

Heritage Design and Access Statement

Proposed widened entrance to driveway

13 Bloomesbury Avenue, St James Park, Didsbury

for

Mr G Rafferty

V1 25th November 2025

PLEASE READ THIS DOCUMENT IN CONJUNCTION WITH DRAWING NOS

25 513 PL000 OS LOCATION PLAN

25 513 PL201 SITE PLAN AND ELEVATIONS AS EXISTING/PROPOSED

Prepared by:

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1. Introduction

This Heritage Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support the planning application for the widened drive at the entrance to 13 Bloomesbury Avenue, St James Park, Didsbury. The house is situated within a designated Conservation Area, and as such, the proposal must consider both the historical context and the need for enhanced accessibility.

The aim of this project is to improve the turning access onto and off the drive while ensuring that the design respects and complements the heritage and character of the surrounding area.

2. Site Description

St James Park is located in the heart of Didsbury, a historic suburb of Manchester. The gated residential development built circa 2017 has a mix of high-quality detached dwellings, set in large garden plots, together with apartments within a refurbished Victorian building formerly used by MMU. With its established green spaces, trees, and landscaping, the gated development is a successful development within the local area.

13 Bloomesbury Avenue is a large semi-detached dwelling set in a large garden plot to the rear of the St James Park development, accessed by a private roadway.

The existing vehicular entrance to the dwelling plot features brick pillars, flanked by hedging/railings, off a narrow private roadway that makes turning into the drive difficult for anything other than small cars. The new widened drive aims to address these needs while preserving the integrity and aesthetic of the site entrance.

The paved driveway can accommodate 3 cars but requires excessive manoeuvres to allow any individual car onto/off the drive.

Other driveways in the locality are similar or larger in width and some are gated.

3. Heritage Context

St James Park is located within a Conservation Area that includes significant historical buildings, landscapes, and structures. The Conservation Area designation aims to preserve the aesthetic, architectural, and historical value of the area.

In this context, any changes to dwellings, including the widened drive, must be carefully considered to avoid detracting from the area's character. The design of the widened drive has been developed to minimise change and ensure it remains sympathetic to its surroundings and does not interfere with the historical significance of the park or the broader Conservation Area.

4. Design Proposal - Widened driveway

The proposal involves the creation of a new, widened drive that will improve vehicular and pedestrian access to 13 Bloomesbury Avenue. Key aspects of the design include:

The existing brick pillar will be carefully taken down and rebuilt in the new proposed location.

Existing black steel railings will be modified in length to suit the new pillar location.

Evergreen hedging will be trimmed to suit the new pillar location.

Existing hard paved surfaces will be extended as shown on the attached drawing.

The design ensures that the drive remains in harmony with the surrounding historic environment, complementing the character of the estate.

5. Access Considerations

The widened drive will improve access to 13 Bloomesbury Avenue, benefiting a range of users, including:

Vehicular Access: The wider drive will accommodate larger vehicles, ensuring safe access for delivery and maintenance vehicles.

Pedestrian Access: The drive will continue to ensure accessibility for individuals with mobility impairments.

Bicycle Access: The widened drive will also allow for easier passage of cyclists, in line with the commitment to promoting sustainable travel.

6. Impact on the Conservation Area

The design of the widened drive has been developed with careful consideration of impact on the Conservation Area. Key measures taken include:

The adaptation of existing black painted steel railings and re-use of existing brickwork ensures that the drive respects the historical aesthetic of the area, using a similar colour palette to that on the main house.

The width of the drive has been chosen to ensure it is functional but does not dominate the existing street scene.

Reversibility: The design allows for the potential removal or alteration of the driveway arrangement in the future, should this be deemed necessary.

The proposed driveway alteration will have minimal visual impact on the Conservation Area, preserving the existing street scene and aesthetic of St James Park.

7. Conclusion

The proposed widened drive at 13 Bloomesbury Avenue, Didsbury, represents a sensitive and thoughtful approach to improving access and car parking while respecting the heritage and character of the Conservation Area. The design balances the practical need for enhanced access and amenity with the preservation of the park's aesthetic and historical significance.

The proposal will contribute positively to the functionality of access into 13 Bloomesbury Avenue, and the use of the drive for parking. The designs respect the surrounding context and enhance the amenity of the Conservation Area.

We therefore suggest the application should meet with the support of the Planning department and a Planning Consent be granted.