

Building for a Healthy Life Assessment

Proposed Residential Development of 24no Houses and
Apartments at Waterfold Lane, Heap Bridge, Heywood.



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1. Development Summary

Status:	Full Planning Application	
Development Site Area:	1.85 acres	0.75 hectares
Development Type:	Residential	
Number of Units:	6no 1 Bedroom 2P Apartments and 18no 3 Bedroom 5P Houses : 24no units total	
Proposed Density	13 units per acres	32 units per hectare
Open Market Sale:	Nil	
Affordable Housing Provision:	100% Affordable	
Affordable Tenure	24no units Social rent,	

2. Associated Documents

This Building for a Healthy Life Assessment has been prepared by Equilibrium Architects in accordance with the following drawings:

R0832-19 Proposed site Layout
R0832-20 Plots 1-6
R0832-21 Plots 7-18
R0832-22 Plots 7-18 sections
R0832-23 Plots 19-24
R0832-24 Street scenes
R0832-25 External works
R0832-26 Landscaping
R0832-27 Site Layout and new access road
R0832-28 Proposed site sections

3. Scoring Explanation

Each of the criteria is evaluated in accordance with the Building for a Healthy Life template as follows:

- Red** Aspects of the proposals which need to be reconsidered or changed
- Amber** Characteristics of the scheme make full compliance of the Building for a Healthy Life principles impossible or that further consideration is needed to improve the design
- Green** Principles have been fully met

A justification or response as to how the development meets the criteria of the assessment is provided. In accordance with these requirements, the development should seek to achieve as many green lights as possible providing where appropriate, the rational to explain why particular circumstances have unavoidably influenced an amber score.

The scoring follows the principles of the previous Building for Life 12 format with additional sections added to the new Building for Life for Healthy Life document.



4.0 The Assessment

Category:	Response:	Score:
1. Natural Connections Create places that are well integrated into the site and their wider natural and built surroundings. Avoid creating isolated and disconnected places that are not easy places to move through and around.		Amber
1A. Look beyond the red line that marks the extent of your site. Ordnance Survey maps along with satellite mapping software such as Google Earth are useful tools to help you understand the wider context and how you can best stitch a new development into a place.	The topography of the site has influenced its connectivity, to the west is the M66 motorway which restricts access, to the north-east is the River Roch with no public access across and south-east is Waterfold Lane with open field beyond. Due to the secure and private boundary constraints to the site there is no feasible way of connecting the proposed development to the surrounding area except via Waterfold Lane however there is the benefit of a motorway underpass to the south of the site for pedestrian access only.	
1B. Identify the places, facilities and services you need to connect to.	There is a single vehicular access proposed from Waterfold Lane along a partially adoptable/partially private highway forming access farm buildings only which prevents connectivity to the wider environment. However pedestrian access has been carefully considered with access to local facilities such as schools and shops located south-east of the site towards Heap Bridge centre with the inclusion of an upgraded access road to the site.	
1C. Draw points of connection into and through your site - creating a strong and direct street, path and open space network.	The main point of connection is from Waterfold Lane which has been incorporated to allow vehicle, pedestrian and cycle links into the site. Further connection to the wider environment are constrained due to the topography of the surrounding restrictive uses as previously highlighted with the exception of the motorway underpass which connects to Waterfold Business Park and The Village Hotel which in turn connects to Rochdale Road.	

1D. Create well-connected street and path networks, providing opportunities for these to be extended beyond the site boundary in the future.	The houses and apartments have been proposed to be set back from Waterfold Lane whilst still connecting the development visually with the existing infrastructure along the highway and further integrate the scheme within the surrounding area.	
1E. Research and respond to how water flows and nature moves across your site and the wider surroundings	The site sits on the edge of Heap Bridge, separated from Bury with the M66 motorway and the River Roch creates a partial island site, with the green environment being primarily around the edges of the site and alongside the river. The proposed development compliments this feature through the landscaping scheme, drawing this green element into the urban form.	
2. Walking Cycling and Public Transport Short trips of up to three miles 5 can be easily made on foot or bicycle if the right infrastructure is in place, helping to improve public health and air quality whilst also reducing local congestion and carbon emissions.		Amber
2A. If there is an existing protected cycle network, connect to it. Alternatively, begin a new one by building or funding routes to key destinations.	Rochdale and Bury are investing in a wider plan for cycling within the respective Boroughs. This incorporates all forms of public transport and cycle routes. Within the vicinity of the development is a series of cycle path allowing safe access to Bury and Heywood/Rochdale	
2B. Ensure access for all and help make walking feel like an instinctive choice for everyone undertaking short journeys (such as the school run or older generations accessing local facilities and services).	The site is located close to local amenities making short journeys feasible, the proposed development has carefully considered providing Part M compliant pedestrian access within the site. Cycle parking has been incorporated into the scheme with every resident having potential for cycle storage with secure external storage included for the apartments indicated within the development, which is well overlooked and secure. The houses being provided with a cycle hoop fixed to the rear elevation of each property.	
2C. Streets and paths that connect people to places and public transport services in the most direct way, making car-free travel more attractive, safe and convenient.	Waterfold Lane provides the only connectivity to wider facilities and public transport. The site has access to a good public transport connectivity into Heap Bridge, Heywood, Rochdale and Bury with train stations located along these public transport routes in Rochdale plus Tram stations in Rochdale and Bury	

2D. Make sure that all streets and routes pass in front of people's homes rather than to the back of them – creating a well overlooked public realm.	The building line of the proposed apartment block is set back from the main highway however, the scheme has still been designed to provide an active frontage to Waterfold Lane and the internal highway network. Increasing the overlooking to the existing road network and new adoptable highways within the site which will be well lit.	
2E. Exploit existing (or planned) public transport hubs, such as train stations and bus interchanges, to build at higher densities and channel a higher percentage of journeys to public transport.	Waterfold Lane provides good access to public transport and to the wider network with buses to local train stations within increasing the accessibility to North Manchester as a whole. Bus stops are located on Bury New Road providing access to the east bound route to Rochdale and Manchester with the west bound providing access to Bury and Bolton	
3. Facilities and Services Places that offer social, leisure and recreational opportunities a short walk or cycle from their homes.		Amber
3A. Developments that provide community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, health facilities, co-working spaces, parks, play spaces, cafés and other meeting places that respond to local community needs.	Due to the proposed development size, there is little opportunity to provide on site community facilities. However, the scheme does sit in a highly sustainable location with good public access to local shops, schools, and eateries. The development layout provides a new active frontage to Waterfold Lane increasing safety to the wider community plus new street lighting will provide a safer environment for residents and those passing through.	
3B. Locate any new facilities in the best location for those walking, cycling and using public transport. Consider whether improving existing facilities will add more value to the local community than adding new ones.	There is an extensive network of local facilities in and around Heap Bridge with the development site having good pedestrian access to all facilities. In the wider area there is good public transport to local supermarkets and schools and Rochdale station provides access to the wider area. By intensifying development within this sustainable location it increases footfall to local services while allowing users access to the wider area.	
3C. Create places where people can meet each other such as public spaces, leisure facilities, community buildings,	There is a large area of private amenity space within the development situated around the perimeter of the site in clusters and as a riverside	

cafes and restaurants to provide opportunities for social interaction – helping to improve public health by encouraging physical activity and helping to tackle those affected by loneliness and isolation.	walkway which will encourage interaction within the proposed community that this development will bring.	
4. Homes For Everyone Providing a range of homes that meet local community needs.		Green
4A. A mix of housing types and tenures that suit the needs of the local community. This may include first time buyer homes, family homes, homes for those downsizing and supported living.	The proposed tenure for the development is 100% affordable housing, of 1 bedroom apartments and 3 bedroom houses for social rent. These properties will be suitable for individuals, couples and families, they will provide much needed homes for a variety of other residents within the Heap Bridge area. All at affordable rates in conjunction with a Housing Association end user.	
4B. Offering people access to at least some private outdoor space. This is particularly important for people's mental health and wellbeing especially when social distancing and travel restrictions are in place	Outdoor space is vital to people's mental health and with more and more people working from home these spaces can provide much needed breaks in day-to-day life. The proposed apartment development is to have a private amenity space at the rear of the scheme, houses will benefit from ample private amenity space and the open space around the site will be sensitively landscaped. This space will encourage interactions between existing and new residents creating a cohesive community.	
5. Making the Most of What's There Understand and respond.		Green
5A. Discuss, understand and agree opportunities and constraints, building a shared vision that makes use of the	The Design and Access statement submitted as part of this Planning application details out the main design drivers for the site. The site is located along Waterfold Lane, as such this has heavily influenced the design. The design team have been conscious of the topography,	

topography and other existing assets on and beyond the site.	constraints and opportunities moving the built environment away from the M66 motorway as much as possible and introducing green infrastructure around the site	
5B. Consider opportunities for natural lighting, cooling and ventilation. Take care not to compromise important urban design principles such as perimeter block structure.	Urban design principles have been followed allowing maximum overlooking onto the urban form without compromising on the natural environment. The apartment block is primarily south and west as such there will be a lot of natural light during mornings and afternoons with the amenity space benefitting from evening sun however, this does pose a ventilation issue and subject to an energy statement, MVHR or similar approved may have to be used.	
5C. Identify opportunities to integrate and reuse existing features of value, these might be natural or man made, on or beyond the site	The existing natural leafy landscape surrounding the site has been replicated where practical with the new layout. The topography of the site allows for level/usable gardens and amenity space has also been used to the design team's advantage. The design of the new access road allows existing residents to access all properties and allows for adequate turning facilities for Refuse vehicles.	
5D. Be careful that hedges are not simply retained and prevent a sensible and practical new development layout. It may be more effective to create and plant new hedgerows and tree belts into development proposals than work around existing hedges. A well thought out approach may even increase habitat and biodiversity.	The natural landscape has been retained where possible with a few minor trees to be removed to create car parking for the site. While this involves the removing of habitat it creates a more cohesive design, and this loss will be replanted within the site, with other areas of quality habitat enhanced to compensate.	
5E. Be sensitive to existing development but avoid creating buffer spaces between existing and new back gardens.	The design team have carefully considered how this three-storey form of the housing blocks will impact upon the wider urban development. The scheme has been designed along urban design principles but dictated by the Acousticians findings and recommendations. Strong urban frontage been positioned in such a way to reduce any negative impacts to the neighbouring properties on Waterfold Lane and the wider residential and commercial units beyond.	

5F. Understand how water flows across and pools on the site. Explore how water can be used to enhance biodiversity, create character and improve people's sense of wellbeing.	Underneath the proposed highway/car parking court a attenuation tanks are proposed and will be placed built to adoptable standards and connecting to the wider adopted sewer system. An attenuation pond is proposed within the area of Public amenity adjacent to the river to further reduce the impact upon the existing storm water system.	
6. A Memorable Character Create places that are memorable.		Green
6A. Create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character. Review the wider area for sources of inspiration. If distinctive local characteristics exist, delve deeper than architectural style and details. Where the local context is poor or generic, do not use this as a justification for more of the same. Inspiration may be found in local history and culture.	The apartment block and houses which front onto Waterfold Lane have been designed to be visually cohesive with the wider urban form, in a complementary buff and red brick and slate grey coloured concrete interlocking roof tile. The multiple pitched roofs has been designed to emulate the neighbouring properties to further embed the proposed development within the wider community.	
6B. Understand where positive local character comes from: streets, blocks and plots (urban grain), green and blue infrastructure, land uses, building form, massing and materials often underpin the essence of the distinctive character of settlements rather than architectural style and details.	Heap Bridge and Heywood have a mix of typologies including terraced, semi-detached, detached and converted flat buildings with most properties in the area situated back from the highway. As such this architectural element has been implemented into the proposed design with the proximity of dwellings to the highway to provide an active frontage to the development. Where car parking is located within front gardens (plots 7-18) landscaping plays an important role in reducing the impact therefore new trees and shrubs will lessen the impact on the frontage.	
6C. Using a local materials palette (where appropriate) can be a particularly effective way to connect a development to a place. This is often more achievable	The area is a predominately red brick, the proposed development proposes a contrasting buff and red brick fenestration with a complimentary buff brick banding and cladded ground floor band used	

and credible than mimicking traditional architectural detailing which can be dependent on lost crafts.	to further break up the larger elevation of the houses and apartment block and key nodes within the proposed development.	
6D. Brownfield sites can offer sources of inspiration for new development. Greenfield and edge of settlement locations often require more creativity and inspiration to avoid creating places that lack a sense of local or otherwise distinctive character.	While this site is Brownfield in nature following the demolition of the former mill and ancillary buildings due to the introduction of M66 motorway, the original and surrounding land has since been left vacant and untended. However, the buildings in the surrounding area including the neighbouring houses have contributed to the elevation treatment of the development knitting the proposed development within its surroundings. The provision of the new, 'controlled' access along Waterfold Lane will assist new residents and maintain neighbourly cohesion.	
6E. Character can also be created through the social life of public spaces. Create the physical conditions for activity to happen and bring places to life.	While this is a relatively small development site, careful consideration has been taken to the amenity spaces around the site to be used by the residents to socialise. This space through a detailed hard and soft landscaping strategy will blend the urban form into the more natural surrounding landscape. The riverside walkway will encourage residents to appreciate the outdoor lifestyle, which should not only be provided to high vale private developments, and the value of a riverside frontage	
7. Well Defined Streets and Spaces Create a network of streets and spaces that are well enclosed by buildings and/or structural landscaping, taking care to ensure that front doors and the principal facades of buildings face streets and public spaces.		Green
7A. A strong framework of connected and well overlooked streets and spaces. Look beyond the plan and illustrative street scenes; what will you actually see and experience walking along the street?	The proposed new access and adoptable highway does form into a cul-de-sac and car parking court as it is restricted by the surrounding topography and highway structure, however, the scheme does overlook the proposed highway and motorway, while maintaining high visibility over the public and private realm. As you enter the site you will be presented with the corner apartment block which provided a sense of arrival and orientation within the development site.	

7B. Perimeter blocks with clearly defined public fronts and private backs.	The site forms part of the wide perimeter block created by the Motorway and River Roch to the north. This establishes a clear front entrance with the ancillary spaces including car parking located at the front of the houses and apartment block which although in a dominant location, has been designed as part of the overall Landscaping scheme.	
7C. Active frontages. Front doors, balconies, terraces, front gardens and bay windows are a good way to enliven and add interest to the street and create a more human scale to larger buildings such as apartments and supported living accommodation.	Active frontages have been a key design consideration, with doors and windows opening out onto the existing highway infrastructure and all apartments overlooking the proposed highway, amenity space or existing highway infrastructure.	
7D. Carefully considered street corners.	Windows have been incorporated into any elevations that turn a corner, making sure that all frontages are active and overlooked whether this be main frontages or gable elevations, The corner turning flats block provides this consideration creating a fluency from building to boundary.	
8. Easy to Find Your Way Around Use legible features to help people find their way around a place.		Green
8A. Streets that connect with one another. Streets that are as straight and as direct as possible	Even though the proposed development is relatively small, careful consideration has been taken to the connection to the wider community and how the site will be accessed and navigated. Clear lines of sight are used to orientate users around the development with fronts of buildings being directly off the adoptable highway.	
8B. Use street types, buildings, spaces, non-residential uses, landscape, water and other features to help people create a 'mental map' of a place.	As this is a single road development the massing of the building has been used to create anchor point in key vistas, along Waterfold Lane, providing users ever opportunity to easily navigate the site.	

8C. Streets with clearly different characters are more effective than 'character areas' in helping people grasp whether they are on a principal or secondary street.	The scheme has been designed to be sympathetic to the local vernacular as such takes much of its characteristics from the Heap Bridge, Heywood and Bury areas.	
9. Healthy Streets Streets are different to roads. Streets are places where the need to accommodate the movement of motor vehicles is balanced alongside the need for people to move along and cross streets with ease. Activity in the street is an essential part of a successful public realm.		Amber
9A. Low-speed streets and neighbourhoods with pedestrian and cycle priority.	The scheme has been designed with pedestrians and cyclist in mind with a level, single adoptable highway that will generate low speeds, to be used by both vehicle and cyclist with pedestrians gaining access to the building directly from Waterfold Lane.	
9B. Boulevards and streets with active edges rather than distributor roads and bypasses with no (or limited) frontage access.	The access road has been designed to have the relevant parking directly off it with pedestrian links and planting to break up the vehicle and pedestrian routes as previously highlighted. All frontages are direct off the highway whether proposed or existing.	
9C. Streets that are easy to cross; providing priority for pedestrians and cyclists across junctions and accesses. Avoid streets that are just designed as routes for motor vehicles to pass through and for cars to park within.	Whilst the proposed road is a cul-de-sac/parking court due to the small nature of the scheme, consideration has been taken to pedestrians. It is envisaged that pedestrians will use the amenity space and riverside walkway to access Waterfold Lane, access the cycle store and refuse for the flats will be contained within the rear garden area for security and to 'hide' the paraphernalia associated with this.	
9D. Well overlooked streets with front doors facing streets and public spaces.	The apartment block has windows across all four elevations allowing the scheme to turn the corner with frontages to the new access road and Waterfold Lane. All houses have been designed to either front onto the new highway or overlook the amenity space around the site to enhance security to this area.	

9E. Provide conditions for cycling appropriate to the speed and volume of motor traffic.	Cycle links are via the highway infrastructure with secure storage located within the private amenity space of the apartments. Houses have been designed to accommodate secure cycle storage within the rear garden areas of the properties with the inclusion of a secure loop to the rear elevation.	
9F. Inclusive design: think about how people with visual, mobility or other limitations will be able to use the street confidently and safely.	The main pedestrian link from Waterfold Lane has been designed to be Part M compliant with the relevant ramp distances/slope and tactile finished required to meet the needs of all users.	
10. Cycle and Car Parking Well-designed developments will make it more attractive for people to choose to walk or cycle for short trips helping to improve levels of physical activity, air quality, local congestion, and the quality of the street scene. Well-designed streets will also provide sufficient and well-integrated car parking.		Green
10A. Provide secure cycle storage close to people's front doors so that cycles are as convenient to choose as a car for short trips.	For the apartment scheme, individual cycle storage is difficult to design as such a convenient cycle store has been integrated within the landscape to make it easy for residents to choose to cycle rather than use vehicles. Houses have adequate storage capacity within secure rear garden areas for the same.	
10B. Integration of car parking into the street environment. Anticipate realistic levels of car parking demand, guarding against displaced and anti-social parking; thinking about the availability and frequency of public transport.	Car parking has been directly integrated within the street environment, and anticipated levels have dictated the number of parking bays (one per apartment and two per house) as such this has restricted the amount of planting to obscure the urban form into the more natural surrounding landscape. Street trees are proposed to create an 'avenue' as one travels through the new development	
10C. Creative solutions for attractive, convenient and safe cycle parking or higher density developments (such as apartment buildings).	An attractive store will be used and has been detailed to make a feature of the cycle store for the apartment block rather than an eye sore within the public realm.	

10D. Generous landscaping to settle frontage car parking into the street.	The design team have incorporate more landscaping within the street scene to reduce the impact of car parking. Landscaping has been used to soften the urban landscape from Waterfold Lane and further trees and shrubs have been used to blend the scheme into the natural landscape to the rear of the site	
11. Green and Blue and Infrastructure Creative surface water management such as rills, brooks and ponds enrich the public realm and help improve a sense of wellbeing and offer an interaction with nature. As the richest habitat for a range of flora and fauna, they are also a key play in achieving the net gain in biodiversity sought by the 2020 Environment Bill.		Amber
11A. Create a network of different types of spaces.	There is opportunity within the development to create several key zones of spaces. The first is the street scene from Waterfold Lane, having bee/insect friendly plants and street trees to compliment the urban forms. Secondly the amenity space and riverside walkway around the site will be designed to nestle back into the surrounding 'woodland' allowing residents to fully immerse themselves into the landscape.	
11B. Weave opportunities for habitat creation throughout the development. Plan these as movement corridors to support biodiversity.	These two key areas will all be tied back to the surrounding trees and natural landscaped area allowing wildlife to connect through and around the site safely supporting the existing habitats.	
11C. Have a sustainable drainage 'treatment train' thinking about the 'four pillars'. Capture water as close as possible to where it falls. Be creative with rain gardens, ponds and swales and avoid steeply-sided or fenced holes in the ground.	An attenuation pond is proposed within the public open space as an opportunity for SUDs on this small development plus permeable surface have been utilised to allow surface water to drain more efficiently preventing pooling water on the hardstanding with the benefit of storm water attenuation under the car parking and road to supplement the pond and permeable areas.	
11D. Well-overlooked public open spaces with strong levels of natural surveillance.	All open spaces will be overlooked by the proposed dwellings either by the front or side with habitable windows overlooking all public spaces.	

11E. Robust management and long-term stewardship.	This scheme is to be 100% affordable and such will be managed by the Registered provider. The Housing Association and their Management teams will create a robust management plan to ensure the longevity of the landscaping strategy plus the buildings and boundary treatments.	
12. Back of Pavement Front of Home Garden cities, towns and suburbs used hedges to define public and private spaces, helping to create characterful and biodiverse places. The space between the back of the pavement and the face of buildings has a significant impact on the quality of a place. Clear demarcations between public and private spaces can encourage people to personalise the front of their homes whilst also offering opportunities to integrate level changes, utility boxes and waste storage.		Amber
12A. Clearly define private spaces through strong boundary treatments.	Fencing/walls as a hard boundary and planting will be used to secure private spaces however new trees and shrubs will soften the landscape to allow the urban to blend into the natural surroundings.	
12B. Manage changes in level in a way that does not compromise the qualities of the street.	The site is generally flat and has been design so that Part M compliance access is available to all areas of the development including dwellings and the public amenity areas.	
12C. Design the space between the back of the pavement and building façades carefully to integrate services, waste storage and utilities cabinets (meter boxes) so their impact is reduced.	Storage of refuse has been placed to be easily accessible for residents and refuse workers these are in secure stores for the apartments located within the private rear garden area with easy access to the new access road. Houses have hardstanding areas within the rear garden areas for refuse and recycling bins. A shared access is provided between gardens to allow refuse bins to be 'walked' to their respective collection areas. Utility cabinets will be either placed on the external walls of the buildings or built within the footprint of the design.	
12D. Avoid pieces of 'leftover' land that serve no useful public or private function. Homes with shallow street backs need careful thought as it is not uncommon to see these spaces poorly	Any small, landscaped areas will be landscaped and manged by the Housing Association preventing small areas of turf.	

resolved with small pieces of grass turf or gravel.		
12E. Outdoor amenity space for apartment buildings, such as a balcony for relaxing or the drying of clothes.	There is currently no provision for balconies within the site due to the acoustic issues associated with the site. All residents will have to exit through the main doors to make use of the both private and public amenity space- to both flats and houses	

6.0 Conclusion

To conclude, the Planning application associated with this Building for a Healthy Life Assessment is for a residential development comprising of 24no fully affordable dwellings. With a mix of 6no. 1-bedroom apartments and 18no. 3 bedroom houses all offering a high-quality development within Heap bridge.

The proposed development demonstrates a score of 6no green, 6no amber with 0no red scores. The amber scores demonstrate areas in which the constraints of the site/development have impacted upon the preferred criteria for new developments.

Nevertheless, the aim of the proposed development is to redevelop a vacant brownfield site to create good quality Affordable homes for social rent as required by and discussed with Rochdale MBC Housing department.