

Soane Point, 3-10 Market Place

Application ref: 221446

Proposal: External works to existing building, including partial replacement of the existing facades fronting Market Place and Abbey Square alongside other external works to the building, set back single-storey extension above part of block fronting Market Place, part two part three storey extensions above other blocks, and conversion and alterations to ground floor reception and car parking area, together the works will deliver 38 new homes and (internal and external) residential amenity areas with associated car parking.

Whilst expressing general support for key principles of the above development proposals, including the proposals to retain and improve the existing building, Members of the Planning Applications Committee deferred the consideration of the above application on 11th January 2023, as they required clarification on detailed matters relating to:

1. Cycle parking
2. Waste strategy
3. Photovoltaic panels
4. Electric vehicle charging points
5. Fire strategy
6. Materials

This clarification document provides responses to the questions raised.

1. Cycle Parking

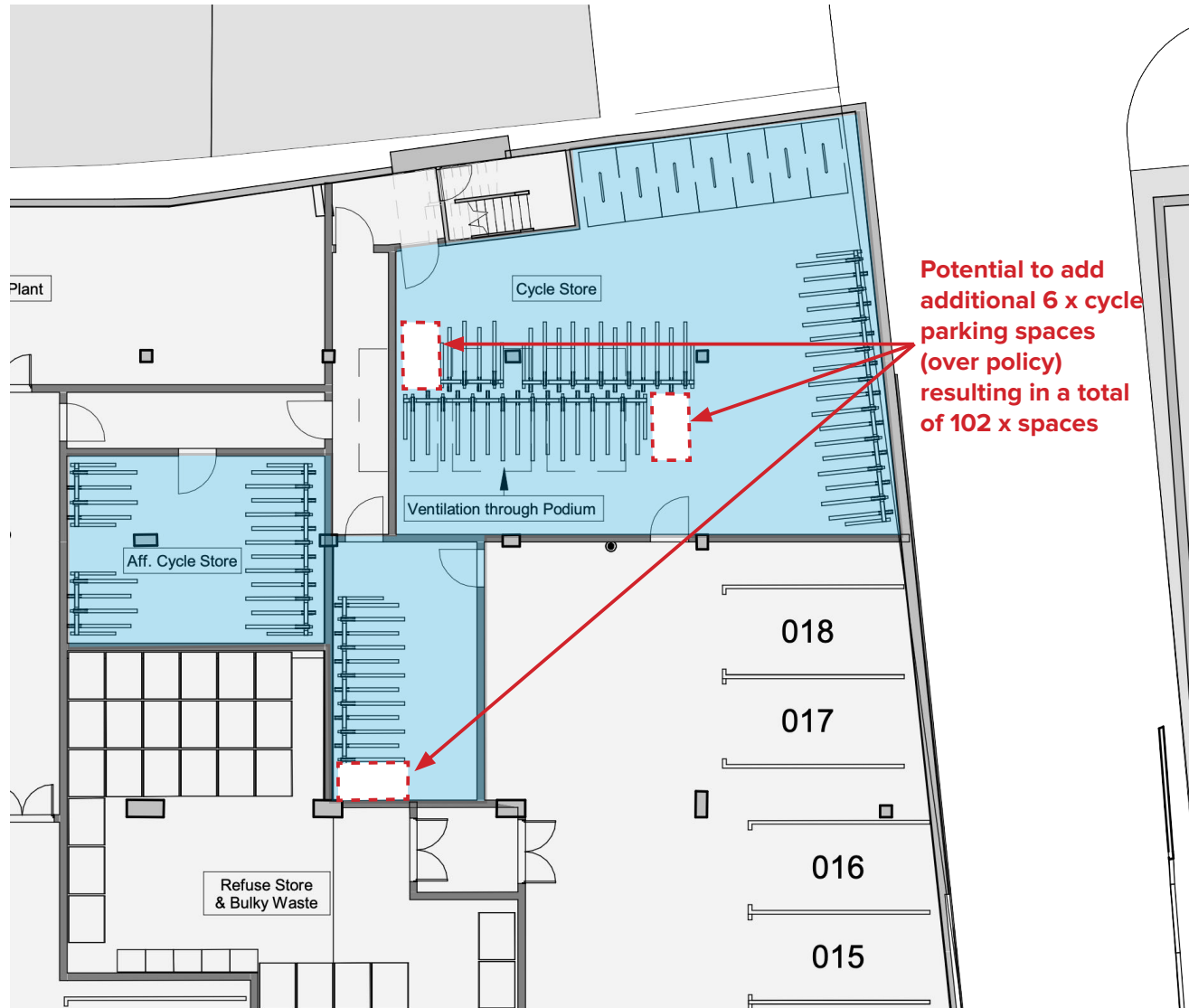
- Policy TR5 states that development should provide cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport. Supporting text confirms that the requirements for cycle parking are outlined in the Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). For flatted developments the requirement is:
 - 0.5 cycle parking spaces for 1 and 2 bed dwellings, and
 - 1 space for 3+ bed dwellings.
- On this basis, the policy requirement for the approved 144 homes plus the proposed 38 new homes (182 units in total) is 93 cycle parking spaces.
- The proposed plans provide space for 96 cycle parking spaces, exceeding policy requirements.
- We have annotated the Proposed Basement Plan to show the location of the cycle stores and have provided a zoomed-in extract. Whilst not a policy requirement, this also shows space within the stores where additional cycle parking could be accommodated should demand necessitate an increase. Where there is a demand from residents, other potential opportunities can be explored, including to provide additional cycle parking through the provision of Brompton / folding bike lockers elsewhere.

Basement Plan - With Cycle Storage Areas Highlighted
96 cycle storage spaces provided (93 required under policy)



Zoomed-in Basement Plan - With Cycle Storage Areas Highlighted

96 cycle storage spaces provided (93 required under policy) with potential to increase to 102 spaces



2. Waste Strategy

The Applicant appointed a Waste Consultant, Buro Happold, who engaged with the Senior Recycling and Enforcement Officer at Reading Borough Council in August 2022 and contractors operating in the area to advise on the waste strategy options for the site. Their advice has informed the application proposals. In providing their advice they took into account the Council's Waste Management Guidelines ¹.

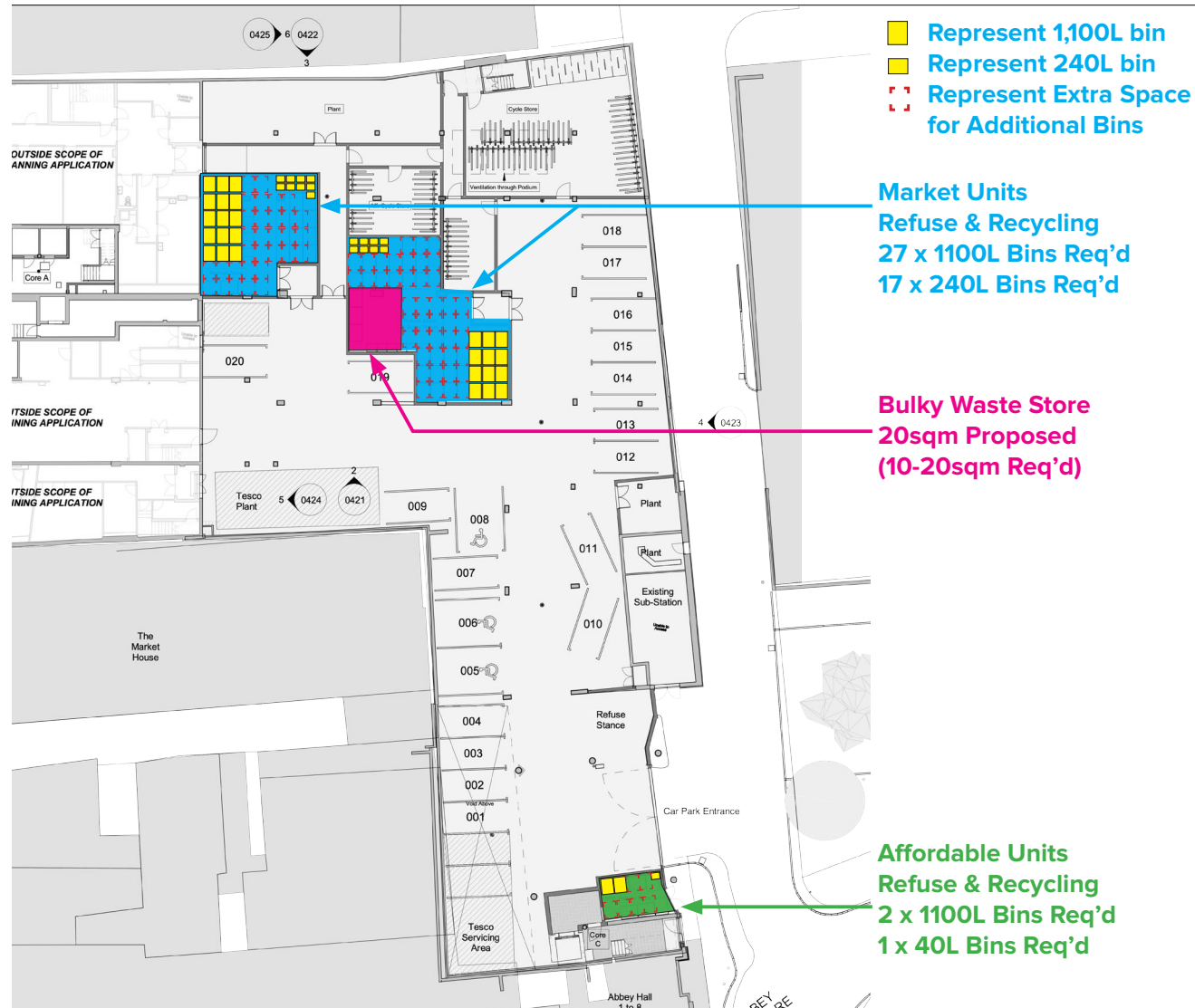
The following principles have been adopted:

- Refuse stores are proposed within the basement, with storage provision significantly in excess of standards for both the 38 proposed new homes as well as the already approved 144 homes. The stores are shown on the annotated plan overleaf.
- The refuse stores have been over-sized to allow for flexibility in the refuse strategy which is to be further developed at the next design stage via an Operational Waste Management Strategy which will be submitted for the Councils approval pursuant to planning conditions.
- Collection will be by a private waste collection contractor for all waste streams.
- With regards to food waste, engagement with private contractors, Olleco and Biffa, has confirmed that they both undertake food waste collections in the area. Both contractors have confirmed that collected food waste is taken to an anaerobic digestion facility or taken to a food waste transfer station and bulked up before being transported to an anaerobic digestion facility.

¹ (<https://www.reading.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/waste-management-guidelines-for-property-developers-architects-planners-contractors-managing-agents-and-landlords/>)

Basement Plan - Refuse & Recycling

Calculations based on weekly waste collection by a private waste collection company



Waste Quantity & Space Requirement and Provision:

- Waste generation benchmarks were obtained from a Senior Recycling and Enforcement Officer at Reading Borough Council in August 2022 to calculate waste storage and spatial provisions. The requirements have been based on a total of 182 units (38 new homes plus the approved 144 homes). This has been calculated in accordance with BS 5906:2005 and based on weekly collections for all three waste streams (residual waste, mixed recyclables and food waste).
- The capacity requirements are as follows, where L = litres:

	Residual Waste	Mixed Recyclables	Food Waste
Private bin storage	10 x 1,100L bins	17 x 1,100L bins	17 x 240L bins
Affordable bin storage	1 x 1,100L bins	1 x 1,100L bins	1 x 240L bins
Total	11 x 1,100L bins (12,100L)	18 x 1,100L bins (19,800L)	18 x 240L bins (4,320L)

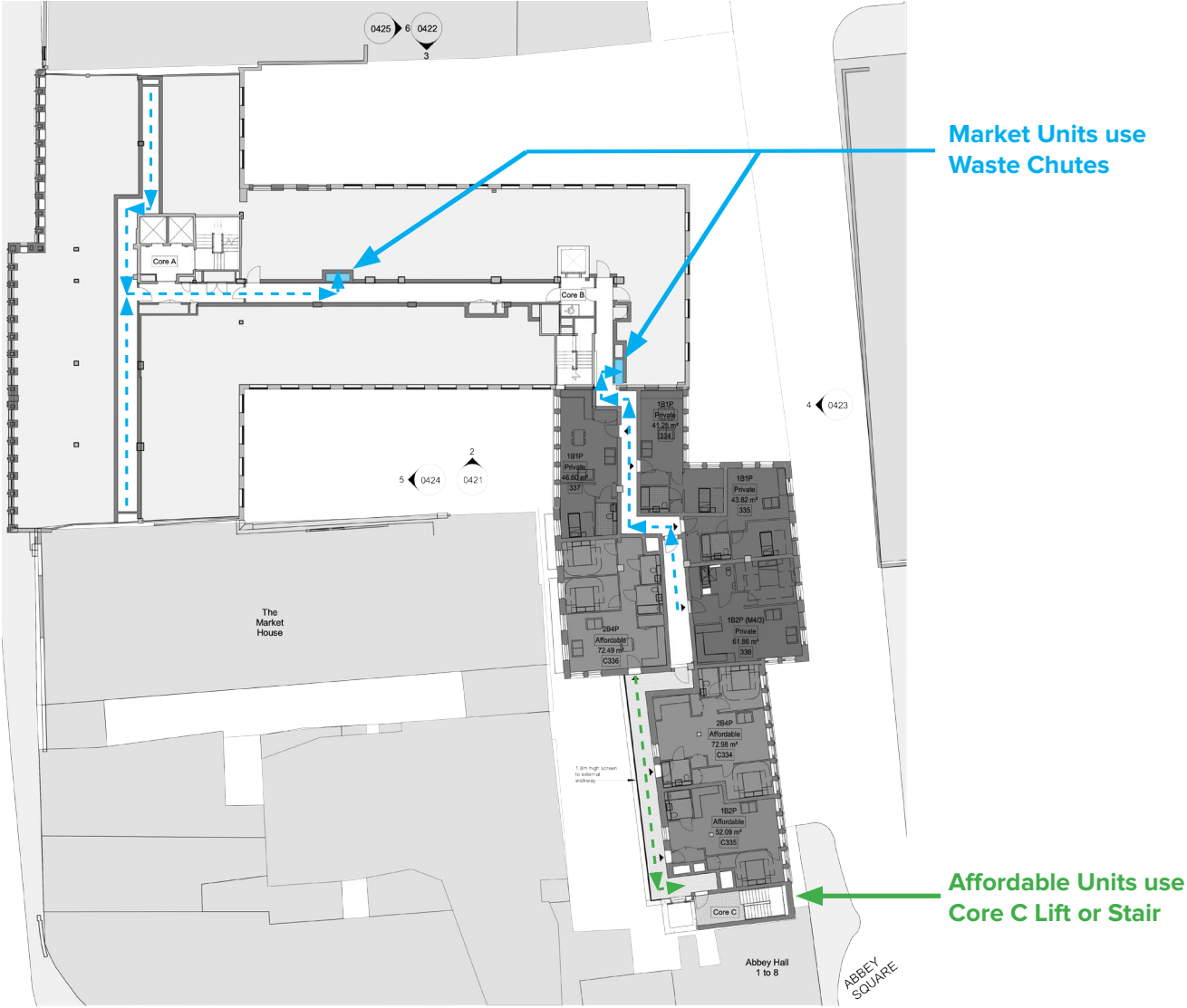
- The table below shows the required capacity compared to the capacity shown in the application:

	Required Capacity	Proposed Capacity
1,100L Bins	29 Bins (31,900L)	75 Bins (82,500L)
240L Bins	18 Bins (4,320L) 1	6 Bins (3,840L)
Total	36,220L	86,340L

- The capacity provided is more than double the capacity required for weekly collections (50,120L excess). Importantly, the excess capacity provides flexibility so that the Applicant can review the refuse strategy in terms of frequency of collections for the different waste streams, for example providing fortnightly collections of the residual waste and/or mixed recyclables or providing for collections for all or some of the waste streams twice a week. The excess capacity also ensures that there will be space left over for bulky waste storage areas. 10-20sqm of bulky waste storage is shown in the proposed plans, which represents best practice for developments of this scale.
- The refuse store locations are shown on the annotated basement plan provided on the previous page demonstrating that the stores have been oversized at this stage of the design.
- With regards to refuse management processes, the following is being considered:
 - Each waste stream will be collected on a separate day to the other.
 - Bins from the private refuse stores will be moved to the Refuse Stance collection area (located adjacent to the car park entrance) by building management during collections.
 - Bins from the affordable refuse store will be collected directly from their store by the waste collection crews.
 - Building management will manage the private refuse stores by rotating bins within the stores.
 - Building management will also be responsible for organising collections of ad-hoc bulky waste collections.
- The design accommodates provision for a waste chute system. This would benefit residents as they could dispose of waste from their floor without having to travel down to the basement refuse stores. The floorplans include spatial provision for these chutes.
- A resident's journey for disposing of waste from their flat is shown on the drawings overleaf. In accordance with BS 5906:2005 residents will not need to travel more than 30m to dispose of their waste.

As noted above, the Applicant will develop an Operational Waste Management Strategy which will be submitted to the Council for approval pursuant to planning condition. This will provide greater detail on the refuse strategy, including in relation to the final number and size of bins, frequency of collections, collection vehicles, management processes and measures to prevent pests and vermin. Planning conditions have been proposed by the Council to require these details and to ensure that the waste storage areas and collection process are appropriately maintained and managed.

Third Floor Plan - Refuse & Recycling
Occupant's Journey to Dispose of Waste



3. Photovoltaic Panels

Policy H5 requires that all major new-build residential development should be designed to achieve zero carbon homes. Supporting text confirms that, as a minimum, a 35% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the 2013 Building Regulations is required, plus a contribution of £1,800 per tonne towards carbon offsetting within Reading (calculated as £60 per tonne over a 30 year period).

The proposed energy strategy outlines that the development is expected to achieve a 50% reduction in carbon emissions, exceeding the policy requirement.

Councillors queried the proportion of energy that the photovoltaic (PV) panels will generate for the development. It is estimated that the PV panels will provide 25% of the proposed development's energy and achieve a 25% reduction in carbon emissions.

Councillors queried the level of reduction in carbon emissions that will be achieved through the use of the PV panels. It is estimated that the PV panels will provide a 25% reduction in carbon emissions.

4. Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Policy TR5 states that within communal car parks for residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point. The development proposes 10% active charging points thus satisfying policy requirements. In addition, whilst not a policy requirement, in light of members' request, the Applicant is willing to install the necessary infrastructure to future proof all remaining spaces so that additional charging points can be added with ease as the demand for electric charging points increases.

5. Fire Safety

A Planning Gateway One Fire Statement was submitted with the application. This was prepared by BB7 who are experienced fire consultants. The report outlines the fire safety considerations specific to the development and demonstrates that adequate measures have been incorporated to ensure fire safety matters at the planning stage of this scheme having as reference Approved Document B 2020, BS 9991:2015 and industry best practices. The measures include:

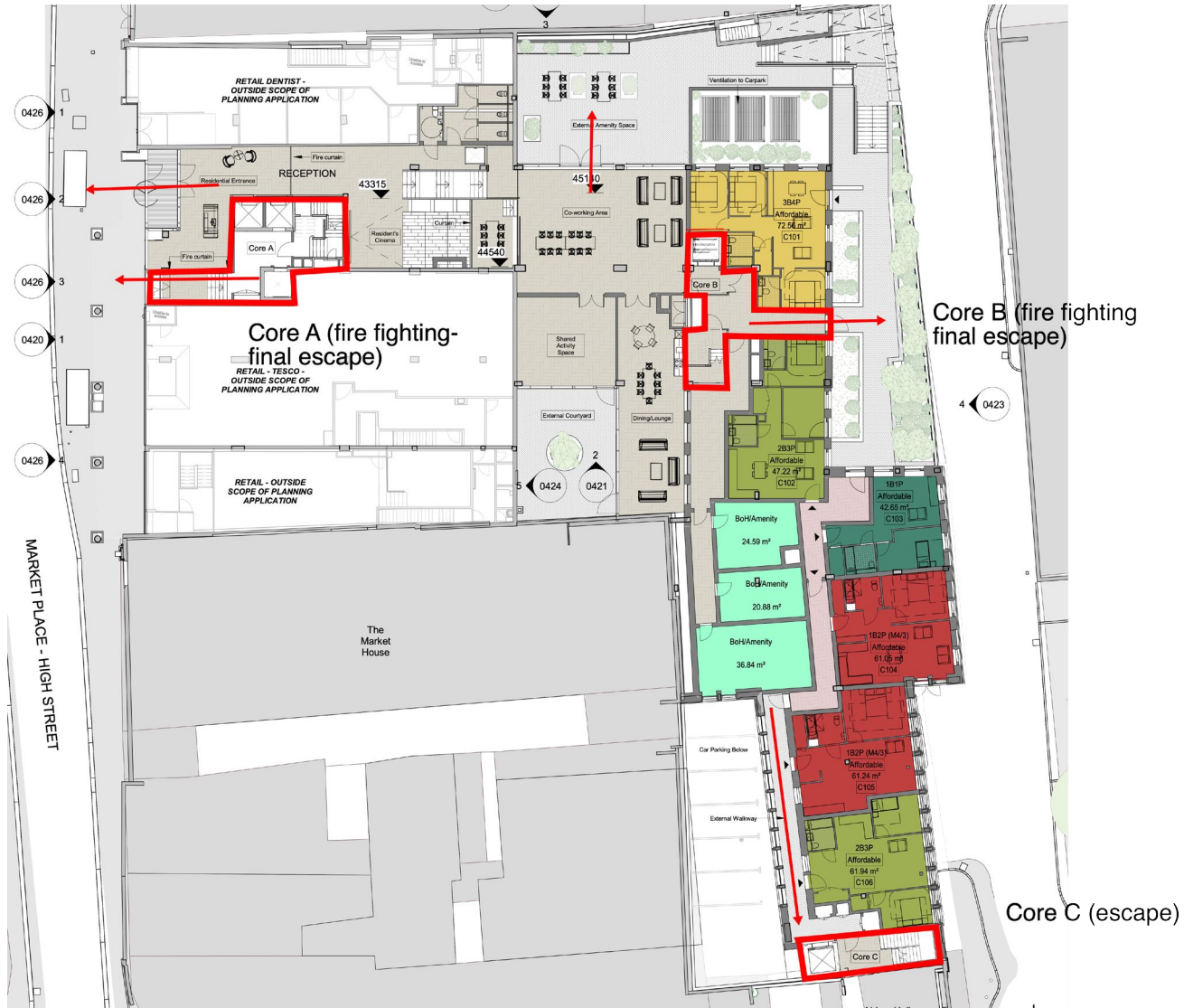
- Enhanced mechanical smoke ventilation system;
- Sprinklers;
- There are 3 escape cores and 2 fire fighting cores that will serve the building. At 6th floor level only there is access to 1 firefighting core which meets the escape distances of BS 9999 as set out in the gateway 1 report.

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service has reviewed the application and have not raised an objection.

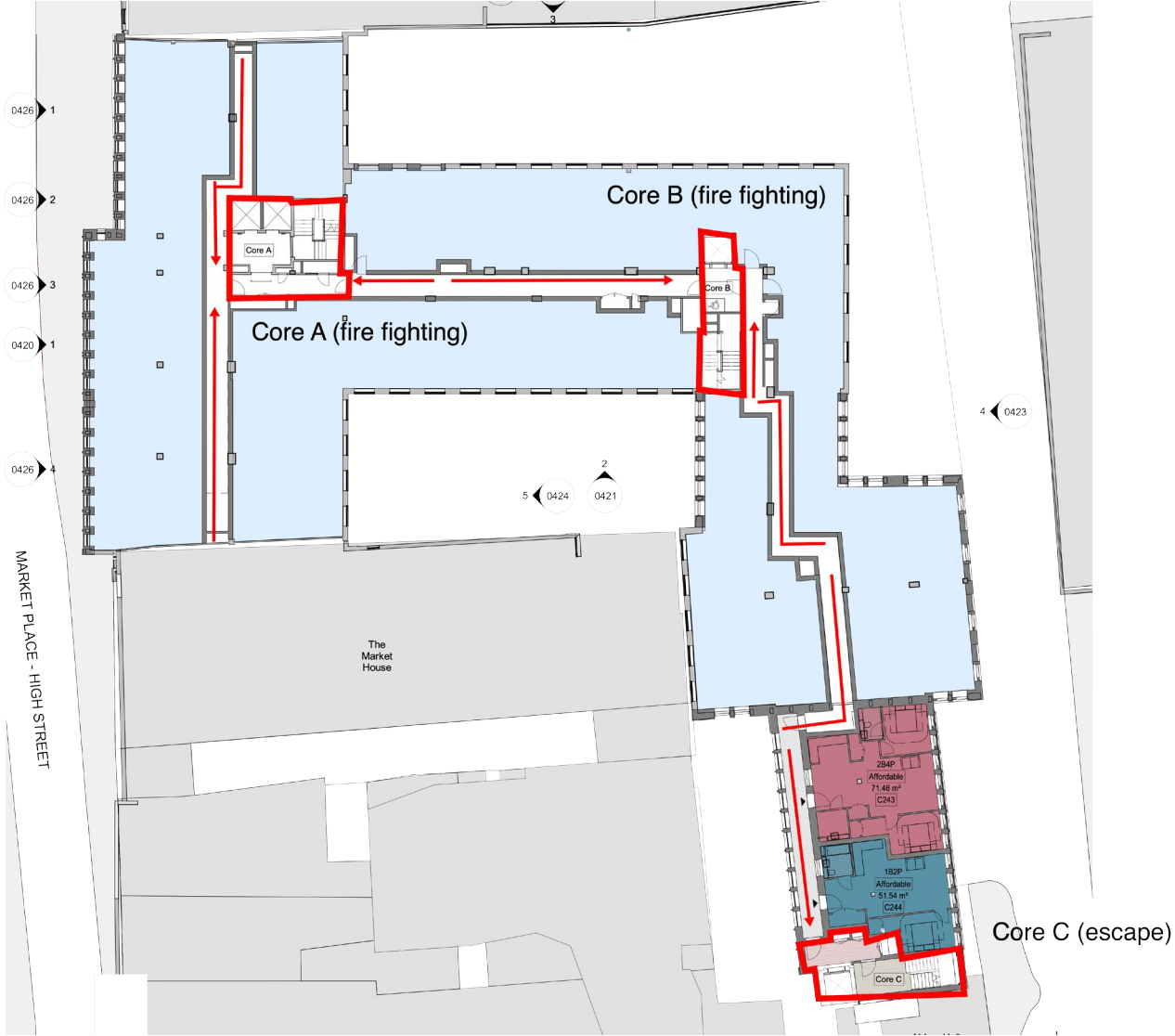
Fire Safety considerations will continue to be taken into account in the detailed design with the Building Control process ensuring that fire safety principles are appropriately accommodated in the scheme.

Fire escape routes are indicated on the following drawings.

Ground Floor Plan - Fire Fighting Cores



Second Floor Plan - Fire Fighting Cores



Fifth Floor Plan - Fire Fighting Cores



Sixth Floor Plan - Fire Fighting Cores



6. Materials

Tene Living is committed to retaining and operating the building for many years to come. Delivering a high-quality design is therefore at the heart of Tene's model and company ethos. Their original and long-term intention is very much to create a high-quality building that will make a positive contribution to the local area, as well as a building that will stand the test of time. In order to achieve this objective, the Applicant has worked positively and proactively with the Council throughout the design evolution process.

The Applicant progressed a heritage design-led approach and engaged with the Council, key stakeholders, and the local community. The process involved:

1. Carrying out a detailed analysis of the historic and local context of the site. This process involved specialist input from heritage advisors, Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture. This included early consideration of the historic development of the area, and character and townscape appraisals.
2. Detailed pre-application engagement and design scrutiny, with meetings held with:
 - RBC Planning & Conservation and Urban Design Officers;
 - Reading Design Review Panel (DRP); and
 - Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC).

This process informed the design evolution and included detailed discussions about the façade treatment of the building, including the colour and tone of the materials. The premise of the feedback received from the Council's Officers, the DRP and CAAC throughout this process was to ensure that the proposals made a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and setting of the nearby listed buildings.

Feedback received from the Council and other stakeholders supported the use of a variety of brick colours. There were, however, suggestions around providing more asymmetry in terms of subservient and dominant blocks; the use of different materials on the recessed fifth storey (introducing elements of cladding rather than being all brick); and providing a natural stone colonnade on the ground floor rather than brick.

This feedback was taken into account and the design of the Market Place façade evolved accordingly prior to submission, (see images showing scheme evolution on following pages), with the following changes made in relation to colour and materiality:

- The replacement of the façade with a new brick façade that matches the massing in the local area, with the design approach reflective of a series of 4 storey buildings with narrow frontages;
- Agreeing the colour and tone of the three main brick facade elements that match notable buildings in the locality, split by the recessed entrance building;
- Changing the colours used in the recessed top floor to provide darker colours; and
- Changing the materiality of the stone ground floor colonnade from brick.

Pre-Application Proposals (November 2021)



Pre-Application Proposals (February 2022)



1. Render



2. Georgian Red Brick



3. Grey Field Brick



4. Buff Brick To Match Existing



5. Bronze Curtain Walling + Black Windows

Pre-Application Proposals (May 2022)



1. Georgian Red Brick



2. Grey Field Brick



3. Buff Brick to match existing



a.Bronze



b.Black

4. Frame Colour to match RAL

Submission Proposal (September 2022)



Following submission, a meeting with the Council's Planning and Conservation & Urban Design Officers resulted in further refinement of the materiality of the set-back storey fronting Market Place. The Applicant positively responded by amending the scheme accordingly.

The selection of brick material draws inspiration from some of the notable Victorian brick buildings local to Market Square, including the Listed 1-2 Market Place (adjacent) and the Town Hall at the top of the square (see photos of the local context overleaf). The choice of colours provides three distinct building forms with a fourth darker brick element on plot 2 which forms a recessive shadow between the three other plots. The architects have worked with the Council's Officer and the heritage consultant to create a modern interpretation that balances the idiom of the burgage plot and the local tones and colours of brick that forms the character of the area. The location of the different colours has been carefully selected to provide variety and celebrate and contrast with the listed buildings adjacent.

Brick Precedents

GREY



TOWN HALL

BUFF



42 MARKET PLACE

RED



1-2 MARKET PLACE

The contextual, and positive and proactive engagement process, culminated in the scheme being reported to Planning Committee with a positive recommendation from Officers, with clear endorsement of the design which will result in an overall enhancement to the character of the Market Place, the Conservation Area, and the setting of the listed buildings.

At the Committee meeting, one Councillor questioned the suitability of using grey brick. As explained above, the grey brick draws inspiration from the brickwork used in the Grade II* listed Town Hall located at the top of Market Square (with inspiration also coming from the grey stone cladding of the Grade I Listed Church of St Lawrence, that is also located to the north of the square, immediately adjacent to the Town Hall). The variety of colour (red, buff and grey) is important both to complement and contrast with the dominant red colour of the street paving and to provide the visual excitement of the mixture of design.

In order to work collaboratively with the Council, since the Committee we have examined additional colour options which are enclosed for reference. These options have been carefully and extensively considered, and it is the opinion of the Applicant's professional team that the original proposal remains the most suitable.

The original design creates four distinct plots made up of three wider burgage plot frontages using three distinct brick colours and a fourth narrow plot that forms the entrance of the building, using a darker colour to make it visually recessive.

The arrangement of these colours - as presented in the original application - ensures that the combination remains distinct so that the grey colour does not sit next to the darker recessive entrance and the red and buff colours stand out from their neighbours. This ensures that they do not compete with the listed red brick Victorian building at 1-2 Market Place or clash with the poor example of 1980's buff brick architecture at 12 Market Place.

The alternative proposals blur the rationale for these distinct colour choices and weaken the composition of the four elements.

Proposal (November 2022)



Brick Colour Study Option # 1



Brick Colour Study Option # 2



Brick Colour Study Option # 3



Brick Colour Study Option # 4

