# McAleer & Rushe breaks ground on £42.7m luxury later‑living scheme at Kew waterfront



McAleer & Rushe has started work on The Watermark, a £42.7 million luxury later‑living development for Elysian Residences on Melliss Avenue in Kew, south‑west London. Construction News reported the contractor has “broken ground” on the riverside site formerly occupied by the Biothane plant; planning records and the developer’s own material describe a scheme of 88 apartments with completion scheduled for spring 2027. The development sits within walking distance of Kew Gardens and Kew Village and is being marketed as high‑end retirement living that couples private accommodation with onsite hospitality and care services.

The Watermark is designed as a four‑to‑six storey specialist extra‑care facility. Planning documents and the project’s promotional material say the scheme will include landscaped gardens, resident amenity spaces, car and cycle parking, and a package of communal healthcare, therapy and leisure facilities — notably a restaurant and a fully accessible swimming pool. Ryder Architecture is the design lead and McAleer & Rushe is delivering the main contract under a design‑and‑build arrangement, acting as principal contractor for the project.

The proposal has been on the local radar for some time. Richmond upon Thames council granted planning permission for the redevelopment on 16 September 2020, authorising demolition of existing structures and the creation of the extra‑care facility together with publicly accessible amenity space. Local reporting and council records note the redundant industrial site had been largely unused since Thames Water vacated in 2015, and demolition work to clear tanks and plant was reported to have begun in a phased programme in late 2023 ahead of the current main‑contract works.

On‑site progress has already moved beyond preparatory talk. A community newsletter published by the developer in July 2025 confirms McAleer & Rushe were appointed principal contractor and began on site in May, listing early works including delivery of temporary welfare cabins, groundworks, installation of security and environmental monitors, an attenuation tank and the erection of a tower crane. The newsletter states the project is registered with the Considerate Constructors Scheme and sets out contact details for community liaison, naming McAleer & Rushe’s project manager and site manager.

The Watermark forms part of Elysian Residences’ growing portfolio of branded retirement communities. Elysian’s website emphasises optional onsite care, hospitality‑style services and an emphasis on resident wellbeing and social life; a housing directory entry adds that the scheme will offer one, two and three‑bed leasehold apartments with 24/7 staffing and guest facilities. The project announcement also quoted McAleer & Rushe project director Patrick Coyle saying the development would “showcase our expertise in delivering complex, high‑end residential schemes that combine quality, comfort and community.” Elysian chief executive Gavin Stein was quoted in the developer’s statement as saying the scheme reflects the company’s commitment to “exceptional retirement living, combining outstanding design, luxury amenities and a welcoming community.”

While the developer and contractor stress the scheme’s benefits for prospective residents and the local area, planning documents make clear the project required mitigation measures and neighbour notifications during demolition and construction. The approved consent specifically requires landscaping, publicly accessible amenity and other measures intended to balance the new development with its riverside setting and neighbouring properties, and local reporting of the demolition phase highlighted the need for careful management of tank removal and other groundworks.

With works under way, the programme remains for a spring 2027 completion. Elysian’s sales material indicates availability information and contacts for prospective residents, and the project team — now operating on site and registered with the Considerate Constructors Scheme — is positioning the scheme to open in line with the stated timetable.

### 📌 Reference Map:

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.constructionnews.co.uk/buildings/mcaleer-rushe-starts-43m-retirement-living-project-in-kew-18-08-2025/), [[2]](https://www.constructionnews.co.uk/buildings/mcaleer-rushe-starts-43m-retirement-living-project-in-kew-18-08-2025/), [[3]](https://elysianresidences.com/our-residences/the-watermark/), [[4]](https://www2.richmond.gov.uk/PlanData2/Planning_CASENO.aspx?DocTypeID=7&strCASENO=18%2F3310%2FFUL)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.constructionnews.co.uk/buildings/mcaleer-rushe-starts-43m-retirement-living-project-in-kew-18-08-2025/), [[2]](https://www.constructionnews.co.uk/buildings/mcaleer-rushe-starts-43m-retirement-living-project-in-kew-18-08-2025/), [[4]](https://www2.richmond.gov.uk/PlanData2/Planning_CASENO.aspx?DocTypeID=7&strCASENO=18%2F3310%2FFUL), [[3]](https://elysianresidences.com/our-residences/the-watermark/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[4]](https://www2.richmond.gov.uk/PlanData2/Planning_CASENO.aspx?DocTypeID=7&strCASENO=18%2F3310%2FFUL), [[5]](https://richmond.nub.news/news/local-news/works-to-demolish-former-kew-biothane-plant-to-begin-this-month-200096)
* Paragraph 4 – [[6]](https://kew-riverside.co.uk/newsletter-no-5-july-202556/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.constructionnews.co.uk/buildings/mcaleer-rushe-starts-43m-retirement-living-project-in-kew-18-08-2025/), [[3]](https://elysianresidences.com/our-residences/the-watermark/), [[7]](https://housingcare.org/housing-care/facility-info-165800-the-watermark-kew-england)
* Paragraph 6 – [[4]](https://www2.richmond.gov.uk/PlanData2/Planning_CASENO.aspx?DocTypeID=7&strCASENO=18%2F3310%2FFUL), [[5]](https://richmond.nub.news/news/local-news/works-to-demolish-former-kew-biothane-plant-to-begin-this-month-200096)
* Paragraph 7 – [[6]](https://kew-riverside.co.uk/newsletter-no-5-july-202556/), [[3]](https://elysianresidences.com/our-residences/the-watermark/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.constructionnews.co.uk/buildings/mcaleer-rushe-starts-43m-retirement-living-project-in-kew-18-08-2025/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.constructionnews.co.uk/buildings/mcaleer-rushe-starts-43m-retirement-living-project-in-kew-18-08-2025/> - Construction News reports that McAleer and Rushe has broken ground on The Watermark, a £42.7 million luxury retirement development in Kew for Elysian Residences. The scheme will deliver 88 later‑living apartments on the former Biothane plant site beside the River Thames, with completion scheduled for spring 2027. Planned facilities include landscaped gardens, resident amenity spaces, car parking and ancillary works, plus communal healthcare, therapy, leisure areas, a restaurant and a swimming pool. The four‑to‑six storey scheme was designed to support independent later living and was designed by Ryder Architecture, with McAleer and Rushe contracted as principal contractor under contract agreement.
3. <https://elysianresidences.com/our-residences/the-watermark/> - Elysian Residences’ official project page for The Watermark at Kew describes a luxury later‑living development due in 2027. Located on Melliss Avenue, the site will provide 88 waterside apartments set within landscaped gardens and is marketed as high‑end retirement living a short walk from Kew Gardens and Kew Village. The page highlights Elysian’s focus on lifestyle, hospitality and optional care, noting on‑site services and amenities designed to support independent living while offering care if required. The page includes contact details for sales and emphasises the operator’s award‑winning credentials and commitment to resident wellbeing and community, and further information on availability.
4. <https://www2.richmond.gov.uk/PlanData2/Planning_CASENO.aspx?DocTypeID=7&strCASENO=18%2F3310%2FFUL> - The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames planning record for application 18/3310/FUL confirms permission granted on 16 September 2020 to redevelop the former Kew Biothane Plant on Melliss Avenue. The approved scheme authorises demolition of existing structures and construction of a four‑to‑six storey specialist extra care facility comprising 88 residential units, communal healthcare, therapy, leisure and social facilities, including a restaurant/bar/café and a swimming pool. It also requires provision of car and cycle parking, landscaping and publicly accessible amenity space including a children’s play area. The record lists application dates, documents and the assigned planning officer and decision history online.
5. <https://richmond.nub.news/news/local-news/works-to-demolish-former-kew-biothane-plant-to-begin-this-month-200096> - Richmond Nub News reported in September 2023 that demolition works would start at the former Kew Biothane plant, ahead of redevelopment for an extra‑care facility. The article notes planning consent to replace the redundant industrial site with a multi‑storey specialist care development providing around eighty‑nine rooms and communal spaces, including public amenity, a restaurant or café and a fully accessible therapy pool. It describes a phased demolition beginning in September, targeting tank structures and mechanical buildings, and explains the site had been unused since 2015 after Thames Water vacated operations, with neighbour notifications and mitigation measures outlined in the article.
6. <https://kew-riverside.co.uk/newsletter-no-5-july-202556/> - The Kew Riverside community newsletter (July 2025) from Elysian Residences confirms McAleer and Rushe were appointed principal contractor for the main contract and began on site in May. The update lists progress including delivery of temporary welfare cabins, groundworks, installation of security cameras, sound and dust monitors, an attenuation tank and erection of a tower crane. It notes the project is registered with the Considerate Constructors Scheme and anticipates completion in spring 2027. The newsletter gives community liaison contacts, references McAleer and Rushe project manager Patrick Coyle and site manager Robin Moran, and outlines forthcoming construction activities and community engagement.
7. <https://housingcare.org/housing-care/facility-info-165800-the-watermark-kew-england> - The HousingCare directory entry for The Watermark in Kew profiles the development as an extra care housing scheme by Elysian Residences at Melliss Avenue. It records 88 leasehold flats due in 2027, including one, two and three‑bedroom layouts and on‑site extra care with 24/7 staffing. Facilities listed include lifts, lounges, a restaurant open to the public, guest facilities, garden, hobby and activities rooms, and meal provision. The entry notes management and social care authority as Richmond upon Thames and gives contact details for Elysian. Information was last updated in July 2024 and prospective residents are advised to contact the operator.