

6 Townscape and Visual Resources

Introduction

- 6.1 This chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) describes the potential townscape and visual effects that are likely to result from the re-development of the project site at Caversham Road, Reading; hereinafter referred to as the 'proposed development'. It distinguishes between landscape (townscape) effects and visual effects; the latter being considered a specific subset of the former. However, as the proposal is located within a predominantly urban area, the term 'townscape' is used in this assessment when describing urban landscapes. The assessment is thus referred to as a 'Townscape and Visual Resources Assessment' (TVRA).
- 6.2 The TVRA includes a description and evaluation of the existing townscape in and around the project site and identifies visual receptors within the local and wider surrounds (up to 2km from the project site). The assessment covers both the temporary (construction) effects and those of the permanent operational phase that are likely to result from the proposed development, together with the mitigation measures proposed to avoid or reduce potential adverse effects.
- 6.3 The principal objectives of this townscape and visual resources assessment are:
- a. to identify and describe local views most likely to be affected by the Proposed Development;
 - b. to identify the townscape resource which would be affected by the Proposed Development and evaluate its sensitivity to change as a result of implementing the type of development proposed;
 - c. to identify the effects brought about by the proposed development upon views experienced by people and the character of the townscape resource, expressed in terms of individual townscape character areas; and
 - d. to estimate the magnitude of impact and to assess the likely significance of effect upon the receiving townscape and views.

Assessment Methodology

Legislation and Planning Policy Context

- 6.4 This section summarises the national and local planning policies that are of relevance to the proposed development and that have informed the baseline conditions and subsequent townscape and visual assessment. The project site is within the administrative boundary of Reading Borough Council (RBC). Landscape/ Townscape planning designations of relevance to the TVRA are shown on Figure 6.1.

National Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 6.5 The NPPF was published in March 2012 (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012). Its purpose is to simplify and speed up the planning process. In July 2018, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, published an update to the NPPF.
- 6.6 Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that “Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (amongst others); (a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan); and “(b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland”.
- 6.7 The NPPF places ‘sustainable development’ at the heart of the planning system. Chapter 2, page 5 of the NPPF states that, “The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.” The NPPF identifies three objectives to sustainable development which (as well as a social and an economic role), includes “an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.” It also considers that each of these roles is inter-dependant and should not be treated in isolation.
- 6.8 Paragraph 126 indicates that:
- “Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments (amongst others):*
- (a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- (b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and effective landscaping;*
- (c) respond to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- (d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive and distinctive places to live, work and visit; ...”*

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

- 6.9 In addition to the NPPF, the Government has also published National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2014). This replaces the majority of previous Government planning guidance and complements the NPPF. The new guidance is not intended to provide further policy but instead is meant to help clarify issues relevant to the planning regime. Planning practice guidance has been produced for the ‘Natural Environment’, which covers ‘Landscape’ and states that, ‘Where appropriate, landscape character assessments should be prepared to complement Natural England’s National Character Area profiles. Landscape Character

Assessment is a tool to help understand the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and identify the features that give it a sense of place'. In this instance, the term 'townscape' and 'landscape' may be regarded as interchangeable, albeit, Natural England's guidance covers the rural landscape, rather than the urban landscape (townscape). The NPPG is occasionally updated when new national planning guidance drafts have been finalised.

Local Planning Policy Context

6.10 Policy within the local plan documents supports the regeneration of the town centre area, inclusive of the railway station and its local urban environment. Appendix 6.1 includes a review of relevant policies within the following local planning documents:

- Core Strategy 2008 (altered January 2015);
- Reading Tall Buildings Strategy (2008);
- Reading Central Area Action Plan 2009 (RCAAP);
- Reading Station Area Framework (2010); and
- Submission Draft Reading Borough Local Plan (RBC, 2018).

Relevant Guidance

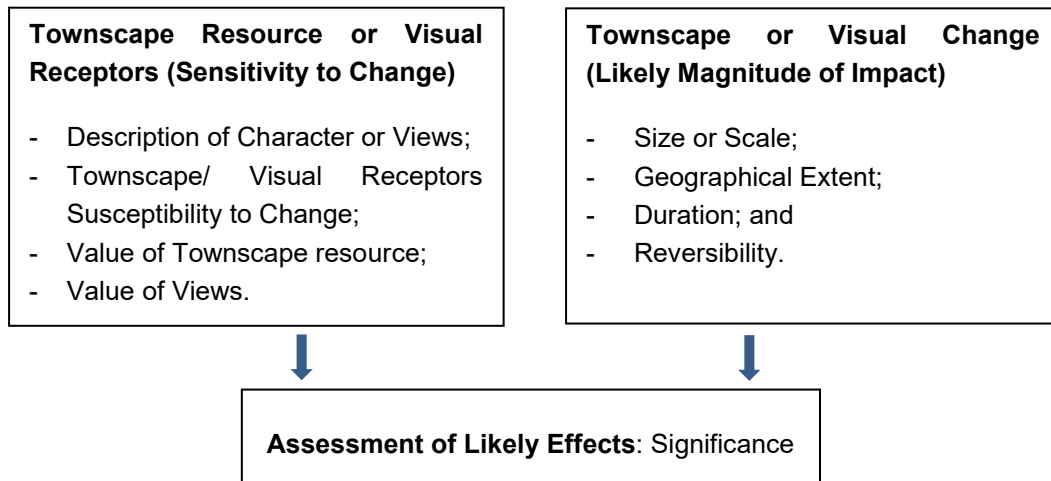
6.11 The method used in the TVRA is based on guidance within the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA) – published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (3rd Edition 2013, Routledge).

Study Area

6.12 The study area for the assessment is taken as extending to 2km in all directions from the redline boundary for the proposed development. This is consistent with the 'Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment' within the Environmental Assessment for the previously approved scheme on the site (Royal Mail Estates Ltd, Caversham Road, February 2011), and with similar townscape and visual impact assessments undertaken by RPS for similar schemes containing tall buildings within urban areas.

Baseline Methodology

6.13 The effects on townscape and views is assessed by considering the proposed change against the townscape resource or visual receptor as outlined in the diagram below:



- 6.14 These factors are determined by a combination of quantitative (objective) and qualitative (subjective) assessment using professional judgement. Magnitude of impact or change and receptor sensitivity are expressed on the scales described in the paragraphs below. Potential effects can be beneficial (positive) or neutral as well as adverse (negative).

'Future Baseline' for the Assessment

- 6.15 The proposed development is the re-development of an existing site within Reading town centre for commercial and residential purposes. It includes tall buildings, i.e. over 10 commercial storeys in height, together with new areas of public realm, comprising areas of both hard and soft landscape.
- 6.16 The central area of Reading either side of the railway station is an evolving townscape. There are several proposed re-developments which have planning consent in place (some for tall buildings). Most notable of these are the proposals for the Station Hill site to the south of the railway station, which proposes tall buildings of varying height within up to 6 or more individual development blocks. However, there are also others. These other approved or consented schemes are considered to form part of a 'future baseline' against which change due to the proposed development during both its construction and operational phase has been assessed. These consented schemes, which therefore form part of the 'future baseline', are as follows:
- Station Hill (Approved July 2017). *Planning Application 181820 is for a minor material amendment to this consented scheme, which forms part of the future baseline for the assessment. This planning application is thus not regarded as a cumulative scheme;*
 - Weldale St (Planning Application 170326, 171686 and 160353);
 - Kings Point Reading (Planning Application 15/0019);
 - Thames Quarter (Planning Application 162166);
 - Kenavon Drive, Reading (Planning Application 170509);
 - 33 Blagrove Street, Reading (Planning Application 181074); and

Visual Assessment

- 6.17 To inform the assessment, a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was computer generated using Terra-firma (KTF) software. It takes into account existing variations in topography or landform (see Figure 6.2) as well as the heights of existing buildings within the local surrounds. It shows the indicative extents of the study area from which views to the tallest 5 parts of the proposed development may be available. These 5 points include the top of the tallest tower and each of the towers which then step down in height progressively towards Caversham Road adjacent to the western edge of the project site. It also shows the indicative extent of the study area from which views to the tallest part of the Station Hill development may be available; this is based on the top height of Plot C, at 128mAOD, as shown on the parameter plans accompanying the planning application drawings for this proposal. It is included as Figure 6.3.
- 6.18 The ground model was developed using the following data:
- a. Open Data available from Emu Analytics for existing building heights within the study area;
 - b. additional 3d modelling undertaken by RPS to show those consented schemes with buildings over 10 commercial storeys in height forming part of the 'future baseline'; and
 - b. Ordnance Survey (OS) Terrain 5 Data.
- 6.19 The consented schemes containing tall buildings which were added to the 3d CAD model used in the production of the ZTV by RPS, were as follows:
- Station Hill (Approved July 2017);
 - Weldale St (Planning Application 170326 and 160353);
 - Kings Point Reading (Planning Application 15/0019);
 - Thames Quarter (Planning Application 16/2166); and
 - Kenavon Drive (Planning Application 170509).
- 6.20 The ZTV did not take into account the screening effects of individual trees, hedges and other vegetation. The visibility of the proposed development has been assessed based on a viewers' eye level height of 1.6m above ground level.
- 6.21 Visual receptors include the public or community at large, residents and visitors to the area. Twenty-one representative viewpoints which are representative of the visual receptors most likely to be affected by the proposed development are included in the assessment. The majority of these are the same as those included in the ES for the previously approved scheme. However, a number of adjustments to these have been made as described in paragraphs 6.25 and 6.59 of this TVRA.
- 6.22 In addition, a further 5 representative viewpoints have been included at the request of RBC. The locations of each of these representative viewpoints is shown on Figure 6.4. Visually Verifiable Montages (VVMs) for each of the representative viewpoints have been prepared by Nicholas Pearson Associates Ltd and are included in Appendix 6.2.

Townscape Assessment

- 6.23 A townscape assessment of the central area of Reading is included in the 'Reading Tall Building Strategy' (2008). The entire central area of Reading is within the study area for this assessment and as such, the townscape character areas defined in the 'Reading Tall Buildings Strategy' have been used as the baseline for the assessment. For areas outwith the central area of Reading, Conservation Areas have been regarded as areas of townscape with similar characteristics and thus these have also been regarded as townscape character areas. In addition, these have been supplemented with landscape character area '10- Thames Valley' as defined within the Newbury District Landscape Character Assessment (1993).
- 6.24 For the remainder of the study area, townscape character areas have been defined by RPS using the results of desktop and field survey information to identify those areas with broadly similar townscape characteristics. The townscape character areas are shown on Figure 6.5.

Consultation

- 6.25 A letter was sent to RBC by RPS dated 23 October 2018. It included a list of 16 proposed representative viewpoints to be included in the TVRA, details of the proposed study area (2km in all directions from the project site boundary) and a description of the intended 'future baseline' for the assessment. The 'future baseline' stated in the letter was the same as that stated in paragraph 6.16, except it now also includes the Kenavon Drive proposal. A response to this communication was received which was confined to comments on the proposed list of representative viewpoints (Reading Borough Council, November 2018). These are as summarised in Table 6.1 below, which also describes how these comments were addressed.

Table 6.1: Consultation Responses Relevant to this Chapter

Date	Consultee and Issues Raised	How/ Where Addressed
1 November 2018	Richard Eatough, Case Officer, Reading Borough Council; Consultee advised that the proposed representative viewpoints were acceptable, <i>"subject to minor adjustments in the field to ascertain the best representative view from this general location"</i>. The following comments were made about certain representative viewpoints: Representative Viewpoint 3: <i>"There may be a further useful easterly view, but it may be on Kings Road, London Road or perhaps even Shepherd's Hill (Wokingham Borough) on the A4, Woodley. Kings Point 162087/VARIAT is under construction."</i> Representative Viewpoint 9: <i>"Important to note the 162166/FUL Thames Quarter Scheme in this view, under construction."</i> Representative Viewpoint 10: <i>"Depends. A4155 view, I am assuming that this is beyond the 2km boundary and there have been views of tall buildings in Reading before at Toker's Green, out of Reading on the A4155."</i> Representative Viewpoint 14: <i>"OK, but a clearer view and arguably more sensitive is from Caversham Court Gardens, a Registered Garden."</i> The response also included the following <i>"Additional Suggestions"</i>: <i>Two important townscape views of this development are going to be from Station Square North and Station Square South (by the statue on the roundabout).</i>	Representative Viewpoint 3 positioned unchanged on the basis that the representative viewpoint used is on London Road and that potential effects upon views from this area would be not significant. Representative Viewpoint 9 re-positioned to a point further east to include the Thames Quarter development within the foreground to the view. Representative Viewpoint 10 position unchanged on the basis that the position intended is the same as that used in the original ES and that Toker's Green is outside of the 2km study area. Potential effects upon views from Toker's Green would also be not significant. Both of these views from Station Square North and South have been included as representative viewpoints 19 and 20 respectively.

Date	Consultee and Issues Raised	How/ Where Addressed
	<i>A middle-distance westerly view is missing, suggest Victoria Recreation Ground, Great Knollys Street"</i>	A view from Victoria Recreation Ground has been included as representative viewpoint 21.
19 November 2018	Informal discussion with Richard Eatough following design review meeting. Points of discussion included the form of presentation of the VVMs and the final positions of Representative Viewpoints 10, 14, Station Square North, Station Square South and Victoria Recreation Ground.	Representative Viewpoint 10: Existing view tabled and exact position on A4155 clarified; Representative Viewpoint 14: reverted to St Peters Church on the basis this presented a more elevated viewpoint position and views from Caversham Court are well screened by existing vegetation and buildings; Alternative viewpoint positions for Station Square North viewpoint tabled and final position agreed as presented in this assessment; Alternative viewpoint positions for Station Square South discussed and position alongside statue within mini-roundabout agreed as presenting the most uncluttered view; and Viewpoint within Victoria Recreation Ground agreed rather than Great Knollys Street given views from the latter largely screened by existing buildings.

- 6.26 The response from RBC excluded comments on the intended 2km study area and the list of consented schemes which form part of the 'future baseline' to the assessment. These aspects of the TVRA were therefore taken as approved by RBC.

Assessment Criteria and Assignment of Significance

Visual Assessment

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

- 6.27 The sensitivity of visual receptors is dependent upon:
- the location and context of views;
 - whether views are continuous, fragmented or intermittent (i.e. the transient nature of a view gained while travelling through an area); and
 - the importance of views and the activity or expectations of receptors.
- 6.28 Influences such as the numbers of receptors affected, popularity of views and the significance of views in relation to valued landscapes, townscapes or features determine the importance of views. The sensitivity levels have been identified for each representative viewpoint in accordance with the criteria indicated in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: Definitions of Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Typical Descriptors
Very High	Includes viewers within residential properties with direct views from ground floor windows on the front or rear elevations of their properties and gardens. Users of townscapes and townscape features of National importance or value with direct views.
High	Includes viewers within residential properties and users of townscapes and townscape features of National importance or value with more restricted views compared to the 'Very High' category of sensitivity. Includes users of Public Rights of Way, including users of National Trails and Local Recreational Trails and townscape and townscape features of acknowledged importance and value, i.e., parks and gardens.
Medium	Includes people engaged in sports / formal outdoor recreation; dynamic views gained by the travelling population through the landscape. Viewers from residential properties with upper floor window views.

Low	Includes people at their place of work with direct views; albeit whose attention may be focused on their work or activity and are therefore be less susceptible to changes in view.
Negligible	Includes people at their place of work with more restricted views in comparison to the 'Low' category of sensitivity.

Magnitude of Impact

- 6.29 The magnitude of impact (or change) to an existing view has been determined by a number of interrelated factors. These include the distance of the proposed development from the receptor and the proportion of it likely to be visible within the view. In addition, consideration was given to the height of visible parts of the proposed development relative to the receptor, with reference also to the scale of other features in the view and the number and character of elements, which would be lost from or added to the view. It was assumed that change would be seen in clear visibility and appropriate lighting conditions and the assessment was carried out on that basis. Magnitude of impact was then assessed using the criteria shown in Table 6.3 below.

Table 6.3: Magnitude of Impact (or change) to an Existing View

Magnitude	Typical Descriptors
High	Complete or very substantial change in view: change very prominent involving complete or very substantial obstruction of existing view or complete change in character and composition of baseline, i.e. pre-development, view through removal of key elements or addition of uncharacteristic elements.
Medium	Moderate change in view: may involve partial obstruction of existing view or partial change in character and composition of baseline, i.e. pre-development, view through the introduction of new elements or removal of existing elements. Change may be prominent but would not substantially alter scale and character of the surroundings and the wider setting. Composition of the views would alter. View character may be partially changed through the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.
Low	Minor change in baseline, i.e. pre-development, view: change would be distinguishable from the surroundings while composition and character would be similar to the pre-change circumstances.
Negligible	Very slight change in baseline, i.e. pre-development, view: change barely distinguishable from the surroundings. Composition and character of view substantially unaltered
No Change	No visual effects would be observed

Townscape Assessment

- 6.30 Each townscape character area for which the ZTV indicated that the proposed development may be visible within views from it (see Figure 6.6) was evaluated in relation to its overall sensitivity to the type of change envisaged by the proposed development (see Appendix 6.3). Sensitivity is a measure of the townscape's capacity to accommodate change of the type proposed, such as the introduction of new features or the loss of existing features. It is influenced by a number of factors, including the quality of the receiving townscape and how it is valued. To bring these factors together a five-point scale has been used as provided in Table 6.4 below. However, this table can only illustrate general categories, the assessment of absolute sensitivity has been determined as part of the overall assessment process.

Table 6.4: Definitions of Townscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Typical Descriptors
Very High	Very high importance and rarity, international scale and very limited potential to accommodate change of the type proposed.
High	High importance and rarity, national scale, and limited potential to accommodate change of the type proposed.
Medium	High or medium importance and rarity, regional scale, limited potential to accommodate change of the type proposed.
Low	Low or medium importance and rarity, local scale, and capable of accommodating change of the type proposed.
Negligible	Very low importance and rarity, local scale and very capable of accommodating change of the type proposed.

- 6.31 GLVIA guidance states that, “Sensitivity is not absolute but is likely to vary according to the existing landscape, the nature of the proposed scheme and type of change being considered. Sensitivity is not therefore, part of baseline studies but is considered during and arises from the assessment of effects.” The GLVIA also indicates that “sensitivity is dependent on both the attributes of the receiving environment and the characteristics and effects of the proposed scheme and can only be established by carrying out the assessment.” As such, the assessment of the sensitivity of each townscape character area to the type of changes that would result from the proposed development has been carried out as part of the assessment of effects rather than as part of the baseline.
- 6.32 Further, and with regard to sensitivity, GLVIA states that, “The determination of the sensitivity of the landscape resource is based upon an evaluation of each key element or characteristic of the landscape likely to be affected. The evaluation will reflect such factors as its quality, value, contribution to landscape character, and the degree to which the particular element or characteristic can be replaced or substituted.” To assist with the evaluation of sensitivity, relative value needs to be applied to the townscape resource or its constituent parts and the following definitions have been used in this assessment:
- **Very High:** Areas that exhibit an exceptionally strong, positive character and which are in excellent or very good condition with valued features that combine to give an experience of unity, richness and harmony. These are townscapes that may be considered to be of international importance to conserve and which may be especially sensitive to change if inappropriately dealt with. Frequently, such areas will contain World Heritage Site status;
 - **High:** Areas that exhibit a very strong, positive character and which are in excellent or very good condition with valued features that combine to give an experience of unity, richness and harmony. These are townscapes that may be considered to be of particular importance to conserve and which may be particularly sensitive to change if inappropriately dealt with. Frequently, such areas will contain designations such as Conservation Area status or Registered Parks and Gardens;
 - **Medium:** Areas that exhibit positive character and are considered to be in good condition with some valued features, but which may have evidence of alteration to/ degradation/erosion of features resulting in areas of more mixed character. Potentially sensitive to change, change may not necessarily be detrimental nor require special attention to detail;

- Low: Areas generally negative in character, in poor condition with a weak urban structure with few, if any, valued townscape features. Scope for positive enhancement frequently occurs; and
- Very Low: Areas generally lacking any character with no urban structure and very few, if any, valued townscape features. Scope for complete re-development.

6.33 The potential townscape impacts of the proposed development were identified taking into account the effects of the removal of any existing townscape elements within the project site and the design, scale and layout of the proposed development, inclusive of the landscape design proposals. The identification of townscape effects distinguishes between direct effects upon the physical resource (landform, vegetation, pattern etc) and those associated with amenity and views so as to avoid double counting. However, where visual effects of, for example, a proposed building, would impact on the character of adjacent townscape areas, this has been taken into consideration.

6.34 Magnitude of impact (or change) was then assessed using the criteria shown in Table 6.5 below.

Table 6.5: Magnitude of Impact (or Change) to a Townscape Character Area

Magnitude	Typical Descriptors
High	Total loss of or large alteration to key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline townscape and/or introduction of elements considered to be totally uncharacteristic, when set within the attributes of the receiving townscape.
Medium	Partial loss of/moderate alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline townscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent, but not necessarily considered substantially uncharacteristic, when set within the attributes of the receiving townscape.
Low	Slight loss of or slight alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline townscape, and/or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving townscape.
Negligible	Very slight loss of or alteration to key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline townscape, and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the surrounding townscape.
No Change	No change to key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline townscape.

Significance of Effects

6.35 The final stage of the assessment process identifies the potential significance of townscape and visual effects using the matrix in Table 6.6 below. This takes into account the previous assessments for magnitude of impact and sensitivity of townscape/ visual receptor. Where a range of significance levels is provided, professional judgement has been used to identify the most appropriate significance level on a case by case basis.

Table 6.6: Assessment Matrix

Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact				
	No Change	Negligible	Low	Medium	High
Negligible	No change	Negligible	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor
Low	No change	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Minor or Moderate

Medium	No change	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Moderate	Moderate or Major
High	No change	Negligible or Minor	Minor or Moderate	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial
Very high	No change	Minor	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial	Substantial

- 6.36 For the purposes of this assessment, any potential effects that are assessed as being 'Major' significance of effect or above are considered to be significant in townscape or visual terms. Potential effects that are considered to be of a 'Minor' or 'Moderate' significance of effect are described; however, they are considered to be not significant in EIA terms. In addition, where the proposed development is considered to result in potential beneficial effects which would balance any potential adverse effects for the same receptor or, in instances where the magnitude of impact is considered to be so slight that the overall quality of the townscape or view would be maintained, this is recorded in the assessment as 'Neutral'.

Definitions of Significance of Visual Effects

- 6.37 Table 6.7 provides a definition of the terms used to describe the potential significance of effect upon existing views due to the proposed development.

Table 6.7: Significance Criteria for Assessment of Visual Effects

Significance of Effect	Definition
Substantial	Typically, the proposed changes would lead to a substantial improvement to a view from a high or very high sensitivity receptor.
	Typically, the proposed changes would lead to a substantial deterioration to a view from a high or very high sensitivity receptor.
Major	Typically, the proposed changes would lead to an obvious improvement to a view from a medium or high sensitivity receptor, or a perceptible improvement to a view from a very high sensitivity receptor.
	Typically, the proposed changes would lead to an obvious deterioration to a view from a medium or high sensitivity receptor, or a perceptible deterioration to a view from a very high sensitivity receptor.
Moderate	Typically, the proposed changes would lead to some obvious improvement to a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity or limited improvement to a view from a more sensitive receptor.
	Typically, the proposed changes would cause some obvious deterioration to a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity, or limited deterioration to a view from a more sensitive receptor.
Minor	Typically, the proposed changes would cause perceptible improvement to a view from a receptor of high or medium sensitivity or would cause greater improvement to a view from a receptor of low sensitivity.
	Typically, the proposed changes would cause perceptible deterioration to a view from a receptor of high or medium sensitivity or would cause greater deterioration to a view from a receptor of low sensitivity.
Negligible	Typically, the proposed changes would cause a barely perceptible improvement to a view from a receptor of high or medium sensitivity or slightly greater improvement to a view from a receptor of low sensitivity.
	Typically, the proposed changes would cause a barely perceptible deterioration to a view from a receptor of high or medium sensitivity or slightly greater deterioration to a view from a receptor of low sensitivity.
Neutral	Typically, the proposed changes would have adverse effects which would be offset or 'balanced' by beneficial effects upon a view for the same visual receptor

Significance of Effect	Definition
	or the change to the view would be so slight that the quality of the view would be maintained.
No Change	No effects upon a view.

Definitions of Significance of Townscape Effects

6.38 The significance of effect criteria are described in table below as follows:

Table 6.8: Significance Criteria for Assessment of Townscape Effects

Significance of Effect	Definition
Substantial (beneficial/ adverse)	Typically, the proposed changes would: - substantially enhance the character (including value) of the townscape; - enable the restoration of characteristic features and elements lost as a result of changes from inappropriate management or development; and/or - enable a sense of place to be enhanced.
	Typically, the proposed changes would: - be at variance with the character (including value) of the townscape; - degrade or diminish the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements or cause them to be lost; and/or - change a sense of place.
Major (beneficial/ adverse)	Typically, the proposed changes would: - substantially enhance the character (including value) of the townscape; - enable the restoration of characteristic features and elements lost as a result of changes from inappropriate management or development; and/or - enable a sense of place to be enhanced.
	Typically, proposed changes would: - be at variance with the character (including value) of the townscape; - degrade or diminish the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements or cause them to be lost; and/or - change a sense of place.
Moderate (beneficial/ adverse)	Typically, the proposed changes would: - enhance the character (including value) of the townscape; - enable the restoration of characteristic features and elements partially lost or diminished as a result of changes from inappropriate management or development; and/or - enable a sense of place to be restored.
	Typically, the proposed changes would: - conflict with the character (including value) of the townscape; - have an adverse effect on characteristic features or elements; and/or - diminish a sense of place.
Minor (beneficial/ adverse)	Typically, the proposed changes would: - complement the character (including value) of the townscape; - maintain or enhance characteristic features or elements; and - enable some sense of place to be restored.
	Typically, the proposed changes would: - not quite fit the character (including value) of the townscape; - be at variance with characteristic features and elements; and/or - detract from sense of place.
Negligible (beneficial/ adverse)	Typically, the proposed changes would: - just complement the character (including value) of the townscape; - just maintain and enhance characteristic features and elements; and/or - just about enable some sense of place to be restored.

Significance of Effect	Definition
	Typically, the proposed changes would: - barely fit the character (including value) of the townscape; - only just be at variance with characteristic features and elements; and/or - only just detract from sense of place.
Neutral	Typically, the proposed changes would have adverse effects, which would be offset or 'balanced' by beneficial effects for the same townscape receptor or the change to the townscape would be so slight that its quality would be maintained.
No Change	The proposed changes would have no townscape effects.

'Future Baseline' for the Assessment

- 6.39 As previously stated (paragraph 6.16), there are a number of consented projects which are considered to form part of a 'future baseline' for the assessment are as follows:

Station Hill

- 6.40 This proposed development is to the south of the railway station. It includes a series of plot developments for which the maximum and minimum building heights within each is as listed in the table below. The scheme received planning approval in July 2017. Plot B and C within the proposal would contain the tallest buildings.

Table 6.9: Maximum/ Minimum building heights within the Station Hill development

Plot No.	Maximum building height	Minimum building height	Approximate height above finished ground level (Max) (<i>41m AOD at the mid-point along the northern edge of the proposed development</i>)
A	+91mAOD	+67mAOD	50m
B	+121mAOD	+94mAOD	80m
C	+128mAOD	+109mAOD	87m
D	+105mAOD	+75mAOD	64m
E	Not available	Not available	-
F	+85mAOD	+63mAOD	44m

- 6.41 In addition, and at the time of writing, there is a request for an EIA scoping opinion with RBC covering a minor material amendment a reserved matters application in relation to this approved scheme (Planning Application 181820). This is understood to represent a minor amendment to the approved scheme and the parameters plans previously submitted providing details of max/min building heights are unchanged from those stated in the table above.

- 6.42 Other developments also forming part of the 'future baseline' to this assessment are as follows:

- Weldale St (Planning Application 170326)

The site of this approved tall building scheme is at the junction of Chatham Street with Caversham Road to the south-west of the railway station. The development would include development blocks of between 4-12 storeys in height.

- Kings Point Reading (Planning Application 150019)

This site for an approved tall building proposal is at the junction of Kings Road and Watlington Street to the south-east of the railway station. A tall building of up to 20 residential storeys (about 16.5 commercial storeys) has been approved for this site.

- Thames Quarter (Planning Application 162166)

The scheme (which includes a 23-storey tower) would be built at the junction of Kings Meadow Road with Vastern Road to the east of the proposed development.

- Kenavon Drive, Reading (Planning Application 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.

- 33 Blagrove Street, Reading (Planning Application 181074)

Change of use from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 28 dwellings (17 x 1-bed and 11 x 2-bed).

- 1 Station Road/ 22 Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1LG (Planning Application 180139)

Change of use to 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors of building from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 11 dwellings.

- Land to the west of Thames Valley Park Drive, RG6 1PT (Planning Application 161596)

Full application for the proposed development of a Park and Ride facility providing approximately 277 vehicular spaces, motorcycle parking and associated vehicular access and landscaping.

6.43 Of these, the following are shown on the existing or 'future baseline' views for each of the representative viewpoints included in Appendix 6.2:

- Station Hill;
- Weldale Street;
- Kings Point;
- Thames Quarter; and
- Kenavon Drive

- 6.44 None of the remaining approved schemes forming part of the 'future baseline' for the assessment include tall buildings, i.e. over 10 commercial storeys in height. As such, they are not shown on the existing or 'future baseline' views in Appendix 6.2.

Cumulative Assessment

- 6.45 The full list of other projects which have been considered in the cumulative assessment are included in Appendix 4.6 of this Environmental Statement. Only those which have been 'scoped in' to the ES for the proposed development have been taken forward for inclusion in the assessment of potential cumulative effects. These are proposed schemes for which a planning application has been submitted to RBC and sites which are allocated for development within the 'Sites and Detailed Policies' (Adopted October 2012, altered January 2015) and the 'Submission Draft Reading Borough Local Plan' (March 2018). The potential cumulative effects of these proposals in association with the proposed development upon the townscape character areas within the study area and views from the representative viewpoints are assessed in Appendix 6.4.
- 6.46 In addition, whilst a planning application has not been submitted to RBC to date for the re-development of the Vastern Road Retail Park to the immediate north of the project site, this is one of several areas identified within the Reading Station Area Framework (RSAF) (December 2010) as a 'main development plot'. Those to the immediate north of the project site are labelled (west to east) 'N3' to 'N6' in the RSAF, where buildings with a benchmark height of 6 to 'at least 10 commercial storeys' in height are considered likely to be appropriate. It is a development proposal on this site which is most likely to result in some potentially significant cumulative effects upon townscape character and or views; more so than any of the other schemes listed in Appendix 6.4.

Limitations of the Assessment

- 6.47 The assessment process aims to be objective and to describe the changes to the Reading townscape that would result from the proposed development factually. However, the assessment of townscape and visual effects inevitably requires a degree of subjective analysis. Whilst the changes arising from the proposed development can be factually defined, the potential effects of these changes do require qualitative judgements to be made. The conclusions to this assessment therefore combine objective measurement and subjective professional interpretation.

Baseline Environment

Townscape Designations

- 6.48 The project site is not subject to any statutory designation or non-statutory local townscape designation. However, the Market Street/ London Place Conservation Area is about 300m from the boundary of the project site at its closest point (see Figure 6.1). In addition, the Reading Abbey scheduled monument, including the Forbury Gardens (Registered Park and Garden), is about 400m to the south-east of the project site. There are also a large number of listed buildings within Reading town centre to the south of the railway line, including Regent Place on Caversham Road, about 150m to the south-west and the Edward XVII statue within the mini-roundabout to the south of Reading Station. A small part of the Chiltern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONB) is

also shown within the top left corner on Figure 6.1. However, this is outwith the study area for the TVRA and therefore not considered further.

Local Townscape Context (including Project Site)

- 6.49 Several near distance views looking towards the project site are included on Figure 6.7. The project site is located immediately north of Reading railway station and is bounded to the north by retail and restaurant facilities along Vastern Road (Vastern Road Retail Park). To the west lies Caversham Road and to the east a multi-storey car park. It is bounded to the south by the railway line which is elevated above the project site and (further south) Reading town centre, which is centred around the Oracle shopping centre, the Kennet and Avon Canal, surrounding streets and Reading railway station. It comprises predominantly commercial and retail uses. To the north of Vastern Road and to the west of Caversham Road residential areas are widespread.
- 6.50 The project site is comprised of large steel-clad buildings formerly used as a Post Office sorting office with associated parking, storage and distribution facilities. The former Post Office site is enclosed by security fencing. It also includes part of Station Square to the north of the railway station, which is connected to the station via a pedestrian underpass. Station Square is an evolving new area of public realm which was established as part of the recent major re-development of Reading railway station. The local road network, which includes the A329 Caversham Road and Vastern Road are very busy transport corridors through the town centre.
- 6.51 Within the immediate context of the project site, there are a number of significant tall buildings giving variation to the skyline of the town. These are located south of the railway and on key approaches to the town, for example Thames Tower (recently refurbished and extended to 14 storeys), 'The Blade' and that above the Broad Street Shopping Mall. In addition, and whilst not yet constructed, other tall building proposals have recently received planning consent and are considered to form part of the baseline for the assessment (see also paragraph 6.43). These include the Station Hill development, as well Thames Quarter, Weldale Street and Kings Point; each of which include tall buildings.

Land cover and Settlement Pattern

- 6.52 The project site is within an urban area. Vastern Road Retail Park, to the immediate north is a commercial site, with several outlets, including TGI Fridays and an Aldi store, set within an extensive area of at grade car parking. To the west lies Caversham Road and to the east a multi-storey car park. Reading town centre to the south of the project site centres around the Oracle shopping centre, surrounding streets and Reading railway station and comprises predominantly commercial and retail uses. To the north of Vastern Road and to the west of Caversham Road residential areas are widespread.
- 6.53 Green spaces within the study area include Balmore Park within Caversham to the north of the River Thames and Forbury Gardens to the south of the river. The latter is enclosed by development of several storeys in height, whilst Balmore Park occupies rising ground within the north of the study area. Caversham Court borders the River Thames to the west of Caversham Bridge. Within the wider Thames Valley (also within the study area), the landscape is open, albeit used extensively

for leisure and recreation to the west whilst, to the east, there are large waterbodies, which are the result of former mineral workings now ceased.

Topography and Drainage

- 6.54 Whilst there appears to be little change in landform elevation within the central area of Reading, the area to the south of the railway station sits on a very slight rise in topography at about 45 metres above ordnance datum (AOD) and on land with a very gently rounded hill-top profile. This is the highest part of the town centre. The project site itself sits at approximately 38 metres AOD. Thereafter, landform slopes gently towards the River Thames and River Kennett which flow to the north and south of the project site respectively. To the north of the River Thames, landform rises more abruptly to form the northsides of the Thames river valley. The higher ground of the Chiltern Hills rises further to the north of Reading and to the south the ground undulates between 35-50 metres AOD.

Settlement History and Cultural Associations

- 6.55 An account of the historical development of Reading is provided in Chapter 5: Historic Environment. The town is thought to have originated in the early medieval period and is first mentioned in AD 870. It developed at the confluence of the River Thames and the River Kennet. Its growth during the medieval period was influenced by the establishment of Reading Abbey in 1121; the site of which is now a scheduled monument, inclusive of Forbury Gardens.
- 6.56 During the 19th century, the town grew rapidly as a manufacturing centre and, in 1841, the Great Western Railway (GWR) arrived. However, it would appear that the project site still largely remained undeveloped until about 1879, when the GWR Works were extended into it; a development which included buildings such as a foundry and large engineering sheds, as well as railway sidings. During the late 19th and in the 20th century, numerous phases of development occurred within the project site, associated with the expansion of the railway works and subsequent establishment of the Royal Mail Sorting Office, which remains to this day, albeit it is now dis-used.

Views

- 6.57 The ZTV, (see Figure 6.3), indicates the potential extent of the study area from which views to the proposed development may be available. It indicates that the Station Hill development (in association with existing buildings) would screen views from most of the urban area within the southern part of the study area but suggests that the proposed development would be visible from rising ground to the north of the River Thames within Caversham as well as low-lying areas adjacent to the River Thames, to both east and west of the project site.
- 6.58 The location for the 21 representative viewpoints included in the assessment are shown on Figure 6.4. They are listed in the table below together with an evaluation of their sensitivity, in accordance with the criteria outlined in Table 6.2.

Table 6.10: Representative Viewpoints

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Distance to Approximate Centre of Project Site
Vp.1: Kings Meadow	Very High (Users of a Public Right of Way and Thames Path National Trail)	1.22km
Vp.2: Mount Pleasant	Medium (Users of a roadside footpath)	1.71km
Vp.3: London Road	Medium (Users of a local road)	3.58km
Vp.4: Caversham Bridge	High (Users of a townscape feature of acknowledged value with an important view over River Thames towards town centre)	0.63km
Vp.5: Thames Path	High (Users of a Public Right of Way and Thames Path National Trail)	1.19km
Vp.6: Thames Path	High (Users of a Public Right of Way and Thames Path National Trail)	2.23km
Vp.7: Caversham Road	Medium (Users of a roadside footpath)	0.14km
Vp.8: A329 Overbridge (Chatham Street/ Friars Street link)	Medium (Users of a roadside footpath)	0.57km
Vp.9: Napier Road	Medium (Users of a roadside footpath)	0.5km
Vp.10: A4155 Caversham Road	Medium (Users of a roadside footpath)	0.18km
Vp.11: Forbury Gardens	High (Users of an urban park and scheduled monument with restricted views)	0.61km
Vp.12: De Montfort Road	Medium (Users of a roadside footpath)	0.3km
Vp.13: Christchurch Bridge	High (Users of a townscape feature of acknowledged value with an important view towards the town centre)	0.36km
Vp.14: St Peters Church	High (Users of a Conservation Area and Registered Park and Garden, but with restricted views)	1km
Vp.15: Town Hall Square	Medium (Users of a roadside footpath)	0.55km
Vp.16: Balmore Park	High (Users of an urban park)	1.08km
Vp.17: Swansea Road	Medium (Users of a roadside footpath)	0.24km
Vp.18: Caversham Road	Medium (Users of a roadside footpath)	0.33km
Vp.19: Station Square North	Medium (Users of the Public realm)	0.18km
Vp.20: Station Square South	Medium (Users of the Public realm)	0.3km
Vp.21: Victoria Recreation Ground	High (Users of an urban park)	0.82km

- 6.59 The majority of these are the same as those included in the ES for the previously approved scheme. However, a number of adjustments to these have been made as described in paragraphs 6.16 (as a result of comments received from RBC) and following further consideration of the viewpoints during fieldwork. The adjustments are as follows:

- Representative Viewpoint 11, has been re-located to a more central (and more widely used) position within Forbury Gardens adjacent to the war memorial (Maiwand Lion Statue);
- Representative Viewpoint 12, has been re-located to De Montfort Road, from which a vista looking south towards the proposed development is available (the proposed development would be screened within the view from Brigham Road, as used in the previous ES);
- Representative Viewpoint 13, as used in the ES for the previous scheme, no longer exists following re-development of Reading railway station. It has therefore been substituted with a view from Christchurch Bridge (a footbridge over the River Thames);
- Representative Viewpoint 15, has been re-located to present a slightly more open view looking north towards the proposed development;
- Representative Viewpoint 16 has been included from a point in Balmore Park; the park is identified as providing a 'key view' in the Reading Tall Building Strategy (2008);
- Representative Viewpoint 17 has been included from a point on Swansea Road from which a vista looking east along Northfield Road showing the relationship of the proposed development with Caversham Road;
- Representative Viewpoint 18 has also been included from a further point on Caversham Road to show the relationship of the proposed development to the Caversham Road streetscape; and
- Representative Viewpoints 19, 20 and 21 have been added at the request of RBC during consultation

Townscape Character

- 6.60 The following sections set out the Townscape character framework for the study area from the national level through to district scale based upon existing published landscape and townscape character assessments; supplemented with information gleaned from the various Conservation Area appraisals published by RBC for areas outwith the central area of Reading. For those parts of the study area which are not covered by available published studies, areas of townscape with broadly similar characteristics have been defined by RPS (see Figure 6.5).

National Landscape Character Assessment

- 6.61 Natural England's national landscape characterisation study (Natural England, 2014) shows parts of Reading (including the project site) as being within National Character Area 115: Thames Valley, with the rising ground within the north of the town falling within National Character Area 110: Chilterns. It is described in this document as, "a mainly low-lying, wedge-shaped area, widening from Reading, which includes Slough, Windsor, the Colne Valley and the southwest London fringes. The River Thames provides a unifying feature through a very diverse landscape of urban and suburban settlements, infrastructure networks, fragmented agricultural land, historic parks, commons, woodland, reservoirs and extensive minerals workings."

District Landscape Character Assessment

6.62 Descriptions of each of the townscape character areas for which the ZTV (Figure 6.3) indicates that there may be a degree of potential inter-visibility between the townscape character area and the proposed development are included in Appendix 6.3. That within which the application site sits is '22: Vastern Road'; an area containing buildings with a large floor space, but generally of 2 to 3 storey height, including a retail park and a former Post Office Sorting office, which is within the project site. Buildings are generally set within large expanses of hard surfacing providing car parking. Historically, the townscape character area is associated with the railway and growth of manufacturing and commerce within the town, post 1840. However, other than more recent development within the eastern part of the character area, adjacent the junction between Vastern Road and the B3345, its townscape dates from the latter parts of the 20th century. Building materials include coloured, metal cladding, with some brickwork on buildings within the Vastern Road retail park. The character area includes the Reading Station multi-storey car park and Station Square to the north of the northern entrance to the railway station. Given its location, to the immediate north of the railway line, the character area has an obvious association with the commercial centre of Reading to the south and also reads as part of the central area within views from the rising ground to the north with Caversham, including Balmore Park. The Thames Quarter development (yet to be built) will form a new tall building (over 10 commercial storeys) within this character area to the immediate south of Reading Bridge House.

6.63 Townscape character area '22: Vastern Road' is described in the Reading Tall Buildings Strategy, 2008, as follows:

Table 6.11: Townscape Character Area '22: Vastern Road'

Townscape Element	Description
Land Use	Warehouses and retail park
Historical significance	Railway town and growth of manufacturing and commerce post 1840.
Architectural style	The predominant material is coloured, metal cladding.
Urban grain and townscape scale	The building blocks have a large floor space, although the buildings are not high rise and there is extensive car parking adjacent to the buildings. These features combine to create a medium scale townscape.
Townscape condition	The large, blank faces of the warehouses create an unexceptional area of townscape which does not respond well to the surrounding residential land use. Although the buildings are occupied and function well for their purpose, their design is unattractive and creates a weak and uninspiring area of townscape.
Key views within the character area	There are no key views defined for the character area.
Key views into the character area	Buildings within the character area contribute to the skyline visible from Oxford Road when approaching Reading from the west. From the elevated position of Caversham Park, Balmore Park and Horse Close, built form within the character area contributes to the view of central Reading.
Landmark structures and existing tall buildings	The large, warehouse structures create a consistent, unexceptional townscape. There are no landmark structures. Although the warehouses create a roofline which is elevated above the surrounding residential buildings, there is no one structure which is notable as a tall building.

Tall buildings planning Applications	None
Townscape sensitivity to the inclusion of tall buildings	Low: The large block size which exists within the character area and the absence of any key views or visual focal point makes this an appropriate location for tall buildings. However, it is proposed that tall structures should not be developed along the north and western boundaries of the character area as these boundaries are shared with small scale residential areas. any proposed built form should respond in terms of height and scale to the residential area. The tallest structures should be located to the south of the character area, adjacent to the railway line. In this area the townscape features are larger scale, and adjacent to large scale features outside of the area e.g. existing station buildings, Thames Tower and Western Tower.

- 6.64 Where reference is made to 'key views' is made above, these are as derived from the Reading Tall Building Strategy, 2008. They cover views towards the town centre from various points within the urban area, including views from within central Reading (Views A to P) and from the wider urban area (Views 1 to 28).

'Future Baseline' Conditions

- 6.65 The proposed development has been assessed against a 'future baseline' which includes a number of approved schemes containing tall buildings (see paragraph 6.43). Some of these, i.e. Thames Quarter, were under construction at the time of field survey to inform the assessment. Others, i.e. Station Hill are yet to commence. However, the 'future baseline' assumes they are all built and in place before the proposed development and that they form part of the townscape setting to it. This is different to what may be termed the 'current baseline', which more appropriately describes the townscape as it is today, i.e. at the time of writing during late 2018. It is considered that this 'current baseline' would be inappropriate for the assessment given the number of approved schemes within the town centre which include tall building clusters against which the proposed development would be visible.
- 6.66 The most likely change to the baseline going forward is further development for both residential and commercial purposes within what is likely to continue to be a constantly evolving townscape. This may well include development and re-development. Some of these have been considered as part of the assessment of cumulative effects, others are likely to come forward.
- 6.67 It is extremely difficult to predict the likely effects of climate change on vegetation and building materials. It may be appropriate for planting proposals within the areas of soft landscape within the proposed development to use species which are considered most likely to adapt to climate change within an urban environment. This would apply equally to street tree planting, as well as shrubs and herbaceous plants. A similar approach may be appropriate with respect to building materials, which may be less susceptible to the possible effects of weathering due to climate change.

Mitigation Measures Adopted as Part of the Proposed Development

- 6.68 As part of its design evolution, a study was undertaken to assess the townscape design of the proposed development (RPS, 2018). Whilst the study considered the fit of the proposed development with the existing settlement pattern and urban form, it also explored the height and massing of the proposed development against an evolving townscape which includes a number of consented schemes containing tall buildings (i.e. Station Hill to the south of the railway). The study

included a review of published local planning documents (as included in Appendix 6.1) as well as several visualisations to show the height and massing of the proposed development in relation to known consented schemes. The conclusions to the assessment were that the proposed development achieved a good level of fit with the existing urban form with its strong north-south and east-west axes and that it complemented the existing tall building cluster provided by Station Hill/ Thames Tower to the south of the railway. It also made recommendations concerning the heights of parts of the proposed development, which were taken forward and given further consideration by the design team.

- 6.69 The proposed development also includes proposals for soft landscape design, inclusive of specimen tree planting. Whilst, due to the scale of the proposed development, these elements of it would not mitigate its effects upon views from the representative viewpoints, they would provide amenity features and assist with its townscape integration.

Assessment of Construction Effects

- 6.70 The potential effects of the proposed development upon views and townscape character during the construction phase (inclusive of its initial demolition phase) have been assessed using the methodology described elsewhere in this chapter. Effects during the construction phase would be temporary and are anticipated to take place over a period of between 5 to 7 years.

Visual Effects

- 6.71 At the start of the construction phase, impacts upon views from the representative viewpoints would be mainly limited to the near distance views from those representative viewpoints for which users would have unobstructed views to the boundaries of the project site, i.e. representative viewpoints 7 (Caversham Road) and 10 (A4155, Caversham Road), together with 12 (De Montfort Road), 17 (Swansea Road), 18 (Caversham Road) and 19 Station Square North. From each of these representative viewpoints, hoardings (solid plywood boarding or similar) erected along the project site boundaries, would foreshorten ground level views. Within the views from representative viewpoints 7 and 19 (to take in the re-development of Station Square North), this feature of the construction phase would occupy more or less the full width of the views whereas, for the others, the extent of the views impacted would be considerably less and, in the case of the view from representative viewpoint 18, minimal and would be at least partially obstructed by traffic using Caversham Road. Other site establishment works, including setting up of car parking areas, site offices and compounds would largely be screened within these near distance views by the previously erected solid boundary hoardings.
- 6.72 It should also be noted that construction activities associated with the proposed development are likely to follow on from those associated with the Station Hill development to the south of the railway, Weldale Street to the west, Kenavon Drive and Kings Point, along with other smaller developments which do not contain tall buildings. As such, tower crane(s) are likely to have been a characteristic of views looking towards Reading town centre, including many of the representative viewpoints, prior to the start of the temporary construction phase for the proposed development. In addition, Thames Quarter to the east was under construction at the time of field survey for the assessment.

- Construction activity, including tower crane(s), are thus a frequent characteristic of a constantly evolving and adapting townscape and would not just be confined to the proposed development.
- 6.73 Removal of existing trees along the Caversham Road frontage and demolition of the former Post Office sorting office would follow, probably using demolition excavators and trucks, with mobile crane(s) for roof plant. This phase of the works and machinery would be at least part visible above the hoardings and would be visible within each of the near distance views.
- 6.74 Excavations to form foundations for the new buildings would most likely follow, stockpiles of materials may well also be visible at this time above the hoardings and regular traffic movements are also likely to be a frequent feature of these near distance views. However, as the framework for the new buildings is formed and it gradually increases in height; these works, and the tower crane(s) that are likely to be necessary to enable this phase of the works to progress, would become visible within the remaining representative views and visible above intervening buildings and other features bordering the project site, particularly during the winter months, when existing deciduous vegetation would be without its leaf cover.
- 6.75 As the buildings progressively increase in height, their impact upon each of the views from the representative viewpoints would gradually increase until they reach the same heights as that of the operational phase, at which point they would be as noticeable within views and would provide the same level of visual obstruction to views, as that of the operational phase. Albeit, the tower crane(s) are likely to remain an additional element within these views alongside the new buildings until their final cladding and finishes are complete.
- 6.76 An assessment of the potential effects of the temporary demolition and construction phase of the proposed development upon the 'future baseline' view from each of the representative viewpoints is included in the Table 6.12 overpage:

Table 6.12 – Potential Effects upon Views from Representative Viewpoints During Temporary Construction Phase

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
Vp.1: Kings Meadow	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Buildings within the Station Hill development form the tallest buildings within the view alongside Thames Tower. Albeit, views to both are filtered by existing mature trees within the park. There is an open foreground to the view provided by the sports pitches and regularly maintained grassland. A series of freestanding poles within the foreground to the view form a noticeable vertical element within the view. Proposed View: Winter: Tower crane(s) would be visible within views filtered by existing trees within the middle distance to the view and would form an element within the view as each block within the proposed development is constructed. However, lower level construction activity would be screened. During summer, the tower cranes are likely to be screened by existing trees. Temporary construction activity would contrast with the parkland character of the view.	Negligible	Minor adverse
Vp.2: Mount Pleasant	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Thames Tower, alongside tall buildings within the Station Hill development, are visible above 2 storey residential properties lining Mount Pleasant within the foreground to the view. An existing tower crane reveals the location of a further development site immediately south of Crown Street. The Chiltern Hills to the north form the skyline to the view. Proposed View: Winter: The view already contains a tower crane, which would form a temporary component of the view and is not uncharacteristic of a typical urban view within which development and re-development is an ongoing characteristic. Tower crane(s) within the project site would be visible along with the uppermost parts of the tallest building within the proposed development as it gradually increases in height. Lower level construction activity would be completely screened within the view.	Negligible	Negligible adverse
Vp.3: London Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Tall buildings within the Station Hill development set alongside Thames Tower are clearly identifiable as a tall building cluster above a line of 2 storey residential properties. Thames Quarter stands slightly isolated from this central cluster and reads as a separate tall building. There are several other vertical elements within the view, including the lattice work electricity pylon and tall lighting columns, together with the Novo Hotel (inclusive of the service crane on its roof). Proposed View: Winter: Tower crane(s), and the uppermost parts of the tallest buildings within the proposed development (as they near their completed height) would be partly visible within the view, albeit beyond the electricity transmission pylon and set within the context of a wider view with many existing tall elements. The tallest building would also be partly screened by the lattice work electricity pylon. Overall, within this broad panorama looking towards the town centre and wider urban environs, the quality of the view would be maintained.	Negligible	Neutral
Vp.4: Caversham Bridge	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Parts of the Station Hill development alongside Thames Tower are visible within a view partly screened by existing trees on the south bank of the River Thames. Thames Quarter is visible within the left of the view alongside 'The Blade'. Buildings adjacent to the river are generally of 3 to 4 storeys in height. The Thames riverscape is the dominant townscape element with a setting provided by buildings, some of which are tall buildings.		

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
		Proposed View: Winter: Tower crane(s) would add a different element to the view, albeit it looks towards the urban area within which construction activity is a frequent characteristic of views. There would be a slight alteration to the view as tower crane(s) would be seen in association with the taller parts of the proposed development as the buildings are gradually erected and steadily increase in height.	Low	Moderate adverse
Vp.5: Thames Path	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): The mass and bulk of the Station Hill development is partly visible above the roofline of the Rivermead Leisure Complex over a foreground of regularly mown amenity grassland. Intervening trees within the foreground to the view screen views to Thames Tower, Thames Quarter and Kings Point, although 'The Blade' building remains visible. Proposed View: Winter: Tower crane(s), along with the tallest buildings within the proposed development as they are gradually built up, would be visible above the Rivermead Leisure Complex. These temporary features of the construction phase would contrast with the more rural or parkland characteristics of the view. During summer, the tower crane(s) and ongoing construction activity would be screened.	Negligible	Minor adverse
Vp.6: Thames Path	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): The upper sections of the Station Hill development and Thames Quarter are partly visible above the tops of intervening trees and woodland. Views to other tall buildings are screened by this intervening woodland. Within a winter scene, it is likely that more of the Station Hill development and the other tall buildings would also be visible within the view. Proposed View: Winter: This is an inherently more rural scene. Tower crane(s) and ongoing construction works as buildings within the proposed development steadily increase in height would be visible. This would temporarily contrast with what is a predominantly rural view.	Negligible	Minor adverse
Vp.7: Caversham Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): View over busy A329 Caversham Road looking directly at the project site with the former Post Office sorting office immediately visible within the middle distance to the view. The vehicular entrance to the former sorting office is also visible within the right of the view alongside the walling which carries the railway line on its elevated route above existing street level. Other tall buildings within Reading town centre are not visible from this viewpoint which looks north away from the railway line. Proposed View: Winter: Virtually the full width of the view would be impacted. Hoardings would be visible, along with other construction phase activities. Regular traffic movements bringing materials and personnel to the project site are also likely to be a temporary characteristic of the view. There would be a very substantial change in its character.	High	Major adverse
Vp.8: A329 Overbridge (Chatham Street/ Friars Street link)	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): The upper sections of the Station Hill development would be visible above the 4 to 6 storey buildings within the right of the view, partially screened by existing mature trees. There is an obvious difference in height between buildings to the right of Caversham Road and those to the left, with the latter generally being between 3 to 4 storeys. Those buildings within the right of the view being closer to the town centre.		

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
		Proposed View: Winter: The construction works would be screened by intervening buildings.	No Change	No Change
Vp.9: Napier Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): The multi-storey car park and Vastern Road/ Napier Road interchange form the central element within a channelled view framed by Thames Quarter within the left of the view and the Thames Water building within the right of the view. Proposed View: Winter: Again, this is an inherently urban view, Thames Quarter is under construction within the immediate left foreground of the view. Hoardings along the boundary to this construction site are visible. These are a frequent characteristic of an urban landscape. Tower crane(s), and the upper parts of the tallest building within the proposed development, would be visible at some point during the temporary construction phase. However, they are likely to be screened during the summer months by existing trees.	Negligible	Negligible adverse
Vp.10: A4155 Caversham Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): The Station Hill development dominates the view set alongside Thames Tower, with part of the view filtered by existing mature London Plane trees bordering Caversham Road/ Vastern Road. Traffic using this busy interchange is an immediately visible element within the foreground to the view. Buildings within the Vastern Retail Park (i.e. TGI Fridays) are immediately noticeable as is the former Post Office sorting office within the middle distance to the view which occupies the project site. Proposed View: Winter: Some ground level activities, including solid panel hoardings, would be visible within this near distance view. Also, tower crane(s) and scaffolding, piling equipment, stockpiles, etc. At any one time, the steelwork and frames to the new buildings within the proposed development are likely to form immediately visible elements across a considerable width of the view. This would contrast with its existing urban character. Regular construction traffic on Caversham Road and Vastern Road is also likely to be visible.	High	Major adverse
Vp.11: Forbury Gardens	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Existing buildings within the town centre are visible above and between existing trees on the boundary to the gardens. The Station Hill development and Thames Quarter are screened. Mature trees within the right of the view obstruct views to existing buildings within this part of the view. Proposed View: Winter: Tower crane(s) may be visible at some point in the temporary construction period alongside the uppermost parts of the tallest building within the proposed development when close to completion. This is an urban view and very little of the temporary construction activity would be visible. Its quality would be maintained.	Negligible	Neutral
Vp.12: De Montfort Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Parts of the Chatham Place tall building within the far right of the view and the Station Hill development within the left of the view are visible above the rooflines of predominantly 2 storey residential development lining De Montfort Road. The vista is more or less due south along the street and is terminated by buildings within the Vastern Road Retail Park. Proposed View: Winter: This is again an urban view within which tower crane(s) are not an unusual temporary characteristic. Ground level construction activity, including temporary hoardings, would be screened within the view. Tower crane(s) would be visible alongside the buildings within the	Low	Minor adverse

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
		proposed development as their height gradually increases; albeit within a view which already contains tall buildings.		
Vp.13: Christchurch Bridge	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): This representative viewpoint presents a broad panorama towards the town centre over a foreground of buildings supporting a light industrial landuse with 2 to 4 storey residential buildings within the right of the view. Thames Tower, Station Hill and the Chatham Place tall building groups contribute to a clear tall building cluster of a broadly uniform height. Proposed View: Winter: Ground level construction activity, including hoardings would be concealed by intervening buildings. Tower crane(s) along with new buildings within the proposed development would be visible, albeit these would not be uncharacteristic of the urban environment within which the project site is located and within a view which already contains tall buildings. There would be a temporary, but noticeable change to the view.	Medium	Moderate adverse
Vp.14: St Peters Church	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn 2018): Thames Tower, alongside the Station Hill development, is visible within the right of the view, albeit existing trees within the churchyard provide some limited screening to these buildings within the view. Further, the Thames Quarter tall building, within the left of the view, is also screened. Existing trees within the churchyard, and those within Caversham Court (at a lower elevation and beyond the low brick wall in the foreground to the view) do provide some visual obstruction and a foreshortening of the view, both in summer and winter due to their being in part evergreen. Proposed View: Winter: Construction activity would be partly visible within a view filtered by existing trees within the foreground to the view. There would be a very slight change to the baseline view. During summer, the construction works would be screened.	Negligible	Negligible adverse
Vp.15: Town Hall Square	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Buildings within the Station Hill development would form the visual focus to the view and the tallest buildings within it, framed by the clocktower within the right of the view and existing 4 storey buildings within the left of the view. Proposed View: Winter: Tower crane(s) and the building of the tallest structure within the proposed development would just be visible above intervening buildings and within a view heavily filtered by existing trees. On balance, the quality of the view would be maintained. During summer, construction works would be screened.	Negligible	Neutral
Vp.16: Balmore Park	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Panoramic view over Reading from an elevated location to the north. The Station Hill development is clearly visible and stands taller above other buildings within the view, set alongside Thames Tower. Part of 'The Blade' building remains visible, albeit its distinctive 'blade' feature is screened by the Thames Quarter development. The Weldale Street, Chatham Place and Kings Point developments are partly screened by existing vegetation. Proposed View: Winter: This is an elevated view with a parkland foreground and a representative viewpoint from which much of the construction phase activities would be visible, albeit ground level construction works would be screened. There would be a slight change in the baseline view.	Low	Minor adverse

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
Vp.17: Swansea Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): View channelled by existing 2 to 3 storey residential terraced buildings lining Northfield Road. The view is terminated by the former Post Office sorting office within the project site, part of the multi-storey car park is also visible below Thames Quarter as is the 4 storey 'Shurgard' building at the junction of Northfield Road and Caversham Road. The Station Hill development is screened by buildings within the right of the view. Proposed View: Winter: Some ground level construction activity would be visible within a channelled view along Northfield Road. Whilst urban in character, tower crane(s) along with tall buildings would be visible within a view within which parts of Thames Quarter are also visible. There would be a temporary noticeable change to the view.	Medium	Moderate adverse
Vp.18: Caversham Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): No part of the Station Hill development is visible. The tallest building within the view is the 'Pinnacle' building of effectively 7 storeys in height. As with viewpoint 8, the difference in building height between those on the left of Caversham Road and those on the right is clearly evident, with those within the right of the view being broadly about twice the height of those within the left of the view. The railway bridge forms a central element to the view along with Caversham Road (inclusive of its traffic). Proposed View: Winter: Some ground level construction activity would be visible along with tower crane(s) and the uppermost parts of the tallest building within the proposed development, which would be visible above existing buildings within the right of the view when approaching completion. There would be a very slight change to this inherently urban view.	Negligible	Negligible adverse
Vp.19: Station Square North	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): View over an open foreground provided by the partially completed Station Square North. The northern access/ exit to the recently re-developed Reading Station is visible within the left of the view, whilst part of Vastern Road Retail Park is visible within the right of the view. The former Post Office building with its low, pitched roof construction, forms the central feature to the view along with temporary solid board fencing, which is also visible. Proposed View: Winter: There would be a very substantial but temporary change in the character and composition of this view, with extensive ground level construction activity being immediately visible within the foreground to the view. This would include hoardings and the progressive construction of the tallest building within the proposed development as it gradually increases in height. Construction vehicles bringing materials and personnel to the project site may also form a transient element within the view.	High	Major adverse
Vp.20: Station Square South	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): View over an open and bustling foreground provided by Station Square South and the taxi drop-off and pick-up facility, looking towards the southern access/ exit from Reading Station. The older parts of Reading Station, with its clocktower, contrast with the more contemporary form of those parts of Reading Station within the left of the view. Proposed View: Winter: Tower crane(s) and the gradual increase in height of the new buildings within the proposed development would be visible over and above Reading Station. This is an urban view	Medium	Moderate adverse

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
		and ground level construction activity would be screened. There would be a noticeable change to the view.		
Vp.21: Victoria Recreation Ground	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): View over open foreground (public park) towards light industrial buildings which restrict the depth of the view at ground level. Above these intervening buildings, much of the Station Hill development and part of Thames Quarter would be visible. Proposed View: Winter: Tall buildings form an existing feature within this view and ground level construction activities would be screened by light industrial buildings within the middle distance to the view. Whilst tower crane(s) would be visible alongside new buildings within the proposed development as they gradually increase in height, the temporary change to the view would be slight.	Low	Minor adverse

Townscape Effects

- 6.77 The assessment of potential effects upon townscape character has taken into account the direct changes to townscape features within the project site that would result from the demolition and construction of new buildings within the proposed development and changes to adjacent areas of hardstanding within the project site. It has also taken into account the indirect impacts upon each townscape character area due to changes in views from those townscape character areas for which the ZTV indicates a degree of potential inter-visibility with tower cranes and other equipment likely to be used during this temporary phase of the proposed development.
- 6.78 The changes to the townscape character areas within the study area that would arise from the proposed development during its temporary construction phase is summarised in the table below.

Table 6.13: Summary of Effects upon Townscape Character During Construction

Townscape Character Area	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
Townscape Character Areas derived from the 'Reading Tall Buildings Strategy', 2008			
1: Station Hill	Low	Low	Negligible adverse
2: Station Area East	Low	Negligible	Negligible adverse
8: Forbury Gardens	High	Negligible	Negligible adverse
10: Forbury Retail Park	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse
11: Napier Road	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse
12: Caversham Road	High	Low	Minor adverse
13: Cattle Market	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse
14: Oxford Road and Surroundings	High	No Change	No Change
15: Chatham Place	Low	No Change	No Change
20: London Street	Low	No Change	No Change
22: Vastern Road	Low	Medium	Minor adverse
23: Kings Meadow	High	Low	Minor adverse
24: Kennet Walk	High	No Change	No Change
Landscape Character Areas identified by West Berkshire Council			
27: Thames Valley	High	Negligible	Minor adverse
Townscape Character Areas identified by RPS			
28: Thames Valley East	High	Negligible	Minor adverse
29: New Town	High	No Change	No Change
33: Southcote	High	No Change	No Change
34: Portman Road/ Richfield Avenue Light Industrial Area	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse
35: Caversham	High	Low	Minor adverse
Conservation Areas (also Townscape Character Areas for the purposes of the assessment)			
Alexander Road	High	No Change	No Change
Christchurch	High	No Change	No Change
Kendrick	High	No Change	No Change
Redlands	High	No Change	No Change
Russell Street/ Castle Hill	High	No Change	No Change
St Peters	High	Negligible	Negligible adverse
Surley Row	High	No Change	No Change

'22: Vastern Road'

- 6.79 There would be direct impacts upon this townscape character area; part of it would become a construction site during this phase of the proposed development. The sequence and range of construction activities that are likely to take place within this character area are described in paragraphs 6.71 to 6.75 above. There would be considerable disturbance to this character area throughout this phase of the proposed development.
- 6.80 The project site is currently dis-used, and the Vastern Road Retail Park is a used, albeit fairly utilitarian area of typical urban, commercial townscape. Further, the multi-storey car park is a typical monolithic structure for this type of building. Areas to the north of Vastern Road are of a contemporary urban form and of a slightly higher townscape value or importance. With its large-scale, and weak townscape structure, this character area is considered to be of Low sensitivity to the type of change proposed, i.e. tall buildings serving a mixed-use function with areas of new public realm.
- 6.81 This phase of the proposed development would also establish some sense of a construction site over adjacent parts of the character area not directly impacted. Whilst construction activity would not be out of keeping within Reading town centre (and most urban centres) where development and re-development is an ongoing activity (at the time of field survey, two construction sites were underway to the south), there would be a temporary adverse effect upon the character area during this phase, and a partial loss and moderate alteration to the baseline townscape. Overall, this would equate to a Minor adverse significance of effect.

1: Station Hill

- 6.82 This character area abuts the project site to the south. It is a large-scale townscape and the commercial centre of the town within which development and re-development is an ongoing characteristic. It is considered to be capable of accommodating development of the type proposed (tall buildings) and as such is assessed as being of Low sensitivity.
- 6.83 Given its close proximity to the proposed development, the character of a construction site would be established over much of the character area, especially the railway station and station square, albeit that this is an area which has seen considerable re-development itself in recent years. There would be a slight alteration to the character and appreciation of this area for its users during this phase of the proposed development, which would equate to a Low magnitude of impact and a Negligible adverse significance of effect.

2: Station Area East/ 10: Forbury Retail Park/ 11: Napier Road/ 13: Cattle Market/ 34: Portman Road/ Richfield Avenue Light Industrial Area

- 6.84 Each of these character areas exhibit a large or medium block form and satisfy a commercial or light industrial landuse. They are areas of relatively weak townscape with large or medium sized buildings in plan form set within areas of car parking and hardstanding. They are a form of townscape which is relatively commonplace. As such, they are considered to be of either Low or Medium sensitivity to the type of development proposed, i.e. tall buildings. Elements of the construction phase would be visible from parts of these character areas, which would establish

some sense of a construction site for their users. As such, there would be a temporary Negligible magnitude of impact and significance of effect upon each.

8: Forbury Gardens

- 6.85 The is a registered park and garden and part of a scheduled monument. Whilst the character area is effectively enclosed by large buildings within Reading town centre, the character area is inherently of a High sensitivity to the type of development proposed, i.e. tall buildings fulfilling a mixed-use function. The ZTV (and visually verifiable montages, see Appendix 6.2), suggest that views to the tallest building within the proposed development would be available from parts of Forbury Gardens. For a very short period of time, likely to be when the tower crane is in use in relation to this new building and it is approaching its final height, there would be some awareness of a nearby construction site which would very slightly contrast with the character of the gardens. The potential effects would be temporary, and of a Negligible magnitude of impact, resulting in a Negligible adverse significance of effect.

12: Caversham Road

- 6.86 This a character area comprising a tight network of streets with 2 storey terraced residential buildings. Tall buildings would not be in-keeping with its townscape character and, whilst not especially distinct or of a high townscape value, it is of inherent sensitivity to the type of development proposed and therefore of High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.
- 6.87 Given its close proximity to the proposed development, there would be some sense and awareness of a construction site for its users; primarily occupiers of the residential area. There would be a minor change in the baseline townscape (Low magnitude of impact), which would equate to an overall Minor adverse significance of effect.

23: Kings Meadow, 27: Thames Valley and 28: Thames Valley East

- 6.88 Each of these character areas are more open and have some sense of a rural landscape and/ or an edge of town character. They are inherently of a High sensitivity to the development of tall buildings with a mixed-use function. During this phase, views to tower cranes and the gradual increase in height of the new buildings within the proposed development would form an element within views and, as such, there would be some perception and awareness of a construction site for users of these townscapes which would contrast with their more natural characteristics. However, given the distances between the proposed development and these character areas, any potential characterising effects would be very limited; Negligible or Low magnitude of impact. This is likely to result in a temporary Minor adverse significance of effect upon each.

35: Caversham

- 6.89 This is a character area comprising predominantly residential buildings of generally 2 storeys in height. It is to the north of the River Thames and separate to the town centre. Whilst of Medium value or importance, it is considered to have limited potential to accommodate change of the type proposed, i.e. tall buildings serving a mixed-use function. As such, it is considered to be of High sensitivity. Construction activities would be visible within views from elevated parts of this character area and this would establish some sense of a construction site over those parts of the character area with some inter-visibility with the proposed development. It is considered that there would be

a slight loss or alteration to its key characteristics (Low magnitude of impact), which would result in a temporary Minor adverse significance of effect.

St Peters (Conservation Area)

- 6.90 Similarly, this character area is of High sensitivity to the type of change proposed and some elements of the construction phase would be visible within limited views from it, mainly during winter given the screening to views from the character area during summer provided by existing trees within it. As such, there would be some awareness of a construction site for users of this townscape character area, i.e. Negligible magnitude of impact and a temporary Negligible adverse significance of effect.

Surley Row (Conservation Area)

- 6.91 This is a townscape of National importance and of a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed. However, it sits on the very northern limits to the study area and, whilst the ZTV indicates a degree of potential inter-visibility between the character area and the proposed development during its construction phase, its townscape character would be unaffected, i.e. magnitude of impact and significance of effect of No Change.

Townscape Character Areas within the southern part of the Study Area: Generally

- 6.92 The ZTV (see Figure 6.6) indicates that the proposed development would be largely screened within views from the townscape character areas within this part of the study area, mainly by the Station Hill development. It suggests that there would be very few areas of potential inter-visibility with buildings within the proposed development and that the ZTV would be especially fragmented. Tower crane(s) within the project site are likely to be, at some point or another, at or about the top height of the tallest building within the proposed development, i.e. up to about 80m above existing ground level. They may also be moved around the construction site and, as such, there may be periods when these features of the construction phase would be more noticeable within views from these character areas. However, cranes are an existing feature of views from these character areas looking towards the town centre and are likely to remain so given the likely frequency of development within Reading town centre.
- 6.93 As the construction phase progresses, the project buildings would gradually increase in height until they are fully built out. The townscape character areas within the south of the study area, and those for which the ZTV indicates some limited potential inter-visibility with the proposed development are as follows:
- '14: Oxford Road and Surroundings';
 - '15: Chatham Place';
 - '20: London Street';
 - '24: Kennet Walk';
 - '29: New Town';

- '33: Southcote';
- Alexander Road (Conservation Area);
- Christchurch (Conservation Area)
- Kendrick (Conservation Area);
- Redlands (Conservation Area); and
- Russell Street/ Castle Hill (Conservation Area).

6.94 Whilst these character areas are of varying sensitivity to the type of change that would result from the proposed development (see Table 6.13), it is considered that, due to distance and the extremely limited availability of views from them to the proposed development, their townscape character would be unaffected, i.e. a magnitude of impact of No Change and a resultant significance of effect of No Change.

Further Mitigation and Monitoring

6.95 No requirements for further mitigation have been identified. Some temporary significant adverse effects upon views from near distance representative viewpoints have been identified. However, no temporary significant adverse effects upon any townscape character areas have been identified. Hoardings around the construction site boundaries (as proposed), whilst obstructing views, would screen most general ground level construction activities.

Accidents and/or Disasters

6.96 There are no potential construction accidents/disasters (that could realistically occur or that are not normally controlled through standard construction management practice) that are relevant to or likely to affect the conclusions to this assessment of temporary construction effects.

Assessment of Operational Effects

6.97 The potential effects of the proposed development upon views and townscape character during its operation at both winter Year 1 and summer have been assessed using the methodology described elsewhere in this chapter.

Visual Effects

6.98 An assessment of the potential effects of the project upon the existing view from each of the representative viewpoints during its permanent operational phase is included in Table 6.14 over page:

Table 6.14 – Potential Effects upon Views from Representative Viewpoints During Operational Phase (see Appendix 6.2 for Visualisations)

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
Vp.1: Kings Meadow	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Buildings within the Station Hill development form the tallest buildings within the view alongside Thames Tower. Albeit, views to both are filtered by existing mature trees within the park. There is an open foreground to the view provided by the sports pitches and regularly maintained grassland. Proposed View: Winter Year 1: The proposed development and the Station Hill/ Thames Quarter developments would read as two separate clusters of tall buildings within a view filtered by existing mature trees within the park. The two building clusters would complement one another within the view, albeit the buildings within the proposed development would be clearly distinguishable. There would be a minor change in the baseline view; whilst distinguishable, the composition and character of the view would be similar to the pre-change circumstances. There would be an additional tall building added to the view. Summer: Existing mature trees within the park would screen buildings within the proposed development within the view. No visual effects would be observed.	Negligible No Change	Negligible adverse No Change
Vp.2: Mount Pleasant	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Thames Tower, alongside tall buildings within the Station Hill development, are visible above 2 storey residential properties lining Mount Pleasant within the foreground to the view. The top of a church is just visible above recently completed buildings within the middle distance and an existing tower crane reveals the location of a further development site immediately south of Crown Street. The Chiltern Hills to the north form the skyline to the view. Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The tallest building within the proposed development would just be visible to the right of the Thames Tower/ Station Hill development and above the rooflines to 2 storey buildings lining Mount Pleasant. There would be a very slight change to the baseline view.	Negligible	Negligible adverse
Vp.3: London Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Tall buildings within the Station Hill development set alongside Thames Tower are clearly identifiable as a tall building cluster above a line of 2 storey residential properties. Thames Quarter stands slightly isolated from this central cluster and reads as a separate tall building. Other notable tall buildings or elements within the view include the Novo Hotel, 'The Blade' and the gas tower steelwork in New Town. Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: Parts of the proposed development would be discernible, albeit beyond the electricity transmission pylon and, in effect, partly concealed by this structure. The proposed development would read as part of a tall building cluster within the town centre and complement those within Station Hill and Thames Quarter.	Negligible	Neutral
Vp.4: Caversham Bridge	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Parts of the Station Hill development alongside Thames Tower are visible within a view partly screened by existing trees on the south bank of the River Thames. Thames Quarter is visible within the left of the view alongside 'The Blade'. Buildings adjacent to the river are generally of 3 to 4 storeys in height. The Thames riverscape is the dominant townscape element with a setting provided by buildings, some of which are tall buildings.	Low	Minor adverse

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
		Proposed View: Winter Year 1: Due to the orientation of the viewpoint relative to the proposed development, its distance from the town centre and its elevation, the tallest building within the proposed development would read as the tallest within the town centre. The remaining buildings within the proposed development would step down gradually in height from the Thames Tower to meet with Caversham Road within the right of the view. The tallest building within the proposed development would form a distinctive and prominent building within its own right which would complement the other tall buildings within the view. There would be a minor change in the baseline view; change would be distinguishable, but composition would be similar to the pre-change circumstances. Overall, there would be a limited deterioration to the view from a high sensitivity visual receptor. Proposed View: The tallest building within the proposed development would remain clearly visible. It would continue to form an individual building of some distinction within the town centre. There would be some limited screening to those parts of the proposed development which are at a lower height within the right of the view, as well as parts of the Station Hill development.	Low	Minor adverse
Vp.5: Thames Path	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): The mass and bulk of the Station Hill development is partly visible above the roofline of the Rivermead Leisure Complex over a foreground of regularly mown amenity grassland. Intervening trees within the foreground to the view screen views to Thames Tower, Thames Quarter and Kings Point, although 'The Blade' building remains visible. Proposed View: Winter Year 1: Buildings within the proposed development, and those within the Station Hill development, would read as two separate clusters of tall buildings with a clear gap between the two only partly occupied by the Thames Tower, which would remain partially visible. The proposed development would also screen 'The Blade' building within the view. The two tall building clusters would complement one another and provide some 'balance' to the view. There would be a minor change in the baseline view, with its overall character and composition remaining similar to the pre-change circumstances. Summer: Very little of the buildings within the proposed development would remain visible beneath the canopy of existing trees within the foreground to the view. In effect, its quality would be maintained.	Negligible Negligible	Negligible adverse Neutral
Vp.6: Thames Path	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): The upper sections of the Station Hill development and Thames Quarter are partly visible above the tops of intervening trees and woodland. Views to other tall buildings are screened by this intervening woodland. Within a winter scene, it is likely that more of the Station Hill development and the other tall buildings would also be visible within the view. Proposed View: Winter Year 1: Parts of the tallest buildings within the proposed development would be visible alongside the Station Hill development and Thames Quarter. These three developments would	Negligible	Negligible adverse

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
		read as separate tall building groups within the view but would, collectively, read as a cluster of buildings within the town centre. There would be a very slight change in the baseline view. Summer: The tallest buildings within the proposed development would remain visible above existing vegetation, which would be in full leaf, alongside the tallest sections of the Station Hill development and Thames Quarter. There would remain a very slight change in the baseline view.	Negligible	Negligible adverse
Vp.7: Caversham Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): View over busy A329 Caversham Road looking directly at the project site with the former Post Office sorting office immediately visible within the middle distance to the view. The vehicular entrance to the former sorting office is also visible within the right of the view alongside the walling which carries the railway line on its elevated route above existing street level. Other tall buildings within Reading town centre are not visible from this viewpoint which looks north away from the railway line. Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: Buildings within the proposed development would dominate and foreshorten the view. There would be considerably less sky visible. Whilst unattractive fencing and somewhat haphazard styles of temporary secure fencing, together with a somewhat dated and uninspiring former Post Office sorting building would be removed and would be replaced with new and attractive tall buildings, which would also have some considerable variation in the treatment of its building façade with set-backs and changes in elevation, the new buildings would obstruct and foreshorten the view. There would be a very substantial change in the view.	High	Moderate adverse
Vp.8: A329 Overbridge (Chatham Street/ Friars Street link)	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): The upper sections of the Station Hill development would be visible above the 4 to 6 storey buildings within the right of the view, partially screened by existing mature trees. There is an obvious difference in height between buildings to the right of Caversham Road and those to the left, with the latter generally being between 3 to 4 storeys. Those buildings within the right of the view being closer to the town centre. Proposed View: Winter and Summer: No part of the proposed development would be visible.	No Change	No Change
Vp.9: Napier Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): The multi-storey car park and Vastern Road/ Napier Road interchange form the central element within a channelled view framed by Thames Quarter within the left of the view and the Thames Water building within the right of the view. Proposed View: Winter Year 1: The tallest building within the proposed development would be visible above the multi-storey car park and would form a new tall building within a view, which is filtered by an existing mature street tree. The other buildings within the proposed development would be screened by the multi-storey car park. There would be a minor change in the composition of the baseline view with the introduction of a further tall building within a different part of the view. Summer: An existing street tree would be in full leaf and would largely screen the proposed development within the view. The quality of the view would be maintained.	Negligible Negligible	Negligible adverse Neutral

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
Vp.10: A4155 Caversham Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): The Station Hill development dominates the view set alongside Thames Tower, with part of the view filtered by existing mature London Plane trees bordering Caversham Road/ Vastern Road. Traffic using this busy interchange is an immediately visible element within the foreground to the view. Buildings within the Vastern Retail Park (i.e. TGI Fridays) are immediately noticeable as is the former Post Office sorting office within the middle distance to the view which occupies the project site. Proposed View: Winter Year 1: Buildings within the proposed development would dominate this near distance view and would obstruct views to the Thames Tower and virtually all of the Station Hill development. There would be a noticeable change in the character and composition of the view. Summer: Existing mature trees bordering Caversham Road would be in full leaf and would partially screen views to the proposed development within the view (primarily those fronting onto Caversham Road). However, there would remain some obstruction and foreshortening to the view provided by buildings within the proposed development within the far left of the view.	Medium Low	Moderate adverse Minor adverse
Vp.11: Forbury Gardens	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Existing buildings within the town centre are visible above and between existing trees on the boundary to the gardens. The Station Hill development and Thames Quarter are screened. Mature trees within the right of the view obstruct views to existing buildings within this part of the view. Proposed View: Winter Year 1: The tallest building within the proposed development would just be visible above the roofline of existing buildings within the left of the view. There would be a very slight change in the baseline view, however, its quality would be maintained. Summer: The tallest buildings within the Station Hill development would be screened by mature trees (in full leaf) on the boundary to the gardens. Existing trees would also screen other buildings within the view. There would be no change to the view.	Negligible No Change	Neutral No Change
Vp.12: De Montfort Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Parts of the Chatham Place tall building within the far right of the view and the Station Hill development within the left of the view are visible above the rooflines of predominantly 2 storey residential development lining De Montfort Road. The vista is more or less due south along the street and is terminated by buildings within the Vastern Road Retail Park. Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and summer: The proposed development clearly responds to the vista along De Montfort Road; it would be extended and enhanced by the proposed development. However, the proposed development would introduce tall buildings over a greater extent of the view in comparison to that of the 'future baseline', obstructing more of the view and the amount of sky visible. Tall buildings would become a more obvious element and component of the view both during winter and summer.	Low	Minor adverse
Vp.13: Christchurch Bridge	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): This viewpoint presents a broad panorama towards the town centre over a foreground of buildings supporting a light industrial landuse with 2 to 4 storey residential buildings within the right of the view. Thames Tower, Station Hill and		

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
		the Chatham Place tall building groups contribute to a clear tall building cluster of a broadly uniform height. Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and summer: The proposed development would introduce a series of further tall buildings to the view, with the tallest within it, due to its closer proximity to the viewpoint, reading as the tallest, and most prominent building within the town centre. Other, lower buildings within the proposed development, whilst visible above intervening buildings, would be of comparable height to other buildings within Station Hill. The tallest building would form a clear and obvious new element within the view of some distinction and individual merit and the proposed development would balance the overall massing of tall buildings within the town centre. It would contribute to a clear and distinctive tall building grouping within the town centre.	Medium	Moderate adverse
Vp.14: St Peters Church	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn 2018): Thames Tower, alongside the Station Hill development, is visible within the right of the view, albeit existing trees within the churchyard provide some limited screening to these buildings within the view. Further, the Thames Quarter tall building, within the left of the view, is also screened. Existing trees within the churchyard, and those within Caversham Court (at a lower elevation and beyond the low brick wall in the foreground to the view) do provide some visual obstruction and a foreshortening of the view, both in summer and winter due to their being in part evergreen. Proposed View: Winter Year 1: Parts of the proposed development would be visible within views heavily filtered by existing intervening trees. The tallest building within the proposed development would read as being at or about the height of the tallest building within the Station Hill development. The proposed development would form part of a tall building cluster within the view, with the tallest building within it forming a distinctive new element in its own right. There would be a minor change in the baseline view Summer: The proposed development would be screened by existing intervening trees within the foreground to the view. There would be no change to the baseline view.	Negligible No Change	Negligible adverse No Change
Vp.15: Town Hall Square	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Buildings within the Station Hill development would form the visual focus to the view and the tallest buildings within it, framed by the clocktower within the right of the view and existing 4 storey buildings within the left of the view. Proposed View: Winter Year 1: the uppermost parts of the tallest building within the proposed development would just be visible above existing buildings and within a view heavily filtered by existing intervening trees. The quality of the townscape view would be maintained. Summer: Existing intervening trees would screen the proposed development.	Negligible No Change	Neutral No Change
Vp.16: Balmore Park	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): Panoramic view over Reading from an elevated location to the north. The Station Hill development is clearly visible and stands taller above other buildings within the view, set alongside Thames Tower. Part of 'The Blade' building remains visible, albeit its distinctive 'blade' feature is screened by the Thames Quarter development. The Weldale Street, Chatham Place and Kings Point developments are partly screened by existing vegetation.		

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
		Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The buildings within the proposed development would be seen set against the building mass of the Station Hill development. Due to the elevation of the viewpoint relative to the town centre, the tallest block within the project would appear to be slightly taller than the tallest block within the Station Hill development, despite there being a difference in height between the two of some 5m. Buildings within the proposed development would contribute to and clearly complement a cluster of tall buildings within the town centre. The Thames Tower would remain visible as a standalone building alongside the tall building cluster provided by Station Hill and the proposed development. There would be very little additional visual obstruction afforded to the view over and above that provided by the Station Hill development and the proposed development would add some considerable interest and variety to the massing of tall buildings within the town centre. There would be a very slight change in the baseline view and any adverse effects would be balanced by beneficial effects for the same visual receptor.	Negligible	Neutral
Vp.17: Swansea Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): View channelled by existing 2 to 3 storey residential terraced buildings lining Northfield Road. The view is terminated by the former Post Office sorting office within the project site, part of the multi-storey car park is also visible below Thames Quarter as is the 4 storey 'Shurgard' building at the junction of Northfield Road and Caversham Road. The Station Hill development is screened by buildings within the right of the view. Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The tallest building within the proposed development would form a new visual focus and key component of the view. Other buildings within the proposed development would screen much of the multi-storey car park within the view. The proposed development would cause some additional obstruction to the view and would result in a partial change in the character and composition of the view.	Medium	Moderate adverse
Vp.18: Caversham Road	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): No part of the Station Hill development is visible. The tallest building within the view is the 'Pinnacle' building of effectively 7 storeys in height. As with viewpoint 8, the difference in building height between those on the left of Caversham Road and those on the right is clearly evident, with those within the right of the view being broadly about twice the height of those within the left of the view. The railway bridge forms a central element to the view along with Caversham Road (inclusive of its traffic). Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: That part of the proposed development fronting onto Caversham Road would continue the building line along the east side of this road provided by the 'Pinnacle' building and others to the south of the railway line. It would complement and fit seamlessly with the existing streetscape. However, the tallest building within the proposed development would form a clearly visible new element within the right of the view, visible above the roof-tops of existing buildings. There would be a very slight change in the baseline view. However, any adverse effects would be offset by beneficial effects for the same visual receptor.	Negligible	Neutral
Vp.19: Station Square North	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): View over an open foreground provided by the partially completed Station Square North. The northern access/ exit to the recently re-developed Reading Station is visible within the left of the view, whilst part of Vastern Road Retail Park is visible within the right of the view. The former Post Office building with its low,		

Representative Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Existing View and Change to Existing View	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
		pitched roof construction, forms the central feature to the view along with temporary solid board fencing, which is also visible. Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The tallest building within the proposed development would form an immediately apparent feature beyond an open foreground provided by a widened and enhanced Station Square. This would form a larger area of public realm (in comparison to the existing Station Square North) and is likely to contain tree planting and other soft landscape elements. However, the tallest building would form an immediately noticeable and prominent element, which would noticeably foreshorten and dominate the view. However, its effects would be partly offset by the removal of the Post Office building and other temporary features of the future baseline view.	High	Moderate adverse
Vp.20: Station Square South	Medium	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): View over an open and bustling foreground provided by Station Square South and the taxi drop-off and pick-up facility, looking towards the southern access/ exit from Reading Station. The older parts of Reading Station, with its clocktower, contrast with the more contemporary form of those parts of Reading Station within the left of the view. Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: Parts of the recently re-developed Reading Station would screen some of the lower parts of the proposed development. However, its tallest elements would remain visible above intervening buildings, including the older parts of Reading Station. New elements (tall buildings) would be introduced to the view. However, whilst uncharacteristic within the existing view, these new features within the view would not be visually discordant.	Medium	Moderate adverse
Vp.21: Victoria Recreation Ground	High	Existing 'Future Baseline' View (Autumn): View over open foreground (public park) towards light industrial buildings which restrict the depth of the view at ground level. Above these intervening buildings, much of the Station Hill development and part of Thames Quarter would be visible. Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The upper section of the tallest building within the proposed development would form a distinguishable new feature within the view and to the left of the Station Hill development. There would be a minor change which would be distinguishable, whilst composition and character would be similar to the pre-change circumstances.	Low	Minor adverse

Townscape Effects

- 6.99 The assessment of potential effects upon townscape character has taken into account the direct changes to townscape features within the project site that would result from the proposed development, such as new buildings, open spaces and the landscape design proposals. It has also taken into account the indirect effects upon each townscape character area due to changes in views from those townscape character areas for which the ZTV indicates a degree of potential inter-visibility with the proposed development.
- 6.100 The changes to the townscape character areas within the study area that would arise from the proposed development is summarised in the table below, and further explained in the sections that follow.

Table 6.14: Summary of Effects upon Townscape Character During Operation

Townscape Character Area	Sensitivity of Townscape Resource	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
Townscape Character Areas derived from the 'Reading Tall Buildings Strategy', 2008			
1: Station Hill	Low	Negligible	Negligible beneficial
2: Station Area East	Low	No Change	No Change
8: Forbury Gardens	High	No Change	No Change
10: Forbury Retail Park	Medium	No Change	No Change
11: Napier Road	Medium	No Change	No Change
12: Caversham Road	High	Negligible	Minor adverse
13: Cattle Market	Medium	No Change	No Change
14: Oxford Road and Surroundings	High	No Change	No Change
15: Chatham Place	Low	No Change	No Change
20: London Street	Low	No Change	No Change
22: Vastern Road	Low	Low	Minor beneficial
23: Kings Meadow	High	Negligible	Neutral
24: Kennet Walk	High	No Change	No Change
Landscape Character Areas identified by West Berkshire Council			
27: Thames Valley	High	Negligible	Neutral
Townscape Character Areas identified by RPS			
28: Thames Valley East	High	Negligible	Neutral
29: New Town	High	No Change	No Change
33: Southcote	High	No Change	No Change
34: Portman Road/ Richfield Avenue Light Industrial Area	Low	No Change	No Change
35: Caversham	High	Negligible	Neutral
Conservation Areas (also Townscape Character Areas for the purposes of the assessment)			
Alexander Road	High	No Change	No Change
Christchurch	High	No Change	No Change
Kendrick	High	No Change	No Change
Redlands	High	No Change	No Change
Russell Street/ Castle Hill	High	No Change	No Change
St Peters	High	Negligible	Neutral

Townscape Character Area	Sensitivity of Townscape Resource	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect
Surley Row	High	No Change	No Change

'22: Vastern Road'

- 6.101 This is a townscape character area with a history of use associated with the railway and the growth of manufacturing and commerce within Reading post 1840. It generally comprises large building blocks with extensive areas of car parking within its central area, which becomes smaller in scale towards its northern and western limits. It is described in studies published by RBC as, "an area of weak and unattractive townscape" with a townscape sensitivity to the inclusion of tall buildings as "Low". The townscape character area is important to Reading given its central location adjacent to the railway line and the commercial centre to the town to the south. However, its townscape is of local scale importance and is commonplace. Parts of it are now also essentially dis-used urban spaces. It is thus assessed as being of Low sensitivity and thus capable of accommodating change of the type proposed, i.e. tall buildings supporting mixed-use with new areas of public realm.
- 6.102 The proposed development would result in permanent beneficial effects upon the townscape character area; an area of light industrial development which had fallen into disuse would be re-developed and become an active part of the Reading townscape. Secure fencing demarcating the boundaries to part of the project site, which previously separated the private from the public realm, would be removed and, what was previously private, would become accessible to the public with two new civic squares. One of these would complete Station Square, immediately north of the railway line, and within the east of the proposed development. An area which has been only partly recently re-developed as part of the Reading Station area development.
- 6.103 The proposed development would include green roofs as well as street level tree planting to define pedestrian routes and to contribute to the amenity of the streetscape. It would respond well to the existing urban grain of streets aligned on a broadly north-south/ east-west axis, i.e. De-Montfort Road and Lynmouth Road to the north, and Northfield Road to the west. This change would take part within a small, central part of the townscape character area. Whilst the changes would be considerable on the project site, the remainder of the townscape character area would remain as it is at present, albeit tall buildings would become a further characteristic of its local setting, as started with the Station Hill development to the south. Indeed, the proposed development would mean that the project site would have a stronger association with character area '1: Station Hill' to the south. There would be a slight alteration to townscape character area '22: Vastern Road' and an overall Low magnitude of impact. For a townscape of Low sensitivity to the type of change proposed, this would result in an overall Minor beneficial significance of effect. The proposed development would complement the character of the townscape and enable a sense of place to be established.

1: Station Hill

- 6.104 The proposed development would effectively expand this character area to the north of the railway station such that the town centre would be extended to include areas to the north with the railway station as its hub. Whilst the scale of the new buildings within the proposed development may slightly add some additional sense of enclosure to the townscape, overall there would be beneficial

effects and an enhancement to this townscape character area; Negligible magnitude of impact and a Negligible beneficial significance of effect.

2: Station Area East/ 10: Forbury Retail Park/ 11: Napier Road/ 13: Cattle Market/ 34: Portman Road/ Richfield Avenue Light Industrial Area

- 6.105 Tall buildings within the proposed development would be visible within views from these character areas but would be seen within the local context of Station Hill and Thames Quarter. The proposed development would add a further tall building grouping to these views, but this would not alter the intrinsic townscape character of these areas, they would continue to be townscapes supporting a light industrial or commercial landuse; they would not be directly impacted. As such, there would be a magnitude of impact and a significance of effect of No Change upon each.

12: Caversham Road

- 6.106 Tall buildings would be brought closer to this character area and would contrast with the lower, 2-storey height of existing buildings within it. Whilst the intrinsic character of this tightly knit network of predominantly terraced properties would not be altered, there would be some sense of dominance and over-bearing of the character area afforded by the new tall buildings. However, this is adjudged to be slight, i.e. a Negligible magnitude of impact and a Minor adverse significance of effect, given the High sensitivity of this character area to change of the type proposed, i.e. tall buildings.

23: Kings Meadow, 27: Thames Valley and 28: Thames Valley East

- 6.107 Views to tall buildings from these character areas, which include Station Hill and Thames Quarter, would be a characteristic of the future baseline. The proposed development would simply form a further tall building within views from these character areas set within the local context of other tall buildings within the town centre. It is considered that the ability to see a further tall building grouping within the local context of others would have little to no further characterising effects upon these character areas over and above that provided by the buildings which already form part of the 'future baseline'. Whilst there may be some potential effects upon views from these character areas, their inherent sense of openness and naturalness would not be affected. Accordingly, there would be a magnitude of impact of Negligible and a significance of effect of Neutral.

35: Caversham

- 6.108 The ZTV suggests that the proposed development would be visible within views from the higher ground within this extensive area of residential suburbs, including parts of Balmore Park. However, so would the Station Hill development (and other tall buildings within the town centre). These tall buildings would be a characteristic of the 'future baseline' to views from this character area to which the proposed development would add a further tall building group, set against the Station Hill development. It is considered that this would have no additional characterising effects upon this area of residential development over and above that afforded by the Station Hill development and other tall building groups within the town centre; i.e. magnitude of impact of Negligible and a significance of effect of Neutral. The introduction of tall buildings into Reading town centre would be a natural progression of its evolving form, which includes tall buildings. The central part of the town is visible from parts of this character area and (as shown on representative viewpoint 16) its

form and massing has been clearly designed to complement, but at the same time, add contrast to the scale and massing of the Station Hill development.

St Peters (Conservation Area)

- 6.109 Views from the character area to the proposed development would be largely confined to the winter months when existing trees would be without their leafcover; even then some are evergreen. There would be no change to the inherent townscape character of St Peters as a result of the proposed development. Further tall buildings would be added to views already containing tall buildings; magnitude of impact would be Negligible, and the significance of effect would be Neutral.

Surley Row (Conservation Area)

- 6.110 The character area sits on the very northern limits to the study area and, whilst the ZTV indicates a degree of potential inter-visibility between the character area and the tallest building within the proposed development, its townscape character would be unaffected, i.e. magnitude of impact and significance of effect of No Change.

Townscape Character Areas within the southern part of the Study Area: Generally

- 6.111 There would be very little inter-visibility between the proposed development and these townscape character areas (see ZTV, Figure 6.6), especially at street level from which views are naturally restricted by buildings lining the streets. Further, most streets within these character areas are orientated such that channelled views along them are away from the proposed development. This is especially the case with parts of '29: New Town', the Alexander Road and Kendrick Conservation Areas and character area '14: Oxford Road and Surroundings' within which streets are broadly aligned north-south. Even where views to the tallest building within the proposed development may be available, they would be restricted views and only part of the building would be visible immediately behind and in association with tall buildings within the Station Hill development or other large buildings within Reading town centre. Effectively, these townscape character areas would remain unaffected. Whilst they would be of varying sensitivity to the type of change proposed (see Table 6.14), the magnitude of impact and significance of effect upon each would be No Change. These townscape character areas would be as follows:

- '8: Forbury Gardens';
- '14: Oxford Road and Surroundings';
- '15: Chatham Place';
- '20: London Street';
- '24: Kennet Walk';
- '29: New Town';
- '33: Southcote';
- Alexander Road (Conservation Area);

- Christchurch (Conservation Area);
- Kendrick (Conservation Area);
- Redlands (Conservation Area); and
- Russell Street/ Castle Hill (Conservation Area).

Further Mitigation and Monitoring

- 6.112 Colour and building materials should be given further consideration going forward. Whilst these would not reduce the potential townscape and visual effects identified above, these should be designed so as to complement other tall buildings within Reading town centre forming part of the 'future baseline' to the assessment and to further integrate the proposed development within its local townscape setting. Additional planting within the proposed development, be it specimen trees or ornamental shrubs, would not serve to reduce the townscape and visual effects described above.

Accidents/Disasters

- 6.113 There are no potential operational accidents/disasters which are of particular relevance to this assessment of effects. An overarching consideration of potential accidents and disasters is set out in Chapter 2 of this ES.

Potential Changes to the Assessment as a Result of Climate Change

- 6.114 As stated in paragraph 6.67, it is extremely difficult to predict the likely effects of climate change on vegetation and building materials. Albeit, it may be appropriate to use plant species and building materials which are proven to be resistant to the effects of a predicted warmer climate going forward. However, use of such plants and materials would not change the assessment reported in this chapter of the ES.

Assessment of Cumulative Effects

- 6.115 This part of the assessment considers the potential cumulative effects of the proposed development in association with a number of site allocations and planning applications (see Appendix 4.6 of the ES for the locations of these relative to the proposed development). It also includes an assessment of the potential cumulative effects of the proposed development in-combination with a possible development on the Vastern Road Retail Park to the immediate north of the project site.

Potential Cumulative Visual Effects of the Proposed Development in Association with a Possible Development on the Vastern Road Retail Park

- 6.116 An assessment of the potential cumulative effects of the proposed development in association with a potential development on the Vastern Road Retail Park (henceforth referred to as the 'cumulative scheme') upon the view from each of the representative viewpoints during its permanent operational phase is included in Table 6.15 overpage:

Table 6.15: Overview of Likely Cumulative Visual Effects upon views from Representative Viewpoints during Operational Phase at winter Year 1

Viewpoint	Sensitivity of Receptor	Description of Cumulative Effects	Magnitude of Cumulative Change	Significance of Cumulative Effect
Vp.1: Kings Meadow	High	Proposed View: Winter Year 1: Development of the cumulative scheme would potentially increase the building mass visible in association with the proposed development. This would effectively balance the tall building cluster to the north of the railway (i.e. Cumulative Scheme/ Proposed Development) with that to the south of the railway (i.e. Station Hill/ Thames Quarter). There would remain a minor change to the baseline view and a very slight deterioration to the view from a High sensitivity visual receptor with the slightly greater contribution to the cumulative effect provided by the cumulative scheme. Summer: The proposed development would be screened within the view and as such there would be no cumulative effects.	Negligible No Change	Negligible adverse No Change
Vp.2: Mount Pleasant	Medium	Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: Development of the cumulative scheme would add a further building block, which would be visible on the skyline to the view, alongside the proposed development. It would form a more noticeable building mass, due to its bulk and position, over and above that of the proposed development. There would be a minor change to the baseline view.	Low	Minor adverse
Vp.3: London Road	Medium	Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The cumulative scheme would be potentially visible in association with the proposed development, albeit at a distance of some 3.58km and, similarly, partly screened by the electricity pylon. There would be a very slight change in the baseline view, however its quality would be maintained.	Negligible	Neutral
Vp.4: Caversham Bridge	High	Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: Development of the cumulative scheme would widen the extent of the panorama occupied by tall buildings and is likely to obstruct views to parts of 'The Blade' building. The cumulative scheme would reinforce the sense of a tall building grouping within the town centre with the tallest building within the proposed development at its centre and clearly visible as a key element within the view. There would be a noticeable change in the composition and character of the view, with the greater contribution to that change provided by the cumulative scheme.	Medium	Moderate adverse
Vp.5: Thames Path	High	Proposed View: Winter Year 1: The cumulative scheme would potentially add a further tall building mass to the view and 'infill' the gap between the proposed development and Thames Quarter. It would contribute to an obvious grouping of tall buildings within the town centre, partly screened by existing trees within the foreground to the view. There would be a very slight change in the baseline view. Summer: Intervening trees within the foreground to the view would provide some screening to the cumulative scheme and the proposed development. The quality of the baseline view would be maintained.	Negligible Negligible	Negligible adverse Neutral

Viewpoint	Sensitivity of Receptor	Description of Cumulative Effects	Magnitude of Cumulative Change	Significance of Cumulative Effect
Vp.6: Thames Path	High	Proposed View: Winter Year 1: Parts of the cumulative scheme would be potentially visible in association with the proposed development above existing intervening treelines. In association with the proposed development, the cumulative scheme would contribute to a very slight change in the baseline view. Summer: The uppermost parts of the tallest blocks within the cumulative scheme are likely to remain just visible in association with the proposed development above the intervening treelines. There would remain a very slight change in the view	Negligible Negligible	Negligible adverse Negligible adverse
Vp.7: Caversham Road	Medium	Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The cumulative scheme would just be visible alongside the proposed development, which would remain the dominant feature to the view. It would reinforce the building line provided by the proposed development along Caversham Road. The cumulative scheme would contribute to a very substantial change in the view, but the greater contribution to that substantial change in the view would be provided by the proposed development.	High	Moderate adverse
Vp.8: Vp.8: A329 Overbridge (Chatham Street/ Friars Street link)	Medium	Neither the cumulative scheme or the proposed development would be visible from this viewpoint and as such there would be no cumulative effects upon the view.	No Cumulative Effects	
Vp.9: Napier Road	Medium	Proposed View: Winter Year 1: The cumulative scheme would form an obvious and immediately apparent element within the view and would add to the visible building mass set alongside the proposed development. It would add to the visual obstruction to the view over and above that afforded by the proposed development, which would only be visible within a view filtered by an existing intervening tree. There would be a slight change in the view with the greater contribution to the change provided by the cumulative scheme. Summer: An existing street tree within the foreground to the view is likely to obstruct views to the proposed development and parts of the cumulative scheme. However, it would remain visible and still add to the visual obstruction to the view.	Low Negligible	Minor adverse Negligible adverse
Vp.10: A4155 Caversham Road	Medium	Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The cumulative scheme would result in further foreshortening to the view and would screen much of the proposed development. There would be a very substantial change in the character and composition of the view. The greater contributor to this effect being provided by the cumulative scheme.	High	Major adverse
Vp.11: Forbury Gardens	High	Proposed View: Winter Year 1: Parts of the cumulative scheme are likely to be visible within a view filtered by existing mature trees within Forbury Gardens alongside the tallest building within the proposed development. The latter would remain just visible above intervening buildings. The cumulative scheme is likely to infill much of the gap between existing buildings visible within the baseline view. There would be a minor change in the baseline view with the main contribution to this potential cumulative effect being provided by the cumulative scheme.	Low	Minor adverse No Cumulative Effects

Viewpoint	Sensitivity of Receptor	Description of Cumulative Effects	Magnitude of Cumulative Change	Significance of Cumulative Effect
		Summer: Existing trees within the foreground within Forbury Gardens is likely to screen the cumulative scheme and the proposed development within the view. There would be no cumulative effects.		
Vp.12: De Montfort Road	Medium	Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The cumulative scheme is likely to further foreshorten the view and bring tall buildings closer to the viewpoint. There would be a partial change in the character and composition to the view with the greater contribution to that change being provided by the cumulative scheme.	Medium	Moderate adverse
Vp.13: Christchurch Bridge	High	Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The cumulative scheme is likely to bring tall buildings closer to the viewpoint and further foreshorten the view. There would be a partial change in the character and composition to the view with the greater contribution to that change being provided by the cumulative scheme.	Medium	Moderate adverse
Vp.14: St Peter's Church	High	Proposed View: Winter Year 1: Parts of the proposed development and the cumulative scheme are likely to be visible within views filtered (and partly screened) by existing trees within the foreground to the view. There would be a very slight change in the baseline view with the greater contribution to that change being provided by the proposed development. Summer: Existing vegetation in full leaf would screen the proposed development and the cumulative scheme within the view. There would be no change in the view and no cumulative effects.	Negligible No Cumulative Effects	Negligible adverse No Cumulative Effects
Vp.15: Town Hall Square	Medium	Neither developments would be visible. There would be no cumulative effects upon the view.	No Cumulative Effects	
Vp.16: Balmore Park	High	Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The cumulative scheme would potentially widen the width of the panorama occupied by tall buildings and reduce the area of sky visible especially to the left of the Thames Tower. There would be a minor change in the baseline view with the greater contribution to that change being provided by the cumulative scheme.	Low	Minor adverse
Vp.17 Swansea Road	Medium	Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The cumulative scheme would be potentially visible alongside the proposed development and would contribute to a noticeable change to the view, albeit the greater contribution to that change would be provided by the proposed development.	Medium	Moderate adverse
Vp.18 Caversham Road	Medium	Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: In association with the proposed development, the cumulative scheme would continue the building line along Caversham Road and to the north of the railway line. Parts of the tallest building within the proposed development would be visible above intervening buildings. There would be a very slight change in the baseline view with the greater contribution to that change provided by the proposed development. However, the cumulative effects would maintain the quality of the view.	Negligible	Neutral

Viewpoint	Sensitivity of Receptor	Description of Cumulative Effects	Magnitude of Cumulative Change	Significance of Cumulative Effect
Vp.19: Station Square North		Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The cumulative scheme would be visible as a tall building within the right of the view and are likely to follow the building line to buildings within the existing Vastern Road Retail Park. In some respects, this would 'counter-balance' the tallest building within the proposed development within the view. There would be a noticeable change to the view, with the greater contribution to the cumulative effect provided by the proposed development.	High	Moderate adverse
Vp.20: Station Square South		Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: The cumulative scheme is likely to widen the width of the view occupied by tall buildings, especially to the right of the tallest building within the proposed development. There would be an increase in the extent of visual obstruction afforded to the view, albeit the greater contribution to the cumulative effect is likely to remain the proposed development, which would screen parts of the cumulative scheme within the view.	Medium	Moderate adverse
Vp.21: Victoria Recreation Ground		Proposed View: Winter Year 1 and Summer: Parts of the cumulative scheme are likely to be visible to the right of the proposed development; again, partly visible above the roofline to intervening industrial buildings within the middle distance to the view. There would be a cumulative effect, but the greater contribution to that effect would be provided by the proposed development, which would also screen parts of the cumulative scheme within the view.	Low	Minor adverse

Potential Cumulative Townscape Effects of the Proposed Development in Association with a Possible Development on the Vastern Road Retail Park

- 6.117 The proposed development is assessed as having a significance of effect of No Change upon most of the townscape character areas within the study area (see Table 6.14) during its operational phase. As such, any potential effects upon any of these townscape character areas would be solely due to the cumulative scheme and as such would not be a cumulative effect. Those character areas which would be potentially impacted during the operational phase by the proposed development and upon which it, in association with the cumulative scheme, may have an effect are considered further in the following section.

1: Station Hill

- 6.118 The cumulative scheme, in association with the proposed development, is likely to expand this character area further north and as far as Vastern Road; again, with the railway station as its hub. The commercial centre to the town, and its vibrant and active hub, would be expanded. There would be a slight alteration to some of the key characteristics of the baseline townscape and, as such, a Low magnitude of impact and an overall Minor beneficial significance of cumulative effect, with both the proposed development and the cumulative scheme contributing to the beneficial effect in broadly equal measure.

12: Caversham Road

- 6.119 The cumulative scheme, in association with the proposed development, would bring tall buildings closer to this character area; more so with the cumulative scheme given that it would only be separated from that part of the character area containing De Montfort Road and Lynmouth Road to the north by Vastern Road. This would contrast with the generally 2-storey, tight knit pattern of development within the character area and slightly increase the dominance of tall buildings over the character area. As such, it is considered that there would be a Low magnitude of impact and an overall Minor adverse significance of cumulative effect.

22: Vastern Road

- 6.120 The cumulative scheme, in association with the proposed development, would result in the re-development of a considerable part of this townscape character area. That part occupied by the project site, and which is currently inaccessible to members of the public, would be re-developed to include areas of new public realm and active spaces. Whilst the cumulative scheme would re-develop an area which currently has public access, it too is likely to add new and contemporary buildings to the Reading townscape and areas of new public realm. Overall, the cumulative effects are likely to result in a Medium magnitude of impact and an overall Moderate beneficial significance of cumulative effect, with a slightly greater contribution to this effect potentially being provided by the proposed development given its likely greater area of public realm and closer proximity to the town centre.

23: Kings Meadow/ 27: Thames Valley/ 28: Thames Valley East/ 35: Caversham/ St Peters Conservation Area

- 6.121 Whilst the magnitude of impact within each of these character areas is assessed as Negligible magnitude of impact as a result of the proposed development, it is also concluded that the changes

to their inherent townscape characteristics and elements would be so slight that the townscape quality of each would be maintained. As such, any cumulative effects upon these character areas is likely to be due to the cumulative scheme rather than the proposed development. Albeit, that any potential cumulative characterising effects are unlikely to be significant.

Potential Cumulative Effects of the Proposed Development in association with other Cumulative Schemes (Planning Applications)

- 6.122 An assessment of the potential cumulative effects of the proposed development, in association with other schemes within the study area for which planning applications have been submitted to RBC and which are currently being determined by the local planning authority, is included in Appendix 6.4. This section provides a brief summary.
- 6.123 The majority of proposals would not result in any cumulative townscape effects in association with the proposed development. However, they are likely to have at least some cumulative effects upon views from a number of the representative viewpoints, albeit that the majority of these would not impact upon the near distance viewpoints to the proposed development for which a Moderate adverse significance of effect has been assessed (see Table 6.13).
- 6.124 In terms of potential cumulative effects upon townscape, there are two planning application which may result in potential cumulative townscape effects in association with the proposed development. These are planning application reference 181659 pertaining to land along the River Thames in Caversham (a proposed flood risk management scheme) and 180418 pertaining to the erection of 42 dwellings on Henley Road, Caversham.
- 6.125 Although, no specific details as to the types and forms of (presumably) flood protection works are available at the time of writing for the proposed flood risk management scheme, this proposal may result in direct impacts upon townscape character areas 12: Caversham Road and 22: Vastern Road. The proposed development is assessed as having a Negligible magnitude of impact and a Minor adverse significance of effect on the former and a Low magnitude of impact and a Minor beneficial significance of effect upon the latter. There would therefore be potential cumulative townscape effects upon both, albeit these are considered likely to be not significant.
- 6.126 This proposal is considered likely to result in the building of low-level flood defence features to prevent flooding of the adjacent townscape. It would have little effect upon the inherent character of these townscapes which would remain largely unaffected. Their inherent residential and commercial light industrial character would be maintained. As such, it is considered that the potential cumulative townscape effects of these proposals in association with the proposed development, would result in no greater magnitude of impact and significance of effect than that of the proposed development in isolation, i.e. a potential cumulative Negligible magnitude of impact and a Minor adverse significance of effect upon 12: Caversham Road and a potential cumulative Low magnitude of impact and a Minor beneficial significance of effect upon 22: Vastern Road.
- 6.127 With respect to the erection of 42 dwellings on Henley Road, Caversham, which would fall within character area 35: Caversham, any potentially significant cumulative effects is likely to be due to this proposal rather than the proposed development. The latter assessed as having a Neutral significance of effect upon character area 35: Caversham. Further, it would not be visible within

views from any of the representative viewpoints and as such there would be no cumulative effects upon these views.

- 6.128 With respect to potential cumulative effects upon other views from the representative viewpoints, the proposed re-development of the Broad Street Shopping Mall (planning application 181689) would be visible within a number of these views, including representative viewpoint 16: Balmore Park. However, it would not be visible within views from any of the representative viewpoints for which the proposed development is assessed as having its greatest effect, i.e. representative viewpoints 7: Caversham Road, 10: A4155 Caversham Road, 13: Christchurch Bridge 17: Swansea Road, 19: Station Square North and 20: Station Square South. It is therefore concluded that any potentially significant cumulative effects upon views from the representative viewpoints as a result of this proposal in association with the proposed development would be due to the proposal itself rather than the proposed development.
- 6.129 The re-development of the gas holder site within the New Town area (planning application 181687) includes an 11-storey element and, as such, is likely to be visible within the view from representative viewpoint 3 in association with the proposed development. However, given the distance to the proposed development (3.58km) and the presence of other tall buildings within the future baseline view, any potential cumulative effects upon this view are considered to be not significant, i.e. no more than a Negligible magnitude of impact and a Negligible adverse significance of cumulative effect.
- 6.130 The proposal for a flood risk management scheme along the southbank of the River Thames between Caversham Bridge and Christchurch Bridge (planning application 181659) is likely to include low-level flood defences. These may be prominent within the views from representative viewpoints 4: Caversham Bridge and 13: Christchurch Bridge, upon which the proposed development is assessed as having a Low and a Medium magnitude of impact, and a Minor and a Moderate adverse significance of effect respectively. It is therefore likely that this proposal, in association with the proposed development, would result in a cumulative effect, albeit the greater contribution to this cumulative effect is most likely to be provided by the proposed development.

Potential Cumulative Effects of the Proposed Development in association with other Cumulative Schemes (Planning Allocations)

- 6.131 An assessment of the potential cumulative effects of the proposed development, in association with other schemes within the study area which are allocated for development within the 'Sites and Detailed Policies' (Adopted October 2012, altered January 2015) and the 'Submission Draft Reading Borough Local Plan' (March 2018), is also included in Appendix 6.4. This section provides a brief summary.
- 6.132 Almost all of the allocated sites are within townscape character areas which would not be impacted by the proposed development, i.e. magnitude of impact and significance of effect of No Change. As such, these would not result in any potential cumulative effects. Any effects on townscape character would be due solely to development on the allocation site(s) and not the proposed development.

- 6.133 However, allocated sites CR11a to CR11i [collectively referred to as the 'Station/ River Major Opportunity Area' within the 'Submission Draft Reading Borough Local Plan' (March 2018)], include the project site and most of townscape character area 22: Vastern Road as well as 1: Station Hill to the south of the railway line. These allocated sites are likely to include tall buildings (i.e. 10 commercial storeys or higher). The proposed development is assessed as having a Minor and Negligible beneficial significance of effect upon character areas 22: Vastern Road and 1: Station Hill respectively. A possible development on the Vastern Road Retail Park site is considered to result in a potential cumulative significance of effect of Moderate beneficial on character area 22: Vastern Road, given the greater area of contemporary development and public realm that is likely to result (see paragraph 6.120).
- 6.134 Further development on allocated sites within character area 1: Station Hill, in association with the proposed development, is also likely to increase the significance of beneficial effect upon this character area to possibly Moderate. As such, the proposed development is likely to contribute to a potentially Moderate beneficial significance of cumulative effect upon both character areas 1: Station Hill and 22: Vastern Road in association with these allocations. However, the greater contribution to that cumulative effect on character area 1: Station Hill would be due to development on allocated sites within this character area as opposed to the proposed development.
- 6.135 Potential cumulative effects upon character area 12: Caversham Road due to development on allocated sites 11f and 11g, are unlikely to be increased from a Minor adverse significance of cumulative effect due to the proposed development in association with a possible development on the Vastern Road Retail Park, given that the 'Submission Draft Reading Borough Local Plan' (March 2018) is promoting low density development to reflect the low-rise residential character of the area.
- 6.136 With respect to views from the representative viewpoints, it is unlikely that development on the majority of the allocated sites would be visible within views from those representative viewpoints within close proximity to the proposed development, i.e. representative viewpoints 7, 10, 13, 17, 19 and 20. As such, whilst development upon one of them may be visible within a view from one of the other representative viewpoints in association with the proposed development, and therefore there would be a cumulative effect, if any potential cumulative effects were to be significant, this would be more likely due to development on one or more of the allocated sites rather than the proposed development.
- 6.137 With respect to the allocated sites CR11a to CR11i, potential cumulative effects of a Moderate adverse significance of effect have been assessed upon the views from representative viewpoints 4, 7, 10, 12, 13, 17, 19 and 20 for the proposed development in-combination with a possible development upon the Vastern Road Retail Park site (see Table 6.15). Depending on the scale of development within allocation sites CR11f and CR11g, the potential significance of cumulative effect upon the views from representative viewpoints 13: Christchurch Bridge and 17: Swansea Road could be increased. If so, it is likely that the greater contribution to the potential cumulative effect upon these views would be due to development on the allocation sites (inclusive of a possible development on the Vastern Road Retail Park), rather than the proposed development.

- 6.138 Development on the allocated sites CR12a to CR12e [collectively referred to as the 'West Side Major Opportunity Area' within the 'Submission Draft Reading Borough Local Plan' (March 2018)] may be visible within the views from representative viewpoints 12 and 13; upon which the proposed development is assessed as having a Minor and a Moderate adverse significance of effect respectively. As such, it may be that if development on the allocated sites is also visible within these views, it could contribute to a potential cumulative effect, albeit the greater contribution to that effect is likely to be the proposed development. Any other potential cumulative effects upon views from the representative viewpoints due to these allocated sites in association with the proposed development is considered likely to be not significant.
- 6.139 Development on allocated sites 14c and 14l may be visible within the view from representative viewpoint 2: Mount Pleasant. If so, they may contribute to a potential cumulative effect upon the view. However, if significant, it is likely that the greater contribution to that potentially significant effect would (due to their closer proximity to the representative viewpoint) be development on the allocated sites, rather than the proposed development.

Inter-relationships

- 6.140 The assessment of townscape and visual effects has some inter-relationship with the assessment of cultural heritage effects; the essential difference being that the assessment of townscape and visual effects is concerned with effects upon townscape and views as experienced by people. In contrast, the assessment of cultural heritage effects is concerned with potential effects upon heritage assets in their own right, i.e. conservation areas, listed buildings and scheduled monuments. Whilst cultural aspects of the townscape are considered as part of the baseline to the assessment, in association with topography and drainage, land use, vegetation and settlement pattern, the assessment of potential townscape effects considers potential effects upon these townscape features as a whole and as they combine to establish areas of distinctive townscape character, rather than considering these as individual components of townscape each independently worthy of assessment.
- 6.141 The visual effects of traffic on local roads as a result of the proposed development during both construction and operation are inter-related with the assessment of the environmental effects of traffic. This TVRA chapter of the ES has considered the potential townscape and visual effects of increased traffic on local roads. This has been considered against an existing baseline within which traffic on Caversham Road and Vastern Road, and elsewhere within the study area is already a regular feature of these routes with consequential effects upon the townscape character areas through which it passes and upon views. As such, the relatively modest increase in the volume of traffic during the temporary construction phase and permanent operational phase (as described in Chapter 8: Traffic and Transport) is not considered to increase the potential significance of effect

upon any of the townscape character areas directly impacted or upon views from any of the visual receptors from that stated in this assessment.

Summary of Effects

Construction Phase

Views

- 6.142 Whilst there would be considerable ground level disturbance during the initial site establishment and demolition phases of the proposed development (most noticeable within near distance views), the magnitude of impact upon all views from the representative viewpoints would progressively increase as the buildings within the proposed development gradually increase in height until they are almost complete, at which point they would have a similar level of visual obstruction and foreshortening to views as would be the case with the permanent operational phase. However, tower crane(s) would form an additional element within these views (alongside the new buildings). As such, it is considered that the potential significance of effect upon views from most of the representative viewpoints would be broadly the same as those of the operational phase, except for those of a more rural or parkland character and those in close proximity to the project site. Within these views the tower cranes would add further contrast to the more rural/ parkland character of the existing view. In contrast, within those views which are essentially urban in character, tower crane(s) are not an infrequent feature within views, especially within the context of recent (and ongoing) re-development within Reading, most notably those of the schemes included in the future baseline to the assessment, i.e., Thames Quarter. However, locally significant adverse effects during the temporary construction period have only been assessed upon views from 3 representative viewpoints abutting the project site within which ground level construction activity, hoardings and vehicles bringing materials and construction personnel to the proposed development would be clearly visible within what are near distance views. These are representative viewpoints 7: Caversham Road, 10: A4155 Caversham Road and 19: Station Square North upon which a Major adverse significance of effect has been assessed. No potential effects of a Substantial adverse significance of effect have been identified.

Townscape

- 6.143 No potentially significant adverse effects upon any of the townscape character areas within the study area have been identified. However, there would be a temporary Minor adverse significance of effect upon character areas 12: Caversham Road, 22: Vastern Road, 23: Kings Meadow, 27: Thames Valley, 28: Thames Valley East and 35: Caversham. Character area 22: Vastern Road would be directly impacted and, for the other character areas, construction activities on the project site would be visible within views from each. This would promote an awareness of a construction site and construction activities for users of these townscapes which would contrast with their generally more open and tranquil qualities in comparison to the fully built up character areas. There

would also be greater awareness of construction activity within the fully built out character area 12: Caversham Road and 35: Caversham, given their close proximity to the project site.

Operational Phase

Views

- 6.144 The proposed development includes tall buildings which, due to their height and massing, would inevitably cause some visual obstruction and foreshortening to views (including those from the representative viewpoints). Most notably, they would obstruct views to parts of the sky and to other features of the Reading townscape, i.e. 'The Blade' building. These impacts would be greatest where the proposed development is visible as a separate grouping from the other tall building clusters forming part of the 'future baseline' to the assessment, i.e. Station Hill. Conversely, when visible set against a tall building group, these impacts would be reduced. Whilst the new buildings within the proposed development would be of some considerable architectural merit and would complement and, in some instances, 'balance' the massing of other tall building groups within views, the resultant visual obstruction and foreshortening to views that would result from the proposed development are considered to be adverse effects.
- 6.145 No potentially significant adverse effects upon views from any of the representative viewpoints have been assessed. The proposed development is assessed as having its greatest effects upon the near distance views from representative viewpoint 7: Caversham Road, 10: A4155 Caversham Road, 13: Christchurch Bridge, 17: Swansea Road, 19: Station Square North and 20: Station Square South; for which a Moderate adverse significance of effect has been assessed.
- 6.146 Given the scale of the buildings within the proposed development, new planting within it would not provide any significant screening to views, even when fully established. Any reduction in the potential significance of effect upon views during summer would therefore be due to existing vegetation, generally within close proximity to the representative viewpoint, which would screen views to the proposed development (fully or in part). During summer, the screening effects of existing vegetation would reduce the potential effects upon views from representative viewpoint 1: Kings Meadow, 8: A329 Overbridge (Chatham Street/ Friars Street link), 11: Forbury Gardens, 14: St Peters Church and 15: Town Hall Square to No Change. No potential effects of a Substantial adverse significance of effect were identified.

Townscape

- 6.147 The proposed development would transform an area of derelict and un-used townscape, which had fallen into disuse, to one which would be accessible to the public with new civic spaces; one of which would extend Station Square North. It would become an area of active townscape and would result in permanent beneficial effects upon townscape character area 22: Vastern Road (Minor beneficial). It would also effectively extend character area 1: Station Hill; the existing commercial centre of Reading, to the north, establishing the railway station and Station Square north and south

as a new and expanded civic hub. A Negligible beneficial significance of effect has been identified for character area 1: Station Hill.

- 6.148 In contrast, the proposed development would bring tall buildings closer to character area 12: Caversham Road; an area of small-scale and tightly knit townscape characterised by 2-storey terraced residential properties, which is of High sensitivity to the type of change proposed, i.e. tall buildings. There would be a very slight alteration to its townscape character whereby the proposed development would have some dominating effects upon the user's experience of this character area (Minor adverse significance of effect).
- 6.149 For all other townscape character areas within the study area, there would be very limited inter-visibility with new tall buildings within the proposed development or tall buildings within Reading town centre, forming part of the 'future baseline', i.e. Station Hill, are already important elements within views from them. It is therefore considered that the ability to see further tall buildings within views from those character areas in the northern half of the study area, including 23: Kings Meadow, 27: Thames Valley and 28: Thames Valley East would have only a very slight characterising effect upon the experience of these townscapes over and above that afforded by the tall buildings already present within the 'future baseline'. As such, their inherent character would not be changed, and their townscape quality would be maintained (Neutral significance of effect).

Cumulative Effects

Views

- 6.150 Generally, the developments for which planning applications have been lodged with RBC and those sites allocated for development within local planning documentation would not be visible within those views for which the proposed development is assessed as having its greatest effect, i.e. those representative viewpoints in close proximity to the project site. As such, if the proposed development is visible within views from the representative viewpoints in association with one of these cumulative schemes, any potential cumulative effects upon views are likely to be not significant.
- 6.151 A possible exception would be the Reading and Caversham Flood Risk Management Scheme (planning application 181659), which is likely to result in some changes to views from representative viewpoint 4: Caversham Bridge and 13: Christchurch Bridge. The proposed development is assessed as having a Minor and a Moderate adverse significance of effect upon each of these views respectively. Given the close proximity of these proposals to each of these representative viewpoints it is possible that they could contribute to a potentially significant cumulative effect. However, this would be entirely dependent upon the detail design of the flood prevention proposals.
- 6.152 With respect to the allocated sites CR11a to CR11i, potentially significant cumulative effects upon the view from representative viewpoint 10 has been assessed for the proposed development in combination with a possible development upon the Vastern Road Retail Park site (part of allocation

CR11e). Development on the Vastern Road Retail Park is assessed as being the main contributor to a potential significant cumulative effect upon the view from this representative viewpoint.

Townscape

- 6.153 Almost all of the townscape character areas within which planning applications for development are currently lodged with RBC and sites allocated for development in local planning authority documentation would not be impacted by the proposed development. As such, there would be no cumulative effects upon them and any effects would be solely due to the impacts of the cumulative scheme in isolation.
- 6.154 A proposal for which a planning application has been lodged with RBC that is likely to have some potential cumulative effects in association with the proposed development is the Reading and Caversham Flood Risk Management Scheme (planning application 181659). This proposal would directly impact upon parts of character areas '12: Caversham Road' and '22: Vastern Road' on the southbank of the Thames. However, these are likely to be low-level features and are not anticipated as resulting in potential cumulative effects in association with the proposed development which would be significant. Any potentially significant cumulative effects that would result from the proposed development in association with the erection of 42 dwellings on Henley Road, Caversham (planning application 180418) would be due to this proposal and not the proposed development.
- 6.155 A possible development on the Vastern Road Retail Park site (in association with the proposed development) is assessed as having a potential Moderate beneficial significance of cumulative effect upon character area 22: Vastern Road. This development would increase the area of contemporary urban form within the character area, inclusive of new public realm, and extend the civic centre of the town further north.
- 6.156 Further development within allocated sites CR11a and CR11c, within character area 1: Station Hill may also increase the potential cumulative beneficial effects of the proposed development upon this character area to Moderate beneficial, given that these sites would further develop parts of the town centre. However, the greater contribution to this potential cumulative effect would be development on the allocation sites themselves rather than the proposed development.
- 6.157 Development on allocated sites CR11f and CR11g is likely to be low-rise to reflect the character of character area 12: Caversham Road. As such, a potential cumulative effect of the proposed development in association with development on these allocated sites is likely to be no more than a Minor adverse significance of cumulative effect (not significant).

Overview

- 6.158 The proposed development would contribute to the evolving townscape of Reading town centre and add a further tall building group to those which already exist within the 'future baseline' used in this assessment. It is considered to complement these existing tall building groups and, in some instances, 'balance' the effects of the tall buildings within the Station Hill development and Thames Tower within views. However, it would inevitably obstruct and foreshorten the views from some of the representative viewpoints and as such would result in an adverse effect upon them. In contrast,

its townscape effects would be to re-develop a part of the town centre which is currently dis-used and neglected, re-uniting it with the town centre to the south and creating an active area of commercial and residential development with new areas of public realm with the railway station at the hub of an expanded civic centre. These would be beneficial townscape effects.

- 6.159 A full summary of the potential townscape and visual effects of the proposed development during its construction and operational phase is provided in the following tables:

Table 6.16: Summary of Likely Environmental Effects on Visual Resources

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Description of impact	Short / medium / long term	Magnitude of impact (Summer if different)	Significance of effect (Summer if different)	Significant / Not significant (Summer if different)	Notes
Construction Phase							
Representative Viewpoint 1: Kings Meadow	High	Impact upon a view	Medium	Negligible	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 2: Mount Pleasant	Medium	Impact upon a view	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 3: London Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Medium	Negligible	Neutral	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 4: Caversham Bridge	High	Impact upon a view	Medium	Low	Moderate adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 5: Thames Path	High	Impact upon a view	Medium	Negligible	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 6: Thames Path	High	Impact upon a view	Medium	Negligible	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 7: Caversham Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Medium	High	Major adverse	Locally Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 8: A329 Overbridge (Chatham Street/ Friars Street link)	Medium	Impact upon a view	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 9: Napier Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 10: Caversham Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Medium	High	Major adverse	Locally Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 11: Forbury Gardens	High	Impact upon a view	Medium	Negligible	Neutral	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 12: De Montfort Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Medium	Low	Minor adverse	Not Significant	

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Description of impact	Short / medium / long term	Magnitude of impact (Summer if different)	Significance of effect (Summer if different)	Significant / Not significant (Summer if different)	Notes
Representative Viewpoint 13: Christchurch Bridge	High	Impact upon a view	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 14: St. Peter's Church	High	Impact upon a view	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 15: Town Hall Square	Medium	Impact upon a view	Medium	Negligible	Neutral	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 16: Balmore Park	High	Impact upon a view	Medium	Low	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 17: Swansea Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 18: Caversham Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 19: Station Square North	Medium	Impact upon a view	Medium	High	Major adverse	Locally Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 20: Station Square South	Medium	Impact upon a view	Medium	Medium	Moderate adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 21: Victoria Recreation Ground	High	Impact upon a view	Medium	Low	Minor adverse	Not significant	
Operational Phase							
Representative Viewpoint 1: Kings Meadow	High	Impact upon a view	Long	Negligible (No Change)	Negligible adverse (No Change)	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 2: Mount Pleasant	Medium	Impact upon a view	Long	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 3: London Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Long	Negligible	Neutral	Not Significant	

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Description of impact	Short / medium / long term	Magnitude of impact (Summer if different)	Significance of effect (Summer if different)	Significant / Not significant (Summer if different)	Notes
Representative Viewpoint 4: Caversham Bridge	High	Impact upon a view	Long	Low	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 5: Thames Path	High	Impact upon a view	Long	Negligible (Negligible)	Negligible adverse (Neutral)	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 6: Thames Path	High	Impact upon a view	Long	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 7: Caversham Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Long	High	Moderate adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 8: Vp.8: A329 Overbridge (Chatham Street/ Friars Street link)	Medium	Impact upon a view	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 9: Napier Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Long	Negligible (Negligible)	Negligible adverse (Neutral)	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 10: Caversham Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Long	Medium (Low)	Moderate adverse (Minor adverse)	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 11: Forbury Gardens	High	Impact upon a view	Long	Negligible (No Change)	Neutral (No Change)	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 12: De Montfort Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Long	Low	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 13: Christchurch Bridge	High	Impact upon a view	Long	Medium	Moderate adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 14: St. Peter's Church	High	Impact upon a view	Long	Negligible (No Change)	Negligible adverse (No Change)	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 15: Town Hall Square	Medium	Impact upon a view	Long	Negligible (No Change)	Neutral (No Change)	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 16: Balmore Park	High	Impact upon a view	Long	Negligible	Neutral	Not Significant	

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Description of impact	Short / medium / long term	Magnitude of impact (Summer if different)	Significance of effect (Summer if different)	Significant / Not significant (Summer if different)	Notes
Representative Viewpoint 17: Swansea Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Long	Medium	Moderate adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 18: Caversham Road	Medium	Impact upon a view	Long	Negligible	Neutral	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 19: Station Square North	Medium	Impact upon a view	Long	High	Moderate adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 20: Station Square South	Medium	Impact upon a view	Long	Medium	Moderate adverse	Not Significant	
Representative Viewpoint 21: Victoria Recreation Ground	High	Impact upon a view	Long	Low	Minor adverse	Not Significant	

Table 6.17: Summary of Likely Environmental Effects on Townscape

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Description of impact	Short / medium / long term	Magnitude of impact (Summer if different)	Significance of effect (Summer if different)	Significant / Not significant (Summer if different)	Notes
Construction Phase							
1: Station Hill	Low	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Low	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	
2: Station Area East	Low	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	
8: Forbury Gardens	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	
10: Forbury Retail Park	Medium	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	
11: Napier Road	Medium	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Description of impact	Short / medium / long term	Magnitude of impact (Summer if different)	Significance of effect (Summer if different)	Significant / Not significant (Summer if different)	Notes
12: Caversham Road	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Low	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
13: Cattle Market	Medium	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	
14: Oxford Road and Surroundings	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
15: Chatham Place	Low	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
20: London Street	Low	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
22: Vastern Road	Low	Direct impact upon townscape	Medium	Medium	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
23: Kings Meadow	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Low	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
24: Kennet Walk	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
27: Thames Valley	Low	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Negligible	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
28: Thames Valley East	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Negligible	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
29: New Town	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
33: Southcote	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
34: Portman Road/ Richfield Avenue Light Industrial Area	Medium	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Description of impact	Short / medium / long term	Magnitude of impact (Summer if different)	Significance of effect (Summer if different)	Significant / Not significant (Summer if different)	Notes
35: Caversham	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Low	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
Alexander Road Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
Christchurch Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
Kendrick Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
Redlands Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
Russell Street/ Castle Hill Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
St Peters Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Not Significant	
Surley Row Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Medium	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
Operational Phase							
1: Station Hill	Low	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	Negligible	Negligible beneficial	Not Significant	
2: Station Area East	Low	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
8: Forbury Gardens	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
10: Forbury Retail Park	Medium	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Description of impact	Short / medium / long term	Magnitude of impact (Summer if different)	Significance of effect (Summer if different)	Significant / Not significant (Summer if different)	Notes
11: Napier Road	Medium	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
12: Caversham Road	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	Negligible	Minor adverse	Not Significant	
13: Cattle Market	Medium	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
14: Oxford Road and Surroundings	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
15: Chatham Place	Low	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
20: London Street	Low	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
22: Vastern Road	Low	Direct impact upon townscape	Long	Low	Minor beneficial	Not Significant	
23: Kings Meadow	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	Negligible	Neutral	Not Significant	
24: Kennet Walk	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
27: Thames Valley	Low	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	Negligible	Neutral	Not Significant	
28: Thames Valley East	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	Negligible	Neutral	Not Significant	
29: New Town	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Description of impact	Short / medium / long term	Magnitude of impact (Summer if different)	Significance of effect (Summer if different)	Significant / Not significant (Summer if different)	Notes
33: Southcote	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
34: Portman Road/ Richfield Avenue Light Industrial Area	Medium	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
35: Caversham	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	Negligible	Neutral	Not Significant	
Alexander Road Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
Christchurch Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
Kendrick Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
Redlands Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
Russell Street/ Castle Hill Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	
St Peters Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	Negligible	Neutral	Not Significant	
Surley Row Conservation Area	High	Indirect impact on townscape	Long	No Change	No Change	Not Significant	

References

Department for Communities and Local Government (2012) National Planning Policy Framework.

Department for Communities and Local Government (2014) National Planning Practice Guidance.

Department for Communities and Local Government (2016) National Planning Practice Guidance: Natural Environment.

Doyle Town Planning & Urban Design with Peter Brett Associates on behalf of Reading Borough Council (2010) Reading Station Area Framework.

Emu Analytics (2018) Open Data, Available at <http://www.emu-analytics.com/products/datapacks.php>

Entec on behalf of Reading Borough Council (2008) Reading Tall Buildings Strategy.

Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition).

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2018), Revised National Planning Policy Framework;

Natural England (2014) National Character Area Profile 115: Thames Valley.

Newbury District Council (1993) District-Wide Landscape Assessment.

Reading Borough Council (2008, altered January 2015) Core Strategy.

Reading Borough Council (2009) Reading Central Area Action Plan 2009 (RCAAP).

Reading Borough Council (2018), E-mail with comments on RPS letter to Richard Eatough.

Royal Mail Estates Ltd (2011) Caversham Road Environmental Statement.

RPS (2018a) Caversham Road, Reading, Review of Townscape Design Proposals.

RPS (2018b) Reading Metropolitan, Caversham Road, Letter to Richard Eatough, Reading Borough Council.