

Memo

To: Marcelina Rejwerska, Planning

From: Amy Daly, Assistant Natural Environment Officer, Planning

CC:

Date: 5th September 2025

Re: Consultation on an Application

Planning Application Ref: PL/25/1131

Application Type: Approval of details reserved by a condition

Address: 108 Elm Park Road, Reading, RG30 2TJ

Proposal: Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions 3 (Schedule of materials), 4 - (Energy), 6 - CMS (Construction Method Statement), 11 - (Landscaping and) 12 (Habitat Enhancement scheme) of application PL/23/1556

The site is within a low canopy cover ward (Battle, 7.4% canopy cover). The site currently contains no trees, but there are some on adjacent land. The rear garden is currently mostly a green lawn area. The frontage is entirely hard surfaced.

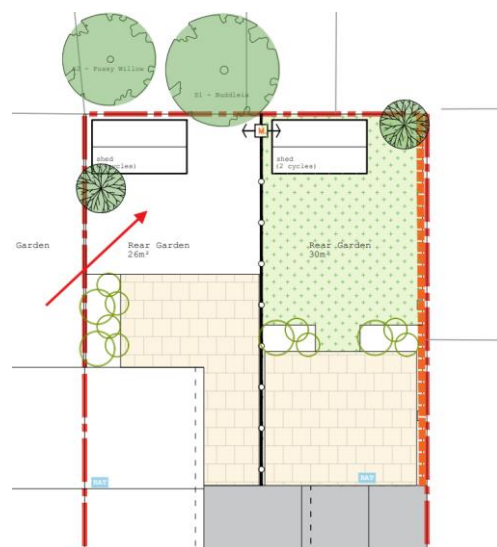
Condition 11 states:

Prior to first occupation/use of the building hereby approved, a scheme of hard and soft landscaping shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This scheme shall specify means of treatment for hard surfaced areas, means of enclosure including mammal gaps where appropriate, specify species, planting sizes, spacing and numbers of trees/shrubs to be planted (including replacement trees and tree pit specifications where appropriate, and must include a maintenance programme detailing all operations to be carried out in order to allow successful establishment of planting. Planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building(s) or in accordance with a timetable agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. REASON: In the interest of ensuring that the landscaping of the development enhances the visual local environment and in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

With reference to Landscape & Ecology As Proposed, August 2025, Drawing No. 90-10, Rev: A, I note the following:

The plan positively incorporates the planting of two *Acer campestre* trees. As these are both of the same species, there is limited diversity. I suggest that the two replanted trees are of different species and thus meet with the aims of the Tree Strategy and the applicant might wish to consider more fastigate trees given the limited space available. Whilst the plan states the newly planted trees will be 10-12cm in girth, the trees height also need to be stated and should be of a minimum 3m in height at the time of planting. The incorporation of a privet hedge on the frontage is also positive.

There is no mention of the treatment of hard surfaces which is a requirement of the condition. I am unclear what the area is below (red arrow) as the surfacing has not been described here. This needs to be amended to detail the surfacing as it is currently unclear.



The means of enclosure has been specified as a brick wall around the perimeter and 1.2m high CB fence separating the two dwellings. I am concerned that the brick wall will require excavation to install the foundations and that it may have an impact on the RPA of the trees adjacent to the site – this was not considered at the application stage. Further details are required as if concrete is required for the foundations of the brick wall, which is toxic to trees, an impermeable liner will need to be used to prevent concrete leaching into the soil. Ecology will need to comment on mammal gap requirements.

No maintenance programme, to establish successful planting, has been provided which is a clear requirement of the condition.

No tree pit specifications have been provided.

The plan does not demonstrate when the planting will occur or that if the trees and plants die, become damaged, diseased or are removed within 5 years of planting that they will be replaced.

To conclude, due to missing information, the requirements of the condition have not been met. Further details are required regarding the boundary brick wall and its requirements for foundations. The tree species choice also needs to be revised to include a range of species.