

Design and access statement

Building Use

Current: Private residential, single family dwelling.

Proposed: Demolition of the existing single storey dwelling. Erection of a new high quality three storey dwelling plus basement and landscaping.

Amount

The proposal is for the erection of one 5 bedroom dwelling and associated landscaping. There is no change to the amount of development on site and the density will remain as existing.

Layout

The proposed plans show the outline of the existing house to be demolished in dotted line. The proposed new dwelling largely respects the footprint of the existing house: the new dwelling is located on the same front building line as the forward most form of the existing house and that of the houses in general to the east of the site; the side elevations are located on the same line (or within) as the existing house; and the rear ground floor form sits within the form of the existing house.

No windows allow overlooking to the neighbours on either side. When windows are required on the side elevations for additional light internally, the windows are translucent glazed so that no views out are possible.

The location of the main entrance in the centre of the proposed house echoes the central location of the main entrance of the houses on either side of the site.

Scale / massing

The size of the existing single storey house was not sufficient to meet the client's accommodation requirements. The house is also untypical and very small in the street context therefore has no presence and is a poor contributor to the street scene.

The scale and massing of the proposed house has been carefully designed to sit on the site in a manner sensitive to its neighbours. Special care has been given to the outlook and separation distances from the habitable windows on the east elevation of the house at 550 Wilbraham Rd, resulting in the proposed house cutting away from 550 on the second floor at the front and the stepped forms to the rear. This cutting away on the second floor also respects the views to 550 from the street and is deferential in form to 550.

The height of the proposed house respects the scale of the house at 548a Wilbraham Rd.

In order to keep the scale and massing down to an appropriate level with the surroundings and be as unimposing as possible, a part basement has been utilised in the proposals (down one side of the house only).

Landscaping

The existing landscaping is very limited and of poor quality, consisting mainly of hardstanding in the front garden and a lawn in the rear.

Advice has been taken from an Arboriculturalist regarding treatment of the existing trees, see attached report. Work on site and any work to trees will be undertaken in line with this advice.

The layout of the proposed house is designed to get the most out of the available landscape of the site by locating some of the accommodation underground in the basement. New landscaping will include a hedge to the front boundary above the existing wall in keeping with some of the surrounding houses and typical of the area. Due to the relatively tight nature of the site, new lawned areas will be provided to ensure usable amenity, and new planting will generally be limited to the smaller scale. The proposed house has been located on the same front building line as the existing house (and that of the houses in general to the east of the site) so that the maximum rear garden utility space is achieved.

There is a hard landscaping strategy for the surrounding paths and garden area to the rear; the material is to be a light coloured tile so as to be in keeping with the sensitive nature of the dwellings materials and existing front stone boundary wall.

Sedum roofs are to be included on the ground floor and first floor roofs, providing an extra microclimate for insects and bird life and making the views from the first and second floor bedrooms more rewarding.

Appearance

The proposed dwelling utilises a limited pallet of sensitive and restrained materials throughout. The beige/buff brick the house is constructed from has been chosen to relate to the retained existing front boundary wall (when cleaned).

The planning constraints that have contributed to the overall shape of the house have led to it being conceptualised as a collection of juxtaposed solid brick forms. These forms perform a vertical shift at the front to create the second floor on one side and a subterranean garage on the other, with the easily identifiable entrance sitting naturally between the two in a glazed 'fissure'. This is further enhanced by the brick continuing internally to form walls of the double height entrance area that are visible from the outside, thereby emphasising the separate forms of the two main brick structures of the front elevation. At the rear the brick forms cascade down to ground level, ending at a more intimate human scale.

Glazed apertures on the north facing rear facade are kept relatively large so that light is maximised into the spaces and good views are afforded out into the garden amenity. Rooflights are also used to encourage light deep into the building. The front facade on the south side is more solid which accommodates and helps control solar gains and the amount of direct sunlight from the summer sun. Juliet balconies on the rear at first floor level allow for occasional connection with the rear garden.

Access

Vehicular access to the site will be from the same location as existing but with a widened opening. The house will provide garage space in the basement for two vehicles and off road parking on the drive for two further vehicles.

New pedestrian access to the site has been provided in the form of a separate gate, which will match in style the vehicular gate. A ramped path between external pavement and front door will be

wheelchair user friendly in accordance with Part M Building regulations. Entrance to the house will achieve level access.

Sustainability

In order to take advantage of the solar orientation the site has to offer, to assist with the requirements of meeting (and likely exceeding) the carbon emissions reductions required by building control, and to integrate a sustainable energy generation technology into the proposed dwelling, low carbon technologies have been considered:

- Solar water heating, for preheating the domestic hot water.
- Photovoltaic panels, for generating electricity for use on-site or export to the grid.
- Air source heat pump.
- Electric car charging point in garage.

The photovoltaic and solar hot water panel arrays will be located on the dwelling's roof – the architectural design of this element is currently for an almost flat roof, therefore they will not be located in a prominent position in relation to the surrounding buildings, and will not cause any negative impact or nuisance to surroundings.

A combination of these technologies will be integrated into the final design, depending on further technical feasibility and financial viability work at the next stage of design.