

# CDS PLANNING

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

## PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

44 Murray Road, Northwood, HA6 2YL

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## 1. Introduction and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This application follows a withdrawn appeal scheme in 2023 (reference 1787/APP/2023/202) which was appealed because the Council failed to determine the application within the prescribed timeframe set by legislation. That scheme proposed 5 flats, parking, cycle and bin storage and landscaping. Dialogue has taken place with the Council to understand their previous concerns to now propose a scheme which should receive officer support.
- 1.2 This Planning, Design, and Access Statement is prepared in support of a planning application submitted by Gavacan Homes, a locally based SME housebuilder known for delivering high-quality homes in the area. CDS Planning and Development Consultants have prepared this statement to support the planning application for the demolition of No.44 Murray Road, Northwood, a single-storey dwelling of poor quality, and the construction of a block of five high-quality apartments, including parking and amenity space.
- 1.3 The proposal utilizes the existing access point onto Murray Road at the front of the site and ensures unrestricted access for the property at the rear. This development aims to deliver a sustainably located, high-quality project on previously developed land, incorporating the highest standards of sustainable construction techniques and offering onsite electric charging spaces.

## 2. Site Description and Location

- 2.1 The site is accessed from Murray Road, equidistant from its junction with Elgin Drive to the north and Lingfield Close to the south. The site is located approximately 400m south from Northwood town centre and the Northwood Underground Station. The site is approximately 0.08ha.
- 2.2 The site is located in an established suburban residential area. The site comprises a tired bungalow building, with a small area of hardstanding accommodating car parking to the west, as well as a small garden. The bungalow presents no special architectural qualities and has reached its end of life in terms of thermal envelope and sustainability credentials.
- 2.3 The bungalow is well screened from Murray Road by an existing hedgerow and trees. The existing single point access is also shared with no. 42, located to the rear (northwest) of the site.
- 2.4 The surrounding area is not defined by a single type of architecture or typology; it has a mixed vernacular comprising detached and semi-detached dwellinghouses and blocks of flatted development. Of note, is the flatted development to the south and west of the site which is 3 storeys in height. The dwellinghouses in the vicinity are typically 2.5 storeys in height.



- 2.5 Northwood has excellent local facilities typically associated with urban living within the M25. The site is served by popular bus routes providing connections to a wide area. Bus Stops are located a short walk from the site on Maxwell Road to the northwest.
- 2.6 There are no listed buildings on or near the application site.
- 2.7 The site falls within Flood Zone 1 with no apparent surface water drainage issues.
- 2.8 The site has a PTAL rating of 2, albeit it is very close the boundary of central Northwood which has a PTAL rating of 3.

### 3. Proposals for Development

- 3.1 The proposals are submitted in detail for a residential development at the site.
- 3.2 The submitted plans show the removal the existing building and the construction of a small block of 5 apartments located centrally within the site to respect current building lines and wider built form.
- 3.3 The below schedule is submitted

House Type	Unit Number
2 bedroom @ 77sqm	2
2 bedroom @ 58 sqm	1
2 bedroom @ 82 sqm	1
3 bedroom @ 98 sqm	1
Total	5

- 3.4 The proposal includes the creation of a new vehicular parking area to the front of the site.
- 3.5 The new apartments are attractive to market, both sizing and first time buyers along with a 3 bedroom family unit proposed on the ground floor with its own private amenity space to the rear.

## 4. Planning Policy

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires that Local Planning Authorities must determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2 The Council's adopted proposal map, confirm the site is not subject to any planning designation.

### **THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK 2025**

4.3 The NPPF confirms that Local Planning Authorities must determine applications in accordance with the statutory Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and that the planning system does not exist to protect the private interests of one person against another.

4.4 The NPPF states that 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. The NPPF retains a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This applies unless any adverse impacts of a development would 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits.

4.5 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF provides that for determining planning applications this means either.

*Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*

*Where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*

*The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

*Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.*

4.6 The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making, but policies within the

development plan need to be considered and applied in terms of their degree of consistency with the Framework.

- 4.7 The following paragraphs of the NPPF are of most relevance to this application :
- 4.8 Paragraph 61 – “To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.”
- 4.9 Paragraph 65 – “Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount”
- 4.10 Paragraph 73 – “Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, are essential for Small and Medium Enterprise housebuilders to deliver new homes, and are often built-out relatively quickly.”
- 4.11 Paragraph 125 – “Give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land”
- 4.12 Paragraph 131 – “The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process”.
- 4.13 Paragraph 135 advises, “Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- *Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.*
- *Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.*
- *Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).*
- *Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit.*
- *Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- *Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”*

#### **THE MAYOR'S LONDON PLAN 2021**

- 4.14 The London Plan sets out the Mayor's overarching strategic planning framework for the next 20 to 25 years was adopted on the 2nd March 2021.
- 4.15 The London Development Plan is the overall strategic plan for London, and it sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital to 2050. It forms part of the development plan for Greater London and is recognised in the NPPF as part of the development plan.
- 4.16 The London Plan provides a unified framework for strategies that are designed to ensure that all Londoners benefit from sustainable improvements to their quality of life.

#### **HILLINGDON LOCAL PLAN**

- 4.17 Hillingdon's Local plan is formed from 2 parts, Part 1 are Strategic Policies setting out broad location of growth up to 2026, Part 2 adopted in 2020 sets out Development Management Policies and Site Allocations. Policies of most note include:

DMEI 9 Management of Flood Risk

DMEI 10 Water Management Efficiency and Quality  
DMHB 11 Design of New Development  
DMHB 12 Streets and Public Realm  
DMHB 14 Trees and Landscaping  
DMHB 16 Housing Standards  
DMHB 18 Private Outdoor Amenity Space  
DMT 5 Pedestrians and Cyclists  
DMT 6 Vehicle Parking  
LPP D3 (2021) Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach  
LPP D5 (2021) Inclusive design  
LPP D6 (2021) Housing quality and standards  
LPP D7 (2021) Accessible housing  
LPP G7 (2021) Trees and woodlands  
LPP SI12 (2021) Flood risk management  
LPP SI13 (2021) Sustainable drainage  
LPP SI2 (2021) Minimising greenhouse gas emissions  
LPP T5 (2021) Cycling  
LPP T6 (2021) Car parking

## HOUSING LAND SUPPLY POSITION

4.18 It is understood that in recent appeals the Council has accepted that they are unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, meaning that para 11 of the NPPF (2024) is engaged, meaning the so called tilted balance.

4.19 **Para 11.** Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For **plan-making** this means that:

a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;

b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas 6 ), unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area 7 ; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

For **decision-taking** this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance<sup>7</sup> provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits,

when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

## 5. Planning History

- 5.1 There have been no recent planning decisions made on this site in recent years. While there has been a previous application for 5 flats and a subsequent appeal, this was withdrawn prior to any decision being made either by the Council or Planning Inspectorate. Discussions were held with the Council prior to the appeal as discussed within the report.

## 6. Planning Assessment

### Principle of Development

- 6.1 As recent documents establish, Hillingdon are unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, meaning that para 11 of the NPPF (2024) is engaged, meaning the so called tilted balance.
- 6.2 Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 6.3 For decision-taking this means that the Council should be approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance<sup>7</sup> provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
  - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.
- 6.4 It is the case, that this site is within the urban area and not subject to any special designation that would otherwise prevent the delivery of housing on a matter of principle.
- 6.5 For reasons as will be set out in this report, there are no adverse impacts proposed by this development that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefit of approving 5 high quality started and family units which must be given significant weight in the planning balance in favour of this development. This development represents a well designed block of apartments, in a sustainable location making effective use of brownfield land. The Council should therefore be approving this development without delay.

6.6 As directed in paragraph 73 small and medium sized sites like the application site make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, are essential for Small and Medium Enterprise housebuilders to deliver new homes, and are often built-out relatively quickly. This must be given significant weight given the Council's lack of housing land supply. Further, as directed by paragraph 125 the Local Planning Authority must give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused. As set out in this statement, no unacceptable harms would arise from this development.

### **Impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area**

6.7 As previously mentioned, the NPPF requires that developments should function well and enhance the overall quality of the area, not just in the short term but over the lifetime of the development. They should be visually attractive due to good architecture, layout, and effective landscaping, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

6.8 Policies D1, D3, and D4 of the London Plan (2021) echo this sentiment, requiring developments to be of high quality and to enhance the local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness. Hillingdon Policies mandate that new developments achieve a high quality of design in all new buildings, alterations, extensions, and the public realm, enhancing the local distinctiveness of the area and contributing to community cohesion and a sense of place. Policy DMHB 11 requires developments to harmonize with the local context by considering the surrounding scale of development, height, mass, and bulk of adjacent structures; building plot sizes and widths, plot coverage, and established street patterns; building lines and setbacks, rooflines, streetscape rhythm, such as gaps between structures and other streetscape elements, like the degree of enclosure; architectural composition and quality of detailing; local topography, views both from and to the site; and the impact on neighbouring open spaces and their environment.

6.9 While the existing dwelling does not contribute positively to the visual amenities of the area, it does not have any formal designated or non-designated heritage status. Its overall loss would not

harm the prevailing local character. The proposal would maintain the overall character by incorporating design features commonly seen on neighbouring properties and would be of a scale that does not dominate views from the public domain. The building would be set in from both sides, and its overall scale and bulk would be consistent with other apartment and apartment-style buildings in the locality.

- 6.10 There are examples of flatted developments in the local area, and the area is considered robust in terms of its sensitivity to new built forms. An apartment block following a traditional design is considered entirely acceptable. The proposed block will have a pitched roof with gable ends. While the eaves and ridge will increase in height compared to the existing building, the building will remain comparable to neighbouring buildings and will follow a similar design theme. The proposed block maintains a comfortable relationship in terms of mass, bulk, and scale with adjacent properties and does not compete with them.
- 6.11 The degree of glazing on the front elevation respects neighbours, with windows and doors being entirely in character with adjacent properties. There is a consistency of design throughout the proposal. Regarding the front hardstanding and provision of parking, the development maintains a balance between hard and soft landscaping and contributes positively to the street scene.
- 6.12 The form and appearance of the proposed building would not result in an incongruous form of development, thus complying with the requirements of Policy DMHB 11.

### **Impact on the amenities of neighbours**

- 6.13 Policy DMHD 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan states that planning applications for alterations and extensions of dwellings must ensure a satisfactory relationship with adjacent dwellings and avoid any unacceptable loss of outlook for neighbouring occupiers. Policy DMHB 11 seeks to ensure that development proposals do not adversely impact the amenity, daylight, and sunlight of adjacent properties and open spaces.
- 6.14 The proposed development would centre the new building, retaining a large gap to the boundary and situating it outside the 45-degree sight lines with neighbours. The proposed windows would

not cause any conflict with neighbouring properties. In terms of size and scale, the dwellings respect adjacent properties in height and are on a very similar footprint, neither extending significantly further forward or back within the plot, thus avoiding any uncomfortable overlaps of built form. Consequently, there would be no overbearing impact felt by neighbours.

- 6.15 While it is accepted that the scheme would result in additional comings and goings associated with family life, it is considered that given the character of the surrounding properties, this is not a point that should result in objection and would not be a defensible objection if challenged. It is considered that there would be no significant additional impact on the residential amenities of the neighbouring occupiers because of the proposal.

#### **Provision of adequate accommodation for future occupiers**

- 6.16 In terms of the amenity for future occupiers, the Planning Authority rightly expects a high standard of internal design and layout in new residential development to provide an adequate standard of accommodation. The dwellings comfortably exceed all adopted amenity space standards, as is demonstrated in the accommodation schedule.
- 6.17 The new units would provide excellent outlook, and all rooms would be flooded with light through the well designed and appropriately proportioned windows, all properties would be dual aspect thus meeting the Council's expectation that single aspect dwellings are avoided.
- 6.18 The layout of the proposed homes would reflect the character of the area with road facing entrance. The gardens are extensive and allow for side and rear access for ease of usability. It is notable that the small family unit would benefit from its own private area of amenity space separated off from the communal amenity space enjoyed by the other units in the development.
- 6.19 The proposals represent high quality living accommodation and would include an enviable amount of private and useable outdoor amenity space for future occupiers, comfortably exceeding expected minimums for dwellings of the size proposed.

### Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing

- 6.20 As part of this application a Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Impact Assessment has been submitted. This Planning, Design and Access Statement does not seek to repeat the contents of the report, other than to confirm that a 14 windows have been assessed across three neighbouring properties for the sunlight assessment. No windows were tested for sunlight in 2 Lingfield Close as all windows in this property that face towards the Proposed development are within 90 degrees due north.
- 6.21 The results indicate that all 14 assessed windows meet the target for sunlight. The overshadowing impact of the development on neighbouring garden, balcony and terrace amenities has been assessed and the development does not have a significant impact on any neighbouring property.
- 6.22 The results indicate that both the assessed garden amenities exceed the minimum sunlight hours required. Overall, the proposed design is in line with the objectives of the guidelines on daylight and sunlight set by BRE, where possible. Where impact occurs, the extent of the impact is deemed acceptable.

### Parking and highways

- 6.23 A single existing carriageway crossing is to serves the site.
- 6.24 DMT 6 requires that new development will only be permitted where it accords with the council's adopted parking standards unless it can be demonstrated that a deviation from the standard would not result in a deleterious impact on the surrounding road network.
- 6.25 London Plan (2021): Policy T6.1 (Residential Parking) requires that new residential development should not exceed the maximum parking standards.
- 6.26 1 space per unit is proposed, therefore the provision does not exceed maximum standards. All spaces are to have active EV charging points.

- 6.27 In terms of cycle parking, a secure store is to be located to the front of the building. This is large enough to contain all necessary bikes, shown to be 2 per unit. It is anticipated that this would be secured by condition in the event of approval.
- 6.28 Operational Refuse will continue via Murray Road, there is of course the option of entry and exit into the site if considered desirable, however travel distances are such that kerb side collection direct from the Bin Store would meet operational requirements.
- 6.29 The proposal is considered to have an acceptable impact on the local highway network and would meet local and national planning policies, in particular paragraph 116 of the NPPF which states that development should only be refused when impacts would be 'severe'.

### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 6.30 Policy SI 12 of the London Plan (2021) states that development proposals should ensure that flood risk is minimised and mitigated, and that residual risk is addressed. Policy DMEI 9 of the Local Plan states that proposals that fail to make appropriate provision for flood risk mitigation, or which would increase the risk or consequences of flooding, will be refused. Policy DMEI states that applications for all new build developments are required to include a drainage assessment demonstrating that appropriate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) have been incorporated in accordance with the London Plan Hierarchy.
- 6.31 The application site lies within Flood Zone 1 of the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Map. Details of acceptable drainage have been provided as part of this application.

### **Biodiversity Net Gain**

- 6.32 In England, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). It became mandatory for major developments on 12 February 2024 and small sites on 2 April 2024. Developers must deliver a BNG of at least 10%.
- 6.33 A BNG Matrix has been provided that demonstrates full compliance with legislative requirements.

## 7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The scheme would provide a high-quality residential development that fully complies with policies of the Development Plan and the associated adopted guidance.
- 7.2 The site is in a sustainable location and the proposals would secure tangible benefits at an economic, social and environmental level.
- 7.3 The proposed development would bring forward several public benefits -
- Delivery of 5 high quality new homes
  - Making efficient use of a brownfield site in a sustainable location
  - Removal of the existing building and introduction of high quality design
  - Soft landscaping and biodiversity improvements
- 7.4 The Government have fully committed to delivering high quality new housing of which is enshrined in policy and written ministerial statements. This proposal delivers a mix of high quality additional housing on a brownfield site in a sustainable location, of which paragraph 125 part (c) states that 'substantial weight' must be given. In consideration of the application, the planning balance in weighing up all the very many benefits must be considered, which is a key policy requirement of the NPPF to ensure that a deliverable supply of housing land is in place.
- 7.5 The site will deliver important new family accommodation. In summary, the proposals have extensively evolved to ensure compliance with policy and Council expectations and would achieve sustainable development.