

Design and Access Statement

McInerney Homes
Land at Brunswick Street/ Banks Road, Garston, Liverpool

January 2011



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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Design and Access statement accompanies a full planning application for the development of 18 dwellings on the former Bankfield House in Garston. This planning application is made by McInerney Homes together with the Diocese of Liverpool.
- 1.2 This document demonstrates how the applicants have followed an assessment – involvement – evaluation – design process, in accordance with the Department of Communities and Local Government guidance ***‘Guidance on Information Requirements and Validation’*** and **CABE advice on *‘Design and Access Statements: how to write, read and use them.’***
- 1.3 It begins by assessing the context of the site and its surroundings; and describes the proposals; before setting out relevant design and access planning policies. The subsequent section evaluates the opportunities and constraints the scheme presents; then the design principles will be discussed; followed by the access arrangements for the scheme.
- 1.4 This Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the following documents which have influenced the resultant proposals;
- Street Scenes / Block Elevations
 - Tree Survey
 - House Type Planning Drawings
 - Fence and Wall Designs
 - Utilities Statement
 - Site Investigation Report
 - Planning Statement
 - Housing and Regeneration Statement

2 THE PROCESS AND PROPOSAL

Involvement

- 2.1 From the beginning and throughout the design process Liverpool City Council have been fully involved and informed of the schemes evolution. Written correspondence has been received from Gary McGowan (Development Control Division) commenting on initial proposals dating back to March 2009. A large amount of correspondence has followed in order to 'fine tune' the proposed scheme, culminating with confirmation that the scheme is 'acceptable in principle'. A detailed commentary of the schemes evolution is within the design section of this document.
- 2.2 Appendix 1 contains some correspondence between the applicant and Liverpool City Council. The site is classed as infill and is within the Southern Fringe Housing Zone, Liverpool City Council will be supportive of developments within this area provided that regeneration benefits are demonstrated. Furthermore this application proposes 100% private sale housing, thus support has been obtained from South Liverpool Housing Association confirming that our proposals don't detract from their Housing Strategy. The early involvement from Liverpool City Council has helped to shape this planning application in design and regeneration terms.
- 2.3 McInerney Homes intends to purchase the site from Liverpool Diocese and seeks approval of proposals to develop 18 private sale units. Of the 18 homes all of the units are 3 bedroomed in size; thus providing variation in the housing stock for Garston. Garston is dominated by 2 bedroomed terraced housing; our proposals seek to vary this providing regeneration of a brownfield site that is becoming a social problem for surrounding residents.

3 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS (PHYSICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC)

- 3.1 The 0.35 Ha (0.88 Acre) proposal site is vacant land situated within the Garston area of Liverpool. It was previously the Bankfield House, which was used as a community centre. This facility closed in 2006 following Health and Safety concerns. It was subsequently vandalised by arson and then demolished. The site has now become overgrown and unkempt. Local residents have complained that it is becoming a site for fly tipping. Any redevelopment plans will eradicate this unsavoury usage.
- 3.2 The site is generally flat and concealed by wooden hoardings. There are a number of important trees that are 'dotted' around the site boundary. The proposals fully retain most of these and respect the same.
- 3.3 Access to the site is currently via the main road called Banks Street.
- 3.4 The area surrounding the site is predominantly residential in nature although there are many industrial and commercial premises that are further a field.
- 3.5 The site is located within Garston, one of the south suburbs of Liverpool. The property occupies a corner position with frontages onto Banks Road and Brunswick Street. The area was originally developed to serve the Garston Docks and comprised predominantly of high density low value terraced housing. The area witnessed a significant decline after the Second World War and despite improvement grant work in the 1970's the decline was only temporarily stalled and further deterioration occurred during the 1980's and 90's. The area was highlighted for regeneration towards the end of the 1990's and much of the uplift dilapidated terraced streets were demolished towards the North West section of Banks Road.
- 3.6 The former Liverpool Airport site and commercial/factory units along Speke Boulevard have benefited from significant regeneration over the last 5 – 10 years. The redevelopment has included the former Bryant and May Matchworks which was converted by Urban Splash. The former terminal and substantial hangers have been redeveloped to provide a Marriott Hotel, Lloyds Leisure Centre and Littlewoods Direct Outlet. There is also the Speke Estuary Business Park and the Speke Retail Park has been extended and improved over recent times.

- 3.7 Comprehensive amenities can be found within Garston district centre and there are good road and public transport routes through to the major suburban district centres, Liverpool John Lennon Airport, South Parkway Rail/Bus Terminus and the commuter trains through to Liverpool City Centre.

4 **RELEVANT DESIGN AND ACCESS POLICIES**

4.1 In order to ensure that the design and access aspects of the proposals accord with planning policy, this section details the guidance that has been taken into consideration in drawing up the plans. National and local planning policies relevant to the proposal are considered in more depth in the accompanying Planning Statement. Policies found in the Liverpool Unitary Development Plan (2002) are relevant:

4.2 The site is located within a designated ***Primary Residential Area (Policy H4)*** where ***'new housing development that satisfies other Plan policies'*** will be granted permission. The accompanying Planning Supporting Statement demonstrates further how the proposals accord with relevant planning policy. As such, this statement is concerned only with those policies which relate specifically to the design and access of the development.

4.3 **Policy H5: *New Residential Development*** states that:

'1. Planning permission will be granted for new residential development which accords with the following criteria:

i. the density, design and layout respects the character of the surrounding area, and maintains levels of privacy and amenity for existing and future residents; and

ii. the highway and parking provision ensures a safe, attractive, convenient and nuisance-free highway environment for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.

2. Proposals for new residential development will be expected to comply with the provisions of policies HD18 on General Design Requirements'.

- 4.4 As per part 2 of Policy H5, **Policy HD18: *General Design Requirements*** has been considered. This asserts that:

‘when assessment proposals for new development, the City Council will require applications to comply with the following criteria, where appropriate, to ensure a high quality of design:

i. the scale, density and massing of the proposed development relate well to its locality;

ii. the development includes characteristics of local distinctiveness in terms of design, layout and materials;

iii. the building lines and layout of the development relate to those of the locality;

iv. external boundary and surface treatment is included as part of the development and is of a design and materials which relate well to its surroundings;...

vi. the development pays special attention to views into and out of any adjoining green space;...

vii. the development has regard to and does not detract from the city's skyline, roofscape and local views within the city;

viii. the satisfactory development or redevelopment of adjoining land is not prejudiced;

ix. there is no severe loss of amenity or privacy to adjacent residents;...

xi. adequate arrangements are made for the storage and collection of refuse within the curtilage of the site and the provision of litter bins where appropriate;

xii. the exterior of the development incorporates materials to discourage graffiti; and

xiii adequate arrangements are made for pedestrian and vehicular access and for car parking.'

4.5 The 'Good Design' section of the UDP states that:

'the City Council will expect the design, layout and treatment of all new development to be of a good design and make a positive contribution to the city's environment.' (parag. 7.132)

'Urban design is defined as including the complex relationship between all the elements of built and unbuilt space. As such, the appearance and treatment of spaces between and around buildings is of comparable importance to the design of the buildings themselves.' (parag. 7.133)

'New development should respect, complement and contribute to the character of the area, and make an improvement to areas where this is required. Creative, imaginative and contemporary designs which provide visual interest will be encouraged...New development should avoid unusable or inappropriate pockets of open land on street frontages by following the grain of the street pattern.' (parag. 7.135)

4.6 Neighbouring uses are considered in Paragraph 7.140, which states that: ***"The quality of life of neighbouring occupiers should not be harmed***

unnecessarily by new development through overshadowing and loss of privacy or visual amenity."

- 4.7 Policies on highways requirements and accessibility issues are provided in the **Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD**. The following policies are of importance: **T12 – Car parking provision in new developments**: All new developments which generate a demand for car parking will be required to make provision for car parking on site, to meet the minimum operational needs of the development. Additional space for non operational car parking will be permitted up to a maximum standard. This will be determined by: the nature and type of use; whether off-site car parking would result in a danger to highway and pedestrian safety; whether the locality in which the proposed development is located is served by public car parking facilities; whether off-site parking would result in demonstrable harm to residential amenity; and the relative accessibility of the development site by public transport services.
- 4.8 In formulating the scheme, the aims of the police initiative, Secured by Design have been considered which seek **"to encourage the building industry to adopt crime prevention measures in the design of developments to assist in reducing the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime, creating a safer and more secure environment."** (parag, 1.2, Secured by Design Principles 2004)

5 OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

- 5.1 The site does not present any design constraints not expected in any typical infill site in an urban area, that is to say the site is constrained by the orientation of surrounding development and by the presence of a number of trees. The layout has been designed to maximise the retention of all the larger trees, this can be seen on the plans submitted. The mature trees will create a valuable street scene at the corner of Banks Road and Brunswick Street.
- 5.2 It is important to ensure that the development takes guidance relating to 'designing out crime' into account as the site adjoining is unsupervised. Units 1 – 8 achieve this natural surveillance of the adjacent green space.
- 5.3 The proposals represent a good opportunity to develop a vacant and overgrown, brownfield site with a high quality, well located, well designed, accessible, housing site.

6 Design and Scheme Evolution

Design

- 6.1 As the site is located within an established residential area, it is essential that the design of the new housing compliments and is well integrated with the character of the surrounding area. This has been achieved via careful planning and reviewing the neighbouring homes in terms of their design; layout; scale and height.
- 6.2 It became important through consultation with Liverpool City Council that a strong frontage must be provided looking from the main aspects of the site. Plots 1 -13 provide this with a strong build line. Plot 8 has an aspect facing Banks Road which addresses the prominent corner. With the retention of the mature trees a pleasant street scene is provided.
- 6.3 The units planned are all two storeys in height. This sits well with the existing profile of the surrounding streets and properties.



1. Homes at the corner of Banks Road.



2. New homes opposite the site on Banks Road.



3. The homes on the left are adjacent to the site.

6.4 As can be seen by photographs 1 -3 on pages 11 - 12 of this document, the homes which sit adjacent to the site on Banks Road are traditional two storey homes with pitched roofs which are terraced in nature with semi detached units grouped at the end of the road. The densities which are planned are characteristic of the surrounding streets and estates.

6.5 The majority of the neighbouring homes do not have garages, but do have single car driveways.

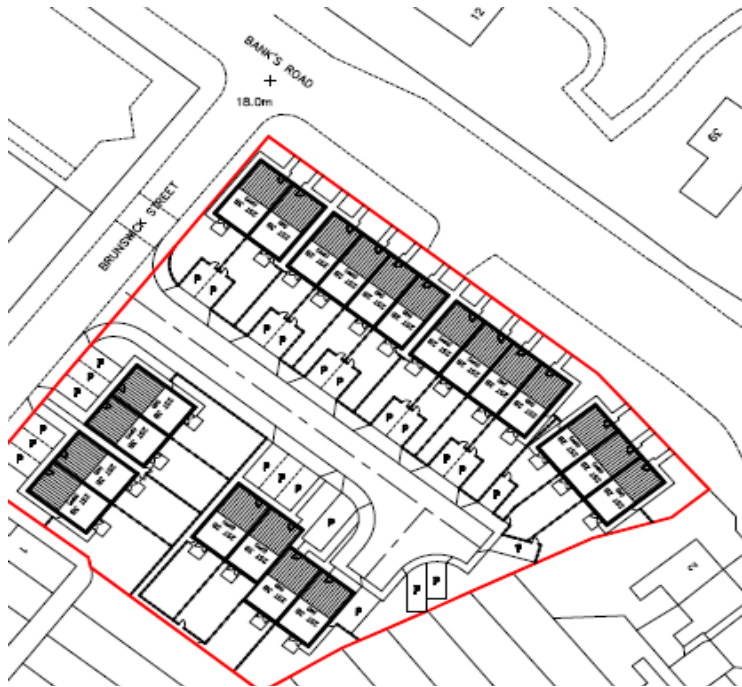
- 6.6. Also, new housing development directly opposite the site has been taken into consideration. This is shown in photograph 2 on page 12. These homes are built from brick and render with feature pediments and banding courses.
- 6.7 The proposed design of the new housing scheme has not tried to imitate the surroundings, but rather, be influenced by them and has sought to ensure that the new development sits well within the character of the area.

Scheme Evolution

- 6.8 The design and layout of the scheme has been shaped by the ongoing discussions and consultations detailed below. Appendix 2 includes some of the various drawings discussed with the Local Authority. A snapshot of the first and final scheme is shown on page 13. The drawings enclosed in Appendix 2 are as follows; SK3, SK8, SK14, and SK17. SK 17 is the final layout for submission.



SK 17 – Above is the submitted scheme following lengthy discussions.



SK02 – Above is an early scheme that did not retain any trees and was deemed too dense and lacking space. SK17's evolution is a marked improvement.

- 6.9 It was important to maintain a strong build line along Banks Road and Brunswick Street. Drives had to be avoided directly off Banks Road due to existing utilities that are prominent in the footways. Inclusive parking has been provided directly off Brunswick Street with a parking court to the rear of plots 9 -13. The parking court is overlooked by certain plots in order to provide security. It is enclosed within the development and does not open up a 'rat run.'
- 6.10 There are a total of 20 car parking spaces planned. That is 1 space per dwelling with 2 visitor spaces. This is deemed acceptable by the Local Planning Authority.
- 6.11 Most trees are retained on site; the only losses come to minor small saplings and generally lower class trees. The root protection zones of the larger trees are also fully respected. None of the trees on site are protected by TPO.

7. ACCESS

- 7.1 The sites current access comes off Banks Road (see photograph below). A new access point is proposed via Brunswick Street; this is an improvement as it contains far less traffic.



- 7.2 The new cul-de-sac layout would make the development user – friendly for pedestrians and cyclists as it is not anticipated to be busy with car activity. The proposed homes fronting Brunswick Street each have a driveway which is accessed directly from this road.
- 7.3 Pedestrians are able to use the footpaths along Banks Road and Brunswick Street which are in good condition and are well lit. The routes are logical and obvious to use. There are traffic calming measures in place further to the North of Banks Road Garston; raised speed table.
- 7.4 There is public open space directly opposite plots 1 – 8; there is also access to private outdoor space in the form of residential gardens for each of the dwellings.

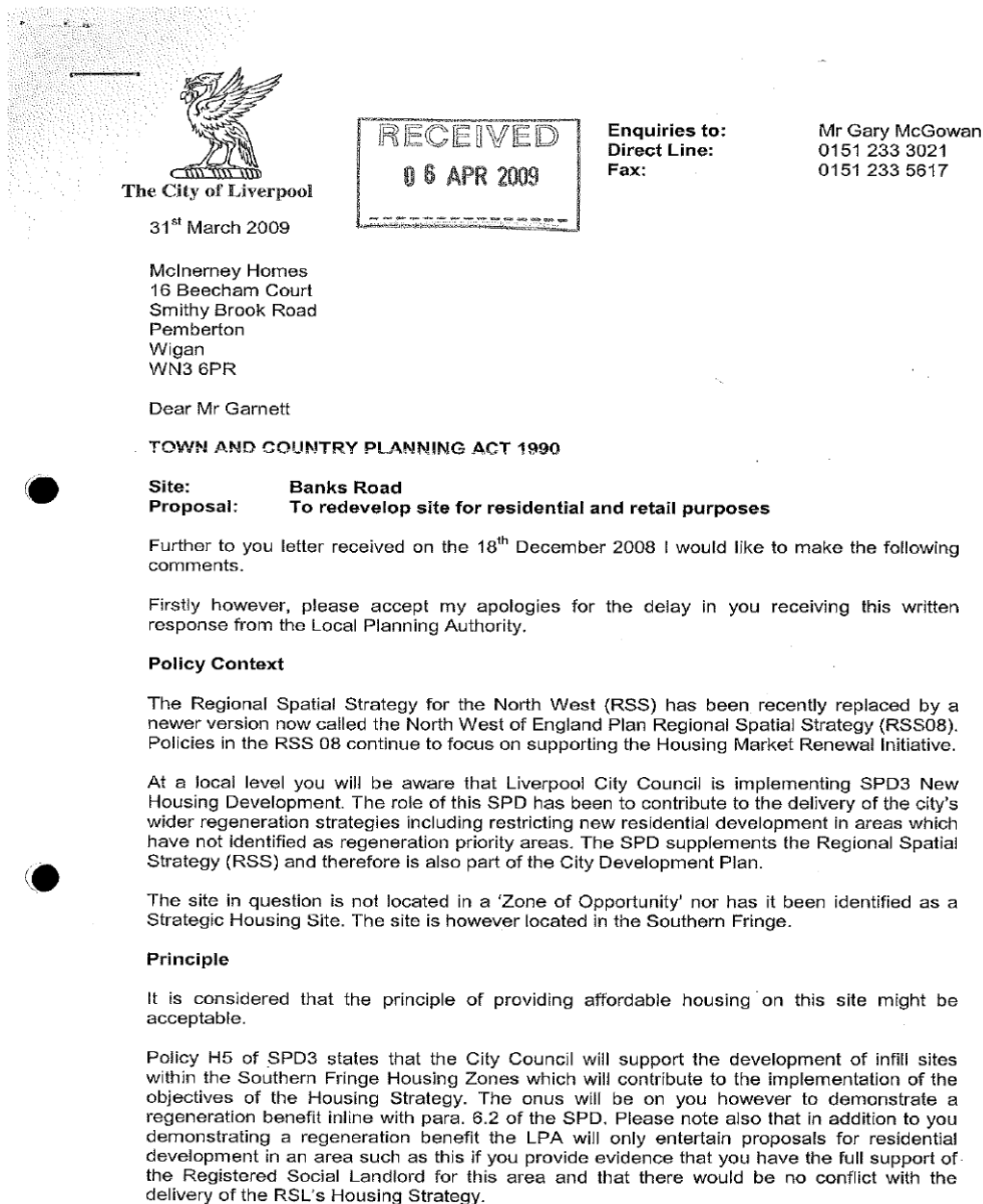
- 7.5 Access to public transport is fundamental to promoting sustainable travel too and from the site. The site benefits from excellent links with the nearest bus stop being opposite the site on Bank Road.
- 7.6 The design of the development will ensure that accessibility is inclusive of disabled people. Disabled standards will meet the new building regulations that have recently been adopted. All dwellings will have doorways that meet with the standards, are accessible via footpaths that are at least 1500mm wide and have a maximum gradient between 1:12 and 1:20. The levels of amenities in the local area also allow the site to be considered to be accessible by wheelchair users.
- 7.7 As mentioned previously in 6.10 adequate parking will be provided on site. This will reduce on – street parking, ensuring a safer, more attractive, convenient and nuisance – free environment for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.

8. **CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 The purpose of this report has been to explain the strategy behind the proposals. Its intent has been to highlight the site's constraints and opportunities that have been identified for consideration in the design process. The statement has also been used to assist the formulation of the detail of the final submission.
- 8.2 The resultant scheme is one which takes on board comments received from the Council and respects the character of the site and its surroundings. It will secure the development of a derelict brownfield site which is becoming a concern for local residents and stakeholders. Furthermore, the proposed housing will not compromise existing housing regeneration schemes within the locality.
- 8.3 It is therefore considered that this analysis has demonstrated that the design and accessibility of the proposal meet with the relevant policy guidance and that planning permission should be granted.

APPENDIX 1

Correspondence dating from April 2009 showing the lengthy consultation process.



Liverpool City Council
Regeneration, Planning and Building Control,
Municipal Buildings, Dale Street, Liverpool L2 2DH.
web: www.liverpool.gov.uk





**The City of Liverpool
Layout**

This sites location is considered prominent so a careful approach to design and layout should be adopted. It is considered that the number of units that you propose exceeds the level the site can accommodate comfortably. Your proposal is dense and it is considered that the development would appear somewhat cramped and over developed. The proposed dwellings have short gardens, the level of hard standing is high and car parking spaces have been squeezed into what ever space there is left available. The LPA would suggest that you reduce the number of units in order to free up some space, which in turn would improve interface distances and garden size, which are unacceptable in places.

The level of general greenspace provision should also be improved and each property should have a curtilage parking space. Alleyways are not acceptable as these can be problematic form a crime and anti social behaviour view point. Attempts should be made to maintain the open character at the junction, the end dwelling with its blank gable wall abutting Brunswick Street is not considered acceptable. I have observed that there are a number of established trees within and surrounding the site so you should also seek advice from the Councils Tree Officer (who can be contacted by using the number above) as their removal is likely to be unacceptable.

Without elevations the Local Planning Authority's design comments are limited, however the LPA would expect a good standard of design regardless of the housing type that is being proposed. Materials whilst they do not have to be of a traditional type must be sympathetic to the area. In terms of scale 2 storeys would seem appropriate in this location

I hope that you find these comments useful, please do not hesitate to get in touch should you seek clarification on any of the matter raised.

Yours Sincerely

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL DIVISION.



Liverpool City Council
Regeneration, Planning and Building Control,
Municipal Buildings, Dale Street, Liverpool L2 2DH.
web: www.liverpool.gov.uk



From: McGowan, Gary [mailto:Gary.McGowan@liverpool.gov.uk]
Sent: 07 October 2010 10:16
To: Leon Armstrong
Subject: RE: Brunswick Street, Garston

Dear Leon,

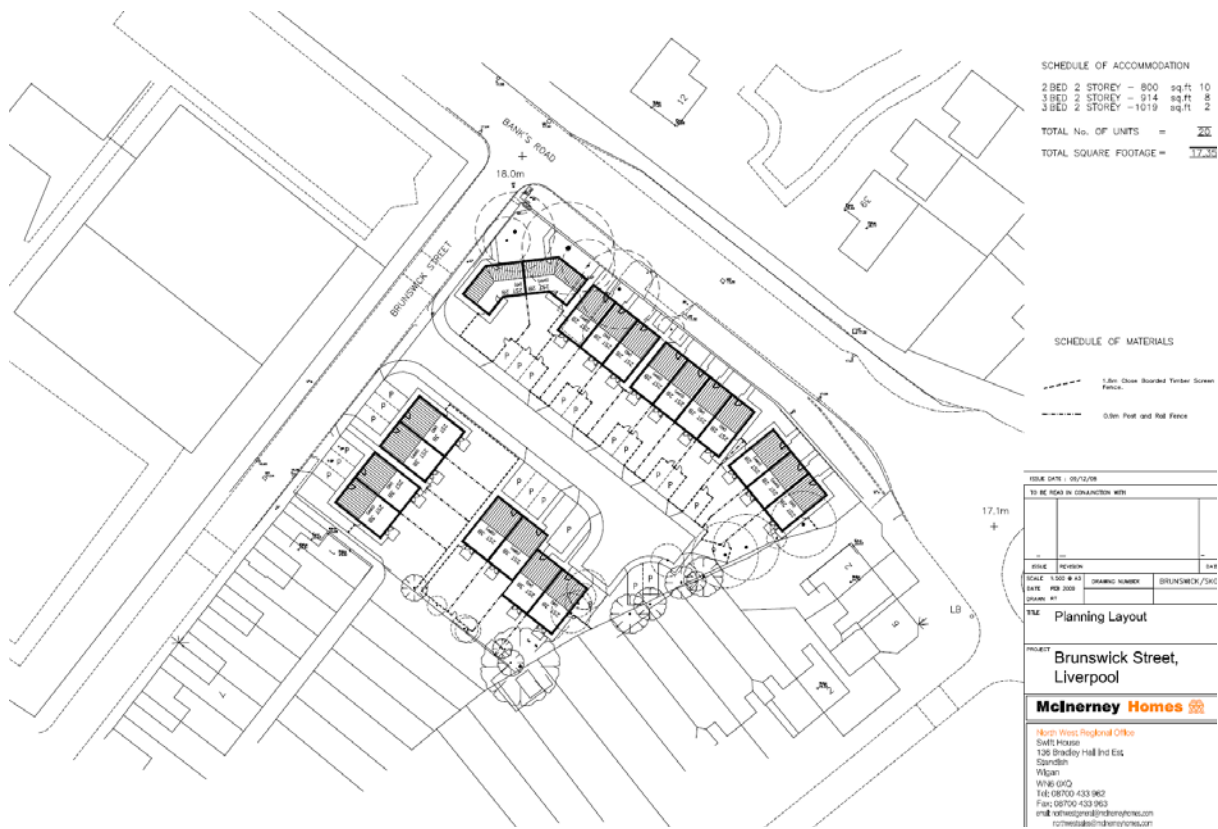
Further to your email below. I am pleased to inform you that SK17 on the face of it now seems acceptable in principle. The layout is now to the satisfaction of the LPA authority. With regards to the S106 obligations and validation I would draw your attention back to my original letter.

The Local Planning Authority would like to thank you for your co-operation thus far.

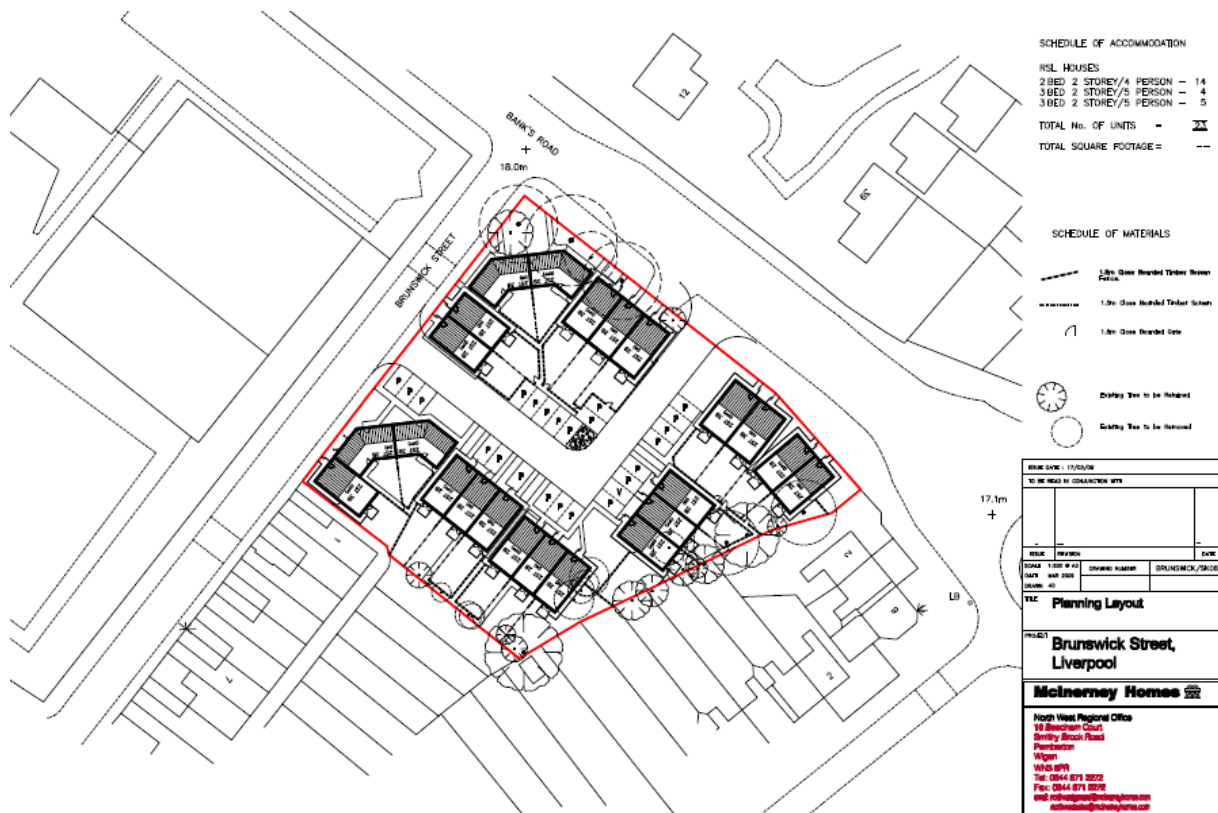
Kind Regards,
Gary McGowan

APPENDIX 2

4 layouts are shown; SK3, SK8, SK14 and the final SK17. These layouts show how the scheme has evolved over the past year prior to planning submission.



SK 3



SK 8



SK 14

