



**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
CONSTRUCTION OF A FIRST FLOOR SIDE EXTENSION TO
PROVIDE 4 ADDITIONAL BEDROOMS
SWEETCROFT RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME, 53 SWEETCROFT LANE,
UXBRIDGE UB10 9LE**

**PLANNING STATEMENT
JUNE 2024**

Introduction

1. This statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for a first floor side extension to provide 4 additional bedrooms at 53 Sweetcroft Lane, Uxbridge UB10 9LE. The application is submitted on behalf of J Somauroo (J & B Care Home Limited).
2. The application follows previous applications involving larger first floor side and rear extensions and conversion of the roof space to provide additional bedrooms:
 - 5013/APP/2021/866 - Construction of a first-floor side and rear extension to provide 7 bedrooms together with the conversion of the roof space to provide an additional 4 bedrooms. Refused 08/06/21. Appeal APP/R5510/W/21/3287222 dismissed 21/02/22.
 - 5013/APP/2021/3861 - Erection of a first-floor side and rear extension to provide 4 additional bedrooms together with the conversion of the roof space to provide an additional 2 bedrooms. Refused 14/04/22.

- 5013/APP/2023/1304 – Erection of a first floor side and rear extension to provide 4 bedrooms. Refused 28/06/23.
- 3. The single main issue in each of these applications has been the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area. This statement explains how the current proposals have been revised to ensure they would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area and would accord with relevant Hillingdon and London Plan policies and national policy as a material consideration. I draw in particular on the findings of T J Burnham BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI, Inspector, in his Decision Letter dated 21 February 2022 (PINS ref. APP/5510/W/21/3287222) which I refer to throughout my statement.

National policy

- 4. NPPF paragraph 131 states that the creation of high quality beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. NPPF paragraph 135 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, and are sympathetic to local character and history including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change and optimising the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount of development.

Development plan policies

- 5. The development plan for the purposes of S70(2) of the TCPA 1990 and S38(6) of the PCPA 2004 is the London Plan – The Spatial Development Strategy for London March 2021, the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies

(November 2012) and the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 Development Management Policies (2020).

6. The policies most relevant to this application are:

BE1 – Built environment

HE1 – Heritage

DMHB5 – Areas of special local character

DMHB1 – Heritage assets

DMHB11 – Design of new development

DMHB12 – Streets and public realm

LP HC1 – Heritage conservation and growth

LP D3 – Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach

D4 – Delivering good design

LP D8 – Public realm

Planning assessment

The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area

7. Development plan policies seek to ensure that all new development complements and where possible improves the character and appearance of the area in which it is proposed. Policy DMHB11 requires all development to be designed to the highest standards and incorporate principles of good design and harmonise with the local context by taking into account the surrounding scale of development and considering the height, mass and bulk of adjacent structures, building lines and set-backs and protecting features of positive value. Policy DMHB12 requires developments to improve legibility and ensure public realm design takes account of the established townscape character and quality of the

surrounding area. Policy DMHD1 seeks to ensure that alterations and extensions to dwellings do not result in an adverse cumulative impact on the character, appearance or quality of the existing street or wider area.

8. I consider the proposals would not have any detrimental effect on the character, appearance and visual amenity of the street scene and the surrounding area for the following reasons:
 - (1) The Inspector to the previous appeal APP/R5510/W/21/3287222 (DL5) noted that the building falls within the Hillingdon Court Park Area of Special Local Character (ASLC) which is an LPA designation for areas that possess architectural, townscape and environmental quality of local value.
 - (2) The Inspector (DL6) noted that the area is characterised by predominantly residential properties, many of which retain their traditional character, set on large plots within a verdant setting. He considered (DL8 and 9) that despite having been substantially altered, particularly through extensive single storey extensions to the side and rear, when viewed from Sweetwater Lane through the trees, the property has a modest appearance of limited bulk and retains some of its original character, being set at a regular two storey height and incorporating a hipped roof with chimney stack, and that it contributes positively to the character and appearance of the ASLC.
 - (3) The Inspector (DL10) assessed that the previous proposals would add further extensions to the front, side and rear at first floor level along with the provision of a crown roof which would terminate at a height greater than the existing ridgeline. He considered (DL12) that substantial additional bulk would be added through the increase in the height and depth of the roof and this would be particularly notable from Sweetcroft Lane and rear gardens of the adjacent residential properties. He

concluded (DL12) this would significantly alter the existing roof profile and would somewhat swamp the existing property, such that the building would lose any sense of its original character, and this would be harmful to the character and appearance of the ASLC.

- (4) The LPA has indicated that they believe the building has been extended to its maximum extent. However, that would be to prejudge any and all proposals. The Inspector's assessment does not support this position. The Inspector considered the scale and extent of the appeal scheme, which involved a series of additions to the front, side and rear at first floor level and a resultant crown roof which would be higher than the existing maximum height of the building, in combination would subsume the existing building such that it would lose what remains of its original character. It follows that if proposals are forthcoming that retains what remains of the original character they would comply with the relevant policies. Tellingly, the Inspector (DL16) states "there is nothing compelling within the evidence to indicate that the acknowledged need for additional elderly persons accommodation could not be provided at the site in a manner which would be less harmful to the character and appearance of the area".
- (5) The current proposal is significantly smaller in scale compared to the appeal scheme and the previous application. It is limited to a side extension at first floor level only. The first floor extension is smaller than the ground floor footprint on which it sits, to allow the continuation of the projecting ground floor and roof around the front and side elevations which is a characteristic of the existing building.



EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION



DISMISSED APPEAL SCHEME



CURRENT APPLICATION



EXISTING REAR ELEVATION



DISMISSED APPEAL SCHEME



CURRENT APPLICATION

- (6) The proposed side extension is also set back from the existing façade and the proposed roof is lower than the roof to the main building, reinforcing the subservience of the extension. The proposed roof form follows the existing building and retains a traditional hipped roof with a pair of lower hipped roofs to the rear, perpendicular to the main roof, and copying the same design as the three existing hipped elements along the rear of the building. This approach retains the existing roof profile to the main building and minimises the bulk and height of the new roof. There would be no crown roof, unlike each of the previous proposals. The current proposals also retain the distinctive chimney stack which was mentioned by the previous Inspector. The proposed extension would therefore retain distinctive features and in scale remain subservient (i.e. subordinate, lower order) to the main building and would not swamp the building, unlike the previous appeal proposals. For all these reasons, I consider that the property would continue to make a positive contribution to the ASLC.

- (7) The first floor of the existing building would extend nearer to the boundary with No. 57 Sweetcroft Lane. However, the previous Inspector did not identify any concerns about this relationship with the neighbouring property or gaps between the two buildings. His concern was the additional bulk that would be added through the combination of front, side and rear extensions and the increased height and depth of the roof, all of which he considered would be particularly notable from Sweetcroft Lane and the rear gardens of adjacent residential properties (DL12). The previous appeal proposals raised the maximum height by 0.75m, resulted in an unbroken ridge nearly 12 metres long and created a full two storey elevation to the flank of the building facing No 57 Sweetcroft Lane. It also added a row of 4 no. new dormers on the rear slope of the new and larger roof profile to provide additional accommodation at second floor. The current proposals set the first floor

extension back, retaining the ground floor wrap around projection. The proposed roof is lower and set back compared to the existing roof to the main building, and the rear gable additions are lower still (1.62m height) with the hipped roof profile sloping away when viewed from the boundary to No. 57. See comparison elevations below. There would be no additional accommodation within the roof. The proposed development would result in some change but not harmful change. In particular, the proposals are well designed and sympathetic to the host property, and they would not appear incongruous or overbearing when viewed either from Sweetcroft Lane or the neighbouring gardens.



9. The proposal would provide four additional care bedrooms. The Inspector (DL16) acknowledged there was an identified need for additional elderly persons accommodation. In the absence of harm to the character of the area, in my opinion this can be afforded additional weight in support of the proposals in this case.
10. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would be a high quality design that is appropriate to the character of an area and local context and distinctiveness. As such it would maintain the character and appearance of the area and would not result in harm to the historic environment including locally recognised historic features such as the ASLC.
11. The proposed development would therefore comply with Local Plan Part 1 Strategic Policies (2012) Policies BE1 and HE1, Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies (2020) Policies DMHB 1, DMHB 5, DMHB 11 and DMHB 12 and London Plan (2021) Policies D4, D8 and HC1.

Other considerations

Impact on the amenities of residential properties

12. In terms of the impact of the proposed development on the occupiers of No.57 Sweetcroft Lane, the LPA in assessing the previous application 5013/APP/2023/1304 in respect of a much larger two-storey side and rear extension, noted there is significant mature tree planting and vegetation along the site boundary which offers extensive screening between the properties and as a result there are limited views between the properties, even during winter months. In view of the screening gained by the mature planting, it is not considered that the proposal would result in overlooking or any significant loss of outlook, privacy or light. It is noted that the two new first floor windows proposed in the west facing elevation would serve non habitable rooms and could be obscure glazed. The LPA concluded that this would not result in a

significant level of overlooking sufficient to justify refusal. The current proposals follow a similar approach with two new first floor windows in the flank elevation serving WCs which can be obscure glazed and secured by a planning condition.

13. As with the previous application 5013/APP/2023/1304, the neighbouring property of No.51 Sweetcroft Lane, located to the rear, would be more than 75 metres distance from the proposed extensions and this distance, together with existing dense boundary planting, would ensure the proposals would not have any detrimental impacts on the residential amenity of occupiers of that property in terms of overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light or loss of outlook.

Car parking and layout

14. The LPA, in assessing the previous application 5013/APP/2023/1304, noted that the development does not include any increase in parking or alterations to the existing access arrangements as a result of the proposal. The application form confirms that there would be no increase in staff numbers. Therefore as with the previous application, it is not considered that there would be any significant increase in visitors to the site or demand for additional parking facilities.

Trees and biodiversity net gain

15. The officer's report to the previous application 5013/APP/2023/1304 noted that the site lies within the Hillingdon Court Park ASLC Area of Special Local Character, which designation is due in part to the verdant character and tree cover in this residential area. It also lies within the area covered by TPO 32A. Protected trees on the site include the group of Oaks on the front boundary (G2 on the TPO schedule). There are also protected trees in the rear garden. No tree survey or full site plan with trees plotted was submitted with the previous application. However, officers noted that the proposal involved the addition of first floor extensions, most of which are within the existing footprint of the building. The Council's Landscape Officer confirmed that the previous proposal

would have no direct impact on trees or other landscape features (subject to a condition relating to protection of trees during the construction phase).

16. The current proposals are wholly contained within the existing building footprint and therefore for similar reasons as the previous application there would be no direct impact on protected trees (subject to a condition relating to protection of trees during the construction phase).

17. For the same reasons, because the proposed development is restricted to within the existing building footprint it would not impact on a priority habitat and would not result in any net loss of on-site habitat, and therefore would be exempt from mandatory biodiversity net gain requirements.

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21 June 2024