

General Comments

Church of St Mary lies at the heart of the St Mary's Butts / Castle Street Conservation Area, surrounded with historic commercial and domestic buildings reaching back to sixteenth century. The current street pattern dates from medieval times, when the St Mary's Parish was the original heart of the town (RBC, 2008).

It is the most pedestrian-friendly part of the Conservation Area with pedestrian routes crossing the large public open space: The Churchyard. The churchyard defined by curtilage listed walls, provides a wide and attractive green space in the urban townscape. The importance of the churchyard is unquestionable due to its sense of enclosure and connections to the rest of the town offering a pedestrian experience both for movement and relaxation.

Good pedestrian links through and around the site provides connectivity to Broad Street Mall to the north and The Oracle to the south. However, these large modern buildings beyond the Conservation Area detracting from the scale, materials and grain of the historic town centre also shifted commercial activity from the centre to the outskirts and left the churchyard transitional.

With the newly emerging Minster Quarter (Hosier Street) area there is a chance to increase footfall and improve the public realm in St Mary's Butts area which will also benefit the church and the churchyard.

The Proposal

Reading Minster of St. Mary-the-Virgin is a Grade 1 listed ecclesiastical building situated in the heart of Reading. Attention required in terms of safety and additional lighting provisions due to the insufficient lighting levels creating blind spots in parts of St Mary's Churchyard.

After a recent crime was reported, it is proposed to increase the quality of the public realm by assuring safety and connectivity. This will involve installing 6 new, matching lamp posts in addition to the existing fixtures, which are in good condition, dark in colour and a timeless in design: Column 5018 is a 5m black steel lighting column fitted with an DW Windsor LED lantern and Mayflower Node.

Fig. 2: Existing lamp post in cemetery. It is proposed to add 6 more identical lamp posts, painted black.	Fig. 3: Location of proposed new lamp posts shown by Red Dots. Original posts shown by Green Dots.
	