



Views, Density and Heights Study

Allies and Morrison
Urban Practitioners

Stage 2 Sites Report
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1.1 Introduction

Overview

This report outlines the findings from Stage 2 of the Exeter Views, Density and Heights Study. Stage 1 of the study (Skyline and Views Study) identified a set of key views to be considered across the city. Together both stages of this study will form an important part of the evidence base for the Exeter Local Plan and will be instrumental in shaping the scale, massing and nature of development proposals across the city over the next two decades.

This report looks at six sites proposed as site allocations in the Draft Exeter Plan. They are:

- East Gate
- North Gate regeneration area (focusing on the St Mary's site allocation)
- Red Cow
- West Gate regeneration area (focusing on the Exe Bridges Retail Park allocation)
- St Luke's Campus
- South Gate

The purpose of this report is to test the massing, density and heights feasible for each site within the constraints of the views established in the Skyline and Views study in Stage 1.

For each site the team have undertaken the following background analysis:

- Review of existing evidence base information, including past studies and planning applications.
- Views constraints mapping including the identification of any relevant views and implications from the Stage 1 Skyline and Views Study.
- Character review of the immediate area and setting for each site.
- Site visits to each site to understand the existing site condition and setting.
- Initial high-level assessment on the scope for the re-use of buildings on site and the implications for capacity/design approach.

For each site the team then considered development and massing options through:

- The generation of concept design and parameters including: urban form, heights and massing, and landscape considerations.
- The testing of different massing and height options for each site in order to identify a guide to potentially appropriate heights and massing, along with specific maximum heights in some locations.
- Supporting guidance on heights and massing for each site.

This report summarises the conclusions of this work following input from Council officers and Historic England. For each site the following are provided:

- Overview and introduction to the site including setting, local character and constraints.
- Model views generated from the key viewpoints relevant to the site and those view corridors crossing the site identified in the Stage 1 study.
- Baseline constraints mapping.
- Appropriate height plan and massing guidance.
- Example layout and capacity schedule.

Assumptions

The capacities generated for each of the sites have been assessed appropriate building footprints and floor to ceiling heights. For each block a total Gross External Area (GEA) floorspace has been generated. The GEA figure is used for all non-residential space. To convert residential floorspace to the available net floorspace and then number of homes, the GEA figure has been divided by 100sqm. This accounts for removing external walls, internal circulation space and then applying an average home unit size. This conversion has been well-tested and provides a good estimate for the number of units that can be delivered.

All heights are given in storey numbers. All residential storeys are assumed as 3.2 metres. So where “up to 4 storeys” is indicated this equates to a height limit of 12.8 metres in height. All non-residential storeys (primarily relating to St. Luke's Campus) are assumed as 4 metres. All roof plant infrastructure should be within this height limit, but this would not be required on all buildings.

On each site the team have considered the potential for retrofit or re-use of existing structures which could be explored on any site to manage existing embodied carbon. The building footprint assumptions allow for retrofit and upward extension opportunities within the height limits proposed.

It is important to note that the example layouts shown for each site are not proposals and do not represent the only way development could come forward at optimal density across the sites. The massing layouts shown would need to be tested at application stage.

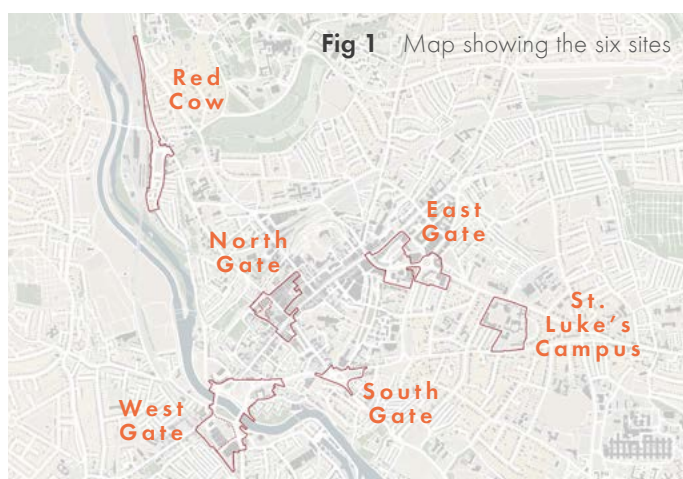


Fig 1 Map showing the six sites

Importantly, the layouts shown have not been tested against all townscape, heritage, archaeology or other planning constraints and considerations which would be subject to detailed design and assessment to inform masterplanning and future planning applications.

Please note in all views the landmark buildings, as identified in the Stage 1 Skyline and Views Study, are simplified and so do not show the detail of spire or tower forms. Rather simple rectangular forms are extruded to the maximum height of these features.

Density analysis

The six sites sit in different parts of the city in the context of differing levels of density. Fig. 1 presents **Floor Area Ratio** data for the city of Exeter, highlighting the range from 0 to 7.5 across the city. FAR measures building density and is useful for understanding how space is really utilised in practice. The map differentiates areas by using green to represent conservation areas and red for non-conservation areas.

Exeter's expansion throughout history is clear from the city's morphology, and density is a useful indicator. Pre-war developments are typically of finer grain and higher density. The city centre was subject to heavy bombing during WWII, causing the loss of clusters of historic buildings and streets. Today, the centre is characterised by mid-rise buildings of 3-5 storeys, permeated by narrow streets that broadly follow the historic street pattern. On the edge of the historic city centre, there are some examples of taller buildings such as John Lewis, built in the early 1960s, and recently developed student accommodation along Cheeke Street. Exeter has 20 conservation areas, which cover most of the city centre and some other areas. Generally, the areas that are designated as conservation areas are of a higher density than the other areas, with large parts of the city centre at 1-3 FAR. Mid-century suburban developments relied more on vehicular transport, which created a low density city fringe for Exeter, with large portions being <0.5 FAR. 21st century development has included low-mid density suburban expansion and higher density student accommodation.

Fig. 2 shows **Dwellings per hectare** data and provides an overview of residential density across the city. The plan shows some areas with high concentrations of dwellings. Conversely, other areas exhibit lower densities, indicative of suburban or edge of city characteristics. This analysis not only maps the current density of housing distribution but also serves as a tool for identifying areas with potential for further development or those that may benefit from densification. However, the dwellings per hectare measure misses the contribution of other land uses and the overall intensity of the built environment.

Fig 2 Floor Area Ratio of Exeter city centre

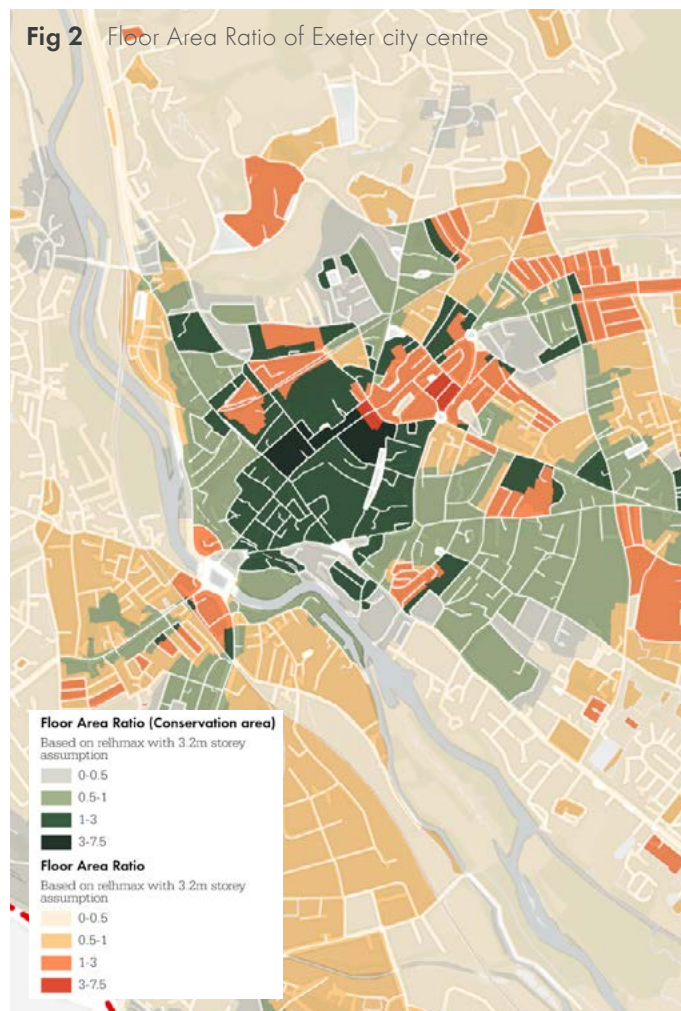
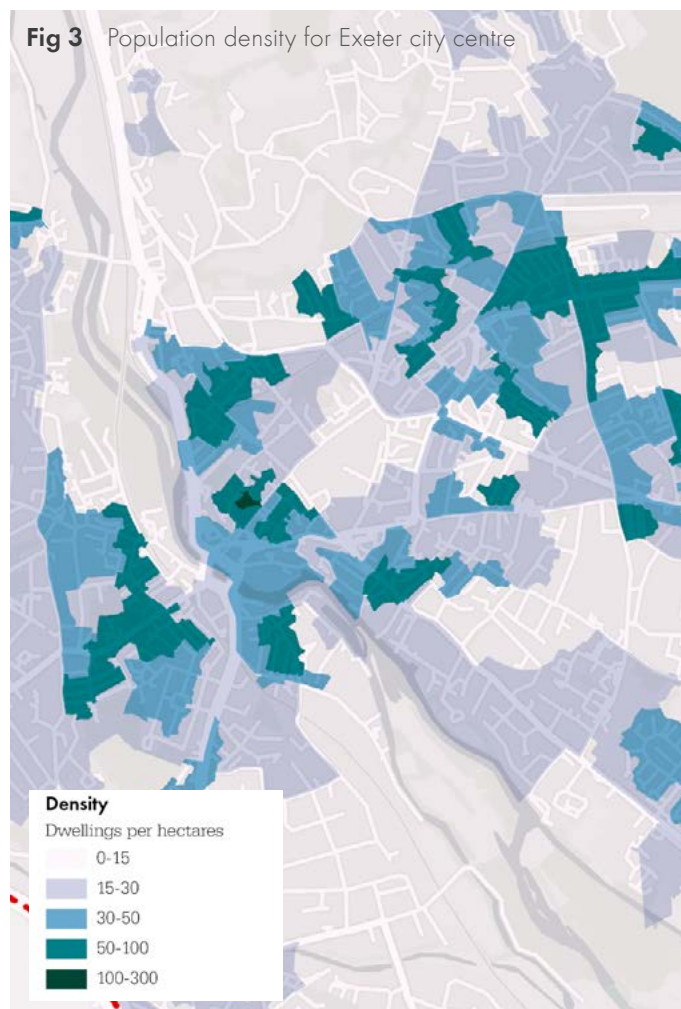


Fig 3 Population density for Exeter city centre





View from Council offices looking north west across the site



View looking north on Sidwell Street with site frontages on the right hand side



View looking north on Sidwell Street beyond the site to Sidwell Methodist Chapel



View from within the site on Bude Street looking towards the new bus station

1.2 East Gate

Location

The site is located on the north eastern edge of the historic city centre. This brownfield site occupies a key stretch along the major thoroughfares of Sidwell Street, Paris Street. The site comprises multiple land ownerships, though large portions are owned by Exeter City Council, including significant areas along the major Sidwell Street and Paris Street including the City Point area.

Exeter's plans for East Gate aim to set a benchmark for sustainable city centre regeneration that rejuvenates this underutilised area into a vibrant new urban quarter at the cutting-edge of design and low-carbon living.

Character

- The imprint of the former East Gate entry point to the city has largely been lost in the urban structure, however an opportunity exists to enhance this gateway into the city centre and the quality of built fabric along key approaches.
- To the north of Paris Street the site predominantly comprises post-war low-mid rise development. Frontage on to Sidwell Street ranges between one and three storeys complementing what exists on the northern side. At the corner, a set back building rises to four storeys with an attractive (but under-used) circular single storey form in front.
- To the south of Paris Street the Council office buildings are a notable and important landmark, reaching 5 and 6 storeys tall.

Constraints & opportunities

- The Southernhay and Friars Conservation Area covers land to the south of Paris Street.
- Lower Summerlands Conservation Area lies just to the east of the site.
- The settings of both Southernhay URC and Sidwell Methodist Chapel need to be considered.
- The Stage 1 report did not identify any view corridors to the Cathedral that pass through this area.
- The Southernhay Gardens view does not cross the site, but any intensification on the corner of Paris Street and Sidwell Street would be in the background of this view.
- Opportunities to support the reintroduction of a finer grain to the urban structure should be sought.
- There are opportunities for redevelopment and refurbishment on this site.

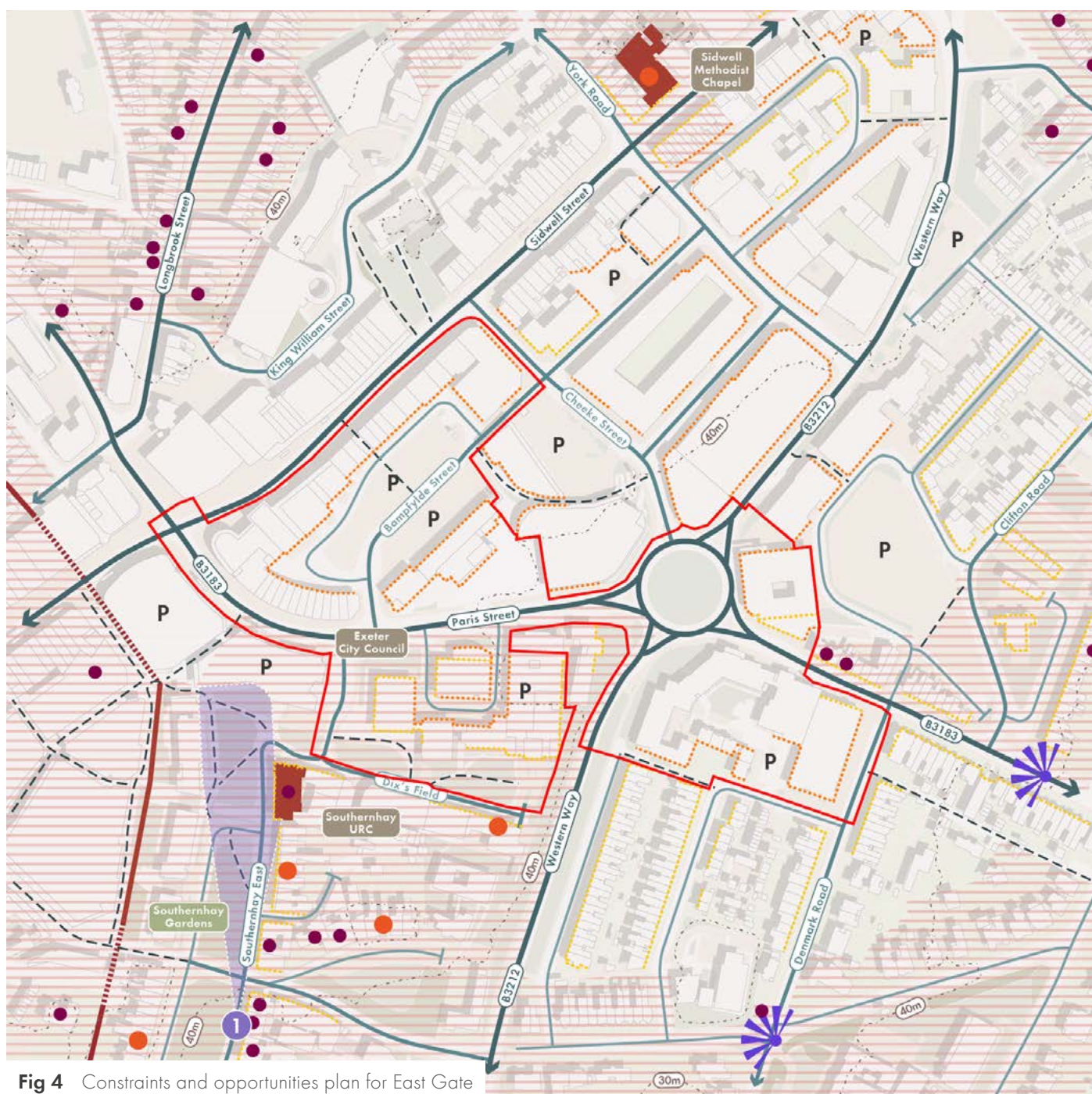


Fig 4 Constraints and opportunities plan for East Gate

Heights

The plan below outlines potential development heights which may be considered appropriate in the context of their impact on key views of principal heritage assets. It is important that as part of any interventions, development introduces a range of heights up to the maximum level. There is potential for a tall element of up to 10 storeys on the east side of the roundabout as part of intensification of Clarendon House, as well as on the junction of Paris Street and Bamptylde Street.

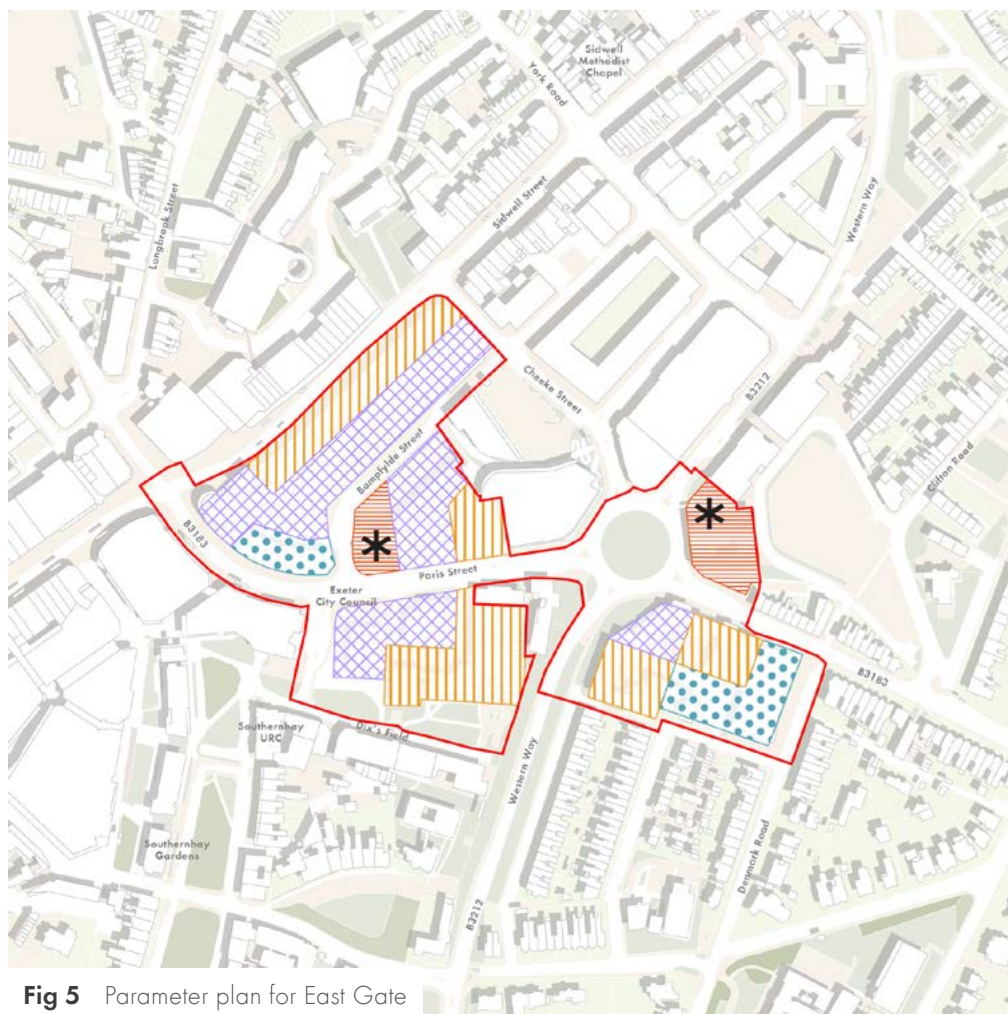
Frontage along Sidwell Street could reasonably accommodate buildings of up to 6 storeys, with scope for a taller element up to 8 storeys at the junction with Paris Street and stepping up to 8 storeys behind Sidwell Street. Topography needs to be respected to ensure buildings step along Paris Street.

Sensitivity is needed along the southern boundary of the site to recognise existing context. This will include stepping down to prevailing heights around Denmark Road and keeping the building line back to support the Dix's Field environment.

Grain

Overall, this site requires the introduction of a finer grain to enable a higher quality environment at this gateway into the city centre. This is particularly important as this neighbourhood transitions into an area for town centre living and mixed use.

The example layout illustrates how the development blocks can be broken down into finer grain elements. Development intervention would allow the introduction of stronger fronts and backs and this is to be encouraged. Frontage on to Sidwell Street should maintain the sense of plots and avoid development creating single large elements. The existing character of Paris Street would support further taller block structures, but these should avoid creating a wall of large footprints.



- Site allocation
- up to 4 storeys* (equal to 12.8m)
- up to 6 storeys* (equal to 19.2m)
- up to 8 storeys* (equal to 25.6m)
- up to 10 storeys* (equal to 32m)
- * indicative location for tallest element

**Some, but not all, buildings could reach this height in these areas. Not all buildings should reach the maximum height. All new development will be subject to consideration against the wider development plan and local townscape issues.*

All storey heights are assumed as 3.2m for East Gate, any commercial storeys would need to be accommodated within the stated total height limit

Fig 5 Parameter plan for East Gate

832
homes136
dph23,500m²
non-
residential
spaceor...
potentially
700 parking
spaces

Example layout

The example layout below shows one way that intensification of the site could come forward. The drawing demonstrates the heights for each building and the varied massing required for each block.

Site capacity

The example layout generates 832 homes and 23,500 sqm of non-residential space.

PROPOSED	TOTAL			GDA	Site area	FAR	DPH	Parking
	GEA m2	GEA sqft	Dwellings					
Residential (dwellings)	83,166	895,191	832	106,602	1.49	7.13	556	
Residential Upper (GEA)								
Residential Ground (GEA)								
Non-residential (GEA)	23,436	252,263						
Parking (GEA)	18,519	199,337						

741

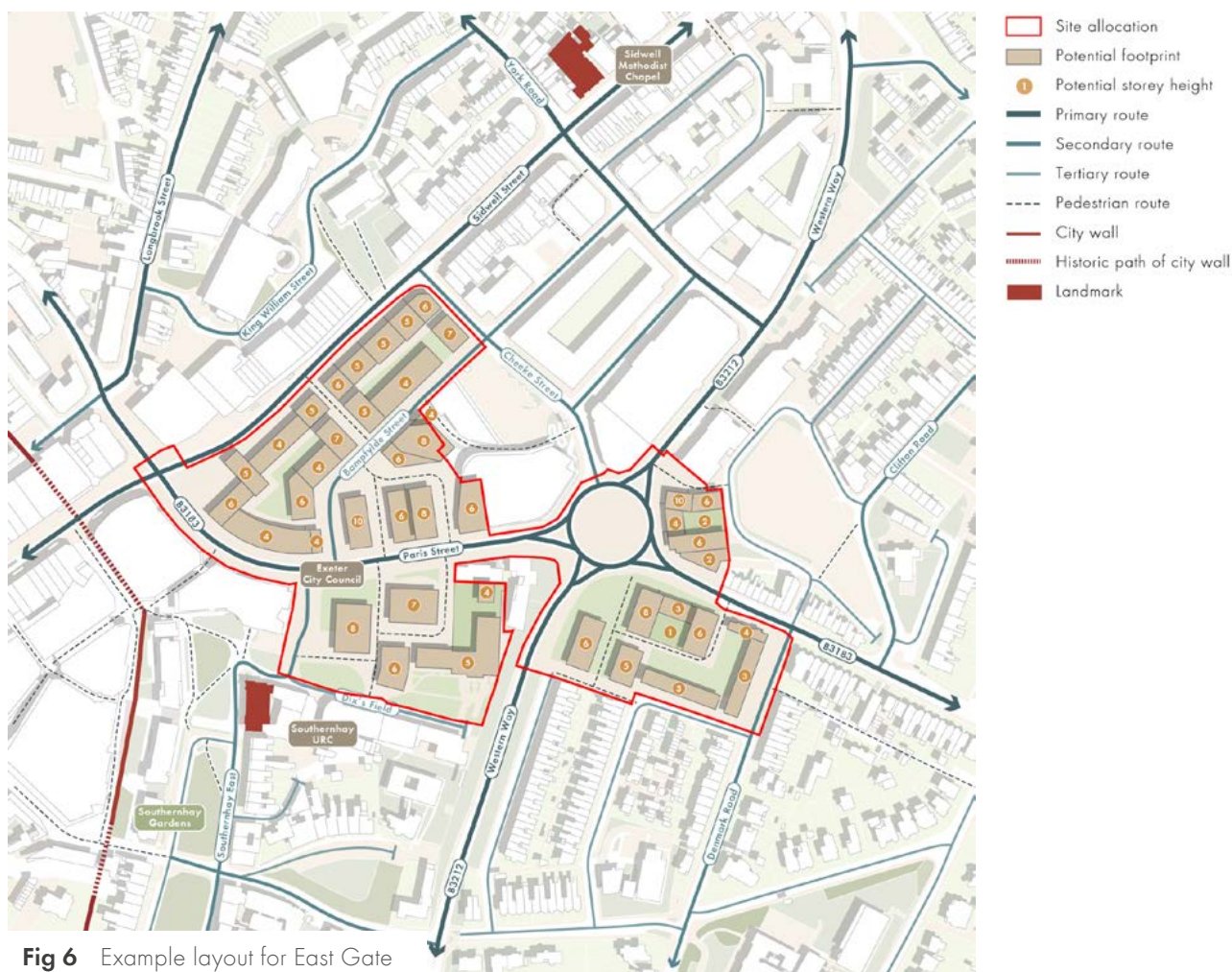


Fig 6 Example layout for East Gate

Views

This spread illustrates the key views most relevant to the East Gate site taken from the Skyline and Views Study, others will need to be considered at planning application stage. The massing of an example layout is shown in purple to illustrate how development of appropriate scale and massing might sit within each view (it does not represent a proposal or developed scheme design). Landmarks identified in the Skyline and Views Study are shown in red. These views are generated using a terrain model. It is important to note that the model shows the maximum visibility of any buildings in the view. In reality, the incidence of trees would reduce what can actually be seen. This is particularly true of the Ludwell Valley Park view. However trees are often seasonal and may not be permanent (note Tree Preservation Orders would offer an element of safeguarding against tree loss). The proposed height limits and example massing shown would not obscure views towards the Cathedral from the studied views below.

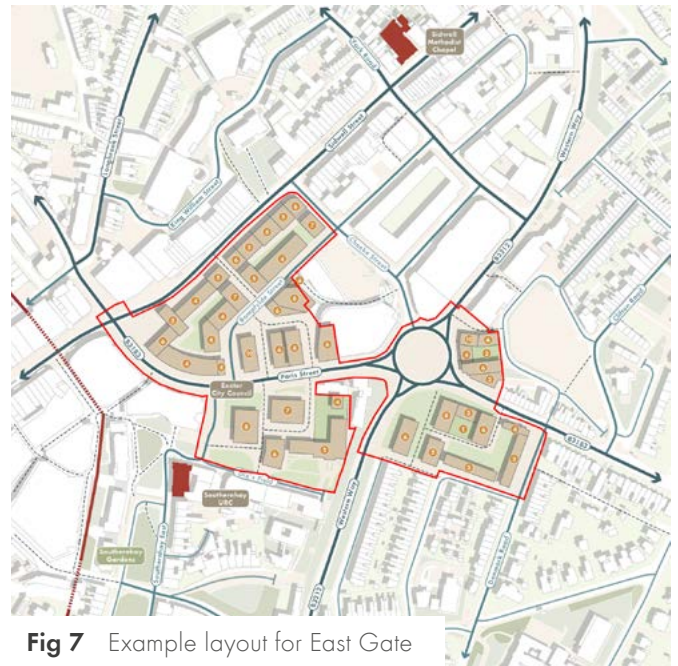


Fig 7 Example layout for East Gate

Fig 8 Key View SO2 Barley Valley Nature Reserve view looking east across the city

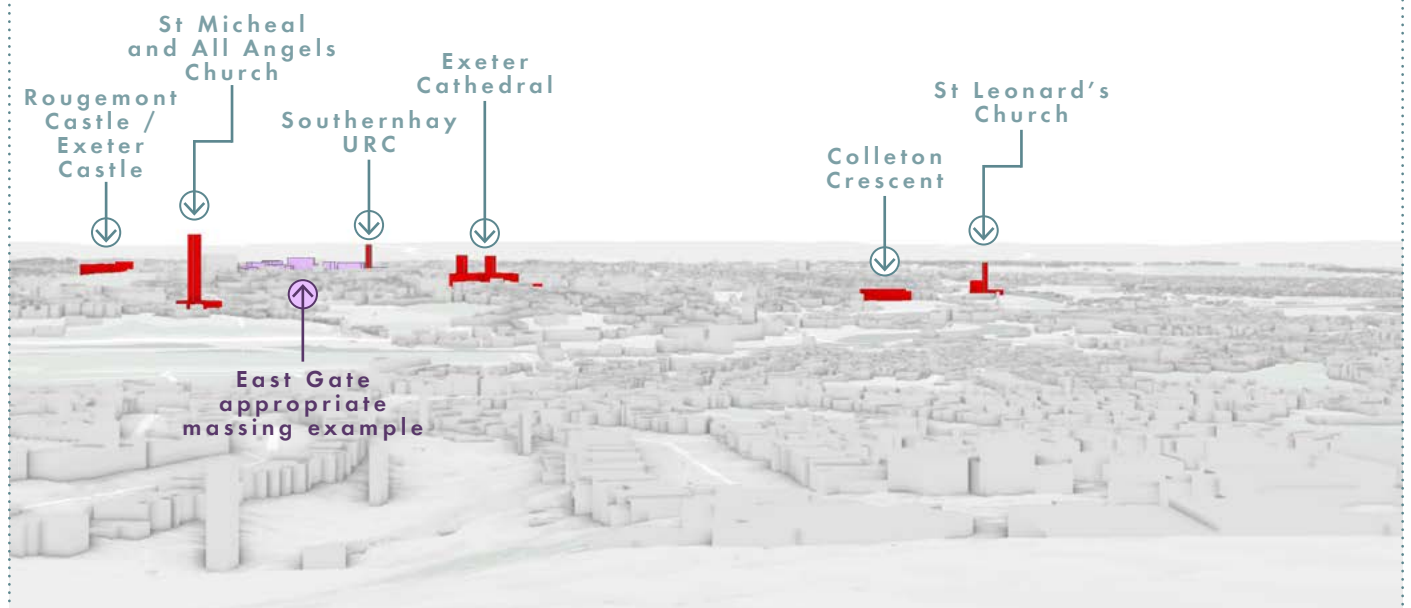


Fig 9 Key View SO3 Ludwell Valley Park view looking north west across the city

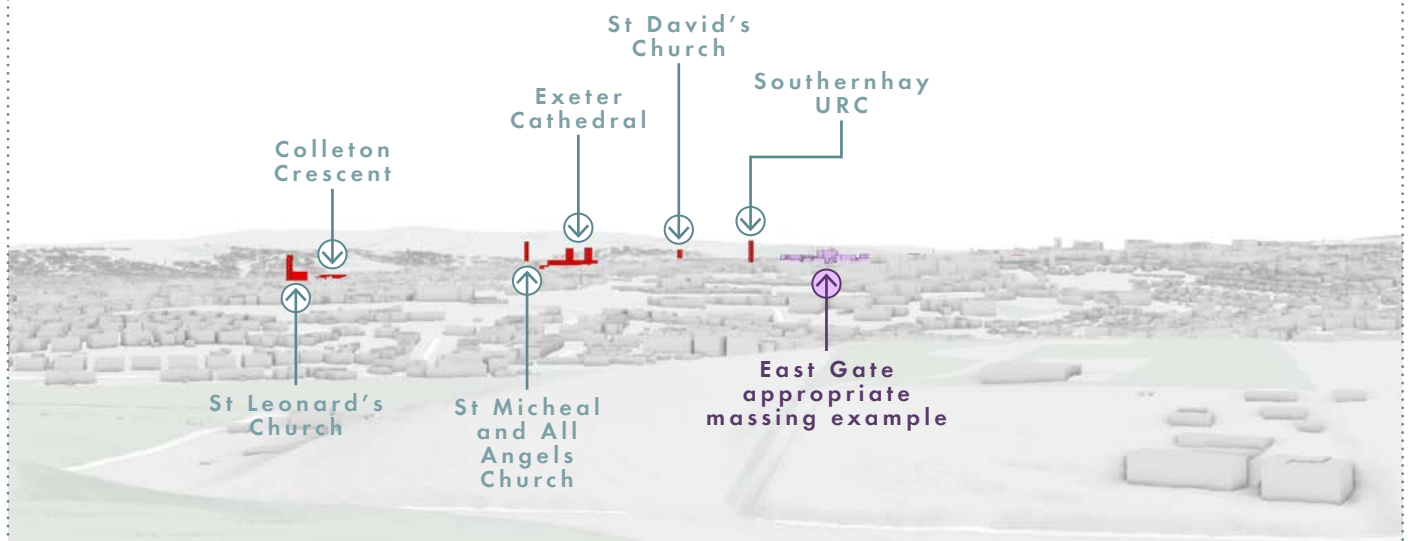


Fig 10 Key View CO1 from top of Rougemont Castle/Exeter Castle looking east across the site, with the John Lewis tower in the foreground



Fig 11 View looking north along Sidwell Street with intensified frontage on right hand side and Sidwell Methodist Chapel in the background

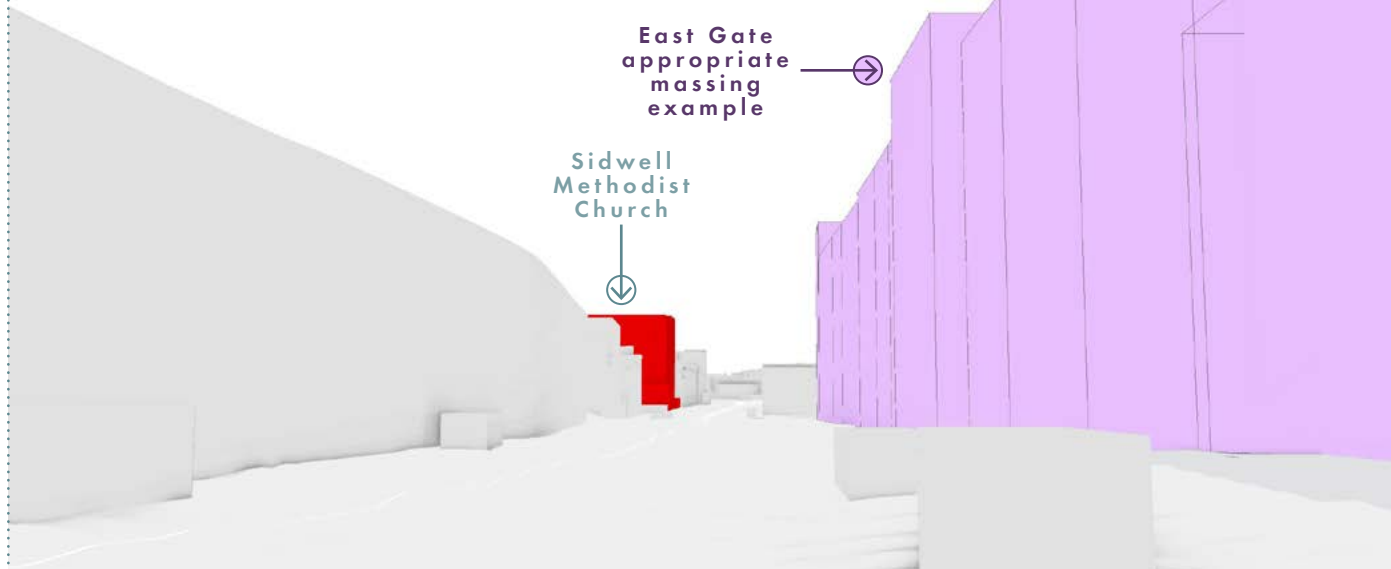
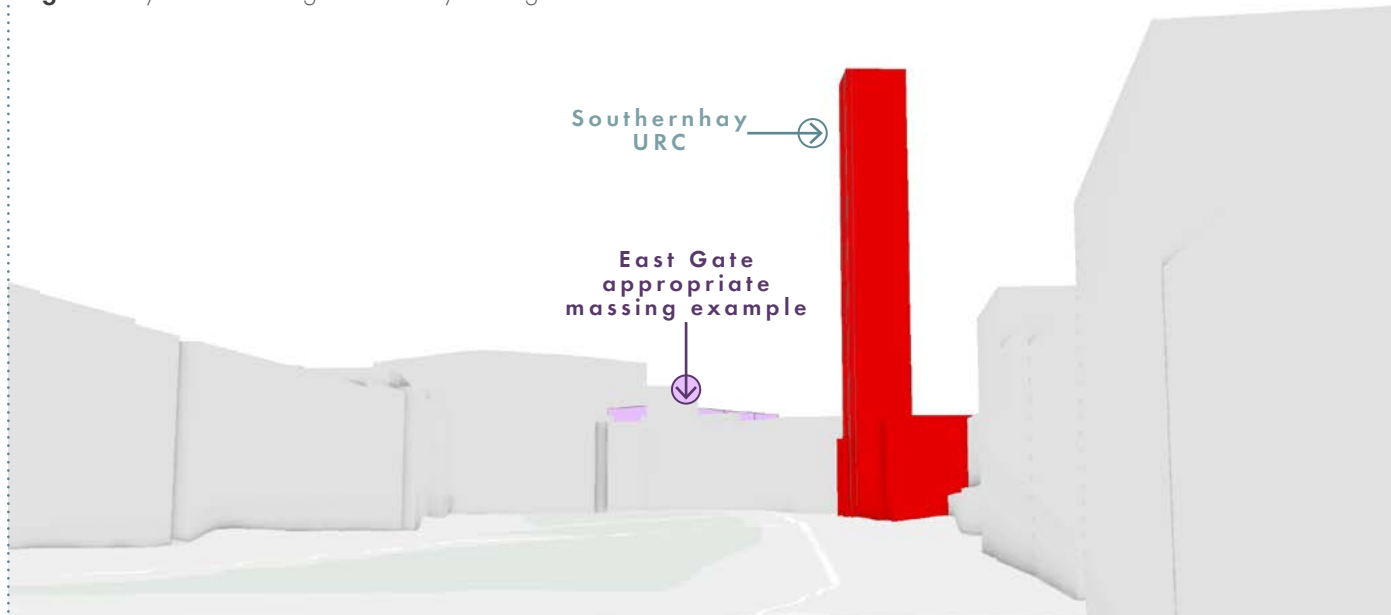


Fig 12 Key View K1 along Southernhay looking north





View from the top of the north tower of the Cathedral looking across towards the North Gate site



Former cinema building within the centre of the block



View looking down North Street with Guildhall Shopping Centre on the right, and the bridge linking to Mary Arches car park on the left



View from the top of the north tower of the Cathedral looking across towards the North Gate site

1.3 North Gate

Location

The whole North Gate site is a 5 hectare brownfield regeneration opportunity area identified in the Exeter Plan. Part of the western element at Mary Arches is to be allocated in the Exeter Plan. Situated in the heart of Exeter's city centre, this prominent location presents a prime opportunity to enhance the vitality and attractiveness of the central area through thoughtful, high-quality new development. The site contains a variety of uses including retail units, restaurants, cafés, takeaways, small-scale commercial businesses, a public car park, leisure facilities, and a bingo hall. There are several historically important listed buildings, including the 1930s Gaumont Palace, the Victorian Exeter Synagogue, and the medieval Church of St Mary Arches. The mixed-use development is envisioned to deliver new homes integrated with employment spaces, retail, and commercial uses that together will create an impressive, memorable gateway to the city centre.

Character

- The site sits adjacent to the ancient North Gate, a historically important entry point to the city. The city walls are a scheduled monument, and are still apparent either side of the former gate.
- North Street is an important approach route to the city centre.
- Much of this part of the city was redeveloped following war damage and today comprises much larger footprint buildings than would have historically been present, including the Guildhall Shopping Centre and multi-storey car parks.
- The western (proposed allocation) portion of the site retains finer grain elements facing High Street/Fore Street and the central portion of North Street, but is still dominated by large buildings such as the former cinema and Mary Arches car park.

Constraints & opportunities

- The area sits wholly within the Central Conservation Area and includes a number of listed buildings.
- The key views to be respected and enhanced include North Street and from the northern end of Iron Bridge to the Cathedral towers.
- Opportunities to support the reintroduction of a finer grain to the urban structure should be sought.
- The Mary Arches site offers the opportunity to enhance the setting and environment of the North Gate entry to the city.

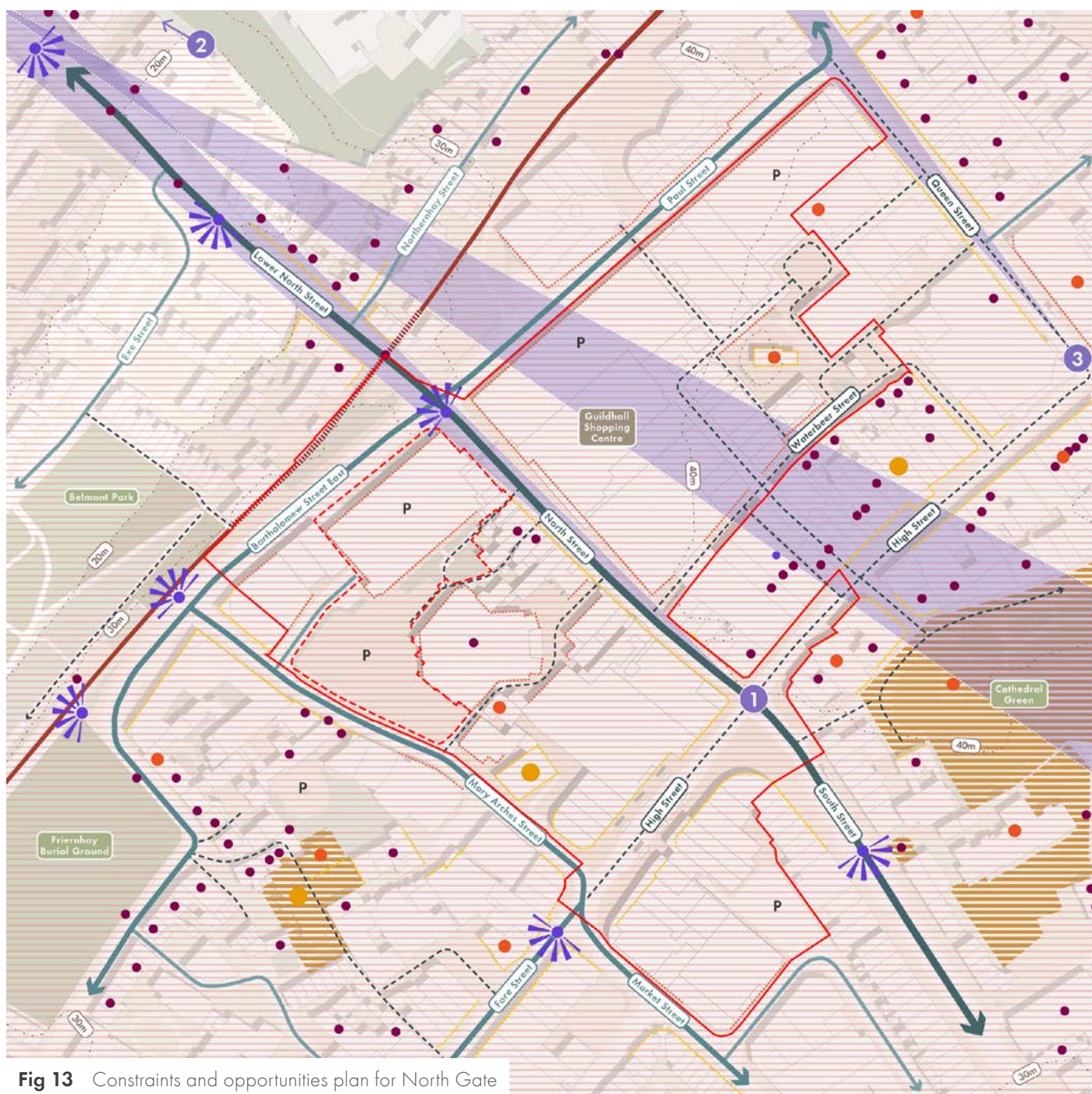


Fig 13 Constraints and opportunities plan for North Gate

Heights

Development across much of this site already stands at the equivalent of 5 residential storeys. Redevelopment offers the opportunity to introduce a greater variety of building heights and more intricate massing.

Heights on North Street need to be carefully managed to avoid re-establishing a canyon. A maximum of 6 storeys would be appropriate here, but variation is needed and the rising topography should be respected. On Mary Arches Street heights of between 4 and 5 storeys would be appropriate. The central part of the Guildhall Shopping Centre site would be appropriate for 4 storeys to ensure views of the Cathedral towers from the North Street/Iron Bridge approach can be celebrated.

These heights have been established through testing of key views, however development here would also need to consider a wider set of heritage matters including listed buildings and other heritage assets.

Grain

The redevelopment of the sites across North Gate offers an important opportunity to improve the quality of the built form. The large footprint bulky buildings have significantly reduced the quality of the environment and detracted from the status of this historic gateway into the city.

Partial redevelopment offers the opportunity to break up this bulk and restore a finer grain. In doing so, the North Gate location and the presence of the city walls can be much better celebrated, and views to the Cathedral towers can be enhanced.

Example layout

The example layout below shows one way that intensification of the site could come forward. It should be noted that although the Guildhall Shopping Centre is included there are no plans associated with this area. Potential heights for each building are indicated, demonstrating the varied approach to massing required for each block.

Site capacity

For the Mary Arches section of the site, the example layout generates 116 homes and 2,100 sqm of non-residential space on the ground floor.

For illustrative purposes, the full area could provide 428 homes and 13,400 sqm of non-residential space on the ground floor, some of which could be for parking.



116
homes237
dph2,100m²
non-
residential
space

Mary Arches ONLY

POTENTIAL	TOTAL			GDA	Site area	FAR	DPH
	GEA m2	GEA sqft	Dwellings				
Residential (dwellings)	11,584	124,684	116	13,717	0.49	2.81	237
Residential Upper (GEA)							
Residential Ground (GEA)							
Non-residential (GEA)	2,133	22,959					

Full scheme

POTENTIAL	TOTAL			GDA	Site area	FAR	DPH
	GEA m2	GEA sqft	Dwellings				
Residential (dwellings)	42,813	460,835	428	56,205	4.35	1.29	98
Residential Upper (GEA)							
Residential Ground (GEA)							
Non-residential (GEA)	13,392	144,150					

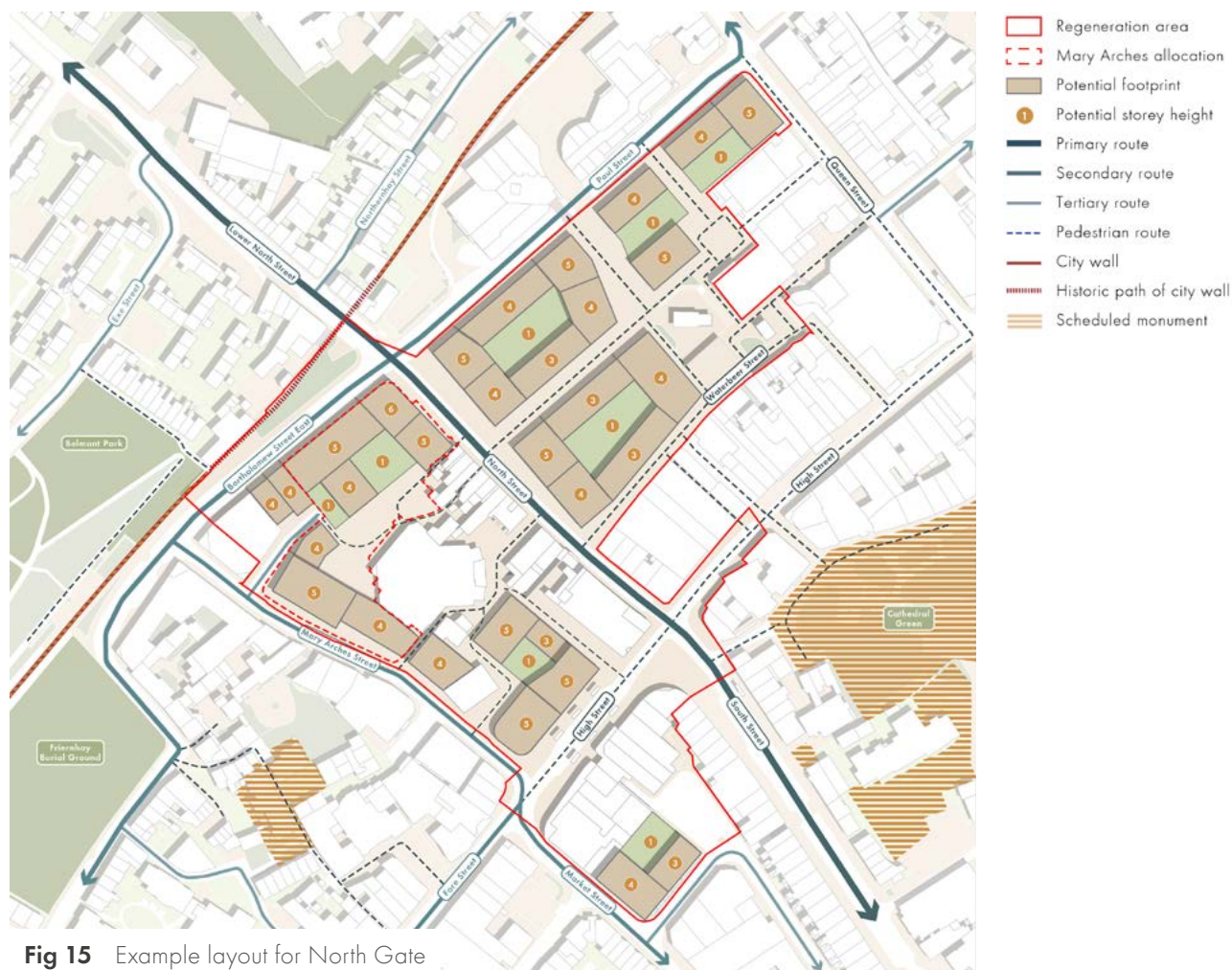


Fig 15 Example layout for North Gate

Views

This spread illustrates the key views most relevant to the North Gate area taken from the Skyline and Views Study, others will need to be considered at planning application stage. The massing of an example scheme is included in purple to illustrate how development of appropriate scale and massing could sit within each view (it does not represent a proposal or developed scheme design). Landmarks identified in the Skyline and Views Study are shown in red.

These views are generated using a terrain model. It is important to note that the model shows the maximum visibility of any buildings in the view. In reality, the incidence of trees would reduce what can actually be seen. However trees are often seasonal and may not be permanent (note Tree Preservation Orders would offer an element of safeguarding against tree loss). Development along Fore Street and the southern end of Mary Arches Street must be carefully considered as it has the potential to block views of the Cathedral from Barley Valley Nature Reserve. There is an opportunity to reintroduce historic views of the Cathedral towers from St David's Hill and Iron Bridge through the Guildhall Shopping Centre.

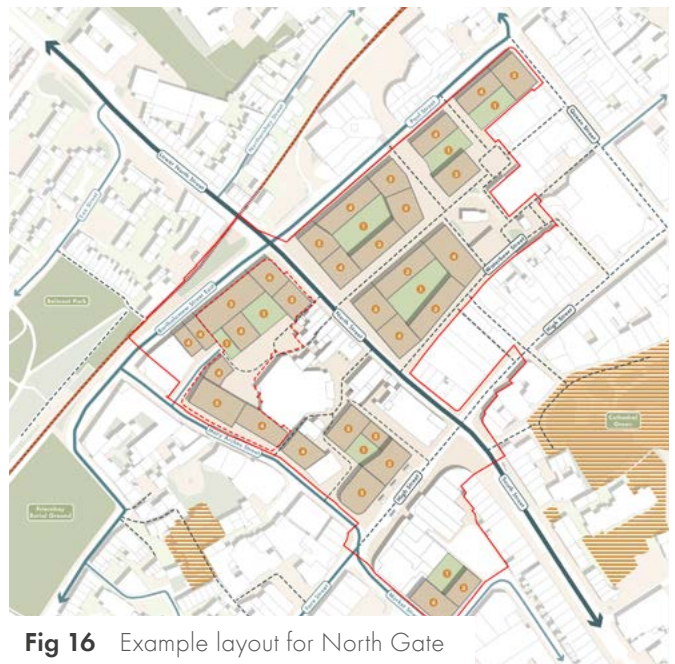


Fig 16 Example layout for North Gate

Fig 17 Key View SO2 Barley Valley Nature Reserve looking east across the city

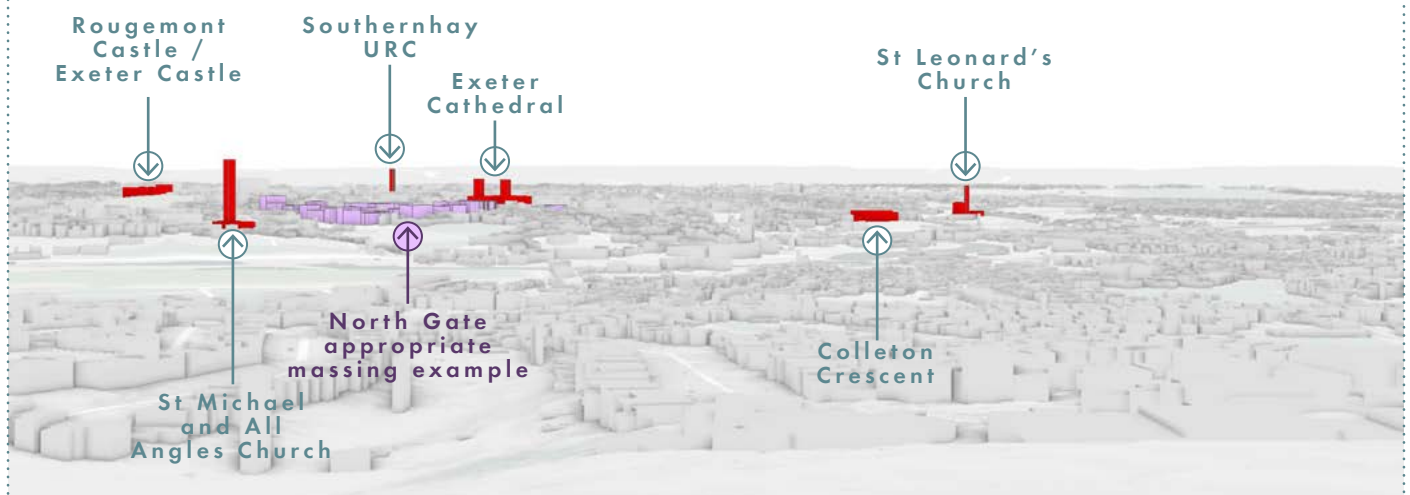


Fig 18 Key View CS01 Cathedral Precinct view looking west from North Door

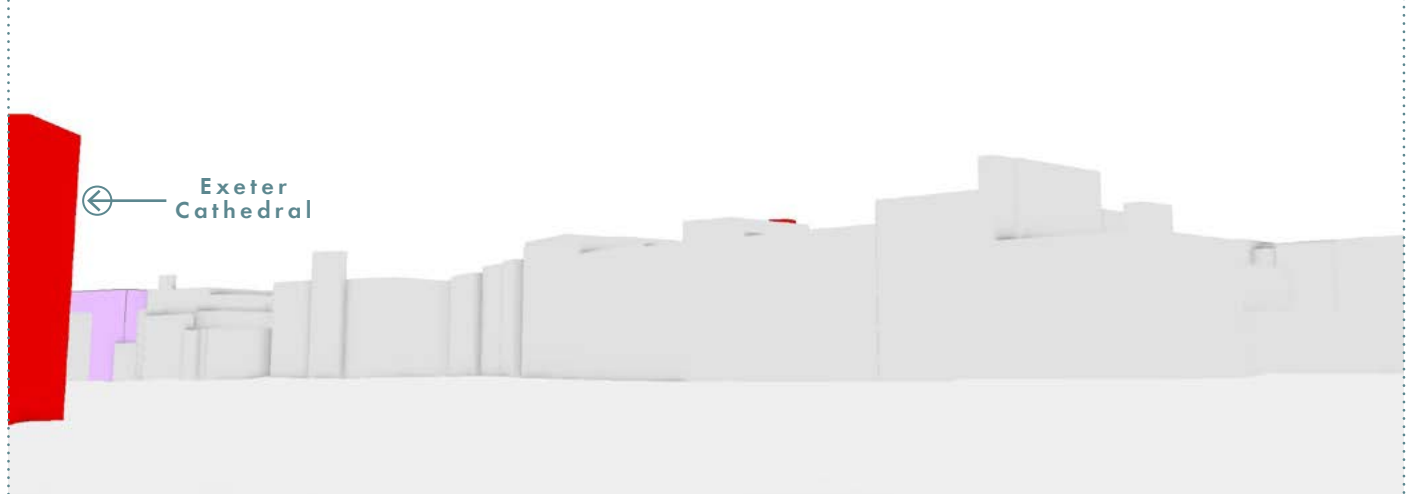


Fig 19 Key View AO1 St David's Hill / Iron Bridge view looking up North Street and towards the city centre and Cathedral towers

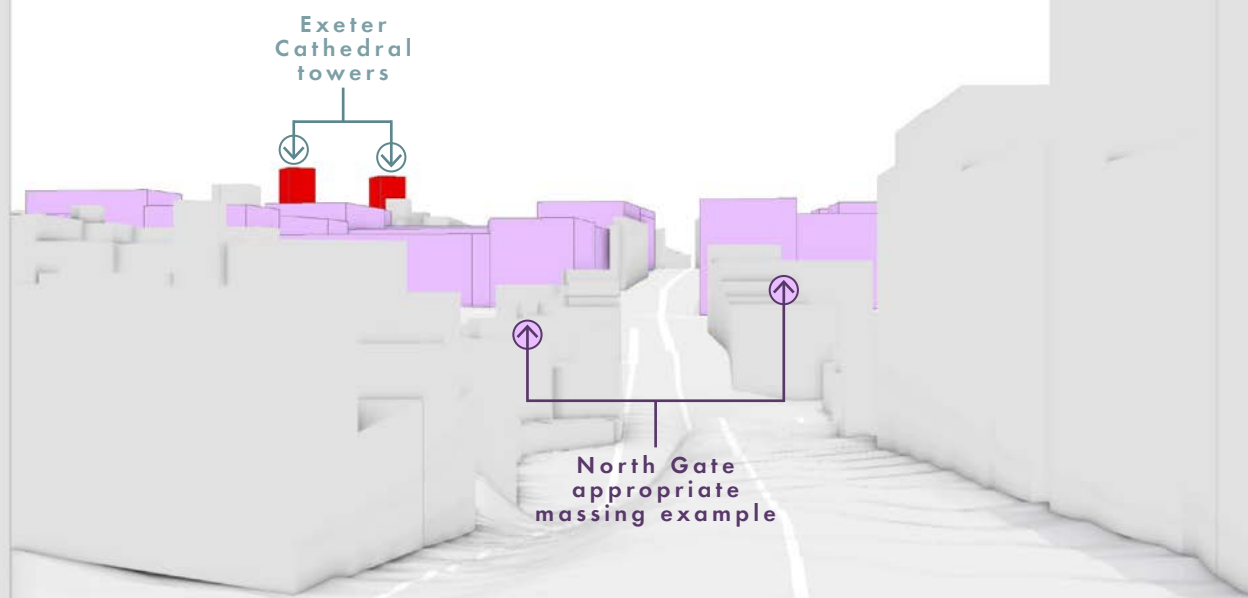


Fig 20 Key View A02 looking down Dunsford Road view looking towards the city centre

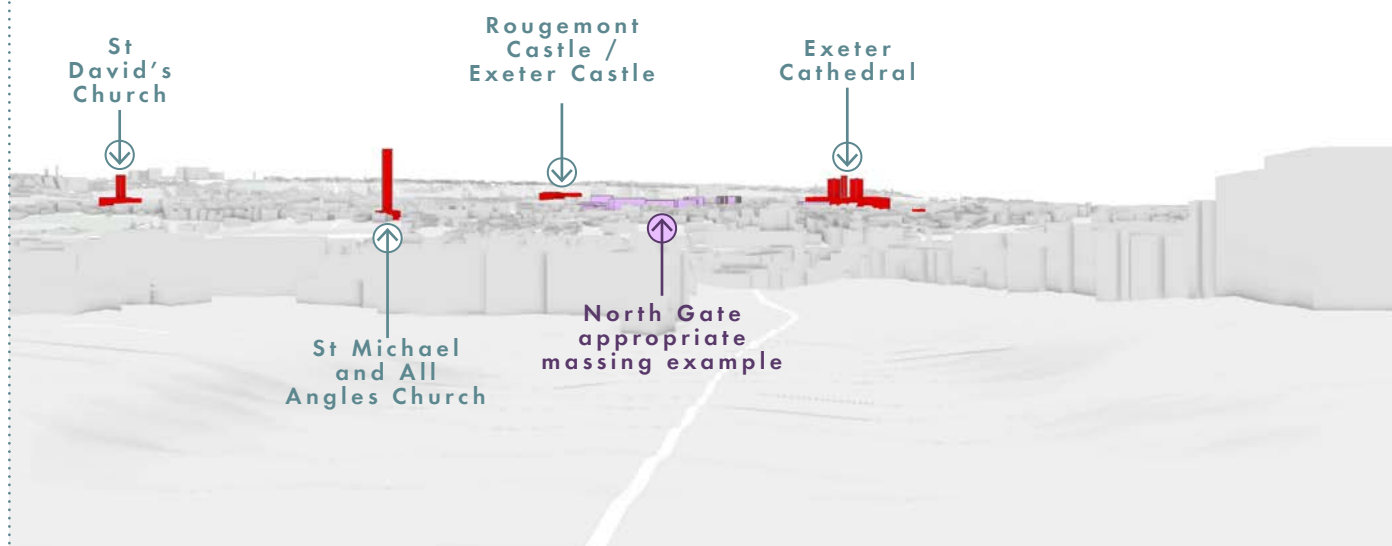
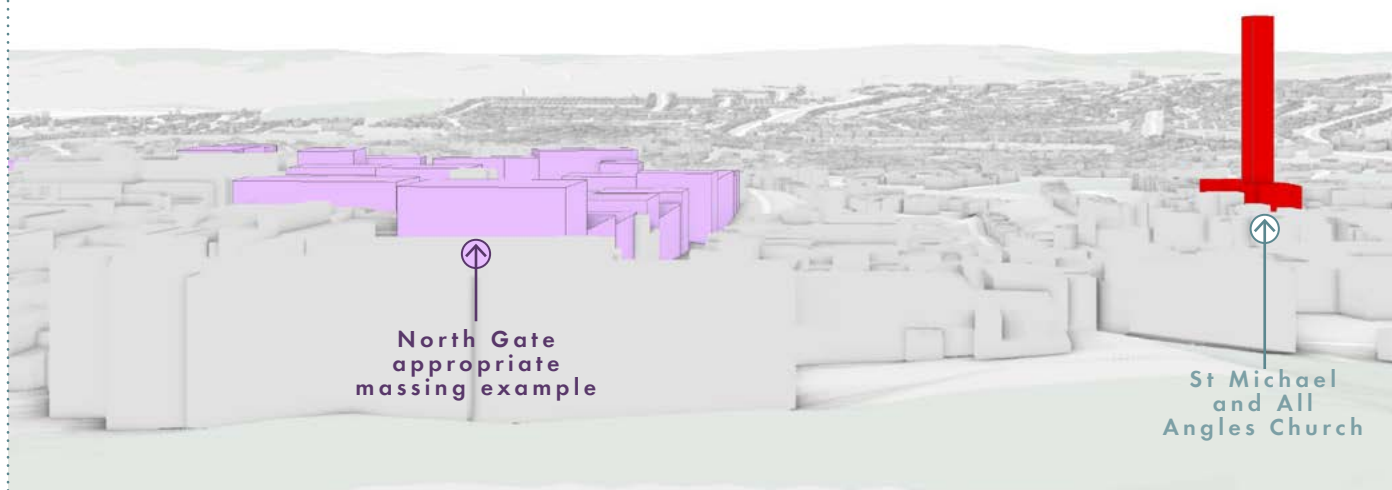


Fig 21 Key View CO1 from top of Rougemont Castle / Exeter Castle looking south west





View from station building exit looking up to Exeter College



Exeter St David's station building



View looking north along Bonhay Road adjacent to station surface car parking



View looking across the station surface car parking with Isambard Parade in the background

1.4 Red Cow

Location

The Red Cow site is an approximately 4 hectares brownfield area directly adjacent to St David's railway station. As a key gateway to the city, the development of this site presents a crucial opportunity to create an impressive and memorable arrival experience for visitors arriving by rail. The site's boundaries are defined by Cowley Bridge Road and Bonhay Road to the east, while the western edge borders the platforms and rail lines of the locally listed St David's Station.

Currently, the site comprises a mixture of railway-related infrastructure including the former stationmaster's house building and surface parking lots, as well as storage and light industrial facilities, student accommodation blocks, and some small retail shops. However, the proposed redevelopment aims to transform this area into a high-quality, residential-led, mixed-use district, whilst maintaining the strategic functionality of the station.

Character

- The site comprises low lying land in the river valley, with the rail line and rail infrastructure running along the western edge of the site between it and the River Exe.
- Red Cow village grew as a result of the rail line opening, with a grid of Victorian terraced streets on the east side of Bonhay Road.
- The Great Western Hotel building faces on to the car park space in front of the station on the northern side. More modern and large scale development has been introduced on the east side including student housing and a Premier Inn.

Constraints & opportunities

- This site can make a significant impact on enhancing a currently poor quality arrival to the city through high quality design and development as well as public realm enhancements.
- A key consideration will be opportunities to enhance the views from the river and rail line across this area. The other key view passing through the site is from Higher Exwick Hill.
- Taddyforde Conservation Area along the east side of Cowley Bridge Road will restrict the height of any new buildings feasible on the west side.
- St David's Conservation Area lies on higher ground to the east of the site.
- The historically important view from Higher Exwick Hill looks across the southern half of the site.
- The adjacency of the rail line will require buildings to be set back in some parts of the site.
- The site is in Flood Zone 3 which will impact what uses can be accommodated on the ground floor.

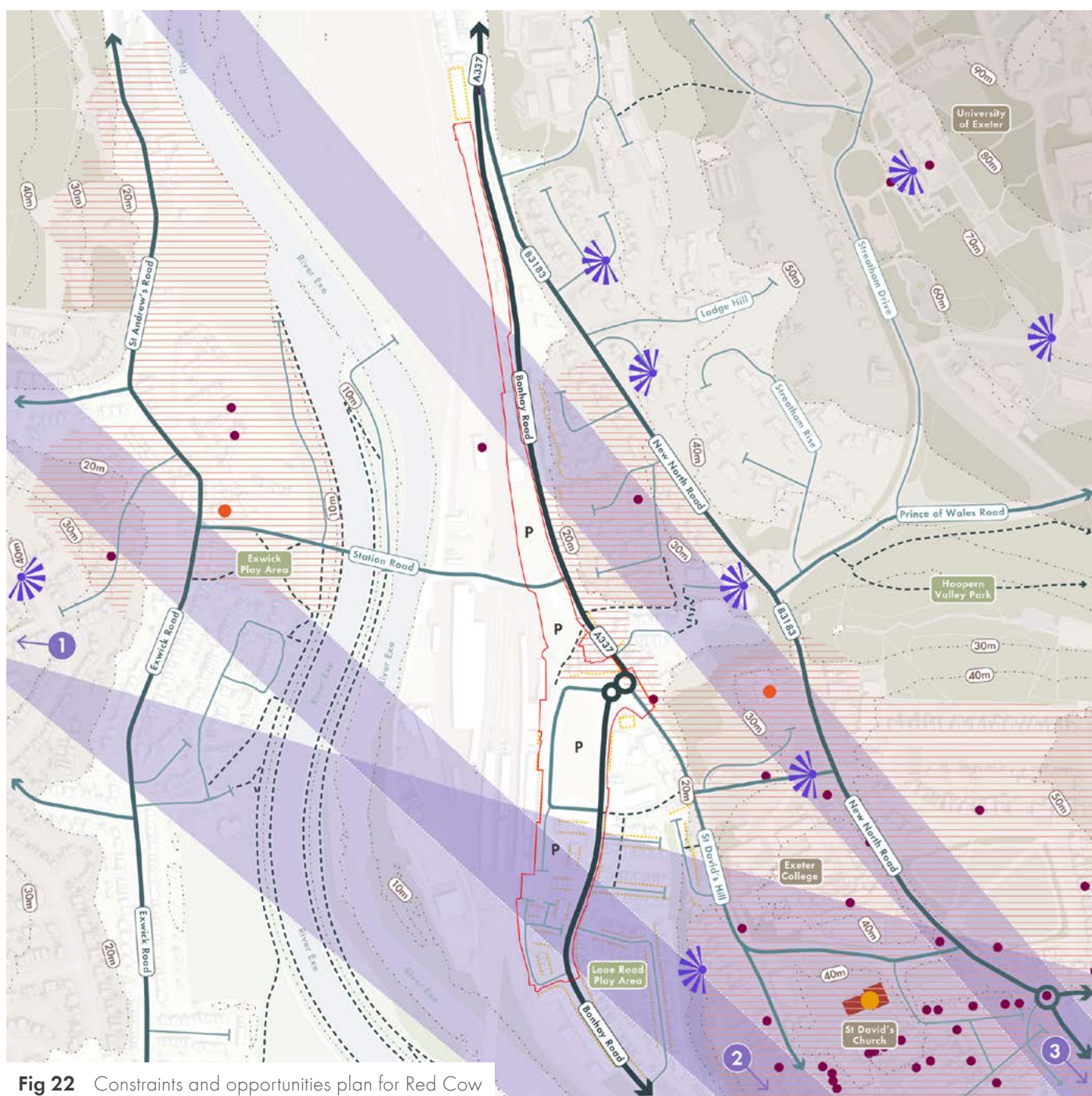


Fig 22 Constraints and opportunities plan for Red Cow

Heights

There is the opportunity for mid-rise buildings adjacent to the station. The tallest elements should be pushed to the north of the existing car park site.

Any development on the southern part of the site (Brunel Close / Kingdom Mews) should be limited to 6 storeys to support views across and from the river valley. On the eastern side of this section of the site development should be reduced to 4 storeys maximum to be sensitive to the existing 2 storey context.

At the northern end of the site, development on Cowley Bridge Road should be sensitive to existing neighbourhoods and be limited to 3-4 storeys. There may be potential for taller elements south of the brewery building, but this will require testing to ensure the raised properties to the east are not overly impacted.

Grain

Without careful regard to grain and massing the development of Red Cow could present a wall of development along the rail line that will have a negative impact on the existing streetscape, surrounding views, and the pedestrian and vehicular experience. It will be important to break up blocks and ensure varied building heights to present an attractive edge and welcome to the city.

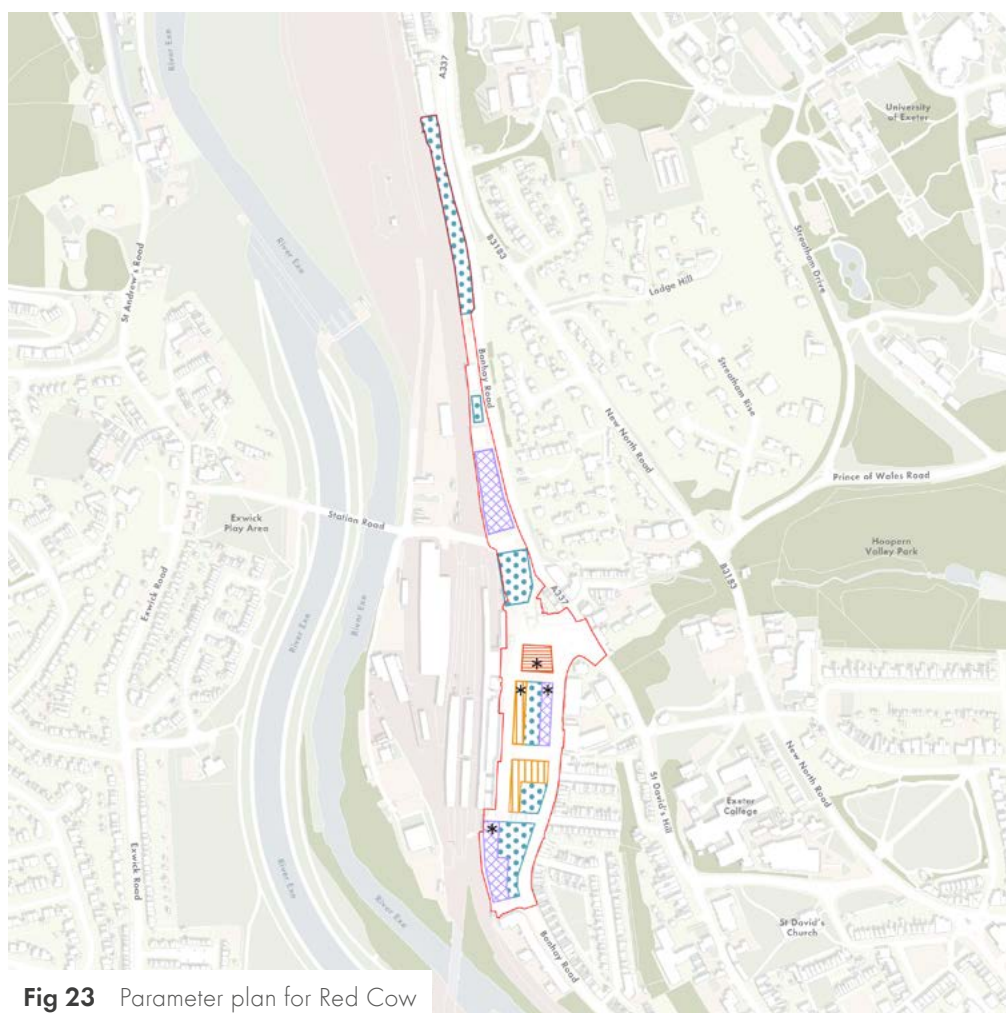


Fig 23 Parameter plan for Red Cow

- Site allocation
- up to 4 storeys* (equal to 12.8m)
- up to 6 storeys* (equal to 19.2m)
- up to 8 storeys* (equal to 25.6m)
- up to 10 storeys* (equal to 32m)
- * indicative location for tallest element

**Some, but not all, buildings could reach this height in these areas. Not all buildings should reach the maximum height. All new development will be subject to consideration against the wider development plan and local townscape issues.*

All storey heights are assumed as 3.2m for Red Cow, any commercial storeys would need to be accommodated within the stated total height limit

455
homes120
dph7,000m²
non-
residential
space7,900m²
parking

Example layout

The example layout below shows one way that intensification of the site could come forward. The scheme assumes re-provision of the station surface car park in a multi-storey form to the north of Isambard Parade. Ground floors across much of the site are assumed to be non-residential. Heights for each building are indicated, demonstrating the varied approach to massing required for each block.

Site capacity

The example layout generates a gross figure of 455 homes and over 7,000 sqm of non-residential space. If the southern section of the site was redeveloped as student housing the unit numbers would increase to support a potential net total figure of 484 homes.

POTENTIAL	TOTAL		Dwellings	GDA	Site area	FAR	DPH	Parking
	GEA m2	GEA sqft						
Residential (dwellings)	45,526	490,032	455	52,612	1.50	3.51	304	
Residential Upper (GEA)								
Residential Ground (GEA)								
Non-residential	7,086	76,273						
Parking	7,884	84,863						

315

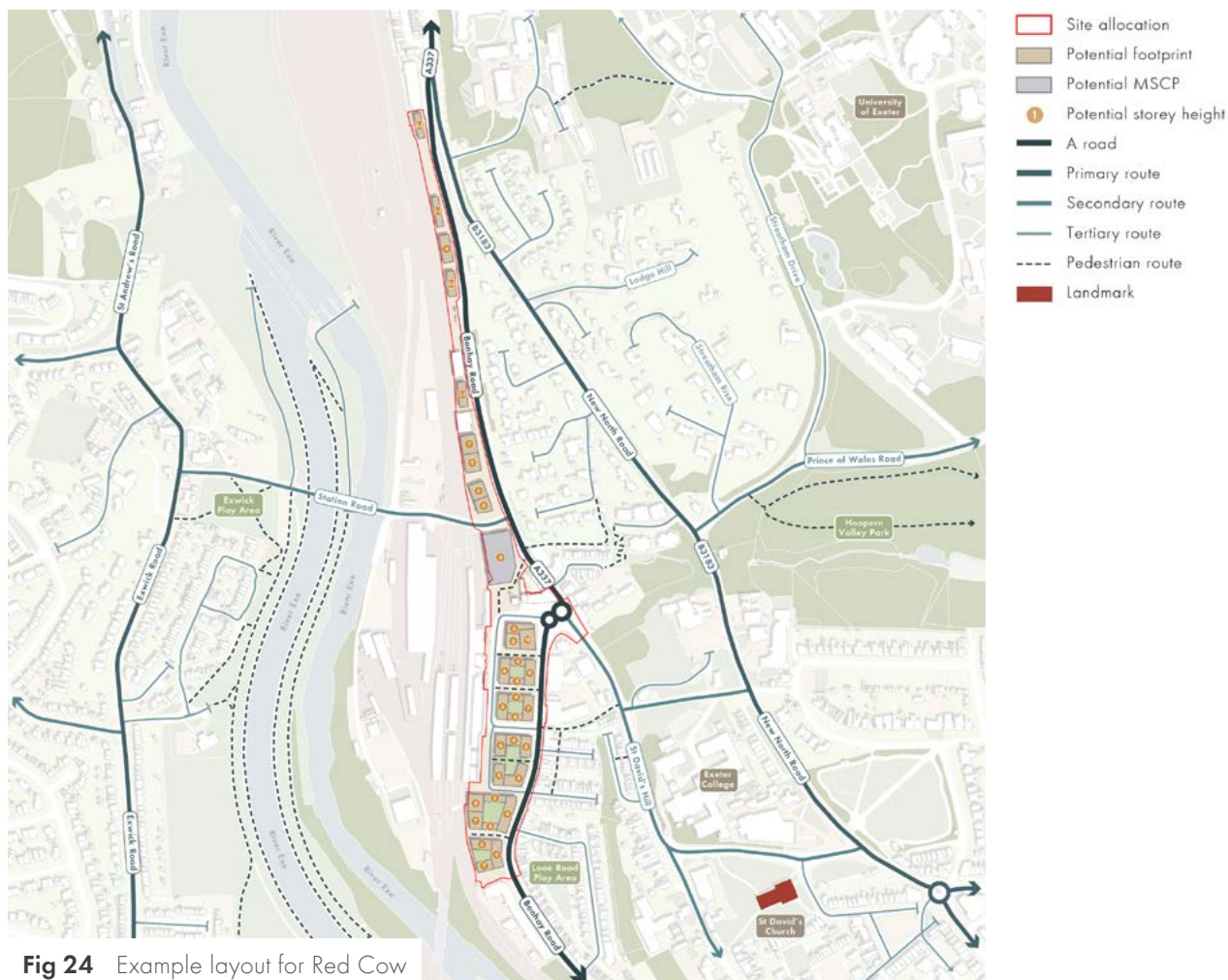


Fig 24 Example layout for Red Cow

Views

This spread illustrates the key views most relevant to the Red Cow site taken from the Skyline and Views Study, others will need to be considered at planning application stage. The massing of an example scheme is included in purple to illustrate how development of appropriate scale and massing could sit within each view (it does not represent a proposal or developed scheme design). Landmarks identified in the Skyline and Views Study are shown in red. These views are generated using a terrain model. It is important to note that the model shows the maximum visibility of any buildings in the view. In reality, the incidence of trees would reduce what can actually be seen. However trees are often seasonal and may not be permanent (note Tree Preservation Orders would offer an element of safeguarding against tree loss).

The massing and height limits outlined for the Red Cow site ensure any massing stays well clear of conflicting with any views of the Cathedral. The massing allows views across the river valley to maintain the layering of topography to be read with built form in the city centre separate to that layered into the valley floor at Red Cow.

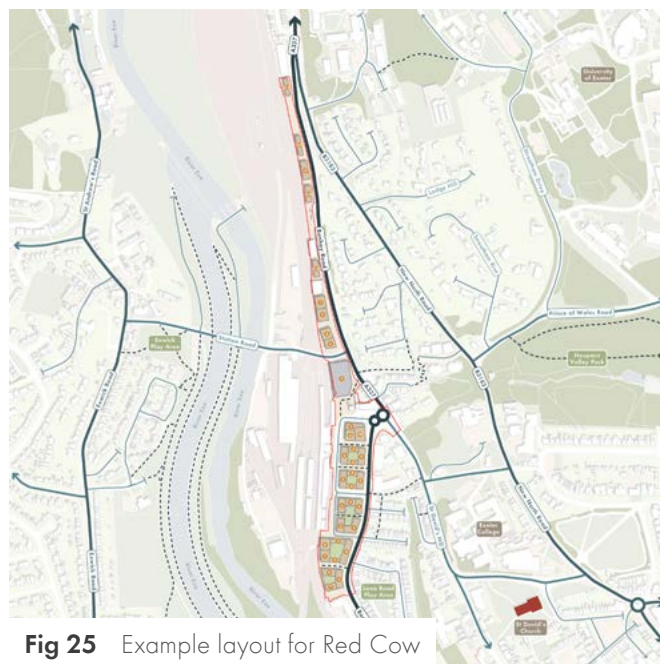


Fig 25 Example layout for Red Cow

Fig 27 Key View C01 from the top of Rougemont Castle/Exeter Castle looking west towards Exeter St David's Station

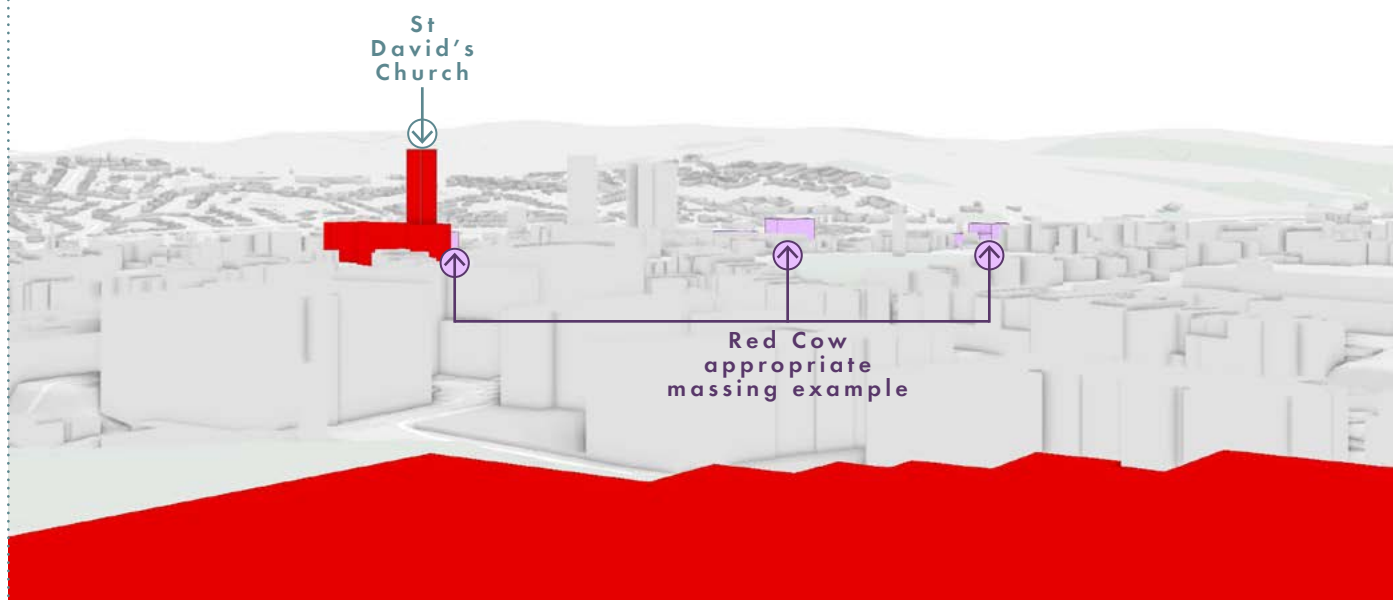


Fig 28 Key View WH02 from Higher Exwick Hill view towards the city centre and overlooking the Exe Valley and Exeter St David's Station

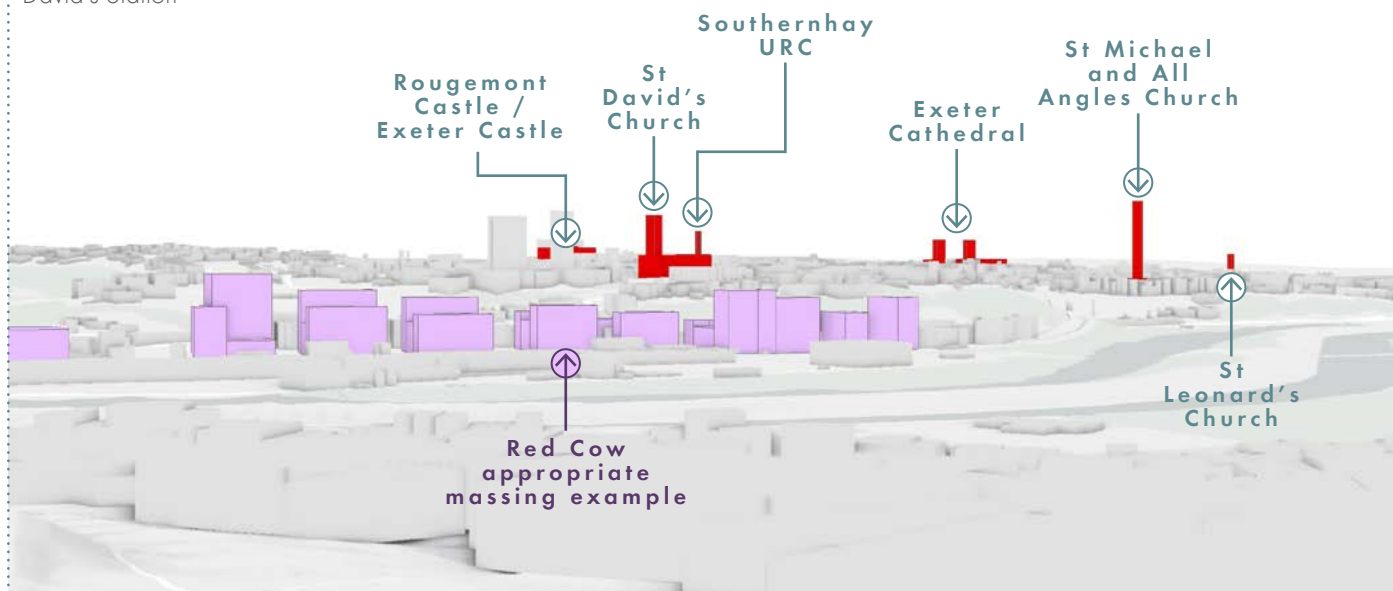


Fig 26 View from rail line looking south from just north of Exeter St David's Station





View looking north along River Exe showing Exe Bridge South



The Medieval Exe Bridge on the north side of the River Exe



View from rail line looking over the Riverside Leisure Centre to the Cathedral



Holiday Inn and St Michael's and All Angels Church on the north side of the river

1.5 West Gate

Location

West Gate is an area of potential enhancement straddling the River Exe identified in the Liveable Exeter initiative. For this exercise the 2.3 ha Exe Bridges Retail Park sitting south of the River Exe and adjacent to Exeter St Thomas station is the focus as it is a draft allocation in the Exeter Plan. As one of the key gateways into the city centre, the development of this area presents an important opportunity to create an impressive and memorable arrival experience for visitors arriving into Exeter St Thomas. The development area is defined by Cowick Street to the west and north, Alphington Street to the east, and the railway to the south. Currently, the area comprises a mixture of retail and food and beverage units with a large surface carpark sitting adjacent. The leisure centre sits to the south-east of West Gate, with the Medieval Exe Bridge, a scheduled monument, sitting across the River Exe to the north.

Character

- The area comprises low lying land in the river valley, with the rail line running along the south-western edge of the site, with the River Exe enclosing the site to the north.
- With the site sitting adjacent to St Thomas station, it allows for ease of mobility for the surrounding low-rise residential character, primarily composed of Victorian terraces to the south and east.
- The Exeter St Thomas Station building, sitting at the western edge of the site, is grade II listed and of strong historic character.

Constraints & opportunities

- A key consideration will be opportunities to enhance the views of the Cathedral from the rail line, with scope to frame a series of views. Other views from Barley Valley Nature Reserve and Dunsford Road / Cowick Street should also be considered.
- St Thomas station will be an important consideration for informing appropriate building heights given its proximity.
- The Cowick Street Conservation Area, sitting to the west will also be an important consideration for informing appropriate building heights in this area.
- The adjacency of the rail line will require buildings to be set back in some parts of the site.
- The site sits in Flood Zone 3 so any new development should not include residential rooms on the ground floor.
- Opportunity to provide mixed use development through the re-provision of existing ground floor retail with residential above.

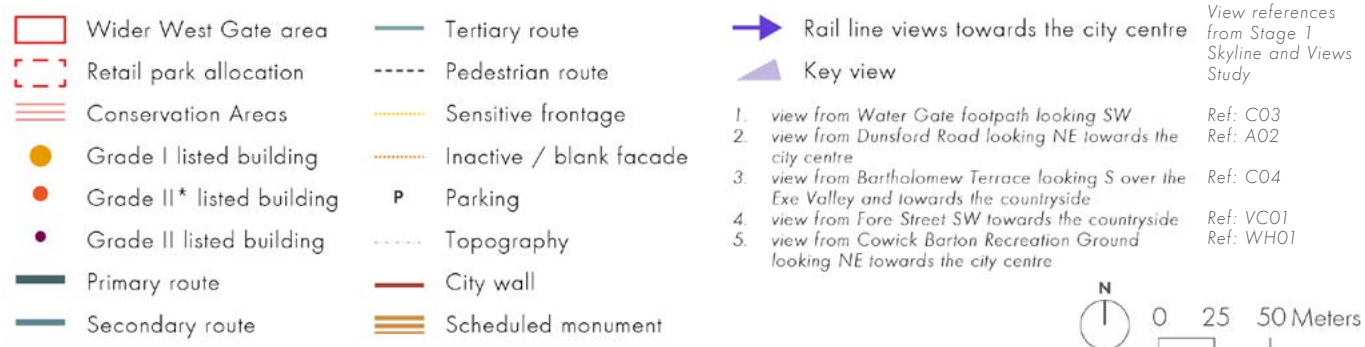


Fig 29 Constraints and opportunities plan for West Gate

Heights

There is the potential for six storey development to frame routes at the north of the site, which would prevent any over-shadowing of development. Some eight storey elements could be included in this stretch. Taller elements should be stepped away from the surrounding lower rise buildings, with the crescendo towards the centre of the frontage along Alphington Street.

Development on the southern part of the site should be limited to 4 storeys to support the setting of the historic station, while allowing natural light to flood shared amenity spaces. Sensible consideration to design could allow for up to 5 storeys in specific places for visual interest through variation.

Grain

The grain and positioning of blocks needs careful consideration to make the most of opportunities to retain viewpoints and ensure the massing allows visual breaks. It will be important to angle the breaks between blocks to support clear framed views of the Cathedral towers. Varied building heights within blocks should be arranged to present an attractive edge and welcome to the city.

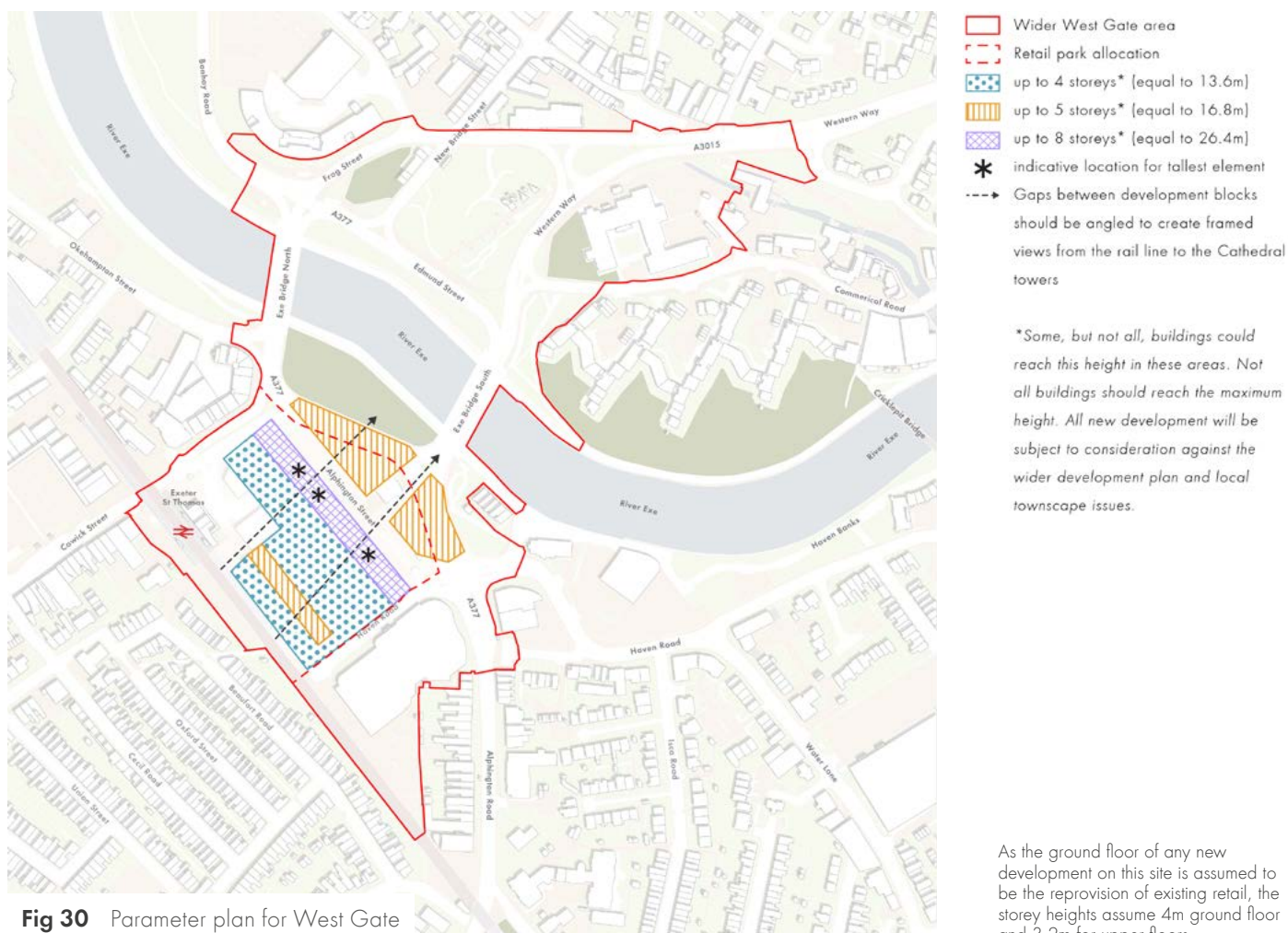


Fig 30 Parameter plan for West Gate

201
homes88
dph4,300m²
non-
residential
space

Example layout

The example layout below shows one way that development of the site could come forward. The scheme assumes re-provision of retail uses on the ground floor, as appropriate uses within Flood Zone 3. Some ground floor units should include shared residential spaces such as refuse and bike storage. Upper floors are comprised of mix-tenure residential units.

Site capacity

The example layout for the Retail Park site generates 201 homes and 4,338 sqm of non-residential space. The block structure shown would allow for reconsideration of highway alignments if appropriate and creates space for potential new development on the north side of the site.

POTENTIAL	TOTAL			GDA	Site area	FAR	DPH
	GEA m2	GEA sqft	Dwellings				
Residential (dwellings)	20,129	216,667	201	24,467	2.30	1.06	88
Residential Upper (GEA)							
Residential Ground (GEA)							
Retail / F&B (GEA)	4,338	46,694					

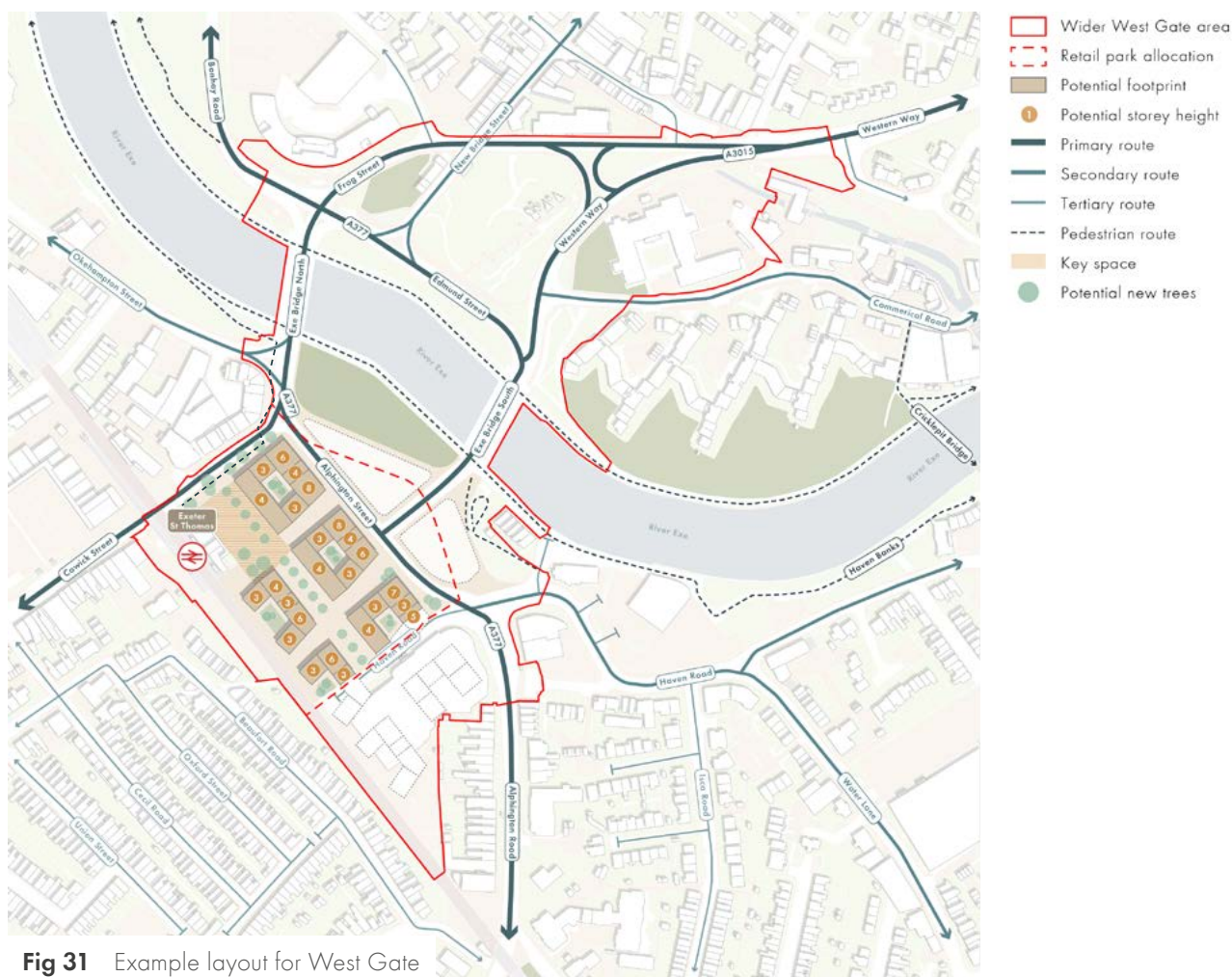


Fig 31 Example layout for West Gate

Views

This spread illustrates the key views most relevant to the West Gate site taken from the Skyline and Views Study, others will need to be considered at planning application stage. The massing of an example scheme is included in purple to illustrate how development of appropriate scale and massing could sit within each view (it does not represent a proposal or developed scheme design). Landmarks identified in the Skyline and Views Study are shown in red. These views are generated using a terrain model. It is important to note that the model shows the maximum visibility of any buildings in the view. In reality, the incidence of trees would reduce what can actually be seen. However trees are often seasonal and may not be permanent (note Tree Preservation Orders would offer an element of safeguarding against tree loss). The example massing helps to open up new framed views towards the Cathedral, as shown from the studied views below.

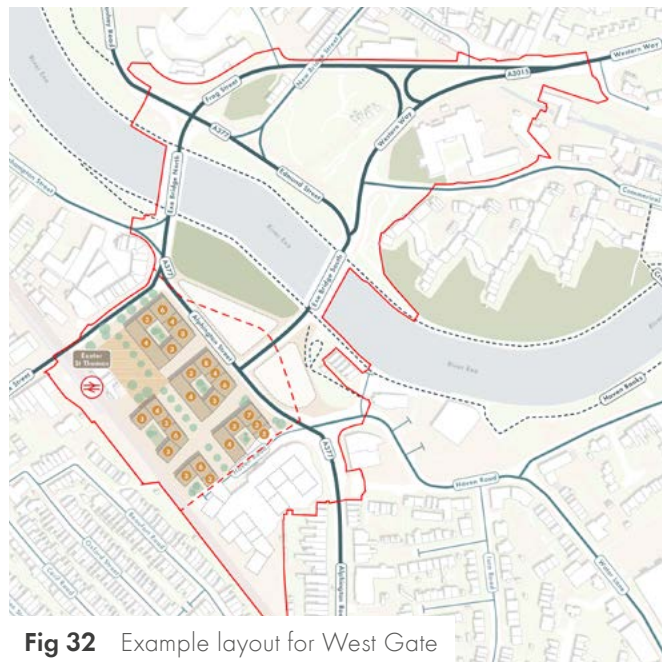


Fig 32 Example layout for West Gate

Fig 33 Key View VC01 looking south west down Fore Street towards the countryside beyond



Fig 34 Key View CO4 from Bartholomew Terrace looking out over the countryside



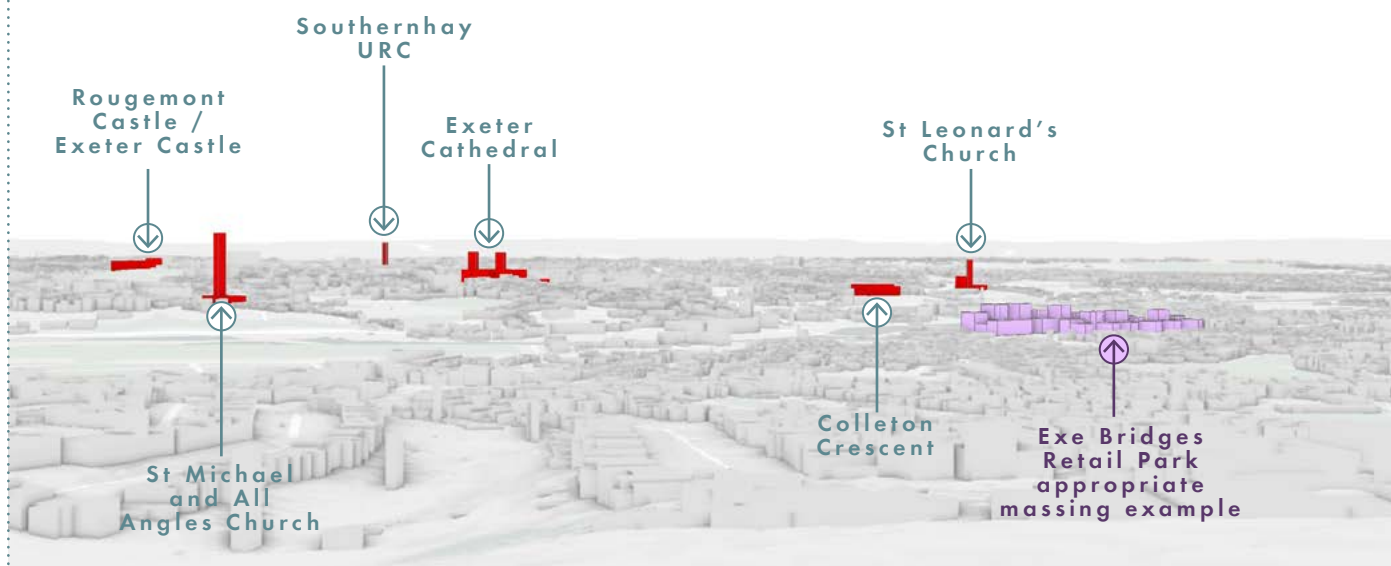
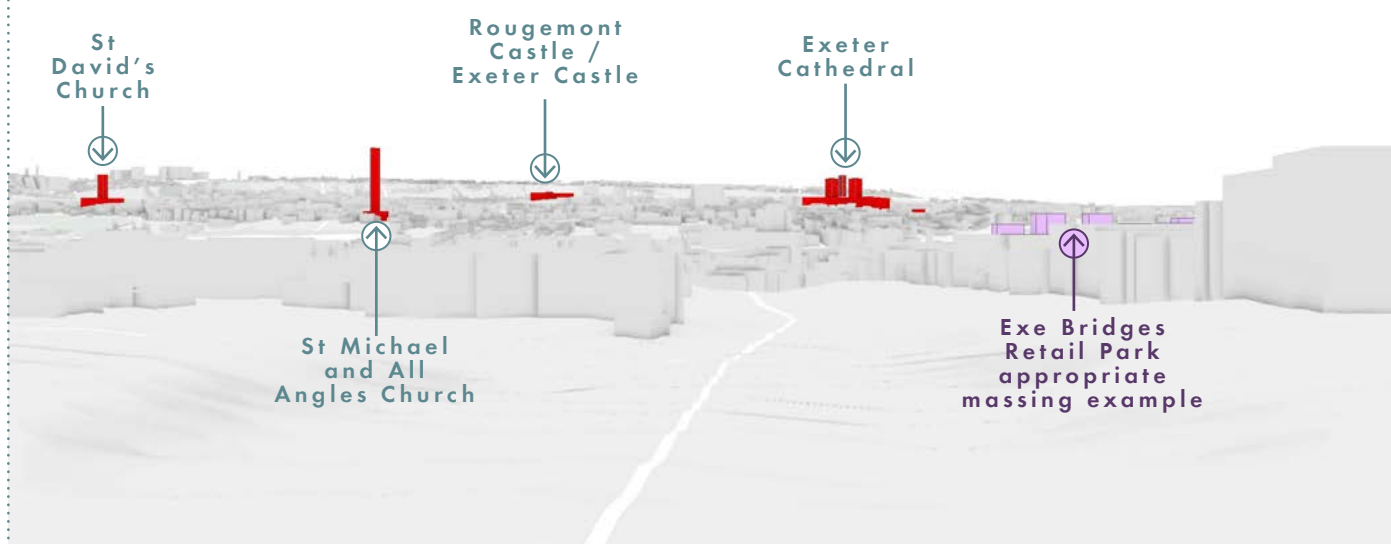
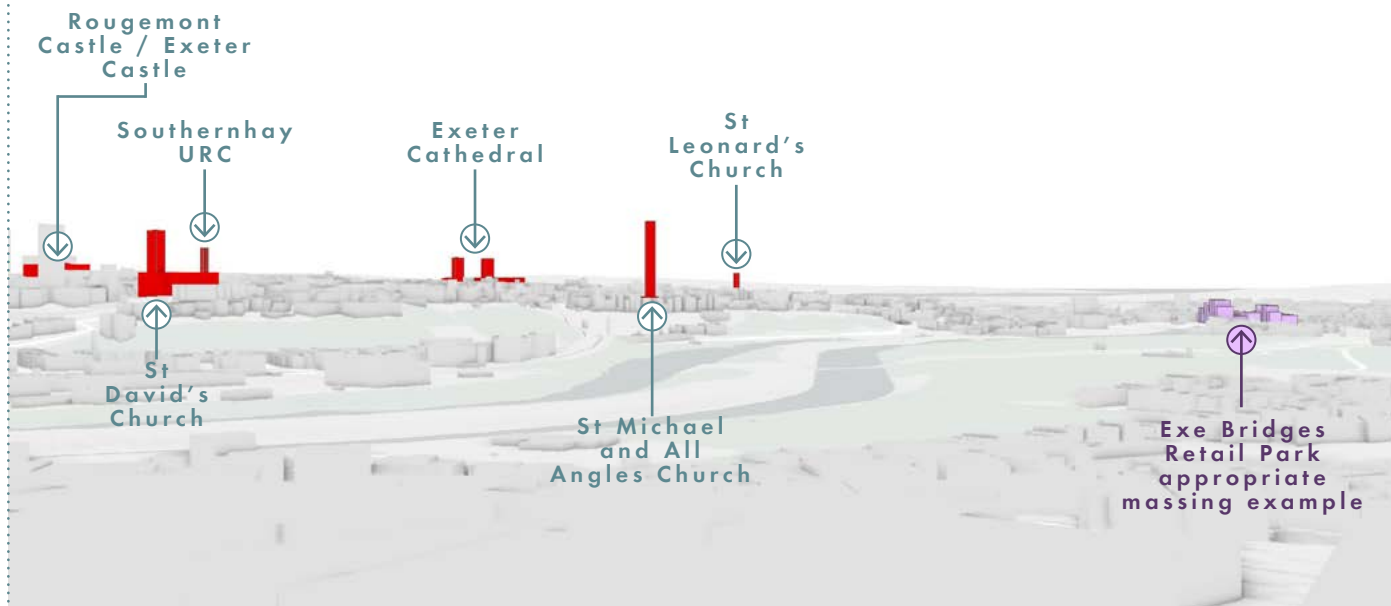
Fig 35 Key View S01 from Barley Valley Nature Reserve looking east across the city**Fig 36** Key View A02 looking down Dunsford Road view looking into the city centre**Fig 37** Key View WH02 from Higher Exwick Hill looking back towards the city centre and over the Exe Valley

Fig 38 View from Cowick Street/St. Thomas station

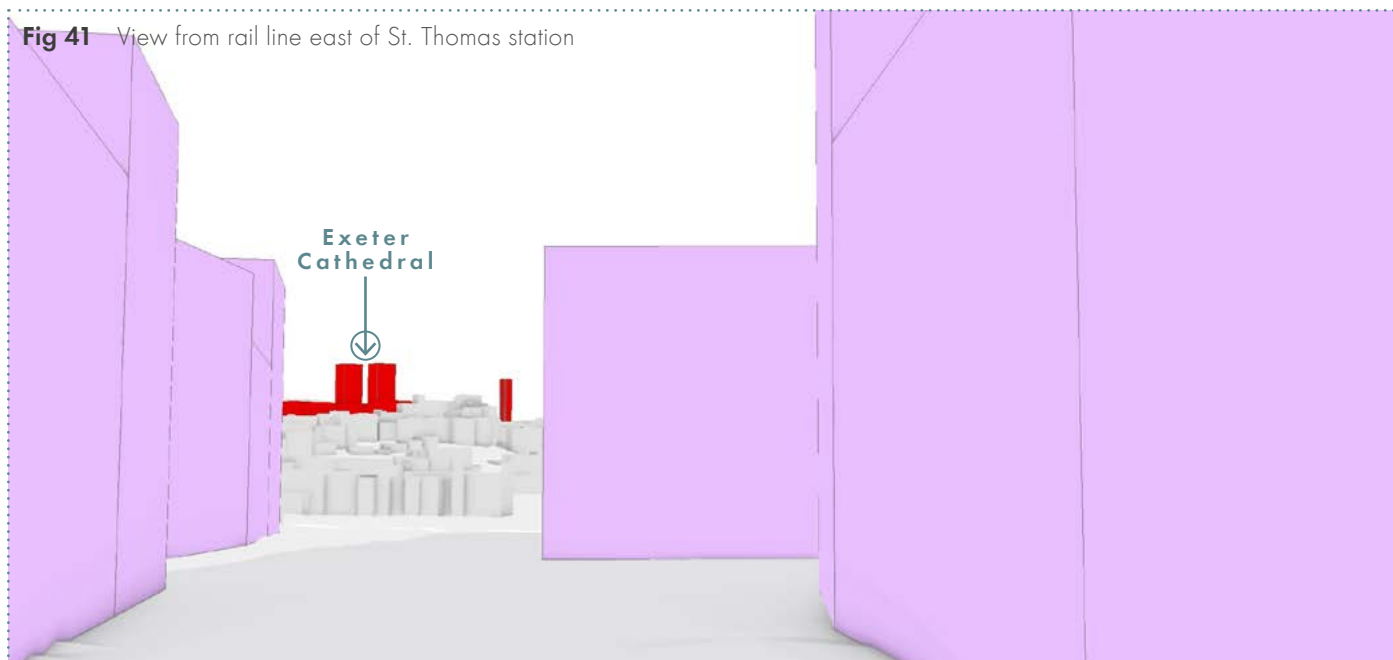
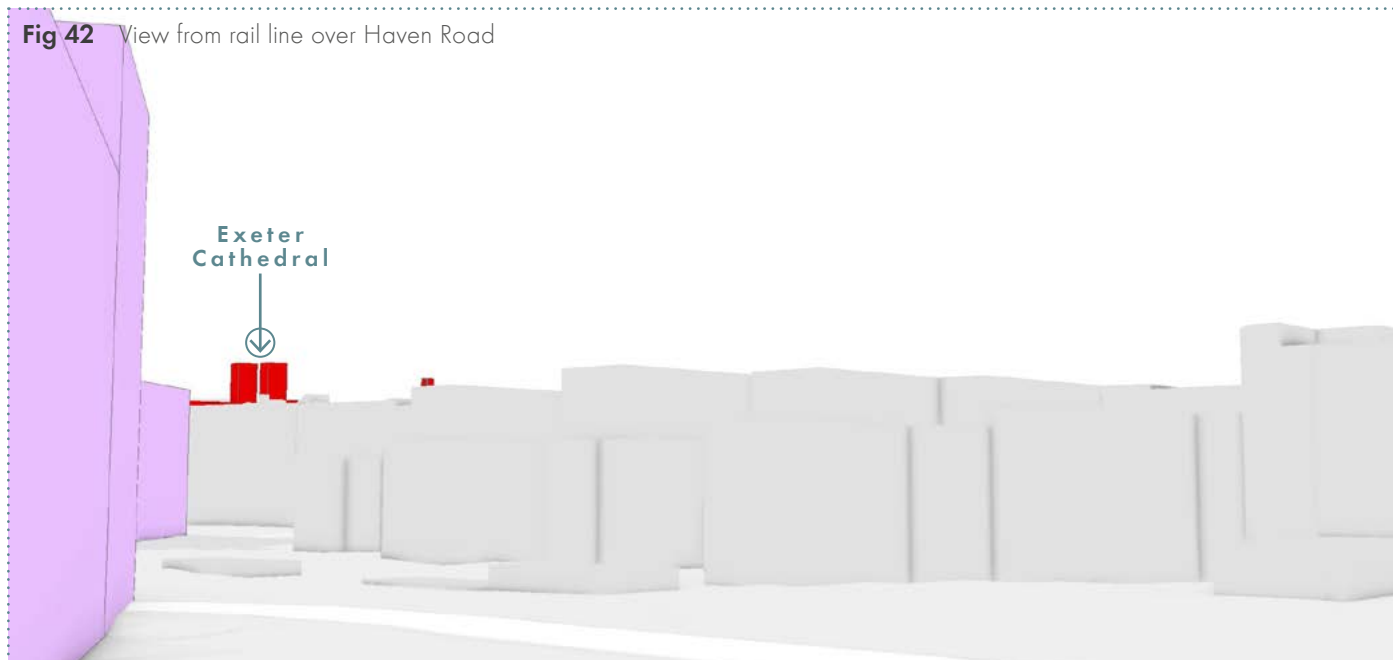


Fig 39 View from St. Thomas platform - showing first corridor through the development



Fig 40 View through second route corridor taken from the far eastern end of St. Thomas platform



Fig 41 View from rail line east of St. Thomas station**Fig 42** View from rail line over Haven Road

The height limits and massing seek to balance the need for redevelopment of the site and key views to the Cathedral. At present, views of the Cathedral from the rail line are possible either side of the site. The proposed massing would allow for new framed views to be established through the site.



View within the campus showing the Library building and the Medical School



Historic campus frontage on to Heavitree Road



Large green courtyard area outside the Library Building



View from north of College House showing green space which backs on to Baring Crescent

1.6 St Luke's Campus

Location

St Luke's Campus is situated to the east of Exeter city centre. The site is being allocated for transformational employment linked to the research and development work of Exeter University and Royal Devon University Healthcare Trust. It sits between two historic approach roads - Heavitree Road and Magdalen Road - which both lead to the historic city gates.

Character

- The existing context is primarily residential streets, with many period properties, including Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian terraced, semi-detached and detached houses. These buildings often feature intricate detailing, such as sash windows, ironwork, and ornamental brickwork.
- Larger non-residential buildings such as Waitrose and Heavitree hospital are to the north of the campus.
- The campus and surrounding area have a leafy environment, with tree-lined streets.
- The campus itself has buildings from a variety of eras. The site was extensively bombed during the second world war which led to the main buildings being repaired or reconstructed. The expansion of the university introduced late 20th century buildings to the site. These contrast to the older Victorian buildings, adding to its diverse character.
- Historic frontages face out towards Heavitree Road, as well as internally to face the main quad. Some of these buildings have suffered degradation in the past few years, but their historic architectural character prevails.
- The campus has some inward looking courtyards, creating inactive frontages along streets.
- The site is predominantly low-rise. The tallest building on the site is the South Cloisters building, at 4 storeys, however, the majority of the buildings are 2-3 storeys.

Constraints & opportunities

- The northern and westerly sides of the site sit within the St Leonard's Conservation Area.
- Baring Crescent, to the east of the site, is lined by grade II listed buildings, which were built to overlook the Cathedral and wider city.
- The oldest university building, the North Cloister, was built in 1853 and is locally listed. The Chapel was built shortly after in 1862 and is also locally listed.
- The site is situated on relatively high ground, and has long range views towards surrounding countryside from the top of College Road looking south, Heavitree Road looking west, and Magdalen Road looking west.
- There are a lot of mature, healthy trees, planting and green space currently on the campus.

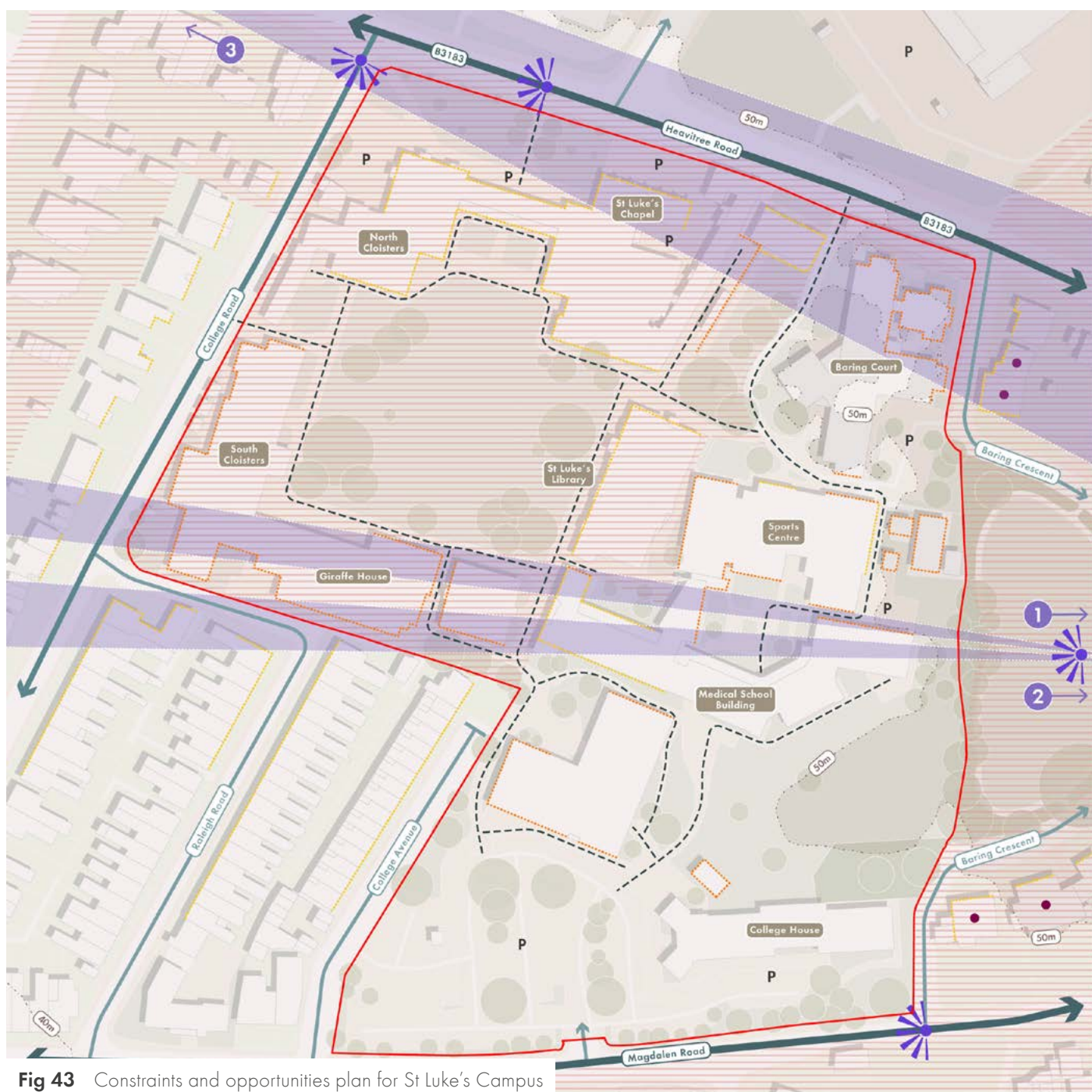


Fig 43 Constraints and opportunities plan for St Luke's Campus

Heights

Given the prevailing low-rise and historic character of the area, height is restricted to mid-rise on this site. The ground rises from west to east across the site, so buildings on the eastern edge will have more impact on views from Baring Crescent than those on the west. Where possible, refurbishment or retrofit / building additional storeys onto existing buildings should be considered before redevelopment, to restrict embodied carbon.

The eastern side of the site offers the most potential for redevelopment due to the poorer quality and inefficient buildings here. However, this also impacts views from Baring Crescent. Height should be restricted in the view corridors towards the Cathedral and St Michael and All Angels Church to protect the historic setting of Baring Crescent and its views towards the Cathedral and other landmarks. Please note the heights shown do not take into account all heritage impacts.

Grain

The grain of the site is composed largely of perimeter blocks, differing from the surrounding area which has a finer grain of terraces and detached homes running parallel to the streets. There is an opportunity to introduce some smaller blocks to integrate into the grain of the local area, as well as retaining the larger block pattern to keep the campus character of the site. However, proposals that retain existing buildings should be considered before demolition and redevelopment.

Gaps between building should be designed to retain long distance views to the surrounding countryside, and towards the Cathedral and St Michael and All Angels Church.

A permeable, legible route between Heavitree Road and Magdalen Road is currently missing from the site, the proposed buildings' grain should permit new pedestrian routes through the site to improve walkability.



44,000m²
employment
space

1.23
FAR

Potential for...
3,000m²
parking

Example scheme

Buildings should predominantly be between 3-5 storeys. The tallest building appropriate for this site could be 8 storeys, as a landmark building mirroring the existing University of Exeter Physic's building.

Site capacity

Development potential here could create a gross total of 44,000m². This option removes the hard-standing surface car park. There is potential to incorporate 3000m² of parking within ground floor of new buildings fronting Magdalen Road, this would reduce development potential to 41,000m².

PROPOSED	TOTAL		GDA	Site area	FAR	Parking
	GEA m2	GEA sqft				
Employment* (GEA)	44,446	478,412	44,446	2.87	1.55	
Parking (GEA)	3,057	32,905				122

* Note: Employment uses will be comprised of university teaching buildings



Fig 45 Example layout for St Luke's Campus

Views

St Luke's Campus is not in close proximity to any of the city's landmark buildings, however it can be seen from some long distance views. Of these, the site is most notable from Ludwell Valley Park, where it can be seen amongst Exeter's other key landmark buildings. Locally, the view from Baring Crescent will be altered by development on the campus. Due to its historic planning as a picturesque view, this view must be carefully considered.

The potential massing shown allows the retention of the view to the Cathedral from the central part of the crescent. Careful consideration will be required to maintain the view of the Cathedral towers. Due to considerable planting on Baring Crescent, the towers are only currently visible from upper floors, these views may be further reduced from the street with potential development.

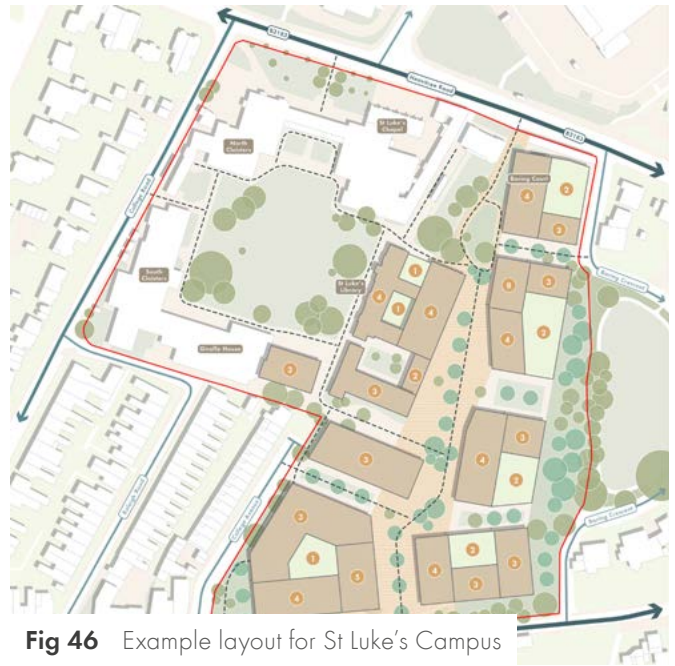


Fig 46 Example layout for St Luke's Campus

Fig 47 Indicative view from Baring Crescent towards Exeter Cathedral and St Michael and All Angels Church, as well as the surrounding countryside. However, foliage does obstruct this view, therefore the image does not necessarily accurately represent the visibility.

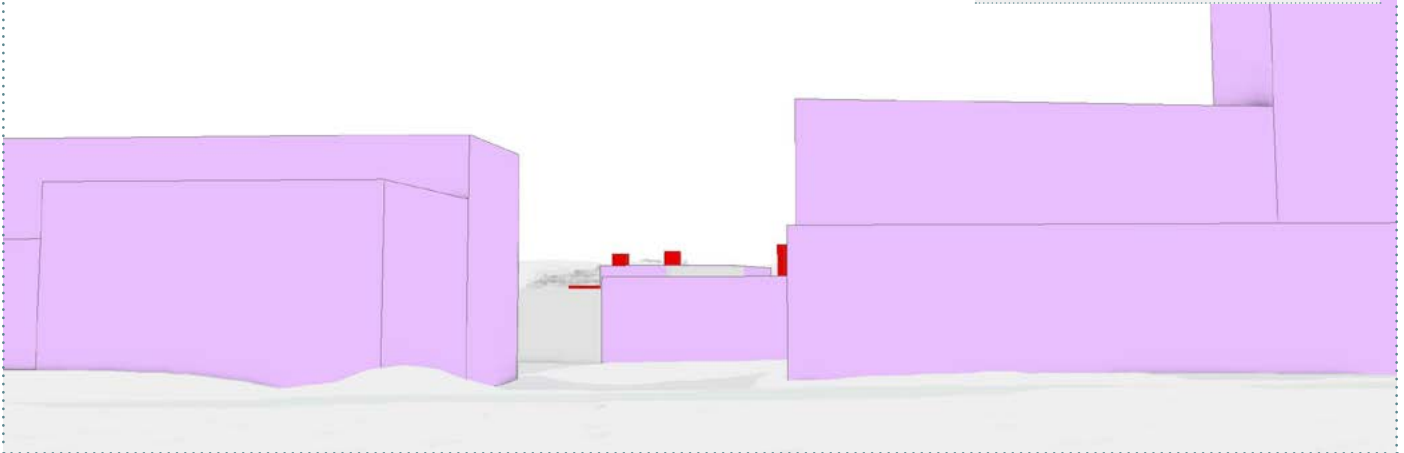


Fig 48 Indicative view from Baring Crescent's second floor window towards Exeter Cathedral and St Michael and All Angels Church, as well as the surrounding countryside. However, foliage does obstruct this view, therefore the image does not necessarily accurately represent the visibility.

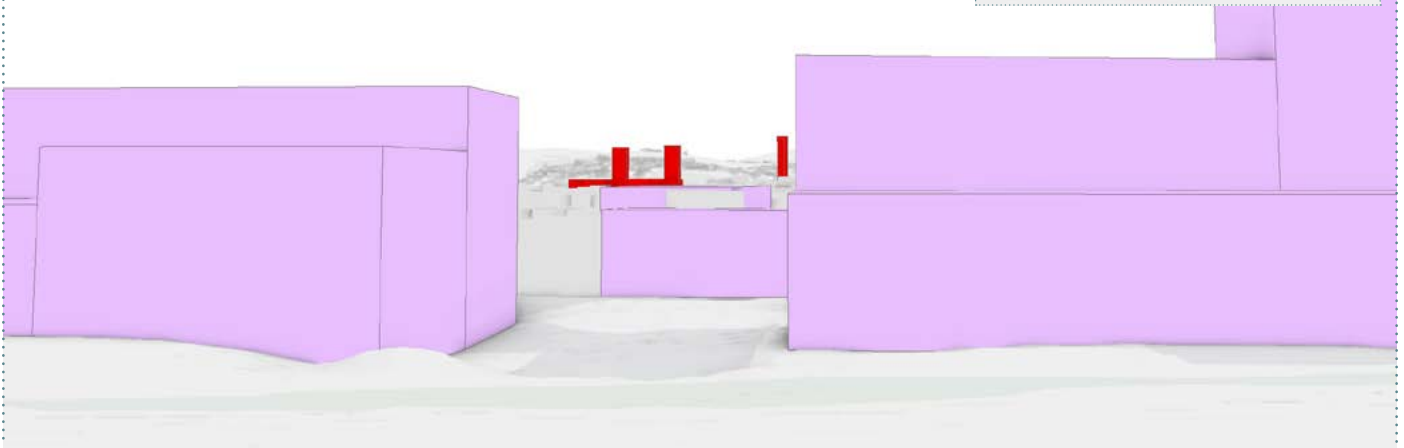
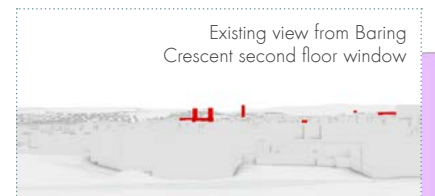
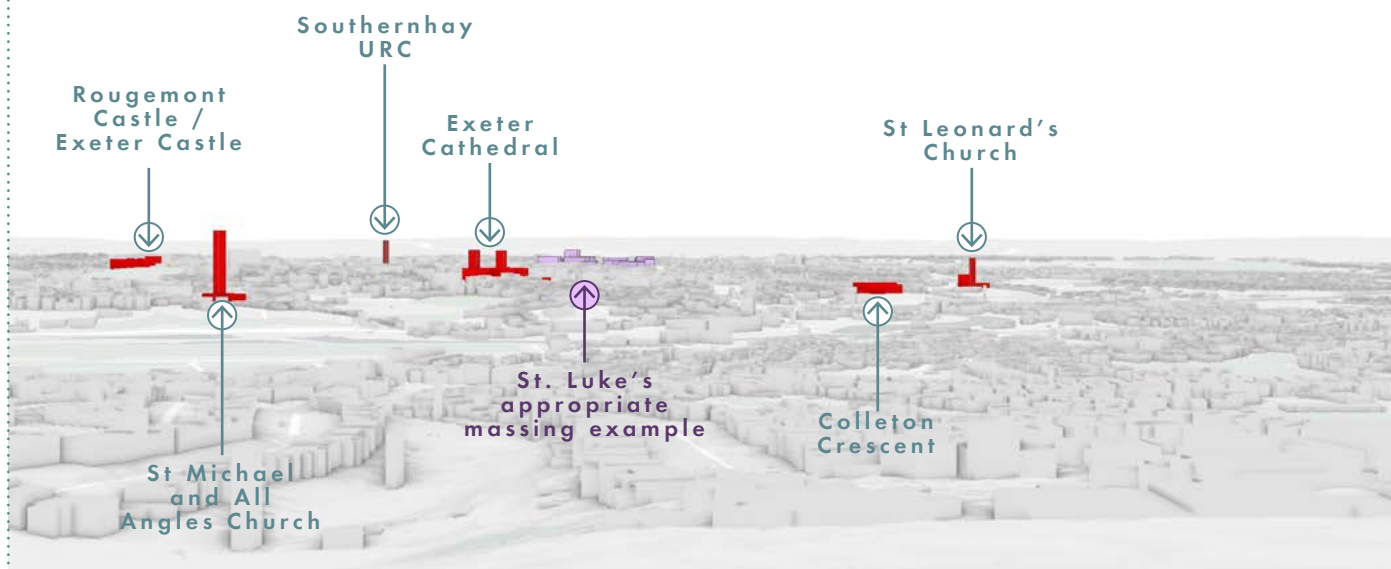


Fig 49 Key View SO1 from Barley Valley Nature Reserve looking east across the city





View looking east across the junction



View looking alongside the city wall and pedestrian bridge



View looking north west across the junction to the White Ensign Club and George's Meeting House buildings



Housing on the southern side of the junction backs on to the site

1.7 South Gate

Location

South Gate is an approximately 1.5 hectare site at the edge of the city centre, sitting immediately adjacent to the historic South Gate entry point to the city. It is positioned at a critical threshold, underscoring the necessity of crafting an impressive and memorable arrival experience for those entering Exeter. The site is currently dominated by the gyratory at the southern terminus of South Street and the western end of Holloway Street. The site encompasses the Magdalen Street car park, a homeless shelter, and a substantial area occupied by roads and associated infrastructure. The South Gate development should to create a vibrant, mixed-use neighbourhood that serves as a gateway to Exeter's city centre, improving the linkages between the city centre and the quay.

Character

- Vehicles and the gyratory dominate the street, creating a very hostile environment.
- There is some building frontage on the north of Magdalen Street, but narrow pavements provide a poor pedestrian experience.
- There is no building frontage within the site on the south of Magdalen Street, or where it turns south to join Holloway Street.
- There are poor quality buildings to the south of Holloway Street and the south western end of South Street, adjacent to the city wall.
- The city walls are visible, but are hidden by foliage and sit alongside the busy Western Way.
- There is an imprint in the ground of some of the historic gate footprint, but it is not well-celebrated.

Constraints & opportunities

- The site is within Southernhay and The Friars Conservation Area and adjacent to the City Centre Conservation Area.
- Opportunity to introduce a stronger street environment, public realm and better pedestrian connections across this area.
- Given this was the primary and ceremonial entrance to the city, there is a major opportunity to support greater appreciation of the city walls and historic South Gate.
- The linear view from Holloway Street up through the former gate to South Street is a key view and one which can be opened up and much enhanced by the redevelopment of this junction (this is not a historic view).
- The approach view of the Cathedral towers from Topsham Road will constrain the height of development to the east of the site.
- The view south down Southernhay out to the surrounding hills should be protected and could also be enhanced by the positioning of new development.

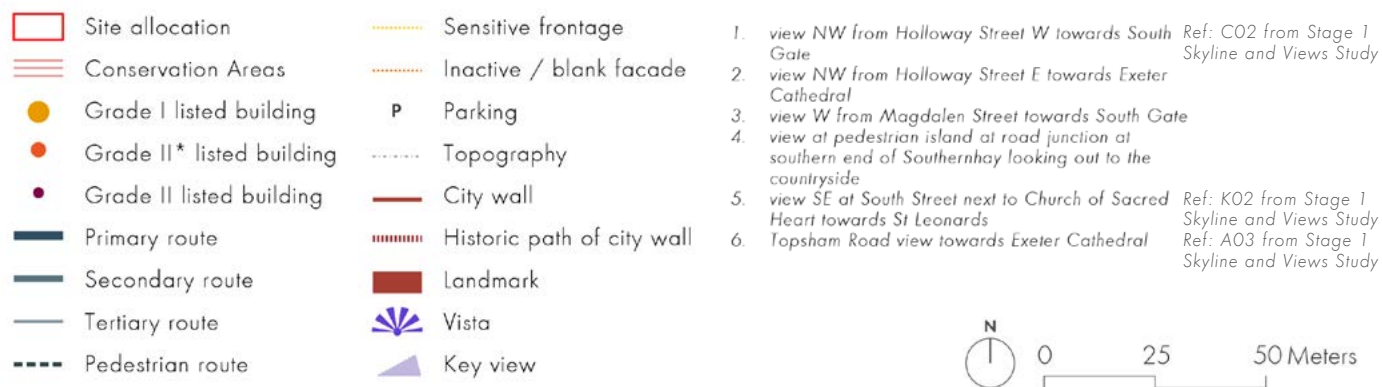


Fig 50 Constraints plan and opportunities for South Gate

Overview

This site is particularly sensitive given its location adjacent to the historic city gate and its relatively high elevation on the south east side of the city centre. The layout of blocks and the limits to heights have been set in order to: enhance existing approaches to South Gate and South Street from Magdalen Street and Holloway Street; maintain the historic view of the Cathedral towers from Topsham Road; and protect views out to the countryside from Southernhay East.

Heights

Heights to the east of the site are limited to 4 storeys in order to maintain the view of the Cathedral towers from Topsham Road. Greater heights may be possible to the west of the site, but these will need to be carefully arranged and tested to ensure views from the river are not overly disrupted, and that it responds appropriately

to the existing character of the area. Having a variety of heights that acknowledge the surrounding buildings will be important to carefully considered development here. The preferred option is to limit height to 6 storeys on this site to ensure the development is sensitive to views and its immediate context.

Grain

The grain of development on the site and within blocks will be critical to achieving a sensitive development. Opportunities to introduce a fine grain and permeability across the site should be maximised. Each block and building will need to work hard to respond to the character and grain of the surrounding urban fabric, whilst providing a strong frontage to a renewed gateway to the city. There is also an opportunity to create a more direct pedestrian route from Southernhay East to Friar's Gate, which leads to Colleton Crescent and The Quay.



Fig 51 Parameter plan for South Gate

81
homes54
dph1,200m²
commercial
space23
parking
spaces

Example scheme

The example layout below shows one way that intensification of the site could come forward. The scheme takes a worked up highways solution as a basis, however, alternative highways solutions could support an enhanced gateway and frame for development. The heights for each building are indicated within the preferred limits, demonstrating the varied approach to heights and massing required for each block.

Site capacity

The preferred option for heights generates 81 homes and 1,200 sqm of commercial space, as well as the option for 576 sqm of parking (equating to 23 spaces). This provides a sensitive approach to development at this historic site.

POTENTIAL	TOTAL			GDA	Site area	FAR	DPH	Parking
	GEA m2	GEA sqft	Dwellings					
Residential (dwellings)	8,084	87,015	81	9,306	1.49	0.62	54	
Residential Upper (GEA)								
Residential Ground (GEA)								
Non-residential	1,222	13,153						
Parking	576	6,200						23

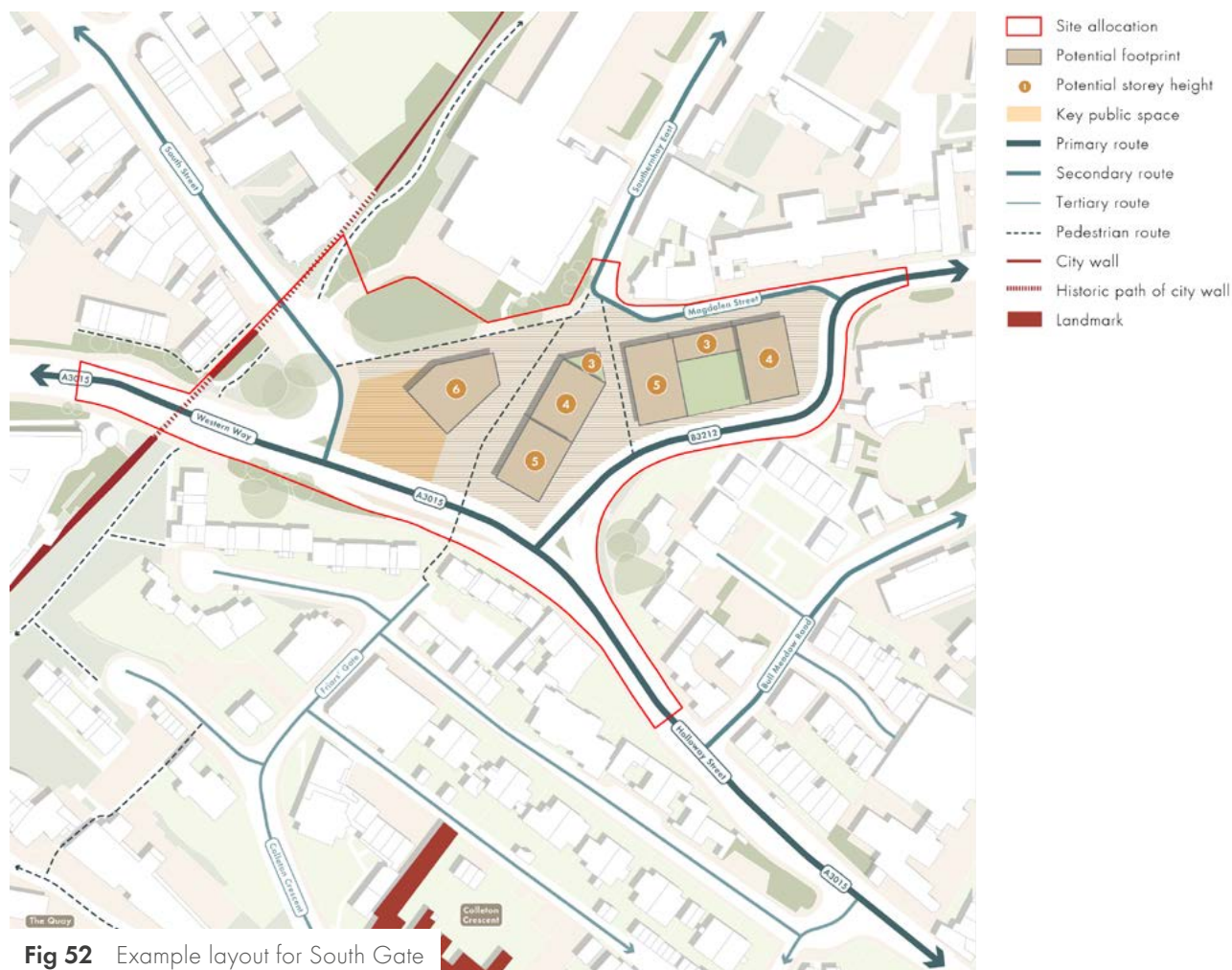


Fig 52 Example layout for South Gate

Initial capacity scenario

The initial starting point for the modelling was the capacity included in a previous draft of the Exeter Plan which suggested 170 homes. The team modelled the volume required to meet this capacity and then worked down towards an acceptable capacity in terms of potential impact on heritage assets. The scenario modelled here seeks to achieve the views through from Holloway Street and Southernhay East, as well as the view from Topsham Road to the Cathedral towers. Our recommendation would be to reduce the capacity figure for this site in the allocation to no more than 80.

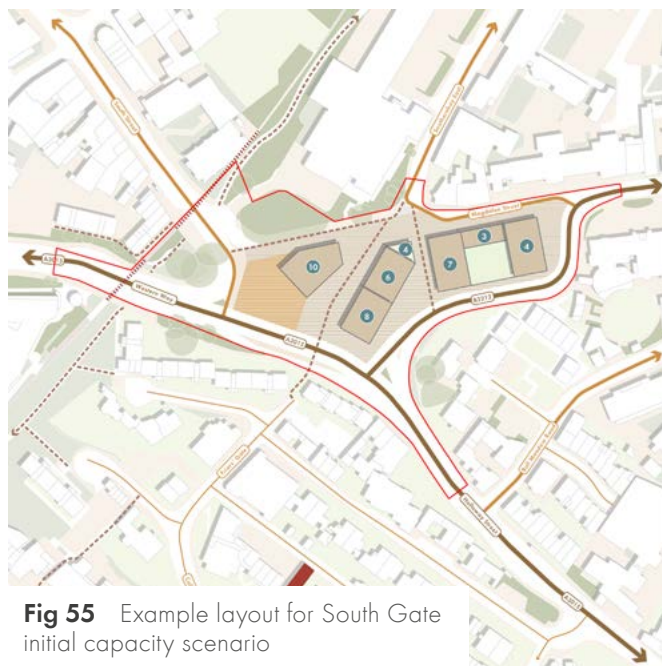


Fig 55 Example layout for South Gate initial capacity scenario

Fig 53 Key View S01 from Barley Valley Nature Reserve looking east across the city

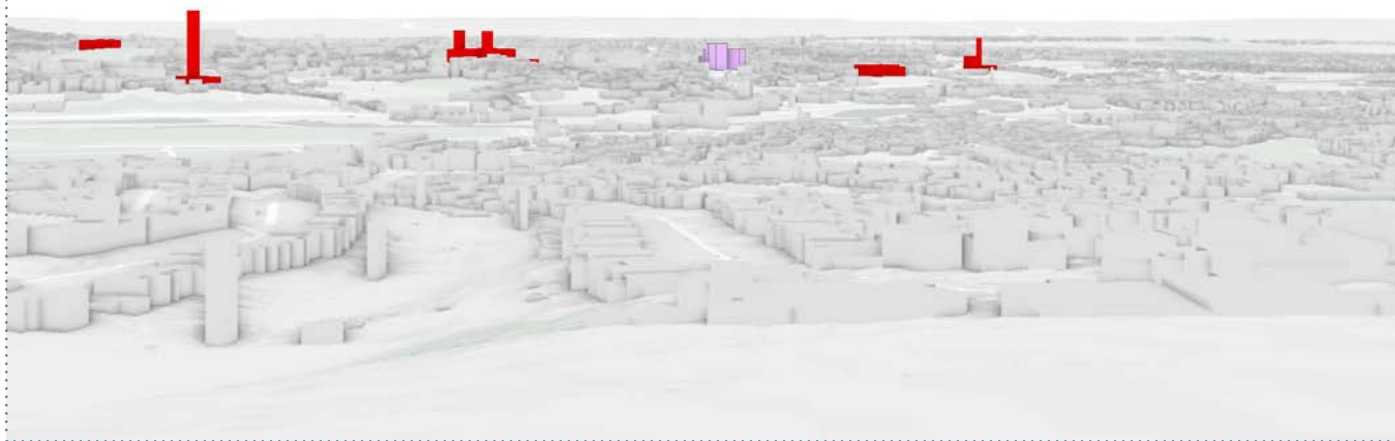


Fig 54 Key View A03 looking from Topsham Road towards Exeter Cathedral



Fig 58 View from Holloway Street across the site and up South Street

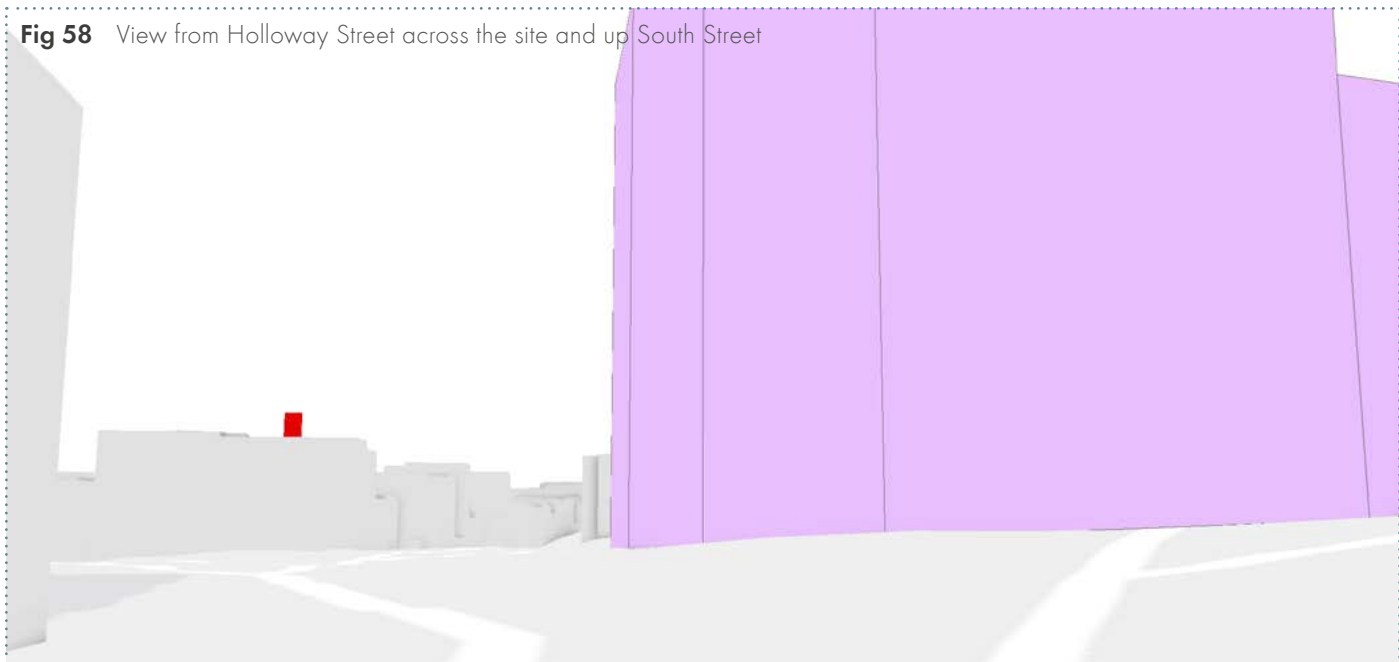


Fig 56 View looking south along Southernhay



Fig 57 Key View R01 from Riverside Park cycle path



Sensitive scenarios

This and the following spreads illustrates three height scenarios that have been assessed in order to understand the acceptable threshold point for height. The three options allow consideration of the heights and massing that could be accommodated to be sensitive to the immediate context and the key views crossing the site. The low and medium options would be sensitive to all elements but would not maximise the capacity within sensitive thresholds. The maximum option shown here is considered to be the tallest that should be considered. This option allows views of the Cathedral to be maintained and sensitively supported, whilst also supporting the view to St. Leonard's church. Any increase in height beyond this maximum option would disrupt key views and be out of context with the immediate character.

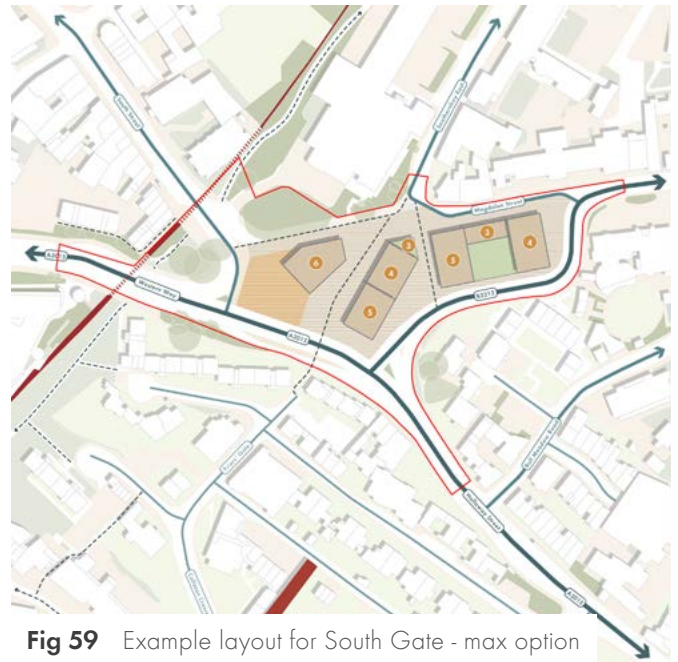


Fig 59 Example layout for South Gate - max option

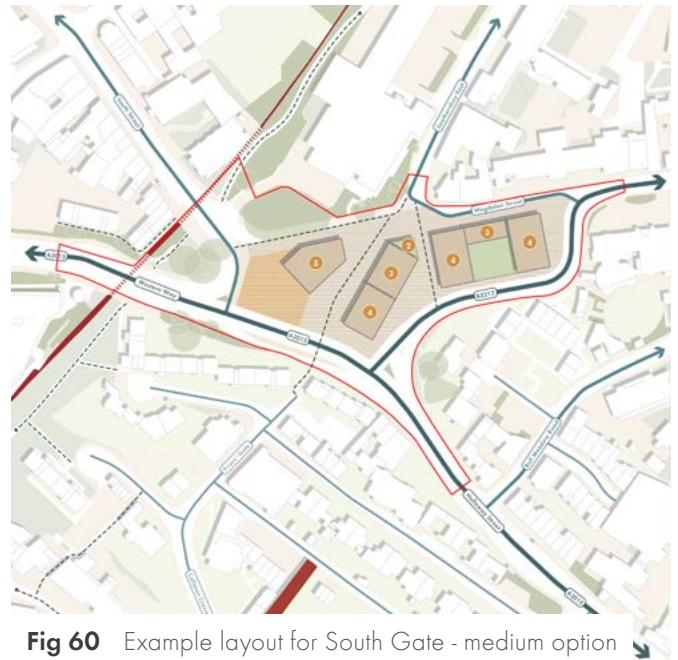


Fig 60 Example layout for South Gate - medium option

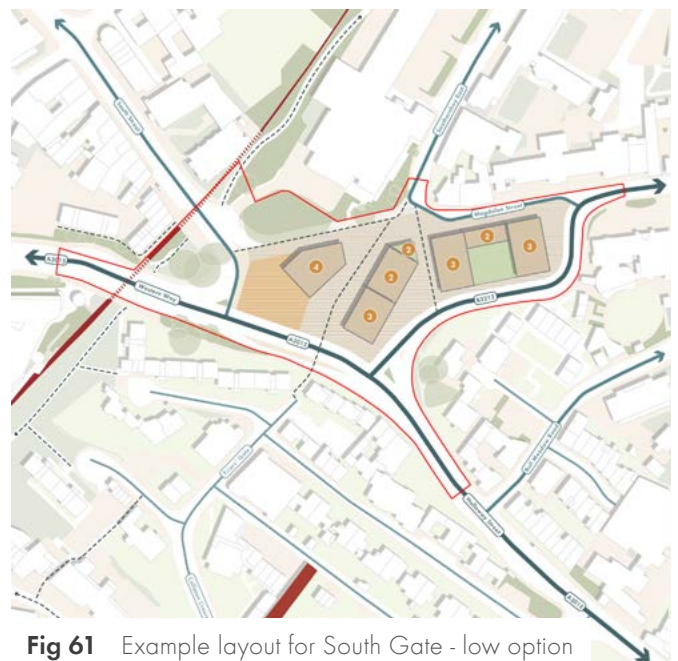


Fig 61 Example layout for South Gate - low option

Fig 62 Key View S02 from Barley Valley Nature Reserve looking east across the city, showing South Gate - max option

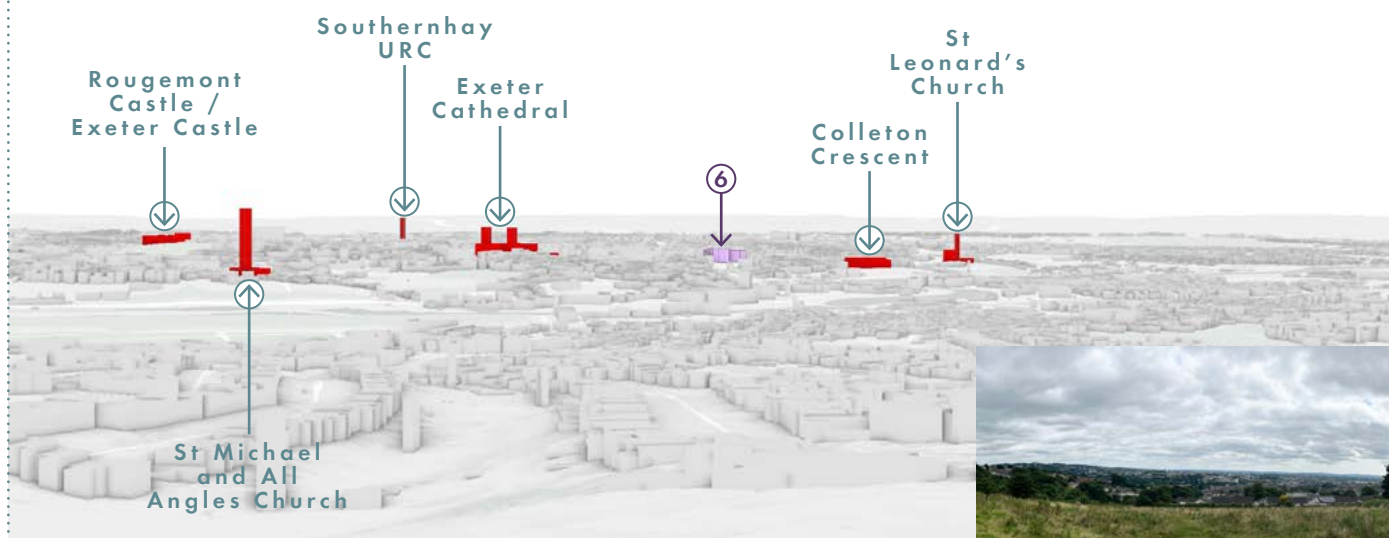


Fig 63 Key View S02 from Barley Valley Nature Reserve looking east across the city, showing South Gate - medium option

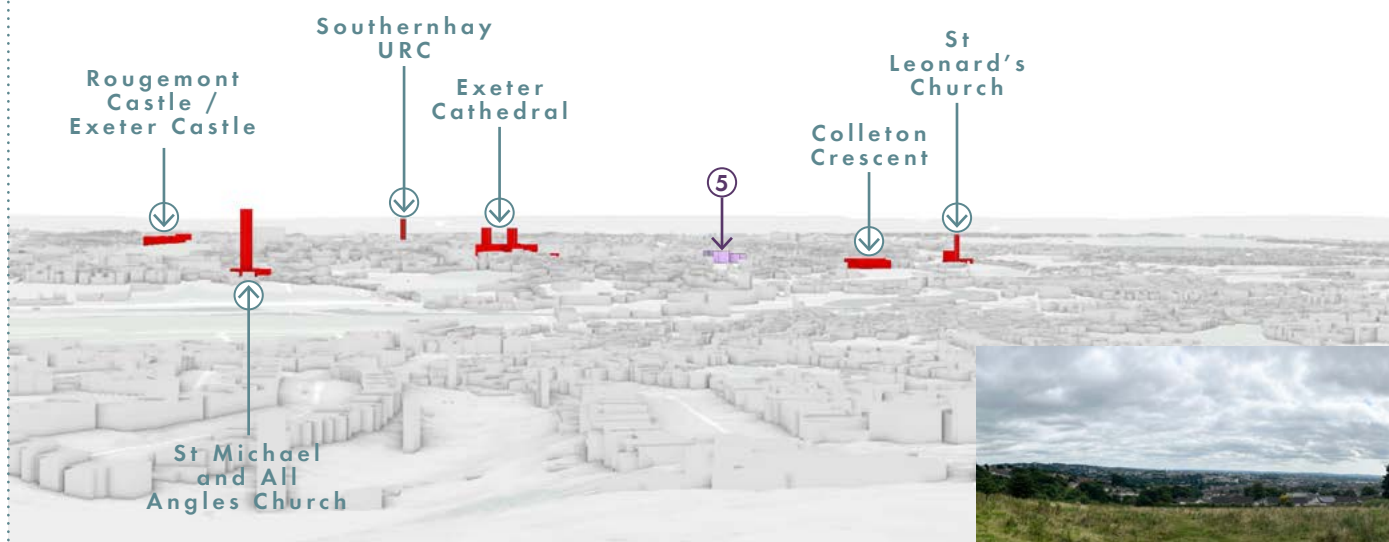


Fig 64 Key View S02 from Barley Valley Nature Reserve looking east across the city, showing South Gate - low option

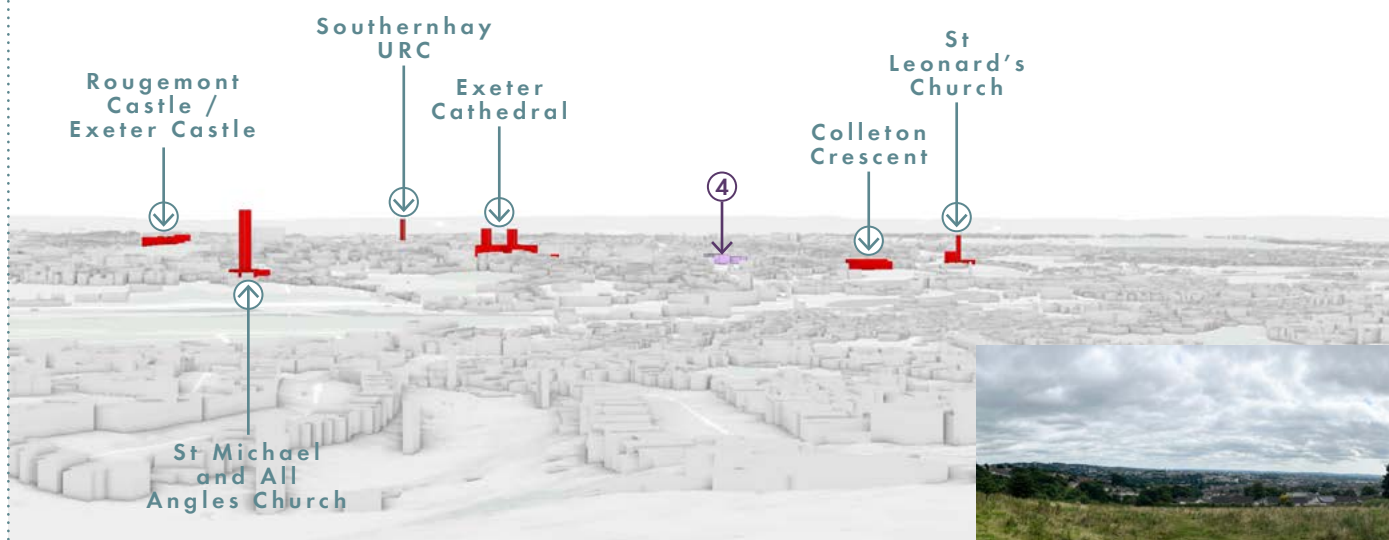


Fig 65 Key View K2 looking down South Street towards South Gate, showing South Gate - max option

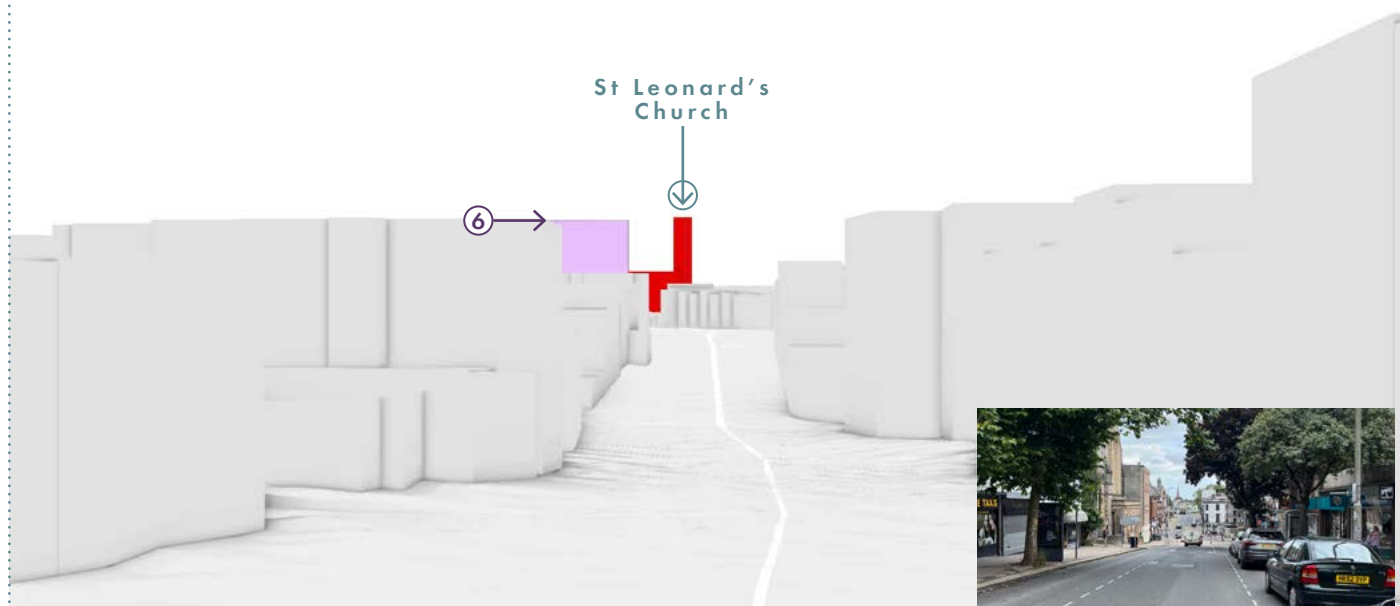


Fig 66 Key View K2 looking down South Street towards South Gate, showing South Gate - medium option



Fig 67 Key View K2 looking down South Street towards South Gate, showing South Gate - low option

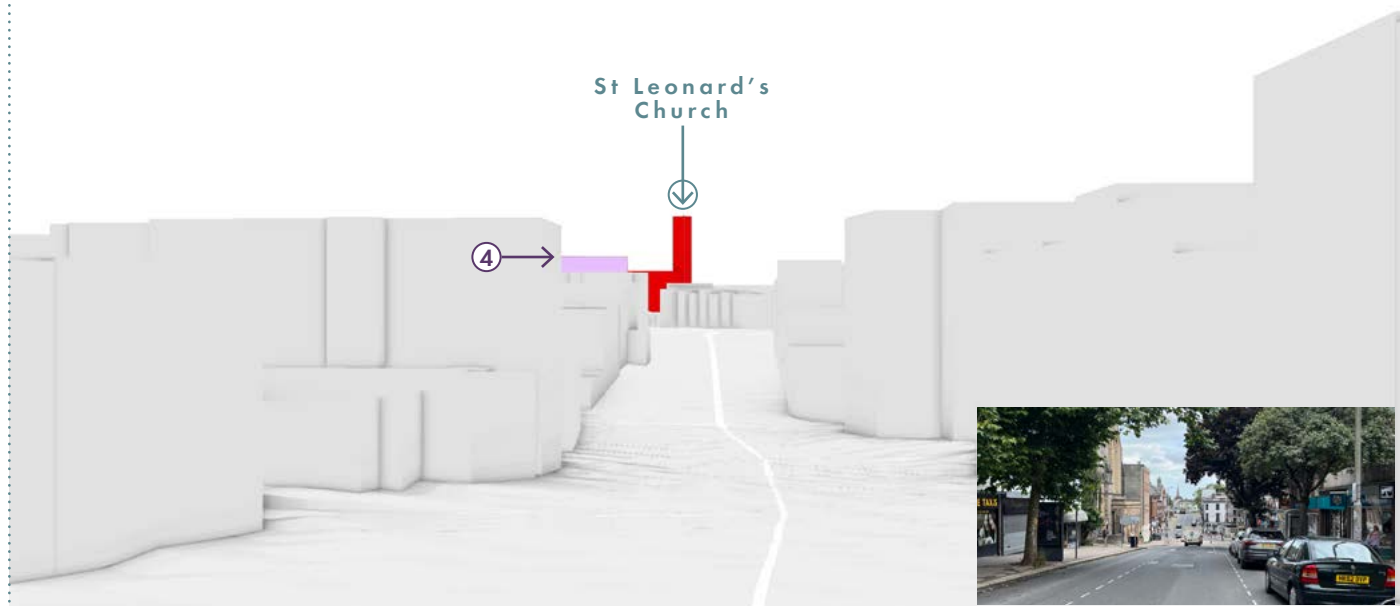


Fig 68 View looking down Southernhay East, showing South Gate - max option

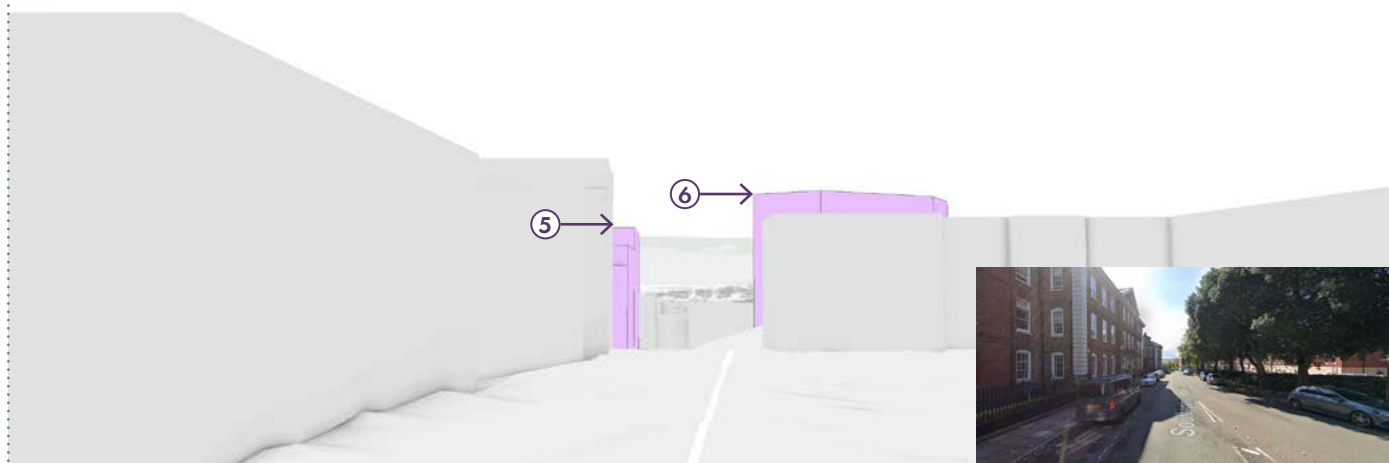


Fig 69 View looking down Southernhay East, showing South Gate - medium option

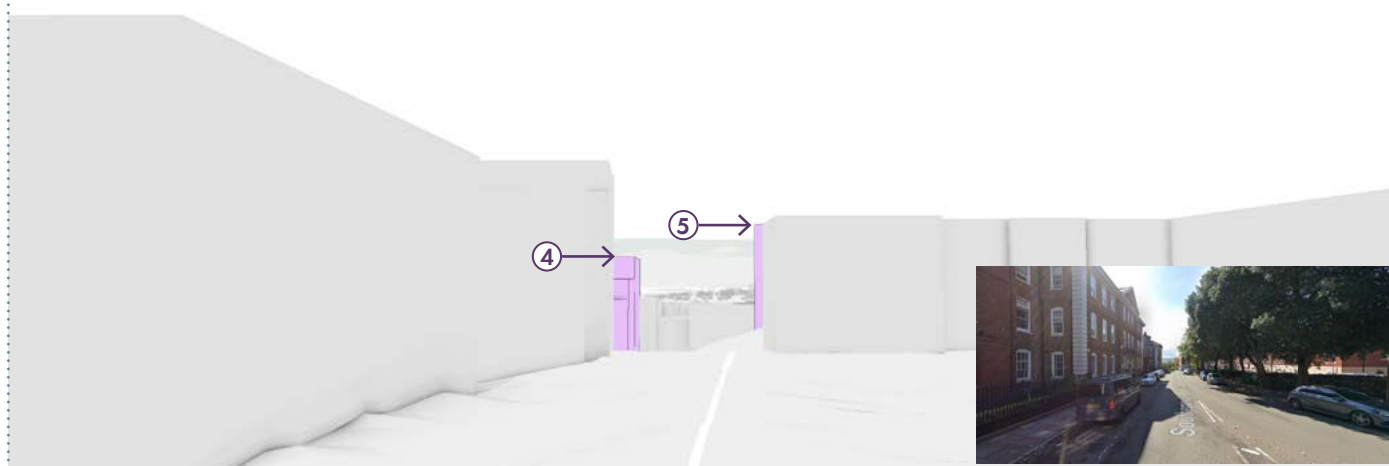


Fig 70 View looking down Southernhay East, showing South Gate - low option

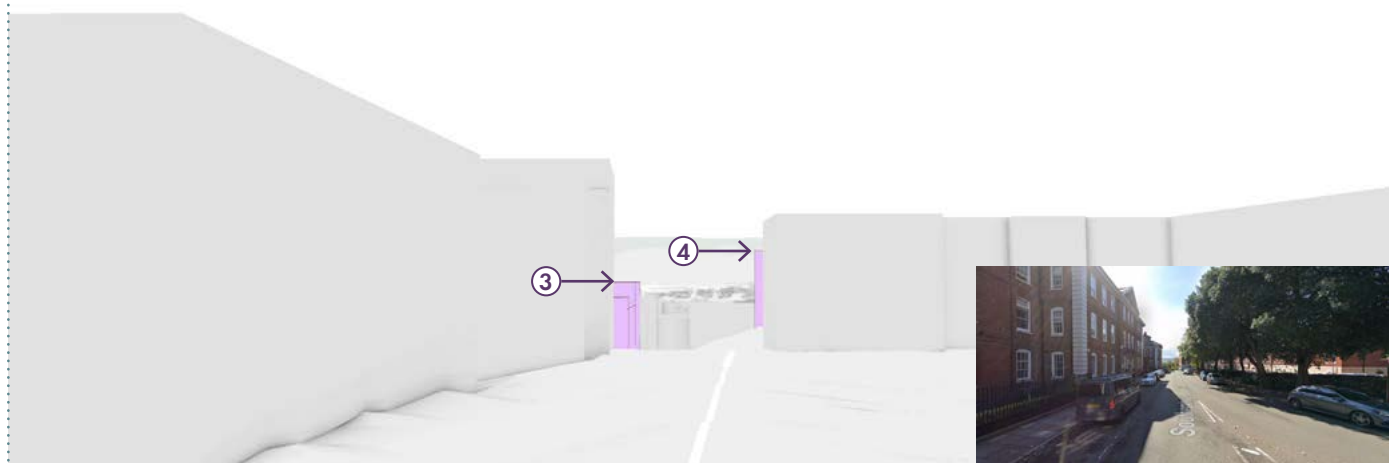


Fig 71 Key View A03 looking down Topsham Road towards Exeter Cathedral, from St Leonards Church bus stop showing South Gate - max option



Fig 72 Key View A03 looking down Topsham Road towards Exeter Cathedral, from St Leonards Church bus stop showing South Gate - medium option

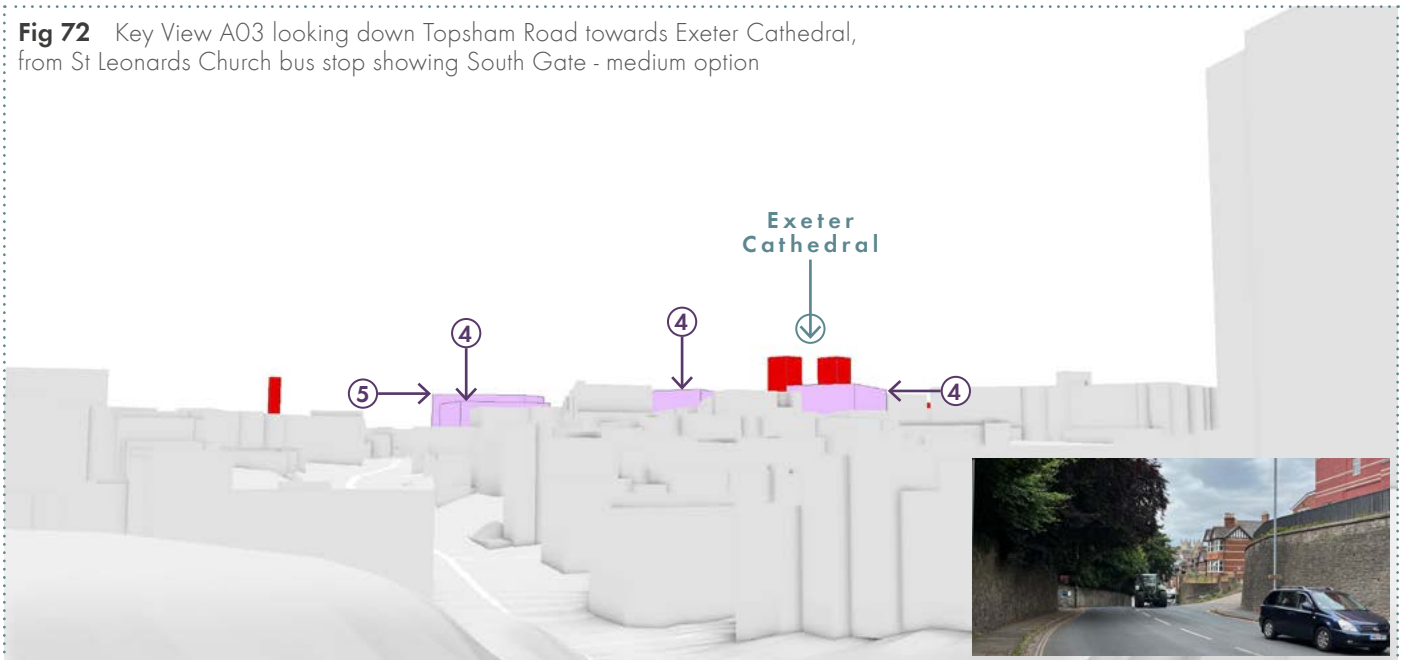


Fig 73 Key View A03 looking down Topsham Road towards Exeter Cathedral, from St Leonards Church bus stop showing South Gate - low option

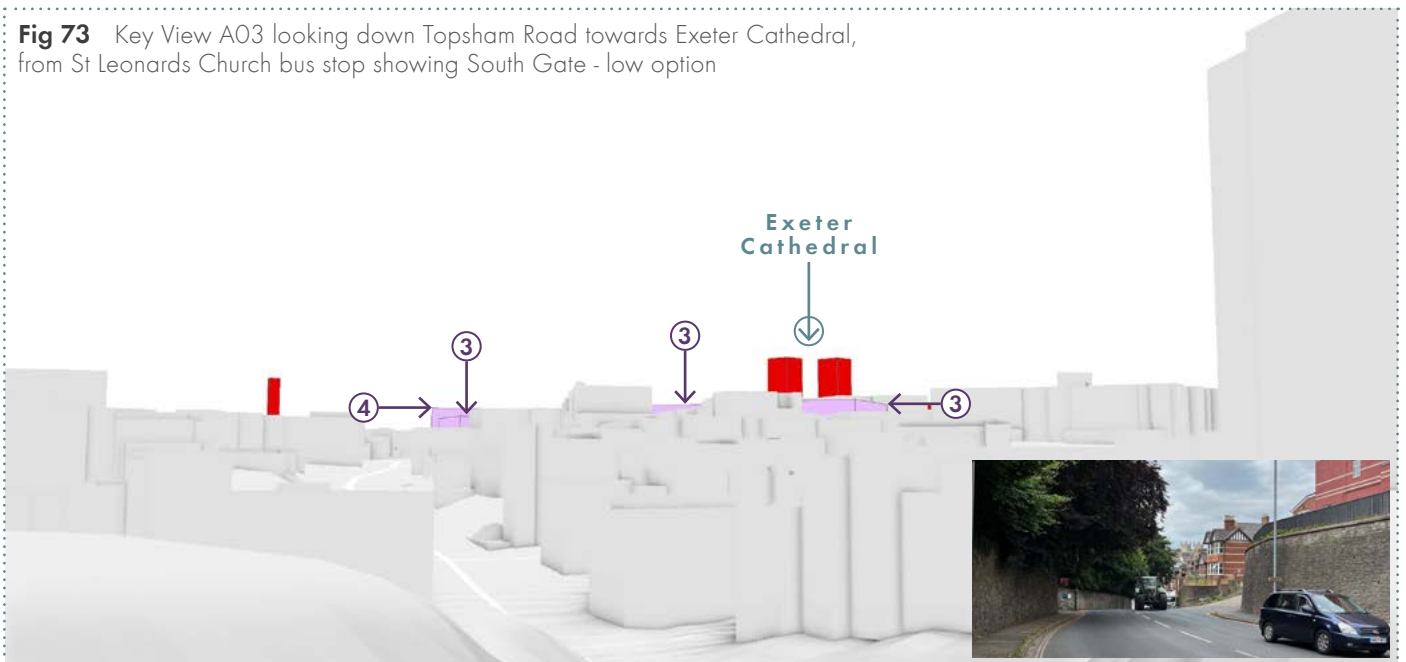


Fig 74 View looking up South Street from Holloway Street, showing South Gate - max option (please note this is an important approach route into the city - Key View C02 - but not a historic viewpoint for the Cathedral)

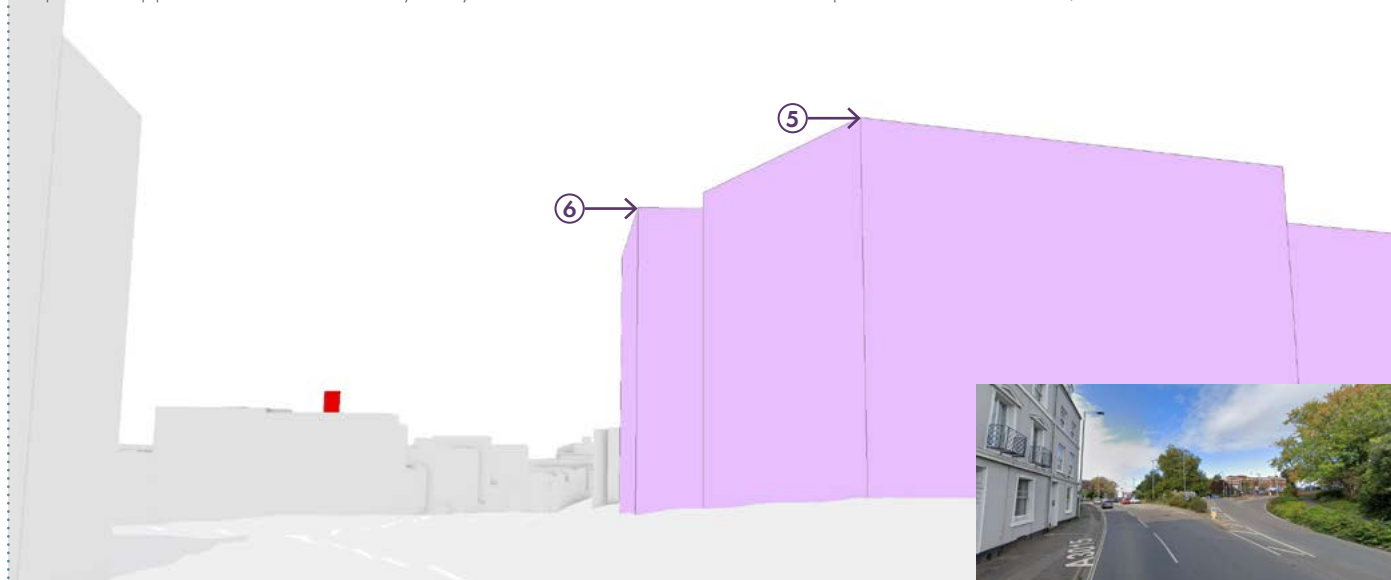


Fig 75 View looking up South Street from Holloway Street, showing South Gate - medium option (please note this is an important approach route into the city - Key View C02 - but not a historic viewpoint for the Cathedral)

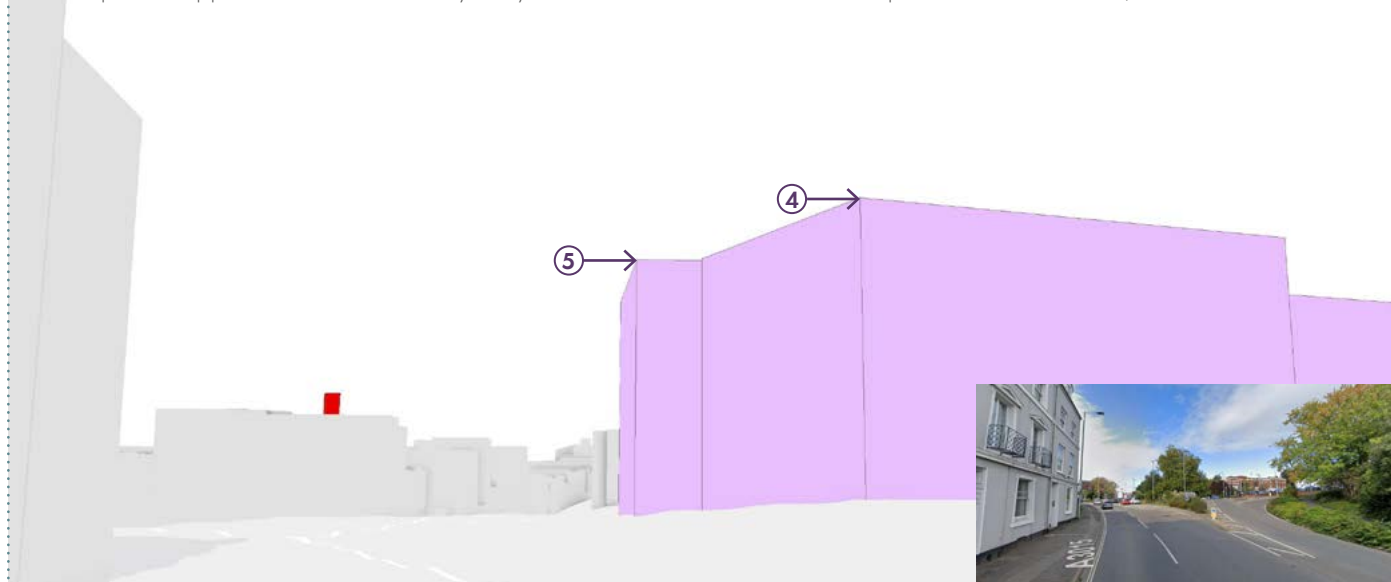


Fig 76 View looking up South Street from Holloway Street, showing South Gate - low option (please note this is an important approach route into the city - Key View C02 - but not a historic viewpoint for the Cathedral)

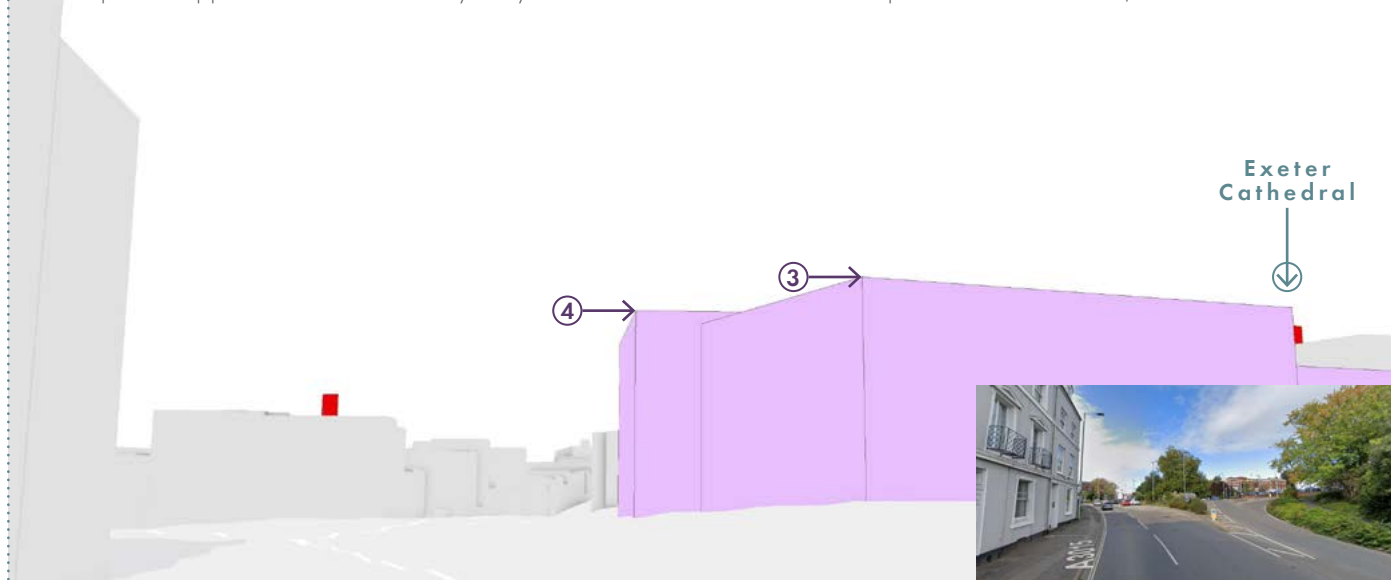


Fig 77 Key View R01 from Riverside Park cycle path, showing South Gate - max option

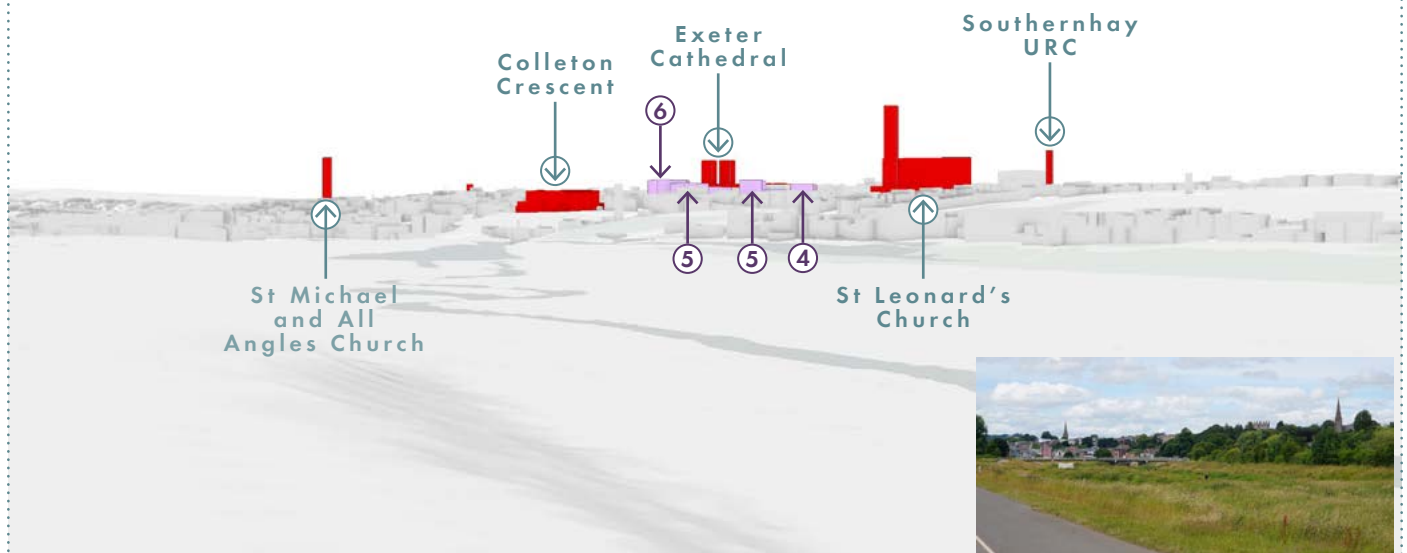


Fig 78 Key View R01 from Riverside Park cycle path, showing South Gate - medium option

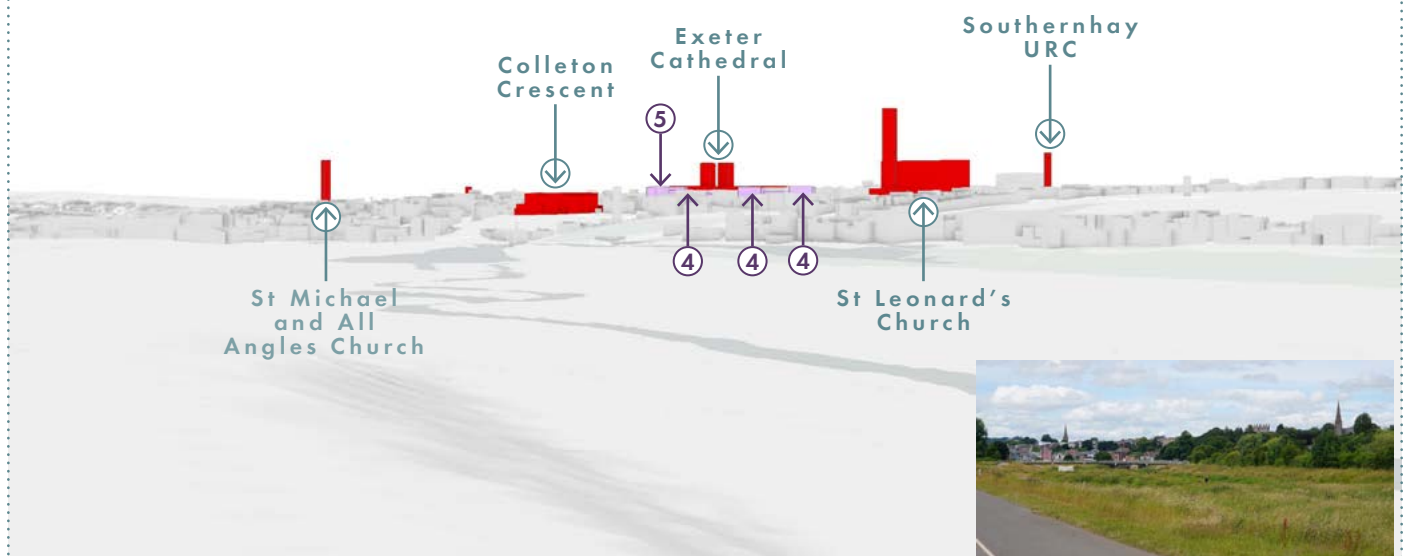


Fig 79 Key View R01 from Riverside Park cycle path, showing South Gate - low option

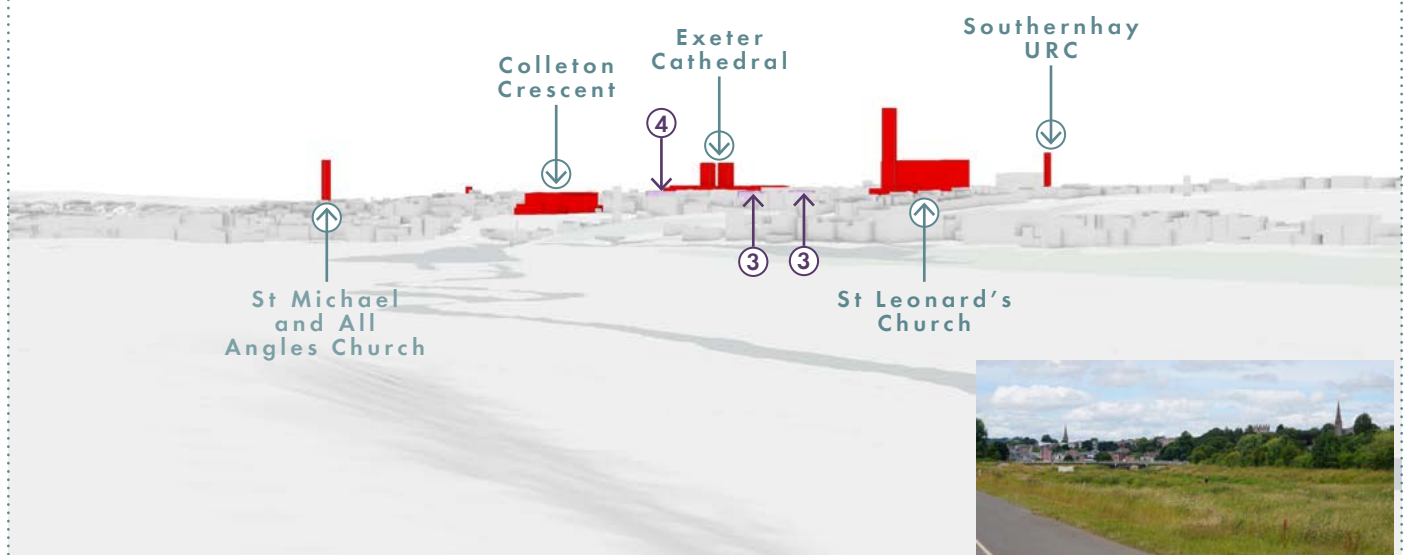
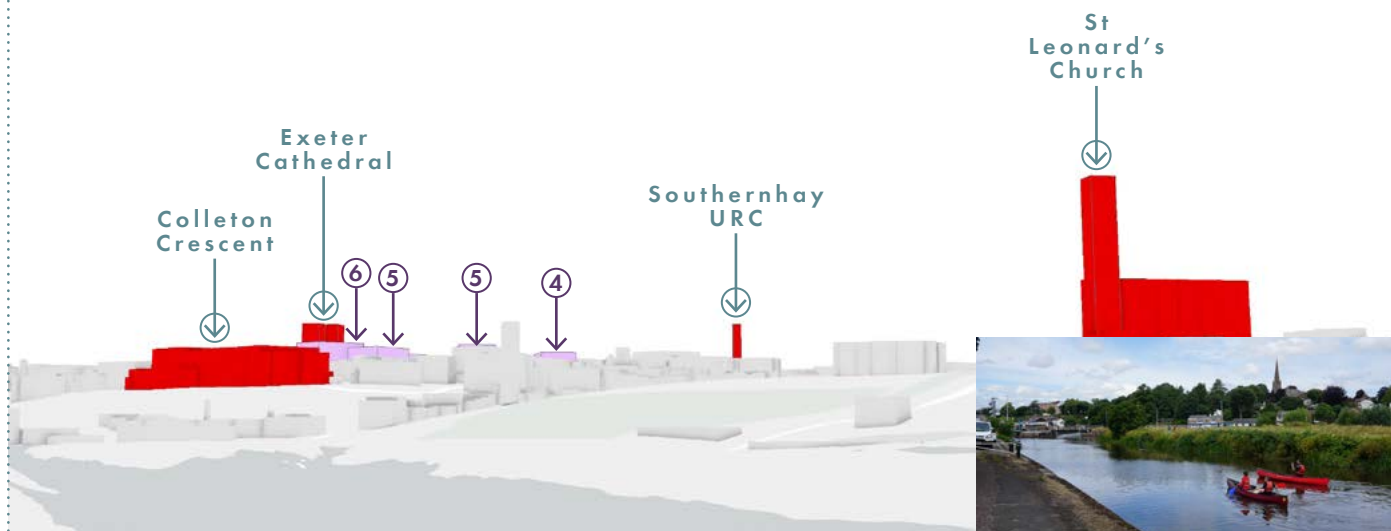
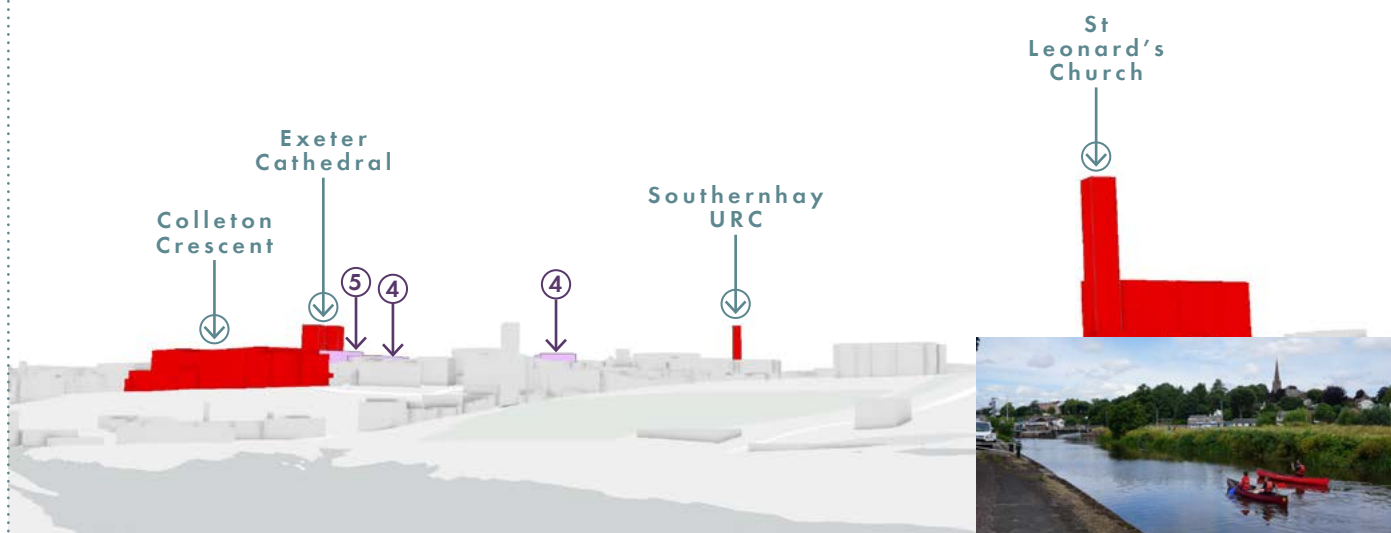
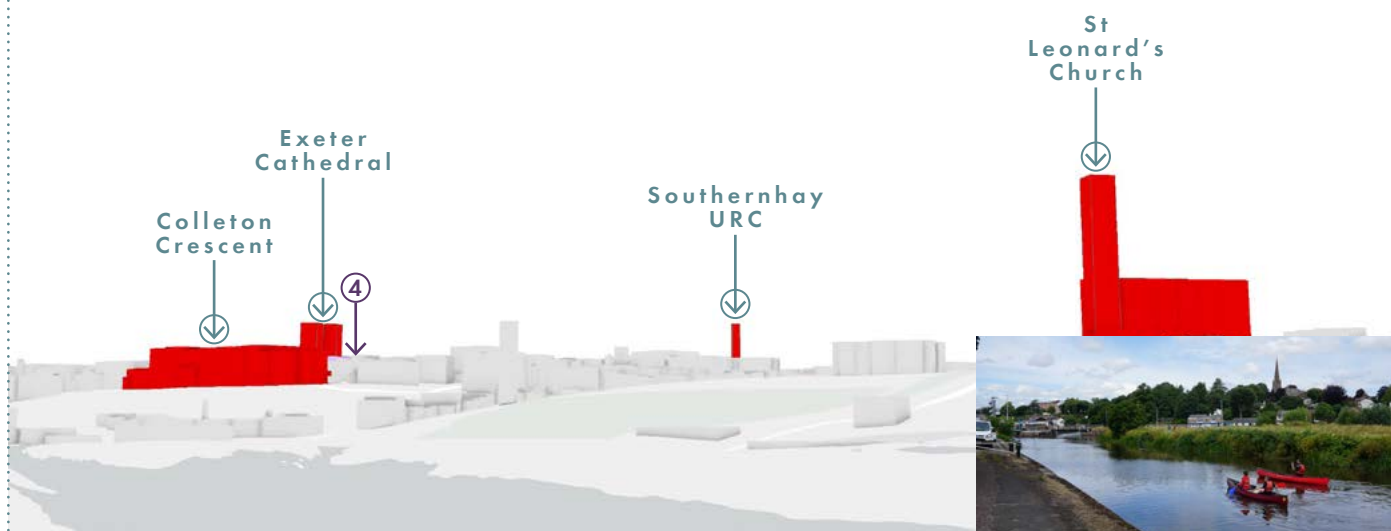


Fig 80 Key View R03 from Haven Banks/canal tow-path, showing South Gate - max option**Fig 81** Key View R03 from Haven Banks/canal tow-path, showing South Gate - medium option**Fig 82** Key View R03 from Haven Banks/canal tow-path, showing South Gate - low option

1.8 Conclusion

This report concludes the Stage 2 work of the Views, Density and Heights Study. The testing of massing and height options for the six sites has emphasised the scope to meet development needs whilst improving the built environment and respecting views and the settings of key landmark heritage assets.

The report confirms that the site capacities for East Gate, North Gate, Red Cow, West Gate and St. Luke's can be achieved without negatively disrupting the key views identified in Stage 1 and tested here in Stage 2. This study concludes that the site capacity for South Gate should be reduced to reflect the height limitations in relation to key views.

This study is limited to the consideration of views of key landmarks as identified in the Stage 1 Skyline and Views Study, and has not considered all townscape, heritage, archaeology or planning constraints and requirements. These factors will need to be considered and addressed as part of planning applications.



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