



AFFORDABLE HOUSING STATEMENT

Site Address: Land Adjacent to 524 Northumberland Avenue, Reading
Applicant: Opal Group London Ltd
Prepared by: StudioMAC
Date: 11.07.25

1. Introduction

This Affordable Housing Statement supports the planning application for the proposed development at Land Adjacent to 524 Northumberland Avenue, Reading. The development comprises:

Erection of a two-storey building;
Ground floor: retail unit (51.1 m² GIA);
First floor: 1 x 2-bedroom, 3-person self-contained flat (63.4 m² GIA);
Associated cycle and refuse storage and external amenity space.
The statement addresses compliance with Policy H3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) and the Affordable Housing SPD (2021).

2. Policy Context

Policy H3: Affordable Housing

Reading Borough Council's adopted Local Plan Policy H3 requires affordable housing contributions from all residential developments of one dwelling or more, including small-scale developments. The policy allows for on-site provision, off-site contributions, or financial contributions depending on the scale and context of the proposal.

SPD (2021) Requirements

The SPD provides further guidance, clarifying that:

Contributions apply from one unit upwards. For proposals of fewer than 10 dwellings, financial contributions in lieu of on-site provision will typically be required. Contributions will be calculated using a standardised commuted sum formula, unless robust viability evidence demonstrates otherwise.

3. Proposal Summary

The development proposes the creation of a single residential unit above a new retail unit. Given that only one new dwelling is proposed, the affordable housing requirement would normally be met via a commuted sum payment rather than on-site provision.

4. Affordable Housing Contribution

In line with Policy H3 and the Affordable Housing SPD:

The proposal is for 1 additional unit, thus triggering a requirement for a financial contribution towards off-site affordable housing.
The applicant accepts this requirement in principle and is willing to make a commuted sum contribution to be secured via a Section 106 Agreement.
The exact contribution value will be calculated in accordance with Reading Borough Council's standard methodology for small sites, or as otherwise advised by the case officer.

5. Viability

At this stage, no viability assessment is submitted, as the applicant intends to comply with the full contribution requirement. Should viability concerns arise during the application process, the applicant reserves the right to submit a full viability appraisal in line with SPD requirements.

6. Conclusion

This application proposes a minor residential development of one dwelling and is fully aligned with Policy H3 and the Affordable Housing SPD. The applicant acknowledges the obligation to contribute towards affordable housing and is committed to entering into a legal agreement to secure a financial contribution to support the delivery of affordable homes elsewhere in the borough.

We respectfully request that the Council confirm the contribution amount during the determination process, to allow for timely drafting of the Section 106 agreement or Unilateral Undertaking.