Volume 2: Townscape, Visual and Built Heritage
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1 TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL

Introduction

1.1 This chapter of the ES reports on the likely significant townscape and visual effects associated with the demolition and construction stage and the completed development/operational stage of the proposed development.

1.2 The chapter describes the methods used to assess the potential impacts; the baseline conditions currently existing at the application site and the study area; as well as the potential impacts and likely effects on townscape character and visual amenity, taking into consideration embedded mitigation measures. Where appropriate, additional mitigation measures required to prevent, reduce, or offset the likely effects, are identified and the chapter concludes with a summary of the likely residual effects.

1.3 This chapter is supported by the following appendices in ES Volume 2:

- Appendix 1.1: Planning Policy;
- Appendix 1.2: Baseline Conditions and Figures;
- Appendix 1.3: Townscape Assessment;
- Appendix 1.4: Visual Assessment;
- Appendix 1.5: Cumulative Assessment; and
- Appendix 1.6: Verified View Methodology.

1.4 Baseline views are presented in Appendix 1.2. Wirelines of the proposed development are presented in Appendix 1.4 and Cumulative Wirelines are presented in Appendix 1.5.

Methodology

1.5 The Townscape and Visual impact assessment (TVIA) methodology has been drawn from The Landscape Institute and The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment's 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition'[1](GLVIA 3), 2013. The aim of these guidelines is to set high standards for the scope and content of landscape/townscape and visual impact assessments and to establish certain principles that will help to achieve consistency, credibility, transparency and effectiveness throughout the assessment.

1.6 The assessment has been informed by the following legislation, policies and published guidance, details of which is set out within Appendix 1.1 – Planning Policy:

- NPPF[2];
- PPG[3];
- Reading Borough Local Plan 2019;
- Reading Station Area Framework 2010;
- Reading City Centre Framework 2008; and
- Reading Borough Housing and Economic Land Availability 2017.

Consultation

1.7 At the time of undertaking this assessment, the EIA Scoping Opinion remains outstanding. Table 1.1 summarises the consultation that has been undertaken with respect to the TVIA and that have further refined the scope of the assessment, as presented in EIA Scoping Report.

Table 1.1: Summary of Consultation

Consultee and Form / Date of Consultation	Summary of Comments	Action Taken
Principal Planner (Brian Conlon) Email exchange 17 October 2019	Email sent requesting comments/suggestions on assessment viewpoint selection. Brian responded via email requesting an additional three viewpoints - to the south-west on Greyfriars Road; to the south in front of Thames Tower; and to the south-east on Blagrave Street.	Viewpoints 24, 25 and 26 added as assessment view-points.
Principal Planner (Brian Conlon) Email exchange and telephone conversation 28 November 2019	Email sent requesting confirmation on view-point selection for production of verified views.	15 viewpoints were agreed upon, including viewpoint 3 and 25 (in place of viewpoint 20 and 15).

Assessment Scope

1.8 The assessment has been based on a set of development parameters, commitments and assumptions as described in Chapter 2: EIA Process and Methodology; Chapter 4: Proposed Development Description; and Chapter 5: Demolition and Construction Environmental Management. Due to the flexibility being sought in respect of land use classes and associated development scenarios, the townscape and visual assessments have been undertaken of the worst-case massing proposals represented by the mixed use scheme, as shown in Parameter Plan PP-105.

Technical Scope

1.9 The overall aim of the TVIA is to assess the likely effects of the proposed development on the features and character of the existing townscape (townscape receptors); and on the visual amenity of identified viewers of the application site (visual receptors) and study area, which include views from locations such as residential or business properties, public buildings, public open spaces, roads and Public Rights of Way (PRoW).

1.10 The TVIA does not address effects of the proposed development on built heritage, which is discussed in ES Volume 2, Chapter 2: Built Heritage. However built heritage features have been considered in so far as their contribution to the sensitivity (value and susceptibility) of townscape character and views.

1.11 In order to explain the potential of the application site to accommodate the proposed development, the key objectives of this assessment have been to:

- appraise the townscape features and character of the application site and its context;

[1] Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013. Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition. Abingdon. Routledge.
[2] Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019. National Planning Policy Framework.
[3] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance

- appraise the visibility of the application site from the surrounding study area and the nature and quality of existing views; and
- consider the likely townscape and visual effects of the proposed development.

1.12 The assessment of townscape and visual effects, in common with the assessment of many environmental effects as set out in the ES, includes a combination of objective and subjective judgements, and it is therefore important that a structured and consistent approach is adopted to ensure that the assessment undertaken is as objective as possible.

1.13 A townscape assessment is the systematic description and analysis of the features within the townscape, such as landform; vegetation cover; settlement pattern; building forms; transport patterns; and land use; which create a particular sense of place. A visual assessment considers visual receptors, which are the views of and within the townscape, and includes locations such as residential and business properties; public buildings; transport routes; Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and public open space.

1.14 The assessment has considered the following potential impacts and associated likely effects during the construction of the proposed development:

- Development works and associated visibility of machinery, cranes and other equipment used in construction works; and the hoarding and site lighting which would be visible at street level.

1.15 The assessment has considered the following potential impacts and associated likely effects of the completed proposed development:

- Visibility of the proposed development in local views (including RBC designated views), effects on the quality of local views and on viewers;
- Impacts on the townscape character and quality of the application site; and
- Impacts on the townscape character and quality of the townscape character areas within which it would be likely to result in perceived changes.

1.16 An assessment of inter-project cumulative effects has also been undertaken that considers the proposed development in addition to the identified cumulative schemes, as well as the proposed development in addition to the identified cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable cumulative schemes, in order to assess the different cumulative scenarios.

1.17 As set out in Table 1.1, 26 representative viewpoint locations were agreed with Reading Borough Council. Wirelines of the proposed development were modelled in 15 of those views, as agreed with Reading Borough Council. Wirelines of the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable cumulative schemes were modelled in the same 15 viewpoints.

Spatial Scope

1.18 The study area for the TVIA was determined through the consideration of the existing influence and visibility of the application site, as well as the anticipated influence of the proposed development on townscape character and visual amenity. This was determined by means of desk study and field study. Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping was not undertaken due to the urban nature and location of the application site meaning that results would be difficult to interpret.

1.19 The extents for the study area are shown in TVIA Figure 1: Site Context Plan, Appendix 1.2.

Temporal Scope

1.20 The assessment has considered the following scenarios:

- Existing baseline;
- Existing baseline + proposed development;
- Existing baseline + proposed development + cumulative schemes; and
- Existing baseline + proposed development + cumulative schemes + reasonably foreseeable cumulative schemes.

Baseline Characterisation Method

Desk Study

1.21 A detailed desktop analysis of landscape policy, mapping, published landscape and townscape character assessments and evidence base was undertaken to inform the baseline evaluation of both landscape and townscape character, and visual amenity.

Field Study

1.22 Field surveys were undertaken to verify the desktop review of the baseline landscape/townscape character and visual amenity, and in order to inform the determination of effects upon the landscape/townscape resource and visual amenity witnessed by visual receptors as a result of the proposed development and to determine the study area. ZTV mapping was not undertaken due to the urban nature and location of the application site meaning that results would be difficult to interpret.

Assessment Method

1.23 The methodology for the TVIA is summarised below.

Methodology

1.24 GLVIA 3 paragraph 1.1 states that:

"Landscape and Visual Assessment is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity."

1.25 Paragraph 2.6 outlines that the definition of landscape applies to townscapes, and is therefore interchangeable with the term 'landscape', with paragraph 2.7 stating:

"Townscape means the landscape within the built-up area, including the buildings, the relationship between them, the different types of urban spaces, including green spaces, and the relationship between buildings and open space…"

1.26 The guidelines contained within GLVIA 3 are not intended as a prescriptive set of rules, and have been adapted for the context and nature of the proposed development.

1.27 TVIAs are often undertaken by professionals who are involved in the design of the public realm and preparation of management proposals. This can allow the assessment to proceed as an integral part of the overall proposed development. Judgements are based on training and experience, and supported by clear evidence and reasoned argument.

1.28 The purpose of the TVIA is to identify the potential for, and assess the likely effects of, change resulting from development. Townscape and visual assessments are separate, although linked, procedures. A distinction is made between:

- Townscape - townscape character and the elements and features that contribute to it (townscape receptors); and
- Visual - people who experience views within the townscape (visual receptors).

1.29 A TVIA is typically accompanied by illustrative material, including baseline mapping and photographs of the application site itself and from the surrounding area.[

Viewpoint Selection

1.30 In order to assess the effects on visual receptors and inform the change that is likely to occur within townscape character areas, a selection of publicly accessible viewpoints is made, which could include

representative viewpoints (e.g. representing views of users of a particular footpath) and specific viewpoints (e.g. a key view from a specific visitor attraction). Views are identified through the interrogation of baseline data and consultation with relevant stakeholders and are then refined through ground testing on site visits. The variety of viewpoints aim to provide a representative selection of views available in the study area in terms of direction and distance, as well as receptor type.

1.31 Views are categorised as either near-distance, medium-distance or long-distance with the relevant distances dependant on the size and nature of the development, based on professional judgement.

1.32 The type of view is typically described firstly as transient (i.e. in passing) or fixed (i.e. from a static location) and then in relation to being filtered (i.e. through intervening vegetation), oblique (i.e. not within the direct field of view), or open (i.e. uninterrupted).

1.33 Photographs of representative viewpoints are taken at eye level, using a digital SLR camera, with reference to the Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11 'Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment'.

1.34 There are typically three key stages to TVIA, namely:

- Baseline Studies to establish the existing townscape and visual situation;
- Consideration of the proposed development and any primary mitigation that has been designed into the proposals; and
- Assessment of Townscape and Visual Effects, that considers the impact of the proposed development on the townscape and visual receptors identified through the baseline studies.

Assessment Criteria

1.35 The criteria used to assess if an effect is significant or not, is set out in subsequent sub-sections. This is determined by consideration of the sensitivity of the receptor, magnitude of impact, duration of the effect, geographical extent of the effect and application of professional judgement.

Townscape Effects

1.36 GLVIA 3 paragraph 5.1 states:

"An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource."

1.37 In order to assess the townscape effects, the sensitivity of the townscape receptor and the magnitude of impact experienced as a result of the proposed development is assessed.

Townscape Receptor Sensitivity

1.38 The sensitivity of a townscape receptor is a combination of the value of the townscape receptor and the susceptibility of the townscape receptor to the type of change proposed, using professional judgement.

Townscape Value

1.39 The GLVIA 3 Glossary defines landscape [townscape] value as:

"The relevant value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a variety of reasons"

1.40 Townscapes, including their character and features, may be designated at a range of levels (international, national, county and local level), examples of which are set out below. The assessment of value is based on a combination of the importance of townscape-related planning designations and the following attributes:

- Townscape quality (condition): the measure of the physical state of the townscape. It may include the extent to which typical townscape character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the townscape and the condition of individual elements;
- Scenic quality: the extent that the townscape receptor appeals to the visual senses;
- Perceptual aspects: the extent that the townscape receptor is recognised for its perceptual qualities (e.g. remoteness or tranquillity);
- Rarity: the presence of unusual elements or features;
- Representativeness: the presence of particularly characteristic features;
- Recreation: the extent that recreational activities contribute to the townscape receptor; and
- Association: the extent that cultural or historical associations contribute to the townscape receptor.

1.41 The overall value for each townscape receptor is categorised as High, Medium, Low or Very Low, as presented in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Townscape Value Criteria

Value	Criteria
Very Low	Features or areas with little or no evidence of being valued by the community and are not designated.
Low	Features likely to be of importance to the local community but have little or no wider recognition of their value and are not designated.
Medium	Features or areas likely to be of county or borough importance, designated at county or borough level.
High	Features or areas likely to be of international or national importance, designated at national or international level.

Townscape Susceptibility

1.42 The GLVIA 3 Glossary defines landscape [townscape] susceptibility as:

"The ability of a defined landscape…receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences"

1.43 The following criteria is taken into consideration in the assessment of townscape susceptibility, although not all criteria are equally applicable or important within a given townscape / type of development proposed:

- Landform;
- Pattern/Complexity;
- Composition;
- Landcover; and
- Relationship of a given townscape area to any existing settlements or developments.

1.44 Susceptibility of the character of the townscape / of the townscape features is categorised as High, Medium or Low, as set out in the Table 1.3. Townscape susceptibility can also be considered in the context of the capacity of townscape / townscape features to accommodate change.

Table 1.3: Townscape Susceptibility Criteria

Susceptibility	Criteria
Low	The receptor is likely to be able to accommodate the type of change proposed with little or no effect upon its overall integrity.
Medium	The receptor is likely to have some scope to accommodate the type of change proposed without undue effects upon its overall integrity.
High	The receptor is likely to have little scope to accommodate the type of change proposed without undue effects upon its overall integrity.

1.45 Based on the combination of value and susceptibility, an assessment of townscape sensitivity is reached, defined as High, Medium or Low.

Townscape Magnitude of Impact

1.46 The townscape magnitude of impact is informed by judgements about the size and extent of the change brought about by the proposed development both in terms of the existing townscape character and townscape elements / features and the addition of new townscape elements / features, and its duration and reversibility, as set out in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4: Townscape Magnitude of Impact Criteria

Magnitude	Criteria
None	No direct change to the existing townscape receptor or a change that is so inconsequential that it does not alter the existing townscape receptor.
Very Small	Very slight alteration to the existing townscape receptor; may also affect a limited area.
Small	Slight alteration to the existing townscape receptor; may also affect a restricted area.
Medium	Partial alteration to the existing townscape receptor; may also affect a wide area.
Large	Total alteration to the existing townscape receptor; may also affect an extensive area.

Visual Effects

1.47 The GLVIA 3 paragraph 6.1 states:

"An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity."

1.48 In order to assess the visual effects, the sensitivity of the visual receptor and the magnitude of impact experienced as a result of the proposed development are assessed.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

1.49 The sensitivity of a visual receptor is a consideration of the value of the view and the susceptibility of the visual receptor to the type of change proposed, using professional judgement. The assessment of value is based on the criteria set out in Table 1.5.

Table 1.5: Visual Value Criteria

Value	Criteria
Low	A location that is not designated, with minimal or no cultural associations.
Medium	A location that is likely to be of local importance, either designated or with local cultural associations, where the view obtained forms part of the experience.
High	A location that is likely to be of national importance, either designated or with national cultural associations, where the view obtained forms an important part of the experience.

1.50 The assessment of visual susceptibility is based on the criteria set out in Table 1.6.

Table 1.6: Visual Susceptibility Criteria

Susceptibility	Criteria
Low	• People travelling on major roads; and • People at their place of work.
Medium	• People engaged in outdoor sport and recreation, where their appreciation of their surroundings is incidental to their enjoyment; and • People travelling on secondary roads of lanes, rail or other recognised transport routes
High	• People at their place of residence; • People engaged in outdoor recreation, whose attention is likely to be focussed on the townscape; and • People travelling along recognised scenic routes or where their appreciation of the view contributes to the amenity experience of their journey

1.51 Based on the combination of value and susceptibility, an assessment of visual sensitivity is reached, defined as High, Medium or Low.

Visual Magnitude of Impact

1.52 The magnitude of visual impact is typically described with reference to the:

- Scale of change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition;
- Duration and nature of the impact;
- Angle of view;
- Distance of the viewer; and
- Extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.

1.53 The magnitude of visual impact classifications are set out in Table 1.7.

Table 1.7: Visual Magnitude of Impact Criteria

Magnitude	Criteria
None	No change discernible in the view.
Very Small	The proposals would cause a barely perceptible change in the view.
Small	The proposals would cause an unobtrusive change in the view.
Medium	The proposals would cause a noticeable change in the view.
Large	The proposals would cause a pronounced change to the view.

Significance Criteria

1.54 In order to draw conclusions about the scale and significance of townscape or visual effects, the combination of the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of impact are considered for the proposed development at the demolition and construction stage and upon completion, as shown in Table 1.8.

1.55 Table 1.8 provides a matrix that represents how receptor sensitivity is combined with the magnitude of impact to derive the significance of effect.

Table 1.8: Significance of Effect Matrix

Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact				
	None	Very Small	Small	Medium	Large
Low	Neutral	Negligible	Negligible/ Minor	Minor	Minor/ Moderate
Medium	Neutral/ Negligible	Negligible/ Minor	Minor	Minor/ Moderate	Moderate
High	Negligible	Minor	Minor/ Moderate	Moderate	Major

1.56 The criteria that have informed the significance of effects are set out in Table 1.9.

Table 1.9: Significance of Effect Criteria

Scale and Nature of Effect	Townscape Effects Criteria	Visual Effects Criteria
Major Beneficial	Alterations that result in a considerable improvement of the existing townscape resource. Valued characteristic features could be restored or reintroduced as part of the proposed development.	Alterations that typically result in a pronounced improvement in the existing view.
Moderate Beneficial	Alterations that result in a partial improvement of the existing townscape resource. Valued characteristic features could be largely restored or reintroduced.	Alterations that typically result in a noticeable improvement in the existing view.
Minor Beneficial	Alterations that result in a slight improvement of the existing townscape resource. Characteristic features could be partially restored.	Alterations that typically result in a limited improvement in the existing view.
Negligible Beneficial	Alterations that result in a very slight improvement to the existing townscape resource, not uncharacteristic within the townscape	Alterations that typically result in a barely perceptible improvement in the existing view.
Neutral	No alteration to any of the components that contribute to the existing townscape resource; or an alteration that does not beneficially or adversely affect the existing townscape receptor.	No change to the view, or a change which on balance neither results in an improvement or deterioration to the existing view.
Negligible Adverse	Alterations that result in a very slight deterioration to the existing townscape resource, not uncharacteristic within the townscape.	Alterations that typically result in a barely perceptible deterioration in the existing view.
Minor Adverse	Alterations that result in a slight deterioration of the existing townscape resource. Characteristic features could be partially lost.	Alterations that typically result in a limited deterioration in the existing view.
Moderate Adverse	Alterations that result in a partial deterioration of the existing townscape resource. Valued characteristic features could be largely lost.	Alterations that typically result in a noticeable deterioration the existing view.
Major Adverse	Alterations that result in a considerable deterioration of the existing townscape resource. Valued characteristic features could be wholly lost.	Alterations that typically result in pronounced deterioration in the existing view.

1.57 Duration of effect has been described as short or long-term, in accordance with the criteria set out in Table 1.10.

Table 1.10: Duration of Effects Criteria

Duration	Criteria
Short term, Temporary	0 – 5 Years
Medium Term Temporary	5 – 10 Years
Long term Permanent	10 + Years

1.58 For the purposes of this EIA, effects that are graded as being Major or Moderate are considered significant. Effects that are graded as Minor to None constitute effects that are not considered significant.

Assumptions and Limitations

1.59 Assumptions have been made in relation to the massing of the proposed development, which has been based upon a worst case scenario from a townscape and visual perspective. The height and massing for the proposed development set out within Parameter Plan PP-104 constitutes the worst case scenario due to the orientation of the massing and the maximum development height.

1.60 Whilst an indicative demolition and construction programme has been prepared for the proposed development, and presented in ES Volume 1, Chapter 5: Demolition and Construction Environmental Management, the construction timetables for the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes that have been considered within the cumulative assessment are currently unknown and as such, the cumulative assessment for the demolition and construction stage has been estimated as a worst case of the demolition and construction stage for all cumulative schemes occurring concurrently.

Baseline Conditions

1.61 This section provides an overview of the existing townscape and visual baseline conditions, with a more detailed description of both townscape and visual baseline conditions presented at Appendix 1.2: Baseline Conditions and Figures.

Townscape Baseline

Land Use and Pattern

1.62 The urban area of central Reading generally occupies the River Thames valley floor and in broad terms is contained in a narrow area of land between the River Thames and River Kennet. The east-west route of the Great Western Mainline currently provides further containment of the urban centre of Reading, which sits to the south of the railway line.

1.63 As a result of the topographical pattern and the transport corridors that follow it, urban development extends in a broadly east-west pattern along the valley floor. This is evident in the coalescence of smaller settlements as development has spread along the corridors from the urban centre of Reading. A mixture of industrial, retail and residential development has also extended north and north-west of Reading Station, infilling broadly flat land between the railway line and River Thames. However, the linkages between Reading and Caversham remain vehicle dominated and focussed around the Caversham Bridge crossing point, which is at a distance from the centre of Reading. Reading Bridge to the east of the application site acts as an additional route between central Reading and Caversham but is also physically and visually separated from central Reading by built form and transport corridors.

1.64 The many strategic movement routes have long influenced the land use within Reading and its wider suburbs, notably areas immediately adjacent to the route of the Great Western Mainline, which are formed predominantly by large industrial, business and transport infrastructure uses with limited small-scale residential development.

1.65 The application site lies immediately to the north of the recently constructed northern Reading Station entrance. Large-scale commercial and office uses are evident along Vastern Road, Forbury Road and Napier Road to the south-east of the application site. Continuing east along the route of the Great

Western Mainline further large scale industrial, commercial and office buildings have been constructed with the Thames Valley Park estate representing a substantial large-scale development located on land between the railway line and River Thames. These form part of a pattern of large-scale land uses extending along either side of the railway line corridor from the suburb of Tilehurst to the north-west of the application site, as far as the Thames Valley Park to the east. Reading town centre includes extensive commercial, business and transport infrastructure uses.

1.66 Surrounding the industrial/business core, in which the application site is located, wider Reading includes extensive areas of residential development, interspersed with areas of open space. The latter includes Christchurch Meadows and Hill Meadow to the north-east of the application site and the playing fields of Kings Meadow to the south-east, which are accessible via the Thames Path. Small-scale residential properties along Lynmouth Road and De Montfort Road sit immediately adjacent to the north of the application site; however, they are situated in an area predominantly characterised by large scale and low grain built form.

1.67 As is evident from the above, the application site lies within a very well-established framework of significant large-scale built development land uses, surrounded by residential development, all set within a network of regional strategic transport corridors.

Access Routes and Rights of Way

1.68 No Public Rights of Way (PRoW) cross or lie immediately adjacent to the application site. PRoW No.1, known as the Thames Path, extends north-west to south-east following the course of the River Thames and lies 160 m to the north-east of the application site. The recently constructed Christchurch Bridge connects the Thames Path to Christchurch Meadows and PRoW No. 24 to the north-east. Further PRoW and cycle routes extend throughout the urban area of Reading to the south of the application site and to the north within Caversham.

Topography and Hydrology

1.69 At a regional scale, Reading sits within the low-lying Thames Valley at an elevation of approximately between 30 – 40 m above ordnance datum (AOD)To the north lie the Chiltern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Two localised prominent landforms within the Thames Valley, adjacent to the urban centre of Reading, rise to the south-west towards Tilehurst at an elevation of 90 m AOD and the south-east towards Whitley and Earley at an elevation of 80 m AOD.

1.70 Locally, the application site lies approximately 180 m south of the River Thames and is broadly level, lying at an elevation of approximately 36 to 38 m AOD. The land immediately surrounding the application site, lying adjacent to the River Thames, sits at approximately the same elevation. Approximately 1 km north of the application site, Caversham Park and surrounding residential properties sit on a localised ridgeline at an approximate elevation of 80-85 m AOD, which extends south-west to Balmore Park before steeply falling towards Hemdean Road, which sits in a narrow valley at an elevation of 40 m AOD. The topography then rises again to the north-west towards Caversham Heights (70 m AOD) and onto Caversham Heath Golf Course (80 m AOD).

1.71 The urban centre of Reading and focus of the historic settlement occupies a slightly elevated area of land to the south of Reading Railway Station, approximately 500 m to the south of the application site. This area sits at between 40-45 m AOD and lies between the River Thames and River Kennet. The River Kennet forms a key feature that passes directly through the town centre, whereas, in contrast, the River Thames is physically and visually separate from central Reading.

Designations

1.72 There are no designations of townscape/landscape quality within or adjoining the application site. The nearest Conservation Area, Market Place/London Street, lies in the urban centre of Reading, approximately 280 m to the south-east of the application site and beyond Reading Railway Station. The Conservation Area of St Peter's lies 480 m to the north-west of the application site and includes Caversham Bridge.

1.73 There are no Registered Parks or Gardens of Special Historic Interest (RPGSHI) in the vicinity of the application site. The nearest RPGSHIs are The Forbury Gardens, approximately 270 m to the south-east from the application site boundary; Caversham Court Gardens, approximately 725 m to the north-west; and Caversham Park, approximately 2 km to the north-east.

1.74 There are no listed buildings or scheduled monuments immediately adjacent to the application site with the nearest being the Main Building of Reading General Station (Grade II), 130 m to the south and is separated from the application site by the recently constructed northern entrance to Reading Railway Station and the railway tracks and platforms within Reading Railway Station. Further to the south and south-east of Reading Railway Station, clusters of listed buildings are located within the Conservation Areas of Market Place/London Street and St Mary's Butts/Castle Street which are considered in ES Volume 2, Chapter 2: Built Heritage.

1.75 The application site lies within the Station Area Boundary as defined in the Reading Station Area Framework (RSAF, 2010). The RSAF sets out the public realm priorities and provides design guidance, of which a number of points provide context to the application site. These include benchmark building heights, area massing and density, screening of external plant and machinery and creation of a north-south spine connecting Christchurch Meadows with central Reading. The application site also falls within the area covered by Policy CR11: Station/River Major Opportunity Area (MOA), which sets out broad guidelines for development in the MOA with further guidelines for the sub-areas of which the application site is within RC1e: North of Station. The application site also sits within Policy RC13a Station Area Cluster as defined in the Reading Tall Buildings Strategy (2008 updated 2018) and CR10a: Station Area Cluster within the Reading Local Plan (2019).

Vegetation

1.76 The application site itself is largely devoid of vegetation except for several small canopy trees along the northern and western boundaries and ornamental planting (predominantly low shrub planting) within the areas of surface car parking.

1.77 In the immediate vicinity of the application site, south of the River Thames, vegetation is limited to sporadic street trees and shrubs along the southern bank of the river supplemented with garden vegetation associated with residential properties (e.g. on De Montford Road and Lynmouth Road). To the north of the River Thames, within Christchurch Meadows, tree cover is more notable with willow and alder species lining the river bank. Dense tree cover and vegetation bounds the course of the River Thames eastwards towards the Thames Valley Park. West of Caversham Bridge, tree cover along the Thames Side Promenade and river is less dense with the transition in the landscape from built edge to grassland.

Published Character

National Landscape Character

1.78 In terms of Landscape and Townscape Character, the application site lies in the eastern part of the National Character Area (NCA) 110: Chilterns, the key characteristics of which, of relevance to the application site, are the following:

- *"The chalk plateau is incised by parallel branching valleys gently shelving to the south-east into the London Basin. The large chalk aquifer is abstracted for water to supply London and its surrounds and also supports flows of springs, chalk streams and the River Thames ...*
- *The River Thames and its flood plain mark a distinctive area in the south. The river is a focus for settlement, abstraction and recreation ...*
- *Major transport routes, including motorways, radiate from adjacent Greater London, associated with significant 20th-century development and extensive urban fringe areas...*

- *Brick and flint are the dominant traditional building materials, with Totternhoe Stone (clunch) being less common, but still a distinctive..."* (p. 7-8).

1.79 There are four Statements of Environmental Opportunity for this NCA, of which SEO4 is of relevance, noting the need for creation of green infrastructure to reduce the impact of development, for example through the following:

- *"Enhance local distinctiveness and create or enhance green infrastructure within existing settlements and through new development, particularly in relation to the urban fringe ...;*
- *Adapt or remove existing development where to do so would significantly strengthen landscape character, enhance views and address barriers to natural processes and public access to the countryside ...;*
- *Addressing deficits in greenspace and access links, integrating the public transport and cycle network and creating new or improved multi-user routes and green spaces working across administrative boundaries as necessary ...;*
- *Maximising the appeal of existing and new green spaces and sustainable transport routes close to people's homes and workplaces, including in the urban fringe where it could also strengthen landscape character ...;*
- *Enhancing the rural and urban scene by promoting the use of traditional local building materials and vernacular styles and utilising appropriate infrastructure"* (p.27).

Country Landscape Character

1.80 Within the West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment[4], the application site is located within land defined as 'Urban Area' for which no further detail is provided.

Local Level Townscape Character

1.81 Entec Ltd produced the Reading Tall Building Strategy (RTBS)[5] in 2008 on behalf of RBC in order to inform the development of a tall buildings policy and specific guidelines for individual sites, which form part of the Reading Central Area Action Plan. As part of the production of the RTBS, a townscape assessment was undertaken, and the Reading Central Area divided into townscape character areas. The RTBS was updated in March 2018 and the updates are documented below along with the original 2008 commentary.

1.82 As shown on TVIA Figure 3: Townscape Character Plan, the application site and its immediate setting fall within Character Area (CA) 22 - Vastern Road. The north-western edge of the application site immediately abuts CA12 - Caversham Road whilst the north-eastern edge abuts CA23 - King's Meadow. CA1 - Station Hill abuts the boundary of CA22 to the south, whilst CA11 - Napier Road abuts the south-eastern boundary (both of these being located beyond Reading Station and the Great Western Railway Line. The area immediately to the west of CA22 falls outside of the Reading Central Area.

1.83 It is noted on page 13 that "There are 8 character areas which are judged to have a capacity for tall buildings. These areas are largely, but not wholly towards the edges of central Reading, adjacent to major transport routes such as the IDR and the railway line. Within these areas there is an absence of historic built form, and although the building style and heights across these areas is variable, there are characteristically occasional buildings of between 8 and 10 storeys. The buildings were largely constructed during the middle and later stages of the 20th century and have a medium sized or large block size. With the exception of character area 19 'Mallard Row to 'Fobney Street' they all have a predominantly office or industrial land use". This includes CA 22 and CA1 and CA2 immediately to the south.

1.84 The townscape descriptions for each of the RTBS Character Areas are set out within Appendix 1.2: Baseline Conditions and Figures. Table 1.11 sets out the commentary provided in the Reading Tall Building Strategy Townscape Character Assessment (2008, updated 2018) regarding CA:22 - Vastern Road.

Table 1.11: Degree to which Application Site Reflects Published Townscape Assessment

Consideration	Original Tall Buildings Strategy Comment	2018 Update
Land Use	Warehouses and retail park	Major land uses remain the same, although the opening of the northern entrance to the station has brought a public transport interchange into the heart of the site.
Historical significance	Railway town and growth of manufacturing and commerce post 1840	No change.
Architectural style	The predominant material is coloured, metal cladding	No change.
Urban grain and townscape scale	The building blocks have a large floor space, although the buildings are not high rise and there is extensive car parking adjacent to the buildings. These features combine to create a medium scale townscape.	No change.
Townscape condition	The large, blank faces of the warehouses create an unexceptional area of townscape which does not respond well to the surrounding residential land use. Although the buildings are occupied and function well for their purpose, their design is unattractive and creates a weak and uninspiring area of townscape.	Although the new entrance to the station and adjacent square have improved the townscape condition of a small part of the site, the surrounding buildings remain unchanged.
Key views within the character area	There are no key views defined for the character area.	No change.
Key views into the character area	Buildings within the character area contribute to the skyline visible from Oxford Road when approaching Reading from the west. From the elevated position of Caversham Park, Balmore Park and Horse Close, built form within the character area contributes to the view of central Reading.	No change.
Landmark structures and existing tall buildings	The large, warehouse structures create a consistent, unexceptional townscape. There are no landmark structures. Although the warehouses create a roofline which is elevated above the surrounding residential buildings, there is no one structure which is notable as a tall building.	The new northern entrance to the station is a landmark, albeit not particularly high. It will become more prominent as development of surrounding sites allows views of it to open up. The new Christchurch Bridge is a landmark on the river, but is currently visually separated from the rest of the area.
Tall buildings planning applications	N/A	Outline planning permission (110024) was granted on the sorting office site for a major mixed use development including residential, office, hotel and retail. The plot adjacent to the station entrance

[4] Land Use Consultants, August 2018. Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment. Reading Borough Council.

[5] Entec Ltd, 2008. Reading Tall Building Strategy. Reading Borough Council.

Table 1.11: Degree to which Application Site Reflects Published Townscape Assessment

Consideration	Original Tall Buildings Strategy Comment	2018 Update
		would have been up to 16 commercial storeys or 21 hotel storeys, with heights decreasing to the west. This permission has now expired.
Townscape sensitivity to the inclusion of tall buildings	Low: The large block size which exists within the character area and the absence of any key views or visual focal point makes this an appropriate location for tall buildings. However, it is proposed that tall structures should not be developed along the north and western boundaries of the character area as these boundaries are shared with small scale residential areas. any proposed built form should respond in terms of height and scale to the residential area. The tallest structures should be located to the south of the character area, adjacent to the railway line. In this area the townscape features are larger scale, and adjacent to large scale features outside of the area e.g. existing station buildings, Thames Tower and Western Tower.	Townscape sensitivity remains low, albeit with the caveats expressed in 2008 continuing to apply.

1.85 In addition to the 2018 character assessment updates, there is no direct access to the site from the northern station entrance. Furthermore, the site inhibits legibility between Vastern Road and the recently upgraded public realm at the northern station entrance, with any physical or perceptual connection between the centre of Reading and the River Thames corridor broken by the vehicle dominated Vastern Road. Views north from the station, as proposed in the Reading Station Area Framework, would contribute significantly to diluting this separation. Buildings within CA 22 do not contribute to the skyline in views towards the centre of Reading, with views of The Blade and Thames Tower being the most recognisable aspects of the built form in views over the site.

Application Site Character

1.86 The application site is approximately 1.77 hectares (ha) in size and is currently occupied by the Reading Station Shopping Centre which comprises a series of retail units set within extensive areas of surface car parking and associated infrastructure such as fencing, signage and lighting columns.

1.87 The existing built forms on the application site comprise a series of low-rise retail units, constructed predominantly in red brick with corrugated metal cladding. The rear and side facades of the retail units generally lack articulation or fenestration, resulting in a blank inactive façade. The front facing aspects of the buildings in contrast feature doors, windows, canopies, recesses and signage, resulting in a more active and articulated façade. Overall the existing built forms are large-scale blocks of utilitarian massing and appearance which, along with the extensive surface car parking, diminishes the visual amenity experience within the application site.

1.88 The northern and western boundaries of the application site are bounded by Vastern Road and Caversham Road respectively. These are busy roads with high volumes of traffic that result in diminished levels of tranquillity within the application site. The application site is contained to the south and east by large-scale built forms: the former Royal Mail sorting office and the recently completed Reading Railway Station building to the south, as well as a multi-storey car park to the east. Whilst the application site is contiguous with the former Royal Mail building, it is separated from the Reading Railway Station building by the northern entrance forecourt; and from the multi-storey car park by Trooper Potts Way.

1.89 The application site is largely devoid of vegetation, although the following on and off-site trees are noted:

- amenity shrubs planted in several small linear groups within the car parking areas;
- three small trees within the car parking area adjacent to the restaurant within the western part of the application site;
- a single canopy tree located within the application site to the south, adjacent to the western end of the retail units; and
- a line of mature street trees along the northern and western application site boundaries (i.e. the Vastern Road frontage and the Caversham Road frontage).

Visual Baseline

1.90 A visual appraisal of the application site and its study area was undertaken in April, May and October 2019, to determine the relationship of the area with its surroundings, the visibility of the application site within the wider townscape and provide a basis for consideration of the effects that the proposed development would have on views and the townscape and visual characteristics of the area.

1.91 The visual appraisal was undertaken from publicly accessible viewpoints within the surrounding townscape, primarily roads, footpaths and public open space, to determine the approximate extent of the area from which the application site is visible from the eye level of a person standing on the ground.

1.92 The visibility of any site is predominantly influenced by landform and the extent and type of vegetation cover and built elements within the application site and the surrounding townscape. The Visual Appraisal exercise demonstrated that the broadly level topography of the application site and study area results in very limited visibility of the application site as it exists, as intervening vegetation and built form in the urban area typically screen views from all but the nearest distances. However, during the visual appraisal, account was taken of the likely scale of the proposed development within the application site, in terms of the potential visibility of the application site.

1.93 In order to represent the nature of identified views, Site Context Photographs 1–26 were selected from those photographs taken during the visual appraisal fieldwork from near (0- approximately 250 m), middle (approximately 250-750 m) and long (approximately 751 m+) distances. A further three viewpoints were requested by Brian Conlon (Principal Planner) at RBC via email on 17 October, all of which were near-distance views from the south and south-east.

1.94 The locations from which these photographs were taken are illustrated on Figure 5: Visual Appraisal Plan in Appendix 1.2, which also shows how visible the application site is from the surrounding area. The extent and nature of views obtained towards the application site are described below, with reference to these representative views.

1.95 The Visual Appraisal demonstrated that the application site and the existing built form is only readily visible from a limited number of locations in the surrounding townscape, owing to containment provided by intervening built form, landform and/or vegetation.

Near-Distance Views

1.96 Clear views of the application site are obtained from the adjoining roads to the north-west, north and north-east. This includes from Caversham Road to the north-west (Site Context Photograph 4); and Vastern Road to the north (Site Context Photograph 1) and north-east (Site Context Photograph 2). Where visible, the application site appears as a utilitarian architecture set within surface car parking, providing limited visual amenity.

1.97 Glimpsed/channelled views are also available where roads are aligned towards the application site, such as along De Montfort Road (Site Context Photograph 5) and Lynmouth Road to the north; along Northfield Road to the west (Site Context Photograph 7); and along Greyfriars road to the south-west

(Site Context Photograph 24); and along Blagrave Street to the south-east (Site Context Photograph 26).

1.98 From other locations in proximity, near-distance views towards the application site are partially restricted by intervening built forms, although views towards the site are available above and beyond these, including views from Reading Bridge to the east (Site Context Photograph 8); from Caversham Road to the south-west (Site Context Photograph 6); and from the southern forecourt of Reading Station to the south (Site Context Photograph 25).

1.99 Although the site itself is not visible due to existing built form on intervening land, views towards it are available in the context of existing large scale built forms in the central Reading area. Many of these built forms are visible against the skyline, notably the 12-storey Reading Bridge House, the 5-storey multi-storey car park on Vastern Road, No.3 Forbury Road, Apex Plaza and Thames Tower.

Middle-Distance Views

1.100 Middle-distance views from the south are obtained from the central area of Reading. These views are invariably channelled along busy urban roads, with associated traffic and infrastructure dominating views, as demonstrated by Site Context Photograph 10, which is focussed north along Station Road towards the Grade II listed Reading Railway Station Building. Views from central Reading invariably feature large-scale built forms and as such have an urban visual character. Similarly, views are also obtained from Forbury Gardens to the south-east (Site Context Photograph 13), albeit the foreground is defined by public open space with numerous mature canopy trees, which filter views and help to reduce the influence of the surrounding large-scale built forms.

1.101 In contrast, middle-distance views from the west are predominantly along streets lined with residential properties of a domestic scale or low-rise commercial/industrial properties, and therefore have either a suburban and/or edge-of-town visual character, albeit with large-scale built forms in central Reading visible in the background, as demonstrated by Site Context Photograph 12.

1.102 Middle-distance views obtained from the north-west, north, north-east and east are generally from green open spaces along the River Thames, as demonstrated by Site Context Photograph 15, 11, 9 and 14. Whilst these views are defined by the open river corridor and/or green open spaces containing large amounts of mature vegetation, the large-scale built forms of central Reading are visible in the background of views, including 'Thames Tower', 'The Blade' and 'Reading Bridge House'.

Long-Distance Views

1.103 Glimpsed long-distance views are obtained from elevated areas to the north and north-east, as demonstrated by application site Context Photograph 16, 18 and 19. Similarly, long-distance glimpsed views are available from certain locations to the south, such as where street orientation allows channelled views north towards the application site, for example Site Context Photograph 17, which demonstrates that the views obtained along Mount Pleasant; and Site Context Photograph 21, which demonstrates the views obtained along the A33. From these views towards the application site are seen in the context of larger scale built forms in the central Reading visible on the skyline, notably The Blade, Thames Tower and Reading Bridge House.

1.104 Views towards the central area of Reading are also available from elevated location further afield, such as the Warren Footpath in the vicinity of Chazey Wood within the Chilterns AONB to the north-west (Site Context Photograph 20); Dunsden Way to the north-east (Site Context Photograph 23); and from London Road, Shepherds Hill to the east (Site Context Photograph 22). In these views the application site is not discernible, owing to intervening topography, built form and vegetation, although several existing tall buildings within central Reading are visible on the skyline.

Policy Considerations

1.105 This section summarises the baseline policy that is relevant to the site and proposed development, while the full baseline assessment presented at Appendix 1.1: Planning Policy.

1.106 National level planning policy is supported at a local level by a number of policy documents produced by RBC, some of which relate specifically to development within Reading town centre and provide guidelines for development. The area that the application site is located within is identified as a MOA, within the Local Plan.

1.107 Of the policies within the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) of particular relevance is policy 'CR10 - Tall Buildings', which sets out that tall buildings are identified as 10 storeys of commercial floorspace or 12 storeys or residential floorspace and equivalent to 36 m tall. The site is located within the area covered by 'CR10a - Station Area Cluster', which states that:

"A new cluster of tall buildings with the station at its heart will signify the status of the station area as a major mixed-use destination and the main gateway to and most accessible part of Reading. Tall buildings in this area should:

- *Follow a pattern of the tallest buildings at the centre of the cluster, close to the station, and step down in height from that point towards the lower buildings at the fringes;*
- *Contribute to the creation of a coherent, attractive and sustainable cluster of buildings with a high quality of public realm;*
- *Ensure that adequate space is provided between the buildings to avoid the creation of an overly dense townscape and to allow buildings to be viewed as individual forms;*
- Be designed to fit within a wider planning framework or master plan for the area, which allows separate parcels of land to come forward at different times in a coordinated manner." .....

  v) In addition to the area-specific requirements, all tall building proposals should be of excellent design and architectural quality, and should:

- *Enhance Reading's skyline, through a distinctive profile and careful design of the upper and middle sections of the building;*
- *Contribute to a human scale street environment, through paying careful attention to the lower section or base of the building, providing rich architectural detailing and reflecting their surroundings through the definition of any upper storey setback and reinforcing the articulation of the streetscape;*
- *Contribute to high-quality views from distance, views from middle-distance and local views;....."*

1.108 The Reading Tall Buildings Strategy (2018) sets out that in respect of CA 22: Vastern Road, within which the application site is located, is considered to have a Low townscape sensitivity to tall building development due to the absence of any key views of visual focal point. The document states that development should respond in terms of height and scale to the adjacent residential area, with tall structures being located to the south of the character area, adjacent to the railway line.

1.109 The Reading Station Area Framework (2010) sets out benchmark heights for re-development of the application site, which range from 6 storeys in the north-western corner to a landmark building of at least 10 storeys in the south-eastern corner. Although at paragraph 6.23, the document states that:

- *"Benchmark heights may be modified upwards in order to realise certain urban design or other major planning benefits, or where applicants have demonstrated convincingly that the potential impact of higher buildings on the surroundings can be mitigated."*

Sensitive Receptors

1.110 The receptors identified as being sensitive to the proposed development and which have been 'scoped-in' to the assessment are summarised in Table 1.12. Judgements in respect of sensitivity are presented in Appendices 1.3 and 1.4.

Table 1.12: Summary of Sensitive Receptors	
Townscape Receptors	
Receptor	**Sensitivity**
National Landscape Character Area 110: Chilterns	Low
CA 22: Vastern Road	Low
CA 12: Caversham Road	Medium
CA 23: King's Meadow	High
CA 1: Station Hill	Low
CA 2: Reading Station East	Low
CA 7: Reading Station West	Medium
CA 13: Cattle Market and Chatham Place	Low
CA 3: Friar Street	Low
CA 4: Station Road	Low
CA 11: Napier Road	Low
Visual Receptors	
Visual Receptors with Near-Distance Views	Low – High
Visual Receptors with Middle-Distance Views	Low – High
Visual Receptors with Long-Distance Views	Low – High
Viewpoints detailed in the Reading Tall Building Strategy	Low – High

Assessment of Effects

1.111 This section summarises the key townscape and visual effects that are anticipated to arise as a result of the proposed development, setting out only those receptors considered likely to experience significant effects as a result of the proposed development, with the full consideration of townscape effects set out within Appendix 1.3: Townscape Assessment, and full consideration of visual effects set out within Appendix 1.4: Visual Assessment.

Demolition and Construction Effects

Townscape Effects

Application Site Character

1.112 Demolition and construction operations on the application site would cause direct changes to its character through the removal of an existing retail facility and replacement with plant and machinery. The construction traffic and plant movements would constitute discordant elements on the application site. There would be no access to the application site which would be surrounded by hoarding with the construction works being a higher elevation than the existing elements on the application site.

1.113 The temporary demolition and construction works would cause a Large magnitude of impact upon the character of the Low sensitivity application site due to the replacement of the entire application site with construction operations. As such, the temporary construction activities would result in a temporary **Moderate Adverse** effect. This is considered to be a significant effect.

Reading Tall Building Strategy Townscape Character Area

1.114 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause direct effects upon the Vastern Road CA identified within the Reading Tall Building Assessment that it is located within. Whilst the demolition and construction activities would not take place within the adjacent character areas, they would give rise to indirect, or perceived effects upon these areas. The direct effects of the demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be greater than the perceived effects, which would diminish as the physical separation between the works and the CA's increases. As such, the effect upon the CA's that the site is located within or immediately adjacent to, are detailed below. The consideration of how the proposed development would impact all character areas assessed is contained within Appendix 1.3: Townscape Assessment.

CA22: Vastern Road

1.115 The construction activities would be located within the north of this CA, occupying a large proportion of its area. The temporary introduction of plant and machinery, construction traffic and construction activities would result in direct changes to the CA where they would be perceived as detracting from the character of the CA for the duration of the construction works. The temporary construction activities would occupy a large proportion of the CA, where the disturbance would be perceptible both horizontally along Vastern Road, as well as vertically as the construction works progress.

1.116 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Large magnitude of impact upon the Low sensitivity CA22. This would result in a temporary **Moderate Adverse** effect for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. This is considered to be a significant effect.

CA12: Caversham Road

1.117 Although the construction activities associated with the proposed development would not cause any direct changes to the CA, the temporarily introduced tall plant and machinery (including cranes) in the adjacent CA would detract from the townscape characteristics of the Caversham Road CA, particularly where street orientation allows channelled views towards the application site. The temporary construction activities would be perceived as intrusive features, which would partially alter the setting of this CA and would be at odds with its over-riding Victorian and Edwardian residential character for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. However, from much of the CA the construction works would not be perceptible due to the high enclosure ratio. On balance, there would be a slight deterioration in the setting of this CA.

1.118 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the Medium sensitivity CA12. This would result in a temporary **Minor Adverse** effect for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

CA23: King's Meadow

1.119 Although the demolition and construction activities associated with the proposed development would not cause any direct changes to the CA, the temporarily introduced tall plant and machinery (including cranes) in the adjacent CA would detract from the large expanse of open meadows. The temporary construction activities would be perceived as intrusive features, which would slightly alter the setting of this CA and would be at odds with the recreational resource of the open meadows. Although immediately adjacent to the Vastern Road CA, the King's Meadow CA is afforded some level of separation from the application site. However, the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be imperceptible from large areas of the CA. On balance, there would be a slight deterioration in the setting of this CA where the construction activities appear above the bankside vegetation of the River Thames.

1.120 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the High sensitivity CA23. This would result in a temporary **Minor Adverse** effect for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

CA1: Station Hill

1.121 Given the enclosed nature of this CA, demolition and construction activities associated with the proposed development would not be readily perceptible from the vast majority of the CA. Whilst the uppermost parts of taller construction plant and machinery such as cranes, would be perceptible from the Great Western main line immediately to the north of the application site, these would be perceived in context with existing rail infrastructure which are a defining characteristic of this CA. As such, there would be no alteration to any of the key characteristics of the CA.

1.122 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the Low sensitivity CA1. This would result in a temporary **Minor Adverse** effect for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

CA11: Napier Road

1.123 While the temporary demolition and construction activities of the proposed development would not occur within this CA, the tall plant and machinery (including cranes) would be perceived in its setting from some areas in the CA alongside the existing unremarkable built form adjacent to the railway line. On balance, there would be a slight deterioration in the setting of this CA where construction activities are perceptible.

1.124 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact upon the Low sensitivity CA11. This would result in a temporary **Negligible Adverse** effect for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

Visual Effects

1.125 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would alter both the visibility of the application site and the visual amenity experienced in its study area. Much of the ground level demolition and construction activity would be screened from view by hoarding around the application site while the more elevated activities would be clearly visible, to varying degrees, from large parts of the study area where views towards the application site exist.

1.126 Near-distance views – the temporary demolition and construction activities would be seen at close range, where they would likely occupy large amounts of views gained towards the northern station entrance. While some of the ground level activities would be partially screened from view by hoarding around the application site, the large area of construction and the height of the proposed construction works would be clearly visible, occupying a large proportion of views in close range of the application site. Clear views of the construction activities would be available from the immediate vicinity of the application site, such as the adjoining roads of Caversham Road to the north-west (Site Context Photograph 4), Vastern Road to the north (Site Context Photograph 1) and north-east (Site Context Photograph 2). Views from De Montfort Road (Site Context Photograph 5) and Lynmouth Road to the north, along Northfield Road to the west (Site Context Photograph 7), along Greyfriars road to the south-west (Site Context Photograph 24) and along Blagrave Street to the south-east (Site Context Photograph 26) would channel views towards the more elevated construction activities, while the lower aspects would be largely screened from view by intervening elements.

1.127 In other near-distance views towards the application site, the temporary demolition and construction activities would be partially screened by intervening built forms. However, the elevated construction operations would be partially visible above and beyond these, including views from Reading Bridge to the east (Site Context Photograph 8); from Caversham Road to the south-west (Site Context Photograph 6); and from the southern forecourt of Reading Station to the south (Site Context Photograph 25).

1.128 Middle-distance views – the ground level construction activities on the site would be screened from view by existing development on intervening land. Where visible, the elevated aspects of the temporary construction activities would be largely seen in views that are channelled along busy urban roads, where traffic and infrastructure occupy large proportions of the view available such as in Site Context Photograph 10. Views of the demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be largely screened from view by the existing large-scale built forms that provide an urban character to the visual amenity. Views towards the construction activities from the south-east would also be largely screened by the existing large scale built form such as Apex Plaza and Forbury Place (Site Context Photograph 13). Views of the temporary construction works from the west are predominantly obtained along residential streets, or those with a more domestic scale of built form that the taller elements of construction activities would be seen above (Site Context Photograph 12). In views from the north-west, north, north-east and east; the taller elements of the temporary construction works would appear within the context of views from green open spaces along the River Thames, such as in Site Context Photograph 15, 11, 9 and 14.

1.129 Long-distance views – the ground level construction activities on the site would be screened from view by existing development on intervening land but the more elevated activities would be visible from elevated ground (Site Context Photographs 16, 18, 19, 20, 22 and 23), or where street orientation channels glimpsed views towards the site (Site Context Photographs 17 and 21).

1.130 Views of the temporary construction activities would give rise to larger changes where they are anticipated to occupy a larger proportion of views available, such as close range views. As such, the effect of the demolition and construction stage of the proposed development upon the representative Site Context Photographs where the most significant changes are anticipated are detailed below. The consideration of how the proposed development would impact visual receptors at all representative Site Context Photographs assessed is contained within Appendix 1.4: Visual Assessment.

Site Context Photograph 01: View south from Vastern Road/Lynmouth Road

1.131 During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the ground level activities would be partially screened from view due to hoarding around the application site which would partially limit the amount of clutter visible. However, the taller activities would be visible against the skyline with tall plant and machinery such as cranes being seen at close proximity. Views of the proposed development under construction would slightly erode the visual amenity experience at this location, leading to a limited deterioration to the existing view.

1.132 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Large magnitude of impact upon the Medium sensitivity visual receptors in the vicinity of Site Context Photograph 01. This would result in a temporary **Moderate Adverse** effect for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. This is considered to be a significant effect.

Site Context Photograph 02: View south-west from Vastern Road

1.133 During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the ground level activities would be partially screened from view due to hoarding around the application site which would partially limit the amount of clutter visible. However, the taller activities would be visible against the skyline with tall plant and machinery such as cranes being seen at close proximity. Views of the mass and height of the proposed development under construction would slightly erode the visual amenity experience at this location, leading to a limited deterioration to the existing view.

1.134 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Large magnitude of impact upon the Low sensitivity visual receptors in the vicinity of Site Context Photograph

02. This would result in a temporary **Minor - Moderate Adverse** effect for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. This is considered to be a significant effect.

Site Context Photograph 03: View north from Station Square North

1.135 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would largely occupy the foreground of views available from the Northern Reading Railway Station Entrance. Although hoarding would screen views of some ground level clutter, the tall plant and machinery would be visible at close proximity. Demolition and construction works for the proposed development would replace views of the poor quality built form that exhibits little architectural merit but would occupy a greater area of the skyline in views due to the elevated nature of the construction activities.

1.136 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Large magnitude of impact upon the Medium sensitivity visual receptors in the vicinity of Site Context Photograph 03. This would result in a temporary **Moderate Adverse** effect for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. This is considered to be a significant effect.

Site Context Photograph 04: View south-east from Caversham Road

1.137 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would appear in views towards the south-east gained by visual receptors along Caversham Road. The taller elements of plant, machinery and the demolition and construction works would be seen in views channelled along the road where they would interrupt views of recognisable townscape elements including The Blade and Thames Tower. Views of ground level activities would be largely screened by hoarding around the application site and foreground elements. Where views of the temporary construction activities are available, they would be seen in the context of traffic and infrastructure associated with the A4155 Caversham Road and the highway clutter of signs and street lights as well as existing buildings and vegetation.

1.138 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Large magnitude of impact upon the Low sensitivity visual receptors in the vicinity of Site Context Photograph 04. This would result in a temporary **Moderate Adverse** effect for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. This is considered to be a significant effect.

Site Context Photograph 05: View south from Thames Path / De Montfort Road

1.139 During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the construction activities would be partially visible above the terraced housing that lines De Montfort Road. The taller elements of plant, machinery and the construction works would be seen in views channelled along the narrow road by the largely two storey development lining the road. The demolition and construction activities would interrupt views towards top floors the City Tower, that can be seen above the existing Siemens building immediately to the south of the application site and development to the south of the railway line. Additionally, the demolition and construction works would add to the visual clutter of streetlights, signs, telegraph wires, aerials, satellite dishes and low quality surfacing that detract from the visual amenity along the residential road.

1.140 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Medium magnitude of impact upon the High sensitivity visual receptors in the vicinity of Site Context Photograph 05. This would result in a temporary **Moderate Adverse** effect for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. This is considered to be a significant effect.

Context Photograph 25: View north from Station Square

1.141 During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the demolition and construction activities would be partially visible above the Main Building of Reading General Station (Grade II Listed). The taller elements of the demolition and construction activities and plant such as cranes would be partially seen against the skyline above both the new station building and the historic station building. The temporary construction works would appear alongside the large advertising screen where they would introduce an additional element of clutter into views over Station Square towards the former station building.

1.142 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the Medium sensitivity visual receptors in the vicinity of Site Context Photograph 25. This would result in a temporary **Minor Adverse** effect for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

Completed Development Effects

1.143 This section includes a summary of the townscape and visual effects of the proposed development which has been undertaken with consideration to Year 1 of the completed development. The full assessment is presented in Appendix 1.3: Townscape Assessment, and Appendix 1.4: Visual Assessment.

1.144 The proposed development is anticipated to comprise of the following:

- Demolition of the existing buildings;
- Construction of approximately four new buildings, up to approximately 75 m (112.9m AOD) in height, indicatively up to 23 storeys;
- Delivery of car parking spaces and cycle storage in line with current policy requirements; and
- Delivery of a mix of public and private open space, including children's play space equivalent to a minimum of approximately 10 % of the application site area.

1.145 New pedestrian and cycle routes would be provided within the proposed development creating permeability through the application site. In addition, vehicular access would be provided.

1.146 The scale and massing of the proposed development is shown within Verified Wirelines 1-15, presented in Appendix 1.4: Visual Assessment.

1.147 The design of the block locations within the proposed development would facilitate the increased integration of the northern entrance of Reading Railway Station into the surrounding urban grain where it would benefit from the improved legibility and navigation that the proposed development would provide. The connection of the northern station entrance to Vastern Road in a more defined manner contributes to the opportunity for the improved legibility of townscape to be extended north to the River Thames corridor, connecting the river and the station, through the application site.

1.148 This more decipherable townscape layout and connectivity of key townscape elements within Reading, would represent a noticeable improvement to the existing urban grain with the quality of townscape in Reading expanding across the currently under-utilised site which is occupied by uninspiring commercial units and large areas of car parking at grade with Vastern Road.

1.149 The proposed development would enhance the locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights, urban public realm and wayfinding to the north of the railway line, reflecting the quality of townscape south of the railway line. The block layout would also contribute to the connection of the town centre south of the application site, to the green areas along the River Thames corridor north of the application site.

1.150 The proposed development would contribute to the identity of the centre of Reading by consolidating development in the vicinity of the Reading Railway Station while respecting the existing character of the domestic scale development north of the site within CA12: Caversham Road, providing a transition in townscape character to the expanding urban centre. The rhythm of the proposed development heights would step up from the existing residential edge to the north of Vastern Road, progressively increasing in height towards the railway line, providing a strong transition between the largely two storey development within CA 12, and the recognisable centre of Reading.

1.151 This rhythm of increasing scale of development would improve wayfinding by signifying the centre of Reading that would help to create a strong sense of place for not only the Vastern Road CA, but the town centre as a whole and the wider conurbation of Reading. Furthermore, the use of varied materiality on both the horizontal and vertical axis would break up the perceived massing, assist in the perception of change in scale, increase visual interest and contribute to defining the sense of place.

1.152 The proposed development, landscaping scheme and associated public realm improvements would create a much more positive frontage along Vastern Road as well as forming a landmark in views that are channelled south-east along Caversham Road towards the roundabout.

Townscape Effects

Application Site Character

1.153 The overall form, layout, mass and scale of the introduced built form would provide application site wide improvements to the quality of built form. Whilst the proposed development would increase the mass of building on the application site, it would create a positive built frontage to Vastern Road and the roundabout as well as forming a transition in townscape from the domestic scale of buildings north of the application site, to the town centre beyond the railway line to the south of the application site. The proposed development would also provide improvements to the legibility of the public realm that would relate well to the key townscape features of the northern station entrance, creating a coherent townscape element that positively contributes to the local area. The block arrangement of the proposed development would allow a much clearer legibility of public realm with respect to the northern entrance to the station where improved sightlines would strengthen the relationship between the application site and key townscape elements. The increased building mass along with improvements to legibility and built form through creation of a landmark building by virtue of its scale would constitute a Large magnitude of impact to the Low sensitivity application site. This would result in a **Moderate Beneficial** effect. The effect is considered to be significant.

Reading Tall Building Strategy Townscape Character Area

1.154 The proposed development would give rise to direct changes to the CA22: Vastern Road, that it would be located within and would cause indirect changes to the other character areas where perceived changes are experienced. The Vastern Road CA would experience changes to the material characteristics that define it, while other character areas would be afforded an element of physical separation from changes caused by the proposed development. The improvements in public realm that the proposed development would bring and the improved connectivity between the northern station entrance and the Thames corridor to the north would also be located within CA22, but the benefits that they bring to the townscape would be perceived in adjacent character areas.

1.155 The interrelationships of the elements within adjacent character areas mean that the proposed development would cause perceived changes in other character areas which diminish as the physical separation increases. As such, the effect upon the CAs that the proposed development would be located within or immediately adjacent to, are detailed below. The consideration of how the proposed development would impact all character areas assessed at completion is contained within Appendix 1.3: Townscape Assessment.

CA22: Vastern Road

1.156 At Year 1, the introduced built form would fundamentally alter the fabric of a large part of this CA, helping to establish a strong local identity in the townscape. The proposed development would replace the functional and unattractive retail buildings and associated car parking areas. The change from the retail shed development and large areas of tarmac to a large mass of development in four distinct blocks would increase the level of legibility for townscape in the vicinity of the northern station entrance. The overall form, layout, mass and scale of the introduced built form would provide site wide improvements to the quality of built form. Whilst the proposed development would increase the mass of building in the CA, it would introduce improved architectural form, creating landmark buildings by virtue of their height and scale along the Vastern Road frontage and on the roundabout. The proposed development would also provide improvements to the public realm that would relate well to the buildings, creating a coherent townscape element that positively contributes to the local area.

1.157 The proposed development would create landmark structures in the vicinity of Reading Railway Station, where they would provide positive identifying features for the station area with the massing and height focused closest to the station entrance and railway line, whilst providing smaller built forms adjacent to the existing residential properties north and north-west of the application site. This variety of building heights would be sympathetic to the more domestic scale of the largely 2 storey residential properties north of Vastern Road. The progression of height across the proposed development would enhance the sense of urbanisation in the vicinity of the station, reinforcing the connection between the River Thames corridor and the centre of Reading.

1.158 The legibility of the connection between the Thames corridor and the centre of Reading would be further strengthened by the block arrangement of the proposed development which would allow a connection from the subway that passes under the railway station through the site as far as Vastern Road, to link with the connection envisaged in RBC planning documents between the Thames Path and Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road. The accessibility of the northern entrance to the station would be much clearer with improved sightlines leading towards the station from Vastern Road.

1.159 At ground level, the benefits that the block structure bring to wayfinding and legibility would be enhanced through a reduction in vehicle dominance that would result from the ground floor frontages to create a more inviting space with greater visual amenity value. The legibility of the northern entrance to the station would be much clearer with improved sightlines leading towards the station and the River Thames. The increased building mass along with improvements to legibility and built form through creation of a landmark building by virtue of its scale would constitute a Large magnitude of impact to the low sensitivity CA, resulting in a **Moderate Beneficial** effect. This is considered to be a significant effect.

CA12: Caversham Road

1.160 At Year 1, the proposed development would be imperceptible from much of the CA due to the existing enclosure provided by the tight urban grain. However, where the taller built forms of the proposed development are perceived, they would contrast with the prevailing 2 to 3 storey Victorian and Edwardian residential development in the CA. The configuration of the proposed development would allow physical and visual permeability between the blocks, thus helping to reduce their perceived mass, helping the proposed development to relate to the street pattern of this adjacent CA. In addition, the progression in height from the predominantly 2 to 3-storey built forms that characterise this CA and the taller forms of the proposed development would be moderated by a stepping up in height, which would help to reduce any sense of physical over-dominance. Where perceived within the setting of the CA, the proposed development would introduce a positive contribution to the skyline that would help to enhance legibility and wayfinding for the northern entrance to the railway station through the connection of the landmark Christchurch Bridge to the north and the northern station entrance to the south that would indirectly cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the Medium sensitivity CA, although the increased building mass would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. Considering both the beneficial and adverse aspects above, on balance the proposed development would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** effect. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

CA23: King's Meadow

1.161 At Year 1, the proposed development would cause some slight changes to the setting of the CA where it is perceptible above the bankside vegetation of the River Thames. The proposed taller forms would contrast with the open meadows of the CA but would be perceived alongside other tall buildings that identify the centre of Reading which would adversely affect the sense of place which would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. However, the configuration of the proposed development would allow physical and visual permeability between the blocks, thus helping to reduce their perceived massing.

1.162 Where the proposed taller built forms are perceived in the setting of this CA, they would introduce a positive contribution to the skyline that would help to enhance wayfinding by sign-posting the location of the centre of Reading, as well as connecting the landmark Christchurch Bridge within the CA and the northern station entrance to the south which would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the High sensitivity CA. Considering both the beneficial and adverse aspects above, on balance the proposed development would result in a **Minor Beneficial** effect. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

CA1: Station Hill

1.163 At Year 1, the proposed development would give rise to some slight changes to the setting of the CA where it is perceptible above the large structure of the station building. The proposed development would be perceived alongside other tall buildings that identify the centre of Reading such as the Thames Tower within the CA. The permeability resulting from the configuration of the proposed development blocks would help to reduce their perceived massing, as well as connecting the Station Hill CA through the site to the River Thames and Thames Path, Christchurch Bridge and Christchurch Meadow recreational area. The perception of building mass in the adjacent CA would cause a Very Small magnitude of effect with the increased legibility of townscape causing a Small magnitude of effect upon the Low sensitivity CA. On balance, there would be an improvement in the setting of this CA and the proposed development would result in a **Minor Beneficial** effect. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

CA 11: Napier Road

1.164 At Year 1, the proposed development would give rise to some slight changes to the setting of the CA where it is perceptible amongst the existing built form and railway infrastructure. The taller forms of the proposed development would introduce a positive contribution to the skyline that would help to enhance wayfinding in the townscape and where perceived, would introduce a locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights into the setting of this CA where the under construction development on the former BMW site immediately adjacent to it has a strong influence. The proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would be a slight improvement in the setting of this Low sensitivity CA which would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** effect. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

Visual Effects

1.165 The proposed development would alter both the visibility of the application site and visual amenity in the vicinity due to the blocks of built form of the proposed development. As committed to in the Design Code, the improvements to the quality of built form and public realm on the application site would enhance the experience that visual receptors receive in the vicinity of the proposed development, as well as in views from further afield.

1.166 Near-distance views – the proposed development would be seen at close range, where the large development blocks would occupy large amounts of views south towards the northern station entrance. The new built form and visual interest of the proposed development with a locally distinctive combination of massing and heights, would create a new positive development frontage along the Vastern Road edge of the site with a progression in scale of built form away from the more domestic scale of development that lies to the north of Vastern Road. The increasing height of the proposed development across the site with the higher parts towards Reading Station and the railway line. Clear views of the proposed development would be available from the immediate vicinity of the application site, such as the adjoining roads of Caversham Road to the north-west (Site Context Photograph 4) and Vastern Road to the north (Site Context Photograph 1) and north-east (Site Context Photograph 2). Views towards the proposed development from De Montfort Road (Site Context Photograph 5) and Lynmouth Road to the north, Northfield Road to the west (Site Context Photograph 7), along Greyfriars road to the south-west (Site Context Photograph 24), and along Blagrave Street to the south-east (Site Context Photograph 26) would channel views towards the top of the proposed development, while the lower parts of the development including the improvements to orientation and legibility of the public realm would be largely screened from view by intervening elements.

1.167 In other near-distance views towards the site, proposed development would be partially screened by intervening built forms. The highest parts of the proposed development would be partially visible above and beyond these, including views from Reading Bridge to the east (Site Context Photograph 8), from Caversham Road to the south-west (Site Context Photograph 6) and from the southern forecourt of Reading Station to the south (Site Context Photograph 25). Where the proposed development is visible, it would be seen in the context of existing scale built forms in the central Reading area that are seen against the skyline, notably the 12-storey Reading Bridge House, the 5-storey multi-storey car park on Vastern Road, No.3 Forbury Road, Apex Plaza and Thames Tower.

1.168 Middle-distance views – the lower parts of the proposed development including the legibility of the public realm improvements, would be screened from view by existing development on intervening land. Where visible, the taller parts of the proposed development would be seen in views that are channelled along busy urban roads, where traffic and infrastructure occupy large proportions of the view available (Site Context Photograph 10). The existing large scale built forms that provide an element of visual screening to the proposed development, create an existing urban character to views that the new built form would be seen within.

1.169 The proposed development would be largely screened from view by the existing large scale built form such as Apex Plaza and Forbury Place (Site Context Photograph 13) for visual receptors to the south-east. Views of the proposed development from the west would be largely obtained along residential streets, or those with a more domestic scale of built form, where the proposed development would appear above the foreground elements (Site Context Photograph 12). In views from the north-west, north, north-east and east; the taller parts of the proposed development would appear within the context of views from green open spaces along the River Thames, such as in Site Context Photograph 15, 11, 9 and 14.

1.170 Long-distance views – the ground level improvements to the site such as public realm improvements and the landscape scheme would be screened from view by existing development on intervening land but the higher parts of the proposed development would be visible from elevated ground (Site Context Photographs 16, 18, 19, 20, 22 and 23), or where street orientation channels glimpsed views towards the site (Site Context Photographs 17 and 21). From these locations the proposed development would be seen in the context of larger scale built forms in central Reading that are visible on the skyline, notably The Blade, Thames Tower and Reading Bridge House. The proposed development would be seen alongside these existing townscape elements in views towards the centre of a built up area.

1.171 Views of the proposed development would give rise to larger changes where they are anticipated to occupy a larger proportion of views available, such as close range views. As such, the effect of the proposed development upon the representative Site Context Photographs where the most significant changes are anticipated is detailed below. The consideration of how the proposed development would impact visual receptors at all representative Site Context Photographs assessed is contained within Appendix 1.4: Visual Assessment.

Site Context Photograph 01: View south from Vastern Road/Lynmouth Road

1.172 At Year 1, the large mass of the proposed development would occupy views to the south where it would replace views or car parking and the cluttered brick facades of existing retail units. The proposed development would form a large mass that would shorten views to the south and screen existing buildings south of the railway line such as Thames Tower. The proposed development would form a new skyline element that would alter the composition of views gained at Vastern Road whilst introducing, as committed to in the Design Code, locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights, as well as improvements to the public realm that would enhance views of built form and compliment other new tall built form it is seen alongside, such as the currently under construction

development at the former BMW site. The new built form would be seen alongside improvements to the legibility of the public realm which would further enhance the visual amenity experienced. The proposed built forms would also contribute to creating a visual interest and a strong sense of place that would serve to visually signify the urban regeneration of the area around the station. This would cause a Medium magnitude of impact. Considering the scale of the proposed built forms and the proximity of the visual receptors, the proposed development would occupy a large amount of the visual envelope, albeit with new built form. This would cause a Small magnitude of impact. However, taking into account both the beneficial and adverse aspects above, on balance the proposed development would cause a **Negligible Beneficial** effect upon the Medium sensitivity receptors. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

Site Context Photograph 02: View south-west from Vastern Road

1.173 At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a large mass of built form into views gained from the vicinity of Vastern Road. The height and mass of the proposed development would form a new skyline element that would alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity whilst introducing, as committed to in the Design Code, locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights as well as improvements to the legibility of public realm that would enhance views of built form. The arrangement of the proposed development would allow views between the built form that create a visual connection to the railway station northern entrance and underpass that connects to the centre of reading. The improved new development would be seen alongside improvements in the legibility of public realm which would further enhance the visual amenity experience. The proposed built forms would also contribute to creating a visual interest and a strong sense of place that would serve to visually signify the urban regeneration of the area around the station and causing a Medium magnitude of impact. Considering the scale of the proposed built forms and the proximity of the visual receptors, proposed development would occupy a large amount of the visual envelope which would cause a Small magnitude of impact. However, taking into account both the beneficial and adverse aspects above, on balance the proposed development would cause a **Negligible Beneficial** effect upon the Low sensitivity receptors. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

Site Context Photograph 03: View north from Station Square North

1.174 At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a large mass of built form into the close range views gained from the vicinity of the northern station entrance. The height and mass of the proposed development would occupy the foreground of views although the arrangement of the built form would channel views between the buildings towards the former SSE site and the River Thames to the north. The height and mass of the proposed development would form a new skyline element that would alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity whilst introducing locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights as well as improvements to the public realm that would enhance views. The improved arrangement of built form would be seen alongside improvements to the legibility of the public realm which would further enhance the visual amenity experience. As committed to in the Design Code, the proposed built forms would also contribute to creating a visual interest and a strong sense of place that would serve to visually locate the area around the station. This would cause a Medium magnitude of impact while the large mass of development would cause a Small magnitude of impact. Taking into account both the beneficial and adverse aspects above, on balance the proposed development would cause a **Negligible Beneficial** effect upon the Medium sensitivity receptors. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

Site Context Photograph 04: View south-east from Caversham Road

1.175 At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a large mass of built form into views towards the roundabout where it would form a landmark building and mark the transition from the two storey residential TCA of Caversham Road, to the redevelopment area in the Vastern Road TCA surrounding Reading Railway Station. Existing development along Caversham Road would channel views towards the proposed development where the height and mass of the built form would screen views towards existing buildings south of the railway line such as Thames Tower and The Blade. As committed to in the Design Code, the built form of the proposed development would form a new skyline element that would alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity whilst introducing locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights, as well as improvements to the public realm that would enhance views of built form and reduce the amount of clutter in views along Caversham Road. The new built form would be seen alongside the improved legibility of the public realm which would further enhance visual amenity and cause a Medium magnitude of impact. The large mass of built form would cause a Small magnitude of impact. Considering both the beneficial and adverse aspects above, on balance the proposed development would cause a **Negligible Beneficial** effect upon the Low sensitivity receptors. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

Site Context Photograph 05: View south from Thames Path / De Montfort Road

1.176 At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a large mass of built form into views along the residential road. The mass of built form would occupy a large area of views that are channelled along the narrow residential road towards the application site, although the gap in buildings on the application site would partially align with De Montfort Road, allowing views through the development. The built form of the proposed development would form a new skyline element that would alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity although the new skyline elements would comprise locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights. The landmark buildings by virtue of scale and height would be seen alongside the improved legibility of the public realm which would further enhance visual amenity. This would cause a Medium magnitude of impact, whilst the introduced mass of built form would cause a Small magnitude of impact. Considering both the beneficial and adverse aspects above, on balance the proposed development would cause a **Minor Beneficial** effect upon the High sensitivity receptors. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

Site Context Photograph 25: View North from Station Square

1.177 At Year 1, the proposed development would appear as an additional element in views of the Main Building of Reading General Station (Grade II Listed), where it would alter the background of the view. The proposed development would introduce new built form into the view that would create a new skyline element which would contribute to increasing visual interest and add to the juxtaposition between the combination of architectural forms visible from Station Square, causing a Small magnitude of impact. The focus of views gained by visual receptors at Station Square would remain the historic station building seen within the context of an urban area with more modern development complimenting the more historic building where the proposed development. As such, the proposed development would cause a **Minor Adverse** effect upon the Medium sensitivity receptors. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

Assessment of Residual Effects

Additional Mitigation

1.178 At the detailed design stage, the commitments made within the Design Code in regard to high quality design, the delivery of a landmark development, locally distinctive built form, variety in massing and height, articulation of the facade, quality materiality, creation of a distinct sense of place, permeability and high quality public realm and landscape interventions, would be delivered.

1.179 This would help to reduce the scale of effects identified in this assessment. However, as the proposed development is currently at outline stage, this detailed design information is not currently available and therefore cannot be relied upon as additional mitigation.

Enhancement Measures

1.180 There are no enhancement measures identified for the proposed development at this stage. At the detailed design stage of the proposed development, enhancement measures would be identified when further scheme information becomes available.

Demolition and Construction Residual Effects

1.181 Due to the fact that there is no secondary or additional mitigation identified at this stage of the proposed development, the residual effects for the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would remain as reported above.

Completed Development Residual Effects

1.182 Due to the fact that there is no secondary or additional mitigation identified at this stage of the proposed development, the residual effects for the completed proposed development would remain as reported for the completed development above.

Summary of Residual Effects

1.183 Table 1.13 provides a summary of the residual effects identified for the demolition and construction stage and upon completion of the proposed development.

Table 1.13: Summary of Townscape and Visual Residual Effects

Residual Effect	Additional Mitigation	Receptor	Scale of Effect **	Nature of Residual Effect*				
				+ -	D I	P T	R IR	St Mt Lt
Demolition and Construction								
Application Site Character	Temporary introduction of demolition and construction plant and activities.	N/A	Moderate	-	D	T	R	St
CA 22: Vastern Road		N/A	Moderate	-	D	T	R	St
CA 12: Caversham Road		N/A	Minor	-	I	T	R	St
CA 23: King's Meadow		N/A	Minor	-	I	T	R	St
CA 1: Station Hill		N/A	Minor	-	I	T	R	St
CA 11: Napier Road		N/A	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
Site Context Photograph 01		N/A	Moderate	-	D	T	R	St

Table 1.13: Summary of Townscape and Visual Residual Effects

Residual Effect	Additional Mitigation	Receptor	Scale of Effect **	Nature of Residual Effect*				
				+ -	D I	P T	R IR	St Mt Lt
Demolition and Construction								
Site Context Photograph 02		N/A	Minor-Moderate	-	D	T	R	St
Site Context Photograph 03		N/A	Moderate	-	D	T	R	St
Site Context Photograph 04		N/A	Moderate	-	D	T	R	St
Site Context Photograph 05		N/A	Moderate	-	D	T	R	St
Site Context Photograph 25		N/A	Minor	-	D	T	R	St
Completed Development								
Application Site Character	Introduction of new large scale built form with large mass and gaps in the blocks.	N/A	Moderate	+	D	P	IR	P
CA 22: Vastern Road		N/A	Moderate	+	D	P	IR	P
CA 12: Caversham Road		N/A	Negligible	+	I	P	IR	P
CA 23: King's Meadow		N/A	Minor	+	I	P	IR	P
CA 1: Station Hill		N/A	Minor	+	I	P	IR	P
CA 11: Napier Road		N/A	Negligible	+	I	P	IR	P
Site Context Photograph 01		N/A	Negligible	+	D	P	IR	P
Site Context Photograph 02		N/A	Negligible	+	D	P	IR	P

Table 1.13: Summary of Townscape and Visual Residual Effects

Residual Effect	Additional Mitigation	Receptor	Scale of Effect **	Nature of Residual Effect*				
				+ -	D I	P T	R IR	St Mt Lt
Completed Development								
Site Context Photograph 03		N/A	Negligible	+	D	P	IR	P
Site Context Photograph 04		N/A	Negligible	+	D	P	IR	P
Site Context Photograph 05		N/A	Negligible	+	D	P	IR	P
Site Context Photograph 25		N/A	Minor	-	D	P	IR	P

Notes:
* - = Adverse/ + = Beneficial/ +/- Neutral; D = Direct/ I = Indirect; P = Permanent/ T = Temporary; R=Reversible/ IR= Irreversible; St- Short term/ Mt –Medium term/ Lt –Long term.
**Negligible/Minor/Moderate/Major

1.184 The assessment concludes that there would be temporary significant adverse effects during the demolition and construction stage on the application site character, the Vastern Road CA, as well as on the visual amenity of views 01-05. For the completed development stage, the introduction of the proposed development would result in significant beneficial effects on the application site character and the Vastern Road CA only.

Cumulative Effects

1.185 Table 2.3 of ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: EIA Process and Methodology presents the list of cumulative schemes which have been considered for additive cumulative effects with the proposed development.

1.186 This section summarises the cumulative effects of the proposed development setting out only those receptors considered likely to experience significant effects as a result of the proposed development. Whilst the cumulative assessment focuses on the same townscape receptors that are likely to experience significant effects as the main assessment, the cumulative visual assessment varies to consider where the addition of the proposed development into views of other cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable cumulative schemes would be likely to result in significant effects. A full assessment of the cumulative townscape and visual effects of the proposed development, in combination with cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes is set out in Appendix 1.5: Cumulative Assessment, and is supported by cumulative wirelines 1 – 15.

Demolition and Construction Cumulative Effects

Proposed Development in addition to Cumulative Schemes

Townscape Effects

Application Site Character

1.187 Demolition and construction works on the application site would occupy the land currently occupied by the existing retail units and car parking. Any perceived effects on the application site from demolition and construction operations for cumulative schemes on other sites would consolidate the sense of disturbance on the application site. The temporary demolition and construction stage for the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the Low sensitivity application site that would result in a temporary **Negligible Adverse** cumulative effect. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

Reading Tall Building Strategy Townscape Character Area

CA22: Vastern Road

1.188 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would introduce plant and machinery into the CA. Should the demolition and construction stage of the proposed development overlap with demolition and construction stage of the approved project of the Former BMW Site, the demolition and construction works would temporarily detract from the character of the Vastern Road CA for a short duration. In addition, any perceived effects from the demolition and construction stages of any other cumulative schemes in adjacent CA's occurring in parallel to demolition and construction of the proposed development would further enhance the level of disturbance within the urban area. The temporary demolition and construction stage for the proposed development would cause a Large magnitude of impact upon the Low sensitivity CA and therefore a temporary **Moderate Adverse** cumulative effect. This is considered to be a significant effect.

CA12: Caversham

1.189 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development would not occur within the Caversham Road CA, nor would the demolition and construction works for other cumulative schemes, and so would not give rise to any direct cumulative changes. Should the demolition and construction stage of the proposed development overlap with the demolition and construction stage of other cumulative schemes, the perceived effects of combined demolition and construction activities could result in indirect disturbance to CA 12. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the Medium sensitivity CA and therefore a temporary **Minor Adverse** cumulative effect.

CA23: King's Meadow

1.190 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development would not occur within the King's Meadow CA, nor would the demolition and construction works for other cumulative schemes, and so would not give rise to any direct cumulative changes. Should the demolition and construction stage of the proposed development overlap with the demolition and construction stage of other cumulative schemes, the perceived effects of combined demolition and construction activities could result in indirect disturbance to CA 23. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the High sensitivity CA and therefore a **Minor Adverse** cumulative effect.

CA1: Station Hill

1.191 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would not occur within the Station Hill CA, but the demolition and construction activities for the cumulative schemes, of Station Hill and 29 Station Road, would. Should the demolition and construction stage of the proposed

development overlap with the demolition and construction stage of these cumulative schemes, the perceived effects of combined demolition and construction activities could result in indirect disturbance to the Station Hill CA. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Minor adverse magnitude of impact that would result in a temporary **Minor Adverse** cumulative effect upon the Low sensitivity CA.

CA11: Napier Road

1.192 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development would not occur within the Napier Road CA, nor would the demolition and construction works for other cumulative schemes, and so would not give rise to any direct cumulative changes. Should the demolition and construction stage of the proposed development overlap with the demolition and construction stage of other cumulative schemes, the perceived effects of combined demolition and construction activities could result in indirect disturbance to CA 11. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would result in a temporary **Negligible Adverse** cumulative effect upon the Low sensitivity CA.

Visual Effects

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 07: View East from Swansea Road / Northfield Road

1.193 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development may appear in views east from the residential streets in addition to the demolition and construction works for the development at the Former BMW site, and Station Hill should the demolition and construction stages overlap. The demolition and construction works for the proposed development would partially screen some views of demolition and construction activities at the Former BMW site, but would extend the amount of demolition and construction works seen where they appear alongside the activities at Station Hill. Demolition and construction works on the application site in addition to the demolition and construction works at the Former BMW site, and Station Hill would extend demolition and construction activities across a wider amount of views. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact, resulting in a temporary **Minor Adverse** cumulative effect upon the high sensitivity receptors.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 09: View South-west from Christchurch Meadows

1.194 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development would appear in addition to the demolition and construction activities at 29 Station Road, and Station Hill, should the demolition and construction stages overlap. The demolition and construction works for the proposed development would partially screen some views of demolition and construction activities at the Station Hill, but would extend the amount of demolition and construction works seen where they appear alongside the activities at 29 Station Road. Demolition and construction works on the application site in addition to the demolition and construction works at 29 Station Road, and Station Hill, would extend demolition and construction activities across a wider amount of views causing a Medium magnitude of impact. The combined temporary demolition and construction stage effects would result in a temporary **Minor Adverse** cumulative effect upon the high sensitivity receptors.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 11: Views South-east from Christchurch Meadows

1.195 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would appear in addition to the demolition and construction activities for the cumulative schemes of Former BMW site, 29 Station Road, and Station Hill, in views south-east along the River Thames should the demolition and construction stages overlap. The demolition and construction activities for the proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes would contribute to additional visual disturbance that would be seen above the existing development along the southern bank of the river. The addition of the demolition and construction activities for the proposed development would extend the amount of view that demolition and construction works are visible in and the amount of skyline that they occupy, causing a Medium magnitude of impact. This would result in temporary **Moderate Adverse** cumulative effect upon the Medium sensitivity receptors.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 16: View South from Balmore Park

1.196 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development may appear in views to the south from Balmore Park, in addition to the demolition and construction works for the cumulative schemes at Former BMW site, Station Hill, and 29 Station Road, should the demolition and construction stages overlap. The demolition and construction works for the proposed development would slightly extend the amount of demolition and construction works seen where they appear alongside the activities of the cumulative schemes in views towards the urban area, causing a Small magnitude of impact. This would result in a temporary **Minor Adverse** cumulative effect upon high sensitivity receptors.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 25: View North from Station Square

1.197 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development would be seen in the backdrop against the skyline above the Main Building of Reading General Station (Grade II Listed) in views where any demolition and construction activities for cumulative schemes would be screened from view, should they coincide. The demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a magnitude of impact of None, resulting in a **Minor** cumulative effect upon the medium sensitivity receptors.

Completed Development Cumulative Effects

Proposed Development in addition to Cumulative Schemes

Townscape Effects

Application Site Character

1.198 The proposed development would cause direct changes to the application site in addition to the perceived changes caused by cumulative schemes on other sites. The proposed development in addition to any perceived changes caused by cumulative schemes, would contribute to the increase in mass of development and would cause a Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development, in addition to the other cumulative schemes would combine to provide the perception of increased urbanisation on the application site, as well as an improvement in the legibility of built form and wayfinding, causing a Large magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes would result in a **Minor Beneficial** cumulative effect on the application site which has a Low sensitivity. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

Reading Tall Building Strategy Townscape Character Area

CA22: Vastern Road

1.199 The proposed development with a height of 23 storeys would be located within the same urban townscape CA as the part 13 and part 23 storey development on the Former BMW Site where the two schemes would frame the station area, helping to establish a strong local identity in the townscape. The two developments would combine to increase wayfinding, articulation and legibility of the townscape of the Vastern Road CA and the vicinity of Reading Station by creating greater permeability and a recognisable scale of built form. The proposed development would cause a Large magnitude of impact upon the Low sensitivity CA that would result in a **Moderate Beneficial** cumulative effect. This is considered to be a significant effect.

CA12: Caversham

1.200 Although neither the proposed development nor any of the cumulative schemes would be located within the CA, the proposed development in addition to the Former BMW Site in the adjacent Vastern Road CA, and the other cumulative schemes such as Station Hill and 29 Station Road in CA 1: Station Hill, Station Hill and 52-55 Friar Street in CA 3: Friar Street, Kenavon Drive in CA 10: Forbury Retail Park, and Land between Weldale Street and Chatham Street in CA 13: Cattle Market, would cause some perceived changes to the residential area of Caversham Road. The proposed development, in addition to the other cumulative schemes would combine to provide the perception of increased urbanisation in adjacent CA's while maintaining the more domestic scale of development within CA 12, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development would combine with the other cumulative schemes to increase the number of landmark buildings perceptible from CA 12, as well as improving wayfinding causing a Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect upon the Medium sensitivity CA. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

CA23: King's Meadow

1.201 Although neither the proposed development nor any of the cumulative schemes would be located within the CA, the proposed development in addition to the Former BMW Site in the adjacent Vastern Road CA, and the other cumulative schemes such as Station Hill and 29 Station Road in CA1: Station Hill, Station Hill and 52-55 Friar Street in CA3: Friar Street, Kenavon Drive in CA10: Forbury Retail Park, and Land between Weldale Street and Chatham Street in CA13: Cattle Market, would cause some perceived changes to the residential area of Caversham Road. The proposed development, in addition to the other cumulative schemes would combine to provide the perception of increased urbanisation in adjacent CA's while maintaining the green spaces of CA23, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development would combine with the other cumulative schemes to increase the number of landmark buildings perceptible from CA23, as well as improving wayfinding, causing a Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect upon the High sensitivity CA. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

CA1: Station Hill

1.202 The proposed development adjacent to the Station Hill CA, would cause perceived changes to the CA in addition to direct changes from the cumulative schemes within the Station Hill CA and those cumulative schemes in adjacent CA's such as Station Hill and 52-55 Friar Street in CA3: Friar Street, Kenavon Drive in CA 10: Forbury Retail Park, and Land between Weldale Street and Chatham Street in CA13: Cattle Market which would increase the mass of built form causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. The permeability in the adjacent Vastern Road CA, resulting from the proposed development blocks, would help to connect the Station Hill CA to the River Thames corridor and open spaces at Christchurch Meadows, through the application site which would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the Medium sensitivity CA. The proposed development would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect. This is not considered to be a significant effect.

CA11: Napier Road

1.203 Although neither the proposed development nor any of the cumulative schemes would be located within the CA, the proposed development in addition to the Former BMW Site in the adjacent Vastern Road CA, and the other cumulative schemes such as Station Hill and 29 Station Road in CA1: Station Hill, Station Hill and 52-55 Friar Street in CA3: Friar Street, Kenavon Drive in CA10: Forbury Retail Park, and Land between Weldale Street and Chatham Street in CA13: Cattle Market, would cause some perceived changes to the largely commercial area of Napier Road that would increase the mass of development causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development, in addition to the other cumulative schemes would combine to provide the perception of increased urbanisation in adjacent CA's, as well as an improvement in the legibility of built form and wayfinding perceptible from CA11, causing a Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect.

Visual Effects

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 07: View East from Swansea Road/ Northfield Road

1.204 The proposed development would screen views of the approved project at the Former BMW site, but would extend the amount of view occupied by tall buildings as the proposed development would be seen in addition to a small part of the approved project at Station Hill, that would be visible above residential properties lining the road, adding to the mass of buildings and causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development would combine with other cumulative schemes to deliver built form with variety in massing and heights, as well as improvements to legibility of the public realm that would cause a Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes would cause a Small magnitude of impact, resulting in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect upon the High sensitivity receptors.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 09: View South-west from Christchurch Meadows

1.205 The proposed development would be seen in addition to the cumulative schemes of 29 Station Road, and Station Hill, where it would occupy the same section of views but would extend the amount of view that tall buildings are visible against the skyline, causing a Small magnitude of impact. Where the proposed development is visible in addition to the cumulative schemes and existing built form, it would provide strong visual interest in views to the south-west. As the proposed development would partially screen views of the cumulative scheme at Station Hill, and increase the height variance of built form, it would cause a Medium magnitude of impact, resulting in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect upon the High sensitivity receptors.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 11: Views South-east from Christchurch Meadows

1.206 The proposed development would appear against the skyline above the existing built form on the southern bank of the River Thames, where it would constitute an increase in tall buildings seen against the skyline in views towards the centre of Reading, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes of Former BMW site, and Station Hill, would occupy a wide section of the view, while the proposed development would screen views of the approved project at 29 Station Road. The variety of heights and the consolidation of views towards the centre of an urban area where improvements to the legibility of the urban centre would cause a Small magnitude of impact that would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect upon the Medium sensitivity receptors.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 16: View South from Balmore Park

1.207 The proposed development would appear in front of the cumulative schemes of Station Hill and 29 Station Road, as well as alongside the approved project of Former BMW site where it would increase the mass of development visible and cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. The addition of the proposed development to the cumulative schemes in views towards the urban centre of Reading would add to the variety in heights and architectural form visible in the centre of Reading where it would not only mark the urban centre in views but would also add to landmark buildings visible by virtue of its scale and height, causing a Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect upon the Medium sensitivity receptors.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 25: View North from Station Square

1.208 The proposed development would not be seen in addition to any cumulative schemes and so would cause a cumulative magnitude of impact of None, resulting in a **Neutral** cumulative effect upon the Medium sensitivity receptors.

Demolition and Construction Cumulative Effects

Proposed Development in addition to Cumulative Schemes and Reasonably Foreseeable Cumulative Schemes

Townscape Effects

Application Site Character

1.209 Demolition and construction works on the application site would occupy the land currently occupied by the existing retail units and car parking. Any perceived effects on the application site from demolition and construction operations for cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable cumulative schemes on other sites would consolidate the sense of disturbance on the application site. The temporary demolition and construction stage for the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the Low sensitivity application site that would result in a temporary **Negligible Adverse** cumulative effect upon the Low sensitivity application site.

Reading Tall Building Strategy Townscape Character Area

CA22: Vastern Road

1.210 The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would introduce plant and machinery into the CA. Should the demolition and construction stage of the proposed development overlap with demolition and construction stage of the cumulative schemes at the Former BMW Site, Network Rail Thames Valley Area Site Office/Former Royal Mail Site and the Former Scottish and Southern Energy Site, the demolition and construction works would temporarily detract from the character of the Vastern Road CA for the duration of overlapping works. In addition, any perceived effects from the demolition and construction stages of any other cumulative schemes in adjacent CA's occurring in parallel to demolition and construction of the proposed development would further add to the level of disturbance within the urban area. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Large magnitude of impact, resulting in a temporary **Moderate Adverse** cumulative effect upon the low sensitivity CA.

CA12: Caversham

1.211 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development would not occur within the Caversham Road CA, nor would the demolition and construction works for other cumulative schemes, and so would not give rise to any direct cumulative changes. Should the demolition and construction stage of the proposed development overlap with the demolition and construction stage of other cumulative schemes, the perceived effects of combined demolition and construction activities could result in indirect disturbance to CA 12. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact and therefore a temporary **Minor Adverse** cumulative effect upon the Medium sensitivity CA.

CA23: King's Meadow

1.212 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development would not occur within the King's Meadow CA, nor would the demolition and construction works for other cumulative schemes or reasonably foreseeable cumulative schemes, and so would not give rise to any direct cumulative changes. Should the demolition and construction stage of the proposed development overlap with the demolition and construction stage of other cumulative schemes, the perceived effects of combined demolition and construction activities could result in indirect disturbance to CA23. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact and therefore a temporary **Minor Adverse** cumulative effect upon the High sensitivity CA.

CA1: Station Hill

1.213 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development would not occur within the Station Hill CA, but the demolition and construction activities for the cumulative schemes Station Hill and 29 Station Road, would. Should the demolition and construction stage of the proposed development overlap with the demolition and construction stage of these cumulative schemes, the perceived effects of combined demolition and construction activities could result in indirect disturbance the Station Hill CA. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact that would result in a temporary **Minor Adverse** cumulative effect upon the Low sensitivity CA.

CA11: Napier Road

1.214 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development would not occur within the Napier Road CA, nor would the demolition and construction works for other cumulative schemes or reasonably foreseeable schemes, and so would not give rise to any direct cumulative changes. Should the demolition and construction stage of the proposed development overlap with the demolition and construction stage of other cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes, the perceived effects of combined demolition and construction activities could result in indirect disturbance to CA11. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would result in a temporary **Minor Adverse** cumulative effect upon the Low sensitivity CA.

Visual Effects

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 07: View East from Swansea Road / Northfield Road

1.215 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development may appear in views east from the residential streets in addition to the demolition and construction works for the cumulative scheme at the Former BMW site and Station Hill, as well as the reasonably foreseeable scheme at the Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site, should the demolition and construction stages overlap. The demolition and construction works for the proposed development would increase the views of demolition and construction works at the Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site, as well as extending the amount of view that demolition and construction works are seen alongside the activities at Station Hill. Demolition and construction works on the application site in addition to the demolition and construction works at the Former BMW site, Station Hill, and Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site, would extend demolition and construction activities across a wider amount of views. This would cause a Medium magnitude of impact and therefore a temporary **Moderate Adverse** cumulative effect upon the High sensitivity receptors.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 09: View South-west from Christchurch Meadows

1.216 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development would appear in addition to the demolition and construction activities for the cumulative schemes at 29 Station Road, and Station Hill, as well as the reasonably foreseeable schemes at Former Scottish and Southern Energy site, and Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site, should the demolition and construction stages overlap. The demolition and construction works for the proposed development would occupy the same section of views as demolition and construction works for Station Hill, Former Scottish and Southern Energy site, and Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site. The proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes would constitute a very slight extension of the amount of view that demolition and construction works

occupy. This would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the High sensitivity receptors and therefore a **Negligible Adverse** cumulative effect.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 11: Views South-east from Christchurch Meadows

1.217 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development would appear in addition to the demolition and construction activities for the cumulative schemes at 29 Station Road, and Station Hill, as well as the reasonably foreseeable schemes at Former Scottish and Southern Energy site, and Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site, should the demolition and construction stages overlap. The demolition and construction works for the proposed development would occupy the same section of views as demolition and construction works for Station Hill, Former Scottish and Southern Energy site, and Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site. The proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes would constitute a very slight extension of the amount of view that demolition and construction works occupy. This would cause a Medium magnitude of impact upon the High sensitivity receptors and therefore a temporary **Moderate Adverse** cumulative effect.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 16: View South from Balmore Park

1.218 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development may appear in views to the south from Balmore Park, where it would appear in the same section of views as the demolition and construction works for the cumulative schemes at Former BMW site, Station Hill and 29 Station Road, as well as the reasonably foreseeable scheme of Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site and Broad Street Mall, should the demolition and construction stages overlap. The demolition and construction works for the proposed development would slightly extend the amount of view that demolition and construction works are seen in where they appear alongside the activities for the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes in views towards the urban area. This would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the High sensitivity receptors and therefore a temporary **Minor Adverse** cumulative effect.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 25: View North from Station Square

1.219 The temporary demolition and construction works of the proposed development would be seen in the backdrop against the skyline above the Main Building of Reading General Station (Grade II Listed) in addition to the demolition and construction activities for Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site, should they coincide. The demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would extend the amount of view demolition and construction activities are visible in behind the historic station building where it would cause a Medium magnitude of impact upon the Medium sensitivity receptors. This would result in a temporary **Moderate Adverse** cumulative effect.

Completed Development Cumulative Effects

Proposed Development in addition to Cumulative Schemes and Reasonably Foreseeable Cumulative Schemes

Townscape Effects

Application Site Character

1.220 The proposed development would cause direct changes to the application site in addition to the perceived changes caused by those cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes on other sites. The proposed development in addition to any perceived changes caused by cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes, would contribute to the increase in mass of development and would cause a Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development, in addition to the other cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes would combine to provide the perception of increased urbanisation on the application site, as well as an improvement in the legibility of built form and wayfinding, causing a Large magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes would result in a **Minor Beneficial** cumulative effect on the Low sensitivity application site.

Reading Tall Building Strategy Townscape Character Area

CA22: Vastern Road

1.221 The proposed development with a height of 23 storeys would be located within the same urban townscape CA as the part 13 and part 23 storey scheme on the Former BMW Site, the up to 25 storey scheme on the Network Rail Thames Valley Area Site Office/Former Royal Mail Site and the up to 11 storey scheme on the Former Scottish and Southern Energy Site. The proposed development in addition to these cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes would significantly improve the quality of built form, and provide a strong local identity in the townscape that identifies Reading Station as a key area within the townscape, improving articulation and legibility of the townscape within the Low sensitivity Vastern Road CA. This would cause a Large cumulative magnitude of impact that would result in a **Moderate Beneficial** cumulative effect.

CA12: Caversham

1.222 Although none of the proposed development, cumulative schemes or reasonably foreseeable schemes would be located within the CA, the proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes of the Former BMW Site in the adjacent Vastern Road CA, and the other cumulative schemes such as Station Hill and 29 Station Road in CA1: Station Hill, Station Hill and 52-55 Friar Street in CA3: Friar Street, Kenavon Drive in CA10: Forbury Retail Park, and Land between Weldale Street and Chatham Street in CA 13: Cattle Market, as well as the reasonable foreseeable schemes of Network Rail Thames Valley Area Site Office/Former Royal Mail Site and the Former Scottish and Southern Energy Site in CA 22 Vastern Road, and Broad Street Mall in CA15: Cheapside, would cause some perceived changes to the residential area of Caversham Road due to the increased building mass causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development, in addition to the other cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes would combine to provide the perception of increased urbanisation in adjacent CA's while maintaining the more domestic scale of development within CA12. The proposed development would combine with the other cumulative schemes and reasonable foreseeable schemes to increase the legibility of built form perceptible from CA12, as well as improving wayfinding and cause a Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect upon the Medium sensitivity CA.

CA23: King's Meadow

1.223 Although none of the proposed development, cumulative schemes or reasonably foreseeable schemes would be located within the CA, the proposed development in addition to the Former BMW Site in the adjacent Vastern Road CA, and the other cumulative schemes such as Station Hill and 29 Station Road in CA1: Station Hill, Station Hill and 52-55 Friar Street in CA3: Friar Street, Kenavon Drive in CA10: Forbury Retail Park, and Land between Weldale Street and Chatham Street in CA13: Cattle Market, as well as the reasonable foreseeable schemes of Network Rail Thames Valley Area Site Office/Former Royal Mail Site and the Former Scottish and Southern Energy Site in CA22: Vastern Road, and Broad Street Mall in CA15: Cheapside, would cause some perceived changes to the residential area of Caversham Road due to the increase in building mass causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development, in addition to the other cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes would combine to provide the perception of increased urbanisation in adjacent CA's while maintaining the green spaces of CA23. The proposed development would combine with the other cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes to increase the legibility of built form perceptible from CA23, as well as improving wayfinding, causing a Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect upon the High sensitivity CA.

CA1: Station Hill

1.224 The proposed development adjacent to the Station Hill CA, would cause perceived changes to the CA in addition to direct changes from the cumulative schemes within the Station Hill CA and those cumulative schemes in adjacent CA's such as Station Hill and 52-55 Friar Street in CA3: Friar Street, Kenavon Drive in CA 10: Forbury Retail Park, and Land between Weldale Street and Chatham Street in CA13: Cattle Market, as well as the reasonable foreseeable schemes of Network Rail Thames Valley Area Site Office/Former Royal Mail Site and the Former Scottish and Southern Energy Site in CA22: Vastern Road, and Broad Street Mall in CA15: Cheapside, where the additional building mass would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. The permeability in the adjacent Vastern Road CA, resulting from the proposed development blocks would help to connect the Station Hill CA to the River Thames corridor and open spaces at Christchurch Meadows, through the application site, causing a Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development would result a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect.

CA11: Napier Road

1.225 Although none of the proposed development, the cumulative schemes or the reasonably foreseeable schemes would be located within the CA, the proposed development in addition to the Former BMW Site in the adjacent Vastern Road CA, and the other cumulative schemes such as Station Hill and 29 Station Road in CA1: Station Hill, Station Hill and 52-55 Friar Street in CA3: Friar Street, Kenavon Drive in CA10: Forbury Retail Park, and Land between Weldale Street and Chatham Street in CA13: Cattle Market, as well as the reasonable foreseeable schemes of Network Rail Thames Valley Area Site Office/Former Royal Mail Site and the Former Scottish and Southern Energy Site in CA22: Vastern Road, and Broad Street Mall in CA15: Cheapside would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact to the largely commercial area of Napier Road due to the addition of building mass. The proposed development, in addition to the other cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes would combine to provide the perception of increased urbanisation in adjacent CAs, as well as an improvement in the legibility of built form and wayfinding perceptible from the Low sensitivity CA 11. As such, the proposed development in addition to the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes would cause a Small magnitude of impact, resulting in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect.

Visual Effects

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 07: View East from Swansea Road/ Northfield Road

1.226 The proposed development in addition to the approved project of Station Hill and the reasonably foreseeable scheme of Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site, would extend the amount of view occupied by tall buildings. This would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development would combine with other cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes the deliver variety in massing and heights as well as improvements to legibility of the public realm, marking the location of the railway station and the urban centre of Reading. This would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the High sensitivity receptors. As such, the proposed development, in addition to the cumulative schemes, would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 09: View South-west from Christchurch Meadows

1.227 The proposed development would be seen in addition to the cumulative schemes of 29 Station Road, and Station Hill, as well as the reasonably foreseeable schemes of the Former Scottish and Southern Energy site, and Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site where it would increase the mass of built form visible and cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. Where the proposed development is visible in addition to the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes, as well as existing built form, it would provide visual interest in views to the south-west as well as legibility to the townscape, causing a Small magnitude of impact upon the Medium sensitivity receptors. The addition of the proposed development to views would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 11: Views South-east from Christchurch Meadows

1.228 The proposed development would be seen in addition to the cumulative schemes of 29 Station Road, and Station Hill, as well as the reasonably foreseeable schemes of the Former Scottish and Southern Energy site, and Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site where it would increase the mass of buildings in the view and cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. Where the proposed development is visible in addition to the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes, as well as existing built form, it would provide visual interest in views to the south-west, as well as increase legibility of the urban realm. The addition of the proposed development to views would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the Medium sensitivity receptors that would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 16: View South from Balmore Park

1.229 The proposed development would appear in front of the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes of Station Hill, 29 Station Road, and Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site, as well as alongside the cumulative schemes of Former BMW site, Broad Street Mall and Former Scottish and Southern Electricity Site where it would increase the mass of built form visible and cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. The addition of the proposed development to the cumulative schemes and reasonably foreseeable schemes in views towards the urban centre of Reading would add to the variety in heights and visible in the centre of Reading where it would not only mark the urban centre in views but would also add to landmark buildings visible by virtue of its height and scale where it would cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the High sensitivity receptors. As such, the proposed development would result in a **Negligible Beneficial** cumulative effect.

Cumulative Wireline Viewpoint 25: View North from Station Square

1.230 The proposed development would be seen in addition to the reasonably foreseeable scheme of Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site, where it would occupy the same section of views but would extend the amount of view that tall buildings are visible against the skyline and reduce the prominence of the Main Building of Reading Station (Grade II Listed) causing a Medium magnitude of impact. However, the proposed development would, in addition to the Network Rail Thames Valley site office/Former Royal Mail site, introduce built form with variety in massing and heights that would increase the recognisable elements in views. This would result in a **Moderate Adverse** cumulative effect as it would alter the composition of the station building in close range views. This effect is considered to be significant.

Appendix 1.1: Planning Policy

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019

1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was first published in March 2012 has been updated and published in February 2019. The NPPF promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, defined as ***"meeting the needs of the present withou****t compromising the* ***ability of future generations to meet their own needs"***. Development proposals must also be in accordance with the relevant up-to-date Local Plan and policies set out in the NPPF, including those identifying restrictions with regard to designated areas, such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Green Belt.

1.2 Paragraph 38 relates to decision making and states that:

- ***"Local planning authorities should approach decisions on*** *proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve* ***applications for sustainable development where possible".***

1.1 Section 12 of the NPPF sets out requirements for achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 124 outlines the importance of the design of the built environment and states that ***"good design is a key aspect of sustainable*** *development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps* ***make development acceptable to communities"***.

1.2 This approach is enshrined in Paragraph 127, which states:

"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
b) Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
c) Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
d) Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
e) Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
f) Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well- being with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or ***community cohesion and resilience".***

1.3 Paragraph 130 states:

- ***"Permission should be refused for development of poor design*** *that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans* ***or supplementary planning documents…Conversely, where the*** *design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a* ***valid reason to object to development ...".***

1.4 Paragraph 131 states:

- ***"In determining applications, great weight should be given to*** *outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form* ***and layout of their surroundings".***

1.5 Under Section 15 of the NPPF: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment, Paragraph 170 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- ***"a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes ...;***
- *b) recognising ... the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services ...;*
- ***...".***

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014

1.6 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was first published online in March 2014 and provides detailed guidance to support the NPPF. This will, where necessary, be updated in due course to reflect changes to the NPPF 2018. The key areas of guidance and themes of relevance to the Site relate to design. The key passages from the 'Design' PPG (see Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 26-001-20140306) are outlined below.

- ***"Good quality design is an integral part of sustainable*** *development ...*
- *Achieving good design is identified as being about creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations.*
- *Good design responds in a practical and creative way to both the function and identity of a place. It puts land, water, drainage, energy, community, economic, infrastructure and other such resources to the best possible use – over the long as well as the* ***short term".***

1.7 Further objectives and achievements that good design can achieve are outlined, with Paragraph 002 noting that good design should, among other points:

"... address the need for different uses sympathetically".

1.8 Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 26-007-20140306advises that ***"development should seek to*** *promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, local man-made and natural heritage and culture, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. The successful integration of all forms of new development with their surrounding context is an important design objective ... The opportunity for high quality hard and soft landscape design that helps to successfully integrate development into the wider environment should be carefully considered from the outset, to ensure it complements the architecture of the proposals* ***and improves the overall quality of townscape or landscape ..."***.

1.9 Paragraph 009 (Reference ID: 26-009-20140306) notes that:

- ***"A high quality landscape, including trees and s****emi-natural habitats where appropriate, makes an important contribution to* ***the quality of an area".***

1.10 The qualities of a well-designed place are identified by the PPG as including, among other points, a distinctive character (see Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 26-015-20140306).

1.11 Further guidance on this is offered, in paragraph 020 Reference ID: 26-020-20140306:

"Distinctiveness is what often makes a place special and valued. It *relies on physical aspects such as:*

- *the local pattern of street blocks and plots;*
- *building forms;*
- *details and materials;*
- *style and vernacular;*
- *landform and gardens, parks, trees and plants; and*
- *wildlife habitats and micro-climates.*

Distinctiveness is not solely about the built environment – it also ***reflects an area's function, history,*** *culture and its potential need for* ***change".***

1.12 In addition, more detail on buildings and the spaces between them is noted in paragraphs 023-028.

1.13 In relation to Layout (paragraph 024 Reference ID: 26-024-20140306), PPG notes, among other points, that, layout should be considered in relation to:

- ***"... adjoining buildings, streets and spaces; the topography; the*** *general pattern of building heights in the area; and views, vistas and landmarks into and out of the development site.*
- *There may be an existing prevailing layout that development should respond to and potentially improve. Designs should ensure that new and existing buildings relate well to each other, that streets are connected, and spaces complement one another. This could involve following existing building lines, creating new links between existing streets or providing new public spaces* ***...".***

1.14 In relation to Scale (paragraph 026 Reference ID: 26-026-20140306), PPG notes, among other points, that:

- ***"... In general terms too much building mass compared with o****pen space may feel overly cramped and oppressive, with access and amenity spaces being asked to do more than they feasibly can. Too little and neither land as a resource or monetary investment will be put to best use.*
- *The size of individual buildings and their elements should be carefully considered, as their design will affect the: overshadowing and overlooking of others; local character; skylines; and vistas and views. The scale of building elements should be both attractive and functional when viewed and used from neighbouring streets, gardens and parks.*
- *The massing of development should contribute to creating distinctive skylines in cities, towns and villages, or to respecting existing skylines. Consideration needs to be given to roof space design within the wider context, with any adverse visual impact* ***of rooftop servicing minimised ...".***

Local Planning Policy

Reading Borough Council Reading Station Area Framework (RSAF 2010)

1.15 The Reading Station Area Framework (RSAF) forms part of RBC's LDF, with the status of supplementary planning document, and is designed to supplement Policy RC1 within the RCAAP. The document sets out six principles for the RSAF in guiding development within the Station Area, which should achieve "*A vital and enjoyable place, a place to work, a place to live, a well* ***connected and accessible place, a place to value and a highly sustainable place".*** Policies that underpin the RSAF are drawn directly from the Core Strategy and RCAAP LDF documents. The Site falls within the Station Area Boundary as defined in Figure 2.1 (p.12) of the RSAF.

1.16 The delivery of quality public realm within the Station Area is a key consideration of the RSAF, which sets out the following detailed aims for achieving quality public spaces:

- ***"'Stitching' together the*** *various development sites within the Area, both visually and physically;*
- *Unifying the area through a coordinated design approach that utilises the best contemporary modern materials and street furniture;*
- *Creating an environment that is busy, overlooked and safe* ***through its relationship with adjoining buildings ('passive surveillance');***
- *Contributing to the character and identity of the town centre, helping to instil a strong sense of place and underpinning investment;*
- *Creating more opportunities for sustainable forms of transport, particularly walking and cycling, by enhancing the connectivity* ***and legibility of the area"*** (p.24).

1.17 Ten public realm priorities are listed within the RSAF, eight are specific location references and two general themes, of which the Site forms a nodal point for Priority 2: Station Square North, Priority 3: Kennet-Thames Spine, Priority 5: Vastern Road, Pedestrian Grid and Landscaping and Public Art.

1.18 Priority 2: Station Square North states:

- *"**The two station entrances will lead out int**o high quality multi functional public spaces - **new 'town squares'** - one to the north and one to the south of the Station. Although there will be great competition for space outside the station entrances (buses, taxis, cars etc.), public space and pedestrian movement should **be prioritised"*** (p.25).

1.19 Priority 3: Kennet-Thames Spine states:

- ***"The spine will extend across the Thames with a new** footbridge(s) and new riverside parks, which can act as amenity space for new residents. The spine will include enhancements including wider pavements and greater pedestrian priority in Station Road. North of the railway, the spine will incorporate a **'green link' towards the river. Buildings will face onto the spine** rather than away from it, and, on all parts of the spine south of Vastern Road, the frontages will be enlivened with active uses including ret**ail and leisure"*** (p.26).

1.20 Priority 5: Vastern Road states:

- *"Potential changes to Vastern Road could reduce the dominance of speeding traffic and transform the character of the road from a by-pass at the edge of the town centre into a tree lined avenue as a central element of the town centre public realm, by planting **in the central reservation and creating planted verges"*** (p.27).

1.21 Landscaping is listed as a priority theme for the Station Area public realm stating:

- *"Although the development of the Station Area is unlikely to result in major new areas of green space, there will be a significant opportunity to provide new landscaping ... In particular, the Council wishes to see new tree planting in the **area. The Council's Tree Strategy (adopted 2010) states that t**he Council will seek to prioritise the protection, maintenance and planting of trees that enhance the appearance of central Reading, particularly its various public realm. There should be new tree planting along Vastern Road, for instance, including the central **reservation"*** (p.29).

1.22 The RSAF sets out guidance on development density, mass and height with the Site covered by individual development plots **N3 to N6**. In relation to density the document states that plot N3 should reflect a ***"Medium"*** density range, N4 and N5 should reflect a ***"Medium to High"*** density range and N6 should reflect a ***"High to Very High"*** density range (Figure 6.7, p.35).

1.23 In relation to massing the RSAF states:

- *"Development in the Station Area should be characterised by high density development with an intense, fine grained urban fabric framing flexible development plots capable of adaptation to many land uses, combinations of land uses (vertical and **horizontal) and many building types and forms"*** (p.34)

1.24 In terms of building heights, the RSAF uses landmark and benchmark heights, which are then applied to each individual development plot. Plot N3 is assigned a benchmark height of 6 storeys, Plot N4 7 storeys, Plot N5 8 storeys and Plot N6 a benchmark of at least 10 storeys (Figure 6.9, p.37).

1.25 The guidance does include for a degree of flexibility in benchmark heights, subject to specific criteria, as stated in paragraph 6.23:

- *"Benchmark heights may be modified upwards in order to realise certain urban design or other major planning benefits, or where applicants have demonstrated convincingly that the potential **impact of higher buildings on the surroundings can be mitigated"*** (p.36).

1.26 Paragraphs 6.28 and 6.29 make specific recommendations concerning building heights that relate to the Site and its immediate context:

- *"Much of the surrounding area consists of fairly low density, low rise residential areas. High-density development can also be achieved through lower-rise compact development forms and this will be particularly appropriate immediately adjoining low rise residential areas to the west of Caversham Road and the residential streets leading from Vastern Road northwards towards the Thames (e.g. Lynmouth Road);*
- *A transition zone (buffer zone) should be formed towards adjacent areas (particularly the historic core of the town and low-rise residential areas to the west and north) with heights stepping down so that they relate appropriately to surrounding development and residential areas. Development should respect the amenity, privacy and light requirements of these properties **..."*** (p.37).

1.27 Figure 6.10 (p.38) considers sensitive receptors within the Station Area and identifies properties along Lynmouth Road and De Montfort Road, which lie to the north of the Site and separated by Vastern Road, as within an area of ***"particular sensitivity to the effects of tall buildings".***

Reading City Centre Framework (RCCF, 2008)

1.28 The RCCF stands as a supporting document to the RCAAP and sets out spatial and design guidance for the area. As discussed in the RCAAP overview, the RCCF also identifies the site as falling within the MOA: Station/River. The RCCF highlights that the areas around Reading Station including the Site are; ***"Preferred locations for tall buildings subject to the detailed criteria of the Tall Buildings Strategy"*** (p.30). The design guidelines within the document share commonality with those discussed in the RCAAP and RSAF.

Reading Borough Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA, 2017)

1.29 The HELAA document identifies the Site as AB004: North of Station, which uses the RCAAP MOA sub-area RC1e as a basis for the assessment. The Site is considered as ***"potentially achievable"*** for a total of 634 units.

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

1.30 The draft Local Plan, once adopted, will represent the spatial planning strategy for Reading Borough Council up to 2036. The following policies and extracts from policies will be relevant to landscape and visual matters.

1.31 Policy CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change) states:

> ***"All developments will demonstrate how they have been designed to*** *incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. The following measures shall be incorporated into development:*
>
> - *... Use of trees and other planting, where appropriate as part of a landscape scheme, to provide shading of amenity areas, buildings and streets and to help to connect habitat, designed with native plants that are carefully selected, managed and* ***adaptable to meet the predicted changed climatic conditions ..."*** (p.23).

1.32 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) states:

> ***"All development must be of high design quality that maintains and*** *enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located ... will be assessed to ensure that the development proposed makes a positive contribution to the following urban design objectives:*
>
> - *Character - a place with its own identity and sense of place;*
> - *Continuity and enclosure;*
> - *Quality of the public realm;*
> - *Ease of movement and permeability;*
> - *Legibility - clear image and easy to understand;*
> - *Adaptability – capable of adaptation over time;*
> - *Diversity – meets a wide range of needs.*
>
> *Developments will also be assessed to ensure that they:*
>
> - *Respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough and providing value to the public realm;*
> - *Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine quality of life or community cohesion;*
> - *Address the needs of all in society and are accessible, usable and easy to understand by them;*
> - *Are visually attractive as a result of good high quality built forms and spaces, the inclusion of public art and appropriate materials* ***and landscaping ..."*** (p.28).

1.33 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) states:

> ***"Development will not cause a significant detriment****al impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties, in terms of:*
>
> - *... Access to sunlight and daylight;*
> - ***Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development ..."*** (p.30).

1.34 Policy EN7 (Local Green Space and Public Open Space) states:

> ***"The following Local Green Spaces (LGS) and Public Open Space*** *(POS), as shown on the Proposals Map, will be protected from development. Proposals that would result in the loss of any of these areas of open space, erode their quality through insensitive adjacent development or jeopardise their use or enjoyment by the public, will* ***not be permitted ..."*** (p.42).

1.35 Policy EN9 (Provision of Open Space) states:

> ***"All new development should make provision for appropriate open*** *space based on the needs of the development. This can be achieved through on or off-site provision, contributions toward provision or* ***improvement of existing leisure or recreational facilities ..."*** (p.45).

1.36 Policy EN10 (Access to Open Space) states:

> ***"In areas with relatively poor access to op****en space facilities (including as a result of severance lines), new development should make provision for, or contribute to, improvements to road and other crossings to improve access to green space and/or facilitate the creation or linking of safe off-roa****d routes to parks"*** (p.48).

1.37 Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) states:

> ***"... New development shall demonstrate how the location and type of*** *green space, landscaping and water features provided within a scheme have been arranged such that they maintain or link into the* ***existing Green Network and contribute to its consolidation ..."*** (p.51).

1.38 Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands) states:

> ***"Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be*** *protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and* ***Reading's vegetation cover will be extended. The quality of waterside*** *vegetation will be maintained or enhanced;*
>
> *New development shall make provision for tree retention and planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage, or off-site in appropriate situations, to improve the level of tree coverage within the Borough, to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which a site is located, to provide for biodiversity and to contribute to measures to reduce carbon and adapt to climate change. Measures must be in place to ensure that these* ***trees are adequately maintained"*** (p.55).

1.39 Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) states:

> ***"... The design of outdoor areas will respect the size and*** *character of other similar spaces in the vicinity, clearly identify whether they are private or communal spaces, ensure that they are appropriately related to main entrances, enhance safety and the perception of safety for future residents and the general public, and not be compromised by the relationship of other buildings which may be detrimental in* ***terms of overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing"*** (p.90).

1.40 Policy H14 (Suburban Renewal and Regeneration) states:

> ***"There is scope for some of Reading's suburban residential areas to*** *undergo renewal and regeneration that would achieve the following aims:*
>
> - *Improve the local built environment ...;*
>
> *Where development would fulfil the above aims, it would generally be supported, subject to other policies in this plan and provided that:*
>
> - *Any loss of undeveloped land would be outweighed by a qualitative improvement in open and green space and by the benefits of development to the community as a whole;*
> - *Buildings and features that make a positive contribution to the* ***area's character are retained ..."*** (p.96).

1.41 Policy CR2 (Design in Central Reading) states:

> ***"Applications for development within Central Reading should*** *demonstrate the following attributes:*
>
> *a) Development will build on and respect the existing grid layout structure of the central area, providing continuity and enclosure through appropriate relationships between buildings and spaces, and frontages that engage with the street at lower levels, and contributing towards enhanced ease of movement through and around the central area;*
> *b) Development will provide appropriate, well designed public spaces and other public realm, including squares, open spaces, streetscape, utilising high quality and well maintained hard and soft landscaped areas, and public art, that provide suitable functions and interest, sense of place and safe and convenient linkages to adjoining areas;*
> *c) Development should consider and, where possible, include ways of providing green infrastructure designed into the development, for instance through roof gardens, green walls and green roofs, to enhance the otherwise very urban environment;*
> *d) The architectural details and materials used in the central area should be high quality and respect the form and quality of the detailing and materials in areas local to the development site;*
> *e) Development and any associated public realm should contribute to the diversity of the central area, be capable of easy adaptation over time to meet changing circumstances, and be designed to enhance community safety;*
> *f) Development should be designed with consideration of adjacent development sites, and should not prevent or cause unreasonable burdens on the future development of those* ***sites"*** (p.129).

1.42 Policy CR3 (Public Realm in Central Reading) states:

> ***"Proposals for new developme****nt will need to make a positive contribution towards the quality of the public realm of the central area and will be assessed against the following criteria:*
>
> *ii) Imaginative uses of open space and the public realm, which contribute to the offer of the centre, will be encouraged, and new open spaces should be of a size and shape to be flexible enough to accommodate such uses. The provision of water features, trees (including street trees) and other planting, as well as hard landscaping, to create high-quality spaces, will be encouraged;*
> *iii) Development proposals adjacent to or in close proximity to waterways will retain and not impede existing continuous public access to and along the waterways, and will provide legible continuous public access to and along the waterways where this does not currently exist;*
> *iv) The design of developments adjacent to a waterway, including the refurbishment of existing buildings, will be required to enhance the appearance of the waterways and to provide active elevations facing the waterways. Development that turns its back on the waterways and results in blank or mundane elevations* ***facing the waterways will not be permitted ..."*** (p.54).

1.43 Policy CR10 (Tall Buildings) states:

> ***"In Reading, tall buildings are defined as 10 storeys of commercia****l floorspace or 12 storeys of residential (equating to 36 metres tall) or above. Tall buildings will meet all the requirements below;*
>
> *i) Within Reading Borough, tall buildings will only be appropriate* ***within the 'areas of potential for tall buildings' as defi****ned on the Proposals Map. These areas are as follows:*
>
> - *CR10a Station Area Cluster*
> - *CR10b Western Grouping*
> - ***CR10c Eastern Grouping"*** (p.49).

1.44 The Site falls within CR10a Station Area Cluster, which states:

> ***"A new cluster of tall buildings with the station at*** *its heart will signify the status of the station area as a major mixed-use destination and the main gateway to and most accessible part of Reading.*
>
> *Tall buildings in this area should:*
>
> - *Follow a pattern of the tallest buildings at the centre of the cluster, close to the station, and step down in height from that point towards the lower buildings at the fringes;*
> - *Contribute to the creation of a coherent, attractive and sustainable cluster of buildings with a high quality of public realm;*

- *Ensure that adequate space is provided between the buildings to avoid the creation of an overly dense townscape and to allow* ***buildings to be viewed as individual forms …"*** (p.140).

1.45 Policy CR10 also lists several requirements for tall building developments, which apply in addition to the area specific requirements:

- ***"Enhance Reading's skyline, through a distinctive profile and*** *careful design of the upper and middle sections of the building;*
- *Contribute to a human scale street environment, through paying careful attention to the lower section or base of the building, providing rich architectural detailing and reflecting their surroundings through the definition of any upper storey setback and reinforcing the articulation of the streetscape;*
- *Contribute to high-quality views from distance, views from middle-distance and local views;*
- *Take account of the context within which they sit, including the existing urban grain, streetscape and built form and local architectural style;*
- *Avoid bulky, over-dominant massing;*
- *Preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the setting of conservation areas and listed buildings;*
- *Use high quality materials and finishes;*
- *Create safe, pleasant and attractive spaces around them, and avoid detrimental impacts on the existing public realm ...;*
- *Ensure adequate levels of daylighting and sunlighting are able to reach buildings and spaces within the development;*
- *Avoid significant negative impacts on existing residential properties and the public realm in terms of outlook, privacy, daylight, sunlight, noise, light glare and night-****time lighting"*** (p.141).

Appendix 1.2: Baseline Conditions and Figures

Townscape Baseline

National Level Landscape Character

1.1 In terms of Landscape and Townscape Character, the Site lies in the eastern part of the National Character Area (NCA) 110: Chilterns, the key characteristics of which, of relevance to the Site, are:

- ***"The chalk plateau is incised by parallel branching valleys gently*** *shelving to the south-east into the London Basin. The large chalk aquifer is abstracted for water to supply London and its surrounds and also supports flows of springs, chalk streams and the River Thames ...*
- *The River Thames and its flood plain mark a distinctive area in the south. The river is a focus for settlement, abstraction and recreation ...*
- *Major transport routes, including motorways, radiate from adjacent Greater London, associated with significant 20th-century development and extensive urban fringe areas...*
- *Brick and flint are the dominant traditional building materials, with Totternhoe Stone (clunch) being less common, but still a* ***distinctive..."*** *(p. 7-8).*

1.2 There are four Statements of Environmental Opportunity for this NCA, of which SEO4 is of relevance, noting the need for creation of green infrastructure to reduce the impact of development, for example through:

- ***"Enhance local distinctiveness and create or enhance green*** *infrastructure within existing settlements and through new development, particularly in relation to the urban fringe ...;*
- *Adapt or remove existing development where to do so would significantly strengthen landscape character, enhance views and address barriers to natural processes and public access to the countryside ...;*
- *Addressing deficits in greenspace and access links, integrating the public transport and cycle network and creating new or improved multi-user routes and green spaces working across administrative boundaries as necessary ...;*
- *Maximising the appeal of existing and new green spaces and* ***sustainable transport routes close to people's homes and*** *workplaces, including in the urban fringe where it could also strengthen landscape character ...;*
- *Enhancing the rural and urban scene by promoting the use of traditional local building materials and vernacular styles and utilising appropriate infrastructu****re"*** *(p.27).*

County Level Landscape Character

1.3 Within the West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment, the Site is located within land defined as 'Urban Area' for which no further detail is provided.

Local Level Townscape Character

1.4 Entec Ltd produced the Reading Tall Building Strategy (RTBS) in 2008 on behalf of Reading Borough Council in order to inform the development of a tall buildings policy and specific guidelines for individual sites, which form part of the Reading Central Area Action Plan. As part of the production of the RTBS, a townscape assessment was undertaken, and the Reading Central Area divided into townscape character areas. The RTBS was updated in March 2018 and the updates are documented below along with the original 2008 commentary.

1.5 As shown on Figure 2: Townscape Character Plan, the Site and its immediate setting fall within Character Area (CA) 22: Vastern Road. The north-western edge of the Site immediately abuts CA12 - Caversham Road whilst the north-eastern edge abuts CA 23 – King's Meadow. CA1 - Station Hill abuts the boundary of CA22 to the south, whilst CA2 - Reading Station East abuts the south-eastern boundary (both of these being locate beyond Reading Station and the Great Western Railway Line. The area immediately to the west of CA22 falls outside of the Reading Central Area.

1.6 It is noted on page 13 that ***"there are 8 character*** *areas which are judged to have a capacity for tall buildings. These areas are largely, but not wholly towards the edges of central Reading, adjacent to major transport routes such as the IDR and the railway line. Within these areas there is an absence of historic built form, and although the building style and heights across these areas is variable, there are characteristically occasional buildings of between 8 and 10 storeys. The buildings were largely constructed during the middle and later stages of the 20th century and have a medium sized or large block size. With* ***the exception of character area 19 'Mallard Row to 'Fobney Street' they all have a predominantly office or industrial land use"***. This includes CA 22 and CA 1 and 2 immediately to the south.

CA22 – Vastern Road

1.7 The RTBS Townscape Assessment sets out in table form the following descriptions for the character area against ten townscape criteria:

Consideration	Original Tall Buildings Strategy comment	2018 Update
Land Use	Warehouses and retail park	Major land uses remain the same, although the opening of the northern entrance to the station has brought a public transport interchange into the heart of the site.
Historical significance	Railway town and growth of manufacturing and commerce post 1840	No change.
Architectural style	The predominant material is coloured, metal cladding	No change.
Urban grain and townscape scale	The building blocks have a large floor space, although the buildings are not high rise and there is extensive car parking adjacent to the buildings. These features combine to create a medium scale townscape.	No change.

Townscape condition	The large, blank faces of the warehouses create an unexceptional area of townscape which does not respond well to the surrounding residential land use. Although the buildings are occupied and function well for their purpose, their design is unattractive and creates a weak and uninspiring area of townscape.	Although the new entrance to the station and adjacent square have improved the townscape condition of a small part of the site, the surrounding buildings remain unchanged.
Key views within the character area	There are no key views defined for the character area.	No change.
Key views into the character area	Buildings within the character area contribute to the skyline visible from Oxford Road when approaching Reading from the west. From the elevated position of Caversham Park, Balmore Park and Horse Close, built form within the character area contributes to the view of central Reading.	No change.
Landmark structures and existing tall buildings	The large, warehouse structures create a consistent, unexceptional townscape. There are no landmark structures. Although the warehouses create a roofline which is elevated above the surrounding residential buildings, there is no one structure which is notable as a tall building.	The new northern entrance to the station is a landmark, albeit not particularly high. It will become more prominent as development of surrounding sites allows views of it to open up. The new Christchurch Bridge is a landmark on the river, but is currently visually separated from the rest of the area.
Tall buildings planning applications	N/A	Outline planning permission (110024) was granted on the sorting office site for a major mixed use development including residential, office, hotel and retail. The plot adjacent to the station entrance would have been up to 16 commercial storeys or 21 hotel storeys, with heights decreasing to the west. This permission has now expired.
Townscape sensitivity to the inclusion of tall buildings	Low: The large block size which exists within the character area and the absence of any key views or visual focal point makes this an appropriate location for tall buildings. However, it is proposed that tall structures should not be developed along the north and western boundaries of the character area as these boundaries are shared with small scale residential areas. any proposed built form should respond in terms of height and scale to the residential area. The tallest structures should be located to the south of the character area, adjacent to the railway line. In this area the townscape features are larger scale, and adjacent to large scale features outside of the area e.g. existing station buildings, Thames Tower and Western Tower.	Townscape sensitivity remains low, albeit with the caveats expressed in 2008 continuing to apply.

CA12 – Caversham Road

1.8 The RTBS Townscape Assessment sets out in table form the following descriptions for the character area against ten townscape criteria:

Consideration	Original Tall Buildings Strategy comment	2018 Update
Land Use	Residential	No change.
Historical significance	Railway town and growth of manufacturing and commerce post 1840	No change.
Architectural style	Two storey, red brick, terraced housing	No change.
Urban grain and townscape scale	The low rise, terraced housing creates a small scale townscape.	No change.
Townscape condition	The buildings are in good condition. The consistent architectural style create a strong townscape character.	No change.
Key views within the character area	View from Caversham Bridge westwards	No change.
Key views into the character area	From the elevated position of Caversham Park, Balmore Park and Horse Close, built form within the character area contributes to the view of central Reading.	No change.
Landmark structures and existing tall buildings	There are no landmarks structures within the character area.	No change.
Tall buildings planning applications	N/A	No change.
Townscape sensitivity to the inclusion of tall buildings	High: There is a low capacity for the development of buildings of this scale due to the low rise, small scale residential character	Townscape sensitivity remains high.

	which predominates. Taller buildings would dilute the townscape pattern and would be uncharacteristic. The area is also inappropriate in terms of market demand and transport connections.	

CA23 – Kings Meadow

1.9 The RTBS Townscape Assessment sets out in table form the following descriptions for the character area against ten townscape criteria:

Consideration	Original Tall Buildings Strategy comment	2018 Update
Land Use	Sports ground and river meadows	No change.
Historical significance	N/A	Kings Meadow Baths, an unused listed Victorian facility at the time of the TBS, has been reopened as Thames Lido.
Architectural style	N/A	No change.
Urban grain and townscape scale	The large expanse of open meadows creates a large townscape scale.	No change.
Townscape condition	The meadows are a well maintained recreational resource and contribute positively to the townscape character.	No change.
Key views within the character area	The open views across the meadows to the wooded skyline created by bankside vegetation, has been identified as a key view.	No change.
Key views into the character area	From the elevated position of Caversham Park, Balmore Park and Horse Close, built form within the character area contributes to the view of central Reading.	No change.
Landmark structures and existing tall buildings	N/A	The Christchurch Bridge, opened in 2015, is a new prominent landmark on the Thames that links Caversham and central Reading. The 39m high bridge support is tall within a local context.
Tall buildings planning applications	N/A	No change.
Townscape sensitivity to the inclusion of tall buildings	High: The majority of the site is protected open space and therefore inappropriate as a location for tall buildings.	Townscape sensitivity remains high.

CA1 – Station Hill

1.10 The RTBS Townscape Assessment sets out in table form the following descriptions for the character area against ten townscape criteria:

Consideration	Original Tall Buildings Strategy comment	2018 Update
Land Use	A mixture of offices and retail land uses	These uses remain, although residential uses have also been introduced around Garrard Street.
Historical significance	Railway town and growth of manufacturing and commerce: post 1840. The Station building. Edward XVII statue and Great Western House (now Malmaison) are all listed.	No change
Architectural style	The architectural style is predominantly 1970s. Concrete is a widely used material. Ramps and staircases navigate the awkward spaces and level changes.	Much of the 1970s concrete architecture has now been demolished ahead of redevelopment, although the multi-storey car park remains and demolition has temporarily made it more prominent. The new station building is of a modern architectural style.
Urban grain and townscape scale	The large block size and occasionally tall buildings, the tallest being Thames Tower (11 storeys) and Western Tower (17 storeys) create a large townscape scale.	Thames Tower has been extended by four storeys to 15 storeys (2017). Western Tower has been demolished in advance of Station Hill redevelopment. A large townscape scale remains, including new station building and Station Square south.
Townscape condition	The buildings are occasionally derelict and all are either of a poor condition or an unexceptional design quality. The spaces between the buildings are awkward shapes and sizes and poorly maintained. The overall effect is of a poor quality townscape.	The area is in the process of improvement. The station itself has been much improved with the new station having been completed together with a new station square and transport interchange. Thames Tower has been re-clad and is in improved condition. Most of the poorest quality areas have been demolished, and await development.
Key views within the character area	N/A	No change.

Key views into the character area	Views of current buildings within the character area are possible from the A4, A327 and A33 when travelling into the city. From the elevated position of Caversham Park, Balmore Park and Horse Close, built form within the character area contributes to the view of central Reading.	No change.
Landmark structures and existing tall buildings	Thames Tower and Western Tower both form localised focal points to views.	Western Tower has been demolished. The new Station building, although not tall, forms a focal point and landmark within the area. Thames Tower's increased height makes it more of a focal point
Tall buildings planning applications	The 2007 application for the Station Hill site proposes residential units together with The proposed development at the Station Hill site would comprise no less that 577 and no more than 624 residential units together with office, retail, cultural and leisure land uses. The tallest building would range from 150-161 metres. There are two planning applications for tall buildings which have been approved.	There have been two subsequent iterations of the Station Hill scheme. Permission 090622 proposed up to 782 dwellings, 80,000 sq m offices plus retail and leisure. It included eight buildings, of which six qualify as tall buildings. The tallest building, B1, would have been 28 commercial storeys, and this would have been the tallest building in Reading. This was then superseded by a new permission, 130436, amended in 151426, which took in some adjacent buildings. This proposed up to 475 23 dwellings, 122,000 sqm of offices plus retail and leisure uses. This comprises seven buildings. Although six would potentially qualify as tall buildings, heights would be reduced from the previous scheme, with the tallest building, plot C, being 40m shorter than permitted in the previous scheme, and heights of other plots also reduced. However, plot C would still potentially be Reading's tallest building. The planning permission for 22 residential storeys on 29-35 Station Road (in place at the time of the TBS) has now expired.
Townscape sensitivity to the inclusion of tall buildings	Low: The large townscape scale, the absence of historic townscape features and the precedence for tall structures, all contribute to this area having a high capacity for the development of further tall buildings in terms of townscape character.	Townscape sensitivity remains low. Planning permissions have continued to establish this as the primary opportunity for tall buildings in Reading.

CA2 – Station Area East

1.11 The RTBS Townscape Assessment sets out in table form the following descriptions for the character area against ten townscape criteria:

Consideration	Original Tall Buildings Strategy comment	2018 Update
Land Use	Offices.	No change.
Historical significance	Railway town and growth of manufacturing and commerce: post 1840. Adjacent to Forbury Gardens.	No change.
Architectural style	1970s - late 20th century office blocks.	Addition of four more modern office blocks – three at and adjacent to the former Energis site, and one at former Aldwych House on Blagrave Street.
Urban grain and townscape scale	The individual buildings within the character area e.g Apex Plaza and Queens House are large and blocky structures which create a sense of large scale townscape.	The new additions to the area have only served to reinforce this large scale townscape.
Townscape condition	The buildings within the character area are of an unexceptional design and quality.	The more recent office additions are of reasonably good quality, and have generally enhanced the overall condition of the area.
Key views within the character area	No key views have been defined for this area.	No change.
Key views into the character area	From the elevated position of Caversham Park, Balmore Park and Horse Close, built form within the character area contributes to the view of central Reading.	No change.
Landmark structures and existing tall buildings	Apex plaza is a local landmark due to its height and distinctive pink colour. The Energis/Metal box is a local landmark due to its prominence and distinctive shape.	The Energis/Metal Box/Queens House building has been demolished, and replaced by two 8-storey office buildings which were completed in 2017. Adjacent to this is 3 Forbury Place, an 11-storey office building which was completed in 2010.
Tall buildings planning applications	-	No change.
Townscape sensitivity to	Low: The high density of development within the character area, the characteristic large	Townscape sensitivity remains low.

the inclusion of tall buildings	block size and the absence of historic townscape features within the area ensures a low sensitivity to the development of further tall buildings. The absence of any key views also contributes to this being an appropriate location when judged against townscape character criteria.	

CA3 – Friar Street

1.12 The RTBS Townscape Assessment sets out in table form the following descriptions for the character area against ten townscape criteria:

Consideration	Original Tall Buildings Strategy	Tall Buildings Strategy comment 2018 update
Land Use	Friar Street is a shopping street	No significant change, although there is now some residential use of upper floors, and this would increase substantially as a result of new planning permissions.
Historical significance	Ecclesiastical Town; AD1121-1539 Post-Dissolution Reading: AD 1539-1840 Railway town and growth of manufacturing and commerce post 1840	No change.
Architectural style	The street has been redeveloped over many decades and as such the building frontage line has not been retained consistently and the architectural style is very varied. Some Victorian facades remain above the shop frontages but in many cases the architecture is undistinguished.	No change.
Urban grain and townscape scale	The tightly packed buildings and the relatively low skyline (generally 4-6 storeys) creates a medium scale townscape.	No significant change. Redevelopment has occurred along northern frontage on corner of Greyfriars Road, but this fits in with the assessed townscape scale. The Station Hill outline permission would mean buildings on the Friar Street frontage of approximately 6-8 storeys and increase further back, so this could lead to some taller elements.
Townscape condition	The buildings and public realm along the street is generally in good condition	No change.
Key views within the character area	Views along Friar Street eastwards towards the Market Place and St. Lawrence's church	Views to the west along Friar Street are now terminated by the tower at Chatham Place.
Key views into the character area	From the elevated position of Caversham Park, Balmore Park and Horse Close, built form within the character area contributes to the view of central Reading.	No change.
Landmark structures and existing tall buildings	The Ibis hotel is 14 storeys high Greyfriar's Church (at the western end of Friar Street)	No change.
Tall buildings planning applications		As above, the Station Hill planning permission covers part of the area, although the development within the area would not qualify as tall buildings. The resolution to grant permission at 52-55 Friar Street 162210 would include development of 10 residential storeys, although the highest elements would be set back from Friar Street and not prominent from street level.
Townscape sensitivity to the inclusion of tall buildings	Medium: There is a fairly consistent, low rise roof line which is occasionally punctuated with views of taller structures e.g. Ibis hotel. Where the tall structures are visible, they detract from the cohesive character of the shopping street and are overbearing features of an uncharacteristically large scale. Therefore further tall buildings would exacerbate this characteristic further.	Townscape sensitivity remains medium. There is likely to be an increase in height in parts of the area due to permissions, however efforts have been made to ensure that the Friar Street frontage itself is more in keeping with the existing roof line. Likewise, the appearance of the Chatham Place development from a view along Friar Street appears as a more distant element, and tall buildings in closer proximity would exacerbate effects on the area.

CA7 – Station Area West

1.13 The RTBS Townscape Assessment sets out in table form the following descriptions for the character area against ten townscape criteria:

Consideration	Original Tall Buildings Strategy comment	2018 Update
Land Use	Residential land use	No change.
Historical significance	Ecclesiastical Town; AD1121-1539. Post-Dissolution Reading: AD 1539-1840. Railway town and growth of manufacturing and commerce post 1840.	No change.
Architectural style	Victorian 2-3 storey terraced residential properties interspersed	The south side of Tudor Road has now been redeveloped for a 4/5 storey apartment block. However,

	with more recent small scale office/commercial development.	the remainder of the character area remains as described.
Urban grain and townscape scale	The low rise, terraced housing creates a fine grained, small scale townscape.	No change.
Townscape condition	Buildings on Tudor Road are largely derelict creating a degraded character. To the south of the character area the terraced housing is in good condition and creates an area of strong residential character as the backdrop to views of Greyfriar's Church.	The derelict buildings on Tudor Road have now been redeveloped into a modern apartment block. Otherwise, no change.
Key views within the character area	Views towards Greyfriar's church.	No change.
Key views into the character area	Views along west street to Greyfriar's Church which creates an attractive focal point. From the elevated position of Caversham Park, Balmore Park and Horse Close, built form within the character area contributes to the view of central Reading.	No change.
Landmark structures and existing tall buildings	Greyfriar's Church is located in this character area.	No change.
Tall buildings planning applications	-	No change.
Townscape sensitivity to the inclusion of tall buildings	High: The small scale, low rise and residential character of this area makes it inappropriate for the development of tall buildings.	Townscape sensitivity remains high.

CA13 – Cattle Market and Chatham Place

1.14 The RTBS Townscape Assessment sets out in table form the following descriptions for the character area against ten townscape criteria:

Consideration	Original Tall Buildings Strategy comment	2018 Update
Land Use	Mixed use.	No change.
Historical significance	Railway town and growth of manufacturing and commerce post 1840.	No change.
Architectural style	The Architectural style is variable including the large sheds and expansive car parking on the site of the Cattle Market and depot which is to the north of the character area and 3 storey residential blocks along Weldale Street.	
Urban grain and townscape scale	Buildings are of a variable height and block size but cumulatively create a medium scaled townscape.	No change. Recent development has reinforced the pattern of the higher buildings (4-6 storeys) on the Caversham Road frontage.
Townscape condition	The variety of building styles, block sizes and materials creates a weak townscape character.	No change.
Key views within the character area	No key views have been defined for this area.	No change. Buildings in Station Hill will be prominent from much of this area.
Key views into the character area	From the elevated position of Caversham Park, Balmore Park and Horse Close, built form within the character area contributes to the view of central Reading.	No change.
Landmark structures and existing tall buildings	There are no landmark structures within the character area.	No change.
Tall buildings planning applications	-	The Council has resolved to grant permission for 427 dwellings on the land south of Weldale Street subject to S106 agreement. The height varies across the site, but has a maximum of 12 residential storeys at the south eastern corner close to Chatham Place. The height of the tallest building in this scheme has been greatly reduced from the preapplication scheme, in order to comply with the Council's policy.
Townscape sensitivity to the inclusion of tall buildings	Medium: The existing large block sizes of built form at the cattle market site and the degraded townscape condition all contribute to a high capacity for the development of tall buildings. However, despite the suitability of this area, the height would be restricted by the surrounding small scale residential areas. Consideration should be given on a case by case basis to the appropriateness of tall building height in relation to these areas of strong residential character.	Townscape sensitivity remains medium. The issue has been explored in the recent planning application, which confirmed the south eastern corner as the greatest potential for height, albeit still within policy parameters.

Degree to which the Site reflects Published Townscape Assessment

1.15 This table sets out the assessment response of Barton Willmore LLP, following a site visit during April and May 2019, to the commentary provided in the Reading Tall Building Strategy Townscape Character Assessment (2008, updated 2018) regarding Character Area 22 (CA:22): Vastern Road in relation to the current condition of the Site:

Consideration	Original Tall Buildings Strategy comment	2018 Update	Barton Willmore LLP Response to the Townscape Character Assessment
Land Use	Warehouses and retail park	Major land uses remain the same, although the opening of the northern entrance to the station has brought a public transport interchange into the heart of the site.	The Site comprises retail units and car parking thus still accords with the published character assessment. However, there is no direct access to the Site from the new northern station entrance instead pedestrians are required to walk along Trooper Potts Way to join Vastern Road before accessing the Site from a small block paved pavement, which flanks the external façade of the retail units.
Historical significance	Railway town and growth of manufacturing and commerce post 1840	No change.	The Site is specifically referenced as part of the Great Western Railway Works, north of Reading Station, on historic OS Six Inch, 1888-1913 mapping. The Grade II listed Main Building of Reading Station lies to the south of the recent station construction and is not visible from the Site at present.
Architectural style	The predominant material is coloured, metal cladding	No change.	Buildings facades within the Site are utilitarian red brick fronting onto a large tarmac car parking area. The six storey station car parking building lies 20m to the south-east of the Site also exhibiting various utilitarian brick and concrete external finishes. Clearwater Court and Reading Bridge House also lie within CA22 and are of distinct architectural styles, which are not found elsewhere within the CA.
Urban grain and townscape scale	The building blocks have a large floor space, although the buildings are not high rise and there is extensive car parking adjacent to the buildings. These features combine to create a medium scale townscape.	No change.	The Site is in line with the assessment, however, within the wider CA22 the Clearwater Court and Reading Bridge House are larger in height than surrounding buildings increasing the sense of scale in the immediate area extending further south-east along Vastern Road. Vastern Road is a vehicle dominated corridor through the CA due to the double width, which acts to increase the grain and sense of scale of this area. Vastern Road acts as a physical and perceptual barrier between the north of the train station and the River Thames.
Townscape condition	The large, blank faces of the warehouses create an unexceptional area of townscape which does not respond well to the surrounding residential land use. Although the buildings are occupied and function well for their purpose, their design is unattractive and creates a weak and uninspiring area of townscape.	Although the new entrance to the station and adjacent square have improved the townscape condition of a small part of the site, the surrounding buildings remain unchanged.	The Site reflects the condition detailed in the assessment due to the low architectural merit of the existing buildings that provide a poor transition between the rail station and existing residential development beyond. The large facades of the units within the Site contribute to the weak townscape character.

Key views within the character area	There are no key views defined for the character area.	No change.	Reading Station Area Framework proposes the view north from the station as a new view to be created.
Key views into the character area	Buildings within the character area contribute to the skyline visible from Oxford Road when approaching Reading from the west. From the elevated position of Caversham Park, Balmore Park and Horse Close, built form within the character area contributes to the view of central Reading.	No change.	Buildings in CA:22 do not contribute to the skyline when seen from Oxford Road. The Blade and Thames Tower are the only identifiable buildings within the skyline.
Landmark structures and existing tall buildings	The large, warehouse structures create a consistent, unexceptional townscape. There are no landmark structures. Although the warehouses create a roofline which is elevated above the surrounding residential buildings, there is no one structure which is notable as a tall building.	The new northern entrance to the station is a landmark, albeit not particularly high. It will become more prominent as development of surrounding sites allows views of it to open up. The new Christchurch Bridge is a landmark on the river, but is currently visually separated from the rest of the area.	Reading Bridge House is within CA:22 and at a height of 36.50m is a tall building as per the RTBS, which also forms a prominent built element, which is identifiable in within the central Reading townscape. Clearwater Court is also a prominent building within CA:22 but not a tall building as defined in the RTBS.
Tall buildings planning applications	N/A	Outline planning permission (110024) was granted on the sorting office site for a major mixed use development including residential, office, hotel and retail. The plot adjacent to the station entrance would have been up to 16 commercial storeys or 21 hotel storeys, with heights decreasing to the west. This permission has now expired.	Outline planning application submitted for Former Royal Mail Sorting Office, 80 Caversham Road for a large scale mixed use development. Proposed building heights between 2 and 25 storeys.
Townscape sensitivity to the inclusion of tall buildings	Low: The large block size which exists within the character area and the absence of any key views or visual focal point makes this an appropriate location for tall buildings. However, it is proposed that tall structures should not be developed along the north and western boundaries of the character area as these boundaries are shared with small scale residential areas. any proposed built form should respond in terms of height and scale to the residential area. The tallest structures should be located to the south of the character area, adjacent to the railway line. In this area the townscape features are larger scale, and adjacent to large scale features outside of the area e.g. existing station buildings, Thames Tower and Western Tower.	Townscape sensitivity remains low, albeit with the caveats expressed in 2008 continuing to apply.	Site has a 'Low' sensitivity to the inclusion of tall buildings due to the proximity to the railway line and larger scale built form located to the south. The Site is separated from the smaller scale residential properties to the north by the double width Vastern Road.

Visual Baseline

Site Context Photographs

Site Context Photograph 01: View south from Vastern Road/Lynmouth Road

1.16 The viewpoint is located approximately 25m to the north of the Site on at the junction of Vastern Road and Lynmouth Road. The busy dual-carriageway Vastern Road extends across the foreground parallel to the viewer, with its associated infrastructure and traffic dominating the view. Beyond the road corridor the existing low-rise retail units on the Site are visible in the middle ground, with a series of canopy trees partially filtering views. The built forms on the Site generally restrict views beyond, although the Thames Tower (15 storeys) is visible rising above this in the background, drawing the eye to the south. To the east the 12 storey Reading Bridge House and the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development is visible, which also draws the eye to the east along Vastern Road.

1.17 The value of the view obtained from this location is considered to be low as it is not designated and has minimal or no cultural associations. As the receptors at this location will include people at their place of residence. (i.e. dwellings on Vastern Road), their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high.

1.18 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.

Site Context Photograph 02: View south-west from Vastern Road

1.19 The viewpoint position is located Vastern Road opposite Trooper Potts Way, approximately 30m to the north-east of the Site. The busy dual-carriageway Vastern Road extends across the foreground parallel to the viewer, with its associated infrastructure and traffic dominating the view. Beyond the road corridor the middle ground features several low to medium-rise built forms, including the low-rise retail units on the Site to the west and the 5-storey multi-storey car park to the east. The built forms across the middle ground generally restrict views beyond, although the Thames Tower (15 storeys) is clearly visible at the termination of the channelled views south along Trooper Potts Way, forming a visual focus to the view and drawing the eye towards Reading Station. To the east the 12-storey Reading Bridge House and the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development is visible, which also draws the eye to the east along Vastern Road.

1.20 The value of the view obtained from this location is considered to be low as it is not designated and has minimal or no cultural associations. As the receptors at this location will comprise people travelling along a busy towards Reading Station and people at their place of work (i.e. Sovereign House), their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low.

1.21 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.

Site Context Photograph 03: View north from Station Square North

1.22 The viewpoint position is located at Station Square North, approximately 25m to the south of the Site. Station Square North forms the northern entrance forecourt to Reading Station and is visible extending across the foreground parallel to the viewer. This comprises recently introduced high-quality public realm interventions, including street furniture and tree planting. Beyond this, the rear of the existing low-rise built forms on the Site and on the adjacent Hermes site to the west are visible, with the metal-clad utilitarian retail and warehouse units presenting inactive unarticulated façades. These structures prevent views to the townscape beyond. To the north-east the 5-storey multi-storey car park is visible on Trooper Potts Way, beyond which glimpsed views of development fronting on to Vastern Way are available.

1.23 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is noted as a new view (view 62) within the RSAF. The receptors at this location will comprise people arriving at Reading Station, whose attention will partially focussed on the surrounding townscape, meaning their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be medium.

1.24 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.

Site Context Photograph 04: View south-east from Caversham Road

1.25 The viewpoint position is located on Caversham Road (A4155), approximately 100m to the north-west of the Site. Caversham Road extends perpendicularly from the viewer to the roundabout junction with Vastern Road in the middle ground. The Road and associated traffic dominate the view. Beyond the roundabout the built forms currently occupying the Site are visible, appearing as indistinct low-rise structures sitting in front of the Reading Station building. The background of the view features a number of tall buildings within central Reading, including Thames Tower, The Blade and One Reading Central, which add articulation to the skyline. Thames Tower in particular helps to draw the eye towards the station building.

1.26 The value of the view obtained from this location is considered to be medium as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 39) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location would comprise people travelling along a busy urban road, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low.

1.27 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.

Site Context Photograph 05: View south from the Thames Path/De Montfort Road

1.28 The viewpoint position is located on the Thames Path at its junction with De Montfort Road, approximately 190m to the north of the Site. The view towards the Site from this location is channelled along De Montfort Road by the predominantly two storey residential built forms on either side of the road (similar channelled views are also available along Lynmouth Road further to the east). The existing low-rise built forms on the Site are visible at the termination of the view in the middle ground, appearing as indistinct low-rise structures. Beyond this in the background a number of taller buildings are visible on the skyline, including development blocks on Tudor Road and the recently constructed 19 storey residential tower on Alfred Street/Chatham Street to the south-west.

1.29 The view obtained is considered to be of high value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 44) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will include people using the Thames Path or people at their place of residence, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high.

1.30 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.

Site Context Photograph 06: View north-east from Caversham Road

1.31 The viewpoint position is located on Caversham Road, approximately 150m to the south-west of the Site. The busy Caversham Road extends across obliquely from the foreground of the view to the middle ground. Views towards the Site from this location are generally restricted by intervening built forms along Caversham Road, including Vastern House sorting office (on the Hermes site). Less restricted vies are available, however, to the east where the upper portions of the Reading Station building are visible in the middle ground and the top of the 12-storey Reading Bridge House is visible in the background.

1.32 The value of the view obtained from this location is considered to be low as it is not designated and has minimal or no cultural associations. As the receptors at this location will comprise people passing through the townscape along a busy, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low.

1.33 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.

Site Context Photograph 07: View east from Swansea Road/Northfield Road

1.34 The viewpoint position is located at the junction of Swansea Road and Northfield Road, approximately 150m to the east of the Site. The view towards the Site from this location is channelled along Northfield Road by the predominantly two storey residential built forms on either side of the road. The existing low-rise built forms located immediately adjacent to the south of the Site (i.e. on the Hermes site) are visible at the termination of the view in the middle ground. These metal-clad warehouse units appear as indistinct low-rise structures which curtail views towards the Site. Beyond this in the background the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development is visible, which tends to also draw the eye.

1.35 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 38) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will include people at their place of residence, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high.

1.36 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.

Site Context Photograph 08: View west from Reading Bridge

1.37 This viewpoint is located Reading Bridge, approximately 250m to the east of the Site. The slightly elevated position of the viewpoint offers uninterrupted oblique views west over and along the River Thames and south along George Street (B3345). Views are naturally focussed to the open expanse of the river to the west, with views channelled by the built forms and mature vegetation adjacent to the river on either side. The large-scale office blocks to the south of the river (including Clearwater Court and the adjacent office block on Norman Place) curtail views towards the Site from this location.

1.38 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 46 and 47) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will include people travelling along George Street towards central Reading, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low.

1.39 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.

Site Context Photograph 09: View south-west from Christchurch Meadows

1.40 The viewpoint position is located on a pedestrian/cycle route within Christchurch Meadows, approximately 380m to the north-east of the Site. The foreground comprises the green open space of Christchurch Meadows. This gives way to a band mature vegetation along the north bank of the River Thames, which extends across the middle ground of the view. This vegetation generally restricts views beyond, including towards the Site, albeit glimpsed views are available towards the Reading Station building. In addition, several tall buildings are visible on the skyline above the intervening vegetation, including Reading Bridge House within the middle ground to the south, and the recently constructed 19 storey residential tower on Alfred Street/Chatham Street within the background to the south-west. The ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development are also visible on the skyline beyond Reading Bridge House to the south.

1.41 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 43) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location comprise visitors to the public open space in the pursuit of outdoor recreation with their focus on their surroundings, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high.

1.42 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.

Site Context Photograph 10: View north from Station Road

1.43 This viewpoint is located on Station Road, approximately 340m to the south of the Site. Station Road extends into the background of the view, perpendicular to the viewer. Built forms of varying heights (predominantly 3 to 4 storeys high) on either side of the road channel the view to the north where the Main Building of Reading Station (Grade II listed) terminates the view. The 15 storey Thames Tower lies to the immediate south-wet of the Station and is visually dominant from this location, occupying a noticeable portion of the visible sky. The station building curtails views further to the north, including towards the Site.

1.44 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 58) within the RSAF and has cultural associations due to views of the listed station building. As the receptors at this location will comprise people who are passing through the townscape along a main route, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low.

1.45 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.

Site Context Photograph 11: View south-east from Christchurch Meadows

1.46 This viewpoint is located on the towpath along the River Thames, adjacent to the War Memorial within Christchurch Meadows, approximately 425m to the north-west of the Site. The view is focussed along the river to the east, with views channelled by mature vegetation and built forms along each side of the river. The 3 to 4 storey residential blocks on the south side of the river (i.e. those on Waterman Place and Thames Avenue) within the middle ground largely restrict more far-reaching views south from this location, thus curtailing views towards the Site. Despite the intervening built forms across the middle ground, several tall buildings are discernible within the background, including 'Thames Tower' and 'The Blade' to the south-east.

1.47 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 41) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location comprise visitors to the public

open space in the pursuit of outdoor recreation with their focus on their surroundings, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high.

1.48 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.

Site Context Photograph 12: View north-east from Great Knollys Street

1.49 This viewpoint position is located on Great Knollys Street, approximately 460m to the south-west of the Site. The view is oriented east along Great Knollys Street, which extends from the foreground to the middle ground of the view. The road is lined on either side by 1 and 2-storey industrial and commercial sheds, which results in a channelling of the view. The intervening built form limits far-reaching visibility east and west and largely obscures views of the Site. However, several tall buildings punctuate the skyline above this, including the 15 storey 'Thames Tower' and two 6 storey residential blocks on Caversham Road/Abattoirs Road.

1.50 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 29) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will comprise people travelling along a busy road and people at their place of work, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low.

1.51 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.

Site Context Photograph 13: View north-west from Forbury Gardens

1.52 This viewpoint position is located Within Forbury Gardens, approximately 470m to the south-east of the Site. The view is oriented to the north-west with the foreground comprised of an open area of amenity grass/lawn and footpaths. Mature vegetation within and surrounding the park and large-scale built forms surrounding the park to the west and south generally restricts wide ranging visibility out from within Forbury Gardens. The intervening vegetation and built form generally curtail views towards the Site.

1.53 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 53) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location comprise visitors to the gardens in the pursuit of outdoor recreation with their focus on their surroundings, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high.

1.54 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.

Site Context Photograph 14: View west from Kings Meadow

1.55 The viewpoint location in Kings Meadow, approximately 560m to the east of the Site. The foreground comprises green open space within Kings Meadows. This gives way to a dense band mature vegetation along the south bank of the River Thames and along Kings Meadow Road, which extends across the middle ground of views. This vegetation generally restricts far ranging views to the west and north, including towards the Site. Less restricted views are obtained to the south and south-west, where several tall buildings are visible on the skyline in the background of views, including the large-scale office blocks at Forbury Place on Forbury Road to the south, 'The Blade' to the south, and Reading Bridge House to the south-west. The ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development are also visible on the skyline beyond Reading Bridge House to the south-west.

1.56 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 49) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location comprise visitors to the public open space in the pursuit of outdoor recreation with their focus on their surroundings, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high.

1.57 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.

Site Context Photograph 15: View south-east from the Thames Path / Thames Side Promenade

1.58 This viewpoint is located on the Thames Path/Thames Side Promenade, approximately 775m to the north-west of the Site. The view is open within the foreground, being focussed along the River Thames to the east and across the adjacent area of open space to the south. Mature vegetation across the middle ground – that lining the river to the north and east, and that within and surrounding the open space to the south - restricts more wide-ranging views from this location. Only partial glimpsed views are available through and above the intervening vegetation to some tall buildings located within central Reading in the background, such as the 15 storey Thames Tower to the south-east.

1.59 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance view (view 1) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location comprise users of the Thames Path/Thames Side Promenade and visitors to the public open space in the pursuit of outdoor recreation, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high.

1.60 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.

Site Context Photograph 16: View south from Balmore Park

1.61 This viewpoint position is located within Balmore park approximately 1.2km to the north of the Site. The foreground comprises an expanse of open green space, which is enclosed by dense bands of mature vegetation surrounding the park in the middle ground to the south, east and west. Despite this, distant views are available to the south, owing to the elevated position of the viewpoint. In these views the centre of Reading is visible in the background, marked by several tall buildings punctuating the skyline. These include the 'The Blade' to the south-east; the 15 storey 'Thames Tower' to the south; City Tower to the south-west; and the 11 storey Fountain House on Oxford Road in the distance to the south-west. In addition the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development are also visible on the skyline beyond to the south-west.

1.62 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance key view (view 14) within the RTBS (views from Balmore Park are also designated as a longer distance view (view 5) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location visitors to Balmore Park in the pursuit of outdoor recreation, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high.

1.63 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.

Site Context Photograph 17: View north from Mount Pleasant/Southampton Street

1.64 The viewpoint position is located at junction of Mount Pleasant and Southampton Street, approximately 1.6km to the south of the Site. The road junction dominates the view in the foreground view, although beyond these channelled views are available north along Mount Pleasant. Due to the slightly elevated position of the viewpoint, distant views are afforded across central Reading in the background. In these views the 15 storey Thames Tower forms a visual focus, punctuating the skyline. I addition the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the development at the junction of Crown Street and Silver Street, are also clearly visible on the skyline in the middle-ground.

1.65 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance view (view 12) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will comprise people travelling along the busy Mount Pleasant and Southampton Street, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low.

1.66 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.

Site Context Photograph 18: View from south-west from Henley Road/Lower Henley Road

1.67 This viewpoint position is located at the junction of Henley Road and Lower Henley Road, approximately 1.7lm to the north-east of the Site. The road junction dominates the view in the foreground view with adjacent built forms channelling views west along Henley Road and south-west along Lower Henley Road. Due to the slightly elevated position of the viewpoint, distant views are afforded along Lower Henley Road across central Reading in the background to the south-west. In these views several tall buildings are visible, marking the centre of Reading. This includes the 15 storey Thames Tower, the 12-storey Reading Bridge House and the 13-storey hotel on Friar Street. In addition, the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development is visible adjacent to Reading Bridge House.

1.68 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance view (view 10) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will comprise people travelling along the busy Henley Road and Lower Henley Road, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low.

1.69 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.

Site Context Photograph 19: View south-west from The Horse Close

1.70 This viewpoint position is located on The Horse Close, approximately 1.9km to the north of the Site. The Horse Close extends across the foreground of the view with the 2-storey residential dwellings to the south-east and west generally restricting wide-views in these directions. However, dwellings to the south and south-east are single storey which, along with the elevated viewpoint position, affords glimpsed distant views in these directions. Within these views several tall buildings are visible in the background, marking the location of central Reading. These include 'The Blade', the 15 storey Thames Tower and the and the 11 storey Fountain House on Oxford Road.

1.71 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance view (view 7) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will include people at their place of residence, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high.

1.72 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.

Site Context Photograph 20: View south-east from the Warren Footpath, Chazey Wood

1.73 This viewpoint is located on the Warren Footpath adjacent to Chazey Wood, approximately 2.7km to the north-west of the Site. The view from this location is across agricultural fields in the foreground, which slope to the south. The elevated topography affords distant views across the Thames Valley to the south and south-west, although views towards the Site are curtailed by intervening topography, built form and vegetation to the east and south-east.

1.74 The value of the view obtained from this location is considered to be high as it is located within the Chilterns AONB and is designated as a longer distance view (view 16) within the RSAF and as a key view (view 9) within the RTBS. As the receptors at this location will include people using the local PRoW network in the pursuit of outdoor recreation, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high.

1.75 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.

Site Context Photograph 21: View north from the A33 near water treatment works

1.76 The viewpoint position is located on the A33, approximately 2.5km to the south of the Site. Views are available north along the A33, which is lined by dense mature hedgerow vegetation on either side. This vegetation restricts views to the east and west and channels views to the north. In views north a number of built forms are visible in the middle ground, albeit set within a well-vegetated context. Visible above and beyond this is the 15 storey Thames Tower, which punctuates the skyline and marks the location of central Reading.

1.77 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance view (view 14) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will comprise people travelling along the busy A33 on approach to central Reading, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low.

1.78 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.

Site Context Photograph 22: View west from London Road, Shepherds Hill

1.79 This viewpoint is located on London Road, approximately 3.3km to the east of the Site. The foreground and middle ground of the view comprise the busy London Road and adjacent predominantly 2 storey residential dwellings. Whilst the adjacent built forms restrict views to the north and south, channelled views are available west along the wide London Road. Within these views west central Reading is visible in the distance, marked by the presence of several tall buildings punctuating the skyline. This includes the recently constructed 16 storey tower on Bembridge Place, 'The Blade' and the 15 storey Thames Tower. In addition the ongoing construction

activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development is are visible above intervening built forms.

1.80 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance view (view 11) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will comprise people travelling along the busy London Road on approach to central Reading, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low.

1.81 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.

Site Context Photograph 23: View south-west from Dunsden Way

1.82 This viewpoint is located on Dunsden Way in Dunsden Green, approximately 3.7km to the north-east of the Site. This is an open view across a number of large arable fields across the foreground. The suburban edge of Caversham is visible in the middle ground beyond which the centre of Reading is visible in the distance, marked by several tall buildings visible on the skyline. This includes 'The Blade', the upper portions of the 15 storey Thames Tower and the recently constructed 19 storey residential tower on Alfred Street/Chatham Street. In addition the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development is are visible.

1.83 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.

Site Context Photograph 24: View north from Greyfriars Road/Garrard Street

1.84 This viewpoint is located at the junction of Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street, approximately 350m to the south of the Site. The large built form of largely commercial development that occupies the foreground of views, limits the extent of visibility to views channelled along Greyfriars Road and Gerrard Street. Views towards the site are largely curtailed by existing built form such as the Xafinity House that occupies much of the foreground, and Phoenix House that forms the extent of views north. Existing built forms visible range from 2 storeys to the 14 storey hotel development seen in views along Gerrard Street.

1.85 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is close to the location of view 31, which is designated as a shorter distance view within the RSAF. As receptors at this location will comprise transient receptors moving along the urban road that is lined by commercial development, visual receptors at this location are considered to have a low susceptibility to the type of change proposed.

1.86 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.

Site Context Photograph 25: View north from Station Square

1.87 This viewpoint is located at the Station Hill, approximately 230m to the south of the Site. The foreground of views available from this area are dominated by the high quality public realm, although a large number of metal bollards divide the open space and provide an element of clutter that is enhanced by the large and incongruous digital advertising board that significantly detracts from the visual appreciation of the designed relationship between the new Reading Station building and the Main Building of Reading General Station (Grade II Listed).

1.88 The existing station buildings form the extent of views and curtail views to the north from Station Square with the architectural quality of the 15 storey Thames Tower having a strong influence over views gained from the area. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as although it is not designated within the RSAF, it has cultural associations due to views of the listed station building. As the receptors at this location will comprise people who are passing through the townscape along a main route, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low.

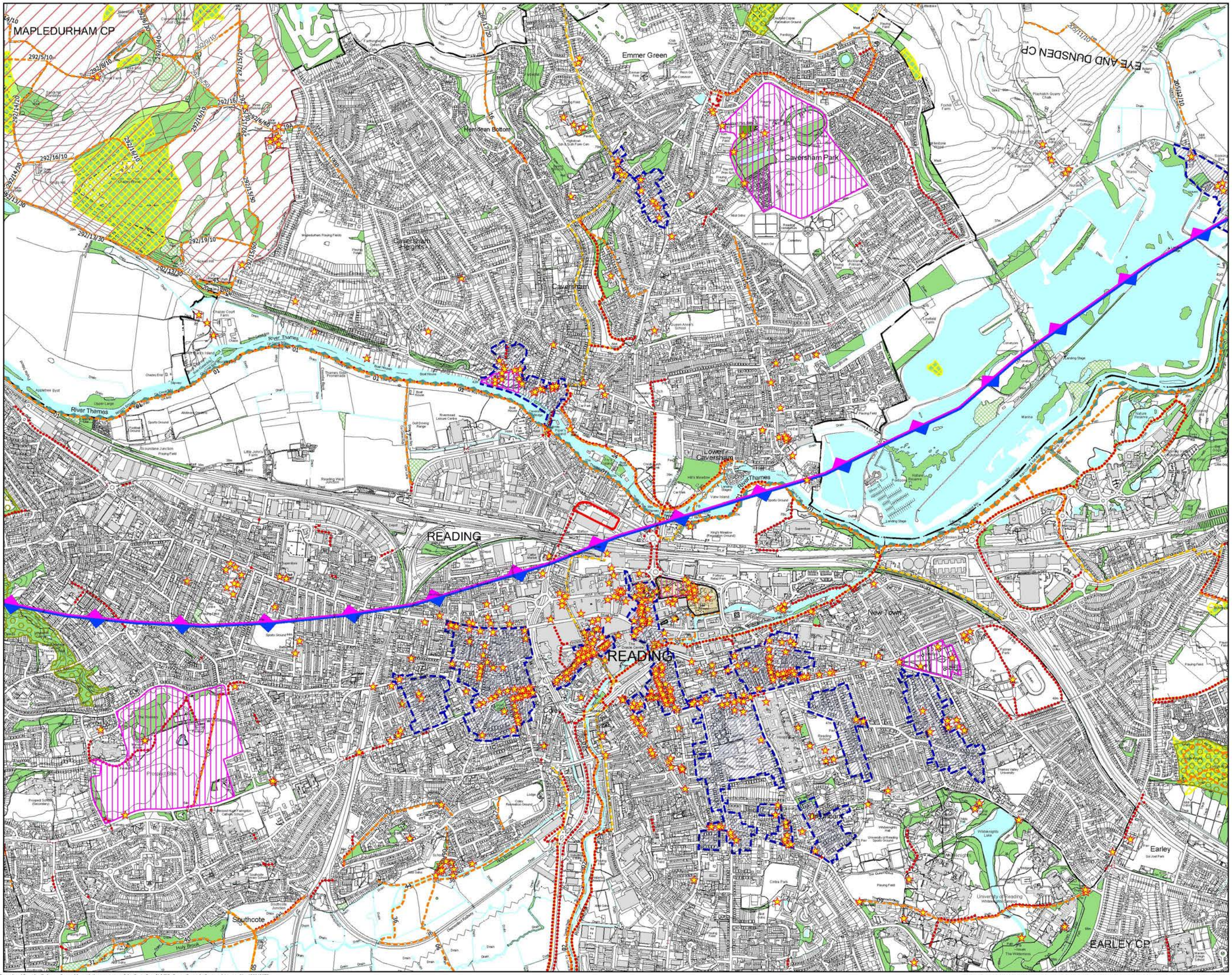
1.89 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.

Site Context Photograph 26: View north from Blagrave Street

1.90 This viewpoint is located on Blagrave Street, approximately 270m to the south of the Site. Views to the north are channelled along the street by buildings that line it such as 2 Blagrave Street to the east and Forbury Works (which is located within Market Place Conservation Area) to the west. The large building of Apex Plaza occupies a large section of views to the north, with the modern but not recent extension to the Main Building of Reading General Station (Grade II Listed), occupying the rest of views beyond Blagrave Street. The built form of the station building and Apex Plaza curtail views further north, including towards the Site. The public realm and Reading Abbey Quarter signage combine with the street trees to create an attractive street scene that draws views towards the station.

1.91 The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 54) within the RSAF and has cultural associations due to views of buildings within the Market Place Conservation Area. As the receptors at this location will comprise people who are passing through the townscape along a main route, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low.

1.92 On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.



The scaling of this drawing cannot be assured

Revision	Date	Drn	Ckd
-	-	-	-

N

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Ancient Woodland #
- Existing Woodlands, Copses and Tree Belts ^
- Existing Scrub ^
- Existing Water Courses and Features ^
- Contours/Spot Heights (Metres AOD) ^
- Public Rights of Way *
- National Trails / Long Distance Walks #
- Sustrans Cycle Route +
- Cycle Route ++
- Listed Buildings ~
- Conservation Area ##
- Registered Parks and Gardens ~
- Scheduled Monument ~
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty #
- Local Nature Reserve #

Source:
^ OS Mapping
# Natural England GIS Data Set
~ Historic England National Monument Record GIS Data Set
* Oxfordshire County Council, Reading Borough Council, West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council PROW GIS Data
+ Sustrans National Cycle Network GIS Data
++ Department of Transport Cycle Network Model
Reading Borough Council and South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan Proposals Map, Adopted Interactive Map
** Reading Borough Council, Reading Tall Building Strategy, January 2008
~~ Reading Borough Council, Reading Station Area Framework, Adopted December 2010

Data collated for constraints and analysis mapping is based on publicly available sources at the time of preparation inserted using the British National Grid and may itself not be accurate. Barton Willmore shall not be liable for the accuracy of data derived from external sources.

TVIA FIGURE 1

Project
Reading Station Park

Drawing Title
Site Context Plan

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Check by
08.01.2020	1:10,000 @A1 1:20,000 @A3	ML/LH	RG

Project No	Drawing No	Revision
17127	RG-LP-01	-

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The scaling of this drawing cannot be assured

Revision	Date	Drn	Ckd
-	-	-	-

LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Existing Woodlands, Copses and Tree Belts ^
- Existing Water Courses and Water Features ^

Central Reading Policies **

- Boundary of Identified Centre (Policy RL1) (Reading Central, Policies CR1-16)
- Major Opportunity Areas (Policy CR11-13)
- Sites Identified for Development or Change (Policy CR11-14)
- Tall Building Clusters (Policy CR10)
- Office Core (Policy CR1)
- Central Core (Policy CR1)
- Major Landscape Features (Policy EN13)
- Local Green Space and Public Open Space (Policy EN7)

Reading Station Area Framework ~~

- Station Area Framework Boundary

Sources:
^ OS Mapping
** Reading Borough Council, Adopted Local Plan, 2019
~~ Reading Borough Council, Reading Station Area Framework, Adopted December 2010

TVIA FIGURE 4

Project
Reading Station Park

Drawing Title
Central Reading Designations

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Check by
08.01.2020	1:5,000 @A1 1:10,000 @A3	LH	RG

Project No	Drawing No	Revision
17127	RG-LP-05	-

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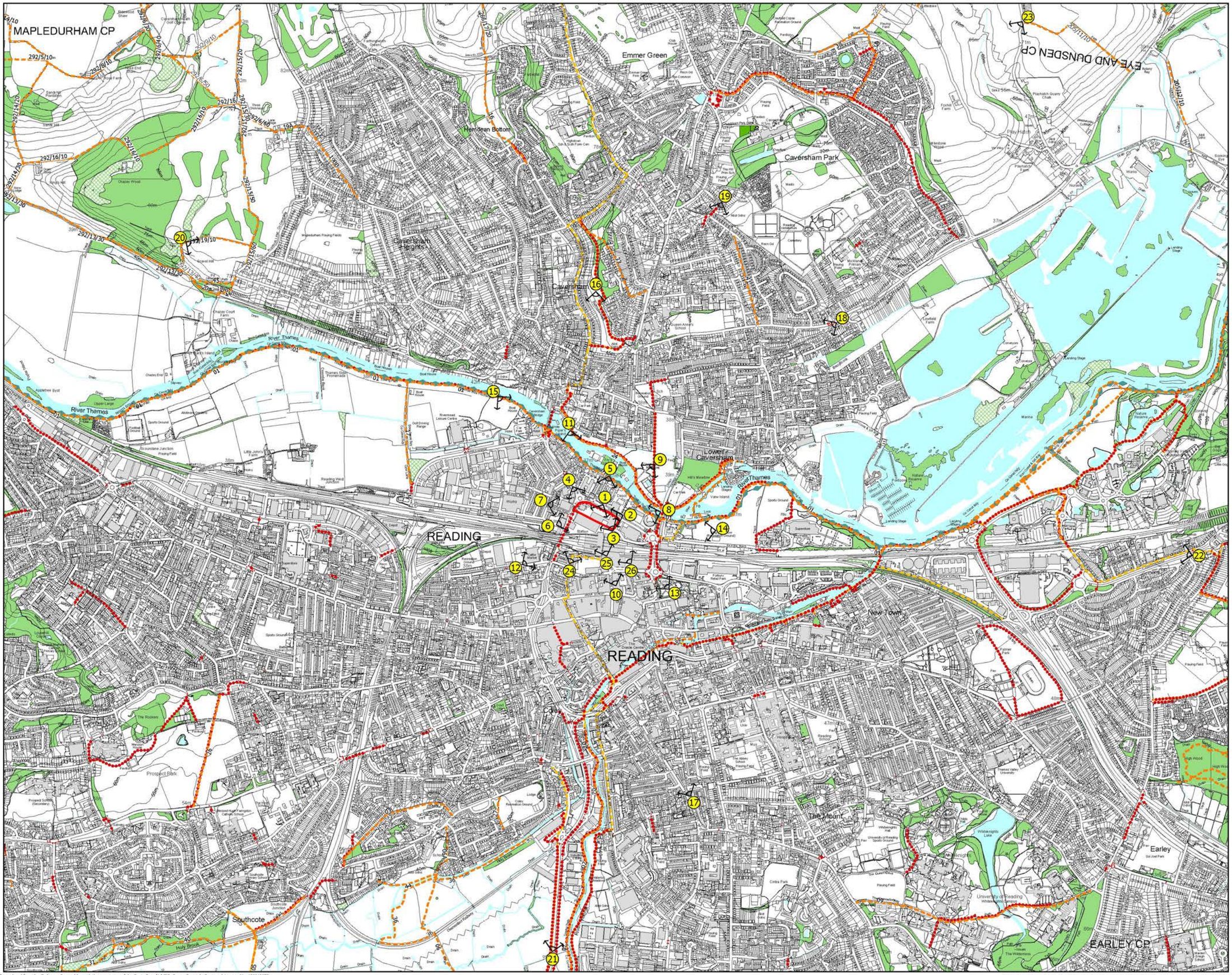

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J:\17000 - 17999\17100 - 17199\17127 - Reading Station\A4 - Drawings & Registers\Landscape\17127 RG-LP-08 Viewpoints Locations Plan.dwg - A1

The scaling of this drawing cannot be assured

Revision	Date	Drn	Ckd
- -	-	-	-

N

Legend

🟥	Site Boundary
🟩	Existing Woodlands, Copses and Tree Belts ^
▨	Existing Scrub ^
🟦	Existing Water Courses and Features ^
110m +	Contours/Spot Heights (Metres AOD) ^
No.	Public Rights of Way *
◆ ◆	National Trails / Long Distance Walks #
- - -	Sustrans Cycle Route +
●●●●●●●●	Cycle Route ++
1	Location of Photographic Viewpoints (Site Context Photographs: 1-26)

Sources:

^ OS Mapping
# Natural England GIS Data Set
~ Historic England National Monument Record GIS Data Set
* Oxfordshire County Council, Reading Borough Council, West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council PRoW GIS Data
+ Sustrans National Cycle Network GIS Data
++ Department of Transport Cycle Network Model

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TVIA FIGURE 5

Project
Reading Station Park

Drawing Title
Visual Appraisal Plan

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Check by
08.01.2020	1:10,000 @A1 1:20,000 @A3	ML/LH	RG

Project No	Drawing No	Revision
17127	RG-LP-08	-

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SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 1

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 2

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 3

READING STATION PARK

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPHS: 1 - 3

DATE TAKEN: APR/NOV 2019
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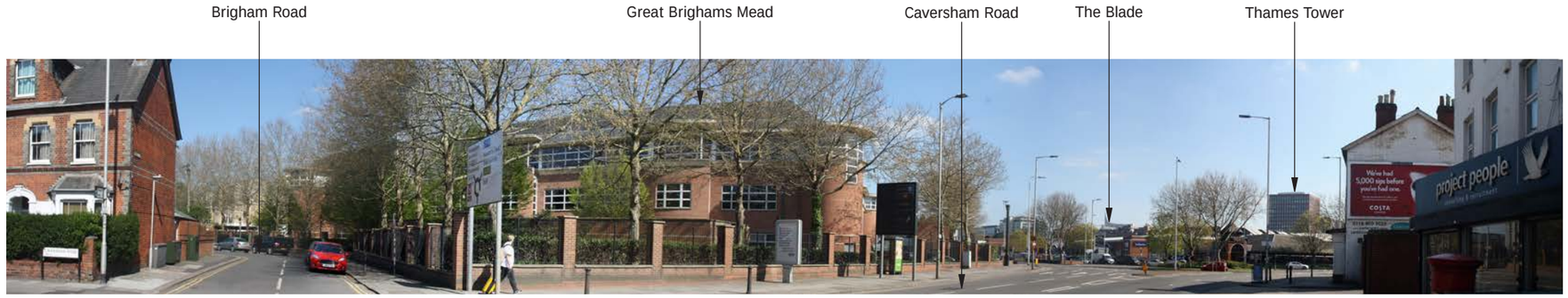

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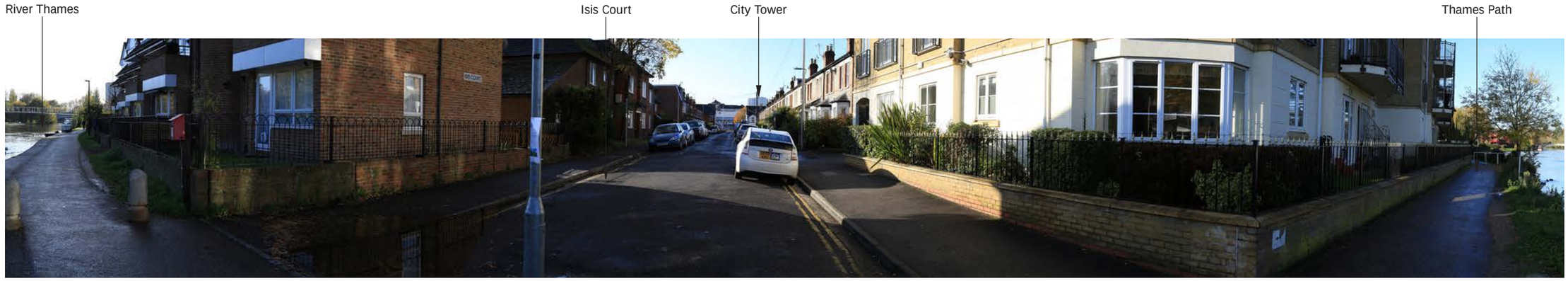

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 5

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 6

READING STATION PARK

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPHS: 4 - 6

DATE TAKEN: APR/NOV 2019
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SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 7

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 8

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 9

READING STATION PARK

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPHS: 7 - 9

DATE TAKEN: APR/MAY 2019
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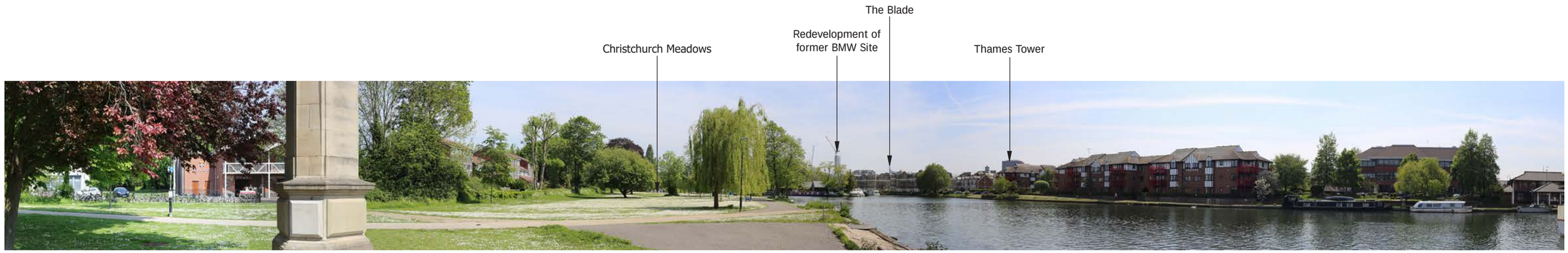
SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 10



SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 11

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 12

READING STATION PARK

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPHS: 10 - 12

DATE TAKEN: MAY 2019
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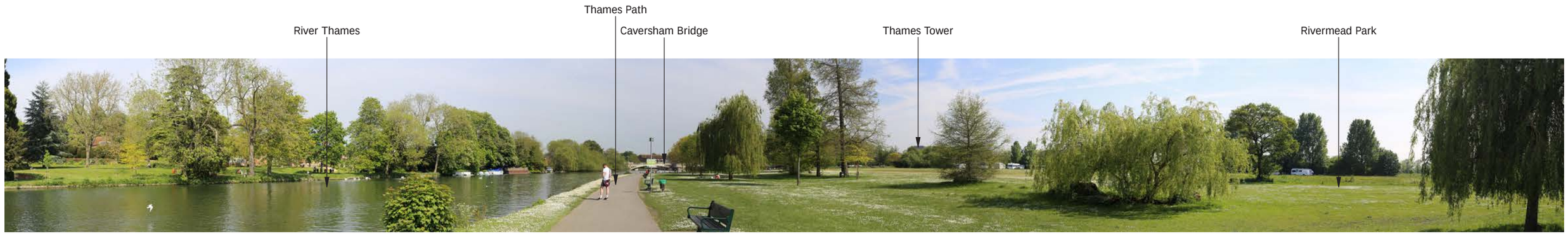
SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 13

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 14



SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 15

READING STATION PARK

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPHS: 13 - 15

DATE TAKEN: MAY 2019
PROJECT NUMBER: 17127

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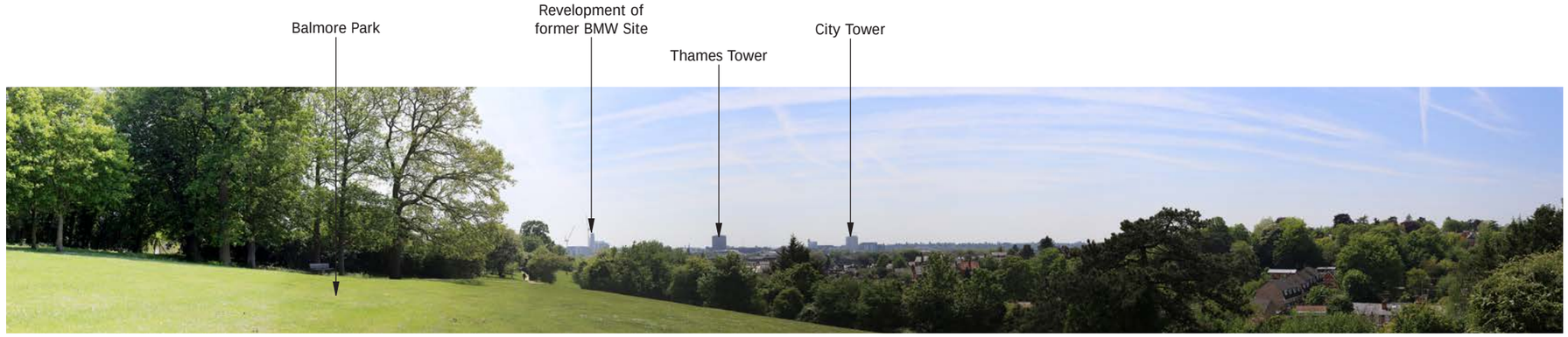
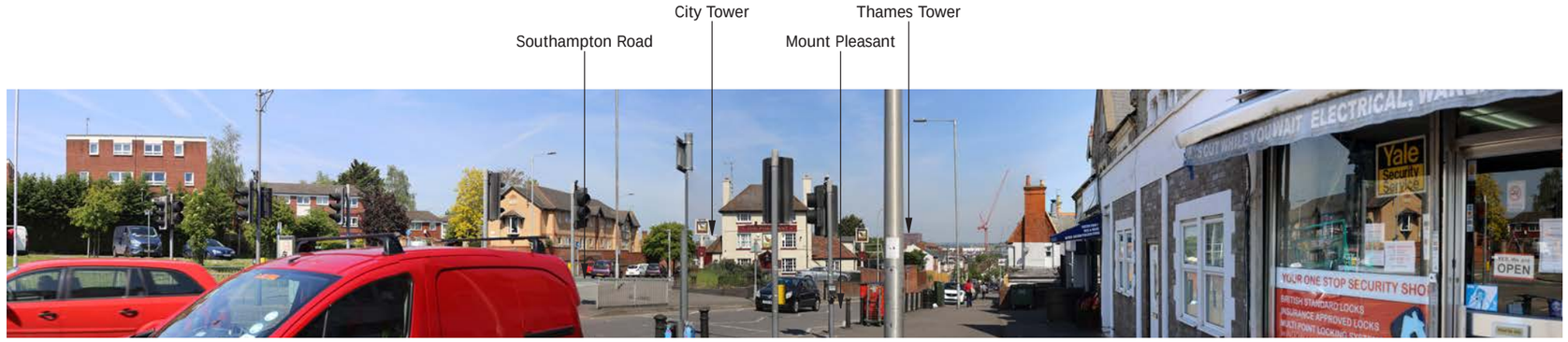


SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 16



SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 17

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 18

READING STATION PARK

SITE CONTEXT
PHOTOGRAPHS: 16 - 18

DATE TAKEN: MAY 2019
PROJECT NUMBER: 17127

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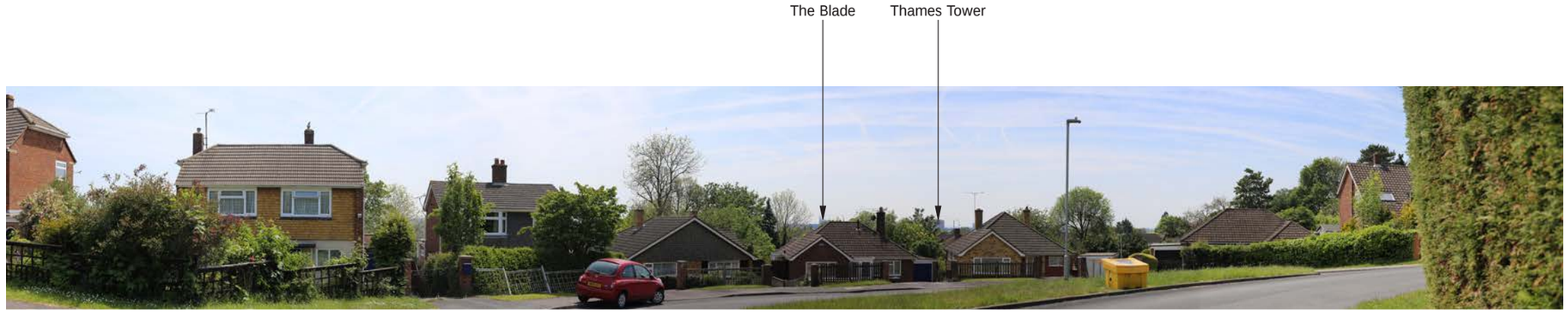

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 19

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 20

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 21

READING STATION PARK

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPHS: 19 - 21

DATE TAKEN: MAY 2019
PROJECT NUMBER: 17127

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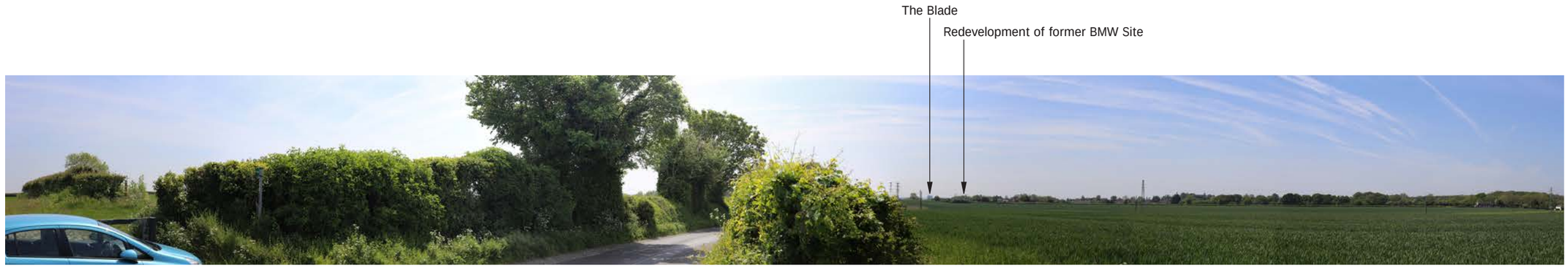
SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 22



SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 23

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 24

READING STATION PARK

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPHS: 22 - 24

DATE TAKEN: MAY/NOV 2019
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Phoenix House

Reading Railway Station

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 25

Blagrave Street

Reading Railway Station

Apex Plaza

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPH 26

READING STATION PARK

SITE CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPHS: 25 - 26

DATE TAKEN: NOV 2019
PROJECT NUMBER: 17127

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Appendix 1.3: Townscape Effects Table

Townscape Receptor		Townscape Effects				
Area	Sensitivity	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 (Parameter Plans)		Notes
		Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
National Landscape Character Area						
Natural England's NCA Profile 110: Chilterns	The application site and surrounding townscape form a localised part of this extensive NCA. The NCA as a whole comprises a combination of countryside mixed with urban development and major transport routes. The application site and adjoining landscape are considered to be urban in character. The surrounding built elements are not particularly distinctive or characteristic of the wider NCA. On the basis of the above the NCA is considered to be of low value. Due to the urban context of this part of the NCA, its susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a Low sensitivity.	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would introduce plant and machinery, material stockpiles and welfare facilities into a localised part of the NCA. However, the very localised nature of the demolition and construction activities in relation to the wider extent of the NCA would not be perceived over a wide area and would represent a direct alteration to only a very small proportion of the NCA as a whole. The key characteristics of the NCA would remain unaffected. This would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact and result in a Negligible Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would not influence a wide area of the NCA. The proposed development would contribute positively to the built in the centre of Reading although there would be an increase in massing locally. However, these changes are of such a small geographic extent in relation to the scale of this NCA, and within an urban area, that overall the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact and result in a Negligible Adverse effect.
Reading Tall Building Strategy Townscape Character Area						

Townscape Receptor		Townscape Effects				
Area	Sensitivity	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 (Parameter Plans)		Notes
		Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
CA 22: Vastern Road	The CA contains several warehouses and a retail parks, with built forms comprising low-rise, large-scale blocks of utilitarian massing and appearance (e.g. unarticulated facades and metal cladding), set within extensive areas of surface car parking, which are of a commonplace type in the wider area. This results in a consistent yet unexceptional townscape, albeit there are some examples of recently constructed taller development of higher-quality architecture in places (e.g. Clearwater Court). Development on the fringes of the CA to the north and west comprises smaller scale two to three-storey residential and commercial properties while development on the former BMW site is currently under construction for 13 and 23 storey buildings. The sense of tranquillity is diminished by the busy Vastern Road and Caversham Road (A329), which traverse the CA; the Great Western Mainline and Reading Railway Station, which defines the southern edge of the CA. The recently completed northern entrance to the station provides good quality public realm interventions within the CA, which adds an element of townscape quality and enhances the visual amenity experience and sense of place. The CA contains no recreational resources and carries no statutory heritage designations. Based on the above, the value of the CA is considered to be low. The CA comprises an area of existing large-scale built form and road infrastructure within a built-up urban context where tall buildings are currently under constructions and existing tall buildings located within the adjacent townscape. Therefore, the susceptibility of the CA to the type of development proposed is considered to be Low. Furthermore, the RTBS notes that the large block size and lack of any key views or visual focal pints, make the CA an appropriate location for tall buildings; and the RCAAP identifies the application site as falling within 'area of potential for tall buildings' (i.e. RC13a Station Area Cluster). The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a Low sensitivity.	Large	Moderate Adverse	Large	Moderate Beneficial	The demolition and construction activities would be located within the north of this CA, occupying a large proportion of its area. The temporary introduction of plant and machinery, demolition and construction traffic and demolition and construction activities would result in direct changes to the CA where they would be perceived as detracting from the character of the CA for the duration of the demolition and construction works. This would result in a Moderate Adverse effect. At Year 1, the introduced built form would fundamentally alter the fabric of a large part of this CA, helping to establish a strong local identity in the townscape. The overall form, layout, mass and scale of the introduced built form would provide application site wide improvements to the quality of built form. Whilst the proposed development would increase the mass of building in the CA, it would create a landmark building on the roundabout with enhanced legibility. The proposed development would also provide improvements to the legibility of the public realm that would relate well to the key townscape features of the northern station entrance, creating a coherent townscape element that positively contributes to the local area. The block arrangement of the proposed development would allow a connection from the subway that passes under the railway station through the application site and would contribute to the aspirations set out within Reading BC planning documents to connect the river corridor to the centre of Reading south of the railway line. The legibility of the northern entrance to the station would be much clearer with improved sightlines leading towards the station and the River Thames. The increased building mass along with improvements to legibility and built form through creation of a landmark building by virtue of its scale would constitute a Large magnitude of impact to the CA. This would result in a Moderate Beneficial effect.

Townscape Receptor		Townscape Effects				
Area	Sensitivity	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 (Parameter Plans)		Notes
		Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
CA 12: Caversham Road	The CA forms a residential area comprised predominantly of Victorian and Edwardian two-storey red brick terraces and semi-detached properties. Whilst this small-scale townscape features some more recently constructed larger residential blocks of up to four storeys in height adjacent to the river, the townscape retains a sense of cohesion with some scenic quality, although some properties exhibit slight wear. The limited garden space and enclosure ratio of the narrow streets produces a tight urban grain and results in a sense of enclosure and a resulting degree of tranquillity away from the busy Caversham Road and Vastern Road. One notable exception to the small-scale residential built form is the large office block (Great Brighams Mead), which is located centrally at the junction of Caversham Road and Vastern Road. The CA contains no statutory heritage designations, although the Thames Path extends along its northern boundary, following the southern bank of the river. Based on the above, the value of the CA is considered to be Medium. This is a small-scale townscape with built forms of a consistent height, massing and form, resulting in a coherent character, albeit with larger scale built form in its wider setting to the east and south. Whilst the CA has little scope to directly accommodate the type of development proposed (as noted within the RTBS), there is some scope to accommodate it within its setting. Accordingly the townscape is of Medium susceptibility. The combination of the Medium value and Medium susceptibility results in a Medium sensitivity.	Small	Minor Adverse	Small	Negligible Beneficial	Although the demolition and construction activities associated with the proposed development would not cause any direct changes to the CA, the temporarily introduced tall plant and machinery (including cranes) in the adjacent CA would detract from the townscape characteristics of the Caversham Road CA, particularly where street orientation allows channelled views towards the application site. The temporary demolition and construction activities would be perceived as intrusive features, which would partially alter the setting of this CA and would be at odds with its over-riding Victorian and Edwardian residential character for the duration of the demolition and construction stage. However, from much of the CA the demolition and construction works would not be perceptible due to the high enclosure ratio. As such, the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact and result in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would be imperceptible from much of the CA due to the existing enclosure provided by the tight urban grain. However, where the taller built forms of the proposed development are perceived, they would contrast with the prevailing 2 to 3 storey Victorian and Edwardian residential development in the CA. The configuration of the proposed development would allow physical and visual permeability between the blocks, thus helping to reduce their perceived mass, helping the proposed development to relate to the street pattern of this adjacent CA. In addition, the progression in height from the predominantly 2 to 3-storey built forms that characterise this CA and the taller forms of the Development would be moderated by a stepping up in height, which would help to reduce any sense of physical over-dominance. Where perceived within the setting of the CA, the proposed development would introduce a positive contribution to the skyline that would help to enhance legibility and wayfinding for the northern entrance to the railway station through the connection of the landmark Christchurch Bridge to the north and the northern station entrance to the south that would indirectly cause a Small magnitude of impact upon the CA, although the increased building mass would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. Considering both the positive and negative aspects above, on balance the proposed development would cause a Negligible Beneficial effect.

Townscape Receptor		Townscape Effects				
Area	Sensitivity	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 (Parameter Plans)		Notes
		Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
CA 23: King's Meadow	This CA comprises a series of open green spaces and playing fields located along the River Thames, including river meadows and sports pitches, which offer numerous recreational opportunities. The various open spaces are generally in good condition and contain a wealth of mature trees, which contribute to a well-vegetated character and, along with the adjacent river, enhance the scenic quality and sense of place of the CA. The green open spaces also offer a sense of tranquillity within and otherwise built-up urban context. Whilst it contains no statutory heritage designations, the vast majority of the CA is identified as a 'Major Landscape Feature' and an 'Important Areas of Open Space' (Policy LE14 and RC14) within the RCAAP (2008). Based on the above, the value of the CA is considered to be High. This is an area of undeveloped green spaces which is locally protected open space, albeit within a built-up urban context containing some large-scale developments. On balance the susceptibility of the CA to the type of development proposed in its setting is considered to be Medium. The combination of the High value and Medium susceptibility results in a High sensitivity.	Small	Minor Adverse	Small	Minor Beneficial	Although the demolition and construction activities associated with the proposed development would not cause any direct changes to the CA, the temporarily introduced tall plant and machinery (including cranes) in the adjacent CA would detract from the large expanse of open meadows. The temporary demolition and construction activities would be perceived as intrusive features, which would slightly alter the setting of this CA and would be at odds with the recreational resource of the open meadows. Although immediately adjacent to the Vastern Road CA, the King's Meadow CA is afforded some level of separation from the application site. However, the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be imperceptible from large areas of the CA. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Minor Adverse effect upon the setting of this CA where the demolition and construction activities are perceptible above the bankside vegetation of the River Thames. At Year 1, the proposed development would cause some slight changes to the setting of the CA where it is perceptible above the bankside vegetation of the River Thames. The proposed taller forms would contrast with the open meadows of the CA but would be perceived alongside other tall buildings that identify the centre of Reading which would adversely affect the sense of place. This would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. However, the configuration of the proposed development would allow physical and visual permeability between the blocks, thus helping to reduce their perceived massing. Where the proposed taller built forms are perceived in the setting of this CA, they would introduce a positive contribution to the skyline that would help to enhance wayfinding by sign-posting the location of the centre of Reading as well as connecting the landmark Christchurch Bridge within the CA and the northern station entrance to the south which would cause a Small magnitude of impact. Considering both the positive and negative aspects above, on balance the proposed development would cause a Minor Beneficial effect.
CA 1: Station Hill	This CA includes Reading Station and the area of office, retail and residential land uses immediately adjacent to south. This is an emerging townscape following the demolition of a number of structures and the introduction of new high-quality architecture, including the new station building, set within high-quality public realm interventions such as Station Square. The height and massing of built forms ranges from between 3 and 15 storeys, with 'Thames Tower' (15 storeys) forming a visual focus that sign-posts the location of the station and provides a degree of legibility within the surrounding townscape. The Station building, the Edward XVII statue and Great Western House (now Malmaison) are all listed (all Grade II). Station Square provides a large public open space, with large numbers of people passing to and from the station giving rise to a sense of vibrancy. Overall the value of the CA is considered to be Medium. The CA comprises an area of existing large scale built development and rail infrastructure, including tall buildings, within a built-up urban context. Therefore, the susceptibility of the CA to the type of development proposed in its setting is considered to be Low. Furthermore, the RCAAP identifies the application site as falling within 'area of potential for tall buildings' (i.e. RC13a Station Area Cluster). The combination of the Medium value and the Low susceptibility results in a Low sensitivity.	Small	Minor Adverse	Small	Negligible Beneficial	Given the enclosed nature of this CA, demolition and construction activities associated with the Development would not be readily perceptible from the vast majority of the CA. Whilst the uppermost parts of taller demolition and construction plant and machinery such as cranes, would be perceptible from the Great Western main line immediately to the north of the application site, these would be perceived in context with existing rail infrastructure which are a defining characteristic of this CA. In light of the above there would be no alteration to any of the key characteristics of the CA and the demolition and construction activities would cause a Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would give rise to some slight changes to the setting of the CA where it is perceptible above the large structure of the station building. The taller elements of the temporary demolition and construction stage would be perceived alongside other tall buildings that identify the centre of Reading such as the Thames Tower within the CA. The permeability resulting from the configuration of the proposed development blocks would help to reduce their perceived massing as well as connecting the Station Hill CA through the application site to the River Thames and Thames Path, Christchurch Bridge and Christchurch Meadow recreational area. The perception of building mass in the adjacent CA would cause a Very Small magnitude of effect with the increased legibility of townscape causing a Small magnitude of effect. On balance, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect upon the setting of this CA.

Townscape Receptor		Townscape Effects				
Area	Sensitivity	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 (Parameter Plans)		Notes
		Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
CA 2: Reading Station East	The CA comprise an area of large-scale office blocks, dating from the 1970s through to the early 20th century. Built forms are of an unremarkable design and quality, although the more recent additions have introduced a higher-quality architecture that has enhanced the overall condition of the area. The individual buildings within the character area (e.g. Apex Plaza) are large and blocky structures extending up to 12 storeys in height ('One Reading Central'), which create a sense of a large-scale townscape. Apex Plaza in particular is a local landmark due to its height and distinctive pink colour. Perceptual qualities are influenced by the busy Vastern Road and Forbury Road (A329), which traverse the CA and diminish the sense of tranquillity. The CA contains only one Grade II listed building – the Walter Parsons Corn Stores – but contains no recreational resources. Overall the value of the CA is considered to be Low. The CA comprises an area of existing large-scale built form and road infrastructure within a built-up urban context. Therefore, the susceptibility of the CA to the type of development proposed in its setting is considered to be Low. Furthermore, the RTBS notes that the CA has a low sensitivity to the development of further tall buildings. The combination of the Low value and Low susceptibility results in a Low sensitivity.	Small	Negligible Adverse	Small	Negligible Beneficial	While the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would not occur within this CA, the tall plant and machinery (including cranes) would be perceived in its setting from some limited areas in the CA. In these areas, the demolition and construction activities would be perceived alongside the existing built form of largely unremarkable architectural quality where they would not alter the key characteristics of the CA. The temporary demolition and construction activities would cause a Small adverse magnitude of impact which would result in a Negligible Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would give rise to some slight changes to the setting of the CA where it is perceptible amongst the existing built form and railway infrastructure. The proposed taller forms would introduce a positive contribution to the skyline that would help to enhance wayfinding in the townscape and where perceived, would introduce locally distinctive architectural improvements with variety in massing and heights, into the setting of this CA which would cause a Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development would cause a Negligible Beneficial effect on the setting of this CA.
CA 7: Reading Station West	This CA has a predominantly residential land use, albeit interspersed with occasional small-scale commercial office blocks. Built forms comprise a mix of two to three-storey Victorian terraces with later infill development of three to five storey blocks, which largely respect the scale and grain of the earlier structures resulting in sense of consistency. Housing is generally in good condition and the low rise, terraced housing creates a fine grained, small-scale townscape with a strong residential character. The CA contains only one Grade I listed building, Greyfriars Church, but contains no recreational resources. Overall the value of the CA is considered to be Medium. This is a small-scale townscape with built forms of a consistent height, massing and form, resulting in a coherent character, albeit with larger scale built form in its wider setting to the east. Whilst the CA has little scope to directly accommodate the type of development proposed (as noted within the RTBS), there is some scope to accommodate it within its setting. Accordingly the townscape is of Medium susceptibility. The combination of the Medium value and Medium susceptibility results in a Medium sensitivity.	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	Very Small	Negligible Beneficial	Although the temporary demolition and construction activities for the proposed development would not occur within this CA, the tall plant and machinery (including cranes) would be perceived from very small parts of its setting. However, from much of the CA the demolition and construction works would not be perceptible due to the high enclosure ratio. The temporary demolition and construction works would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact which would result in a Negligible Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would be largely imperceptible from the CA due to the high enclosure ratio of much of the Reading Station West CA. Where the proposed development is perceptible in the setting of this CA, it would introduce a positive contribution to the skyline due to the delivery of a landmark building by virtue of its scale and height. The proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect on the setting of this CA.

Townscape Receptor		Townscape Effects				
Area	Sensitivity	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 (Parameter Plans)		Notes
		Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
CA 13: Cattle Market and Chatham Place	This CA comprises an area of commercial and industrial development, centred on the application site of the former cattle market, with the exception of a small area of residential development on Weldale Street and occasional residential blocks. The majority of the built forms date from the mid-20th century onwards, albeit with some older buildings along Caversham Road to the east; are predominantly low-rise one and two storeys, although with some taller forms on the Caversham Road frontage; and are of a low architectural quality, comprising red brick and metal-clad sheds and warehousing, although some of the more recent developments and the older developments provide a higher-quality architecture. The townscape is overall in a relatively poor condition and there is a proliferation of security fencing that diminishes the scenic quality of the CA. The area is defined to the north by the Great Western Mainline and by the busy Caversham Road (A329) to the east, and frequent heavy goods traffic is associated with the predominant land-use, which diminishes the sense of tranquillity. The CA contains two Grade II buildings on the Caversham Road frontage but contains no recreational resources. Overall the value of the CA is considered to be Very Low. The CA is typified by the presence of industrial and commercial development set within a built-up urban context. Due to the diminished visual amenity experience, and the presence of larger scale built form within its setting to the south and east, the susceptibility to the type of development proposed within the setting of the CA is considered to be Low. The combination of the Very Low value and the Low susceptibility results in a Low sensitivity.	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	Very Small	Negligible Beneficial	The temporary demolition and construction activities for the proposed development would not occur within this CA but some of the taller plant and machinery (including cranes) would be perceived from very small parts of it. However, from much of the CA the demolition and construction works would not be perceptible due to the high enclosure ratio and large elements occupying intervening land. The temporary demolition and construction works would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Negligible Adverse effect on the setting of this CA. At Year 1, the proposed development would be largely imperceptible from the CA due to the levels of enclosure in some parts of it and the existing development in the vicinity of Station Hill and Reading Station West. Where the proposed development is perceptible in the setting of this CA, it would introduce a positive contribution to the skyline due to its landmark nature by virtue of its scale and height. The proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect on the setting of this CA.
CA 3: Friar Street	This CA is centred along the retail street of Friar Street where the form of the CA is comprised of commercial and residential properties with hotel development fronting onto the road. Although the buildings and public realm are generally in good condition, the mixture of built forms appear relatively dated and exhibit a low architectural merit with a level of discordance that detracts from the quality of the Victorian facades that remain in some buildings. The townscape has a medium scale that is created by the largely four to six storey development that is interspersed with taller elements such as the 14 storey Ibis hotel. The low architectural quality of many buildings along Friar Street is bookended by views towards the landmarks of Greyfriars Church and St Lawrence Church to the east and west of the CA. Overall the value of the CA is considered to be Very Low. The susceptibility of the CA to the type of development proposed within its setting is considered to be Low. The combination of the Very Low value and the Low susceptibility results in a Low sensitivity.	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	Very Small	Negligible Beneficial	The temporary demolition and construction activities for the proposed development would not occur within this CA but some of the taller plant and machinery (including cranes) would be perceived from very small parts of it. The demolition and construction works would not be perceptible from the majority of the CA due to the high enclosure ratio and existing built form. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Negligible Adverse effect on the setting of this CA where demolition and construction activities are perceptible. At Year 1, the proposed development would be largely imperceptible from the CA due to the levels of enclosure in some parts of it and the existing development in the vicinity of Station Hill. Where the proposed development is perceptible in the setting of this CA, it would introduce a positive contribution to the skyline due to an increase in the perception of landmark building by virtue of its scale. The proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect on the setting of this CA.

Townscape Receptor		Townscape Effects				
Area	Sensitivity	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 (Parameter Plans)		Notes
		Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
CA 4: Station Road	This CA is centred along the retail street of Friar Street where the form of the CA is largely comprised of commercial properties with some historic building frontages that hide the more modern retail buildings. Key elements of the CA include the consistent architectural quality of buildings along the pedestrianised Queen Victoria Street. The townscape has a medium scale that is created by the largely three storey development that has a high density. Overall the value of the CA is considered to be Low as although it is in close proximity to the Market Place and London Road Conservation Area, it is not subject to any landscape or townscape designations. The susceptibility of the CA to the type of development proposed within its setting is considered to be Low due to the physical separation from the application site. The combination of the Medium value and the Low susceptibility results in a Low sensitivity.	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	Very Small	Negligible Beneficial	Temporary demolition and construction activities for the proposed development would not occur within this CA but some of the taller plant and machinery (including cranes) would be perceived from very small parts of it although would not detract from the consistent architectural quality of Queen Victoria Street. The temporary demolition and construction works would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Negligible Adverse effect on the setting of this CA where demolition and construction activities are perceptible. At Year 1, the proposed development would be largely imperceptible from the CA due to the levels of enclosure in some parts of it and the existing development in the vicinity of Station Hill. Where the proposed development is perceptible in the setting of this CA, it would introduce a positive contribution to the skyline due to an increase the perceptible landmark buildings by virtue of its scale. The proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect on the setting of this CA.
CA 11: Napier Road	This CA is focused along the railway line to the east of Reading Station and includes the existing residential, commercial and retail development largely set within woodland vegetation that lies between the railway line and the River Thames. Although the built form is up to 10 storeys tall, the individual block sizes are relatively small and are separated by parking and landscaped areas to create a medium scale townscape. Development on the former BMW site is currently under construction immediately adjacent to the CA and will increase building heights on the edge of Napier Road to 13 and 23 storeys. The Low architectural quality of the development within the CA means that it is considered to have an overall value of Very Low. The CA is considered to have a Low susceptibility to the type of change proposed within its setting due to the weak townscape character. The combination of the Very Low value and the Low susceptibility results in a Low sensitivity.	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	Very Small	Negligible Beneficial	While the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would not occur within this CA, the tall plant and machinery (including cranes) would be perceived in its setting from some areas in the CA alongside the existing unremarkable built form adjacent to the railway line. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Negligible Adverse effect on the setting of this CA where demolition and construction activities are perceptible. At Year 1, the proposed development would give rise to some slight changes to the setting of the CA where it is perceptible amongst the existing built form and railway infrastructure. The taller forms of the proposed development would introduce a positive contribution to the skyline that would help to enhance wayfinding in the townscape and where perceived, would introduce a locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights, into the setting of this CA where the under construction development on the former BMW site immediately adjacent to it has a strong influence. The proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect on the setting of this CA.
Application Site Character						

Townscape Receptor		Townscape Effects				
Area	Sensitivity	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 (Parameter Plans)		Notes
		Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
Application Site	The existing built forms on the application site comprise a series of low-rise retail units, constructed predominantly in red brick with corrugated metal cladding. The rear and side facades of the retail units generally lack articulation or fenestration, resulting in a blank inactive façade. The front facing aspects of the buildings in contrast feature doors, windows, canopies, recesses and signage, resulting in a more active and articulated façade. Overall the existing built forms are large-scale blocks of utilitarian massing and appearance which, along with the extensive surface car parking. Based on the above, the application site is considered to have a Very Low value. The northern and western boundaries of the application site are bounded by Vastern Road and Caversham Road respectively. These are busy roads with high volumes of traffic that result in diminished levels of tranquillity within the application site. The application site is contained to the south and east by large-scale built forms: the former Royal Mail sorting office and the recently completed Reading Railway Station building to the south, as well as a multi-storey car park to the east. Whilst the application site is contiguous with the former Royal Mail building, it is separated from the Reading Railway Station building by the northern entrance forecourt; and from the multi-storey car park by Trooper Potts Way. The susceptibility of the application site to the type of development proposed within its setting is considered to be Low. The combination of the Very Low value and the Low susceptibility results in a Low sensitivity.	Large	Moderate Adverse	Large	Moderate Beneficial	Demolition and construction operations on the application site would cause direct changes to its character through the removal of an existing retail facility and replacement with plant and machinery. The construction traffic and plant movements would constitute discordant elements on the application site. There would be no access to the application site which would be surrounded by hoarding with the construction works being a higher elevation than the existing elements on the application site. The temporary demolition and construction works would cause a Large adverse change to the character of the application site due to the replacement of the entire application site with construction operations. As such, the temporary construction activities would result in a Moderate Adverse effect upon the Low sensitivity application site. The overall form, layout, mass and scale of the introduced built form would provide application site wide improvements to the quality of built form. Whilst the proposed development would increase the mass of building on the application site, it would create a positive built frontage to Vastern Road and the roundabout as well as forming a transition in townscape from the domestic scale of buildings north of the application site, to the town centre beyond the railway line to the south of the application site. The proposed development would also provide improvements to the legibility of the public realm that would relate well to the key townscape features of the northern station entrance, creating a coherent townscape element that positively contributes to the local area. The block arrangement of the proposed development would allow a much clearer legibility of public realm with respect to the northern entrance to the station where improved sightlines would strengthen the relationship between the application site and key townscape elements. The increased building mass along with improvements to legibility and built form through creation of a landmark building by virtue of its scale would constitute a Large magnitude of impact to the application site. This would result in a Moderate Beneficial effect.

Appendix 1.4: Visual Effects Table

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
							Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
01	View south from Vastern Road/ Lynmouth Road	The viewpoint is located approximately 25m to the north of the Site on at the junction of Vastern Road and Lynmouth Road. The busy dual-carriageway Vastern Road extends across the foreground parallel to the viewer, with its associated infrastructure and traffic dominating the view. Beyond the road corridor the existing low-rise retail units on the Site are visible in the middle ground, with a series of canopy trees partially filtering views. The built forms on the Site generally restrict views beyond, although the Thames Tower (15 storeys) is visible rising above this in the background, drawing the eye to the south. To the east the 12 storey Reading Bridge House and the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development is visible, which also draws the eye to the east along Vastern Road. The value of the view obtained from this location is considered to be low as it is not designated and has minimal or no cultural associations. As the receptors at this location will include people at their place of residence. (i.e. dwellings on Vastern Road), their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.	Fixed and Transient	Open	Full	Most	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Medium	Negligible Beneficial	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the ground level activities would be partially screened from view due to hoarding around the Site which would partially limit the amount of clutter visible. The taller activities, however, would be visible against the skyline with tall plant and machinery such as cranes being seen at close proximity. Views of the proposed development under demolition and construction would slightly erode the visual amenity experience at this location, leading to a limited deterioration to the existing view that would cause a Medium magnitude of impact and result in a Moderate Adverse effect. At Year 1, the large mass of the proposed development would occupy views to the south where it would replace views of car parking and the cluttered brick facades of existing retail units. The proposed development would form a large mass that would shorten views to the south and screen existing buildings south of the railway line such as Thames Tower. The proposed development would form a new skyline element that would alter the composition of views gained at Vastern Road whilst introducing locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights, that would enhance views of built form and compliment other new tall built form it is seen alongside, such as the currently under construction development at the former BMW site. The new built form would be seen alongside the improved legibility of the public realm which would further enhance the visual amenity experience. The proposed built forms would also contribute to creating a visual interest and a strong sense of place that would serve to visually locate the urban area around the station. This would cause a Medium magnitude of impact. Considering the scale of the proposed built forms and the proximity of the visual receptors, the proposed development would occupy a large amount of the visual envelope, albeit with new built form. This would cause a Small magnitude of impact. Taking into account both the positive and negative aspects above, on balance the proposed development would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
							Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
02	View south-west from Vastern Road	The viewpoint position is located Vastern Road opposite Trooper Potts Way, approximately 30m to the north-east of the Site. The busy dual-carriageway Vastern Road extends across the foreground parallel to the viewer, with its associated infrastructure and traffic dominating the view. Beyond the road corridor the middle ground features several low to medium-rise built forms, including the low-rise retail units on the Site to the west and the 5-storey multi-storey car park to the east. The built forms across the middle ground generally restrict views beyond, although the Thames Tower (15 storeys) is clearly visible at the termination of the channelled views south along Trooper Potts Way, forming a visual focus to the view and drawing the eye towards Reading Station. To the east the 12-storey Reading Bridge House and the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development is visible, which also draws the eye to the east along Vastern Road. The value of the view obtained from this location is considered to be low as it is not designated and has minimal or no cultural associations. As the receptors at this location will comprise people travelling along a busy towards Reading Station and people at their place of work (i.e. Sovereign House), their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.	Fixed and Transient	Open	Full	Most	Medium	Minor Adverse	Medium	Negligible Beneficial	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the ground level activities would be partially screened from view due to hoarding around the Site which would partially limit the amount of clutter visible. The taller activities however, would be visible against the skyline with tall plant and machinery such as cranes being seen at close proximity. Views of the mass and height of the proposed development under demolition and construction would slightly erode the visual amenity experience at this location where it would cause a Medium magnitude of impact, resulting in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a large mass of built form into views gained from the vicinity of Vastern Road. The height and mass of the proposed development would form a new skyline element that would alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity whilst introducing locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights that would enhance views of built form. The arrangement of the proposed development would allow views between the built form that create a visual connection to the railway station northern entrance and underpass that connects to the centre of reading. The improved arrangement of built form would be seen alongside the improved legibility of the public realm which would further enhance the visual amenity experience. The proposed built forms would also contribute to creating a visual interest and a strong sense of place that would serve to visually locate the area around the station and causing a Medium magnitude of impact. Considering the scale of the proposed built forms and the proximity of the visual receptors, proposed development would occupy a large amount of the visual envelope which would cause a Small magnitude of impact. However, taking into account both the positive and negative aspects above, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
							Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
03	View north from Station Square North	The viewpoint position is located at Station Square North, approximately 25m to the south of the Site. Station Square North forms the northern entrance forecourt to Reading Station and is visible extending across the foreground parallel to the viewer. This comprises recently introduced high-quality public realm interventions, including street furniture and tree planting. Beyond this, the rear of the existing low-rise built forms on the Site and on the adjacent Hermes site to the west are visible, with the metal-clad utilitarian retail and warehouse units presenting inactive unarticulated façades. These structures prevent views to the townscape beyond. To the north-east the 5-storey multi-storey car park is visible on Trooper Potts Way, beyond which glimpsed views of development fronting on to Vastern Way are available. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is noted as a new view (view 62) within the RSAF. The receptors at this location will comprise people arriving at Reading Station, whose attention will partially focussed on the surrounding townscape, meaning their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be medium. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.	Fixed	Open	Full	Most	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Medium	Negligible Beneficial	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would largely occupy the foreground of views available from the northern station entrance. Although hoarding would screen views of some ground level clutter, the tall plant and machinery would be visible at close proximity. Demolition and construction works for the proposed development would replace views of the poor quality built form that exhibits little architectural merit but would occupy a greater area of the skyline in views due to the elevated nature of the demolition and construction activities. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Medium magnitude of impact that would result in a Moderate Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a large mass of built form into the close range views gained from the vicinity of the northern station entrance. The height and mass of the proposed development would occupy the foreground of views although the arrangement of the built form would channel views between the buildings towards the former SSE site and the River Thames to the north. The height and mass of the proposed development would form a new skyline element that would alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity whilst introducing locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights that would enhance views of built form. The improved arrangement of built form would be seen alongside improvements to the legibility of the public realm which would further enhance the visual amenity experience. The proposed built forms would also contribute to creating a visual interest and a strong sense of place that would serve to visually locate the area around the station. This would cause a Medium magnitude of impact while the large mass of development would cause a Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
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04	View south-east from Caversham Road	The viewpoint position is located on Caversham Road (A4155), approximately 100m to the north-west of the Site. Caversham Road extends perpendicularly from the viewer to the roundabout junction with Vastern Road in the middle ground. The Road and associated traffic dominate the view. Beyond the roundabout the built forms currently occupying the Site are visible, appearing as indistinct low-rise structures sitting in front of the Reading Station building. The background of the view features a number of tall buildings within central Reading, including Thames Tower, The Blade and One Reading Central, which add articulation to the skyline. Thames Tower in particular helps to draw the eye towards the station building. The value of the view obtained from this location is considered to be medium as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 39) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location would comprise people travelling along a busy urban road, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.	Fixed and Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Partial	Most	Large	Moderate Adverse	Medium	Negligible Beneficial	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would appear in views towards the south-east gained by visual receptors along Caversham Road. The taller elements of plant, machinery and the demolition and construction works would be seen in views channelled along the road where they would interrupt views of recognisable townscape elements including The Blade and Thames Tower. Views of ground level activities would be largely screened by hoarding around the Site and foreground elements. Where views of the temporary demolition and construction activities are available, they would be seen in the context of traffic and infrastructure associated with the A4155 Caversham Road and the highway clutter of signs and street lights as well as existing buildings and vegetation. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Large magnitude of impact that would result in a Moderate Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a large mass of built form into views towards the roundabout where it would form a landmark building and mark the transition from the two storey residential TCA of Caversham Road, to the redevelopment area in the Vastern Road TCA surrounding Reading Station. Existing development along Caversham Road would channel views towards the proposed development where the height and mass of the built form would screen views towards existing buildings south of the railway line such as Thames Tower and The Blade. The built form of the proposed development would form a new skyline element that would alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity whilst introducing locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights, that would enhance views of built form and reduce the amount of clutter in views along Caversham Road. The new built form would be seen alongside improved legibility of public realm a which would further enhance visual amenity and cause a Medium magnitude of impact. The large mass of built form would cause a Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
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05	View south from the Thames Path/De Montfort Road	The viewpoint position is located on the Thames Path at its junction with De Montfort Road, approximately 190m to the north of the Site. The view towards the Site from this location is channelled along De Montfort Road by the predominantly two storey residential built forms on either side of the road (similar channelled views are also available along Lynmouth Road further to the east). The existing low-rise built forms on the Site are visible at the termination of the view in the middle ground, appearing as indistinct low-rise structures. Beyond this in the background a number of taller buildings are visible on the skyline, including development blocks on Tudor Road and the recently constructed 19 storey residential tower on Alfred Street/Chatham Street to the south-west. The view obtained is considered to be of high value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 44) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will include people using the Thames Path or people at their place of residence, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.	Fixed and Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Partial	Partial	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Medium	Minor Beneficial	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the demolition and construction activities would be partially visible above the terraced housing that lines De Montfort Road. The taller elements of plant, machinery and the demolition and construction works would be seen in views channelled along the narrow road by the largely two storey development lining the road. The demolition and construction activities would interrupt views towards top floors the City Tower, that can be seen above the existing Siemens building immediately to the south of the Site and development to the south of the railway line. Additionally, the demolition and construction works would add to the visual clutter of streetlights, signs, telegraph wires, aerials, satellite dishes and low quality surfacing that detract from the visual amenity along the residential road. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Medium magnitude of impact that would result in a Moderate Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a large mass of built form into views along the residential road. The mass of built form would occupy a large area of views that are channelled along the narrow residential road towards the Site, although the gap in buildings on the Site would partially align with De Montfort Road, allowing views through the development. The built form of the proposed development would form a new skyline element that would alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity although the new skyline elements would comprise locally distinctive built form, with variety in massing and heights. The landmark buildings by virtue of scale and height would be seen alongside improved legibility of public realm which would further enhance visual amenity. This would cause a Medium magnitude of impact, whilst the introduced mass of built form would cause a Small magnitude of impact. Considering both the positive and negative aspects above, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect.

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06	View north-east from Caversham Road	The viewpoint position is located on Caversham Road, approximately 150m to the south-west of the Site. The busy Caversham Road extends across obliquely from the foreground of the view to the middle ground. Views towards the Site from this location are generally restricted by intervening built forms along Caversham Road, including Vastern House sorting office (on the Hermes site). Less restricted vies are available, however, to the east where the upper portions of the Reading Station building are visible in the middle ground and the top of the 12-storey Reading Bridge House is visible in the background. The value of the view obtained from this location is considered to be low as it is not designated and has minimal or no cultural associations. As the receptors at this location will comprise people passing through the townscape along a busy, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.	Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Partial	Partial	Small	Minor Adverse	Small	Negligible Beneficial	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be seen in views to the north-east alongside the existing built form and infrastructure of the railway line. Buildings in the foreground would partially screen some of the ground level demolition and construction activities but the more elevated plant, machinery demolition and construction works would be seen against the skyline in views that are largely characterised by low quality architecture and clutter provided by the railway infrastructure. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the large mass of the proposed development would appear above the existing built form in views to the north-east. The proposed development would form a new skyline element that would alter the composition of views whilst introducing locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights, that would enhance views of built form, complimenting other new tall built form it is seen alongside, such as the currently under construction development at the former BMW site. The proposed built forms would also contribute to creating a visual interest and a strong sense of place that would serve to visually signify the urban regeneration of the area around the station and would cause a Small magnitude of impact. Considering the scale of the proposed built forms and the proximity of the visual receptors, the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact to views. This would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect.

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07	View east from Swansea Road/Northfield Road	The viewpoint position is located at the junction of Swansea Road and Northfield Road, approximately 150m to the east of the Site. The view towards the Site from this location is channelled along Northfield Road by the predominantly two storey residential built forms on either side of the road. The existing low-rise built forms located immediately adjacent to the south of the Site (i.e. on the Hermes site) are visible at the termination of the view in the middle ground. These metal-clad warehouse units appear as indistinct low-rise structures which curtail views towards the Site. Beyond this in the background the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development is visible, which tends to also draw the eye. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 38) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will include people at their place of residence, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.	Fixed and Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Partial	Partial	Small	Minor Adverse	Small	Negligible Beneficial	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the demolition and construction activities would be partially visible above the terraced housing that lines the road. The taller elements of plant, machinery and the demolition and construction works would be seen in the context of the existing built form along Northfield Road and existing Siemens building immediately adjacent to the southern boundary of the Site. Demolition and construction activities would interrupt views towards the currently under construction development on the former BMW site which is partially visible above the existing Siemens building in views channelled along the narrow road by the two and three storey development lining the road. Additionally, the demolition and construction works would add to the visual clutter of streetlights, signs, telegraph wires, aerials, satellite dishes and low quality public realm that detract from the visual amenity along the road. The temporary stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a large mass of built form into views along the road where largely 2 and 3 storey development channel views along the route of the road which would cause a Small magnitude of effect. The proposed built form would also contribute to increasing visual interest and visually signify the urban regeneration of the area around the station. The built form of the proposed development would form a new skyline element and landmark building by virtue of its height that would alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity although it would comprise locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights which would cause a Small magnitude of impact. The large scale of the proposed development would be noticeable in views cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. As a result, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect.

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08	View west from Reading Bridge	This viewpoint is located Reading Bridge, approximately 250m to the east of the Site. The slightly elevated position of the viewpoint offers uninterrupted oblique views west over and along the River Thames and south along George Street (B3345). Views are naturally focussed to the open expanse of the river to the west, with views channelled by the built forms and mature vegetation adjacent to the river on either side. The large-scale office blocks to the south of the river (including Clearwater Court and the adjacent office block on Norman Place) curtail views towards the Site from this location. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 46 and 47) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will include people travelling along George Street towards central Reading, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.	Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Partial	Partial	Small	Minor Adverse	Small	Negligible Beneficial	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the taller elements of the demolition and construction activities would be partially visible above the existing development at Clearwater Court and Norman Place. The higher demolition and construction activities would be seen against the skyline above the rooflines of the existing built form where they would be seen as receptors pass over the bridge. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact and result in a Minor Adverse effect. At year 1, the proposed development would be partially visible above the large built forms of the office blocks that line the southern bank of the River Thames. The additional built form would appear against the skyline to the west where, by virtue of its scale it would form a landmark in views and cause a Small magnitude of effect as it would be recognisable. The proposed development would not alter the context of views that are drawn along the river corridor and would extend the urban views along the river corridor, causing a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect upon views available in this vicinity.

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09	View south-west from Christchurch Meadows	The viewpoint position is located on a pedestrian/cycle route within Christchurch Meadows, approximately 380m to the north-east of the Site. The foreground comprises the green open space of Christchurch Meadows. This gives way to a band mature vegetation along the north bank of the River Thames, which extends across the middle ground of the view. This vegetation generally restricts views beyond, including towards the Site, albeit glimpsed views are available towards the Reading Station building. In addition, several tall buildings are visible on the skyline above the intervening vegetation, including Reading Bridge House within the middle ground to the south, and the recently constructed 19 storey residential tower on Alfred Street/Chatham Street within the background to the south-west. The ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development are also visible on the skyline beyond Reading Bridge House to the south. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 43) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location comprise visitors to the public open space in the pursuit of outdoor recreation with their focus on their surroundings, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.	Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Partial	Partial	Medium	Minor Adverse	Medium	Minor Beneficial	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the demolition and construction activities would be partially visible above the existing development that forms the relatively horizontal skyline along the River Thames. The taller demolition and construction activities would be visible alongside the local landmark of Christchurch Bridge. The temporary demolition and construction works would interrupt views of the upper floors of the City Tower which is partially visible above the existing development south of the railway line but would be partially screened by the mature vegetation within the Christchurch Meadows. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Medium magnitude of impact that would result in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a large mass of built form into views to the south-west from Christchurch Meadows where it would appear in the same views as Christchurch Bridge and screen existing townscape elements such as City Tower and Reading Station from view which would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. The large mass of built form would increase the vertical interest in views towards the centre of Reading where the proposed development would be seen alongside the existing townscape elements such as Thames Tower. The vertical elements of the proposed built form would contribute to increasing visual interest and visually locate land to the north of Reading Station. The proposed development would alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity of Christchurch Meadow but would introduce locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights that would complement other tall buildings that it is seen alongside, causing a Medium magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Minor Beneficial effect.

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10	View north from Station Road	This viewpoint is located on Station Road, approximately 340m to the south of the Site. Station Road extends into the background of the view, perpendicular to the viewer. Built forms of varying heights (predominantly 3 to 4 storeys high) on either side of the road channel the view to the north where the Main Building of Reading Station (Grade II listed) terminates the view. The 15 storey Thames Tower lies to the immediate south-wet of the Station and is visually dominant from this location, occupying a noticeable portion of the visible sky. The station building curtails views further to the north, including towards the Site. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 58) within the RSAF and has cultural associations due to views of the listed station building. As the receptors at this location will comprise people who are passing through the townscape along a main route, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.	Fixed and Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Partial	Partial	Small	Minor Adverse	Small	Negligible Adverse	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the demolition and construction activities would be partially visible in views channelled along Station Road where they would be seen above the station building. The taller demolition and construction activities would appear against the skyline between the existing built form that lines Station Road. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would introduce an additional level of clutter into views to the north along the road which is afforded a relatively high level of enclosure. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact, resulting in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would appear as a large mass at the extent of views north along Station Road where it would form a backdrop to the listed station building. The proposed development would increase the level of visual enclosure in views to the north where it would enhance the sense of development in the vicinity of the station building. The vertical elements of the proposed built form would contribute to increasing visual interest and add to the combination of architectural forms visible at the northern end of Station Road causing a Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development would alter the composition of views north along Station Road, reducing the prominence of the Main Building of Reading Station (Grade II Listed) but would introduce locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Adverse effect.

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11	View south-east from Christchurch Meadows	This viewpoint is located on the towpath along the River Thames, adjacent to the War Memorial within Christchurch Meadows, approximately 425m to the north-west of the Site. The view is focussed along the river to the east, with views channelled by mature vegetation and built forms along each side of the river. The 3 to 4 storey residential blocks on the south side of the river (i.e. those on Waterman Place and Thames Avenue) within the middle ground largely restrict more far-reaching views south from this location, thus curtailing views towards the Site. Despite the intervening built forms across the middle ground, several tall buildings are discernible within the background, including 'Thames Tower' and 'The Blade' to the south-east. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 41) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location comprise visitors to the public open space in the pursuit of outdoor recreation with their focus on their surroundings, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.	Fixed and Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Partial	Partial	Small	Minor Adverse	Small	Negligible Beneficial	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the demolition and construction activities would be partially visible above the existing development that forms the relatively horizontal skyline formed by development along the southern bank of the River Thames. While the ground level demolition and construction operations would be screened from view by development on intervening land, the more elevated operations would be visible above the rooflines of riverside development. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would interrupt views of the upper floors of Thames Tower as well as alter the context of views across the river. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Minor adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a large mass of built form into views along the River Thames corridor where they appear above the riverside development, increasing the vertical elements in the relatively consistent horizontal townscape. Where the proposed development forms a mass above the existing built form on the riverside it would reinforce the increasing visual interest in the vicinity of Reading Station, although it would screen views of the Thames Tower, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development would alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity but would introduce locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights that would complement other tall buildings that it is seen alongside such as the currently under construction development on the former BMW site and would cause a Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect.

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12	View north-east from Great Knollys Street	This viewpoint position is located on Great Knollys Street, approximately 460m to the south-west of the Site. The view is oriented east along Great Knollys Street, which extends from the foreground to the middle ground of the view. The road is lined on either side by 1 and 2-storey industrial and commercial sheds, which results in a channelling of the view. The intervening built form limits far-reaching visibility east and west and largely obscures views of the Site. However, several tall buildings punctuate the skyline above this, including the 15 storey 'Thames Tower' and two 6 storey residential blocks on Caversham Road/Abattoirs Road. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 29) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will comprise people travelling along a busy road and people at their place of work, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.	Fixed and Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Partial	Limited	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	Very Small	Negligible Beneficial	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the demolition and construction activities would be partially visible above the foreground elements of commercial and industrial units. The demolition and construction operations would be seen amongst the clutter of the light industrial units, fencing, outdoor storage areas, car parking and low quality public realm, which would screen ground level works. The more elevated activities would interrupt views of the currently under construction development on the former BMW site, which is partially visible. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact, resulting in a Negligible Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a new built form into views that are characterised by the high levels of clutter. The proposed development would increase the number of tall buildings visible for receptors looking north-east where it would appear in the same section of views as Thames Tower and the currently under construction development on the former BMW site, where it would help to consolidate the sense of high density development in the vicinity of Reading Station where it would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect.
13	View north-west from Forbury Gardens	This viewpoint position is located Within Forbury Gardens, approximately 470m to the south-east of the Site. The view is oriented to the north-west with the foreground comprised of an open area of amenity grass/lawn and footpaths. Mature vegetation within and surrounding the park and large-scale built forms surrounding the park to the west and south generally restricts wide ranging visibility out from within Forbury Gardens. The intervening vegetation and built form generally curtail views towards the Site. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 53) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location comprise visitors to the gardens in the pursuit of outdoor recreation with their focus on their surroundings, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.	Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Glimpse	Limited	Very Small	Minor Adverse	Very Small	Neutral	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors in Forbury Gardens by the mature vegetation that lines the park and the large blocks of built form to the south of the railway line that occupies intervening land. The most elevated demolition and construction activities and cranes may be partially visible above the roofline of Apex Plaza to the north-west of the park but would not detract from the visual amenity of the park itself or views towards the Market Place Conservation Area to the west. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact, resulting in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors in the park by vegetation around the edge of Forbury Gardens and the existing built form on intervening ground such as Apex Plaza to the north-west of the park. Where glimpses of the proposed development are available above the trees and buildings on intervening ground, it would not alter the context of any views to the north west, or towards the Market Place conservation Area to the west where it would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. The proposed development would be seen as a landmark building by virtue of its height where it is visible above existing built form, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. The focus of views would remain within the park itself and the proposed development would be largely screened from view. As such, the proposed development would result in a Neutral effect.

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14	View west from Kings Meadow	The viewpoint location in Kings Meadow, approximately 560m to the east of the Site. The foreground comprises green open space within Kings Meadows. This gives way to a dense band mature vegetation along the south bank of the River Thames and along Kings Meadow Road, which extends across the middle ground of views. This vegetation generally restricts far ranging views to the west and north, including towards the Site. Less restricted views are obtained to the south and south-west, where several tall buildings are visible on the skyline in the background of views, including the large-scale office blocks at Forbury Place on Forbury Road to the south, 'The Blade' to the south, and Reading Bridge House to the south-west. The ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development are also visible on the skyline beyond Reading Bridge House to the south-west. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 49) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location comprise visitors to the public open space in the pursuit of outdoor recreation with their focus on their surroundings, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.	Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Glimpse	Limited	Very Small	Minor Adverse	Very Small	Neutral	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors at Kings Meadow by the mature vegetation that lines its western edge and the existing built form of Reading Bridge House. The top of the most elevated demolition and construction activities and cranes may be partially visible above the existing vegetation and buildings in views to the west although would not detract from the visual amenity experienced in the open views available at Kings Meadow. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact, resulting in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors at Kings Meadow by the mature vegetation along the western edge and the large built form of Reading Bridge House. Where glimpses of the proposed development are available above the trees and buildings on intervening ground, it would be seen alongside the currently under construction tall building at the former BMW site and the existing development at Forbury Place where it would form a landmark building by virtue of its height and cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. Glimpses of the very top part of the proposed development in this setting would not alter the context of any views with the focus of views remaining within Kings Meadow but would increase the urbanisation of views glimpses to the centre of Reading, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Neutral effect.

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Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
							Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
15	View south-east from the Thames Path/ Thames Side Promenade	This viewpoint is located on the Thames Path/Thames Side Promenade, approximately 775m to the north-west of the Site. The view is open within the foreground, being focussed along the River Thames to the east and across the adjacent area of open space to the south. Mature vegetation across the middle ground – that lining the river to the north and east, and that within and surrounding the open space to the south - restricts more wide-ranging views from this location. Only partial glimpsed views are available through and above the intervening vegetation to some tall buildings located within central Reading in the background, such as the 15 storey Thames Tower to the south-east. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance view (view 1) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location comprise users of the Thames Path/Thames Side Promenade and visitors to the public open space in the pursuit of outdoor recreation, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.	Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Glimpse	Limited	Very Small	Minor Adverse	Very Small	Neutral	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, views gained by visual receptors in the vicinity of the Thames Path would remain largely unchanged due to the high levels of visual screening provided by existing vegetation on intervening ground. Where glimpsed views towards the demolition and construction activities are available through the vegetation as transient receptors move along the route, the cranes and plant would be partially visible in gaps between the foreground elements but would not detract from the visual amenity experienced along the Thames Path with views remaining focused upon the River Thames corridor where they are drawn along the river towards Caversham Bridge. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact, resulting in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would be partially visible in glimpsed views to the south-east from the Thames Path, where it would be seen amongst the vegetation that occupies intervening ground. Where glimpsed views are available, the proposed development would contribute to the sense of urban regeneration at Reading Station and would help with wayfinding as it would form a landmark building by virtue of its size, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. Although the proposed development would introduce a new element in the skyline where it is seen, it would not alter the context of views in which the river corridor would remain the focus with glimpsed views towards the locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights of the proposed development seen amongst vegetation on Rivermead Park, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Neutral effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
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16	View south from Balmore Park	This viewpoint position is located within Balmore park approximately 1.2km to the north of the Site. The foreground comprises an expanse of open green space, which is enclosed by dense bands of mature vegetation surrounding the park in the middle ground to the south, east and west. Despite this, distant views are available to the south, owing to the elevated position of the viewpoint. In these views the centre of Reading is visible in the background, marked by several tall buildings punctuating the skyline. These include the 'The Blade' to the south-east; the 15 storey 'Thames Tower' to the south; City Tower to the south-west; and the 11 storey Fountain House on Oxford Road in the distance to the south-west. In addition the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development are also visible on the skyline beyond to the south-west. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance key view (view 14) within the RTBS (views from Balmore Park are also designated as a longer distance view (view 5) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location visitors to Balmore Park in the pursuit of outdoor recreation, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.	Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Partial	Partial	Small	Minor Adverse	Small	Negligible Beneficial	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would introduce tall plant and cranes across a wide section of views to the south from Balmore Park. The temporary demolition and construction activities would be seen amongst the longer distance views where the existing tall buildings in Reading offer vertical elements in the wide vista available to the south. The demolition and construction works would interrupt views of the Thames Tower and Reading Station as well as the spire on the Church of St Giles-in-Reading. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact, resulting in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a large mass of built form into views to the south where it would help to consolidate the sense of urban regeneration in the vicinity of the station as well as form a landmark building in views by virtue of its scale and height. The proposed development would screen views of the Reading Station and the tall building of the Thames Tower but would introduce additional locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights that would be seen alongside other tall buildings such as the currently under construction development on the former BMW site and the City Tower that punctuate the skyline either side of the Site where it would cause a Small magnitude of impact. The increased mass of built form visible from the park would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact to views. As such, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
							Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
17	View north from Mount Pleasant/ Southampton Street	The viewpoint position is located at junction of Mount Pleasant and Southampton Street, approximately 1.6km to the south of the Site. The road junction dominates the view in the foreground view, although beyond these channelled views are available north along Mount Pleasant. Due to the slightly elevated position of the viewpoint, distant views are afforded across central Reading in the background. In these views the 15 storey Thames Tower forms a visual focus, punctuating the skyline. I addition the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the development at the junction of Crown Street and Silver Street, are also clearly visible on the skyline in the middle-ground. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance view (view 12) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will comprise people travelling along the busy Mount Pleasant and Southampton Street, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.	Transient and Fixed	Filtered/ restricted	Glimpse	Partial	Small	Negligible Adverse	Small	Negligible Beneficial	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the demolition and construction activities would be partially visible on the horizon in views to the north where they would break the skyline to the east of Thames Tower. The taller elements of plant, machinery and the demolition and construction works would be seen in the context of the existing clutter in views that is provided by street furniture and low quality public realm that detracts from the visual amenity along the road. Whilst the temporary demolition and construction activities would be visible, they would not alter the context views towards Reading town centre from the vicinity of Mount Pleasant and Southampton Street. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Negligible Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would introduce a mass of built form into views adjacent to the existing tall buildings of Thames Tower and the IBIS Hotel, extending the height of development further east. The proposed development would represent a consolidation of tall buildings in the vicinity of Reading Station that would increase visual interest in longer views that are heavily cluttered by foreground elements through the introduction of additional locally distinctive built form with variety in massing and heights. This would cause a Small magnitude of impact. The built form of the proposed development would form a new skyline element that would increase the built form visible but would not alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Beneficial effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
							Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
18	View from south-west from Henley Road/Lower Henley Road	This viewpoint position is located at the junction of Henley Road and Lower Henley Road, approximately 1.7lm to the north-east of the Site. The road junction dominates the view in the foreground view with adjacent built forms channelling views west along Henley Road and south-west along Lower Henley Road. Due to the slightly elevated position of the viewpoint, distant views are afforded along Lower Henley Road across central Reading in the background to the south-west. In these views several tall buildings are visible, marking the centre of Reading. This includes the 15 storey Thames Tower, the 12-storey Reading Bridge House and the 13-storey hotel on Friar Street. In addition, the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development is visible adjacent to Reading Bridge House. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance view (view 10) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will comprise people travelling along the busy Henley Road and Lower Henley Road, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.	Transient and Fixed	Filtered/ restricted	Glimpse	Limited	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	Very Small	Neutral	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the demolition and construction activities would be partially visible in the longer range views that are framed by foreground vegetation and development. The taller elements of plant, machinery and the demolition and construction works would be seen alongside the Thames Tower and the currently under construction development on the former BMW site, where they would be seen in the context of the existing clutter in views that is provided by high levels of street furniture and low quality public realm that detracts from the visual amenity along the road. The temporary demolition and construction activities would be visible amongst the foreground vegetation, built form and highway clutter, but would not alter the context of views towards the centre of Reading. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact which result in a Negligible Adverse effect. At Year 1, the additional mass of the proposed development would be partially visible alongside other tall buildings in the vicinity of Reading Station, where it would represent a consolidation of tall buildings identifying the centre of the town that would increase visual interest in longer views that are heavily cluttered by foreground elements, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. The built form of the proposed development would form a new skyline element that would not alter the composition of views gained in the vicinity and would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Neutral effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
							Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
19	View south-west from The Horse Close	This viewpoint position is located on The Horse Close, approximately 1.9km to the North of the Site. The Horse Close extends across the foreground of the view with the 2-storey residential dwellings to the south-east and west generally restricting wide-views in these directions. However, dwellings to the south and south-east are single storey which, along with the elevated viewpoint position, affords glimpsed distant views in these directions. Within these views several tall buildings are visible in the background, marking the location of central Reading. These include 'The Blade', the 15 storey Thames Tower and the and the 11 storey Fountain House on Oxford Road. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance view (view 7) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will include people at their place of residence, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.	Transient and Fixed	Filtered/ restricted	Glimpse	Limited	Very Small	Minor Adverse	Very Small	Neutral	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors in the vicinity of The Horse Close by the mature vegetation and existing development that occupies the foreground. The top of the most elevated demolition and construction activities and cranes may be partially visible above the existing vegetation and buildings although would not detract from the visual amenity experienced in this area. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact, which would result in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors at The Horse Close by the foreground vegetation and development. Where the proposed development is visible to the south-west, it would be seen alongside the tops of other tall buildings where it would represent a consolidation of built form in views towards the centre of Reading, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. Glimpses of a very small part of the proposed development in this setting would not alter the context of any views with the focus of views remaining within Kings Meadow but the building would represent a landmark building by virtue of its height and scale which would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Neutral effect.
20	View south-east from the Warren Footpath, Chazey Wood	This viewpoint is located on the Warren Footpath adjacent to Chazey Wood, approximately 2.7km to the north-west of the Site. The view from this location is across agricultural fields in the foreground, which slope to the south. The elevated topography affords distant views across the Thames Valley to the south and south-west, although views towards the Site are curtailed by intervening topography, built form and vegetation to the east and south-east. The value of the view obtained from this location is considered to be high as it is located within the Chilterns AONB and is designated as a longer distance view (view 16) within the RSAF and as a key view (view 9) within the RTBS. As the receptors at this location will include people using the local PRoW network in the pursuit of outdoor recreation, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be high. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be High.	Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Glimpse	Limited	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	Very Small	Neutral	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors in the vicinity of The Warren Footpath by the topography and vegetation in the foreground. The top of the most elevated demolition and construction activities and cranes may be partially visible above the existing vegetation and landform, where they would be seen within the context of long distance views towards the centre of Reading. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact, resulting in a Negligible Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors on the footpath due to the topography and vegetation that occupies the foreground of views. Should the very top of the proposed development be visible above the vegetation and topography to the south-east, it would be seen in the context of long distance views towards the centre of Reading where it would form a landmark building by virtue of its height and scale and would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. Glimpses of a very small part of the proposed development in this setting would not alter the context of any views with the focus of views remaining the undulating agricultural fields of the foreground and longer views into the settled Thames Valley below where it would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Neutral effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
							Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
21	View north from the A33 near water treatment works	The viewpoint position is located on the A33, approximately 2.5km to the south of the Site. Views are available north along the A33, which is lined by dense mature hedgerow vegetation on either side. This vegetation restricts views to the east and west and channels views to the north. In views north a number of built forms are visible in the middle ground, albeit set within a well-vegetated context. Visible above and beyond this is the 15 storey Thames Tower, which punctuates the skyline and marks the location of central Reading. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance view (view 14) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will comprise people travelling along the busy A33 on approach to central Reading, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.	Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Glimpse	Limited	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	Very Small	Neutral	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors on the A33 due to the high level of vegetation lining the route and occupying the foreground of views. The top of the most elevated demolition and construction activities and cranes may be partially visible above the existing vegetation and buildings although would not detract from the visual amenity experienced in this area due to the high levels of visual clutter provided by the highway infrastructure. Where views of the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development are available above the roadside vegetation, they would not alter the context of views along the busy road. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Negligible Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors travelling on the A33. Where the proposed development is visible above the vegetation and existing development to the north, it would be seen alongside the tops of other tall buildings where it would represent a consolidation of built form in views towards the centre of Reading, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. Glimpses of the top of the proposed development in this context would not alter the focus of views where it would be seen amongst the existing visual clutter of the highway infrastructure where it would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Neutral effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
							Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
22	View west from London Road, Shepherd s Hill	This viewpoint is located on London Road, approximately 3.3km to the east of the Site. The foreground and middle ground of the view comprise the busy London Road and adjacent predominantly 2 storey residential dwellings. Whilst the adjacent built forms restrict views to the north and south, channelled views are available west along the wide London Road. Within these views west central Reading is visible in the distance, marked by the presence of several tall buildings punctuating the skyline. This includes the recently constructed 16 storey tower on Bembridge Place, 'The Blade' and the 15 storey Thames Tower. In addition the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development are visible above intervening built forms. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a longer distance view (view 11) within the RSAF. As the receptors at this location will comprise people travelling along the busy London Road on approach to central Reading, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Low.	Transient and Fixed	Filtered/ restricted	Glimpse	Limited	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	Very Small	Neutral	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors in the vicinity of London Road due to the existing built form and vegetation in the foreground as well as the topography of the intervening land. The top of the most elevated demolition and construction activities and cranes may be partially visible amongst the street lights and highway infrastructure in the foreground as well as pylons in the middle distance that add to the level of clutter in views to the west. As such, where they are visible, the demolition and construction activities would not detract from the visual amenity experienced in this area and would not alter the context of views gained in the vicinity of London Road. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact and result in a Negligible Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors in the vicinity of London Road. Where the proposed development is visible above the foreground elements of vegetation and existing development, it would be seen alongside existing clutter and the tops of other tall buildings where it would represent a consolidation of built form in views towards the centre of Reading, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. Glimpses of the top of the proposed development in this context would not alter the focus of views where the additional built form would be seen amongst the existing visual clutter of highway infrastructure and pylons where it would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Neutral effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
							Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
23	View south-west from Dunsden Way	This viewpoint is located on Dunsden Way in Dunsden Green, approximately 3.7km to the north-east of the Site. This is an open view across a number of large arable fields across the foreground. The suburban edge of Caversham is visible in the middle ground beyond which the centre of Reading is visible in the distance, marked by several tall buildings visible on the skyline. This includes 'The Blade', the upper portions of the 15 storey Thames Tower and the recently constructed 19 storey residential tower on Alfred Street/Chatham Street. In addition the ongoing construction activities (including cranes) associated with the former BMW site development are visible. The value of the view obtained from this location is considered to be low as it is not designated and has minimal or no cultural associations. As the receptors at this location will comprise transient receptors on the country lane that is lined on both sides by hedgerow vegetation, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.	Transient and Fixed	Filtered/ restricted	Glimpse	Limited	Very Small	Negligible Adverse	Very Small	Neutral	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors in the vicinity of Dunsden Way by the foreground vegetation that lines the road as well as the variations in topography on the intervening land. Where visible, the temporary demolition and construction activities for the proposed development would be seen alongside the pylons that occupy the middle distance in glimpsed views towards the developed centre of Reading, with mature vegetation on the ridgeline at Milestone Wood providing a high level of visual screening for development in the centre of Reading that is enhanced by hedgerow vegetation on both sides of Dunsden Way which limits views into the surrounding landscape. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact and result in a Negligible Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view visual receptors in the vicinity of Dunsden Way. The topography of intervening land and the mature vegetation on the ridgeline at Milestone Wood, would almost entirely screen the proposed development from view but glimpses of the tall building would represent a landmark by virtue of its scale and size, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. Where it is seen within the context of views towards the developed centre of Reading, the proposed development would be seen alongside pylons that occupy the middle ground of views and form point features in the skyline, causing a Very Small magnitude of impact. Where glimpsed views of the top of the proposed development are available over the large areas of agricultural land in the foreground, it would not alter the focus of the views which would remain the foreground and longer views into the settled Thames Valley in the south-west. As such, the proposed development would result in a Neutral effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
							Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
24	View north from Greyfriars Road/ Garrard Street	This viewpoint is located at the junction of Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street, approximately 350m to the south of the Site. The large built form of largely commercial development that occupies the foreground of views, limits the extent of visibility to views channelled along Greyfriars Road and Gerrard Street. Views towards the site are largely curtailed by existing built form such as the Xafinity House that occupies much of the foreground, and Phoenix House that forms the extent of views north. Existing built forms visible range from 2 storeys to the 14 storey hotel development seen in views along Gerrard Street. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is close to the location of view 31, which is designated as a shorter distance view within the RSAF. As receptors at this location will comprise transient receptors moving along the urban road that is lined by commercial development, visual receptors at this location are considered to have a low susceptibility to the type of impact proposed. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.	Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Glimpse	Limited	None	Neutral	None	Neutral	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors in the vicinity of Greyfriars Road and Gerrard Street. The majority of the demolition and construction activities would be screened from view by the exiting built form in the foreground. The most elevated demolition and construction activities and cranes may be partially visible above the roofline of Phoenix House to the north but would not detract from the visual amenity of the urban road. Where visible, they would be seen in the context of a view along an urban road in the centre of Reading where existing signs, street furniture and low quality public realm provide an element of clutter to views. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a magnitude of impact of None, resulting in a Neutral effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors in the vicinity of Greyfriars Road and Gerrard Street by the existing built form of Xafinity House and Phoenix House. Some partial views of the very top of the proposed development may be available above the existing built form for visual receptors in the vicinity, but where these glimpses of the new building are available, it would not alter the context of any views where the focus would remain channelled along the urban roads where buildings typical of an urban area form the extent. The existing screening means that the proposed development would cause a magnitude of impact of None, resulting in a Neutral effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
							Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	
25	View north from Station Square	This viewpoint is located at the Station Hill, approximately 230m to the south of the Site. The foreground of views available from this area are dominated by the high quality public realm, although a large number of metal bollards divide the open space and provide an element of clutter that is enhanced by the large and incongruous digital advertising board that significantly detracts from the visual appreciation of the designed relationship between the new Reading Station building and the Main Building of Reading General Station (Grade II Listed). The existing station buildings form the extent of views and curtail views to the north from Station Square with the architectural quality of the 15 storey Thames Tower having a strong influence over views gained from the area. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as although it is not designated within the RSAF, it has cultural associations due to views of the listed station building. As the receptors at this location will comprise people who are passing through the townscape along a main route, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.	Fixed and Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Partial	Partial	Small	Minor Adverse	Small	Minor Adverse	During the temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development, the demolition and construction activities would be partially visible above the Main Building of Reading General Station (Grade II Listed). The taller elements of the demolition and construction activities and plant such as cranes would be partially seen against the skyline above both the new station building and the historic station building. The temporary demolition and construction works would appear alongside the large advertising screen where they would introduce an additional element of clutter into views over Station Square towards the former station building. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would appear as an additional element in views of the Main Building of Reading General Station (Grade II Listed), where it would alter the backdrop and setting of the building and clock tower. The proposed development would introduce built form into the backdrop of the historic station building that would create a new skyline element which would contribute to increasing visual interest and add to the juxtaposition between the combination of architectural forms visible from Station Square, causing a Small magnitude of impact. The focus of views gained by visual receptors at Station Square would remain the historic station building seen within the context of an urban area with more modern development complimenting the more historic building where the proposed development would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Negligible Adverse effect.

Visual Receptor				Visual Effects							
Ref	Name	Sensitivity	Type[i]	Nature[ii]	Intrusion [iii]	Proportion[iv]	Demolition and Construction Stage		Operational Stage – Year 1 Parameter Plans		Notes
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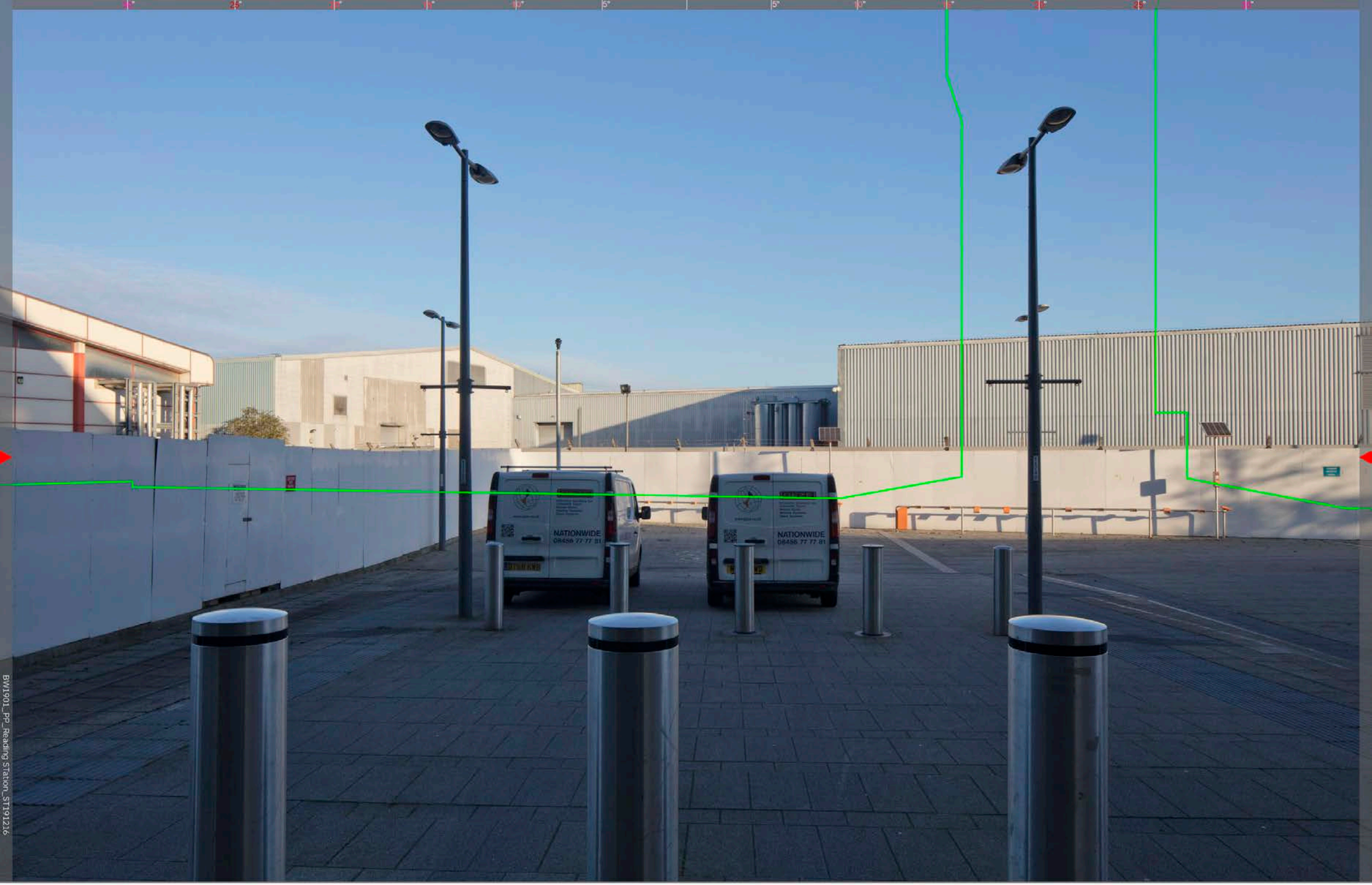
26	View north from Blagrave Street	This viewpoint is located on Blagrave Street, approximately 270m to the south of the Site. Views to the north are channelled along the street by buildings that line it such as 2 Blagrave Street to the east and Forbury Works (which is located within Market Place Conservation Area) to the west. The large building of Apex Plaza occupies a large section of views to the north, with the modern but not recent extension to the Main Building of Reading General Station (Grade II Listed), occupying the rest of views beyond Blagrave Street. The built form of the station building and Apex Plaza curtail views further north, including towards the Site. The public realm and Reading Abbey Quarter signage combine with the street trees to create an attractive street scene that draws views towards the station. The view obtained is considered to be of medium value as it is designated as a shorter distance view (view 54) within the RSAF and has cultural associations due to views of buildings within the Market Place Conservation Area. As the receptors at this location will comprise people who are passing through the townscape along a main route, their susceptibility to the type of development proposed is considered to be low. On the basis of the above the sensitivity of receptors at this location is considered to be Medium.	Fixed and Transient	Filtered/ restricted	Partial	Partial	Small	Minor Adverse	Very Small	Neutral	The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would be largely screened from view for visual receptors on Blagrave Street by the existing built form at the northern end of the street. The large mass of Apex Plaza and the modern but not recent extension to the station building would screen views of the majority of demolition and construction activities, although the cranes and highest works would be partially visible alongside the Apex Plaza. Where visible, the temporary demolition and construction works would not alter context of views along the urban street. The temporary demolition and construction stage of the proposed development would cause a Small magnitude of impact that would result in a Minor Adverse effect. At Year 1, the proposed development would be largely screened from view for visual receptors using Blagrave Street by the large mass of built form at Apex Plaza and part of the station building that occupy views north along the street. Where glimpses of the proposed development are available above the trees and buildings at the northern end of the road, it would not alter the context or focus of views along the urban street in the centre of reading where built form is a common aspect in views and the landmark building by virtue of its height and scale would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. Furthermore, the proposed development would not detract from views of buildings such as Forbury Works which form part of the Market Place Conservation Area where it would cause a Very Small magnitude of impact. As such, the proposed development would result in a Neutral effect.

[i] Type of receptor: Fixed, Transient
[ii] Nature of the view of the Development: Open, Filtered/restricted, None
[iii] Degree of visual intrusion of the Development (extent of the view occupied by the Development): Full, Partial, Glimpse, None
[iv] Proportion of the Development visible: Full, Most, Partial, Limited, None



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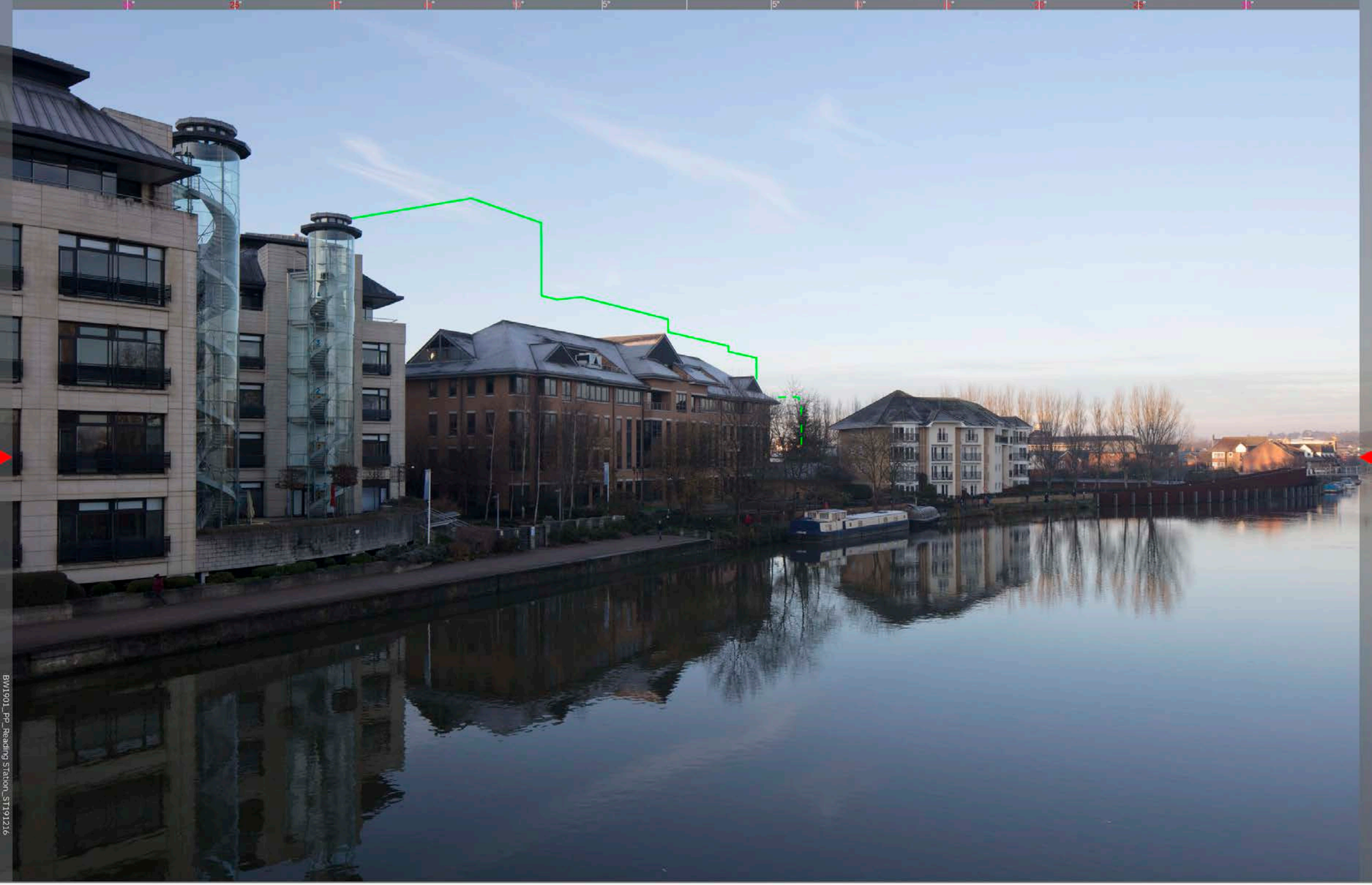
BW1901_PP_Reading Station_STI191216

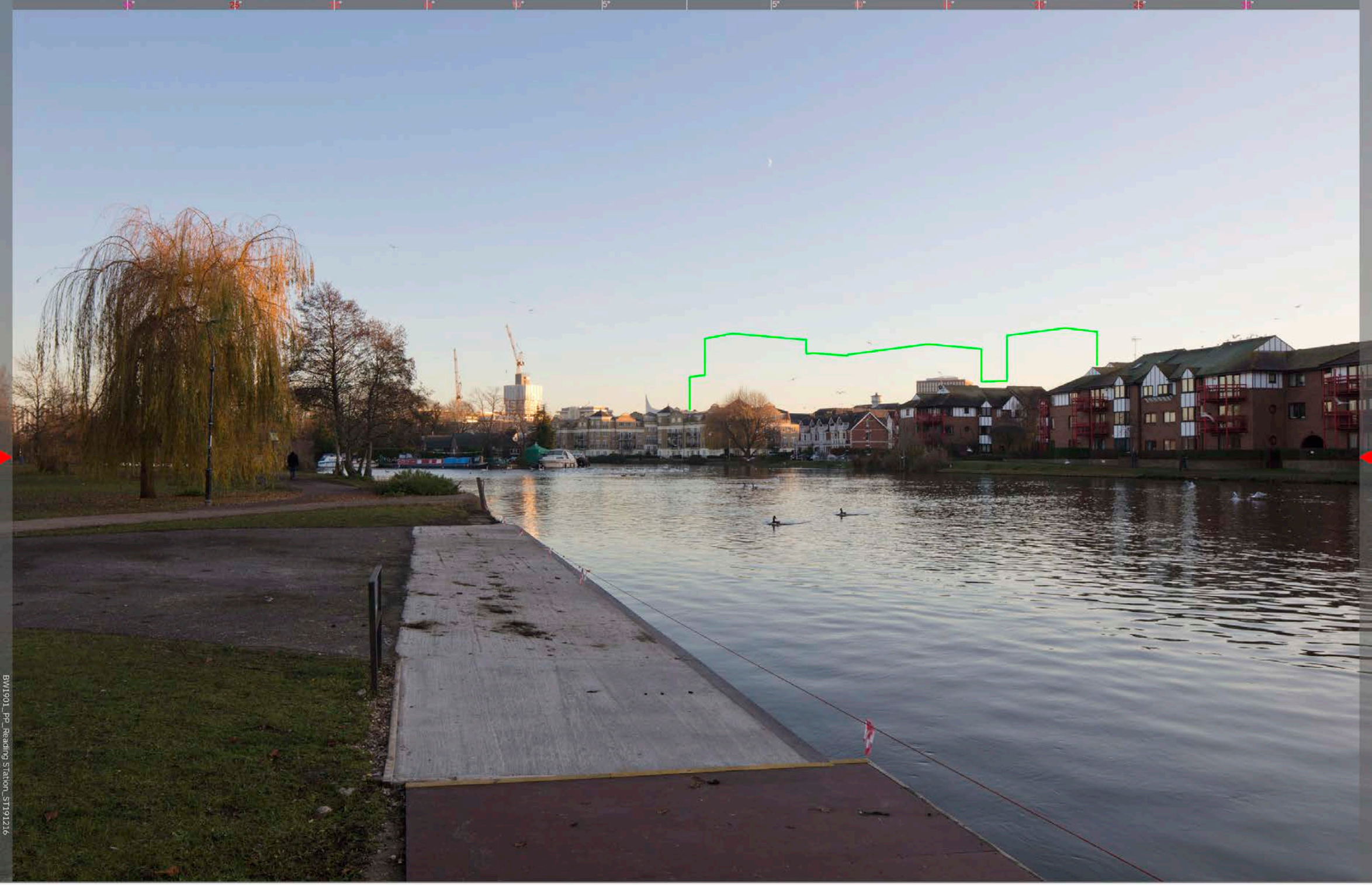
BW1901_PP_Reading Station_ST191216



BW1901_PP_Reading Station_STI191216

BW1901_PP_Reading Station_ST191216

BW1901_PP_Reading Station_ST191216



BW1901_PP_Reading Station_ST191216

Preliminary Alignment

1.6 m above ground

15:28 02 December 2019

BW1901_PP_Reading Station_ST191216

BW1901_PP_Reading Station_ST191216

Preliminary Alignment

1.6 m above ground

15:54 02 December 2019

BW1901_PP_Reading STation_ST191216

Preliminary Alignment

1.6 m above ground

12:29 02 December 2019


BW1901_PP_Reading Station_SZ191216

BW1901_PP_Reading Station_ST191216

Preliminary Alignment

1.6 m above ground

09:34 02 December 2019