LDO HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT
Introduction

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared to inform and provide objective guidance for a proposed Local Development Order (LDO) to be made by Cheshire East Council for prospective development on six sites within Reaseheath College.

Designated Heritage Assets that may be potentially affected by development on the six sites include the Reaseheath College Conservation Area and Reaseheath Old Hall (Old Hall Farm).

Reaseheath College Conservation Area

The Conservation Area encompasses two distinct zones, firstly around the historic entrance to the estate and then around the principal buildings within the estate, together with a narrower section, which links the two, containing the historic avenued carriage drive. Within the Conservation Area are a number of buildings and features which, though not listed in their own right, can be considered as ‘non-designated heritage assets’ which together make a valuable contribution to the character and setting of the Conservation Area as a whole.

The first zone, around the historic entrance, includes a number of late 19th Century detached and semi-detached houses designed in a similar ‘rural picturesque’ style arranged around a small green which provides the setting for the former main entrance to the Reaseheath estate. Ornamental gateposts and a boundary wall in masonry corresponding to the adjacent houses leads to the former carriage drive and Reaseheath Hall.

The second zone, at the heart of the current college campus, includes the high-Victorian red-brick Reaseheath Hall, together with related former stables and dairy outbuildings and also a number of new College buildings. Substantial lawned and wooded gardens surrounding a large ornamental lake provide the setting for Reaseheath Hall and connect to the carriage drive.

Reaseheath Old Hall (Old Hall Farm)

Reaseheath Old Hall is an 18th Century farmhouse, extended, and is the only listed building relevant to the study. Although outside the Conservation Area and the main College campus, it is adjacent to one of the proposed development sites and is therefore included within this Heritage Impact Assessment.

Methodology

This Heritage Impact statement has been based upon a desk-based study of the history and context of the area and a visit to each of the sites and the heritage assets on 17th June 2016.

The methodology used to assess the potential impact of development on each site is as follows:

1. An initial assessment of the contribution that the development site makes to the significance of each heritage asset, in its current state.
2. An assessment of the impact that the loss of the site and its subsequent development might have on the significance of the heritage asset.
3. An assessment on how any potential harm to the heritage asset caused by development of the site may be removed or reduced (mitigation).
4. A revised assessment of the impact that the loss of the site and its subsequent development might have upon the significance of the heritage asset, with the mitigation measures identified above in place.
5. Conclusion: a summary of the above to inform future development in relation to impact on the heritage assets.

The assessments above have been carried out taking into account both architectural and landscape considerations.

The assessments have been presented in a tabulated form for consistency and ease of understanding.
<table>
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<th>Heritage Asset</th>
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<td>LDO Development Site 1</td>
<td>The site is beyond the W edge of the principal built-up area of the college grounds and approx. 140m from the W edge of the Conservation Area. The area between is occupied by a collection of buildings, associated car parking and landscaped areas populated by dispersed groups of trees. Views between the site and the Conservation Area are generally well screened by dense hedgerow and trees along most of the length of the E boundary of the site. Glimpsed longer views towards the former dairy buildings within the Conservation Area are possible from gateway locations within the E boundary.</td>
<td>Views from the Conservation Area into the site are long range and presently only available through gateways in the field boundary. The views are however into open countryside and development within the site may block these glimpsed views from the Conservation Area. Development that exceeds the height of the hedge and tree screening along the E edge of the site would be visible from within the Conservation Area.</td>
<td>Management of the height of new development across the site so as not impact on sightlines from within the Conservation Area towards the site, above the existing tree screening. Retention and enhancement of boundary vegetation, screening. Use of external hard and soft materials which reinforce &amp; strengthen desirable character.</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
<td>This site is sufficiently distant and well screened by existing buildings and established planting such that, if the principles of development include a restriction on the height of new buildings, and the design of new development is appropriate and of high quality, there should be no significant adverse impact on the Conservation Area. There is potential for landscape reinforcement to further soften views of the building from the Conservation Area.</td>
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<td>Reaseheath Old Hall (Old Hall Farm)</td>
<td>The LB is separated from the development site by two boundaries and Wettenhall Road; its immediate setting will therefore not be affected by development on the site, however development close to the site boundary would impact on the wider setting of the asset. The outlook from the LB to the N and NE is presently across open fields. Development within the proposed development site will interrupt these views.</td>
<td>New development should be located sufficiently far from the SW boundary so as not to impact unduly on the setting of the LB. The maximum height of new development should be restricted to a level that allows the development still to be screened by the existing boundary planting when viewed from the ground floor of the LB and for long range views from the upper floors of the LB towards open countryside to be maintained. Enhanced planting on the site frontage to supplement existing hedging and trees. The roof material of the new building should be very carefully considered as it will be visible from the upper floors of the LB.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Appropriately designed and sited new development would be possible whilst preserving the setting of the LB. Development will inevitably have an impact on the short range views from the LB, however if the height of development is restricted, the important long range views may be preserved. There is potential for landscape reinforcement to further soften views of the building from the LB and within its setting.</td>
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Site 1 photos

View towards SE boundary showing screening

View to the SW, towards Old Hall Farm from centre of site

View from centre of site towards the Conservation Area glimpsed in background

View from NE of site, to the SW, towards Old Hall Farm
# REASEHEATH COLLEGE LDO HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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<td>LDO Development Site 2</td>
<td>Views both to and from the Conservation Area are blocked: to the SW by the rear of the group of courtyard buildings forming the edge and to the W by dense planting of small to medium trees and hedgerow. The majority of the site is occupied by the modern two-storey Reception Building which substantially blocks long views towards the Conservation Area from further to the N and E. The external landscape and use of materials in the internal courtyard does little to provide a link between the two building styles of the Reception Building and the Conservation Area.</td>
<td>Provided the existing historic buildings and dense planting forming the edge of the Conservation Area are maintained, and the maximum height of further development is restricted, the impact is unlikely to be detrimental to the quality and character of the Conservation Area. If the proposed further development abuts closely or connects to the existing buildings forming the edge of the Conservation Area, or infills the space between them and the Reception Building, the setting of these buildings (though of lesser importance than on other elevations) will be impacted. The potential opportunity to link the two building styles through hard and soft landscape works in the internal courtyard would be lost, however additional development would instead provide an opportunity for the relationship between the two buildings to be improved through built form.</td>
<td>Management of the scale and height of new infill development in the SW of the site (adjacent to the Conservation Area) so as not to cause significant harm to the setting of the rear of the Courtyard Buildings within the Conservation Area. Management of the height of new development across the site so as not impact on sightlines from within the Conservation Area towards the site, above the existing historic buildings and tree screening. Careful use of appropriate materials, scale and form which relate comfortably to the existing buildings on the edge of the Conservation Area. Ensure that design and layout of external paved areas to the north and south of the proposed development are improved and build on desired materials which contribute to the Conservation Area setting, but also relate to the contemporary style new development. Ensure planting and street furniture (e.g. bollards, bins, lighting, and seating) is appropriate to the setting.</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
<td>Although adjacent to the edge of the Conservation Area, this site is sufficiently well screened by existing buildings and established planting such that, if the principles of development are in accordance with those indicated on the LDO parameters plan, and the design of new development is appropriate and of high quality, there should be no significant adverse impact on the Conservation Area. Ensure Hard and Soft Landscape works are afforded appropriate priority especially adjacent to the Conservation Area.</td>
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Site 2 photos

View looking SE, buildings within the Conservation Area on the right

View looking NW, buildings on the left within the Conservation Area

View looking SW towards the Conservation Area screened boundary

View looking S towards the buildings within the Conservation Area
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<td>LDO Development Site 3</td>
<td>The edge of the Conservation Area is clearly visible from the site, looking towards the W and SW, though at a closest distance of approx. 130m, separated from the site by a playing field containing a series of sports pitches. For most of its length views into and out of the Conservation Area along this edge are screened by a deep band of mature woodland trees. Oblique, glimpsed longer views are possible from the carriage drive to the SW, though still largely obscured by less dense woodland planting and fencing around the sports pitches.</td>
<td>The site is sufficiently distant from the Conservation Area, which is also generally well screened by established planting, such that development on the site is highly unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the quality and character of the Conservation Area, provided that it is of a quality appropriate to its setting.</td>
<td>Additional planting along the Western edge of the site, or within the playing field area separating the site from the Conservation Area would provide further visual screening, though this is not considered necessary. Management of the height of new development so as not impact on sightlines from within the Conservation Area towards the site, above the existing tree screening along the E edge of the Conservation Area. An appropriately designed and detailed building, appropriate materials and the use of external hard and soft materials which reinforce &amp; strengthen desirable character.</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
<td>This site is sufficiently distant and well screened from within the Conservation Area by established planting such that, if the principles of development are in accordance with those indicated on the LDO parameters plan, there should be no significant adverse impact on the Conservation Area.</td>
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Site 3 photos

View looking S, across the W boundary of the site

View looking W, towards the Conservation Area, from the site

View looking E towards the site, from the edge of the Conservation Area

View looking NE towards the site, from the edge of the Conservation Area next to the carriage drive
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<td>LDO Development Site 4</td>
<td>Conservation Area (site is directly adjacent to the W edge of the lake gardens).</td>
<td>The views into the site from the Conservation Area are short range only, principally from the woodland footpath near to the boundary, and are not attractive at present - overlooking fencing, kennels and car parking. It is understood that the kennels are to be relocated within the site. Appropriately scaled and well-designed development is unlikely to have further detrimental impact, provided that new buildings are sufficiently far from the boundary with the Conservation Area so as to avoid the necessity to remove overhanging branches, which currently help to screen views. New buildings should be sited sufficiently far from the boundary with the Conservation Area so as to allow the edge to be improved with additional green screening. Careful selection of materials and considered design will help to unify this part of the site. The kennels should be relocated away from the boundary with the Conservation Area or screened so as not to be visible. In addition, under storey or hedge planting on the boundary of the site or on the W boundary of the Conservation Area would focus views within the Conservation Area inwards towards the lake.</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
<td>The site has potential to provide a more attractive contribution to the setting of the lake and surrounds within the Conservation Area. Relocating the existing kennel outbuildings away from the boundary with the Conservation Area and improving screening (possibly including replacing the existing fence), together with providing a green setting for new development would benefit short range views to and from the site. Providing under storey planting to this section of the S boundary of the Conservation Area would be an additional benefit. Well considered design and selection of materials on the new building(s) would help to make this area more cohesive.</td>
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Conservation Area (site is directly adjacent to the W edge of the lake gardens). The site lies along part of the W boundary of the lake gardens section of the Conservation Area, an area with mature woodland trees and rough ground cover. The boundary itself is formed by a timber fence approx. 2m high, which provides some screening at low level to and from the Conservation Area; however it lacks additional dense shrubbery or a hedge to provide more effective screening. A footpath runs parallel to the boundary through the Conservation Area, from which there are short range views towards the development site. The views to and from the Hall are long range and well screened by the intervening mature woodland around the lake.
Site 4 photos

View looking NE, towards the Conservation boundary

Close view from the Conservation Area towards the site boundary

View from the Conservation Area towards the site boundary

View from the Conservation Area towards the site boundary
### Heritage Asset

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<td>LDO Development Site 5</td>
<td>The edge of the Conservation Area is visible from the site, looking towards the SW, though at a closest distance of approx. 200m, separated from the site by a playing field containing a series of sports pitches. For most of its length views into and out of the Conservation Area along this edge are screened by a deep band of mature woodland trees. Oblique, glimpsed longer views are possible from the carriage drive to the SW, though still largely obscured by less dense woodland planting and fencing around the sports pitches. To the N and W the site is surrounded by an existing building.</td>
<td>The site is sufficiently distant from the Conservation Area, which is also generally well screened by established planting, so that development on the site is highly unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the quality and character of the Conservation Area.</td>
<td>Additional planting to the S of the site, or within the playing field area separating the site from the Conservation Area would provide further visual screening, though this is not considered necessary. Management of the height of new development so as not to be higher than the existing building surrounding it. Materials used in the new building should be of high quality, appropriate to the setting, and coordinated with those on the adjacent existing building.</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
<td>This site is sufficiently distant and well screened from within the Conservation Area by established planting such that, if the height of development is controlled, and the building materials appropriate, there should be no significant adverse impact on the Conservation Area.</td>
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Site 5 photos

View towards the Conservation Area, site on the right

View looking NE towards the site, from the edge of the Conservation Area next tithe carriage drive
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<td>LDO Development Site 6</td>
<td><strong>Conservation Area</strong>&lt;br&gt;(site is directly adjacent to the S edge)</td>
<td>The adjacent Conservation Area at this point comprises an open field area, the equestrian centre, several period dwellings, garden settings and the historic carriage drive entrance, which together make a significant contribution to the character of the wider Conservation Area. The site currently extends the rural context and setting of the Conservation Area. Though positioned adjacent to the extreme S edge of the Conservation Area, and partially well-screened by equestrian buildings and a dense hedgerow and trees along most of its N boundary, the site, which is presently open fields used for grazing, forms part of the existing short and long range views from the Conservation Area towards open countryside to the S. The existing hedgerows dividing the fields provide articulation and perspective to these views. The proposed A51 Relief Road will run to the S of the site. The site in its present form, together with the open field to the N within the Conservation Area, could provide an important buffer between the Conservation Area and the new relief road. Development of the site would reduce the extent of the positive impact of this buffer and could negatively impact on the context and the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area. Development that exceeds the height of the hedge and tree screening along the E edge of the site would be visible from within the Conservation Area. The existing farm track to the W of the Conservation Area will require development to form an access road from the existing A51 to the developed site. Increased traffic and wider road construction will impact negatively on the Conservation Area.</td>
<td>Views from the Conservation Area into the site are presently fairly well screened by dense planting along most of the field and watercourse boundary. Gaps in the hedge and gates do however allow glimpsed short and long range views into the site and the open countryside beyond. The proposed A51 Relief Road will have a significant impact on the long range views from the Conservation Area to the S. The impact of development will therefore be more significant on short range views into the site.</td>
<td>Consolidating the existing hedgerow and tree screen along the N and NE boundaries of the site will reduce the impact of development on the Conservation Area. Introducing appropriately scaled landscaping within the site could also help to break up rooftlines and provide a softer character to the development. Management of the height of new development so as not impact on sightlines from within the Conservation Area towards the site, above the existing tree screening along the S edge of the Conservation Area. Using similar external landscape materials that are characteristic within the Conservation Area. The proposed access road should be screened with appropriate hedging and tree planting to screen views of the access road from the Conservation Area. The significance of the open field adjacent to the new access road as a landscape buffer will increase as a result.</td>
<td>Moderate/low adverse</td>
</tr>
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Site 6 photos

View looking E along the N edge of the site boundary, Conservation Area on the left.

View looking N towards the Conservation Area.

View looking SE towards the northern boundary of the site, across the Conservation Area.

Close up view of glimpses of the Conservation Area through dense screening on the N boundary of the site.
Conclusions

The assessment demonstrates that the impact of development on the six sites, if properly migrated, should be negligible for sites 1-5, and moderate/low adverse for site 6.

Sites 1 and 6 are on the periphery of the college area and development has the potential to impact on short and long range views to the surrounding open countryside from the Conservation Area, and also, in the case of site 1, from Old Hall Farm.

Sites 3 and 5 are further within the developed area of the college grounds, yet sufficiently distant and well screened from the Conservation Area such that the potential impact is reduced.

Sites 2 and 4 are closer to the core of the Conservation Area, but well screened by adjacent buildings and planting, again thereby reducing the potential impact of development.

A number of key issues and common approaches to mitigating the impact of development are applicable across each of the development sites as follows:

- Scale and materials used in new buildings should be appropriate for their setting and serve to provide unity and cohesion of development across the site and, in particular, with respect to the Conservation Area.
- The height of new buildings should be such that short and long range views from the heritage assets are maintained, particularly towards the surrounding open countryside.
- Screening of new development from the heritage assets should be enhanced and consolidated where appropriate through retaining and infilling existing hedgerows and woodland, in order to preserve views.
- In addition, supplementing the above with additional landscape elements within the development sites should break up the built area and help maintain the essentially rural character of the overall setting.
- Appropriate selection of hard landscape materials would further contribute to the above character.

It is considered essential that development of each of the six sites is of the highest quality in design and materials, that architectural and landscape design are closely co-ordinated, and that appropriate mitigation measures are included to reduce the impact of development on heritage assets to an acceptable level.