

Reading Borough Council

~~Draft~~ Outline Development
Framework

The Site of Reading Prison



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 4th September 2013 the Government announced the closure of Reading Prison with effect from 20th December 2013. It ~~will~~closed early in 2014 following the approval of orders by Parliament. The Ministry of Justice ([MoJ](#)) will be responsible for the subsequent disposal of the site. This report contains initial research of the site and outlines the initial views of the [Council](#)council, approved by its Policy Committee on 24th February 2014, on initial steps towards a development framework for the future use and development of the site.
- 1.2 Reading Prison is a very important site within the central area of Reading. It is a very historically significant site. In its entirety, it is part of the Reading Abbey and Civil War earthworks Scheduled Ancient Monument. There is a high potential for archaeological remains from the

Bronze Age through to the period of the Vikings in the 9th Century, as well as medieval and later interest. The site was part of the extensive grounds of the nationally important Reading Abbey. The site of the Abbey, founded in 1121 encompassed the whole of the Prison Site. Part of the Abbey Church extended into the north-western part of the Prison site. It is likely that the Prison site would have contained various associated buildings as well as areas that might have been used as a cemetery. The Prison site was also an important area in the defence of Reading during the Civil War in 1643.

- 1.3 The Berkshire County Justices built a house of correction (aka a gaol) on the site that opened in 1786. This was subsequently enlarged to become the County Gaol in 1793. The current structure was actually opened in July 1844 (construction began in 1842), replacing the earlier buildings on site (of which foundations may still remain below the surface). The cruciform Main Building of the Prison is now Grade II listed (See Appendix 2 for a copy of the listing description for the building). The main prison building is a notable early example of Victorian prison architecture, designed by George Gilbert Scott and William Bonython Moffat, and its form was based upon the innovative design for Pentonville Prison constructed two years before. It was designed to implement the latest penal technique of the time, known as the 'separate system'. Externally, the design is said to have been visually inspired by Warwick Castle.
- 1.4 The prison is famous for Oscar Wilde's experience there, between 1895 to 1897, related through his poem written during his imprisonment, "*The Ballad of Reading Gaol*," published in 1898. [His cell c3.3 survives in the Main Building of the Prison building.](#) The prison grounds also include the graves of men executed within the walls, including Trooper Charles Wooldridge, whose death forms the subject matter of the *Ballad*. Reading University are researching various aspects of the history of the prison including the Oscar Wilde connection.
- 1.5 The gaol closed in November 1915. Between 1916 and 1919 it was used as an internment centre to hold Irish prisoners involved in the Easter Rising. It was then used intermittently by various government departments for storage, as a wartime Canadian military detention centre during the latter part of WWII and it then became a borstal in 1951.
- 1.6 The site was reopened as a prison in 1969 after extensive demolition, ~~rebuilding-reconstruction~~ and alterations to the fabric of the main prison building, including the fenestration of the cells and the demolition and rebuilding of the gatehouse complex and perimeter wall. Only the cruciform main building remains, comprising four wings (A-D) converging at a central semi-octagon. The external alterations to the main building have changed its external appearance. A number of new buildings were constructed within the old prison yards of 1 and 2 storeys of red brick construction.

- 1.7 From 1992 until its closure it served as a Remand Centre and Young Offenders Institution, holding prisoners between the ages of 18 and 21 years.
- 1.8 The site falls naturally within the emerging “Abbey Quarter Area”, an area that Reading Borough Council and its partners are actively developing and promoting for its historical importance and as an important leisure, learning and interpretation visitor ~~attraction~~ centre for the future. The ~~Council~~ council has developed an Abbey Quarter plan (based on a detailed conservation statement¹) and programme that takes in a number of attractions in this part of Central Area. It encompasses the area of the Abbey, the Forbury Gardens, St Laurence’s Church and churchyard, the Town Hall and Museum. The prison site could potentially extend the area of the Quarter and ~~provide various additional attractions~~ complementing the other attractions of the Quarter.
- 1.9 Plans for the Quarter include major repairs to the Abbey Ruins, the Abbey Gateway and various other structures in the area, enhancements to the Town Hall Square, signage and interpretation facilities and other features. The long term intention is that the area should become an important visitor ~~attraction~~ focus point, complementing the attractions of the centre of Reading to residents, business and visitors. Detailed information on the Abbey Quarter can be found via the following link:

<http://www.readingmuseum.org.uk/get-involved/projects-consultation/abbey-quarter/>

An ordnance survey map showing the prison is attached as Appendix 1.

- 1.10 The availability of the ~~Prison~~ prison site for reuse and development has the potential to open up the full Abbey area and to complement its development as an area of high historical interest, adding an important and highly interesting additional attraction to the current plans for the area. Appendix 2 contains a more detailed analysis of the historical interest of the ~~Prison~~ prison Site site.

2. Planning Policy Background

- 2.1 The Prison Site is allocated in the Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP)² as part of the East Side Major Opportunity Area. The relevant policy for the site is policy RC3. The East Side Major Opportunity is a wider regeneration area encompassing areas of development potential around Kenavon Drive and Forbury Road. It includes a number of key principles for the area relevant to the prison site as follows:

¹ [Abbey Quarter Conservation Statement October 2012](#)

² The National Planning Policy Framework, DCLG, 2012, : <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Development in the East Side Major Opportunity Area will:

- i) Provide a more defined urban environment than currently exists, of a medium to high density;*
- iii) Help facilitate greater pedestrian and cycle permeability, in particular east-west links through the area and links between development areas and the station, including improved crossings of the IDR*
- v) Preserve the historic features in the area and enhance their setting where possible;*
- vi) Provide additional areas of open space where possible, particularly in the centre of the new community;*
- vii) Maintain, improve and create new access along the River Kennet.*

2.2 The prison site therefore has a key role in drawing the wider opportunity area into the town centre through improved connections, continuity of the built environment, and linking areas of heritage assets with new development. The policy then contains a specific allocation for the prison site:

Policy RC3b, READING PRISON:

The prison building itself is of historical significance and is listed, and will be retained. The building would be used for residential, commercial offices or a hotel. Development should enhance the setting of the Abbey ruins.

2.3 The site was listed as 'aspirational' in the Implementation Framework because there were no firm plans for its closure and reuse at the time that the plan was drafted. However, in order to be prepared for the eventuality of the possible closure of the prison, it was decided to include an allocation to recognise and guide the potential future use and development of the site.

2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework [\(NPPF\)](#)³ details the weight that must be given to the preservation and enhancement of heritage assets. [The NPPF, and its associated National Planning Policy Guidance \(NPPG\), provide policy and guidance on many planning matters that will be relevant to the future use and development of the site.](#)

2.5 Planning proposals for the site will also be determined against other policies in the RCAAP, as well as policies in the two other documents that make up the Reading Borough Local Development Framework (now known

³ Reading Borough LDF , The Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) , RBC , 2009
<http://www.reading.gov.uk/businesses/Planning/planning-policy/reading-central-area-action-plan/adoptedrcaap/>

as the local plan), the Core Strategy⁴ and the Sites and Detailed Policies Document.⁵

- 2.6 A summary of the main policies that will apply to the prison site in addition to RC3 is included in Appendix 34.

3. Historical Importance and Heritage Assets

- 3.1 Appendix 2 contains a detailed outline of the significant historical importance of the site and the various designations affecting the site. The historical importance and interest of the site, and the significance of its heritage assets as part of the Abbey Quarter area, are the primary considerations in determining the future use and development of the site.

Scheduled Monument

- 3.2 The whole of the prison site and land to the west is designated as a Scheduled Monument. Such designation indicates that this is a nationally important site. Any works within the site of a Scheduled Monument require prior written permission from the Secretary of State through a consent process administered by English Heritage. This is for works either above or below ground level. The procedure is known as Scheduled Monument Consent or SMC. 'Works' are defined by the 1979 Act as demolishing, destroying, damaging, removing, repairing, altering, adding to, flooding or tipping material onto the monument. To avoid the possibility of damaging a monument, and therefore carrying out unlawful works, potential applicants are strongly advised to consult English Heritage while in the early planning stages of any intended works. This applies to all buried remains on the site of whatever age.
- 3.3 It is assumed that, at this stage, English Heritage ~~are~~ is likely to reserve their position on any new development in the entire scheduled area of the prison until a detailed desk based archaeological appraisal and consequent investigation and evaluation is produced for the site (this would normally be produced by the landowner and their partners or prospective developers). ~~The A~~ desk based assessment ~~should~~ has now been carried out (in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA), "Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment" (updated November 2012).⁶ The specification for the appraisal ~~should~~ was agreed with Berkshire Archaeology, the Council's Archaeology consultant, prior to the appraisal work being undertaken. The appraisal ~~will need to~~ includes consideration of previous impacts on site as well as the potential for highly

⁴ Reading Borough LDF, Core Strategy, RBC, 2008, <http://www.reading.gov.uk/businesses/Planning/planning-policy/core-strategy/adoptedcs/>

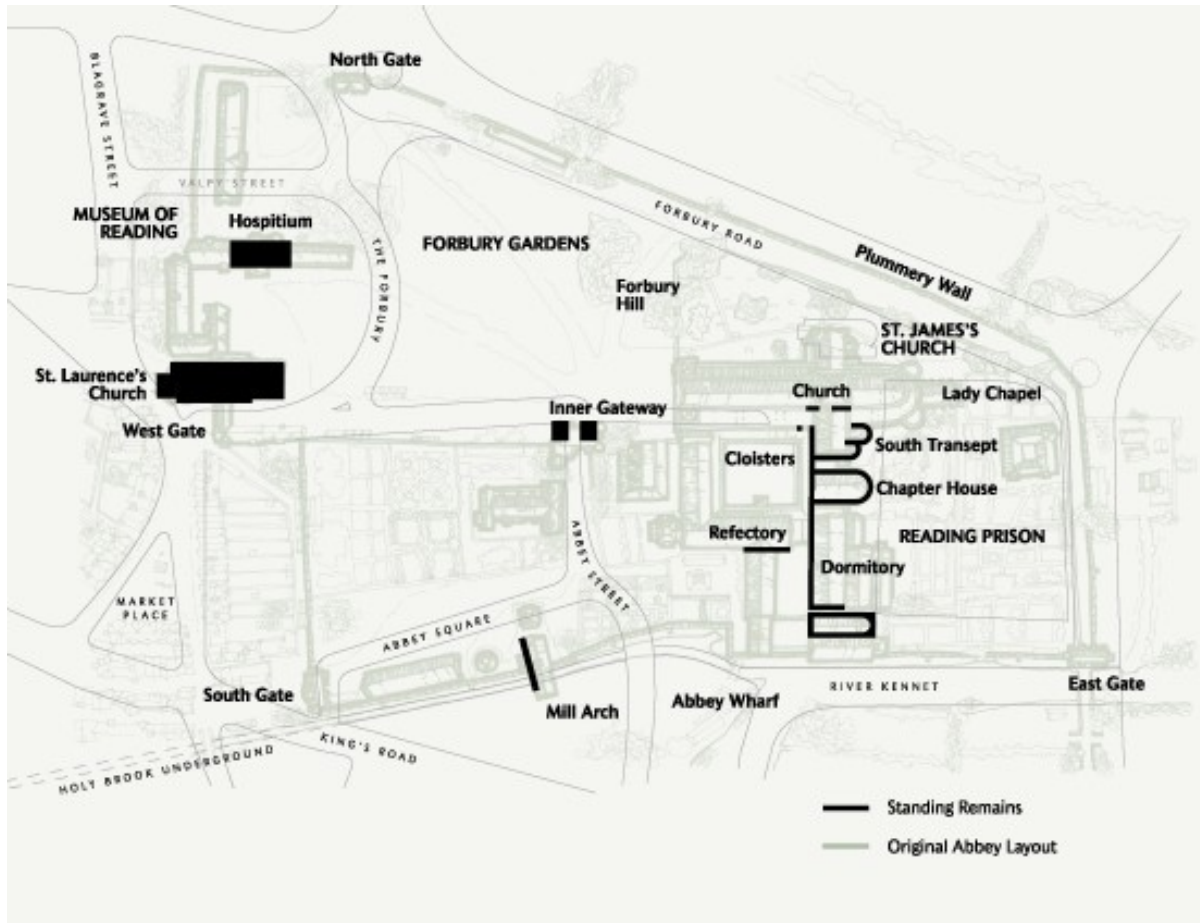
⁵ Reading Borough LDF, Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD), RBC, 2012, <http://www.reading.gov.uk/businesses/Planning/planning-policy/sites-and-detailed-policies-document/sdpdadopted/>

⁶ <http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/node-files/DBA2012-Working-draft.pdf>

significant below-ground archaeology. ~~It is also advisable to contact Council's Case Officer via a pre-application request, prior to undertaking any investigative work. The case officer will consult English Heritage and the Council's Conservation Officer as appropriate although the applicant might want to be consulted on the study contact English Heritage on their own account. The desk based assessment will make recommendations on further on site investigation and evaluation. Again, such investigation and evaluation that is agreed with the Council and English Heritage should be undertaken in accordance with IFA Standard and Guidance.~~⁷

- 3.4 Reading Abbey sat within a walled and gated precinct that provided for a large ecclesiastical community separated from the town. It had important Royal connections (the founder of the Abbey, King Henry, was buried within the Abbey Church although the exact location is not known). Because of its royal patronage, the Abbey was one of the pilgrimage centres of medieval England, and one of its richest and most important religious houses. The Abbey also held over 230 relics including the hand of St James. The Abbey complex therefore contained a large number of residential and functional buildings within its walls in addition to the Abbey itself. It is clear from the information already available on the extent of the Abbey building, that a part of the former Abbey Church is located within the site of the prison in the north-west quadrant. It is also likely that there are remains of other residential and functional buildings and a cemetery related to the former Abbey precinct across the site of the prison, which was wholly within the former Abbey walls.
- 3.5 The plan below provides an outline of the original Abbey layout indicating the walls that remain standing.

⁷ ~~Further Standard and Guidance on excavation and field evaluation, along with other information can be found at <http://www.archaeologists.net/codes/ifa>~~



- 3.6 In addition, as can be discerned from the note on the historical importance of the Prison Site, there is evidence of pre-Abbey occupation, most notably from the Viking period. It also contains earthwork defences and other remains from the Civil War Siege of Reading as well as other subsequent uses prior to the building of the current prison building in 1843. There are reports that a tunnel existed under the Abbey Ruins for the transfer of prisoners between the Prison and the Crown Court to the west of the Abbey Gateway. There is no evidence of its existence from within the Prison and it may have been filled in. There is a basement plan of the prison from 1865 illustrating a passage from the prison to rooms below the Abbey Ruins.
- 3.7 It is clear that the site contains many layers of history and all of them need to be taken into account in any assessment and evaluation.
- 3.8 ~~The As indicated above, a -detailed desk based archaeological appraisal assessment has been prepared on behalf of the Ministry of Justice MoJ by Purcell. and further recommended excavation/field evaluation will provide information on the survival and nature of remains from the former Abbey precinct. Once completed and agreed, t~~ This will form the basis for outline discussions of any development potential on the site. ~~It is highly likely that, at this stage, the most sensitive areas would be agreed and anything other than removal of later additions and enhancement ruled out~~

~~in those locations; also we cannot expect development to be accepted in any given area at this stage. This would depend on further investigation and evaluation.~~ This report plots the archaeology of the ~~P~~prison site through history, derived from a desk-top analysis of the Historic Environment Records for Berkshire and other sources. It contains considerable detail about the use and the development of the site for a prison between 1786 and the closure of Reading Prison in January 2014. Section 5 of the Report draws together the findings and provides a diagram showing the total impact area of previous ground intrusion and build up across the site.

3.9 The non-technical summary states:

“Purcell was instructed by Jones Lang LaSalle, on behalf of the Ministry of Justice, to undertake an archaeological desk based appraisal of HM Prison Reading (hereafter the ‘site’) to inform future redevelopment of the site. The report deals with buried archaeology only.

The site lies within an area of high archaeological potential. Prehistoric activity has been located in and around the site indicating that the area has been settled for millennia. The potential for the site to yield further pre-historic evidence was considered to be moderate/low.

Documentary evidence indicates that a Saxon settlement and Danish encampment existed in Reading during the 9th and 10th centuries. There is therefore a moderate potential for the recovery of further evidence for the Middle Saxon period, whilst the archaeological potential for the late Saxon period is moderate/low.

The site is located within the precinct of Reading Abbey. The Abbey was a 12th century Benedictine and Cluniac monastery and is designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 19019). The monastery was founded in AD1121 by Henry I who was also buried there in 1135. Today, only a small proportion of the Abbey survives as above-ground ruins to the west of the site. Excavations in the 1970s located the east end of the Abbey Church. There is also potential for other monastic buildings such as the Infirmary and cemetery to be located on the prison site. Whilst later development of the site from 18th century onwards has been proven to be extensive and may have impacted on the survival of in situ archaeology, the potential for archaeological deposits relating to the medieval abbey are still considered to be high.

After the abbey was dissolved on the orders of Henry VIII, the site may have been used as gardens and as orchard. The area may also have been used during the defence of the town during the Civil War. The potential for archaeological evidence for this period is considered to be moderate.

The new County Gaol was built on the site in the 1780s which was subsequently replaced by the present building in 1844. The prison site underwent modifications up to the present with various additions and deletions to prison plans. There is a high potential for evidence to be uncovered of lost elements of the prison including the gate house, the earlier prison wall and wall turrets, the female prison and other associated structures. There is also a high potential for the discovery of burials relating to prisoner executions.

Analysis of historic maps showing the evolving prison layout and construction details relating to the 1970s prison buildings shows significant historic and modern ground intrusion and build up across the site. Such intensive activity is likely to have impacted upon buried archaeological deposits across the site. Given the heritage significance of the site, English Heritage and the Local Planning Authority will require a targeted programmed predetermination archaeological evaluation to further quantify the archaeological potential of the site in those areas where development is proposed. Any ground intrusive investigation works on site will required schedule monument consent and should be agreed with English Heritage and the Local Planning Authority through a Written Scheme of Investigation”.

3.10 Section 5.3 of the report indicates that the scheduled site is extremely sensitive to ground intrusive development and any future development of the site should seek to minimise ground impact and reuse the footprint of the existing buildings. The report concludes that:

The archaeological significance of the prison site given its status as part of the scheduled Monument defining Reading Abbey is very high. This report has identified a high potential for the existence of buried archaeological deposits relating to the 18th and 19th century prison. The extent of ground intrusion associated with 18th, 19th and 20th century prison development is likely to have impacted heavily on any predating archaeological deposits.

3.11 Any targeted programmed predetermination archaeological evaluation may take the form of geo-technical analysis and/or archaeological trial pitting/ trenching and will be targeted to establish the presence, extent and condition of any in situ archaeology deposits. Any investigations or works on the site will require Scheduled Monument Consent whilst the disturbance and/or removal of human remains will require a license issued under the Burial Act and other legislation. All ground intrusive works should be agreed with English Heritage and the Local Planning Authority through a Written Scheme of Investigation. Any such investigation and

evaluation that is agreed with the Council and English Heritage should be undertaken in accordance with IFA Standard and Guidance.⁸

- 3.912 While the MoJ assessment provides a high level of information on the archaeology of the site, Overall there would be an remains a need for an iterative process of identifying levels of significance (archaeology and historic building) and potential locations for change. These will evolve as the extent of archaeological/historic and architectural information is confirmed through any further evaluation. It may well be that as investigations progress, areas of interest may be altered or additional areas may be excluded from development. There remains an absolute need for information on the survival of below-ground archaeology (i.e. through evaluation).^[SR1]
- 3.1013 ~~It will be important to reconcile the built heritage and archaeological constraints. It will be equally important to get a holistic response from English Heritage and the Principal Conservation Officer (Borough) rather than their separate inputs on the two separate designations.~~

Grade II listed prison building

- 3.1114A A desk based Historic Building Assessment has been prepared on behalf of the Ministry of Justice MoJ by Purcell. detailed conservation assessment of It provides a comprehensive recording of the history, development and significance of the buildings and site along with an assessment of the impact on the heritage value. It highlights the historic associations with the prison, Oscar Wilde, the Irish Internees, and its design by Sir George Gilbert Scott - one of the most prolific and celebrated architects of the Victorian period. It considers the significance of the prison and the discussion at section 5.6 reports on its significance as follows:

“Reading Prison is clearly an unusual prison, standing as it does within a Scheduled Monument. The buried archaeological potential of the site is therefore of high significance, and redevelopment of the site could provide the opportunity to investigate this evidence and increase understanding of the archaeology of the area, particularly the medieval abbey and 18th century County Gaol and demolished elements of the later prison built in 1844.

Also of high significance is the historic value of the prison to illustrate the development of prison philosophy as it is an early example of the radial-plan, built for the newly introduced ‘separate system’.

⁸ Further Standard and Guidance on excavation and field evaluation, along with other information can be found at <http://www.archaeologists.net/codes/ifa>

Of high significance is the association of Reading Prison with the architect Gilbert Scott and also with the former inmate, Oscar Wilde.

The existing listed building is also of high significance and is been grade II Listed. It's Gothic -Tudor design is still legible and despite later alterations and losses, it retains a fortress-like appearance. Despite modern intrusions, many original features still exist internally and should be retained as part of any new scheme. Alterations have also removed the internal fittings of the chapel, but despite this, it has retained its tall gothic windows and double height internal space."

3.15 Section 6 of the report sets out the broad design parameters for considerate development of the site and its buildings. These are broadly supported by English Heritage and the Council and should be closely adhered to in the future use and development of the Prison Site. They need to be considered in conjunction with the findings, conclusions and legal requirements set out in the Archaeological Desk Based Assessment discussed above.

3.16 The conclusions to the report indicate that the development of the former prison site offers the opportunity for the enhancement of the heritage value of the main listed prison building. During the late 20th century, the site was subject to a major phase of rebuild which comprised the addition of a number of buildings (Admin/education/ workshop/sports pitch/gatehouse). These buildings are of plain utilitarian design and are believed to detract from the heritage significance of the main listed prison building. Their considered removal offers significant opportunity for enhancement of the heritage value of the Listed Building itself whose national significance is recognised in the Listed Building designation. This is particularly true for the north of elevation of the main prison building (Formally the main entrance) which is heavily obscured by the unsympathetic administration block. Any new buildings agreed within the site footprint could be tempered by the offer of conservation reinstatement of the north entrance to the Listed Building and conservation repair to this building as a whole.

3.17 ~~the site's buildings, and their settings,~~This assessment assists in ~~will be needed to fully~~ understanding ~~their~~ significance ~~of the prison buildings,~~ including the interiors and fittings. ~~Once this is done, it will be possible.~~ ~~This will assist in~~ ~~to~~ identifying areas where there is potential for change and/or demolition and the extent of that change or demolition, and where new development might/ may not be possible from a built heritage perspective.

3.18The prison was designed by Gilbert George Scott, who also designed the Albert Memorial and the St Pancras Hotel (which has recently been restored). This was one of Scott's first buildings. It is therefore of interest in that it illustrates how his style developed in the early part of

his career. In addition, there is great interest in the historical, literary and social associations of the prison, in particular the fame generated by Oscar Wilde's incarceration and his poem, "*The Ballad of Reading Gaol*." It is also notable for receiving a number of well-known Irish patriots who were interned after the Easter Rising of 1916. These included Arthur Griffith, who later became the first President of the Irish Republic. There is significant local support for these associations to be marked in the reuse of the prison site and its important buildings through the provision of some form(s) of visitor learning /interpretation facilities as well as access to the site as part of any development. Academically, the University of Reading have a significant interest in the literary associations with the prison's history.

3.19 It will be important to reconcile the built heritage and archaeological constraints. It will be equally important to get a holistic response from English Heritage and the Principal Conservation Officer (Borough) rather than their separate inputs on the two separate designations.

Abbey Quarter

3.1320 The reuse and development of the Prison Site will be an important component of the Abbey Quarter project. In addition to preserving, enhancing and giving access to heritage assets within the site itself, which further study may provide added emphasis and importance, the site needs to be linked and appropriately related to other attractions of the Abbey Quarter, most notably the Abbey Ruins and Forbury Gardens which lie to the west of the Prison Site. It should also be linked and related to the Kennet and Avon Canal to the south of the site. These linkages are likely to entail some remodelling of the present, modern prison walls, which are currently a dominant feature of the site, to open up and connect the site. It is also likely that there will be a requirement to open up and reconnect the prison site with the Abbey Ruins. However, any works will require detailed discussions with, and the agreement of, English Heritage and the Secretary of State. English Heritage has indicated that the current prison wall incorporates elements of Scott's original wall, which it would be desirable to retain. Even in its current much altered state, the wall makes a contribution to the significance of the prison, as the characteristic thing about prisons is that they are separated from the outside world by a high wall. Any plans for the future of the prison ought to retain this sense of separateness as far as is practicable.

3.1421 Ideally, there will be potential to somehow demarcate the outline of the Abbey's exterior walls (currently underground) in the future use and development of the site, especially the east end of the Abbey Church and Lady Chapel. This might be through some form of landscape treatment. There will be new facilities and interpretation for this part of the Abbey, better public access, and increased visibility of the Abbey Ruins in their totality.

3.1522 The archaeological appraisal will also highlight other features of importance that need to be preserved and noted or interpreted as part of the future use of the site.

3.1623 It should also be noted that many of the buildings within the Abbey Quarter are separately listed and any future use and/or development of the Prison Site will need to have regard to any impacts on the setting of these buildings. In particular, any proposals will need to have regard to St James Church, Presbytery and Day Nursery, which are all listed as are the houses at the eastern end of Abbot's Walk.

3.1724 As part of the Abbey Quarter, the Prison site will need to be remodelled and enhanced in accordance with design codes that are being developed as part of the Abbey Quarter Project to guide future development. It will include matters such as carriageway and footpath materials, street furniture, site and historical interpretation, signage, landscape planting, etc. Thames Valley Police advise that there should be appropriate protection for the site to stop thieves gaining access, during demolition and archaeological explorations.

Burial Ground

3.1825 The Abbey precinct contained a cemetery which is believed to lie within the site of the prison and this will be assessed in the archaeological appraisal. In addition, the prison was a place of execution (as described in the poem by Oscar Wilde, "*The Ballad of Reading Gaol*"). It is understood that there were a number of executions carried out at the prison, the last in 1913. As a rule those executed were buried, often in shallow graves, within the prison grounds. It is understood that most of the burials were made alongside the perimeter wall on the western side of the prison. The Berkshire Records Office can provide further evidence relating to these burials.

3.1926 In carrying out any works involving any form of ground disturbance, there will be a requirement to liaise with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) as a licence to disturb/remove remains will be required under the Burial Act and other legislation. The MoJ will place binding conditions in respect of the removal, handling, storage and subsequent reburial of the remains etc., in the licence. English Heritage should also be notified of proposed works and their permission sought as part of the Scheduled Monument Consent process. It is likely that remains resulting from prison executions will require re-burying in marked and recorded locations. It is likely that there are living relatives of those executed and any disturbance therefore needs to be handled very sensitively.

4. Planning Framework

4.1 As indicated above, the site is of very high historical significance and value and the overriding consideration in planning the future use and

development of the site is the conservation and enhancement of the many and varied heritage assets. Policy CS33 in the Core Strategy and Section 9 in the Sites and Detailed Policies Documents to the Council's Local Plan provide further guidance on planning considerations relating to heritage assets. There remains an absolute need for information on the survival of below-ground archaeology (i.e. through evaluation) as part of the formulation of proposals for the future of this site.

4.2 Appendix ~~3-4~~ sets out the other various relevant development plan policies affecting the future use and development of the site under the Reading Borough Local Development Framework (local plan). Regard should also be had to national policy and guidance, where relevant, contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). The following commentary highlights the main policy issues affecting the site.

Future Uses

4.23 Policy RC3b (of the Reading Central Area Action Plan) refers to future residential, commercial offices or a hotel use of the prison and its site. That was based on very limited knowledge of the site or its buildings. As indicated above, with the recent evolution of the Abbey Quarter concept and project, the reuse of the Prison Building and its site offers a wonderful opportunity to provide accommodation and facilities for learning and interpretation not only of the prison but also the wider attractions of the Abbey Quarter. There is therefore an expectation that the site will provide public access to the site and buildings and contribute by way of, community and cultural/arts/leisure/exhibition/commercial facilities and attractions, to the Abbey Quarter concept. There is ~~also some~~ support for the use of part of the site/buildings for an arts and cultural facility complementary with the other cultural attractions in the Abbey Quarter as part of the commercial development of the site. Such uses could occupy part of the site/prison building and would need to work in conjunction with commercial and/or residential uses that will help fund and maintain the site as part of the Abbey Quarter. Consultation responses to the draft Framework also made suggestions for the use of the Pprison for a sustainable education centre to promote various green project solutions (possibly as a short term use while the planning and conversion of the prison is being undertaken). Other suggestions include use for small retail units, food outlets with outdoor seating,

4.34 The listed prison building will be retained, suitably refurbished for an appropriate use in close consultation with English Heritage and the Council's Conservation Advisor. ~~Prison buildings which are not part of the listed building will require listed building consent for any demolition as they adjoin or affect the setting of the listed building.~~ Various elements of the interior of the Prison, particularly the main galleries, make a major contribution to the significance of the building and any new use should look to preserve these. Reading Prison now has the benefit of a new list description which defines the extent of the listed building as the blue area

on the map attached to the listing (the map could therefore do with being appended to the list description). Anything outside the blue area will not need LBC for demolition. Where a development that requires planning permission is considered to affect the setting of the listed building the impact on the setting of the listed building should be a material consideration when determining the application. It is anticipated that Any application for such works will ~~not be controversial, subject consider~~ details of construction in relation to likely archaeological remains, impact upon the Listed Building, and making good the ground surfaces. Some clearing away of the surrounding modern buildings may be desirable in enhancing the setting of the listed building by allowing the listed building to stand alone.

- 4.45 Depending upon the full archaeological investigation and assessments of the listed building indicated in Section 3, not yet undertaken, the Council will develop further guidance on the prospect of new additional development within the site.

Transport and Access

- 4.56 The preferred vehicular access will be the use of the existing left in, left out access arrangement onto the Forbury Road dual carriageway. Some adjustments to its geometry may be required. Accident data indicates that this existing access is not unsafe. The existing access provides a satisfactory arrangement in terms of visibility. The road has a 30mph speed limit and a satisfactory visibility splay to the right is all that is required. The required 2.4 metres by 90 metres splay can be achieved. An alternative all moves junction, even if that was acceptable in highways terms (and this is a very congested part of the network), could not be built here because of the location of the listed Plummery Wall. This listed structure had to be accommodated as part of completion of the IDR when the dual carriageway was constructed between 1989 and 1991. It was incorporated into the central reservation of the new road. Listed building consent would be needed for its removal or alteration.
- 4.67 A transport assessment will be required for submission as part of any planning application for the future use of the site. A residential development may result in an increase in trips, but as the prison is listed there may be limitations on parking accommodation. A hotel or office use, with limited parking, may also be appropriate, given the proximity to Reading Station. Applicants should follow the advice on car parking and cycle parking set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Parking.⁹
- 4.78 The development should provide appropriate, supervised and suitably lit pedestrian and cycle links through the site and from the site to the canal

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http://www.reading.gov.uk/documents/servingyou/planning/local_development_framework/21420/Revised-Parking-SPD-Adopted-1011.pdf

to the south of the site, into the public areas of the Abbey Ruins and to the Forbury Gardens, and to the Kenavon Drive area, in addition to the existing links onto the Forbury Road. The development of the site should also contribute to the wider cycling and pedestrian networks being developed and signposted as part of the proposals for the Abbey Quarter Project. These involve improving pedestrian and cycle access, and signage, from Reading Station and elsewhere in Reading Town Centre to the Abbey Quarter and the Prison via Forbury Gardens.

Views

4.89 In drafting the RCAAP, the Council commissioned a Tall Buildings Strategy, part of which involved identifying important views in Central Reading. One of these views was the view from the western end of Kenavon Drive towards the south west, with the prison being the key feature of the view. This is therefore a key view that will require careful consideration, particularly in terms of views of the listed building.

4.94.10 Other important views that will need to be considered include the following:

- View north from Blake's Cottages across the Kennet and Avon Canal;
- View north from Watlington Street;
- View east from The Forbury and Abbots Walk; and
- View east/south east from Forbury Road.

4.1011 Views out of the site will also be important. Views that link into principle routes to the east and west will assist in realising the aim of linking the East Side Major Opportunity Area to the centre. In addition, development should make the most of any opportunities to create and enhance high-quality views out of the site, such as towards the Abbey Ruins and St James Church and nursery, as well as across the Kennet and Avon Canal towards Blake's Cottages.

Environmental Constraints

4.1112 Information on potential ground condition issues and the possibility of land contamination can be obtained from the Council's Environmental Health Service. A contaminated land survey and report should be submitted with any planning application for the site.

4.1213 The site lies within the Air Quality Management Area. Any development that would detrimentally affect existing air quality or which would be sensitive to poor air quality (e.g. residential uses) will need to meet the criteria set out in Policy DM19 of the adopted Sites and Detailed Policies Document.

4.1314 As residential is likely to form part of the reuse and development and hotel use is also a possibility, the issue of noise affecting the site, particularly from adjoining roads will be relevant. Any development will need to comply with policy CS34 in the Council's Adopted Core Strategy.

4.1415 A preliminary ecological appraisal to include a bat survey of all buildings will need to be undertaken prior to the submission of a planning application to detail the nature conservation interest of the site. Opportunities to enhance the ecological value of the site particularly the canal should be included in any proposals.

4.16 The southern part of the site, adjacent to the southern boundary of site, falls within Flood Zone 2 as having a medium probability of flooding. The remainder of the site lies within Flood Zone 1 as having a low probability of flooding. If the site is considered for residential development, a site wide sequential approach should be taken. This means more vulnerable land uses (such as residential) should be located in those parts of the site with the lowest flood risk. Areas at greatest risk of flooding should remain undeveloped. Following this, it will be appropriate to consider mitigation measures if required.

4.17 To be acceptable, any development on this site will require a full Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). The developer should confirm, as a minimum, that the scheme will achieve a betterment in the surface water runoff regime; ensuring that surface water runoff will not increase flood risk to the development or third parties (this will to some extent be achieved through an appropriate (SuDS)(see below). As part of this assessment, an allowance for climate change needs to be incorporated, which means adding an extra amount to peak rainfall (20% for commercial development, 30% for residential).

4.18 There is also now a separate requirement to demonstrate how sustainable drainage system techniques (SuDS) will be used for a site of this size, with any obstacles to their use clearly justified (see below). Details of the requirements for SuDS are set out in Appendix 5

4.19 Current and historic uses associated with the Prison may have led to contamination on the Site. A PRA (Preliminary Risk Assessment) should be carried out prior to submission of any application in order to assess the risk of any contamination to the underlying aquifer (a principal aquifer) and the adjacent watercourses. The outcomes of your site investigations should inform the SuDs scheme you choose. For example, no infiltration should take place on parts of the site that have previously been impacted by contamination.

4.20 There may be opportunities for ecological enhancement of the river corridor as this site has a river frontage to the south. Natural features encourage biodiversity, and can also create an attractive residential

setting and add value to a development. We would strongly encourage any development to explore these opportunities.

4.21 Under the terms of the Water Resources Act 1991, and the Thames Region Land Drainage Byelaws 1981, prior written consent of the Environment Agency is required for any proposed works or structures, in, under, over or within 8 metres of the top of the bank/foreshore of the River Kennet, designated a 'main river'.

Design Considerations

4.1522 Detailed architectural design and urban design will be an important component of any future use and development of the Prison Site. This planning framework will evolve in parallel with the historical appraisals of the site in terms of design/urban design when there are firmer indications of the form of development that might take place. In the meantime, Policy CS7 provides a framework for considering design and the matters that will need to be addressed in a future Design and Access Statement.

4.23 In line with Policy CS7 the design for the site should seek to create safe and accessible environments through ensuring that:

- o appropriate links from the site to outside the site are provided and designed to ensure that they do not encourage or facilitate anti-social behaviour and street drinkers from the town centre;
- o there are active edges with good natural surveillance from active rooms at ground floor level;
- o appropriate boundary treatments are used to deter crime and anti-social behaviour in relation to adjoining property;
- o any car parking is not hidden away but with receives good natural surveillance from active ground floor rooms.

Policy CS5 indicates that any buildings should be sited and designed to provide suitable access to, into and within its facilities for all potential users including disabled people.

4.1624 Any Design and Access Statement will need to seek to retain and incorporate existing landscape features. Landscape design will need to give careful attention to the public realm and any areas subject to public access. It will need to reflect the history and archaeology of the sites as determined by the various assessments and their evaluation. There may be opportunities to interpret and demarcate the layout of former Abbey buildings and other important features within the landscaping proposals. The landscape design should make proposals for appropriate street furniture and interpretation features. It should provide for play facilities for use by visitors to the site and, possibly in a separate location, play facilities and equipment in association with any residential use or development

It should allow for tree planting, other planting, appropriate surfacing to public areas, seating etc. It will also need to respond to the presence of the prison walls that remain as part of the reuse of the site (see paragraph 3.13 above). New development should respond to the streetscape of the Forbury Road. It should seek to make use of the canal frontage and Chestnut Walk to the south of the site as a significant opportunity.

Planning Obligations/CIL.

4.1725 Policies CS9, DM3 and other policies point to the need to enter into planning obligations with the Council in relation to future infrastructure provision and matters such as affordable housing where required by policies in the plan (e.g. CS 13 and 15). Further information on the interpretation of these policies can be found in recently adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.¹⁰

4.1826 ~~The Council council is currently preparing a Draft Charging Schedule for the Community Infrastructure Levy and expects to progress this through 2014 so that it can be intending to adopted introduce the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule for all developments determined after 1st April early during 2015. At the same time it The Council is also producing adopting~~ a new Supplementary Planning Document on Site Specific Planning Obligations that will complement the new CIL regime. This will cover site related works such as site access improvements or on-site open space provision that will not be funded by CIL but which remain the responsibility of the applicant to provide to ensure the proper planning of the proposed development. Once adopted, these will replace the existing planning obligations regime related to infrastructure provision and work alongside CIL.

Property valuation and development issues.

4.1927 The ~~Council council~~ accepts that in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, viability is a material consideration in development and will inform negotiations on matters such as affordable housing provision (Policy CS 15) and works and contributions made by way of planning obligations (policies CS9 and DM3 and other policies). Where viability is a material consideration, the Council will expect the submission of an open book viability appraisal with any planning application. This should include details relation to timing, finance phasing, etc., where they have an impact on viability.

5. Processes and Procedures

Pre application Service

¹⁰ <http://www.reading.gov.uk/businesses/planning/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents-topics/s106spd/>

- 5.1 The Council provides a paid for pre-application service. It is strongly recommended that detailed pre-application advice is sought from the local planning authority prior to the submission of a formal planning application for any potential redevelopment proposals. This is particularly important for a complex site such as the Prison Site. Pre-application request forms and further advice on the pre-application service can be found at:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/businesses/Planning/how-to-make-a-planning-application/pre-application-advice/>

Pre Application Consultation on Development Proposals

- 5.2 As part of the pre-application process, the Council will expect the prospective applicants to carry out consultation on the draft application proposals. Such consultation should be carried out in accordance with the Council's recently adopted Statement of Community Involvement, noting that it is currently being reviewed (2013 draft version).¹¹

Information requirements

- 5.3 The Council has a Validation Checklist, available on its website, which lists the requirements for information to be submitted alongside any application. This is available on the Council's website¹². The main information requirements are outlined below, but will depend to a large degree on what is being proposed on the site in terms of uses and amount of new development or demolition. The list below is not necessarily comprehensive depending on the proposals:

- Consideration of archaeology is a prerequisite to any other consideration of the development of the site, as set out elsewhere in this framework;
- Heritage Statement and the Setting of Listed Buildings/ SAM's;
- Environmental Impact Assessment screening assessment;
- Affordable Housing Statement (if dwellings or larger employment is proposed);
- Air Quality Statement;
- Contaminated Land Survey & Report;
- Daylight/Sunlight Assessment;
- Ecological Survey & Report - proposals involving demolition will also likely require a bat survey;
- Energy Statement;

¹¹ <http://www.reading.gov.uk/businesses/planning/planning-policy/general-information-on-planning-policy/sci/>

¹² <http://www.reading.gov.uk/businesses/Planning/how-to-make-a-planning-application/validation-checklist/>

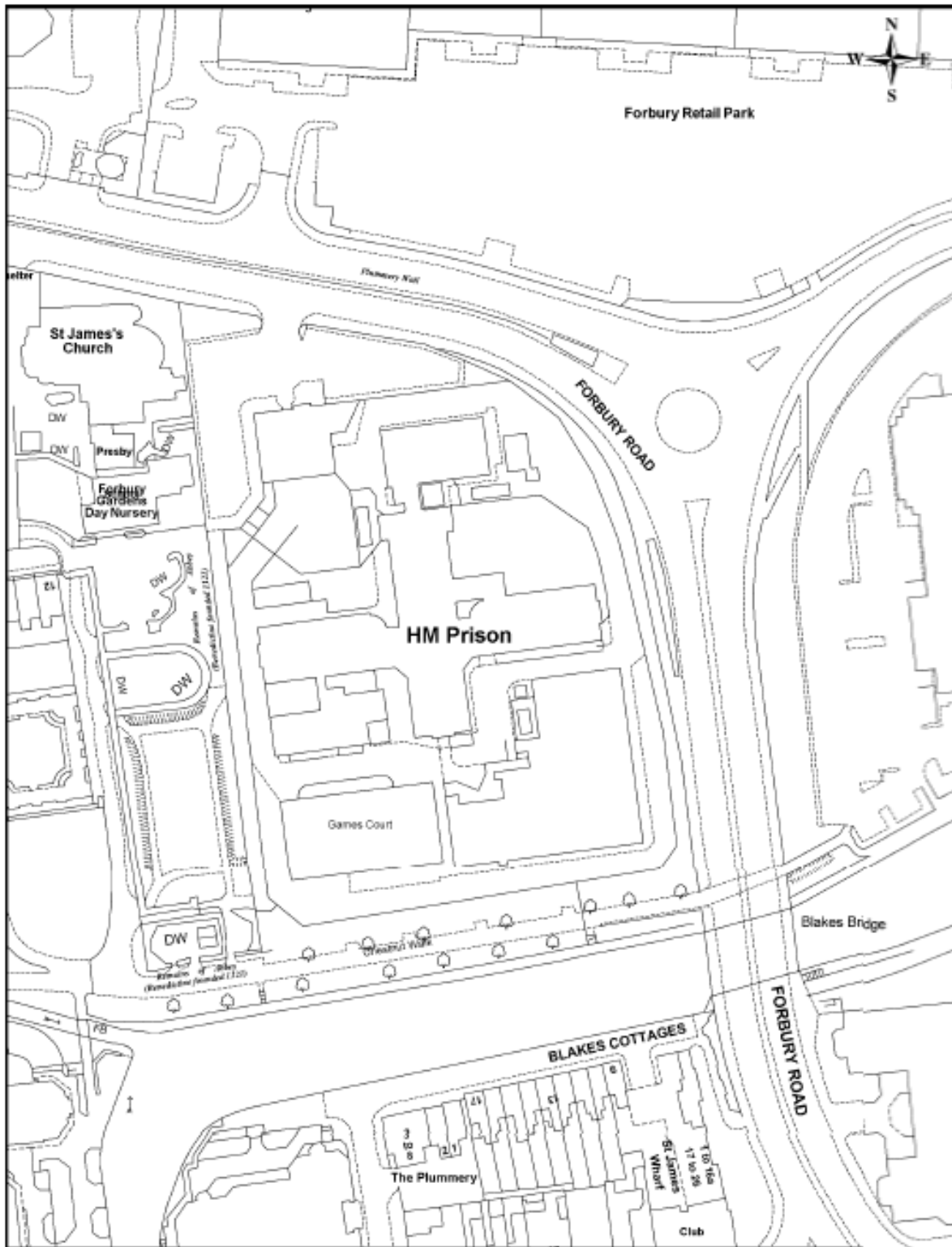
~~• Environmental Impact Assessment screening assessment;~~

- External lighting details;
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Heads of Terms proposals for a Section 106 agreement;
- Heritage Statement;
- Landscape principles;
- Materials details;
- Noise & vibration impact assessment;
- Open space statement;
- Planning policy statement;
- Superfast Broadband Strategy Statement if a new development of more than 50 residential dwellings proposed;
- Sustainability Statement;
- Sequential test & impact assessment if main town centre uses other than offices or hotel are proposed (site is edge-of-centre);

• SUDS:

- Transport assessment and travel plan;
- Tree survey;
- Utilities and drainage statement;
- Vehicle parking and servicing details;

Appendix 1



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<p>Title: Location Plan Reading Prison, Forbury Road.</p>		 <p>Reading Borough Council Working better with you</p>
<p>Produced by GIS & Mapping Services</p>	<p>Date: 04/09/2013 Scale at A4: 1:1250 Ref: Rdg_Prison.pdf</p>	

Appendix 2.

Reading Prison: Historical Importance

Issues and opportunities for the Abbey Quarter

September 2013

Prepared by Matthew Williams (Museum Manager) and Fiona MacDonald (Principal Archaeologist), Reading Borough Council.

Designations

Scheduled Ancient Monument The entire prison site is part of the Reading Abbey and Civil War earthworks scheduled area.

Area of Archaeological Potential The entire site is identified as an area of archaeological potential within the LDF.

Listed Building The 1844 Main Building of the Prison is Grade II listed. This red brick cruciform building consisting of four cell wings; the northern wing contains the former entrance and chapel. It an important example of a 'separate system' prison where prisoners spent almost all their time in solitude, based on the Pentonville Prison Model. The cell (C3.3.) occupied by Oscar Wilde survives. Arthur Griffith, later first President of the Executive Council of the Irish Free State, was interned here after the Easter Rising in 1916. The original walls, gatehouse and turrets were removed in 1972.

Issues and opportunities

Setting and connection with the wider historic environment

The prison provides the setting for several key features within the Abbey Quarter: Abbey Ruins (Scheduled and Grade I listed), St James Church and school (Grade II), Forbury Gardens (Grade II) and Chestnut Walk - public footpath and Oscar Wilde memorial.

It is important that any proposal retains a strong visual connection between the historic prison building and the Abbey Ruins, Forbury Gardens and Chestnut Walk, and enhance the wider historic environment.

Opportunities to open up pedestrian routes between the prison site and the rest of the Quarter would be desirable. A pedestrian access onto Chestnut Walk should be considered. A secondary pedestrian connection into the northern part of the Abbey Ruins would improve access across the site, but would need to be gated so that the Ruins can continue to be secured after dark to minimise anti-social behaviour and vandalism to the standing monument.

The plans for the site should take into wider strategy for the town centre through the Abbey Quarter and Public Realm Strategy. Any signage for the site

should be integrated into pedestrian signage schemes for the Abbey Quarter and wider town centre.

Impact on Grade II listed prison building -

A conservation assessment of the site's buildings will need to be developed, in order to fully understand its significance. This 'significance appraisal' should establish the approach for alterations and any redevelopment. Issues will include whether any later additions are worthy of retention as part of site's history and setting. For example elements of the 1971 prison wall could be retained or echoed within new structures to put the listed main building in its proper historical context as part of a Victorian prison.

The reuse/ development presents an opportunity to restore the main listed building, particularly removing ugly and inappropriate late 20th century additions. A key improvement would be to restore the northern entrance façade of the main building that is currently disfigured by the 1970s administration block. Creating a direct visual connection between this facade and the Forbury Road would visually improve the wider townscape and setting of the Abbey Quarter.

Archaeological impact

There is a high potential for archaeological remains. The whole site will require evaluation to assess likely survival and inform mitigation of potential impacts. Berkshire Archaeology will advise RBC and due to the site's Scheduled status English Heritage and the Secretary of State will need to give consent for any works.

There are thought to be remains of Reading Abbey present across the site. The east end of the Abbey Church lies under the car park and prison entrance in the site's north-west corner. This was partially revealed by excavations during the rebuilding of the perimeter wall and gatehouse in 1971-73 (Slade 1975-76). Following the excavations these remains were partially destroyed, and part reduced and covered to form the current car park. The extent of medieval remains across the rest of the site remains largely unknown. There is the potential for medieval burials.

Slade's excavations found some evidence of pre-Abbey occupation including worked flint and early Bronze Age, Romano-British, and middle Saxon pottery shards. There could potentially be evidence on this site for the 871AD Viking army encampment. There is likely to be evidence for the post-dissolution use of the site including the Civil War town defences, post-medieval industry and the 1790s County Goal that was replaced by the current building.

There is almost certainly evidence for elements of the 1844 and later 19th century buildings that have since been demolished, including the County Militia guardroom (originally on east side outside the perimeter wall and linked to basement militia stores under the east wing by a underground passage), original perimeter wall, turrets, gatehouse, women's wing (in the north east corner), mill house (tread mills), and the houses of the chaplain and governor. A watching brief on new water pipe trenches recorded in situ elements of both the pump

shed and the wood storage yard of the 19th century prison (Jacobs 2008). The west side is the likely location of burial plot for the prisoners executed at Reading. Any new build will need to avoid impacts on any 'in situ' remains, potentially leaving such areas within public open space.

The development of the site gives an exciting opportunity to better understand and present the site's important archaeology to the public as part of the wider Abbey Quarter. In some circumstances there may be opportunities to reveal, present and protect buried features and foundations or to mark and interpret the location of the Abbey and later structures using paving/landscaping and interpretive signage.

Listing of the Prison¹³

The Revised English Heritage Listing of the Prison ~~contains the following description: is attached at Appendix 3~~

~~FORBURY ROAD 1, 5128 (South Side) Main building of HM Prison SU 7273 7/100 II 2. 1833. Scott and Moffatt. Gatehouse and corner towers removed. Only main cruciform building remains. 3 storeys and basement. Red brick with stone cornice band and parapet. Central crenellated octagon with tall crenellated drum over, east and west wings join at a quadrant on north side. 13 bays (south side 6 bays) with small rectangular windows. Chapel in north wing which has bold block cornice to parapet. 1+4+1 lancets on upper floor, and retaining cast iron glazing bars. 3 bay return to north with a 4 storey crenellated turret in centre and flanking chimneys. Interior: central octagon with ribbed domical vault. Communicating corridors have pointed barrel vaults with diaphragm arches. Galleries on 2 levels with cast iron decorative brackets. Segmental vault in cells. Said to be of some importance in connection with prison reform. Chiefly famous because Oscar Wilde wrote his "Ballad of Reading Gaol" while a prisoner here. His cell on the north side of the east wing can be seen from the railway. Interior of chapel altered.~~

~~Listing NGR: SU7207673552~~

Site Timeline

- 870-1 Viking army encampment, first written record for Reading
- 1121 Reading Abbey founded by Henry I
- 1136 Henry I buried in front of the High Altar
- 1539 Dissolution of Abbey by Henry VIII
- 1643 Siege of Reading, earthwork defences built around Reading
- 1776 first antiquarian survey of Abbey Ruins
- 1791 County Gaol opens in the Forbury
- 1833 S. Transept and Chapter House purchased by public subscription
- 1837-1840 St James Roman Catholic church designed by A.W.N. Pugin
- 1841 Huntley & Palmers, world's biggest biscuit factory opens
- 1843-1844 Reading Gaol rebuilt by Scott and Moffat
- 1845 first execution at the prison and burial within site
- 1895-7 Oscar Wilde imprisoned at Reading Gaol

¹³ <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1321948>

- 1898 *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* published
- 1913 Last execution at the gaol
- 1915 Abbey becomes a Scheduled Ancient Monument
- 1971-73 Prison's outer walls rebuilt, removing the Victorian gatehouse and towers.
- 2013 Prison closure announced for December 2013 (although now likely to be January 2014)

References

Berkshire Archaeology; Berkshire Historic Environment Record - available online at <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/default.aspx>

English Heritage; The National Heritage List for England - available online at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>

Jacobs. 2008. *HMP Reading, Berkshire - Archaeological Watching Brief Report*. unpublished report (Berkshire HER event: ERM841)

Reading Borough Council, 2012, *Abbey Quarter Outline Conservation Statement*. unpublished report

Slade, C. 1975-76. *Excavations at Reading Abbey 1971-3* in Berkshire Archaeological Society Journal. Vol. 68, pages 29-70 (Berkshire HER event: ERM1240)

Appendix 3:

List Entry

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: Reading Gaol (main building) former Her Majesty's Prison

List Entry Number: 1321948

Location

Forbury Road, Reading, Berkshire,

The listed building(s) is/are shown coloured blue on the attached map. Pursuant to s.1 (5A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act'), structures attached to or within the curtilage of the listed building (save those coloured blue on the map) are not to be treated as part of the listed building for the purposes of the Act. The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County District District Type Parish

Reading Unitary Authority Non Civil Parish

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 14 December 1978

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

L

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

Legacy Number: 38945

Asset Groupings

This List entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List Entry Description

Summary of Building

County gaol, 1842-4 by George Gilbert Scott and William Boynton Moffatt, altered c.1970. Certain buildings and parts of the buildings are excluded from the Listing, as is made clear in the List entry. English Heritage Advice Report 26 February 2014.

Reasons for Designation

The main building at Reading Gaol, of 1842-4 by George Gilbert Scott and William Boynton Moffatt, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- * Architectural interest: an impressive, fortress-like design that represents an early work by one of England's foremost C19 architects;
- * Planning interest: a pioneering English example of a radial-plan prison built for the newly-introduced 'separate system' of constant surveillance and solitary confinement;
- * Historic interest: strongly associated with the imprisonment of Oscar Wilde, who spent eighteen months of his two-year sentence there and later immortalised the institution in 'The Ballad of Reading Gaol'.

History

Reading Gaol stands adjacent to the town centre, on a plot of riverside land once occupied by the cloister and burial ground of Reading Abbey. The original County Gaol was in Castle Street, but moved to a new building on the present site in 1786. By the 1840s this had become overcrowded and dilapidated, and in 1842 a design competition was held for a new prison, which was to house 200 criminals and 20 debtors, with space for 100 additional cells and a court house. The winning design by George Gilbert Scott and William Bonython Moffatt was based on the then recently-

completed New Model Prison at Pentonville in London. Its plan comprised a central hub and a series of radiating galleried wings containing individual cells, which was designed to implement the 'separate system' of solitary confinement and regular surveillance, introduced in Britain under the 1839 Prisons Act and pioneered ten years earlier at the Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, USA. This type would become ubiquitous during the course of the C19, with some twenty radial-plan prisons built in England during the period 1839-77.

The building contract was initially given to John Jay of London, but his company went bankrupt three months after construction began in August 1842, and the work was completed by Messrs George and William Baker. The new gaol, with cells for 250 men and women and a debtors' ward, was ready for occupation in July 1844, by which time the need for additional cells, a separate laundry block and the rebuilding of the old perimeter wall had driven the final cost up from an initial estimate of £24,000 to an eventual total of more than £40,000. Reading continued as the County Gaol for the next 70 years. Its most famous inmate was Oscar Wilde, who served the latter part of his sentence there between November 1895 and May 1897; he described his experience in 'De Profundis', written during his imprisonment, and later in 'The Ballad of Reading Gaol'. The gaol closed in November 1915; it served as an internment centre from 1916 until 1919, and parts of it were let to various government departments during the inter-war period. In the latter part of WWII it was used as a military prison by the Canadian Army, reopening in 1946 as an overflow prison for men serving short sentences, before becoming a borstal in 1951. In 1969-70 it was returned to use as an adult prison; this involved numerous changes to the fabric, including the refenestration of the cells and the demolition and rebuilding of the gatehouse and perimeter wall. Between 1992 and its closure at the end of 2013 Reading served as a remand centre and Young Offenders Institution.

George Gilbert Scott (1811-78) was perhaps the most successful, prolific and influential British architect of the Victorian period. The son of a Buckinghamshire clergyman and amateur architect, he was articled to the London church architect James Edmeston in 1827 and established his own practice in 1834. His early work, until 1845 in collaboration with William Boynton Moffatt (1812-87), mostly consisted of workhouses, hospitals and other poor-law buildings. Scott's chief fame, however, was as a builder and restorer of churches, in which he was strongly influenced by the Gothic Revivalist polemics of AWN Pugin. Scott's reputation was firmly established in 1844 with the commission for the vast new Nikolaikirche in Hamburg, Germany, and in the decades that followed his practice became one of the largest in Britain, responsible for hundreds of new churches - from Oxbridge college chapels to the new cathedrals at Edinburgh and Christchurch, New Zealand - and for the restoration of hundreds more, where his often destructive approach drew bitter criticism from William Morris and the fledgling conservation movement. Major secular commissions included the Albert Memorial, the Midland Hotel at St Pancras' Station, the Foreign Office on Whitehall (all in London) and the universities of Glasgow and Bombay, India. Scott was knighted in 1872, and served as president of the RIBA from 1873 to 1876.

Details

County gaol, 1842-4 by George Gilbert Scott and William Boynton Moffatt, altered c.1970. MATERIALS: red brick with Bath stone dressings, mostly now renewed in concrete. Roofs originally of slate, now replaced with asbestos tiles* (not of special interest). PLAN: the main prison building originally stood within a square enclosure of approximately three acres, surrounded by a high boundary wall with octagonal corner towers and a large, multi-towered gatehouse complex on the north side providing accommodation for resident staff (the governor, deputy governors, warders, matron and chaplain) as well as additional security. Against the north wall and alongside the gatehouse was a block containing the women's cells.

All this was demolished c.1970, leaving only the cruciform main building. This comprises four wings, designated A to D, converging on a central semi-octagon. The upper three floors of A, B and C wings contained the male felons' cells. Originally there were twelve on each floor in B wing and twenty-five in the longer A and C wings, accessed on the upper two floors by means of galleries connecting via the central octagon. The basement beneath A wing originally contained the prison kitchens, and – in a sealed-off area to the west, accessed via a tunnel (now demolished) leading outside the prison wall – a munitions store for the Berkshire militia; the latter space was absorbed into the prison proper in 1878 and was last used as the prison hospital. The basement under B wing contained baths, punishment cells, a knife room and an officers' cleansing room.

D wing was aligned with the old gatehouse and formed the entrance to the main building. The ground floor and basement contained the debtors' cells: first-class debtors on the ground floor opposite the governor's office and visiting rooms, second-class debtors in the basement along with the reception cells and coal store.

The first and second floors contained the chaplain's and schoolmaster's offices, a room from which the governor could oversee activity in the central octagon, and – rising through both floors in the centre of the wing – the prison chapel. Executions took place on a scaffold built against the eastern side of the wing. As well as the rebuilding of the perimeter walls, the works of c.1970 saw the construction of a number of new buildings within the old prison yards. These are plain red-brick structures of one and two storeys, and include: a new gatehouse at the north-west corner of the site; an administration block with visiting and interview rooms, abutting D wing to the north; and, in the angle between A and B wings, an education and training building, which now also contains the prison chapel and kitchens. In the angle between B and C wings is a former workshop of c.1910, a single-storey brick building with a part-glazed roof. These structures, and the rebuilt perimeter wall that encloses them, are not of special interest and are excluded from the listing*.

EXTERIOR: Scott and Moffatt's design displays the Tudor-Gothic details employed in their workhouse and hospital designs, here combined with castellated elements – battlements to the entrance block and central octagon, machicolations under the eaves throughout - intended to give a fortress-like aspect. The visual inspiration for the design, which was much criticised for its elaboration and expense, is said to have been Warwick Castle. The alterations of c.1970 greatly changed the building's external appearance: the original two-light cell windows were replaced with single square openings containing barred double-glazed window units* (not of special interest), and most of the stone-dressed elements were replaced in concrete. (An unaltered original cell window survives in the basement of D wing.)

D wing is the main focus for architectural display. The projecting frontispiece at the northern end is fully crenellated and features tall ridged and corbelled chimney stacks, diapered brickwork and mullion-and-transom windows. The ground-floor entrance doorway has been lost, absorbed into a single-storey addition of c.1970. The wing behind is dominated by the tall chapel windows with their simple Gothic tracery. Beneath these, on the western side, are more mullion-and-transom windows, originally to the administrative offices. On the eastern side are the smaller pointed windows of the debtors' cells. In the centre is a larger archway, now bricked up, through which condemned prisoners were led out onto the scaffold.

A, B and C wings have pitched roofs over the central galleried section and flat roofs over the cell blocks on either side. The latter have the square concrete-framed windows installed c.1970; the former terminate in gabled projections with very tall mullion-and-transom windows (of concrete replacing the original stone) which are the main source of light to the internal galleries. There is a similar (and likewise renewed) window where each wing abuts the octagonal hub, the cell blocks terminating in quadrants here to allow light to penetrate the central space. The octagon itself has a crenellated parapet and a tall central turret, also crenellated, which forms the main stack for the plenum ventilation system.

INTERIORS: these have been much altered, with original features removed and a variety of modern fittings and finishes* applied; the latter are not of special interest. The original cells with their jack-arched brick vaults mostly survive, but have in the majority of cases been doubled up by removing the wall between each pair, while the Tudor-arched entrance doorways now have flat concrete lintels, and renewed doors* (the doors not being of special interest). The metal gallery structures with their curved supporting brackets and cross-braced balustrades are original. The ceiling over the galleries is a pointed brick vault, while the central octagon has a brick vault with moulded stone ribs and corbels, and lozenge-shaped ceiling lights cut through the webs of the vault. Air extracted from vents in the cells originally passed through the space above the vaults and out through the plenum tower. Suspended at first-floor level within the octagon was a glazed Gothic pavilion structure from which prison staff could keep watch on movements in A, B and C wings and (via the tall side windows) in the prison yard outside; the pavilion has been replaced with a modern prefabricated cabin* (not of special interest). In the basement under A wing, the layout of the former munitions store is still legible, despite the inserted ceiling* (not of special interest) and the

demolition of the access tunnel. Beneath B wing some original cells survive, including high-security 'punishment' cells for the confinement of violent inmates.

The chapel, later used as a games room, is a double-height space with an arch-braced queen-strut roof and central skylight. It originally contained a multi-tiered timber gallery structure that allowed each prisoner to observe the service from within an enclosed box; this arrangement, designed to minimise contact between prisoners in accordance with the 'separate system', can still be seen at Lincoln Castle but has been completely lost at Reading along with all other fittings and decoration. Elsewhere in D wing the layout of the offices survives, as do some of the debtors' cells.

* Pursuant to s.1 (5A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') it is declared that these aforementioned features are not of special architectural or historic interest.

Selected Sources

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Brodie, Croom and Davies, English Prisons, 2002, 96-116

Cole, D, The Work of Sir Gilbert Scott, 1980

Southerton, P, Reading Gaol by Reading Town, 1993

Stokes, A, Pit of Shame: the Real Ballad of Reading Gaol, 2007

Map

National Grid Reference: SU7207273571

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The above map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale

map, please see the attached PDF - 1321948_2.pdf

Former List Entry

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for

its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: MAIN BUILDING OF HM PRISON

List Entry Number: 1321948

Location

MAIN BUILDING OF HM PRISON, FORBURY ROAD,

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County District District Type Parish

Reading Unitary Authority

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 14 December 1978

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

Legacy Number: 38945

Asset Groupings

This List entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official

record but are added later for information.

List Entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

FORBURY ROAD1.5128 (South Side)

Main building of HM PrisonSU 7273 7/100II2.1833.

Scott and Moffatt. Gatehouse and corner towers removed. Only maincruciform building remains. 3 storeys and basement. Red brick with stonecornice band and parapet. Central crenellated octagon with tall crenellated drum over, east and west wings join at a quadrant on north side. 13 bays (southside 6 bays) with small, rectangular windows. Chapel in north wing which has bold block cornice to parapet. 1+4+1 lancets on upper floor and retaining cast iron glazing bars. 3 bay return to north with a 4 storey crenellated turret in centre and flanking chimneys. Interior: central octagon with ribbed domical vault. Communicating corridors have pointed barrel vaults with diaphragm arches. Galleries on 2 levels with cast iron decorative brackets. Segmental vault in cells. Said to be of some importance in connection with prison reform. Chiefly famous because Oscar Wilde wrote his "Ballad of Reading Gaol" while a prisoner here. His cell on the north side of the east wing can be seen from the railway. Interior of chapel altered

Listing NGR: SU7207673552

Selected Sources

None.

Plan of Listing that defines the extent of the listed building as the blue area on the map attached to the listing to be attached here.

| Appendix **34**:

Relevant Development Plan Policies

Main Policy Relationships

- A1.1 The main policy that this Framework supplements is policy **RC3 (Development in the East Side Major Opportunity Area)** in the Reading Central Area Action Plan, adopted in January 2009. The text of the policy is set out below.



RC3e, 42 KENAVON DRIVE:

This area will be developed for medium density residential use, preserving the east west

Other Policy Relationships

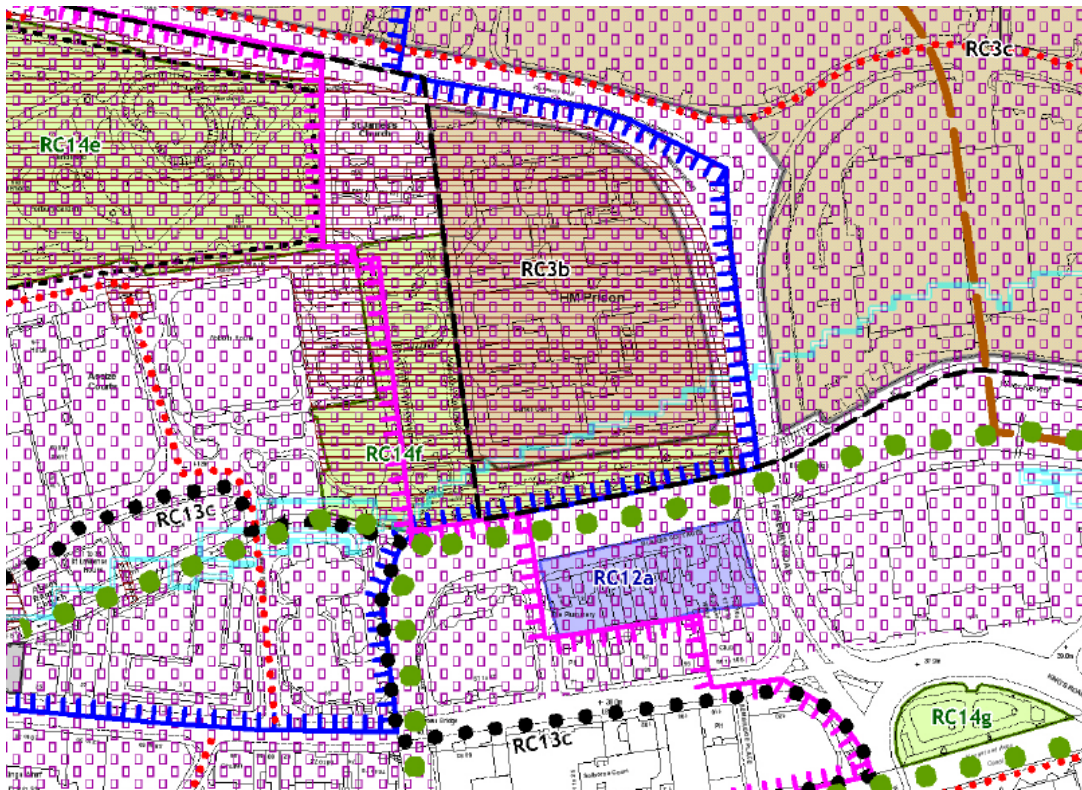
There are a number of other policies in the Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan and Sites and Detailed Policies Document that are relevant, as are some topic-related Supplementary Planning Documents. Figure XX below lists the main relevant policy principles that should be taken into account in considering development on this site:

Figure XX: Other Main Relevant Policies


CORE STRATEGY (adopted 2008)	
CS1: Sustainable Design and Construction <i>(as supplemented by Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, 2011)</i>	Development should be sustainable in nature, use resources efficiently, and meet a number of more specific requirements. The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD contains more specific guidance.
CS3: Social Inclusion and Diversity	Development should demonstrate how it will address issues of social exclusion.
CS4: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development	The density and intensity of development should reflect the level of accessibility by sustainable forms of transport.
CS5: Inclusive Access	Buildings should be sited and designed to provide suitable access to into and within its facilities for all potential users including disabled people.
CS7: Design and the Public Realm	A high quality of design is required that reflects principles such as high quality public realm, permeability and safe environments.
CS8: Waterspaces	Development should enhance the public realm of waterways, and ensure public access and preserving the multiple roles of the waterways.
CS9: Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities	Development will mitigate its impacts on infrastructure, services, resources and amenities. More guidance will be set out in a SPD.
CS13: Impact of Employment Development	Employment development should provide mitigation in line with its impacts.
CS15: Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix	Density and mix of housing will be related to character, accessibility, mix and environmental impacts. An indicative density range for a 'town centre' area is over 70 dwellings per hectare.
CS16: Affordable Housing	Developments of 15 units or more should provide 50% affordable housing.
CS20: Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy	Development should contribute balanced transport network including schemes in Local Transport Plan.
CS22: Transport Assessments	Development proposals should make provision for an adequate level of accessibility and safety in accordance with an agreed transport assessment.
CS23: Sustainable Travel and Travel Plans	Major development proposals should promote and improve sustainable transport facilities.
CS24: Car/Cycle Parking <i>(as supplemented by Parking Standards and Design SPD, 2011)</i>	Parking standards for specific uses are set out by zone. The prison falls within zone 1.

CS25: Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development	Major retail, leisure and culture development will be directed to central Reading in the first instance.
CS29: Provision of Open Space	New development will make on-site or off-site provision to open space.
CS31: Additional and Existing Community Facilities	New community facilities will be acceptable. Loss of an existing facility only acceptable where there is no need for it.
CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment	Heritage assets and their settings will be protected and where appropriate enhanced.
CS34: Pollution and Water Resources	Development will not damage the environment through pollution. Proposals sensitive to pollution will not be in areas with high levels of pollution. Issues which should be addressed on this site are likely to include air quality and contaminated land.
CS35: Flooding	Development should not reduce flood storage, impede flows or increase flood risk. Small part of site is in Flood Zone 2.
CS38: Trees, Hedges and Woodland	Protects trees, hedges and woodland
READING CENTRAL AREA ACTION PLAN (adopted 2009)	
RC5: Design in the Centre	Development should build on existing grid structure, provide well-designed public spaces and public realm, use high quality materials etc.
RC6: Definition of the Centre	Prison site is within the defined centre for offices, but is edge of centre for retail development and other main town centre uses.
RC7: Leisure, Culture and Tourism in the Centre	Leisure is encouraged within the area defined for other main town centre uses under policy RC6.
RC9: Living in the Centre	A mix of sizes of residential units is required, Development should take account of noise and air quality issues and contribute to affordable housing.
RC13: Tall Buildings	Site is not within an area that would be considered appropriate for tall buildings (10 storeys or more).
RC14: Public Realm	Abbey Ruins and Chestnut Walk identified as important areas of public open space. All proposals on sites of more than 1 ha will provide new public open space. Design near waterways should enhance them.
SITES AND DETAILED POLICIES DOCUMENT (adopted 2012)	
DM1: Adaptation to Climate Change	Development should adapt to climate change, e.g. orientation, shading, drainage.
DM2: Decentralised Energy	Large developments (over 20 dwellings or 1,000 sq m) should consider the inclusion of decentralised energy provision.
DM3: Infrastructure	Identifies priorities for infrastructure provision. These priorities will be developed further in the Community Infrastructure Levy and a S106 SPD.
DM4: Safeguarding Amenity	The amenity of existing and future residents will be protected.
DM5: Housing Mix	New housing to be designed to Lifetime Homes standards
DM12: Access, Transport and Highways-Related Matters	New or altered accesses will be considered in terms of safety, congestion and the environment. Reference is made to the Council's adopted standards, which include no new access points on classified roads - Honey End Lane is classified.
DM16: Provision of Open Space	Policy sets out the amount and quality of new open space required.
DM17: Green Network	The network of areas of existing and potential biodiversity significance should be retained and enhanced through provision of green links.
DM18: Tree Planting	Development should result in an increase in tree planting.
DM19: Air Quality	Site is within an Air Quality Management Area. Therefore, applications will need to address the air quality issue, and, potentially, identify mitigation measures.

Included below is an extract from the adopted Proposals Map showing the main designations affecting the site.











Legend

 Reading Central Area Boundary

Sites and Detailed Policies Document Designations

-  Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves and Areas of Biodiversity Action Plan Habitat (Policy DM17)
-  Existing and potential Green Links (Policy DM17)
-  Areas of archaeological potential
-  Site Allocated for Development (Policies SA2, SA4, SA5, SA8, SA9 and SA10)
-  Cycle Routes (Policy SA14)
-  Major Landscape Feature (Policy SA17)

Contextual Information (Potentially Subject to Change During Plan Period)

-  Conservation Areas
-  Scheduled Ancient Monuments
-  Air Quality Management Area (related to Policy DM19)
-  Major Hazard Sites (related to Policy DM20)
-  Hazardous Pipelines (related to Policy DM20)
-  Historic Parks and Gardens (related to Policy CS33)
-  Boundary of Flood Zone 2 (Environment Agency) – see smaller map for more detail
-  Area safeguarded for potential Crossrail extension

Reading Central Area Action Plan Designations

-  Boundary of Major Opportunity Areas (Policy RC1 - 3)
-  Major Opportunity Areas Sub Areas (Policy RC1 - 3)
-  Other Opportunity Sites (Policy RC4)
-  Primary Shopping Area (Policy RC6)
-  Central Core (Policy RC6)
-  Office Core (Policy RC6)
-  Existing Active Frontage (Policy RC10)
-  Proposed Active Frontage (Policy RC10)
-  Terraced Housing in the Centre (Policy RC12)
-  Tall Buildings Clusters (Policy RC13)
-  Important Areas of Open Space (Policy RC14)

Figure XX: Proposals Map Extract

Appendix 5: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)