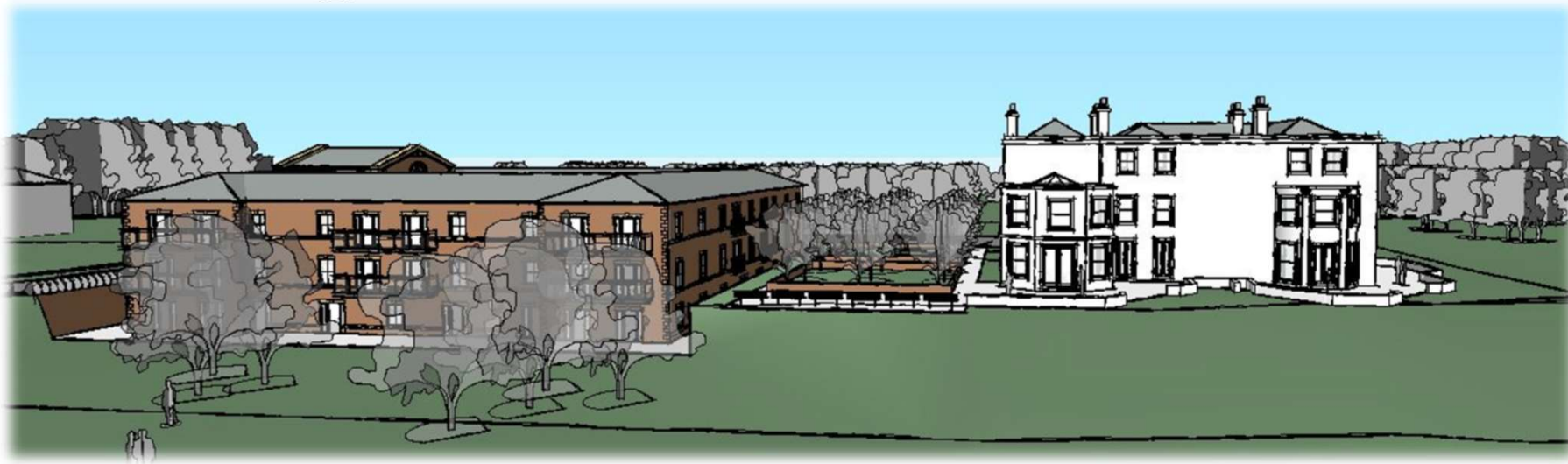


# Design & Access Statement



HAREFIELD GROVE

MIDDLESEX, UB9 6JY

A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSING A MIXTURE OF RESIDENTIAL USE, EMBRACING ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENTS AND COMMUNITY BETTERMENT

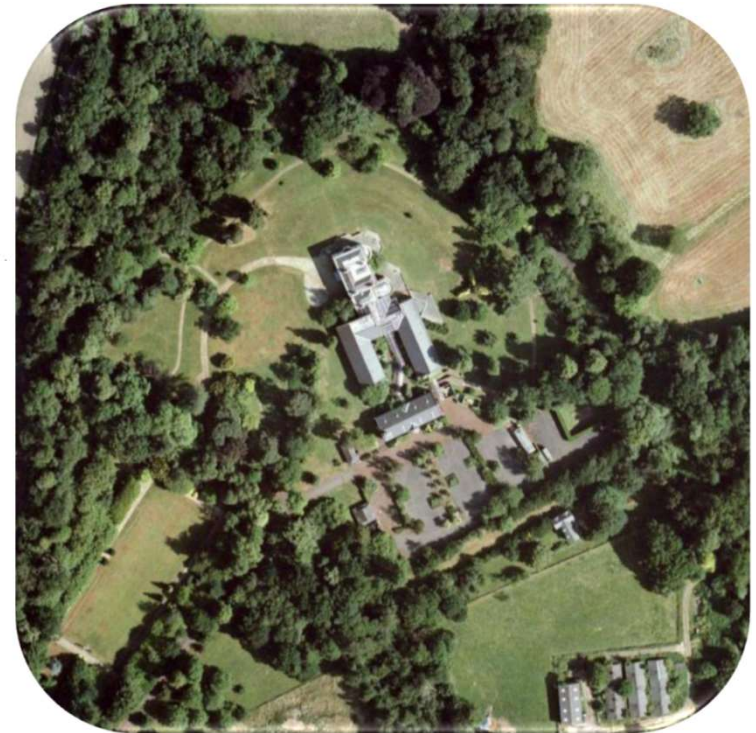
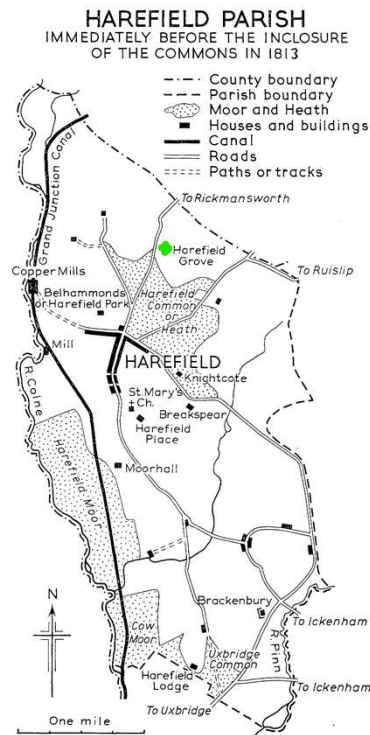
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# 1. General Introduction

Harefield Grove, a former mansion house in extensive grounds, is situated on the eastern side of Rickmansworth Road, approximately half a mile to the north of Harefield village, with Colne Valley, the Union Canal and M25 to the west, Rickmansworth and Watford to the north, Northwood and Ruislip to the east and Denham and the M40/A40 to the south. Due to the density of the trees and shrubs, and ground contours, only the entrance gates and avenue are visible from the main (Rickmansworth) road. The Design & Access explains in depth our proposals for the reinstated mansion house, proposed stable block and outbuildings.



## 2. Use

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The mansion house, extension and stable block had been used as offices from 1982 – 2002. This was established by Initial Standard in 1982-4 when they adapted the existing mansion and dependencies to form their headquarters for supplying towels to businesses on a worldwide basis. After Comer Homes took over the site in 2003 the office use has progressively reduced and the house and grounds have sporadically been used for making films and television programmes.

In 2016, planning was granted for the conversion of the mansion house into a single dwelling, along with alteration of the existing office block extension to the mansion house. The approved scheme also included retention of the cottage house, conversion & extension of the existing conservatory and adjacent building to form a single

dwelling, conversion and extension of the existing outbuilding/store to form a single dwelling house and reinstatement of the former entrance lodge as two dwelling units.

This new application proposes significant enhancement of the landscaped grounds and including a more appropriate restoration of the mansion house.

Consequently, the mansion house is to be restored and subdivided into 6No. apartments. The existing office and stable blocks are to be demolished and replaced with a new courtyard stable block.

The proposed stable block is a mixture of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments across 3No. floors creating 29No. spacious units. In all, 35No. residential

units will be provided with 78No. open car spaces. The total gross area of the proposed residential accommodation will be 4,200m<sup>2</sup> compared with an approved gross area of 4,237m<sup>2</sup>.

The proposed scheme returns the site to its original purpose and seeks to make the best use of the attractive landscape and in particular removing the unsightly 1980's glazed extension.

The site also benefits from good access to facilities such as local shopping centres at Northwood and Rickmansworth and regional shopping at Hillingdon.

Train/underground connections are available at Ruislip, Moor Park and Rickmansworth and the site is within a short drive of the M25, M40/A40 and A4180. Local bus services and taxis are available and Harefield Hospital is close at hand.

The main justification for the use proposed is that this provides a viable form of development that will ensure the restoration and preservation of the listed building and associated landscape. The decay and uncertain future dating back to the 1937 sale, followed by the effects of the war has done little to secure the future of the estate. The adaptation to business use in 1984 caused considerable damage to the historic building and its setting and nevertheless failed to provide a long term solution.

### 3. Amount of Development, Layout and Scale, Landscaping and Appearance

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The response to each of the sections of the Design and Access Report above has largely been determined by the form and disposition of the historical house, dependencies and associated landscaping. The changes made in 1982 - 84 were, as stated, deleterious to the design and setting of the listed building. It is therefore proposed to demolish the unsympathetic 1980's office and stable blocks and replace them with a courtyard stable block. In practice, this seems to be the only method of producing a viable scheme based on present costs and sale values. Numerous alternative designs have been prepared previously, however marketing of the mansion house as a single dwelling has failed to produce any interest. In order to restore the mansion house to its original residential use it is proposed to subdivide the house into 6 No. dwellings.

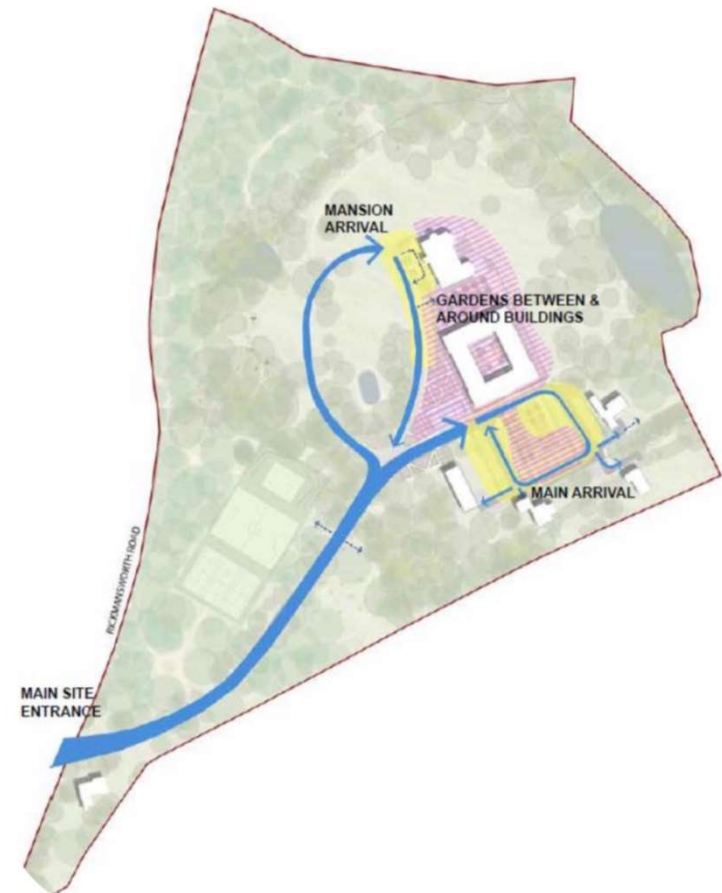


The proposed removal of the large extension currently attached to the house's south elevation has several significant advantages. The primary one is that it will halt physical damage currently being inflicted at the junction between the old and new which is undermining the historic building fabric of the main house. Whilst the concept of a glazed link between existing and proposed buildings was popular when the extension was built, water ingress and structural issues have resulted in distress to the heritage asset which will be alleviated by the extension's removal and careful repair of the south elevation. This removal also facilitates the south elevation to be fully exposed, and the symmetry of the house to be enjoyed without visual disruption by the extension.

The proposed courtyard stable block is set at such distance to allow the elevation of the mansion house to be fully appreciated, without harm to the heritage asset. The proposals are domestic in detail with the scale being subordinate to the main house.

The proposals actively enhance the heritage asset and its setting, returning it to its original use and allowing it to be fully appreciated, enhanced by appropriately designed landscape works.

The landscape has been designed to incorporate amenity space with the layouts of the dwellings, in particular the reinstatement of the 1km Woodland walk and 500m Wheelchair Friendly Garden Walk walkway and access drive.





# 4. Impact on Green Belt

The proposed development would actively enhance the listed building and its setting and would have a positive impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

The removal of the east and west wings would have a positive impact on openness through the creation of a 20m separation between the listed building and the new Stable Block.

By virtue of the scale and siting of the development, minor spread of built form beyond the limits of the existing buildings would occur however there would be a substantial reduction (c. 35%) of building footprint and the height of the Stable Block has since been reduced from that described within

the original pre-application submission and as a direct response to feedback received from officers at the meeting. The design of the Stable Block to incorporate a lower ground floor Garden Level results in a significant reduction in the above ground volume of the proposed building relative to that of the existing office extension and stable block. Overall, through the removal of the existing stables and office buildings and erection of the new Stable Block, the site will see a reduction of over 550m<sup>3</sup> in volume.

The ridge height of the new build (with the exception of the front gable) would sit below the ridge heights of both existing buildings

reducing the prominence of the building in and its urbanising impact on the wider rural setting of the Green Belt.

Overall, the development would have a positive improvement on openness in the Green Belt and the development would not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.



# 5. Building History

Illustration 1 identifies the key elements of the buildings and gardens prior to the 1982-5 reconstruction. The first of these is a title plan of 1846 recording the layout of the estate up to the demolitions of the 1980's with the main house to the north, dependencies including garden buildings to the south, lakes and streams to the east and pond and entrance drive to the west. Illustration 4 is more detailed and is part of a sale plan of 1861 when the estate was bought by Robert Barnes. The main house is clearly shown in its 1981 form though without the small bay to the north - the service courtyard is laid out more regularly and the kitchen

garden to the south has been numerous beds and outbuildings, whilst a new pond/trapezium-shaped reservoir has been added to the north. Illustration 4 is from the first Ordnance plan of 1865 and appears to be more accurately delineated than the earlier plans. By this stage the 'stable' building with its clock tower has made its appearance according with the view in the Gardening World of 1886 which shows a portrait of George Webster who owned the Estate from 1880 - 1896 and developed the kitchen garden and greenhouses on a huge commercial scale (illustration 5).

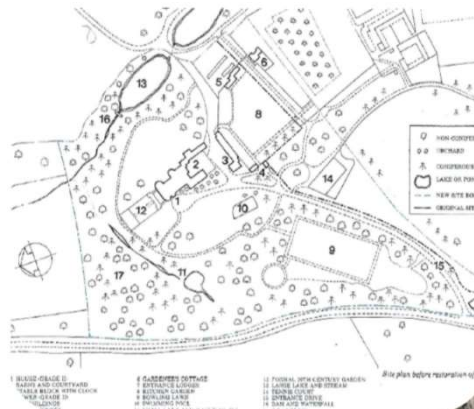


Illustration 1

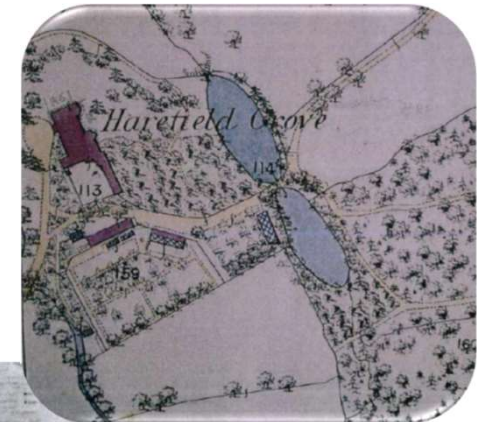
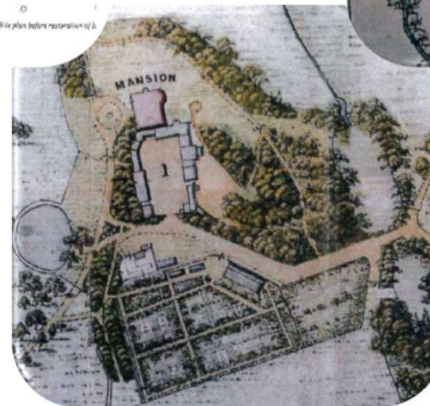


Illustration 5



Finally by 1937 the estate extending to 110 acres was auctioned and sold to Rowland Cox whose family sold it in turn to Initial Towels in 1982. The sale plan of 1937 shows the estate at its maximum development (illustration 6) with commercial gardens and the orchards extending far to the south and additional conservatories and terraces to the north (see also illustration 12). The sale catalogue of 1937 also gives views of the park, house and photographs of main rooms (illustrations 8-11). The double entrance lodge is shown in photographs of the 1980's shortly before its demolition confirming its layout as shown on the 1937 sale plan. A photograph of the west (entrance) front showing the reduced conservatory on the north front (illustration 8) survives and photographs from the 1982 sale catalogue and immediately before demolition of all the outbuildings by Initial Standard confirm the condition of the long vacant buildings at that time.

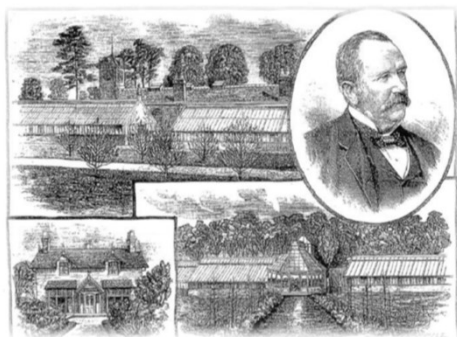


Illustration 6

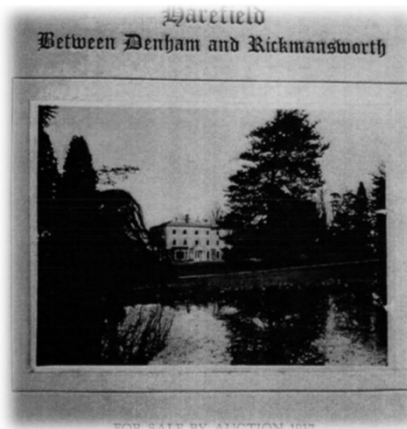


Illustration 8

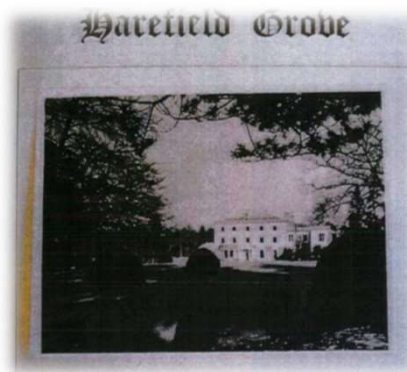


Illustration 9



Illustration 10



Illustration 11

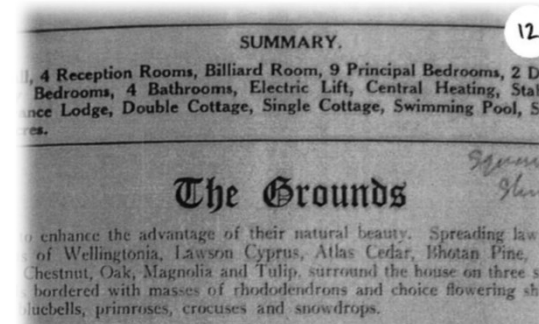


Illustration 12



**Illustration 22**



**Illustration 24**



**Illustration 26**



**Illustration 28**

A vertical aerial photo of 1954 shows the overall gardens and estate and a further set of photographs taken by Ideal Standard in 1982 - 84, show the radical extent of the works which they were to carry out in this period. The whole of the area of the dependencies and garden structures together with a substantial part of the main house were demolished and leveled prior to redevelopment (illustrations 22-29) and the new steel framed structures constructed in place of the old stables and outbuildings. Internally, the house was reinforced to take

the increased office floor loading and decorations in many of the rooms were altered (illustrations 28 - 29). The buildings that one now sees were radically transformed from what remained of the original house, though the grounds were mercifully largely preserved with the exception of the demolition of the entrance lodges, reconstruction of the lily pond/swimming pool, and replacement of the majority of the kitchen garden enclosures and conservatories with parking and service buildings.



**Illustration 23**



**Illustration 25**



**Illustration 27**



**Illustration 29**



# 6. Mansion House

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Illustrations 20-66 show the current state of the main house and office extensions.

The aim is to retain and restore the mansion house but to remove the glazed corridors, rear porch and existing wings, the mansion house will be a stand alone building benefiting from significant repairs to the external facade and minor amendments to the internal arrangements.

The mansion house footprint and scale will be as existing, 14No. car parking spaces, a bin store and a bicycle store will be added in front of the house to serve the residents.

A mixture of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments are proposed in the 3 storey dwelling (2No. apartments on each floor.)

Ground Floor: Apartment 1 (104m<sup>2</sup>) and Apartment 2 (180m<sup>2</sup>)

First Floor: Apartment 3 (123m<sup>2</sup>) and Apartment 4 (180m<sup>2</sup>)

Second Floor: Apartment 5 (113m<sup>2</sup>) and Apartment 6 (131m<sup>2</sup>)

The building benefits from a grand communal entrance hall, communal stairs and a lift. The ground floor also has access to the terrace and garden areas.

The overall appearance will be improved by the removal of the discordant glazed enclosures. Extensive works will be required to repair/reconstruct the surrounding terraces, produce effective damp proofing, and restore the stucco and wood work prior to repainting the external surfaces (see Illustrations 42-66). Roofs, chimneys, parapets, skylights and gutters will need to be overhauled and repaired (Illustrations 58-66), and a thorough check made of roof timbers and

structures prior to making any necessary repairs.

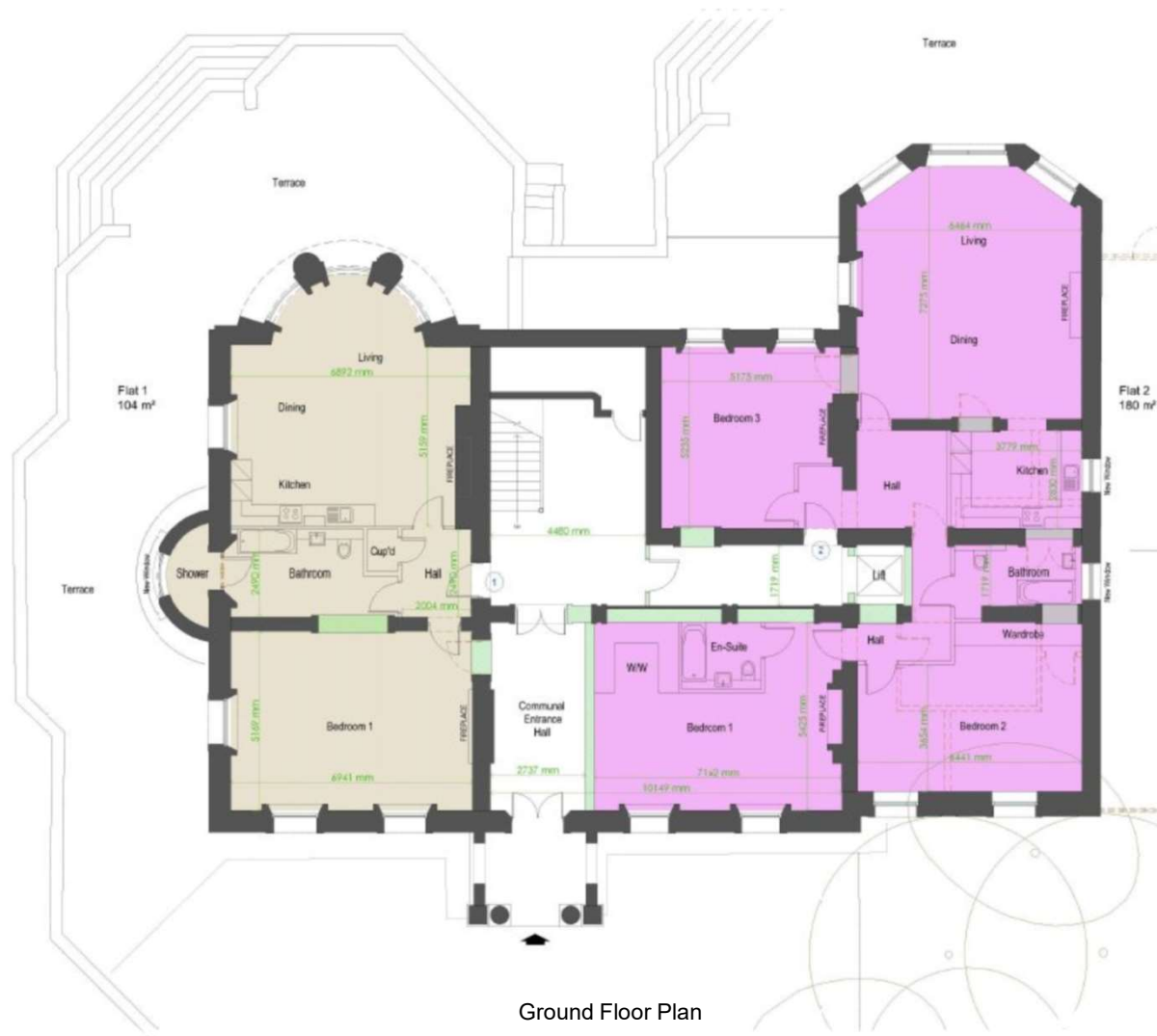
Internally a hallway has been created for the access to the apartments. The apartment entrances all open into a protected lobby which the various rooms are distributed from. Careful consideration of fire compartmentation will be required both horizontally and vertically between apartments.

The floor plans have been replicated up throughout the building where applicable, this simplifies construction and sets the standard of each floor.

The main stair appears to be a more recent addition with late Victorian/Edwardian features such as the balustrading newel posts and architraves. The wall decoration is clearly modern

though the guilloche embellishment framing the ceiling is original and repeats the design in the ceiling of the billiard room. The arched basement corridor remains and can be seen exposed during the Initial 'restoration' works.









First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan

# 7. Proposed Stable Block

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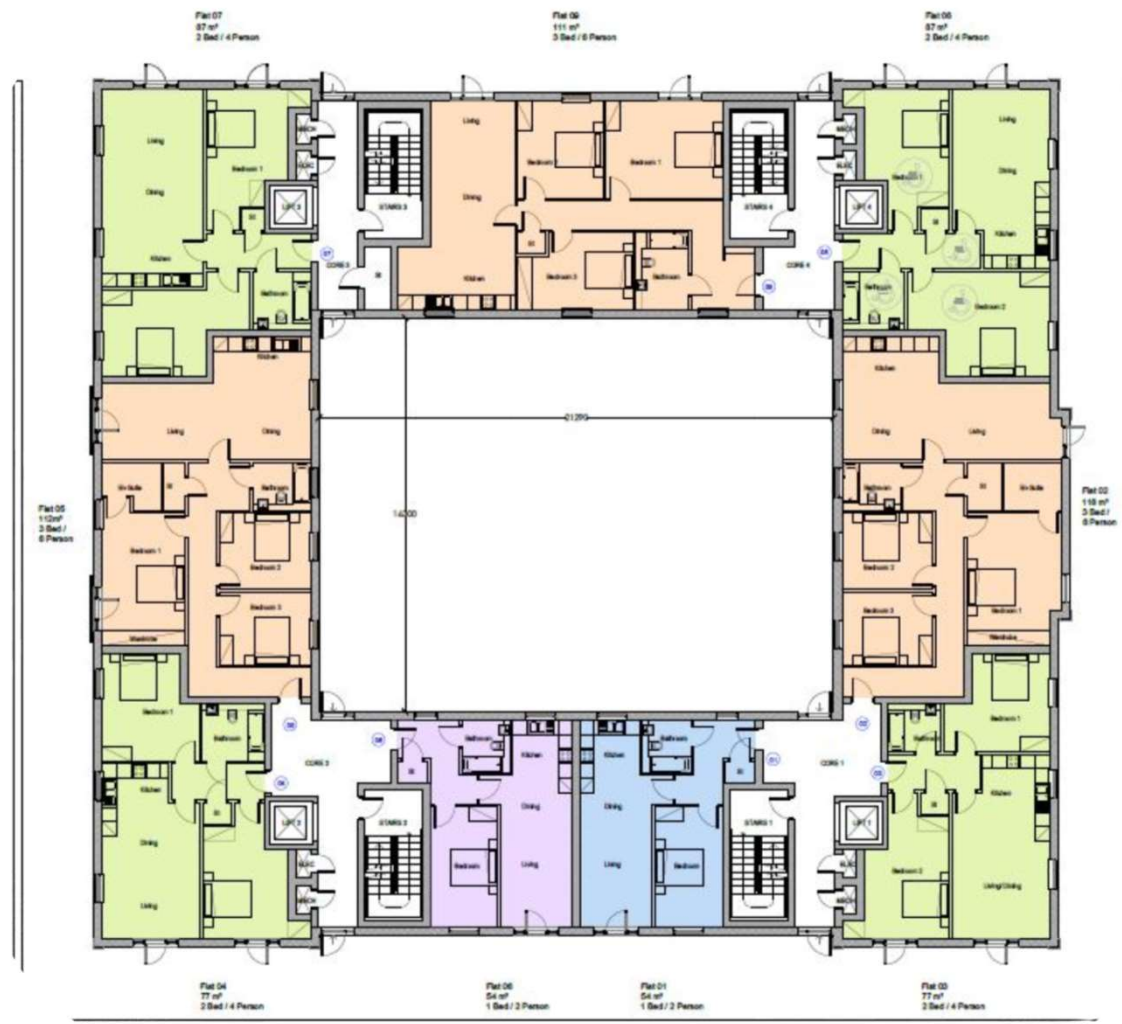
The proposed stable block will replace the 1980's built extension and stable building offices. The existing extension is bulky and out of character with the rest of the development, this is not viable to redesign and create residential units. The demolition allows the two main buildings to compliment each other and create a positive vocal point.

A mixture of 1, 2 & 3 bedroom are proposed in the new courtyard stable block. A total of 29No. apartments are proposed over three floors which includes the Garden level, Ground floor and First Floor.

The building is to be located 20m away from the existing mansion house and has access from both the Garden level and Ground floor with each corner of the building containing a lift and stairs core.

At Garden level, each core (4No.) has access to the communal courtyard space that will be available to residents, this amenity space aims to create a sense of community in the heart of the development where families can socialise together.

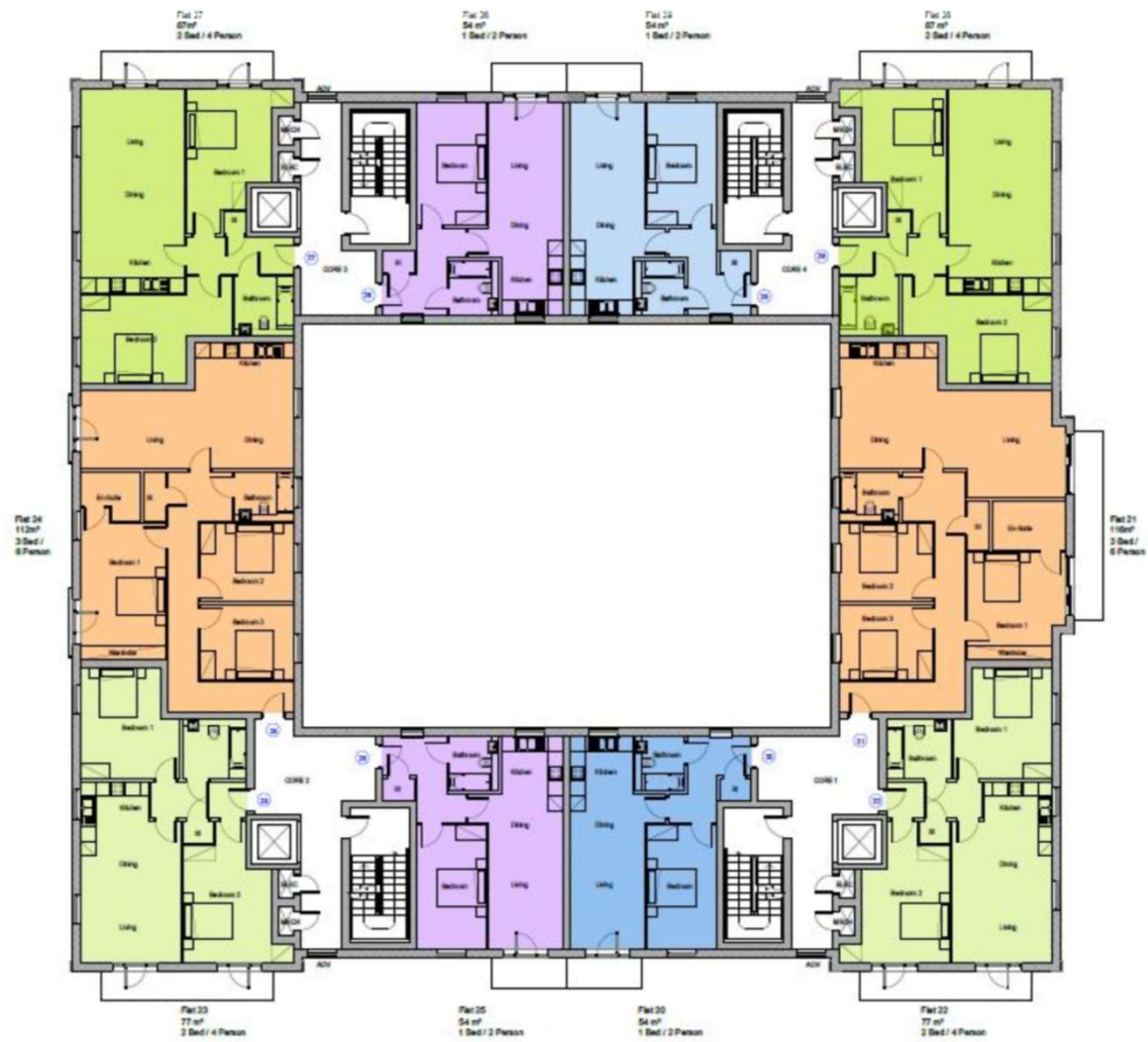




Garden Floor Level







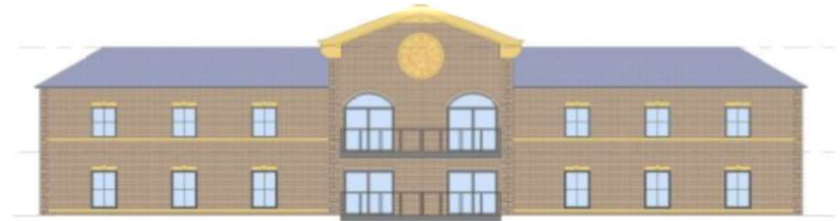
First Floor Plan

The existing stable building is a brick built structure and has been used as office space since it was constructed in the 1980's. The proposed courtyard stable block has been designed using the same style as the existing stable building which is to be implemented to keep the appearance the same as the existing, even though the existing is not the original stable building. The proposed stable block will be constructed using brick and a slate roof to match the existing. It's important to ensure the existing style is retained so decorative features such as stone headers and brick quoining have been incorporated into the design. The clock from the existing clock tower is also to be reinstated and used on the front elevation of the proposed stable block. The stable block will also benefit from balconies giving each unit outside space.

This build has been designed to accommodate a wide range of spacious apartments which a conversion of the existing office block will not be able to offer.

52No. open car parking spaces are to be provided where the existing car park is located. The spaces are positioned off a one way road creating a central island that will be used as amenity space. 2No. Zebra crossings are provided to link the central island and the new stable block.

A large area has also been designated for a bin store including recycling and a bicycle store.



# 8. Heritage Impact

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The proposed removal of the large extension currently attached to the house's south elevation has several significant advantages. The primary one is that it will halt physical damage currently being inflicted at the junction between the old and new which is undermining the historic building fabric of the main house. Whilst the concept of a glazed link between existing and proposed buildings was popular when the extension was built, water ingress and structural issues have resulted in distress to the heritage asset which will be alleviated by the extension's removal and careful repair of

the south elevation. This removal also facilitates the south elevation to be fully exposed, and the symmetry of the house to be enjoyed without visual disruption by the extension.

The new residential building is set at such distance to allow elevation of the house to be fully appreciated, without harm to the heritage asset. The proposals are domestic in detail with the scale being subordinate to the main house. Whilst the design reflects the stable block, originally in this location, in its entrance details of clocktower, arch entrance, the use of brick

defines it as subservient to the more formal white render to the house, and simple sash windows reflect less important buildings on the site. The building identifies itself as being residential, returning to the original purpose of Harefield Grove.

In conclusion, it is proposed for the development to be returned to its residential use, retaining the overall layout by using similar styles and materials.

The site will benefit from the removal of the existing office space that is causing damage to the heritage asset and facilitates appreciation of

mansions house south elevation.

The heritage asset is vitally important to the site and the proposal will enhance the house bringing it back to its original state. The landscape work has been appropriately designed in order to fully appreciate the site and create a community feel around the grounds.





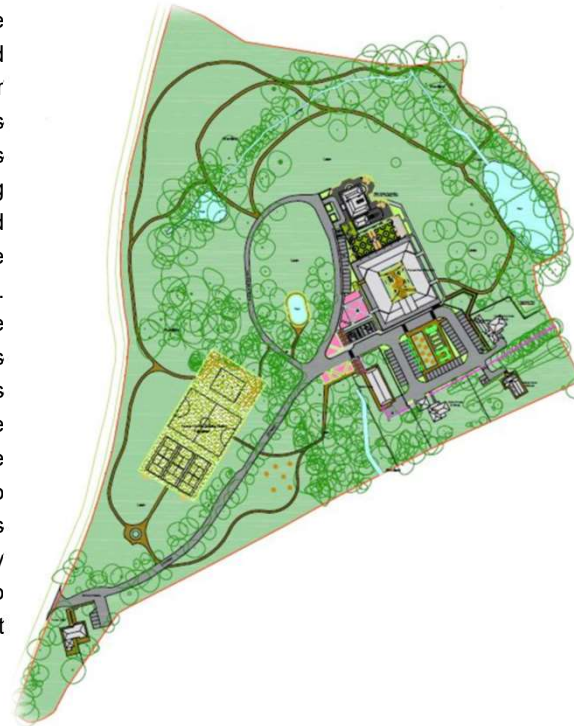
# 9. Landscape Features

It is vitally important to ensure landscape features are retained and restored throughout the site, the features are aesthetically pleasing and enable people to re connect with nature.

Landscape features include the following:

- The reinstatement of the original vehicular link to the front of the main house.
- Retention and reinforcement of the circuit walk giving access to the gardens
- Retention and emphasis of former kitchen garden area.
- The drive will be restored to its earlier alignment and the striking landscape views from the main house will be retained and enhanced. Individual parkland elements will be repaired and enhanced.

The existing area of tennis lawns is to be retained as an informally managed grassland for family sports and outdoor fun. The north-south east-west access points onto the lawn with linking paths are to be reinstated and existing boundary vegetation is to be retained and managed with some selective removal to enhance natural surveillance. 3No. tennis courts, 1No. 5-a-side football court and 1No. croquet court is proposed, as well as the grass terraces where appropriate by utilising the existing levels. Removable fencing/barriers are to be used to enclose sports courts so that the area is open and flexible for community events/performances. Potential to include benches for rest and quiet contemplation.





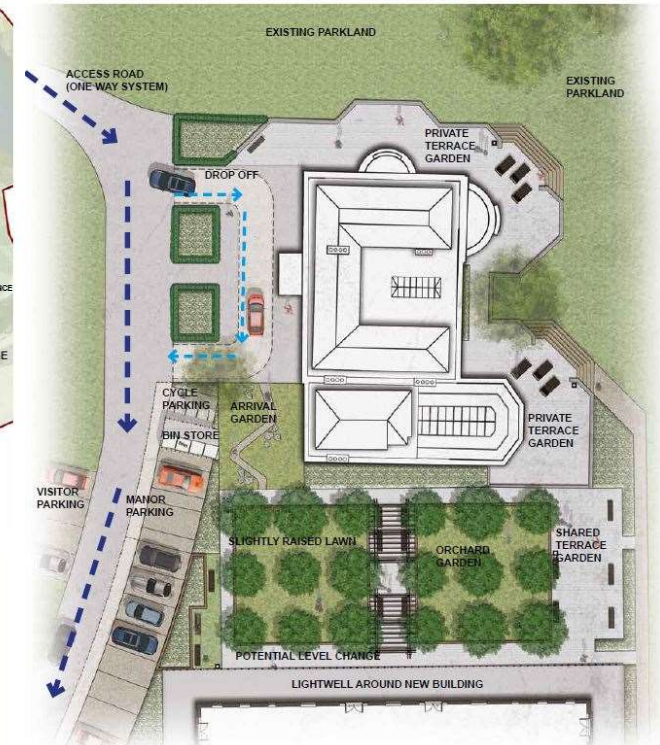
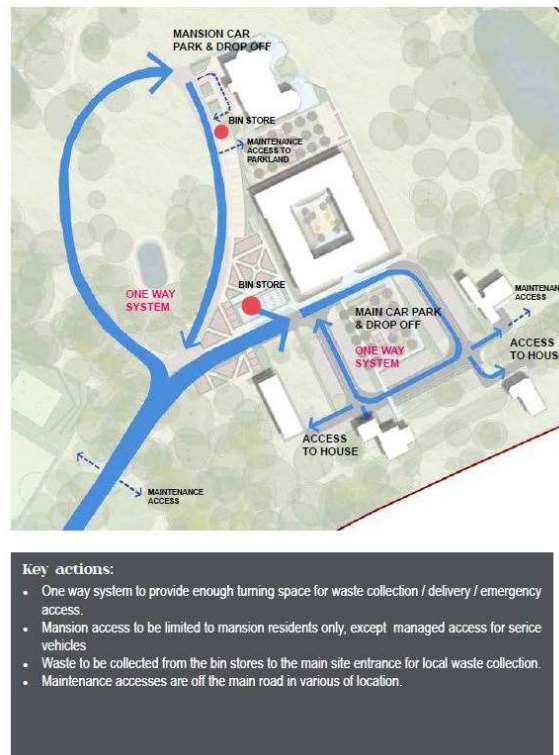
# 10. Access

The site has good road links with Harefield and local centres such as Rickmansworth, Watford, Northwood, Denham, Ruislip and Uxbridge. There is off road parking provision for 78No. cars to serve the proposed development with a required percentage available for disabled users.

In the case of emergency the site has been designed to accommodate emergency service vehicles with access to all units.

Refuse vehicles will be able to access the refuse stores distributed throughout the site using the main access road from Rickmansworth Road.

All buildings can be accessed using easily found and visible entry points with no hidden or inaccessible approaches.



# 11. Illustrations

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1. Diagrammatic Plan showing main features in park
2. Strategic road plan showing relationship to London
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4. Sale Plan of 1861
5. Ordnance Plan of 1865
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8. View of House from west showing park. 1937 sale catalogue
9. View of house from west, 1937
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11. View of large drawing in main house
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47. Condition of steps to north of house
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49. Detail of steps to east and junction with new east wing.

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