

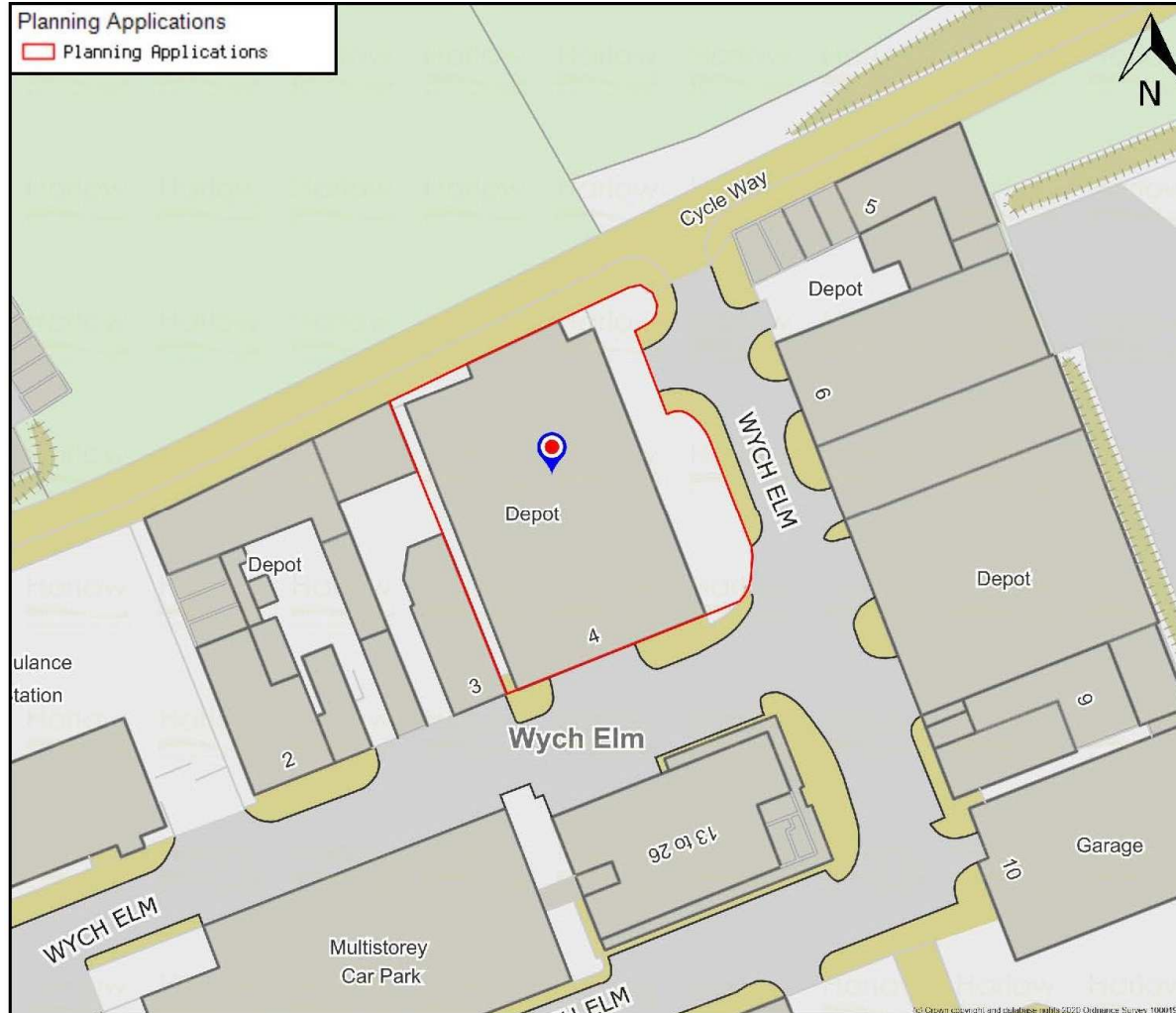
**4 Wych Elm, Harlow, CM20 1QP**

**Application Reference: HW/FUL/22/00406**

**Demolition of the existing building and erection of building ranging between 6 and 15 storeys comprising 84 residential flats (Use Class C3) and flexible commercial floorspace (Use Class E), communal amenity space, with associated parking, waste/recycling storage and other associated works.**

# Site Location

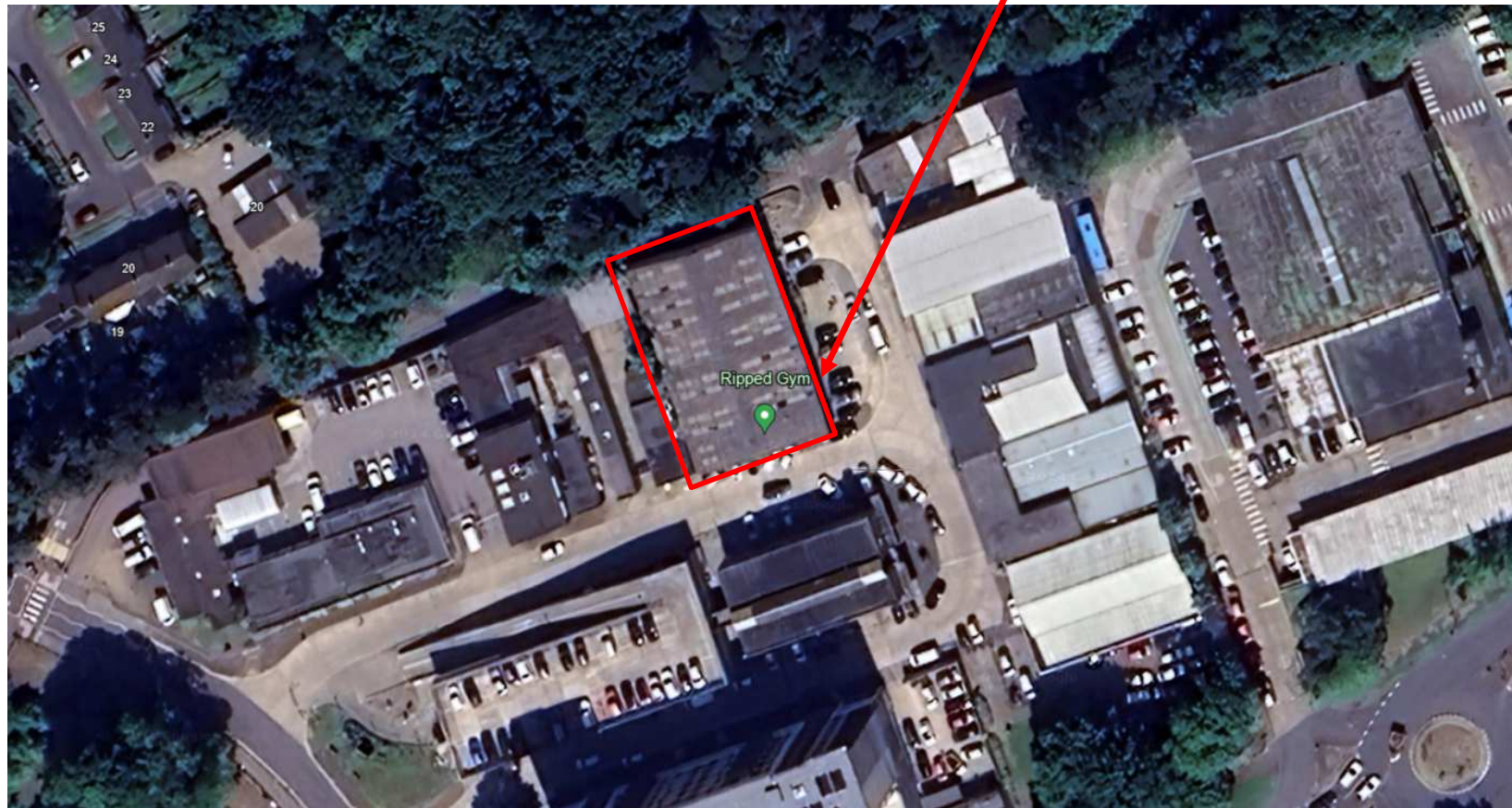
Site is edged in red



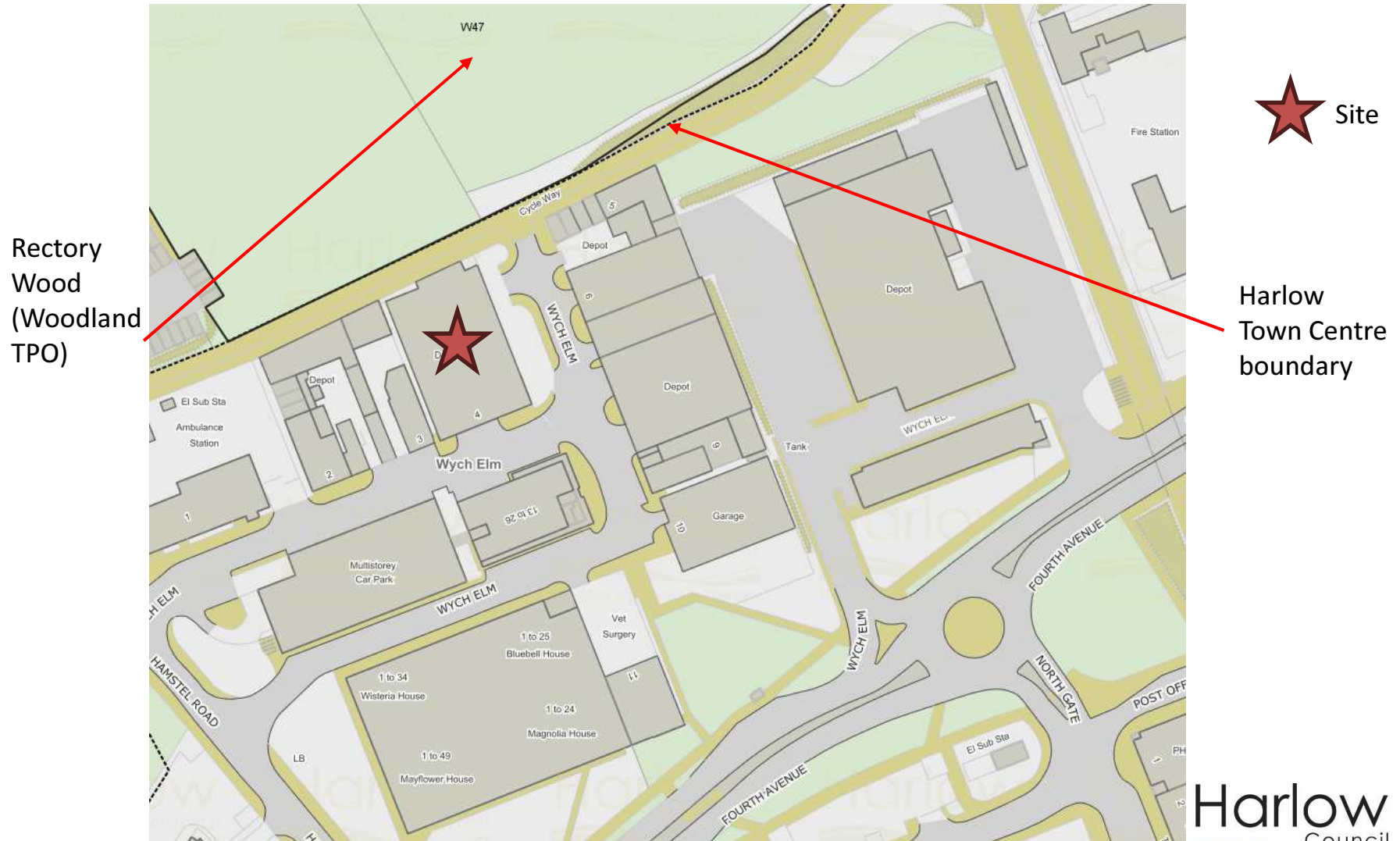
# Context Plan

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Site



# Proposals Map



# Existing Site

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# Existing Site

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# Principle of Development

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- Wych Elm area is not a designated employment area.
- Within Harlow town centre and forms part of *Opportunity Area 2* of the Harlow Town Centre Masterplan Framework – an appropriate and sustainable location for ground floor commercial uses with residential development above.
- Suitable for higher density development, including tall buildings.
- Wych Elm Development Brief sets out the vision for the area to be a place for mixed-used development including retail, leisure and residential.
- Site earmarked specifically for residential development with ground floor commercial floorspace in a building between six and 15 storeys in a staggered formation.

# Housing and Amenity Space

No. of Units	Studio	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed
84	4	36	38	6
Proportion	5%	43%	45%	7%

- A variety of unit sizes with the highest proportion being 1-bed and 2-beds which are suitable for a town centre location.
- Further negotiation with the applicant has resulted in a number of family-sized units and smaller studio flats for single occupants.
- All units would meet nationally described space standards, offer a good standard of accommodation (including dual aspect) and provide private amenity space.
- Communal terraces proposed at 1<sup>st</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> floor levels.



# Affordable Housing

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- Unviable to provide affordable housing on-site or as a commuted sum.
- Applicant's viability reviewed by Council's consultants and agree that scheme is unviable to do so.
- Early-stage review (ESR) mechanism negotiated and to be secured via S106 Agreement to re-determine level of contribution prior to development commencing.
- In line with HLDP and SPD requirements.

# Design (1/2)

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- Part 6, 9, 11, 14 and 15 storey building – acceptable at corner plot in Wych Elm.
- Tallest elements located along the eastern and northern edges, and steps down towards west and south. Approach supported in Wych Elm Development Brief.
- ‘Horse shoe’ layout centred around communal amenity space at first floor.
- Building designed to make effective use of small site and considers relationship with neighbouring sites and development.
- To be constructed using white concrete and grey and green masonry. Windows, door frames, railings and balconies to be dark grey aluminium to contrast the fenestration with masonry.
- Linear vertical emphasis synonymous with Harlow design.

# Design (2/2)

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- Ground level would provide residential and servicing access, with flexible commercial floorspace (Use Class E) and residential parking.
- UDO and planning officers content with the final proposed design in terms of height, bulk, massing and layout.
- DOCO has agreed measures to reduce levels and fear of crime – to be conditioned in line with No.5 and No.10 Wych Elm.
- Meets fire safety planning requirements – agreed by HSE.

# Landscaping

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- Limited space for landscaping but proposals would improve boundaries with new paving, planting and trees along northern, eastern and southern edges.
- Would introduce green roofs where blocks terminate as well as additional planting as part of the communal terraces.
- Space allocated for public art at ground level – details to be dealt with by condition requiring engagement with the Harlow Arts Trust.
- No objection raised by Trees Officer.
- Landscaping scheme and maintenance/management plan to be conditioned.

# Highways & Servicing

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- Largely car-free development with adequate levels of parking restrictions in area. Would help to reduce the number of vehicles in the area.
- Exception would be inclusion of 13 parking spaces (three accessible). 10 spaces to provide electric vehicle charging.
- 112 cycle spaces.
- No objection from ECC Highways given town centre, sustainable location.
- Parking levels exceed No.5 (car free) and No.10 Wych Elm (three spaces) which have resolution to grant planning permission.
- Condition to be imposed requiring developer to offer the right of first refusal to occupiers of the largest units.
- Applicant has dealt with waste matters. Loading bay to be provided.

# Other Matters

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- No concerns raised by EH re: land contamination and noise, subject to appropriate conditions.
- Use Class E floorspace to be restricted to opening hours of 07:00-23:00 each day.
- Proposed development compatible with No.5 Wych Elm, and vis versa, in terms of daylight and sunlight.
- Development would achieve an estimated 65% reduction in regulated CO2 emissions. Would introduce air source heat pumps and 175 PV panels.
- Introduction of SUDS would improve surface water drainage capacity.
- Green Infrastructure improvements and biodiversity net gain compared to existing site.

# Obligations

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S106 Heads of Terms would comprise:

- Early Stage Review mechanism requiring a re-assessment of the viability to determine affordable housing contributions before development commences.
- £90,468 to NHS Hertfordshire & WEST Essex ICS.
- £68,634 to ECC to support Sustainable Transport Corridor
- £34,190.64 to ECC to support Early Years & Childcare provision.
- £25,855.20 to East of England Ambulance Services.
- £6,535.20 to ECC to fund libraries.
- Non-financial contribution to prepare an Employment and Skills Plan.

WARM BRICK



GREY BRICK



GREEN BRICK



WHITE CONCRETE







# Summary & Recommendation

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- Redevelopment of brownfield site within the town centre.
- Wych Elm area has an adopted vision to be redeveloped into a mixed-use area with commercial floorspace at ground level with homes above.
- Site suitable for high density development, including a tall building up to 15 storeys.
- Well-designed using high-quality materials.
- Would complete planning process for ‘four corners’ of Wych Elm (subject to signing of S106 Agreements).
- Applicant has agreed to early-stage review to allow Council to clawback affordable housing contributions should circumstances allow, as well as offering a substantial package of financial benefits through a S106 Agreement.
- **It is resolved that the DM Committee Grant Planning Permission subject to a S106 Agreement and planning conditions.**