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Aerial Site

Introduction1.0

Foreword1.1

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Howard & Seddon Architects to support a Full Planning Application for the redevelopment of the site at St Georges, Abbey Hey Lane, Gorton, Manchester, M18 8RB.

The proposal outlines the vision, design objectives, and detailed rationale for the demolition of the existing semi-derelict buildings, followed by the construction of 8 new dwellings. Specifically, the scheme comprises 6 two-and-a-half-storey terraced houses (4-bedroom) and 2 two-and-a-half-storey semi-detached houses (3-bedroom).

The primary purpose of this statement is to demonstrate that the proposed development has been carefully designed to respond sensitively to the site’s characteristics, the established residential grain of the surrounding context, and the long-term needs of future occupants. It explains the design evolution in terms of layout, scale, massing, appearance, access, and landscaping, highlighting how the scheme delivers a high-quality residential environment while actively enhancing the local streetscape.

To assist the local planning authority in assessing the application, this document integrates essential technical criteria, including an accommodation schedule demonstrating full compliance with the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS), Manchester’s Emerging Space Standards and adherence to M4(2) requirements for accessible and adaptable dwellings.

By analyzing the site’s planning history, physical constraints, and spatial opportunities, this statement demonstrates that the proposal presents a highly sustainable opportunity. It seeks to transform an underused and visually detrimental brownfield site into an attractive, functional, and visually coherent residential setting, offering tangible benefits for both new residents and the wider community.

This document should be read in conjunction with the drawings prepared by Howard and Seddon Architects and any other reports submitted as part of this application.



Aerial Site, Application Site in Red

Vision

1.2

The overarching vision for St Georges is to deliver a distinctive, high-quality residential development that positively contributes to the surrounding Gorton neighbourhood. The scheme presents a highly sustainable opportunity to transform a previously developed, brownfield site—currently occupied by a vacant and semi-derelict building —into an active, engaging, and safe residential environment.

By replacing the current boarded-up structures, which have suffered from fly-tipping and neglect, the development will significantly improve the local streetscape. The introduction of eight well-designed family homes will increase natural surveillance along both Abbey Hey Lane and Redacre Road, contributing to a safer and more welcoming public realm.

A traditional architectural style, sympathetic to the established local context, has been adopted. By incorporating classic residential features such as bay windows, entrance canopies, and a familiar material palette, the design carefully respects the character and identity of the area. The resulting development aims to support local amenities, foster social cohesion, and provide lasting benefits for both new and existing residents.

Key Design Objectives

1.3

To ensure the proposed development successfully integrates with its context and meets the needs of future occupants, the design process has been guided by the following core objectives:

- Brownfield Regeneration: To bring an underused site back into active and productive residential use, removing a current visual detractor from the neighbourhood.
- Contextual Integration: To sit sensitively within the established residential setting by respecting local scale, massing, building lines, and streetscape rhythm.
- High-Quality, Adaptable Living: To create attractive, future-proofed homes that promote the long-term well-being of occupants through generous space standards and high levels of adaptability.
- Ecological Enhancement: To improve local biodiversity and visual amenity by replacing areas of existing hardstanding with high-quality private gardens, soft landscaping, and integrated wildlife measures.
- Sustainable Design: To promote environmental responsibility and reduce energy demand through modern construction methods, high-quality materials, and energy-efficient design principles.

The Application

1.4

This Full planning application seeks approval for the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of 8 no. two-and-a-half-storey dwellings, with car parking, landscaping, and associated works at St Georges Residential Home, Abbey Hey Lane, Manchester, M18 8RB.

The proposed development seeks to deliver a high-quality residential scheme comprising 2 no. 3-bedroom semi-detached dwellings and 6 no. 4-bedroom terraced houses, each designed to provide highly adaptable family accommodation.

Planning history

1.5

The site has a detailed planning history which has firmly established the principle of residential development in this location. Notably, in assessing the 2022 approval for 7 flats, the planning officer explicitly noted that “family housing is, potentially, the most appropriate form of development for the site”. The current proposal for 8 high-quality family homes aligns perfectly with this local authority aspiration.

The relevant planning history is summarized as follows:

- 143062/00/2025 (Withdrawn - Sept 2025): Outline planning application for the demolition of the existing building and construction of 6 houses (access and layout).
- CDN/24/0155 (Approved - Apr 2024): Application to discharge Condition 9 (Air Quality) attached to planning permission 133654/FO/2022.
- CDN/23/0793 (Split Decision - Feb 2024): Discharge of conditions 6 (Environmental Standards), 7 (Construction Management Plan), and 8 (Waste Management) approved. Condition 9 (Air Quality) refused, attached to permission 133654/FO/2022.
- 133654/FO/2022 (Approved - Sep 2022): Change of use from a vacant residential care home to 7 flats with extensions at ground and first-floor level, alterations to elevations and roof form, and modifications to the car parking layout and boundary treatments.
- 121173/FO/2018 (Refused - Apr 2020): Proposed demolition of the vacant former nursing home and erection of a 2-storey apartment block comprising 12 flats (8x 2-bed, 4x 1-bed). Refused due to overdevelopment and scale.
- 115563/FO/2017 (Refused - Oct 2017): Construction of a 3-storey building (20 apartments) following the demolition of the existing building.
- 070080/FO/2003/N2 (Approved - Apr 2004): Two-storey rear extension to form lounge, dining room, and laundry at ground floor with three bedrooms above.



Approval 133654/FO/2022



Surrounding, Abbey Hey Ln



Surrounding, Abbey Hey Lane



View of the site from Redacre Rd



Existing building - derelict

Context

2.0

Site Location, Description, and Setting

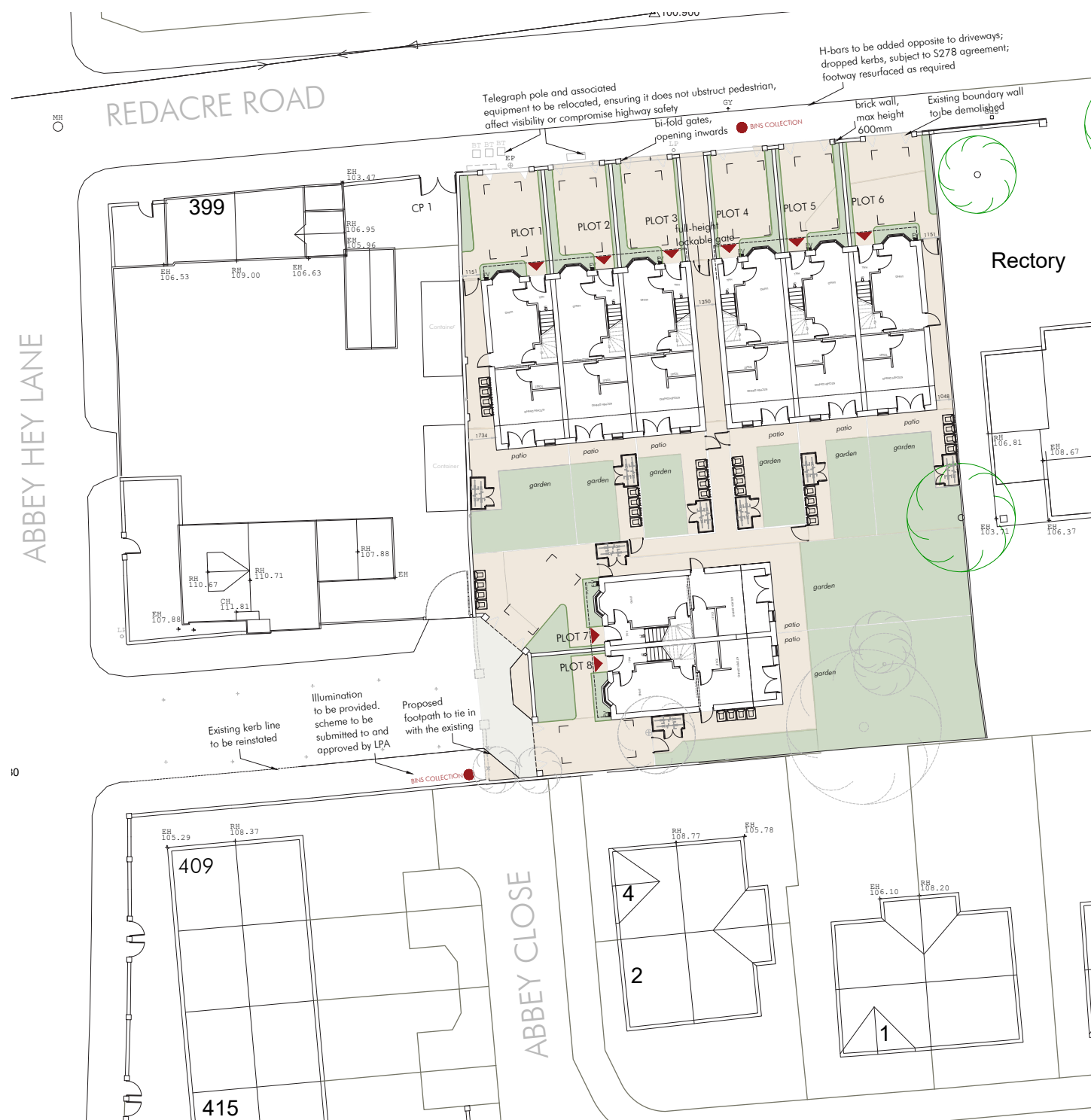
2.1

The application relates to a prominent corner plot currently occupied by a vacant, semi-derelict two-and-a-half-storey detached building that formerly operated as a residential nursing home. The property is currently boarded up and collapsed, and its curtilage has unfortunately been subject to fly-tipping over a number of years.

The site benefits from existing direct access off Abbey Hey Lane, while also maintaining a significant secondary frontage onto Redacre Road. It sits within a predominantly residential area characterised by a traditional mixture of two-storey terraced, semi-detached, and detached family dwellings.

The location is highly sustainable and benefits from excellent connectivity to local amenities and active travel networks:

- Local Amenities: The site is within comfortable walking distance of primary schools, convenience shops, a community centre, public houses, and formal parkland.
- Public Transport: Frequent bus services routed along Abbey Hey Lane provide direct access to Stockport, The Trafford Centre, Gorton, and Ashton-under-Lyne. Additionally, the site is within walking distance of Gorton Train Station (connections to Manchester Piccadilly, Rose Hill Marple, and Hadfield) and the Edge Lane Metrolink station.
- Active Travel: The Fallowfield Loop, part of the National Cycle Network connecting to Whalley Range in the west of the City, runs directly adjacent to the site.



Site plan as proposed

Design Considerations

3.0

Use, Amount & Access

3.1

The proposal seeks the demolition of the existing building to provide 8 new residential dwellings. This high-quality housing mix comprises:

- 6 no. four-bedroom, five-person terraced houses (Type A), each providing a total Gross Internal Area (GIA) of 107.4 sq m.
- 2 no. three-bedroom, four-person semi-detached houses (Type B), each providing a total GIA of 99.4 sq m.

The principle of residential development on this site has already been firmly established by the approval of the previous planning application for 7 flats. Transitioning this approval into 8 purpose-built houses represents a highly efficient use of the site, introducing much-needed family housing to the area.

To support this use, the development has been designed with highly functional access and active frontages that significantly enhance natural surveillance. The six terraced houses are accessible directly from Redacre Road, with each property benefiting from its own dedicated driveway, providing 6 car parking spaces along this frontage. These frontages are softened through the inclusion of integrated landscaped areas and shrub separations, providing clear and attractive boundary definitions. Vehicular access to the remaining dwellings is retained via the existing access route from Abbey Hey Lane, serving the two driveways. The development provides a total of eight designated off-street parking spaces.

The proposed redevelopment represents a significant opportunity to improve the ecological value and environmental health of a site that is currently semi-derelict and prone to fly-tipping. The existing plot is heavily characterized by derelict hardstanding and overgrown scrubland. A major benefit of this scheme is the removal of these visually poor elements, replacing them with high-quality, well-maintained private rear gardens and soft landscaping along the street frontages.

The proposed dwellings are two-and-a-half storeys in height, thoughtfully utilizing the roof space to provide generous internal accommodation.

Crucially, the maximum proposed ridge height is lower compared to the existing building on site. Furthermore, the massing has been carefully stepped to directly respond to the surrounding streetscape. The Type B semi-detached houses are set 780mm lower than the Type A terraced houses, reflecting the slightly lower ridge lines of the adjacent properties in that specific part of the site. This context-led approach to scale naturally dictates the reduced three-bedroom capacity of the Type B units, ensuring the overall massing is never overbearing and remains highly sympathetic to all neighbouring homes.

Regarding the layout and building lines, the footprint has been carefully considered so that the houses sit comfortably within the established street frontages of both Abbey Close and Redacre Road. Despite being an infill site surrounded by existing properties, the layout has been meticulously arranged to guarantee amenity privacy for all residents. A significant benefit to the wider area is the removal of the site’s existing derelict hardstanding and overgrown scrubland.

Replacing these areas with private, well-maintained rear gardens not only provides essential outdoor family space but also substantially improves the visual and ecological value of the neighbourhood.



Type A - Elevations as proposed

Layout & Accommodation

The proposed layout for each dwelling is designed to provide a clear, highly functional internal arrangement tailored to modern family living.

The primary entrance of both house types features a traditional canopy over the door, reflecting the established architectural style of the area. This detail has been specifically designed to ensure there is an external level landing of more than 1.2m, with a minimum covered width of 900mm and depth of 600mm, strictly adhering to the requirements of Approved Document M4(2). Internally, the welcoming entrance hallway comprises a WC, a direct stair access to the upper floors, and leads seamlessly into a spacious, open-plan lounge and kitchen-dining configuration. A traditional bay window has been provided on the ground floor. This not only reflects the character of the surrounding area but also ensures enhanced natural daylight penetration and provides a wider field of view over the streetscape to improve natural surveillance. Generous internal storage space is also provided at this level.

Both Type A and Type B feature a single-storey lean-to rear extension. This incorporates fenestration directly over the kitchen units alongside large double doors providing direct access to the patio. This architectural approach maximizes natural light penetration while providing a defined kitchen-dining area with a direct, secure outlook over the private rear garden.

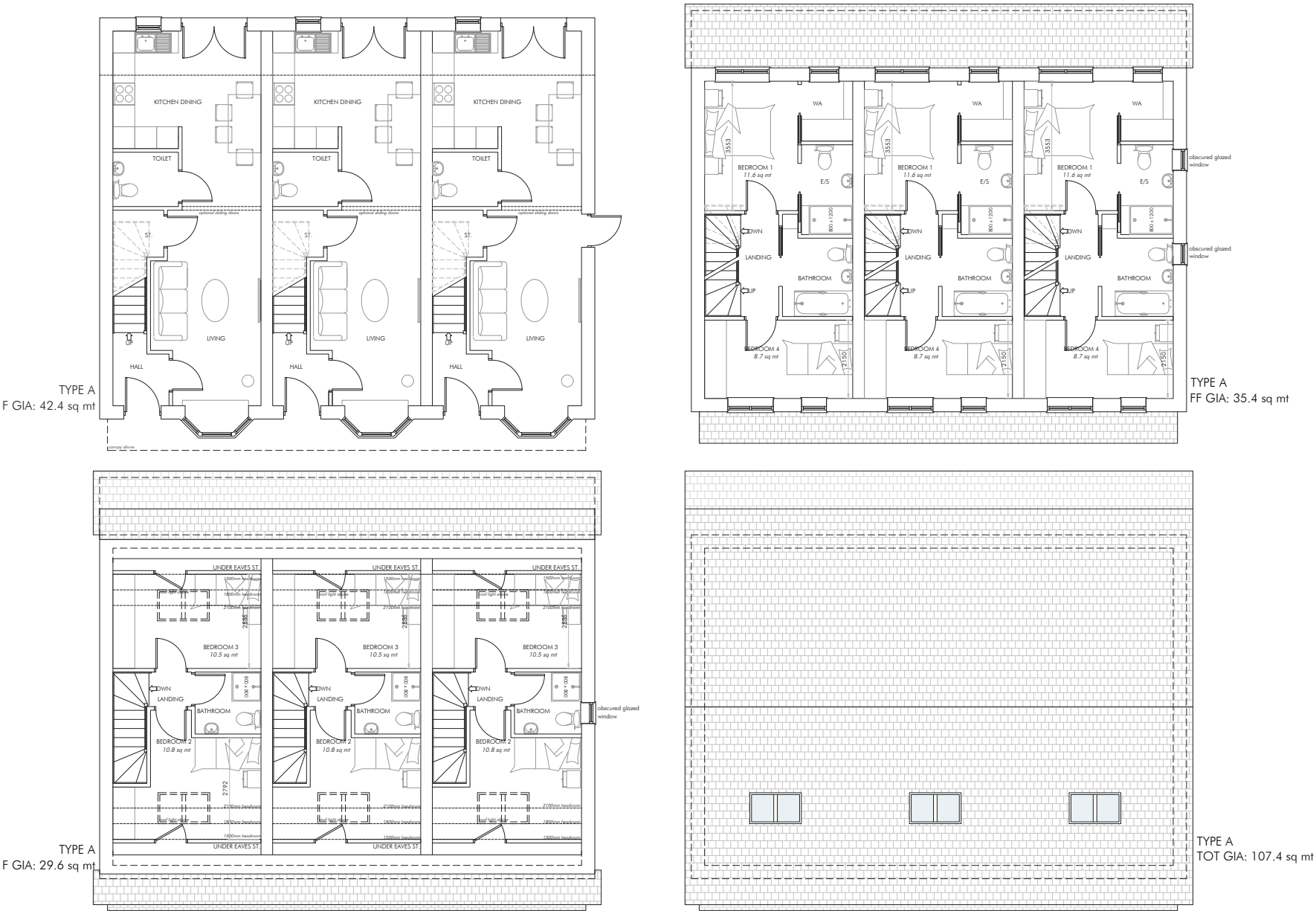
At the first-floor level, each property provides one generously proportioned double bedroom (the principal bedroom featuring an en-suite and walk-in wardrobe), alongside a comfortable single bedroom, and a dedicated family bathroom.

The second floor has been tailored to the specific massing of each unit type. Type A accommodates two single bedrooms and an additional shower room. This flexible layout reflects contemporary housing needs, easily allowing one of the bedrooms to be utilized as a dedicated home office. Type B, due to the stepped reduction in ridge height, accommodates a single large double bedroom and efficiently utilize the space under the eaves for vital household storage.

The proposed Gross Internal Areas (GIA) for the dwellings are as follows:

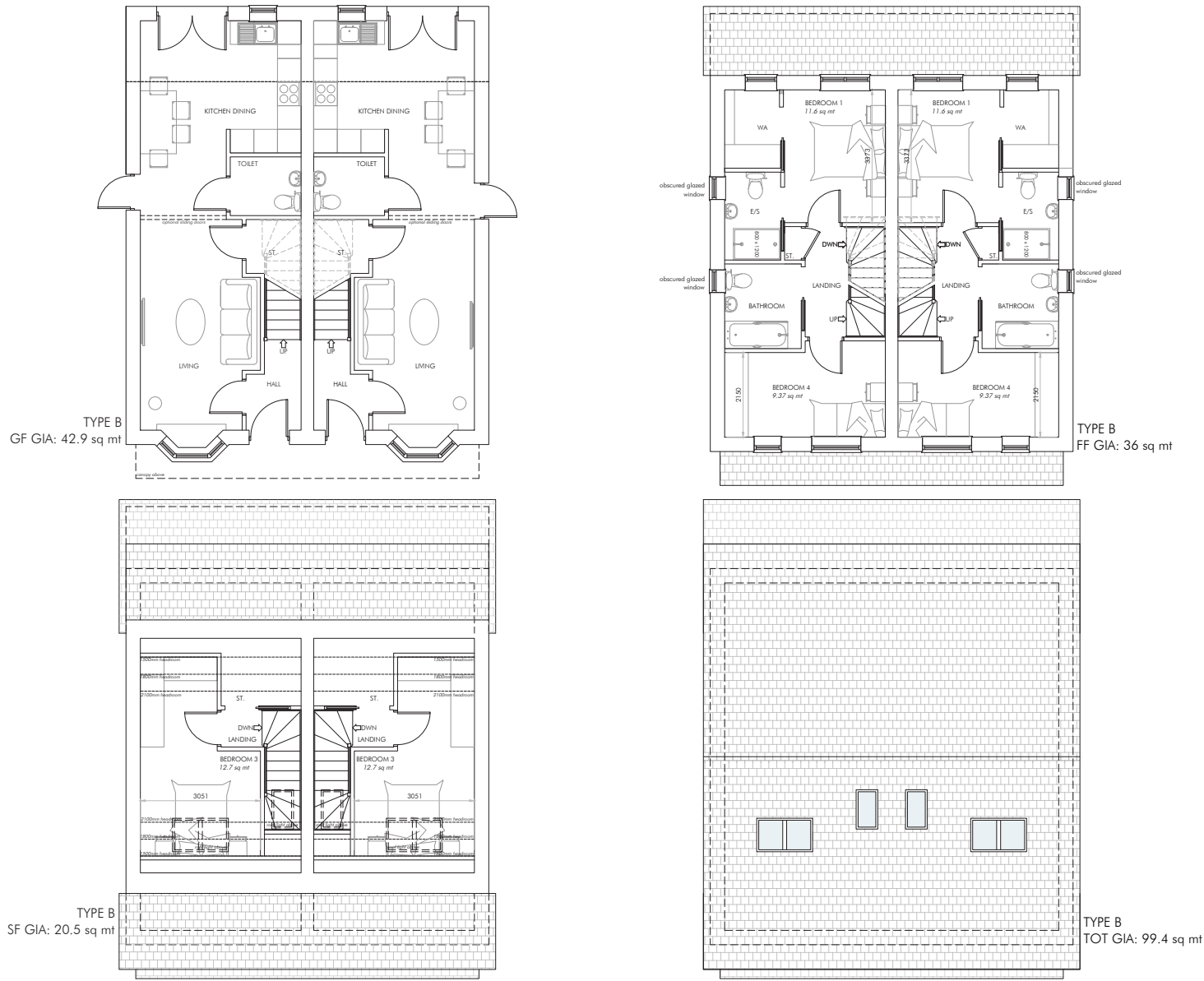
Plots 1-6 (Type A – Terraced houses) 4B/5P :
Ground Floor: 42.4 sq m
First Floor: 35.4 sq m
Second Floor: 29.6 sq m
TOTAL: 107.4 sq m

Plots 7-8 (Type B – Semi-detached) 3B/4P :
Ground Floor: 42.9 sq m
First Floor: 36 sq m
Second Floor: 20.5 sq m
TOTAL: 99.4 sq m



Type A, plans as proposed

Type B, plans as proposed



NDSS COMPLIANCE

3.4

All proposed dwellings have been meticulously designed to fully comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) and Manchester’s Emerging Space Standards . As detailed in the accommodation schedule, the Type A gross internal areas provide 107.4 sq m, satisfying the 106 sq m minimum requirement for a three-storey, 4-bedroom, 5-person house. Similarly, the Type B dwellings provide 99.4 sq m, meeting the 90 sq m minimum requirement for a three-storey, 3-bedroom, 4-person house.

This guarantees functional living spaces for future residents. The internal layout has been carefully considered to provide practical accommodation that consistently achieves minimum bedroom dimensions. Single bedrooms accommodate the required minimum width of 2.15m and floor area of 7.5 sq m, while the double bedrooms offer practical widths ranging between 2.55m and 3.0m.

Furthermore, each dwelling incorporates the minimum dedicated internal built-in storage, ensuring adequate space for everyday family needs. Full spatial demonstrations are provided on the submitted architectural floor plans, illustrating how the internal layout successfully balances strict NDSS requirements with the practical demands of modern occupants.

M4(2) COMPLIANCE

3.5

To ensure the development is highly inclusive, accessible, and adaptable, all dwellings have been designed to meet Building Regulations Requirement M4(2) – Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings.

This approach guarantees that the accommodation and sanitary facilities can comfortably serve a wide range of occupants over the lifetime of the building, including older adults, individuals with reduced mobility, and wheelchair users. The design seamlessly integrates features that allow for simple future adaptations, extending the lifespan and functionality of the homes.

Key M4(2) features incorporated into the scheme include:

- Accessible principal entrances featuring level thresholds, covered external landings (minimum 1.2m depth), and clear door opening widths of 850mm.
- Internal circulation areas and doorways accurately sized to comply with M4(2) mobility requirements.
- Ground floor WC facilities designed to current accessible standards, including the requisite spatial provision for future conversion into a level-access shower.
- Main family bathrooms that are fully compliant with M4(2) layout and access parameters.
- Living, kitchen, dining, and bedroom spaces proportioned to allow comfortable, unobstructed navigation for all users.
- External routes and private amenity areas designed to be inclusive, safe, and step-free where topographically possible.

Further spatial details confirming these criteria are explicitly detailed on the accompanying architectural drawings.



View as proposed

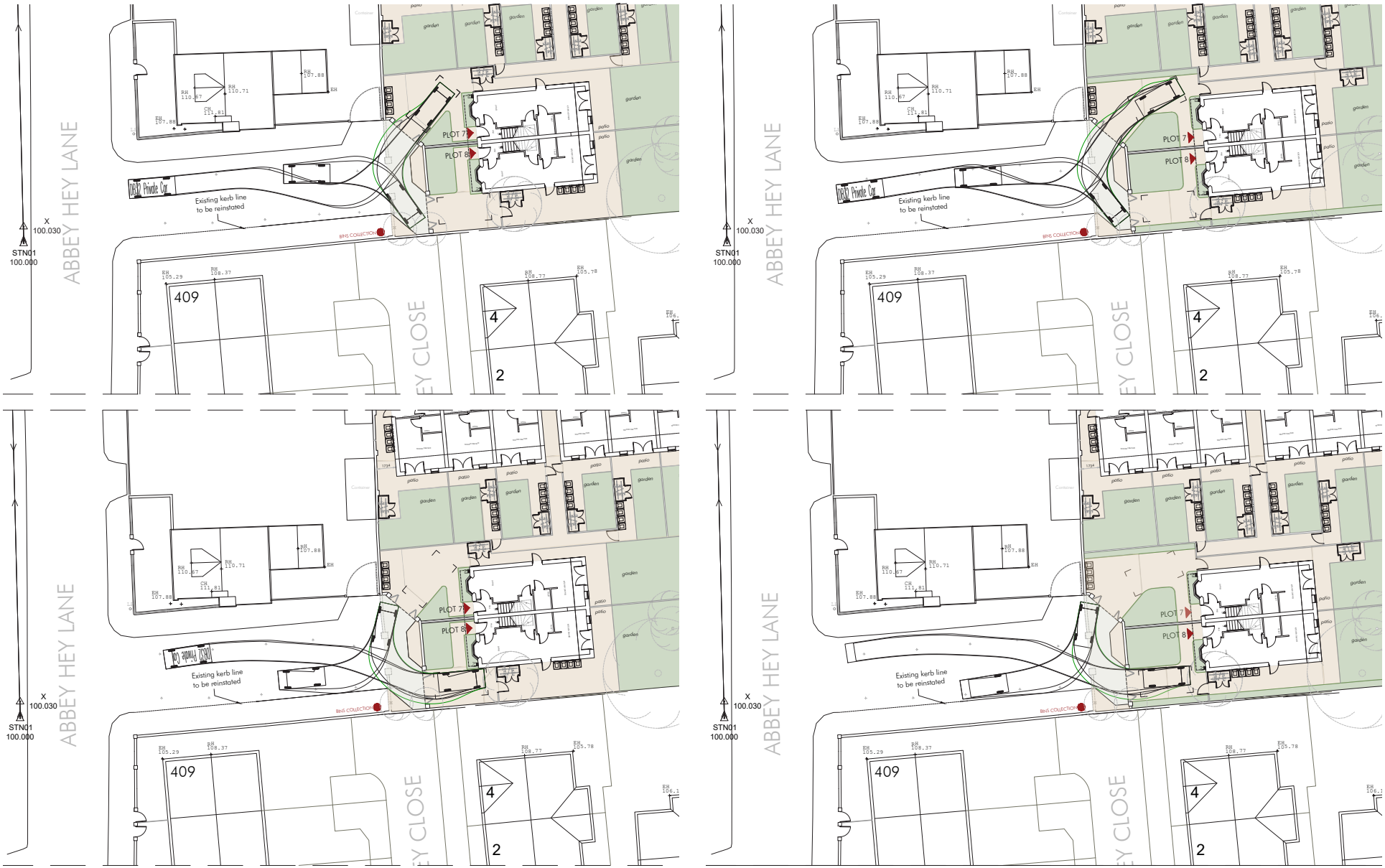
Appearance & Materials

The architectural language of the proposed development has been carefully considered to ensure it assimilates seamlessly into the established streetscape of Gorton. The design draws heavily on the traditional domestic vernacular of the area, utilizing a familiar, high-quality material palette combined with well-articulated architectural detailing.

The facades will be constructed using traditional red facing bricks, creating a cohesive aesthetic that respects the surrounding residential context. The pitched roofs will be finished in slate concrete roof tiles, maintaining a profile that sits comfortably alongside neighbouring properties. The fenestration comprises white UPVC windows, providing a clean, modern standard of thermal performance, paired with traditional-style composite doors in a pebble grey finish with obscure glass. All windows and external doors are proposed to be set back from face of the building with 195mm deep reveals, as required by the LPA. Rainwater goods will feature UPVC half-round gutters and downpipes in an anthracite grey finish, contrasted by light-coloured fascias.

To break up the massing and add visual interest to the street scenes along Redacre Road and Abbey Hey Lane, the front elevations incorporate traditional features typical of the local area. Ground-floor bay windows provide depth and articulation to the facade. Each principal elevation is defined by a traditional canopy supported by gallows brackets. Furthermore, the window openings are framed with cast-stone heads and cills, adding a robust, high-quality finish to the brickwork.

The rear elevations have been designed with equal attention to detail. The ground floor incorporates a single-storey lean-to extension, establishing a clear visual hierarchy while facilitating direct access to the private gardens. Standard Velux roof lights (or similar approved) are integrated into the roofscape to provide natural illumination to the second-floor accommodation without visually disrupting the traditional roofline. Photovoltaic (PV) panels are proposed on the rear roof slopes to harness solar energy, minimising their visual impact on the principal elevations.



Sketched proposals and vehicle tracking overlays

Following discussions with the Local Planning Authority, the proposed development has been reviewed and amended to address comments relating to the internal accommodation, site layout, residential amenity, boundary treatments and security.

The internal layout of Type A has been revised to increase the gross internal area and meet the requirements of Manchester’s Emerging Space Standards. Amendments have also been made to the fenestration, including the removal of rear bay windows and revisions to selected side and gable windows, to safeguard the privacy and amenity of neighbouring residents.

The site layout and parking arrangements have been refined, with the parking provision for Plots 7 and 8 revised to provide a single parking space within the curtilage of each dwelling, accessed via a driveway. Inward-opening bi-fold gates are proposed to provide secure access to the driveways. Boundary treatments and gated access to shared alleyways have also been incorporated to provide a clearer distinction between private and shared areas and to improve security.

Photovoltaic panels are proposed on the rear roof slopes to contribute towards the environmental performance of the development. External lighting will be provided to the access arrangements serving Plots 7 and 8, and the development will comply with the relevant Secured by Design standards.

These amendments respond to the matters raised during consultation while retaining the overall architectural approach and seeking to deliver a coherent residential development that respects its surroundings.

The proposed development seeks to reduce energy demand and improve the environmental performance of the dwellings through a fabric-first approach, with consideration given to the thermal performance of the building envelope, insulation and fenestration. The dwellings will be designed to comply with the applicable Building Regulations requirements relating to energy efficiency and the conservation of fuel and power. Window specifications will be selected to provide appropriate thermal performance while allowing good levels of natural daylight to the internal spaces.

Photovoltaic (PV) panels are proposed to harness solar energy and contribute towards reducing reliance on grid electricity. Their arrangement will be coordinated with the roof design and detailed building proposals.

The development also incorporates private garden areas and soft landscaping, contributing to the visual amenity of the site and providing opportunities to support local biodiversity. The landscape proposals will be considered alongside the relevant ecological and biodiversity requirements.

These measures form part of the overall approach to delivering a sustainable residential development that makes effective use of a previously developed site.

The development has been designed with consideration for the safety and security of future residents, with clear distinctions between private residential areas and shared access routes. The positioning of dwellings, entrances and windows will contribute to natural surveillance of the surrounding streets, access routes and communal areas. Appropriate boundary treatments and full-height, lockable gates will provide controlled access to shared alleyways, including between Plots 3 and 4. External lighting will be provided to the access road serving Plots 7 and 8 to support safe movement and improve security. The development will comply with the relevant Secured by Design standards, incorporating appropriate security measures to create a safe and secure residential environment.



Type B - Elevations as proposed



View as proposed

Highways, Access & Servicing

4.0

Sustainable Transport

4.1

The application site is located within an established urban area, with access to a range of public transport, walking and cycling facilities, helping to reduce reliance on private car travel.

Frequent bus services operate along Abbey Hey Lane, providing connections to the Trafford Centre, Stockport and Ashton-under-Lyne. Gorton Railway Station and Edge Lane Metrolink stop are also within walking distance of the site.

The site benefits from its proximity to the Fallowfield Loop, a National Cycle Network route providing connections to Whalley Range and the wider cycling network.

The development provides a total of eight off-street parking spaces to serve the eight dwellings. Each property benefits from dedicated parking provision, with driveways measuring a minimum of 3m × 6m, in accordance with the proposed parking layout.

Electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure will be incorporated into the development to support the use of electric vehicles and contribute towards more sustainable transport choices.

Secure and sheltered cycle storage is provided for each dwelling, with capacity for two bicycles per property, encouraging cycling as an alternative to private car use.

Waste Management

4.2

Dedicated waste storage areas are incorporated into the site layout for all dwellings. On collection days, bins for Plots 1–6 will be presented on Redacre Road, while bins for Plots 7 and 8 will be transferred to the designated collection point on the access road. This ensures that waste collection vehicles do not need to enter the site or perform complex turning maneuvers, aligning with the principles of the waste management strategy previously approved for the site under application CDN/23/0793.



View as proposed

Conclusion

The proposed development at St Georges is considered to present a sustainable opportunity to deliver eight high-quality family homes. The principle of residential development on this site is considered to be established, and transitioning from the previously approved flatted scheme to purpose-built houses is viewed as an efficient use of brownfield land that responds to the housing needs of the local area.

The design approach has been led by the site’s context. By adopting a traditional architectural language, lowering the overall ridge height compared to the existing building, and respecting established building lines, the scheme is considered to integrate comfortably into the surrounding streetscapes of Abbey Hey Lane and Redacre Road.

Furthermore, the development is anticipated to deliver tangible benefits. It would remove a long-standing visual blight and fly-tipping hotspot, replacing derelict hardstanding with active residential frontages and well-maintained private gardens. The dwellings have been designed to meet NDSS requirements, Manchester’s Emerging Space Standards, achieve M4(2) compliance, aiming to provide inclusive, accessible, and adaptable living environments.

In summary, the scheme is considered to comply with local and national planning policies, offering a high-quality residential environment that would positively contribute to the Gorton neighbourhood.



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