

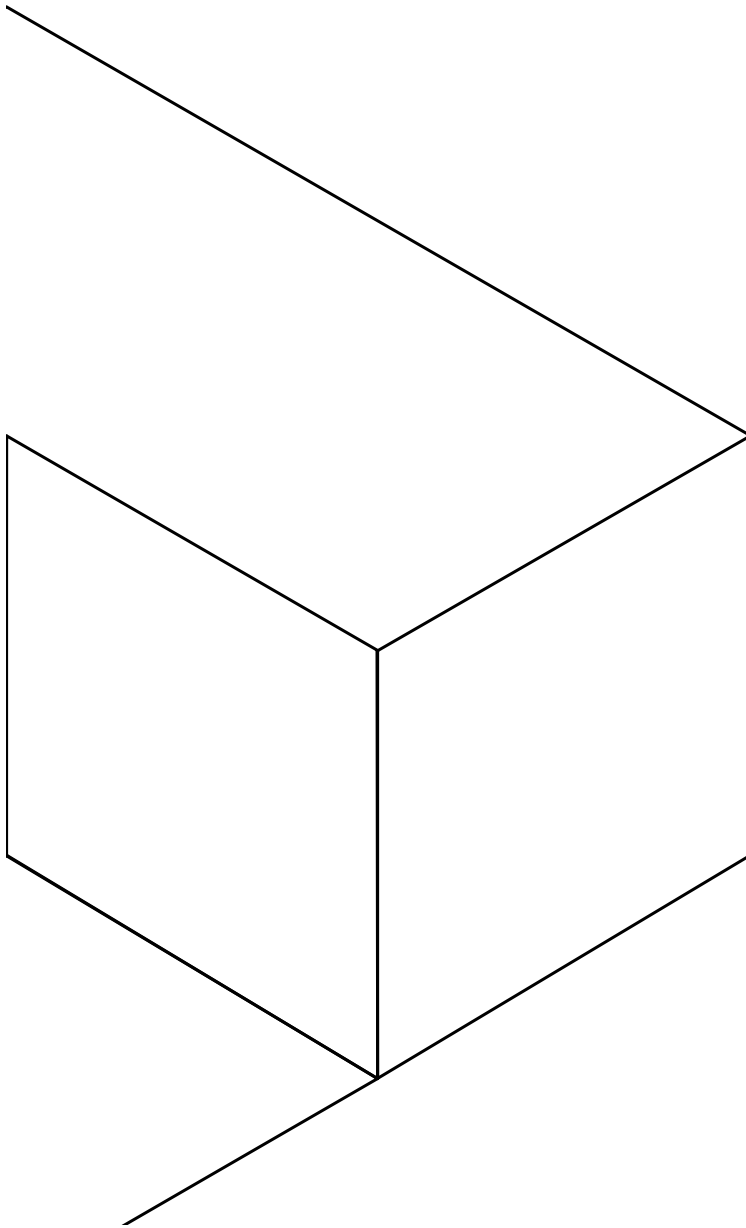
Yeomanry House/ READING/ RG1 6AG

Affordable housing
statement



Issue: Planning Issue

Date: Rev 1 - March 2026



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Job No: 375

Location: Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 6AG

Description: The conversion of former Council offices of the Registry and Bereavement Service to 8 dwellings (5 apartments and 3 houses), associated access and highway works, and landscaping alongside internal and external alterations and repair works to the Grade II Listed Property.

Proposed Development

The proposed development is for 8 residential units within the existing building. The site benefits from a highly sustainable town centre location with strong access to public transport, services and facilities.

Affordable Housing Policy Context

Reading Borough Council's affordable housing policy is set out in the Reading Local Plan (November 2019), Policy H3. Policy H3 seeks affordable housing contributions on sites of 5-9 dwellings. For developments of this scale, the Council expects a financial contribution equivalent to 20% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough.

In all cases where proposals fall short of the policy target as a result of viability considerations, an open-book approach is required and the onus is on the developer/landowner to clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower affordable housing contribution.

This approach is supported by the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (March 2021). Section 6 of the SPD sets out the Council's approach towards assessing viability where a reduced or nil affordable housing contribution is proposed.

Paragraph 7.7 of the SPD stipulates that an Affordable Housing Statement for developments of less than 10 dwellings, where an off-site financial contribution is expected, should include:

- the total number of all residential units;
- details of the Gross Development Value (GDV) of the whole development, based on two separate valuations by suitably qualified estate agents of the completed development; and
- the proposed level of financial contribution.

On site offer

During the application preparation process, it has become clear that the proposed listed building works give rise to significant and abnormal cost implications. The current cost plan indicates that the scheme is marginal in viability terms.

Accordingly, the application will engage in a viability review process with the Council to agree an appropriate and reasonable level of planning obligations. The objective is to ensure that the heritage assets can be properly secured and restored, while establishing a contribution that is acceptable to the Local Planning Authority and reflective of the scheme's deliverability.

A full Viability Assessment accompanies the planning application. This has been prepared on an open-book basis in accordance with the Council's policy requirements and the Affordable Housing SPD. The assessment demonstrates the scheme viability position and provides the necessary evidence where a policy-compliant affordable housing contribution cannot be supported.

It is acknowledged that the Viability Assessment must be submitted alongside the planning application where the applicant seeks to challenge the policy requirement for affordable housing provision.

Full details of the appraisal inputs, assumptions and conclusions are set out within the accompanying Viability Statement, which is submitted as part of the planning application.

Heads of Terms

Applicant: Richard McCarthy

Title plan: BK872

Land Owner: Richard McCarthy Homes Ltd.

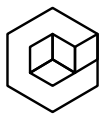
Mortgage: No

Applicant Solicitor:

Robert Daniel
Merali Beedle
Vicarage House
58-60 Kensington Church Street
London
W8 4DB
United Kingdom
Tel: 0207 368 3325
rdaniel@meralibeedle.com

Legal Costs:

The applicant agrees to pay the Council's reasonable legal costs whether or not the matter proceeds or is completed with the standard S106 monitoring fee.



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