



**London &
South East
Planning**

International House
36-38 Cornhill
London
EC3V 3NG

0208 914 7900

info@lseplanning.com

www.lseplanning.com

Planning Statement

Proposed development:

Change of Use to Amalgamate B1 Space with C3 Dwelling
to Create a 3-Bedroom House

Address:

2 Linden Square, Uxbridge, UB9 6TQ

Application Dated:

July 2024

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1. Introduction

- 1.1.** Planning permission is requested in relation to the following development at 2 Linden Square Uxbridge, UB9 6TQ

Change of Use to Amalgamate B1 Space with C3 Dwelling to Create a 3-Bedroom House

- 1.2.** This planning statement will set out the site context, planning history, applicable planning policy and the key issues associated with the application.

2. Site & Surroundings

- 2.1.** The application site is located on the eastern side of Linden Square within the administrative area of the London Borough of Hillingdon. The existing building has three storeys and is an end of terrace property. The ground floor of the property was originally approved as ground floor workspace with the upper floors as residential. There is amenity space on the first floor balcony area.
- 2.2.** The site is not listed and there are no listed buildings in the vicinity of the site. The site is within Flood Zone 3.



- 2.3.** The character of the surrounding area is a mix of residential and industrial. An aerial image of the site is shown below:



- 2.4.** An image showing the site and the wider context is shown below:



3. Relevant Planning History

- 3.1.** A full search of planning history for the application site has been carried out. There is the following planning history:

201AJ/98/2472 - Condition 17 of that permission specified that: "The ground floor of the four live/work units shall be used for B1 business purposes by the occupier of the residential unit above – Granted

78576/APP/2024/382 - Change of use from live/work unit to a residential dwelling (Application for a Certificate of Lawful Development for a Existing Development) – Refused

4. Planning Policy Context

- 4.1.** This section of the statement provides a summary of the planning policy context in which the proposed development should be considered in accordance with the relevant planning legislation and national policy guidance.
- 4.2.** Planning decisions in England and Wales should be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This statutory requirement is set out in Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. As the site is also within a Conservation Area there is a statutory requirement under Section 69 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 4.3.** The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) sets out the Government's planning policies for England including the presumption in favour of sustainable development and is a material consideration in the determination of all applications.
- 4.4.** The statutory Development Plan for the London Borough of Hillingdon consists of the following documents relevant to this application:
- London Plan 2023
 - Hillingdon Local Plan (2020)
- 4.5.** The relevant planning policies within the Hillingdon Local Plan 2020 are considered to be:
- DMH 4 Residential Conversions and Redevelopment
 - DMT 1 Managing Transport Impacts
 - DMT 2 Highways Impacts
 - DMT 5 Pedestrians and Cyclists
 - DMT 6 Vehicle Parking
 - DME 1 Employment Uses in Designated Sites

5. Key Issues

Context

5.1. This application is for the following development at 2 Linden Square in Hillingdon.

Change of Use to Amalgamate B1 Space with C3 Dwelling to Create a 3-Bedroom House

5.2. The proposal involves the formal change of use of the ground floor of the property from B1 to residential living space, which will be connected to the upper floors of the existing C3 property. There have been no changes made to the elevations of the property.

5.3. The key issues to consider are as follows:

- Principle of the Change of Use
- Quality of accommodation
- Car parking & Cycling

Principle of the Change of Use

5.4. National, regional and local policies all seek to encourage sustainable housing development on appropriate sites in urban areas.

5.5. In accordance with the London Plan, development should optimise housing output and be of the highest quality. It should enhance the quality of local places, taking into account physical context, local character, density, and land use mix amongst other considerations.

5.6. The application involves the provision of one family sized dwelling and therefore, noting the Borough's identified need for a housing mix, we consider that the principle of the development can be supported.

5.7. The proposed dwelling could provide accommodation for a family, in full compliance with the aims of local policy, and which would also be in line with the overall character of the locality. Whilst it is noted this is a limited benefit, when considering the proposed development against policy H10 of the London Plan and the corresponding limited scale of the development, the proposal would be considered to satisfy the objectives of relevant policy.

5.8. London Plan Policy E2 supports the provision, and where appropriate, protection of a range of B Use Class business space. The loss of such land is permitted, unless there is a shortage of business space of particular types identified in a local plan for protection. Where a local plan identifies a shortage of business space of a particular type, then any loss of such land can be justified by demonstrating that there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for business purposes.

5.9. The live-work units do not constitute an employment generating site within the context of the London Plan as they are not defined as falling within a B Use Class. Acknowledging that they can provide some "working space" within the living accommodation does not consider them to be within an "employment location" within the context of Policy DME1: Employment Uses In Designated Employment Sites. Policy DME1 confirms that *"The Council will support light industrial, office and research & development role (B1 (a), (b), (c) classes) within Locally Significant Employment Locations (LSEs). D) Other uses will be acceptable in LSIS and LSES only where:*

- *There is no realistic prospect of the land being used for industrial or warehousing purposes in the future; and*
- *Sites have been vacant and consistently marketed for a period of 2 years; and*
- *The proposed alternative use does not conflict with the policies and objectives of this plan.*

- 5.10.** The proposed development adds to the overall housing stock within the borough whilst diversifying the offer in this locality and maintaining an acceptable balance relative to the surrounding area. Most importantly, the Hillingdon Local Plan affords no protection for live/work units, whilst strongly promoting the provision of self-contained residential accommodation. Given that the unit sits within a block and wider area that both exhibit a predominance of self-contained residential accommodation, the change of use should be supported in principle.
- 5.11.** Policy DME1 seeks to protect employment locations throughout the borough outside of designated employment locations. The policy states that employment land within clusters of commercial and business uses, should be recommended for retention in employment use. However, the policy also allows for a change of use to other uses (including residential) where it can be demonstrated that site specific conditions show that the site should no longer be retained in employment use.
- 5.12.** The approved use of the application site is a live/work unit arranged as workshop on the ground floor and residential living on the first and second floor. The application seeks the approval for the retention of the ground floor in use as residential in connection with the upper floors. The use of the whole property as residential has been established for over 10 years.
- 5.13.** The current layout sees the residential floorspace increase to 120m². The application proposal will create an additional bedroom. The proposal will not result in the unjustified loss of employment space as the current space can only be used by the resident of the premises and the type of work permitted under a live/work permission would be equally permissible under the proposed planning designation as a solely residential premises (C3(a) Dwellinghouses).
- 5.14.** The live/work units as a concept were created over 20 years ago and they have evolved into a creative community largely occupied by individuals associated with the film and media industries. The practicality of this unit no longer serves its original purpose and it is the intention of the owner to retain the current C3 residential use throughout the property.
- 5.15.** The proposed changes to the ground floor of the live-work unit and otherwise redundant floorspace and the replacement with a ground floor bedroom, living room and bathroom will not affect the continuation of the use of the remaining live-work units. The site is in a sustainable location for residential living, be it in the form of live-work units or self-contained residential units. The proposal will not result in the loss of an "employment generating" site, and it will not unduly impact on the retained live-work units.
- 5.16.** There are no guidelines on how often the designated space should have been used for work purposes. Having the space allocated 100% of the time to be used for work purposes, while functioning as a primary residence for individual, means there is a significant portion of the space which can't be utilised to its fullest extent. The demise is not fit for use as a commercial premises due to a number of factors. The location of the property doesn't cater well for delivery goods as the road leading to Linden Square is very narrow. Further restrictions exist in the small 52m² work space that leaves little options for B1 uses and no opportunity to expand. Due to the residential location, and opposite a care home, there is a number of light industrial uses that would be inappropriate, this further confirms how this location is not fit for purpose as live/work units. The location as a whole no longer fits the need for live/work units and the number of similar applications submitted from Linden Square shows how the demand no longer exists for this living arrangement.
- 5.17.** The issues that the Council have had with the previously refused live/work applications in Linden Square relate to car parking and refuse storage. Both these matters would be exacerbated through a B1 use as opposed to residential living. In this case the creation of an additional bedroom would not cause further impact than already exists. If the Council believe there isn't sufficient parking/refuse for residents then it is hard to understand how they believe there is sufficient parking/refuse for the B1 use which is likely to accommodate staff and clients to the unit.

- 5.18.** It is deemed that the changes in work arrangements since Covid has meant that a lot of properties have become live/work units in some capacity. Residents are now seeking office space within their property so they can spend work days at home as opposed to in the office. This live/work arrangement would not have been common 20 years ago but in some ways, it can be considered that this current proposal fits the needs for the changing working arrangements of people and the original concept would still remain at 2 Linden Square.
- 5.19.** It is well documented that Live/work units generally don't have the success that is originally intended and in many cases are used by developers to gain planning consent. There is widespread evidence of large-scale residential reversion and little evidence of continued employment occupancy, other than in areas where there is a strong market for small offices where units are more likely to revert to employment use. The number of applications submitted for Linden Square to be reverted into residential only properties has shown clear signs that this arrangement does not work.
- 5.20.** In view of the above and given the current occupation of the property as a self-contained dwelling the applicant contends that there is no demand for a live/ work unit at the site. Furthermore, the loss of B1 office space within this unit would not have a significant impact on available employment space in the area.
- 5.21.** The immediate area at Linden Square is characterised by residential dwellings. The Applicant thus contends that the loss of the B1/C3 unit at this location would comply with DMH 4. The loss of the B1 office floorspace within the unit would not impact on the overall offer of employment floorspace within the vicinity and would not impact on the vitality and viability of the area.

The Standard of Residential Accommodation

- 5.22.** London Plan policy D6 states that housing developments should be of the highest quality internally, externally and in relation to their context and to the wider environment.
- 5.23.** NPPF Paragraph 127 and London Plan Policy D6 seek high quality design and adequately sized rooms with comfortable and functional layouts. London Plan Table 3.1 sets out key qualitative aspects that should be addressed in the design of housing developments. Hillingdon's planning policies express similar objectives and standards. The accommodation will comply with the requirements of these policies and encompass the nationally described space standards as set out within the DCLG's document "Technical Housing Standards" (March 2015). It will also comply with the relevant standards identified within the Mayor of London's Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2016).
- 5.24.** The table below identifies the floor space of the dwelling in comparison to the Technical Housing Standards. The dwelling will provide a good standard of accommodation in terms of the size, layout and orientation of rooms, the quality of the build and internal fit-out specifications.

<i>Use Class</i>	<i>Technical Housing Standards (m2 GIA)</i>	<i>Proposed Internal Floor Area (m2 GIA)</i>	<i>Proposed Private Amenity Space (m2)</i>
<i>Residential (C3)</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>127.3</i>	<i>11</i>

- 5.26** Technical Housing Standards do not specify minimum areas of private amenity space for new dwellings, although "Standard 26" of the London Plan Housing SPG (2016) suggests that a minimum of 5m² of private outdoor space should be provided for 1-2 person dwellings and an extra 1m² should be provided for each additional occupant. In exceptional circumstances, where site constraints make it impossible to provide private open space for all dwellings, a proportion of dwellings may instead be provided with additional internal living space equivalent to the area of the private open space requirement.

- 5.27** The unit would keep its existing private amenity space in the form of an 11m² in the front balcony area. They will also have additional internal living space equivalent to or greater than the private open space requirement.
- 5.28** The property will receive good levels of light, outlook and aspect. The new proposed ground floor bedroom would have two large windows. It is understood that the rear of the property faces onto a car park from an industrial estate but given that the bedroom would have two large windows it is deemed that sufficient outlook and sunlight can be achieved. The gap between the window and vehicles would be enough to not block the windows completely and the vehicles would be gone by 5/6pm leaving no restrictions to sunlight/outlook.
- 5.29** The new living area would have the existing front door with frosted glass to each side. Two rooflights are also proposed in the first floor balcony which would provide a high level of sunlight into the living room. These rooflights would be fitted flush to the roof and would be possible to walk on, therefore not reducing any amenity space.
- 5.30** The property will have floor to ceiling heights of 2.5m for at least 75% of their floor area in accordance with the London Plan standards.

Refuse

- 5.31** To enable and encourage occupants to recycle their waste, adequate internal storage will be provided within the kitchen for the separation of recyclable materials from other waste, as already exists. The occupants of Linden Square do not use wheelie bins and they are much smaller sized bins. An area under the stairs on the ground floor will be kept free for refuse storage and have suitable space to cater for 2 medium size bins (waste and recycle) and 1 small bin (food waste).
- 5.32** The owners then leave their bins out the front of the property on bin collection day, as they always have. The nature of this change of use does not change the refuse system that always existed at the property.

Car and Cycle Parking

- 5.33** There are 9 car park spaces outlined in front of the 4 adjoining properties, No's 2-8 Linden Square. This means every property gets at least 2 spaces per property.

DWELLINGS WITH CURTILAGE	
2 spaces per dwelling	(a) 1 per 1 or 2 bed unit. (b) 2 per 3 or more bed unit.
FLATS	
3 - 4 or more bedrooms - 2 spaces p/unit 1 – 2 bedroom/s - 1.5 - 1 spaces p/unit studio - 1 space per 2 units (a) Proposals must also accommodate visitor's car parking on site additional to the above. (b) Car parks must be allocated to dwellings.	(a) 1 per studio, 1 or 2 bed unit. (b) 2 per 3 or more bed unit.

- 5.34** According the Hillingdon Local Plan "Appendix A Table 1: Parking Standards" Dwellings within curtilage require 2 per 3 or more bed unit. This property is not considered to have curtilage so is assessed as a 3 bed flat, which is also 2 car park spaces. It is deemed that the property meets the car park requirements for a dwelling of this size. It is also noted that there is available car park spacing to the rear of the property. There is also car parking to the rear of the industrial estate that is significantly underused.
- 5.35** Cycle storage facilities will be provided to accommodate 1 cycle space at the property, in accordance with local plan and London Plan standards. The cycle rack will be inside the living space as there is no suitable safe storage outside. The proposal has created one additional bedroom and it is considered that 1 cycle space and 2 car park spaces, with plenty of additional communal ones, is more than sufficient and it would be unreasonable to insist on more. In the refused application at 8 Linden Road (77872/APP/2023/2478) in relation to cycle parking it was stated "the assumption is that there is a net loss of at least two cycle storage spaces" based on the removal of the live/work ground floor unit. There is no basis to this assumption that 2 cycle spaces were lost. No cycle spaces were indicated in the previously approved plans and therefore this scheme would provide a net gain.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1** It has been shown that the principle of the proposed scheme is acceptable and that it is also compliant with policy in relation to design, residential standards, car/cycle parking and neighbouring amenity.
- 6.2** In conclusion therefore, it is considered that the proposal complies with the relevant planning policies and represents a sustainable development as required by the NPPF and Development Plan.