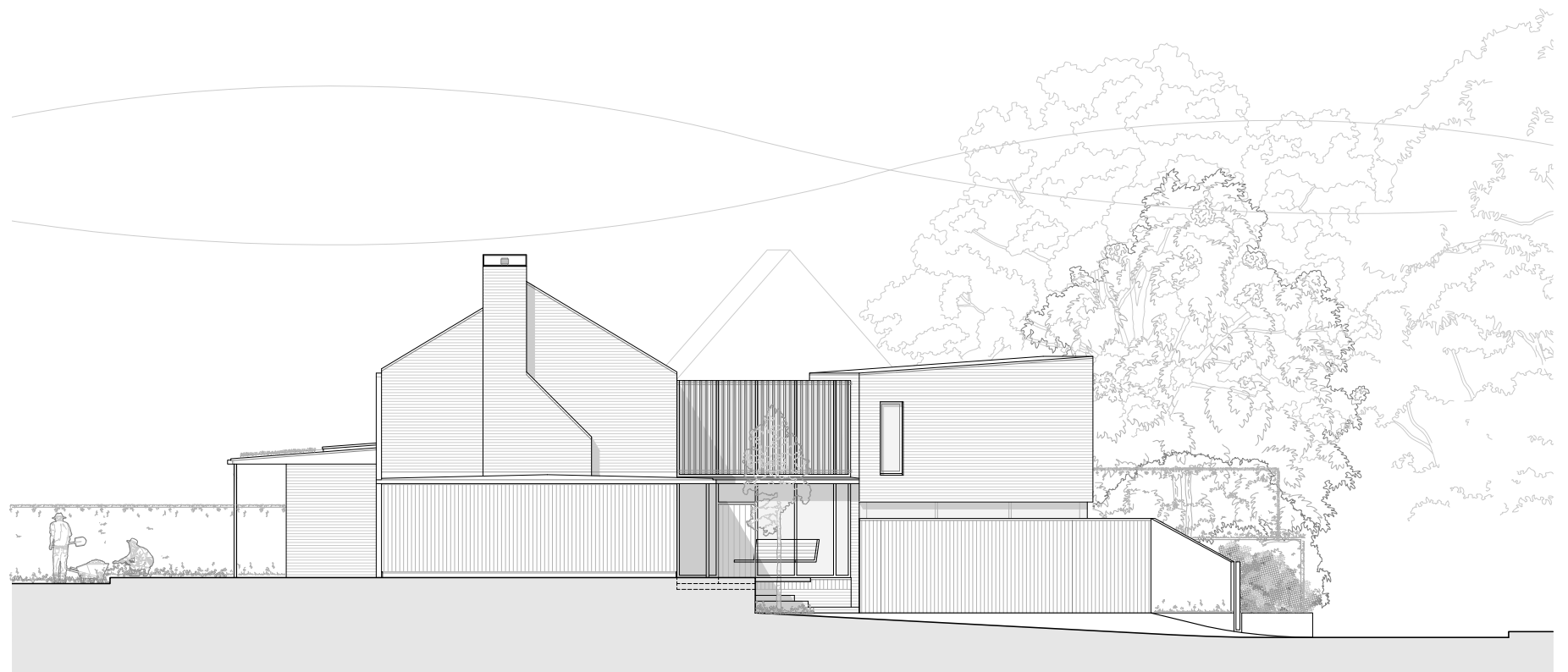




Application to Remodel an Existing Detached House at 21 Millgate Lane, Didsbury, Manchester, M20 2SW

Design & Access and Heritage Statement

prepared by **GAGARIN STUDIO**

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VIEW FROM WEST. FRONT ELEVATION



VIEW FROM EAST. REAR ELEVATION

1 Introduction & Application

This Design & Access and Heritage Statement is submitted on behalf of the applicant by Gagarin Studio, Architects and agent, to accompany a full planning application for the refurbishment of a single detached dwelling at 21 Millgate Lane, Didsbury, Manchester, M20 2SW.

The application seeks planning permission to remodel an existing 2-storey detached house, which includes the demolition of an existing single-storey garage and entrance porch and replacing with 2-storey accommodation of a similar footprint, and a single-storey extension to the rear of the property.

See Architectural drawings:

GAG302-1000 - LOCATION PLAN

GAG302-1001A - SITE PLAN AS EXISTING

GAG302-1200A - GROUND FLOOR PLAN AS EXISTING

GAG302-1201A - 1st FLOOR PLAN AS EXISTING

GAG302-1300A - ELEVATIONS AS EXISTING

GAG302-1301A - ELEVATIONS AS EXISTING

GAG302-3001A - SITE PLAN AS PROPOSED

GAG302-3200A - GROUND FLOOR PLAN AS PROPOSED

GAG302-3201A - 1st FLOOR PLAN AS PROPOSED

GAG302-3300A - WEST ELEVATION AS PROPOSED

GAG302-3301A - NORTH ELEVATION AS PROPOSED

GAG302-3302A - EAST ELEVATION AS PROPOSED

GAG302-3303A - SOUTH ELEVATION AS PROPOSED

GAG302-3400A - SECTION AA and BB AS PROPOSED



AERIAL VIEW



LOOKING SOUTH ALONG MILLGATE LANE TOWARDS SITE ACCESS



2 Site & Context

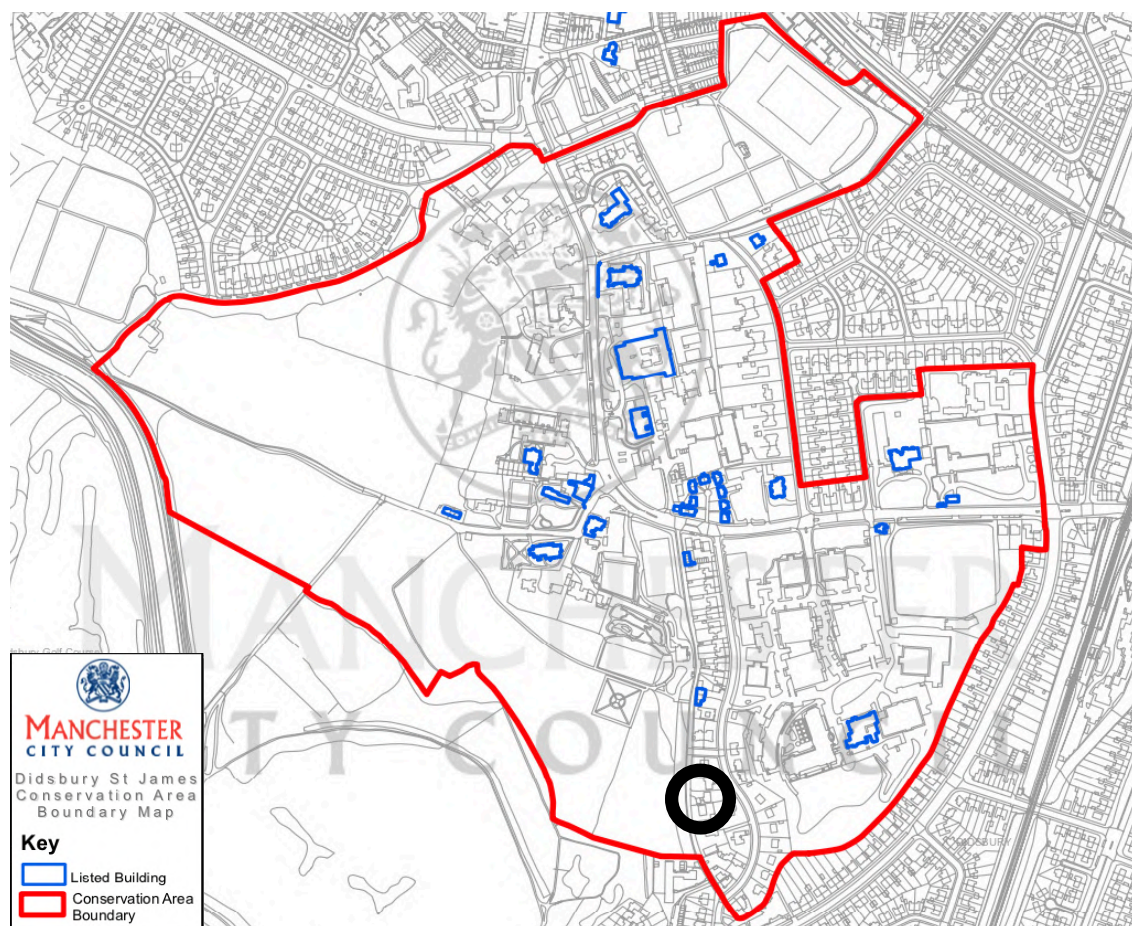
21 Millgate Lane is a mid-20th century detached house, constructed c.1970, orientated west-east on a residential street in the Didsbury St. James Conservation Area. The front of the property is accessed from Millgate Lane which forms the western boundary of the plot. Kingston Road forms the eastern boundary to the rear. Immediately to the west is Fletcher Moss Park public park and gardens, and the river Mersey beyond.

The house was built as one of a pair together with 44 Kingston Road immediately to the north in an unusual back-to-back arrangement accessed from opposite roads, in typical mid-century modernist style with brick walls and areas of timber cladding, large format glazing and flat roofed single-storey garage and entrance canopy. The house sits at a slightly elevated position in relation to Millgate Lane with a ramped driveway / parking area leading to the garage and entrance. Boundary treatments are a mixture of stone and brick walls, timber fencing and hedges. The house is heavily screened along the western and eastern boundaries by healthy vegetation and mature trees which are a key characteristic of the conservation area.

3 Didsbury St. James Conservation Area

The Didsbury St. James Conservation Area was designated in November 1970, covering an extensive area centred on the historical core of Didsbury at the junction of Wilmslow Road and Stenner Lane. The following passages from Manchester City Council's website have been referenced throughout the design process to inform the development of the proposals, and have been extracted here to provide a historical and character appraisal of the conservation area:

- Prior to the Industrial Revolution, Didsbury was a small agricultural hamlet within the sub-manor of Withington. The earliest recorded reference to it is provided by the granting, in 1235, of land for the building of a chapel. This became the parochial church of St. Oswald, later changing its name to St. James in 1855. Near the church on Stenner Lane was a spring or well which provided water and permitted the growth of the hamlet over the next few hundred years.
- With the growth of the railways, Didsbury was absorbed by the resultant urban sprawl, and it became part of the City of Manchester in 1904.
- A great variety of building materials is used in the conservation area. Most common is red brick for walls and blue slate for roofs. Stone dressings, in conjunction with brickwork, are used extensively, and several buildings are built entirely of stone, notably the two churches.
- Several buildings are finished in stucco or rough-cast render and one, Lawnhurst, consists of red brick with yellow moulded terra cotta dressings.
- The grounds of the Shirley Institute, originally parkland to the Towers, have recently been developed with glass office blocks. The large variety of building materials to be found in the area is not as discordant as would first appear.
- The whole of the conservation area, with the exception of playing fields, is well wooded. The trees serve not only to screen one group of buildings from another, but to provide a unifying, leafy backdrop to the whole area.
- The forecourts of some Millgate Lane cottages are paved with cobbles, and the change to tarmacadam is all that distinguishes the property boundaries. Elsewhere, most houses have gardens enclosed by brick or stone walls, although the height varies up to about three metres. Some properties have fences or hedges, mostly in addition to or above the wall. Walls with railings in particular make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area. Hedges on their own are not usual in Didsbury St. James. Garden gates are wrought iron or timber, supported by stone or brick piers although many gates are now missing.



CONSERVATION AREA MAP WITH THE SITE HIGHLIGHTED



AERIAL VIEW SHOWING THE HOUSE IN WIDER CONTEXT

- The quality of the built environment, as well as the setting of buildings, is of a very high standard, and a similar high standard will be expected of any scheme which proposes new buildings, extensions, or other major developments.
- The existing well-treed suburban character of the conservation area should be maintained, and any development proposals should respect this. The construction of large floor plan buildings without substantial landscape intervening would inevitably damage the quality of the setting.
- The trees in Didsbury St James are of paramount importance in establishing the character of the conservation area. Many are fully mature and create the effect of woodland, although a large number of properties do exist in the area. The woodland extends into a large part of the Mersey Valley flood plain.
- The Shirley Institute has long been established in the conservation area, and its use has been scientific or institutional rather than commercial. The development of offices within its grounds has been a contentious decision. Although the glass and metal structures are not in the style of the older buildings in the conservation area they quite clearly represent the age in which they were built and to some extent replace 1950s buildings of far less character or interest. This is preferable to producing a debased copy of an historical architectural form, but designs should relate to other buildings in height, massing, proportions and scale.
- A considerable degree of sympathy with older buildings can be achieved in the appropriate siting of a new building, in its massing, scale, proportion, rhythm and materials used in its construction while still allowing it to demonstrate the vitality of the present day.
- In comparison with other conservation areas in Manchester, Didsbury St. James covers a large area, and the style and form of its buildings varies, giving great scope for the generation of appropriate architecture for the future. Notice should be taken of these characteristics when preparing new schemes. The features mentioned previously, such as garden walls, hedges, gate posts, porches, styles and colours of window frames and roofing materials should all be taken into consideration, their form analysed and new buildings designed to harmonise with them.

As with the wider conservation area, Millgate Lane is characterised by its variety of building types, displaying a mixture of architectural styles from different periods and utilising a range of building materials.

Other than 21 Millgate Lane's inclusion in the St. James Conservation Area, there are no other site specific designations.



WEST (FRONT) ELEVATION AS PROPOSED



NORTH (SIDE) ELEVATION AS PROPOSED

4 Design Proposal

The design has been led by an ambition to reimagine the property using the mid-century modernist principals of contemporary design and creating connections between the house and garden, by utilising a familiar palette of materials to create a contextual response to the house and site that serves to create an exemplary modern family home, and in turn to enhance the character of the conservation area.

The scheme involves refurbishment and remodelling throughout. To the front of the house it is proposed that the existing single-storey garage and entrance canopy / porch be demolished, to be replaced with 2-storey accommodation on a similar footprint, creating an improved entrance and internal link between the house and garage, with a new master bedroom arrangement above. The extension has been designed to sit in the same location as the existing garage, referencing the original form and mitigating any impact to neighbour amenity.

It is proposed that this replacement building volume is constructed with the ground floor level approx. 600mm lower than the existing garage. This will reduce the overall height of the extension and allow the level of the driveway / parking area to sit slightly lower, thereby reducing the gradient of the ramped access from Millgate Lane which is currently quite steep.

The new 1st floor accommodation, as well as re-ordered fenestration to the main house, has been orientated and designed to take advantage of natural afternoon / evening daylight and the impressive leafy aspect over the park to the west, while maintaining privacy with the neighbours.



EAST (REAR) ELEVATION AS PROPOSED

A single storey extension is proposed to the rear of the property, creating a focused space for family activity with a strong connection to the rear garden, maximising natural daylighting and taking advantage of impressive long views through the plot, while again minimising any impact to neighbouring properties.

The extensions have been developed to provide simple, clearly articulated building volumes that remain subservient to the main house, with a calm but modern palette of materials to suit the existing house and wider conservation area.

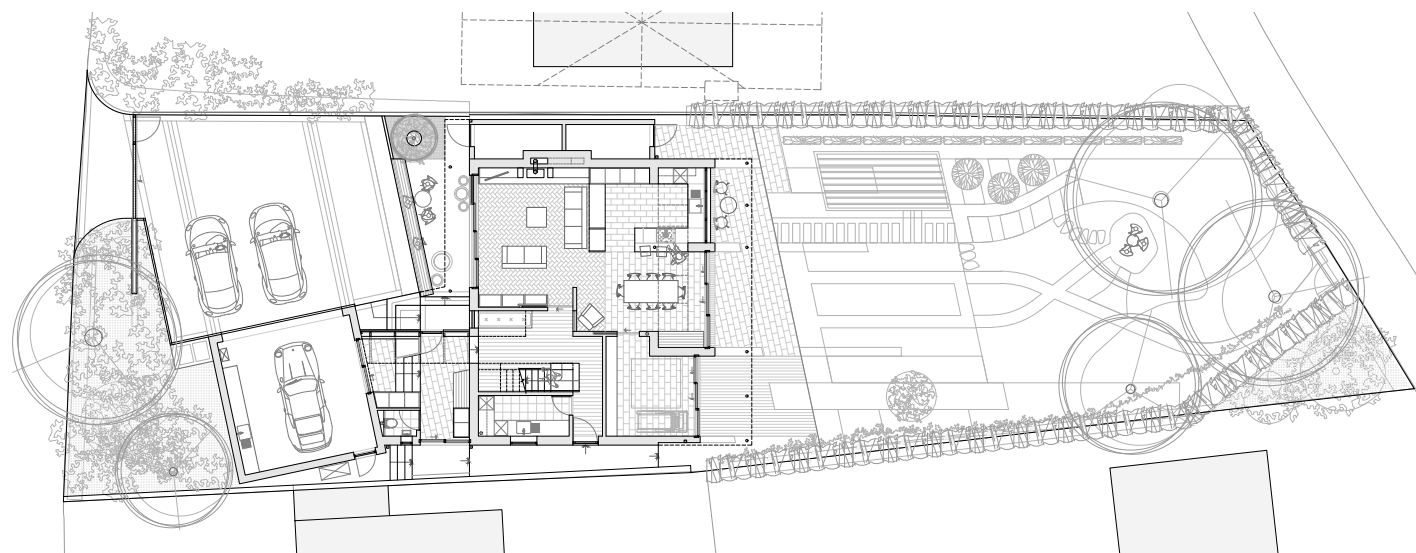
To the walls, new brickwork will be selected to suit the existing. Areas of natural timber cladding are proposed as a complementary material to bring order and proportion to the elevations, and to connect the house and landscaping with a shared palette throughout. The existing concrete pitched roof tiles will be replaced with natural blue slates referencing the wider palette of the conservation area and street scene, with shallow roofs receiving traditional standing seam zinc covering coloured to match.

New areas of glazing have been carefully designed to maximise natural lighting and create visual connections with long views between spaces and out to the lush front and rear gardens. Glazing will be double-glazed aluminium framed casements, coloured to suit the brickwork.

EXAMPLE MATERIAL PALETTE



PRECEDENT STUDY OF A SIMILAR MID-CENTURY DETACHED HOUSE WITH CONTEMPORARY EXTENSION



PROPOSED SITE PLAN SHOWING LANDSCAPING PROPOSALS

Sustainability

The decision was taken early on in the design process to retain the existing structure of the main house. In response to the climate crisis and growing body of global climate research, there are ever increasing calls for the construction industry to reduce building demolitions in favour of reusing the existing building stock where possible, to retain the embodied carbon in existing structures and reduce the overall life-cycle emissions of buildings. Although it is proposed to demolish the existing garage, the existing foundation material and brickwork will be reused in the redevelopment. The simple pitched and gabled form of the existing house naturally lends itself to repurposing. Spaces have been carefully reordered in the proposals to create a contemporary piece of architecture, while reusing the existing structure with a minimal amount of carbon-heavy site work required.

The refurbishment will also include significant upgrades to the thermal performance of the building which currently suffers from very poor levels of insulation. Upgrading to modern standards of insulation and high quality design, and upgrading to double-glazing throughout, will greatly improve the building's performance and reduce energy consumption. As part of the proposals a new air source heat pump with pv solar array will provide off-grid central heating and hot water for the property, contributing renewable energy generation.

Landscaping

Landscaping proposals have been developed alongside the architectural design as an integral part of the design process, by Layer Studio landscape architects. With the ambition of creating a 'house within garden' setting, the proposals seek to retain all of the major trees and boundary vegetation, while introducing new trees, planting and wild grasses sympathetic to the area to encourage wildlife biodiversity, and to enhance the lush and leafy 'woodland' character of the conservation area.

See design document : 320-LYR-XX-XX-RPT-L-0002 Landscape Chapter
and drawings : 320-LYR-XX-ZZ-DWG-L-1001 / 3001 / 4001 / 5001

An arboricultural survey has also been undertaken and is submitted in support of the application.
See survey report and plan : Millgate Ln 21 RTS 30082022, RTS 30082022 TPP 001

Access Vehicular & Pedestrian - Existing vehicular and pedestrian access from Millgate Lane is to remain as existing. A new steel and timber rolling gate with pedestrian pass gate is proposed to the driveway / parking area.

Car Parking - The existing driveway / parking area will be increased in size to allow for turning on the property to exit in a forward direction. The new garage is big enough to accommodate max. 2 cars.
New EV charge point.

5 Summary & Conclusions

The existing house is typically tired and inefficient for a building of its era. The sustainable and sensitive improvements proposed reimagine the property to create a contextual, contemporary home of high quality design and craftsmanship, with improved connection to the site and wider setting.

We consider the proposals to be beneficial to the continued use and re-animation of the property, providing enhancement to the character of the conservation area while contributing to the much needed upgrade of existing housing stock to meet local and national climate targets.

