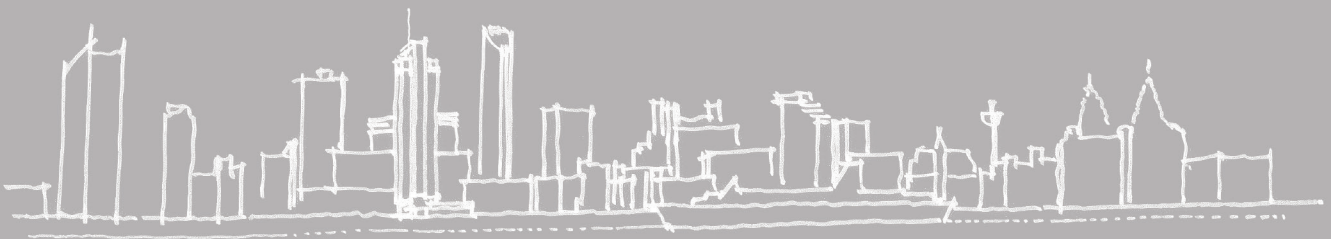




PRINCES REACH, PRINCES DOCK

TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

June 2016



Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document assesses the impact of the proposed development on Townscape and Visual amenity. In particular, it considers the potential effects on townscape character, for both the site and the surrounding area, and the potential visual effects on a number of selected viewpoints that are considered to represent the principal view of the proposed development.
- 1.1.2 The document describes the methods used to assess the impacts, the baseline conditions currently existing at the site and surroundings, the potential direct and indirect impacts of the development arising from potential townscape and visual effects, the mitigation measures required to prevent, reduce, or offset the impacts and the residual impacts. This document has been written by Planit I.E LLP.

1.2 Legislative and Policy Context

Legislation

- 1.2.1 The European Landscape Convention (ELC, 2000) (Ref. 11.1) provides a foundation for closer co-operation on landscape issues across Europe and was ratified in the UK on the 21 November 2006, and became binding on 1 March 2007. The convention identifies the need to recognise landscape in law, to develop and promote landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and creation of landscapes, and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the evolution and implementation of landscape policies. It also encourages the integration of landscape into all relevant areas of policy, including cultural, economic and social policies.
- 1.2.2 The ELC defines landscape as ‘an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’. It recognises that landscape has important cultural, ecological, environmental and social dimensions and is a key element of achieving sustainable development. In this context the use of the word ‘landscape’ is more appropriately termed ‘townscape’ though the constituent factors remain consistent.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.2.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and consolidates the previously adopted Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes for use in England. It contains a number of criteria relating to the importance of good design and sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.
- 1.2.4 Section 7 of the NPPF deals with the requirements of good design. The overarching statement can be found at paragraph 57, which states: ‘It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.’
- 1.2.5 Key aspects of the NPPF which apply to the Townscape and Heritage Assessment are the paragraphs below:
Paragraph 56: The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.
- 1.2.6 Paragraph 61: Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places

and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

- 1.2.7 Paragraph 128: In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.'

Liverpool Unitary Development Plan (Liverpool City Council, 2002)

- 1.2.8 A Local Plan is currently being prepared by Liverpool City Council, until that has been adopted the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) forms the statutory development plan for the city. A number of policies contained within the UDP relate to the conservation of the existing landscape, character, and views within the UDP area. Full details of these policies are contained within Appendix 5.6 Liverpool Unitary Development Plan. In summary, these policies are:
- HD5 Development Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building
 - HD12 Development Adjacent to Conservation Areas
 - HD22 Existing Trees and Landscaping
 - HD23 New Trees and Landscaping
 - OE4 The Mersey Coastal Zone
 - OE16 The Leeds and Liverpool Canal

Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted October 2009)

'The overarching aim of this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to provide guidance for protecting and enhancing the outstanding universal value (OUV) of Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Site, whilst encouraging investment and development which secures a healthy economy and supports regeneration.'

- 1.2.9 The site lies within the World Heritage Site buffer zone, this Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) identifies and assesses the potential impact of the development upon selected Strategic and City viewpoints that are located within WHS. The potential impact upon these views and mitigation to reduce the impact upon the views is taken into consideration within the assessment.
- 1.2.10 The SPD has been produced to provide detailed guidance for new development, regeneration and conservation in the WHS and its Buffer Zone. It is intended to supplement the existing "saved" UDP, and will deal with the management of the site, acting as a guide to future development in and around the site and embodying the principles in the existing WHS Management Plan.
- 1.2.11 In addition to policies and guidance relating to the WHS as a whole, the document includes a section on the Stanley Dock Conservation (Character Area 3), which makes reference to the adjoining areas that are within the Buffer Zone. The Council's declared vision for this area includes the following statement:

The Princes Dock redevelopment programme will be completed with significant townscape character benefits for the WHS and wider cityscape.

- 1.2.12 Paragraph 6.4.29 of the SPD requires that the completion of Princes Dock should be a priority. The principles for redevelopment of the Princes Dock should be:
- (i) strong urban form with active frontages and an ordered overall perspective;
 - (ii) enhanced linkages and connectivity;
 - (iii) comfortable relationships with surroundings, especially important will be Plot 7 which is most visible from the Pier Head;

- (iv) protection of view corridors;
- (v) increased activity; and
- (vi) respect for heritage and response to historical context.

- 1.2.13 Paragraph 6.4.8, refers to development that takes place west of the Dock Boundary Wall and states:
...development must respect the integrity and setting of the Dock Wall and the opportunity should be taken to conserve the wall and its associated features such as gates, shelters and drinking fountains. Development should retain and conserve surviving historic surfaces, kerbs, rail tracks and other ancillary historic structures. Any new buildings west of the Dock Wall should generally be set back at least 9 metres from the wall in order: to provide an adequate setting for that wall; to enable these historic surfaces and features to be retained and; to create a useable corridor for cycling and walking.

Liverpool Urban Design Guide, Liverpool City Council 2003

- 1.2.14 The Liverpool Urban Design Guide has two overriding objectives in guiding development within Liverpool. These objectives are used as a planning tool to guide general development within the city.
- To guide the physical development of the city; and,
 - To assist in the implementation of statutory planning control.
- This document is used as general planning guidance within the planning system and it therefore can be used to refine the baseline townscape character.

1.3 Methodology and Scope

- 1.3.1 This assessment has been carried out with reference to the Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition, 2013 (referred to hereafter as “the Guidelines”).
- 1.3.2 An assessment of townscape value and susceptibility of townscape to change enables the overall sensitivity of townscape receptors to be determined. This forms the baseline from which the impact of the proposed development can be assessed.
- 1.3.3 The assessment has considered the proposed development against the site as it currently stands.

Baseline Townscape Value

- 1.3.4 Townscapes may be valued at community, local, national level or above. Existing Townscape designations have been taken as the starting point for this assessment, as shown in Table 1.1 below. However, the value attached to undesignated townscapes also needs to be assessed and this is considered in Table 1.2.
- 1.3.5 Table 1.1 sets out the relative importance of generic townscape designations and descriptions, identifying those designations applicable to the study area in the third column.

Table 1.1: Value of Designated Townscapes			
Typical Designation	Description	Actual Designation of the Site	Importance (Value) where present
World Heritage Site	Unique sites, features or areas of international importance with settings of very high quality.	Lies within the buffer zone of the designated World Heritage Site	High
Curtilage of Grade I, II and II*, Conservation Areas Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, Scheduled Monuments.	Sites, features or areas of national importance with settings of high quality.	N/A	N/A
Local nature site, long distance recreational routes	Sites, features or areas of regional importance with intact character.	N/A	N/A
Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)	Sites, features or areas of district importance.	N/A	N/A
Public Space or local route	General townscape area valued at the local level.	N/A	N/A

- 1.3.6 Whilst the assessment of value is partly based on the Planning Policy importance of the townscape, other criteria used to assess townscape value in more detail, including that of undesignated townscape, are set out in Table 1.2 below. The criteria are taken from the Planning Practice Guidance which supports the National Planning Policy Framework.

Table 1.2: Criteria for Assessing the Value of Non-designated Townscapes	
Attribute	Criteria
Functional	A building or place should be fit for purpose, designed and delivered in a way that delivers the intended function and achieves value for money in terms of lifetime costs

Table 1.2: Criteria for Assessing the Value of Non-designated Townscapes	
Attribute	Criteria
Mix of uses	Mix of uses to ensure easy access to facilities and encourage a healthier environment, reducing the need to travel.
Well designed public space	Functional and attractive hard and soft landscape elements, well orientated and designed routes, inclusion of facilities such as seats and play equipment and public art.
Buildings designed to be adaptable.	Flexibility to be able to respond to a range of future needs – how easily buildings change be adapted for change of use, places that are easy and practical to manage with good access, natural surveillance and hard wearing materials that are easy to repair.
Distinctive character	Consideration of: the local pattern of street blocks and plots; building forms; details and materials; style and vernacular; landform and gardens, parks, trees and plants; and wildlife habitats and micro-climates.
Attractive spaces	Consideration of streetscapes, landscapes, buildings and elements within them all, microclimates and views should all be considered.
Promotes ease of movement	All users should be able to move safely, conveniently and efficiently to and within a place, appropriate number of legible routes to and through it, good connections with each other and other destinations.

- 1.3.7 An overall assessment of value has been made for each townscape receptors (refer to Appendix 1.1), based on an overview of the assessments made using each of the above criteria, in terms of high, medium and low value.

Baseline Susceptibility of Townscape Receptors to Change

- 1.3.8 Susceptibility of townscape receptors to change has been assessed using the criteria identified in Table 1.3, with reference to the baseline conditions.

Table 1.3: Townscape Receptor Susceptibility to Change	
Susceptibility	Criteria
High	Little ability to accommodate the proposed development without undue harm.

Table 1.3: Townscape Receptor Susceptibility to Change	
Susceptibility	Criteria
Medium	Some ability to accommodate the proposed development without undue harm.
Low	Substantial ability to accommodate the proposed development without undue harm.

Overall Sensitivity of Receptor

- 1.3.9 The assessment of receptor sensitivity combines judgements on the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of development proposed and the value attributed to that receptor.

Baseline Visual Assessment

- 1.3.10 The baseline visual assessment is set out in Appendix 1.2.

Type of View and Number of Viewers

- 1.3.11 In terms of assessing the baseline visual sensitivity, key factors to consider are the type of view and the likely numbers of viewers (the visual receptors). The type of view and the number of viewers are described in the following terms:
- i) Glimpsed (i.e. in passing)/Filtered/Oblique/Framed/Open Views; and
 - ii) Few/Moderate/Many Viewers

Value of Views

- 1.3.12 The value attached to views has regard to a number of factors, including:
- recognition through planning designations or heritage assets; and
 - the popularity of the viewpoint, its appearance in guidebooks, literature or art, on tourist maps and the facilities provided for its enjoyment.
- 1.3.13 The assessment of the value of views is summarised in Table 1.4 below, in terms of High, Medium and Low value. These criteria are provided for guidance only and are not intended to be absolute.

Table 1.4: Value Attached to Views	
Value	Criteria
High	Views from townscapes/viewpoints of national importance, or highly popular visitor attractions where the view forms an important part of the experience, or with important cultural associations.
Medium	Views from townscapes/viewpoints of regional/district importance or moderately popular visitor attractions where the view forms part of the experience, or with local cultural associations.

Low	Views from townscapes/viewpoints with no designations, not particularly popular as a viewpoint and with minimal or no cultural associations.
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Susceptibility of Visual Receptors to Change

- 1.3.14 The susceptibility of different types of visual receptor to changes in views is mainly a result of:

The occupation or activity of the viewer at a given location; and

The extent to which a person's attention or interest may therefore be focussed on a view and the visual amenity experienced at a given view.

- 1.3.15 The assessment of a visual receptor to change is specific to the proposed development. However the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment offers the generic guidance identified in Table 1.5 as a starting point for the assessment.

Table 1.5: Visual Receptor Susceptibility to Change	
Susceptibility	Type of Receptor
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents; • People engaged in outdoor recreation, including users of public rights of way, whose attention is likely to be focussed on the townscape and on particular views; • Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions where views of the surroundings are an important part of the experience; • Communities where views contribute to the townscape setting enjoyed by residents; and • Travellers on scenic routes.
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes, where the view is moderately important to the quality of the journey.
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People at their place of work, where the setting is not important to the quality of working life; and • Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes, where the view is fleeting and incidental to the journey. • People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which does not involve appreciation of views;

- 1.3.16 The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment qualifies the above examples as follows:

'This division is not black and white and in reality there will be a gradation in susceptibility to change. Each project needs to consider the nature of the groups of people who will be affected and the extent to which their attention is likely to be focussed on views and visual amenity.' (**page 114, paragraph 6.35**).

Overall Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

- 1.3.17 The assessment of receptor sensitivity combines judgements on the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of development proposed and the value attributed to that receptor.

Predicted Townscape and Visual Impacts

- 1.3.18 The predicted townscape and visual impacts of the proposed development are set out in Appendices 1.1 and 1.2.

- 1.3.19 The assessment of receptor sensitivity combines judgements on the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of development proposed and the value attributed to that receptor.

Size and Scale of Effects

- 1.3.20 The size and/or scale of effects relates to the scale of changes in the townscape, such as the loss or addition of features and the scale of the change in views.

Geographical Extent of Effects

- 1.3.21 The geographical extent of effects relates to:
- the area over which townscape effects are likely to be experienced, i.e. this could be at the site level, the immediate setting of the site, or townscape character type or area;
- the area over which visual effects are likely to be visible; and duration.
- 1.3.22 Effects may be temporary, permanent or reversible over time. For example, visual effects arising from construction activities may be limited solely to the construction period and therefore only temporary or they may be permanent, for example, where construction necessitates some clearance of existing vegetation.

Reversibility

- 1.3.23 Effects may be reversible, for example, restoration of a quarry following mineral extraction. The assessment therefore considers the practicality of effects being reversed with an approximate timeframe for reversibility.

Magnitude of Effects

- 1.3.24 The magnitude of a townscape or visual effect is assessed in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced by that effect, and its duration and degree of reversibility.
- 1.3.25 The size and/or scale of change in the townscape takes into consideration the following factors:
- the extent/proportion of townscape elements lost or added;
- the contribution of that element to townscape character and the degree to which aesthetic/perceptual aspects are altered; and whether the effect is likely to change the key characteristics of the townscape, which are critical to its distinctive character.
- 1.3.26 The criteria used to assess the size and scale of townscape effects are based upon the amount of change that will occur as a result of the proposals, as described in Table 1.6, below:

Table 1.6: Townscape Effects: Magnitude	
Category	Criteria
Substantial adverse townscape effect	The proposals will result in a total change in the key characteristics of townscape character; will introduce elements totally uncharacteristic to the attributes of the receiving townscape; and/or will result in a substantial or total loss, alteration or addition of key elements/features/characteristics.

Table 1.6: Townscape Effects: Magnitude	
Category	Criteria
Moderate adverse townscape effect	The proposals will result in a partial change in the key characteristics of townscape character; will introduce elements partially uncharacteristic to the attributes of the receiving townscape; and/or will result in partial loss, alteration or addition of key elements/features/characteristics.
Minor adverse townscape effect	The proposals will result in a small change in the key characteristics of townscape character; will introduce elements that are not uncharacteristic to the attributes of the receiving townscape; and/or will result in a minor loss, alteration or addition of elements/features/characteristics.
Negligible adverse townscape effect	The proposals will result in a just discernible change to townscape character/elements/features/characteristics.
Neutral	The proposals will not cause any change to the townscape character/elements/features/characteristics.
Negligible townscape benefit	The proposals will result in a just discernible improvement to the townscape character/elements/features/characteristics.
Minor townscape benefit	The proposals will achieve a degree of fit with the townscape character/elements/features/characteristics and go some way towards improving the condition or character of the townscape.
Moderate townscape benefit	The proposals will achieve a good fit with the townscape character/elements/features/characteristics, or would noticeably improve the condition or character of the townscape.
Substantial townscape benefit	The proposals will totally accord with the townscape character/elements/features/characteristics, or would restore, recreate or permanently benefit the condition or character of the townscape.

Magnitude of Visual Effects

- 1.3.27 The magnitude of a visual effect is assessed in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and degree of reversibility.
- 1.3.28 The size or scale of change in the view relates to the degree of contrast or integration likely to result from the proposed development and is influenced by the relative time over which a view is experienced and whether it is a full, partial or glimpsed view.
- 1.3.29 The criteria identified in Table 1.7 are used to assess the size and scale of visual effects, based on the degree of change to the view or composition.

Table 1.7: Visual Effects: Magnitude	
Category	Criteria
Major adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a dominant or complete change or contrast to the view, resulting from the loss or addition of substantial features in the view and will substantially alter the appreciation of the view.
Moderate adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a clearly noticeable change or contrast to the view, which would have some affect on the composition, resulting from the loss or addition of features in the view and will noticeably alter the appreciation of the view.
Slight adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a perceptible change or contrast to the view, but which would not materially affect the composition or the appreciation of the view.
Negligible adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a barely perceptible change or contrast to the view, which would not affect the composition or the appreciation of the view.
No change	The proposals will cause no change to the view.
Neutral	There will be a change to the composition of the view, but the change will be in keeping with the existing elements of the view.

Nature of Effects

- 1.3.30 The nature of effects may be positive or negative (beneficial or adverse), direct or indirect. Direct effects are those which result directly from a development itself, whereas indirect or secondary effects may arise as a consequential change resulting from development, for example, changes to downstream vegetation as a result of alterations to a drainage regime.

Significance of Effects

- 1.3.31 The scale shown in Table 1.8 is used to guide the assessment of the significance of both townscape and visual effects, from a combination of the assessment of receptor sensitivity and the magnitude of effects:

Table 1.8: Assessment of Townscape or Visual Significance					
Sensitivity of Receptor	Major Effect	Moderate Effect	Minor Effect	Negligible Effect	Neutral Effect
High	Significant	Significant/ Moderately Significant	Moderately Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant

Table 1.8: Assessment of Townscape or Visual Significance					
Sensitivity of Receptor	Major Effect	Moderate Effect	Minor Effect	Negligible Effect	Neutral Effect
Medium	Moderately Significant	Moderately Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Low	Moderately Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant

- 1.3.32 The table has regard to guidance in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition, 2013, at paragraph 5.56, page 92 (significance of landscape effects) and paragraph 6.44, page 116 (significance of visual effects). This matrix is used as a guide to determine significance, along with professional judgement.
- 1.3.33 For the purposes of this Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Moderately Significant effects are not considered to be Significant in the meaning of the Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2011.

Confidence

- 1.3.34 The predicted impact is assessed against the criteria set out below in order to attribute a level of confidence to the visual assessment.

High - The predicted impact is either certain, or very likely to occur, based on reliable information or previous experience.

Medium – The predicted impact and its level are best estimates, based on on-site and desktop study.

Low – The predicted impact and its level are best estimates, based on given knowledge and experience. More information may be needed to improve the level of confidence.

1.4 Consultation

- 1.4.1 The principal viewpoints were identified through a three-stage process. The first was to identify the views which were selected as part of the original Liverpool Waters masterplan. This was then used to predict which of these views were relevant for the Princes Reach application. In addition to this an assessment of the existing three dimensional model was used to assess if any additional views were required for particular application. An initial viewpoints plan was agreed with Liverpool City Council and then refined following further pre-application consultation with Liverpool City Council and other stakeholders.

1.5 Limitations and assumptions

- 1.5.1 This townscape and visual impact assessment has made assumptions based on the modelling information available at this time. The contextual modelling utilises ordnance survey and topographical information, proposed information is based on modelling supplied by Falconer Chester Hall architects. Any discrepancies which may occur between these models have been rectified where possible, any outstanding issues which may occur are a result of the differences in timescales and mixed media of the modelling information. We have assumed that the comprehensive model used in the production of the verified views, is as accurate as can be given the limitations outlined above.

1.6 Baseline Conditions

Site location

- 1.6.1 The Princes Reach site lies within the Princes Dock neighbourhood, a water front development which is part of the wider Liverpool Waters masterplanning proposals which received planning consent in 2012.
- 1.6.2 The site is situated between Bath Street and the historic dock wall to the east and the dock basin to the west. The site is currently cleared and undeveloped, however a number of existing buildings already exist as part of the Princes Dock redevelopment. The site location is illustrated in Figure 1.1 of Appendix 1.3.

Historical Development

- 1.6.3 For an in depth analysis of the historical development of Princes Dock, please refer to the Heritage Statement which accompanies this application.

Heritage Designations

- 1.6.4 There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the proposed development site. There is one listed building – the Princes Dock Boundary Wall directly adjoining it, which is Grade II, and the stone surface materials and rail tracks which are regarded as undesignated heritage assets. The site is considered to be within the setting of the Royal Liver Building, which is listed Grade I. The site directly adjoins the Stanley Dock Conservation Area and is also within the setting of the Pier Head Conservation Area. It is within the Buffer Zone of the World Heritage Site. These boundaries are illustrated in Figure 1.3 of Appendix 1.3.
- 1.6.5 A Buffer Zone was identified around the WHS, to ensure that development proposals within it, that might adversely affect the setting of the WHS, can also be carefully considered.
- 1.6.6 Within the WHS original dockyard surfaces and dock walls often survive and there are areas where groups of buildings retain their historic character. Hard surfaces, edges, stock brick, stone and iron define the character of the area and will be retained. The dock wall is an integral part of the WHS. It has much architectural interest, great historic importance and still provides cohesion; it defines the relationship between the docks and the City.
- 1.6.7 A number of structures, buildings and features are protected by statutory listing, including the dock walls, the boundary walls and gates, and structures such as Victoria Tower and the accumulator tower at Bramley-Moore Dock. In accordance with national and local planning policy, a high priority must be given to the physical preservation and setting of the listed buildings in any development proposals.

Townscape Character Areas

- 1.6.8 The site is located within Liverpool City Centre, as defined by the Local Plan. The built form surrounding the site can be described in several differing character areas. These are highlighted in Figure 1.4 of Appendix 1.3.
- 1.6.9 To the south of the site lies the Pier Head, which includes the Royal Liver Building, The Cunard Building and the Port of Liverpool Building. These lie within the World Heritage Site Boundary and are key landmark buildings which are recognised world wide and make up the townscape identity of Liverpool. They are significant townscape features of the Liverpool waterfront.
- 1.6.10 In contrast, to the east of the site beyond the historic dock wall is a small scale industrial site, made up of low rise, box development and areas of car parking.
- 1.6.11 The fringe of the commercial district lies to the south eastern edge of the site on the other side of New Quay and the Strand. This area has a distinctive character parts of which lie within the WHS boundary.
- 1.6.12 The historic docks continue to the north of the site, and are part of the future Liverpool Water proposals.

Urban Grain

- 1.6.13 The urban grain of Princes Dock is largely made up of single buildings set within their own plot. The footprints of the buildings are fairly large and are surrounded on all sides by car parking and public realm. This is illustrated in Figure 1.5 of Appendix 1.3.
- 1.6.14 This type of urban grain can be found along the river frontage. The main road which runs parallel to the river (New Quay and The Strand) defines a change in grain from a more traditional perimeter block layout to single buildings surrounded by public realm.

Land Use

- 1.6.15 Figure 1.6 of Appendix 1.3 illustrates land uses. The area is generally mixed-use, with the predominant use being commercial. Residential, hotels, and a small amount of retail make up the surrounding uses. Some industrial uses can be found adjacent to the site and several cultural buildings are located nearby.

Building Heights

- 1.6.16 Figure 1.7 of Appendix 1.3 illustrates building heights in the wider context. The site is currently vacant, and as such makes no contribution to the general datum of the area. The area immediately around the site range from 9 – 20 storeys, but there are some larger scale buildings towards the east, which form a back drop to the site from the river edge.

Movement and Linkages

- 1.6.17 The surrounding movement and access has been illustrated in Figure 1.8. Vehicle access into the site is currently provided along William Jessop Way, this is part of an almost circular route around the Princes Dock. William Jessop Way is a cul-de-sac and does not connect through to the wider road network surrounding Princes Dock. One of Liverpool's major north south vehicular routes passes close to the south eastern edge of the site. Bath Street and Waterloo Road provide vehicle access to areas North of the site.
- 1.6.18 The Princes Dock site is accessible by pedestrians. A number of existing openings within the historic dock wall help to provide existing pedestrian access to the site. However the location and legibility of these openings is poor in places. A pedestrian bridge crosses the dock enabling pedestrian permeability across the dock. Pedestrian access is provided along the river edge towards the Pier Head.
- 1.6.19 The site is quite well served by public transport, with a bus route along Princes Parade. The nearest station is Moorfields approximately 5 minutes' walk from the site.

Environmental Designations and Public Open Space

- 1.6.20 The surrounding public open spaces have been illustrated in Figure 1.9 of Appendix 1.3. The site sits adjacent to a number of different water bodies, dock edge, canal and river which makes for an interesting and unique situation. There are no significant public parks close to the site, the majority of the public space is provided in and around the existing water bodies.
- 1.6.21 However, several existing public open spaces are located nearby, with the Pier Head public square focused around the new canal link and the gardens of Our Lady and St Nicholas Church on the other side of the Strand.

Principal Viewpoints

- 1.6.22 A total of 18 viewpoints have been identified in conjunction with Liverpool City Council. The location of the key viewpoints is illustrated in Figure 1.11 of Appendix 1.3. The Views and montages are in Appendix 1.4.
- 1.6.23 The distribution of viewpoints indicates that the site is highly visible, particularly from the Wirral looking across towards Liverpool City centre. This is largely due to the open nature of the river frontage and the prominent position of the site along the dock edge. Views mostly utilise strong

movement corridors which allow longer vistas. Wider viewpoints are located to the slightly higher ground to the north-east and the south east and the western bank of the River Mersey.

Some of the views lie within the World Heritage Site boundary, some are located within the WHS buffer zone.

The selection of long range and close to views, provide the opportunity for a comprehensive assessment from many different perspectives.

1.7 Assessment

- 1.7.1 This section identifies the likely significant environmental effects (positive and negative) resulting from the proposed development. Construction and operational effects are considered separately.

Construction Phase Impacts

- 1.7.2 The proposed development is at a relatively early stage in the design and construction programme. It is therefore difficult to predict with certainty the precise methodology that will be adopted for construction and site management. However, it is possible to identify some broad impacts that may arise during the construction phase:
- 1.7.3 The summary of potential construction phase effects for the application site only, and their significance prior to any supplementary mitigation is provided in the table below:

Table 1.9: Potential construction phase impacts					
Feature/Nature of Impact	Timescale	Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Impact	Confidence Level
The visual impact of HGV movement & general construction works	Temporary	High/medium	Moderate Adverse	Significant/Moderately Significant	Medium
The visual impact of site lighting around construction areas	Temporary	High/medium	Minor Adverse	Moderately Significant	Medium
The visual and landscape impacts of remodelling ground levels/cut and fill operations	Temporary	High/medium	Minor Adverse	Moderately Significant	Medium
The landscape impacts of incorporating services and utilities.	Temporary	High/medium	Minor Adverse	Moderately Significant	Medium
The visual impacts of temporary screening measure and protective fencing.	Temporary	High/medium	Moderate Adverse	Significant/Moderately Significant	Medium

The landscape and visual impacts of temporary parking, on-site accommodation and work areas.	Temporary	High/medium	Minor Adverse	Significant/Moderately Significant	Medium
The landscape and visual impact of material stockpiles.	Temporary	High/medium	Minor Adverse	Moderately Significant	Medium

Operational Phase Impacts

- 1.7.4 The design proposals have been formulated through a lengthy iterative process involving environmental assessment and consultation. This process has allowed site constraints and opportunities to directly influence the evolution of the building and the public realm proposals. As a result, mitigation measures are embedded within the proposals as part of the detailed design of the landscape and surrounding built form. Consideration has been given to alternative designs, and a number of iterations have been amended in order to take account of feedback within the professional team and that received through the community and stakeholder engagement process.
- 1.7.5 A summary of mitigation measures which have been ‘designed in’ to the proposals in order to reduce or where possible, avoid townscape and visual impacts is provided below, and is described further within the Design and Access Statements that accompanies this application.
- 1.7.6 The building has been developed in accordance with good urban design principles, which avoids, reduces or offsets potential impacts on the townscape and views. The key design principles incorporated into the design are outlined below, and are described in full within the Design and Access Statements which accompanies these applications:
- Residential uses, in keeping with planning policy and the original Liverpool Waters outline planning application.
 - Scale, massing and height of building responds to surrounding context.
 - The building addresses and helps to improve the frontage along the dock edge.
 - Design of movement and linkages prioritising pedestrian movement. Vehicular access and servicing carefully considered and controlled to minimise impact.
 - Appropriate application of materials which contribute to the character of the area.

Mitigation Measures

- 1.7.7 The supplementary mitigation for the development is described below. Supplementary mitigation measures are proposed to reduce and where possible offset/remedy any significant adverse townscape and visual effects identified.

Construction Phase

- 1.7.8 The precise methodology that will be adopted in order to mitigate against potential construction phase impacts will be formulated as part of the ongoing design development. However, it is anticipated that

measures to control construction impacts as outlined in the following table, which can be incorporated into a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), and should include:

- Site compounds to be positioned close to the proposed access points and as remote from existing developed areas as feasible;
- Use of directional lighting will be used across the site.
- Where possible, hoarding lines will also utilise existing areas of woodland and scrub cover to help visually break up the extent of the fencing.
- Stockpiles will be located on site to limit visual impacts where possible.

1.7.9 Through the adoption of a Code of Construction Practice (CoCP), good site management shall be achieved through the following measures:

- Protection of existing vegetation to be retained where practicable;
- Strict adherence to the self storage areas and construction access roads;
- Use of site hoarding where appropriate; and
- A phased planting programme.

1.7.10 The implementation of good site management, maintenance and housekeeping would ensure that temporary deterioration to landscape resources, character and visual amenity will be kept to a practicable minimum. Despite these better practice measures, there would still remain inevitable adverse effects during construction works. However in overall terms the residual effects upon townscape features, character and the visual envelope are not anticipated to be significant and the majority of which short term, temporary and local.

Operational Phase

1.7.11 A Public Realm and Landscape Management Plan may be employed to provide further mitigation once the site is operational. The Plan would ensure the longevity of planting, and promote native species and diversity.

1.8 Residual Effects

1.8.1 The residual impact assessment assumes that all mitigation described in the section above has been implemented. The predicted townscape effects are set out in Appendix 1.1, and are summarised below.

Heritage Designations

1.8.2 Please refer to the 'Heritage Impact Assessment' which accompanies this application for a full assessment of the heritage impacts.

1.8.3 The features of the site which make up the value of the World Heritage Site buffer zone are the dock boundary wall, the setting of the Princes Dock, areas of historic surfacing and the key views in and around Princes Dock of the WHS.

- 1.8.4 The dock boundary wall will not be altered by the proposed building; it is substantially higher than the wall which may have some affect on it's setting. The wall, a horizontal structure, will still be visible from the city centre and will maintain it's integrity. It's historical function and importance will not be compromised.
- 1.8.5 The proposed development continues the regeneration of Princes Dock. The impact of a high density development will not have a significant effect on setting, due to the existing presence of tall buildings in Princes Dock and within the central business district behind. Historic surfaces will be maintained where possible and incorporated into the wider landscape proposals.
- 1.8.6 The views of the Pier Head from Princes Dock will not be obscured by the proposed building. Other views have been assessed as part of the visual impact assessment. Please refer to Appendix 1.2.
- 1.8.7 Taking into account all of the above the impact on the heritage designations has been assessed as moderate neutral.

Townscape Character

- 1.8.8 The existing site forms a gap in the existing townscape of Princes Dock. Princes Dock is surrounded by several differing character areas, there is no one character which dominates. The proposed building will go some way to completing the townscape of Princes Dock. The grain of the building, a single building, surrounded by public realm corresponds with the existing character of the buildings within the dock and along the River Mersey frontage. The overall impact has therefore been assessed as Slight Beneficial, with the vast majority of the impact benefitting Princes Dock.

Urban Grain

- 1.8.9 The existing site represents a large urban void in the urban grain of Princes Dock. Any change, compared against the baseline void would represent a large-scale change in the urban environment. The proposals show an urban grain which is in keeping with the existing surrounding buildings, enclosing the dock edge and improving the public realm along the dock edge. This creates a minor improvement to pedestrian movement and aid legibility. The overall urban grain impact has therefore been assessed as Moderate Beneficial.

Land Use

- 1.8.10 There is no current land use of the site. However, there are several different land uses within Princes Dock, hotel, residential, office and a small amount of retail. New residential space is proposed. This will supplement the surrounding mix of uses and support high quality public realm. The overall impact on land use has therefore been assessed as Moderate Beneficial.

Building Heights

- 1.8.11 The site as exists is undeveloped. The proposed development will be 34 storeys high and will form part of a cluster of tall buildings which exist within and behind Princes Dock. The majority of buildings within Princes Dock are between 6 and 20 storeys high. The overall townscape impact has therefore been assessed as Moderate Neutral.

Movement and Linkages

- 1.8.12 Vehicle access into the site is currently provided along William Jessop Way, the proposed development will maintain this as the main vehicle access adjacent to the site. The Princes Dock site is accessible by pedestrians. A number of existing openings within the historic dock wall help to provide existing pedestrian access to the site. However, the location and legibility of these openings is poor in places. The proposed building does not impinge on the existing opening within the dock wall and forms a clear frontage with the access along the dock edge. Therefore, the movement impact has been assessed as Slight Beneficial.

Environmental Designations and Public Open Space

- 1.8.13 Proposals seek to improve the public realm around the footprint of the building and address the edge of Princes Dock. Existing areas of public realm, including existing water bodies will be enhanced. Therefore the impact has been assessed as Slight Beneficial.

Key Views

- 1.8.14 Appendix 1.3 sets out in detail the predicted visual effects for each of the 18 identified principal viewpoints, and are summarised below.
- 1.8.15 The baseline analysis of the key viewpoints concludes that 8 of the views are 'high' in terms of the overall sensitivity of the visual receptors. Two views have been assessed as 'high/ medium' in terms of the sensitivity of the visual receptors, with the remaining views assessed as 'medium' or 'low'.
- 1.8.16 View 7 has been assessed as resulting in a Slight Adverse impact due to it's impact on the silhouette of the Royal Liver Buildings from this location and its prominence on the skyline.

1.9 Conclusion

- 1.9.1 This report has assessed the townscape and visual impacts of the proposed development within the application site boundary. The assessment has been carried out with reference to the Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition, 2013.
- 1.9.2 A three-stage assessment process has been adopted; firstly the nature of receptors (sensitivity) has been assessed, secondly the nature of the effects (magnitude) likely to result from the proposed development have been assessed. From this the overall significance of the identified effects on receptors have been assessed.
- 1.9.3 The site is currently cleared of any previous buildings associated with Princes Dock. It sits within an area of undeveloped land at the back of Princes Dock. Existing buildings within Princes Dock lie close by with the back drop formed by the commercial district. The site lines the edge of the Princes Dock water body.
- 1.9.4 The proposals have been developed through an iterative process, and mitigation has been embedded into the design. As a result, the proposed development is predicted to result in mostly 'beneficial impacts' to the townscape elements assessed, with the impact on Heritage Designations and Building Heights has been assessed as 'neutral'.
- 1.9.5 The scale and massing of the proposed development, and its relationship with the nearby listed Royal Liver Building is also a key consideration. The height of the proposed development although higher than any existing buildings on Princes Dock, is consistent with that of the buildings that characterise this area of the city, and the commercial district behind. The building becomes part of an existing cluster of taller buildings. This relationship with the Pier Head and the Three Graces is largely neutral. It doesn't alter the townscape setting of these buildings.
- 1.9.6 The visual assessment of the site demonstrated that the site is in a very prominent waterfront location, which is highly visible from the Wirral side of the River Mersey, from areas of higher ground to the east and south of Liverpool and certain framed view points from within the city centre.
- 1.9.7 A total of 18 principal viewpoints were identified and agreed with Liverpool City Council. Only one of the identified viewpoints is predicted to result in a Slight Adverse visual effect at the baseline assessment. This viewpoint (no. 7) is from the south west corner of the Albert Dock and is considered a highly sensitive view. The proposed building would slightly alter the silhouette of the Royal Liver Buildings against the skyline from this location.
- 1.9.8 In conclusion this study provides a townscape and visual impact assessment of the proposed development at Princes Reach, Princes Dock. The building will have a largely beneficial effect on the townscape of the Princes Dock neighbourhood. The building although tall and highly visible can become a part of the cluster of tall buildings which already exist with Princes Dock and the central business district.



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