



Statement of Community Involvement

Amethyst Lane, Reading
May 2023



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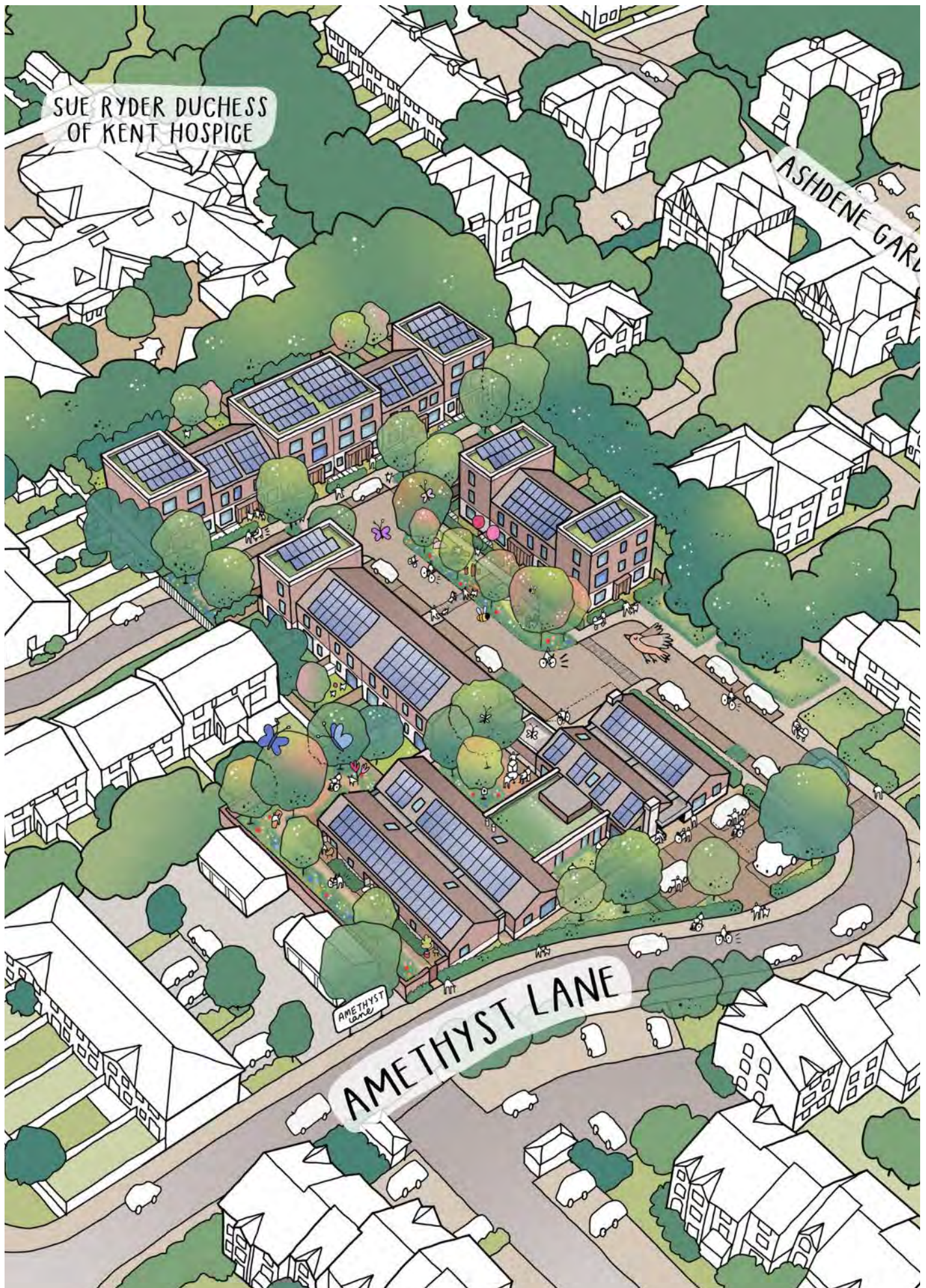
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Proposed street view of Building A

1 INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared by HTA Design LLP in support of a full planning application submitted to Reading Borough Council by Reading Borough Council (hereafter referred to as 'the Applicant') for the development of Amethyst Lane in Reading (hereafter referred to as 'the Site').

This Statement of Community Involvement should be read in conjunction with other supporting documents submitted with the planning application, including the Town Planning Statement prepared by HTA and the Design and Access Statement prepared by HTA which explain the Proposed Development in more detail and relate it to the surrounding context and planning policy framework for the Site.

1.1 The Site

Amethyst Lane is a 0.59 hectare site located east of Prospect Park, in Reading's suburbs west of the town centre. The site is vacant following the closure of two day care centres, and is not currently accessible. For the purposes of this application, the site comprises the following:

- Reading Local Plan (2019) Allocated Site WR3n Amethyst Lane

It is a well-connected site, located near to Liebenrood Road and Prospect Park. The surroundings are primarily residential, with a mixture of suburban housing and apartments of 2 and 3 storeys. The site is accessed via Amethyst Lane, an existing cul-de-sac with no through connections.

The site forms site allocation WR3n in the adopted 2019 Reading Borough Council Local Plan. It is allocated for residential development, providing

an indicative housing capacity of 32-48 net additional dwellings. There are no other site specific designations but the site is located north of Bath Road and cycle route (422), and a cycle route (R50) through Prospect Park.

Site Allocation WR3n Amethyst Lane outlines that any development scheme should pay regard to:

- Include appropriate back-to-back separation from existing residential; and
- Take account of the potential impact on water infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required



Existing Site Plan (NTS)



Existing Site Photography - Looking north towards the closed Day Care Centre

1.2 Structure and Purpose of this Report

This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared by HTA Design LLP to provide an assessment of community and local stakeholder engagement considerations relevant to the Proposed Development having regard to the national, regional and local planning policy framework as follows:

Development Plan policies contained in:

- Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)
- Reading Borough Policies Map (November 2019)

Material considerations, including:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021);
- Planning practice guidance (PPG);
- Reading Borough Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents;
- Reading Borough Statement of Community Involvement (20214)

The following sections of this statement provide the following:

- Consultation Context
- Consultation Objectives
- Consultation Methodology
- Consultation with Local Community and Stakeholders
- Conclusion

1.3 The Proposals

The proposals relate to 21 family homes and a 6 bedroom respite care facility. The development provides all 21 dwellings as affordable rented accommodation. The proposals extend the existing street network, arranging new terraced homes around a biodiverse swale street. The Respite Care Facility is a low rise building, well integrated into the domestic setting. The key statistics of the new proposals are as follows:

The Proposals	
Total No. of Homes	21 homes + a 6 bedroom Respite Facility
No. of Wheelchair Adaptable Homes	6 bedroom wheelchair accessible Respite Care Facility
Proposed Habitable Rooms	96
Site Area	0.59 ha
Density Homes/Ha	35.7 Homes/Ha
Density Habitable Rooms/Ha	163 Habitable Rooms/Ha
Tenure	100% affordable
Housing Mix	3 bed (x18); 4 Bed (x3) (not including respite care facility)
Building Heights	1, 2 and 3 storeys
Biodiverse Green Roofs	521 sqm
Public Amenity	213.4 sqm
Residents' Shared Gardens	288.7 sqm
Residents' Private Amenity	1367.7sqm
Car Parking Spaces	28
Electric Vehicle Charging	100% active charging
Residential Cycle Parking Spaces	42
Biodiversity Net Gain	+11.39% (including offsite measures)
Sustainability	Net Zero Carbon in operation. ASHPs, PVs, Air Permeability of 1m3/hm2 (@50 Pa), Water Consumption <95l per person per day

2 ENGAGEMENT

2.0 Engagement Context

Community engagement is an integral part of the pre-planning application process. It not only helps inform the design of the proposals, but it also provides local residents and other stakeholders the opportunity to raise concerns and issues.

The Localism Act (2011)

The Localism Act (2011) sets out how the government intends to devolve the decision-making process to the neighbourhood, Local Authority level, and empower local communities. The Act includes a clause which requires developers to consult with local residents living in the vicinity of the proposed development site and report on the pre-application consultation process which has taken place.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Furthermore, the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) lays down clear guidance on good practice, stating that early engagement has the *'significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties'* and that *'good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community'*.

Adopted national planning policy sets out that: *'Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot'* (NPPF, 2021).

Reading Borough Council

The Council has its own adopted Statement of Community Involvement (adopted 2014) document which sets out how the Council will engage with the community when formulating policies and making planning decisions.

Reading Borough Council Housing Team

The Council champions best practice engagement techniques and recognises the need for good quality engagement with existing residents and the local community. The Council's dedicated Housing team lead on this.

HTA Design LLP

From its earliest beginnings HTA have been pioneers of techniques for community engagement in the design of housing environments that have subsequently been absorbed into mainstream practice. When working with existing communities the experience is invaluable. They are often our most informed collaborators, knowing the places where they live more intimately than anyone else. Wherever possible, HTA engages with residents in innovative and interesting ways to ensure that the process is valued by all participants.

Amethyst Lane Development

The site forms site allocation WR3n in the adopted 2019 Reading Borough Council Local Plan. It is allocated for residential development, providing an indicative housing capacity of 32-48 net additional dwellings. There are no other site specific designations but the site is located north of Bath Road and cycle route (422), and a cycle route (R50) through Prospect Park. The local community are generally supportive of this vacant brownfield site being redeveloped by the Council for new affordable housing.

2.1 Engagement Objectives

Extensive pre-application consultation has taken place with the Reading Borough Council, local stakeholders, and local residents prior to the submission of this planning application, from late 2022 and up to submission in May 2023. This process allowed the opportunity for engagement, review and refinement of the proposals, and successfully raised the overall awareness and discussion over the development of the site for the benefit of the wider neighbourhood. To date, detailed consultation has been undertaken by the Reading Borough Council, and the Design Team, led by HTA Design LLP.

The overall objectives of the consultation engagement process have been as follows:

- To raise awareness of the development process for Amethyst Lane with residents and neighbours within the local community;
- To develop an understanding of key issues affecting the site and the surrounding area;
- To engage with local residents and stakeholders to ensure they have the opportunity to give their feedback and discuss their views on the emerging designs;
- To record and respond to feedback received during the pre-application process;
- To produce this Statement of Community Involvement to accompany the planning application for the Planning Application for Amethyst Lane.

2.2 Engagement Methodology

Strategic Engagement Approach

From the inception stage of the project the Council's Housing team and the Design Team have been committed to a varied engagement strategy for the development of Amethyst Lane.

Amethyst Lane Community Engagement Plan

From the inception of the project, a Community Engagement Plan was developed for the proposals. Devised as a 6 month pre-application programme of regular activities and events running from December 2022 to May 2023 in parallel with the design evolution of the proposals, and aligning with the start of the formal planning application process.

The Plan was reviewed and revised regularly at Design Team Meetings and specific meetings held with the Council's Housing and Communications team to develop detailed strategies and material for each engagement event. See overleaf for further detail.

Access to Live Engagement Events

The Engagement Plan has placed a high level of importance on including interactive engagement events that allow residents and stakeholders to hear first hand how the proposals have developed; to ask questions; provide ideas and suggestions; and to understand the longer term process and project timetable.

Online and written updates supported a main in-person public exhibition, alongside a workshop with existing respite facility carers,

Access to Printed Information

A printed newsletter was distributed to neighbours in the local community at the beginning of the pre-application process and at planning submission, to provide residents with the opportunity to engage, highlighting responses to their feedback and the nature of the final proposals.

Access to Digital Information

Providing residents and neighbours with easy access to digital information has been an integral part of this engagement process. The Council have maintained regular updates on the RBC web page, along with design updates and contact details.

<https://consult.reading.gov.uk/dens/amethyst-lane-online-consultation/>

Post-Planning Submission

It is envisaged that the engagement process led by the Council will continue after planning submission. Printed and digital information have continued to be valuable media for disseminating information widely across Amethyst Lane and to the wider neighbourhood. Information updates to residents and stakeholders will continue following planning submission.

Engagement Coverage

Those local organisations, stakeholders and residents that have been engaged with throughout this pre-application process have included:

- Neighbouring Residents
- Ward Councillors
- Lead Councillors
- Reading Borough Council officers (RBC)
- Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Reading Design Review Panel
- Thames Valley Police

2022

Community Engagement Plan

Amethyst Lane & Dwyer Road, Reading



Note Title

Amethyst Lane & Dwyer Road, Reading – Community Engagement Plan

Amethyst Lane & Dwyer Road, Reading Community Engagement Plan 2022/23		
November 2022		
	Councillors' Briefing 14 November 2022	Design Update Interactive design briefing on the initial proposals.
December 2022		
	Community Engagement Strategy By Fri 9 December 2022	Community Engagement Plan, project branding, messaging & website Agree programme, dates and venue, along with overall project branding to distinguish the two sites.
	Community Newsletters #1 Officers' Sign-Off December 2022	Officers' & Comms Team Sign-Off Digital issue of final draft newsletter. Within 1 week prior to mail-out to allow for final collation and printing.
	Community Newsletters #1 Members' Sign-Off December 2022	Members' Sign-Off Digital issue of final newsletter. Within 1 week prior to mail-out to allow for final collation and printing.
January 2023		
	Community Newsletter #1 Mail out by: Wed 4 January – Dwyer	Residents' Newsletter #1 Mail-out to immediate surrounding neighbours and website update. Promoting community drop-in event in January, plus contact details and website. Update website to promote of event.
	Community Drop-In Event Posters January 2023	Posters Pin up posters near to sites and at venues min 1 week before events.
	Community Drop-In Event Officers' Sign-Off January 2023	Officers' & Comms Team Sign-Off Digital issue of final draft exhibition boards. Within 1 week prior to event to allow for final collation and printing.
	Community Drop-In Event Members' Sign-Off January 2023	Members' Sign-Off Digital issue of final exhibition boards. Within 1 week prior to event to allow for final collation and printing.
	Event: Dwyer Road Community Drop-In Event Wed 25 January 2023 (4.30-7.00p.m)	Manor Primary School, Ashampstead Road RG30 3LJ HTA to prepare set of exhibition boards outlining the existing site, key design principles, proposed layout, landscape strategy and sustainability features. Questionnaires available to residents to complete at the event.
	Event: Dwyer Road Community Outreach Workshop Wed 25 January 2023	Manor Primary School, Year 5 Students Workshop Design workshop with primary school students creating future hoarding artwork and presentation about the

	(1.15-2.30pm.)	redevelopment proposals.
February 2023		
	Community Newsletter #1 February - Amethyst	Residents' Newsletter #1 Mail-out to immediate surrounding neighbours and website update. Promoting community drop-in event in March, plus contact details and website. Update website to promote of event.
March 2023		
	Event : Amethyst Lane Community Drop-In Event Tues 7 March 2023 (4.00-7.00pm)	YMCA. Marlborough House, Parkside Road RG30 2DD HTA to prepare set of exhibition boards outlining the existing site, key design principles, proposed layout, landscape strategy and sustainability features. Questionnaires available to residents to complete at the event.
	Event : Amethyst Lane Community Drop-In Event Tues 7 March 2023 (1.00-2.00pm)	Preview for Respite Carers / Users Preview exhibition for RBC Adult Social Care team and respite carers/ users at Whitley Wood facility.
April 2023		
	Planning Applications Officers' Sign-Off April 2023	Officers' Sign-Off Digital issue of final draft drawings and reports. prior to submission to allow for final collation and submission.
	Planning Applications Members' Sign-Off April 2023	Members' Sign-Off Digital issue of final drawings and reports. prior to submission to allow for final collation and submission.
May 2023		
	Submit Planning Applications Fri 5 May 2023	Submit Planning Applications Website update & stakeholders informed.
	Community Newsletters #2 Officers' Sign-Off May 2023	Officers' & Comms Team Sign-Off Digital issue of final draft newsletter. Within 1 week prior to mail-out to allow for final collation and printing.
	Community Newsletters #2 Members' Sign-Off May 2023	Members' Sign-Off Digital issue of final newsletter. Within 1 week prior to mail-out to allow for final collation and printing.
	Community Newsletters #2 May 2023 (date TBC)	Residents' Newsletters #2 Mail-out to immediate surrounding neighbours and website update. Feedback of community drop-in events and design update upon submission of planning applications.

2.3 Engagement with Residents & Local Stakeholders

Pre-Application Meetings

November 2022 - April 2023

Pre-Application Process

Summarised here are the preferred design options presented during the course of the pre-application process, along with key feedback established from each meeting/stakeholder.

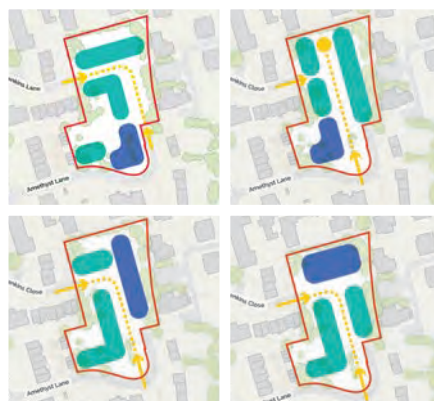
The design development has been informed by this feedback, in conjunction with that from other stakeholders, and developing technical information such as site survey information and building services strategies.

Numerous other studies not shown here, examined alternative building typologies, and additional tests of scale and building arrangement.

Feedback:

Key items of design development in response to officer and Design Panel feedback include;

- Rearrangement of on site and internal layout of Respite Care Facility in response to CQC feedback
- Removal of east/west perimeter tree planting to avoid maintenance issues and create more space for residential amenity
- 'Straightening' of eastern terrace to increase rear garden sizes
- Introduction of side entry homes to activate end gables of terraces
- Additional parking bays and redline boundary extended to



Early Concept Layouts plans



Preliminary Scoping Meeting



Stage 2 Developed plan



Stage 3 Developed plan

- achieve on site visitor parking bays
- Rearrangement of northern terrace to create 2 and 3 storey stepped massing, with a positive view termination at end of new street
- Increased pitch roof to 30 degree pitch, to improve relationship with 3 storey elements and PV provision
- Inclusion of offsite mitigation measures to compensate for tree canopy loss
- Amends to planting types and extents to achieve 10% Biodiversity Net Gain
- Green roofs included on all flat roof properties.

- Amends to architectural detailing, in line with design comments e.g. brick banding depth.

Event #1: Councillors' Briefing (online via Microsoft Teams)

14 November 2022 (16:00pm- 17:00pm)

Briefing Format & Agenda

An interactive briefing to Reading Council Members held online via Teams. The presentation had also been issued in advance. This Planning and Design Update addressed the project brief, planning policy context, site context, pre-application consultation to date, and an overview of the preferred design option. The team also gave a summary of the timeline to planning submission, including the key engagement events such as Design Review Panel presentations and Public Exhibitions.

Briefing Attendance

Attended by 5 Councillors (see below), and hosted by the Council's Housing and Adult Social Care teams, plus HTA's architects and landscape architects.

- Jason Brock (Leader of the Council);
- Deborah Edwards (Deputy Mayor);
- Tony Page (Lead Councillor, Climate Strategy and Transport)
- Ellie Emberson (Lead Councillor, Housing)
- John Ennis (Councillor, Lead Councillor Adult Social Care)

Feedback & Questions

Councillors raised some of the following feedback points:

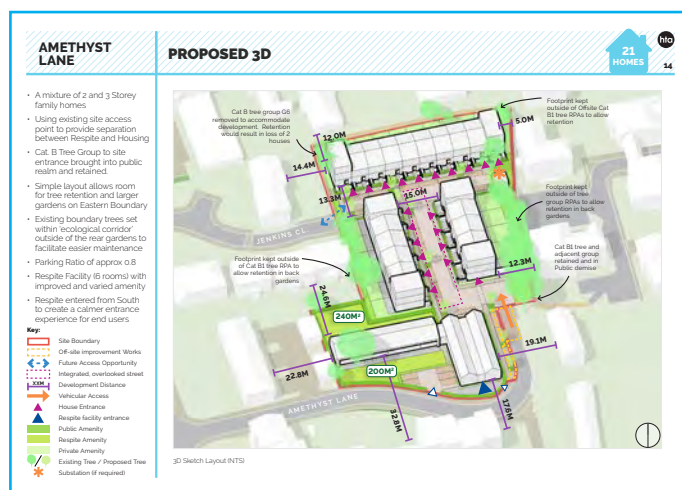
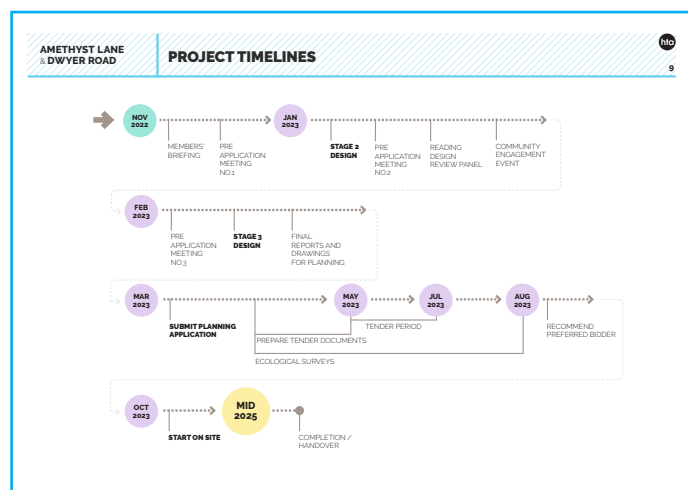
- Recommendations to hold engagement events as early as possible, ideally in January 2023
- Considerations for procurement process and

possible 2 stage tender to enable faster delivery.

- Members commented that the proposals 'look good', noting that 'blending in to make a community' was important, and acknowledging that the site constraints looked tight.
- Noted that providing extra affordable family housing in the wider Southcote area was welcomed.
- Important not to 'close off' the site, allowing ease of access in / out of the site.
- Suggestion of possible additional building height to the north of the site to increase floor space or numbers of homes. RBC officers noted that additional 4 bedroom homes might not be suitable in terms of housing management and that the density of the site may have reached capacity.
- Members commended the retention of existing mature trees within the site layout.
- Supported the provision of on-site informal communal play.
- All supported the proposed location for the single storey Respite Centre.

Design Evolution Response

The briefing feedback helped to consolidate some of the key moves in terms of urban design and project brief objectives ahead of the forthcoming Design Review Panel and Public Exhibition. The organising design principles for the building typologies received support.



Secured by Design Engagement (online via Teams)

21 December 2022 (11.00am-12.00noon)

Briefing Format & Agenda

Initial contact was established with the local Crime Prevention Design Advisor with Thames Valley Police in December 2022 to notify the police of the development proposals. A full pack of design proposals, including concept plans and massing were issued in December 2022, with a follow-up briefing held via Teams. A presentation was given to officers to outline the building and landscape proposals.

Briefing Attendance

Attended by PC Joanna Haley and PS Kevin.Cox (Crime Prevention Design Advisors). Hosted by HTA's architects.

Feedback & Questions

Officers provided the following feedback on the proposals in terms of Secured by Design:

- Ensure active frontages e.g. entrances oriented to face new streets on all key corners
- Improve proximity of respite centre bin store from residential properties

Design Evolution Response

The briefing feedback at this early design stage ensured proposals could adapt to address the concerns raised;

- Robust boundary treatments defined; 2.1m high brick walls to public realm, 1.8m high fences between private gardens. Planting and hedges to public boundaries provide additional defensible treatment to homes
- Side entry front doors to specific homes types increase overlooking and activity of green spaces
- Inclusion of rear and side facing glazing further improves overlooking of the public realm.

Following Briefing

It was agreed to confirm to officers when the planning application had been submitted, and that officers would provide any comments as part of the application process, noting the responses to their feedback.

Community Newsletter January 2023

Distributed February 2023

Community Newsletter

At the beginning of the engagement process it was agreed that awareness of the design process and upcoming in-person consultation events should be circulated to local residents. A two page printed newsletter was shared as an invitation to an in-person consultation and feedback event, to direct residents to online information and contact details, as well as a brief overview of aspirations for the site.

Newsletter Distribution

The printed questionnaire was distributed to neighbours and hosted on the project specific website.

Feedback & Questions

Over the course of the pre-application period, the local community were able to provide feedback directly to the housing team via email. Online feedback was received following the in-person consultation and is summarised in later sections of this report.

The redevelopment of
Amethyst Lane

Reading Borough Council
Working better with you

Community Newsletter
February 2023

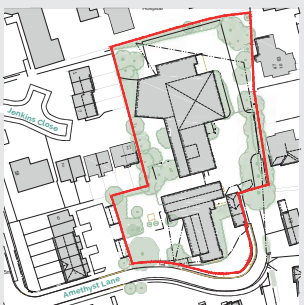
An invitation

You are invited to:
An open event for the proposed redevelopment of the former Day Centre site north of Amethyst Lane.

Where:
The YMCA, 34 Parkside Road RG30 2DD

When:
Tuesday 7th March 2023 (4-7pm)

We will be available to explain the proposals and answer any questions you may have. HTA, the project architects, will also be on hand.
We hope you are able to come along.



Amethyst Lane Existing Site Plan

The proposals

Reading Borough Council owns the former Day Centre site north of Amethyst Lane and is seeking to sustainably redevelop this vacant brownfield site to create much-needed affordable family housing and a new Adult Social Care Respite Facility to support people with learning disabilities.

Designs are being developed ahead of submitting a planning application in Spring 2023. The project team are engaging with the local community and stakeholders now to help shape the emerging proposals. The new homes will be 100% affordable and managed by the Council. All homes and the respite facility will be energy efficient, highly sustainable, and constructed with high quality materials. The landscape will include biodiverse planting, new trees and natural play features.



Proposed 3D massing for new family housing & Respite Facility



Existing view of site from Amethyst Lane

The redevelopment of
Amethyst Lane

Your feedback

We welcome your feedback on the proposals prior to the submission of a planning application in Spring 2023. Please go to the web page below for regular updates, and come along to the community open event in March. The proposals will be available to view and comment on the web page from the 5th March to 20th March. Your comments and ideas will help to shape this sustainable development.

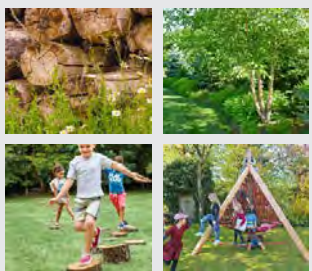


Proposed site plan showing 21 family houses & Respite Facility with separate entrances

Healthy & Sustainable Living

The proposals are seeking to improve the health and wellbeing of both new and existing residents, and are targeting the highest sustainability standards. We have proposed the following:

- A wide range of adaptable homes designed to be flexible to meet residents' needs.
- A biodiverse natural environment promoting wildlife.
- New native tree planting & sustainable drainage.
- Natural play elements for all ages.
- Attractive, well-lit green streets.
- Integrated secure bicycle storage.
- Electric vehicle charging points.
- Homes designed to be energy efficient & low water use.



SOME KEY FACTS

The proposals include the following mix of affordable homes & design features.

- 21 family houses (3 & 4 bedroom homes).
- 6 bedroom Respite Facility with communal facilities & gardens.
- Low-rise: mostly 1 & 2 storeys with 3 storey larger houses at ends of terraces.
- 19 parking spaces for the new houses and 7 parking spaces for the Respite Facility.
- Secure bicycle storage spaces for every home.

For further information visit:
www.reading.gov.uk/AmethystLane

The web page is live from the 5th March to the 20th March

INVESTING IN YOUR COMMUNITY
New homes and Respite Facility coming - Get Involved

Reading Borough Council
Working better with you

Event #1: Respite Drop In Exhibition Preview

Tuesday 7 March 2023 (1:00pm-2:00pm)

Exhibition Fomat & Agenda

In March this was the first interactive event, held in person at the existing respite facility in Whitley Wood Lane, Reading. The purpose of the exhibition was to introduce the HTA team to current respite users and staff, share the project objectives and brief, as well as the designs so far. The event also allowed the HTA architectural team to have an in-person review of current facilities. The attendees were invited to give feedback on the proposals so far, to help guide the design development.

Exhibition Attendance

Attended by 2 no. staff members, 2 no. carers and HTA's architectural team.

Feedback & Questions

The attendees raised some of the following feedback points:

- Nice to have option to sit outside of a respite

bedroom with patio doors open, but need to control security

- Need to provide shade from sunlight
- Monitor call system in all bedrooms required
- Nice for wheelchair users to be able to transfer from a wheelchair to a comfy armchair that provides support
- Need space for x1 shower bed
- Respite users enjoy TV, music and sensory lights in bedrooms
- Positive feedback on emerging designs and layout of the new building

Design Evolution Response

HTA collated the responses and these points fed into the emerging design of the proposals. This also prompted further conversations with RBC's Adult Care and Health team and CQC consultation during the design process.



Photographs from the existing respite facility at Whitley Wood Lane

Event #2: Community Exhibition

Tuesday 7 March 2023 (4:00pm-7:00pm)

Exhibition Format & Agenda

In March, this was an interactive public event, held in person at the local YMCA Parkside Cafe,. The cafe is local to the site (approximately 6 minutes walk north). The purpose of the Community Exhibition was to introduce the HTA team, share the project objectives and brief,

Printed newsletters detailing event location, date and time were distributed by post to all homes within an agreed area surrounding the site, and the events were publicised on the Council's website.

The purpose of the exhibition was to provide an illustrated presentation introducing the site, background to redevelopment, constraints, opportunities, current design options, landscape proposals and the timeline to planning submission. A proposed site plan was presented and the benefits of the proposals clearly outlined, with time for questions and answers.

Feedback forms were available for all attendees to record their thoughts, as well as recording feedback received through conversation and discussion

Workshop Attendance

7 local resident attendees, RBC Housing Team, HTA's architectural team.

Feedback & Questions

Attendees raised some of the following feedback points:

- Worried there is not enough car parking
- Neighbour in Jenkins Close worried about overlooking into property
- Appears as though road connects into Jenkins Close creating a 'rat run' with noise and traffic
- Worried about kids kicking a ball against fence to Jenkins Close
- Concerns about ASB
- Concern over cutting down all the trees
- What are the building materials and will they be fire-proof?
- Concern over height of end 3 storey houses and



Photographs from the Community Exhibition at YMCA Parkside Cafe

Event #2: Community Exhibition

Wednesday 25 January 2023 (14:30-19:00pm)

effect on daylight

- When will the construction work be completed?
- Lighter facing bricks preferred
- Need to decide on a building name for the Respite Facility – perhaps chosen by respite users and carers?

Following the Exhibition

Following the exhibition additional feedback was received via the online website. Key additional feedback included;

- 4 responses (2x support, 2x objections)
- Concerns about construction noise during the day – a neighbour works night shifts
- Concern about amount of traffic / noise and low parking provision (especially visitor parking and drop off for the respite facility)
- Perhaps traffic restrictions required (double yellow lines to manage overflow parking)

Design Evolution Response

HTA collated the responses and these points fed into the emerging proposals for the layout of the proposals;

- Car Parking levels re-examined with recently updated census data to confirm likely car ownership
- No through access to Jenkins Close is proposed, with end of street boundaries/planting to ensure no vehicles can travel through.
- Different roof forms tested, with flat roofs selected to reduce overall height of buildings compared to pitched roofs, and allow integration of further biodiversity measures such as green roofs and solar panels
- Secure boundaries including double fence lines along existing neighbours gardens are proposed to maintain privacy and reduce nuisance
- Homes are designed with window positions and obscured glazing to reduce overlooking to neighbours, but ensure passive surveillance of public spaces to help reduce ASB.
- Some mature trees are retained, but overall a net increase in biodiversity will be achieved with new planting and street trees.
- The facades will be brick, with final material choices will be inspired by existing Reading vernacular. All external wall insulation will be non-combustible.



Photographs from the Community Exhibition at YMCA Parkside Cafe

Tuesday 21 February 2023

- HTA presented emerging proposals including general building form and layout. The aspiration to create a homely environment was supported.
- The bespoke nature of the building, designed to include RBC Adult Social Care requirements based on similar facilities was well received.
- The CQC response to the proposals was generally positive.



Extracts from the CQC presentation (3D Views and Plan Layout)

Care Quality Commission Review

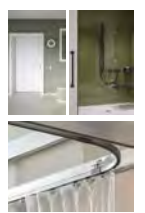
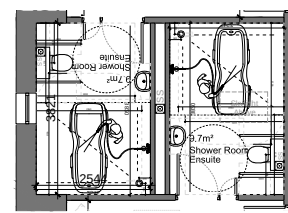
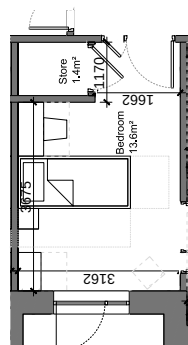
Wednesday 26 April 2023

Feedback:

- HTA presented developed proposals including general building form and layout, including developed detail on room layouts to ensure access compliance, and landscape proposals for communal gardens.
- The CQC feedback was generally positive.



Amethyst Lane,
Respite Centre II



Extracts from the CQC presentation (3D Views and Plan Layout)

Community Newsletter 02 May 2023

Distributed May 2023

Community Newsletter

Following the community consultation and pre-application process, a follow up newsletter was circulated to the local community. A two page printed newsletter was shared to provide residents with an update on amendments to the proposals in response to their feedback, to notify them of the planning submission, and to provide a brief overview of the final proposals for the site.

Newsletter Distribution

The printed questionnaire was distributed to residents within the local community, and hosted on the project specific website.

The redevelopment of
Amethyst Lane

Reading Borough Council
Working better with you.

Public Consultation Update
May 2023

An update

Dear Resident,

As part of Reading Borough Council's plans to deliver vital affordable housing for the people of Reading, we have now submitted a planning application for the redevelopment of the former Day Centre site north of Amethyst Lane. The proposals seek to sustainably redevelop this vacant brownfield site to create much-needed 100% affordable flats and family housing and a new Adult Social Care Respite Facility to support people with learning disabilities.

Thank you to everyone who attended the open event and left feedback for the proposals online.

It looks like the plans show a road connecting through to Jenkins Close. This would create a 'rat run' though and create lots of noise and traffic we don't currently have.

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I live on Jenkins close, and am worried about kids kicking a ball against my fence.

The new development will incorporate a second fence within the existing fences to ensure they remain unaffected by the new development.

Concerns around anti-social behaviour.

All new residents will have their own private and secure back gardens. Homes are designed with doors and windows overlooking the main streets and open spaces, to create activity and passive surveillance to discourage anti-social behaviour.

I live next to the development in Jenkins Close, and am worried about overlooking into my property.

We have worked with the pre-application process and Design Review Panel to ensure we address this. The side-facing gables have been designed with any windows on a gable-end looking into a stairwell or a bathroom, and will have obscured glazing to ensure privacy.

Are you cutting down all the trees?

The development will deliver a 11.39% net increase in biodiversity, by retaining high-quality, existing mature trees where possible, and the addition of a new bio-diverse planted 'swale' and planting 43 new trees on site.

What will the buildings be made of? Will they be fire-proof?

The new homes will be built using soft Reading 'red' and 'grey' bricks, inspired by local architecture and the history of Reading's Victorian terraces. Furthermore the insulation in the walls will be non-combustible to improve fire safety.

Concerns about construction noise during the day – a neighbour works night shifts.

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We had great feedback and questions from the visitors at the public consultation held in March 2023 where a number of key issues were raised. These are outlined below alongside our responses:

I'm worried there is not enough parking.

We have worked with the pre-application process to ensure we address this. Our Transport Consultant re-examined parking levels alongside updated 2021 census data to ensure parking supply will be sufficient. There are now 21 spaces (a further 2 spaces have been added). This now provides one-to-one parking for the new houses. Further to this 7 additional spaces are provided for the Respite Facility to ensure there is no overspill into the general needs car parking spaces.

The 3 storey houses on the end of the terraces are quite tall. Will this affect my daylight?

We have worked with planning policy to ensure we address this. Many of the houses have pitched roofs in keeping with the local surroundings. However, a pitch on the 3-storeyed end-house would make the homes taller. To reduce impacts on neighbours, these homes have flat roofs. Which are also used for solar panels and green sedum planting to support biodiversity. A detailed daylight/sunlight study has been undertaken which confirms that good light levels will be maintained for neighbours.




The redevelopment of
Amethyst Lane

Reading Borough Council
Working better with you.

Key facts

The proposals include the following mix of affordable homes & design features:

- 21 family houses (3 & 4 bedroom homes).
- 6 bedroom Respite Facility with communal facilities & gardens.
- Low-rise: 1 & 2-storeyed homes with 3-storeyed larger houses at ends of terraces.
- 21 parking spaces for the new houses and 7 for the Respite Facility plus 100% electric car-charging provision.
- Secure bicycle storage for every home.



Proposed site plan

Your views matter

A planning application has now been submitted and you have the chance to leave your support and comments online via the council's website. Alternatively, please email us for more information on: propertydevelopmentteam@reading.gov.uk

For further information visit the planning website for Reading Borough Council.




Computer Generated image of proposed designs looking north

INVESTING IN YOUR COMMUNITY
New homes and Respite Facility coming - Get Involved

Reading Borough Council
Working better with you.

3 CONCLUSION

A thorough pre-application consultation and engagement process over a 7 month period has been undertaken for the development proposals at Amethyst Lane in Reading. Conversations and feedback from residents and stakeholders have provided valuable local knowledge, insights and suggestions helping to shape the proposals.

The following is a summary of the involvement that has been carried out during this pre-application process to assist with design evolution and the preparation of this planning application:

- 2 Public Newsletters printed and circulated within the local community
- 1 Public Drop In Exhibition with the local community advertised widely with printed fliers and on the Council's website.
- 1 Respite Drop In Exhibition with existing Reading respite staff, carers and users
- 2 Respite Care Facility briefing presentations to the Care Quality Commission
- 1 briefing to Lead Councillors and Ward Councillors. Feedback gathered at all events plus online feedback from the dedicated development website.

Furthermore, during this pre-application process the Housing team and the Design Team carried out the following engagement meetings with stakeholders:

- 4 pre-application meetings and workshops with Reading Borough Council planning, highways, refuse, tree and ecology officers.
- 1 Secured by Design meeting with the Thames Valley Police.

- 1 Reading Design Review Panel.

It is envisaged that further resident and local stakeholder engagement will continue after submission of the planning application, as technical design information is developed for tender purposes. The Council will keep residents and the wider local community up to date on the proposed development. Development works are anticipated to commence at Amethyst Lane from late 2023.

Please refer to the following appendices for the chronologically collated community engagement materials used during this pre-application process.



Illustrative landscape plan

APPENDICES

The redevelopment of Amethyst Lane

Community Newsletter
February 2023

An invitation

You are invited to:

An open event for the proposed redevelopment of the former Day Centre site north of Amethyst Lane.

Where:

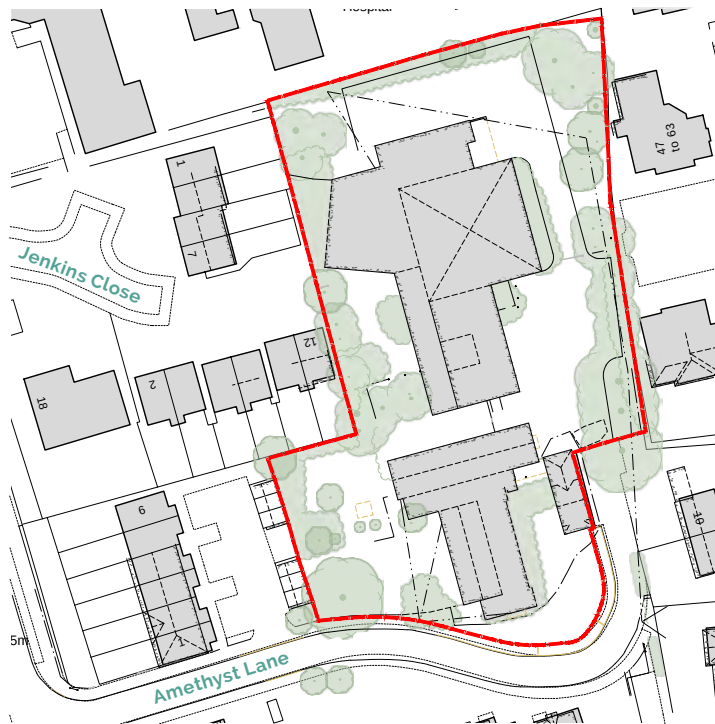
**The YMCA, 34 Parkside Road
RG30 2DD**

When:

**Tuesday 7th March 2023
(4-7pm)**

We will be available to explain the proposals and answer any questions you may have. HTA, the project architects, will also be on hand.

We hope you are able to come along.



Amethyst Lane Existing Site Plan

The proposals

Reading Borough Council owns the former Day Centre site north of Amethyst Lane and is seeking to sustainably redevelop this vacant brownfield site to create much-needed affordable family housing and a new Adult Social Care Respite Facility to support people with learning disabilities.

Designs are being developed ahead of submitting a planning application in Spring 2023. The project team are engaging with the local community and stakeholders now to help shape the emerging proposals. The new homes will be 100% affordable and managed by the Council. All homes and the respite facility will be energy efficient, highly sustainable, and constructed with high quality materials. The landscape will include biodiverse planting, new trees and natural play features.



Proposed 3D massing for new family housing & Respite Facility



Existing view of site from Amethyst Lane

Your feedback

We welcome your feedback on the proposals prior to the submission of a planning application in Spring 2023. Please go to the web page below for regular updates, and come along to the community open event in March. The proposals will be available to view and comment on the web page from the 5th March to 20th March. Your comments and ideas will help to shape this sustainable development.

Healthy & Sustainable Living

The proposals are seeking to improve the health and wellbeing of both new and existing residents, and are targeting the highest sustainability standards. We have proposed the following:

- A wide range of adaptable homes designed to be flexible to meet residents' needs.
- A biodiverse natural environment promoting wildlife.
- New native tree planting & sustainable drainage.
- Natural play elements for all ages.
- Attractive, well-lit green streets.
- Integrated secure bicycle storage.
- Electric vehicle charging points.
- Homes designed to be energy efficient & low water use.



For further information visit:

www.reading.gov.uk/AmethystLane

The web page is live from the 5th March to the 20th March



Proposed site plan showing 21 family houses & Respite Facility with separate entrances

SOME KEY FACTS

The proposals include the following mix of affordable homes & design features.

- 21 family houses (3 & 4 bedroom homes).
- 6 bedroom Respite Facility with communal facilities & gardens.
- Low-rise: mostly 1 & 2 storeys with 3 storey larger houses at ends of terraces.
- 19 parking spaces for the new houses and 7 parking spaces for the Respite Facility.
- Secure bicycle storage spaces for every home.

The redevelopment of Amethyst Lane

March 2023

Welcome to the Amethyst Lane Community Exhibition

Welcome to the open community exhibition for the proposed redevelopment of the site north of Amethyst Lane.

Reading Borough Council owns the former day centre site north of Amethyst Lane and is seeking to sustainably redevelop this vacant brownfield site to create much-needed affordable family housing and a new Adult Social Care Respite Facility to support people with learning disabilities.

Designs are being developed ahead of submitting a planning application in Spring 2023. The project team are engaging with the local community and stakeholders now to help shape the emerging proposals. The new homes will be 100% affordable and managed by the Council. All homes and the respite facility will be energy efficient, highly sustainable, and constructed with high quality materials. The landscape will include biodiverse planting, new trees and natural play features.

Key Dates:

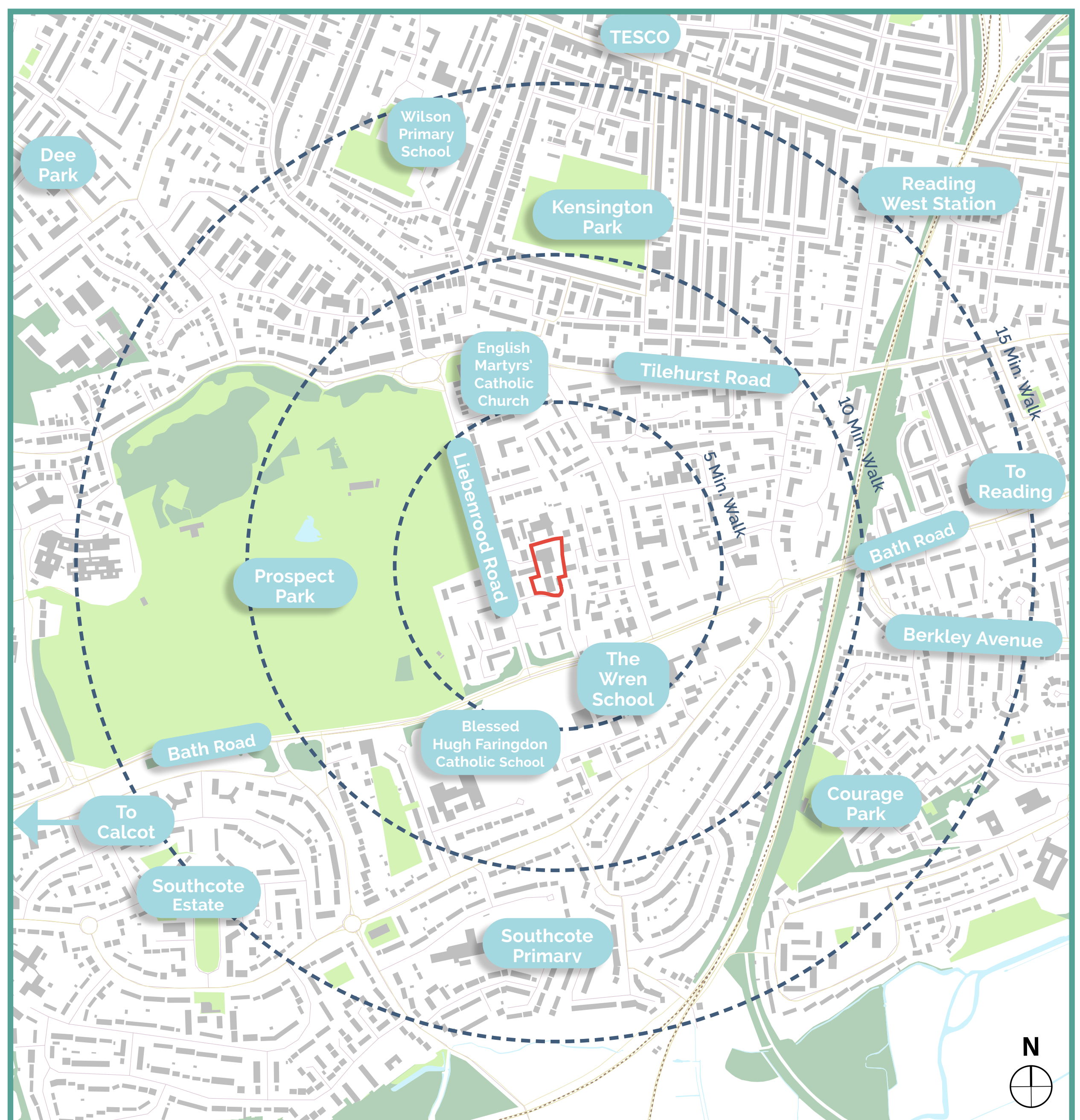
- February 2023 - Community Exhibition
- Spring 2023 - Submit planning application
- Autumn 2023 - Planning decision
- Winter 2023/24 - Start works on site
- Winter 2025/26 - New homes completed

Your Feedback

We welcome your feedback on the proposals prior to the submission of a planning application in Spring 2023. Please go to the web page below for regular updates. The proposals will be available to view and comment on the web page from the 30th January to 10th February. Staff are on hand to answer your questions today. Your comments and ideas will help to shape this sustainable development.



Existing Amethyst Lane site plan with redevelopment boundary



Existing Amethyst Lane site within the surrounding existing neighbourhood

Key Facts about The Proposals:

- 21 family houses (3&4 bed)
- 6 bedroom Respite Facility with communal facilities & gardens
- Mostly 1 & 2 storeys with 3 storey houses at ends of terraces
- 19 parking spaces for houses and 7 spaces for the Respite Facility
- Secure bicycle storage



Existing view north across the redevelopment site



Existing vacant buildings on the site

The redevelopment of Amethyst Lane

March 2023

Site Constraints & Opportunities

A number of site surveys and research have been undertaken to accurately map the existing natural and built features of the site.

These site constraints have directly informed the design proposals so that high value trees and ecology can be retained and incorporated into

the proposals. The vacant site presents a range of opportunities for the benefit of the wider community.

Site History



1883



1912



1944



1961

The Existing Site



Approach view along Amethyst Lane



Existing site entrance on Amethyst Lane

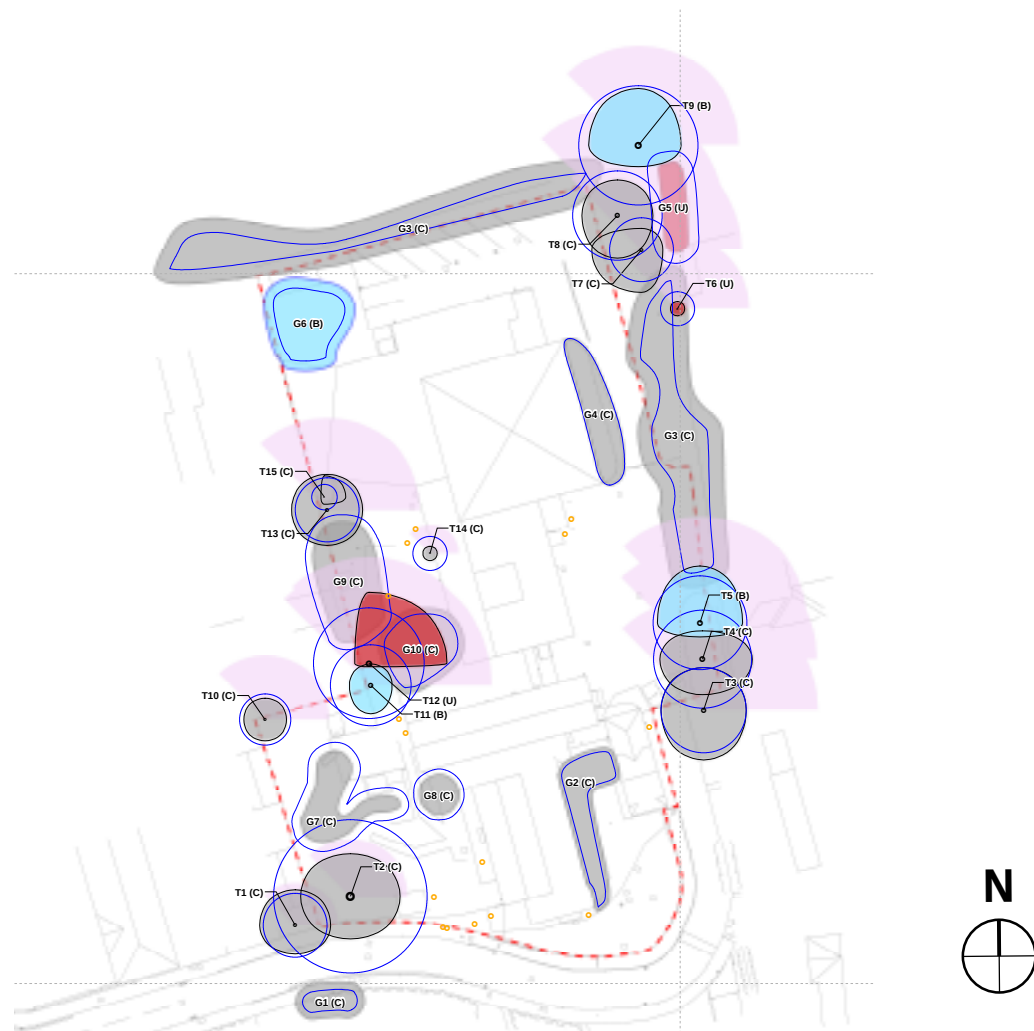


Amethyst Lane looking west



Site frontage along Amethyst Lane

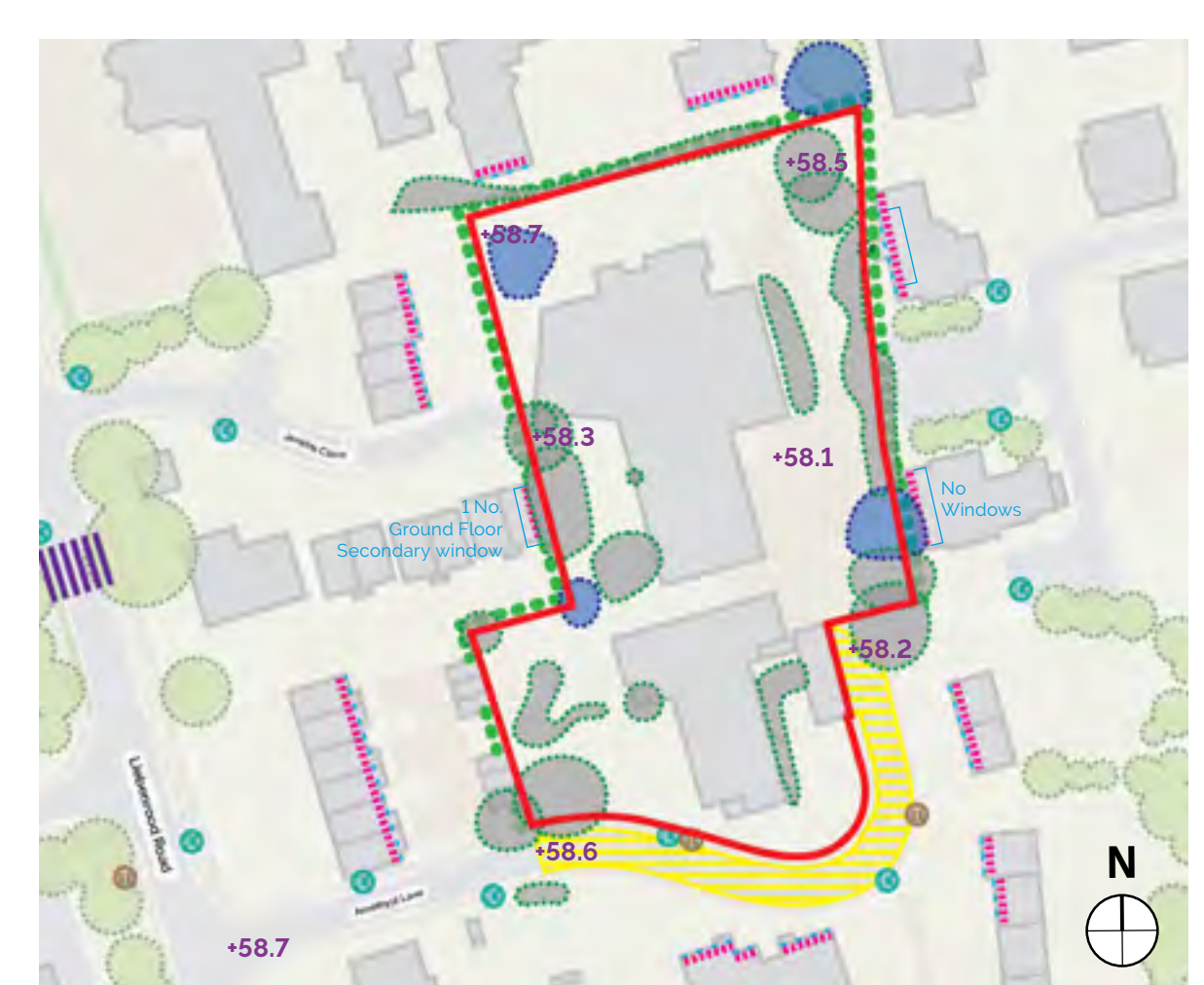
Trees



Ecology



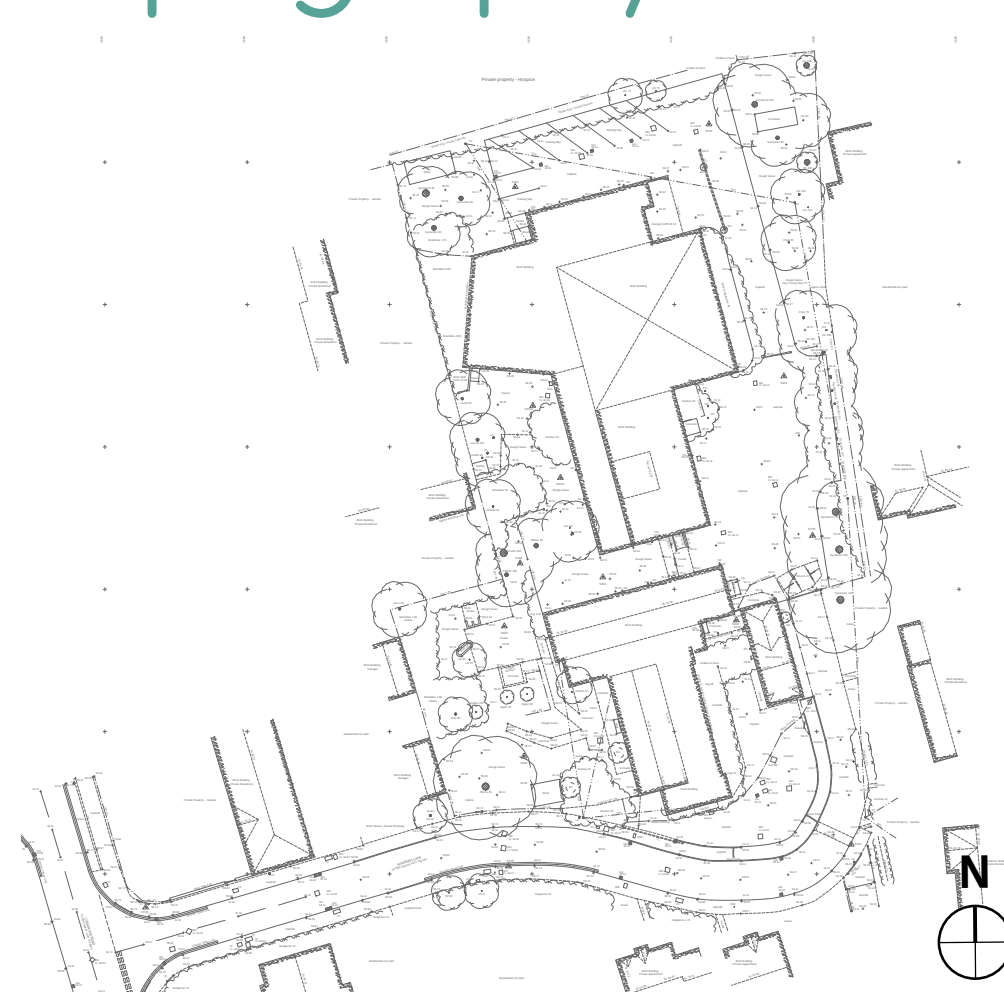
Site Constraints



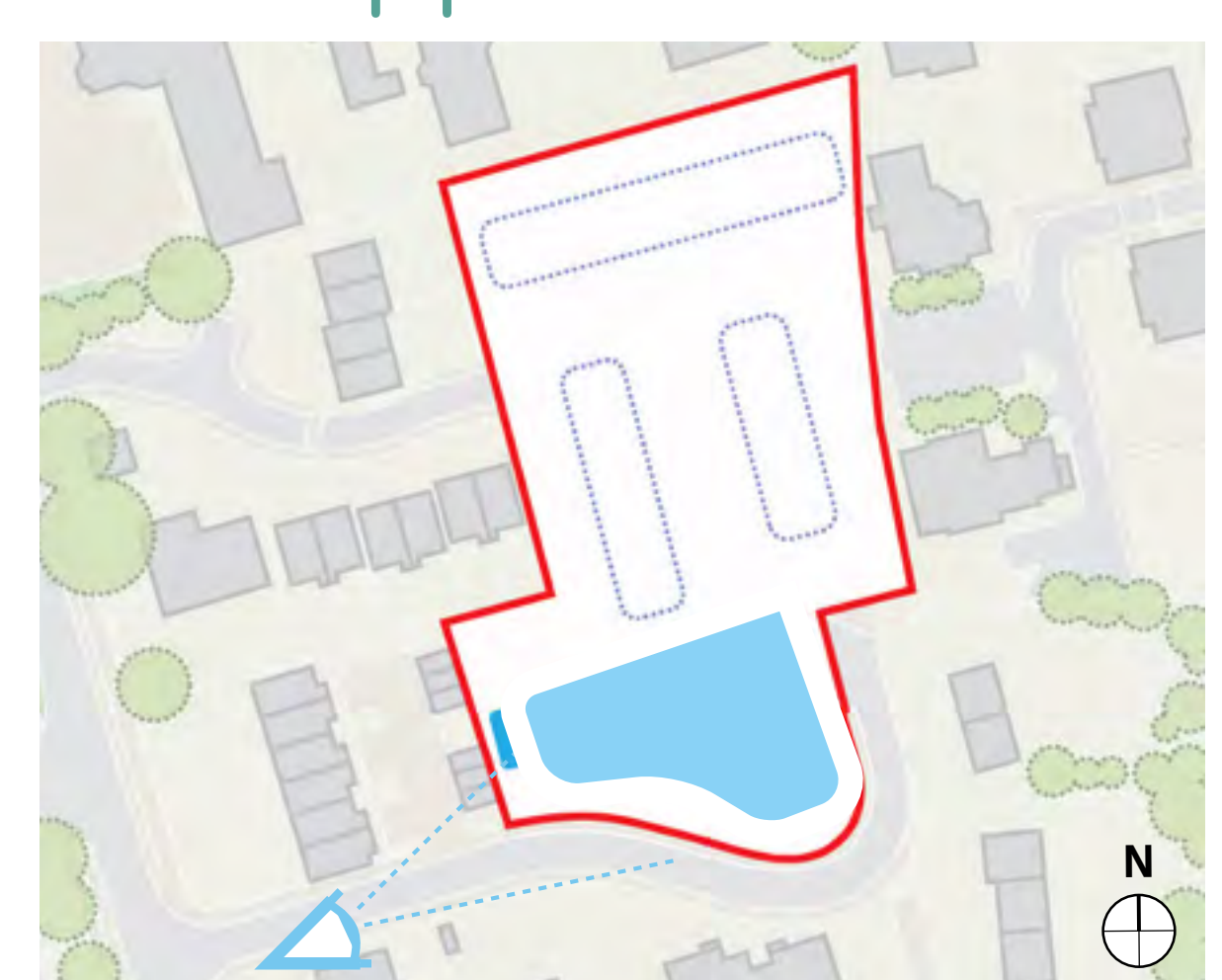
Utilities



Topography



Site Opportunities



The redevelopment of Amethyst Lane

March 2023

Proposed Site Plan

The proposals include 21 affordable houses and a 6 bedroom Respite Facility to be managed by Reading Borough Council. The proposed layout of the site centres on an attractive new north-south street that provides pedestrian and cyclist access

plus car parking to all homes. The street will allow for residents' refuse collection and servicing access from Amethyst Lane. It will include new tree planting and will be a safe space for all ages.

A new Respite Facility set within its own gardens is proposed to the south of the site with a main entrance and parking forecourt facing the Amethyst Lane. Terraces of family houses line the new street overlooking a central green swale.



Proposed Amethyst Lane site plan

Proposed Accommodation:

- 6 bedroom Respite Facility to support people with learning disabilities
- 21 affordable family houses

- 18 three bedroom houses
- 3 four bedroom houses
- 19 parking spaces for houses and 7 spaces for the Respite Facility

Key:

Building entrance	➤
Boundary hedge	—
Rear garden	■
Swale/ informal play	①
Ecology corridor	②
Parking	■
Site Boundary	□
Existing tree retained	●
Category B Existing Tree retained	●
Proposed tree	●
Respite Amenity	③
Turning Head	④

The redevelopment of Amethyst Lane

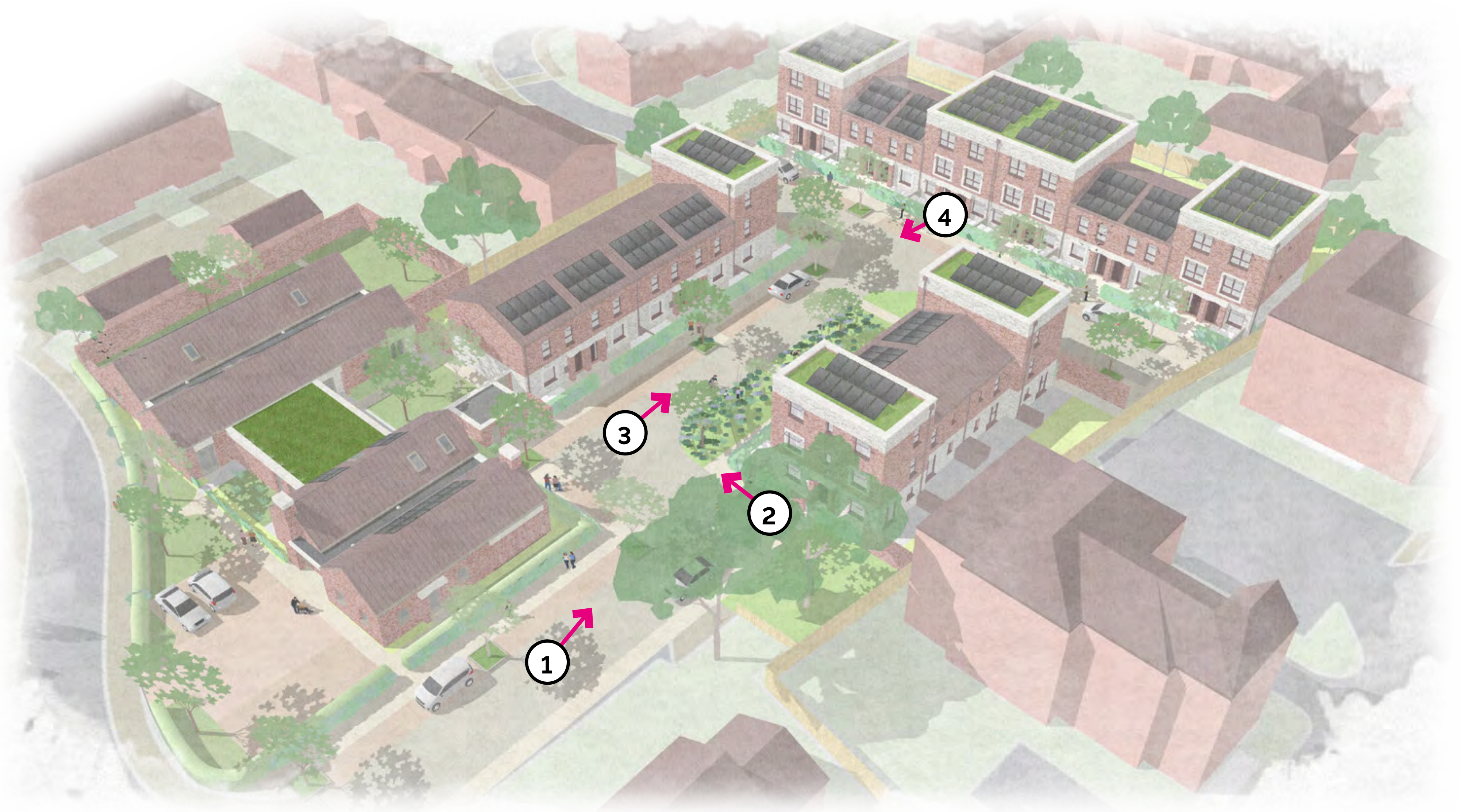
March 2023

Proposed 3D Massing

The heights and massing of proposed buildings has been carefully arranged to respond to the existing surrounding building heights and types in the neighbourhood, and also to respect the amenity of neighbours.

A single storey Respite Facility is proposed to the south of the site fronting Amethyst Lane surrounded by its own secure communal gardens.

The three terraces of family houses are mostly 2 storeys in height with 3 storey larger houses at the ends. Each house has its own back garden.



Street Views



Proposed view north from Amethyst Lane approach



Proposed view into new family street



Proposed view north along new family street



Proposed view south along new family street showing green swale

Amethyst Lane

March 2023

Safe & Healthy Streets

The new street will provide an attractive north-south route for pedestrians and cyclists plus car parking. New street trees, hedges and biodiverse planting will help to green the site.



Section through new street and swale / informal play with family houses on both sides



Pedestrian crossing to dry swale



Integration of 0-5s play within dry swale

Fire Access

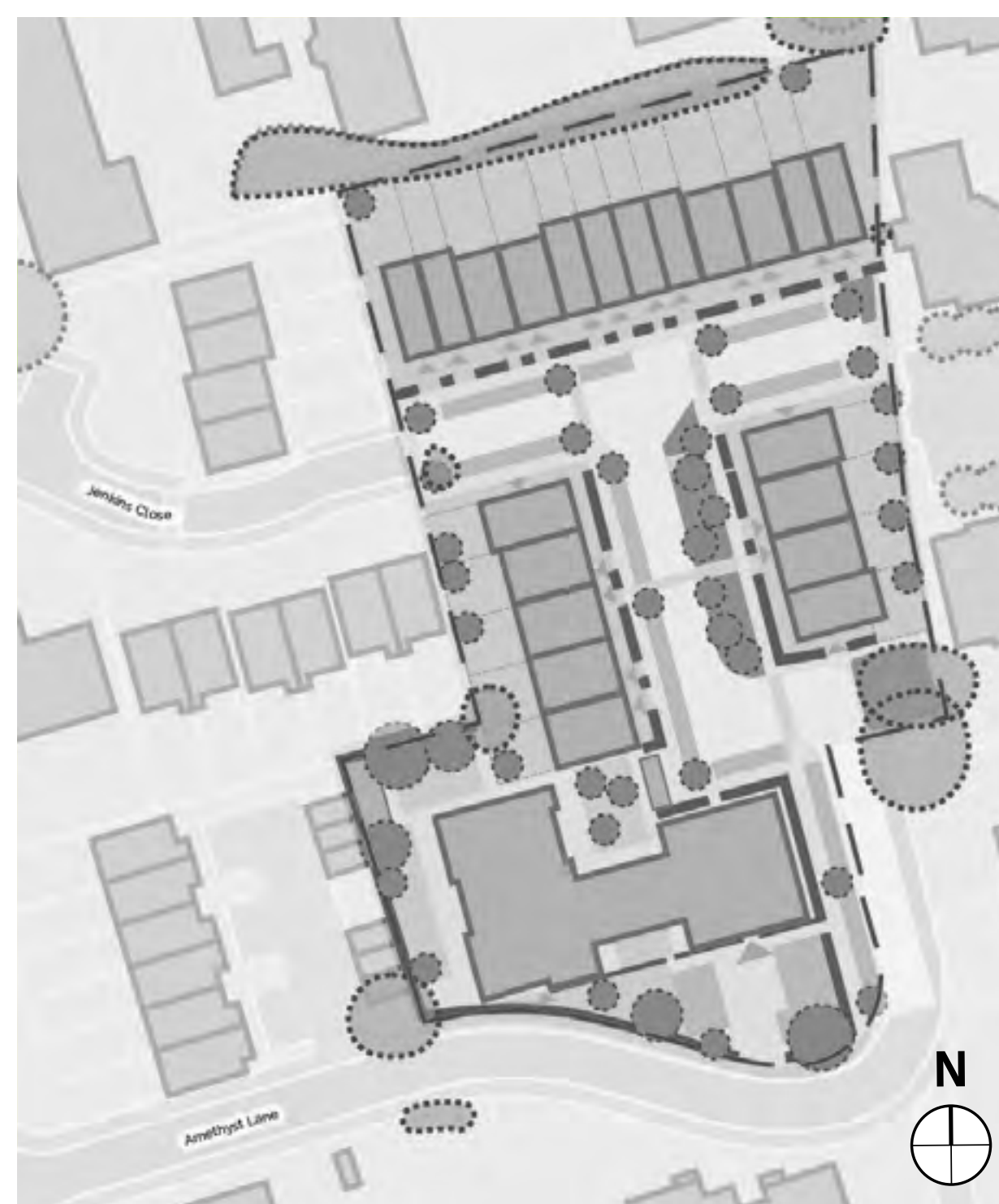
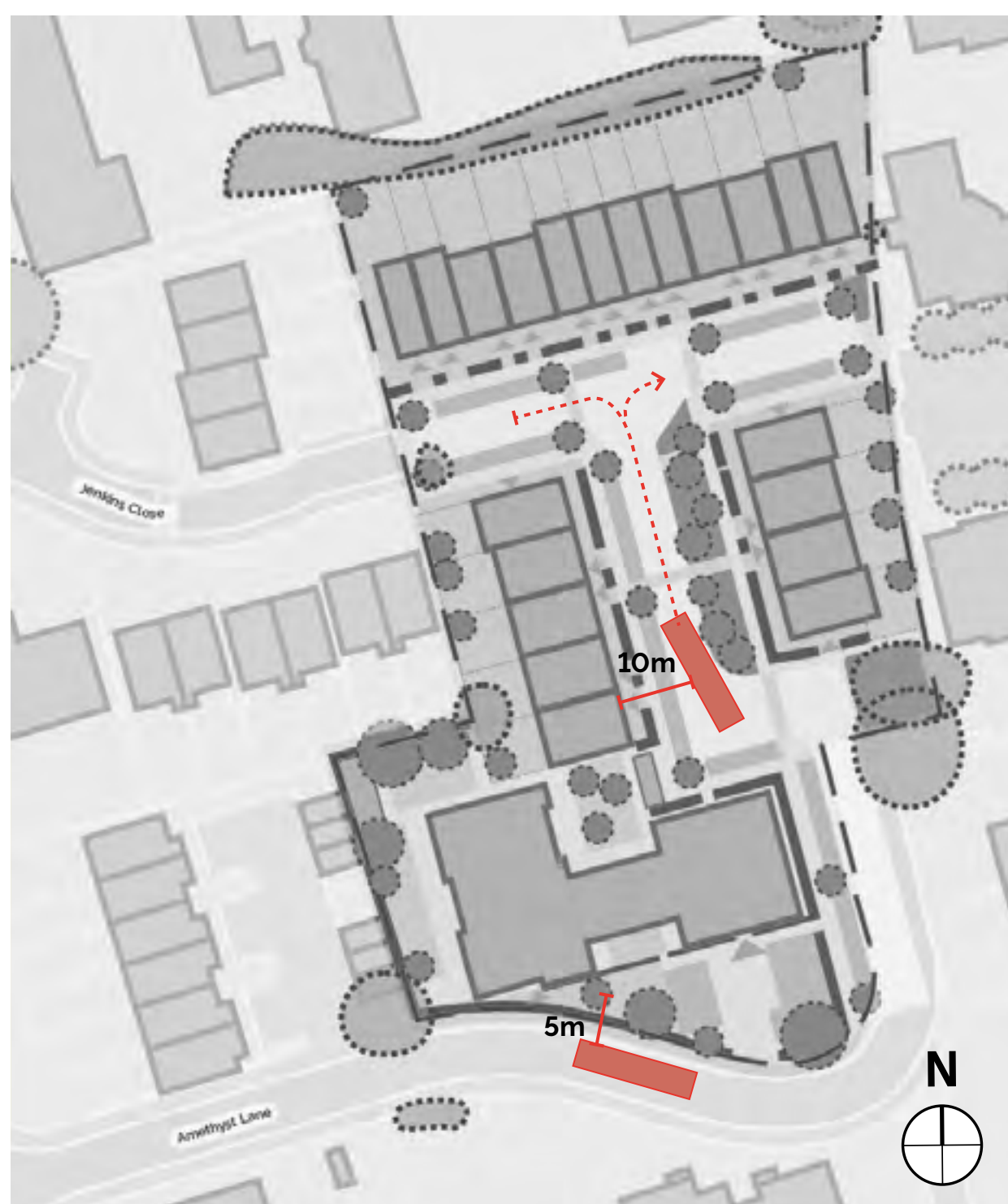
Emergency access has been accommodated within the proposals so that a fire tender can easily reach all homes and the Respite Facility.

Refuse Access

Refuse and recycling storage has been designed into the proposals making it easy for residents and refuse operatives to store and collect.

Parking & Deliveries

19 car parking spaces for residents are provided close to homes, plus 7 spaces for the Respite Facility. Generous cycle storage and electric vehicle charging points are also provided.



The redevelopment of Amethyst Lane

March 2023

Sustainable Homes with Character

Building upon Reading's long heritage of brick making the proposals include new homes and a Respite Facility that will be built from high quality brickwork with details that add character to the street scene.

The design team have studied Reading's older examples of terraced housing to shape the proposed designs.

The homes are being designed to be highly energy efficient, influenced by Passivhaus principles. Integrating zero-carbon energy sources, solar panels and biodiverse planting will help create a sustainable, new community of homes.



View north along proposed family street showing central landscaped swale



Proposed street elevation of family houses

Local and Contemporary Design Influences



1 New trees and native planting creates an attractive green street for families



2 Paired front doors along the street



3 Larger homes create a 'bookend' to the terraces



4 New homes overlook car parking in the street



5 Paired first floor windows



6 Larger windows and brickwork details enliven the ground floor

The redevelopment of Amethyst Lane

March 2023

Sustainable Homes with Character



Proposed approach view from Amethyst Lane with single storey Respite Facility in foreground



Proposed street overlooked by Respite Facility and family houses



Proposed family street featuring green swale and informal play features

The redevelopment of Amethyst Lane

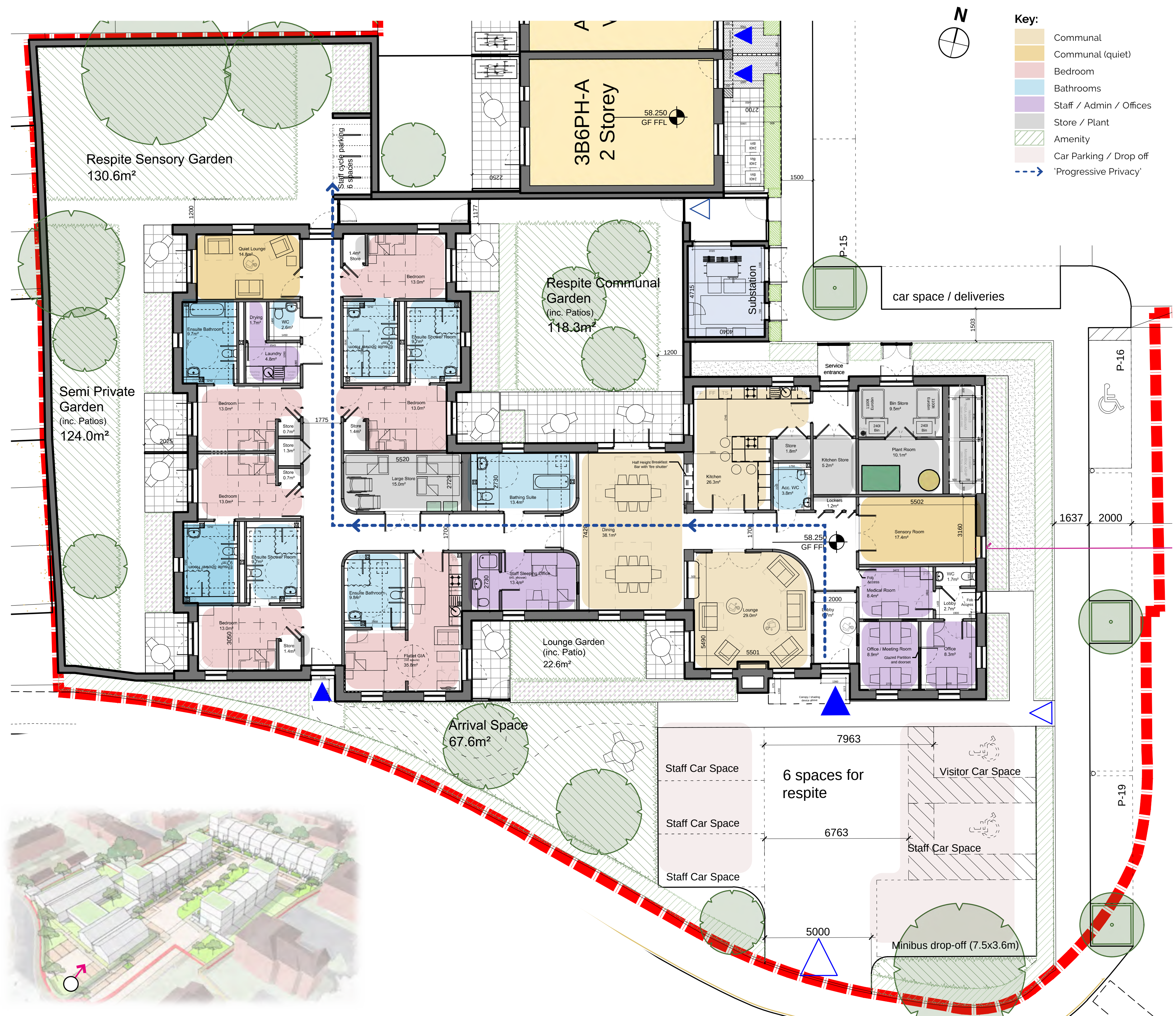
March 2023

Respite Facility for Adult Social Care

The proposals include a single storey 6 bedroom Adult Social Care Respite Facility to support people with learning disabilities, to be managed by Reading Borough Council.

Refuse and recycling storage will be neatly integrated within a dedicated secure bin store for the facility, which will benefit from secure bicycle storage and 7 parking spaces.

Generous secure landscaped communal gardens surround the building including a sensory garden. All parts of the building are specifically designed to be wheelchair adaptable, providing spacious and flexible room layouts for the users of the building.



Proposed view of Respite Facility forecourt and front elevation



Respite Facility Summary:

- 6 bedroom Respite Facility
- Internal building area = 520sqm
- External 4 garden areas = 448sqm
- 7 parking spaces for staff, drop off, visitors and deliveries

The redevelopment of Amethyst Lane

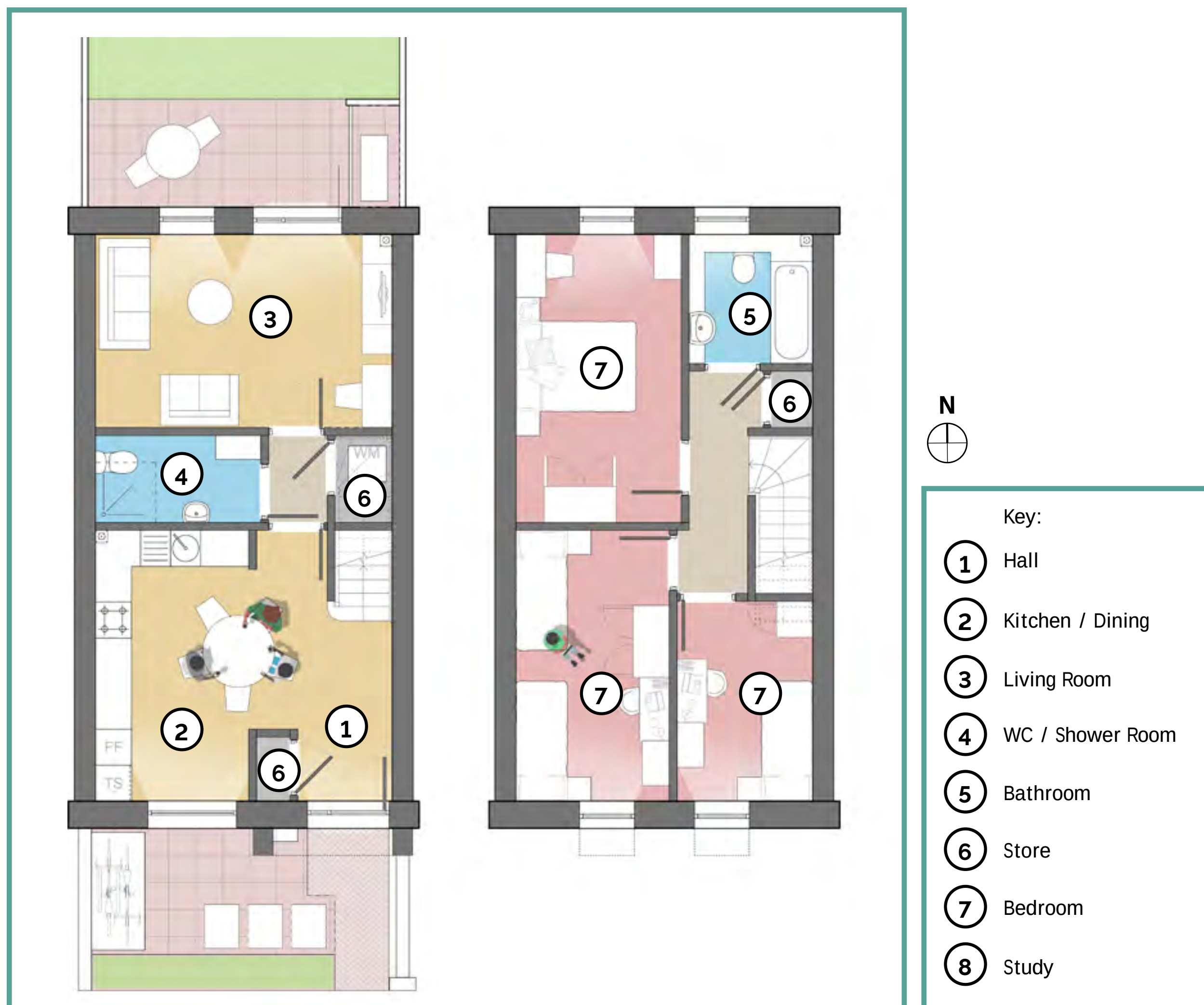
March 2023

Flexible Homes for All

The proposals include 21 affordable houses to be managed by Reading Borough Council. The range of new houses includes 18 three bedroom houses and 3 four bedroom houses for families.

Refuse and recycling storage will be neatly integrated in front gardens for houses. Every home will benefit from secure bicycle storage located in back gardens.

Every home will have its own secure private back garden.



Proposed 3 bedroom 5 Person House Plans



Proposed 4 Bedroom 7 Person House Plans

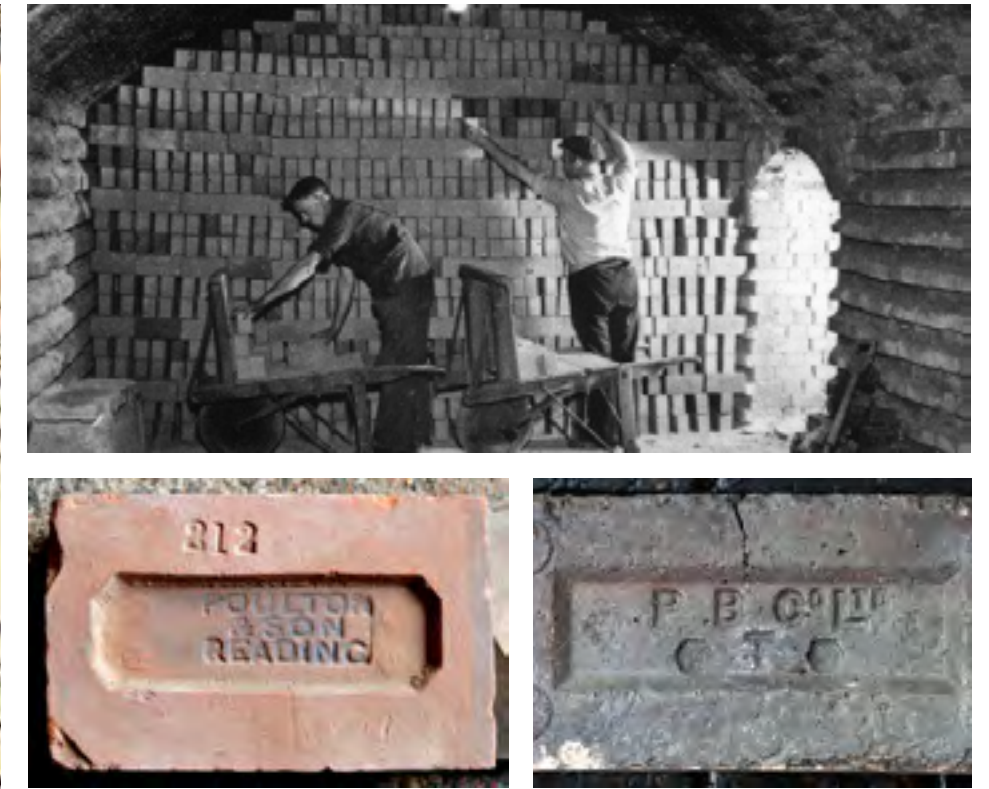
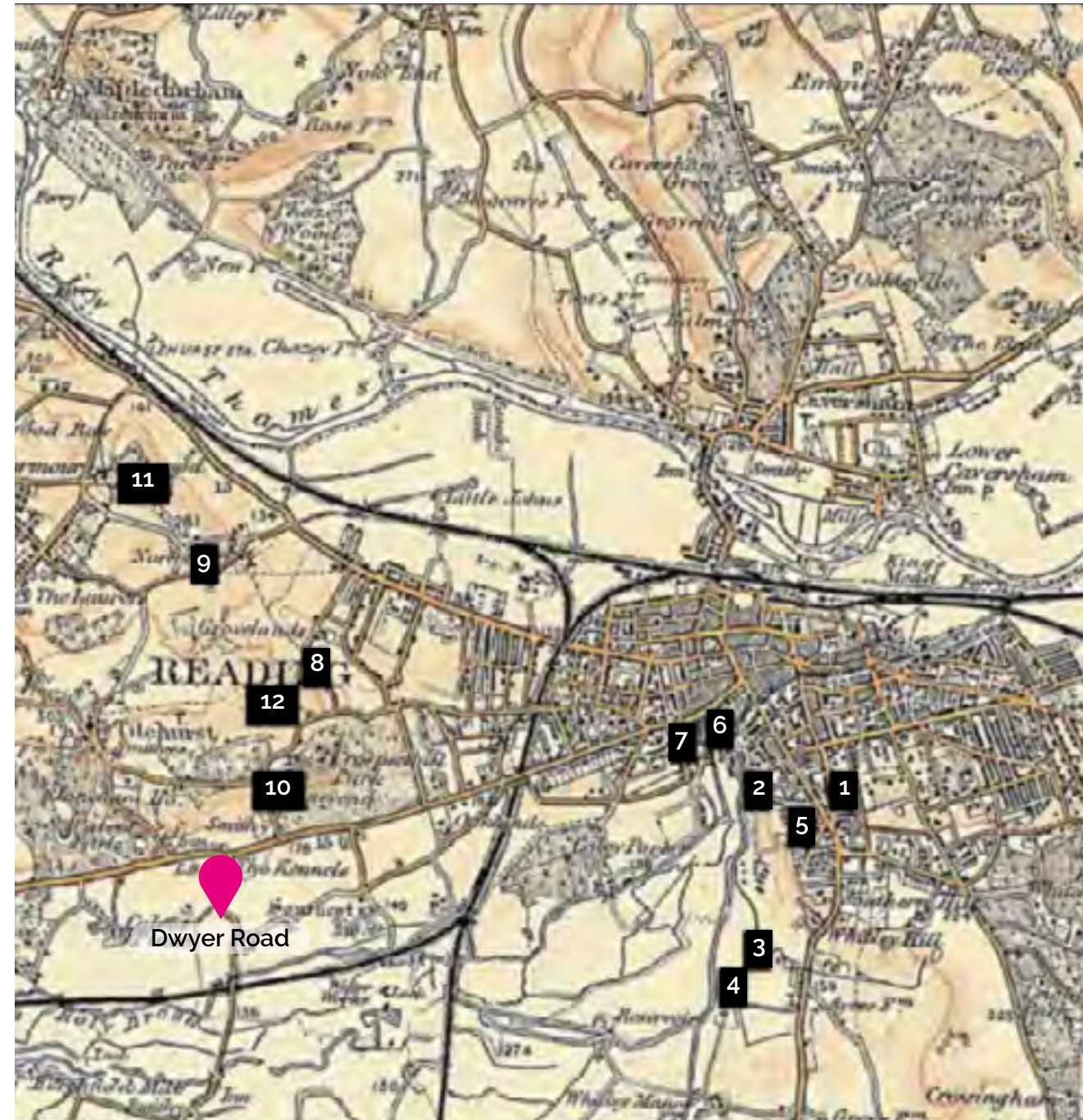
The redevelopment of Amethyst Lane

March 2023

Architecture & Landscape Materials

As we develop the designs, consideration of the materials used will inform the appearance of the buildings. Reading has a long history of brick making in the area. While the original brickworks have not survived, a huge variety of 'brick-faced' buildings and homes are still found around the town. We are keen to build on this history with new brick buildings that fit into their context. We may propose other materials to highlight key features such as windows and entrances.

The landscape palette is also hugely important; the kind of trees and plants proposed will help encourage native wildlife to thrive, be easy to maintain, and look good all year round.

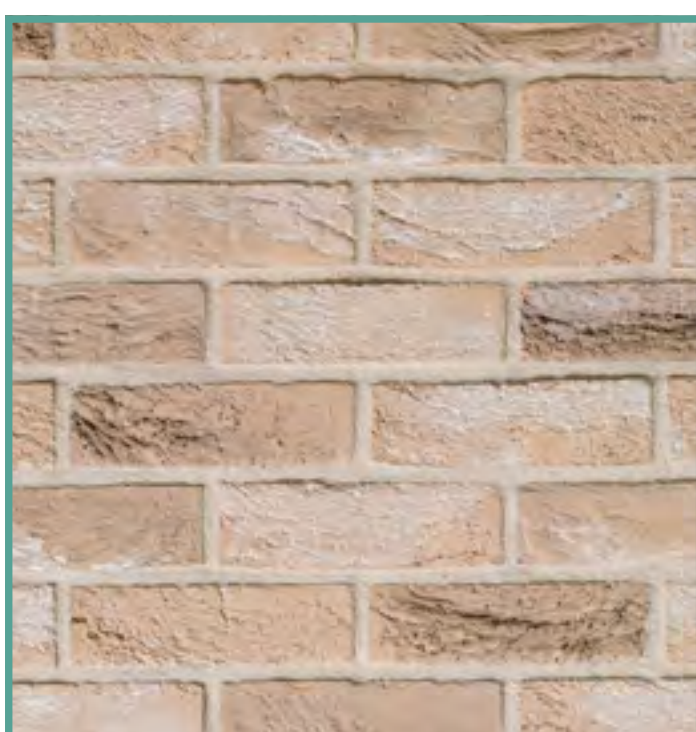
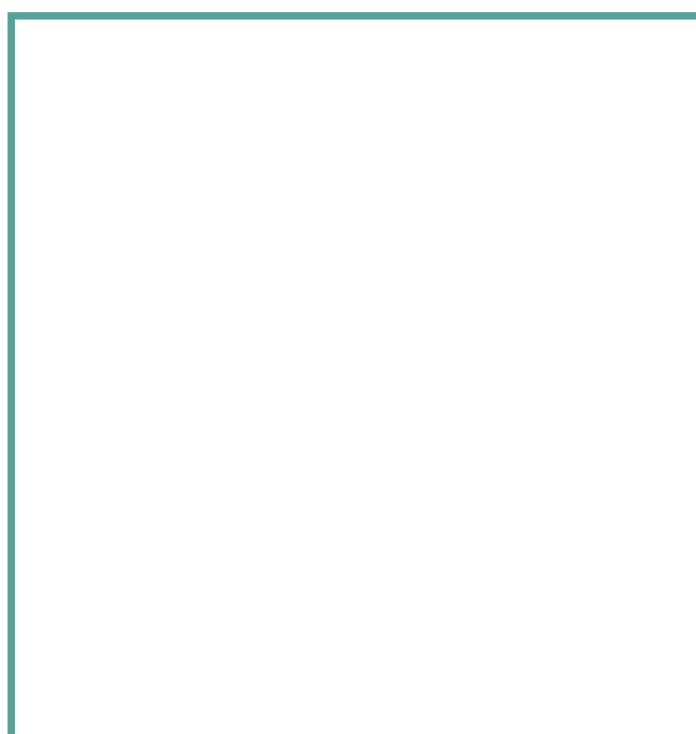
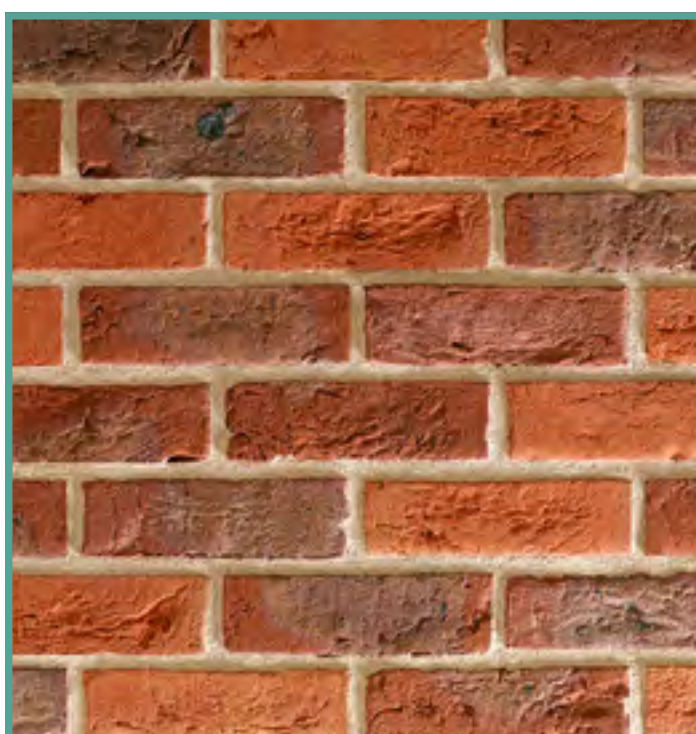


Former Brickwork Locations in Reading:

1. Silver Street - Medieval Tile Kilns
2. Waterloo Kilns, Elgar Road
3. Whitley Kiln, Elgar Road
4. Rose Kiln, Rose Kiln Lane
5. Katesgrove Kiln, Alpine Street
6. Avenue Works, Berkeley Avenue
7. Coley Kilns, Berkeley Avenue
8. Grovelands, Grovelands Road
9. Norcot Kiln, Norcot Road
10. Prospect Park Brickworks, Prospect Park
11. Kew Kiln, Kentwood Road
12. Westwood Kiln, Dee Road

What colour brick do you like best?

We'd love your thoughts on emerging design ideas! Stick a dot next to the brick colour you prefer.



Planting Ideas

Swale planting: Trees and Shrubs



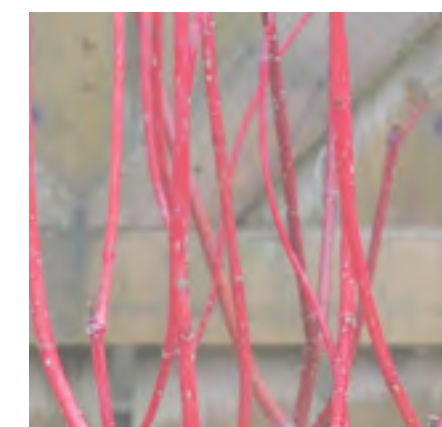
Common Sallow



Sea Buckthorn



Dogwood



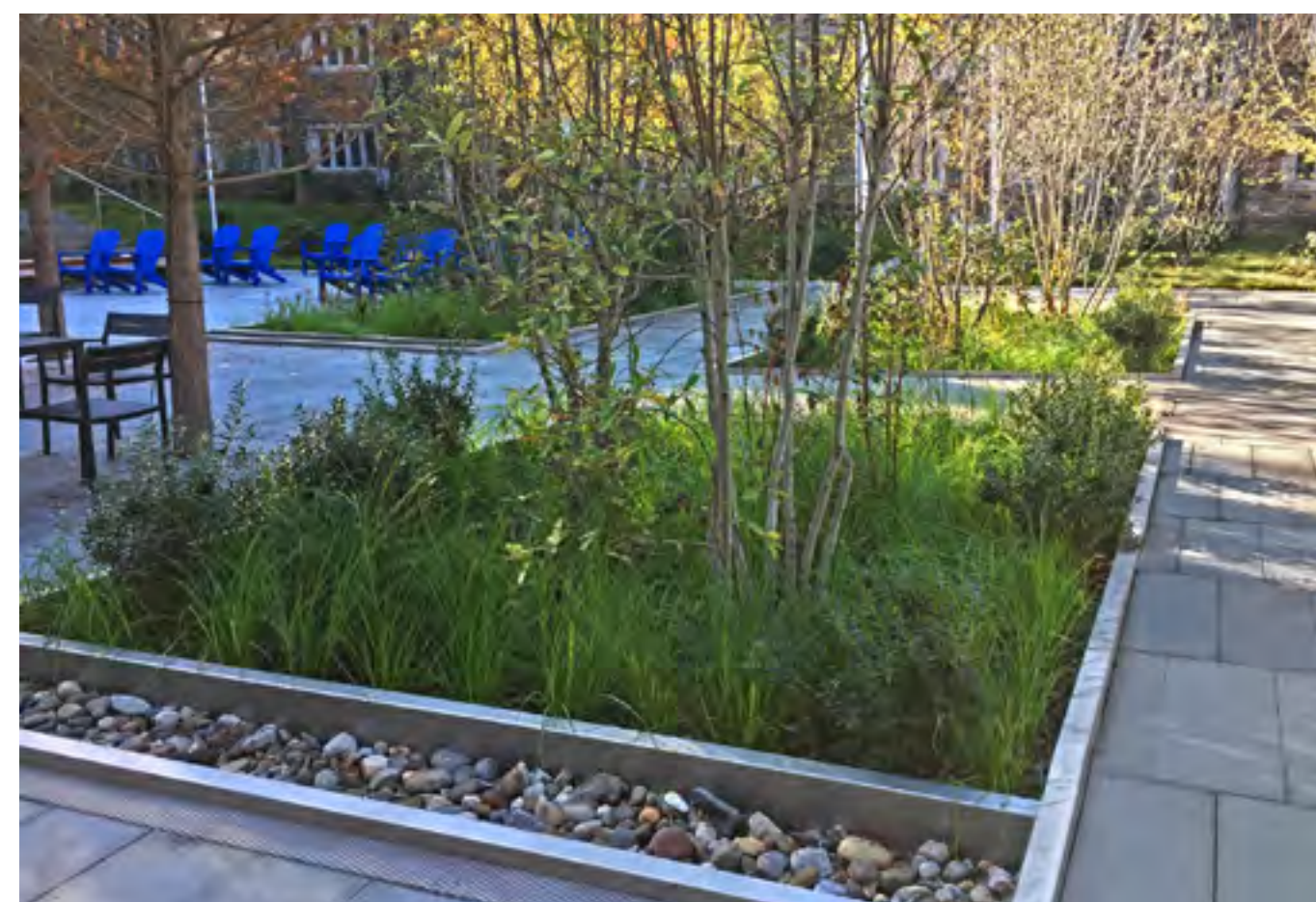
Dogwood



Midland Hawthorn



Guelder Rose



An example rain garden showing specialised species for wet/water-logged conditions



Alder 'Imperialis'

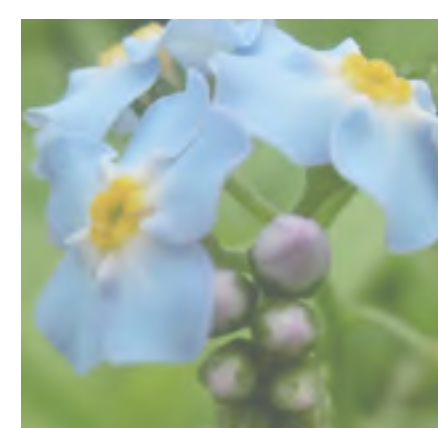


Black Birch

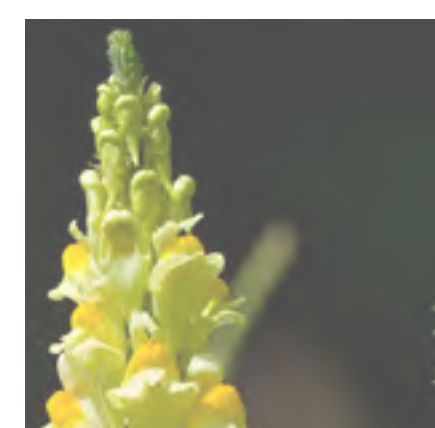
Swale planting: Wildflower Turf



Bird's Foot Trefoil, (N)



Water Forget-me-not, (N)



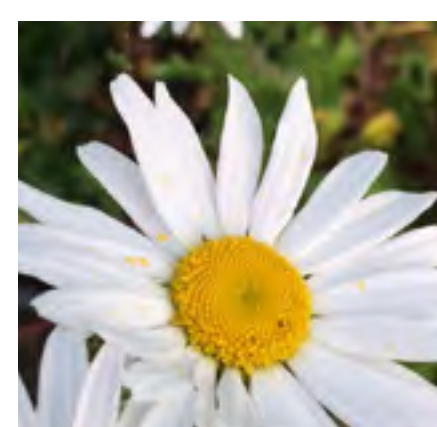
Common Toadflax, (N)



Lady's Bedstraw, (N)



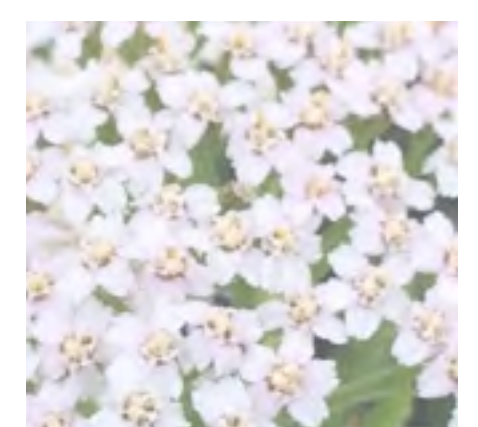
Field Scabious, (N)



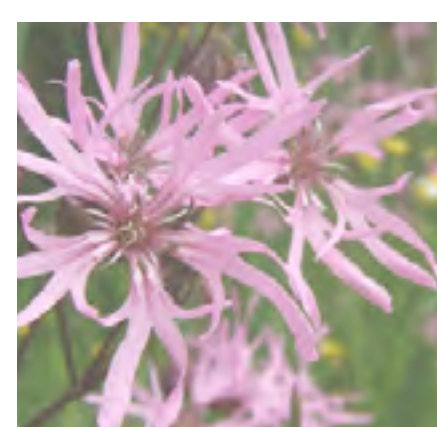
Ox Eye Daisy, (N)



Above: Swale with wildflower turf



Yarrow, (N)



Ragged Robin, (N)



Wild Carrot, (N)

The redevelopment of Amethyst Lane

Public Consultation Update
May 2023

An update

Dear Resident,

As part of Reading Borough Council's plans to deliver vital affordable housing for the people of Reading, we have now submitted a planning application for the redevelopment of the former Day Centre site north of Amethyst Lane. The proposals seek to sustainably redevelop this vacant brownfield site to create much-needed 100%-affordable flats and family housing and a new Adult Social Care Respite Facility to support people with learning disabilities.

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- Secure bicycle storage for every home.



Proposed site plan



Your views matter

A planning application has now been submitted and you have the chance to leave your support and comments online via the council's website. Alternatively, please email us for more information on:

propertydevelopmentteam@reading.gov.uk

For further information visit the planning website for Reading Borough Council.



Computer Generated image of proposed designs looking north

HTA Design LLP
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E1 8BL

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info@hta.co.uk
www.hta.co.uk

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