



22 Cottage apartments
35 Greene's Road, Whiston
Design & Access Statement

13th September 2021

Introduction



Visual of proposed apartments

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Purpose and Format of the Statement

This Design and Access Statement meets the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 and Circular 1/2006 from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

These state that planning applications, with some exceptions, are to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement that explains the design principles that have been applied to the development and illustrates how issues of access have been dealt with. The structure and content of this statement has been informed by 'Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use Them. (CABE 2006).

This statement has been prepared by Level 2 Architects on behalf of Built Group Ltd in support of a planning application for 22 new build cottage style apartments in 2-storey blocks, all for affordable rent. The aim for the development is to activate an unused plot of land and deliver a desirable residential development that fits in to residential area. The proposals herein have been formulated in collaboration with the applicants, Onward Homes, design consultants and in consultation with local neighbours.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the application drawings and supporting documentation.

1.1 Site Location

Current Status



Site Location



Aerial Photo

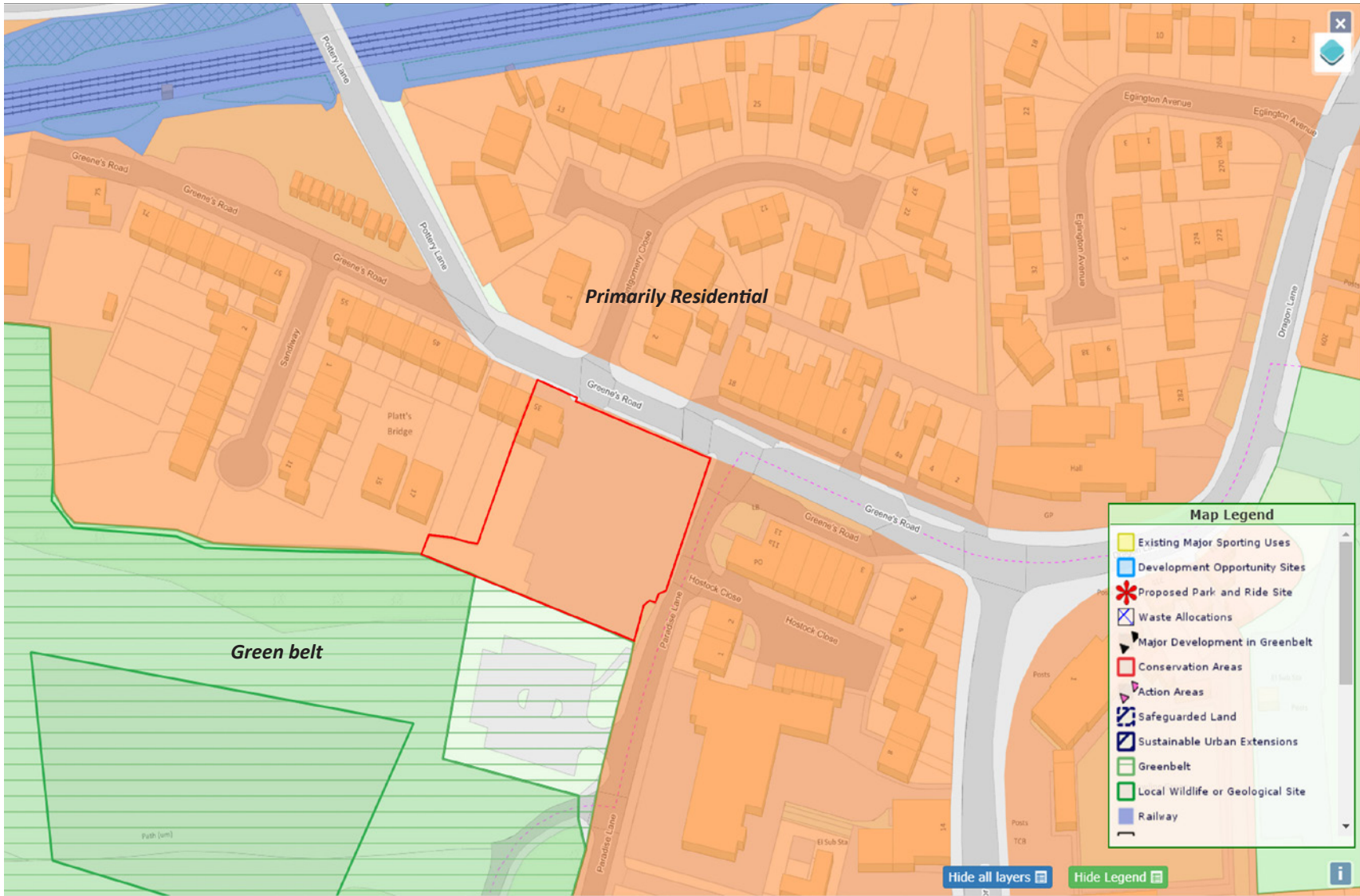
The application site which is 0.24 Hectares is situated on a prominent corner of Greene's Road and Paradise Lane in a residential area close to Whiston Village. The site is currently vacant comprised of mostly an open yard, the former commercial buildings that occupied the site were demolished in 2004, since then the land has been used for storage and recreation.

There are 2-storey terraced houses immediately to the west of the site fronting Greene's Road and other residential properties positioned within infill land, Stadt Moers Park is situated immediately to the south, which is in open green belt, and Whiston village is very close to the east of the site which provides local convenience stores, a nursery and supermarket all within walking distance. Greene's Road is the main thoroughfare through this area of Whiston, and the 248 bus route uses Greene's Road and links Huyton to Whiston Hospital and Prescot.

There is no known planning permission for residential use on the site but the red line boundary includes 35 Greene's Road which is an end-terrace property with a single storey rear extension, the rear gardens for this property are not defined with fences in the southern corner of the site.

1.2 Site Analysis

Planning Position



Extract from Knowsley MBC Proposals Map



Current Site conditions

The application boundary is situated within a residential area, allocated for housing development on the local proposals map as shown in the orange colour above. The majority of this area is allocated for housing development, on both sides of Greene's Road and within the vicinity of Whiston Village.

Open green belt shown in green abuts the southern boundary of this site, but general views over green belt from within the site are partially obscured by a line of mature trees which are positioned on the car park side of the boundary, not within this site. These trees have been assessed as part of the arboricultural report and are deemed to be good quality trees.

As it stands the site does not offer any contribution to the outlook for the neighbouring properties, it has been secured at several points with a mix of mesh and palisade fencing and there is a low stone wall against the footpath which due to its age appears to restrict the use of the footpath for pedestrians and could be improved. The site is in need of development to improve the visual appearance and improve the safety around the perimeter.

1.3 Contextual Analysis

Constraints & Opportunities



Photo looking toward site corner



Photo of site entrance on Greene's Road

The application site is currently vacant and has been secured with mesh fencing to the perimeter and down the middle of the land. Access to the site is from Greene's Road next to no 35. The ground is mostly covered by concrete and gravel surfaces, low level shrubs, foliage and trees are located around the edge of the site on the southern boundary. There is a noticeable cross fall over the site where the high point is on the eastern boundary sloping down toward the west.

The site is overlooked on the north and eastern sides but by some distance. The first floor windows of 35 Greene's Road overlook the south-west corner but generally the open feel of the land offers many opportunities for development.

Searches by the design team have found a major sewer to run across the south-east corner of the site, a 4 metre easement is shown in the pink hatched area above which prevents anything from being built here.

2.1 Layout

The Development



Response to Constraints

Using the site analysis we have developed the general layout described above which follows the alignment of the terraced properties on Greene's Road and the alignment of the newer bungalows behind the terraces. These rows can be appropriately separated from both existing properties and from each other with the compliant interface distances shown above.

These interface distances comply with Appendix 4 of Knowsley Council's New Residential Development SPD, and they set out the framework for the position of windows and obscured or blank windows in the proposed apartments.



Proposed Layout

Developing this alignment further; the separation of the front and rear blocks allows for a central 'communal' area for landscaping and parking which can be accessed from Paradise Lane and thereby offering continued frontage to Greene's Road.

The nature of apartments particularly over 2-storeys brings opportunities for communal amenity which is spread out here over the front and rear zones of the buildings. The car park itself will be shared by pedestrians and vehicles and will provide a space to orientate residents and visitors, leaving the blocks to split off areas of amenity so they are semi-private.

2.2 Amount The Development



The above aerial visual shows the linear arrangement of the front and rear blocks with a central parking court between them. Each apartment has its own car parking space and its own front door. The end terraces facing the corner and Paradise Lane have been turned to provide activity and interest on the gable elevations, with the ground floor apartments being accessed directly off this side and windows positioned appropriately to respect privacy distances provide natural surveillance of this side.

This visual also demonstrates well the clear front and back of each block. Residents front doors for Block A need to face the main road (Greene's Road) as a continuation of the terraced houses next to the site, and so pedestrian access is provided from the car park around both sides of Block A to give the shortest distance for residents to walk from the car to the front door.

Aerial view over the development

2.3 Scale

The Development

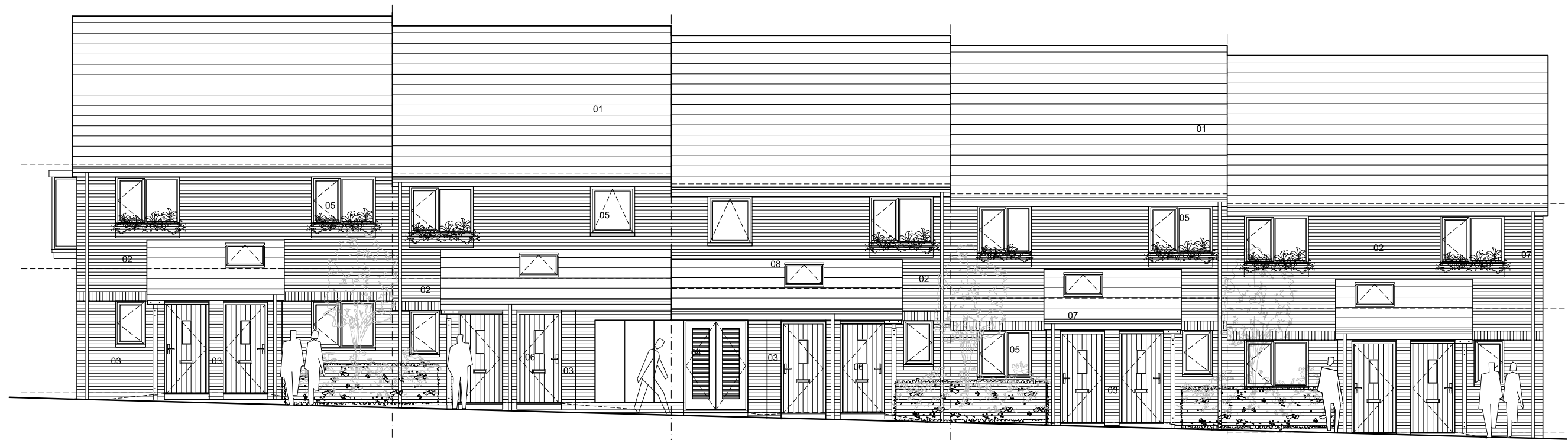


High level view over site access position and car parking court

The apartment buildings are all 2-storey with a duo-pitched roof which fits in with the 2-storey feel in this residential area. The repetitive nature of a run of terraces is also in keeping with the local area. This terrace terminates in the form of a gable end where special angular windows and a mix of materials are used to create interesting forms and modern look.

The individual front doors to the apartments which are either recessed or protruding in single storey outriggers bring the scale down closer to the street, and the boundary treatments and soft landscaping that front the adoptable footpath bring the scale down further to pedestrian level.

Each terrace of the front and rear blocks connect along the natural slope across the site which means there is a requirement to step the ground floor to achieve level access. This creates a stepped appearance which is visible at ground, eaves and ridge height, and helps to blend the new buildings in with the surrounding area.



Front elevation showing the cross fall over the site

2.4 Appearance



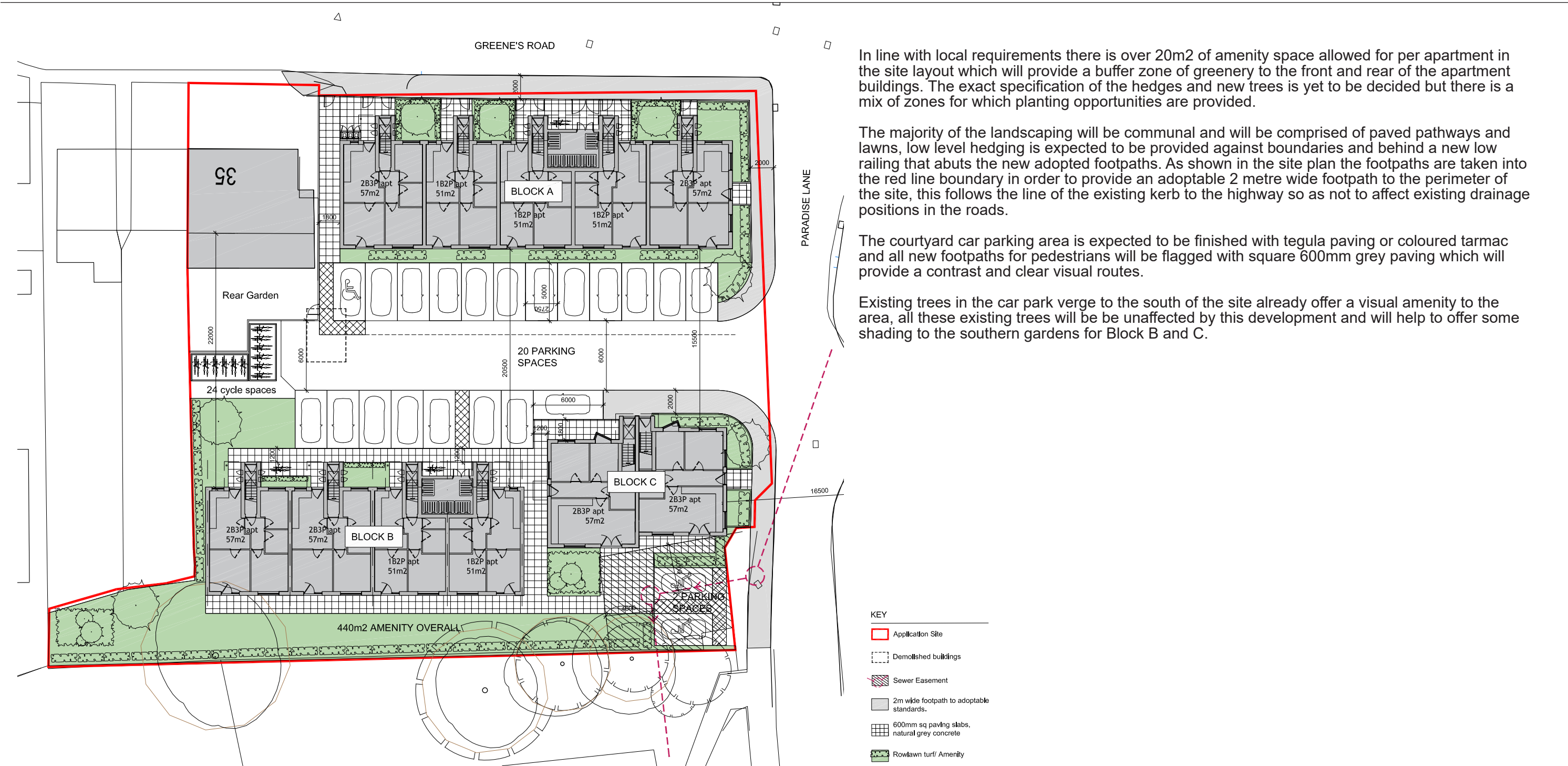
Visualisation of proposed houses facing West

Our overall ambition for the appearance of the new apartments is to create an understated but modern look that will be desirable to new residents and create a positive contribution for the local area.

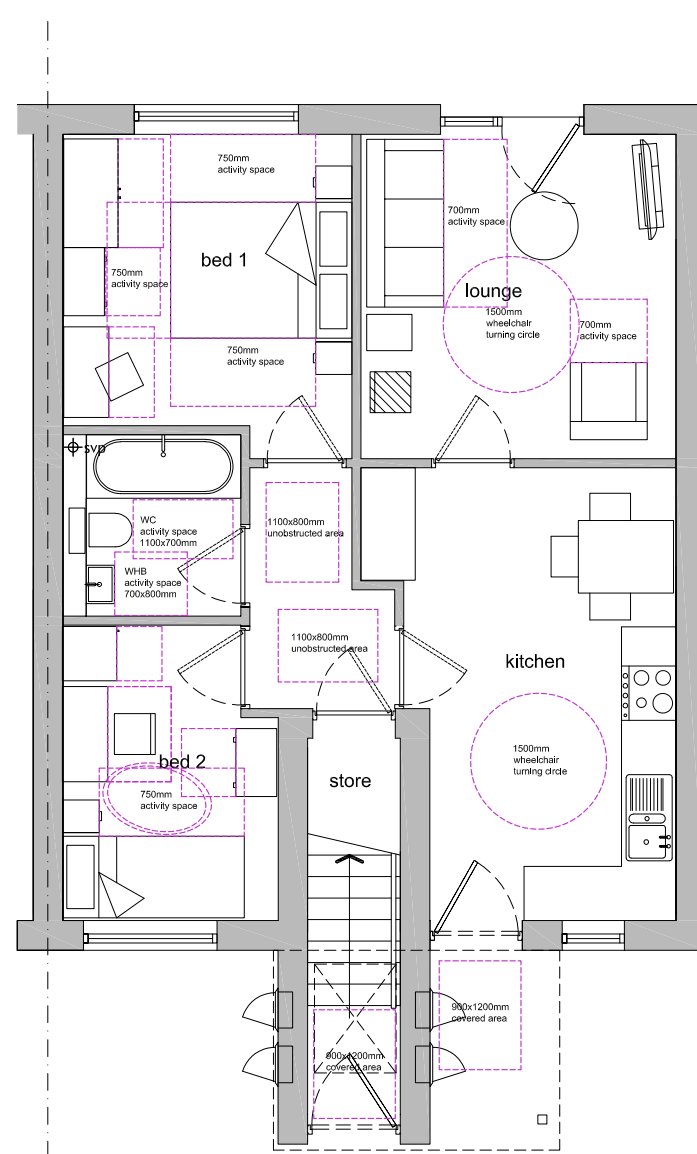
Although conforming to a basic 2-storey form with duo-pitched roof, a mixture of traditional materials have been used to create interest and highlight entrances, with red brick being the most abundant and grey brick being used only on special areas such as the corners and around entrance doors. The arrangement of the windows helps bring about a modern look, the first floor windows are deliberately inconsistent with ground floor windows, and the angular windows are used sparingly as an aesthetic and practical device to 'direct' views out.

A simple zinc canopy highlights the entrance doors on the gable ends of each block and brick soldier courses are used above windows or at floor level to break up any large expanses of repetitive stretcher courses of brick. Anthracite coloured windows complete the modern look and feel.

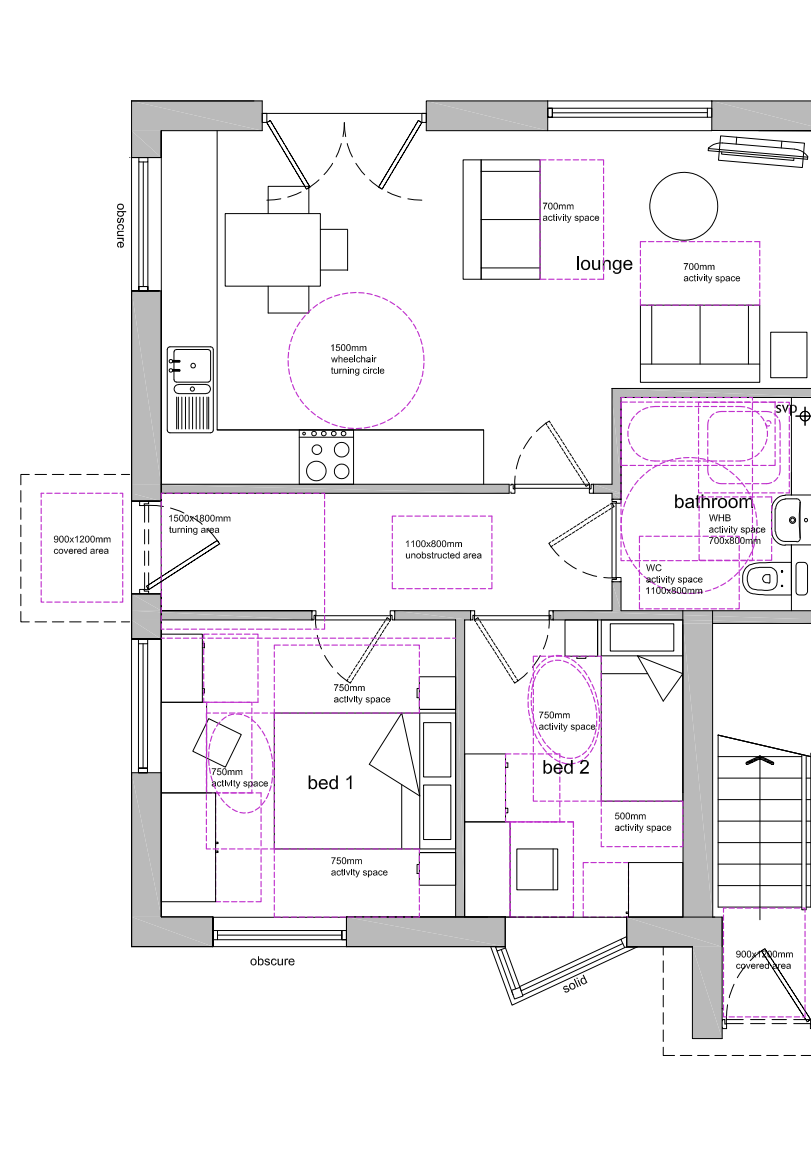
2.5 Landscaping



2.6 Access Inclusive Design



Block A ground floor apartment



Block C ground floor apartment

Inclusive design is a key objective for the proposals for this development, all access routes on the highway will be to adoptable standards; 2 metres in width and with smooth surfaces limited to 1:15 and 1:20 cross falls to ensure that the surfaces can be readily navigated by all user groups. The adoptable footpaths lead straight into the proposed car park area and connect to all front doors for the apartments on ground and first floors. Existing cross falls and levels on the site will be largely retained creating stepped ground floors to provide level access to achieve building regulations compliance.

Compliance

We confirm the proposed houses comply with M4(2) (Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings) of approved document M. Larger bathrooms have been provided in Block C for which the ground floor apartments can be adapted to M4(3) dwellings should the Housing Association require it.

Parking

The proposed site plan shows 22 individual vehicle parking spaces which will provide 100% parking for the development. Car park bay dimensions comply with local requirements being 5000mm long and 2750mm wide throughout. Ground levels will be adapted to achieve a level access to front doors, whilst meeting the requirements of Part C. Surface finishes will be firm, no loose laid material is anticipated to be used in pedestrian walkways.

Access

Pedestrian access will be a consistent visual tone using 600mm square paving slabs, all paths leading from the adopted highway to front doors. The minimum 900mm wide approach is provided throughout. These paths will be fully accessible with gradients no greater than 1 in 20 and will be contrasting in colour to surrounding landscaping to clearly define the routes. Level access will be provided to the principal entrance, ramp gradients are not expected to be required. Level landings to gentle slopes will be at least 1200mm long.

Entrance

External doors to front doors for all apartments will have a level threshold, existing levels will be adapted to achieve this. The principal entrance has a canopy achieving the minimum 900mm width and 1200mm depth. The entrance door will provide at least 850mm clear opening and will open inwards away from the highway.

Circulation

Front doors provide level access, due to the stacked 2-storey apartment design only apartments on the ground floor have rooms on the entrance storey which are step free. Corridor widths achieve the minimum 900mm unobstructed width and unobstructed areas of 1100 x 800mm are provided throughout.

Bedrooms

The main double bed (2x1.5m) has 750mm clear zones to both sides and foot of the bed, other bedrooms with single beds (1.9x0.9m) have 750mm clear zones to one side and 500mm to the foot of the bed. These bedrooms to have clear access routes of 750mm from windows and doors.

Bathrooms

Each apartment has a shared family bathroom (2x1.65m) including WC, basin and bath on the same floor as the main double bedroom. 1.1x0.7m clear access zones are provided in front of the WC and to the side of the bath, 0.7x0.8m clear access is provided to the wash hand basin. There is provision to replace the bath for a level access shower within the bathrooms.

Sanitary facilities

In Block C the WC within the entrance storey on the ground floor is capable of taking a future level access shower: the WC meets the desired 1.45 x 1.8m room size to achieve the requirements of Part M. This also allows for 1.1m in front of the WC and 0.7x0.8m in front of the sink. The WC door can open outwards as shown on the plans.

Fixtures and Fittings

The construction is anticipated to be traditional load bearing masonry allowing for walls around the WC and bathrooms to be capable of supporting 1.5kN/m² for additional ambulant fittings and fixtures. Consumer units will be mounted at 1.4m above floor level. Handles for manually operated windows will be located 1.4m above floor level.