

GREEN SPACE INFRASTRUCTURE REVIEW

Change of Use of MOT Centre to a 1-bed apartment with associated alterations; provision of plant and store rooms associated with entirety of ground floor residential units

At Units 14-16 Ryefield Crescent, Pinner, Northwood, HA6 1LT

1. This Green Space Infrastructure Review has been prepared in response to comments raised by the Local Planning Authority during the pre-application enquiry stage for the above proposal (LPA Ref: 20331/PRC/2024/38). It was noted that the proposal to convert the MOT Centre to 1no. 1-bed unit would trigger policy requirements for private outdoor amenity space provision.
2. In the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1, it is stated that *“the borough is characterised by an extensive network of open spaces, from the large expanse of Green Belt land, countryside and woodlands in the north, Colne Valley Regional Park stretching north to south along the western edge of the borough, and a network of Metropolitan Open Land, Green Chains, smaller parks and open spaces, playing fields both public and private, river and canal corridors in between”*.
3. Policy DMHB 18 of the Local Plan Part 2 concerns the provision of private outdoor amenity space, and reads as follows:

“A) All new residential development and conversions will be required to provide good quality and useable private outdoor amenity space. Amenity space should be provided in accordance with the standards set out in Table 5.3.

B) Balconies should have a depth of not less than 1.5 metres and a width of not less than 2 metres.

C) Any ground floor and/or basement floor unit that is non-street facing should have a defensible space of not less than 3 metres in depth in front of any window to a bedroom or habitable room. However, for new developments in Conservation Areas, Areas of Special Local Character or for developments, which include Listed Buildings, the provision of private open space will be required to enhance the streetscene and the character of the buildings on the site.

D) The design, materials and height of any front boundary must be in keeping with the character of the area to ensure harmonisation with the existing street scene”.
4. Table 5.3 referred to above is reproduced below for ease of reference.

Table 5.3: Private Outdoor Amenity Space Standards

Dwelling type	No of bedrooms	Minimum amenity space provision (sqm)
Houses	1 bedroom	40
	2 and 3 bedrooms	60
	4 + bedrooms	100
Flats	Studio and 1 bedroom	20
	2 bedrooms	25
	3 + bedrooms	30

5. On the basis of the above, the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 requires the proposal (for a 1-bed flat) to provide 20sqm of private outdoor amenity space. In the London Plan however, it is stated at sub-point 9 of Policy D6 that *“where there are no higher local standards in the borough Development Plan Documents, a minimum of 5 sq.m. of private outdoor space should be provided for 1-2 person dwellings and an extra 1 sq.m. should be provided for each additional occupant, and it must achieve a minimum depth and width of 1.5m”*.
6. As the scheme proposes conversion of an existing commercial unit on a space-constrained site, there is very little opportunity to provide private outdoor amenity space (as evidenced in Figure 1 below). It should be noted that none of the other residential flats within the same block have private outdoor spaces – the prior approval process in which the remainder of the ground floor was granted permission for conversion does not require such provision within the legislation.



Figure 1 – Google Streetview of Unit 14-16 proposed for conversion from a garage to a 1-bed flat, with the access road and parking/loading bays dominating the only external space on site.

7. The Pre-Application Covering Letter submitted with the initial enquiry stated the following at paragraph 31:

“No outdoor amenity space is proposed as part of either of the developments. The fenestration changes would not warrant provision of such, and the nature of the change of use application as conversion of an existing Class B unit entails that there is limited space on-site for amenity provision. The site is located within walking distance of an abundance of green spaces however, such as Northwood Recreation Ground (0.3miles W), Hogs Back Open Space (0.6 miles N) and Haydon Hall Meadows (0.9 miles SE).

8. As well as the 3 areas previously identified, there are public green spaces on Joel Street, Wylchin Close and Wiltshire Lane, all within what is deemed easy ‘walking distance’ (800m).

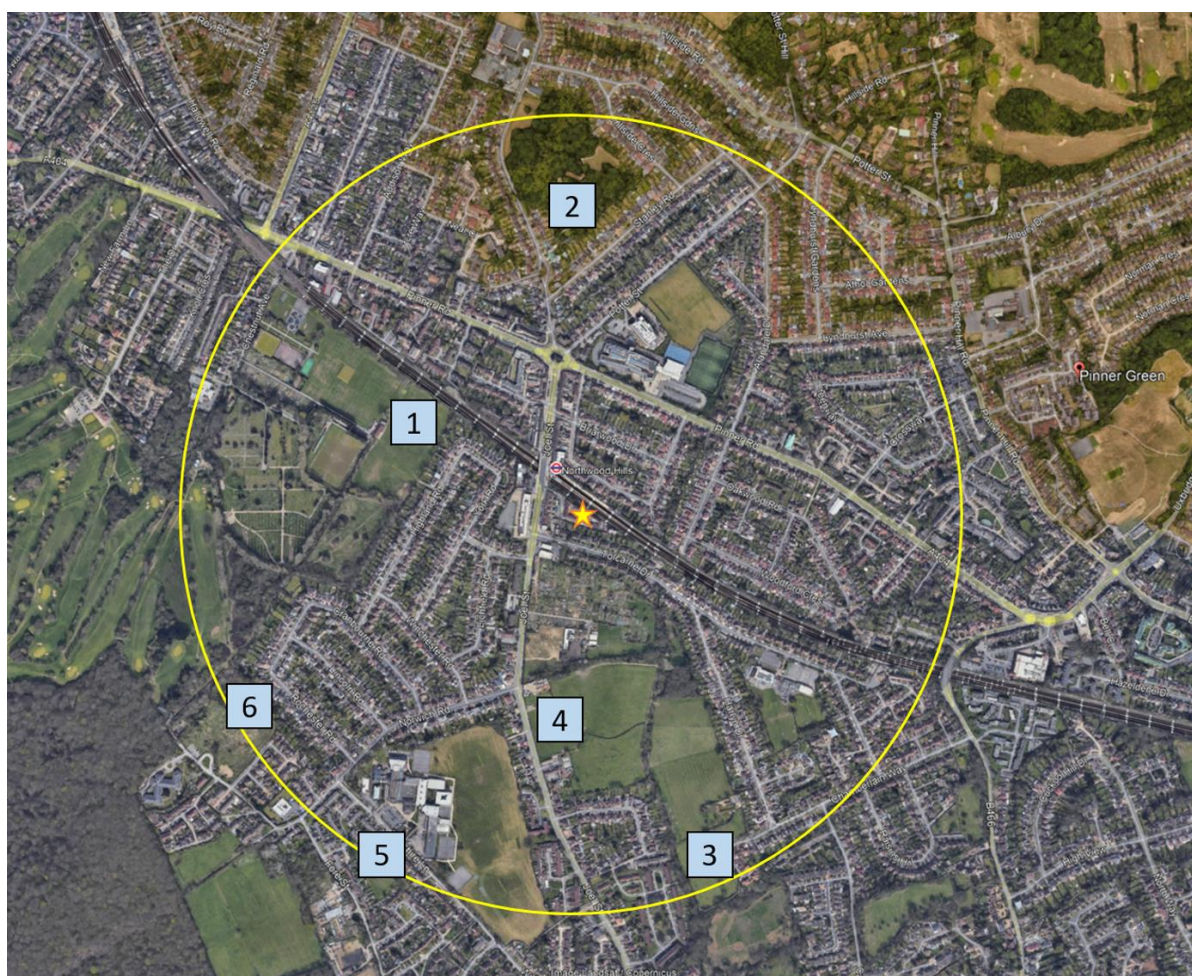


Figure 2 – Local public outdoor space within a 10-minute walk of the site (marked with the yellow star). Northwood Recreation Ground, Hogs Back Open Space, Haydon Hall Meadows, Joel Street, Wylchin Close Playground and Wiltshire Lane marked 1-6 respectively.

9. In addition to the above, the following public open green spaces are located only *circa.* 1km from the site:

- Park Wood SSI

- Cuckoo Hill
 - Raisins Hill Common
 - Montesole Playing Fields
 - Dingles Wood
10. Whilst discussing the proposals at the pre-application enquiry stage, the Case Officer suggested the provision of an inset balcony. Whilst theoretically this could be done to meet the policy requirements of the London Plan, the unit in question is at ground floor level and therefore this would not produce a particularly private, nor desirable, space, due to the proximity of the parking bays and access road which traverses immediately past the unit (as evidenced previously at Figure 1). In design terms, the provision of an inset balcony would not be in keeping with the appearance or character of the remainder of the residential units on site. Furthermore, it would have repercussions for the insulated cladding system that the Applicant is proposing to install across the entire building, in practical installation terms as well as cost.
11. There is a clear abundance of public open space in the local area, which is easily accessible from the site. The area is not densely populated, and therefore the existing green spaces are not “overprescribed”. It is wholly considered that there is sufficient amenity space in the local area to meet the recreational requirements of the future occupants of the unit.