

MERCER PLANNING

Town Planning & Property Development Consultants

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Site: Land at rear of 1 and 2 Ashburton Court, Ashburton Road, Ruislip, HA4 6AD.

Proposal: Demolition of existing garages (Class B8 storage & distribution) and erection of single storey detached one bedroom dwelling with associated refuse, cycle stores and amenity space provision.

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1

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1. Introduction

This Planning, Design & Access Statement has been prepared for submission with an application for full planning permission for the 'Demolition of existing garages (Class B8 storage & distribution) and erection of single storey detached one bedroom dwelling with associated refuse, cycle stores and amenity space provision' on land at rear of 1 and 2 Ashburton Court, Ashburton Road, Ruislip, HA4 6AD.

2. The Application Site and its Surroundings

The site constitutes a separate planning unit situated to the rear of 1 & 2 Ashburton Court, Ashburton Road, Ruislip Manor, a two storey detached property occupied as two flats.

The site currently accommodates a single storey detached triple garage building with land to side and hardstanding to the front.

The site is located on the southern side of Hatherleigh Road and to the western corner of the junction intersection between Hatherleigh Road and Ashburton Road. The surrounding area is residential in character and the immediate section of that side of Ashburton Road as well as Hatherleigh Road, are characterised by residential properties.

The application site lies within the 'Developed Area' as identified in the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (November 2012).

3. The Proposal & Background to the Case

The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the garages and the erection of a single storey one-bed detached dwelling with associated refuse, cycle stores and amenity space provision.

The level of the development proposed is summarised below:

Amount: The proposed dwelling has a gross internal floor area of 40.19sqm, with an amenity area of 39.4sqm.

Layout: The proposal provides a detached single storey dwelling with an open plan living, kitchen, dining room area, one bedroom and bathroom.

Scale: The proposed dwelling is single storey with a flat roof and a raised roof light above the living space and is of a similar size and scale to the building it replaces and the single storey detached building to the rear.

Landscaping: Soft landscaping is proposed within the rear garden area with porous paving bricks to path and rear and front patio.

Appearance: The proposal is of a contemporary design and has been designed to integrate within the street scene in terms of the scale, proportions and appearance,

overall form, roof design, finished materials and fenestration detailing.

Access & Parking: Level access will be afforded to the new dwelling. No off street parking space is proposed given that this is a small dwelling to suit young professionals or a starter home for individuals with low levels of car ownership. The property is also located within a sustainable location and within walking distance of train station, bus routes and local amenities.

Secure bicycle storage would be provided within the rear garden.

The proposal follows the issue of a certificate on 16/09/19 for an existing lawful B8 storage and distribution use of the land and garage building. The granting of the certificate demonstrates that the lawful use of the site is for class B8 purposes. The current proposal will not, therefore, result in the loss of residential garden or parking space for the residential properties Nos.1 and 2 Ashburton Court, Ashburton Road.

The proposal follows the dismissed appeal ref: APP/R5510/W/20/3258007 and has been amended to address the Inspectors concerns.

The Applicant contends that the proposal is an acceptable form of development for the reasons set out below.

4. Relevant Planning History

74981/APP/2019/4151: Erection of 1-bed bungalow with associated cycle and bin storage and amenity space, involving demolition of existing garages. Refused 10/03/20.
Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/20/3258007 dismissed 15/06/21.

74981/APP/2019/2441: Use of garages to the rear of 1 and 2 Ashburton Court as storage (Application for a Certificate of Lawful Development for an Existing Development). Certificate issued 16/09/19.

5. Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that all planning decisions are required to be made in accordance with the development plan for the area unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The application must therefore be considered within the context of the Statutory Development Plan for Hillingdon, which comprises:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023);
- The London Plan (2021);
- The Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (2012)
- The Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020)
- The Local Plan: Part 2 - Site Allocations and Designations (2020)
- The West London Waste Plan (2015)

The above documents are, therefore, material considerations in the determination of this application. The relevant planning policies applicable to this proposal are as follows:

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023):

Section 2 Achieving sustainable development

Section 4 Decision-making

Section 9 Promoting sustainable transport

Section 11 Making effective use of land

Section 12 Achieving well-designed places

London Plan Policies (2021):

D3: Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach

D4: Delivering good design

D5: Inclusive design

D6: Housing quality and standards

H1: Increasing housing supply

H10: Housing size mix

T4: Assessing and mitigating transport impacts

T5: Cycling

T6: Car parking

London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):

London Housing SPG (March 2016)

Suburban Design Guide SPD Adopted April 2019

Hillingdon Local Plan

Part 1 Policies:

PT1.BE1 (2012) Built Environment

Part 2 Policies:

DMHB11: Design of New Development

DMHB12: Streets and Public Realm

DMHB14: Trees and Landscaping

DMHB16: Housing Standards

DMHB17: Residential Density

DMHB18: Private Outdoor Amenity Space

DMT1: Managing Transport Impacts

DMT2: Highways Impacts

DMT6: Vehicle Parking

National Technical Housing Standards, 2015.

6. Planning Considerations

The main planning issues in relation to this case are:

- Principle of development;
- Design considerations and impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- Impact on residential amenity;
- Quality of accommodation; and
- Highway Safety and Parking Issues.

6.1 Principle of Development

The application site is a brownfield site within a sustainable location within the urban area. The certificate issued in 2019 has established that the application site is an independent planning unit and has a lawful use for Class B8 storage and distribution purposes. The site currently has an unrestricted B8 use and whilst currently a low key small scale operation the use could intensify and would cause substantial harm to visual and neighbouring residential amenity.

Whilst the Planning Inspector attached limited weight to the current unrestricted class B8 lawful use of the site, the Inspector's comments were made during the Covid 19 lockdown, so the property was unattended by the commercial occupier. It follows the observations made were illogical and ill founded.

The present position is that the tenant is in the process of relocating his business. The advice the Applicant has on re-letting the commercial unit is that there will be strong demand, in particular that the hard standing and the garages will be particularly attractive to a commercial tenant, especially with unfettered access.

In our opinion the proposal would result in the introduction of a residential use of the site, which is a more compatible and less intrusive use than the unrestricted existing Class B8 (commercial storage) use of the site. The removal of the existing use would be of benefit to the visual and residential amenities of the area.

In considering this proposal, the local planning authority is required to have regard to delivering a wide choice of homes and the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Both the London Plan and the NPPF place significant weight on housing delivery and focus on the roles that intensification and small sites in particular can play in helping to resolve the current housing crisis. The proposal provides a detached one bedroom one person dwelling that integrates within the surrounding context, preserves the local character, does not have an adverse impact on neighbouring amenity and provides a suitable standard of accommodation.

In view of the above the Applicant contends the principle of development is acceptable subject to the material planning considerations discussed below.

6.2 Design Considerations and Impact on the Character of the Area

The Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One Strategic Policy BE1 seeks a quality of design in all new development that enhances and contributes to the area in terms of form, scale and materials; is appropriate to the identity and context of the townscape; and would improve the quality of the public realm and respect local character.

Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) advises that all development will be required to be designed to the highest standards and incorporate principles of good design. It should take into account aspects including the scale of the development considering the height, mass and bulk of adjacent structures; building plot sizes and established street patterns; building lines and streetscape rhythm and landscaping. It should also not have an adverse impact on the amenity, daylight and sunlight of adjacent properties and open space.

The site is currently occupied by a single storey flat roofed triple garage building located to the rear of the site adjacent to the side and rear boundaries. To the rear and side of the building are single storey detached outbuildings in the gardens of the adjacent properties. The site benefits from an unrestricted class B8 storage use.

The application proposes the erection a detached single storey dwelling with a flat roof with a feature roof light. The dwelling is of a simple contemporary design with a render finish. Following the comments raised in the appeal decision the proposed dwelling would be located to the front of the site with an '*active frontage*' and an enclosed amenity area to the rear. The front of the site would be enclosed with a low brick wall and some planting.

In terms of design; the size, appearance, finish and minimal height results in a building that would not be obtrusive within the area and with the active frontage the proposal would integrate well within the street scene.

The building would replace an existing building of a similar size, height and siting and the proposal would not appear as a cramped and contrived form of development when viewed within the street scene.

The Applicant contends that the proposed development responds well to the existing built form in the vicinity and would not cause material harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would tidy up the site and remove an intrusive unrestricted land use from the area, which would be of significant benefit to the visual amenities of the site and area generally.

In view of the above the Applicant contends that the proposal is of a high standard of design that would not cause material harm to the visual amenities of the street scene or the character and appearance of the area. As such the proposal accords with the Councils adopted planning policies in this regard. Furthermore the proposal would remove an unrestricted intrusive Class B8 storage and distribution use from the area, which has the potential to cause substantial harm to the visual amenities and character and appearance of the area. The Applicant contends the design issues raised by the Inspector in the appeal decision have been addressed in the current proposal.

6.3 Quality of accommodation

Policy DMHB 16 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) states that all housing development should have an adequate provision of internal space in order to provide an appropriate living environment. Policy D6 of the London Plan (2021) states - Housing development should be of high quality design and provide adequately-sized rooms (see Table 3.1) with comfortable and functional layouts which are fit for purpose and meet the needs of Londoners without differentiating between tenures.

The application proposes a one bedroom one person dwelling with an internal floor area of 40sqm and would comply with the internal dimensions required by the Nationally Described Space Standards and the London Plan. The proposal provides a spacious internal layout and the dwelling would enjoy good levels of light, ventilation and outlook.

Policy DMHB 18 of HLP2DMP requires a private garden area of 40sqm to serve a dwelling of this size. A useable amenity area of 34.9sqm is provided to the rear of the dwelling. Whilst this is slightly less than the recommended size, the amenity space provided is of a sufficient size to serve the dwelling proposed which is located within a short walk of Warrender Park, Bessingby Playing Fields and Cavendish Recreation Ground.

The Applicant submits that the amenity space provided is of a sufficient size to serve the dwelling proposed and provides adequate space for sitting out, drying clothes and entertaining. Not everyone likes a large garden and if the size of this garden is not suitable for the future occupier or tenant then they could choose not to live there.

In view of the above the Applicant considers that the development would provide a high quality development with adequate amenities and usable garden area, which would provide a high standard of accommodation for future occupiers. As such the proposal complies with the Councils adopted planning policies in this regard.

6.4 Impact on Residential Amenity

Policy DMHB 11 seeks to ensure that development proposals do not adversely impact on the amenity, daylight and sunlight of adjacent properties and open space. The supporting text for this policy states that the Council will expect new development proposals to carefully consider layout and massing in order to ensure development does not result in an increased sense of enclosure and loss of outlook.

The proposed dwelling has been designed to have minimal impact on the adjacent properties. Given the single storey nature of the dwelling and its position within the site and distance from adjacent properties there would be no loss of light, overbearing impact, loss of outlook or visual intrusion to the adjacent properties. The positioning of the windows to the front and rear elevations of the dwelling overlooking the street and enclosed rear amenity space means there would be no overlooking of neighbouring properties.

The proposal would result in the introduction of a residential use of the site, which is a more compatible and less intrusive use than the unrestricted existing Class B8 (storage) use of

the site. The removal of the existing use would be of benefit to the residential amenities of the occupiers of the adjacent and surrounding dwellings.

The proposed development would not therefore result in an unneighbourly form of development and would thus comply with the Councils adopted policies in this regard.

The Inspector also concluded in the appeal decision that a single storey dwelling could be accommodated on the site and '*would not significantly affect the outlook of these neighbouring occupiers or harm their enjoyment of their private garden space*'. There can be no objection to the proposal on residential amenity grounds.

6.5 Highway Safety and Parking Issues

Policies DMT 1 and DMT 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) require the Council to consider whether the traffic generated by proposed developments is acceptable in terms of the local highway and junction capacity, traffic flows and conditions of general highway or pedestrian safety.

Policy DMT 6 of HLP2DMP requires two off-road parking spaces to be provided for a new dwelling, unless there would not be any harm to street parking provision, congestion or local amenity.

The site is currently an independent planning unit used for Class B8 storage and distribution purposes and is not used as a parking area for Nos.1 and 2 Ashburton Road. The B8 use currently operates with no off street parking provisions.

The proposed scheme is a car free development given the proposal is for one occupier, young professional or student with low car ownership levels. Whilst the Councils plan shows the site has a PTAL value of 2 (poor), the London Plan states that poor accessibility will score 0 to 1 so the site has a less than poor PTAL value. Furthermore within 250m of the site there are bus stops for the 114 (24 hour service) and 398 bus services and it is only a 780m walk to Ruislip Manor tube station. Given the highly sustainable location of the site and the low levels of car ownership of the proposed occupier the Applicant submits that the site is suitable for a car free development.

The application proposes cycle storage for the dwelling. This provision would comply with the Councils adopted parking standards.

The proposal would not impact on existing parking conditions at the site and given the accessibility of the site and its sustainable location would not be detrimental to existing highway conditions in the vicinity.

The Planning Inspector agreed with the above in relation to a car free development and there can be no objection to this proposal on highway, parking grounds. The appeal decision states:

'It appeared to me from my site visit that the site lies within walking distance of a range of services, a bus stop and a tube station. In addition, the proposed dwelling is modest in size

and therefore would be unlikely to generate a significant level of car ownership. Moreover, there was a good level of on-street parking available within the vicinity, with no evidence of a clear parking problem in the area. Taking all of this into account, the proposal would be unlikely to result in a shortage of on-street parking provision in this location which would cause congestion or harm local amenity. The appeal proposal therefore would not conflict with HLP2DMP Policies DMT 2 and DMT 6 which, taken together, seek to safeguard highway safety.'

7. Conclusion

For the reasons detailed above, the Applicant contends that the principle of development is acceptable. The proposed development is acceptable in design terms and respects the overall characteristics of the area, provides a good residential environment for the future occupiers and would not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of surrounding occupiers or on local highway and parking conditions. The proposal represents an acceptable form of development that complies with the Development Plan for Hillingdon. The concerns raised by the Planning Inspector in the appeal decision have been overcome in the current proposal.

Accordingly the Applicant requests that planning permission is granted subject to any conditions deemed reasonable and necessary.

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