

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Former Ambulance Station, Cemetery Road, Ramsbottom, BL0 9PU

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompanies a full planning application for the redevelopment of the former Ramsbottom Ambulance Station on Cemetery Road, Ramsbottom. The proposal seeks consent for the demolition of the existing redundant building and the erection of **three detached dwellings**, each providing approximately **241 m² of internal accommodation over three storeys**.

The Statement has been prepared in accordance with the **Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015** and responds directly to **pre-application advice issued by Bury Council**, addressing matters of layout, scale, appearance, streetscene integration and access.

The site lies within the established urban area (outside Green Belt). The Council's pre-app confirms the principle of residential development is acceptable. While the PfE housing supply position is robust, the latest published HDT still informs the tilted balance until superseded; in any case, the proposal accords with policies directing development to sustainable locations and making effective use of land.

2. Site and Context

The site occupies a prominent but transitional position on the eastern end of Cemetery Road, immediately adjacent to Ramsbottom Cemetery. The surrounding townscape is notably **varied**, comprising:

- Traditional stone and brick terraced housing along Cemetery Road
- Detached and semi-detached dwellings of differing ages and styles
- Bungalows and an apartment block to the rear (Bramble Place)
- The **ornate cemetery lodge** opposite the site, which provides a distinctive architectural counterpoint to the more modest terraces

This variety results in **no single, uniform architectural character** dominating the immediate context.

A defining feature of the site is the **physical and visual break** between the existing terrace and the proposed plots, created by retained trees and site spacing, clearly illustrated on **Drawing P006 (Proposed Street Scene)**.

3. The Proposed Development

The proposal comprises:

- **Three detached, three-storey dwellings**
- Five bedrooms per dwelling
- High-quality materials including stone and slate
- Active frontages to Cemetery Road
- Generous internal floor areas exceeding national space standards
- On-plot parking and private amenity space

The scale, form and layout have been carefully designed to respect surrounding development while making efficient use of a constrained brownfield site.

On a site of c.0.095 ha (0.085 taking into account RPA zone), three homes equate to ~35 dph. Here, TPO tree RPAs, frontage width, and a need to maintain rhythm/spacing with Cemetery Road support a moderated density. The proposal delivers family-sized NDSS-compliant (134 m² for 3F 5b8p), M4(2) adaptable homes, directly addressing local needs for larger units identified under JP-H3. A Density Statement accompanies the application.

The layout achieves or exceeds the Council's aspect guidance: >30 m front-to-front across Cemetery Road; >7 m from rear first-floor windows to boundary; upper-floor rooflights serve non-habitable spaces. For Plot 1, a daylight/shadow assessment demonstrates no material harm to the first-floor window at No. 29 given orientation and path of the sun.

4. Design Response

4.1 Layout and Streetscene

Drawing **P006** demonstrates that the proposed dwellings do not read as a continuation of the existing terrace. Instead, they are **visually separated** by:

- Retained mature trees
- A change in plot rhythm and spacing
- A clear break in building line

This break allows the new dwellings to be read as a **distinct but complementary group**, rather than a forced extension of the terrace.

The layout ensures appropriate separation distances, maintains residential amenity, and responds proportionately to tree constraints and site geometry.

4.2 Scale and Massing

The proposed dwellings are three storeys in height, consistent with the vertical proportions of nearby housing and appropriate within the wider context, which includes bungalows, two-storey dwellings and taller buildings to the rear.

Ridge and eaves heights are carefully controlled and align acceptably with adjacent properties, as demonstrated in the submitted elevations and street scenes.

4.3 Appearance and Architectural Detailing

Response to Pre-Application Comment on Front Bays

The Council's pre-application advice suggested the removal of the **square projecting bays** on the principal elevations in order to more closely reflect the adjacent terraced housing.

The Applicant has carefully considered this request but respectfully maintains that the bays should be retained for the following reasons:

1. **Contextual Justification**

The immediate streetscene is not architecturally uniform. While terraced houses are present, they are only one component of a mixed townscape that also includes detached homes, bungalows, and notably, the **ornate cemetery lodge opposite the site**.

2. **Heritage Reference (Without Pastiche)**

The projecting bays provide a **subtle nod** to the strong vertical elements, depth and articulation found on the cemetery lodge, rather than copying the simpler terrace elevations. This creates a respectful dialogue across Cemetery Road without resorting to imitation.



3. Visual Interest and Quality

The bays:

- Break up the massing of relatively large family homes
- Provide depth and shadow to the façades
- Add legibility and animation to the street frontage

Their removal would result in flatter, less articulated elevations and a diminished architectural quality.

4. Townscape Break and Partial Screening

Plot 1 is **partially screened** by the retained tree, reducing the prominence of the bays when viewed from the public realm. Given the existing physical break in the street scene, the bays do not appear incongruous or dominant.

5. National Design Guidance

The National Design Guide is clear that good design does **not require replication** of existing buildings. In this context, the bays represent a proportionate and justified contemporary response rather than a harmful deviation.

For these reasons, the Applicant considers the retention of the projecting bays to be both **appropriate and beneficial** to the overall design quality of the scheme.

5. Materials

The proposed dwellings will utilise a restrained and high-quality palette of external materials, selected to respond positively to the character of Cemetery Road and its varied built context.

The principal facing material will be **Ibstock Anstone – Black (Old Weathered)** brickwork. This material has been chosen for the following reasons:

- its dark, weathered tone reflects the muted palette found within the surrounding streetscape, including traditional masonry buildings and boundary structures adjacent to Ramsbottom Cemetery;
- the finish provides a robust and high-quality appearance appropriate for prominent front elevations;
- the brick's subtle texture and colour variation add depth and visual interest, avoiding a flat or overly uniform appearance; and
- the darker tone allows architectural features, including window proportions and façade articulation, to read clearly without appearing visually dominant.

The use of **Ibstock Anstone – Black (Old Weathered)** also supports the design approach set out within the Design and Access Statement, providing a contemporary interpretation of traditional materials rather than direct replication of neighbouring buildings.

Roofing materials will comprise **Sandtoft – Rivius Antique Slate** roof tiles, selected to provide the appearance of natural slate with subtle tonal variation, complementing both the darker brickwork and the established roofing character evident within the surrounding streetscape.

Window frames and rainwater goods will be finished in complementary dark tones to create a cohesive and well-considered external appearance.

Precise material samples and detailing can be secured by condition if required; however, the proposed palette is considered appropriate in principle and capable of delivering a high-quality development that integrates successfully with its surroundings.

These materials reflect local traditions while allowing for a contemporary interpretation.

6. Access

Replacing an ambulance station with 3 dwellings reduces trip intensity in principle. The application includes: dimensioned access and parking, gradients/FFLs, visibility splays at back of footway, lighting-column offsets, and refuse strategy. In Zone 4 (SPD11), 3 spaces per dwelling are provided (tandem capability shown), with a footway improvement scheme and a reasoned mitigation of on-street parking displacement.

6.1 Vehicular Access

Vehicular access is taken from Cemetery Road, utilising established access points. Each dwelling benefits from on-plot parking in excess of adopted standards, reducing reliance on on-street parking.

6.2 Pedestrian Access

Safe and legible pedestrian access is provided to each dwelling from the public footway, with clear separation from vehicular areas.

7. Inclusive Design

The dwellings are designed to be adaptable over time, with generous internal layouts, logical circulation, and ground floor WC provision. Level changes across the site are modest and managed sensitively.

8. Sustainability and Technical Matters

Drainage: SuDS-led design per national standards and GM SuDS Guide, with maintenance plan. Land Quality: Contamination Desk Study/PRA provided. Air Quality: No AQMA; scale below EPUK screening threshold; EV charge points proposed. Energy/Carbon: Carbon & Energy Statement setting out fabric-first measures and low-carbon technologies (e.g., PV/ASHP), annotated on plans. Digital Connectivity: Statement confirming FTTP multiple-ducting provision in line with JP-C2.

9. Conclusion

This Design and Access Statement demonstrates that the proposed development:

- Responds positively to a **mixed and varied townscape**
- Makes efficient use of a constrained brownfield site
- Delivers high-quality family housing
- Provides a reasoned and defensible response to pre-application advice
- Retains architectural features that enhance, rather than detract from, the streetscene

The scheme represents a **carefully considered, policy-compliant design solution** that will enhance the character and appearance of this part of Cemetery Road.