FATHERSON HOUSE

Design & Access statement

TITAN
PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

In response to the historic approved application, pre-applications and design review panel presentations TITAN wish to present a revised residential scheme on the site of an existing, redundant overflow car park on land to the west of 300 Kings Road, Reading.

The scheme has followed a collaborative approach to design, use, scale and massing where all parties have played a part in the proposal tabled in the application documents.

The scheme looks to deliver 14 residential units consisting of -

7x 1 bed 2 person apartments

5x 2 bed 4 person apartments

1x 3 bed 4 person apartment

1x 3 bed 6 person apartment

The site will also provide 8x parking spaces including charging bays, disabled bays, with 10x indoor secure bike racks and 8x visitor cycle spaces.

The proposed development utilises an under-used brownfield site providing required housing in a sustainable location through a development that enhances the appearance of the street scene.

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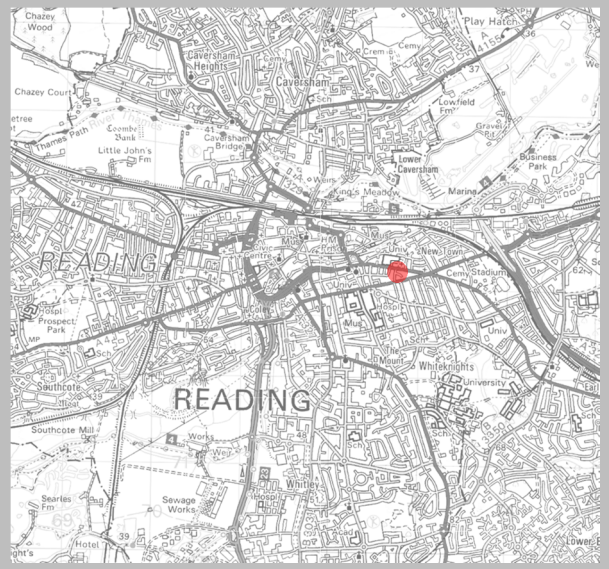
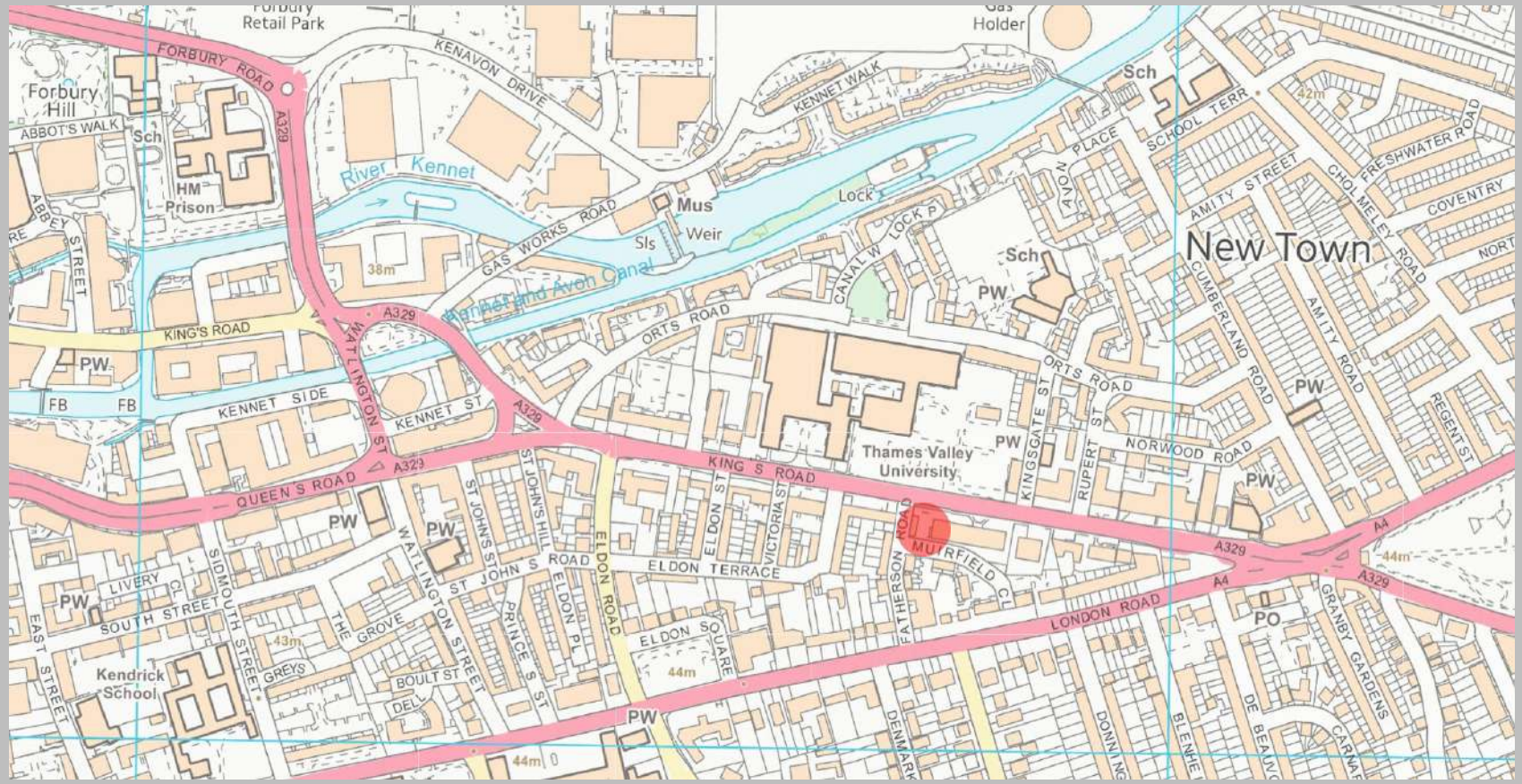
Site Location

The site lies just to the East of the Reading centre opposite Thames Valley University on the south side of Kings Road.

The area is predominantly residential with mainly public buildings and offices breaking up the residential streetscape.

Topography is relatively flat with a gradual fall towards the river Kennet and the Thames





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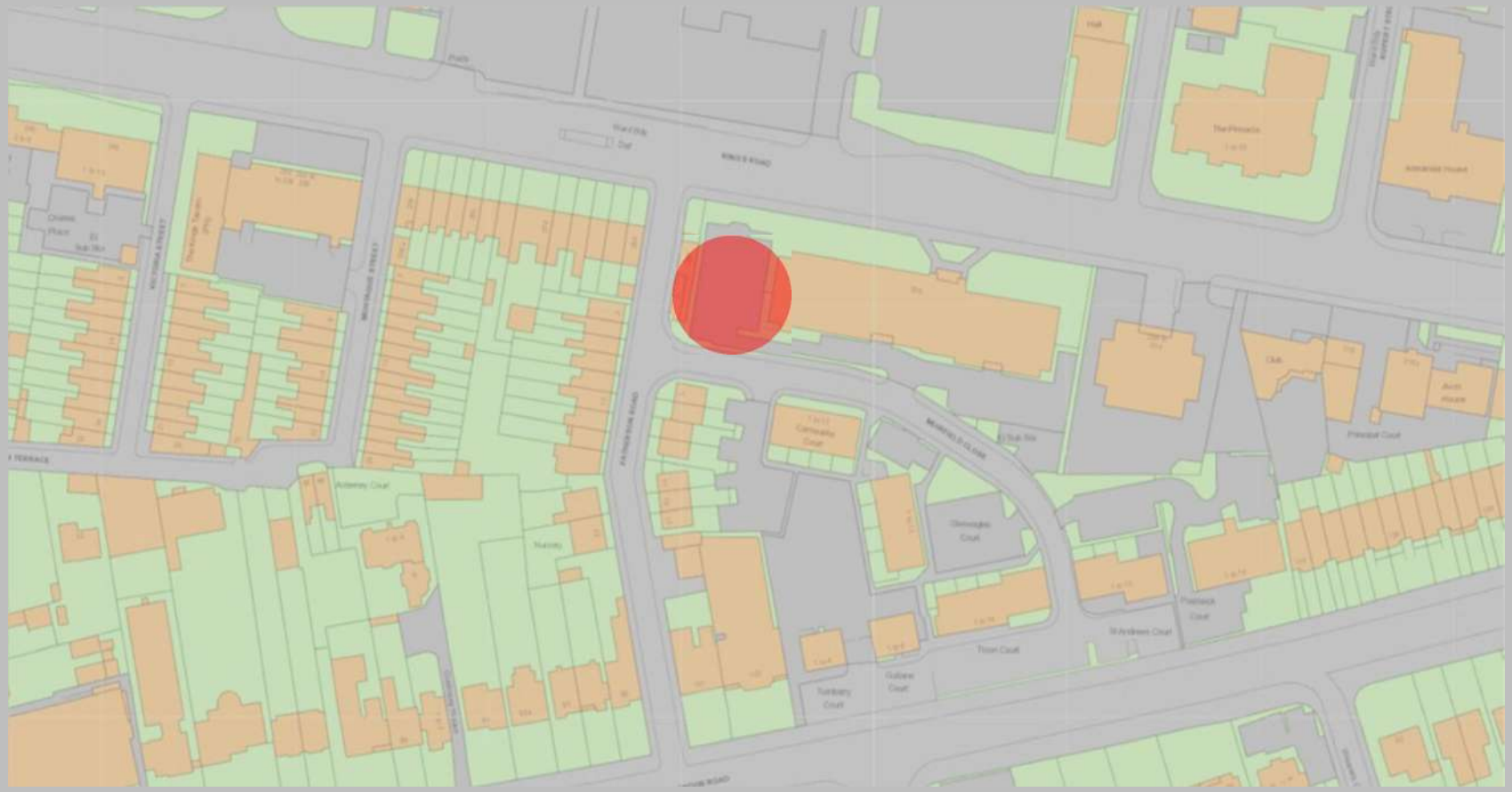
Site Location

The site has excellent links to the transport network, education, employment and retail areas to the west and east. The site can easily be accessed by public and private transport and lies on a primary cycle and bus route coupled with excellent pedestrian access from both Kings Road and London Road.

There is easy access to large open recreational parks and structured recreation at the Palmer Park complex. Further access is in easy reach to the north for the Thames Path linking into the Chiltern hills, reading town centre, and Henley for longer excursions.



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Existing site

The site lies between the gables of 300 Kings Road and 286 Kings Road and backs onto Muirfield Road. The site has clear, open aspects to the north and south.

The site is currently a vacant overspill tarmacked car park accessed via the shared access to 300 kings road off Muirfield Road. Pedestrian access to the car park is gained from Kings Road or by 'hopping the fence' on Muirfield Road or via the shared vehicle access with 300 Kings Road.

The site is tarmacked in its majority with no trees and only hedge line and minor areas of bunded scrub and bush providing any green space. The boundaries are defined to Muirfield Road but no formal boundary is found along Kings Road.

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Existing site

Building Line and frontages

Fig 1 shows the defined (dark green filled areas) and the undefined, localised street frontages in light green.

Kings Road and London Road have clear, defined building lines with verges and front gardens allowing clarity of street scene and defined major and minor roads. Between these two principle roads lies the remnants of historic and turn of the century terraced housing in a grid form, this form dissolves as it nears the junction of Kings and London Road. This degradation of street pattern is mainly due to the awkward nature of the wedge and the alternate, modern uses driving in large, regularised building footprints.

Fig 1

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Existing site

Building Heights.

Fig 2 shows the heights of the surrounding buildings.

- 2 residential floors
- 3 residential floors
- 4 and over residential floors / 3 – 4 commercial floors - and over

These heights as shown show a linear concentration of mass and scale along Kings Road with London Road at a lower overall height.

Fig 2

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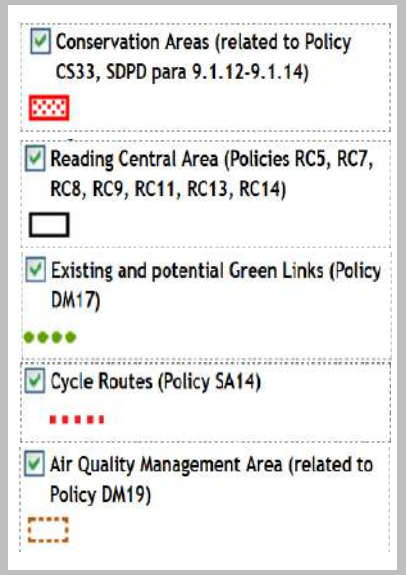
Existing site

Site Policy

The site lies within the policy areas DM19 - Air Quality Management Area (related to Policy DM19) The site in and around No. 300 Kings Road is also located in an area which has been identified in the Tree Strategy & Policy DM17 as having poor tree cover (10% or less). Objective 6 of the adopted Tree Strategy expects new development to make a positive and sustainable contribution in supporting the objectives of the strategy in enhancing the town's urban environment. Such planting should be used to enhance streets.

The site lies just out of Reading's Central Area as sits just off the SA14 – designated cycle route.



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Pre-Applications

Pre application 1
0171135/PREAPP

In the early stages of the scheme's inception the first of two pre-applications took place with the case officer as RBC to ascertain the viability of either a mid to large scale GP surgery or a 13 unit residential scheme. Following a pre-App meeting with RBC its was agreed that the GP surgery would provide an excessive strain in terms of mass, scale and parking on the site and was therefore dismissed.

Following this basic assumption and agreement on use for the site further items were raised in the following areas based upon the provisional design, massing, scale, planting and access

The principle of a residential development in this location is considered to accord with Policy CS4 (Accessibility and Intensity of Development) whilst the proposal would align with the broad objectives of Policy CS14, in assisting in meeting the annual housing targets.

Access –

- *Plan 300/LA Drawing PL- 04 illustrate a new access in addition to the one that serves the existing car park. The proposed access point is situated close to the junction of Fatherson and Muirfield road which is not acceptable as it could cause conflict of movement at the junction.*
- *Bin storage and collection area should be illustrated on plans and should be located no further than 15m from the access point of the site.*
- *In accordance with the Borough's Parking Standards and Design SPD, a minimum provision 0.5 cycle storage spaces should be provided. This equates to a total provision of 6.5 spaces. These should be located in a conveniently located, lockable, covered store and illustrated on plans.*
- *Whilst the site is accessible to good public transport links and local shops, the parking demand created by this development should not be accommodated on the surrounding roads where there is significant demand for on-street parking. Therefore, the parking conditions and informative would be applied to prevent any future occupants of the new flats from obtaining a residents parking permit.*

Planting –

- *No. 300 Kings Road is also located in an area which has been identified in the Tree Strategy as having poor tree cover (10% or less). Objective 6 of the adopted Tree Strategy expects new development to make a positive and sustainable contribution in supporting the objectives of the strategy in enhancing the town's urban environment. Such planting should be used to enhance streets and other public realm as part of planning permissions for all new relevant developments, particularly higher density urban developments.*
- *Development in this location is an opportunity to improve the tree cover of Kings Road and any application should be accompanied by a quality landscaping scheme with provision for potentially large growing trees which can reach maturity without foreseeable conflict with the buildings or access..*

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Pre-Applications

Pre application 1
0171135/PREAPP

Scale, Massing and Design

- *It is considered that at a minimum similar gap would need to be provided to the flank of no. 286 to retain a degree of spaciousness, avoid a cramped and overdeveloped feel to the development and prevent any proposal appearing over dominant relative to no. 286. On the basis of the above it is considered that any proposal for development of this area of land should be restricted to a height of three storeys with significant separation to the adjacent buildings either side.*

- *It is considered that any proposal for a building of the scale proposed, combined with the reduced scale and greater separation identified above, should project no further back in the site towards Muirfield Close than the rear elevation of no. 300, in order to prevent an undue sense of enclosure.*

- *It is not considered that the building design shown would appear unduly out of keeping with the character of the Kings Road street-scene which is particularly mixed.*

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Pre-Applications

Pre application 2
172288/PREAPP

Following the original pre-app with the council a further, more focussed pre app was taken with RBC looking at the residential potential on the site and providing further clarity and arguments surrounding the items outlined in the response from the 1st pre-app. This application was for a revised residential scheme of 12 units with a revised mix to include 3bed units and a reduced footprint providing a more sympathetic response to the surrounding properties.

A formal written response was not supplied by RBC, however a set of minutes agreed by RBC and Titan confirmed the following points-

Conclusion
DB/MBA enquired whether, subject to the satisfactory resolution of the two design issues raised and the supporting technical documents being acceptable, could MB support this scheme. MB advised based on those caveats, then yes, the scheme would be supported.

Design and Impact on Character of Area
MB advised that he supported the amendment to a pitched roof design and that this better related to no.286, compared to the previous flat roof version. It was agreed by all that no.286 is a rather odd building in terms of its position and isolation.

MB raised two remaining areas of concern:

a) Absence of a gap between the proposed development and no.286
b) Massing of the rear of the scheme and its impact in relation to Muirfield Close. This is not specific to the impacts on residents but the street as a whole and a sense of enclosure that is created through filling the gap.

DB/MBA (Titan/Freeths) responded on point A, and DB took MB (RBC) through the design rationale document, specifically the mass study. It is DB/MBA's case that the revised scheme seeks to integrate no.286 into the design and therefore maintaining some form of gap would dilute this relationship. Further MBA expressed that giving no.286 the same gap as between no.300 and the proposal, fails to account for the width of no.286 and the established rhythm of the street. MB maintained that he felt a gap was required between no.286 and the proposal.

In regards to point B, MB suggested that a reduction in massing was necessary on this elevation to reduce the sense of enclosure and present acceptably to the street (Muirfield Close). MBA questioned whether this was an amenity argument given that the nearest property (3 Fatherson Rd) is side facing to the proposal with no habitable windows overlooking the site. MB advised that it is more the impact on the street that causes concern. DB pointed to the established recesses in the development and that setting down the scheme at the rear would compromise the integrity of the design in respect of the roof pitches.

Pre-Application 2

DB suggested that the matter be referred to the Design Review Panel ("DRP") and that Titan would promote their case on both issues at that point. MB agreed that this could be arranged and will target the DRP in late February. DB asked MB to confirm whether there were any other design issues and MB advised it was restricted to these two points.

Amenity of Surrounding Occupiers
MB advised that the point he made in respect of the rear massing would help in respect of enjoyment of garden areas for Fatherson Rd properties but no other issues were raised.

Amenity of Future Occupiers
MB recognised that improvements had been made and DB highlighted that some apartments benefit from secondary windows and roof lights allowing further light into the units. It was agreed that a light study would aid the assessment of this issue but no significant issues are expected.

Mix of Housing
The revised mix set out in Freeths letter of 14 December 2017 is acceptable.

Natural Environment
It was agreed that suitable tree species would be planted on the Kings Rd frontage to create an enhanced street-scene and link in with other planting along Kings Rd.

Access and Parking
MB happy with revised arrangement of utilising existing access. In respect of parking, MB advised that he did not anticipate an issue but that lower provision must be justified through a Transport Statement or similar supporting information.

Affordable Housing
DB explained that a viability study would be submitted to justify Titan's position on this. The key to on-site provision is whether there would be interest in 2/3 units, otherwise it will need to be a financial contribution. MB advised that in house viability advisor is very busy and response times of 2-3 months are normal. DB enquired whether it could be outsourced at Titan's expense. MB advised that this would be RBC's viability advisor's decision. DB to progress this matter.

Other Issues
MB confirmed no concern with bin storage arrangement and advised that validation requirements are as listed in previous response. S.106 will cover local employment skills and affordable housing. Scheme will be subject to CIL. Sustainability measures, including renewable energy initiatives should be embraced in the scheme.

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Design Review Panel (DRP)

During the 2nd pre-application meeting with the council a number of points were discussed around massing, scale and proximity to neighbouring property. This discussion was open ended and therefore a submission of the scheme to the Reading DRP as agreed to understand and agree these points and provide some further thought on design.

The scheme was submitted to the DRP and the following was agreed –

Mass –

A mass which transitions from the end building (286 Kings Road) up to the height of 300 Kings Road is the correct assumption of scale and mass placement and the mass should proportion itself accordingly with the mass of these two buildings.

A mass which utilises a pitch form roof line in the greater proportion of mass is welcomed as the form will diminish the overall height of the structure and helps break up the form.

A mass which utilises the form of 286 Kings Road in its entirety would not be seen as an effective use of context and there should be a form 'break' between the two pitched forms.

Scale –

The scale of the building is determined by its context and associated footprint. The scale of the mass therefore should be no higher than 300 Kings Road and effectively associate itself with 286 Kings Road respectively - both in height and footprint. This equates to building of 3 floors at its lowest point and 5 at its highest.

Proximity –

The building should associate itself with the blank gable of 286 Kings Road and provide a degree of a physical break from the larger mass of 300 Kings Road. The properties off Muirfield Close and Fatherson Road will not be effected by the mass if the building follows the principles set out above.

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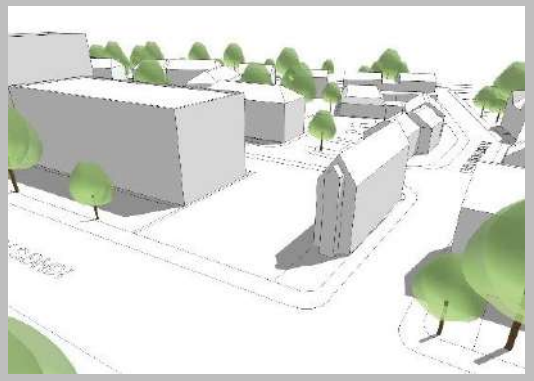
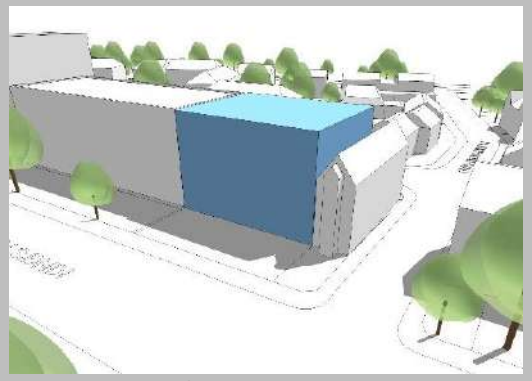
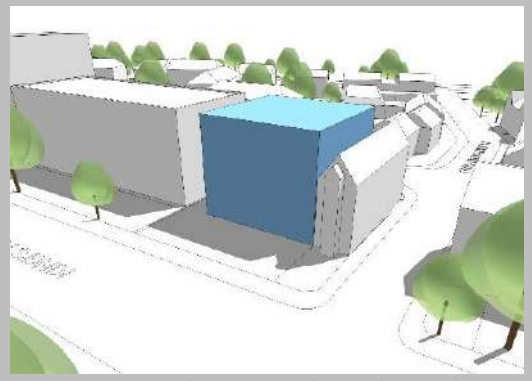
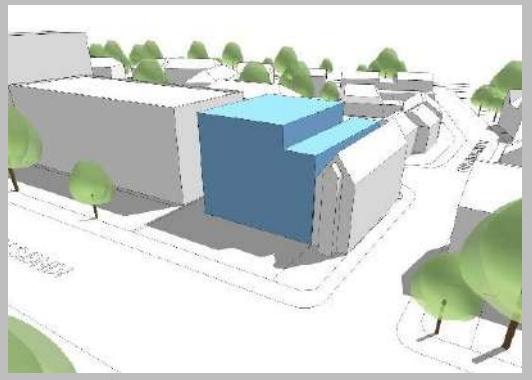
Design Review Panel - Provisional massing as presented


Existing site

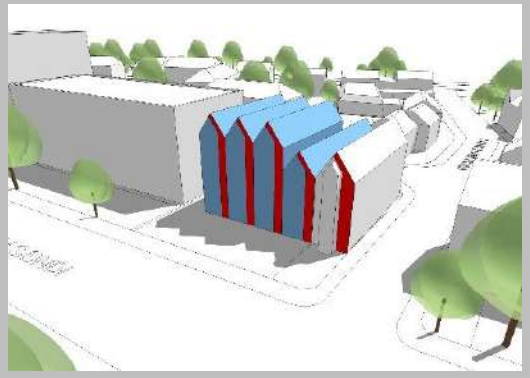

Full mass and footprint


Dissociation of mass to form 'break'

Step down in mass


Altered footprint to neighbouring mass

Break up of overall mass through pitch


Neighbouring mass detail adopted

Break up mass through façade relief

Building detail

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Proposal

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Proposal

- Re use of a well connected central brownfield site to C3 Residential.
- 1180 sqm GIA of new build over 3 - 5 floors.
- 14 residential units consisting of -

    - 7x 1 bed 2 person apartments
    - 5x 2 bed 4 person apartments
    - 1x 3 bed 4 person apartment
    - 1x 3 bed 6 person apartment

- 5x standard parking spaces
- 2x charging spaces
- 1x disabled space
- 10x indoor, secure bike racks
- 8x visitor cycle spaces
- Increased site permeability
- Increased biodiversity across the site with increased planting
- Increased tree count through new native tree planting

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Proposed and previously approved massing

Post DRP a clear way forward in massing, scale, design and roofscape was agreed which addressed the main concerns with the 2nd pre app scheme – these items were -

a) Absence of a gap between the proposed development and no.286
b) Massing of the rear of the scheme and its impact in relation to Muirfield Close. This is not specific to the impacts on residents but the street as a whole and a sense of enclosure that is created through filling the gap.

A revised massing model was produced during the meeting to illustrate the comments received from the DRP panel during the meeting and was unanimously agreed to be adopted as a way forward.

This model was in response to the DRP's conclusions in the following areas –

The panel agreed that the massing and position of the proposed building was best suited to a physical attachment to 286 Kings road with a gap between the larger 300 Kings road building. – this addressed and settled point A

The massing to the rear of the site and the massing proportionally siting itself in height and footprint to each of the buildings rear façade line was seen to be a just solution and the panel supported the proposal in terns of height and did not see the building having a overbearing nature on the street scheme or neighbouring properties. - this addresses and settles point B

Further to the above principle agreements in terms of massing, scale, heights and building siting the panel raised concerns in the break up of the façade and proposed simplifying the façade and gable design to 3 gables with a lower – non gabled link to 286.

Further ideas were put forward and subsequently explored, these included –

- Identification of entrance within the façade
- Location of entrance being located between the two buildings
- Eco credentials of the proposal.
- Planting and outdoor space and perimeter treatment.
- Materials used on the scheme to reference the neighbouring buildings
- Simplification of the overall scheme to help define the architecture

The following pages explain the agreed massing, with further pages explaining the responses to the further idea posed by the DRP.

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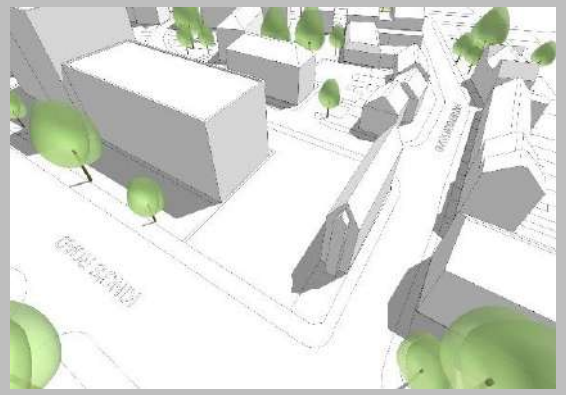
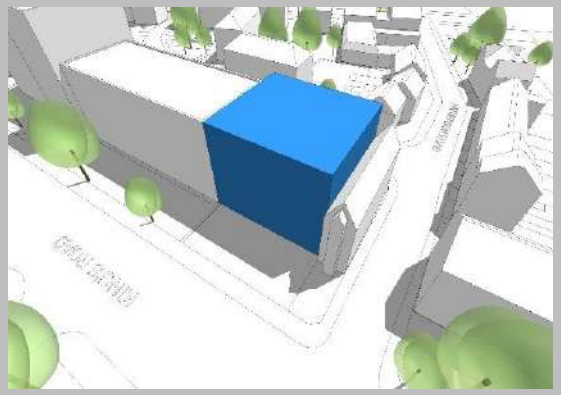
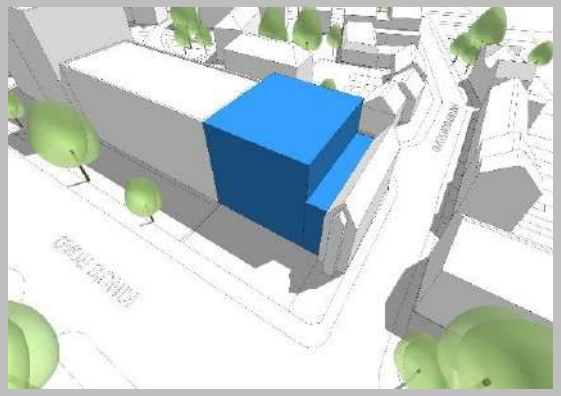
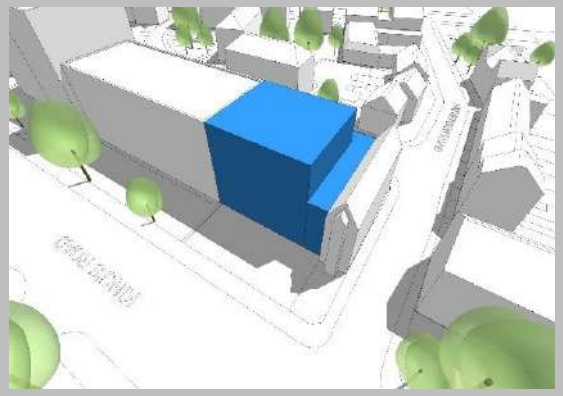
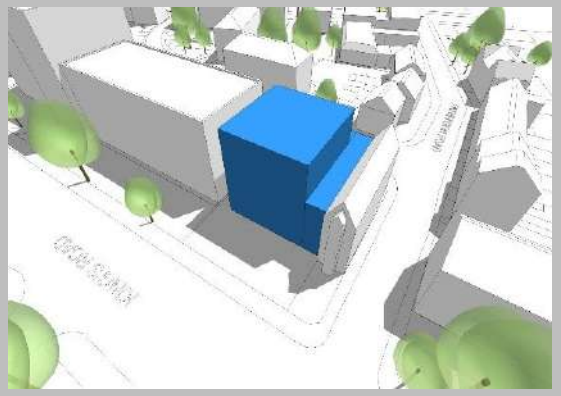
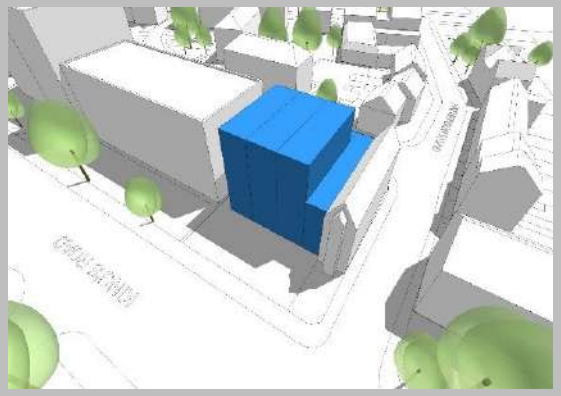
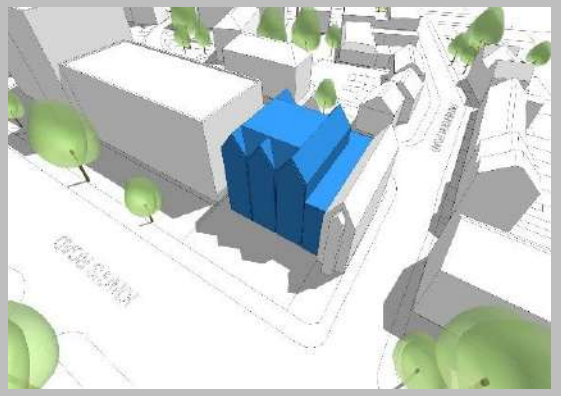
DRP agreed massing

The images show a progression of mass reduction from the simplistic site volume to the revised and refined 'break and pitch' approach shown in the final image.



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DRP agreed massing

Fig1. Build line association influencing position and proportion of mass

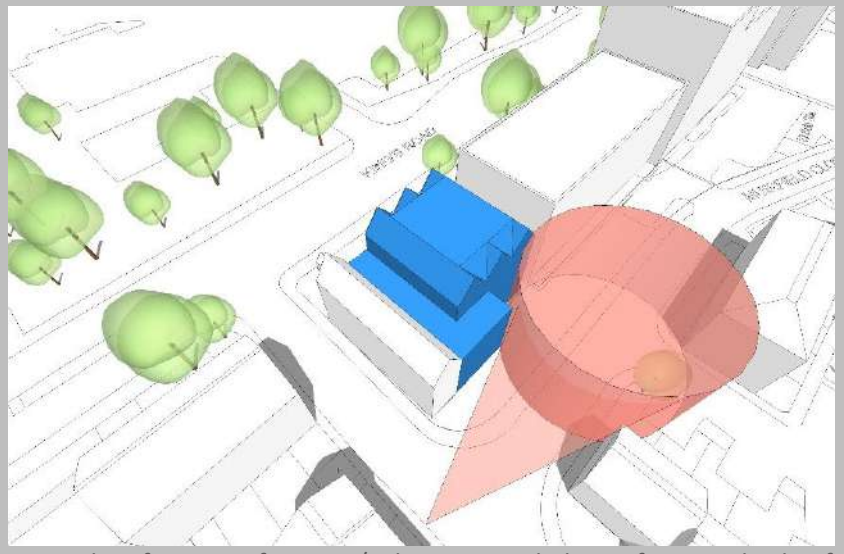

Fig2. Identification of open / clear space helping form setback of structure an form along with clarity of mass.

Fig3. Eaves height and roof height association helping to form maximum heights of the mass.

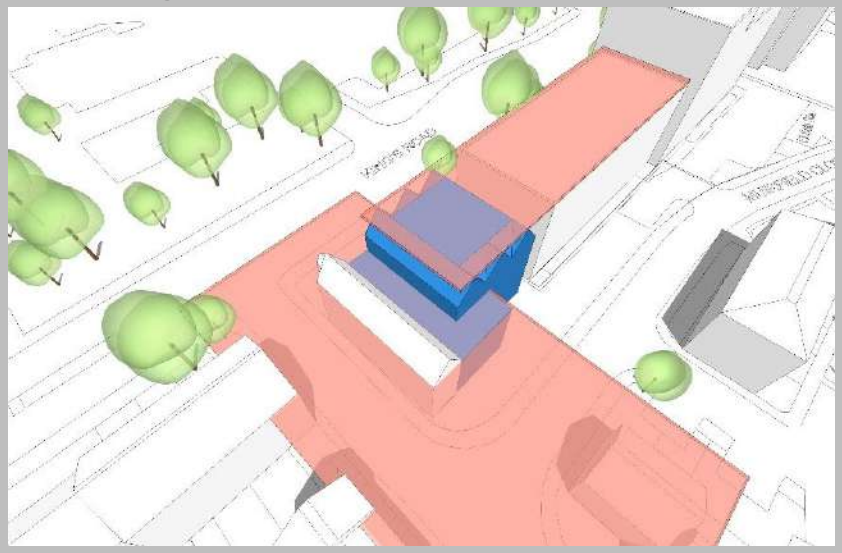

Fig4. Association and proportion of form to neighbouring structures

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DRP – further items.

Identification of entrance within the façade
This was a just comment and one which has been addressed in the revised massing and design. As the primary access is off the Kings Road a defined entrance and arrival point needs to be defined for better way-pointing and desire lines. Several options were explored which utilised a protruding feature / canopy or wall to define the entrance however this 'add one' looked at odds with the rhythm of the façade so a further option was design which pulled the entrance doors inwards creating a covered entrance whilst retaining façade integrity. Further to this set back the returning wall was pushed aside to create a better sense of openness and remove an corridor arraignment, this also allows an ideal place for the building name, access points or building logo.

Location of entrance being located between the two buildings
the location of the entrance between 300 Kings Road and the proposal was explored in early iterations of the scheme and was discounted for the following reasons - proximity, legibility, efficiency, secure by design, circulatory and fire design along with building clarity / position. These aspects still stand and the design is formed as shown in the planning drawings.

Eco credentials of the proposal.
TITAN will adhere to the required requirements of residential development both in terms of local and national policy along with Building regulations. Further to this the design of the building and elevations have been designed to make best use of the site and aspect to create the right environment for future residents and the life of the building.

Planting and outdoor space and perimeter treatment.
It was mutually agreed that planting within the available landscaping will playa key part in the site's ability to both sit within its location and enhance the current state of landscaping and biodiversity on the site. TITAN will agree to enhance the biodiversity on site along with the planting of additional trees and bushes to allow boundary definition, defensible space, secure by design and noise reduction.

Materials used on the scheme
It was mutually agreed that a brick should be used for the façade with contextual reference, further to this roof coverings should take reference from the surrounding residential properties and be of a slate or similar slate-like material. It is our intention to reference the heavier statured listed properties on Kings Road which are mainly stone along with the stone sections on 300 Kings Road by utilising a buff brick which allows a contextual reference to the area and provides a welcome break in colour and texture to that found in the smaller residential properties.

Simplification of the overall scheme to help define the architecture
This referenced the previous proposal of a building split into 5 pitches each one slender and narrow in form, the reduction to 3 pitches and an interconnecting flat roofed form relating to the neighbouring building allowed better definition of form and mass and consequently façade design should follow. The revised design looks to facilitate this comment and also address the form of the residential properties situated off Fatherson Road in the smaller 3 storey form to the rear.

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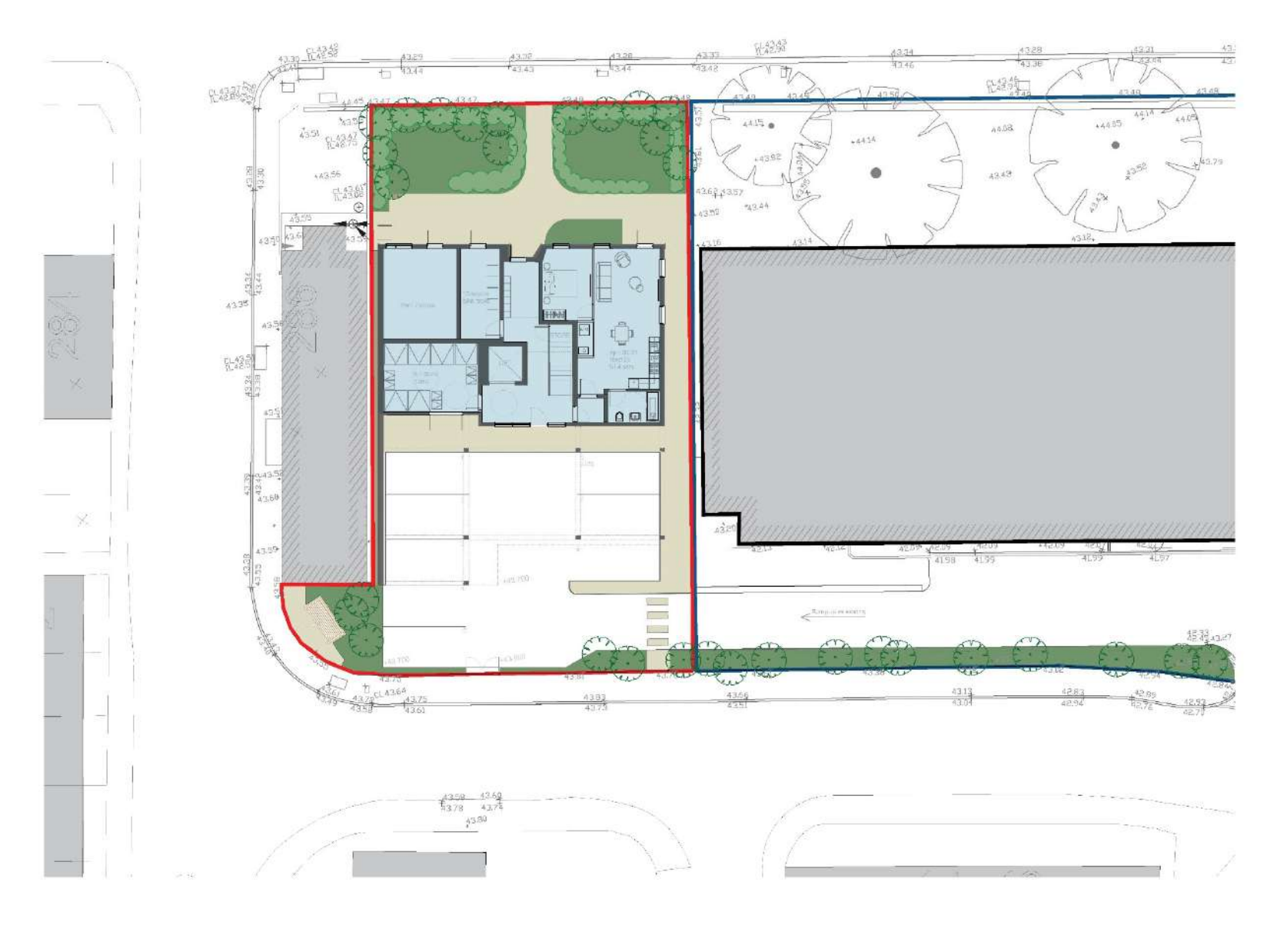
Proposed Site Plan



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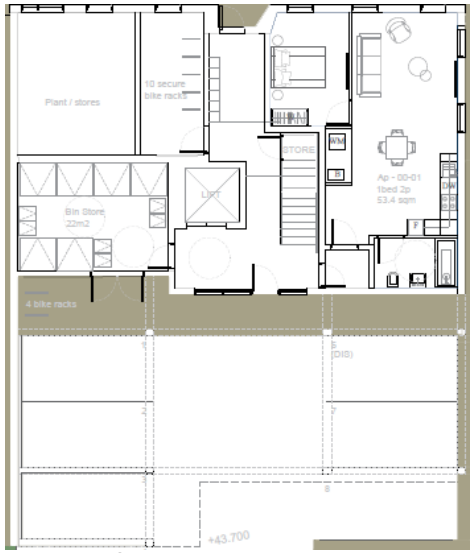
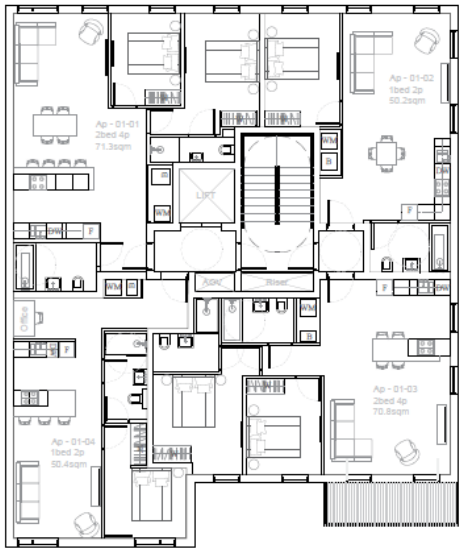
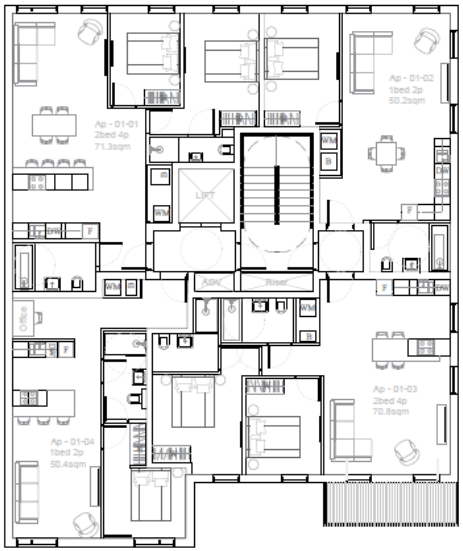
Proposed Plans



Ground floor

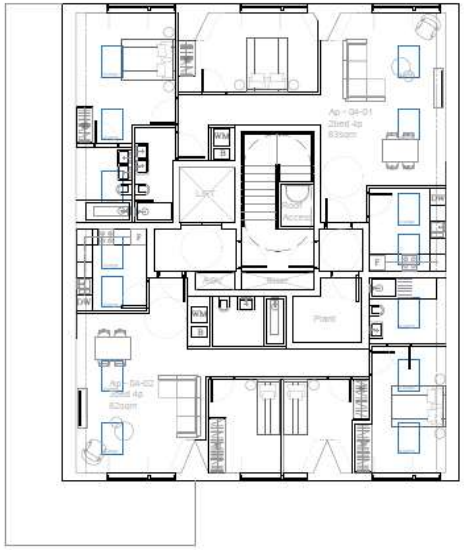


1st floor

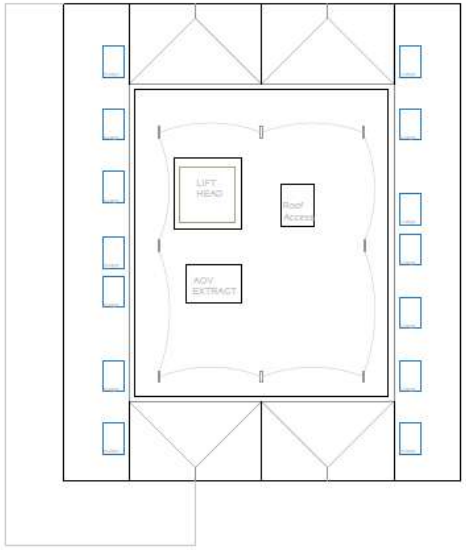


2nd floor

3rd floor



Loft apartments



Roof plan

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PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

FATHERSON HOUSE

Proposed Plans

Development Mix –

The 1180sqm GIA building will house the following :

Unit Number/Ref	Bedrooms	Persons	NSA (Sqm)
00-01	1	2	53.4
01-01	2	4	71.3
01-02	1	2	50.2
01-03	2	4	70.8
01-04	1	2	50.4
02-01	2	4	71.3
02-02	1	2	50.2
02-03	2	4	70.8
02-04	1	2	50.4
03-01	1	2	50.1
03-02	1	2	50.2
03-03	3	6	96.0
04-01	2	4	83.0
04-02	3	4	82.0

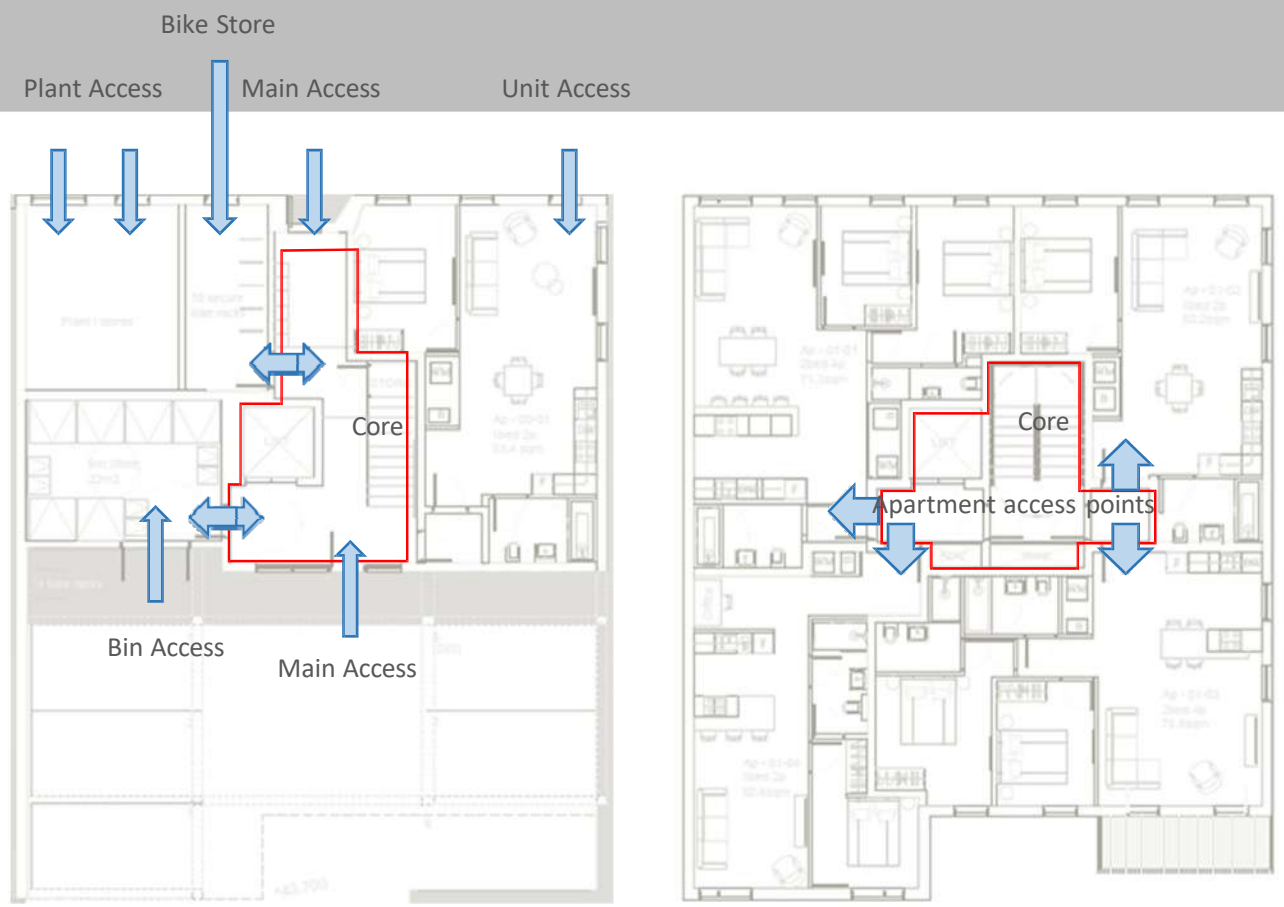
The scheme has been designed to comply with Reading's requirements on mix and unit types. Further to this the plans have been designed to enable the majority of the units to be dual aspect.

All units are designed around a central core with both stair and lift access.

FATHERSON HOUSE

Design & Access statement

Proposed Access Plans



Ground floor

Upper floors

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PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

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Design & Access statement

Proposed Design rational

Following two pre-apps and a design review panel presentationevolving into the previous approval the scheme has evolved from its simplistic massing at inception to a refined proposal demonstrating a logical end to a design process where all parties have played a part.

The final proposal provides a strong, characterful architecture, sympathetic to its location and context through architecture, materials and finishing details.

The apartment layouts have been designed and re-designed following input from the greater design team and neighbours to accomplish the correct levels of internal lighting, remove excessive overshadowing, allow multiple units to be dual aspect and deliver ease of access.

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Design & Access statement

Proposed Design

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FATHERSON HOUSE

Design & Access statement

Proposed Design

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Design & Access statement

Proposed Design

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Design & Access statement

Proposed Main Elevations – North Façade

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Design & Access statement

Proposed Main Elevations – South Façade

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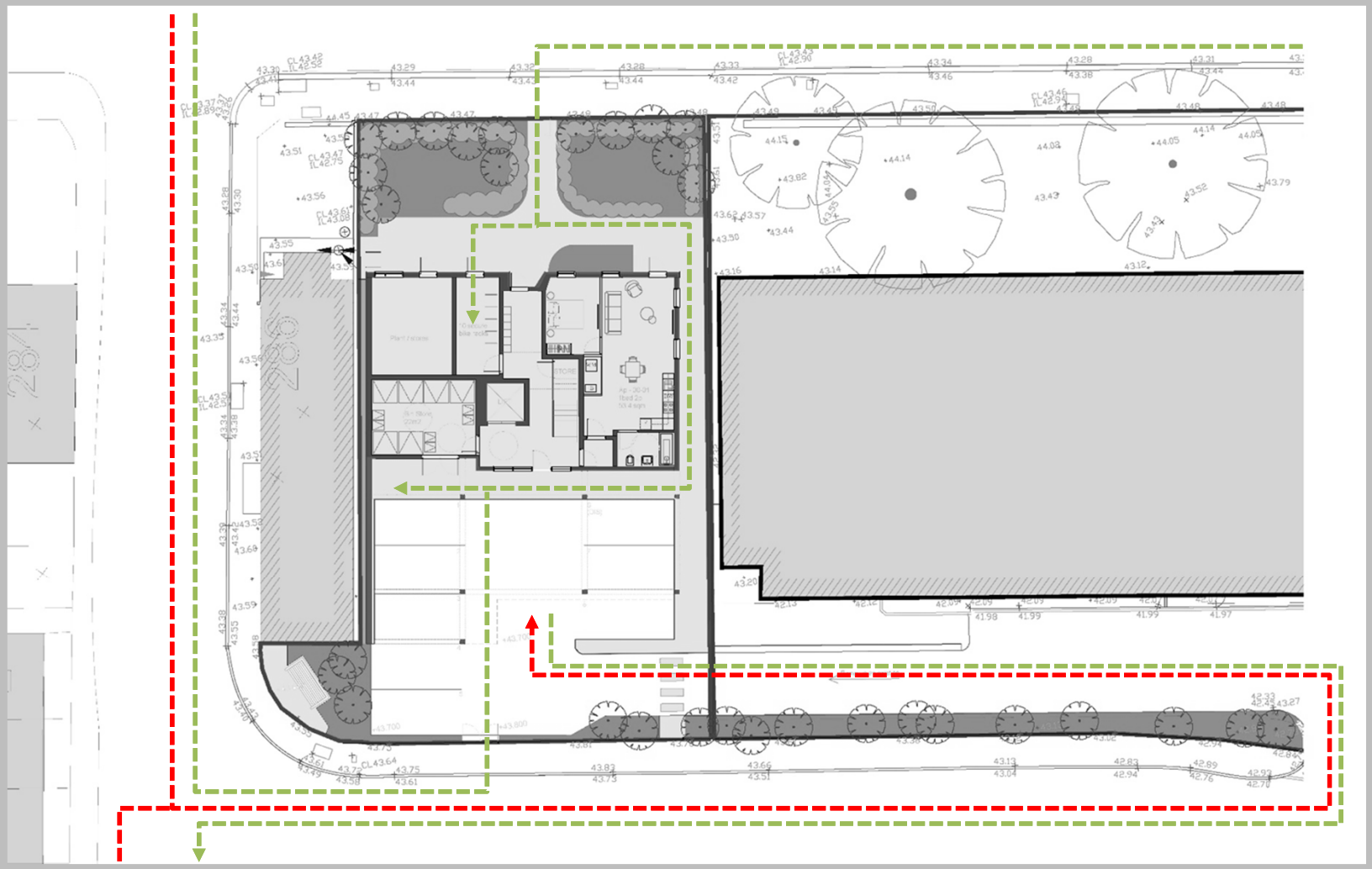
Design & Access statement

Proposed Parking and vehicle / bike access

Vehicle access from Kings & London Road
Vehicle egress from onto London Road
Bike access / egress from Kings & London Road

Please refer to the Transport statement for parking details, tracking, secure bike parking details and refuse methodology.



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FATHERSON HOUSE

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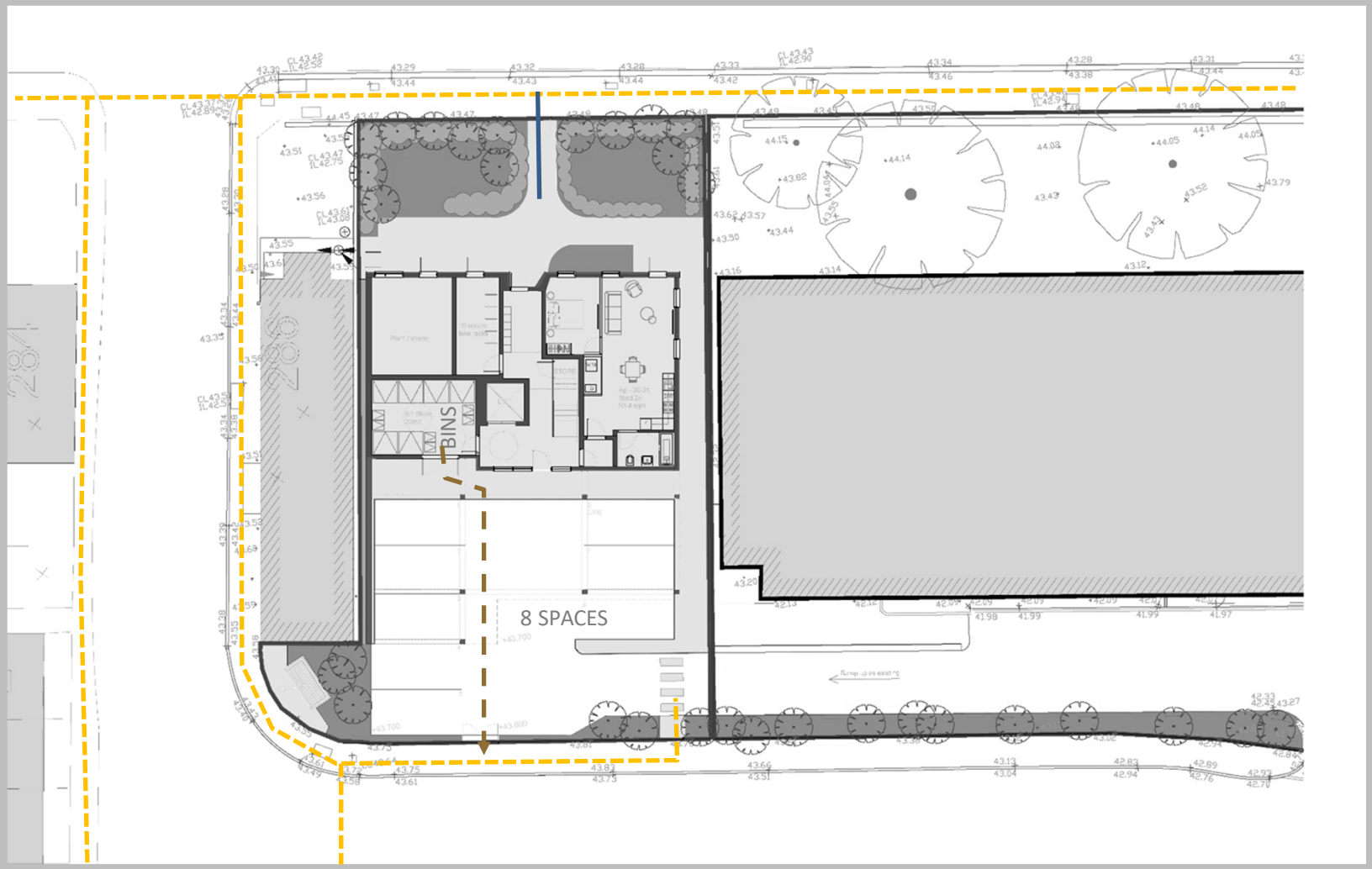
Design & Access statement

Proposed Access – Pedestrian, Cycle, Bins

Pedestrian access to the site will be off back of pavement from both Kings and Muirfield Road with an approximately 1:40 grade towards the building entrance. All access points will be a level threshold with a full DDA compliant lift accessing all floors to aid vertical circulation. One apartment will be accessed off the ground floor and by a level threshold. Bins will be brought out from the building by the property management team supporting the residential units being formed in 300 Kings Road and Fatherson House



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PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

FATHERSON HOUSE

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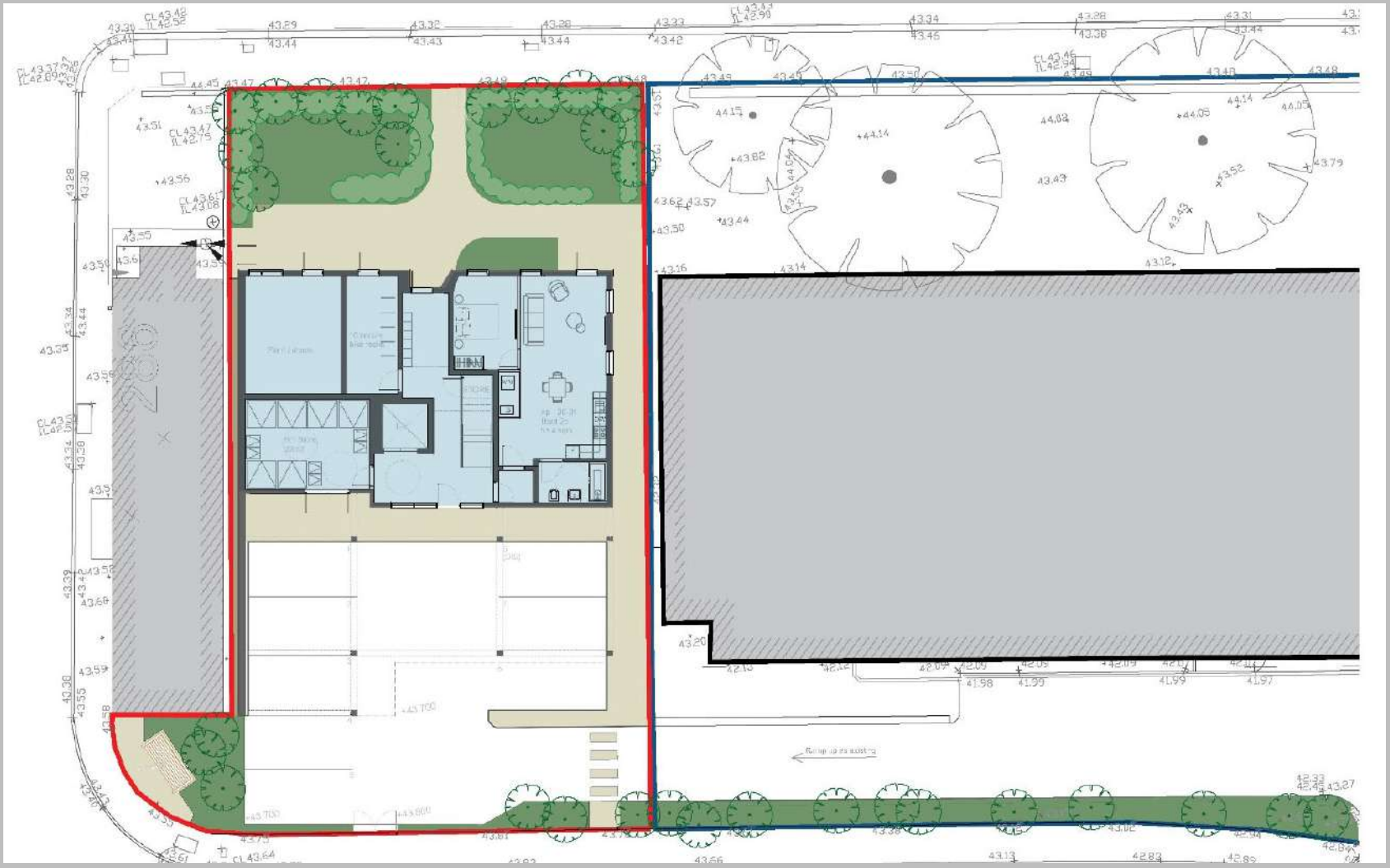
Design & Access statement

Proposed Planting and landscape design

Details of the planting regime will be sought through a reserved matters application on the site, however some principles will be set in this application 1. Increase biodiversity on the site 2. Improve and enlarge the green spaces / verge to Kings Road 3. Commit to planting a minimum of ten trees – all of native species 4. Improve site boundary definition and secure by design by planting hedgeline to back of pavement.



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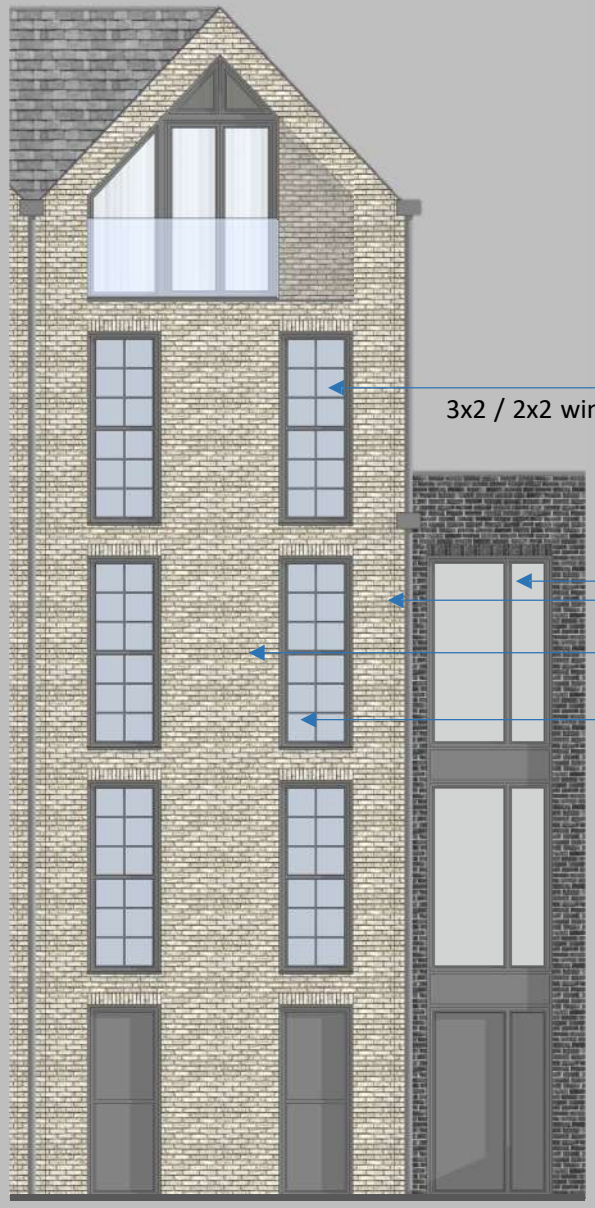
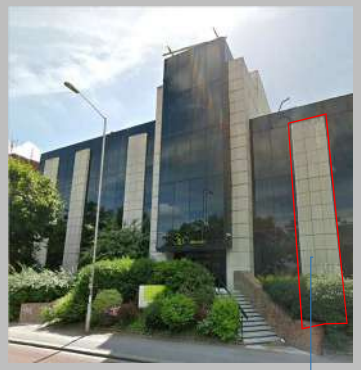
Design & Access statement

Proposed material context





3x2 / 2x2 window bar sash window

Vertical windows

Buff brick to relate to the recent ashlar stone facades

Buff brick to relate to the older ashlar stone facades

3x2 / 2x2 window bar sash window

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PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

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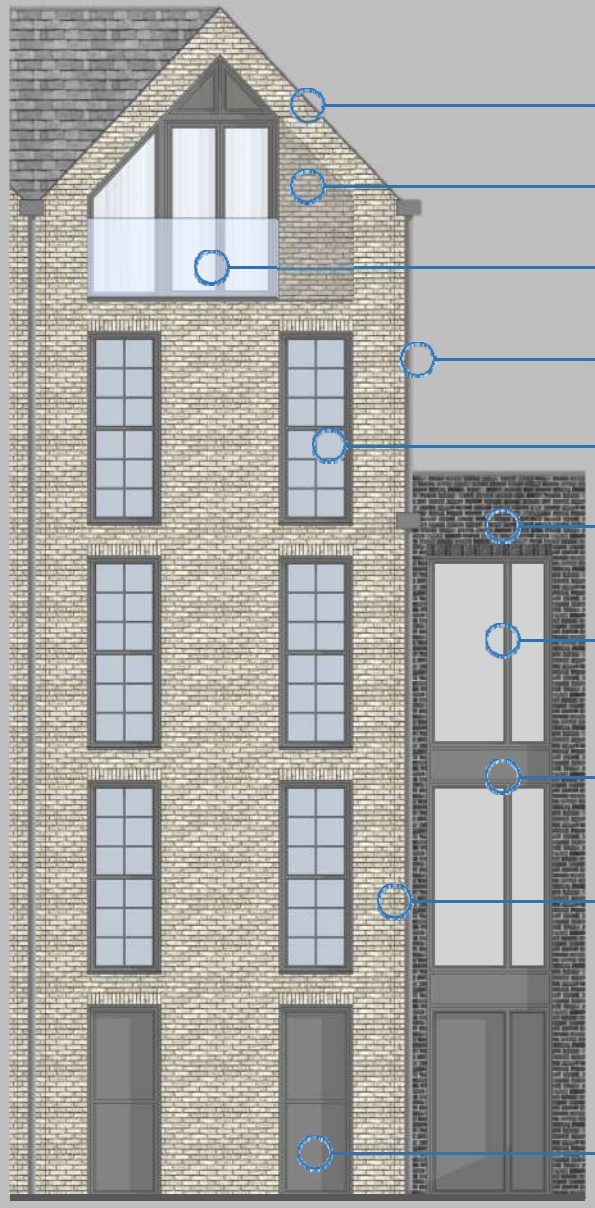
Design & Access statement

Proposed Materials



- Reconstituted slate roof
- Buff brick in recess
- ‘Frameless’ glass Juliet balcony
- Grey plastic downpipes
- Floor to ceiling glazing with blue tint, grey frame and glazing bars.
- Grey buff brickwork
- Floor to ceiling glazing with grey tint and grey frame.
- Grey infill spandrel panel in grey frame.
- Buff brickwork
- Plant and bike access doors in grey with grey framing.

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PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

FATHERSON HOUSE

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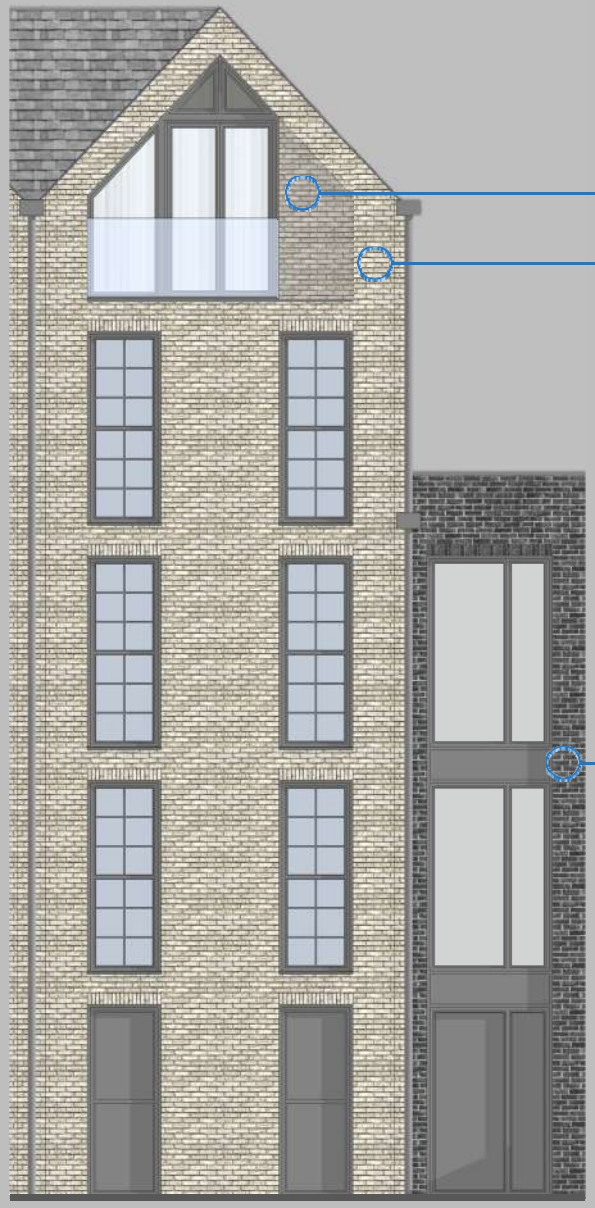
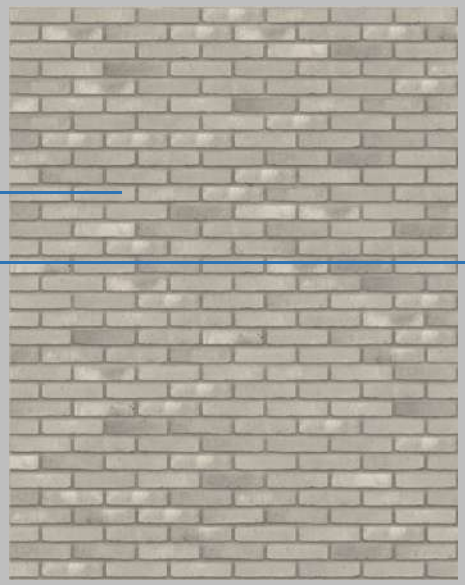
Design & Access statement

Proposed Materials



Darker, heavily textured
Buff brick in recess to apply definition



Lighter Buff brick to main façade to contextualise materials against the stone of neighbouring buildings

Dark brick acting as linking structure.

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PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

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FATHERSON HOUSE

Design & Access statement

Conclusion

Following a previous approval consisting of two pre-apps and a design review panel presentation the scheme has evolved from its simplistic massing at inception to a refined proposal demonstrating a logical end to a design process where all parties have played a part.

The final proposal provides a strong, characterful architecture sympathetic to its location and context through architecture, materials and finishing details.

The Fatherson House proposed development makes appropriate use of an unused brownfield site, in a highly sustainable location to provide much needed housing.

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