



Shrewsbury Town Centre Regeneration: Smithfield Riverside Phase One

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Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):	Cllr Ian Nellins	Climate Change, Environment and Transport	
	Cllr Mark Jones	Economic Growth and Regeneration	
	Cllr Dean Carroll	Housing and Assets	

1. Synopsis

The Smithfield Riverside project seeks approval to consult on the emerging masterplan and submit an initial planning application to demolish the former Riverside shopping centre and construct parkland and meanwhile greenspace, amended to align to the LUF2 Grant award.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The Shrewsbury Town Centre Redevelopment (STCR) Programme is an ambitious regeneration initiative, supporting many of the strategic objectives of the Shropshire Plan. Notably, it supports a Healthy Economy, promoting the County town ‘as a safe, strong and vibrant destination to visit and invest’; Healthy Environment and Organisation through the potential for low carbon development, mitigating climate change, increasing flood resilience, whilst reducing the Council’s operational carbon footprint and providing greenspace in our public realm. These objectives are reinforced by the Economic Growth Strategy, Shrewsbury Place Plan and Big Town Plan Vision and informed by the emerging Movement and Public Realm Strategy.
- 2.2. The Council report titled ‘Levelling Up Fund Award for Shrewsbury’ (6 July 2023) approved the inclusion of enabling and infrastructure works associated to the ‘Levelling Up Round 2 Fund Award’, within the planning application(s) for the demolition of the Riverside Shopping Centre and the former Riverside medical practice, as also recommendation 3.2 approved in the Council report titled ‘Shrewsbury Town Centre Redevelopment Phase One’ (16 February 2022).

- 2.3. Further to the above approvals, a specialist consultancy team has been appointed to support the delivery of the wider Phase One redevelopment of Smithfield Riverside. Led by experienced development managers Rivington Hark, the team has initially undertaken a review of the project's outline business case (OBC), as set out in the Council report February 2022.
- 2.4. Referred to as Key Stage 1 and adopting the RIBA workstages 0/1¹ (Strategic Definition/Preparation and Briefing respectively), this review also includes an appraisal of the masterplan for the immediate locality, again to ensure that initial developments proposed by the Council report (February 2022) are complementary to, and act as a catalyst for future phases of the Smithfield Riverside. In summary, this review concludes that the overall approach, development assumptions and mix and quantum of proposed development remains relevant and appropriate to the development site, as well as the wider Shrewsbury context.
- 2.5. Following this review, and to meet LUF 2 grant funding spend deadlines (March 2025), the next stage of design has commenced (RIBA 2 Concept Design) for the Phase One developments, for the scope approved by Council in February 2022. To meet this requirement, it is proposed to submit an initial planning application by December 2023, for the demolition of the former Riverside shopping centre and medical practice, subsequent ground preparation, remediation and enabling works, and for the construction of a linear park and public realm (streets, squares and other open spaces), including associated meanwhile-use greenspace, pending future development.
- 2.6. This initial planning application is an integral component of the draft planning strategy for the wider Phase One development area (as section 8.12 below), comprising four applications between December 2023 to August 2024.
- 2.7. It is proposed to commence stakeholder engagement and public consultation on the emerging masterplan, including the quantum, mix, and location of future development sites. It will also consider the sequence and phasing of activities, and implications for the planning strategy, with reference to the scope of works to be delivered by the LUF2 grant award and the associated, initial planning application referred to above. The engagement and consultation process will be delivered over a 4-week period, concluding late November 2023, from which the outcomes will inform the final masterplan, for consideration at future Cabinet and Council meetings. The stakeholder engagement and public consultation strategy is summarised in section 8.12 below.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That Cabinet:
 - 3.1.1. Approve the submission of a planning application for the demolition of the Riverside shopping centre and the former Riverside medical practice, and enabling work, construction of the proposed park and temporary greenspace (as set out in the Council report 6 July 2023), all aligned to the Levelling Up Fund bid award for the *Smithfield Riverside Redevelopment Programme (Project 1)* of £14.85m.
 - 3.1.2. agree to commencement of the stakeholder engagement and public consultation programme on the emerging masterplan for Smithfield Riverside.
- 3.2. Delegates responsibility to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Portfolio Holders for Climate Change, Environment and

¹ Royal Institute of British Architects Plan of Work

Transport, Economic Growth and Regeneration and Housing and Assets, to progress the capital project (item 3.2.1 above), to include, but not limited to, the following:

- 3.2.1. finalise the masterplan for the wider Smithfield Riverside redevelopment area following the outcomes of the stakeholder engagement and public consultation programme, as provided for in Recommendation 3.1.2 above, and for inclusion in a further report for final approval by Council.
 - 3.2.2. finalise planning strategy for future phases of development for the Shrewsbury Town Centre Redevelopment Programme: Smithfield Riverside Phase One, following the outcomes of the stakeholder engagement and public consultation programme, as provided for in Recommendation 3.1.2 above, and for inclusion in a further report for final approval by Council
 - 3.2.3. undertake an options and feasibility study for the retention, reconstruction and/or replacement of Ravens Meadow multi-storey car park, necessary to inform future phases of the Smithfield Riverside masterplan, and for inclusion in a further report for final approval by Cabinet and Council.
- 3.3. That Cabinet agree to recommend to Council to:
- 3.3.1. progress the above works as a capital project to completion of contract documentation and receipt of tenders, for demolition, enabling works and construction of the park and associated temporary greenspace within the Levelling Up Fund bid award for the *Smithfield Riverside Redevelopment Programme (Project 1)* of £14.85m.

Report

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. The Opportunity Risk Management Strategy sets out the methodology for identifying opportunities/benefits and assessing these against the associated risks. As part of the risk assessment and opportunities appraisal, a further detailed review has been undertaken with key officers to identify the key opportunities/benefits, the associated risks and possible mitigation, each appraised against all potential options.
- 4.2. Strategic opportunities and benefits have been identified for the initial Phase 1 of the Redevelopment Programme. A key opportunity is to produce an exemplar regeneration scheme, which is both sympathetic, and of appropriate mix and density of uses to drive transformation in the town centre. As part of the opportunity/risk analysis key Council/stakeholder representatives have been identified to enable the opportunities to be realised, together with the management of associated risks.
- 4.3. A detailed risk register is in place (aligned to RIBA workstages) which has identified key risks to delivering the associated strategic benefits/opportunities. The risks recognise the impacts, and each risk has identified ownership and has appropriate mitigation identified. The key risks with mitigations associated with activities relating to this report are as follows:

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
Fluctuations in demolition/ construction costs	Cost and programme management consultancy appointed to monitor delivery of proposed developments against industry benchmarking and to procurement

Construction tender and programme delays	options appraisal, including consideration of framework contractors. Detailed value engineering will be undertaken to ensure of works remain w
Flood adaptation and resilience	Appointed delivery team have demonstrable experience of delivering comparable developments to Smithfield Riverside.
Statutory consultee objections	Dedicated planning and legal advice commissioned (client-side and consultancy) to liaise with statutory consultees including Environment Agency (under a paid service agreement) and Historic England (relating to demolition within a conservation area). Planning Performance Agreement in place with the Local Planning Authority. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been commissioned to support planning applications.
Failure to secure planning consent(s)	
Public opposition to the scheme	Dedicated communications and engagement agency appointed to ensure the proposed development programme is clearly presented to all stakeholders and the public, and available via media channels, as well as in person displays/meetings. The associated activities will take place prior to planning applications being determined.

- 4.4. The risk register will remain under constant review with risks being closed when mitigated and emerging risks added and managed throughout the programme cycle.
- 4.5. The development process is defined by risk. The earlier in the development process the higher the risk that expenditure could prove abortive. Currently all development expenditure is being funded by secured grant monies and allocated match funding. The project is working within existing financial approvals and will be able to until after the December full Council meeting.

5. Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)

- 5.1. An initial screening Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) was undertaken to inform the respective business cases referenced in the Council report titled 'Shrewsbury Town Centre Redevelopment Programme Phase One' (24 February 2022). The impact of the proposals regarding equality, diversity, social inclusion, and health considerations is principally in economic terms, and remain likely to be positive across groupings in the community regarding economic growth opportunities, particularly the intersecting Protected Characteristic groupings of Age, Disability and Sex. Positive impacts are anticipated regarding Social Inclusion for low-income households and people living in this part of what is a very large and sparsely populated rural county, with explicit recognition of the social mobility opportunities likely to arise.
- 5.2. There remains potential for further positive impacts through the stimulation of economic development and investment, which will provide jobs and improved workspace. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty on the Council, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, the Council will need to ensure that contractors engaged in commercial development are likewise able to demonstrate compliance with PSED duties. In so doing, they will

also be expected to adhere to guidance regarding equity of access to economic opportunities.

- 5.3. The intention is to also reference other policy strands within the Council and for partners, regarding pedestrianisation, transport, healthy lifestyles, use of green space, air quality issues, public protection measures such as the Public Space Protection Order in place in Shrewsbury and other safeguarding policies. Collectively, these wider societal and environmental considerations will contribute towards helping to create a welcoming environment across all groupings within the community, thereby aiding the intended positive impacts. There will also be efforts made to engage with groupings and their advocates where links may usefully be made with specific target groups such as people with health problems and people with disabilities, people with caring responsibilities, and older people. These may range from blue badge holders to those who need access to toilets and changing facilities, such as people with Crohn's disease, families and carers of babies and children. Actions may be readily identified from evidence gathered to enhance the positive impact of the development programme for these groupings, leading to better outcomes overall for communities in Shropshire as well as in Shrewsbury.
- 5.4. The development of the engagement and consultation strategy addresses in part the need to develop a clear communications and relationship plan that underpins the priorities and objectives of the development programme, articulated through the emerging masterplan. This will involve communications with residents and businesses and engage key stakeholder groups and networks. The approach is consistent with the Council's strategic vision and objectives and creates a framework for future investment.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. The budget for the consultancy and associated fees, and the subsequent demolition, enabling and construction works within the scope of this report, are within the funding approved in the Council report of 21 September 2023, titled *Capital Investment Programme and Mid-Year Review of the Capital Strategy (2022/23 - 2027/28)*.

7. Climate Change Appraisal

- 7.1. The outline business case (Council report February 2022) has previously stated the aspiration to demonstrate leadership in the delivery of low carbon, sustainable development in Shrewsbury. Consequently, the proposed brownfield development of the wider Smithfield Riverside will provide significant opportunity to create new developments that will be energy/fuel efficient, both by supply of renewable sources and in operation, minimising the need for carbon offsetting and mitigation.
- 7.2. Carbon performance and climate mitigation measures have been included as an integral part of the project from the early stages of the design process. Carbon performance will be quantified, monitored and reported as the project proceeds.
- 7.3. The proposed demolition and enabling works which fall within the scope of this report will aim to retain and reuse of materials arising from the site's clearance. The construction of the proposed park will directly contribute to climate change adaptation through both surface management and flood water attenuation, including Sustainable Urban Drainage solutions.

8. Background

- 8.1. The proposed stakeholder engagement and public consultation process aims to explain the emerging masterplan proposals for Smithfield Riverside, including indicative sequence, phasing and timescales for delivery. The outcomes of the masterplan review will form the basis of the consultation process and responses will be collated from

various media channels, as well from in person events hosted locally to the town centre. The outcomes of the process will assist in testing and informing the final masterplan as well, as provide context and support to the initial planning application to demolish the former Riverside shopping centre, undertake the enabling works and build the park with temporary greenspace.

8.2. Masterplan Review

8.3. The first period of design development represents a holistic review of the outline business case masterplan, using key observations to inform and propose a revised masterplan structure. The revisions respond to:

- Maintaining the regeneration objectives.
- Urban Design observations in response to the project's outline business case masterplan.
- A constraints and opportunities analysis of the site and wider town context.
- Tracking the town's emerging Movement and Public Realm Strategy, and Design Code.

8.4. Emerging Revisions to the Masterplan

8.5. Key revisions as outcomes of this stage of design development are (appendix 2):

- A linear public park replaces the hotel proposed on Plot 4. This is a key placemaking move enhancing connectivity between the Riverside and Pride Hill in the form of a new green public space. The park captures opportunity for solar performance, provides a pillar of the flood strategy and addresses phasing constraints and opportunities, whilst mitigating the change of level and lack of grade level active frontage born of the flooding constraints.
- The active levels of Riverside are raised to address flood risk. This resultant space at current road level is exploited to create parking and flood compatible support spaces.
- A second level of podium is proposed to embrace an opportunity to link pedestrians at the current level of the connections to The Pride Hill Centre, the Darwin Centre and pedestrian river crossing to Frankwell. Opening the route through Pride Hill provides opportunity for pedestrian flow and cascade from the town centre onto the Riverside podium, creating an animated customer journey and outward facing buildings.
- The optimal position for the public parking and travel hub are identified in the existing location of the Ravens Meadows MSCP. This position supports the future performance of the Darwin Centre and any emerging strategy for a revised bus interchange. It also enables the retention of the Pride Hill service yard and delivers a more efficient parking solution than would be possible on the Gap Site. The masterplan identifies opportunity for alternate uses on the Gap site that could bring further benefit to the existing historic and listed fabric.

8.6. Masterplan Placemaking Vision and Phasing

8.7. The revised masterplan structure places at its heart a vision to repair urban connections with high quality and differentiated places – delivering the OBC vision of a connection to the River Severn, reinforcing the links to the town centre (Pride Hill and beyond) and delivering a new landscaped gateway.

8.8. The masterplan structure contains four “missions”, distinct elements of a placemaking vision that can be independently delivered to support a phasing strategy and staged strategy of planning applications:

- Connection of the town centre to the Riverside- the redevelopment of Pride Hill and the Riverside Shopping complex with a new linear park at its heart- deliverable within existing movement patterns and ownerships.
- Connection to the River Severn and re- considering Smithfield Road – which can be staged and phased to dovetail with the emerging movement strategy and its implementation over time.
- Delivering urban repair to the east of the masterplan to stitch together the intimate grain of historic properties and topography with new residential development. This element of the masterplan could be enabled by the implementation of a new kerbside bus interchange along Raven Meadows and new central link to the Smithfield Road.
- A central infrastructure phase that maintains all functional and footfall support to the Darwin and Premier Inn.

8.9. The masterplan review has been informed by the following:

8.10. **Sequence and Phasing Strategy:** Due to the scale, massing, mix and sequencing of development, the wider masterplan for the Smithfield Riverside will be delivered in phases. The recent OBC and masterplan review has confirmed that the Phase One developments continue to commence with the delivery of the Multi-agency Hub on the former Riverside shopping centre site, and the redevelopment of the former Pride Hill shopping centre, all as approved in the Council report February 2022. This sequencing is informed, in part, by the need to meet grant funding obligations and timescales, namely the Getting Building Fund (GBF) for Pride Hill and more recently the Levelling Up Fund Round 2 for Riverside.

8.11. The emerging masterplan envisages the following sequence and phasing for the approved Phase One developments (appendix 1) and as aligned to the proposed planning strategy:

- Phase 1a - Demolition of the former Riverside shopping centre and creation of public realm/park on Roushill, with meanwhile greenspace to remainder of site (aligned to LUF2 grant award as Council report titled ‘Levelling Up Fund Award for Shrewsbury’ – 6 July 2023), pending future development, as phase 1c below.
- Phase 1b – Partial demolition of the former Pride Hill shopping centre and leisure-led mixed-use redevelopment, currently proposed to include a cinema, food and beverage, and retail with bridge/footpath links to the former Riverside shopping centre site.
- Phase 1c – Construction of commercial office building, incorporating the Multi-agency Hub with associated pedestrian links, from landing of existing Frankwell footbridge to Pride Hill.
- Phase 1d – Refurbishment/reconstruction of the existing Ravens Meadow multistorey car park to include a travel hub and associated facilities; aligned to the parking strategy under development for the town centre and as the draft Movement and Public Realm Strategy.

8.12. **Planning Strategy, Engagement and Consultation:** The planning strategy has been developed cognisant of the above sequence and phasing requirements, and the need to meeting grant programme funding and delivery timescale obligations. Consequently, the

strategy for the initial phase of development is proposing 4 planning applications as follows:

	<i>Planning Permission (locations as appendix 1)</i>	<i>Submission/ determination (excl. 6 week judicial review period)</i>	<i>Consultation Strategy</i>
1	<p>Full application for the former Riverside shopping centre and environs relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demolition of former Riverside shopping centre. • construction of public realm/park on Roushill. • meanwhile use to the remainder of site (meeting obligations of the LUF 2 grant award). • application to be supported by the illustrative wider masterplan. 	November 2023 – April 2024	<p>Stage 1: public consultation preceding planning application (October – November 2023).</p> <p>Commencing with workshop with Council members to finalise scope and content ahead of public events.</p>
2	<p>Outline application with parameters (hybrid) for the former Riverside shopping centre site relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multi-agency hub buildings on plot 3. • future development plots 5 and 6 to the meanwhile use sites created by the application 1 above. • Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) relating to the indicative mix of commercial office (including the multi-agency hub), hotel/hospitality, residential and undercroft parking. 	January 2024 – May 2024	Stage 2: public consultation preceding planning application (December 2023 – January 2024)
3	<p>Full application for the partial demolition and redevelopment of the former Pride Hill shopping centre to include cinema, food and beverage, retail and public realm.</p>	March 2024 – July 2024	Stage 3: public consultation preceding application 3 (March 2024)
4	<p>Reserved matters application for plot 3 multi-agency hub plus adjacent surface car park (the 'gap' site) and plots 5/6 subject to full business case/market demand</p>	August 2024 – September 2024	Stage 4: public consultation preceding any reserved matters application(s) (May/June 2024)

8.13. The consultation and engagement strategy builds on previous consultations, including those for the Shrewsbury Masterplan Vision and the Smithfield Riverside Strategic

Development Framework. It ensures the wide range of stakeholder organisations, residents and businesses, both locally and regionally, can engage with the development of proposals, provide feedback and contribute to the development and delivery strategy of the masterplan for the Smithfield Riverside.

- 8.14. The consultation and engagement strategy prioritises a participant-driven approach which is inclusive, accessible and creative, and has been designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of the Planning Strategy. Emphasis will be placed on providing opportunities to engage both in-person and online, with a range of awareness-raising activities to encourage broad participation.
- 8.15. The first stage of consultation and engagement aims to inform the initial planning application relating to the demolition of the former Riverside shopping centre and associated works, as summarised above. Consequently, the first stage of consultation and engagement is proposed to run from 19 October until 15 November 2023, with a dedicated consultation website and an in-person consultation hub in the Darwin Shopping Centre open from 25 October. The consultation and engagement strategy will commence with a workshop with Council members to finalise its scope ahead of public events.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Council report	Levelling Up Fund Award for Shrewsbury – 6 July 2023
Council report	Shrewsbury Town Centre Redevelopment Programme Phase One – 24 February 2022

Local Member: Cllr Nat Green

Appendices [Please list the titles of Appendices]

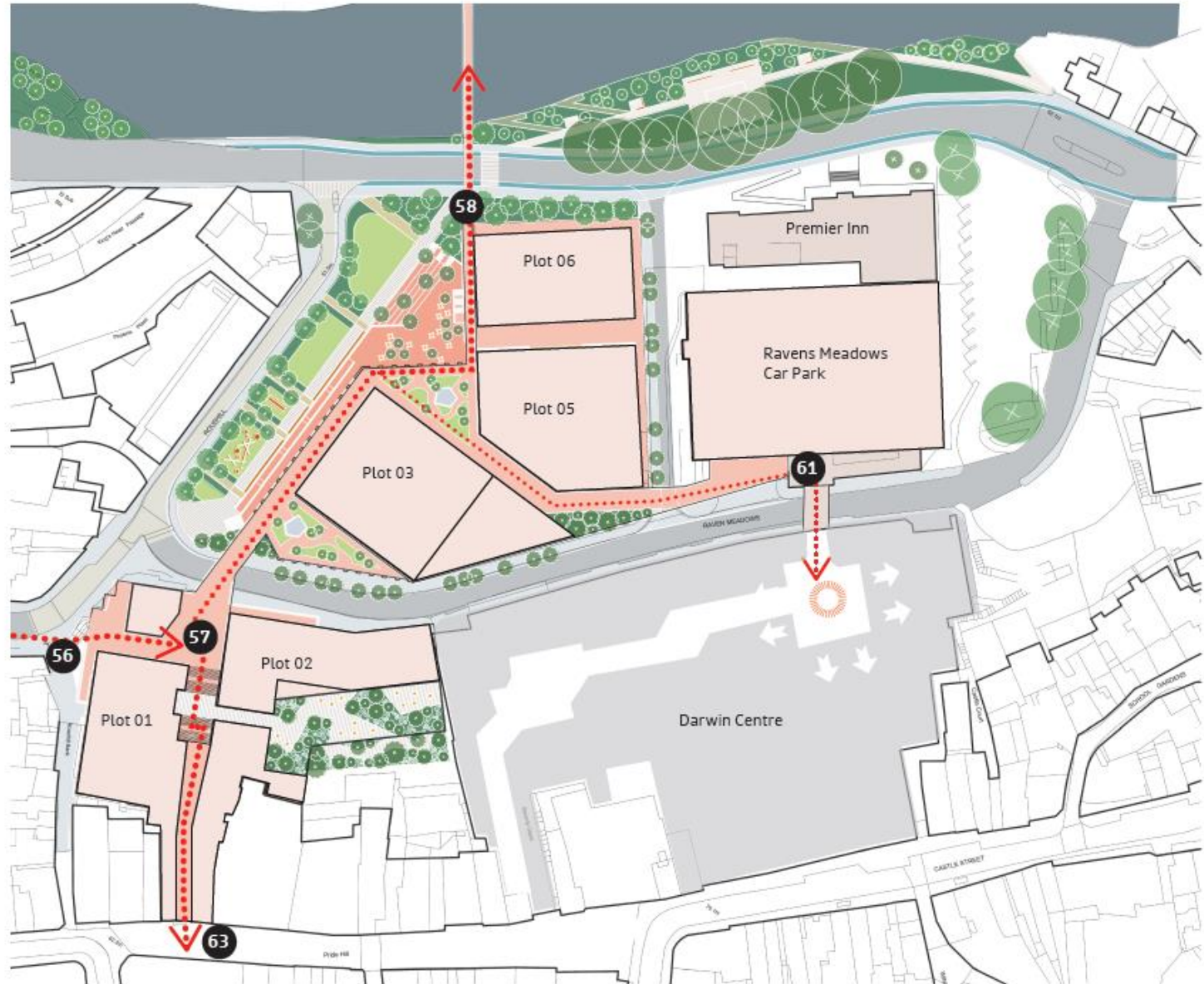
1. Indicative Sequence and Masterplanning
2. Emerging Masterplan

Appendix 2: Emerging Masterplan

RIVERSIDE MASTERPLAN Plot Location

Key

58 Key Levels (AOD)



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