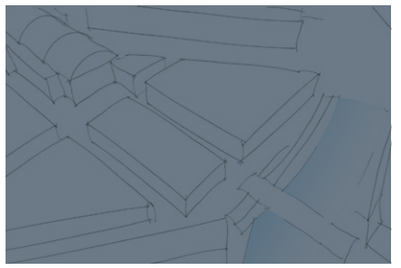
Urban design led review of:

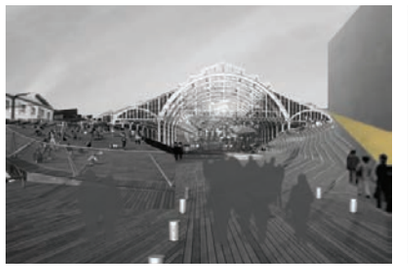
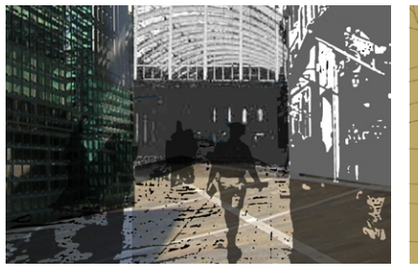
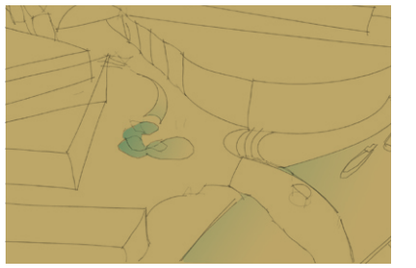
BWR East / Green Park Station, Bath

Completed for and on behalf
of Bath and North East
Somerset Council by:

Vaughan Thompson
Joe Edgard
Finlay McNab

April 2009



Contents

Introduction

Commission

Independent consultant Vaughan Thompson was commissioned by Bath and North East Somerset Council (the client) to provide an urban design led review of Bath Western Riverside (BWR) East / Green Park Station and an assessment of its ability to accommodate a higher density of development. With the agreement of the client, Vaughan Thompson appointed freelance consultants Joseph Edgard and Finlay McNab to assist in the delivery of the brief.

BWR East has previously been subject to urban design testing undertaken in 2004/5 by Llewelyn Davies in order to inform the BWR Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which was adopted in 2008. The Llewelyn Davies work was more detailed than the SPD, which was adopted as a more 'high level' strategic master plan.

Circumstances have changed since the Llewelyn Davies report, for example, in relation to the proposed location of the bus rapid transit route. It is therefore necessary to revisit the study area to establish capacity figures to provide an evidence base to support the emerging Core Strategy.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the report is to enable the Council to present a picture of the development capacity and indicative land use mix that could come forward within the study area based on sound urban design principles and assessment of constraints. The report will be used to inform the emerging Core Strategy.

The Brief and Scope of Study

The extent of the study area is indicated in Figure 1. As a capacity analysis exercise, the study is not seeking to master plan the area. The consultant recognises the importance of integrating the plans for BWR east with those for the wider river corridor potential strategic site. Consideration of context and connectivity was therefore included within the work.

The focus of the commission is on the potential arrangement of development blocks and their height, scale and massing. The report therefore does not extend to detailed design or design coding. It does not undertake primary research into site constraints but refers to constraints mapping undertaken in previous reports validated by the client.

To assist in decision making in regard to the two main existing land uses, Homebase and Sainsbury's, the brief requested an urban design led assessment that considered three scenarios / options for intervention ranging from least interventionist (scenario 1) to most interventionist (scenario 3). In all scenarios, a 25% increase in Sainsbury's floorspace was to be accommodated. Large footprint retail uses were to be accommodated in multi storey mixed use urban block formats.

In addition the brief required the consideration of further stated mixed commercial, retail, and cultural floorspace that was common to all scenarios. These are set out in 'Land Use Parameters' below.

Additional capacity that could be found could be considered for residential floorspace.

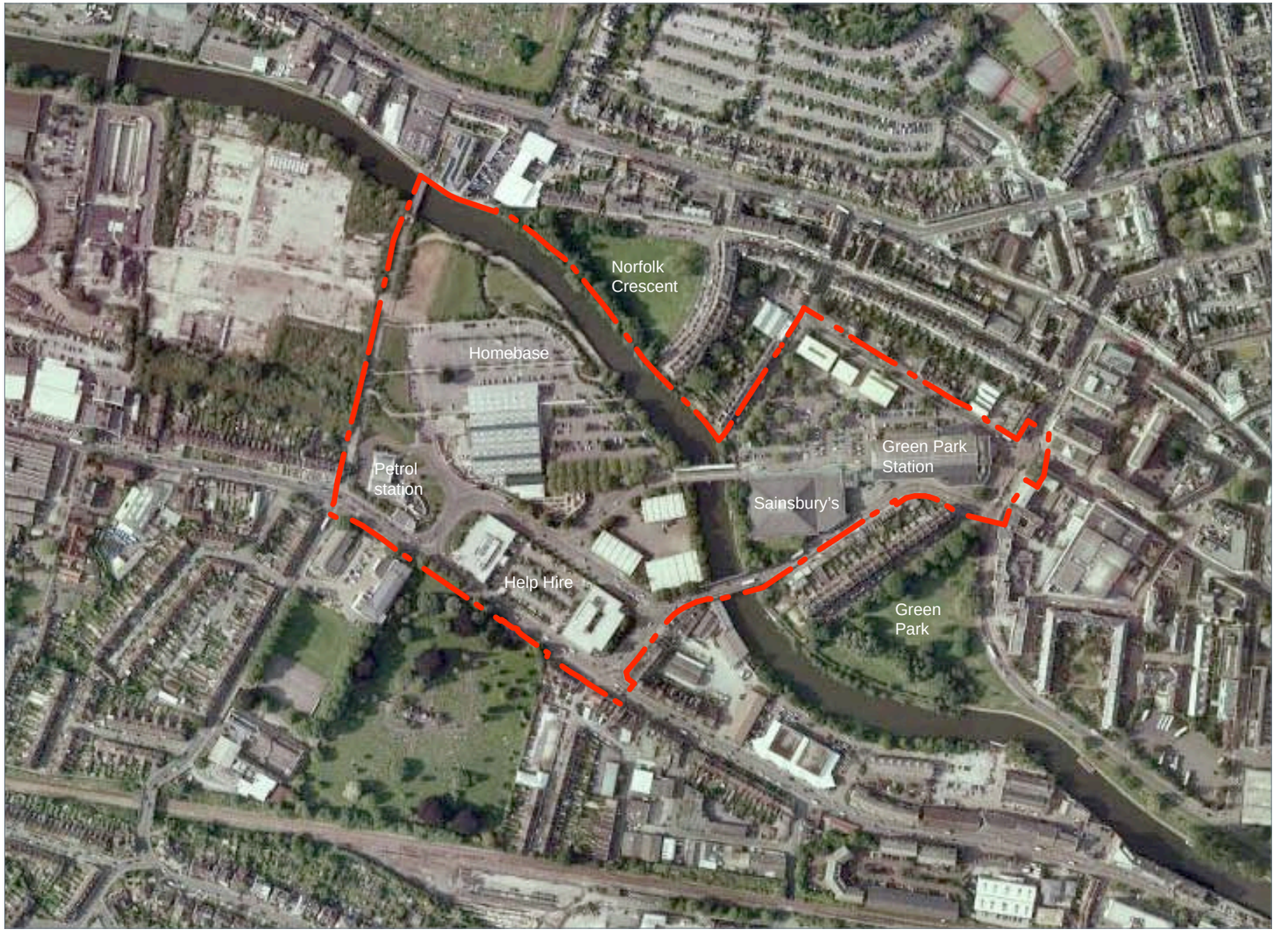


Figure 1: Study area

Land Use Parameters

The brief provided a series of assumptions. These are as follows:

- The Existing light industrial units at Pines Way and business space at James Street West will be demolished with associated light industrial activity displaced off-site.
- The regeneration of BWR East area is not to be residential led (see BWR SPD) though residential uses should be incorporated. It should be assumed that the amount of space directed residential uses will be a function of what is left over after all other development requirements have been met.
- Establishment of a new office quarter of 40Ksqm.
- 5,000sqm of comparison retail at Green Park Station area.
- A Cultural facility of 3,500sqm either in stand alone building or as part of a larger building.
- A Hotel of 4,500sqm.
- A floorspace allowance for A3 uses.
- The route of the BRT (bus rapid transit route is fixed as per current planning application) and enters the study area north of the Sainsbury's petrol station before following the southern boundary of the study area and along across Midland Bridge Road.
- A Sainsbury's supermarket should be retained within the study area. In accommodating Sainsbury's an extension to the existing floorspace of floor area of 25% should be assumed. Currently the net internal area 3,753sqm for which 2,644sqm is food retail and the remainder a small amount of comparison goods and storage. A 25% increase takes these areas to 4,691sqm and 3,305sqm respectively.
- The first strategic scenario requires the retention of a Homebase within BWR East. The existing Homebase store operates from 7,073sqm gross, comprising 4,300sqm ground floor, a 1,028sqm mezzanine and 1,745sqm garden centre and sharing 721 parking spaces with Sainsbury's. The minimum requirements for a redeveloped store are 4,645sqm gross floorspace comprising 3,716sqm on the ground floor, a gallery of 929sqm and a separate garden centre of 929sqm and 250 parking spaces.

The Three Scenarios

Scenario 1 - Retention of Sainsbury's (extended) at Green Park Station in situ or as part of a remodelled area and the retention of Homebase (reduced size) at BWR East.

Scenario 2 - Retention of Sainsbury's (extended) at Green Park Station in situ or as part of a remodelled area and displacement of Homebase off site.

Scenario 3 - Relocation of Sainsbury's (extended) from Green Park Station to BWR East and displacement of Homebase off site.

Methodology

Stage 1: Constraints, Context and Drivers Review

In addition to site appraisals undertaken by the consultant team, constraint and contextual evidence was drawn from relevant adopted or validated technical analysis previously undertaken. This included environmental assessment work undertaken by Feilden Clegg Bradley Architects as part of a planning application for BWR in November 2006 and from Llewellyn Davies technical material supporting the BWR SPD.

The emerging Core Strategy and the council's Future for Bath and North East Somerset document and Draft Public Realm and Movement Strategy were also reviewed.

Methodology - continued

Stage 2: A Single Robust Urban Design Framework

From analysis an urban design framework for the study area has been developed based on an assessment of its role and function within the city and informed by national design criteria.

The framework is designed to provide a robust and flexible structure, capable of fulfilling alternative land use distributions with an emphasis on demonstrating distinct place character options.

Drawing on national design guidance and adopted local plan policy, three overarching design principles were used as guidance:

Quality of Place - distinctiveness, character, streets and places and public realm.

Linkage and Accessibility - the river, routes to and through Green Park and BWR west and north-south routes.

Deliverability, Adaptability and Marketability - comprehensive, market led and flexible.

Stage 3: The Scenarios

The final stage is to develop the three spatial scenarios / options based on the single robust framework and within the site constraints and the detailed design parameters set down in the brief (detailed later in this chapter).

The key output of this assessment is a schedule of land use capacity for each scenario.

The brief specifies a target of achieving 40,000 sqm of office floorspace in addition to other specified uses. In seeking to create scenarios that demonstrate vibrant quality places whilst assessing commercial capacity, the consultant has balanced office floorspace with residential accommodation, reflecting the mixed use character found within and close to the city centre.

Initial findings were presented to a steering group of key officers from the council on 1 April 2009 who provided feedback and guidance. Following this, a sensitivity analysis was incorporated into the results and changes were made to some building heights.

Constraints and Drivers

Policy Context Summary

National Design Guidance

A number of national design guidance documents exist. For the purposes of this report By Design (DETR, 2000) has been drawn on to develop the three overarching design principles outlined in the previous section (Quality of Place; Linkage and Accessibility; Deliverability, Adaptability and Marketability)

By Design outlines the following objectives of urban design:

- Character – A place with its own identity
- Continuity and enclosure – A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished
- Quality of the public realm – A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas
- Ease of movement – A place that is easy to get to and move through
- Legibility – A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand
- Adaptability – A place that can change easily
- Diversity – A place with variety and choice

Unitary Policy and Guidance

Bath and North East Somerset Local Plan (Adopted 2007)

The Local Plan allocates the Western Riverside Area as a General Development site (GDS1) which incorporates the eastern study area. It requires a comprehensive high density mixed used master planned approach that includes a new integrated transport system and public access to and along the riverside.

Bath Western Riverside Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted March 2008)

The SPD provides a number of aspirations and design principles for Bath Western Riverside. Amongst the most relevant are the 'key organising principles' in Part 2. These are set out in the following text box.

River Focus

The River Avon is the principal asset of this site and must be fully addressed by development on both banks. The site offers the opportunity to create significant public realm on the southern bank of the River Avon through the site; in particular the opportunity to create a new river park along the majority of the Avon frontage.

Public Realm

At the heart of the redevelopment is the requirement to create the highest quality public realm experiences that form a sequence of experiences. These will not only be the major spaces – identified as activity zones on the summary diagram including the River Park, Victoria Bridge Cascade, Midland/Windsor Bridge Road junction with river, Green Park Station (front and rear), and the community space but also high quality intimate incidental spaces mirroring this tradition throughout the city.

Rapid Transit System

The RTS will form an east-west link from the city centre to Newbridge Park and Ride. This is a central feature of the access strategy for this site and it supports sustainable travel for the city. It will reduce reliance on the private car and help to ensure modal shift. In design terms it needs an efficient alignment from east to west that integrates well within the development that it will serve.

Uses

The whole site is viewed as a mixed use quarter; however, there will be dominant uses amongst the mix. To the western end residential and community uses will dominate. To the east of Victoria Bridge Road this forms the eastern city extension with the full range of uses including retail, leisure, civic, cultural, commercial and residential. These uses relate to the concept of character areas, which is supported by the spatial master plan and the design codes.

Links

The main new link created by the redevelopment is the RTS. The other key links across the site are the two strong north-south green pedestrian links connecting this site to the surrounding communities. Other desire lines are included within the Spatial Masterplan, recognising well established routes that have developed over time.

Heritage Enhancement

The key heritage enhancement is the opportunity to add to the quality of the World Heritage site. The redevelopment will secure the future for Victoria Bridge, and create a proper setting for it which is currently lacking. It will create opportunities to enhance the conservation area and listed buildings, in particular Green Park Station. Other notable buildings unlisted but worthy of retention are included in the Spatial Masterplan, notably Bath Press.

Landmark Opportunities

In recognising the role that the gasholders play in creating a landmark throughout the city it is acknowledged that the size of the site and the scale of the redevelopment offers the opportunity for the inclusion of landmarks. The Spatial Masterplan includes possible locations for these, however, any landmark must be fully justified by a detailed examination of context and design rationale.

Townscape Opportunities

As well as the opportunity for landmarks there exists the opportunity for significant townscape enhancements building on the respected built form elements of the area. These form a valuable tool as townscape navigational aids to bolster the new urban form and help to tie it back to the contextual language and community associations.

Protecting Key Views

The Western Riverside site sits on the valley floor and as a consequence is exposed to views from all around the city. The consideration of the key viewpoints rather than protection of all viewpoints is the best approach. The development must demonstrate how key views will be affected by the proposal.

Scale Height and Massing

Bath is a city that is founded on the principles of human scale and proportion; it lacks tall buildings. The appropriate scale for the development of Western Riverside needs to respond to local contextual conditions and respect the established city scale. The respect for contextual scale will help to protect views to the wider landscape.

Box 1: BWR SPD Extract

Other Studies

Future of Bath and North East Somerset (2008)

This report provides a cultural and spatial vision for Bath. It identifies the following themes which make up Bath's 'DNA':

- Water and wellbeing
- Pleasure and culture
- Imagination and design
- Knowledge and invention
- Living heritage

The study highlights the need for a better east-west connection within the city centre which could be based on an axis of 'spa' and water related cultural nodes including Pulteney Bridge and the Thermae Bath Spa with the potential for Green Park Station to be the western gateway to this axis. It also introduces the 'Smart City' concept that relates to the development of 'intelligent' or creative industries within the city-centre fringe, stating that this 'could include the Green Park Station area and sites beyond'.

Draft Bath Public Realm and Movement Strategy (2009)

This document sets out a proposed framework for investment in Bath's public realm. It identifies and ranks the network of streets and public spaces in the city, informing the hierarchy and rhythm of routes and public space to be integrated into the BWR East framework.

Development Proposals

Crest Nicholson Ltd – Bath Western Riverside Detailed Planning Application (November 2006)

Feilden Clegg Bradley Architects prepared a Design and Access Statement on behalf of Crest Nicholson in November 2006, in support of an outline planning application for the whole BWR site (06/01733/EOUT) and full planning application (06/04013/EFUL) for part of the core area. The document sets out master plan proposals for the western part of Bath Western Riverside including a small area in the north western part of our study area. The report provides a design cue in terms of the potential spatial context of the study area to the west including the location of connecting routes like the proposed boulevard space and BRT route. It was also used to inform the identification and assessment of site constraints.

Constraints Mapping

Previous elements of work, BWR SPD and Crest Nicholson planning applications, have included detailed plans and description of the various constraints relevant to the master planning of the study area. This report does not repeat detail about the known constraints, instead, the following text box lists the constraints in general terms and Figure 2 (opposite) illustrates those constraints that have been considered of most importance in shaping the high level urban design framework.

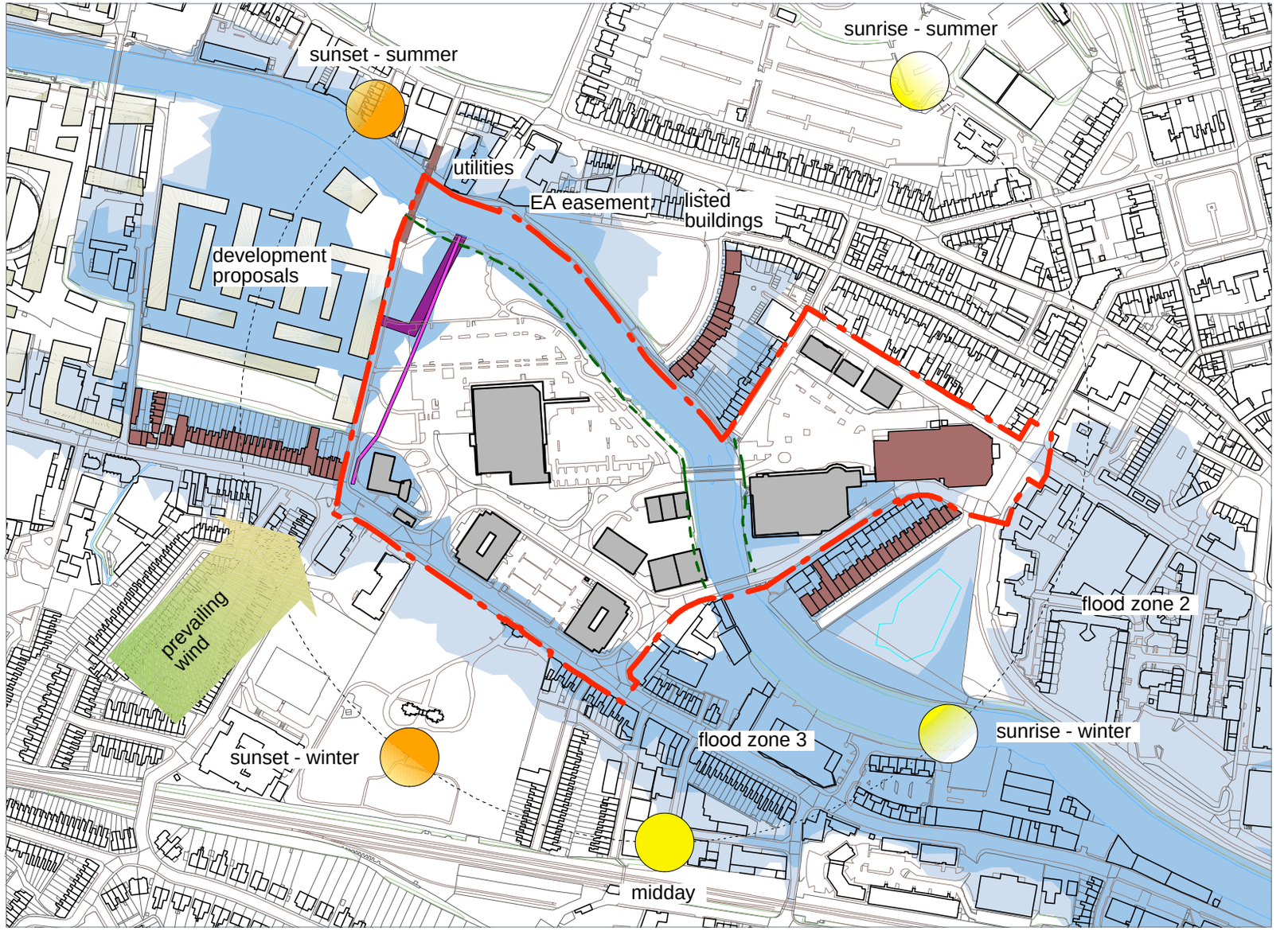


Figure 2: Constraints plan

Heritage, conservation and listed buildings

The study area is located within the Bath World Heritage Site and future development should be informed by the World Heritage Site inscription and the City of Bath World Heritage Site Management Plan.

The element of the study area around Green Park Station, to the north of the River Avon, falls within the City Centre Conservation Area and any future development in this location will have to accord to the relevant conservation area policy.

The study area includes the Grade II listed Green Park Station building and there are also a number of listed structures in the immediate surroundings, the closest to the study area are Norfolk Crescent, Victoria Bridge and Victoria Buildings.

Flooding

Flood mapping produced for Bath & North East Somerset Council identifies the majority of BWR East and Green Park falling within flood zone 1. Some elements of the study area are shown as falling within flood zone 2; Lower Bristol Road and the edges of the river are identified as flood zone 3a. Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (2006) sets out a list of uses suitable for each zone, ranging from those with the highest flood risk (zone 3a) to those with the lowest (zone 1).

Bath & North East Somerset Council has recently commissioned work to prepare a flood defense strategy for the district. It is understood that the different approaches currently being considered are likely to impact on the BWR site, particularly in relation to the areas suitable for redevelopment, and therefore site capacity. Further work would be required to consider how the strategy would impact on the proposed framework plan and capacities.

Contamination

The Bath Western Riverside site is known to be heavily contaminated in some areas due to its former / ongoing industrial use. It will be necessary for appropriate mitigation measures and risk controls to be undertaken in relation to any redevelopment proposals.

Visual Analysis

Information on significant views to and from BWR, the suggested location of landmark structures / spaces, and the appropriate building heights for different areas, is all set out in the adopted BWR SPD. The SPD also notes the importance of any development having a varied roofscape when viewed from the hillsides to the north and south. In drawing up the urban design framework plan, significant consideration was given to producing a built form which reveals views of local landmarks, as well as framing long range views out from the site to the surrounding hills.

Topography and contours

The study area is relatively flat, rising slightly in level to the north towards the river. The area sits within a valley and can be viewed, in whole, from the hills to the north and south. The layout of the framework plan has not had to be informed by any significant existing level changes although it is likely that, at a detailed design stage, some level changes may be introduced, for example, to accommodate (sub) basement vehicle parking.

Microclimate (wind, sun orientation, exposure, shelter)

The microclimate of the study area has not previously been set out in detail. Figure 2 illustrates the prevailing wind direction and sun path. The relative exposure / shelter of parts of the study area have been considered in determining a suitable, high level, arrangement of building blocks, streets and, in particular, public spaces.

Public utilities (underground services, drainage systems, overhead power lines)

The supporting material for the Crest Nicholson planning application includes detailed information regarding the location of underground services and drainage systems. The study area is primarily constrained by a storm water drain running north / south, which is located close to the western boundary with Victoria Bridge Road. There is a restrictive easement which prohibits development above the line of this drain. The study area is also constrained by a deep sewage tunnel which occupies a similar area as the storm drain, to the north west. The sewage tunnel can be built over although certain constraints are imposed on the design of foundations in this area.

In addition, there is an eight metre easement zone along the edge of the river to provide access for the Environment Agency and the existing flood defences are tied back in to the bedrock extending approximately 16 metres in to the site.

Public services available locally (e.g. schools, public transport, local facilities)

Work completed for the Crest Nicholson planning application illustrates the local amenities and key public transport interchanges close to the study area. The study area is well located in relation to the existing services in the city centre and the surrounding residential neighbourhoods.

Pines Way

The environment around Pines Way makes a very significant contribution to the feeling of separation and poor environmental quality at this key city gateway. Whilst it is recognised as a potential longer term development site, it is considered important to include the area within the study if regeneration of BWR East is to transform the connectivity and perception of this area.

However, in recognition of the potential longevity of the existing development, the approach will enable phased and separate delivery. In addition baseline office floorspace will not be identified on the Pines Way site in the three scenarios.

Box 2: Constraints

Developing a Robust Spatial Framework

Key Site Issues

The study area is located at the confluence of a number of current and future routes (see Figure 3):

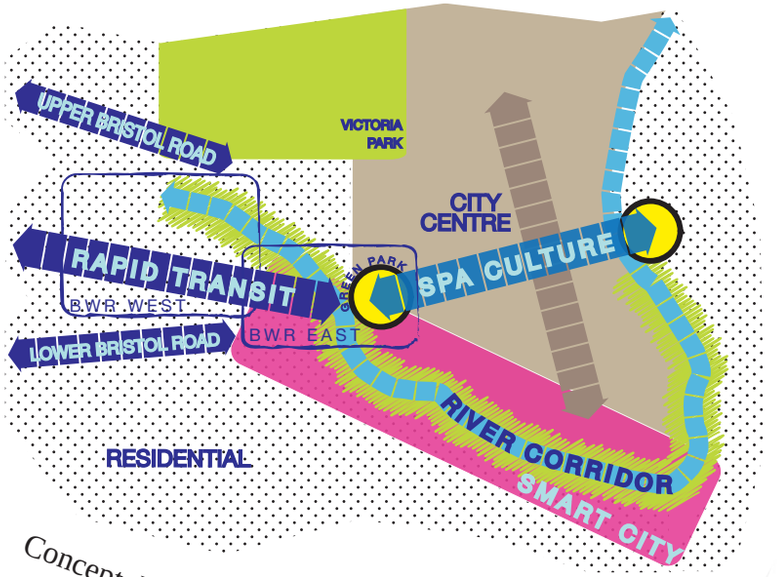
- It is between Lower Bristol Road to the south and Upper Bristol Road to the north, the two main access roads entering the city from the west.
- The study area can be viewed as two distinct areas, Green Park Station and BWR East.
- It sits on the line of the proposed BRT route travelling east west through the city.
- It is at the western end of ‘spa culture’ axis identified in the Future of Bath Vision.
- It is a key crossing on the River Avon Corridor.
- The future for Bath and North East Somerset vision document identifies the potential for the ‘Smart City’ cluster of creative and intelligent industries could flow into this area.
- The western periphery boarders the important north-south link across Victoria Bridge.
- The area borders residential neighbourhoods to the north, south and potentially to the immediate west.

Therefore, the study area has a clear role within the city as a gateway, point of transition and movement interchange.

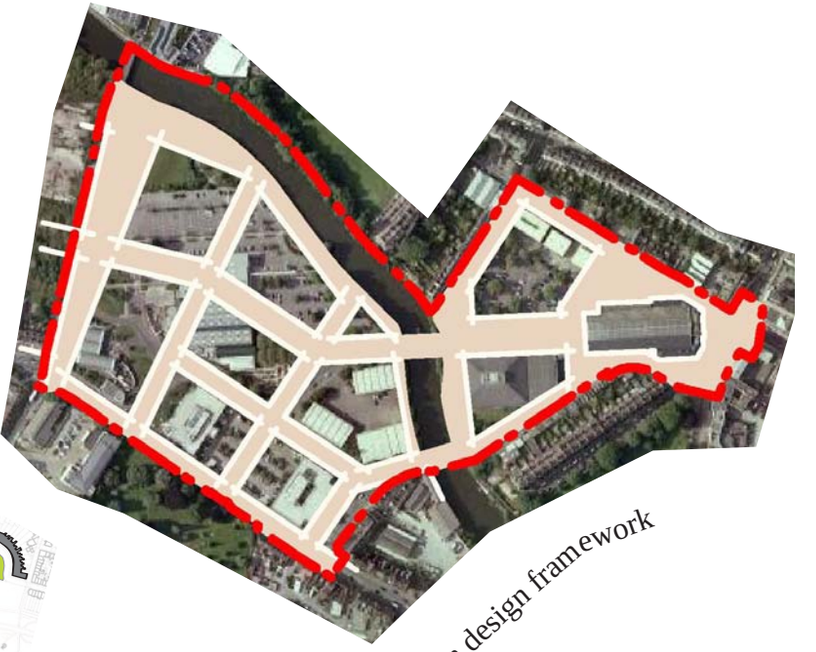
A key driver was to respond to this role by creating connectivity of the main routes, creating public spaces of an appropriate character and scale, and the articulation of the built form through landmarks.

A lattice of connecting routes are proposed providing permeability and framing the structure of robust urban blocks.

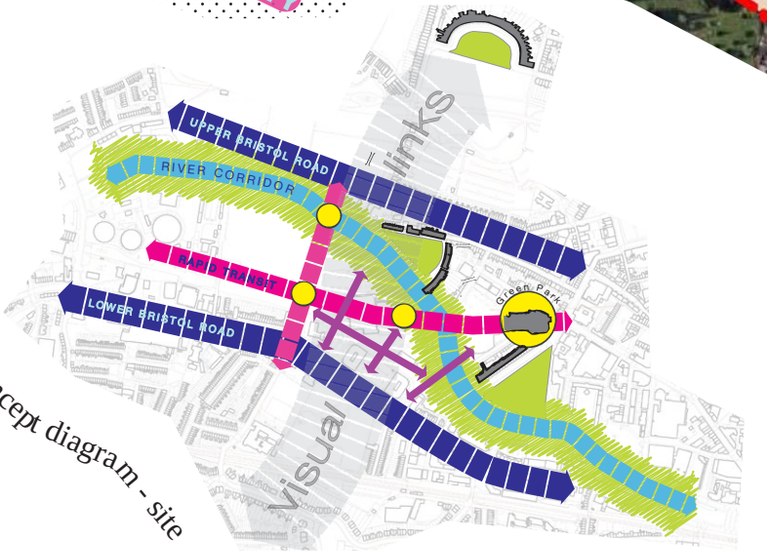
The study area is situated in the valley and there are important visual links across the valley between areas of open space and historic landmarks such as the Royal Crescent and Norfolk Crescent. The suggested routes are also designed to conserve, reveal and frame these views.



Concept diagram - city



Urban design framework



Concept diagram - site

Figure 3: Design development

Framework Characteristics

The framework (see Figure 3) is a high level plan to assist the long term restructuring of the urban fabric. It does not specify landscape treatment or public realm / architectural design.

All options and suggested urban forms are guided by adopted policy and guidance.

Robust development blocks are created that are capable of attracting varied commercial development and supporting changing needs over time and facilitating distinctive character areas.

Pines Way and the Sainsbury's filling station are incorporated to demonstrate a comprehensive long term approach.

Blocks incorporate phased development options and retention of constraint development (petrol station and Pines Way)

Development grain connects to and refers to the immediate surroundings and city context.

A continuous riverside promenade is provided.

Options for distribution of public space are considered through interpretation of the urban block structure.

Large footprint uses (supermarkets and bulky goods stores) will be accommodated in urban perimeter blocks and within mixed use multi-storey buildings with active frontages on all street edges.

Car parking will be accommodated within decked parking structures wrapped to provide active commercial/residential frontages (in a single aspect form).

All options will prioritise accommodating the required land use mix specified in the council's brief (see Land Use Parameters). Additional capacity identified will be assumed to be allocated for residential development.

Sensitivity Analysis

Illustrative gross and net floorspace illustrations will also be subject to more refined sensitivity testing. This will assist in producing capacity projections that have taken account of design issues likely to impact upon floorspace during design development.

Whilst the high level scenario options will illustrate the simple 20m deep perimeter block forms recommended as creating maximum robustness in the Urban Design Compendium, a 20% reduction in net figures will be included. This will take account of potential sub division within blocks and allow for intimate spaces and minor routes to be created.

In addition some concern was expressed by members of the steering group about the reaction of residents of Norfolk Crescent to the suggested height of plot A (6 storeys). Whilst this is within the BWR SPD guidance and suggested because of the particular locational characteristics, the sensitivity analysis provides capacity figures based on a 5 storey development.

Scenarios

Three different spatial and land use scenarios are presented below. Each scenario is based on the single robust urban design framework. Each accommodates the required baseline development quantum and mix. Each demonstrates potential additional capacity. Each scenario demonstrates a potential distinct placemaking option for Green Park and BWR East.

Scenario 1

In the brief, Scenario 1 is expressed as the following:

Retention of Sainsbury's at Green Park Station in situ or as part of a remodelled area and the retention of Homebase at BWR East.

The option presented (Figure 4 and 5) fulfils these requirements and, based on the framework, is sound in terms of its urban design structure within the wider city. Through the distribution of uses within the framework and their juxtaposition with site features, it develops a series of places with distinct characters and functions.

Green Park Station is re-focussed and rejuvenated as a point for retail activity. Sainsbury is retained on the same side of the river but remodelled into a mixed-use block bordering James Street West, allowing for a larger floorspace and parking on upper floors. The block is 'skinned' to the south with residential uses above ground level (taking advantage of afternoon and evening sun) to provide frontage onto a new active pedestrian only 'street' running along the line of the old railway. The site that Sainsbury's vacates becomes a new mixed-use block with specialist retail at ground level. It is envisaged that the existing retail functions of Green Park station would enjoy a boost from the renewed retail focus, laying the foundations for a vibrant retail gateway to a stronger east-west axis.

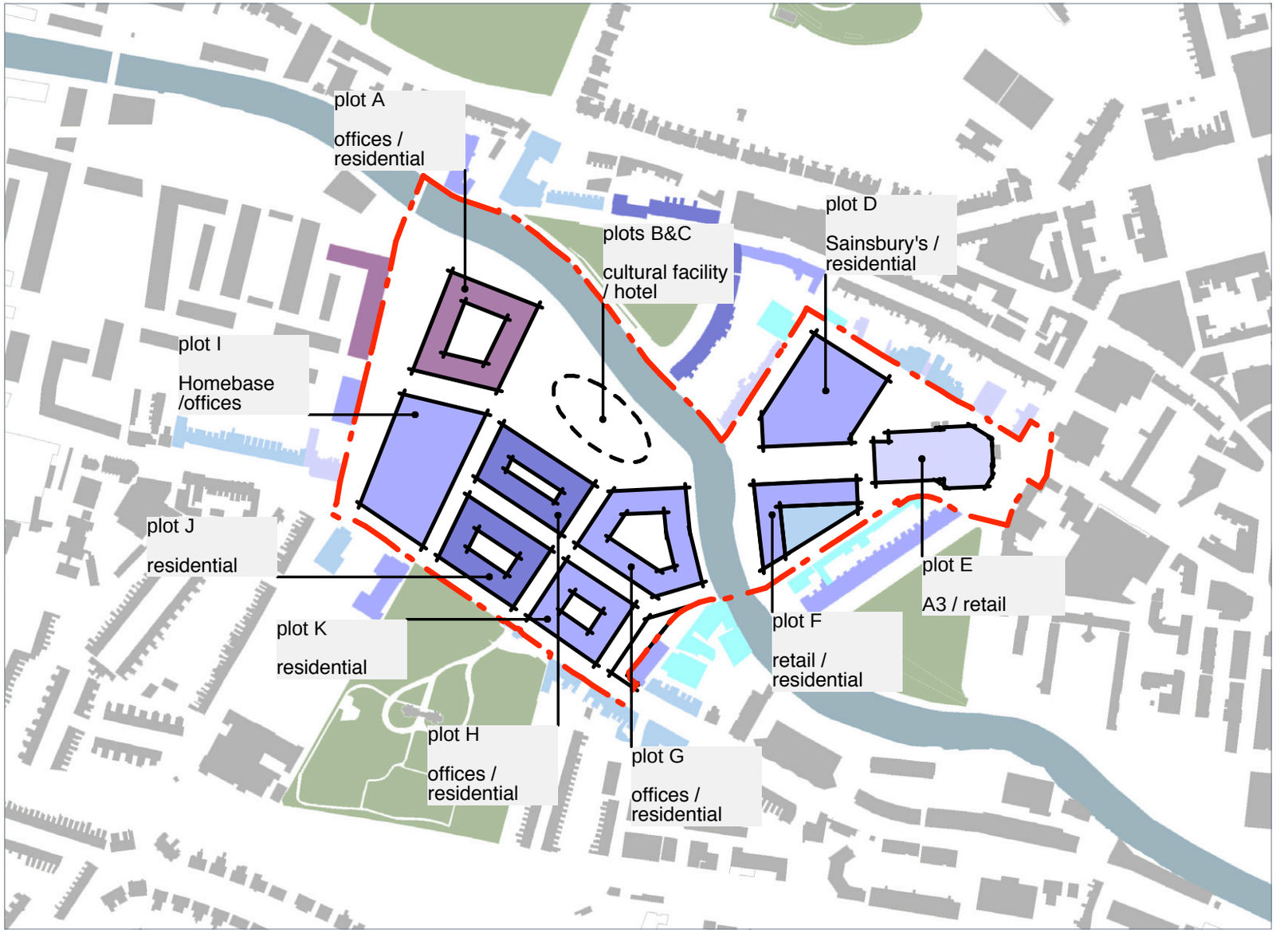
From the new 'street' behind Green Park Station, views would be channelled to a new landmark cultural facility and hotel across the river. This focal point will form the backdrop to a new Business District comprising a grid of mainly office uses with some mixed use blocks. As part of this remodelling, Homebase is retained but relocated slightly to the west with increased floorspace.

Under this scenario, it is necessary to retain Sainsbury's on the Green Park Station side of the river. However, this inevitably causes some weaknesses. Parking is assumed to be in floors above Sainsbury's but there are concerns about vehicular access from the relatively narrow streets to the north. Also, given the requirements for car parking it is not possible to wrap the stacked parking above Sainsbury's except on the Green Park Station side providing a sub-optimal design solution to other aspects.

Summary:

Green Park – Retail led regeneration
- Relocation of Sainsbury's within remodelled area around Green Park Station (parking located above Sainsbury's)
- A1 comparison retail
- A3/A1 specialist retail

BWR East - Business / cultural led quarter
- Office/commercial hub
- Combined Cultural facility and Hotel
- Homebase relocated westward but retained within BWR East



Key

- 6 storey
- 5 storey
- 4 storey
- 3 storey
- 2 storey
- 1 storey

Scenarios

5
4
3
2
1

Figure 4: Scenario 1 - Site layout and storey height plan

Table 1: Scenario 1 - Capacity

	Use	Gross area (sqm)	Net area* (sqm)	Units / spaces**
Plot A	Offices	14,517	12,339	
	Residential	14,517	11,614	145
	Parking	6,436	5,792	232
Plots B&C	Cultural		3,500	
	Hotel		4,500	
	Parking		3,500	140
Plot D	Sainsbury's	6,327	4,745	
	Residential	2,440	1,952	24
	Parking	10,298	9,268	371
Plot E	A3	1,000	750	
	Retail	2,457	1,843	
Plot F	Retail	4,210	3,158	
	Residential	5,438	4,350	54
	Parking	4,210	3,789	152
Plot G	Offices	9,772	8,306	
	Residential	9,772	7,818	98
	Parking	6,595	5,936	237
Plot H	Offices	10,035	8,530	
	Residential	10,035	8,028	100
	Parking	4,538	4,084	163
Plot I	Offices	11,680	9,928	
	Homebase	4,645		
	Gallery	929		
	Parking	9,290	8,361	334
Plot J	Residential	19,620	15,696	196
	Parking	4,636	4,172	167
Plot K	Residential	14,120	11,296	141
	Parking	4,087	3,678	147
Key totals	Office	46,004	39,103	
	Residential	75,942	60,754	759
	Office + residential	121,946	99,857	

* Net figures are based on the following percentages of gross floorspace figures: Offices (85%); Residential (80%); Retail (75%); Parking (90%).

** Unit numbers are based on an average residential unit size of 80 sqm; parking spaces are calculated based on 25 sqm per space.

Table 2: Scenario 1 - Sensitivity analysis

	Use	Gross area (sqm)	Net area* (sqm)	Units / spaces**
Plot A	Offices	9,678	8,227	
	Residential	9,678	7,743	97
	Parking	6,436	5,792	232
Plots B&C	Cultural		3,500	
	Hotel		4,500	
	Parking		3,500	140
Plot D	Sainsbury's	6,327	4,745	
	Residential	2,440	1,952	24
	Parking	10,298	9,268	371
Plot E	A3	1,000	750	
	Retail	2,457	1,843	
Plot F	Retail	4,210	3,158	
	Residential	5,438	4,350	54
	Parking	4,210	3,789	152
Plot G	Offices	7,818	6,645	
	Residential	7,818	6,254	78
	Parking	6,595	5,936	237
Plot H	Offices	8,028	6,824	
	Residential	8,028	6,422	80
	Parking	4,538	4,084	163
Plot I	Offices	11,680	9,928	
	Homebase	4,645		
	Gallery	929		
	Parking	9,290	8,361	334
Plot J	Residential	15,696	12,557	157
	Parking	4,636	4,172	167
Plot K	Residential	11,296	9,037	113
	Parking	4,087	3,678	147
Key totals	Office	37,204	31,623	
	Residential	60,394	48,315	604
	Office + residential	97,598	79,938	

Sensitivity analysis based on an 20% reduction of gross area to reflect potential impact of fracturing blocks (figures for plot A also reflect reduction in height by one storey).

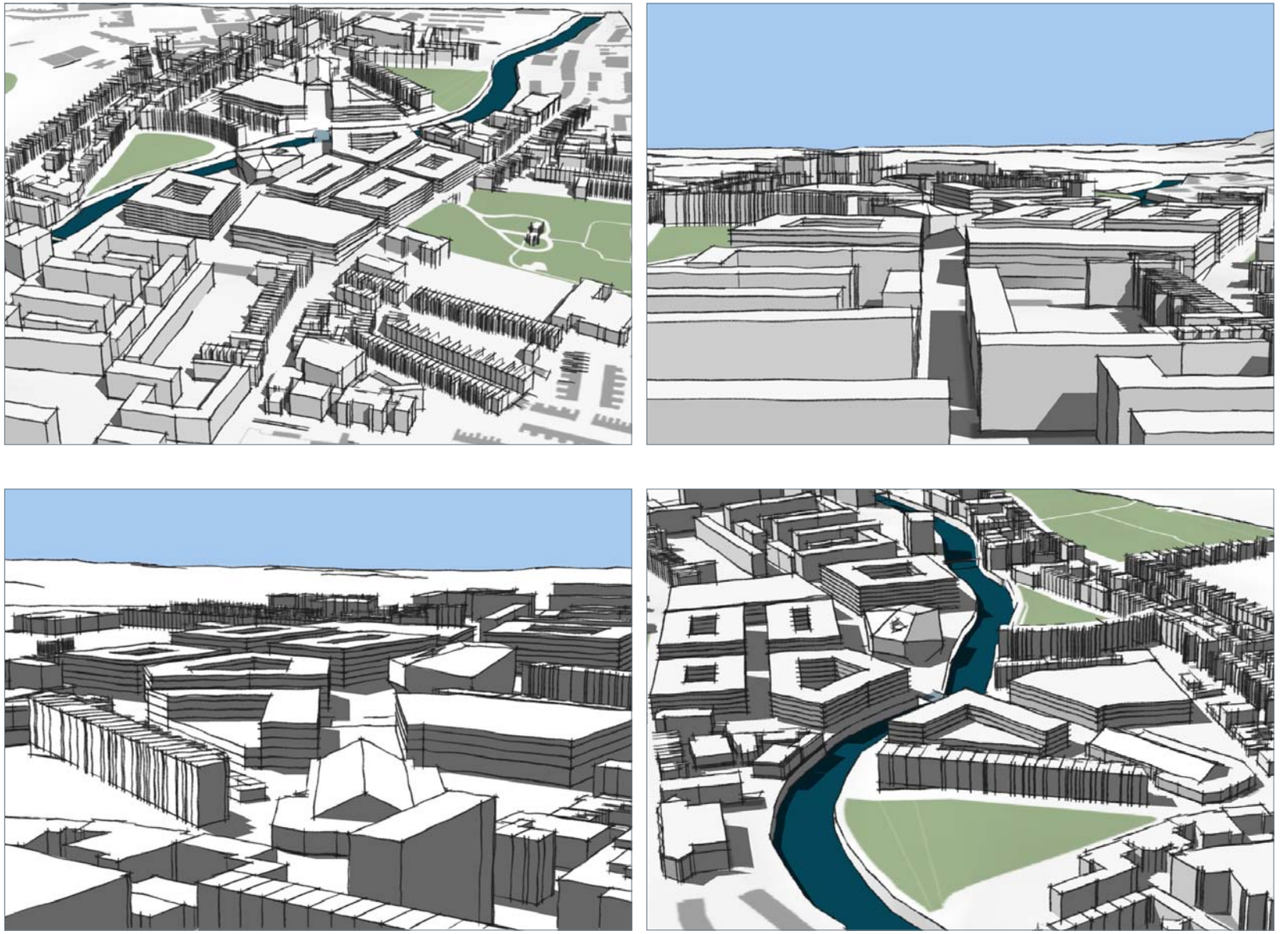


Figure 5: Scenario 1 - 3D visualisations

Scenario 2

In the brief, Scenario 2 is expressed as the following:

Retention of Sainsbury's at Green Park Station in situ or as part of a remodelled area and displacement of Homebase off-site.

The option presented (Figure 6 and 7) fulfils these requirements and is based on the framework. Within this it develops a series of places with distinct characters and functions.

In terms Green Park station this follows the approach taken in Scenario 1. Across the river, Homebase is relocated and the area becomes a live / work quarter. Within this quarter, the cultural facility is brought back from the waterfront to sit within a new recti-linear space. This space is envisaged to be formal with a strong commercial focus, addressed by offices on all sides (maximising values). This option also provides for a renewed focus on a linear riverside space and provides a commercially valuable and active frontage onto the river.

Summary

Green Park – Retail led regeneration

- Relocation of Sainsbury's within remodelled area around Green Park Station (parking located above Sainsbury's)
- A1 comparison retail
- A3/A1 specialist retail

BWR – Live / Work Quarter

- Office / employment hub
- Combined Cultural facility and Hotel

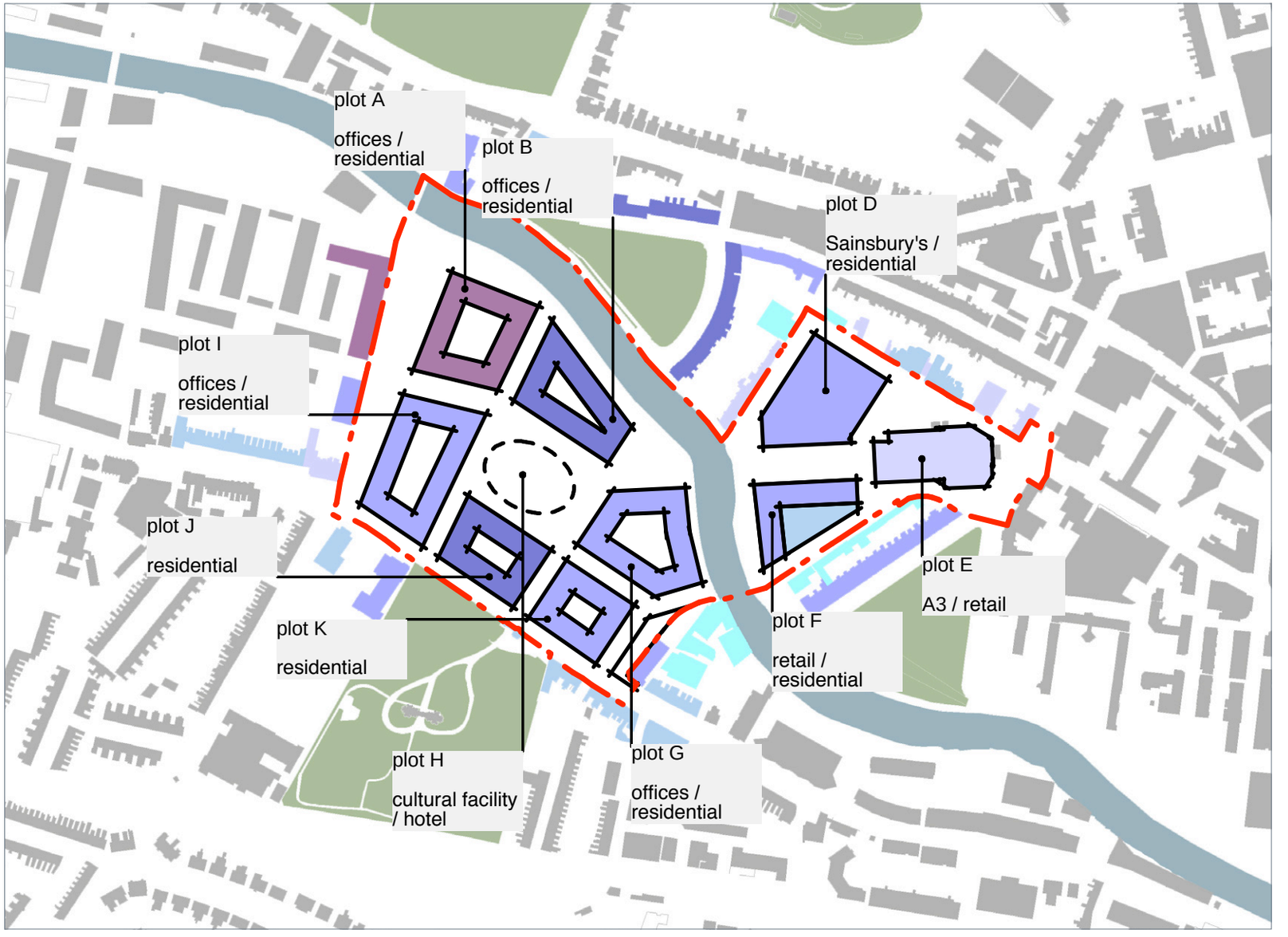


Figure 6: Scenario 2 - Site layout and storey height plan

Table 3: Scenario 2 - Capacity

	Use	Gross area (sqm)	Net area* (sqm)	Units / spaces**
Plot A	Offices	14,517	12,339	
	Residential	14,517	11,614	145
	Parking	6,436	5,792	232
Plot B	Offices	11,818	10,045	
	Residential	11,818	9,454	118
	Parking	5,528	4,975	199
Plot D	Sainsbury's	6,327	4,745	
	Residential	2,440	1,952	24
	Parking	10,298	9,268	371
Plot E	A3	1,000	750	
	Retail	2,457	1,843	
Plot F	Retail	4,210	3,158	
	Residential	5,438	4,350	54
	Parking	4,210	3,789	152
Plot G	Offices	9,772	8,306	
	Residential	9,772	7,818	98
	Parking	6,595	5,936	237
Plot H	Cultural		3,500	
	Hotel		4,500	
	Parking		3,500	140
Plot I	Offices	11,218	9,535	
	Residential	11,218	8,974	112
	Parking	7,565	6,809	272
Plot J	Residential	19,620	15,696	196
	Parking	4,636	4,172	167
Plot K	Residential	14,120	11,296	141
	Parking	4,087	3,678	147
Key totals	Office	47,325	40,226	
	Residential	88,943	71,154	889
	Office + residential	136,268	111,380	

* Net figures are based on the following percentages of gross floorspace figures: Offices (85%); Residential (80%); Retail (75%); Parking (90%).

** Unit numbers are based on an average residential unit size of 80 sqm; parking spaces are calculated based on 25 sqm per space.

Table 4: Scenario 2 - Sensitivity analysis

	Use	Gross area (sqm)	Net area* (sqm)	Units / spaces**
Plot A	Offices	9,678	8,227	
	Residential	9,678	7,743	97
	Parking	6,436	5,792	232
Plot B	Offices	9,454	8,036	
	Residential	9,454	7,564	95
	Parking	5,528	4,975	199
Plot D	Sainsbury's	6,327	4,745	
	Residential	2,440	1,952	24
	Parking	10,298	9,268	371
Plot E	A3	1,000	750	
	Retail	2,457	1,843	
Plot F	Retail	4,210	3,158	
	Residential	5,438	4,350	54
	Parking	4,210	3,789	152
Plot G	Offices	7,818	6,645	
	Residential	7,818	6,254	78
	Parking	6,595	5,936	237
Plot H	Cultural		3,500	
	Hotel		4,500	
	Parking		3,500	140
Plot I	Offices	8,974	7,628	
	Residential	8,974	7,180	90
	Parking	7,565	6,809	272
Plot J	Residential	15,696	12,557	157
	Parking	4,636	4,172	167
Plot K	Residential	11,296	9,037	113
	Parking	4,087	3,678	147
Key totals	Office	35,925	30,536	
	Residential	70,795	56,636	708
	Office + residential	106,720	87,172	

Sensitivity analysis based on an 20% reduction of gross area to reflect potential impact of fracturing blocks (figures for plot A also reflect reduction in height by one storey).

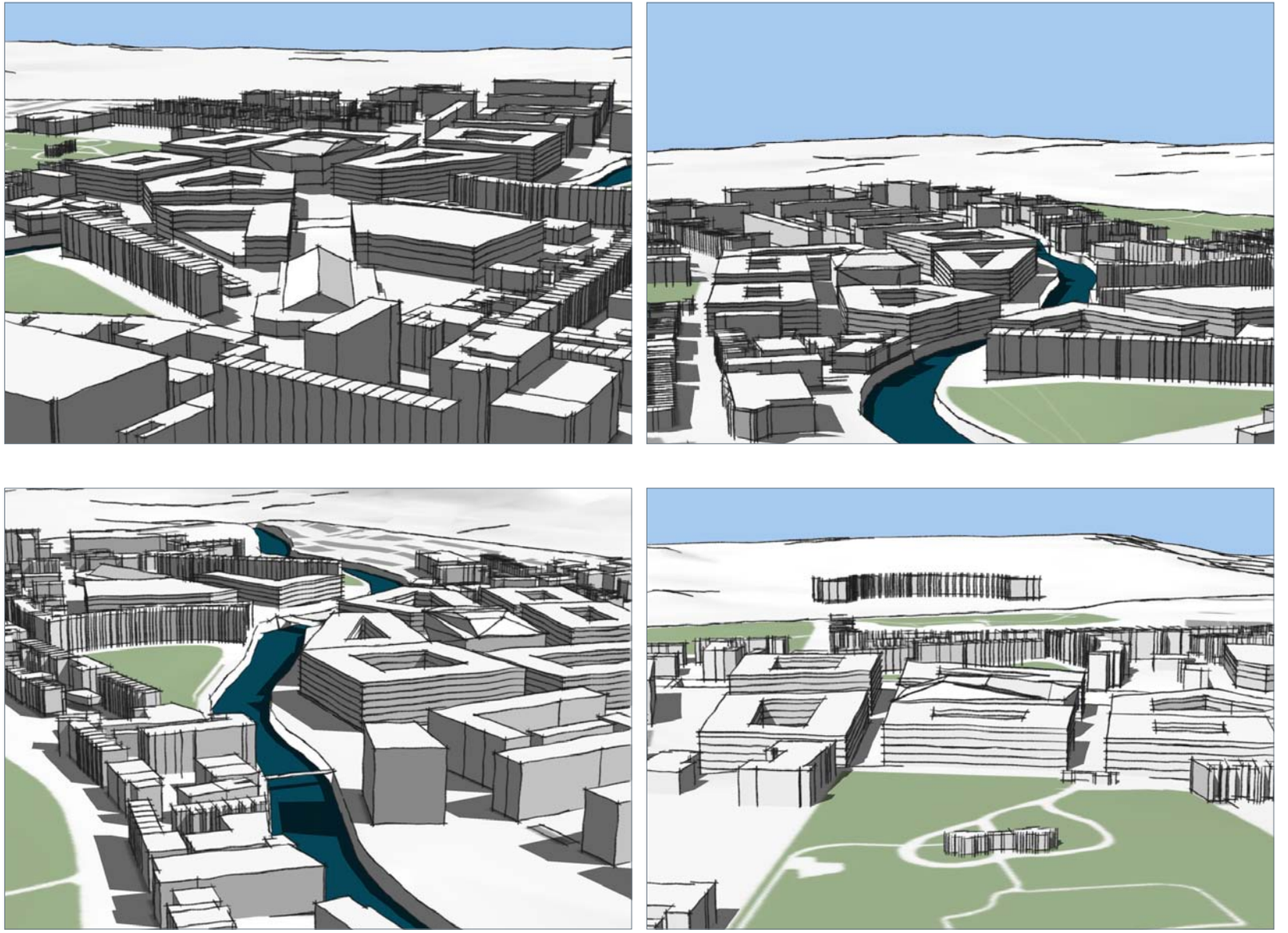


Figure 7: Scenario 2 - 3D visualisations

Scenario 3

In the brief, Scenario 3 is expressed as the following:

Relocation of Sainsbury's from Green Park Station to BWR East and displacement of Homebase off-site.

The proposal presented here (Figure 8 and 9) fulfils these requirements and is based on the framework. Within this it develops a series of places with distinct identities.

Under this scenario Green Park station becomes a cultural hub and retains and new landmark building containing the cultural facility. Its closeness and contrast to Green Park Station creates drama and provides the backdrop to a new active open space. A key advantage of this option is the realisation of Green park Station as the springboard into the proposed Spa Culture axis. The more northerly blocks becomes a mixed use block adding to the vitality of the area.

Across the river the urban form is shaped into a tight grid of urban streets within a new commercial quarter. An intimate and formal recti-linear space is crafted as the focus of this new place, the break out space for office workers. The character might be similar to that of Brindley Place in Birmingham.

Summary

Green Park – Cultural led regeneration

- Cultural Facility
- A3 and A1 comparison and specialist retail (Green Park Station)
- Hotel

BWR

- Commercial quarter
- Large footprint retail hub (Sainsbury's)
- Parking

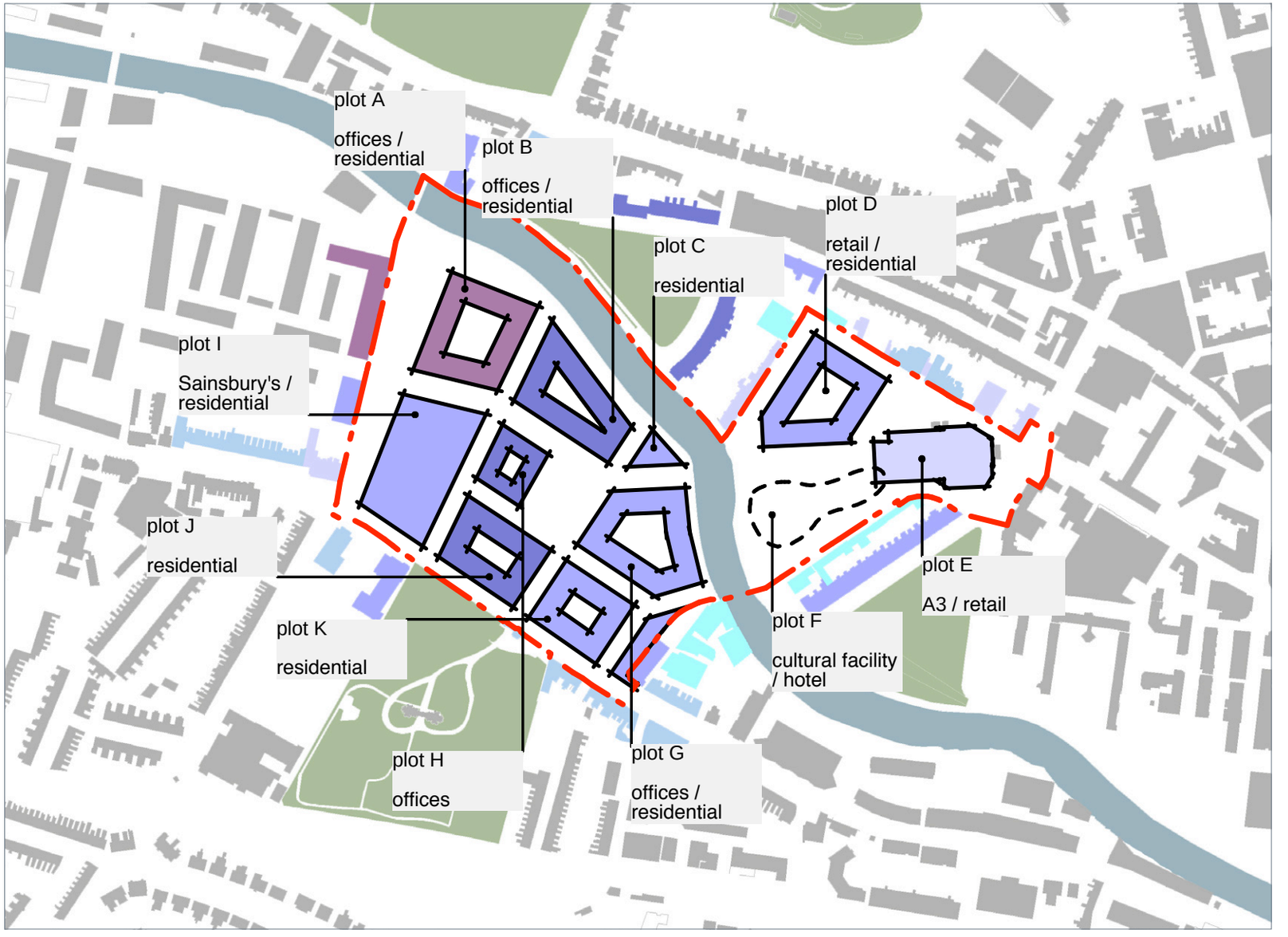


Figure 8: Scenario 3 - Site layout and storey height plan

Table 5: Scenario 3 - Capacity

	Use	Gross area (sqm)	Net area* (sqm)	Units / spaces**
Plot A	Offices	14,517	12,339	
	Residential	14,517	11,614	145
	Parking	6,436	5,792	232
Plots B	Offices	11,818	10,045	
	Residential	11,818	9,454	118
	Parking	5,528	4,975	199
Plot C	Residential	2,872	2,298	29
	Parking	718	646	26
Plot D	Retail	6,327	4,745	
	Residential	9,664	7,731	97
	Parking	6,327	5,694	228
Plot E	A3	3,160	2,370	
	Retail	340	255	
Plot F	Cultural		3,500	
	Hotel		4,500	
	Parking		3,500	140
Plot G	Offices	9,772	8,306	
	Residential	9,772	7,818	98
	Parking	6,595	5,936	237
Plot H	Offices	9,834	8,359	
	Parking	2,269	2,042	82
Plot I	Sainsbury's	6,255	4,691	
	Residential	8,822	7,058	88
	Parking	7,618	6,856	274
Plot J	Residential	19,620	15,696	196
	Parking	4,636	4,172	167
Plot K	Residential	14,120	11,296	141
	Parking	4,087	3,678	147
Key totals	Office	45,941	39,050	
	Residential	91,205	72,964	912
	Office + residential	137,146	112,014	

* Net figures are based on the following percentages of gross floorspace figures: Offices (85%); Residential (80%); Retail (75%); Parking (90%).

** Unit numbers are based on an average residential unit size of 80 sqm; parking spaces are calculated based on 25 sqm per space.

Table 6: Scenario 3 - Sensitivity analysis

	Use	Gross area (sqm)	Net area* (sqm)	Units / spaces**
Plot A	Offices	9,678	8,227	
	Residential	9,678	7,743	97
	Parking	6,436	5,792	232
Plots B	Offices	9,454	8,036	
	Residential	9,454	7,564	95
	Parking	5,528	4,975	199
Plot C	Residential	2,298	1,838	23
	Parking	718	646	26
Plot D	Retail	6,327	4,745	
	Residential	9,664	7,731	97
	Parking	6,327	5,694	228
Plot E	A3	3,160	2,370	
	Retail	340	255	
Plot F	Cultural		3,500	
	Hotel		4,500	
	Parking		3,500	140
Plot G	Offices	7,818	6,645	
	Residential	7,818	6,254	78
	Parking	6,595	5,936	237
Plot H	Offices	7,867	6,687	
	Parking	2,269	2,042	82
Plot I	Sainsbury's	6,255	4,691	
	Residential	8,822	7,058	88
	Parking	7,618	6,856	274
Plot J	Residential	15,696	12,557	157
	Parking	4,636	4,172	167
Plot K	Residential	11,296	9,037	113
	Parking	4,087	3,678	147
Key totals	Office	34,818	29,595	
	Residential	74,726	59,781	747
	Office + residential	109,544	89,376	

Sensitivity analysis based on an 20% reduction of gross area to reflect potential impact of fracturing blocks (figures for plot A also reflect reduction in height by one storey).

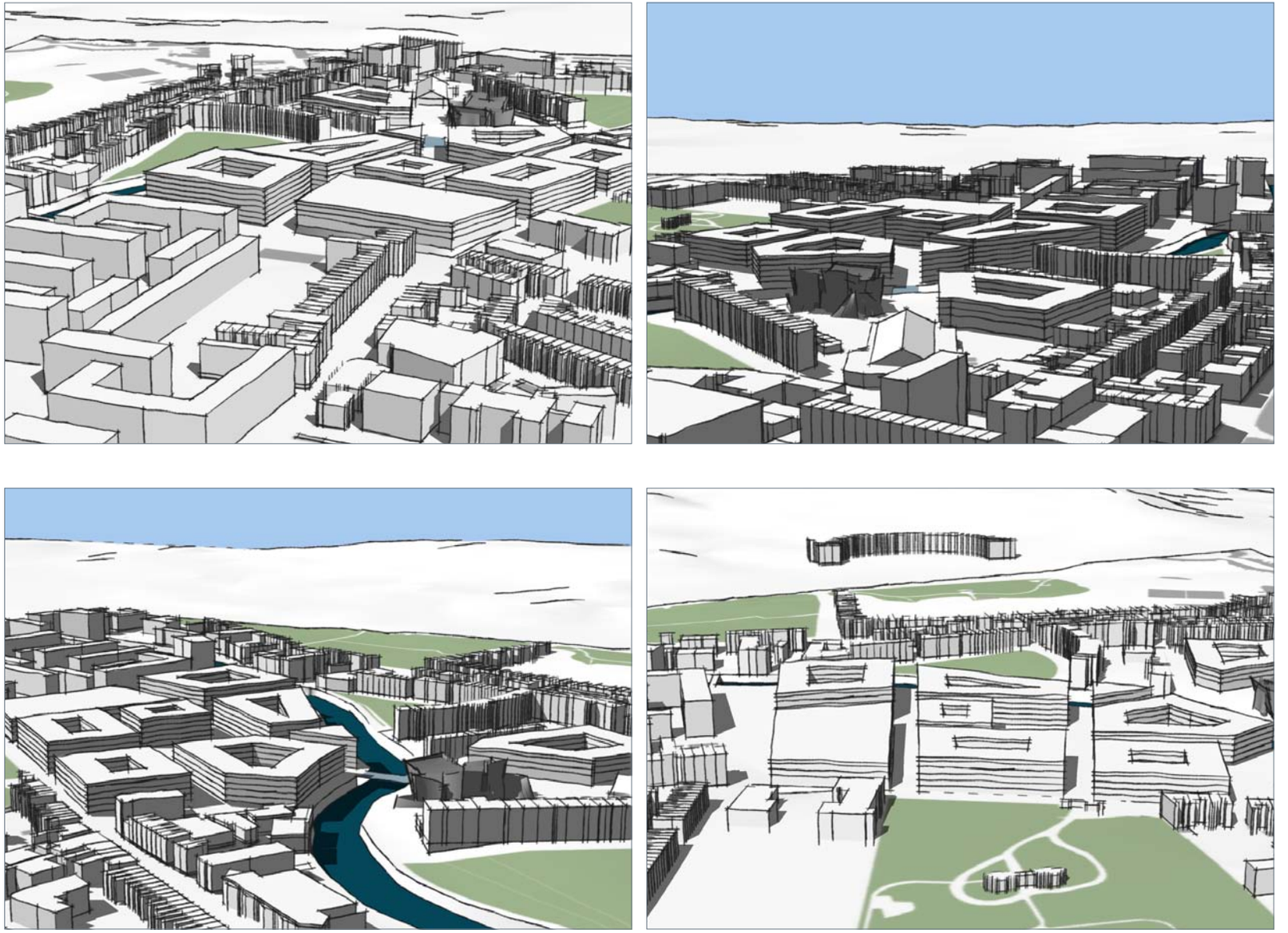


Figure 9: Scenario 3 - 3D visualisations

Conclusion

The Brief

This study has been commission by Bath and North East Somerset Council to help inform the issues and options stage of the Bath Chapter of its Core Strategy.

The boundary of the study area has been defined in the brief, covering BWR East from Victoria Bridge Road and Green Park Station.

The priority of the study is to identify the potential capacity of the defined study area to accommodate development and to demonstrate three distinct place-making scenario options through interpretation of the land uses defined in the brief. However, it should be noted that consideration of other land uses should be enabled through this study including new homes should additional capacity be identified.

A key feature of the options is the location of Homebase within or outside of the study area and the location of an enlarged Sainsbury's at Green Park or BWR east.
The brief also requires a new cultural facility to be considered.

The study provides an urban design led development structure based on respected principles within which capacity options are tested. Regard has been given to constraints, context and connections. The study is in conformity with adopted policy and guidance and seeks to integrate with council vision and strategy for Bath.

Methodology

The design led approach has referenced By Design and The Urban Design Compendium and has prioritised three key design aspects in developing a framework:

1. Quality of Place
2. Linkage and Accessibility
3. Deliverability, Adaptability and Marketability

Constraints and Context

The study has been informed by constraints analysis previously undertaken and validated by the council connected to flood risk assessment, the Bath Western Riverside SPD and the proposals by Crest. The council has drawn attention to the constraint potentially imposed by the existing petrol filling station and the existing Pines Way units. In preparing the framework the study has accounted for potential incremental development of these uses.

Options for addressing flood management may impact on the potential capacity of BWR east. However, the study has assumed river banks / walls remain unchanged for this exercise.

Framework

Constraints analysis has concluded the study area falls into two distinct character areas, BWR East and Green Park Station. It is one element of the suggested River Corridor strategic site, a gateway at the transition point between established and new communities and the city centre, at the western end of the 'spa culture axis' influenced by the 'Smart City' and at the confluence of strategic transport links to the west. It offers the opportunity to test a significant range of options for its future development building upon its context and location.

A single high level urban structure framework has been produced that is capable of flexibly supporting the land use mix specified in the brief and future potential option development.

The framework provides:

- A lattice of connecting routes and streets, accommodating proposed the BRT and framing key views.
- A network of spaces extending from the city centre and in conformity with adopted BWR guidance.
- Development blocks sized to support a range of development options.

Scenarios

All scenario options illustrate building heights in conformity with adopted guidance and are subject to sensitivity analysis to ensure capacity figures take account of floorspace lost through a detailed design process. Pines Way has been included and its development capacity is calculated as windfall residential floorspace.

All three scenarios produced are capable of meeting the specific land use mix and quantity requirements of the brief. However scenarios demonstrate a balance between office and residential content in the interests of creating vibrant living new city quarters.

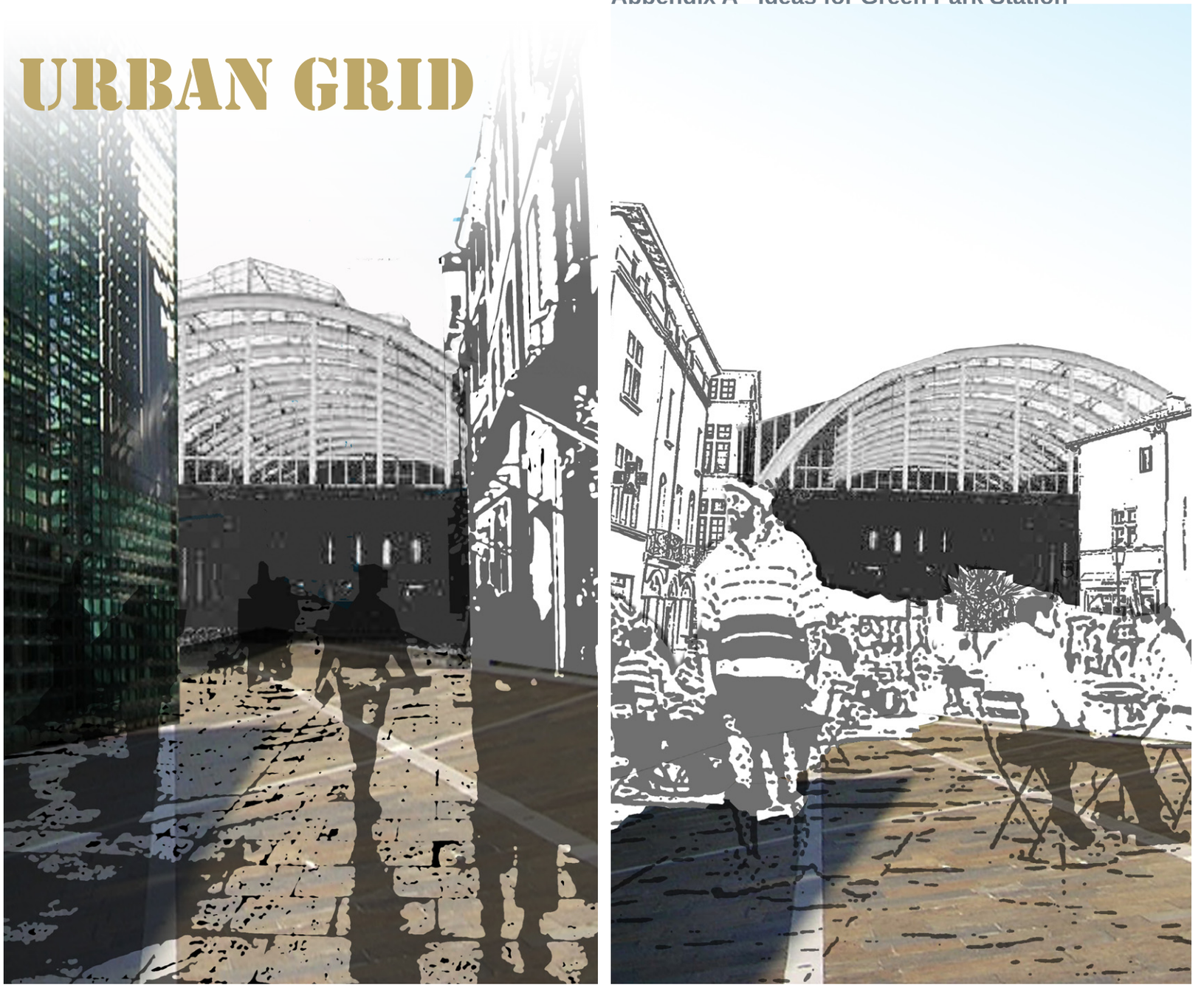
Scenario options 2 and 3 delivered the greatest potential capacity benefiting from the relocation of Homebase. Both illustrating the potential to create in the region of 30,000sqm net of office / employment space and between 700 and 900 additional residential units after sensitivity allowances were made (including c270 units in Pines Way).

Scenario 3 produced the most distinct places, with a clear cultural focus at Green Park and a living working community at BWR East. In Scenario 2, the accommodation of an enlarged Sainsbury's on Green Park created a strong retail character, but less satisfactory development form. However, the cultural facility at the heart of BWR East created the opportunity for a new destination south of the river. Accommodation of Homebase at BWR East in Scenario 1 eroded distinction and grain of the quarter.

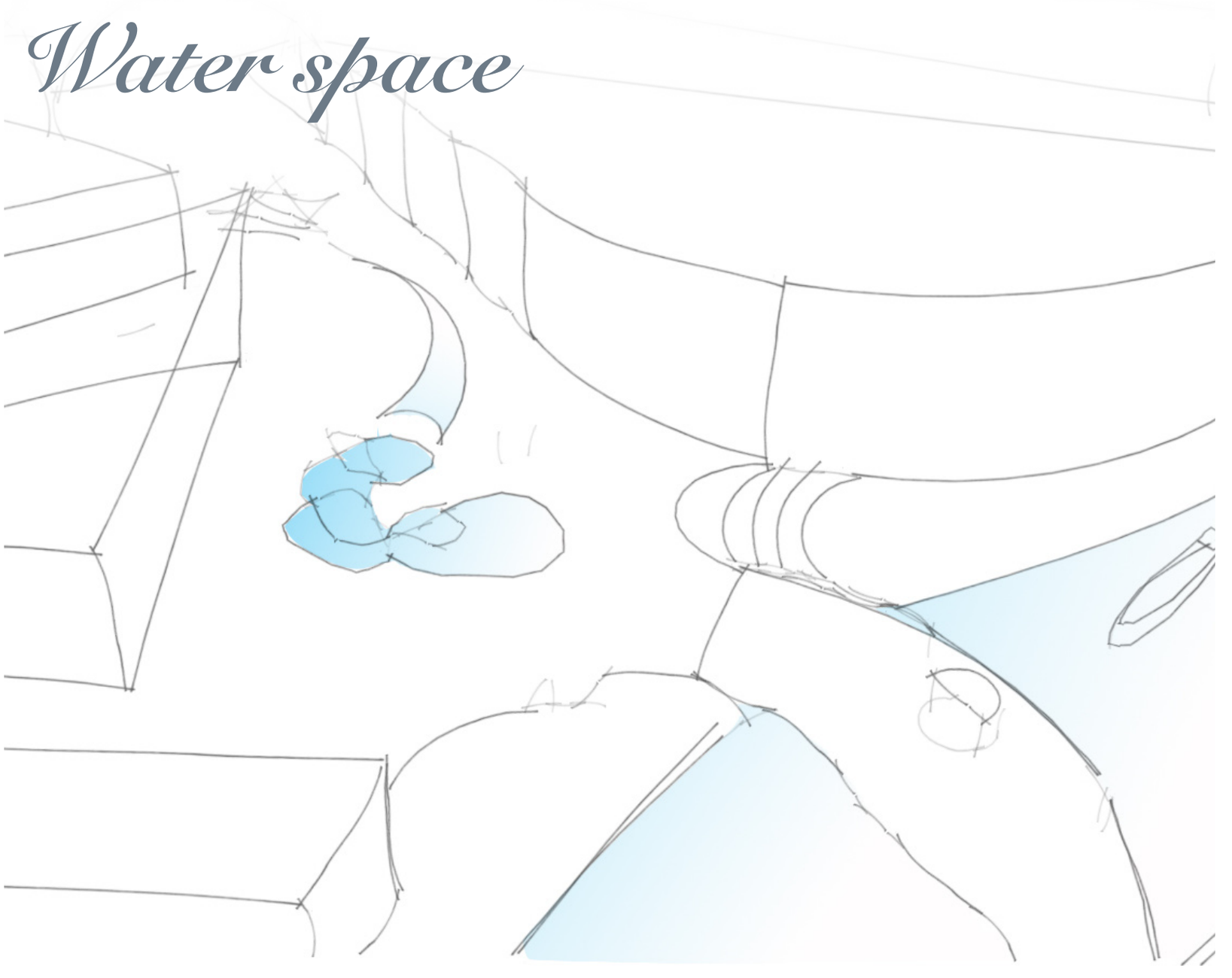
The creation of a cultural destination at Green Park, combining the listed station with a cultural facility and hotel accommodation is considered a tremendous opportunity to design and develop a new iconic waterside environment; a worthy subject of an international design competition (some initial ideas for this area are presented within the appendix of this report).

Scenario options have been produced to illustrate alternative approaches at a high level. It is considered that the framework is capable of refinement and development and could be the basis of a preferred proposal at a later stage in the process.

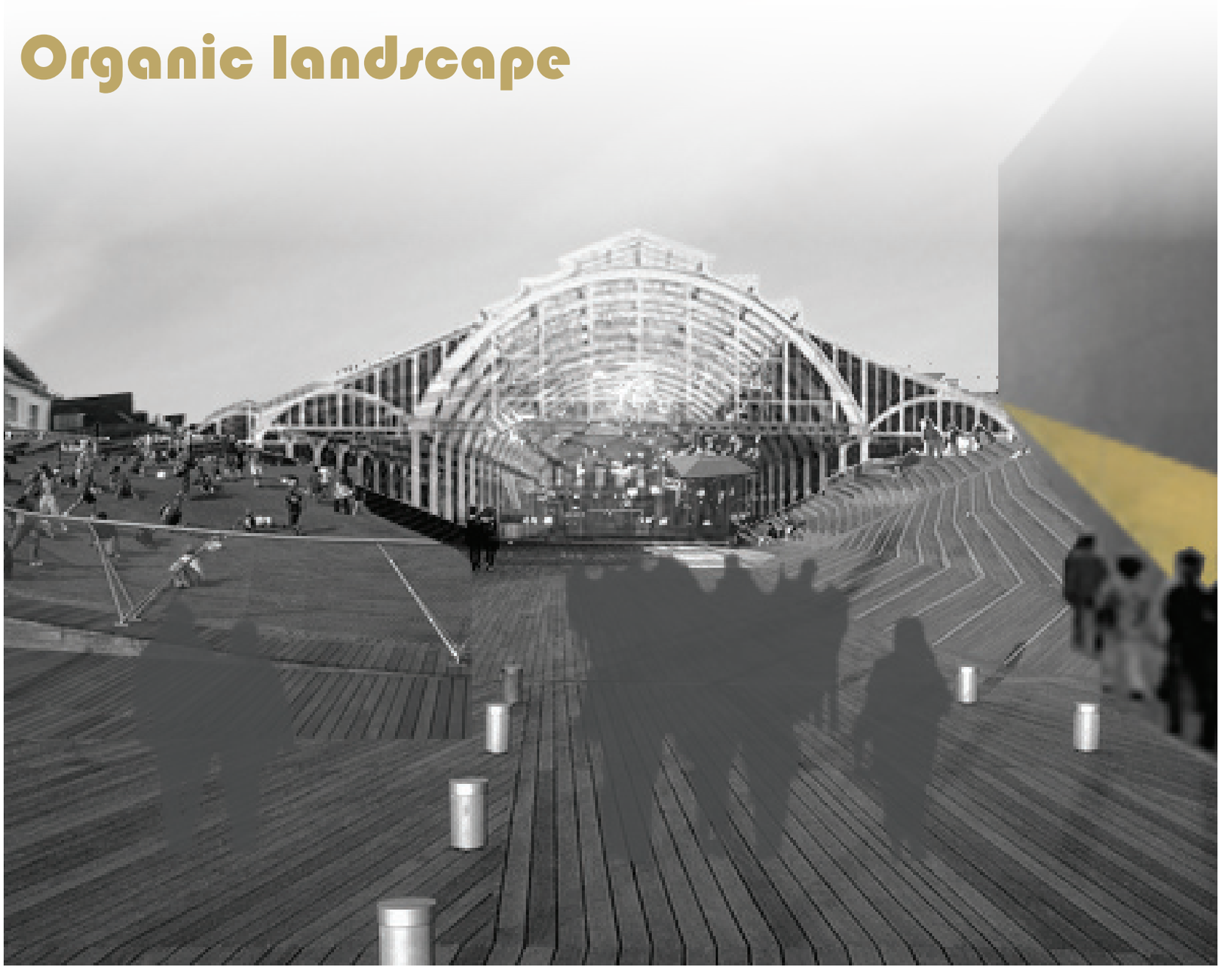
Appendix A - Ideas for Green Park Station



Water space



Organic landscape



Appendix B - Further Capacity and Phasing Analysis

A requirement of the brief was to achieve at least 40,000 sqm of net office floorspace. In the body of report the capacity figures demonstrate how this figure can be achieved for the three scenarios. However, once sensitivity analysis has been applied, (taking account of the potential for a finer grain of development) the scenarios provide about 30,000 sqm of net office floorspace. In the interests of thoroughness a different solution is presented here which meets the 40,000 sqm of net office floorspace after sensitivity analysis. This change has the effect of reducing the residential element. The findings are presented in the table below.

The brief does not include a requirement to show the possible phased delivery of sites, which would give an indication of the delivery of floorspace over time. In order to provide a picture of this, albeit not a definitive one, the table below groups the development parcels into different geographic areas which are thought likely to come forward at different times.

Appendix B Table 7
Alternative Scenario 1 Capacity

	Use	Gross area (sqm)	Net area* (sqm)	Units / spaces**
Green Park Station				
Plot D	Sainsbury's	6,327	4,745	
	Residential	2,440	1,952	24
	Parking	10,298	9,268	371
Plot E	A3	1,000	750	
	Retail	2,457	1,843	
Plot F	Retail	4,210	3,158	
	Residential	5,438	4,350	54
	Parking	4,210	3,789	152
Western Riverside (earlier phase)				
Plot A	Offices	18,517	15,739	
	Residential	14,517	8,414	105
	Parking	6,436	5,792	232
Plots B&C	Cultural	3,500		
	Hotel	4,500		
	Parking	3,500	140	
Plot G	Offices	15,772	13,406	
	Residential	9,772	7,818	98
	Parking	6,595	5,936	237
Plot H	Offices	13,035	11,080	
	Residential	7,035	5,628	70
	Parking	4,538	4,084	163
Plot I	Offices	11,680	9,928	
	Homebase	4,645		
	Gallery	929		
	Parking	9,290	8,361	334
Western Riverside (later phase)				
Plot J	Residential	19,620	15,696	196
	Parking	4,636	4,172	167
Plot K	Residential	14,120	11,296	141
	Parking	4,087	3,678	147
Key totals	Office	59,004	50,153	

Appendix B Table 8
Alternative Scenario 1 Sensitivity Analysis

	Use	Gross area (sqm)	Net area* (sqm)	Units / spaces**
Plot A	Office	12,344	10,492	
	Residential	7,011	5,609	70
Plot B&C	Offices	7,818	6,645	
	Residential	7,818	6,254	78
Plot G	Offices	12,618	10,725	
	Residential	3,018	2,414	30
	Parking			
Plot H	Offices	10,428	8,864	
	Residential	5,628	4,502	56
Plot J	Residential	15,696	12,557	157
Plot K	Residential	11,296	9,037	113
Key totals	Office	47,070	40,009	
	Residential	50,527	40,421	505

* Net figures are based on the following percentages of gross floorspace figures: Offices (85%); Residential (80%); Retail (75%); Parking (90%).

** Unit numbers are based on an average residential unit size of 80 sqm; parking spaces are calculated based on 25 sqm per space.

Sensitivity analysis based on an 20% reduction of gross area to reflect potential impact of fracturing blocks (figures for plot A also reflect reduction in height by one storey).

* Net figures are based on the following percentages of gross floorspace figures: Offices (85%); Residential (80%); Retail (75%); Parking (90%).

** Unit numbers are based on an average residential unit size of 80 sqm; parking spaces are calculated based on 25 sqm per space.

Sensitivity analysis based on an 20% reduction of gross area to reflect potential impact of fracturing blocks (figures for plot A also reflect reduction in height by one storey).

Appendix B Table 9
Alternative Scenario 2 Capacity

	Use	Gross area (sqm)	Net area* (sqm)	Units / spaces**
Green Park Station				
Plot D	Sainsbury's	6,327	4,745	
	Residential	2,440	1,952	24
	Parking	10,298	9,268	371
Plot E	A3	1,000	750	
	Retail	2,457	1,843	
Plot F	Retail	4,210	3,158	
	Residential	5,438	4,350	54
	Parking	4,210	3,789	152
Western Riverside (early phase)				
Plot A	Offices	18,517	15,739	
	Residential	10,517	8,414	105
	Parking	6,436	5,792	232
Plots B	Offices	17,818	15,145	
	Residential	4,818	3,854	48
	Parking	5,528	4,975	199
Plot G	Offices	15,772	13,406	
	Residential	3,772	3,018	38
	Parking	6,595	5,936	237
Plot H	Cultural	3,500		
	Hotel	4,500		
	Parking	3,500	140	
Plot I	Offices	11,218	9,535	
	Residential	11,218	8,974	112
	Parking	7,565	6,809	272
Western Riverside (later phase)				
Plot J	Residential	12,120	9,969	196
	Offices	7,500	6.375	
	Parking	4,636	4,172	167
Plot K	Residential	14,120	11,296	141
	Parking	4,087	3,678	147
Key totals	Office	70,825	60,201	
	Residential	64,443	51,554	644

Appendix B Table 10
Alternative Scenario 2 - Sensitivity Analysis

	Use	Gross area (sqm)	Net area* (sqm)	Units / spaces**
Plot A	Offices	12,344	10,492	
	Residential	7,011	5,609	70
Plot B	Offices	14,254	12,116	
	Residential	3,854	3,084	39
Plot G	Offices	12,618	10,725	
	Residential	3,018	2,414	30
Plot I	Offices	8,974	7,628	
	Residential	8,974	7,180	90
Plot J	Residential	9,696	7.757	97
	Offiices	6,000	5,100	
Plot K	Residential	11,296	9,037	113
Key totals	Offiice	54,109	46,062	
	Residential	51,728	41,382	517

Appendix B Table 11
Alternative Scenario 3 Capacity

	Use	Gross area (sqm)	Net area* (sqm)	Units / spaces**
Green Park Station				
Plot D	Retail	6,327	4,745	
	Residential	9,664	7,731	97
	Parking	6,327	5,694	228
Plot E	A3	3,160	2,370	
	Retail	340	255	
Plot F	Cultural	3,500		
	Hotel	4,500		
	Parking	3,500	140	
Western Riverside (earlier phase)				
Plot A	Offices	18,517	15,739	
	Residential	10,517	8,414	105
	Parking	6,436	5,792	232
Plots B	Offices	17,818	15,145	
	Residential	4,818	3,854	48
	Parking	5,528	4,975	199
Plot C	Residential	2,872	2,298	29
	Parking	718	646	26
Plot G	Offices	15,772	13,406	
	Residential	3,772	3,018	38
	Parking	6,595	5,936	237
Plot H	Offices	9,834	8,359	
	Parking	2,269	2,042	82
Plot I	Sainsbury's	6,255	4,691	
	Residential	8,822	7,058	88
	Parking	7,618	6,856	274
Western Riverside (later phase)				
Plot J	Residential	12,120	9,696	121
	Offices	7,500	6,375	
	Parking	4,636	4,172	167
Plot K	Residential	14,120	11,296	141
	Parking	4,087	3,678	147
Key totals	Office	69,441	59,025	
	Residential	66,705	53,364	667

Appendix B Table 12
Alternative Scenario 3 - Sensitivity Analysis

	Use	Gross area (sqm)	Net area* (sqm)	Units / spaces**
Plot A	Offices	12,344	10,492	
	Residential	7,011	5,609	70
Plot B	Offices	14,254	12,116	
	Residential	3,854	3,084	39
Plot C	Resiential	2,298	1,838	23
Plot G	Offices	12,618	10,725	
	Residenital	3,018	2,414	30
Plot H	Offices	7,867	6,687	
Plot J	Residential	9,696	7,757	97
	Offices	6,000	5,100	
Plot K	Residential	11,296	9,037	113
Key totals	Office	53,083	45,121	
	Residential	55,659	44,527	557

* Net figures are based on the following percentages of gross floorspace figures: Offices (85%); Residential (80%); Retail (75%); Parking (90%).

** Unit numbers are based on an average residential unit size of 80 sqm; parking spaces are calculated based on 25 sqm per space.

Sensitivity analysis based on an 20% reduction of gross area to reflect potential impact of fracturing blocks (figures for plot A also reflect reduction in height by one storey).

5
4
3
2
1

Produced for and on behalf
of Bath and North East
Somerset Council by
independent consultants:

Vaughan Thompson
Finlay McNab
Joseph Edgard

Spike Design
Spike Island
Cumberland Road
Bristol BS1 6UX

T. 0117 954 4028