



Land at Birchinley Manor

Design and Access Statement **Draft Issue**

June 2026

Introduction

Purpose of the Report

My client is seeking to obtain planning permission for a dwelling of outstanding design on this site in accordance with Paragraph 139 of the NPPF.

The site is located close to the Birchinley Manor residential hamlet where they have lived for several years.

The land was purchased from the original developer with the purpose of implementing a re-wilding scheme they could manage.

Clients Requirements

They are local residents looking to build a sustainable home and to manage the 16 acres of land to the east of Birchinley Manor as a wildlife area.

It is important to them that the dwelling is contemporary and yet has sympathies with both the existing built vernacular and the wider landscape.

It should be a comfortable family home which makes the most of the extended views of the surrounding Pennine landscape, which is defined by open scrub/agricultural land interspersed with areas of woodland.

Planning

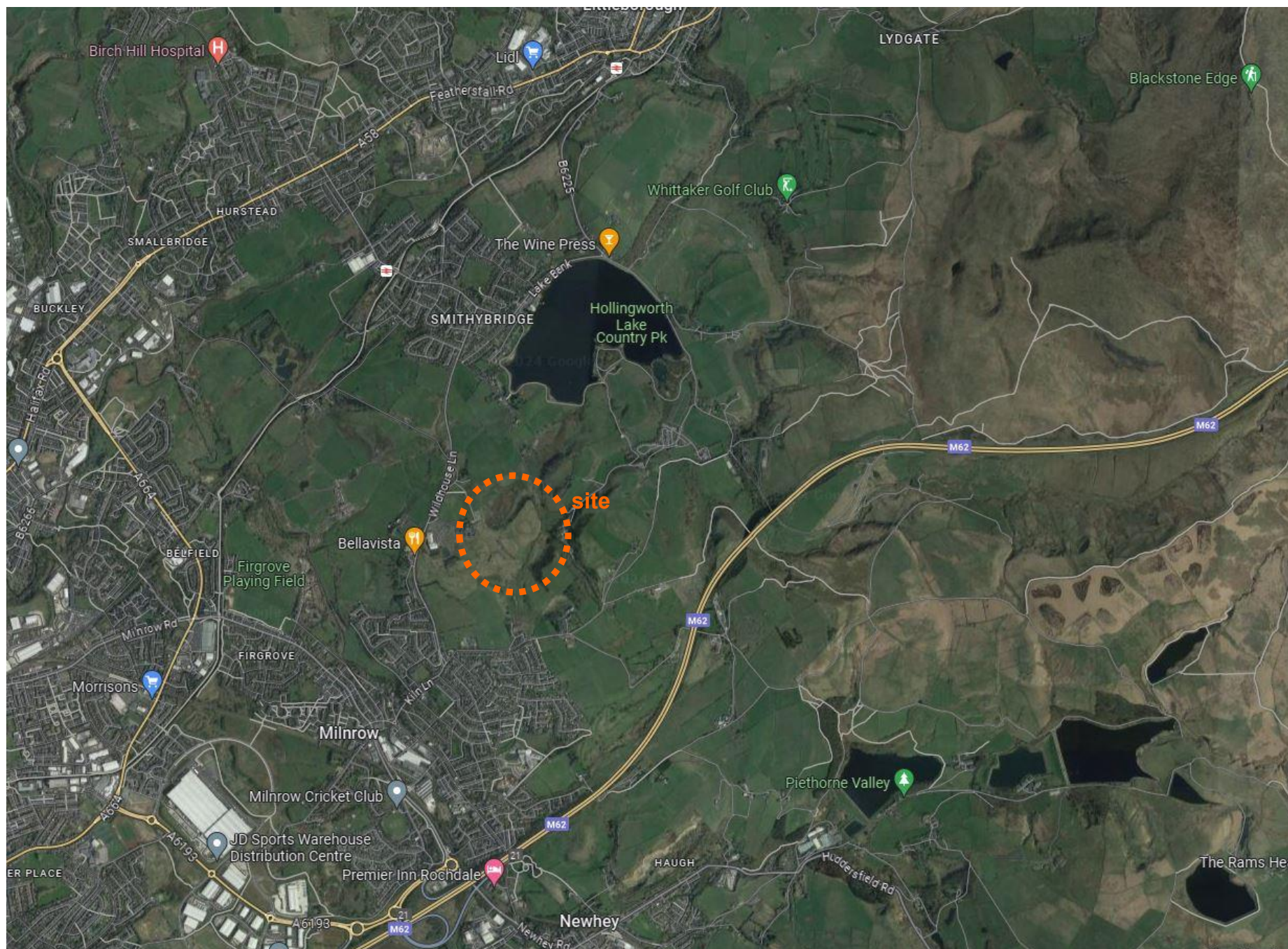
Early advice was to make a pre-app submission and look for an ‘engagement process’ with the planning department.



01

The Site





1.01 Site Location

Located in an upland area to the south of Hollingworth Lake, and to the west of the M62 motorway.

It is a 20-minute walk to Milnrow town centre with all of its shops, transport network connections, schools and local amenities.

The small hamlet group of buildings based around Birchinley Manor are joined by a larger residential development of the former Soccer Village site to the west (currently under construction).

With a motorway connection and tram stop in Milnrow along with the train station close by at Smithy Bridge, the site is easily accessible by various forms of transport.

Public footpaths also provide access to the countryside and the wider footpath/bridleway network.



1.02 Site Location

The dotted line indicates the approximate extents of the 12 acre site to the east of Birchlinley Manor, with the former Soccer Village residential to the south-west (under construction).





1.03 Site Location

The site is bounded by mature trees to the northern boundary close to Birchinley Manor and along the extreme western boundary.

The smaller area to the west of the site connects with existing residential/agricultural groupings with a more open aspect to the east looking across to Annis Hill Farm.

A public footpath crosses the site along the southern boundary (red dotted line).





1.04 Site Context

An elevated view opposite indicates the area of the site closest to the Birchinley Manor complex with the public footpath in the foreground.

The red dotted line indicates the approximate position for the proposed dwelling up against the mature trees to the left.

Note the traditional elongated built forms and L-shaped plan layouts.



Birchinley Manor



1.05 Site Context

From the aerial view opposite it can be clearly seen that the house is sited to be screened in the foreground by mature trees and in the background by the Birchinley Manor development to lessen any impact on the wider landscape,

In this way it can be observed as an extension to an existing development.

Essentially, it is a modern-day farmhouse for the management of the 16-acre sustainable re-wilding project.





1.06 Site Context

The existing Birchinley Manor grouping is typified by elongated linear buildings and L-shaped courtyard spaces from which provided the inspiration for the proposed design.

Gable elevations and ribbon windows with a horizontal emphasis are a feature of the original manor house to the far left, which also incorporates a corner window above the entrance,

The main elevation is divided into 3 distinct parts with a protruding gabled elevation to the right-hand side.

There are also substantial external chimney stacks with both regular window placings alongside ad-hoc arrangements,

The horizontal emphasis is more obvious in the original buildings compared to the more recent structures and is generally more pleasing on the eye.

Note the long ribbon window to the right of the main entrance.

The natural local stone is in thin courses, which also have a linear emphasis.



There is both a vertical and horizontal patterns within the main elevation to Birchinley Manor



1.07 Site Context

A wider view of the original manor house and associated former barns shows how the house developed into a farmhouse grouping based around an agricultural use.

Note the typical large opening to the barn on the far right.

.....→
horizontal emphasis to the entrance elevation





1.08 Site Context

A view from the footpath looking north-west toward the farm outbuildings and equestrian area.

The new dwelling will screen these ancillary buildings.



02

Design





2.01 Landscape and Form

Looking at the wider landscape we can see former farmstead/agricultural structures in clusters, and they generally take a linear form with gabled end elevations and mature trees providing shelter from the elements.

Dry-stone walls de-lineate field boundaries and working areas close to the buildings.

They are a part of the distinct character of this upland setting and provide visual points of interest.

This is the starting point for the siting and layout of the proposed dwelling, which itself is part of a wider landscape strategy for management of the associated 16-acre parcel of land.





2.02 Landscape and Form

The initial sketch opposite indicates how the proposed dwelling (far right) will connect with the Birchinley Manor, appearing as a natural extension in terms of siting, layout, and form, whilst providing the opportunity for a native landscaped setting, with some degree of separation from the dwellings to the west. (with clumps of trees provide both shelter and screening).



upland wild-flower meadow

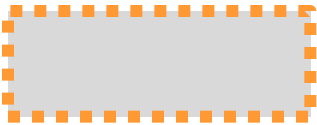


line of public footpath





Birchinley Manor south-facing elevation



an orange out-line indicates the elongated pitched forms which are an intrinsic characteristic of the existing built forms which inform the design of the proposed building

2.03 Landscape and Form

A comparison with the layout/siting of Birchinley Manor can be seen opposite.

The basic ancillary buildings and open yard to the north will be screened by the new development and landscaping when viewed from the public footpath to the south.

There is a fall in level from the public footpath to the proposed dwelling of around 1.8m, which places it in something of a hollow.



the proposals will screen the unkempt area of basic out-buildings (red-dotted line) located to the north of the site- when viewed from the public footpath



line of public footpath



red arrow indicates a fall in level of 1.8m approx.



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ENVIRONMENTAL ARCHITECTS





2.04 Layout

The red line boundary opposite shows the localised site in context with the developed area around Birchinley Manor and the wider site (blue line).

The L-shaped plan allows for a sheltered amenity space and entrance to the south and west.

The north side is sheltered by an existing line of mature trees (planted at a lower level allowing views over at first floor level).

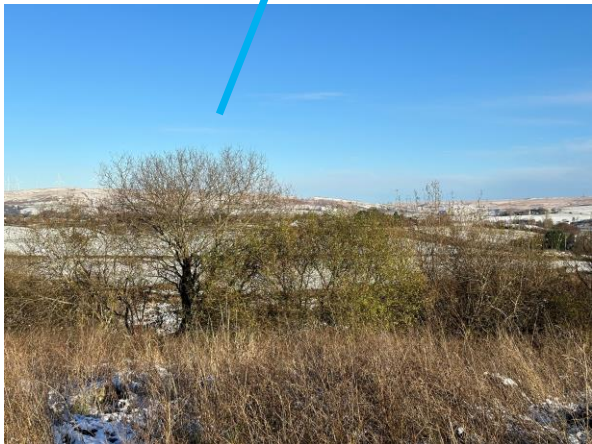
There is a rise in level to the south of the site allowing the dwelling to nestle into the natural hollow.



views towards Hollingworth lake at upper storey level



open views towards the upper Pennines



line of mature trees to the northern boundary



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ENVIRONMENTAL ARCHITECTS





we have positioned the garage and car parking to far end of the site behind a dry-stone wall and an enhanced native species landscaping scheme, to screen it from open view



2.05 Layout and Massing

Looking at the layout, we wanted to keep vehicles away from the front of the building to create a welcoming landscaped courtyard, taking our cues from the original Birchinley Manor,

Designed to be a welcoming space it creates a sheltered space and visual focal-point with a rhythmic horizontal and vertical emphasis (see images below for comparison).





2.06 Layout and Massing

The long elevation to the east is visible in the wider landscape and we felt a longer linear form would appear as a simple barn-like structure in the distant views. They appear to cling to the landscape offering a dark shadow-line on the horizon.

Closer views reveal the sheltered balcony and covered external space adjacent to the garden room, which responds to the clients' requirements in response to the weather climate in what is a quite exposed position.

The large ribbon/corner window at first floor level provides extensive views of the landscape from the first floor living space,





2.07 Layout and Massing

The east elevation faces the wider open landscape offering the best views from the first floor living area.

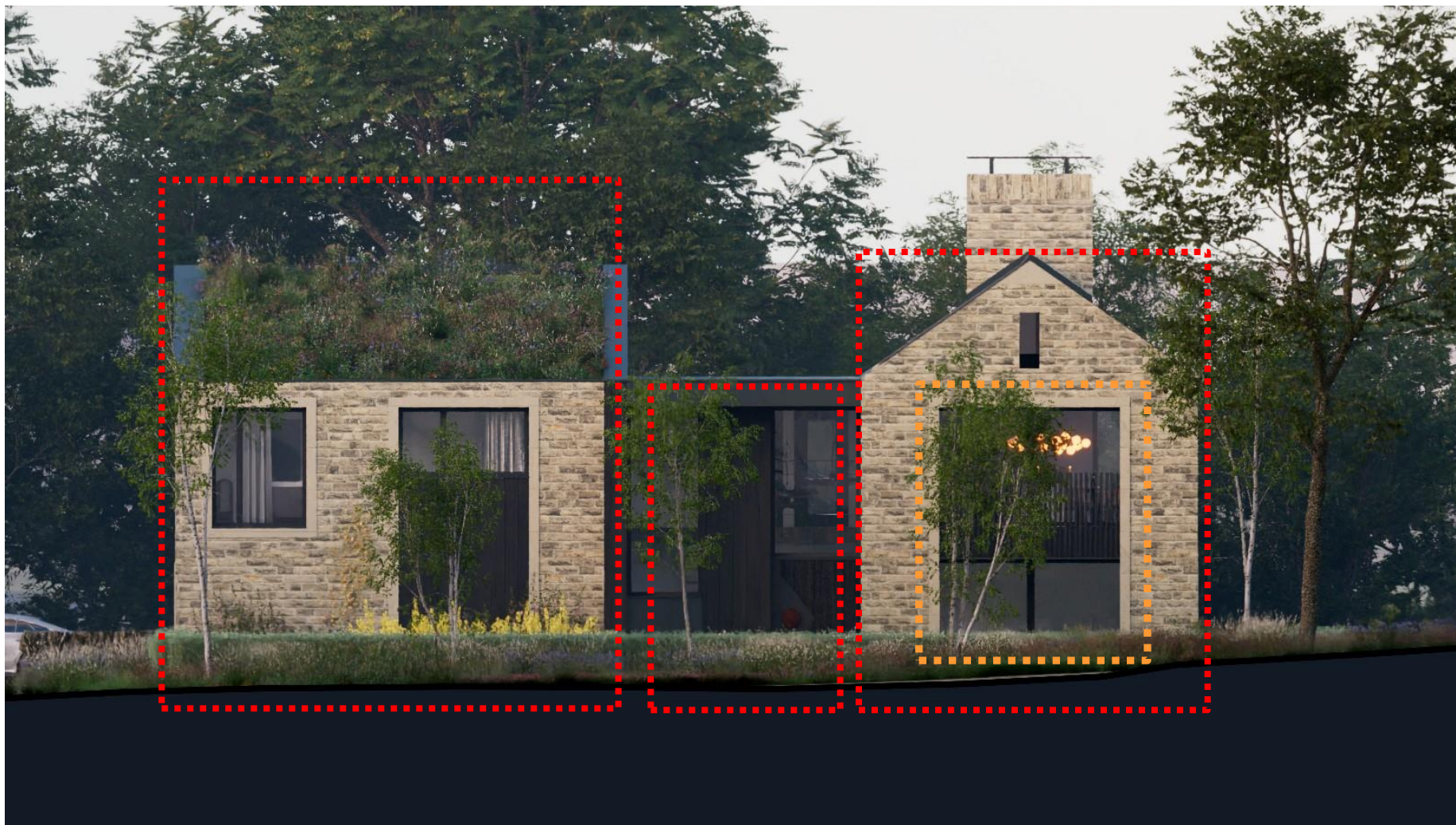
Viewed from the wider landscape the proposals reflect the local vernacular for elongated barn structures in terms of form and massing. The L-shaped plan and robust form also take cues from Birchinley Manor, whilst providing a contemporary approach to modern living requirements and construction requirements.



view of the open landscape to the east

linear 2- storey barn structures provide a reference for the simple elongated form of the building





2.08 Form and Architecture

Utilising a SketchUp model as a design tool, we looked to develop a design which responded to the site in terms of requirements for shelter in an exposed setting, the historic context of traditional forms, and a response to the existing built development around Birchinley Manor.

The natural landscape setting with far-reaching views was one of the important features in driving the design forward, along with complementing the existing building group.

In terms of minimising the impact on the wider landscape all external space is kept to a minimum within the constrained site boundary.

Large barn door openings are also a feature of farm building groupings within the area.





2.09 Form and Architecture

Response to Pre-app Advice

We have taken inspiration from Birchinley Manor in developing the proposals with the following providing direct comparisons:

1. a defined entrance courtyard,
2. large linear window configurations,
3. traditional gabled elevations
4. external chimney
5. a corner window detail
6. natural stone elevations
7. a dual pitched slate roof

The inset plan to the right-hand side of the main entrance visually splits the building into 3No elements.





2.10 Contemporary Precedents

We have referenced some similar new contemporary developments which have been influenced by the local vernacular below left.

In terms of form, massing, and materials they are influenced by traditional the buildings within their rural locations, whilst also responding to the requirements for sustainability, spaciousness and modern construction living and expressing an integrated fluidity within the landscape.





2.11 Contemporary Precedents

In the images below left, interpretations of traditional mono-pitch roof structures are woven into building groups which reference historic agricultural uses.

Random-sized window opening and vertical slit windows are also a feature.

Whilst the images below are sited as examples, they main influences come from the local vernacular architecture which is more of a combination of domestic and agricultural uses (farmhouse+barn).



The layout has been designed by integrating the sites existing features giving structure to the site providing enhanced landscape and visual mitigation. Consideration to the Local Landscape Character, the sites opportunities and constraints and relationship with wider green infrastructure and ecological networks have also influenced the layout. The aim has been to put the environment and people first as part of the landscape design process while finding the balance between space and the building and respecting the sites topography, landscape and ecological character and context of the site.

The key components of the Masterplan are:

- 1 Proposed new house
- 2 Access be taken from existing lane, Birchinley Manor.
- 3 Existing woodland and scrub retained.
- 4 Ecological pond and reed bed filtration.
- 5 Areas of new native woodland planting.
- 6 Retained trees where appropriate, invasive species removed maintained in line with ecologist guidance.
- 7 New native tree and shrub planting throughout the Site.
- 8 Enhanced boundary treatments.
- 9 Retained PRoW through the Site
- 10 Dry stone wall in state of disrepair to be retained for ecological benefits and provide wildlife habitats
- 11 Small areas of woodland to increase biodiversity value and reinforce landscape character
- 12 Mixed native hedgerow interspersed with native trees reinstated along the boundaries



2.12 Layout-Wider Landscape

The wider landscape covers 16 acres approximately and forms a part of a re-wilding strategy by the client, which is a passion of theirs.

PGLA have been commissioned to provide both a concept plan for the larger site and a more detailed strategy for the proposed house siting.

Ecology consultants JCA have provided the base data and BNG input which forms the basis for the landscape design.

The house site will provide a minimum 16-20% increase in BNG, and the site out-side of the planning application estimated as something similar.

Siting the house close to the existing Birchinley Manor hamlet minimises the visual impact, provides a greater degree of shelter, and provides an accessible facility for the management of the extended open area.





High quality development that works with the existing landscape features complementing the topography, retained vegetation and the existing settlement and landscape character.

Vegetable / productive growing area.

Driveway using Grasscrete or similar approved to provide a permeable surface as well as aesthetically softening the hard surface.

Combination of paving type, to be permeable (to reflect the drainage strategy / SuDS scheme) and natural or similar approved.

Mixed native hedgerows to contain garden area and provide a level of screening and extend wildlife corridors. Shrub planting around the development will be both native and ornamental with grasses and pollinators to further enhance biodiversity levels.

Grassland areas to be overseeded with a suitable wildflower and meadow mix, mown paths can be introduced through the grasslands.

Existing PRoW to be retained.

Ecological pond with reed bed filtration

Part of the driveway to be a resin bound material, which offers a permeable surfacing and in a shade to compliment the building and surrounding landscape.

Native tree planting to screen and soften the built form and introduce new habitats to site and provide enhancements for biodiversity.

Development located adjacent to the existing settlement which will reduce the impact on the landscape and visual amenity.



2.13 Layout-Localised Site

The proposed dwelling will provide a base for the management of the 16 acre re-wilding area on adjacent land within the same ownership.

Access is provided from the existing lane leading from the open car park which serves the existing properties (highlighted below).

A curving driveway leads to a small screened parking area adjacent to the garage and an ancillary building (for landscape management storage of materials and tools).

The building is set-back from the existing public footpath and will visually form a part of the Birchinley Manor development, visually screening the unsightly sheds to the north boundary.

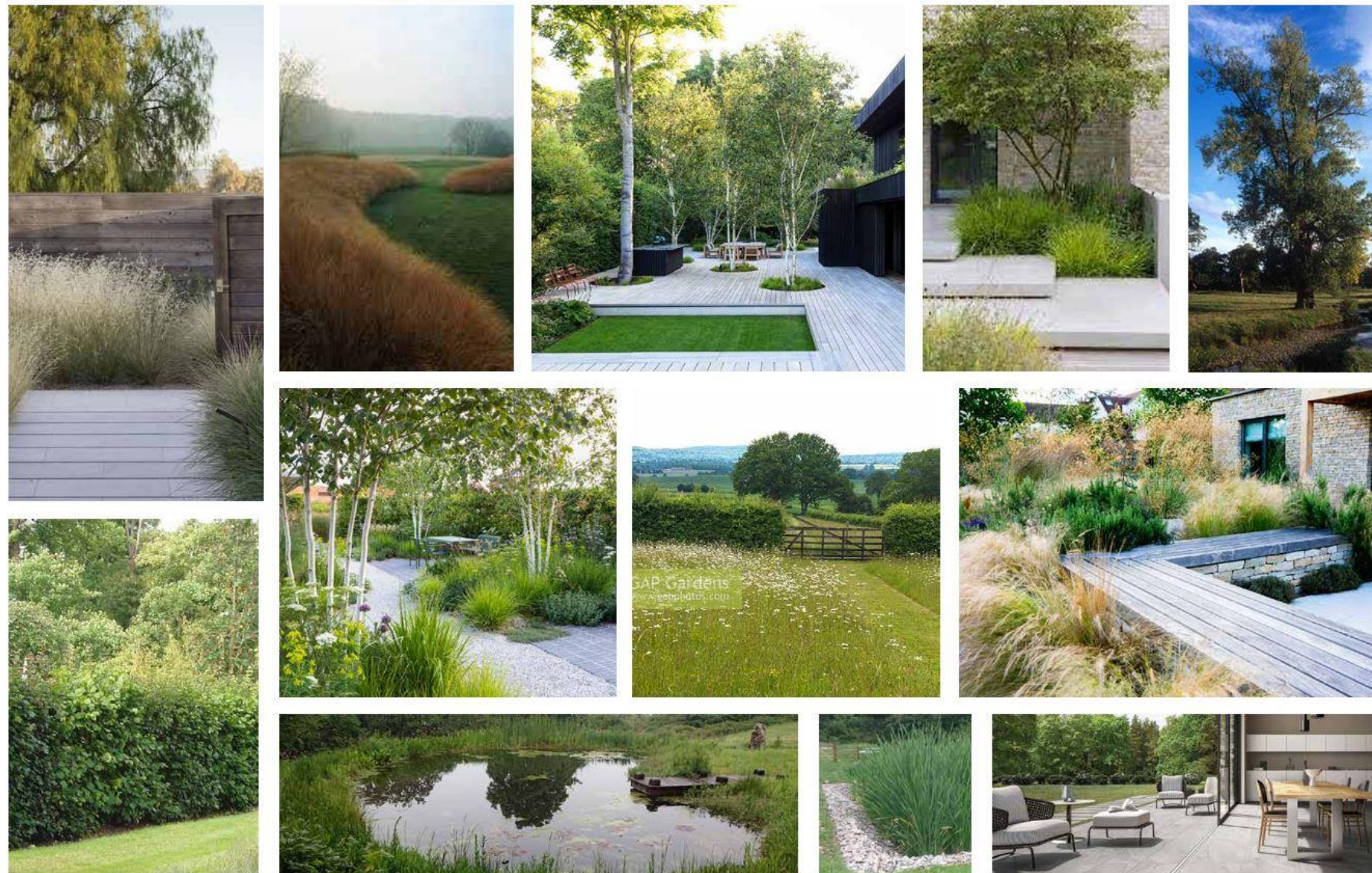
The L-shaped plan is formed around an entrance/garden courtyard, which is screened to the southern boundary by a native species hedgerow and trees. It creates a usable sheltered space which naturally extends into the wider landscape.

New planting of native species trees in defined clumps will soften the built form and increase the bio-diversity.



red arrow indicates a fall in level of 1.8m approx.





2.14 Layout-Localised Site

The images opposite provide an indication of how the proposed landscape scheme will help to blend the house setting into the extended natural landscape and complement the architecture.



Planting

Invasive species and poorly maintained vegetation to be removed. This allow for the introduction of new more appropriate native trees and suitable under-story vegetation. The species aim to retain and enhance the Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats.

Suggested new species to create more diversity and a healthy understorey include:

- *Corylus avellana*
- *Carpinus betulus*
- *Crataegus monogyn*
- *Quercus robur*
- *Alnus glutinosa*
- *Aesculus hippocastanum*
- *Salix* sp.
- *Sorbus aucuparia*

Areas of scrub to be retained for wildlife habitats along with introducing habitat and log piles along with brash bundles. These will offer valuable refuge habitats or wildlife.

An ecological pond will be introduced to further increase the habitats on site and will be planted with appropriate wetland tree and marginal planting. There will also be the opportunity to introduce viewing platforms / jetty area around the pond. Reeds will be introduced to provide water filtration.

Native and ornamental shrub planting to be introduced, mainly around the proposed house, which will include grasses and pollinators.

Small groups of native woodland to enhance biodiversity levels and re-enforce landscape character

Large areas of grassland will be retained as existing but overseeded with a suitable wildflower grass mix to improve the landscape condition.

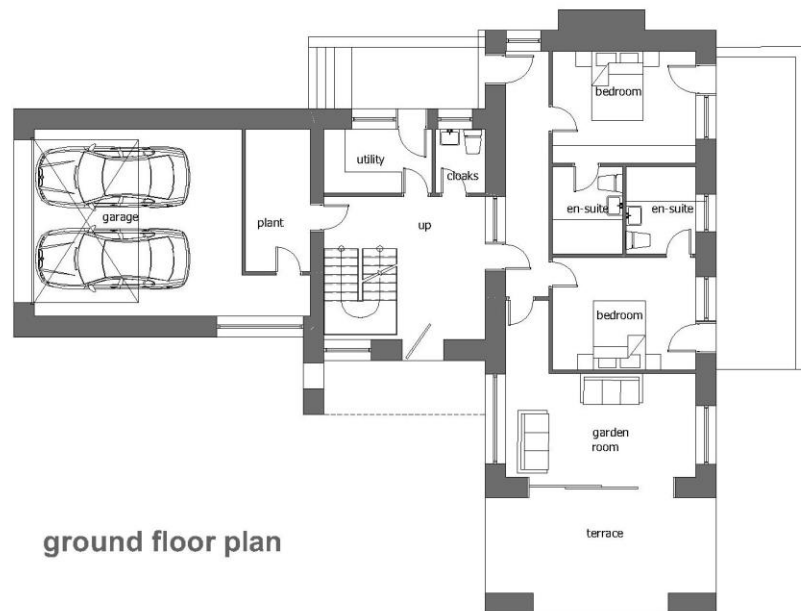
All species and habitats to follow the ecologists recommendations.



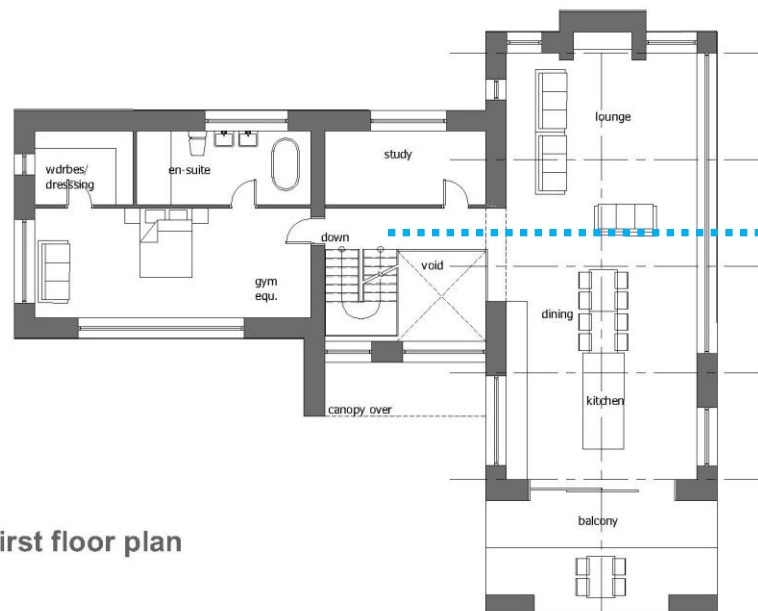
2.15 Layout-Localised Site

The proposed pallette of native species planting has been selected to increase the bio-diversity and create a visually pleasing setting for the dwelling.





ground floor plan



first floor plan

2.16 Layout-House Plans

A double-height entrance/ vertical circulation space is the central point of the layout, providing access between the entrance court/screened parking area/ garage and the main living block.

The open living/kitchen/dining is located within the western main block and provides elevated views of the Pennine landscape to the east.

A covered terrace to the south facilitates a sheltered external space with a full east/south/west aspect.

The master bedroom has a south-facing aspect over-looking the entrance garden courtyard.

At the ground floor a separate bedroom wing below the living space has access to a south-facing lounge/garden room for the teenage sons.

The upper storey is designed to be light and airy with a vaulted ceiling following the line of the pitched roof above.



contemporary influences





view back towards the Birchinley Manor development



2.17 Layout-Levels

The plan opposite indicates how the levels fall approx. 1.8m from the site entrance/public footpath (following the contours)



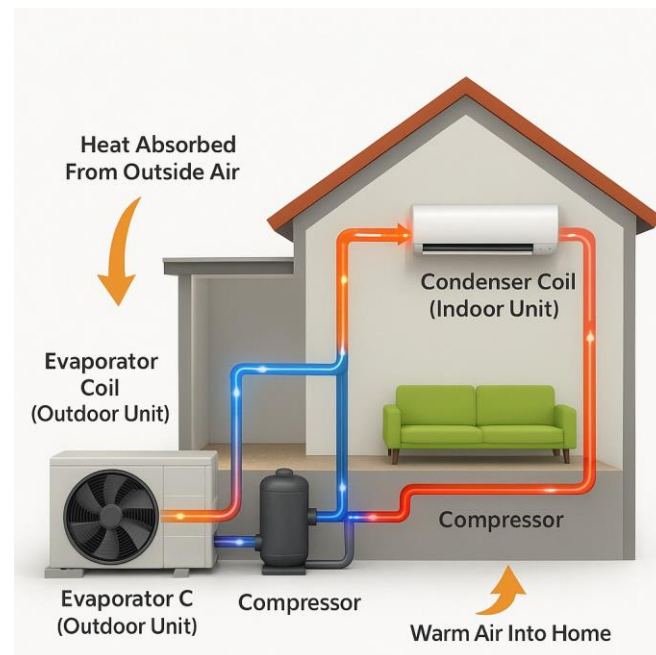
Contour at 178.00

fall in level of 3.0m

Contour at 180.00



charred timber cladding



air source heat-pumps have been recommended by the Energy Counsel



green roof/integrated solar to south facing mono-pitch

2.18 Sustainability

For Paul and Sarah this forms a most important part of the design brief.

For the construction of the external walls, we have selected the Durisol ICF system which is made from recycled wood pallets and has excellent insulation and air-tightness properties.

We are currently investigating the possibilities of a ground source heat pump system which will work alongside a solar panel/slate/battery storage energy supply as we aim for net zero energy consumption.

Alternatively, ground mounted solar panels could be an option.

With tree/hedgerow planting there will be an increase of 38.63% in BNG on site.

There are also plans for further BNG on the adjacent land owned by the applicants.



Durisol ICF made from recycled wood pallets



air source heat pump integrated within the landscape



screened ground mounted solar

8. Energy Assessment of Proposed Scheme

The proposed development has adopted the principles of the 'Be Lean, Be Clean, Be Green' approach.

The most practical and economically feasible solution for the development is a good quality thermally insulated fabric, airtight envelope, passive improvements and the use of a highly efficient air heat pump, supported by an efficient Mechanical extract ventilation system.

Table 13 - Proposed emissions from the development

Ref	Dwelling Type	No.	TER	DER	TPER	DPER	Total Carbon Emissions (Kg CO ₂ /yr)	Total Primary Energy (kWh/yr)
Z71794	HT – 3B6P	1	10.35	-2.45	55.45	-1.80	-618	-438
			124.54%		103.25%			
Total		1	124.54%		103.25%		-618	-438

The carbon emissions for the new build dwelling are predicted to emit **-618 KgCO₂/yr**. This is a total carbon reduction of **3,135 KgCO₂/yr** from the baseline emissions of **2,518 KgCO₂/yr** this equates to a **124.54%** carbon reduction.

The primary energy rate is **-438 kWh/yr**. This is a primary energy reduction of **13,926 kWh/yr** from the baseline primary energy rate of **13,488 kWh/yr**. This equates to a **103.25%** primary energy reduction.

The development proposal meets local policy including energy efficient lighting, efficient ventilation, improved thermal bridging, low air leakage and highly efficient water heating delivered via a heat pump.

2.19 Energy

A report prepared by the Energy Counsel endorses the adoption of 'Be lean, Be Clean, Be Green' approach, which takes the following approach:

- good quality thermally insulated fabric
- airtight envelope
- passive improvements
- the use of highly efficient air heat pump, supported by an efficient mechanical extract system

This will result in a predicted carbon emissions of **-618 KgCO₂/yr**, which is reduction of **124.54%** from a baseline of **2,518 KgCO₂/yr** and a reduction in the baseline primary energy of **103.25%**.

9. Conclusion

Following the 'Be Lean, Be Clean, Be Green' hierarchy, the proposed design solutions are predicted to:

- 1) Reduces the total carbon emissions by 124.54% compared to new building regulations ADL 2021. The Dwelling is exceeding net zero carbon for regulated energy.
- 2) The heat pumps are the renewables/ low carbon technology. Their contribution to the overall energy reduction under the 'be green' energy hierarchy is approx. 50%.
- 3) The dwelling will include PV panels to cover 65% of the ground floor area with a total kWp allocated of 14.4 kWp.
- 4) Reduces the total primary energy by 103.25% compared to new building regulations ADL 2021. This is a new metric under Part L.

The approach for the development at Land Adjacent to Birchinley Manor, Milnrow is to embed sustainability into the heart of the development through a range of design measures based on the 'Be Lean, Be Clean, Be Green' design hierarchy. Measures will include:

1. Enhanced building fabric to meet Building Regulation ADL1A 2021.
2. Enhanced air tightness and thermal bridging
3. Highly efficient Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery system.
4. Heating and Hot Water to be provided by highly efficient air source heat pumps
5. Efficient lighting strategy primarily using LED type fittings.
6. 14.4 kW PV Array mounted on the roof to benefit the building

2.20 Energy

In conclusion The Energy Counsel have stated that the total primary energy requirements should BE 103.25% less than the new building regulations ADL 2021 Part L target.

The table opposite sets out the measures which will be employed to achieve this.

9.2. Summary Headlines

- A passive fabric-first approach has been taken to reduce the energy demand of the proposed development. By focusing on passive design measures and energy efficiency through the energy hierarchy, the project offers an efficient and sustainable solution for the life of the building.

Table 14 - Proposed development emissions against Building Regulations Part L1A 2021

	Total CO ₂ Emissions (kgCO ₂ /yr)	Total Primary Energy (kWh/yr)	Total Unregulated Energy (kgCO ₂ /yr)
Target Dwelling Performance	2,518	13,488	N/A
Proposed Dwelling Performance	-618	-438	1,295
Total Reduction	3,135	13,926	N/A
Percentage Improvement (above ADL1 2021)	124.54%	103.25%	N/A

2.21 Energy

The table opposite indicates how the energy requirements compare to the current Building Regulations requirements.

In both total Co2 emissions and energy requirements it should be in negative territory, which was the goal from the outset, whilst respecting the existing heritage of the site and making the most of the open views.









