The following slides are extracts from my proof of evidence along with other submitted images as follows:

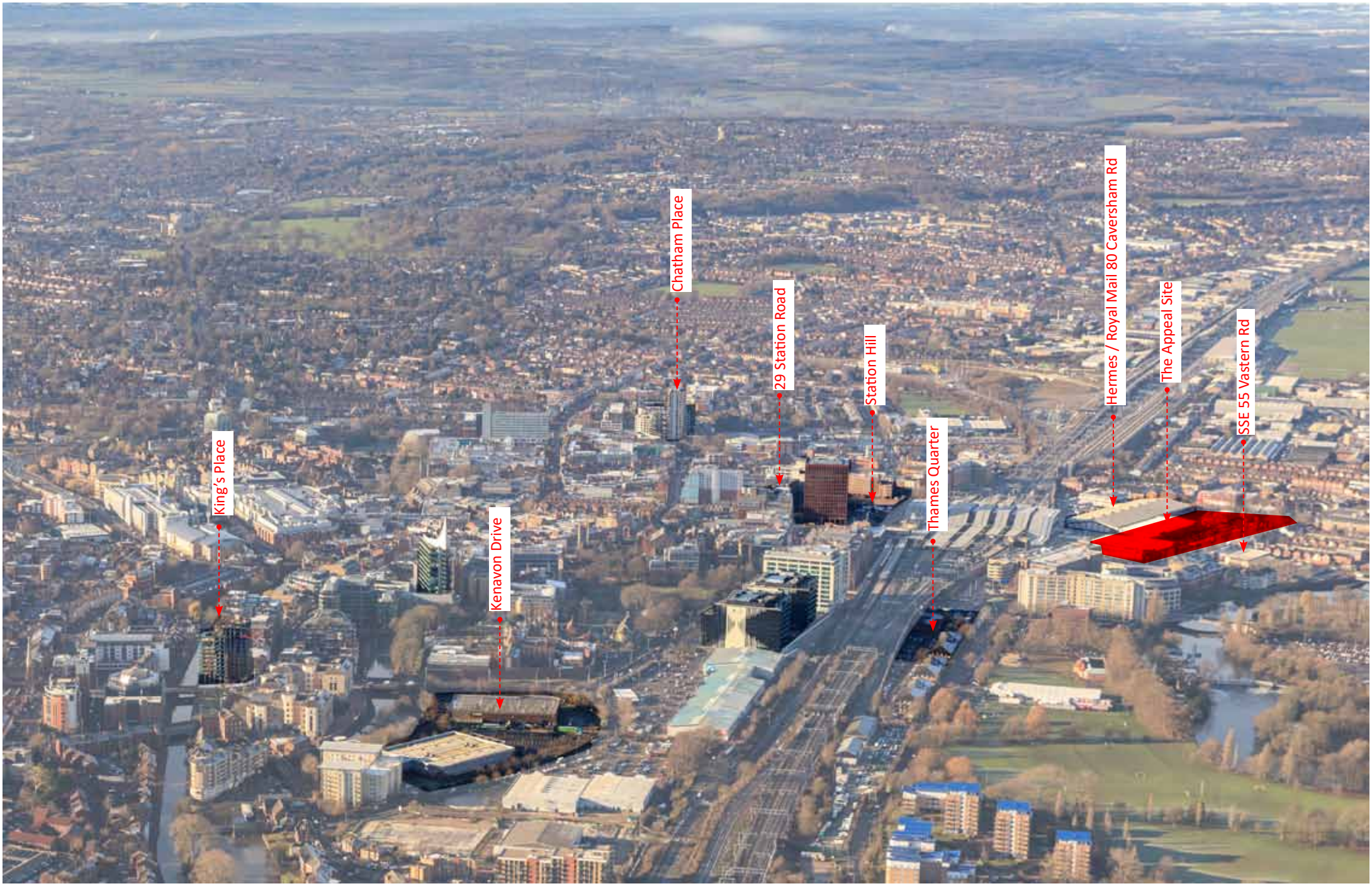
1. The site – existing and emerging site.
2. A summary of the key design drivers from the relevant planning policies and guidance.
3. An analysis of the constraints and opportunities.
4. The evolution of the scheme.
5. Design response to plots A,B,C and D.
6. The North-South and East-West links and public realm.
7. The illustrative scheme.
8. Design Codes and how they define the scheme.
9. Views.
10. Summary.

The Existing Site

Station Square North

Vastern Retail Park from Vastern Rd

Vastern Road Appeal


Chatham Place
29 Station Road
Station Hill
Thames Quarter
Hermes / Royal Mail 80 Caversham Rd
The Appeal Site
SSE 55 Vastern Rd
King's Place
Kenavon Drive

Emerging Context

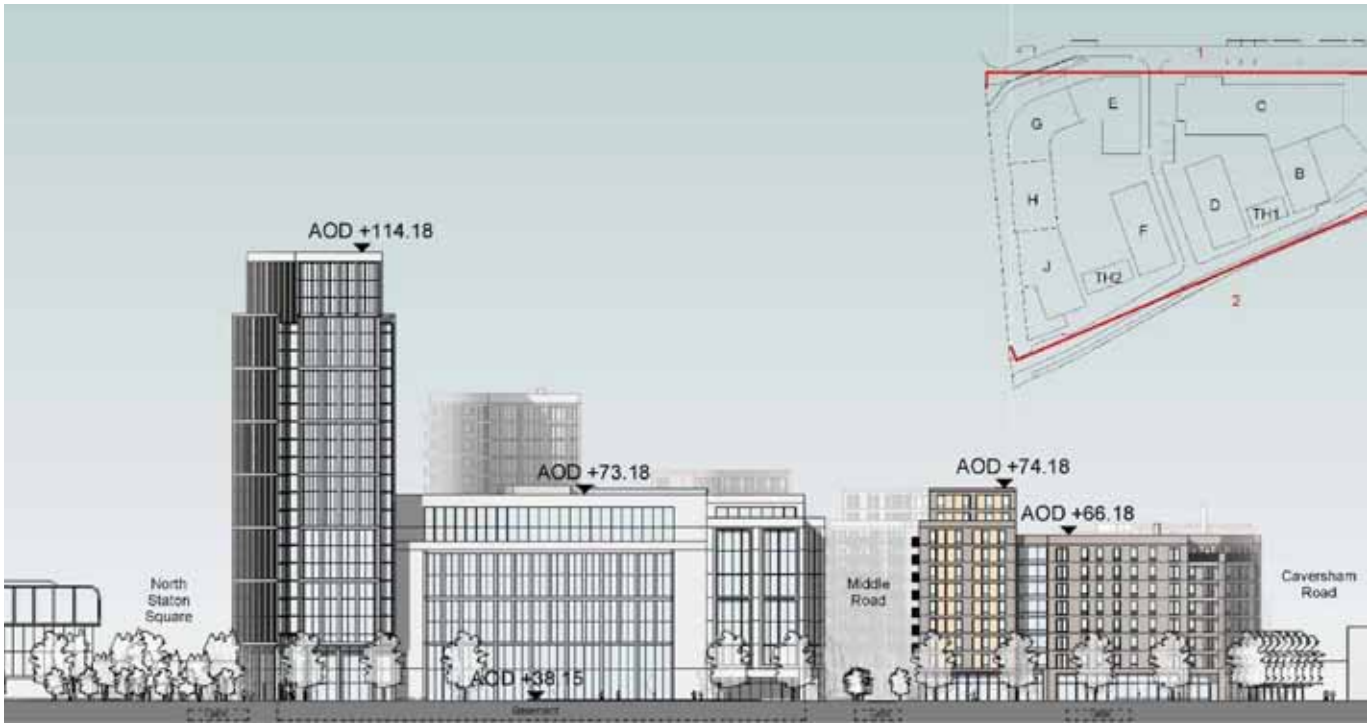
29 Station Road

Station Hill

King's Place

Thames Quarter

Chatham Place


AOD +114.18
AOD +73.18
AOD +74.18
AOD +66.18
AOD +38.15
North Staton Square
Middle Road
Caversham Road
G
E
C
B
H
D
TH1
F
J
TH2
2


38.2m
VASTERN ROAD
Vastern House
Tunnel


72.150 AOD
57.875 AOD

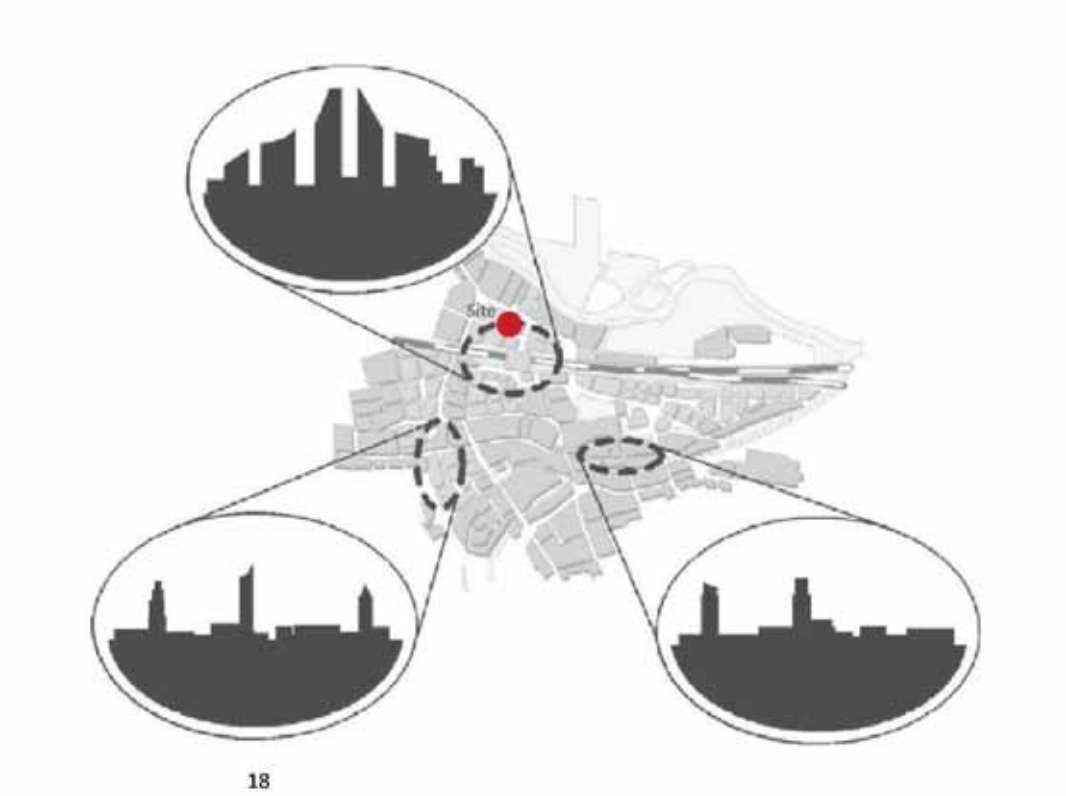

Vastern Road
The Goods Office
The Turbine Hall
Cafe

Planning Policy - Local Plan Policies

A summary of the key design cues from local planning policy and guidance
This is not intended as an exhaustive guide to planning policy, rather those policies of particular relevance to the design of this site.

Local Plan CR10 - Tall Buildings

- Tallest element at the centre and stepping down toward the lower fringes
- Allow adequate space between buildings
- Designed to fit with the wider framework
- 5.3.9 – The station cluster will comprise the highest and densest cluster, and will make a significant impact on the townscape around the station and on the town's skyline.
- Create a coherent grouping
- 5.3.43 – the contribution that tall buildings can make to views in terms of their locations should also be taken into account. Aligning tall buildings to terminate or frame views can create a strong reference point, allowing greater urban legibility
- 5.3.45 – tall buildings should
  - Step down a large mass toward its lower neighbours
  - Provide a naturally surveyed public realm
  - Have legible accessible entrances
  - Step back at the upper levels
  - Provide good detailing with high quality materials
  - Be articulate to reflect local character
  - Provide continuity of frontage
- 5.3.47 – At early stages consider solar effects of tall buildings



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Local Plan CR11 - Station / River MOA

- Contribute to provision of a high density mixed use development
- Facilitate permeability – esp. N-S link (and E-W link)
- Development to fit with future routes and spaces and activate the routes
- Provide areas of open space where possible
- Give careful consideration to the areas of transition to low and medium density residential and conserve, where possible, enhance listed buildings, conservation areas etc.
- Demonstrate part of a comprehensive approach that does not prevent neighbours from fulfilling the policy aspirations

Local Plan CR11e - North of Station

- Indicates 640-960 dwellings for the combined sites with Royal Mail, also noting that:
- 5.4.5 – figures for indicative capacity, for this location more than at others, can vary significantly on high density town centre sites, and these figures are therefore an indication only. Of greatest importance will be the creation of a high quality, well designed mixed use destination, and there is potential for development figures to vary in order to achieve this aim.
- 5.3 – shows indicative N-S and E-W key movement corridors.

Reading Tall Buildings Strategy (RTBS)

- Identified as Character Area 22 'Vastern Road', and within this, the Station Area Cluster.

- P37 notes that within the character area, and the absence of any key views or visual focal points make this an appropriate location for tall buildings. There are no key views which could be blocked by development of tall buildings. Qualified at 6.1 with a note promoting the need to consider further considerations.

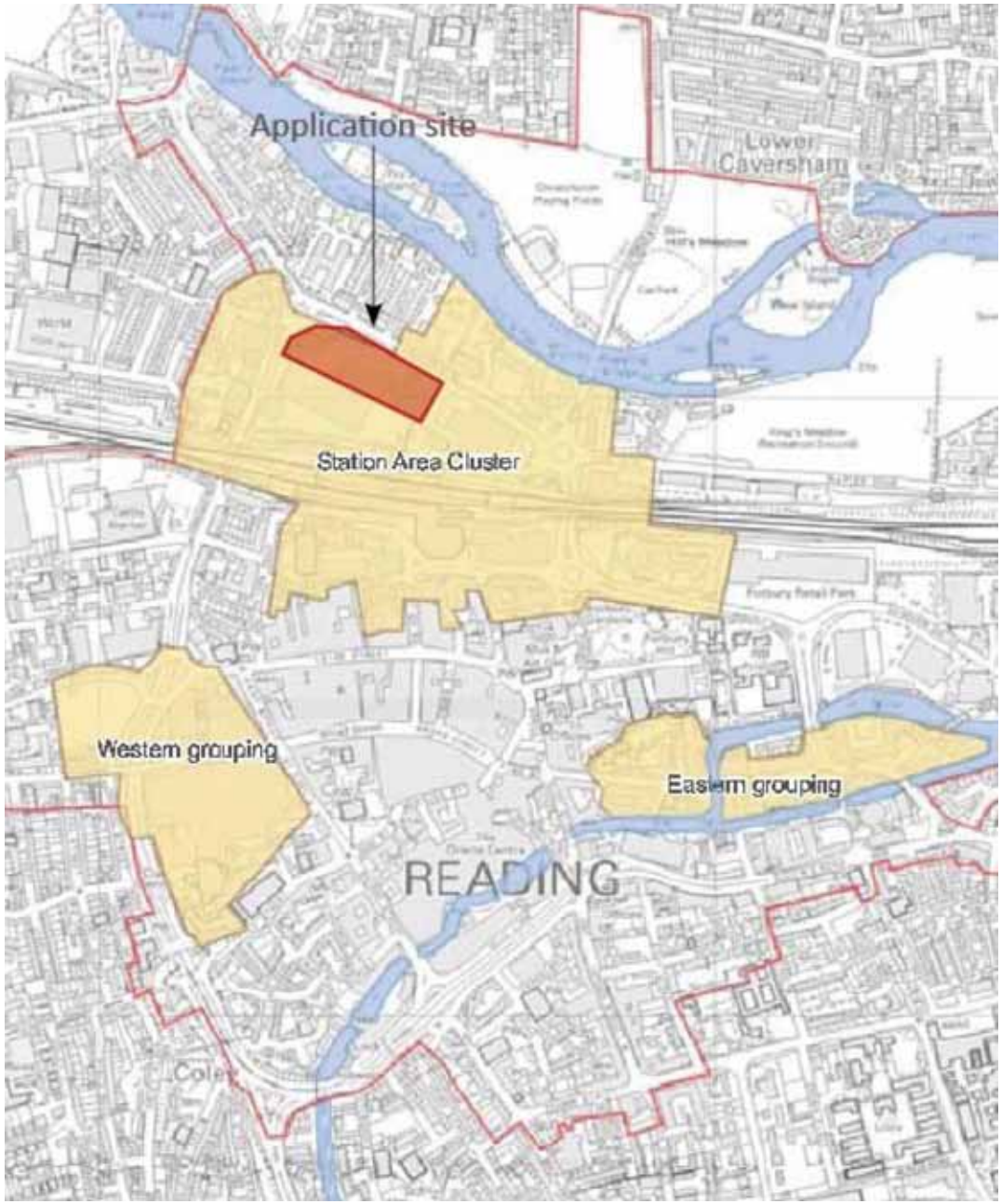
- 6.3 – Tall buildings not to be detrimental to the character of Reading
  - High quality design
  - Human scale at street level
  - Enhance skyline
  - Contribute to distant and middle distance views
  - Avoid bulky massing
  - Materials that reference their surroundings
  - Mitigate over shadowing

- 6.4 – station Area Cluster (specifically)

- The urban form is large scale. Within the existing context the buildings are tall and have large block sizes. It is proposed that tall buildings should continue to be a feature of this area, providing a focal point to views. The design of any built form within the character area should respond to the routes and vistas which connect to the area.

- **Policy recommendations** – a new cluster of tall buildings with the station at its heart will be created to draw attention to the station as a major mixed use destination and the main gateway to and most accessible part of reading. This will include the tallest buildings in Reading, of around 30 storeys, located in the centre of the cluster close to the station, stepping down toward the (more sensitive) fringes.

- 7.1 – strategic conclusions – The station Area will be signified by the highest buildings and the densest cluster. In reaching this view, the policy notes that it has been subject to 'a thorough analysis of the suitability of the areas for tall buildings when considering townscape, historic context, local and strategic views, demand, topography, and other issues'



Reading Station Area Framework - RSAF 2010

- 1.5 – The purpose of the framework is to outline broad development principles
- 4.1 notes it is to sit alongside and expands upon higher level planning policy
- Fig 4.1 – identifies areas of transition required to lower density neighbourhoods (excludes Vastern Road which we take to be an oversight)
- 5.6 - identifies the importance of the N-S link and Station Square
- 5.9 – Recognises that in providing the N-S link, that this provides the amenity for new residents at and around the open spaces by the Thames.
- Provides guidance on density and heights at Fig 6.6, 6.7, 6.8 and 6.9
- 6.17 – accepts that density ranges are not exact controls and subject to other considerations
- 6.23 and 6.24 – Benchmark heights can be modified (upwards or downwards) where applications can show that potential impacts can be mitigated, where there are townscape reasons, or where other factors have a determining impact.
- RSAF Illustrative proposals are helpfully provided at Chapter 14 (that have been reviewed and considered in development of our own proposals)

Plot reference	Benchmark	Landmark
N1	4	None
N2	6	None
N3	6	None
N4	7	Local
N5	8	Local
N6	*	Local
N7	6	None
N8	8	Local
N9	6	None
N10	8	Local
N11	8	Local
S1	*	Local
S2	*	District
S3	4	None
S4	*	Local
S5	6	Local
S6	6	None
S7	6	None
S8	6	None
S9	6	None
S10	8	Local**
S11	8	District**
S12	*	Local

** Benchmark height likely to be at least 10 storeys - refer to tall building policies and design guidance.*

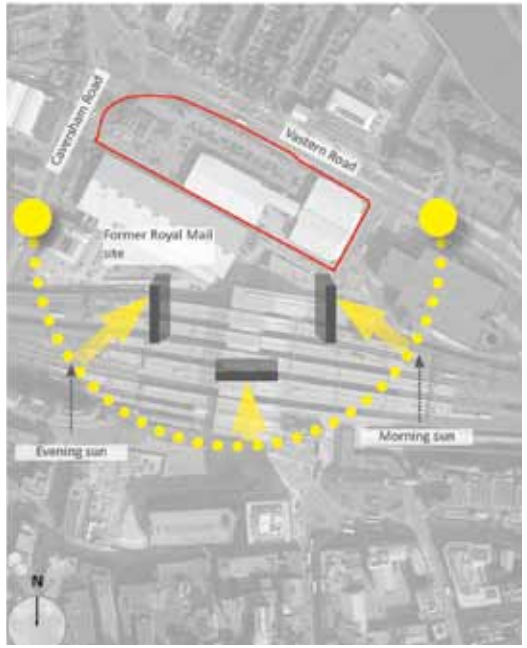
*** Only parts of the plot within the Tall Buildings Clusters as defined by the RCAAP are appropriate for landmarks.*

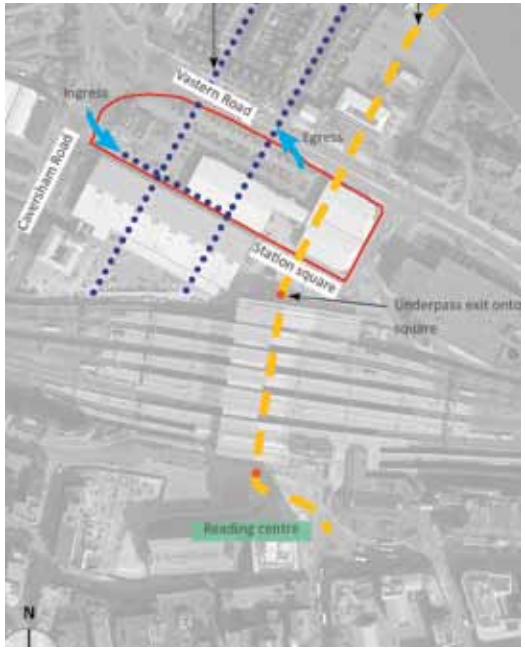
Opportunities and Constraints

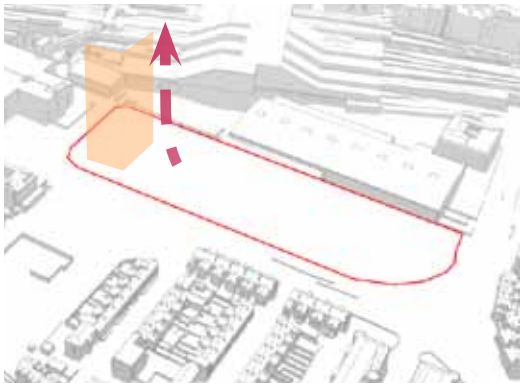
The opportunities are well set out within the planning policy and guidance documents.

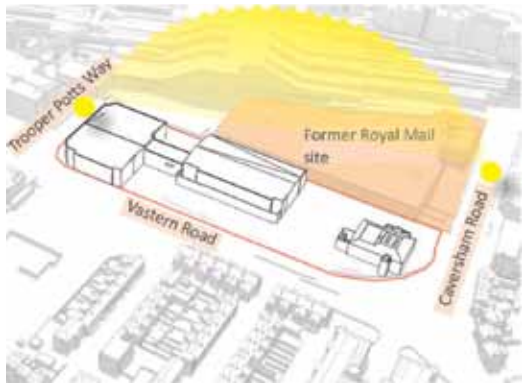
This section considers responses to the site's constraints

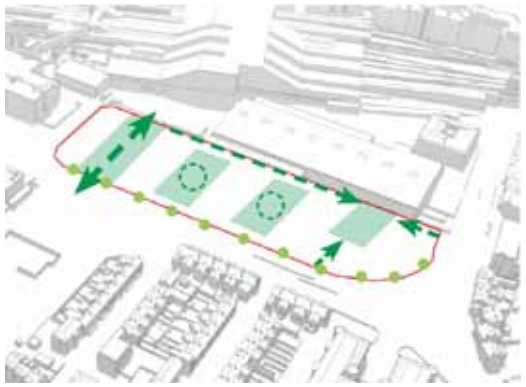
- Ensuring a good three-dimensional fit with the consented Royal Mail and SSE developments
- Ensuring the policy aspirations are met in a sensitive manner with regards to the low rise housing adjacent to parts of the site
- Ensuring the policy aspirations are met whilst providing well lit public realm and high quality housing
- Unlocking this site so that it can take its place within the wider area master plan in a manner the delivers the connections required
- Creating tall buildings that respond to townscape, sun path, place creation and definition, and that deliver high quality housing, spaces and buildings

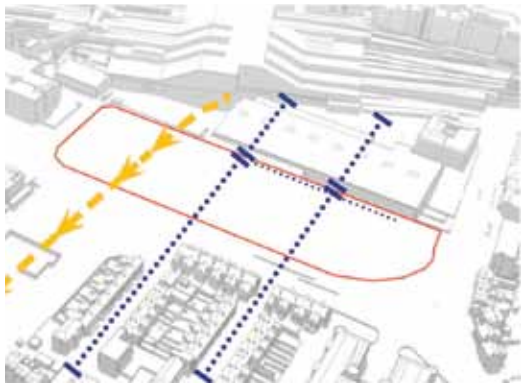












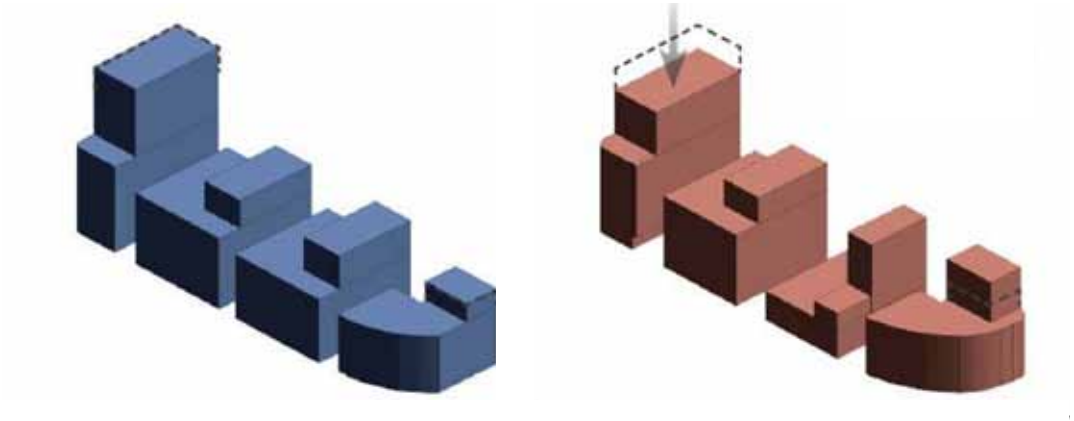
The RSAF provides a very helpful and considered starting place for our consideration of the site layout. There is a strong logic in the disposition of the four building plots within the Aviva site based upon the extension of the breaks in urban fabric indicated by De Montfort Road and Lynmouth Road, and by the N-S link springing from the station underpass. We tested the scale and size of these plots and found them to be wholly suitable for high quality residential buildings in width and depth, having regard to the dimensions required both within and between them.

The plot arrangement infers a sense of urban 'formality' across the plan, which sits comfortably with the ambition for scale and density and the desire to align pedestrian routes. To our mind this thinking goes to inform the three dimensional arrangement and treatment of the buildings as an urban grouping, arranged formally, and with the characteristics of new city blocks, as opposed to a more informal 'twisty turny' arrangement more usually associated with lower rise fragmented pieces of a city.

Initial Concept and Design Evolution

Having resolved the plot locations and approximate disposition, we commenced a detailed journey of three dimensional design and discussion. The Design and Access Statement sets that out more fully. This process was inevitably an iterative one where options were shared and reviewed, and involved:

- Meetings with Reading to discuss the town wide model that we had built and design development and design thinking
- Consultation and feedback
- Numerous technical meetings with our own advisory team to constantly test and refine the design approach, composition, and detail.
- During this process adjustments continued made, included:
  - Heights reduced (Plot D and Vastern Road)
  - Heights increased – at plot A and around Station Square in response to Townscape development
  - Heights articulated in response to daylight assessment
  - Widths between plots increased
  - Adjustments made in response to the Royal Mail design (in response to over shading mainly)
  - Adjustments to residential mix tested
- Throughout this process, constant reference was made back to policy, and through detailed three dimensional modelling, reference was made back to short, medium and long views.
- Throughout this process the detail of the scheme was evolving alongside the development of the massing

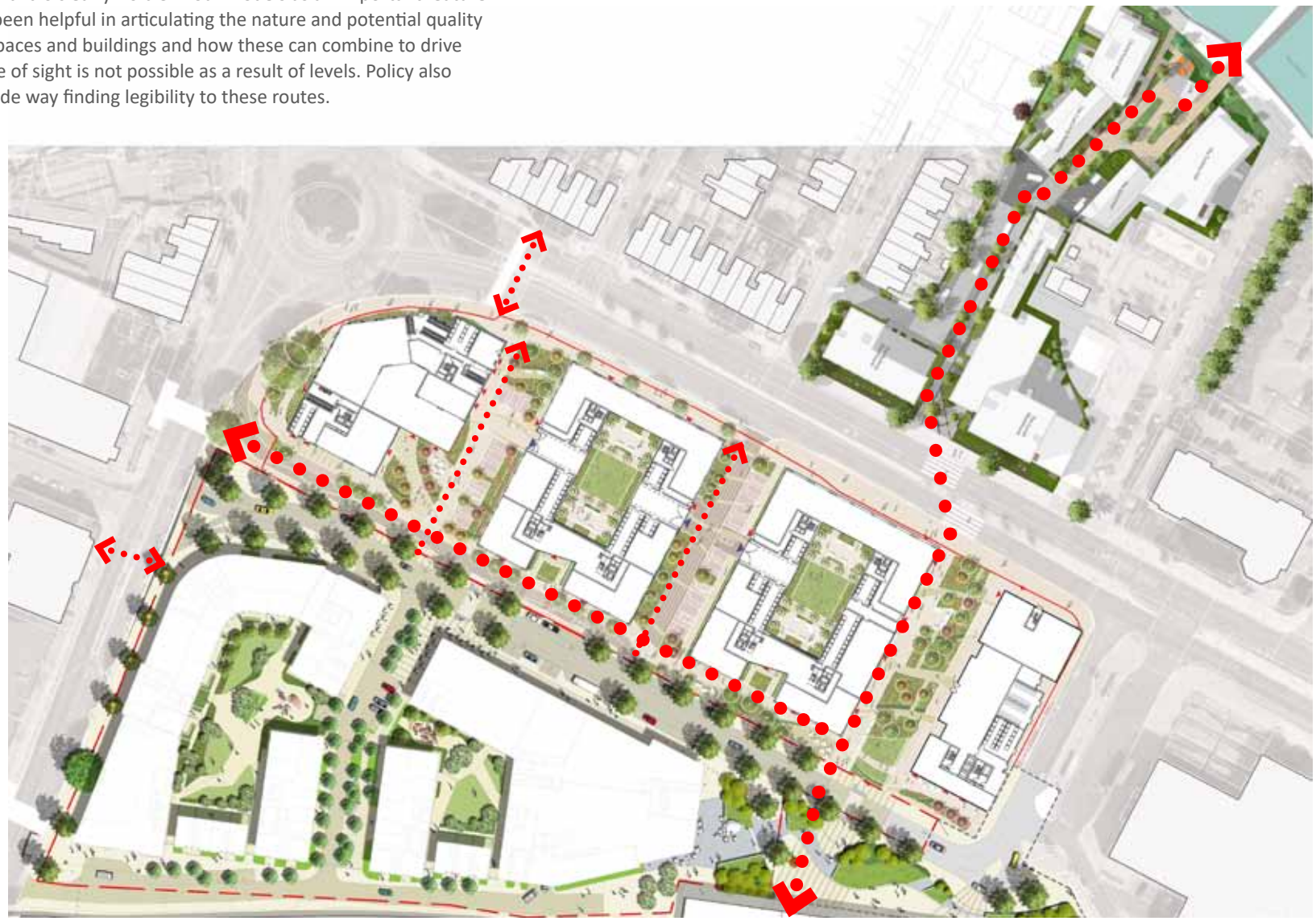


Public realm and the North – South (and East – West) links

The importance of the North – South link, connecting the more established town centre and the wider Caversham Area to the Thames is an important design consideration. There has been a lot of discussion around the nature of this route, and we now have the benefit of the approved SSE scheme to work with. We have been working alongside the emerging scheme in any event to ensure that each site is cognisant of the other. We support the desire for this high quality connection, and it is clearly visible in our models as an important feature of the earliest designs. The Inspector's decision has been helpful in articulating the nature and potential quality of this route, noting the importance of way finding spaces and buildings and how these can combine to drive movement. The Inspector also notes that a direct line of sight is not possible as a result of levels. Policy also supports the use of design and massing to help provide way finding legibility to these routes.

The illustrations here show:

- The full extent of the route from the station underpass to the Thames edge
- The SSE 'marker' building that helps to define the view as one leaves the underpass
- How quickly the gap opens up alongside this marker building
- The lack of a direct view to the Thames through the SSE site (which is not to say this is a negative feature of the layout)
- A view from the SSE site back to our own scheme – with a clear gap and tree lined space drawing the pedestrian toward Station Square



North-South Link

The distance from the subway to the Thames is c280m and in our view it is unrealistic and unnecessary for it to be a clear and unbroken vista, and that this in no way diminishes its legibility and interest as a route to the Thames.

The space given to this route within our site is 23m. That compares to 6 - 9m within the SSE site, c15m at Station Road – the main approach Road to the station on the South, and c20m on Broad Street, the main public pedestrianised shopping street in Reading. The arrangement of this link ensures high levels of sunlight access upon it, and ample dimension for landscaping and very high quality public realm.

Whilst much is made of the N-S link, the pedestrian journey from West to East, connecting into the wider Caversham area, is also important and recognised by policy. The design of this space along with the spaces between the buildings has also been carefully developed and tested by Fabrik Landscape designers, whilst along Vastern Road a 5m no build zone has been agreed to ensure adequate space is made available for pedestrians, cyclists and landscape.

Plot A (N3)

Plots B,C and D are, in our judgement, delivering almost exactly what the RSAF and other policies prescribe and draw, which we will come back to. Plot A delivers the plot arrangement and uses as sought by policy, but adopts a different approach to height than suggested for benchmark heights within the RSAF document. Notwithstanding that buildings within the RSAF illustrative scheme, the Royal Mail consent, and the SSE consent also breach the guidance on benchmark heights, we have adopted the massing approach proposed for the following reasons:

- Planning policy notes the importance of East – West connections, linking the new Station Square to the residential neighbourhoods on Caversham Road and beyond to the northern banks of the Thames. This is an important pedestrian axis into the site for a large residential community.
- The highway arrangement adjacent to plot A opens out to a large urban 'gap' filled with a roundabout. Its sensitivity and sense of urban enclosure is different from that within the body of Caversham Road and Vastern Road for example, where plots B and C sit.
- The RSAF illustrative scheme itself highlights this node with taller buildings of up to 10 floors that are at odds with the quoted benchmark heights. The RSAF scheme proposes outer edges of 7-8 residential floors with a taller element at 10.
- Our own proposals are broadly consistent with this on the outer edge but with a slim element rising to 16 floors to denote the direction and point of entry into the new West – East Avenue.
- This taller element is well set back from Vastern Road and daylight modelling has been used to ensure no undue harm. It is orientated in the East – West Axis, and rotated to form a western gateway into the project, and designed to be a part of the family of buildings on plots B and C.
- When viewed in wider context, it does not detract from the role of Plot D to be seen as the tallest part of our development and contributing to the 'station nexus'. This has been widely tested with our TVIA assessment.
- By way of comparison, the SSE has proposed buildings of 10 and 11 floors adjacent to the Thames and marking the N-S link to 'signpost' this route, against Benchmark heights of 4 and 6 floors. The difference between these heights and those in the RSAF is greater than we propose and in a more sensitive location. That said the SSE massing works well in my opinion in terms of way finding and townscape variety and legibility.
- Plot A is shaped at ground level internally to respond to the gap in the east – west massing within the Royal mail scheme, with the daylight penetration this opening affords to help locate an additional area for public realm.

Plots B and C (N4 and N5)

Whilst there are differences in the design massing of plots B and C, the driving principles are very similar. The scale of both plots is quite significantly lower in parts than the RSAF benchmark heights as a consequence of daylight and sunlight modelling. Plot C is slightly larger on Vastern Road than Plot B because it sits opposite the SSE consented development which is taller.

- The general building heights on Vastern Road are lower (significantly so in places) than the RSAF benchmark heights in order to achieve required ADF requirements for the new residential dwellings. This has the added benefit of improving daylight relationship from the position tested by the parameter plans.

- The varied nature of the street edge on Vastern Road creates a really positive relationship with the housing opposite. This compares very favourably when considered alongside the Royal Mail arrangement on Caversham Road.

- In looking across the composition of plots A,B,C and D toward the South, the slenderness of the arrangement is evident as a consequence of working with a strong N-S emphasis (as guided in the RTBS). This contrasts with the East-West approach of the Royal mail scheme in the back drop, and allows a greater amount of pedestrian and light permeability.

- Architecturally, we have suggested in the illustrative proposals a design that is firmly inspired by the vernacular of some of the finer buildings within Reading, referencing local materials, forms and details.

Plot D (N6)

Within the illustrative scheme, plot D is shown as a commercial office building. As with plots A,B and C, its plan location has derived from the work on plot layouts, and forms one side of the new North - South pedestrian link to the Thames.

- The RSAF at Fig 6.9 describes plot D as a Local Landmark, specifically highlighted as ‘at least 10 floors’. This description sets it apart as the tallest building anticipated within th RSAF within the Royal Mail and Hermes sites.
- This is further supported within the RSAF at 6.7 where plot D is identified as ‘high-Very High’ in terms of density range, greater than N8 for example.
- Our assessment of the collective policies is that the building at plot D should be one of, or the, tallest building in the wider ensemble in order to fulfil the role of identifying the station at the heart of this high density development.
- In fact our plot D building is slightly lower than the Royal Mail building at plot N8 – technically contradicting the RSAF hierarchy if one considers benchmark heights.
- The positioning and visual relationship of the building on Plot D is explored more fully within the TVIA and some of our own views within the DAS.
- The RSAF illustrative scheme proposes a lower building on Plot D, arguably in conflict with the wording within the RSAF and other diagrams that promote it as the tallest element so as to define the station.

Summary

It has been suggested that in combination there is something of a ‘toast rack’ effect when these buildings are all viewed together. In response:

- A toast rack implies a very high degree of repetition whereas our buildings vary very significantly in scale and massing – more so than the RSAF illustrative scheme.
- There is an intentional approach to the styling of plots A,B and C. It might equally be valid to develop different architectural treatments for each piece if that direction were preferred, as indicated within the RSAF illustrative proposals.
- The linear nature of the taller elements is in response to the sun path and the desire to create well-spaced gaps in between buildings.
- The RSAF illustrative scheme also proposes a series of taller elements along the new Avenue, albeit with the taller components in the wrong corner from a daylight design perspective.

The Illustrative Scheme

I think it is important to highlight that we have, in effect, designed a series of buildings and spaces to what might be considered very close to a detailed planning submission level. It is not, in our opinion, possible to set down absolute parameters without testing them through a detailed design. The inputs that we have considered in developing the illustrative (detailed) scheme are numerous, and comprise, in addition to the policy framework and guidance, an understanding of the physical context that exists and that is emerging. This has helped us to make what we believe to be informed judgements on how to apply the policy guidance so that all parts of the wider vision remain connected and considered in the real world built environment.

The level of design progressed ensures that the scheme drawn is considered and capable of delivery in a form very close to that drawn. Furthermore, the Design Codes that have been subsequently wrapped around the scheme ensure very little wriggle room for any future detailed design changes. It has been suggested that we can fill in bits of the massing parameters that we have not. This is not the case for two reasons:

1. The drawn scheme occupies 96% of the permitted space in total and per plot. Any expansion will breach this cap.
2. The massing is informed by daylight and sunlight, and so any increase or movement in massing is likely to breach ADF requirements

Matters that have been considered in detail, and that have informed and shaped the illustrative scheme, include the following:

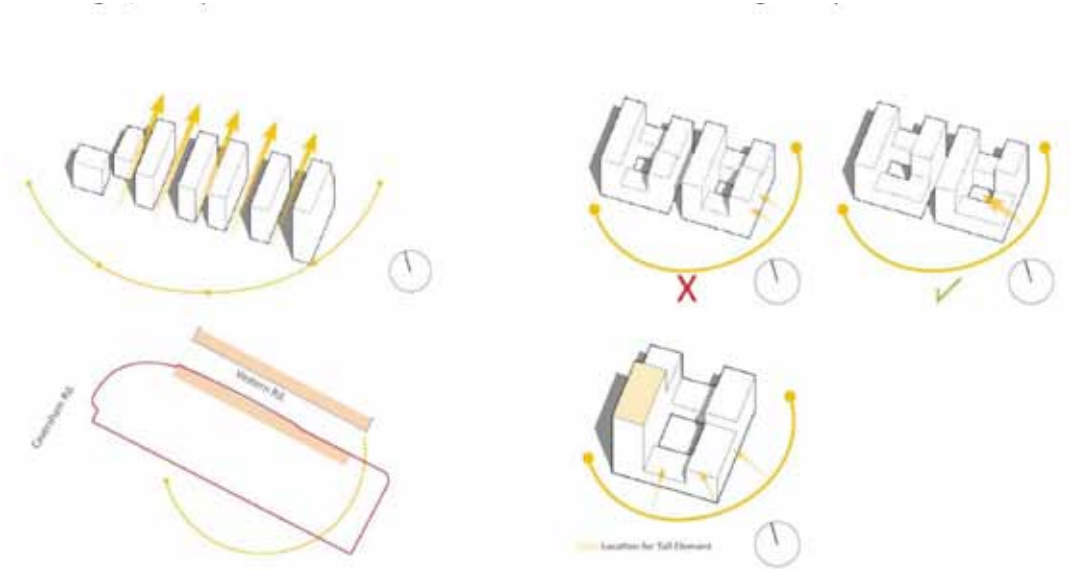
- Daylight and Sunlight – within and beyond the scheme.
- Amenity – private and public
- Building uses, disposition, access and egress
- Public Realm
- Servicing and deliveries
- Cycle and car parking
- Refuse quantum and collection strategy
- Fire fighting
- Crime Prevention & Secured by design
- Disabled accessibility
- Drainage strategy
- Façade design, materiality and form
- Residential quality (unit size, configuration, aspect, NDSS compliance)

The design process has been iterative and each of these headings continually refined. At the same time the scheme has been continuously tested three dimensionally to ensure a good fit with context and policy aspirations.

Sunlight & Daylight

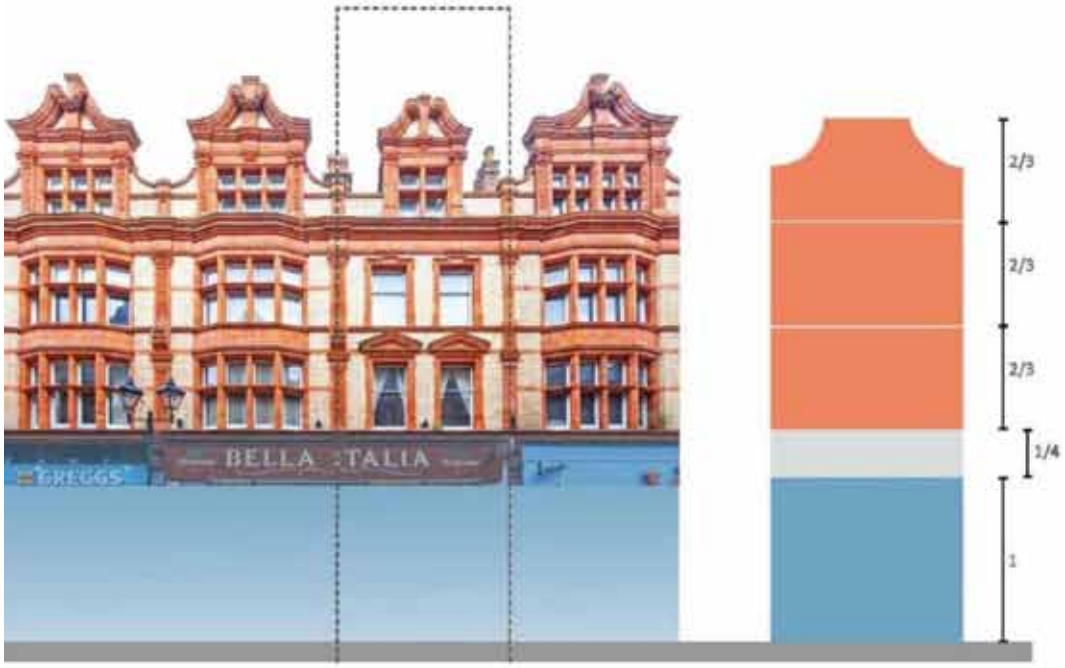
The following slides are extracts from the Design Code document addressing some of the key areas of importance – daylight, residential quality, and architecture. Some of the topics set out include:

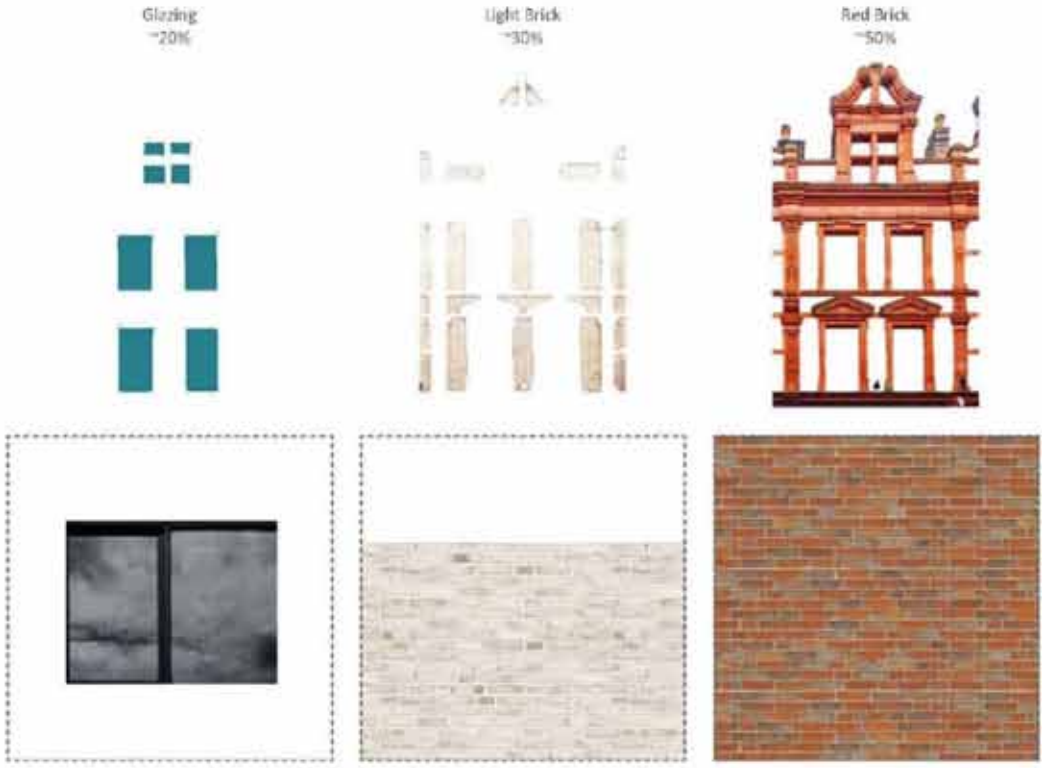
- 80% of dwellings to achieve ADF compliance – this informs massing cut backs
- All dwellings to NDSS requirements, minimise north facing units, optimise corner and through dwellings – this informs plot dimensions and spacing
- Façade story book – this informs form, material, detail, and the composition of buildings



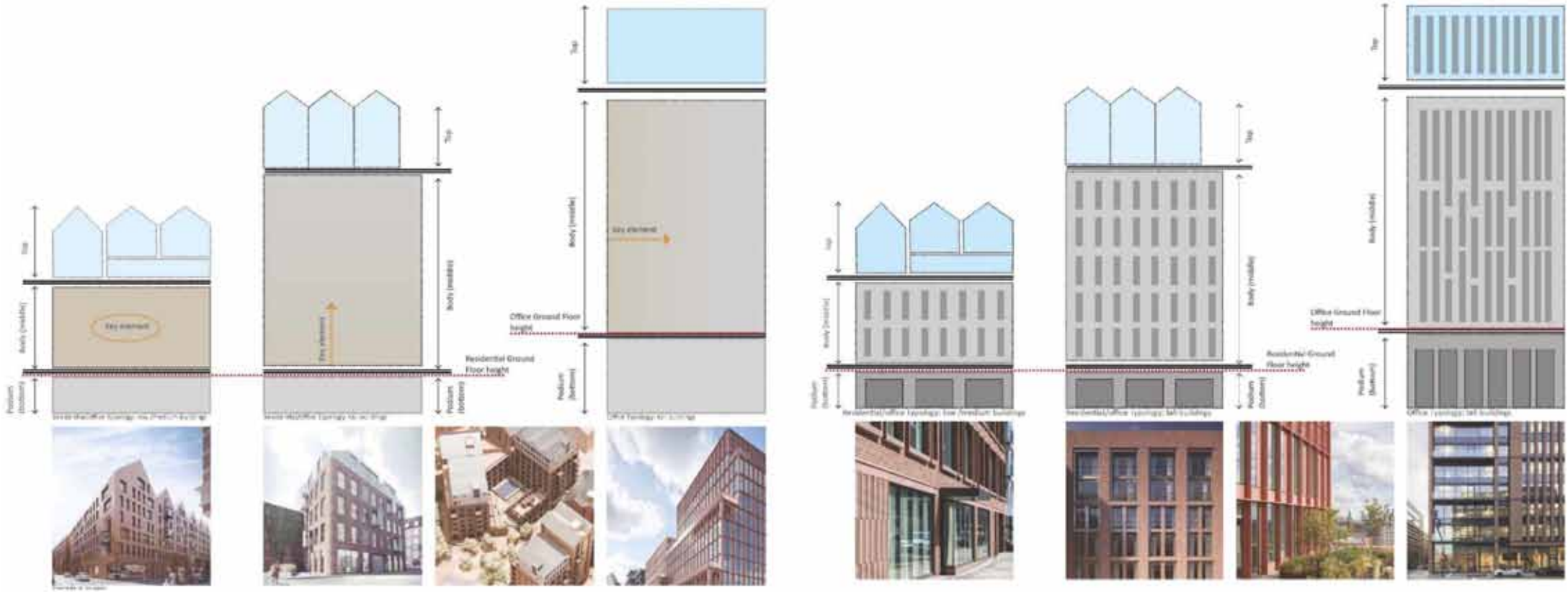
Residential Layout Quality

Architectural Quality



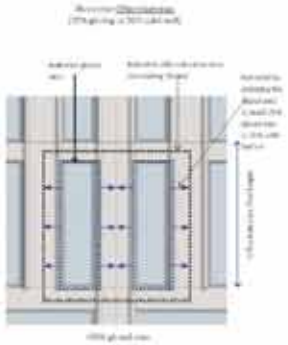


External Appearance



Design Code Examples

External Appearance



Illustrative Elevations (North, facing Vastern Road)

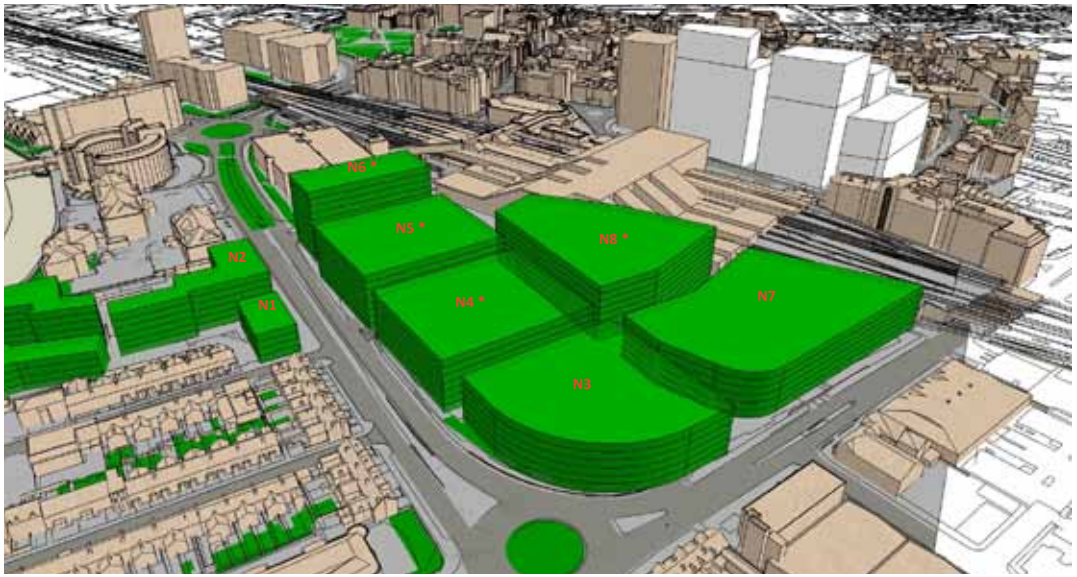
North Elevation (Vastern Road)

North Elevation (Vastern Road) with Hermes development behind shown in grey

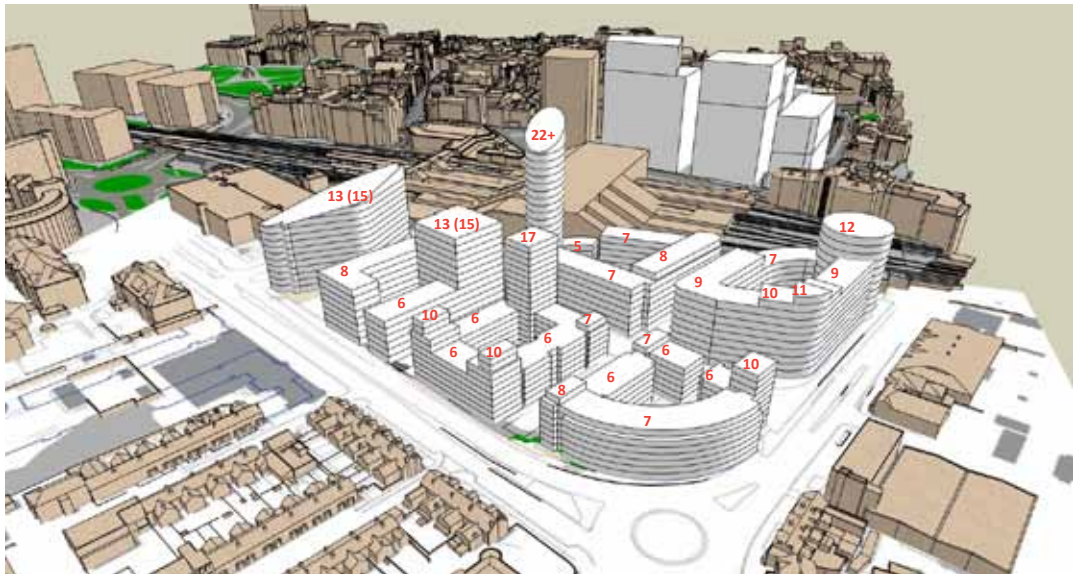
Illustrative Views

Illustrative Massing Views

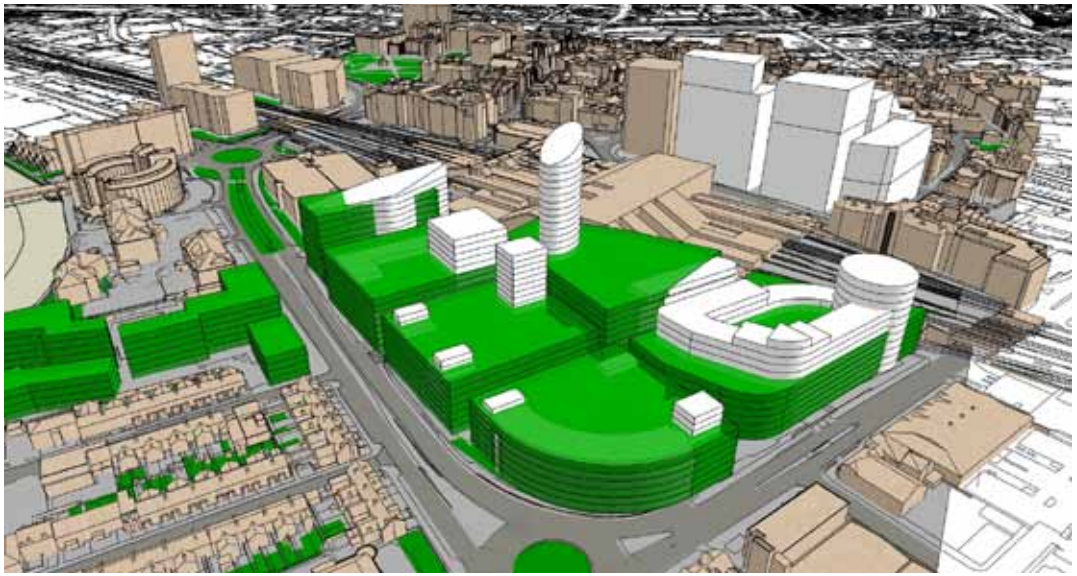
The following illustrations show the relationship of our proposals and others to the RSAF, and illustrate the total composition of all developments from a range of locations in order to allow a three dimensional picture to be formed.



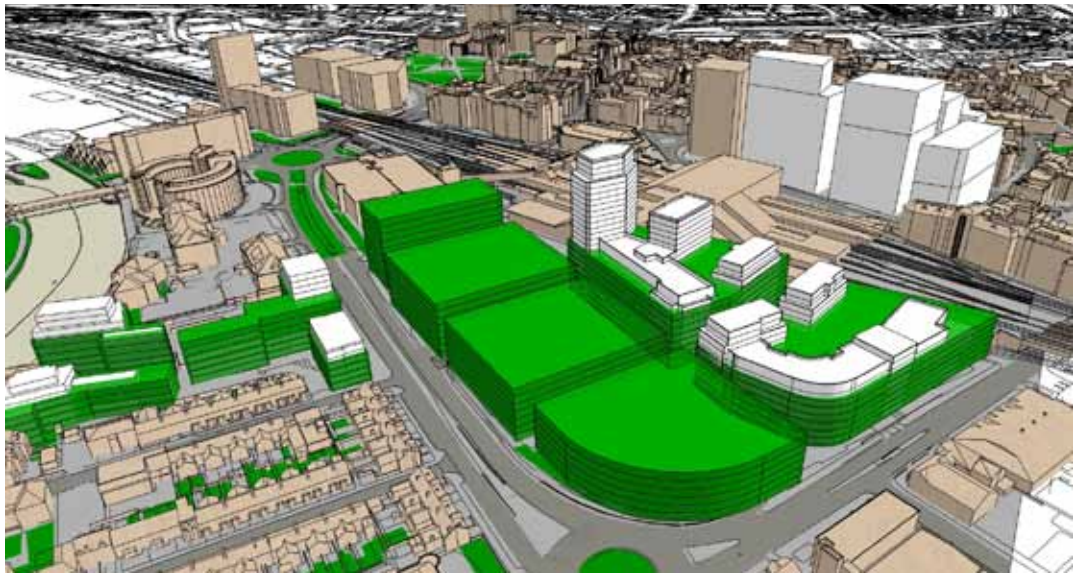
Benchmark heights as set out in the RSAF. Plots marked * are noted as appropriate for local landmarks which may puncture the benchmark height (N4, N5, N6 and N8)



Massing of the Illustrative Scheme in the RSAF



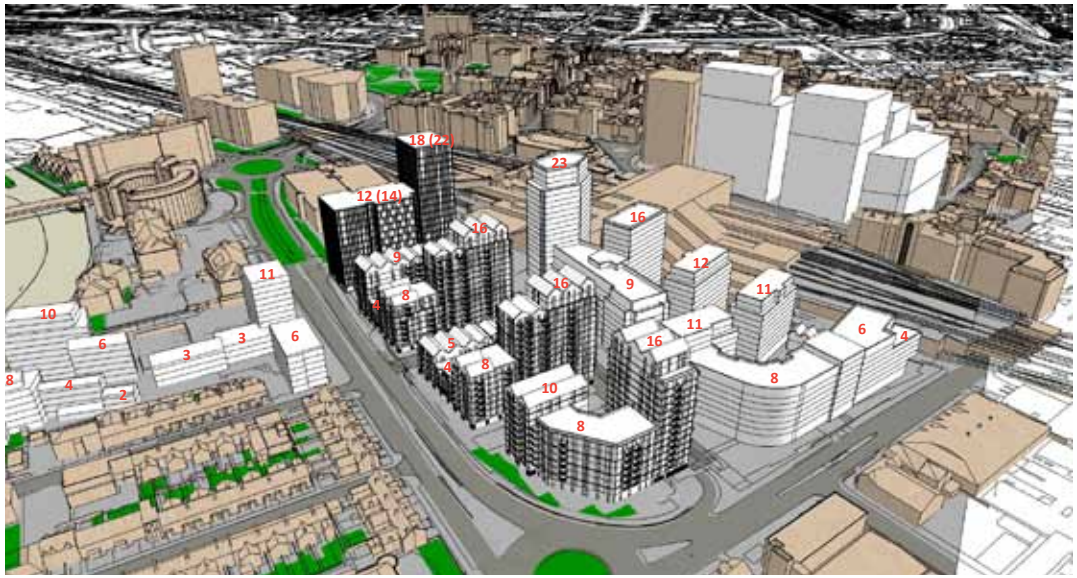
Illustrative Scheme depicted in the RSAF
The buildings rise above the benchmark heights on all plots, in some locations on plot N3 and all of N7



Consented schemes for Royal Mail and SSE sites rising above the benchmark heights
The vast majority of the Royal Mails scheme on plots N7 and N8 rise above the benchmark heights.

Illustrative Massing Views

Illustrative Appeal scheme, Royal Mail and SSE sites
Appeal scheme buildings rise above benchmark heights on all plots, significant area below benchmark



Consented schemes for Royal Mail and SSE plus Illustrative Scheme on appeal site.

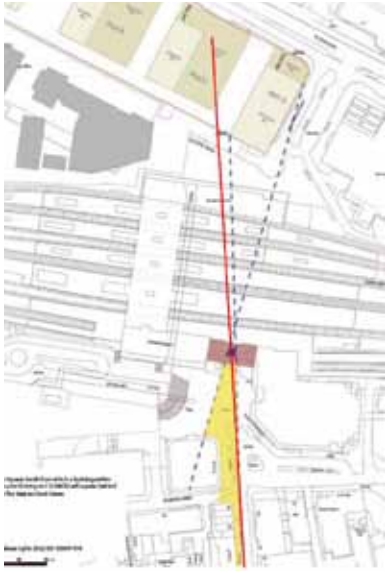
From the North showing the consented schemes for Royal Mail and SSE plus Illustrative Scheme on appeal site.

From the North showing the consented schemes for Royal Mail and SSE plus Illustrative Scheme on appeal site showing the N-S route through the SSE site.

Illustrative Massing Views

From the West showing the consented schemes for Royal Mail and SSE plus Illustrative Scheme on appeal site.

From the East showing the consented schemes for Royal Mail and SSE plus Illustrative Scheme on appeal site.

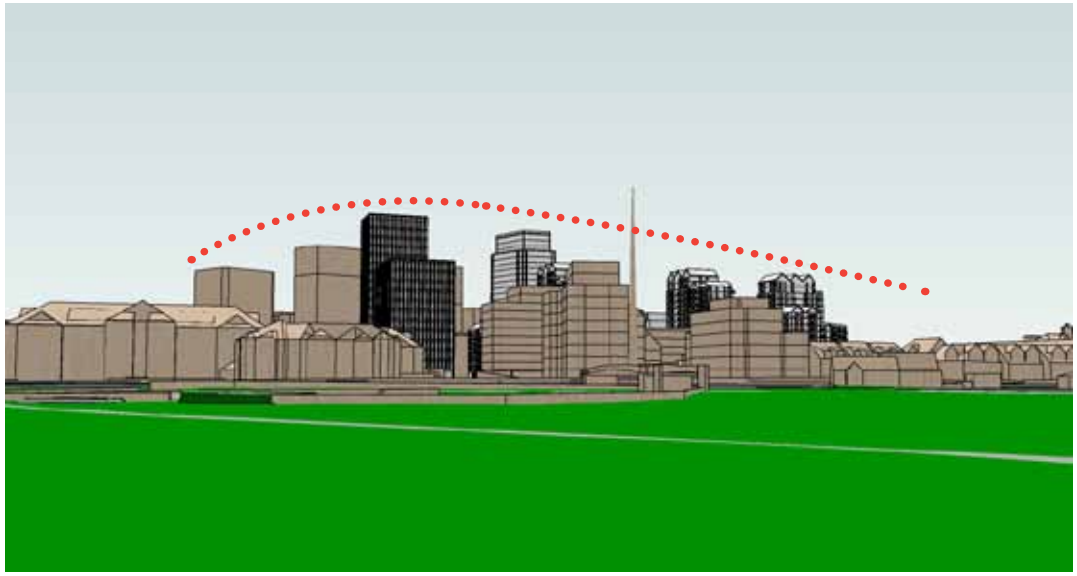


RSAF illustrative scheme from Station Road showing the proposals either side of the station clock tower. (Doyle PoE appendix D - Figure not in RSAF and not verified for accuracy)

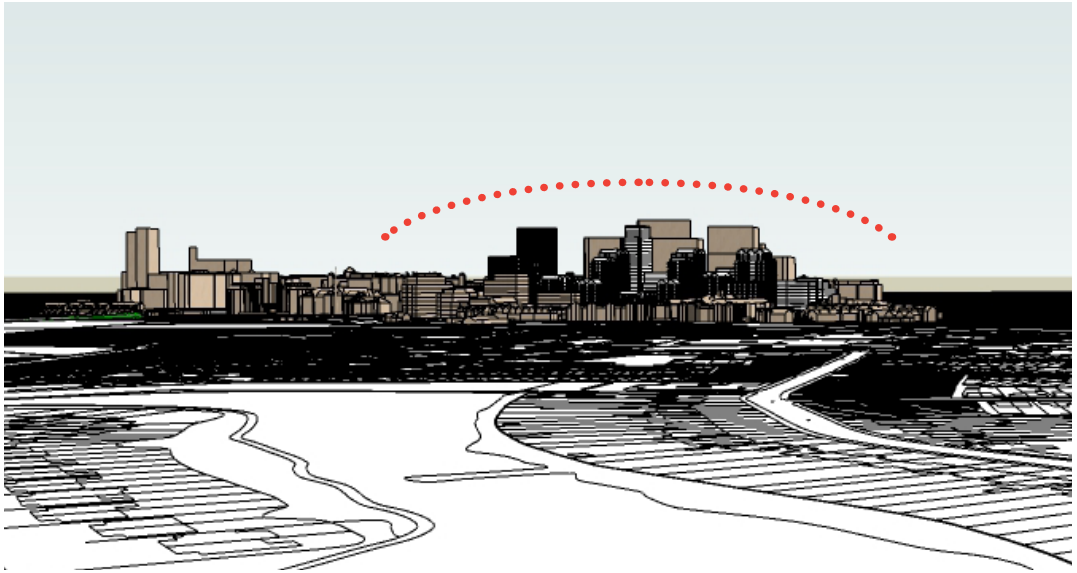
Appeal scheme from the same viewpoint showing buildings positioned either side of the clock tower. (View accurate but is not a verifiable view.)

Illustrative Massing Views

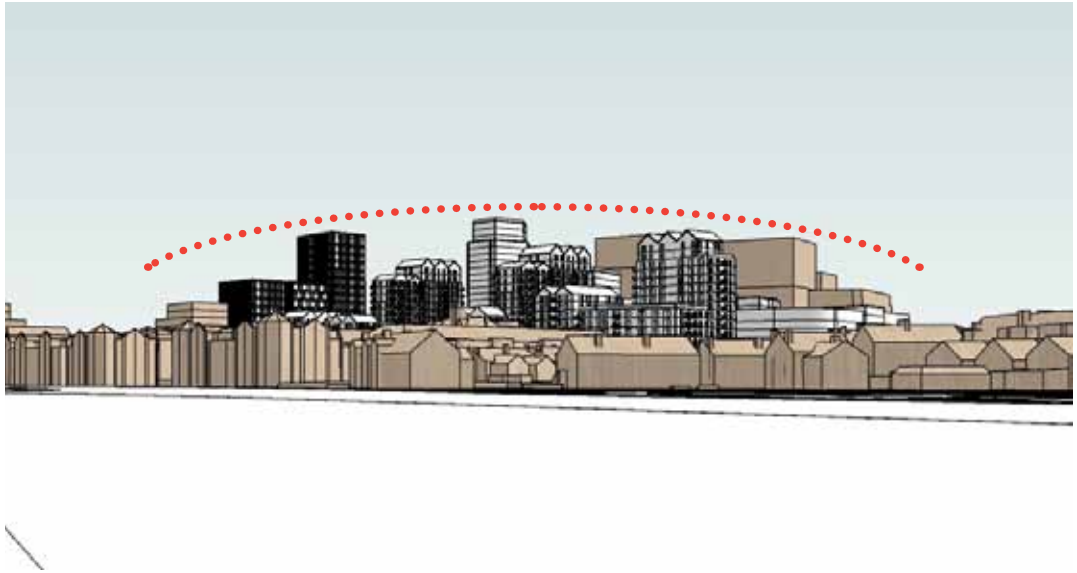
From Balmore Hill showing the Appeal Site illustrative scheme in isolation



From Christchurch Meadows showing the Appeal Site illustrative scheme and the proposals for SSE, Royal Mail and Station Hill sites

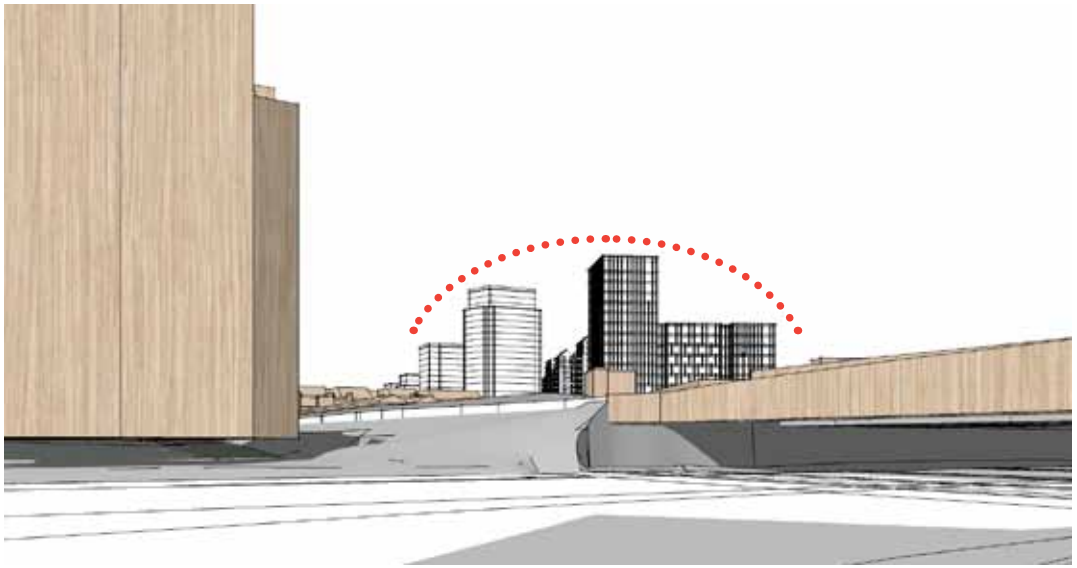


From Balmore Hill showing the Appeal Site illustrative scheme and the proposals for SSE, Royal Mail and Station Hill sites



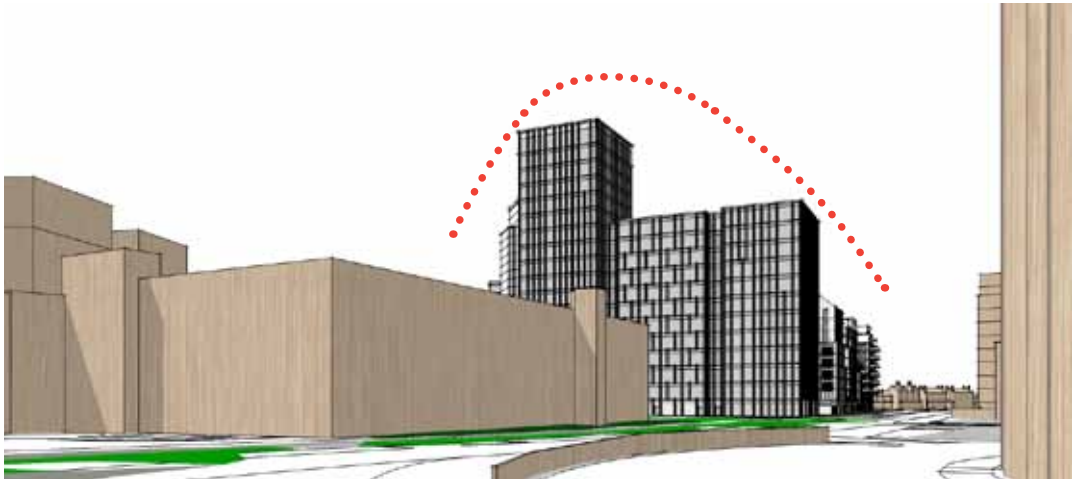
From Christchurch Meadows adjacent to the towpath showing the Appeal Site illustrative scheme and the proposals for SSE, Royal Mail and Station Hill sites

Illustrative Massing Views



From the Forbury Rd roundabout to the South-East of the site showing the Appeal Site illustrative scheme and the proposals for SSE, Royal Mail and Station Hill sites

Along Vastern Road looking South-East towards the Aviva site showing the Appeal Site illustrative scheme and the proposals for SSE, Royal Mail and Station Hill sites



From the Vastern Rd roundabout to the East of the site (southern end of Reading Bridge) showing the Appeal Site illustrative scheme and the proposals for SSE, Royal Mail and Station Hill sites

Along Vastern Road looking North-West towards the Aviva site showing the Appeal Site illustrative scheme and the proposals for SSE, Royal Mail and Station Hill sites

Summary

- Regard and attention paid the relevant design focused planning policies and guidance.
- Regard of the wider consented buildings and their place within the Reading vision
- Close working with the SSE and Royal Mail applications to respond to and fit with their layouts and designs, and to connect both with the station and Thames.
- Rigorous design process followed to ensure high quality design is demonstrated.
- The delivery of the N-S link to the Thames is enabled with this development
- Parameters and Design Codes developed the ensure a scheme very close to the one illustrated is likely to come forwards.
- Station Cluster completed with the care taken to achieve a balance between the policy ambition for the site and sensitivity toward the lower outer edges.