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

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.
COVID-19
As the first national lockdown took effect in March 2020 all Grounds operational staff and Harris Garden volunteers were asked to stay at home. With many parks forced to close the University took the decision to keep the campus open for the local community. The campus was widely used for recreation and fitness with many local residents discovering Whiteknights and particularly the Harris Garden for the first time.

After agreeing safe work practices four members of operational staff returned to work to concentrate on grass cutting and tree watering. Without the contribution of Michael Argent, Liam Haines, Tracy Lunn and especially Melvin Silvey the campus would have been very difficult to get back to the standard that we wish to continue to achieve. All staff returned by late summer but working in a very different way.

At the time of writing the latest lockdown has resulted in the team being reduced to 5 operational staff with our Harris Garden volunteers being asked to stay at home since the autumn. The continued use of the grounds has put high levels of wear on foot paths and lawn areas during the winter months but a positive consequence of the pandemic is a surge in interest of people wanting to help within the Harris Garden.

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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 1900 students and over 4000 staff.

The University is rated 205th worldwide and 27th in the UK in the QS World University Rankings 2021
The Complete University Guide 2021: 39th in the UK
The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2020: Joint 38th in the UK
2020 Times Higher Education World University Rankings 201-250 in the world and joint 29th in the UK

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 on page 9.

1.3 THE VISION

The vision for the Whiteknights campus is ‘to provide a green oasis for students, staff and the wider community 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:

- Where appropriate the historic nature of the estate will be retained and enhanced
- Planting will be consistent with the ambience of the campus
- High use areas will be the priority for maintenance and replanting.

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 and public lectures.
2.2 ANNUCING 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's 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.

2.3 PHYSICAL ACCESS

Whiteknights campus has three main vehicular entrances; Shinfield Road, Earley Gate and Pepper Lane (See Campus plan Page 9).

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’; an area of semi natural woodland forming the eastern boundary of the campus.

Pepper Lane Entrance: The third vehicle entrance, Pepper Lane, is on the southern 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 promotes travel to our campuses by sustainable modes with bus stops provided outside Whiteknights House and the Chancellor’s 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.

Accessibility: Most of our teaching buildings are accessible for wheelchair users, although some older buildings have limited access. Induction loop facilities are available in a large number of our lecture halls. We are continually improving access to buildings and operate a central room booking system so that lectures are timetabled in accessible rooms. All University buildings are accessible by car and most have disabled parking spaces nearby. Students with mobility issues may apply for a permit to park on campus, for which there is a small annual charge. Permits for Blue Badge holders are free.

SECTION 3: SAFETY, SECURITY & HEALTH

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 carries out four patrols at Whiteknights Campus over a 24 hour period. These patrols are supplemented by ad-hoc patrols from Thames Valley Police. 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.

Those 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 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 and open lake edges are clearly marked with wooden bollards. Due to concerns regarding lake side safety heritage and undergrowth, it has been allowed to grow to restrict access to the water.

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 and 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
Estate services have developed a ‘capability framework’ which defines the minimum training and competencies required for each role. Each team may develop 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.

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.
4.1 LITTER AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

4.1.1 Litter collection

The University employs a dedicated External Cleaning team who are responsible for keeping the University campus clean and tidy. These members of staff empty waste bins, pick litter, keep street furniture and signage clean and have access to a range of equipment to assist cleaning including a mechanical path sweeper and external vacuums.

There are over 70 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 Porters, 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 Grounds Maintenance team have no responsibility for litter but will clear litter from the borders and maintenance areas to prevent it entering the green waste processing cycle.
4.1 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 3 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.

4.2.3 Lake maintenance
Whiteknights Lake system is just under 6 hectares in size and is found at the heart of the park. Three interconnecting bodies of water provide opportunities for birds, insects and aquatic life. Maintenance works concentrate on path safety and ensuring the dams and outfalls are kept clear for the biannual inspections of the consulting engineer.

4.2.4 Tree management
Whiteknights Campus is home to an extensive range of tree species within a parkland setting. Trees range in size from recently planted transplants to veteran Oak trees estimated to be around 350 years old. The campus has approximately 20 hectares of woodland and copses along with hundreds of specimen trees with some being national and county champions for their size. Grounds Maintenance aim to manage the tree stock in a proactive way with tree works and planting under their control carried out to the highest standards.

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 arbicultural 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 Grounds Maintenance team manage for the Sportspark a number of grass and artificial pitches and have an SLA in place for service provision and agreed usage. Currently the team provide in season pitches for Rugby Union and Rugby league, Football, American football, Lacrosse and a training area. In addition the team provide temporary pitches for Ultimate Frisbee, Rounders, Volleyball and Quidditch. The team ensure the pitches are in a fit condition for play on match days and follow up with remedial works post-match.

Whiteknights campus has a number of artificial pitches including Three 5-a-side third generation football pitches, a synthetic pitch used mainly for hockey and football and an artificial cricket wicket. Five outdoor tennis and netball courts, all flood lit, are available with a further three tennis courts which are enclosed within a lit dome for all year play. Again the team carry out maintenance works with specialist equipment to ensure the surfaces remain at the best and arrange specialist contractors for periodic planned maintenance.

The facilities are used by students and staff as well as local schools and sports clubs.

The grounds team have an on-going programme of landscape review and where appropriate the team are replacing tired plantings with species rich grass land or other plantings which encourage biodiversity.
4.3 BUILDING MAINTENANCE

4.3.1 Background information
The University has developed a Building Maintenance Policy which aims to ensure that:
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- The University has developed a Building Maintenance Policy which aims to ensure that:
- The University has developed a Building Maintenance Policy which aims to ensure that:

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

4.3.2 Maintenance arrangements
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.

Projects are co-ordinated to minimise disruption 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 becoming net zero carbon by 2030 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 new Health & Life Sciences Building and Library projects which both aimed for the ‘Very Good’ BREEAM rating during the planning phases of development as per the EEMS objectives. Interim assessments show that HLS is on track for Very Good and the Library, although not requiring a formal assessment, has been delivered to the BREEAM Very Good standard.

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

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. 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.

4.4.3 Incident control equipment
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 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 boillards, incident tape, portable signs etc.
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 alternative 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 reduce CO2 emissions and environmental impact. Whiteknights has over 3000 cycle spaces with over half covered and around a third within secure compounds.

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.
Whiteknights Campus

University of Reading Management Plan

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 45% against a 2008/9 baseline is 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 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.

5.2 MINIMISATION OF HERBICIDE USE

The grounds team control weeds with a combination of mulching, hand weeding and herbicides. Herbicides are necessary to control weeds in hard landscape areas, pernicious weeds such as Japanese Knotweed, regrowth from cut stumps and excessive broadleaved weeds within sports turf. The team are continuing to review its selection of herbicides and how they are applied and look for viable alternatives.

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 Grounds team process green waste in a number of ways to reduce handling and transport as far as is practical.

Where possible green waste is processed on site for example fallen leaves are shredded on lawn areas with mowers, woody waste is chipped on site or larger timber stacked into habitat piles. Where green waste needs to be removed from site it is taken to a central composting area where it is shredded, put into wind rows and turned a few weeks later. When the material is fully composted it is finally screened into a usable product. In recent years, the team has spread the material within the park and sown it with a seed mix to provide seed rich plants for birds to feed on over the winter. The compost is also used for replanting and perennial meadow sowing.

5.5ARBORICULTURE 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 20,000 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, these 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 three 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 Grounds Maintenance invested in Arbortrack, a tree management database, and embarked upon a structured programme of tree surveys. Each major tree, or tree group, now has an individual entry on the database, recording such information as species, dimensions, condition and works required, together with a hazard rating. The system has been used to help prioritise remedial work to the tree stock.

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 little 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.

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.

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 team developed a woodland management plan which has been running for nearly 10 years and was last reviewed in 2020. Works are subject to available budgets but a large area of replanting was carried out in 2019. 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 around 750 Local Wildlife Sites representing 10% of the county land area (2020). 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

During the University’s daily operations the environment will inevitably feel the effects of the activity on site; including teaching & research, 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 through policies and procedures.
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.
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. However with any new development due consideration is given to how the scheme will impact on the park. 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.

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. However with any new development due consideration is given to how the scheme will impact on the park.

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.

Constructed Stag Beetle habitat
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. Students who received the Chancellor’s Award in 2019 were asked: What is the best thing about life at the University of Reading?

Maria Garay Arriba  BA Art and History of Art

‘The campus is pretty cool – ‘there are so many non-human inhabitants to distantly interact with!’”

Katherine Halley  BA English Language and Linguistics

‘The best thing about life at the University of Reading is the campus. The campus itself is beautiful and a nice environment to study in.’

Harry Hawkins  BA Accounting and Business

‘The fact that everything is on one campus with lots of green spaces’

Eve Thom  BA Archaeology

‘The campus itself is a lovely place, with excellent facilities and beautiful green spaces to be enjoyed by all.’

Katherine Evans  BA Classics (Part-Time)

‘Even when the workload gets stressful, nature is never far away – I doubt there are many universities where one can walk around a lake between lectures and see a kingfisher! The Harris Gardens on campus are also beautiful and the perfect place to unwind or revise peacefully for exams’

Michelle Ho  MSci Speech and Language Therapy

‘The University campus is quiet and tranquil with the lake and Harris Gardens.’

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. Grounds Maintenance have adopted a minimal intervention strategy after concerns regarding water safety and recommendations from the Biodiversity Working Group. It is hoped that the unmanaged herbage will give numerous opportunities for nesting birds and insects.

SECTION 7: Community Involvement
7.2 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

7.2.1 Community Forum
The University consults with local residents and other interested parties on development plans. In order to seek feedback, 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 senior members of University staff and Students' Union representatives. These events typically take place in May and November.

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.

Harris Garden Volunteers: The Harris garden volunteers currently meet twice a week and provide valuable assistance in the maintenance of the Harris garden. Volunteers come with a wide range of experience skills and back grounds and without their valuable input we would not be able to retain the more complex borders found within the Garden.

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, Walking for 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. In 2020 the Cole museum was relocated to its new Home in the Health and Life Sciences Building.
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 organizes 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. The Tennis Park features indoor and outdoor floodlit tennis courts.

Each year the route of the Reading Half Marathon utilizes 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. The University Diversity and inclusion team provide co-ordination and support for the D&I efforts of staff and students across Reading. The University is proud to receive recognition in the form of Charter marks in recognition for our work in supporting staff and students in underrepresented groups.

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.
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 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.

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 Guides and brochures
The University produces a number of guides, including a general introductory guide to the Whiteknights campus, 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.
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 Gardens. In total around £480,000 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 control
Capital and large-scale revenue projects are normally controlled by a dedicated Project Committee. There is an established governance system covering the feasibility, design and construction phases to monitor project planning, programme, risks and costs.

SECTION 10: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

10.1 OVERVIEW
This section aims to describe the main issues influencing maintenance of the Whiteknights Campus in 2021 and comprises two main sections.

Part 1 A description of the current key issues and a copy of the 2021 Implementation Plan to address the issues identified

Part 2 A copy of the 2020 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 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. Review of external Covid-19 signage will be made throughout the year.

Healthy, safe and secure

Tree work: The team will concentrate on works recommended following detailed inspection by a consultant and other works highlighted during routine survey.

Footpath improvements: A number of areas on the lake side path have been identified for improvement to the existing sight lines. The programme of prioritised path resurfacing will continue if budget is available. The programme of footpath widening to allow shared access will also continue.

Clean and well maintained

Landscape programme: Areas for tree planting and relandscaping will be identified with the objectives of simplification and increasing biodiversity opportunities.
Sustainability & Biodiversity

- **Green waste processing:** At times, the team have not been able to use all of the green waste compost produced because of the labour involved in moving it. In recent years we have looked for bigger projects that can be mechanised to make use of this valuable product. The team will use the processed compost in large landscaping schemes to produce wild bird seed plantings and a direct sown perennial meadow in the Harris Garden.

- **Wilderness:** Due to Covid-19 we were not able to organise a programme of works for 2020/21 but we hope to continue with the implementation of the woodland management plan in the 2021/22 season.

- **General Biodiversity Opportunities:** The team have been encouraged to take a different view on elements of how the park is managed and we will be trying a number of new initiatives in 2021 including rewilding areas and mosaic mowing patterns with the objective of increasing biodiversity.

Conservation and heritage

- **Whiteknights Lake:** The team will continue to ensure that the dams and outfalls are kept clear of heritage to allow essential inspection and any necessary repair works. Due to concerns regarding lake safety and recommendations from the Biodiversity Working Group the programme of heritage management on banksides have been suspended.

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

- **Habitat management plan:** The plan was reviewed in 2020 following input from the Biodiversity Working Group the team will monitor the changes in management and ensure they remain relevant. Should charges be required the habitat plan will be updated and published to the web.

- **Review of Health & Safety arrangements:** The team are all involved in looking for improvements in our health and safety systems and review of existing measures especially after any reported incident. The systems in place are reviewed annually by the teams Safe Contractor accreditation application.

### 2021 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>Signage improvements</td>
<td>Review areas and make recommendations for improvements according to available resources. Review Covid-19 signage</td>
<td>4Q21</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>Tree works</td>
<td>Implement programme of tree works with hazard reduction being the driving priority highlighted from on-going survey and consultants report</td>
<td>4Q21</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Programme delivered within environmental time constraints</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Footpath improvements</td>
<td>Identify and prioritise heritage control and tree works adjacent to footpaths in order to improve sight lines, lighting and personal safety</td>
<td>3Q21</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Areas in need of improvement identified and work completed by 3Q21</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Landscaping programme</td>
<td>Develop proposals for landscape and tree planting requirements within 2021/22 academic year in line with available budgets</td>
<td>1Q22</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Programme compiled and implemented by 1Q22</td>
<td>Not started</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Sustainability & biodiversity

| 5A  | Green Waste Compost | Spread compost at edge of Whiteknights meadow and sow game margin | 2Q21 | HoGM | Winter seed crop produced for wild birds | Not started |
| 5B  | Green Waste Compost | Compost to fill redundant water feature in Harris Garden as agreed plan | 4Q21 | DHofGM | Perennial meadow and planting established. | Started |
| 6   | Wilderness | Carry out clearance of Rhododendron and Laurel overplant with native species | 1Q22 | HoGM | Works complete by 1Q22 | Not Started |

#### Conservation & heritage

| 7   | Whiteknights Lake | Implement clearance of dams to allow inspection by Engineer and carry out recommended works before 10 year inspection | 3Q21 | HoGM | All Engineering recommendations complete before 10 year inspection | On-going |

#### Community involvement & marketing

| 8   | Continue to support volunteers within the Harris Garden | Ensure volunteers have sufficient resource, safety equipment and support to work effectively including COVID 19 measures | 4Q21 | DHofGM | Volunteer numbers remain sufficient to maintain the garden at current standard | On-going |

#### Management arrangements & planning

| 9   | Habitat Management Plan | Ensure plans remain up to date and relevant | 4Q21 | HoGM | Plans reviewed any changes implemented and published to the web | Not started |
| 10  | Review H&S arrangements | Ensure operational and site risk assessments up to date and relevant | 3Q21 | HoGM | Documentation reviewed and safe contractor accreditation achieved | Not started |
### PART 2: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR 2020

<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>3Q20</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>Implement programme of tree works with hazard reduction being the driving priority</td>
<td>3Q20</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>H&amp;S Compliance of contractors, delivery of high quality tree works</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Footpath improvements</td>
<td>Identify and prioritise herbage control and tree works adjacent to footpaths in order to improve sight lines, lighting and personal safety</td>
<td>4Q20</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 2020/21 academic year in line with available budgets</td>
<td>1Q21</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Programme compiled and implemented by 1Q21</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sustainability &amp; biodiversity</td>
<td>Spread compost at edge of Whiteknights meadow and sow game margin</td>
<td>2Q20</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Winter seed crop produced for wild birds</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Wilderness</td>
<td>Clear designated area of Rhododendron and scrub carry out overplanting</td>
<td>1Q20</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Due to Covid-19 this project has been suspended. Team to concentrate on previous planting maintenance</td>
<td>Not-started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Conservation &amp; heritage</td>
<td>Implement clearance of dams to allow inspection by Engineer and reduce encroachment upon outfalls</td>
<td>4Q20</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Works completed before engineers visit</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Community involvement &amp; marketing</td>
<td>Ensure volunteers have sufficient resource, safety equipment and support to work effectively</td>
<td>4Q20</td>
<td>DHoGM</td>
<td>Volunteer numbers remain at current levels</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Management arrangements &amp; planning</td>
<td>Ensure plan is appropriate and achievable with available budget</td>
<td>4Q20</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Plan reviewed and sufficient funding and support for its implementation</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Review Wilderness management plan</td>
<td>Ensure plan is appropriate and achievable with available budget</td>
<td>4Q20</td>
<td>HoGM</td>
<td>Plan reviewed with sufficient funding and support for its implementation</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY**
- Complete
- On-going
- Not started