

SEABROOK ARCHITECTS

CHARTERED ARCHITECTS

Unit 17, Chiltern Court, Asheridge Road, Chesham, Buckinghamshire, HP5 2PX.

Tel: 01494 778918 E-mail: j.seabrook@gsparchitects.co.uk

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1991

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

In support of the



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

at

Manor Lodge
Rickmansworth Road
Northwood
Middlesex

Demolition of the existing structures and creation of 6 family residential units together with means of access and associated parking and landscaping.

on behalf of

Merchant Land Investments Ltd

As submitted to

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Hillingdon Council
Civic Centre
High Street
Uxbridge
UB8 1UW



Seabrook Architects Partnership Ltd

Company Reg. No. 10528377

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Seabrook Architects are appointed by Merchant Land Investments Ltd to prepare the designs for the redevelopment of Manor Lodge, a brownfield site located off Rickmansworth Road in Northwood.

The design process involved analysis of the site and the various constraints and opportunities arising together with establishing with the client the brief and the most appropriate form of development possible at the site. A Pre-Application submission and discussions with Officers at London Borough of Hillingdon planning department followed with the preferred scheme and Pre-App comments duly agreed. The Pre-App scheme was then developed further with the design and client team to the final and agreed planning application submission now prepared. A Public Exhibition of the developed proposals was also held in order to provide the opportunity for the public to be fully informed and engaged with the intended proposals and their feedback received.

1.2 Proposed Development

The proposed development provides for 6 new family residences in a paired semi-detached format together with private off-street car parking of 2 cars each, shared landscaped frontage with a shared private access road and private rear gardens to each residence.

Site preparation includes for the demolition of the existing disused buildings on the site and altered and uprated cross-overs and access points to the site frontage on to Rickmansworth Road.

The development also consists of new comprehensive landscaping across the site, private cycle stores, shared bin stores and double EV charging points for each residence.

2. The Site

2.1 Existing Site and Surrounding Environment



The site is located 750 metres south-west of Northwood Town Centre on the Rickmansworth Road within the Northwood built-up urban area. The site therefore benefits from very easy access to Northwood's local amenities, shops, restaurants, places of worship etc and public transport system – the London Underground Metropolitan Line and bus routes - together with various well-established Schools and leisure amenities in close vicinity, eg, Northwood Golf Club opposite.

The existing site and site boundary are all as outlined in red below.



The neighbours to the site comprise a 4-storey block of flats to the north-west, Moray House, a single private 2-storey residence to the south-east, Kiln Farm, and Northwood College Girls School (outdoor play area) to the north-east.

The surrounding architecture and building type is incredibly varied and eclectic from late 19th Century to mid-late 20th Century buildings of varying merit to the most recently and newly completed Science Block around the corner on Maxwell Road at Northwood College.

The building heights and rooflines to those building in the vicinity of the site vary widely too with a significant amount of flat- roofed / crown roofed buildings both immediately adjacent at Moray House and Northwood Golf Club to those a little further afield on the Northwood College campus.

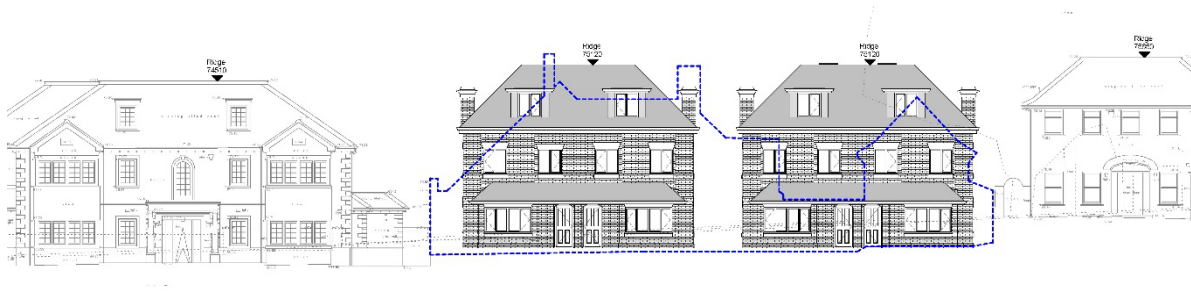
This variation is particularly evident in the aerial image below and marked as thus ★ including the existing building itself on the site;



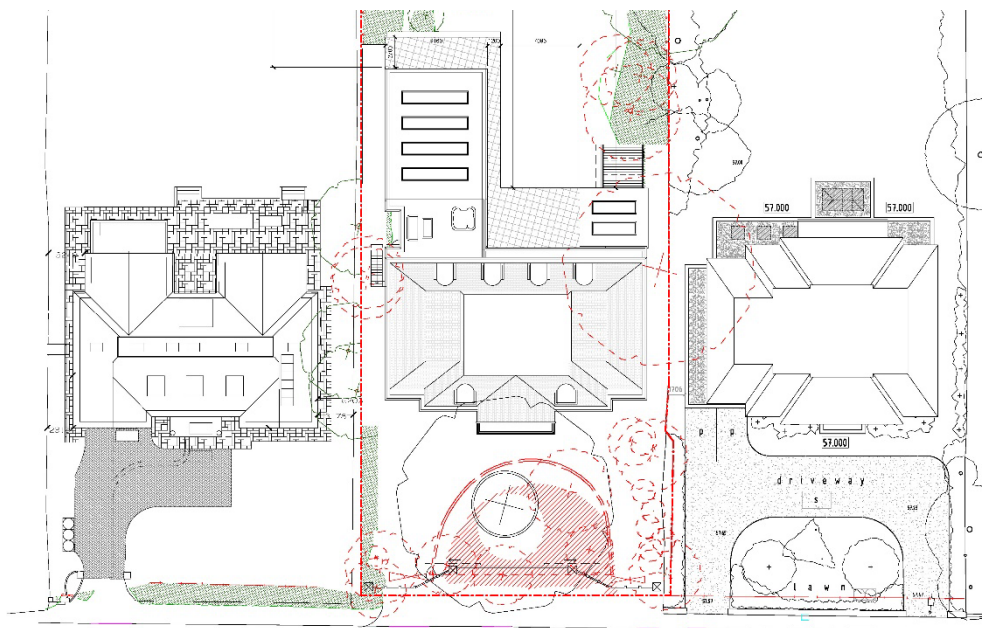
We ourselves as Architects who are working consistently in this area of Northwood have also secured recent planning permissions for schemes that also include new crown roofs at the following sites;

25 The Avenue, circa 500 metres to the west,





And also at 25 Linksway on the Copsewood Estate



Together with others on Copsewood Estate already built out including 29 and 97 Copsewood Way too.

And in terms of constraints at the site, the orientation of any new development is important in that we ought to respect the neighbouring residential properties and avoid overlooking and also take advantage of the already present access points to the frontage boundary on to Rickmansworth Road.

On the former point, we acknowledge the existing front balconies at Moray House together with side windows facing the north-west flank of the site that all serve a kitchen to each flat within the block. The building orientation and windows at Kiln Farm are sufficiently distant to be of no concern. This was confirmed by Officers at the Pre-App consultation.

Balconies to the front elevation at Moray House



Kitchen windows to the flank elevation at Moray House

On the latter point, it would be most appropriate to orientate any new development 'frontwards' to the road frontage on Rickmansworth Road given the ease at which both pedestrian and vehicular access is possible.

The site is fronted on to Rickmansworth Road by an existing brickwork boundary wall with an hedgeline and a number of low-quality tall conifer treeline behind. These are dealt within the Tree Survey and LVIA included elsewhere.



View of the site frontage looking north.



View of the site frontage looking south.

The remainder of the site is bounded by a mix of brickwork wall and close-boarded and chainlink fencing. The site is also free from other vegetation and trees.

The existing buildings on the site are vacant and are to be demolished to make way for the new build development proposed.

2.2 Heritage Assets

Heritage Assets

The Site holds no heritage designations in itself, nor is it located in a Conservation Area. However, the Northwood Town Centre, Green Lane Conservation Area lies immediately adjacent to the Site to the east.

The following image is a heritage mapping exercise to evaluate if there are any heritage assets within the vicinity of the Site that have the potential to be impacted by the proposals. It reveals that aside from the Northwood Town Centre, Green Lane Conservation Area, there are three locally listed buildings in the nearby vicinity.



- Site Boundary
- Locally Listed Buildings
- Northwood Town Centre Conservation Area

These are:

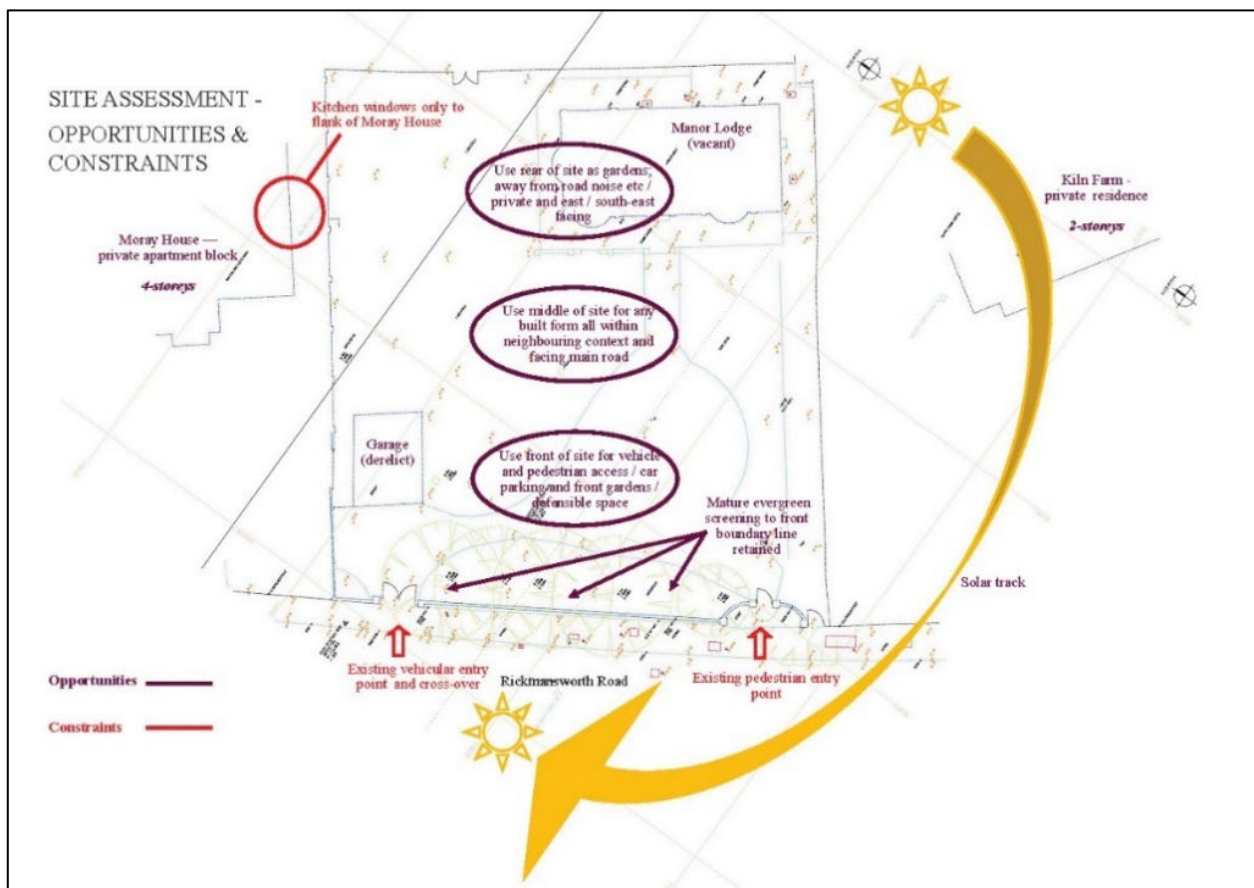
- a. 32 Maxwell Road
- b. 30 Maxwell Road
- c. Northwood College

3. Design

3.1 Site Layout

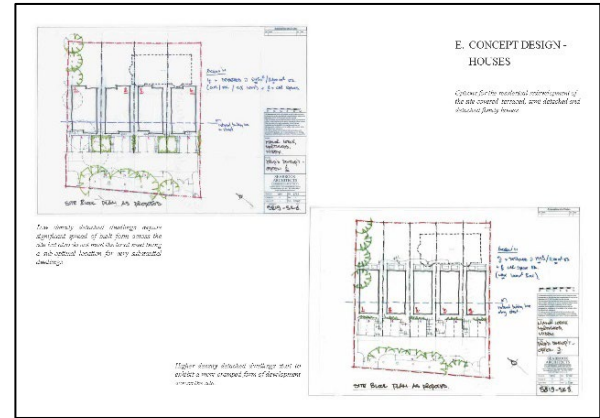
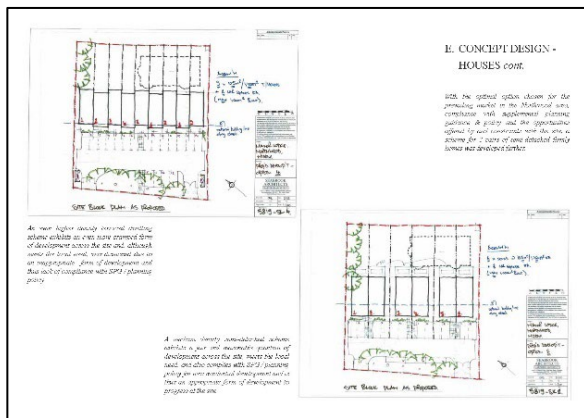
3.1.1 July 2022 Pre-App Proposals

The Pre-App package was prepared and submitted to LB Hillingdon in July 2022. An extract of the site analysis that informed the Pre-App scheme is below;

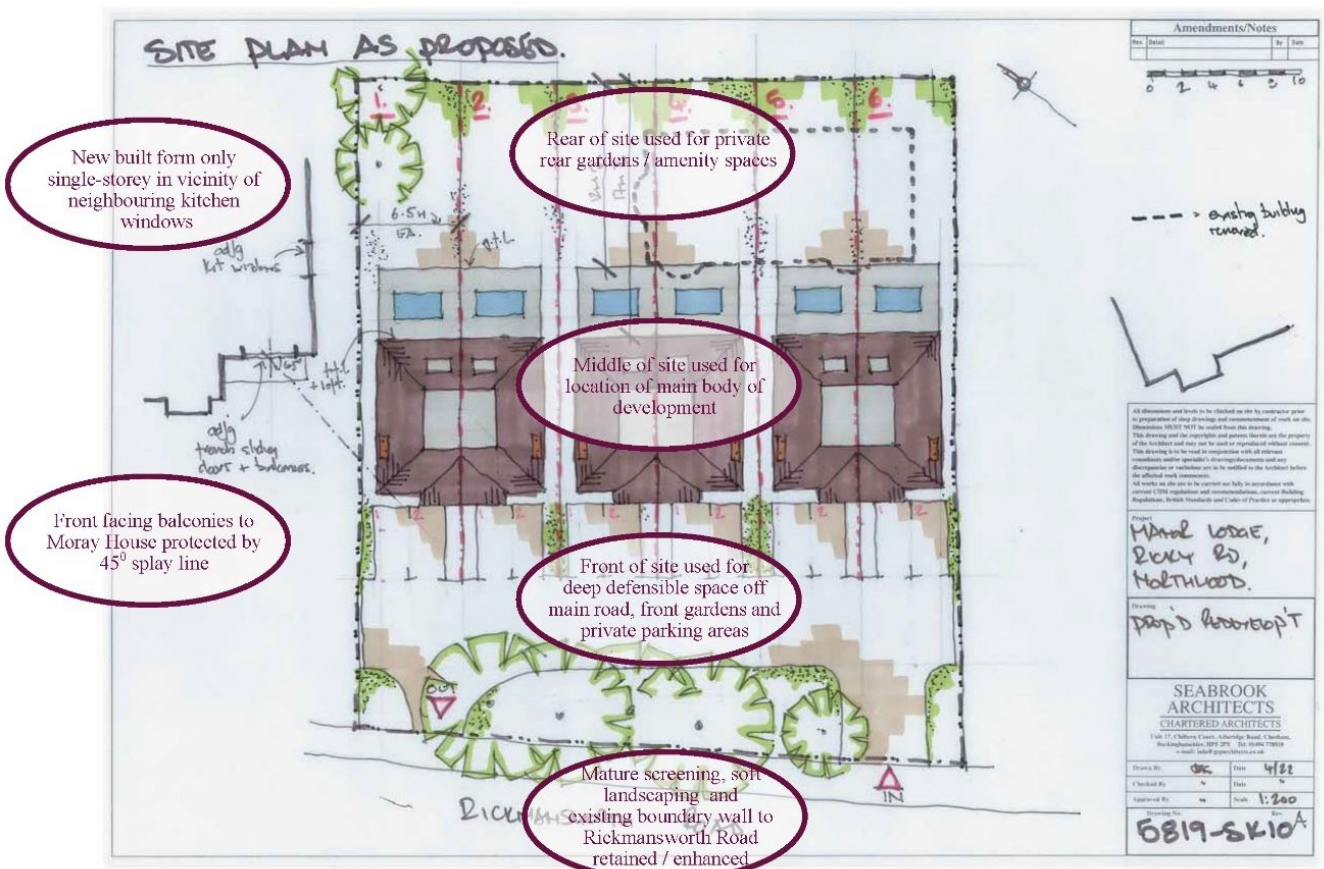


The Pre-App package described the process of concept design and the potential forms of development tested across the site based upon the principles that self-contained family houses are the most appropriate form of development to meet the market needs for new housing in the Borough rather than any form of flatted development.

Various options for such development based upon these constraints and opportunities together with size of dwelling and the appropriate form, scale and overall architecture desired were developed further,



with the conclusion that a scheme for 3 pairs of semi-detached family homes – 6 in total – was selected as the preferred proposals.



Pre-App site plan as proposed.



Pre-App street scene / front elevation as proposed.

Each family home was conceived as providing 2 ground floor reception rooms with its kitchen, dining and family space facing on to the rear private gardens, 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms at first floor level with a fourth bedroom and potential study / playroom and further bathroom at loft level;



Pre-App building layout plans as proposed.



Pre-App street detailed front elevation as proposed.

Feedback from the Officers on these proposals was generally very positive and the principle of this form of new family housing, level of accommodation, design and overall elevational treatment on the site was all agreeable with the following items to be developed further as part of the formal planning application;

- Review the proposed front building line position relative to the neighbouring Moray House.
- Review the extent and depth of the single-storey rear projection.
- Ensure 1 metre clear between flank walls and boundary lines.
- Review the size of the crown roof proposed and provide analysis of such flat roofs in the vicinity of the site.
- Demonstrate extent of loft accommodation / head height.

3.1.2 2023 Planning Submission Proposals

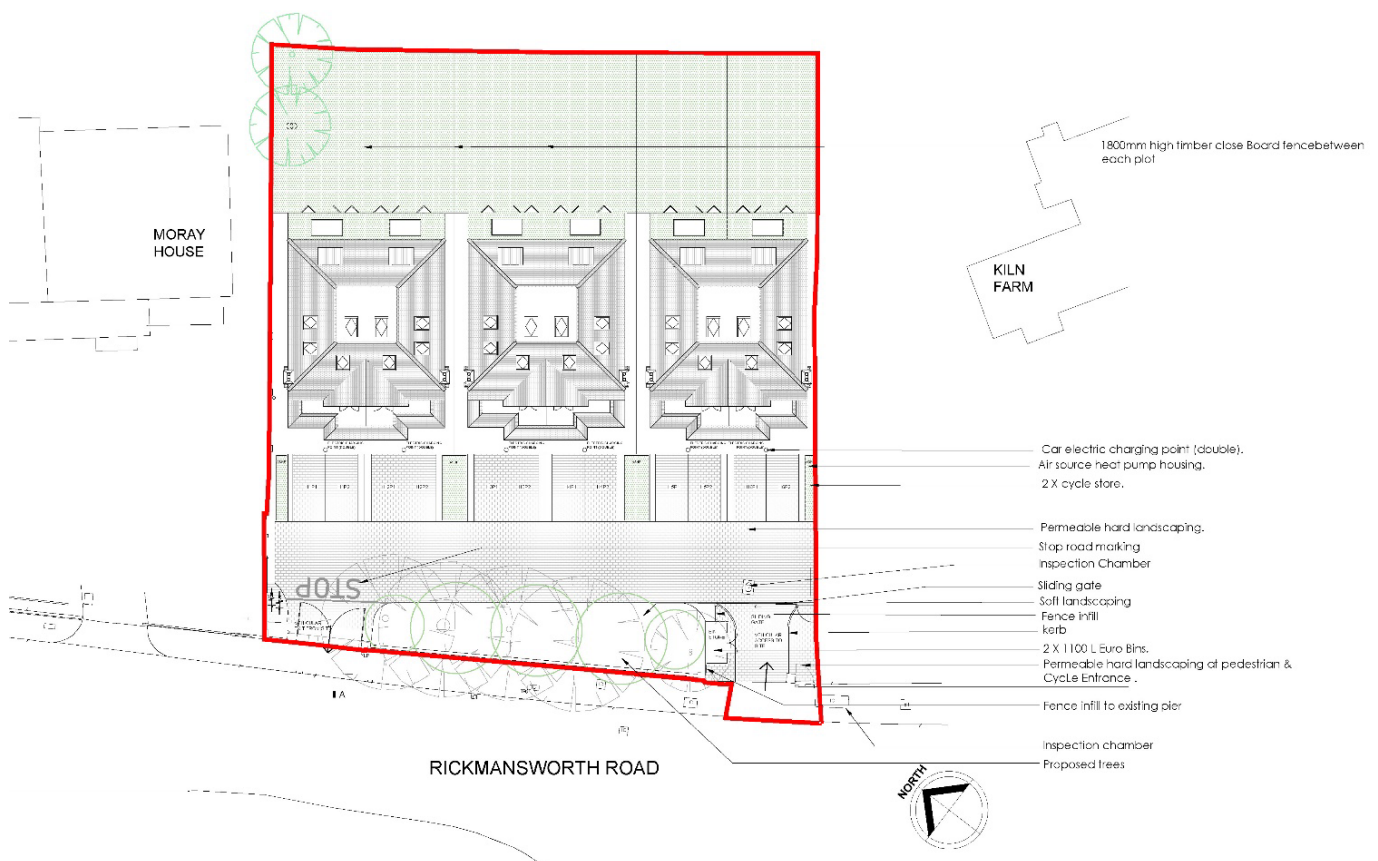
Based upon the Officer feedback and further design team led design development, the site layout and scheme design was developed beyond the July 2022 Pre-App scheme as follows;

- The front building line at first floor level has been set back by circa 2 metres such that all development above ground floor level is well within a 45° line as set from Moray House.
- The depth of the single-storey rear projections has been reduced to 2 metres from circa 4.5 metres.
- 1 metre wide pathways are provided to each side passageway between flank walls and boundary lines.

- d. The site analysis under Section 2.1 above shows that there is a significant quantity of flat / crown roofs prevalent in the vicinity of the site and such form of roof treatment in this new development would not be incongruous or in any way out of keeping with such prevailing forms. And in any event, the extent of crown roof in the Pre-App proposals has also been marginally reduced too in these submission proposals.
- e. All as indicated in the application drawings and shows the extent of loft level accommodation at 1.5 metres high. The playroom / study is not considered to be a bedroom and measures 6.3m² at 2.5 metres ceiling height.
- f. All units fully comply with – and exceed - the national space standards for room sizes and overall GIA being 165m² each.

Private gardens are retained to the rear of each home as per the Pre-App proposals – each no less than 12 metres long – and the site frontage design has been developed further with now the inclusion of dedicated air source heat pump and cycle storage, shared bin storage, new double-sided EV charging points for each home, and a new landscaping scheme across the whole site.

Overall amenity space allocated to each dwelling is circa 97m² including balconies to the first-floor front bedrooms. This is further enhanced by the extensive landscaped shared frontage of over 100m² too.



Site Plan as Proposed

3.2 Design Cues

Given the general acceptability of the Pre-App proposals and the design of the new homes using more of a traditional architectural form with pitched tiled roof, gable feature to the front elevation, a variety of traditional building materials employed, these submission proposals have simply been developed in more detail;



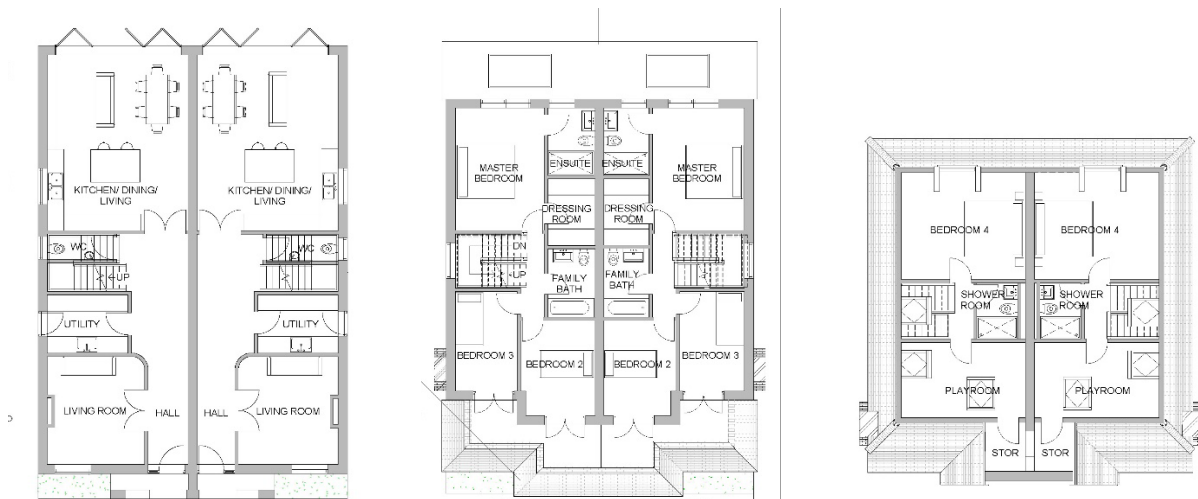
PROPOSED SOUTH ELEVATION



PROPOSED NORTH ELEVATION

The overall plan form has also been retained following Pre-App – but includes those post Pre-App revisions referred above - with minor revisions to the layouts such as juxtaposition of the staircase and utility room / WC.

A further new update is the inclusion of small outdoor balconies to the front bedrooms to provide additional private amenity areas in addition to the rear private gardens and overall shared landscaped site frontage.



3.3 Street Scene and Scale

Again, given the general acceptability of scale and extent of development proposed in the Pre-App proposals, the overall scale has not been altered in any significant manner. The scheme has generally been developed and adapted to meet the feedback items provided at Pre-App stage but overall remains as originally conceived:



PROPOSED SECTION D - THROUGH HOUSE FRONTAGE

The overall height and extent of development has not changed in any significant way from the Pre-App proposals. The building heights are congruous with the prevailing neighbouring buildings and – albeit set well back from the road frontage and behind an existing retained front boundary wall – fits neatly within the street scene broken up by virtue of the semi-detached form of development.

The plots are spacious and provide for both private amenity spaces to the rear and at first floor level front all set within a 17-metre deep landscaped frontage that provides a shared private access road to each plot in a fully landscape setting, and private car parking areas.

3.4 Amount

The proposed development provides for a total of 6 family residences in a paired semi-detached format across the width of the site. All units fully comply with – and exceed - the national space standards for room sizes and overall GIA being 165m² each. Overall amenity space allocated to each dwelling is circa 97m² including balconies to the first-floor front bedrooms. This is further enhanced by the extensive landscaped shared frontage of over 100m² too.

3.5 Appearance & Material Selection

As has already been mentioned, the overall appearance of the new buildings is of a traditional 2-story plus pitched roof architectural type with brickwork and clay tile hung elevations, traditional casement windows, clay roof tiling to a central gable feature, and feature detailing to the elevations such as brick soldier coursing over the window heads.

The feature gable to the front elevation also provides for a covered porch area prior to reaching the front door proper which then continues across the elevation to take account of the stepped plan form up to first floor level.



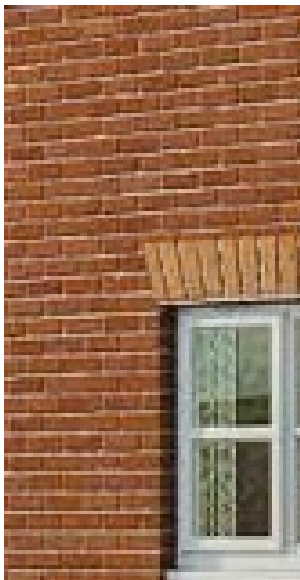
Additional domestic features include a chimney stack to each flank elevation. A palette of materials has been selected that reflect the more traditional set of building materials in the vicinity of the site and Northwood in general;



Clay roof tiles to all roofs



Detailing to brickwork chimney stacks



Fairfaced brickwork to elevations
with soldier course detailing



Clay tile hanging to gable feature

3.6 Security

By reference to the principles of Secured by Design the following is proposed:

All windows to the ground levels and any other accessible windows will comply with BS 7950 with authenticated testing. Double glazing units will have 6.8mm laminated outer panes.

Entrance doors to meet PAS 24 specification having enhanced security including any glazing and will be fitted with audio-visual remote door release mechanisms.

French door / full height glazing to terraces will meet the same security standards as the main entrance doors (see above for details).

Rainwater down pipes will be flush fitting also to dissuade climbing.

4 Access (in conjunction with PJA Transport Report)

4.1 Parking and Access

The scheme is proposed to be accessed by way of enhanced and improved vehicular and pedestrian cross-overs off Rickmansworth Road and then onwards within the site through gates – sliding upon ingress and swinging upon egress – and beyond over its own private drive then providing direct access to each individual plot and their respective 2 no. parking spaces and private pathway to the front door.

Two no. cycle storage spaces are also included within purpose-built enclosure for each dwelling alongside their respective parking spaces.

Two further shared short-stay cycle parking spaces are also provided within the site frontage.

4.2 Pedestrian Access

Access for pedestrians throughout the development is provided over the new access road as a shared surface and onwards to each individual residence. A pedestrian gate is also provided directly off of the public footpath on Rickmansworth Road.

5. Heritage Assessment

Heritage Assessment

A Heritage Assessment has been prepared by Icen Projects.

5.1 Assessment of Significance

Methodology

The methodology used here for assessing the significance of the identified heritage asset and its setting are as set out in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework. This proposes the use of three heritage interests – historical, archaeological, and architectural and artistic – in assessing what makes a place and its wider context special.

Northwood Town Centre Conservation Area

The character of the Northwood Town Conservation Area is typically defined by late Victorian architecture of the 1890s, with several scattered examples of Edwardian properties that display strong features including pitched roofs, half timbering, gables, sash windows, and dominant chimney stacks.

It has a primarily residential character, which is divided only by several Victorian parades of shops, and landmark buildings such as Northwood College. The College, along with the two other nearby locally listed

buildings (30 & 32 Maxwell Road), positively contribute to the character of the Conservation Area on account of their Edwardian and Victorian architectural quality.

The small conservation area has fairly uniform aesthetic appearance with a subdued material palette consisting primarily of red-brick, timber accents, stone detailing, and iron railings.

While not located within the boundary of the Conservation Area ('CA'), the Site is adjacent to it. The Site is typical of the late Victorian residential character of the wider town centre. However, visibility from the CA is extremely limited due to the taller development of Soval Court on the corner of Maxwell Road. Furthermore, the Site backs onto the very edge of the CA, which is dominated by school buildings and has a unique, non-residential, appearance and character.

Therefore, the Site has a minimal effect on the setting of the Northwood Town Centre Conservation Area as there is little to no inter-visibility between the Site and the CA. Additionally, this edge of the CA is so well defined by the Northwood College buildings that it has a very low sensitivity to change.

The Site

The Site is not locally listed or a designated heritage asset, nor is it located in the Conservation Area. There is no evidence to suggest the Site was built or designed by a person of note nor has any group value. Having been excluded from local listing and conservation area, the Site is not considered to be significant itself, nor contribute to the setting and significance of the Conservation Area and locally listed buildings.

5.2 Assessment of Potential Heritage Impacts

The Site is located approximately 50m to the west of the Northwood Town Centre, Green Lane Conservation Area, which incorporates all locally listed assets within the vicinity of the Site including 30 Maxwell Road, 32 Maxwell Road and Northwood College.

The Site is in a poor condition and has a dilapidated appearance. Therefore, the existing property can be considered as a detracting element in the townscape due in part to its physical condition (vacancy) and the overgrown inactive frontage onto Rickmansworth Road, a key route into Northwood from Rickmansworth, Pinner, Harrow and beyond.

As established in the previous section, the Site has a minimal effect on the setting of the Conservation Area, due to its distance away, the intervening developments including Soval Court, and mature tree screening, both from within the Site and along Maxwell Road. The redevelopment of the site would remove the existing unattractive elements and bring forward a new development which better contributes to the townscape and visual interest of the surrounding area, by removing a deteriorated element in the conservation area's wider setting and replacing it with a development of high architectural merit. Thus, the Proposals would be an enhancement to the setting of the Conservation Area, albeit only limited due to the Site's adjacency and role in its setting.

Rickmansworth Road would be improved by an active frontage as a result of six family houses occupying the plot, thus enhancing the activity on the street. Furthermore, the historic red-brick boundary wall and hedges will be retained, and trees would be replanted to enhance the appearance of the Site and Rickmansworth Road. The proposed planting softly distinguishes between public and private with carefully considered boundary treatments.

The Site is considered to be an appropriate location for the creation of six new family houses as it is close to multiple transport links including major roads (Rickmansworth Road), local bus routes, Northwood Station, and pedestrian / cycle links. The location, along Rickmansworth Road, provides notable scope for

enhancement which could improve the legibility of the local character and emerging development within Northwood.

Overall, the Proposed Development seeks to take an underused and vacant site that can be considered to have a minimal but detracting effect from the setting of the nearby conservation area and introduce high-quality designed family houses to the Site. With its use of variety, articulation, and materiality, the proposal would provide a sensitive architectural addition to the townscape which would enhance the townscape character of Northwood while respecting its Victorian and Edwardian heritage, thus making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness in line with [LP1 HE1 and BE1; and LP2 DMHB 1 and DMHB 4]. No harm is anticipated to the setting of the Conservation Area (and heritage assets within it) from the demolition of the existing site and new development in its setting. Therefore, the proposed scheme from a heritage perspective is deemed to be in line with NPPF paragraphs 197 to 202; London Plan Policy HC1 and D3; Local Plan Part 1 Policies HE1: Heritage and BE1: Built Environment; and Local Plan Part 2 Policies DMHB 1: Heritage Assets and DMHB 4: Conservation Areas.

6. Refuse

A shared bin store is provided to serve each of the residential units all as indicated on the plans in an accessible position for service vehicles directly alongside Rickmansworth Road.

7. Conclusion

This Statement together with the accompanying proposal drawings and other reports form a full planning application for the redevelopment at Manor Lodge to provide a residential development for families on this site within the Northwood urban area and providing significant improvement and benefits to the site itself.

We therefore commend the application scheme to officers and Members of the Council based upon sound and robustly justified planning, design, highways and heritage/townscape credentials that will deliver six much needed family dwellings in a highly accessible location and on a previously developed site within the Northwood urban area.

The applicant seeks Officers continued support for the proposals based upon revisions and an enhanced scheme from those presented at pre-application that supports sustainable development, design and housing objectives in the Framework, London Plan and Hillingdon's adopted policies for which planning permission should be secured in due course.