



Historic England

Mr Brian Conlon
Sent via email only

Direct Dial: 0207 973 3700

Our ref: **W:KT21**

21 April 2020

Dear Mr Conlon,

**T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**Vastern Court, Caversham Road, Reading
Application No. 200328**

Thank you for your letters of 1st April 2020 regarding the above applications for planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Historic England Advice

This proposal is for outline permission for the redevelopment of the Vastern Court site with a mixed use site including residential and office uses. The proposals would sit within the context of much new development that has either been granted permission or has been planned for.

The proposed development is likely only to have impacts on designated heritage (listed buildings, conservation areas) through the development being seen in important views. In this case, there is an important channelled view looking north along Station Road towards the listed Station building. Whilst it was remodelled in the 1860s it retains the form of the Brunel 1840 station and is one of the few between Paddington and Bath that is anything like its Brunel form, and is therefore significant and rightly listed at Grade II. The coming of the railings transformed Reading's fortunes and the linear connection and views along Station Road (and the listed Queen Victoria Street in that direction) reflect the importance of the Station building and the connection with London, Bristol and the Empire beyond.

The visibility of Blocks C and D in views looking north along Station Road have not been sufficiently explored and the impact of them on the Station building is not clear. In order to understand the possible impact of the proposals in outline form a rectified view looking north would provide clear information, and we request this further piece of information is provided, in line with paragraph 189 of the NPPF. We would



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welcome the opportunity to comment further once the additional information has been provided.

Recommendation

Historic England has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds.

We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the application to meet the requirements of paragraphs 189 of the NPPF.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Your authority should take these representations into account and seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Fletcher', is positioned over a faint, repeating watermark of the word 'electronic'.

Rachel Fletcher

Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
E-mail: Rachel.Fletcher@HistoricEngland.org.uk



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