

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT Rev A
2 MIDCROFT
RUISLIP – HA4 8ES

January 2025



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 SUMMARY

This Design and Access Statement has been produced by USL Architects. The application relates to the erection of a modest four-story residential building on 2 Midcroft, Ruislip.

The site is currently occupied by a former petrol filling station, which has most recently been used as a car wash facility.

The site in its present form does not enhance the local street scene or local vernacular. It creates an incongruous structure, which is intrusive to its surroundings.

The proposed scheme comprises seven flats ranging from one bedroom to three bedrooms and also includes refuse storage, a cycle store, and parking spaces, whilst considering the local area in all aspects.

The purpose of this document is to provide further information relating to the design and accessibility of the proposed scheme.

This statement should be read in conjunction with other material submitted, as well as:

- Application form
- Application drawings (existing, proposed, photo report)
- Planning Statement
- Transport Statement
- Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

1.2 DESIGN TEAM

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2.0 PART 1 – ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

2.1 SITE LOCATION



The site, as mentioned previously, currently houses a former petrol station, comprising a single sub-rectangular building situated in the northern half of the site, with a covered forecourt and fuelling stations adjacent in the southern half.

It is located in the Ruislip Town Centre, off the High Street and lies within the Archaeological Priority Area (APA) of Ruislip and within Ruislip's Conservation Area.

The site fronts onto Midcroft Road, a residential street characterised by semi-detached residential properties. It is positioned immediately to the rear of the No 53-61 High Street, a 1970s three storey building that has commercial/retail units at the ground floor with office space above.

On the south side of Midcroft Road the site faces into the service yard of the locally Listed Building at No 63 High Street which currently accommodates the NatWest Bank.

Midcroft itself runs east from Ruislip High Street towards Manor Way; it is a residential road.

The site is located within close proximity to Ruislip train station and Ruislip Underground station, which connects the area easily through the Metropolitan and Piccadilly line to central London.

Pictures on the right: Old postcards of Ruislip High Street



save



3.0 PART 2 – PLANNING HISTORY

Before our latest proposal five planning applications and a pre-application were submitted to Hillingdon Council:

A first application was submitted in November 2014 under **LPA Reference 4918/APP/2014/1274 4918/APP/2014/1274** for the **“Demolition of existing petrol station with tanks and erection of a four-storey building comprising 14 residential, an office unit at ground floor level plus associated access, underground car parking and cycle storage”**.

The application was recommended for conditional approval by the officers but due to some significant objections from local resident groups to some aspects of the scheme the Committee decided to go against the officer’s advice and refused permission, for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposal, because of its siting, size, height, bulk and proximity to neighbouring buildings, would be unduly intrusive and would represent an incongruous form of development, which would be out of character with Ruislip Village Conservation Area and Midcroft Area of Special Local Character. It would not complement the appearance of the street scene and would result in a loss of visual amenities.*
- 2. The proposal fails to demonstrate sufficient manoeuvring and access arrangements for service vehicles and car parking for adjoining commercial premises and would result in conditions prejudicial to highway and pedestrian safety*

Following the refusal in 2016 a new scheme was submitted to the council via formal Pre-Application Advice.

After consideration of the officer’s comments made at that meeting and his written preliminary assessment of the proposal, a new application was submitted in February 2018. **LPA Reference 4918/APP/2018/738** for the **“Demolition of existing petrol station plus removal of tanks and erection of a four -storey building containing 9 residential units.”**

This application due to a series of concerns raised by the officer was withdrawn in June 2018. Resubmitted, following the case officer advice, in December 2018. **LPA Reference 4918/APP/2018/4227** for the **“Erection of four storey building with undercroft to create 2 x 1 -bed, 3 x 2-bed, and 4 x 3-bed self-contained flats with associated parking, amenity space, refuse and cycle storage”**

In March 2019, the application was refused again, for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposed development by reason of its size, scale, bulk and design represents an overdevelopment of the site that would be detrimental to the character, appearance and visual amenities of the street scene and would fail to either preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the surrounding Ruislip Village Conservation Area.*

2. The proposal fails to demonstrate that sufficient manoeuvring and access arrangements for service delivery vehicles and car parking would be maintained for adjoining commercial premises which would result in driver confusion and unexpected vehicle movements for other highway users and deliveries and parking taking place from the road. The development is therefore considered to be detrimental to highway and pedestrian safety and prejudicial to the free flow of traffic on the adjoining highway, including access by service delivery vehicles the adjacent buildings at 53 - 61 High Street Ruislip.

3. The proposed development by reason of its layout and design, including a large basement that covers mostly the entire site, fails to demonstrate how it would prevent an increased flood risk.

4. The proposed development by reason of its layout and design fails to provide sufficient outlook and privacy for occupants of existing and the proposed building resulting in a development that is detrimental to the amenity of existing and future occupiers of the site and adjacent buildings.

In March 2021 a 4th application was submitted: **LPA Reference: 4918/APP/2021/1103** and was subsequently appealed, leading to a refusal. **Erection of a part 3 storey, part 4 storey building to provide 1 x 1-bed, 3 x 2-bed and 5 x 3-bed self-contained flats with associated parking, amenity space, refuse and cycle storage following demolition of existing petrol filling station/car wash.**

The reasons for the refusal were as followed:

- 1. The proposed development by reason of its size, scale, bulk and design would be an inappropriate development of the site that would be detrimental to the character, appearance and visual amenities of the street scene and would fail to either preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the surrounding Ruislip Village Conservation Area and the adjacent Area of Special Local Character. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies BE1 and HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (November 2012), Policies DMHB 1, DMHB 4, DMHB 5, DMHB 11 and DMHB 12 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part Two - Development Management Policies (January 2020), Policy HC1 of the London Plan (2021) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).*
- 2. The proposed development by reason of its siting, layout and design would result in the provision of a habitable rooms on the ground floor with very limited levels of natural lighting, outlook and privacy that would result in a substandard form of living accommodation and reliance upon artificial means of lighting which would fail to satisfy sustainability and energy efficiency objectives and would be to the detriment of the amenity of future occupiers, contrary to Policies DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) and Policies D6 and SI2 of the London Plan (2021).*
- 3. The proposed development by reason of its siting, layout and design would result in the provision of a habitable rooms on the ground floor with very limited levels of natural lighting, outlook and privacy that would result in a substandard form of living accommodation and reliance upon artificial means of lighting which would fail to satisfy sustainability and energy efficiency objectives and would be to the detriment of the amenity of future occupiers, contrary to Policies DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) and Policies D6 and SI2 of the London Plan (2021).*

The most recent application was submitted in July 2022: **LPA Reference: 4918/APP/2022/2303** followed by some concerns raised especially by the conservation officer regarding some design aspects. For these reasons the design team together with the client have decided to submit this pre-application in order to overcome the reasons which caused the concerns of the previous applications, and the new proposal represents the agreed response to these concerns.

Shown below are the aforementioned previous applications.

APPLICATIONS COMPARISONS



First Application

Second Application

Third Application

Fourth Application

Fifth Application

Amendments to the application

Design statement for: 2 Midcroft– Ruislip HA4 8ES

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First Application



Second Application



Third Application



New Proposal



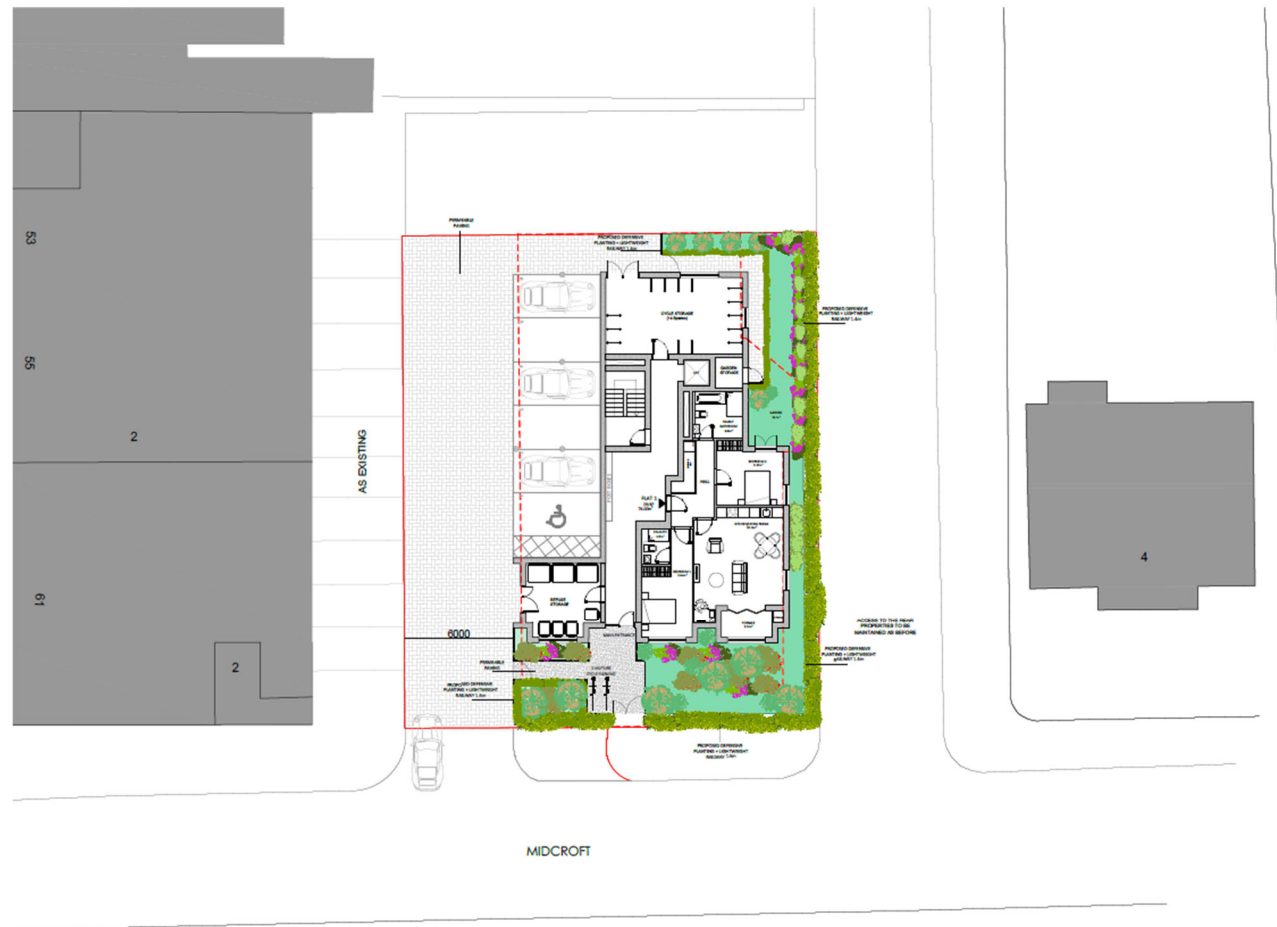
Fifth Application



Amendments to the application



NEW PROPOSAL



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The new building has been designed taking in consideration the relationship with the adjacent buildings and to respect the character of the area, in order to provide a design for residential accommodation, which would enhance the appearance of the street scene, which currently is impoverish, by the presence of an incongruous structure, responding to the previous appeal and addressing all of the concerns raised.

As visible in the proposed site plan, following the response from the Appeal APP/R5510/W/21/3282716, the scale of the building has been reduced from 8 to 7 Flats having only a one, two-bedroom flat on ground floor to ensure high quality living conditions for all of the proposed flats.

The gap between 53 - 61 High Street and the proposal site has been increased with the complete removal of the left wing of the previous designs This has brought to a less dominant front elevation which with its single centred gable would respect the character and appearance of the area and the CA.



4.0 PART 3 – OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION –

LONDON BOROUGH OF HILLINGDON

This section of the statement aims to summarise the analysis undertaken in the design policy documents relating to the new design.

3.1 DESIGN GUIDANCE

- MASSING AND RESIDENTIAL PROPOSED:

The new proposal responds to the Government's target to increase new residential developments by 60%.

The proposed scheme would remove the existing petrol station structures and replace them with a new residential building on four floors, taking into account all of the previous reasons for refusal. This has been achieved through a variation in the massing, an overall smaller proposal, to respect the adjacent buildings, reduce perceived bulk and ensure that the building sits comfortably with its neighbours and complements the character of the locality.

As shown in the proposed site plan the proposed building line has been considerably set back from the street. This decision has been taken in order to create ground floor frontage that is more open and interesting. This also produced the possibility of having a combination of hard and soft landscaping between the centred pedestrian entrance and the street, providing more private access from the main road to the building for the future occupants and protected cycle spaces for visitors.

It responds to the previous appeal and addresses all of the concerns raised.

The redevelopment of this site is seen as an opportunity to provide a medium scale residential development, which would produce a transition in terms of scale and appearance, from the taller, commercial High Street buildings to the domestic scale of the houses in Midcroft.

- PRIVACY AND OVERLOOKING:

The main windows within the building would be on the front and rear elevations. The windows set within the east and west elevations would be obscure glazed if required in order to avoid overlooking whilst not affecting the levels of natural light provision within the flats. This was considered acceptable by the previous planning inspector.

- AMENITY:

The development provides generous, direct private garden space from the principal habitable rooms of the ground floor flat. Upper apartments have private amenities in the form of inserted balconies in line with the London Plan, again accessible from principal habitable rooms. Some bedrooms also feature direct private amenity space. The public open space of Church Field Gardens is located very close by and is easily, and safely accessible via a pedestrian route next to the proposed building. It is therefore considered that the amenity open space needs for the flats would, overall, be reasonable and would more than meet expectations for such town centre flats.

The applicant as previously mentioned has reworked the two ground floor units of the previous scheme in order to create a more generous 2-bedroom flat, which responds proactively to the comments raised as part of Appeal APP/R5510/W/21/3282716

- ACCESS STRATEGY:

Whilst maintaining the existing access arrangements for the adjoining properties, the vehicle access to the property is on the west of the site, while the pedestrian access route is provided directly off Midcroft through a landscaped area.

The site is also proposed to be protected by defensive planting and fencing proposed behind.

3.2 PARKING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The site is located within easy walking distance of the London Underground services and Ruislip Station. Additionally, there are bus services operating along the High Street, with bus stops nearby.

The proposal will provide six on-site car parking spaces (including 1 accessible space) which is in accordance with the Local and Regional policy requirements. Of these spaces, one space shall have active provision, and one space shall have passive provision for electric vehicles.

3.3 REFUSE AND CYCLE STORAGE

Refuse storage is located on the ground floor on the left of the main entrance of the building. The access for the occupant is via an internal door located in the entrance lobby whilst an external door guarantees safe and secure storage of refuse and easy collection of the bins on the appropriate days. A cycle store is provided at the rear of the ground floor for a total of 14 cycle spaces. This store provides accessible, secure, safe and sheltered cycle parking for the development which exceeds the LBH Local Plan standards. In addition to this, 2 visitor cycle spaces are provided at the front of the building near the green area of the main entrance.

5.0 PART 4 – DESIGN PROPOSAL

4.1 DESIGN STRATEGY

4.1.1 ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

The design, as mentioned, has changed significantly from the previous schemes. The new proposal has been designed following the pre-application meeting taking into consideration all the case officers' suggestions. Instead of being a pastiche of different styles or a too contemporary proposal, it takes some cues from the next door Jebson House but with a more contemporary approach. Front Windows are vertically revoking the opening characteristic of the buildings on the high street, creating light, airy interiors and elegant exteriors. All accommodation has been designed to exceed the space standards as per The London Housing Design Guide and Lifetimes homes.

The main objections for the most recent application referred to the size and mass of the proposal, its relationship with the adjacent Jebson House and its incongruous elevations. This has been carefully reconsidered. For this reason, following a contextual study, and comments from the heritage officer, the front elevation together with the whole massing of the proposal has been redesigned to incorporate key features of the next-door building including the mansard roof which can also be a characteristic of the corner listed building. The new rooftop has been considerably simplified and the relationship with 53 - 61 High Street reconsidered leaving a bigger gap between the two in order to ensure a good level of privacy and light between the two buildings. We believe this new proposal responds to the local context coherently and can be considered a good quality example of the passage of scale, from the taller, commercial High Street buildings to the domestic scale of the houses in Midcroft.





Contextual 3d Views of the proposal

Design statement for: 2 Midcroft– Ruislip HA4 8ES

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4.1.2 SCALE

The new proposal and individual flats reflect the demand within the market of Ruislip town centre. The design has been carefully considered to adapt to the character of the area in respect of the scale of the adjoining buildings and in order to provide the best quality space for its future residents.



APPLICATION 2022



PROPOSED ELEVATION

4.1.3 LAYOUT

The scheme as mentioned comprises seven flats between four floors.

At the ground floor there will be the refuse store, the cycle store and a 2-bedroom Flat with direct access to private amenities areas from the principal habitable rooms. At the first floor and second floor there will be a one1bedroom/2 Person flat, one 2 bedroom/4 person flat and a duplex 2 bedroom/4 person flat while on the third floor there will be one 3Bedroom/6 Person flat.

All the flats will have private amenities in the form of balconies that exceed minimum standards. All of the balconies will be inserted which not only will make them useable in every circumstance but also will provide to the future occupiers a good quality enjoyable space protected from the neighbor and the street.

All of the floors will be served by an internal protected staircase and lift.

This provision of mixed units is considered more appropriate to the town-centre location in order to respond to the different demands of the area. All flats are designed to a high specification and quality to respect the location while complying with the space standard.

4.1.4 MATERIALS

All new materials to be used will be sympathetic with the style, design, character and appearance of the adjoining buildings and the local context: red brickwork for the walls, grey natural slate for the roof, dark grey doors and windows frames and glass panels for the balconies.

4.1.5 SUSTAINABILITY

Low energy appliances and lighting will be used in order to reduce the demand for energy. Other aspects of water saving measures will also be employed, such as water butts, water saving taps and reduced flush toilets and Solar Panels. The development will be designed to meet and/or exceed current building regulation standards.

4.1.6 PRE-APPLICATION CHANGES

- Additional landscaping – landscaping plan scale 1:100 showing adjacent property.
- Redesign of boundary treatment – implemented 1.4m mixed native hedgerow as defensive planting and lightweight railing.
- Removal of Brise-soleil, retaining of obscured window on the Southwestern elevation.
- Sun path analysis

CONCLUSION

The proposed building has been carefully and sensitively designed to provide a high-quality development that responds positively to the local context and scale. The design respects the history and character of the area whilst maintaining a good outlook and privacy for occupants of existing neighbouring properties.

The building will have a positive impact on street aesthetics and will finally enhance this area of Ruislip, making full and efficient use of the existing land through good residential architecture. The sensitive use of materials and high-quality landscaping will greatly improve the site yet remain sympathetic to the nearby properties and will be a positive addition to the street.

USL Architects are positive that this proposed design is an appropriate response to the constraints and opportunities presented by the site and the surrounding area whilst remaining compliant with council requirements, and this proposal deserves the support of the council in planning terms.

6.0 PART 5 –APPENDIX

5.1 SCHEDULE OF ACCOMODATION

| 2 MIDCROFT ,Ruislip - GIA | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| FLAT | TYPE | LEVELS | Number of bed spaces (persons) | SURFACE Sqm | SPACE STANDARD SURFACES Sqm |
| 1 | 2 BERDOOM | Ground Floor | 4 | 74,0 | 70 |
| 2 | 2 BERDOOM | First floor | 4 | 76,5 | 70 |
| 3 | 1 BEDROOM | First floor | 2 | 66,9 | 50 |
| 4 | 2 BEDROOM | First floor | 4 | 91,2 | 79 |
| 5 | 2 BEDROOM | Second floor | 4 | 76,5 | 70 |
| 6 | 1 BEDROOM | Second floor | 2 | 66,9 | 50 |
| 7 | 3 BEDROOM | Third floor | 6 | 166,0 | 95 |
| TOTAL | | | | 618 | 484 |

| 2 MIDCROFT - FLATS TYPE | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| TYPE | NUMBER |
| 1 BEDROOM | 2 |
| 2 BEDROOM/4P | 4 |
| 3 BEDROOM/5P | 1 |
| | 7 |