Paul Butler Associates
Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

Gary Jackson

Erection of Family Dwelling on Land at 826 Wilmslow Road, Didsbury

Planning and Heritage Statement

04 April 2013

Paul Butler Associates, 31 Blackfriars Road, Salford, Manchester M3 7AQ
t. 0161 835 3530 I e. pba@paulbutlerassociates.co.uk I w. www.paulbutlerassociates.co.uk

Professional Planning, Development & Heritage Advisors since 1992.
Members of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI). Recognised by the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) as a Historic Environment Service Provider (HESPR).

© Paul Butler Associates Ltd 2012. All Rights Reserved.

Job Number: 12/801

Project: Land at 826 Wilmslow Road, Didsbury

Client: Gary Jackson

File Name: planning and heritage statement tf04

Document Preparation/Checking Record:

	Name and Qualifications	Position	Date
Prepared by:	Tom Flanagan MTCP MRTPI	Director	08.02.2013
Checked by:	Paul Butler MA MPhil PG Cert Arch Hist MRTPI IHBC	Director	08.02.2013
Issued by:	Tom Flanagan MTCP MRTPI	Director	04.04.2013

Document Revision Record:

Issue No.	Date	Details of Revisions
-	-	-

Contents

1. Introduction

2. The Application Site and Surrounding Area

3. Planning History and Pre-Application Discussions

4. The Proposed Scheme

5. National, Regional and Local Planning Policy Context

6. Planning and Heritage Appraisal

7. Conclusion

1. Introduction

1.1 This Planning and Heritage Statement has been prepared by Paul Butler Associates on behalf of Gary Jackson. It forms part of a planning application for the erection of a family dwelling with associated car parking and landscaping on land at 826 Wilmslow Road, Didsbury.

1.2 In order to provide a clear understanding of the proposed scheme and its relationship with the surrounding area, this statement includes:

- A description of the application site and surrounding area;
- A review of the application site's planning history and a summary of pre-application discussions between the design team, Manchester City Council's officers, local residents and the Didsbury Civic Society;
- An overview of the proposed scheme;
- A review of relevant national, regional and local planning policy guidance, and;
- An appraisal of the proposed scheme against its planning policy context and relevant planning and heritage issues.

1.3 The planning application is supported by a series of planning drawings prepared by Ollier Smurthwaite Architects and the following documents:

- A Design and Access Statement prepared by Ollier Smurthwaite Architects;
- A Code for Sustainable Homes Pre-Assessment Report prepared by LK Accreditation Limited; and,
- An Arboricultural Report prepared by Scott Fitzgerald Tree Consultants.

2. The Application Site and Surrounding Area

The Application Site

2.1 The application site is located approximately 100m east of Wilmslow Road (A5145), 250m north of the historic core of Didsbury and 9km south of Manchester city centre.

2.2 The site is broadly rectangular in shape, 0.08 ha in area and positioned adjacent to the formal landscaped gardens of Lawnhurst. Lawnhurst is a large 3-storey (plus basement) building that was designed by Manchester-born architect Edward Salomons as a private residence for industrialist Henry Simon in 1891. Following its use as a military hospital during the First World War, the building became a nursing home and then a school during the mid to late twentieth century before being converted into twelve apartments in 2010.



Photograph 1: The application site



Photograph 2: Views of Lawnhurst from the application site

2.3 During the conversion of Lawnhurst the application site was used for storage and the siting of refuse and recycling facilities. It is currently vacant, roughly vegetated, visually and physically separated from Lawnhurst's landscaped gardens to the east and south by a laurel hedge. The site's northern and western boundaries are defined by dense tree planting and dilapidated timber fencing that separates the site from the rear gardens of 824 and 824b Wilmslow Road.

2.4 Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is from Wilmslow Road. A right of way exists adjacent to the southern boundary of the site and provides access – from Lawnhurst and the application site – to Fletcher Moss Park.



Photograph 3: Access to the application site



Photograph 4: Dense tree planting on the site boundaries

The Surrounding Area

2.5 The application site is located within the northern part of Didsbury St James Conservation Area. This conservation area was designated in 1970 and is centred on Didsbury's historical core at the junction of Wilmslow Road and Stenner Lane. Its boundaries include Ford Lane, Didsbury Park and Sandhurst Road to the north, the rears of properties on the western side of Parrs Wood Road to the east, a ditch draining the Mersey flood plain to the southwest and the River Mersey to the west.

2.6 Whilst the earliest recorded reference of this part of Didsbury dates to 1235, the character of the conservation area was established by the development of large villas and country houses by wealthy industrialists during the nineteenth century. The majority of these large private residences are now in educational or institutional use or, like Lawnhurst, have been subdivided into apartments. Today, there is an array of architectural styles across the area, ranging from classical and gothic public buildings and more grandiose houses to contemporary buildings including those found at the Towers Business Park as well as the neighbouring medical centre.

2.7 Other characteristics that contribute to the character of the conservation area include: the use of a variety of materials, ranging from redbrick for walls and blue slate for roofs, stone/roughcast render/terra cotta dressing to the use of glass in the more contemporary buildings; mature trees which provide screening and a leafy backdrop, together with substantial landscaping which contributes to the quality of setting; and, gardens that are enclosed by brick walls and which vary in height and up to three metres.

2.8 The site is positioned within a highly sustainable and accessible location due to being located on the fringes of Didsbury Village and accessible by a good public transport network.

3. Planning History and Pre-Application Discussions

Planning History

3.1 There is a planning history associated with the application site that is of particular relevance to the proposed scheme and which is set out in further detail below.

Application 069472/FO/2003/S2

3.2 This full application was submitted by Lawn Hurst Ltd on 01 October 2003 and was for the development of 2 no. detached two storey four bedroom dwellings to the west of Lawnhurst. The application was refused by Manchester City Council on 26 November 2003 for the following 5 reasons:

- The development is out of scale/character with the Didsbury St James Conservation Area, an area comprising low density development within a mature landscape setting, and would therefore be contrary to the Council's policy for development in conservation areas (UDP policies E3.8 and DCP18);
- The development would constitute backland development in the case of Conservation Areas. It will not maintain or enhance the character of the surrounding built form or space and would therefore be contrary to policy (UDP Policy DC6.2(g);
- The scheme is considered residential development on a backland site due to limited access due to the site being surrounded by other housing and would therefore be contrary to UDP Policy DC6.1;
- The two dwellings will cause a loss of privacy to adjoining dwellings and associated gardens and will create problems of significant overshadowing and an over dominant appearance affecting existing properties contrary to UDP Policy H2.2; and,
- The development will result in the loss of private outdoor amenity space allocated for the residents of Lawnhurst and will have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of occupants contrary to policy H2.2.

3.3 In contrast to the proposed development, not only did the previous scheme propose 2 dwellings but there are significant differences regarding design. In terms of siting, the application site for the refused scheme was larger and the dwellings were sited within closer proximity to Lawnhurst and encroached on its landscape gardens. The proposed dwelling is sited much further away and doesn't impact on Lawnhurst residents' amenity space. The other notable difference is that the refused dwellings were of a low quality/standard design that failed to consider the application site's context and the significance of the Didsbury St James Conservation Area. The proposed dwelling is of a high quality contemporary design that will minimise any potential impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents and will provide a valuable contribution to the conservation area.

Pre-Application Discussions

The Council

3.4 Prior to submission of the planning application, the design team have held various discussions with Manchester City Council's officers. An initial meeting was held with a Council planning officer on the 8 February 2012 to discuss the principle of the proposals and a site meeting was held on 3 May 2012 to discuss the planning issues that would require consideration. A further meeting was held with the Council's planning and design & conservation officers on 1 October 2012 to discuss the detail of the dwelling's design. There were also discussions and subsequent agreement on the level of information that would be required to accompany the application.

Local Residents

3.5 The design team thought it important to engage with local residents prior to the submission of an application. The proposals were presented to Lawnhurst's residents on 17 December 2012. The purpose of the consultation event was to explain the proposed scheme and allow residents the opportunity to comment on the proposals. The event was attended by

the majority of Lawnhurst's residents and the design team were on hand to respond to any questions/queries raised.

3.6 The following questions/queries were raised by the residents, together with a response from the design team.

Q1) How high is the perimeter wall?

Response: The wall is approximately 3m high. The height reflects that of similar redbrick walls in the Didsbury St James Conservation Area and ensures that views of the house from the Lawnhurst apartments are minimised.

Q2) Will there be any planting on the Lawnhurst side of the wall?

Response: A row of new specimen trees will be planted as well as climbers. The wall and planting will enhance the setting of Lawnhurst's grounds for the enjoyment of its residents.

Q3) Are there any windows in the perimeter wall and what materials will the wall comprise?

Response: There will be no windows, therefore ensuring no impact on the amenity of Lawnhurst's residents; and, the wall will comprise traditional/reclaimed redbrick that will be sympathetic to Lawnhurst and in keeping with the Didsbury St James Conservation Area.

Q4) Will the proposals reduce access to Fletcher Moss Park?

Response: The existing access – adjacent to the southern boundary of the application site – for Lawnhurst's residents will not be affected.

Q5) Do the proposals require a new access from Wilmslow Road?

Response: Access to the application site will be via the existing access off Wilmslow Road; and, due to the proposals being for a single house, traffic generation will be negligible.

Q6) Are there to be any changes to the current car parking arrangements?

Response: There will be no impact on Lawnhurst's existing car parking and provision for the proposed dwelling will be within the application site.

Q7) What is the construction timeframe?

Response: The construction timeframe is expected to be approximately 9-12 months and a planning application is expected to be submitted early in the New Year.

Q8) Would there be any loss of Lawnhurst's grounds?

Response: The proposed dwelling will be sited on the adjacent overgrown parcel of land and will not have any impact on Lawnhurst's grounds.

Q9) Would there be an impact in terms of comings/goings and noise during the construction phase?

Response: There will be no detrimental impact regarding these issues due to the project being for a single house. With regards to noise during construction, and in accordance with good construction practice, there will be regular consultation with neighbouring residents and monitoring of site impacts before/during/post construction.

Q10) Could the trees (proposed adjacent to wall) and a screen be put in place prior to construction of the dwelling/wall?

Response: A screen will be put in place in line with Health and Safety regulations which will limit visual impact during construction. The planting of the trees might be more difficult but this will be discussed with the project arboriculturalist.

Q11) Will the proposed dwelling impact on any existing trees?

Response: Prior to developing the design an Arboricultural Report was commissioned which identified all trees (and their root protection areas) within the site. The new dwelling has been designed to minimise impact on existing trees. It is proposed that a single tree is removed – a young category C tree (T5) – to enable the car parking to be covered, however this will be negated by the provision of 3 new trees.

Q12) Can new trees be planted in the grounds of Lawnhurst where existing 1/2 trees were previously removed?

Response: The design team confirmed that these trees were removed due to being in a poor/dangerous condition. However, there would be consideration of replacement trees which would be discussed with the residents.

Q13) Does the proposed dwelling have a sedum roof?

Response: Yes it does. The sedum roof will be low maintenance and will further reduce the visual impact of the dwelling on Lawnhurst's residents' outlook.

3.7 At the end of the presentation, one of the residents stated that the development of the proposed dwelling would provide a better use for the site than existing; and, that the design was very well thought out and a good solution that would enhance the setting of Lawnhurst and its grounds. The majority of Lawnhurst's residents were of the same view.

3.8 Other residents located close by to the application site include no's 824, 824a, 824b and 822 Wilmslow Road. Although the proposals will have even less of an impact on these residents, the proposals were discussed with them individually and they were handed a copy of the application drawings.

Didsbury Civic Society

3.9 A meeting was also arranged and attended with Steve Parl and other committee members of the Didsbury Civic Society on Thursday 7 February at The Parsonage. The main issue raised related to whether or not the proposals might be considered backland development. It was confirmed that this issue had been raised at an initial meeting with the Council's planning officers and that the proposed dwelling had been sensitively designed to ensure that it accords with each of the criteria set out in policy DC6 of the Council's unitary development plan.

3.10 The submitted scheme has been designed in response to the aspirations of the client; Manchester City Council's planning and design & conservation officers; and, to minimise potential harm to neighbouring residents' amenity. The proposed scheme has been developed on the following principles: to provide a family dwelling that is set within a generous landscaped setting and retains existing trees within the site; to design a dwelling of high sustainability credentials that is energy efficient and has a positive impact on biodiversity; and, to design a dwelling that appreciates the significance of the Didsbury St James Conservation Area, whilst at the same time providing a contemporary and positive addition.

4. The Proposed Scheme

4.1 This is a full planning application for the erection of a family dwelling with associated car parking and landscaping.

4.2 The proposed dwelling is a 4 bedroom family home and the main aspirations for the dwelling are for it to be of an exceptional design quality and innovation, to have high sustainability credentials, to integrate sensitively within its setting and to have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the Didsbury St James Conservation Area.

4.3 The dwelling is single storey above ground and has been built into the ground to provide additional accommodation. Internally, the ground floor comprises a WC, study/home office, lounge, kitchen and dining area, living room, a double bedroom and master bedroom with en-suites. The lower ground floor comprises 2 double bedrooms, a bathroom, swimming pool, gymnasium, store room, utility room and plant room. Externally, amenity space is provided in the form of 2 linked paved terraces, a sunken courtyard, an internal courtyard and lawn area.

4.4 Covered car parking for 2 vehicles is provided by a car port style roof enclosure which extends from the garden, cycle and bin stores. These enclosures comprise lightweight timber post and timber infill construction. The cycle store is secure and will provide sufficient room for a minimum of 4 bicycles, whilst it can also be used for pushchairs and mobility scooters.

4.5 The dwelling will comprise redbrick, glazing, timber cladding and a sedum roof incorporating roof lights. A redbrick garden wall forms the eastern and southern boundaries of the site, from which the dwelling will extend. The northern and western boundaries of the site will comprise replacement timber close boarded fencing and existing trees.

4.6 Vehicular and pedestrian access will be from Wilmslow Road via the communal car parking area associated with Lawnhurst and through entrance doors positioned on the

eastern elevation of the redbrick wall. A further pedestrian access will be incorporated on the southern elevation of the boundary wall to enable access to Fletcher Moss Park.

5. National, Regional and Local Planning Policy Context

5.1 Planning policy guidance of relevance to the proposed scheme, and which provides the context for its assessment, is set out within the following documents:

- The National Planning Policy Framework; and,
- The Development Plan for Manchester.

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England. The central theme to the NPPF is to achieve sustainable development. The document states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It seeks to achieve this objective by:

- Supporting development that facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport, gives priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and has access to high quality public transport facilities;
- Seeking the creation of sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities through the delivery of a wide choice of high quality homes;
- Encouraging outstanding and innovative design and seeking a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- Ensuring that new development establishes a strong sense of place, optimises the potential of sites and is safe, accessible, healthy and inclusive;
- Minimising energy consumption;
- Minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains where possible, and;
- Striving to retain and enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings and encouraging new development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Development Plan for Manchester

5.3 The Development Plan for Manchester comprises the following documents:

- North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) to 2021;
- The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012);
- Saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995); and,
- The Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Guidance (April 2007).

North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) to 2021 (2008)

5.4 The proposed scheme has been considered in relation to those policies set out within the Regional Spatial Strategy, including:

Policy DP1 'Spatial Principles' outlines the key principles underpinning the RSS, which include promoting sustainable communities, making the best use of existing resources and infrastructure and promoting environmental quality.

Policy DP2 'Promote Sustainable Communities' states that sustainable communities should meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, promote community cohesion and equality and diversity, be sensitive to the environment and contribute to a high quality of life.

Policy DP4 'Make the Best Use of Existing Resources and Infrastructure' states that priority should be given to developments in locations which build upon existing concentrations of activities and existing infrastructure; and, identifies the use of suitable infill opportunities within settlements for development.

Policy DP5/RT2 'Manage Travel Demand' dictates that the location of development should reduce the need to travel, especially by car; and, that all new development should

be accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, with priority given to locations where such access is already available.

Policy DP7 'Promote Environmental Quality' states that environmental quality should be protected and enhanced, especially by understanding and respecting the character and distinctiveness of places and landscapes; the protection and enhancement of the historic environment; promoting good quality design; and, maintaining and enhancing the quantity and quality of biodiversity and habitat.

Policy DP9 'Reduce Emissions and Adapt to Climate Change' sets out that schemes should contribute to reductions in carbon dioxide emissions through increasing urban density; encouraging better built homes and energy efficiency, with good thermal insulation and green roofs; promoting walking, cycling and public transport; and, effective waste management.

Policy L4 'Regional Housing Provision' states that local authorities should work in partnership with developers to address the housing requirements (including local needs) of different groups (including families with children) to ensure the construction of a mix of appropriate house types/sizes/tenures/prices etc.

Policy EM1 'Integrated Enhancement and Protection of the Region's Environmental Assets' states that schemes should identify, protect, maintain and enhance natural and historic features that contribute to the character of landscapes and places.

The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012)

5.5 The Manchester Core Strategy was adopted on the 11 July 2012 and replaces a large number of policies in Manchester's Unitary Development Plan. Relevant policies of the Core Strategy include:

Policy SP1 'Spatial Principles' – states that a key spatial principle will be the creation of neighbourhoods of choice, providing high quality and diverse housing.

Policy H1 'Overall Housing Provision' states that proposals for new residential development should take account of the need to: contribute to creating mixed communities by providing house types to meet the needs of a diverse and growing Manchester population; scheme's design and density to contribute to the character of the local area; make provision for useable amenity space and provision for parking cars and bicycles; prioritise sites that are in close proximity to centres and public transport routes; be designed to give privacy to both its residents and neighbours.

Policy H6 'South Manchester' states that priorities will be for housing which meets identified shortfalls, including family housing.

Policy T2 'Accessible areas of Opportunity and Needs' states that new development should be easily accessible by walking/cycling/public transport and provided with appropriate car parking facilities.

Policy EN1 'Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas' states that opportunities for good design to enhance the overall image of the City should be fully realised, particularly on major radial routes.

Policy EN3 'Heritage' states that developments must be designed to preserve or enhance the historic environment, the character and setting of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance.

Policy EN4 'Reducing CO2 Emissions by Enabling Low and Zero Carbon Development' states that all development must follow the principle of the energy hierarchy: to reduce the need for energy through design features that provide passive heating, natural lighting and cooling; to reduce the need for energy through energy efficient features such as improved insulation and glazing; to meet residual energy requirements through the use of low or zero carbon energy generating technologies.

Policy EN8 'Adaption to Climate Change' states that new development will be expected to be adaptable to climate change in terms of the design, layout, siting and function of

buildings and associated external spaces. Regard should be had to: minimisation of flood risk by appropriate siting, drainage and treatment of surface areas to ensure rain water permeability; reduction of urban heat island effect through the use of green infrastructure, green roofs and tree cover; controlling over-heating of buildings through passive design; providing linked and diverse green space to enhance natural habitats which will assist species adaptation.

Policy EN9 'Green Infrastructure' states that new development will be expected to maintain, and where opportunities arise, enhance green infrastructure.

Policy EN14 'Flood Risk' states that all new development should minimise surface water run-off through sustainable drainage systems and use of Green Infrastructure.

Policy EN15 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation' states that developers will be expected to enhance, restore or create new biodiversity, either on site or adjacent.

EN19 'Waste' states that developers will be required to submit a waste management plan to demonstrate how the waste management needs of the end user will be met.

Policy DM1 'Development Management' sets out various issues that development should have regard to, including: appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail; impact on the surrounding areas; effects on amenity; accessibility; community safety and crime prevention; adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space; refuse storage and collection; vehicular access and car parking; effects relating to biodiversity and landscape; green infrastructure; new residential development to meet as a minimum Code for Sustainable Homes Code Level 3.

Saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995)

5.6 Although the Manchester Core Strategy is now adopted, some unitary development plan (UDP) policies remain extant until they are superseded by policies in a future Development Plan Document.

5.7 The application site is located within Area 15 (Didsbury) of the Area Specific Proposals section of the UDP. The proposals map accompanying Area 15 identifies the site as being located within the Mersey Valley Area. Since the proposed scheme will not lead to a division of open parts of the Valley and represents limited infilling to an established Valley settlement, the scheme is not affected by the provisions of Policy CB43. There are a series of general policies of relevance to the proposed scheme, including:

Policy DC6 'Housing on Backland sites' states that the Council will not normally grant consent for residential development on 'backland' sites, unless the proposals are able to meet various criteria.

Policy DC7 'New Housing Development' requires new housing to be accessible at ground floor level to disabled people and for family homes to be designed to be safe areas within which children can play.

The Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Guidance (April 2007)

5.8 This document aims to support and enhance the on going shaping of the City by providing a set of reasoned principles which will guide developers, designers and residents to the sort of development that we all want to see in Manchester. The sections of the guide that have been considered in the development of the proposed scheme include:

Section 2 'Design' provides guidance under 7 key principles recognised as being urban design characteristics which together create successful places.

Section 3 'Accessibility' sets out design principles that will help to achieve accessible development and makes reference to the guidance document 'Design for Access 2' which provides detailed information on design standards.

Section 4 'Environmental Standards' considers energy efficiency, the use of renewable energy and water and waste management.

Section 6 'Parking Guidelines' promotes the sensitive location of car parking and secure cycle parking.

Section 7 'Housing Density and Mix' promotes the provision of family housing in parts of the City where flat developments have affected their character and sustainability.

Section 8 'Community Safety and Crime Prevention' promotes a safer environment.

Section 9 'Internal Design Principles and the Provision of Space within Housing' promotes a high standard of internal design for new housing, encourages innovation and improved standards.

5.9 For the reasons given in section 6 below it is considered that the proposal is consistent within the above planning policy guidance.

6. Planning and Heritage Appraisal

6.1 Having regard to the above planning policy guidance, the main material considerations against which the proposed scheme should be considered, and which are discussed in the following section, include:

- Principle of Residential Use.
- Heritage Considerations.
- Residential Amenity.
- Sustainability.
- Highways and Car Parking.
- Trees and Landscaping.
- Disabled Access.
- Crime and Security.

6.2 Further material considerations against which the scheme will be considered relate to design and access. These issues are considered in more detail in the Design & Access Statement prepared by Ollier Smurthwaite Architects.

Principle of Residential Use

6.3 Planning policy guidance supports development that makes the best use of land within an urban setting and which is well located in terms of existing activities and infrastructure. The application site comprises a parcel of vacant land that is bound by residential properties to the north, east and south. The development maintains a predominantly residential use within the immediate surroundings of the site and proposes a dwelling that is of exceptional design quality and is positioned in a suburban location that is in close proximity to Didsbury Village and accessible by various modes of public transport.

6.4 The proposals might be deemed 'Backland Development' and this issue was raised in the reasons for refusal of a previous housing scheme. Having said this, the previous scheme comprised 2 dwellings, related to a larger site area and was of a poor design that failed to

respect the site's context. The proposed scheme has been assessed below against policy DC6 of the UDP. Policy DC6 'Housing on Backland sites' states that *'the Council will not normally grant consent for residential development on backland sites, that is, sites with limited access to a road because they are surrounded by housing or other uses. Development will not be permitted unless:*

a. there is no loss of privacy to adjoining dwellings and associated rear gardens;

Response: The proposed dwelling will not cause any harm to the privacy of adjoining dwellings and their rear gardens. This is primarily due to the dwelling's design: its siting ensures that significant distances exist between the property and the nearest neighbouring properties – Lawnhurst is 25.35 m away and 824b Wilmslow Road 28m away; its single storey height, orientation and the internal layout of accommodation ensures that there are no opportunities for overlooking from the dwelling; and, the redbrick wall on the eastern and southern boundaries of the site will protect the privacy of Lawnhurst's formal gardens. Furthermore, the extensive tree cover that exists on the site's boundaries and which separate the site from the gardens of 824/824b Wilmslow Road will be retained.

b. access and parking arrangements do not significantly increase noise and disturbance for occupiers of existing adjoining dwellings;

Response: Access to the site will be via the entrance on Wilmslow Road which currently serves the Lawnhurst apartments and properties 822, 824a, 824b and 824 Wilmslow Road, whilst the car parking area will be positioned adjacent to the house and separated from neighbouring properties by a boundary wall and trees. Since the proposals are for a single dwelling that will generate minimal traffic, there will be no noise/disturbance issues associated with access and car parking.

c. the scale and design of the development is compatible with the character of buildings in the surrounding area;

Response: The dwelling's design will ensure minimal impact on existing buildings. On the contrary, the development will be a positive addition to the environment that will enhance the character and appearance of the Didsbury St James Conservation Area, as well as the setting of the Lawnhurst building. The dwelling's single storey height – with additional accommodation built into the ground; its utilisation of both traditional and contemporary materials; and, the provision of a sedum roof, provides a scheme that has been sensitively designed in consideration of its setting.

d. there is sufficient space between the proposed and existing dwellings to avoid problems of significant overshadowing or of over dominant appearance affecting either the existing or the proposed dwellings;

Response: As highlighted earlier, the siting of the dwelling ensures that there are significant distances between it and neighbouring properties. Coupled with the fact that the dwelling is single storey and numerous mature trees exist on the boundaries of the site, there will be no overshadowing nor an over dominating impact caused to existing properties or the proposed dwelling.

e. the proposal does not involve the loss of important trees or other natural features of high amenity value or the loss of locally important wildlife habitats;

Response: All existing trees of good condition will be retained and the dwelling has been positioned to ensure there is no impact on their root protection areas. As mentioned earlier, a single tree will be removed to enable the car parking to be covered. However, this is a young category C tree (T5) and its removal will be negated by the provision of 3 new trees. The proposals will not impact on any wildlife habitats, whilst the provision of lawn areas and a sedum roof will enhance biodiversity.

f. the proposed and existing dwellings retain adequate levels of private amenity space;

Response: The footprint of the dwelling ensures that a significant part of the site is given to private amenity space. The scheme includes 2 terrace areas, a sunken courtyard, internal courtyard and lawn areas. Unlike the previous proposal for the site, the scheme does not encroach into the gardens provided for the residents of Lawnhurst.

g. in the case of development within a Conservation Area, the built form and the surrounding spaces maintain or enhance the character of the area'.

Response: The scheme has been designed to ensure there is no detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Didsbury St James Conservation Area or the setting of Lawnhurst. This issue is considered in more detail in the following section.

6.5 The site's immediate surroundings include a series of dwellings (including 822, 824a, 824b and 824 Wilmslow Road) which do not have direct access to the highway. Such properties characterise this part of the conservation area and like the proposed dwelling, their design and the setting of the properties do not raise any of the planning issues identified in policy DC6.

Heritage Considerations

6.6 The Didsbury St James Conservation Area and the Lawnhurst building are defined as a 'Designated Heritage Asset' by Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Since the proposals involve the development of a site within the conservation area and adjacent to Lawnhurst, the scheme has been designed to ensure minimal harm is caused to the significance of these assets. Also, the scheme's design has evolved following extensive discussions with the Council's planning and design & conservation officers.

Didsbury St James Conservation Area

6.7 The proposed residential use of the site is entirely consistent with the immediate surroundings, whilst the intensification of a residential use has already been approved

through the sub-division of Lawnhurst. In terms of the use, the scheme will have no discernible impact upon the wider conservation area.

6.8 It is important to consider whether the proposals will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area in relation to its key characteristics which were set out in paragraphs 2.6 – 2.7.

Large private residences amongst trees

6.9 The proposal is for a relatively large family home set within a large plot. The gardens of the neighbouring Lawnhurst building will be retained as existing, unlike the previous proposal which encroached into this area, whilst the development of the dwelling into the ground will retain the openness of the plot and give the impression of spaciousness.

Use of a variety of materials

6.10 As stated in the Didsbury St James Conservation Area Appraisal, *'the style and form of its buildings varies, giving great scope for the generation of appropriate architecture for the future'*. Redbrick is a common building material used within the area and this is continued through the walls to the dwelling. The dwelling will also utilise glazing and timber cladding that will reflect the scheme's contemporary design and allow suitable levels of natural light to penetrate the building. The scheme also proposes a sedum roof, which will be unique to the area and will enable the dwelling's sensitive integration into the environment whilst providing biodiversity benefits.

Mature Trees and Landscaping

6.11 The conservation area is characterised by mature trees which provide a high quality setting to the built form. The proposed dwelling has been positioned within the site to enable existing trees to be retained with no damage caused to their root protection areas. The scheme will include the planting of younger trees which will ensure that their valuable function is provided into the future. The landscaping proposals will be of a high quality,

comprising a mix of hard and soft landscaping which will contribute to the setting of the dwelling.

Redbrick Garden Walls

6.12 Many of the houses within the area have gardens enclosed by redbrick walls which form an important part of the area's streetscape. The redbrick wall on the eastern and southern boundaries of the site will help screen the proposed dwelling and will form an appropriate edge to the gardens of Lawnhurst.

6.13 The dwelling has been designed to ensure that it has a sensitive relationship with the surrounding area. The dwelling's exceptional design quality, high sustainability credentials and consideration of the area's features of significance will ensure that the scheme is a positive addition to the conservation area.

Lawnhurst Building

6.14 The proposals have been designed to ensure that the setting of Lawnhurst isn't harmed. The dwelling is positioned a significant distance from Lawnhurst, thus ensuring that an acceptable relationship is maintained.

6.15 The dwelling's single storey height and redbrick boundary wall ensure that the dwelling will not dominate views of Lawnhurst, rather they will enable it to continue to have an important and dominant presence within the streetscene and surrounding area. The scheme's use of redbrick for the wall complements the materials used in the construction of Lawnhurst (as well as providing a feature that contributes to the significance of the conservation area), whilst the use of more contemporary materials such as glass and timber cladding provide a contrast that will further ensure the retention of Lawnhurst's presence. The dwelling's height ensures that there are few views of the building from within Lawnhurst's apartments, and where it is visible, views are of the sedum roof which will give the impression of landscaped grounds.

6.16 Unlike previous proposals, the scheme isn't positioned within the landscaped grounds of Lawnhurst which provide an important setting to the building. It is positioned on a parcel of unmaintained land that is roughly vegetated and unsightly. The proposed dwelling – in particular the development of the traditional/reclaimed redbrick wall – will be sympathetic to Lawnhurst, and together with the planting of specimen trees and wall climbers will enhance the setting of Lawnhurst's grounds for the enjoyment of its residents.

Residential Amenity

6.17 The application site is located within an existing residential area. The properties which could be said to be most affected by the proposed dwelling are the apartments within Lawnhurst. However, the proposed dwelling's design and the characteristics of the application site will ensure that there is little if any impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

6.18 As mentioned earlier, there will be a significant gap between the dwelling and the nearest apartments in the Lawnhurst building. Furthermore, the dwelling's single storey height, orientation, internal layout of accommodation and positioning of ground floor windows will ensure that the proposal will not result in any overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing impact. The redevelopment of this vacant and roughly vegetated parcel of land will in fact improve the outlook for Lawnhurst's residents, whilst the landscaped redbrick wall will protect the privacy of the gardens use and provide a sympathetic backdrop. The design team have undertaken a consultation exercise with Lawnhurst's residents which enabled them to respond to various queries/questions raised and resulted in numerous positive responses being received in relation to the scheme's design.

6.19 For the reasons highlighted above, and also due to existing extensive tree/vegetation cover, the proposals will have even less of an impact on other nearby residential properties, including 824/824a/824b/822 Wilmslow Road and the warden's bungalow (associated with Manchester Metropolitan University accommodation) to the south of the site.

6.20 The dwelling's design and the characteristics of the site will also ensure minimal impact on future occupants of the proposed dwelling, whilst a large area of outdoor space – in the form of 2 separate terraces, a sunken courtyard, an internal courtyard and lawn area – will provide high quality amenity space for the enjoyment of its residents.

Sustainability

6.21 The application site's close proximity to social infrastructure and its accessibility by public transport should be viewed positively. The site is located on the fringes of Didsbury Village, which caters for everyday requirements and provides a wide range of restaurants, bars, leisure and shopping facilities; is within close proximity to various community facilities, including primary and secondary schools, places of worship, a medical centre and pharmacy; has direct access from the site to Fletcher Moss Park and its associated Botanical gardens, recreational and sporting facilities; and, is nearby the Towers Business Park which is an attractive employment location.

6.22 The site is accessible by a good public transport network: numerous bus services operate along Wilmslow Road (A5145); East Didsbury railway station is within a short walking distance and provides regular services between Manchester and Stockport; and, Metrolink is to be extended to the area. In terms of access by car, the motorway network is nearby and accessed via Kingsway (A34).

6.23 The Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) Pre-Assessment Report prepared by LK Accreditation Limited confirms that the scheme will achieve a CSH level 4 rating. In response to policies EN4/EN8 of the Core Strategy and section 4 'Environmental Standards' of the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD, the following measures will be incorporated into the proposals:

- Installation of smart meters with energy display devices, energy efficient white goods, highly efficient gas boilers, external lighting with daylight sensors/movement sensors and the provision of external drying space. These measures will ensure a reduction in energy demand.

- Storage for up to 4 cycles will be provided in order to reduce use of cars and improve health.
- The dwelling will provide for home working in order to reduce the need to travel.
- Water use will be minimised through incorporation of water efficient taps, water efficient/dual flush toilets, restrictions on shower flow rates and bath sizes.
- Although the site is located in a low risk flood zone, measures will be incorporated to ensure that the scheme doesn't result in high volumes of surface water run-off. The use of hard surfacing will be minimised as far as possible, whilst any hard surfacing that is proposed will comprise pervious materials. There will also be the installation of rainwater butts and use of the water for landscaped areas.
- Use of construction materials that are locally sourced and from sustainable sources.
- Adequate external spaces and internal facilities will be provided for waste storage.
- The dwelling will be built in accordance with principles of the 'Considerate Constructors Scheme', regarding waste management, use of materials and recycling; and, regular consultation with existing neighbouring residents.
- The majority of existing trees will be retained. There will be the provision of lawn areas, a sedum roof and additional tree/shrub planting which will enhance biodiversity within the site.

Highways and Car Parking

6.24 Since the proposals are for a single dwelling, the development will not generate a level of traffic that would impact on highway or pedestrian safety. Vehicular access to the site will be via an existing access from Wilmslow Road that achieves suitable visibility splays. In terms of car parking, the provision of 2 on-site car parking spaces is acceptable, whilst additional parking could be accommodated if required.

Trees and Landscaping

6.25 The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Report prepared by Scott Fitzgerald Tree Consultants. The report confirms that there are a number of trees within the site that are potentially hazardous and should be removed irrespective of the proposals in order to

prevent potentially significant damage. Those trees (and their root protection areas) that are of a good condition are also identified and the dwelling has purposely been positioned to ensure minimal impact. The scheme proposes a number of replacement trees adjacent to the redbrick perimeter wall which will compensate for those removed. Soft landscaping will comprise lawn areas and the planting of climbers on the redbrick perimeter wall; and, hard landscaping will include paved terraces and gravel for the access/driveway area. The landscaping proposals are indicative and further details can be conditioned should the application be approved.

Disabled Access

6.26 The scheme has been designed in response to the requirements of policy DC7.1 of the City of Manchester UDP, section 3 'Accessibility' of the Guide to Development in Manchester SPD and the guidance documents 'Design for Access 2', in order to ensure that the proposed dwelling is inclusive and accessible to all, and considers the requirements of disabled persons. The entrance to the dwelling will be accessible at ground floor level and will have a clear opening of 850mm; the driveway will enable adequate space for persons travelling by car; and, the internal layout provides ground floor bedroom accommodation with all other habitable rooms.

Crime and Security

6.27 The application site's location in proximity to existing residential properties and access to the site being via Lawnhurst's secure gates/communal car parking area, will limit crime or the fear of crime. Also, the provision of secure gates at the entrance to the application site; the provision of perimeter brick walls; the provision of car parking adjacent to the dwelling; and, provision of external lighting to the application site will further reduce any potential impact. Secure by Design accreditation will be obtained from Greater Manchester Police at a later stage of the development process.

7. Conclusion

7.1 The proposed scheme accords with relevant national/regional/local planning policy guidance. In terms of national guidance, the scheme accords with the relevant policies of the National Planning Policy Framework; and, with regards to local guidance, policies within the Core Strategy, saved policies of the unitary development plan for the City of Manchester and the Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document.

7.2 The proposals will redevelop an unmaintained vacant parcel of land that is currently unsightly, with a dwelling of high design quality that will preserve/enhance the character and appearance of the Didsbury St James conservation area and have minimal impact on the setting of the Lawnhurst building.

7.3 The design of the dwelling will incorporate features that characterise the significance of the conservation area, whilst representing the age in which it is built rather than being a pastiche of a historical architectural form. The dwelling's innovative design will also ensure that there is minimal harm caused to the amenity of nearby residents, whilst incorporating a series of measures that will enable level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes to be achieved. The scheme can be viewed as a valuable addition to the conservation area and Didsbury as a whole.

7.4 Paul Butler Associates are pleased to submit this planning application and look forward to working with Manchester City Council in progressing the application to determination.