

Security Review of Existing Security Strategy

55 Vastern Road, Reading

For Berkley Homes

1st December 2025

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1. Introduction

Tobruk Protective Security Solutions have been engaged by an Architect from Berkeley Group to review their current Security Strategy for the Vastern Road development in Reading. A particular focus is the fact that the Local Planning Officer is currently objecting to an element of the design following advice received from the Thames Valley Police Designing Out Crime Officer (DOCO).

The original planning application for the demolition of existing structures and erection of a series of buildings ranging in height from 1 to 11 storeys, including residential dwellings (C3 use class) and retail floorspace (A3 use class), together with a new north-south pedestrian link, connecting Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road, application ref. 200188 was submitted in January 2020 and approved under appeal ref. APP/E0345/W/21/3276463 on 17 March 2022. The application was since resubmitted and subsequently approved under S73 application ref. 231673, from 27 March 2024, to include an increase from 4 to 5 storeys of the western wing of Block B, amendments to the top two floors of Blocks D & E, changes to the unit mix and various other associated alterations.

Some of the amendments and planning conditions have related to the building materials, such as doors and windows and glazing standards, which will have an impact on the site security. These materials will require assessment to ensure that they comply with recommended security standards.

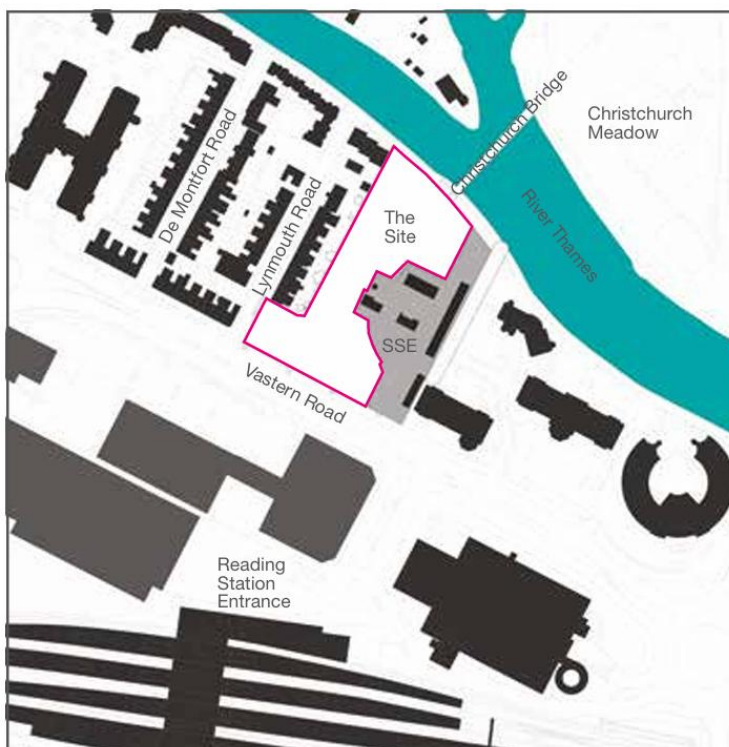
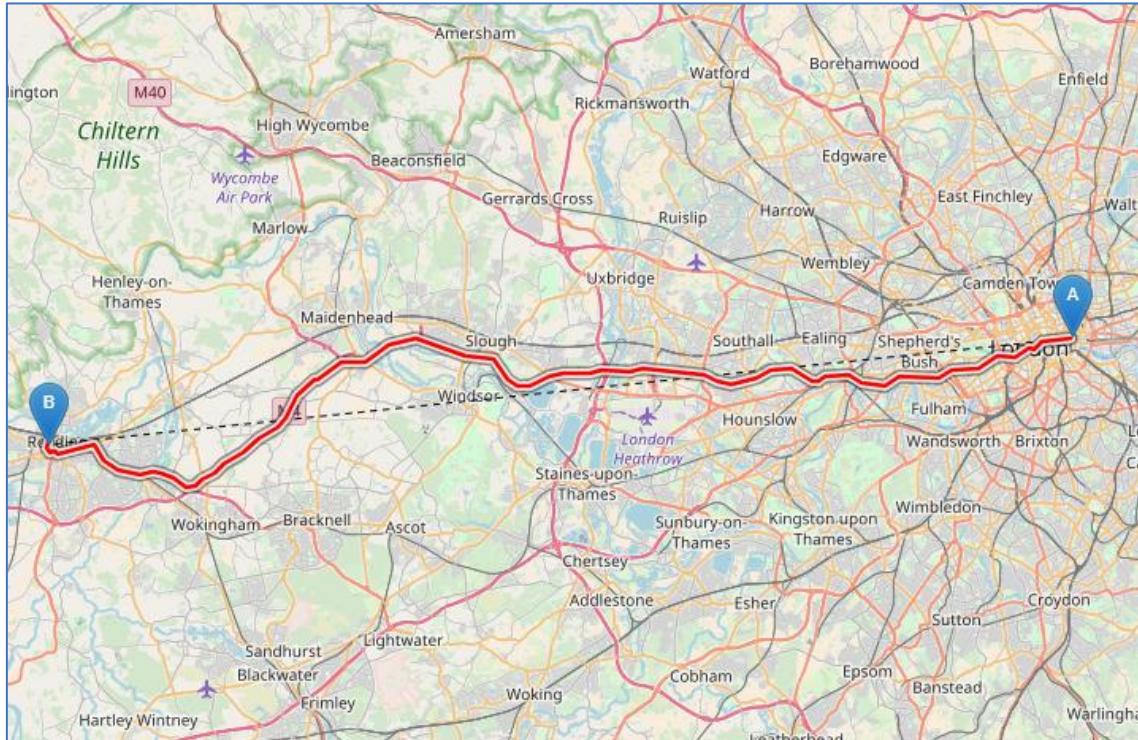
As part of our review of the security measures proposed and comments made by the DOCO, we have assessed the comments and give justification as to our reasoning should our opinions differ from those of the DOCO.

Site layout image from the 2020 Illustrated Masterplan for Planning Application PL/23/1673 to Reading Council:



We have included a map of the location which demonstrates the proximity to London below along with a local site map which illustrates the surrounding buildings/properties.

A = London B = Reading



There are established transport links from London to Reading with trains from Paddington to Reading taking between 23 – 39 minutes depending on the service.

When driving the M4 Motorway provides a direct route, typically taking 45 – 60 minutes depending on traffic. National Express also run coach services between the cities.

As can be seen from the site map left the rail station is in close proximity to the Vastern Road development which would be attractive to prospective buyers needing to commute.

2. Crime in the Local Area

2.1 Site Crime Statistics

55 Vastern Road, Reading, RG1 8BU	Violence and sexual offences	Vehicle crime	Other theft	Criminal damage and arson	Anti-social behaviour	Robbery	Burglary	Public Order	Other Crime	Shoplifting	Bicycle Theft	Possession of Weapons	Drugs
Jun-24													
Jul-24		1	2		1		1						
Aug-24	2			2	1								1
Sep-24					4		1						
Oct-24	1												
Nov-24	1	1		2					1				
Dec-24			1										
Jan-25	1			1			2						
Feb-25			1	1			2				1	1	
Mar-25	2			1	1						1		
Apr-25	1			1				1					
May-25		1	1		2				1				
Jun-25	2			1	1								
Jul-25						1					1		
Aug-25													
Sep-25													
	10	3	5	9	10	1	6	1	2		3	1	1
Total Crimes	52												

The above statistics are drawn from www.police.uk and relate directly to the site and the immediate area surrounding it. These were not the statistics from the Postcode which factors in all crime within a one-mile circumference of the site.

2.2 Crime Statistics Summary

The site is bordered by Vastern Road to the south and Lynmouth Road to the west. There is a large retail park to the south of Vastern Road. Crime statistics have not been gathered for this area due to the types of expected criminal offences at retail outlets such as theft and anti-social behaviour.

Lynmouth Road is a mostly residential street with several house types including apartments and traditional terraced houses. It is well populated and may account for the numbers of violent and sexual offences and anti-social behaviour which has been recorded in this area.



Footpath to the north of the proposed site along the Thames Path next to the Christchurch Bridge

As can be seen in the above image, criminal damage and graffiti are prevalent along the Thames Path to the north of the site. This path is likely to be secluded at night and shows signs of youth loitering and damage to walls.



Access from Lynmouth Road to the Thames Path and the River Thames

There are several potential factors for crime enablers in this area. The ease of travel around the area, with a major road and close by train station allowing free movement near the site. There is a footbridge which crosses the River Thames to the north of the site which leads to the Peppard and Caversham areas of Reading.



Thames Path and Christchurch Bridge

Crime statistics are higher in the Peppard and Caversham area than in the development, which could indicate movement by offenders into other locations.

Criminal damage in the immediate Vastern Road area shows nine reported incidents over the listed period. In the grand scheme of things, this would be considered low as with many of the other crime types shown above.

The crime statistics for 55 Vastern Road, Reading (June 2024–September 2025) show a total of fifty-two recorded incidents, with the most common categories being violence and sexual offences (10), anti-social behaviour (10), and criminal damage/arson (9). Compared to surrounding areas in Reading, this level of crime is moderate, as central urban zones often experience higher rates of these types. Nationally, the UK sees significantly higher volumes, especially in densely populated cities, but the types of crime listed here are consistent with broader trends. The absence of robbery, burglary, and major drug-related offences suggests this area may be safer than average for its urban context.

As most of the new development on Vastern Road will be residential dwellings near each other along with multiple different types of units, it is likely that the above crime types will be featured in future statistics.

Theft, burglary, violent crimes, and anti-social behaviour occur in mixed and close confined communities. To mitigate this as far as possible, improvements to the security measures can be made without excessive cost implications to the developers. Further security considerations will be listed in section 3.

3. Observations | Current Security Strategy for 55 Vastern Road

3.1 Boundary Treatments

The planning approved enclosure strategy for the Vastern Road site demonstrates a layered and thoughtful approach to perimeter security, balancing protection, access control, and aesthetic integration with the surrounding environment.

Diverse Boundary Treatments for Risk-Based Zoning

The plan includes a mix of physical barriers tailored to different security needs:

- **3.0m Blast Walls:** These provide high-level protection, positioned near critical infrastructure or areas requiring enhanced resilience against hostile threats.
- **2.4m Palisade Fencing:** A robust choice for securing perimeters while maintaining visibility. Its height and design deter climbing and unauthorised access.
- **2.0m Brick Walls:** These offer both physical security and visual screening, ideal for residential or mixed-use zones where aesthetics and privacy are important.
- **1.1m Metal Railings:** Used in lower-risk or publicly accessible areas, these maintain openness while subtly guiding movement and defining boundaries.

Upgraded Existing Boundaries

Some existing boundaries are being increased to 1.8m, enhancing security without requiring full replacement. This is a cost-effective way to improve perimeter integrity while preserving existing structures.

Strategic Placement and Integration

The enclosure elements are clearly designed to integrate with the landscape and urban layout, supporting controlled access points and natural surveillance. The plan aligns with CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles by using physical barriers to guide movement and reduce opportunities for concealment.

Clear Site Demarcation

The inclusion of a defined site boundary and application area contours supports clarity in ownership and responsibility, which is essential for managing access control and responding to incidents.

A plan detailing the boundary treatments has been submitted alongside this report for reference, see **Appendix A**.

3.2 Landscape design

The landscape architecture for the Vastern Road development incorporates several features that contribute positively to site-wide security, blending physical protection with environmental design.

Secure Boundary Treatments

- **Vertical Bar Fencing and Gates:** The use of 1.1m and 2.0m high vertical bar railings (RAL 7032 Pebble Grey) provides clear demarcation of space while maintaining visibility for natural surveillance. Gates include fob/mag lock access control, supporting secure entry points.
- **2.0m Brick Walls with Integrated Gates:** These offer robust physical barriers, particularly effective for securing residential or service areas while maintaining aesthetic consistency.

Controlled Access and Movement

- **Defined Access Points:** The inclusion of pedestrian/service gates and decorative balustrades helps manage movement through the site, guiding users through designated routes and reducing opportunities for unauthorised access.
- **Bollards (Fixed and Removable):** Strategically placed bollards, including fire strategy-compatible removable types, prevent vehicle intrusion into pedestrian zones while allowing emergency access when needed.

Visibility and Surveillance Support

- **Low-Level Railings and Open Sightlines:** The railing designs and placement support visibility across the site, aiding passive surveillance and reducing concealment opportunities.
- **Lighting Integration:** Although not detailed in these specific drawings, the landscape features are designed to complement the lighting strategy, ensuring illuminated pathways and access points remain unobstructed.

Durable and Vandal-Resistant Materials

- **Street Furniture and Fixtures:** Benches, planters, and railings are constructed from durable materials like powder-coated steel, hardwood, and resin-bound gravel. These choices reduce maintenance vulnerabilities and resist tampering or damage.

Environmental Design Supporting Safety

- **Tree Pit Systems and Planting Layouts:** The use of underground crate systems and root barriers ensures that planting does not obstruct pathways or sightlines, maintaining clear and safe pedestrian routes.
- **Step and Paving Details:** Tactile hazard paving and demarcation strips enhance accessibility and reduce trip hazards, contributing to overall site safety.

3.3 Defensible Planting

The planting design for the development integrates several features that support **defensive landscaping** and contribute to the overall security of the site:

Defensive Planting for Perimeter Protection

- **Dense Hedge Planting:** Species such as *Prunus lusitanica* and *Ilex crenata* are used extensively along boundaries and transitional zones. These evergreen, dense hedges act as natural barriers, discouraging unauthorised access and guiding pedestrian movement.
- **Native Hedge Mixes:** Combinations like *Carpinus betulus* and *Crataegus monogyna* provide robust, thorny, and seasonally dense growth, enhancing perimeter security while supporting biodiversity.

Visibility and Surveillance Support

- **Low Shrub and Groundcover Selection:** Plants such as *Ajuga reptans*, *Heuchera* 'Palace Purple', and *Carex morrowii* 'Ice Dance' are used in foreground planting, maintaining open sightlines for passive surveillance and reducing concealment opportunities.
- **Strategic Tree Placement:** Semi-mature trees like *Carpinus betulus* 'Fastigiata' and *Tilia cordata* are positioned to avoid obstructing views or creating shadowed areas near entrances and pathways.

Access Control and Zoning

- **Specimen Shrubs and Feature Planting:** Bold, structured plants like *Phormium 'Sundowner'* and *Cotinus 'Grace'* are used to visually reinforce boundaries and define zones without relying solely on hard landscaping.
- **Podium and Roof Planting:** Controlled access areas such as podium gardens feature intensive green roofs and ornamental planting that discourage loitering and limit access to vulnerable building edges.

Ecological and Seasonal Deterrents

- **Thorny and Textured Species:** Plants like *Berberis thunbergii 'Atropurpurea'* and *Mahonia aquifolium* offer natural deterrents due to their spiny foliage and dense growth, particularly useful near fences and low walls.
- **Seasonal Interest with Defensive Qualities:** Flowering species such as *Lavandula angustifolia 'Grosso'* and *Euphorbia amygdaloides* provide aesthetic appeal while maintaining low growth and minimal concealment risk.

Reinforced Defensive Planting

- **Double-Staggered Hedge Rows:** The use of *Prunus lusitanica* and *Ilex crenata* in double-staggered rows at 0.3m offsets significantly increases density and impenetrability. This technique is particularly effective for discouraging access along boundaries and between zones.
- **Native Hedge Mixes:** Continued use of thorny and dense species like *Crataegus monogyna* and *Rosa arvensis* reinforces natural barriers, especially in areas adjacent to public paths or less monitored zones.

Strategic Tree Placement for Controlled Visibility

- **Columnar and Upright Trees:** Species such as *Carpinus betulus 'Fastigiata'* and *Liquidambar styraciflua 'Worplesdon'* are chosen for their upright growth, which provides vertical interest without obstructing horizontal sightlines, supporting surveillance, and reducing hiding spots.
- **Specimen Trees in Open Zones:** Trees like *Ginkgo biloba* and *Platanus hispanica* are placed in open areas, contributing to placemaking while maintaining visibility and avoiding dense canopy cover near entrances or pathways.

Planting to Deter Loitering and Unauthorised Access

- **Textured and Spiny Shrubs:** The inclusion of *Berberis thunbergii*, *Mahonia aquifolium*, and *Cotinus coggygria* adds a layer of passive deterrence in areas where loitering or shortcutting might be a concern.
- **Low-Maintenance Groundcovers:** Species like *Pachysandra terminalis* and *Ophiopogon planiscapus* are used to fill space without encouraging foot traffic or informal paths, helping to maintain controlled movement.

Visual Zoning and Wayfinding

- **Repetitive Planting Patterns:** Repetition of species such as *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Grosso' and *Euonymus fortunei* helps define pathways and entrances, subtly guiding users through the site and reinforcing territorial cues.
- **Seasonal Colour and Texture:** Plants like *Allium purple sensation* and *Rudbeckia 'Goldsturm'* provide seasonal interest that enhances visibility and supports a sense of ownership and care, both are known to reduce anti-social behaviour.

Defensive Planting Summary

The Vastern Road development incorporates robust defensive planting in front of ground floor windows through extensive use of dense evergreen hedges such as *Ilex crenata* and *Prunus lusitanica*, often arranged in double-staggered rows for maximum coverage. These are complemented by native hedge mixes (*Carpinus betulus*, *Crataegus monogyna*) and spiny or deterrent shrubs including holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), mahonia, and berberis, creating physical and psychological barriers to unauthorized access.

Drawings depicting the planting arrangements can be found in Appendix B submitted alongside this report.

3.4 Cycle Parking

Cycle theft can often be an issue in residential developments, so it was good to see that Berkeley have provided a dedicated cycle store with access control locking on the door. In addition to this they have specified an Alpro Vortex 2400¹ compact door magnet as opposed to a standard maglock in the cycle store. This provides a combination of magnetic and mechanical locking and is much harder to defeat than a standard maglock where the doors can be forced open with enough force. We would also recommend providing suitable racks within the cycle store to protect the parked cycles, those with ground anchors and multiple locking points are preferable.

3.5 Bin stores

Although the bin stores are being secured with digital pin code locks which is not something we would ordinarily encourage these were specified to facilitate access for local refuse collectors. In addition, it was positive to see that the bin stores are isolated and do not permit any further access into the apartment blocks meaning that security has been considered within the design.

In this scenario (no further access into development from bin stores) we feel that the choice between securing with digital pin code locks and normal readers will have very little impact on overall security.

¹ [Vortex Surface Door Magnet AL2400-LP - Alpro](#)

3.6 Car Park Gates

Robust Gate Construction

- Both Block BC and Block D gates feature drive-through metalwork designs with an approximate clear opening width of 1049mm, suitable for controlled vehicular access.
- The gates are constructed with durable metal components, ensuring resistance to forced entry and long-term wear, which is essential for perimeter security and access control.

Integrated Fire and Safety Barriers

- The Block BC gate design includes Siderise EW-CD30 cavity barriers fixed to the structure using galvanized steel brackets. These barriers enhance fire protection and compartmentalisation, contributing to overall site resilience.
- Fire-rated components such as Rytons A1 metal vents and fire boards are incorporated into the gate surrounds, ensuring compliance with fire safety standards while maintaining structural integrity.

Controlled Access Infrastructure

- The gates are part of a deflection head system using cloaking angles and Rockwool insulation, which not only supports fire safety but also reinforces the structural interface between the gate and the building envelope.
- The use of cavity tray systems and masonry support angles further secures the gate installation, reducing vulnerabilities at junction points.

Architectural Integration for Surveillance and Deterrence

- The gate designs are coordinated with soldier brick arch elevations and soffit detailing, which maintain visibility and aesthetic continuity while avoiding concealment opportunities.
- The inclusion of metalwork detailing at strategic access points supports passive surveillance and territorial reinforcement, key principles in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

3.7 Security Lighting

The lighting strategy for the Vastern Road development demonstrates a strong commitment to creating a secure and welcoming environment while balancing ecological sensitivity and urban aesthetics. From a security perspective, several key strengths stand out:

Thoughtful Zoning and Visual Hierarchy

The lighting design establishes a clear visual hierarchy across the site, with brighter zones at key circulation points such as the Arrival Square and intersections, and softer lighting along transitional pathways. This approach enhances wayfinding and situational awareness, helping residents and visitors navigate safely and confidently, especially during evening hours.

Compliance with Security Standards

Post-curfew lighting levels are designed to meet the requirements of BS EN 13201 and BS 5489-1, ensuring adequate illumination for facial recognition, crime deterrence, and safe movement. Lighting classes have been carefully selected based on ambient illumination and traffic flow, with adjustments made to support biodiversity without compromising safety.

Controlled Light Spill and Glare Reduction

The use of shielded luminaires, bollards with low glare optics, and directional lighting significantly reduces light spill into residential windows and public areas. This not only protects privacy but also prevents dark spots and over-illumination, which can hinder visibility and increase vulnerability.

Adaptive Lighting Control Strategy

A factory-set dimming system and curfew-based lighting controls allow for dynamic adjustment of light levels. Feature lighting is switched off after curfew, while amenity lighting is dimmed to maintain minimum safety standards. Presence detection (PIR) is recommended for entrances, ensuring lighting is responsive to actual use and reducing unnecessary illumination.

Integration with Public Realm and Existing Infrastructure

The lighting scheme is designed to integrate seamlessly with Reading's broader public realm lighting, ensuring continuity and reducing contrast between the development and surrounding areas. This contributes to a cohesive and secure urban environment.

Durable and Vandal-Resistant Fixtures

Lighting bollards and wall-mounted fixtures are specified with high impact and vandal resistance, supporting long-term reliability and reducing maintenance vulnerabilities that could compromise security.

The lighting for the development is well thought out and will have a significant impact when it comes to deterring crime.

3.8 Physical Security

Even though Berkley Homes are not obliged or required to apply for SBD accreditation it is to their credit that despite this the development appears to meet all the main requirements of SBD except for the objection regarding planned compartmentation.

The development incorporates multiple layers of physical, electronic, and environmental security measures that collectively support SBD compliance:

- **Access Control Systems (ACS):** The NACD NPH and XMPGH door entry panels are DDA-compliant, anti-vandal, and support proximity access via MIFARE technology. They include audit trail capabilities, concierge integration, and programmable features, meeting key SBD standards for controlled access and traceability.
- **CCTV Deployment:** The site-wide CCTV plan shows strategic coverage of entrances, communal areas, and circulation routes. Integration with lighting infrastructure ensures effective surveillance, supporting both deterrence and incident response.

- **Lighting Strategy:** The lighting design complies with BS5489-1:2020, with appropriate lux levels pre- and post-curfew. Shielded luminaires and bollards reduce glare and light spill, enhancing visibility while protecting privacy and ecological zones.
- **Defensive Landscaping:** Planting plans include dense hedging, thorny species, and low-level groundcover to deter unauthorised access and loitering. Sightlines are preserved to support natural surveillance.
- **Perimeter Security:** The enclosure plan features a mix of brick walls, palisade fencing, and railings tailored to risk zones. These barriers are robust and well-integrated with the landscape design.
- **Emergency Egress and Safety:** Mushroom exit buttons and break glass units are installed with dual safety/convenience functions, ensuring compliance with fire safety and emergency access standards.

Overall Security Posture

The development exhibits a **holistic and layered security approach**, combining:

- **Physical security** through barriers and controlled access.
- **Electronic security** via ACS, CCTV, and lighting.
- **Environmental design** that supports CPTED principles.
- **Accessibility and compliance** with DDA and Equality Act standards.

The inclusion of audit trails, programmable systems, and integration across disciplines (lighting, planting, access control) reflects a proactive and future-proofed security strategy.

3.9 Compartmentation and Access Control

The current objection that is holding up final planning approval is an objection regarding the developments planned compartmentation arrangements from the Principal Planning Officer, following comments from the local Designing Out Crime Officer (DOCO).

We consider that the locking down of the entire building with access control systems on each floor entrance may be slightly excessive. The building must allow for freedom of movement for the residents. It is understood that not all the residents will adhere to the “house rules” as such, and some may become problematic or cause nuisance to other residents. At that point, Management Plans will have to be enacted to deal with this type of behaviour.

The planned Access Control arrangements into each block see integrated Video intercom and proximity fob/card reader units installed at each ground floor entry point. The models that have been specified are IPVIEW IP Video Monitor Door entry units.² These units provide full communication between visitors and residents, resident to resident and resident to concierge when applicable/required. They are also capable of forwarding live visitor calls to smart phones.

² [NACD Ltd](#)

Once a visitor is granted access by the resident, they are coming to see they will be admitted into the lobby area at the ground floor but will need to then wait for the resident to come down to the lobby and collect them due to the second inner door. Whilst this could present a vulnerability with regards to tailgating we believe it offers a good compromise between a single access point entry and full compartmentation on every floor level, especially considering the overall security posture and the local crime rate/threats. In addition, even compartmentation does not prevent a determined intruder from tailgating.

Delivery drivers/couriers and postal workers would face the same process e.g., required to be granted access by residents. Items small enough could be left in the parcel lockers provided in the secure postal lobby whereas larger items would need to be collected by residents.

Example picture of Video Intercom and ACS Unit:



IPVIEW-F

3.10 CCTV System

The CCTV strategy for the development demonstrates a well-considered approach to site-wide surveillance, supporting both deterrence and incident response. Coverage is strategically distributed across key access points, pedestrian routes, and communal areas, ensuring visibility over high-traffic and potentially vulnerable zones.

Strategic Placement for Maximum Coverage

CCTV cameras are positioned to monitor entrances, undercroft areas, and key circulation routes, including pedestrian pathways and vehicle access points. This ensures that all primary movement zones are covered, reducing blind spots and enhancing situational awareness.

Integration with Lighting Infrastructure

The CCTV deployment is coordinated with the lighting layout, including bollards and column-mounted luminaires. This integration ensures that camera views are well-lit during low-light conditions, improving image clarity and supporting facial recognition and behavioural monitoring.

Layered Surveillance Across Zones

The plan includes coverage across residential blocks, shared spaces, and perimeter boundaries. This layered approach supports both internal security (e.g., resident safety) and external threat mitigation (e.g., unauthorised access or loitering).

Support for Passive and Active Monitoring

The deployment supports both passive deterrence through visible camera presence and active monitoring, enabling real-time response to incidents. The inclusion of cameras near plant rooms, depots, and service areas also helps protect critical infrastructure.

Compliance and Futureproofing

The layout appears to align with best practice standards for urban residential developments, and the infrastructure (e.g., power and mounting) is designed to accommodate future upgrades or additional cameras if needed.

Make and Models

Hanwha Vision³ cameras and network video recorders are being deployed at the development. Hanwha are well regarded in the security industry and whilst the South Korean manufacturer still provides good value, they have not had the negative publicity of Chinese manufacturers such as HikVision⁴ or Dahua. Whilst the Chinese camera technology would not represent a security threat in a residential development, they also received negative publicity on ethical grounds. It is pleasing to see a good quality CCTV solution being installed.

³ [Hanwha Vision - Global Vision Solution Provider](#)

⁴ [UK government bans new Chinese security cameras - BBC News](#)

3.11 Postal Security

The post rooms where the boxes are placed show required security protection with access control systems on access doors, CCTV, and non-combustible post boxes accessible by the residents being proposed. In undefended post rooms, mail can be intercepted by offenders and hostile devices can be used to cause damage or threats to buildings, so it was positive to see the security measures included in this development.

3.12 Vehicle Security Arrangements

As this site would not be considered a high-risk target for terrorism, it is unlikely to require hi-specification rated bollards for hostile vehicle mitigation. It is however important to ensure that the bollard products chosen and installed are done so in the correct positions and with appropriate spacing between each of the bollards to prevent vehicle egress. The same applies to any vehicle restriction barriers, which are also shown on the plan. The security standards for any bollards or restriction barriers to LPS1175 SR1 rating will be sufficient for this development, as there is a low perceived threat level for a vehicle borne attack.

3.13 Site Environmental Considerations

The site vegetation can become a problem for security should there not be a strict Management Plan in place to maintain the trees and bushes. Vegetation can create hiding places for offenders and directly interfere with the lines of sight for both pedestrians and CCTV coverage. However, a maintenance plan has been included and approved within the plans for the development.

3.14 Parking Areas

Undercroft parking areas for both cars and cycles with electric batteries must have an individual safety assessment. Many vehicle charging points are now being installed into new builds. This can be extremely dangerous in the case of an exploding electric vehicle. Often fire appliances or suppression systems cannot deal with the extreme heat caused by this type of fire. Upper floors are at severe risk of progressive collapse should this not be considered at design stage.

4. Observations | Letter of Response, Principal Planning Officer

4.1 Response from Designing Out Crime Officer, as received 18/07/2025.

"The applicant should confirm the method of compartmentation, as per the extract I provided from the Secured by Design Residential Guide 2025 (section 29.42). I provide again for ease of reference: Developments of twenty-six or more flats, apartments, bedsits, or bedrooms can suffer adversely from anti-social behaviour, criminality, and a reduced sense of safety, due to unrestricted access to all areas and floors of the building. SBD therefore seeks to prevent unlawful free movement throughout the building through the use of an access control system. How this is achieved is a matter for the specifier, the following two methods are acceptable:

1. Lift and stairwell access controlled separately:

- To prevent the lift and stairwell providing unrestricted access onto a residential landing, each resident shall be assigned access to their floor only via the use of a security encrypted electronic key (e.g. fob, card, mobile device, key etc.) both on the stairwell/landing door and lift*
- Access to stairwells from the communal lobby shall be restricted to residents to reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour or criminal activities.*
- Unrestricted egress from a landing into the stairwell and from the stairwell to the communal lobby/emergency fire exit must be provided at all times.*

2. Lift and stairwell access jointly controlled via an additional secure door set:

- An additional secure door set prevents access to each landing from both the lift and stairwell. Each resident shall be assigned access to their floor only via the use of a security encrypted electronic key (e.g. fob, card, mobile device, key etc.) for this door set.*
- Access to stairwells from the communal lobby shall be restricted to residents to reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour or criminal activities.*
- Unrestricted egress from a landing into the stairwell and from the stairwell to the communal lobby/emergency fire exit must be provided at all times As I mentioned previously, further guidance on compartmentation is provided with the SBD Guidance, including how to deal with visitors as part of compartmentation. If compartmentation is appropriately achieved, and with the audio-visual access control, then the proposed 'meet and greet' arrangements (as outlined in para 3.12 of Security Strategy) will not be necessary (noting SBD guidance does not consider meet and greet appropriate for larger scale developments). "*

Whilst the above statements are both accurate and proportional to the risk for such a development. It is considered that, as the site and developer is NOT applying for Secured by Design (SBD) accreditation, these proposed security measures could be assessed and modified to fit with the current risk and crime analysis statistics below.

4.2 Applicant's Response

"Thank you for your letter and for providing the relevant extract from the Secured by Design (SBD) Residential Guide 2025. We note the guidance within section 29.42 regarding compartmentation for larger residential developments. While we acknowledge the value of the SBD recommendations, we would respectfully point out that the wording of the relevant planning condition does not explicitly require full compliance with the SBD guide, nor does it mandate floor-by-floor compartmentalisation. Instead, the condition requires the provision of appropriate security measures to achieve a safe and secure environment for residents."

Many of the UK Police Forces have adopted the principles of SBD as good practice, which is positive. There are, however, several police forces, especially in the South of England, who promote this accreditation without exception and insist on this for planning conditions.

It has long been argued that CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles have a positive effect in reducing crime and disorder in the built environment. These principles are adopted by security professionals throughout the developed world and should be used in a case-by-case basis to assess the risk factors for individual sites.

Adopting an accreditation scheme which promotes its own members goods and services at the expense of other equal and sometimes superior security products, which have been subjected to rigorous testing, can be detrimental to the overall outcome for the security of individual sites.

In this case, whilst not disagreeing with the DOCO per say, alternative security measures will be recommended which should provide a similar outcome to the ones put forward by SBD.

5. Observations | Development Drawings of Site

Overall assessment of the submitted site drawings show that security measures have been carefully considered by the developers. It is clearly visible that anti vehicle bollards have been specified to segregate the pedestrian areas, and that internal and external CCTV has been included in key locations. The parking entrance is gated, and natural boundary barriers have been included in the shape of defensible planting (see our comments in 3.2 on this).

That said, as the DOCO has rightly pointed out, properties with multiple occupancy on several levels can attract crime and disorder, especially within this type of property.

6. Summary

Tobruk Protective Security Solutions has undertaken a comprehensive review of the proposed security strategy for the 55 Vastern Road development by Berkeley Homes, with particular attention to the concerns raised by the Thames Valley Police Designing Out Crime Officer (DOCO) regarding compartmentation.

While the DOCO's recommendation for floor-by-floor compartmentation aligns with Secured by Design (SBD) guidance for developments of twenty-six or more units, it is important to note that Berkeley Homes is not seeking SBD accreditation. Therefore, there is no statutory obligation to implement compartmentation as described. The planning condition requires "appropriate security measures" rather than strict adherence to SBD protocols.

In addition, the method of securing each block proposed by Berkeley offers a robust compromise with visitors/couriers/tradesmen only being granted access to a secure lobby by residents who then must collect them from the lobby on the ground floor. This is a much better solution than visitors being granted access through a single door and then being free to roam the other floors unescorted.

Overall, the development demonstrates a robust and layered approach to protective security, incorporating:

Physical Security: Diverse boundary treatments including blast walls, palisade fencing, and defensible planting.

Electronic Security: DDA-compliant access control systems, site-wide CCTV coverage, and a lighting strategy aligned with BS standards.

Environmental Design: CPTED principles are evident throughout the site layout, landscaping, and visibility planning.

Crime statistics for the local area indicate moderate levels of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage, with no significant trends in burglary or robbery. The site's proximity to transport hubs and mixed-use design does present some risk, but the proposed mitigations are proportionate and well-integrated.

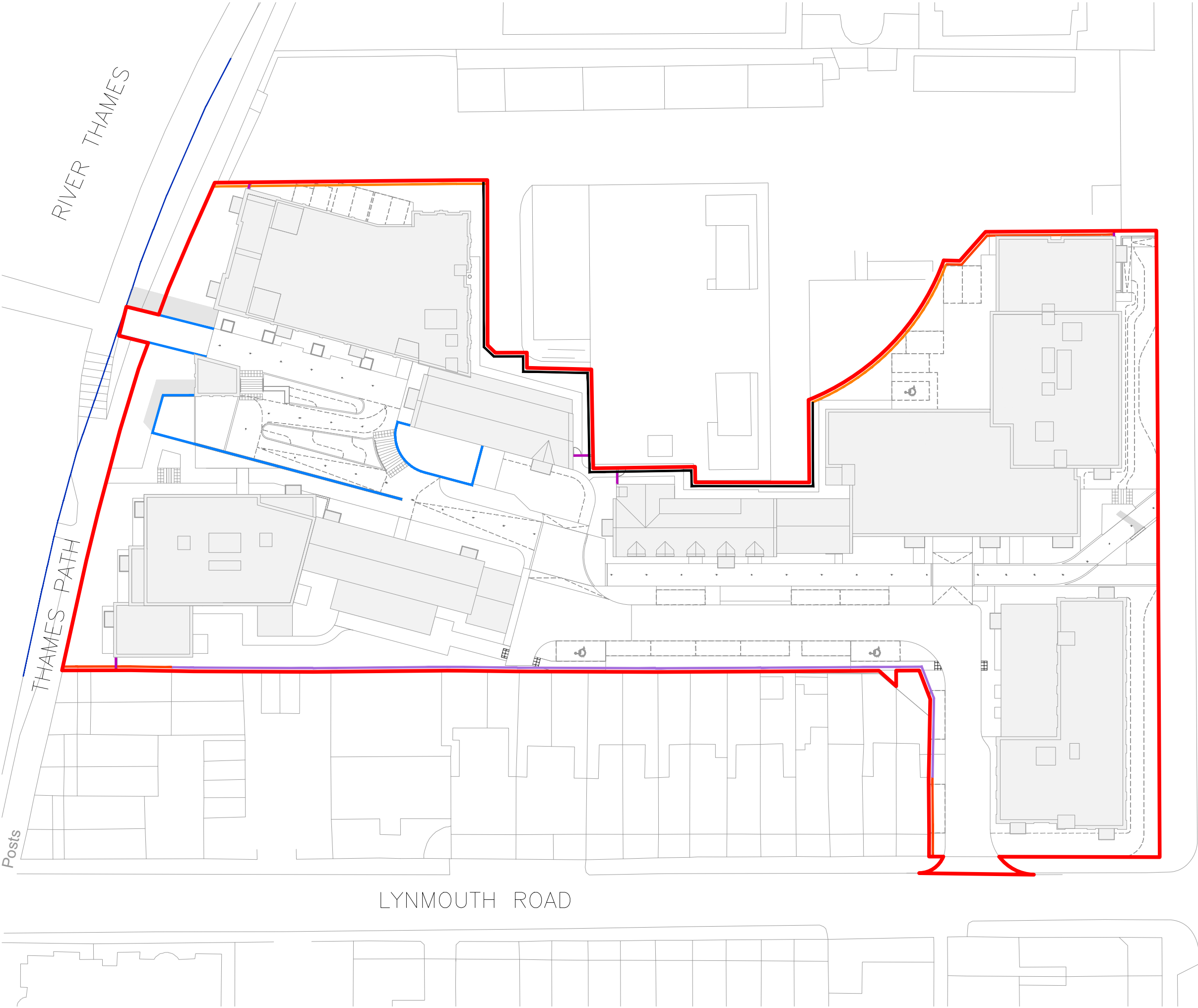
While the DOCO's advice is valid and reflects good practice, the developer's strategy offers a balanced solution that prioritises resident safety without imposing unnecessary restrictions.

7. Appendix

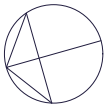
- A. Plan of Boundary treatments – Enclosure plan – Drawing number 448.PL.SL.003
- B. Planting plans Drawings 1-5

Note:

Listed Appendix documents submitted alongside this report.



ENCLOSURE PLAN



- notes
- THIS DRAWING IS BASED ON BERKELEY HOMES LAYOUT: BHOC.448.LA.101 LANDSCAPE GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
 - THIS DRAWING SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL OTHER LANDSCAPE DRAWINGS AND DOCUMENTS
 - THIS DRAWING IS NOT INTENDED FOR CONSTRUCTION
 - DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING
 - ANY DISCREPANCIES WITHIN THIS DRAWING OR BETWEEN THIS DRAWING AND ANY OTHER INFORMATION IS TO BE REPORTED TO BERKELEY HOMES OXFORD CHILTERN FOR CLARIFICATION

KEY

APPLICATION AREAS & CONTOURS

OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION SITE BOUNDARY

BOUNDARY TYPES

EXISTING BOUNDARIES RETAINED

EXISTING BOUNDARIES INCREASED TO 1.8M

PROPOSED 2.0M BRICK WALL

PROPOSED 3.0M BLAST WALL

PROPOSED 2.4M PALISADE FENCE

PROPOSED 1.1M METAL RAILINGS

A 06/12/23 TN Site Layout and Building Footprints Updated

revision	date	prepared	description

Berkeley
Designed for life

Berkeley House
Farnham Lane
Farnham Royal SL2 3RQ

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www.berkeleygroup.co.uk

project
VASTERN ROAD

drawing
ENCLOSURE PLAN

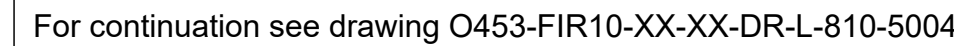
date
February 2020

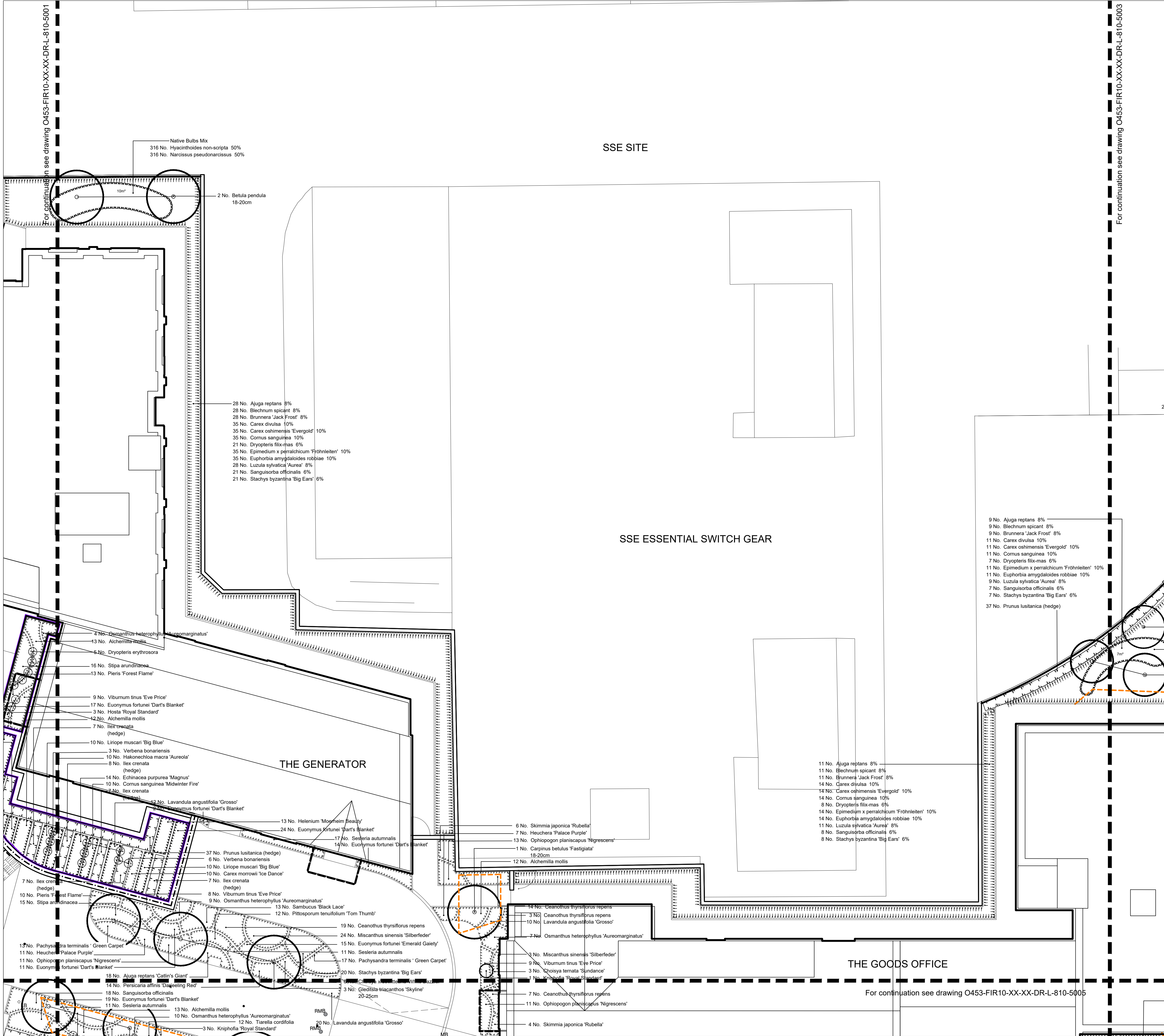
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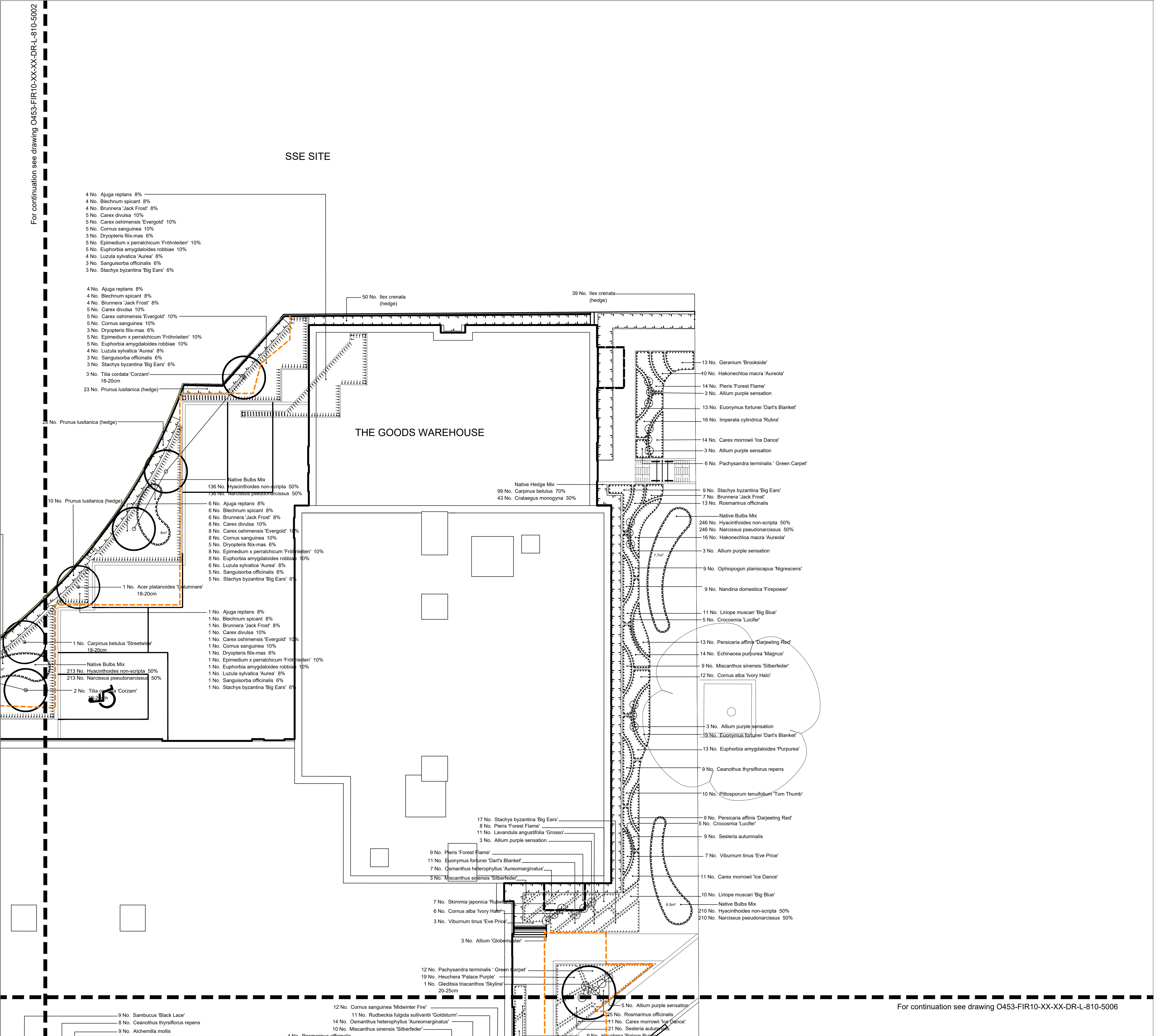
drawn
TN

drawing number
448.PL.SL.003

revision
A







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amendments		
P01	First Issue	31/03/23
P02	Updated with Client changes	17/06/24
P03	Planting updated in accordance with revised layout.	10/10/24
P04	Planting updated in accordance with revised layout.	20/03/25
P05	Key and plan updated for podium level.	28/04/25

Legend

- Semi-Mature Tree
- Specimen Plants / Shrubs
- Ornamental Shrub Planting
- Hedge Planting
- Native Scrub Mix / Shade-Tolerant Mix
- Meadow Mix Amenity Grassland
- Species Rich Grassland
- Bulb Planting Drifts
- Extent of Intensive Green Roof - podium level
- Other Green Roof - native meadow turf vegetated blanket - podium level
- Extent of root barrier to tree pits

drawing status: Planning

project:
Vastern Road
Reading

job number:
O453

drawing title:
Landscape General Arrangement
Planting Plan Sheet 3 of 6

drawing number:
O453-FIR10-XX-XX-DR-L-810-5003

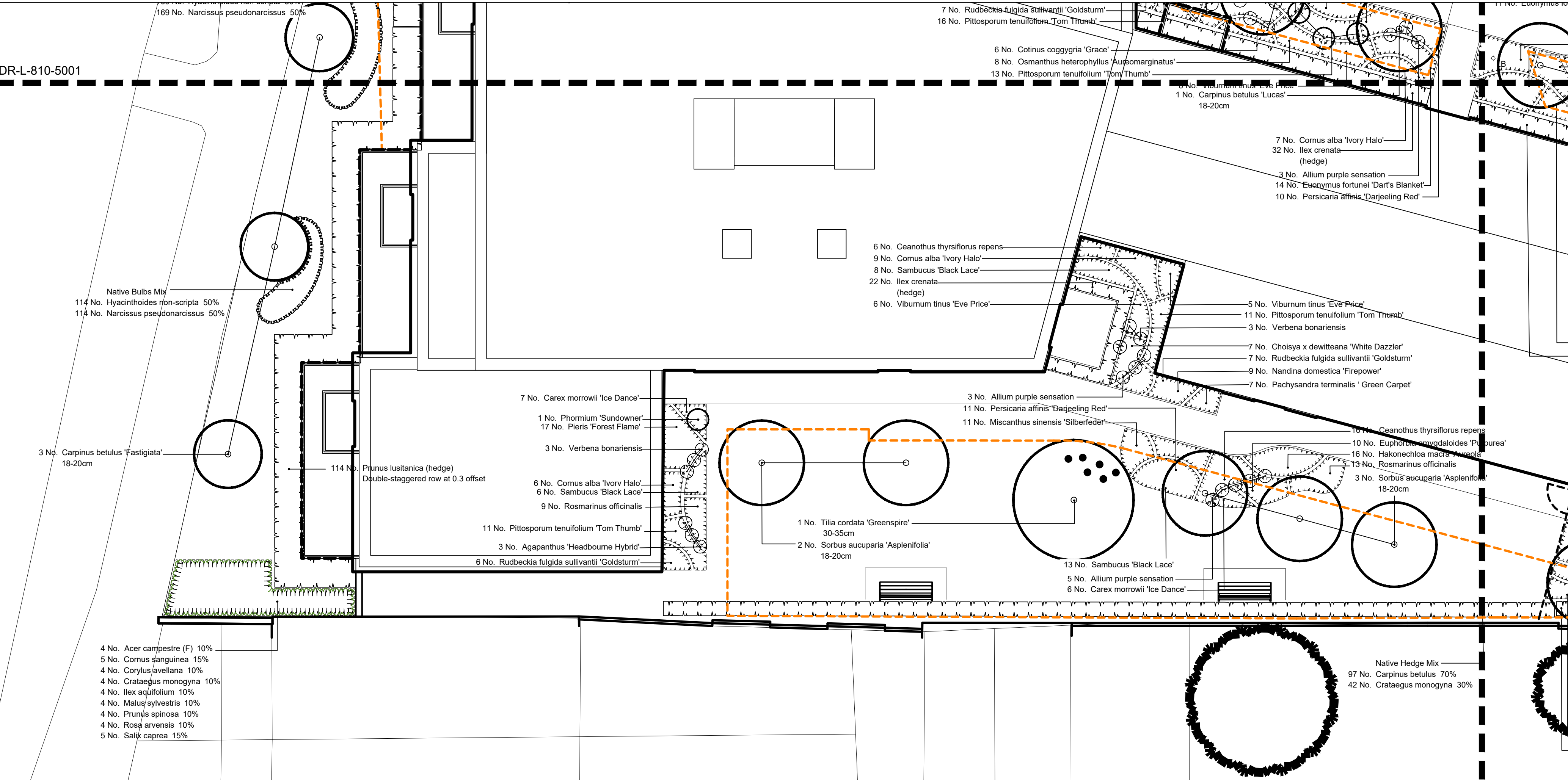
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for information	drawn	auth	date
	DT	AW	31/03/23
for construction			

fira

The Jewellery Business Centre
85 Spencer Street
BIRMINGHAM, B18 6DA.
Tel: 0121 523 1033
Fax: 0121 523 1034
fira landscape architecture and urban design

For continuation see drawing O453-FIR10-XX-XX-DR-L-810-5001



Legend

- Semi-Mature Tree
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- Extent of root barrier to tree pits

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drawing status: Planning

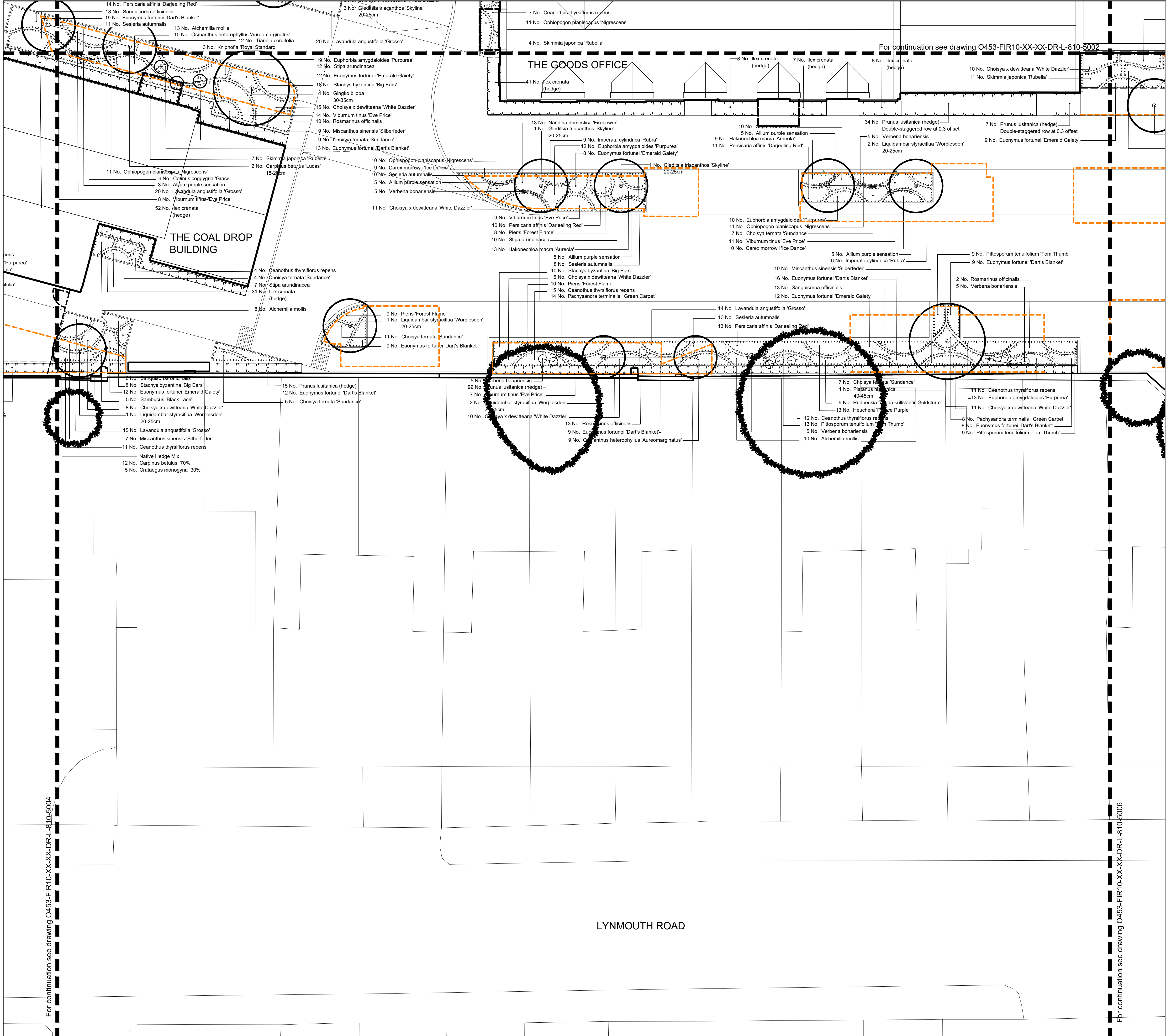
project:
Vastern Road
Reading

job number:
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drawing title:
Landscape General Arrangement
Planting Plan Sheet 4 of 6

drawing number:
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revision	scale	date		
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		drawn	auth	date
for information		DT	AW	31/03/23
for construction				



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P03	Planting updated in accordance with revised layout.	10/10/24
P04	Planting updated in accordance with revised layout.	20/03/25
P05	Key and plan updated for podium level.	28/04/25

- Legend
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drawing status: Planning

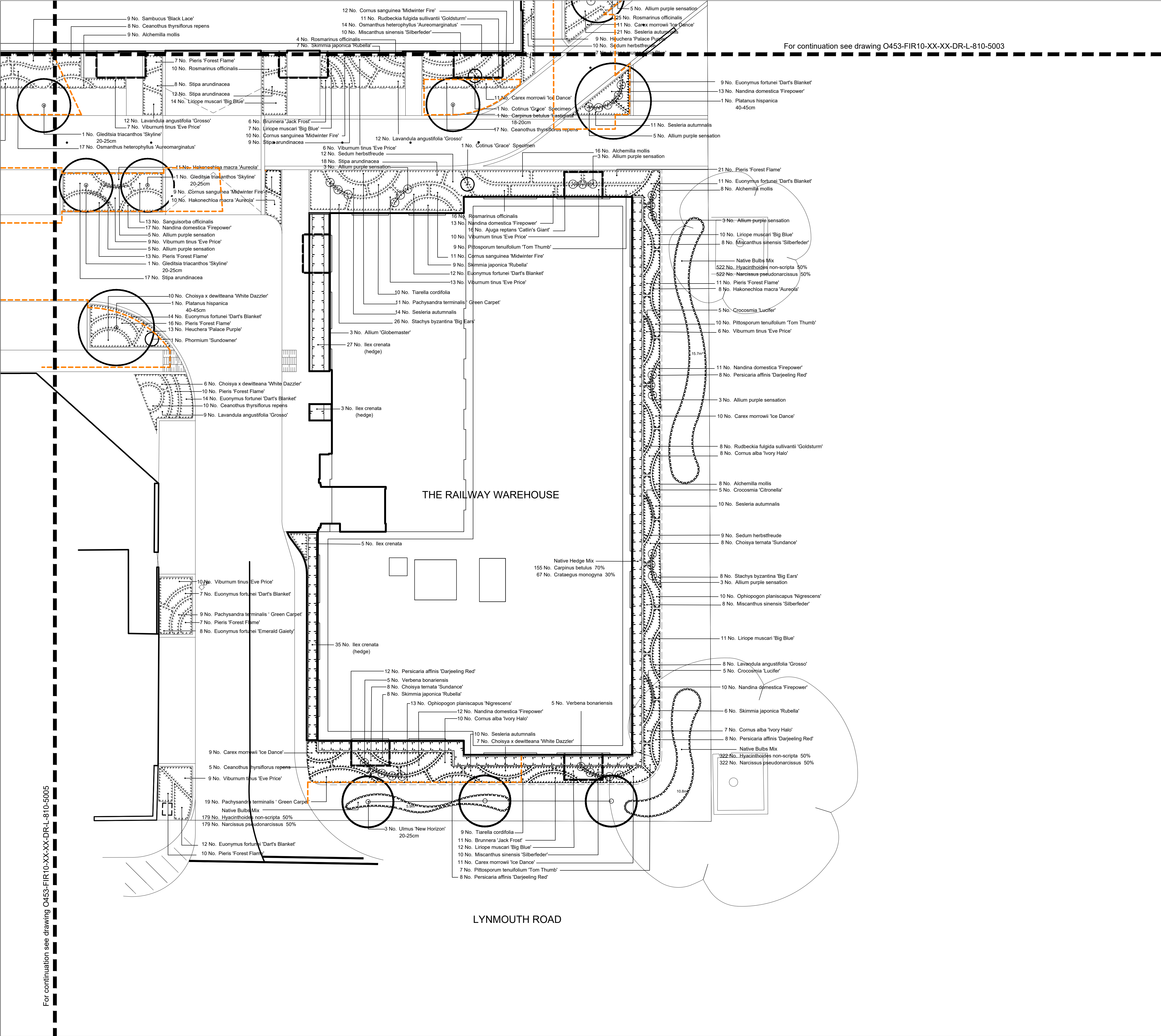
project:
Vastern Road
Reading

job number:
O453

drawing title:
Landscape General Arrangement
Planting Plan Sheet 5 of 6

drawing number:
O453-FIR10-XX-XX-DR-L-810-5005

revision	scale	date		
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		drawn	auth	date
for information		DT	AW	31/03/23
for construction				



For continuation see drawing O453-FIR10-XX-XX-DR-L-810-5005

LYNMOUTH ROAD

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drawing status: Planning

project:
Vastern Road
Reading

job number:
O453

drawing title:
Landscape General Arrangement
Planting Plan Sheet 6 of 6

drawing number:
O453-FIR10-XX-XX-DR-L-810-5006

revision	scale	date
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drawn	auth	date
for information	DT	AW
for construction		31/03/23