

DESIGN & PLANNING STATEMENT

41 Harcourt Drive, Earley, Reading



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1. Summary and Drawing List	3
1.2. 3D Aerial Images	4
2. SITE LOCATION AND APPLICATION CONTEXT	5
3. SITE AS EXISTING	6
4. SITE CONTEXT	7
4.1. Scale	7
4.2. Form	7
4.3. Materiality	7
5. PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT	8
5.1. Relevant Wokigham Borough Policies	8
5.2. Emerging Local Plan 2023 - 2040 (Policy H8)	9
6. PROPOSALS	10
6.1. Overview of proposals	10
6.2. Areas and room schedule	10
6.3. Quality of Accommodation	10
6.4. Materials	11
6.5. Parking	12
6.6. Waste storage	12
6.7. Biodiversity Net Gain	13
6.8. Bats Assessment	13

7. LANDSCAPING PRINCIPLES	14
7.1. Planting	14
7.2. Materials	14
7.3. Boundary treatments	14
8. SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT	15
8.1. Energy / CO2	15
8.2. Water	15
8.3. Materials	15
8.4. Surface water run-off	15
8.5. Waste	15
8.6. Pollution	15
8.7. Health and Well-being	15
8.8. Management	15
8.9. Ecology	15
9. TRANSPORT STATEMENT	16
9.1. Car parking	16
9.2. Vehicular Access	16
9.3. Cycle parking	16
9.4. Public transport	16
10. CONCLUSION	17

VERSION CONTROL

FILE NAME	REV	DATE	ORIGINATOR / CHECKED	DETAILS
PLANNING STATEMENT	-	08/07/26	OH/RI	First issue

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Summary and Drawing List

Kite Architects have been asked to prepare the following design and planning statement to support the application for the proposed extension of an existing dwelling at 41 Harcourt Drive to create an eight bedroom house in multiple occupation (HMO).

This document provides an overview of the existing site and planning context, and how the proposals relate to this.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the following drawings:

- 260004-KTE-XX-00-DR-A-00800. Location Plan
- 260004-KTE-XX-00-DR-A-00801. Location Plan with HMO Properties
- 260004-KTE-XX-00-DR-A-00805. Existing Site Plan
- 260004-KTE-XX-00-DR-A-01100. Proposed Site Plan
- 260004-KTE-XX-XX-DR-A-00820. Existing Elevations and Section
- 260004-KTE-XX-XX-DR-A-01200. Proposed Elevations and Section
- 260004-KTE-XX-ZZ-DR-A-00810. Existing Gr. and 1st Floor Plans
- 260004-KTE-XX-ZZ-DR-A-00811. Existing 2nd Floor and Roof Plans
- 260004-KTE-XX-ZZ-DR-A-01120. Proposed Gr. and 1st Floor Plans
- 260004-KTE-XX-ZZ-DR-A-01121. Proposed 2nd Floor and Roof Plans



▲ AERIAL IMAGE - the site as existing



1.2. 3D Aerial Images



▲ AERIAL 3D - Facing north (indicative boundary)



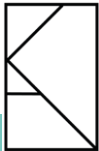
▲ AERIAL 3D - Facing west (indicative boundary)



▲ AERIAL 3D - Facing south (indicative boundary)



▲ AERIAL 3D - Facing east (indicative boundary)



2. SITE LOCATION AND APPLICATION CONTEXT

The site is 329sqm and is within the administrative area of Wokingham Borough Council in the Hillside Ward area. This site is currently occupied by a two-storey semi detached residential dwelling, of traditional construction.

The site is situated on Harcourt Drive, nearby to the University of Reading approximately 0.5 miles (0.8 km) to the north a 12 minute walk, and approx. 2.5 miles (2km) south of Reading town centre.

The site lies to the south of the University of Reading and is situated in a large residential area dominated by two storey properties, which are a mixture of semi and detached properties with a variety of architectural styles. Various side, rear and loft extensions have been recently added to majority of the properties along Harcourt Drive. Some have been listed below.

The site is not situated in a conservation area, nor are there any statutory or locally listed buildings that might be adversely affected by the site's redevelopment.

The site is located within 300m of Reading Council's High Frequency 'Premier Route' bus service. This service provides high quality bus routes to and from Reading town centre and other local centre facilities.

Reading town centre provides a good array of connections to several key destinations in the South East and South West.

Relevant nearby planning history:

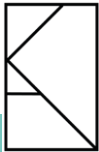
Site Address	Application No.	Decision	Description
39 Harcourt Drive	041885	Approve	Proposed single storey rear extension to dwelling to form conservatory
39 Harcourt Drive	241876	Approve	Householder application for proposed loft conversion with rear dormer extension plus the insertion of 2no. rooflights.
45 Harcourt Drive	210814	Approve	Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey front extension and two storey side and rear extensions with 3no. rooflights with internal alterations to existing dwelling following demolition of existing garage and conservatory.
37 Harcourt Drive	031416	Approve	Proposed two storey side extension to dwelling.
38 Harcourt Drive	152049	Approve	Householder application for the proposed erection of a two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, conversion of loft to create habitable accommodation to dwelling with rear dormer.
36 Harcourt Drive	141727	Approve	Proposed erection of single storey rear and first storey rear extensions.



▲ SITE CONTEXT - rings at 1km intervals



▲ SITE CONTEXT - rings at 200m intervals



3. SITE AS EXISTING

The existing building is a two-storey 4 bedroom house with a GIA of 146.9 m². There is a driveway to the front of the property, and a large landscaped garden to the rear.

The works have been finalised to create a rear dormer on the rear with bedroom accommodation under permitted development rights. However the below photographs do not show this as it has recently been implemented.



▲ EXISTING BUILDING - back garden and rear elevation



▲ EXISTING BUILDING - front entrance & elevation



▲ EXISTING BUILDING - rear elevation



▲ EXISTING BUILDING - rear car port



4. SITE CONTEXT

4.1. Scale

The scale of the existing building fits within the existing street scene, as the majority of buildings are 2 storey and have been extended similarly.

4.2. Form

The majority of buildings in the street are 2 storey semi detached houses with traditional pitched roofs, as well as being hipped at either side too.

4.3. Materiality

There are numerous brick buildings in the street scene, with some elements of roughcast render, as well as tile hanging.



▲
56 Harcourt Drive



▲
35 - 37 Harcourt Drive



▲
27 - 29 Harcourt Drive



▲
12 Harcourt Drive



▲
3D View facing east



5. PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT

The proposed extensions and change of use of the existing dwelling house to a large House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) represent a sustainable form of development that makes effective use of an existing residential property within the built-up area. The proposal would increase the range and choice of housing available within the borough.

The site occupies a sustainable location with convenient access to local services, employment opportunities and public transport, thereby reducing reliance on private car travel. The proposed extensions have been designed to remain subordinate to the host dwelling and to respect the character and appearance of the surrounding residential area, whilst providing suitable living accommodation for future occupants.

As such, the development accords with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework in promoting sustainable development, efficient use of land and delivery of a diverse housing stock, together with the relevant policies of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan relating to housing provision, design quality, residential amenity and sustainable development.

5.1. Relevant Wokingham Borough Policies

It appears that there are no specific adopted policies dealing exclusively with HMOs, therefore the key general housing, design, amenity etc policies have been considered.

Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010)

CP1 – Sustainable Development - Supports development that contributes to sustainable communities and makes efficient use of land

CP3 – General Principles for Development - Requires development to be in keeping with the character of the area and to provide a satisfactory living environment.

CP17 – Housing Delivery - Seeks to deliver housing to meet borough needs and supports additional housing provision.

Managing Development Delivery (2014)

CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development - Supports sustainable proposals consistent with the development plan

Wokingham Borough Design Guide SPD (2012)

The proposed extensions and conversion of the property to an HMO have been carefully designed to respect the character of Harcourt Drive, maintain the amenity of neighbouring residents, provide a high standard of accommodation for future occupants and deliver appropriate parking and access arrangements. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with the objectives and detailed guidance contained within the Wokingham Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.



5.2. Emerging Local Plan 2023 - 2040 (Policy H8)

Policy H8 from the Emerging Local Plan does set out requirements to be considered when converting dwellings into HMOs. The following considerations have been implemented when designing the proposals:

A. The original character is respected with the design by introducing sensitive extensions with sympathetic materials that are all found locally and are to match the existing building.

B. The rear garden provides extensive outdoor amenity (140sqm) for the future residents. Furthermore, the 45deg. sightlines from the neighbouring habitable windows have been carefully considered when designing the extensions.

C. The proposal is designed to current legislation (The Housing Act 2004) and provides a high standard of accommodation. All habitable rooms have natural lighting and ventilation, with partition walls achieving noise insulation.

D. Highway access is suitable for the proposal, providing 2 car parking spaces. The site is in close proximity to bus stops on Pepper Lane the 21 claret bus has regular services to Lower Early and Central Reading respectively. Short and long stay cycle parking has been proposed, in form of Sheffield stands to the front of the property and a cycle shed within the rear garden.

E. Adequate space has been shown for refuse disposal in form of a secured, covered bin store, located on the front drive, with capacity for three 240L wheelie bins.

F. A 50m catchment has been highlighted on drawing KTE-XX-00-DR-A-00801 which identifies 22 properties in total, with only one being a licensed HMO (no. 39). This proposed conversion increases the percentage of HMOs within this area to 0.9%.

Policy H8: Conversion and sub-division of buildings

1. Development proposals for the conversion or sub-division of buildings into self-contained flats or houses of multiple occupation, or their subsequent extension, will be supported within defined settlements provided that all the following criteria are met:
- a) The character and appearance of the existing building is respected in terms of materials, design, and principal architectural features;

b) The proposal would provide acceptable levels of residential amenity for future occupiers of the development, and would not unacceptably impact on the amenity of the occupiers of nearby properties;

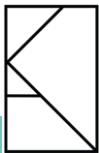
c) The proposal would provide an acceptable standard of accommodation, including adequate living space (including any communal areas), appropriate layout of rooms between units of accommodation, appropriate noise insulation, and a high quality internal and external environment including natural lighting and ventilation;

d) The proposal provides acceptable access to the highway, vehicle parking and secure cycle storage and parking. All parking should be provided on-site and provision offered relative to accessibility;

e) The proposal provides adequate on-site space for refuse and recycling storage facilities which is conveniently located for collection. Facilities should be contained within a covered storage area; and

f) The proposal would not, either individually or cumulatively, unduly dilute or harm an existing mixed and sustainable community through the significant overconcentration of flats or HMOs.

▲
Emerging Local Plan exert





6.4. Materials

The proposed materials are as follows:



- Walls -
- Brick and grout to match existing.

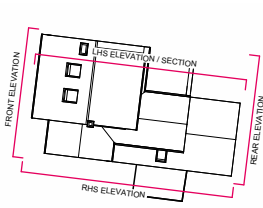


- Roof -
- Grey tiles to match existing

- Windows -
- New UPVC windows to match existing
 - Brick cills retained

Doors -
New UPVC doors to match existing

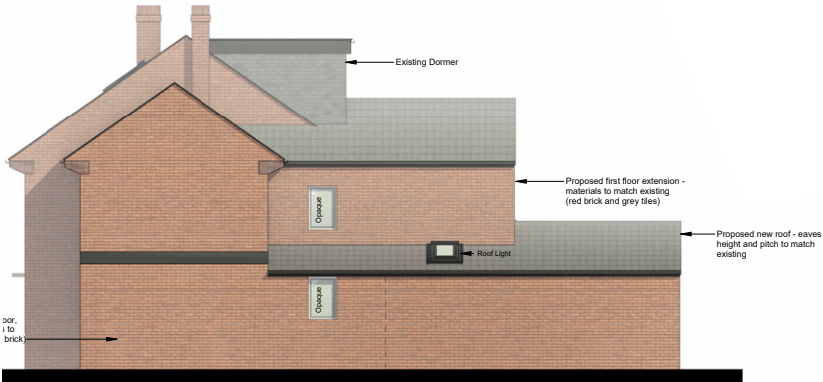
Rainwater goods -
Black UPVC rainwater goods.



▲ Proposed Front Elevation (not to scale)



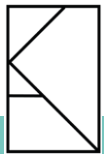
▲ Proposed Rear Elevation (not to scale)



▲ Proposed RHS Elevation (not to scale)



▲ Proposed Section (not to scale)



6.5. Parking

2 x vehicle parking spaces are proposed within the enlarged front drive of the property. All spaces are 2.5m x 5.0m

1 x cycle parking space is provided per bedroom, within a secured shed, at the rear of the garden. Additionally, two Sheffield stands are proposed at the front of the property for short stay use.

6.6. Waste storage

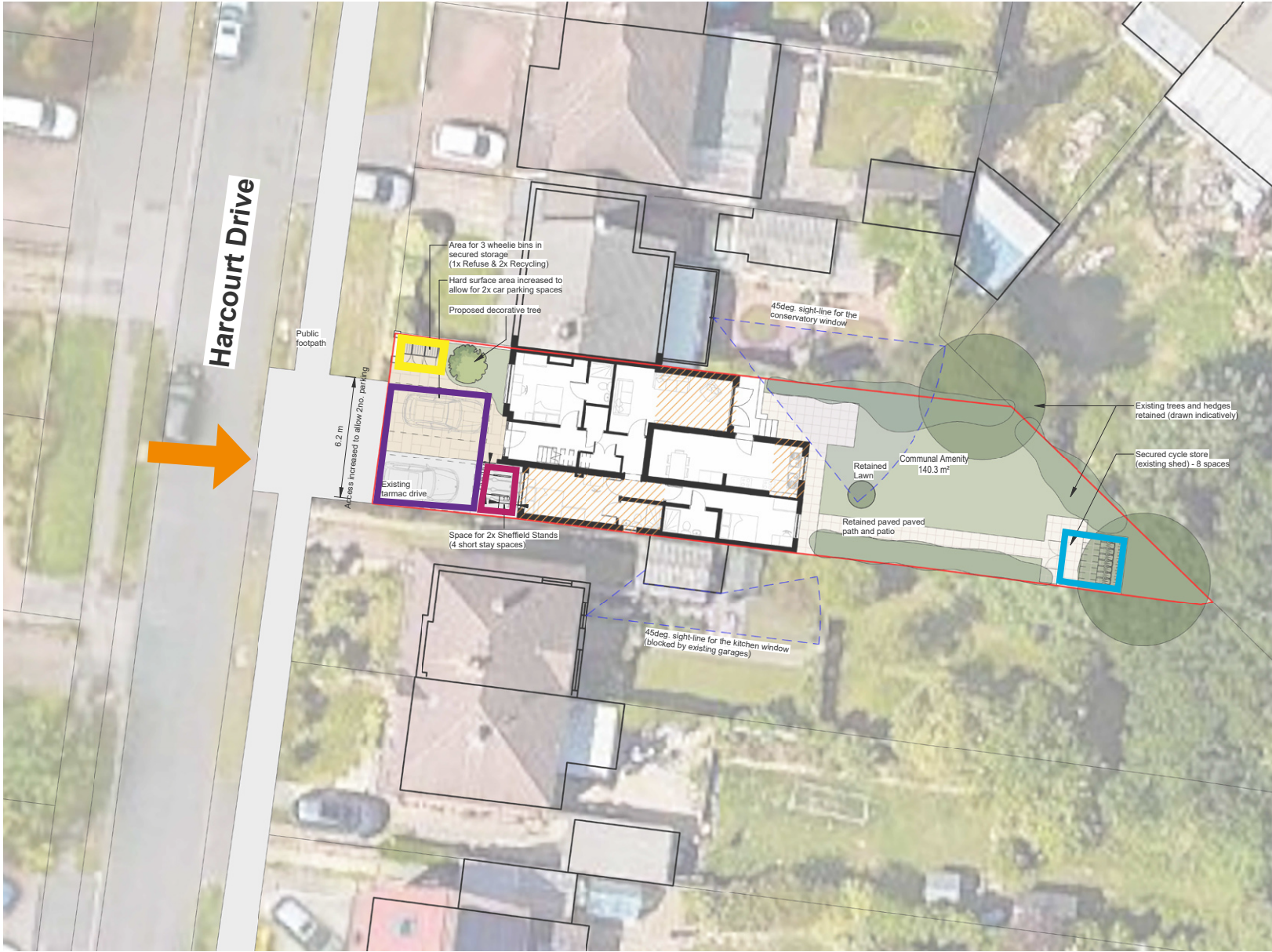
A secured, covered waste storage is provided in line with planning policy, and is located in front of the property in a dedicated bin store , within less than 10m from highways kerb. The store accommodates 3x240l wheelie bins for refuse and recycling.



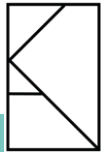
▲ Secured Bin Storage Box Example

KEY

- ➡ Site Entrance
- ▭ Bin Store
- ▭ Car Parking
- ▭ Cycle Parking - secure
- ▭ Cycle Parking - Sheffield stand



▲ Proposed Site Plan (not to scale)



6.7. Biodiversity Net Gain

The proposed extensions involve removal of existing hard surface areas only.

Only a small area of vegetation (approx. 20sqm) is proposed to be removed from the front garden to facilitate an increased driveway. Therefore, a BNG Calculation is not required for this application.

To mediate the loss of vegetation, one urban tree is proposed in the front garden.

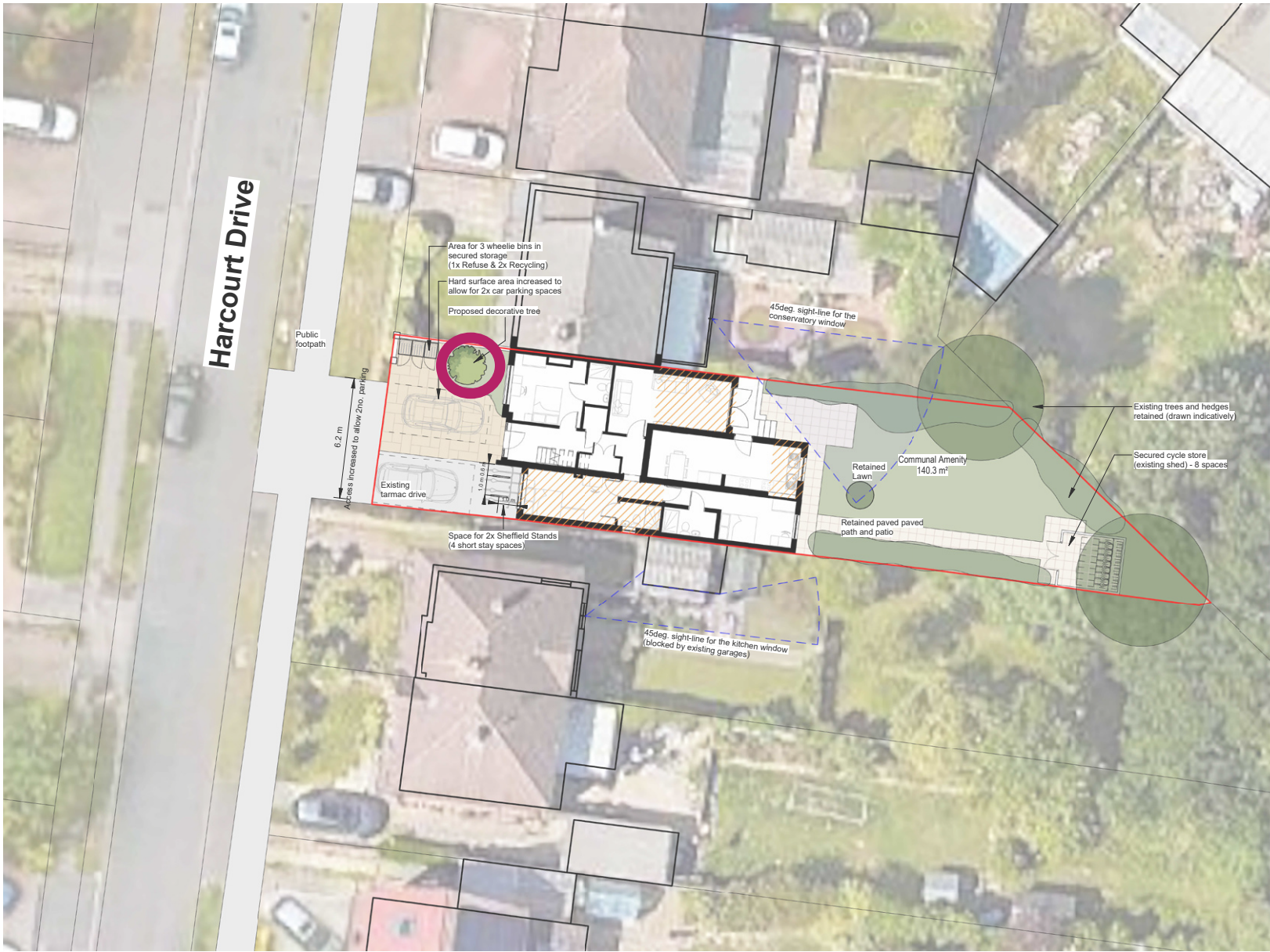
The proposed planting will be native and biodiversity enriching.

6.8. Bats Assessment

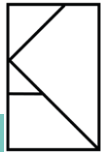
The works to the loft conversion have been carried out recently (2-4 weeks) under permitted development rights, and no sightings of bats have been reported. As bat sightings are legally required to be reported, we believe that a Bat Survey is not necessary to determine this application.

KEY

Proposed Tree



▲ Proposed Site Plan (not to scale)



7. LANDSCAPING PRINCIPLES

7.1. Planting

The existing planting within the rear garden will be retained, and one new tree is proposed within the front garden

7.2. Materials

All proposed hard landscaping is to be permeable paving.

7.3. Boundary treatments

The boundary treatment of the rear garden is to be retained and repaired, where needed.

A small section of the front dwarf brick wall is to be removed to facilitate an increased width for the front driveway

KEY



Proposed new tree (AMELANCI-IER 'ROBIN HILL, BETULA DALECARLICA, CARPINUS FRANS FONTAINE, MALUS 'EVERESTE' or similar)



Existing boundary treatment retained



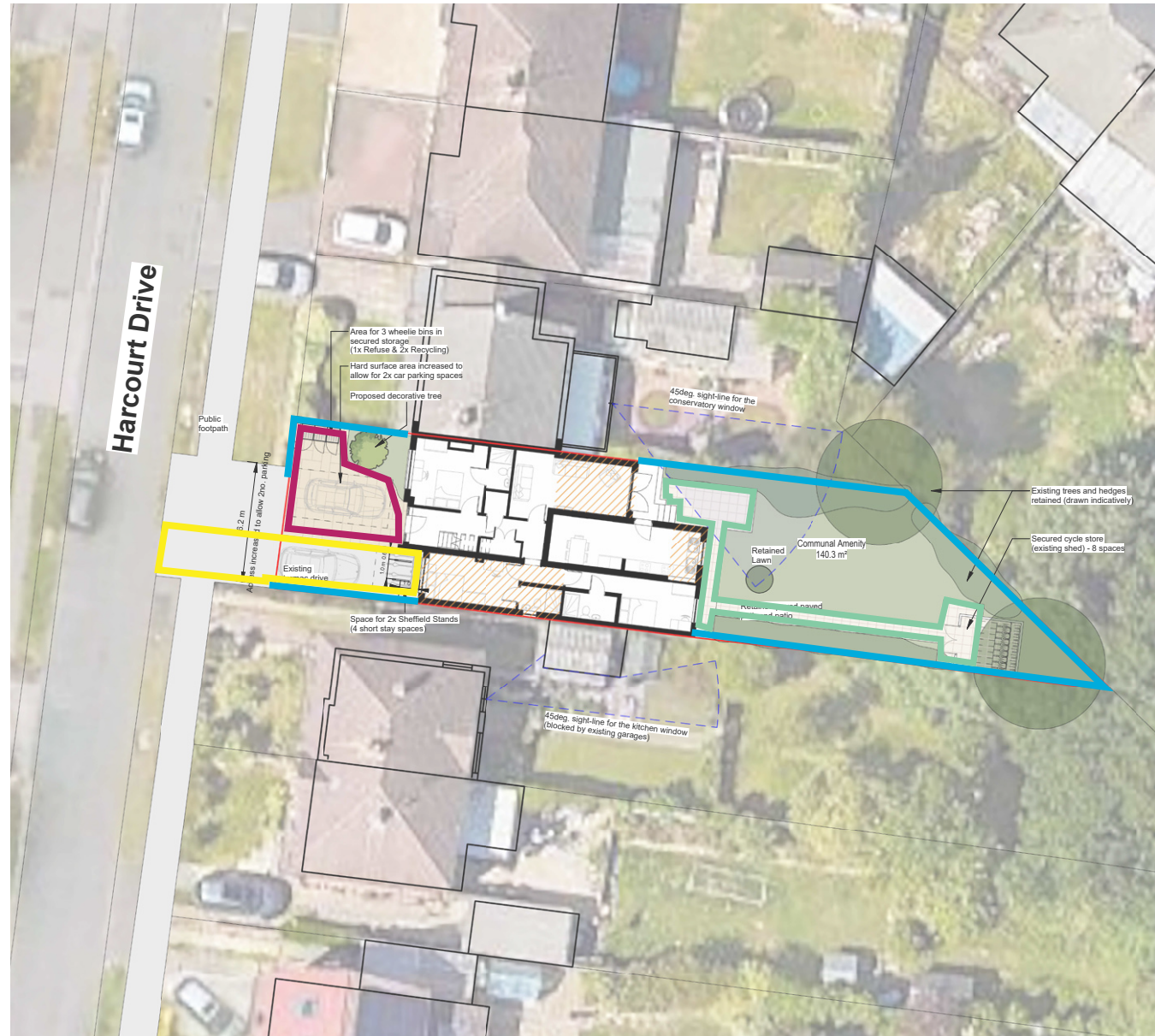
Surface retained (tarmac drive; concrete crazy paved side path)



Permeable concrete paving, colour brindle or similar, concrete block trim, colour charcoal or similar.



Retained concrete paving



▲ PROPOSED SITE PLAN (nts)



8. SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

The proposals are for the conversion and extension of an existing dwelling house to create a large HMO, which represents a significantly more sustainable type of development when compared to new build.

8.1. Energy / CO2

The proposals have been designed with energy conservation in mind. They will be built in line current building regulations (Approved Document L). Natural daylighting is optimised, and all rooms can be naturally ventilated. Energy efficient lighting will be used.

Generous cycle storage is proposed, both for those occupying it and visiting. This will encourage active transport, as well as the sites proximity to the bus stop.

8.2. Water

Potable water consumption will be minimised by specifying fixtures and fittings flow volume to less than 5-6L per minute which is within the highest efficiency rating under the unified water label.

Rain water storage tanks/butts will be incorporated into the scheme. These will be sized and located appropriately within the scheme with minimal visual impact.

Appliances with an efficient water usage rating will be specified.

8.3. Materials

Materials have been selected to match the existing. Where possible existing materials that are proposed to be removed will be re-used elsewhere on site

8.4. Surface water run-off

The proposals will not result in increased surface water run-off, due to the extensions being over existing impermeable hard landscaping. The proposed new areas of hard landscaping will be permeable.

8.5. Waste

Where possible, materials will be reused on site. Proposed window openings have been designed to be the same size as existing openings, in order that existing windows can be moved rather than disposed of.

Practical project management opportunities will be employed that will assist the process of site based waste management and will include:

- Ordering materials 'just in time' to minimise on site storage, potential damage and loss due to theft.
- Keeping accurate cutting lists and quantity surveys to avoid over ordering and subsequent restocking.
- Organising site facilities to encourage effective waste management

Ample on-site storage is provided for general waste, recycling, food waste and garden waste bins.

8.6. Pollution

Regardless of the construction method and whether this takes place on or off site it is inevitable some form of machinery will be required on site, which may require fossil fuels.

Where possible and viable to do swapping site machinery and generators with electric and bio-diesel alternatives will be carried out.

Having a suitable construction plan will eliminate the running time of machinery regardless of its source of fuel. Prior to any works being carried out the workers/contractors are to be briefed on the use of non renewables and there impacts with a suggested way forward on reducing any impacts during the process.

8.7. Health and Well-being

The development has been deigned to ensure that all habitable spaces have generous windows, and that users have private external amenity space. It is not anticipated that there will be any increase in noise.

8.8. Management

The site will be managed in an environmentally and socially considerate manner. A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be prepared prior to the commencement of works.

8.9. Ecology

The development will not result in the loss of any wildlife habitats, and the development will result in an increase in planting on the site.



9. TRANSPORT STATEMENT

9.1. Car parking

The proposal provides two off-street car parking spaces within the existing frontage of the site. The parking arrangement retains the ability for vehicles to enter and leave in a safe and controlled manner.

The proposed development seeks to provide an 8-bedroom large HMO in a highly sustainable location close to the University of Reading, local services and public transport facilities. Occupiers of HMOs in such locations typically demonstrate lower levels of car ownership than conventional family housing due to the accessibility of employment, education and local amenities by walking, cycling and public transport.

The provision of two off-street parking spaces is therefore considered appropriate to the scale and nature of the proposal and is not expected to result in a material increase in on-street parking demand.

Both existing and proposed driveway arrangement accommodates 2 car parking spaces, therefore there will be no increase in traffic/journeys.

9.2. Vehicular Access

The development will continue to utilise the existing vehicular access from Harcourt Drive, albeit with a slight increase of its width. Visibility for drivers entering and leaving the site is suitable, with at least 100m clear distance in both ways.

With no increase in traffic/journeys, the scale of the development is therefore unlikely to have a significant impact on the operation of the local highway network.

9.3. Cycle parking

The scheme promotes sustainable travel through the provision of high-quality cycle parking facilities. Secure covered cycle storage for up to eight bicycles is proposed within the existing outbuilding, equating to one space per bedroom. In addition, visitor cycle parking is provided by means of two Sheffield stands located to the front of the property.

The level of provision exceeds what would typically be expected for a development of this scale and reflects the site's proximity to the University of Reading, local employment opportunities, shops and public transport services. The proposal will therefore encourage cycling as a realistic and attractive alternative to private car use.

9.4. Public transport

The site occupies a highly sustainable location within Earley, approximately 0.8km (12 minutes' walk) from the University of Reading campus and approximately 2km from Reading town centre. A range of day to day services, employment opportunities and educational facilities are accessible on foot or by bicycle.

Bus stops on Pepper Lane, Elm Road and nearby Shinfield Road are located within a short walking distance of the site and provide regular services to Reading town centre, Reading railway station, Lower Earley and other destinations throughout the borough. Reading Station offers frequent rail services to London, the Thames Valley, the South West and the wider national rail network. Given the site's accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport, future occupiers will have genuine alternatives to private car travel. The proposal therefore represents a sustainable form of development consistent with local and national transport objectives.



10. CONCLUSION

The proposed development at 41 Harcourt Drive will provide a high quality 8 bedroom House in Multiple Occupation through the sensitive extension and adaptation of an existing dwelling. The scheme makes efficient use of a sustainable residential site in close proximity to the University of Reading, local services, public transport connections and employment opportunities, helping to meet an identified demand for shared accommodation in the area.

The scale, appearance and materials of the proposed extensions have been carefully designed to complement the existing dwelling and character of the surrounding street scene. Adequate private and communal amenity space is retained, together with appropriate levels of car parking, cycle storage and refuse provision. The proposal will not result in any unacceptable impacts on neighbouring residential amenity, highway safety or the wider character of the area.

Overall, the proposals represent a sustainable form of development that accords with the objectives of national and local planning policy. The scheme will deliver high quality accommodation in an accessible location while making effective use of an existing residential property, and should therefore be supported and granted planning permission.



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