

Design and Access Statement

Outline planning application for the demolition of the existing dwellings and garage court, and the erection of up to 32 no. residential dwellings. All matters reserved except access.

Land at 237–239 Hornchurch Road & Rear Garage Court, Hornchurch, RM12 4TG

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Purpose of this Document

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Andrew Ransome Town Planning Ltd on behalf of Rodwell Property Ltd in support of an outline planning application for the demolition of the existing dwellings at 237–239 Hornchurch Road and the rear garage court, and the erection of up to 32 residential dwellings.

The application seeks to establish the principle of development, with all matters reserved except for access. Accordingly, this statement explains the design principles and parameters that will guide future Reserved Matters submissions.

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in accordance with Article 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and the guidance set out within Planning Practice Guidance.

1.2 The Proposal

The proposal comprises:

- Demolition of 237 and 239 Hornchurch Road and the 88 lock-up garages to the rear;
- Erection of up to 32 dwellings, comprising a mix of apartments and family houses;
- A one-way vehicular entry from Hornchurch Road at the north-east corner of the site, with a separate exit at the north-west corner (the matter for approval at this stage);
- Associated parking, landscaping, amenity space and drainage infrastructure.



Figure 1: Site Location Plan

1.3 Design Policy

The relevant design policies are summarised below. The accompanying Planning Statement sets out the full policy context.

Policy	Summary of requirement
National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026)	Policy DP3(1) requires proposals to respond to their context, and DP3(2) sets out principles of liveability, climate, nature, movement, built form, public space and identity. DP4(1) expects design quality to be considered through pre-application engagement and the life of the scheme. Policy L3(2)(a) expects development within settlements to increase density while taking account of character; TR4 sets out principles for safe and inclusive street design; and N3(1)(a) expects new streets to be tree-lined. The National Design Guide explains how these principles can be achieved.
London Plan (2021)	GG2 Making the best use of land – creating sustainable places that make the best use of land and are design-led in determining the optimum capacity of sites. D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach – enhancing local distinctiveness, encouraging active travel, creating safe and inclusive environments and achieving high sustainability standards. D4 Delivering good design; D5 Inclusive design; D6 Housing quality and standards – adequately sized rooms, functional layouts, dual aspect and accessible waste storage; D7 Accessible housing. H10 Housing size mix – a range of unit sizes. T5 Cycling and T6 Car parking – secure cycle parking to minimum standards and car parking restricted in line with public transport accessibility. G5 Urban greening – a target Urban Greening Factor of 0.4 for predominantly residential schemes.
Havering Local Plan 2016–2031 (adopted November 2021)	Policy 7 Residential design and amenity – high-quality, inclusive design that protects existing and future residents from unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy or outlook, loss of daylight/sunlight and noise or disturbance. Policy 10 Infill, backland and garden land development – good access, adequate amenity space and no significant harm to neighbours, green infrastructure or biodiversity. Policy 26 Urban design – respect for local character, building patterns, scale, massing, rhythm, building line and height. Policy 27 Landscaping – high-quality landscape schemes with long-term management.

2.0 Site and Surrounding Context

2.1 The Site

The application site comprises approximately 0.53ha, encompassing two dwellings at 237–239 Hornchurch Road and a rear garage court of 88 lock-up garages accessed through an electronically controlled gate.

It is located in a mixed-use area, comprising predominantly residential streets, commercial buildings along Hornchurch Road, a large-format supermarket and primary schools. Harrow Lodge School playing field adjoins the southern boundary.

The site is accessed from Hornchurch Road (A124) and lies within PTAL 2. Bus stops are located immediately adjacent to the northern boundary, and Romford and Elm Park stations are accessible by bus.

The site is not within a Conservation Area and contains no designated heritage assets. It lies within Flood Zone 1.

The residential streets neighbouring the site, Franmil Road and Albany Road, comprise predominantly two-storey semi-detached and terraced dwellings whose rear gardens back on to the site. Taller flatted buildings of three to five storeys are found along Hornchurch Road.



Figure 2: Site Context

2.2 Site Photographs


Access and Nos. 237 and 239 Hornchurch Road


Existing 'out' access from the garage court


Existing garage court


View towards taller buildings along Hornchurch Road


View towards Albany Road


View towards the school playing field


View towards Franmil Road


Neighbouring dwellings along Hornchurch Road

Figure 3: Site Photographs – The Site



Dwellings along Franmil Road backing on to the site



Dwellings along Albany Road backing on to the site



Flatted building opposite the site



Flatted building within the wider context



Large-format supermarket opposite the site



Hornchurch Road looking towards the site



Hornchurch Road view towards the site



Commercial buildings opposite the site

Figure 4: Site Photographs – Surrounding Context

3.0 Pre-Application Summary

3.1 Pre-Application Engagement

The applicant sought pre-application advice from the London Borough of Havering (ref. W0275.24). A meeting with planning officers took place on 22 January 2025 and written comments were issued on 21 May 2025.

The pre-application scheme proposed 40 dwellings (2 x 1-bed, 11 x 2-bed, 22 x 3-bed and 5 x 4-bed) in buildings of two to four storeys, with 15 affordable units, 29 parking spaces and a single vehicular access from Hornchurch Road. The submitted material was limited to a general site layout, so officers focused on the principle of development, scale, layout and access.

Officers concluded that redevelopment of the garage site for residential purposes may represent a more sustainable use of the site, and would be acceptable and supported in principle provided that:

- it is demonstrated that the garages do not provide much-needed parking for existing residents, and that their loss would not cause additional on-street parking pressure;
- safe vehicular access can be provided – officers considered the existing access unacceptable;
- the scheme achieves high-quality design and sustainability, and protects residential amenity (privacy, daylight and outlook);
- arboricultural impacts are addressed through a landscaping strategy, and affordable housing viability and tenure are resolved.

3.2 Officer Advice and Design Response

The table below summarises the key points raised by officers and how the scheme has been revised in response.

Topic	Officer advice (May 2025)	Design response in this application
Principle / loss of garages	Acceptable in principle if evidence shows the garages are not used for residents' parking and their loss would not increase on-street parking pressure.	Gate data (2021–2024) shows about 12–17 entries a day across 88 garages, and tenants confirm storage and hobby use rather than residents' parking (Planning Statement, Appendices A and B).
Access	Existing access unacceptable. Bus stop is a major constraint. A two-way access is needed so that inbound vehicles do not wait on the highway. Fire, emergency and refuse access must be demonstrated.	Separate one-way entry (north-east) and exit (north-west), both left-in/left-out, so inbound vehicles never wait for outbound traffic. Bus stop and shelter retained; pedestrian crossing relocated about 5m west. Refuse and emergency tracking undertaken.
Quantum and density	Pre-app scheme of 40 dwellings at about 76 dph.	Reduced to up to 32 dwellings (about 60 dph), which lets heights step down and secures larger gardens and separation distances.
Scale and height	Heights to transition to neighbouring two-storey homes: possibly three storeys with a roof-level set-back to the frontage, two storeys to the rear.	Maximum height reduced from four storeys to three. Three storeys to the Hornchurch Road frontage, two storeys centrally, and two and a half storeys (rooms in the roof) to the southern boundary.
Materials and massing	Should reflect suburban character while allowing modern variation.	Brick-led palette, pitched roof forms and contemporary detailing (see Sections 5.4 and 6.0).
Residential amenity	BRE 209 daylight and sunlight compliance; appropriate rear-to-rear and front-to-front separation; no significant overlooking; playspace; noise from access and parking.	Daylight study shows no significant overshadowing and at worst a low impact on neighbours. Minimum 18m back-to-back to existing dwellings. Playspace and noise detail at Reserved Matters.
Affordable housing	35% by habitable room with a 70/30 social/intermediate split, or a viability appraisal.	The applicant commits to policy-compliant affordable housing, with tenure and location to be fixed at Reserved Matters and secured by S106.
Parking	LB Havering standards; 0.7 spaces per unit accords with T6. Accessible bays, cycle parking, EV charging and a likely car club contribution.	27 resident spaces (about 0.84 per dwelling) within London Plan maximums, with cycle parking to London Plan minimums.
Trees and landscaping	BS5837 AIA required; minimise RPA conflicts; UGF of 0.4 and 10% BNG required.	AIA submitted; boundary trees retained where possible with replacement planting. UGF of 0.41 demonstrated. BNG assessment shows +31.89% habitat units on site.
Energy	35% on-site carbon reduction, with an offset payment for any shortfall. ASHPs, PV and passive design encouraged.	Energy Statement shows an 84% on-site reduction using fabric efficiency, air source heat pumps and a 34kWp PV array, with the balance offset to net zero.
Waste and servicing	Bin stores within collection distances; 11.2m refuse vehicle tracking; collection points identified.	Tracking undertaken. Communal bin and cycle stores are shown on the illustrative layout.

4.0 Technical Considerations

4.1 Flood Risk and Drainage

The Flood Risk Assessment confirms the site lies in Flood Zone 1 and is not at risk of tidal, fluvial or groundwater flooding. Only a small area in the north-east corner shows low-risk surface water ponding. Infiltration rates are very low, so a SuDS strategy is proposed with permeable paving and attenuation, restricting discharge to about 1.2 l/s (1 in 100 year +40% climate change) into the public surface water sewer in Hornchurch Road.

4.2 Highways and Access

The Transport Statement concludes the site is sustainably located, with bus stops on the frontage and cycle lanes on Hornchurch Road. Vehicles enter via a new bell-mouth at the north-east corner and exit via a new bell-mouth at the north-west corner, both left-in/left-out. The development is predicted to generate 15 two-way trips in the morning peak and 17 in the evening peak, which would not have a material impact on the highway network.

4.3 Arboriculture

The Arboricultural Impact Assessment (BS5837:2012) finds the trees have limited visual amenity value and are not rare, ancient or veteran specimens. Trees T4, T8–T11 and groups G1–G4 (one tree in G4 retained) would be removed. The loss is assessed as having a negligible impact on local landscape character and would be offset by new planting.

4.4 Urban Greening and Landscape

The Urban Greening Factor calculation demonstrates a score of 0.41 against the London Plan target of 0.4. It uses semi-natural vegetation, intensive green roofs, street trees in connected tree pits, flower-rich perennial planting, hedges, amenity grassland and permeable paving.

4.5 Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal found negligible potential for roosting bats and no potential for other protected species except nesting birds. The BNG Assessment shows the scheme would deliver a +31.89% net gain in habitat units on site, exceeding the mandatory 10%, with no off-site units required.

4.6 Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing

The Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Study (Pager Power, March 2026) finds that the vast majority of neighbouring windows would retain at least 80% of their existing skylight and sunlight, with at worst a low impact. No significant overshadowing is predicted. Within the scheme, most windows meet BRE thresholds; mitigation through internal layout and window design is recommended for the east side of building A-right.

4.7 Energy and Sustainability

The Energy Statement shows a 38% reduction through energy efficiency measures and a total 84% on-site reduction in regulated CO_2 emissions with air source heat pumps and a 34kWp PV array. This exceeds the London Plan minimum of 35%, with the residual offset by a cash-in-lieu payment to achieve net zero.

4.8 Heritage

The site is not within a Conservation Area and contains no designated heritage assets.

5.0 Development Principles

5.1 The Amount of Development

The scheme seeks to deliver up to 32 market and affordable dwellings across the site, together with significant areas of landscaped amenity space.

The development is anticipated to comprise a mix of apartments and family houses.

The illustrative layout shows one way the following mix could be achieved:

Size	Dwellings	Share
1-bed	2	6%
2-bed	8	25%
3-bed	16	50%
4-bed	6	19%
Total	32	100%

5.2 Scale

Scale is reserved. However, buildings are anticipated to be a mix of two and three storeys, comprising:

- three storeys along the Hornchurch Road frontage, to give an appropriate scale to the existing mixed-use street scene;
- two storeys in the centre of the site, reflecting the dwellings at Franmil Road and Albany Road that back on to it;
- two and a half storeys along the southern boundary, to improve the silhouette and views from the adjoining playing field.

5.3 Site Layout

Layout is reserved. However, the site is anticipated to be arranged around a dedicated entrance from Hornchurch Road and a separate dedicated exit on to Hornchurch Road.

The internal layout could be served by a simple estate road loop, giving a clear perimeter-block structure with houses fronting the street and private gardens backing on to existing gardens (see Figure 6).

5.4 Materials and Appearance

Appearance is reserved. However, the design approach will:

- reflect the suburban character of Hornchurch;
- use high-quality, durable materials, with a brick-led palette;
- incorporate contemporary detailing where appropriate;
- use permeable paving to parking and shared surfaces.

The design will draw on the characteristics of the wider area around Hornchurch Road.

5.5 Landscaping

Landscaping is reserved. However, landscaping will play a key role in:

- enhancing visual quality;
- supporting biodiversity;
- providing amenity space.

In accordance with the London Plan Guidance 'Urban Greening Factor' (2021), the site can achieve an Urban Greening Factor of 0.41. This can be achieved through:

- semi-natural vegetation;
- green roofs;
- tree planting;
- flower-rich perennial planting;
- hedges.



Figure 5: Indicative Urban Greening Plan

5.6 Residential Amenity

In accordance with Havering Local Plan Policy 7:

- Overshadowing – buildings will be orientated to avoid significant overshadowing. The daylight and sunlight study confirms no significant overshadowing of neighbouring properties.
- Daylight and sunlight – the orientation of each dwelling will vary with its position in the block, but dwellings will be designed to be dual aspect wherever possible.
- Privacy – the orientation of dwellings and a minimum 18m back-to-back distance with existing neighbouring homes will avoid harmful overlooking of habitable windows and gardens.
- Amenity space – each house will have a private garden, and apartments will have private balconies or terraces together with communal space.

These matters will inform the detailed design at the Reserved Matters stage.

5.7 Parking

The illustrative layout shows 27 resident parking spaces, within the London Plan maximum standards for PTAL 2.

Reserved Matters proposals will accord with London Plan Policies T5 and T6, including accessible bays, EV charging infrastructure and secure cycle storage.

5.8 Access

Access is the only detailed matter for approval at this stage. Vehicles will enter via a new bell-mouth junction at the north-east corner of the site and leave via a separate new bell-mouth junction at the north-west corner, both by left-turn movements only. Pedestrian and cycle access is provided at both points.

The scheme will be designed to ensure:

- safe and convenient access for all users;
- inclusive design principles (London Plan Policy D5);
- compliance with Manual for Streets and relevant highway standards.

The development will be accessible to:

- pedestrians;
- cyclists;
- vehicles, including refuse vehicles;
- emergency services.

5.9 Illustrative Site Plan

The illustrative site plan shows one way in which up to 32 dwellings could be accommodated on the site. It is not submitted for approval, but demonstrates that the quantum of development, the proposed access arrangement and the design parameters in Section 6.0 can be delivered together.

Key features include:

- a three-storey apartment building framing the Hornchurch Road frontage, set behind a landscaped frontage;
- a central block of two-storey family houses with back-to-back gardens;
- a terrace of houses to the southern boundary overlooking the playing field;
- a one-way internal loop between the north-east entrance and the north-west exit;
- communal bin and cycle stores within collection distances;
- retained and new tree planting along the boundaries and street.

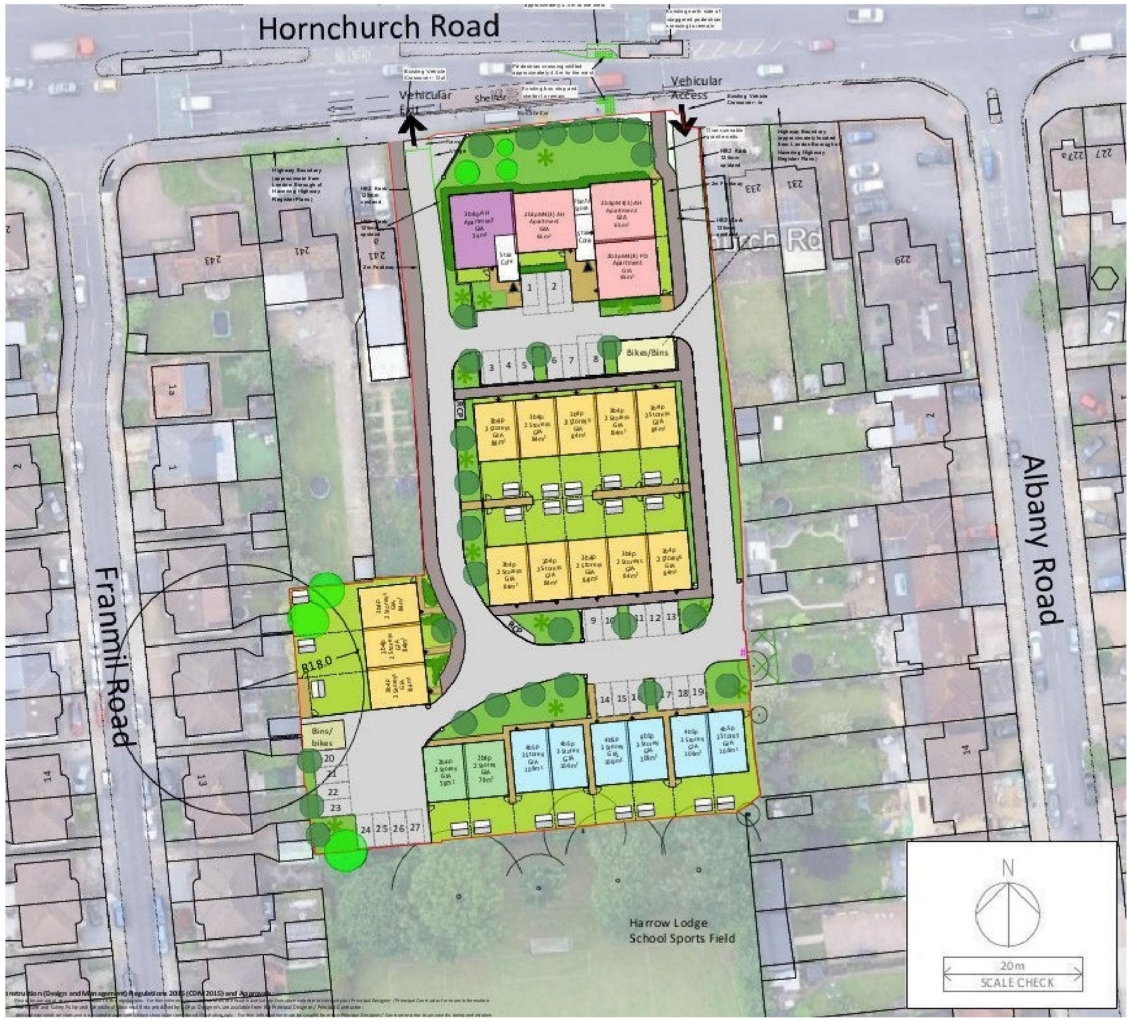


Figure 6: Illustrative Site Plan

6.0 Suggested Design Parameters

6.1 Purpose of the Parameters

As all matters except access are reserved, the parameters below are suggested to give the Council confidence that the Reserved Matters scheme will deliver the quality shown in this statement. The applicant would accept their use as a design framework, secured by condition, which subsequent Reserved Matters applications would be required to accord with.

6.2 Design Parameters for Reserved Matters

Parameter	Suggested parameter	Basis
Use and quantum	Residential (Use Class C3), up to 32 dwellings.	Application description; Section 5.1
Housing mix	A mix of apartments and houses (1–4 bed), with a majority of family-sized (3+ bed) homes.	Havering LP Policy 5; London Plan H10
Affordable housing	35% by habitable room, 70% social / 30% intermediate, unless otherwise justified by viability.	Havering LP Policy 4; pre-app advice
Building heights	• Hornchurch Road frontage: maximum three storeys, with the upper floor set back or contained within the roof form • Centre of site: maximum two storeys • Southern boundary: maximum two and a half storeys (accommodation in the roof)	Pre-app advice; Section 5.2; daylight study
Building lines and frontage	Buildings to front Hornchurch Road behind a landscaped frontage, and to front the internal street with active elevations.	Havering LP Policy 26; NPPF DP3
Separation and privacy	Minimum 18m back-to-back distance between proposed and existing habitable-room windows. Side windows to neighbours to be obscure-glazed or serve non-habitable rooms.	Havering LP Policy 7; Section 5.6
Daylight and sunlight	Detailed layouts to meet BRE 209 guidance. The eastern side of building A-right to place non-habitable rooms on that elevation and enlarge windows to habitable rooms.	Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Study, s.6.3
Housing quality	All dwellings to meet the Nationally Described Space Standard and to be dual aspect wherever possible. 90% M4(2) and 10% M4(3).	London Plan D6, D7
Private and communal amenity	Private gardens to all houses. Apartments to have balconies or terraces of at least 5m² for 1–2 person homes plus 1m² per additional occupant. Playspace to London Plan standards.	London Plan D6, S4; Havering LP Policy 10
Access and movement	Vehicular entry at the north-east corner and exit at the north-west corner, left-in/left-out, as shown on the access drawings. Internal street designed to Manual for Streets, with tracking for an 11.2m refuse vehicle and fire appliances.	Transport Statement; NPPF TR4

Parameter	Suggested parameter	Basis
Parking	Maximum 27 resident spaces, including accessible bays (3% from the outset, plus 7% identified for future provision). Electric vehicle charging infrastructure to all spaces (at least 20% active, the remainder passive). Cycle parking to London Plan minimums in secure, covered stores.	London Plan T5, T6, T6.1
Materials and appearance	A brick-led palette and pitched roof forms reflecting the suburban character of Hornchurch, with high-quality, durable materials and contemporary detailing.	Havering LP Policy 26; pre-app advice
Landscape and urban greening	Urban Greening Factor of at least 0.4 (0.41 demonstrated), including green roofs, street trees in connected tree pits, hedges and flower-rich planting. Tree-lined internal street.	London Plan G5; NPPF N3; UGF calculation
Trees	Trees identified for retention in the AIA to be protected in line with BS5837:2012, with replacement planting to compensate for losses.	Havering LP Policy 27; AIA
Biodiversity	At least 10% biodiversity net gain on site (+31.89% demonstrated), with bird and swift boxes integrated into buildings.	Environment Act 2021; BNG Assessment
Drainage	SuDS-led drainage with permeable paving and attenuation, discharge restricted to about 1.2 l/s (1 in 100 year +40% climate change).	Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
Energy	At least 35% on-site carbon reduction (84% demonstrated) using fabric efficiency, air source heat pumps and roof-mounted PV, with any shortfall to net zero offset.	London Plan SI2; Energy Statement
Refuse and servicing	Communal bin stores within London Plan and Havering collection distances, integrated into the building or landscape design.	Pre-app advice; London Plan D6
Safety and security	Natural surveillance of streets, parking and amenity spaces, with secure-by-design principles applied.	London Plan D11; Havering LP Policy 26

7.0 Conclusion

This Design and Access Statement supports an outline planning application for the demolition of 237–239 Hornchurch Road and the rear garage court, and the erection of up to 32 dwellings. All matters are reserved except access.

The site is a sustainably located, previously developed site within the built-up area of Hornchurch. It currently accommodates under-used lock-up garages that make little contribution to the character of the area. Its redevelopment would make efficient use of land and contribute to housing delivery in the Borough, consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026), London Plan Policies GG2 and D3, and Havering Local Plan Policies 3 and 10.

The scheme has evolved positively in response to pre-application advice from the London Borough of Havering (ref. W0275.24). The number of dwellings has been reduced from 40 to up to 32, maximum heights have been reduced from four storeys to three, and the access has been redesigned as a separate one-way entry and exit that retains the existing bus stop and avoids inbound vehicles waiting on Hornchurch Road.

The supporting technical evidence demonstrates that:

- safe and suitable access can be achieved, with no material impact on the highway network;
- the site is in Flood Zone 1 and can be drained sustainably;
- there would be no significant overshadowing of, or loss of daylight to, neighbouring homes;
- an Urban Greening Factor of 0.41 and a biodiversity net gain of +31.89% can be achieved on site;
- an 84% on-site carbon reduction can be achieved.

The suggested design parameters in Section 6.0 provide a clear framework to guide the Reserved Matters submissions, so that the final scheme delivers a high-quality, well-landscaped development that respects its suburban context and the amenity of neighbouring residents.

The proposed development would represent a sustainable development that can be successfully assimilated into the built-up area of Hornchurch. It is respectfully requested that outline planning permission is granted.