

Arboricultural Statement - Outline Planning Application Kings Meadow View, Reading

Treework Environmental Practice were commissioned in 2021 to offer advice and design guidance on the proposed development of Kings Meadow View and to present information suitable to accompany an Outline Planning Application.

A tree survey was originally undertaken during October 2021 according to the method set out in BS 5837:2012 *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*. A Tree Constraints Plan and Tree Schedule have been made available to the design team at an early stage in the design process, to inform an appropriate indicative site layout. An Arboricultural Consultant has been appointed as part of the team, to offer comments and advice on the impact of design proposals on trees throughout the design process.

The site was revisited during May 2026 to update the tree survey information to provide supporting information for an Outline Planning Application (PL/25/1706) submitted in November 2025 in response to comments made as part of the consultation process from the Natural Environment Officer at Reading Borough Council.

Application PL/25/1706 is an:

Outline application with all matters reserved with the exception of access, for site redevelopment involving the demolition of all existing structures & a residential-led mixed use proposal for up to 700 residential units (Class C3) & up to 3,000 sqm (GEA) of commercial uses (Class E), together with various associated works including replacement pedestrian and vehicle access routes, open spaces, hard & soft landscaping & sewer works, partial basement excavation, up to 130 basement level car parking spaces, up to 53 separate car parking spaces for Class E uses, up to 600 cycle parking spaces & servicing facilities. This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

This Arboricultural Statement (260910-2.1-Kings Meadow View-Arboricultural Statement-PM) and the accompanying plans (260520-2.2-KMVR-TCP-SH, and 260603-1.1-KMVR-TCP-MASTERPLAN-NC) and tree schedule (260604-1.0-Kings Meadow View-Tree Schedule-PM) therefore describes the current tree population recorded in the tree survey and sets out the possible impact on trees, on the basis that the Parameter Plans and Illustrative Masterplan submitted are, at this point in the planning process, indicative layouts. The final impact on trees will be confirmed upon submission of detailed planning applications for the reserved matters elements of the application. It is not possible to provide a meaningful Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan at the Outline Application stage for elements of the proposal that are indicative and that will, inevitably, be subject to revision during the detailed design phase of the project.

The relevant aspects of the indicative design that have the potential to impact trees are limited to the landscape scheme and the location and construction method for the new sewer. It is, however, possible to state at this point in the design process, that the location of the building footprints alone have very limited impact on trees and this element of the site layout design would allow the retention of the entire population of trees with the exception of two very young small planted trees.

A separate Arboricultural Impact Assessment report and Tree Protection Plan have been provided to cover the element of the application that is not a reserved matter, for which final layout details have been submitted, where it is possible to assess the impact on trees with a degree of certainty, *i.e.* limited to the impact of the construction of the two access roads.

Existing Trees within the Illustrative Masterplan

The tree survey identified the significance of a linear group of 8 London plane (T15-T22) along the southern boundary of the site covered by a Tree Preservation Order as well as dense linear groups of young and semi-mature trees around the boundary of the site on the eastern and northern aspects, with the northern group separating the site from the adjacent railway line and offering a screen between the railway and the site. The intention is for trees T15-T21 to be retained within the landscape design, and to be protected during the construction phase of the project.

The remaining trees recorded during the survey are part of a relatively recent landscaping scheme around extensive areas of car parking at the front of the existing retail units and are of low value, with restricted rooting environments, and can be considered to be easily replaceable.

The development proposal to demolish the existing retail units and replace them with a scheme comprising residential blocks of housing and commercial units has the potential to have a minor impact on trees on the site in terms of the proposed footprints and the landscape infrastructure. Removal of the existing young trees within the original landscaping scheme would be easily mitigated, within the proposed extensive landscape scheme around the new blocks, with the potential to increase the numbers, quality and amenity offered by a tree population on the site. A net improvement in tree coverage is anticipated if the proposed landscape scheme is brought forward. Retention of the category C trees along the southern boundary of the site and around the eastern entrance (T1-T13 and G42-T45), could be incorporated within a landscape scheme, but the current illustrative proposals provide an opportunity to plant a more appropriate species mix within more suitable landscaping areas, and the current intention would be to remove these trees.

The location of the proposed new sewer has not been finalised although the alignment has been relocated from earlier designs with the aim of reducing the impact on trees along the northern boundary. Careful design consideration will be required to minimize or avoid the need for the removal of trees within the group along the northern and eastern boundaries. It appears that excavations within the Root Protection Areas of some of these trees may be required due to the current alignment, with minimal opportunity for realignment further south. The final location and installation method for the sewer will need to be determined before the impact on the trees along the northern and eastern boundaries can be confirmed. The current location does appear feasible with manageable impact for the majority of the adjacent trees, provided appropriate precautions are taken during construction.

The detailed methodology for decommissioning the sewer is unknown at this stage. However, the applicant is willing to commit that no excavation works will take place within the Root Protection Areas of the TPO trees (including T20 and 21). Whilst the existing sewer is located within the RPAs of some of the trees, the majority of the sewer is located on less sensitive parts of the Site where

excavations could occur to provide access to remove the sewer with no impact on retained trees. This would allow for the existing sewer within the RPAs to be capped off or filled in without intrusive works within the RPA and therefore with no impact to the TPO trees, by operating from a working zone outside the RPAs to the west north-west and east south-east of these trees.

Details relating to the tree protection required during the development, to ensure that no damage is caused to the trees being retained within the site, will be submitted in the form of an Arboricultural Impact Assessment report and Tree Protection Plan for the reserved matters elements of the proposal once the final site layout has been determined and tree retention across the site confirmed. The potential conflict between trees to be retained on the site and the proposed development, as well as any detailed engineering requirements will be considered during the design phase leading to the final layout. Consultation with an Arboricultural Consultant will ensure that the trees to be retained within the design are not adversely impacted by construction activities with the intention that these trees will continue to contribute to the proposed development over the long-term.

In addition to providing an Arboricultural Impact Assessment to accompany future reserved matters applications an Arboricultural Method Statement will be required to inform methods of construction where these are proposed adjacent to trees. This can only be provided once the details of layout and final construction methods have been determined, for which liaison with the relevant contractors will be required. A method statement will be required to cover works to install the new sewer, for works to decommission the existing sewer (if it transpires that this needs to be removed) and for the realignment of the kerb line east of T21 (if the current indicative location cannot be revised to be outside the RPA of T21).

In addition to general precautionary measures relating to working close to trees (storage of materials, avoidance of soil compaction, the passage of plant and machinery *etc*), it is likely that a method statement will specify supervision by an Arboricultural specialist when excavations are carried out within Root Protection Areas, for work to be carried out using hand tools, or with the aid of an air spade/vacuum excavator, and for any roots that are exposed to be removed using a sharp saw, by the Arboricultural specialist.

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