

2A BUILT HERITAGE

Introduction

- 2.1A This chapter has been prepared by Montagu Evans as a replacement to the chapter previously prepared by MoLA. The assessment is of the 2021 amended proposed development, but as the changes sought through the 2021 addendum application are minor in nature and predominately not of relevance to this assessment, this chapter has relied largely on the previously submitted information. New and amended text has been presented in blue text for ease of reference.
- 2.2A This chapter of the ES reports on the likely significant effects of the 2021 amended proposed development on built heritage. The assessment considers direct effects on the particular significance of the built heritage receptors at the application site and within the surrounding study area (including statutory listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens and special historic interest and locally listed buildings), as well as indirect effects through change in their settings. For the purposes of this assessment, the term 'built' heritage refers to above-ground heritage receptors.
- 2.3A The chapter provides a description of the methods used to conduct the assessment, the relevant baseline conditions of the application site, and an assessment of the potential impacts and likely effects of the 2021 amended proposed development with respect to built heritage associated with the demolition and construction stage and completed development/operational stage of the proposed development. Additional mitigation measures are identified, where appropriate, to avoid, reduce or offset any adverse effects identified. The nature and scale of any residual effects are also described.
- 2.4A This chapter is supported by the baseline information contained in ES Volume 3, Appendix 2.1A: Heritage Statement prepared by Montagu Evans.

Methodology

- 2.5A There is no published guidance for built heritage assessment in EIA. Accordingly, the assessment has been informed by the following legislation, policies and published guidance:
- NPPF¹;
 - PPG²;
 - Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990³;
 - General Planning Advice 3 (GPA3), Historic England 2015⁴;
 - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2, Historic England 2015⁵;
 - Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's⁶; and
 - Reading Borough Local Plan 2019⁷.
- 2.6A In addition, professional judgment has been applied.

Consultation

- 2.7A Following the submission of the 2020 application, feedback has been received from Historic England (21 April 2020) and the Reading Borough Council (24 June 2020) in respect of Built Heritage. Reading Borough Council does not have its own heritage officer, therefore it employs a consultant, who

has provided a written response to the application These written responses are included at Appendix 2.1A: Heritage Statement.

- 2.8A Comments provided by Historic England were that impacts are likely to arise from the visibility of the scheme in important views. The assessment of significance carried out by Historic England in their identification of the station building as important as part of the history of the development of the railway broadly aligns with the assessment that underpins the assessment carried out in this chapter.
- 2.9A The Reading Borough Council heritage consultant comments were:
- that the proposals are likely to have adverse effects on the setting and significance of the Grade II listed Reading Station, with reference in particular to the main public view which in their opinion is afforded by visitors to the town;
 - that the proposals would affect views from the Grade II listed Great Western House and that similar, though lesser impacts would be anticipated on Nos. 13 and 15 Station Road (Grade II); and the statue of King Edward VI' (Grade II);.
 - that the proposed development would harm the setting of the the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area (CA).
- 2.10A The comments raised by Historic England and the Council's heritage consultant have been taken into account and responses provided below in this chapter.

Assessment Scope

- 2.11A The assessment has been based on a series of development parameters, commitments and assumptions as described in the ES Compliance Letter for the 2021 amended proposed development to which this chapter is appended, as well as the 2020 ES Chapter 2: EIA Process and Methodology; Chapter 4: Proposed Development Description; and Chapter 5: Demolition and Construction Environmental Management.

Technical Scope

- 2.12A Historic environment and planning legislation identifies the significance of heritage receptors (listed buildings, conservation areas etc.) and the contribution that setting makes to that significance. Accordingly, this assessment considers both likely direct (on the receptors) and indirect (on the settings and views/visual appearance of the receptors) impacts and effects. Setting is not a heritage receptor and not a heritage designation. Its importance lies in what it may, or may not, contribute to the significance of a heritage receptor. On this basis, the receptors addressed in this assessment comprise those heritage receptors within the study area, the settings of which may be affected by the 2021 amended proposed development.

Spatial Scope

- 2.13A The assessment has considered the potential for the 2021 amended proposed development, as a whole, to affect those elements of setting that contribute to the heritage significance of the relevant heritage receptors within 500 m of the application site centre. This radius is a typical one in EIA

¹ Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021. National Planning Policy Framework.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

³ HM Government, The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

⁴ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-receptors/>

⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa2-managing-significance-in-decision-taking/>

⁶ DCMS, 2010, Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings

⁷ Reading Borough Council, 2019. Reading Borough Local Plan. RBC.

procedures and no inference about the area of actual effect should necessarily be drawn from this dimension.

2.14A Following on from the identification of heritage receptors within the study area, analysis focussed on those whose setting could be affected by the 2021 amended proposed development. Not all identified heritage receptors within a study radius will be affected by the 2021 amended proposed development due to local street alignment and the height of existing buildings on these streets. Analysis of the heritage receptors that could be affected was aided by the TVIA in Chapter 1 of ES Volume 2 of the 2020 ES.

Temporal Scope

2.15A The assessment has considered the following scenarios:

- Existing baseline;
- Existing baseline + 2021 amended proposed development; and
- Existing baseline + 2021 amended proposed development + cumulative schemes.

Baseline Characterisation Method

Desk Study

2.16A Historic Environment Records (HER), historic mapping and archival data were used to establish the built historical development of the application site and study area. Historic England’s National Designation List also provided information on nearby designated heritage receptors. Information from RBC provided details on locally listed buildings and Conservation Areas. [An explanation of how the baseline information was gathered is set out in the Heritage Statement or ‘baseline study’ submitted as Appendix 2.1A to this ES Chapter.](#)

Field Study

2.17A A site visit was undertaken in April 2019. This involved a visit of the application site and the surrounding study area. Montagu Evans undertook a further site visit in July 2021 to consider the receptors as part of its review of the previous 2020 ES chapter.

Assessment Method

Methodology

2.18A The baseline for the assessment of built heritage effects is the existing site conditions. A description of the baseline characterisation is presented within the ‘Baseline Conditions’ section of this chapter and has been derived from the site visit and from the detailed information provided in the Heritage Statement at Appendix 2.1A.

2.19A Sensitive receptors for the purposes of this assessment are heritage receptors as defined by the NPPF. Designated heritage receptors include listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments and registered parks and gardens. Locally listed buildings are non-designated heritage receptors and so do not benefit from any statutory protection. Their sensitivity or susceptibility to change is accordingly less, and harmful effects are not specially weighted in the way that harmful impacts on designated receptors are.

Defining 'Heritage Significance'

2.20A The term 'significance' is defined in the NPPF as: “*the value of a heritage receptor to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic*”. The Historic England 'Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2' provides an alternative definition as “*the sum of its architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest*”.

2.21A The quality in a heritage receptor that is affected by change is described as 'significance', referred to for clarity throughout the assessment as 'heritage significance'. This incorporates the concepts of 'special architectural and historic interest' (in relation to listed buildings and conservation areas, and in the language of statute, here the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990) and 'character and appearance' in relation to conservation areas (same statutory reference). The 'significance' of a heritage receptor is a quality that may be more or less sensitive to change, depending on the specific characteristics of the receptor and its setting. Similar receptors can sustain more or less change depending on their settings, their condition or, as in this case, the likely direction of change as established in a development plan document.

2.22A The heritage significance of heritage receptors, both designated and non-designated, varies according to the nature and characteristics of the receptor in question and its setting, which can contribute to significance. A number of listed buildings at the same grade, for instance, may have greater or lesser levels of heritage significance depending on:

- the nature of their special architectural or historic interest (i.e. the reason for listing);
- the degree to which the listed building has changed since it was listed (i.e. whether physical alteration of the building since listing has preserved or enhanced its special interest); or
- the degree to which the setting of the listed building has changed since listing.

2.23A Not all receptors, therefore, and despite being nationally designated, have the same level of sensitivity. A general classification of a heritage receptor (into grades) does not equate to an identical or similar level of heritage significance in every receptor of the same grade. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 does not refer to grades of listed building or conservation area, referring only to 'special architectural or historic interest', and the statutory tests are applied equally to the designated heritage receptors concerned. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's 'Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings' states that “*Buildings on the list are graded to reflect their relative architectural and historic interest*”. Grading therefore provides a helpful general indication of a level of heritage significance, and that has been used in assessing the sensitivity of heritage receptors to change. What matters are the particular qualities that make it special.

Approach to Assessing Heritage Significance

2.24A The heritage significance, or ‘value’ in ES termsinology, of a listed building that may be affected is its 'special architectural and historic interest'. More precisely, a development may affect this special architectural and historic interest by harming or reducing the degree to which such interest can be appreciated (i.e. the potential impact).

2.25A The heritage significance of a conservation area that may be affected by the proposed development is its 'character and appearance'. Conservation areas are defined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as being “*areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*”. A development may affect this character and appearance by harming or reducing the degree to which these qualities can be appreciated (the potential impact).

2.26A Unlike listed buildings where it is the special architectural and historic interest that may be affected by a development, it is the general architectural and historic interest that can affect the heritage significance of a locally listed building or a building considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area. [However, such buildings are not listed buildings, and the frame of reference for assessing their impact is the conservation area as a whole.](#)

2.27A Similarly, and in relation to all receptors, one looks at the effect of proposals on the whole of a receptor’s significance, ascertaining what is present before the development occurs and what will be left after.

2.28A The methodology adopted to assess the potential impacts of the proposed development upon the heritage significance of the heritage receptors is to measure those impacts – using professional

judgement - against criteria contained in national and local policy and guidance relating to the historic built environment.

- 2.29A The methodology that was used to determine the significance of built heritage receptors, the severity of any impacts upon them, and the resulting significance of environmental effect, is as follows:
- Evaluation of the significance (i.e. sensitivity) of built heritage receptors (based on existing designations; and professional judgement where such resources have no formal designation);
 - Prediction of the magnitude of likely impacts upon the known significance of built heritage receptors;
 - Consideration of any inherent mitigation measures that have been included within the development proposals (and any additional mitigation that might be required in the design and construction or operational lifetime of the proposed development) in order to reduce or eliminate any significant adverse effects upon heritage receptors; and
 - Quantification of residual effects (those that might remain after mitigation).
- 2.30A The likely significance of any effect the proposed development may have on a built heritage receptor or its setting is a function of the sensitivity of a built heritage receptor and the magnitude of the impact resulting from the proposed development.
- 2.31A [The heritage significance, in ES terminology, ‘value’ of each of the receptors is set out in Table 2.4 and are taken from the Heritage Statement \(Appendix 2.1A\).](#)
- 2.32A [The following criteria give a range from Exceptional to Very Low value. This allows for a professional judgement to be made as to the relative interest of a heritage receptor in line with the proportionate approach advocated in the NPPF.](#)
- 2.33A [Furthermore, this is considered to be an appropriate approach as, whilst all grades of listed buildings and conservation areas enjoy the same statutory protection, it is generally accepted that a Grade I listed building has a greater and/or more sensitivity heritage interest than a Grade II listed building, and that a World Heritage Site is of exceptional interest. A gradation of heritage value for the purposes of ES assessment was therefore applied accordingly. The criteria for heritage value we have used in this Chapter is as follows:](#)
- [Exceptional - Building/site/area of international heritage value World Heritage Sites and can include Grade I and II* statutorily listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens.](#)
 - [High Building/site/area of national heritage value - Can include Grade I and II* statutorily listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens](#)
 - [Medium - Building/site/area of national heritage value- Can include Grade II statutorily listed buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments and Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens.](#)
 - [Low - Building/site/area of national or regional heritage value, or particular local heritage value Can include Conservation Areas and locally listed buildings \(or equivalent\)](#)
 - [Very Low- Building/site/area of local heritage value- Can include receptors with some evidence of local heritage value but in an incoherent or eroded form of local interest and generally with no statutory protection.](#)
- 2.34A [It is recognised that some of the types of heritage assets listed above fall into a number of categories. For example scheduled monuments could be identified as being either exceptional, high, or medium value. The significance or value of each of the specific assets is determined in each case according to professional judgement in accordance with Historic England’s *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment*, *Good Practice Advice Note in Planning Note 2*.](#)

Demolition and Construction

- 2.35A The methodology utilised for assessing the demolition and construction effects has been consistent with that utilised for the completed development stage effects. Demolition and construction works are a necessary first step in the redevelopment of any site. It is common across urban environments and means that receptors would have a general awareness of demolition and construction activities taking place. In this instance, demolition and construction impacts would not be considered to be significant in EIA terms, as they are indirect, temporary in nature and short-medium term in duration. Accordingly, a qualitative assessment has been undertaken.

Completed Development

- 2.36A The effect of the 2021 amended proposed development on each of the identified heritage receptors has been considered and a judgement formed as to the importance and sensitivity of the heritage receptors (as considered in the baseline study); the magnitude of impact; and the duration, extent and scale of the effect. In doing so, consideration has been given to embedded mitigation measures. Appropriate cross-referencing has been made to the Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs) in Technical Appendix to Chapter 1: Townscape and Visual in ES Volume 2 of the 2021 ES.

Assessment Criteria

- 2.37A The criteria used to assess if an effect is significant, 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.

Receptor Susceptibility and Sensitivity Criteria

- 2.38A While the heritage significance of a heritage receptor may be an assessable quality that can be analysed and described for each receptor, and is expressed usually in ES terms as the ‘value’ of the receptor, be it at a higher or lower level, the sensitivity of that significance to change varies depending on the specific circumstances of the receptor in relation to the source of the change.
- 2.39A The relative sensitivity of heritage receptors is assessable in the abstract (without considering a specific physical relationship to a specific type and magnitude of change) up to a certain point, given the distinction between designated and non-designated heritage receptors, which is principally the distinction between national special architectural or historic interest (designated heritage receptors including conservation areas) and purely local architectural or historic interest (locally listed buildings). Designated heritage receptors of a higher heritage ‘value’ are generally considered to have a higher susceptibility to change and are therefore more sensitive, and non-designated heritage receptors of lower heritage ‘value’ are considered to have a lower susceptibility to change and are therefore less sensitive. This is by virtue of the potentially greater level of heritage significance contained in the fabric and appearance of a statutorily listed building than, say, a locally listed building.
- 2.40A This approach is applied to the specific circumstances of the heritage receptors that could be affected by the 2021 amended proposed development. The susceptibility of individual heritage receptors to change are considered against the general levels of significance or ‘value’ outlined above, and are varied by the specific circumstances of individual heritage receptors, their relationship to the application site and the nature of the change. A heritage receptor - regardless of its type - that is within the application site or in close proximity to the application site has a higher susceptibility to change than a heritage receptor that is further away from the application site and, for instance, lacks inter-visibility with the proposed development. [This approach is endorsed by Historic England’s Setting Guidance⁸. It has of course to be applied flexibly to the facts of any case. This approach is also intended to provide a realistic assessment of the susceptibility of heritage receptors in the vicinity of the application site to change. This judgement on susceptibility is then combined with the value of the receptor to conclude on the sensitivity. This is then](#)

⁸ The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic England Good Practce Advice in Planning Note 3

combined with a consideration of the magnitude of change in order to arrive at a reliable and realistic assessment of effects. The matter is also highly relevant to change in a busy urban environment which is evolving. Thus, the potential magnitude of impacts varies in relation to context (see Table 2.2).

2.41A Following the application of this approach, the sensitivity of individual heritage receptors in the study area is set out in Table 2.1, taking into account the nature of the receptor in question and its relationship with the application site. The sensitivity of heritage receptors is described as High, Medium or Low.

Table 2.1A: Receptor Sensitivity Criteria	
Sensitivity	Criteria
Low	- The receptor has a high ability to accommodate the specific proposed change, and/or - The receptor’s existing setting may make a negative contribution to the heritage value of the asset, and/or - Distance, topography and/or intervening may block any visual relationship with the proposed change.
Medium	- The receptor has a medium ability to accommodate the specific proposed change; and/or - The receptors’ existing setting may make a moderate contribution to the significance of the asset; and/or - Distance, topography and/or intervening development may block or allow a visual relationship with the proposed change.
High	- The receptor has a high ability to accommodate the specific proposed change, and/or - The receptor’s existing setting makes a positive contribution to the heritage value of the receptor; and/or - Distance, topography and/or intervening development may allow a visual relationship with the proposed change.

Impact Magnitude Criteria

2.42A The magnitude of impact has been classified as nil to high, in accordance with the criteria set out in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2A: Impact Magnitude Criteria	
Magnitude of Impact	Criteria
Nil	There would be no change to the value of the receptor – no change to the fabric of the built heritage receptor or its setting.
Very Low	There would be change, but it would be barely perceptible
Low	Slight change to the built heritage receptor or its setting that would not be readily noticed.
Medium	An obvious change to the fabric of the built heritage receptor or its setting that would be noticeable but not necessarily in contrast to the existing urban fabric.
High	Considerable change to the fabric of the built heritage receptor or its setting in complete contrast with the existing urban fabric.

Scale of Effects

2.43A The environmental effect is determined by comparing the sensitivity of heritage receptors with the magnitude of impact, as outlined in Table 2.3. Effects are assessed as being beneficial, or adverse. For

effects described as beneficial or adverse, significance levels of negligible, minor, moderate and major are assessed.

Table 2.3A: Scale of Effects Criteria			
Magnitude of Impact	Sensitivity of Receptors		
	Low	Medium	High
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Very Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Low	Negligible	Minor	Minor/Moderate
Medium	Minor	Minor/Moderate	Moderate
High	Minor/Moderate	Moderate	Major

2.44A Combining respective sensitivity and magnitude of change matrices may not provide the appropriate category for the significance of the effect. These judgements are not absolute, and the final judgment is the product of the tabular analysis subjected to a further discursive one. This is necessary because heritage impact assessment is not a strict quantitative process and some of these considerations will depend upon professional judgement. Accordingly, there is an emphasis on narrative text throughout the report to describe the receptors and the judgements in reference to the significance of the identified effects.

2.45A Note that moderate and major effects are considered to be ‘significant’ (the shaded cells in Table 2.3).

2.46A The nature of effects has been described as:

- Beneficial or adverse;
- Temporary or Permanent;
- Short, medium or long term; and
- Significant (moderate or major) or not significant (nil or negligible, minor or minor/moderate).

2.47A Following their identification, significant beneficial or adverse effects have been classified on the basis of their nature and duration as follows:

- Temporary: Effects that persist for a limited period only (due, for example, to particular activities taking place for a short period of time);
- Permanent: Effects that result from an irreversible change to the baseline environment (e.g. alterations to built fabric) or which will persist for the foreseeable future (e.g. noise from regular or continuous operations or activities);
- Direct: Effects that arise from the effect of activities that form an integral part of the proposed development (e.g. construction of a new building);
- Indirect: Effects that arise from the effect of activities that do not explicitly form part of the proposed development; and
- Secondary: Effects that arise as a consequence of an initial effect of the proposed development (e.g. induced employment elsewhere)

2.48A All listed buildings and historic buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of a conservation area have been identified. Where these have a group value relationship, or if they are in a similar location, the assessment has considered the effects of the proposed development on the built heritage receptors as a whole in order to avoid repetitive or overlong assessment. Notwithstanding this, each assessment has identified each building that is considered to fall within that group.

Assumptions and Limitations

- 2.49A The assessment of effects has been undertaken on the basis of the information supplied on the 2021 amended proposed development works and estimated completion date for the proposed development, as updated in the new submission and stated within the ES Compliance Letter.
- 2.50A The assessment has assessed the potential impact and likely effects on heritage receptors based on the maximum height and massing for the 2021 amended proposed development. The wirelines prepared by AVR London are modelled on the maximum parameters. These wirelines, submitted with the application, have informed the final assessment of the effect on heritage receptors. Additionally, since the 2020 application was submitted, the Development Parameters have been amended to reduce the land uses proposed and consequently revised illustrative masterplans have been prepared. Two illustrative schemes have been specifically prepared to demonstrate how a scheme which includes residential in Plots A-D might be delivered and a scheme where offices are delivered in Plot D with residential in Plots A-C. These illustrative schemes are included in the revised DAS and demonstrate two ways but not the only ways acceptable schemes could come forward in accordance with the proposed Development Parameters and Design Code at the reserved matters stage.
- 2.51A The Design Code is submitted as part of the formal outline planning application, so that compliance with it can be required by condition, on the outline planning permission, at reserved matters stage. At the detailed design stage, the commitments made within the Design Code in regard to 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.

Baseline Conditions
Existing Baseline

- 2.52A This chapter is supported by a Heritage Statement (Appendix 2.1A) which describes the history of the application site and its surroundings, and analyses and describes any heritage significance, or ‘value’ in ES terms. The Heritage Statement includes illustrations.
- 2.53A The application site is bounded by Vastern Road to the north; Trooper Potts Way to the east; the former Royal Mail sorting office and Reading Railway Station to the south; and Caversham Road to the west . To the north of the application site are residential buildings and low lying industrial buildings which front on to the River Thames. Further residential and commercial areas extend to the east, west and south of the application site.
- 2.54A The application site is occupied by pavilion style commercial units (including an Aldi, The Range, TGI Fridays, Mothercare, Majestic Wine) and associated surface car parking. The units are low rise, approximately two storeys high.
- 2.55A The application site does not contain any designated or undesignated heritage receptors, nor is it located within a conservation area. Within the 500m radius study area, 37 heritage receptors have been identified. These are presented in the Table 2.4.

Table 2.4A: Heritage Receptors within Study Area			
Map No.	Asset Name	Listing Designation	List Entry No.
Scoped into full assessment			
3	Former Town Council Chamber	Grade II*	1113400

Table 2.4A: Heritage Receptors within Study Area			
4	Main Building of Reading Station	Grade II	1321892
5	The Statue of King Edward VII	Grade II	1113589
6	Former Great Western House	Grade II	1113591
8	Regent Place	Grade II	1113434
9	13 and 15 Station Road	Grade II	1113590
10	Reading Museum	Grade II	1321990
11	Former School of Art	Grade II	1113600
13	The Concert Hall	Grade II	1113401
18	29 and 31 Caversham Road	Grade II	1113433
36	55 Vastern Road	N/A – Locally Listed	N/A
A	Market Place Conservation Area	N/A	N/A
Scoped out of full assessment			
1	Church of St Laurence	Grade I	1113532
2	Greyfriars Church	Grade I	1321952
7	Walter Parson’s Corn Stores	Grade II	1248738
12	11 Friar Street	Grade II	1321949
12	12 Friar Street	Grade II	1113484
12	13 Friar Street	Grade II	1321950
12	14 Friar Street	Grade II	1113485
12	15 Friar Street	Grade II	1113486
14	154 Friar Street	Grade II	1113489
14	155 Friar Street	Grade II	1303154
15	147 Friar Street	Grade II	1113488
16	Municipal Buildings	Grade II	1113402
17	Queen Victoria Jubilee Statue	Grade II	1113483
19	Small Town Hall	Grade II	1321989

Table 2.4A: Heritage Receptors within Study Area			
20	Kings Meadow Swimming Pool	Grade II	1391153
21	1-31 Queen Victoria Street	Grade II	1113564
22	Caversham War Memorial	Grade II	1445141
23	Wall and Gatepiers of St Laurence’s Grave-yard	Grade II	1155686
24	Tracery Fragments to South of No 10	Grade II	1113392
25	Drinking Fountain on South Side of St Laurence’s Tower	Grade II	1156250
26	St Laurence’s Church and Churchyard Twelve Tombs in St Laurence’s Churchyard	Grade II	1113533
27	Maiwand Memorial	Grade II	1155769
28	Quadrant Walls and Railings to former No 64 (Greyfriars Vicarage)	Grade II	1113487
29	27 and 28 Market Place	Grade II	1302967
29	23-26 Market Place	Grade II	1113536
30	The Coopers Public House	Grade II	1113537
31	32 Market Place	Grade II	1156271
32	Trustee Savings Bank	Grade II	1113538
33	The Mitre Inn	Grade II	1157216
34	Reading Abbey: a Cluniac and Benedictine monastery and Civil War earthwork	Scheduled Monument	1007932
35	The Forbury Garden	Park and Garden, Grade II	1000586

- 2.56A The application site is located approximately 360m north of the Market Place Conservation Area which has been assessed as having a Medium heritage value.
- 2.57A All the designated heritage receptors are located south-east of the application site within the historic centre of Reading and obscured from the application site by the railway viaduct and new railway station. The exception to this is 29 and 31 Caversham Road, as well as Regent Place which are to the south-west of the application site.
- 2.58A There is a locally listed building (non-designated heritage receptor) on the opposite side of Vastern Road (No 55), approximately 35 m north of the centre of the application site. The locally listed building is the front façade of a house associated with the offices of SSE behind it, as such it is semi-industrial in nature. As a locally listed building, it does not benefit from any statutory protection.

Sensitive Receptors

2.59A Table 2.4 lists all heritage receptors, both designated and non-designated identified within the 500 m study area. Subsequent analysis of the setting of these heritage receptors and the intervening built townscape form undertaken as part of the Heritage Statement concluded that only those identified in Table 2.5 have the potential to be affected by the 2021 amended proposed development. The remaining analysis focuses on these.

Table 2.5A: Summary of Receptors Scoped into assessment	
Receptor	Sensitivity
Former Town Council Chamber	Medium
Main building of Reading General Station	Medium
Regent Place	Medium
29 and 31 Caversham Road	Medium
Great Western House	Medium
13 and 15 Station Road	Medium
Statue of King Edward VII	Medium
Reading Museum	Medium
Former School of Art	Medium
Concert Hall	Medium
No 55 Vastern Road	Low
Market Place Conservation Area	Medium

- 2.60A The other designated heritage receptors identified within the study area have not been considered in the assessment due to the intervening built form, landscape and/or infrastructure providing visual and physical obstructions/screening. Many of the streets south of the application site and within the identified Market Place Conservation Area are narrow and have 4-5 storey buildings on either side of the street. As such, views from the Conservation Area to the 2021 amended proposed development would remain unaffected.
- 2.61A The summaries of significance and judgement on the receptors that have not been taken forward to full ES assessment is set out in Section 3.0 in Appendix 2.1A.

Assessment of Effects

Demolition and Construction Effects

- 2.62A The impact on heritage receptors caused by the demolition and construction stage would be indirect, temporary and short-term compared to completed development effects which are longer term or permanent.
- 2.63A The effects caused by the demolition and construction phases relate to the enclosure of the application site with hoardings; demolition of the buildings on-site; and effects related to construction traffic and noise. The latter effects are directly related to this assessment because the experience of a built heritage receptor (which is influenced by uses or activity) can contribute to setting, and therefore also contribute to the heritage significance.

- 2.64A This approach is taken from page 6 of GPA3 (2015),⁹ which states: “the setting of a heritage receptor is the surroundings in which a heritage receptor is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the receptor and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of a receptor, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral”.
- 2.65A None of the identified designated heritage receptors would be directly affected during the demolition and construction phases due to their distance from the application site and the intervening built townscape form. Taking into account the embedded mitigation measures that would be adopted as part of the CEMP, the overall effect of the demolition and construction works would be temporary, indirect, **Negligible Adverse**. The temporary nature of this impact is an important planning consideration, because heritage values are permanent.
- 2.66A The locally listed building on Vastern Road would suffer some demolition and construction effects, mainly noise related due to its proximity. The setting of this heritage receptor is semi-industrial in nature and it has already been altered by the presence of the dual carriageway Vastern Road. Taking into account the embedded mitigation measures that would be adopted as part of the CEMP, the overall effect of the demolition and construction works would be temporary, indirect, **Negligible Adverse**.

Completed Development Effects

- 2.67A The application site has no heritage significance. The application site is not derelict and is still in use as a retail park. [The site does not evidence good urban design, and detracts from what is recognised in the development plan as a strategically important location capable of delivering transformational change.](#)
- 2.68A The 2021 amended proposed development would be of considerable scale and density and would change the setting of heritage receptors by virtue of its visibility and presence. Any visibility is not, by itself, harmful. The heritage significance of each of the heritage receptors assessed does not inherently rely on no change occurring in their setting, nor is it necessarily harmed by the presence of new development in their setting that is highly visible. Quite the opposite; the visibility of new development can be positive, contributing to place making and good urban design (the way an area appears and functions, which can be a heritage setting benefit).
- 2.69A The 2021 amended proposed development would enhance the application site by providing commercial and residential accommodation, as well as public spaces and new access routes. The design at ground level would provide an active street frontage which would be of benefit to Vastern Road. Interpretation of the Design Code provides commitments to deliver high quality design at the reserved matters stage.
- 2.70A Table 2.6 summarises the sensitivity of the identified heritage receptors, assessed in line with the methodology described earlier (specifically assessed in terms of the relationship of the receptor to the 2021 amended proposed development), the magnitude of impact arising from the completed development, and the resulting scale of the effect on heritage significance.

Table 2.6A: Sensitivity of Heritage Receptors, Magnitude of Impact and Likely Effects on a Tabular Basis			
Heritage Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Scale of Effect
Former Town Council Chamber	Medium	Negligible	Negligible Adverse
Main building of Reading General Station	Medium	Medium	Minor/ Moderate Adverse

Table 2.6A: Sensitivity of Heritage Receptors, Magnitude of Impact and Likely Effects on a tabular basis			
Regent Place	Medium	Negligible	Negligible Adverse
29 and 31 Caversham Road	Medium	Negligible	Negligible Adverse
Great Western House	Medium	Low	Negligible Adverse
13 and 15 Station Road	Medium	Negligible	Negligible Adverse
Statue of King Edward VII	Medium	Negligible	Negligible Adverse
Reading Museum	Medium	Negligible	Negligible Adverse
Former School of Art	Medium	Negligible	Negligible Adverse
Concert Hall	Medium	Negligible	Negligible Adverse
No 55 Vastern Road	Low	High	Minor Adverse
Market Place Conservation Area	Medium	Negligible	Negligible Adverse

Listed Buildings

- 2.71A The completed development effects would vary between each heritage receptor due to the immediate setting of each heritage receptor and the degree of visibility of the 2021 amended proposed development from each heritage receptor. The main building of Reading General Station and Great Western House would have direct views of the proposed development, albeit at a distance of 250m and 380m respectively. While there are other modern buildings around each, none of them are as tall as those proposed for the completed development.
- 2.72A The architectural importance of the glazed tower of the main building of Reading General Station would be diminished in some views from some vantage points by the height of the buildings of the proposed development behind it. This change is shown by the wireline modelled in View 25. As such the magnitude of the effect is judged to be **Medium** and the effects would be permanent, indirect, **Minor / Moderate Adverse**. The effect would not be significant (see Table 2.4). Professional judgement has been applied in this case to come to the conclusion that this effect is not significant owing to the nature of the effect as an indirect setting effect. The effect is a visual effect on the setting of the listed building. The new development will be experienced at a distance of over 200m from the receptor, which will reduce the impression of the impact, and also in combination with consented schemes which are coming forward as part of the regeneration of sites within the SPD area.
- 2.73A The setting of Great Western House has been changed by virtue of its neighbouring modern buildings. The further change that would be introduced by the proposed development would be in keeping with the existing urban fabric. The listed building’s principal façade is experienced as part of the street, and the proposals would be seen obliquely across the front as part of a busy modern environment. Whilst the proposals would be noticeable in that context, distance, orientation of the listed building, existing context and the scale and location of what is proposed would not undermine the ability to appreciate the

⁹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-receptors/>

Italianate or mid Victorian detailing and proportions of the building. Accordingly, we find an impact of **Negligible Magnitude** and there is a **Negligible Adverse Effect** on its setting.

2.74A The other identified heritage receptors in Table 2.5 are further away and would not have a direct view of the 2021 amended proposed development and/or the 2021 amended proposed development would not be visible in views of these receptors. There may be glimpsed views from within the settings of the group of municipal buildings to the south of Blagrove Street, including the Grade II* listed Former Town Council Chamber, but any change in these views would not alter an experience of the important elements of the settings of these buildings. The magnitude of impact is considered to be **Negligible**. The scale of the effect would be permanent, indirect, **Negligible Adverse**.

2.75A The core of the Market Place Conservation Area is located to the south around the municipal buildings and historic setting of the Church. Views of the proposals may be glimpsed from the northern part of the Conservation Area but this will not affect an appreciation of significance or the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The magnitude of impact is judged to be **Negligible** and the effect would be permanent, indirect, **Negligible Adverse**.

Locally Listed Buildings

2.76A The locally listed No 55 Vastern Road would have a direct view of the 2021 amended proposed development. The introduction of the proposed development would represent a high magnitude impact given the scale and massing of the newly introduced buildings. However, the setting of this heritage receptor is semi-industrial in nature and it has already been altered by the presence of the dual carriageway Vastern Road. The 2021 amended proposed development would improve the character of the application site, introduce new high quality public realm and thereby improve the ability to appreciate the locally listed building. Considering these factors, as well as the low sensitivity of the receptor, the effect would be permanent, indirect **Minor Adverse** and not significant.

Assessment of Residual Effects
Additional Mitigation

2.77A On the basis that none of the effects on the relevant heritage receptors meet the criteria to be deemed significant as set out in Table 2.3A and Paragraph 2.45A no additional mitigation measures are proposed in respect of built heritage.

Enhancement Measures

2.78A No enhancement measurements are proposed in respect of built heritage.

Demolition and Construction Residual Effects

2.79A The residual effects remain unchanged, namely temporary, indirect, **Negligible Adverse**.

Completed Development Residual Effects

2.80A The residual effects range from permanent, indirect, **Negligible Adverse** (not significant) to permanent, indirect, **Minor/Moderate Adverse** (not significant).

Summary of Residual Effects

Table 2.7A: Summary of Residual Effects including Additional Mitigation			
Receptor	Residual Effect		Nature of Residual Effect*

Table 2.7A: Summary of Residual Effects including Additional Mitigation								
		Additional Mitigation	Scale of Effect **	+ -	D I	P T	R IR	St Mt Lt
Demolition and Construction								
No 55 Vastern Road	Introduction of demolition and construction features and activities and the resulting visual and aural disruption to the setting of the listed buildings and locally listed building affecting the ability to appreciate the heritage significance	n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
Former Town Council Chamber		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
Main building of Reading General Station		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
Regent Place		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
29 and 31 Caversham Road		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
Great Western House		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
13 and 15 Station Road		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
Statue of King Edward VII		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
Reading Museum		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
Former School of Art		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
Concert Hall		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
Market Place Conservation Area		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	St
Completed Development								
55 Vastern Road	Introduction of new built form within views of heritage receptors and the resulting visual alteration to the setting of the listed buildings and locally listed building affecting the ability to appreciate the heritage significance	n/a	Minor	-	I	T	R	P
Former Town Council Chamber		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	P
Main building of Reading General Station		n/a	Minor/Moderate	-	I	T	R	P
Regent Place		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	P
29 and 31 Caversham Road		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	P
Great Western House		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	P
13 and 15 Station Road		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	P

Table 2.7A: Summary of Residual Effects including Additional Mitigation								
Statue of King Edward VII		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	P
Reading Museum		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	P
Former School of Art		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	P
Concert Hall		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	P
Market Place Conservation Area		n/a	Negligible	-	I	T	R	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								

2.81A The residual built heritage effects on the main building of Reading General Station would not be significant.

Cumulative Effects

2.82A Table 2.8 provides a summary of the likelihood for inter-project cumulative effects to arise during demolition and construction and at the completed development stage for the 2021 amended proposed development taking into consideration the list of cumulative schemes presented in Chapter 2: EIA Process and Methodology of ES Volume 1 of the 2020 ES.

Table 2.8A: Inter-Project Cumulative Effects				
Cumulative Development	Demolition and Construction		Operation / Completed Development	
	Cumulative Effects Likely?	Reason	Cumulative Effects Likely?	Reason
Former BMW Site – Thames Quarter	No	Development considered to be too far away	No	Development considered to be too far away
Station Hill				
Toys R Us				
Land between Weldale Street and Chatham Street				
Network Rail Thames Valley Area site office/Former Royal Mail site	Yes	Demolition and construction phases may overlap and much of the area would be boarded up and there would be increase noise levels	Yes	Another tall development near the proposed development
Former Scottish and Southern Energy site				
29 Station Road				
Broad Street Mall, Broad Street	No	Development considered to be too far away	No	Development considered to be too far away

2.83A Accordingly, the cumulative effects assessment has focused on the following schemes by virtue of their proximity to the application site:

- Network Rail Thames Valley Area site office/Former Royal Mail site;
- Former Scottish and Southern Energy site; and
- 29 Station Road.

Demolition and Construction Cumulative Effects

2.84A Should the three cumulative schemes be constructed at the same time as the 2021 amended proposed development, the cumulative effect on heritage receptors in the vicinity of the application site may be magnified above those effects resulting the proposed development itself.

2.85A The closest designated heritage receptor is the main building of Reading General Station. Between it and the cumulative schemes of Network Rail Thames Valley Area site are the railway lines. The SSE site is at a significant distance and 29 Station Road is closer but is still separated by roads and as such the cumulative effects through demolition and construction works would not change and remain as temporary, indirect, **Negligible Adverse**.

2.86A The same can be said of Great Western House. The SSE development is too far away to have any effect and the railway lines provide a buffer between it and the Network Rail Thames Valley Area site. 29 Station Road is separated by a road which further reduces the likelihood of any cumulative effect. The effects would therefore remain as temporary, indirect, **Negligible Adverse**.

2.87A Should the demolition and construction of the former Scottish and Sothern Energy site and the 2021 amended proposed development take place at the same time, then cumulative effects are likely to arise in respect of No 55 Vastern Road. This would be due to the proximity of these schemes. The cumulative effect would be temporary, indirect **Minor Adverse** on this receptor.

2.88A The other identified heritage receptors are too far away from the application site to experience cumulative demolition and construction effects.

Completed Development Cumulative Effects

2.89A The introduction of cumulative schemes would be in keeping with urban context and changing surrounding townscape. As these schemes would put the 2021 amended proposed development within context, the scale of the cumulative effects would remain unchanged from that reported for the proposed development in isolation.

2.90A The proposed redevelopment of the former Royal Mail site would result in the introduction of a 25 storey building to the south west of the application site. However, this is not oriented directly on the station, and the proposals would largely interpose, resulting in no greater cumulative impact than that already assessed on the Reading General Station, or other heritage receptors identified.

2.91A The proposed redevelopment of 29 Station Road would result in the introduction of a 22-storey building and would result in some intervisibility with the proposed scheme on the main building of Reading General Station, Great Western House and 13 and 15 Station Road. However, for the reasons set out above, we conclude that there would be no greater impact on the Station Building, Great Western House in the cumulative condition, or likewise to the significance of 13 and 15 Station Road. Hence the assessments do not change in relation to these receptors because their intrinsic qualities which contribute to their heritage value, and the elements of their settings that contribute to that value remain unaffected in the cumulative condition. The effects on these receptors would remain **Minor / Moderate Adverse, Negligible Adverse** and **Negligible Adverse** respectively.

2.92A The development of the former Scottish and Southern Energy site would result in the redevelopment of the entire site adjacent the locally listed building of 55 Vastern Road and the introduction of an 11 storey building in this location. The location of this development and the nature and orientation of interposing development means there are, in our view, unlikely to be any interaction with

the other receptors identified. As a consequence there are no cumulative effects resulting from intervisibility or visual interaction within the setting of the heritage receptors with the exception of 55 Vastern Road. This, however, will not intensify the effects arising from the application site and thus we find the effect on 55 Vastern Road to remain as **Minor Adverse**.

2.93A The other identified heritage assets are too far away from the application site to experience any cumulative demolition and construction effects.

2.94A None of the identified effects on the relevant heritage receptors would meet the criteria to be deemed significant as set out in Table 2.3A and Paragraph 2.45A.