



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

PILSWORTH ROAD, HEYWOOD

Produced by Triangle Architects Ltd

On Behalf of Cornerstone Place and Rochdale Borough Council

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE SITE

The site is a vacant plot of land bounded by Pilsworth Road, Tower Street, and Dickens Street in Heywood, south west Rochdale. The land is owned by Rochdale Borough Council and has a total area of approximately 0.085Ha.

1.2 THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is for 8 dwellings and ancillary space, split across 2 levels:

- Ground Floor: 4 residential units & storage space for bins and bicycles
- First Floor: 4 residential units & ancillary space for worker accommodation

Associated boundary treatments and landscaping are also proposed to demarcate and integrate the development within its surroundings.

The dwellings, which will be use class C3, will provide supported accommodation to help those who have been homeless or are at risk of homelessness. The ancillary space facilitates support staff on site from the homelessness charity, Centrepont, who will manage the homes.

1.3 PROJECT TEAM

Cornerstone Place is a social enterprise with the mission to help end street homelessness in the UK by 2030. They do this by working in partnership with homelessness support charities to provide fully funded move-on accommodation and providing their unique model to help the charity grow unrestricted income and balance sheet growth over time.

Centrepont are a charity who have been dedicated to ending youth homelessness for over 50 years and focus on giving young people not just a bed for a night but a home where they can reclaim their future with the support of their dedicated frontline workers. They work in partnership with other charities all over the UK, where they learn from each other and join forces to call for change. They believe they can't end youth homelessness alone – it will take collaboration and systemic change. Centrepont started with one small shelter and now they support more than 2,000 young people every day through their floating support, rough sleeping and resettlement services but with more than 129,000 young people experiencing homelessness last year their services are needed more than ever.

Rochdale Borough Council have a dedicated homelessness and prevention team who manage various accommodation facilities within the Rochdale area and offer services for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. They believe that everyone has the right to good quality accommodation, and the kind of support that will allow them to reach their optimum level of independence. By offering a range of stable short-term accommodation with both on-site and floating support services, they aim to help their customers to develop the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to secure and maintain independent accommodation.

Triangle Architects is an award-winning architectural practice based in Manchester, with a focus primarily around the housing and healthcare sectors, as well as urban regeneration, community, and workplace projects. Triangle are committed to providing the highest quality of service: in the interests of their Clients, the end-users of buildings and the environment they help to shape.

Ward Williams Associates provide long standing experience as quantity surveyors and project management services across the UK to both public & private sector clients, across all aspects of project management.

1.4 DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the development is to deliver much needed accommodation to help address the homelessness crisis. Supplementing this goal are several objectives:

- Incorporate the principles of psychologically informed environments to provide dwellings which offer comfort, safety, and enjoyment to future residents, to help them in recovery and cultivating independence.
- Integrate the development within its context, to minimise potential friction within existing communities and provide a positive contribution to the neighbourhood.

- Minimise the carbon footprint and long-term operational costs of the development with net zero design principles.
- Balance the aspirations for quality with capital costs, recognising the need to spread funding and revenue streams across projects.

1.5 PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

This document covers each design issue in turn. Under each issue an appraisal is carried out, current planning policy and best practice are considered and the reasons for the current proposals are put forward. A number of different sources have been used to compile this report including *Design and Assess Statements: How to write, read and use them* by CABE and the *National Design Guide: Planning Practice guidance for beautiful, enduring, and successful places* by MCHLG.

The role of this design and access statement is:

- To guide and shape the future use and redevelopment of this site at Pilsworth Road in Heywood.
- To establish the parameters and principles for the new development.
- To act as a material consideration in the determinations of the reuse and redevelopment of the site.
- To create a sustainable and high-quality development that is appropriate to its context and that both preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the site.

SECTION A: THE PROCESS

2 ASSESSMENT

2.1 SITE CONTEXT

The site is situated approximately four miles west south west of central Rochdale on Pilsworth Road, located within close proximity to the A58 a major road running between Prescott, Merseyside and Yorkshire. The site is mostly surrounded by low rise residential buildings, and there are industrial units to the south. Woodland Community Primary School is located nearby on Regent Street, and the main high street is a short walk away with amenities such as local shops.

2.2 SURROUNDING BUILDING TYPOLOGIES

The surroundings are primarily two storey terraces of various periods, including traditional Victorian terraces and later 20th century houses, including semi detached bungalows.

2.3 PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE

Further to the NPPF, the development takes into consideration the following guidance:

- Rochdale Core Strategy (CS) (2016).
- Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2006).
- Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development SPD
- Oldham and Rochdale Urban Design Guide
- Rochdale Borough's Homelessness Strategy

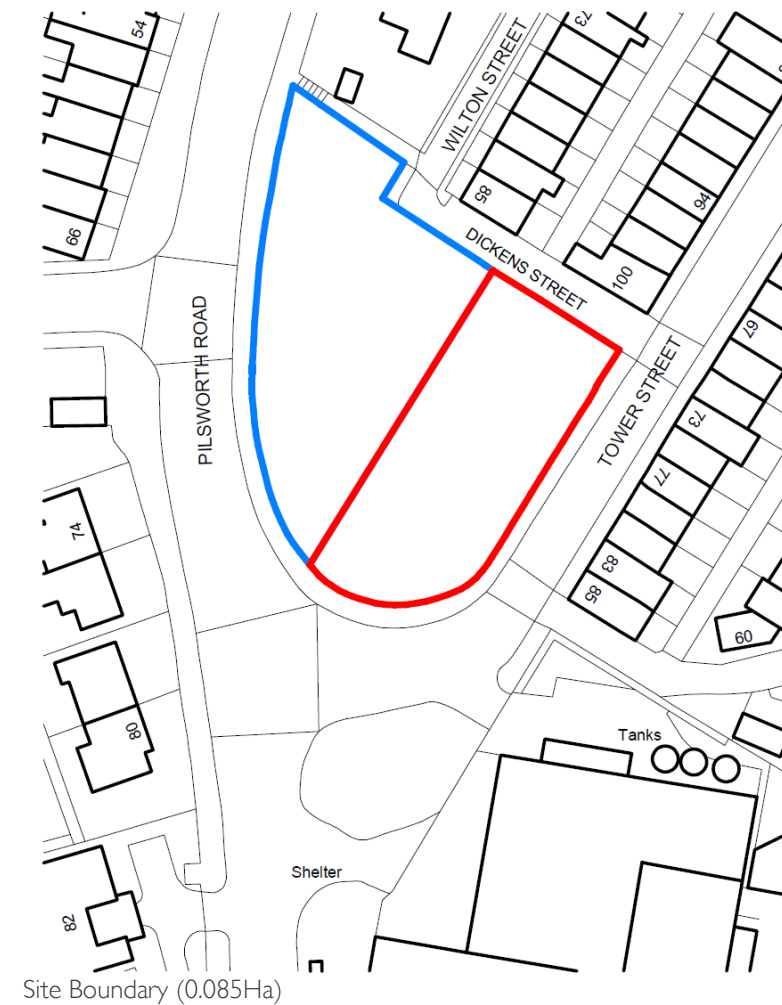


Figure 1: Site Location Plan



Figure 2: Site view from junction of Pilsworth Road and Tower Street

3 INVOLVEMENT

3.1 CORNERSTONE PLACE & CENTREPOINT

Cornerstone Place provided the momentum to drive the project forward. In collaboration with Rochdale Borough Council and Centrepoint homelessness charity, they identified the opportunities of the site and defined the design brief. The design underwent several iterations at the early concept stage, to refine the objectives of the scheme and how it could be accommodated on the site.

Centrepoint were regularly consulted throughout the design process, offering their extensive experience and knowledge of service users needs, to provide a facility that would accommodate these needs effectively, in addition to catering for the operational requirements of the charity.

3.2 ROCHDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

The scheme has been discussed in detail with the planning officer to conform to aspirations for the area and to local characteristics. The initial feasibility was submitted to Rochdale Borough Council for comment and as the design developed the team have worked closely with the Planning Officer and Urban Design Officer to assess the suitability of the proposal on the site.

General scheme principles, massing and appearance were discussed, along with the constraints of the site and consideration for planning policy and obligations. Advice and suggestions from the feedback given by Rochdale Borough Council have been incorporated into the final scheme proposals.

3.3 SPECIALISTS & CONSULTANTS

Investigation of the site has been carried out, including an arboricultural and ecological assessment, noise assessment, transport assessment, and site investigation and coal mining risk assessment. The findings and recommendations have been used to inform the design.

4 EVALUATION

4.1 SITE CONSTRAINTS

Please refer to the drawing opposite for a detailed analysis of the existing features and site constraints.

The site is currently unoccupied greenspace, elevated above street level with sloping banks and flag on edge retaining wall in places. There are several trees on the site at various stages of maturity, including a semi mature oak tree and several young specimens that appear to be recently planted.

There is a desire line crossing the site, running from a set of steps facing the south junction, to Dickens Street at the north border of the site. This route appears to be on the official records for rights of way, but the highways department advised the following:

"The "Right of Way" crossing the site as discussed in the options is neither definitive or shown on the Highways Register and may be a desire line only. If an application came in without retaining the right of way we would not ask for formal closure, if however those proposals did include closing the right of way the general public may wish to formalise it via the appropriate legal route. This needs to be carefully considered as any objectors may raise this as a reason for objection."

The site is bordered by Pilsworth Road on the west, which is identified as a key thoroughfare in the highway network. On the east side is Tower street, a quieter residential street, and to the north is Dickens Street, which is unadopted and connects Wilton Street to Tower Street.

4.2 SITE OPPORTUNITIES

Since the plot is currently underutilised land, the primary opportunity of developing the site is to make better use of the site's potential by providing much needed accommodation for service users.

Integrating the new accommodation within the established communities is challenging, as the density of residential development is already quite high. However, there is opportunity to create a positive living environment for future residents to help them gain stability and independence. With consideration for the existing street pattern and designing the development to reflect two-storey homes, rather a than a tall apartment block, shows how the scale, proportion, and appearance of the new buildings supports the integration of service users into society.

There is opportunity to maintain a high number of trees on the site and create a pleasant landscape surrounding the new development.

- Adopted Road
- Unadopted Road
- Pavement / pedestrian route
- Existing overlooking distances
- Existing Tree
- Lamp post
- Utilities Box
- ~ Slope

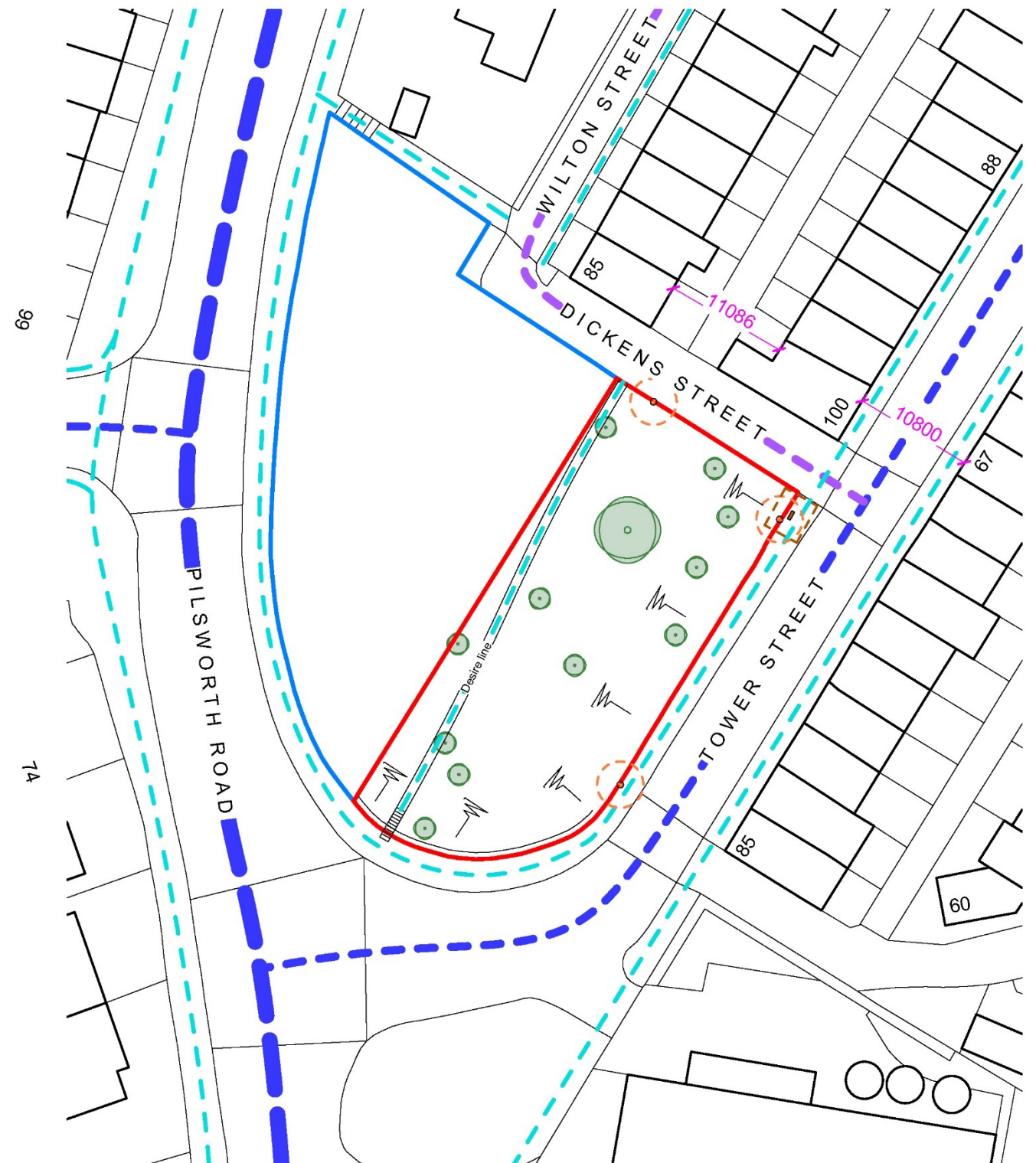


Figure 3: Constraints & Opportunities Plan

5 DESIGN

5.1 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The design underwent a series of iterations, in response to the constraints and opportunities of the site, and feedback from the various stakeholders involved.

Initial proposals explored the creation of an apartment block set-back from Tower Street into the site, with a central stair core providing access to banks of dwellings on either side, with associated ancillary spaces. This arrangement allowed more overlooking from the existing properties on Tower Street, but required diversion of the existing footpath / desire line through the site.

A fourth option was explored with a single bank of dwellings, which would enable the existing pedestrian route to be retained, along with more of the greenspace, and a longer frontage would be created to Tower Street, which is more consistent with the surrounding street pattern. This arrangement was proposed with a central stair core leading up to deck access above for the first floor flats. The deck would provide an interface between the apartments and the street and some covered external space for the residents.

On review of the proposals, the client advised that they wanted to create a more traditional form with the design, with the appearance of houses rather than flats, to integrate the scheme within its surroundings. This led to the substitution of the deck access for conventional front doors and a series of shared stair cores to access the first floor flats. As the design progressed further into massing, elevations and fenestration details, inspiration was taken from the existing streets, most of all the Victorian terraces, to create a proposal that would blend into its context and not stick out as alien from the traditional family homes.

One crucial component of this approach was to reduce the spacing between the new dwellings and the existing properties across the road on Tower Street, to create continuity with the existing street grain. It was not possible to match the existing building line of 94 to 100 Tower Street, because these existing houses are accessed directly from back of pavement, which does not allow for any defensible space or flexibility for level access requirements on a modern home. Accordingly, the block was recessed from back of pavement to create this necessary interface, but this recess was minimised to be more in keeping with the Victorian vernacular.



Figure 4: RIBA Stage 2 Design Option 1



Figure 5: RIBA Stage 2 Design Option 2



Figure 6: RIBA Stage 2 Design Option 3



Figure 7: RIBA Stage 2 Design Option 4

SECTION B: THE PROPOSAL

6 USE

6.1 THE PROPOSAL

The proposed use of the development is C3 Dwelling Houses. The dwellings will be managed by Centrepont, to provide supported accommodation for homeless people and those at risk of homelessness.

The Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan (UDP) does not identify the site for any specific allocation for the land, and it is not recognised as protected open space. The UDP identifies Pilsworth Road as an 'Area of Opportunity'.

The development supports the Housing First approach, a key tenet of the Rochdale Borough's Homelessness Strategy, by providing new capacity which can be operated sustainably in the interests of service users and the broader community.

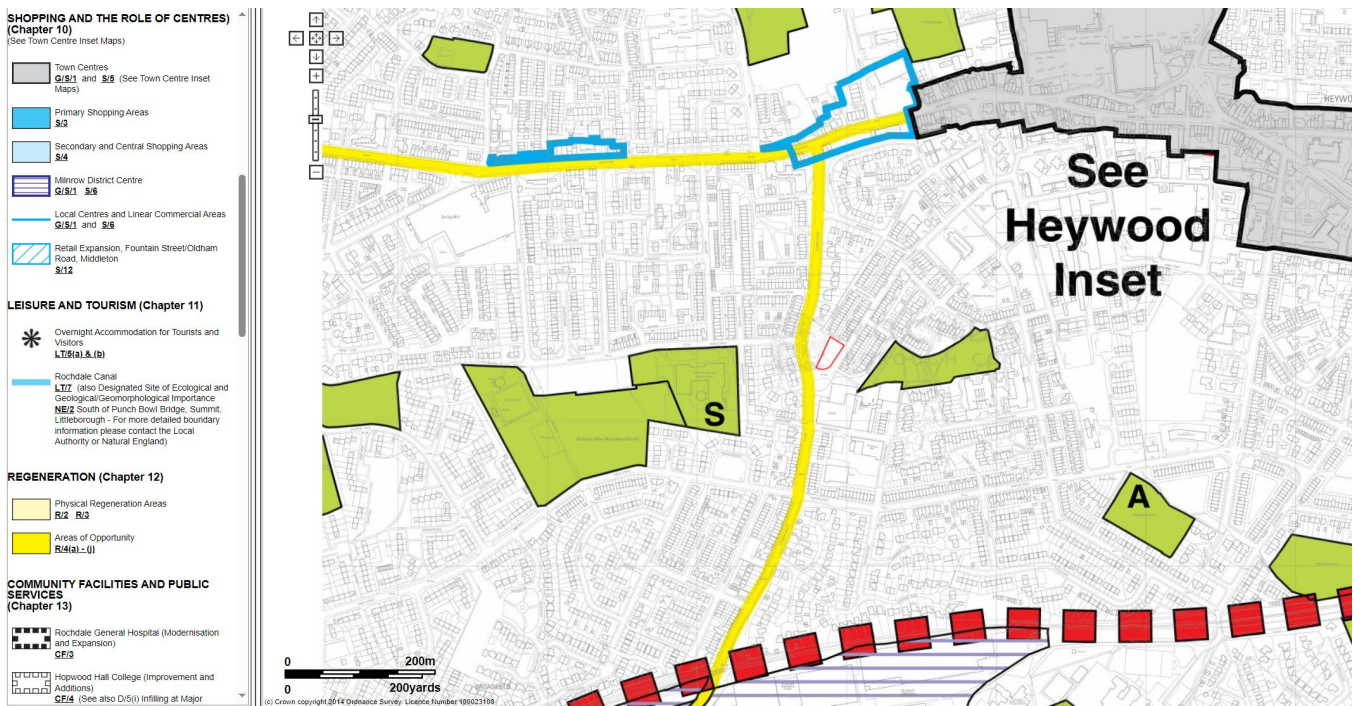


Figure 8: Excerpt from Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan online mapping, with site location outlined red

7 AMOUNT

7.1 SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION

The density of the development has been carefully considered, to strike a balance between providing new dwellings to support a critical area of housing need, whilst not exceeding an appropriate scale of development for the site. The resulting quantity of units emerged naturally from the design development process, taking into consideration the constraints for the site.

Each dwelling is designed to meet Nationally Described Space Standards and follow the principles of Category 1 'Visible Dwellings'.

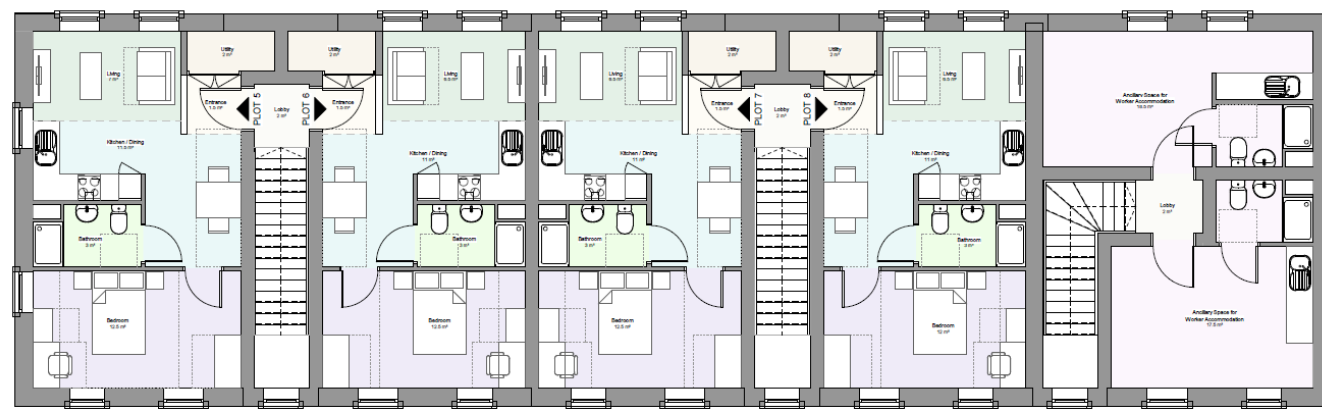
Plot 1	1 bed flat	40.1m ²
Plot 2	1 bed flat	40.1m ²
Plot 3	1 bed flat	40.1m ²
Plot 4	1 bed flat	40.1m ²
Plot 5	1 bed flat	38.8m ²
Plot 6	1 bed flat	38.8m ²
Plot 7	1 bed flat	38.8m ²
Plot 8	1 bed flat	38.8m ²
Amenity Space for Worker Accommodation		18.5m ²
Amenity Space for Worker Accommodation		17.5m ²
Bin and Cycle Store		25m ²
Store		21m ²

8 LAYOUT & LANDSCAPE

8.1 LAYOUT

The dwellings are orientated to Tower Street, in-filling an underutilised gap within the street fabric and providing continuity to the streetscape. The building footprint is set-back from the back of pavement to provide space for pedestrians and separation between the ground floor dwellings and public realm, creating 'defensible space' for the residents. The south gable of the block is carefully aligned to the existing gable across the road, providing continuity in the urban grain. The public right of way is maintained to the rear of the building and upgraded with a new footpath, which borders the green space creating an attractive outlook from the rear elevation.

The project team intended to create the appearance of houses rather than flats, so that the dwellings would integrate better in the surrounding neighborhood, which is composed of traditional family dwellings. Accordingly, the ground floor flats have secure front doors facing the street, which access a hallway space internally, providing a sense of entrance from the street and space to store coats and shoes. The first floor apartments are accessed from shared stair cores, ascending centrally to access a dwelling on either side with their own secure front doors. The entrances to the stair cores have the same appearance as those to the ground floor apartments, so they maintain the character of houses rather than a flat block. To the north end of the building, an ancillary space has been proposed which enables a member of staff to be on site, providing not only security, but also support for the service users and a friendly point of contact. Within an undercroft below this worker accommodation is located the cycle and bin storage, which will have secure fob access for residents.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

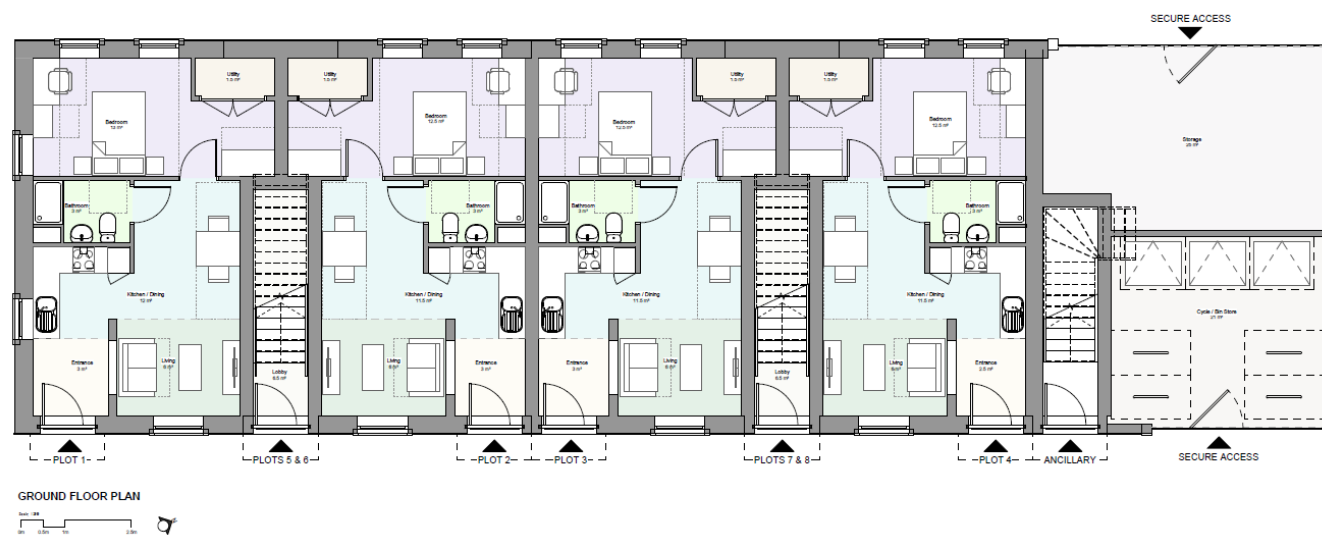


Figure 9: Proposed Floor Plans



Figure 10: Proposed Site Layout

8.2 LANDSCAPE

The tree survey by Mulberry Tree Management Consultants identified a total of 12 existing trees on the site, including one semi-mature oak tree, and a group of 11 younger trees that appear to be recently planted – a mix of Birch, Cherry & Alder. The ecologist advised that it should be possible to relocate the younger specimens on the site if required. Taking this into account, it was possible to design the site layout with only 1 tree removed, which will be replaced at a ratio of 2 to 1, bringing the new total to 13 trees on the site.

The tree planting will be combined with grass and hedgerow / shrub planting along borders, to enhance security where appropriate and increase biodiversity. To the rear of the block is proposed mid height metal railings and planting forming a continuous perimeter around the dwellings – this proposal will maintain openness and enable the residents to overlook the footpath and green space, but also prevent unsolicited access to bedroom windows.

9 SCALE & APPEARANCE

9.1 VISUAL STRATEGY

In keeping with the intention to create the appearance of houses rather than flats, and integrate the design into the surrounding vernacular, design cues were taken from the existing Victorian terraces on Tower Street and the surrounding area. These terraces have tall proportions, with the houses generally being narrow but deep in plan, with natural light being achieved by the generous height of windows. Although predominantly red brick, the materials vary on some plots where residents have applied render of various colours.

The craftsmanship of Victorian masons is celebrated in the door and window head details of the existing properties, with arches of various pitches, sometimes with contrast brick detailing to create various effects, which accentuate the entrance doors and provide interest and character to these otherwise simple row houses. These details are reinterpreted in a contemporary way on the proposed development, with contrast window surrounds, projecting arched canopies, and contrast brick detailing around entrance doors. A combination of 3 different brick and door/canopy colours are utilized on the elevations to distinguish each dwelling from its neighbors, adding individuality and helping to integrate the dwellings within the lively tapestry of the existing street.

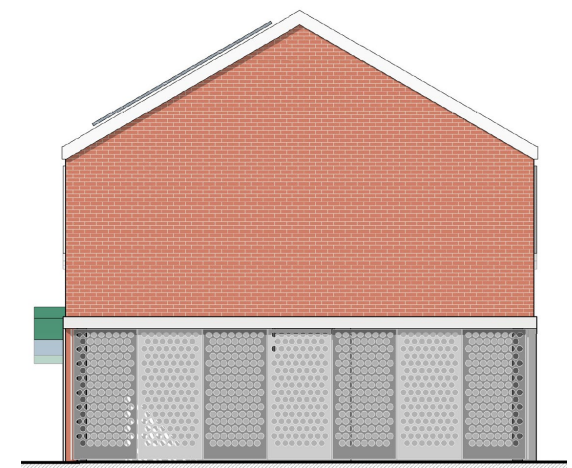
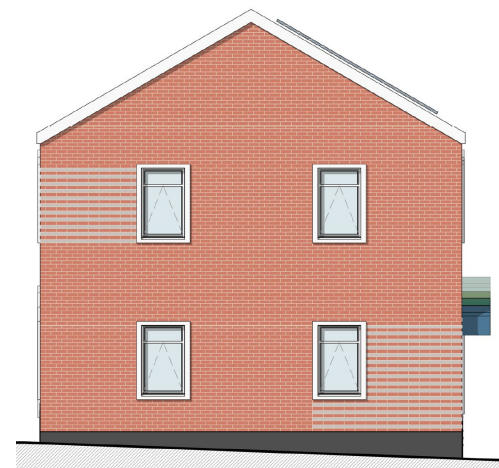
The south gable is populated with window surrounds and brick detailing to add interest and character to this key elevation, which faces the junction of Pilsworth Road and Tower Street. Perforated metal panels are utilized for the undercroft space on the north gable to provide a secure perimeter whilst allowing light and ventilation into the space.



Figures 11 & 12: Existing Victorian Terraces on Tower Street



Figures 13, 14 & 15: Excerpts from Proposed Elevations



Figures 16 & 17: Precedents at Port Loop, Birmingham (left), and Marmalade Lane, Cambridge (right)



10 ACCESS

10.1 VEHICULAR & TRANSPORT LINKS

The site is within a highly sustainable location and meets the aspirations of the National Planning Policy Framework. It is well served by public transport, with the nearest bus stop to the site located on Pilsworth Road (90m away). The site is served by 10 buses per hour during the day (each way) and bus services also provide coverage in the evening and at the weekend.

The centre of Heywood is within a 10-minute walk of the site, meaning that residents have access to food retail, a library, dental care and a church within a short walk. Within a 15-minute walk of the site access can be gained to Hopwood Park, Queens Park and Morrisons. Areas such as Chadderton, Butler Green, Hollins, Hathershaw and Moorhey are within a 25-minute walk of the site.

The design proposes 1 cycle store per dwelling along with electric provision for E-scooters to be charged as requested by the client. For more information please refer to the Transport Statement submitted along with this document.

10.2 ACCESSIBILITY

Each dwelling is designed to meet Nationally Described Space Standards and follow the principles of Category 1 'Visitability Dwellings'. Ground floor dwellings all have their own front doors which will be designed with an accessible threshold. Due to the existing pavement levels along Tower Street, it was necessary to offset the floor levels of the dwellings towards the south end to enable level access. It may be necessary for some combined level access routes to be created from back of pavement to front doors, which will be resolved in detail at the technical design stage.

10.3 REFUSE & RECYCLING STRATEGY

Refuse storage is provided within the undercroft space at the north end of the block, within a combined bin and cycle storage facility which will be secured for access by residents and staff only. The existing properties on Tower Street are already served by municipal waste collection services, which can provide collection for the new dwellings. There is a bin collection area set back from the pavement, allowing bins to be wheeled out from the store on collection days. Refuse vehicles and other delivery vehicles will wait on kerbside on collection day in line with the arrangements for other residents and within the existing TRO controls.

Bins will be provided in accordance with the Rochdale Waste Management Strategy, for recycling and general waste.