

DESIGN, ACCESS AND PLANNING STATEMENT

August 2023

Seymour House

34 – 38 Chester Road

Northwood, Middlesex

HA6 1BQ



Proposal: Second Floor Glazed Link Walkway Between Existing Care Home Buildings.

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1. Introduction

This design statement supports our planning application in respect of 34 - 38 Chester Road, Northwood, to extend our current ground floor glazed link walkway up to second floor level.

It examines the character and appearance of the local topography and townscape, the site itself the policy background and site constraints. The Design Access Statement incorporating Planning Statement focuses upon the way in which the proposals have been designed through an understanding of previous approved planning applications, planning appeal decisions, the setting, scale, massing and relationship to surroundings.

2. The Site and Location

The application site is located to the southern side of Chester Road, between its junctions with Reginald Road and Hallowell Road to the west. Nos. 34-38 is a registered residential dementia care home for the elderly. Nos. 36 -38 is designed to appear as a pair of semi - detached houses arranged over 4 levels with a mansard roof and basement to the rear. No. 34 is also designed to appear as a detached house copying many of the design elements from Nos. 36-38 in particular being arranged over 4 levels also with a mansard roof and basement to the rear. Both properties are separated with a gap of 1.25m and are currently linked with a ground floor corridor walkway providing the connection between the two buildings. Both houses follow the building line of the other properties within the street. They are run as one single care home establishment known as Seymour House – Northwood.

The total site area of the two properties extends to approximately 1700m² with a street frontage of 28.85m. To the west of No 34, the land at Nos. 30 - 32 is vacant with planning consent to construct a further residential dementia care home, next to this No's 26 - 28 Chester Road, are a pair of substantial semi - detached houses. These are two storey with additional rooms within the roof space and dormer windows. To the east of Nos. 36 – 38 is No's 40 - 42 Chester Road, again which is a pair of substantial semi – detached two storey houses with additional rooms within the roof space and dormer windows. More widely the area comprises of residential accommodation with a mixture older and newer developments characterized by substantial 2/3 storey traditional and modern style houses. The site lies in the 'Old Northwood Area of Special Local Character' as designated in the Hillingdon Local Plan.

3. Planning History

50613/APP/2023/1659 - SEYMOUR HOUSE 34-38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD
Erection of a first floor glazed link walkway between existing care home buildings.
Approved on 01/08/2023.

50613/APP/2022/2728 - SEYMOUR HOUSE 30-38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

Details pursuant to Conditions 3 (Tree Protection), 4 (Landscape Scheme), 5 (Ecology), 6 (Construction Method Statement), 7 (Basement Impact Assessment) and 8 (Materials) of planning appeal ref: APP/R5510/W/21/3269406, dated 03-09-2021 (Erection of 29-bed residential care home (Use Class C2) on land at Nos. 30-32 Chester Road and the change of use of three existing rear bedrooms to storage and ancillary rooms to No. 34 Chester Road). Approved on 20/01/2023.

50613/APP/2020/3628 - SEYMOUR HOUSE 30-38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

Erection of 29-bed residential care home (Use Class C2) on land at Nos. 30-32 Chester Road and the change of use of three existing rear bedrooms to storage and ancillary rooms to No. 34 Chester Road. Approved on Appeal 03/09/2021.

50613/APP/2020/1371 - Seymour House 30-38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

Erection of 29-bed residential care home (Use Class C2) on land at No. 30-32 Chester Road and proposed rear infill extension to No. 34 Chester Road. Application withdrawn on 12/08/2020.

50613/APP/2014/4336 - Seymour House 34-36 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

Glazed link walkway between existing dwellings. Approved on 23/02/2015.

50613/APP/2013/503 - 36 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

Installation of balcony/decking to rear. Refusal on 31/05/13

50613/APP/2011/397 - 36 & 38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

Changes to rear elevation, windows to include wider rear doors. (Application for non-material amendment following grant of appeal decision ref: APP/R5510/A/06/2008833/NWF dated 27/07/2006; Erection of 24-bedroom care home with refurbishment and alterations to no.34 Chester Road and associated parking, involving the demolition of nos.36 and 38 Chester Road). Approved on Appeal 25/01/2012.

50613/APP/2010/658 - 36 & 38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

Changes to rear elevation to include wider door to dining room, french doors to rear lounge, changes to lower ground windows, and revisions to internal layout. (Application for non-material amendment). Application withdrawn on 14/10/2011.

50613/APP/2009/2802 - 34 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

Details in compliance with conditions 2 (samples of materials), 3 (surfacing of footpaths, 4 (hard and soft landscaping), 6 (landscape management plan), 8 (finished floor levels), 9 (details of secure cycle store) and 11 (details of washing wheels of construction vehicles) of planning permission ref. 50613/APP/2006/2768 dated 17/09/2007: Erection of a three storey building with mansard roof to provide for 12 single en-suite rooms for use as a residential care home, with provision of associated car, motorcycle and cycle parking and landscaping (involving demolition of existing buildings). Approved on 27/05/2010.

50613/APP/2009/721 - 36 & 38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

Details in compliance with conditions 2 (materials), 3 (surfacing of footpaths), 5 (hard and soft landscaping), 7 (landscape management plan), 8 (finished floor levels), 9 (cycle store) and 11 (wheel washing) of the Secretary of State's Appeal Decision ref.

APP/R5510/A/06/2008833/NWF dated 27/06/2006 (LBH ref.50613/APP/2005/758 dated 23/12/2005): Erection of 24-bedroom care home. Approved on 25/11/2009.

50613/APP/2008/2051 - 34-38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

ERECTION OF 3 TERRACED AND 2 SEMI-DETACHED THREE STOREY HOUSES WITH MANSARD STYLE ROOF INCLUDING LOWER GROUND FLOOR ACCOMMODATION TO 3 OF THE DWELLINGS COMPRISING 2 THREE BEDROOM AND 3 FOUR-BEDROOM, WITH INTEGRAL GARAGE, ASSOCIATED PARKING AND LANDSCAPING (INVOLVING THE DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING BUILDINGS). Refusal on 25/09/2008.

50613/APP/2007/395 - 34-38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

ERECTION OF A NEW FORTY-BEDROOM CARE HOME WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING (INVOLVING DEMOLITION OF NO.34 CHESTER ROAD). Refusal on Appeal 17/09/2007.

50613/APP/2007/397 - 34-38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

ERECTION OF A NEW THIRTY - SIX BEDROOM CARE HOME WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING (INVOLVING DEMOLITION OF 34 CHESTER ROAD) . Refusal on Appeal 17/09/2007.

50613/APP/2006/2768 - 34 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

ERECTION OF A THREE STOREY BUILDING WITH MANSARD ROOF TO PROVIDE FOR 12 SINGLE EN-SUITE ROOMS FOR USE AS A RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME, WITH PROVISION OF ASSOCIATED CAR, MOTORCYCLE AND CYCLE PARKING AND LANDSCAPING (INVOLVING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS). Approved on Appeal 17/09/2007.

50613/APP/2006/1382 - 34, 36 & 38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

ERECTION OF A NEW 32-BEDROOM CARE HOME WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING (INVOLVING DEMOLITION OF NOS.34, 36 AND 38 CHESTER ROAD). Application withdrawn on 07/08/2006.

50613/APP/2005/758 - 34 - 38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

ERECTION OF 24-BEDROOM CARE HOME WITH REFURBISHMENT AND ALTERATIONS TO NO.34 CHESTER ROAD AND ASSOCIATED PARKING (INVOLVING THE DEMOLITION OF NOS.36 AND 38 CHESTER ROAD). Approved on Appeal 27/07/2006.

50613/APP/2004/1907 - 34-38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

ERECTION OF 43-BEDROOM RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME (INVOLVING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS) . Refusal on 14/09/2004.

50613/D/98/2250 34-38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

Erection of two storey extension linking Nos. 34-38 Chester Road to provide an office with two bedrooms and w.c. above. Approved on 14/07/1999.

50613/B/96/0465 - 34, 36 & 38 CHESTER ROAD NORTHWOOD

Erection of a single storey pitched roof extension (involving demolition of existing ground floor extension). Approved on 17/05/1996.

4. Planning Policy, Guidance and Legislation

The following Local Plan Policies are considered relevant to the application:

Part 1 Policies:

PT1. BE1 (2012) Built Environment

Part 2 Policies:

DMHB 5, DMHB 11, DMHB 12, DMHB 14, DMHB 16, DMHB 18, DMHD 1, LPP D1, LPP D3, LPP D4, LPP D6, NPPF2, NPPF11, NPPF12, Areas of Special Local Character, Design of New Development, Streets and Public Realm,

Trees and Landscaping, Housing Standards, Private Outdoor Amenity Space, Alterations and Extensions to Residential Dwellings, (2021) London's form, character and capacity for growth, (2021) Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach, (2021) Delivering good design, (2021) Housing quality and standards, NPPF 2021 - Achieving sustainable development, NPPF 2021 - Making effective use of land and NPPF 2021 - Achieving well-designed places.

Other Material Considerations

The Care Act 2014

The Care Act 2014 came into effect from April 2015 and replaced most previous law regarding carers and people being cared for. Under the Care Act, local authorities have new functions. This is to make sure that people who live in their areas, receive services that prevent their care needs from becoming more serious, or delay the impact of their needs can get the information and advice they need to make good decisions about care and support. Have a range of provision of high quality, appropriate services to choose from. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 places a further duty on local planning authorities to meet the assessed need for the required mix of housing within the Borough.

Health and Social Care Act 2008

The design of the proposal has been made for the enhanced and improved operational purposes of the existing care homes at 34 – 38 Chester Road with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) who are the relevant health and social care services regulator acting across England. In considering the location, design and layout of the site, Regulation 15 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 has been referred to, in particular section 15(1)(c), in order to ensure that the premises among other things are 'fit for purpose'.

Both the Housing White Paper 2017 and the Government's recently published consulting on Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places, September 2017 outline the importance of ensuring that we plan to deliver the accommodation that is needed to meet identified local needs.

5. The Proposal

The application seeks planning permission for a second floor glazed link walkway between No.34 and No. 36. The link would be an upwards continuation on top of the existing ground floor link walkway and the first floor link walkway (planning approved under ref: 50613/APP/2023/1659) which is 1.25m wide, 2.30m deep and set back 5.85m from the main front elevation of the buildings. The extension would have a flat roof. The linkway would be constructed of face matching bricks below the eaves level. Above the eaves level within the roof space face matching grey roof slates are to be used with glass set in upvc frames. The small flat roof element of the walkway will be finished in grey mineral felt.

The proposed link provides a total floor area of 2.875m².

As indicated the two buildings are separated by a gap of 1.25m. The proposed link will be located mid way between the front and back of the buildings set back from the building frontage 5.85m which is 12.7m from the front boundary. Internally the proposal will link the main second floor corridor of each building.

The site lies within the Northwood 'Developed Area' and Old Northwood Area of Special Local Character. This status does not afford the same protection as a conservation area. The principal of linking the two buildings is already well established, this application scheme has no greater impact. This is acknowledged within the Planning history of the site. The existing ground floor link and the approved first floor link application reference: 50613/APP/2023/1659 approved on the 01/08/2023 clearly demonstrates the principal of the linked walkway between the care home buildings.

Due to the location of the proposal there is no potential for overlooking and the development will have absolutely no impact on adjacent properties. There is no conflict with any planning policies especially those that seek to protect the privacy of future occupiers. There will also be no loss of daylight or sunlight to neighbouring dwellings and the proposal is considered to be consistent with all of Hillingdon's local planning policies.

The proposal in terms of its general scale is very modest and lightweight in its appearance It will have no significant impact on the massing of the overall development and visually its effect on the street elevation is negligible.

Due to the fact that the proposed link is set back from the main frontage of the two buildings it will only be visible when standing directly in front of the current separation gap. From other angles the projection of the main frontage will obscure the structure from view.

The proposed link walkway would be sited approximately 27m from the neighbouring property at No.47 Chester Road and 70m from Nos. 33 and 35 Roy Road and therefore, it is not considered that the proposal would have a detrimental impact on loss of sunlight, loss of privacy or appearing visually intrusive. Due to its positioning and modest scale, it is not considered that the additional glazed link walkway at second floor would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the existing buildings or the surrounding area.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the Area of Special Local Character.

So as to minimize the visual impact of the link the structure has been designed to be predominantly glazed so as to appear lightweight. The roof will be a simple flat structure and will be covered in lead and felt introducing traditional material. We have included various photographs (APPENDIX A) which demonstrate this and have selected what we consider to be the more relevant buildings within the street. The site is not located within The Northwood Conservation Area, however as noted, the area is designated as an Area of Special Local Character. This status seeks to ensure that new development is of similar scale and reflects the materials, but does not afford the same protection as a Conservation Area. It is considered that the proposal will have no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area, there will therefore be no conflict with the relevant development plan policies or with national guidance.

6. The importance and operational benefits of the proposal

The existing care home extends across two properties Nos. 36-38 and No. 34 however it is operationally run as one single care home establishment. The extension of the existing corridor / walkway link to the second floor level would facilitate essential enhancements to the existing care home setup. It would enable both residents and staff to move between the buildings with far more ease. This would assist staff in one building being able to respond even quicker to call bell alerts raised by residents in the other building as they would not always need to go to the ground or first floor to cross over from Nos. 36-38 to No. 34 and vice versa. It would also assist in residents and occupiers movement between buildings without having to revert to the ground or first floor for access. It would benefit the social interaction between residents on the first and second floors of each building and assist their relatives and the various professionals when visiting the care home with enhanced access through the corridors of the two buildings.

The proposed link builds more contingency into the operation of the care home enabling both passenger lifts in each building with access to the first and second floors in both buildings providing an alternative option at busy times or in the event of a lift breakdown or service.

Over the past ten years we are unfortunately seeing the occurrence of fire's in residential care premises, even though these are rare events care home provider's do have a duty to minimize the risk as much as possible. The proposal will provide enhanced egress and fire safety for each building at first and second floor levels. It will facilitate further fire escape routes through both horizontal and vertical evacuation for residents and staff in each building and more importantly will provide access to other fire safety compartments and areas providing overall better fire safety within the premises.

7. Conclusion

It is considered that the proposal will have no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area, there will be no conflict with the relevant development plan policies or with national guidance. As discussed, the link is set back from the street and its impact in visual terms is very minimal. The continuation of the existing ground floor link upwards to the first floor and second floor levels enhances the residential care home layout and improves the functionality and safety of the building. It is an established and historic feature of the properties on this site and we therefore respectfully request that the Council approve the submitted application.

8. Appendix – Site Photographs



Residential Care Homes for the Elderly on 34, 36 & 38 Chester Road. Note how the existing link is so well set back that it is not even visible from this street view.



Alternative view of existing care homes at 38 & 36, 34 Chester Road, and neighbouring vacant site at 32 – 30 Chester Road. Note how the existing link is so well set back that it is not even visible from this street view.



Alternative view of existing care homes at 38 & 36, 34 Chester Road. Note how the existing link is so well set back that it is not even visible from this street view.



The existing ground floor link is only visible when standing directly in front of the current separation gap. It is well set back and visually its effect on the street elevation is negligible.



Existing example of first floor link between dwellings in the Area of Special Local Character at the junction of Chester Road and Hallowell Road.



No. 8 Chester Court. Modern Flat development on Chester Road with a set back glazed link between buildings up to second floor level.