

Design & Access Statement

24 Ducks Hill Road, Northwood, HA6 2NR

On behalf of YNS Properties Ltd.

May 2025 – Revision C



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Preamble

On behalf of our client, YNS Properties Ltd., we have the pleasure of submitting this Design and Access statement for the redevelopment of 24 Ducks Hill Road, Northwood, HA6 2NR. The proposal is to demolish the existing dwelling on site and erect four new high-quality dwellings.

The Site – description, location, characteristics

The site is roughly 0.2 hectares in area and currently consists of a 3-storey, 4-bedroom dwelling with a large front driveway and grassland to the rear.

It is located on the western side of Ducks Hill Road, situated east of the David Lloyd recreation centre and south of the Cricket Club.

The location is highly sustainable, being within a 5-minute walk from multiple recreational facilities, schools and shops. It is located approximately 320m from Holy Trinity School Bus Stop K, which runs local bus services 328, 282, H11, 331 and 328, serving Watford, Hanwell, Harrow, Ruislip and Abbots Langley, respectively.

The site also enjoys a close proximity to Mount Vernon Hospital, Northwood Highstreet and Northwood Underground Station, which provides direct access to central London via the Metropolitan Line.



Figure 1 - Satellite Image Showing Walking Distances from Site.

Ducks Hill Road is of mixed character, featuring detached, semi-detached dwellings and apartment buildings. There are multiple recent developments of a similar nature, including 27 and 29 Ducks Hill Road, which provide precedents for this proposal.

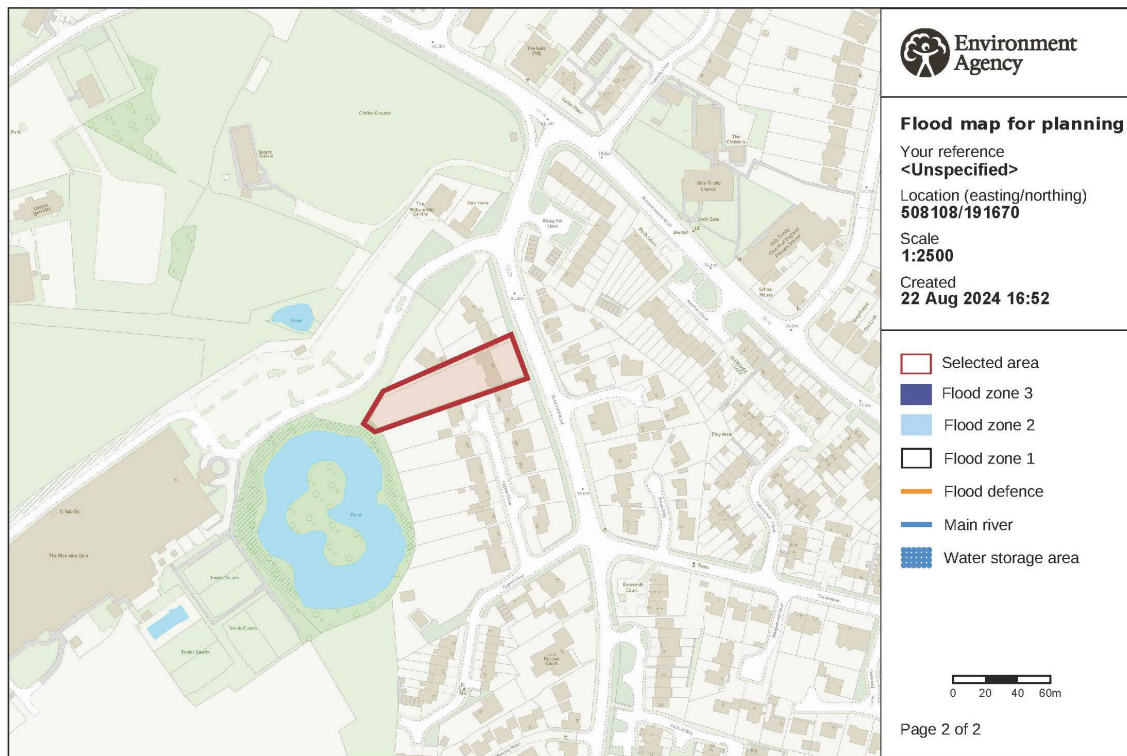
The site's orientation and openness allow direct, southerly sunlight to enter and create a highly desirable environment.

The existing building on the site consists of a 4-bedroom, 3-storey detached dwelling with an integral garage. Hardstanding occupies a majority of the front garden, which provides parking for +6 cars. The current use is within Class C3 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 2019.

The site is served by a joint vehicle and pedestrian access point from Ducks Hill Road.

As part of the new National Planning Policy Framework, any development in the Green Belt area will entail a 10% biodiversity net gain. However, most of the site remains in an area suitable for development, with only a small portion towards the rear of the site being within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

The site is situated within Flood Zone 1 and has a low risk of Surface water flooding.



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Figure 2 - Application Site from Google Earth

A large tree is situated to the front at the eastern edge of the plot, neighbouring Duck Hill Road. This tree is distinctly visible from the road and makes an important contribution to the street's character. Our proposal will maintain this tree, and protect it throughout the construction phase.



Figure 3 - View from Ducks Hill Road using Google Earth

Ducks Hill Road and the neighbouring Cygnet Close feature established and distinctive building lines that influence the form of our proposed development and the position of buildings.

Due to the nature of the site and adjacent buildings, floor plans have been carefully designed to reduce overlooking neighbouring properties.

A small section of the site is located within the Metropolitan Greenbelt, and care has been taken to ensure no development takes place within this designated area.

The Proposal

Demolition of the existing detached 4-bedroom dwelling and the erection of 4 new high-quality semi-detached dwellings.

2 units (units 1 and 2) will be located at the east of the site, fronting Ducks Hill Road, whilst a new private drive along the south of the site will provide vehicular and pedestrian access to a further 2 semi-detached properties to the rear of the site (units 3 and 4).

Units 1 and 2 fronting Ducks Hill Road will follow the established building line of Ducks Hill Road, whilst units 3 and 4 to the rear of the property will follow the established building line of neighbouring Cygnet Close and 18a Ducks Hill Road.

The proposal seeks to retain the existing hedgerow between both neighbouring properties, 22 & 18a Ducks Hill Road and 37c & 38d Cygnet Close.

Each of the proposed dwellings would feature the following:

- a) 4 bedrooms with an occupancy capacity of 8 people.

- b) Spacious living arrangements that comply fully with national space standards.
- c) The building design is influenced by the vernacular of the neighbouring dwellings, utilising similar forms and materials.
- d) Rear gardens serving each property will provide adequate green amenity space for residents, providing abundant natural daylight and recreational space.
- e) Sufficient space for parking for each property.
- f) 45-degree rules have been adhered to protect neighbouring amenities.
- g) Have adequate refuse facilities.
- h) Protects the loss of a 4-bedroom dwelling
- i) Additional detailed plans of boundary treatments, external lighting, the meeting of Standards for Category 3 M4 (3), detailed SuDS information, and parking allocations are also provided in the Planning Application.



Figure 4 - Proposed Site Plan



Figure 5 – East and South elevations

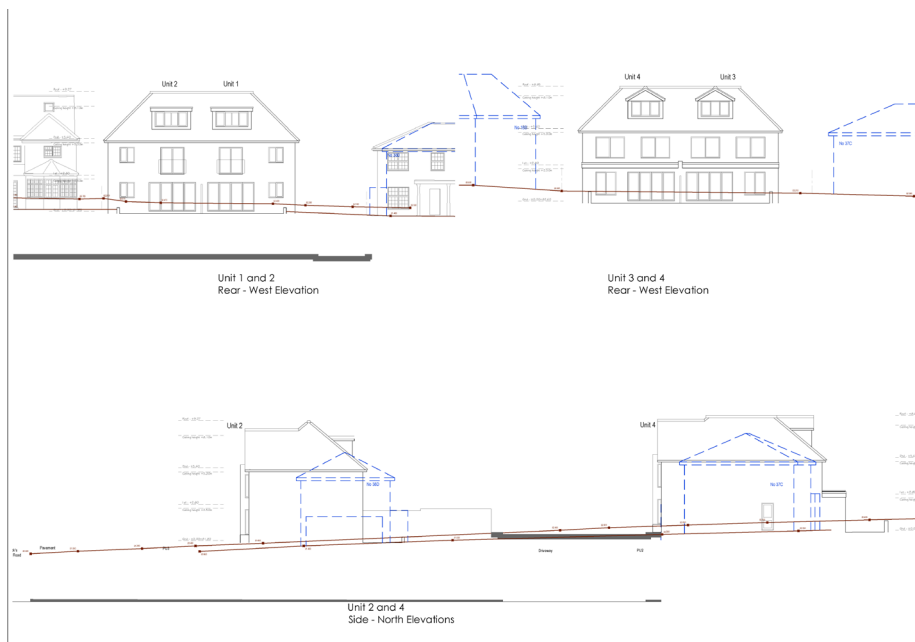


Figure 6 – West and North elevations

Units 1-2:

Units 1 and 2 are semi-detached properties that lie towards the front of the site. They have 3 bedrooms across 3 storeys and a GIA (gross internal area) of 138.2 m².

On the first floor, there are two generous double bedrooms, each with access to en-suite bathrooms. Similarly, the second floor has a large bedroom with a large

wardrobe and an ensuite bathroom, which rests within the roof eaves. The second-floor toilet lies within the gable structure.

These dwellings are entered via a spacious hall with a lounge situated to the front and an open-plan kitchen/dining/living space and WC behind.

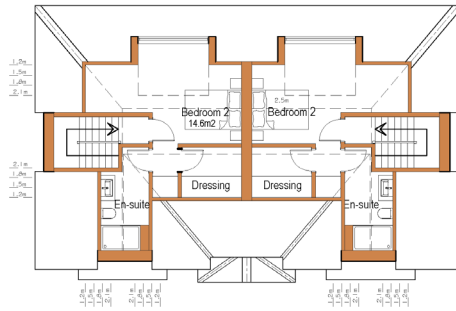
This building style is characteristic of Northwoods through its use of traditional brick, gables and a chamfered roof design.

Total GIA (units 1 and 2): 276.4 m²

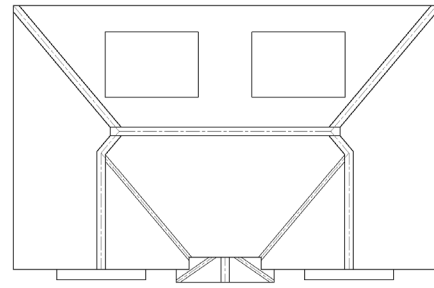
Amenity: 227 m²

Parking spaces: 4

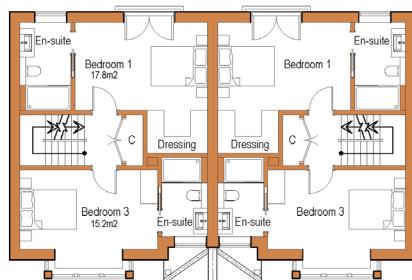
The layout of both proposed dwellings has been designed following national space standards to accommodate the needs of modern living. It achieves this while providing flexibility for future generations.



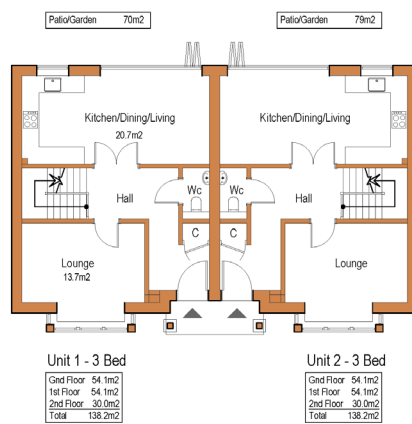
Second Floor Plan



Roof Floor Plan



First Floor Plan



Ground Floor Plan

Figure 8 – Floor plans for units 1-2

Units 3-4:

Units 3 and 4 are semi-detached properties that sit towards the rear of where the existing property is located. They each consist of 4 bedrooms across 3 storeys with a GIA (gross internal area) of 224.2 m² per unit.

The ground floor consists of a hall entrance and a lounge to the front with a large open-plan Kitchen/Dining/Living space in the rear. This space is connected to the private garden via a 3.6m wide glazed aperture, allowing abundant daylight and good views of the proposed orchard at the rear of the site.

In between the lounge and the rear open-plan space lies a washroom and a utility room with a side entrance, granting convenient side access to take out refuse. This is closely attached to the shared rear amenities.

The first floor has three bedrooms accessed via a central landing with a shared bathroom. The front bedroom (bedroom 3) also has access to an en-suite bathroom and good views from the front bay window.

The second floor has a sizable 28.1m² bedroom, storage/dressing area and an ensuite bathroom located within the roof eaves.

The property's internal layout emphasises a spacious, modern open-plan living arrangement with good visual and physical connection to the garden, each facilitating plenty of sunlight into the building. It provides ample bedrooms with other amenities, including an open-plan kitchen and dining area. The three entrances (front, side and rear) provide plenty of access points for residents.

Each unit provides two parking spaces. Units 3-4 have a generous private garden of 135 and 140 m², respectively, each having patios and dedicated areas for storing bins and two bicycles per property.

Total GIA (units 3 and 4): 448.4m²

Amenity: 227m²

Parking spaces: 4

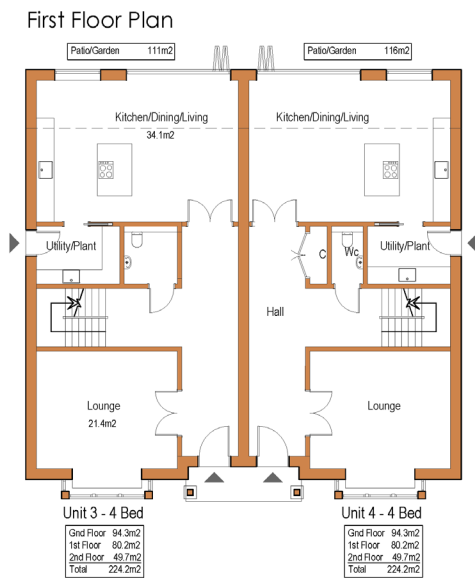
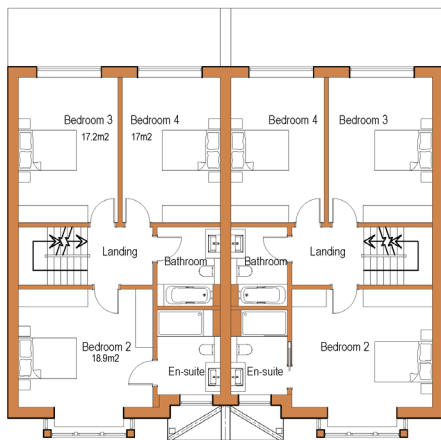
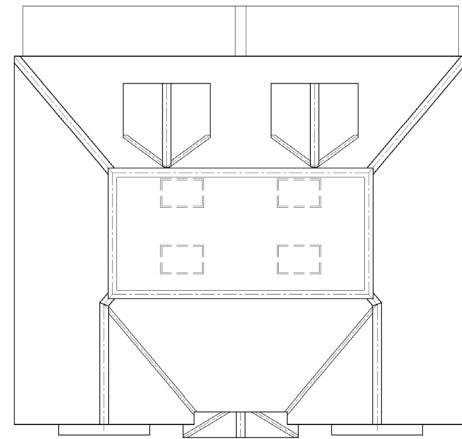
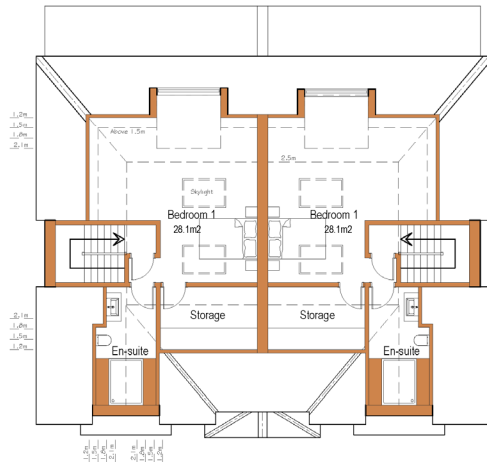


Figure 7 – Floor plans for units 3-4

Schedule of Accommodation

The proposed schedule of accommodation is as shown below:

Floor	Description	Area (m2)
Units 1/2		
Ground	Kitchen/ Living/ Dining	20.7
	Hall	10.3
	Lounge	13.7
	WC	1.7
	Total	54.1
First	Bedroom 1	17.8
	Ensuite 1	5.6
	Bedroom 3	15.2
	Ensuite 3	4.5
Second	Total	54.1
	Bedroom 2	14.6
	Ensuite 2	5.6
	Dressing	3
Unit total	Total	30
		138.2
Units 3/4		
Ground	Kitchen/ Living/ Dining	34.1
	Lounge	21.4
	Utility/plant	5.8
	Hall	20.8
	WC	2.2/3.7
	Total	94.3
First	Bedroom 2	21.4
	Ensuite 2	5.7
	Bedroom 3	18
	Bedroom 4	16.2
	WC	5.3
Second	Total	80.2
	Bedroom 1	28.1
	Ensuite 1	6.6
	Storage	7.2
Unit total	Total	49.7
		224.2

Table 1 – Schedule of accommodation for proposed units

Pre-Application Advice – (32490/PRC/2024/166)

Pre-Application advice has been sought previously by Hillingdon Council (32490/PRC/2024/166).

The following areas are to be addressed:

- Mass and scale
- Appearance
- Sustainability
- Trees and vegetation
- Lighting and shadow
- Amenities
- Site access
- Refuse strategy

The guidance given in the above pre-application response has been incorporated and addressed in the design of the proposed application.

Mass and Scale

As recommended in the pre-app advice, the mass of units 3-4 has been greatly reduced to better fit with the scale and building lines of the existing dwellings on Cygnet Close.

The GIA of the rear building (units 3 and 4) has been reduced by 89.6 m² each, which, as per the policy DMH6 regarding backland development, reduces both the mass and scale of the rear units concerning the front properties.

Similarly, the GIA of the front units (1 and 2) have been reduced to 138.2 m² each. This reduction ensures the property remains at a similar scale and mass to the surrounding units, showing careful consideration of the neighbouring context.

In response to item 2.8 of the pre-app response, the depth of these units has been reduced to 13.7m. This allows the property to more closely match the rear building lines of the neighbouring properties along Cygnet Close, with only a 3.6m depth offset from 37c Cygnet Close.



Figure 9 – Building lines for Units 1-2 with neighbouring properties

To ensure compliance with local policy and SPD guidance, the scale and mass of the proposal have been carefully considered within the context of the immediate surroundings.

Although the pre-application advice indicated that the proposed front development would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area, the design has been further refined to enhance its compatibility with the surrounding environment. This has been achieved through adjustments to the bulk and massing of the proposed houses.

Appearance

With regards to the pre-app response to item 3.0, the building's elevation and design characteristics have been modified to better reflect the local typology and blend with the more traditional brick façade of the neighbouring properties. In addition, Units 1 and 2 have been set back slightly from the neighbouring property number 22 to ensure that the existing front building line isn't breached.

This provides a generic transition with the adjoining properties by retaining a more traditional exposed dark brick elevation.

The proposed development is also sympathetic with other recent developments on Ducks Hill Road. A good example is the neighbouring sites of 27 and 29 Ducks Hill Road, which are like the development of two-storey semi-detached units with habitable roof space to replace an existing property. The units also maintained a ridge height of 8.9m, which closely matches the 8.85m and 9.27m for the front and rear units, respectively.

In addition, 24 Ducks Hill Road retains and maintains similar building lines and designs characteristic to the local Pinner and Northwood architectural styles. This is maintained with the use of traditional elements in the front, most notably the stone frame front porch and bay windows.



Figure 10 – Rendered front elevation of units 3 and 4

Sustainability

Section 2.2 of the pre-app response: *“Demolition would only be supported with the justification that urban design, sustainability and carbon emissions issues of demolition outweigh the benefits of retaining the building”*. This questions the feasibility of demolishing and replacing the existing house as opposed to potentially refurbishing and upgrading its thermal properties.

Considering this, an extensive study was conducted by our sustainability consultant, HDSgreentech. In their carbon feasibility statement, the estimated CO₂ emissions of the proposed dwellings were compared with the existing building alongside a scenario with three cost-effective upgrades to the existing building’s performance.

Run	Annual Carbon Emissions (CO ₂ kg//Yr)	Carbon Savings %
Existing Dwelling	16,660	-
1 - Upgraded Glazing	15,722	5.6
2 - Run 1 plus New Boiler, Cylinder and controls	13,063	21.6
3 - Run 2 plus 4 kWp PV array	12,874	22.7
New dwellings combined carbon	2,920	
Total Carbon Savings new dwellings VS existing dwelling with no improvements		82.5
Total Carbon Savings new dwellings VS existing dwelling with improvements		77.3

Table 7 – Results

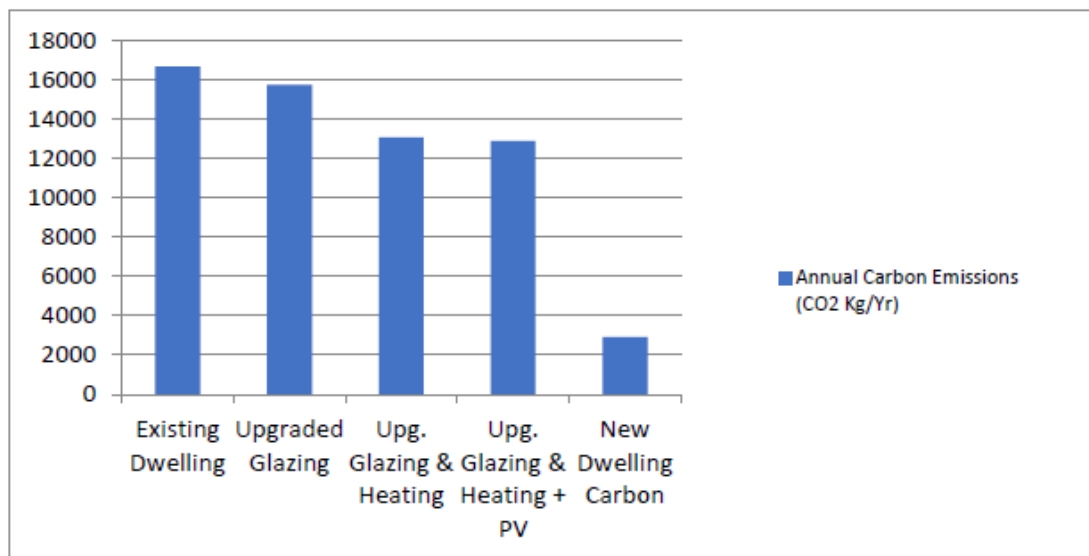


Figure 11 – Table and chart extract taken from Carbon Feasibility Statement.

As shown in the table and charts above, the existing building has a poor sustainability performance. Even with the upgrades, the existing house does not meet the required sustainability criteria. In addition, there is an estimated 77.3% saving in annual carbon emissions with the new dwellings due to their greatly improved efficiency and thermal performance to meet current criteria.

Hence, replacing the existing dwelling with the four proposed units provides the most sustainable and viable option for long-term residential use on site.

Trees, Landscaping and Ecology



Figure 12 – Proposed site plan with tree layout and root protection areas

The current proposal does not require any of the high-value trees on the site to be removed. The asymmetrical parking arrangement for units 1-2, highlighted in the pre-app response, helps to maintain a setback from the front Oak tree to avoid encroaching on its root protection area.

Following the Hillingdon council's response to the pre-app, an extensive Arboriculture survey has been conducted to highlight the significant trees. The report by our Arboriculture specialist, Trevor Heaps, highlights how the proposed scheme aims to minimise the impact on the existing trees and the wider local ecology.

13 trees will have to be removed for the development of Units 3 and 4. However, the report determined that these trees are of low ecological value, with the site amenities and their arboreal characteristics being largely unaffected by their removal. In addition, no tree protection orders are present in or near the site, with all third-party trees remaining unaffected.

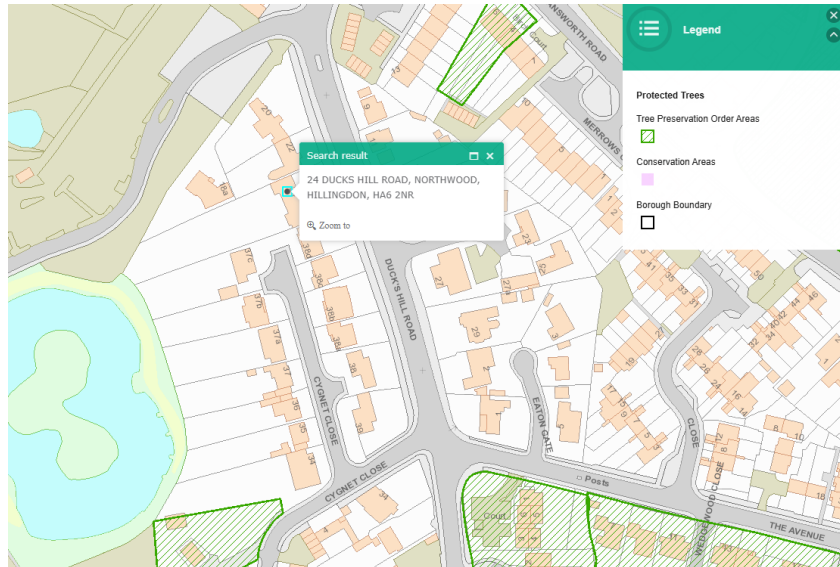


Figure 13 – Tree protection zones around the site

To better align with the 10% BNG target raised in the pre-app, the 37.7m rear gardens of Units 3 and 4 were reduced to 13.1m private amenity spaces, allowing the remaining area to be repurposed as a communal orchard.

In compensation for the removal of 13 trees, several new ones—2–3m high and suited to local conditions—will be planted in the orchard area under BS8545, with maintenance ensured for at least five years. All existing trees in this space will be retained, with the potential for additional fruit tree planting in the communal orchard.

Since the local soil is of a London Clay formation, the Arboriculture report raised the issue of soil compaction, especially within the root protection areas of retained trees. Hence, mitigation measures will be undertaken during the development works to minimise soil compaction that could affect the retained trees. This includes the use of ground protection cover and protective fencing around vulnerable areas. This is especially important towards the front of the site.

All new hardscaping will utilise permeable ground surfaces e.g. permeable block pavers, along with rear patios, keeping 5mm gaps between boards to help ensure the replenishment of groundwater and minimise urban heat gain. Where possible, all underground services will aim to retain the existing network locations and excavate outside the RPA of the retained trees.

While most of the proposed development areas sit outside of the retained trees RPAs, two trees (T15 and G21) have slight encroachments, as shown on the Tree Protection Plan. Despite this, the report also highlights that if development work follows recommendations and protective measures are undertaken, these trees would remain unaffected.

Further advice received in the pre-application response has been implemented with the accompanying reports and assessments. These are:

- An arboricultural assessment displaying an adequate tree protection plan.
- A hard and soft landscaping strategy, including replacement planting details.

Amenity

As per C10.1 of the Housing Design Standards, all dwellings require “a minimum of one 5 m² of step-free private outside space for homes with one or two bedspaces, with a minimum depth and width of 1.5m. An extra 1 m² should be provided for every additional bedspace.”

As shown in the table below, all four units have generous step-free outdoor spaces in the form of 3m deep patios that provide over double the required area. In addition, the outdoor amenity spaces for each unit are at least 9.5m in length. This ensures adequate room for social activities and utility space.

Proposed Unit	Bedrooms	Min. required amenity area	Proposed step-free amenity area	Proposed total outdoor area.
Unit 1	3	6	19	70
Unit 2	3	6	19	90
Unit 3	4	7	20	135
Unit 4	4	7	20	140

Table 2 – Outdoor amenity areas for proposed units

The private amenity spaces will feature plentiful soft landscaping and hedging to ensure privacy and well-being. As per B3.1 of the London Design Guide, for properties with three or more bedrooms, each unit will be provided with two dedicated secure cycle spaces per property.

The reduced scale of the front units to three bedrooms ensures that there is adequate private amenity space for the front units.

Lighting and shadow

Floor area reduction has been made possible through the reduction of the basement kitchen and living rooms in Units 1 and 2.

Subsequently, a shadow and daylighting study was conducted based on a 3D in-context model of the proposed units. This analysed the VSC (vertical sky component) of all the habitable room windows, looking at the winter and summer solstice and the spring equinox. As shown in the report, all the rooms exceed the minimum required daylight factors and VSC rating of 27% throughout the year. Further information regarding daylight and shadowing is available in the sunlight study report.



Figure 14 – Unit 2 bay window analysis with VSC study.

Similarly, the shadow study highlights the impact of the proposed developments on the lighting and shadows of the neighbouring properties and vice versa. In particular, the presence of several high-value trees is expected to have an impact on the daylight levels received by the front units.

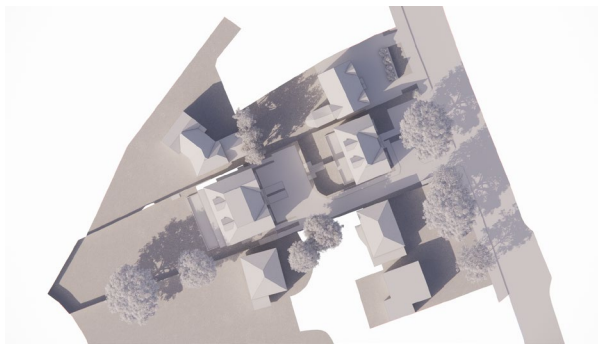


Figure 15 – Plan view of model analysing site shadows

While the units would impose shadows on properties to the north during the winter solstice, the lack of any south-facing glazing would mean that the impact that they would have on daylighting would be minimal.

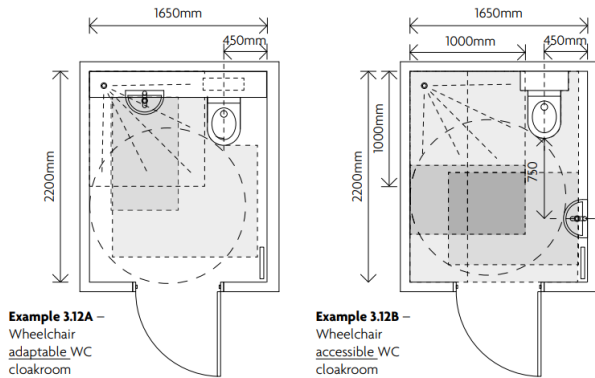
Access

Access to all units will be maintained exclusively from Ducks Hill Road. The side driveway on the south of Units 1-2 will remain the sole access point for the rear units 3 and 4. This access road is 3.6m wide from curb to fence, providing sufficient vehicle access per the Hillingdon design policies.

In addition, units 3-4 feature side access to their respective amenity spaces.

All properties have a 1m wide main entrance and implement step-free entrances with flush thresholds at the front doors to eliminate tripping hazards while maintaining more inclusive access for wheelchair users.

In addition, Unit 1 is fully accessible for wheelchair users on the ground floor as it includes a disabled WC accessible via the hall. It provides a generous space with a 1.5m turning radius for wheelchair users as per Part M4(3). This also meets the Greater London Authority's requirement for at least 10% of all new developments to be wheelchair accessible (provide wheelchair accessible toilets).



Notes:
1. Dimensions for illustration purposes only.
2. Doors must be capable of opening outwards – in wheelchair adaptable bathrooms the door may open inwards providing that the door can be easily rehung to open outwards (e.g. door stops are planted and easily moved).
3. Stack and drainage positions to be shown clear of access zones where located within WC / Cloakroom.

Figure 16 – Extract from Part M4(3) for wheelchair accessible WCs

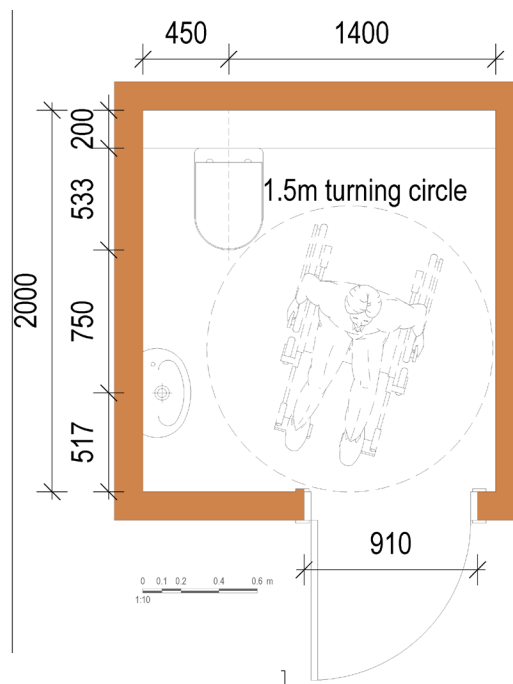


Figure 17 – Annotated plan of disabled WC proposed on the ground floor of Unit 3

Highways and transport

As per the Manual for Streets, the required stopping sight distance is informed by the speed limit of the road (30mph on Ducks Hill Road). Hence, in Figure 18, the required SSD (stopping sight distance) for Ducks Hill Road is 40m with an 'x-value' (position of driver's view from car bonnet) of 2.4m.

As shown in Figure 19, the 40m 'y-distance' of unobstructed views to the centre of the road is easily accommodated within the proposal from either side.

Speed	Kilometres per hour	16	20	24	25	30	32	40	45	48	50	60
	Miles per hour	10	12	15	16	19	20	25	28	30	31	37
SSD (metres)		9	12	15	16	20	22	31	36	40	43	56
SSD adjusted for bonnet length. See 7.6.4		11	14	17	18	23	25	33	39	43	45	59

Additional features will be needed to achieve low speeds

Figure 18 – Derived SSDs for streets (figures rounded) from the Manual for streets.



Figure 19 – Proposed Site Plan Traffic Splay Diagram.

Being a backland development, it was crucial to ensure easy access to the rear properties for private cars to park and ambulances to perform a 3-point turn. This is highlighted in the respective private car and ambulance traffic swept path

diagrams (figures 20 and 21). As shown, both vehicles can safely enter and manoeuvre around the rear of the site and exit in forward gear.

Figure 20 also highlights that as per Part S, all four properties have access to one electrical vehicle charging point each in adjacent to their associated parking spaces.

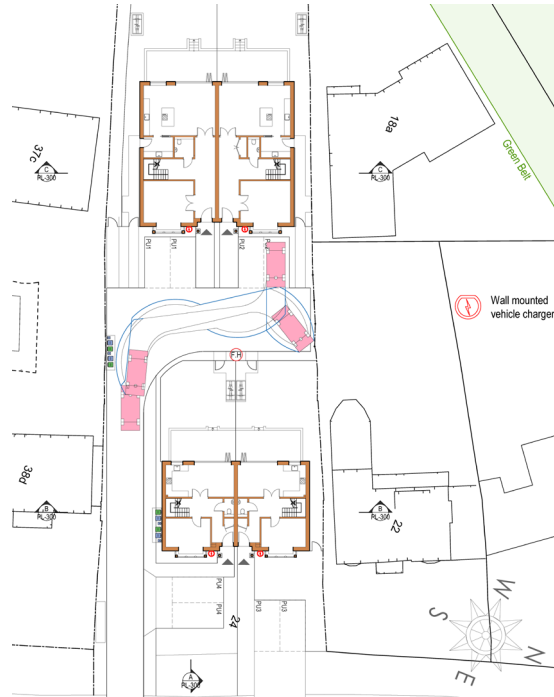


Figure 20 – Proposed traffic swept path diagram for private car parking



Figure 21 – Proposed traffic swept path diagram for ambulance '3-point turn'



Figure 22 – Proposed fire safety site plan based on hydrant coverage

In addition, as per Part B of the Building Regulations regarding fire safety, all properties should be within 45m (length of hose) of a water source - fire hydrant or equivalent. Hence, as shown above in Figure 22, a fire hydrant has been provided at the rear of units 1-2, granting complete hose coverage of all the properties.

The proposed vehicle footway crossover of 3.6m exceeds the minimum required width of 2.4m as per the Domestic vehicle footway policy 2022. This generous access route provides adequate space for a car and a bicycle to pass side by side. In addition, a 1.2m wide pavement also allows separate pedestrian access to the rear of the site. The existing property already has two crossovers in roughly the same locations on the proposed plan. These two crossovers would simply need to be extended and slightly readjusted.

Refuse Strategy

As per the West London Waste plan, each property will be provided with 2 x 240-litre wheelie bins and a smaller 23-litre bin for food waste. For Units 1-2, these bins will be located on the South side of Unit 1. These bins will be permanently stored in discrete bin stores for convenience. Regarding the stores, the bins should keep a 150mm clearance from the walls, with 2m wide doors and 2 vertical clearances to allow easy access.

Towards the front of the property, temporary bin collection points are located with allocated spaces for four bins. This ensures the bins are within 15m of the road line

for loading. Similarly, units 1-2 are within the required 30m travel distance from the bin position to the collection store.

On collection day, refuse bins will be relocated from their permanent storage locations to the designated collection point on the side of the street, allowing refuse operatives to collect the refuse from Ducks Hill Road without altering their current collection route.

The bin collection point consists of a timber store 2m high with a covered top and openings for ventilation. The store aims to help conceal the bins, improving the property's street aesthetic.

To meet the 30m travel distance requirements, Units 3 and 4 entailed relocating the bin stores to an external place on the South boundary of the site in front of the units. The proposed refuse strategy is in fig.23.

The stores provided will also allow for two wheelie bins and a food waste bin, with the flexibility for potential expansion in the future.

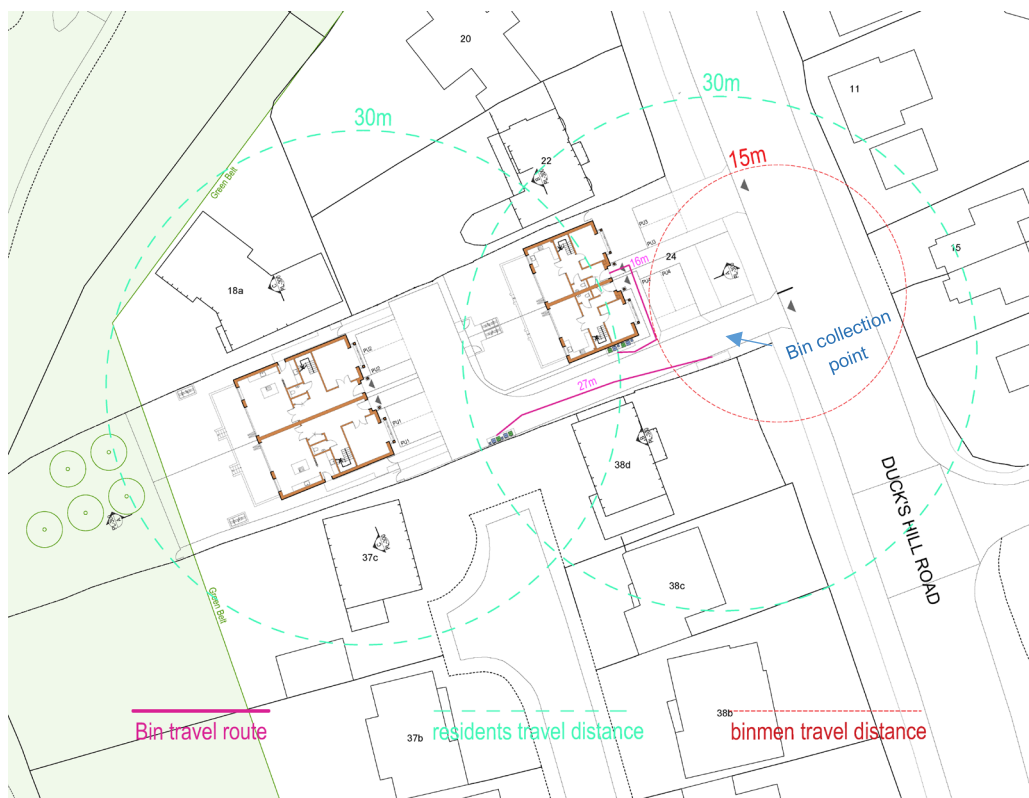


Figure 23 – Site plan with refuse collection distances

Summary

The proposal for four new dwellings on the plot of 24 Ducks Hill Road will provide high-quality housing stock with spacious gardens and a practical living arrangement.

The design has been approached with due consideration to best practice design standards. The advice received from the pre-application response has been implemented in its entirety, and the consideration displayed for overall massing, materials, and the use of vernacular forms contributes greatly to a scheme that fits in nicely with the street and area. Each house has been designed and orientated to negate any overlooking concerns and ensure no impact to neighbouring properties, whilst providing the necessary living arrangements expected by Hillingdon council to provide high-quality and accessible housing stock to the area.

The site is utilised to its maximum while remaining respectful to its surroundings and neighbours and providing spacious and comfortable dwellings.