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Cover Storey
Architects

Visual Impact Assessment
Vahnea Student Residences
Wilko Store, London Road, Bognor Regis
January 2022

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introduction 1.0

- 1.1 Cover Storey Architects et al have been instructed by Vahnea Marolda Investments LLP to prepare and submit a Visual Impact Assessment to Arun district council for the development of the existing rooftop of plot 18-20 London Road, Bognor Regis, currently occupied by Wilko retail store for use as student residences.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Visual Impact Assessment is to identify and assess any landscapes and views which may be affected as a result of the proposed development. The assessment will take into account the degree of change and the significance on the affected view.
- 1.3 The methodology used to gather accurate information will be through a combination of topographical and ordnance survey data, combined with 3D computer modelling using the software Autodesk Revit, and represented through in-situ photographs, montages and illustrations.



View of the front entrance onto London Road.



Rear elevation onto Bedford Street.

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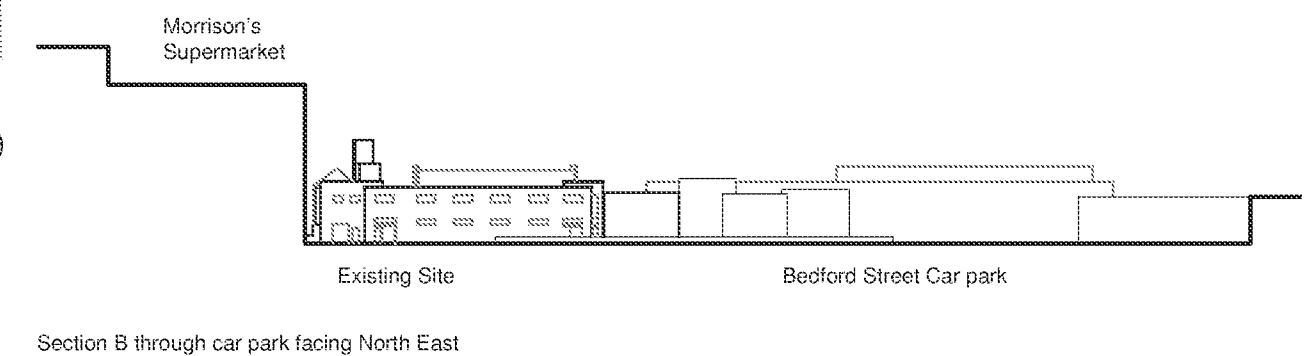
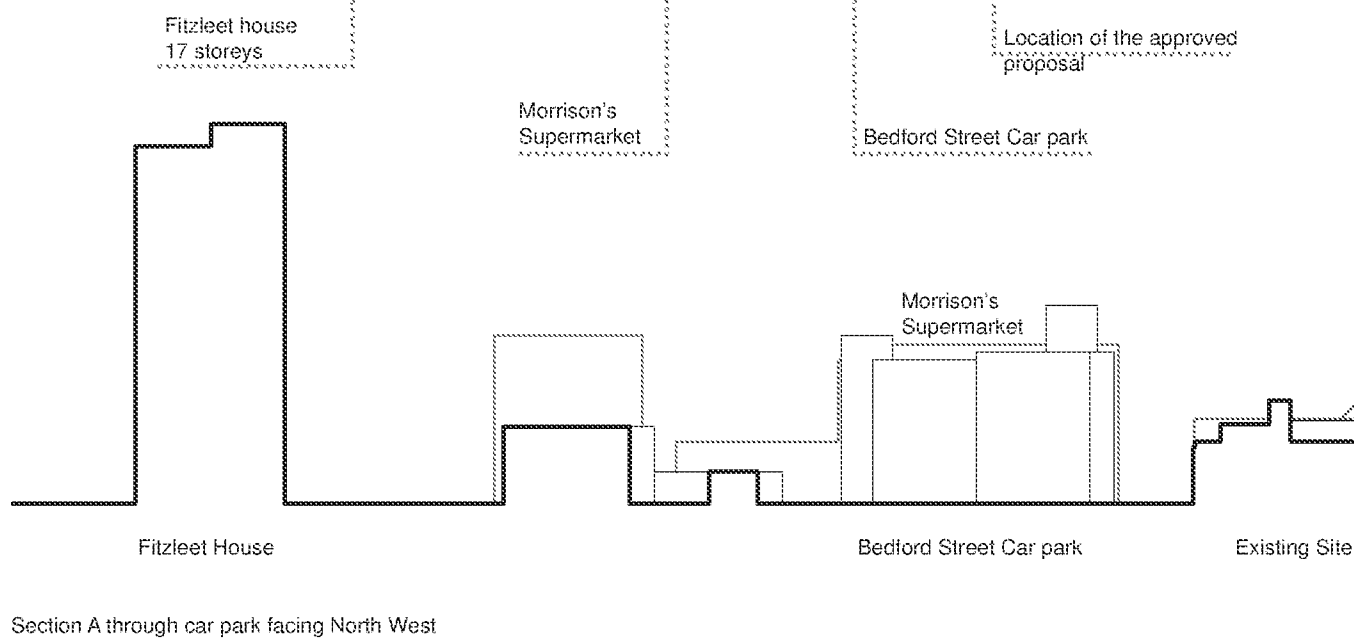
Bognor Regis town centre.
<http://www.arun.gov.uk/>

Location of the proposal

- 2.1 The seaside attraction of Bognor Regis encouraged growth from the early Eighteenth century and with the connection to the coastal railway the town quickly became a location which brought tourism and leisure with hotels built along the seafront. The town's core growth centred on the Bognor Regis railway station built in 1902 which today stands as a grade II listed building and forms the basis for the town centre.
- 2.2 With the invention and popularity of the motor vehicle, roads began to carve into the town centre as it is known today, forming a strong linear axis down through the centre of London Road and crossing with the perpendicular High Street. This has since been hardscaped and pedestrianised to create a safe and populated link directly between the railway station and the seaside, with the glass arcade acting as a visual threshold between the two destinations, centred in the frame of the historic corridor.
- 2.3 Hotels and accommodation were among the first large properties to be built along the seaside, and still to this day remain some of the more dominant landmark buildings in the town. Butlins continues to grow and develop in the town, likewise the Bognor Regis campus of the University of Chichester is constructing new contemporary teaching spaces just outside of the town centre alongside Hotham Park.
- 2.4 The London Road retail corridor is the largest block of Bognor Regis town centre and is fronted both sides with two to three storey large retail units facing onto the pedestrianised street. Heights and appearance vary considerably from building to building, with an historic and stylistic blend of contrasting elevations. These include several locally listed properties such as: 12 London Road (Mountain Warehouse), 24 London Road (Game), 31 London Road (Bright House), and 33-34 London Road (Costa). The proposed site, occupied by Wilko Hardware store is noteworthy in that its London Road elevation is a dominant modernist form from the 1950s when Woolworths renovated the original brick elevation.
- 2.5 To the rear of the existing store is the service entrance which serves as a much less dominant, more functional facade. It overlooks a road, overshadowed by the neighbouring Morrison's supermarket and multi-storey car park. The road borders an outstretch of ground level parking, which is contained on all sides by the rear of the retail units serving the High Street, London Road and Queensway. This Bedford Street side has low value visual character and could be considered a detriment to the historical value of the town centre besides functioning as a car park and goods delivery. The ground level car park is a large open expanse, but this is balanced accordingly with the much taller buildings at the perimeter such as Morrison's multi-storey carpark to the north and Fitzleet House to the west.



- 3.1 The site as existing is a 1000m² retail unit at ground level with a first floor mixed storage and office space above. On the front elevation the first floor leads up to a small additional storage space with roof access and towards the rear a tall stair core and lift over-run stands out above roof level.
- 3.2 On the rear elevation, the existing parapet sits at around 8.2 metres above Bedford Street level and is built with a stair tower and lift over-run with a roof height of approximately 14 metres from street level.
- On the front elevation the parapet sits at approximately 10.4 metres above street level, taller than the neighbouring shops each side but not the tallest building on the street.
- 3.3 As existing, views of the building are visible from its immediate surroundings, the front elevation can be seen from the majority of the London Road pedestrianised area. The rear elevation is seen clearly from both vehicular entrances of the Bedford Street car park.
- The shop is easily recognisable from both London Road and Bedford Street, but would not be considered the focal point of these views.
- 3.4 The site is located approximately 300 metres from the coast, under four minutes walking distance. Glimpses of sea views are visible from the rooftop of the existing store but are primarily masked by the rising height of buildings at the seaside. Evidence from the rooftop of Morrison's car-park shows that sea views are visible clearly from only two storeys higher. It is understood that Fitzleet House will have considerably favourable views on all sides overlooking both the coastal landscape and the townscape to the north.
- 3.5 The topography of the site context is urban and nominally flat, no notable planting or landscaping appear until outside of the core town centre, where there are a number of parks and gardens. Due to the proximity to the well landscaped seaside the town centre has no need for considerable planting. London Road contains several small decorative trees as part of the seating and furnishings, but would not be considered to be a planting landscape.



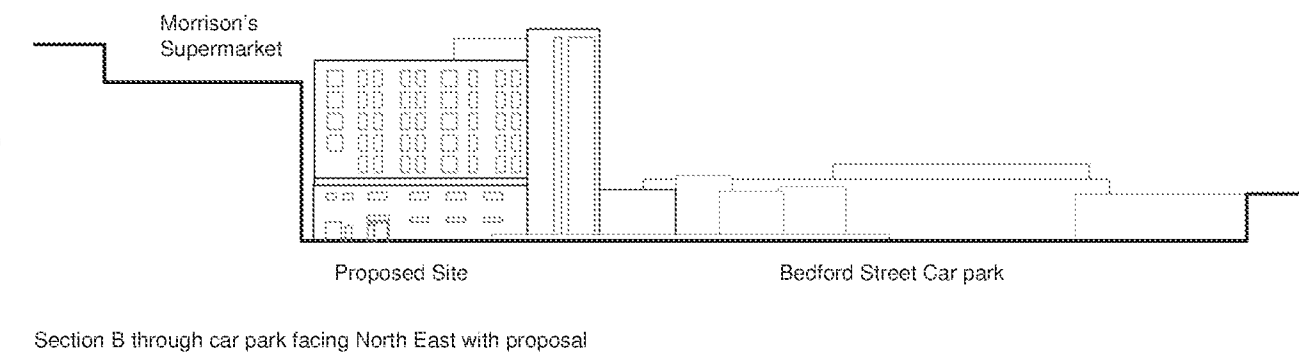
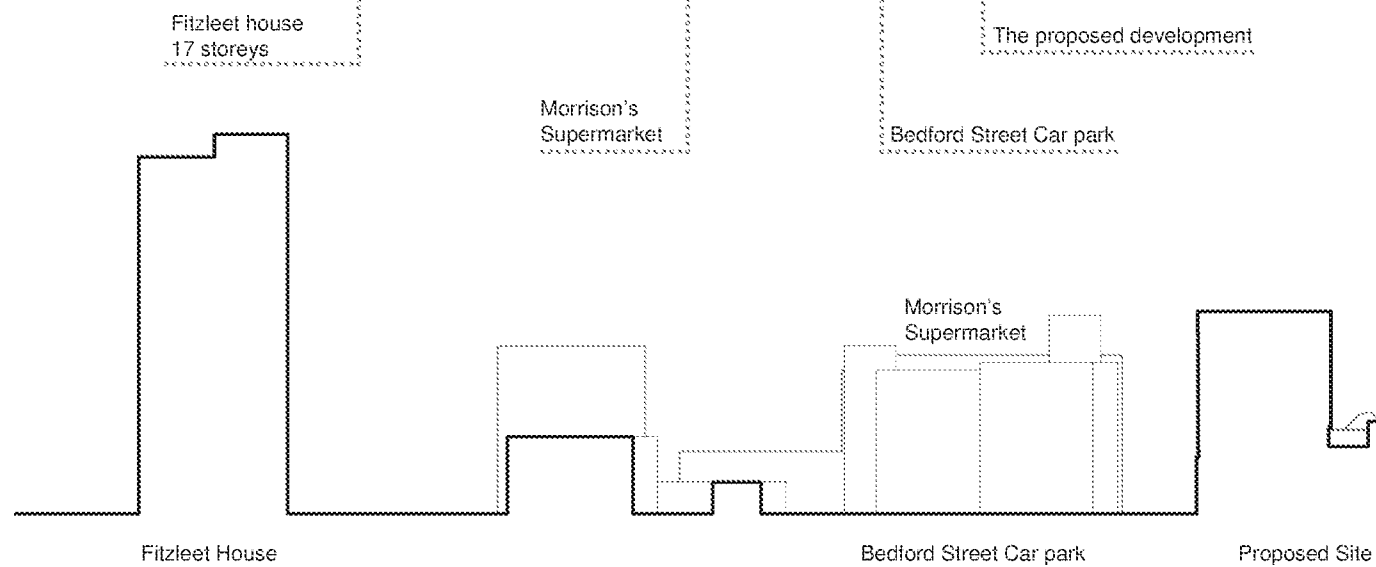
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the proposal 4.0



- 4.1 The approved proposed development (BR/270/018/PL) will comprise 26 self contained flats totalling up to 94 purpose built student accommodation rooms with associated access, services, common space and staff offices across six floors.
- 4.2 The topmost habitable floor level is intended to sit approximately 23 metres from street level. Including for parapet and lift over-run, the tallest point of the building is intended to be circa 27 metres above street level, which is relative to the high point of Morrison's
- 4.3 External materials for the proposal are to be a combination of buff mixed brick cladding panels, white through-colour render and elements of aluminium louvre screening around plant and structure. The fenestration is to be repeating large aluminium windows divided into panels and including for ventilation louvres. Curtain walling is to be used for the entrance and stair core, creating a visual bookend which forms the relationship between the rooftop development and the street level entrance on the south east corner.
- 4.5 Due to the form and location of the proposal on the site, much of the mass will be concealed when viewed from the pedestrianised area of London Road. This is intended to minimise the visual impact on the existing 2-3 storey retail street.
- 4.6 Due to the height of the proposal it is likely that some of the building would be visible from several directions as distance increases. Some of these key view points are indicated for consideration and shall be investigated throughout this document.



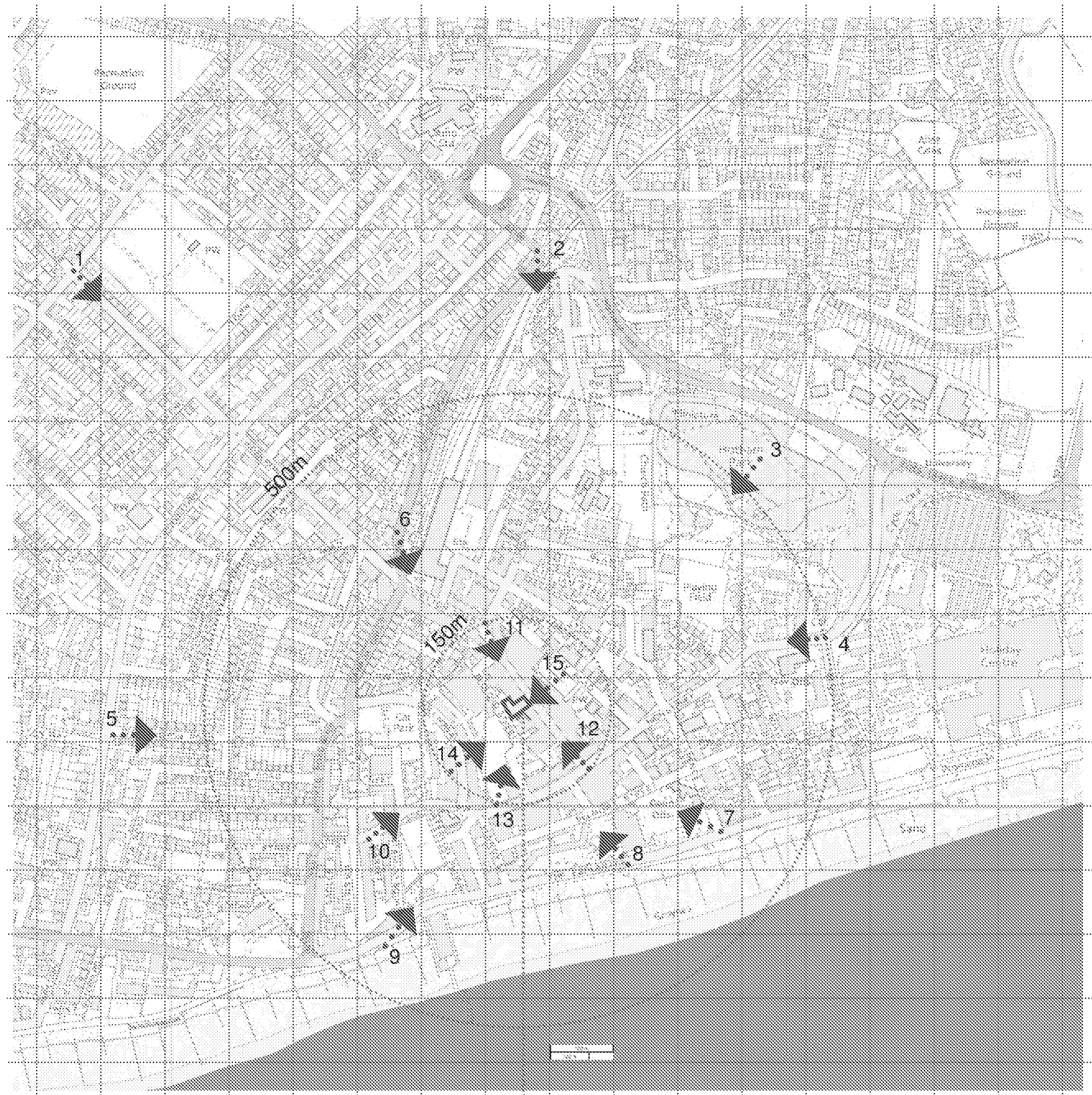
Section A through car park facing North West with proposal

Section B through car park facing North East with proposal

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zone of theoretical visibility 5.0



Bognor Regis with 100m grid overlay.
<http://www.arun.gov.uk/>

Location of the proposal

- 5.1 With consideration for visibility of the proposed development in the local area, fifteen possibly affected areas have been highlighted for investigation. These areas can be grouped into short, medium and long range views of the site. 100-150 metres, 300-400 metres, and 500+ metres respectively.
- 5.2 The locations have been chosen for several reasons, these include: location sensitivity; local importance; the visual opportunities presented by the direction of the road; and for views with the least visual interference from existing built form. These locations should provide a fair and balanced investigation to understand if the proposed development should affect genuine existing views.
- 5.3 The investigation comprises on-location photographs taken from an average eye height of 160 centimetres from ground level. The information is modelled through a combination of topographical and ordnance survey data, using the software Autodesk Revit, and represented through on-location photographs, montages and illustrations.
- 5.4 The locations are listed and individually examined as follows:
 1. Intersection between Hawthorn Road and Linden Road (1000m)
 2. Corner of Chichester Road B2259 (730m)
 3. Centre of Hotham Park (570m)
 4. High Street and Gloucester Road roundabout (505m)
 5. Intersection between Victoria Drive and Wellington Road (660m)
 6. Longford Road B2166 (330m)
 7. Intersection between The Esplanade and Clarence Road (385m)
 8. The Esplanade alongside the Regis Centre (310m)
 9. The Esplanade alongside the Pier (390m)
 10. Intersection between West Street and Waterloo Square (270m)
 11. Intersection between London Road and Station Road (140m)
 12. Intersection between London Road and High Street (150m)
 13. South Entrance to Bedford Street car park (150m)
 14. West Entrance to Bedford Street car park (130m)
 15. Sudley Road (90m)
- 5.5 For information regarding the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, third edition' please see page 15.



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visual impact assessment 6.0



1 Intersection between Hawthorn Road and Linden Road (1000m)

Linden road is a long and flat street with no visibility of the site from the road. The orientation of the houses is perpendicular to the location of the site.

Sensitivity of Receptors: High sensitivity (Residential properties)
Magnitude of change: Low

Impact: Negligible



2 Corner of Chichester Road B2259 (730m)

Railway users may gain a passing view of the site from this location, however there are no views from the pedestrian footbridge over the railway line. The photograph opposite was taken from the pedestrian footbridge. The view of the site is limited and the impact of change is reduced by the context of taller buildings, creating a town centre skyline rather than a projecting form over its surroundings as is seen with Fitzleet House. This is reduced further by the orientation of the proposal, whereby if any is seen, only the narrow end of the taller block will be visible to train users.

Sensitivity of Receptors: Low sensitivity (Passing commuters)
Magnitude of change: Medium

Impact: Minor

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Location of the proposal



3 Centre of Hotham Park (570m)

A site of importance as both a tourist attraction, local amenity and a grade 2 listed property, Hotham Park will not have views of the site. The natural tree line and contours of the landscape mask most views out of the park, and with the distance from the site as well as numerous physical obstructions it is not possible to see the proposal from the park. The opposite photograph was taken on the 19th of January when the deciduous trees will provide the least visual screening.

Sensitivity of Receptors:	Very High sensitivity (Listed location)
Magnitude of change:	No Change
Impact:	<u>Negligible</u>

Location of the proposal



4 High Street and Gloucester Road roundabout (505m)

The eastern approach to the town centre is a widely used road by commuters, residents and tourists alike. Due to the height of the existing built form along the coastal roads, the three to five storey buildings screen most views through to the town centre. Thus the site and proposals would not be visible along this road.

Sensitivity of Receptors:	Medium to High sensitivity (Widely used road)
Magnitude of change:	No Change
Impact:	<u>Negligible</u>

Location of the proposal



5 Intersection between Victoria Drive and Wellington Road (660m)

In the nearby suburban residential area, Victoria Drive provides fleeting but indirect views of Fitzleet House between perpendicular roads such as Wellington Road. Views from the streets will have a negligible change. Note that the proposal is approximately half the height of Fitzleet House. The opposite photograph was taken from Wellington Road, this is relevant as it shows that the only plausible views of the development will be partial roofscape.

Sensitivity of Receptors: High sensitivity (Residential properties)
Magnitude of change: Low

Impact: Moderate / Minor

Location of the proposal



6 Longford Road B2166 (330m)

The road approaching the Train Station and Picturedrome Cinema is of importance due to the character of the buildings and due to the higher footfall of local residents and tourists alike. The site and proposals would not be visible from this road due to the size of buildings which line the corner and create a visual obstruction.

Sensitivity of Receptors: High sensitivity (Buildings of character)
Magnitude of change: No Change

Impact: Negligible

Location of the proposal



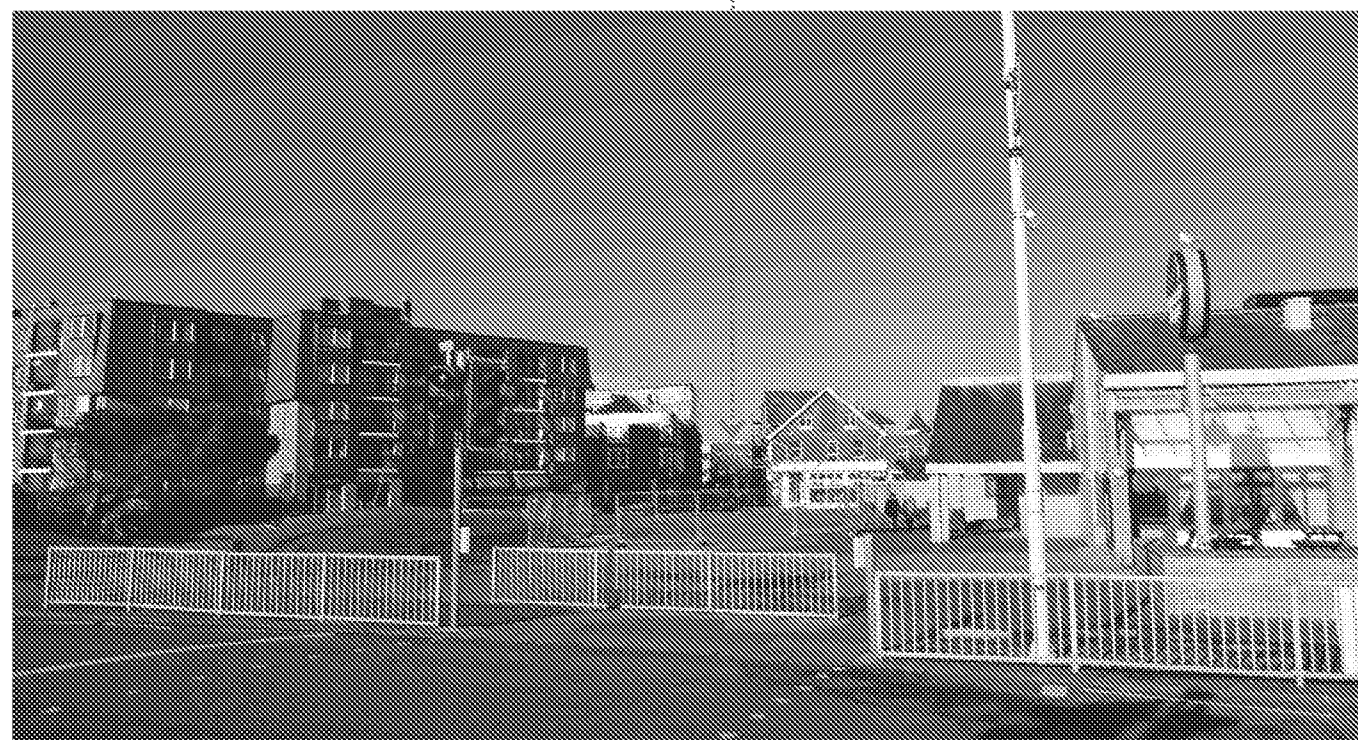
7 Intersection between The Esplanade and Clarence Road (385m)

The roof / top storey of the proposal may be visible over the existing town centre skyline along this road. This has been indicated in red on the opposite photograph. Due to the nature of the location, as a landscape and as a tourist attraction, it is recognised that the town centre acts as a skyline, secondary to the seafront.

Sensitivity of Receptors: High sensitivity (Landscape and character)
Magnitude of change: Low

Impact: Moderate/Minor

Location of the proposal



8 The Esplanade alongside the Regis Centre (310m)

Further along the Esplanade, due south of the site, the built form opens up, where views of the proposal might be expected. However the proposal is not visible due to the retail properties which line the High Street perpendicular to London Road.

Sensitivity of Receptors: High sensitivity (Landscape and character)
Magnitude of change: No Change

Impact: Negligible

Location of the proposal



9 The Esplanade alongside the Pier (390m)

Looking North East from the Pier it will be possible to see a portion of the upper storeys of the proposal as indicated in red on the opposite photograph. This will be partially obstructed by the church tower in the middle-ground. Between the existing rooftops it may be possible to see parts of the proposal, however it will not stand proud of the surrounding buildings. Again, due to the character and attraction of the Esplanade, the view of the town centre is deemed to be secondary to the views of the landscape in the forefront.

Sensitivity of Receptors: High sensitivity (Landscape and character)
Magnitude of change: Low

Impact: Moderate/Minor

Location of the proposal



10 Intersection between West Street and Waterloo Square (270m)

In the residential areas beyond Queensway the view of the site may be most noticeable. The photograph opposite shows how the direction of West Street offers a relatively clear line of sight towards the proposal. It is partially blocked by the existing Fitzleet House in the foreground, but an area of the proposal remains visible in the background. It is deemed that this is a seasonally medium to low change in view as the mass is subservient and distant, but does stand proud of its surrounding context creating contrast to the sky beyond. Careful consideration has been paid to the elevational design in this location due to its potential for visibility, this includes feature glazing, a change in material and a step back in elevational plane to reduce the perception of a solid mass.

Sensitivity of Receptors: High sensitivity (Residential properties)
Magnitude of change: Medium/Low

Impact: Moderate/Minor

Location of the proposal



11 Intersection between London Road and Station Road (140m)

This view is considered a valuable historic view through the town centre, with the characteristic retail corridor framing the view and the Arcade being the focal point in the background. This road carries a regular high footfall during daytime hours and acts as a preferred thoroughfare outside of business hours. Although the historic view is not affected by the proposal, the route through captures glimpses of the proposal between the breaks in eaves and ridge line. Care has been taken through the design of proposal to minimise the visual impact by forming the massing to the rear of the plot away from London Road.

Sensitivity of Receptors: High sensitivity (Historical view)
Magnitude of change: Low

Impact: Moderate/Minor

Location of the proposal



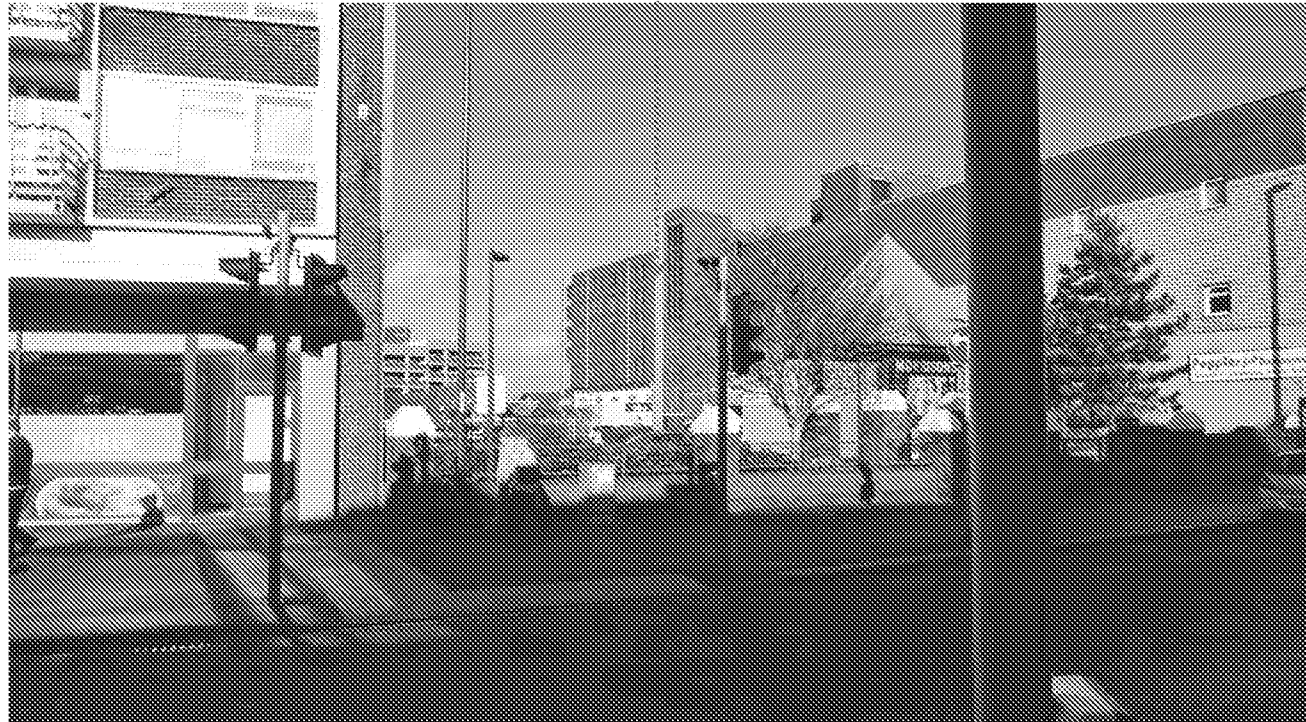
12 Intersection between London Road and High Street (150m)

Although the proposal is not initially visible from this location, broken glimpses of the proposal can be occasionally seen when approaching from the south of London Road. This is due to the wider streets and the lower building line in the foreground. As pedestrians walk along the right hand side of the pedestrianised high street, intermittent / partial views of the top two storeys will be seen in the background behind the existing buildings although in many locations will be partially or fully masked by the existing trees. For additional views in this location please see the document as part of the application entitled 16102 - Supporting Visuals.

Sensitivity of Receptors: Medium sensitivity (People engaged in retail)
Magnitude of change: Medium

Impact: Moderate / Minor

Location of the proposal



13 South Entrance to Bedford Street car park (150m)

The area to the rear of the retail properties along London Road bears no resemblance to its busy counterpart. The Bedford Street car park acts more as a utility than a destination. It is primarily fronted by delivery entrances and fire escapes. Aside from its use as a car park and access route to Morrison's supermarket, the area holds few qualities which attract footfall, there is a noticeable reduction in activity when passing between London Road and Bedford Street. The passing view of the site from the perpendicular High Street offers a clear view of the proposal, however it is felt that the existing view holds very little value as it currently stands. The view will benefit from a carefully considered focal point which aims to improve the amenity and street scene.

Sensitivity of Receptors: Medium sensitivity (People engaged in retail)
Magnitude of change: Medium

Impact: Moderate/Minor

Location of the proposal



14 West Entrance to Bedford Street car park (130m)

The proposal will be the focal point at the entrance to the Bedford Street car park. The massing will not appear over-bearing by comparison to the three to four storey buildings in the foreground. The existing street scene in Bedford Street does not hold any unified or historical character. It is felt that the view will benefit from the proposal as a new focal point upon entrance to the car park.

Sensitivity of Receptors: Medium sensitivity (People engaged in retail)
Magnitude of change: Medium

Impact: Moderate/Minor

Location of the proposal



15 **Sudley Road (90m)**

The road immediately to the north east of London Road is lined with residential properties which face the site. From the street level it would not be possible to see the proposal,

Sensitivity of Receptors: High sensitivity (Residential properties)

Magnitude of change: No change

Impact: Negligible

assessment criteria 7.0

Sensitivity				
Sensitivity of receptors (people). Measured negligible to very high based on number and frequency of receptors and the extents to which the view is to be valued.				
Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
People within notionally designated town-scape features such as AONB or historical view.	Including residential occupants or recreational viewers using public rights of way or in a historical or landscape setting.	People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, occupiers of places of work where views may contribute to quality of working life.	People travelling through or past the affected landscape in cars, on trains or other transport routes who are not likely to notice views.	People at their place of work whose attention is not focused on the environment.

- 7.1 The effects of the proposal on identified views is to be assessed using criteria as laid out in the book 'Guidelines For Landscape and visual Impact Assessment' Third Edition by Landscape Institute / I.E.M.A.
- 7.2 The matrix found alongside explains how categories for impact are to be extrapolated from identified characteristics of the existing view and the visible effect of the proposal.
- 7.3 Each location will summarise information as follows:
- Receptors (properties, roads, paths)
 - Sensitivity of receptors
 - Overall assessment of significance (negligible - severe)

Magnitude of Change	Magnitude of effect. Measurement depends on the amount of the view blocked, the number of viewers effected and the duration of the effect.						
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	No Change		
	A complete change in view.	A significant change in view.	A noticeable change in view.	A barely perceivable change in view.	No discernible change in view.		
	Severe / Major	Major	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / Minor	Minor	Minor / Negligible
	Major	Major / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / Minor	Minor	Minor / Negligible	Negligible
	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

summary 8.0

- 8.1 Based on the assessment criteria as set out in part 6.0 of this document, the views considered within the zone of theoretical visibility have been assessed.
- 8.2 The accumulation of results show that of the fifteen sampled views the impact breaks down as follows:
- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Negligible | 6 |
| Minor | 1 |
| Moderate/Minor | 8 |
- 8.3 Areas which are considered to have a higher receptor sensitivity such as along the Esplanade, within Hotham Park and in areas of important buildings are not affected by the proposal.
- 8.4 The proposal will have most impact on the Bedford Street car park and street scene comprising of delivery entrances and fire escapes. It is considered that the massing is appropriate in size with reference to the surrounding context and open space, and that the proposal will in fact bring beneficial change to the existing unappealing street scene.
- 8.5 Areas with minor to moderate impact are residential streets which vary between 150 metres and 1000 metres from the site. The resulting change to the views are in most cases negligible due to the orientation of the housing. In some cases where the streets are perpendicular to the coast, the topmost portion of massing may be seen above the existing skyline. In many cases, the impact is reduced where these views are aligned with Fitzleat House which masks a portion of the proposed massing.