



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT – LAND AT LOWNDES ROAD, TUEBROOK,
LIVERPOOL



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of our client in support of the application for Full Planning Approval – New Building Works for 10 No dwellings on land at Lowndes Road, Tuebrook, Liverpool. The statement is intended to demonstrate that the proposals are in accordance with relevant National planning Policy Guidance and Development Plans, and to show that the proposals take account of the principles of good design as set out in the Councils Urban Design Guidelines.

1.2 The Statement reviews the planning considerations that are relevant to determining the application and identifies important matters which support the proposals including the approach to the design of the development and accessibility.

1.3 The images accompanying the text are a combination of photographs and exploratory drawings completed during the design stage and discussed with the client during the pre-application stage.

1.4 The accompanying design solution is illustrative of the development proposals for the regeneration of this HMRI area. The Statement has been written to reflect the content and form of the document published by CABE 'Design and Access Statement: How to write, read and use them' (2006) and adhered to the advised structure:

Design

- Use -What buildings and spaces will be used for.
- Amount – How much will be built on the site.
- Layout - How buildings and public and private spaces will be arranged on the site, and the relationship between them and the buildings and spaces around the site.
- Scale – How big the buildings and space will be.
- Landscaping – How open spaces will be treated to enhance and protect the character of place.
- Appearance – What the buildings and spaces will look like, for example, building materials and architectural details.
- Access – How everyone can use the place comfortably, safely & easily.

In addition, a statement on designing out crime is provided.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.5 Identity

- The area around the site is predominantly residential with a mixture of traditional terraced houses and new build semi detached dwellings. The existing properties on Lowndes Road adjacent to the site provide a degree of enclosure and security from the street. We are proposing a scheme that would ensure continued use and activity in the area 24 hours a day.

1.6 Urban Grain and enclosure

- The proposed development has been designed to take into account the relevant urban grain of the surrounding area, massing and use of materials. This proposed application is for 9No. 3 bedroom and 1No 2 bedroom family houses. The pattern of arrangement and the size of the surrounding buildings and their junctions influenced the final design outcome of this project. The main features of the proposal respect the arrangement of the locality. In general the street patterns are typically two-three storey continuous terracing and we have sought to continue this theme in the new development. In general the new development should create, preserve and enhance the enclosure to the street scene and create a cohesive urban space. The development aims to create an urban form of enclosure in which the building does not dominate the site. The core of the scheme is dominated by the linear axis of the existing street frontages and incorporating private rear gardens, bringing the influence of traditional housing into the centre of the scheme.

2.0 USE

2.1 The site lies to the East of Liverpool City Centre, in Tuebrook and is accessed via Clifton Road East. There is pedestrian access to the main arterial route into town on West Derby Road from the site. The proposed development is located close to all main public transport routes to the city centre and Queens Drive hence out to further afield and is located within walking distance of shops, municipal parks, the City of Liverpool College and other community facilities.

2.2 The proposal on Lowndes Road consists of nine 3bed houses and one 2bed house for the family owner/occupier market. The area immediately surrounding the site is a mix of social housing and owner occupiers terraced housing and semi detached housing stock. Existing routes around the site have been further reinforced by the introduction of paving to distinguish the pedestrian movement and create better connectivity between the residential areas.

2.3 The proposed residential development has been designed to successfully integrate and preserve the appearance of the surrounding housing stock. The proposed location of the development will encourage people to walk and cycle which in turn has benefits for the environment, road safety, and residential amenity and for health. The development is located on a comprehensive network of attractive and safe pedestrian and cycle routes. The development has access to a high quality and frequent bus service to Liverpool city centre and local educational facilities with high quality travel information, bus shelters and street lighting. All residents are within approximately 400m walking distance of a frequent service bus stop.

2.4 The proposed development links to the main road network and is also close to the main distributor road link to the motorway (Queens Drive). The location of the development along established road routes into the city centre presents a range of opportunities to promote a design concept, which will prioritise sustainable transport policies.

2.5 The proposed building is within walking distance of shops, restaurants, pubs, a library, a council one stop advice centre, and multi-dominational churches, City of Liverpool College, Newsham Park, and on a major public transport route into the city centre. A place should be easy to get to and move through and the site is located very close to a bus stop. How well a region is connected, both internally and externally, will play a large part in how successful, inclusive, safe and sustainable it is. The proposed development would include public transport accessibility, and connections between different modes of transport. The site is within walking distance of the local shops. Schools and colleges can be useful community foci and the facilities they contain can be made available to more people, more of the time, so supporting leisure health and cultural policies. The site has strong restraint measures over the use, penetration and speed of vehicles within it. Potential residents will be limited to using their one designated on street parking space. The proposed development and the immediate surrounds take into account the need to ensure that people are not excluded access because of physical restrictions and as such the residents have access to a range of facilities and opportunities.

2.6 The development is within walking distance of:

- West Derby Road shopping centre
- City of Liverpool College
- Newsham Park
- Edinburgh Park
- Old Swan Commercial area

3.0 AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The development consists of a house type specifically designed to respond to the limitations of the site and also to provide the qualities and economies of scale sought after by the National and Regional Planning Policies and Guidelines. Each house has a gross internal area of between 63-66sqm. The level of development seeks to ensure that the project is economically viable for the client despite complicated social and economic restraints and policies implemented in the area. The size, shape and number of units proposed are a specific contextually sensitive response that turns the problems of the topography into opportunities for affordable rental or ownership for families.

3.2 The proposed development includes a total of 10 units based on reasonable dwellings for families. The density of the entire development aligns well with the existing suburban character of the area, ensuring a density that makes efficient use of the land and creates demand for local services.

3.3 To achieve long term sustainability for the development and in turn the area, the planning application seeks to reflect a mixed community of varying age groups. Accordingly the development includes a property type that can respond to the continued evolution of the area. The development can make significant contributions to meeting a shortfall in the available supply of affordable housing as compared with local need. This has the twin aims of ensuring the community is sustained by its existing residents as well as providing the necessary range and quality of new homes to encourage people to live in Tuebrook.

3.4 Affordability is an increasing problem across the city and a growing issue creating specific difficulties for the local population. The application supports the need for varying house types to sustain population levels and to address the issues of urban density. The development can contribute to the identified regeneration programmes of the area and reduce the worsening vacancy rates of the properties.

3.0 AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT

3.5 The application site is currently vacant. The site has been vacant for many years. We feel that bringing the site into beneficial use will achieve the economic and environmental benefits as well as those of a visual impact to the street. The provision of good quality housing in close proximity to important commercial areas such as West Derby & Old Swan will ensure that the housing accommodation is attractive to families and with the added benefit of reducing long distance commuting by car.

3.6 The national Planning Guidance that is relevant to this site is provided in:

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Developments

PPG3 Housing

The guidance in PPG3 accepts that the extent of the development will depend on the overall need for housing and the capacity for the existing urban area to accommodate additional housing.

3.7 With regard to the housing proposals assessed against the criteria set out in the councils policy framework, the development performs well, being located in a previously developed area and within a short distance from the city centre and thereby reasonably accessible to colleges, shops and services. The proposals directly support housing market renewal and would meet local needs or otherwise provide exceptional planning benefits.

3.8 The application directly supports the renewal of housing markets and the creation of a sustainable community in this area.

To conclude the development is considered to be sustainable within the overall mix of the existing housing types

4.0 LAYOUT

4.1 Tuebrook is designed around an ordered structure of formal avenues and streets that form a clear hierarchy of routes and public spaces. The proposed layout of the development seeks to build upon this quality to create a development that promotes good connectivity, so that all residents are within easy reach of local schools, shops, community facilities and recreation areas. The development is based on a permeable arrangement of terraced blocks forming a regular and well connected street structure. The principle of the terraced block is based on the composition of building frontages that frame and define the character of the streets and by enclosing private space to the rear, thereby creating an environment where the access is controlled.

4.2 The proposed development has been designed to take into account the relevant urban grain of the surrounding area and its use of materials. The pattern of arrangement and the size of the surrounding buildings and their junctions influenced the final design outcome of this project. The main features of the proposal respect the arrangement of the locality. In general the street patterns are typically two-three storey continuous terracing. In general the new development should create, preserve and enhance the enclosure to the street scene and create a cohesive urban space. The development aims to create an urban form of enclosure in which the building does not dominate the site. The core of the scheme is dominated by incorporating the private rear gardens, bringing the influence of traditional housing into the centre of the scheme.

4.3 The dwellings are sited to respect and protect the amenity provisions of the existing dwellings surrounding the site, in order to comply with Liverpool City Council Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes: New Residential development. With the site however, a more qualitative approach has been adopted reflecting the advice laid down in Planning Policy

Guidance 3: Housing (PPG3). Here the aim is to site the dwelling to enclose and define the spaces and give interest and definition to the street scene whilst maintaining the privacy and amenity space throughout the design stages.

- 4.4 The siting of the proposed development is such that the dwellings continue the line of the existing urban block, forming a visual frontage to the streetscape and a clear definition of public and private space. Lowndes Road connects onto West Derby Road via Chester Road. The proposed development will continue the developed frontage reflecting the character of the streetscape in the locality. The siting of the proposals allows for private and enclosed rear spacing between the dwellings and this is intended to provide the residents with access to a private amenity space, the details of the landscaping proposals are included in this application. Within the site context, there are no trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders.
- 4.5 The housing units have been aligned with the existing street elevations to enable the development to merge in and create a continuing streetscape. The gable wall has a blank face in order to meet the interface distances between the neighbouring building.
- 4.6 The refuse storage will be incorporated into the rear gardens ensuring the streets are clear of the clutter associated with the storage and disposal of waste. Bin stores provided to the rear of the property reduces the visual impact on the public realm.

5.0 SCALE

5.1 The scale of the development conforms to the established height and character of the surrounding district of Tuebrook which is essentially residential and reflects the areas suburban characteristics. In terms of the lateral arrangement of the elevations, a distinctive characteristic of Tuebrook is the dominance of terraced dwellings, which create a strong sense of enclosure due to the limited amount of gaps in the built form. The development tries to balance this characteristic alongside the desire to include variety into the built form.

5.2 To create a sense of enclosure the new housing has been designed to be on a reasonable scale with the surrounding buildings. The proposed building does not exceed the height of any surrounding property. The development has been designed to reflect the traditional balance of street widths, plot ratios, building height, building form and massing found in the other examples of the surrounding buildings. In general, the frontage is not excessively long and is in proportion to the building height. Thus the development should by its independence and proportion of scale not undermine the architectural effect of the surrounding streetscape, the existing uniformity of the street, and does not over balance or dominate existing features in the surrounding area that are important to the building.

5.3 The proposed development responds to the physical and social dynamic, character and setting of the local area. The new development aims to respect the form, structure and urban grain of the locality, taking into account local distinctiveness such as materials and features, and creates a new and interesting public face to an existing vacant site. The housing development has been conceived as infilling a missing fragment of a depressed area with high quality, contemporary design using well proportioned elevations, door and window openings and a roof pitch that makes visual references to the local tradition.

5.4 The new buildings follow the front building lines of the adjacent properties however this is not likely to undermine the uniformity, regularity and coherence of the street scene.

5.0 SCALE

The set back distance creates a continuity of frontage and provides definition and enclosure to the public realm. The development is planned on formal lines around the existing building line. It is conceived as a contemporary interpretation of the surrounding Tuebrook fabric.

- 5.6 The main aim of the design concept was to achieve a residential space with high standards of local character and distinctiveness. The development comprises two distinct layouts, a formal private internal area, based around a traditional terraced block and an informal private integrated landscaped area. The use of local materials, continuity of architectural detail and an integrated landscaped area ensure that the development relates positively to the existing townscape rather than becoming a disjointed add on.



6.0 LANDSCAPING

6.1 Significant areas of private open space will be provided as part of the proposed development. All the interfaces between the development and the street will receive intensive design attention. The development will address the key streetscape and will include areas for informal play. Landscaping to a large extent can have a significant impact on the visual success or failure of the building, and its subsequent enjoyment by its occupants, owes much to the setting provided by soft and hard landscaping. The greening effect can also have a health impact, in so far as the trees absorb CO2 during the day. The proposed landscaping scheme is to provide a suitable and pleasant setting for the development to include:

- Small tree planting
- Ground & shrub cover, hard surfacing and paving
- Adequate lighting without causing light pollution
- Boundary treatments comprised of materials which reduce the likelihood of graffiti.

6.2 For the private spaces of the development to work well, its ownership must be clearly defined. The boundary markers will be visible on and from the street front and as such, the proposal is to give particular consideration to the design and height of the walling, railings and any appropriate planting that will be expected. It is recognised that the design of the front gardens will have a significant effect on the visual amenity of the street. The front gardens are to be planted with shrubs of a species appropriate in size to the location and overall streetscape. It is generally recognised that surface water drainage and street run off management are assisted in the front garden area to allow some interception and infiltration of rainwater. The rear gardens, although enclosed, will not generally have a great visual impact on the street and here the residents should have complete choice, although some planting to encourage wildlife should be encouraged.

6.3 Areas of publicly visible landscaping follow the existing dwellings use of low retaining walls. This provides clear ownership demarcation, key level changes to ensure routes

are as level as possible and also distinguishes the boundaries of public and private space. The front gardens have path layouts which are dependant on the door position. To the rear of the plot, the gardens are to have an area of extensive raised boundary walls and lockable gates to ensure good 'Secured by design' practice to an otherwise vulnerable boundary.

7.0 APPEARANCE

7.1 The housing layout has a design precedent with the surrounding housing stock. Each unit has a pitched roof in the same direction as the adjacent properties. The front door positions do not vary from the existing streetscape in order to provide a street presence and to ensure continuity in the house type. Predominantly the elevation treatment is brickwork to ensure a visual connection with the existing properties, whilst creating buildings with contemporary detailing, environmentally conscious materials that are suitably scaled for domestic architecture.

7.2 The built form of the proposed development reflects the local characteristic and develops a local distinctiveness. The principle aim will be to use traditional built forms and materials of Liverpool and to reflect these in a contemporary manner in order to produce a fresh identity. The elevational treatments will be characterised by a balance of horizontal and vertical elements as well as the rhythm of the openings. The location of the windows and doors seeks to limit excessive blank facades and maximise the opportunity for the windows and door to create active street fronts. The building frontage is positioned to have a higher degree of visibility and so that the regular character of the street will be accentuated by a continued building line parallel to the street edge.

7.3 National Planning Guidance emphasise the importance of acknowledging and making a positive response to the context. In this regard the built environment adjoining the site provides some design context and it is also relevant to consider the character and distinctiveness of the wider locality. The architectural form of Tuebrook as a whole is generally simple but bold, with basic rectilinear plan shapes combined with pitched roofs. This general simplicity creates a sense of uniformity and it is these design features and palette of materials that has informed the design solution of the proposed development.

7.4 The pitched roof will create an interest in the front and rear elevation complementing the vertical and horizontal rhythm of the windows and doors. The buildings themselves have an

architectural standard which has been interpreted with additional emphasis at windows and eaves level. The form, rhythm and massing of the building reflects features in the surrounding buildings.

7.5 In the design of the building we have endeavoured to respect the historical context within the area. We have sought to accomplish this with the use of a sympathetic palette of building materials and external finishes and we are dedicated to refine this further in close collaboration with the Planning Officer. We have also sought to align the main horizontal lines of the building composition and overall massing to compliment and respect adjacent buildings. Finally we have sought to proportion the building to sit comfortably in a context of predominantly traditional building types whilst maintaining a contemporary design ethos.

7.6 The redevelopment of the existing land optimizes the use of the land available and as a result regenerates a small and isolated piece of land.

7.7 The proposed development reflects Liverpool City Councils strategy and land use development based on three main themes:

- Equality and social inclusion
- Sustainable development
- Regeneration.

The formal layout of the development provides a robust context for a contemporary architectural interpretation of proven Liverpool development forms.

8.0 ACCESS

8.1 Wroot Design Ltd is committed to providing an inclusive development that allows access to everyone regardless of disability, age, ethnicity or social grouping. We are active in ensuring that any potential sources of discrimination are addressed in the physical characteristics of the scheme. The design has been developed to meet the latest legislation and good practice guidance on accessibility available at the design and construction stages. These will include for example the Building Regulations: Part M (Access to and use of buildings), the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

8.2 The dwellings are distributed along the edge of the site, completing the street frontage between the existing houses that face onto Lowndes Road. Careful consideration of the slight change in level across the site has ensured that the properties will be able to meet the access standards required by both Part M and Liverpool City Councils Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes and Lifetime Homes Assessments.

8.3 Pedestrian approach: The main approach to the dwellings has a slight slope approaching the thresholds. This access will be constructed from firm, durable and slip resistant material and will be well lit, designed and maintained to meet the standards laid down in BS 5489.

8.4 The site and buildings have to actively take consideration of the disabled and to provide sufficient access for disabled users. The design has been developed in accordance with the BS 8300: 2001 and the DDA Act 1995 Parts 1-4.

8.5 The application site is in a sustainable location close to several urban centres and to substantial employment areas. Bus services run past the site along West Derby Road and allow access to a wide range of services without dependence on

the car.

8.6 Whilst there is a slight change of level across the site no access will be graded at a level that is not suitable for wheelchair use and those who have mobility impairment.

8.7 As part of our proposals for our residential development we propose a full crime prevention system to provide a 'safe as possible' route for residents and visitors to the site.

8.8 Entrances will be well lit and additional lighting will be provided through the use of motion sensitive lighting.

8.9 If required a simple stair lift mechanism could be installed on the stairs in the dwellings to allow disabled user to move freely about the property.

8.10 Provision for cyclists is fairly limited within the site. The main facilities are on West Derby Road.

8.11 The majority of bus services are located along West Derby road which are at acceptable walking distance from the site.

9.0 DESIGNING OUT CRIME

9.1 As with all new developments designed by Wroot Design Ltd, a heavy emphasis is placed upon providing safe and secure environments for all those who use them. The success of a development is often illustrated after construction has been completed whereupon the buildings are being used on a daily basis.

9.2 If a project can be seen to be resilient to crime years after its completion, the initial groundwork of applying crime fighting measures at the design stage can be shown to triumph. When developing housing we employ the principles of secure by design to our buildings. SBD is a scheme developed by the police and its requirements and recommendations ensure that the prime objective of providing safe and secure environments is met. To achieve this objective equal weight should be given to both environmental design and physical security.

9.3 Natural surveillance is the cornerstone in the achievement of community safety. The proposed development will ensure that the proposed private front gardens, footpaths and routes to the car park are open to view from adjoining occupied properties. Natural surveillance will principally be achieved by continuing the urban block, based on a composition of building frontages that frame and overlook adjacent streets. The location of windows and doors will seek to limit the blank facade.

9.4 The arrangement of the terraced block helps to create a more secure development. The building frontages will enclose the private rear gardens, limiting the opportunity for intruders to access the private land from public areas. Resident parking will be allocated on the street.

9.5 The rear garden will be demarcated and secured by a minimum 1800mm high boundary wall, which in turn will help with the security risk to the existing properties that are adjacent to the proposed development and which back onto the site.

9.6 The correct uses of certain species of plants such as spiny or thorny types can help prevent graffiti and enhance perimeter security. We have proposed for planting in areas whereupon this type of activity could be targeted. The location of our landscaping does not impede the opportunity for natural surveillance and avoids the creation of potential hiding places.

9.7 The properties will be clearly named and numbered to assist residents, postal workers and the attendance of the emergency services.

9.8 All external lighting to comply with BS 5489. The lighting will be designed to illuminate all external doors and vulnerable area, and will be controlled by photo electric cells, a time switch or passive infra-red detectors. We propose the use of low consumption lamps with the units positioned to reduce glare, light pollution and possible attack.