

Jonathan Davidson Architects

Residential Development
123 Barlow Moor Road, Didsbury

Design & Access Statement

October 2022



Contents

1.0 Context

2.0 Development Objectives

3.0 Character

4.0 Accessibility

1.0 CONTEXT

Physical

The development site is located on Barlow Moor Road in Didsbury, close to the junction with Palatine Road in an area designated as being predominately residential. The site is also in close proximity to, but not within, the Blackburn Park and Albert Park Conservation Areas.

The site currently contains an assisted living bungalow featuring an area of hardstanding for car parking to the front aspect, accessed via an entrance from Barlow Moor Road. To the east and south of the site are a number of apartment blocks, including the three-storey Broomfield Court immediately next door. To the west of the site are three individual dwellings fronting on to Palatine Road.

The eastern edge of the site also includes a number of mature trees within the adjacent site in close proximity to the boundary.



2.0 DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

Use

The proposed use of the site is residential, with the development providing a pair of semi-detached dwellings with off-street parking and extensive gardens.

The application site is within a predominantly residential area within easy access of shops and services and modes of transport other than the private motor vehicle and where development of new housing is considered acceptable.

Amount

The number of units proposed is primarily determined by the constraints that exist on the site, including the available frontage to Barlow Moor Road, the height and massing of adjacent buildings, overlooking distances to neighbouring properties and the proximity of root protection areas to the trees on adjacent sites.

The shape of the site, being long and thin with a relatively narrow frontage to Barlow Moor Road, is a significant restriction and only permits the development of up to two individual dwellings with street frontage. Given the site area of 0.11 hectares this equates to a little over 18 dwellings per hectare, well short of Manchester City Council's guidance of a minimum of 40 dwellings per hectare for developments outside of local centres.

This low density can be mainly attributed to the length of each plot, which results in disproportionately large gardens. The applicant has sought to turn this potentially negative feature into a positive that will utilise the plot more efficiently and increase density whilst also providing an alternative to the standard housing model that embraces and enables changing patterns of living in the 21st century.

Research by the CBRE finds that 1.8m UK households now contain two or more adult generations, an increase of 38% in just 10 years, citing reasons including a lack of retirement homes, increasing housing costs and grown up children living with parents, all set against a background of likely house price increases and an ageing population.

This rise in multi-generational living is only set to increase and has yet to be fully embraced by the standard house building model. Consequently, the scheme proposed for Barlow Moor Road features a large family home connected by a shared garden to a separate annexe unit suitable for a single person or couple.; it enables living together but apart and allows for a variety of different living configurations to suit a wide variety of needs.

The scheme proposals, therefore, comprise a pair of 4 bedroomed semi-detached houses, each with a 1 bedroomed independent annexe, both with semi-private amenity space in addition to shared gardens and parking.

3.0 CHARACTER

Design Concept

The design concept is based on providing a contemporary reworking of a traditional Edwardian style villa to respond to the character and development pattern of the surrounding area and the physical characteristics of the site and to create a high quality, visually attractive and positive contribution to the streetscape and to the surrounding context.

Layout

There are a number of factors that have influenced the site layout including shape of the site, the contribution to the streetscape, the provision of amenity space, privacy and overlooking and the proximity of trees on the eastern boundary.

Although there is no overriding building line to this part of Barlow Moor Road, with all buildings set at different distances back from the pavement line, the new dwellings have been positioned to align with the adjacent Broomfield Court and also the line of the existing dwelling on the site.

This set back ensures that the new dwellings are contained within the depth of the gable end of the adjacent Broomfield Court, which has no windows to habitable rooms. The annexe unit has been positioned to align with the rear gable of the U-shaped Broomfield Court, which is similarly window free, in order to preserve the open character of the gardens to both sites and restrict overlooking the neighbouring resident's communal space.

Parking for two vehicles will be provided to the frontage of each dwelling to preserve the amenity space to the rear, with access from Barlow Moor Road via the existing site entrance with an additional access point formed in the existing stone wall. Turning space is provided within the curtilage of each site to enable cars to exit in a forward direction.

We believe this layout responds well to the site circumstances and optimises the potential of the site, whilst enhancing the the existing streetscape.

Scale

The adjacent buildings are either three-storey or two-storey with pitched roofs and so a development of three storeys fronting Barlow Moor Road, with the top floor set within a pitched roof, is considered appropriate in this context. A streetscape elevation showing the proposal in context with the adjacent buildings is included with the application.

The rear annexes are at a much smaller scale, as befits their level of accommodation, and, again, the first floor is partially contained within the roof space in order to reduce the overall massing.

We believe the scale and massing proposed for both the main houses and the annexes are sympathetic to their neighbours and would be appropriate in the context of the site.

Appearance

This section of Barlow Moor Road contains a diverse mix of building styles from large Edwardian villas, often converted to apartments, to purpose built blocks, both large and small and both contemporary and more prosaically styled blocks dating from the 1970s and 80s.

These buildings provide no specific design type and no strong prevailing character or distinctiveness which would dictate a prescriptive response to the design of a development on this site and so the design response has been derived from the wider area and the historic pattern of large, detached period dwellings in spacious, leafy grounds.

This influenced the decision to develop the scheme as a single block of semi-detached dwellings rather than individual detached dwellings, with the design developed to give the impression of a large, double-fronted dwelling, with projecting square bays and gabled dormers and a materials palette of red brick with stone features and a blue welsh slate roof.

The annexe units adopt a similar palette of materials and share a common design language such that the main house and annexe together form a consistent whole although of different scales.

Landscape Strategy

The provision of high quality amenity space is fundamental to the design concept and further details are provided in the accompanying Landscape Design Strategy document produced by DEP Landscape and included with this application.

Trees

The existing site is surrounded by a number of mature trees, primarily on adjacent land to the eastern boundary, and this has informed the design strategy. Further details, including a tree survey and an Arboricultural Impact assessment have been produced by Murray Tree Consultancy and are included with this application.

Highways & Parking

Vehicular access to the site is proposed to be taken from Barlow Moor Road via the existing access, which will be supplemented by an additional access point through the existing boundary wall fronting the highway.

Parking will be provided for two vehicles for each dwelling with sufficient turning space provided within the curtilage. Dwellings will be provided with electric vehicle charging points and a secure cycle storage pod is also to be provided.

Waste Management

The proposed strategy for waste management is based on providing 4no. 240 litre bins for each plot to be shared between the main house and the annexe and allowing for recycling for each type of waste stream.

A dedicated refuse storage area is provided, which is screened from the highway by a timber fence separating the frontage from the private areas at the rear.

4.0 ACCESSIBILITY

Access Links

The development site, being very close to the village centre of Didsbury is easily accessible by various forms of public transport and by private cars. Vehicular and pedestrian access is from Barlow Moor Road, an established public highway.

Access Routes & Entrances

Level access (shallower than 1:20) is provided to the main entrance from the highway and from the parking spaces to the frontage. The threshold into the dwellings will be flush and will provide level access to an entrance hallway.

Internal Circulation

In both the main house and the annexe the staircase is arranged in a single straight flight to allow the simple installation of a stairlift should this be required in the future. In addition, the entrance hallway to the main house features a full height void, large enough to allow installation of a platform lift and, therefore, provide full wheelchair access to the upper floors.