



Environmental Statement Addendum: Volume 2 Townscape, Conservation and Visual Assessment

Station Hill, Reading

October 2020

Waterman Infrastructure & Environment Limited



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Introduction

- 1.1
- In March 2013, an Outline Planning Application for the redevelopment of approximately 2.14 hectares (ha) of previously developed land at Station Hill (the ‘Site’) was submitted by Sackville Developments Reading Ltd (SDRL). The development was known as the Station Hill 3 (SH3) Scheme. The SH3 Scheme included the demolition of all the existing buildings and structures within the SH3 Site, excluding the existing multi-storey NCP car park, and replacement with four new commercial buildings (referred to as Building Plots A - D) and two new primarily residential buildings (referred to as Building Plots E and F). The existing NCP Car-Park would be reconfigured and refurbished. The Planning Application was subsequently granted planning consent by Reading Borough Council (RBC) in January 2015 and is hereafter referred to as the ‘2015 Consented Scheme’.
- 1.2
- In August 2015, SDRL submitted two further planning applications to extend and amend Plot E of the 2015 Consented Scheme to incorporate an adjacent site referred to as the Telecom House Site. These two applications were granted planning consent in July 2016 and are together referred to in this report as the ‘2016 Consented Scheme’.
- 1.3
- Following acquisition of the Site from SDRL in 2018, SH Reading Master LLP (the Applicant) made changes to Plots E and F of the 2016 Consented Scheme (referred to collectively as Phase 1 or the South Site) to respond to a series of design alterations. This was undertaken by way of applications pursuant to Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 (hereafter referred to as the 2019 Section 73 Applications). At the same time, reserved matters applications were submitted for Plots E and F. These applications were granted planning consent in December 2019 and are hereafter referred to as the ‘2019 Consented Scheme’.
- 1.4
- In December 2019, the Applicant submitted a new hybrid application (the ‘2019 Hybrid Application’) for the area of the Site to the north of Garrard Street, known as Phases 2 and 3 or the North Site. Changes to the 2019 Hybrid Application were submitted in June 2020 during the determination period. Once approved, the 2019 Hybrid Application would replace the 2019 Consented Scheme for the North Site.
- 1.5
- The Applicant is now seeking to make further changes to Phase 1 (Plots E and F) of the Station Hill Development by way of two further Section 73 applications. Of relevance to this Townscape, Conservation and Visual Impact Assessment (TCVIA), these changes include minor alterations to the height and massing of the plots. The 2019 Consented Scheme as amended by the above changes (hereafter referred to as the ‘Proposed Amendments’) is hereafter referred to as the ‘Development’.
- 1.6
- In 2013, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken of the SH3 Scheme and an Environmental Statement (ES) prepared to accompany the planning application. An ES Addendum was subsequently prepared and submitted in September 2013 to address additional environmental

- issues that had come to light during the determination period. Together, the ES and ES Addendum are hereafter collectively referred to as the ‘2013 ES’.
- 1.7
- In 2015, an ES was prepared to accompany the application to revise Plot E to incorporate the Telecom House Site. This ES was a full update of the 2013 ES and covered the entire SH3 Scheme as amended by Telecom House. During the determination period, amendments were made to the planning application for Plot E incorporating the Telecom House Site and a letter setting out the EIA implications of the design amendments was submitted to Reading Borough Council (RBC) in December 2015. Together, the ES and EIA implications of design amendments letter are referred to as the ‘2015 ES’
- 1.8
- The 2019 Section 73 Applications were accompanied by an ES Addendum which considered the proposed amendments to the 2016 Consented Scheme together with new cumulative schemes that had come forward since the 2015 ES and / or changes to the baseline conditions at, and surrounding the Site. This is hereafter referred to as the ‘2019 ES Addendum’. Collectively the 2015 ES and the 2019 ES Addendum are referred to as the ‘2019 Consented Scheme ES’ and is the ES to which the Proposed Amendments for Plots E and F should be compared.
- 1.9
- A TCVIA of the proposed Development at Station Hill, Reading was produced by Tavernor Consultancy and presented in Volume 2 of the 2015 ES. The 2019 Addendum TCVIA and this Addendum TCVIA has been prepared by Waterman to provide an update to the assessment of the likely townscape, conservation and visual impacts as a result of the Proposed Amendments and changes to the cumulative schemes that have occurred since production of the 2019 Consented Scheme ES. This update should be read in conjunction with the TCVIA presented as part of the 2019 Consented Scheme ES.

Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria

- 1.10
- The methodology used in the assessment process is based on Chapter 2 (Methodology) of the 2015 TCVIA and remains materially unchanged apart from the matters set out below. The methodology used in this TCVIA differs from that used in the 2019 Hybrid Application ES. Although both use the recognised assessment methodology, different assessment approaches have resulted in varying significance of effects being concluded within the two separate documents. The significance of the effects of the cumulative scenario presented in this Addendum TCVIA and the 2019 Hybrid Scheme ES are therefore not comparable.
- 1.11
- The assessment presented in this Addendum TCVIA assesses eight of the 32 viewpoints assessed within the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA. These eight viewpoints were selected for reassessment on the basis that the Proposed Amendments may be perceptible within the viewpoint

- analysis and/or have the potential to change the significance of effect on townscape character. Seven of the viewpoints are the same as those presented in the 2019 Addendum TCVIA; an additional viewpoint, VP32, has also been included in this Addendum TCVIA as this viewpoint was of interest to Historic England during consultation in relation to the 2016 Consented Scheme and 2019 Hybrid Application.
- 1.12
- Whilst the buildings within Plots E and F have been demolished since preparation of the 2019 Consented Scheme ES, as this demolition represents part of the Development being assessed, the baseline views presented in this Addendum TCVIA show the buildings within Plots E and F as still being present. This enables the effects of the Development now proposed to be compared with those of the development assessed within the 2019 Consented Scheme ES. However, where the buildings within Plots E and F are visible in the views, commentary has been provided in relation to the existing baseline. In any event, the change in baseline conditions is not considered to alter the assessment of the significance of the effects of the Development.
- 1.13
- The cumulative schemes have changed since preparation of the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA and, where relevant, these have been considered in this Addendum TCVIA.
- 1.14
- This Addendum TCVIA therefore considers the following scenarios in the assessment process:
 - The baseline conditions on the Site as existing in March 2019 with a brief commentary where this has changed in the interim;
 - The proposed development scenario: comprising the reserved matters details for Plots E and F with the remaining Station Hill Development (as maximum parameters) in place (Proposed View); and
 - The cumulative scenario: Reserved matters details for Plots E and F with the 2019 Hybrid Application on the North Site (with Phase 3 as maximum parameters) plus Cumulative Surrounds.

Cumulative Schemes

- 1.15
- An updated list of cumulative schemes to be considered as part of the cumulative effects is provided in the table below.

Table 2.1: Schemes Considered in Cumulative Assessment

Scheme Name/Address	Application Reference	Details of Works
Former Sorting Office, 80 Caversham Road	182252 / OUT	Outline application considering access, landscaping, layout and scale involving the demolition of all existing buildings and structures (Classes B1a & B2) and erection of new buildings ranging between basement and 2 – 25 storeys in height, providing 658 (79 x studio, 227x1, 335x2 & 17x3-bed) residential units, office accommodation (Class B1a), flexible ground floor Class A1-3 uses, a community centre(Class D1), health centre uses (Class D1) and various works including car parking, servicing, public and private open space, landscaping, highways, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works.
29-35 Station Road, Reading, RG1 1LG	181753	Demolition of existing building and the erection of a 22-storey building (at 121m AOD) for hotel accommodation, office accommodation and ground floor retail uses. No parking is proposed on site although servicing will be provided for to the rear of the site accessed from Garrard Street.
52 to 55 Friar Street and 12 Grayfriars Road, Reading, RG1 1DX	162210	Demolition of existing building and structures (Class A1) and erection of 3 new buildings ranging between 6 - 12 (and basement) storeys in height to provide 135 (1xstudio, 54x1, 73x2 & 7x3-bed) residential units (Class C3), a flexible Class A1-A5 use at ground floor level fronting onto Friar St, a flexible Class A1-5, B1(a) or D2 (gym only) use at ground floor level fronting onto Greyfriars Rd, with associated access, parking, servicing, landscaping and engineering works (amended description).
Bristol and West Arcade, Market Place	180358	Demolition of vacant former Bristol & West Arcade (173 – 175 Friar Street) and erection of an eight storey mixed–use building (plus basement) to provide 35 residential units, 4,212 sqm of B1 office floorspace, and 5 retail units (A1/A2/A3), demolition of rear parts of 29 – 31 and 32 Market Place, the change of use of the retained units at 27 – 28, 29 - 31 Market Place at first, second and third floors to provide 8 residential units, change of use at ground and basement level of 32 Market Place from A2 to flexible retail use (A1/A2/A3), retention of 260.4 sqm of A4 use at ground and basement at 29-31 Market Place, change of use at ground and basement of 27 - 28 Market Place to flexible retail use (A1/A2/A3), and associated internal and external works to the Listed Buildings, landscaping, refuse, plant, cycle stores and substation at basement level.
Land between Weldale Street and Chatham Street	170326	Demolition of all existing buildings (including 3 retail units) and structures, and erection of new buildings ranging between lower ground & 4 storeys to lower ground & 11 storeys in height, providing 427 (233x1, 182x2 & 12x3-bed) residential units (Class C3) and 1 flexible ground floor retail shop (Class A1) or restaurant and cafe (Class A3) unit, together with new public realm, landscaping, accesses, parking and associated works (amended description).
Kenavon Drive, Planning	170509	Demolition of the two existing retail (Homebase and former Toys R Us) structures and the erection of new buildings ranging between 2 and 11 storeys in height, providing 765 (18 x studio, 302x1, 409x2 and 36x3- bed) residential units (Class C3), 5 commercial units (1x flexible Class A1-A4, B1 or D1-D2, 1x flexible D1 or D2, 1x flexible Class A1- A5, 1x flexible Class A3 or A4, 1x flexible A1-A5 or D1-D2 uses), various works to the public realm, including a new riverside square, landscaping, accesses, parking and associated works
Former Scottish and Southern Electricity Site, North of Vastern Road	200188	Demolition of existing structures and erection of a series of buildings ranging in height from 1 to 11 storeys, including residential dwellings (C3 use class) and retail floorspace (A3 use class), together with a new north-south pedestrian link, connecting Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road
Broad Street, Reading, Planning	182137	Construction of three residential buildings (Use Class C3) ranging in height from 5 to 22 storeys (Site E to provide 52 units , Site B to provide 139 Units and Site A to provide 172 units) above Broad Street Mall and provision of a podium level amenity area; Construction of an 18 storey building on South Court comprising ground and first floor retail (Use Class A1/A2/A3) and residential over upper floors (Use Class C3, Site C to provide 99 units); Change of use and extension of Quadrant House to form a 3 storey residential building (Use Class C3, Site D to provide 31 units); Creation of three ground floor retail units (Use Class A1/A2/A3) fronting Dusseldorf Way and Queens Walk
Station Hill North Site Hybrid Application	192032	Hybrid application comprising (i) application for Full Planning Permission for Phase 2 (Plot G and public realm) including demolition of existing structures, erection of an eighteen storey building containing office use (Class B1) and flexible retail, non-residential institution and assembly and leisure uses (Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2). Provision of podium deck, vehicular access and parking. New public open space and landscaping. Bridge link over Garrard St and(ii) Application for Outline Planning Permission for Phase 3 (all Matters reserved) for four building Plots (A, B, C and D). Demolition of existing buildings and structures. Mixed-use redevelopment



Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

1.16 This section provides a summary of legislation, planning policy and guidance where it has been updated since the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA. Documents that have not been referred to in this section, remain unchanged from the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA.

National Legislation and Policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2019

1.17 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in February 2019¹ with a correction added in June 2019 to remove paragraph 209a relating to minerals planning policy. The February 2019 NPPF was considered as part of the 2019 Addendum TCVIA and there have been no other changes to the NPPF of relevance to the TCVIA. This section therefore remains as presented in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA.

Local Policy

Reading Borough Local Plan, (November 2019)

1.18 RBC adopted a new Local Plan in November 2019 however, the policies of relevance to the TCVIA, comprising Policy EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment, Policy EN5: Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest, Policy EN6: New Development in a Historic Context and Policy CR10: Tall Buildings have not been changed since the submission draft Local Plan of March 2018 which was described in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA.

Baseline Conditions

History of the Site and surrounding area

1.19 The baseline conditions introduction and section relating to the history of the Site and surrounding area (Chapter 4 Paragraphs 4.1 to 4.9) remain unchanged.

The existing buildings on and near to the Site

1.20 As described above, Telecom House and Friars Walk Shopping Centre have been demolished since the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA.

In addition, the Temporary Events Space has been enclosed within construction hoarding to allow the enabling works for the 2019 Hybrid Application to progress. However, the views presented in this TCVIA show the baseline conditions at the time of the 2019 Addendum TCVIA to enable a comparison of effects.

Designated Heritage Assets

1.21 This section remains unchanged from the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA.

Summary of the Proposed Amendments

1.22 The Proposed Amendments relate to Blocks E and F only. The remainder of the Development remains as per the 2016 Consented Scheme. The key design elements relevant to this assessment are:

Plot E

- Additional height and articulation on Friar Street;
- Increase the height of the central wing by an additional two full storeys;
- Lowering of the southern courtyard;
- Repositioning of amenity space into commercial units along Friars Walk to provide active frontage;
- Provision of additional residential units at ground floor; and
- Lower ground floor amendments, including the relocation of cycle parking.

Plot F

- Additional level added to Plot F with units layout on level 10 replicated on Level 11;
- Conversion of amenity space on Level 11 of Plot F into 2 residential units. Amenity provided on level 12;
- Introduction of 4 no. duplex units on Friars Walk.

Views Assessment

1.23 The assessment presented in this Addendum TCVIA assesses eight of the 32 viewpoints assessed within the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA. These viewpoints were selected for reassessment on the basis that the Proposed Amendments may be perceptible within the viewpoint analysis and/or have the potential to change the significance of effect on townscape character.

1.24 The eight viewpoints selected for the assessment of the Proposed Amendments comprise:

- VP09: Chatham Street;
- VP10: Weldale Street;
- VP12: Junction of Friar Street and Greyfriars Road looking along Friar Street;
- VP24: St Laurence’s Church;
- VP25: Station Road B
- VP26: Friar Street Looking West; and
- VP30: Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street.
- VP32: Friar Street Western End

1.25 The Figure below shows the location of the of eight viewpoints.

1.26 The Visual Assessment of the remaining 24 viewpoints remains unchanged from that presented in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA. This Addendum TCVIA and the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA should be read in conjunction with each other.

1.27 Each Plot of the proposed Development is represented by a different coloured wireline to add clarity. The wireline images of each of the eight viewpoints are shown in the Figure below.

1.28 For Plots A, B, C and D, the lower dotted line on the Figure represents the minimum parameter and the solid upper line represents the maximum parameter. Plot E (red) and F (orange) are shown with a solid wireline and fill.

1.29 Cumulative schemes are represented with a black wireline in the cumulative views. Details of the cumulative schemes are provided in Table 2.1 of this report.

1 Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, Revised National Planning Policy Framework, June 2019

Parameter masterplan plot key

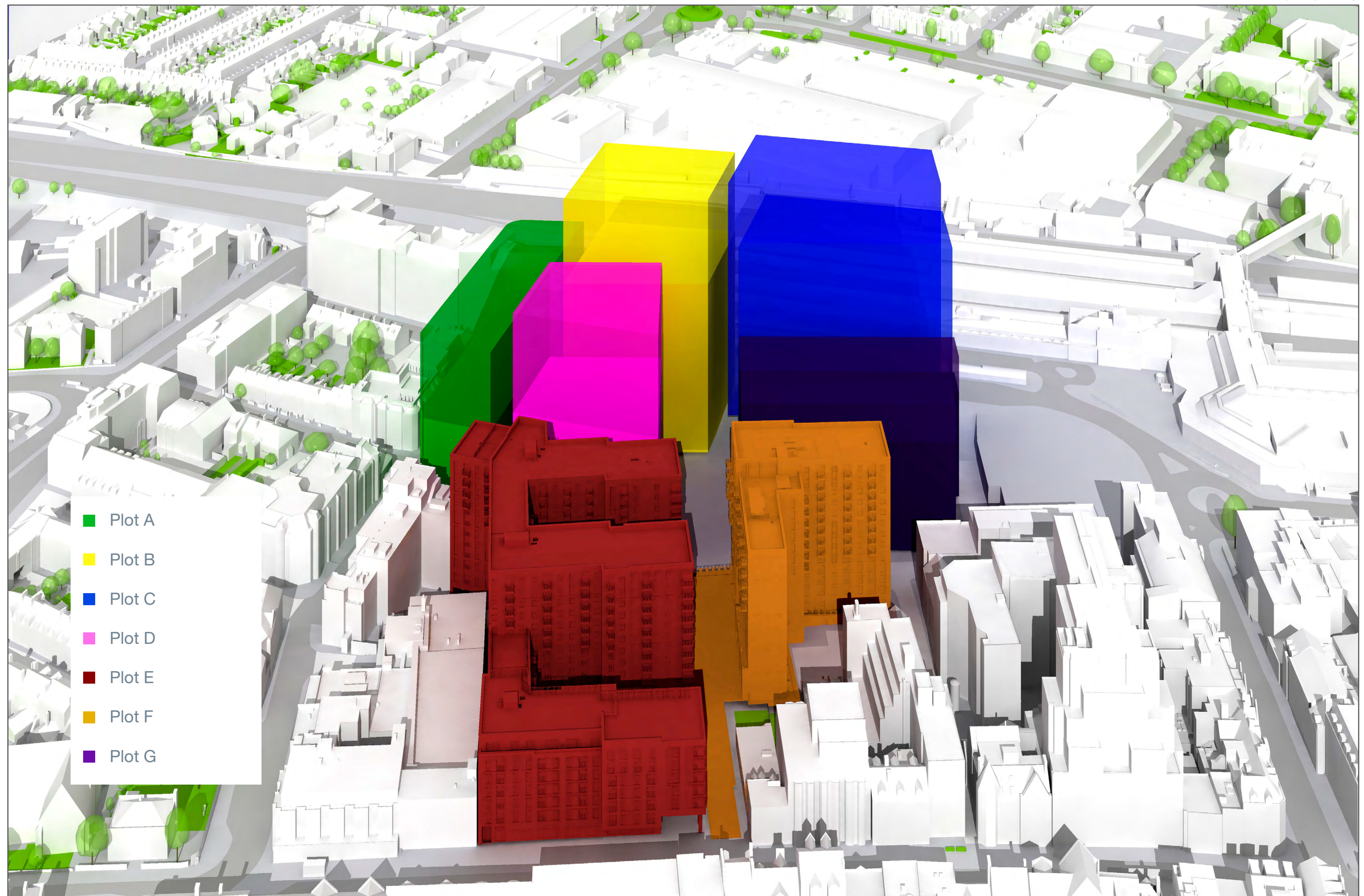
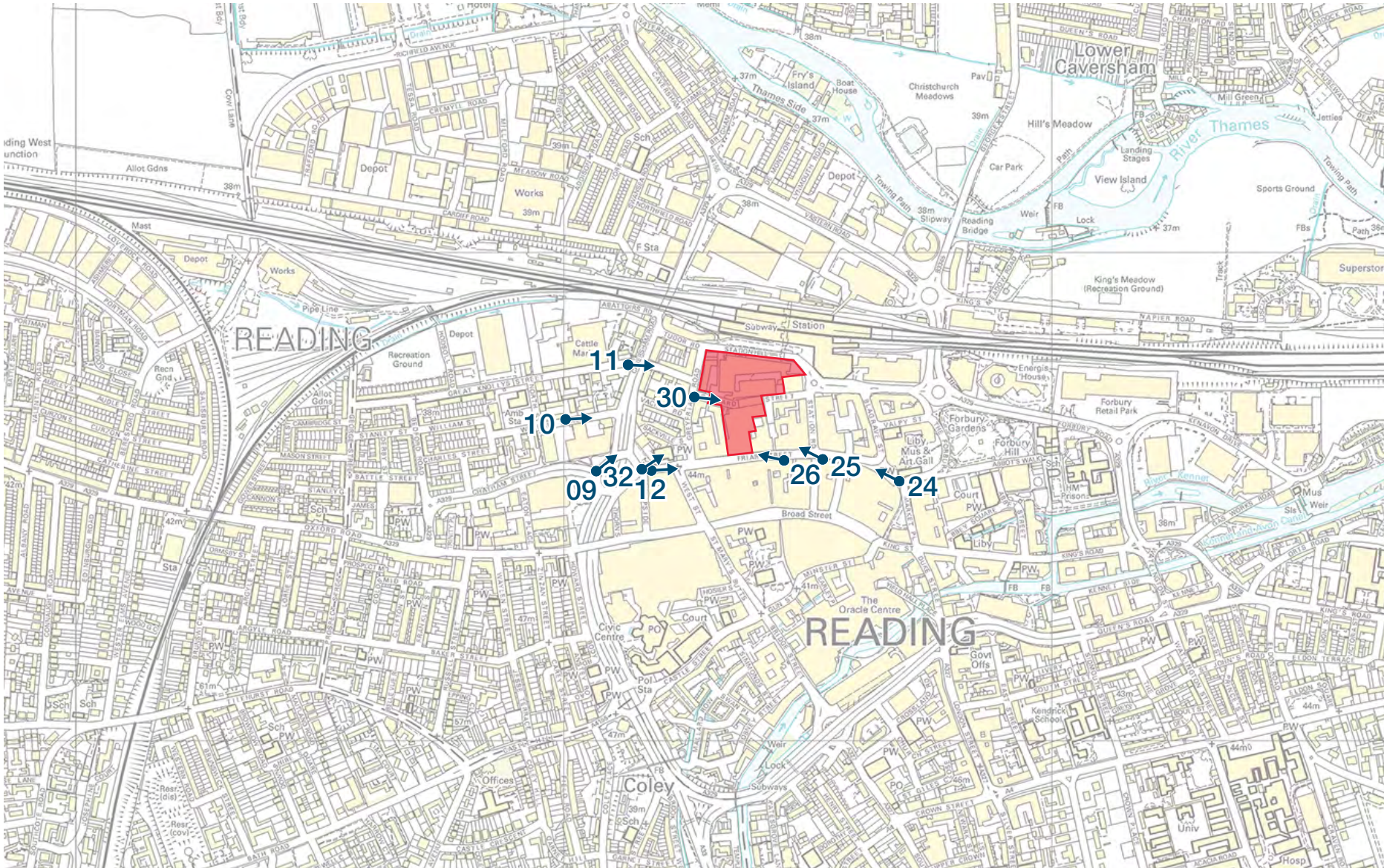




Table of Views

View	Location	Page	Style	Render/ Wireline	Ref	OS-E	OS-N	Height (AOD)	Heading	Lens	Field of View	Film	Date	Time
9	Chatham Street	12	AVR-1	Wireline	D17719	471066.54	173557.53	45.23	62.20°	24mm	74°	Digital	25/11/18	11:45
10	Weldale Street	14	AVR-1	Wireline	D17720	470998.59	173656.97	42.14	78.23°	35mm	55°	Digital	25/11/18	11:55
12	Junction of Friar Street and Greyfriars Road looking along Friar Street	16	AVR-1	Wireline	D17721	471257.24	173558.94	46.66	72.50°	24mm	74°	Digital	25/11/18	12:07
24	St Lawrence's Church	18	AVR-1	Wireline	D17840	471683.82	173529.91	46.49	314.87°	24mm	74°	Digital	20/12/18	13:23
25	Station Road B	20	AVR-1	Wireline	D17722	471452.29	173580.82	47.14	275.81°	24mm	74°	Digital	25/11/18	12:28
26	Friar Street looking west	22	AVR-1	Wireline	D17723	471520.50	173583.22	46.92	306.07°	24mm	74°	Digital	25/11/18	12:36
30	Greyfriars Rd and Garrard Street	24	AVR-1	Wireline	D17725	471257.93	173708.75	40.35	97.09°	24mm	74°	Digital	25/11/18	12:14
32	Friar Street Western End	26	AVR-1	Wireline	D21210	471156.95	173554.33	46.13	65.68	24mm	74°	Digital	05/04/20	11:35

Views map





09
page 12

Chatham Street



10
page 14

Weldale Street



12
page 16

Junction of Friar Street and Greyfriars Road looking along Friar Street



24
page 18

St Lawrence's Church



25
page 20

Station Road B



26
page 22

Friar Street looking west



30
page 24

Greyfriars Rd and Garrard Street



32
page 26

Friar Street Western End

09

Chatham Street



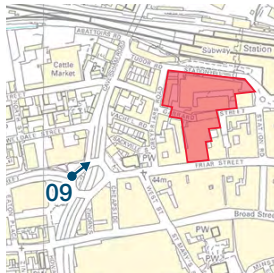
Existing View



Proposed View



Camera Location



View Location

Existing baseline

1.30 The existing baseline is unchanged from that in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.

Proposed View

1.31 The additional height of Plot E along Friar Street can just be seen through the trees on the left hand side of the view but this does not affect the significance of the impact.

Significance of Impact: **moderate, beneficial.** This remains unchanged from the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.

Cumulative

1.32 The amendments would increase the prominence of the Development within the centre of the view. The upper sections of the proposed buildings forming the 2019 Hybrid Application would appear as a tight cluster with differing heights and massing. This would add depth to the skyline which is currently devoid of tall buildings. The mass of the cumulative development on land between Weldale Street and Chatham Street (Ref. 170326) would add a strong built form that would frame the left side of the viewpoint in the foreground creating a more enclosed urban character to the viewpoint. This enclosure would increase the focus towards the proposed Development in the background. The clustered form of the proposed Development would add positively to the central Reading skyline.

Significance of Impact: **moderate, beneficial.** This remains unchanged from the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.



Cumulative view



10

Weldale Street



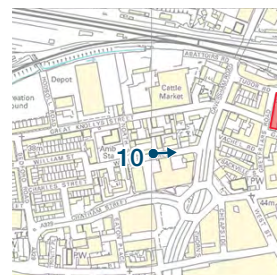
Existing View



Proposed View



Camera Location



View Location

Existing Baseline

1.33 The existing baseline is unchanged from that in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.

Proposed

1.34 Whilst there have been some minor amendments at the top of Plot E which are visible in the view, these will not affect the significance of impact.

Significance of Impact: **moderate beneficial**. This remains unchanged from the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.

Cumulative

1.35 The cumulative schemes would positively change this view through the addition of contemporary built elements on the skyline. The Development would appear as a tight group, with their different heights and massing adding depth to the skyline form and rising towards northeast end of the Site at the Station.

Significance of Impact: **moderate, beneficial**. This remains unchanged from the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.

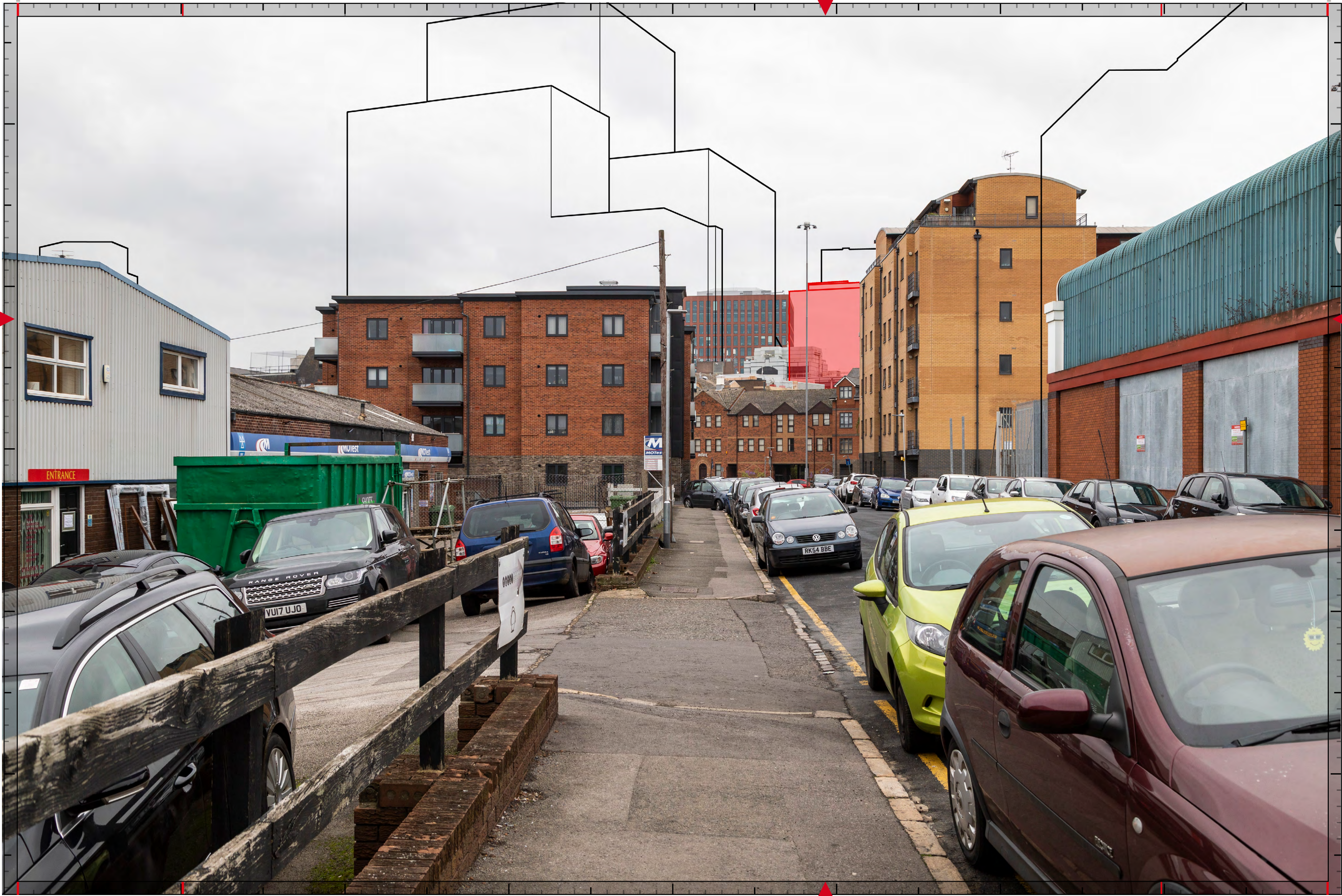
35mm – 31.5°

50mm – 20°

0°

50mm – 20°

35mm – 31.5°



Cumulative view



12

Junction of Friar Street and Greyfriars Road looking along Friar Street



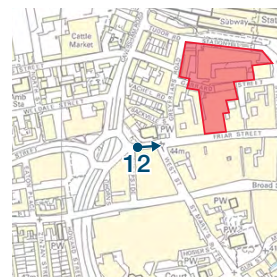
Existing View



Proposed View



Camera Location



View Location

Existing Baseline

1.36 The baseline view remains unchanged from that presented in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA. Although the buildings within Plot E have been demolished since this photograph was taken with a currently vacant construction site present behind construction hoarding which would be visible in this view, this change is not considered to alter the significance of the effects.

Proposed

1.37 The additional storeys and articulation along Friar Street can be seen in this view. The set back of the additional storeys breaks up the massing, adding to the street scene character.

Significance of Impact: **moderate, beneficial**. This remains unchanged from the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.

Cumulative

1.38 The additional storeys of Plot E take the building above the adjacent cumulative development. The additional height improves the massing along the Friar Street. The step back also further breaks up the massing.

Significance of Impact: **moderate, beneficial**. This remains unchanged from the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.



Cumulative view



24

St Lawrence's Church



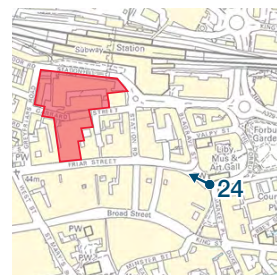
Existing View



Proposed View



Camera Location



View Location

Existing Baseline

- 1.39 The existing baseline is unchanged from that described in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.

Proposed

- 1.40 The very top of Plot F can be seen rising above the existing buildings sitting in front of Plot D. Plot F is slightly higher than in the 2019 Consented Scheme but given the small area of Plot F that is visible, and that it sits within the context of the remainder of the Development, this change is not considered to alter the significance of the effects.

Significance of Impact: **minor to moderate, beneficial**. This is the same as reported in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.

Cumulative

- 1.41 The very top of Plot F would be seen above the existing buildings and in front of the cumulative schemes. The new buildings on and surrounding the Site would create a focal point marking the redeveloped area of central Reading and would enhance the outlook of existing modern built form in the frame.

Significance of Impact: **major, beneficial**. This is the same as reported in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.





25

Station Road B



Existing View



Proposed View

Existing Baseline

- 1.42 The baseline view remains unchanged from that presented in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA. Although the buildings within Plot E have been demolished since this photograph was taken with a currently vacant construction site present behind construction hoarding which would be visible in this view, this change is not considered to alter the significance of the effects.

Cumulative

- 1.44 Elements of the 2019 Hybrid Application would be visible in the right of the frame along with 29-35 Station Road (181753). However, the significance of the effect remains unchanged from the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA

Significance of Impact: **minor, beneficial**. This is the same as reported in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.

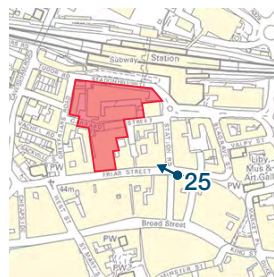
Proposed

- 1.43 The changes to Plot E can be seen in the proposed view. The improved articulation adds to the street scene with the revised massing contributing positively to the street character. However, the changes are not considered sufficient to alter the significance of the effects.

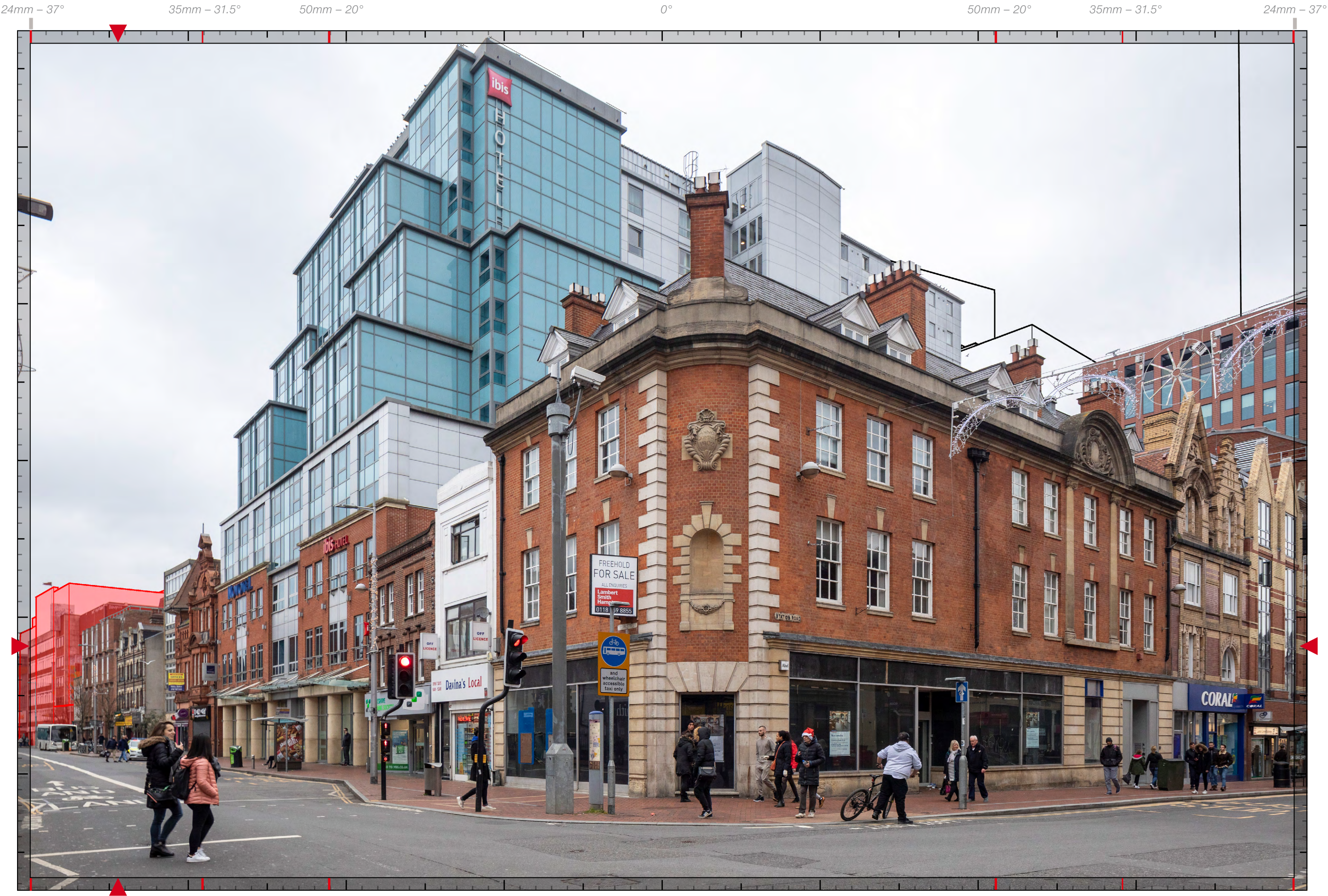
Significance of Impact: **minor, beneficial**. This is the same as reported in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.



Camera Location



View Location



Cumulative view



26

Friar Street Looking West



Existing View



Proposed View

Existing Baseline

- 1.45 The baseline view remains unchanged from that presented in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA. Although the buildings within Plot E have been demolished since this photograph was taken with a currently vacant construction site present behind construction hoarding which would be visible in this view, this change is not considered to alter the significance of the effects.

Cumulative

- 1.47 Whilst the additional storeys and articulation of Plot E are visible in this view, the changes are not considered to alter the significance of the cumulative effects.

Significance of Impact: **moderate, beneficial.** This is the same as reported in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.

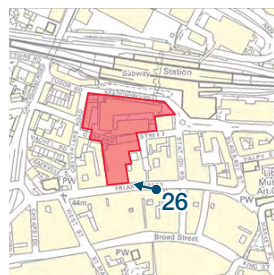
Proposed

- 1.46 The additional storeys and articulation of Plot E can be seen in this view. These changes improve the massing of the Plot E and the street scene. However, the changes are not considered sufficient to alter the significance of the impact.

Significance of Impact: **moderate, beneficial.** This is the same as reported in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.



Camera Location



View Location



Cumulative view



30

Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street



Existing View



Proposed View

Existing Baseline

- 1.48 The baseline view remains unchanged from that presented in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA. Although the buildings within Plot E have been demolished since this photograph was taken with a currently vacant construction site present behind construction hoarding which would be visible in this view, this change is not considered to alter the significance of the effects.

Cumulative

- 1.50 The changes to Plot F and the inclusion of the 2019 Hybrid Application in the foreground, means that only a sliver of the very top floor of the development at 29-35 Station Road is visible. Despite this, the cumulative impact is considered to remain unchanged.

Significance of Impact: **major, beneficial**. This is the same as reported in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.

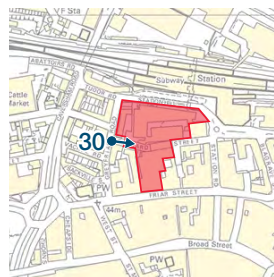
Proposed

- 1.49 The height of Plot F has increased which can be seen in this view along with some minor changes to the balcony arrangements on Plot E. However, these changes are not considered sufficient to alter the significance of the impact.

Significance of Impact: **major, beneficial**. This is the same as reported in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVA.



Camera Location



View Location

24mm – 37°

35mm – 31.5°

50mm – 20°

0°

50mm – 20°

35mm – 31.5°

24mm – 37°



Cumulative view



32

Friar Street Western End



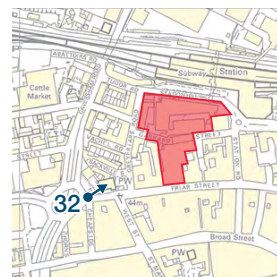
Existing View



Proposed View



Camera Location



View Location

Existing Baseline

1.51 This view is taken from the western end of Friar Street at the island in the centre of the pedestrian crossing. Behind the viewing position is a busy roundabout on the Caversham Road, A329 dual carriageway. The view looks east along Friar Street, which is one of the principal retail streets in central Reading. Development along this street is mixed, on the south side (to the right) this is varied in scale, age and quality compared to the north side which is made up of more recent post-war blocks. At the far end the bulky stepped curtain walling of the Novotel hotel is visible. In the foreground to the left, and the principal building in the frame, is Greyfriars Church which is Grade I listed. The Franciscan-style Church was completed in the 14th century and restored in the mid-19th century. The mature trees in the Church grounds screen the clear reading of the Church's silhouette even from this close position. The significance of the Church lies in its age and it being the most complete surviving example of Franciscan architecture in England. The modern setting of the Church, dominated by the road infrastructure to the north and west and post-war commercial and office buildings to the north-east, contributes little to its significance.

Proposed

1.52 Plots A, B, C and D would sit below the existing skyline in the left of the view. These would form a feature in the background behind the Church. The stepped buildings would break up the massing and provide different architectural treatments. The Church in the foreground would still form the focal point of the view. Plot E steps up and out towards Friar Street at its easterly end. This would allow glimpsed views looking along Friar Street.

Significance of Impact: **major, beneficial.**

Cumulative

1.53 The 2019 Hybrid Application would be seen in the left of the view rising above the existing skyline. The Church would form the main feature in the foreground with the buildings visible in the background. The different heights of building stepping away from the Church breaks up the massing ensuring the taller elements are in the background.

Significance of Impact: **major, beneficial.**



Cumulative view



Conclusions and Residual Impacts

Do Nothing – No Development

1.54 The Proposed Amendments do not change the findings of this section as reported in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA.

Construction Impacts of the Proposed Development

1.55 The Proposed Amendments do not change the findings of this section as reported in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA.

Operational Impacts of the Proposed Development

1.56 There have been no changes to findings of this section since the assessment presented in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA.

Townscape impacts

1.57 The Proposed Amendments do not change the findings of this section as reported in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA.

Heritage impacts

1.58 The Heritage Impacts Section presented in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA remains predominantly the same with respect to the methodology utilised. It remains a distinct assessment from the Visual Impacts section below.

1.59 While the Proposed Amendments would result in a localised increase in height of Plot E, this would not exceed the overall maximum height of the 2019 Consented Scheme. The changes to Plot F height comprise the introduction of a new storey, changing the proposals from 11 storeys to 12 storeys. However, these Proposed Amendments are not considered to alter the findings of this section as reported in the 2019 Completed Scheme TCVIA.

Visual Impacts

Local Views

1.60 The effects to Local viewpoints not reassessed in this assessment remain the same as reported in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA. For those views that have been reassessed, the effects to local views (all of the

viewpoints assessed) remain unchanged from those stated in the 2019 Consented Scheme TCVIA, that is a minor to major beneficial impact.

1.61 In the close views on Friar Street (Viewpoints 24 and 30) Plot E would add positively to the varied street frontage and would mark the entrance to the new Friar’s Walk, leading north through the Site and to the new public spaces and activity located there. Plots A, B, C and D would add new built form of varying heights and architectural heights to the view. The improved frontage to the north side of Friar Street and the introduction of the new cluster of buildings would have a major beneficial impact.

Distant Views

1.62 The Proposed Amendments do not change the findings of this section as reported in the 2019 Completed Scheme TCVIA.

Mitigation

1.63 The Proposed Amendments do not change the findings of this section as reported in the 2019 Completed Scheme TCVIA.

Residual impacts

1.64 There would be no residual effects beyond those considered in relation to the completed and operational development.



APPENDIX:

CITYSCAPE VERIFIED VIEWS METHODOLOGY

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0.0 INTRODUCTION

0.1 Methodology overview

The methodology applied by Cityscape Digital Limited to produce the verified images or views contained in this document is described below. In the drafting of this methodology and the production and presentation of the images, guidance has been taken from the London View Management Framework SPG March 2012. The disciplines employed are of the highest possible levels of accuracy and photo-realism which are achievable with today’s standards of architectural photography and computer-generated models.

0.2 View selection

The viewpoints have been selected through a process of consultation with relevant statutory consultees and having regard to relevant planning policy and guidance.

1.0 PHOTOGRAPHY

1

1.1 Digital photography

With the latest advances in Digital Photography it is now possible to match the quality of plate photography.

1.2 Lenses

For local views a wide angle lens of 24mm or 35mm is generally used in order to capture as much of the proposal and its surroundings as possible. Intermediate distance views were photographed with a lens between 35mm to 70mm and occasionally long range views may be required with lens options ranging from 70mm to 600mm. As a guide, the following combinations were used:

Distance to subject	View	Lens Options
0 – 800 metres	Local	24mm to 35mm
800 to 5000 metres	Intermediate	35mm to 70mm
5000+ metres	Long	70mm to 600mm

Examples of these views are shown in Figures 4 and 5.

1.3 Digital camera

Cityscape uses a Canon 5D MK IV (shown in figure 1) and a Canon 1DS MK III (all full frame digital SLRs) high resolution digital camera for the digital photography. Also used were Canon’s ‘L’ series professional tilt and shift lenses which produce high quality images that are suitable for the camera-matching process without the need for processing and scanning.

1.4 Position, time and date recording

The photographer was provided with (i) an Ordnance Survey map or equivalent indicating the position of each viewpoint from which the required photographs were to be taken, and (ii) a digital photograph taken by Cityscape of the desired view. For each shot the camera was positioned at a height of 1.60/1.65 metres (depending on whether image is SPG or RPG3A view) above the ground level which closely approximates the human eye altitude. A point vertically beneath the centre of the lens was marked on the ground as a survey reference point and two digital reference photographs were taken of (i) the camera/tripod location and (ii) the survey reference point (as shown in Figures 2 and 3). The date and time of the photograph were recorded by the camera.





2



3



5

- 1 Canon 1DS Digital Camera
- 2 Camera Location
- 3 Survey reference point
- 4 Local view
- 5 Intermediate view

2.0 DIGITAL IMAGE CORRECTION

2.1 Raw file conversion

Canon cameras produce a raw file format, which is then processed digitally for both high detail and colour accuracy. The final image is outputted as a tiff¹ file.

2.2 Digital image correction

The digital images were then loaded into Cityscape's computers to prepare the digital image for the next stage of camera matching (see section 5). The image is also 'bank'² corrected which means ensuring that the horizon in each digital image is precisely horizontal.

In spite of the selection of the most advanced photographic equipment, lenses are circular which results in a degree of distortion on the perimeter of images. The outer edges of an image are therefore not taken into consideration; this eliminates the risk of inaccuracy. Figure 17 in section 5 illustrates the 'safe' or non-distortive area of an image which is marked by the red circle.

The adjusted or corrected digital image, known as the 'background plate', is then saved to the Cityscape computer system ready for the camera matching process (see section 5). In preparation for the survey (see section 4) Cityscape indicates on each background plate the safe area and priority survey points, such as corners of buildings, for survey (see Figures 6 and 7)

¹ TIFF is the name given to a specific format of image file stored digitally on a computer.

² By aligning the vanishing points.

6





6 Background plate highlighting critical survey points in purple and secondary survey strings in red

7 Area of interest to be surveyed as shown in Figure 7



3.0 GPS SURVEY

3.1 Survey

An independent surveyor was contracted to undertake the survey of (i) each viewpoint as marked on the ground beneath the camera at the time the photograph was taken (and recorded by way of digital photograph (see section 1 above) and (ii) all the required points on the relevant buildings within the safe zone.

The survey was co-ordinated onto the Ordnance Survey National Grid (OSGB36) by using Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment (see, for example, Figure 9) and processing software. The Ordnance Survey National Grid (OSGB36) was chosen as it is the most widely used and because it also allows the captured data to be incorporated into other available digital products (such as Ordnance Survey maps). The height datum used was Ordnance Survey Newlyn Datum and was also derived using the GPS.

The surveyor uses a baseline consisting of two semi-permanent GPS base stations (see Figure 8). These stations are located approximately 5730 metres apart and positioned so as to optimise the results for the area of operation (see location map, Figure 13). The base stations are tied into the National GPS Network and are constantly receiving and storing data which allows their position to be monitored and evaluated over long periods of operation. By using the same base stations throughout the survey the surveyor ensure the consistency of the results obtained.

Using the Real Time Kinematic method a real time correction is supplied by each base station to the rover (shown in Figure 10) (over the GSM³ network) physically undertaking the field survey. This enables the rover to determine the co-ordinates of its location instantaneously (i.e. in ‘real time’). The rover receives a ‘corrected’ fix (co-ordinates) from each base station. If the two independent fixes are each within a certain preset tolerance, the rover then averages the two fixes received. The viewpoints are, with a few exceptions, surveyed using this technique. This method of GPS survey (Real Time Kinematic) produces results to an accuracy in plan and height of between 15mm – 50mm as outlined in the “*Guidelines for the use of GPS in Land Surveying*” produced by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

The required points on each building are surveyed using conventional survey techniques utilising an electronic theodolite and reflectorless laser technology (shown in Figures 11 and 12). There are two methods used to fix the building details, namely polar observations⁴ and intersection observations⁵. The position of the theodolite is fixed by the rover as described above. In certain circumstances, a viewpoint may need to be surveyed using conventional survey techniques as opposed to Real Time Kinematic, if, for example, the viewpoint is in a position where GPS information cannot be received.

³ GSM network: the mobile phone network.

⁴ Polar observation is the measurement of a distance and direction to a point from a known baseline in order to obtain co-ordinates for the point. The baseline is a line between two known stations.

⁵ Intersection observation is the co-ordination of a point using directions only from two ends of a baseline.



8



9



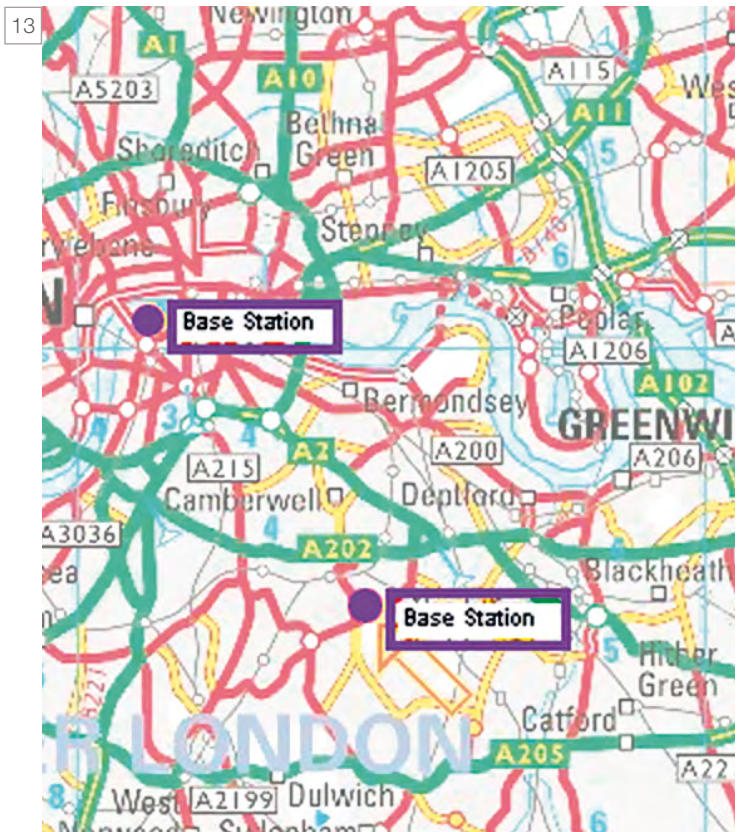
10



11



12



13

- 8 Marshall Survey semi-permanent GPS base station
- 9 GPS System
- 10 Field survey being carried out
- 11 Electronic Theodolite
- 12 Field survey being carried out
- 13 Location of Marshall Survey's GPS base stations

4.0 MODEL POSITIONING

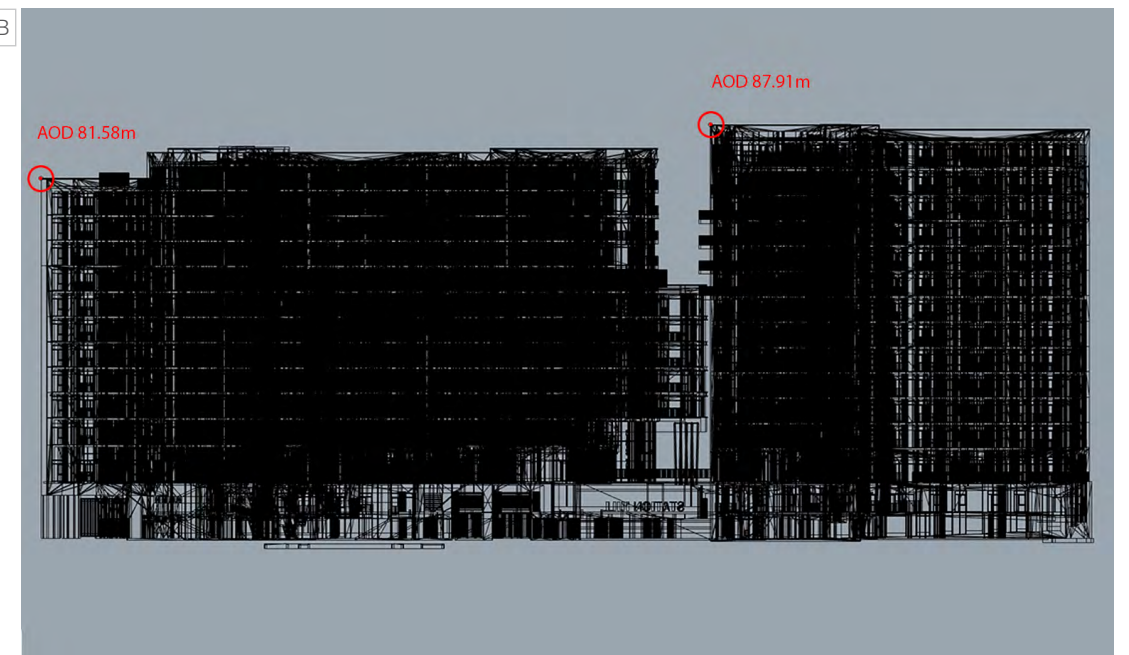
4.1 Height and position check

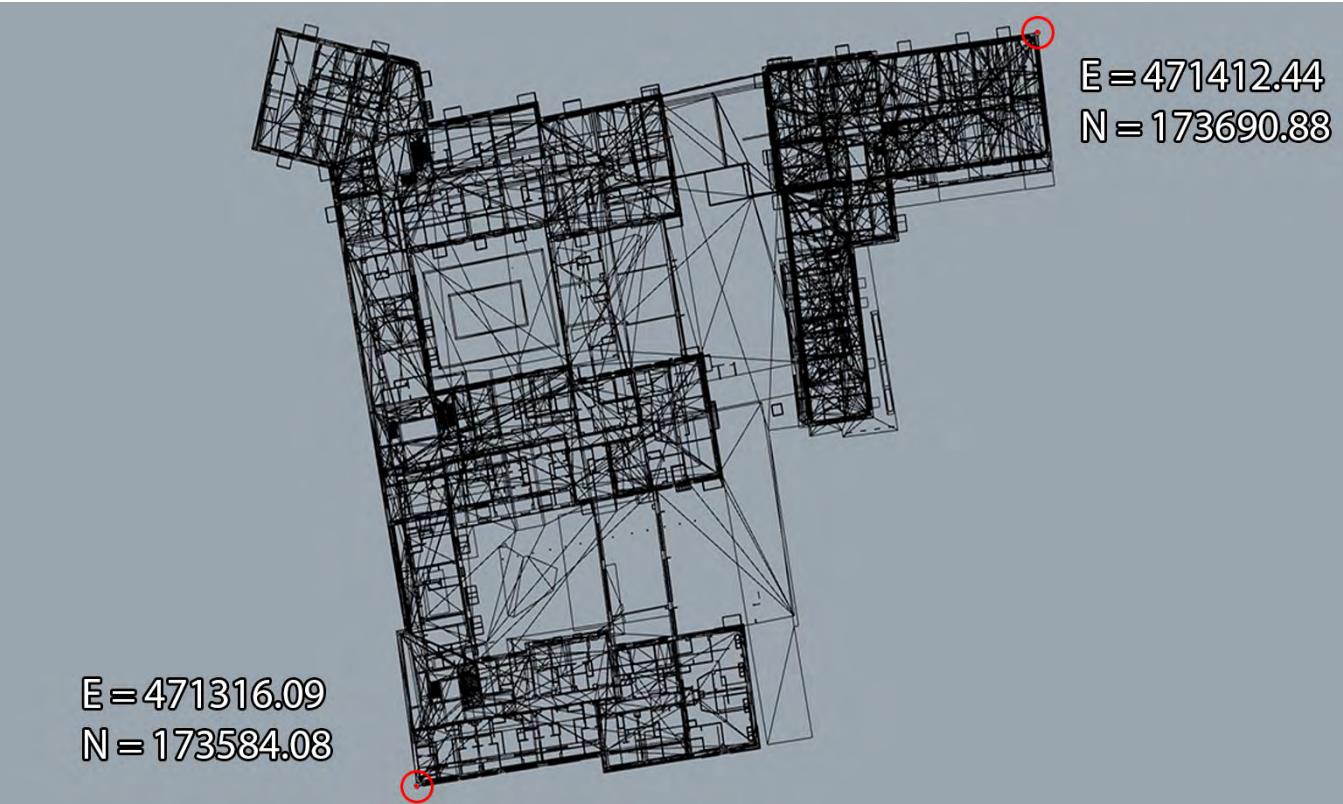
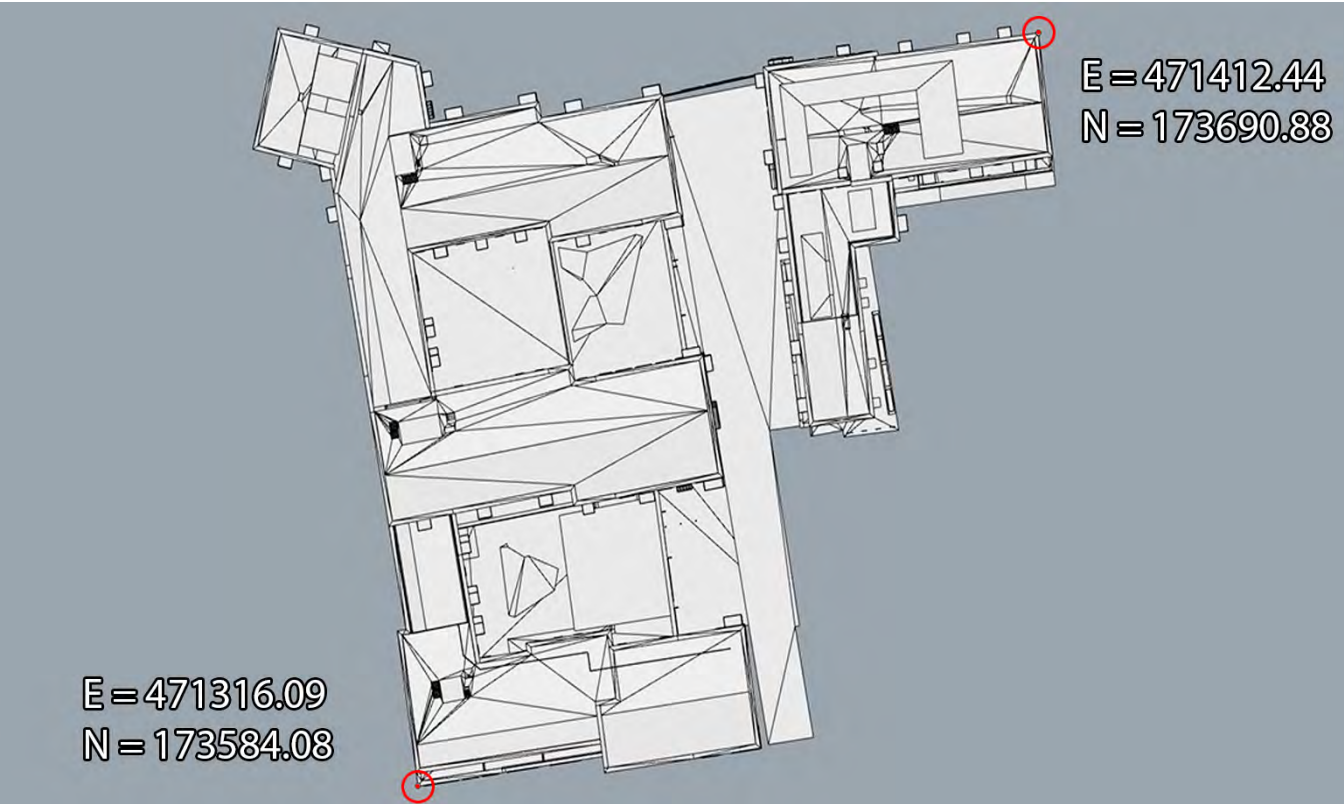
The model is positioned using a site plan provided by the architect. This is then overlaid onto OS positioned survey from a CAD provider. Once the building has been positioned, confirmation of height and position is requested from the architect. At least two clear reference points are agreed and used to confirm the site plan and Ordnance Survey. The height is cross checked against the architect's section and given in metres Above Ordnance Survey Datum (AOD).

14A



14B





15A

15B

- 14A Architect's Elevation Drawing
- 14B Cityscape's Elevation Model
- 15A Architect's Plan Drawing
- 15B Cityscape's Plan Model

5.0 CAMERA MATCHING

5.1 Cityscape's Database

Cityscape has built up a comprehensive database of survey information on buildings and locations in central London; the database contains both GPS survey information and information regarding the dimensions and elevations of buildings gathered from architects and other sources. Figure 16 shows a selection of GPS located models (yellow) within Cityscape's database which effectively represents a 3D verified computer 'model' of some prominent buildings in central London. The term '3D model' has been adopted with caution in this methodology as it is thought to be slightly misleading because not every building in central London is included in the database although the majority of those buildings which form part of the 'skyline' are included.

The outlines of buildings are created by connecting the surveyed points or from the information obtained from architects' drawings of particular buildings. By way of example of the high level of detail and accuracy, approximately 300 points have been GPS surveyed on the dome of St. Paul's. The database 'view' (as shown in Figure 16) is 'verified' as each building is positioned using coordinates acquired from GPS surveys.

In many instances, the various co-ordinates of a particular building featured

in one of the background plates are already held by Cityscape as part of their database of London. In such cases the survey information of buildings and locations provided by the surveyor (see section 3 above) is used to cross-check and confirm the accuracy of these buildings. Where such information is not held by Cityscape, it is, where appropriate, used to add detail to Cityscape's database. The survey information provided by the surveyor is in all cases used in the verification process of camera matching.

5.2 Cityscape's Database

A wireframe⁶ 3D model of the proposed scheme if not provided is created by Cityscape from plans and elevations provided by the architects and from survey information of the ground levels on site and various other points on and around the site, such as the edge of adjacent roads and bollards etc. provided by the surveyor.

5.3 Camera Matching Process

The following information is required for the camera matching process:

- Specific details of the camera and lens used to take the photograph and therefore the field of view (see section 1);
- The adjusted or corrected digital image i.e. the 'background plate' (see section 2);

- The GPS surveyed viewpoint co-ordinates (see section 3);
- The GPS surveyed co-ordinates of particular points on the buildings within the photograph (the background plate) (see section 3);
- Selected models from Cityscape's database (see section 3);
- The GPS surveyed co-ordinates of the site of the proposed scheme (see section 3);
- A 3D model of the proposed scheme (see section 4).

A background plate (the corrected digital image) is opened on computer screen (for example, Figure 17), the information listed above is then used to situate Cityscape's virtual camera such that the 3D model aligns exactly over the background plate (as shown in Figures 18 and 21) (i.e. a 'virtual viewer' within the 3D model would therefore be standing exactly on the same viewpoint from which the original photograph was taken (Figure 20). This is the camera matching process.

5.4 Wireline Image

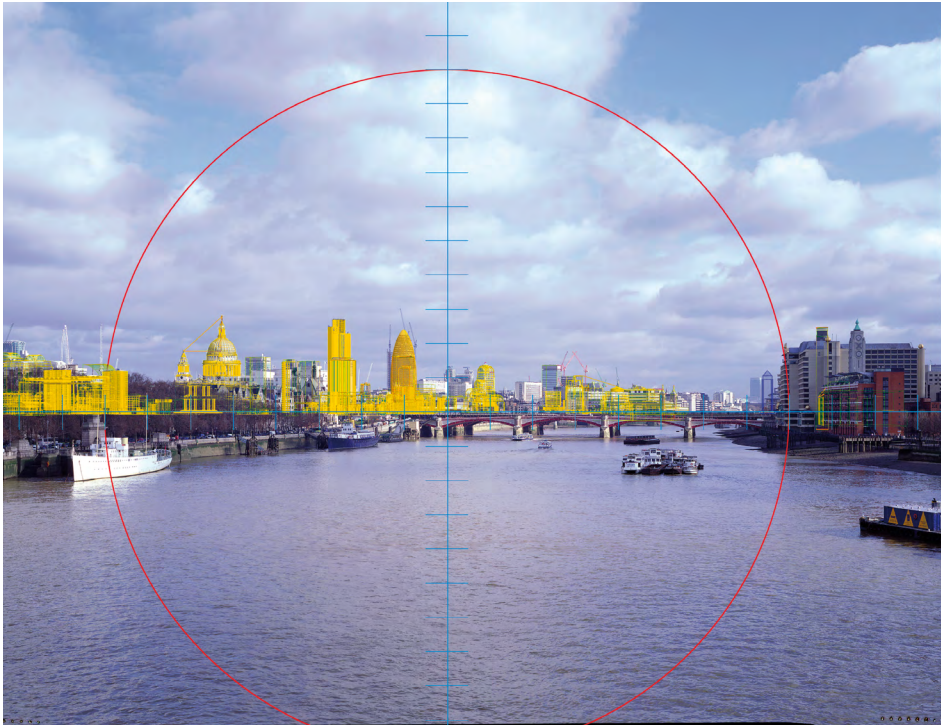
Cityscape is then able to insert the wireframe 3D model of the proposed scheme into the view in the correct location and scale producing a verified wireline image of the proposal (shown in Figures 19 & 22).

The camera matching process is repeated for each view and a wireline image of the proposal from each viewpoint is then produced. The wireline image enables a quantitative analysis of the impact of the proposed scheme on views.



⁶ A wireframe is a 3D model, a wireline is a single line representing the outline of the building.

- 16 Selected GPS located models (yellow) from Cityscape's database, situated on Cityscape's London digital terrain model
- 17 Background plate & selected 3D models as seen by the computer camera. Red circle highlights the safe or non-distortive area of the image
- 18 Background plate matched to the 3D GPS located models
- 19 The camera matched background plate with an example of a proposed scheme included in red
- 20 Background plate: digital photograph, size and bank corrected as described in section 3
- 21 Camera matching: the background plate matched in the 3D GPS located models
- 22 The camera matched background plate with the proposed scheme included



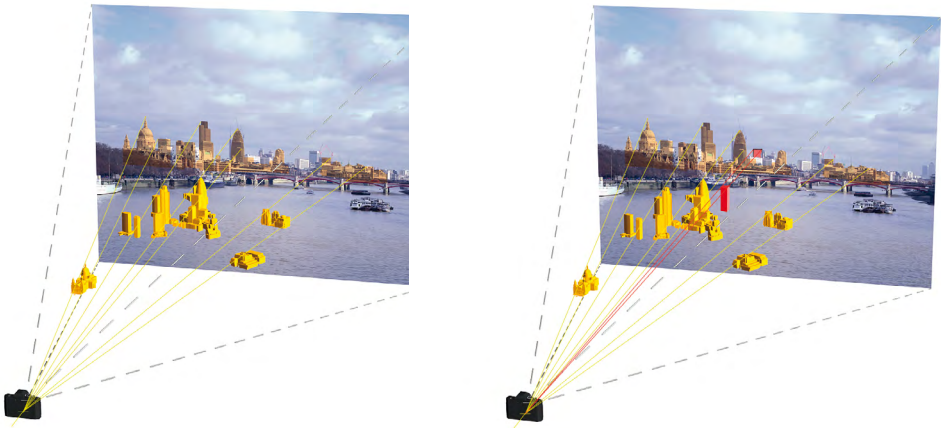
17



20



21



22



6.0 POST PRODUCTION

6.1 Post production

Finally the rendered image of the scheme model is inserted and positioned against the camera matched background plate. Once in position the rendered images are edited using Adobe Photoshop®⁸. Masks are created in Photoshop where the line of sight to the rendered image of the proposed scheme is interrupted by foreground buildings (as shown in Figure 29).

The result is a verified image or view of the proposed scheme (as shown in Figure 30).

⁸ Adobe Photoshop® is the industry standard image editing software.



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29



30

- 28 Background plate
- 29 Process Red area highlights the Photoshop mask that hides the unseen portion of the render
- 30 Shows a photo-realistic verified image



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