

Hermes Property Unit Trust

Reading Metropolitan

Natural Environment Officer and Leisure & Recreational Comments

Addendum

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NEO and LR Comments Addendum

Contents

I.0 Natural Environment Officer Comments

1.1 NEO Comment 1

1.2 NEO Comment 2

1.3 NEO Comment 3

1.4 NEO Comment 4

1.5 NEO Comment 5

2.1 LR Comment 1

1.1 NEO COMMENT 1

iv

COMMENT

“It was stated at pre-app that the retention of trees (or otherwise) should be based on a full condition survey and those that merit retention should be designed around. There is no mention of existing trees within the Revised Design and Access Stated (Feb 2019) which would be a normal expectation on any development site. This information should be sought.”

RESPONSE

The Aboricultural Report has been completed and accompanies this response.

(Documents 19177-AA-AN & 19177-BT1)

This report illustrates that there are few existing trees on site; the majority of these are located along Caversham Road and in Station Square. Species include, but are not limited to, a combination of large London Plane and Norway Maple along Caversham Road, and smaller Ornamental Pear trees in Station Square.

The aboricultural report notes three possible trees along Caversham Road for retention (T1, T4 and T5).

The existing tree (T1) is in good condition and will now be retained with a tree root protection area. In addition, 2 trees of a similar species to the existing T1 tree have been introduced and are located to the south of the existing tree.



1.2 NEO COMMENT 2

COMMENT

“It would appear from the information submitted that none of these [existing trees along Caversham Road frontage] would be retained. Whilst the applicant may argue mitigation planting could be provided, new trees will take many years to provide the multiple benefits of the existing, mature trees.”

RESPONSE

The existing, mature tree (T1) is in good condition and will now be retained. In addition, a similar species to tie in with this existing tree for the 2no. proposed trees at the southern end of Caversham Road has now been included. With regards to the 4no. proposed trees in planters located above the culvert; these will be a smaller ornamental street tree that will complement the other species on this street. These new trees will be semi-mature.

A combination of existing, new and planter trees will form an attractive frontage, and the addition of another species will further increase the scheme’s biodiversity value.

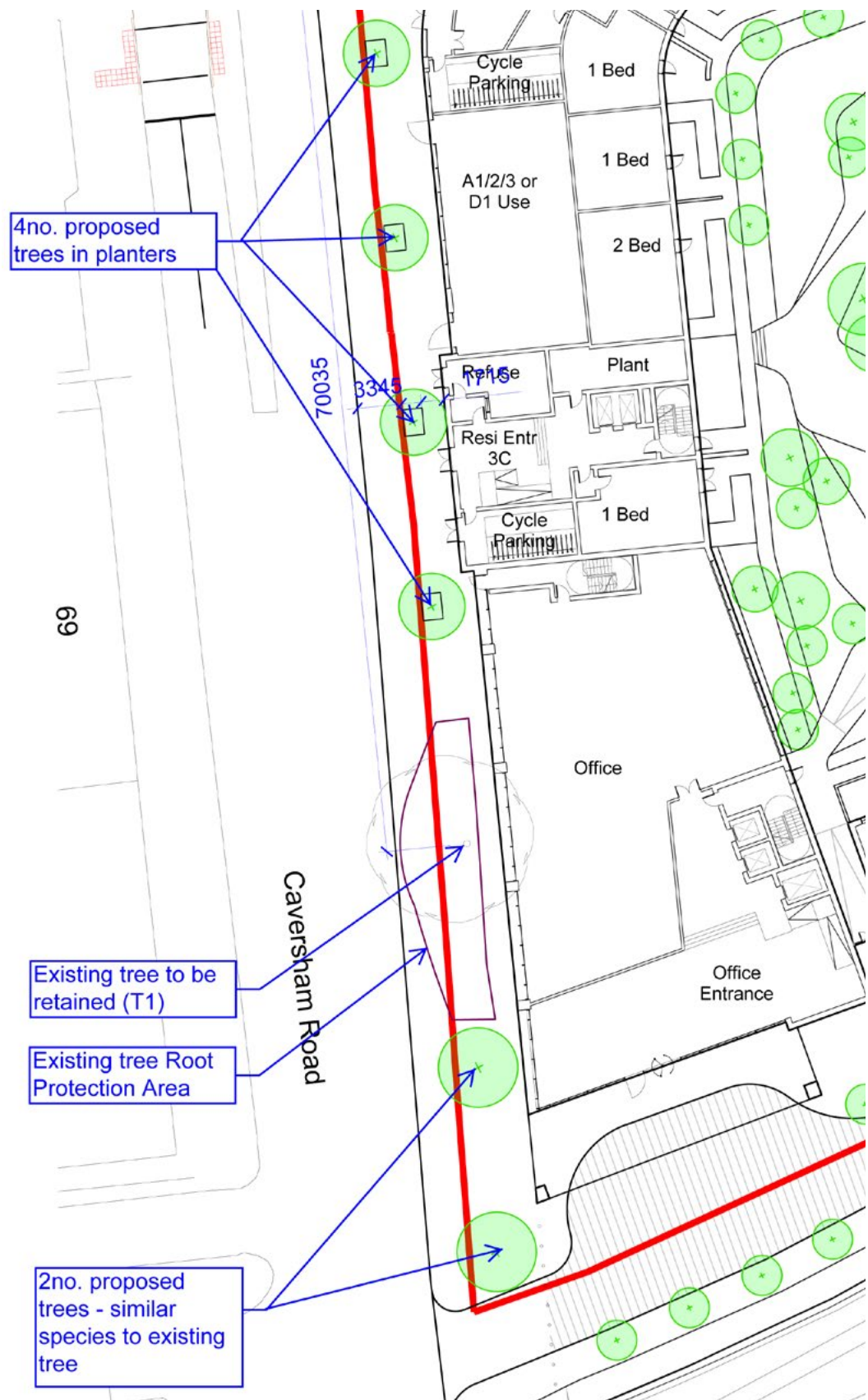
Tree planting across the site will enhance both the local character and proposed development by increasing the aesthetic value of the scheme, providing new habitats for many species, and reducing air and noise pollution.

Trees within the scheme can be categorised into avenue trees, street trees and naturalistic/informal clusters which will reflect and enhance the character of each of the particular character areas.

Key tree species now include:

- Betula pendula (Station Square)
- Liquidambar styracifua (The Avenue)
- Pyrus chanticleer (Middle Street)
- Prunus avium (Railway Link)
- Amelanchier lamarckii (Communal Gardens and Roof Terraces)
- Acer platanoides and Sorbus aucuparia (Caversham Road)

The Avenue and street trees will be planted at large, semi-mature sizes with typically 2.5-3m clear stem to allow pedestrian flow and visibility (visual permeability) of the retail frontages.



1.3 NEO COMMENT 3

COMMENT

“The development poses a fundamental issue on the Caversham Road frontage in relation to tree planting in that it appears to be proposed off-site within the Council pavement. The default position on any development should be tree planting within the site. Only if it is demonstrated that it is not feasible within the site might it be appropriate to secure monies for off-site tree planting. However, this is ONLY acceptable IF it has been proven that planting in the pavement is practically possible taking all below and above ground constraints into account. It cannot be seen in the DAS that 1) evidence has been provided to justify off-site tree planting or 2) that evidence has been provided that planting in the Caversham Road pavement is feasible.”

RESPONSE

All proposed trees along Caversham Road are now located within the site boundary.



1.4 NEO COMMENT 4

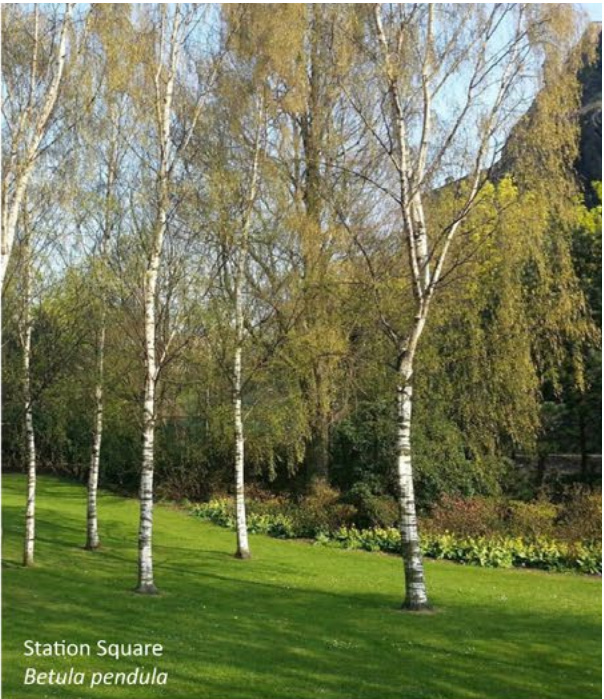
COMMENT

“..it would be suggested that a further species is introduced to either Middle Street or Railway Walk (currently both ornamental Pear) to add diversity, given the extensive use of *Pyrus* (ornamental Pear) in landscape schemes across the Borough.”

RESPONSE

Two species are now proposed along Middle Street and Railway link:

- *Pyrus chanticleer* (Middle Street)
- *Prunus avium* (Railway Link)



1.5 NEO COMMENT 5

viii

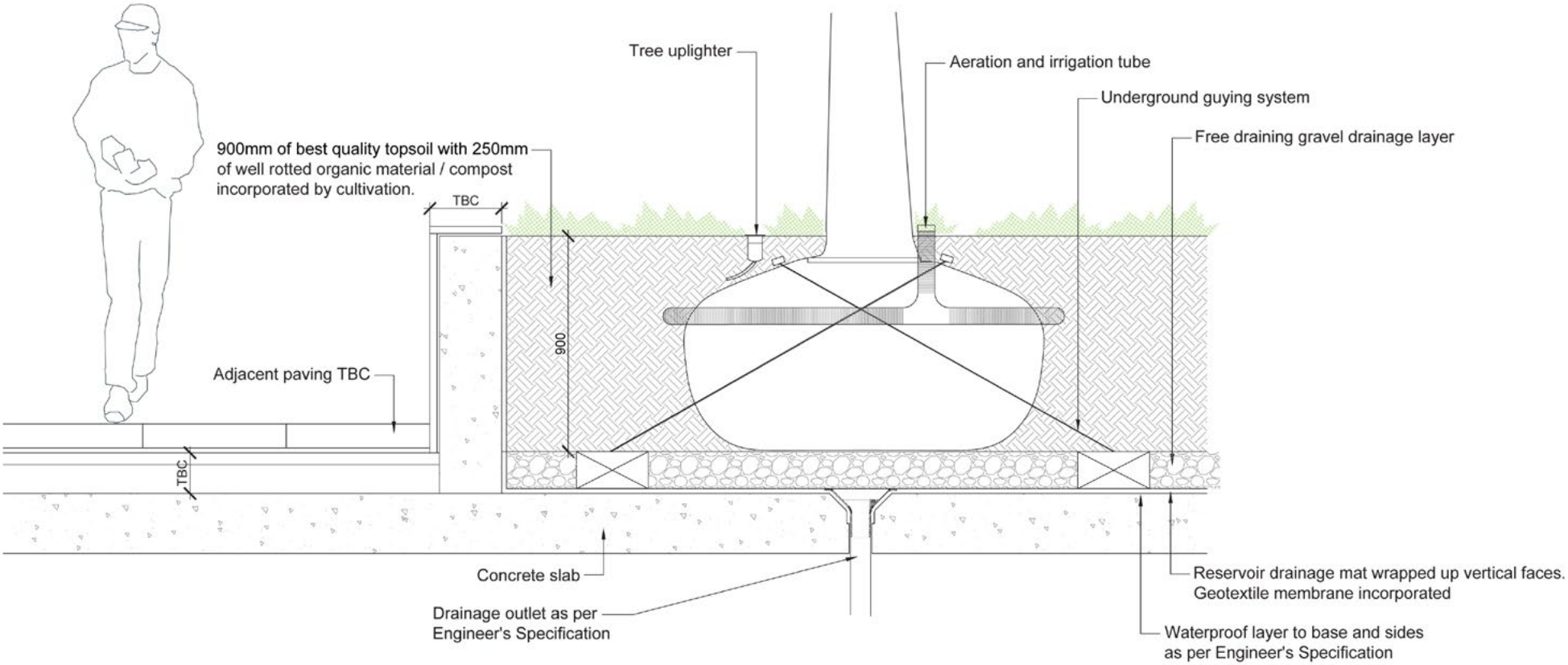
COMMENT

“It is noted that the development includes a basement level, which it is assumed works around the existing culvert indicated in 3.3 of the DAS? Hence confirmation of planting depths across the site will be required.”

RESPONSE

The planting proposed over the basement carpark will have a minimum planting depth of 800mm and is of sufficient structure to properly support the proposals.

This has now been revised to 900mm. Details to be provided in addendum report.



1 Sketch Detail: Typical Tree Pit in Raised Planter
1:20 @ A3

2.1 LR COMMENT 1

COMMENT

“The new Station Square has been described as representing a significant new public space for Reading and one of the key gateway spaces for the town. As such it lends itself to having a large scale feature providing a focal point and sense of place. Consideration should be given to a water feature, statue or other forms of public art, including provision for seating and large, town-scale trees for shading.”

RESPONSE

Agreed. We have indicatively shown a large scale feature / focal point in Station Square on our illustrative landscape masterplan, along with seating edges along the raised planters and groups of large trees. Please refer to Figure 1.



Figure 1. Station Square - Illustrative Landscape Plan



Figure 2. Character Images

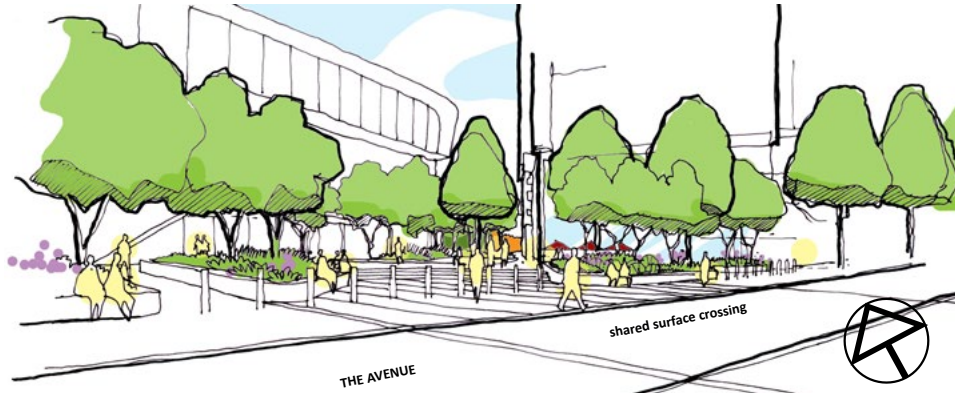


Figure 3. Sketch Visualisation

