

pre-application advise - kingston road

I have looked at your submission and offer the following observations.

The principle of the proposal is acceptable and the Council is supportive of contemporary design where it is of a high quality and pays regard to the surrounding character and context. The dwelling on site at present is of utilitarian appearance which makes a neutral contribution to the street scene. The opportunity to add visual interest is welcomed.

Context:

The site lies within the Didsbury St. James conservation area in a street characterised by a varied housing typology of Victorian villas and terraced houses, early C20 houses, some examples of late C20 houses and a couple of recent contemporary dwellings.

No.44 is a late C20 gable ended rectangular plan detached dwelling set within the centre of a rectangular plot fronting the western side of Kingston Road. It shares similar characteristics with No.21 Millgate Lane to the south (proportions, orientation, height, scale, design and materials) but is very different to No.42 Kingston Road (& 3 Millgate Lane at the rear), the large Victorian detached dwelling immediately north. Facing the site are 2 detached dwellings erected in the late 1980's and south of these is a contemporary detached dwelling which received approval in 2017.

Siting

The siting of the proposed dwelling within the centre of the plot is acceptable. There are however some concerns regarding taking development closer to the northern boundary as set out below.

Design, Scale, Height and Massing

The plot:ratio is almost identical to No.21 Millgate Lane immediately south. The massing of the proposed dwelling, together with its increased height, design and roof profile, makes it appear shoe-horned onto the plot creating an uncomfortable relationship with its plot and neighbouring dwellings.

The elevations would benefit from being either horizontally or vertically proportioned; combining both on the front elevation appears incongruous. No.21 (as No.44 at present) is horizontally proportioned whilst No.42 immediately north is vertically proportioned. If the ridge and eaves height are increasing to respond to No.42, a vertically proportioned design treatment would most likely be appropriate. Consideration in this regard should be paid to how the windows interpret the narrower scale of windows at No.42.

The extended footprint across both storeys, particularly to the north, significantly narrows the visual gap with No.42. This is a much earlier Victorian villa which characteristically in the area, is relieved by having a good separation distance from later neighbouring dwellings. Any revised scheme should maintain a good visual break so that the historic urban grain of Kingston Road is maintained.

Materials

Care should be taken over the materials palette. The scheme proposes yellow/orange brick and off-white/grey render, materials similar to the dwelling on site at present. We will pay close attention to these and would ask to see materials samples as a condition of any approval.

Other Matters

As the site is within a conservation area, any application would go before the Conservation Panel meeting that is held monthly in Manchester. You have the option of asking us to take the pre-application submission to the Panel meeting.

In addition to your plans and elevations, any application should be accompanied by a Heritage Statement and a Design and Access Statement which separately set out the historic context and the design evolution of your submission.

Other issues may come to light during the course of any application, but I hope this is helpful in the interim.