

PD12695/JS/HM/TC  
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Reading Borough Council  
Planning Department  
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Bridge Street  
Reading  
RG1 2LU

21 May 2025

Dear Jonathan,

**FORBURY RETAIL PARK, READING, RG1 3HS**

On behalf of our client, Aberdeen Investments ('the Applicant'), we hereby submit the enclosed Heritage Response, prepared by Montagu Evans. This document is submitted in response to the following consultation comments:

1. Gardens Trust – Dated 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026;
2. Conservation Officer – Dated 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026; and
3. Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee – Dated 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

The enclosed response note provides commentary against the various detailed comments made by the above consultees. In particular, we wish to draw your attention to the following key considerations arising from the assessment:

Firstly, with regard to the effect on setting, it is important to recognise that a change to the setting of a heritage asset does not inherently result in harm. As established through policy and guidance, including national policy, changes to setting (even significant changes) can be neutral, beneficial, or harmful depending on the circumstances and the contribution that the setting makes to the asset's significance. The accompanying Heritage Response and Chapter 10: Built Heritage of the ES (the 'Built Heritage Chapter') carefully assesses this relationship and demonstrates that the proposed development does not give rise to harm, but instead results in a neutral effect overall, having regard to the limited contribution made by the affected elements of the setting.

Secondly, in relation to matters of intervisibility, the Heritage Response emphasises that mere visibility between a proposed development and a heritage asset does not, in itself, equate to harm to the significance of the heritage asset. As set out within the analysis (see Viewpoint 2 and the discussion on page 5), intervisibility must be considered in the context of how, and to what extent, views contribute to the significance of the heritage asset. The Heritage Response demonstrates that, while there may be instances of visibility, these do not materially affect the asset's significance or its appreciation, and therefore do not translate into harm in heritage terms.

Overall, the enclosed Heritage Response and originally submitted Built Heritage Chapter confirms that the proposed development accords with relevant heritage policy, preserving the significance of designated and non-designated assets.

We would be grateful if the enclosed Heritage Response could please be included with the application. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Julian Stephenson ([julian.stephenson@montagu-evans.co.uk](mailto:julian.stephenson@montagu-evans.co.uk) / 07818 012537), Harry Manners ([harry.manners@montagu-evans.co.uk](mailto:harry.manners@montagu-evans.co.uk) / 07341 114785) or Tommy Cooney ([tommy.cooney@montagu-evans.co.uk](mailto:tommy.cooney@montagu-evans.co.uk) / 07386 956518 at this office.

Yours sincerely,

*Montagu Evans*

**Montagu Evans LLP**