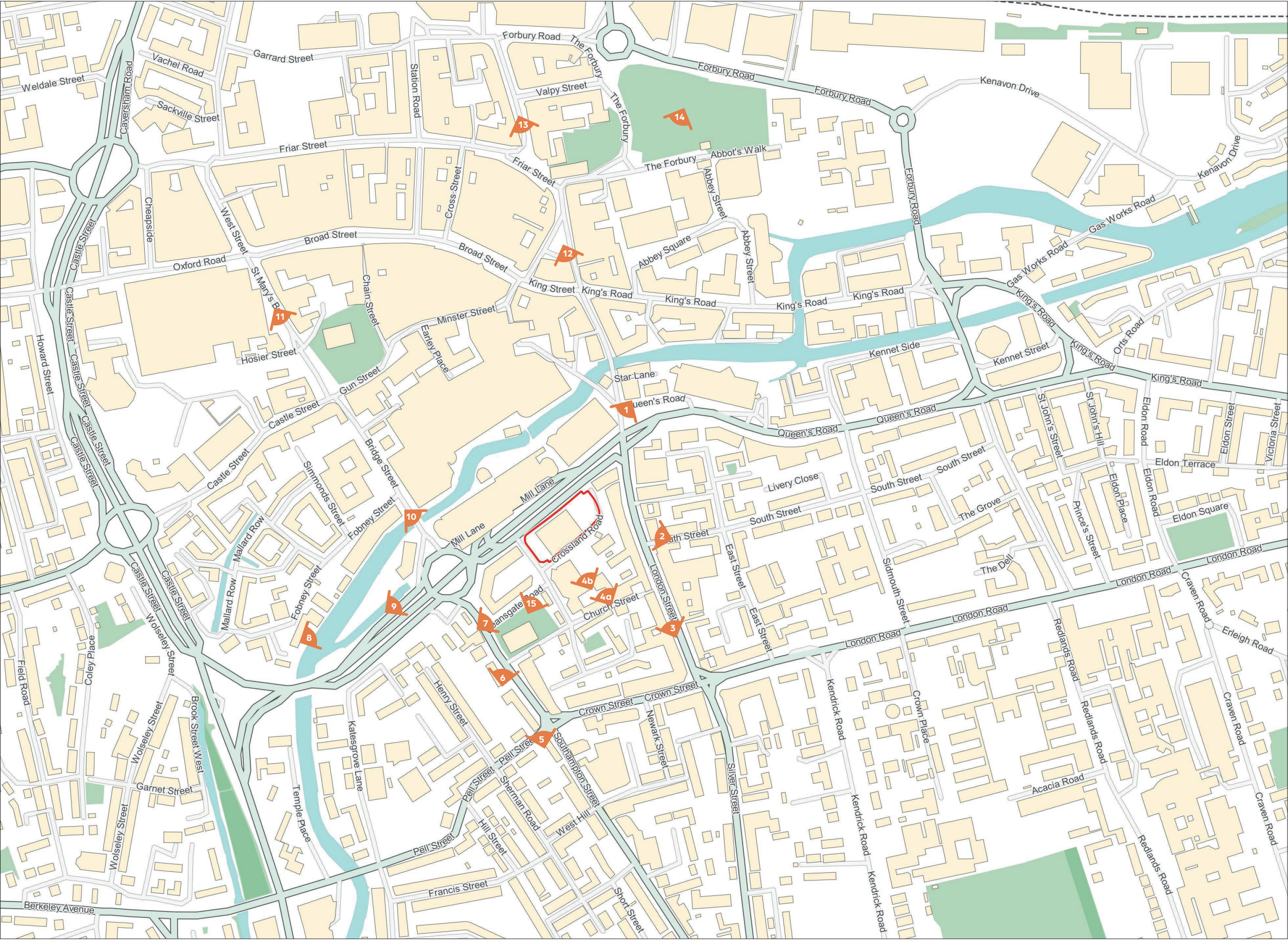




VIEWS LOCATION PLAN

- Application Site
1. Queen's Road / A329 looking west
 2. Junction with South Street / A327
 3. A327 looking north
 - 4a. View north on Church Lane (Quaker Meeting House)
 - 4b. View north from burial ground (Quaker Meeting House)
 5. Junction with Pell Street / A327
 6. St Giles Church
 7. Deansgate Road
 8. River Kennet (north bank) looking east
 9. Bridge Street / A329 looking east
 10. Bridge Street junction looking south
 11. The Minster (Grade I) looking south
 12. Market Place looking south
 13. Town Hall looking south
 14. Forbury Gardens looking south
 15. St Giles Churchyard

LOCATION:
Mill Lane, Reading

DATE:
May 2024

SCALE:
1:5,000 @ A3

FIGURE 7.1 View Location Plan. Source: Montagu Evans

▲ NORTH



MONTAGU EVANS
CHARTERED SURVEYORS
70 ST MARY AXE,
LONDON, EC3A 8BE
T: +44 (0)20 7493 4002
WWW.MONTAGU-EVANS.CO.UK

LOCAL RESIDENTS

- 7.4

A number of representative views (2,3, 5 6 and 7) have been identified to illustrate the residential experience of receptors within and travelling around the residential areas to the northwest and south of the Site.
- 7.5

There are a number of residential areas located on the edge of the town centre, correlating with TCA3. The streets to the south of the town centre and the Site, comprise a series of x-y orientated, linear streets which also form part of the London Street CA. Most of the houses along here are terraces dating to the 19th century. To the northwest of the Site is a residential pocket comprising a residential estate of houses and flats dating to the late 20th century. It has an enclosed character, defined by dense vegetative borders.
- 7.6

Receptors in the residential areas to the east are likely to be residents of Pell Street, St Giles Close, Church Street and Henry Street. Owing to the enclosed nature of the linear streets, which are characterised by homogenous terraced housing on either side, views out of the area are limited and reserved to views along north-south orientated roads including Pell Street and London Street.
- 7.7

Residents will be aware of the proximity of the ring road and other key arterial routes to and from the town centre, with high levels of traffic and movement readily discernible, particularly in linear views looking north. Receptors will also be aware of the high activity associated with the centre of Reading and the high levels of pedestrian traffic travelling to and from the retail centre, further contributing to the sense of movement and activity.
- 7.8

The scale of development within the foreground of views from these residential streets, however, in views looking south along Pell Street and London Street the taller scale development including the seven storey Premier Inn and eight storey Oracle Shopping Centre which marks the receptors entrance into the town centre.
- 7.9

Residents of the housing estate to the northwest of the Site, owing to the enclosed nature of the development, may be less aware of the proximity of the town centre. The scale of development in the foreground follows a general datum of two to four storeys, given the homogenisation of architectural form. In views looking east along Maltings Place, the Reading borough Council Offices are discernible to the receptors, and the proximity of the town's civic centre is perceptible.



Figure 7.2 View 2: Junction with South Street/A327. Source: Cityscape



Figure 7.4 View 5: Junction with Pell Street/A327. Source: Cityscape



Figure 7.3 View 3: A327 Looking North. Source: Cityscape



Figure 7.5 View 6: St Giles Church. Source: Cityscape

- 7.10

Whilst the general experience of receptors is largely characterised by smaller scale residential development and amenity uses, intermittent views to the north make the receptor aware of the proximity of the town centre, IDR and larger scale development which aligns it.

- 7.11

Visual amenity value: **Medium**



Figure 7.6 View 7: Deansgate Road. Source: Cityscape

ROAD USERS

- 7.12 View 9 has been identified to illustrate the pattern of vehicular movement along the IDR.
- 7.13 The presence of the IDR ring road which provides access into and within Reading town centre, is located to the immediate north of the Site. The experience of road users will likely be drivers who are primarily concerned with activities and movement associated with the road.
- 7.14 The experience of receptors is defined by the four lanes of the IDR which travels, closest to the Site, on an east to west axis. The linear trajectory of the road forms a central viewing corridor, channelling the eye of the receptor in long views east and westward.
- 7.15 On the northern side of the IDR the townscape is characterised by a mix of residential housing developments, then transitioning to the larger scale and higher density development of the Oracle Shopping Centre and adjacent retail/commercial development.



Figure 7.7 View 9: Bridge Street/A329 looking east. Source: Cityscape

- 7.16 On the southern side of the IDR, the experience of road users is again characterised by a mix of larger scale commercial development on the IDR frontage, which then transitions to lower density housing estates and terraces, the smaller scale of which allows for views of St Giles' Church spire. As receptors travel closer to the Site, their view of the surrounding lower scale residential development is obstructed by the presence of higher density development including the seven storey Premier Inn hotel. Receptors will be aware of the change in built form between the larger scale commercial/retail development that aligns the IDR and the surrounding lower scale residential development to the south.
- 7.17 Given the elevated position of the road infrastructure, long views are afforded across the whole of Reading, from which receptors are able to appreciate the variety in the built form, particularly the range in density, including the town centre and buildings along the IDR increasing the height datum. Receptors will be aware of the heavily urbanised character of Reading and the tight knit grain of development. The principal focus on direction of movement will mean specific urban forms and details remain unnoticed.
- 7.18 Given that the visual experience of the receptor is predominantly characterised by the infrastructure and traffic associated with the IDR, with fleeting views of the wider townscape off Reading, the visual amenity value is identified as being low.
- 7.19 Visual amenity value: **Very Low**

COMMERCE USERS OF READING TOWN CENTRE

- 7.20 A number of representative views (1, 10, 11, 12, 13) have been identified to illustrate the pattern of pedestrian movement through the town centre. Receptors are likely to be commerce and amenity users of the retail and leisure outlets which characterise the town centre.
- 7.21 Reading town centre covers a large area which is centred around the main shopping high street of Broad Street. The area correlates with TCAs 1a and 5 and is surrounded by the A329 ring road (also partially incorporating it) and residential development on the edge of Reading town centre. Some routes within the town centre are completely pedestrianised. This includes Broad Street, Cross Street, Union Street, Butter Market, Town Hall Square and Queen Victoria Street.
- 7.22 Reading town centre has been subject to a high degree of change since the establishment of an urban settlement at the strategic crossing of the River Kennet in the 11th century. After the Second World War, Reading experienced significant change in its built environment and infrastructure. Following the clearance of fine grain, terraced and small residential properties, particularly along Castle Street, this area was infilled with larger urban footprints of the Broad Street Mall Shopping Centre (1971) and the Oracle Shopping centre (1999). As a result of this mixed, eclectic character, Reading town centre is a busy, urban built environment, which, as receptors, travel through, will have an awareness of.
- 7.23 Pedestrians and commuters within this area of visual amenity will be travelling through the retail/commercial core, as well as towards Reading Station. Pedestrians, including commuters, will be focused primarily on navigation from the outskirts of reading town centre to the retail/commercial core, particularly along Broad Street and Friar Street. Commuters are likely to be focused on movement to and from Reading Station, located to the north of the town centre.
- 7.24 To the south of the town centre, the experience of commerce users of the town centre who are approaching from the residential areas to the south, will be aware of the presence and proximity of the IDR. The open trajectory of the dual carriageway allows for long views to the east and west, in which development of a higher density and scale is perceptible.

- 7.25 For amenity users who are likely to be those utilising retail, hospitality and leisure premises; their focus will be reserved to the enjoyment of amenity space, public realm and designated pedestrianised areas. Key areas of public realm include the pedestrianised shopping street of Broad Street, as well as along Oracle Riverside, specifically designed for users of the Oracle Shopping centre.
- 7.26 The range and mix of architectural quality, age and character continues along the principal commercial streets of Broad Street and Friar Street. The variation in building types, materials and quality will be discernible to the receptor, though the main focus will be on the busy arterial route and the commercial/retail premises at ground floor level.
- 7.27 In some areas, due to the dominance of the Oracle Shopping Centre and Broad Street Mall shopping centre, the diverse character of the town centre is less discernible and the homogenisation of the town centre by retail development is evident to the receptor.
- 7.28 Visual amenity value: **Low to Medium**



Figure 7.9 View 10: Bridge Street junction looking south. Source: Cityscape



Figure 7.11 View 12: Market Place looking south. Source: Cityscape



Figure 7.8 View 1 Queen's Road/A329 looking West. Source: Cityscape



Figure 7.10 View 11: The Minster (Grade I) looking south. Source: Cityscape



Figure 7.12 View 13: Town Hall looking south. Source: Cityscape

AMENITY USERS OF FORBURY GARDENS

- 7.29 View 14 has been identified to illustrate the pedestrian experience of amenity users of Forbury Gardens.
- 7.30 Forbury Gardens is located to the northeast of Reading town centre, and to the northeast of the Site. It is a public park on the site of the outer court of Reading Abbey. The gardens are designated as a Grade II RPG and comprise an open greensward, the topography of which drops down from Forbury Hill. Formal planting and mature trees are a key characteristic of the gardens.
- 7.31 Receptors within Forbury Gardens are likely to be people using the space for amenity and enjoyment, with their focus on the natural landscape, in an otherwise heavily urbanised built environment. Routes through the park orientate around areas of seating and lead to the central statue of the Maiwand Lion (Grade II listed). There is also another listed structure to the southeast of the gardens, the Grade II listed Anglican Cross. Receptors are likely to have an appreciation of these designated heritage assets as they move through the park.



Figure 7.13 View 14: Forbury Gardens looking south. Source: Cityscape

- 7.32 Whilst mature trees are a feature of the park, the lack of vegetation density around the park's borders allow for views outwards, providing visibility of larger scale, modern developments, including the presence of tall buildings.
- 7.33 Much of the experience from within the park would therefore be that of a major urban centre 'pocket park' with receptors having an awareness of the urban environment beyond its boundaries.
- 7.34 View 14 illustrates the experience of users of Forbury Gardens.
- 7.35 Visual amenity value: **Medium**

AMENITY USERS OF QUAKER MEETING HOUSE AND BURIAL GROUND

- 7.36 Views 4a and 4b have been identified to illustrate the experience of visitors to the Grade II listed Quaker Meeting House and associated burial ground.
- 7.37 The experience of the receptors is defined by the complex of buildings that make up the meeting house, as well as the area of green space to the rear, which comprises the burial ground.
- 7.38 The burial ground is characterised by an area of green open space, with a dense vegetative border on the northern, and western boundaries. The burial ground is a pleasant space, featuring formal landscaping, including planting and shrubs. The mature trees within the area provide a sense of visual enclosure and help to screen the surrounding development, reinforcing the quiet and contemplative nature of the space.
- 7.39 Glimpsed views are, however, afforded to the larger scale development comprising the Oracle Shopping Centre car park and warehouse building on Site, to the north of the IDR. This is further facilitated by the changing topography of the burial ground which drops down towards the boundary that aligns with the IDR. To the east, the adjacent residential development is perceptible, providing some visual enclosure to this eastern boundary which lacks more dense vegetative screening. These glimpsed views, becoming more perceptible in winter when the trees have shed their leaf, remind the receptor of the urban location of the Burial Ground and the extent of surrounding built form. This somewhat erodes the tranquil nature of the space.
- 7.40 Given the reflective and contemplative character of this area of visual amenity, receptors are likely to be highly engaged on the immediate environment, which will include the tombs and gravestones of the burial ground.
- 7.41 Visual amenity value: **Medium**



Figure 7.14 View 4A: Church Street looking north (Quaker's Meeting House)



Figure 7.15 View 4B: View north from within burial ground (Quaker's Meeting House)