

Donna Williams

From: Craig Pettit <Craig.Pettit@bartonwillmore.co.uk>
Sent: 06 February 2020 17:17
To: Markwell, Jonathan; Jones, Grahame
Cc: Joseph Harding; Sophie Haslum
Subject: [EXTERNAL] FW: Vastern Road Statement of Community Involvement
Attachments: SSE Vastern Road, Consultation Statement_FINAL.pdf

Dear Jonathan,

I would be grateful if you could please receive the attached Consultation Statement and replace it with the one you currently have on file, as we noticed some minor errors.

I have copied in Grahame from your validation team and I am happy to make this change via the portal if this would be easier.

If this email is acceptable however, could I please ask for confirmation that the current Consultation Statement has been superseded with the attached.

Many thanks

Craig Pettit

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December 19

Consultation Report

Former SSE Site, Vastern Road, Reading

Berkeley Homes (Oxford and Chiltern)



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1. Introduction

This Consultation Report has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of Berkeley Homes (Oxford and Chiltern) (the Applicant). It forms part of a planning application for residential-led redevelopment of the former SSE site, Vastern Road, Reading.

Full planning permission is sought for the 'Demolition of the existing structures and erection of a series of buildings ranging in height from 1 to 11 storeys including residential dwellings (C3 use class) and leisure floorspace (A3 use class), together with a new north-south pedestrian link, connecting Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road'

Full details on the design of the proposed development are set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement, which also explains how the design has evolved in response to an appraisal of site opportunities and constraints. Further details are provided in the accompanying technical reports submitted as part of the planning

application. This Consultation Report (CR) should be read alongside these documents.

The CR provides a detailed record of the consultation activities that have taken place in order to inform interested parties of the application proposals. All feedback received during the consultation period will be recorded, analysed and considered as part of the design process.

Consultation activity overview

The development team have delivered a pre-application engagement programme, which included engagement with key stakeholders and the general public. This engagement has enabled the project team to build an understanding of the local context and raise awareness of the proposals.

To ensure all groups had the opportunity to view and comment on the proposed plans over the course of four engagement phases; an initial parameter setting approach, with three following full consultations each time culminating with a public exhibition. A number of consultation methods were

utilised to ensure meaningful participation by local stakeholders during each phase. Engagement activities included a series of discussions with key decision-makers and local representative groups, the detail of which is set out in later sections; and distribution of letters to c.800 properties close to the site, the display of community notices throughout the area, adverts within InYour Area (online), Reading Chronicle and Reading Post and a project website to enable wide-ranging participation during the public exhibition and comment phases.

Feedback summary

In total, 105 exhibition responses were received across the course of three exhibitions, these being provided as a mix of email submissions, comments forms posted during the exhibition or following this by freepost or online. The responses provided a range of views, suggestions and questions about the proposals, which have been fed into the design, layout and principles of the proposals submitted to the Council as set out in later sections.

A number of supporting comments were received with regard to the design and layout of the scheme; improved connectivity from the bridge to the station; enhanced ecology; approach to flooding and drainage and the provision of a café and public space. However, some concerns were raised *inter alia* in respect of potential impact on daylight and sunlight to existing buildings; overlooking; the scale and massing of proposed built form; potential conflicts arising between pedestrian, cycle-borne and vehicular traffic within the site; and loss of the locally-listed building. In addition, comments were also provided on the mix of house types proposed and the scale of the scheme and whether there would be construction traffic/noise disruption during building phases; and impacts on local infrastructure, landscaping and ecology.

In response to the feedback received over the four phase, iterative engagement process, the scheme has been revised in terms of quantum, layout, built form, parking, landscaping and approach to open spaces and non-residential uses.

2. Policy Context

The Applicant recognises that national planning policy places an emphasis on community involvement as an important part of the planning application process. To ensure the approach taken in the pre-application stages of this application is consistent with national and local guidelines relevant policy was reviewed in full.

The Government's policy on community involvement is set out in a number of statutory and non-statutory documents, including the National Planning Policy Framework (2018), the Localism Act (2011) and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). In addition to national policy, Reading Borough Council provides guidance on pre-application consultation in their Statement of Community Involvement (adopted March 2014).

National Planning Policy Framework (2018)

The National Planning Policy Framework ("the Framework") sets out that the purpose of the

planning system is to help deliver sustainable development and in doing so should be a collective enterprise. The Framework specifically promotes pre-application engagement and the frontloading of consultation. The purpose is to identify issues that can be resolved at the pre-application stage, thereby enabling the planning system to function more effectively and efficiently.

In this regard, Paragraph 39 states that *"Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community."*

NPPF Paragraph 40 states that Local Planning Authorities should *"encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications."*

Furthermore, NPPF Paragraph 128 states that *"Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot."*

As set out in this Statement, comprehensive community engagement has taken place prior to the submission of the planning application, in full accordance with guidance set out within the Framework.

Localism Act (2011)

The Localism Act provides the context within which the planning system currently operates. The Localism Act was given Royal Assent on 15 November 2011, setting out the Government's continuing intention of shifting power from central Government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils.

The Localism Act introduced a number of changes of government policy including:

- decentralisation and strengthening local democracy;
- community empowerment; and
- a re-booting of the planning system including neighbourhood planning.

Following the designation of secondary legislation, the Localism Act 2011 will introduce the requirement to consult local communities on planning applications for certain developments, giving people the chance to comment when there is scope to influence proposals. Responsibility is placed on developers to:

- consult communities, having regard to advice that their local planning authority may provide;
- consider any responses before they finalise proposals and submit their applications; and
- account for how they have consulted the local community, what comments they have received and how they have taken those comments into account.

Reading Borough Council - Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2014

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires Local Planning Authorities to produce policy documents, called Statements of Community Involvement (SCI), which sets out their expectations for community consultation as part of development plan making and in the planning application process.

The Council's SCI was adopted in 2014.¹

The Council encourages applicants to undertake consultation with local communities before they submit a planning application to the Council for major development.

In particular, paragraph 7.2 of the SCI places strong emphasis on engaging the community from the outset, highlighting that it can result in “an improved scheme which takes the needs of the existing community into account, and a better relationship between the developer and the community that carries through the application process and beyond.

This is particularly the case for proposals that are sensitive or of a significant scale”.

Following paragraphs highlight the need for a project plan to be produced and agreed with Officers to set out the approach and timings relating to the engagement process, with this also aligning with planning stages to enable a consistent flow of information between decision-making and opinion-forming stakeholders.

The approach to consultation has fully accounted for this requirement and also sought to identify and agree local representative groups prior to commencement of engagement, the resultant process allowing wide-ranging, meaningful feedback that has had a positive influence on the proposals.

Taking into consideration the multi-stage, iterative and inclusive approach undertaken, it is contended that the project team have responded appropriately to national and local guidelines on pre-application engagement, which has led to creation of a bespoke strategy and in turn greater local inclusion and therefore influence on the proposals to the benefit of the project and wider locality.

¹ <https://www.reading.gov.uk/media/1051/Statement-of-Community-Involvement-Adopted-March-2014/pdf/Statement-Of-Community-Involvement-Mar14.pdf>

3. Consultation with Stakeholders

A comprehensive engagement strategy was formulated at the start of the project and included engaging with key stakeholders.

Throughout the course of the project, significant attention has been placed on local engagement. The pre-application process and the applicants' approach to the site has been moulded through meetings and correspondence with Reading Borough Council, numerous local stakeholder groups and local Residents in Lynmouth Road and environs.

An initial meeting was held in November 2018 with Abbey Ward Members and the Planning Case Officer, the purpose of which was primarily to set out principles in terms of design and layout, unit quantum, car parking and affordable housing. As part of the approach, significant attention was given to the then emerging policies of the Local Plan, the draft site allocation and how the proposals sought to accord with the majority of these. Attention was also drawn to the potential for extending the route of Christchurch Bridge into the site to enable creation

of a more direct link to the station underpass and central Reading beyond.

Following on from this meeting, which helped to identify guiding principles for the development, a series of meetings were held over three phases of engagement; these culminating in public exhibitions held in February, May and October 2019.

A summary of each phase of engagement with local stakeholders is provided below, with further detail in respect of the public exhibitions provided in the following section.

1st Engagement Phase – to December 2018

Over the course of two months, a fairly intensive engagement exercise with local decision-makers, representative groups and residents was undertaken. The process concentrated on an initial proving design and layout, used to establish whether the scheme would require an Environmental Impact Assessment, and subsequent

refined proposals, which had taken on board the initial views and inputs of stakeholders.

As part of the 1st phase of engagement, the following meetings were held:

- **Abbey Ward Members, 22nd November 2018**
- **Reading Civic Society, Conservation Area Advisory Committee, 26th November 2018**
- **Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA), 27th November 2018**
- **Caversham Traders Association, 27th November 2018**
- **Caversham GLOBE, 28th November 2018**
- **Reading CIC, 29th November 2018**
- **Caversham Ward Members, 14th December 2018**

In addition, approaches were made and discussions held with Reading Safer Neighbourhoods and the Bell Tower Community Association to provide information and invite to a meeting prior to the initial public exhibitions taking place.

Comments Received

The following represents a breakdown of comments made, which have been categorised for ease of understanding. Further detail regarding comments made are set out in the minutes of each meeting, which are not included for GDPR purposes, but which can be provided on request.

Use of whole site and area considerations

- It was requested that Berkeley seek more comfort from SSE regarding the sale of the whole site, as this would enable a development more in keeping with Policy CR11g riverside.
- Design co-ordination with Aviva and Royal Mail sites encouraged in relation to connectivity and also Vastern Road crossing.
- Concern noted about amount of flats coming forward in Reading.
- Need to ensure that service/infrastructure requirements are covered by CIL/S106.

- Concerns raised about EA proposals to replace wall across frontage and potential to reinforce asbo issues by the bridge ramp area.

Connectivity

- Requested that the bridge be directly linked into the site in line with the Policy CR11g riverside aspiration.
- Thought to be given as to how to connect more widely from site to the station, rather than relying on current or new traffic junctions.

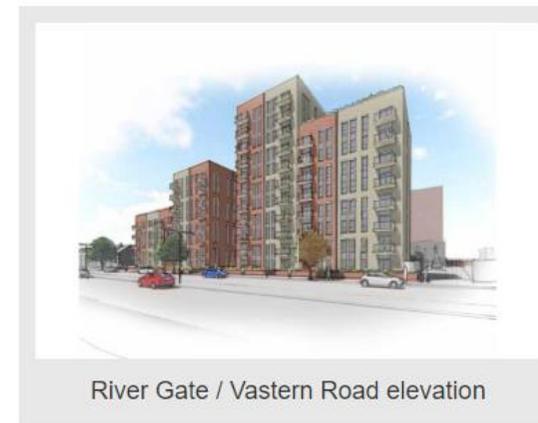
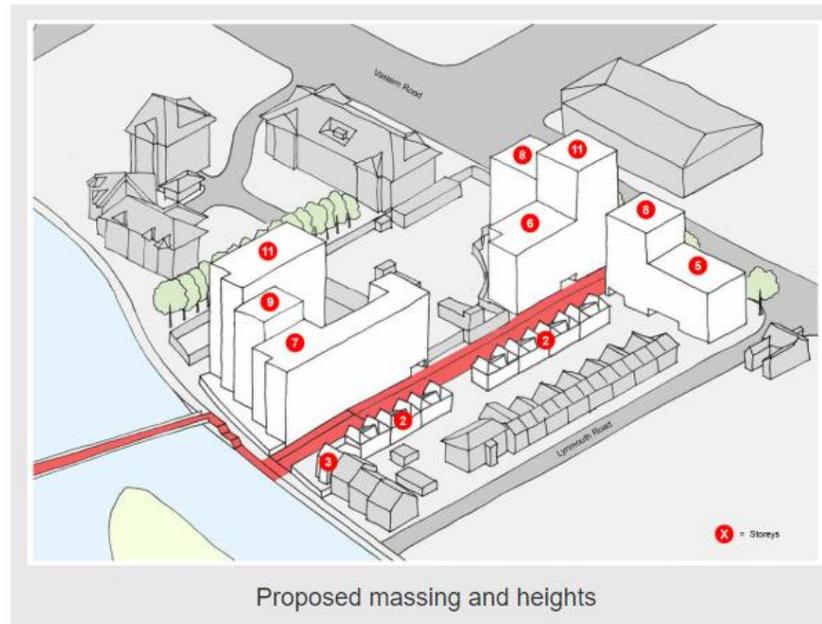
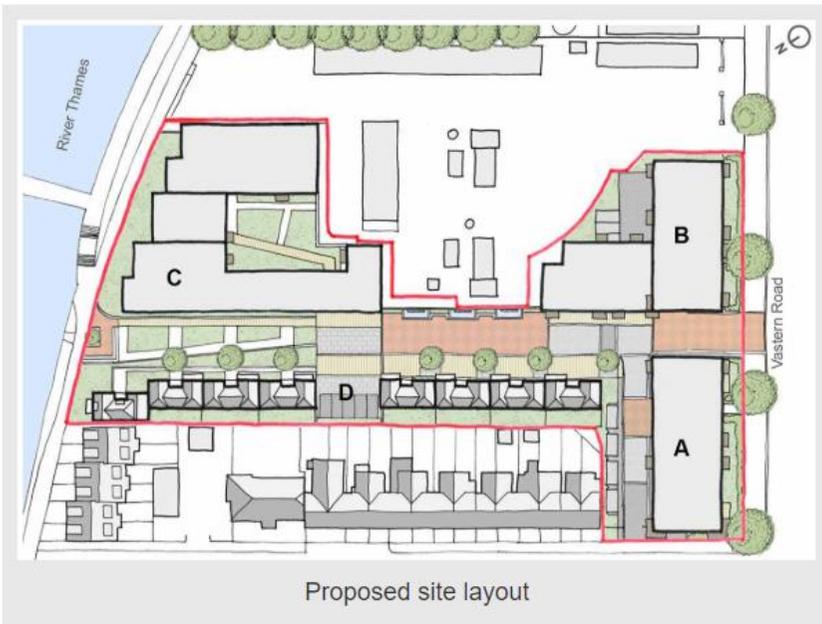
Non-resi uses

- Consideration should be given to incentivising the route through the site by activating key links/spaces with shops/cafes.
- Need to make the undercroft areas at the river frontage welcoming and light, potential to maintain an active frontage – coffee shop or sit-down location advised.
- Business owners in Caversham would express concern about mixed uses on site.

Scale and Massing

- More consideration should be given to height and the scheme needs a clearer entrance, perhaps with some symmetry.

- Buildings could be more of a uniform mass and, with the right design, heights would not have to step down to the same extent to acknowledge terraced housing.
- Considered that there was a lot of massing close to the river and that 5-6 storeys, at most, would be more appropriate.
- Suggested that taller elements should step down towards the river and that 11 storeys would be setting a precedent; that to north of Vastern Road was intended to be more residential in scale.
- Concern regarding how much of the Vastern Road massing can be seen from the riverside.



Initial November 2018 proposals – more detail is available within the Design Evolution Section and at www.vasternroad.co.uk

- Concern over height, scale and mass closest to Lynmouth Court.
- Concern over height of rear walls abutting Lynmouth Road properties.

Design

- Scheme needs individuality: a USP.
- What makes the design 'Reading'? Ecclesiastical features of historic on-site buildings raised and requested that thought be given on how to 'top off' buildings.
- Desire expressed to see a design more akin to Bankside Gardens or Taplow Riverside
- Considered Taplow Riverside preferable in design as its commercial in nature, which was more relevant to the site's history.
- Consideration to be given to building over the bridge link into the site with an atrium structure, which could be lightweight (glass), allowing the rest of the building to feature a more traditional brick structure.
- Liked Clearwater Court and would like something equally attractive designed.

- Concerns raised regarding provision of balconies within scheme, due to proliferation on frontages and fussy appearance.
- Considered overall design was undistinguished and not aspirational. Did not like the 'shoeboxes on end' and 'barracky' design, which was compared to that coming forward on the Royal Mail site and that in-situ on the former RG1 nightclub site.
- Considered Taplow Riverside approach would work well on riverside, but not Vastern Road.
- Liked design of mews, but not necessarily the location.
- Design on each frontage should be fabulous, but currently needs work.
- Design needs to flow better and needs to reflect context of other buildings more greatly.
- Preference for a design more akin to Great Brighams Mead.
- Good to create water features and suggested that team look at the Rivers and Parks part of the 2050 Vision.

- 'Canopies' on Vastern Road frontage thought more office-like in appearance and could impact on view from the river.
- Consideration to be given to lighting within the archway areas and throughout the site for security reasons, whilst respecting local ecology.
- Review of walkway railings suggested – those associated with the bridge are 'dense' and create funnelling.
- Building closest to Lynmouth Court requires remodelling to reduce impact, perhaps add height elsewhere on frontage to compensate?

Layout

- Providing a central boulevard, which could curve within the site, could link the bridge and the station.
- The frontage needs opening up to identify and direct wayfinding.
- Would like to see some of the colonnades removed and the Vastern Road entrance opened up more.

- Consideration to be given to the riverside frontage to offset safety concerns.
- Introduction of a N-S axis is a good idea, letting sunlight through.
- Scheme needs a big opening between Reading and Caversham to make best use of 'Great West Way' opportunity, which is trying to link Caversham Court, the Abbey Ruins and Pedestrian Bridge as a destination.
- Potential for reducing site levels under mews houses to reduce impact on Lynmouth Road properties?

Landscaping

- Thought needs to be given to potential tension between new residents and those using the open space.
- Potential for additional planting on Vastern Road, citing potential to intersperse planting between existing trees.
- Disappointed that there were less trees within the scheme than could be accommodated to improve amenity.

- Requested the Tree Wardens attend meeting between Berkeley Landscape Architect and Sarah Hanson.
- Some greening to soften the wall to the transformers would assist.

Public Art/Benefit

- Suggested that both the public art and design should link back to historic uses on site – thought to be Coke Works and Railway Sidings.
- Suggested that Sarah Hacker from Reading Art and Heritage Forum be contacted regarding public art on site.
- Liked public art proposals and noted it would be nice to have water theme to it and perhaps continue on the materiality from the bridge (rusty metal).
- Requested that Caversham is marketed as a destination in sales brochures and that directional signage and information on/around bridge is provided.
- Should seek provision of a bin on the Thames frontage to deter littering.

- Potential to use redundant artwork from the Guardian Building in the scheme.
- Suggested signage to assist Great West Way passage to/from Caversham Court was provided.

Heritage

- Expressed concerns regarding proposed height and design and suggested it would be for the skill of the architect to include the LLB in the scheme.
- Could the existing Vastern Road frontage not be included within the design?
- A full answer on the loss of the listed building has not yet been provided.
- Can the LLB be part-retained within the scheme, either within the entrances or as part of the public art?
- Noted that Berkeley should research the background to the LLB.
- Potential impact on the view from Caversham Bridge, which is listed and now within St. Peters Conservation Area. Concern regarding

interruption of the view to the Blade (on/by the former Abbey ruins).

- Suggested team review the Reading 2050 vision, in particular in terms of heritage and conservation, as this looks at how to mix community with history, high-rise with culture.

Highways and Access

- Concerns over parking overspill onto Lynmouth Road and management of this.
- Concerns regarding traffic generation and possible impact on turning out of Lynmouth Road at peak times.

Amenity

- Potential for significant loss of daylight/sunlight to Lynmouth Road/Lynmouth Court from scheme.
- Potential for overlooking into residents' gardens and windows.

2nd Engagement Phase – to February 2019

Further to the comments received, which were largely echoed by the public comments made at the exhibition and online via the project website,

following design development was undertaken, the detail of which is provided within the 'February 2019 proposals' section within the project [website](#). The changes to the scheme, which were significant in scale and largely seeking to meet with local opinion were then presented back to the original stakeholder groups for additional comment and input.

As part of the 2nd phase of engagement, the following meetings were held:

- **Abbey Ward Members, 14th January 2019**
- **Lynmouth Road residents, 14th January 2019**
- **Caversham Conservative Councillors, 24th January 2019**
- **Caversham GLOBE, 25th January 2019**
- **Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA), 5th February 2019**
- **Reading Civic Society/CAAC – 8th February 2019**
- **Matt Rodda MP, 11th February 2019**
- **Caversham Traders Association (CTA), 12th February 2019**

- **Caversham Ward Members, 25th February 2019**
- **Bell Tower Community Association, 25th February 2019 (at exhibition)**

Comments Received

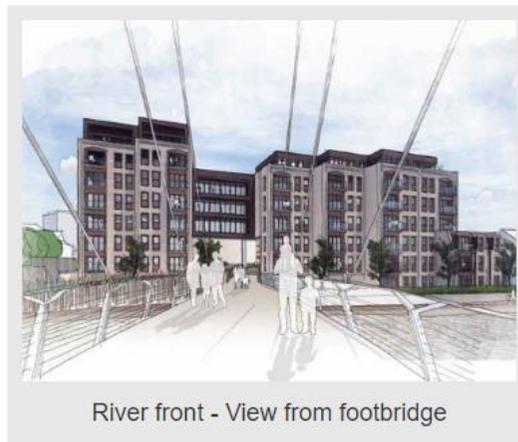
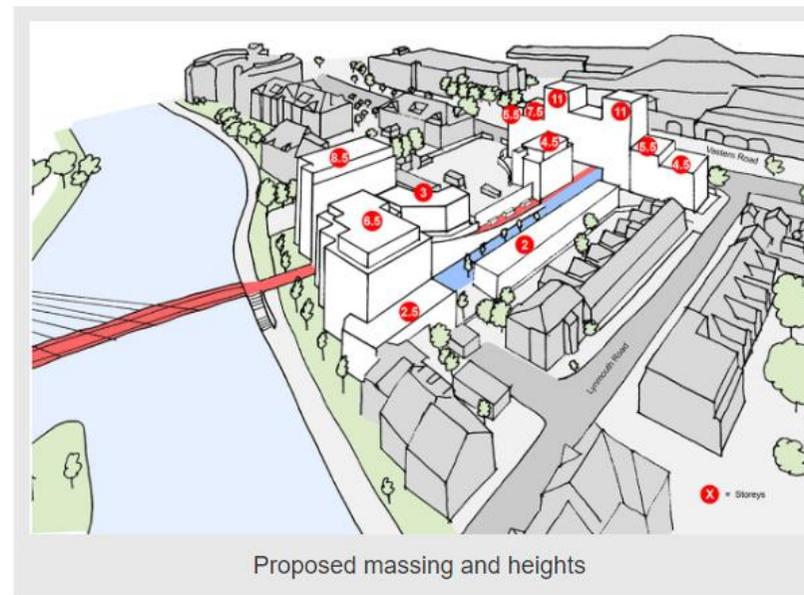
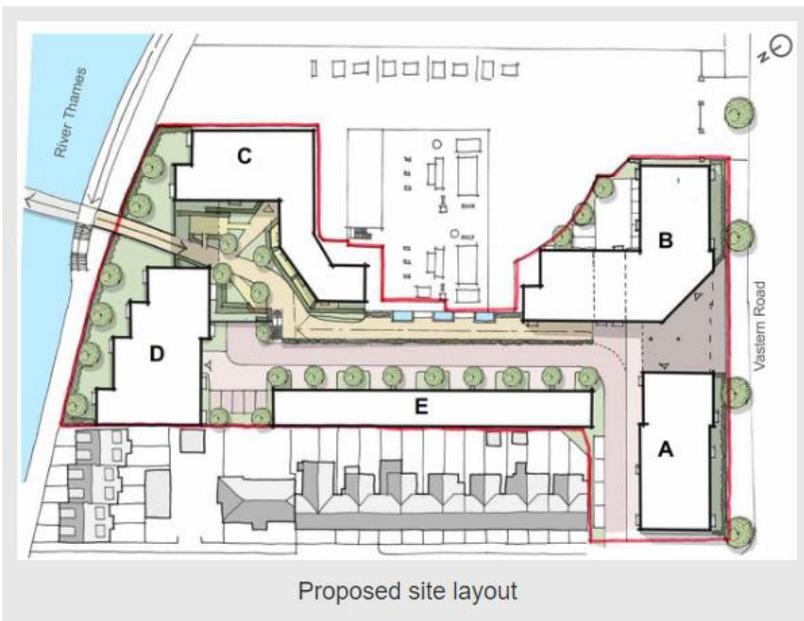
The following represents a breakdown of comments made, which have been categorised for ease of understanding.

Use of whole site and area considerations

- Design co-ordination with Aviva and Royal Mail sites encouraged in relation to connectivity and also Vastern Road crossing.
- Concerns raised about EA proposals to replace wall across frontage and potential to reinforce asbo issues by the bridge ramp area.

Connectivity

- Thought to be given as to how to connect more widely from site to the station, rather than relying on current or new traffic junctions.
- Considered that people generally do not like to use footbridges and in terms of this site, it was not the way to go.



February 2019 proposals – more detail is available within the Design Evolution Section and at www.vasternroad.co.uk

Non-resi uses

- Consideration should be given to incentivising the route through the site by activating key links/spaces with shops/cafes.
- Need to make the undercroft areas at the river frontage welcoming and light, potential to maintain an active frontage – coffee shop or sit-down location advised.
- Business owners in Caversham would express concern about mixed uses on site.
- Noted that cafe would come into competition with Whittington's Tea Barge and that it may be preferable to seek mooring of this adjacent to the site or the bridge, rather than increasing competition.

Scale and Massing

- Concern regarding how much of the Vastern Road massing can be seen from the riverside.
- Concern over height, scale and mass closest to Lynmouth Court.
- Concern over height of rear walls abutting Lynmouth Road properties.

Design

- Scheme needs individuality: a USP.
- What makes the design 'Reading'? 'Ecclesiastical features of historic on-site buildings raised and requested that thought be given on how to 'top off' buildings.
- 'Canopies' on Vastern Road frontage thought more office-like in appearance and could impact on view from the river.
- Consideration to be given to lighting within the archway areas and throughout the site for security reasons, whilst respecting local ecology.
- Liked the way the building design on Vastern Rd was stepped up and liked particular the gateway feature and the divisions in frontage layers.
- Review of walkway railings suggested – those associated with the bridge are 'dense' and create funnelling.
- Building closest to Lynmouth Court requires remodelling to reduce impact, perhaps add height elsewhere on frontage to compensate?

- Concern that the development on riverside seemed 'heavy and bulky' along with the height. Concern raised over massing - the design was a 'big step up of development on the riverfront.
- In principle the idea of the height of the development makes the walk along the river somewhat claustrophobic.
- Expressed the view that the Vastern Road side of the development had improved greatly, but that this was not the case on the riverside.
- Concern as to what the development would look like at the night time from the riverside, especially regarding light pollution.
- Could height of the development on riverside be further reduced and added to on the Vastern Rd side of the development.
- Commented that the current riverside representation doesn't look much like wharfside or warehouse development and that more work was needed to improve the look of this.
- Considered the design changes an improvement, particularly on the river frontage.

- Considered that providing a more glazed centre across the river gateway preferable.
- Suggested more variety could be added to the mews – mews are rarely uniform.
- Unconvinced by the proposed approach to the lower two storeys on the Vastern Road frontage. Others were more complementary – design preference. Asked if stucco could work.
- Suggested ‘top hat’ should be removed.

Layout

- Would like to see some of the colonnades removed and the Vastern Road entrance opened up more.
- Consideration to be given to the riverside frontage to offset safety concerns.
- Potential for reducing site levels under mews houses to reduce impact on Lynmouth Road properties?
- Positive move to further set back of the development from the river, along with the extra greening and trees.
- Asked what might happen to the existing wall by the river pathway.

Landscaping

- Potential for additional planting on Vastern Road, citing potential to intersperse planting between existing trees.
- Asked what might happen to the existing wall by the river pathway.

Public Art/Benefit

- Suggested that Sarah Hacker from Reading Art and Heritage Forum be contacted regarding public art on site.
- Liked public art proposals and noted it would be nice to have water theme to it and perhaps continue on the materiality from the bridge (rusty metal).
- Asked how the site could act as a link to Caversham, perhaps through provision of lighting/signage into the centre.

Heritage

- A full answer on the loss of the listed building has not yet been provided.
- Can the LLB be part-retained within the scheme, either within the entrances or as part of the public art?

- Potential impact on the view from Caversham Bridge, which is listed and now within St. Peters Conservation Area. Concern regarding interruption of the view to the Blade (on/by the former Abbey ruins).
- Suggested team review the Reading 2050 vision, in particular in terms of heritage and conservation, as this looks at how to mix community with history, high-rise with culture.

Highways and Access

- Concerns over parking overspill onto Lynmouth Road and management of this.
- Concerns regarding traffic generation and possible impact on turning out of Lynmouth Road at peak times.

Flooding and Drainage

- Discussed several flooding issues raised by the site and enquired how this would be addressed

Amenity

- Potential for significant loss of daylight/sunlight to Lynmouth Road/Lynmouth Court from scheme.
- Potential for overlooking into residents’ gardens and windows.

- Concern as to what the development would look like at the night time from the riverside, especially regarding light pollution.

Further Engagement

- Should contact Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group as part of consultation.

3rd Phase of Engagement – to May 2019

Following the initial public exhibition and in line with Berkeley's commitment to open and meaningful engagement, a further round of engagement with stakeholder groups was undertaken, this primarily focussing on minor alterations to design and layout to respond to comments received, as well as consideration of more general principles in relation to non-residential uses and connectivity into, within and around the site. This detail is set out more fully in the 'May 2019 proposals' section within the project [website](#).

As part of the 3rd phase of engagement, the following meetings were held:

- **Abbey Ward Members, 21st March 2019**
- **Caversham GLOBE, 8th April 2019**

- **Reading Civic Society/CAAC – 10th April 2019**
- **Caversham and District Residents Association, 11th April 2019**
- **Caversham Traders Association, 12th April 2019**
- **Lynmouth Road residents, 2nd May 2019**

Comments Received

The following represents a breakdown of comments made, which have been categorised for ease of understanding.

Use of whole site and area considerations

- What makes the design 'Reading'?
- Insufficient provision of affordable housing, public open space and active frontages within site.

Connectivity

- Need to have more width/capacity for users of the footpath/cycleway during peak times.
- Review of walkway railings suggested – those associated with the bridge are 'dense' and create funnelling.

Non-resi uses

- Potential to maintain an active frontage – coffee shop or sit-down location advised.

Scale and Massing

- Concern over height, scale and mass closest to Lynmouth Court.
- How much of the Vastern Road massing can be seen from the riverside.
- Need to consider height in context of adjacent properties along river front and Vastern Road.
- Concern that the development on riverside seemed 'heavy and bulky' along with the height.

Design

- 'Ecclesiastical features of historic onsite buildings raised and thought be given on how to 'top off' buildings.
- Canopies' on Vastern Road frontage thought more office-like in appearance and could impact on view from the river.
- Unconvinced by the proposed approach to the lower two storeys on the Vastern Road frontage.



Proposed site layout



Proposed massing and heights



View looking along the avenue towards river front



River front - View from footbridge



River Gate / Vastern Road elevation

May 2019 proposals – more detail is available within the Design Evolution Section and at www.vasternroad.co.uk

- Liked the way the building design on Vastern Road is stepped up and liked particular the gateway feature and the divisions in frontage layers.
- Considered the design changes an improvement.
- Suggested more design variety could be added to the mews.

Layout

- Need to make the undercroft areas at the river frontage welcoming and light.
- A positive move to further set back of the development from the river, along with extra greening and trees.
- Good to have some low rise in the plans - it makes the central passageway more light and open.

Highways and Access

- Concern over parking overspill to Lynmouth Road & management of this.

Flooding and Drainage

- Need to ensure that flood risk is properly controlled and mitigated.

Amenity

- Potential for significant loss of daylight/sunlight to Lynmouth Road/Lynmouth Court from scheme.
- Concern as to what the development would look like at the night time from the riverside, especially regarding light pollution.

4th Phase of Engagement – to November 2019

Following the 3rd phase of engagement, a comprehensive review of the scheme was undertaken to ensure that it would provide the placemaking that Berkeley desired whilst meeting with local aspirations.

Overall scheme principles were largely maintained, but the masterplan was evolved to define three heritage-inspired character areas: Thames View, Coal Drop Terrace and the Sidings.

The proposals were also amended to better draw people through the site, opening up access between Christchurch Bridge, the River Thames and Vastern Road. In this way, opening to Christchurch Bridge was widened and a café placed on the site frontage. Similarly, the entrance to Vastern Road was set back and opened up to create a more welcoming

feature. To enable greater views and connectivity through the site, the mews houses adjacent to Lynmouth Road were removed from the scheme.

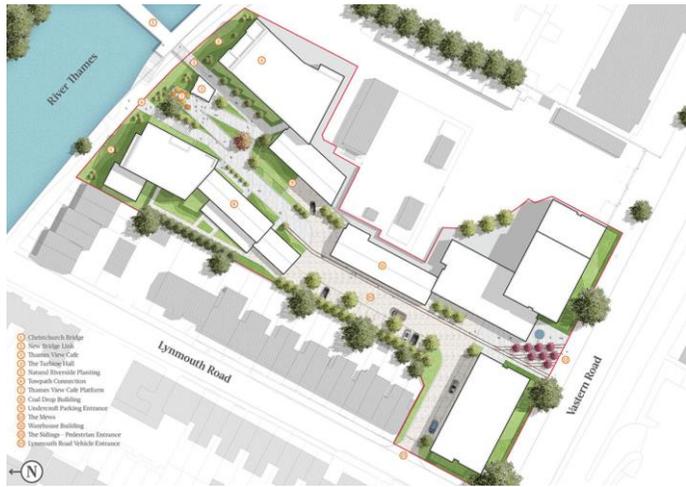
Full detail of the October 2019 proposals are set out in the 'October 2019 proposals' section within the project [website](#).

As part of the 3rd phase of engagement, the following meetings were held:

- **Abbey Ward Members, 24th September 2019**
- **Caversham GLOBE, 26th September 2019**
- **Reading Civic Society/CAAC – 27th September 2019**
- **Lynmouth Road residents, 3rd October 2019**
- **Caversham and District Residents Association, 8th October 2019**
- **Caversham Traders Association, 8th October 2019**

Comments Received

The following represents a breakdown of comments made, which have been categorised for ease of understanding.



October 2019 proposals – more detail is available within the Design Evolution Section and at www.vasternroad.co.uk

Use of whole site and area considerations

- Still some concerns regarding location of SSE equipment and impact on usability of site.
- Queries regarding provision and location of affordable housing within site.
- Approach to public open space and uses considered more coherent.

Connectivity

- Concerns raised about new shared space through site and potential conflicts with traffic and delivery vehicles.
- Considered appearance/usability of openings to the River Thames and Vastern Road improved, including pedestrian link direct to the river frontage.
- Co-ordination of works with Aviva and Royal Mail requested to ensure optimised connectivity from bridge to river.

Non-resi uses

- Changes to café location welcomed, but need to control opening hours mooted.
- Need to think about alternative uses for the café is this were to fail. Needs in-built flexibility.

Scale and Massing

- Some concern remaining over height, scale and mass closest to Lynmouth Court, alongside concern over impact on Lynmouth Road due to removal of mews houses.
- Concerns regarding daylight/sunlight to Lynmouth Road arising from massing and potential shading of the River Thames.
- Thought suggested regarding height in context of adjacent Aviva development to ensure tunnelling effect and wind issues offset.
- Considered overall scale and massing throughout development generally improved.

Design

- Liked approach to café design – like an old electrical building.
- Materiality and references to sites heritage welcomed. Considered to provide more variety and interest; textural benefit.
- Topping off of buildings considered an improvement, but thought to be given to lighter glazed rooftop and potential impacts on neighbouring amenity arising from penthouse/terraced areas.

- Thought to be given to boundary treatments along Lynmouth Road, given some walls wanting to be retained.
- Could green roofs be incorporated into the development now that flat roofs were being progressed.
- Detailing will be important for the warehouse look to be effective.

Layout

- A positive move to open up the river and road frontages to enable footfall, attractiveness of use.
- Concerns about wheelchair and cycle access through scheme related to change to layout and bridge link.
- Concerns raised over loss of mews houses and potential overlooking from flats opposite.
- Suggested that a hedge is placed to the front of the Vastern Road façade.

Highways and Access

- Concern over parking overspill to Lynmouth Road & management of this.

- Thought consolidation of parking in one area of site would reduce potential shared space conflicts.

Amenity

- Potential for significant loss of daylight/sunlight to Lynmouth Road/Lynmouth Court from scheme.
- Concerns over height of trees on the river side. Would prefer something more substantial.
- Could the wall to the east of the site (within SSE ownership) be removed on grounds of being unsightly.
- Need for scheme to comply with Reading BC's Tree Strategy.
- Concern regarding overlooking from closest houses into private areas of some Lynmouth Road properties.
- Concern regarding noise from bin stores located close to boundary with Lynmouth Road.
- Concern regarding noise from building works.

4. Consultation with the Local Community

A comprehensive engagement strategy was formulated at the start of the project and included engaging with the local community.

The engagement strategy was developed with consideration of the government's policy on community involvement and Reading Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement (2014), as detailed in Chapter 2.

Awareness raising

For each exhibition, notification was provided via a number of means to maximise awareness and encourage participation.

A consultation letter was issued to c.800 residences and business within the local area, this responding to that agreed with officers at the initial stage of consultation. The purpose of the letter was to introduce the development proposal and context, as varied throughout the engagement process and invite recipients to attend each of the public exhibitions and/or to direct people to the

consultation website. A copy of the letter is included at **Appendix 1**.

In addition, 19 community notices (these simply replicating the consultation letters) were placed throughout the local area to advertise the public exhibition. A copy of the map showing the locations of each is included at **Appendix 2**.

Project website

A dedicated webpage was launched at www.vasternroad.co.uk. The website permitted people to access consultation material at any time that was suitable and convenient to them, with this being updated three times to provide up to date details to reflect design development and the material being consulted upon.

The purpose of the website was to provide local residents and other interested parties with an opportunity to view details of the development proposal, learn about the developers, and submit feedback online.

In each instance, the content of the latest exhibition boards was uploaded to the website as was an updated feedback form. Screen shots of the website can be found at **Appendix 3** or viewed [online](#).

Public exhibitions

Three public exhibitions were held onsite during the design development process, as follows:

- **25th February 2019, 3.30pm – 7.30pm**
- **8th May 2019, 3.30pm – 8pm**
- **15th October 2019, 3.30pm – 7pm**

Approximately 150 people attended the first exhibition and 44 comments were received.

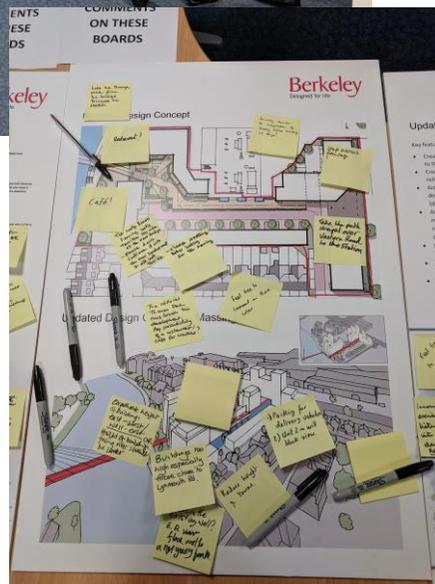
Approximately 70 people attended the second exhibition and 26 comments were received.

Approximately 80 people attended the third exhibition and 35 comments were received.

At each of the events, members of the project team were available to answer questions and exhibition banners displayed information about the proposals and site context. A copy of the banners used at the third exhibition is included at **Appendix 4**.

Consultees were able to submit comments to the team using the feedback form at the exhibition or online. A copy of the feedback form used at the third exhibition is included at **Appendix 5**.

Figure 1: Clockwise from top - Images from the February, May and October 2019 public exhibitions and post-it responses, February 2019 exhibition



5. Consultation Feedback

Overall, 105 responses were received during the public consultation stages.

The approach to questions asked during the public consultation varied during this process and so the results of each process are highlighted by stage below alongside analysis of the responses received to each question.

Those responding to the consultation were asked to identify what 'type' of respondent they were. The breakdown of respondents is set out on the chart below.

February 2019 Exhibition

Questions Asked...

Q1 – What are your thoughts regarding the principle of residential development for this site?

Q2 – Do you have any comments regarding the provision of a direct link from Christchurch Bridge through this site to Vastern Road and the Station beyond?

Q3 – Do you have any thoughts on the provision of mews housing?

Q4 – Do you have any thoughts regarding the proposed built form facing Vastern Road?

Q5 – Do you have any comments on our proposals for the River Thames

Q6 – Are there any other issues you would like to raise for our review?

Responses Received...

Ref No	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
1	No General issue. However there are apartment developments at: 1) Old Homebase/ Toys R Us 2) Old BMW Garage 3) Flats by canal/ prison 4) A33 development by relief road Who has considered the supporting infrastructure, schools, dentists, GPs, extra traffic?	No issue. Please ensure lighting/ landscaping	The plans seem to be 8 storey flats, not mews housing?		See Q2	See Q1 ref infrastructure Reading will simply grind to a halt
2	Fine plus cafe	Good	Good	Fine	Yes! Needs a cafe and restaurant	Just a cafe or two fronting the Thames
3	Brownfield development welcome in principle	V important but concerned re effects of strong SW wind through the arch. Needs modelling and maybe lose the link block	Crude adjustment to scale of existing homes		Big improvement over previous both in scale and texture	
4	Positive. It's an appropriate use of the site and a site like this in such a sustainable location needs to be developed at high density	It's vital that the link is: a) Provided b) Straight c) Attractive d) Providing a clear view through I think the proposal is to take the link through/ under a building. Better would be to have an open link with greater height on either side if necessary.	Not really. It may help integrate better with surrounding streets	It needs to be tall and imposing. It also needs to coordinate well with any current or future plans for the retail park and Royal Mail Depot.	Given the considerable distance across the River it offers the opportunity for height but a significant part of the River should still receive sunlight.	Residential Use – Good High Density – Good Not much parking – Good Link through the site essential and needs to be more attractive and open. Not through a tunnel, however wide it might be
5			The mews housing will create a 2-storey wall at the end of gardens on Lynmouth Road. This goes against the pattern in the area and will make our views oppressive. 1) Limit height on one storey No windows overlooking our gardens should be incorporated			Car Parking for delivery vehicles If you have 250 units with most having no parking facilities then all deliveries will be via delivery vans if each house has 3 deliveries a week then that translates to over 750 deliveries a week, roughly 100 per day. Where will these vans park to make their deliveries? They will potentially clog up Lynmouth Road
6	Make it 33% affordable housing not yuppy apartments				Out of scale with adjacent properties	

7	<i>In principle it could be put to good use but for low volume low height housing in keeping with the area</i>	<i>The level of footfall would make this a 'noisy people attractive facility' in what should be a quiet residential area</i>	<i>This appears more in keeping with the surrounding area that 8+ storey blocks of flats</i>	<i>Not in keeping with the area</i>	<i>Think the design swamps all other buildings along this frontage of the River and is inappropriate</i>	<i>The building of high rise flats near the boundary of Thames Court will remove all light both for residents... and be an intrusive privacy issue. The height will remove views already enjoyed and the size of the development [will] bring noise pollution with it. How will you protect the right of residents who have already purchased their properties and don't wish for an oversized development that will change the nature of this section of the towpath for all current owners? The design needs reconsideration to be acceptable</i>
8	<i>Area needs developing BUT sympathetically</i>	<i>Good idea, provided [its] well lit</i>	<i>Good idea</i>	<i>Too tall – we do not need tall buildings which will overpower the area</i>	<i>Again – housing needs to be sympathetic to river and not overpower the area</i>	<i>Look forward to learning you plans for use of brick colour and style</i>
9	<i>I agree that the main development should be residential</i>	<i>This would be a big advantage to the town</i>		<i>I agree with the variation of height of this frontage</i>	<i>I think this creates a good facade</i>	<i>Locally listed building should be retained as a public building possibly linked to river heritage exhibition The housing/flats development should encompass mid point letter boxes as defined in EU regulations</i>
10						<i>I feel more life should be brought to Reading's stretch of the Thames and this is the key place to do it, given the prominence of the site and the access through to the station and town in one direction, and Caversham in the order. There should be several commercial units, for cafes and restaurants. I suggested this at the event but you felt that access constraints make it difficult. I've seen plenty of shops and restaurant wheel in deliveries from 30 yards+ away, then either into side entrances or even through the front door - perfectly do-able isn't it?</i>
11.						<i>I am a director of Thames Court Reading Freehold Co. Ltd, the freeholder proprietor of the Thames Court development on the eastern site adjacent to the proposed SSE/Berkeley development. I would request that we are regularly updated on your development plans and forward them to me, and perhaps have a meeting, where appropriate. I have some initial comments to make that the proposed section of building adjacent to our Thames Ct. site should be no taller than the present buildings in the immediate surrounding building skyline, and adjacent to our Thames Court building should be similar, e.g Covea and Sovereign House buildings, and at Norman Place Reading, have similar height to Thames Court with pitched roofs.</i>

12.	<i>It was always going to be flats at that location. Having lived in flats (twice) I don't have a problem with them.</i>	<i>I was never a fan of the present route on the south side of Christchurch Bridge. It's cramped & bikes can be a nuisance. I assume the current link via Norma's Place will remain as it's more direct to the station. In an ideal world pedestrians would use your link & bikes the current one.</i>	<i>Mews housing good idea.</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>My only comment is that it would be nicer if the highest block was 6 storey. Pleased you have done away with the glass fronts. Can you get rid of those horrible things on the top of the blocks? They look like the top of my old kitchen units.</i>	<i>No.</i>
13.	<i>I have no issue with the principle.</i>	<i>I think it would be a vast improvement to the area</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>My biggest concern is the potential disruption to Vastern Road whilst the works are underway. This is an incredibly busy thoroughfare in a town where congestion is always a huge issue - especially if any thoroughfare is disrupted. As long as Vastern Road is kept free-flowing without additional congestion then this will not be a problem. If this is not currently a consideration, it needs to be.</i>
14.	<i>I am comfortable with this.</i>	<i>It is a good idea but would be annoying for the residents as it would be used well. If it has to be why not provide some retail/coffee shops at the lower level.</i>	<i>Seems cynical as I'm sure it's only being done as you can't build up to existing terrace houses.</i>	<i>Make balconies bigger and more usable. People need outside space.</i>	<i>Make balconies bigger and more usable. People need outside space.</i>	<i>Design is hardly ground breaking. It would be good to see more creative design in these huge developments. I would like to see less flats and more 3 bed flats with bigger balconies. There are so many 2 and 1 beds in Reading but hardly any 3 beds for downsizers.</i>
15.	<i>I did not see any mention of affordable housing. It will be millionaires row facing the Thames.</i>	<i>Absolutely essential and would expect that to be a requirement of the Planning Department. The path should be made a right of way.</i>	<i>No other than the need to provide parking for each household.</i>	<i>The buildings look to have no architectural merit, are too tall and dominant for the area.</i>	<i>The buildings look to have no architectural merit, are too tall and dominant for the area. They would completely alter the nature of the view from the Thames. The buildings would completely dominate the surroundings without having any benefit of being architecturally interesting.</i>	<i>The site is so important for Reading and for the Thames frontage that the design should have been put out for competition. As it stands the blocks of buildings could have been designed by Barret Homes. In addition, there should be a limit on the height of the development so as not to overwhelm the surroundings and the Thames skyline.</i>
16.	<i>I think the idea of more residential development without the necessary improvements in infrastructure - transport, parking, education, leisure (all areas the council are decimating) - is laughable. We will look back in years to come and wonder why we killed off this town.</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>See above - these proposals need to be seen within the wider picture. But Berkeley will have no appetite to and the council have a inability to see the wider picture.</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>None</i>
17.	<i>Not a bad idea as long as it respects the height of surrounding buildings.</i>	<i>Would be useful</i>	<i>If by mews housing you mean individual houses two/three floors high, with some outside space, it would be lovely . BUT...?</i>	<i>The proposed scheme is ridiculously high for the area.</i>	<i>Same comment . Far too high. Along a green park and tow path...you don't expect high rise buildings.</i>	<i>1) How many social housing and affordable flats are included in this project. This is what Reading needs: affordable houses not luxury apartments. 2) Reading has two major concerns at the moment: traffic congestion and pollution and floods. It seems very dangerous to build high rise blocks in the flood plain. The weight will cause damage and aggravate the possibility of floods. It has been demonstrated on many occasions that new buildings in flood plains have increased the damage caused by floods. Furthermore, the number of extra cars attached to the site are not going to ease the traffic jams for which Reading is well- known. Far from it.</i>

						So, in short, I think that this project is far too massive; clearly to maximise profit, the developers are hoping for as many flats as possible instead of designing a humane, environment friendly number of houses, respecting the "heritage" which is mentioned in the project.
18.	Ok. Good location close to town and station	Brilliant but is it at the cost of the link directly from the river path onto the bridge? I would prefer to keep the link the runs at 90 degrees from the bridge to the Thames path for when I'm continuing to Tesco, Thames Lido or Sonning, otherwise will I need to weave to Vastern Road and back again?	Good - not everyone wants to live in a flat, especially families	Looks much better than original plans	Looks much better than original plans - the lower the better	None.
19.	a good idea	I think there should be a link through to the station directly from the (relatively new) pedestrian bridge that is across the river	no thoughts really but it sounds good	Looks fine to me	Looks fine to me	what about parking for residents, I can't see any provision for that and presumably it would be difficult/impossible to put underground (which would be the preferred option) due to the proximity of the river and the water table
20.	This site needs to have some community/town centre land use as well. For instance, where are the restaurants, art galleries, cafes, or local shops? It is a prime location, being the principal gateway from Reading town centre to the River Thames, and the northern suburbs.	There must be a direct and open link between Christchurch Bridge and Vastern Road. I think this link should be made as linear as possible, to make it seem open and clearly navigable. I see from the current scheme that the only pedestrian provision through the site is a rather narrow path that winds through the blocks of tall apartments near the Thames, weaving under buildings. The path should take the most direct path possible, with the buildings planned around this route (not vice-versa!). Whereas it seems to have been planned to turn many corners, and I think it should be fully-open to the air, not covered. Also, the section of path just before Christchurch Bridge seems to wind through a courtyard, dwarfed by tall apartment blocks. I dread to think the limited amount of sunlight reaching this path, making it windswept, unwelcoming and dangerous. There should be active frontages, cafes, community used along this prominent section.	The mews housing appears to be a well planned part of this proposal. It is a good idea to use these to blend the development into the surrounding housing stock.	I appreciate the use of architectural detail, which looks rather industrial and well designed.	The architecture in the proposals of the Thames frontage building are nice. I like the classic-yet-modern detailing. I am thoroughly impressed by this. However, there is insufficient provision for public open space, and active frontages, in this development. The Thames frontage should be the jewel in the crown in this development. What an opportunity to create a fitting gateway to Reading town centre, with good footfall and a lively cosmopolitan atmosphere. Instead, all I can see from the proposals is a boring residential apartment block, serving Reading (and even the future residents of this development) with no purpose other than high-density housing and a small pedestrian link. The Thames frontage needs to have more open green spaces with benches, planting and high quality public realm. This will allow residents and the public to relax and enjoy the development fully. There should be restaurants and cafes at the river frontage, to make the area active and positively contribute to this town centre location.	Please consider providing adequate multi-storey/underground parking for ALL residents. Each dwelling should be accompanied by at least 1 or 2 parking spaces depending on the size of the house. Not everyone is able to walk, train or cycle to where they need to be in Reading, or beyond. Public transport in this town is just not convenient and not cost effective for everyone. People need their own cars to go about their daily living.
21.	I think it is very disappointing that this is just residential. It would be an ideal opportunity for a bar and a restaurant overlooking the river.	Good idea	Sounds nice		It's a real waste to just put flats on this site. The river front should not just be homes - we need entertainment too.	

22.	Too many homes in too small a space	<i>The lack of any evidence of people flow studies alongside the consultation is disappointing. However, drawing suggest that the site is going to be congested at peak morning/evening times. It is good that there is more connectivity with the bridge though given how bad the initial proposal that was put forward was, I strongly suspect the developers were finding a really poor anchor point.</i>	<i>The drawings are not detailed enough for sensible comment on the mews housing. In fact, the drawings are pretty poor all round and don't lend themselves to informed comment.</i>	<i>It looks like an office block. If I had been shown that as a replacement building for SSE I wouldn't have batted an eyelid. Studies need to be undertaken and published on fumes that can reach those homes from traffic on Vastern Road when it is congested. The traffic lights are not shown in the drawing, it isn't possible to evaluate the front of the building with the usage that will take place in front of it. It is not clear how the connection from the bridge (the avenue) will connect to the pedestrian crossing on Vastern Road. To be clear, the connection between the bridge and Vastern Road needs to be straight through (this was the premise of the consultation for the bridge, the 90 degree turn on the bridge was supposed to be temporary until the SEE development was complete). Any obstacles such as a narrowing/turning of the connection is going to be horrendous for people. If the developers manage to get something like that through, I want them to commit to travelling from Christchurch Meadow to the station twice a day at peak time for two months either in a wheel chair or with a double buggy with screaming kids in it so they can share the misery they have inflicted.</i>	<i>Difficult to see the frontage given the majority of the drawing is taken up with the bridge. It's a pretty picture, given that it is an attractive bridge, but fairly useless for a public consultation.</i>	<i>The avenue isn't wide enough for the number of people that will be on it at peak time. This consultation is dire at communicating the connectivity between the bridge and the station/Reading.</i>
23.	<i>No problems with it being a Residential site -a very nice area</i>	<i>Very good idea cut down on traffic issues</i>	<i>No problem</i>	<i>No problem</i>	<i>The river frontage is very tall and imposing - a bit too tall. No privacy for the residents and no privacy for the people using the park - especially young children using the pool if this can be seen from the building. Doesn't really look like a river frontage a bit too high rise - the Vastern Road side looks fine</i>	<i>Parking must be controlled no saying everything fine then residents wanting to park everywhere. No restrictions on use of the river and park saying it's too noisy for the residents as here in Maidenhead when a long existing fountain has to be turned off at night due to complaints. Vastern Road Roundabout is too fast and busy and will need to be controlled so that vehicles approach slower especially when the building works are going ahead.</i>
24.	<i>I think it is a good re-use of the site</i>	<i>I think the changed plans with the route going through the site are better than the original. It would be better if there were some footbridge across Vastern Road but that is outside this scope</i>	<i>Good to have some low rise in the plans - it makes the central passageway more light and open</i>	<i>Is the listed building to be demolished?</i>	<i>I think a development of Reading's river frontage is long overdue. The height of the blocks facing the river is a little daunting but probably we would get used to it</i>	<i>Is there no possibility of moving the electrical substation? It seems a shame to leave that in place. It seems in the way</i>

25.	As long as it's not more flats	Fine	Fine	Very boring like all recent blocks in Reading	Boring AND ugly and too imposing next to what is already there	More trees, as big as possible to hide the ugliness
26.	The projected vision looks good, but cannot see in the drawings the Listed Building (no. 55) which should be protected	If the electricity station at the back of the proposed flats serves the whole of Reading, as stated, that it needs 100% protection from vandalism	No	No	Not pleasing on the eye. Needs to be more beige in colour. The Thames Water 'Clearwater' building is perfect	Yes, keep the Listed Building! At least the façade. It would need renovation for safety. Your architect could learn a thing or two from this listed building. It would be good if the whole frontage of the flats could be like the listed building. It would be very pleasing to the eye.
27.	Very much in favour of residential development here. Makes sense – potentially lovely riverside environment, convenient for station and town centre In favour of the area as possibility for downsizing older couples, plus first time buyers	Excellent decision – great Improvement on existing unsatisfactory approach to/from Christchurch Bridge	Like it – seems positive/desirable to have variation of accommodation – levels, heights and what is offered	Would favour a more open looking form. Do not especially like design if top storey. Feel it is a bit too high?	Again, a bit too high? But probably part of Reading's 'CBD' notion? Like staggered siting of buildings on Thames; again, not keen on roof line	Concerned about limited parking. Does it work to have vehicular and pedestrian access together in way it is shown in front of mews? Vastern Road busy, fast vehicles – hard to adjust as they turn off? Would favour perhaps shops / community space on ground floor facing Vastern Road – not appropriate for residential accommodation?
28.	My first thoughts were that this site is inappropriate for large scale development. Firstly, how would you make an industrial site safe for the public and residents? Then how would you deal with Lynmouth Road terraces.	I think a direct route to the bridge is essential. The bridge is iconic and should be a priority. Your schematic from Vastern Road doesn't offer that. In fact, I doubt the bridge will be visible from Vastern Road.	I think the provision of mews housing is good but I think its impact on Lynmouth Road is too oppressive. It will be like having a prison wall at the end of all the gardens. I think it should be broken up. I also think a square block is wrong and I would consider a mansard 3 storey rather than 2 storey flat roof.	I think the view from Vastern Road to be rather 'blockey' and I don't like the link from 2 slab buildings. Otherwise it's ok.	I think I have the most objections from the point of view on the river appearance. No one makes enough of the Thames and while you have an open green area which is good it's unclear about ground levels and the appearance of this important aspect.	From an appearance point of view as developments go it isn't bad. I think the approach to the shared river area is unclear (The existing wall with its security gate and graffiti is awful). I don't like the blast wall and I thought the generator room was listed. I think having to make a residential site safe from the public and residents is unacceptable. After all there has already been a fatality from overhead cables at Reading Station. People and the public generally need protecting and I think, on balance, this site is not suitable to large-scale public use.
29.	Ok with that	I LOVE the fact that we can walk straight off the bridge and through the building to the station and beyond.	I accept that lower buildings would seem less threatening to pedestrians but it isn't super important. 3 floor townhouses would work just as well.	I think the planned building is really ugly. There is no beauty of purpose to the towers. Better to make the whole block with a level skyline, maybe 6 or 8 floors. Concentrate the housing here so that the north side of each apartment gets a nice view over the river, across the bridge to the open space of Christchurch Meadow. Maybe have nice penthouse flats with some plants.	It would look better low, 3 floors max to match existing houses. Also the Vastern Road apartments can see over them to what is undoubtedly the best aspect	Presumably flooding will be taken into account as much as possible. Remembering that water comes up drains!

30.	<p><i>The development is over-developed for the size of the site. The height of the buildings is far too high compared to the houses next to the development.</i></p> <p><i>There is very little parking and the local area does not have spare parking available.</i></p>	<p><i>I believe that this will cause a huge problem. There is a huge drug problem in the area. The access to the Thames from the station will only help the drug dealers.</i></p> <p><i>Graffiti is likely to be daubed on any walls as per the walls that are currently on the edge of the site.</i></p> <p><i>The houses could be vulnerable to burglars as there is an easy pathway for them to disappear along the Thames Path. Insurance companies will increase premiums if the site is vulnerable to crime.</i></p>	<p><i>The houses are the best part of the development.</i></p>	<p><i>My concern is about the amount of housing proposed on the site. There are too many high rise buildings and the site looks overcrowded.</i></p>	<p><i>I think the development should not be open to the river as the residents should be protected from possible vandalism or crime.</i></p>	<p><i>Deep foundations for high rise buildings will affect the water table and could help towards possible flooding in the area.</i></p> <p><i>I am concerned that even though you have put high rise buildings into your plans you will then apply for extra floors to increase the number of flats you currently wish to build on the site.</i></p> <p><i>Although you are asked to provide social housing on the Estate I am aware that builders are happy to provide a sum of money instead to the Council for social housing to be built elsewhere instead of in your development. This will then tie up more free land in the Reading area for housing. We do not have enough open spaces in the area, and more provision should be made for cars on the development.</i></p> <p><i>Car spaces on the development are minimal. It is unrealistic to say that flat dwellers do not have cars. There is no free car parking spaces in the area and more provision should be made for cars on the development.</i></p> <p><i>The pathway from the Bridge to the Vastern Road entrance could be a potential wind tunnel, and also an area like this could attract muggers or thieves.</i></p> <p><i>The development as it stands at the moment is not complementary to the surrounding Victorian houses in Lynmouth Road. Your development will cause their houses to be in shade and in the dark for most of the day. You will reduce the price of their houses as they will be harder to sell. Lynmouth Road has been subject to a lot of interest because of its proximity to the station and the houses have been upgraded by their owners. The road is much sought after but your development will potentially reduce their value.</i></p>
31.	<p><i>Agreed</i></p>	<p><i>Current link proposal much better</i></p>	<p><i>Good idea. But how about also having some mews offices to bring some much needed smaller business space</i></p>	<p><i>The pedestrian entrance needs to have more prominence. The link to the river needs to be more obvious</i></p>	<p><i>I would like to see space for cafe or two with outdoor space fronting the river</i></p>	<p><i>Have you done any analysis of wind effect of the tall buildings on the pedestrian space</i></p>

32.	<i>I would be interested in investing in these apartments. Would you be able to advise if this could be possible?</i>					
33.	<i>Totally against the idea with the current infrastructure. Caversham is a bottle neck at the best of times without all the additional cars this would bring. I have to travel through caversham every day and there is always traffic. There is no mention on how the roads are supposed to cope.</i>	<i>No odds to me at all</i>	<i>Better than ugly looking flats</i>	<i>Nope</i>	<i>Nope</i>	<i>Traffic. Traffic. Traffic. Traffic. No consideration for anyone that lives in the area already and no thought at all about the extra traffic</i>
34.	<i>I feel that residential development makes some sense.</i>	<i>I do not see the point as the current route is adequate.</i>	<i>Seems reasonable</i>	<i>Too tall and as a result too many residential buildings units.</i>	<i>Requires further stiffening with planting/landscaping.</i>	<i>Too many residential units being proposed.</i>
35.	<i>In principle, residential development is ok. There does not appear to be information on how many people, and whether there is appropriate parking</i>	<i>Necessary</i>	<i>Access and parking facilities are not clear</i>	<i>This seems reasonable for the area.</i>	<i>The design is absolutely awful - dark looming towers right on the river bank. This is an opportunity for beauty and it is important that Reading makes the most of this opportunity- not just cramming in towers. Are there plans for restaurants?</i>	<i>Parking facilities? Number of proposed dwellings?</i>
36.	<i>In general, a good idea</i>	<i>Makes sense</i>	<i>Too high, too imposing on surrounding properties. Max height of 3 stories, plus ground floor.</i>	<i>Too high, too imposing on surrounding properties. Max height of 3 stories, plus ground floor. Those living in the properties would be facing high traffic noise all day.</i>	<i>Too high, too imposing on surrounding properties, blocks sunlight from the river frontage / pathway. Max height of 3 stories, plus ground floor.</i>	
37.	<i>Excellent choice for development facing Thames ,the new Bridge and close to Station and town centre</i>	<i>I like this idea but will it encourage unwanted drug pushers and vandals entering the development from the playing fields on the other side of the river?</i>		<i>I presume the height of the 8 storey flats will be the same height as the Thames Water Building. Maybe at this level the noise from the railway will be significant to the top floor flats</i>	<i>Make sure that unwanted visitors are restricted in some way</i>	<i>I worked as a System Control engineer for SSE during the 70's Miners Strike in the old building that fronts Vastern Rd. Our cars parked at the front of the building were damaged with paint etc. There was at that time a large high voltage substation on the property with quite noisy large system transformers. I see no mention of this in the design concept and if remaining in situ you should make quite clear to potential property purchasers that the 100 cycle hum from these transformers will cause much distress to the nearby purchasers.</i>
38.	<i>Don't have an issue with it being residential.</i>	<i>It should do - when the bridge was built it was designed to do this.</i>	<i>Don't think it's in Reading council planning policy for this area.</i>	<i>Can't establish if you are keeping the Victorian buildings?</i>	<i>Doubt if there will be any affordable housing in this development</i>	<i>Local amenities ie Drs, Schools additional congestion</i>

39.	<i>I believe that developing that site makes a lot of sense. It is very close to the station and currently just wasted land which is just a big area covered in Tarmac.</i>	<i>The change made to the initial proposal with a very straight line link is very positive. It is currently an awkward wriggly passage with uneven floor arriving on a "road" (even if this is just a small cul de sac serving the block of flats). It is not nice for the pedestrians nor the people living in these flats as this passage was not designed to take such a big amount of pedestrian traffic.</i>	<i>I assume RBC will not allow any car parking at all as it is their policy to not give any parking to buildings which are that close to the station, unless this has now changed. If there is no parking there should be a provision for wheelie bins in a large cupboard for these mews housing.</i>	<i>Not really, all modern blocks of flats look more or less the same, and Reading does not seem to have tried to make them look anything special. Your proposal does look nice, with different height buildings and Windows and balconies. Trying to use some materials like the ones at the station or the refurbished Thames tower would help to integrate all the buildings together.</i>	<i>I like the opening for the pedestrian way and the different height front on the right which ties in with the existing buildings.</i>	<i>I think the following will most likely never happen, but Reading lacks shops at a reasonable price where small businesses can actually survive and give variety from the massive chains in the oracle and town centre. It would be nice to have these integrated in the ground floor of some new built developments.</i>
40.	<i>This is a strong development... I feel with more residential we should incorporate more cafe culture or restaurants, social bars, bringing life close to the river having a vibe for residents and locals, to differ from going into town and community gathering</i>	<i>I feel this is a good idea, just a spot that it has coursed more drug use and anti-social behaviour in the area as there is less police presence than in town</i>	<i>This is a good idea</i>	<i>Most of the buildings seem to be going taller on this side</i>	<i>This is should be in keeping with the area with maybe a pub or something so we could enjoy the scene</i>	<i>It could be a very strong site with a community feel, if it is just going to be flats for people to commute from and to, it will be like every other development popping up just trying to get people by the train station, I feel by giving the new residents and community a leisure building of sorts this would sell it.</i>
41.	<i>I think a predominantly residential development for this site is fine, but public amenity space (bar / restaurant / cafe) should be reserved for the Thames frontage. Retail offerings in the area north of the station all the way to Caversham are limited, so a small but high quality (Tesco Metro / Little Waitrose / M&S Food) outlet would do very well and help serve the community.</i>	<i>I am a daily user of Christchurch bridge for access to both the centre of town and the station. The existing layout is poorly lit (and therefore prone to anti-social behaviour) and is narrow and a bit fiddly for bike users to navigate. I would therefore urge you to ensure that the space provided for the direct link is suitable for shared used by pedestrians and cyclists, and is well lit and open to deter anti-social behaviour. I cannot see how the proposals deal with access across Vastern Road (if at all) and wonder whether there is opportunity to create a more user friendly crossing for non-vehicle users wishing to cross from your development to the other side of Vastern Road? The space should not be a "wind tunnel" and nor should it be barren; a proper planting scheme should be adopted.</i>		<i>I think getting the Vastern Road facing element "right" is far less important than ensuring that the River Thames frontage provides a good amenity space (see below). Current proposals for Vastern Road look good to me.</i>	<i>I had always hoped that the redevelopment of this site would signal the start of Reading making better use of the Thames. At present, the only place to sit and have a riverside meal/drink is the appalling managed establishment on Pipers Island near Caversham Bridge; it feels like the town wants to turn its back on the river and this is a great shame. The riverside should be for use and enjoyment by the people, so it is a real shame that your current proposals do not cater for any river side amenities.</i>	
42.	<i>I am a local resident in Lynmouth Road and fully welcome a development that smartens up the area, gives greater access to the river, connects Caversham to Reading more directly and provides a little retail too (a riverside cafe/bar?)</i>	<i>Yes, as above. It's a great idea - and will make caversham to Reading a much more pleasant and direct walk.</i>	<i>Welcome it. Low height development is in keeping with the existing neighbouring Victorian housing.</i>	<i>Way too high. I appreciate that it is always going to be higher than existing Victorian properties. But if you look at every other recent development, between Vastern Road/Caversham Road and the River Thames, height lines are, at the most, half of what is being proposed. I am concerned that rather than open up the river, the height of these buildings will entomb it. I am also concerned about reduction of sunlight into Lynmouth Road and how overlooked Lynmouth Road will become.</i>	<i>It should incorporate some kind of cafe. Or something else apart from residential. Reading has never fully utilised the river and this is a unique opportunity to do just that.</i>	<i>The single access point is insufficient for a development of this size. Current site has two - and traffic peaked at 8.30 and 5.30 with very little movement in between (unlike the 24-7 nature of a residential development). Will all demolition and construction work be accessed through this single point? It's too small, part of a quiet residential side road - and there are already serious sightline issues when turning on to Vastern Road from Lynmouth Road. <i>There need to be two access points - as the current electricity board site has. I am concerned that Lynmouth Road will be used as overspill parking for this new development and that the small section of visitors parking we currently have will</i></i>

						<p><i>be totally swamped by hundreds of new neighbours who have no parking spaces. Even if the majority of new residents don't have cars, where do their visitors park?</i></p> <p><i>I am also concerned by the new reduced width of the pedestrian pavement between the front of this new development and Vastern Road. There are a couple of places (the corner of Lynmouth Road and Vastern Road in particular) where the boundary wall will be so close to mature protected trees (which I want retained), that there will be insufficient room for pedestrians. The current very broad pavement is also used by cyclists. Reduced pavement width endangers pedestrians.</i></p>
43.	<p><i>My initial wish list was the front line in Vastern Road would continue with the style of 3 (or 4) level houses from Caversham Road to the site then backed by stepped increases to the rear.</i></p>	<p><i>This seems essential though I can see the levels would present problems. Cyclists might also make it "tricky".</i></p>	<p><i>The answer to 1 leads to being in favour of more parts on a similar scale to other housing in the immediate area. Lynmouth, De Montfort and Brigham Roads, then Thames Avenue.</i></p>	<p><i>3 levels too high for homes, again compared to the existing area. Roof gardens or landscaping would help. Probably too expensive to install and maintain.</i></p>	<p><i>Jerome K Jerome said it all in 'Three Men in a Boat' Chapter XVI about Reading and the Thames – Now is your chance. Make some small, or large, amends for previous aberrations.</i></p>	<p><i>The Vastern Road frontage will need suitable tree planting with a service layby, of some length, for vehicle stops and deliveries.</i></p> <p><i>We live very close on the north side of the Christchurch Bridge. Have consideration for improving the view we have from our homes and when approaching the walk to the town centre.</i></p>
44.	<p><i>Good idea, close to town centre and rail station. Also good site for access to river frontage and park areas</i></p>	<p><i>Like the idea, will add interest to the building and allow easier access for pedestrian and cycle users for the town and train station</i></p> <p><i>Care needs to be taken to prevent this passageway becoming a resting/sleeping place for homeless people</i></p>	<p><i>Would be a welcome contribution to give variety</i></p>	<p><i>Looks rather tall, stark – perhaps improve with some architectural feature to reflect the historic nature of the site which would make it easily identifiable in the town</i></p>	<p><i>Happy with them</i></p>	

May 2019 Exhibition

Questions Asked...

Q1 – Do you welcome the changes made to the Vastern Road façade? Do these changes alleviate concerns?

Q2 – Do you welcome the changes made to the River Frontage façade? Do these changes alleviate concerns?

Q3 – Do you welcome the changes made to the Mews Houses? Do these changes alleviate concerns?

Q4 – Do you agree with our approach to the Locally Listed Building?

Q5 – Do you agree with our approach to development adjacent to Lynmouth Court?

Q6 – Do you agree with the inclusion of a café or restaurant within the scheme?

Responses Received...

Ref No	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
1		<i>These changes are much better. I like the integration of public space with the river. The landscape strategy and the café are the two positive improvements for the existing Reading residents.</i>		<i>I think this is paying lip service. You could have incorporated it if you thought it expedient. As for the 'history of the site' there is no reference to that in the surrounding architectural new build. It's quite irrelevant, especially as this proposal looks pretty much the same as all the other Berkeley schemes displayed.</i>		<i>This change is very welcome. Thank you for including it. Will the café be open to the public? Will it be sold to a private buyer as the residences will be? Who will pay for the outdoor areas eg walkway, gardens etc?</i>
2	<i>These changes are definitely an improvement, especially the landscape buffer, but I still wonder whether anyone would want to live in the ground floor apartments facing on to Vastern Road. I like the way you can now see past the link building.</i>	<i>I welcome these changes and think they are a distinct improvement. I always felt you weren't making enough of the waterside frontage – after all, these apartments with a river view should command a higher price</i>	<i>I was rather unhappy about these mews houses. With their single aspect they were more like a re-invention of the old back to back. This is a great improvement, giving them a lot more light and air. I wonder though to what extent they will be overlooked from the ramp leading to Christchurch Bridge. It certainly looked this way from your animation.</i>	<i>Although I feel it would have been better to retain this building, given your restraints on a very restricted site, I am happy to lose it.</i>	<i>This seems to be a distinct improvement.</i>	<i>I welcome the idea of a café on this site with river views. Given the number of people who cross Christchurch Bridge and the lack of anything else in the immediate area, I think it would be popular. The question of a crossing of Vastern Road to provide a direct route to the station still needs to be addressed.</i>
3	<i>Still too high and lacking in greenery. Need trees at frontage to soften the building and provide screening for residents from the road.</i>	<i>Yes, enhancing landscaping is welcome</i>	<i>Will still dominate Lynmouth Road. Would rather see a green buffer between your development and Lynmouth Road/Lynmouth Court</i>	<i>The listed building should be retained.</i>		<i>Yes, but plaza area needs softening with more planting and trees. Consider green walk instead of a water feature on walkway adjacent to SSE, i.e. an avenue of trees/hedges not walls!</i>
4	<i>Design changes are definitely an improvement. Height seems fine. I remain concerned about having to walk through/under a building to access the site. It needs to be abundantly clear that the route through the site is public, whereas the current plans feel like one is entering a private space. Please remove the link over the route.</i>	<i>This elevation is much improved. In particular the access from the bridge through the site is much more open and welcoming. Here it is clear that one is accessing a public space and a similar approach needs to be adopted for the Vastern Road frontage. Railings are good but the design here needs to be cognisant of the EA flood alleviation works which are soon to happen. Please co-ordinate the design process.</i>	<i>This element seems better. It wasn't a big issue in the first place.</i>	<i>While it would be nice to retain the LLB, its loss enables a better design solution for the site and opens up other options. On balance the loss of the LLB appears acceptable.</i>	<i>This all appears sensible.</i>	<i>This also appears sensible and should help reinforce the public, not private nature of the route through the site.</i>
5	<i>They are still too many storeys and out of keeping with the surrounding buildings - the max height should be 5 storeys so you do not dwarf the neighbours</i>	<i>That's fine but refer to the fact that the buildings exceed 5 storeys which is not within Reading Councils plans</i>	<i>Still don't believe that these mews houses are in Reading Councils guidelines</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>That's fine but refer to the fact that the buildings exceed 5 storeys which is not within Reading Councils plans</i>	<i>Yes</i>
6	<i>Do not alleviate concerns. Proposal still looks like a bunch of high-rise boxes with lipstick on the pig.</i>	<i>Still looks characterless, like it was designed by a robot, to minimum possible budget. Would it really kill</i>	<i>Hah! "Mews properties". Hilarious. All the character and individuality of living in a shoe-box.</i>	<i>Blah blah. You'll say anything to get to the bottom line profit, but won't actually create an area with character. Your concept is appalling character-</i>		<i>One café? Wow, don't wear yourselves out?</i>

	<i>The point was that we don't want a pig, not that if you put lipstick on it, we'll be fooled? We're not fooled.</i>	<i>you, to include some randomness, some character?</i>		<i>free. Like the "Yoghurt vs. Australia" joke.</i>		<i>I must also have missed the amenities that you're going to build, to support the new residents?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cafes - Pubs - Restaurants - Post office/late night general shop <i>I'm sure that these will be open to the general public.</i>
7	<i>I appreciate you stated the buildings had been reduced somewhat. Daylight is still a concern with two very tall buildings which are uncharacteristic of the area, especially given the location of the sun, the location of the 7-11 storey buildings and my house/garden. Furthermore the ability for people to view directly into my garden, and also possibly into my back windows from these buildings reduces my privacy. I would have expected these to be in the region of 3-4 storeys tall for an area which the Reading policy stipulated in the (Local Plan) was for only medium density development and the benchmark was for 4-6 storeys in this area according to the Reading Station Area Framework.</i>		<i>Mews houses developments are still too close to existing Lynmouth Road properties – I cannot see where within either Lynmouth Road or De Montfort Road there is a property in such close proximity to another house without a buffer (i.e. large garden at the back). Furthermore, mews houses seem to detract from the overall open feeling of the development. These houses alongside your proposed Vastern Road frontage are effectively "boxing in" my property with regards to Garden and current Open space. Finally, the views of my house from the second floor, across to the trees of Christchurch Meadows will be blocked, so I have no view whatsoever of any greenery beyond my garden.</i>	<i>Whilst you stated you had constructed research on the LLB, it appears you have made no plans for retaining this listed building. Any attempts to incorporate the importance of the LB into the overall design appeared to be shallow or superficial at best. Could the building not be re-purposed into a public facility? i.e. local town gathering or of something which better suits the community? We have no such facility here.</i>		<i>I appreciate the move to install a café, what about adding a local convenience store also?</i>
8	<i>There have definitely been improvements since the previous design. I still have concerns that it is too many storeys. The current, and surrounding buildings are 2-5 storeys high. Currently when leaving Reading train station via the North and Caversham exit the view from the glass wall is green which is great. This view will be blocked/ruined by such a tall brick development. The view will be dominated by these buildings! Tall trees can't cover 11 storeys. Green wall on the front of the building?</i>	<i>Definitely improved since previous. More open definitely a good idea. Love any greening and boosting biodiversity of the area.</i>	<i>I don't know enough about the previous mews house design to comment.</i>	<i>I don't know enough about this to comment.</i>	<i>Sounds better</i>	<i>I hope there is outdoor seating for non residents that does not involve being a café customer. Is the café's existence guaranteed? What happens if the café isn't viable as a business? What will replace it?</i>
9	<i>Previous scheme presented a far preferable south frontage. More sophisticated with 1930's echoes, and fitting in better with likely future surroundings. No reason for fake warehouse look through whole site.</i>	<i>Warehouse look overdone and does not respect heritage of site, which is about large windows, clerestory and expanse of red brick. Impact could be improved by stepping back frontage part way up, breaking up sense of soaring monolith. Brick colour should be changed to red.</i>				<i>Yes, but this reach of Thames has character of suburban by-pass, and this site is one of few opportunities to change that. Need for more public access facilities eg restaurant at ground floor, stretching out to towpath.</i>
10	<i>It looks very "meh". Either your designers are old or living in the past. Just so lifeless and unimaginative. I live near there and welcome new developments, but this in time will just resemble 60s tower block ideology. It's prime location near the station and you look like your holding back.</i>	<i>I welcome a nice through area, but as above. It just look like a by the numbers design. Blending into so many of the other boringly similar designs. It has no show piece mentality that will make people go wow. Get new designers, they are pants</i>	<i>Yawn</i>	<i>Not fussed</i>	<i>Unaffected.</i>	<i>Wow, let me let the balloons off. A café! It's a river view next to the station. It should all be café and bars over the river and park.</i>

11.	Approve	Approve	Approve	Approve	Approve	Approve	YES! Well done. Please ensure the café is entitled to use a large enough area of the plaza to get some sunlight all year round. Please talk of it as a facility for weekend leisure visitors to the river and Christchurch Meadows, as well as simply being a facility for commuters. Perhaps space in the plaza for additional temporary unit/van in the summer?
12.	Yes they are welcomed but the concern on the overall massing still exists	Yes the railings may improve visibility and reduce the occurrences of anti-social behaviour. I still believe the construction of an 8.5 storey building on the river frontage is totally inappropriate, nothing residential in the area comes close.	Yes	Yes			Yes welcomed.
13.	The buildings look quite attractive and as a Lynmouth Road resident I welcome the reduction in height of one of the two towers. Still think the higher one is out of keeping with the rest of this section of Vastern Road, especially considering the proximity of two storey Victorian housing. Also, on the last point, I want to highlight again the lack of space there is going to be for pedestrians turning left out of Lynmouth Road. The corner of your landscape buffer needs to be taken off to allow space between the tree (which has a preservation order) and the boundary of the development.	Looks fine.	Yes. Looks fine	I think your proposals is better than retaining the locally listed building. I don't think it is of huge architectural merit and I'd rather you were permitted to maximise your development here – and further reduce the height of the tallest tower.	Looks fine. But my house doesn't back directly on to the development.		Yes. I also think it has a fair chance of being a commercial success as the footfall will be considerable.

Additional Comments

Parking

- I can see that some parking has been put forward for the properties, however I cannot see anyway to accommodate visitor parking. The parking is currently at maximum capacity within Lynmouth and De Montfort and they will be unable to accommodate.

Highways and Access

- The influx of additional vehicles at this junction may be dangerous given the nature of the road being obstructed by parking in between Lynmouth and De Montfort, and many people crossing the road in order to arrive at the station or the shopping complex (Aldi etc.) access the road.
- Will there be a crossing directly outside of the development? If people use it as a cut through to the train station from Caversham footbridge they still have to then go left to the crossing at Norman Place which means it will take longer. Or people will cross without a crossing on a busy road which is dangerous and slows traffic. Your plans implied it would give a straight through route between footbridge and train station approach but without a road crossing outside then it will be very zig zaggy and add time. There definitely needs to be a way to cross the road other than the existing lights for this development to make sense.
- Cycle and footpaths should be clearly separated, ignoring unfortunate precedent on bridge. Cyclists will seek to speed through site, whatever their lobbyists pretend.
- There is still only one access road to the site...from a quiet cul-de-sac. Bad enough when there will be 200-plus residents once the scheme is completed. The comparison with the number of cars that used the old site isn't valid as they weren't there during weekends and they had a separate entrance and exit. This is in and out from the old exit point. Plus, is that really going to be the only access point during three years of demolition and construction. The developer has to work with SSE to use the old entrance point during construction – and once the development is in place.

Design

- I had a quick look at the website plans, and I'm reasonably happy with the ambitions of the project and the use of space. My only concern is the height of the buildings. It appears that the blocks will be 8 or 9 storeys tall, and I'm worried that this would tower over the surrounding residential area. The development is just on the outside of the IDR (Inner Ring Road) in a mainly residential area, so I think the new buildings should not exceed 6 floors (including ground floor).
- Of concern is the height of the buildings. It would be detrimental if new buildings in this development exceed the height of any of the buildings on the same side of Vastern Rd, eg Thames Water, Covea, and existing residential blocks. Buildings of 8-11 storeys are too imposing.
- I welcome the stepping down of the Mews Houses toward Lynmouth Rd and changes to create separation from properties there. I have concern over the red-brick wharf style proposal, (whilst it is an improvement over the styling of the earlier proposal). Wharf and power station residences work well where original buildings have been re-developed as residences; a new build will not benefit from sentiment of retaining character of old buildings. Agree the building should have an attractive architectural style, and I suggest it incorporate architectural features of the Locally Listed Building into the new building design, eg contrasting colour of brickwork with stone window and door surrounds, archways, canopy above door,

bow windows, flat roof. The proposed roof structures look spurious and dysfunctional. Either pitched roof lines or flat roof lines could achieve the aim of being attractive through using imaginative brickwork design and window/balcony styling. I'd like the spirit of the LLB to live on after its removal by setting the style for the new development I welcome removal of the link building on the River Thames frontage. Also welcome the prioritisation of a foot/cycle path thoroughfare across the development site.

Café

- We are an independent restaurant called Clay's in Reading and if you ever decide to have a restaurant or a decent sized small plates/tapas style cafe as part of the development, we would be really interested in those premises. Just wanted to let you know we are interested and ask for the details of the right person to contact

Co-ordination with other developments

- Planning approval should be synchronous with planning approval for the redevelopment of the retail park (Range etc), so that the plan is complimentary (eg continuation of foot/cycle route) and avoids an early approval of one side setting precedents for the other, eg it could be argued the height of the Vastern Rd development sets a precedent height for the retail park development (In my view, better if Vastern Rd is fewer storeys, else the retail park could be even more massive). This proposal needs to present a solution for the cycle and pedestrian route to cross Vastern Rd that has minimum risk to pedestrians and cyclists, and minimises journey delays to both foot/cycle path users, and to Vastern Rd traffic. I'd like to see an assessment of options including an option for a bridge over Vastern Rd keeping the link path at height across the proposed development, and for the option of the path emerging at street level inclusion of a clear plan to optimise the pelican crossing(s) including the phasing of lights and the wait times for crossing users.

October 2019 Exhibition

Questions Asked and Responses Received...

1. Which elements of the proposed development do you like, and why?

Principle of Development

- Utilising brownfield site
- This is the best use of this prime location. It was all wasted lying there
- All looks good
- Good use of difficult site
- Looks good, pleased with the final layout
- Location for buyers
- I am looking forward to book an apartment facing Thames and Christchurch Park
- Too many people living in too little space does not make for a well-adjusted community – not planned around the needs of stay at home mothers with small children or retired people

Highways and Access

- Cycleway
- Pedestrian/cycleway, better access to Christchurch Meadow
- Bridge linking through.
- Public Open space
- Open space, view on the river
- Some open spaces
- Public access to river
- Access to riverfront
- Good access to the riverside on foot
- Nice to have public access to the river bridge
- Better access to station/Vastern Road
- Opening up access from pedestrian bridge to station
- Path to station
- Public access/corridor
- Like the design and the centre walk from the pedestrian bridge
- I like the view and public access to railway
- Liked the accessibility through development for public use
- New proposal provides an increased river/bridge frontage view along the main development footpath
- It is good that a better route from the new footbridge to the station appears (providing a good crossing of Vastern Road)
- Access from Caversham to the station
- Access from footbridge to station

Affordable Housing

- I have concerns re: possible reductions of 'affordable' housing as the scheme progresses

Design and Layout

- Everything looks lovely in the architect's/artists images – just hope it will end up as depicted
- The design and vista through to the footbridge
- Heritage-influenced design
- Architectural style
- The wharf-style buildings
- Warehouse Building – looks great, brings fresh look to development. I wish more traditional buildings were built in Reading
- Like the fact that design reflects the 'industrial' past, as well as combining modern elements – in the steel/glass penthouse
- The current design is better in terms of smaller, more appealing buildings
- I think the development is more attractive than previous designs which I opposed.
- The smaller blocks nearer to the River Thames and brick colour 'Thames View'
- The front, but not the back which is too heavy for view on Thames. The extra building here will have a large environmental (impact) on area

- Smaller than earlier version
- The gradual inclining of the buildings on the main road is much more in keeping with the local housing
- The view from the Caversham side looks great and offers an excellent 'entrance' to the Station and Reading.
- Design evolution/aesthetic is an improvement. Less Canary Wharf and more sympathetic to history/river setting
- Removal of houses backing on to Lynmouth Road
- It's good the new buildings won't overlook Lynmouth Road
- I am particularly pleased with the removal of the units along Lynmouth Road – well done
- Building heights are staggered
- The reduced height, central area and the variation in style between the different elements
- The open plan courtyard
- I don't like the height of the buildings along the river. They are not in keeping with neighbouring flats
- I would prefer houses, rather than flats
- I think the 4 storey units beside Lynmouth Court should be 3 storey with a mansard
- I think Vastern Road is a bit boring and I would consider another floor or 2 for aesthetics (facing south)
- Frontage, particularly riverside is very imposing and cuts off views from north to south (and vice versa)
- Building should not exceed current build line of 4 storeys
- The heights of buildings especially as other schemes are proposed nearby – shading, wind tunnel effects etc

Materiality

- Building materials/style: should age well
- ...the brickwork will have different shades of colour, giving the façade a more interesting, mosaic-like character
- The brickwork and design

Community Infrastructure/Amenity

- The café (2 mentions)
- Riverside café
- Café proposals will add an excellent amenity
- Incorporation of public amenity (and café) is a real improvement on previous scheme designs
- Good idea to have the riverside café and hope that it is not too small
- Enjoyable place for a coffee
- Public amenity
- I am a little bit concerned that control of the café will be relinquished and it might not be opened/used correctly
- Are extra play facilities (Christchurch Meadow), doctors and schools being considered?

Environment

- The flowers and trees
- View over river
- Soft landscaping – but may need more emphasis

Parking

- Concerned there are only a few parking spaces – will the flats be sold on the condition that residents don't own cars?
- Concerned about parking on streets north of the Thames
- Parking remains a concern. Current local managed schemes do not work

Engagement

- I am pleased that Berkeley Homes are engaging with the public and this is a sympathetic development

2. The design of the buildings, types of materials and the architecture proposed are appropriate and suitable for the area reflecting the sites legacy and heritage:

Strongly Agree - 5

Agree - 20

Not Sure - 1

Disagree – 0

Strongly Disagree – 1

3. The link through the site to Christchurch Bridge and on to Caversham will be a benefit to pedestrians and cyclists, providing a more accessible route to the river as well as improved access to the station and town centre:

Strongly Agree - 13 Agree - 11 Not Sure - 2 Disagree - 1 Strongly Disagree – 0

4. The café is being introduced into a prime location which will be easily accessible to the public and will be a great asset to the local community?

Strongly Agree - 8 Agree - 10 Not Sure - 5 Disagree – 1 Strongly Disagree – 0

5. Redevelopment of this disused brownfield site to provide much needed housing should be supported.

Strongly Agree - 7 Agree - 15 Not Sure - 5 Disagree - 1 Strongly Disagree – 0

6. The scheme encourages improved biodiversity and wildlife adjacent to the River Thames?

Strongly Agree - 1 Agree - 5 Not Sure - 16 Disagree - 4 Strongly Disagree – 3

7. The redevelopment of the site will provide a new direct pedestrian route to the River Thames, encouraging riverfront activity and providing access to the Thames towpath.

Strongly Agree- 8 Agree - 15 Not Sure - 4 Disagree - 0 Strongly Disagree – 0

8. The proposals and plans you have seen today represent an improvements on our proposals shown earlier this year:

Strongly Agree - 8 Agree - 14 Not Sure - 4 Disagree - 0 Strongly Disagree – 0

9. Do you have any other comments regarding the proposals you have seen today?

Principle of Development

- It will be a beautiful addition to the area and will open out the riverside
- It will encourage community spirit
- Great improvement on prior proposal and fully support the development of the site
- Looks very nice – public access to railway would benefit local people
- Anything's an improvement on the current brownfield!
- Looking forward to it – better than a brownfield site or a multi-storey nightmare
- Us – the people who live here already – the flats by the river are too high

- Well done
- Who will live here – how many young professionals want to live here and what will have to do in overcrowded centre

Highways and Access

- It would be good, if viable, to provide a footbridge to cross Vastern Road to link to the station/town centre
- It is not immediately clear from proposals how pedestrians are to traverse Vastern Road having crossed the site. There is an established crossing to the east along Vastern Road but this might not meet the desire lines of those heading to the station and into the town centre
- Tight corner for cyclists
- Current cycle/pedestrian path, not so cycle friendly
- Secure motorbike/scooter parking?

Affordable Housing

- Needs greater emphasis on affordable homes to meet at least compliance (30%)
- I agree that the site needs regenerating, but Reading needs more affordable housing
- Position social housing away from River
- Incentivise key worker support – they need a break

Design and Layout

- Building illumination – warehouse building could really use it to show brick details in the dark. Cheap but make it way nicer
- I like the fact that the building closer to Caversham Bridge is shorter and less obtrusive to eye for Lynmouth and neighbouring residents
- Perhaps roof terraces could be added to the top of the flats to provide a nice open space for them to socialise and have BBQs etc
- Would like to see the taller of the buildings reduced 1 or 2 levels
- Could the top double windows on the south elevation be stepped back?
- Need to know more about fire evacuation procedures
- Maybe thick hedges between parking and backyards of Lynmouth Road would be nice
- It is a shame that the transformer remains as part of the site as that feels like it compromises the design somewhat but I guess that is out of your hands?
- Block II will look directly into our kitchen and conservatory and garden
- I am also a little unsure about a pathway through the development as we have problems with drug pushers in the area and this would be a problem for people living on the site
- I do feel sorry for the people on the bottom floors – if it is successful then they will never open their curtains and will require security bars. No chance of turning the bottom floor into parking and bike parking – maybe even paid parking for the station?
- The river frontage flats are too high the neighbouring buildings are 4-5 storeys – proposing 10+ is not in keeping at all – the eastern Rd side is Ok for the height, but trying to squeeze too many flats on the riverside is inappropriate
- Current build line should not be exceeded
- The height of the tower blocks adjacent to Vastern Road are still too tall and out of keeping with area. They overpower other buildings 'The Sidings'
- I think the entrance from Vastern Road should offer more of a 'gateway' design
- Doesn't really stand out as a mix of traditional to fit in and modern to stand out. Could be a bit more adventurous. I think more glass, or full length windows would be good. Especially when considering who you want to sell to and how much you will charge.
- Not sure why you got rid of the link between the two buildings at the front. Would have been a great gym type space

Materiality

- The two flat blocks have the yellow brick design which often discolours and looks cheap
- The use of a 'soft colour' brick, more expensive, will give the site a more suitable and enhanced feeling
- Red brick looks better than yellow

Community Infrastructure/Amenity

- I think the café should be designed to be flexible space, so it could be used for multiple purposes e.g. yoga/dance practice area/games room – at times outside of café opening hours
- I am still unsure about a café as we have had some unsuccessful attempts in the past to provide this service
- Not enough space for community activities (garden or enclosed hall)
- Would do well to have on-site maintenance. A lot will depend on the outdoor maintenance as to the long term appearance – flowers, shrubs.

Environment

- It's not clear how energy efficient the building will be
- The environmental impact should be clearer
- Will disrupt wildlife during development to a great degree
- Are there any adverse issues associated with the retained generating kit on the adjacent site?
- It would be nice if the 'old power house' provided 'new power house' with some solar panels on all the flat roofs
- Will solar panels be added to the flat roof?

- Sound proofing for transformer?
- What about the sound of the transformers for the residents?
- I would be worried about noise from the transformers
- Sound travels down the river already and this will aid the tunnel effect meaning noisier for residents and wildlife
- This discourages wildlife

Parking

- Parking and pollution concerns
- Extra cars not beneficial
- Parking and saturation is an issue. Local managed schemes do not work
- Aim to attract non-car users to reduce car usage in town

Engagement

- I would be interested in receiving updates from you (email address provided)
- I'm taking a card, so may be in touch later with further comments or questions
- Consultation over a longer period (day not enough)
- Publish development timeframe online

6. Applicant's Response

The focus of the consultation was on encouraging comments and suggestions on the proposals and any other issues which respondents considered should be taken into account when shaping the development.

Every comment received has been recorded and considered to identify the issues raised². Where respondents raised more than one issue, each has been recorded separately. Through this process we have been able to identify commonalities and attributed issues to topic areas. For each topic area, the issues raised have been captured and summarised in Chapter 5. Below provides the Applicant's response to the issues raised.

Wherever possible community comments and suggestions have been fed into the final masterplan. It is important to note that some community concerns will not always be overcome through the consultation exercise and that sometimes people have contradictory views.

² The comments forms received are available in full to Reading Borough Council from the applicant upon request.

Principle

The Applicant is pleased to receive all comments during the consultation and thank all residents for the feedback received. The team understands that some respondents have concerns with regards to the development, it is hoped that these are overcome where possible. Ultimately the principle of development is to be dealt with and decided by the Council.

Scale of development

A total of 209 dwellings are proposed at the application site.

The quantum of development has reduced through the course of consultation from the 240 units initially mooted, as a consequence of changes to built form, the detail of which is set out later in this section.

Changes

The project has been presented to local stakeholders in four forms, the metamorphosis of the scheme in each case being directly related to

comments received. The Design Evolution is captured more vividly within the Design and Access Statement (DAS) and within the project [website](#), but main changes to the scheme can be summarised as:

- We have reviewed and incorporated relevant design precedents to reflect the past history of the site in an appropriate manner. In particular, the warehouse vernacular and varied materiality to be utilised through the site will provide buildings of interest set within a meaningful and fully accessible public realm. The blend of old and new and emphasis on quality will provide a step-change in design and set high expectations for other developments in the locality.
- We have increased car parking to offset potential overspill into Lynmouth Road.
- We have significantly increased open spaces throughout the site and have

created a welcoming public realm that will act as a transition from river to station. We have listened to comments received and have placed an enlarged café with outdoor space by the river so that it can benefit workers during the week and leisure users at the weekend and during holidays.

- We have undertaken a landscape and visual assessment and a daylight and sunlight assessment to determine where to place built form in an acceptable manner.
- We have reduced massing closest to Lynmouth Court to respect building lines and garden spaces and to protect amenity in terms of overlooking and impact from daylight and sunlight.
- We have removed the mews properties from adjacent to Lynmouth Road and have set back and angled away low rise and flatted development from the boundary so that there is no unacceptable impact on these properties by virtue of overlooking or loss of daylight and sunlight. A landscape buffer between the site and Lynmouth Road is also proposed

to provide some separation and screening from the site.

- We have further set back buildings from the river frontage and have increased the opening between buildings to provide a welcome entrance from Caversham and the River Thames into the site and Reading town centre beyond. Revision of the roof design to incorporate a more lightweight, flat-roofed structure reduces the overall height and perception of proposed buildings, whilst allowing a meaningful and high-quality gateway to emerge.
- Alterations to the river frontage have also enabled a more usable public realm, very much integrated into the existing walking and cycling network to come forward. Providing the café in a central spot allows for much needed amenity space, whilst changes to the central route through to the station have allowed pedestrian access from the site directly to the River Thames.
- The approach to Vastern Road has been amended to ensure a coherent site-wide design approach, taking into account historic design precedent.

- The previous two gateway buildings on Vastern Road have been replaced with a single, more slender form of building.
- Buildings on the Vastern Road frontage have also been set back to enable a landscape buffer to be provided and opened up with the link building removed to provide a more welcoming public space to encourage use.
- In tandem with changes to the central avenue through the site at the river frontage, the layout now more comprehensively and successfully draws users through the site to clearly defined destinations.
- Public spaces at both site entrances have been provided to aid wayfinding and activate frontages.

Landscaping, Open Space and Ecology

There are a number of local open space areas situated in close proximity to the site, that are highly accessible and within easy walking distance. These are detailed in Open Space Strategy. There

are also child play facilities approximately 200 metres from the site.

In addition, the proposed development incorporates sufficient private amenity space for each dwelling in the form of balconies, terraces, semi-private and public open spaces.

It is considered more appropriate for the scheme to contribute towards the existing open space and play space in the locality rather than providing this on site. This being said, the development also incorporates a meaningful area of public realm which is expected to see significant usage by future residents and locals.

The application is accompanied by an ecology assessment. The site is considered to have low botanical diversity and be of low ecological value. The loss of this habitat as part of the development proposals will not have a negative impact on biodiversity. The features of highest ecological value are the boundary hedgerows which are being retained and enhanced. New native tree, shrub and hedgerow planting will be included within the wider landscape scheme, including boundary treatments to gardens.

We have created a landscape and ecology buffer to the river frontage to mitigate flood risk and to

respect local wildlife. We have also set back development from the riverside to respond to concerns, to offset overshadowing and to reduce the impact of light and noise pollution on local wildlife.

We have discussed our proposals with the Environment Agency and have provided a landscaped and open approach within our site to offset the need for a wall along the River Thames, enabling open vistas and comprehensively dealing with existing concerns regarding anti-social behaviour in the area.

Highways

A Transport Statement has been submitted as part of the planning application. The Statement considers the existing access from Lynmouth Road to be the most suitable vehicle access.

The Transport Statement includes a 'Forecast Trip Generation' table to assess the impact on the local highway network during peak hours'. The results indicate that the proposed development reduces the trip generation compared to its previous use as the SSE Offices.

54 parking spaces will be provided across the development, including 42 undercroft spaces and

12 on street spaces, delivering a parking ratio of 26% which has been considered broadly acceptable by the Local Authority due to its sustainable location.

In line with the Adopted Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019), 5% of the car parking spaces will be electric vehicle charging points.

Construction

The proposed development would cause no significant harm to any neighbouring amenity by way of noise and disturbance. It is envisaged that prior to the commencement of any development, a Construction Management Plan will be in place to provide a range of measures to effectively manage and limit disturbance to existing residents during the construction phase.

Sewage and drainage

The proposals incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) which will sustainably accommodate surface water within the site. Surface water run-off from the proposed development will be discharged to the existing drainage network located along Lynmouth Road and Vastern Road via a new pumping station located in the south-east corner of the site.

7. Conclusion

The Applicant has undertaken multi-phase, iterative engagement with officers and members of Reading Borough Council, key stakeholders and the local community. This engagement has enabled the project team to build understanding of the local context and raise awareness of the proposals at the former SSE site, Vastern Road, Reading.

The engagement programme undertaken for the development has met the requirements of the national planning policies and the general principles set out in Reading Borough Council SCI.

From an early stage the Applicant has engaged with the local stakeholders, through a series of stakeholder meetings, and the local community via three public exhibitions, distribution of consultation awareness raising materials and a consultation website.

In total, 105 responses were received, providing a range of views, suggestions and questions about the proposals.

A number of supportive comments were received with regard to the need for redevelopment of the site, complimenting the approach taken to design and layout and in respect of the approach to the river frontage, landscaping and non-residential uses. Against this, concerns were raised primarily relating to the scale of the scheme and associated perceived impact on amenity, provision of car parking, whether there would be construction traffic/noise disruption during the building phase and impacts on infrastructure.

In response to the feedback received the scheme has been revised via an iterative and inclusive engagement process, this leading to changes in terms of *inter alia* quantum, design, layout, parking, landscaping and provision and use of open spaces.

It can be considered that the pre-application engagement undertaken with the local community and stakeholders has been timely, meaningful and effective and it can be concluded that the requirement to consult has been satisfied.

Appendix 1: Consultation Letters

PUBLIC EXHIBITION

Initial development proposals for residential development at
SSE, 53-55 Vastern Road, Reading

You are invited to attend a public exhibition to present initial proposals for the residential development of part of the above site by Berkeley Homes (Western)



An exhibition of the proposals will be held on:-
Date: Monday 25th February 2019
Time: Between 3.30pm and 7.30pm
Location SSE, 53-55 Vastern Road, Reading

If you are unable to attend, the exhibition materials and feedback form will be available to view at the following website from 25th February 2019.

www.vasternroad.co.uk

You can also provide your views via the following email address:

feedback@vasternroad.co.uk

Or postal address:

FREEPOST RTZZ-AZJX-TYCU,
Vocalism Limited, 14 Raglan Gardens, Caversham, RG5 5JH

PUBLIC EXHIBITION

Updated development proposals for residential development at
SSE, 53-55 Vastern Road, Reading

You are invited to attend a public exhibition to present updated proposals for the residential development of part of the above site by Berkeley Homes (Western)



An exhibition of the proposals will be held on:-
Date: Wednesday 8th May 2019
Time: Between 3.30pm and 7.30pm
Location SSE, 53-55 Vastern Road, Reading

If you are unable to attend, the exhibition materials and feedback form will be available to view at the following website from 8th May 2019.

www.vasternroad.co.uk

You can also provide your views via the following email address:

feedback@vasternroad.co.uk

Or postal address:

FREEPOST RUAB-SGYU-TKJJ,
Vocalism Limited,
The Studio, 7 Priory Copse, Peppard Common,
Henley on Thames RG9 5LH



The Old Power Station – An Exciting New Chapter

The Old Power Station at Vastern Road was purchased by Berkeley Homes (part of the Berkeley Group) from SSE in March 2019.

Following on from earlier proposals presented in February and May of this year, the latest designs seek to continue to provide high quality new housing alongside a new riverfront café. The revised designs better reflect comments provided and reflect upon the unique character of the sites history, taking cues from the heritage of the former power station and waterfront access.

To find out more about the plans and to have the opportunity to have your say, please attend our public exhibition.

The Exhibition is being held on:

Tuesday 15th October 2019, 3:30pm to 7:30pm

at 53-55 (former SSE offices), Vastern Road, Reading, RG1 8BU

If you are unable to visit us at the exhibition, please take the opportunity to view our plans on our dedicated website

www.vasternroad.co.uk

Please contact Berkeley Homes if you have any further questions relating to the designs or the exhibition;

Tel: 01753 784 400

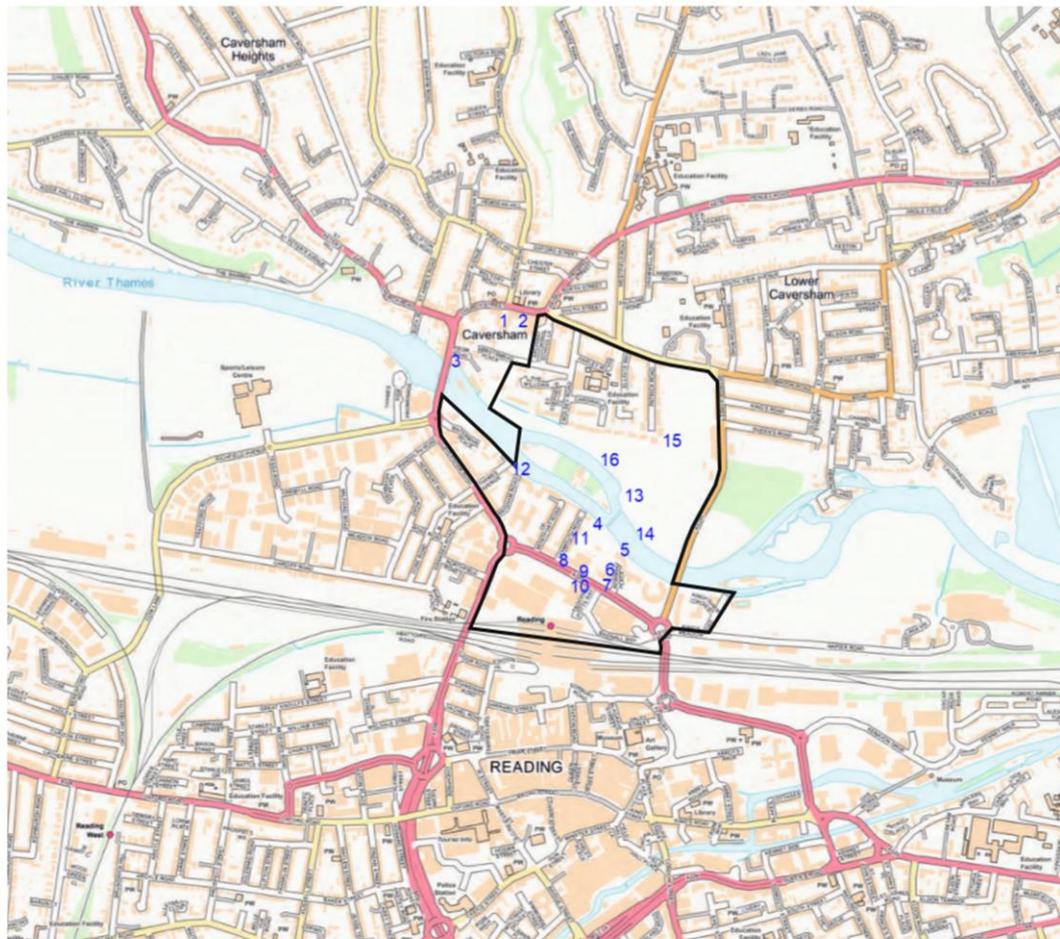
Email: feedback@vasternroad.co.uk



PLEASE NOTE: NO PARKING IS AVAILABLE ON SITE OR IN LYNNMOUTH ROAD

Berkeley
Designed for life

Appendix 2: Map showing location of Community Notices



 LEAFLET DISTRIBUTION AREA

1, 2 etc LOCATIONS OF EXHIBITION NOTICES



PLANNING - ENGAGEMENT - DEVELOPMENT

Appendix 3: Consultation Website (extract)

THE OLD POWER STATION
READING ROAD READING

Berkeley
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Home
Background
Heritage
Design Evolution
Current Scheme
Benefits
Feedback

Current Proposals, October 2019



Exterior view of the current proposals from Vastern Road

Exterior view of the current proposals from Vastern Road

Welcome to our consultation website for The Old Power Station, Vastern Road, Reading (formerly SSE).

The following pages present our updated proposals for the above site, which identify the significant changes made to design and layout further to comments received at the February 2019 and May 2019 events and through dialogue with local residents and groups.

We would be grateful for your feedback on our plans, which will allow further design development ahead of submission of a planning application in November 2019.

About Berkeley

The Berkeley Group is a business built on 40 years of excellence. We focus all our efforts on creating exceptional places in which to live, work and enjoy.

The Berkeley Group has also employed more than 850 apprentices on its sites and offices over the last 18 months and is creating 319 roles of public realm and planting 9,800 trees across London and the South of England.

Our homes and developments are designed not just for today, but for tomorrow and the future. They are designed to enhance the neighbourhoods in which they are located for.

Experts in Placemaking

Berkeley has unrivalled experience in regenerating complex sites to deliver beautiful developments that are tailored to their surroundings and unlock public realm and a real identity. It is led by Berkeley's strong focus on placemaking. It's about creating strong communities where people from all walks of life can live comfortably together.

We believe the key to placemaking is ensuring that it is delivered in true partnership with the parties involved and making decisions for the long-term. Collaboration is key to our success. It helps us create high quality places that go on to become thriving communities.




THE OLD POWER STATION
READING ROAD READING

Berkeley
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Home
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Background

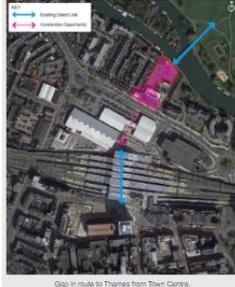
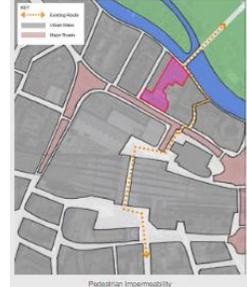
The design and layout of the scheme has been influenced by a number of factors including existing policy allocations, a desire to connect the bridge to the station and technical site constraints as set out below.

The Site Allocation



Site identified for development or change (policies CR11-14, SR1-4, WR1-3, CA1, FR1)

Place & Permeability

Gap in route to Thames from Town Centre

Pedestrian Permeability

Site Constraints



Opportunities & Constraints Key

1. EA Constraint 8m min from River edge
2. North Facing River Views
3. RBIC Constraint 10m min from River edge
4. River Thames
5. Christchurch Pedestrian Foot Bridge
6. Existing SSE Offices to be demolished
7. Area of Flood Plain
8. Existing Mature Trees on Eastern Site Boundary
9. Site Vehicular Access
10. 55 Vastern Road (L18 RBIC Locally Listed)
11. Mature Trees towards Vastern Road
12. South Facing views towards town centre
13. Location of Culvert

THE OLD POWER STATION
READING ROAD READING

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Heritage

Whilst there is little historic imagery of the Vastern Road site and its buildings, the SSE archives provides an insight into the building types that have been adopted over the years. The photographs below provide an overview of the building styles and architecture that have influenced our latest proposals.

Site Development Timeline:

- 1894 Frederick W Albury won the tender to design buildings for the Reading Electric Supply Co. Ltd.
- 1898 Buildings first appeared on a map with a small building close to Vastern Road and the main works building adjacent to the Thames for ease of coal delivery.
- 1900 Reading Electric Supply Co. Ltd.
- 1912 Reading Electric Supply Co. Ltd (E Rowley Hill engineer and manager) & Reading Roller skating rink (on Vastern Road)
- 1920 Reading Electric Supply Co. Ltd & Carter & Cahoy (Building & timber work) & Simmonds Co. Ltd (Bundry & motor sales depot)
- 1930 Reading Electric Supply Co. Ltd (Water Barnes PCB)
- 1940 Reading Corporation Electricity Dept. (J.W. Ashur engineer & manager). John Edwards listed at 55 Vastern Road (possible first reference to locally listed building as accommodation).
- 1950 British Electricity Authority (Southern division) generating station.
- 1960 Central Electricity Generating Board & Southern Electricity Board.
- 1970 Central Electricity Generating Board & Southern Electricity Board. Demolition of the chimney and river fronting warehouse buildings.







Click images above to enlarge

Architectural Details

When considering the design for the Vastern Road site, it has been necessary to understand the history of the site and how it has evolved over time. The project team has worked with a heritage consultant to document the history of the site. The timeline above demonstrates the evolution of the electricity works over time, leading to the development of the office and substation complex currently occupying the site.




Aerial view of site looking south and brick detailing of turbine hall and furnace chimney

We have explored similar industrial buildings to inform the proposed design.

Power Station Precedents

The images to the right are of power stations built in the same era as Vastern Road and demonstrate similar forms, brick details and materials. Following analysis of historic photographs of Vastern Road and other power stations constructed around the same period, the key features which have informed our design are:

- Brick as an envelope material
- Distinctive warehouse roof forms
- Chimney
- Arched windows







Click images above to enlarge

Appendix 4: Consultation Banners (3rd Exhibition)

Berkeley Homes

THE OLD POWER STATION

Welcome to our exhibition which showcases our updated proposals for the development at the former SSE offices, Vauxhall Road, Reading.

Berkeley Homes is a proud member of the Berkeley Group. Our business is based on creating beautiful, successful places across London and the South of England.

We work closely with key stakeholders to tackle the shortage of good quality homes and so make a lasting contribution to the landscape and the communities we help create.

Our team has a wealth of experience sensitively developing sites within this area, providing much needed homes and practical improvements to the local infrastructure.

We invest in the social, economic, and environmental fabric of the places where we work, helping to support thriving communities.



Below: Historic photographs of the former power station (Source: British architectural building society, 2010)



Berkeley

About Vauxhall Road

THE OLD POWER STATION

The site sits between Vauxhall Road and the River Thames, with the potential to link Christchurch Bridge and Cavendish through to Reading Town Centre and Railway Station.



Below: Aerial photograph showing north, general

Our vision is to create an iconic place where people will feel welcome, connected, energised and proud.

The Old Power Station provides a truly exciting opportunity to create a landmark place to live in the heart of Reading.

We will 'blend and reconnect' with the River Thames, and create beautiful spaces for the community to meet, relax and enjoy. We will create amazing spaces and buildings.

We believe regeneration, when done well and in true partnership with local people, has the potential to be the right, and the natural route to be fully utilised. If that is done, these amazing places will be delivered.

Berkeley

Our Proposed Masterplan

THE OLD POWER STATION

Our proposals draw people through the site, opening up access between Christchurch Bridge, the River Thames and Vauxhall Road.



Below: Proposed Site Plan



Proposed Site Plan, May 2017

Berkeley

The Sidings Character Area

THE OLD POWER STATION

The frontage on to Vauxhall Road was historically the old railway sidings for Reading Station. Our proposals will draw inspiration through the inclusion of railway influenced warehouse buildings and railway-track detailing within the landscape, inviting people in to the scheme and on to the River beyond.



Below: Proposed Site Plan



Below: Aerial view of the site location (Source: Berkeley Homes)

Berkeley

Coal Drop Terrace Character Area

THE OLD POWER STATION

Through the centre of the scheme sits a series of pitched roof buildings, reminiscent of Victorian industrial offices and warehouses found within smaller scale Victorian coal fuelled power stations.

Proposed Plan & View Location

Pitched Roofs, May 2019

Architectural view of the pitched proposals towards Christchurch Bridge

Architectural view of the pitched proposals towards Christchurch Bridge

Berkeley

Thames View Character Area

THE OLD POWER STATION

The northern part of the site takes cues from the sites past, with power station inspired architecture, alongside opened up views and access to the River Thames for all to enjoy.

A cafe will sit at the centrepiece with views along the River and access to Christchurch Park.

Proposed Plan & View Location

Thames View, May 2019

Architectural view of the pitched proposals from the River Thames

Current Progress, October 2019

Architectural view of the pitched proposals from the River Thames

Berkeley

Benefits of our Development

THE OLD POWER STATION

Our commitment to make a difference will go beyond the site itself.

This is a wonderful opportunity to work with the Council to reinvigorate the site into a thriving community, which integrates the sites heritage and leaves a long lasting legacy.

Justly, we will deliver:

- IMPROVED LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE**
The site will deliver improved connectivity and be provided to improve public access and deliver a shorter walk to Christchurch Park and the Station for the wider community.
- A PLACE MAKING APPROACH**
Creative architecture will blend new community with existing history.
- HIGH QUALITY DESIGN**
There is no generic Berkeley scheme, every design is bespoke, to meet the scheme's needs and a new destination.
- NEW HOMES FOR RESIDING**
Deliver high quality homes and a place where people feel safe and are proud of their new home.
- DELIVER AFFORDABLE HOUSING**
Deliver the affordable housing of the previous development to be re-used for the first time.

- CYCABLE TRANSPORT**
We will encourage sustainable transport by providing protected and secure parking, including facilities for chargepoints, car clubs, and secure cycle parking.
- ENHANCED PUBLIC SPACE**
We want to improve the immediate environment. We are opening the site through the delivery of high quality public realm.
- WALKING**
Enhanced access to the River Thames with a direct link from the development.
- SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**
We will address the overall quality of the site to ensure we deliver our Berkeley goals.

- A THRIVING COMMUNITY PLAN**
We have a long term vision and will play an active role in ensuring that the management and planning for the site can be done in a sustainable way.
- HERITAGE**
Explore the legacy of the Old Power Station site and ensure all plans to recognise its past and future.
- A NEW ECONOMIC CASE**
Provision of new jobs creating the River Thames and providing a sustainable way along the riverbank.
- A THRIVING ECONOMY**
The site will provide new jobs, training and apprenticeship opportunities.

Berkeley

Thank You & Next Steps

THE OLD POWER STATION

Berkeley Homes hopes that you have found this presentation of our proposed development informative and we thank you for taking the time to attend this exhibition.

We would be grateful if you could fill out the questionnaire forms provided based on what you have seen here today. This helps us to continually improve our developments and keep you informed about our progress.

Should you have any further questions regarding our proposals please speak to one of the project team here today or alternatively call 01932 794976 and ask for a member of the Lead team.

We will be submitting our application to Reading Through Council next month and will be working with conditions throughout the process.

www.berkeley.co.uk

Berkeley

Appendix 5: Feedback Form (3rd Exhibition)

Berkeley Homes (Oxford & Chiltern) Ltd

Vastern Road (Former SSE Offices) – Public Exhibition Feedback Form

Having viewed our proposals for Vastern Road, we would be grateful if you could share your views with us.

1. Which elements of the proposed development do you like, and why?

2. Is there anything further that you feel we should consider within our proposals?

3. The design of the buildings, types of materials and the architecture proposed are appropriate and suitable for the area:

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. The positioning and design of the café with views over the river are in keeping with the rest of the site and are a good addition to the scheme:

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. There is a good balance of open space across the site, improving the public connectivity between the river and the town centre/ train station:

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

1

Berkeley Homes (Oxford & Chiltern) Ltd

6. Do you have any other comments regarding the proposals you have seen today?

Please leave this completed form in the box provided, or alternatively feel free to take the form with you today and return it to (no later than 28th October 2018):

Joe Harding, Berkeley Homes, Berkeley House, Farnham Lane, Farnham Royal, SL2 3RQ
 Email: joseph.harding@berkeleygroup.co.uk
 Tel: 01753 784 400

Please print in BLOCK CAPITALS

NAME:

ADDRESS:

EMAIL:

TELEPHONE NO:

PLEASE TICK IF YOU **DO** WANT TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE EXHIBITION BOARDS

PLEASE TICK IF YOU **DO NOT** WISH FOR YOUR COMMENTS TO BE PUBLISHED AS PART OF ANY FUTURE DOCUMENTATION

Thank you for taking the time to attend our exhibition and complete this questionnaire.

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Pegasus
Group

