

Design & Access Statement

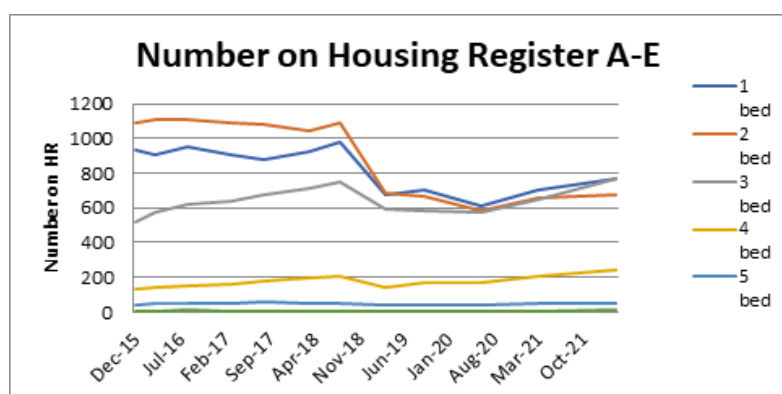
99 Hartland Road, Reading

Affordable Housing Need

Reading is in the heart of the Thames Valley, an economically successful area with excellent transport links and a high quality of life. One of the difficulties with this success is that there are significant issues with the affordability of housing in Reading. Figures from the Office of National Statistics show that median house prices in Reading were 9.06 times median gross annual workplace-based earnings in 2019, and that affordability has been progressively worsening over the last 20 years.

The Berkshire (including South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA, 2016) shows that over time, lower quartile affordability in Reading is consistently worse than median affordability. In Reading, people on lower wages struggle to be able to afford housing at the lower end of the market. This manifests itself in a high level of demand for affordable housing. At March 2022, there were 4,616 households on the Housing Register.

There is also a particular need for housing for families in Reading (defined as households with children living in overcrowded conditions) who are generally the highest priority need. The trend forecast for numbers on the Housing Register in Bands A-E shows that the need for three-bedroom homes is rising quickly along with the need for four-bedroom homes:



In this case, the Council has identified a specific need for a family sized home with an adapted ground floor bedroom and shower room in this location. The property will therefore be adapted and extended in order to provide a much-needed family-sized home that meets this need.

Design Principals and Concepts

The central concept of the proposals is to provide accessible, modern, living accommodation for families where a member of the family has a disability which compromises their ability to live comfortably in standard housing.

The proposed plans involve extending an existing three bedroom house to provide a purpose built accessible bedroom and shower room. The ground floor of the property is remodelled to create an inclusive accessible environment.

The energy strategy for the building is to create a low carbon impact, and low energy usage. To this end, the external elevations of the building will be insulated and applied with a rendered finish to greatly reduce heat loss. Inside, the gas heating system will be replaced with a new air source heat pump and solar panel system.

The facade of the building is to be overclad with an external insulation panel and render system. This changes the elevation from a red face brick to a modern thru-coloured render. Hartland Road contains buildings which vary in finish from face brick, pebble dash render and painted render, therefore this change in facade ties into the existing street themes on the road.

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95 Hartland Road - Example painted render finish

97 Hartland Road - Example pebble dashed render finish

99 Hartland Road - Current Elevation

On approach to the building, there will be level access to the front elevation entrance door, leading into an accessible ground floor of the building. Existing door openings are widened, and the configuration of the floor has been amended to allow internal wheelchair circulation across the floor.

To the rear, shallow threshold, outward opening doors will allow access to a level paved patio allowing the occupiers to enjoy the rear garden space.

Consultation

The design has been prepared in consultation with Reading Borough Council's housing team. This has supported the design and resulted in a design that will be fit for purpose for the planned and future residents of the property.

The topography of the site is broadly level, meaning that limited external work is needed to support level access within the building.
