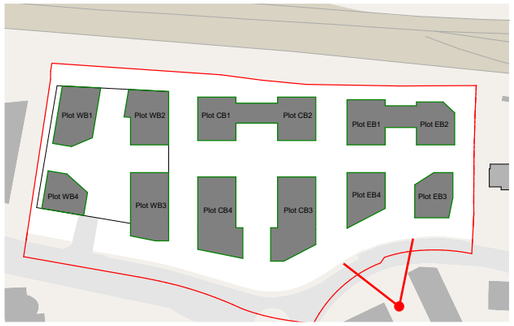
Proposed Illustrative Scheme aerial view

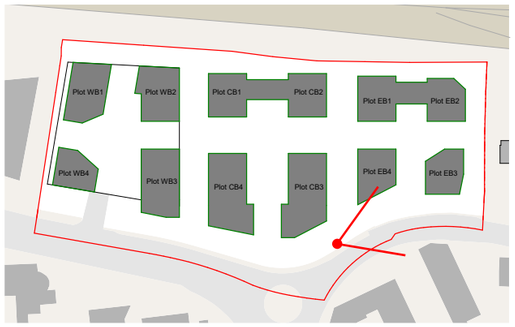
4.11 Illustrative Views



Illustrative view of the site looking North West from Huntley Wharf

Illustrative view of the site looking East along Forbury Road

4.11 Illustrative Views



Illustrative view of the site looking East

Illustrative view of the site looking West

5

Accessibility, social inclusion & safety

Introduction

This chapter of The Design and Access Statement contains the following sections:

Overview 5.1
Transport & Servicing 5.2
Approaches to buildings 5.3

5.0 Accessibility, Social Inclusion & Safety

5.1 Overview

The KMV OPA will provide a safe, legible, high quality environment that will be easily used by as wide a range of people as possible without undue effort, special treatment or separation. The objective is to provide a high quality mixed use development that caters for a wide range of people and is designed to be inclusive for all users and visitors. It also confirms compliance of the proposals with relevant national, regional and local principles and policies.

5.2 Transport & Servicing

Location and vehicle access
The site is located in the centre of Reading and is very well connected within the Reading town and the wider region as well as London and the rest of the UK, this is due to its rail, bus and car connections. The Illustrative Scheme incorporates a primary vehicle route to the perimeter of the site, accessed at the most easterly point of the site.

Domestic users and visitors will be expected to enter from the south west of the site and re able to use car park, the vehicle exit is provided next to the entrance of the commercial unit from Forbury Road within DZ1.

Basement and ground floor parking
It is proposed that resident parking will be accommodated within the basement level and commercial customer parking will be accommodated at ground floor. These car park areas would be accessed via the south western entrance.

Maintenance access
Plant spaces have been configured within the Illustrative Scheme so that maintenance vehicles could be provided with access via the basement. Facade maintenance will also be facilitated by controlled access to hard landscaped areas.

Deliveries
It is proposed that adhoc motorcycle, van and LGV deliveries will be able to use loading bays on the service route to the north eastern portion of the site. Deliveries will be collected in post rooms next to the loading bays for residents to collect their parcels at their convenience.

Commercial delivery vehicles will also be provided with controlled access to the podium loading bay (LGVs only) located to the rear of the site and accessed via the perimeter servicing road within DZ3.

Refuse Collection
Refuse will be collected into smaller refuse stores beneath each residential building where there is a basement in DZ1 & 2 or at ground level stores in each building in DZ3. Refuse from the basement will be taken up via lifts to a refuse presentation area located at ground floor to be collected via the servicing access road at the rear of the site. Refuse in buildings in DZ3 will be collected directly from the stores along the secondary access route through the middle of the blocks.

5.3 Approaches to Buildings

5.3.1 Access for emergency services

Emergency access will be possible to all main public areas and entrances to residential and other uses in the KMV OPA.

5.3.2 Safety, security and designing out crime

The KMV OPA's primary objective is to establish a distinct sense of place, and its illustrative scheme layout and public realm proposals address the seven key factors identified by Secured By Design for sustainable community security. The following are some of the key elements:

Access and Movement
Structure
Surveillance
Ownership
Physical Protection
Activity
Management and Maintenance

Access and movement:
Routes have been designed to cater to different users, such as pedestrians and vehicles. Public spaces and building entrances have been placed in strategic locations for natural surveillance and pedestrian safety.

Structure:
The design has considered ground floor use types to avoid conflicts between public and private use types. Ground floor residential units are placed on quieter thoroughfares to reduce public activity.

Surveillance:
Upper-level residential use in most buildings enables natural surveillance of all publicly accessible spaces.

Ownership:
Key public realm areas will encourage a sense of ownership by providing community-focused public spaces, well-lit and surveyed for natural and digital security. The residential green streets will have clear public and private space definitions and physical buffer zones to ground floor level residential units.

Physical protection:
Physical interventions such as street lighting, shutters, and bollards will be integrated into buildings and landscapes in a carefully planned manner. The Design Code document provides guidelines and mandatory codes to ensure quality and design control.

Activity:
The ground floor level Town Centre uses are concentrated along primary new routes or public spaces. This results in a higher level of human activity during day and evening hours, which benefits from natural surveillance without affecting existing residential neighbours.

Management and maintenance:
Future areas of public realm will have a management and maintenance regime that discourages crime and encourages ownership and responsibility. The operational systems will be provided in future RMAs.

6

Landscape and Public Realm

Introduction

This chapter of the design guidelines contains the following sections:

Introduction 6.1
Existing Site Analysis 6.2
Landscape Vision 6.3
Sustainable Landscape Design 6.4
Landscape Strategies 6.5
Landscape Outline Proposals 6.6
Maintenance and Management Principles 6.7

6.1 Introduction

6.1.0 Landscape and Public Realm Summary

Design principles

- Respectful design that recognises the nature of the town and its heritage and relationship to the setting of Forbury Gardens, Abbey, Prison and Railway.
- Creation of new streets and public spaces that connecting with the recent Huntley Wharf development and future development to the east of Reading.
- Create a new destination and residential neighbourhood
- Create a green space strategy that promotes wellbeing and biodiversity across streets, elevations, and roofs
- Create people-oriented, social, and active connecting route with a variety of spaces for social interaction, rest and recreational amenity
- Accommodate both through movement for pedestrians and cyclists
- Relate the public streets and spaces to the adjacent entrances and uses of the buildings
- Design dynamic spaces, which are lively throughout the seasons, day and night
- Create an integrated and cohesive identity for the external spaces with moments of intimacy, intrigue and delight, inviting curiosity and exploration
- Utilise opportunities at roof level for biodiversity and environmental services
- Integrate robust urban water management solutions which respond to seasonal flooding

Design and materials

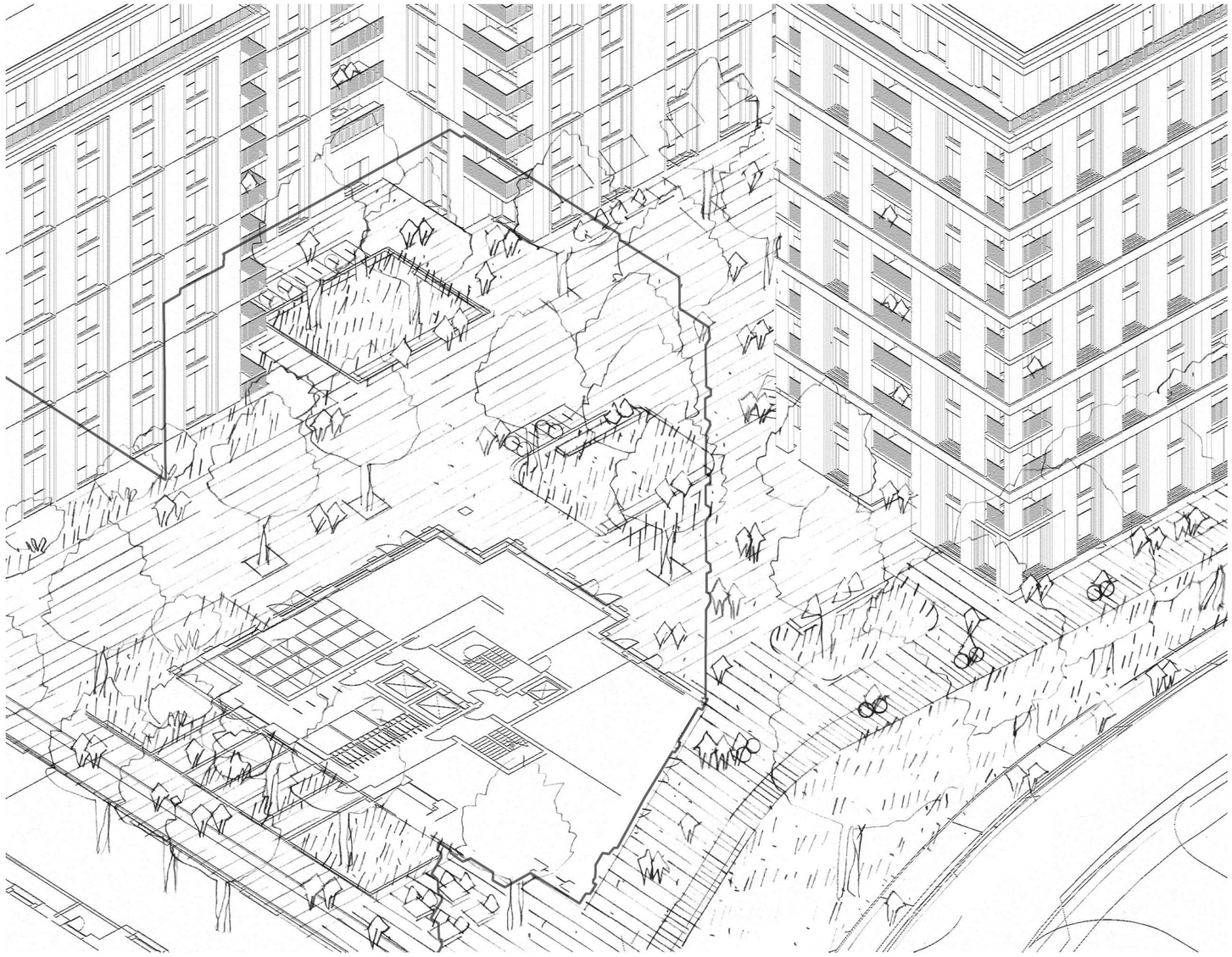
- Create a quality floorscape which stitches into the rich heritage and quality of the town
- Respect the historic character and lost history of the site by responding to the local language of surface design, street furniture and details
- Respond to the Reading Tree Strategy guidance to ensure the proposals meet the objectives
- Utilise water in the public realm expressing lost heritage of the Plummery Ditch through sustainable urban drainage and playful water features in the new eastern square, contributing to the identity of the site

Sustainability

- Site optimisation of assets, such as access, views, orientation, sunlight, connectivity, programming, and adjacency
- Improvement of air quality through orientation to prevailing breezes, use of trees and plants; avoidance of polluting outputs,
- Enhance the biodiversity of the site through new tree cover, ground cover planting, biodiversity roofs, swift, bird, and bat boxes.
- Integrated approach to storm water management through green roofs, swales, rain gardens and permeable surfaces
- Use of materials that minimise heat gain in the summer (without reflective glare) and heat loss in the winter
- Design of low maintenance regimes, with maximum longevity and robustness and minimum demand for maintenance or replacement
- Design of places that are cost effective, adding value far beyond their actual cost, epitomising user comfort providing sunny spaces cool shaded spaces that safe

Operational and movement factors

- Consider movement and wayfinding within a cohesive whole, positioning elements to optimise flow, movement, and visual connections
- Reduce vehicular dominance and provide safe cycle routes, encouraging cycling as a sustainable mode of transport with improved connections to the existing cycle network
- Create a shared cycle and pedestrian environment
- Ensure scheme is inclusive to all
- Create clear pedestrian and cyclist crossings, improving connections to the wider street network
- Provide security that is integrated and unobtrusive
- Create an integrated servicing strategy
- Accommodate emergency vehicle access
- Protect key public places of arrival and assembly from hostile vehicles



6.1.1 Introduction

This Landscape Strategy chapter has been prepared to support the Planning Application for a residential development on the site of Forbury Retail Park, Reading.

In collaboration with Squires and Partners architects, Macgregor Smith have developed the initial project brief to encompass a series of fundamental design aims with the overall objective of delivering a contemporary living environment.

By developing a concept which considers the combined internal and external user experience the landscape proposals seek to complement the architecture to provide a seamless and multi-functional living environment.

This Chapter sets down the proposed strategy for the provision of landscape and open space to accompany the residential development, including provision for landscape infrastructure, community gardens, courtyards, private amenity space, play and surface water management.

The chapter is structured in two parts:

The first section provides a summary of existing site conditions, to identify opportunities and constraints which might inform the landscape strategy.

The landscape strategy set out in the second part of the document builds upon these opportunities and constraints to ensure that the proposals reflect and enhance the site's existing assets while addressing any issues, and also ensuring that the proposals sit seamlessly within the existing site setting.

6.2 Introduction

6.2.1 Planning Background

A summary of the most relevant Planning Policies to the provision of public realm and landscape to this development are summarised below:

Sites and Detailed Policies Document Adopted
October 2012 (Revised January 2015)
Reading Borough Council

This document sets down a number of planning polices which relate to the provision of open space in new residential developments: in Reading

5.6.1 DM10: Private and Communal Outdoor Open Space

Dwellings will be provided with functional private and communal open space that allows for suitable sitting out areas, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage and drying space. Houses will be provided with private outdoor space whereas flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and /or roof gardens.

The design of outdoor areas will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity, clearly identifying whether they are private or private communal spaces, ensuring that they are appropriately related to main entrances, enhancing safety and the perception of safety for future residents and the general public, and not be compromised by the relationship of other buildings which may be detrimental in terms of overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing.

5.6.10 In the past, the Council has sought the following minimum provisions for private or communal outdoor space for each type of accommodation:

a/ Houses: Useable private outdoor space should be no less than the gross floor area of the dwelling to which it relates .

b/ Flats outside central Reading:

1 and 2 bedroom	25sqm per flat
3 or more bedrooms	40sqm per flat
Sheltered units	20sqm per unit

c/ Development in central Reading will not always be expected to comply with the standards set above. Open space is nonetheless required, unless exceptional circumstances prevail, to accommodate modest sitting out areas and clothes drying facilities.

8.1.2 DM16 Provision of Open Space

The amount and type of publicly accessible open space to be provided shall be as laid out in the most up-to-date Open Spaces Strategy. The provision of open space shall satisfy the most urgent need in terms of the type of open space to be provided in a particular location having regard to the size of the site and shall be subject to considerations of particular site specific deficiencies.

8.1.12 The Open Space Strategy states that, 'All guidelines recommend that at least some open space for children to play, whether publically or privately owned, be available within 100-200m of every home. This will primarily affect very high-density developments, like flats....'

Reading Open Space Strategy
Update Note January 2018

This note reinforces the importance of Public Open Space within Reading:

'Public Open Space helps to achieve various Council aims including improving the quality of life for residents, providing good access to open space and waterspace, adapting to climate change, enhancing the natural envionment to contribute to economic success, ensuring Reading is healthy and enhancing biodiversity and wildlife. The town's open spaces contribute significantly to defining its character'.

'The OSS notes the contribution that planting on the street frontage can make to increase street tree cover ...,

	Description	Size	Transport mode	Radial catchment
Borough park	Varied character and facilities; open parkland, natural, formal, sport, play and relaxation; catering	60 ha	Car; public transport; cycle	
District parks	Varied character and facilities (but fewer than above); natural, formal, sport, play and relaxation	20 ha	Car; bus; cycle; foot	1.2 km
Local parks	Relaxation, play and ball games	2 ha or 1-2 ha equipped	Cycle; foot; wheelchair	0.8 km
Neighbourhood park	LEAP (local equipped area for play) + informal space	0.1-.02 ha equipped	Foot; wheelchair	0.4-0.8 km
Small recreational open spaces	'low-grade' recreation	0.1-0.2 ha	Foot; wheelchair	0.4-0.6 km
Linear open spaces	Relaxation; green link		Foot; cycle	
Semi-natural sites	Comparatively undisturbed sites, managed for wild flora and fauna		Cycle; foot; wheelchair	1.5-2.0 km

Reading Open Space Strategy - Hierarchy and Access

6.2.1 Planning Background

Reading Biodiversity Action Plan 2005-2015

The Reading Biodiversity Action Plan sets down the following objectives for the habitats in Urban environments:

Short term:

Protect and/or replicate habitats found to be used by rarer species of plants and animals.

Require nesting provision for birds and bats as part of development.

Medium term;

Manage selected sites for optimum wildlife habitat. Developments should contain materials and designs that provide opportunities for use by identified BAP species.

Long term:

Maintain a mosaic of suitable sites, including ground, green and brown roof and wall sites.

Species on the long list occurring in this habitat (but not necessarily found at all sites)/

Birds:

- Black Redstart
- House Sparrow
- Linnet
- Kestrel
- House Martin
- Sand Martin
- Swift

Mammals

- Bats (Brown Long Ear, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Natterer's)

Invertebrates

- Buttoned Snout (a moth)

6.2.1 Planning Background

Reading Tree Strategy June 2010

The Reading Tree Strategy sets down the following Objective for trees in new developments:

Objective 6: The role of new developments.

New development will be expected to make a positive and sustainable contribution supporting the objectives of this strategy in enhancing Reading's urban environment.

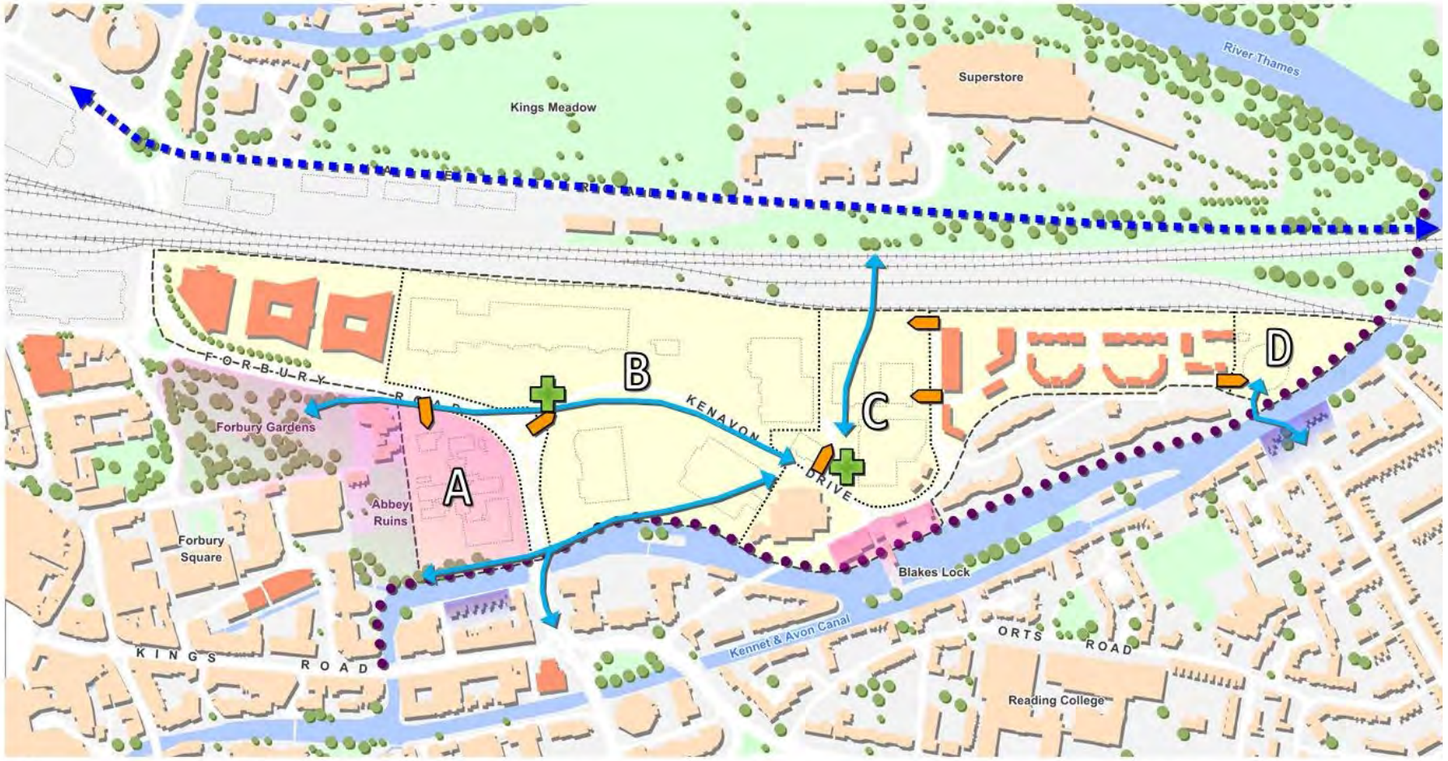
Such planting should be used to enhance streets and other ublic realm as part of planning permissions for all relevant new developments, particularly in higher density urban developments.

Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy, March 2021

Objectives

1. RBC Tree Stock – protect, retain, manage and plant trees to ensure an increased canopy cover of healthy trees resistant to pest and diseases and climate change and to reduce air pollution.
2. Climate adaptation – increase the diversity of the tree stock (family, genus and species) to provide resistance to climate change, plant large canopy species wherever feasible, and keep trees healthy in order that they can achieve their full potential to ensure that Reading's Urban Forest is resilient to the impacts of climate change, so that it provides the maximum role in mitigating
3. Tree planting – plant at least 3,000 'standard' trees by 2030 on Council land.
4. Canopy cover – increase overall canopy cover to 5% by 2030; ensure that all wards have at least 12% canopy cover by 2030; and target priority areas for tree planting based on canopy cover, air pollution, treed corridors, green links and areas of high landscape value
5. Protection of private trees - the Local Planning Authority will continue to use its powers under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 to make Tree Preservation Orders and to retain and protect trees on development sites in line with good arboricultural practice
6. RBC will engage with partners, public and landowners to raise awareness of the Tree Strategy aims and good arboricultural management practices
7. Improve biodiversity across the Borough by selecting trees that are either native or of wildlife value, particularly in semi-natural areas, by use of natural regeneration where practicable, and by ensuring that tree planting does not compromise or affect other habitats
8. Identify all areas suitable for street tree and other planting on Council land – initial study to be completed by 2022, with continued updates
9. Ensure continuing funding for tree planting
10. Biosecurity – continually review RBC purchasing and working practices to ensure RBC are working to good arboricultural and horticultural practice to minimise the chance of introducing and/or spreading pests and diseases within the Borough; ensure biosecurity is considered on development sites
11. Trees and Development - tree retention, protection and planting within development sites to be in accordance with the aims of the Tree Strategy and Local Plan policy
12. Monitor progress – Record and report net tree gain on an annual basis; reassess canopy cover in 2030

6.2.2 Reading Borough Local Plan Adopted November 2019



Key

- Sub-area boundary
- Major Opportunity Area
- Footprint of existing building in Major Opportunity Area
- New area of open space
- Vehicle access point
- Key movement corridor (pedestrian and/or cycle)
- Proposed Mass Rapid Transit route
- Retained or new public access along waterways
- Existing building
- Recent building or building under construction
- Nearby sensitive location—low-rise residential
- Nearby sensitive location—heritage assets

Sub-Areas

- A CR13a: Reading Prison
- B CR13b: Forbury Retail Park
- C CR13c: Forbury Business Park & Kenavon Drive
- D CR13d: Gas Holder

CR13b, FORBURY RETAIL PARK:
This site would be the focus of the new residential community, and, alongside residential, additional retail, leisure and community uses at a scale to serve the Kenavon Drive area would be appropriate. It should include a new area of open space and enhance the frontage to the canal, including a buffer zone to the top of the canal bank to reflect its wildlife significance. Implementing this policy may involve complete redevelopment or using new additional development to improve the existing urban form of the area. Some parts of the site are likely to be implemented in the long term.
Site size: 6.99 ha Indicative potential: 1,230-1,840 dwellings, no net gain of retail.

READING BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN Adopted November 2019, p158

6.2.3 The Site

The site occupies a strategic and prominent location at the northern end of Forbury Road as it transitions west.

The site is located a short distance north east of the commercial and historic centre of Reading, and is an 8 minute walk from the station.

The site is bordered to the north by railway lines, and to the south by Forbury Road and Kenavon Drive.

The Forbury Place development sits immediately to the west of the site, with Reading's historic prison and the Abbey lying beyond Forbury Road to the south.

To the south east - a new residential development is emerging - Huntley Wharf - which to the south fronts onto the River Kennet.

Beyond the railway lines lies Kings Meadow - an extensive and attractive park which fronts onto the River Thames on its northern boundary.

Vehicular and pedestrian access is restricted, by a change of level, to one entrance only.

Existing retail units sit along the northern boundary with surface car parking to the south.

Vegetation is limited to the boundaries, with some native hedge and tree planting to the north and east boundaries, and a number of TPO London Plane trees along the southern boundary facing the Huntley Wharf scheme.

6.2.4‘A City of Parks and Rivers’

Historically, the landscape around Reading was one of streams, fishponds and waterways. Over time these waterways and water meadows have been diverted, or even covered over.

However, the waterways continue to form an important backdrop to the town and its key open spaces which are largely associated with the River Thames.

The site is within 9 minutes walk of King’s Meadow to the north which itself fronts onto the Thames. And to the south, the Huntley Wharf development will provide a direct link from Kenavon Drive (which forms the southern boundary of the site) to the River Kennet.

An artist’s impression of Saxon Reading showing the Minister Church

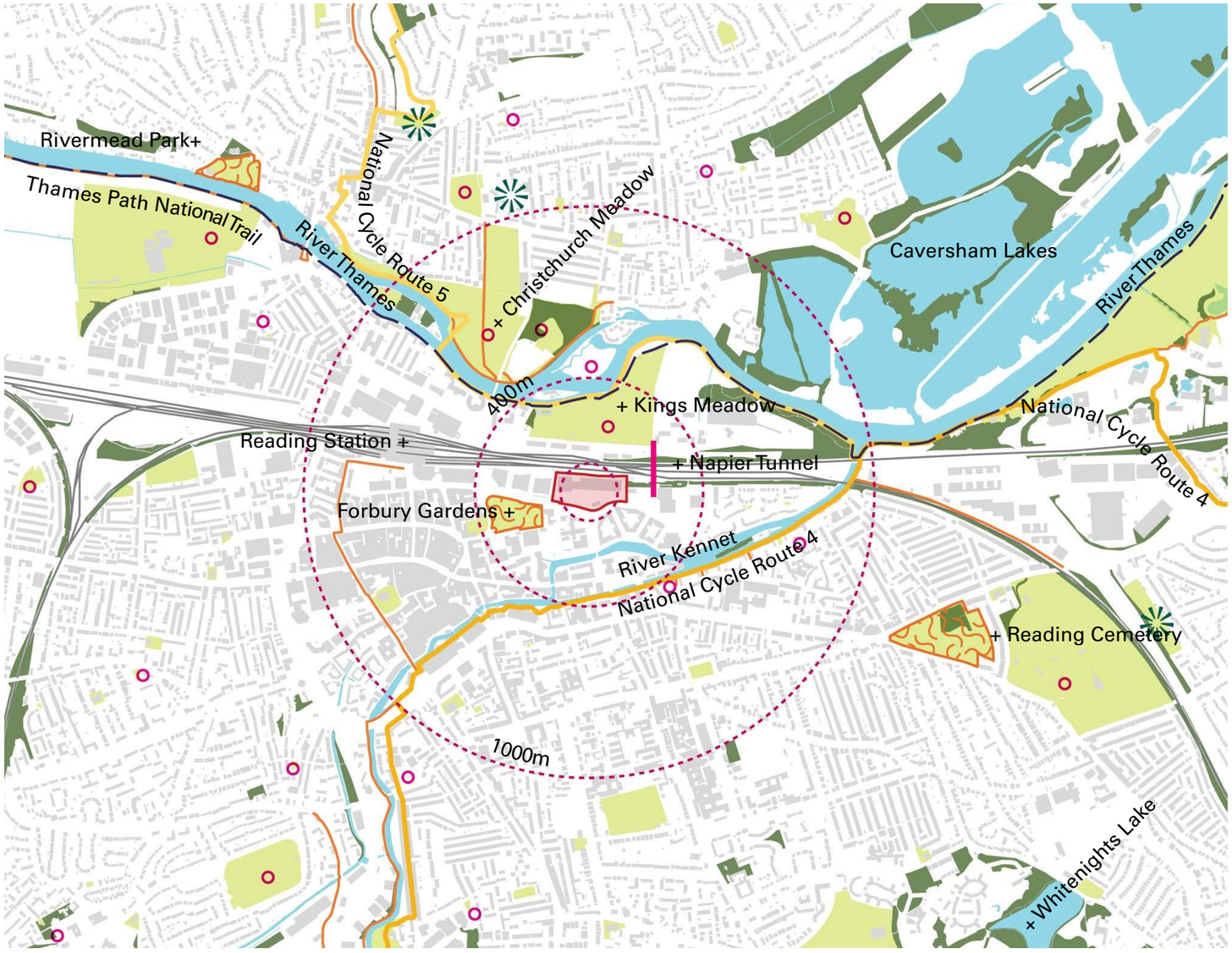
6.2.5 Wider Connections

The site is an 8 minute walk from the main railway station and 12 minutes walk from the retail centre of Reading - Broad Street.

The Thames Path National Trail and National Cycle Route 5 pass close to the site.

Access from the site is restricted by development to east and west, and the railway lines to the north. Access to the King's Meadow to the north is via the Napier Tunnel which passes under the railway lines and which is itself accessed from the retail park to the east of the site.

A new link from Forbury Road through the Huntley Wharf development to the River Kennet is being created.



KEY

- Green Open Space
- Woodland
- Water Body
- Park
- Play Area
- Allotment
- National Cycle Route
- Local Cycle Route
- National Trail

Macgregor Smith

6.2.6 Requirements for Open Space and Play Provision

The site is located close to the historic and commercial heart of Reading and as a result has limited access to public open space.

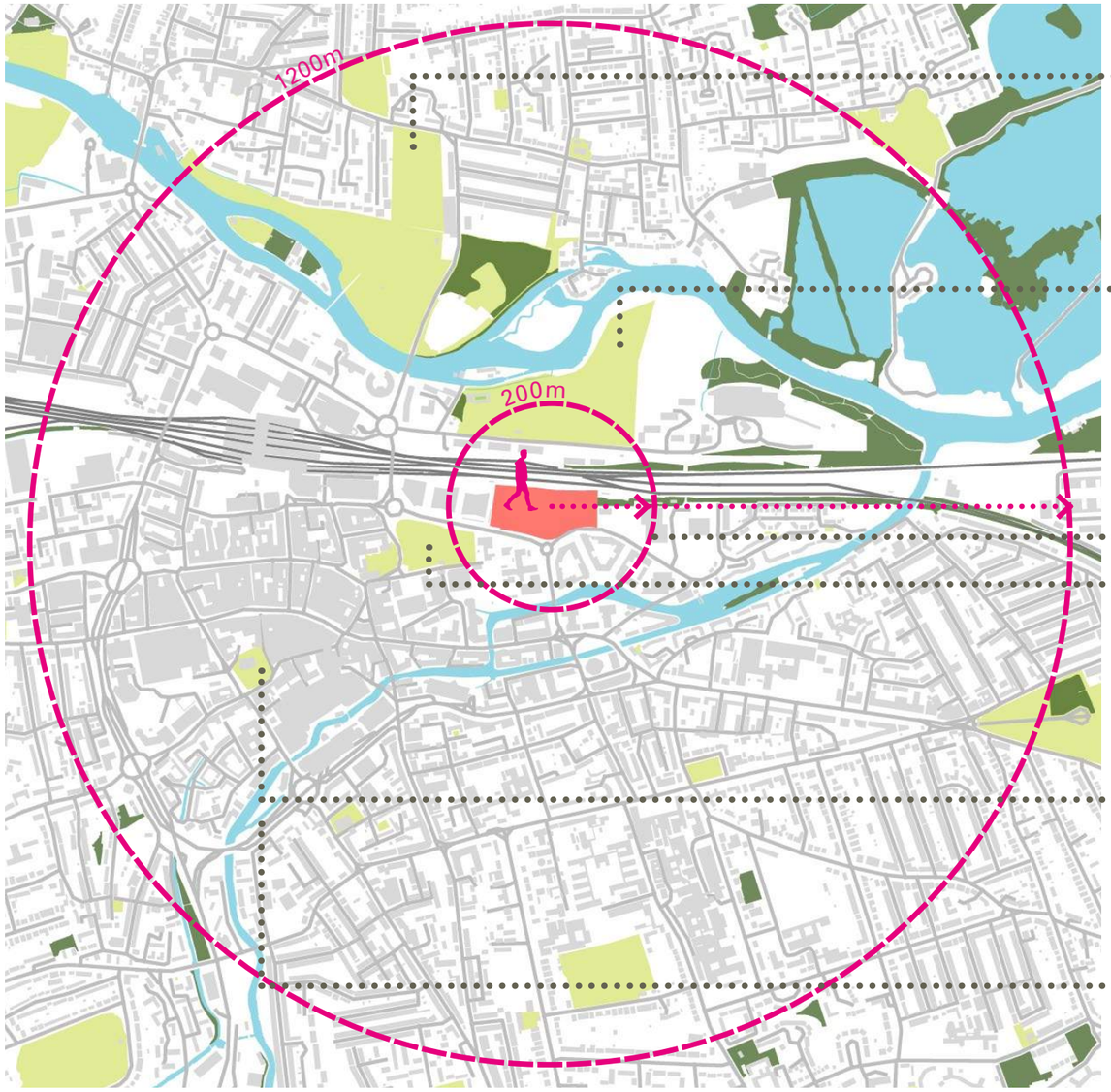
The Reading Open Space Strategy states with regard to the existing distribution of open space across the City;

'There is no particular defined standard. A 4km radius catchment area for local parks and a 1.2km catchment for larger parks is considered a reasonable standard in assessing the distribution of open spaces in urban areas. The standard of 0.2ha minimum local park size is also widely used. By these measures, Reading's provision of green space is close to average, but at the lower end of the range'.

With regard to provision of open space for new developments Reading Borough Council's The Sites and Detailed Policies Document Adopted October 2012 (Revised January 2015), states:

Development in central Reading will not always be expected to comply with the standards set above. Open space is nonetheless required, unless exceptional circumstances prevail, to accommodate modest sitting out areas and clothes drying facilities.

The Open Spaces Strategy states that, 'All guidelines recommend that at least some open space for children to play, whether publically or privately owned, be available within 100-200m of every home. This will primarily affect very high-density developments, like flats....'



Christchurch Meadows
11.3ha
Recreation Ground
Picnic Area
Play Area
Tennis Courts
Fishing
Changing Rooms
Football
Cycling

Kings Meadow 12.6ha
Fishing
Play Area
Rugby
Football
Woodlands
Lido

The Site

The Forbury Gardens
2.4ha
Picnic Area
Recreation Ground
Cafe
Historic Interest

Minster of St Mary the Virgin Gardens 0.4ha

Katesgrove Playground
0.5ha
Basketball
Football
Play Area

Forbury Gardens

Kings Meadow

6.2.7 Wider Materiality

Public realm materials to the perimeter of the site consist of a variety of surface materials and street furniture, in various conditions.

The historic centre of Reading is characterised by the use of red brick to both buildings, walls and pedestrianised areas.

New infill commercial and residential developments in Reading use a variety of materials, including flamed granite paving at Forbury Place.

The Huntley Wharf development to the immediate south of the site is to use precast concrete sett paving in silver and mid grey colours, to its walkways and multicoloured setts in a grey/brown mix, to the new public terrace overlooking the River Kennet.

The older areas of the City Centre including the Abbey Precinct are characterised by a mix of stone and flint, often used in attractive patterns.

Elsewhere, surface materials are a mix of concrete block typologies and tarmacadam footways.

Street furniture is predominantly cast iron in the heart of the City Centre, with a variety of typologies used elsewhere.

1. Red Brick Paving

2. Flamed Granite Paving

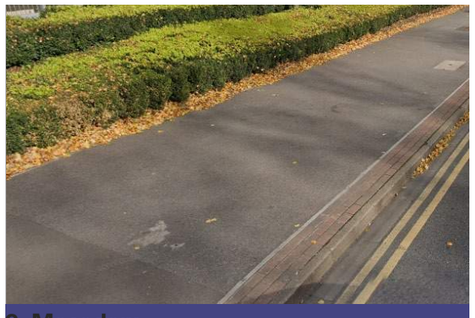
3. Concrete Paving

4. Textured Concrete Slabs

5. Resin Bonded Aggregate

6. Herringbone Concrete Blocks

7. Various Concrete Paving and Setts


8. Macadam

9. Cobblestone Median Strip & Flint Wall