

Ramesh and Nayantara Parmar



87 Green Lane, Northwood HA6 1AE

Householder Planning Application: Design & Access Statement

January 2023

ICE21.263.301.006

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ICE Environmental Policy 2023
Objective 4: *Reduce waste and make better use of material resources*

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This document is a Design & Access Statement to accompany a householder planning application to Hillingdon Council for the alteration and extension of 87 Green Lane, Northwood HA6 1AE.
- 1.2 The statement describes the context of the project and explains the design approach using the advice set out in the CABI publication – *Design & Access Statements: How to write, read and use them*. (2006).

2.0 Document Status

- 2.1 The statement should be read in conjunction with the following application drawings:

DRAWING NUMBER	DRAWING TITLE	SCALE @ A3
ICE21.263 PL1.0	Location Plan	1:1250
ICE21.263 PL1.1	Site Plan Existing	1:500
ICE21.263 PL1.2	Existing Ground Floor Plan	1:100
ICE21.263 PL1.3	Existing First Floor (Loft) and Roof Plan	1:100
ICE21.263 PL1.4	Existing North East and South West Elevations	1:100
ICE21.263 PL1.5	Existing North West and South East Elevations	1:100
ICE21.263 PL2.1	Site Plan Proposed	1:500
ICE21.263 PL2.2	Ground Floor Plan Proposed	1:100
ICE21.263 PL2.3	Demolition Plan Proposed	1:100
ICE21.263 PL2.4	Proposed Structural Alterations	1:100
ICE21.263 PL2.5	Roof Plan Proposed	1:100
ICE21.263 PL2.6	Proposed North East and South West Elevations	1:100
ICE21.263 PL2.7	Proposed North West and South East Elevations	1:100
ICE21.263 PL2.8	Proposed Section AA	1:100

- 2.2.1 This Design & Access and Heritage Statement was submitted to Hillingdon Council with a householder planning application on the 13th January 2023.

3.0 The Applicant & The Existing House

- 3.1 The Applicants are Ramesh and Nayantara Parmar - the current occupants of the property. The site address is 87 Green Lane Northwood HA6 1AE. A site location plan is included in the application documents, drawing No: ICE21.263.PL1.0.
- 3.2 The site is not located in a conservation area nor contains any listed buildings. The boundary of the Northwood-Firthwood Conservation Area is on the opposite side of the private road which accesses the property to the northwest of the site. Northwood Town Centre/Green Lane Conservation area is 300m west of the Applicants' site.
- 3.3 The existing building is a single storey bungalow with an upper habitable floor with dormer windows and a raised ground floor reflecting the sloping nature of the site.
- 3.4 The application site slopes towards Green Lane and is accessed from a private road and cul-de-sac running perpendicular to Green Lane. There are several small trees on the site, but none the subject of a Tree Preservation Order.
- 3.5 **The Need for the Development**

The existing house has serious structural defects which have caused significant stress to the Applicants and their family. The house has suffered major subsidence and much to the concern and inconvenience of the occupants is the subject of repeated efforts by insurers to undertake works to stabilize the property.

- 3.6 There have been two previous structural interventions to stabilize the building neither of which has arrested the continued foundation movement.
- 3.7 The movement in the structure has resulted in significant and widening cracks in the external wall and between the wall and window frames big enough to pass a hand through from inside to out. (See photographs at Appendix 1).
- 3.8 The building has been strapped to safeguard the occupants from sudden collapse, and consultants working for the insurers have proposed a full replacement of the existing foundations as the next stage in the stabilization works.
- 3.9 This will mean the removal of the whole ground floor of the building and the construction of new foundations under the existing house. The Applicants will have to vacate the property and the house will be uninhabitable for the proposed twelve to eighteen-months period of the contract works.
- 3.10 Without the consent of the Applicants the insurer's representatives made a separate planning application – reference 10115/TRE/2020/352 to remove trees on the adjoining St. Helen's School Site because of an engineering assessment that these trees contributed to the instability in the ground conditions.
- 3.11 This application - which was opposed by the Applicants - was refused by a decision notice dated 21 January 2021.
- 3.12 The Applicants face an unenviable and unacceptable proposition:
 1. To vacate their house for a period of up to eighteen months, relocating family life and their links to the local community where they have resided for more than twenty years,
 2. To have their house effectively demolished internally to install new foundations,
 3. To return to the house following this work knowing that there are contested aspects to the work where other consultants advise that the structural issues cannot be fully resolved without the removal of the adjacent trees.
 4. To return to the house in the knowledge that two previous below ground interventions (with associated disruption to family life) as proposed by the insurers and their consultants have failed to address the structural issues.
 5. To have no other course since the option to sell their property and move elsewhere is not available. The present market value of the house would not enable them to acquire an equivalent alternative home since the market value of the present house has collapsed because of the structural issues.

- 3.12 The present application has been prepared following discussions with the engineering and construction team appointed by the insurer to conduct the replacement foundation works. The conclusion is that the remedial work is likely to be more cost effective and have a lower risk of future failure if the reliance on the existing wall of the house is reduced.
- 3.13 The proposed foundation remedial work will remove completely the existing foundations, underpin the existing external walls, and install a piled concrete raft foundation over the whole extent of the property.
- 3.14 The work can be thought of conceptually as lifting the existing house and putting it down again on a new foundation. Since this is clearly not possible in practice the existing foundations will be removed in small pieces and then replaced and connected to a new ground floor constructed by removing the complete internal fabric of the existing house.
- 3.15 To allow the foundation work to be constructed all non-loadbearing walls, all existing floors, and all fixtures and fittings including all bathrooms and kitchen units will be removed from the house so that it is a bare shell
- 3.16 The enclosed householder application therefore proposes the removal of large parts of the existing external walls of the house and their replacement with structural steel portal frames (as drawing PL2,4) to support the first floor and roof but also to allow as much as possible of the existing defective external walls and foundations to be removed so that they have no role in the support of the repaired house.
- 3.17 The new steel portal frames in the line of the existing walls are then locally underpinned and effectively the extent of the house remaining supported on the existing walls is minimized.
- 3.18 The removal of parts of the external walls for these reasons allows for the house to be extended to the front and to the rear since the structural works create large openings in the external walls which allow connections to new extensions.
- 3.19 The benefit of the extensions to the applicants is not only the additional space but the provision of new habitable space in the house on new walls and foundations unaffected by the prior ground movement.
- 3.20 Given that there is a history of failed structural interventions at the site – the applicants wish to increase wherever possible the proportion of the floor area of the house which is not supported on a ‘repaired’ foundation because the previous repairs have not resolved the ground movement previously experienced in the house.

4.0 The Context

- 4.1 The context is a residential and suburban. The Borough’s residential areas expanded with the Metropolitan Railway in the early 20th century with the associated development referred to as ‘Metro-land’.
- 4.2 Green Lane extends through the centre of Northwood and Northwood Station is a short walk (5 minutes) from the Applicants’ property.

- 4.3 To the east of the application site is a three-storey terraced block of town houses, Nos. 1 to 6 The Ridge, while east of The Ridge there is a three-storey flatted block with mansard roof – Daintry Lodge which is accessed from Watford Road.
- 4.4 To the west of the application site are the buildings of St Helen’s School in large grounds which provide a green backdrop to the surrounding residential area. The closest building to the application site, – Little St. Helen School, – is set back from Green Lane by approximately 45 meters
- 4.5 On the opposite side of Green Lane, there are mainly detached and semidetached houses. No. 110 has been recently redeveloped into a three-storey building containing 7 flats and west of No. 110 is a three-storey flatted block, Cervantes Court.
- 4.6 To the rear of the site, accessible through the private road, there are three detached and semidetached houses. The closest is No.85 C which consists of a two-storey house which is 6.5 meters from the boundary of the application site. There is a dense tree and vegetation screen between 85C and the Applicants’ Property.
- 4.7 The streetscape to the south side of Green Lane is more consistent with detached and semidetached houses regularly set back from the street line establishing a constant street pattern with a rhythm of regular gaps between structures. Building plots sizes and building heights are also regular and feature similar boundary enclosures and aspect to the street.
- 4.8 To the north side of Green Lane, particularly in proximity to the application site, the regularity in pattern and rhythm found on the south side is absent and a review of historic maps shows that the plot size here was originally much larger and the development pattern was thus of much larger houses – such as ‘The Gables’ (Now Little St. Helen’s School).
- 4.9 Because of this piecemeal evolution none of the buildings adjacent to the Applicants’ site present a consistent building line to Green Lane and this character extends all the way west to Eastbury Road at the Underground Station. Even in Northwood centre the southside of Green Lane has commercial and apartment properties at the back of the pavement while the northside development is set back presenting a forecourt to the street.
- 4.10 The pattern of development is illustrated in the annotated map extract below.



5.0 Statutory Consents and Relevant Planning History

5.1 The work will require householder planning consent for the proposed extensions and for the modifications to the external appearance of the existing house.

5.2 The planning history at Hillingdon Council's planning portal has been reviewed and there are five previous applications, as set out in the table below:

Reference	Location	Proposal	Received	Status
26068/APP/2002/787	87 GREEN LANE NORTHWOOD	ERECTION OF BARN-TYPE OPEN GARAGE AND GARDEN STORE	08/04/2002	Approval
26068/APP/2000/2436	87 GREEN LANE NORTHWOOD	ERECTION OF BARN-TYPE OPEN GARAGE AND GARDEN STORE	27/10/2000	Appealed
26068/E/98/1521	87 GREEN LANE NORTHWOOD	ERECTION OF A SINGLE STOREY FRONT EXTENSION	27/07/1998	Approval
26068/D/97/1264	87 GREEN LANE NORTHWOOD	ERECTION OF A SINGLE STOREY FRONT EXTENSION	04/08/1997	Refused (P)
26068/78/1991	87 GREEN LANE NORTHWOOD	RES.DEVELOPMENT - HOUSE CONVERSION (FULL) (P)	22/11/1978	Approval

6.0 Proposed Design

6.1 Although an extension to the front of the property is an unusual development – the building is set back from the front boundary of the plot and is much closer to the rear boundary than the front. An extension to the front of the house is therefore not unusual in the context of this site.

6.2 There is also a previous consent for an extension of the house to the front – application reference 26068/E/98/1521 – and therefore the Applicants wish to extend the house to the front to enable new walls and foundations for part of the living space and to increase the extent of the house supported on new foundations and new external walls rather than repaired walls and foundations which have previously failed.

6.3 A modest extension is also proposed to the rear to 'square off' the existing house and again to provide a new wall and foundations to support the building.

6.4 The extensions provide additional bedroom space and a large reception room.

6.5 The extensions however are largely proposed because once constructed approximately 55% of the external wall of the house will be new and constructed on new foundations rather than repaired walls on repaired foundations. The Applicants believe this approach has a significantly lower risk of failure than the proposed repair only strategy.

6.6 The site is sloping and at present the house is not very accessible and is approached via a flight of steps. The Applicants wish to remain in their family home as they grow older and so the extension to the front allows for the installation of a platform lift to provide access to the house.

6.7 At present the house is on two different levels and the new foundations will provide the whole of the ground floor at one level suitable for long life occupation.

6.8 The front of the house faces due south and at present awnings have been fitted to some of the windows to the south. The proposed elevation includes aluminium foldable solar shading to reduce the solar gain in summer

7.0 Access

7.1 The site is located within 120m of a bus stop, and within 500m of shops and Northwood station.

7.2 As noted above the proposal will provide access from the entrance to the habitable floor using a platform lift.

7.3 Vehicular

There are no changes proposed to the existing vehicular access.

8.0 Conclusion

8.1 The Applicants have lived in the community for more than twenty years and now find themselves in an impossible position because of the structural defects in their home.

8.2 There have been repeated attempts to address these structural defects - and a further major works programme to reconstruct the entire foundations at the property is to proceed in 2023. The house will be uninhabitable during these works causing further extreme stress and inconvenience to the Applicants.

8.3 The Applicants have reluctantly concluded that the mature and beautiful trees adjacent to their property - which contribute so much to the amenity of the house - are wholly incompatible with the existing foundation structure.

8.4 The Applicants wish to see the trees retained and believes that is also the position of the Local Authority since they refused consent to have the trees cut down.

8.5 The Applicants have discussed with the engineering and construction team ways of reducing the risk that the structural interventions will fail as the previous works have failed and thus proposes to extend the house to enable a reduction in the extent of existing walls and repaired foundations which will support the house.

8.6 The additional space created by the extensions will obviously improve the house but will also mean that almost 55% of the extended house is supported on new walls and new foundations.

8.7 The Applicants consider this is an essential outcome from the structural repair works if they are to sustain some confidence that the structural movement of the house will finally be addressed.

8.8 The extension works to the house and alterations to the appearance of the house cannot progress with householder planning consent and that is the reason for the present application.

Document ends.

Appendix 1: Structural Movements



Strapping to existing building



Strapping and propping to existing house



Filled gap between wall and window frame.



View from front Private Garden to 87 Green Lane – The Ridge to the right!



The proposed extension is from the wall behind the bench (right) to the front face of the house (left)



General View (Applicants Property Highlighted).

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