

PLANNING REF : 261625
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 32 Harcourt Drive
: Reading, Berkshire
: RG6 5TJ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Steve Green
DATE SUBMITTED : 23/07/2026

COMMENTS:

I wish to object to the above planning application on the grounds that it has not adequately demonstrated compliance with Emerging Policy H8 and has failed to provide sufficient evidence regarding the impact of the proposed development on parking, residential amenity and the character of the area.

1. Parking and Highway Impact

The proposal seeks to intensify the use of an existing four-bedroom family dwelling into an eight-bedroom HMO whilst providing only two off-street parking spaces. The application assumes that future occupiers will have lower levels of car ownership because of the property's proximity to the University of Reading, local services and public transport. However, no parking survey, transport assessment, car ownership study or evidence of existing parking conditions has been provided to support this assumption. The applicant concludes that there will be "no increase in traffic/journeys" because two parking spaces currently exist and two parking spaces will remain. This is not, in itself, evidence that parking demand will remain unchanged following the intensification of occupation from a family dwelling to an eight-bedroom HMO. In the absence of robust evidence, the application has not demonstrated that:

Two parking spaces are sufficient for an eight-bedroom HMO.

Overspill parking will not occur on the street.
Existing residents will not experience increased parking pressure.
Highway safety and residential amenity will remain unaffected.

I therefore request that the Council gives careful consideration to the adequacy of the proposed parking provision and requires evidence-based justification before reaching a decision.

2. HMO Concentration Assessment and Policy H8

The applicant relies heavily on a 50-metre catchment area to demonstrate compliance with Emerging Policy H8, stating that only one licensed HMO exists within this area. However, the application provides no explanation as to why a 50-metre radius has been selected, whether this reflects the wider character of the neighbourhood, or whether alternative assessment areas were considered. The Council's HMO register identifies other licensed HMOs within the wider local area, including elsewhere on Harcourt Drive and nearby roads.

While I acknowledge that these properties may fall outside the applicant's chosen 50-metre radius, the application does not demonstrate why that radius should be regarded as the appropriate measure for assessing cumulative impact or neighbourhood character. I therefore request that the Council independently assess HMO concentration and cumulative impact within the surrounding area rather than relying solely upon the applicant's selected catchment boundary.

3. Impact on the Character of the Area

Harcourt Drive is predominantly characterised by family housing.

Although the proposed extensions may be visually acceptable, the planning impact arises from the significantly increased intensity of occupation.

The proposal would transform a four-bedroom family dwelling into an eight-bedroom HMO with multiple unrelated occupants, shared facilities and a substantially different pattern of occupation. The application does not adequately assess the potential impact of this intensified use on:

Residential character.

Day-to-day activity levels.

Comings and goings throughout the day and evening.

Noise and disturbance associated with a larger number of occupants.

Demand for on-street parking.

These matters are relevant considerations when determining whether the proposal respects the character and amenity of the surrounding residential area.

4. Conclusion

The application has not provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the proposed eight-bedroom HMO can operate without adverse impacts on parking conditions, residential amenity or the character of the area.

In particular:

The parking provision appears insufficient for the scale of occupation proposed.

The conclusions regarding car ownership and parking demand are unsupported by evidence.

The HMO concentration assessment relies on a narrowly defined catchment area without justification.

The cumulative impact of intensifying a family dwelling into an eight-bedroom HMO has not been adequately assessed.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Council refuse the application unless these concerns can be satisfactorily addressed through further evidence and assessment.