

6. Consultation

6.1 Consultation & Pre-application Meetings

Consultation has been an integral part of the design process for Station Hill Phase 3A and reflects the long-standing collaborative approach adopted across the wider Station Hill development. Engagement has been undertaken with Reading Borough Council officers, elected Members, local stakeholders and the wider community to ensure that the proposals respond positively to their context, build on the success of earlier phases and contribute meaningfully to the ongoing regeneration of Reading town centre.

The consultation process has focused on the detailed design of Phase 3A, which comprises residential development and associated public realm. Phase 3B, relating to the commercial office development on Plot C, is not the subject of this application and will be brought forward separately.

A series of structured pre-application meetings were held with Reading Borough Council officers at key stages of the design process. These meetings provided an opportunity to review the emerging proposals for Phase 3A in detail and to test the design approach against the requirements of the outline planning approval and the Station Hill Design Code.

Discussions covered the overall massing, scale and building form of Plots A, B and D, including their relationship to surrounding streets, public spaces and adjacent phases.

Officers reviewed the proposed uses, residential mix and unit layouts, with consideration given to residential quality, internal amenity provision and the relationship between homes, shared spaces and

the public realm. The architectural intent was also discussed, including façade composition, material strategy and the articulation of building bases and upper levels.

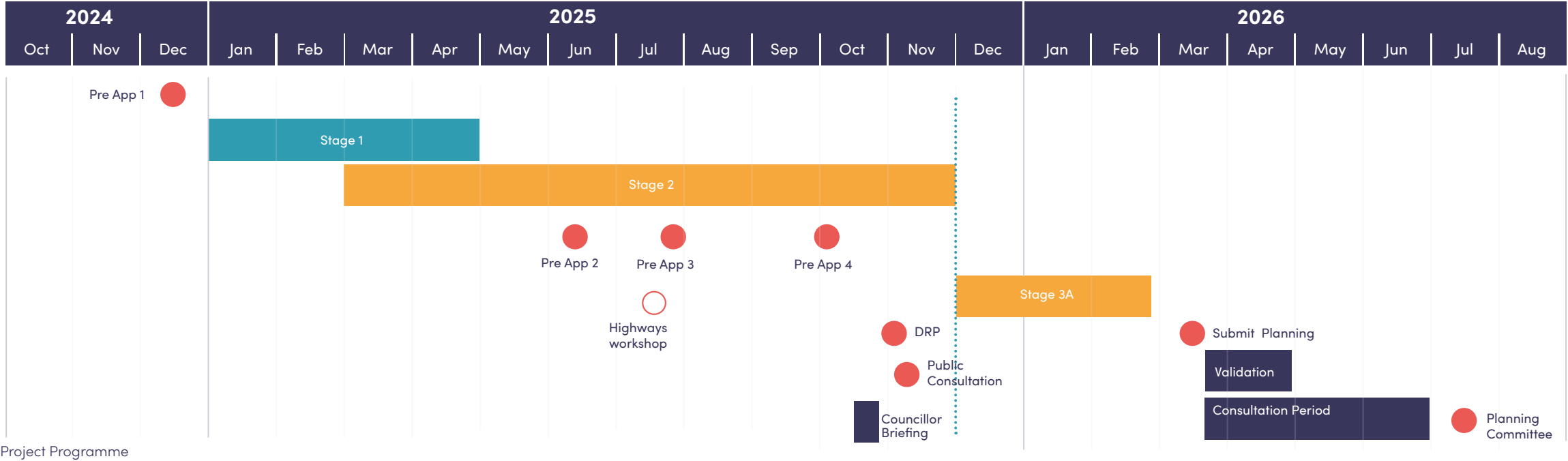
A key focus of the meetings was the role of Phase 3A in strengthening the primary pedestrian connection between Reading Station and Friar Street. The layout, massing and ground floor uses were reviewed to ensure that this route is reinforced as a clear, legible and welcoming public realm spine.

In parallel, discussions considered the enlivenment and activation of Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street as important secondary routes, with feedback supporting active frontages, clearly expressed entrances and improved pedestrian conditions.

Technical matters were also reviewed, including:

- Access and servicing
- Fire safety principles
- Inclusive design
- Daylight and outlook
- Integration of landscape and public realm with the built form.
- Energy strategy
- Overheating
- Highways and parking

Feedback from these meetings informed refinements across layout, architecture and public realm as the proposals progressed.

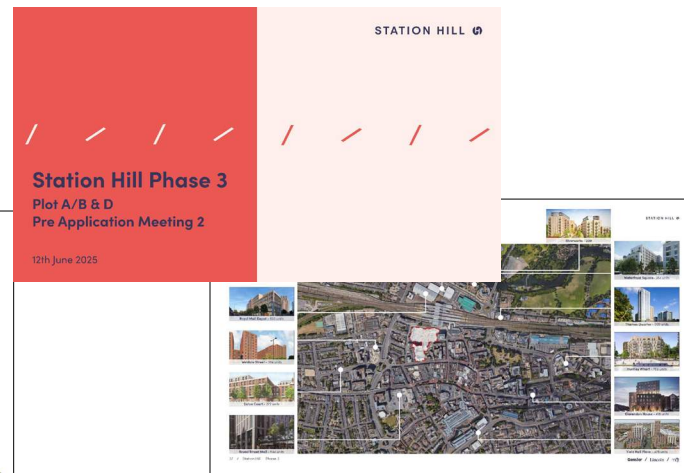


Pre-app 01 – December 2024



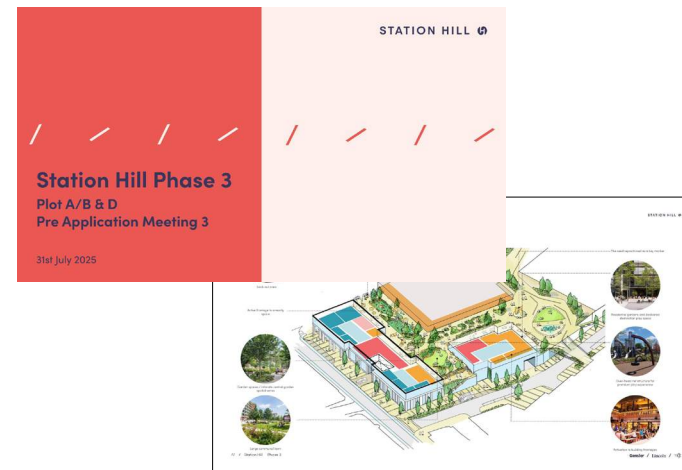
- The Vision
- What was delivered to date
- Current Outline Approval
- Phase 3 Proposed Scheme
- Phase 3B Option 2

Pre-app 02 – June 2025



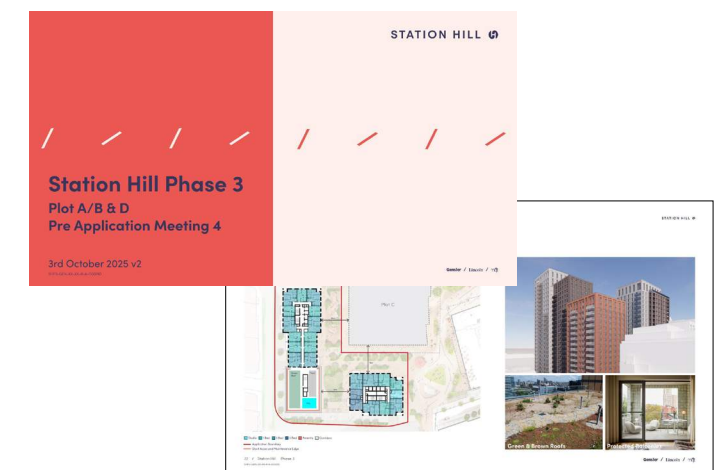
- Journey So Far & Proposed Planning Programme
- Masterplan & Massing Direction
- Constraints and Impacts of Recent Regulatory Changes
- Metrics to Define the Content of the Buildings Including:
 - Unit Size and Mix
 - Vehicle & Bike Parking
 - Refuse Strategy
- Section 106 Obligations
- Section 96A & RMA Submission Strategy

Pre-app 03 – July 2025



- Massing
- Direction of Facade Design
- Landscape Strategy
- Energy Strategy
- Content of the Section 96A

Pre-app 04 – October 2025



- Layout, Unit Numbers, Size and Mix
- Design of the Façade on All Blocks
- Landscape Proposal
- Consultation Process
- Submission Materials

6.2 Public Exhibition

6.2.1 Public Exhibition Overview

A public exhibition was held to provide the local community with an opportunity to engage with the proposals for Station Hill Phase 3A. The exhibition took place on the ground floor of ONE Station Hill and was held over a two-day period on 7th November to 8th November. Following the exhibition, the boards were retained on site and made available for ongoing public viewing for a further two weeks.

Attendance levels demonstrated strong interest in Phase 3A, reflecting the prominence of Station Hill within Reading town centre and the positive response to the delivery of Phase 1 and Phase 2. Feedback was largely supportive of Phase 3A coming forward, with comments welcoming the continued regeneration of the area and the introduction of additional homes and public realm.

Constructive comments focused on matters of detail, including the relationship between buildings and the public realm, ground floor activity and the clarity of pedestrian routes. These comments were reviewed by the project team and considered alongside feedback from pre-application meetings and the Design Review Panel.

Further detail on the community engagement process, including attendance and feedback, is provided in the accompanying Redwood Statement of Community Involvement, submitted alongside this application.



6.2.2 Exhibition Boards

The public exhibition included 18 boards presenting both the completed phases of Station Hill and the detailed proposals for Phase 3A. Early boards illustrated the delivery of Phases 1 and 2, highlighting new public spaces, commercial uses, residential accommodation and the activation of the area through events and public art.

Visual material provided a clear narrative of the transformation already achieved, including Ebb&Flow, ONE Station Hill and enhanced public realm.

The Phase 3A boards summarised the outline planning position and explained how the detailed design responds to this framework.

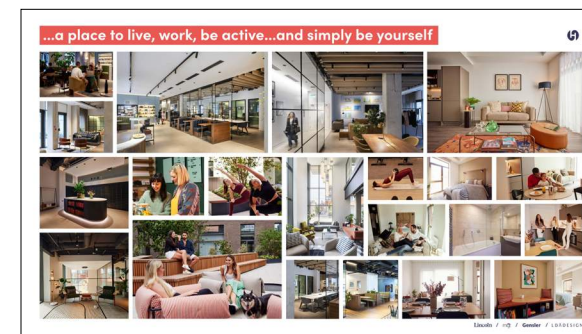
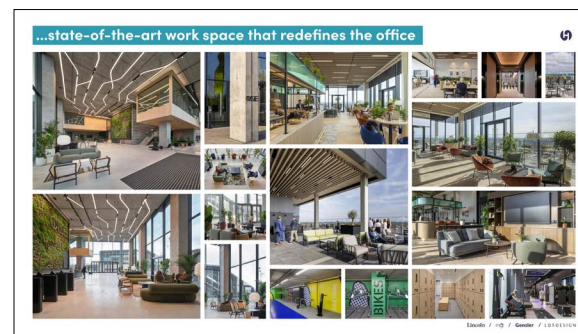
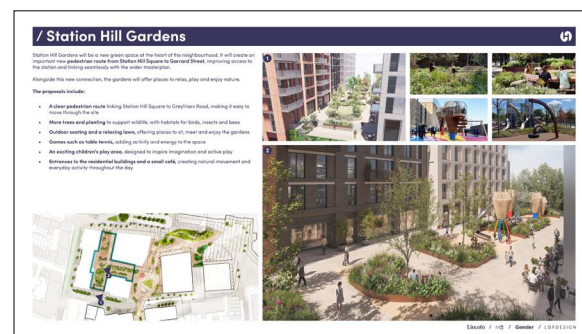
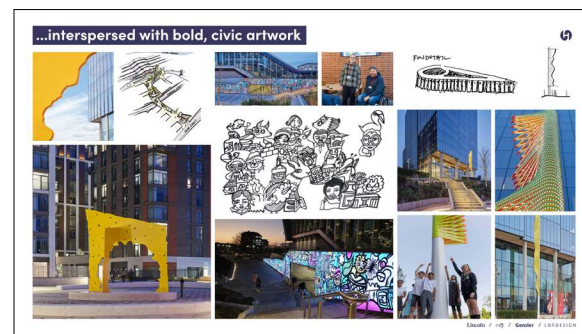
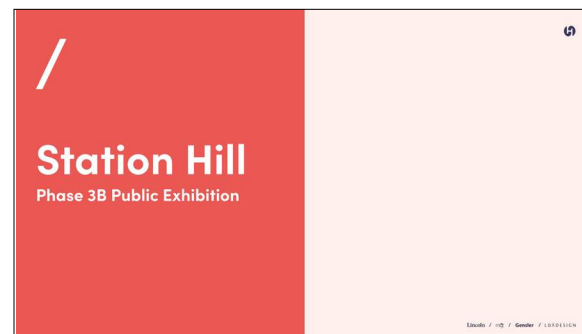
Key elements included improvements to Station Hill Square, Station Hill Gardens, Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street, with a focus on planting, seating, pedestrian routes and active ground-floor uses. Proposals for 600 new homes were presented, covering mix, amenities and affordable housing. A final design summary captured the height, scale, architecture and public-realm approach for Phase 3A.

6.2.3 Attendance & Summary of Comments

Across the exhibition period, 26 feedback responses were received via written forms and the consultation email address. All comments were recorded individually to ensure a thorough and transparent account of issues raised. The project team, including relevant technical disciplines, was available throughout to answer questions and support engagement with the proposals.

Overall sentiment was strongly positive. Fifteen respondents expressed clear support, welcoming further town-centre regeneration and the quality of the emerging design. Eight respondents offered conditional support, endorsing the scheme in principle but citing concerns regarding supporting infrastructure such as GP provision, schools, traffic impacts and the size of proposed homes. No respondents opposed the development.

The feedback has provided useful insight into community priorities and has informed the project team's continued refinement of the scheme.



6.3 Stakeholder Briefings

6.3.1 Summary of Stakeholder Briefings

Stakeholder Briefings

Stakeholder briefings (October and November):

- Matt Rodda MP
- Reading Borough Council leadership
- Ward councillors
- Civic Society
- REDA
- BIDs
- Greyfriars Road businesses

Targeted stakeholder briefings were undertaken over a number of days during October and November as part of the consultation process, ensuring that a broad range of local, civic and strategic perspectives were considered as the proposals for Phase 3A progressed.

The briefings focused on the role of Phase 3A within the wider Station Hill development and its relationship to the completed phases. Discussions covered the approach to massing, uses and architectural intent, the integration of residential accommodation with amenity spaces, and the contribution of Phase 3A to public realm, movement and town centre activity.

Particular attention was given to the primary pedestrian connection between Reading Station and Friar Street, alongside the role of Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street as supporting routes. Feedback from the stakeholder briefings was generally supportive and has been considered alongside comments from the public exhibition, pre-application meetings and the Design Review Panel.

Further detail on the stakeholder briefings and wider engagement process is provided in the accompanying Redwood Statement of Community Involvement.

6.4 DRP Meeting

6.4.1 DRP Overview

The proposals for Station Hill Phase 3A were presented to the Reading Design Review Panel as part of the iterative design process. The review provided an opportunity to test the detailed design approach against the established Station Hill framework, the outline approval and the Design Code, and to receive independent feedback on the emerging scheme.

The Panel recognised the significance of Station Hill within Reading town centre and the quality achieved through the delivery of Phase 1 and Phase 2. Discussion focused on the architectural expression of the buildings, their relationship to the public realm, and the role of Phase 3A in reinforcing pedestrian movement and activity.

Feedback was constructive and focused on refinement, including façade articulation, the clarity of building form and massing, the expression of building bases, and the activation of ground floor frontages. Particular attention was given to the treatment of key corners and the relationship between buildings, landscape and surrounding streets.

The comments received from the Design Review Panel have informed the ongoing development of the proposals and are addressed through the design changes set out below.

6.4.2 Summary of Comments from DRP

Architectural Language

- The use of brick is welcomed, but façades need more texture and articulation to achieve the desired craftsmanship.
- Current grey and brown tones feel too dark; red brick is preferred, and accent colours near entrances/public areas could lift the scheme.

Building Crowns and Base

- Crowns require greater refinement; Plot B and the link block currently lack definition.
- Expressing the base as three storeys instead of two could improve proportions and highlight the podium level.

Facade and Materials

- Ensure depth and articulation are practical for construction, especially if prefabrication is used.
- Consider balconies for all homes to improve quality of life and add character.
- Corner balconies could introduce playfulness through varied column and balustrade treatments.
- Maintain a coherent aesthetic across plots but explore Victorian references for character.
- Accent colours and detailing should enhance entrances and public-facing areas.

Strengthen Entrances and Connections

- Extend main entrances of Plots A and B down from podium to ground level.
- Connect concierge and amenity spaces directly to Greyfriars Road for visibility and activity.
- Clarify secondary entrances on Greyfriars Road—make them usable for residents, not just emergency egress.
- Encourage creative or community uses at prominent corners (Station Hill, Greyfriars Road, Garrard Street).

- Consider peppercorn rents or subsidies to attract local businesses.
- Current undercroft along Greyfriars Road risks antisocial behaviour due to limited overlooking.
- If active uses and surveillance cannot be provided, remove the colonnade but retain generous pavement width.
- Adjust building footprints if needed to maintain separation distances.

Reconfigure Layouts

- Reduce frontage of refuse stores and make them deeper to free up space.
- Explore alternative arrangements for plant rooms and cycle stores to allow more active uses.
- Move blue badge bays to on-street locations (with council highways input).
- Free up internal ground floor space for entrances, amenity, and community uses
- Consider peppercorn rents or subsidies to attract local businesses.

6.5 Design Changes in Reaction to Consultation

6.5.1 Summary of Consultation

Feedback received through pre-application meetings, the public exhibition, stakeholder briefings and the Design Review Panel was broadly supportive of the design approach for Phase 3A. Comments focused on opportunities to further strengthen architectural quality, ground floor activation and the relationship between buildings and the public realm.

In response to consultation, the following refinements have been incorporated into the Phase 3A proposals:

- Refinement of building massing and articulation to improve clarity of form and townscape presence.
- Enhanced façade detailing and material expression to add depth and visual interest.
- Clearer definition of building bases to strengthen the relationship with surrounding streets and spaces.
- Improved legibility and prominence of residential entrances.
- Increased activation of ground floor frontages along Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street.
- Refinement of internal layouts and residential amenity spaces.
- Strengthened coordination between buildings, landscape and public spaces to reinforce pedestrian priority and inclusive access.
- Ongoing coordination of technical matters, including access, servicing, inclusive design and fire safety.

These changes demonstrate a considered and proportionate response to consultation and ensure that the Phase 3A proposals are well resolved within the approved framework, while allowing for the future progression of Phase 3B to be brought forward separately.



Improved legibility of residential entrances



Enhanced facade detailing and material expression



Increased activation of ground floor frontages