

# Design and Access Statement

## Introduction

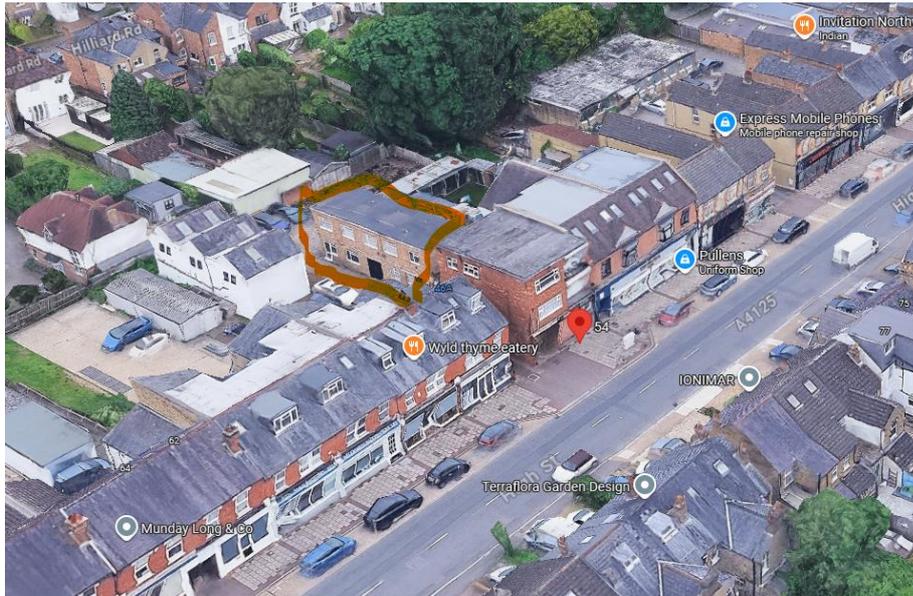
This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the change of use of the existing ground floor flat at 54c High Street, Northwood, from a self-contained dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a small House in Multiple Occupation for up to four occupants (Use Class C4).

The proposal also includes some minor external works involving replacement of front doors with windows and creation of new entrance door to the unit from the side of the building. Bicycle storage for 4 bikes, waste and recycling storages would be provided at the rear of the building.

Site context:



The subject site is located to the rear of number 54 High Street and is accessed via an alleyway from the street frontage. The unit forms part of a mixed-use town centre environment within Northwood High Street, characterised by a variety of residential and commercial uses.



The surrounding area accommodates a mix of household sizes and tenures, consistent with its town centre location and good accessibility.

### Planning History:

**4994/APP/2025/2435:** Conversion of the existing one-bedroom flat into 2-bedroom flat – granted on 19th November 2025.

**70476/APP/2022/1640:** Change of use of offices (Use Class E) to a one-bedroom dwelling (Application for Prior Approval under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended))- **Approval on 13-07-2022**

### Principle of Development

The proposal seeks change of use from a self-contained residential unit (Use Class C3) to a small House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4) for four persons.

The site remains in residential use and no loss of housing floorspace would occur. The proposal therefore accords with Policy DMH 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 (2020), which seeks to safeguard existing housing stock.

Policy DMH 5 (Houses in Multiple Occupation) permits small HMOs subject to compliance with criteria relating to accessibility, living conditions, and impact on the character of the area and neighbouring amenity. The site is located in a sustainable High Street location with access to local services and public transport. The proposal is limited to four occupants and does not involve external enlargement. Subject to detailed assessment below, the principle of the use is considered acceptable.

The proposal is consistent with London Plan Policy H9, which supports the effective use of existing housing stock, and Policy D3, which requires a design-led approach to site capacity. No intensification of built form is proposed.

### Quality of Accommodation

London Plan Policy D6 and Policy DMHB 16 of Hillingdon Local Plan require residential accommodation to provide a high standard of living conditions.

The proposed **bedrooms measure 10.3sqm, 10.1sqm, 10.3sqm and 11.2sqm**. These exceed minimum single occupancy standards. Each bedroom is provided with an ensuite facility, ensuring adequate private amenity provision.

**A communal kitchen of 9.1sqm** is provided, proportionate to a four-person HMO. The internal layout provides functional circulation space and adequate shared facilities.

The proposal is therefore considered to provide satisfactory living conditions in accordance with London Plan Policy D6 and Hillingdon Local Plan Policy DMHB 16.

### Character and Appearance

Limited and minor external alterations are proposed, comprising:

- Replacement of existing front entrance doors with windows; and
- Creation of a new entrance door to the unit from the side of the building.

These changes are functional in nature, improve legibility of access, and are modest in scale. They would be in keeping with the host building and would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the property or surrounding area, in accordance with Policy DMHB 11.

### **Impact on Neighbouring Amenity**

The proposed HMO would accommodate a maximum of four occupants, representing a **low-intensity form of shared accommodation**. The scale of occupation is comparable to that of a family dwelling and would not materially increase activity levels or disturbance.

The site's rearward location, combined with the absence of any extensions or increases in built form, ensures that neighbouring residential amenity would be preserved. It is considered that no unacceptable impacts would arise in terms of noise, overlooking, loss of privacy, daylight or visual amenity, in accordance with Policies DMH 5 and DMHB 11.

### **Access, Transport & Highways:**

Policy DMT 2 requires development to ensure safe access arrangements. Access to the unit from the High Street is through a wide alleyway, providing safety, convenience and clarity of movement for residents.

The access arrangement is appropriate to the rear location of the unit and does not conflict with existing circulation routes within the building. As the accommodation is located at ground floor level, it benefits from level access and avoids unnecessary barriers to movement.

In accordance with London Plan Policy T5 and Policy DMT 5, secure cycle parking for four bicycles is proposed within the external rear side of the building.

The proposal is located in a sustainable High Street location and is of modest scale. It is not considered likely to result in severe residual cumulative impacts on the highway network. The development is therefore compliant with Policies DMT 2, DMT 5 and London Plan Policy T6.1.

### **Refuse and Recycling:**

In accordance with London Plan Policy SI7, refuse and recycling storage will be provided within the external rear section of the building. The arrangement enables on-site storage and collection without obstruction to access.

The scale of provision is proportionate to the number of occupants and complies with the Council's waste management requirements.

## Overall Conclusion

The change of use from Class C3 to Class C4 would retain residential use of the site, provide satisfactory living conditions, preserve the character and appearance of the area, and avoid unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity or highway safety.

The proposal is considered to comply with the relevant policies of the London Plan (2021) and the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 (2020).

