DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

TO ACCOMPANY THE APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING CONSENT

IMPROVEMENT WORKS

At

THOMAS REGAN COURT, ANSELL CLOSE, GORTON



Prepared on Behalf of **EASTLANDS HOMES LTD**

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Contents

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Site Assessment

3.0 Amount of Development

4.0 Layout

5.0 Scale

6.0 Appearance

7.0 Landscaping

8.0 Design for Access

9.0 Waste Management Strategy

10.0 Secured By Design

11.0 Sustainability

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This statement is to outline the design principles and regeneration context of the proposed works at Thomas Regan Court on Ansell Close in Gorton

The building is owned by Eastlands Homes and provides sheltered housing accommodation in thirty one bed flats.

The proposals are to re-landscape the site and its immediate environment (including the resurfacing of Ansell Close), over-clad parts of the existing elevations, build a new extension to the existing common room.

2.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

The existing building dates from the mid 1970s and is in need of refurbishment to bring it in line with contemporary standards. In conjunction with these internal works the client would like to increase the area of communal space available to the residents and improve the external appearance of the building.

Particular problems exist with the current entrance area which is located immediately adjacent to the bin store and includes a sub-standard approach ramp.

In developing proposals we have worked in conjunction with the Groundwork Trust to produce detailed landscape proposals for the site as a whole.

3.0 AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT

The proposals involve the creation of a new approach ramp and steps with a pergola over to improve the approach to the entrance. In conjunction with this the entrance area itself will be modified and the hard landscape in Ansell Close renewed.

To further improve the appearance of the building about 30% of the existing elevations will be over-clad with a mixture of render and Trespa cladding board.

An additional 25sqm of floor space is proposed in an extension to the existing common room area.

Extensive re-landscaping works are also proposed. The current provision is unsuitable as the perimeter fence does not lie on the legal boundary of the site, and the mounding within the site is unsuitable for use by elderly people.

Therefore a new perimeter wall and fence is proposed similar in style to other boundary works being carried out in Gorton for Eastlands Homes by the Groundwork Trust. This will be located on the legal boundary line at back of pavement. In addition the grounds will be re-graded to make them more usable.

Finally there are proposals to remove a number of trees as recommended by the landscape architect following completion of a tree survey. Three of these are on the site itself. A fourth tree along with a number of leylandii are on an adjacent site. It is hoped that these will be removed subject to reaching an agreement with the owner.

4.0 LAYOUT AND TRAFFIC

No new parking is to be provided as part of the development however the existing provision is to be improved and relined. The works will result in five standard parking spaces, two accessible spaces and an area for emergency vehicles to draw up. Very few of the current tenants have cars and it is anticipated that this level of parking will continue to meet the needs of the development without causing parking issues in the neighbouring streets.

5.0 SCALE

The new development respects the scale of the existing building

6.0 APPEARANCE

The existing building is rather plain in character and the approach to the entrance area is particularly unattractive. The client is concerned that these are putting off potential clients and affecting the viability of the scheme. The proposed over-cladding will enhance the appearance of the building while retaining its existing character.

The cladding on the end gables and the around the middle of the block provides emphasis while the continuous band of render between the first floor windows draws the whole elevation together. Smaller cladding panels have been used on the ground floor to produce a more human scale and to vary the treatment across the gable. Low maintenance materials have been used throughout.

7.0 LANDSCAPING

An extensive re-landscaping scheme has been produced by the Groundwork Trust following consultations with staff and residents regarding features they would like to see incorporated in the final development. Thus the paths around the building have been improved and a number of seating areas and shelters have been created to encourage wider use of the grounds than is currently the case. In addition a larger level patio is proposed with an adjacent area for playing boules or similar outdoor activities.

It is intended that a new low brick wall with railings be erected on the perimeter of the site. This will be similar in style to other boundary improvements being carried out by the client to their housing stock in Gorton.

A tree survey has been undertaken and as a result a programme of pruning and maintenance is proposed to protect the mature landscape. Three trees on the site have been identified for removal. In addition it is hoped that an agreement can be reached with the adjacent owner to remove a number of trees on the adjacent plot as the roots of these are causing problems with paths and foundations.

8.0 DESIGN FOR ACCESS

The current ramped approach has an incline of 1 in 12. It is proposed that this be reduced to 1 in 20 as part of the improvement works. Two accessible parking spaces will be located close to the end of the ramp.

The improvement works to the grounds including wider paths around the perimeter and a greater area of level ground will improve access to the external spaces to those residents with accessibility issues.

9.0 WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Currently waste is collected internally in central bins with no sub-division of items for recycling. A refuse chute provides residents on the first floor with access to the ground floor bins. This bin storage area is located immediately adjacent to the entrance.

The proposals involve relocating the bin store further from the entrance and removing the refuse chute. Thus all residents will be expected to bring their rubbish to the ground floor and place it in the bins provided. This will give the opportunity to establish a recycling programme with dedicated bins for glass, paper etc.

The new bin store will be larger than the existing and the gentler incline on the new ramp will make it easier to get the bins to the refuse lorry.

10.0 SECURED BY DESIGN

We do not anticipate seeking a Secured by Design award for the proposed works. However we have tried to ensure that the proposals will improve the security of the site as a whole. The new boundary treatmetn will discourage unauthorised access to the site and the relocation of the entrance doors to the facade of the building will reduce the risk of people loitering unseen in this area. Improvement works to the external lighting will also be incorporated into the scheme.

11.0 SUSTAINABILITY

We understand that as part of previous improvement projects the cavities in the walls have been filled with insulation and the original windows have been replaced with new double glazed units. However the original heating and lighting systems are still in place from when the building was first built.

The works will involve complete renewal of the services throughout the building. This will include efficient new communal gas boilers linked to solar thermal panels on the roof to pre-heat the water for the heating system. The client is also hoping to replace all the lighting in communal areas with a low energy LED lighting system.