

## **Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Regeneration**

**Address** MOUNT VERNON HOSPITAL RICKMANSWORTH ROAD NORTHWOOD

**Development:** Construction of 1.5m wide gravel footpath around lawn perimeter and through the centre of the woodland belt to south of lawn, to include two access ramps with handrails.

**LBH Ref Nos:** 3807/APP/2020/4265

**Drawing Nos:** 273W-02 Rev. A  
273W-03  
273W-01 Rev. D  
Design and Access Statement (Dated 11th January 2021)

**Date Plans Received:** 18/12/2020      **Date(s) of Amendment(s):** 18/01/2021

**Date Application Valid:** 18/12/2020

### **1. SUMMARY**

The proposed development would construct a 1.5m wide self binding gravel footpath around the lawn perimeter and through the centre of the woodland belt to the south of the lawn, to include two short ramped sections with associated timber handrail. It would be used for rehabilitation of patients with extremely restricted mobility who are recovering from procedures or are receiving treatment for cancer, to improve their health and wellbeing. Accordingly, the principle of the development is supported. It would also be considered to constitute appropriate development within the Green Belt and would not have a detrimental impact on the setting of the Grade II Listed Building.

Subject to planning conditions, the application is recommended for approval.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

**APPROVAL subject to the following:**

#### **1 COM3 Time Limit**

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

#### **REASON**

To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

#### **2 COM4 Accordance with Approved Plans**

The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers 273W-01 Rev. D and 273W-03 and shall thereafter be retained/maintained for as long as the development remains in existence.

#### **REASON**

To ensure the development complies with the provisions Hillingdon Local Plan Parts 1 (November 2012) and 2 (January 2020) and the London Plan (2016).

#### **3 COM5 General compliance with supporting documentation**

The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the specified supporting plans and/or documents:

- Design and Access Statement (Dated 11th January 2021)

Thereafter the development shall be retained/maintained in accordance with these details for as long as the development remains in existence

#### REASON

To ensure that the development complies with the provisions Hillingdon Local Plan Parts 1 (November 2012) and 2 (January 2020) and the London Plan (March 2016).

#### **4 COM7 Materials**

Prior to the commencement of the development, details of all materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details should include information relating to make, product/type, colour and photographs/images.

Thereafter the development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and be retained as such.

#### REASON

To ensure that the development presents a satisfactory appearance in accordance with Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020).

#### **5 NONSC Detailed Elevations**

Prior to the commencement of the development, detailed elevations of the access ramps hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This should also detail the handrails to the ramps and shall not be fixed to the listed building.

Thereafter the development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details and be retained as such.

#### REASON

To safeguard the special architectural and/or historic interest of the listed building, in accordance to Policy HE1 of Hillingdon's Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (November 2012), Policies DMHB 1, DMHB 2 and DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020) and Policy 7.8 of the London Plan (March 2016).

#### **6 NONSC Imported Materials**

No contaminated soils or other materials shall be imported to the site. All imported soils and gravel materials for the purposes of landscaping and/or construction of the pathway shall be clean and free of contamination. All imported materials shall be tested for chemical contamination, and the results of this testing shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval.

#### REASON

To ensure that future users of the pathway and other receptors are not subject to any risks from soil contamination in accordance with Policy DME1 12 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020).

## INFORMATIVES

### **1 I52 Compulsory Informative (1)**

The decision to GRANT planning permission has been taken having regard to all relevant planning legislation, regulations, guidance, circulars and Council policies, including The Human Rights Act (1998) (HRA 1998) which makes it unlawful for the Council to act incompatibly with Convention rights, specifically Article 6 (right to a fair hearing); Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life); Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination).

### **2 I53 Compulsory Informative (2)**

The decision to GRANT planning permission has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 (2012) and Part 2 (2020) set out below, including Supplementary Planning Guidance, and to all relevant material considerations, including The London Plan - The Spatial Development Strategy for London consolidated with alterations since 2011 (2016) and national guidance.

DMEI 4	Development on the Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land
DMHB 1	Heritage Assets
DMHB 11	Design of New Development
DMHB 14	Trees and Landscaping
DMHB 2	Listed Buildings
DMT 1	Managing Transport Impacts
DMT 2	Highways Impacts
DMT 5	Pedestrians and Cyclists
DMT 6	Vehicle Parking
LPP 3.2	(2016) Improving health and addressing health inequalities
LPP 6.3	(2016) Assessing effects of development on transport capacity
LPP 6.13	(2016) Parking
LPP 7.2	(2016) An inclusive environment
LPP 7.4	(2016) Local character
LPP 7.5	(2016) Public realm
LPP 7.6	(2016) Architecture
LPP 7.8	(2016) Heritage assets and archaeology
LPP 7.16	(2016) Green Belt
NPPF- 2	NPPF-2 2018 - Achieving sustainable development
NPPF- 8	NPPF-8 2018 - Promoting healthy and safe communities
NPPF- 9	NPPF-9 2018 - Promoting sustainable transport
NPPF- 12	NPPF-12 2018 - Achieving well-designed places
NPPF- 13	NPPF-13 2018 - Protecting Green Belt land
NPPF- 16	NPPF-16 2018 - Conserving & enhancing the historic environment

### **3 I70 LBH worked applicant in a positive & proactive (Granting)**

In dealing with the application the Council has implemented the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way. We have made available detailed advice in the form of our statutory policies from Local Plan Part 1, Local Plan Part 2, Supplementary Planning Documents, Planning Briefs and other informal written guidance, as well as offering a full pre-application advice service, in order to ensure that the applicant has been given every opportunity to submit an application which is likely to be considered favourably.

### **4**

It is advised that, based on Ordnance Survey mapping (1944-1969), the proposed

pathway appears to follow the direction of an earlier path and a track. Therefore, there is a minor possibility of contaminating substances (e.g. ash, clinker and asbestos fibres etc.) to be present on and/or in the ground at shallow depth. We have no information on the actual ground conditions at the location, therefore, we would advise persons working on site to take basic precautions in relation to any contamination they may find. Precautions should also be taken to minimise the mixing of any exposed contaminated material with clean shallow soils that are to remain in place. The advice is provided on the grounds of Health and Safety of the workers on site and to ensure the appropriate restoration of the site once works are complete, to minimise risk to the future users of the proposed paths.

## **5**

This Planning Permission does not act as Listed Building Consent. It is advised that a separate Listed Building Consent application is required if any works are to alter the listed building's built fabric.

### **3. CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **3.1 Site and Locality**

The application site forms part of the grounds to Mount Vernon Hospital, a Grade II Listed Building. The site consists of an open space situated to the south of this building and forms part of designated Green Belt land. The open space slopes down towards a wooded southern boundary with hospital buildings to the east and west. The northern end consists of a raised terrace with a grass embankment leading onto an upper lawn used as a kick-about area. A second smaller embankment to the south opens onto another lawned area with tree lined edges and formal footpaths around part of the perimeter.

#### **3.2 Proposed Scheme**

This application seeks permission for the construction of 1.5m wide gravel footpath around the lawn perimeter and through the centre of the woodland belt to the south of the lawn, to include two access ramps with handrails.

#### **3.3 Relevant Planning History**

##### **Comment on Relevant Planning History**

None.

### **4. Planning Policies and Standards**

Development Plan

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan for the London Borough of Hillingdon currently consists of the following documents:

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 London Plan - Consolidated With Alterations (2016)

## Material Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) is also a material consideration in planning decisions, as well as relevant supplementary planning documents and guidance.

## Emerging Planning Policies

Paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 states that 'Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- (a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- (b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- (c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

## Draft London Plan (Intend to Publish Version, December 2020)

The GLA consulted upon a draft new London Plan between December 2017 and March 2018 with the intention of replacing the previous versions of the existing London Plan. The Plan was subject to examination hearings from February to May 2019, and a Consolidated Draft Plan with amendments was published in July 2019. The Panel of Inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State issued their report and recommendations to the Mayor on 8th October 2019.

The Mayor considered the Inspectors' recommendations and, on 9th December 2019, issued to the Secretary of State his intention to publish the London Plan along with a statement of reasons for the Inspectors' recommendations that the Mayor did not wish to accept. The Secretary of State responded on the 13th March 2020 and stated that he was exercising his powers under section 337 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 to direct that modifications are required.

On 9th December 2020, the Mayor wrote to the Secretary of State to advise of his intention to formally approve a new draft London Plan, which included his best understanding of the modifications required. The Secretary of State responded on 10th December 2020 requesting that the draft London Plan was re-submitted with more specific amendments to address the 11 previous Directions and 2 additional Directions. On 21st December 2020, the Mayor formally approved a new London Plan, the 'Publication London Plan'. This has been submitted to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State has 6 weeks to respond or can request a further extension of time. The Mayor can only publish the Plan after the Secretary of State has given approval.

More limited weight should be attached to parts of draft London Plan policies where the Secretary of State has directed specific amendments. Greater weight may be attached to policies that are not subject to the specific amendments from the Secretary of State.

## **UDP / LDF Designation and London Plan**

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

Part 1 Policies:

PT1.BE1 (2012) Built Environment

PT1.HE1	(2012) Heritage
PT1.EM2	(2012) Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and Green Chains
PT1.EM4	(2012) Open Space and Informal Recreation

Part 2 Policies:

DMEI 4	Development on the Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land
DMHB 1	Heritage Assets
DMHB 11	Design of New Development
DMHB 14	Trees and Landscaping
DMHB 2	Listed Buildings
DMT 1	Managing Transport Impacts
DMT 2	Highways Impacts
DMT 5	Pedestrians and Cyclists
DMT 6	Vehicle Parking
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LPP 6.13	(2016) Parking
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LPP 7.4	(2016) Local character
LPP 7.5	(2016) Public realm
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NPPF- 8	NPPF-8 2018 - Promoting healthy and safe communities
NPPF- 9	NPPF-9 2018 - Promoting sustainable transport
NPPF- 12	NPPF-12 2018 - Achieving well-designed places
NPPF- 13	NPPF-13 2018 - Protecting Green Belt land
NPPF- 16	NPPF-16 2018 - Conserving & enhancing the historic environment

## 5. Advertisement and Site Notice

- 5.1 Advertisement Expiry Date:- **10th February 2021**
- 5.2 Site Notice Expiry Date:- **27th January 2021**

25th January 2021

## **6. Consultations**

### **External Consultees**

Letters were sent to neighbouring residents, a site notice was displayed and an advert was posted in the local paper. All forms of consultation expired on 10th February 2021. No comments from residents have been received.

Northwood Residents Association:

The NRA fully supports the application.

### **Internal Consultees**

CONTAMINATED LAND OFFICER:

GIS mapping shows the proposed path would be situated on open land. Historic mapping from 1944-1969 shows former pathways and a track were present at similar locations. There is no evidence of contaminative activities having taken place in the vicinity.

However, due to the presence of former pathways of unknown design and construction I would recommend the following informative and condition be applied.

Contamination Informative

You are advised that based on Ordnance Survey mapping (1944-1969) the proposed pathway appears to follow the direction of an earlier path and a track. Therefore, there is a minor possibility of contaminating substances (e.g. ash, clinker and asbestos fibres etc.) to be present on and/or in the ground at shallow depth. We have no information on the actual ground conditions at the location, therefore, we would advise persons working on site to take basic precautions in relation to any contamination they may find. Precautions should also be taken to minimise the mixing of any exposed contaminated material with clean shallow soils that are to remain in place.

REASON: The advice is provided on the grounds of Health and Safety of the workers on site and to ensure the appropriate restoration of the site once works are complete, to minimise risk to the future users of the proposed paths. [The suitability of [building materials] [and] [building techniques] may also need to be considered under the Building Regulations.]

Imported Materials Condition

No contaminated soils or other materials shall be imported to the site. All imported soils and gravel materials for the purposes of landscaping and/or construction of the pathway shall be clean and free of contamination. All imported materials shall be tested for chemical contamination, and the results of this testing shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval.

REASON: To ensure that future users of the pathway and other receptors are not subject to any risks from soil contamination in accordance with Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 (January 2020) Policies - DMEI 11: Protection of Ground Water Resources and DMEI 12: Development of Land Affected by Contamination.

ACCESS OFFICER:

This proposal which seeks to improve accessibility to the natural environment for all patient groups and visitors is supported in principle from an accessibility perspective. Although the information provided is detailed in its intention to improve access to the areas which are currently 'out of bounds', no technical detail has been submitted on exactly how the proposal would be delivered. Further information is requested from the developer on the following points:

1. To be accessible, the minimum surface width of an access route (i.e. between walls, kerbs or path edgings) should be at least 1800 mm for general routes, although a width of 2000 mm is preferable to accommodate larger electric mobility scooters. Will this be achieved?
2. For disabled people who need a generous amount of space when moving about, the provision of narrow approaches creates difficulties. The new pathway should be firm, as level as possible and free from obstructions, such as litter bins and signposts. Resin bonded gravel should be used for all surfaces. Please provide details.
3. Ramps should accord with the specifications set out in BS8300-1:2018. In gardens, where it might not be practicable to adhere strictly to the recommendations in this standard, the aim would nonetheless be to maintain as close compliance as possible. Please provide details.
4. The intended pathway should have a detectable demarcation which can be followed by people who are blind or partially sighted, for example a wall, building line, kerb edge, grass verge, barrier, or clearly detectable change in texture of the surface underfoot. Visual contrast should also be provided sympathetically within natural and/or historical environments. Please provide details.

Conclusion: further details are requested prior to any planning consent.

#### PLANNING OFFICER COMMENT:

An amended Design and Access Statement (Dated 11th January 2021) was submitted in response to the Access Officer's comments. This responds to the points raised above and is summarised as follows:

1. A wider path, particularly one 2m wide, would look very out of place here and will be out of proportion and scale with the landscape setting. As the landscape is part of a historic layout, a balance between user requirements and aesthetics is required. The design achieves accessibility by creating passing places, so that at each seating bay the path will be widened locally to a width of 2000mm.
2. There will be no site furniture placed within the path surface other than the seats which will be located so as to maintain a clear width of 2000mm. The pathway will be firm and level without any undulations. In line with Sensory Trust guidance we will construct the path to a minimal crossfall rather than a camber, where it is necessary to prevent water ponding on the surface.

The surface material proposed is self-binding gravel. Self binding gravel is a naturally-occurring material composed of different sized pieces of aggregate, from 20mm diameter, down to dust. This mix of sizes enables the individual pieces of aggregate in the path surfacing material to lock together to form a firm surface with plenty support, suitable for wheelchair-users. Please also note that the proposed path is reached via the existing terrace path which in contrast to the proposal, has a shallow loose gravel surface. The self binding gravel is considered to be an improvement.

Resin bonded gravel is a very useful surfacing material but it involves a top dressing of aggregate laid over an asphalt or concrete base to which it adheres via a tack coat of resin. This would require a deeper path construction which would be far more costly and potentially more intrusive in terms of tree roots. In addition it is a non permeable surface compared with the self binding gravel surface



which does allow some permeability.

3. Access at the top of each ramp will be spacious as the ramp will be approached via the existing terrace path, which is a wide firm surface. There are currently a number of site furniture items in the vicinity of both ramps and these will be relocated prior to opening the proposed path, to ensure that there is sufficient circulation space at the top of each ramp.

The ramps will be constructed to a maximum gradient of 1:12. This is steeper than is normally recommended however as the ramps are very short, we have followed the recommendations of the Sensory Trust. The ramps will follow a straight run without any bends and will be around 8 - 9m long with one central landing 1.5m long to create a resting point. The landing is slightly longer than normally specified to ensure that larger motorised wheelchairs can be easily accommodated there. They will be constructed in the same material as the path surface. The ramp surface will be firm and even, stable, and non-slip, with well compacted crushed stone sub-base with a high proportion of fines (as the path below). A timber handrail of between 900mm - 1000mm high will be provided on both sides of the ramp to improve access for users who may have a stronger or weaker right or left side.

4. The proposed path is to be located within two very different types of surfaces which will in our opinion provide sufficient contrast for users. Within the lawn area the grass either side will provide a natural demarcation in terms of surface texture and 'feel' underfoot. Within the woodland area the natural woodland floor either side will provide an equivalent level of natural demarcation in terms of surface texture and 'feel' underfoot. The path itself will be of a much lighter appearance than the grass and woodland floor either side and this will provide an additional visual contrast.

#### ACCESS OFFICER FOLLOW-UP:

I have no further concerns.

I have reviewed the ramp details shown on drawing no. 273W-03 and consider the specifications proposed at this development control stage to be satisfactory.

Conclusion: acceptable.

#### TREES AND LANDSCAPING OFFICER:

This site is occupied by an area of green open space to the south of one of the central buildings (listed Grade II) on the Mount Vernon Hospital campus. The open space slopes down towards a wooded southern boundary with hospital buildings to the east and west. The northern end is on raised terrace with a grass embankment leading onto an upper lawn used as a kick-about area. A second smaller embankment to the south opens onto another lawned area with tree lined edges and formal footpaths around part of the perimeter. There are no TPO's or Conservation Area designations affecting the site which lies within the Green Belt.

#### Comment

No trees will be affected by the proposal. According to the D&AS some scrub clearance will be required at the southern end of the site. The proposal seeks to make better use of the space for the benefit of patients, by improving the footpath network and creating an informal circular pedestrian route, which links to the existing footpath network. The new route includes two short ramped accesses across the embankment at a gradient of 1:12, with handrails. Otherwise the gravel footpath will extend across the open space into the wooded southern perimeter. A landscape plan by Aileen Shackell Landscapes provides the proposed layout of hard and soft landscape. The annotation on plan refers to a schedule for items A-E which does not appear on file. Details of the gravel footpath (materials and construction) are required to ensure that the surfacing is suitable and

accessible for all.

#### Recommendation

No objection subject to the submission of supporting hard and soft landscape details which should be conditioned - unless they are already available? Conditions COM9 (parts 1,2, and 5)

#### Planning Officer Comment:

The landscape scheme information submitted is considered to be sufficient and a condition will be attached to secure the detail of materials if recommended for approval.

#### CONSERVATION AND DESIGN OFFICER:

1. Summary of comments: Further information required - conditions proposed

2. Historic Environment Designation (s)

· Grade II Listed Building - Mount Vernon Hospital (NHLE: 1080083)

3. Assessment - background/significance

The land originally formed part of the Northwood Hall Estate now known as Denville Hall, to the south-east of the hospital site. The listed hospital building dates from 1902-04 and was designed by F.H. Wheeler. It forms a group alongside the Grade II\* chapel to the east of the main hospital building. Unfortunately, the visual connection between the two buildings has been somewhat compromised by the infilling of the once open space with modern structures built during the mid-20th century.

The hospital building is an extensive structure and described as being built in an Edwardian 'free-style'. A 4-storey tower with a clock at roof level forms the central point, with the built form tapering down to a 3-storey, 5-bay block which is then flanked by 2-storey, 14-bay wings. At the end of each wing is a tall winter garden structure with some notable detailing adding interest to its elevations. The building is finished in a brown brick laid in a Flemish bond, with red brick quoins and dressing, stone ashlar dressing and gabled plain tiled roofs. The central tower appears to be finished in an oxidised metal. Some of the windows have been altered, most likely prior to listing however original windows (where extant) comprise of multi-paned timber casements to the southern block. The buildings to the north, connected by corridors include neo-Georgian timber sash windows.

The plan form of the original hospital building is shaped as a 'Y', with a V-shaped southern end. The southern elevation maintains its original symmetrical appearance and includes a continuous balcony at first floor. Originally the raised terrace at ground floor was a dominant feature, however overtime planting has softened its appearance. The elevated nature of the land was an important factor in establishing a hospital in this location, it provided the opportunity for fresh air for recovering patients being treated at the hospital and extensive views across the Colne Valley and towards Windsor.

The history of the site and hospital, quality of the buildings and open, verdant surroundings contributes to the significance of the listed building.

4. Assessment - Impact

There would be no objections to the proposed landscaping of the area to the south of the listed hospital building. Historically area has remained undeveloped as open grassland, however originally a series of pathways had existed allowing people to interact with the open space and provide a connection between the main hospital building and listed chapel to the east. The proposal would

maintain the area's sense of openness and verdant qualities therefore, the setting of the listed building would be preserved in this instance.

The submitted statement mentions the remnants of parkland fencing and a gate along the southern lawn boundary with the wooded area. This may relate to the original hospital site and should be retained in situ. Subject to further clarification and investigation the fencing may be considered to be curtilage listed, nevertheless any alteration to a means of enclosure within the curtilage of a listed building would require planning permission.

Further details would be required in relation to the two proposed ramps provided access/egress of the existing ground floor terrace to the listed building. No scaled elevations have been submitted therefore it is difficult to assess the impact of the proposed ramps on built fabric and the appearance of the building's elevations. Alterations to existing built fabric, notably the existing terrace would warrant the need for Listed Building Consent, which has not been submitted to date. Alterations to original building features, notably the terrace in this instance would inevitably result in some harm to the Listed Building and its original architectural integrity.

The associated handrails to the ramps would introduce some clutter to the elevations, resulting in some harm to the setting of the listed building. Due to the lack of information it is not clear whether the railings would be fixed to the building. If they are to be fixed Listed Building Consent would be required for such works. In any instance it is strongly recommended the handrails remain independent to avoid interventions to historic built fabric.

Further details of the ramps should ideally be provided upfront, otherwise pre-commencement conditions would be required if this application is to be determined favourably.

Based on the submitted information the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the listed building and its setting. The decision maker(s) would need to determine this application in line with the duties under section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

5. Conclusion: Less than substantial harm - further information required - conditions proposed if approved

Conditions: Prior to the commencement of development, scaled elevation drawings of the ramps in context with the listed hospital building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drawings shall be no more than 1:20 in scale. Works shall be carried out in accordance to approved details.

Reason: To preserve and conserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building in accordance to policy HE1 (Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 1, adopted November 2012), policies DMHB 1 and 2 (Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 2, adopted January 2020) and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Prior to the commencement of development, details of the handrails to the ramps shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The handrails shall not be fixed to the listed building. Works shall be carried out in accordance to approved details.

Reason: To preserve and conserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building in accordance to policy HE1 (Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 1, adopted November 2012), policies DMHB 1 and 2 (Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 2, adopted January 2020) and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Prior to the commencement of development, product details of hard surfacing to pathways and ramps shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Works shall be

carried out in accordance to approved details.

Reason: To preserve and conserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building in accordance to policy HE1 (Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 1, adopted November 2012), policies DMHB 1 and 2 (Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 2, adopted January 2020) and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Informative: This Planning Permission does not act as Listed Building Consent and you are advised accordingly of the need to submit a separate listed building consent application in respect of the works altering the listed building's built fabric.

#### PLANNING OFFICER COMMENT:

These comments are addressed within the main body of the report.

### **7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES**

#### **7.01 The principle of the development**

Paragraph 92 of the NPPF (February 2019) states that planning decisions should:

- a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments; and
- b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community

Policy 3.2 of the London Plan (March 2016) states that new developments should be designed, constructed and managed in ways that improve health and promote healthy lifestyles to help to reduce health inequalities.

Policy EM4 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (November 2012) states that the Council will safeguard, enhance and extend the network of open spaces, informal recreational and environmental opportunities that operate as carbon sinks and that meet local community needs and facilitate active lifestyles by providing spaces within walking distance of homes. Provision should be made as close as possible to the community it will serve.

The proposed path will be used for rehabilitation of patients with extremely restricted mobility who are recovering from procedures or who are receiving chemotherapy or other treatment for cancer, to improve their health and wellbeing. The lawn and woodland area is currently not accessible to anyone with impaired mobility. Accordingly the proposed development is generally supported by national, regional and local planning policy.

#### **7.02 Density of the proposed development**

Not relevant to the consideration of the application.

#### **7.03 Impact on archaeology/CAs/LBs or Areas of Special Character**

ARCHAEOLOGY, CONSERVATION AREA AND AREA OF SPECIAL LOCAL CHARACTER

Not relevant to the consideration of the application.

LISTED ASSET

Please see Section 07.07 of the report.

#### **7.04 Airport safeguarding**

Not relevant to the consideration of the application.

#### **7.05 Impact on the green belt**

The application site is located within Green Belt land and is subject to the following policy considerations:

Paragraph 143 of the NPPF (February 2019) sets out that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in 'very special circumstances'. Paragraph 144 continues this, stating:

"When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations."

Paragraph 145 of the NPPF (February 2019) states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt but that exceptions to this include:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
  - not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
  - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

Policy 7.16 of the London Plan (2016) supports this, stating:

"The strongest protection should be given to London's Green Belt, in accordance with national guidance. Inappropriate development should be refused, except in very special circumstances. Development will be supported if it is appropriate and helps secure the objectives of improving the Green Belt as set out in national guidance."

In terms of local policy, the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (November 2012) gives strong protection to Green Belt land. Policy EM2 states that the Council will seek to maintain the current extent of the Green Belt and any proposals for development in the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land will be assessed against national and London Plan (March 2016) policies, including the very special circumstances test.

Policy DMEI 4 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020) also states that:

A) Inappropriate development in the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land will not be permitted unless there are very special circumstances.

B) Extensions and redevelopment on sites in the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land will be permitted only where the proposal would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land, and the purposes of including land within it, than the existing development, having regard to:

- i) the height and bulk of the existing building on the site;
- ii) the proportion of the site that is already developed;
- iii) the footprint, distribution and character of the existing buildings on the site;
- iv) the relationship of the proposal with any development on the site that is to be retained; and
- v) the visual amenity and character of the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land.

The proposed footpath and ramps are considered to meet the criteria stated under part b) of paragraph 145 of the NPPF (February 2019). The proposal is for the purposes of outdoor recreation and are not considered to harm the openness of the Green Belt. The proposal complements the existing use of the land and provides appropriate facilities within the Green Belt.

In view of the above, the proposal is considered to constitute appropriate development within the Green Belt and does not require 'very special circumstances'. Following this, the proposed development is considered to comply with Policy DMEI 4 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020), Policy EM2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (November 2012), Policy 7.16 of the London Plan (March 2016) and the National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019).

#### **7.07 Impact on the character & appearance of the area**

The application sites form part of the Mount Vernon Hospital grounds, sitting within the landscaped parkland setting.

The impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area requires the consideration of the following planning policies:

Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan (2016) require that new development is of the highest architectural quality; is a proportion, composition, scale and orientation that enhances, activates and appropriately defines the public realm; and comprises details and materials that complement the local architectural character.

Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (November 2012) 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 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020) is taken into consideration and states:

- A) 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:
- i) 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.
- ii) ensuring the use of high quality building materials and finishes;
- iii) ensuring that the internal design and layout of development maximises sustainability and is adaptable to different activities;
- iv) protecting features of positive value within and adjacent to the site, including the safeguarding of heritage assets, designated and un-designated, and their settings; and
- v) landscaping and tree planting to protect and enhance amenity, biodiversity and green infrastructure.

The impact of the proposed works on the character, appearance and setting of the Grade II\* Listed Buildings also requires the consideration of the following planning policies:

Policy 7.8 of the London Plan (March 2016) states that development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

Policy HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (November 2012) states that the Council will conserve and enhance Hillingdon's distinct and varied environment, its settings and the wider historic landscape.

Policy DMHB 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020) states that:

A) The Council will expect development proposals to avoid harm to the historic environment. Development that has an effect on heritage assets will only be supported where:

- i) it sustains and enhances the significance of the heritage asset and puts them into viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- ii) it will not lead to a loss of significance or harm to an asset, unless it can be demonstrated that it will provide public benefit that would outweigh the harm or loss, in accordance with the NPPF;
- iii) it makes a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the area;
- iv) any extensions or alterations are designed in sympathy, without detracting from or competing with the heritage asset;
- v) the proposal would relate appropriately in terms of siting, style, scale, massing, height, design and materials;
- vi) buildings and structures within the curtilage of a heritage asset, or in close proximity to it, do not compromise its setting; and
- vii) opportunities are taken to conserve or enhance the setting, so that the significance of the asset can be appreciated more readily.

Policy DMHB 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020) states:

D) Planning permission will not be granted for proposals which are considered detrimental to the setting of a Listed Building.

The proposed development would construct a 1.5m wide self binding gravel footpath around the lawn perimeter and through the centre of the woodland belt to south of lawn, and would include two short ramped sections with associated timber handrail where the proposed footpath joins the existing upper terrace path. As confirmed by the Council's Conservation Officer, there would be no objections to the proposed landscaping of the area to the south of the listed hospital building. Historically the area has remained undeveloped

as open grassland, but originally a series of pathways had existed allowing people to interact with the open space and provide a connection between the main hospital building and listed chapel to the east. The proposed pathway and planting would maintain the area's sense of openness and verdant qualities. With regard to this element of the proposal, the setting of the listed building would be preserved.

It is noted that no scaled elevations of the proposed ramps have been submitted, although the applicant has clarified that they would be situated entirely within the grass area and their construction will not entail any modification or alteration to either the gravelled terrace, the building terrace, or the building itself. The ramps consist of sloping sections of path to accommodate the small change in ground levels from lower terrace path down to lawn level, and will be constructed within the grass bank which will be re-modelled either side of the ramps. There will be no elevations as such as the sides of the ramps will be hidden from view by the built-up ground either side.

The associated handrails to the ramps would introduce some clutter to the elevations, resulting in some harm to the setting of the listed building. In this instance, the extent of harm is considered by the Council's Conservation Officer is 'less than substantial', therefore requiring consideration of paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019). This states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

The proposed development would be used for the rehabilitation of patients with extremely restricted mobility who are recovering from procedures or are receiving treatment for cancer. Accordingly, the proposal would improve their health and wellbeing. This is considered to be a significant public benefit and would outweigh the limited 'less than substantial harm' posed.

If recommended for approval, details of the proposed ramps and the materials to be used would be secured by condition to ensure that the proposal is appropriate for the setting of the Grade II Listed Building. Subject to such conditions, the proposed development would not be considered contrary to Policies DMHB 1, DMHB 2 and DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020), Policies BE1 and HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (November 2012) and Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan (March 2016).

#### **7.08 Impact on neighbours**

Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020) states that:

B) Development proposals should not adversely impact on the amenity, daylight and sunlight of adjacent properties and open space.

There are no neighbouring residential properties within the immediate vicinity of the application site. As such, the proposed development will not adversely affect the amenity of any neighbouring residents and accords with Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020).

#### **7.09 Living conditions for future occupiers**

Not applicable to the consideration of the application.

#### **7.10 Traffic impact, car/cycle parking, pedestrian safety**

Not applicable to the consideration of the application.



## **7.11 Urban design, access and security**

### URBAN DESIGN

Please see Section 07.2 of the report.

## **7.12 Disabled access**

### ACCESS

Policy 7.2 of the London Plan (March 2016) requires that all new development proposals provide the highest standards of accessible and inclusive design.

Following the submission of a revised Design and Access Statement (Dated 11th January 2021), the Council's Access Officer has confirmed that the proposals raised no concerns. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy 7.2 of the London Plan (March 2016).

## **7.13 Provision of affordable & special needs housing**

Not applicable to the consideration of the application.

## **7.14 Trees, Landscaping and Ecology**

### TREES AND LANDSCAPING

Policy 5.10 of the London Plan (2016) states that development proposals should integrate green infrastructure to contribute to urban greening, including the public realm.

Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020) also requires that new development is high quality, sustainable, adaptable, and harmonises with the local context. Landscaping and tree planting should also enhance amenity, biodiversity and green infrastructure.

Policy DMHB 14 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020) states:

A) All developments will be expected to retain or enhance existing landscaping, trees, biodiversity or other natural features of merit.

B) Development proposals will be required to provide a landscape scheme that includes hard and soft landscaping appropriate to the character of the area, which supports and enhances biodiversity and amenity particularly in areas deficient in green infrastructure.

There are no Tree Preservation Orders or Conservation Area designations affecting the site. No existing trees are to be affected by the proposals, although some scrub clearance will be required at the southern end of the site. Accordingly, the Council's Trees and Landscaping Officer has confirmed no objection to the proposal, subject to a condition for detail on hard landscaping materials. Subject to such a condition, the proposed development would accord with Policy 5.10 of the London Plan (March 2016) and Policies DMHB 11 and DMHB 14 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020).

### ECOLOGY

Policy 7.19 of the London Plan (2016) states that development proposals should wherever possible, make a positive contribution to the protection, enhancement, creation and management of biodiversity.

Policy DMEI 7 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies

(January 2020) states that the design and layout of new development should retain and enhance any existing features of biodiversity within the site.

The application site does not form part of a Nature Conservation Site of Metropolitan or Borough Grade I Importance. The proposed works would also add ecological value to the site. As such, the proposed development would accord with Policy 7.19 of the London Plan (March 2016) and Policy DMEI 7 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020).

**7.15 Sustainable waste management**

Not applicable to the consideration of the application.

**7.16 Renewable energy / Sustainability**

Not applicable to the consideration of the application.

**7.17 Flooding or Drainage Issues**

The proposed development is not considered likely to impact on flood risk or drainage of the application site.

**7.18 Noise or Air Quality Issues**

Not applicable to the consideration of the application.

**7.19 Comments on Public Consultations**

Please see Section 06.1 of the report.

**7.20 Planning Obligations**

Not applicable to the consideration of the application.

**7.21 Expediency of enforcement action**

Not applicable to the consideration of the application.

**7.22 Other Issues**

**CONTAMINATED LAND**

Policy 5.21 of the London Plan (March 2016) states that appropriate measures should be taken to ensure that development on previously contaminated land does not activate or spread contamination.

Policy DMEI 12 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020) states that:

A) Proposals for development on potentially contaminated sites will be expected to be accompanied by at least an initial study of the likely contaminants. The Council will support planning permission for any development of land which is affected by contamination where it can be demonstrated that contamination issues have been adequately assessed and the site can be safely remediated so that the development can be made suitable for the proposed use.

B) Conditions will be imposed where planning permission is given for development on land affected by contamination to ensure all the necessary remedial works are implemented, prior to commencement of development.

C) Where initial studies reveal potentially harmful levels of contamination, either to human health or controlled waters and other environmental features, full intrusive ground investigations and remediation proposals will be expected prior to any approvals.

D) In some instances, where remedial works relate to an agreed set of measures such as the management of ongoing remedial systems, or remediation of adjoining or other affected land, a S106 planning obligation will be sought.

The Council's GIS mapping shows that the proposed footpath would be situated on open land

and there is no evidence of contaminative activities having taken place in the vicinity. However, due to the presence of former pathways of unknown design and construction, the Council's Contaminated Land Officer advises that persons working on site to take basic precautions in relation to any contamination they may find. Precautions should also be taken to minimise the mixing of any exposed contaminated material with clean shallow soils that are to remain in place. A condition is also recommended to ensure that no contaminated soils or other materials shall be imported to the site. Subject to such a condition, the proposal is not considered contrary to Policy DMEI 12 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020) and 5.21 of the London Plan (March 2016).

## **8. Observations of the Borough Solicitor**

### **General**

Members must determine planning applications having due regard to the provisions of the development plan so far as material to the application, any local finance considerations so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations (including regional and national policy and guidance). Members must also determine applications in accordance with all relevant primary and secondary legislation.

Material considerations are those which are relevant to regulating the development and use of land in the public interest. The considerations must fairly and reasonably relate to the application concerned.

Members should also ensure that their involvement in the determination of planning applications adheres to the Members Code of Conduct as adopted by Full Council and also the guidance contained in Probity in Planning, 2009.

### **Planning Conditions**

Members may decide to grant planning consent subject to conditions. Planning consent should not be refused where planning conditions can overcome a reason for refusal. Planning conditions should only be imposed where Members are satisfied that imposing the conditions are necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects. Where conditions are imposed, the Council is required to provide full reasons for imposing those conditions.

### **Planning Obligations**

Members must be satisfied that any planning obligations to be secured by way of an agreement or undertaking pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. The obligations must be directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related to the scale and kind to the development (Regulation 122 of Community Infrastructure Levy 2010).

### **Equalities and Human Rights**

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010, requires the Council, in considering planning applications to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunities and foster good relations between people who have different protected characteristics. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The requirement to have due regard to the above goals means that members should consider whether persons with particular protected characteristics would be affected by a

proposal when compared to persons who do not share that protected characteristic. Where equalities issues arise, members should weigh up the equalities impact of the proposals against the other material considerations relating to the planning application. Equalities impacts are not necessarily decisive, but the objective of advancing equalities must be taken into account in weighing up the merits of an application. The weight to be given to any equalities issues is a matter for the decision maker to determine in all of the circumstances.

Members should also consider whether a planning decision would affect human rights, in particular the right to a fair hearing, the right to respect for private and family life, the protection of property and the prohibition of discrimination. Any decision must be proportionate and achieve a fair balance between private interests and the public interest.

#### **9. Observations of the Director of Finance**

Not applicable

#### **10. CONCLUSION**

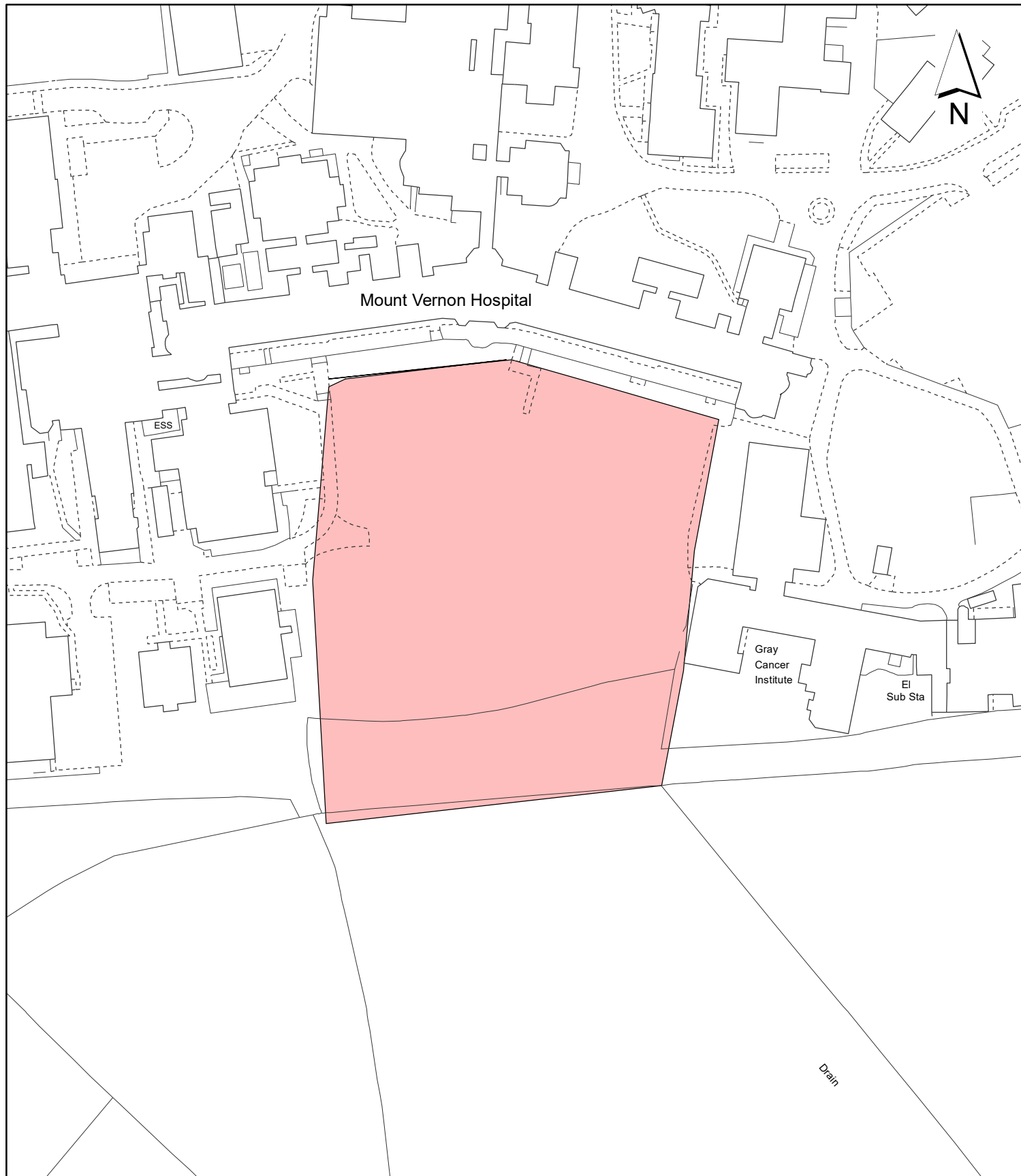
In conclusion, the proposed 1.5m wide footpath and two access ramps is supported for the purpose of patient rehabilitation and recovery. It would also be considered to constitute appropriate development within the Green Belt and would not have a detrimental impact on the setting of the Grade II Listed Building. Subject to conditions, the application is recommended for approval.

#### **11. Reference Documents**

National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)  
Publication London Plan (December 2020)  
The London Plan (March 2016)  
Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (November 2012)  
Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (January 2020)  
Accessible Hillingdon Supplementary Planning Document (September 2017)  
Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (July 2014)

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# Notes:

 Site boundary

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Site Address:

**MOUNT VERNON HOSPITAL  
RICKMANSWORTH ROAD  
NORTHWOOD**

Planning Application Ref:

**3807/APP/2020/4265**

Planning Committee:

**North**

Scale:

**1:1,250**

Date:

**February 2021**

**LONDON BOROUGH  
OF HILLINGDON**  
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**HILLINGDON**  
LONDON