



Figure 11.3 AVR View 3 (proposed). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.5 AVR View 5 (proposed). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.7 AVR View 6 (proposed). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.4 AVR View 3 (cumulative). Source: Cityscape



Figure 11.6 AVR View 5 (cumulative). Source: Cityscape



Figure 11.8 AVR View 6 (cumulative). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.9 AVR View 7 (proposed). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.10 AVR View 7 (cumulative). Source: Cityscape.

GROUP 2: ROAD USERS

- 11.9 Receptors within this group are likely to be road users of the IDR, who will be primarily focused on wayfinding and activities associated with the road. Given the existing urban character of this visual amenity area, they will have a Low susceptibility to the proposals. When calibrated with the Very Low value of the visual amenity area, this results in a sensitivity of Low.
- 11.10 The Proposed Development will be particularly visible in close up views, from the elevated section of the IDR, located in closest proximity to the Site. From here the Proposed Development will be appreciable in fleeting glimpses as receptors travel in both easterly and westerly directions along the IDR.
- 11.11 The Proposed Development will be seen in conjunction with the existing, commercial, retail and leisure development which characterises this part of the IDR. The nature of this low-quality, utilitarian development, enables the new building to be seen as a welcome addition to the quality and character of architecture in this part of Reading.
- 11.12 The placement of the tallest, 11 storey element of the Proposed Development, to the less sensitive northern and western part of the Site, allows it to sit in conjunction with the surrounding scale of built form; with the Premier Inn to the immediate west (7 storeys) and The Oracle Shopping Centre and Vue Cinema to the immediate north (9 storeys). This simultaneously establishes a consistent height relationship with the retail development directly opposite, restoring a sense of visual enclosure to the south side of the IDR.
- 11.13 Whilst the more detailed architectural features may be unappreciable in fleeting views, the design of the exterior façade which comprises vertical proportions and columns, is understood to reference the proportions of the large-scale buildings immediately opposite, providing a vertical articulation which contextualises the building with the surrounding larger scale development which characterises the IDR.
- 11.14 The use of a three fingered approach to massing, seen in westerly views from the IDR, enables the new building to sit comfortably within the existing townscape, gradually stepping up in scale from the 7 storey Premier Inn to the west of the Site.

- 11.15 As receptors travel eastwards along the IDR, they will have an appreciation for the contextual design approach and use of materials which echo the historic vernacular of Reading, predominantly comprising the use of buff and red brick.
- 11.16 The association of the taller parts of the Proposed Development with a major piece of infrastructure (the elevated section of the IDR) and a building of high design quality improve the amenity of this part of the IDR and benefit the amenity of receptors travelling from the west, by car, serving to increase eligibility of an important junction. The set back ranges between the finger blocks will reduce the apparent mass of the building in oblique views, and so reduce visual impact.
- 11.17 As such, the Proposed Development is considered to have a **Low** magnitude of impact on the visual amenity area, resulting in an effect of **Minor Beneficial**. A beneficial nature of effect is identified given the restoration of visual enclosure to the south of the IDR through the provision of contextual and purposefully designed architecture, as well as its function as a legibility marker in longer views from the east and west.



Figure 11.11 AVR View 9 (proposed). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.12 AVR View 9 (cumulative). Source: Cityscape.

GROUP 3: COMMERCE USERS OF READING TOWN CENTRE

- 11.18 Receptors within this group are likely to be amenity users and pedestrians of Reading town centre, who will primarily be navigating the key shopping routes to the north of the Site, including Friar Street, Broad Street, St Mary Butts and Market Place. Given their focus on retail, commercial and leisure facilities within the town centre, their susceptibility to the Proposed Development is considered to be Low. When calibrated with the Low to Medium value of the area, this results in a sensitivity of Low.
- 11.19 The density of development, alignment of streets and tight-knit urban grain of this central part of Reading has afforded a sense of visual enclosure which has reduced visibility of development further afield (including that of the Site). This, combined, with the extent of separation distance has mean that visibility from large parts of this visual amenity area is limited, as demonstrated by the ZTV at **Figure 2.1**.
- 11.20 This is further reinforced by AVR Views 10, 11, 12 and 13, each of which demonstrate no intervisibility with the Proposed Development, given the extent of separation distance and interposing built form.

- 11.21 The maximum point of visibility is demonstrated by AVR View 1, at the junction of Queens Road and the IDR. The open trajectory of the four-lane dual carriageway of the IDR provides visibility to the Proposed Development. From here, the staggered, three-finger approach to massing is appreciable, with the Proposed Development stepping in scale to the less-sensitive west, and northern parts of the Site, away from the low-scale, historic development that characterises London Street.
- 11.22 Receptors will also have an appreciation for the restoration of visual enclosure and building line to the south of the IDR, simultaneously establishing a height relationship with the development comprising the Oracle Shopping Centre and Vue Cinema opposite, through the use of vertical fenestration, proportions and columns which reference the increased scale of development directly opposite.
- 11.23 The use of a contextual materiality comprising buff and red brick which echoes the character of the historic buildings which form the London Street/Market Place CA is appreciable in views from this junction, and aid in contextualising the Proposed Development within the existing area of visual amenity.
- 11.24 Given that the Proposed Development is predominantly occluded from large parts of the visual amenity area, given the extent and nature of interposing development, as well as the considerable separation distance; this has resulted in a localised effect, as articulated by AVR 15. As such, the Proposed Development is considered to have a **Low** magnitude of impact on the visual amenity area, resulting in an effect of **Minor Beneficial**. A beneficial nature of effect is identified given the restoration of building frontage and visual enclosure to the south side of the IDR, as well as a contextual design approach including mass mitigation features.



Figure 11.13 AVR View 1 (proposed). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.14 AVR View 1 (cumulative). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.15 AVR View 10 (proposed). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.17 AVR View 11 (proposed). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.19 AVR View 12 (proposed). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.16 AVR View 10 (cumulative). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.18 AVR View 11 (cumulative). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.20 AVR View 12 (cumulative). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.21 AVR View 13 (proposed). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.22 AVR View 13 (cumulative). Source: Cityscape.

GROUP 4: AMENITY USERS OF FORBURY GARDENS

- 11.25 Receptors within this group are likely to be amenity users of Forbury Gardens who will be engaged in their surroundings, with no awareness of the Site, given the extent of separation distance. As such, the susceptibility of users of Forbury Gardens to the Proposed Development is Low. When calibrated with the Medium value of the visual amenity area, professional judgment has been applied to identify a sensitivity of Low.
- 11.26 AVR 14 demonstrates visibility from within Forbury Gardens. The Proposed Development (indicated by the blue wireline) is completely occluded from view given the extent of interposing development and separation distance. As such, the magnitude of impact is **Nil**, resulting in an effect of **None**.



Figure 11.23 AVR View 14 (proposed). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.24 AVR View 14 (cumulative). Source: Cityscape.

GROUP 5: AMENITY USERS OF QUAKER MEETING HOUSE AND BURIAL GROUND

- 11.27 Receptors within this group are likely to be visitors to Reading Quaker Meeting House. Given their focus on this contemplative space, yet proximity to the Proposed Development, their susceptibility is considered to be **Medium**. When combined with the Medium value of this visual amenity area, the sensitivity of visual receptors is **Medium**.
- 11.28 The visual impact on this area of visual amenity is demonstrated by AVR View 4. The proposals will appear prominent from locations within the burial ground, increasing the sense of visual enclosure to the north. This is assessed to be an improvement on the current visual experience afforded from the garden, which looks out across the Site towards the Oracle (buildings of no architectural merit) and from where the noise and disruption of the IDR is appreciated.
- 11.29 The Proposed Development will be prominent within views experienced from the garden and will help to shield noise and negative environmental effects associated with the main road to the north. The massing has been carefully considered to ensure it is not experienced as a solid wall like structure from these areas and for the receptors enjoying the space. The three-finger massing approach, comprising three interconnecting blocks with setbacks in between, helps to break up the overall perception of the mass. This has been further reinforced through the staggered approach to the building form, which has stepped down to this rear, and east of the Site, further reducing visual impact to this more sensitive area to the south of the Site.
- 11.30 The Proposed Development present a new, well-considered background elevation to the burial ground. This is achieved through the design which reflects the local historic context, including Flemish bond corbelling which is weaved through the exterior façade, as well as the use of buff brick tones which are in keeping with the surrounding area.

- 11.31 The Proposed Development will form part of receptors’ kinetic experience as they move around the burial ground, with the Proposed Development, in some views, appearing as merely a background element. In summer, when the trees on the northern boundary of the burial ground turn to leaf, the Proposed Development will be further occluded from view.
- 11.32 The Proposed Development will obstruct views of large scale, utilitarian and commercial development along the IDR which previously detracted from the visual amenity of the area.
- 11.33 Given that the Proposed Development has infilled a sky gap and has introduced development of scale to the experience of visual receptors within the burial ground, the overall magnitude of impact is **Medium**, resulting in an effect of **Moderate Beneficial**. A beneficial nature of effect is identified, through the sense of visual enclosure provided by the high-quality architectural backdrop.



Figure 11.25 AVR View 4A (proposed). Source: Cityscape.



Figure 11.26 AVR View 4A (cumulative). Source: Cityscape.