

Design, Access & Heritage Statement

Pomona St/Cathedral Walk



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Contents

Design, Access & Heritage Statement Proposed Mixed Use / Residential Development JD Estates

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1.0 Introduction

The Design and Access Statement supports the current planning application for the construction of a mixed use education / residential development on Pomona Street / Cathedral Walk, Liverpool. The development is the construction of a 7 storey block with supporting facilities. This statement outlines the design policy and urban design context of the site and sets out design principles for its development. The layout has been developed and is supported by a range of design parameters which form the basis of the detailed design proposals.

The application and the content of this statement is supported by the suite of plans, elevations and visualisations submitted as part of the planning application. Graphics are used within the narrative to illustrate the points being made in the text and to make the document more readable.

The report concludes with a brief summary of the matters covered.

Every effort is made to relate the contents of this statement with the CABI publication 'Design & Access Statements – How to Write, Read and Use Them' (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment 2006) breaking down the statement into the key areas:

- Use
- Amount
- Scale
- Landscaping
- Appearance
- Access
- Heritage

It is hoped that this document clearly explains our intentions and thinking behind the proposals submitted and demonstrates the merits of this project.



Proposal in Context

View looking west along Cathedral Walk. View shows relationship with the existing 1960's maisonette block in the foreground.

2.0 Use

2.1 Background to the proposal

The site is currently owned by Liverpool City Council with a contract for sale to the client / applicant upon planning approval. The client has explored a number of options for its development and after considering developing the site in a number of ways it was decided that primarily residential use would be the most appropriate. There are no previous planning applications on the site and is currently used as a surface car park.

2.2 Design Process and Principles

The proposed site can be accessed from Pomona Street and Cathedral Walk. The site is currently vacant and is used as a car park. The existing boundary is formed by a low brick wall to Pomona Street and Cathedral Walk. The eastern boundary is defined by solid brick wall to plinth level which provides perimeter access to the adjacent maisonette block. The open northern boundary to the school is currently defined by steel railings and brick pillars. There is a redundant electrical sub-station on the site which is to be decommissioned and demolished. There are no trees on the site.

The design process has involved:

- A review and analysis of the site context
- An assessment of planning policy and design guidance
- An understanding of opportunities and constraints of the site including planning policy constraints
- An understanding of the development potential of the site
- Consultations with the Local Planning Authority
- Consultations with the client to understand their requirements
- Close liaison between various consultants

A number of design solutions have been evaluated as part of the design process. The site analysis, opportunities and constraints and review of guidance and policy fed into the development of initial options. The design team recognised that the proposals for the site should meet the requirements of the client, harmonise the site and improve the quality of the existing urban fabric.

Response to the principle objectives fundamental to all design options included:

- The new building should create a high quality and aesthetically pleasing living environment
- Good use of the site, balancing the needs of street scene and access with existing urban environment
- Ensuring the relationship with neighbouring residential properties maintains privacy and a good outlook
- The design of the building should respect the material nature and scale of the local area

2.3 Consultations

Preliminary meetings with planning officers Paul Vertigen and urban design officer Samantha Cambell were broadly supportive of the proposals subject to submission of detailed scheme. Further meetings on revised proposals were held which included Cllr Nick Small who was also supportive of the scheme. No formal pre-planning advice was sought, and no written advice has been received. Prior to submission we have referred to National Planning Guidance and UDP for guidance:

- H5: New Residential Development - The proposal will be designed in accordance with the criteria for new residential development as set out in Policy H5.
- HD18: General Design Requirements - Policy H18 requires careful consideration to be given to aspects such as; scale, massing, building lines and materiality.
- HD19: Access for All - Ensure consideration is given to the need to ensure ease of access and movement for disabled people between and within public areas.
- HD20: Crime Prevention - The council will encourage developments whereby measures have been incorporated which reflect the need to make proper provision for personal safety and crime prevention.
- EP1: Vacant, Derelict and Neglected Land
- SP1: Waste Storage
- SP9: Location and Phasing of New Housing - SP 9 sets out that the provision of new housing will be managed to deliver housing market renewal in Liverpool's Urban Core and broaden housing choice in the City Centre.
- SP13: Housing Mix – Policy 13 identifies that all new housing provision should enable the needs of a household to be met over its lifetime.
- NPFF para 111: Encourages “the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land)”.
- Planning advice note: Refuse Storage and Recycling Facilities in New Development

Currently no public consultations have been undertaken, consultations with local residents may take place during the application. Discussions with statutory service providers are ongoing.

2.4 Surveys

The following specialist surveys will be undertaken in relation to this project prior to construction:

- Ground Investigation
- Contamination
- Noise Report
- SPD Minimum Accessibility Standard Assessment

3.0 Amount

The proposed development consists of a single 7-storey multi-use building. Education functions at ground floor consist of an auditorium, café, toilets etc. The upper six storeys are a mix of 2 & 1 bedroom apartments (37 no 2-bedroom / 6 no 1 bedroom).

The building footprint has been influenced by street context, separation distances to neighbouring properties and site boundaries.

The gross external floor area of the block is 645m² within the 722m² curtilage of the development site.

There is no parking provision within the site and no on street parking on Pomona Street or Cathedral Walk. This provision is below Council standards for the area, although not dissimilar to other recently approved residential schemes. If this substandard level of provision is to be justified, there will need to be direct provision for sustainable means of travel, including: sufficient cycle storage, the implementation of a Travel Plan.

The constrained nature of the site will mean that the majority of servicing will need to be undertaken from adjacent highways. This will require a management strategy, to be coordinated by the building management office, which controls the number, types and times of refuse collection and other deliveries. All elements of the development will need to be inclusively accessible, including the residential accommodation, communal facilities, commercial uses, external amenity space, car parking and building approaches.

4.0 Layout

4.1 Site Context

The proposed residential development is located in the 'Knowledge Quarter' area of Liverpool. The site is easily accessible by public transport services as well as by car and foot. The local area is a lively mix of education, retail, business and residential. The site is well served by local amenities such as schools and health services as well as local shops.

4.2 Site Boundaries

North

The north boundary is formed by steel railings and brick pillars to the adjacent St Nicholas Catholic Primary School

East

The eastern boundary is formed by a plinth level solid brick wall to the adjacent maisonette flats

South

The southern boundary is formed by a low brick wall to the highway of Cathedral Walk.

West

The western boundary is formed by a low brick wall to the highway of Pomona Street.

4.3 Constraints

The major constraints on the site are:

- Massing of block in relation to Mount Pleasant Conservation Area
- Separation distances
- On street parking
- Abutment to existing maisonette block
- Site level changes
- Building line of maisonette block to north boundary, possible loss of light
- Unesco view of Metropolitan Cathedral from Waterfront

4.4 Proposed Site Arrangement

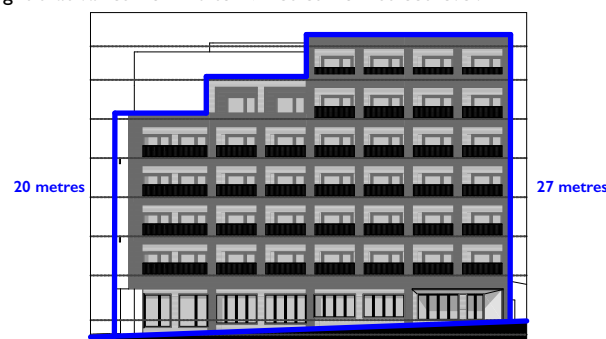
The current design proposals resolve all of these major constraints:

- Elevation design and the stepping back of the upper storeys help reduce the overall scale of the block in relation to the Mount Pleasant street elevation and views up Pomona Street
- The massing of the building maintains site lines up towards the Metropolitan Cathedral
- Separation distances are maintained as habitable rooms are at a higher level than the accommodation along Pomona Street.
- Proposed block is built up to eastern boundary and existing brick wall but is approximately 2.0m from maisonette gable wall
- Street incline is accommodated with level changes within the building ensuring level access into all areas
- The massing of the block is cut back at the north eastern corner to ensure daylight is maintained to the north west corner of the maisonette block

5.0 Scale

The proposed terrace blocks have a total gross footprint of 645m² which effectively sits within the development site area of 722m².

Overall dimensions of block at ground floor are approximately 35m x 20m and a height that varies from 20 to 27metres from street level.



The proposed building is of similar scale to the nearby Liverpool College / JMU buildings on Clarence Street and Liverpool Science Park / Art & Design School along Great Orford Street. In massing terms the block scale is appropriate to the context and has been mediated through elevation design and setting back at the upper storeys. Traditional brick materials are also employed to ensure the building sits comfortably in its environment.

6.0 Landscape

6.1 Surface Treatment and Planting

Landscaping is minimal in this urban context. The building footprint is set back from the boundary along the north, south and west elevations and suitable hard landscaping will be employed to maintain access and create level thresholds to the exiting highway.

The design addresses key design principles:

- Maintain pedestrian highway and access
- Responds to topography and related features

6.2 Drainage Strategy

Drainage from roof, kitchen and bathrooms etc will connect directly into existing sewer system.

Hard landscape proposals will not significantly increase surface water run-off onto the existing highway and sewer system.

7.0 Appearance

The design team and client agree that the new building should have a positive visual impact on all residents and visitors who approach the site. The client is keen that the building should be aesthetically pleasing and have a contemporary feel while responding to the context of the local area.

The current design aims to satisfy these aims with a restricted palette of materials to maintain simplicity, visual understanding and their contemporary nature. Ultimately, whilst remaining sympathetic to the surrounding area the aim is to maintain the identity of the apartment building.

The facades are constructed in 3 contrasting colours of brickwork to maintain the language of the surrounding area whilst giving a contemporary feel to the development. The brickwork will be further emphasised with the use of reveals and stepped facades giving a contemporary interpretation Georgian façade proportion and rhythm.

The proposed elevations are orientated to give continuity to the existing street scene.

The proposed development provides a quality design to the area that is an impressive response to site and brief. We have purposely used a simple and subtle architectural style to create a building that will be familiar, coherent and comfortable to all who reside there and visit it.

8.0 Access

UDP policy HD19 has been consulted with reference to highway safety, access and parking

8.1 Pedestrian

Access to the building and apartments is provided directly from the public highway with level access.

8.2 Public Transport

The site is adjacent to major roads leading into the centre of Liverpool. Bus services run along Mount Pleasant and Brownlow Hill. Merseyrail and major rail services from Lime Street station are also within walking distance.

8.3 Vehicular Access

Vehicular access to the building is via Pomona Street and Cathedral Walk.

8.4 Access Within and Around the Building

The Equality Act 2010 requires reasonable provision be made to enable services be provided to all users regardless of ability. BS8300:2001 Design Guidance has been consulted widely in the production of these design proposals.

All approaches around the site and into the building will provide level access. All routes will be firm and level underfoot. Clear minimum widths will prevail to maintain access.

Obstructions such as steps, kerbs, lighting columns, signposts etc along routes will be suitably highlighted with either contrasting colours or tactile hazard warnings to the surrounding ground to help direct users safely.

Generally, no slopes to external surfaces will exceed 1 in 25.

Generally, all doors at ground floor are to have a minimum leaf width of 926mm. All double doors should have an effective clear opening width of 1616mm. Double doors have been avoided where possible in favour of single doors. Door sets are only provided where absolutely necessary to comply with Building Regulations, fire safety and general security. Handle sides of doors are to be at least 300mm from any other adjoining partition or obstructions to provide ease of access for anyone in a wheelchair.

9.0 Heritage

9.1 Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of the current application for the site at Pomona Street / Cathedral Walk in Liverpool. The site does not comprise of any Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments, nor does it sit within a conservation area. As the site sits on the edge of the Mount Pleasant Conservation Area this statement provides evidence that the proposals have considered any potential impact to the surrounding area and context, specifically when viewed from Mount Pleasant / Clarence Street toward the Cathedral. This Heritage Statement has been prepared with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF Paragraph 128 states: *In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.*

9.2 Proposal

Please refer to the rest of this document for a more detailed description of the proposals.

The current Planning Application is for the construction of a 7-storey multi-use building. The ground storey is for educational use by John Moores University. The upper six storeys consist of 2-bed apartments.

The external envelope is predominantly brick. Three different colour/types will be used to articulate and create rhythm to the elevations. The upper two stories are set back in response to the adjacent massing of neighbouring buildings. The ground storey is predominantly glazed to Pomona Street and Cathedral Walk to provide an active façade and interface with the street.

Planning officers and other interested parties have been consulted numerous times during the design development of this project. All comments and concerns have been taken on board in the production of the final design for planning submission



Historical OS map showing original street layout. Proposed site indicated red, current Mount Pleasant Conservation Area indicated blue.

9.3 Historical Development and Context

A review of historical maps indicates that only the original buildings that front onto Mount Pleasant from Clarence Street up to the Wellington Rooms and along Clarence Street to Pleasant Street remain of the original historical context adjacent to the site. Nothing remains of the original late 1800's context to the north up to Brownlow Hill and east to Mount Pleasant. A number of bombs fell in this area during World War 2 and it is assumed much of the area was subject to post war clearance. Subsequently the site to the east which originally contained the Liverpool Workhouse was developed and is now home to Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral and Luyten's Crypt. This site is now subject to Liverpool's UNESCO World Heritage Site status.

To the east, directly adjacent to the site is a 1960's 4-storey maisonette block which extends up to Great Orford Street. To the north is the St Nicholas Primary School which extends to Brownlow Hill. More recently larger scale contemporary developments have been completed along Great Orford Street/ Duckinfield Street adjacent to the cathedral for John Moores University and Liverpool Science Park. Two further education buildings of similar scale have also recently been completed on Clarence Street for Jon Moores University and Liverpool College. All of these recent developments have employed different material palettes from brickwork and cladding systems to stonework.

Beyond the Mount Pleasant Conservation area much of the recent development to the north and east has been undertaken within the last 15 years. All of these developments are contemporary designs and of similar scale to our proposals.

9.4 Assessment of Impact and Mitigation

The elements of the proposals and their likely impact and mitigation proposed can be assessed with regard to the specific elements of the scheme. These are addressed below:

Context and adjacent Conversation Area

The site or proposed building do not sit within a conversation area nor are there any Listed Buildings in the area which are affected by the proposal. It is not clear on the UDP the exact boundary line of the Conservation Area but this has been taken as the back of pavement line to buildings that front Mount Pleasant and Clarence Street. The major concern regarding the proposals is the effect on site lines and streetscape of both Clarence Street and Mount Pleasant. After a number of design iterations and discussions with the planning department the design has been resolved to lessen the impact on the adjacent conservation area. Massing has been reduced by stepping back the upper storeys with the aim of improving site lines from both Mount Pleasant and Clarence Street. Visuals have been produced showing the impact from these areas and looking along Pomona Street.

The proposed building is only visible from the Conservation when viewed down Pomona Street from Mount Pleasant. The facade and massing of the building from this view has been designed to respond to the building frontage on Mount Pleasant by maintaining sight lines and height levels.



Context and Precedent 1

View looking east along Pleasant Street toward Clarence Street (edge of Conservation Area). View shows Liverpool College (right) and JMU building (left) and their relationship to the edge of the Conservation Area. Both buildings are similar in scale and mass to this Planning Application proposals.



Context and Precedent 2

View looking north across Leece Street (edge of Conservation Area). View shows recent and current developments for apartments and student accommodation and their relationship to the edge of the Conservation Area. All buildings are similar or larger in scale and mass to this Planning Application proposals.

Context and surrounding built environment

The surrounding urban realm has undergone great change over the last 15 years. There have been a number of new developments for offices and education buildings to the east and west of the site, all of contemporary design. The proposed building is of similar scale to the nearby Liverpool College / JMU buildings on Clarence Street. There have also been a number of apartment blocks completed on Mount Pleasant, again similar in scale to the proposals at Pomona Street.

Exploration of the periphery of the conservation area reveals many similar recent developments that address a similar context to the proposed site. Photographs around Mount Pleasant, Leece Street and Roscoe Street show much larger schemes that often do not respond as sympathetically as our current application.

In early pre-planning discussions with the Case Officer and the Local Authority's Senior Urban Design and Heritage Officer, the acceptable height of 5 key stories and 2 set-back stories was established. Views from a level-accurate Building Information Model were presented and agreed. It was demonstrated that site lines to key buildings were maintained and that the scale of the proposal reflected that of recently constructed buildings in the area. Whilst we have identified numerous large contemporary interventions in and around the adjacent conservation area that could serve as precedents, we have made a proposal on a lesser scale to them, one that has minimal visual impact from the surrounding major routes



Context and Precedent 3

View looking north along Roscoe Street toward Mount Pleasant. The edge of Conservation Area is to the right on the photograph. View shows recent and current developments for apartments and student accommodation and their relationship to the edge of the Conservation Area. All buildings are similar or larger in scale and mass to this Planning Application proposals.



Context and Precedent 4

View looking north along Roscoe Street toward Mount Pleasant and Conservation Area. View shows Liverpool College beyond the Conservation Area frontage. The college building is similar in scale and mass to this Planning Application proposals.



Context and Precedent 5

View looking north along Clarence Street within the Mount Pleasant Conservation Area. View shows the JMU building beyond the Conservation Area frontage. The JMU building is similar in scale and mass to this Planning Application proposals.

9.5 Conclusions

The 'Knowledge Quarter' area of Liverpool within which the site sits and which also encompasses the Mount Pleasant Conservation area is a rapidly developing part of the city. The Pomona Street site is an important and integral part of this development. We consider that the proposed building is an appropriate and well proportioned design that respects the setting, character and appearance of the area. We consider the proposals to positively contribute to the character of the area and the setting of the wider urban realm. The proposals have been discussed at length with council representatives and having reviewed and implemented many of the recommendations we believe the resulting design satisfies planning approval requirements. As part of the discussions we prepared a number of visual impact studies have been produced to show the relationship of the proposed building with the adjacent Conservation Area. These reveal the negligible impact on street scene and conservation corridor.



Visual Impact Study 1

View looking across Clarence Street toward proposed site from Pleasant Street. Red line indicates proposed building outline.



Visual Impact Study 2

View looking across Clarence Street toward proposed site from Pleasant Street. Red line indicates proposed building outline.

10.0 Summary

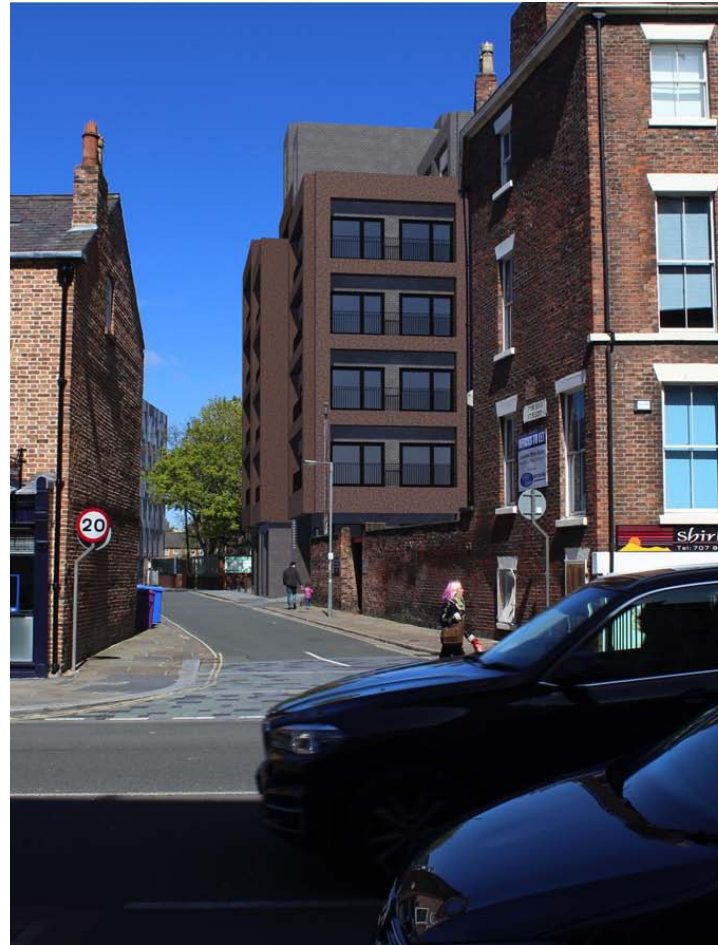
It is hoped that this Design, Access & Heritage Statement provides a thorough explanation of how the designs submitted with the Planning application have evolved.

A full history has been provided from the undertaking of initial feasibility studies, through the reasoning behind the proposed design, the establishment of the core design principles and how the proposals have been shaped both by these and the context of the site.

We have consulted with all the previously stated persons and policy.

Every effort has been made to consider accessibility issues throughout the development of the proposals.

The visualisations and other graphics will hopefully help support the merits of the proposals.



Proposal in Context

View looking north along Pomona Street within the Mount Pleasant Conservation Area. View shows the proposed apartment building beyond the Conservation Area frontage. The JMU building is visible at the end of Pomona Street.

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