

This is my application to build three new homes in close proximity for myself and immediate family; it is not a commercial development. The proposal would introduce a diversity of tenure in this well-connected, sustainable location, placing dwellings in a simply managed setting of privacy and personal space creating inclusive, appealing homes appropriate for elderly single or semi-retired people. The demographic of the occupants, who are likely to spend a longer period of time at home, has driven this design-led approach to produce a high standard of quality with innovative and comfortable living spaces, employing superior environmental controls, safety and security systems, whilst the occupants retain privacy and freedom of immediate engagement with the street and local neighbourhood.

Employing advanced levels of insulation for thermal, sound and structure, heating and cooling systems with efficient and eco-friendly recovery and modern recycling techniques, will create very efficient spaces, generating an ongoing sustainable low-carbon existence whilst also addressing other aspects of climate change.

Currently, over 75% of properties on Nicholls Avenue were either purpose-built or been converted into multi-bedroom, two-story dwellings, with more in the process of alteration; these proposed ground-floor units can only ever exist as built, preserving a mix of unit sizes and the requirement to deliver mixed and inclusive neighbourhoods.

Extracts from: *Officers Report in blue italic*

STREETVIEW

- *"The proposed dwelling includes a first floor side elevation window serving a bedroom. The window would provide views (albeit relatively oblique) into the first floor bedroom window of No.1a Nicholls Avenue, causing a harmful loss of privacy to users of the room which would harm their amenities. The proposal is therefore considered to cause harm to the amenities of No.1a Nicholls Avenue".*

The harmful extra window was placed to produce a more contemporary appearance, both internally and externally, seemingly the building corner itself does not appear to be offensive. Although the window provides excellent security look-out, it can be omitted or installed with opaque glass and restricted opening. (See site layout NA04-01a)

The London Plan 2021 – Chapter 3 Design Policy D6 Housing quality and standards

3.6.6 A variety of approaches to housing typologies and layout of buildings should be explored to make the best use of land and create high quality, comfortable and attractive homes. For example, increasing ceiling heights and having bay windows can optimise daylight and sunlight and allow buildings to be closer together than can otherwise be achieved.

- Aside from the window judgment, it is apparent from the Officers Report that the proposed scheme, including the car-port, does not cause any harm as regard concept and design layout: *"The development is therefore considered to cause no harmful overshadowing or loss of light ["or outlook"] to the habitable spaces of its neighbours" "Ultimately the proposal is considered to provide sufficient and acceptable external amenity space for its future residents" "It is agreed that subject to the mentioned conditions the proposed building would be appropriately accessible for existing and future residents" [Category 2, M4] "The proposed rooftop garden has a screened perimeter to ensure that no overlooking is achieved toward its nearest neighbours" "The proposed first floor roof garden would add a uncharacteristic feature to the area".*

3.6.9 Private outside space should be practical in terms of its shape and utility, and care should be taken to ensure the space offers good amenity. All dwellings should have level access to one or more of the following forms of private outside spaces: a garden, terrace, roof garden, courtyard garden or balcony. The use of roof areas, including podiums, and courtyards for additional private or shared outside space is encouraged.

London Borough of Hillingdon Local plan part 2 development management policies 2020 Private Outdoor Amenity Space

5.70 Dwellings on upper floors should all have access to a private balcony or terrace, where this is consistent with the overall design of the building. Houses and ground floor flats should have private gardens. The Council is keen to improve the quality of housing in the Borough and therefore communal provision of private outdoor space is generally not supported unless there are strong planning reasons and the proposed scheme is of high quality with clear planning merits.

- The Officers Report notes, *"Overall it is considered that whilst this scheme is an improvement on the previous scheme, due to its design and size the proposed development would form a harmful addition to the character and appearance of the area". "Due to its design, depth, bulk and scale, the resulting building, including its roof, would form an oversized, uncharacteristic and visually incongruous form of development which would fail to harmonise with the established character of the area and appearance of the street scene and locality. The proposal would therefore be detrimental to the visual amenities of the streetscene and the character and appearance of the surrounding area"*

The proposed building is situated within a section of road where the properties are all of a diverse and individual design, there is no overriding architectural consistency in style, layout or size; within a short distance is Harlington Road where the streetscene contains an intense variation in size and appearances.

"The proposed valley style roof is overcomplicated and contrasts with the simple designs of other roofs in the area".

Can overcomplicated be said about the roof of Nicholls Court or Olive Tree House?

According to the previous refusal and subsequent appeal, a hipped or crown roof was not acceptable, and "a more modest ridge height" required to compare with 1a, regardless of the house directly opposite having 3 storey accommodation and a ridge over a metre higher. This proposed roof design produces simple construction and long-term performance; it replicates gable ends of adjacent properties, respects ridge heights and creates several efficiencies in the layout for solar collection, PV and internal lighting, all of which will undeniably reduce grid-power consumption.

I believe internal roof space is too valuable not to be utilised, in this case for the positioning of the latest fixed services, harvested water storage, heat pumps, and eco-efficient air handling equipment, all appropriately located above internal utility rooms and with enough additional space for ease of maintenance and future technological advances. In the final interior design, some habitable room ceilings may be vaulted to create a favorably open and airy environment.

- *“Due to its small eaves to ridgeline (when viewed from the front) it would also appear as undersized, making the property appear bottom heavy and unbalanced”.* Should this ‘unbalanced’ statement also apply to the appearance of adjacent house 1a? they are dimensioned comparably. *“Due to its depth, location and height, the unusual design of the roof would be clearly visible when travelling from east to west on Nicholls Avenue causing adverse harm to the streetscene”.*

Physical evaluation revealed when driving in either direction, the view is from a very low perspective and outside typical peripheral vision. Currently, pedestrians approaching from the east, view the whole side elevation of Olive Tree House; the proposed new building and porch will screen a significant part of this. If looking toward the site, the central valley, between the two side gables, will not be visible until within the frontage of either adjoining property (site layout NA04-01a). The local residents who participated in this analysis could not comprehend the design being described as *“causing adverse harm to the streetscene”*

- *“The front gable seeks to mirror other gables on the road, however due to its large roof, depth, excessive width, height and siting on the front of a two storey property, it is considered to result in a property that is contrived and architecturally confused between being a bungalow and two storey dwelling”.*

Most road-facing gables in the street are larger; the proposed porch exactly replicates the most prominent front gable of Olive Tree House, but set-back considerably further from the street and with a much shorter projection from the principle block. LBH Access regulations require a suitable wheelchair entrance to have a minimum internal clearance of 1500mm and to be sheltered from precipitation.

- *Broadly, in attempting to resolve issues as raised by in the Inspector in terms of the previous proposal being “at odds with this predominant character” and failing “to respond to the adjacent two-storey property in terms of size, design and layout” and issues associated with the “two-storey projection to the front, with its squat roof, and the crown roof to the main building” leading to “a substantial, bulky and imposing appearance” the current scheme has not resolved or introduced other design and character issues.*

This new proposal has been significantly modified in appearance and reduced in overall proportions, respecting height, width and depth of the adjacent two-storey property; there are no side entrances, no two-storey projection, there is no crown or squat roof. The proposed pitch angle has been set as a compromise between the great variation in the surrounding properties and does work efficiently for solar PV. The front projection is a combined porch for all three homes, with an internally vaulted ceiling above the central stairwell as shown.

As local properties have substantial rear garden, many dwellings have successfully used depth to increase volume in their homes. It is considered the proposed layout observes the fundamental principle of ‘making best use of the scarce supply of land’ however, having a comparatively low-ridge height and increased room heights does amplify the shallow roof appearance in side elevation drawings, although these full direct views are not accessible in reality due to positioning, trees and surrounding buildings. The new ground level layout conceals the rear part of the building from the street view, keeping the perceived depth of building into the plot as that of the adjacent house 1a. (See site layout NA04-01a)

House 1a is a 4 bedroom family home built, over 40 years ago, to room standards not permitted today. It has not been updated since construction. A Permitted Development application with LBH will allow the existing rear single storey to be raised to double height and an additional ground floor rearward extension by 4 metres.

The London 2021 Policy H2 Small sites

A **Boroughs should pro-actively support well-designed new homes on small sites** (below 0.25 hectares in size) through both planning decisions and plan-making in order to:

- 1) significantly increase the contribution of small sites to meeting London’s housing needs
- 2) **diversify the sources, locations, type and mix of housing supply**
- 3) **support small and medium-sized housebuilders**
- 4) **support those wishing to bring forward custom, self-build and community-led housing**
- 5) achieve the minimum targets for small sites set out in Table 4.2 as a component of the overall housing targets set out in Table 4.1.

B Boroughs should:

- 1) recognise in their Development Plans that local character evolves over time **and will need to change in appropriate locations to accommodate additional housing on small sites**
- 2) where appropriate, prepare site-specific briefs, masterplans and housing design codes for small sites
- 3) identify and allocate appropriate small sites for residential development
- 4) list these small sites on their brownfield registers
- 5) grant permission in principle on specific sites or prepare local development orders.

NPPF July 2021, 4. Decision-making:

38. Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

On this application, the official consultation with 15 neighbours, conducted twice, did not result in any objections to the concept, design, or layout. I estimate that including the previous two applications, LBH conducted over 65 individual consultations with very local neighbours, whom this development could offend the most, and yet only received positive responses, indicating that local residents do not share the same opinion as LBH planning. Despite several requests, LBH have not provided me with entitled documents to precisely confirm this statement; likewise, their several offers of assistance and qualification on their specific requirements have not been forthcoming, despite coercing my agreement for repeated extensions to their date of decision, on this and previous applications.

PARKING

- From the Officers Report it is established the proposed parking, canopy and associated access road does not cause offence or attracted objections from neighbours: *"The proposed garage would be sited some distance from the rear walls and windows of the neighbouring property, due to its 3m height and separation distance (12m plus), it is unlikely to cause any harmful loss of light or outlook from the neighbouring property (1a) or any other neighbouring property. Other properties in the area, including the nearest neighbour (1a) have side accesses which lead to rear garages, as such the proposal is not considered to give rise to any unusual movements which would cause significant noise or disturbance"*. My D&A statement also specifies the environmental benefits of this scheme.
- "At the rear, due to its 3m height, 70sqm footprint and siting in the middle of the development site (which would appear to be split for two uses), the rear garage would fail to follow the established pattern of garden development in the area, which is made up of smaller buildings sited to the most rear of their sites, well away from the sites main building"*. The proposed parking area for 4 cars and 8 cycles serves three dwellings, not a single property; nearby is a large neighbouring outbuilding of 63sqm which has been in place for over 80 years. Directly opposite is a newly constructed garage and gym of 57sqm, a mirrored version of which is now under construction for the adjacent property (26105/APP/2023/1520), which will result in a combined block of 114 sqm. The site freehold includes the access service road although there is a vehicular right-of-way for 93 and 95 Harlington Road, with legal widths of 8'-0" and 10'-0", respectively. The recent new garages are constructed close to the service road, resulting in challenging entry and exit without an increased road width at the intersection; therefore, my proposed location for parking and approach is the most practical to enable easier and safer manoeuvring for all users.

Vehicle Parking London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies Adopted Version 2020

8.31 In order to ensure a high standard of public amenity and to meet objectives of inclusion and accessibility, the Council will ensure that car parking areas have bays of appropriate dimensions and with sufficient manoeuvring space; are well lit, safe and secure; and landscaped to a high standard, with provision for electric vehicle parking.

The proposal is to support four future electric vehicles with off-road charging using renewable energy in off-peak periods and supporting the imminent advancement of vehicle-to-house technology, which will create localised power storage, helping to balance peak demands on the grid. It was anticipated that OEM charging equipment would be added to the passive power supplies when needed, it was not seen necessary to install EV charging on the visitors bay, but this can be easily achieved.

The site is on the perimeter of Greater London and I currently use a commercial vehicle for work, which is parked nights and weekends; local social media and awareness groups constantly highlight crime involving vehicle theft and break-in's, so to design-out and deter crime, it must be sensible that vulnerable vehicles can be securely parked off-street, out of sight and under natural surveillance and reactive security systems.

- The published London Plan 2021 Policy T6.1 Residential Parking requires that development proposals must comply with the relevant parking standards. For a development of this type, a 2 x 1no. bedroom and a 1 x 2no. bedroom dwellings with a PTAL ranking of 2 the maximum number of car parking spaces permitted would be 2.25no. therefore the 5no. proposed are not in accordance with this policy.*

Vehicle Parking London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies Adopted Version 2020

8.27 The Mayor's Transport Strategy acknowledges the role of the car in outer London particularly for medium to longer distance trips but it also recognises that different areas of London require different policy interventions. **In outer London, proposals need to acknowledge the role of the car, especially low emission cars.**

8.30 Hillingdon's parking standards are based on those contained in the London Plan with some variance to address local circumstances in terms of employment sites and **residential uses**. The standards contained within **Appendix C Table 1** are expressed as maximum levels and do not imply any minimum level.

- Policy DMT 6 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020) states that development proposals must comply with the parking standards outlined in Appendix C Table 1 in order to facilitate sustainable development and address issues relating to congestion and amenity.*

I believe this standard qualifies the proposed development to 3-4.5 parking spaces, or accepting one unit has a three-bedroom potential, 4-5 spaces, furthermore it states **"(a) Proposals must also accommodate visitor's car parking on-site additional to the above"**.

The front off-road bay is outside the secured site area and is intended for use by visitors. LBH do acknowledge "potential to be" in some planning officer's reports.

ACCESS

- Policy DMT 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020) states that Highways Impacts development proposals must ensure that:
 - i) safe and efficient vehicular access to the highway network is provided to the Council's standards; ✓
 - ii) they do not contribute to the deterioration of air quality, noise or local amenity or safety of all road users and residents; ✓
 - iii) safe, secure and convenient access and facilities for cyclists and pedestrian are satisfactorily accommodated in the design of highway and traffic management schemes; ✓ *
 - iv) impacts on local amenity and congestion are minimised by routing through traffic by the most direct means to the strategic road network, avoiding local distributor and access roads; ✓ * and
 - v) there are suitable mitigation measures to address any traffic impacts in terms of capacity and functions of existing and committed roads, including along roads or through junctions which are at capacity. *

*Appears more applicable to highway and road traffic management for large developments

The proposal site has a PTAL rating of 2 indicating that its access to public transport is poor when compared to London as a whole suggesting that there will be a strong reliance on the private car for trip making. Parking along Nicholls Avenue does not contain any parking restrictions. Furthermore, parking is heavily limited due to the presence vehicle crossovers and dropped kerbs. One side of the road contains double yellows along it.

The proposed crossover extension to access the visitors bay will shorten the adjacent street-kerb length but will still facilitate a large single parked vehicle, eliminating constant overlength double parking, stopping vehicles infringing cross-over's and thereby reduce local friction.

- The second crossover to facilitate a fifth parking space is unnecessary as an existing functioning crossover exists and significant oversupply of parking is proposed. Furthermore, the crossover includes no off road turning space and is tight to the footpath and main road, meaning that it would not allow for a car to enter and exit the site in a forward gear. It includes the extension of No.1a's crossover resulting in a crossover **which exceeds 5m contrary to guidance** mentioned above. Pedestrians would have no safe island or place of refuge when walking across the oversized crossover (which would serve the new flats and no.1a) reducing their safety and increasing the chances of collisions.

The 5 metre cross-over width, as I understand the guidance notes, is for each individual property (See 4.2.2).

- 4.10 Provision of second crossovers and 'in and out' drives

The London Borough of Hillingdon Domestic Vehicle Footway Crossover Guidance 2022 is a material consideration. The **guidance** for a second crossovers states:

"To limit any adverse impact on pedestrians using the adjoining footway and to minimise the loss of kerb side parking, only one crossover will be permitted per property and requests for additional crossovers will generally be refused....."

However, a second crossover may be permitted where all relevant planning, highway safety and amenity criteria have been satisfied and:

-Where a second crossover would allow vehicles to enter and exit in a forward gear. Relating to an 'in and out' drive?

-The property frontage abutting the highway is at least 12m wide. ✓ 13.564m

-There is no practical loss of on-street parking or amenity from a second access, and it is possible to park a vehicle between the two points of access min distance of 5m. ✓ 6.14m

Or

*If the applicant has a rear access and **requires a crossover in the front of the property**, the crossover would be considered if it complies with relevant requirements of the policy. (*This criteria point was not included in the Officers Report)

London Borough of Hillingdon Highway services - Domestic vehicle footway crossover policy June 2022

4.2.2 Shared Crossover/Shared Access

Subject to 4.3 below, where applicants are applying for two adjoining crossovers (e.g., for 2 adjoining properties), or where a new crossover will join an existing one (e.g., a neighbour's crossover), a maximum of 5m flat section will be allowed for **each crossover** (refer to Fig 5). This requirement will also apply where the occupiers of two adjoining properties share a driveway and wish to build a double width crossing to serve the two sites or if one owner only requires an extension.

4.3 Alteration of Crossover

Where applicants require extensions to a shared crossover or shared access, the provision of a separate crossover would be considered where any of the following prevails:

- Where the extension may result in blocking the front door
- Where there is an existing side wall, hedge or fence that forms the boundary between each house
- Where a lamp column or other street furniture relocation required for the extension and cannot be achieved

From the previous appeal:

21. The proposal would also require the creation of a new vehicular access over the existing footpath. I saw on my site visit that there are many examples of dropped kerbs in the vicinity of the site which are of double width or wider.

22. There is an existing crossover at No 1A Nicholls Avenue, and the appeal scheme would introduce a new crossover directly adjacent to this. These crossovers would only serve one dwelling each, and considering the low level of vehicular movements, and that pedestrian refuge would still be available to the site frontage, I do not consider this aspect of the appeal scheme would result in harm to pedestrian or vehicular safety. I note the Highways Officer has also raised no concerns in this regard.

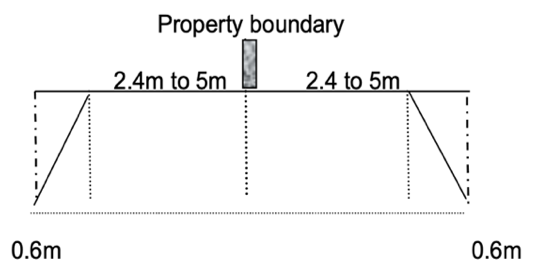


Fig 5 -Two adjoining crossovers