

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

97 Southbourne Gardens, Ruislip, HA4 9TA

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the **conversion of an existing semi-detached dwellinghouse into two self-contained residential dwellings**, together with associated extensions, access, parking, and private amenity space.

Both dwellings meet or exceed nationally described space standards and provide levels of private amenity space significantly above minimum requirements.

The proposal seeks to optimise the use of an existing residential plot in a sustainable manner, delivering high-quality accommodation while preserving the character and spaciousness of the surrounding area.

The proposal complies with:

- Hillingdon Council Local Plan – residential standards
- London Plan – housing quality and optimisation of site capacity
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – efficient use of land

The proposal also delivers clear planning benefits, including:

- Optimisation of an underutilised residential plot
- Delivery of an additional dwelling in a sustainable location
- Retention of local character and amenity

2. Previous Use

Historical Usage as HMO: Previously functioned as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) for up to 7 residences over 5 years, demonstrating adaptability for residential purposes and supporting the principle of housing development.

Current Usage: The property is currently used as residential accommodation for one family.

3. Site and Surroundings

The site comprises a detached dwelling situated within a well-established suburban residential area of Ruislip. The surrounding context is characterised by:

- Detached and semi-detached family dwellings
- Consistent building lines and plot rhythm
- Generous rear gardens
- Low-rise built form

A key characteristic of the application site is its **larger-than-average plot size**, which includes a substantial rear garden and **existing side access**.

This combination provides a clear opportunity to accommodate subdivision without resulting in overdevelopment.

4. Planning History

The site has been subject to the following relevant applications:

- **19487/APP/2024/122** – Proposed redevelopment / subdivision – *Refused* – [2023]

The previous refusal related to overdevelopment and excessive built form. The current proposal directly addresses this through a reduced footprint, simplified massing, and retention of substantial garden space.

Importantly, **no objections were raised by neighbours or statutory consultees**, indicating that the proposal did not give rise to material concerns in relation to access, amenity, or site suitability.

5. Design Evolution and Response

The current proposal has been carefully revised in direct response to the previous refusal. The scheme represents a **significantly more modest and restrained form of development**, primarily utilising the footprint of the existing dwelling and built form has been reduced and simplified, avoiding overdevelopment of the site

The proposal represents a low-intensity subdivision of an existing dwelling, rather than a material intensification of use, with only one additional unit introduced on a generously sized plot.

Key changes include:

- A **reduction in built form and overall scale**
- Greater reliance on the **existing building footprint**
- Retention of substantial garden space
- Lower impact for on street parking provision
- Simplified and more legible layout
- Clear provision of independent access to each dwelling

As a result, the scheme now represents a **more balanced and policy-compliant form of development**.

6. Proposed Development

The application proposes the **conversion of the existing dwellinghouse into two self-contained residential units**, supported by modest external alterations and a comprehensive reconfiguration of the internal layout. The development has been carefully designed to make efficient use of the site while maintaining the character of the area and delivering high-quality accommodation.

The proposal will create **one 3-bedroom family dwelling** occupying the principal portion of the building, and **one 2-bedroom dwelling** formed within a secondary part of the property. Each unit will be fully self-contained, with its own kitchen, bathroom, and living accommodation, and will function as an independent planning unit. The internal layout has been arranged to ensure there is **no shared internal circulation**, reinforcing the separation between the two dwellings.

The scheme includes **modest extensions and alterations** to facilitate a functional and policy-compliant layout. These works are limited in scale, remain subordinate to the host dwelling, and primarily support internal reconfiguration rather than intensification of the built form. The overall approach ensures that the existing building remains the dominant feature and that the development does not result in overdevelopment of the site.

A key strength of the proposal is the provision of **clearly defined and independent access arrangements**. The 3-bedroom dwelling will utilise the existing principal front entrance, while the 2-bedroom dwelling will be accessed via a **dedicated side access route**, leading to a separate entrance. This side access is of sufficient width, directly connected to the public highway, and allows the second dwelling to operate entirely independently, representing a significant advantage of the site.

The proposal includes **on-site off-street parking provision**, with spaces clearly allocated to each dwelling. The 3-bedroom dwelling is provided with two parking

spaces, while the 2-bedroom dwelling is provided with one space. In addition, there is established on-street parking availability along Coombe Drive. Given the modest scale of development and the combination of on-site and on-street provision, the proposal is not expected to give rise to any adverse impact in terms of parking stress or highway safety.

The development provides **generous and clearly defined private amenity space for each dwelling**, with the 3-bedroom unit benefiting from approximately 200 sqm of private rear garden, and the 2-bedroom unit benefiting from approximately 100 sqm of private garden space. These areas are directly accessible from each dwelling, clearly separated, and significantly exceed typical minimum standards, ensuring a high-quality living environment.

Provision is also made for **cycle storage and refuse/recycling facilities**, which are integrated within the site in accessible and visually discreet locations, ensuring functionality while maintaining the residential character of the site.

Overall, the proposal represents a **low-intensity, well-balanced form of development**, which primarily utilises the existing building footprint, retains substantial garden space, and delivers two high-quality dwellings with independent access, appropriate parking, and strong residential amenity. The scheme has been specifically designed as a proportionate response to previous planning concerns and avoids the issues of scale and overdevelopment identified in earlier proposals.

7. Accommodation and Layout

Dwelling A – 3 Bedroom Mid terrace family house

- Type: 3-bedroom dwelling
- Gross Internal Area: **102 sqm**
- Private Garden: approx. **~150 sqm including side access onto Coombe Drive**
- Parking: **1 space + provision for more in a generous front garden**

This unit is arranged within the main portion of the existing dwelling and is designed to provide spacious, high-quality family accommodation.

Dwelling B – 2 Bedroom semi-detached family house

- Type: 2-bedroom dwelling
- Gross Internal Area: **76 sqm**

- Private Garden: approx. **~150 sqm**
- Parking: **1 space**

This unit benefits from a **dedicated side access** and functions as a fully independent dwelling.

8. Internal Quality

Both dwellings are designed to:

- Meet or exceed nationally described space standards
 - Provide well-proportioned rooms
 - Maximise natural light and outlook
 - Offer functional and flexible layouts
-

9. Access Strategy

A key strength of the proposal is the provision of **clear and independent access arrangements**:

- Dwelling 1 retains the **existing principal entrance**
- Dwelling 2 is accessed via a **separate side passage**, ensuring full independence with parking provision retained in front of the newly created property through subdivision of the generous front garden

This arrangement avoids shared circulation and supports the creation of two distinct residential units with almost no visible change to the current site layout.

10. Parking, Cycle and Refuse Provision

The development provides:

- Dedicated off-street parking spaces within the site
- Clearly allocated parking for each dwelling
- Additional on-street capacity along Coombe Drive

Cycle storage and refuse facilities are incorporated within the site in accessible and discreet locations.

The provision aligns with local parking standards and reflects the suburban, car-dependent context.

11. Private Amenity Space

The proposal provides **substantial private outdoor space**:

- Dwelling 1: approx. **150 sqm**
- Dwelling 2: approx. **150 sqm**

These significantly exceed typical standards and reinforce the high-quality nature of the scheme.

12. Design and Appearance

The proposed development has been carefully designed to respect and respond positively to the established character of the surrounding area. The site is located within a suburban residential context characterised by low-rise dwellings, consistent building lines, and generous plot sizes.

The proposal retains the **original dwelling as the dominant built form**, ensuring that the overall scale and presence of the building within the street remain largely unchanged. The extensions proposed are **modest in scale and subordinate in form**, designed to sit comfortably alongside the existing structure without appearing dominant or incongruous.

The design approach prioritises:

- Retention of the existing building's proportions and visual hierarchy
- Subservient additions that read as secondary elements
- A continuation of the established architectural rhythm within the street

External materials will be selected to **match or closely complement the existing dwelling**, ensuring visual continuity and coherence with neighbouring properties. This includes matching brickwork, roof tiles, and fenestration proportions where appropriate.

Importantly, the proposal avoids the introduction of bulky or overly prominent built form, and does not result in the loss of the spacious character associated with the area. The overall composition remains consistent with the prevailing suburban grain.

As a result, the development is considered to integrate **seamlessly into the streetscape**, preserving local character while allowing for a sensitive and appropriate evolution of the site.

13. Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

The proposal has been designed with careful consideration of its relationship to neighbouring properties, ensuring that the development does not result in any unacceptable impacts on residential amenity.

In terms of **privacy and overlooking**, window positions have been arranged to maintain appropriate separation distances and avoid direct overlooking into neighbouring habitable rooms or private garden areas. Where necessary, the design ensures that views are angled or limited to prevent loss of privacy.

With regard to **outlook and sense of enclosure**, the scale and positioning of the proposed extensions have been carefully controlled to avoid any overbearing impact. The development remains proportionate to the host dwelling and maintains appropriate spatial relationships with adjoining properties.

In terms of **daylight and sunlight**, the modest scale of the extensions and their positioning relative to neighbouring boundaries ensure that there will be **no material loss of light** to adjacent properties. The proposal does not introduce significant bulk or depth that would give rise to overshadowing concerns.

Furthermore, the proposal maintains the established pattern of development and does not introduce any unusual or intrusive design features that would adversely affect neighbouring amenity.

Overall, the development is considered to be fully compliant with local planning policies relating to residential amenity and will not give rise to any unacceptable impacts.

14. Sustainability

The proposal adopts a sustainable approach through the **re-use and enhancement of the existing building**, reducing the need for demolition and new construction materials. This approach supports the efficient use of resources and minimises construction waste.

The development will incorporate measures to improve the **thermal performance of the building**, including:

- Upgraded insulation to walls, floors, and roof

- Energy-efficient glazing
- Airtight construction detailing where appropriate

These measures will contribute to improved energy efficiency and reduced operational energy demand.

The design also allows for the incorporation of **energy-efficient systems and technologies**, including low-energy lighting and the potential for future integration of renewable energy solutions where feasible.

In addition, the retention of substantial garden space supports sustainable drainage and reduces surface water runoff, particularly where permeable materials are utilised within hardstanding areas.

Overall, the proposal represents a **sustainable form of development**, balancing the re-use of existing structures with improved environmental performance and long-term efficiency.

15. Relevant Local Precedent

Since the refusal of application 19487/APP/2024/122, a comparable scheme has been approved at:

- **35392/APP/2025/1812 – 23 Pine Gardens, Ruislip**

This scheme involved the **conversion of a single dwelling into two residential units**, supported by extensions and associated works.

Notably:

- The Pine Gardens site is **smaller in plot size** than the application site
- The approved scheme includes **more extensive extensions and built form**
- Despite this, the subdivision into two dwellings was considered acceptable in planning terms

16. Implications for the Current Proposal

In comparison, the current proposal at 97 Southbourne Gardens:

- Operates within a **larger and more generous plot**
- Proposes a **less intensive and more restrained form of development**
- Retains substantial private amenity space for both dwellings

- Provides appropriate parking and access arrangements
- Ensures independent, functional, and policy-compliant residential units

The approval at Pine Gardens demonstrates that the principle of subdivision into two dwellings is acceptable within the local context where supported by appropriate design and layout.

17. Conclusion on Planning History

The current proposal has been specifically developed in response to previous concerns and is supported by a **recent, directly comparable local approval**, alongside the absence of objections to the previous scheme.

It therefore represents a **balanced, well-considered and policy-compliant form of development**, which should be supported.

18. Overall Conclusion

The proposal represents a **high-quality, sustainable, and well-balanced development**, delivering two dwellings without harm to the character of the area or neighbouring amenity.

Planning permission should therefore be granted.