



Design & Access Statement

Site: 63A Hamilton Road, Reading, RG1 5RA

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1. Introduction and Contextual Justification

1.1 Introduction

This Design and Access Statement is submitted in support of a planning application for a single-storey detached outbuilding within the rear garden of 63A Hamilton Road. The primary purpose of the structure is to provide necessary ancillary accommodation for the applicant's elderly and disabled mother.

1.2 Multi-Generational Living & Accessibility Need

The applicant's mother suffers from severe mobility issues and can no longer navigate the stairs to access her existing first-floor bedroom in the main house. Moving her to a ground-floor environment is a medical and practical necessity. The proposed outbuilding provides a safe, level-access, independent ground-floor living space. This arrangement facilitates essential, round-the-clock family care and support while maintaining the spatial integrity and functional dependency of the main dwellinghouse.

1.3 Site Context and Constraints

The application site is located within a well-established residential area characterised by substantial dwellings set in generous plots. The rear garden benefits from a mature landscape. Several mature trees on and immediately adjacent to the site are subject to **Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)**. These specimens (**T005, T006, T012, and T6**) are recognised as vital contributors to the character, canopy cover, and biodiversity of the Hamilton Road streetscape.

2. Proposal

The application seeks permission for a single-storey ancillary annex with a gross internal area of approximately 42sqm. The layout is designed to fully comply with Reading Borough Council's guidelines for ancillary structures:

- **Ancillary Use:** The building is intended for habitation solely by a dependent family member. It will function as an extension of the main household, sharing primary kitchen facilities, utilities, and main garden access with 63A Hamilton Road. It will not be severed, sold, or let as an independent planning unit.
- **Subservient Scale:** Positioned discretely within the deep rear garden, the footprint remains subservient to the main host dwelling, retaining a substantial proportion of private open amenity space in accordance with **Policy H10**.
- **Contemporary Low Profile:** The building utilises a flat roof profile to compress the overall height to a maximum of 3.0m, ensuring it sits low against the boundary lines.

3. Design Principles and Material

The design strictly adheres to **Policy CC7 (Design and Character)** of the Reading Borough Local Plan:

- **Materials:** All external finishes, predominantly matching brickwork, will be selected to perfectly complement the existing material palette of 63A Hamilton Road, ensuring architectural cohesion.

- **Massing:** By utilising a flat roof, the massing is minimised, ensuring the structure does not appear dominant or overbearing to neighbouring properties.
- **Fenestration and Privacy:** The layout includes integrated roof skylights to flood the living space with high-quality internal light without compromising privacy. All vertical glazing is carefully positioned to look inward over the applicant's own private garden, eliminating any potential for overlooking into adjacent properties.

4. "No-Dig" Engineering Strategy (TPO Compliance)

The proposed outbuilding falls within the designated Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of protected trees T005, T006, T012, and T6. To satisfy Policy EN12 (Trees and Woodlands), traditional strip foundations, mechanical trenching, and hard landscaping have been entirely eliminated. The development introduces a 100% "No-Dig" design philosophy.

4.1 Structural Foundation Design (Helical Screw Piles)

- **Deep Strata Anchoring:** To support the weight of a high-quality brick and timber structure on shrinkable clay soil, the foundation will utilise a matrix of engineered, heavy-duty helical screw piles. These slim steel shafts will be driven past the volatile upper clay crust to a depth of **3.5m to 6.0m**, anchoring firmly into stable substrata.
- **Isolation from Ground Movement (Soil Heave):** The building will be mounted onto a reinforced steel/concrete ground beam framework completely suspended **100mm above the existing ground level**. A

compressible void-former (*Claymaster*) will maintain this physical air gap. This layout protects the building from tree-induced clay movement (shrink/swell) while ensuring continuous gas, air, and moisture exchange for the root systems below.

- **Zero Invasive Future Remediation:** Bypassing the active root zone eliminates the risk of future settlement. In the highly improbable event that alignment adjustments are required down the line, screw piles can be levelled mechanically from *above-ground* pile heads. This guarantees **zero future excavation, zero underpinning, and zero long-term risk** to the tree roots.

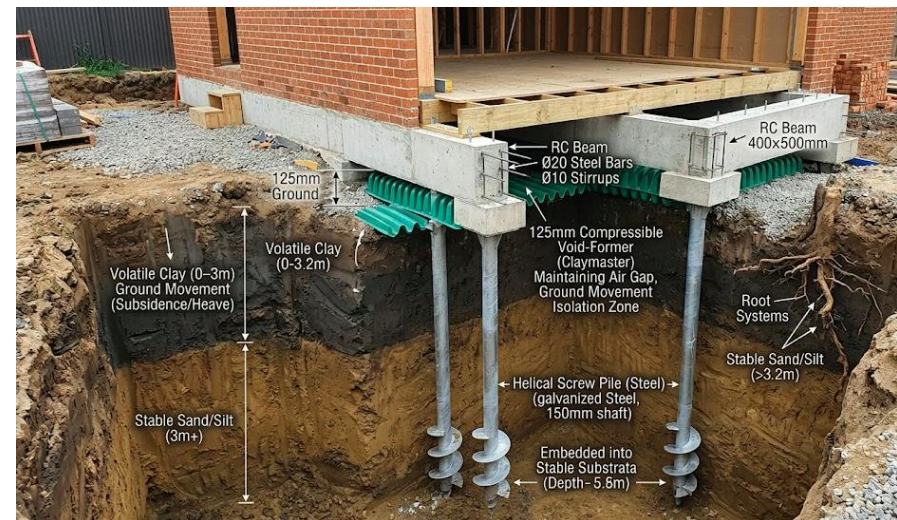


Image of Structural foundation design

4.2 Zero-Dig Utility Strategy (Electricity, Water & Drainage)

To avoid damaging important tree roots, we will not dig traditional trenches for underground services. Instead, we will use the existing 300mm deep brick boundary wall as a safe and non-intrusive route to run services through.

- **Electrical & Water Supply:** Steel Wire Armoured (SWA) cables and insulated water lines will run parallel to the boundary wall, enclosed in high-impact protective conduits mounted **entirely above-ground** to the face of the brick wall, causing absolute zero root disturbance.
- **Foul Drainage via Low-Pressure Pump:** To eliminate a deep, sloped gravity trench, wastewater will be managed via a localised, sealed pumping station at the outbuilding. Waste will be discharged through a narrow, flexible pressure pipe (32mm–50mm) clipped above-ground along the base of the existing brick wall, snaking directly into the existing chamber located.

4.3 No-Dig Landscaping and Thresholds

- **Level Building Access:** To facilitate disabled access without creating solid concrete steps, pedestrian thresholds will feature low-profile, suspended timber decking supported by mini ground screws or extensions of the steel chassis, maintaining the 100mm air void below.
- **Permeable Walkways:** Any perimeter maintenance pathways will utilise a **"No-Dig" cellular confinement system (e.g., Geoweb)** laid directly on the unexcavated turf surface and filled with clean, angular stone. This

spreads pedestrian loads to prevent soil compaction while maintaining 100% water and air permeability to the roots.

5. Access, Parking, and Lifetime Homes Compliance

- **Disabled Pedestrian Access:** In accordance with **Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)** and "Lifetime Homes" principles, a seamless, level access pathway will connect the main dwelling to the outbuilding, ensuring safe, wheelchair-friendly transit for the elderly resident.
- **Vehicular Access & Parking:** The existing access from Hamilton Road remains unchanged. The front driveway provides ample off-street parking. Because the outbuilding serves purely ancillary family use, it will not increase local highway pressure or create a requirement for additional parking spaces.

6. Neighbouring Residential Amenity

The proposal respects the amenity of adjacent properties in strict compliance with **Policy CC8**:

- **Overshadowing:** The single-storey height compressed flat roof, and adequate setbacks from boundaries ensure no loss of daylight or overshadowing to neighbouring windows.
- **Noise and Activity:** As a purely residential ancillary unit housing a single family member, the building will produce no more noise or disruption than a standard domestic garden room.

7. Planning Policy Framework

The scheme has been systematically developed to satisfy the requirements of:

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** Delivering social sustainability by addressing specific family housing and accessibility needs while optimising residential land.
- **Reading Borough Local Plan (2019):** * *Policy CC7 (Design):* Responding to context through matching brickwork and a low-profile massing.
 - *Policy CC8 (Amenity):* Protecting neighbour privacy and securing level access.
 - *Policy EN12 (Trees):* Preserving 100% of the TPO canopy via a fully documented "No-Dig" engineered strategy.
 - *Policy H10 (Amenity Space):* Retaining policy-compliant private outdoor space.

8. Conclusion

The proposed outbuilding at 63A Hamilton Road is a carefully designed, high-quality extension to meet an important family need for multi-generational living and accessible ground-floor accommodation for a disabled occupant.

The design uses matching materials, a low roof height, and specialist foundation methods to ensure it fits well with the existing property and surrounding environment.

To protect nearby trees, no excavation will take place within the root protection areas. Instead, the building will use helical screw piles, a suspended floor structure, and above-ground service routes fixed to the existing boundary wall, along with a low-pressure waste system.

This approach ensures the trees are fully protected and their root systems are not disturbed.

Full structural calculations, installation data, and an arboricultural method statement will be provided to the Local Planning Authority as required.

On this basis, we respectfully request that planning permission is granted.