Bell Farm Avenue, York - Design & Access Statement

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Project Title: Refuebishment and Retrofit Works, Bell Farm Avenue, Heworth, York

Contents

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Document

This document has been prepared in support of the planning application which seeks approval for refurbishment and retrofit works to 5Nr blocks of flats at Bell Farm Avenue, Heworth, York. The refurbishments include internal re-modelling, external renovations, demolition of existing modular extensions to the rear and erection of new traditional build extensions in their place. This statement sets out the rationale behind the application proposals and the key issues that have been taken into consideration. This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying information submitted.

1.2 Description of Proposals

City of York Council have an ambition to address fuel poverty across the borough and have opted for an energy efficiency retrofit approach to improve their existing housing stock to achieve this.

Energy efficiency retrofit involves carrying out improvements to the existing building fabric and service installations with the aim of:

- Improving thermal efficiency

- Reducing energy costs / carbon emissions

- Improving comfort for residents

- Improving aesthetic appearance

- Extending useful life of buildings

This planning application proposes the re-modelling of each existing 1 bedroom flat to provide more efficient, comfortable and spacious homes with the aim to achieve as close to nationally described space standards as possible, within the constraints of the existing buildings. All ground floor flats will have level access and wet rooms to create accessible homes. The proposal also includes upgrades to the external walls, windows and doors to improve the thermal performance of the properties. All energy efficiency upgrades will be designed in accordance with PA2035.

2.0 Existing Site Analysis

2.1 The Application Site

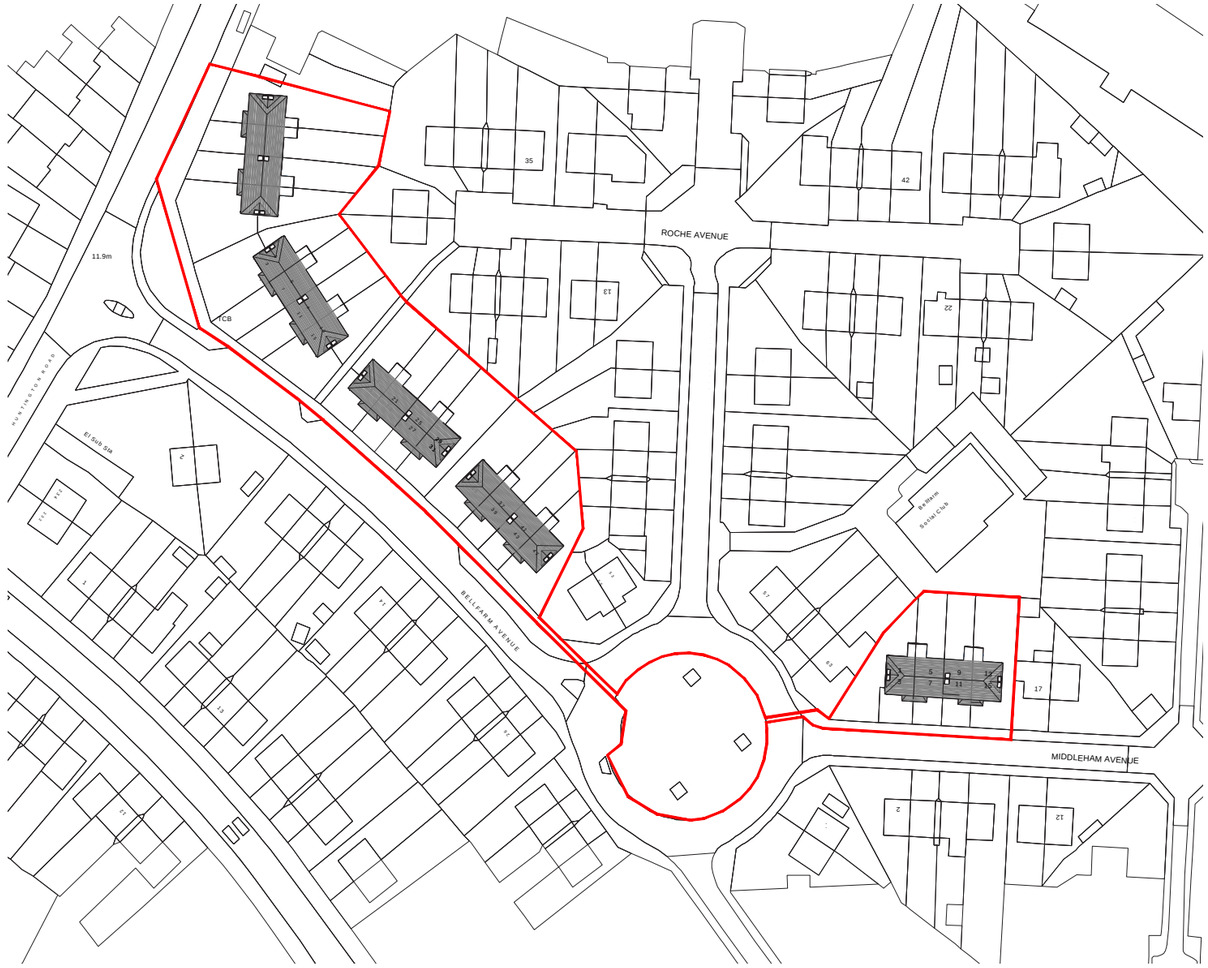
The application site, outlined in red, is located in the Heworth area of York, approximately 1.5 miles north of York city centre. The site comprises 5Nr blocks of 8Nr 1 bedroom flats, totalling 40Nr flats. 4 of the blocks run adjacent to one another, predomaninantly along Bell Farm Avenue with the most northern block being on the corner to Huntington Road. The fifth block to the east is located on Middleham Avenue, separated from Bell Farm Avenue by a small roundabout. This roundabout has been highlighted as a possible location for a site compound during construction.

2.2 Site Constraints

Bell Farm Avenue is accessed via Huntington Road to the north-west.There are roadside parking bays to the front of the blocks along Bell Farm Avenue and 4Nr driveways to the Middleham Avenue block.

There is 1Nr pedestrian access point for every 4 flats located to the front of each plot. The majority of the properties do not currently have level access. The Huntington Road block is raised slightly higher than the road level and there is a significant amount of ramped footpaths to provide access, along with associated handrails.

The surrounding area is largely characterised by sub-urban, low rise residential development of 2 storey houses and flats with some industrial and commercial units nearby to the north-east and the west.



Existing Site Plan

Key:

Application Site - 5675m²

2.0 Existing Site Analysis

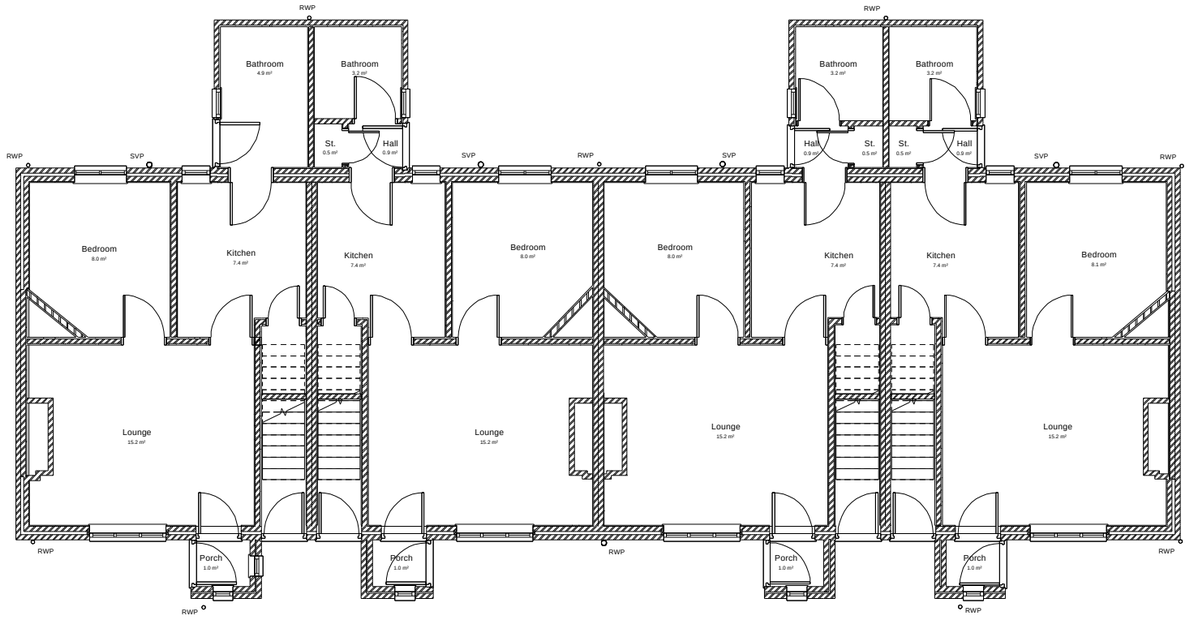
2.3 Existing Properties

All 5 blocks are of the same construction, appearance and internal layout. Each block is 2 storeys high and comprises 8Nr 1 bedroom flats. Each flat has a seperate living room and kitchen, a single bedroom - accessed directly off the living room - and a bathroom to the rear.

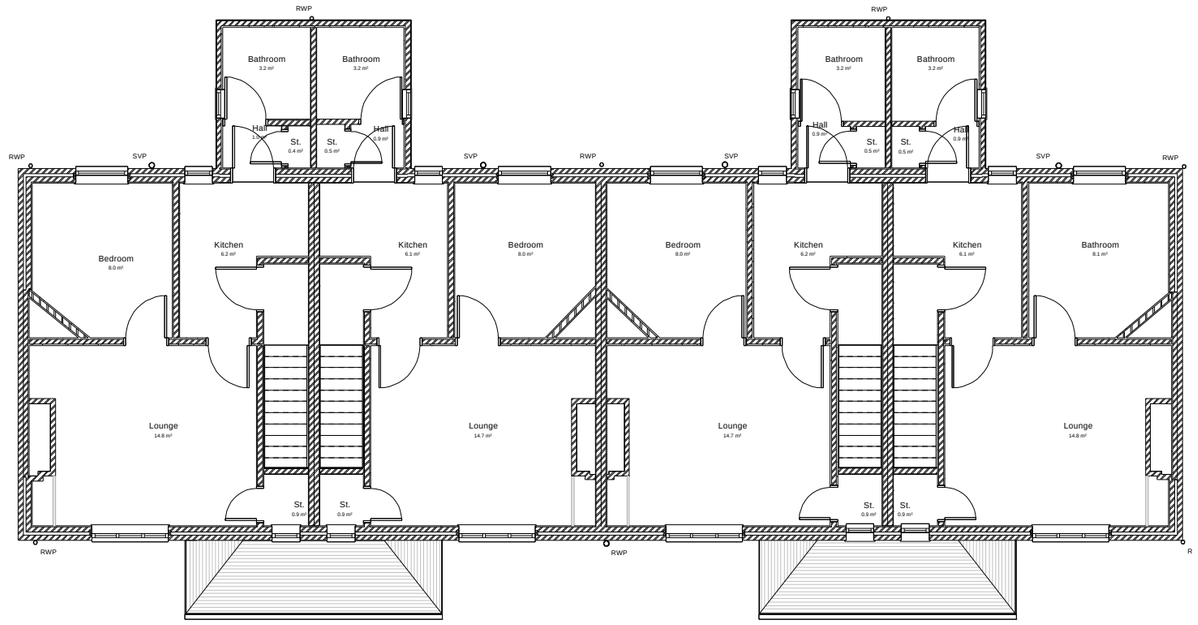
The bathrooms are located within a modular build, flat roofed extension which contains asbestos containing materials. The flat roof is not in keeping with the surrounding vernacular.

The main buildings are of red brick cavity wall construction and have hipped roofs finished with concrete pantiles. Cavity wall investigations found that although there is existing insulation within the external wall cavity, it is sporadic, in poor condition and has failed in places suggesting that it will not be performing sufficiently.

The proposal seeks to provide a thermal retrofit updgrade whilst also introducing an aesthetic uplift to the properties.



Existing Ground Floor Plan



Existing First Floor Plan

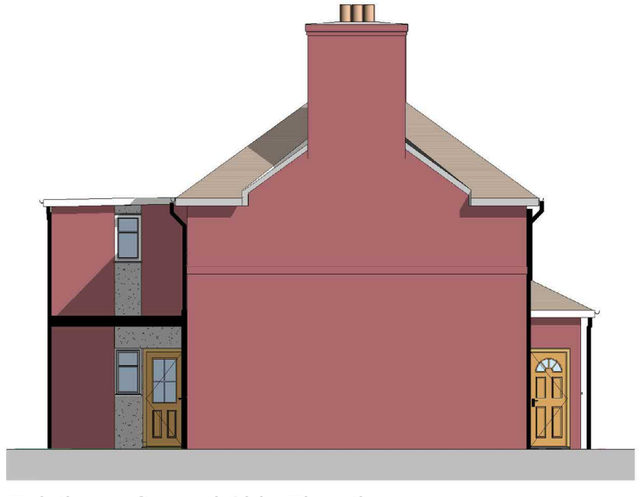
2.0 Existing Site Analysis

2.3 Existing Properties

Existing Front Elevation

Existing Right Hand Side Elevation

Existing Rear Elevation



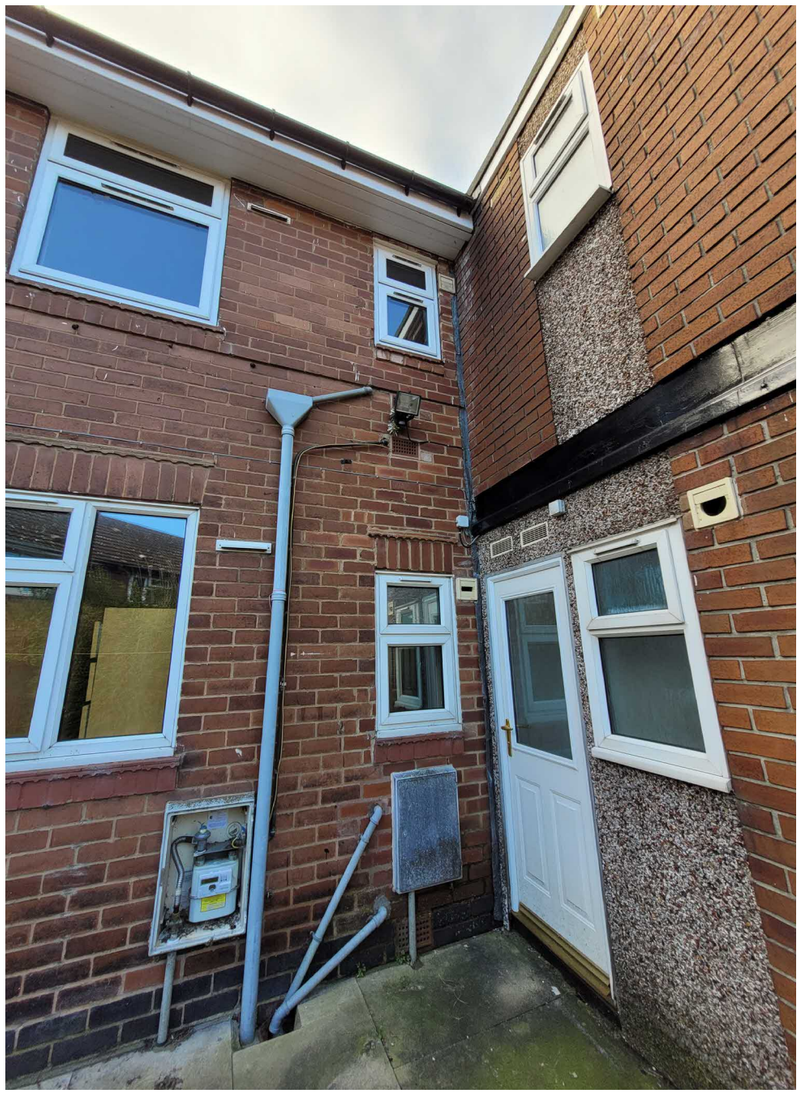
Existing Left Hand Side Elevation

2.0 Existing Site Analysis

2.4 External Photographs

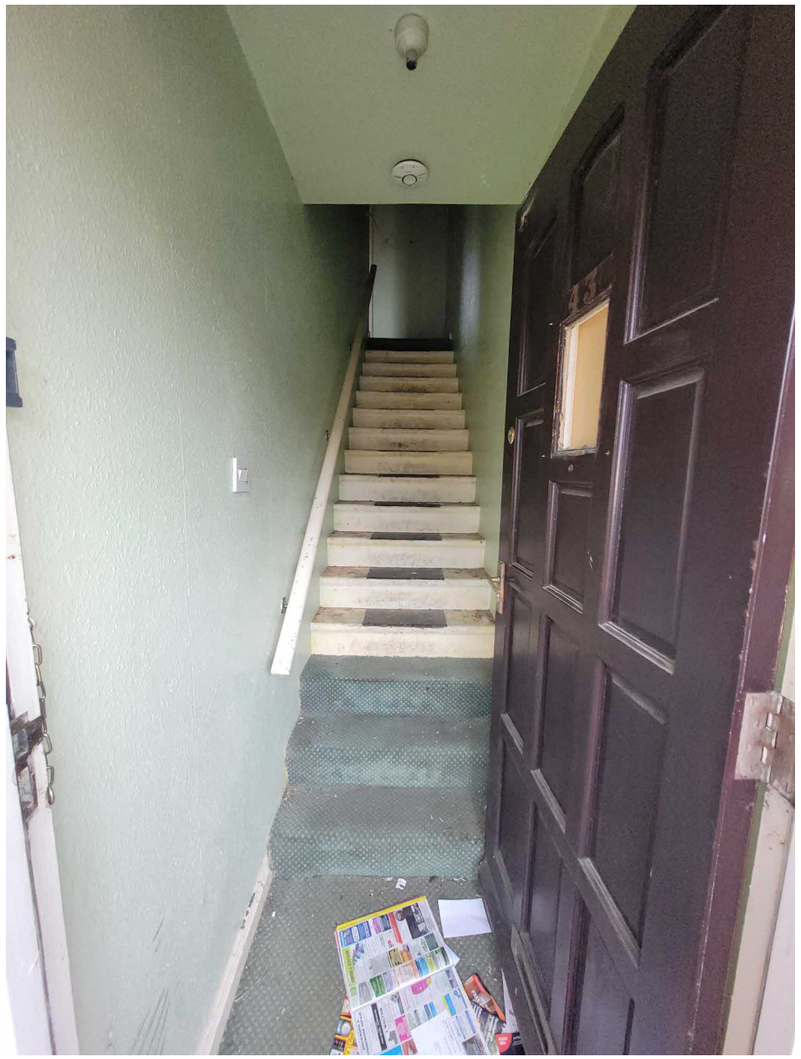
2.0 Existing Site Analysis

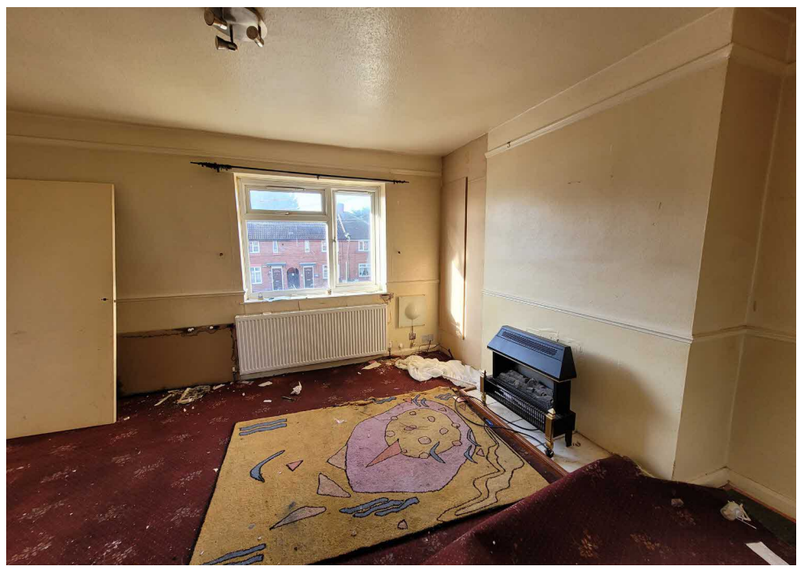
2.4 External Photographs



2.0 Existing Site Analysis

2.5 Internal Photographs





2.0 Existing Site Analysis

2.6 Surrounding Area

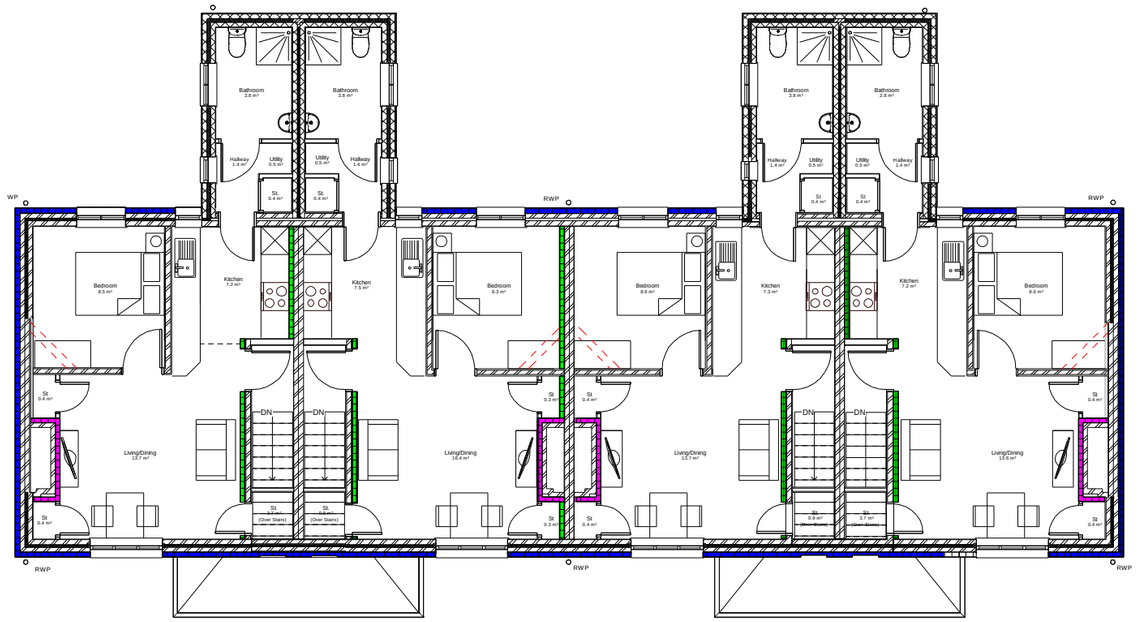
3.0 Design Process

3.1 Proposed Flat Layouts

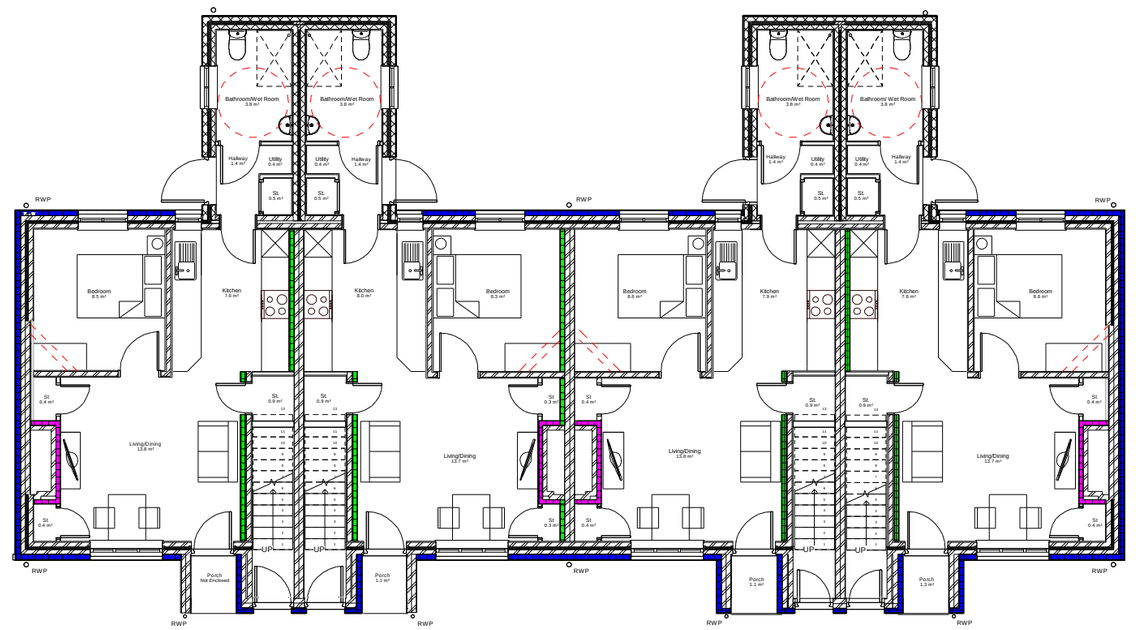
The layout of each existing building comprises 4Nr 1 bedroom flats at ground floor and 4Nr 1 bedroom flats at first floor. The ground floor flats have a small entrance porch to the front providing direct access to the living room. The porch is acccesed to the side and is not large enough to allow a wheelchair to turn. The doors to the rear of the properties are not level access so these flats are currently not accessible to people with limited mobility. The entrance door to the first floor flats opens to a staircase which provides access to the kitchen. Each flat comprises a separate living room and kitchen, a single bedroom - accessed directly off the living room - and a bathroom - accessed either via the kitchen or via a hallway off the kitchen.

This application proposes the internal re-modelling of all flats to provide improved living arrangements which are more accessible and closer to achieving nationally described space standards than the current layouts. The proposal includes removing the area of wall between the living room and the kitchen to provide more spacious and light open plan living accommodation. The modular extensions to the rear of the properties are to be demolished and replaced with tradtional build extensions. The existing extension contains hazardous asbestos containing materials and the flat roof to the extension is not in keeping with the surrounding area. The traditional build extension proposed in its place wil comprise a hipped roof to match the style of the existing buildings and surrounding properties.

To improve accessibility to the ground floor flats, the porch will be opened up with the main access door now being at the front of the property rather than the side of the porch, to provide level access to all ground floor properties. Wet rooms are also proposed to the ground floor flats for improved accessibility. The existing staircases to the first floor are going to be removed and replaced with a new timber stair. The position of the new stair will be moved forward from the existing positon to increase the livable space within the flats.



Typical Proposed First Floor Plan Type 1



Typical Proposed Ground Floor Plan Type 1

3.0 Design Process

3.2 Flat Layout Types

There are 3 different proposed flat layout types which have been designed and allocated dependant on the proximity of the neighbouring properties to alleviate any concerns of overlooking. The main difference to each type is the extension to the rear.

The extension to Type 1 is similar in size to the existing modular extension and houses the bathroom, a hallway and storage. This is to be used where there are neighbouring properties in close proximity.

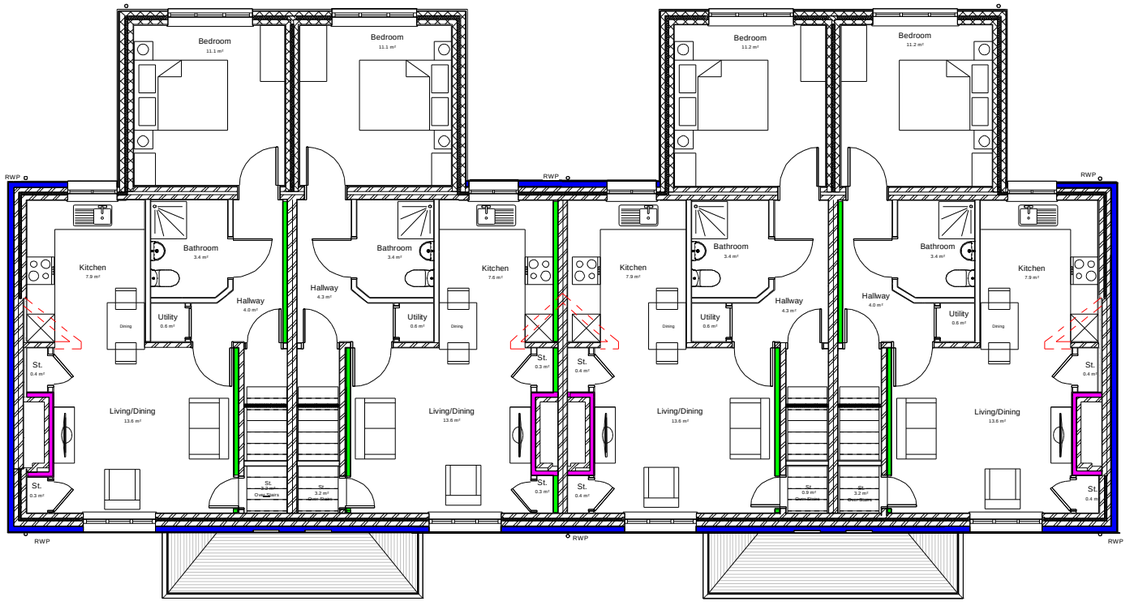
Type 2 has a larger extension to the rear which houses a double bedroom. This is a significant improvement on the existing flat layouts as the flats currently only have a small, single bedroom. By moving the bedroom to the rear, this also allows for an improved living arrangement with a larger open plan living / kitchen area and a hallway providing access to the bathroom and bedroom.

Type 3 is almost the same as Type 2 but the bedroom windows are located on the side elevations rather than the rear to avoid overlooking of nearby properties to the rear. Obscure glazing will be proposed to the kitchen windows on adjacent flats to allow privacy as necessary.

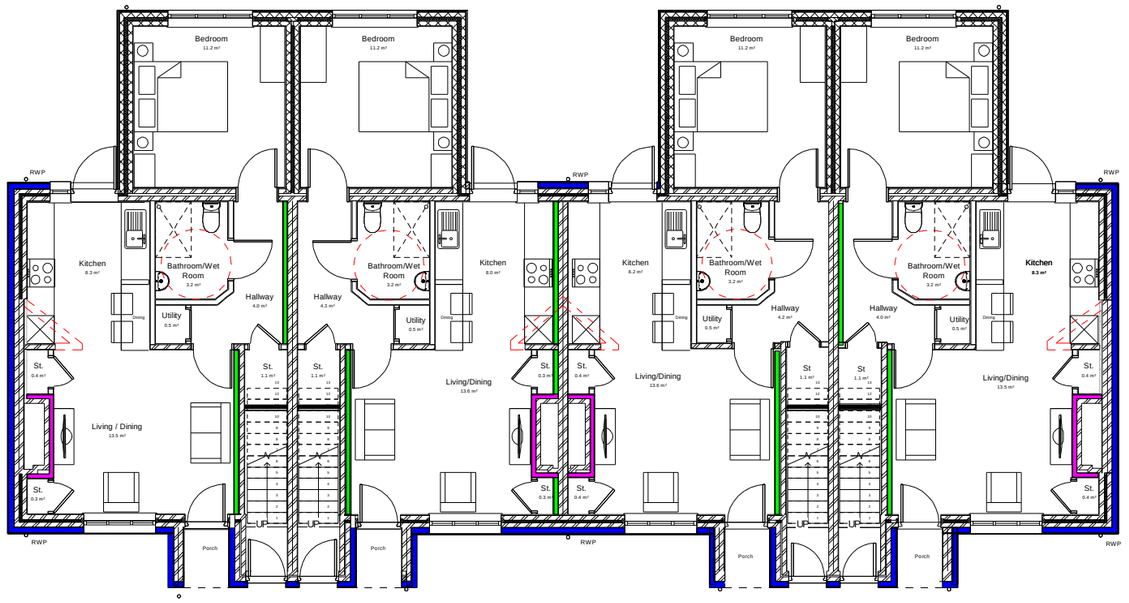
The Proposed Site Layout submitted with this application indicates which type is proposed in which location.

3.3 Initial Planning Consultations

Prior to submission of this application, we have had informal discussions with City of York Council's Development Management team regarding the proposals. It was highlighted that flat layout Type 2 may create overlooking issues in some instances. Where this is of concern we are proposing to utilise flat layout Type 1 - with the bathroom to the rear - or flat layout Type 3 - with the bedroom windows to the side - to eliminate overlooking. It was noted that it would be preferable for ground floor flats to have direct access to the rear garden. On flat Type 1, there is access to the garden via the rear hallway and on Types 2 and 3 the rear garden can be accessed via the kitchen. We were advised to consider wheelchair accessibility to the ground floor flats. We have proposed level access and accessible wet rooms to all ground floor flats of all layout types. Earlier elevation designs considered a cream render finish with grey PVCu windows but there was concern that this may look utilitarian. Taking this on board, we decided on mixed grey render with white PVCu windows and red brick slip details.



Typical Proposed First Floor Plan Type 2



Typical Proposed Ground Floor Plan Type 2

3.0 Design Process

3.4 Energy Efficiency Improvements

As well as developing our designs in accordance with the latest UK Building Regulations and with reference to nationally described space standards, the designs have also been developed in accordance with PAS 2035. PAS 2035 focuses on improving the existing building fabric and service installations of the property to achieve the following:

- Improved thermal efficiency

- Reduced energy costs / carbon emissions

- Improved comfort for residents

- Improved aesthetic appearance

- Extended useful life of buildings

The existing EPC ratings of the properties do not currently achieve a C rating. Introducing energy efficiency improvements in accordance with PAS2035 will increase the properties EPC ratings to a C or better, providing the benefits listed above. This work will take the buildings forward with a sustainable and timeless design, extending the life expectancy and improving the lives of residents for the future years.

3.5 Materials

As part of the retrofit energy efficient improvements, the external walls, windows and doors will be upgraded to improve the thermal performance of the existing buildings. Materials to the extension have been chosen as to reflect both the current materials and the proposed upgrades to the existing building.

External Wall Insulation (EWI) System:

The design proposals include wrapping the building facades with a modern, noncombustible EWI system with a render finish. The existing buildings suffer with cold bridges, particularly to the window surrounds and party wall junctions. The proposed EWI will provide a full thermal layer over the façade with a common thickness of insulation. This has the benefit of overcoming cold bridges whilst at the same time allowing different palettes / colours to be applied, providing a secondary benefit of aesthetic improvement. The EWI will be finished with a mix of light and dark grey render with red brick slip details to window sills and a soldier course. The aesthetic improvement offers a modern uplift to the elevations whilst retaining elements of the original aesthetic and the surrounding buildings through the use of the red brick slip details.

Windows and Doors:

The existing windows and doors are to be replaced with new windows that meet current building regulations and PAS2035 standards. The new windows will be white PVCu to match the existing and the surrounding buildings. The new doors will be GRP composite doors. To the rear, these will be white to match the windows. The colour of the front doors is to be determined by City of York Council.

Rainwater Goods:

The existing gutters and downpipes are to be replaced with black PVCu gutters and downpipes in keeping with those found on surrounding properties.

Extension:

The extension will be of tradional cavity wall construction with an insulated cavity and therefore will not require EWI. For continuity and consistency, the extension will also have a mixed grey render finish with red brick slip details. The roof to the extension will have interlocking double roman concrete tiles in a colour to match the existing building. The new fascias and soffits will be white PVCu to match the existing.

3.0 Design Process

3.6 Proposed Elevations

Proposed Front Elevation Type 1

Proposed Right Hand Side Elevation Type 1

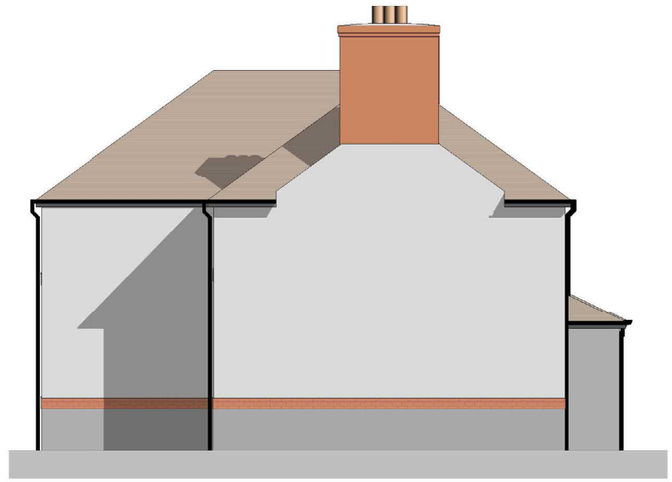
Proposed Rear Elevation Type 1

Proposed Left Hand Side Elevation Type 1

3.0 Design Process

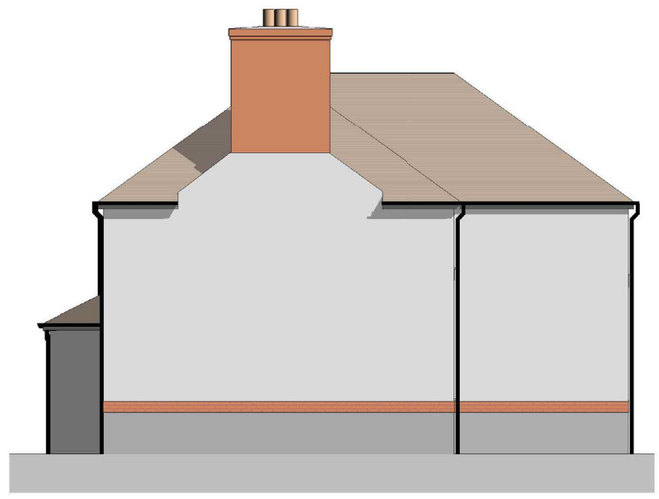
3.6 Proposed Elevations

Proposed Front Elevation Type 1



Proposed Right Hand Side Elevation Type 1

Proposed Rear Elevation Type 1



Proposed Left Hand Side Elevation Type 1

3.0 Design Process

3.7 Example Visuals

Indicative Proposed Front Visual

Indicative Proposed Rear Visual (Type 2)

4.0 Conclusion

This statement has been prepared to accompany the planning application for the refurbishment and retrofit works to 5Nr blocks of flats at Bell Farm Avenue, Heworth, York. This document focuses on the overriding principles and details of the planning application.

The proposal provides a solution for enhancing both the appearance and the thermal performance of the properties on Bell Farm Avenue, Huntington Road and Middleham Avenue.

Owing to the size and extent of the application, we, the agent, believe we have satisfied the validation criteria within this statement and the supplementary information provided.

This document is to be read in conjunction with Michael Dyson Associates drawings and supplementary information.

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