

Step-Free Access Addendum

Prepared by:



Fernfield Homes – Land at Summerhouse Lane, Harefield, Uxbridge UB9 6HS

Application Route: Section 73 (variation of approved plans – traditionally proportioned, contemporary designed, pitched-roof dwellings)

1. Purpose and scope

This addendum brings together, in one place, the strategy and provisions for step-free access to all four dwellings at Summerhouse Lane. It should be read alongside the submitted Design, Planning & Access Statement (DAS) and the application drawings. The document is design-led and evidence-based: it explains the site-wide approach, the dwelling-level measures, and demonstrates compliance with relevant national, London-wide and local guidance. A short plot-by-plot schedule and a compliance checklist are included for ease of reference.

2. Site and movement context

The site sits slightly below Summerhouse Lane, enclosed by mature woodland. A short, calm shared surface with two modest turning heads serves four detached houses (Plots 1–4). The layout has been organised so that principal pedestrian approaches are direct, gently graded and legible, with on-plot parking positioned to enable a level or near-level connection to each front door. This approach supports inclusive access without over-engineering the Green Belt setting.

3. Policy and standards framework

- **London Plan Policy D5 (Inclusive Design):** schemes must achieve the highest standards of inclusive design, with step-free, legible routes and appropriate gradients/thresholds. Our circulation is designed to be obvious and usable for all, with level entries and carefully managed gradients.
- **Accessible Hillingdon SPD (2017):** sets local expectations for inclusive entrances, route widths, gradients and detailing, and encourages going beyond minimums where practicable. We adopt this stance on route width and lighting, while remaining sensitive to ecology.
- **Approved Document M, Vol. 1 – Dwellings (2015 with 2016 amendments):** establishes baseline provisions for M4(1) (visitable), M4(2) (accessible and adaptable) and M4(3) (wheelchair user) dwellings, including approach routes, thresholds, clear openings, circulation and sanitary facilities. We have applied the key dimensional logic on approaches, ramps, landings and door clear openings.
- **BS 8300-1/2:2018 (overview):** best-practice recommendations for accessible approaches and inclusive environments. We follow the emphasis on readable, obstacle-free routes and consistent details.
- **DfT Inclusive Mobility (2021):** good practice on footway widths and management of pinch points/obstructions (desirable 2.0 m, acceptable 1.5 m; short, absolute minimum 1.0 m with careful management), and temporary works standards. This underpins our approach to widths and construction-phase access.

- **Manual for Streets / MfS2:** people-first movement principles that favour legibility, low speeds and comfort. We use these principles to keep routes intuitive and uncluttered.
- **ILP GN08/23 (Bats & Artificial Lighting):** informs a low-spill, warm-colour lighting strategy to balance inclusive wayfinding and the site's ecological sensitivities at the woodland edge.

4. Step-free access strategy

4.1 External approaches and gradients

- Primary routes from parking to each principal entrance are step-free.
- Routes target gentle gradients (about 1:30–1:25). Where level transitions require ramps, these will comply with Approved Document M: 1:20 to 1:12 gradients with maximum flight lengths and intermediate landings set out in the standard.
- Level landings are provided at doors; crossfalls are kept low for stability; drainage is via flush linear channels, avoiding upstands.

4.2 Thresholds and entrances

- All principal front doors will have flush thresholds with weather protection/canopies.
- Door sets are specified to achieve clear openings that meet or exceed AD M guidance; nibs and pull-side clearances are planned for comfortable manoeuvre. (AD M confirms minimum clear openings, including the widely used 775 mm clear door with related corridor widths).

4.3 Route widths, landings and turning

- Approach routes provide a minimum 1.2 m clear width, with local 1.5 m widening near entrances and at bends (aligned with Inclusive Mobility good-practice bands of 2.0 m desirable, 1.5 m acceptable, and short constrictions to 1.0 m absolute minimum).
- 1.5 m turning circles are provided at principal entrances; every ramp flight includes level landings in line with AD M.

4.4 Surface materials and details

- External surfaces are firm, even and slip-resistant, with tonal contrast at key thresholds/edges for legibility.
- Covers are flush; gratings aligned to avoid trapping small wheels; joints tightly controlled to prevent trip edges.
- Kerbs and upstands are avoided along primary approaches to retain step-free continuity.

4.5 Parking-to-door connection

- Each plot has on-plot parking with a direct, step-free link to the principal entrance.
- Clear access zones are provided beside bays to aid transfer/equipment loading.
- Where drive gradients exist, the final approach is brought to level with short transitions.

4.6 Doors, circulation and internal layout

- Door leaves and corridor widths are coordinated to meet the functional needs of a wide range of users, following AD M dimensional logic.

- Ground floors include a WC and circulation capable of accommodating mobility aids; stairs are designed to accept a future stairlift.

4.7 Lighting and wayfinding

- Uniform, low-glare illumination to entrances and approaches for safe night-time use; warm colour temperature and full cut-off optics adopted.
- Strategy is dusk-to-dawn or presence-activated, balancing inclusive legibility with ecological sensitivity (per ILP GN08/23). Simple, high-contrast address signage supports wayfinding.

4.8 Construction-phase accessibility

- During works, any temporary pedestrian route will provide minimum 1.2 m clear width, firm surfacing and safe gradients, with protected edges and accessible transitions, aligned to Inclusive Mobility.

5. Compliance checklist (key parameters)

| Element | Standard / guidance (summary) | Provision in scheme |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Approach gradients | AD M: ramps 1:20–1:12, with max flight lengths and landings. | Primary routes ~1:30–1:25; if ramps are needed, they follow AD M gradient/landing rules. |
| Approach widths | Inclusive Mobility: 2.0 m desirable, 1.5 m acceptable; 1.0 m absolute minimum over short lengths with management. | ≥1.2 m along approaches, with 1.5 m local widening near doors/bends. |
| Thresholds | AD M: flush principal thresholds, level landings. | All principal doors flush with level landing and canopy. |
| Door clear openings | AD M: minimum clear opening (commonly 775 mm) with related corridor widths per Table/Diagrams. | External doors designed to achieve ≥850 mm clear opening where practicable; internal doors set per plan. |
| Turning/landings | AD M: 1.5 m turning circles and landings at changes of direction and between ramp flights. | 1.5 m turning at entrances; landings provided at changes of direction. |
| Parking-to-door | AD M / local good practice: step-free link and accessible transfer space. | On-plot bays with step-free link and clear access zone; short transitions to achieve level at the door. |
| Lighting | AD M: safe, even illumination; ILP GN08/23: low-spill, habitat-sensitive design. | Warm, full cut-off fittings; dusk-to-dawn/presence control; dark corridors retained at habitat edges. |
| Controls/switches | AD M: accessible mounting heights/reach ranges. | Heights coordinated during technical design to meet reach ranges. |

6. Plot-by-plot step-free provisions

- **Plot 1 (4B8P):** direct step-free approach from on-plot parking; flush threshold; ≥ 1.2 m route with 1.5 m local widening; canopy and entrance lighting; ground-floor WC; stair sized for a future stairlift.
- **Plot 2 (3B6P):** as Plot 1; near-level approach with minimal crossfall; clear access zone by bay; 1.5 m turning space at door; internal widths coordinated to AD M principles.
- **Plot 3 (4B8P):** as Plot 1; approach gradient moderated by short transitions; principal route step-free; low-spill entrance lighting; accessible control heights.
- **Plot 4 (3B6P):** as Plot 2; direct connection from parking; flush threshold and landing; slip-resistant, even external surface; internal layout capable of accommodating mobility aids.

7. Management, maintenance and delivery

Inclusive access is protected through construction and into occupation. Materials and details are selected for durability (slip-resistant paving, robust edges, protected thresholds). Management commitments include keeping routes clear, replacing failed luminaires like-for-like (retaining low-spill optics), and avoiding clutter that narrows usable widths. Any changes during detailed design will be checked against AD M and Accessible Hillingdon SPD.

8. References (key documents)

- The London Plan (2021), Policy D5 – Inclusive Design.
- Accessible Hillingdon SPD (2017).
- Approved Document M, Volume 1 – Dwellings (2015 edition with 2016 amendments).
- BS 8300-1/2:2018 (overview).
- Inclusive Mobility (DfT, 2021).
- Manual for Streets (DfT) and Manual for Streets 2 (CIHT).
- ILP GN08/23 – Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night.