



8-12 QUEEN STREET, NEATH | April 2026

Design & Access Statement



1. INTRODUCTION

This Design & Access Statement is prepared by Hammond Architectural Ltd on behalf of the applicant.

It has been prepared in relation to the future redevelopment located near the centre of Neath.

The purpose of this report is to summarise the design journey undertaken to date and illustrate how a thorough site and context analysis is informing the layout.

The structure of this document follows the stages of the design and planning process set out in the Welsh Government document 'Site & Context Analysis Guide: Capturing the Value of a Site', published March 2016.

- Section 2 'sets the scene', outlining the background to the project and the project brief and vision.
- Section 3 of the document summarises the 'site and context analysis' informing the approach of the ongoing design process.
- Section 4 provides an overview of the emerging concept proposal and identifies next steps.

8-12 QUEEN STREET SITE

BRIEF TO CONSULTANTS

Provide a number of 1 Bed 2 Person & 2 Bed 3 Person Apartments along with Ground Floor Retail spaces fronting onto Queen Street

Taking into account:

- Communal & circulation spaces
- Amenity space
- Ancillary spaces (cycle, bin store, etc)
- Limited undercroft parking provision

Guided by the following design principles:

- Simple, cost-effective materials and detailing
- Cost effective energy performance (aspire to EPC A)
- Designed to meet the WDQR 2021 Standard
- Create a light, airy and secure home environment
- Provide an exemplar of design excellence
- Utilising Modern Methods of Construction (MMC)
- Meeting the Placemaking Charter



2. PROJECT TEAM

Hammond Architectural (HAL)

Committed to sustainable placemaking, creating quality places that contribute to people's health, happiness and well-being. Going forward HAL are excited to be working on projects that champion Aspirational Design, the normalisation of affordable, low carbon living and accessible green infrastructure.

Asbri Planning

Wales' largest independent Town Planning Consultancy, dedicated to driving forward development projects that shape our communities for the better

PHG Consulting Engineers

Independent Civil and Structural Engineering Consultancy Operating throughout England and Wales, based in Cardiff, Ceredigion & Cornwall



Count Hotel, Ebbw Vale – Approved scheme for Bron Afon HA



Agate St, Cardiff – Completed scheme for Taff Housing Association



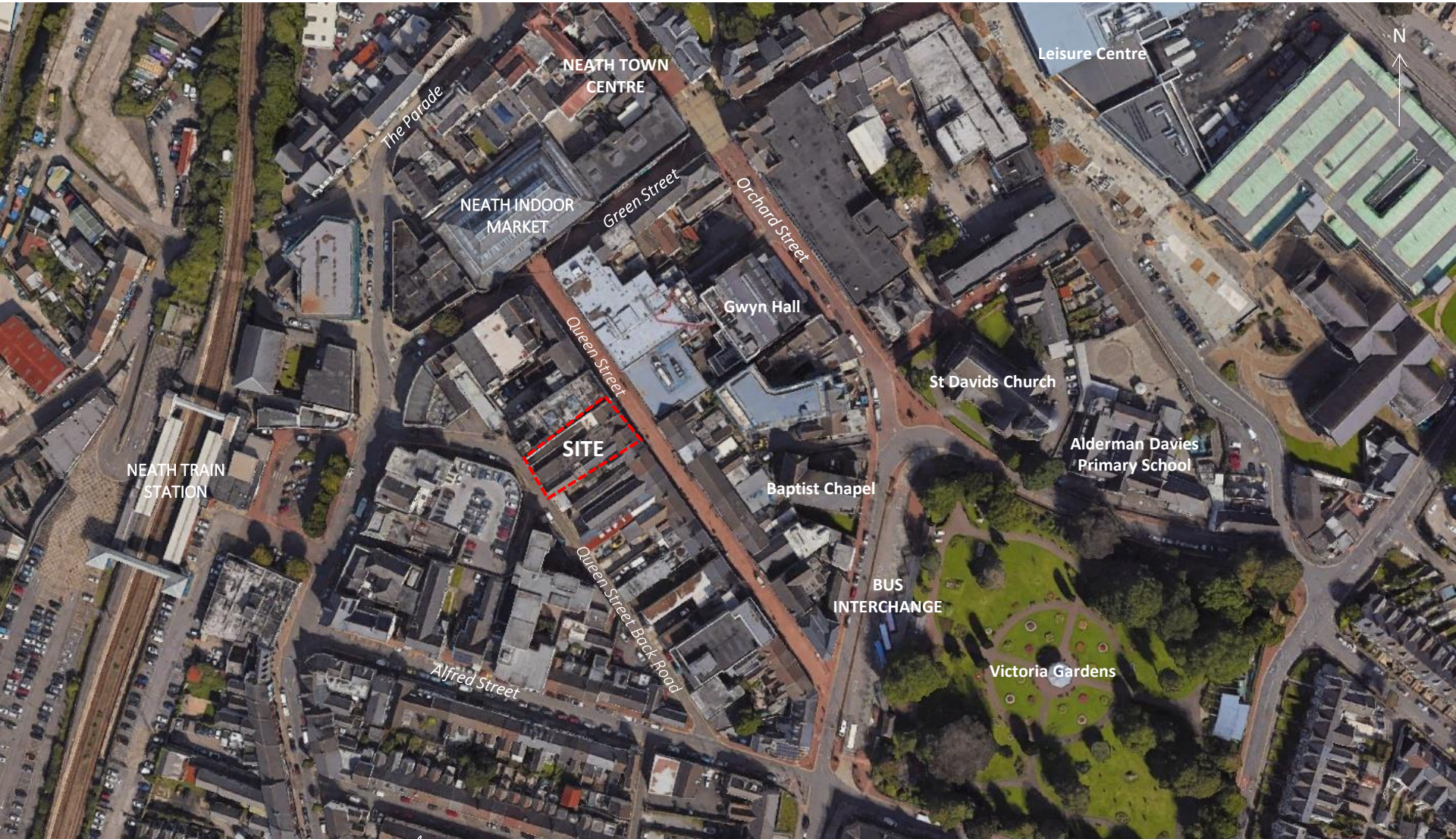
SITE AND CONTEXT Analysis

3. SITE AND CONTEXT ANALYSIS



Site

Located in Neath, South Wales. In the centre of the town, within a dense urban area of mixed uses - residential buildings, retail areas, commercial development and transport infrastructure.





Site Context

The site constitutes three separate buildings each comprising ground floor retail and a mixture of 1st Floor uses. Only No. 8 & 12 are currently occupied.

The site sits in a key position at one of the pedestrian gateways to the town centre, towards the north end of Queen Street. This street acts as a key part of the town centre street network, framing the approach to the landmark Indoor Market building.



The site itself is on a flat piece of land situated on the western side of Queens Street. The site is bound to the northeast and southwest by other retail premises, and to the west by Queen Street Back Road.

The building form is predominantly two storey with front to back pitched roof, but the neighbouring Peacocks building to the northeast sits considerably above the site levels at approximately 4 storeys. Existing vehicle access is from Queen Street Back Road.

Site Context Photos:



View A



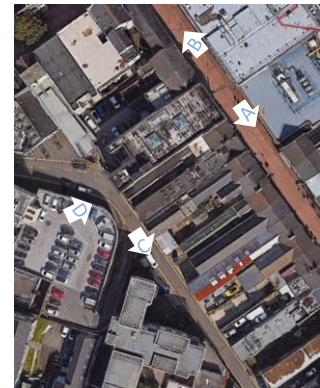
View B



View C



View D



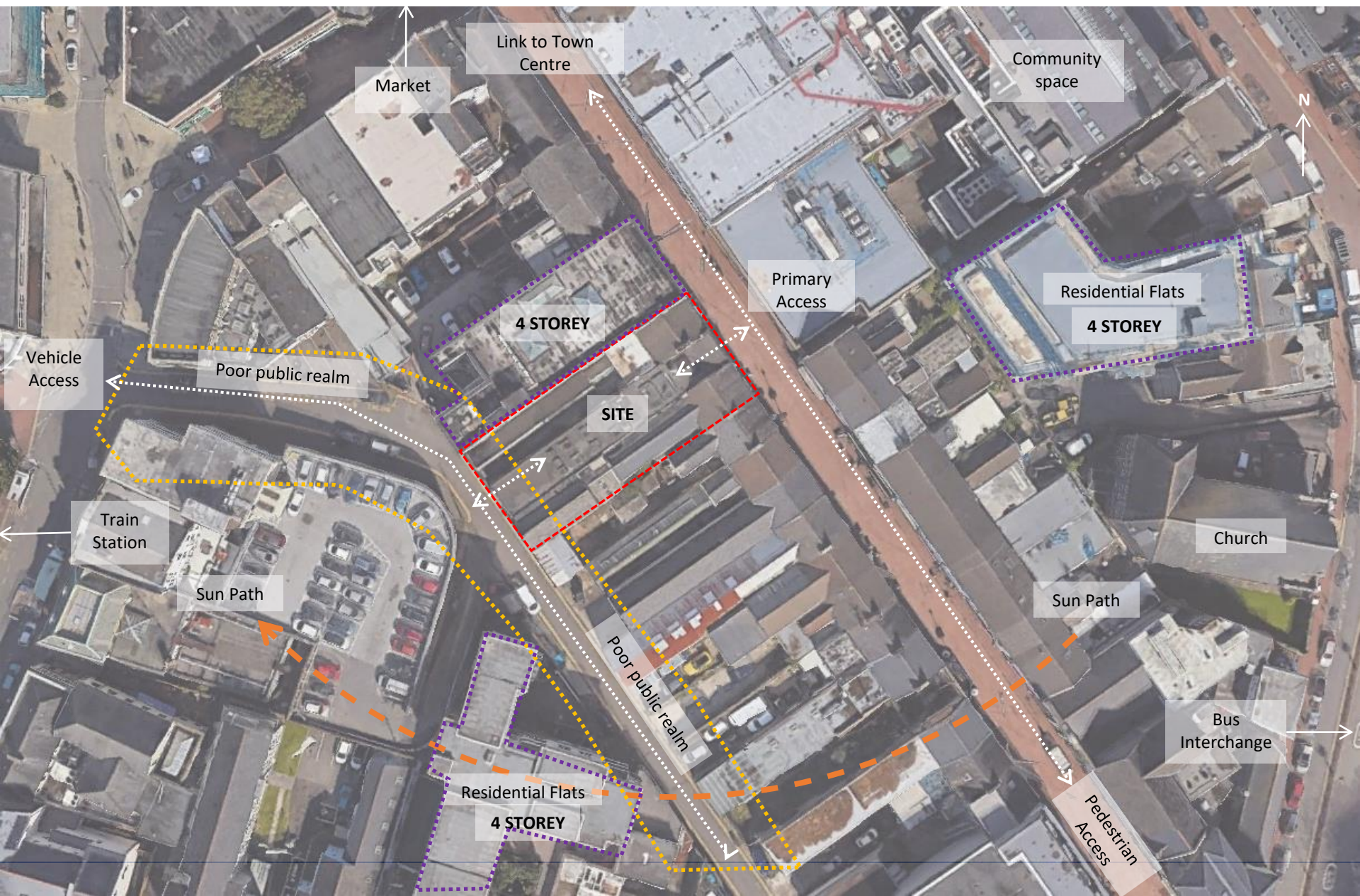
Local Vernacular



Material Palette



The site represents something of a design crossroads between the typological ages of the locale. Brick, render and pennant stone are common across the immediate area, but in variation of colour and quality. Georgian shop fronts to the south of the site utilise a mix of brick and render, with stone or painted brickwork frames to windows and doorways. Slate roof is most common, with white upvc windows frames in abundance. More contemporary styles can be seen to the north, with Art Deco and modernist architecture utilising render, brick, metal cladding and concrete. Examples of more intricate brickwork can be found in some of the surrounding properties, as well as variations to roof forms & materials. Pronounced white elements in elevations are a regular theme. No one style dominates.



SWOT Analysis

The early identification of site constraints and opportunities has informed the design process, helping capture the full value of the site and create a site-specific response that is sustainable, accessible and deliverable. The key constraints and opportunities presented by the site are summarised below.

Strengths

- Land is currently under one ownership and in a prominent position, which would allow us to create a landmark development for the town.
- Sustainably located within the town core , in walking distance to local amenities.
- Close to train station, bus stops and walking distance to town's shopping centre, local shops and parks.
- Existing buildings are in poor condition.
- Size of site allows spaces for considerable development to meet local housing needs.
- Easily accessible site as it's facing a main street and has rear vehicular access.
- Existing pedestrian access option to main frontage, linking to wider town centre pedestrian zone.

Weaknesses

- Potentially difficult relationship with the public realm to the front and rear.
- Infiltration drainage unlikely for the entirety of the site.
- Possible land contamination.
- Proximity to neighbours may result in overlooking issues.
- Mixed architectural style dominates area, will require careful design to integrate with neighbours.
- Poor public realm, especially along Queen Street Back Road.

Opportunities

- Underdeveloped area.
- Opportunity to improve poor public realm.
- Community engagement, social value and cohesion opportunities.
- Potential for residential redevelopment to meet community needs.
- Aspire to net zero carbon.
- Achieve/Comply with Lifetime Homes, HAPPI Homes, DQR, BHS, Part M, SBD.
- Incorporate SUDS, ecological mitigation and biodiversity enhancement measures.
- Surrounding massing presents opportunity to increase density of site.
- Create a landmark building at key gateway to town centre
- Deliver principles of the Placemaking Charter

Threats

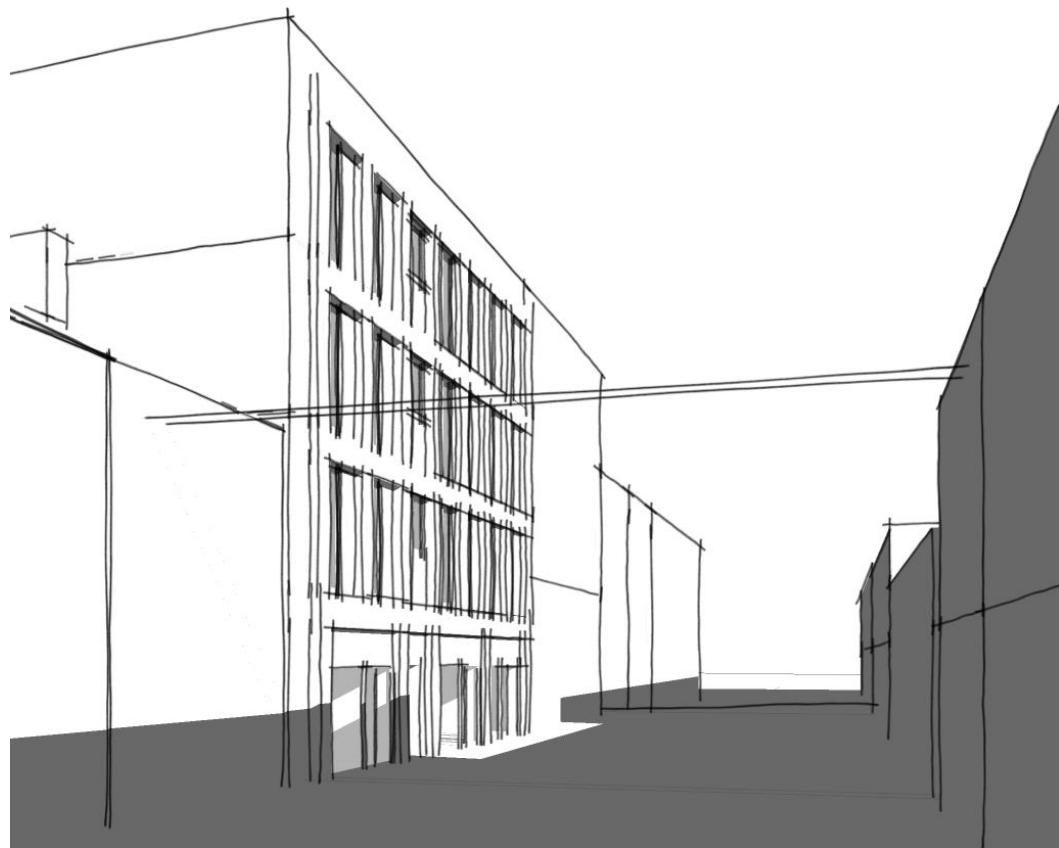
- Overlooking issues with existing neighbors and public realm.
- Potential contamination within ground soils.
- Proximity to Grade II Listed Building & part of Conservation Area.
- Potential noise impact from the shops and proximity to the Queen Street Back Road.
- Impact on existing neighbors.
- Lack of current parking provision and need to provide 1:1 spaces for new development.
- Acoustic issues
- Flood zone
- Coal Risk Area



DESIGN RESPONSE

VISION

- Design a contemporary, sustainable mixed use residential development that embraces place making and fosters community.
- Create a mixed use residential scheme that supports a diverse, mixed community and delivers much needed affordable homes.
- Deliver an exemplar development that successfully integrates into the wider neighborhood, responds to its context and has the potential to act as a catalyst for meaningful regeneration.
- Provide a focal design point that enhances the aesthetic aspect of the street, aiding legibility and providing a sense of identity to residents.
- Capitalise on the unique town centre location, prioritising sustainable lifestyles and sustainable transport.
- Leave a legacy, that is sustainable, green and climate resilient where people of all ages and abilities can live a healthy, balanced lifestyle in harmony with the environment.



Early concept sketch



DESIGN RESPONSE
Concept Design

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

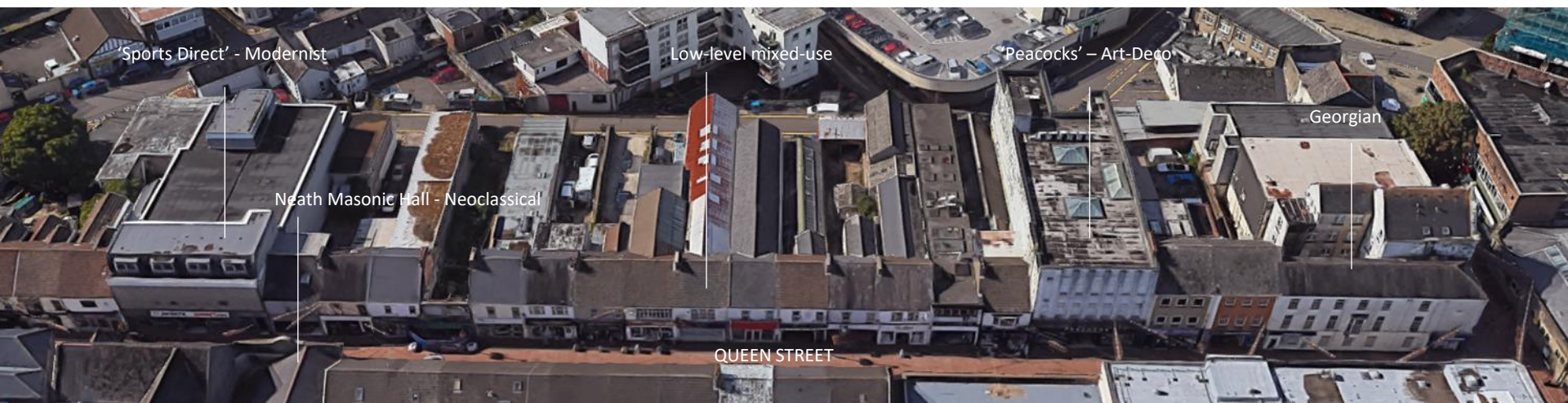


The early design development of the scheme centered around the pre-app submission for No. 10 & 12 Queen Street, before No. 8 was added to the project.

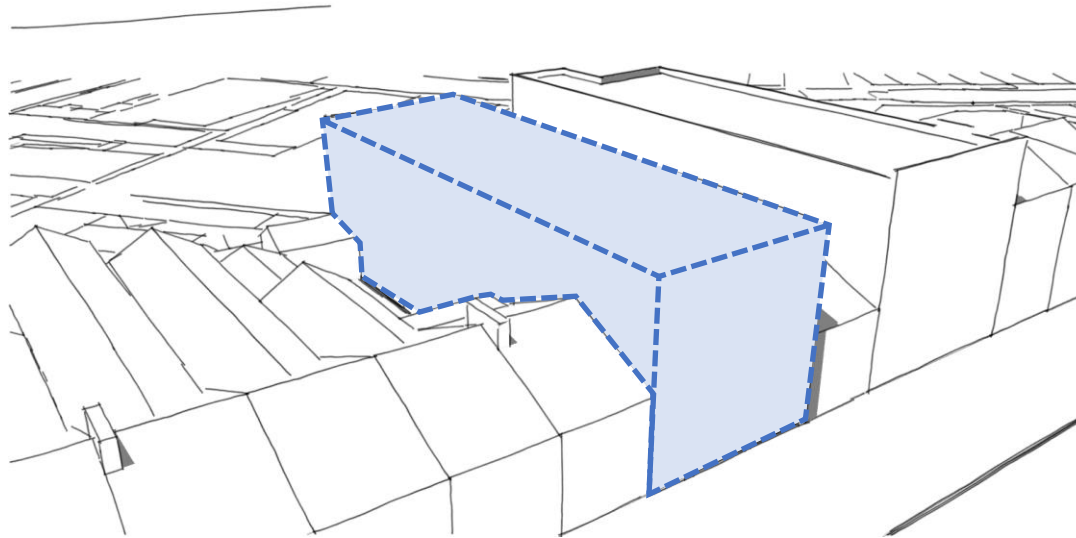
Our initial approach was to respect and respond to the immediate buildings in terms of scale, setback and architectural character. Having observed Queen Street we concluded that there was no one distinct style, with interventions from a number of periods including Georgian, Art-Deco, Classical and Modernist. Despite the variety of styles, there are valuable site-specific features which run throughout, namely repetition, symmetry and rhythm. We used these specific features as the basis of our design approach, ensuring we maintain the feeling of rhythm, scale and symmetry, similar to that of No 6 Queen Street (Peacocks) and of the Neath Masonic Hall (also on Queen Street). The low-level mixed-use units again show a variety of styles, with window sizes and styles changing regularly, providing little consistency and therefore value.

Having walked Queen Street and Queen Street Back Road we wanted to be sympathetic to any shadowing impacts on neighbouring properties, which is why we have kept the height of the proposal in line with those to the north of Queen Street towards Green Street (E.g. Peacocks, Nationwide) and the 'Sports Direct' building to the South. Neath as a town benefits from a rich plethora of additional styles, with Neath Abbey showcasing the grandeur of the Gothic style; Neath Town Hall in contrast being an example of Neoclassical design. Other influences, whilst not dominant, such as Romanesque Revival and Renaissance Revival can also be found in Neath, reflecting the broader architectural trends of the time.

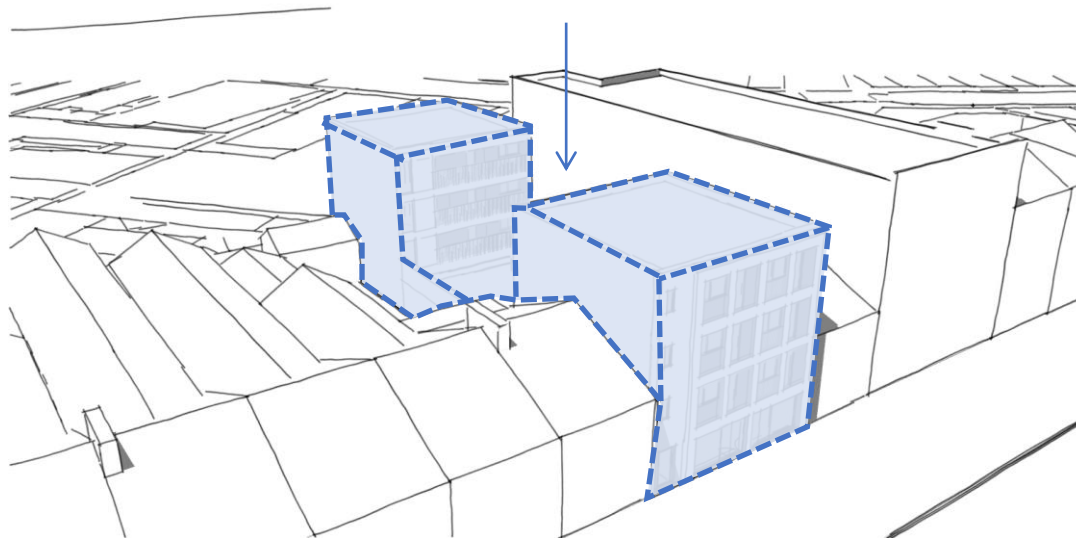
Our intention therefore was to maintain elements of these various styles without creating a pastiche copy of any of them. We have applied rhythm, scale and symmetry in an unapologetically contemporary form in order to create something of interest and of its time. Our aim is to create a beautiful piece of modern architecture which accentuates Neath rich architectural history.



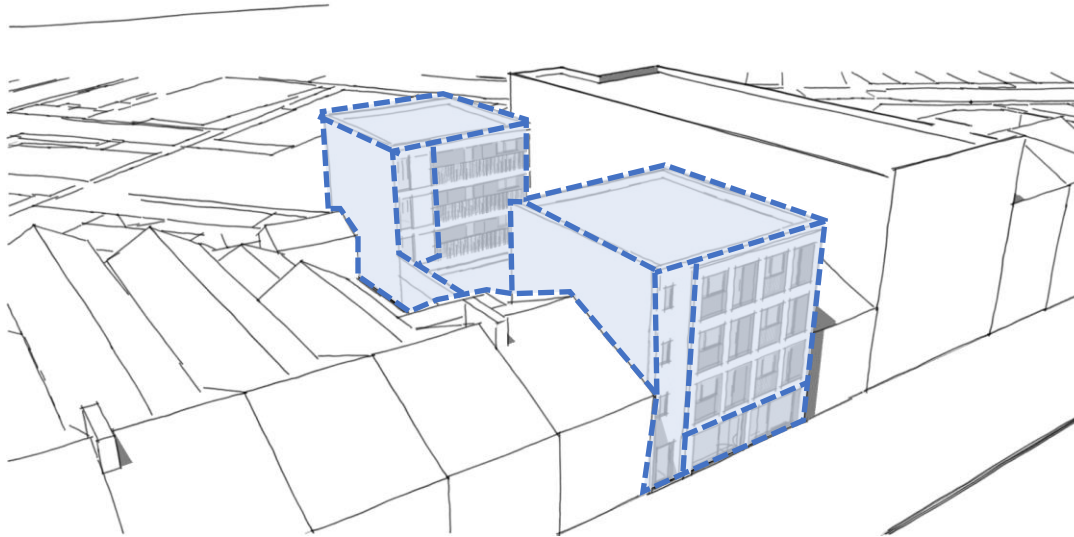
1. Developable site
envelope identified



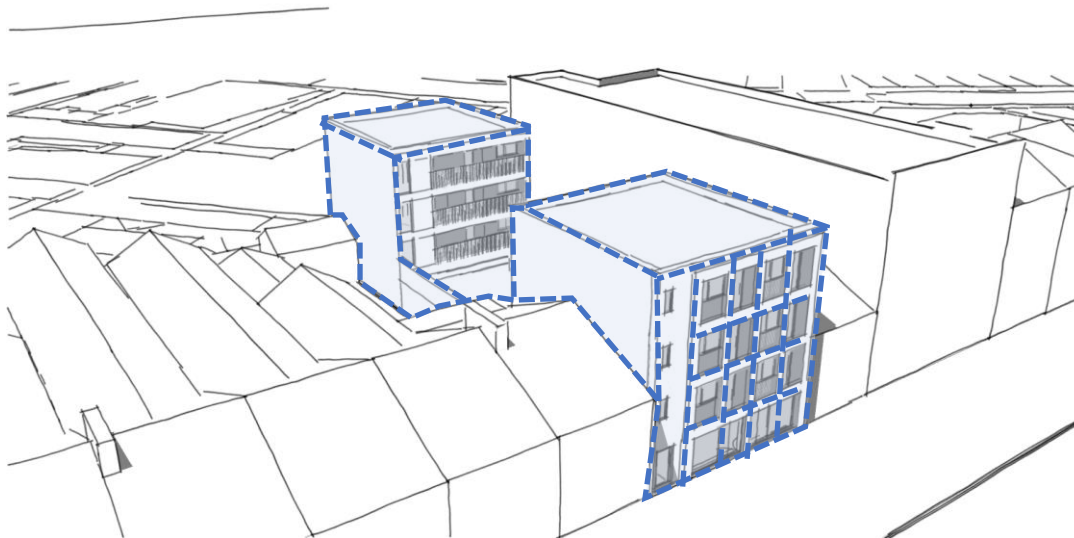
2. Internal frontage
exposed for double
aspect and amenity



3. Material treatments
fragment massing,
enhance connection
and highlight entrances



4. Articulation further
introduced rhythm to form,
through window positions,
brick details and inverted
colour changes



DESIGN DEVELOPMENT



Connectivity & Accessibility

Our intention was to reinforce the existing urban grain and block structure through thoughtful infill placement. Whilst ideally this would have included Number 8 in order to abut No 6 (Peacocks) this was not feasible at this stage due to site ownership.

We have maintained pedestrian links, developed mid-block connections and improved laneway access.

The proposals deliberately aim to strengthen street activation and observation to both Queen Street and Queen Street Back Road to more hours of the day, improving safety and adding to the feeling of community.

Sustainability & Environmental Response

Due to the nature of the site, our courtyard approach aims to integrate passive solar design despite site constraints, creating a private sanctuary for residents away from the hustle of Queen Street.

Our intention is to also consider green roofs and rainwater collection if space allows and to use durable, locally sourced materials suited for dense urban use and maintenance.

Community & Identity

Our motivation was to reinforce neighbourhood identity through appropriate scale, materials, and architectural language, and to avoid 'generic' development, in order to integrate authentically with the streetscape and engage the community to align the infill with local needs and aspirations



DESIGN DEVELOPMENT



Facade Design Exercise

As part of the design process, we undertook a comprehensive optioneering exercise to come up with the most responsive façade arrangement that emphasises the design focus on introducing symmetry, rhythm and repetition to the façade, that would allow the design to become a distinctive built form in its own right, that references and emphasises the character of its context.



OPTION 1

OPTION 2

OPTION 3

OPTION 4

OPTION 5

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Built Form, Massing

As mentioned previously our aim was to align with the most dominant buildings along Queen Street with regards rooflines and streetscape rhythm.

We have used recessed areas and façade articulation to create a clean, crisp street elevation.

The driving factors behind the massing was to maximize usable floor area for the retail element whilst ensuring that the apartments above adhered to height, daylight, and privacy regulations. We have also taken advantage of the buildings vertical articulation to visually reduce bulk on the narrow, tight footprint.

Street Interface & Functionality

The main principles were to maintain the active street frontage on Queen Street and enhance street frontage on Queen Street Back Road with transparent façades and clear entry points.

Due to the constraints of the site, internal layouts have limited options, however we have attempted to design flexible layouts that adapt to changing urban lifestyles.

As Queen Street is a pedestrianised area, we have designed efficient service access (e.g., deliveries, refuse) via Queen Street Back Road.

We have provided shared amenities (e.g., rooftop gardens, bike storage) to maximize utility on a small urban footprint.



DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

With the addition of No. 8 to the project brief came to opportunity to address the disjunct between No.6 (Peacocks) and our site caused by the 'gap' in massing. The design language formulated thus far was still applicable and resulted in a more satisfactory composition with the 'gap filled in'. It also allowed the site to fulfil its role as an important junction between the predominant styles of the Queen Street frontages on this side of the road.

Elements of the Georgian shopfront character are carried though the façade of the proposed design, with the shop front proportions, 1st floor window dimensions and the dark roofline massing all represented.



Features from the Art Deco Peacocks building are then carried over the face of the site, with the predominant white lattice gridwork drawn across to create a layered finish to the building, weaving the two disparate typologies together.



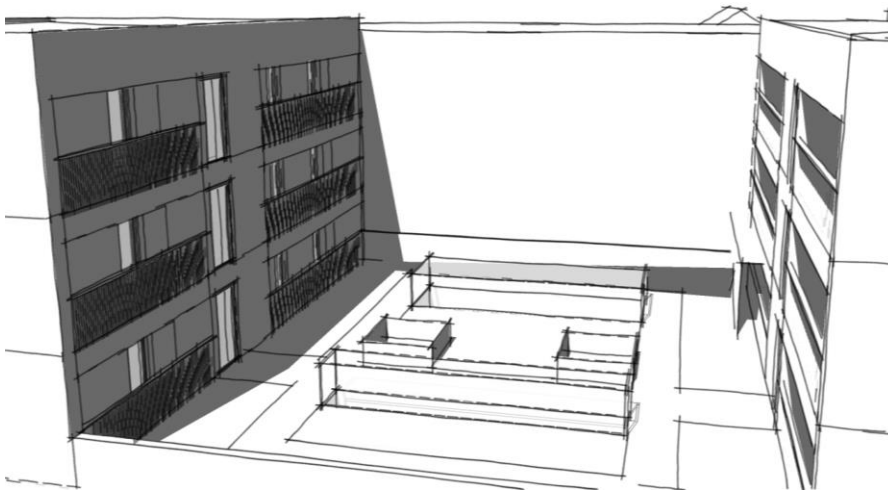
The resultant layers are accentuated by the addition of a set back along the side and top to add further layering to the building, and articulation of windows through deep reveals. Inset brick panels carry the material motifs of the surrounding context through the design under the lattice, adding further depth.



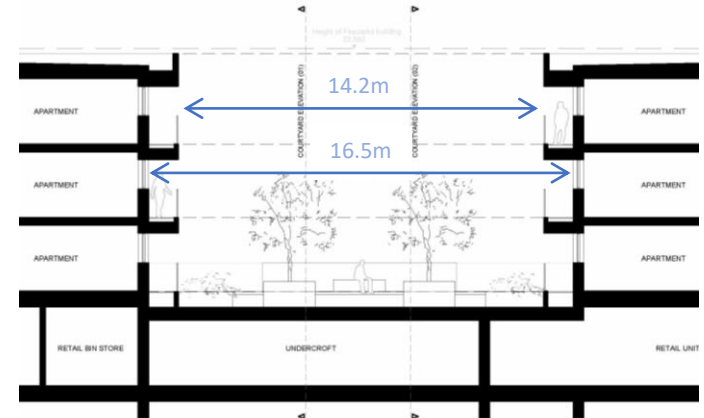
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The addition of No. 8 to the project has also allowed us to create a far more substantial resident amenity area at 1F between the two perimeter apartment blocks. Although the separation distance between the blocks does not meet the SPG guidance of 21m back-to-back, we feel it is justified on the grounds that:

- By introducing internal frontages, the space allows us to increase the density of the site (in line with principles of placemaking charter)
- All units will be double aspect, experiencing great levels of natural lighting and ventilation
- Inset balconies on courtyard provide a further degree of shelter and privacy for occupants
- Arguably not a back-to-back condition as per the SPGs intent
- Planting will provide screening at lower levels
- Overlooked space is communal amenity not private gardens, and 21m would not encourage active frontages and stewardship of the space by residents as it would be too wide.
- Courtyards that are intimate and well overlooked tend to experience less ASB issues.



3D massing of amenity space



Section & setback distances

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Access

Pedestrian access to ground floor shops and residential areas will primarily be to the front of the site, from Queen Street, a pedestrianized street to the northeast.

Vehicular access is primarily to the rear of the site, via Queen Street Back Rd. This is a one-way road with a single footpath opposite the site to the southwestern side of the road (fig 1). Loading for retail premises will continue via this route as it does currently.

Access is proposed from a limited number of parking spaces for residents/staff with mobility issues. Gates are currently shown as roller shutter style, which will be perforated or chain link style to be seen through.

Refuse Collection

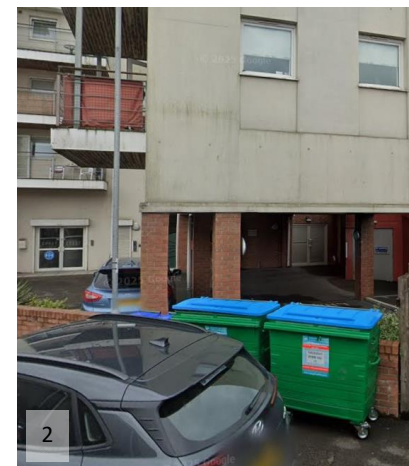
Residential refuse collection will be via Queen Street Back Rd., collected directly from the bin store by operatives. This would be an improvement on the strategy currently in place at neighbouring residential properties on this road, who have on street storage & collection (fig.2)

Commercial refuse collection will be managed by the retailer, brought out for collection from the storage when operatives arrive

Vision Splays

Vehicles: A single splay is shown to the north, as road is one way traffic. Manual for Streets advice for vision splays on bends has also been followed, as approach road is bending.

Pedestrian splays: No pedestrian splays are shown as there is no footway to be crossed (only footway is on opposite side of road, see fig.1)



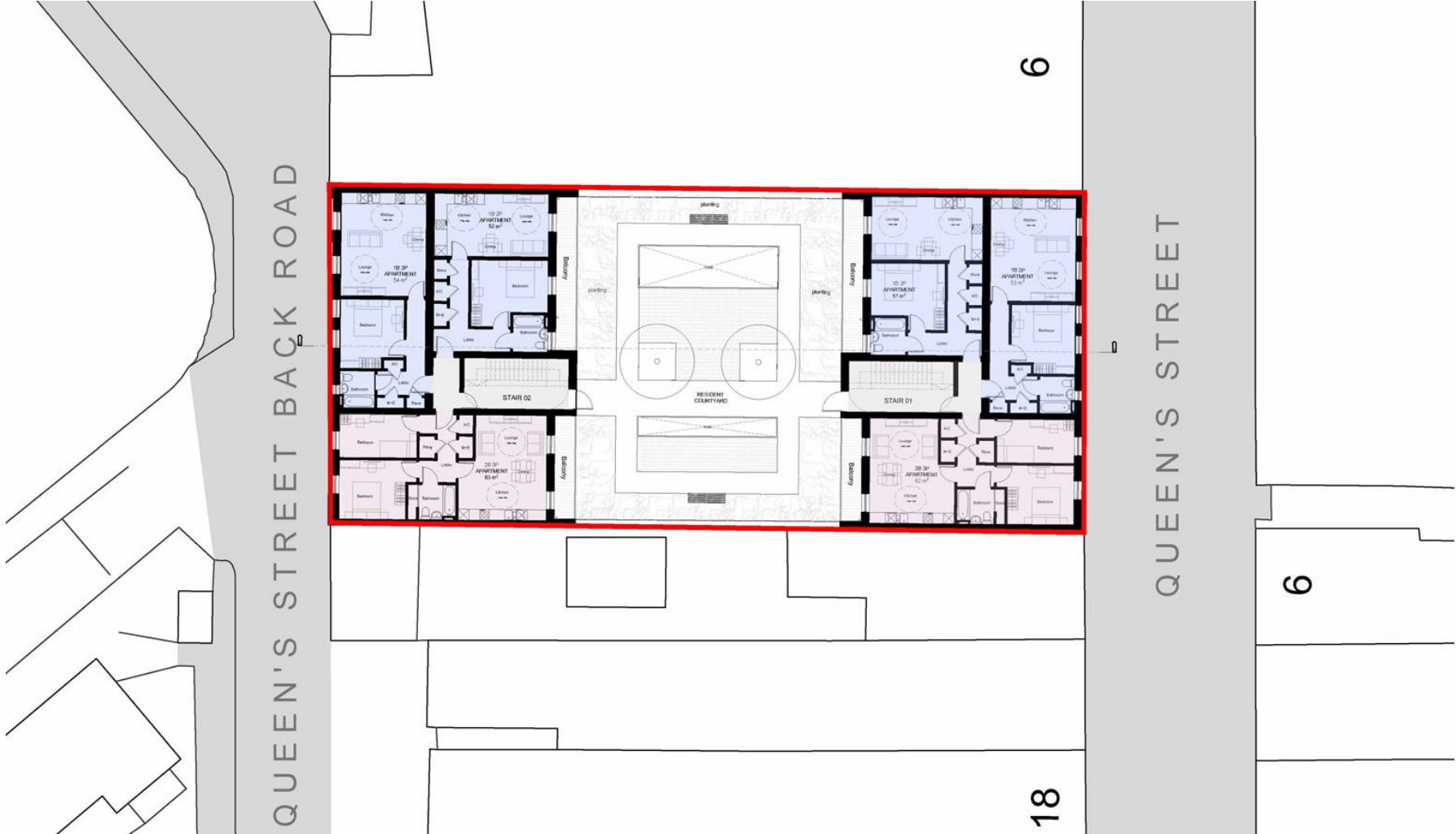


DESIGN RESPONSE
Proposed Design

Proposed Design
Ground Floor Layout

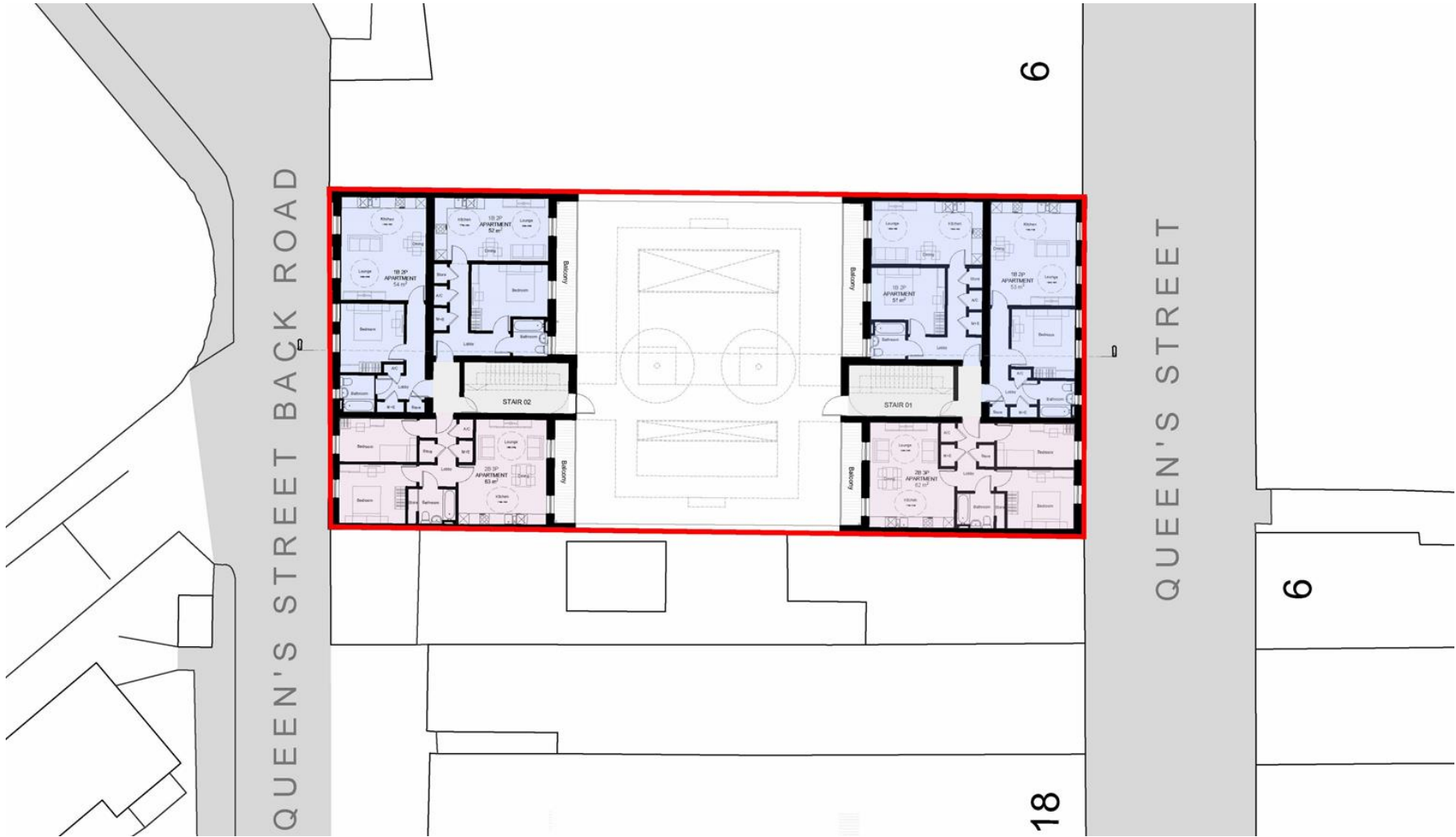


Proposed Design
First Floor Layout

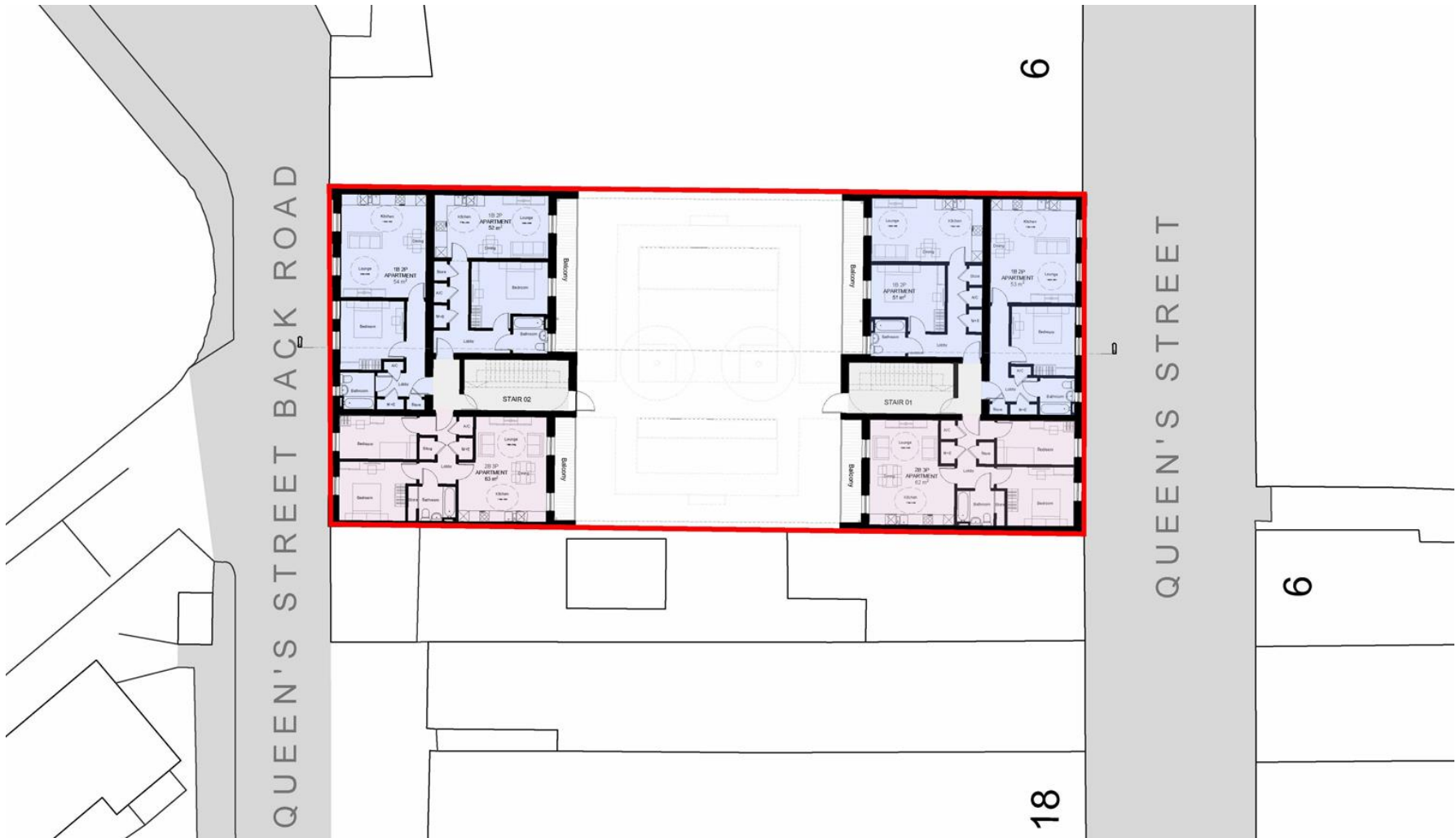


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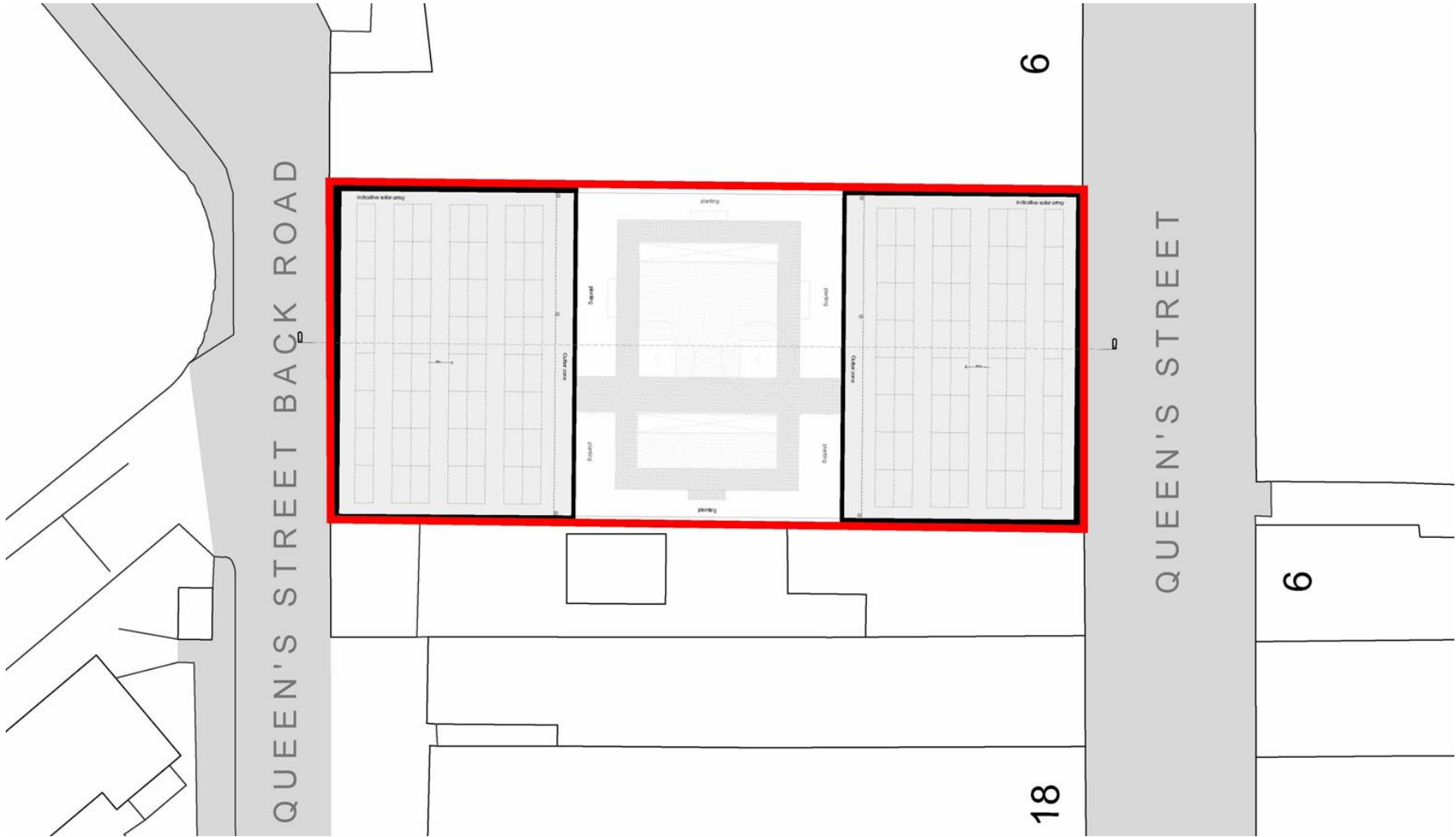
Proposed Design
Second Floor Layout



Proposed Design
Third Floor Layout

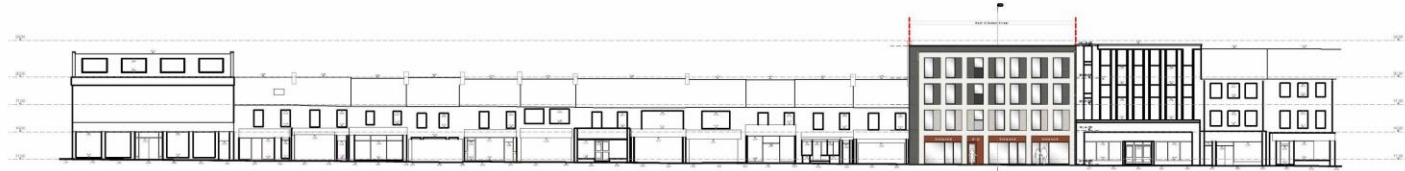


Proposed Design
Roof plan



Proposed Design

North East (front) Elevation



Proposed Street Elevation
1:500



Proposed Part Elevation
1:200

Not to scale

Proposed Design

North East (front) Elevation



Proposed Front Elevation

Not to scale

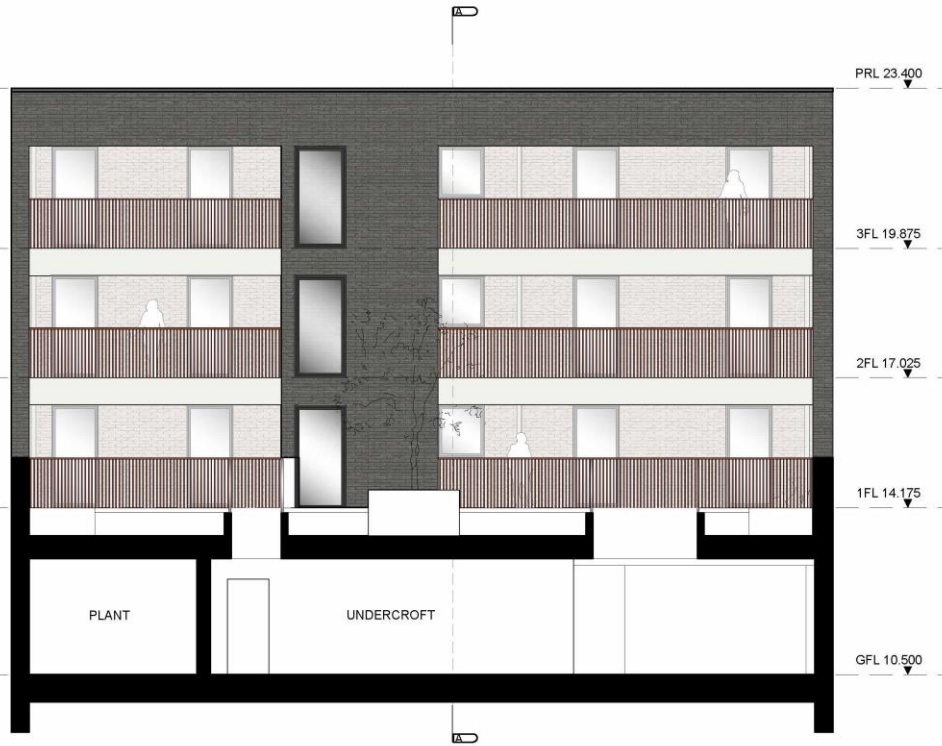
Proposed Design
Sout West (rear) Elevation



Proposed Rear Elevation

Not to scale

Proposed Design Courtyard Elevations



Proposed Courtyard Elevation 01
(Looking South West)



Proposed Courtyard Elevation 02
(Looking North East)

Not to scale

Proposed Design

1. Street Scenes



Proposed Streetscene 01
(from southern end of Queen St.)



Existing Streetscene 01



Proposed Streetscene 02
(from northern end of Queen St.)



Existing Streetscene 02

Concept Design

Material Palette



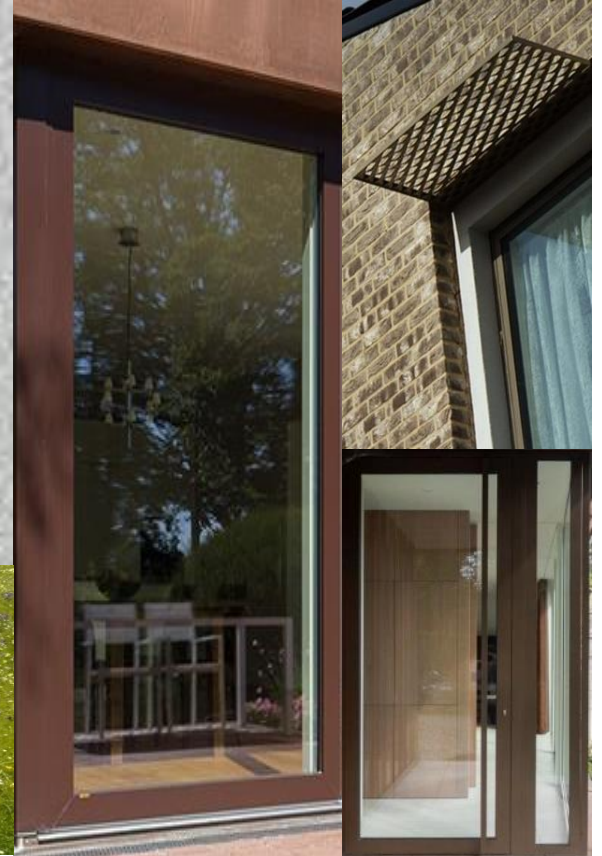
Primary Brick



Accent Brick



Copper coloured Frames, glazing & Brise Soleil



Copper colour
Railings
(balustrades)



Copper coloured
cladding



Landscaping
(planting / green
roof)



Accommodation Schedule

Apartments

12 x 1B 2P Apartments (~50 m²)

6 x 2B 3P Apartments (~60 m²)

TOTAL: 26 UNITS

Car Parking:

- 4 x parking spaces

Bicycle Parking

- 20 x bike parking spaces
- 6 x Visitor spaces



Early concept sketch

