

Street Tree Review Panel Report for A38 Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme (BREP) Scheme 6

Why BREP is required:

Congestion in Bromsgrove is a major concern of residents and businesses, with prolonged and unreliable journey times affecting the A38 corridor which is set to worsen without any intervention. Worcestershire County Council is therefore committed to provide improvements at key junctions, with upgraded cycling facilities and active travel routes by delivering BREP. The scheme has been approved by Worcestershire County Council Cabinet and the Department for Transport (DfT) through a Full Business Case (FBC).

The A38 BREP Phase 3 schemes address the Major Road Network priorities by:

- **Supporting the Strategic Road Network (SRN)** - Congestion affects the strategic role of the A38, delaying traffic that is trying to reach the SRN via M5 junction 4, M5 junction 5 and M42 Junction 1 or using the corridor as a diversionary route, as well as traffic using the corridor to access urban areas and key employment areas south of Birmingham. Improvements to the corridor will provide efficient and reliable access to the M5 via Junction 4 and M42 via Junction 1.
- **Reducing congestion** – Without improvements, existing congestion at junctions will continue to worsen leading to increased journey time and increased cost to the economy. Traffic modelling shows that in 2040, in the Do-Minimum scenario, junction capacity is exceeded at multiple locations on the corridor and journey times are increased.
- **Supporting economic growth and rebalancing** – Congestion on the A38 affects the wider economy, restricts labour markets and impacts on the ability of employees to access potential employment. Improvements are required to enable the A38 corridor to function effectively for businesses and workers.
- **Supporting housing delivery** - The ability to accommodate growth will be impeded without improvements, due to limited capacity on the network. Junction improvements will help enable the network to better cater for planned development and support delivery of the Local Plan requirements.
- **Supporting all road users** – Opportunities to support modal shift to walking and cycling are currently restricted due to actual and perceived severance caused by the A38, impacting on local trips and those to Bromsgrove Rail Station. Walking and cycling improvements included in this scheme address severance issues by providing better facilities along, across and adjacent to the A38, building on schemes being delivered across Bromsgrove in other programmes. These schemes will improve safety and security for non-motorised users crossing the A38 and in the surrounding area, resulting in a reduced number of collisions and subsequent economic active mode user benefits.

Summary of Scheme 6 Proposals:

The scheme will provide the connection between the active travel components of Scheme 3 by installing a shared footway/cycleway along the south side of Regent's Park Road, between Oakalls Roundabout and the new provision adjacent to Royal Worcester Crescent.

A raised table is proposed across the exit of Green Park Road, thus improving the crossing for cyclists and pedestrians.

The latest scheme design can be found on the A38 BREP Webpage on the following [link](#)

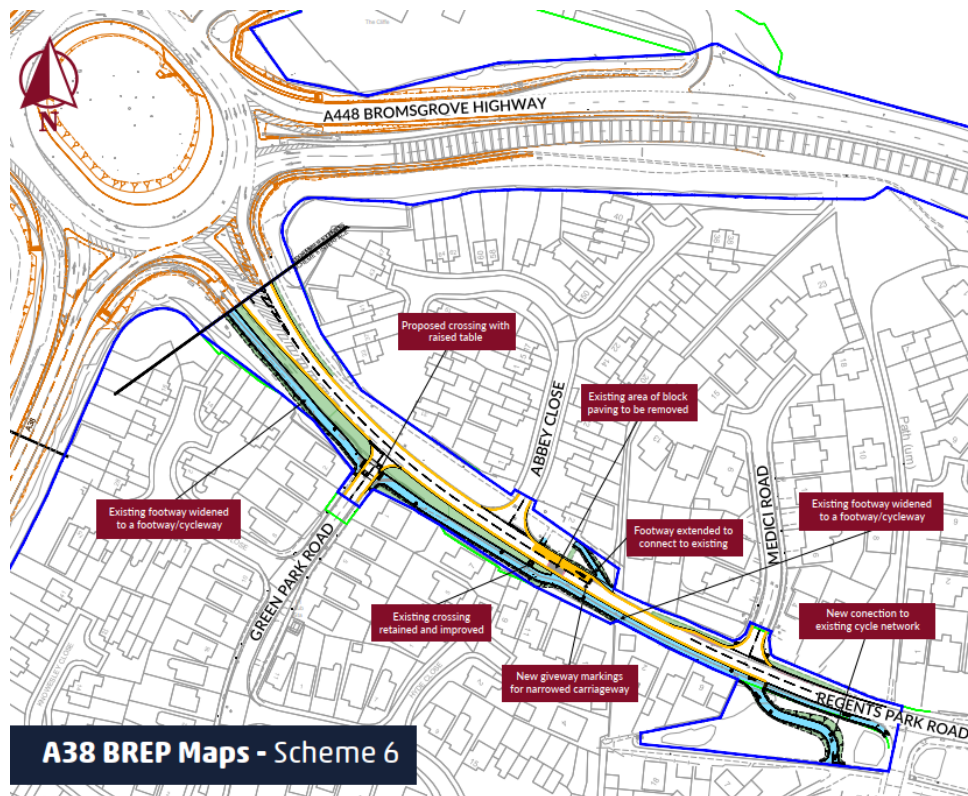


Figure 1: Scheme 6 Scheme Design

Why Tree Removal is Proposed:

Figure 2 is an excerpt from the Scheme 6 consultation plan, showing the location of the small area of tree clearance and landscape proposals at the eastern end of the scheme, adjacent to Royal Worcester Crescent. None of the trees highlighted for removal have a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Figure 3 is a zoomed in excerpt from the designers landscaping clearance plan and its interaction with the proposed cycleway.

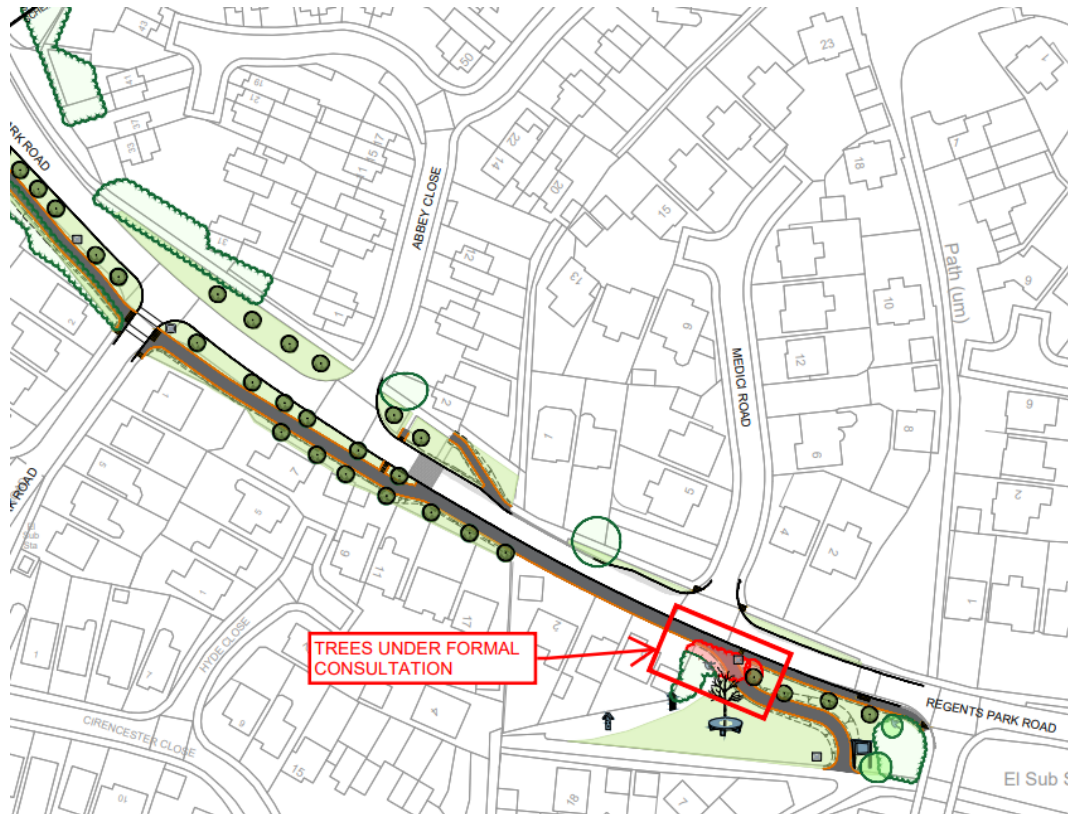


Figure 2: Scheme 6 Tree Consultation Plan

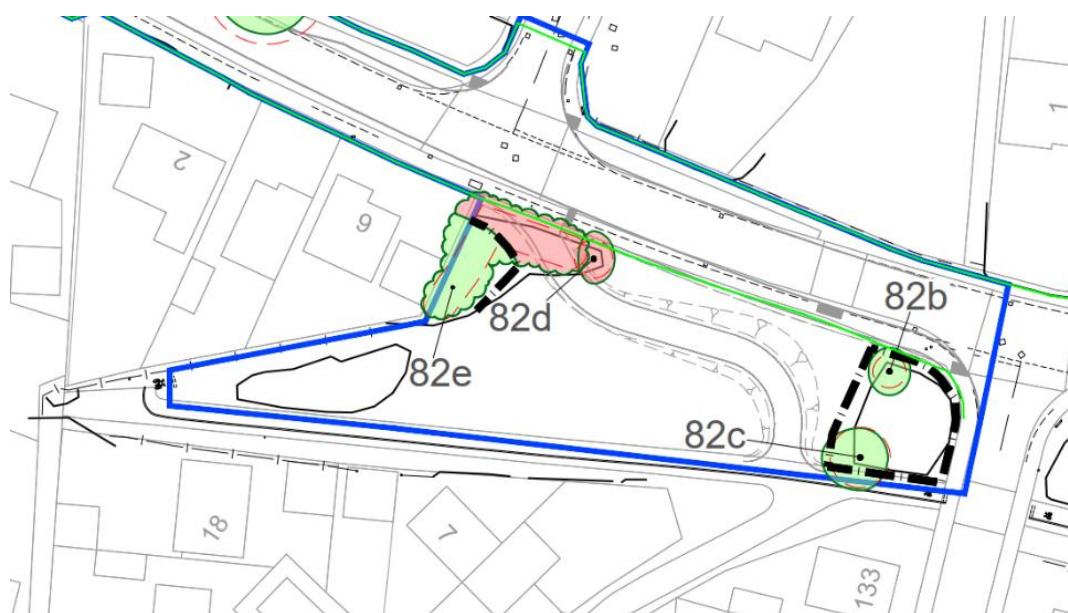


Figure 3: Regents Park Road (East) Vegetation Clearance

As shown in Figure 3, the scheme proposes a section of new cycleway to connect the active travel corridor along Regents Park Road to the existing corridor adjoining Brierley Road which is being improved as part of Scheme 3. Thus the reason why the shrubs and trees are proposed for removal are:

1. They are in the way of proposed works and/or working area to safely build the works. The shrubs/trees would cause great difficulty in delivering the works safely due to their location.

Alternatives considered:

WCC instructed the designer to explore moving the start of the segregated footway/cycleway to the east, in order to avoid the need for vegetation clearance. Whilst the designer deemed this possible, in both a 2D and 3D arrangement, the shared footway cycleway would still have an impact on these trees and to avoid impacting them completely meant narrowing the shared route to 2.5m wide, less than the 3.0m required by LTN 1/20. Additionally, several metal statutory undertaker cabinets, which have been installed since the survey was completed, would conflict with a cycleway which went around the end of the treeline, see below. We believe these pose a risk to errant cyclist and thus moving the cycleway closer exacerbated the hazard.



Figure 3: Existing Statutory Undertaker Cabinets adj. to Proposed Cycleway

To make this option feasible, the cabinets would have to be relocated by a significant distance to provide a suitable offset from the edge of the cycleway, whilst also allowing for the cycleway to avoid the trees. To move these boxes would require a lengthy process with the statutory undertaker as well as a sizeable payment for them to undertake the works, estimated to be a five to six-figure sum. Such a cost would make this scheme unfeasible and therefore, this option has not been pursued.

Thus the decision was taken not to pursue the option to relocate the cycleway due to the safety implications to users caused by the sub-standard shared footway/cycleway width and proximity to the adjacent cabinets, and the excessive cost to accommodate a safe alternative. No other alternatives were deemed appropriate without requiring more extensive tree and vegetation clearance.

The design was revised ahead of this consultation to eliminate a large area of vegetation clearance adjacent to the junction with Green Park Road.

Mitigation Measures

For the landscape proposals for BREP, as many existing trees have been retained as possible. Where tree removal is required to facilitate BREP works, as many replacement trees as possible will be planted within the highway boundary, adhering to WCC's replanting commitment (2:1 ratio) where sightlines, underground services and existing trees/vegetation allow.

The Landscape Environmental Management Plan (LEMP), prepared as part of the detailed design of the Scheme, will be implemented during the planting works and there will be a subsequent maintenance period to reduce the risk of failure supplemented by replacement planting where necessary. Where planting has been proposed, it includes native species reflecting those currently found on-site, but with regard to recommendations from Worcestershire County Council's Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Guidance. Native planting will be of local provenance, as detailed within the Forestry Commission's Practice Note on Using Local Stock for Planting Native Trees and Shrubs.

The trees and shrubs which are removed will be repurposed into wood chippings and delivered off site to be used as a raw material (for example for landscaping or animal bedding) or processed into biomass fuel.

Scope of Legislation

Where a Local Authority proposes the removal of a street tree or trees, consultation is required as per Section 96A of the Highways Act 1984.

A street tree is one that is located on an urban road. Urban roads are highways, **other than trunk or classified roads**, which:

- are restricted for the purposes of section 81 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (30 miles per hour speed limit);
- are subject to an order made by virtue of section 84(1)(a) of that Act imposing a speed limit not exceeding 40 miles per hour; or
- are otherwise a street in an urban area.

For Scheme 6 this means Regents Park Road trees fall under this legislation and thus all trees due to be removed as part of Scheme 6 should be subject to consultation.

Consultation Process

- The consultation period commenced on Thursday 5th June 2025 for 28 days and ended on Thursday 3rd July 2025 at 5pm.
- The CMR, Divisional County Councillor and Bromsgrove Tree Officer were notified of the intention to remove the trees prior to the consultation commencing.
- Letters were delivered to residents in the immediate vicinity of the trees on Thursday 5th June 2025, advising which trees are proposed to be removed, why they have to be removed, any mitigation measures proposed and informing recipients about the consultation process.

- Notices and plans were placed across the site on Thursday 5th June 2025.
- On the same day, the notice and plan were also posted on the A38 BREP website, under the following [link](#).
- The notices advised the public that they had 28 calendar days to make comments with information on how to do so (write to A38BREP@worcestershire.gov.uk or address provided).
- All correspondents have received acknowledgement of their representations.
- All comments received have been carefully considered and summarised in this report
- Following the conclusion of the Street Tree Review Panel, a notice of the decision will be posted on the trees, placed on WCC's website and emailed/posted to those who responded to the consultation.

Assessment of consultation responses

In total **4** communications were received in response to this consultation; **3** from the general public and **1** from Cllr Sam Evans.

Each representation has been reviewed and summarised into common themes in the following table:

Table 1 – Consultation responses assessment

| Theme | Number of responses with this theme |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Questioning the engineering design & reasons for removal | 3 |
| Detriment to wildlife, namely insects and/or birds etc. | 2 |
| Unhappy with mitigation measures. Replanting 'saplings' does not compensate. Concerned about maintenance. | 1 |
| General objection to tree clearance across all of BREP | 1 |
| Residents do not want and/or need a cycle path on this road or are unhappy with proposals. | 1 |

The four stakeholders who wrote in to WCC in response to this consultation all received acknowledgement emails as well as additional information where necessary.

Scheme 6 provides an essential connection between the two sections of Scheme 3: Town Centre to Oakalls Roundabout; and Railway Station to Brierley Road (adj. Regents Park Road).

In response to the residents who were concerned about the location of the cycleway and the consequent tree clearance, the aforementioned metal cabinets were not made explicitly clear on the plans and therefore residents did not appreciate the need to situate the cycleway in the location shown. As discussed, there are no other alternatives which are deemed appropriate which would not require more extensive tree and vegetation clearance.

Residents were concerned that the tree clearance was taking place during bird nesting season. This is not the case. Additionally, a suitably qualified and experienced Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) who attends site regularly, will be present to supervise the vegetation clearance and confirm that there are not any active nests and to identify any ecological mitigation that may be required prior to works taking place.

With regards to the tree reinstatement proposals, the Specimen Street Tree (Circular Tree Seat) will be a *Fagus Sylvatica* "Purpurea". This will have a girth ranging from 14-16cm and a height of 350-450cm. There will be 31 Specimen Street Trees of type *Acer Campestre* "Elegant". These trees will have a girth between 10-12cm and have a height between 300-350cm. Finally, there will be road verge wildflower and grass seed mix, covering an area of approximately 2347m², and a number of habitat features such as a Bird Box, a Ladybird Lodge and a Bug Hotel.

Recommendations

The engineering works on Regents Park Road, are imperative for BREP to achieve its objectives. There are no alternative engineering solutions that would not result in tree clearance elsewhere. As such, it is the project managers recommendation that these trees be removed to allow for the installation of the cycleway link.

Comments from Street Tree Review Panel

The Street Tree Review Panel met on 14th July 2025. Panel members included:

- Project Manager
- Assistant Project Manager
- Transport Infrastructure Commissioning Manager
- Project Manager, Major Projects
- Project Support Officer
- Head of Highways Operations
- Principal Highways Maintenance Engineer
- Highway Tree Officer

The comments from the meeting are:

The Panel made the following comments/recommendations:

Responses received during the consultation were carefully noted; it is not considered that any of the comments fundamentally require the trees that are proposed to be removed to be retained although the following points should be noted:

- Whilst noting that this is already referenced in the report, the panel stressed the importance of minimising tree loss consistent with the delivery of the scheme and ensuring the health of retained trees.
- The panel also stressed the importance of achieving the 2 for 1 replanting ratio to mitigate the impact of the loss but noted that planting on Scheme 6 is well above this threshold.
- Similarly, the panel reinforced the importance of mitigation measures such as the planting of replacement trees and other environmental measures together with ongoing reviews by ecologists and arboriculturists as appropriate.
- Whilst noting that the Project Manager understands all trees that are proposed to be removed are highway trees or are on land owned by, or dedicated to, the County Council, the panel advised that this is “double-checked”.
- The panel stressed the importance of robust tree protection measures for those trees that are scheduled to remain and emphasised the need for an arboriculturist to carry out regular inspections.
- The panel reiterated the importance of a post-scheme monitoring, maintenance and replacement regime for new trees.
- The panel also expressed the importance of providing multiple species of trees in place of those removed, as this not only provides a better street scene but improves resilience against species specific diseases such as ‘Ash Dieback’.
- As detailed in the report, the panel noted that relocating the metal cabinets would result in a substantial cost increase. The panel also noted that locating the cycle/footway between the cabinets and trees, avoiding the need for tree removal, would result in safety risks for users. Therefore neither of these options can be considered as viable.

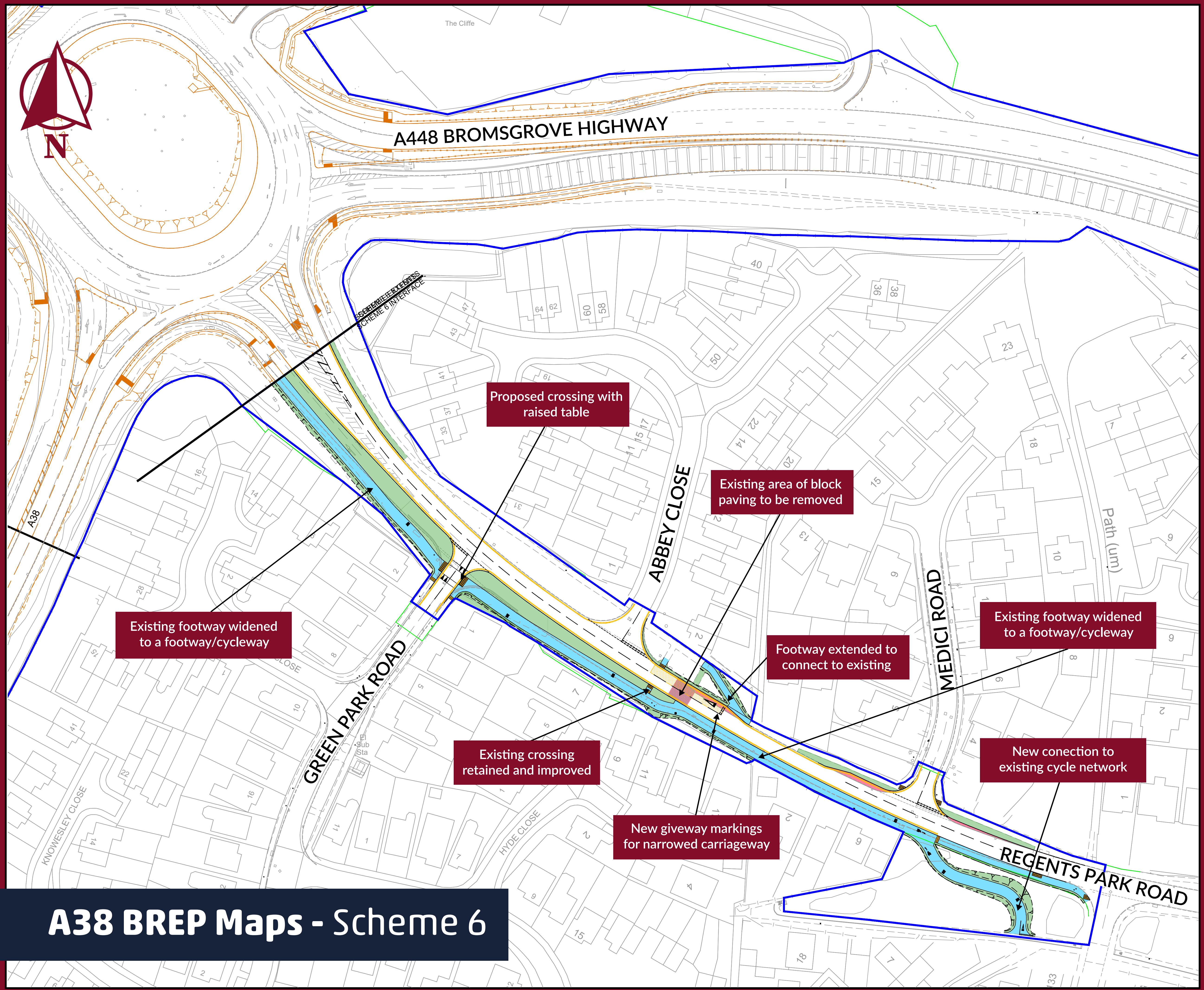
Decision of Street Tree Review Panel:

The panel supports the recommendation of the Project Manager subject to the comments/recommendations made above.

Date: 14/07/2025

Appendix A – A38 BREP Map Scheme 6

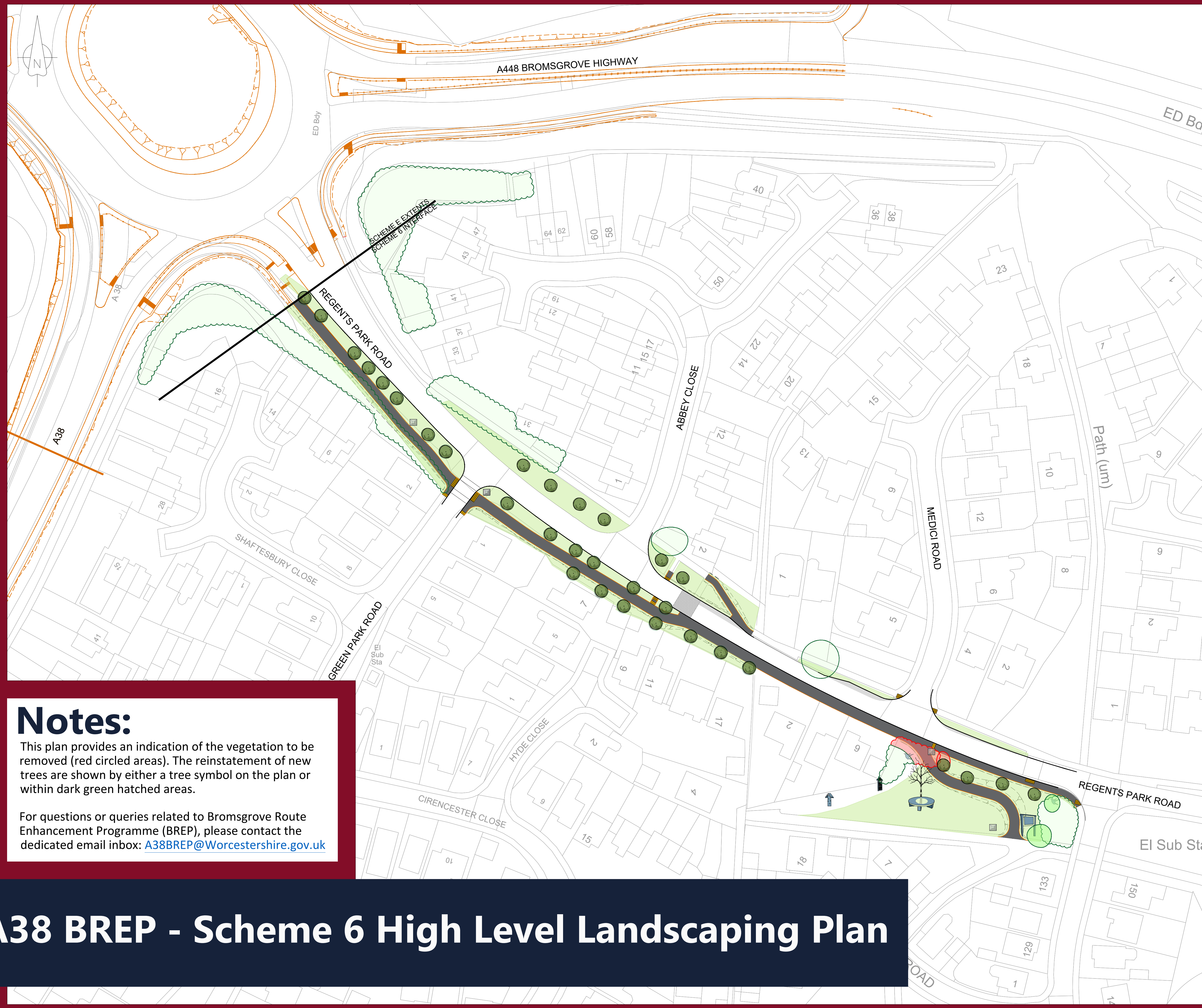
Appendix B – A38 BREP Scheme 6 High Level Landscaping Plan



Legend

- Site Boundary
- Proposed Design
- Area of New Carriageway
- Area of New Footway/Cycleway
- High Friction Surfacing (Buff Colour)
- Tactile Paving (Buff Colour)
- Verge
- Proposed Earthworks
- Tactile Warning Strips
- Existing Block Paving to be removed

DISCLAIMER:
This map is not to scale.
It is for illustrative purposes
only.



- # Legend
- Existing trees to be retained and protected.
 - Existing trees / vegetation to be removed
 - Area of new footway
 - Area of new carriageway
 - Specimen trees
Function: To reinstate, enhance and compliment existing tree planting on site.
 - Grassland - Road verge wildflower grass seed mix
Function: If not a safety issue allow grass to grow longer to increase biodiversity.
 - Feature Bollard
 - Circular Timber Tree Seat - Provisional Location
 - Interpretation Board
 - Bird Box - Schwegler Nest Box 2M
 - Bug Hotel - Ladybirds, lacewings and solitary bees
 - Ladybird Lodge - To be constructed by ecologist.

Notes:

This plan provides an indication of the vegetation to be removed (red circled areas). The reinstatement of new trees are shown by either a tree symbol on the plan or within dark green hatched areas.

For questions or queries related to Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme (BREP), please contact the dedicated email inbox: A38BREP@Worcestershire.gov.uk

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A38 BREP - Scheme 6 High Level Landscaping Plan