

## Report of the Head of Development Management and Building Control

**Address:** 34, 36, 38 GREEN LANE NORTHWOOD

**Development:** Demolition of existing outbuilding and partial demolition of the ground floor of nos. 34 and 38. Erection of an outbuilding for use as a workshop. Installation of an external staircase to retained upper floor residential units. Amalgamation of ground floors of nos. 38 and 36 to form a combined retail unit including a new shopfront.

**LBH Ref Nos:** 77897/APP/2023/602

**Drawing Nos:** 19150-101  
19150-102  
19150-103  
19150-104  
19150-105  
19150-106  
19150-107  
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Design, Access & Heritage Statement prepared by The Harris Partnership (ref. 19150-DA01A, dated February 2023)

**Date Plans received:** 01-03-2023

**Date(s) of Amendments(s):**

**Date Application valid** 01-03-2023

### 1. SUMMARY

The site comprises three terraced buildings in a parade of eight mixed-use terraced properties with ground floor retail and first floor residential/retail on the southern side of Green Lane. It is at the western end of the Northwood (Green Lane) Town Centre and Conservation Area. The proposal involves the demolition of the rear ground floor wings of 34 and 38 Green Lane, the demolition of an

outbuilding to the rear of 36 Green Lane, the erection of a single storey, flat roofed workshop (Class E(g)(iii)), the amalgamation (at ground floor) of 36 and 38 Green Lane and associated new shop front.

There are 16 objections, including from Northwood Residents' Association relating mostly to loss of retail viability and resultant harm to the area (including the loss of existing retail tenants) and harm to the conservation area. There is also a petition against the proposal with 131 signatures. There are objections from the Council's Conservation Officer due to concerns with the works to the shopfront and the poor design of the workshop. The loss of retail floorspace (Class E) is not explicitly contrary to planning policy and so does not form an objection or reason for refusal. The Highways Officer has not objected or raised concerns on highways grounds.

The application is recommended for refusal for one reason - it would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, resulting in less than substantial harm whereby there are no identified public benefits that would outweigh this harm. The proposed shop front alterations would also adversely affect the visual amenity of the street scene.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION**

**REFUSAL for the following reasons:**

### **1. NON2 Harm to the character of the Conservation Area**

By virtue of its box form design, orientation, appearance and disruption to the pattern and rhythm of the linear parade of shops posed by the proposed workshop building and the removal of traditional characteristics to the shopfront of 38 Green Lane, the development would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Northwood Town Centre, Green Lane Conservation Area. It would result in less than substantial and unacceptable harm to the setting and character of the Northwood Town Centre, Green Lane Conservation Area, as well as the visual amenity of the street scene. When weighing the public benefits, these would not outweigh the identified harm. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies HE1 and BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One Strategic Policies (2012), Policies DMHB 1, DMHB 4, and DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020), Policies D3 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021), and Chapters 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

## **INFORMATIVES**

### **1. I71 Discussion**

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 the 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. We have however been unable to seek solutions to problems arising from the application as the principle of the proposal is clearly contrary to our statutory policies and negotiation could not overcome the reasons for refusal.

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

The decision to REFUSE 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).

### 153 **Compulsory Informative (2)**

The decision to REFUSE 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 (2021) and national guidance.

DMEI 14	Air Quality
DMEI 7	Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement
DMEI 9	Management of Flood Risk
DMHB 1	Heritage Assets
DMHB 13	Shopfronts
DMHB 13A	Advertisements and Shop Signage
DMHB 4	Conservation Areas
DMT 1	Managing Transport Impacts
DMT 2	Highways Impacts
DMT 5	Pedestrians and Cyclists
DMT 6	Vehicle Parking
DMTC 1	Town Centre Development
DMTC 2	Primary and Secondary Shopping Areas
DMTC 3	Maintaining the Viability of Local Centres and Local Parades
DMTC 4	Amenity and Town Centre Uses
LPP D14	(2021) Noise
LPP D4	(2021) Delivering good design
LPP D5	(2021) Inclusive design
LPP D8	(2021) Public realm
LPP E4	(2021) Land for industry, logistics and services to support London's economic function
LPP E6	(2021) Locally Significant Industrial Sites
LPP G6	(2021) Biodiversity and access to nature
LPP GG2	(2021) Making the best use of land
LPP HC1	(2021) Heritage conservation and growth
LPP SD6	(2021) Town centres and high streets
LPP SD7	(2021) Town centres: development principles and Development Plan Documents
LPP SI12	(2021) Flood risk management
LPP SI13	(2021) Sustainable drainage

LPP SI7	(2021) Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy
LPP T5	(2021) Cycling
LPP T6	(2021) Car parking
LPP T6.3	(2021) Retail parking
LPP T6.5	(2021) Non-residential disabled persons parking
LPP T7	(2021) Deliveries, servicing and construction
NPPF11	NPPF 2021 - Making effective use of land
NPPF12	NPPF 2021 - Achieving well-designed places
NPPF14	NPPF 2021 - Meeting the challenge of climate change flooding
NPPF15	NPPF 2021 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
NPPF16	NPPF 2021 - Conserving & enhancing the historic environment
NPPF7	NPPF 2021 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres
NPPF9	NPPF 2021 - Promoting sustainable transport

### **3. CONSIDERATIONS**

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

The site forms three properties on the southern side of Green Lane, forming the eastern end of a row of eight 2.5 storey terraced buildings in mixed use (ground floor retail with residential above) at the western end of the Green Lane Town Centre and Conservation Area. The site area extends to 2,000m<sup>2</sup> and includes side vehicular access to a rear parking area providing rear/back of house access (including to first floor residential properties) with a separate single storey building at the rear boundary.

Similar town centre development predominates to the north and east, with Northwood Underground Station 130m to the east. A Council-owned car park is adjacent to the west with lower density residential development beyond.

##### Site Constraints

- Green Lane Northwood Town Centre
- Green Lane Northwood Primary Shopping Area
- Northwood Town Centre, Green Lane Conservation Area
- Flood Zone 1
- Potentially Contaminated Land
- PTAL Rating 3

#### **3.2 Proposed Scheme**

The proposal involves the following works:

- Demolition/removal of the rear of the ground floor (and associated structures) of 34-38 Green Lane
- New single storey, flat roof detached workshop building at the rear of the site with three adjacent car spaces
- Two new accesses stairs/landing to the rear of the existing first floor flats
- Associated works including new close boarded fencing, bin storage, cycle storage and other site



works

- Amalgamation of 36 and 38 Green Lane into one shop
- New glazing to 38 Green Lane shop frontage and replacement glazing to 36 Green Lane shop frontage.

### 3.3 Relevant Planning History

2310/ADV/2005/42	34 Green Lane Northwood
INSTALLATION OF AN INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGN AND PROJECTING BOX SIGN	
<b>Decision:</b> 17-02-2012	No Further Action(P)
2310/D/94/0305	34 Green Lane Northwood
Installation of a new shopfront	
<b>Decision:</b> 13-05-1994	Approved
324/A/86/0439	36 Green Lane Northwood
Alterations to elevation (P)	
<b>Decision:</b> 06-05-1986	Approved
324/APP/2006/829	36 Green Lane Northwood
CHANGE OF USE FROM CLASS A1 (SHOPS) TO CLASS A3 (RESTAURANTS, SNACK BARS, CAFES).	
<b>Decision:</b> 06-06-2006	Refused
324/APP/2017/3602	36 Green Lane Northwood
Change of use from retail (Use Class A1) to a mixed use comprising retail, restaurant/cafe (Use Classes A1/A3) (Retrospective)	
<b>Decision:</b> 05-04-2018	Approved
4610/ADV/2001/10	38 Green Lane Northwood
INSTALLATION OF NON-ILLUMINATED FASCIA AND PROJECTING SIGNS (RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION)	
<b>Decision:</b> 16-01-2002	Approved

#### Comment on Relevant Planning History

None relevant.

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

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 (2021)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) is also a material consideration in planning decisions, as well as relevant supplementary planning documents and guidance.

The Northwood Town Centre, Green Lane Conservation Area Appraisal has also formed part of the assessment.

#### **Local Plan Designation and London Plan**

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

Part 1 Policies:

PT1.BE1 (2012) Built Environment

PT1.E1 (2012) Managing the Supply of Employment Land

PT1.E5 (2012) Town and Local Centres

PT1.EM1 (2012) Sustainable Waste Management

1

PT1.EM6 (2012) Flood Risk Management

PT1.EM7 (2012) Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

PT1.EM8 (2012) Land, Water, Air and Noise

PT1.HE1 (2012) Heritage

Part 2 Policies:

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LPP D14 (2021) Noise

LPP D4 (2021) Delivering good design

LPP D5 (2021) Inclusive design

LPP D8 (2021) Public realm

LPP E4 (2021) Land for industry, logistics and services to support London's economic function

LPP E6 (2021) Locally Significant Industrial Sites

LPP G6 (2021) Biodiversity and access to nature

LPP GG2 (2021) Making the best use of land

LPP HC1 (2021) Heritage conservation and growth

LPP SD6 (2021) Town centres and high streets

LPP SD7 (2021) Town centres: development principles and Development Plan Documents

LPP SI12 (2021) Flood risk management

LPP SI13 (2021) Sustainable drainage

LPP SI7 (2021) Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy

LPP T5 (2021) Cycling

LPP T6 (2021) Car parking

LPP T6.3 (2021) Retail parking

LPP T6.5 (2021) Non-residential disabled persons parking

LPP T7 (2021) Deliveries, servicing and construction

DMEI 14 Air Quality

DMEI 7 Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement

DMEI 9 Management of Flood Risk

DMHB 1 Heritage Assets

DMHB 13 Shopfronts

DMHB 13A Advertisements and Shop Signage

DMHB 4 Conservation Areas

DMT 1 Managing Transport Impacts

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**PART 1 - MEMBERS, PUBLIC & PRESS**

- DMT 2 Highways Impacts
- DMT 5 Pedestrians and Cyclists
- DMT 6 Vehicle Parking
- DMTC 1 Town Centre Development
- DMTC 2 Primary and Secondary Shopping Areas
- DMTC 3 Maintaining the Viability of Local Centres and Local Parades
- DMTC 4 Amenity and Town Centre Uses
- NPPF11 NPPF 2021 - Making effective use of land
- NPPF12 NPPF 2021 - Achieving well-designed places
- NPPF14 NPPF 2021 - Meeting the challenge of climate change flooding
- NPPF15 NPPF 2021 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- NPPF16 NPPF 2021 - Conserving & enhancing the historic environment
- NPPF7 NPPF 2021 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- NPPF9 NPPF 2021 - Promoting sustainable transport

## **5. Advertisement and Site Notice**

**5.1** Advertisement Expiry Date: Not Applicable

**5.2** Site Notice Expiry Date: **14th April 2023**

## **6. Consultations**

### **External Consultees**

Neighbour consultation

A total of 64 residents and Northwood Residents Association were consulted between 9-30 March 2023 with a Conservation Area site notice installed from 14 March to 4 April 2023 and an advertisement in the local press from 22 March to 14 April 2023.

A total of 16 submissions (excluding duplicates from the same property but including one from Northwood Residents Association and submissions from the tenants of all three subject properties) were received. Additionally, a petition with 131 signatures was received requesting refusal of the application. The submissions raised the following summarised issues:

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**PART 1 - MEMBERS, PUBLIC & PRESS**

- Works will affect the existing local businesses and employment
- Loss of existing business floorspace
- Loss of existing units and businesses
- Reduction in floorspace and amalgamation of 36 and 38 Green Lane will affect vitality of the area
- The loss of floorspace creates a retail unit that is not supportive of the town centre location
- Loss of retail unit, in conflict with policy
- Existing businesses do not want to leave
- There is no need for larger retail units
- Workshop is unrelated to the size and scale of the town centre

Planning Officer Comments: The net loss in retail floorspace is not explicitly contrary to policy and may be considered partly offset by the increase in light industrial floor area. Both retail and the proposed workshop for light industrial use are within Use Class E.

- Loss of floorspace and depth to the retail units will affect cumulative viability and therefore the survival of the conservation area
- This row of terraces was the first parade of shops on Green Lane
- The flat roof design is detrimental to the conservation area
- The removal of a door to 38 Green lane will harm the character of the area
- Will affect the heritage significance of the area

Planning Officer Comments: The broader harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area is discussed in the body of the report and forms the basis for the refusal of the application.

- Servicing and rear access to the retail units will be lost

Planning Officer Comments: The retail units would still be accessed and serviced at the rear from a shared rear yard.

- Car parking spaces should not be provided
- Parking spaces are dangerous for access and visibility

Planning Officer Comments: There are no objections from the Council's Highways Officer on visibility and manoeuvring grounds, as discussed in the body of the report.

- Looks like developer wants to demolish
- Intent of developer remains unclear

Planning Officer Comments: These are not relevant planning considerations.

- Use of the workshop should be specified

Planning Officer Comments: The workshop use is specified in the application form as light industrial which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity. This is within Use Class E, specifically class E(g)(iii).

The petition cited the following topic and desired outcome:

"The block has particular historic value and so the original units should be retained. The existing businesses do not need or want any change to the retail units they occupy. Reducing the size of the retail units and taking out viable commercial space would affect the businesses that occupy these premises and

reduce the quality of services they provide for the community".

Planning Officer Comments: Conservation concerns are outlined in the body of the report and whilst not all of the petition concerns are detailed, the heritage impact still forms Reason for Refusal 1. The personal situation of leaseholders does not form part of the planning consideration, though net loss of retail floorspace is discussed in the body of the report.

### **Internal Consultees**

Conservation Officer: Objection raised due to the harm to the shopfront (including the loss of the door) and the poor design and siting of the workshop building.

Highways Officer: No objection (detailed comments are incorporated into section 7.10 of the Committee Report).

Planning Policy Officer: No objection to the principle of development.

In summary: "Relevant policies are DMTC 1 and DMTC 2. An important note is that, assuming the workshop is light industrial use, this is the same Use Class (E) as a retail unit...Therefore any net change calculations should be undertaken with the inclusion of the workshop if it is Use Class E.

Policy DMTC 2 refers to ensuring ground floor is uses for retail, financial and professional activities and restaurants, cafes, pubs and bars. Realistically, due to Use Class E we can't make this much distinction anymore and all uses within Class E should be acceptable. It requests that 70% of the frontage to be retained as Use Class A1, but again this should be interpreted as Use Class E. I note there is not loss of frontage either. Therefore I cannot see a conflict with Policy DMTC 2.

Policy DMTC 1 requires town centre development to demonstrate that adequate width and depth of floorspace has been provided for the town centre uses and appropriate servicing arrangements have been provided. I'd assume the amended units and new workshop could still be serviced from the rear under the proposal. The width has not changed - so as long as there are other units with a similar depth operating on the high street (i.e. it is not obviously abnormal) I don't think there could be a strong objection".

## **7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES**

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

- Loss of Retail

Policy SD6 of the London Plan is a strategic policy that notes that the vitality and viability of London's varied town centres should be promoted and enhanced by encouraging strong, resilient, accessible and inclusive hubs with a diverse range of uses that meet the needs of Londoners, and strengthen the role of town centres as a main focus for Londoners' sense of place and local identity in the capital. The adaptation and diversification of town centres should be supported in response to the challenges and opportunities presented by multi-channel shopping and changes in technology and consumer behaviour, including improved management of servicing and deliveries.

Policy SD7 of the London Plan aims to ensure that commercial floorspace relates to the size and the role and function of a town centre and its catchment, is appropriately located and fit for purpose, with

at least basic fit-out and not compromised in terms of layout, street frontage, floor to ceiling heights and servicing, with efficient delivery and servicing in a way that minimises negative impacts on the environment, public realm, the safety of all road users, and the amenity of neighbouring residents. It also aims to support the diversity of town centres by providing a range of commercial unit sizes, particularly on larger-scale developments.

Policy E9 of the London Plan aims to support convenience retail in all town centres to secure inclusive neighbourhoods as well as provide a policy framework to enhance local and neighbourhood shopping facilities and prevent the loss of retail and related facilities that provide essential convenience and specialist shopping.

Policy DMTC 1 of Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 2 also supports 'main town centre uses' where the development proposal is consistent with the scale and function of the centre with adequate width and depth of floorspace and appropriate servicing arrangements have been provided.

Policy DMTC 2 of Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 2 supports the provision of ground floor retail (and other specified town centre uses) provided that a minimum of 70% of the frontage is retained in retail use; the proposed use will not result in a separation of Class A1 uses of no more than 12m interruption in frontage of A1 shops or a concentration of non retail uses which could be considered to cause harm to the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre; and compliance with other relevant local plan policies.

Whilst there is a clear intent to avoid the loss of retail within designated town centres and parades, there is no actual policy against the loss of retail floorspace, net or otherwise, in a town centre. There is also no policy direction against shop amalgamation.

Objections have referred to paragraph 93 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which aims to protect social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, by guarding against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs. It falls within Section 8 of the NPPF which refers to healthy and safe communities. A retail use could, in theory, fall within the remit of Section 8. However, given the broad scope of retail uses would not necessarily include uses that would involve safe and healthy communities, it is clear that application of this NPPF paragraph within a retail use is not intended.

The three existing retail units have internal floorspaces of 115m<sup>2</sup>, 138m<sup>2</sup> and 73m<sup>2</sup>, with depths of about 25m. The proposal involves the demolition of the rear parts of all three buildings and the internal walls between 36 and 38 Green Lane to allow the amalgamation of these two units. It results in two retail units of 66m<sup>2</sup> and 131m<sup>2</sup>. This is a net loss of one retail space and 129m<sup>2</sup> (in total floorspace terms).

It appears that the amalgamation of 36 and 38 Green Lane is an offset against the net loss of retail floorspace. At present, 38 Green Lane is 4.2m wide at its entrance but narrows to 2.6m. This is somewhat prohibitive as a retail space. Widening the space through amalgamation with 36 Green Lane offers a more flexible and attractive retail space with a double frontage. There would not be any loss in retail frontage as a result of the proposal.

The depth of the retail units is reduced from 26m at 34 Green Lane, 31m at 36 Green Lane and 24m at 38 Green Lane to 15m within both units. In terms of maintaining depth to ensure flexibility and viability in use, there are no significant constraints and the resultant units would be similar in

depth/area to the ground floor premises operating at 24 and 26 Green Lane. Overall, the net loss is noted, and is unfortunate, but there are clear benefits with the refurbishment of the existing spaces to be retained and the additional width provided within 36-38 Green Lane.

Therefore, the loss of retail floor space and the amalgamation of 36 and 38 to form one retail unit is acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with wider planning policies.

#### - Light Industrial Use

Policy E7 of the London Plan requires a proactive approach and encouragement for the intensification of business uses through introduction of small units, amongst other factors. Policy DME1 of the Local Plan will support light industrial within Locally Significant Employment Locations (LSEs).

There is no explicit policy encouragement towards or against the provision of light industrial uses in town centre locations and the provision of 44m<sup>2</sup> of light industrial floorspace is not opposed in principle. In principle, the proposed workshop could provide a service that is compatible and complementary to the area, particularly given the back land location behind the street frontage. It is also recognised in the planning use class order (amended 1st August 2021) that any light industrial use that is capable of being carried out in a residential area (as proposed on the application form) is Class E, the same as retail shops or any other service appropriate to this commercial locality. On this basis, no objection is raised to the principle of the proposed workshop in this location, subject to compliance with wider planning policies.

#### - Conclusion

Paragraph 86 of the NPPF supports the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. The proposal involves a loss of retail floorspace and provision of workshop floorspace for a net loss overall. Whilst this is generally unusual, it is not a policy departure and the associated refurbishment of the premises, increased flexibility of the retail space and diversity of use weighs in favour. Therefore, the principle of development is acceptable, subject to compliance with wider planning policies.

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

Not applicable.

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

Refer to Section 7.07.

### **7.04 Airport safeguarding**

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

### **7.06 Environmental Impact**

Not applicable.

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

Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 - Strategic Policies (2012) seeks a quality of design



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 (2020) states that new development will be required to be designed to the highest standards and incorporate principles of good design, including harmony in consideration of the height of surrounding structures. Policy DMHB 12 of the same plan requires integration with the surrounding area.

The site is within the Northwood Town Centre, Green Lane Conservation Area and the Council has a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, including its setting (Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). Paragraphs 199-202 of the NPPF requires consideration of the harm to the significance of the Conservation Area.

Policy DMHB 4 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 (2020) seeks to ensure that development within a Conservation Area preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area, including through high quality design and resisting the loss of buildings and features. Policy HC1 of the London Plan (2021) seeks to conserve significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings.

The Conservation Area Appraisal notes that The Pavement on the south side was the first section of shops to be completed (visible in 1914 ordinance maps) and the parades of shops are tightly packed. It is less flamboyant than its later neighbours. The parade is two and half storeys with shops on the ground floor with a red brick first floor with yellow brick decorative courses and dormer windows in the attic under slate roofs.

There is also reference to an alley that runs behind, and an interesting surviving outbuilding which is an early Victorian stable/workshop at the end of the alley. It is constructed of London stock brick with slate roofs and has three pitched roof dormers breaking through the eaves. This building falls outside of the application site. The appraisal notes that the buildings make a positive contribution to the historic and architectural character and appearance of the conservation area.

- To the rear

Notwithstanding the above appraisal, the rear of the buildings at 24-48 Green Lane are a haphazard collection of rear extensions of varying form and materials that have a clear servicing or back of house appearance, offering little in terms of a positive setting for the conservation area. They open onto the rear alleyway, they are also well removed from and not appreciated in views from the street. The demolition of these structures is therefore not opposed.

The replacement with a detached, flat roof, single storey building offers little in terms of enhancement of the site and the conservation area. Whilst of modest form and appearance, it is at odds with the historic pattern of development and disrupts the cohesion of the parade of shops by establishing an ill thought out replacement building of infill appearance. The orientation east/west is completely against the grain of the rear extensions and additions which are perpendicular to the street. This forms Reason for Refusal 1.

- To the street

Whilst not offering much to the conservation area, the new doors to 36 Green lane are largely like for like replacements and are satisfactory. The new shopfront to 38 Green Lane involves the removal of the door and the provision of bi-fold doors much the same as 36 Green Lane. The Council's Conservation Officer is opposed to these works with the loss of pilasters and corbel brackets harmful to the character and form of the parade of retail premises and the Conservation Area as a whole.

#### - Conclusion

For the reasons above, the proposed development would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Northwood Town Centre, Green Lane Conservation Area, or the visual amenity of the street scene.

The harm arising from the proposed development is considered to be less than substantial. In line with paragraph 202 of the NPPF (2021), the public benefits of the proposal must be weighed against the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset (Northwood Town Centre, Green Lane Conservation Area).

The principle of the development (loss of retail and provision of light industrial) is generally supported with the provision of a workshop use retaining a degree of employment activity. Nonetheless, given there is a net loss of retail floor space (even if it is not contrary to policy), there appears minimal economic benefit and the weight applied is minimal. Given the very limited benefits associated with the scheme, public or otherwise, the benefits do not outweigh the clear harm.

As such, it is concluded that there are no identified public benefits that would outweigh the demonstrated harms to the Conservation Area. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policies HE1 and BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One Strategic Policies (2012), Policies DMHB 1, DMHB 4, and DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020), Policies D3 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021), and Chapters 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

### **7.08 Impact on neighbours**

Policy DMHB 11 and Policy EM8 of the Hillingdon Local Plan (part 2 and part 1 respectively) seek to ensure a satisfactory relationship with adjacent dwellings and no unacceptable loss of outlook, amenity, daylight and sunlight to neighbouring occupiers or impacts of noise, odour, emissions, safety and security, refuse, parking or traffic congestion. Policy D14 of the London Plan (2021) aims to reduce, manage and mitigate noise to improve health and quality of life by avoiding significant adverse noise impacts on health and quality of life. Section 15 of the NPPF aims for similar outcomes.

The proposal involves a net reduction in building footprint with the footprint of the new workshop building well removed from the existing retail and residential units, such that there is no additional dominance or loss of light.

The uses within the main building remain unchanged and the premise of the use class of the new workshop building is that the use is compatible with a residential area. Further, the openings are to the south, away from the existing retail and residential units. Whilst there are offices to the rear and residential properties beyond, the separation distance is appropriate to protect amenity.

New access stairs to each of the units, including a new shared landing for 34 and 36 Green Lane would, in theory, open up some sightlines to neighbours but when compared with the existing

situation, there is no significant change and no objection raised.

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

Not applicable.

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

##### Site Characteristics

The site forms part of a 1930's shopping parade located within Green Lane in Northwood and the surroundings consist of a mix of commercial and residential uses.

It is proposed to reconfigure and amalgamate two established retail units at 36 and 38 Green Lane to form a single larger commercial unit with the erection of a small-scale workshop unit located to the rear of the site. Demolition of an existing outbuilding and partial demolition of the ground floor elements of 34 and 38 would be necessary to facilitate the proposal.

An established access located to the side of no. 38 is to remain to serve the rear of the site envelope affording access to 3 parking spaces and 6 formal cycle parking spaces.

The site exhibits a public transport accessibility level (PTAL) of 3 which is considered as moderate, but the Council's Highways Officer has advised that in practice the 'real world' PTAL may be somewhat higher than numerically depicted. This is due to the relative proximity of Northwood London Underground Station and a plethora of local bus services operating within the locality. There are extensive parking controls on the surrounding roadways exemplified by double yellow lines and 8am to 6.30pm - Monday to Saturday Pay & Display facilities.

##### Vehicular Trip Generation

Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 Policies DMT 1 and DMT 2 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.

The Council's Highways Officer has advised that as a consequence of the relatively small scale of development and limited on-plot parking, any vehicular trip generation uplift is predicted to be negligible and therefore does not give rise to any specific highway concerns.

##### Car Parking

Policy DMT 6 of the Local Plan requires compliance with the parking standards unless it is demonstrated that a deviation would not result in a deleterious impact on the surrounding road network.

It is apparent that the three existing retail units and the two residential units are not provided with any formal car parking. There is a substandard potential parking space at the rear of 34 Green Lane, which is not counted because of its inadequate length. It would then follow that any reduction in retail floorspace would not present any additional parking issue.

The workshop space is required to provide three spaces, with the Local Plan specifying two spaces plus one space per 50-100m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace. The proposal includes three car spaces for the workshop use which represents compliance with the parking standard.

This moderate level of provision is further supported by the aforementioned good 'real world' transport links and local parking controls in the area which act as a parking constraint and therefore encourage sustainable travel to and from the site. It is also noted that there is a Council owned public car park close to the site.

EV charging amounting to one active and two passive charging points would be secured by condition in the event of an approval.

In light of the above, the proposed level of parking is considered acceptable.

### Cycle Parking

Policy DMT 5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan - Part 2 (2020) requires compliance with the cycle parking standards. The retail units are reduced in floorspace and the residential units are unchanged, such that there are no additional cycle parking requirements. The workshop use generates the need for one space, though the Highways Officer recommends three spaces be provided on the basis of the mixed use of the site.

Three cycle racks, providing parking for six cycles, are provided at the rear of the residential units. This would be an improvement on the existing situation and while there is only a requirement for one space, the cycle parking could be shared by the workshop and existing residences (or even the retail units). The cycle parking is accessible, located in a back of house location alongside the residential entrances but would need to be made secure and sheltered. An allocation strategy, including one space allocated to the workshop use, as well as details of secure and covered bike shelters could be secured by condition in the event of an approval.

### Access

Section 9 of the NPPF and Policy T4 of the London Plan (2021) states that development proposals should not increase road danger and that development proposals should not be refused unless highways impacts are severe.

The existing alleyway/driveway serving the rear of the site is single width and serves perhaps ten formal parking spaces and a number of additional informal or ad hoc parking spaces. The proposal for three additional parking spaces would add to the trip generation along this single lane access. However, the Highways Officer has advised that with the low level of traffic (three proposed spaces), the likelihood of conflict is very low. In itself, this is a limiting factor in terms of overall activity to and from the site. Coupled with the stringent waiting restrictions around the area that would inherently restrict general activity by deterring private car travel to and from the address without envisaged measurable harm, no concerns are raised with access. In terms of manoeuvrability within the car park, there is sufficient space and visibility for turning and forward movement from the site.

### Servicing

There is a relatively ad hoc servicing arrangement at the rear of the site for the existing retail units with the greater likelihood that most deliveries would occur at the street front.

The proposed workshop building would alter this rear servicing arrangement by appearing to reduce accessibility to the retail units from the rear. However, the existing access to the rear of these

properties is already somewhat compromised, with either no direct access or restricted access down narrow passage ways. The proposal would introduce a more formal and clearly marked out arrangement with the car parking spaces. Any potential impact to servicing is viewed as either an improvement, commensurate or so minimal as not to warrant concern.

#### Construction Management Plan

A Construction Management Plan would be a requirement given the constraints and sensitivities of the immediate road network in order to avoid/minimise potential detriment to the public realm. Continued and safe pedestrian and vehicular access would also need to be maintained to the rear of the premises during the construction period. This would be conditioned in the event of an approval.

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

Paragraph 92 of the NPPF and Policy DMHB 15 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 (2020) require healthy, inclusive and safe places so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion. There are no objections on these grounds.

#### **7.12 Disabled access**

Policy D5 of the London Plan requires accessible and inclusive design that is convenient and welcoming with no disabling barriers, providing independent access without additional undue effort, separation or special treatment.

The amalgamation of the retail units at 36 and 38 Green Lane will improve accessibility by removing the small step to the existing retail unit at 36 Green Lane. Access to 34 Green Lane will remain unchanged and the new access points to the existing residential units will remain via staircases. The workshop can be designed in a way that it is fully accessible such that no objection is raised.

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

Not applicable.

#### **7.14 Trees, landscaping and Ecology**

No impact.

#### **7.15 Sustainable waste management**

Policy EM11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 (2012) refers to the minimisation of waste. As part of the redevelopment at the rear of the site, a new bin store is positioned underneath the staircase at the eastern end of the site. It is intended to serve the first floor residential properties at the site, along with the three ground floor retail premises.

The dimensions appear inadequate for the likely waste generation from five properties. Also refuse storage for residential units should be kept separate from commercial uses. However, given the available space between the workshop and the rear of the retail buildings, there is adequate space for suitably located and separate (between commercial and residential) bin storage areas that would protect the character of the area and neighbour amenity. This could be conditioned.

In the event of an approval, a condition would be included requiring details of separate residential and commercial refuse and recycling storage and collection arrangements.

#### **7.16 Renewable energy / Sustainability**

Policies BE1 and DMEI 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan (Part 1 and Part 2 respectively) seek to achieve reductions in carbon dioxide emissions through energy efficient design and effective use of low and zero carbon technologies, including the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategies, water efficiency and sustainable design and construction techniques to increase the re-use and recycling of construction, demolition and excavation waste and reduce the amount disposed to landfill.

No such details have been submitted. However, given the relatively modest nature of the construction works and the open plan form of the modest workshop building, there are limited opportunities for sustainability measures beyond what is required of building regulations. On this basis, no objections are raised.

### **7.17 Flooding or Drainage Issues**

#### **Flooding**

Policy SI12 of the London Plan (2021) states that development proposals should ensure that flood risk is minimised and mitigated, and that residual risk is addressed. The site is in Flood Zone 1 with no identified surface flooding. The proposed workshop use is acceptable on flooding grounds. The proposal is therefore acceptable.

#### **Drainage**

Policy SI13 of the London Plan (2021) states that development proposals should aim to achieve greenfield run-off rates and ensure that surface water run-off is managed as close to its source as possible. Policy DMEI 10 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 (2020) states that developments are required to include a drainage assessment demonstrating that appropriate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) have been incorporated.

The site is not in a Critical Drainage Area, not shown to be at risk from surface flooding and there is a net reduction in building footprint. Subject to details of hard or soft landscaping in the area between the workshop and the rear of the retail buildings to ensure that there is adequate on site infiltration, as part of broader drainage details, there is unlikely to be any adverse drainage issues. These details could be secured by condition in the event of an approval.

### **7.18 Noise or Air Quality Issues**

Policy DMEI 14 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 (2020) states that development should demonstrate appropriate reductions in emissions to sustain compliance with and contribute towards meeting EU limit values and national air quality objectives for pollutants. The site does not fall within the Air Quality Management Area, and given the relatively minor scale of development and continued uses, no concerns are raised.

### **7.19 Comments on Public Consultations**

Refer to Section 6.

### **7.20 Planning obligations**

Not applicable.

### **7.21 Expediency of enforcement action**

None applicable.

### **7.22 Other Issues**

## Contaminated Land

The site is located on land identified as potentially contaminated. Given that the development would involve demolition to accommodate new built development in a town centre location, it is unlikely that there would be any concerns with contaminated land that could not be remediated. Therefore, in the event of an approval the appropriate conditions for investigation and remediation would be included.

## 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**

For the reasons set out in this report, it is considered that the development conflicts with national, regional and local planning policies and guidance. No material considerations exist which would outweigh the identified harm. It is therefore recommended that the application be refused on the grounds set out in Section 2 of this committee report.

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

Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (November 2012)

Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (January 2020)

The London Plan (March 2021)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) (as amended)

**Contact Officer:**

Simon Taylor

**Telephone No:**





**Notes:**

 Site boundary

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Site Address:

**34, 36, 38 Green Lane**

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HILLINGDON**  
**Residents Services Planning Section**

Civic Centre, Uxbridge, Middx. UB8 1UW  
 Telephone No.: Uxbridge 01895 250111

Planning Application Ref:

**77897/APP/2023/602**

Scale:

**1:1,250**

Planning Committee:

**Borough**

Date:

**June 2023**



**HILLINGDON**  
 LONDON