

Our ref: NPI00494

Date: 24 November 2025

101 Park Drive,
Milton Park,
Abingdon, Oxfordshire,
OX14 4RY

Reading Borough Council – Planning Services
Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading
RG1 2LU

Dear Sir/Madam,

Location: 250 Brook Drive, Reading, RG2 6UA

Proposal: Site improvements to include the installation of upgraded footpaths and their associated lighting, additional security measures in the form of bollards, planters, new and replacement CCTV and new ANPR, with associated electrical cabinet; new smoking shelter, bike shelter and associated charging and a new bus drop/pick up point (including waiting shelter and pedestrian barriers) and associated works

I write in respect of the above and further to the comments received from the Natural Environment team. We have repeated the comments below and provided an Applicant's response, along with an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (reference JSL5156_770 V3).

Officer Comment	Applicant Response
With reference to the PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT 794-PLN-NPI-12389, September 2025, I note that 3.7 states: <i>'Whilst the fencing is no longer part of the proposals for which planning permission is required, the Applicant confirms that the fencing to be installed will include hedgehog holes as requested by the Ecologist as part of the pre-application response'.</i> The fencing also had implications on trees, specifically 1) digging of fence post and potential root harm, 2) potential requirement to prune trees to allow for installation and to crown lift to avoid branches being a 'climbing aid', 3) potential RPA clash with electricity route to gates, and 4) general protection measures for adjacent trees during fencing installation. It is disappointing, therefore that there is no mention of this and that trees will be duly protected from harm during fence installation. On the assumption that nothing can be requested as a result of the fencing not forming part of the	As is acknowledged, whilst at the pre-application stage the fencing was part of the proposals, due to amendments made in its alignment, as a response to officer comments at the time, the fencing is permitted development and not part of the application proposals and sits outside of the redline boundary. The Applicant is however happy to supply the Arboricultural Impact Assessment undertaken in relation to the fencing and wider site proposals which sets out the protective measures which are being adhered to as part of the works, for the officers information. This is supplied on the understanding and acknowledgment that this relates in the main part to works outside of the redline area and outside the consideration of this application. The Applicant's commitment has always been to ensure limited impact on trees and their removal, which can be seen within the AIA. Amendments have been made since the pre-ap discussions in order to reduce tree loss and

proposals, I would suggest a suitable Informative (probably an appropriate rewording of I29).	associated works. As can be seen on the Tree Removal and protection plan tree loss has been avoided over the length of the fencing, with the exception of selective removals of G3. The RPAs of some trees are within the redline area, although the trees themselves are not (G3, T31 and T43). These are to be retained as illustrated within the AIA, with some selected pruning required. Works have commenced on site, at acknowledged risk, and photos are appended to this response which illustrate that the trees remain in place adjacent to the footpath and lighting locations.
4.6 states that 'The proposals result in the removal of removal of two trees, a small section of hedgerow, a small area of grassland'. Whilst some information is provided within BNG Assessment, this is not sufficiently clear for landscape/tree purposes.	The trees to be removed within the application boundary are T66 and T70, a Common Alder and Field Maple respectively. Both category C trees. The small section of hedge is Field Maple, also category C. This information is confirmed within the AIA.
5.11 refers to Policy EN14 and notes our expectations: 'There are several mature trees that exist around the building. The development should retain existing trees wherever possible and incorporate new planting if any trees are unavoidably lost. A tree survey will be expected and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)'. No AIA has been submitted, which is required as there are apparent clashes with RPAs of retained trees for multiple elements proposed, and loss of several trees. We also discussed at pre-app the need to ensure assess the impact on trees of the CCTV coverage, i.e. whether an trees will need removal or pruning to allow for clear sights. We have also not received a clear tree/vegetation removal plan with mitigation planting shown. An AIA is required and should be submitted prior to a decision – it is odd that it has not been provided given one was provided with the pre-app. I note what is said about ownership and lease arrangements in the Ecology Section (6.18-6.25), however expectations under Policy EN14 and expectations within the adopted Tree Strategy remain, hence comment on how a tree gain will be ensured is required.	As set out above the AIA is now submitted. Whilst the pre-ap related to the whole site, due to the reduced redline application boundary it should be recognised that this AIA covers areas both within and outside of the redline area. The only trees which are to be lost as part of the proposals being considered as part of this application are those cited above (T66 and T70 and a small section of hedgerow). With regards specifically to CCTV, the proposed location of one column was amended pre-application to ensure the retention of T43. As set out in the submission, due to the restrictions as a tenant, mitigation for the loss of the 2 trees and small section of hedgerow is to be provided via the off-site biodiversity net gain contribution. Whilst policy EN14 is recognised, to provide tree gain on site, alongside the off-site financial contribution would be considered as 'double counting'. The Applicant is looking at further enhancing landscaping within the wider site for the enjoyment of future occupiers, however these proposals are not yet confirmed and sit outside the consideration of this application.

We trust the contents of the Applicants response give comfort to the avoidance of tree loss as part of the wider site proposals and the limited loss as part of the proposals the subject of this application, mitigated by an off-site biodiversity net gain contribution and subsequently allow you to favourably determine the application.

Yours sincerely,
for Tetra Tech RPS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Camilla Fisher', with a stylized, cursive script.

Camilla Fisher

Technical Director – Planning

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G3



T31



T43