

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

TO SUPPORT A REVISED PLANNING APPLICATION IN RESPECT OF:

"Conversion of bungalow to two storey house."



21 THORNHILL ROAD, ICKENHAM, MIDDLESEX.

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THE PROPERTY and PLANNING HISTORY:

2.1 No21 Thornhill Road is an existing detached bungalow, located fronting Thornhill Road, with an access road on its right hand side leading down to an 'infill plot' located to the rear of properties in Thornhill Road (to the west), numbered 21a Thornhill Road.

2.2 The broader area is referred to as Ickenham which itself falls within the Administrative area of the London Borough of Hillingdon. Access to the property is from Thornhill Road to the west, with a driveway on the left hand side of the front garden extending upto the front of the bungalow and a small turning area in front of the bungalow.

2.3 The property is orientated on a generally east – west axis, and is an rectangular shape property, with its large rear garden located on the eastern side of the property, and generally enclosed on all sides by hedging and fencing. Also when viewed from the front, No17 Thornhill Road is a similar modest bungalow to the LHS, whilst on the RHS beyond the narrow access leading to No21a is No23 Thornhill Road; a larger detached house.

2.4 The scheme that is the subject of this REVISED planning application is to (A) overcome the previous appeal decision and (B) introduce a more traditional form of two storey home, removing the 'offending' chalet style bungalow, and create a more attractive comprehensive design solution, which would considerably enhance the overall character and appearance of this property.

2.5 To the south of No21a is a further 'infill' property, No23a Thornhill Road, which is an L-shape property, but on a much smaller plot and with its access road also extending between two frontage properties; No23 and 25 Thornhill Road.

2.6 An Ordnance Survey extract showing the location of the application property formed part of the previous planning submissions and appeal, and so we have provided a further extract below, to enable the Inspector to see how this property relates to the surrounding environment:



2.7 The planning Case Officer will respectively note that, in terms of levels and other site characteristics, the site and the wider area is generally level with little or no change in levels across the site. Also in terms of trees, there are also no major mature trees on the site, other than some more modest boundary trees and Lleylandii.

2.8 As discussed, the proposal that is the subject of this application is to achieve the requirements of the Enforcement Notice and create a more comprehensive and more attractive appearance to this property, by replacing most of the pyramid roof with a more traditional house, which better reflects many of the local houses in the area.

2.9 In submitting this revised application we shall also refer to the other examples of other new dwellings and/or roof alterations, loft conversions and other extension which have been added to neighbouring properties, and which have been approved (endorsed) by the London Borough of Hillingdon, during the current Adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) period – since its policies were ‘saved’ in 2007, and formally Adopted in November 2011 – 2012.

2.10 Also in submitting this revised application we shall specifically refer to Policy **DMHB11** which specifically refers to 'Design of new Development' and itself refers to specific criteria for extensions and alterations to residents homes, including dormers and roof alterations, and the requisite distances from the roof margins, and other specific design guidance.

2.11 Clearly the over – arching guidance is contained in The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** (as amended) and The London Plan 2011, and we may also refer to these if it is considered appropriate or necessary.

2.12 So, an Enforcement Notice was served in March 2021, with a requirement to comply by May 12th 2021, however we lodged an appeal against that EN, and an appeal decision was given in respect of that appeal on 7th March 2022. Clearly, we are now attempting to resolve this matter to a swift conclusion, and most importantly comply with the requirements of the EN, asap. At the same time, and in order to comply, the Applicants tenants are moving out on 10th July (so no rental income but a second Mortgage to pay) and scaffolding is being erected on 11th July 2022, and a compliance date of **7th September 2022**.

2.13 **We therefore assume the Planning – Case Officer will liaise with the Enforcement Team and advise them of the submission of this application immediately, and therefore will suspend any further action until this application is determined.**

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY:

3.1 The current Development Plan of the London Borough of Hillingdon comprises the Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies appear first, then the relevant Local Plan Part 2 (2020), then London Plan Policies (2016). Hillingdon's Full Council adopted the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies on 8 November 2012 and the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 on 16 January 2020.

3.2 The relevant policies referred to in the reason for refusal are:

- ❖ ***Policy DMHD 1: Alterations & Extensions to Residential Dwellings;***
- ❖ ***Policy DMHB 11: Design of new development;***
- ❖ ***Policy DMHB 12: Streets and Public Realm.***

3.3 The London Borough of Hillingdon will no doubt also provide copies of all the above Policies as required as part of the questionnaire they complete, however this detailed statement constitutes the Appellants Statements of Case.

3.4 In addition, in this case, the Council refer to the Hillingdon Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), entitled '*Residential Layouts*'. So the current Development Plan of the London Borough of Hillingdon comprises the ***London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan, Part Two-Development Management Policies (2020)***.

Local Plan Part 2 - Development Management Policies

Policy DMHD 1: Alterations and Extensions to Residential Dwellings

A) Planning applications relating to alterations and extensions of dwellings will be required to ensure that:

- i) there is no adverse cumulative impact of the proposal on the character, appearance or quality of the existing street or wider area;
- ii) a satisfactory relationship with adjacent dwellings is achieved;
- iii) new extensions appear subordinate to the main dwelling in their floor area, width, depth and height;
- iv) new extensions respect the design of the original house and be of matching materials;
- v) there is no unacceptable loss of outlook to neighbouring occupiers;
- vi) adequate garden space is retained;
- vii) adequate off-street parking is retained, as set out in Table 1: Parking Standards in Appendix C;
- viii) trees, hedges and other landscaping features are retained; and
- ix) all extensions in Conservation Areas and Areas of Special Local Character, and to Listed and Locally Listed Buildings, are designed in keeping with the original house, in terms of layout, scale, proportions, roof form, window pattern, detailed design and materials.

B) Rear Extensions

- i) single storey rear extensions on terraced or semi-detached houses with a plot width of 5 metres or less should not exceed 3.3 metres in depth or 3.6 metres where the plot width is 5 metres or more;
- ii) single storey rear extensions to detached houses with a plot width of 5 metres or more should not exceed 4.0 metres in depth;
- iii) flat roofed single storey extensions should not exceed 3.0 metres in height and any pitched or sloping roofs should not exceed 3.4 metres in height, measured from ground level;
- iv) in Conservation Areas and Areas of Special Local Character, flat

3.5 Then within Policy DMHD 1 there are various sections, and Section E refers specifically to roof extensions:

E) Roof Extensions

- i) roof extensions should be located on the rear elevation only, be subservient to the scale of the existing roof and should not exceed more than two thirds the average width of the original roof. They should be located below the ridge tiles of the existing roof and retain a substantial element of the original roof slope above the eaves line;
- ii) the Council will not support poorly designed or over-large roof extensions including proposals to convert an existing hipped roof to a gable;
- iii) raising of a main roof above the existing ridgeline of a house will generally not be supported;
- iv) all roof extensions should employ appropriate external materials and architectural details to match the existing dwelling; and
- v) in Conservation Areas, Areas of Special Local Character and on Listed and Locally Listed Buildings, roof extensions should take the form of traditional 'dormer' windows, on the rear elevation, to harmonise with the existing building. The highest point of the dormer should be kept well within the back roof slope, away from the ridge, eaves or valleys, whilst each window should match the proportions, size and glazing pattern of the first floor windows.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

4.1 It should be noted that, on the question of design, the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** (as amended), includes updated guidance to all Local Planning Authorities, including the London Borough of Hillingdon, regarding 'design', at **Paragraphs 127** and **130** stating respectively:

".. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

❖ will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

❖ are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

❖ are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

❖ establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

❖ optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks...

❖ and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users..."

In addition, Paragraph 130 also states:

"Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions... taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents.

Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development."

4.2 So with regards this revised planning application, the decision was made to effectively 'replace' the existing chalet style bungalow and it's dormers with a more traditional house, which in our view would represent good design, in terms of the visual – impact (design) of the new dwelling, by comparison to the existing chalet bungalow.

4.3 We also note that this particular part of Hillingdon is not a Conservation Area or Area of Special Local Character (ASLC), as defined by Hillingdon – a more local conservation designation. So, in terms of the NPPF it is not a "designated or non designated Heritage Asset", where design considerations are more critical.

4.4 Below is a photograph of the front of the existing chalet bungalow, the subject of the Enforcement Notice:



4.5 So, with regards this revised planning application, we have modelled the revised scheme upon an approval (also within Hillingdon), but relatively close to 21 Thornhill Road, at 40 Beech Avenue, as discussed below. Essentially in that case and our case now, the design of both our scheme and that at No40 Beech Avenue would create a 'stepped' appearance, so (in the case of No40 Beech Avenue), stepping down from No38, down to No40 and again down to No40A, which is a detached bungalow. This is indeed a common 'street-scene' design solution, common to many London 'suburban' developments such as ours.

4.6 As discussed, then the National Planning Policy Framework indicates that Local Planning Authorities such as Hillingdon should not be too prescriptive in the application of their Local Development Plans, stating:

'Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural style or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles.'

4.7 In this case, this scheme has indeed been designed as a bespoke house, which seeks to create a more cohesive appearance to the property, and adds considerably more to the architectural merits of the wider street – scene, whilst protecting neighbours amenities, particularly those of No17 Thornhill Road.

4.8 Therefore, the intention with regards to this application is to improve and upgrade this dated looking property, in the form of a comprehensive design solution, and it is maintained that this scheme achieves this objective, whilst according with adopted Local Plan policies.

4.9 This comprehensive design solution would also ensure that the property is updated and brought up to modern – day sustainable construction – heating insulation and other standards.

4.10 Clearly, the main reason for this revised scheme was the fact there is inadequate roof height to the original dwelling – bungalow, in order to create a first floor without raising the ridge. Therefore, an entirely new first floor is proposed, and therefore there was never any way the extensions could be “subordinate” to the existing roof – it is a completely new two storey house. However, even so, as a Planning Consultant I cannot see how the extensions could otherwise have been designed and in this case they are of a comprehensive holistic design solution, and therefore its “*architectural composition*” is going to be fundamentally different from the existing ad-hoc design of the existing chalet bungalow at No21 Thornhill Road.

4.11 So, in terms of Hillingdon’s own design guidance, this was set out in their Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement (HDAS), entitled “*Residential Extensions*” and at Section 7 it refers to “*Loft conversions and roof alterations*.” However, this was superseded recently by newly Adopted **Policy DMHB 11**.

4.12 So, relatively newly adopted Policy DMHB11 ‘*Design of new Development*’ (March 2019) sets out its objectives in respect of “*new extensions, alterations and new buildings*”, so in submitting this revised application we will go through Policy DMHB11 and how our scheme addresses the sub-sections of that policy:

Policies DMHB11 and DMHD1

4.13 So, Part A to Policy DMHB11 states:

All development, including extensions, alterations and new buildings will be required to be designed to the highest standards and, incorporate principles of good design including:

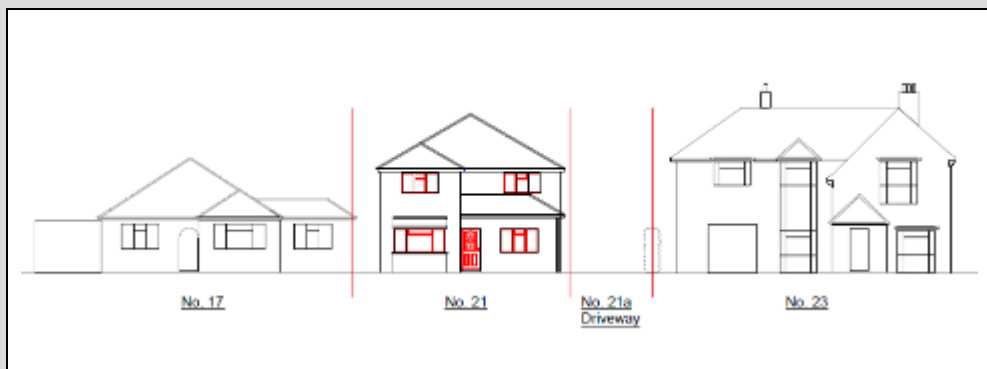
4.14 Then subsection i to Policy DMHB11 states extensions should be:

harmonising with the local context by taking into account the surrounding:

❖ scale of development, considering the height, mass and bulk of adjacent structures;

- ❖ *building plot sizes and widths, plot coverage and established street patterns;*
- ❖ *building lines and setbacks, rooflines, streetscape rhythm, for example, gaps between structures and other streetscape elements, such as degree of enclosure;*
- ❖ *architectural composition and quality of detailing;*
- ❖ *local topography, views both from and to the site; and*
- ❖ *impact on neighbouring open spaces and their environment.*

4.15 So, with regards the first aspect, the scale, height mass and bulk would take into account the surrounding built environment -street-scene, then as discussed, the built form is stepped, from No 23 Thornhill Road, a higher – larger detached house, with traditionally steeper pitched roof, down to the new two storey – extended dwelling at No21, and down again to No17 Thornhill Road, a single storey property. So, below is a direct comparison between our scheme and the one approved at No40 Beech Avenue:



4.16 Then below is the approved street-scene at 40 Beech Avenue:



4.17 So, to reiterate, we consider the 'scale, height, mass and bulk' of adjacent properties are very similar to that approved at No40 Beech Avenue, and note the Case Officers report stated:

"Section E of Policy DMHD 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) does not generally support the raising of a main roof above the existing ridgeline of a house.

Beech Avenue is characterised by a mixture of two-storey and single storey dwellings of various architectural styles. There is a limited degree of uniformity between the properties on Beech Avenue due to the varied housing types and designs of the building. To the east of the site is No.38 Beech Avenue, a two storey detached property that has a hipped roof profile. To the west of the site is No.40a, a detached bungalow with a hipped roof profile. This surrounding context forms part of the local character of the area, and should be taking into account as material consideration.

The proposed development would have a ridge height of 7.8 metres, which would match the height of the two-storey dwelling at No.38 (as shown on the submitted street elevation drawing). It is therefore considered that the height of the proposed development would have a similar presence in the street scene to that of No.38. Given the varied roof heights on Beech Avenue, it is considered that the ridge height of the proposed development would not be out of keeping with the character of the local area. In addition to this, it is considered that the proposed hipped roof profile would help to harmonise the appearance of the development, especially when viewed against the hipped roof profiles at Nos. 38 and 40a.

The proposed development would not be set any further forward than the existing property at the site. As such, it is considered that the proposal would respect the established front building line on Beech Avenue. It is acknowledged that the rear building line of the proposed development would project deeper into the site than the existing property,. However, the proposed two storey rear building line would be set-back from the ground floor level. This in turn, reduces the overall bulk and massing of the development.

At the widest point, the proposed development would be set-in from the side boundaries shared with Nos. 38 and 40a by 2.4 metres and 1.2 metres, respectively. These separation gaps would be no different to the existing situation. The proposed development would therefore not create a terracing effect, thus maintaining the suburban character of the local area.

The application form states that the proposed development would be externally finished in pebbledash rendering and a tiled roof, matching the existing property. This would be secured by condition, in the event of an approval.

The concerns raised by neighbouring residents have been duly noted. It is also acknowledged that the proposal would not technically comply with all the criteria set out in Policy DMHD 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020). However, having regard to the above considerations, it is considered that the proposal would not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area."

4.18 We must therefore suggest to the Case Officer dealing with this revised application, then these are also very similar and valid conclusions that we feel should lead to an approval here at No21 Thornhill Road, as not having an adverse impact or harm to the character and appearance of the area.

4.19 Both policies DMHD1 and DMHB11 overlap in their design objectives, in terms of guiding extensions and alterations, with such objectives as ensuring these have:

- i) there is no adverse cumulative impact of the proposal on the character, appearance or quality of the existing street or wider area;***
- ii) a satisfactory relationship with adjacent dwellings is achieved;***

4.20 And Policy DMHB11 extensions and new development should also have:

- ❖ building plot sizes and widths, plot coverage and established street patterns;***
- ❖ building lines and setbacks, rooflines, streetscape rhythm, for example, gaps between structures and other streetscape elements, such as degree of enclosure;***
- ❖ architectural composition and quality of detailing;***
- ❖ local topography, views both from and to the site; and***

- ❖ *impact on neighbouring open spaces and their environment.*
- ❖ *ii) ensuring the use of high quality building materials and finishes;*

4.21 This revised design would clearly change the appearance from a bungalow to a new two storey house, however this principle was clearly established and accepted at 40 Beech Avenue, approved as recently as 2021, so during the same current planning policies:

Reference	➤ 43278/APP/2021/2802
➤ Status	➤ Approval
➤ Proposal	➤ Raising of roof height to create additional storey, part two storey/ part single storey rear extension and external alterations and fenestration changes to existing bungalow
➤ Location	➤ 40 BEECH AVENUE RUISLIP

4.22 Clearly, the proposed dwelling would be of an equally high quality finish and we assume appropriate and enforceable conditions could be imposed requiring approval of these, and all other aspects, including landscaping, parking, etc. We would simply state that there is also a broad and varied “streetscape rhythm” in both Thornhill Road and Beech Avenue.

PRECEDENTS:

4.23 So, with regards to the issue of precedents, we would like to point out the broader area in close proximity to the appeal site, with a broad pallet of styles, sizes, heights and design of homes:



4.24 An also close by are some new or extended homes, which clearly have been endorsed (approved) by the LPA in recent years, so under the same Adopted planning policies against which the current appeal scheme was determined, also in Thornhill Road or adjacent road, very close by:





4.25 Further prominent gable end architectural designs – roofs in the vicinity:



CONCLUSION:

4.26 With regards to design and the revised application, and in order to address the Enforcement Notice, then clearly it has not been possible to retain the dormers to the existing roof.

4.27 Therefore, at the same time, we sincerely believe that this design solution would actually create a more attractive pitched roof house/property, creating a natural stepped street-scene, which clearly has been accepted at Beech Avenue (as recently as 2021) and reflects the varied characteristics of countless streets and roads in and around 'suburban' London.

4.28 Ultimately, we want to work with Hillingdon Planners and Enforcement Officers to resolve this long running saga, such that Mr Evans has a liveable property once again, and can meet the deadline for compliance with the on-going Enforcement Notice.