FOREWORD

The University of Reading’s Whiteknights Campus is an important green space close to the town centre. It retains many of its historic features, whilst also providing high quality facilities to support the University’s core business of teaching, research and enterprise. With its open spaces, rare tree collection and large lake, Whiteknights is an exceptional place to study, work and relax, and provides a natural habitat for many varieties of birds, animals, insects and plants.

In addition to the students and staff, the University campus is used by a very wide range of visitors, hosting as it does public lectures, conferences, sporting events, music performances, a film theatre and two museums.

This Management Plan has been produced by the University’s Estates department and brings together the various strategies, policies and operating procedures that relate to the campus; the aim being to tie these documents into a coherent plan.

The Management Plan includes sections which:

- Describe the campus, its history, its strategic context for the University and the vision for future development and management
- Describe the existing policies and procedures for management of the campus
- Describe the principle issues currently affecting the campus and include an Implementation Plan describing the University’s plans to address these issues
- Provide supporting information for the Management Plan.
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1.1 ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

The University’s origins lie in the Schools of Art and Science established in Reading in 1860 and 1870 respectively. These became part of an extension college opened in 1892 by Christ Church, Oxford. The University received its Royal Charter in 1926, the only one to do so between the two world wars.

In 1947 the University purchased the main Whiteknights campus, the former country estate of the Marquis of Blandford. Since then the University has grown progressively into a vibrant community.

Today the University is home to 17,000 students and over 4,300 staff. It is ranked as one of the UK’s 20 most research-intensive universities and as one of the top 200 universities in the world. We enjoy a world-class reputation for teaching, research and enterprise. Important achievements include being the first university to win the Queen’s Award for Export Achievement (1989) and four times receiving the Queen’s Anniversary Prize for Higher Education (1998, 2006, 2009 and 2012).

1.2 ABOUT THE WHITEKNIGHTS CAMPUS

The University’s core estate comprises of three main campuses; Whiteknights, London Road and Greenlands. This Management Plan focuses on the largest of these, Whiteknights. This peaceful former country estate covers 134 hectares. With its open spaces, rare tree collection and large lake, Whiteknights is an exceptional place to study, work and relax. It provides a natural habitat for many varieties of birds, animals, insects and plants.

The campus takes its name from a previous owner’s great grandson, John De Erleigh IV, the so called ‘White Knight’. In 1606
the estate was purchased by the nephew of Sir Francis Englefield. The Englefield family in turn sold the estate to George Spencer, the Marquis of Blandford, in 1798.

Between 1798 and 1819, the estate was the scene of vast extravagance and wild entertainments, all at the Marquis’ expense. Splendid gardens were laid out, complete with the rarest of plants. In 1819, the Marquis, by then the Duke of Marlborough, became bankrupt and moved to his family home at Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire. The estate was sold off and the house was demolished in 1840, supposedly by a mob of the Duke’s angry creditors.

In 1867 the land was broken up into six leasehold units and a number of the new houses were designed and built by Alfred Waterhouse, including his own residence at Foxhill House and the smaller Whiteknights House for his father. Both these houses and others still survive.

The Whiteknights campus includes a large area of mature woodland known as the Wilderness on the eastern boundary of the site. Adjoining the Wilderness is the Harris Garden, a former botanic garden, which has been remodelled to provide an amenity space for wider University and visitor use.

A site plan of the Whiteknights campus is shown as Figure 1.

1.3 THE VISION

The vision for the Whiteknights campus is

‘to offer a green oasis for students, staff and other visitors, which retains the campuses historic features, whilst providing high quality facilities to support the University’s core business of teaching, research and enterprise’

The University recognises that Whiteknights campus is a unique selling point and is an important factor in attracting people to work, study and visit. As a result, the parkland setting is a key feature in the University’s marketing strategy for both student recruitment and commercial events.

The University’s current Estate Strategy sets out a number of ‘themes’ for the Whiteknights campus, as follows:

- The historic nature of the Estate will be retained and enhanced and the University will continue to provide a ‘green oasis’ within the town.
- Planting will be consistent with the ambience of the campus. The variety of trees on campus is important; the historic stock will be maintained.
- The work on the grounds will primarily focus on those areas which are readily accessible and in major use.

These principles have been used to guide planning, development and management of the site.
SECTION 2: A WELCOMING PLACE

2.1 OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCESS

Whiteknights campus is an important green space in Reading, both for members of the University and the wider community. It is used extensively by the local community and many external organisations. As well as mature parkland, the campus includes extensive sports facilities, two public museums and a wide range of academic, residential, administrative and other specialist buildings.

Members of the public are welcomed at Whiteknights. The campus is normally open for all but a handful of days each year. A public right of way runs through the heart of the park, linking the Shinfield Road and Earley Gate entrances. Permissive access to other parts of the campus is granted, subject to a simple code of conduct.

In addition to a broad range of academic events, the Whiteknights campus also hosts a large number of public and invitational events throughout the year, including sports competitions, exhibitions, film presentations, public lectures etc.
2.2 ANNOUNCING THE CAMPUS

The campus is signposted from the main transport routes around Reading; this includes signage from the nearby motorway junctions and the local A-roads. Signage is also provided at the main railway station.

At each of the vehicle entrances prominent signage is provided to both locate and advertise the University. Once on site, information boards for visitors are provided, adjacent to each main vehicle entrance, together with a site map for way-finding. These boards provide basic information about use of the site together with contacts details for help and emergencies.

Signage around the park is being progressively replaced with new standardised signage, carrying the University ‘brand’. The type face of the new signage has been developed in conjunction with the University’s own Typography Department and is designed to be easily legible from a distance.

A small number of the secondary, pedestrian entrances have non-branded signs which are in need of improvement or replacement.

2.3 PHYSICAL ACCESS

Whiteknights campus has three main vehicular entrances; Shinfield Road, Earley Gate and Pepper Lane (see Section 1, figure 1 for locations of these entrances – marked in red and grey).

Shinfield Road Entrance: The main public entrance to the Whiteknights campus is off the Shinfield Road. A pay and display car park is provided for visitors adjacent to this entrance.

Earley Gate Entrance: The Earley Gate entrance has two original listed lodge houses either side of the access road. Behind the North Lodge is a remnant of the old estate landscaping, which contains numerous veteran trees, whilst behind the South Lodge is an edge of the ‘Wilderness’, a large area of mature trees on the southern boundary of the campus.

Pepper Lane Entrance: The third vehicle entrance, Pepper Lane, is on the western boundary of the campus.

All three of the main entrances have been simplified over recent years to ensure that the areas have good security and that the sight lines are clear.

Pedestrian and cyclist access is normally via the vehicle entrances, although a number of other pedestrian/cyclist access points are located around the perimeter of the campus.

2.4 ACCESS FOR ALL

The University works hard to encourage travel to our campuses by sustainable modes with bus stops provided outside the main administration building. Bus frequency from the town centre to Whiteknights campus has now increased to every 5 minutes during the day with night services also available. Reading buses have rerouted services onto the campus, and the merging of 3 different routes to provide a single high frequency service. Further route alterations have seen improved accessibility by bus to other sides of the large campus. These changes have been driven by the increasing numbers of university staff and students using them.

Access for the disabled: The University has invested heavily to provide access for the disabled. This includes level or ramped access into most buildings, deaf alerter systems, hearing induction loops, disabled fire refuges etc. Externally, drop curbs have been provided at most road crossings, along with areas of tactile paving.

Entrance signage
3.1 PERSONAL SAFETY AND SECURITY

The University employs a dedicated team of security staff, which provide cover 24 hours per day throughout the year on a shift system.

The in-house security team is supplemented by ad-hoc patrols from Thames Valley Police. Four patrols are carried out at Whiteknights Campus over every 24 hour period. These are intelligence led, and staff are briefed using an Electronic Briefing System. Incidents are logged on the University’s Incident Reporting Information System (IRIS) and reports run daily. These incidents typically range from unlocked buildings to minor maintenance issues.

As a result of the continuous security presence the Whiteknights campus is a low crime area. The highly visible foot and mobile patrols provide a sense of well being and safety to all site users.

The University also operates an extensive network of CCTV cameras that monitor key locations around campus from a central control room. The majority of these cameras are recording 24 hours a day. The maintenance and security teams work closely to maintain and improve the CCTV system coverage.
3.2 SAFE FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

3.2.1 Safe facilities
Although designated Building Support Officers report many faults, any site user is able to report a problem to the Maintenance Department’s Help Desk. In addition the maintenance team run a programme of cyclical site inspections aimed at identifying and prioritising repairs. Identified problems are assessed using a sophisticated risk-based prioritisation system.

3.2.2 Safe equipment
Specialist equipment is generally owned by designated schools and departments within the University, who are responsible for any necessary safety inspections.

Grounds and building equipment is subject to regular periodic safety inspections, almost all of which is scheduled using planned preventative maintenance software running on a bespoke facilities management database.

3.2.3 Water safety
The Whiteknights Lake is designated as a reservoir under the Reservoirs Act (1975) and, as such is subject to regular safety and water level inspections, together with a periodic structural inspection. An Emergency Plan has been developed, together with emergency procedures to control and mitigate any spillage into the lake. Safety signage is located around the perimeter of the lake.

Security at Whiteknights is further enhanced by the Clean & Green team, who are primarily responsible for keeping the site free of litter, but also have a role in reporting security issues. Both the Security and Clean & Green teams are in direct radio contact with the University’s Security Control Room.

The grounds maintenance team also work closely with the Security team to improve safety. For example, by removing over-hanging vegetation adjacent to footpaths in order to open up pedestrian sight-lines and reduce the number of CCTV blind-spots.
3.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

3.3.1 Health and safety on the Whiteknights campus

The University of Reading is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for all who visit the Whiteknights campus. The University has a well publicised health and safety policy, which applies to all staff and students. Implementation of the policy is managed at a local level, with each area of activity developing its own health and safety management arrangements.

For example, the grounds and buildings maintenance teams have developed their own health and safety procedures, as well as extensive safe systems of work, risk assessments etc. These local arrangements are subject to periodic third party audit and review.

Both the grounds and building maintenance teams are registered under the Safe Contractor Scheme. This provides senior University managers with assurance that suitable and sufficient management arrangements are in place.

3.3.2 Staff training and welfare

Estates have developed a ‘capability framework’ which defines the minimum training and competencies required for each role. Each team has developed specific training matrices to ensure that staff are trained to consistent standards.

All staff have basic health and safety training and receive additional training for the specialist activities they undertake. New staff go through an extensive induction process, which includes specialist training, where necessary, for their role and to address any competency gaps.

Staff are issued with appropriate PPE when they start their employment, and are able to replace any items of lost or damaged equipment promptly through the in-house store.

3.3.3 Accident and incident reporting

The University operates a structured accident reporting system. Any person on the Whiteknights campus, or any other University site, is able to report an accident or near-miss. These are collated centrally by Health and Safety Services who oversee accident investigations where necessary.
SECTION 4: CLEAN AND WELL MAINTAINED

4.1 LITTER AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

4.1.1 Litter collection

The University employs a dedicated ‘Clean & Green’ team who are responsible for keeping the University campus clean and tidy. These members of staff empty waste bins, pick litter and also have access to a mechanical path sweeper.

There are over 50 external waste recycling bins on campus. The bins on the highest footfall routes have four compartments for the recycling of paper, plastic bottles, cans and general waste. These containers are typically emptied twice a week. Bins on the lower footfall routes have two compartments, one for mixed recycling and the other for general waste, and these are emptied weekly.

On the Whiteknights campus other groups also have some responsibility for litter picking. This includes Building Support Officers, who empty defined litter bins immediately adjacent to their buildings, and the grounds team, who collect litter from the landscaped areas they are working in.

The University also has support from staff, students and the wider community in keeping the Whiteknights campus clean. The members of EASI (Earley Adopt A Street), a litter-picking scheme,
regularly clear litter from the Wilderness. Students and staff also help with ad-hoc litter picking events aimed at raising awareness of litter problems. The grounds team is supported in clearing litter from the Harris Garden by the ‘Friends of the Harris Garden’, a group of volunteer supporters from all walks of life who help to maintain this particular part of the site.

4.1.2 Graffiti removal

Because of the sense of community amongst site users and the visible security presence, there is very little problem with graffiti on campus. However, when incidents do occur they are normally reported to the Help Desk by security, grounds or maintenance staff. Removal of the graffiti is given a high priority, so as to deter further incidents.

4.1.3 Dog fouling

Dog owners are asked to keep their dogs on a lead and remove any faeces. This requirement is set out in the Code of Conduct, which forms part of visitors’ permissive access to the site.

4.2 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

4.2.1 The Grounds Maintenance team

Grounds maintenance on the Whiteknights campus is undertaken by a team of directly employed staff. The team has responsibility for all University campuses and is divided into 4 operational groups.

4.2.2 General grounds maintenance

The attractive grounds are a key factor in many students’ decision to study at Reading. It is, therefore, important that the Whiteknights campus is maintained to consistently high standards. These standards are defined in a series of Service Level Agreements (SLAs), which have been agreed with the key user groups. Meetings are held on a regular basis with each user group to discuss the standard of service. The SLAs include a series of Key Performance Indicators for grounds maintenance, which are also reviewed at the meetings.

The grounds team have an on-going programme of landscape review. At the present time many of these projects are focussed on rationalisation of shrub borders. The aim is to remove tired borders and to replace them with soft landscaping appropriate to the site and resource available to maintain them.
4.2.3 Lake maintenance

One of the main features of the campus is the Whiteknights Lake, which covers 5.8 hectares in the heart of the park. In recent years the Grounds Maintenance team have carried out lakeside planting using dredged silt along with scalloping of the lake bank. These plantings are now well established.

4.2.4 Tree management

The Whiteknights campus is home to over 10,000 trees, including a wooded area known as ‘the Wilderness’, which contains a number of original features dating from the time when the park was part of the private estate of the Marquis of Blandford.

The University has a tree safety procedure which outlines how the University will manage its extensive tree stock. All trees are subject to cyclical survey and risk assessment, the results of which are loaded onto Arbortrack, the grounds maintenance team’s arboricultural database. The risk assessment considers both the condition and location of the tree; with trees in poor condition next to high traffic areas assigned the highest priority for remedial action.

4.2.5 Sports Grounds Maintenance

The campus has grass sports facilities including: 2 cricket, 2 football, 2 rugby, 2 lacrosse pitches (mens and ladies), an American football pitch and a floodlit winter training area. Temporary pitches for sports such as ultimate frisbee, rounders, hockey, rugby and football 5-a-side are also marked for occasional use. In addition we have artificial surfaces comprising of 3 rubber crumb 5-a-side football pitches, a synthetic turf hockey pitch and a tarmac tennis/netball area. All these facilities are maintained by the grounds team. Although the facilities are primarily used by students many are also regularly used by outside clubs, schools and members of the public.

The football, rugby and lacrosse winter pitches are host to an average of 2 matches a week and so are subject to bi-weekly preparation and renovation. At the end of the season they are top dressed, re-seeded and fertilised.

The SportsPark has opened a new state of the art TennisPark. It has three new courts which are covered by a weatherproof dome. The existing 5 outdoor courts have been resurfaced and new floodlights installed.
4.3 BUILDING MAINTENANCE

4.3.1 Background information
The buildings on the Whiteknights campus are largely owned, occupied and maintained by the University. Many of the buildings are subject to intensive use throughout the year, being accessed by students, staff and members of the public.

4.3.2 Maintenance arrangements
The University has developed a Building Maintenance Policy which aims to ensure that:

- Buildings are ‘fit for purpose’
- Buildings are safe and compliant with current legislation
- The asset value of the building is protected
- Risk of unforeseen failure is minimised
- Robust long term maintenance planning processes are established
- Projects are co-ordinated to minimise disruption

Building maintenance at the University is divided into three programmes of work; reactive maintenance, preventative maintenance and planned maintenance. The maintenance team typically handle around 25,000 repairs each year; comprising around 12,000 reactive maintenance repairs, 12,500 preventative repairs and 500 planned maintenance projects.

By targeted specific building defects in recent years maintenance projects in recent years the Maintenance team have achieved a significant improvement in the measured condition of the estate. The proportion of premises in RICS condition category A/B has increased from just over 31% in 2004/5 to 80% in 2017/18.

In order to set clear expectations on both sides the Maintenance Services Department has developed Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with all of its key customers. These SLAs describe in detail the level of service being provided and set out how our customers will support the department in carrying out its work. The SLAs include a number of Key Performance Indicators. Regular meetings are held with key customers to review performance and discuss service standards.

Building faults are dealt with promptly to avoid secondary damage to the premises. Most reactive defects are reported directly to the Help Desk, where the problem is prioritised before being passed to the relevant maintenance team for action.
4.3.3 New buildings

The University is committed to reducing its carbon emissions and developing sustainable buildings. Within available budgets new buildings are designed and built to the highest possible environmental standards (see Section 5.1). The University’s commitment to sustainable construction is illustrated by the Carrington Building, the Student administration building, which is fitted with solar panels and a ground source heating system. Other recent major projects have included replacement of the steam fed district heating system with a modern distributed hot water system and Combined Heat and Power generation plant.

4.3.4 Infrastructure and other facilities

Infrastructure repairs are now included within the main maintenance planning process. There is an identified backlog of road repairs, which has arisen partly due to the volumes of heavy construction traffic accessing the site.

4.4 EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

4.4.1 Staff equipment maintenance

A programme of inspections is in place to ensure that work equipment is safe to use and a cyclical replacement programme has been developed to ensure that key plant is replaced at suitable intervals. Facilities maintenance staff are trained to carry out safety checks on all equipment immediately before use.

Vehicles are managed by a specialist fleet management company to ensure that they are serviced, tested and inspected at the correct intervals. Specialist vehicles such as tractors are leased, with the lease fee including the cost of servicing by specialist contractors.

4.4.2 Public equipment maintenance

The University has extensive sports facilities on campus, which are open to students, staff and the public. These facilities are subject to regular safety inspections by sports centre staff.

The all-weather pitches undergo routine maintenance by the sports ground maintenance team. Periodic regeneration of the surface by removal and cleaning of the sand base, is carried out by specialist contractors.

The University’s Health & Safety Services team, undertake a rolling programme of safety audits across the University and this audit programme includes a review of workplace inspection records. The findings from each safety audit are incorporated into a report which includes a ‘SMART’ action plan to address any issues identified.

4.4.3 Incident control equipment

The University has well developed major incident procedures. The grounds maintenance, building maintenance and security teams contribute to these emergency planning processes and also hold a stock of equipment for use in the event of an incident. This includes a supply of mobile metal fencing, plastic barriers, plastic bollards, incident tape, portable signs etc.
SECTION 5: SUSTAINABILITY

5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

5.1.1 Public transport
The University of Reading and Reading Buses work in close partnership to offer excellent bus services to staff, students and visitors. Bus route 21 runs 24 hours a day, travelling between the train station/town centre and Whiteknights Campus. Other bus routes skirt the campus periphery, offering students, staff and visitors an environmentally friendly way to travel directly to the University. Reading Buses provide staff and students with discounted rates on their journeys, including free trips for those new to the University.

5.1.2 Cycling/bike purchase scheme
The University encourages cycling as a means to cut down CO2 emissions and environmental impact. We have 2812 cycle parking spaces on Whiteknights campus, 832 of which are in Secure Compounds with a further 759 sheltered.

When they start their studies new students are encouraged to bring their cycles to their halls of residence, all of which have dedicated secure cycle racks and sheds. Staff are able to use a salary sacrifice scheme to purchase discounted bicycles. The University hosts regular ‘on your bike’ events at the start of term to provide students with access to quality second-hand bicycles lights, locks, helmets and safety advice. Free bicycle maintenance sessions are offered to ensure they are kept in roadworthy condition and training is available for those wishing to improve their skills. We also offer a recycled bicycle hire scheme, where bikes that are abandoned on campus are refurbished and hired out. The Whiteknights Campus also hosts two docking stations for the Reading-wide hire bike scheme, Readybike, with a total of 30 stands on the campus. Staff and students are able to hire these bicycles by the hour.
5.1.5 Building energy conservation

Higher education carbon management programme: In April 2010, the University of Reading signed up to phase 6 of the Higher Education Carbon Management Programme (HECMP). The aims of this initiative are to:

- Reduce University carbon emissions. A target reduction of 35% against a 2008/9 baseline has now been achieved. A new 45% target has been set for 2020/21.
- Establish the baseline carbon footprint for the University.
- Determine the value (financial and carbon) at stake of ‘business as usual’ versus the reduction target scenario.
- Generate a project registry outlining reduction opportunities and assessment of how this relates to the target.
- Develop a strategy to engage, communicate and implement carbon management throughout the whole institution involving academics, students and administrative staff.
- Produce a Carbon Management Plan with clear governance and review procedures.

The University currently purchases 100% of its contract electricity supplies from renewable sources.

Building energy management: The University operates an extensive and sophisticated Building Energy Management System, which provides remote control and monitoring of the University’s major heating and ventilation systems. It enables efficient control of building environments, reduces energy consumption and helps the University to lower emissions.

BREEAM targets: BREEAM is the world’s most widely used environmental assessment methodology for buildings. The BREEAM system is designed to help understand the environmental impacts of a development’s design and build.

Buildings are rated on a scale of pass, good, very good or excellent and a certificate awarded to the development. The University of Reading has a policy to commit only to projects which score ‘very good’ or higher.

5.1.3 Car sharing and Car Club schemes

The University has introduced a Car Club scheme, which gives students and staff access to Pay-As-You-Go vehicles available for hire on campus from only £4.75 an hour. Users simply pick up a car, use it and drop it back when they have finished. The scheme uses low emission vehicles to reduce the University’s carbon footprint. The University also encourages drivers to share their journeys with our own car share scheme and website.

5.1.4 Fair trade

The University of Reading has achieved ‘Fairtrade’ status. This is part of the University’s long term commitment towards this scheme and to support fair trade for farmers in the developing world. Several key criteria had to be met by the University, who worked closely with Reading University Students’ Union (RUSU), to achieve the five goals needed for accreditation.
5.2 MINIMISATION OF HERBICIDE USE

The grounds team maintain borders with a combination of mulching, hand weeding and spot treatment of persistent weeds. Areas where herbicides will continue to be used include:

- Control of pernicious weeds e.g. *Japanese Knot Weed*
- Control of re-growth from cut stumps e.g. *Rhododendron ponticum*
- Control of broad leaved weeds within sports turf.

5.3 ELIMINATION OF PEAT USE

The use of peat as mulch, or for the improvement of soil structure, cannot be supported as there are alternative waste or renewable materials available for this purpose. The grounds maintenance team does not purchase peat for such purposes.

5.4 GREEN WASTE RECYCLING AND MINIMISATION

The majority of the University’s green waste is composted to produce mulch, which is subsequently returned to borders. To support this programme the grounds department has a wood chipper and uses a specialist contractor to shred and screen waste.

5.5 ARBORICULTURE AND WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

5.5.1 Overview of the tree stock

The trees at Whiteknights are an essential element of the campus; single specimens, groups, avenues, copses, shelter belts and woodland areas are all found within the park. We estimate there are over 10,000 trees on the park ranging from recently planted whips to venerable Oak veterans 2m across.

The most common occurring species (over 3% of total species present) are Common Oak, Holly, Yew, Common Lime, Sycamore and Horse Chestnut.

The University has inherited an important tree collection from its previous owners, some of which are described in publications by Bean and Mitchell. They include numerous champion trees along with a number of rare and unusual specimens. The park also has a number of veteran oaks which have been recorded by Natural England and the Wokingham Veteran Tree Association.

5.5.2 Arboriculture management

The University is committed to professional tree management at Whiteknights and has four retained Arboricultural Association approved contractors. These companies carry out all of the required tree works.

The Head of Grounds Maintenance is a professional member of the Arboricultural Association. He carries out the majority of the arboricultural surveys on behalf of the grounds team.
5.5.3 Arboricultural records
In 2005 the Grounds Maintenance team invested in Arbortrack, a tree management database, and embarked upon a structured programme of tree surveys. Each major tree, or in some circumstances tree group, now has an individual entry on the database, recording such information as species, dimensions, condition and work required, together with a hazard rating. The system has been used to help prioritise remedial work to the tree stock.

In 2014 the trees with higher risk scores were placed on a risk register to ensure that remedial works or detailed inspections were prioritised. This has resulted in some hard but necessary management decisions to ensure on-going site safety but using a campaign of e-mail and on site signage there has been no negative feedback.

The general approach is to retain trees as long as it is practical and to avoid remedial works where possible. Where potential hazards or defects are identified, which represent a significant risk, a hierarchy of control measures is used dependent on the trees location, species and condition.

Where trees could represent a hazard to site users, a variety of methods are used to mitigate the need for felling. This includes the use of fencing, the adaptation of surrounding herbage, cable bracing, crown or limb reduction etc.

Where it is not possible to retain a tree, then consideration is given to retaining the tree as standing dead wood. This reduces the hazard to a low level but retains the unique habitat that large amounts of dead wood provide. Unless dead wood within the crown of trees represents a hazard it is generally retained. Even in areas of high occupancy the dead wood is ‘tested’ rather than removed, especially in species such as Quercus and Castanea, which tend to retain their dead wood. Felled dead wood is retained on site, where viable, often in log piles. Stumps are cut high to encourage stag beetles and sculpted to retain water.

The grounds team have mulched the areas beneath many mature trees. This is intended to alleviate the affects of high horticulture maintenance, such as ground compaction and organic matter removal, with the aim of increasing tree vitality and longevity.

5.5.4 The Wilderness
The Wilderness was a former landscape garden which has developed into a semi-natural woodland. In previous years a low intervention policy was adopted which resulted in a reduction of previously recorded species. The Grounds team has developed a woodland management plan which is now in its seventh year of implementation. The principle aim now is to manage hazard and risk.
5.5.5 Whiteknights Local Wild Life Site

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are special places which have been identified for their wildlife value in a county context. Local Wildlife Sites are selected due to the presence of important characteristics, threatened habitats or the presence of species included in local or national Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP). In Berkshire there are 764 Local Wildlife Sites representing 8% of the county land area (2009). Whiteknights LWS is designated for its mosaic of habitats (including some BAP priority habitats) that support a number of protected, notable and UK BAP species, including the Stag Beetle and Common Toad. Various red and amber listed birds (Eaton et al. 2009) have been recorded within the site.

The Whiteknights LWS is important in creating an interconnected landscape of wildlife buffers and corridors which allow the free movement of fauna across the site.

5.5.6 Energy and natural resource conservation, pollution

The University has a diverse range of areas to manage on the Whiteknights campus. These include Tree Preservation Orders, a reservoir designation and an area designated as a local wildlife site.

During the University's daily operations the environment will inevitably feel the effects of the activity on site; including teaching & research activity, maintenance, travel, new construction etc. All of this can have a negative impact on the biodiversity of the area. The University aims to adopt a responsible approach to these activities.
6.1 SITE HERITAGE

Whiteknights campus has a rich heritage and many features of the site’s varied past remain today. The campus currently contains 9 listed buildings, ranging from a number of large Victorian houses to a post-war nuclear bunker. The University recognises the importance of these features and has invested significantly in recent years to preserve them.

6.2 CONSERVATION OF BUILDINGS

Some of the more important historic buildings on the Whiteknights campus include:

**Foxhill House**: A listed Gothic revival style building that currently houses the University’s School of Law.

The house was originally built in 1868 by the famous architect Alfred Waterhouse and was used as his own residence until the early 1870s. The University acquired the house in 1958 and it was used initially as student accommodation. Between 2003–2005 the house was extensively restored and sympathetically extended to suit its new role as the home of the School of Law.
Old Whiteknights House: Another Alfred Waterhouse designed house, built originally for his father. The building was extensively restored in 2002 to accommodate post-graduate students and a number of administrative functions.

The Citadel: After the war the eastern boundary of the park became home to the ‘Region 6’ War Room, responsible for civil defence in south-central England. The facilities included the construction of a nuclear bunker in the 1950s, which still stands in a little visited corner of the campus. The building was listed in 2008.

Park House: Park House is another listed Victorian house, which stands on the site of the old 18th century mansion. The building houses the University’s Senior Common Room, together with a number of support departments.

URS Building: Built in 1972, designed by architects Howell, Killick, Partridge & Amis, this building is a unique example of 20th century modern architecture.

Other historic features: Whiteknights campus has a number of other interesting features that give the campus its unique character.

An Ice House is located adjacent to the Whiteknights Lake. This structure, resembling a large brick-built igloo, is approximately four meters in diameter and was used as a rudimentary freezer in Victorian times by stacking ice blocks on shelves and packing around these with straw and sawdust. The Ice House was overlaid with topsoil to help maintain a constant temperature.

A walled garden is hidden at the edge of the Wilderness on the southern edge of the campus. This little known garden is currently used by the School of Biological Sciences for teaching and research purposes.

Also in the Wilderness is The Grotto, a Victorian folly, constructed at the head of the Whiteknights Lake.
6.3 CONSERVATION OF NATURAL FEATURES, WILD FAUNA, FLORA

Whiteknights campus has changed from what was once a prestigious private estate to the thriving University it is today, having passed through many layers of ownership on the way. The University has had a significant impact on the landscape since its arrival in 1947 and is currently undergoing another major redevelopment programme. However, throughout this process the major features such as the grounds and tree cover are carefully considered.

In the initial stages of any redevelopment programme staff, students and the public are consulted extensively. Where construction work is identified as having an impact the Grounds team and other stakeholders are consulted to identify ways of minimising this.
6.4 CONSERVATION OF LANDSCAPE FEATURES

6.4.1 Whiteknights Lake

Whiteknights Lake was created as part of the landscaping carried out by the Marquis of Blandford in the 18th century but its origins date long before this. It was created by blocking a natural water course and allowing the water to pool on the clay beds that existed there. Today the lake is surrounded by trees; some of which are mature and from the original planting and some of which are self-seeded.
7.1 KNOWLEDGE OF COMMUNITY

The University of Reading’s Whiteknights campus serves three main communities: students, staff and visitors. There are a number of bodies representing these groups and the University’s knowledge of these communities is predicated upon the feedback it receives from surveys, meetings, public forums and anecdotal comment.

Students often cite the beautiful green campus as one of the main reasons why they chose to come to the University. Some examples of comments from students who won Chancellor’s Awards in 2017 are shown below:

Francis Grimshaw  BA Philosophy

‘I enjoy the campus at Reading as it has large areas of green space including its’ own gardens. This provides a relaxing and pleasant environment to study in.’

Verity Elliston  BSc Construction Management

‘I love how everything is all in one place. The campus is so green and the facilities are great.’

Gemma Dutton  BA French and Economics

‘And the campus itself is beautiful at practically any time of the year – so green and full of open spaces.’

Nicola D’ Alessandro  BA Italian Studies

‘What makes Reading such a good place to live and study is the close proximity of the town centre to the University. In addition to this, walking around the campus is the best way to take a break from lectures and enjoy nature.’


7.2 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

7.2.1 Community Open Events (formerly the Neighbourhood Forum)

These events are held twice a year and are an opportunity for local residents and councillors to visit the Whiteknights campus and raise any concerns with the University. The first part of the evening is designed to showcase some of the work undertaken by specific academic departments. The second part is an open forum where members of the public can raise concerns or share information with senior members of University staff and Students’ Union representatives. These events typically take place in May and November.

Our Community Open Events provide an opportunity for members of the various user groups on campus to raise concerns and make suggestions for improvements to senior members of the University management.

7.2.2 Pre-planning application consultation

The University has a strategic development plan for the Whiteknights campus. In order to seek feedback, the University consults with staff, students, local residents and other interested parties on development plans.

7.2.3 Involvement with local neighbourhood groups

The University consults widely with local residents and other agencies. University and Students Union representatives attend the local Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) meetings, which serve the areas immediately adjacent to the campus. The Redlands/University NAG includes the Whiteknights campus in its catchment area.

7.2.4 Friends groups

There are two ‘Friends’ groups which have open membership for staff, students and members of the public. These are:

Friends of the University: In 1926, the year in which the University obtained its Royal Charter, it was agreed that an association, to be called ‘The Friends of the University of Reading’, should be formed on an entirely voluntary basis, with the aim of bringing friends and supporters into contact with the University, enabling them to promote its interests and welfare.

The Association came formally into existence on 15 March 1927. Since that day, companies, organisations and individuals, including former students and staff, have become members. Their subscriptions, donations, bequests and support, have helped the University to fund amenities and activities.

The membership currently stands at over 500 and new members are always welcome. The association’s affairs are managed by a committee comprising representatives from the University and elsewhere.

Friends of Harris Garden: The Harris Garden is located on the southern boundary of the Whiteknights campus and is an important amenity for university staff, students and visitors.

The Friends of the Harris Garden is an organisation which was formed in 1987 to support the development of the garden, in partnership with the University. The role of the Friends is to promote activities in and connected with the Harris Garden and to further the development of its amenities. The Friends provide a significant volunteer force to maintain the garden and have funded a number of landscape features within the garden, including the orchard, the Cherry Bowl and pond improvements.
7.3 APPROPRIATE PROVISION FOR THE COMMUNITY

7.3.1 Facilities open to the public

As well as fostering a strong sense of community on campus, the University enjoys close links with local residents and businesses, and aims to make a positive difference to people’s well-being.

The Whiteknights campus is a short walk or ride from the centre of Reading and members of the public are welcome to enjoy this peaceful green space, with its woodland walks, mature trees, licensed fishing lake and conservation areas.

7.3.2 Guided walks

The University has joined Reading Borough Council’s Community Walks Scheme, Walk Your Way to Health. Trained volunteer walk leaders conduct a guided walk through the campus every Monday, throughout the year, 10 – 11am. This activity promotes walking as a way to improve the health and fitness of participants, as well providing an opportunity to meet new people. Recently, an additional walk was started on Wednesday mornings for parents and toddlers. This activity is now so popular that two groups set off each week.

7.3.3 Public Lectures

Each year a series of public lectures take place in the University’s main lecture theatre facility, the Palmer Building. The speakers are members of the University’s academic staff who are experts in their field. The lectures are free and open to anyone to attend.

7.3.4 Museums

There are two museums on the Whiteknights campus. Both are open to members of the public and run events specifically for parties of school children during term time and families during the holiday periods.

The Ure Museum of Archaeology houses one of the largest collections of Greek ceramics in Britain. The Cole Museum of Zoology is home to over 3500 zoological specimens. Amongst its highlights are complete skeletons of a male Indian elephant, a killer whale, a five metre reticulated python, and a pair of giant spider crabs.
7.3.5 Music performances
Staff, students and other visitors are welcome to attend a series of concerts throughout the year. Members of the public are also welcome to join the many music ensembles at the University by joining The Reading University Music Society.

7.3.6 Hosting local cultural activities
Film Theatre: The Palmer Building provides the venue for Reading Film Theatre, an independent cinema which shows a variety of art-house, foreign and commercial films during term time and which is open to staff, students and members of the public.

Whiteknights Studio Trail: Once a year the campus provides the starting point for the Whiteknights Studio Trail, a walking tour of various artist’s studios near to the campus.

7.3.7 Open days and welcome events
The University organises several open days for prospective students throughout the year. Campus tours are also held most Wednesdays for prospective students who are not able to attend the main open days.

7.3.9 Catering, conferences and room hire
The Whiteknights campus has a wide range of cafes and food outlets and offers venues for conferences, weddings and social functions. Services range from delivered hospitality as part of a working lunch, through to formal dinners and weddings. The University offers a wide range of venues for hire and also has facilities for over-night accommodation.

7.3.10 Sports facilities
The campus is home to a range of modern sports facilities, which are open all year round to staff, students and members of the public. The facilities include an extensive fitness studio, dance/yoga and martial arts studios, a multi-purpose sports hall, squash courts, floodlit synthetic turf five-a-side-soccer pitches, grass football and rugby pitches, floodlit tennis courts and county standard cricket squares.

Each year the route of the Reading Half Marathon utilises roads on the Whiteknights campus, bringing over 15,000 runners and many more spectators onto site.

7.3.11 Equal opportunity and diversity
The University is committed to ensuring that all staff, students and visitors are treated with respect at all times and are given equality of opportunity in all activities. Through the support of senior management, robust policies and procedures have been developed, which together with staff training, promotes best practice in this area.

The University’s Equal Opportunities and Diversity Office aims to ensure that the policy and practice is compliant with existing equality legislation. Our reputation for attracting and supporting disabled students and staff has resulted in the overall number of disabled students increasing year on year.
8.1 CAMPUS USE AND AVAILABILITY

The Whiteknights campus is intensively used throughout the year. The last detailed survey of journeys onto the campus revealed that over a typical 5-day period there were over 123,000 travel movements onto the Whiteknights campus. Almost 70,000 of these were pedestrians or people travelling by public transport. Another 10,000 journeys were by bicycle.

During term-time students and staff make up the majority of visitors. Whilst during the vacation periods the campus is used for a wide range of activities, including summer schools and conferences.
8.2 MARKETING AND PROMOTION

The University’s marketing and promotion activity is primarily aimed at its core business; teaching, research and enterprise. However, it places great importance on maintaining a positive relationship with the wider community.

8.3 PROMOTION AS A COMMUNITY RESOURCE

8.3.1 Website

The University has a comprehensive website, which provides information on our activities, services and functions. The address for the home page is: www.reading.ac.uk

8.3.2 Community newsletter

The University promotes the Whiteknights campus as an asset to the local community through its bi-annual magazine, CommUnity. This publication is hand-delivered to 15,000 local homes and carries information about what is happening on campus, as well as listing various activities and events.

8.3.3 Guides and brochures

The University produces a number of guides, including a general introductory guide to the Whiteknights campus, entitled ‘Welcome to Whiteknights’ which explains some of the history of the park and some of the more interesting features. The University also produces a half-yearly comprehensive Events Guide listing to all the events and activities available to members of the public, many of which are completely open and free of charge.

8.3.3 Information films

Our website carries a number of short films about the University and the main campus. A good example of this is shown in the film ‘First Year Experiences’ www.reading.ac.uk/about/film/about-fye-introduction.aspx
SECTION 9: MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND PLANNING

9.1 MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

9.1.1 Reporting structure and management

The Whiteknights Campus is managed, on a day-to-day basis, by the departments within Estates. The departments include the grounds maintenance, building maintenance, project management and security teams, amongst others.

Estates reports directly to a range of University committees, the most important of which in property terms is the Estates and Environment Committee.

9.2 ESTATE PLANNING AND PROJECTS

9.2.1 Strategic estate planning

The University has developed a Corporate Plan which sets out its strategic aims and objectives over the planning period. This document is reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains focused on the University’s current priorities.

The University’s Estate Strategy is derived from the Corporate Plan and describes how the estate will be developed to support the Corporate Plan. The Estate Strategy includes a detailed Implementation Plan, which outlines the projects that are required to implement the strategy.

9.2.2 Maintenance planning

The long-term maintenance programme is primarily derived from the Estate Strategy, together with the findings from the rolling condition survey programme. It also takes account of proposed new building development, plans for building closures and proposed changes of use.

The Maintenance Services team aims to maintain a rolling 5-year planned maintenance programme, which is rigorously prioritised based upon agreed criteria. Repairs having statutory compliance, business continuity or health & safety implications are given the highest priority when developing the programme.
9.2.3 Financial arrangement

Grounds maintenance at Whiteknights is primarily funded from University central budgets, which are often supplemented by smaller grants from volunteer groups, such as the Friends of the Harris Garden and the Friends of the University. In total around £450,000 per annum is available for grounds maintenance at Whiteknights.

The grounds team work on a semi-commercial basis and recharge their costs. Maintenance expenditure is regularly benchmarked, against both commercial contractors and against other peer-group Universities. Grounds maintenance costs per hectare are typically in the lower quartile of institutes in the HE sector.

9.2.4 Project communication

Stakeholder groups are consulted widely during the project development process. Internal University stakeholders are normally represented on the project team, whilst other staff are informed of proposed developments through the web portal, email, newsletters etc.

The Communication Office makes use of other forms of communication, such as mail groups, twitter, student magazines etc., to keep students informed. Students also have access to a dedicated student newspaper, Spark.

Local residents are kept informed of University initiatives through press releases, the CommUnity news bulletin and through involvement with the Community Open Events. Neighbours also have an opportunity to contribute directly to the University’s planning processes through the planning consultation exercises associated with major projects.
10.1 OVERVIEW

This section aims to describe the main issues influencing maintenance of the Whiteknights Campus in 2019 and comprises two main sections.

- **Part 1** A description of the current key issues and a copy of the 2019 Implementation Plan to address the issues identified
- **Part 2** A copy of the 2018 Implementation Plan, indicating the progress made over the last 12 months

As with any organisation which derives part of its income from public funds the University is seeking to obtain value for money and, where possible, reduce expenditure. In the current financial climate both capital and revenue funding is limited. The various operational managers must, therefore, balance a number of often conflicting factors when deciding how funding is prioritised.

PART 1: CURRENT ISSUES

A welcoming place

**Signage improvements:** The University has been carrying out a rolling programme of signage improvements ensuring the campus is well sign-posted. Recommendations for improvements will be made in accordance with need and available budget.

Healthy, safe and secure

**Tree work:** The University has appointed new framework contractors. Monitoring and review of performance to ensure appropriate work standards.

**Footpath improvements:** A number of footpaths in the Wilderness and surrounding the lake have increasingly been encroached upon. By implementing a continuing programme of coppicing, clearance and mowing on a cyclical basis these areas will be more inviting for users and have the ecological benefits associated with these works.

Clean and well maintained

**Landscape programme:** A prioritised programme of landscape projects will be implemented during 2019/20.
Sustainability & Biodiversity

- **Green waste processing:** This will be reviewed to ensure green waste is processed in an efficient manner and is compliant.

Conservation and heritage

- **Whiteknights lake edge improvements:**
  The Lake margin have benefited from targeted clearance of Rhododendron and Laurel with cutting of bramble and undergrowth on a rotational basis to improve the opportunities for wild flowers and marginal plants. An annual budget for lakeside essential works and improvements has been made available. These works prioritise reservoir maintenance and safety works along with habitat management objectives.

Community involvement

- **Harris Garden:** The Grounds team will continue to develop the strong working relationship with volunteers in the Harris Garden, whose support is vital to the continued success of this facility.

Management arrangements and planning

- **Service Level Agreements:** A continual review of capability, roles and training requirements for all grounds staff. SLA’s are reviewed to accommodate available budgets.
# NEW IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Implementation Strategy</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>By</th>
<th>Critical Success Measures</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A welcoming place</td>
<td>Review areas and make recommendations for improvements according to available resources</td>
<td>4Q19</td>
<td>MSD</td>
<td>Recommendations for improvements made and implemented (subject to available funding)</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Healthy, safe &amp; secure</td>
<td>Monitor and review new arboricultural contractors</td>
<td>4Q19</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>H&amp;S Compliance, high quality tree works</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Footpath improvements</td>
<td>Identify and prioritise clearance of undergrowth and trees adjacent to footpaths in order to improve sight lines and safety</td>
<td>1Q19</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Areas in need of improvement identified and work completed by 4Q20</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Clean &amp; well maintained</td>
<td>Develop proposals for landscape simplification within 2019/20 academic year in line with available budgets</td>
<td>1Q20</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Programme compiled and implemented by 1Q20</td>
<td>Not started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sustainability &amp; biodiversity</td>
<td>Carry out review of processing and use of green waste</td>
<td>1Q19</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Usable product, compliance with exemptions</td>
<td>Not started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Conservation &amp; heritage</td>
<td>Implementation of lake side management plan</td>
<td>1Q19</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Rolling programme of lake edge management implemented by 1Q18</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Community involvement &amp; marketing</td>
<td>Ensure volunteers have sufficient resource, safety equipment and support to work effectively</td>
<td>4Q19</td>
<td>HoGM &amp; FoTHG</td>
<td>Volunteer numbers remain at current levels</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Management arrangements &amp; planning</td>
<td>Review SLA’s to accommodate budget cuts</td>
<td>1Q19</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Maintenance works are prioritised according to available resource</td>
<td>Not started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Continue Review of staff capability and roles</td>
<td>Review grounds staff and team structure to ensure staff have the correct training and skills</td>
<td>4Q19</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Staff appropriately skilled for the position they hold</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY**
- Complete
- On-going
- Not started
## PART 2: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Implementation Strategy</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>By</th>
<th>Critical Success Measures</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Signage improvements</td>
<td>Review areas and make recommendations for improvements according to available resources</td>
<td>4Q18</td>
<td>DoFM</td>
<td>Recommendations for improvements made and implemented (subject to available funding)</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tree works</td>
<td>Appoint new tree contractors and ensure consistent quality</td>
<td>2Q18</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Contractors appointed and successfully inducted</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Footpath improvements</td>
<td>Identify and prioritise clearance of undergrowth adjacent to footpaths in order to implement resurfacing works/route improvements</td>
<td>1Q19</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Areas in need of improvement identified and work completed by 1Q19</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Landscaping programme</td>
<td>Develop prioritise proposals for landscape improvements in 2018/19 academic year in line with available budgets</td>
<td>1Q19</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Programme compiled and implemented by 1Q19</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Habitat Management Plan</td>
<td>Implement actions set out in HMP Implementation Plan</td>
<td>1Q19</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Actions for current year implemented by 1Q19</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Wilderness</td>
<td>Implement elements of work allocated for 2018/19, subject to available budget</td>
<td>1Q19</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Allocated woodland management and planting works complete by 1Q19</td>
<td>Not started (Budget cuts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Whiteknights Lake edge improvements</td>
<td>Implementation of lake side management plan</td>
<td>1Q19</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Rolling programme of lake edge management implemented by 1Q19</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Continue to support volunteers within the Harris Garden</td>
<td>Ensure volunteers have sufficient resource, safety equipment and support to work effectively</td>
<td>4Q18</td>
<td>HoGM, FoTHG</td>
<td>Volunteer numbers remain at current levels</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Review of staff capability and roles</td>
<td>Review grounds staff and team structure to ensure staff have the correct training and skills</td>
<td>2Q18</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Staff appropriately skilled for the position they hold</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Management Plans</td>
<td>Review Habitat Management Plan</td>
<td>2Q18</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Habitat management plan reviewed and published in brand by 2Q18</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY**

- Complete
- On-going
- Not started