greatplaces HOUSING GROUP

Longhurst Road, Higher Blackley, Manchester M9 8NS

Design and Access Statement

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

5th April 2023 Rev C: 21/07/23 20-043/Drawings/presentations

BOWKER SADLER **ARCHITECTURE**

Longhurst Road, Higher Blackley, Manchester M9 8NS

Proposed residential development

Executive Summary / Introduction

This statement accompanies and supports the full planning application for the development of the site on Longhurst Road, Higher Blackley, Manchester.

The proposal comprises 14 dwellings in form of semi-detached houses and 2 blocks of apartments containing 8 flats in total. Overall, the total number of units proposed is 22 and all units will be for affordable rent.

Project Team

Applicant: **Great Places Housing Group**
Contact: Ashley Barnes
Email: ashley.barnes@greatplaces.org.uk

Agent: Architect **Bowker Sadler Architecture**
Contact: Kaja Sandura
Email: kaja.sandura@bowker-sadler.co.uk
Tel: 0161 406 7333

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

1.0 Assessment

Physical context and local character – site description and surrounding area

Location
The proposed development site is located on Longhurst Road, Higher Blackley, Manchester. The site boundary is formed by the road to the north, private green space to the south and west and a community facility to the east.

Local Amenities
Victoria Avenue to the northeast of the site provides all local amenities including Primary and High Schools, local shops, community, health and leisure facilities, supermarkets and a library /learning centre.

Public Transport
Local bus services are available adjacent to the site on Victoria Avenue.

Current use
Currently, the site is a disused brownfield land. It was previously occupied by a children's nursery, associated external play space and car parking. The building has since been demolished.

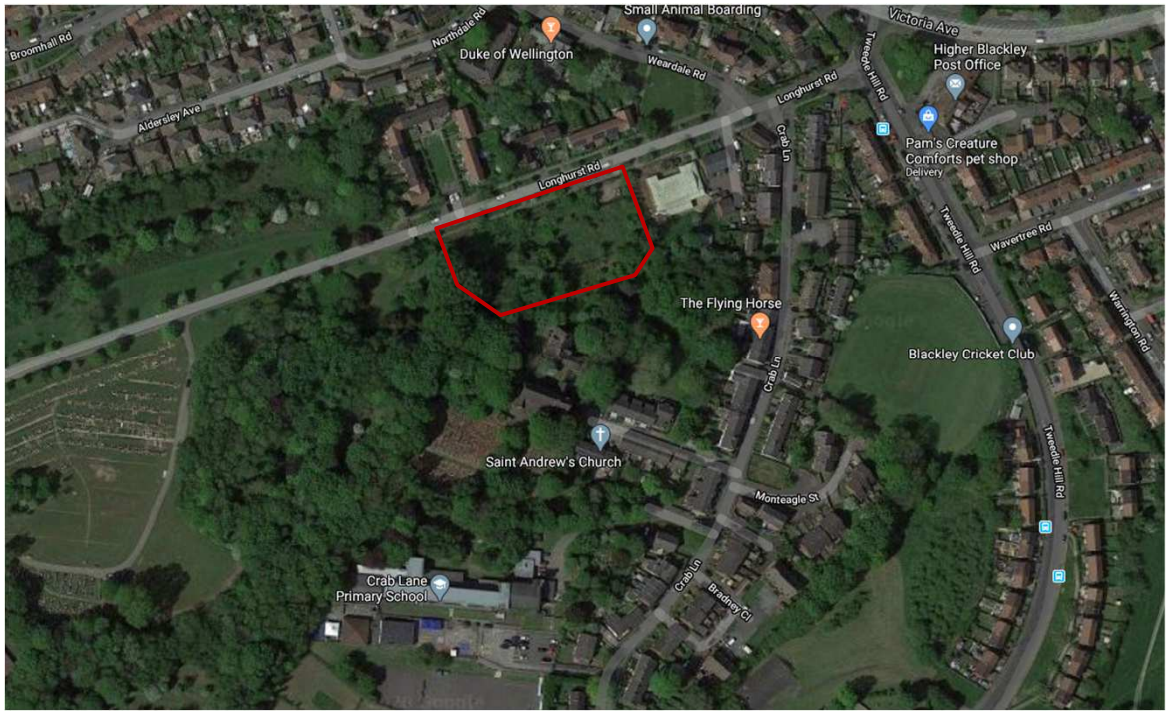


Fig. 1: Aerial view of the site

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

1.0 Assessment

Physical context and local character – site description and surrounding area

Flood zone
The site is located in Flood Zone 1 on the EA Flood Map – an area considered to have the lowest probability of fluvial flooding.

Public Access
Currently, there is no formal public access to the site.

Conservation
The site is situated close to Crab Lane Conservation Area to the east. The closest grade II listed buildings are situated along Crab Lane and are no. 162-172 (even) Crab Lane, 113 Crab Lane and 136-142 (even) Crab Lane, together with their rear neighbours 2-8 (even) Pleasant View. The listed buildings are not visible from the site.

Context
The site is located within an established suburban area occupying a prominent position overlooking green space on two sides, which separates it from St Andrew's Church to the south and offers a view partially obstructed by trees to the west and south. The north boundary adjoins Longhurst Road and terraced properties on the other side of the street. To the East, the site neighbours a single storey community hall and further away, there are rear gardens of terraced and semi-detached Crab Lane properties.

Existing boundary conditions
The site is currently overgrown and bounded with railings and fencing.
Site area = 0.4ha
Site area with additional highways area = 0.46ha

Fig 2: View of the existing site from Longhurst Road looking south-west

Fig. 3: Views of the existing site from Longhurst Road looking south

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

Longhurst Road, Higher Blackley, Manchester M9 8NS

Proposed residential development

1.0 Assessment

Historical map

The maps show the urban setting in 1932 and 1989, and the aerial view in 2000.

The site was previously occupied by a day nursery.

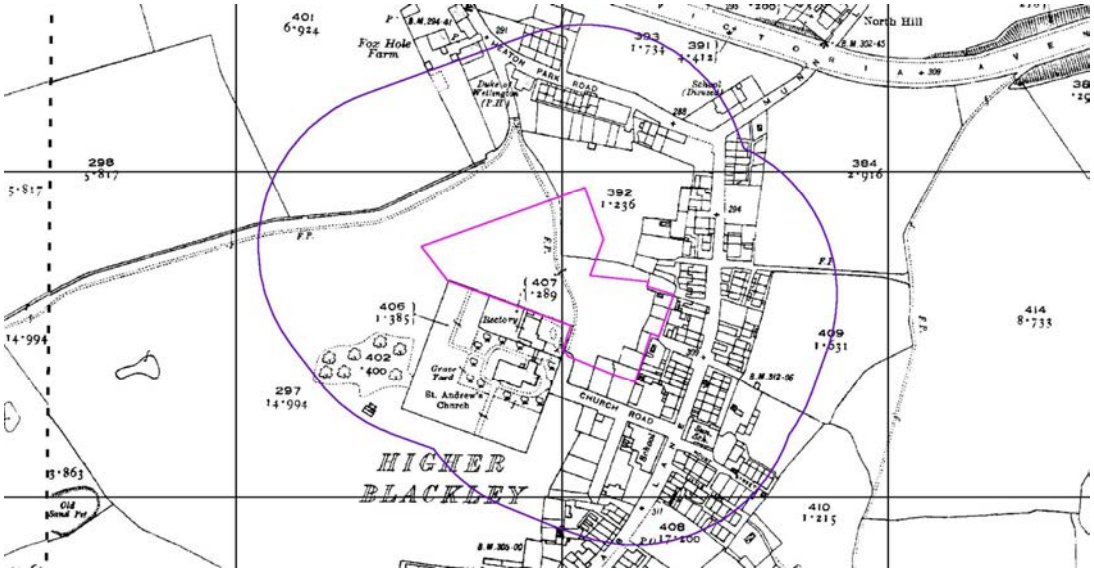


Fig. 5: Historical map of the site in 1932.

Fig. 4: Historical aerial view of the site in 2000.

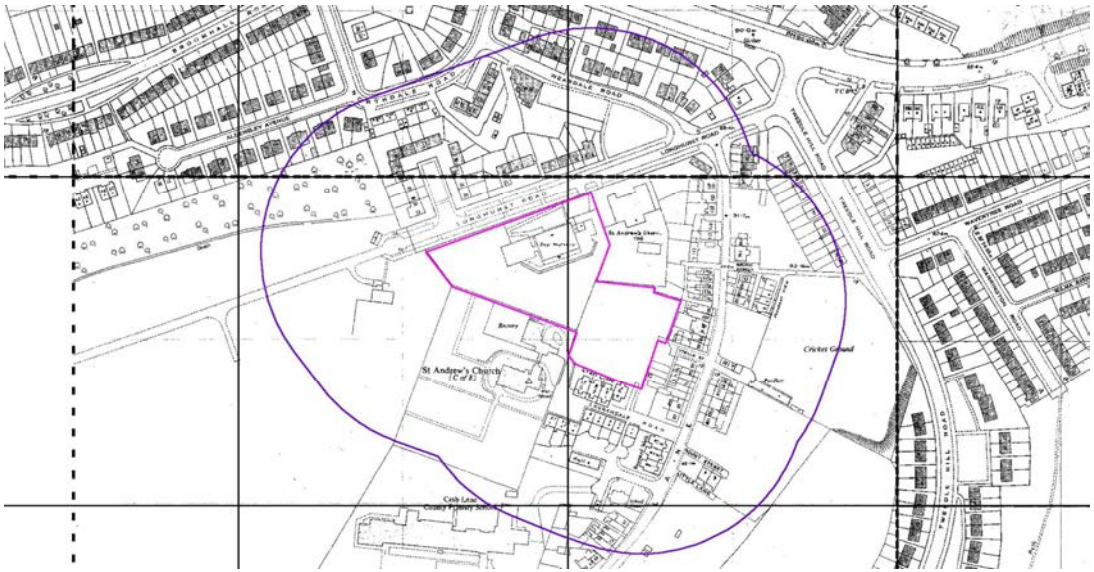


Fig. 6:Historical map of the site in 1989.

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

2.0 Involvement .

Consultation

Initial pre-application planning advice was sought from MCC Planning Officer Sue Wills, who provided informal advice on the initial proposals in favour of split-level houses to address the changes of ground levels with some suggestions regarding enhancing the character of the corner and gable of plots 9 and 22, all of which was addressed in the final design. Gable frontages to houses changed to lower continuous eaves with dormer windows for rooms in roof space.

Public consultation

A Public consultation pack was distributed to local residents/ stakeholders in February 2023 and subsequent comments collected.

The feedback mainly focused on concerns regarding car parking. In response, Transport planning advice has been provided by SCP, which states that

> *'The site is within an acceptable walk distance of Higher Blackley and Blackley as well as the array of amenities these areas have on offer. The site is also within an acceptable walk distance of transport connections, as detailed later, to encourage prospective residents to travel via sustainable modes.'*

> *'the site benefits from high levels of accessibility by sustainable modes and has a large range of local amenities within close proximity. Access to the site on foot and by cycle is of a good standard and there are good transport connections within close proximity providing access to a range of local destinations. These findings demonstrate that prospective residents will not be wholly reliant on the private car.'*

Furthermore, the car ownership amongst residents of affordable dwellings is believed to be lower than privately-owned dwellings. Thus, we believe that 100%

car parking will be sufficient for the new development. The transport planning advice states that:

> *'the proposed car parking levels are considered to be appropriate in this instance.'*

Feedback also raised concerns regarding the presence of crime within the area. This was addressed through the application of Secured by Design guidance and principles. In addition, a Crime Impact Statement has been prepared and submitted with this application.

Addressing a comment about the loss of green space, we have conducted Biodiversity Net Gain calculations together with an Ecological Appraisal. New trees will be planted within the site and the development will be carried out with the necessary measures to respect the presence of existing wildlife as far as practicably possible. The existing vegetation on site includes invasive non-native species, such as Japanese Knotweed, which will be safely removed, thus improving the condition of the site.

The feedback also includes; comments regarding limited space to conduct the construction of the development, a request for a guarantee that any damage to the private driveway of the neighbouring property (no. 16 Longhurst Road) will be reinstated and that constant access to the property is maintained during the construction. These issues will be addressed in the Construction Management Plan.

Fig. 7: Four-page leaflet distributed in the area for consultation purposes

3.0 Evaluation

Key site opportunities

- Opportunity to reinstate street frontages to Longhurst Road and replace the derelict, over-grown, unkempt brownfield site.
- Provide much needed new houses for affordable rent in the area.
- Replace the existing vegetation, including invasive non-native species, with appropriate new soft landscaping including new trees.

Planning history

A previous planning application was granted in 2008 for the-

"Erection of 10 no. two storey residential dwellings with associated car parking, landscaping, regrading of ground levels and boundary treatments.".

Planning reference: 115904/VO/2017

Comparable proposal:

- This previous application proposes a layout similar to that proposed for the western portion of the current application, in the form of semi-detached houses fronting the street with gardens to the rear and ground levels regraded.
- The previous approved scheme proposed a two-storey houses whilst the current proposal is for three storey houses and two storey apartment blocks.
- The current application seeks to increase spatial efficiency through an amended layout to the east of site and reduces the need for regrading of ground by partially 'burying' the houses to the west of site.

Fig. 8: Site plan (Previously approved application)

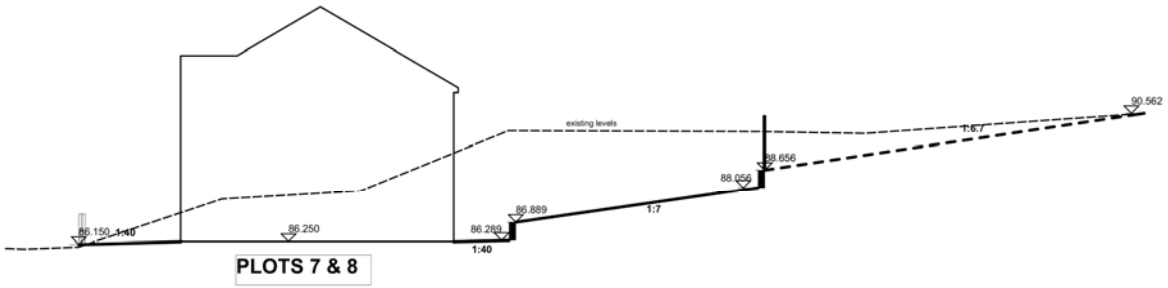


Fig. 9: Typical site section (Previously approved application)

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

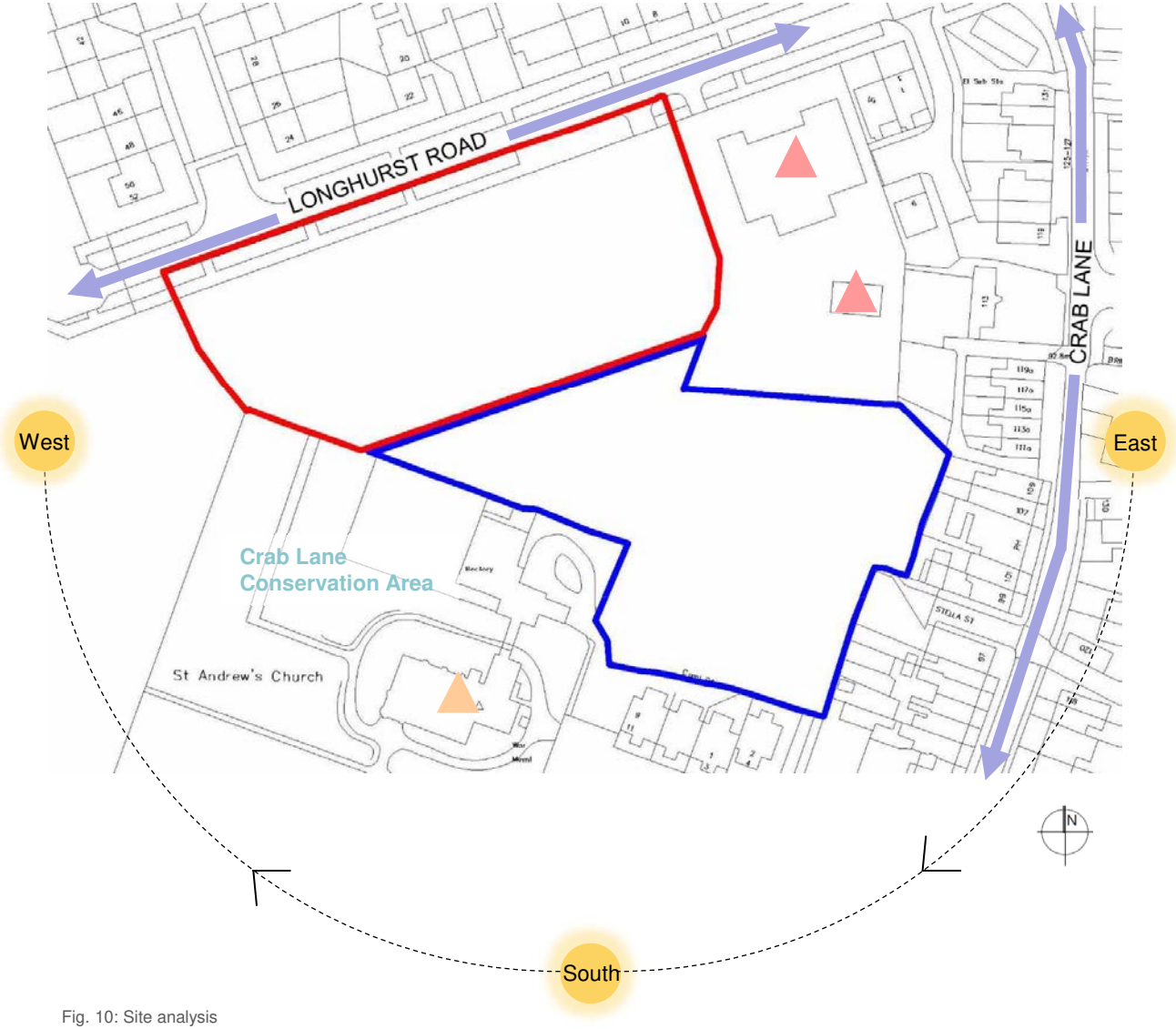
4.0 Design Parameters, Evolution And Layout

Existing urban routes
The site's northern boundary is formed by Longhurst Road, which continues westwards to provide the access road to Blackley Cemetery.

Access constraints
Longhurst Road frontage provides the only viable access to the site.

Distance from adjacent buildings
The minimum amenity distance of proposed homes to the existing residential frontages of Longhurst Road is 25m and complies with current MCC guidelines. Careful window positioning and obscure glazing to the proposed eastern gables will nullify any potential overlooking to the neighbouring community hall.

Massing and storey heights
The majority of the existing buildings are two storey-dwelling houses with the exception of the community hall and its associated outbuilding, which are both single storey. To the south of site lies the 19th Century St. Andrews church and its associated rectory, both substantial, vertically proportioned buildings, constructed in a Victorian 'gothic' style.



Primary routes

Conservation Areas: Crab Lane, December 1983

Single storey buildings

St. Andrew's Church

Solar path

Fig. 10: Site analysis

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

4.0 Design Parameters, Evolution And Layout

Alignment with the neighbouring building
The development offers the opportunity to continue the building line established by the neighbouring properties to the east.

Street elevations
The proposals will establish an active street frontage to the southern edge of Longhurst Road, complimenting that of the northern edge and helping to creating a strong sense of place, with new buildings of appropriate scale and rhythm.

Mix of types
The use of a mix of semi-detached houses and apartments offers a variety of typologies appropriate to current housing needs.

Strong corners
Blocks 1 and Blocks 3- 9 have been designed with strong visual corners in order to articulate the linear massing and provide variety to the street scene.

Access
There is an opportunity to establish a new access off Longhurst Road. The new access takes into consideration the position of existing trees which will be retained. The new road facilitates car parking for the apartments.

Fig. 11: Proposed site plan (Ground floor)

Accomodation Schedule(GIA)				
Plot Number	Type	Key	Area	Comments
plot 1	1b2p Apartment		55.5 m²	Incl. entrance on ground floor
plot 2	1b2p Apartment		52.0 m²	
plot 3	1b2p Apartment		52.0 m²	
plot 4	1b2p Apartment		55.5 m²	Incl. entrance on ground floor
plot 5	1b2p Apartment		55.5 m²	Incl. entrance on ground floor
plot 6	1b2p Apartment		52.0 m²	
plot 7	1b2p Apartment		50.3 m²	
plot 8	1b2p Apartment		57.0 m²	Incl. entrance on ground floor
plot 9	3b5p House		103.9 m²	
plot 10	3b5p House		101.4 m²	
plot 11	3b5p House		101.4 m²	
plot 12	3b5p House		101.4 m²	
plot 13	3b5p House		101.4 m²	
plot 14	3b5p House		101.4 m²	
plot 15	3b5p House		101.4 m²	
plot 16	3b5p House		101.4 m²	
plot 17	3b5p House		101.4 m²	
plot 18	3b5p House		101.4 m²	
plot 19	3b5p House		101.4 m²	
plot 20	3b5p House		101.4 m²	
plot 21	3b5p House		101.4 m²	
plot 22	3b5p House		103.9 m²	
			1854.7 m²	

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

4.0 Design Parameters, Evolution And Layout

No. of dwellings
Due to the size of the site, we believe 22 no. homes can be comfortably accommodated together with an appropriate level of amenity space. The mix of dwellings comprises 14 no. 3bed/5people houses and 8 no. 1bed/2people apartments. The internal floorspace of each home complies with Manchester City Council's Residential Quality Guidance.

Density and plot sizes
The proposals are consistent with the context and grain of the area which is characterised by predominantly terraced and semi-detached houses.

Car parking
100% car parking (1no. space per dwelling) has been provided to each home including one accessible parking space. All the houses, which front Longhurst Road (blocks 3-9) will have in-curtilage parking spaces.

Waste and recycling
Waste and recycling provision is in line with MCC policy, with 4No in-curtilage bins spaces provided for each house (blocks 3-9). Bin storage for apartments is accommodated within an appropriately sized structure (as per MCC guidance), located on the east side of the new access road. On collection days, the refuse team will access bins directly from Longhurst Road.

Sustainability strategy
The proposed dwellings will be designed adopting a fabric first approach with U-Values optimised in accordance with Approved Documents/Building Regulations. The accompanying Energy Statement gives further detail on how this will be achieved.

Fig. 12: Proposed Site Plan First Floor

Fig. 13: Proposed Roof Site Plan

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

4.0 Design Parameters, Evolution And Layout

Blocks 1 & 2 (apartments)
Two blocks of flats are proposed to the east side of the site.

Block 1 is positioned to respect the neighbouring building, extending the street frontage. Block 2 is set back to the south, accessed by the new road off Longhurst Road. As amenity space for both blocks, a shared garden is provided to the south of Block 1/ east of block 2.

The parking and bin storage has been accommodated to the east and west of the new access road respectively, visually discreet from Longhurst road but benefiting from passive surveillance from Blocks 1 and 2.

All dwellings will be accessible in line with Approved Document M and the principles of Building for a Healthy Life requirements. Level access to both front and rear doors will be provided.

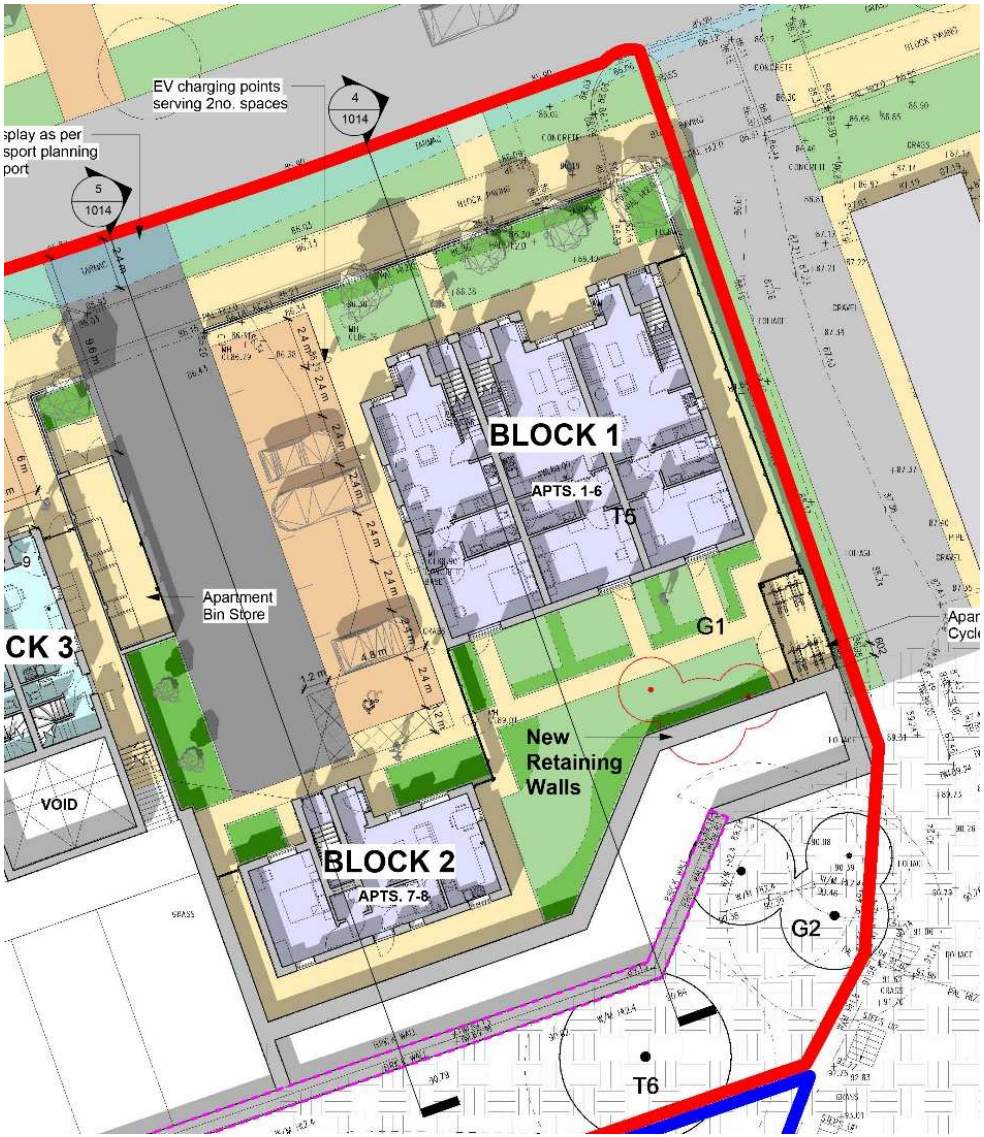


Fig 14: Blocks 1 and 2 ground floor plans

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

4.0 Design Parameters, Evolution And Layout

Blocks 3 - 9 (houses)

The grouping of semi- detached houses, is aligned with and further extends the street frontage established by Block 1 The semi-detached houses are linked together through a porch structure and gate/fence at the ground floor, thus creating visual continuing to the elevation, akin to the existing terrace houses in the vicinity. This solution also increases security of the properties by limiting the access between properties and reducing the need for surveillance.

The properties are entered from front doors facing Longhurst Road. To the side of the house, a gated accessway is provided, where stepped access allows direct access to rear gardens. Incorporated within the steps, a 'bike channel' enables transportation of bikes to the rear, where individual cycle sheds are located. Bins are stored within this gated accessway at the same level as Longhurst Road, which ensures they can be easily moved by residents to bin collection points. The car park spaces for the houses are located to the front of properties.

The gardens located at the rear are designed to slope up at the ratio of 1:40 to minimise the height of retaining walls to the south of properties.

All dwellings will be accessible in line with Approved Document M and the principles of Building for a Healthy Life requirements. Level access to both front and rear doors will be achieved.

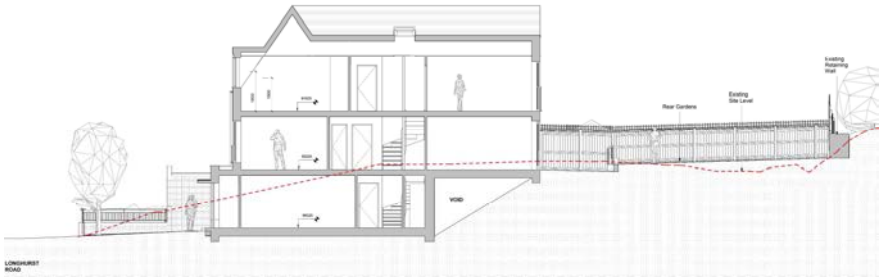


Fig.15: Section through Block 4 looking east

First Floor

Ground Floor

Fig.16: Blocks 3-9 floor plans

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

4.0 Design Parameters, Evolution And Layout

Evolution of Plan Form, Character and Design
The proposal provides a mix of 1B2P apartments and 3B5P homes.

Apartments Block 1
The layout of the apartments has been designed to provide open-plan living with kitchen and dining rooms at the front and a bedroom at the back with a view at the shared garden to the rear.

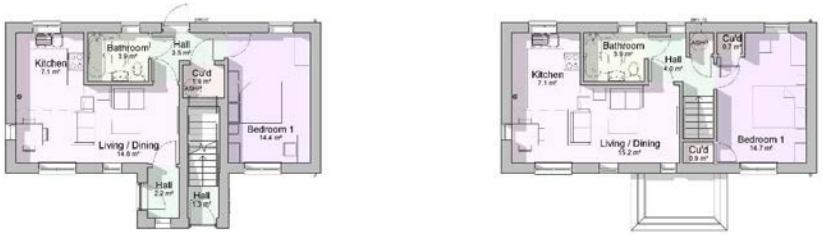
All units have windows on front and rear facades, with side units also having windows to the sides, which improves natural lighting, solar gain and natural cross-ventilation. It also increases the security of the development by providing natural surveillance.

Ground First

Fig.17: Block 1 floor plans

Apartments Block 2
The apartments in block 2 have been designed to offer an open-plan living kitchen and dining rooms to the east with views towards the shared garden and a bedroom towards the west.

The flats are provided with windows to north, south and east facades, which enables appropriate levels of natural lighting, cross-ventilation and natural surveillance across the entire site.



Ground First

Fig.18: Block 2 floor plans

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

4.0 Design Parameters, Evolution And Layout

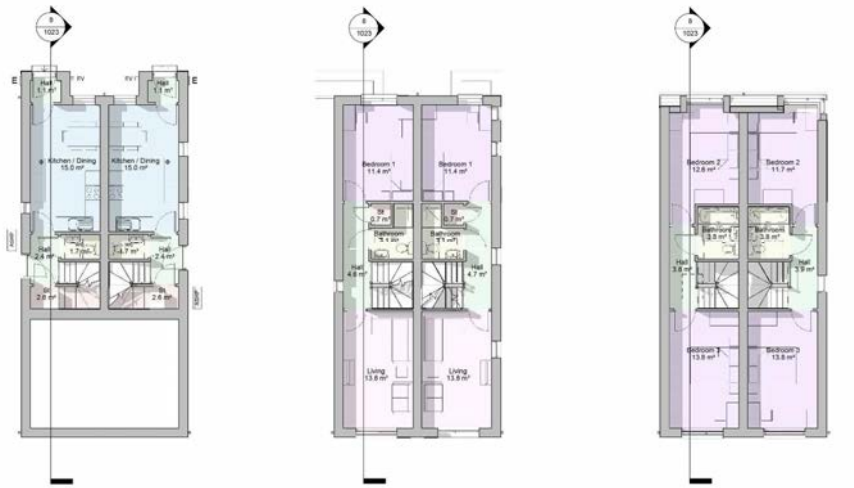
Houses: Middle units

The layout of the houses has been designed to distribute rooms across three storeys. The open-plan kitchen and dining room is located at the front, accessed directly from the entrance hall on the ground floor, thus providing natural surveillance of Longhurst Road. The living room is situated to the rear of the first floor which, due to the sloping site levels allows direct access to the private garden. Bedrooms are located to the front of the first floor and both 'front' and 'rear' of the second floor.

Given the linear configuration of the house, generous fenestration is provided to the front and rear facades to facilitate cross-ventilation, enable natural day-lighting within the rooms and provide views onto the street and private garden. Fenestration to the side elevations, will supplement natural daylighting to the 'middle' of the plan. Together with the use of obscure glazing, the position of the windows will be offset/ staggered in relation to the adjacent in order to respect privacy. Windows will also be detailed to comply with Approved Documents Part B: Fire Safety.

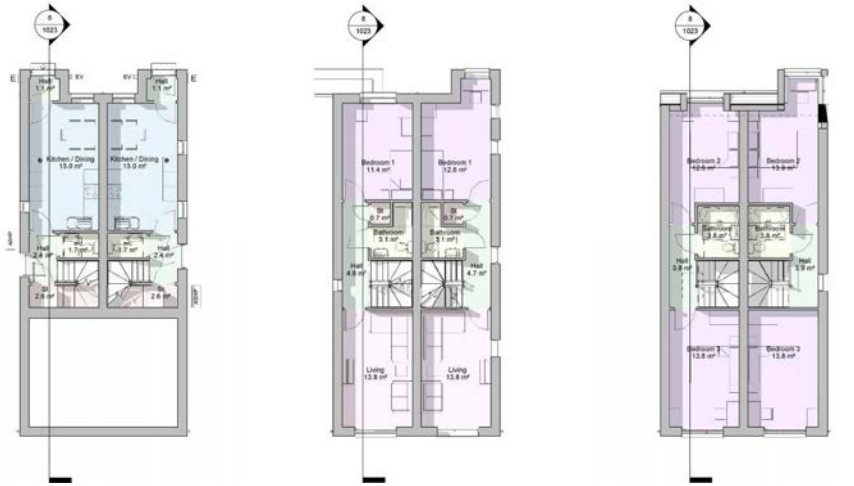
Houses: Corner units

The corner units are differentiated from the 'middle units' in order to offer variety to the street elevation and to provide visual 'bookends' to the western and eastern gables of the row. This is achieved by extending the ground floor porch structure vertically up to eaves height where it is terminated with a corner oriel/ dormer element.



Ground First Second

Fig.19: Houses- middle units- floor plans



Ground First Second

Fig.20: Houses- corner units- floor plans

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

4.0 Design Parameters, Evolution And Layout

Elevational treatment - Apartments

Key elements that relate to the adjacent houses:

- Dark grey roof tiles with matching dark grey fascias and soffits.
- Dark rainwater goods to match the fascias and soffits.
- The use of red brick - which is typical to the area.
- Canopies - which offer an economic way to protect the front door, representing a contemporary interpretation of vernacular porch.
- Individual front doors and porches

Fig. 21: Existing houses along Longhurst Road

Fig. 22: Apartments: proposed elevation

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

4.0 Design Parameters, Evolution And Layout

Elevational treatment – Houses
Key elements:

- Use of red brick for the main body of the elevation, which relates to the surrounding context. This is contrasted with continuous a dark brick plinth which sit at ground level and steps up at the entrances to emphasise the presence of the front door and canopy.
- Top storey located within the roof space to reduce height of the development.
- Porch elements linked at ground floor to offer visual continuity and physically connect the houses akin to a terraced row
- Corner houses differentiated with vertical 'bookend' elements, which offer scale and visual importance to the east and west gables of the row.

Fig. 23: Houses: typical proposed elevation

Fig. 24: Street elevation to Longhurst Road

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

4.0 Design Parameters, Evolution And Layout

Design for Security best practice

The site layout has been designed in line with Design for Security best practice. A Crime Impact Statement has been provided by Greater Manchester Police, commenting positively in support of the development.

The positive features highlighted the appropriate balance of types and size of properties, a suitable amount of defensible space around them with parking being included within the curtilage, provision of a lockable cycle store, amenity space and appropriate boundary fencing and partial retention of grass verges and street trees.

Within the report there was a suggestion that the apartment residents' cycle store is relocated to the shared amenity space.
We have looked at this option and concluded that the preferred option is to retain its position on the eastern side of the new access road where it enjoys natural passive surveillance from three apartments and from Longhurst Road. In addition, this option avoids the potential of additional excavation and loss of greenspace, resulting from its location within the shared garden space.

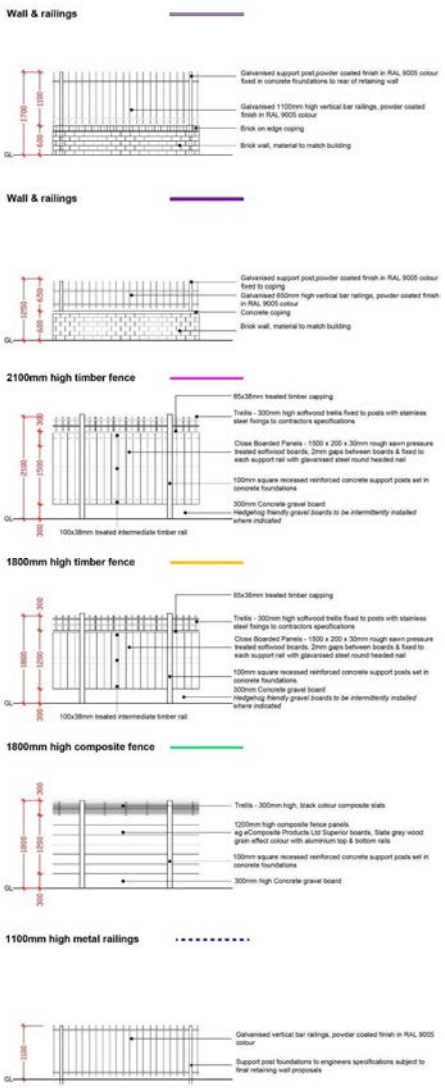


Fig. 25: Site plan/ boundary treatments

5.0 Manchester Residential Quality Guidance

Make It **Manchester**

The proposal relates positively to its context while transforming the image of the neighbourhood using appropriate density and scale.

Make It **Bring People Together**

The mix of house types and the affordability of houses promote social inclusion.

Make It **Animate Streets And Spaces**

The existing public footpath alongside Longhurst Road to the north of the site is considered an opportunity to create a strong urban street: buildings step back from street line, creating private and communal spaces facing the public realm where future residents can interact with passers-by. Entrances have been oriented towards the street and there are windows provided on the ground floor of properties to facilitate natural surveillance.

Fig. 26: Proposed view from Longhurst Road towards housing

.

Make It **Easy To Get Around**

The transport planning advice by SCP has demonstrated that the development would be highly accessible via non-car travel modes, such as walking, cycling and public transport. A secure cycle storage has been provided to the apartment blocks and individual cycle stores to dwelling houses.

However, this residential proposal aims to offer a true modal choice for travelling by providing a good balance of car park spaces in relation to the number of units.

Make It **Work With The Landscape**

The residential scheme integrates a landscape proposal which enhances the street scenes with hedges, trees and shrubs. The proposed soft landscaping improves biodiversity, adds aesthetic value and improves air quality.

Fig.27: Proposed view from Longhurst Road towards apartments

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

5.0 Manchester Residential Quality Guidance

Make It **Practical**

Bin storage points for the apartments and houses have been carefully positioned to prevent the bins from dominating the street scene. The car park spaces have been proportionally located across the site.

Make It **Future Proof**

The thermal performance of the proposed development will be based on a fabric first approach, with low air permeability and U-values to satisfy the requirement of the current Building Regulations.

Each car parking will be provided with an electric car charging point to promote the use of electric cars.

Make It **A Home**

Houses and flats offer a good level of natural lighting to the internal spaces. Windows positions have been given detailed consideration in regards to internal furniture layout.

All units comply with the Manchester' emerging space standards; the layout of the units provides a high level of privacy whilst creating generous living/dining rooms that can be used by residents for social interaction.

Make It **Happen**

The construction phase has been part of the design consideration since the beginning; a limited palette of materials, simple and elegant design and uncomplicated detailing have been chosen to ensure the delivery of a successful project from inception to completion.

Fig 28: Proposed aerial view from north east

Fig. 29: Proposed aerial view from north west

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

6.0 Conclusion

The proposal seeks to provide the following:

- Affordable rent scheme offering a mix of much needed family houses and flats in the area.
- High quality design solution that relates to its context in terms of use, scale, massing, building line and materials.
- An excellent opportunity to revitalise an abandoned site.

We would therefore respectfully request that planning officers provide a positive and supportive response to this Application.

Fig 30: Proposed 3D Site Section

© BOWKER SADLER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED