

Design and access Statement

Conversion of Existing Underused Storage Space into Home Office and Gym Rear of 5 Ashburton Road, HA4

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1. Context

This statement is submitted in support of a planning application by **Laura Taheri** for the conversion of an existing underused storage building into a **home office and gym** serving the ground-floor flat at **5 Ashburton Road**. The proposal seeks to bring an underutilised structure back into meaningful use while maintaining the existing building envelope.



Aerial view of the site

2. Site & Surroundings

The site comprises a **mid-terraced property** subdivided into two flats, with **hard-paved rear gardens** and a **single-storey double garage building** currently used as storage. Access to the site is from Ashburton Road.

The surrounding area is **residential in character**, predominantly formed of terraced houses, many of which have been extended to the rear and sides. The wider road network is generally unrestricted, with parking controls limited to double yellow lines at junctions.

The site benefits from good local amenities:

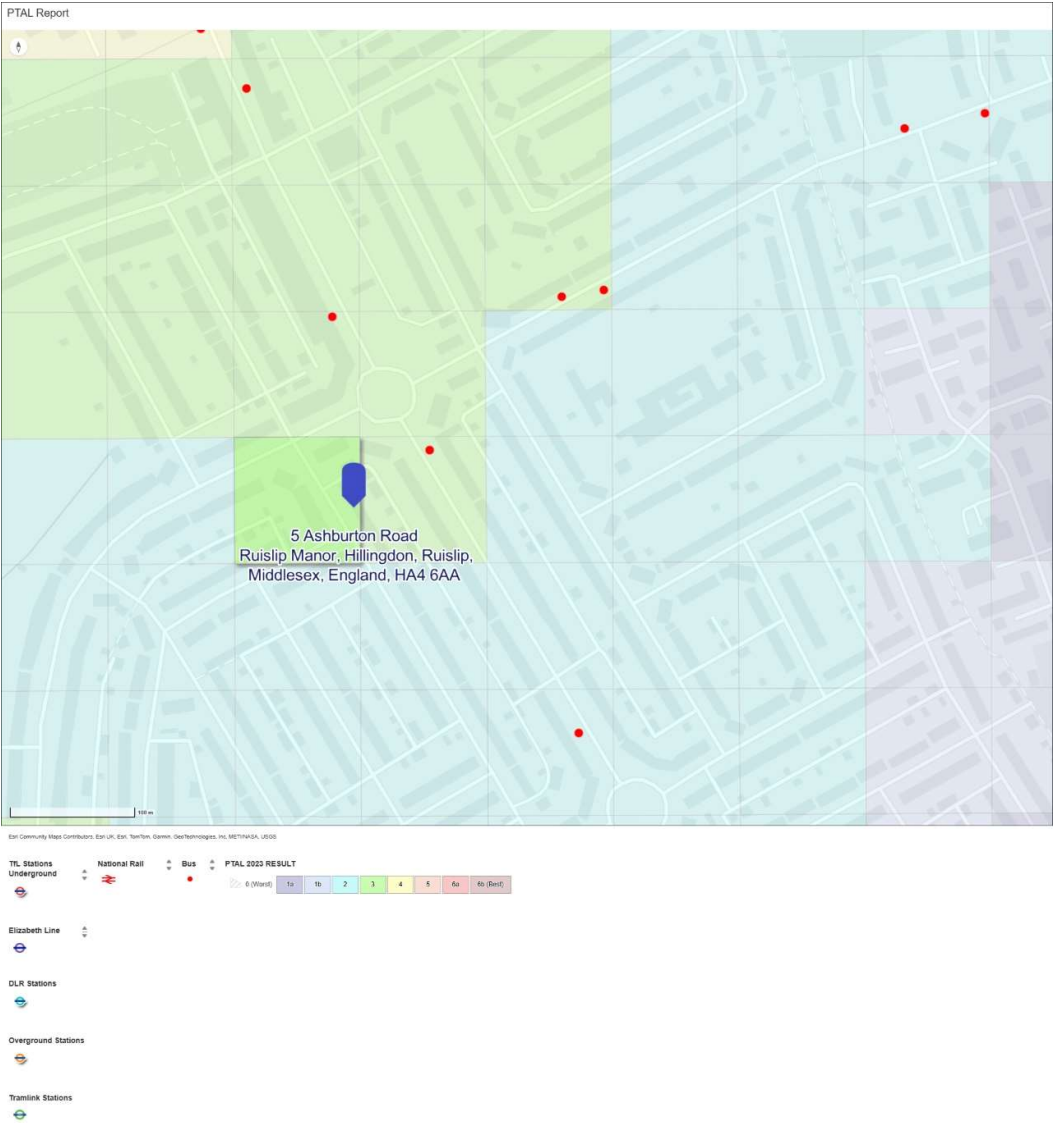
- **Bessingby Park Playing Field** is approximately **0.5 miles** to the east.
- **Ruislip Manor Underground Station** is approximately **0.3 miles** to the north.

The site is **not within a Conservation Area**, and the building is **not Listed**.



Site plan with neighbouring properties

The site lies within the **Ruislip Manor ward** and has a **PTAL rating of 3**, indicating moderate public transport accessibility.



PTAL Map of site

Trees and ecology

The site is mostly hard-paved with **no trees** on or adjacent to the plot. It has a **biodiversity value of 0.0023**, and the proposal does not introduce any ecological impacts.

3. Proposal

The proposal involves converting the existing storage building into **amenity space** for the ground-floor flat, comprising:

- A **generous home office**
- A **fitness/gym area**
- A **small toilet and tea point** to support home-working needs

The conversion provides **37.5 sqm** of internal floor area.

Existing use

The building was originally constructed as garages serving the flats at 5 Ashburton Road but has been used as **builder's storage since 2018**, with access currently blocked by fencing.

Scale & Appearance

The existing structure is a **single-storey building** with rendered blockwork walls, a tiled roof, and white uPVC windows and doors. The proposal **retains the existing building fabric**, with **no external alterations**.

The only external change is the removal of the internal fence separating the storage yard from the garden of the ground-floor flat to create a single, unified amenity space.

Internal layout and access

Access will be provided **through the garden of the ground-floor flat**. The internal layout is open-plan, accommodating the office and gym areas, with ancillary facilities positioned to support home-working.

4. Planning Justification

This proposal represents a low-impact, sustainable reuse of an existing structure and aligns strongly with national, regional, and local planning policy.

4.1 London Plan 2021

Policy D3 – Optimising Site Capacity

- Makes efficient use of existing buildings
- Supports intensification on small sites
- Encourages high-quality internal environments

Policy H1 – Increasing Housing Supply

- Supports improvements to existing residential accommodation
- Enhances the quality and usability of existing homes

Policy SI 7 – Reducing Waste and Supporting the Circular Economy

- Favourable to reuse and adaptation of existing structures rather than demolition

4.2 Hillingdon Local Plan (Part 1 & Part 2)

Policy BE1 (Part 1) – Built Environment

- Supports proposals that improve the quality of the built environment
- Encourages enhancement of residential amenity

Policy DMHB 11 – Design of New Development

- Requires proposals to harmonise with local character
- The scheme retains the existing building envelope and has no impact on the street scene

Policy DMH 6 – Residential Outbuildings

- Supports outbuilding conversions where:
- They remain subordinate
- They do not harm neighbours' amenity
- They do not alter the external appearance
- They are used in connection with the host dwelling

This proposal meets all criteria.

4.3 Impact on Neighbours

- No external alterations
- No increase in height, massing, or footprint
- No overlooking, overshadowing, or loss of privacy
- No change to access arrangements affecting neighbours

4.4 Sustainability & Efficient Land Use

- Reuses an existing structure
- Avoids construction waste
- Supports home-working, reducing commuting demand

5. Conclusion

The site is a small brownfield plot (under 0.25 ha) with a PTAL rating of 3.

The proposal:

- Retains the existing building fabric
- Does not alter the street scene
- Does not harm neighbouring amenity
- Provides valuable home-working and fitness space
- Aligns with London Plan and Hillingdon Local Plan policies
- Represents sustainable, low-impact development

Overall, the scheme is modest, appropriate, and policy-compliant, delivering meaningful improvements to the living conditions of the occupants without introducing any adverse impacts.