



Heritage Statement

Installation of Standby Generator
to serve HLS, Maths and DTS at University of Reading

J J Thomson Building,
University of Reading Whiteknights Campus,
Shinfield Road,
Reading
RG6 6ED

10 June 2025

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Issue Record

Issue	Date	Description	Created by	Reviewed by
-	06/06/25	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 standby generator to be installed adjacent to the electricity substation to the rear of the J J Thomson Building on the University of Reading Whiteknights campus.



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

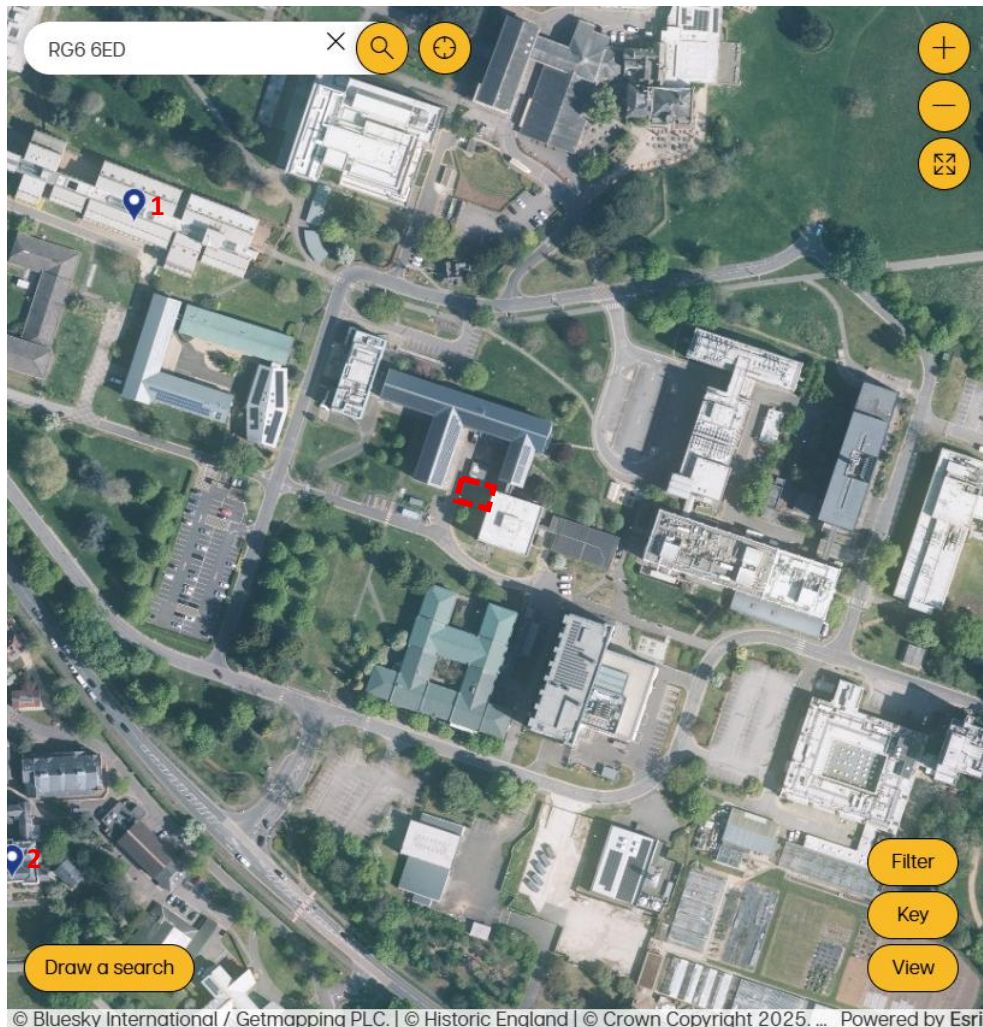


Figure 2 - Listed Buildings to the south side of the Whiteknights Campus (Historic England).

- 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

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 north of the site.

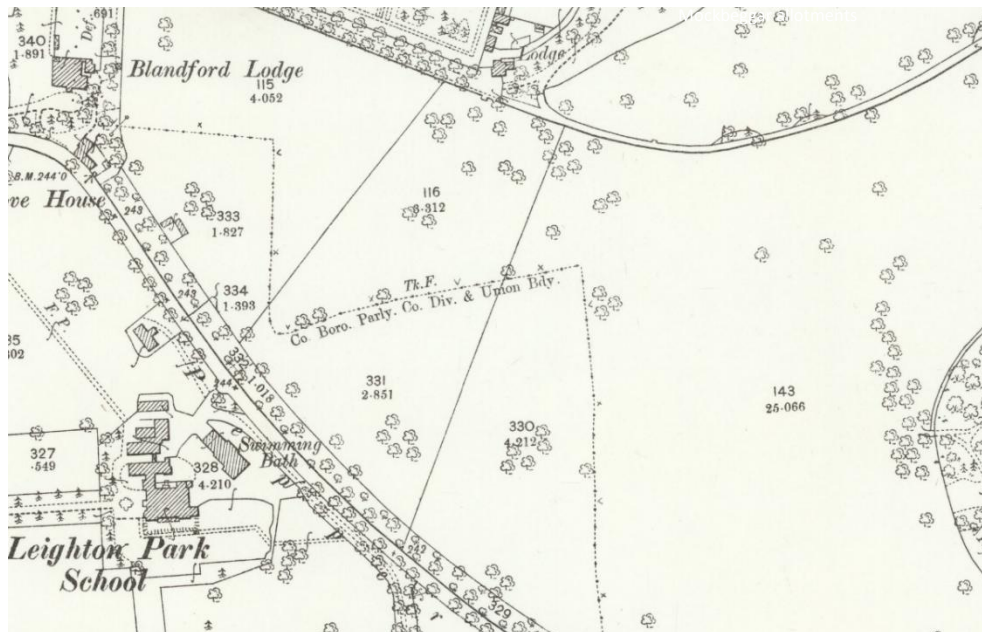


Figure 3 - Extract from 1899 OS Map (National Library of Scotland)



Figure 4 - Extract from 1969 OS Map (National Library of Scotland)

The J J Thomson Physics Laboratory (now known as the J J Thomson Building) was completed in the mid 1960s and is first seen on the 1969 OS map an extract from that can be seen in figure 3 above. The J J Thomson Building is of mid-century design with a brick façade and pitched roof with metal cladding.

To the rear of the J J Thomson Building is a service area and loading bay for the building.

The later substation building is brick built with timber hit and miss cladding to provide ventilation to the transformers.

The service area is partly screened by an existing tree.



Photo 1 – Rear of J J Thomson Building and tree.

3.0 Planning History

There are 11 previous planning application for the site detailed on the local authority website, shown in the table below.

With the exception of the application of the new Health and Life Sciences building application are for general works and alterations to the building to support the delivery of teaching in the spaces.

The existing substation to the rear of J J Thomson Building was applied for in 2016 in application 161614. The substation is a small bricks built structure with timber clad hit and miss cladding to provide natural ventilation to the transformers. The substation was constructed in 2017 following the receipt of Planning Approval in 2016.

App No: 042123 Site Address: J J Thompson Building University Of Reading Whiteknights Reading RG6 6ED Description: Proposed installation of new fan coil units for comfort cooling to laboratories. Decision: Approve 29/09/2004
App. No:131687 Site Address: Land Adjacent To The J J Thomson Physics Laboratory University Of Reading Whiteknights Description: Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed shared use pedestrian/cyclist area, bicycle docking station with 20no docking points and erection of information board. Decision: Approve 21/10/2013
App. No: 130354 Site Address: Jj Thompson Building University Of Reading Whiteknights Campus, Reading, RG6 6UR Description: Proposed alterations to interior of first floor of existing building to reconfigure laboratory space, plus addition of rooftop plant. Decision: Approved 05/11/2013
App. No:142712 Site Address: University Of Reading Suttons Park Avenue Whiteknights Reading RG6 6UR Description: Proposed installation of 6no louvred grills to accommodate a new mechanical and heating ventilation system and a new downpipe. Decision: Approve 23/09/2014
App No: 152550 Site Address: University Of Reading - JJ Thomson Building Shinfield Road, Reading Berks, RG6 6UR Description: Full application for replacement windows for building W003 JJ Thomson Building. Decision: Approve 18/11/2015
App. No: 161693 Site Address: University Of Reading - JJ Thomson Building Shinfield Road, Berkshire, RG6 6UR Description: Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed insertion of 5no new windows with integrated louvers and the removal of existing sliding door. Decision: Approve 16/08/2016
App. No: 161614 Site Address: Engineering Building University Of Reading, Reading Shinfield Road RG6 6UR

Description: Full application for the proposed erection of a substation, materials store and service diversions.

Decision: Approve 22/08/2016

App. No: 163315

Site Address: Engineering Building University Of Reading, Reading Shinfield Road, RG6 6UR

Description: Full application for the erection of a 5 storey Health and Lifesciences Building; new entrance and external works to Philip Lyle Building; associated landscaping and car parking; following demolition of the Engineering and Harborne Building within the Whiteknights Campus of the University of Reading.

Decision: Approve 20/03/2017

App. No:182343

Site Address: University Of Reading, The J J Thomson Building Shinfield Road, Reading, RG6 6UR

Description: Application for a certificate of lawfulness for the proposed installation of pipes (4no 120mm diameter insulated pipework with black thermoplastic lagging) to the western elevation of the existing building, continuing up and over the parapet, to connect to the external air handling units on the roof.

Decision: Approve 06/02/2019

App. No: 182832

Site Address: The JJ Thomson Physics Laboratory, Univ Shinfield Road, Reading

Description: Full application for the proposed renewal of existing roof finish from existing copper long strip roofing to Euroclad Vieo colour coated long strip roofing.

Decision: Approve 11/01/2019

App. No:180166

Site Address: JJ Thomson Building University of Reading, Whiteknights Road Reading, RG6 6UR

Description: Full application for the proposed erection of two x 2.1m high cedar hit and miss fence enclosing two air handling units adjacent to the building plus associated paving and landscaping works.

Decision: Approve 09/04/2018

4.0 Proposed Works

The proposal is to supply install a package generator set along with oil tank and switch gear housing in an enclosure.

The enclosure will be a timber fencing 1.8m high 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. This is the same as the hit and miss cladding to the exterior of the existing substation.

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.

The switch panel will be a GRP unit fixed to the wall of the existing substation. As the manufacturer of the oil tank is to be selected by the contractor this will be confirmed after the tender process.

To facilitate the works the existing tree will be lightly pruned please see accompanying report by Challis Consulting Ltd. Additional tress will be planted on the site to provide screening, meet Biodiversity net gain requirements and recommendations made by Challis Consulting Ltd.

The new generator enclosure is designed to have a minimal impact on the surrounding park area for the following design features,

1. The generator enclosure has been located away from park land and is sited in a more heavily developed area of the site.
2. The generator enclosure is located in an existing service yard.
3. The generator enclosure is surrounded on three sides by an existing building and there are no direct sight lines to any listed buildings or heritage assets.
4. The generator enclosure materials are the same as those used across the campus.
5. Additional tree planting will be carried out to screen the new generator enclosure and the service areas from the road.
6. The new tress will provided and enhanced habitat potential over the exiting short mown lawn area.

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.

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