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High Lane, Chorlton

[Streetscape Assessment]

January 2024

High Lane, Chorlton: Introduction



The Assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to ascertain the suitability of the proposed development through detailed analysis of the surrounding streetscape character.

The first part of this report will assess the wider context of the site, from historical layouts to an appraisal of the nearby conservation area and the scale and typology of surrounding buildings.

The second stage of the report will assess the character of the site itself and its immediate surroundings through analysis of the local streetscape in relation to building interface and gardens, roofline typologies and materials.

The Existing Site

The site relates to the north west of Acres Road and south of High Lane, close to Chorlton town centre.

It currently comprises of former school buildings, these vary in scale, appearance, age and style. Buildings front onto High Lane where there is a large double storey extension built in the mid twentieth century attatched to the original Victorian villa that occupied the site.

There are a series of connected single storey buildings along the length of the site, mostly facing onto a hard surfaced yard, surrounded by a tall brick wall and fencing that fronts onto Acres Road. The character of the site to the rear is generally poor with no open green space or vegetation.

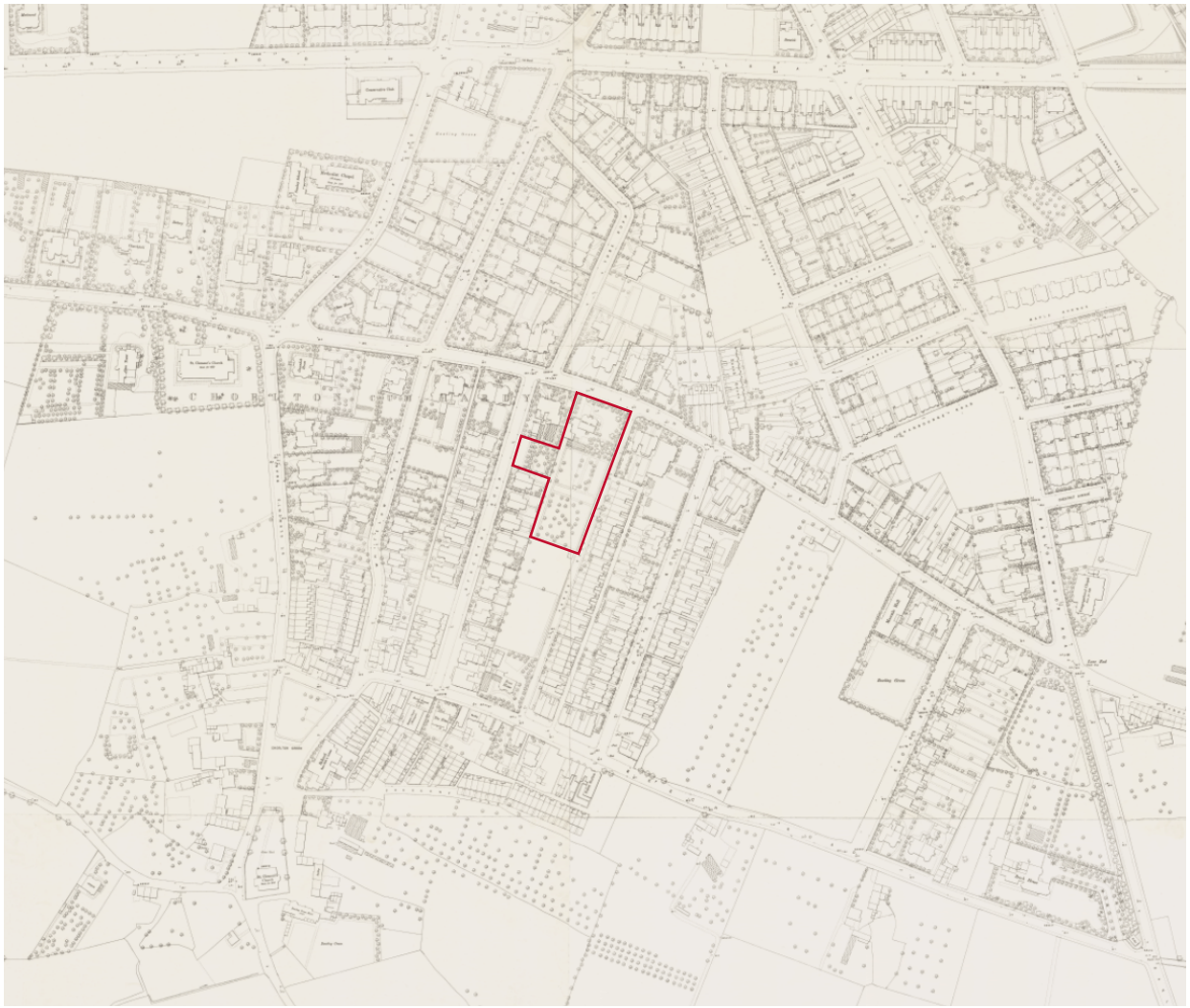
The Proposal

The proposals are for 22 high quality, energy efficient and sustainable new homes comprising 14 four bedroom townhouses fronting Acres Road and High Lane, 6 two-bedroom apartments fronting Stockton Road, and the retention and refurbishment of Carlton House on High Lane, which will be converted into 2 homes.

High Lane: **Character and Context**

01

01: Historical Context



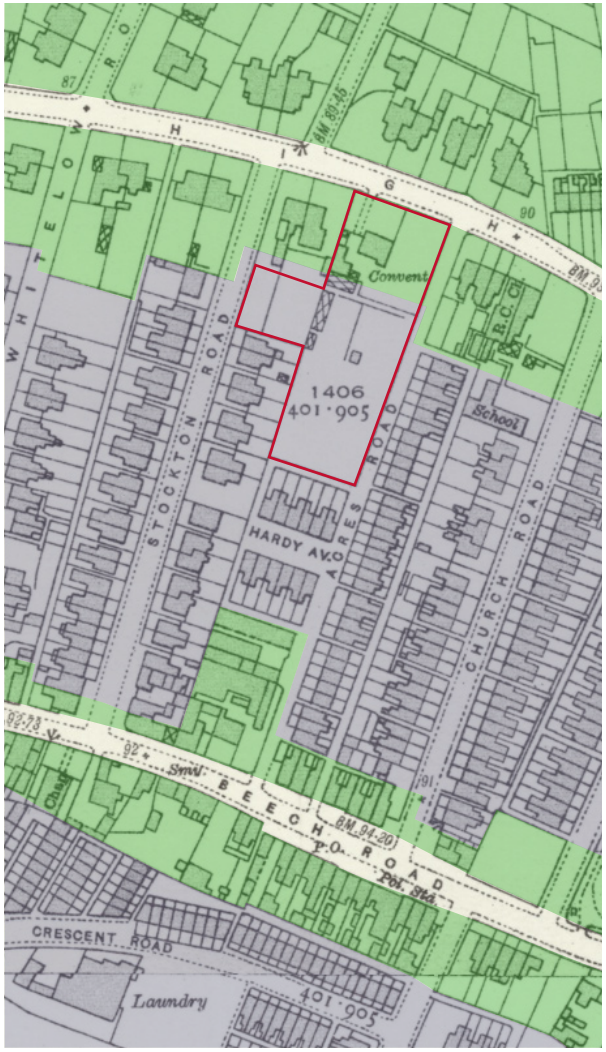
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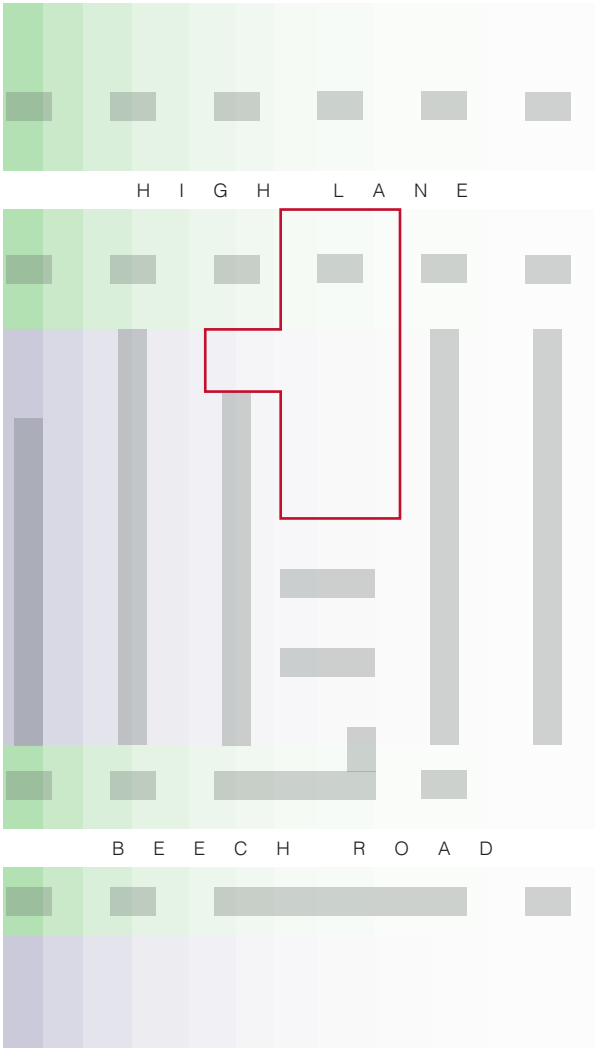
Site

The adjacent map shows the historical street layout and urban grain from the 1892. An evident pattern has emerged within the area at this point, with properties facing onto east-west roads creating a strong frontage onto the wider roads, and the north-south oriented streets developing as roads of terraced housing.

Unless sites were already designated as open spaces the rapid urban growth of areas near Manchester, like Chorlton, meant that these infill sites were occupied by housing. As an exception to this trend, the proposed site did not get re-developed for housing due to its school use and as such, the rear of the property has evolved into a mix of poor quality single storey buildings, a hard surfaced yard and poor quality boundaries that are a detractor on the wider street scene.

01: Historical Context





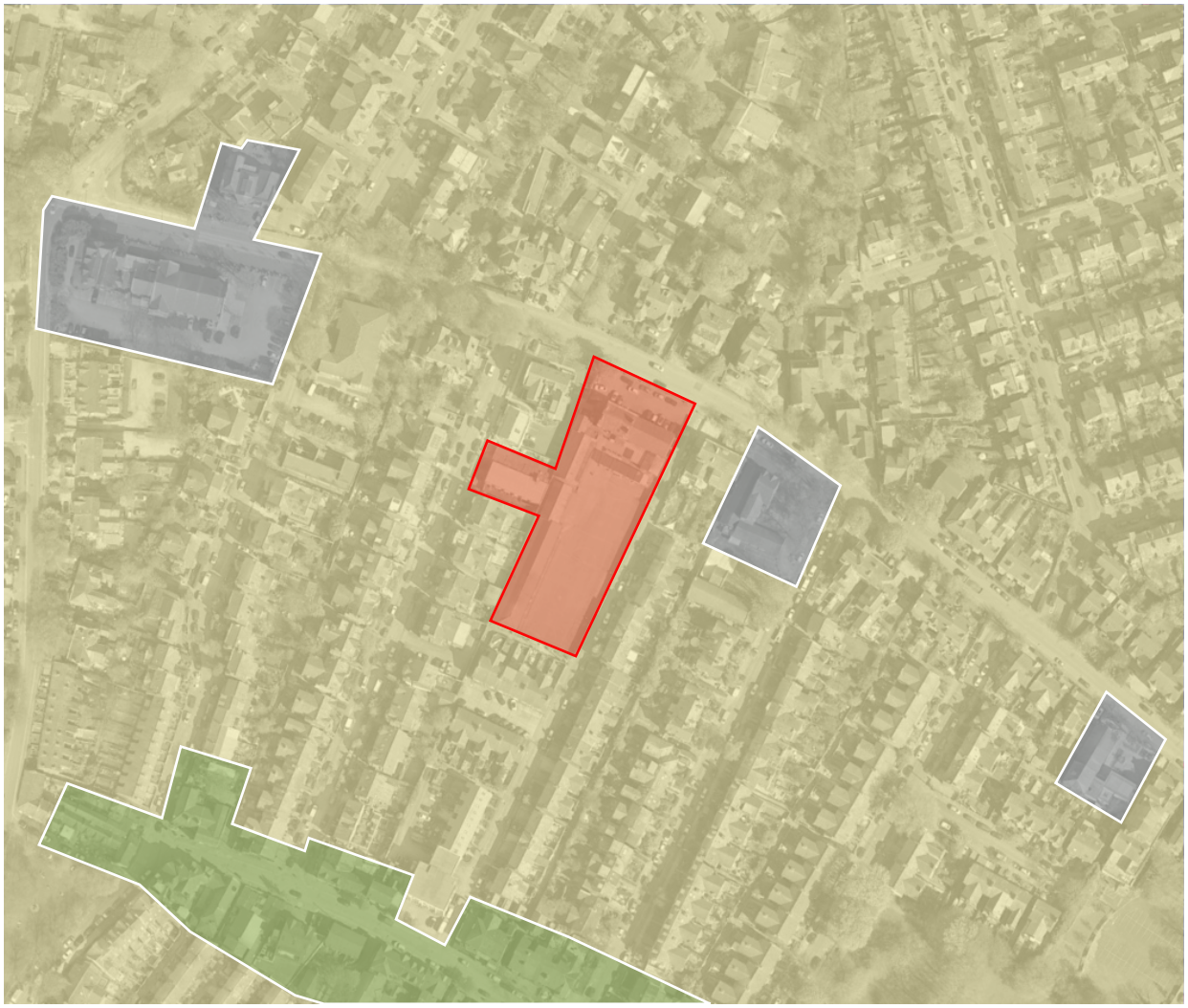
Evident within the historic map from the early twentieth century, shown left, there is a trend developed in the historic street pattern than continues to this day. This pattern has been condensed to the diagram produced here, taking cues from the density and building location around the site.

Built form facing onto both Beech Road and High Lane have a very different scale and character to those located on the streets between:

Properties facing the two bigger named roads are of a much more grand appearance and scale, often reaching three storeys and include more architectural interest in the facade treatments. Often these buildings are larger mansion type houses or grand semi-detatched properties. The gardens lining the streets here match the generous scale of the buildings and are often planted to create a semi private threshold between the active streets and their front door.

Those properties facing the streets between, such as those on Acres Road and Stockton Road are simpler and smaller in scale, echoing the terraced streets that were developing across the outer towns of Manchester at the time. Often these streets maintain a garden space between the house and the street using brick walls and hedges to create the street boundary.

01: Character Areas



Key:

Site

Character Areas:

Residential

Educational

Town Centre

Religious

The adjacent diagram illustrates the key landscape character areas within the study area. As clearly illustrated, the area is predominantly residential. To the south of the proposed site, along Beech Road, there is a town centre character with a number of retail and commercial units activating the streetscape.

Along High Lane, there are a number of religious buildings. These are now home to a number of different faiths. The site would also have previously been considered a religious site as the oldest building on site was a former convent that was doncverted into a school. The educational use of the building has now ceased.

01: Street Hierarchy and Building Scales



Key:

Site

Scale of Built Form:

1 Storey

2 Storey

2.5 Storey

3 Storey

3.5 - 4 Storey

The adjacent diagram illustrates the scale of the buildings surrounding the site.

The site itself comprises mostly of large 2 storey buildings (with increased floor to ceiling heights) fronting onto High Lane. A number of single storey extensions have been constructed over the years to the rear of Carlton House on site. As shown on the figure, single storey buildings are rare in the area. There is a strong overarching typology of two and a half storey properties in the area, a feature that was popular in the era of Victorian residential expansion, this is coupled with the fact that at this time, floor to floor heights were generous, which further increases the scale of these buildings.

Along High Lane, there are a number of 3, 3.5 and 4 storey buildings, this size of building is also evident in newer apartment buildings in the area.

01: Designations: **The Wilbraham Road / Edge Lane Conservation Area**


High Lane Streetscape




High Lane

The site is located within the Wilbraham Road and Edge Lane Conservation area which covers the streets primarily to the north and west to Wilbraham Road. As highlighted on the earlier pages of this report, the area is characterised by streets of large, individual villas bounded by front gardens running east to west along Edge Lane, High Lane and Wilbraham Road. Running north to south, smalller scale, terraced housing defines the vernacular with small front gardens defined by hedgerows and occasional tree planting.

Below there are a number of extracts from the conservation area designation highligting the spatial arrangement of the area and the contribution of green space to the area:

"The spaces within the conservation area are based on the street pattern, so spaces are essentially linear, their width determined by the distance buildings are set back from their road boundaries.

The spaces are characterised by the front gardens to individual properties, sometimes containing mature trees, by the brick or stone boundary walls and their related gateposts, by the pavements, kerbs and highway surfaces.

As identified earlier, the spatial characteristics of the area are determined by the street pattern. The trees and garden hedges to the front of properties make a significant contribution to the character of the street 'corridor'.

The trees planted within the private gardens make an important contribution to the public realm, to which can be added the street trees planted within pavements, as in Wilbraham Road and Hastings Avenue."

01: Character: **High Lane**







The immediate residential area that the site fronts onto to the north is High Lane. As explored previously, the properties fronting onto the street scene here are of considerabel size and offer a lot of architectural interest to the street, with a number of design approaches being taken on each property creating a unique look to each part of the road.

There is a character created by the location of the properties being set back from the main road and a sizeable garden to the front with a consistent york stone boundary wall.

The use of these gardens varies along the road, with the majority being used for parking, either in whole or in part - and the other part of the gardens often being planted up to create defensible green space to create a semi-private space from the street.

01: Character: **Stockton Road**







The immediate residential area that the proposed development will join to the west is Stockton Road. The scale is reduced along this street, this reduction in size is evident in the width of the street, size of gardens and also the size of the properties along the road.

Although the opportunity to create meaningful green space is reduced, as shown in the images here, the gardens are utilised to a great extent for planting trees and shrubs that both contribute to the character of the street and screen houses creating a semi-private space between the pavement and front of houses.

The street is mostly occupied by one style of building largely developed through the victorian period. There are some exceptions to this, mostly through interventions such as extensions, loft conversions and some more contemporary infill sites, these are towards the northern end of the road.

01: Character: **Acres Road**







Acres Road has many similar features that were explored in Stockton Road, but the sense of place is altered siginificantly in the northern end due to the tall brick wall of the former school playing yard. The 2.5m brick wall abuts the road edge to the west, this dominates the character of this of the road making the road feel like a narrow alley for this portion.

Where the road opens out to the south, Hardy Avenue opens up to the west with a short row of terraces perpendicular to the main street and adds variety and height to the streetscene by doing so.

Further south again along Acres Road, as shown in the bottom right image, there is contemporary development along this road that brings a new material palette, with off white through colour render under a cementitious tile reflecting the colour of the surrounding properties, acknowledging the predominance of blue slate tiles roofs in the area.

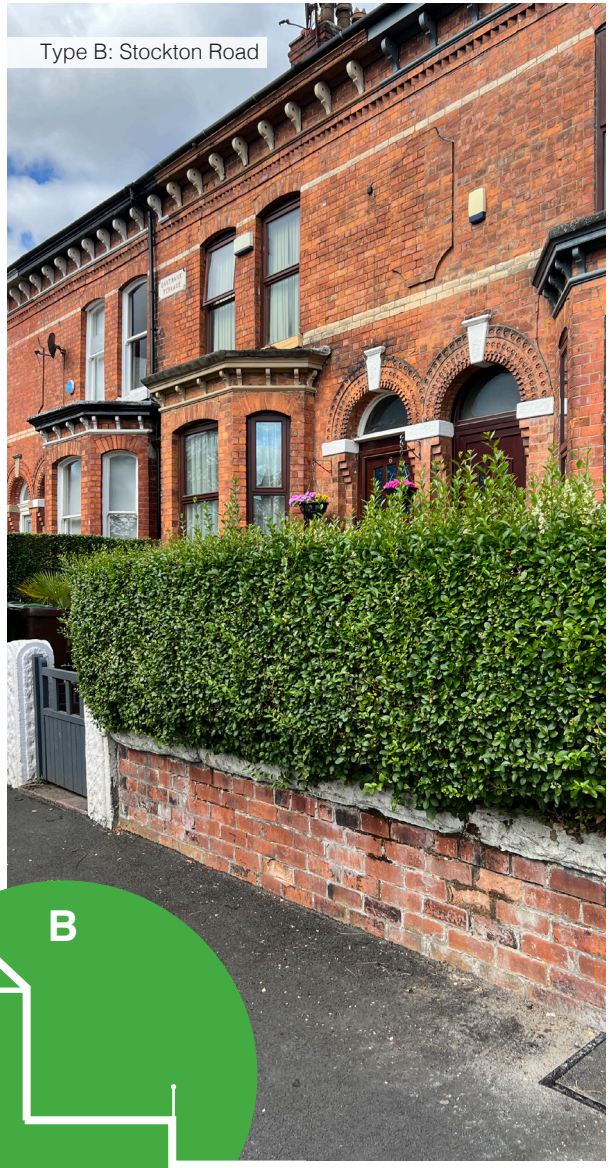
Rather than using brick walls that are used elsewhere, this development uses evergreen hedge planting to create that distinction from private spaces from the street edge.

New Street: **Streetscape Details**

02

02: Building Interface Typologies





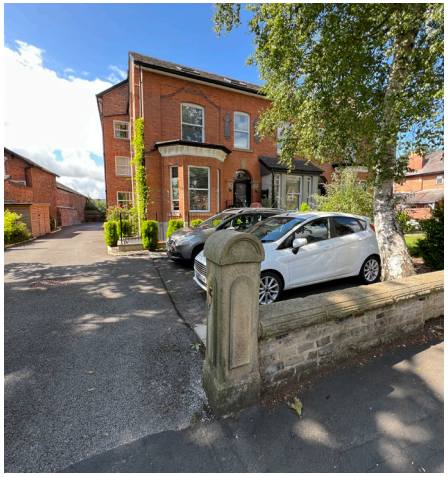


The surrounding townscape mainly comprises two distinctly different typolgies in relation to the interface of building and street. Within the more densly populated parts of the area **(A)** buildings directly front the edge of the steet, whereas in residential areas such as High Lane and Stockton Road **(B)** where the density of housing is lower, buildings are set back from the edge of the street with raised front gardens bounded by brick walling and planting.

02: Building Interface Examples

High Lane






Given the space available, the interface between street and building on High Lane offers greater opportunity for green spaces that use elements such as trees and larger hedges to provide privacy and contribute to a mature streetscene.

Acres Road / Stockton Road






Streets such as Acres Road and Stockton Road, residents on the street are given opportunity to engage and see the built form around them. The interface between houses and street is not broken down with such large elements, but rather uses a boundary features articulated on a smaller scale (in comparison to High Lane).

02: Proposals - Stockton Road





The visualisations shown over the following pages demonstrate how the proposed development will be integrated within the streetscapes that surrounding the site.

The visual on this page shows the view from Stockton Road, looking north towards the section of development that aligns with the street. As the visual shows, the built form of the development draws on the vernacular and scale of the street through the material palette, by following the building line, and setting a 2.5 storey height aligned to the eaves of the adjacent buildings.

The interface with the street has again been designed to reflect the vernacular of the existing street with a low brick wall and hedge boundary that links to the wider use of hedges within the street and the wider conservation area.

In overall terms, the proposed development creates a continuity to the streetscape from the existing low rise, poor quality block that occupies the space, linking in with the buildings to the north on High Lane.

02: Proposals - Acres Road





The visual on this page illustrates the proposed development along Acres Road looking north towards High Lane.

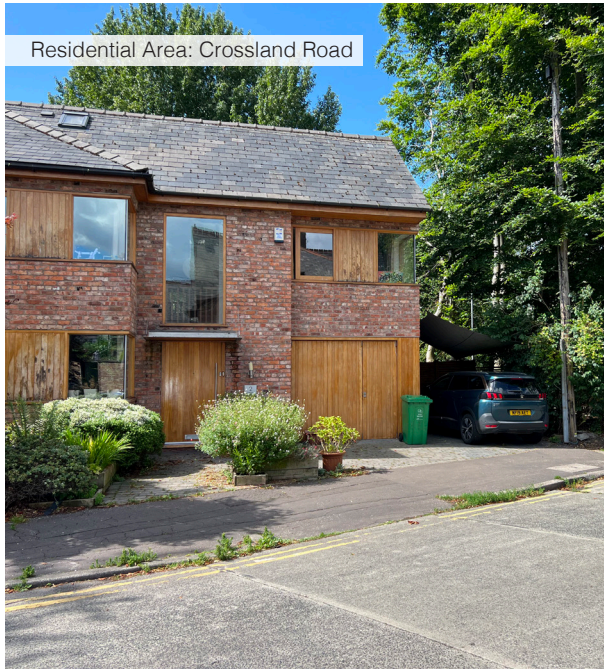
The visual shows a major change to the streetscape with the removal of the detracting infuence of the brick boundary wall and nettings on the site to create a significantly more open and balanced street that links into the surrounding streetscape vernacular.

The proposed housing has been designed to reflect the form, typology and material palette of the Conservation Area with terraced housing and a simple releating form.

The groundfloor interface of the buildings and private spaces have been designed for the C21st century but inspired by the C19th vernacular. The front boundaries of the houses have been rotated through 90 degreees to provide off-street parking which, when viewed along the street, appear to replicate the wall, hedge and tree boundaries found in the surrounding streets.

02: Materials


Residential Area: High Lane


Residential Area: Crossland Road



Buildings within and surrounding the site feature smooth red brick, using both buff and blue bricks for smaller architectural features such as lintels, sills and banding courses. Yellow sandstone/gritstone is often used for cornerstones, copings and graden wall features. Almost exclusively, the area uses natural blue slate for the roofing materials. There are some contemporary examples in the area that build on the otherwise limited material, these natural timber, through colour renders and more contemporary brick choices.

02: Proposals - Design Layout



KEY - EXISTING

Existing tree retained
Existing tree to north west corner of site to be retained.

Existing walls to be retained and made good where required

Existing Stone wall to north of site to be retained and made good where required.

KEY - PROPOSED

Proposed Lawn

Proposed Wildflower Meadow
Refer to Schedule B for details.

Proposed Ornamental Planting Mix
To front of properties.
Refer to Schedule D,E and F for details.

Proposed Single Species Hedgerow
Refer to Schedule C for details.

Proposed Trees
To replace existing trees being removed and also provide additional trees on site.
Refer to Schedule A for details

Proposed Fencing to Rear Garden Boundaries
Product: 1.8m high Horizontal Hit and Miss Fencing with 300mm trellis by Jacksons Fencing or equal with matching gates

Proposed Fencing to Front of Plots
Product: 1.1m high Sentry Metal Garden Railings by Jacksons Fencing or equal

Proposed 2.1m Brick Wall
2.1m high brick wall with curved element to corner. Located to rear garden boundary of plot 13.

Proposed Surfacing to Car Parks
Resin bound gravel to car parking areas
Colour: Buff

Proposed Surfacing to Footpaths

Proposed Paving Flags
To rear and front gardens.
Product: Mayfair Granite Flag by Tobermore or equal
Colour: Graphite

Proposed Paving Flags
To access routes to rear of properties.
Product: Braemar Concrete Flag by Tobermore or equal
Colour: Grey

Proposed Paving to Private Driveways
Product: Artro by Tobermore or equal
Colour: Carbon and Slate

Proposed Edging
Product: Kerbstone by Tobermore or equal
Colour: Charcoal
To be laid as double row on narrowest edge and laid flush.

Refer to drawing 348-LST-XX-XX-DR-L-0101 for further details.

New Street: **Conclusion**

03

03: Conclusion

Mass and Scale	Streetscape and Open Space	Buildings and Materials
The design proposal includes a mix of 2-3 storey dwellings which respond well to the scale of the immediate surroundings. This report has illustrated that building heights increase in scale towards the north-eastern extents of the site where the edge of the town centre has a major influence on its character. The assessment summises that the existing scale of neighbouring properties varying between 2 - 3 storey, sometimes 4 storey, buildings plays a key role in allowing the proposals to fit into the existing character and scale of surrounding residential buildings.	The assessment of the current scene along Acres Road highlights the negative impact the tall wall has on the street and its presence as a significant detractor in the Conservation Area. When considering that the proposed development will draw on the vernacular of the surrounding streets, the proposed design will be a major improvement to the existing street character. As the visuals for Acres Road demonstrate, the perceived “openness” of the street is increased through the removal of the boundary wall, creating a greater sense of space that is more in keeping with the streetscape vernacular of the area. Pushing the building line away from Acres Road also creates the space for a green frontage to be brought into the streetscape, breaking up the elements of built form on the streets, and mimicing the garden boundaries to Stockton Road and the wider Conservation Area. Off street parking will give residents a space to park somewhere other than on the pavements helping avoid the cluttered scenes that occur on the surrounding roads.	The terraced built form proposed on site relates directly to the buildings surrounding it. The scale of the proposed buildings look to mimic the size and form of those adjacent, recognising that the typology along High Lane warrants a different response to that along Acres Road, with terraced housing reflecting what would have been developed there. The proposed materiality also reflects that which is currently present in the area, the scheme does not aspire to stand out and instead, through the careful material choice and alaysis of local verncular sits within it’s context, using the same material palette.

Overall:

The assessment concludes that the development will have a positive impact on the streetscapes on the Conservation Area and this area of Chrolton; its proposed scale and materiality will help to create greater openness and accessibility, whilst successfully integrating it within the surrounding streetscapes and responding to the different typologies and scales present along High Lane, Acres Road and Stockton Road.

The existing site has a negative impact both visually and and in terms of character on the urban grain along Acres Road, the removal of the wall abuting the road, and building a housing typology that reflects the style and scene of the area, will create a stronger, more characterful streetscape that contributes positively to the wider setting of Chorlton and the Wilbraham Road and Edge Lane Conservation Area.