

3.2 Public Consultation

Phase 2 Consultation

Owing to current social distancing restrictions, it was not possible to hold a public consultation to discuss the developed design proposals with the local residents, as originally planned.

However, every effort was made to engaged with local residents remotely and gain meaningful feedback to incorporate into the design proposals.

A consultation programme was developed with the RBC Housing team and the local RBC Council members, in coordination with planned, related initiatives. Below are the activities and communications which were undertaken are part of the consultation process:

'Week of Action' Newsletter 4th of December 2020

A newsletter outlining the 'Week of Action' events, aimed at improving the existing refuse issues, as well as notifying residents of the upcoming consultation for the long-term improvements was distributed to all 267 flats within the three existing buildings.

Wensley Road Website – Live! 7th of December 2020

<https://wensley-road.htadesign.co.uk/>

A dedicated website was developed to provide regular updates to residents regarding improvements around the Wensley Road Estate, including online feedback form Existing Homes consultation event.

'Week of Action' 7th – 13th December 2020

During the week a series of interventions to improve existing refuse areas, such as free bulky waste collection and refuse bin cleaning were undertaken.

Members of the RBC Housing team were on site throughout to discuss with residents existing issues and improvements for the existing homes, both for the short and long term.

Consultation Banners & Posters 6th of January 2021

Consultation banners were displayed externally adjacent to the main entrance of the three existing buildings.

Each banner included a summary of the proposed improvements, a 'next steps' timeline, artist's impressions of the proposed scheme and a QR code linked to the feedback form on the website.

Newsletter & Feedback Form 22nd of January 2021

To encourage further engagement, newsletters and feedback forms with pre-paid envelopes were delivered to all 267 flats, accompanied by an invitation to join a residents steering group.

A further 250 newsletter and feedback forms were distributed to residents in the immediate surrounding area and additional A3 posters were displayed.

Feedback & Design Update Newsletter Spring 2021

The 8th of February was the deadline for residents feedback, a month from the display of the consultation banners display and two weeks after the newsletter. Feedback was presented to RBC Council Members, discussed with the RBC teams and subsequent design refinements were made.

A newsletter with a summary of the feedback, the updated design proposal and timeline will be distributed to residents to coincide with the planning application submission.



Wensley Road Week of Action



Existing Homes Consultation Newsletter



Existing Homes Consultation Banner

3.2 Public Consultation

Phase 2 Consultation Feedback

Feedback Summary

Residents were asked to identify three key issues, provide a response to proposed improvements and the artists impressions, with an opportunity to provide any further comments.

Whilst a number of the respondents completed all the of the questions, other chose to answer only certain questions. Therefore the responses across all the questions were collated and summarised into the three categories; issues, suggestions and overall response to proposed improvements.

All the items raised have been included in the summary, even if they are not directly related to the existing building or the proposed refurbishment works. It has been identified how many times a particular comment was raised by different respondents.

The majority of the responses were from residents within the three existing buildings, and were either in favour of the improves or did not express an opinion. Their concerns were generally related to the existing building themselves and the condition and quality of the existing windows (drafts/condensation) was the top issue.

A small number of responses were received from residents within the surrounding area, whilst a couple did not provide an address. Two of the residents from the surrounding area supported the improvements, but raised issues relating to the phase 1 development.

There was only one respondent who was opposed to the proposed improvements, who was from the surrounding area rather than a resident within one of the existing blocks.

Summary of Responses

Total number of completed feedback forms - 14

Received via: -

- Website - 9
- Email - 0
- Post - 5

Location of Respondents: -

- Coley Park Flats - 8
- Residents from surrounding area - 3
- Address not given - 3

Issues

(Times raised by different respondents)

- Existing Windows (6)
- Existing Entrance Areas (4)
- Existing Refuse (4)
- Rats (4)
- Building Appearance (3)
- Loss of parking (3)
- Condensation on internal walls (2)
- Poor Heating (2)
- Loss of open space (2)
- Uncontrolled parking on green spaces (2)
- Condition/Cleanliness of all internal areas (1)
- Condition of Lifts (1)
- Anti-social behaviour (1)
- Lack of tumble dryers (1)
- Condition play areas (1)
- Lack of cycle storage (1)
- High energy bills (1)
- Lack of youth activities (1)
- Bus Route/Congestion (1)

Suggested Improvements

(Times raised by different respondents)

- Change windows - 3
- Replace main doors with automatic doors - 1
- Put hand sanitiser in entrance areas - 1
- Provider larger parking bays -1
- Redecorate entrance areas - 1
- Remove all external bins, locate internally - 1
- Install new lifts - 1
- Install new tumble dryers in laundry rooms - 1
- Insulate walls - 1
- Install new showers in flats - 1
- Provide car parking under existing flats - 1
- Install bollards to perimeter green spaces - 1
- Demolish flats - 1
- Convert grass verges to parking - 1
- Use non-combustible materials and reassure residents (post-Grenfell) -1
- Increased amount CCTV - 1
- Highlight new bus stop location - 1

Overall Response to Proposed Improvements

(Times raised by different respondents)

- Support improvements works (Look great/ really good/great ideas) - 6
- Improvements look good, but not realistic (will be misused/badly maintained) - 3
- Improvements look good, but opposed to new homes - 2
- Flats need to be demolished - 1
- Don't live in the flats, doesn't affect me - 1

Wensley Road Estate Improvements

Public Consultation

Your Feedback

As part of a regeneration programme for the Wensley Road Estate, Reading Borough Council are planning on making a range of long term improvements to the existing homes.

We would like you to take a look at the sketch proposals and let us know your comments, before the 8th February 2021. Larger versions of the images are on display on the existing buildings or can be viewed online at: www.wensley-road.htadesign.co.uk

Thank you for taking to give us your feedback. Please return this form using the included pre-paid envelope.

Your feedback will remain anonymous and only used for the purposes of gathering your views as part of the consultation process. Any personal details provided will be held in the strictest of confidence and not shared with anyone outside of this project. You are not obliged to leave any personal details if you do not want to.

Name: _____

What is your address? _____

Email: _____ Tel No: _____



Tell us what you think about the proposed improvements to the existing homes?

- 1 Renovated Entrance Areas
- 2 New Refuse & Recycling Facilities
- 3 Replacement of windows and external wall materials
- 4 New Landscaping around your home
- 5 Increased Bicycle Storage

Public Consultation January 2021





Working better with you

Wensley Road Estate Improvements

Public Exhibition Consultation

Your Feedback

In your own words, please let us know your thoughts on each of the images displayed at Wensley Road





Please let us know if you have any further comments on the proposed improvement works?

Public Consultation January 2021





Working better with you

Existing Homes Consultation - Feedback Form

Existing Homes Consultation - Feedback Form

3.0 Consultation & Design Development

Reading Borough Council - Wensley Road: New Build & Estate Improvements Phase 2 - Coley Rise Refurbishment: Design & Access Statement

41

3.3 Pre-application Consultation

A pre-application planning meeting was held on 21 of January, with the Planning Case Officer. In advance of the meeting a pre-application report detailing the project brief, site analysis, design development, proposed architecture and landscape designs, as well as the sustainability strategy was issued for comment from the relevant planning officers.

Below is a summary of the written feedback.

Summary

- Proposed works are generally welcomed, provide positive improvement to the standard of existing accommodation.

Construction & Time frames

- Information required of the phase 1 and phase 2 construction time frame, including if all three towers will be refurbished concurrently and whether residents will be in situ.

Design Matters

- Ground floor additions result in marginal loss of open space, however outweighed by qualitative improvements.
- Justification required for external cycle lockers rather than internal cycle storage. Strong recommendation for the latter.
- Policy in favour of renewal and regeneration of the existing housing stock.
- Consider contribution of the existing elevations, to the surrounding area.
- Clarification of proposed waste storage in comparison with the phase 1 application.

Sustainability

- Energy benefit of refurbishment a key tangible planning benefit.

- Recommend that an Energy Strategy Statement and Sustainability Statement to be submitted as part of the application.

Waste Services

- Recommend refuse capacity and collection frequency: -
 - 5 x 240litre Food waste bins (weekly)
 - 6 x 1100litre General waste (weekly)
 - 9 x 1100litre Recycling bins
- Scope to provide fewer bins, if combined with more frequent collections
- Advised separate waste management plan be submitted with the planning application.

Transport

- Proposed alterations and improved access to building and refuse storage area are supported.
- Proposed cycle storage provision (10 x individual and 5 x double storage lockers) deemed acceptable. Advise including full specification with the application.

Crime Prevention

- Suggest minimising depth to reduce opportunities for Anti-social behaviour.
- All entrances, refuse stores and secluded areas to be covered by CCTV.
- Suggest visually permeable railing to fire escape stairs.
- Recognise challenge of providing private ground floor gardens, but ground floor residents should be offered an appropriate level of privacy.

- Consider how to prevent vehicle usage of perimeter paths.
- Detailed lighting plan compliant with BS54489 be submitted. Bollard lighting only sufficient for wayfinding.
- Extended lobby and lobbied access to internal refuse store welcomed.
- Recommend secondary internal, access controlled communal entrance door and ground floor corridor doors to electronic access control.
- New communal entrance doorsets to comply with SBD guidance and meet the requirements of LPS1175 SR2

Environmental Protection

- Adequate rat proofing is required, to the building envelope. Drain and sewer survey may be required as a condition.
- Contaminated land further information required for the proposed landscape areas.

Natural Environment

- No fundamental issues, keen to ensure consistency with approved phase 1 proposal.
- Protection of existing and newly planted trees (phase 1 works) during to be provided during construction.
- Clarification of proposed tree provision in relation to phase 1 Section 106
- Defensible planting could be considered around the buildings but appreciate maintenance challenges.

- Recommend provision of green roofs on flat roof areas.
- Encourage increased soft landscaping proposal, owing to concerns about loss of open space.

Ecology

- Proposal to be accompanied by a bat survey
- Recommend including new bird nesting features, including 12 swift brick per tower and swift calls.
- New planting to be wildlife friendly, using native species.

Signage

- Advertising consent may be required. Specific justification in relation to Policy OU4.

Fire Regulations

- Advise section on fire safety within the Design & Access Statement owing to the nature of development and recent history of Grenfell.

3.4 Design Review Panel

On the 21st January, following the pre-application planning meeting the design proposals were presented to the Reading Design Review Panel, with formal feedback being received by the design team on 8th March.

The panel consisted of seven architects from local Reading design practices, a number of whom also reviewed the phase 1 proposals in advance of the planning submission. The review was also attended by the Planning Case Officer.

Below is a summary of comments received and questions raised:

1. Building

- **Approach** - The overall approach is supported subject to further resolution of the following items. The entrances and base of the towers will make an enormous difference to the quality of the proposal.
- **Base/ Plinth** - Can the base element be used to address concerns about defensible space around blocks? Design, material and programmatic options for the 1.5-2m high plinth at ground floor should be further explored.
- **Entrances** - Can the entrances be better articulated, more legible and more clearly defined?
- **Capital** - Can the top 3.6m of the towers be better resolved and articulated?
- **Buildability** - How buildable are the proposals considering that all residents of the towers are to remain in-situ during construction works?

- **Materials** - Is there an opportunity to use brick slips for the central section of the facade or a colour of render that contrasts rather than looks to match the proposed brick?
- **Materials** - How will the applied render and signage render and how visible will weathering be from a distance?

2. Community Liaison Hub

- **Appearance** - A landscape solution would be the preferred approach, with a distinctly separate language to the towers or the phase 1 buildings.

3. Landscaping

- **Approach** - General strategy seems very well thought out.
- **Defensible space** - Discussion regarding what is the current situation and how this is defined. Understand the rationale for this zone not being planting (ASB etc.). Further design development recommended.
- **Cycle Storage** - Quantity and quality of proposed cycle storage has been queried. Could/ should this be located internally within the blocks or could the cycle storage be better integrated within the landscape?

Following these design review panel comments, in particular regarding materiality a series of further detailed elevation studies were explored. These are shown on the subsequent pages.



Visualisation of Wensley Court - >>>
Showing the design proposal presented at the
DRP and pre-application meeting

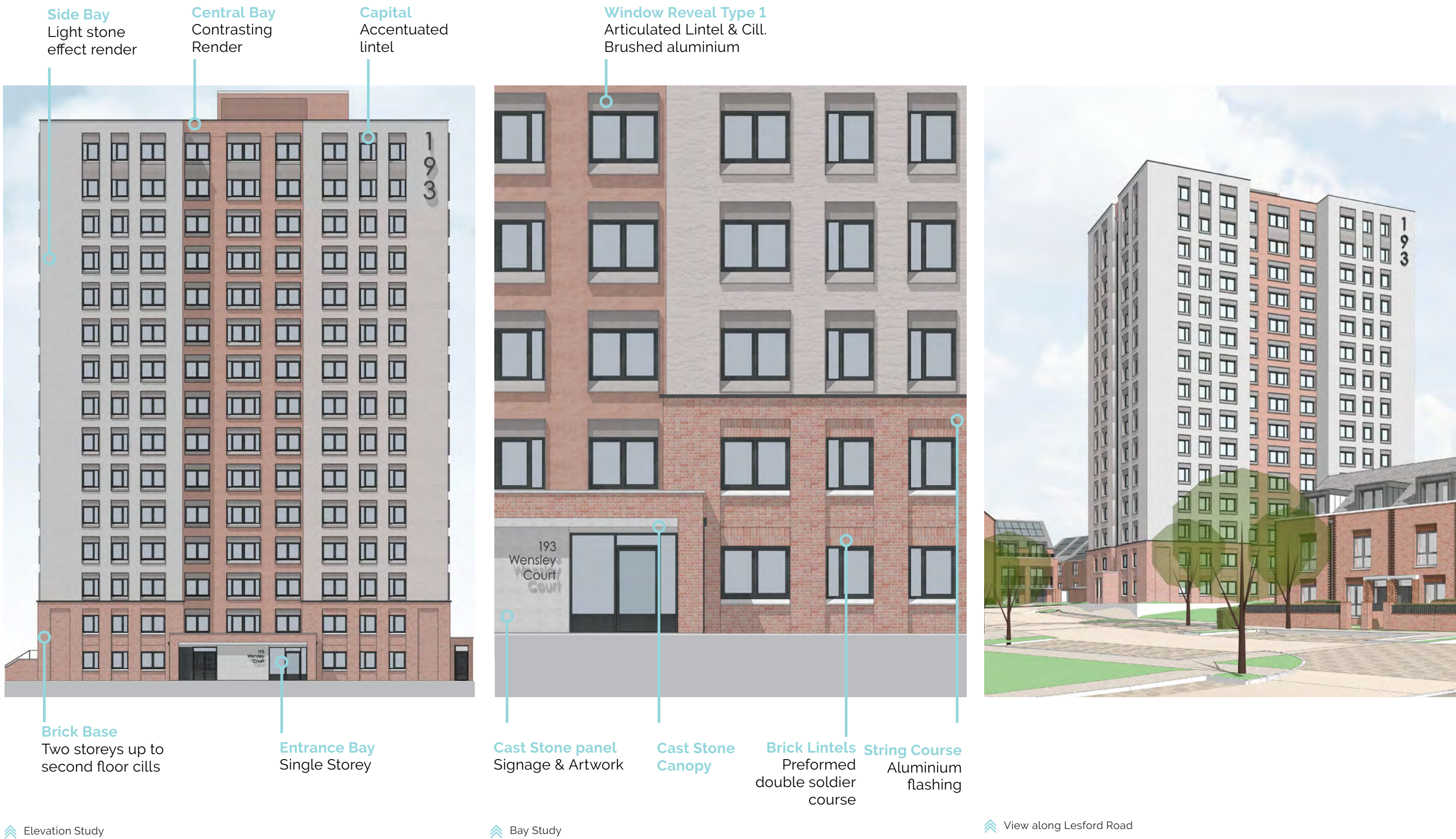
3.5 Detailed Design Development

Elevation Option 1 - Pre-app Meeting



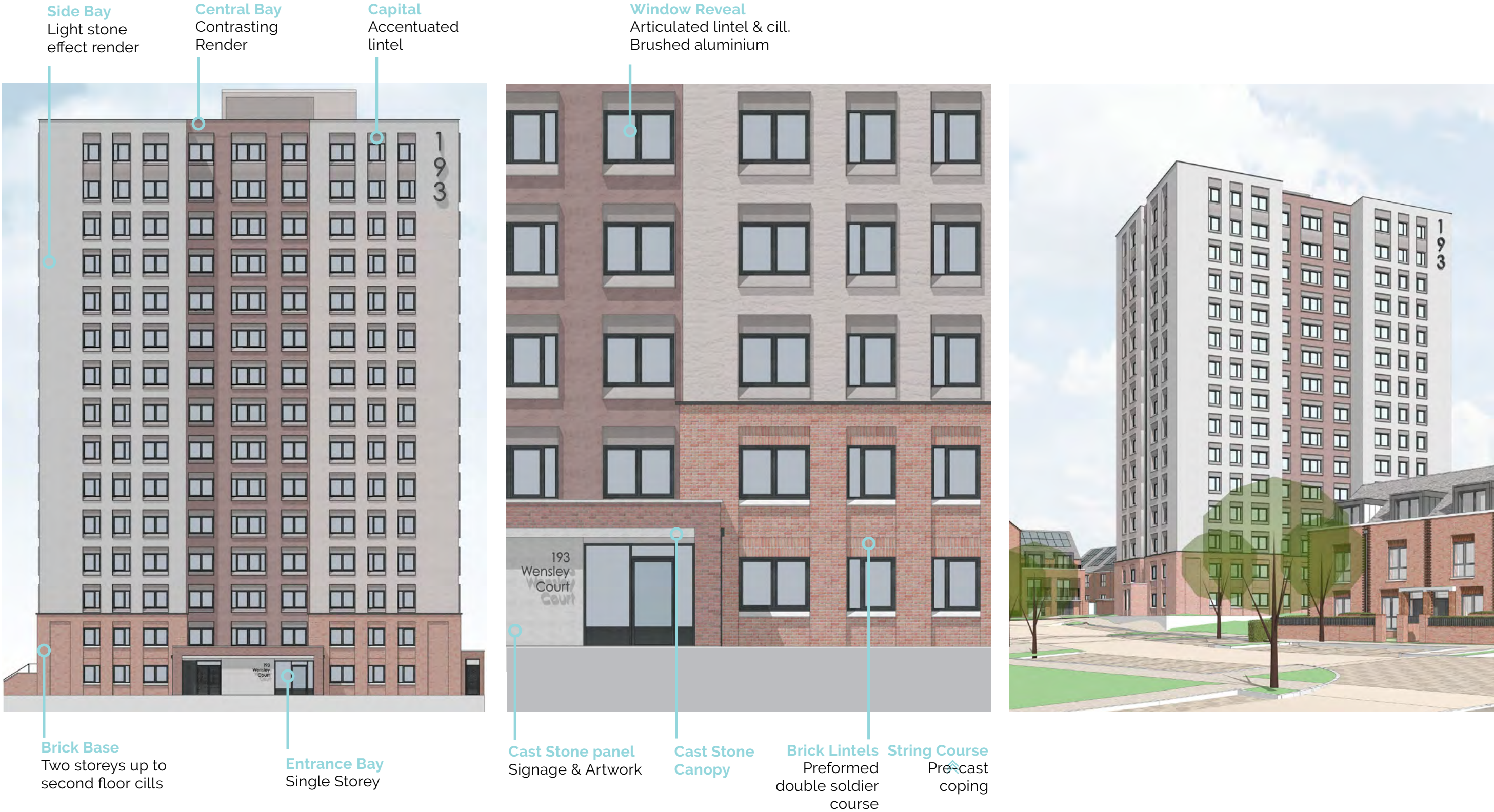
3.5 Detailed Design Development

Elevation Option 2 - Aluminium Features



3.5 Detailed Design Development

Elevation Option 3 - Dark Central Bay



3.5 Detailed Design Development

Elevation Option 4 - Light Central Bay



4.1 Design Proposal

The design proposals being submitted for planning approval have been developed and refined in order to take in consideration the comments and feedback received during the consultation process, balanced with input from the various workshops and discussions with the RBC Property Services and Housing management teams.

Throughout the development of these proposals, the key principles of the overall regeneration and the objectives of the refurbishment works, character, sustainability and identity, have remained at the core of the design.

The proposed internal layout alterations and improvements to the external elevations will deliver a high quality aesthetic appearance and a dramatically improved environmental performance and facilities to promote and facilitate a sustainable life style, consistent and comparable to the phase 1 new build homes.

The redesigned amenity spaces will provide new legible routes that link into the new pedestrian network proposed as part of the phase 1 scheme. These links will encourage activity in redesigned amenity spaces, which incorporate opportunities for imaginative play and increased cycle storage.

Owing to alterations to the site layout as part of the approved phase 1 masterplan, the approach to the existing buildings will be enhanced with new wider footpaths and street trees. A wider, more sensitively designed perimeter buffer at the base of the existing buildings.

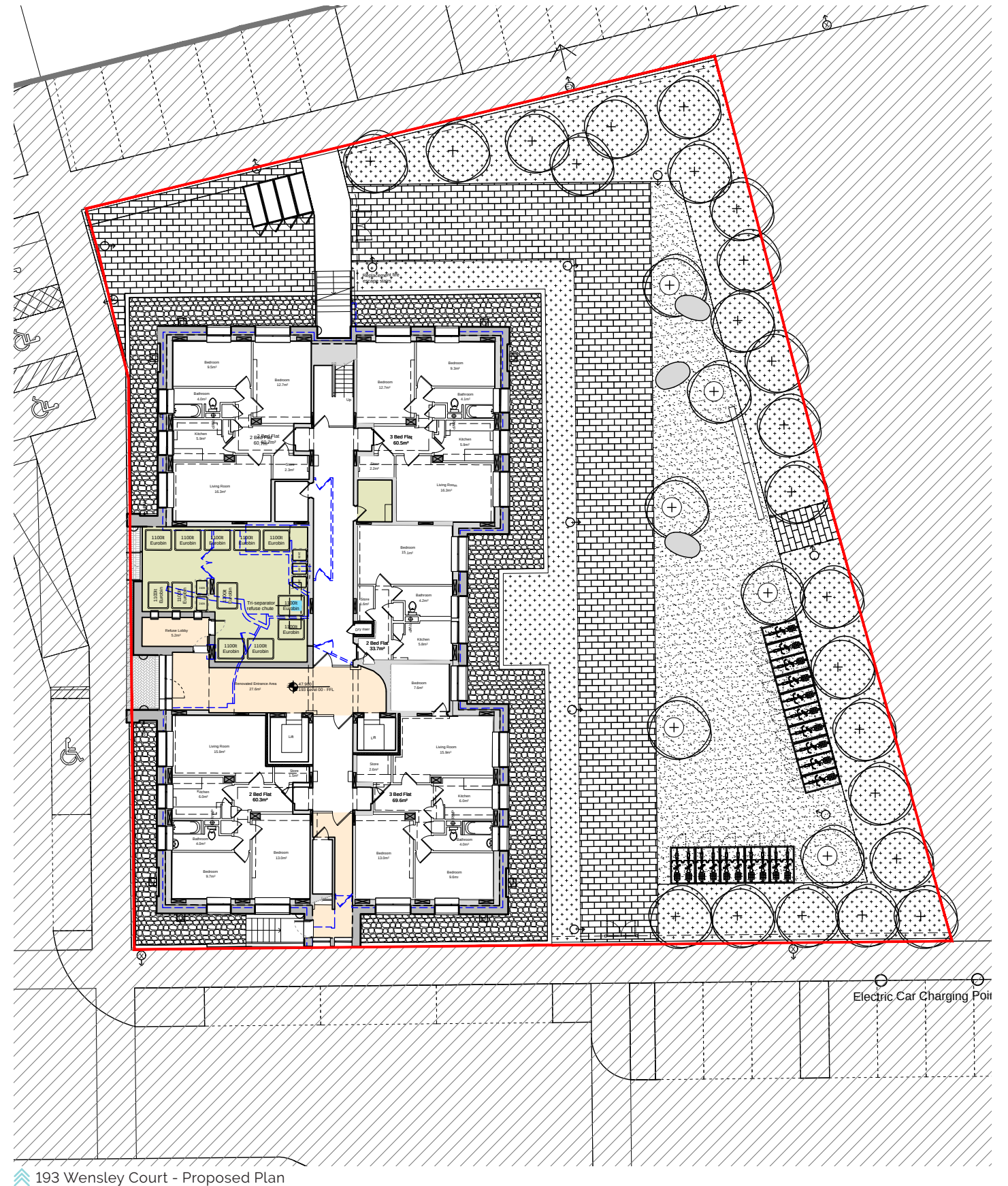
The following pages include the existing and proposed ground plans and amenity space for all three of the development sites.

New Design Elements

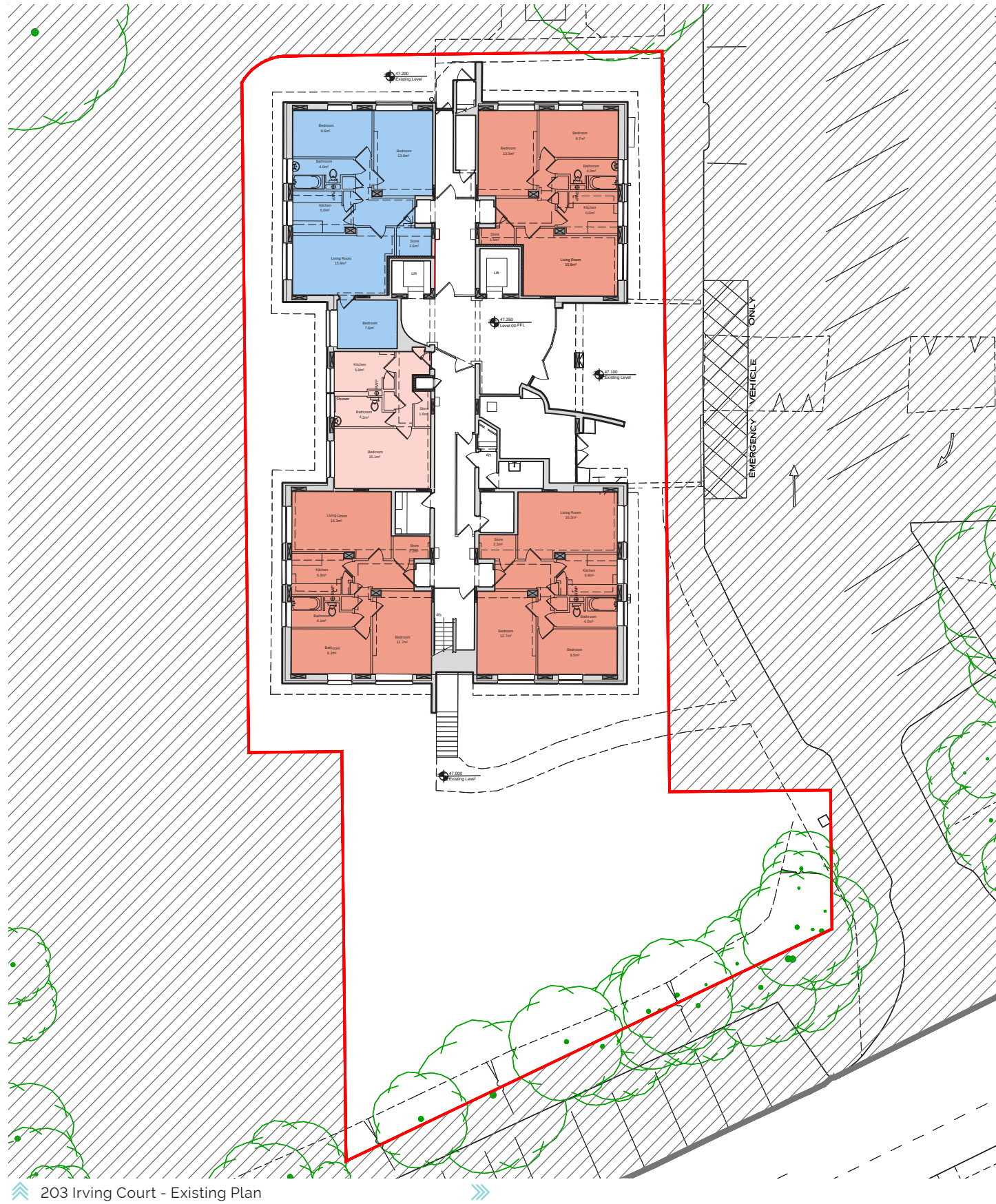
- 1 Renovated and refurbished entrances
- 2 Replacement of External Fabric & Windows
- 3 New refuse & recycling facilities
- 4 Communal Amenity Space
- 5 Increased Cycle Storage



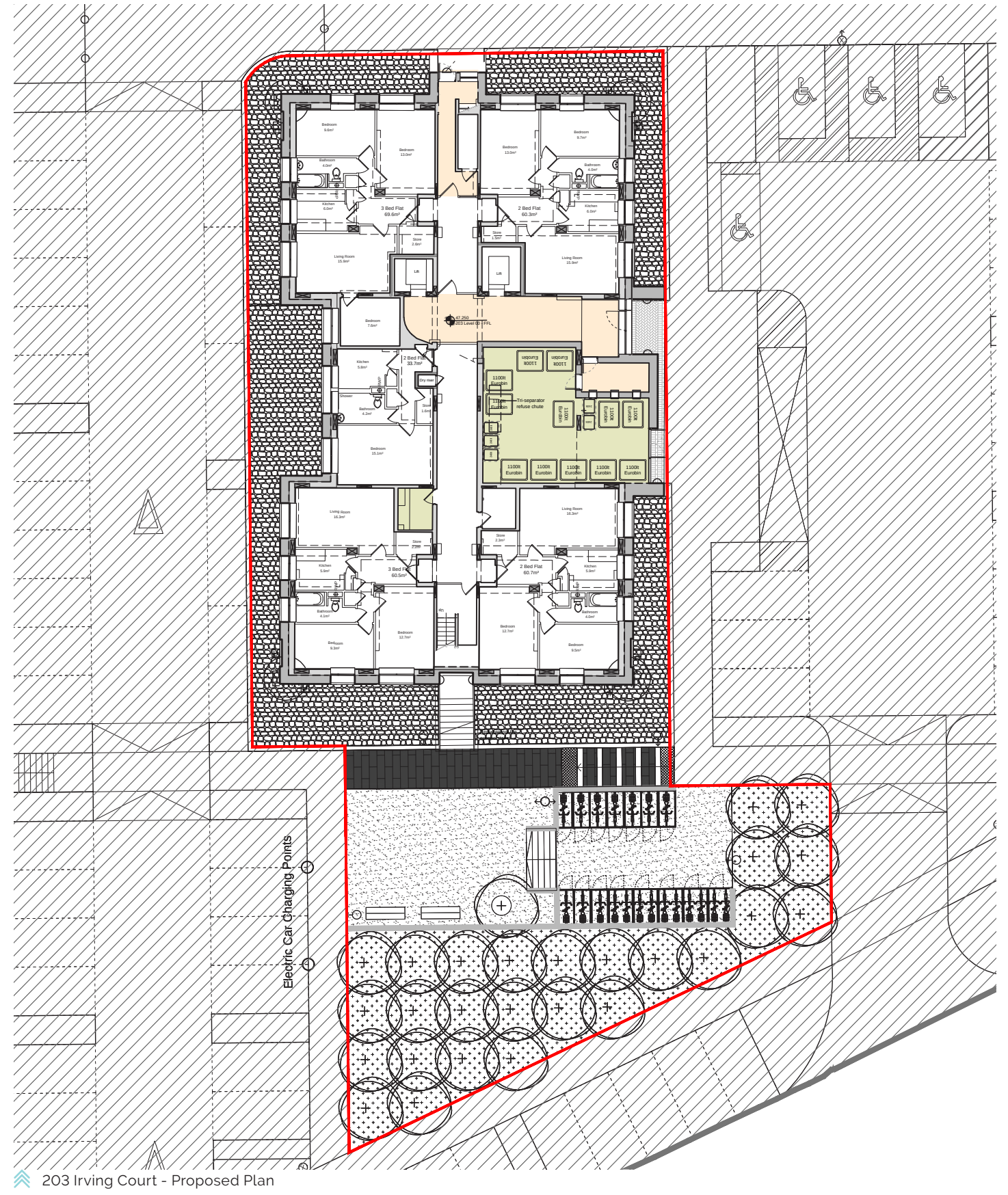
4.1 Design Proposal



4.1 Design Proposal

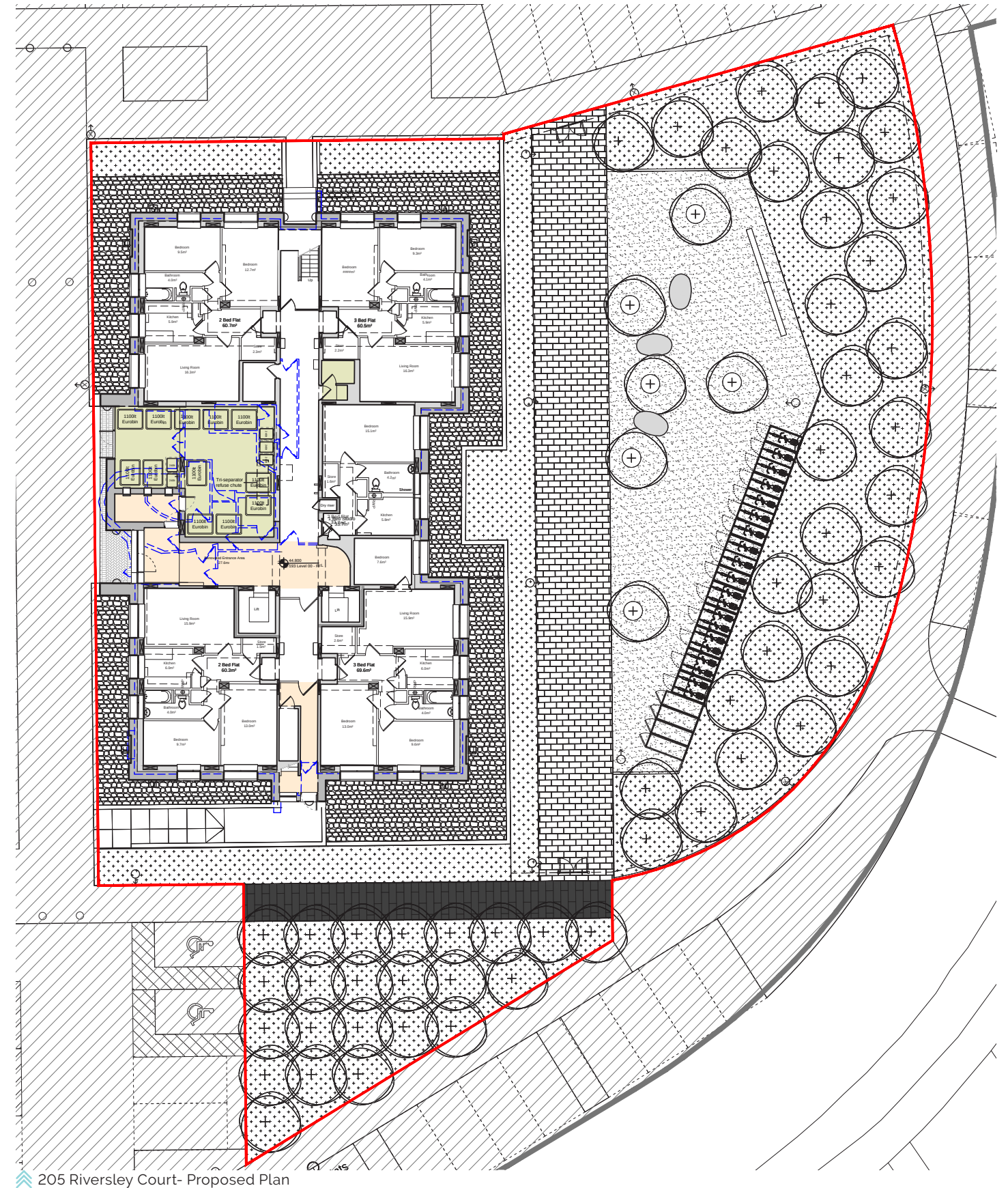
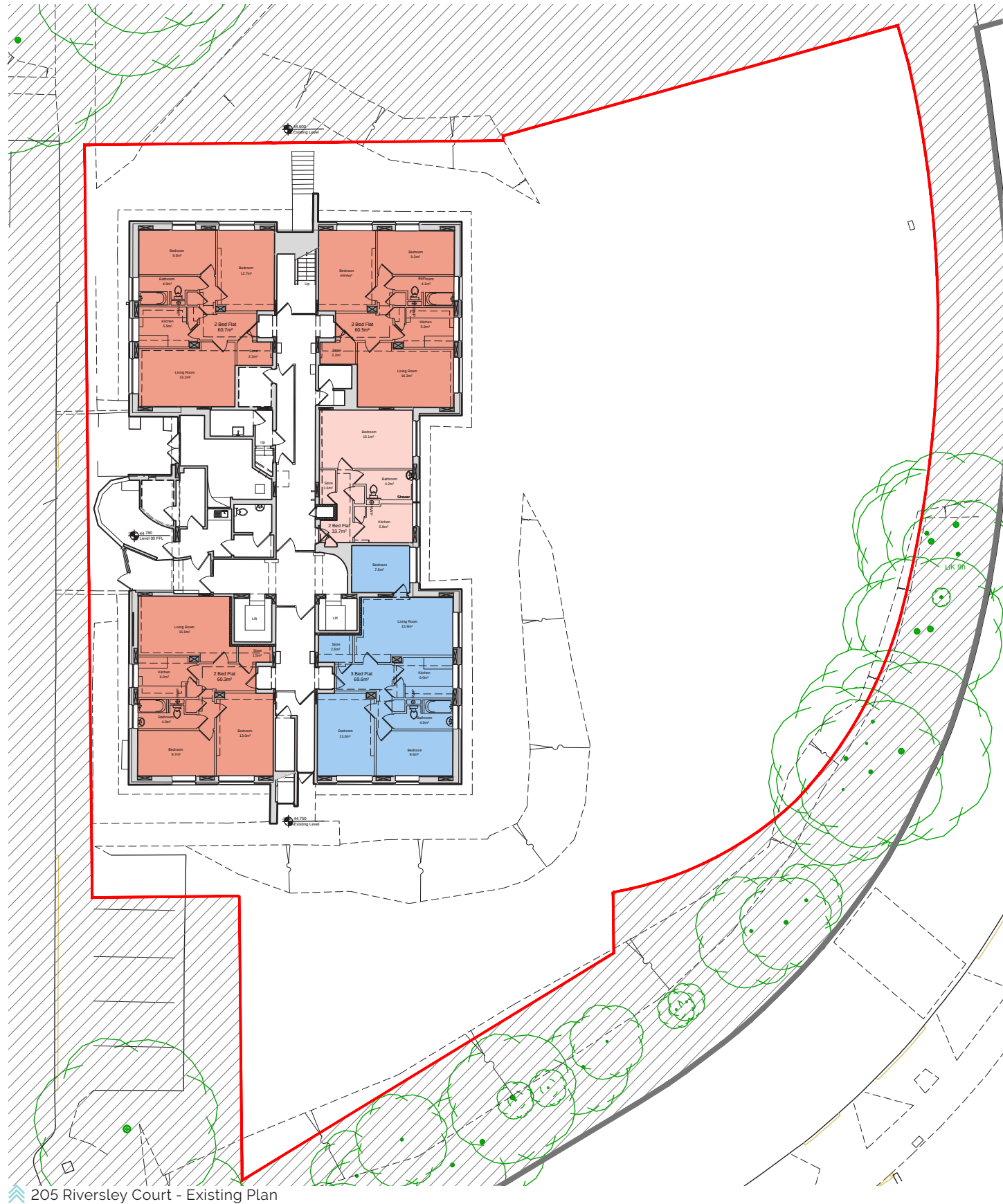


203 Irving Court - Existing Plan



203 Irving Court - Proposed Plan

4.1 Design Proposal



4.2 Proposed Ground Floor Layout

The same internal improvements are proposed to all three of the existing buildings, to ensure that the equal facilities are provided for all residents.

The ground floor extension, with an increased floor to ceiling height, will provide both an improved entrance space and a larger internal refuse store, which will accommodate all of the general waste, recycling and food waste bins required, removing the need for bins to be located externally.

The refuse area will be for maintenance access only, as residents living on the upper floors will be able to use the tri- separator refuse chute to dispose of general waste, recycling and food waste, whilst the ground floor residents can dispose of refuse, recycling and food waste in the refuse lobby. (Further information is included within the refuse strategy within section 6)

Within the new, extended ground floor element, the refuse store doors will be recessed to create a distinct separation between the footway and the entrances. The communal entrance is recessed further to provide a covered area on arrival at the buildings. The size of the recess has been carefully designed to provide a comfortable, sheltered area but not large enough to be overshadowed or conducive to loitering.

The open metal fire escape stairs will be replaced with concrete steps with solid brick sides up to knee-height, removing access to the void space below which has historically been used for unwanted storage. In place of the two adjacent ground floor fire escape doors, a new extension is proposed linking the ground-to floor stairs with the main circulation and removing the need for two doors, helping to control access.

Replacement Fire Escape Stairs
In accordance with site levels

Relocated Cleaners' Store
Maintenance access only

Extended Refuse Store
Revised layout to accommodate all refuse, recycling and food waste bins internally

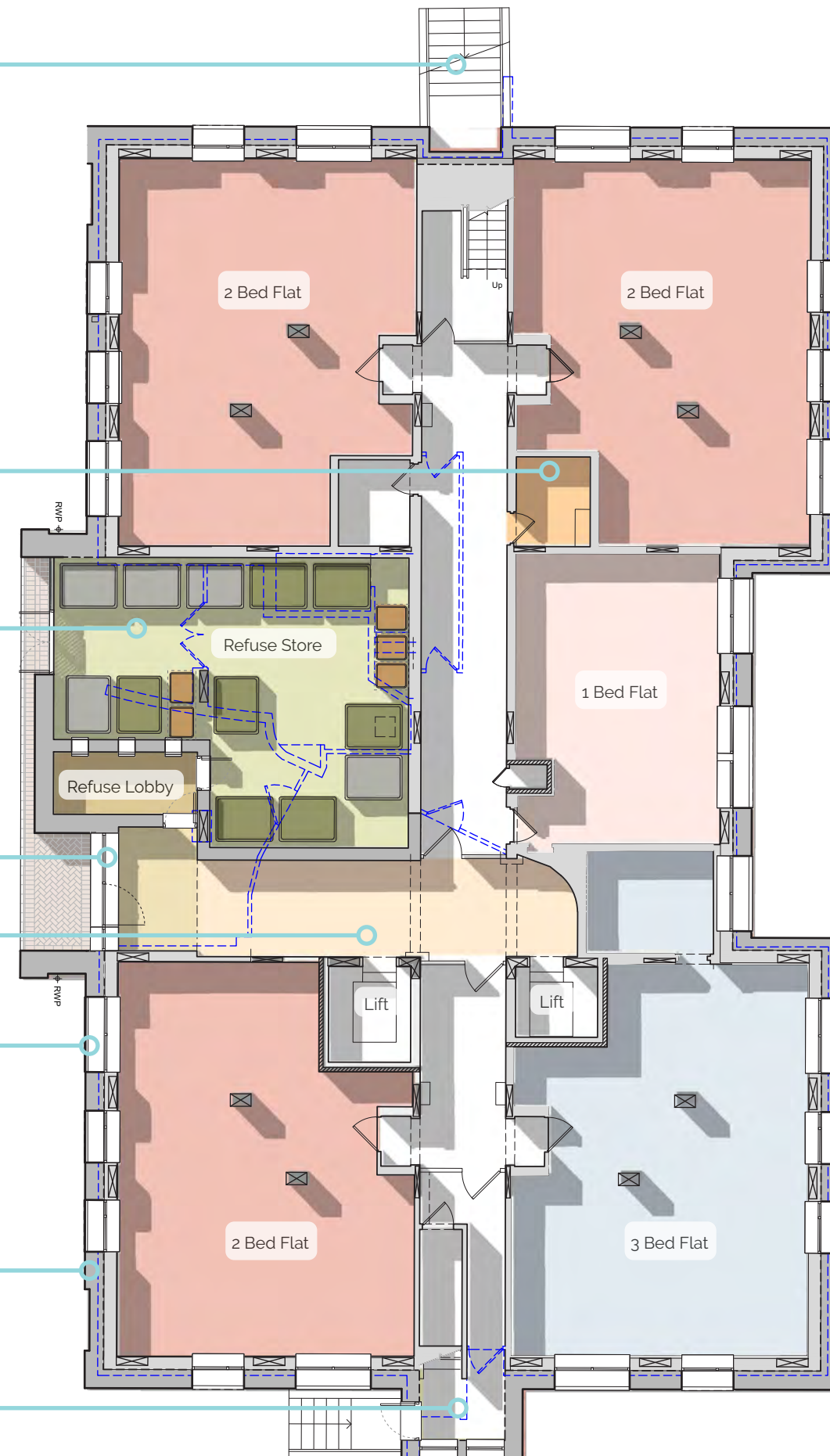
New Entrance
With new door entry system

Renovated Internal Corridor
New finishes and signage

Replacement Windows
Triple glazed, alu-clad inward opening windows

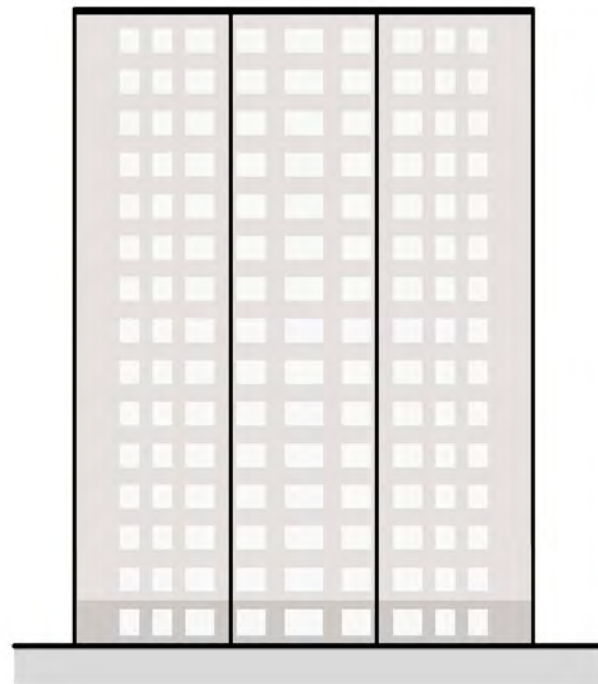
New External Envelope Materials
Increased insulation, brick to ground first floor and render above.

Improved Fire Escape lobby
To combine ground floor means of escape and improve internal circulation.



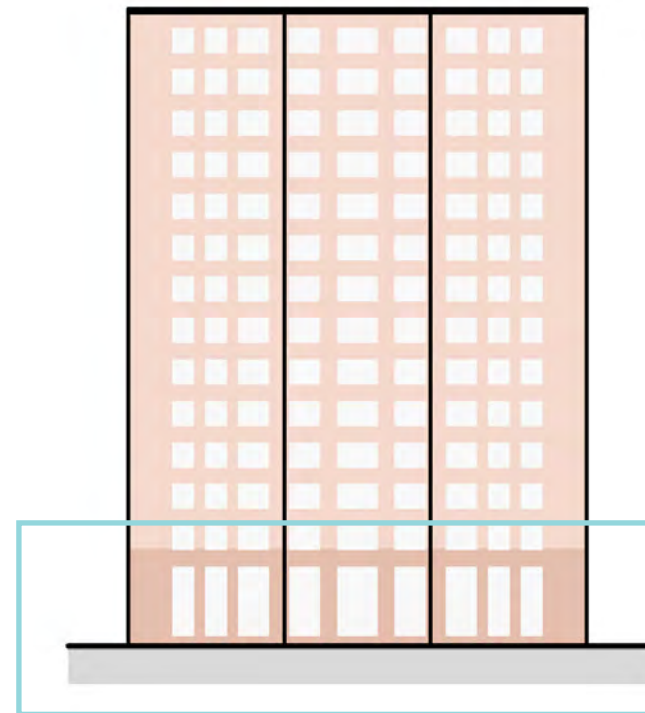
4.3 Elevation Design Principles

Through considering different design options at a range of scales and within the site context, the key moves in terms of the of the elevation composition were concluded to be the following:



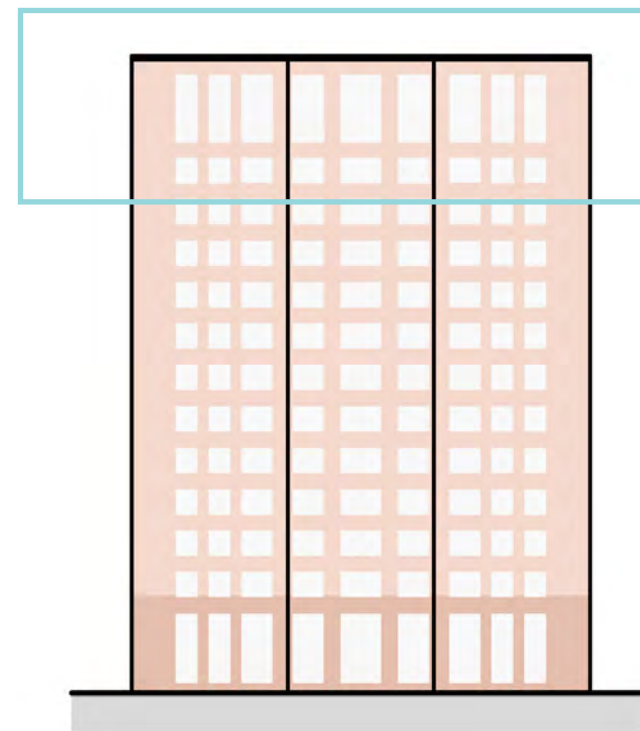
Existing Building

Neutral emphasis



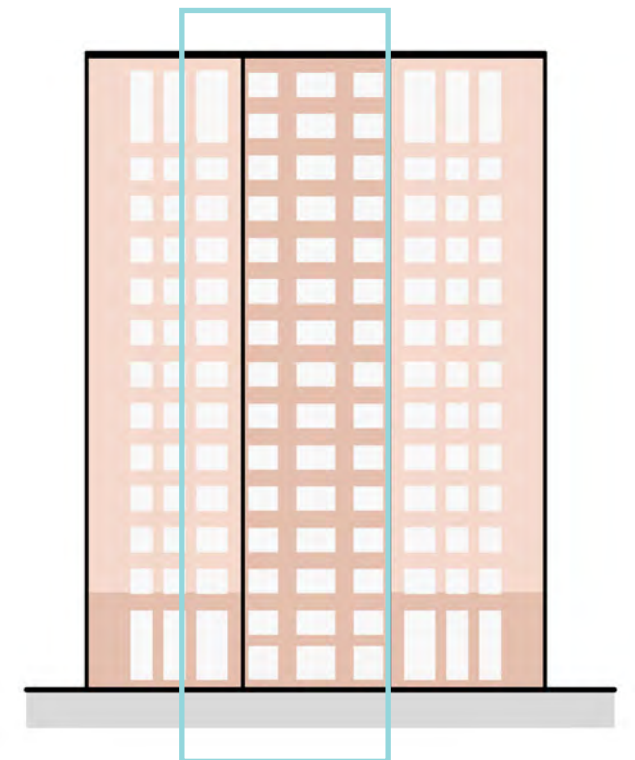
Base Emphasis

Two-storey brick base, ground and first floor windows combined with infill panels.



Capital Emphasis

Combined windows at the upper floors to create visual emphasis from distant views



Central Contrast

Creating a contrast between the central bay and the side wings of the tower.

4.4 Elevation Design Proposal

Main Entrance Elevation

During the design development a range of elevation treatments, design and materials were explored. Following this, it was concluded that simple design moves and materiality could create an elegant and refined building appearance that not only related to the phase 1 new build development at street level, but also had distinct characteristics that could be appreciated when viewing the buildings from much further afield.

The mass of the building is broken up by reintroducing a contrast between the central recessed sections of the buildings and the sides. The use of a tone and colour of render on the central section to compliment and enhance the entrance extension is intended to increase the prominence of the entrances within the facade.

The two-storey brick datum reduces the scale of the building at ground level, creating an improved visual relationship between the existing 15 storey buildings and the existing surrounding houses, as well the future new build houses. The rhythm of the recessed brick elements gives the visual effect of double height colonnade, creating strong vertical proportions at lower levels that reflect the language of the phase 1 apartment building.

The accentuated cills and lintel to the windows on the upper floors, assist in creating vertical proportions all the way up the building facades. Further vertical emphasis at the upper floors is achieved by combining the 13th and 14th floor windows, along with large but simple building signage which will be visible from the surrounding area.

The same language continues around all four elevations of the three buildings. In place of the contrasting render, new, elegant curtain walling on the north and south elevations, creates the clear visual distinction between there volumes of the facade.

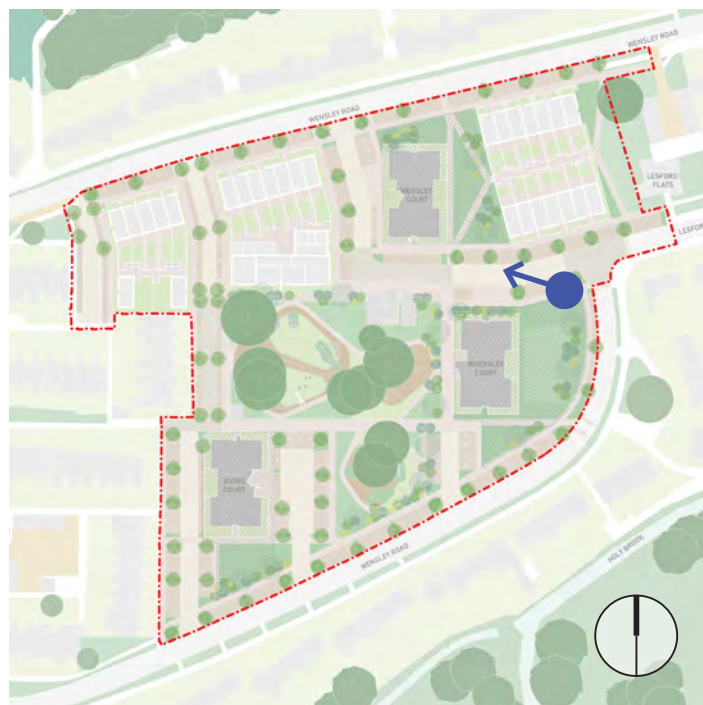


Design Proposal - Front Elevation



Design Proposal - Side Elevation

4.4 Elevation Design Proposal



Wensley Court from Lesford Road



4.4 Elevation Design Proposal



4.5 Key Details

Main Entrance Elevation

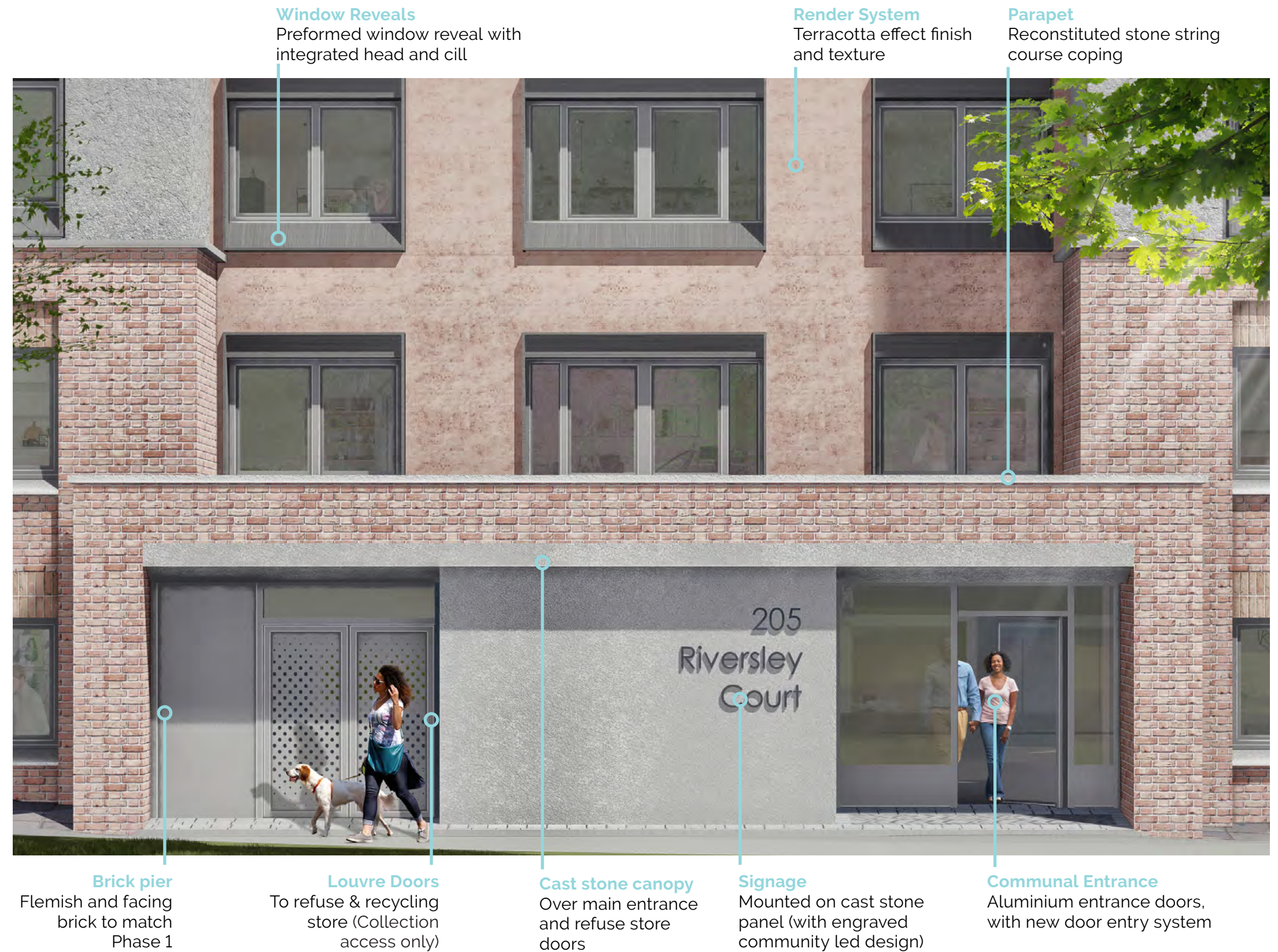
The new extended entrances have been focal points of the design, as this area will effect the daily experience of existing residents as they enter and exit the buildings.

A key principle was to ensure the language and the materials of the entrances had a clear relationship with the entrance of the phase 1 apartment building, as well as tie into the proportions of the existing buildings.

The overall design of each of the three entrances is proposed to be the same. However the intention is to utilise the central panel separating the main entrance and refuse doors on each of the buildings to introduce a community led design piece, along with the building signage which would be distinct for each of the three buildings and create an individual identity for each of the towers at ground level.



Phase 1 External Entrance Visualisation



Design Proposal - Entrance Elevation

4.5 Key Details

Communal Residents Entrance

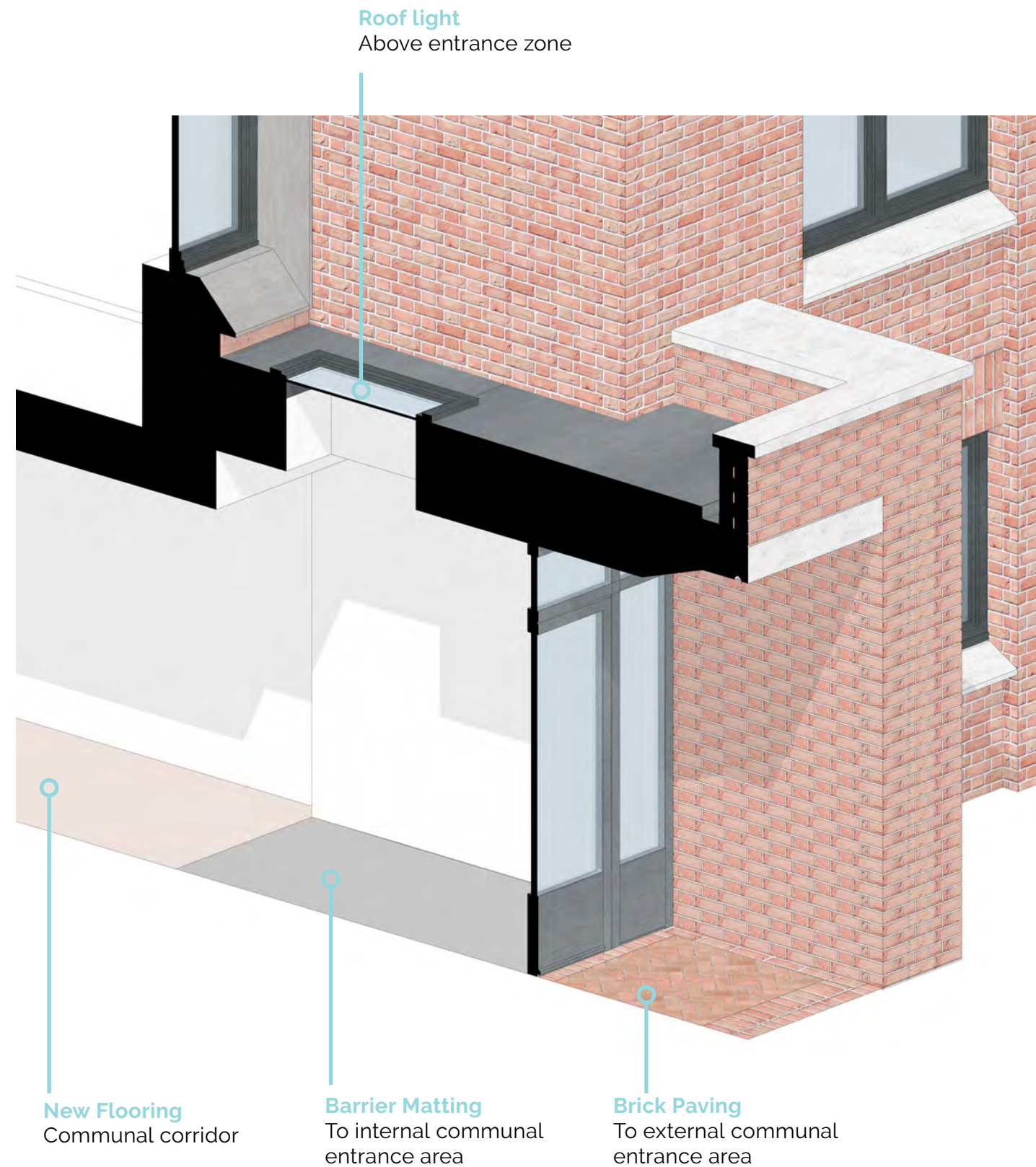
The brick piers either side of the entrance have been design to be the same size as the piers on the phase 1 new build apartment building and will feature the same Flemish bond brickwork.

Recessed from the face of the brickwork, a chamfered cast stone lintel spans between the piers, providing a canopy above the main entrance and refuse store doors. A deeper recess is proposed above the main entrance to further emphasise the entrance and differentiate it from the adjacent refuse store doors.

The floor to ceiling height of the new entrance area has been maximised with roof lights above to create a new, light and welcoming entrance. New internal finishes are proposed to all communal areas, with a number of the same internal finishes as the phase 1 apartment building entrance being used.



Phase 1 - Communal Entrance Visualisation



Communal Entrance Section



Camden Goodsynd



Greenford Block 5



Southall Waterside

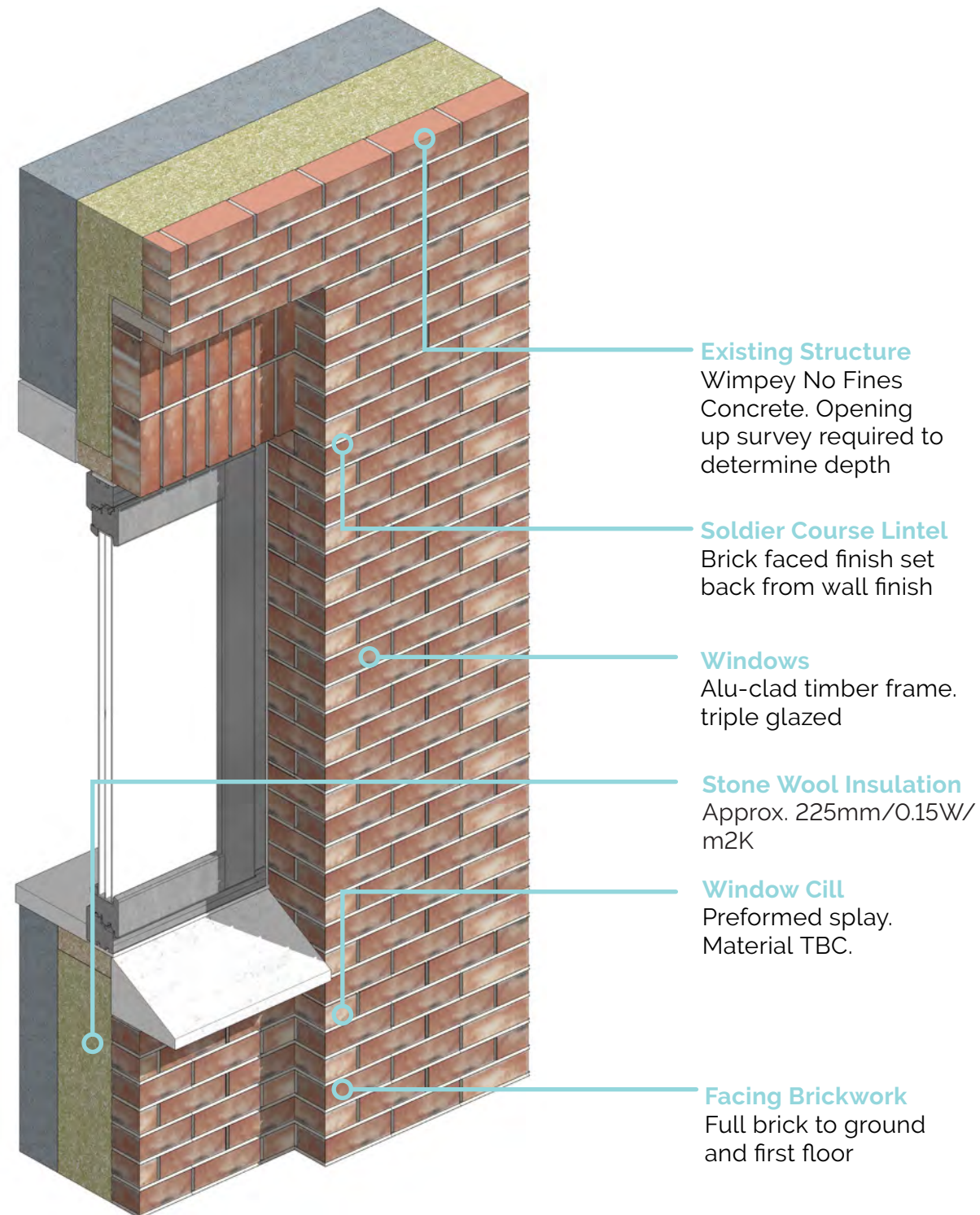
4.5 Key Details

Brick Base

At ground and first floors, external brick work is proposed to provide a more robust and durable material at the lower level where there is increased wear, creating a two storey brick datum which continues across the phase 1 new build homes and the existing buildings.

To the ground floor windows, a recessed, double stacked soldier course lintel is proposed. The height of the lintel is consistent with the brick lintels on the new build phase one houses, however slightly different brick pattern is proposed, to create a subtle distinction.

Consistent with the lintels, recessed brickwork panels are proposed vertically between the windows and a double height blank recessed panel is proposed to the corners. This creates visual affect of engaged brick columns, which is intended to relate to the brick colonnade on the new build phase 1 apartment building.



Red/Pink Multi - Facing Brickwork

Lower Floor Window Reveal



Phase 1 Apartment Building - Window Details



Phase 1 Houses - Windows Details



Phase 1 Apartment Building - Two Storey Entrance colonnade

4.5 Key Details

Upper Floors

From the second floor up to the top of the building, an insulated render system is proposed. To reflect the original 1960s elevation treatment, a lighter colour of render is proposed to the side sections of the buildings, whilst the central recessed section of the building is proposed as a terracotta colour.

The intension to select render colours and textures that have the appearance and quality of natural materials, that will weather gracefully over time. A long-last, high-quality, durable render will also be specified.

Replacement of the existing windows and the installation of new window reveals will have significant impact on the character of the elevations. The accentuated cill and lintel within the window reveal have been designed to create more vertical, elegant proportions.

The will be further develop during the technical stages of the design, however the adjacent images are intended to illustrate the design intent.

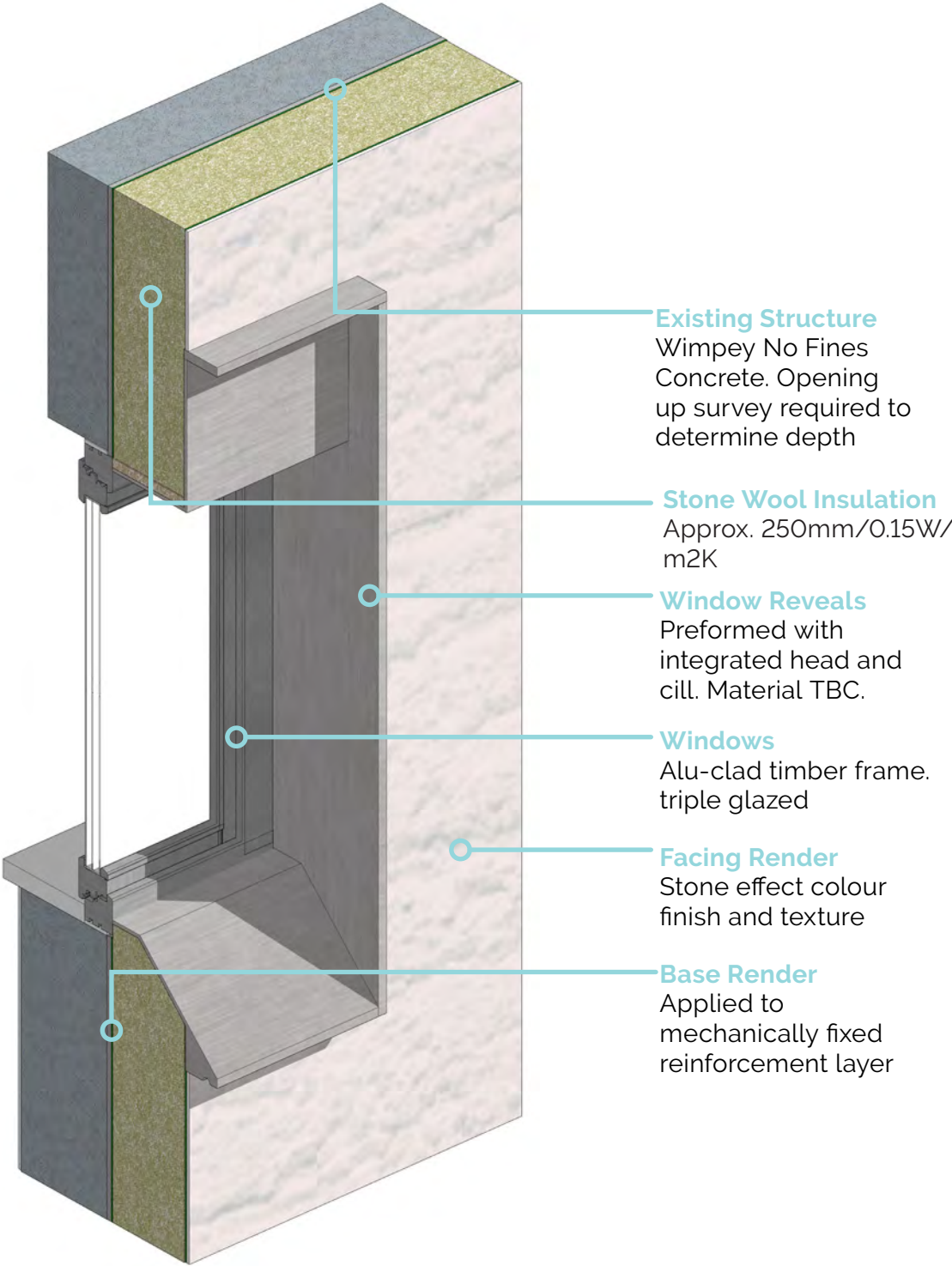


Textured Render



Textured Render

Upper Floor Window Reveal



D Building, Venice - Cino Zucchi



Kapellenhof, Vienna - Alleswirdgut Architektur



Cambridge University - BAM



