4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

"A well-designed place is unlikely to be achieved by focusing only on the appearance, materials and detailing of buildings. It comes about through making the right choices at all levels, including the layout (or masterplan); the form and scale of buildings; their appearance; landscape; materials; and their detailing."

National Design Guide Paragraph 21

4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Concept

"Well-designed places and buildings come about when there is a clearly expressed 'story' for the design concept and how it has evolved into a design proposal. This explains how the concept influences the layout, form, appearance and details of the proposed development. It may draw its inspiration from the site, its surroundings or wider context. It may also introduce new approaches to contrast with, or complement, its context."

National Design Guide Paragraph 16

As a response to the site constraints and opportunities, a linear shaped scheme with an active elevation facing Palatine Road was considered the most favourable. This arrangement will provide:

- **Efficient use of land**
- **Strong street frontage** - traditional in style
- **A balance of landscaping and private amenity space**
- **Suitable access and parking layout**

The design has been developed by looking at the local vernacular and taking cues from the predominant materials and forms. This has led to the emphasis of street facing gable projections, forms which can be found in the immediate context. Materials of buff brick, reconstructed stone heads and cills and slate roof tiles have been included to match the character of the area.

KEY:

- Site Access
- RL Access
- Office Access
- Main Entrance
- Amenity
- Car Parking
- Elevations to neighbouring buildings carefully considered

CONCEPT PROPOSAL

4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

4.2 Urban Grain Study

The pattern of development in the area around the site is characterised by some larger building footprints such as residential apartments, retirement developments and commercial buildings, and smaller footprint buildings of residential properties (shown in dark grey on the plans below). Along the Palatine Road frontage the buildings follow a general building line set back from the road.

The proposed development would introduce a building footprint which fits in with grain of larger footprint buildings grouped around the prominent junction, and establishes a building line which represents a continuation of the existing urban grain. It also creates a development pattern which is more in keeping with the wider pattern, both historic and modern, of development in this area of West Didsbury.

EXISTING URBAN GRAIN (SHOWING APPLICATION)

PROPOSED URBAN GRAIN (SHOWING APPLICATION)

4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

4.3 Scale and Massing

The scale and massing of the proposal has been developed as a response to the scale of the buildings within the context of the site. Buildings within the immediate context are mostly 2/2.5 and 3 storeys in height.

The eaves and ridge heights of the proposed building are lower than those of the existing building and similar or slightly lower than properties in the immediate area including the large villas along Palatine Road. The secondary gables are also a similar scale to others in the area.

The length of the elevations is also similar to other buildings near the site such as Danesmoor Court and Trafalgar Place on Palatine Road, Brankgate Court and the terraced block opposite along with the parade of shops close to the site on Lapwing Lane.

The former Greenfinch Public House would be retained and its corner plot location on an important road junction would be unaffected and would remain prominent and visible and appreciable.

Through positioning, the proposed redevelopment ensures a clear distinction between the proposed building and the former Greenfinch Public House, and thus ensures the historic development of the built environment and streetscape remain readable and appreciable. The former Greenfinch Public House would not be overshadowed.

'Living with Beauty', the report of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission (Jan. 2020), encourages the creation of vibrant, mixed-use, 'walkable' communities in our towns and cities by building at an appropriate 'Gentle Density' (see digram below).

PROPOSED PERSPECTIVE FROM PALATINE ROAD

PROPOSED STREETSCENE FROM PALATINE ROAD

4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

4.4 Appearance and Elevational Treatment

"The materials used for a building or landscape affect how well it functions and lasts over time. They also influence how it relates to what is around it and how it is experienced. The scale, form and appearance of a building influence what materials may be appropriate for its construction. Materials should be practical, durable, affordable and attractive. Choosing the right materials can greatly help new development to fit harmoniously with its surroundings."

National Design Guide Paragraph 30

The proposal has been designed to be sympathetic to surrounding urban and architectural context, yet avoid pastiche.

As described earlier the area immediately surrounding the site is largely Victorian and Edwardian in character, comprising mainly of detached and semi-detached villas in good sized plots but with community, commercial and municipal buildings clustered around the Palatine Road / Lapwing Lane junction.

The proposal looks to compliment the Victorian/Edwardian buildings in the surrounding area, in particular the former Greenfinch public house. This is achieved through the symmetrical positioning of gables and the rhythm of the fenestration, as well as the incorporation of the architectural detailing and material palette previously described.

The redevelopment would form part of the residential frontage along Palatine Road. Through positioning and orientation to Palatine Road the redevelopment accords with the streetscape as it creates a continuous building line facing Palatine Road, in turn creating a visual and stylistic association and connection between the former Greenfinch Public House and the villas south of the Site.

Through height and positioning, setback in the Site, the redevelopment would not become a detracting focal point or be visible from the majority of the streetscape. As such, the former Greenfinch Public House would continue to be appreciable on the corner between Lapwing Lane and Palatine Road and part of the streetscape of surviving villas which has evolved as the area has developed.

The design of the roof and use of gables reflects architectural traits inherent in the area.

1.

2.

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1 Proposed streetscene to Palatine Road.
2 Existing villa further south on Palatine Road.
3 Proposed part-elevation showing active front elevation with projecting gables.

4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

4.5 Design Response

The design intent is for a building that develops an underused site as recommended by the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 11, with a building that improves and enhances the streetscenes to Palatine Road and Lapwing Lane, whilst complimenting the existing office building. The design's scale and massing will be appropriate to the area and the architectural style uses forms, architectural details and materials consistent with the character and appearance of the area.

The site will comprise a single linear building set perpendicular to and fronting onto Palatine Road. Vehicular and pedestrian access will be afforded via the existing entrance off Lapwing Lane and car parking will be in the central part of the site preventing it from being visually intrusive. The building will be three-storeys in height.

Design principles of the proposals are noted as follows:

- **Use** – residential redevelopment within the site is considered appropriate for its context.
- **Footprint** – the shape of the footprint for the building fits into the urban grain of the immediate area and creates a frontage to Palatine Road that compliments the existing building. The setback façade to Lapwing Lane provides a better townscape response to the current open expanse of car parking.
- **Positioning** – the proposed positioning of the building creates a continuous building line facing Palatine Road, in turn creating a visual and stylistic association and connection between the existing office building (former Greenfinch Public House) and the villas south of the site. Retention of the existing boundary wall and a small garden space fronting Palatine Road form an appropriate setback. Positioning the car park in front of the building off Lapwing Lane, and including hedges and trees within it, will create filtered views of the proposed building behind, which will improve the present view of a large open car park area.
- **Height** – the proposed height is considered appropriate as the building corresponds to, and does not exceed, established roof/ridge lines and building heights in the townscape. The redevelopment, through the proposed height, would not overshadow the existing building (former Greenfinch Public House) or compete visually with it or with the former Town Hall.
- **Roof** – the proposed roof design uses of gabled forms with secondary gables, and double gables over bay elements, facing the road frontages.
- **Scale** – the scale of the development is in keeping with other buildings in the area. The building's primary scale is broken down by secondary scale elements like the full height projecting bay elements.
- **Frontages** – the elevations are articulated by the full height bays with either single or double secondary gables over them common with other buildings in the area. Windows are incorporated to all elevations to avoid blank ends which will also provides passive surveillance around the building. Privacy distances to windows in neighbouring properties are good in line with recognised standards and neighbouring amenity is respected by retention of existing boundary trees augmented with additional new landscaping.
- **Orientation** – the proposed orientation of the building towards the roads is considered appropriate. It respects established building lines.
- **Windows** – are sized to suit the requirements of the rooms they serve and to meet current Building Regulation requirements (such as overheating).
- **Entrances** – external doors and patios are included to ground floor apartments which help to create active frontages.
- **Architectural detailing** – proposed detailing is modest to avoid introducing a building which detracts from the existing building, but which incorporates elements from the historic environment. Heavily moulded and ornate elements and strongly contrasting colours are avoided as these are reserved for high status public buildings. Proposed detailing includes:
    - External purlin blocks to gables.
    - Reconstructed stone lintels, cills and infill panels between openings.
    - Blue brick band courses to break up panels of brickwork.
    - Metal Juliet balconies.
- **Materials** - to be in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Proposed roofing material is artificial slate grey tiles, walls are to be buff brick to match that of the immediate area with blue brick banding. Lintels, cills and feature panels are to be reconstructed stone of a colour to match local stone. Windows and doors are to be white uPVC casement type. These are preferred to timber being the most practical to operate for elderly homeowners, as they are not susceptible to swelling like timber. Sliding sash windows are very difficult to operate for this age group. Juliet balconies will be black painted metal.
- **Colour palette** - neutral colour palette sympathetic to the surroundings.
- **Boundary treatments** – the existing stone wall and black painted metal railings fronting Palatine Road and Lapwing Lane will be retained. The South Western and North Western boundaries which have close boarded fences and brick walls are to be retained and repaired where necessary. Boundaries will be augmented with new planting.
- **Landscaping** – a landscaping scheme will be prepared by Consultant Landscape Architects as part of a Planning Application. Trees to boundaries will be retained and additional trees will be planted to boundaries and within the proposed car park. Landscaped garden areas are proposed in front of the proposed building on Palatine Road. A new native species dense hedge will be planted behind the boundary to create privacy and assist with noise reduction. Landscaped gardens will be formed along the South West side of the building to create a more private amenity area for homeowners. The area between the building and car park on the North East side will have a patio area for use by homeowners along with grassed areas and hedging. Planting within the car park will filter views of the building from Lapwing Lane.

4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

4.6 Proposed Landscape and External Amenity

The application is supported by a Landscape Strategy and Ecological Appraisal.

The quality of landscape provision within Churchill Retirement Living's developments is important to prospective residents and indeed Churchill Retirement Living have won awards for excellence for their landscaped gardens. It is proposed that the landscaping strategy will include native planting and planting to encourage and support Bee activity on the site.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

1. Railings - 10mm dia. black polyester powder coated hoop-topped metal railings
2 Border
3 Patio
4. Apartment patios and paths
5. Planting edge border
6. Pergola

4 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

4.7 Access and Movement

"In well-designed places, people should not need to rely on the car for everyday journeys including getting to workplaces, shops, schools and other facilities, open spaces or the natural environment."

National Design Guide Paragraph 83

LOCAL AMENITIES

Due to being located within close proximity of the town centre, the site has an abundance of amenities situated within appropriate walking and cycle distances, including a pharmacy, cafe, convenience store, hospital, post office, all within 0.5 miles of the site and around or under a 10-minute walk or 3-minute cycle.

SUMMARY OF SITE ACCESSIBILITY

The proposed development site is located approximately 0.6 miles north west of Didsbury village centre and less than 150m from West Didsbury Metrolink Station which provides access to Manchester and beyond. The site also benefits from excellent pedestrian and cycle routes. Therefore, it is considered that the development presents an opportunity to promote sustainable travel to future site users and operate as a sustainable development.

CYCLE PARKING PROVISION

Secure cycle parking is located within the mobility scooter store for the Retirement Living apartments. However, demand is anticipated to be low given the age profile of residents and based on the applicant's operational experience.

PARKING PROVISION

The proposed development includes a total of 15 parking spaces for the 37 Retirement apartment units at a ratio of 0.41 per unit. The parking bays measure 2.4m x 5.0m with a 6m aisle width between rows of parking bays in excess of Manual for Streets requirements and in accordance with Manchester City Council guidance.

KEY:

- Vehicle Access
- Pedestrian Access
- Fire Brigade Access to dry riser
- Buggy Store

SITE PLAN

“Well-designed places and buildings are visually attractive and aim to delight their occupants and passers-by. They cater for a diverse range of residents and other users. All design approaches and architectural styles are visually attractive when designed well.”

National Design Guide Paragraph 54

5 PROPOSED DESIGN

5.1 Proposed Site Plan - Density

The National Design Guide at paragraph 63 (page 18) states that: *Well-designed places have compact forms of development that are walkable contributing positively to well-being and placemaking*. At page 20 'compact' is defined as relatively high density and an urban layout.

At paragraph 65 it goes on: *Well-designed new development makes efficient use of land with an amount and mix of development and open space that optimises density. It also relates well to and enhances the existing character and context.*

Similarly the National Model Design Code Part 2 at page 64 makes the following points:

150. Using land efficiently means getting the maximum possible benefit from a site or area, taking into account relevant constraints.

151. This can help to achieve desirable social and environmental outcomes, facilitate the efficient use of resources and infrastructure and reduce pressure on greenfield sites.

152. Efficient land use could involve co-locating higher density housing with shops, services and public transport nodes.

The proposed density is at 123 dwellings per hectare, a product of the character and nature of retirement living developments. This is appropriate for a site with good accessibility to the town centre with good access to local amenities and public transport.

Manchester CC Policy JP-H4: Density of New Housing, advises that new housing built within 400m of a metro-link stop, as is the case for this site, must be built to a minimum density of 70 dwellings per hectare. Were the 9 dwellings proposed under the extant consent (Ref: 130831/FO/2021) to be built out, then density would be 30 dwellings per hectare, significantly under the minimum density requirement.

KEY:

- One Bed Apartment
- Two Bed Apartment
- Communal / Circulation
- * Fire fighting stairs within 18m of highway/furthest point of building within 45m of dry riser outlet
- Refuse Store
- Buggy Store

SITE PLAN

5 PROPOSED DESIGN

5.2 Proposed Floor Plans

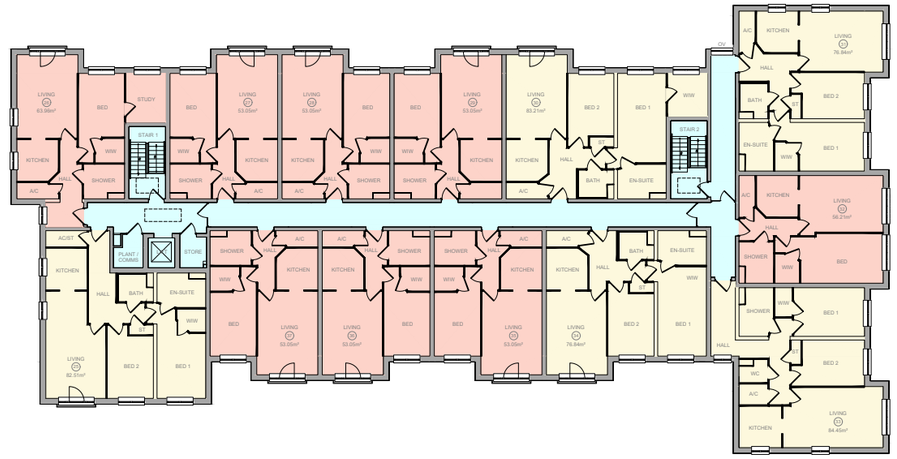
As part of the design process, several studies were undertaken to find the appropriate solution for the site in terms of building footprint, parking and amenity. The studies helped to balance optimising the capacity of the site without over-development, the provision of parking and sufficient landscaping. 15 car parking spaces are proposed which will be accessed from Lapwing Lane using the existing site access.

An internal bin store is easily accessible from the car park and the arrangement of parking allows sufficient space for refuse and emergency vehicle to enter and exit easily.

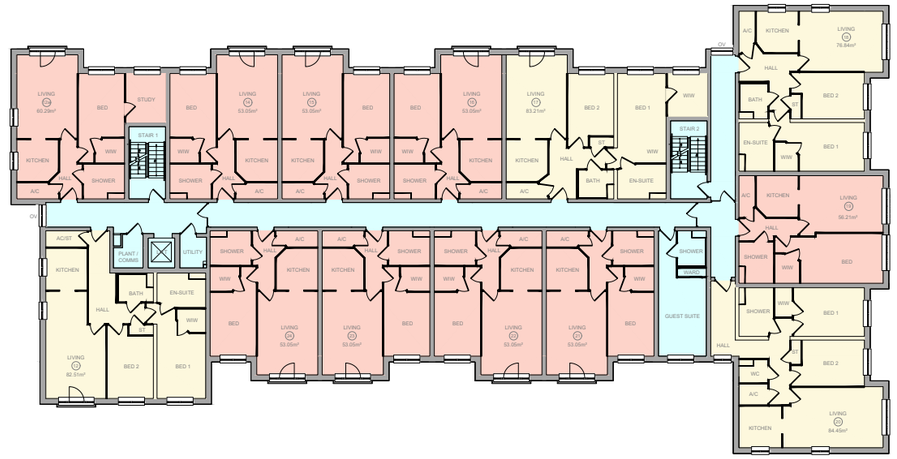
The proposed building follows an T-shape footprint with apartments arranged on either side of a shared corridor and an active frontage onto Palatine Road. The main entrance is accessed from the car park area to the north east side of the building and leads directly to the reception area which is open to the communal Owners' Lounge. A pedestrian footpath can also be accessed off Palatine Road for easy access of residents to the car park through the development.

All ground floor apartments will have their own private patios, whilst upper floors are provided with juliette balconies where possible.

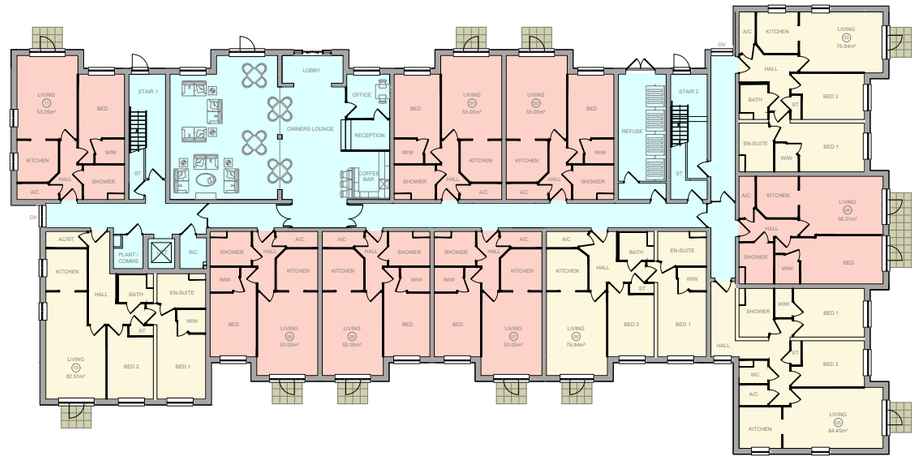
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



KEY:

- One Bed Apartment
- Two Bed Apartment
- Communal / Circulation

5 PROPOSED DESIGN

5.3 Proposed Elevations

ELEVATION A - NORTH EAST

ELEVATION B - NORTH WEST

5 PROPOSED DESIGN

5.4 Proposed Contextual Elevations

CONTEXTUAL ELEVATION A - PALATINE ROAD

CONTEXTUAL ELEVATION B - LAPWING LANE

5 PROPOSED DESIGN

CONTEXTUAL ELEVATION C - 114 PALATINE ROAD

5 PROPOSED DESIGN

5.5 Proposed Perspectives

VIEW 1 - PALATINE ROAD

VIEW 2 - PALATINE ROAD

VIEW 3 - LAPWING LANE

5 PROPOSED DESIGN

5.6 Proposed Landscape

The application is accompanied by a full landscaping strategy prepared by James Blake Associates.

PLANTING PALETTE - PLANTING PHILOSOPHY

The planting style for the amenity spaces will be more formal with seasonal interest and a strong year round evergreen presence. Use of ornamental hedging and topiary specimens will offer instant impact and cohesive structure to the planting beds. Large specimen shrubs chosen for their tone and texture will give an established appearance upon implementation. Flowering shrubs including fragrant perpetual flowering shrubs, grasses and topiary planting provides a visual aid toward the access and egress points to the building.

Proposed planting on the northern elevation of the building will be chosen for their shade tolerance. Geometrical and organic shaped planting beds filled with topiary, semi evergreen and herbaceous plants with seasonal interest to provide an attractive garden experience. Smaller local variety and sourced urban environment tolerant trees provide focal points at a small domestic scale whilst boundary tree planting provides screening and enclosure for the residents. Native Bulbs and herbaceous planting within the sub canopy of existing vegetation and native hedgerows will provide seasonal interest to the site including bee friendly flowering species. Climbers including ivy, clematis and honeysuckle will be proposed on timber trellis to screen boundary walls and create green ecologically biodiverse boundaries. Native shrubs, sub canopy native planting on the boundaries will provide an ecological corridor and refuge for local fauna.

Proposed native hedges on the eastern and western boundaries of the site further provides connectivity and biodiversity across the site. A diverse selection of proposed plant species will provide an overall enhancement to biodiversity with the site having the potential to attract a greater range of invertebrates and therefore providing foraging/nesting habitat for notable urban species. The plant species chosen for this site will be carefully selected to ensure their tolerance for the local climate and micro-climate. The shrub and tree species tolerances must include the ability to tolerate an shaded environment from the existing trees.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY MASTERPLAN