

# Statement of Community Involvement

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**Proposed Retirement Apartments and  
Semi-Detached Housing**

**Site of Focus School, Heaton Mersey  
SK4 2AA**

**Anwyl Partnerships**

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July 2022



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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement accompanies an application by Anwyl Partnerships for 82 dwellings comprised of 72 retirement apartments and 10 semi-detached houses on the vacant site of the Focus School, Heaton Mersey.
- 1.2 The planning application has been subject to pre-application advice alongside a stakeholder engagement process prior to submission. The feedback received is taken into account in this document. In addition, the outcomes of the consultation exercise undertaken for the previously approved scheme (Ref DC/075939) have been reviewed by Anwyl Partnerships and this Statement summarises this process.
- 1.3 By engaging with the local community, the applicant has better understood their needs and opinions, also taking on board concerns raised and implementing changes and suggestion for the proposals where possible.
- 1.4 This Statement will describe the extent of community involvement, the outcomes and how views have been accounted for.
- 1.5 Matters of design evolution, site and surroundings, planning policy and principle of development are discussed in the Planning Statement (PS) and Design and Access Statement (D&A) submitted with the application.

## 2 Proposals

2.1 The proposal description is as follows:

***‘Residential development consisting of A) 10 semi-detached houses and B) 72 retirement apartments for independent living with ancillary support services and communal facilities together with associated landscaping, amenity space and car parking’.***

1.1 The 10 x 4-bed semi-detached houses are proposed to be for open market sale. The retirement apartments are to be 100% affordable and will be constructed by Anwyl Partnerships on behalf of a local housing association, consisting of:

- 37 x 1-bed apartments
- 35 x 2-bed apartments

1.2 The apartments fit within the ‘Retirement living or sheltered housing’ category of specialist housing for older people as defined by Planning Practice Guidance, which has some communal facilities and provides support for residents to live independently rather than full care services. It is anticipated that the development will have a warden, with residents having access to a 24-hour staffed management system and the option of care should they need it.

2.2 For further information on the proposals, see the Planning Statement submitted with the application.

### 3 Consultation Guidance

- 3.1 The Stockport Statement of Community Involvement (SSCI) (adopted October 2015) provides guidance on how it intends to involve the community in preparation of new policies and plans, as well as during the determination of planning applications. Whilst this information is for the Council's processes, it provides a useful steer on how applicants should engage with the local community.
- 3.2 The Council refers to the requirement to inform not just the general public, but statutory consultees and non-statutory bodies such as local interest groups.
- 3.3 The Council details a variety of methods for keeping the community informed of the latest planning applications, whilst balancing between considerations of cost, turnaround times and providing an opportunity for the public to comment. Chapter 3 lists these, which includes the pre-application service, computer-generated neighbour notification letters, email, electronically at the Council's Local Information Offices, in person at the Development Management offices and via the planning pages of the Council website.
- 3.4 Paragraph 3.7 of the Statement encourages applicants to engage with the Council at an early stage of the development process, as this ensure that planning issues are identified early on. This process can involve other interested parties where their knowledge and input would be relevant to the proposals.
- 3.5 Paragraph 3.8 encourages developers to engage with the local community where the scale and/or nature of development is such that it is likely to generate high levels of public interest. Here it states that ***“Not only will this act as an awareness raising exercise for the public, it will also enable the developer to take on board the views of local people when drawing up the details of the development proposal. Engaging the community at this stage may, for example, involve a presentation to the relevant Area Committee.”***
- 3.6 On a national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; 2021) provides further guidance on consultation best practice.
- 3.7 Paragraph 39 states that there is ***“significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties”*** and that ***“good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.”***
- 3.8 The NPPF goes on to clarify that ***“the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits”*** (paragraph 41).

- 3.9 Beyond the developer and decision maker relationship, ***“the participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle”*** (paragraph 42).

## 4 Previous Consultation Exercise

4.1 The applicant of the previously approved scheme undertook pre-application discussions with Stockport Council in March and November 2019 alongside a public consultation exercise. The methods used are described in more detail below.

### Pre-Application Public Meeting

4.2 A public information meeting was held in the former school at the site in December 2019 so that local residents could inspect the draft plans, discuss with the development team and provide feedback.

4.3 The previous Planning Statement advises that an invitation was sent to 176 properties on the following roads: Didsbury Road, Branksome Road, Masefield Drive, Tennyson Close, Briars Mount, Briars Hollow, Bramley Crescent, part of Bankhall Road, Mirfield Avenue and Mirfield Grove. Invitations were also sent to ward councillors.

4.4 The applicant advised that:

- some 40 people attended the event
- 26 feedback forms were received from 25 respondents
- 6 did not comment but wished to be informed when the application was submitted
- 3 enquired about buying a proposed dwelling
- A subsequent email requested action on drainage and trees.

4.5 The following are the main subject areas which were of public interest:

- **Highways:** Residents referred to proximity to the Bankhall Road / Briars Mount junction and to congestion on Didsbury Road.
- **Footpaths:** There was concern that a footpath link to the north-east of the site in the original proposals would cause anti-social behaviour. Improvements to the existing footpath bisecting the site were requested including better lighting, with the applicant referring to protection of ecology and tree management in conjunction with this.
- **Cycles:** A respondent requested a barrier to stop cycles speeding through the area of open space.
- **Design:** Comments were received about the contemporary style of the proposed dwellings.
- **Landscaping:** There were contrasting views about whether there should be increased or reduced landscaping along the site boundaries.

- **Separation Distances:** Residents to the south of the site asked about the proximity of the proposed dwellings to the boundary.
- **Drainage:** Raised as an issue.
- **Tree Management:** Raised as an issue.
- **Views:** Some concerns over views across the site being obstructed by housing
- **Open Space:** Generally welcomed although some concerns over potential for anti-social behaviour.

4.6 The applicant set out a number of changes which the application made in relation to the comments:

- Footpath link at north-east removed, although access still be possible along the shared surface
- Details of landscaping to boundaries submitted including fencing/planning
- Existing footpath improved through lighting and tree management
- Barriers to open space to prevent vehicular access
- Dwellings set into slope along Didsbury Road to reduce height

## Planning Application

4.7 The Council wrote directly to 42 surrounding properties following submission of the application, and also publicised it by means of a site notice and a press notice. Only 2 objections were received.

4.8 The main concerns were as follows:

- Increased traffic and associated congestion, and air pollution
- Preference for access via Briars Mount which has existing traffic lights
- Potential parking on Didsbury Road
- Cost of proposed housing
- Preference for alternative use: e.g., school which are oversubscribed, hospital, social centre
- Belief that land restricted to educational use by will
- Impact on views of hills/daylight from Didsbury Road; preference for bungalows at site frontage

## The New Scheme

4.9 The current application represents a substantial revision to the original proposals due to high abnormal costs arising from the substantive change in levels and the associated engineering solutions

required to provide the internal access road, and the Council required financial contributions for provision of open space and the achievement of Biodiversity Net Gain.

- 4.10 The proposed retirement scheme will enable a higher number of residential units to be achieved, without the traffic generation and parking requirements which would arise with conventional apartments. The building will be set back within the site and utilise topography so that its form can be assimilated, whilst the semi-detached houses adjacent to Didsbury Road will complement the existing street scene.
- 4.11 The applicant has taken note of all comments received from residents and Councillors during the consultation process. Some of the suggestions and comments have contributed towards refinement of the proposed design, which aims to minimise impact on residents, soften the final design and increase the provision of car parking on site.
- 4.12 The design meets the minimum requirements as set out in the Council's Design of Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and where possible exceeds them. Window placements have also been carefully considered to minimise overlooking.

## 5 Consultation Exercise for New Application

- 5.1 As indicated above, both national and local guidance encourage pre-application engagement and community involvement at the pre-application stage of the development planning process.
- 5.2 Consequently, the applicant undertook a public consultation exercise with surrounding residents and local Councillors. This included use of digital consultation methods and more traditional means. The methods used are described in more detail below.

### Leaflet Drop

- 5.3 To begin the public consultation exercise, leaflets were distributed to those properties directly affected by the development. The A5 sized colour leaflet was designed to refer to the developer, proposals, and benefits of the scheme briefly and clearly.
- 5.4 Details for submitting feedback and suggestions were highlighted, and this included a consultation website accessed via the Anwyl Partnerships website, an email address and postal address. For the website, a QR code was featured, allowing recipients to quickly access further information using the in-built camera on their smart device. See Appendix 1 for a copy of the leaflet.
- 5.5 The leaflets were distributed on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022 to 896 properties including business premises within the catchment. This covered all properties surrounding the site and those that are most likely to be affected by its redevelopment. See Figure 1 for a copy of a map demonstrating the GPS tracked leaflet distribution.

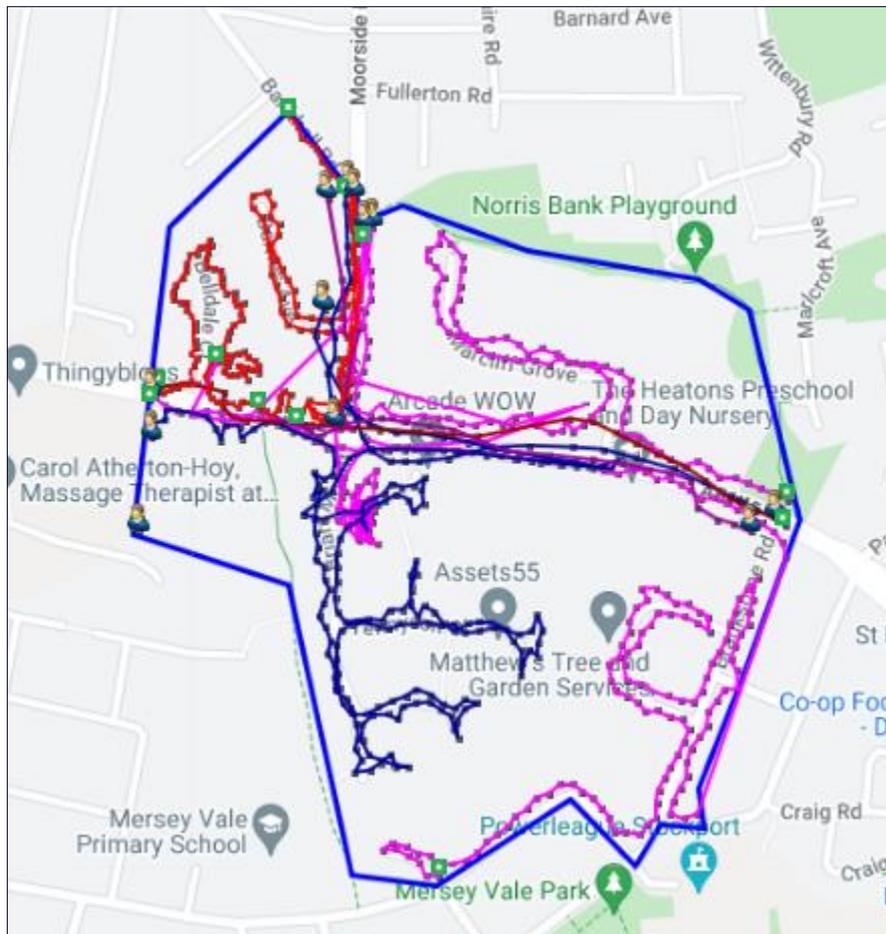


Figure 1: map illustrating the extent of the consultation leaflet distribution.

## Consultation Website

- 5.6 A consultation website has been produced as part of the pre-application consultation process, designed to provide a platform for stakeholders to engage with the development team on the proposals.
- 5.7 This website is hosted on the Anwyl Partnerships website and is designed to be consistent with the leaflets and Anwyl branding, such that there is a familiarity and coherence to the content.
- 5.8 The website remains live at the time of writing and can be accessed via the link below. See Appendix 2 for screenshots.

<https://www.anwylpartnerships.co.uk/consultations/didsbury-road-heaton-mersey/>

- 5.9 The website includes information on the site context, opportunities for development and details of the current proposals and the benefits, including meeting a specific housing need and images of the proposal itself.

- 5.10 A 'Your Views' page also includes an online form for the submission of comments. Email and postal addresses were also provided, offering multiple communication channels.
- 5.11 The webpage was published in March 2022, and no deadline for submitting comments was set.



*Figure 2: Axonometric imagery produced for public consultation*

## Local Media

- 5.12 An advert was designed and placed in Manchester Evening News (MEN). This was a colour column advert taking up just over a quarter of the page, included in the Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March edition of the newspaper at the beginning of the consultation period. The advert was again designed to match Anwyl Partnerships branding, and the design of the leaflets and website.
- 5.13 See Appendix 3 for a copy of the advert and relevant page in the MEN.

## Local Councillor Engagement

- 5.14 Local councillors have been advised of the intended application so that they are better placed to respond to any issues raised by local residents.
- 5.15 The Heatons South Councillors as well as Heatons and Reddish Area Committee members were emailed as part of this process. Members were sent details of the proposals via email. This included a letter giving notice of the public consultation (See Appendix 4), details of the proposals, and how to submit comments via the website. A copy of the plans and axonometric views circulated to residents was also included with the correspondence.

## 6 Summary of Feedback

- 6.1 Since the consultation website went live in March 2022, a total of 12 responses were received: 9 responses via the consultation website, and 3 via direct email. No responses were received via post. These figures take account of any duplicate responses received both via the website and email.
- 6.2 The level of consultation is considered to be proportionate to the scale of development proposed. It involved the hand delivery of circa 896 leaflets to local residences and businesses, correspondence to local members, publication of an advert in the Manchester Evening News and publication of a consultation website. The website, which details the proposals clearly and succinctly, follows best practice examples and allowed for stakeholders to respond online. The feedback form was left open such that no closed questions were asked, avoiding bias and generating qualitative data.
- 6.3 Redacted versions of comments received are included in Appendix 5 of this Statement. These are colour coded into three main categories: 1) Support/positive (Green), 2) neutral/supportive but with concerns/questions (Amber), and 3) Objection/negative (Red).
- 6.4 Of the 12 responses, 3 (25%) were in support, 6 (50%) were neutral or showed support for development but with concerns (on for example design and impact), and 3 (25%) were objections to the development.

### Support

- 6.5 Of those responses showing support for the proposals or at least support for redevelopment of the site, the reasons were distinguished under the following main key themes:
- Improvement to the vacant school site
  - Interest in a property
  - The proposals would be a viable use of the site addressing a pressing need
- 6.6 These comments clearly show the desire to redevelop the site, and to utilise brownfield land that would enhance a site that is considered an eyesore by locals.

### Objection

- 6.7 Of those comments objecting to the proposals, or at least showing concerns towards redevelopment of the site, the reasons were distinguished under the following main key themes:
- Impact on local wildlife and environment during construction.
  - Impact on families already living in the area and the availability of school spaces.
  - Impact of existing properties during construction period.

- Highways impact - increased traffic.
- Highways impact - insufficient parking arrangements.
- Impact on amenity - noise and pollution from congestion.
- Impact on existing NHS services.
- Exacerbation of existing drainage issues, caused by blocked drains and standing water.
- Impact on house prices.
- Very steep site - potential accessibility issues for older residents.
- Impact on height and number of apartments and houses.
- Poor location for the proposal.

6.8 It is clear that the primary areas of concern are around the scale and amount of the proposed apartment building, impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents and nearby service, and the impact of increased traffics and parking demands.

### Suggestions

6.9 The responses included suggestions that have been noted and addressed as part of the submitted design, as detailed in the next chapter. The majority of these suggestions have been addressed as part of the full application and include:

- Increase height of fence between apartments and properties on Tennyson Close, to ensure sufficient protection of privacy.
- Ensure sufficient pavements are provided around the development to facilitate mobility of older residents.
- Provide CGI views from Didsbury Road and Tennyson Close to back up claims of limited impact on existing properties.
- Consider materials for apartment block that lessen impact (alternatives to white elevations).
- Provide further evidence of the need for 10 x 4-bed houses.
- Look into delivery of smaller affordable dwellings for first time buyers/other affordable tenures.

### Questions

6.10 Some questions of note included:

1. What steps will be taken to minimise the impact on local wildlife and environment during construction?

2. Is the main access from Didsbury Road?
  3. How will the area to the west dominated by trees be used?
  4. Will affordable housing be provided?
  5. Will the houses be on the Didsbury Road side and the apartment building near Tennyson Close?
  6. What is the interface distance between the apartment block and houses?
  7. What impact will the apartment block have on existing properties on Tennyson Close?
  8. How many parking spaces will there be?
  9. What mechanism will secure the properties for those over the age of 55 only?
  10. How has highways impact been assessed and what mitigation measures will be implemented to address increased traffic.
  11. What are the timescales for construction?
  12. How will noise and disruption be managed during construction?
  13. What additional infrastructure will be put in place for additional school spaces?
- 6.11 Questions 1 to 10 have been addressed as part of the planning application and further information can be found in the accompanying plans, Planning Statement, Affordable Housing Statement, Retirement Housing Need Assessment, Ecological Assessment and Transport Assessment with Travel Plan.
- 6.12 Questions 11 and 12 can be addressed as part of a final Construction and Environment Management Plan (CEMP). The applicant welcomes a condition securing this information as part of any approval.
- 6.13 Question 13 will be addressed during the determination period, expected following statutory consultation with the Council's education team.

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1 This Statement of Community Involvement has been produced to summarise the methods of engagement with the community and Local Planning Authority. It has been completed in accordance with the Stockport Statement of Community Involvement and paragraphs 39 to 42 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 7.2 This guidance was used to help shape the consultation methodology and to inform as many relevant members of the community as possible on the redevelopment. This involved engagement with the Council at an early stage, liaison with local Councillors, and the wider community.
- 7.3 The engagement utilised methods that were proportional to the proposals. A dedicated consultation website was published at the same time as consultation with local members, publication of local advertising and distribution of leaflets outlining the proposals.
- 7.4 The applicant has taken note of all comments received from residents during the consultation process. Some of the suggestions and comments have contributed towards refinement of the proposed design, which aims to minimise impact on residents and ensure a design that makes efficient use of the site, taking into consideration the technical constraints of the topography and tree locations.
- 7.5 The design meets the minimum requirements as set out in the Council's Design of Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and where possible exceeds them. Window placements have also been carefully considered to minimise overlooking.
- 7.6 An initial pre-application consultation was submitted for the previously approved scheme in March and November 2019. The formal response to this, along with the separate public meeting and subsequent response to the planning application, provided detail on what would be necessary to establish a development that is acceptable in principle.



## Appendix 1 – Consultation Leaflet





### Redevelopment of Former Focus School, Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey

AnwyI Partnerships invites you to comment on our proposals for the former Focus School site at Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey.

The proposal is for 72 extra care apartments set within extensive landscaping, providing homes for those over the age of 55, alongside 10 four bed semi-detached family homes.

The apartments will be designed to facilitate an independent lifestyle in a safe environment that can also accommodate a range of care needs should residents require care. The Council's Housing Needs Assessment identifies a need for 2,414 additional specialist older persons accommodation.

The proposal will also include 10 four bed semi-detached family homes that will be accessed via a new road from within the site.

**We look forward to hearing views of the local community and will consider the feedback received ahead of any formal planning application being submitted to the Council. Upon any planning application being submitted, the Council will of course have to re-consult the local community again as part of the formal planning process.**

**Submit your feedback**

**Online**

[www.anwyipartnerships.co.uk/consultations/didsbury-road-heaton-mersey](http://www.anwyipartnerships.co.uk/consultations/didsbury-road-heaton-mersey)

**By email**

[partnershipsconsultations@anwyi.co.uk](mailto:partnershipsconsultations@anwyi.co.uk)  
(Using subject line: 'Didsbury Road Heaton Mersey')

**By post**

FAO: AnwyI Partnerships, AnwyI House  
Clos Dewi Sant, St David's Park,  
Ewloe, Flintshire, CH5 3DT

For more information, scan the QR code





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## Appendix 2 – Consultation Website








call us on  
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About ▾ What We Do Case studies News **Contact**
SEARCH 

Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey

- Introduction >
- Site Context >
- Planning Policy >
- Opportunities >
- Proposals >
- Your Views >

### Welcome

Welcome to this consultation website, hosted by Anwyl Partnerships. It sets out our proposed redevelopment of the former Focus School site at Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey, and gives you the opportunity to comment on these plans.

The proposals include 10 semi-detached dwellings and 72 extra care apartments for those aged 55 and over.

The apartments will be designed to facilitate an independent lifestyle in a safe environment that can also accommodate a range of care needs for residents. The development comprises a mixture of 1 and 2 bedrooms, including communal areas, landscaping and parking.

This website provides the local community with information on the site, its context and details of the proposals. It will also provide you with a platform to submit your comments and suggestions. Note that these designs are subject to change, so check the website for the latest updates.

#### Location



#### Area






#### Head Office

Anwyl House  
Clos Dewi Sant  
St David's Park,  
Ewloe,  
Flintshire,  
CH5 3DT

#### Phone

Construction:  
**01244 421 600**

#### Our Group

- Anwyl Homes
- Anwyl Group
- Anwyl Land

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- Services
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Anwyl Construction a trading name of Anwyl Construction Co Ltd (Company Number 0436322) a company registered in England whose registered office is at Anwyl House, Clos Dewi Sant, St David's Park, Ewloe, Flintshire, CH5

SCI – Redevelopment of former Focus School

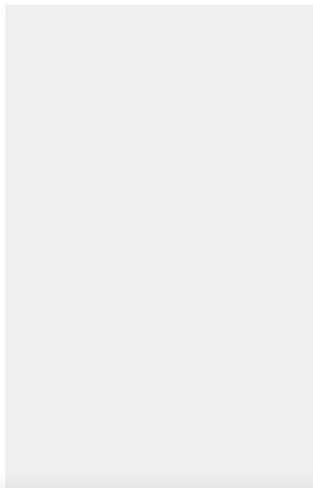
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# Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey

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**Your Views** >



## Your Views

We invite your comments and suggestions at this initial stage in the design process so we can better understand the site and the needs of the local community. Local Councillors and the Planning Department have been informed of the proposals.

You can submit comments using the form below or by post to the following address: Anwyl House, Clos Dewi Sant, St David's Park, Ewloe, Flintshire, CH5 3DT.

Your views and suggestions will help to inform the final development proposals and may be referred to as part of a finalised design for the planning application.

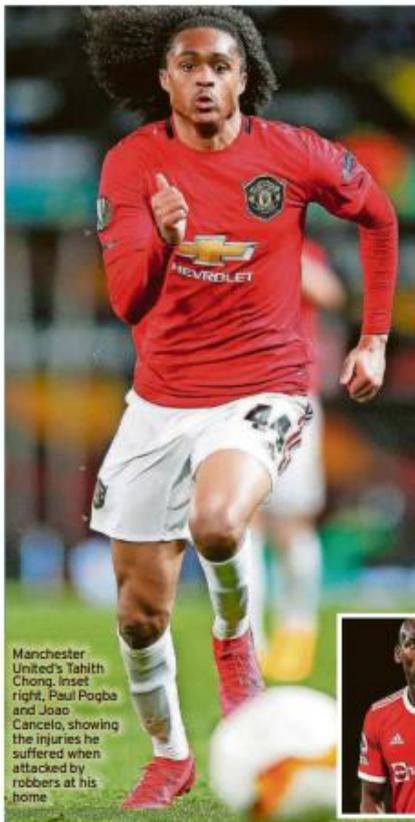
**Please note that they will be forwarded to Stockport Borough Council as part of the Statement of Community Involvement. This document will include all correspondence received, including personal details such as postcodes, where these have been provided. Personal details such as names, addresses and email addresses will be omitted from this document. This ensures all comments received are available to the Council during the consideration of the application. As the SCI forms part of the formal application documents, the Council may publish this information online, subject to their own Data Protection policies. Likewise, should the application be referred to the Planning Inspectorate in the form of an Appeal, this information may again be published online, subject to their Data Protection policies.**

<input type="text" value="First Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Last Name"/>
<input type="text" value="Email Address"/>	
<input type="text" value="Phone Number"/>	
<input type="text" value="Address Line 1"/>	
<input type="text" value="Address Line 2"/>	
<input type="text" value="City"/>	<input type="text" value="County"/>
<input type="text" value="Post Code"/>	

## Appendix 3 – Manchester Evening News Advertisement

News

# Knifepoint robbery ordeal of young United footballer



Manchester United's Tahith Chong, inset right, Paul Pogba and Joao Cancelo, showing the injuries he suffered when attacked by robbers at his home

By **RICHARD FAY**  
newsdesk@men-news.co.uk  
@MENnewsdesk

MANCHESTER United youngster Tahith Chong has confirmed reports he was held at knifepoint by a masked gang who forced their way into his home.

It was reported that three balaclava-clad thugs broke into the 22-year-old's Sale property while he was asleep at around 3am, before holding knives up against his throat.

It is believed the raiders demanded he hand over possessions including jewellery, watches and women's designer bags during the terrifying ordeal that happened in January.

Yesterday, the academy graduate said on social media: "Yesterday there was a report that came out. As terrifying as the article may sound, I am doing fine and this was a few months back, so not as some reported last night."

Thank you for all the messages and happy Mother's Day to everyone."

The report in a national newspaper even claimed the invaders openly mocked the player - currently at loan at Birmingham City - over his poor security at the property.

United declined to comment on the specific incident, but a club source said: "We are working with our players

to review and strengthen the security around their homes."

Greater Manchester Police have been approached for comment.

The Dutch winger is the latest Manchester footballer to have been targeted by criminal gangs since Christmas.

Paul Pogba's home was raided while he played against Atletico Madrid at Old Trafford in the Champions League on March 15.

Pogba said at the time: "The burglars were in our home for less than five minutes, but in that time they took something more valuable than anything we had in our home... our sense of safety

and security."

In January, both Victor Lindelof and Jesse Lingard were also targeted while they were in action for United.

Lindelof was robbed while he was playing for United against Brentford on January 19, four days after Lingard had been robbed of £100,000-worth of clothes and jewellery while he played for United at Aston Villa.

In December, Man City star Joao Cancelo was at home when raiders struck at his home in Hale.

The Portuguese defender posted pictures of his cut and bruised face after he bravely confronted the gang.



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Submit your feedback

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[www.anwyllpartnerships.co.uk/consultations/didsbury-road-heaton-mersey](http://www.anwyllpartnerships.co.uk/consultations/didsbury-road-heaton-mersey)

By email

[partnershipsconsultations@anwyll.co.uk](mailto:partnershipsconsultations@anwyll.co.uk)

(Using subject line:

Didsbury Road Heaton Mersey)

By post

FAC: Anwyll Partnerships, Anwyll House

Clee Drive East, St David's Park,

Ewloe, Flintshire, CH5 3DT

For more information, scan the QR code



## Regan in tears after Dancing On Ice win

REGAN Gascoigne has been crowned the champion of Dancing On Ice.

The singer and dancer, 26, and his professional partner Karina Manta, saw off competition from Brendan Cole, who finished second and won the public vote during Sunday's final.

Gascoigne, son of former England footballer Paul, struggled to hold back his tears as he lifted the trophy, adding: "I am so overwhelmed, I never thought it was possible."

After being named runner-up, Cole, 45, said it was a "really

special moment" in his life.

They performed a Bolero routine for their final skate, which was inspired by judges Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean's 1984 Winter Olympics skating performance.

Following his final performance

Gascoigne said: "It's hard to keep it together, it was very special. "I genuinely did not think I would get the chance to do it."

Gascoigne, Cole and Pussycat Doll Kimberly Wyatt, who placed third in the competition, all received perfect scores for both their final performances on Sunday. Previously eliminated contestants including Love Island's Liberty Poole, Coronation Street actress Sally Dymevor and Happy Mondays star Bez took to the ice for a final time for a group routine during Sunday's final.



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# Heaton Mersey

ANWYL  
PARTNERSHIPS

## Redevelopment of Former Focus School, Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey

**Anwyl Partnerships invites you to comment on our proposals for the former Focus School site at Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey.**

The proposal is for 72 extra care apartments set within extensive landscaping, providing homes for those over the age of 55, alongside 10 four bed semi-detached family homes.

The apartments will be designed to facilitate an independent lifestyle in a safe environment that can also accommodate a range of care needs should residents require care. The Council's Housing Needs Assessment identifies a need for 2,414 additional specialist older persons accommodation.

The proposal will also include 10 four bed semi-detached family homes that will be accessed via a new road from within the site.

**We look forward to hearing views of the local community and will consider the feedback received ahead of any formal planning application being submitted to the Council. Upon any planning application being submitted, the Council will of course have to re-consult the local community again as part of the formal planning process.**

### Submit your feedback

#### Online

[www.anwylpartnerships.co.uk/consultations/didsbury-road-heaton-mersey](http://www.anwylpartnerships.co.uk/consultations/didsbury-road-heaton-mersey)

#### By email

[partnershipsconsultations@anwyl.co.uk](mailto:partnershipsconsultations@anwyl.co.uk)

(Using subject line:

'Didsbury Road Heaton Mersey')

#### By post

FAO: Anwyl Partnerships, Anwyl House

Clos Dewi Sant, St David's Park,

Ewloe, Flintshire, CH5 3DT

For more information,  
scan the QR code



*thoughtful building*

## Appendix 4 – Letter to Councillors

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17 Marble St.  
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M2 3AW  
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enquiries@mosaic-townplanning.co.uk



C/O Town Hall  
Stockport  
SK1 3XE

23 March 2022

Dear Councillor,

### **FORMER FOCUS SCHOOL, LAND OFF DIDSBURY ROAD, HEATON MERSEY**

I am writing to inform you on behalf of Anwyl Partnerships that we will shortly be consulting on proposals to redevelop the Former Focus School, Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey. The proposal is to provide an extra care apartment scheme to facilitate an independent lifestyle for people aged 55 and over, and 10 semi-detached family homes. Details of the proposals are attached. It is our intention to provide you with this information at the beginning of the process to assist in any queries made by you or the local community.

The Anwyl Group was established in 1930 and with over 91 years' experience has grown to become one of the leading contractors and house builders in the North West and North Wales.

The Partnerships Division is the contracting division of the Anwyl Group and specialises in the affordable housing sector, catering for a wide demographic ranging from general family homes to apartment buildings and extra care schemes.

The apartment building will comprise 72 self-contained extra care apartments and be designed to facilitate independent living so that occupants can maintain their level of independence for longer, with access to communal areas to socialise. Such proposals are proven to tackle social isolation within this age demographic, reduce dependency upon care and/or delay the requirement for care, and prevent people going into residential care home settings sooner.

Our retirement schemes ultimately reduce the Council's adult social care bill by keeping residents out of the residential care home setting for longer and also reduce the number of hospitalisations and associated costs the NHS incurs.

The application directly responds to the Council's 2019 Housing Needs Assessment (HNA), which states that there is a need for 2,414 more units of specialist older person dwellings such as extra care and retirement housing and an increase of around 740 units of residential care dwellings within the Borough. The 72 units proposed will assist the Council in meeting this need.

The HNA also states that 22% of all residents have an illness/disability and this is expected to increase to 23.6% by 2037. It is estimated there are around 1,008 households requiring wheelchair adapted properties in Stockport borough over the plan period to 2037. The proposals will therefore help provide suitable homes for real people in real need. Stockport also has the highest number of properties owned by those aged over 65 in Greater Manchester and the majority of these are under-occupied, with 2 or more spare bedrooms. Local symptoms of a failing housing market, such as under-occupancy and declining affordability, demonstrate the implications of inadequate retirement accommodation being available.



You may or may not be aware of a recent planning application that was approved for 34 dwellings subject to a S106 agreement in September 2020. Unfortunately, delivery of the scheme has not materialised due to viability reasons. Our proposal responds to the delivery issues posed by the previous scheme by virtue of the significant level changes across the site. Appendix A shows the reduced footprint of Anwyl's proposals in red against the approved scheme.

Whilst the new proposals provide an increased number of homes, there are no unacceptable adverse impacts in terms of trees or ecology. Conversely, the proposals will provide tree planting and habitat management. Appendix B provides the site layout and Appendix C provides an aerial view of the proposals.

It is notable that part of the site forms the former school playing fields. In accordance with decision making process of the previous planning application, these are no longer required and Sport England were satisfied an off-site contribution was appropriate.

Details are yet to be finalised and are subject to change based on the results of a consultation exercise before the application is submitted. Our engagement will be led by a website to gain the views of local people. An online public notice will be published in the Manchester Evening News directing people to the website to comment. The link to our website is set out below. This will be accompanied by a local leaflet drop. The consultation will commence on Monday 28th March and will be open for two weeks. This is in addition to the Council's statutory consultation during the application process.

Website Link: <https://bit.ly/3ue7Km0>

I trust the enclosed information is sufficient, however, should you have any queries or require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Paul Williams**  
Director

paul@mosaictownplanning.co.uk

Mobile: 07825 614 919  
Office: 0161 638 9211



## Appendix 5 – Comments Received via Website and Email

Thanks for your leaflet regarding the above proposed development.

As a resident of Masefield Drive which is adjacent I'd like to know the following:

1. What steps will be taken to minimise the impact on the local wildlife and environment during building works?
2. Will road access be as per your sketch, ie directly from Didsbury Road?
3. What are proposals, if any for the land between Masefield Drive, Tennyson Avenue and the land of the former Focus School?
4. Will this proposal meet any planning requirements for affordable housing?

I realise I may be premature with some of my questions but in any case I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for the update on the proposed plans for Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey. As a resident very very close to the site, please can you advise on the following:

1. Looks like the houses will be on Didsbury Road side and the higher building of flats will be near Tennyson Close - is that correct?
2. Can't assess how far the higher building (flats) will be from the back of the houses on Tennyson Close? Please advise.
3. Can't assess if you'll see the flats from Tennyson Close. Or at the back of the houses on Tennyson Close, is that where the plans are for planting trees?
4. What's the plans for parking of the flats? How many parking spaces will there be?
5. How will you maintain these flats are for people aged 55+? If the flats end up being occupied by young families, this will have a dramatic impact on families already residing in the area who want their children to get in the schools close by.
6. If planning is approved, when will the development be completed?
7. How will you manage the noise and disruption to people on Tennyson Close?
8. The proposed development is on a steep site;
  - How will this be managed to avoid any disasters eg falling rubble?
  - Will the drilling have any lasting damage to the properties on Tennyson Close?

Please can you confirm receipt of this email.

With reference to redevelopment of Focus school.

The problem I foresee is more traffic on Didsbury road which is already congested, noisy and polluting the atmosphere.

It is very bad at school times and in the rush hour.

What infrastructure is being put in place with regard to school entry and NHS services which are already poor in the Heaton.

The proposal looks interesting and is an improvement on a derelict school but I'd like clarification on the following.

1. We back onto the new development but the retirement home looks to be very high. I'm reassured by the plan for more trees on the southern edge but a much higher fence is essential.
2. The drainage in the area around our house is already very poor. We have repeated problems with blocked land drains and standing water around our property so I'd like to understand how land drainage will be assessed and implemented.

Hi respected sir/madam,

I'm really interested about this development.

I just want more information about this project that what is the procedure for applying a home in this development. I will look forward for your reply. Thanks

Can the residence be reassured that this development will not have an impact on house prices when selling.

Will residence be compensated for any disruption to their lives.

I am not opposed to the redevelopment of this site. This is not a signal of support though.

I have major concerns about the implications for increased traffic on Didsbury Road. This road is already unable to manage existing traffic with frequent and long queues in both directions. This proposal will inevitably make the situation worse.

I would like to know what assessment has the developer made of this impact and what mitigations will be made to reduce the impact.

Can you explain why the planning application has now changed for a retirement village rather than just houses from the developer? Several points:-

Have you been to the site and seen the topology? Without sounding agiist, I struggle as a 40 year old to walk up the hill from the bottom of Briars Mount to the top - building this retirement block at the bottom will all but keep the people there as prisoners - they wont be able to freely walk up the hill to any amenities or bus stop - especially as these are 'assisted living' dwellings. So, that must mean transport, aka car or minibus for every single trips they want, creating traffic and pollution?

On the subject of transport where will all the visitors to these 70+ apartments park when they visit? I don't see very much provision for parking, and what is provided will be surely filled with staff?

Is the nature area still going to be developed into something useable (between Tennyson and Masefield drive) as per previous applications?

I do not see this as a suitable location for retirement apartments, due to the landscape, the lack of suitable transportation and parking arrangements.

I think more incoming and outgoing traffic onto Didsbury Road would make this proposal unviable. The amount of support and specialist staff needed for this site would obviously make this worse than the previously suggested development, which was struck off in September 2020.

Therefore I believe this site and proposal is unviable for the local area.

The height of the flats is excessive, the school is only 2 stories.

The number of flats seems excessive and will generate a considerable amount of traffic.

Parking looks inadequate for the volume of accommodation proposed in the flats.

It is particularly important pavements are provided for elderly or mobility impaired to negotiate the road around the building safely and to keep them off the road. As the landscaping will be terraced on the hillside verges will be sloping and potentially slippery but would be unavoidable if there is no pavement provided.

Images do not show height of houses from Didsbury Road and am concerned that semi detached houses will be taller than originally agreed. Feel design of these could be more appealing than what is offered here.

Also note that proposed park area from original plan, has also disappeared, and that there does not appear to be enough parking spaces for 72 apartments. There is already a very large development of retirement apartments nearby and am wondering exactly what the issue was with original planning for 34 homes - am aware that a local estate agent was already in discussion with then developer to sell houses on site, so surprised this suddenly became an issue.

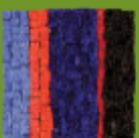
Don't feel this really gives enough information and the block proposed would stand out for those at bottom of slope. Was advised that the block was over 3 floors, but this is obviously over 4. Again whilst it states that block would appear as single storey from road, it would be beneficial for you to actually provide view from Didsbury Road to back this up. If agreed, white colour of apartments should be reconsidered, surely a colour that made the block less obtrusive for those who have to view could be considered.

Am also concerned about the increased amount of building work this would need, and the impact this will have on traffic and air quality for those already living nearby. Really don't see this as a good location for a massive block, site is not that large and surrounded by existing housing that will be greatly impacted by noise and increased traffic as a result - Didsbury Road is getting more and more congested even without this proposal.

Hi - I welcome the development of retirement living type dwellings in the area as a need has been identified as below:

The proposal for 72 apartments and 10 semi-detached dwellings is a viable solution to the site, which will also make a significant contribution to the pressing housing need. The Council's 2019 Housing Needs Assessment states that there is a need for 2,414 more homes of specialist older person dwellings such as extra care and retirement housing and an increase of around 740 homes residential care dwellings.

I do not know if there is a requirement for 10 x 4 bedroom houses and welcome a similar amount of research into this. Surely the area requires affordable, smaller dwellings for first time buyers and/or those with a reduced income such as social housing or shared ownership. I welcome an explanation as to what these houses would offer the area and the current breakdown of smaller, affordable properties. It would also appear that the 10 houses would be built on the existing playing fields - a shame to disturb the fauna and flora of the area - and surely the retirement living apartments would benefit enormously (mentally and physically) from the views and the lawn rather than large 'executive' residential housing.



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