



PLOT E AND TELECOM HOUSE

Outline Application
Environmental Statement (ES)

Volume 2: Townscape, Conservation and Visual Assessment

Waterman
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1
- This document provides an assessment of the likely townscape and visual impacts in relation to the Proposed Development at Station Hill in Reading designed by architects Allies and Morrison for Sackville Developments (Reading) Limited (SDRL). It forms Volume 2 of the Environmental Statement (the ES) prepared by Waterman Infrastructure & Environment Ltd as part of this application for outline planning permission.
- 1.2
- This report is based on Volume 2 of the ES (March 2013) and the Erratum to Volume 2 (July 2013) prepared in relation to the SH3 Scheme. As part of the Proposed Development assessed in this report, the parameters of Plots A, B, C, D and F are the same as those assessed in March and July 2013. The parameters for Plot E have been altered as part of the Proposed Development due to the inclusion of the Telecom House Site, immediately west of Plot E in the SH3 Scheme. All other aspects of the 2013 reports – the baseline assessment, the cumulative assessment and planning policy and methodology – have also been updated to reflect the current situation.
- 1.3
- The ‘SH3 Scheme’ refers to the scheme consented for the SH3 Site in 2013. The ‘Telecom House/ Plot E Scheme’ refers to the current planning application and relates to Plot E only. The ‘Proposed Development’ refers to the SH3 Scheme on all plots and the proposed amendments to Plot E: this is because the Plot E proposals would only be built out in conjunction with the consented plans for the remainder of the SH3 Site. The Proposed Development is the assessment subject of this report and the rest of the ES.
- 1.4
- This report provides an assessment of the likely impact that the Proposed Development will have on the surrounding townscape character of Reading in local and wider views. The assessment has been undertaken by the Professor Robert Tavernor Consultancy (‘Tavernor Consultancy’) and is based on parameter plans by Allies and Morrison, which are being submitted as part of the planning application, and verified images by Cityscape, which are included within this report. This document should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement (DAS) produced by Allies and Morrison.
- 1.5
- In particular, this assessment considers potential changes to:

• The character of the townscape surrounding the Site;

• The significance of designated heritage assets in the surrounding area and their settings; and

• The composition of selected representative views as a result of the Proposed Development.
- 1.6
- The potential environmental effects of the Proposed Development are considered through the Views Assessment in section 6. It contains

a comprehensive selection of views, agreed with Reading Borough Council, through which an assessment is made of the visual impacts of the minimum and maximum parameters of the scheme in the round. Photographs of the views have been overlaid by Cityscape with accurately surveyed, verified wireline representations of the Proposed Development, with the maximum parameter shown in solid line and the height of the minimum parameter shown in a dotted line. A cumulative impact assessment has also been undertaken which considers all relevant consented schemes in the area.

- 1.7
- Non-verified illustrative views of the Proposed Development are included in the architects’ DAS which assist in interpreting the outline parameter forms assessed in this report.

- 1.8
- The following sections 2-5 set out the assessment methodology, relevant planning policy and guidance, the existing townscape and heritage assets on and around the Site and relevant visual characteristics of the Proposed Development, all of which form the basis for the Views Assessment in section 6. The conclusions and residual effects are set out in section 7.

Chapter 2

METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 This assessment takes into account the skyline of Reading, existing tall buildings and consented applications for other tall buildings in Reading, the physical fabric of the area, the appropriateness of the Site for the proposals and the character of the design for Station Hill.
- 2.2 The available guidance for assessing the townscape, heritage and visual effects of a development is as follows:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) Third Edition (2013) (Ref 1-1) produced jointly by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment;
 - Seeing the History in the View (May 2011) (Ref 1-2), which was prepared by Historic England (formerly English Heritage) as a methodology for assessing the heritage significance of views.
- 2.3 The IEMA and Landscape Institute Guidelines (Ref 1-1) were developed in relation to rural and urban landscapes and are applicable to all assessments submitted under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (as amended). The methodology employed for this TCVIA is based on approaches recommended in the IEMA and Landscape Institute Guidelines. The EH guidance was developed in line with the policies set out in Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5), which inform the relevant policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ref 1-3) published in March 2012 to supersede PPS5 and other Planning Policy Statements. The Historic England publication Seeing the History in the View uses examples in London but it is intended to be applicable in all parts of the country and to both urban and rural environments.
- 2.4 Visual impacts have been assessed in terms of the magnitude of the impact or change and also the sensitivity of the resource affected. Where present, listed buildings and conservation areas are considered to be elements of high sensitivity in the townscape. The Site contains no listed buildings and is not designated as a conservation area. However there are listed buildings and conservation areas in the vicinity; these will be identified in section 4 below. In considering the impact of the proposals for the Site, the NPPF (Ref 1-3) requires assessment of potential impacts on the setting of these designated heritage assets.
- 2.5 Thirty viewpoints have been selected for assessment in consultation with Reading Borough Council. Where visible, the Proposed Development has been outlined to show its massing and position.
- 2.6 In order to assess the impact of the Proposed Development, three separate images have been prepared from each viewing location selected:
- Future Baseline – the existing view, prior to the demolition of buildings on the northern part of the Site and with consented schemes presently under construction outlined in relevant views (as black wirelines) (see Table 2-1);
 - Proposed – the Future Baseline view with the consented minimum and maximum parameters for Plots A, B, C, D, F and G of the SH3 Scheme and the proposed minimum and maximum parameters for Plot E of the Telecom House/ Plot E Scheme inserted (as coloured wirelines); and
 - Cumulative - the Proposed View but with maximum parameters only represented for the Proposed Development and significant consented schemes inserted (as black wirelines) (see Table 2-2).

Table 2-1: Future Baseline schemes under construction

Scheme name/ address	Application Ref. and status	Details of consented works
Phase 2, Land at Chatham Place	12/00798/FUL approved	Detailed planning application for Phase 2 of the Chatham Place redevelopment comprising one nine storey and one nineteen storey building to accommodate a total of 184 residential units and ground floor retail uses (Use Classes A1, A2 or A3), together with basement car parking, public and private amenity space, public realm works and landscaping and alterations to existing vehicular access.
21 Caversham Road	110628 approved	Demolition of existing building and erection of 11 x 1-bed flats.
Energis House, Forbury Road	12/01856/FUL approved	Demolition of existing building and construction of two new office buildings (Use Class B1) with associated access, car parking, servicing, landscaping and engineering works.
Thames Tower	141043 approved	Refurbishment and recladding of the existing building, construction of four additional storeys of offices (use class B1), change of use of the ground floor to flexible office and retail uses (classes A1, A2, A3 and B1), rooftop plant and associated works.
Aldwych House, 2 Blagrove Street	101300 approved	Demolition of existing office building and construction of new 6-storey office building (total approximately 13,500 sqm) with associated basement car park and external works.

Table 2-2: Schemes considered in the Cumulative Assessment

Scheme name/ address	Application Ref.	Details of works
Former Sorting Office, Caversham Road / Vastern Road	11/00276/OUT approved	Outline planning application for business uses (Use Class B1), residential accommodation (Use Class C3), hotel (Use Class C1), retail floor space (Use Class A1), food and drink uses (Use Class A3, A4 and A5), leisure uses (Use Class D2), and associated car parking, open space and landscaping, highways, access and associated works.
Garrard House, 30 Garrard Street	150556 approved	Extension to include part new fourth floor and new fifth and sixth floors to provide 23 residential units.
29-35 Station Road	Not yet submitted.	Demolition of existing building and the erection of a 22 storey building. Model information has been taken from previous application for a similar scheme (Application ref: 04/01395/FUL).
Building B, Station Hill 3	Not yet submitted.	Reserved matters application for Building B of Station Hill 3.

2.7 To aid legibility, the plots on Site are represented with the following different coloured wirelines in the Proposed Views and Cumulative Views:

- Plot A = Green
- Plot B = Yellow
- Plot C = Blue
- Plot D = Pink
- Plot E = Red
- Plot F = Orange
- Plot G = Purple

The minimum parameters are indicated with a dashed line and the maximum parameters are indicated with a solid line. Each Plot is also colour shaded to aid clarity.

2.8 The Cumulative Views include the Proposed Development and schemes which are in the pre-application phase, submitted for planning or consented or ‘reasonably foreseeable’ schemes, in accordance with EIA Regulations, and which are likely to have a significant effect in conjunction with the Proposed Development. These schemes are listed in Table 2-2 above and are represented in the Cumulative Views with a black wireline. The Cumulative Views include only the maximum parameters of the Proposed Development for clarity, however both the minimum and maximum parameters of the Proposed Development have been assessed and this is reported in the text that accompanies the Cumulative Views where relevant. The Proposed Views should be referred to for the relevant minimum parameters. The likely significance of cumulative impact refers to the likely impact of the Proposed Development in conjunction with the other cumulative schemes, rather than a combined impact overall.

2.9 It should be noted that the Royal Mail Group development is represented in the views at maximum parameters and that there is therefore a very small deviation in form from the scheme as it was shown in the cumulative views in the 2013 ES, in which an illustrative version of the scheme was considered. The difference between the two versions of the consented Royal Mail Group scheme are very minimal and the effects considered would be the same.

2.10 An assessment of existing townscape conditions and the significance of relevant heritage assets and their settings are set out in section 4 of this report. This overall assessment informs consideration of the existing conditions of each Future Baseline View in section 6. The sensitivity of each Future Baseline View and their scope for change is considered within that assessment. The sensitivity of a view is determined by a range of factors identified in detail in Historic England’s guidance Seeing the History in the View (Ref 1-2) and summarised here:

- the degree of heritage significance of the structures and spaces in view (both how important they are and how much they contribute to the view);

Table 2-3: Significance evaluation methodology

Effect	Magnitude
Major, adverse	Where the proposed changes to the Site would form a major and immediately apparent part of the scene that adversely effects and changes its overall character.
Moderate, adverse	Where the proposed changes to the Site would form a visible and recognisable new element within the scene and may be readily noticed by the viewer as adverse.
Minor, adverse	Where the proposed changes to the Site would be a minor component of the wider view and may be missed by the casual observer.
Negligible	Where the proposed changes to the Site would be imperceptible or would be in keeping with and would maintain the overall character of the existing view. The balance of the proposals with proposed mitigation would maintain the quality of the views.
Neutral	Where the proposed changes to the Site would not be discernible.
Minor, beneficial	Where the proposed changes to the Site would not only be in keeping with, but would also slightly improve the quality of the existing view.
Moderate, beneficial	Where the proposed changes to the Site would be in keeping with, and would improve, the quality of the existing view.
Major, beneficial	Where the proposed changes to the Site would be in keeping with, and would greatly improve the quality of the scene through the removal of visually distracting features.

Source: Modification of criteria contained in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013) (Ref 1-1)

- the nature of the significance of the structures and spaces in view (for example the robustness of their character, their degree of visibility and/or the importance of retaining a clear sky backdrop in order to enable their recognition and appreciation);
 - the degree of importance attached to the view (whether of local or strategic importance or within the setting of a designated heritage asset and/or whether potential for enhancement has been identified); and
 - the nature of the view (whether it is glimpsed, kinetic, formally composed).
- 2.11 Existing buildings within the Site which are to be demolished as part of the Proposed Development (e.g. Western Tower) have been included in the Proposed Views and Cumulative Views in order to give context to the minimum and maximum massing of the Proposed Development. Some of the buildings on the northern part of the Site have already been demolished, although it should be noted that the ‘baseline’ of this assessment includes all the buildings on site prior to the recent demolitions, and this ‘baseline’ situation is represented in the photography used for the assessment.
- 2.12 Potential impacts are considered within the assessment which appears beside each Proposed View in section 6 of this report. It assesses the degree of change – neutral, negligible, minor or major - and the nature of that change - whether beneficial or adverse - as a result of the nature and sensitivity of existing conditions and of the design of the Proposed Development. The criteria which inform the assessment of potential impacts are drawn from relevant national and local policy and guidance set out in section 3.
- 2.13 A night view has not been prepared as part of this assessment due to the outline form of the planning application. Only the height and massing of the Proposed Development are assessed.
- 2.14 The significance of potential impacts overall is categorised for each view using a standardised scale adapted from the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Ref 1-1). Where neutral in impact, the Proposed Development would not be seen, and where deemed negligible, the Proposed Development is likely to have little or no impact on the overall character of the scene in the view. For impacts judged to be minor to major in magnitude, the nature of that magnitude is further categorised as either beneficial or adverse. The scale of significance is defined as follows:

Chapter 3

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) (Ref 1-3)

- 3.1 A National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was introduced in March 2012 to set out the Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. It replaces almost all Planning Policy Statements and Guidance.
- 3.2 In Chapter 7 Requiring Good Design the NPPF considers that *"Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people."* (para 56). Paragraph 58 states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should ensure that developments:
- *"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;*
 - *establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
 - *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;*
 - *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
 - *create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and*
 - *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping"*
- 3.3 Chapter 12 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment sets out the Government's overarching planning policies put in place to conserve the historic environment and its heritage assets so that they may be enjoyed by future generations. It replaces PPS5 - Planning and the Historic Environment (2010) and outlines a balanced approach to the conservation of the historic environment and gives guidance relating to designated heritage assets - listed buildings, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites and Registered Parks and Gardens - and undesignated heritage assets, buildings positively identified as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration during the planning process. In paragraph 131 it states that local planning authorities should take account of:
- *"the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*

- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic viability; and*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*

- 3.4 In determining applications, LPAs should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. "The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance" (para 128). Paragraph 132 states that "when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be." Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Any harm or loss of significance should require clear and convincing justification.

- 3.5 Paragraph 134 states that where a proposed development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Where proposals lead to substantial harm, it must be shown that the harm is necessary in order to achieve substantial benefits which outweigh it, or that a number of criteria regarding the use and ownership of the site are met (para.133). In considering applications that affect non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset (para.135).

- 3.6 The following assessment has been formed to accord with these policies. The relevant records have been consulted as part of the design process and the significance of potentially affected heritage assets has been assessed in proportion to the potential impacts of the proposals. The Site is not within a conservation area and there are no listed buildings on Site. However there are conservation areas and listed buildings in the close and wider surrounding area. Opportunities to enhance or preserve positive aspects of the setting of heritage assets has informed the design process and any potential harm has been weighed against other heritage and public benefits brought by the scheme. An assessment of the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on the setting of relevant heritage assets is undertaken within the Views Assessment in section 6 below.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (March 2014) (Ref 1-4)

- 3.7 The PPG, recently launched by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), is an online resource providing guidance

	on implementing the policies of the NPPF (Ref 1-3). The web resource replaces various guidance documents, including By Design (2000). There are two sections of the NPPG that are of particular relevance to this assessment: • Design; and • Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.		
3.8	The PPG on Design, which supports section 7 of the NPPF, states that local planning authorities are required to take design into consideration and should give great weight to outstanding or innovative designs which help to raise the standard of design more generally in the area: <i>“Planning permission should not be refused for buildings and infrastructure that promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design (unless the concern relates to a designated heritage asset and the impact would cause material harm to the asset or its setting which is not outweighed by the proposal’s economic, social and environmental benefits”</i> (Ref 1-3, para 004).	3.12	Considering potential harm in relation to conservation areas, Paragraph 18 of the guidance states: <i>“An unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area is individually of lesser importance than a listed building (paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework). If the building is important or integral to the character or appearance of the conservation area then its demolition is more likely to amount to substantial harm to the conservation area, engaging the tests in paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework. However, the justification for its demolition will still be proportionate to the relative significance of the building and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area as a whole.”</i>
3.9	The PPG states (Ref 1-3, para 015) that new or changing places should have the following qualities commonly exhibited by successful, well-designed places: • be functional; • support mixed uses and tenures; • include successful public spaces; • be adaptable and resilient; • have a distinctive character; • be attractive; and • encourage ease of movement.		
3.10	The PPG on Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment supports section 12 of the NPPF. Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting, therefore a thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.	3.13	The Setting of Heritage Assets is a guidance document published by Historic England in March 2015. It supersedes the previous Historic England Guidance publication The Setting of Heritage Assets published in October 2011. It condenses that document and updates it to relate to the terminology and objectives of the NPPF. It identifies the ways in which the setting of a heritage asset can contribute to its significance and sets out means of assessing the impacts of a development on the setting of a heritage asset.
3.11	In considering assessment of substantial harm, Paragraph 017 of the guidance states: <i>“In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset’s significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. While the impact of total</i>	3.14	The Guidance notes that <i>“The contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, including a variety of views of, across, or including that asset, and views of the surroundings from or through the asset, and may intersect with, and incorporate the settings of numerous heritage assets.”</i> (Ref 1-5, paragraph 5).
		3.15	Paragraph 12 sets out a number of key steps which form a broad approach to assessment of potential impacts on settings: • <i>“Step 1: identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;</i> • <i>Step 2: assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);</i> • <i>Step 3: assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;</i> • <i>Step 4: explore the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm;</i> • <i>Step 5: make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.”</i>
		3.16	The Guidance notes that <i>“Each of the stages may involve detailed assessment procedures and complex forms of analysis such as viewshed analyses, sensitivity matrices and scoring systems. Whilst these may assist analysis to some degree, as setting is a matter of qualitative and expert judgement, they cannot provide a systematic answer. English Heritage [sic] recommends that [...] technical analyses of this type should be seen primarily as material supporting a clearly expressed and non-technical narrative argument that sets out ‘what matters and why’ in terms of the heritage significance and setting of the assets affected, together with the effects of the development upon them.”</i> This narrative is provided in relation to the heritage assets in the views in section 6 and in relation to each relevant heritage asset in section 6.
			Guidance on Tall Buildings (July 2007) (Ref 1-6)
		3.17	Guidance on Tall Buildings was published by CABI and Historic England to provide advice and guidance on good design practice in relation to tall buildings in the planning process and to highlight other related issues that need to be taken into account. It sets out how CABI and Historic England will evaluate proposals for tall buildings. CABI and Historic England recommend that local authorities use it as a basis for their own consideration of such projects.
		3.18	It is stated at paragraph 3.4 of the Guidance that “All proposals for tall buildings should be accompanied by accurate and realistic representations of the appearance of the building. These representations should show the proposals in all significant views affected, near, middle and distant, including the public realm and the streets around the base of the building. This will require methodical, verifiable 360 degree view analysis.” This is provided in section 6 of this report.
		3.19	Criteria for the evaluation of tall buildings are set out at paragraph 4.1 of the guidance: • The relationship to context; • The effect on the historic context; • The effect on world heritage Sites; • The relationship to transport infrastructure; • The architectural quality of the building including its scale, form, massing, proportion and silhouette, facing materials and relationship to other structures; • The sustainable design and construction of the proposal; • The credibility of the design, both technically and financially; • The contribution to public space and facilities, both internal and external; • The effect on the local environment, including microclimate, overshadowing, night-time appearance; • The contribution made to the permeability of a Site and the wider area; and • The provision of a well-designed environment, both internal and external.

3.20 A draft revision of the Guidance was issued on 15 October 2014 for consultation which has not yet been adopted. It is broadly the same as the 2007 document with parts and terminology updated to reflect minor changes in the wider planning policy context, such as the adoption of the NPPF and publication of the PPG.

Local Planning Policy

Reading Borough Council Core Strategy (Adopted January 2008 and Revised January 2015) (Ref 1-7)

3.21 The Reading Borough Council Core Strategy (CS) sets out its vision up to the year 2023. The policy framework is designed to work towards the following core objectives:

- “1. Strengthen the role of Reading, including the Central Reading Area, as the regional hub for the Thames Valley, providing an accessible focus for the development of employment, housing, services and facilities, meeting the needs of residents, workers, visitors, those who study in Reading Borough, and the wider area, in accordance with the South East Plan;
- 2. Improve the quality of life for those living, working, studying in and visiting the Borough, creating inclusive, sustainable communities with good access to decent and affordable housing, employment, open space and waterspace, transport, education, services and facilities (such as sustainable water supplies and wastewater treatment, healthcare services, sport and recreation, etc.) to meet identified needs;
- 3. Ensure new development is accessible and sustainable, in accordance with the LDF sustainability appraisal objectives;
- 4. Maintain and enhance the historic, built and natural environment of the Borough through investment and high quality design;
- 5. Improve and develop excellent transport systems to improve accessibility within Reading and for the wider area by sustainable modes of transport;
- 6. Offer outstanding cultural opportunities, which are based on multiculturalism, local heritage and high quality, modern arts and leisure facilities; and
- 7. Ensure that Reading is a multi-cultural city where significant social inclusion exists and where the needs of all its citizens are met by high quality, cost effective services and outstanding levels of community involvement.” (Ref 1-7, pp. 19-20)

3.22 There are four distinct areas in Reading that are considered sustainable locations for future development:

- The Reading Central Area;
- South West Reading including the development of Green Park 3;
- District/ Local Centres; and
- Redevelopment of parts of existing employment areas.

The Site is located in the Reading Central Area, and more specifically in the ‘Station/River Project Area’. This area is dominated by Reading Station. The rail interchange at Reading Station is of national significance; it has recently been upgraded with significant improvement works, including a new bridge over the rail line which is visible in nearby views in section 6. Much of the surrounding area is isolated, underutilised and of a very poor architectural and environmental quality.

3.23 Policies CS1, CS7 and CS33 in the Core Strategy are of relevance to the site of the Proposed Development and are outlined in greater detail below.

3.24 Policy CS1: Sustainable Construction and Design ensures that all proposals for new development, as well as the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing buildings, will only be acceptable where their design uses “energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.” (Ref 1-7, p.28)

3.25 Policy CS7: Design and the Public Realm will ensure that all new development in Reading is of the highest design quality, “one that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.” (Ref 1-7, p.37). The components for consideration are:

- “Layout: urban structure and urban grain;
- Landscape;
- Density and mix;
- Scale: height and massing; and
- Architectural detail and materials.” (Ref 1-7, p.37)

These components will be assessed to ensure that proposals make a positive contribution to the following urban design objectives:

- “Character - a place with its own identity and sense of place
- Continuity and enclosure
- Quality of the public realm
- Ease of movement and permeability
- Legibility - clear image and easy to understand
- Adaptability – capable of adaptation over time
- Diversity – meets a wide range of needs.” (Ref 1-7, p.37)

3.26 Policy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment make sure that the historic environment of Reading, including conservation areas, listed buildings and other features of local or national designation, such as sites of archaeological importance and historic parks and gardens, will be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced. The Council will only grant planning permission where development has “no adverse impact on historic assets and their settings. All proposals will be expected to protect and where appropriate enhance the character and appearance of the area in which they are located.” (Ref 1-7, p.79).

3.27 The alterations made to Policy CS16 in January 2015 are not relevant to this assessment.

Reading Borough Council Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) (Adopted October 2012, altered 27 January 2015) (Ref 1-8)

3.28 The SDPD was adopted following the Core Strategy and provides detailed policies to necessary for delivering the objectives of the Core Strategy. It is one of the documents which make up Reading’s Local Development Framework.

3.29 The SDPD provides further detail relating to Heritage Assets on pages 58-62, including listed buildings, conservation areas and other designated and undesignated assets. It refers to National planning policy for principles and guidance relating to development affecting the setting of heritage assets (9.1.8). It notes that “The setting of a building or place can make a significant contribution to and form an integral part of the character of all heritage assets. [...] National planning policy confirms that the setting of all heritage assets is a material consideration and the alteration or destruction of any part of its setting should require clear and convincing justification” (9.1.12).

3.30 It is noted at paragraph 11.1.1 that design issues are not addressed in the SDPD and that the most important design principles applicable to all types of development are set out in Core Strategy Policy CS7. The Station Hill Site is not included in the Site Policies part of the SDPD.

Reading Central Area Action Plan to 2026 (January 2009) (Ref 1-9)

3.31 The Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) is one part of the Local Development Framework for the Reading and is a Development Plan Document (DPD). It should be read alongside the Core Strategy, which is the most important of the DPDs. The role of the RCAAP is to establish specific planning policies for central Reading, an area where significant intervention.

3.32 The RCAAP sets out three Major Opportunity Areas (MOA) in Reading. The Site is located within the Station/River Major Opportunity Area, the vision for this area is as follows:

“The station/river area will be a flagship scheme, extending the centre and providing a mixed use destination in itself and centred on a redeveloped station and new public transport interchange. It will integrate the transport links and areas northwards towards the river and into the heart of the centre.” (Ref 1-9, p.21)

3.33 Policy RC1: Development in the Station/River Major Opportunity Area will ensure that development in the MOA will:

- “i) Contribute towards providing a high density mix of uses to create a destination in itself – the areas that also make up part of the primary shopping area and central core will have a particular emphasis on delivering much of the identified retail and leisure need;
- ii) Help facilitate greater pedestrian and cycle permeability, particularly on

	the key movement corridors. North-south links through the centre and across the railway line, IDR and River Thames centred on the new station are of particular importance; iii) Provide developments that front onto and provide visual interest to existing and future pedestrian routes and open spaces; iv) Safeguard land which is needed for: • Improvements to Reading station; • Reading station interchange; • Mass rapid transit routes and stops; v) Provide additional areas of open space where possible, including a direct green link between the station and the River Thames; vi) Give careful consideration to the areas of transition to low and medium density residential and protect and, where appropriate, enhance the setting of listed buildings; vii) Be laid out in a way that allows the area to come forward in parcels – for instance, single developments should not be solely inwards-facing, ignoring the links with other potential future development areas.” (Ref 1-9, p.22)	a. Development will build on and respect the existing grid layout structure of the central area, providing continuity and enclosure through appropriate relationships between buildings and spaces, and frontages that engage with the street at lower levels, and contributing towards enhanced ease of movement through and around the central area; b. Development will provide appropriate, well designed public spaces and other public realm, including squares, open spaces, streetscape, utilising high quality and well-maintained hard and soft landscape, public art, that provide suitable functions and interest, sense of place and safe and convenient linkages to adjoining areas; c. The architectural details and materials used in the central area should be high quality and respect the form and quality of the detailing and materials in areas local to the development site; d. Development and any associated public realm should contribute to the diversity of the central area, be capable of easy adaptation over time to meet changing circumstances, and be designed to enhance community safety.” (Ref 1-9, p.38)
3.34	The MOA is divided into sub-areas, each of which has its own character and development provisions. The Site has frontages in three of the sub-areas defined in the policy: “RC1a, FRIAR STREET & STATION ROAD: There will be active retail and leisure uses on the ground floor along Friar Street and Station Road, with a mix of uses on higher floors. Development should enhance linkages in a north-south direction to link to the Station Hill area. The setting of listed buildings in the area will be preserved, and opportunities to improve the environment of Merchants Place will be sought. RC1b, FRIARS WALK & GREYFRIARS ROAD: Development in this area will be of a mixed use with a significant leisure element. Active retail and leisure uses will be on the ground floor, particularly along Friar Street, with a mix of uses on higher floors. Development should enhance linkages in a north-south direction at a single level into the Station Hill area and through to the station. The edge of the site nearest to the areas of traditional terracing west of Greyfriars Road will require careful design treatment. RC1c, STATION HILL: This area will be developed for a mix of uses at a high density, including retail and leisure on the ground and lower floors and residential and offices on higher floors. There will be enhanced links through the sites, and a network of streets and spaces. Frontages on key routes through the site should have active uses. The edge of the site nearest to the areas of traditional terracing west of Greyfriars Road will require careful design treatment.”	3.36 Policy RC13: Tall Buildings defines tall buildings in Reading as “10 storeys of commercial floorspace or 12 storeys of residential (equating to 36 metres tall) or above.” (Ref 1-9, p.49). In general all tall building proposals “should be of excellent design and architectural quality” (Ref 1-9, p.50) and meet the following criteria: • “Enhance Reading’s skyline, through a distinctive profile and careful design of the upper and middle sections of the building; • Contribute to a human scale street environment, through paying careful attention to the lower section or base of the building, providing rich architectural detailing and reflecting their surroundings through the definition of any upper storey setback and reinforcing the articulation of the streetscape; • Contribute to high-quality views from distance, views from middle-distance and local views; • Take account of the context within which they sit, including the existing urban grain, streetscape and built form and local architectural style; • Avoid bulky, over-dominant massing; • Preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the setting of conservation areas and listed buildings; • Use high quality materials and finishes; • Create safe, pleasant and attractive spaces around them, and avoid detrimental impacts on the existing public realm...” (Ref 1-9, p.50)
3.35	Policy RC5: Design in the Centre aims to ensure high-quality urban design in the centre by expecting development proposals to demonstrate the following attributes:	3.37 The Site lies in one of the sub-areas defined in the Policy RC13 as being appropriate for tall buildings, specifically in the ‘Station Area Cluster’. RC13a Station Area Cluster relates to this sub-area: “A new cluster of tall buildings with the station at its heart will signify the status of the station area as a major mixed-use destination and the main gateway to, and most accessible part of, Reading. Tall buildings in this area should:

	• Be located at the centre of the cluster, close to the station, and step down in height from that point towards the lower buildings at the fringes; • Contribute to the creation of a coherent, attractive and sustainable cluster of buildings with a high quality of public realm; • Ensure that adequate space is provided between the buildings to avoid the creation of an overly dense townscape and to allow buildings to be viewed as individual forms; • Be designed to fit within a wider planning framework or master plan for the area, which allows separate parcels of land to come forward at different times in a co-ordinated manner.” (Ref 1-9, p.49)
3.38	The elements of a tall building’s design will be viewed differently from different distances. From longer distances the overall massing and proportions are most significant; from mid-distances the composition and detail of the building becomes more important as well as the articulation of elevations. For local views the building’s base and its relationship to its immediate setting is important. The Council expects all of these aspects to be taken into account when designing such a building. “There are some key panoramic views of the central area that tall buildings should make a positive contribution to. These include the views of the central area from Balmore Park, Caversham Park, Kings Meadow, Reading Bridge, and from Oxford Road to the west of the centre, and Wokingham Road to the east.” (Ref 1-9, p.52) Reading Station Area Framework (December 2010) (Ref 1-10)
3.39	The Reading Station Area Framework (RSAF) is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which sets out principles and guidelines for development around the station, focusing particularly on the northern area. It supplements the RCAAP, the relevant parts of which are summarised above, which allocated this area for development.
3.40	Chapter 6 of the RSAF set out principles for the density, mass and height of buildings in the area. Building height and massing in the wider central Reading area are addressed in the RCAAP, particularly policies RC1-3 and RC13 (RC1 and RC13 are relevant to the Site and are summarised above). The guidance set out in the RSAF interprets and applies the policies of the RCAAP.
3.41	The majority of the Station Area has been defined as an area suitable for tall buildings. In order to come to this conclusion a series of height, massing and sectional studies were undertaken by the Council. These studies form the basis of the RSAF’s guidance on density, mass and scale. The RSAF requires development in the Station Area to be characterised by “high density development with an intense, fine grained urban fabric framing flexible development plots capable of adaptation to many land uses, combinations of land uses (vertical and horizontal) and many building types and forms.” (Ref 1-10, p. 34)

- 3.42
- The area close to the southern Station entrance has been earmarked as the location for the tallest buildings. Height here will landmark the station as an important place; it will also be complementary to the topography of the area. The formation of a cluster of tall buildings here will form a dramatic skyline in views from higher ground and open space to the north, southeast and southwest.
- 3.43
- The Station Area is situated close to the open space and nature of the Thames riverside. This area also has a unique built heritage, archaeological and architectural character. As a result the RSAF states that building heights “should have regard to the qualities of buildings and areas of architectural and historic interest and important views and prospects.” (Ref 1-10, p.35) The RSAF also requires a buffer zone between areas of particular historic value such as the core of the town and low-rise residential areas to the west and north. Here heights should step down so that they relate appropriately to surrounding development and residential areas.
- 3.44
- The RSAF expects all new buildings, whether or not they are situated within a conservation area or not, “to make a positive contribution to the area and they should conserve and where appropriate enhance the character or appearance of Conservation Areas and conserve the setting of listed buildings.” (Ref 1-10, p.35)
- 3.45
- Chapter 7 deals with Views around the Station Area and further afield, identifying key views and potential views. The views set out in this chapter are a combination of longer distance views, further than half a kilometre from the Station Area boundary, and shorter distance views. All of the views identified in this document were tested during the design process of the Proposed Development and a relevant short list agreed for assessment in this report with Planning Officers at RBC. These views are tabulated and assessed in section 6 below.
- 3.46
- Chapter 8 sets out the Urban Design Framework based on planning policy context, specifically Core Strategy Policy CS7 summarised at 3.25 above and RCAAP Policy RC5 summarised at 3.35 above. The key principles are to transform the area by:
 - “Integrating transport infrastructure with development;
 - Creating a mix of complementary land uses; and
 - Promoting high quality buildings, streets and spaces” (Ref 1-10, p.44)
- 3.47
- Chapter 12 considers the area’s historic landmarks. There are six heritage assets in the area covered by Policy RC1 of the RCAAP. However these are situated largely in the south eastern corner along Friars Street and Station Road, an area not proposed for major redevelopment. The RSAF recognises the Grade II listed Station building as one of Reading’s most important historic buildings. The listed station and its setting have been altered and listed building consent was obtained as part of the Reading Station Upgrades.
- 3.48
- The Site is not located within a conservation area; however Market Place Conservation Area is situated nearby. The policy that deals with heritage assets is set out in the NPPF (3.1-3.6) and the Core Strategy Policy CS33 (3.26).

- 3.49
- All the heritage assets potential impacted by the Proposed Development Site are identified and summarised in section 4 below and the impact on these heritage assets is assessed in section 6, the Views Assessment.

Station Hill South Planning and Urban Design Brief (March 2007) (Ref 1-11)
- 3.50
- The Station Hill South Planning and Urban Design Brief (SHSPUDB) has been prepared to provide specific urban design and planning guidance for the Station Hill South area of Reading. The document is formed around ten design principles:
 - “Establishing a clear character
 - Allowing for improved freedom of movement
 - Open space and landscape
 - Designing for tall buildings
 - Determining appropriate scale, height and massing
 - Active street frontage
 - Achieving mixed-use development
 - Incorporating high standards of sustainable design
 - Designing in safety and security
 - Demonstrating viable and flexible phasing” (Ref 1-11, p.9)Each principle is outlined in further detail in chapter 2 of document establishing clear objectives and design requirements for each. Principles 1 and 4 are of particular note.
- 3.51
- The key objectives for Principle 1. Establishing a clear character are:
 - To provide for quality landmark development, setting the benchmark for an outstanding architectural redevelopment of Reading Station and land to the North whilst respecting the built heritage which surrounds the study area.
 - The establishment of an accessible and legible transport interchange with clear links to a new MRT facility.
 - Secure a wider choice of safe pedestrian and cycle movement patterns.
 - The promotion of a mix of uses synonymous with a vibrant city quarter and an 18 hour economy.
 - The provision of streets that double as unrestricted visual corridors through the study area.
 - To allow for attractive, useable and accessible public open space.
 - To integrate public art into buildings, structures, streets and spaces” (Ref 1-11, p.10)
- 3.52
- The key objectives for Principle 4. Designing for tall buildings are:
 - “A cluster of city-scale tall buildings, designed as a ‘family’ with complementary roofscapes, detailing and material selection should emphasise the location of Reading Station and the Station Plaza.
 - The tallest buildings in the area covered by the brief should be close to the Station Plaza to provide a landmark. Figure 2.15 indicates a general gradation of building heights, which respect local scale in the south and west part of the brief area.

- A second landmark location is appropriate at the western end of the area covered by the brief, adjacent to the MRT stop. This should rise from a shoulder height set back along Greyfriars Road, to assist with the transition to the lower townscape to the west. This should be lower than the city-scale buildings adjacent to the Station plaza, but visible from Friar Street and Chatham Place.
 - Applications for tall buildings within the study area should take account of the CABE/English Heritage [sic] guidance relating to tall buildings.” (Ref 1-11, p.16)
- 3.53
- The SHSPUDB requires that tall buildings demonstrate design excellence make a positive contribution to the local and wider views and help create and interesting skyline. Tall buildings should have a positive relationship with other buildings, streets, public and private spaces, especially historic buildings. The impact of proposed tall buildings will be tested through a 360’ view analysis in accordance with the methodology set out by the IEMA and the Landscape Institute (Ref 1-1) and using viewpoints approved in discussion with the Council.
- Reading Tall Building Strategy (J anuary 2008) (Ref 1-12)*
- 3.54
- The Reading Tall Buildings Strategy (RTBS) was completed by Entec on behalf of Reading Borough Council in January 2008. The purpose of the strategy is to guide the development of tall buildings in central Reading. The Strategy complements the RCAAP and will inform future tall building policy in Reading.
- 3.55
- The RTBS is formed of a baseline review and analysis of the current conditions in central Reading in terms of townscape, topography, visual context and historic assets and conservation. It goes on to identify character areas and defines the locations where tall buildings would be preferred. An appendix to the document contains a thorough baseline views analysis. Relevant views were adopted in the Reading Station Area Framework (2010) (Ref 1-10) described above and assessment of the views provided in the Tall Building Strategy is cited where relevant in the Views Assessment (section 6) below.

Chapter 4

BASELINE

CONDITIONS

Introduction

- 4.1
- Reading is widely thought of as the capital of the Thames Valley. The Borough covers 40,000 hectares and, apart from the River Thames and River Kennet, which flow through the borough, the area is mainly urban in character. Over the last 20 years the town has experienced great economic pressures to grow and develop, changing this once market town to a vibrant urban centre. Its railway station is a key hub in the national rail network and is the UK’s second busiest interchange outside of London with more than 15 million passengers passing through each year.
- 4.2
- The character of Reading’s built environment is varied and complex; Reading has a great heritage of historic buildings, spaces and waterways. The historic centre is based around a 12th century Abbey and a Victorian Town Hall. This diversifies out into post-war residential areas and industrial estates, to a modern business location, characterised by the office buildings in the city centre and business parks in the south west. Reading has over 880 listed buildings, thirteen conservation areas, and two scheduled ancient monuments.
- 4.3
- The rate and scale of development in Reading over the past 15 years has changed dramatically. This has led to the transformation of the centre and the South-West area.

History of the Site and surrounding area

- 4.4
- Reading is named after the Saxon tribe, Readingas, who settled in the area in the 6th century, though archaeological evidence to suggest Roman occupation. Reading was stormed and occupied by the Danes in 870-71 (Ref 1-13). In 1121 Henry I founded Reading Abbey; this later became one of the richest religious houses in England until the Dissolution in 1539. The remains of the abbey church now lie under the present Forbury Garden and Abbots’ Walk. Also dating from the 12th century is St Laurence’s Church, which originally had its outer abbey gate attached to its south flank. In 1189 the Hospitium of St John Baptist, a flint building located in the churchyard of St Laurence’s, was founded.
- 4.5
- There were three other churches in medieval Reading: St Giles, which is in the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area, St Mary’s, which is in the St Mary’s Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area and Greyfriars Church on Friar Street, altered and extended in the 19th century (Ref 1-13). During the Reformation, St Laurence’s, St Mary’s and St Giles’s were all stripped of their altars, statues, stained glass, and other finery and Greyfriars became the town lock-up in the 18th century.
- 4.6
- Reading quickly developed during the medieval period. Its location, close to the crossroads of a number of major historic routes and the

River Kennet and the River Thames, was an important factor in this growth. Equally, this was bolstered by its manufacture of woollen cloth, leather goods and silk weaving. In 1560 Elizabeth I confirmed a royal charter giving Reading greater powers of self-government. However, during 1642-51, the economy of the town was badly damaged by the Civil War (Ref 1-14).

- 4.7
- From the mid-18th century onwards, Reading became an important layover between Bath and London. Local inns thrived and a regular public coach service began in 1780. New industries also developed, including brewing, brick and tile making, iron-founding, and boat building. In 1786 a new Town Hall was built. During the beginning of the 19th century, the town began to extend beyond its medieval core. This new expansion was stimulated by the development of the Kennet Canal, completed 1723, and the Kennet and Avon Canal in 1810 (Ref 1-14). A large extension was added to the Town Hall in 1875 with a prominent clock tower.
- 4.8
- The construction of the Great Western Railway provided a further boost to Reading’s economy. Its arrival in the town in 1840 saw a rapid growth of a number of major industries. The first national census, in 1801, recorded that the population of Reading was about 9,400. By 1851 it had more than doubled and by the beginning of the 19th century it was around 72,000 (Ref 1-14). The OS map of 1879, fig 8.12 in Appendix 8 of the ES already shows the vast area of the railway and station at Reading, the northern half of the Site consists of mainly open space with a copse of trees.
- 4.9
- The 20th century saw further dramatic changes in the town. In the mid-20th century, the town centre was redeveloped, removing large parts of the historic core to be replaced by shopping and office facilities. In addition, the construction of the Inner Distribution Road in 1969 attempted to improve traffic circulation (Ref 1-14). This route cut across historic routes into and across the centre, isolating parts of the townscape. Buildings begin to encroach onto the north half of the site through the first half of the 20th century, leaving only one segment undeveloped by 1957, which contained a car park (see historic maps figs. 8.12-8.23 in Appendix 8 of the ES).

The existing buildings on and near to the Site

- 4.10
- The Site consists of low quality spaces and buildings which largely date to the 1970s. The majority of the buildings are unoccupied and in poor condition and none are of architectural or historic merit. Some of the buildings on Site have now been demolished (June 2015), however, the ‘baseline’ scenario considered in this report is that of the Site as it was prior to all demolition works.

- 4.11
- The Site has an important location just south of Reading Station and just north of the main shopping area. Building heights in the area vary from three to seventeen storeys and the townscape character of buildings close to the Site is generally of low value, although there are some historic buildings which are listed.
- 4.12
- In the close locality, the Site is most visible from the north when arriving by train. Views from the south and into the Site are restricted by the topography of the area. In the wider area, the Site can be seen from open spaces and elevated vantage points.
- 4.13
- The Site contains no listed buildings and does not lie in a designated conservation area. The Market Place/ London Street Conservation Area is situated to the east of the Site and St Mary’s Butt’s/Castle Street Conservation Area is situated to the southwest. There are also other conservation areas in the wider surrounding area.
- 4.14
- The nearest listed building is adjacent to the south side of the Site, 39 Friar Street, listed at Grade II. To the north of the Site is the Grade II listed Station building; the Station and associated structures have recently undergone significant redevelopment works, including the construction of a large bridge which is visible in some of the views assessed below.

Designated Heritage Assets

Conservation Areas

- 4.15
- The development and special interest of the two Conservation Areas within the local area are described below. Conservation Areas in the wider area are considered in relation to specific views in section 6 where relevant.

Market Place/London Street Conservation Area

- 4.16
- The Market Place/London Street Conservation Area, located in central Reading, was first designated in 1972 and later extended in 1982. The Conservation Area Appraisal was published in 2007 (Ref 1-13). The following description of the history and special interest of the Conservation Area is based on the Appraisal (Ref 1-14).
- 4.17
- Although there is evidence of Roman settlement in the conservation area, the principle phase of historic development came in the 12th century with the construction of Reading Abbey which lies just to the east of the conservation area. St Laurence’s Church was the former gatehouse of the Abbey.
- 4.18
- Through the medieval and Tudor periods, the town flourished as a manufacturing centre and then in the 18th century as an important resting place on the route from London to Bath.

- 4.19
- The town then expanded rapidly beyond its medieval core in the 19th century following the construction of the Kennet Canal in 1810 and the Great Western Railway in 1840.
- 4.20
- The 20th century saw a large amount of redevelopment in the historic core and the construction of large traffic routes through the centre.
- 4.21
- The character of the conservation area is generally of a tight-knit urban grain with streets which have continuous frontages. The scale, however, is more domestic varying between two and four storeys.
- 4.22
- There are a few key open spaces, notably a broad pedestrianised space in front of the Town Hall and St Laurence’s Church, which is “based on the medieval market place and forecourt of a former gateway to the Abbey, [and] provides a good setting for the area’s historic buildings”. Other open spaces are the graveyards of both the two churches in the conservation area. The river Kennet flows across the south of the conservation area parallel to “a wide, characterless dual-carriageway that completely disrupts the historic street pattern” (Ref 1-14).
- 4.23
- The Appraisal identifies three key landmarks: the tower of St Laurence’s, the spire of St Giles’ and the clock tower of the Town Hall. These three landmarks all feature in long distance views both within and outside the Conservation Area.
- 4.24
- The Conservation Area is subdivided into four character areas. Character Area 4: Market Place and environs of St Laurence’s Church and Town Hall is the closest to the Site. This part of the Conservation Area lies just to the west of the main precinct of Reading Abbey and accommodates the Town Hall and St Laurence Church which bound the pedestrianised Market Place.
- 4.25
- The Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal identifies a number of positive features and areas of special interest of Character Area 4:
- “The close proximity of St Laurence’s Church and Town Hall buildings makes a strong architectural statement;
 - St Laurence’s Church and distinctive tower;
 - The large public open space (part-pedestrianised) composed of Market Place and the area around the statue of Queen Victoria;
 - Town Hall complex comprising Victoria Hall, Concert Hall, Town Hall and Museum, Library and Art Gallery;
 - The collection of historic buildings looking onto Market Place;
 - The monument in Market Place, designed by Sir John Soane in 1804 to commemorate Edward Simeon a mayor of Reading and Governor of the Bank of England, and the statue of Queen Victoria;
 - Good views of Town Hall clock tower and the tower of St Laurence’s Church;
 - Trees, greenery and open space of St Laurence’s churchyard;
 - Trees in the public realm which soften the harsh urban townscape;
 - Natural stone kerbs” (Ref 1-14, p.16).

St Mary’s Butt’s/Castle Street Conservation Area

- 4.26
- The St Mary’s Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area was designated by Reading in 1972 and the Conservation Area Appraisal was published in March 2008 (Ref 1-15). The following description of the history and special interest of the Conservation Area is based on the Appraisal.
- 4.27
- This Conservation Area incorporates the original core of Reading, which was early Saxon, before the founding of the Abbey after the Norman Conquest which moved the centre of the town, and the market place, north-eastwards. The original core lay at the cross-roads of two roads, running north-south and east-west. It would have been a busy centre in Saxon and medieval times with St Mary’s Church and several public houses at the junction.
- 4.28
- The special interest of the conservation area is derived from the following features:
- “Its position at the Saxon centre of Reading at a cross-roads of the main east-west and north-south routes through the town, just north of an original crossing point across the River Kennet, upon which river the town grew.
 - Grade I listed Church of St Mary in St Mary’s Butts, a Reading landmark, originally Norman, and mentioned in the Domesday Book, but now mostly Medieval in origin, which is the focal building of the Conservation Area.
 - St Mary’s Churchyard, an important open space in the centre of town. Other important landmark buildings including the Grade II* listed St Mary’s Church in Castle Street.
 - The architectural and historic interest of the area’s other buildings, with examples dating from the sixteenth century to the present day, but the majority of which show a coherence of scale within their various architectural styles.
 - The presence of some of the oldest surviving buildings in Reading, including 3 existing public houses (“The Allied Arms”, “The Horn” and “The Sun”) dating from the 16th and 17th centuries, and the former “Shades” public house at 15 Gun Street dating from the 17th century. “The Sun” is also reputed to be on the site of the former Reading Gaol.
 - Important Grade II* listed buildings at 15 and 17 Castle Street (both 16th century), 19 Castle Street (early 18th century), 63 Castle Street (circa 1750) and the Church of St Mary, Castle Street (1798).
 - 35-37 St Mary’s Butts (“County Delicacies”) and 57 St Mary’s Butts (“The Allied Arms”), which also date from the 16th century.
 - The Queen Victoria Jubilee Fountain in St Mary’s Butts, a local landmark.
 - The Grade II* listed Holy Brook Culvert to the rear of numbers 1-31(odd) Castle Street, plus the remainder of the Holy Brook which links the rear of the properties on the south side of the conservation area.
 - A high percentage of listed buildings, listed individually and for their group value, dating from before 1875.” (Ref 1-15, p.4)
- 4.29
- In general, the Conservation Area retains its medieval scale and appearance in part, with buildings from the 16th to 19th century, as well as a small
- 18
- Tavernor

cityscape

number of modern buildings. Buildings in the Conservation Area tend to be 2-3 storeys. It has a tightly knit urban grain that is a remnant of the medieval street pattern, which is still largely intact. The widest thoroughfares are St Mary's Butts and Castle Street, those leading to the original crossroads. The most significant changes to the street pattern and urban grain occurred in the 1970s with the construction of the Inner Distribution Road to the west of the Conservation Area. There is one large open space in the conservation area: the churchyard of St Mary's.

Listed buildings

4.30 There are no listed buildings on Site, however there are a number of listed buildings in the close vicinity, the setting of which may be affected by the proposals. These listed buildings and their significance are described in the following paragraphs based on their entries on The National Heritage List for England (Ref 1-16). Listed buildings in the wider area are considered in relation to specific views in section 6 where relevant.

Station Hill, Main building of Reading General Station – Grade II

4.31 The original station building was the work of Isambard Kingdom Brunel in c1840; the current building was an enlargement and remodel of the original carried out by architect Mr Lane (Chief Engineer of the GWR Co) between 1865 and 1867. The station is a two storey, ten bay symmetrical building in buff brick from Coalbrookdale with Bath stone dressings, rusticated quoins with Italianate details. The central four bays project forward. The top of the building is ornamented with a frieze, moulded cornice and blocking course, the projecting centre has console brackets to the cornice and the block course rising into a solid pediment. The first floor windows are all squared sashes. Those in the two wings are topped with cornices on console brackets and those in the projecting centre section have either triangular or segmental pediments, again supported on consoles. At the ground floor, the centre projecting section has a guilloche frieze and panelled pilasters flank the windows and doorways. There is a canopy above the ground floor. Above the hipped roof rises a central cupola with pyramidal bracketed roof, round headed windows and clock faces on each side.

The Statue of King Edward VII – Grade II

4.32 This statue was erected in 1902 to commemorate the coronation of King Edward VII. The large bronze statue was the work of sculptor George Edward Wade and depicts the King in his Coronation robes. It is mounted on a highly polished granite plinth with Ionic corner scroll balusters and re-entrant cornice.

Great Western House – Grade II

4.33 This building was previously listed as the Former Great Western Hotel and is one of the first railway hotels in Britain. It dates from 1844 and is in the Italianate style, it has similarities with the Royal Station Hotel

in Slough, by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, suggesting that he or one of his assistants was also the architect of this building. The building is three storeys in height plus a basement below and dormered mansard roof above. It is five bays wide to Station Road, the principal elevation and three to Forbury Road, the building is fully stuccoed with rusticated quoins and channelled ground floor. At ground floor, the bays are divided by pilasters supporting an entablature and boldly projecting modillion cornice. On Station Road, the central bay has a projecting Doric portico supported on paired columns and topped with a balustrade balcony. The windows are all sashes with architraves. Those on the first floor have balustrade Juliet balconies, frieze and cornice and the centre has a pediment. Above the second floor is a heavy, bracketed cornice. There is a two-bay canted extension to the south in matching style and a five bay modern extension beyond. The Forbury Road elevation is very similar; the central bay has a bowed three-light bay with cornice over at ground floor. A further four storey, three window extension is to the east, with carriage entry to the left side in a similar style.

Nos. 13 and 15 Station Road - Grade II

4.34 This pair of terraced buildings date from c1903 and were the work of Joseph Morris. Morris used an exuberant blend of Baroque, Art Nouveau and Flemish styles for this elaborate building. It is three storeys high plus attic and is two bays wide, one for each building. Each bay is topped with an enriched crows stepped gable, the one to No. 13 to the left much larger than that of No.15. The façade is principally red and yellow glazed bricks with details in pale terracotta. The windows are tripartite sashes, with a bracketed, canted bay window to the second floor of No. 13 and arched window to the first floor. The ground floors contain a modern shop front.

Greyfriars Church – Grade I

4.35 Greyfriars is a Church of England church and was first constructed from 1285 onwards and was complete by 1311. This was the second church of this name, the first, constructed between 1255 and 1259 was considered to be unsatisfactory. The church became the town bridewell, another name for a lock-up, in the 18th century but was restored to its original use in around 1863 following work by the Borough Surveyor W H Woodmn. The original church is built using squared knapped flints with stone plinths, dressings and buttresses. The tiled roof sweeps down over the aisles with small vents. The nave has three bays and a large transept, added by Woodman. The chancel was removed after the Reformation and so the east chancel arch is blocked up. Above this arch, the gable is topped with a triple arched belfry, added by Woodman. The windows are all pointed arches with three, four and five light variants and with tracery. The crown post, wind-braced roof structure is visible internally and the internal features date from the church's restoration in the 19th century. A modern single storey flat roofed extension has been added wrapping around the west and north sides. This church is thought to be the most complete surviving example of Franciscan- architecture in England (Ref 1-17).

The Mitre Inn – Grade II

4.36 This public house dates from c1800, but may be earlier and it has been much altered. It is three storeys in height and constructed using brick which has been painted with colour wash. The building has a projecting cornice and parapet above. The principal elevation is to West Street and is five bays wide. The windows are sash windows, not all of which are original. On the second floor, the windows are squared and the outer two openings have been blocked. To the first floor the windows are segmental arched. The ground floor has late 19th century segmental arched windows with bracket keystones and central entrance with corbelled cornice, open pediment and carved decoration. The Friar Street return is one bay wide and in the same style as the front. An additional small single storey one bay extension, with a pitched roof with a dormer, contains a late 19th century shopfront.

Quadrant walls and railings to former No 64 (Greyfriars Vicarage) – Grade II

4.37 The Greyfriars Church Vicarage has long been demolished but it, and so probably the surrounding walls and railings, were the work of John Soane. They date from between c1796-1808. The garden walls are quadrant shaped and are built in red brick. There are two arched garden doors off Friar Street with plastered tympana. These walls are linked by cast iron spearhead railings with fluted columns standards capped by urns. There is also a central set of stairs, leading up to the present doorway with an original foot scraper to the left side.

No. 39 Friar Street – Grade II

4.38 This simple terraced building dates from the 18th century. It is three storeys in height and is four bays wide and built using red brick. The windows are nine over nine sashes under flat brick arches and there is a brick parapet above the second floor. The ground floor has a modern shop front inserted.

No. 147 Friar Street – Grade II

4.39 No. 147 is a commercial building which dates from around the 1880s. It is three storeys in height with gabled attic dormers and is constructed using brick but painted in white with black details. The Friar Street façade, the main commercial frontage, with two storey shop front, is the main area of special interest of this building. The first floor is the most striking with four depressed arches under a cornice and fascia with outer pilasters and dividing fluted Corinthian columns. The ground floor below has a similar pattern of supports and with a deeply recessed entrance. The second floor has three pairs of sash windows. The dormered gables have segmental arches, the central one wider than the outer two. The central one has a pair of sash windows and the outer two have a single window.

Nos. 1-31 and 2-32 Queen Victoria Street, nos. 148, 149 & 150 Friar Street and nos. 24-28 and 35-38 Broad Street – Grade II

4.40 This group of commercial buildings date, centring along Queen Victoria Street and with returns to both Friar Street and Broad Street, date from

c1894 and are probably the work of Joseph Morris. The street front is uniformly three storeys in height, plus attic gables and is clad in yellow brick and red terracotta. The ground floor houses modern shop fronts, though one pre-war shop front does remain as does the bracketed cornice band. The first and second floors have an irregular rhythm of slightly canted bays and flat bays, with the bays being divided by Ionic pilasters. The flat bays have architraved sash windows and the canted bays have mullioned and transomed windows. Above the second floor is a heavy, dentilled cornice and each bay is topped with a gable containing a window with pilaster surrounds and invariably finished with a broken pediment. The returns to Broad Street are much larger than those to Friar Street, all are in a similar style.

No. 154 Friar Street – Grade II

- 4.41
- No. 154 was originally part of a pair with no.153, which is too altered to be listed, it dates from c1800. The building is three storeys in height and constructed using red brick with a stone sill above the ground floor and coping to the parapet. It is two bays wide with squared sash windows under red brick lintels and a modern shop front at ground floor level.

No. 15 Friar Street – Grade II

- 4.42
- This building dates from the late 18th century with shopfronts and central arcade inserted into the ground floor in the 1920s. The principle elevation is three storeys in height with two dormers in the attic roof and four windows wide. It is constructed in red brick with a simple bracketed stone cornice and parapet. The windows are all squared sashes. The 1920s shopfronts, with a central entrance to the Harris Arcade, have a joint cornice, panelled fascia and side pilasters. This house was the birth place of Professor Goldwin Smith, who is of local notoriety.

No. 14 Friar Street – Grade II

- 4.43
- This early to mid-18th century terraced building has possibly been rebuilt. It is three storeys in height and two windows wide and built using a combination of silver grey and red brick. The windows, all of contain modern frames, have cambered arches. There is no decoration to the façade but there is a high, plain parapet. A modern shopfront has been inserted in the ground floor. It has primarily included for its group value with its neighbours.

No. 13 Friar Street – Grade II

- 4.44
- No. 13 Friar Street dates from the mid-18th century and consists of two narrow bays and is three storeys in height. The elevation is an equal combination of silver grey brick headers and red brick dressings, with a tiled roof and modern shopfront inserted at ground floor level. The first floor windows have segmental heads and squared at the second floor, all are sashes. Further decoration includes a brick band above the first floor windows, a block brick cornice and parapet. It has primarily included for its group value with its neighbours.

No. 12 Friar Street – Grade II

- 4.45
- This building forms a pair with no. 11 described above but it is around one hundred years older dating from the early to mid-19th century. It is a duplicate of No.11 at three storeys in height with mansard roof and four windows wide. The façade is a combination of the same details as No.11; silver grey headers with red brick dressings and moulded brick cornice and projecting string above the first floor. A modern shop front has been inserted at ground floor level and two modern dormers have been added in the mansard. The windows are flush-framed sash windows, giving a slightly different façade character to its neighbour.

No. 11 Friar Street – Grade II

- 4.46
- No. 11 is an end of terrace brick building from the early to mid-18th century and forms a pair with No.12 described above. The building is three storeys with an attic in the mansard roof above, hidden behind a parapet and with two, three-light dormers. The building is four windows wide, all of which are inset sash windows and with a modern shop front inserted into the ground floor. The façade has a decorative combination of silver grey brick headers and red brick dressings with a moulded brick cornice and projecting string course above the first floor.

Chapter 5

VISUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

- 5.1 The Proposed Development consists of the SH3 Scheme and the amendments proposed to Plot E which are the subject of this planning application. The subject of the ES is the entire Proposed Development since the proposals for Plot E would not be built out without the rest of the SH3 scheme.
- 5.2 The SH3 Scheme is described in detail in the Development Specification and Framework (DSF), the Design and Access Statement and the Design Codes documents which formed part of the planning application in 2013. The present proposals for Plot E are described in the Design and Access Statement for Plot E and Telecom House. Aspects of the design of the Proposed Development relevant to this assessment are described in the following paragraphs.
- 5.3 Overall, the Proposed Development has been conceived as a high density development which includes offices, residences, retail and leisure uses and has been designed to meet the following key objectives:
- to set out clear and legible design parameters for the site that ensure that the development connects well to the areas of the town adjacent to it;
 - to encourage quality design both for the buildings and for the public spaces;
 - to subdivide the parcels of land within the site so that they can be delivered in realistic phases;
 - to integrate the public transportation interchange to stimulate its regular use;
 - to produce a comfortable environment balanced between residential and commercial uses; and
 - to add a new civic square for Reading.
- 5.4 The description in the following paragraphs is the same as section 5 of the 2013 ES, with reference to Plot E only updated. Plot E is the only part of the Proposed Development which has been altered since 2013. The Reserved Matters Application for Plot B is considered within the Cumulative Assessment in section 6 below; it does not form part of the Proposed Development because it is not yet consented.

Routes and spaces

- 5.5 The Site is situated to the west of Station Road, which is intended to remain the most direct route between the train station and the town centre. The Proposed Development will provide alternative pedestrian routes from the station to improve the permeability of the area. It will include two new routes across the Site, one running east-west

connecting the station to Greyfriars Road to the west and a major route running north-south to connect the new Station Hill bus interchange and station with Friar Street to the south.

- 5.6 At its northeast corner, the Site incorporates part of Station Square, which is currently being refurbished alongside the creation of a new bus interchange and taxi drop-off on its west side. The southeast corner of Station Square is formed jointly by this site and the adjoining Thames Tower site (which is currently under construction and shown in the Future Baseline views in section 6). The design team has therefore worked closely with RBC and the Thames Tower project team to discuss the accessibility of the space and the appearance and finishes that will give it its new character. A coordinated approach to paving pattern and materials has been sought. A design feature of a ‘bosque’ of trees has been discussed for the centre of the space (outside the application boundary for the Proposed Development), to create a focal point for the space whilst allowing for a large pedestrian flow through the space. Specific rules have been included within the Public Realm Design Codes to ensure both of these approaches are delivered within any future reserved matters application.

- 5.7 Central Square will be at the heart of the site and fronted by the buildings on Plots B, C, D and G. It will be located at the intersection of the north-south route from the new bus interchange to Friar Street and the east-west route from the station to Greyfriars Road. Careful consideration has been paid to the size, orientation and the relationship of the space to the buildings adjacent in order to create a space that will be functional and welcoming to office workers and visitors. The parameter plans set minimum dimensions for this and all spaces within the proposals which must be achieved in future detailed proposals. In addition, key aspects of the landscape proposals – trees, furniture, and features – are set out in the Public Realm Design Codes.

- 5.8 The Arcade Walk will provide a new east-west link from Station Square to Central Square. It will be between Plot C, to the north, and Plot G, to the south. Plot G contains the retained Multi Storey Car Park (MSCP) and its north side will have retail units to bring activity to both sides of the arcade. It will be a narrow, busy retail space, enclosed by a roof to provide shelter from the elements, and its linear route will allow views in both directions to the newly landscaped public spaces which it connects.

- 5.9 Friar’s Walk will be a new pedestrian route linking the new Central Square in the north to Friar Street in the south. There is a significant level difference across the route of c.5m which will be addressed by a combination of Part M compliant ramps and steps. Retail units will also line this route to encourage activity all the way along it and to draw pedestrians through the site.

5.10 At street level, consideration has been given to the appropriate location of active retail frontages and office and residential entrances, in order to make the new public routes and spaces safe and welcoming. The majority of the length of the north-south route between the bus interchange and Friar Street and part of the east-west route between the Central Square and Station Square will have active uses (specified in the DSF). The ground floor on both sides of Garrard Street will have some active use, in the form of retail spaces and office and residential entrances.

Temporary Events Space

5.11 An Interim Condition of the Proposed Development is a multi-functional events space which is the subject of a separate planning application which gained approval in January 2014. It will replace the Station Hill retail parade that was present on Site prior to the recent demolition works (June 2015). It will be temporary, constructed pending the redevelopment of the wider Site which will be delivered over a number of years. It will comprise an area of approximately 1,096sqm within the western side of the space and a raised lawn area on the east. It will be simply landscaped with hard and soft surfaces, providing a versatile and flexible location that will be a useable public space when events are not taking place. A panel will be mounted along its western boundary to mask the lower floors of Thames Tower and the construction works for the permanent Proposed Development on the rest of the Site. Full details relating to the design of the proposals and access arrangements are included within the Design and Access Statement supporting that application.

[Cityscape – please insert A+M masterplan diagram with plot labels near here + title it: Figure 1: Plan of Parameter Plots]

Building use, height and mass

5.12 The Site includes seven building plots, labelled A to G on the plan on the previous page organised around the new public routes and spaces. The larger building plots to the north of Garrard Street (A, B, C, D and G) contain commercial development and the plots to the south (E and F) have residential apartments. Car parking would be provided within the refurbished existing MSCP car park (in Plot G) and the amended proposal for Plot E allows for the possibility of up to a further 200 spaces on Plot E. Leisure use is allocated to the roof of Plot G in the form of a multi-sports pitch, which will also provide animation to the roof when viewed from the upper levels of surrounding development. A further quantum of potential leisure use has been allocated to Plot F.

5.13 The proposed massing has followed the principles set out by RBC in the Station Hill South Planning Urban Design Brief (SHSPUDB) (Ref 1-10). The building masses will appear stepped, rising from the southwest of

the site, and the residential areas just beyond that corner, up to mark the station at the northeast of the site. Careful consideration has been paid to the profile of each plot, the size and proportion of the pavilion elements and the treatment of the facades of each plot to ensure that an appropriate massing profile can be achieved overall and in relation to the adjacent redeveloped Thames Tower in particular.

5.14 Due to the phased approach to the SH3 Scheme, it is necessary to maintain some flexibility to the footprint of each plot to ensure individual plots can be adapted over time if market forces dictate. As a result, limits of deviation (‘LOD’s) were set out in Parameter Plan 3 of the 2013 application that allowed for varying degrees of flexibility to the various boundaries of each plot. It should be noted that, whilst individual plots may be afforded limited flexibility, the minimum dimensions for the public realm as set out in Parameter Plan 4 need to be maintained, i.e. if one plot gets bigger there will be a net reduction in size on an adjacent plot in order to achieve the minimum public realm dimension.

5.15 This report considers the maximum and minimum parameters for each plot in the Proposed Views in section 6 and makes an assessment of the overall skyline profile of the Proposed Development and the relationships of the different building masses based on those verified views. Plot C is the tallest building plot (128m AOD maximum/ 109m AOD minimum), with Plots B and A stepping down from C to the west (Plot B: 121m AOD/94m AOD and Plot A: 91m AOD/ 67m AOD). To the south of C, G is lower still (83m AOD/ 72m AOD) and Plot D is 105m AOD/ 75m AOD. On the part of the site leading south from Garrard Street, Plot E is 85m AOD/ 63m AOD and F is 85m AOD/ 66m AOD.

5.16 The proposed amendments to Plot E entail extending the breadth of the plot westwards. The stepped form of the maximum and minimum parameters – stepping down from north to south – for the plot remain the same: 85m/63m on Garrard Street and 73m/63m on Friar Street. 63m equates to approximately ground plus five storeys, 73m to ground plus seven storeys and 85m to ground plus ten storeys. This range of heights also allows for a significant slope in ground level, of 5.5m rising upwards from Garrard Street to Friar Street.

Building appearance

5.17 The Illustrative Scheme is not represented in the views in section 6 below but is described and illustrated in the Design and Access Statement. In discussion with RBC Planning Officers, both a Maximum Illustrative Scheme and a Minimum Illustrative Scheme were developed during the design process to find an appropriate massing profile for each plot, and from this exercise the maximum and minimum overall quantum of area were extrapolated.

5.18 For this planning application, Allies + Morrison Architects have developed an Illustrative Scheme that is set lower than the maximum parameter heights and higher than the minimum parameter heights, and includes some articulation at roof level. The general principle and relationship of

stepped building heights across the Site is the same in the Illustrative Scheme as it is in the maximum and minimum parameters. The Illustrative Scheme is divided into office (Plots A-D), residential (Plots E and F) and car park (Plot G).

5.19 The Design Code sets out the following guidance for the materials of the office buildings:

- Where stone panels are used they must be simply divided up in relation to a structural bay;
- The colours of any cladding material (except glass) must come from the base colours of the materials used rather than widespread use of applied coatings or paints;
- Where brick is used it should be good quality. Brick mixes can be used to achieve a variation in colour and tone. The selection of mortar must be considered concurrently with the selection of any brick; and
- The proposed use of concrete in a building must include demonstration of how design and detail will limit and resist the discolouration and staining over time.

5.20 The Design Code sets out the following guidance for the materials of the residential buildings:

- The design of the buildings should reflect their predominantly domestic use;
- Within courtyards, a lighter coloured material should be used to reflect the available daylight;
- Window openings shall be set back by a minimum of one brick or 225mm from the facade of the external walls in order to introduce depth and relief to the facades;
- Where provided, balconies shall have a minimum clear depth of 1500mm between the building face and the back of the balcony enclosure; and
- The elevations of buildings on Plots E and F should share a common architectural language so that they complement one another. This could be achieved by the use of similar materials or by employing a similar palette of material.

5.21 The material palette supplied by the Design Code is as follows:

- Facing brickwork;
- Reconstituted or natural stone;
- Anodised aluminium;
- Glass;
- Architectural metalwork;
- Self finish render; and
- Louvre panels.

5.22 The retention and reuse of the existing car park on site was the subject of extensive consideration and consultation during the design process. It was demonstrated that the reuse of the existing car park was the most viable option, had the most potentially successful relationship to

the townscape and brought significant sustainability benefits. At ground level, the car park will have new entrances and retail units to encourage activity, particularly in the new Central Square and Arcade Walk that it borders. The upper levels will be car park and extensively refurbished. Two levels will be added to the roof to allow for the space lost through the shortened breadth of the building which is necessary to provide sufficient space for the Central Square and correct alignment for the new north-south route from the bus interchange. The roof will have a multi-sports pitch which will be covered by netting and surrounded by a two lane running track.

- 5.23 The Design Codes set out three different approaches to the elevational treatment of the Car Park. To the south, on Garrard Street, a green wall is proposed to respond to the residential character of the buildings opposite (Plot F). The east and north facades – facing Thames Tower and Plot C (above the Arcade Walk) – will be treated with the same pattern of tilted aluminium panels which creates a varied and reflective surface and provides a consistent expression at the corner addressing the station. The west elevation on Central Square is described as an ‘enhanced’ version of the aluminium panel system applied to the north and east elevations: it will have the same panels set within a strongly emphasised vertical frame which will relate to the expressed frame of the office buildings which front the other sides of the Central Square (Plots B-D).
- 5.24 The external expression of the office buildings (Plots A-D) will be visibly related and calm in character. Each façade will have a regular structural rhythm, augmented by metal or stone elements where appropriate. The northern elevation of Plot C will be modulated or varied in some way to break down the appearance of the breadth of its mass across the lower station buildings and spaces in views from the north. The rooftop plant material on all buildings will be screened from view and the screens will be integral to the composition of the buildings when detailed.
- 5.25 The present illustrative proposals for Plot E include large glazing at ground level on Friar Street with alternate projecting bays above, articulated by different sized window openings and recessed and protruding balconies. On Friars Walk, there will be a similar expression of retail units at ground and vertically stacked windows and balconies set within regularly arranged bays above. On Garrard Street, Plot E will comprise four elements: two vertical ‘bookends’ of residential bays with stacked windows and balconies above retail at ground at either end of the plot; a void which connects Garrard Street to a central residential courtyard; and a broader and lower block with wider and uniformly sized windows set behind recessed balconies, also set above large glazing and retail at ground. The predominant material across the plot will be brick and will range in colouration from buff to grey. The projecting balconies will be anodised aluminium with clear glazed balustrades. The windows will have slim profile frames and some will have timber panels.

Chapter 6

VIEWS ASSESSMENT



- Plot A
- Plot B
- Plot C
- Plot D
- Plot E
- Plot F
- Plot G

Maximum and minimum parameter masterplan plot key

- 6.1 The following views were selected in consultation with RBC Officers and were based on the viewpoints identified in relation to the site in Chapter 7 of the Reading Station Area Framework (2010). All 63 views identified in that document were considered and tested where relevant, and a shortlist of 30 views agreed with RBC Officers (Views 1-28 (including 18a and 25a) below). These 30 views were assessed in the 2013 ES and all of these views are assessed again within this report. Three additional views have been selected for assessment in relation to the extension of Plot E (Views 29, 30 and 31).
- 6.2 A number of the views identified in the Reading Station Area Framework (2010) derive from Appendix 1 to the Reading Tall Buildings Strategy prepared by Entec for RBC in 2008. The Reading Tall Buildings Strategy includes assessment of some of these views, extracts of which are cited where relevant in the text below.
- 6.3 Each Plot of the Proposed Development is represented by a different coloured wireline to add clarity:
- Plot A – green
 - Plot B – yellow
 - Plot C – blue
 - Plot D – pink
 - Plot E – red
 - Plot F - orange
 - Plot G – purple
- 6.4 The lower dotted line on each plot represents the minimum parameter and the solid upper line represents the maximum parameter. The assessment of the Proposed View takes both the maximum and minimum parameters into account and the Significance of Impact statement includes a range of magnitude, where relevant, which relates to an assessment of ‘minimum to maximum’ parameters.
- 6.5 Schemes under construction in the Baseline Views and schemes consented or close to submission for planning in the Cumulative Views are represented with a black wireline. Details of those schemes and the assessment methodology are provided in section 2 of this report.
- 6.6 The Cumulative Views include only the maximum parameters of the Proposed Development for clarity, however both the minimum and maximum parameters of the Proposed Development have been assessed and this is reported in the text that accompanies the Cumulative Views. The Proposed Views should be referred to for the relevant minimum parameters.

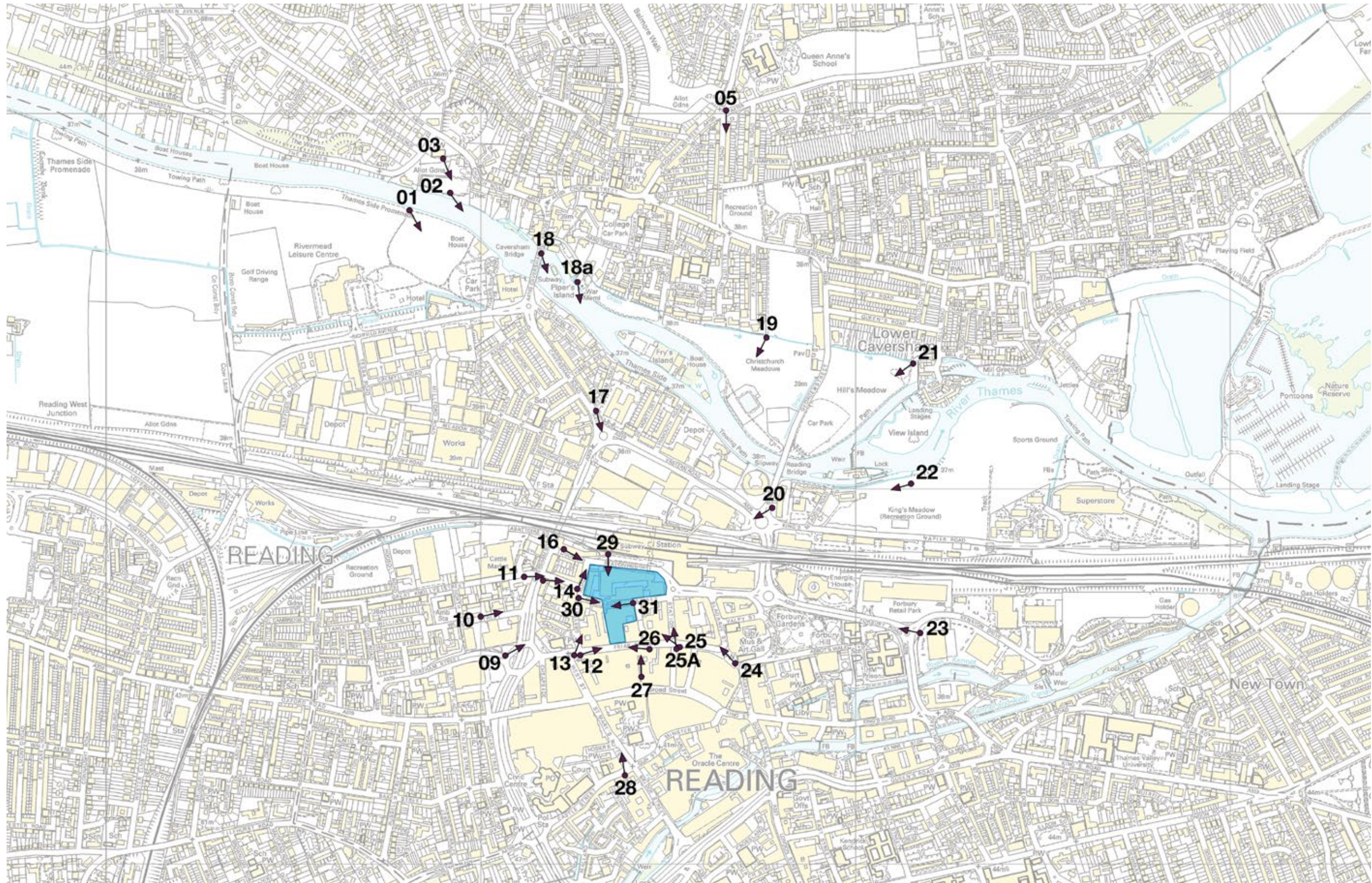
Long distance views		
New no.	SPD no.	SPD title
1	2	Thames Promenade opposite canoe club
2	3	Caversham Court Gardens
3	4	St Peter's Churchyard
4	5	Balmore Walk
5	6	Junction of Prospect Street and Peppard Road
6	12	Junction of Mount Pleasant and Southampton Street
7	16	The Warren footpath at Chazey Wood
8	17	Dunsden Way, south of Dunsden Green

Shorter-distance views		
New no.	SPD no.	SPD title
9	27	Chatham Street
10	28	Weldale Street
11	29	Great Knollys Street
12	30	Junction of Friar Street and Greyfriars Road looking along Friar Street
13	31	Junction of Friar Street and Greyfriars Road looking along Greyfriars Road
14	33	Junction of Vachel Road and Greyfriars Road
15	34	Stanshawe Street
16	35	Tudor Road
17	39	Caversham Road
18	40	Caversham Bridge
18a	41	War memorial, Christchurch Meadows
19	43	Christchurch Meadows
20	47	Reading Bridge near Vastern Road
21	48	Hills Meadow
22	49	Kings Meadow
23	51	Forbury Road near Reading Prison
24	55	St Laurence's Church
25	58A	Station Road, looking west
25a	58C	Station Road, looking north
26	59	Friar Street looking west
27	60	Union Street
28	61	Junction of Castle Street and St Mary's Butts
29	New (2015)	Station Hill, looking south
30	New (2015)	Looking east from the junction of Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street
31	New (2015)	Looking west along Garrard Street

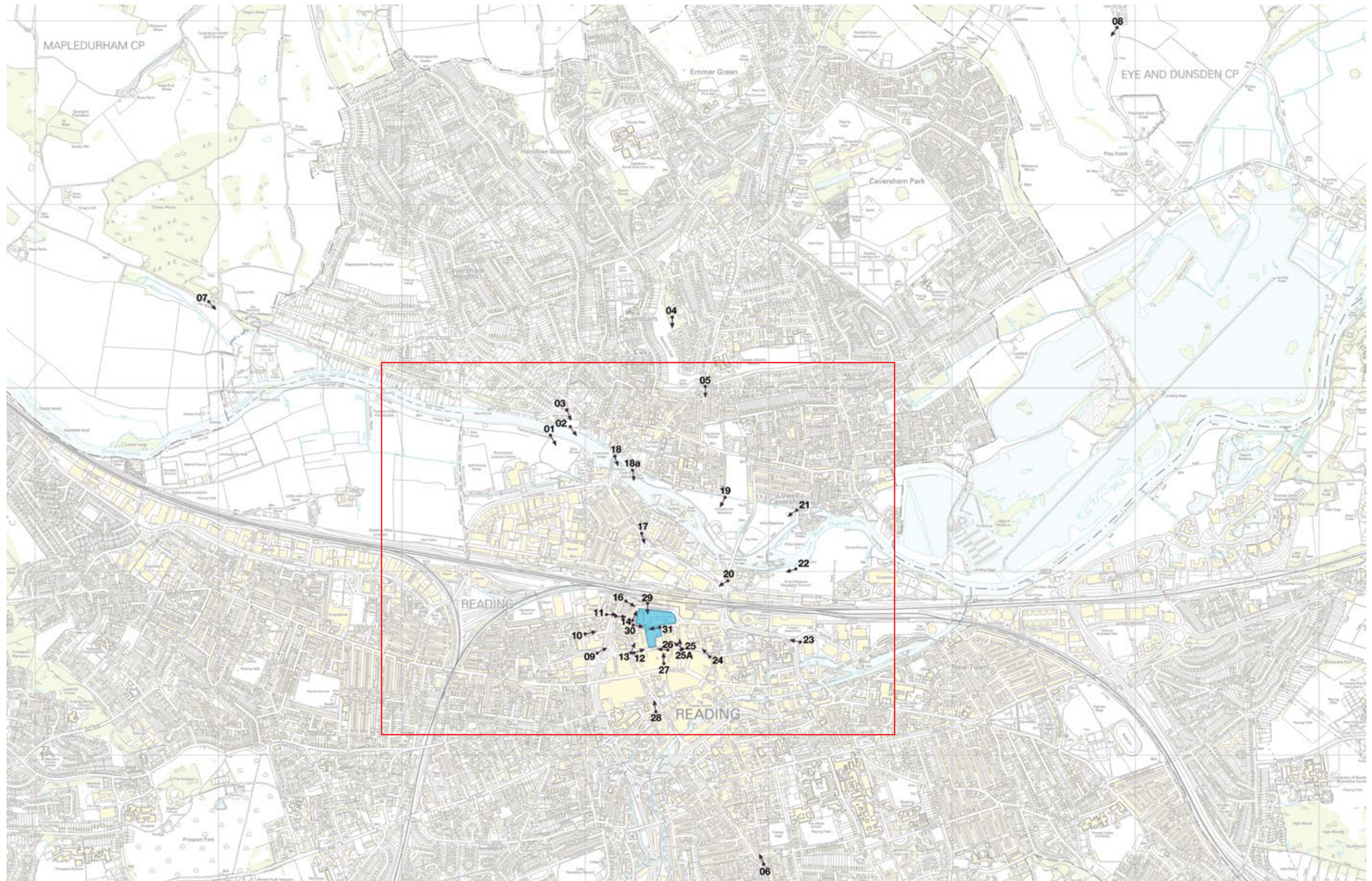
Table of Views

View	Location	Page	Style	Ref	OS-E	OS-N	Height (AOD)	Heading	Lens	Field of View	Film	Date	Time
01	Thames Promenade opposite canoe club	40	AVR-1	D11451	470810.257	174747.32	37.33	150.95	35mm	54°	Digital	02/06/2015	20:11
02	Caversham Court Gardens	42	AVR-1	D7256	470914.742	174775.745	37.679	143.89	24mm	74°	Digital	27/01/2012	15:30
03	St Peter's Churchyard	44	AVR-1	D7626	470898.71	174883.648	47.974	156.49	35mm	54°	Digital	26/03/2012	17:12
04	Balmore Walk A	46	AVR-1	D7756	471419.343	175363.655	60.935	181.86	35mm	54°	Digital	17/05/2012	15:35
05	Junction of Prospect Street and Henley Road	48	AVR-1	D7628	471653.582	175007.248	46.608	191.33	35mm	54°	Digital	26/03/2012	18:14
06	Junction of Mount Pleasant and Southampton Street	50	AVR-1	D7629	471976.523	172399.147	62.785	336.67	35mm	54°	Digital	27/03/2012	13:24
07	The Warren footpath at Chazey Wood	52	AVR-1	D7757	468953.686	175458.809	46.538	138.03	35mm	54°	Digital	17/05/2012	16:58
08	Dunsden Way south of Dunsden Green	54	AVR-1	D7755	473896.658	176950.946	76.597	218.55	70mm	17°	Digital	17/05/2012	14:09
09	Chatham Street	56	AVR-1	D7279	471066.497	173557.351	43.59	61.00	24mm	74°	Digital	27/01/2012	13:26
10	Weldale Street	58	AVR-1	D11458	470998.695	173656.708	40.534	77.60	35mm	54°	Digital	01/06/2015	15:43
11	Great Knollys Street	60	AVR-1	D11459	471122.727	173767.728	38.461	88.37	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	15:16
12	Junction of Friar Street and Greyfriars Road looking along Friar Street	62	AVR-1	D11452	471257.24	173558.91	45.06	73.20	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	13:40
13	Junction of Friar Street and Greyfriars Road looking along Greyfriars Road	64	AVR-1	D11453	471246.29	173556.95	45.02	21.45	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	13:50
14	Junction of Vachel Road and Greyfriars Road	66	AVR-1	D11460	471247.135	173659.16	41.337	23.8	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	14:55
15	Stanshawe Road	68	AVR-1	D11461	471167.00	173764.30	38.83	93.86	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	15:08
16	Tudor Road	70	AVR-1	D11454	471235.73	173825.52	38.40	122.55	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	16:03
17	Caversham Road	72	AVR-1	D7288	471302.65	174212.91	38.245	164.54	24mm	74°	Digital	27/01/2012	14:50
18	Caversham Bridge A	74	AVR-1	D7289	471166.26	174631.38	41.03	162.57	24mm	74°	Digital	27/01/2012	15:07
18a	View from war memorial on north riverbank of thames	76	AVR-1	D11462	470720.41	172998.46	37.29	173.36	34mm	55°	Digital	02/06/2015	17:12
19	Christchurch Meadows	78	AVR-1	D11457	471764.94	174394.63	36.62	207.67	35mm	54°	Digital	02/06/2015	18:36
20	Reading Bridge near Vastern Road	80	AVR-1	D11463	471772.72	173953.42	39.67	239.04	35mm	54°	Digital	02/06/2015	19:34
21	Hills Meadow	82	AVR-1	D7637	472148.92	174322.90	37.54	233.13	24mm	74°	Digital	27/03/2012	11:23
22	Kings Meadow	84	AVR-1	D7638	472161.52	173992.37	36.51	251.95	35mm	54°	Digital	27/03/2012	11:52
23	Forbury Road near Reading Prison	86	AVR-1	D11455	472162.98	173620.12	41.28	280.69	35mm	54°	Digital	01/06/2015	11:46
24	St Laurence's Church	88	AVR-1	D7639	471683.47	173529.82	44.83	315.89	24mm	74°	Digital	27/03/2012	12:25
25	Station Road B	90	AVR-1	D9995	471246.29	173556.95	45.02	21.45	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	13:50
25a	Station Road Looking North	92	AVR-1	D11465	471520.54	173583.28	45.31	350.15	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	12:30
26	Friar Street looking west	94	AVR-1	D11456	471452.33	173580.85	45.52	275.83	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	12:42
27	Union Street	96	AVR-1	D11466	471424.34	173504.19	45.21	359.10	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	12:55
28	Junction of Castle Street and St Mary's Butts	98	AVR-1	D7311	470613.10	173243.17	42.09	352.09	24mm	74°	Digital	26/01/2012	15:30
29	Station Hill	100	AVR-1	D11471	471317.312	173816.021	40.686	184.6	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	09:50
30	Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street	102	AVR-1	D11472	471257.9255	173708.7047	38.69	97.06°	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	14:45
31	Garrard Street Tunnel	104	AVR-1	D11473	471361.56	173696.935	39.11	255.78	24mm	74°	Digital	01/06/2015	10:18

Local views map



Distant views map









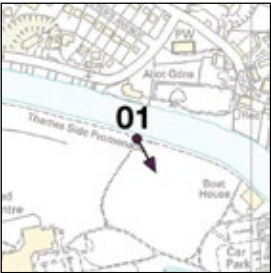






01

Thames Promenade opposite canoe club



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks south east towards the Site of the Proposed Development from the path on the southern bank of the River Thames, known as the Thames Promenade. The viewing position is on the opposite bank of the river to the St Peter’s Conservation Area. The view is described in the Reading Tall Buildings Strategy (2008) as having a “tranquil character” and:

“The view is across an open, largely undeveloped river floodplain landscape... Expanses of floodplain and recreational grassland are interrupted by views of riverside vegetation and individual clumps of trees. The skyline is also interrupted by the upper floors of Thames Tower in the background of the view...” (Ref 1-12, p.61)

Other smaller scale buildings of two to three storeys bound the recreational grassland; these are of a nondescript modern character predominantly in brick and with shallow pitched roofs. Those on the left side of the view are largely obscured by trees even in winter view. The broad, pitched-roof building on the right is more visible and is a budget travel hotel. The upper storeys of the Western Tower on Site are in the centre of the view and the brown wireline to its left shows the full height and mass of the redeveloped Thames Tower when complete. Also under construction and rising to a similar height to the right of the hotel building is the Phase 2 building at Chatham Place by John McAslan Architects.

Proposed

The stepped forms of the Proposed Development will rise gradually from beside the Premier Inn, from Plot A in the west (green) to C in the northeast (blue), which will act as a new marker for Reading Station. The top of Plot D (pink) is glimpsed beyond A and B (yellow), adding depth to the

new cluster of buildings which will be visibly related in a calm architectural expression. They will become the tallest buildings in view but will have a discrete presence, well beyond the perimeter of the open green space, and will not interrupt its tranquil character. The Western Tower will be replaced with a group of high quality buildings which will signal the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area beyond and will add positively to the layers of existing built form which currently form the mid-distant setting of the Thames Promenade.

The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: moderate to major, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot C (blue) will become the tallest building in view, with Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) stepping up towards it on the right and Thames Tower (brown) and the tip of 29-35 Station Road (black) set lower to its left. Together they will form a compact new group of buildings landmarking the new Station Square and adjacent refurbished Station. Further left and partly obscured by a foreground tree, the tallest block of the Royal Mail Group development (black), to the north of the Station, will rise above the treeline and will appear separate and lower than the group to the south of the Station on the skyline.

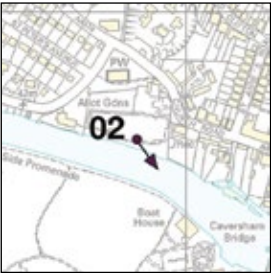
Significance of Impact: major, beneficial



Cumulative view

02

Caversham Court Gardens



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

Caversham Court Gardens in which this viewing position is situated, forms a large section of the St Peter’s Conservation Area and is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden of Special Historic Interest. The view looks southeast towards the Site from the Gardens which lie on the northern bank of the River Thames. The Reading Tall Building Strategy describes the views from here as being “facilitated by the flat, open river course”. It is further described as having:

“Individual trees set within the river meadow land use, on the southern banks of the Thames combine to create a wooded skyline which is infrequently punctuated by built form. Built form includes the Rivermead Leisure Centre and Caversham Bridge. The wooded skyline and river meadow land use creates a tranquil, undisturbed character.” (Ref 1-12, p.82)

The northern bank, to the left of the view is also lined with large mature trees which obscure views to the left and framing the vista along the river towards the bridge. The Phase 2 building at Chatham Place (brown wireline) by John McAslan Architects is an isolated form towards the right of the frame, heavily screened by trees even in winter.

Proposed

Only the tops of Plots C (blue) and B (yellow) are likely to be discernible through the winter trees if the Proposed Development is built out to the maximum parameters. They will have a calm architectural expression and will include screens to conceal all rooftop plant and equipment from view. They will have a modern, high quality character which will landmark the Station and differentiate them from the pitched roof building in the middle-ground, whilst relating to its broad and layered forms presently visible between the winter trees.

The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: negligible to minor, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will form a compact and coherent group with the taller Plot C (blue) and lower plots, if discernible above the treeline. The tip of 29-35 Station Road will appear to the immediate left of Plot C (blue) and as part of that compact group. Together they will landmark the new Station Square and adjacent refurbished Station. The top of the tallest block of the Royal Mail Group development, to the north of the Station, will appear above the roofs of the buildings in the middle ground, slightly left of that group.

Significance of Impact: minor, beneficial

24mm - 37°

35mm - 27°

50mm - 20°

0°

50mm - 20°

35mm - 27°

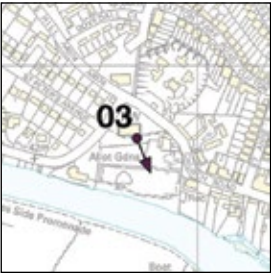
24mm - 37°



Cumulative view

03

St Peter's Churchyard



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

St Peter's Church, listed at Grade II*, is at the centre of the St Peter's Conservation Area and dates from Norman times. This viewing position is situated in St Peter's Churchyard, which contains a number of Grade II listed grave stones, and looks south east towards the Site. The foreground looks across the graveyard, bound by a low brick wall which divides it from the allotments in the Caversham Court Gardens, hidden from view below. The middle ground is dominated by large trees of various types, lining the bank of the River Thames, and the Caversham Court Gardens, which is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden. On the left of the view is the roof of a brick house with a number of chimney stacks; this is the Caversham Court Stables and is listed at Grade II. In the centre of the view, buildings in the mid-distance are almost entirely obscured by trees except for a few building tops, including the Thames Tower. Only the Western Tower, on the Site, is visible at the centre of the view and the Thames Tower to the left is only partially visible through the trees, with its full mass following completion of its redevelopment represented with a brown wireline.

Proposed

The stepped forms of the Proposed Development will be visible above the tree tops in the centre of the view, stepping up from Plot A in the west (green) to C in the northeast (blue), which will act as a new marker for Reading Station. The top of Plot D (pink) is glimpsed beyond A and B (yellow), adding depth to the new cluster form which will replace the Western Tower presently on Site. These new building tops will be visibly related in a calm architectural expression. They will become the tallest buildings in view but will appear in keeping with the general tree line and will have a discrete presence on the distant skyline. The adjacent redeveloped Thames Tower (brown) will appear as part of that new, compact group. The Western Tower will be replaced with

a group of high quality buildings which will signal the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area beyond and will add positively to the distant urban context of this historic place. A sliver of the amended Plot E would appear to the right of Plot A (green), however, due to its lesser height, the small amount visible, the distance of the viewpoint and the number of trees in the middle ground, it is unlikely that it would be detected. The impacts of the proposed Development are therefore the same as those of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: moderate to major, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will form a compact and coherent group with the taller Plot C (blue), lower plots to the right and Thames Tower (brown) and 29-35 Station Road (black) to the left. Together they will landmark the new Station Square and adjacent refurbished Station. The Royal Mail Group development to the north of the Station will appear in front of the lower parts of Thames Tower, with its tallest block stepping up to the left, clearly separated from the more southerly group whilst related to the rounded skyline form of that building cluster on the skyline; in summer it is unlikely to be noticed.

Significance of Impact: moderate to major, beneficial



Cumulative view

04

Baltimore Walk A



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks south towards the Site from Barmore Park, the park is bound by trees and other shrubs. Its elevated nature provides long panoramic views of Reading town centre and the surrounding areas. The Reading Tall Buildings Strategy (2008) describes the view as follows:

“This is a long range panoramic view of central Reading. Views down the grassy slope, across the residential roofline, to central Reading are possible. Thames Tower, Western Tower and Fountain House are visible on the skyline... Views of Reading from this position are panoramic and are experienced from a recreational resource... Consideration should be given to how any proposed tall buildings respond to the existing tall buildings, and to how the skyline would be viewed as a whole. Although true of all viewpoints, this is particularly true in this instance due to the elevated and panoramic nature of the view.” (Ref 1-12, p.68)

Other tall commercial buildings in the east of Reading town centre, including the distinctive Blade, form a small cluster to the left of the view. When redeveloped, Thames Tower (brown wireline) will appear at a similar height to the Western Tower and to its left. Appearing at a similar height and further right is the Phase 2 building at Chatham Place (brown) by John McAslan Architects; these buildings will each have clear, isolated profiles on the skyline.

Proposed

Due to the elevated nature of this viewpoint, almost all of the north elevations of Plots C (blue), B (yellow) and A (green) will be visible in the centre of the view. Together, they will have a stepped roofline, rising up to mark the Station with Plot C (blue) and dropping down to the adjacent, redeveloped Thames Tower to create a rounded skyline profile. Plot E (red) and Plot D (pink) will

be glimpsed in the gaps between and beyond these buildings, adding depth to the new cluster form. The Western Tower will be replaced with a group of high quality buildings which will signal the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area beyond and will add positively to the urban skyline of Reading.

The proposed amended Plot E will have the same degree of negligible visibility in the view as Plot E in the SH3 Scheme: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will form a compact and coherent group with the taller Plot C (blue) and lower plots to the right. Thames Tower (brown), 29-35 Station Road (black), to the left, and the tallest block of the Royal Mail group development (black) - partly in front of Plot C (blue) - will add to the density and overall rounded skyline form of that group. Together they will landmark the new Station Square and adjacent refurbished Station.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial



05

Junction of Prospect Street and Henley Road



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks due south towards the Site of the Proposed Development from a viewing position at the junction of Prospect Street, just to the west of where it becomes Henley Road, and Peppard Road. The road at the centre of the view is Westfield Road, the end of which is obscured by trees. Only the gable of the end house on the left side of the street is visible. The right side of the street is lined by 2-3 storey houses of a variety of styles, some brick and some painted, and which are largely joined in short runs of terraces. Rising above the roofline in the middle of the view is the broad, dark form of the existing Thames Tower and to the right, the grey top of the Western Tower presently on Site. Thames Tower will appear at a similar height to the Western Tower when its redevelopment is complete (brown wireline).

Proposed

The top of Plot C (blue) and part of Plot B (yellow) will rise above the roofline and chimneys of the houses on Westfield Road. Slivers of Plots G (purple), D (pink) and E (red) may also be glimpsed if built out to the maximum parameters. Plot C (blue) and B (yellow) will be the most visible new forms and will be seen in the mid-distance, in relation to the redeveloped Thames Tower. They will have an orderly architectural expression with some modulation on the northern elevation of Plot C to add interest to the view and to distinguish its landmark position closest to Reading Station. This group of new buildings will be of a high quality and will have a shared visual character, appearing as a new layer of urban development in view and marking the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area. The proposed amended Plot E will have the same degree of negligible visibility in the view as Plot E in the SH3 Scheme: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

The tallest block of the Royal Mail Group development will appear partly in front of Plots C (blue) and B (Reserved Matters Application) (black), adding depth to the cluster form. 29-35 Station Road (black) will rise beyond the left side of the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown), helping to consolidate the rounded skyline profile of the new group of buildings, together marking the new Station Square and refurbished Reading Station.

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial

35mm - 27°

50mm - 20°

0°

50mm - 20°

35mm - 27°



Cumulative view

06

Junction of Mount Pleasant and Southampton Street



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks north towards the Site from beside the junction of Mount Pleasant and Southampton Street, on the east pavement of Mount Pleasant. There is an oblique view of the 2-3 storey houses fronting the west side of Mount Pleasant ahead, with larger residential blocks glimpsed beyond them, through the shop awning on the right. Beyond those blocks, a small section of low-lying hills in the north can be seen on the horizon. To the left, this view is obscured by taller and denser development in the town centre, including Thames Tower, Western Tower and Icon House. Western Tower is on the Site of the Proposed Development. The brown wireline indicates the full extent of the height and mass of the Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete. Right again, all distant views are blocked by the Pheasant pub in the foreground which is the tallest and most prominent building in view. It occupies a corner junction position with a parking area and raised planting bed in front. On the far left of the frame, the pitched roofs and chimneys of houses can be seen extending into the mid-distance.

Proposed

From this southerly position, if built out to the maximum parameters, the tops of Plot D (pink) and F (orange) will be more visible in front of the tallest Plots, B (yellow) and C (blue), adding depth and variety to the character of this new cluster of buildings on the Reading skyline. They will share a calm architectural language whilst their different heights and mass will read as separate, stepped forms. They will appear where existing tall buildings mark the town centre, but will be taller, and will have a compact, rounded skyline form with the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown), clearly landmarking the regenerated Station and surrounding area with a group of high quality buildings which will add positively to the urban skyline of Reading.

The proposed amended Plot E will have the same degree of negligible visibility in the view as Plot E in the SH3 Scheme: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear to the left of Plot C (blue), maintaining the compact, rounded profile of the new group of buildings. The tallest block of the Royal Mail Group development (black) will be set lower and beyond the right side of the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown), with the slender form of 29-35 Station Road (black) rising in front of Thames Tower, further consolidating the cluster form. Together they will landmark the new Station Square and adjacent refurbished Station.

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial

35mm - 27°

50mm - 20°

0°

50mm - 20°

35mm - 27°



Cumulative view

07

The Warren footpath at Chazey Wood



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This is a very long distance view from a footpath in the Warren in Chazey Wood and looks southeast towards Reading. The Reading Tall Building Strategy (2008) describes the view as follows:

“Views across the sloping pastoral fields in the foreground are to a wooded skyline. The roofline of housing at the western end of ‘The warren’ is visible in the middle distance...Although occasional built form is a feature, the built form is residential and low rise.” (Ref 1-11, p.63)

This is a rural view, with the urban development of Reading entirely obscured by trees and the topography. The top of Phase 2 of Chatham Place (brown wireline) may be glimpsed through a dip in the treeline in the centre of the view; due to its distance and the fleeting character of this view, it will be little noticed and will form part of the wider urban setting of Chazey Wood.

Proposed

The very tip of the maximum parameters of Plot C (blue) would be visible through the tree tops towards the left of this frame, but due to its significant distance and the small amount which would be visible, it is unlikely to be discerned. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: negligible

Cumulative

No change.

Significance of Impact: negligible



Cumulative view

08

Dunsden Way south of Dunsden Green



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This is another very long distance view, looking from a footpath off Dunsden Way south west towards Reading town centre. The Reading Tall Building Strategy (2008) describes the view as follows:

“Gently undulating, large arable fields form the dominant feature of the view. The fields are interspersed with overhead power lines and electricity pylons. The skyline is occasionally wooded, but the woodland does not significantly contain a view which is long ranging... Although large scale man made features are a feature of the view, a strong rural character remains.” (Ref 1-12, p.65)

In the distance towards the left of this frame, the Blade, Reading’s tallest building at present at 86m (14 storeys) height, can be seen on the horizon marking the east side of Reading town centre. Set much lower and to its right is Energis House, presently under construction; its full extent when complete is indicated by a brown wireline. It appears slightly lower than the horizon and is unlikely to be discerned when built out. In the centre of the view, the brown wireline rising above the horizon indicates the full extent of the height and mass of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete; it will protrude above the horizon but will join the roofline of the house in the middle ground and will therefore be little noticed. Further right is the top of the Western Tower on Site, appearing beside and beyond the steeply pitched-roofed building in the middle ground; it is little noticed in this predominantly rural scene.

Proposed

Only Plots C (blue) and B (yellow) of the Proposed Development will be visible from this northerly viewpoint. They will rise from a point beyond the farmhouse buildings in the centre of this view and will replace the Western Tower, the top of which is visible at present. They will be of a

distinctly different character to the middle ground buildings but will share a calm architectural expression and will be visibly more distant, like the Blade building on the left of the view. Plot B (yellow) will be of a similar height as the treeline to the right and will step up to Plot C (blue), which will provide a distinct new landmark for Reading Station and the town centre just beyond. The redeveloped Thames Tower (brown) will appear slightly lower and to their left, consolidating the overall group form. This group of new buildings will be of a high quality and will have a shared visual character, adding positively to the distant layer of urban development already in view and marking the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area beyond. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: moderate to major, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters. It will appear to the right of Plot C (blue), maintaining the compact, rounded profile of the new group of buildings. 29-35 Station Road will have a slender profile adjacent to the left of the redeveloped Thames Tower. Together, this new group of buildings will landmark the new Station Square and adjacent refurbished Station on the horizon. The overall composition of the view and its predominantly rural character will not be affected by the proposed and cumulative developments in view.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial

70mm - 17°

0°

70mm - 17°



Cumulative view

09

Chatham Street



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks east towards the Site from Chatham Street, just west of the roundabout junction with Caversham Road and Friar Street. It is dominated by the traffic junction in the foreground and the groups of trees on the left and right of the frame. On the far left is a light industrial building of brick and blue coloured cladding. On the right, the Grade II* listed Greyfriars Church is discernible through the bottom of the winter trees, though would not be in summer. In the centre, also heavily filtered by tree branches, are a mixture of 3-4 storey buildings, largely red brick, with the tops of the Western Tower, presently on the Site, and Thames Tower, clearly visible beyond. The brown wireline indicates the extent of the height and massing of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete.

Proposed

From this westerly position, if built out to the maximum parameters, the tops of Plot A (green), D (pink), B (yellow) and C (blue) will appear as a tight group, their different heights and massing adding depth to the skyline form and rising towards Plot C (blue) to mark the northeast end of the Site at the Station. The amended Plot E will be the same height as Plot E in the SH3 Scheme but will extend further left, partly in front of Plot D (pink), helping to consolidate the group form and stepped character of the Proposed Development. It will have a different character to its materials and elevations to reflect its residential use. The taller cluster of commercial buildings will share a calm and light architectural expression whilst their different heights and mass will read as separate, stepped forms. At their minimum parameters, little of the closest Plots A (green) and D (pink) will be visible through the trees and above the existing roofline, however they will still step up to the taller buildings of the new cluster within an overall stepped composition which

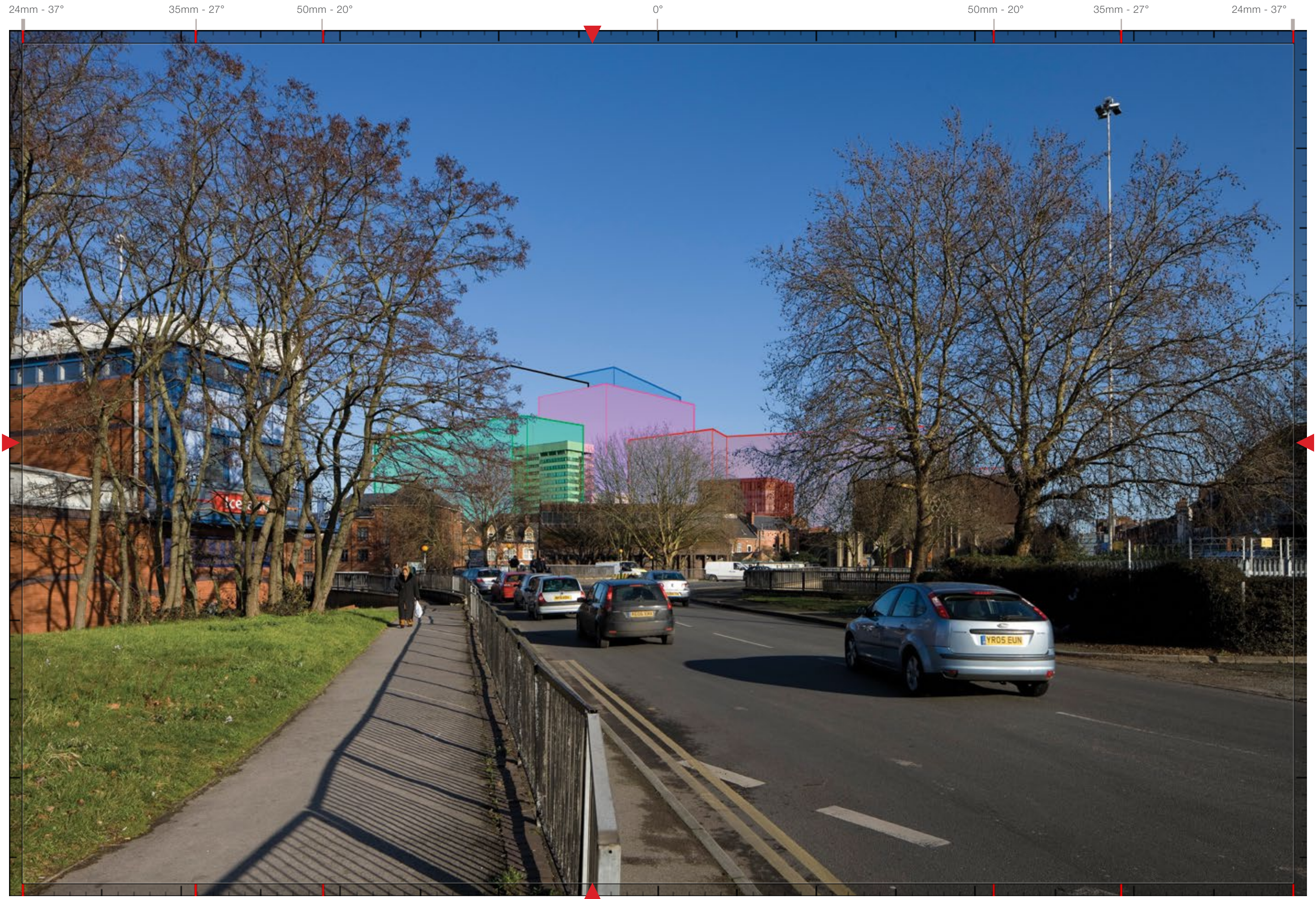
risers to the northeast. The Station will gain a new, high quality landmark on the skyline and the regenerated Site will have a richly layered, cohesive presence on the central Reading skyline.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will appear to have the same massing as Plot B in the SH3 Scheme and will appear between and to the left of Plots C (blue) and D (pink), maintaining the compact, rounded profile of the new group of buildings. The cluster form of the Proposed Development will be consolidated and the new Station Square and adjacent refurbished Station will be provided with a landmark which will add positively to the central Reading skyline.

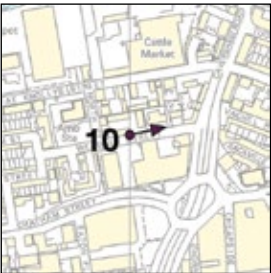
Significance of Impact: major, beneficial



Cumulative view

10

Weldale Street



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks east towards the Site from Weldale Street which runs parallel to Chatham Street (view 9). Like Chatham Street, this approach west has a distinctly urban character and buildings of a more industrial and functional character. Both sides of the street are flanked with industrial sheds, either brick or rendered and with corrugated roofs. On the left side these buildings are set back from the street edge with a crudely fenced off tarmac parking forecourt. At the end of the street on the right is a six storey modern apartment building with curved attic roof and a largely blank west elevation. The vista is terminated with a terrace of modern brick townhouses with pitched roofs on the west side of Caversham Road and the white painted rear elevations of the houses opposite. Rising above the jumbled roofline, the tops of Western Tower, at 17 storeys, and Thames Tower, at 12 storeys, are also undistinguished and detract further from the quality of buildings in view. The full extent of the height and massing of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete is indicated with a brown wireline. A brown wireline also shows the massing of 21 Caversham Road, closer to the viewpoint, which is also under construction.

Proposed

The Proposed Development has the potential to positively transform this view. Like on Chatham Street, from this westerly position, if built out to the maximum parameters, the tops of Plot A (green), D (pink), B (yellow) and C (blue) will appear as a tight group, their different heights and massing adding depth to the skyline form and rising towards Plot C (blue) to mark the northeast end of the Site at the Station. Plot E will remain the same height as in the SH3 Scheme but will be extended westwards, concealing Plot F (orange) and appearing partly in front of Plot D (pink). It will help to consolidate the group form and stepped character of the Proposed Development. The taller cluster of commercial buildings will share a calm and light architectural expression

whilst their different heights and mass will read as separate, stepped forms. At their minimum parameters, little of the closest Plots A (green) and D (pink) will be visible above the existing roofline, however they will still step up to the taller buildings of the new cluster within an overall stepped composition which rises to the northeast. The Station will gain a new, high quality landmark on the skyline and the regenerated Site will have a richly layered, cohesive presence on the central Reading skyline.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear in between the other plots of the SH3 scheme, maintaining the compact, rounded profile of the new group of buildings.

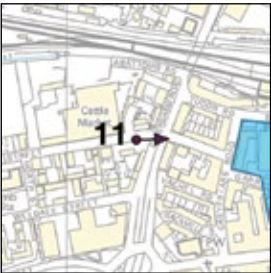
Significance of Impact: major, beneficial



Cumulative view

11

Great Knollys Street



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view

Future baseline

This view also looks east towards the Site and is situated north of views 9 and 10. The viewing position is located on Great Knollys Street close to its junction with Caversham Road. The foreground of the view is dominated by the road junction. To the left of the view is a four storey brick office building with shallow pitched roofs called Premier House and to the right another four storey office building with a dark coloured, angled top storey and flat roof. In the centre of the view, the houses fronting the north side of Stanshawe Road are of a notably smaller scale but increase in height and breadth towards the east, where taller building tops create a jumbled, indistinct roofline. The recognisable taller forms of Thames Tower and the Western Tower rise prominently above. The full extent of the height and massing of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete is indicated with a brown wireline.

Proposed

Only Plots A (green) and B (yellow) will be visible from here, and the tip of Plot D (pink) at the maximum parameters. Western Tower and Thames Tower will be replaced with new, high quality buildings which will share a calm and light architectural expression whilst their different heights and mass will read as separate, stepped forms. As at present, the buildings will step up in height towards the Station in northeast. The Station will gain a new, high quality landmark on the skyline and the regenerated Site will have a richly layered, cohesive presence on the central Reading skyline.

The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: moderate to major, beneficial



Proposed view

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear in between the other plots of the SH3 scheme, maintaining the compact, rounded profile of the new group of buildings.

Significance of Impact: moderate to major, beneficial



Cumulative view

12

Junction of Friar Street and Greyfriars Road looking along Friar Street



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This viewing position is on the southern pavement of the main shopping thoroughfare of Friar Street, at its junction with Greyfriars Road. This is a very linear view, channelled along Friar Street by continuous development at the back of pavement edge on both sides. Friar Street is a retail street with wide pavements. The prevailing building material is brick. The style and mass of forms visible is very varied, particularly on the north side of the street, ranging between four and six storeys, gradually increasing in height towards the east but dipping down adjacent to the Site to the three storey, Grade II listed, brick building at No.39 which is turn of the 19th century. Almost all other buildings on the north side date from the post-war period and are of poor quality. The building on the immediate left reclads and extends the building previously present, is of six storeys on Friar Street and with a red brick body and distinctive vertical, grey panel-clad bays. Towards the east end of the street, the glazed and stepped upper floors of the Novotel are a prominent feature on the skyline. The frontage to the south side is seen obliquely here and appears more uniform, with a brick upper level and gabled roofline. The east end of the street is obscured as it curves to the right.

Proposed

Only Plot E (red) of the Proposed Development will be visible in this view. The proposed amended Plot E will be the same height as Plot E in the SH3 Scheme but will extend further west to replace the adjacent existing building which has clear horizontal bands of glazing and brickwork. Plot E will be lower at its southerly end, on Friar Street, and will (at maximum parameters) appear to be of a similar height to the new building on the left of the frame and the Novotel at the east end of the street. At maximum parameters, a sliver of its northerly element, stepping up to Garrard Street, will also be visible on the skyline. At minimum parameters, only the southerly element will be visible and it will be of a similar height to that of the existing buildings on Site. The southern elevation will

have a slightly staggered footprint, maintaining the street line to the west and east and creating a balanced entrance to the new Friar's Walk on the immediate east side of Plot E. The entrance to the new route northwards will set Plot E slightly away from the lower listed building to its east side (39 Friar Street). Above street level, Plot E will be visibly predominantly residential in nature and characterised by an appropriate materials palette. It will be a new high quality building which will add positively to the varied street frontage and will mark the entrance to the new pedestrian route north through the Site and the new public spaces and activity located there.

Significance of Impact: minor to moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

No change.

Significance of Impact: minor to moderate, beneficial



Cumulative view

13

Junction of Friar Street and Greyfriars Road looking along Greyfriars Road



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks northeast towards the Site from a viewing position just west of view 12 above, just west of Friar Street at its junction with Greyfriars Road. On the north corner of Friar Street and Greyfriars Road (on the right), is a new residential building, with red brick and grey and white panel cladding, and retail units at the ground floor. It is six storeys on Friar Street, stepping up to eight storeys in the north. On the left of the frame, the curved brick wall and railings belong to the former Vicarage of Greyfriars Church, out of view to the left, and are listed at Grade II. The brick dwelling attached is on the site of the old Vicarage and is not listed. The wall obscures the view north along Greyfriars Road. Only one building protrudes above the wall, a large white clad five storey office building.

Proposed

At the maximum parameters, Plot A (green) will fully conceal the white office building top and will appear adjacent to Plots B (yellow) and D (pink), only a sliver of which will be visible adjacent to the new building in the centre of the view. At minimum parameters, little of Plot A (green) will also be seen within this new context. The consented SH3 Scheme will add depth to the existing urban scene with appropriately scaled forms. At maximum parameters, a sliver of Plot E (red) will appear above and to the left of the new building, but is unlikely to be detected or noticed due to the small amount visible. It will not be seen at minimum parameters. The regenerated Site will have a richly layered, cohesive presence on the central Reading skyline.

Significance of Impact: minor, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear in between the other plots of the SH3 scheme, maintaining the compact group form of those buildings.

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial

24mm - 37°

35mm - 27°

50mm - 20°

0°

50mm - 20°

35mm - 27°

24mm - 37°



Cumulative view

14

Junction of Vachel Road and Greyfriars Road



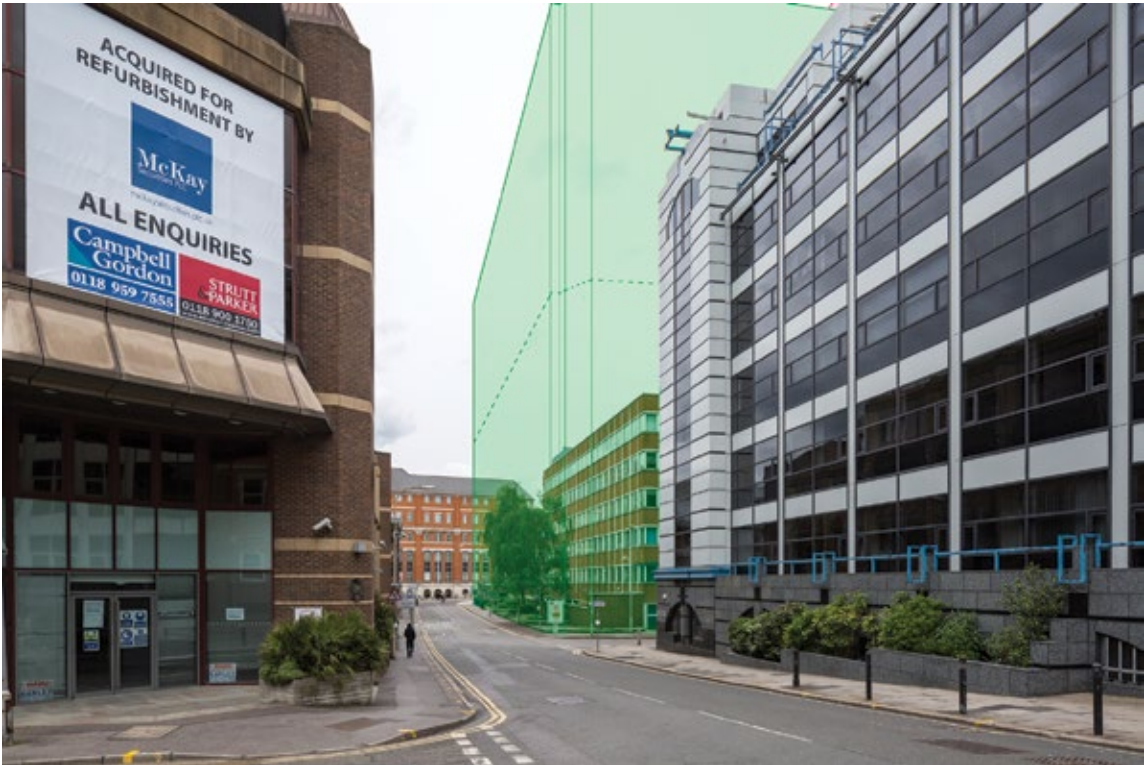
View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This viewing position is located on the southern pavement of Vachel Road, at its junction with Greyfriars Road. The view looks north along Greyfriars Road, beside the west side of the Site. This is a channelled view along Greyfriars Road, which has tall buildings on both sides, which decrease in height towards its termination. It is terminated by Phoenix House, a six storey red brick office building with pilasters rising through three storeys at ground level. To the left of the view only the canted corner entrance of No. 9 Greyfriars Road is visible. It is a brick and brown glazed office building with canopy over the inset entrance doors. To the right is another poor quality office building, six storeys and clad in white with horizontal bands of dark glazing. Beyond and occupying part of the Site, is a lower brick block, also six storeys with strong horizontal bands of glazing and brick, called Xafinity House.

Proposed

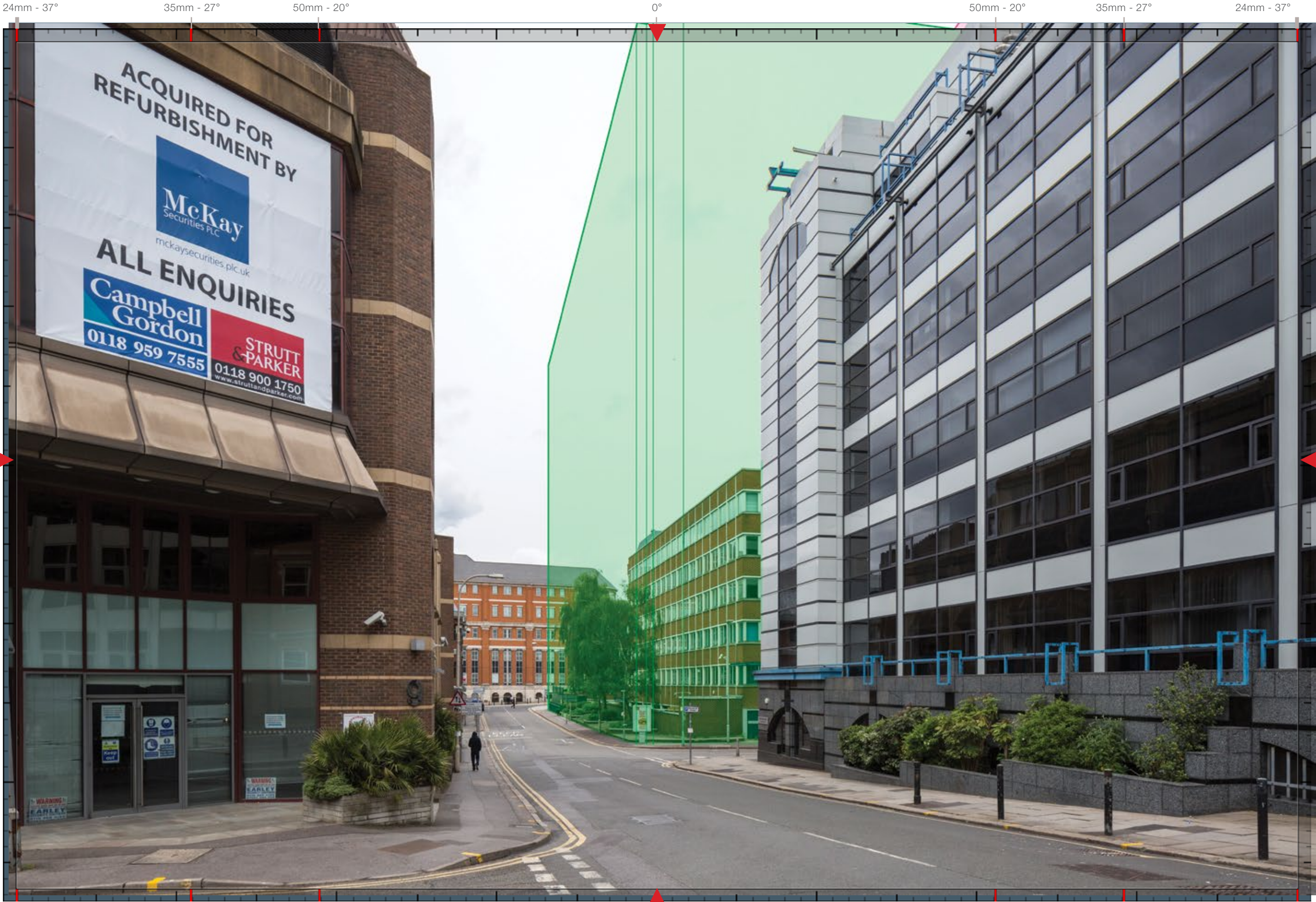
Plot A (green) fronts the entire length of the west side of the northern part of the Site. At both minimum and maximum parameters, and points between, other parts of the Proposed Development are unlikely to be glimpsed. Plot A will maintain the line of the street frontage and the character of the street, which is composed of broad and singular building elevations, whilst introducing a new, high quality element to the streetscape. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

No change. The cumulative schemes will be concealed by the Proposed Development.

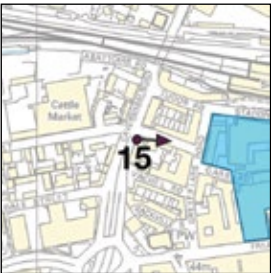
Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial



Cumulative view

15

Stanshawe Road



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks due east towards the Site along Stanshaw Street from a viewing position on Stanshaw Street at its junction with Caversham Road. To the left is a row of small terraced houses in brick and with pitched roofs, and beyond, a flat-roofed brick building occupied by the Reading Campus of London Metropolitan College. The vista along Stanshawe Street is terminated by the façade of Xafinity House, on the Site, which has bands of red brick and glazing. Rising above the roofline is Western Tower, presently on the Site, which is also a poor quality building and characterised by concrete and glazed bands. The brown wireline indicates the height and mass of the redeveloped Thames Tower, just beyond the Western Tower, when complete.

Proposed

Plot A (green) fronts the entire length of the west side of the northern part of the Site. It will conceal the redeveloped Thames Tower fully from view. Xafinity House and Western Tower will be replaced by the taller, linear form of Plot A, with the top of Plot B (yellow) providing a vertical counterpoint above. They will be high quality buildings with a shared architectural language which will add positively to the central Reading skyline. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial

Cumulative

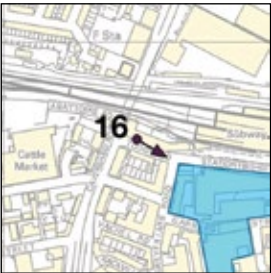
Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear above Plot A (green). As for the SH3 Scheme, the top of Plot B (black) will provide a vertical counterpoint to the breadth of Plot A (green) in the foreground. They will be high quality buildings with a shared architectural language which will add positively to the central Reading skyline.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial



16

Tudor Road



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks east towards the Site from a viewing position on the north pavement of Tudor Road. The ground rises eastwards from the junction ahead, with the Western Tower at the centre of the view and other buildings on Site at its base. The view is framed on the left side by Phoenix House, a modern, neo-classical red brick office building with rusticated stone ground floor. On the far right is a red brick building, beyond which is seen the rear elevation of a dark brick office building, Summit House, and the Malthouse pub, recently refurbished, at centre.

Proposed

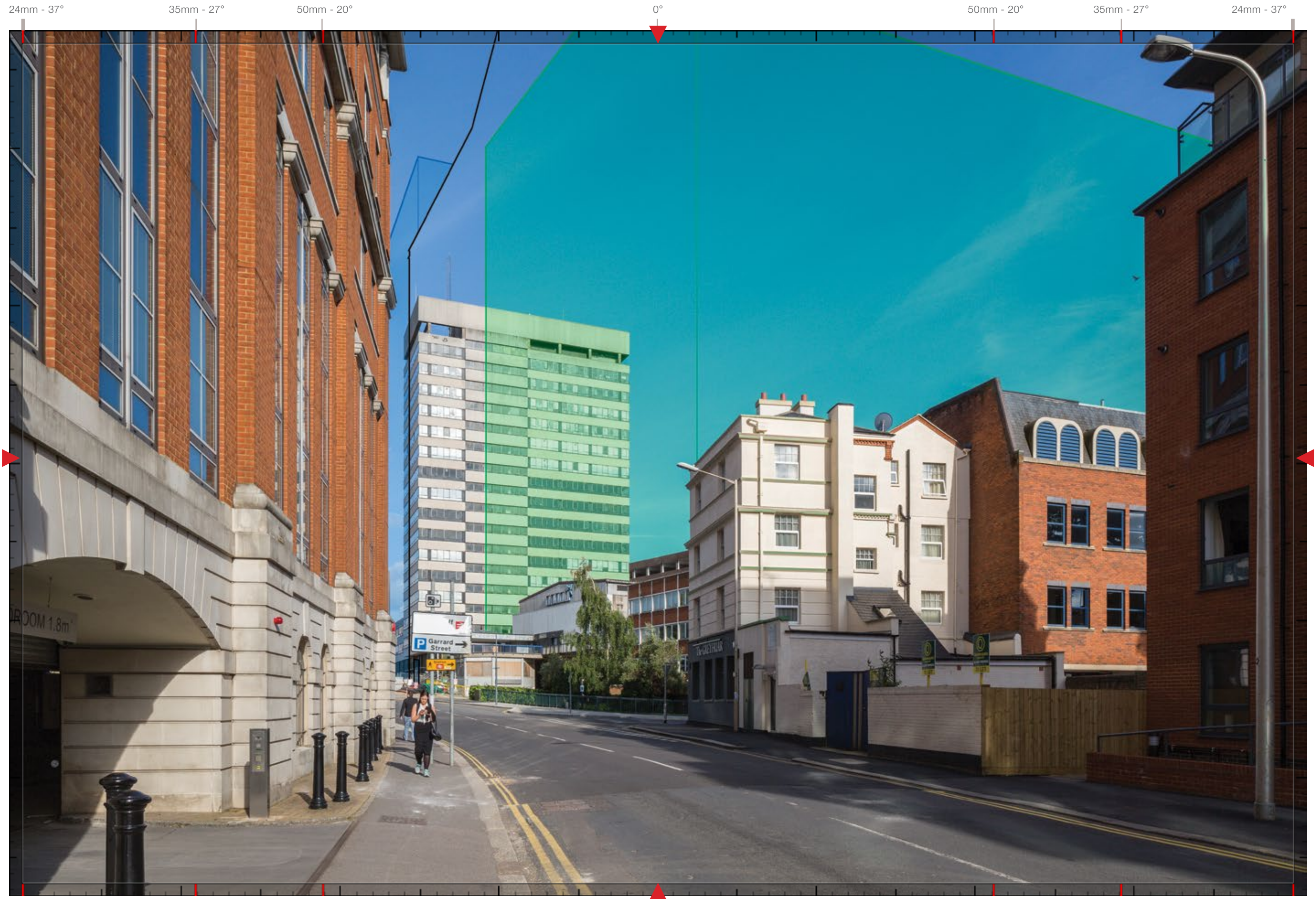
Plot A (green) fronts the entire length of the west side of the northern part of the Site and its western elevation will transform this view. All buildings on Site, including the Western Tower, will be replaced and three plots of the Proposed Development will be visible from here – A (green), B (yellow) and C (blue). These plots will be separated by pedestrian routes and spaces and their frontage set at slightly staggered positions, creating a layered composition of forms in this view, and rising up to the Station in the east. They will be high quality buildings with a shared architectural language which will add positively to the central Reading skyline and will be appropriate to this important site close to the main rail station. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear in between the other plots of the SH3 Scheme, maintaining the compact group form of those buildings and the stepped roofline, leading up from the west to the east.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial



Cumulative view

17

Caversham Road



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This viewing position is on Caversham Road, just beyond the junction of Brigham Road, and looks south east towards the Site. The main road and signage dominates the foreground and beyond, winter trees filter views of low rise, broad building retail park buildings. Rising above these buildings in the far distance are Thames Tower, to the left and largely obscured by trees even in this winter view, and Western Tower, more prominent to the right and partly obscured by tree branches. Western Tower is on the Site of the Proposed Development. The brown wireline indicates the full extent of the height and mass of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete. On the far right of the view is a short, staggered brick terrace of plain, three storey buildings with shops at ground floor.

Proposed

From this northerly viewpoint, a substantial part of the north elevations of Plots C (blue) and B (yellow) will appear beside the Thames Tower, in the centre distance of the view. They will share a calm architectural language whilst appearing separated by a stepped roofline, through which the tallest building Plot C (blue), will landmark the new Station Square and refurbished Station just beyond. The north elevation of Plot C will be further distinguished through modulation or variety of some manner. At maximum parameters, part of Plot A (green) and D (pink) will be glimpsed beside these new landmark buildings, adding depth to the new cluster form. The Western Tower will be replaced with a group of high quality buildings which will signal the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area beyond and which will add positively to the urban skyline of Reading. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: moderate to major, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear adjacent to Plot C (blue), maintaining the compact group form of those buildings and the stepped roofline, leading up from the west to the east. The redeveloped Thames Tower would be concealed by the Royal Mail Group development, which would dominate this view. The lower blocks of the Royal Mail Group development would form a base to the Plot C (blue) and Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) and would also step towards the left of the view, creating a cohesive and densely layered group of new buildings on the skyline.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial

24mm - 37°

35mm - 27°

50mm - 20°

0°

50mm - 20°

35mm - 27°

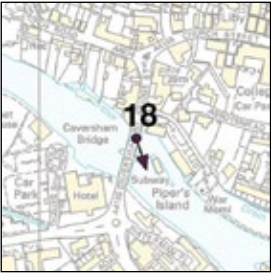
24mm - 37°



Cumulative view

18

Caversham Bridge A



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks south east towards the Site across the River Thames from the east pavement of Caversham Bridge. The Reading Tall Building Strategy (2008) describes the view as follows:

“The banks of the River Thames as viewed from Caversham Bridge are developed, largely with low rise residential and leisure usage. Exceptions include Thames Tower and Western Tower which are visible in the background of the view. None of the buildings visible in this view are of a high quality; the combination of late 20th century architectural styles creates an uninteresting and indifferent character.” (Ref 1-12, p.60)

The Western Tower is on part of the Site of the Proposed Development. The brown wireline indicates the full extent of the height and mass of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete.

Proposed

From this northerly viewpoint, a substantial part of the north elevations of Plots C (blue) and B (yellow) will appear beside the Thames Tower, in the centre distance of the view. They will share a calm architectural language whilst appearing separated by a stepped roofline, through which the tallest building Plot C (blue), will landmark the new Station Square and refurbished Station just beyond. The north elevation of Plot C will be further distinguished through modulation or variety of some manner. At maximum parameters, part of Plot A (green) and D (pink) will be glimpsed beside these new landmark buildings, adding depth to the new cluster form. The Western Tower will be replaced with a group of high quality buildings which will signal the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area and which will add positively to the urban skyline of Reading.

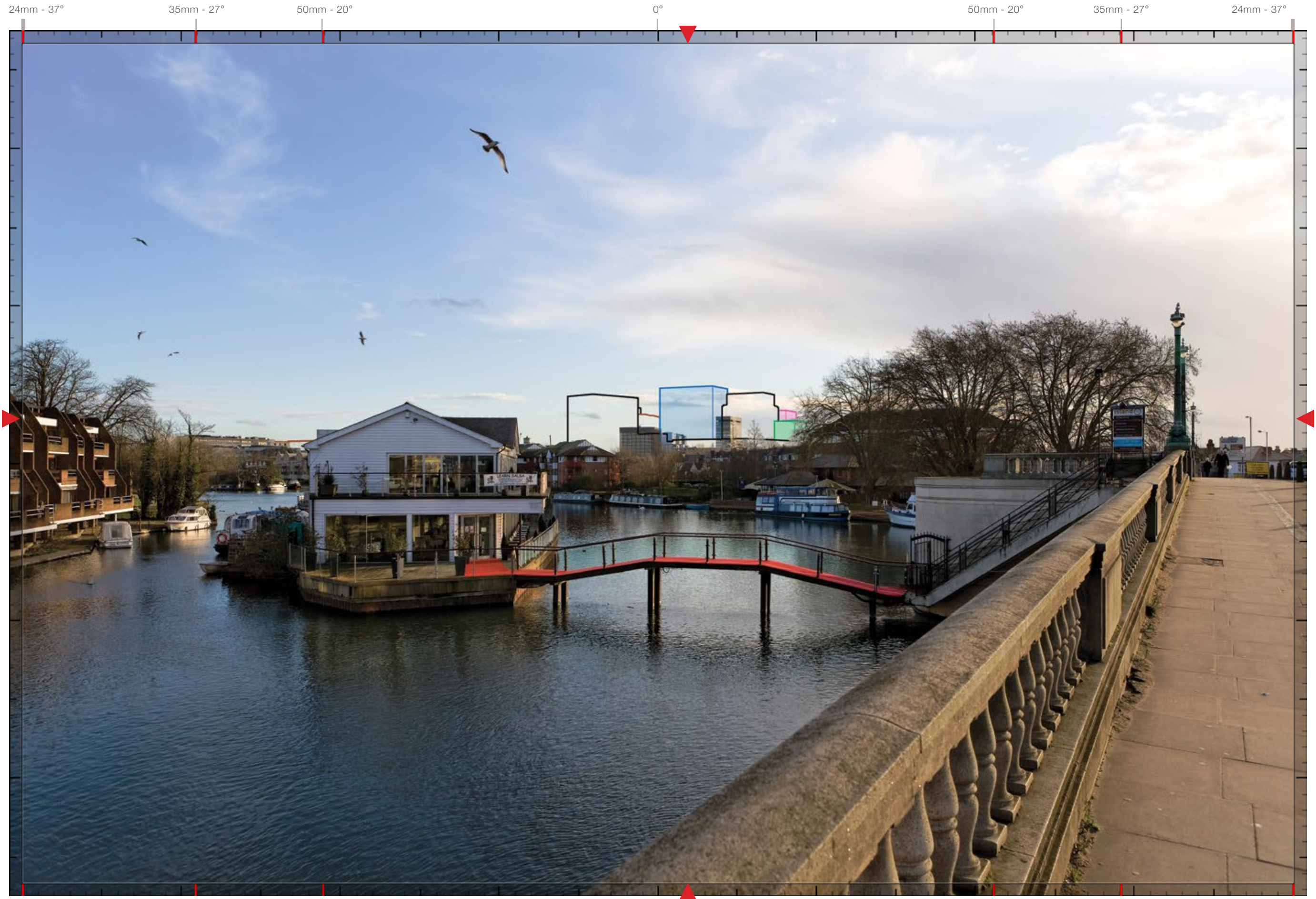
The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

Cumulative
The tallest block of the Royal Mail Group development will conceal much of the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown) and will appear slightly lower than, and to the left of, Plot C (blue) of the Proposed Development. Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear adjacent to the right side of Plot C (blue) and slightly lower in height. Together, these new buildings will have a compact and slightly rounded skyline profile, landmarking the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area and adding positively to the urban skyline of Reading.

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial



18a

View from war memorial
on north riverbank of
thames



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view from within the Christchurch Meadows looks south east towards the Site. The viewing position within the Meadows is adjacent to the War Memorial. The river and its birdlife dominates the foreground, with grass banks and some trees on both sides. The residential developments on the south side are of distinct styles whilst visually related through mass, vertical detailing, a predominance of brick and a roofline characterised by pitches set at varied angles. The tops of more distant, taller buildings can be seen beyond this roofline, including One Reading Central and the Blade, to the far left, and Thames Tower and Western Tower in the centre. The brown wireline indicates the full extent of the height and mass of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete.

Proposed

As in view 18, the upper part of the north elevations of Plots C (blue) and B (yellow) will appear beside the Thames Tower, in the centre distance of the view. They will share a calm architectural language whilst appearing separated by a stepped roofline, through which the tallest building Plot C (blue), will landmark the new Station Square and refurbished Station just beyond. The north elevation of Plot C will be further distinguished through modulation or variety of some manner. At maximum parameters, part of Plot A (green) and D (pink) will be glimpsed beside these new landmark buildings, adding depth to the new cluster form. At minimum parameters, Plot A (green) and D (pink) would not be seen and little of B (yellow) would appear above the roofline. The Western Tower will be replaced with a group of high quality buildings which will signal the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area and which will add positively to the urban skyline of Reading. The immediate setting and character of the River will not be harmed.

The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: minor to moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

Cumulative
The tallest block of the Royal Mail Group development will fully conceal the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown) and will appear slightly lower than, and to the left of, Plot C (blue) of the Proposed Development. Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear adjacent to the right side of Plot C (blue) and slightly lower in height. Together, these new buildings will have a compact and slightly rounded skyline profile, landmarking the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area and adding positively to the urban skyline of Reading.

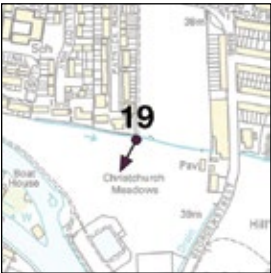
Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial



Cumulative view

19

Christchurch Meadows



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This viewing position, like view 18a above, is located in Christchurch Meadows and looks south and slightly west towards the Site. The foreground is open grassland with a meandering tarmac path on the left. A playground is in the centre of the view, largely hidden by the construction works visible within the view and with the river largely out of sight just beyond, separating it from the buildings seen through the trees lining its edge. They are largely broad brick buildings of about six storeys with a white clad office building, Clearwater Court, on the far right. In summer, much less of these buildings would be visible. Rising above them in the mid-distance are two taller buildings, Thames Tower and Western Tower. At the foot of the Western Tower is the new Station Bridge. Further left, the brown wireline indicates the full extent of the height and mass of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete.

Proposed

As in views 18 and 18a, the upper part of the north elevations of Plots C (blue) and B (yellow) will appear beside the Thames Tower, in the centre distance of the view. They will share a calm architectural language whilst appearing separated by a stepped roofline, through which the tallest building Plot C (blue) will landmark the new Station Square and refurbished Station just beyond. The north elevations of Plot C (blue) and Plot B (yellow) will be distinguished through modulation or variety of some manner. Plot A (green) will be seen to the right of C, adding depth to the new cluster form. The Western Tower will be replaced with a group of high quality buildings which will signal the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area and which will add positively to the urban skyline of Reading. The immediate setting and open character of the Meadows and the River will not be harmed.

The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: minor to moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear adjacent to the right side of Plot C (blue) and slightly lower in height. The tallest block of the Royal Mail Group development will almost fully conceal Plot A (green), to the right of Plot B. The redeveloped Thames Tower (brown) will appear slightly lower than, and to the left of, Plot C (blue) of the Proposed Development. Together, these new buildings will have a compact skyline profile, landmarking the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area and adding positively to the urban skyline of Reading. From here, the separate identities of the proposed and consented buildings will be discernible and together they will replace the isolated forms of the Western Tower and Thames Tower with a new layer of urban development in the mid-distance

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial



Cumulative view

20

Reading Bridge near Vastern Road



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks south west towards the site, from the southern end of Reading Bridge near to the roundabout junction with Vastern Road. The foreground of the view is dominated by the roundabout and connecting roads. Beyond the roundabout to the left, earthbanks lead up to rail lines which lead into Reading Station. Beyond the railway to the far left is a broad office building clad in polished pink granite known as Apex Plaza and on the right of the view, a five storey brick and concrete multi storey car park. In the distance, rises the squat tower form of Thames Tower and the tip of Western Tower. The brown wireline indicates the full extent of the height and mass of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete.

Proposed

The east and north elevations of Plot C (blue) will become the tallest building in view and a new marker for the refurbished Reading Station. Stepping down to the west, Plot B (yellow) and, at maximum parameters, Plot G (purple) will add depth to the new cluster form. The Western Tower will be replaced with a group of high quality buildings which will signal the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area and which will add positively to the urban skyline of Reading. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

Cumulative
Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear adjacent to the right side of Plot C (blue) and slightly lower in height. 29-35 Station Road (black) will have a slender silhouette and will appear just left of the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown). The tallest block of the Royal Mail Group development will appear lower and further right. These consented buildings will have a looser group character on the skyline from this perspective and will be more individually identifiable. Together they will landmark the new Station Square and adjacent refurbished Station. The high quality of their designs will add positively to the existing urban skyline.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial

35mm - 27°

50mm - 20°

0°

50mm - 20°

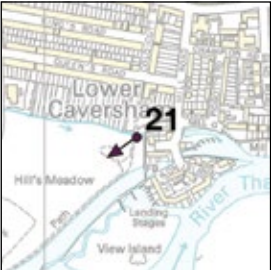
35mm - 27°



Cumulative view

21

Hills Meadow



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view

Future baseline

This viewing position is located in Hills Meadow, on the north bank of the River Thames and looks south west towards the Site. The river is just beyond the frame to the left. It is lined by a tarmac path with benches facing the river and mature trees at its edge. The rolling grassland and unkempt shrubs provide a simply landscaped green space and at present almost no built form is visible beyond the mid-distant tree line even in winter. Only the very tip of the Western Tower can be discerned at the centre. The brown wireline indicates the full extent of the height and mass of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete.

Proposed

In winter, the top of Plot C (blue) will be visible at both minimum and maximum parameters and will be a recognisable form adjacent to the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown). It will be visibly distant and its calm and light architectural expression will not intrude on the relaxed character of this green space, views from which are largely directed south towards the river. At maximum parameters, Plot B (yellow) will appear beside C (blue) and together they will form a new distant marker for the refurbished Station and the regenerated sites around it. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: its impact will be the same as that of Plot E in the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: minor to moderate, beneficial



Proposed view

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear adjacent to the right side of Plot C (blue) and slightly lower in height. Together they will landmark the new Station Square and adjacent refurbished Station and will have a slightly rounded skyline profile in conjunction with the adjacent redeveloped Thames Tower (brown).

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial



22

Kings Meadow



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

The Kings Meadow is designated locally as a Major Landscape Feature. This view looks across the playing field in its southern half, towards the Site. The foreground of the view is dominated by the green expanse of the playing field which is bound on all sides by mature trees. A small brick pavilion lies to the right of the playing field; this is the Kings Meadow Swimming Pool and is listed at Grade II. The winter trees at the perimeter allow partial views to the buildings which form this open space’s existing urban context. On the far left of the frame, Energis House (brown wireline) is under construction and will be of a height related to its immediate neighbour when complete. In front of that building, and addressing the Meadow on the left, is a line of low pitched roofed office buildings, known as Napier Court. Behind these rises One Reading Central, a cubic office building, at 10 storeys, and to its right, Apex House, a pink granite-clad office block. In the centre of the view are the distinctive forms of Thames Tower and the Western Tower. The brown wireline at the centre of the view indicates the full extent of the height and mass of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete. Further right, and mainly hidden by trees are Kings Meadow House and, behind it, North Reading Bridge House.

Proposed

Much of the east and north elevations of Plot C (blue) will be visible at both minimum and maximum parameters and will be a recognisable landmark for the refurbished Reading Station. Stepping down to the west and south, Plot B (yellow), G (purple) and D (pink) will add depth to the new cluster form. The redeveloped Thames Tower (brown) will be set close to the left side of Plot C (blue) and will appear as part of the overall group of new buildings on the skyline. Together, they will signal the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area and will add positively to the urban skyline of Reading. They will relate to the existing layers of built form in view beyond the perimeter of this locally

designated landscape and will not harm the setting of the Grade II listed swimming pool building. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: minor to moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear adjacent to the right side of Plot C (blue) and slightly lower in height. 29-35 Station Road (black) will have a slender silhouette and will appear just left of the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown). These consented buildings will have a looser group character on the skyline from this easterly perspective and will be more individually identifiable. Together they will landmark the new Station Square and adjacent refurbished Station. The high quality of their designs will add positively to the existing urban skyline.

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial



Cumulative view

23

Forbury Road near
Reading Prison



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks due west towards the Site from the roundabout junction of Forbury Road with Kenavon Drive. This is a distinctly urban view with a mixed character of built form and dominated in the foreground by the road, roundabout and associated street furniture. The most eye-catching feature is the blank, dark brick wall on the left surrounding Reading Prison, which is Grade II listed. Beyond, and also listed at Grade II, is the less imposing stone form and bell tower of the Church of St James. The wall and Church lie within the area designated as the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Reading Abbey. To the right, the broad mass of Energis House is under construction and nearly built (a brown wireline indicates its full mass when complete). Beyond is the lighter form of One Reading Central. They are both characterised by bands of tinted glazing. Further in the distance can be seen the pink granite cladding of Apex house, the darker form of the Thames Tower and the white banded Western Tower at centre. The brown wireline at the centre of the view indicates the full extent of the height and mass of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete.

Proposed

Only Plot C (blue) of the Proposed Development will be seen on this approach from the east. It will appear beyond the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown). At maximum parameters, its narrow east elevation will rise to a height similar to One Reading Central, providing a new slender marker for the regenerated Station and surrounding area and adding positively to the urban skyline of Reading. The setting of the listed prison wall and Church of St James will not be harmed. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: minor to moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

29-35 Station Road will appear to the left of Plot C (blue), and at a similar height to its maximum parameters, consolidating the skyline cluster form of the development emerging in the Station area.

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial

35mm - 27°

50mm - 20°

0°

50mm - 20°

35mm - 27°



Cumulative view

24

St Laurence's Church



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

St Laurence's Church was the former gatehouse of the Abbey and is behind this viewing position which looks northwest across the Market Place towards the Site. The Market Place in the foreground is pedestrianised and forms a focal point of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area, in which this viewing position lies. This is an attractive central space, without traffic and with a number of the town centre's significant historic buildings in view. It has simple hard landscaping with raised brick planters, a number of mature trees and a statue of Queen Victoria which is listed at Grade II. Most prominent and on the right is Reading Council Chamber, which is listed at Grade II*. It has richly ornamented red and grey brickwork and two steeply pitched-roof towers, one containing a clock. To the left of the trees in the centre, and appearing much lower due to their distance, brick buildings front the south side of Friar Street. They are three to four storeys and have shops at the ground floor, several of the more distant buildings are listed at Grade II. Rising above them at the centre is the light blue Angel House, the Novotel. The brown wireline at the centre of the view indicates the full extent of the height and mass of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete. On the left of the frame is a row of four storey brick buildings with shops at street level which curves out of view into Friar Street.

Proposed

The top of Plot C (blue) will be visible beyond the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown) at both minimum and maximum parameters and will be a recognisable new landmark for the new Station Square and refurbished Station just beyond. At maximum parameters, stepping down to the west and south, Plots B (yellow), D (pink) and F (orange) will appear beside and beyond the Novotel, adding depth to the new cluster form. They will share a calm architectural language whilst reading as separate forms with stepped heights rising up to the northeast. Together, they will appear as

a discrete new layer of urban form on the skyline, distinct from the red brick, historic buildings in view and of a high quality which will signal the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area and add positively to the urban skyline of Reading. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: minor to moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

29-35 Station Road will have a slender profile and will appear in front of, and distinct from, the new Thames Tower and Plot C (blue) of the Proposed Development. Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear adjacent to the left side of Plot C (blue) and slightly lower in height. These new buildings will have a compact skyline profile and will together landmark the Station beyond.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial



Cumulative view

25

Station Road B



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks northwest towards the Site from the junction of Friar Street and Station Road. Station Road leads off the right side of the frame and the north side of Friar Street extends along the left of the frame. It is a retail thoroughfare with wide pavements fronted by a mixture of building styles and ages with a varied roofline. Most prominently, the blue and white clad and glazed upper storeys of the Novotel have a number of projecting bays which create a stepped form, rising steeply above the buildings on Friar Street and Station Road and dominating the view. The brown wireline at the far right of the view indicates the full extent of the height and mass of Thames Tower when its redevelopment is complete.

Proposed

Only Plot E (red) of the Proposed Development will be visible on the left side of this view on Friar Street. It will be the same height as in the SH3 Scheme but will extend further westwards to include the adjacent building which has clear horizontal bands of windows and brickwork. From this easterly perspective, the overall stepped mass of Plot E will appear similar to its form in the SH3 Scheme. The southern frontage on Friar Street will appear in line with the small brick listed building (39 Friar Street) on the east side of the entrance to the new Friar's Walk. At the minimum parameters, Plot E (red) will rise little above the existing building's height and will be little noticed, if at all, seen obliquely within this varied street frontage. At the maximum parameters, it will contribute more variation and depth to the existing roofline without dominating the skyline and will act as a local landmark for the new pedestrian route north off Friar Street. To the right, above the roofline on Station Road, the top of Plot C (blue) will landmark the new Station Square and regenerated area just south of the Station, and will assist in forming a separate upper layer of built

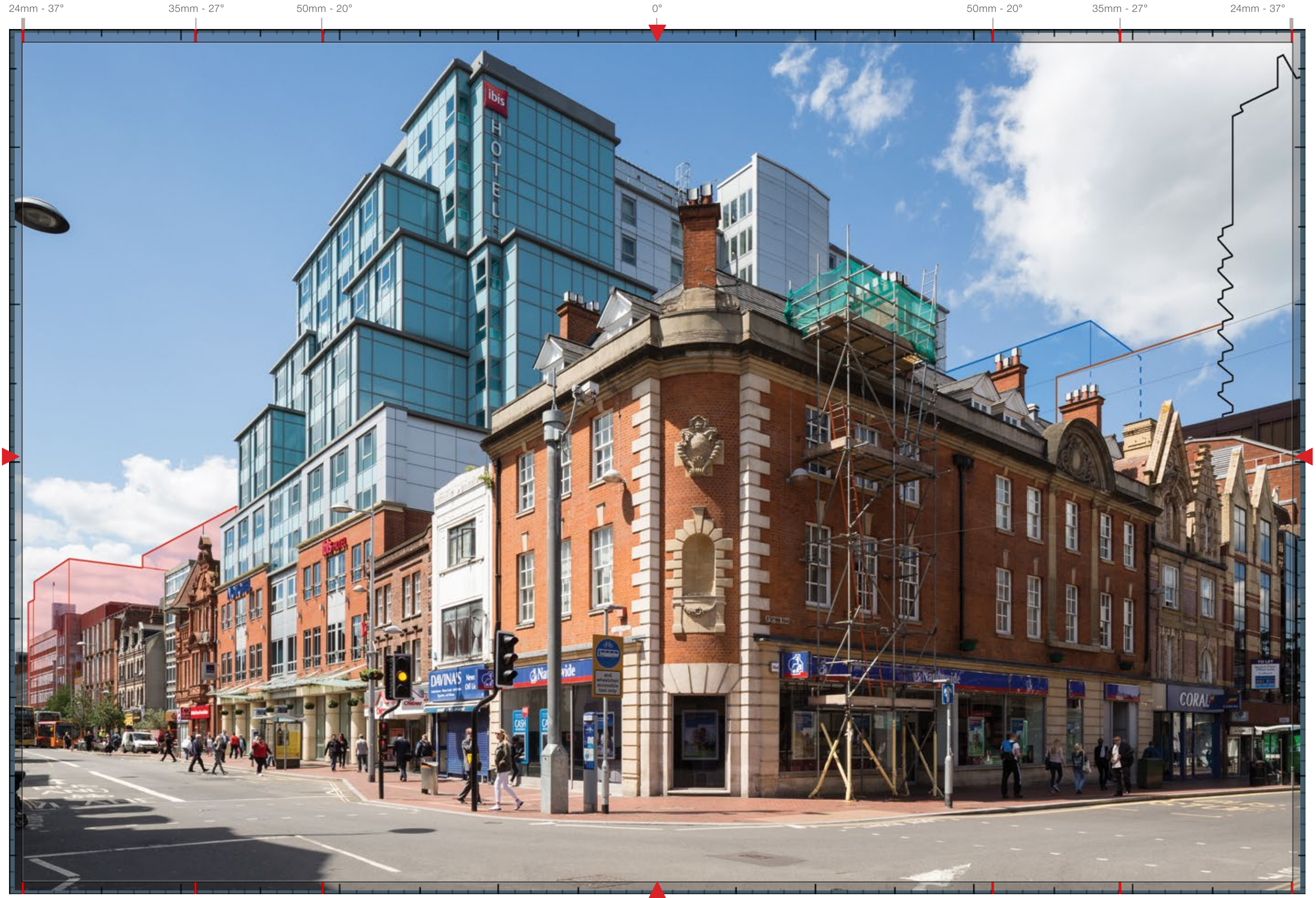
form in view, joining the top of the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown) and helping to separate the Novotel from the predominantly brick frontage at street level. At the minimum parameters, the top of Plot C (blue) is unlikely to be noticed.

Significance of Impact: minor, beneficial

Cumulative

The slender profile of 29-35 Station Road will appear on the far right of the frame, joining this upper tier of modern built form and , together with the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown) and Plot C (blue) of the Proposed Development, marking the Station at the northeast end of the Site.

Significance of Impact: minor, beneficial



Cumulative view

25a

Station Road Looking North



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

The viewing position is the same as for view 25 above, at the junction of Friar Street with Station Road. This view looks north along Station Road. Station Road has a mixed architectural character. The corner buildings on the left and right of the frame are traditional red brick façade with stone at ground level and neo-Georgian in style. The buildings beyond on the west side of the road have prominent gabled roofs, the furthest two are richly detailed and part of a Grade II listed building, the two before it are part of a late 20th century building. Further north is a red brick 1980s office building with steep metal mansard roof and a plain brick and clad 1960s building adjacent to the taller and brown opaque mass of Thames Tower at the end of the street (under scaffolding in this view). Thames Tower is presently being redeveloped and the brown wireline indicates the full extent of its height and mass when complete. On the far left, the blue and white clad top of Angel House (the Novotel) is rises above the red brick buildings which front the street. In the middle distance, partly obscured by a lamppost at this point, is the Grade II listed Station building. Although small in scale and visibly distant, its broad, two-storey mass and white clock tower effectively terminate the vista. The buildings on the right side of Station Road, to the east, are seen obliquely, with part of a flank wall visible where the building line steps in and the pavement narrows.

Proposed

At maximum parameters, the top of Plot C (blue) of the Proposed Development will appear to the right of Angel House (the Novotel), above the roofline of buildings fronting Station Road and just beyond the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown). It will landmark the new Station Square and regenerated area just south of the Station, and will assist in forming a separate upper layer of built form in view, separating the Novotel further from the predominantly brick frontage at street

level. At the minimum parameters, the top of Plot C (blue) is unlikely to be noticed. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: minor, beneficial

Cumulative

The slender profile of 29-35 Station Road will appear in the centre of the frame, joining this upper tier of modern built form and, together with the redeveloped Thames Tower (brown) and Plot C (blue) of the Proposed Development, marking the Station at the northeast end of the Site.

Significance of Impact: minor, beneficial

24mm - 37°

35mm - 27°

50mm - 20°

0°

50mm - 20°

35mm - 27°

24mm - 37°



Cumulative view

26

Friar Street looking west



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view is west of view 25, closer to the Site on the south pavement of Friar Street, just to the east of Merchants Place. Friar Street is a retail thoroughfare with widened pavements and restricted traffic flow, and fronted on both sides by an assortment of building styles and ages. They are largely three to six storeys in height and lower on the south side. The brown wireline which terminates the southern frontage indicates the full extent of the mass and height of Phase 2 of Chatham Place when complete [missing from view]. On the right is a six storey concrete framed office building beyond and, beyond, a terrace of three storey dormered buildings in grey and red brick, then a modern brick building with projecting bay windows and, to the east of the site, a small three storey brick building which is listed Grade II. Further along the north side of the street are the buildings which currently occupy the Site: a five storey and flat-roofed building and, beyond, a 1960s flat-roofed office building of six storeys. The north street frontage peters out towards Greyfriars Road to the west.

Proposed

Only Plot E (red) of the Proposed Development will be visible in this view. It will be the same height as in the SH3 Scheme but will extend further westwards to include the adjacent building which has clear horizontal bands of windows and brickwork. From this easterly perspective, the overall stepped mass of Plot E will appear similar to its form in the SH3 Scheme. The southern frontage on Friar Street will be set in line with the listed building to its east, with the entrance to the new Friar's Walk in between. At the minimum parameters, Plot E (red) will rise to a similar height as its closest neighbours. At the maximum parameters, it will appear taller than the buildings further west and will provide a local marker for the entrance to the new Friar's Walk. Its stepped roofline will rise up and away from the street front, indicating the new route and

newly regenerated Site beyond. It will be a new high quality building which will add positively to the varied street frontage and will mark the entrance to the new pedestrian route northwards through the Site and the new public spaces and activity located there.

Significance of Impact: minor to moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

No change.

Significance of Impact: minor, beneficial

24mm - 37°

35mm - 27°

50mm - 20°

0°

50mm - 20°

35mm - 27°

24mm - 37°



Cumulative view

27

Union Street



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks due north along Union Street, a narrow pedestrian passage orientated north-south and leading between Broad Street and Friar Street. There are two storey buildings on both sides, which are only seen obliquely due to the narrowness of the street. The buildings are either brick or white rendered and have shop fronts at street level with residences above. The channelled view has no clear point of termination due to the shop signs and awnings, but a bridging brick building and roof on Friar Street can be discerned between them, with some taller rooftops above.

Proposed

At maximum parameters, the tops of Plot F (orange), G (purple) and C (blue) will add to the existing layers of rooftops in view. The different character and heights of these buildings will add to that visual texture and to the enclosed character of the passageway. Visible at both maximum and minimum parameters, the top of Plot C (blue) will also provide a helpful marker for the new Station Square and refurbished Station beyond. The proposed amended Plot E will not be visible in this view: the impact of the proposed Development will be the same as that of the SH3 Scheme (as assessed in the 2013 ES).

Significance of Impact: minor to moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

No change.

Significance of Impact: minor to moderate, beneficial



28

Junction of Castle Street and St Mary’s Butts



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This viewing location, on Castle Street at its junction with St Mary’s Butts, is situated in the St. Mary’s Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area and looks northeast towards the Site. The Reading Tall Buildings Strategy (2008) describes the view as follows:

“The main component of the view is St. Mary’s Church which is the tallest building on the skyline. The low rise buildings on St. Mary’s Butts, trees within the graveyard and the street furniture are all secondary elements of the view. All of these features are of a significantly smaller height and scale than the church tower.” (Ref 1-12, p.39)

St Mary’s Church is listed at Grade I and the associated buildings beyond are listed at Grade II. To the left of the view is the Horn Inn, a Grade II listed 16th century, timber framed public house.

Proposed

From this south-westerly point, and at maximum parameters, the tops of almost all the Plots of the Proposed Development would be visible. The west tip of the tallest Plot C (blue) would be visible at both minimum and maximum parameters and would provide a new marker for the refurbished Station and new Station Square. It would appear directly adjacent to the Tower of the Grade I listed St Mary’s Church, but would in no way dominate its setting, and its calm and light architectural expression would ensure that it appeared as a recessive feature on the skyline, in the mid-distance. The other Plots would step down from the greater height of C (blue) to the south and west. The amended Plot E will be the same height as in the SH3 Scheme but will extend further westwards: the overall composition of the SH3 Scheme will not be altered. Together, the new buildings will have a dense and richly layered cluster form on the skyline, marking the regeneration

of the Station and surrounding area. In summer, much of Plot C (blue) would be concealed by the trees in the graveyard of St Mary’s Church and at minimum parameters, the lower Plots would not be visible and the taller – B (yellow) and C (blue) – would be little noticed in the distance.

Significance of Impact: minor to moderate, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters, with some articulation at upper levels. It will appear adjacent to the left side of Plot C (blue) and slightly lower in height. These new buildings will have a compact skyline profile and will together landmark the Station beyond. They will be clearly visible as a separate element in the existing wider urban setting of the Grade I Listed Church and will not harm the viewer’s appreciation of that landmark historic building or the profile and prominence of its Tower in particular.

Significance of Impact: moderate, beneficial

24mm - 37°

35mm - 27°

50mm - 20°

0°

50mm - 20°

35mm - 27°

24mm - 37°



Cumulative view

29

Station Hill



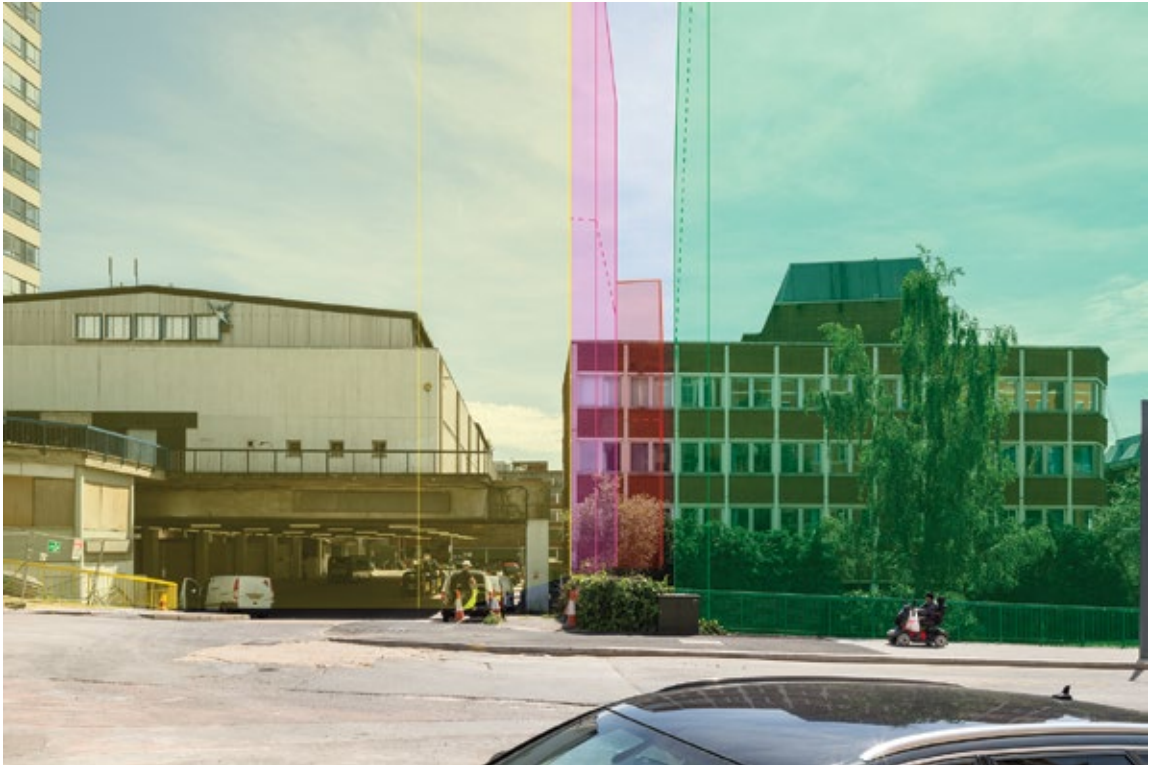
View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This close view is from the western end of Station Hill in front of the Station and looks south. To the left of the view is the Old Bus Station; a corrugated metal warehouse shed raised up over the bus garage. Just visible to the far left is part of Western Tower. On the right side of the view, and partly concealed by shrubs and trees, is a broad, four storey brick and concrete office building, Xafinity House, with a taller central element with grey mansard roof rising above.

Proposed

A new route southwards from Station Hill will be provided between Plots B (yellow) and A (green) as part of the consented SH3 Scheme. A sliver of the amended Plot E (red) will be seen beyond Plot D (pink) and beside it the new pedestrian route will be seen continuing southwards along the new Friar's Walk to Friar Street. The proposed amended Plot E is the same as the consented Plot E in height and is extended westwards only: the proposed amendments to Plot E will not therefore be visible in this view.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial

Cumulative

Plot B (Reserved Matters Application) (black) will be of a mass similar to the consented maximum parameters of Plot B and will not alter the overall composition or character of this view.

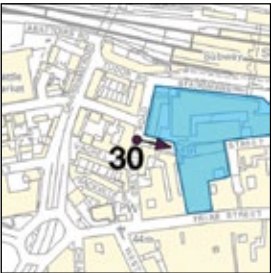
Significance of Impact: major, beneficial



Cumulative view

30

Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view looks east along Garrard Street from Greyfriars Road, towards the rears of the buildings at the centre of this urban block which is bounded by Garrard Street to the north, Greyfriars Road to the west, Friar Street to the south and Merchant's Place to the east. The view is framed by Xafinity House, a five storey red brick and concrete office building to the left, and Greyfriars House, a taller office building with tinted glazing, grey panels and black and grey polished granite to the ground floor. Further along the street to the left is the projecting flat canopy of the Old Bus Station shed and, rising much taller beyond, the Garrard Street multi-storey car park, which bridges over the road. To the right of the car park are the rear elevations of retail and commercial buildings fronting Friar Street. This is very much a backlands view, set off the main nearby thoroughfares. Thames Tower is presently being redeveloped and the brown wireline indicates the full extent of its height and mass when complete.

Proposed

Plots A (green) and D (pink) of the consented SH3 Scheme will provide a new continuous and legible frontage to Garrard Street on the left, and the northern elevations of Plots E (red) and F (orange) will follow the route of the road on the right. The proposed amended Plot E (red) will be the same height as the consented Plot E, with its mass extended further westwards. The maximum and minimum proposed heights for Plot E (red) will relate to those of the adjacent Plot F (orange), stepping down from the consented taller plots to the south. The existing jumbled, backlands character of Garrard Street will be transformed by the consented plots of the SH3 Scheme and the proposed amended Plot E (red), and well-defined routes between the plots will improve the permeability of the wider area.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial

Cumulative

No change.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial



Cumulative view

31

Garrard Street Tunnel



View Location



Camera Location



Future baseline view



Proposed view

Future baseline

This view is from the north pavement of Garrard Street, in front of the multi-storey car park, which bridges over the road (behind this viewpoint). To the left are the rear elevations of retail and commercial buildings fronting Friar Street and then Greyfriars House, an eight storey office building with tinted glazing, grey panels and black and grey polished granite to the ground floor. The foreground of the view is hard surfaced open space in front of the Old Bus Station shed, just out of view on the right, with Xafinity House, a five storey red brick and concrete office building, beyond. Between Greyfriars House and Xafinity House, on the west side of Greyfriars Road, is No. 9 Greyfriars Road, which is a chunky concrete framed four storey office building with brick panels below the windows.

Proposed

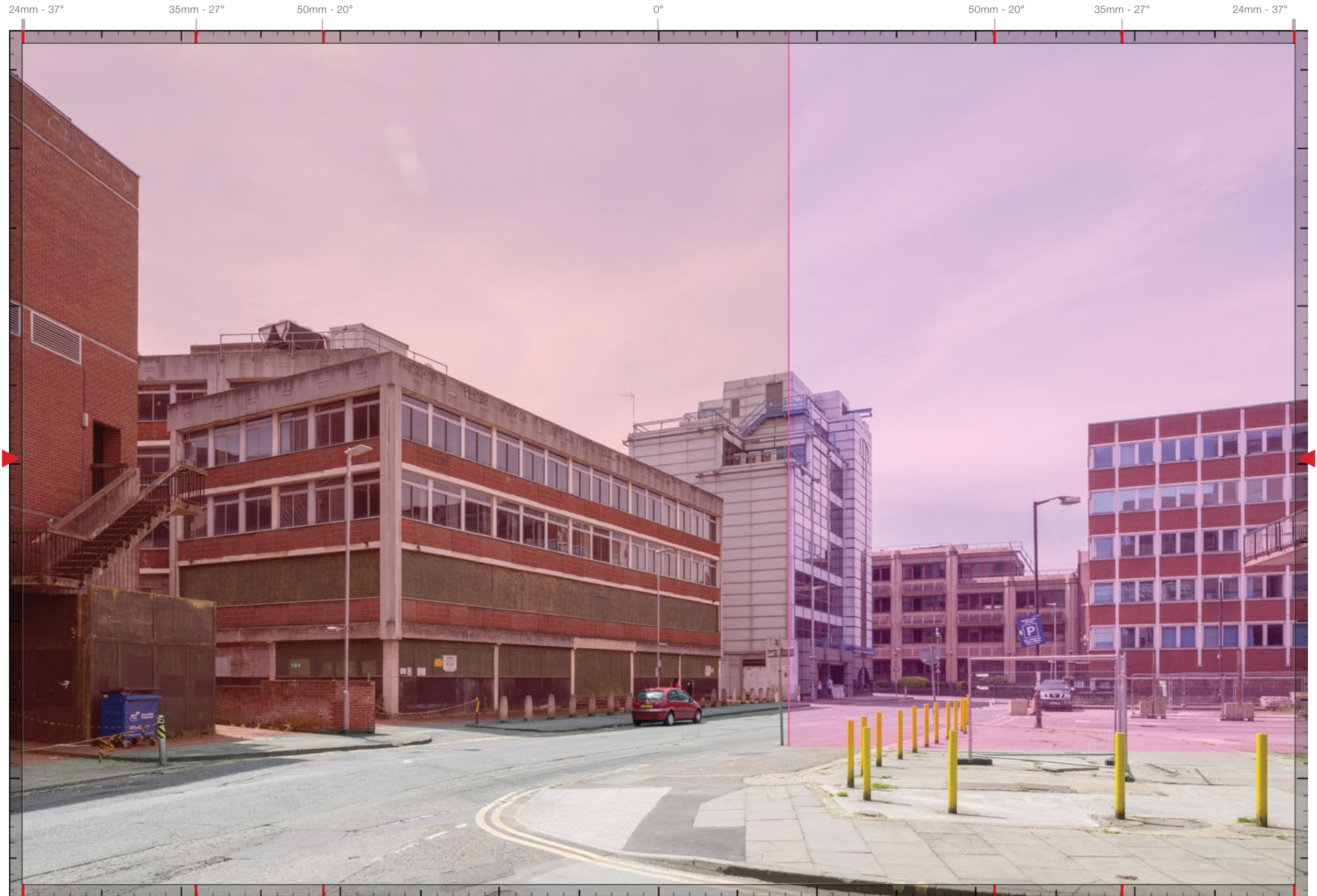
The consented Plot D (pink) of the SH3 Scheme will create a new, well-defined frontage to the north side of Garrard Street. On the left of the view, the amended proposed Plot E will have the same minimum and maximum parameter heights as Plot E of the consented SH3 Scheme but its mass will extend further westwards. The existing jumbled, backlands character of Garrard Street will be transformed by the consented plots of the SH3 Scheme and the proposed amended Plot E (red), and well-defined routes between the plots will improve the permeability of the wider area.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial

Cumulative

No change.

Significance of Impact: major, beneficial



Cumulative view

Chapter 7

CONCLUSIONS

AND RESIDUAL

IMPACTS

Do Nothing – No Development

- 7.1 If the Proposed Development were not to take place the existing townscape character of the Site would remain broadly similar. It would continue to be a gap in the urban and public realm fabric and have a negative effect on the quality and character of the surrounding area.

Interim Condition: Temporary Events Space

- 7.2 An Interim Condition of the Proposed Development is a multi-functional events space which was the subject of a separate planning application which gained approval in January 2014. It will be simply landscaped with hard and soft surfaces and planting and will significantly enhance the quality of the immediate context of the building Plots during their phased construction. The space has been designed to accommodate a number of purposes, detailed in the Planning Statement prepared by Quod. It has also been designed to integrate with the Station redevelopment, and will help to create a series of interlinked spaces and to improve the permeability of the surrounding area. The planting and activity that the Temporary Events Space will bring will have a beneficial impact on the setting of the listed Station and the character of the surrounding townscape that people will experience and view as they arrive at Reading by train.

Construction Impacts of the Proposed Development

- 7.3 The impacts on the local area during construction on townscape and public realm character will result in a temporary moderate adverse visual impact because of the disturbance and visual impact on the Site and in the surrounding area; for example, the presence of cranes, deliveries and service connections. This impact would be temporary and is not considered major due to the adverse visual impact of the Site in its existing state.
- 7.4 Construction impacts will have a minor impact on distant views due to the requirement for cranes and the large scale of the Proposed Development which will be visible as it is built, particularly in distant views from elevated points.

Operational Impacts of the Proposed Development

- 7.5 The assessment of the Proposed Development on townscape and visual impact has been undertaken with particular regard to:

- the size and massing of the maximum and minimum parameters of the Proposed Development and points in between;
- the architectural styles and palettes of materials identified for each plot in the DAS and Design Codes documents;
- the arrangement of routes, landscaped spaces and active uses at street level;
- guidance for plant and other material at roof level;
- other schemes under construction and consented buildings visible in relation to the Proposed Development.

- 7.6 The Site has a low sensitivity to change. This is because it comprises a number of dilapidated buildings, including the Western Tower, and boarded-up buildings with large parts of the site inaccessible to pedestrians. It is also set within a mixed quality townscape, on the north side being adjacent to the Thames Tower site and close to the Grade II listed Station. It is recognised, however, that the Proposed Development will have a substantial and permanent effect on the existing townscape and public realm character.

Townscape impacts

- 7.7 The principal townscape changes of the Proposed Development on the local area will be:
- The creation of two new landscaped areas of public realm, Station Square and Central Square;
 - New pedestrian routes both east-west and north-south through the Site which connect the main shopping thoroughfare to the new bus interchange and refurbished Station;
 - The replacement of office and retail buildings on Site with buildings of masses and designs that will be more viable to owners and ensure occupation, use and, therefore, vitality;
 - Buildings which will be of appropriate and high quality architectural styles and materials, relating to their specific contexts in different parts of the Site and reflecting their different uses;
 - An appropriate frontage on the south side in relation to Friar Street and the adjacent listed building;
 - An appropriate frontage to the north and the bus interchange and Station refurbishment works currently in progress;
 - A marker for the new bus interchange, refurbished Station and new Station Square;
 - Enhancement of the perception of Reading, in particular for rail users; and
 - The positive visual effect of the Proposed Development on the streets surrounding the Site through the quality of its design and materials and through the increased activity and illumination brought day and night.

7.8 The Proposed Development will also have a significant impact on distant views in the wider area. The massing has been arranged to create a new, attractive, landmark cluster form on the Reading skyline that will relate positively to other consented development and will landmark the newly refurbished Station and Station Square by appearing as a compact and cohesive identifiable group on the skyline. Plot C will be the tallest Plot and will be seen alone and in relation to the second tallest, B, in a number of distant views, adding to the existing urban skyline and marking the Station in a wide area. In views where more plots are visible, they will have an attractively layered and stepped composition that will give depth to the cluster form and will form a new, cohesive element to the regenerated Reading skyline.

Heritage impacts

- 7.9 There are no conservation areas and listed buildings on Site. However, the setting of designated heritage assets in the local and wider area has been taken into account during the design process.
- 7.10 The closest designated heritage asset to the Site is the adjacent listed building at 39 Friar Street (see views 12 and 26). The south elevation of Plot E has been brought forward to share the same building line as the listed building and is set 8 metres away from it by Friars Walk, the entrance to which is in between. Both the minimum and maximum parameters of Plot E step down in height from the taller buildings in the north, providing a mediation in height with the listed building and the frontage on Friar Street, whilst still potentially providing a marker for the new pedestrian route (in the maximum parameters). The palette of materials of Plot E and F, to the rear of the listed building, will also be more earthbound than the commercial development to the north, and will have more articulated, explicitly residential elevations at upper level. The proposed amended Plot E will have the same character and will be of the same minimum and maximum heights as Plot E of the SH3 Scheme: it will have the same impact on the setting of the adjacent listed building. The newly exposed west elevation of the listed building, fronting the south end of Friar’s Walk, will gain a new and positive setting.
- 7.11 North of the Site and facing Plot C and B is the Grade II listed Reading Station. Due to its distance from the Site, the listed Station will not be seen in a direct visual relationship with the Proposed Development. However, the Proposed Development will be prominent in views south from within its setting. The massing and materials of the Proposed Development will not relate directly to the listed building, however the significance of the listed building will not be harmed: it is a symmetrically composed building which relates primarily to the open space it faces and to the other rail associated structures. The new Station Square will extend and improve the public realm beside the Station and the north elevations of Plots B and C will provide clear and attractive new frontages to Station Hill road, with active uses at street level bringing vitality to that area. Due to the high quality of the buildings, spaces and routes proposed, the setting of the listed Station will be greatly enhanced

- 7.12 The statue of King Edward VII on the roundabout at the north end of Station Road is also close to the Site. However, it is primarily seen in approaches from the south or east, where it will be seen against the backdrop of Thames Tower. The part of the Site north of Thames Tower accommodates the new Station Square, which will contribute positively to the local setting of the listed statue. The buildings of the Proposed Development will have no impact on the immediate setting or significance of the listed statue.
- 7.13 The settings of the listed buildings fronting Station Road will be little impacted if at all by the Proposed Development. As views 25 and 25a show, only the top of the maximum parameters of Plot C may be seen and it will appear set well back from those listed buildings and will not harm their significance.
- 7.14 The Proposed Development will have little impact on the setting of the listed buildings at the east end of Friar Street except when looking from the open space in front of the Grade II listed town hall (view 25). From here, at maximum parameters, the existing Novotel on the skyline will be much hidden and the tops of Plots B, D and C will appear as a discrete new layer of urban form on the skyline, distinct from the red brick, historic buildings in view and – at both maximum and minimum parameters – providing a new high quality marker for the Station. View 25, from outside the Grade I St Laurence Church, is in the north part of the Market Place/ London Street Conservation Area and is dominated by the listed town hall building in the foreground: the setting of all of these historic buildings enhanced. The small part of the Proposed Development visible in the mid-distance will add positively to the existing urban context of these listed buildings and the conservation area through its massing and the high quality architectural expression and materials palettes set out in the Design Code documents.
- 7.15 To the east of the Site, only Plot C will be visible in relation to the setting of the Grade II listed Reading Prison wall and the Grade II listed Church of St James (view 23). As View 23 shows, the existing setting of these listed buildings is of disparate built form and is significantly detracted by the adjacent major road. The narrow east elevation of Plot C addresses this view and it will rise to a similar height as existing modern buildings in the mid-distance and will provide a new slender marker for the regenerated Station and surrounding area: the setting of these listed buildings will not be harmed.
- 7.16 To the southwest of the Site, at maximum parameters, the tops of almost all the Plots of the Proposed Development would be visible close to the tower of the Grade I listed St Mary’s church, at the heart of the St Mary’s/ Castle Street Conservation Area (view 28). Together they would have a dense and richly layered cluster form on the skyline, marking the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area, and would appear much lower (because more distant) and separate to the Church tower. At minimum parameters, only part of Plot C would be seen, and in summer it would be largely concealed by trees. The impact on the setting of the Grade I listed Church and the Conservation Area would be moderate and most and entirely beneficial.

7.17 The Proposed Development will be visible in some views from St Peter’s Conservation Area, to the north of the Site. View 3 is from the churchyard of the Grade II* listed Church of St Peter, which provides a position slightly elevated from the river below. From here, the tops of Plots A, B, C and D will become the tallest buildings in view through the winter trees in the middle ground. However, they will be visibly distant forms and will be of a related, calm architectural expression that will ensure that they have a discrete presence on the skyline. The existing Western Tower on Site will be replaced with a group of high quality buildings which will signal the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area beyond and will add positively to the distant urban context of this historic place.

Visual Impacts

Local views

- 7.18 Due to the scale of the Proposed Development, it will have a moderate to major, beneficial impact on all local views in the close vicinity of the Site in which it is clearly visible. That will be primarily from the Station surrounds in the north and from streets orientated towards the Site in the west. From the south and east of the Site, views of the Proposed Development will be very restricted and moderate at most. These impacts have been assessed in section 6 and found to be entirely beneficial.
- 7.19 In close views from the west (views 10, 11, 14, 15 and 16), Plot A will be the most visible form, fronting the west of the Site, with the maximum parameter tops of other Plots rising above. If built out to the maximum parameters, the tops of Plots A, D, B and C will appear as a tight group, their different heights and massing adding depth to the skyline form and rising towards Plot C to mark the northeast end of the Site at the Station. The streets to the west of the Site have a fragmented appearance and are characterised by varied housing and light industrial buildings and spaces, the setting of which will be positively transformed by the Proposed Development.
- 7.20 Due to the embedded nature of the Site, close views on its south side are on Friar Street only. Views 12 and 26 show that only Plot E would be visible on Friar Street. At both minimum and maximum parameters, it would add positively to the varied street frontage and will mark the entrance to the new Friar’s Walk, leading north through the Site and to the new public spaces and activity located there. The proposed amended Plot E would be of the same minimum and maximum heights and character as Plot E in the SH3 Scheme, with its mass extended further westwards: the likely significance of its impact on the character of Friar Street, and on views east and west along the street, will be the same as that of Plot E in the consented SH3 Scheme.
- 7.21 To the east of the Site, only the tip of the maximum parameters of Plot C may be seen on Station Road (views 25 and 25a). If visible, Plot C

will landmark the new Station Square and regenerated area just south of the Station, and will assist in forming a separate upper layer of built form in view, separating the Novotel further from the predominantly brick frontage at street level.

7.22 Views from the north are restricted to positions very close to the Site and the Station, which would be positively transformed by the creation of the new Station Square and routes through the Site, and by the activity introduced by shops and entrances at the street level of Plots C and B, which will address the new bus interchange. Local views further north are restricted by the rail lines and associated land and by the Royal Mail Group site on its north side.

Distant views

7.23 The Proposed Development will be most visible in distant viewpoints from elevated positions or across open spaces. Few such positions were found in the residential areas to the south of Reading and none in the distance to the west. However, a number of open and elevated places were identified to the north and east of the Site from which the Proposed Development would be visible. The impact of the Proposed Development on distant viewpoints has been assessed in section 6 above and, depending on the distance of the viewing position and the height and sensitivity of the built form and spaces in view, it has been found to be negligible to major, and entirely beneficial.

7.24 In almost all views from the north, Plots C and B are the most prominent forms of the Proposed Development, with the tops of the lower Plots, where visible, seen stepping down to the west and the south, creating a tight cluster form on the skyline. The architectural expression and materials palette of the northerly plots of the Proposed Development would be visibly related and together they would have a recognisable skyline form, stepping up to the northeast to mark the refurbished Station. The Western Tower will be replaced with a group of high quality buildings which will signal the regeneration of the Station and surrounding area beyond and will add positively to the urban skyline of Reading.

7.25 In mid-distant views from the east (views 21, 22 and 23), Plot C would be the most prominent Plot, landmarking the refurbished Station, with the other Plot buildings clustered beyond. In the limited views available from the south (view 6), Plot C would also be the most prominent part of the Proposed Development, with Plots B and D stepping down to the west. The lower, southerly Plots G, E and F would have no impact on these more distant vantage points from any direction.

7.26 Overall, and in conjunction with the works in progress to the Station and bus interchange and the proposed and consented large scale development in the area, the Proposed Development will have a positive impact on the setting and perception of Reading by drawing attention to the town centre and linking it visually and physically to the transport interchange. This effect is considered to be major and beneficial.

Impacts of Plot E

7.27 As is evident from the views assessment in section 6 and the conclusions relating to townscape, heritage and visual impacts in the preceding paragraphs, the proposed amended Plot E will have the same significance of impact in conjunction with the other plots of the consented SH3 Scheme as the consented Plot E of the SH3 Scheme. This is because it will have identical minimum and maximum parameter heights and, although broader in width and significantly greater in overall mass, its footprint will maintain the existing adjacent street lines (on Friar Street to the south and Garrard Street to the north). Consequently, the impacts of the Proposed Development set out in the 2013 ES would not be affected by the amendments proposed to Plot E.

Mitigation

7.28 The impacts on the local area during construction on townscape and public realm character will result in a temporary moderate adverse impact because of the disturbance and visual impact on the Site and its surrounds. This will be mitigated by hoarding and other measures to be agreed with RBC. . The Temporary Events Space will also mitigate these adverse effects.

7.29 The operational development would not require mitigation. The potential impacts of the Plot heights and mass, and the principles of their architectural expression and detail, have been considered and adjusted throughout the design process so as to fix a design that will relate positively to its local and wider context.

Residual impacts

7.30 There would be no residual effects beyond those considered in relation to the completed and operational development in section 6 above.

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Cityscape

VERIFIED VIEW

METHODOLOGY

0.1 Methodology overview

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

0.2 View selection

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

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1.0

PHOTOGRAPHY

1.1 Digital photography

With the latest advances in Digital Photography it is now possible to match the quality of plate photography. Due to the added benefits of time saving and flexibility Cityscape now employ full time in-house digital photographers.

1.2 Lenses

For local views a wide angle lens of 24mm or 35mm was used in order to capture as much of the proposal and its surroundings as possible. Intermediate distance views were photographed with a standard 35mm to 70mm. As a guide, the following combinations were used:

Distance to subject	View	Canon Digital SLR, 1DS Mark III and 5D
0 - 800 metres	Local	24mm to 50mm 'L' series
800 to 5000 metres	Intermediate	24mm to 70mm 'L' series zoom

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

1.3 Digital camera

Cityscape used a Canon 1DS (shown in figure 1), Canon Digital SLR, Canon 1DSMK3 or 5D (all full frame digital SLRs) high resolution digital camera for the digital photography. Also used were Canon's 'L' series professional tilt and shift lenses which produce high quality images that are suitable for the camera-matching process without the need for processing and scanning.

1.4 Position, time and date recording

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





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

2.0 // 3.0

RAW FILE CONVERSION AND DIGITAL IMAGE CORRECTION

2.1 Raw file conversion

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

3.1 Digital image correction

The digital images were then loaded into Cityscape’s computers running Adobe Photoshop®2 software to prepare the digital image for the next stage of camera matching (see section 6). The image is also ‘bank’4 corrected which means ensuring that the horizon in each digital image is precisely horizontal.

In spite of the selection of the most advanced photographic equipment, lenses are circular which results in a degree of distortion on the perimeter of images. The outer edges of an image are therefore not taken into consideration; this eliminates the risk of inaccuracy. Figure 20 in section 6 illustrates the ‘safe’ or non-distortive area of an image which is marked by the red circle.

The adjusted or corrected digital image, known as the ‘background plate’, is then saved to the Cityscape computer system ready for the camera matching process (see section 6). In preparation for the survey (see section 4) Cityscape marks up each background plate selecting a number of points in the view, such as corners of buildings, for survey (see Figures 7 and 8).

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

2/ Adobe Photoshop® is the industry standard image editing software.

3/ Pixel stands for picture element. It is the most basic component of any computer graphic and corresponds to the smallest thing that can be drawn on the computer screen.

4/ By aligning the vanishing points.

7



8



7

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

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

4.0

GPS SURVEY

4.1 Survey

Marshall Survey Associates Ltd. (MSA) were contracted to undertake the survey of (i) each viewpoint as marked on the ground beneath the camera at the time the photograph was taken (and recorded by way of digital photograph (see section 1 above)) and (ii) all the required points on the relevant buildings (as marked on the background plate).

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

MSA uses a baseline consisting of two semi-permanent GPS base stations (see Figure 10). These stations are located approximately 5730 metres apart and positioned so as to optimise the results for the area of operation (see location map, Figure 14). The base stations are tied into the National GPS Network and are constantly receiving and storing data which allows their position to be monitored and evaluated over long periods of operation. By using the same base stations throughout the survey MSA ensure the consistency of the results obtained.

Using the Real Time Kinematic method a real time correction is supplied by each base station to the rover (shown in Figure 11) (over the GSM5 network) physically undertaking the field survey. This enables the rover to determine the co-ordinates of its location instantaneously (i.e. in ‘real time’). The rover receives a ‘corrected’ fix (co-ordinates) from each base station. If the two independent fixes are each within a certain preset tolerance, the rover then averages the two fixes received. The viewpoints are, with a few exceptions, surveyed using this technique. This method of GPS survey (Real Time Kinematic) produces results to an accuracy in plan and height of between 15mm-50mm as outlined in the “Guidelines for the use of GPS in Land Surveying” produced by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

The particular points on each building as marked up on the background plate are surveyed using conventional survey techniques utilising an electronic theodolite and reflectorless laser technology (shown in Figures 12 and 13). There are two methods used to fix the building details, namely polar observations⁶ and intersection observations⁷. The position of the theodolite is fixed by the rover as described above. In certain circumstances, a viewpoint may need to be surveyed using conventional survey techniques as opposed to Real Time Kinematic, if, for example, the viewpoint is in a position where GPS information cannot be received.

5/ GSM network: the mobile phone network.

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

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



10



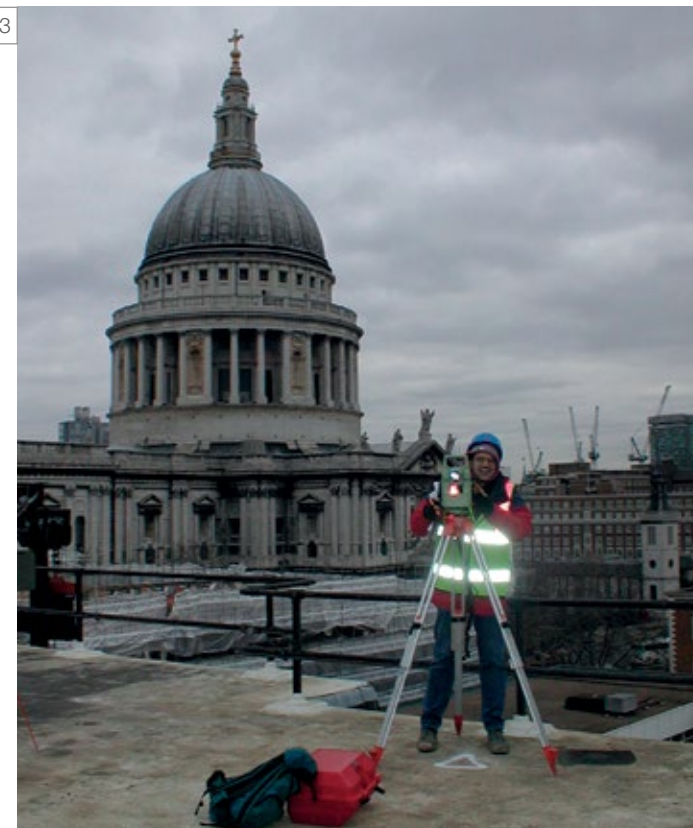
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9 Marshall Survey semi-permanent GPS base station

10 GPS System

11 Field survey being carried out using a GPS rover

12 Electronic Theodolite

13 Field survey being carried out by St. Paul's Cathedral

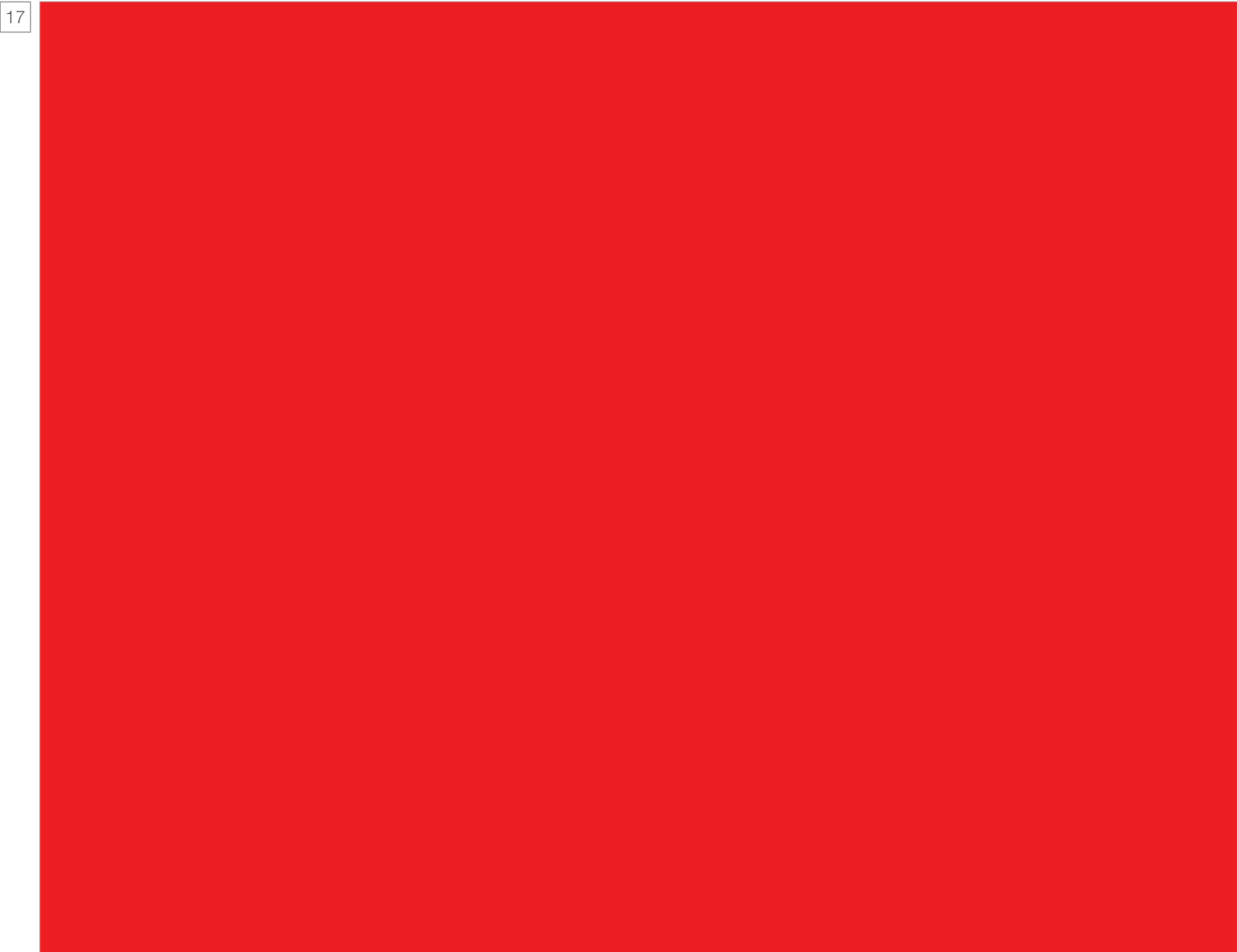
14 Location of Marshall Survey's GPS base stations

5.0

MODEL POSITIONING

5.1 Height and position check

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



18



17 The architect plan

18 Cityscape model plan

6.0

CAMERA MATCHING

Cityscape has built up a comprehensive database of survey information on buildings and locations in central London; the database contains both GPS survey information and information regarding the dimensions and elevations of buildings gathered from architects and other sources. Figure 19 shows a selection of GPS located models (yellow) within Cityscape’s database which effectively represents a 3D verified computer ‘model’ of some prominent buildings in central London. The term ‘3D model’ has been adopted with caution in this methodology as it is thought to be slightly misleading because not every building in central London is included in the database although the majority of those buildings which form part of the ‘skyline’ are included.

The outlines of buildings are created by connecting the surveyed points or from the information obtained from architects’ drawings of particular buildings. By way of example of the high level of detail and accuracy, approximately 300 points have been GPS surveyed on the dome of St. Paul’s. The database ‘view’ (as shown in Figure 19) is ‘verified’ as each building is positioned using coordinates acquired from GPS surveys.

In many instances, the various co-ordinates of a particular building featured in one of the background plates are already held by Cityscape as part of their database of London. In such cases the survey information of buildings and locations provided by MSA (see section 4 above) is used to cross-check and confirm the accuracy of these buildings. Where such information is not held by Cityscape, it is, where appropriate, used to add detail to Cityscape’s database. The survey information provided by MSA is in all cases used in the verification process of camera matching.

A wireframe8 3D model of the proposed scheme is created by Cityscape from plans and elevations provided by the architects, Allies and Morrison and from survey information of the ground levels on site and various other points on and around the site, such as the edge of adjacent roads and bollards etc. provided by MSA.

- The following information is required for the camera matching process:
- Specific details of the camera and lens used to take the photograph and therefore the field of view 10 (see section 1);
 - The adjusted or corrected digital image i.e. the 'background plate' (see section 2);
 - The GPS surveyed viewpoint co-ordinates (see section 3);
 - The GPS surveyed co-ordinates of particular points on the buildings within the photograph (the background plate) (see section 3);
 - Selected models from Cityscape’s database (see section 4);
 - The GPS surveyed co-ordinates of the site of the proposed scheme (see section 4);
 - A 3D model of the proposed scheme (see section 5).

A background plate (the corrected digital image) is opened on computer screen (for example, Figure 20), the information listed above is then used to situate Cityscape’s virtual camera such that the 3D model aligns exactly over the background plate (as shown in Figures 21 and 24) (i.e. a ‘virtual viewer’ within the 3D model would therefore be standing exactly on the same viewpoint from which the original photograph was taken (Figure 23). This is the camera matching process.

Cityscape is then able to insert the wireframe 3D model of the proposed scheme into the view in the correct location and scale producing a verified wireline image of the proposal (shown in Figures 22 & 25).

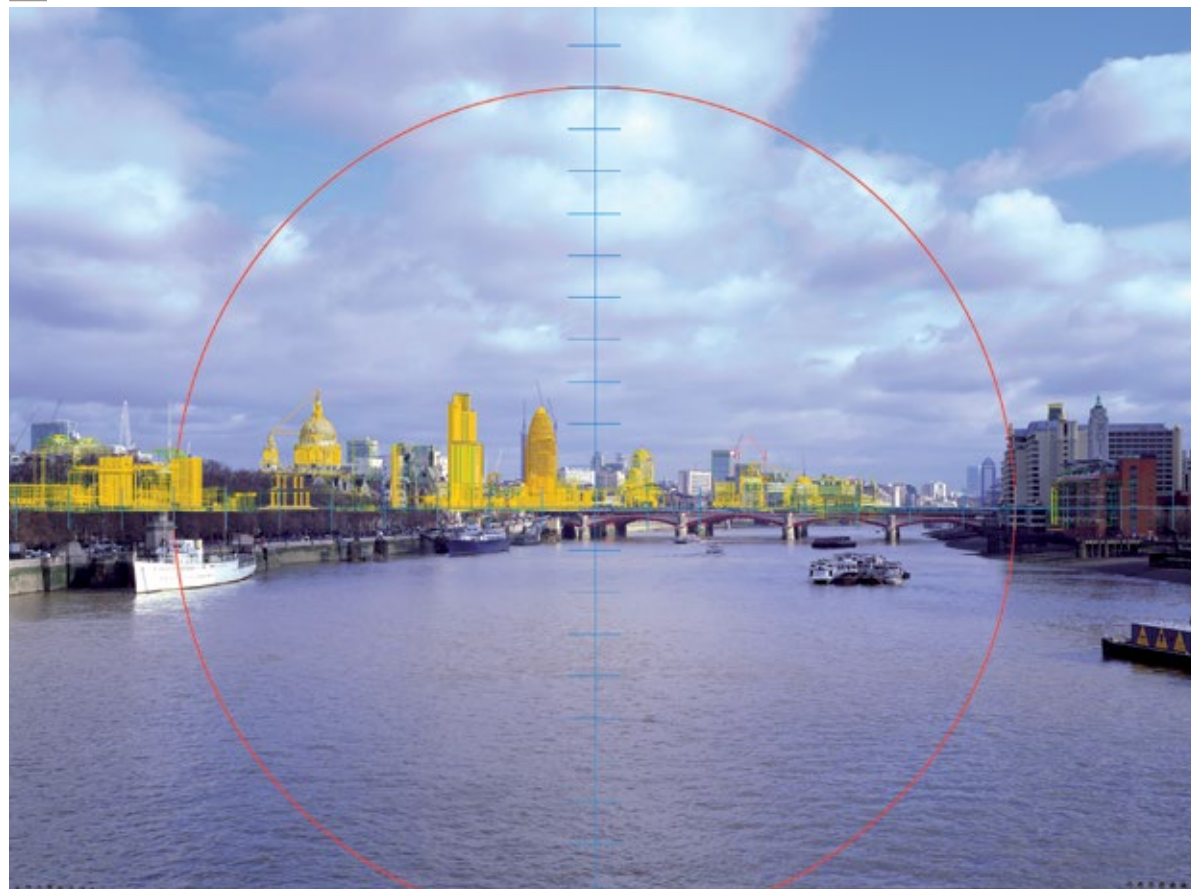
The camera matching process is repeated for each view and a wireline image of the proposal from each viewpoint is then produced. The wireline image enables a quantitative analysis of the impact of the proposed scheme on views.



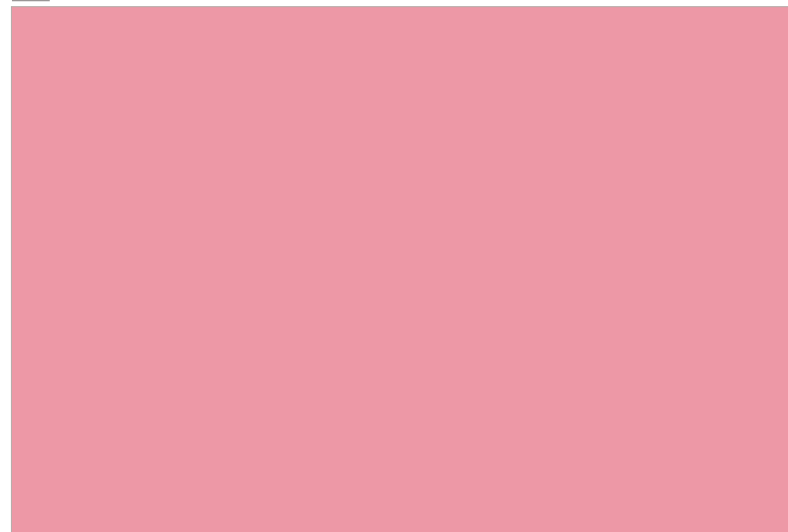
8/ A wireframe is a 3D model, a wireline is a single line representing the outline of the building.

19) Selected GPS located models (yellow) from Cityscape’s database, situated on Cityscape’s London digital terrain model

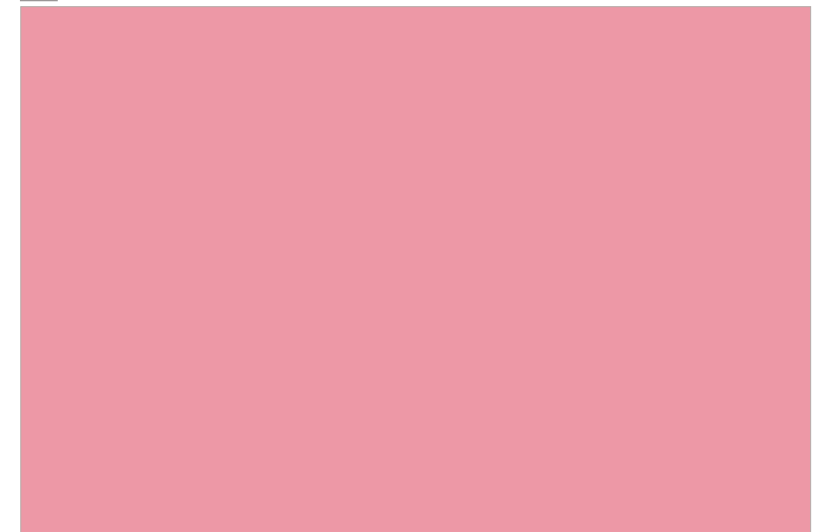
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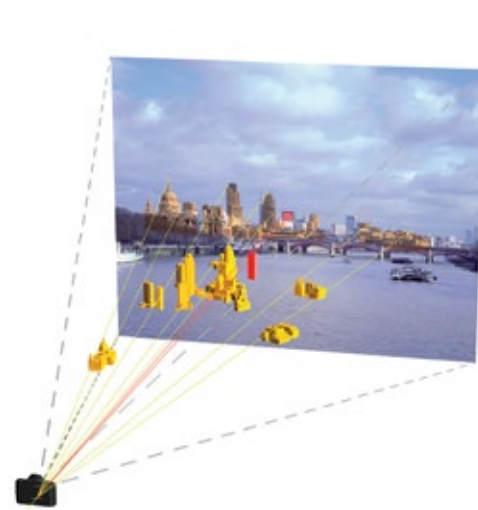
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21



22



20 Background plate & selected 3D models as seen by the computer camera. Red circle highlights the safe or non-distortive area of the image

21 Background plate matched to the 3D GPS located models

22 The camera matched background plate with an example of a proposed scheme included in red

23 Background plate: digital photograph, size and bank corrected as described in section 3

24 Camera matching: the background plate matched in the 3D GPS located models

25 The camera matched background plate with the proposed scheme included

7.0

POST PRODUCTION

7.1 Post production

Finally the rendered image of the scheme model is inserted and positioned against the camera matched background plate. Once in position the rendered images are edited using Adobe Photoshop®. Masks are created in Photoshop where the line of sight to the rendered image of the proposed scheme is interrupted by foreground buildings (as shown in Figure 27).

The result is a verified image or view of the proposed scheme (as shown in Figure 28).

26



26

Background plate

27

Background plate with rendered scheme positioned using the camera matching process Red area highlights the Photoshop mask that hides the unseen portion of the render

28

Shows a photo-realistic verified image

27



28



