Student digs plan unveiled

Designs for controversial university scheme revealed ahead of appeal hearing

DESIGNS for improved student accommodation at the University of Reading have been revealed.

The controversial plans for St Patrick’s Hall are due to be heard by Reading Borough Council on March 19.

Artist impressions of the proposed upgrade to the halls on Northcourt Avenue form part of evidence submitted to the authority as part of a public appeal hearing.

The university is currently appealing against the council’s rejection last year, which had initially been recommended for approval.

Professor Robert Van de Noort, acting Vice-Chancellor, said: “The existing St Patrick’s Hall no longer reflects the needs and expectations of our students.

“We have a responsibility to provide more high-quality accommodation, which has a positive impact on students’ university experience.

“We are aware of concerns held by nearby residents and these designs take those into account.

“We believe this proposal is the right design and location to meet the demands of the community and our students.”

The modernised buildings would provide 654 more rooms for students and help with the demand for places.

The university withdrew its original application to redevelop St Patrick’s Hall and developed an alternative scheme.