34 Kingsley Place N6 5EA

Design and Access Statement - V1

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1. Introduction

My partner and I are the new owners of 34 Kingsley Place. We are returning to Highgate planning to build our own home.

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2. Proposal

34 Kingsley Place has been occupied as a dwelling for nearly 40 years, yet the accommodation it provides is substandard and unsafe. Recently the property has deteriorated and is now uninhabitable and subject to a Prohibition Order.

The proposal seeks to replace the existing dwelling with an accessible, low energy fossil fuel free 2 bedroom home, of modest contemporary design enhancing the existing condition and securing a positive long-term contribution to the conservation area.

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3. Context and Conservation Area

34 Kingsley Place is situated in a mid-1960s residential development designed by Architects Co-Partnership, characterised by staggered terraces, asymmetric facades, flat roofs and a palette of varied yellow stock brick, concrete and timber, with planters to some properties. Together with Somerset Gardens, Kingsley Place forms part of the wider Highgate Conservation Area. The Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal (section 5.4.13) identifies these elements as the defining characteristics of the estate — brick construction, flat roofs, buildings of one to three storeys stepping with the steep terrain, black-stained timber

detailing and brick planters softening the street frontage — and describes the overall effect as well-designed, quiet and efficiently managed.

Long distance view east from Kingsley Place; cars unfortunately dominate the street scene

The steeply sloping site is set between two listed buildings: 33 Kingsley Place to the east and 54 Southwood Lane to the west. Both buildings are significantly taller and of a different architectural character to no. 34 and the rest of the estate. An unregistered pedestrian passage runs along the rear of the property, while private parking areas with vehicular crossovers serving 33 and 54 directly adjoin the site to the east and west.

No. 33's street façade is plain, fully rendered and has contemporary elements. Its principal elevation — the formal south-facing facade with portico — faces away from Kingsley Place toward the garden and the wider Highgate Bowl, reflecting the building's historic orientation prior to the formation of Kingsley Place. The rear garden and parking area of 54 Southwood Lane is contained by a brick wall dating from the late 1960s punctuated by a garage-type shutter to Kingsley Place. These elements, along with blank walls and garages opposite no. 34, create a relatively contained and inward-facing part of the street with attention drawn to the horizon and the distant view east — a view identified in the appraisal (section 4.5.5) as one of the dramatic long-distance views looking over the Highgate Bowl and east London from the junction of Southwood Lane and Kingsley Place.

4. Planning History

The earliest recorded planning application for the site dates from 1965 (OLD/1965/0872), submitted by Architects Co-Partnership, which proposed an extension to the existing building then in use as a jeweller’s studio.

Subsequent applications in 1989 (HGY/38474 and OLD/1989/1807) secured permission for the conversion and extension of the studio to form a single dwelling, establishing the site’s long-standing residential use.

Pre-application advice has since been obtained from the London Borough of Haringey, during which the principle of a replacement dwelling was accepted, subject to detailed design considerations.

Following receipt of the advice note PRE/2025/0226, a detailed written response was provided to the Council in December 2025. The proposal has since been developed, including increased floor-to-ceiling heights and further articulation and stepping of the street elevation. The design evolution is described in section 10.

Kingsley Place view north-east to garages and plain brick façade opposite No. 34

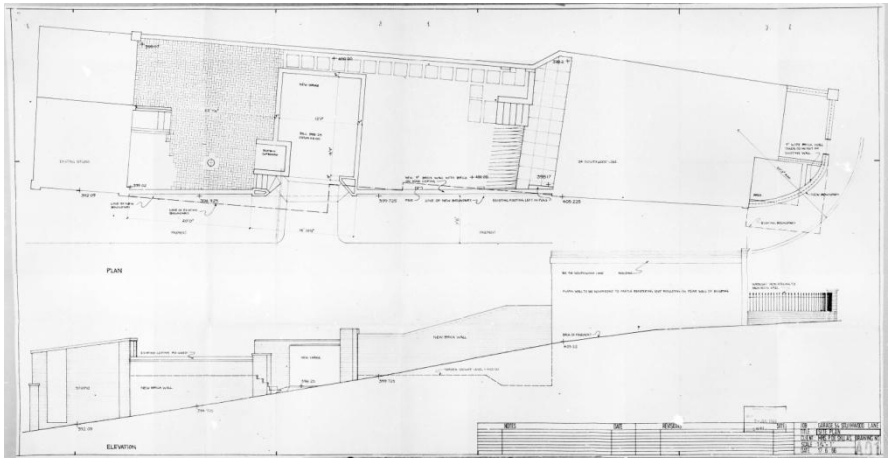
5. Listing Status and Curtilage

34 Kingsley Place is not statutorily listed. Pre-application discussions confirmed that the property is not considered to fall within the curtilage of the adjacent listed buildings.

6. Heritage Considerations

Matters related to the Conservation Area and adjacent heritage assets are addressed throughout this document.

A detailed assessment of heritage impacts is provided within the accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by WS Heritage.



Planning drawings reference OLD/1965/0872 show new boundary walls and studio alterations

7. The Existing Dwelling

The existing detached two-storey dwelling has a gross internal area of approximately 47sqm measured where ceiling height exceeds 1.6m. The upper level comprises a kitchen dining space, while the lower level contains an inner bedroom, bathroom and what might be considered a living space.

Externally, the dwelling is served by a tiered courtyard garden set high above street level with steps leading down to the dwelling entrance. Access to the site is via a narrow gate from Kingsley Place. This arrangement presents practical challenges for everyday use and cannot make provision for adequate waste storage or collection. The courtyard itself lacks privacy due to direct views towards and from the upper-floor windows of No.33 Kingsley Place.

34 Kingsley Place view southeast shows narrow gated stepped entrance

34 Kingsley Place patio garden view east where privacy is compromised by direct overlooking

Prohibition Order

The building has been altered and extended over time, with no proper consideration of layout or standard of construction, suggesting Building Control oversight must have been absent during constructions.

The property is now in a deteriorated condition and is currently subject to a Prohibition Order issued by the London Borough of Haringey under the Housing Act 2004, citing multiple Category 1 hazards which prevent lawful occupation. Generally the existing property exhibits a number of issues, including:

- damp, mould and water penetration
- poor thermal performance and lack of insulation

- inadequate natural light and ventilation
- poor space planning and inadequate ceiling heights
- impractical and non compliant access arrangements
- absence of compliant escape from the lower level
- structural issues

Together with a critical lack of internal space to adapt to required standards, these factors show the extent to which the existing dwelling cannot support safe, accessible and sustainable residential accommodation. Addressing these limitations would require a level of intervention and extension approaching that of a comprehensive re-build that would affect the entire site and occupy the on-site RPA, while still failing to deliver the quality of a replacement dwelling.

As it is, the existing building makes at best a neutral contribution to the character of the conservation area and the setting of neighbouring listed buildings — a conclusion consistent with pre-application discussions with the Council's conservation officer.

The accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by WS Heritage offers a more detailed assessment of the building's contribution, which on careful analysis is considered less favourably. WS Heritage state: ***"The existing dwelling currently represents a negative impingement upon the setting of the adjacent listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area".***

In any case, a carefully designed replacement is considered the best option to secure a positive, long-term outcome for the site and its setting.

8. On and Off-Site Trees and Arboricultural Assessment

A BS5837:2012-compliant tree survey has been undertaken to assess trees within and adjacent to the site, supported by a full Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

Six trees were surveyed, including a silver birch within the garden of No. 34 and five pollarded lime trees located just beyond the southern boundary within an unregistered rear passage. One of the lime trees is confirmed to be dead. The remaining trees are classified as Category C, indicating low individual arboricultural value, with evidence of historic management and constrained rooting environments due to adjacent retaining walls and areas of hard surfacing.

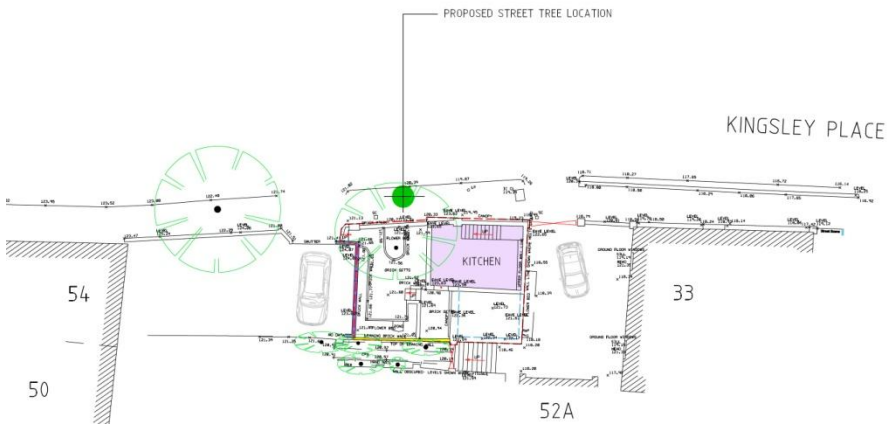
Ownership of the rear passage is not established. Responsibility for the lime trees is therefore unclear; however, any necessary works would be undertaken in accordance with appropriate arboricultural guidance and subject to conservation area controls where required.

Within the application site, the Category C silver birch has limited long-term arboricultural value and occupies a constrained position with restricted growing conditions due to adjacent structures and hard surfacing. Notwithstanding its amenity presence, the tree directly conflicts with both the footprint and the level strategy of the proposed replacement dwelling in ways that cannot be designed around without compromising safe, accessible and policy-compliant accommodation. Its removal and replacement is therefore considered necessary and proportionate. The proposal includes new tree planting and green infrastructure to compensate for the loss and to provide a more suitable long-term contribution to local canopy cover, biodiversity and visual amenity.

An Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan will be implemented along with supervision to ensure the safeguarding of all retained trees.

Proposed new street tree

As part of the landscape strategy, the applicant is committed to securing a new street tree to the pavement frontage of No. 34, subject to agreement with the highway authority. Screening using Trees for Streets indicates the location is suitable. This would provide a lasting and publicly visible contribution to canopy cover on Kingsley Place, further compensating for the loss of the on-site silver birch and aligning with the borough's urban greening objectives.



Proposed street tree location

9. Policy considerations and guidance

The proposal has been informed by planning policy and relevant technical guidance.

A design-led approach has been adopted to optimise a constrained, underutilised site within a well-connected location. The scheme prioritises high-quality design, accessibility and compliance with space standards where achievable, ensuring the long-term functionality of the dwelling.

The proposal is a self-build project, contributing to housing supply and supporting choice within the borough. Local policy recognises the role of self-build development in broadening delivery and supporting smaller-scale construction.

Environmental performance has been embedded from the outset. The dwelling is designed to reduce energy demand through its form, layout and fabric-first principles, supported by low and zero-carbon technologies in accordance with sustainable design policies and industry guidance.

Given the site’s central London context and associated overheating risk, the design responds proactively to Building Regulation requirements through passive measures including careful orientation, controlled solar gain and effective cross-ventilation.

Site constraints — particularly level changes — have also informed the internal arrangement to ensure safe and compliant means of escape, step-free or compliant stepped access where feasible, and a clear, legible layout.

Within the conservation area, national policy supports development that secures the optimal viable use of a site while preserving or enhancing heritage significance. Replacing the existing uninhabitable dwelling with a well-designed, sustainable home represents a proportionate and policy-aligned response.

Policy and Guidance

NPPF (2024)
London Plan (2021) notably D3, D6 and D7
Haringey’s Local Plan Strategic Policies (2017)
Haringey’s Development Management DPD (2017)
Highgate Neighbourhood Plan (2017)

Other policy and guidance:

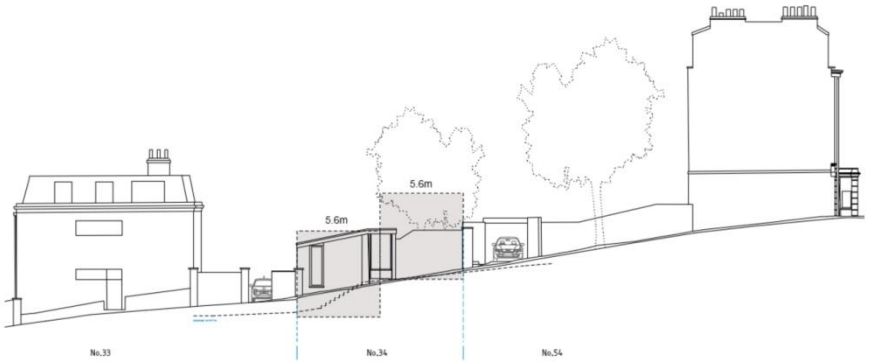
Approved Document Part B (fire safety) V1: dwellings
Approved Document Part O: Overheating
Approved Document Part M: Access to and use of dwellings, V1: dwellings
LPG Small Site Design Codes (2023)
LPG Housing Design Standards (2023)
LETI Climate Emergency Design Guide: small scale housing
RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge
Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015

10. Design Approach

The design has evolved through testing of the site's physical constraints and level changes. From the outset, the objective has been to deliver a modest, well-functioning home that responds positively to its conservation area setting while providing safe, accessible and sustainable accommodation.

The steeply sloping nature of the site, its footprint, and the presence of adjoining buildings create a tightly defined buildable envelope. These factors were analysed alongside technical requirements including space standards, fire safety, daylight, ventilation, accessibility and overheating mitigation.

Early feasibility work explored whether the existing structure could be retained or extended. However, the combination of the building's condition, the Prohibition Order, and the spatial limitations of the site and the existing structure mean that meaningful improvement would require intervention approaching that of a comprehensive rebuild, while still failing to deliver a high-quality *compliant* residential environment.



Proposed stepping references 5.6m wide terraces No. 1 to 10 Kingsley Places

Particular care has been taken in configuring the entrance level, where essential elements such as a compliant escape stair, WC, circulation space, and adequate storage must be accommodated alongside a functional living, kitchen and dining area. Testing confirmed that attempting to design tightly around the silver birch would reduce the available footprint to a degree that prevents these fundamental requirements from being achieved.

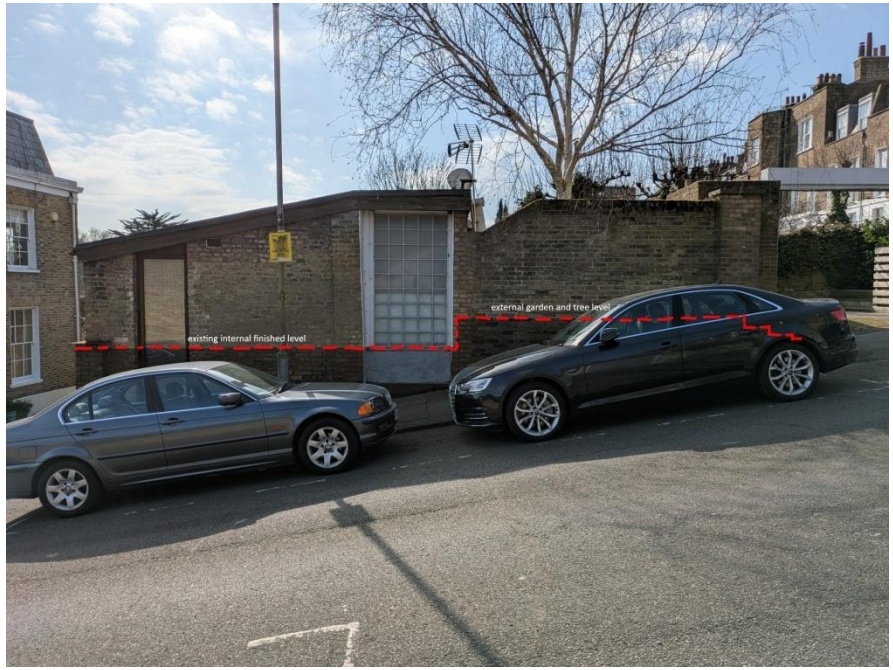
Datum Levels

The silver birch occupies the highest part of the site, fixing a datum significantly above the pavement and the existing upper floor level. Retaining it would severely limit the ability to adjust ground levels or step the building in response to the slope, constraining both the massing strategy and the internal level relationships necessary to achieve compliant access, ceiling heights, and 'connection' between the dwelling and garden. The design has therefore been informed by the need to rationalise levels across the site in a manner that supports a functional and policy-compliant form of development.

Retaining the tree would not produce a marginal compromise — it would produce a fundamentally inadequate outcome. Constrained by the RPA, the available footprint cannot accommodate a compliant entrance sequence, stair,

and accessible WC and living accommodation at the necessary level relationships. The resulting dwelling would be cramped, poorly lit and incapable of meeting the space and safety standards that a new home must achieve. Such an outcome would represent no meaningful improvement over the existing situation and would perpetuate many of the limitations exhibited by the existing dwelling.

The proposed replacement dwelling instead allows the plan to be organised logically and efficiently. A lower, south-facing garden improves daylight, usability and privacy, while enabling step-free access. An additional smaller courtyard introduces light and ventilation to the lower level. The arrangement also avoids undue pressure to build on the rear site boundaries, resulting in a more comfortable relationship with neighbouring properties.



North elevation - existing internal ground floor and garden datum

While the loss of the existing tree is acknowledged, the design prioritises the creation of a safe, durable and sustainable home capable of making a positive long-term contribution to the conservation area. Replacement tree planting will form part of the landscape strategy, ensuring the continued presence of greenery within the streetscape as the site evolves over time.

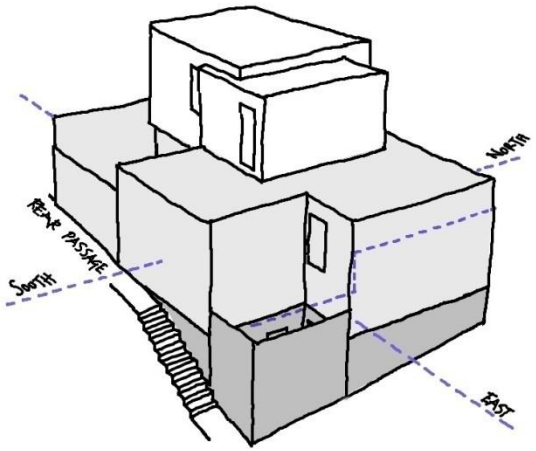
On balance, the proposal represents the most coherent and proportionate response to the site's constraints, securing a significant improvement over the existing situation while aligning with the objective of achieving the optimal viable use of the site.

Massing and Form Factor

The massing is shaped by several factors: the site's topography, the presence of adjacent listed buildings, the wider 1960s context, the need to avoid overshadowing, and the objective of achieving a compact, energy-efficient form.

The proposed building is set below the adjoining listed properties, ensuring it remains visually subordinate in its immediate setting. Volumes step down the natural fall of the site toward the south-east corner, creating a composition that reduces perceived bulk and allows the building to integrate with the changing levels. This approach is expressed in the Kingsley Place elevation, where the stepped and set-back form avoids the appearance of a single dominant mass. From public viewpoints, the proposal maintains legibility of distinctive rooflines and historic elevations.

Careful control of the building envelope ensures the proposal will not cause unacceptable overshadowing of neighbouring properties. A daylight and sunlight assessment prepared by Anstey Horne demonstrates that the proposed dwelling fully complies with BRE Guidelines in respect of both daylight and sunlight at No. 33 Kingsley Place, the adjacent listed building.



Massing sketch – volumes step down towards the ground level southeast corner

Material treatment reinforces the layered composition, with a grounded brick base reflecting elements of the existing building and boundary wall, while the upper level is lighter and partially set back to further moderate visual impact.

Overall, the proposal adopts a measured and responsive approach to scale, allowing the building to read as an evolution of the site rather than an imposition upon it.

Materials and Detail

A restrained material palette is proposed, drawing from the established character of Kingsley Place, where brick, timber and concrete define much of the mid-1960s architectural language. Referencing this palette helps ensure the dwelling sits comfortably within its surroundings and maintains a modest and composed presence.

The building is conceived with a clear material hierarchy. The lower level is expressed in brick, providing a durable and grounded base that responds to the prevailing material character of the street. Subtle variation in brick finish, together with an articulated inset entrance, assists in breaking down the façade.

The brick elevations are differentiated by mortar finish. To the left of the entrance on the north elevation, continuing around the east elevation and the rear, a recessed weather-struck joint emphasises the individual brick units and gives a textured, shadow-rich surface more consistent with the estate. To the right of the entrance, continuing around the west elevation facing No. 54, a flush or lightly smeared joint produces a tighter, more contemporary planar surface.

Above, a modulated timber upper storey is introduced to create a sense of lightness and visual setback. This approach reduces the apparent mass of the building and draws on a compositional principle shared with the adjacent listed buildings, where heavier masonry bases support lighter elements above — reinterpreted here in contemporary materials appropriate to the estate character. A full height brick elevation facing 54 Southwood Lane provides a more robust boundary treatment adjacent to the car parking area.

Design development sketch illustrating the proposed building framed by the street tree with No. 33 Kingsley Place and the horizon visible beyond

Window and door frames will have a minimal profile with dark powder-coated finishes so they remain visually recessive. Ancillary elements — including copings, rainwater goods and the bin store — will be coordinated to avoid unnecessary visual prominence. Detailing will prioritise durability, weathering performance and ease of maintenance to ensure a long-term positive contribution to the conservation area.

Integrated planting and planters will contribute texture and softness, assisting the building to settle into the streetscape and reference the use of planters elsewhere.

The character elements identified in the Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal as defining the Kingsley Place and Somerset Gardens estate — brick construction, flat roofs, stepped massing following the terrain, modest scale and planted frontages — have all informed the proposal directly and consistently. The replacement dwelling does not replicate the Architects Co-Partnership design or Ted Levy's Summerset Gardens, nor should it. It draws on a similar palette and principles to arrive at a contemporary response specific to this site and this plot. In doing so it aligns with the appraisal's own characterisation of what makes this part of the conservation area distinctive.

North street elevation proposed — the proposed dwelling steps with the fall of the pavement and remains visually subordinate to the adjacent listed buildings at 33 Kingsley Place and 54 Southwood Lane

On that basis the proposal is considered to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area. Where any residual element of change might be weighed against that conclusion, the public benefits of the scheme — replacement of an uninhabitable dwelling subject to a Prohibition Order, delivery of a fossil-fuel-free self-build home, improved accessibility, significantly reduced operational energy use, and a net gain in green infrastructure including a new street tree — represent a substantive case in favour of consent that comfortably outweighs any harm.

Overlooking and Privacy

The layout, orientation and placement of openings have been carefully considered to avoid direct overlooking while securing good levels of daylight, outlook and cross-ventilation.

The proposal improves upon the existing arrangement with outdoor spaces offering greater enclosure and visual separation, particularly in relation to No. 33. The relationship between the proposed windows and surrounding properties accords with established privacy expectations:

- To the west, the nearest directly opposing upper-floor windows at 54 Southwood Lane are over 20 metres distant and benefit from screening by existing and proposed vegetation.
- The north-facing window serving the workspace offers some passive surveillance of Kingsley Place, with only distant 18m plus oblique views toward properties on the opposite side of the street.
- The south-facing workspace and landing window face proposed and existing trees, and vegetation and will not introduce any harmful overlooking.
- The south facing kitchen window is obscure glazed to 1.7m above finished floor level.

Overall, the scheme maintains a respectful relationship with neighbouring properties while delivering improved privacy and amenity.

Access Provisions and Approved Document M (Inclusive Design Statement)

Reasonable provision is made for people to gain access to and use the dwelling, having regard to the steep topography and compact nature of the site. The design incorporates accessible principles wherever practicable, including wider door openings, adequate nibs, generous circulation space, and the location of key habitable rooms and facilities on the entrance level.

The approach from the pavement has a gradient of approximately 1:5. This presents a significant physical constraint and limits the potential to achieve fully step-free access without disproportionate site intervention. In this context, the proposal has been carefully developed to maximise accessibility within the parameters of the site.

While full compliance with M4(2) is not achievable, the dwelling meets the requirements of M4(1) (Visitable Dwellings) and delivers a clear improvement over the existing property, particularly in terms of internal movement, legibility of layout, and overall usability.

Living conditions and D6 and NDSS ceiling height regulation

Recognising there is an unavoidable tension between achieving greater floor-to-ceiling heights, realistic structural depths and maintaining a lower external profile, the upper floor level ceilings are set at 2.5m (equivalent to 70% of GIA where 75% is required) and 2.3m on the lower cooler bedroom level. This modest degree of variation towards NDSS standards is a positive outcome for a one-off dwelling of this form and constraint where:

- mechanical ventilation and heat recovery (MVHR) provides continuous fresh-air supply year-round
- dual aspect and cross-ventilation allow purge cooling
- the size and position of glazed openings are dictated by Part O guidance and analysis

Environmental Strategy

The environmental strategy follows the principles set out in the London Energy Transformation Initiative (LETI) Climate Emergency Design Guide for small-scale housing. The proposal adopts a fossil-fuel-free approach supported by high levels of fabric performance, efficient building services and on-site renewable energy generation, to achieve zero regulated carbon emissions and an A rated EPC.

The dwelling is also designed to target an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) less than 35kWh/m²/year, significantly below typical benchmarks. This will be supported by a heat pump, mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (including summer bypass), triple glazing and the inclusion of roof-mounted photovoltaic panels (subject to detailed design).

PV panels have previously been approved on a flat-roofed dwelling within the same conservation area at 13 Kingsley Place (HGY/2025/2122), establishing an accepted precedent for solar installation within the estate. The proposed panels are specified with dark frames and backing to minimise visual impact, consistent with the conditions attached to that approval — although in this case the installation is barely visible from any public view point.

Overheating has informed the design from an early stage in accordance with Approved Document Part O. Glazing areas are carefully controlled, with the largest south-facing opening shaded by the cantilevered upper floor to limit solar gain. The layout enables effective cross-ventilation together with purge and secure night-time cooling. Bedrooms are positioned on the cooler lower level. North-facing windows are intentionally limited to reduce heat loss while still supporting dual-aspect ventilation.

Dynamic thermal modelling will be undertaken at detailed design stage (as required) to confirm compliance with Parts O and F. Non-material adjustments to glazing specification or shading may be made if required.

Embodied Carbon:

A mass timber construction is proposed for the upper part to reduce embodied carbon and support carbon sequestration, while enabling a high-performance building fabric.

Energy Consumption:

Low-energy lighting and appliances will be specified throughout to minimise operational energy demand.

Water Efficiency:

Water-efficient fittings and appliances will be installed throughout, including dual-flush WCs, a low-volume bathtub and reduced-consumption sanitary ware, in line with the London Plan target of 105 litres per person per day.

11. Area Schedule

Detached 3 storey 2 bedroom 3 person dwelling with additional workspace

Designed in line with NDSS and London Plan D6 the dwelling is arranged over three storeys, the lowest of which is set into the slope and largely below pavement level. The upper storey is designated as a workspace rather than a bedroom, reflecting both its thermal characteristics as the warmest level and its separation from bathroom and other facilities by a flight of stairs.

Kitchen Dining	18m2
Living Room	13m2
Bathroom	7.2m2
Bedroom one	12.4m2
Bedroom two	10.6m2
Workspace/office	15.9m2
WC	1.2m2
Built-in storage	4.5m2
Patio	13.3m2
Courtyard	4.8m2
Ceiling heights	2.3-2.6m (70% at 2.6m)
External bike storage	2
Secure internal bike store	2
External bin store	1
GIA	**108.4m2**

12. Bin storage, Waste and Recycling Collection

Accessible, level and discreet designed-in space is provided to the front of the property for:

1 No. 240 litre refuse bin
1 No. 240 litre mixed recycling bin 740mm D x 590mm W x 1080mm H
1 No. food waste bin 350mm D x 300mm W x 360mm H

34 Kingsley Place proposed view southeast

13. Conclusion

34 Kingsley Place is a small, constrained and complicated site. The existing dwelling — uninhabitable, subject to a Prohibition Order and vacant — represents a poor outcome in a sustainable, well-connected and architecturally distinctive part of Highgate. Its replacement is not only justified but necessary.

The proposal that has emerged from this process is the result of rigorous testing against competing constraints: topography, heritage setting, tree considerations, space standards, accessibility, fire safety and environmental performance. These are not independent demands that have been resolved in sequence — they are interconnected, and the design is the product of resolving them together. The result is a modest, carefully considered home that is specific to this site and capable of making a genuinely positive contribution to the conservation area over the long term.

The replacement dwelling steps with the natural fall of the land, sits subordinate to its listed neighbours, draws its material and formal language from the Architects Co-Partnership estate that defines this part of Highgate, and delivers a fossil-fuel-free home of high environmental performance. It achieves zero regulated carbon emissions in accordance with Haringey Local Plan Policy SP4, delivering a home that meets the borough's climate objectives in full. It replaces a building that cannot be saved with a carefully designed home specific to this site and worthy of its setting within the Highgate Conservation Area.