



Heritage Statement

Park House and Library Substation Upgrade

University of Reading Library
Pepper Lane
Whiteknights
Reading
RG6 6EB

22 July 2025

Thames Valley Surveying Limited
Greenbank
University of Reading
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Issue Record

Issue	Date	Description	Created by	Reviewed by
-	22/07/25	Initial issue	CW	JW/EL

1.0 Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany the full planning for the installation of a new substation and standby generator to be installed behind the Library on the University of Reading Whiteknights campus.

The substation and standby generator will serve both the Library and Park House and will replace existing life expired substations.

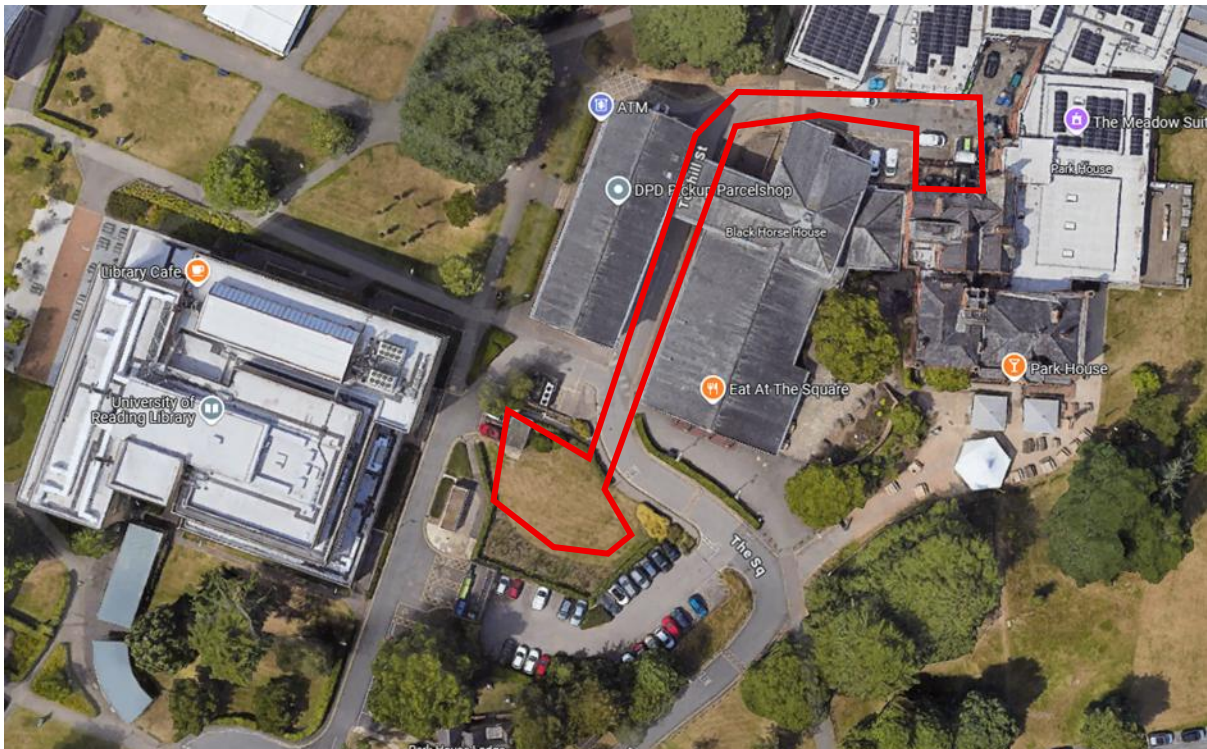


Figure 1 - Site Location (Google maps)

The site is not a Listed Building does not sit within a Conservation Area nor a National Historic Park and Garden but it is identified by Wokingham Borough Council as a Local Historic Park and Garden.

Legislation relating to listed buildings and conservation areas is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Sections 16 and 66 of the Act place a duty on the decision maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings.

This Heritage statement is to assist with the application by informing the decision takers on the effects of the proposed development on the historic environment.

2.0 Site and Surrounding Areas

The site is located to the centre of the University of Reading Whiteknights Campus and is accessed off Pepper Lane to the south. The closest listed buildings are shown below,

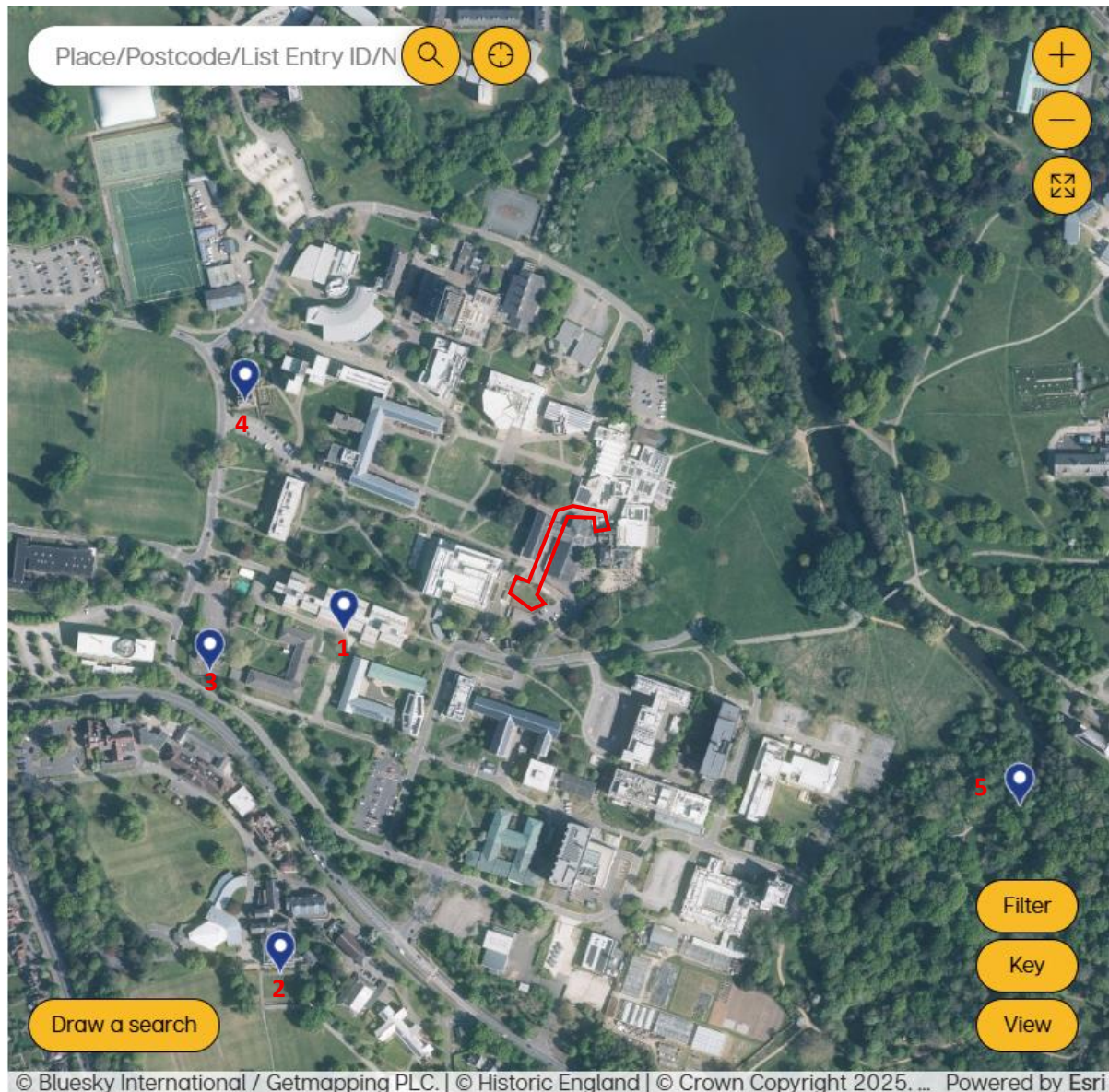


Figure 2 - Listed Buildings to the south side of the Whiteknights Campus (Historic England).

- 1 URS Building, including the paved surface of Chancellors Way and raised edges of the ornamental pool, University of Reading
Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1435127

- 2** School House And Attached Laboratories At Leighton Park School
Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1113577
- 3** Blandford Lodge
Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1157221
- 4** Whiteknights House Annexe
Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1321864
- 5** Landscape Garden Feature At Ngr Su 7390 7158
Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1118127

Whiteknights Campus has a long history with records as far back as the 12th century, in 1867 the park was split into six leasehold plots. Each of the plots had a large manor house built with ancillary buildings such as gate houses, stables and farm building constructed in a complementary style. The majority of the listed buildings on the Whiteknights Campus were constructed during this period, the map below is a section of the 1899 OS map showing Park House Lodge to the south of the site (labelled as Lodge) and Park House to the left of the Whiteknights Park label)



Figure 3 - Extract from 1899 OS Map (National Library of Scotland)

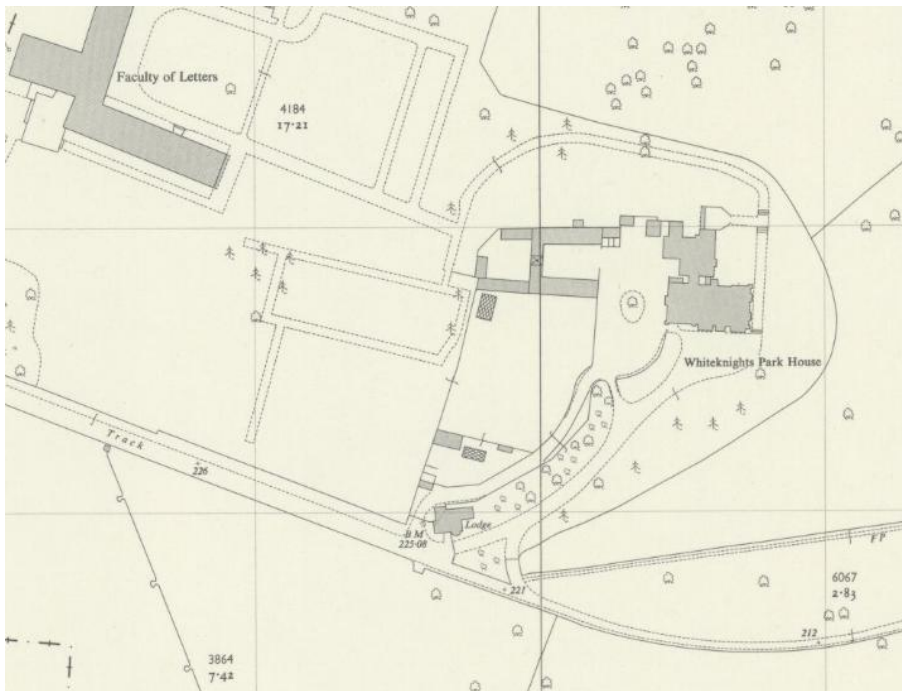


Figure 4 - Extract from 1959 OS Map (National Library of Scotland)



Figure 5 - Extract from 1969 OS Map (National Library of Scotland)

3.0 Planning History

There are seven previous planning application for the site detailed on the local authority website, shown in the table below.

App. No.:	<u>173403</u>
Description:	Application for the submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent 152856 (11/12/2015). 3. Cycle Parking
Received Date:	21/11/2017
Decision Date:	18/01/2018
Decision:	Approve
App. No.:	<u>162780</u>
Description:	Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent 152856 (11/12/2015). 3. Samples and details of materials.
Received Date:	04/10/2016
Decision Date:	17/11/2016
Decision:	Approve
App. No.:	<u>161966</u>
Description:	Application to vary condition 2 and 3 of planning consent 152856 for the refurbishment of the Whiteknights Campus library building including minor extensions, internal alterations and external re-cladding, removal of trees and associated landscaping works. Condition 2 relates to the approved plan numbers and Condition 3 relates to external materials and the replacement of windows.
Received Date:	13/07/2016
Decision Date:	09/09/2016
Decision:	Approve

App. No.:	<u>161680</u>
Description:	Conditions application for the submission of details to comply with the following condition of 152856 (dated 11/12/2015): 4. Cycle Parking.
Received Date:	17/06/2016
Decision Date:	08/07/2016
Decision:	Approve
App. No.:	<u>161393</u>
Description:	Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent 152856 (11/12/2015) 8 Drainage 9 Ecology 10 Roost Plan
Received Date:	19/05/2016
Decision Date:	07/07/2016
Decision:	Approve
App. No.:	<u>160225</u>
Description:	Non-material amendment application to planning consent 152856 to allow amendments to conditions 3,4,5,7 & 8.
Received Date:	27/01/2016
Decision Date:	22/02/2016
Decision:	Approve
App. No.:	<u>152856</u>
Description:	Full planning application for the refurbishment of the Whiteknights Campus Library building including minor extensions, internal alterations and external re-cladding, removal of trees and associated landscaping works.
Received Date:	19/10/2015
Decision Date:	11/12/2015
Decision:	Approve

4.0 Proposed Works

The proposal is to supply install a new substation and a switch room to replace the existing substations serving the Library and Park House. These units are now life expired and when compared with modern transformers they waste high amounts of energy via heat.

Replacement of the existing transformers will improve energy security for critical operations on site and reduce the likelihood of equipment failure resulting in unplanned power cuts.

The newer transformer units will be more energy efficient and will be at a lower risk of fire.

The new substation will be constructed and power supplies will be switched over, this will allow the two existing substations to be shut down. Once the existing substations have been shut down they will be decommissioned. The Park House substation area will become part of the service yard for Park House and the Students Union, and the Library substation will be demolished and the area will be planted, please see the Hard and Soft Landscaping drawing XXXXXXX-TV5-XX-XX-DR-B-XXXX-18201 for planting details.

The new transformers and switch gear will be housed in a purpose built brick building with a flat mono pitch roof. The building will be constructed from a buff/brown brindle brick laid in stretcher bond, similar to the adjacent existing store building and to The Cedars (Co-op supermarket). The walls to the new transformer area will be a vertical hit and miss hardwood (white oak) boards, 100 x 25mm cross-section staggered in plan to provide ventilation to the electrical equipment. The pitched roof will be finished with a grey mineral felt to make it as unobtrusive as possible.

A package generator set along with an oil tank will be located in an enclosure adjacent to the substation. Due to the slope of the site the generator set will be located at a lower level than the transformer building to reduce its impact on the site.

The enclosure will be a 1.8m high timber fence, to be vertical hit and miss hardwood (white oak) boards, 100 x 25mm cross-section, staggered in plan and set either side of concrete posts set in concrete and with timber rails.

The floor of the enclosure will be surrounded by 150mm deep x 50mm wide round top pin kerbs and finished with 20mm diameter shingle across the entire compound area to aid drainage.

The generator set will include sound attenuation modules at either end to prevent break out noise and will sit on a concrete base. An acoustic report has been prepared by CPW, this has been included as part of the submission. The generator housing will be profiled steel construction with a paint finish. As the manufacturer of the generator is to be selected by the contractor this will be confirmed after the tender process.

A bunded oil tank will be located on the enclosure on the road side to allow for ease of access for filling. The oil tank will be a self-bunded uPVC unit. As the manufacturer of the oil tank is to be selected by the contractor this will be confirmed after the tender process.

5.0 Planning Policy

A statutory duty exists under sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') for the local planning authority in considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission for development that affects a listed building or its setting to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

National planning policy relating to the historic environment is provided within section 16 of the NPPF. It advises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Any harm or loss to a heritage asset's significance should require clear and convincing justification, and needs to be weighed against identifiable public benefits. Substantial harm or loss of a Grade II listed building should be exceptional.

6.0 Impact of Development and Conclusion

The works have been sensitively designed and well located to ensure they will have little or no impact on the setting of the adjoining parkland or listed buildings.

The site is already well screened on all sides by hedges to the perimeter and by a mini forest to the south boundary.

On that basis we believe that the proposals satisfy the policy requirements of the development plan and the NPPF.