building heights step down toward this edge of the site and are separated by Greyfriars Road and new street planting, ensuring an appropriate transition in scale and avoiding adverse effects on the character of the adjoining Central Reading character areas, consistent with Policies CR9, EN1 and EN6.



- 7.48 The proposals have been subject to independent review by the Reading Design Review Panel, and the design has evolved in response to this feedback. The accompanying Design and Access Statement and Statement of Compliance confirm that the proposals accord with the mandatory requirements of the Design Code secured by the outline permission.
- 7.49 Overall, the detailed design delivers a high quality architectural and townscape response that reinforces the comprehensive redevelopment of Station Hill, enhances the local skyline and provides a coherent and well-integrated addition to Central Reading.
- 7.50 The proposals therefore accord with the design and townscape objectives of the NPPF and with Policies CC7, CR2, CR9, CR10, CR11, EN1 and EN6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). Emerging Local Plan policies do not materially alter this assessment.

Landscape and Public Realm

- 7.51 Paragraph 103 of the NPPF states that providing access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for physical activity is crucial for health and wellbeing in communities, and therefore should not be built on unless in extenuating circumstances. Paragraph 128 suggests that proposals improving quality and access to open space should be supported.
- 7.52 At the local level, Policy CC7 (Design and the public realm) of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires development to deliver high quality public realm and green infrastructure that contributes positively to character, safety, accessibility and visual attractiveness. Policy CR3 (Public realm in central reading) similarly requires development within Central Reading to make a positive contribution to the quality and functionality of the public realm. Policy EN9 (Provision of open space) requires major residential development to provide appropriate levels of open space and play provision. It requires 'satisfactory provision of children's play areas and neighbourhood parks' for applications with over 50 homes. Policies EN11 (Waterspaces) and EN12 (Biodiversity and the green network) further seek the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure and biodiversity.
- 7.53 Permission is sought for the detailed landscaping proposals for Phase 3A, including the delivery of Station Hill Gardens, enhancements to Station Hill Square and improvements to surrounding streets. The application is supported by a Landscape Strategy set out in Section 8 of the Design and Access Statement, which details the



planting strategy, materials palette, public realm design principles and provision of public open space and play space.

- 7.54 The principle and strategic framework for public realm across the Station Hill site were established through the grant of Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032. Phase 3A delivers a significant component of this strategy through the provision of Station Hill Gardens, a new central landscaped space located between Plots A, B and D, together with enhancements to Station Hill Square and improvements to surrounding streets.
- 7.55 Station Hill Gardens provides a high quality, publicly accessible green space that prioritises planting, tree cover and lawn areas, creating a quieter and more informal environment appropriate to the residential character of Phase 3A. The space incorporates seating, informal recreation areas and a children's play feature, and is designed to support both movement and dwell within a safe and well-overlooked environment.
- 7.56 The landscape design reinforces the approved network of routes and spaces across the wider Station Hill masterplan, maintaining clear north–south pedestrian connectivity between Reading Station and Garrard Street while improving the quality and legibility of the public realm. The proposals also include new street trees, biodiverse planting, soft landscape and enhancements to the pedestrian environment along Station Hill, Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street.
- 7.57 The proposals deliver a substantial increase in urban greening and incorporate biodiverse planting and sustainable landscape design in accordance with the requirements of the Design Code. The landscape strategy has been developed to integrate with the public realm delivered as part of Phases 1 and 2, ensuring a coordinated and cohesive environment across the wider development. Where necessary, minor refinements to adjoining Phase 2 landscape areas will be progressed through a separate Non-Material Amendment to ensure alignment of levels, materials and planting.
- 7.58 The accompanying Design and Access Statement confirms that the proposals meet the open space and play space requirements for the development and comply with the mandatory landscape and public realm provisions of the Design Code secured by the outline permission.
- 7.59 Overall, the proposals deliver a high quality and well-integrated public realm that enhances green infrastructure, improves connectivity and provides meaningful new open space within Central Reading. The development therefore accords with the objectives of the NPPF and with Policies CC7, CR3, EN9, EN11 and EN12 of the Reading



Borough Local Plan (2019). Emerging Local Plan policies do not materially alter this assessment.

Access, Transport, and Servicing

- 7.60 At the national level, Chapter 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to promote sustainable transport and reduce reliance on the private car. Paragraph 116 confirms that development should only be refused on transport grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 7.61 At the local level, Policies CC6 (Accessibility and the intensity of development) and CC7 (Design and the public realm) of the Reading Borough Local Plan require development intensity to reflect accessibility by sustainable modes and to deliver safe and inclusive environments. Policy TR1 (Achieving the transport strategy) requires development to prioritise sustainable transport and to demonstrate acceptable impacts through an appropriate transport assessment. Policy TR3 requires safe access arrangements and confirms that development will only be permitted where there is no detrimental impact on the operation or safety of the transport network.
- 7.62 Policies TR4 and TR5 seek to support cycling and ensure that car and cycle parking provision reflects the accessibility of the site. The Site is located within a highly accessible town centre location adjacent to Reading Station and existing strategic cycle routes, where lower levels of car parking and high levels of cycle provision are supported.

Assessment

- 7.63 The principle of access arrangements and the overall transport strategy for the Station Hill development were established through the grant of Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032 and assessed through Environmental Impact Assessment. This RMA has been developed within that approved framework and does not introduce any material changes to the previously assessed transport impacts.
- 7.64 The transport strategy including the approach to access, parking and servicing was also discussed in detail at pre-application meeting with RBC Highways to ensure the most appropriate solution is brought forward.
- 7.65 The Site occupies one of the most accessible locations within Reading, immediately adjacent to Reading Station and within easy walking and cycling distance of the town centre and a wide range of services and employment opportunities. The scale and



density of development are therefore consistent with the accessibility-led approach required by Policy CC6.

- 7.66 Phase 3A is proposed as a car-free development, with the exception of two blue badge spaces each in Block AB and D. This approach reflects the sustainable location of the Site and aligns with the wider Station Hill transport strategy, reducing reliance on private vehicles and supporting the objectives of the NPPF and Policies TR1 and TR5.
- 7.67 High levels of secure long-stay cycle parking are provided within the buildings, together with visitor cycle parking at ground level. The proposals also enhance pedestrian connectivity through the delivery of new and improved north–south and east–west routes across the Site, including step-free access through Station Hill Gardens. These measures support active travel and accord with Policies TR1 and TR4.
- 7.68 Servicing, delivery and refuse collection will be accommodated via dedicated on-street loading arrangements on Garrard Street and Greyfriars Road, consistent with the servicing strategy established for earlier phases and within the parameters assessed at outline stage. The servicing arrangements have been designed to operate safely and efficiently without adverse impacts on pedestrian movement or highway operation.
- 7.69 The submitted Transport Statement confirms that the development will not result in a material adverse impact on the capacity or safety of the local highway network and that the proposals fall within the transport effects previously assessed and accepted as part of the outline consent.
- 7.70 Emerging Local Plan policies do not materially alter the assessment, as the proposals already prioritise sustainable travel, minimise car parking and support active travel in accordance with the direction of emerging policy.
- 7.71 Overall, the proposals make effective use of a highly accessible location, prioritise sustainable modes of travel and operate within the transport impacts previously assessed through the outline permission. The development therefore accords with the objectives of the NPPF and with Policies CC6, CC7, TR1, TR3, TR4 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

Energy and Sustainability

- 7.72 At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraphs within Chapter 14 seek



to shape places in ways that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve energy efficiency and increase resilience to the effects of climate change.

- 7.73 At the local level, Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires new development to be designed and constructed so that energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources are used appropriately, efficiently and with care, and so that the effects of climate change are properly taken into account. In addition, Policy CC2 requires major non-residential development to achieve the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Excellent' standard where possible and expects the incorporation of water conservation measures, together with greywater recycling and rainwater harvesting where these are energy and cost effective. These requirements are relevant to the non-residential elements of the Proposed Development and should be read alongside Policy H5 (Standards for new housing) in relation to the residential accommodation, Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) in relation to decentralised and low carbon energy, Policy CC5 (Waste minimisation and storage) in relation to waste and recycling, and Policy CR10 (Tall buildings) in relation to the design of tall buildings.
- 7.74 Emerging Local Plan policies reinforce this direction of travel, placing increased emphasis on non-fossil fuel heating, connection to low-carbon heat networks where feasible, improved energy performance and water efficiency, and post-occupation monitoring. The proposals have been developed to align with both adopted and emerging policy requirements.

Assessment

- 7.75 The principle of a low-carbon energy strategy for the wider Station Hill development was established through the Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032. The detailed proposals for Phase 3A have been discussed with RBC in detail at the pre-application stage. The proposed approach and rationale is set out in detail within the Energy Statement and Sustainability Statement submitted with the application.
- 7.76 A fabric-first approach has been adopted to minimise energy demand through a high-performance building envelope, optimised glazing ratios and efficient building form. This reduces operational energy use and improves internal comfort and resilience to overheating.
- 7.77 The development is designed with no on-site fossil fuel use. Space heating and hot water will be provided through high-efficiency heat pump technology supported by energy-efficient building services and controls. Roof-mounted photovoltaic panels will



be installed where feasible to generate renewable energy and further reduce operational carbon emissions.

- 7.78 The proposals have also considered the potential for connection to decentralised or low-carbon heat networks in accordance with Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) and emerging policy requirements. The submitted Energy Statement confirms the approach taken and demonstrates that the strategy represents the most appropriate and viable low-carbon solution for the development.
- 7.79 The energy strategy has been designed to meet the requirements of Policy H5 (Zero Carbon Homes) for net-zero carbon residential development. Where any residual emissions against the target emission rate remain following on-site measures, these will be addressed through the Council's approved carbon offsetting mechanism where required (as secured in the Section 106 agreement).
- 7.80 In addition to operational energy performance, the sustainability strategy incorporates a range of wider environmental measures, including:
- Enhanced water efficiency in accordance with the optional Building Regulations standard;
 - Measures to minimise overheating risk through passive design and dynamic thermal modelling;
 - High levels of natural daylight and internal environmental quality; and
 - Consideration of whole life carbon, durability and circular economy principles to minimise resource use and construction waste, consistent with Policy CC5.
- 7.81 The commercial floorspace within the development is targeting a minimum BREEAM rating of 'Very Good', demonstrating a high level of environmental performance for non-residential elements.
- 7.82 The Sustainability Statement confirms that the proposals also incorporate urban greening, biodiverse planting and sustainable drainage measures, which contribute to climate resilience and environmental quality across the site.
- 7.83 It is noted that the Section 106 agreement intends for Phase 3 to provide a Decentralised Energy System. The feasibility and appropriateness of this approach was discussed with RBC at the pre-application stage. It has been demonstrated that an alternative energy strategy using exhaust air heat pumps is the most appropriate, sustainable and deliverable strategy for the residential plots of Phase 3. The evolution and assessment that led to this is set out in detail in the submitted Energy Strategy and is summarised below.



1. In response to the Building Safety Act, the residential buildings (Plots AB and D) are required to be separated from the commercial building (Plot C) to ensure the latter is not classified as a Higher Risk Building. This is a common response across developments to the updated Building Safety Act.
2. A Decentralised Energy System heated by a ground source heat pump (GSHO), has been carefully considered. This includes two types of ground source heat pump system. This is set out in the Energy Assessment.
3. The small footprint of Plot AB & D, the buildings' piled foundations and the existing Thames Water sewer mean a very small area of the site is suitable for Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHP) to serve the residential. This will only provide 3-4% of the residential heat demand. An additional secondary energy source would therefore be needed to meet the residential heat demand, creating significant additional complications and costs for future residents, impacting leasing. An "open loop" system would only be possible if using office podium footprint.
4. Given this, a variety of energy options have been considered in detail. This is illustrated below.

Energy Strategy Approach	Can this deliver the energy demand?	% Improvement over Part L 2021	Estimated EPC Rating	Estimated Energy Costs (SAP)	Billed via:
Single Source: Communal Ground Source Heat Pump (GSHP)	No	74.9%	80 EPC C	£294	Service charge = resident dissatisfaction
Hybrid Source: Communal Ground Source Heat Pump (GSHP) + Communal Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP)	Yes	71.6%	80 EPC C	£294	Service charge = resident dissatisfaction
Single Source: Communal Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) – Ambient Loop	Yes	68.4%	80 EPC C	£294	Service charge = resident dissatisfaction
Single Source: Communal Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) – LTHW	Yes	63.1%	80 EPC C	£295	Service charge = resident dissatisfaction
Single Source: Individual Air Source Heat Pump (Split System)	Yes	62.9%	80 EPC C	£295	Electricity supplier – residents' choice!
Single Source: RECOMMENDED Individual Exhaust Air Heat Pump (EAHP) & Combined MVHR	Yes	72.6%	86 EPC B	£213	Electricity supplier – residents' choice!

5. The proposed strategy includes an exhaust air heat pump in each home. The benefits of this approach are substantial, as summarised below.

For Residents	For Owners & Managers	For Reading
• Lowest energy bills for residents, giving significant energy savings. • Resident has the full control of sourcing their energy supplier. • Local control to each home – minimises wasted energy serving unoccupied units and gives complete control to residents. • No corridor overheating from hot water distribution in ceilings. • Improved residential rooftop amenity experience, without noisy adjacent equipment.	• Efficient, evolving technology favoured by the investor and developer BTR market throughout the UK and Europe - best-in-class. • All dwellings will be a minimum EPC B rating – a key market advantage and well above statutory minimums. • Reduced corridor and riser pipework – reduced chances of leaks and operational issues. • Improved operational resilience – no single point of failure for residential heating and hot water.	• Delivery of another best-in-class and market-leading development and 75 more affordable homes. • Frees up c. 400m² of roof space for additional PVs and green roofs – reducing environmental noise pollution and energy use, enhances ecology and local air quality. • Significant reduction in water and materials vs. a central system – no hot water distribution around development reducing energy dependency further.



6. The exhaust air heat pump solution is therefore considered the most suitable and deliverable energy strategy for Phase 3 as discussed at the pre-application stage. Further technical details in relation to the strategy is set out in the Energy Strategy. A Deed of Variation is therefore proposed to the Section 106 agreement as set out in the Head of Terms in Section 8 below.

7.84 In conclusion, the proposals deliver a high standard of environmental performance appropriate to a major town centre development and operate within the sustainability framework established through the outline permission. The development therefore accords with the objectives of the NPPF and with Policies CC2, CC4, CC5, CR10 and H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). Emerging Local Plan policies do not materially alter this assessment.

Biodiversity and Ecology

7.85 At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural environment. Paragraph 187 states that development should minimise impacts on biodiversity and deliver measurable net gains, including through the creation of coherent ecological networks that are resilient to current and future pressures.

7.86 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is now a statutory requirement under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021). However, it is clear that the approval of reserved matters for outline planning permission is not subject to the biodiversity gain conditions (as it is not a grant of planning permission). However, the proposal relates to the development of a underutilised brownfield site and will deliver a large quantum of greening, habitats and biodiversity benefits.

7.87 At the local level, Policy CC9 (Securing infrastructure) of the Reading Borough Local Plan identifies the enhancement of biodiversity and green infrastructure as a key priority in new development. Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the green network) requires development to protect, enhance and extend the Green Network and to avoid net loss of biodiversity, while seeking opportunities to deliver biodiversity improvements through landscaping, habitat creation and green infrastructure. Policy CR2 further requires development within Central Reading to incorporate green infrastructure as part of a high quality urban environment.



Assessment

- 7.88 The outline planning permission for the wider Station Hill development established the principle of comprehensive redevelopment of a previously developed town centre site, where existing ecological value is limited. The Phase 3A proposals have been developed to deliver a significant increase in urban greening and biodiversity value compared to the existing baseline.
- 7.89 The development delivers extensive new planting and habitat creation through the provision of Station Hill Gardens, street tree planting and landscaped podium and terrace areas. The landscape strategy prioritises soft landscape, tree cover and biodiverse planting, creating new habitats and contributing to the wider urban green infrastructure network. In total, the proposal will deliver 50 trees and 842 sqm of green space.
- 7.90 Additional measures include the incorporation of biodiverse and brown roof areas where appropriate, together with planting that supports pollinators and urban wildlife. These features contribute to ecological connectivity within the town centre and support the objectives of Policy EN12.
- 7.91 The proposals also make a substantial contribution to urban greening within a highly constrained town centre location. The level of planting, tree provision and green space delivered through Phase 3A represents a significant improvement over the existing site conditions.
- 7.92 Overall, the development transforms a predominantly hard-surfaced brownfield site into a greener and more biodiverse environment, enhancing ecological value and contributing to the wider Green Network.
- 7.93 The proposals therefore accord with the objectives of the NPPF and with Policies CC9, EN12 and CR2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). Emerging Local Plan policies relating to Biodiversity Net Gain and Urban Greening support the approach taken and do not materially alter this assessment.

Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing

- 7.94 At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires development to create a high standard of amenity for existing and future users (Paragraph 135). The Framework also recognises the need to make efficient use of land and confirms that, particularly in accessible urban locations, a flexible approach should be taken in applying daylight and sunlight guidance where strict adherence



would otherwise inhibit appropriate site optimisation, provided acceptable living standards are achieved.

- 7.95 The Building Research Establishment (BRE) guidance *Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight* provides a recognised industry standard for the assessment of daylight and sunlight impacts. However, the guidance is advisory rather than mandatory and should be applied flexibly, taking into account site context, urban density and the need to make efficient use of land.
- 7.96 At the local level, Policy CC8 (Safeguarding amenity) of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires development to avoid unacceptable impacts on the living conditions of existing and future occupants, including in relation to daylight, sunlight, outlook, privacy and overbearing effects. Policy CR10 (tall buildings) requires tall building proposals to ensure adequate levels of daylight and sunlight within the development and to avoid or mitigate significant adverse effects on surrounding properties and public spaces. Policy H10 similarly requires that private and communal outdoor spaces are designed to avoid unacceptable overshadowing.

Assessment

- 7.97 The principle, scale and maximum building envelopes for Phase 3 were established through the grant of Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032 and assessed through Environmental Impact Assessment. The submitted proposals sit fully within the approved Parameter Plans and therefore fall within the range of development previously assessed.
- 7.98 A detailed Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing assessment has been undertaken and is reported within the Environmental Statement Addendum submitted with this application. The assessment considers the effects of the detailed Phase 3A proposals on neighbouring properties, public spaces and the proposed residential accommodation, using BRE methodology where appropriate. A summary is provided below which confirms the impacts of the proposal have been reduced from the Outline Planning Permission.

Daylight

- 7.99 632 of the 1,208 windows see an improvement in their residual VSC levels compared to the approved OPP, the majority see immaterial improvements between 0.2-2.9% VSC and 21 windows see material improvements (3.0% or greater) in their residual VSC levels, these windows are within The Gateway Public House – 31 Greyfriars Road;



Alexia Court – 3 Tudor Road; 53 Greyfriars Road; 18 Stanshawe Road; and 49-51 Greyfriars Road.

- 7.100 217 of the 865 rooms see an improvement in their residual NSL levels compared to the approved OPP, the majority see immaterial improvements between 2-4.9% NSL and 90 rooms see material improvements (5.0% or greater) in their residual NSL levels, these rooms are within 1-41 Icon House; The Gateway Public House – 31 Greyfriars Road; 9-11 Stanshawe Road; 127 Friar Street; Bridlewell & Samuel House; Alexia Court – 3 Tudor Road; 53 Greyfriars Road; 1, 3, 5, 9, 13, 15, 17, 19 and 23 Sackville Street; 49-51 Greyfriars Road; 13 and 15 Vachel Road; 30 Garrard Street; Malcom Place. Station Hill Plots E & F see improved ADF levels compared to the approved OPP.

Sunlight

- 7.101 132 of the 368 rooms see an improvement in their residual APSH levels compared to the approved OPP, 47 see immaterial improvements between 2-3% APSH and 85 rooms see material improvements (4% or greater) in their residual APSH levels, these rooms are within The Gateway Public House – 31 Greyfriars Road; Alexia Court – 3 Tudor Road; 53 Greyfriars Road; 5-21 Tudor Road (Friary Court); 49-51 Greyfriars Road; 18-29 Regent Court; and Malcom Place. Seven of the 368 rooms see an improvement in their residual WPSH levels compared to the approved OPP, all seven see an immaterial improvement of 2% WPSH.
- 7.102 In summary, the effects have been improved from the Outline Planning Permission. The effects are typical of high-density urban regeneration schemes. The scale and distribution of impacts are not materially different from the outline scenario and are not considered to give rise to unacceptable effects.
- 7.103 Within the development, the building layout and separation distances have been carefully designed to optimise daylight access and minimise overshadowing. The increased spacing between plots, particularly between Plots B and D, improves daylight penetration and represents an enhancement compared to the maximum development scenario assessed at outline stage. Communal amenity areas, including Station Hill Gardens and podium-level spaces, have been designed to receive good levels of sunlight throughout the day.
- 7.104 The residential floors are arranged around unit depths that optimise daylight, outlook, internal planning and net internal area. In the majority of units, the layouts are based on a typical depth of 7.8 metres, supporting a balanced mix of one, two and three bedroom homes with a range of aspect conditions. Long-reaching views are achieved



above Level 5, enhancing both daylight and amenity value. North facing, single aspect units are minimised by applying a well-considered massing approach to the scheme and arranging the building cores.

- 7.105 The proposals therefore achieve an appropriate balance between protecting amenity and making efficient use of a highly accessible town centre site, consistent with national guidance.
- 7.106 The development therefore accords with the objectives of the NPPF and with Policies CC8, CR10 and H10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). Emerging Local Plan policies do not materially alter this assessment.

Wind and Microclimate

- 7.107 At the local level, Policy CC3 (Adaptation to climate change) of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires all developments to demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change and be designed, wherever possible, to reduce exposure to wind and other elements and maximise opportunities for natural heating and ventilation. Policy CC8 (Safeguarding amenity) further requires development not to cause detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, including in respect of wind where proposals involve buildings of significant height. Policy CR10 states that tall building proposals must be designed and sited to mitigate any wind speed or turbulence effects.
- 7.108 Emerging Local Plan policies do not materially alter these requirements and continue to emphasise the need for tall buildings to be designed to ensure a comfortable and safe pedestrian environment.

Assessment

- 7.109 The wind environment for the wider Station Hill development was assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment supporting the Outline Planning Permission (ref. 192032). Wind tunnel testing of the Phase 3 parameter scheme undertaken at that stage identified that the development could give rise to localised areas of stronger wind conditions, and that these would require further detailed assessment and mitigation at the Reserved Matters stage. The outline assessment was reviewed by the Building Research Establishment (BRE), which confirmed that mitigation measures such as additional planting, careful siting of building entrances, increased balcony balustrade heights and higher level perimeter glazing to roof terraces could be



explored as part of the detailed design. A planning condition was therefore attached to the hybrid permission requiring further wind tunnel testing, including mitigation, to be undertaken as part of the RMA.

- 7.110 A detailed Wind Microclimate Assessment has therefore been undertaken for the Phase 3A Reserved Matters proposals and is reported within the Environmental Statement Addendum submitted with this application. The assessment involved wind tunnel testing of the detailed scheme across 240 individual test locations within and surrounding the site to assess pedestrian-level wind conditions and the effects of the proposed building massing and layout.
- 7.111 The Phase 3A design has evolved carefully through the design process, including the introduction of increased separation between Plots B and D. This design move provides a number of benefits, including improved daylight and residential amenity, enhanced public realm and stronger north–south pedestrian connections through the site. The updated configuration has been tested through a series of wind tunnel assessments. Initial testing of the scheme in the absence of landscaping and mitigation identified areas of stronger wind conditions, particularly to the north and south along Garrard Street. As a result, an iterative design process was undertaken in which a range of mitigation options were explored and tested.
- 7.112 In total, sixteen potential mitigation measures were considered through the wind tunnel testing process. These included the integration of landscaping and tree planting, refinements to building edges and entrances, and architectural features such as screens, canopies and balcony treatments. Through this iterative approach the scheme has been refined to significantly improve pedestrian wind conditions across the site and surrounding streets.
- 7.113 Following the implementation of mitigation measures, wind conditions across the site meet the Lawson Criteria for pedestrian safety and comfort at ground level across almost all tested locations. Three isolated locations along Garrard Street record marginal exceedances of the Lawson safety threshold for strong winds. These exceedances are extremely limited, equating to approximately 2.5 hours per year compared with the Lawson threshold of 2.2 hours per year (0.025% of the time annually), representing an additional exceedance of approximately 18 minutes over the course of a year.
- 7.114 Further mitigation options were explored; however, achieving a reduction of this very small exceedance would require disproportionate design changes, such as the removal or reduction of the proposed loading bay. This would introduce operational and highway safety implications, including increased on-street servicing activity. The



current design therefore represents a balanced and appropriate response to the marginal exceedances of the Lawson safety threshold noted above and it is considered that any further mitigation is not feasible.

- 7.115 Overall, the proposals demonstrate that a safe and comfortable microclimate environment will be achieved for pedestrians and building users, and that wind effects have been appropriately assessed and mitigated through the design process so far as is practicable in the context of the proposed development. The development therefore accords with the objectives of Policies CC3, CC8 and CR10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). Emerging Local Plan policies do not materially alter this assessment.

Noise

- 7.116 At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires planning decisions to prevent new development from giving rise to unacceptable levels of noise and to ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the effects of noise on health and quality of life (Paragraph 187).
- 7.117 At the local level, Policy CC8 (safeguarding amenity) of the Reading Borough Local Plan seeks to protect the amenity of existing and future occupants from unacceptable levels of noise, disturbance and vibration. Policy EN17 (Noise generating equipment) requires that fixed plant and building services are designed to ensure that noise levels at the nearest sensitive receptor are appropriately controlled. Within Central Reading, Policy CR6 requires development to demonstrate how potential noise disturbance has been considered and mitigated, while Policy CR10 requires tall building proposals to avoid significant adverse effects on amenity, including from noise.

Assessment

- 7.118 The noise environment associated with the wider Station Hill development was assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment supporting the Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032. That assessment considered the effects of the development in the context of the existing urban noise environment, including road traffic and railway noise.
- 7.119 A detailed Noise and Vibration Assessment has been undertaken for the Phase 3A proposals and is reported within the Environmental Statement Addendum submitted with this application. The assessment considers both the effects of the development on surrounding receptors and the suitability of the internal and external environment for future occupants.



- 7.120 The assessment confirms that the detailed proposals sit within the scale and form previously assessed at outline stage and would not result in materially different noise effects. The development will not give rise to significant adverse noise impacts on existing surrounding properties.
- 7.121 Given the Site's location within a busy town centre environment adjacent to major transport infrastructure, the building design incorporates appropriate mitigation measures to ensure suitable internal noise levels for future residents. These measures include high-performance façade construction, acoustic glazing and mechanical ventilation where required to allow windows to remain closed while maintaining adequate internal environmental conditions.
- 7.122 Noise from fixed plant, servicing activities and building operations has been designed and specified to comply with the requirements of Policy EN17, ensuring that operational noise levels will be appropriately controlled at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors.
- 7.123 The Environmental Statement Addendum concludes that the operational Phase 3A development would not give rise to significant adverse noise effects and that the proposals provide an appropriate acoustic environment for future occupants, consistent with the urban context and the outline consent.
- 7.124 Overall, the design incorporates appropriate mitigation to manage environmental noise and to protect the amenity of both existing and future users.
- 7.125 The proposals therefore accord with the objectives of the NPPF and with Policies CC8, EN17, CR6 and CR10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). Emerging Local Plan policies do not materially alter this assessment.

Air Quality

- 7.126 At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires planning decisions to sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant air quality objectives and to ensure that new development is appropriate for its location. Paragraph 199 emphasises that opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, including through sustainable transport measures and the provision of green infrastructure.
- 7.127 At the local level, Policy EN15 (Air Quality) of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires development to have regard to the need to improve air quality and to avoid exposing



future occupants to unacceptable levels of pollution. The Site lies within the Reading Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Policy CR6 (living in central reading) requires development within Central Reading to demonstrate that air quality impacts have been appropriately assessed and mitigated where necessary. Policy CC9 (Securing infrastructure) also supports the provision of green infrastructure and other measures that contribute to environmental quality.

Assessment

- 7.128 The air quality effects associated with the wider Station Hill development were assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment supporting the Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032. That assessment considered both operational traffic emissions and the suitability of the environment for future occupants.
- 7.129 An updated Air Quality Assessment has been undertaken for Phase 3A and is reported within the Environmental Statement Addendum submitted with this application. The assessment confirms that the detailed proposals sit within the scale and development assumptions previously assessed at outline stage and would not result in materially different air quality effects.
- 7.130 The development is proposed as a car-free scheme, with the exception of limited accessible parking, and benefits from an exceptionally accessible location adjacent to Reading Station. High levels of cycle provision, strong pedestrian connectivity and excellent public transport accessibility will minimise reliance on private vehicles and support the reduction of transport-related emissions.
- 7.131 The design also incorporates extensive urban greening through Station Hill Gardens, street tree planting and landscaped podium areas. These measures contribute to local environmental quality and align with national and local policy objectives to improve air quality through green infrastructure.
- 7.132 The Environmental Statement Addendum concludes that operational air quality effects associated with Phase 3A would not be significant and that pollutant concentrations at the Site would remain within relevant air quality objectives. Appropriate design measures, including building layout and façade specification, will ensure that acceptable air quality conditions are achieved for future residents.
- 7.133 Overall, the proposals will not give rise to significant adverse air quality effects and incorporate measures that support improved environmental conditions within a highly sustainable town centre location.



- 7.134 The development therefore accords with the objectives of the NPPF and with Policies EN15, CR6 and CC9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). Emerging Local Plan policies do not materially alter this assessment.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.135 At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires development to be directed to areas of lowest flood risk and to incorporate measures that minimise vulnerability and increase resilience to climate change. Paragraphs within Chapter 14 emphasise the need to manage surface water effectively and to incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) appropriate to the scale and nature of development.
- 7.136 At the local level, Policy CC3 (Adaptation to climate change) of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires development to minimise surface water runoff and to incorporate measures that reduce flood risk and improve climate resilience. Policy EN18 requires major development to incorporate sustainable drainage systems in accordance with national standards and to demonstrate that flood risk will be reduced both on and off site where possible. SuDS design should seek to provide wider environmental benefits, including integration with landscaping and green infrastructure.
- 7.137 Emerging Local Plan policy reinforces these requirements and places additional emphasis on the long-term management and maintenance of SuDS infrastructure.

Assessment

- 7.138 The flood risk and drainage strategy for the wider Station Hill development was established through the Environmental Impact Assessment supporting the Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032. The Site is located within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk of fluvial flooding.
- 7.139 A detailed Drainage Strategy has been prepared for Phase 3A and submitted with this application. The strategy has been developed within the framework established at outline stage and demonstrates that the detailed proposals do not result in materially different flood risk effects.
- 7.140 The development incorporates a comprehensive sustainable drainage strategy designed to manage surface water runoff through attenuation and controlled discharge. The scheme has been designed to restrict discharge rates to agreed site-wide limits and to accommodate appropriate allowances for climate change.



- 7.141 SuDS features are integrated with the landscape design, including planting, tree pits and permeable surface treatments where appropriate. These measures contribute to water quality improvements, urban greening and wider environmental benefits in accordance with Policy EN18.
- 7.142 The proposals represent a significant improvement over the existing predominantly hard-surfaced brownfield conditions and will reduce peak runoff rates compared to the current situation. The Drainage Strategy confirms that the system has sufficient capacity and will operate safely during extreme rainfall events.
- 7.143 A long-term maintenance and management approach for the drainage infrastructure is also set out within the submitted documentation, ensuring that the SuDS measures will remain effective for the lifetime of the development, consistent with emerging policy requirements.
- 7.144 The Environmental Statement Addendum concludes that the detailed Phase 3A proposals would not give rise to significant adverse flood risk or drainage effects and that the development operates within the parameters previously assessed and accepted through the outline permission.
- 7.145 Overall, the proposals reduce surface water runoff, incorporate sustainable drainage and enhance climate resilience within a highly sustainable town centre development.
- 7.146 The development therefore accords with the objectives of the NPPF and with Policies CC3 and EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). Emerging Local Plan policies relating to SuDS maintenance do not materially alter this assessment.

Health Impact Assessment

- 7.147 In the emerging Local Plan, Policy CC10 concerns the strategic policy of a Health Impact Assessment. Policy CC10 states that major development proposals must be accompanied by a HIA which should include the following:
- a) *“A description of the baseline conditions of the site, the surrounding areas and its current use;*
 - b) *The identification of any population groups that could be affected by the development and associated health issues, inequalities and priorities in the area, supported by appropriate evidence/data;*
 - c) *An assessment of the impacts of the proposal on the identified population groups and local health issues, inequalities and priorities, including any potential positive and negative impacts, along with any mitigation measures incorporated into the design to reduce identified negative outcomes; and*



d) Details of monitoring proposed mitigation measures throughout the lifetime of the development.”

- 7.148 Further, Policy CC10 states that the level of detail provided should be proportionate to the scale and nature of development and should consider baseline conditions, potential health effects on different population groups, any mitigation measures incorporated into the design and, where appropriate, arrangements for monitoring.

Assessment

- 7.149 The Site is located within Central Reading, an area with excellent access to employment, services, public transport and community facilities. The redevelopment of a previously developed and largely inactive site as part of the comprehensive Station Hill regeneration will support wider social, economic and environmental improvements that contribute positively to health and wellbeing.
- 7.150 The design of Phase 3A incorporates a range of measures that support healthy living and align with the objectives of emerging Policy CC10, including:
- The delivery of 600 high-quality homes, including affordable housing, contributing to improved housing choice and quality;
 - Extensive new publicly accessible green space through Station Hill Gardens and enhanced public realm, providing opportunities for recreation, relaxation and social interaction;
 - A highly walkable environment with new and enhanced pedestrian connections linking Reading Station, the town centre and surrounding neighbourhoods;
 - A car-free development (with limited accessible parking), supported by high levels of cycle provision and excellent public transport accessibility, encouraging active and sustainable travel;
 - High standards of internal residential quality, daylight, outlook and amenity, supported by communal facilities and professional on-site management consistent with the Build to Rent model.
- 7.151 Environmental factors that influence health, including air quality, noise, wind comfort and flood risk, have been assessed through the Environmental Statement Addendum and associated technical reports. These assessments confirm that the development will provide an appropriate and healthy living environment for future residents and will not give rise to significant adverse effects.



- 7.152 The proposals also incorporate urban greening, tree planting and sustainable drainage measures, which contribute to climate resilience, improved environmental quality and wider health and wellbeing benefits.
- 7.153 Given the town centre location, the previously developed nature of the Site and the comprehensive environmental assessments undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process, the level of information provided is considered proportionate to the scale and nature of the development.
- 7.154 Overall, the proposals are expected to have a positive effect on health and wellbeing through the delivery of high-quality housing, accessible green space, active travel opportunities and an improved urban environment.
- 7.155 The development therefore aligns with the objectives of emerging Policy CC10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. The approach taken is proportionate and supported by the Environmental Statement and accompanying technical documentation.



8. Planning Obligations and Section 106

- 8.1 It is proposed to amend the Section 106 Agreement entered into in connection with the Outline Planning Permission through a Deed of Variation to make changes to reflect the details of the proposed Phase 3A scheme in this RMA.
- 8.2 The proposed amendments to the obligations have been discussed with RBC at the pre-application stage and small variations are now proposed. A summary of these proposed changes is set out below.

Reference	Obligation	Trigger	Proposed amendment
Sch 6, para 10	Decentralised Energy System	Approval of details prior to Commencement of Phase 3	It is proposed to amend this obligation to reflect the approach to the energy strategy for Phase 3.
Sch 6, para 12.5	Highway Works (Phase 3)	Highway Agreement to be entered into no later than 6 months after Commencement of Phase 3	It is proposed to split the Highway Works (Phase 3) into two separate works packages, for Phase 3A and Phase 3B respectively.
Sch 6, para 15.1	Car Club Strategy (North Site)	Submission no later than 6 months after Commencement of Phase 3	It is proposed to delete this obligation in its entirety.
Sch 6, para 26.2	Location of Affordable Private Rent Units	Compliance	It is proposed to provide the 12.5% provision of Affordable Private Rent Units for Phase 3A together in Plot AB, instead of delivering them separately as 12.5% of each Plot.



9. Conclusions

- 8.3 This Planning Statement has been prepared by DP9 Ltd on behalf of SH Reading Master LLP in support of a RMA pursuant to Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032 for Station Hill Phase 3A (Plots A, B and D) at Station Hill, Reading, RG1 1DX.
- 8.4 Extensive pre-application engagement has been undertaken with Reading Borough Council, alongside consultation with the Design Review Panel, the local community and other local stakeholders. The detailed proposals have evolved positively through this iterative process and respond directly to the approved parameter plans, Design Code, Development Specification and feedback received.
- 8.5 The Proposed Development has been carefully designed within the framework established by the Outline Planning Permission. It fully conforms with the controlling documents that were approved to direct a future scheme on this Site. The proposal is within the approved massing envelope/ 'jelly mould'.
- 8.6 The application is supported by a comprehensive suite of technical documents, including an Environmental Statement Addendum, which demonstrates that the detailed proposals sit within the development envelope assessed at outline stage and do not give rise to any new or materially different significant environmental effects.
- 8.7 Station Hill has been a successful award-winning development to date. The Applicant has taken great care and attention to deliver regeneration that benefits the wider community and enhances Reading as a town. They have undertaken huge social value initiatives and delivered building and a public realm that is of very high quality and unique to Reading. This application is the next phase of this Masterplan and will further stitch the Phase 1 and 2 buildings into the urban fabric. It will deliver a wide range of significant economic, social and environmental benefits, including:
- The delivery of 600 high-quality new homes in a highly sustainable town centre location, contributing towards Reading's housing needs and supporting Local Plan Policy H1;
 - The provision of 75 affordable homes, contributing to the delivery of mixed and inclusive communities;
 - The delivery of a professionally managed Build to Rent scheme, providing high-quality, secure and well-managed accommodation with extensive resident amenities;



- The completion of a key phase of the Station Hill Masterplan, bringing forward comprehensive regeneration of a prominent brownfield site within the Station/River Major Opportunity Area (Policy CR11);
- The creation of 1,184 sqm of public realm;
- The delivery of 50 trees;
- The provision of new flexible ground floor commercial uses (Use Class E) to support local services, employment opportunities and town centre vitality;
- The delivery of Station Hill Gardens, together with significant landscaping, tree planting and urban greening, transforming a largely hard-surfaced site into a greener environment;
- The enhancement and completion of Station Hill Square and surrounding public realm, creating high-quality, accessible and safe spaces for residents, workers and visitors;
- The creation of new and improved pedestrian connections, including step-free north–south routes linking Reading Station with the town centre and improving permeability and legibility across the site;
- A car-free development (with limited accessible parking) in one of the most accessible locations in Reading, promoting sustainable travel and reducing reliance on private vehicles;
- High levels of cycle provision and support for active travel, contributing to healthier lifestyles and reduced transport emissions;
- A high-quality architectural and townscape response within the approved parameter plans and Design Code, reinforcing the Station Area Tall Buildings Cluster and strengthening the identity of Station Hill;
- The delivery of a scheme that achieves net zero operational carbon, incorporating renewable energy, sustainable drainage, urban greening and other measures that support Reading’s climate objectives;
- The delivery of measurable biodiversity net gain and urban greening, enhancing ecological value within a town centre location;
- The provision of a safe, comfortable and healthy environment, with acceptable levels of daylight, sunlight, wind comfort, air quality and noise confirmed through the Environmental Statement Addendum; and
- Significant economic benefits, including construction employment, increased town centre expenditure and the introduction of approximately 1,000 new residents to support local businesses and services.

8.8 The proposals represent a high-quality and policy-compliant design solution that responds to the approved masterplan framework and the detailed requirements of the Design Code.



- 8.9 The proposals will therefore make an early and meaningful contribution to housing delivery and the continued regeneration of Reading town centre at a time when the delivery of new homes remains a critical planning priority.
- 8.10 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications are determined in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Proposed Development accords with the Outline Planning Permission, the Development Plan and the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework. There are no material considerations which indicate that this application should not be determined favourably.
- 8.11 Overall, the Proposed Development represents sustainable development in a highly accessible location and the RMA should therefore be approved without delay.



Produced by : Kurt Gagen

Approved by : Don Messenger

Date : February 2026