Land Adjacent 4 Sandy Lane, Chorlton-Cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 8TN

DESIGN, ACCESS AND ENERGY STATEMENT WITH BIODIVERSITY NOTES **Revised May 2026**

INTRODUCTION

The proposal is for two three-bedroomed dwellings on a vacant on Sandy Lane close to the centre of Chorlton. The dwellings have been designed in accordance with the document "Manchester Residential Quality Guidance" as detailed below. The proposal exceeds the provision standards in Appendix (GIA) for a 3-bedroom/5-person dwelling over 3 stories. The site is very close to public transport links, both the Metrolink and the bus terminal, and to public open space at Chorlton Park, Beech Lane Park, Chorlton Ees Nature Reserve and the Mersey Valley/Water Parks The accommodation is suitable for families, the elderly and infirm and young persons sharing. The visual appearance has been designed to be contemporary whilst blending with the nearby properties and the characteristics and scale of the Chorlton area.

BACKGROUND

General

- The site has been unoccupied since June 2000 when it was bought by the applicant.
- There is evidence that the site was originally occupied by buildings forming a terrace of dwellings with nos. 2 and 4 Sandy Lane. Parts of the building formerly attached to no. 4 Sandy Lane still protrude from the party wall. These dwellings appear to have been demolished in around 1954.
- Prior to the applicant's purchase, it is believed that in around 1995, the site may have been used illegally for a brief period (of around 2 years) for motor vehicle salvage and that this use was halted by Manchester City Council enforcement action. Other than this there is no evidence of usage.
- For several years the site had a large advertising hoarding facing onto Sandy Lane until it was removed when the applicant purchased the site in 2000.
- The dwellings immediately adjacent date from the 1920s. Others date mainly from the Victorian era with a few dating from the 1930s-1950s. There have been more recent developments such as the three storey flats at Dingle Court at the junction with Hartington Road.
- The site is very close to the three-plus storey residential properties and commercial premises with residential above which line Barlow Moor Road.
- The site is currently enclosed by high boarded fencing to Sandy Lane and a high corrugated metal sheet fence to the alley. The fence to Sandy Lane is set back from the footpath.
- There are no trees or hedges within the site but Manchester City Council planted a small tree in the pavement outside the site. It was inspected by Mr J Pollit of Frankland Tree Services Ltd in 2007 who reported that it is a Pyrus Calleryana "Chanticleer" (commonly known as an "Ornamental Pear"), planted in the 2003/2004 growing season. At that time it was a small sapling but is currently around 5m tall.
- A Sitecheck Review report was carried out on the site by Landmark Information Group Ltd in 2006. The survey was reviewed by an expert surveyor in this field, RPS Consultants, and the assessment is included in the documentation for this application. The survey could find no legal or recorded use that might lead to any contamination but has commented on the likely effect of a brief use for dismantling cars which ceased around 30 years ago as reported verbally to us by a Manchester City Council Planning Officer. The site has remained in the ownership of the applicants and there has been no activity on the site since the report was carried out.
- The flood risk shown on the government website shows the risk to be low.

Planning history

Application number 083587/FO/2007/S1 for the erection of two three storey houses dated 15 June 2007 was refused on 20 July 2007. An appeal number APP/B4215/A/08/2060940 was dismissed dated 18 July 2008. The reason for the dismissal has been addressed in the current application. A summary of the issues is as follows:

Application report by Manchester City Council

1) Over development of the site (number of houses/occupiers) creating low quality living environment with minimal amenity provision.
2) Unduly intensive relative to the character of the existing buildings, failure to acknowledge the character of existing buildings, detrimental to the visual amenity and character of the surroundings.

3) Unacceptable reduction in privacy for occupiers at 378/378a Barlow Moor Road by reason of balconies.

Appeal report by Planning Inspectorate and how current proposals address these

1) *Consideration* - Effects of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area. *Inspector's conclusion* – Although a "modern" approach is acceptable, the appearance of the proposals would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area, in particular the "box-like" standing seam aluminium mansard-type roof on the front elevation. *Current proposals* – the internal layout and elevations have been redesigned to reduce the floor areas and to have a duo-pitched slate roof similar to and slightly higher the adjacent dwellings.
2) *Consideration* - Outdoor amenity space. *Inspector's conclusion* - Both dwellings had sufficient outdoor amenity space, in line with other dwellings in the vicinity, and were close to good areas of public open space. *Current proposals* - The currently proposed outdoor space remains very similar to that accepted by the appeal inspector.
3) *Consideration* - Effects on the privacy of adjoining occupiers. *Inspector's conclusion* – it was agreed that the proposed balconies affecting 378/378a Barlow Moor Road would be removed by a condition. *Current proposals* - There are no balconies in the current proposal.
4) *Consideration* – Parking provision. *Inspector's conclusion* – one off-street parking space per dwelling is sufficient, particularly in view of the proximity of public transport. *Current proposals* – one garage per dwelling (parking behind the building line) has been retained, this includes scope for electric vehicle charging.

COMPLIENCE WITH MANCHESTER CITY POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Amenity and impact on neighbours

2.1 "MAKE IT Manchester "(the character and qualities of Chorlton)
Character, old and new:
The wealth of Manchester's industrial and commercial heritage is reflected in the urban sub-centres of the southern areas of the city, such as Chorlton. There are characteristic red brick buildings with matching front garden walls. Closer to the sub-centre these comprise several floors of living accommodation above commercial premises and large 4 plus storey Victorian semi-detached and terraced houses. Leading away from the centres are 2-3 storey smaller terraces with their yards and shared back alleys.

Appropriate density:
Density is in keeping with the Chorlton centre position, which includes areas with flats above commercial properties on Barlow Moor Road, the usually 5-6 bedroomed Victorian semis and terraces such as on Zetland Road, the usually three bedroomed tightly packed terraces such as on Fairhaven Avenue, and a mix of all these on Sandy Lane, including the recently constructed flats at Dingle Court at the junction of Sandy Lane with Hartington Road.

Scale and materials:
This site is adjacent to the commercial properties on Barlow Moor Road and close to both the large terraced and semi-detached Victorian housing and to rows of the smaller terrace dwellings. It is unusual in that it appears (from old photos/maps and from the brickwork protruding from the property at 4 Sandy Lane), to have been part of a terrace of houses joining to numbers 2 and 4 Sandy Lane. These are smaller dwellings with bay windows, and a slate roof but a white render finish to the walls, rather than the usual red brick,.
The proposal continues this white render finish but with a contemporary appearance. The articulation of proposed front façade presents a duality and a balance of horizontal and vertical features that is sympathetic to the scale and traditional features of the adjacent houses. The scale to the rear relates to the much taller properties on Barlow Moor Road towards which the proposal faces, whilst respecting the more modest scale of the attached properties. Thus the proposal responds to the existing urban fabric and distinctive local character whilst bringing a contemporary response. The current gap in the streetscape is filled, continuing the building line.

2.2 "MAKE IT Bring People Together" (encouraging community and neighbourliness)
The proposed houses each have two double and one single bedroom. Their layouts include options for easy adaptations for lifetime living, in all areas including doors/corridors, bathrooms, and bedrooms. They are therefore suitable for families, the elderly or infirm and younger "house sharers", adding to the vibrant mix of this part of Chorlton. Each has a small front garden and connects to the shared rear alleyway.
As noted above the site is exceptionally well connected to shops, schools at Chorlton Park and by good transport links to those further afield, community facilities, social hubs, restaurants, bars, parks, playgrounds

and public open spaces. Each property has space for bicycle storage and is connected to the roadway cycle routes and the countryside routes along the Mersey.

2.3 "MAKE IT Animate Streets and Spaces" (interrelationship between buildings, streets and spaces, safe and inviting). The ground floor is the most active area for general living with a large kitchen/dining/family room. Sandy Lane has mostly passing traffic on the approach to the Barlow Moor Road junction. The front façade provides a welcoming scale at street level. The front garden/threshold, with its open railings above a low brick wall, continues along the line of the adjacent properties, allowing visual connection to the dwelling whilst maintaining privacy.

2.4 "MAKE IT Easy to get Around" (accessible and well connected)
The properties are exceptionally well connected, as noted above, with very close proximity to the Chorlton bus terminus, and the tram network/stations at Barlow Moor Road/Mauldeth Road West. These routes provide varied and frequent links to the city centre (and from here to the main line rail network), the airport if necessary, and the whole of the Manchester system. The Manchester cycle route system also extends along Barlow Moor Road and the properties incorporate provision for cycle storage. For those with a car, the integral garage keeps parking off the public street and has provision for electric vehicle charging.
A good range of shops are very close by as are the renowned centres of the Chorlton social scene, particularly the restaurants and bars. The site is exceptionally well connected with the Chorlton bus terminus approximately 2 minutes walk away and the tram/metro stations at St Werburgh's Road and Barlow Moor Road, both approximately 10 minutes walk away. The properties are provided with a garage for off street parking, facilitating charging for electric vehicles.
It is located as part of the commercial and social centre of Chorlton with shops, services, bars and restaurants, particularly on Barlow Moor Road, into the central hub and along Beech Road.
The properties are also very well connected to green open space being approximately 5 minutes walk from Chorlton Park and from Beech Road Park and 15 minutes from the Hardy Lane access to the Mersey Valley/Chorlton Ees.

The public open spaces of Chorlton Park with its public space and playgrounds (also used for community events) and the extensive Mersey Valley public open spaces with walking and cycle routes and connecting to Sale Water Park give excellent provision for enjoyment of the open air.

2.5 "MAKE IT Work with the Landscape" (enhancing connection with landscape and nature) – see "Biodiversity" below.
As noted above, by virtue of its location, the development provides excellent opportunities for interaction with nature and public open spaces. Facilities have been incorporated to encourage cycling and walking but also the provision for adaptations for ageing and infirmity.
There is a small street tree in the pavement outside the properties and access to the properties has been designed to work around this.
The materials used are robust and can withstand the damp weather in Manchester. The design and detailing, such as the robust overhanging roof eaves, will ensure that the appearance will be retained.

2.6 "MAKE IT Practical" (dealing with the "clutter of life")
Space for bins is provided in the rear garden which has direct access to the shared rear alleyway, from which all local bins are collected on allocated days. Bins required will be, refuse, food/garden/mixed, pulpables/co-mingled.
Car parking with electric charging is provided by an integral garage, keeping parked cars away from the street and out of view. Although the need for car usage will be minimal in this exceptionally well-connected location, the possible need for some car ownership is recognised.
Cycle storage space is provided in the rear garden of one dwelling and in the garage of the other, being secure and away from the street scene.
Temporary stopping can take place on the public road outside the properties, which has provision without restrictions and away from any junctions.

2.7 "MAKE IT Future Proof "(impacts of climate change and efficiency)
The construction uses a "fabric first" approach, to help mitigate the risk from extreme weather events and reduce energy use.
The rear of the property faces south allowing for passive solar gain in winter but utilising solar shading to prevent overheating in summer. There is space for a dedicated energy control cupboard at ground floor. There is suitable space in both properties for an air source heat pump for heating as an alternative to a boiler. External paving is minimised and has open/dry joints to permit rainwater penetration. Rainwater run-off could be tempered by the use of a water butt with regulated release to reduce overloading of the public systems and allow harvested water to be used for gardening and vehicle cleaning.

The spaces provided are suitable to accommodate a range of living possibilities and have the essential space standards that will allow for easy adaption to facilitate changing lifestyles. The proposal achieves Building Regulations Approved Document M Volume 1 (dwellings), M4(1) Category 1 (visitable) and M4(2) Category 2 (accessible and adaptable).

2.8 "MAKE IT A Home" (sufficient space, natural light, storage)
Entrance/threshold. The dwellings have attractive front entrance doors with cover from the overhanging canopies. These are set back from the road with a "threshold"/front garden and a low brick wall with open railings forming a private space.
Natural light. All spaces have good natural light with views out away from the road, from the principal rooms. Good natural lighting includes stairways and corridors. The main habitable/sociable rooms have an open aspect, due to the unusual position in this high-density location.
Minimum space standards set out in Technical Housing Standards are 99sqm for a 3 bedroom 5 person 3 storey home, (with storage minimum 2.5sqm), and one bathroom plus one WC or shower room. The areas provided in the proposals exceed these (see drawings), with all rooms having a convenient layout to accommodate furniture and with sufficient space in rooms and circulation spaces for accessibility as Building Regulations ADM M4(2) Category 2. Each house has one full bathroom, one full shower room and a ground floor WC/cloakroom/utility room.
Privacy (visual and acoustic). As far as practical, bathrooms, stairs and the garages are located towards the road with principal habitable rooms towards the rear. The site does not directly face onto other properties to the rear. Instead it faces over the alleyway and the yards of commercial/apartment buildings at right angles to the façade. The ground floor has a 2.0m tall brick wall, aligning with those adjacent which form the enclosure of the communal alleyway, affording good privacy and security to the ground floor.
Private external space is provided for each property in the form of a small south facing garden.

2.9 "MAKE IT Happen" (Delivered as designed, well constructed, sustainably built)
The control of construction quality is dictated as far as possible by referring to the materials on the submitted drawings together with alternative solutions for energy. These include the use of natural slate for the pitched roofs with matching coloured cladding to the dormers and at high level, through coloured render and red/red-common facing brick for walls.

BIODIVERSITY

Existing site

The existing site is as shown on drawing 2025/11. It is cleared/maintained periodically to keep any weed growth and rubbish accumulation under control. The frontage between the fence and the footpath of Sandy Lane is raised by approximately 300mm above the footpath. It is covered with a concrete flag edging and has Tarmac paving with two small unused planters (possibly associated with the former use for a large advertising hoarding). The site is also covered by Tarmac to the south and east with the remains of a few overhead timbers and posts. There are areas of Tarmac paving behind the Sandy Lane fencing (and to the area to the east outside the application site). Most of the central part of the site is covered by densely packed hardcore/brick rubble (possibly from the demolition of the houses that it is believed occupied the site prior to 1954). There is a small area of soil to the south west corner.

Although the site is periodically maintained, these hard surfaces are exposed in places but largely have a sparse covering of approximately 25mm debris/soil/some rubbish which supports weed growth between clearances (mainly bramble and grass), and the occasional "sprouting" of sycamore (centrally) and Buddleia (to the SW corner). At the time of drawing 2025/11 in November 2025, some of the "sprouting's" were approximately 600mm high) and some ivy was growing over the adjacent garden wall. Drawing 2025/11 shows the approximate location of the areas of hard surfacing below this 25mm layer.

There are also two large piles of rubbish on the site (plastic/metal/timber/organic matter), including to the north some items deposited over the fences.



Sandy Lane frontage July 2025



General view of the site July 2025



Sandy Lane frontage November 2025.



General view of the site November 2025







November 2025

Exposed site surface. Where paving is covered by approximately 25mm soil/debris. Southern rubbish pile