

389 Gosbrook Road

Design and Access Statement

389 Gosbrook Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8ED

February 2021



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01 introduction

This design statement is written in support of a planning application for the development of a 6-unit residential apartment scheme at 389 Gosbrook Road, Reading.

The site is currently occupied by a vacant light industrial unit in a poor state of repair.

The design proposal provides for 6 no. units in a mix of 1 and 2 bedroom apartments within a 2.5 storey building form in a well landscaped setting.

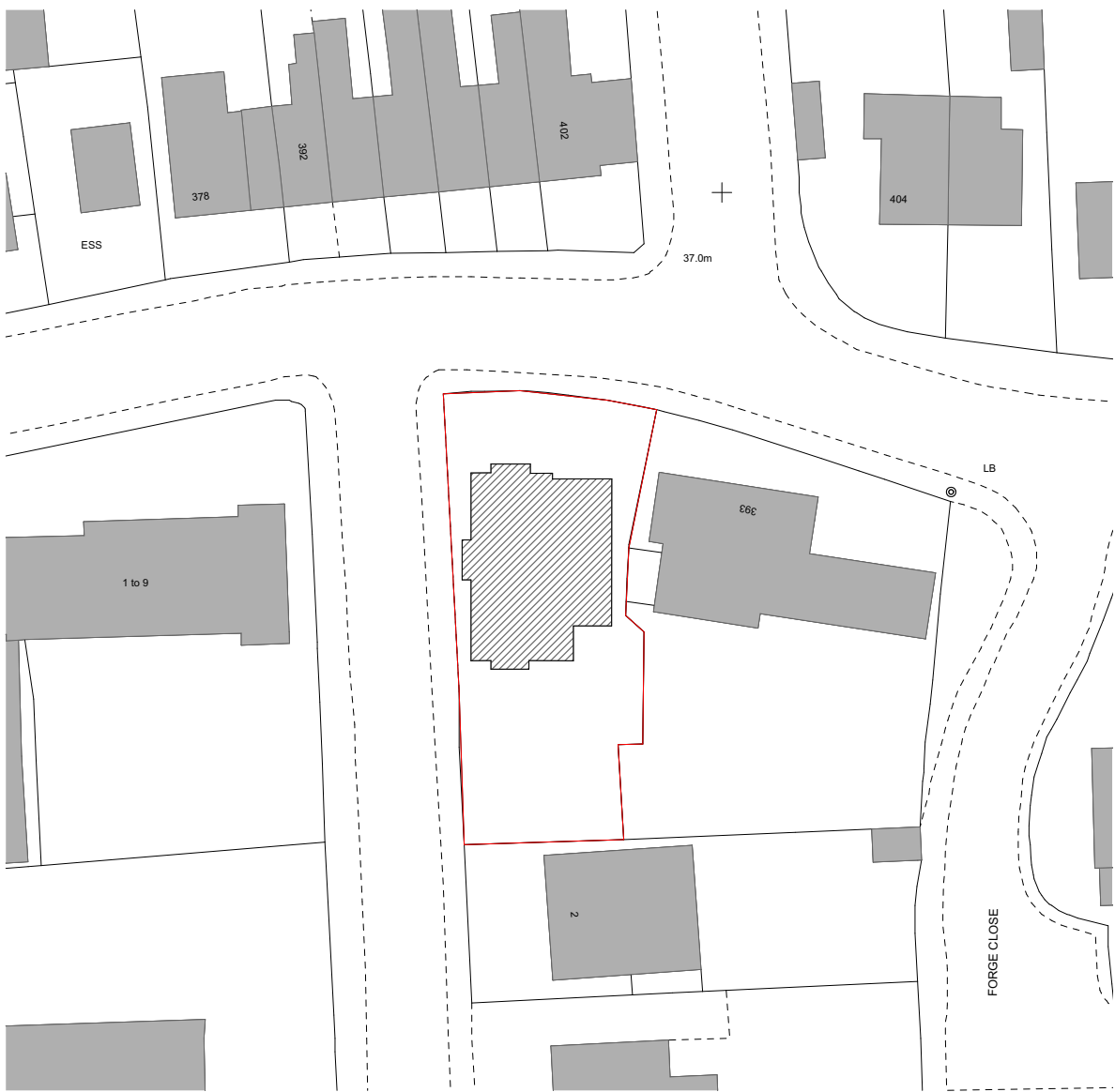
02 the site and context



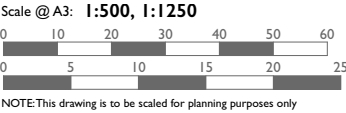
02 the site and context



Location Plan



Proposed Block Plan



02 the site and context

Gosbrook Road is a local distributor road (B3345) connecting Caversham to Central Reading and Reading Station approximately 0.65 miles to the south via George Street. To the west the road leads to the A4 (Bath Road) and the M4 via the A339 (Rose Kiln Lane). Gosbrook Road terminates at the roundabout fronting the site but the B3345 continues north via Briant's Avenue leading to A4155Henley Road - leading to Henley.

Gosbrook Road is a busy thoroughfare and its use as a local distributor road has encouraged light industry such as car showrooms, garages, paint shops etc to intersperse the mainly residential area. This has somewhat eroded the quality of the street setting locally.

The corner plot site is located on the junction of Gosbrook Road and Send Road. Send Road leads south to Heron Island and local residential roads with no through access to Reading Town centre. Adjacent to the west is 1 Send Road, a flatted development of 2.5 storeys in traditional Victorian style, its eastern elevation notably insignificant compared to its north elevation. Its main mass is formed with a recent extension to the east with dormer windows and a prominent elevation facing the application site.

The site shares its east boundary with the Grade II listed Ivy Farmhouse. The Site forms a small portion of the asset's setting and currently makes a negative contribution to the asset's significance and that significance's legibility. Please refer to the statement of significance provided to supplement this application. This is a red brick building with grey/silver flemish bond headers, a red clay tile roof and flint and lime mortar panelling that has seen extensive extensions and renovation over several generations. The boundary is a red brick wall running north to south. Central to the boundary Ivy Farmhouse has extended onto this boundary wall.

Adjacent to the north, traditional terrace houses of merit front Gosbrook Road, these exhibit local detailing such as quoining to windows and doors, arched fenestration, projecting bay windows and brick detailing. The northern boundary of 389 Gosbrook Road is a partly demolished red brick wall of no value. The western boundary with Send Road has no boundary treatment and is defined by a raised concrete slab which covers the front forecourt. The site has no street presence or reference to the residential setting.

To the south, an enclosed yard protected with wire mesh gates shares a brick wall boundary with a bungalow. The properties to the south have recently been subject to a planning application for residential apartments. The application has been withdrawn at the time of writing this statement.

The site is relatively flat north to south. To the south the ground rises leading from the existing Send Road crossover through the gated entry, and is again locally raised nearer the eastern brick boundary wall with Ivy Farmhouse. This is recently discarded spoil and not the natural topography of the site.



02 the site and context



① - Looking east

02 the site and context



② - Looking south from Briant's Avenue with Ivy Farmhouse centre and the proposal site right

02 the site and context



③ - Looking west with Ivy Farmhouse hiding the site beyond

02 the site and context



④ - Looking south-west with Ivy Farmhouse in the foreground

02 the site and context



⑤ - Looking east at the proposal site from the parking forecourt of I Send Road

02 the site and context



⑥ - Looking north on Send Road with proposal site in the distance to the right.

A mix of light industrial and residential buildings are located along Send Road prior to transitioning into a predominantly residential setting.

02 the site and context

The Site - 389 Gosbrook Road



View of the junction of Send Road and Gosbrook Road with a mature tree providing a focal point to the street



View to Gosbrook Road across forecourt



Existing vacant commercial building which provides no street presence



Gated entry to yard of 389 Gosbrook Road



South elevation of 389 Gosbrook Road workshop, with rear wall in a poor state of repair. Ivy Farmhouse rear elevation beyond



Office accommodation with zero street presence or relationship to local character; setting or scale.

02 the site and context

Caversham - Light Industrial / commercial

The existing vacant site and large areas of local land are used for light industry and commercial premises. Over time this has eroded the quality of the residential setting along Gosbrook Road and Send Road. The properties detract from the street scene and setting of the listed building.



Send Road



Send Road



Gosbrook Road



02 the site and context

Caversham - Private dwellings, House Typology

The urban fabric of Caversham is made up of a patchwork of architectural styles and building typologies. The overriding building type is Victorian terrace housing. Constructed fast and efficiently with intricate repetitive detailing. This building style captures the character of Caversham and the setting of Gosbrook Road.

This is interspersed with modern post-war housing of various qualities, typically detached or semi-detached housing. There is little detail or elevation relief to these elevations.

- Dwellings exhibiting qualities of local character
- Dwelling of character; typically post-war 1960's with architectural styling such as art deco influence, alternatively low quality / overclad terracing of original scale and form within high quality terrace street scene.
- Low quality out of character typically post-war modern developments / pastiche examples of terracing and semi/detached properties



02 the site and context

Caversham - Private dwellings, House Typology

The prominent facing materials in Caversham buildings of architectural merit are red and silver/grey brick and slate roof tile. There is infrequent, but identifiable use of flint panelling to buildings and boundary treatments.

Decoration in the form of contrasting brick string courses, window surrounds by quoining in contrasting brick and exposed lintel heads provides elevation relief, elaborate detailing conveys the historical quality of the area on a main route into Reading.

Bay windows, prominent gabled elevations and chimneys are consistent details as are decoration to building elements such as ridge tiles, windows, lintels and chimney flaunching. Flemish bond brickwork and brickwork patternation is also a common local decoration to elevational treatment.



02 the site and context

Caversham - Private dwellings, House Typology

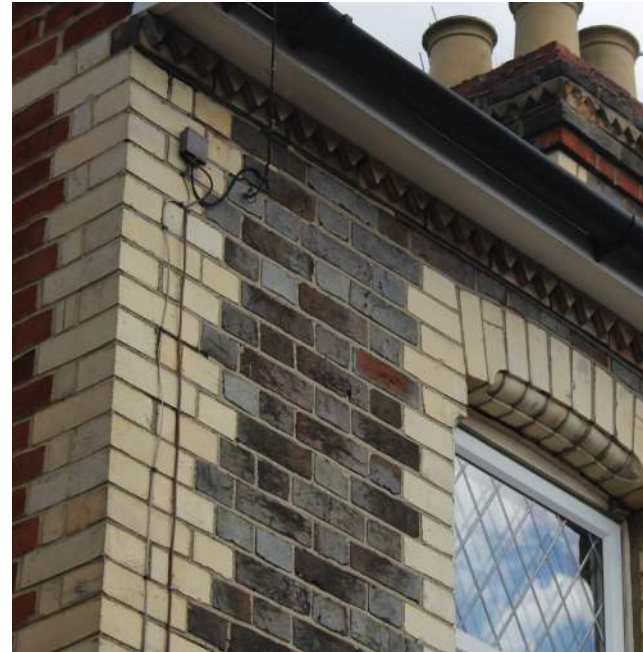
Consistent detailing, form and style reinforces the architectural character of the area.

Elevational panelling in the form of flint and render (notably to Ivy Farmhouse below) and hanging tile elsewhere provide relief to the elevations.

A key detail of the area is the arched door lintel and expressed lintels elsewhere. Segmental arched window heads are not common but are evident to Ivy Farmhouse and to other heritage assets, which also exhibit simpler flat lintel heads.

Decorative brickwork specials add texture and depth to the elevation, particularly to the buildings with brick quoin window surrounds. Additionally, arrowhead brick details to the cornice and similarly to the chimney flaunching add further adorned detail.

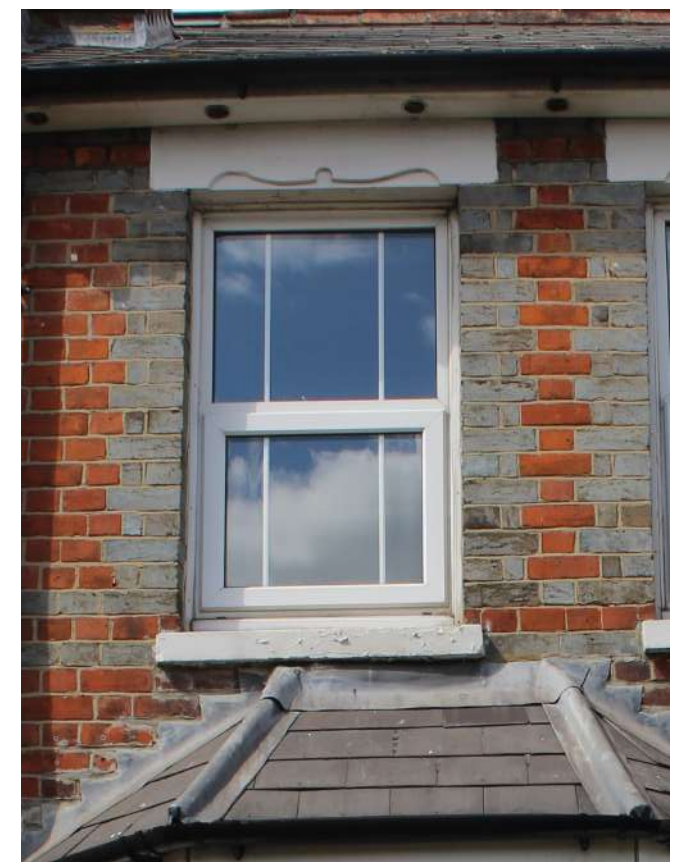
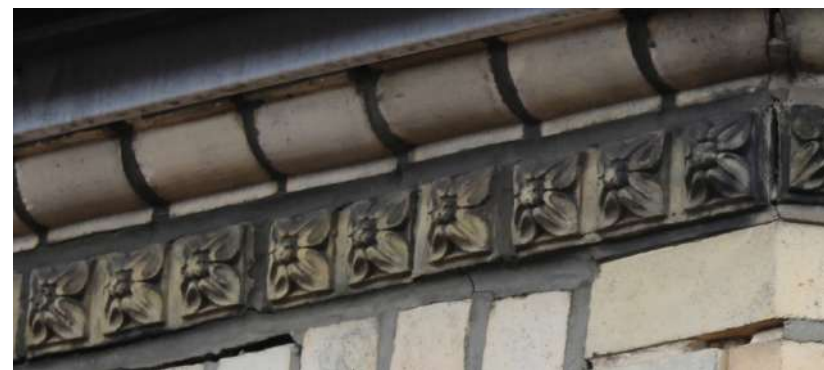
Windows are typically portrait in orientation and proportion, and of around a brick depth deep, although this is not consistent. Projecting bay windows are also common. There are examples of masonry, render and lighter timber bay and oriel windows.



02 the site and context

Caversham - Private dwellings, House Typology

Consistent detailing, materiality, scale and form reinforces the prevailing architectural character and quality of the area.



02 the site and context

Caversham - Private dwellings, House Typology

Post-war housing is typical locally, placed as infill development. Some exhibit art deco references whilst others are notably modern post-war terrace dwellings. These are of the time and exhibit weatherboarding, hanging tile and concrete tiled roofs. There are more recent examples of backland and infill development of poor quality with no reference to local character.

On occasion some terraces have little to no reference of the Victorian styling and sit at odds with the more elaborate terraces throughout Caversham.



02 the site and context

Caversham - Listed Buildings, House Typology

There are a number of interesting listed buildings nearby. They exhibit a historical use of flint and red brick, with clay tile roofs. Their use of simple detailing with quality textured materials, recognizable proportion, scale and form compliment the area.



02 the site and context

Caversham - Flatted dwellings, House Typology

It is evident that the principle of flatted development within this area is common. There are a number of flatted developments within close proximity to the application site. These vary in scale and style from 4-storey block development along Star Road (east) and art deco blocks designed to fit within the urban grain of detached dwellings.

Flatted development locally seldom references local character with simple detailing and little architectural relief.

Nearby flatted development not shown on the illustration right include, but are not limited to:

- 355-357 Gosbrook Road, Caversham RG4 8ED
- Willow Court, Briants Avenue, Caversham RG4 5AZ
- 129 Queens Road, Caversham RG4 8DN
- Monkley Court, Piggotts Road, Caversham RG4 8EW



02 the site and context

Caversham - Flatted dwellings, House Typology



Send Road



Gosbrook House - Star Road



I Send Road - East and south elevation.



Mill Green



Star Road



I Send Road - North Elevation exhibits qualities of Victorian houses

02 the site and context

Contextual Analysis

The site measures approximately 520 m2 and is roughly rectangular in shape, with a northern boundary that follows the curvature of Gosbrook Road.

The existing structures significantly distract from the setting of the Grade II listed Ivy Farmhouse to the east and offers no architectural value to the area.

There are two key elevations, Gosbrook Road to the north and Send Road to the west. Any proposal must relate to both elevations, 'turning the corner' and addressing the scale of the junction.

There is a noticeable scale difference between the nine units of 1 Send Road, opposite to the west, Ivy Farmhouse and the predominantly two storey pitched roof buildings opposite. It is important that any proposal addresses this scale change and importantly respects the scale and positioning of the Heritage Asset.

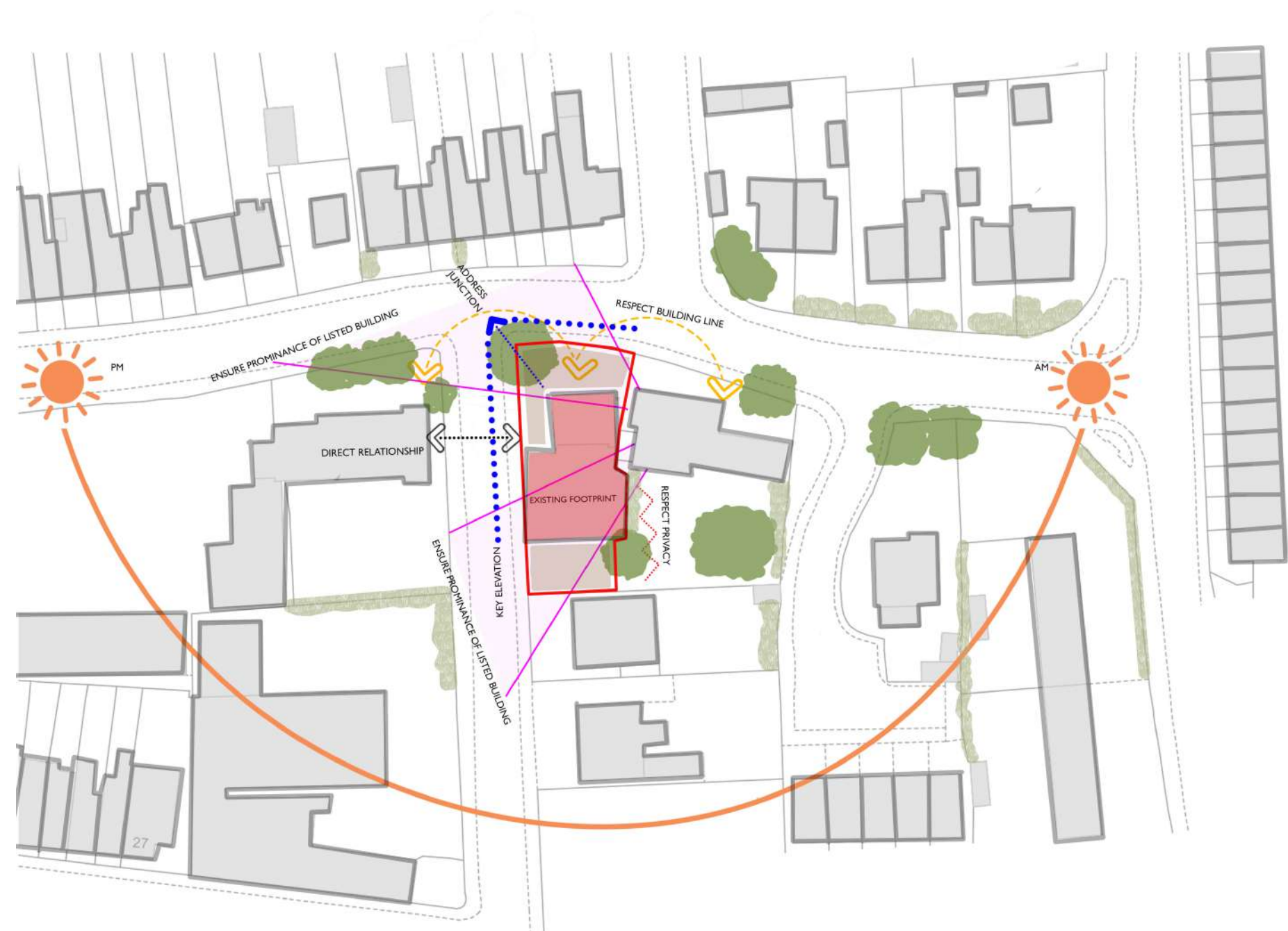
It is considered important not to compete architecturally with the Ivy Farmhouse in style or materiality which could erode its significance locally and within the street scene. Any proposal should restrain from projecting further north than its main elevation to ensure it retains its presence in key views west and east.

1 Send Road is a 2.5 storey flatted development, a part original Victorian mansion house which has been extended to provide flatted accommodation. The extension is of poor quality material and detailing. It does however reference the Victorian era styling in form. The east elevation addressing the site is topped with gabled dormers. There is a direct relationship to be addressed between the proposal site and the 2.5 storey flats of 1 Send Road.

The grounds to Ivy Farmhouse extend the length of the proposal site to the south, terminating against a boundary wall with a small bungalow dwelling. Any proposal will seek to ensure there is no loss of privacy to the amenity of Ivy Farmhouse. The bungalow to the south has recent planning history for a considerably larger residential development.

A Category U tree is located to the rear of the gardens to Ivy Farmhouse. The category B tree to the north of the application site acts as a prominent and valued asset to the local street scene. It is proposed to retain this tree and improve its condition through removal of the forecourt hardstanding.

Due to the lack of built form to the south of the site, the southern elevation of any proposal would be prominent within the street scene of Send Road when looking north. Therefore, this elevation should be considered equally important as the elevations on Send and Gosbrook Road.



Existing site opportunities

03 pre-application advice

A pre-application submission was made to Reading Borough Council (RBC) in July 2020.

A written pre-application response dated 10th October 2020 was subsequently received. The written feedback contained the comments of the Design Review Panel (DRP) which were consistent with the discussion topics during a virtual meeting (17th September 2020) between the applicant, architect, planning consultant, the clients heritage consultant, the DRP and RBC. A further pre-application meeting was held on 5 October 2020 with the Council's case officer.

The following outlines the main considerations identified within the written response:

Principle of Development

Written advice: *RBC considered that the principle of development for flatted units was appropriate in this location and went on to acknowledge that ‘Overall, the panel considered that the fundamental principals of the building layout, landscape improvements and vehicular access would likely enhance the setting of the adjacent listed building and wider area generally’ and that ‘In terms of the proposed building itself, the DRP were keen to highlight a significant number of positive design elements’, ‘Specifically, the panel considered the organization of the massing as two pieces to be appropriate and that the contemporary vernacular appearance to be well proportioned with interesting details which, if delivered as intended, would result in a good quality building.’*

Site Layout

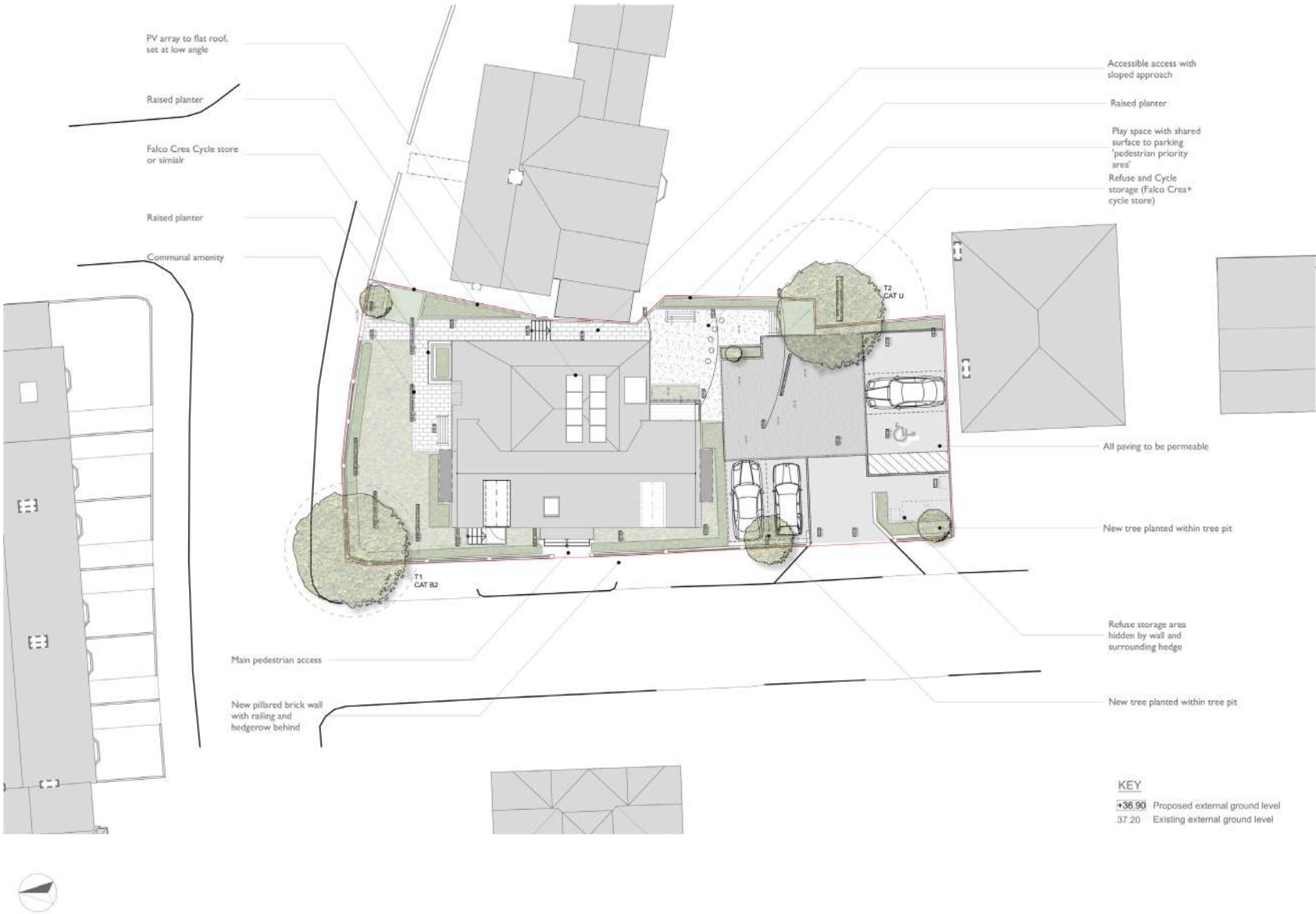
Written advice: *The DRP considered that more focus should be given to the flow of people rather than on vehicles around the site (which ties in with amenity comments below), as the current arrangements give a bias towards the secondary/rear entrance. The panel considered that a more legible proposal would be created if this secondary / rear access was omitted. Concern was also raised regarding the impact on the amenity of Ivy Farmhouse with an access in this location at the rear.*

The design principles emerged form early consultation with Jonathan Smith of RPS group who was appointed as the Heritage consultant to the design team. Prior to any design work commencing, the site, its surroundings and the adjacent heritage asset were assessed and presented in a ‘Statement of Significance’ The document outlined to the design team opportunities for visual enhancement and improved legibility of the heritage asset within the street scene, through improved setting and views, opening up new views to the asset and massing relationships of any future development.

The main access being from Send Road ensures that the proposed building will not compete with the prominence of the listed building. The building presents no formal entrance doorway on its north facing (Gosbrook Road) elevation and instead its main entrance and mass is focused on Send Road away from Ivy Farmhouse.

The pedestrian entrance from Gosbrook Road has been removed. This adds further clarity within the street scene with the added benefit of enclosing the front gardens for quality landscaping and a reduction in hardstanding in front of the boundary to Ivy Farmhouse.

The removal of the side access is considered further over-leaf.



Site plan submitted at pre-application stage

03 pre-application advice

Internal plan layouts and secondary access

Written advice: The DRP suggested the consideration of people movement through the site may lead to the removal of the rear access and free up the internal arrangement for larger apartments.

In unison with the 'Site Layout' changes the rear access has been removed and an area of landscaping included in its place. This reinforces the access being on Send Road and mitigates the impact on the amenity of Ivy Farmhouse from the occupants of the development.

The internal plan arrangement remains similar with a north and south apartment to each floor as this is best suited to the Send Road access. A key change sees the stair move centrally to the plan to reclaim some of the stair circulation zone across all floors and allocate this back to units for a more efficient plan. This has changed the mix as below with further improved living accommodation over smaller 1 person units.

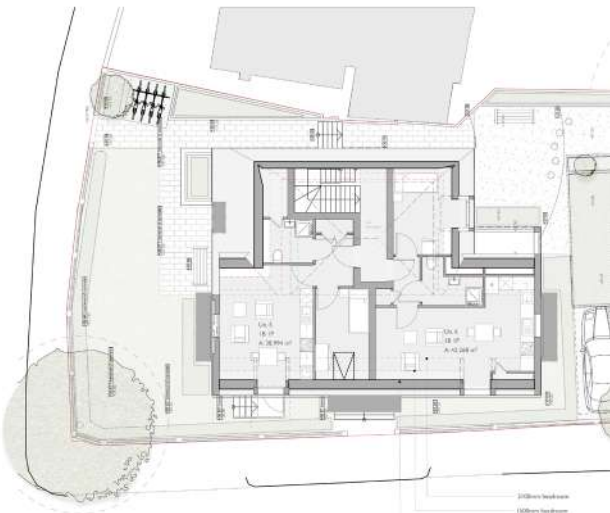
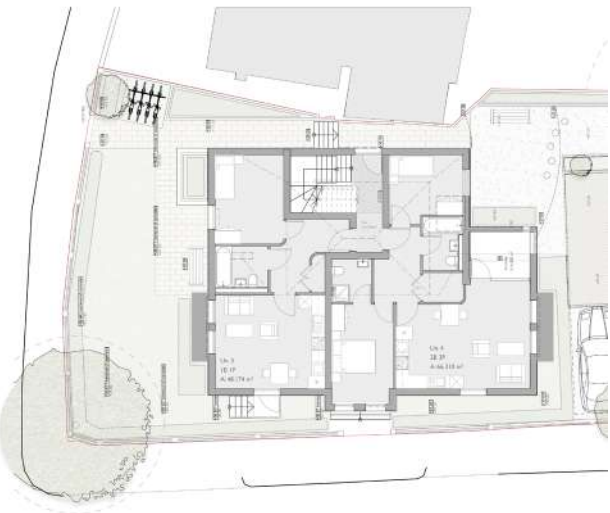
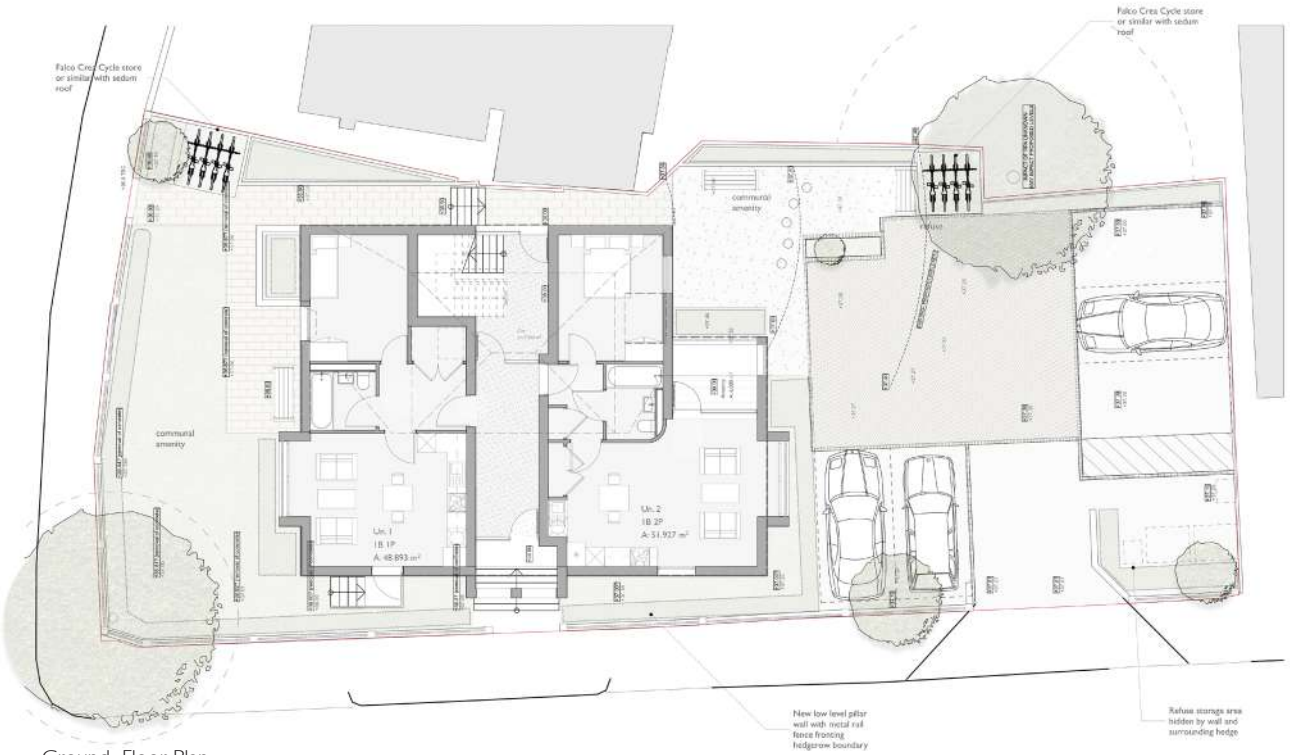
Pre-application mix

5 x 1 bedroom 1 person apartments and,
1 x 2 bedroom 3 person apartment

Proposed mix at full planning

2 x 1 bedroom 1 person apartments,
3 x 1 bedroom 2 person apartments and,
1 x 2 bedroom 3 person apartment

As part of the internal plan and site layout changes a landscape architect has developed the early stage concept of two distinct amenity zones into a well considered landscape proposal. These can be located under the section '04 the proposal' later in this document.



First Floor Plan

Second Floor Plan

Plans submitted at pre-application stage

03 pre-application advice

Accessibility

Written advice: All new build housing will be accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations, unless it is built in line with M4(3)

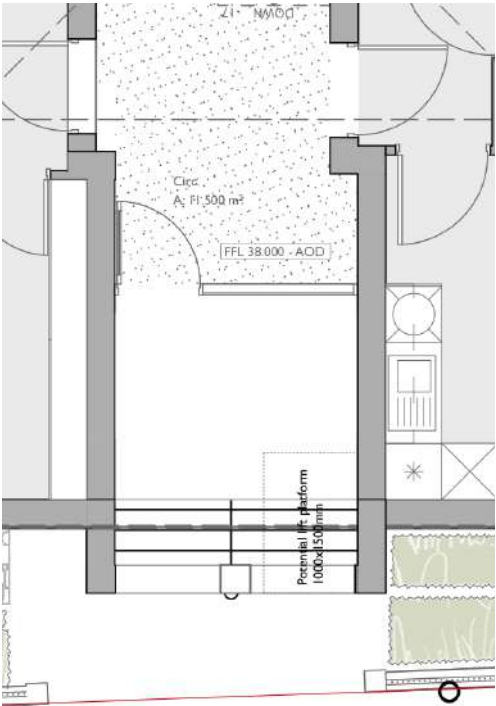
The rear access was proposed to provide for a Part M4(3) wheelchair user apartment at ground floor. It was proposed that the ground could naturally rise over the extent of the forecourt to meet the ground level of the building (circa 1m higher than the prevailing existing ground level for local flood considerations) for a level access into the building.

Reading planning policy requires a provision of 10% of units to be part M4(3) and the remainder to be Part M4(2) compliant, although with the complexities of this site the footprint may be considered too small to accommodate such a provision as a lift to all floors is a requirement for these categorizations.

It was and remains the preference of the applicant to provide as best as possible this provision. The applicant is committed to providing the potential for Unit 01 and 02 on the ground floor to be Part M2(2) units, whereby they can easily be adapted to suit the requirements of a wheelchair user.

To facilitate this, the front entrance foyer has been designed to allow for the future installation of a step platform lift. This will sit within the building footprint in place of one half of the entrance flight of stairs. It will be well screened at street level by boundary treatments and will be specified to suit the building material with a glass front to reduce its visual impact.

Power will be provided to this area during the construction stage to facilitate future installation with minimal interference.



Plan showing approximate location of future-proofed platform lift provision



Example platform lifts



Artists impression of platform lift in place

03 pre-application advice

Form and architectural expression

Written advice: *‘Whilst the panel agreed that the gabled element makes a cohesive and complementary addition to Gosbrook Road, and at an appropriate scale, the secondary hipped element, whilst acceptable in principle, falls a little short in its resolution’ they also noted that ‘the panel did not consider that the angle of the hip end or level of eaves sits comfortable with the listed Ivy House’, it was further added that ‘The panel questioned the lack of relief between the gabled and hipped elements along the front façade, considering that this dilutes the proposition and should be addressed’*

As part of the design development process the comments from the DRP and RBC have been carefully considered. A design study was undertaken which reviewed the eave level, separation of the elevational form into two distinct elements and opening up the view from the west to present Ivy Farmhouse more prevalently within the street scene. These developments coincided with the numerous iterations of plan development within the same overall footprint.

In order to open up Ivy farmhouse from the western views across the north of the site the hipped element addressing Ivy Farmhouse has been set back a further 500mm. This set back emphasizes the gabled element, breaking the elevation into two clear parts that create two distinctive masses scaled to their respective contextual relationships.

The reconfiguration of the internal stair provided the opportunity for the hipped element that creates a clear separation between the proposal and Ivy Farmhouse to take on the same steeper pitch as the gabled element. This also ensures that all roofs on the proposal have a consistent pitch in keeping with the character of the wider area. The roof eave on the east elevation addressing Ivy Farmhouse has been lowered whilst the northern eave height has been raised marginally, these eaves are now aligned and regularise the form of this element of the proposal.

The relief of the main facing elevation on Gosbrook Road (north elevation) as seen in the artists impression to the right, has been greatly improved with a clear distinction now made between the different elements.



Pre-application scheme from Gosbrook Road with Ivy Farmhouse to left



Proposed scheme from Gosbrook Road with Ivy Farmhouse to left

03 pre-application advice



Pre-application scheme from Gosbrook Road looking across the front of the site from the west



Proposed scheme from Gosbrook Road looking across the front of the site from the west

03 pre-application advice

Detail and materiality

Written advice: *Whilst the panel considered the palette of materials that draw reference from the immediate context to be appropriate, they have suggested that further information to illustrate how the junctions between materials and around openings are detailed, should be included in any future planning application*

The intent is for this building to be simple to construct yet robust especially within its detailing which has been considered from the outset. A series of detail sheets have been supplied as part of the application to illustrate materials, material junctions, and architectural design intent.

Vertical windows

Written advice: *The panel considered that there were a few oddities with the positioning of windows vertically within rooms that is being driven by some of the composition of the external facades. The panel suggest this would benefit from a further round of design development. There is a concern as above about the vertical windows which would elongate and emphasis the height of the building*

The application of vertical windows throughout Caversham is an underlying character of the area. It is felt diverging from this would only harm the quality of the proposal and it's appropriatness within the area. The proposal is relatively small and is of a domestic scale at 2-2.5 storeys with minimal floor to floor heights. The building is to a scale comparable with the underlying pattern of development, it's vertical emphasis would be limited with vertical or horizontal windows. The vertical windows are more prevalent on the larger 2.5 storey gabled mass which only assist in this elements addressing of the scale of the Gosbrook Road and Send Road junction and the taller apartment building of I send Road.

This vertical window orientation has informed the elevational composition from the outset and successfully references the character locally.

Conclusion

Overall, the design changes that have been made enhance an already well considered scheme which is testament to the DRP and Pre-application process. The result is a compelling composition that enhances ithe locality and setting of the heritage asset, Ivy Farmhouse.

Example fenestration opposite application site, vertical windows to bay windows and first floor.



Example fenestration locally. Vertical windows single or paired.



Example fenestration locally. Vertical paired windows and vertical windows to bay.



04 the proposal

Setting + Placemaking

The proposal is located to address Gosbrook Road and Send Road with identifiable entrances and identifiable local architectural features.

The proposal aims to enhance the locality through the implementation of active accessible frontages to both roads. The construction of a pillared masonry boundary wall with a hedgerow behind will sit comfortably with the typical front garden boundary character of the area. It is also proposed to plant new boundary trees to enhance the local setting and views into the site. One will be located to the north east corner or the site fronting Gosbrook Road and addressing the roundabout. The second is located to the south west corner fronting the bin storage and creates a focal point in the street when looking north along send Road.

The southern elevation is considered as integral to the scheme as the prominent elevations along Send Road and Gosbrook Road, due to its visibility from the south. Whilst it could be considered the rear of the building, it continues the architectural language of the rest of the building.

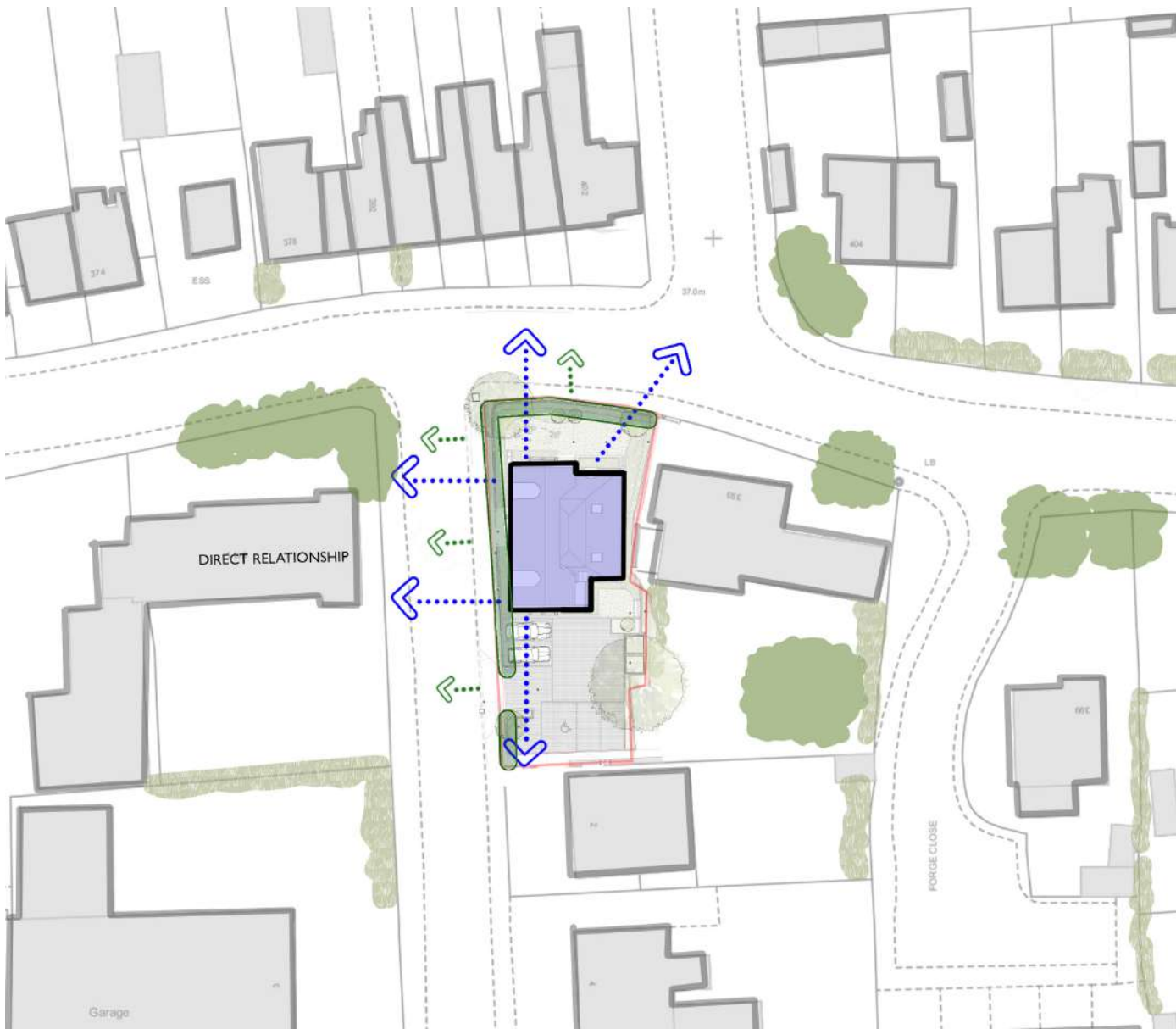


Illustration of proposals response to setting

04 the proposal

Footprint + Siting

The building footprint has developed through an interrogation of the constraints of the site, requirements of local policy and the significance of Ivy Farmhouse.

To the north, the form is set back from the corner of Ivy Farmhouse, ensuring the buildings presence within views east and west is maintained.

The northern elevation is stepped to create two distinct elements of different scale. The larger of these addresses the road junction and I Send Road whilst the smaller form steps back to further open up views of Ivy Farmhouse from the west and limit the proposals visibility in key views from the east.

To the south, the ad-hoc arrangement of warehousing and incongruous boundary treatment is removed to reveal Ivy Farmhouse from Send Road.

The proposed form to the south is aligned with the main massing of Ivy Farmhouse to expose as much of the building to Send Road as possible whilst mitigating any adverse impact on the Heritage Asset and its amenity.

The proposed form along Send Road projects south in a gabled elevation that addresses the views into the site from the south.

The footprint to the south is restrained from further extension to provide for shared pedestrian access / amenity / parking. The southern aspect provides for terraces and clear separation from the site to the south and any future development as well as ensuring the scale of a single 'mansion house' is retained.

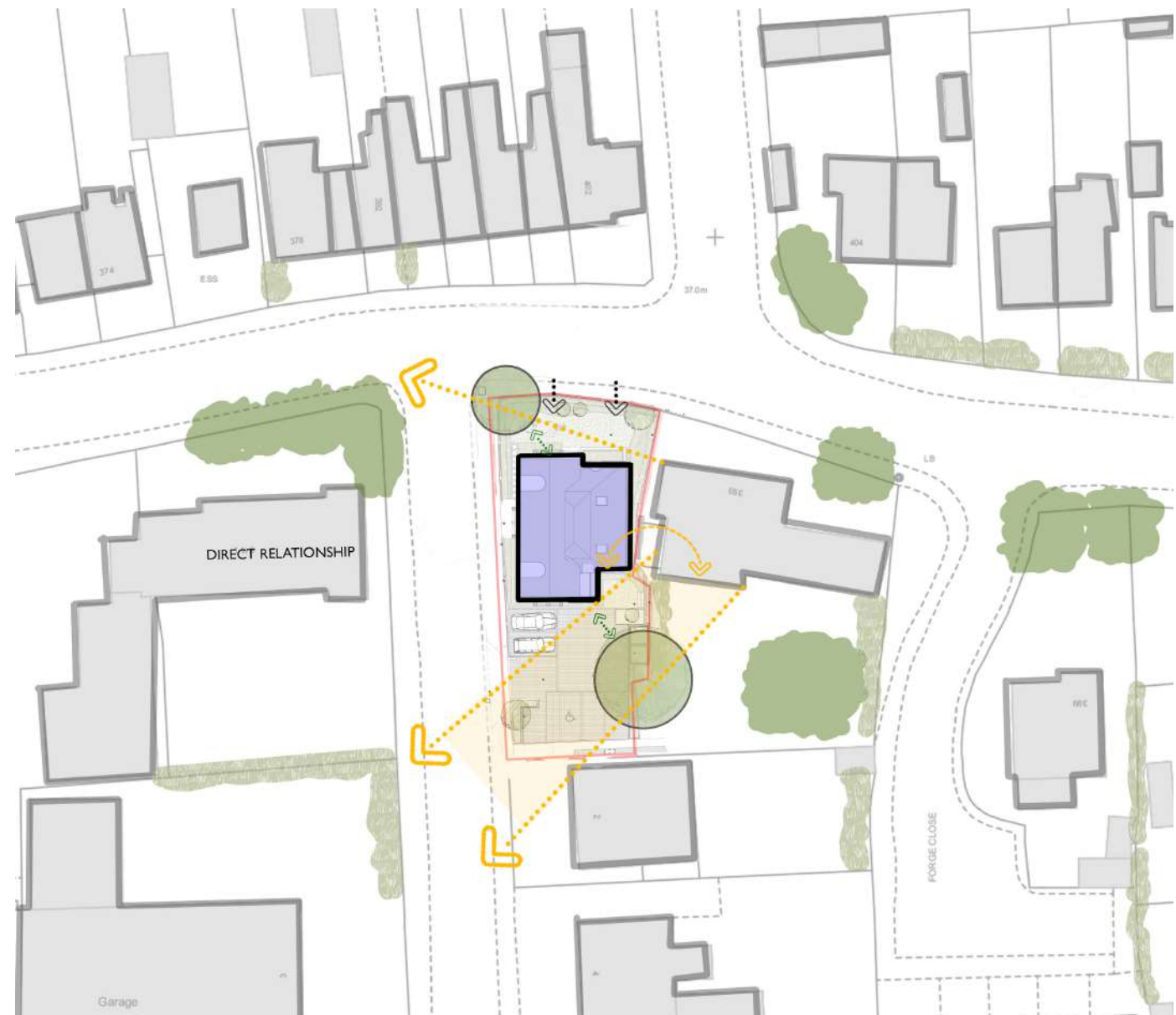


Illustration of proposals response to context

Layout + Amount

The design proposes a contemporary residential development of six units consisting of;

The main access to the building is identifiable from the street with a formal entrance that references the architectural details of the area.



04 the proposal

Form, Scale + Massing

The application proposes a contemporary re-interpretation of the mansion block.

The form takes cues from the character of dwellings within the street with pitched roofs, gables and hipped gables all prevalent.

The form uses prominent gable features to respond to the various scales of buildings close by.

A hipped roof increases the visible gap between the proposed form and Ivy Farmhouse. The main pitched roof is angled to ensure the gabled elevation of Ivy Farmhouse sits prominently in east and western views.

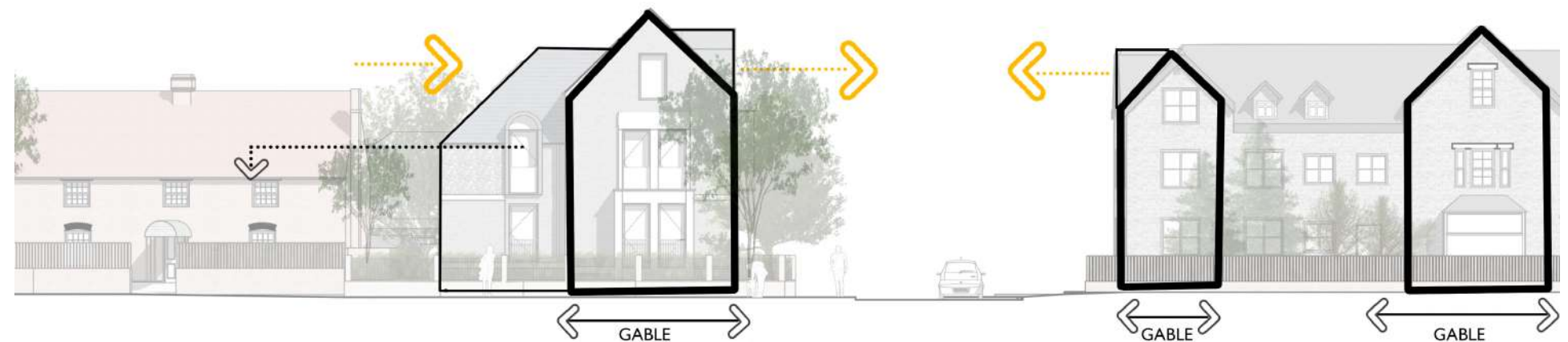


Illustration showing proposals response to character and context

04 the proposal

Form, Scale + Massing

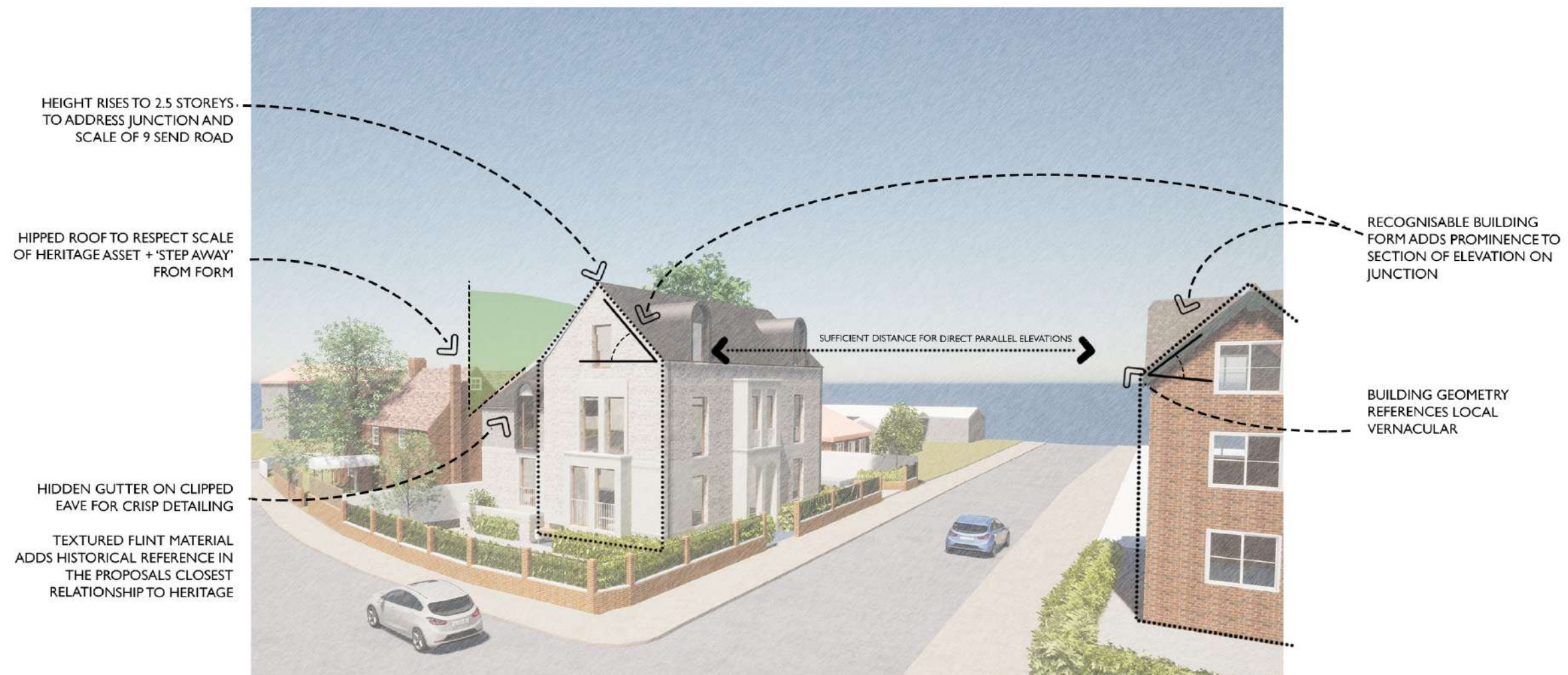
Features such as the variation in eaves height, gables and dormers reference the surrounding buildings.

In areas, dormers break the clear line between roof and facade, helping to relieve the uniformity of the elevations.

The overall height of the proposal is in keeping with the typical scale of properties along Gosbrook Road, stepping up to the junction to address the scale of 9 Send Road.

Eave levels and overall massing has been managed to respect adjacent relationships with the relationship to Ivy Farmhouse being carefully considered. The elevation here is stepped to increase the prominence of the heritage asset.

The gabled elements are proportionate with carefully considered roof pitches that respond to those locally.



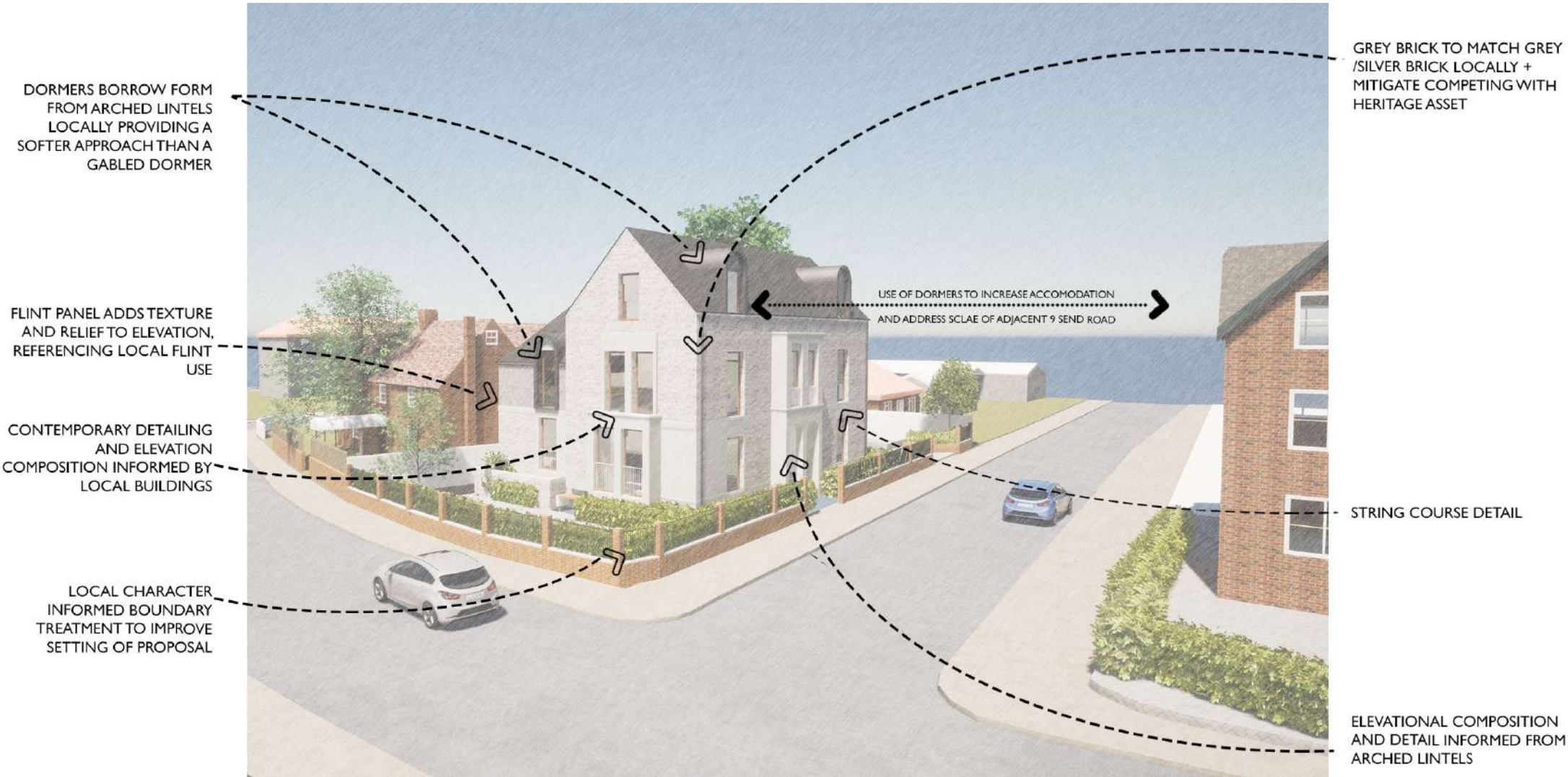
04 the proposal

Form, Scale + Massing

Contemporary detailing when combined with the composition of elevation treatment re-imagines the existing style of the local houses.

The gabled elements are adorned with projecting bay windows at ground floor. At first floor twin windows act as Juliette windows, a reference to the twin windows more prevalent on Star Road.

Vertical window openings follow the proportion of fenestration locally whilst the dormers are an acknowledgment to the arched lintel details locally.



04 the proposal

Access + Parking

The existing crossover is to be renewed and relocated marginally north to facilitate parking to the south of the site.

Five parking spaces are located to the rear with one accessible space. It is proposed to provide charging provision to all parking spaces; please refer to the transport report accompanying this application.

Access around the site is controlled to prevent nuisance to Ivy Farmhouse and future residents of the scheme. Access is only possible via the entrance on Send Road enforcing this as the main entrance, strengthening the prominence of Ivy Farmhouse on Gosbrook Road.

Flooding

The scheme has been specifically designed to meet the flood risk and climate change future-proofing requirements given the site is within EA Flood Zone 3. The flood and drainage consultants have worked closely with the architects and landscape designers to optimise the scheme.

A Pre-App with the Environment Agency was deliberately undertaken to confirm the exact design parameters. These parameters have been incorporated in the scheme for which permission is sought.

The scheme reduces the footprint that is below the EA's specific flood design level i.e. the 1 in 100 year + 35% cc, such that the scheme results in an increase in flood storage and hence reduces flood risk overall.

As per the EA's Pre-App agreement in principle:

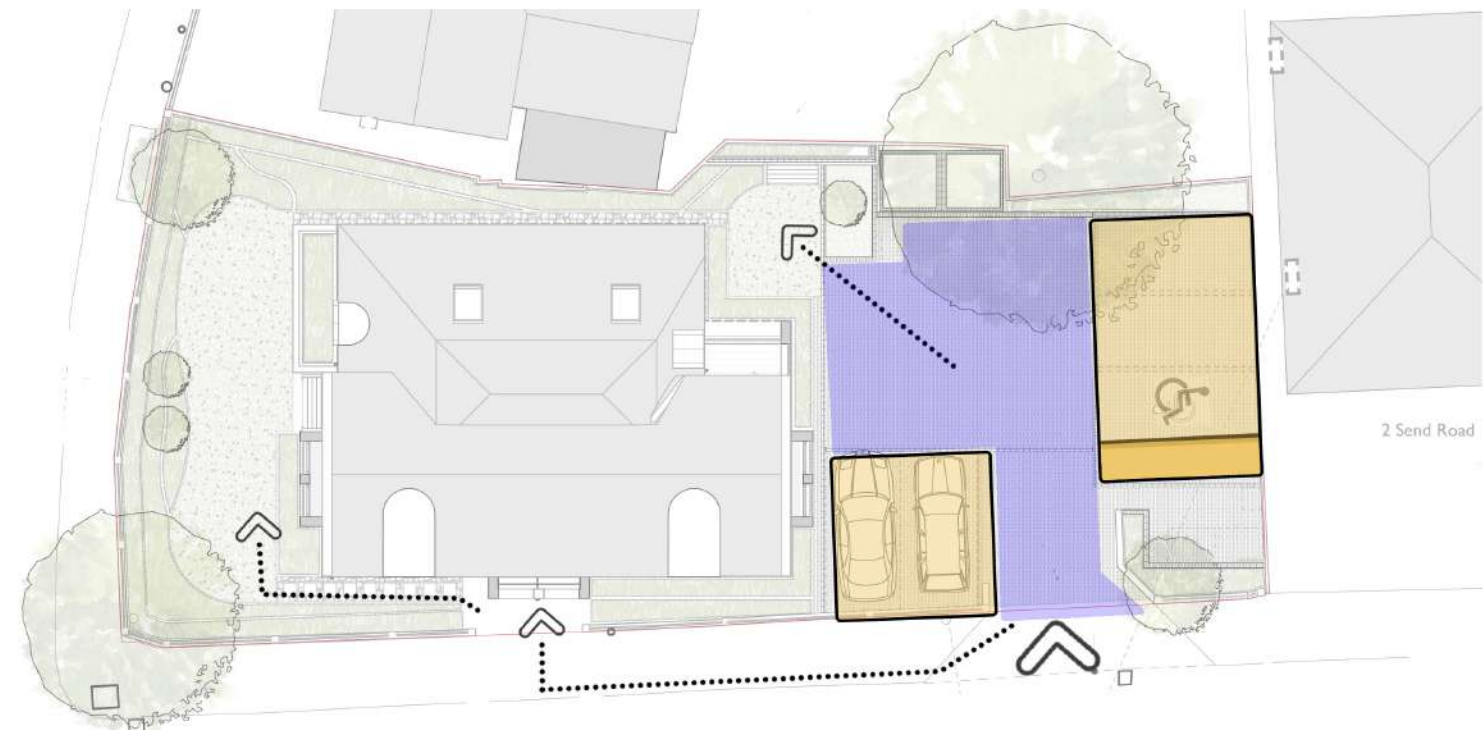
- The ground floor is raised to 300mm above the 1 in 100 year + 35% cc flood level
- There will be no habitable areas below this flood future-proofed design flood level
- The underside of the floor slab (ceiling of the void) is raised to be at the 1 in 100 year + 35% cc
- The ground floor is raised on a flood void with foundation areas minimised to allow suitable flood void openings and maximise below slab ebb and flow
- The flood void openings are designed in accordance with EA approvals
- The ground floor will still be fully flood resilient
- In order to meet the NPPF and LLFA requirements for further flood risk reduction, the scheme incorporates the highest form of SUDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) including specifically:

- Maximised porous and permeable areas
- Integrated surface storage planters
- Granular angular subbase minimal maintenance storage
- The EA confirmed that infiltration techniques are not allowed at this site due to the protection required for the groundwater.

The strategy has therefore been optimised to store on site and discharge at the required restricted discharge rate using the existing connections as feasible.

Full details are provided in the Flood Risk Assessment and SUDS Strategy (Ark Environmental, 2021) which concludes the scheme:

"can be constructed and operated safely in flood risk terms, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, in fact reducing flood risk overall; it is therefore considered appropriate development in accordance with the NPPF/PPG".



04 the proposal

landscaping, refuse and biodiversity

The landscaping proposal will see the removal of the extensive hardstanding which currently covers the majority of the site. This will be replaced with the maximum amount of soft landscaping possible. Where hardstanding is proposed, this will be permeable and complement the shared surface concept. Parking is positioned discreetly behind a new pillared wall with a new hedgerow running the length of the site boundary. Several new trees are proposed on site. These will be installed with tree pits to ensure sufficient nutrients and root zone within hard landscaping. Raised planters provide quality boundary treatment to the east boundary.

Private, lockable and secure communal cycle stores provide 8 spaces. It is proposed to use a bespoke storage locker such as the Falco Crea. These would be topped with a sedum roof for improved biodiversity and integration with the landscaping of the site. Refuse is located away from the building in a well screened location within close proximity to the vehicle crossover. It is intended for this not to be within an eternal enclosure to reduce visual clutter and maintenance issues. The bins are proposed as metal Biffa style bins.

Each unit will provide mixed recycling, refuse and food waste bins within the kitchen cabinetry to encourage recycling and reduce waste.

The communal amenity is split into two areas. That to the front is predominantly soft landscaping with seating surrounded by quality planting with the aim of supporting a broad range of biodiversity on site and creating a welcoming and safe environment.

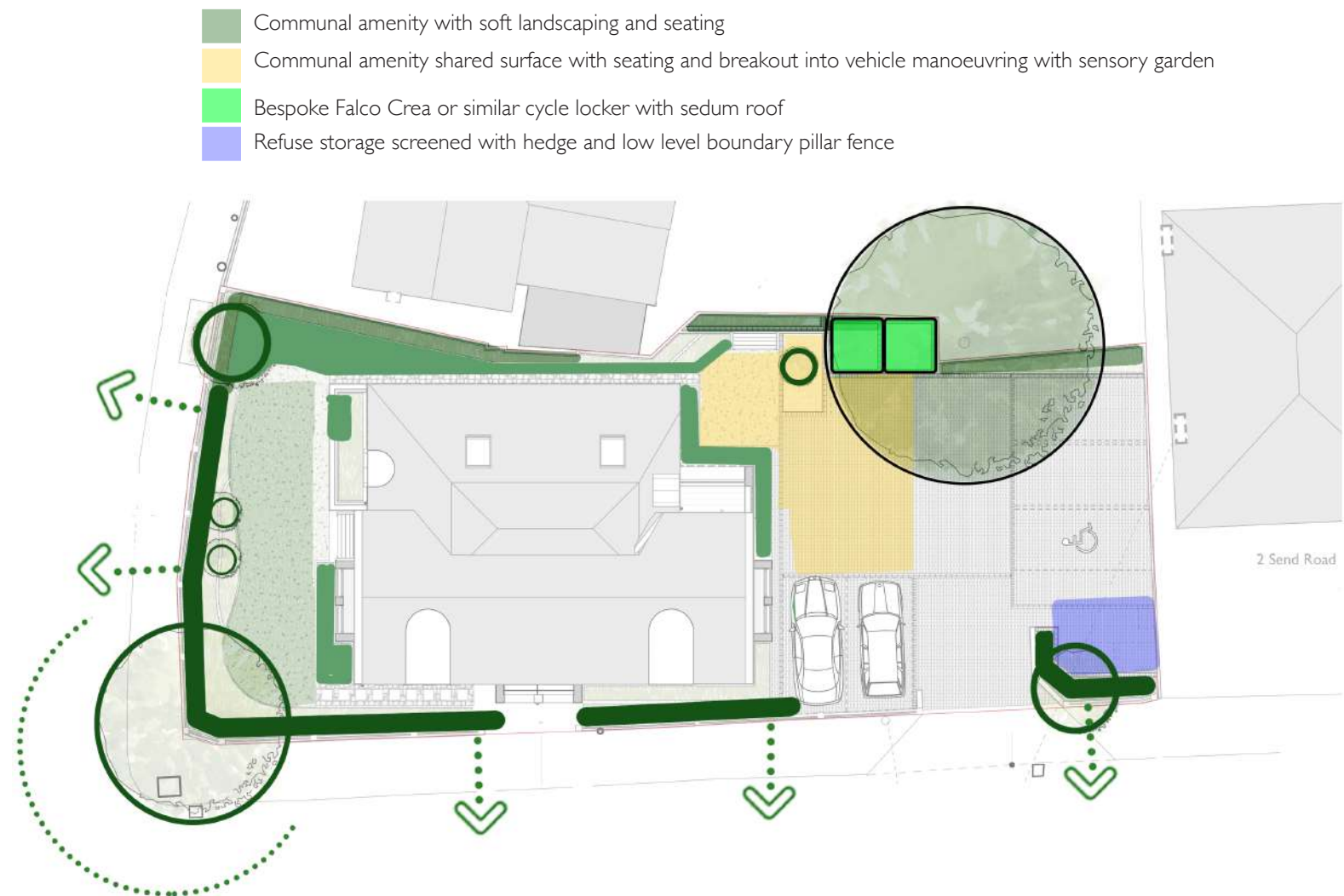
To the rear the infrequent car manoeuvring promotes a shared surface approach with seating looking directly over the forecourt with a small area of grass surrounded sensory planting. This is an ideal southern aspect amenity space during the day located away from vehicular traffic to the north during peak times.

A 'threshold' between strictly pedestrian and shared surface is provided through ground level shrubs and a small tree as a reference point. There are no protected trees on the site. Any adjacent trees with encroaching RPA's have been carefully considered throughout the design development of the proposals.

The Sycamore tree to the north west corner of the site is currently constrained with concrete and tarmac surfacing to 100% of its rooting area. This tree will be retained, and as part of the landscape proposals the concrete will be returned to soft landscaping in the hope that this will ensure it achieves its maximum estimated life expectancy of 40 years. plus

Following consultation with the ecologist and landscape architect, a number of bird and bat boxes are to be provided on the building and on the existing site tree.

Please see overleaf for the developed landscape design by Arc Landscape Design and Planning Limited.



04 the proposal

landscaping, refuse and biodiversity

GOSBROOK ROAD, READING - LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

PLANTING STRATEGY

The following sets out the strategy for the planting proposals across the site. In preparing the detailed planting proposals, careful consideration has been given to the function of the different spaces, the species choice and the planting space available.

The planting strategy focused on the following objectives:

- To retain the existing the mature tree at the northwest corner of the site,
- To provide rain garden raised planter along the building facade to catch and retain the rain water from the roof
- To introduce a range of trees and specimen shrubs to bring volume and shade within the communal garden,
- To provide ecological opportunities with wildlife friendly planting through utilising a combination of species that encourage pollinator and bird,
- To provide a green and attractive frontage,
- To use a range of plants both, native and ornamental, that take in consideration the specificities of the different space (eg. flood/shade tolerant species) to ensure year round sensory interest.

The Illustrative Landscape Strategy opposite illustrates the overall layout. The plant species proposed, along with their characteristics are illustrated on subsequent pages.

This document is to be read in conjunction with the Hard & Soft General Arrangement Plans - A311 GA01 for details of the location of species, their sizes and specification along ongoing management.

LEGEND

SURFACES AND STREET FURNITURE STRATEGY

The hard landscape strategy sets out the material palette as agreed through the design consultation process. Permeable paving is proposed throughout the parking court to address the engineering requirements for drainage across the site.

The choice of surface materials and street furniture will assist in defining the different characteristics and uses of the spaces around the building with permeable block paving within the car park area and permeable resin bound gravel to the pedestrian area. The communal garden to the front will be accessible through a path of stepping stones set in gravel.

Two benches will be integrated into the communal garden to offer formal seating. The front garden will offer informal play opportunities for toddlers with a combination of grass mound, play boulders, logs and simple timber play equipment.

Finally, bat and bird boxes are proposed throughout the development, located as advised by the project ecologist. They will be place in the existing tree or will be integrated to the building facade.

Images of the different surface material, street furniture and biodiversity measure are illustrated in the following pages.

This document is to be read in conjunction with the Hard & Soft General Arrangement Plans - A311 GA01 for details of surface materials, furniture and biodiversity measures.

LEGEND

HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPE STRATEGY



Illustrative Landscape Masterplan
Not to scale @ A3

arc landscape design and planning limited proposals.

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GOSBROOK ROAD, READING - LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

PLANTING PALETTE

PLANTING CHARACTERISTICS



Pollinator friendly



Occasional flood tolerant species



Sensory species



Bird friendly



Shade tolerant species



Ornamental species



Native species

TREES & SPECIMEN SHRUB

- 1- *Amelanchier lamarckii* - Juneberry
2- *Betula utilis jacquemontii* - White-barked Himalayan Birch
3- *Cornus florida rubra*





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RAIN GARDEN PLANTER

- 1- *Acanthus mollis*
2- *Ajuga reptans* 'Catlin's Giant'
3- *Anemone x hybrida* 'Honorine Jobert'
4- *Echinacea Purpurea* 'Magnus'
5- *Helleborus orientalis*
6- *Iris sibirica*
7- *Nepeta* 'Six Hills Giant'
8- *Asplenium scolopendrium*





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BIODIVERSE SPECIES - FRONT GARDEN

- 1- *Choisya ternata* 'Sundance'
2- *Cornus alba* 'Sibirica'
3- *Crocsmia x crocosmiiflora*
4- *Euphorbia amygdaloides robbiae*
5- *Lamium maculatum* 'White Nancy'
6- *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Firetail'
7- *Rudbeckia fulgida deamii*
8- *Schizostylis coccinea* 'Major'
9- *Dryopteris filix-mas*
10- *Molinia caerulea arundinacea* 'Transparent'





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BIODIVERSE SPECIES - SENSORY GARDEN

- 1- *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Munstead'
2- *Sarcococca confusa*
3- *Aster* 'Little Carlow'
4- *Crocsmia* 'Solfatare'
5- *Stachys byzantina* 'Silver Carpet'
6- *Verbena bonariensis*
7- *Miscanthus* 'Kleine Fontane'
8- *Stipa tenuifolia*





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FLOWERING LAWN (WITHOUT GRASSES)

- 1- *Galium verum*
2- *Leontodon hispidus*
3- *Leucanthemum vulgare*
4- *Lotus corniculatus*
5- *Primula veris*
6- *Prunella vulgaris*
7- *Ranunculus acris*
8- *Trifolium pratense*





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PROPOSED HEDGES AND EVERGREEN

- 1- *Eleagnus x ebbingei*
2- *Osmanthus burkwoodii*
3- *Osmanthus delavayi*
4- *Pittosporum eugenioides* 'Variegatum'
5- *Viburnum tinus* 'Eve Price'





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arc landscape design and planning limited proposals.

04 the proposal

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GOSBROOK ROAD, READING - LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

SURFACES MATERIAL & STREET FURNITURE PALETTE



Permeable paving to car park area - Marshalls tegula priora; traditional colour



Permeable resin bound gravel to pedestrian area - SureSet winter gold colour



Stepping stones set in gravel to garden access - Marshalls saxon texture; natural colour



Gravel to maintenance access



Timber bench - Woodscape Tooting backrest seat; FSC certified timber



Flush granite style kerb to car park area - Marshalls Conservation kerb; silver grey colour



Block paving to parking bay - Marshalls tegula priora; pennant grey colour



Metal edging - Kinley ExcelEdge; untreated steel



Metal edge raised planter - Kinley Planterline Bespoke; CorTen steel



Opportunity for informal toddler play including grass mounds and play boulders



Proposed bird boxes in existing tree - Schwegler Nest Box 1B



Proposed sparrow boxes integrated to building facade - Schwegler Sparrow Terrace 1SP



Proposed swift boxes integrated to building facade - Schwegler Swift Box No. 16



Proposed bat boxes integrated to building facade - Schwegler Bat Tube 1FR



Opportunity for informal toddler play including small timber play equipment

arc landscape design and planning limited proposals.

04 the proposal

Plans

Each apartment is accessed off a central stair core. At ground floor level a well sized entrance foyer with a covered entrance is provided. An intercom system will be installed to manage access. Care has been taken to ensure there is no sense of overlooking between adjacent properties.

Unit 02 has a private terrace for amenity. This is in a raised position next to the communal amenity. Unit 04 has a first floor south facing terrace screened to the east to prevent overlooking of Ivy Farmhouse.

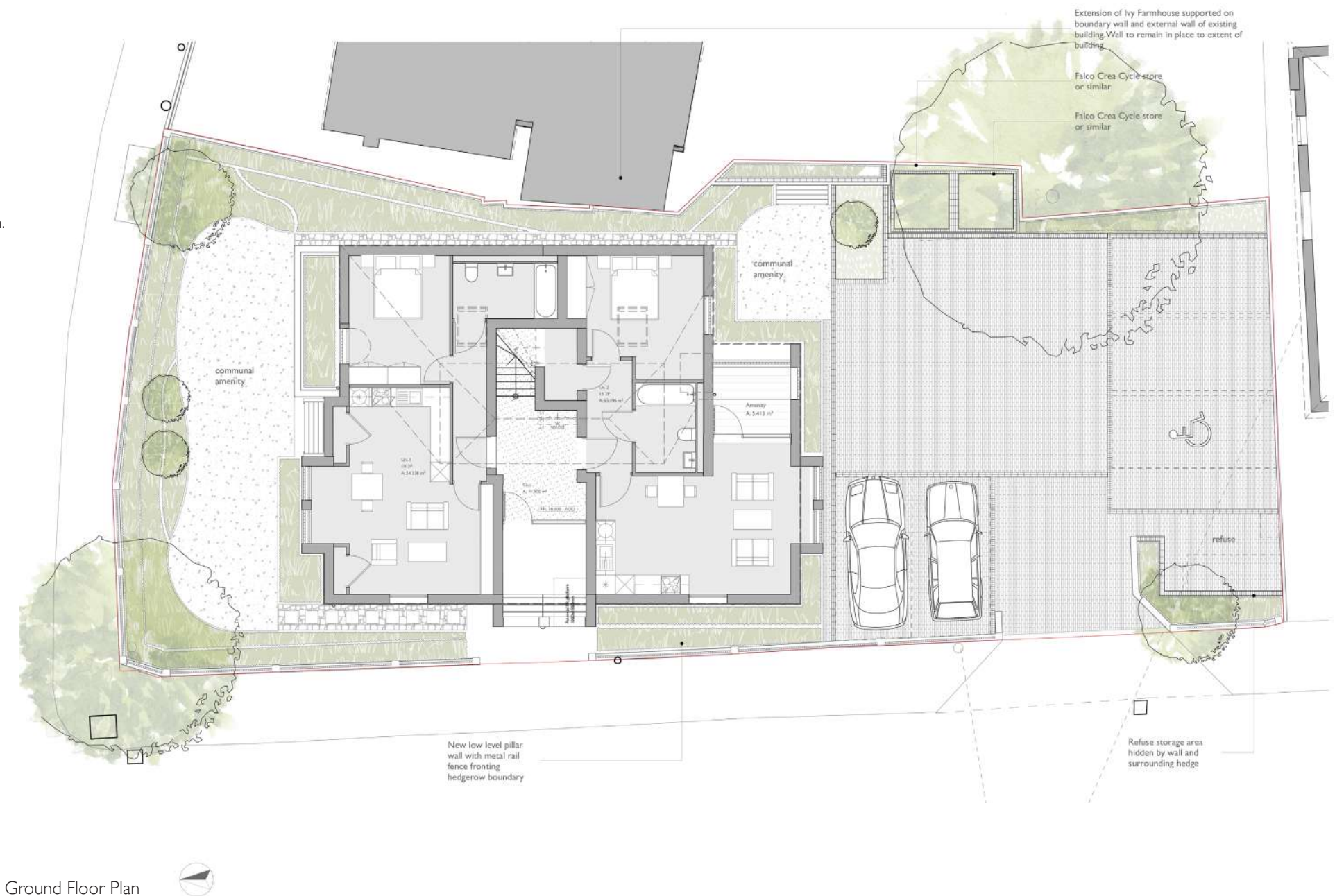
All apartments are at least dual aspect.

All apartments have access to ground floor communal amenity to the south and north.

The apartments at second floor level are contained within the roof form. The plan shown overleaf is cut at 1.1m above finished floor level with cut lines of 1.5m and 2.1m.

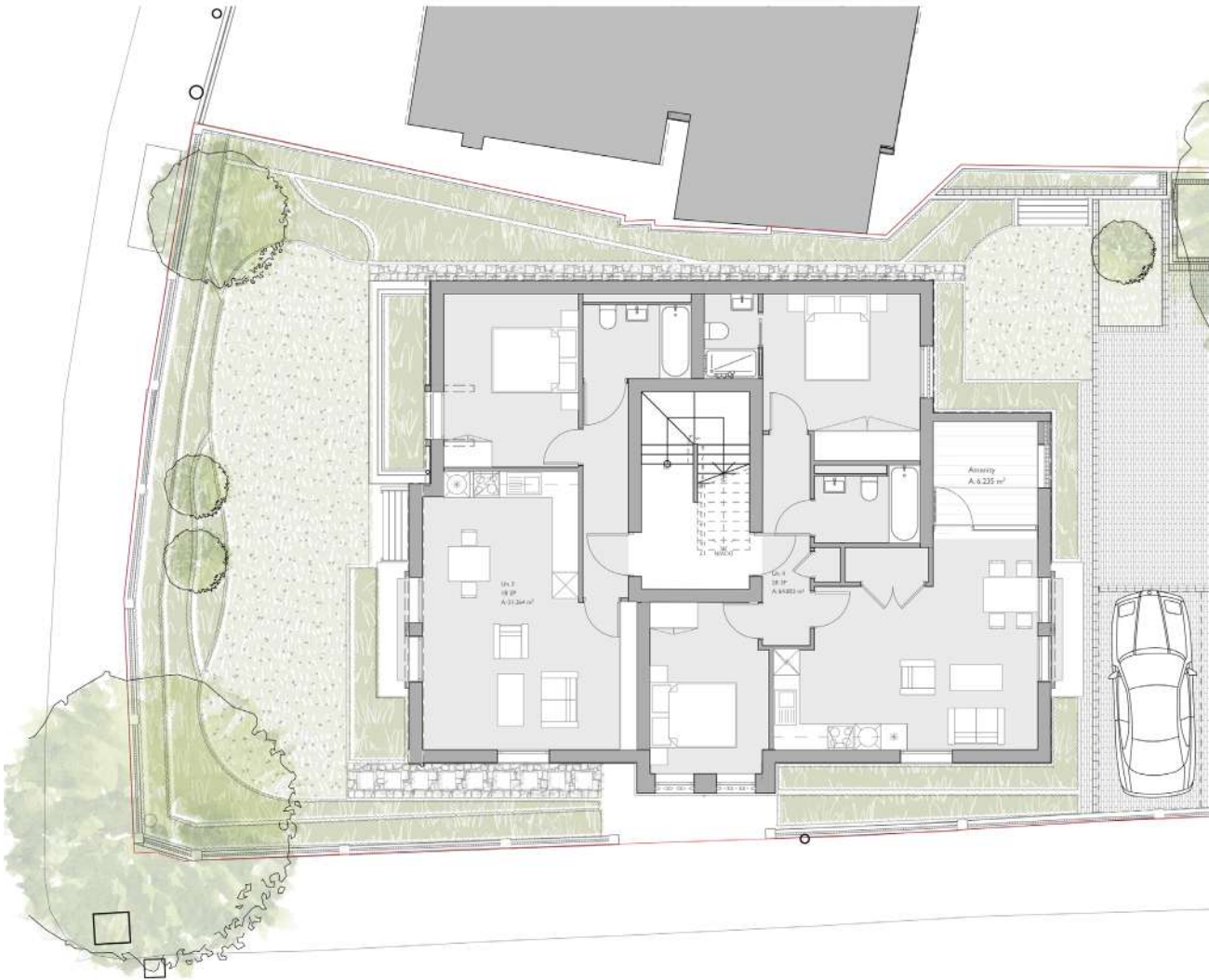
All apartments at a minimum comply with the National Technical Housing Standards.

The impacts of the development are considered to be not significant, the site is considered suitable for the proposed residential use without the need for site specific mitigation associated with air quality.

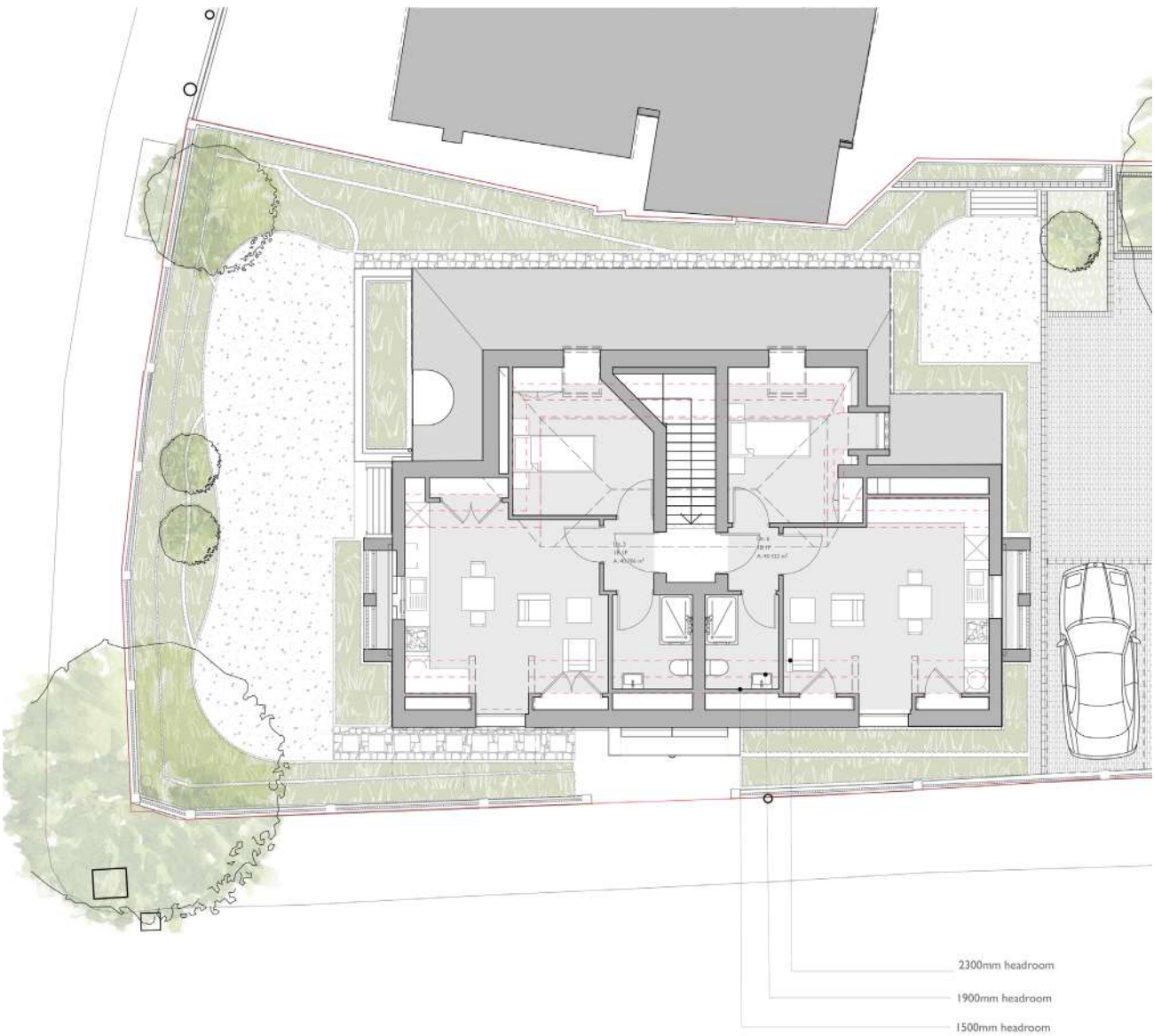


04 the proposal

Plans



First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan

Sustainability

The development has been assessed using a SAP 2012 methodology by BlewBurton Ltd. A fabric first approach has been adopted to reduce energy consumption in the first instance.

Reading Borough Council Policy H% requires a 19% uplift in carbon reduction over building regulations Part L1. The application of photovoltaic panels achieves an approximate uplift of 20.49%.

Air quality assessment

An AQMA has been declared by RBC due to exceedances of the NO2 NAQO, however there has been a decline in measured NO2 levels over the past five years during which annual mean NO2 levels have dropped to below the objective. The proposed development site lies at the south-eastern edge of the Caversham section of the AQMA.

The impacts of the development, with regards to road traffic have been carefully considered, a separate report by Stantec has been provided to supplement this application.

Concentrations of NO2, PM10 and PM2.5 within the site are not expected to exceed the relevant objectives and air quality within the site is considered to be acceptable for future residents.

Secure by Design (SBD)

The design principles of a residential setting have been considered throughout the development of the proposals. This includes the consideration of the following:

- Intercom access to the communal circulation.
- Good visual overlooking creates natural surveillance of communal spaces around the site with restricted access to the side of the building.
- Doors and windows are to be SBD certified.
- Providing a clear threshold between the street and site in the form of a hedgerow clearly defines public and private space.
- Within the site around the building soft landscaping is kept low to reduce hiding places.
- A lighting design to reduce dark and shadowed areas will be developed, in accordance with recommendations by the Ecology Consultant.
- Mail boxes will be within the secure communal entrance reducing the likelihood of theft.
- Cycle and bin stores will be lockable.
- Refuse areas are hidden behind a mature boundary

Acoustics

National Building Regulations will require minimum acoustic reducing constructions between all party floors and walls, and between internal partitions between rooms within each apartment. The plans are designed to support the acoustic division of space within a dwelling, utilising a corridor between the kitchen, living and dining spaces and the bedroom areas. These units will be required to undergo acoustic testing prior to being deemed suitable for occupancy.

An environmental noise assessment of the surrounding area will determine if supplementary considerations need to be made to the building fabric such as acoustic glazing, acoustic trickle vents, triple glazing etc.

To external amenity areas BS8233 states that it is desirable for noise levels in external amenity areas of residential developments not to exceed 50 dB LAeq and that 55 dB LAeq,T should be regarded as a upper guideline value.

In the absence of measured noise levels on the site at the time of this application (due to COVID impacts on traffic levels), it's location on Gosbrook Road is offset by the inclusion of a secondary amenity area to the south of the proposal away from the main road and shielded by the building.

04 the proposal

Architectural Appearance

MATERIALS, APPEARANCE & LANDSCAPING

Material

- A Flint stone
- B Marziale Wienerberger
- C Pinehall Brick
- D Cherokee Brick
- E Aluminium

Precedent detail

- 1 Barrel dormers - A House for Essex - FAT & Grayson Perry
- 2 Flint wall - Flint House - Skene Catling De La Pena
- 3 Flint wall - KH House - Delvendahl Martin Architects
- 4 Lime rendered detail - Orchard House - Studio Octopi
- 5 Local context

Material Choices

The materiality of the proposal has been carefully considered to reference the local character of the immediate area. The prominent building materials of the surrounding buildings in Caversham, particularly those of architectural merit, is red and silver/grey brick and slate roof tile. Therefore, we have selected a silver/grey brick to reflect the local character whilst also incorporating a contemporary aesthetic and have also opted for natural slate roof tiles.

The use of contrasting white render in this scheme reflects the prevalence of contrasting brick string courses and bay windows as well as exposed lintel heads in the local area. These features were often ornately detailed as a result of the historical significance of the area, so we felt it was important to accentuate these components in this design.

To reference the distinctive flint panelling used on some notable buildings in the area, the North and East elevations will feature flint panelling as exemplified in the precedents on the right.

A key detail of the local context is the arched lintel head and doorway which has been echoed in the design through the arched doorways and barrel dormer windows, illustrated in the precedent image top right. These will be finished in aluminium to match the slate roof colour, but will stand out against the textured slate, identifying as a contemporary detail.



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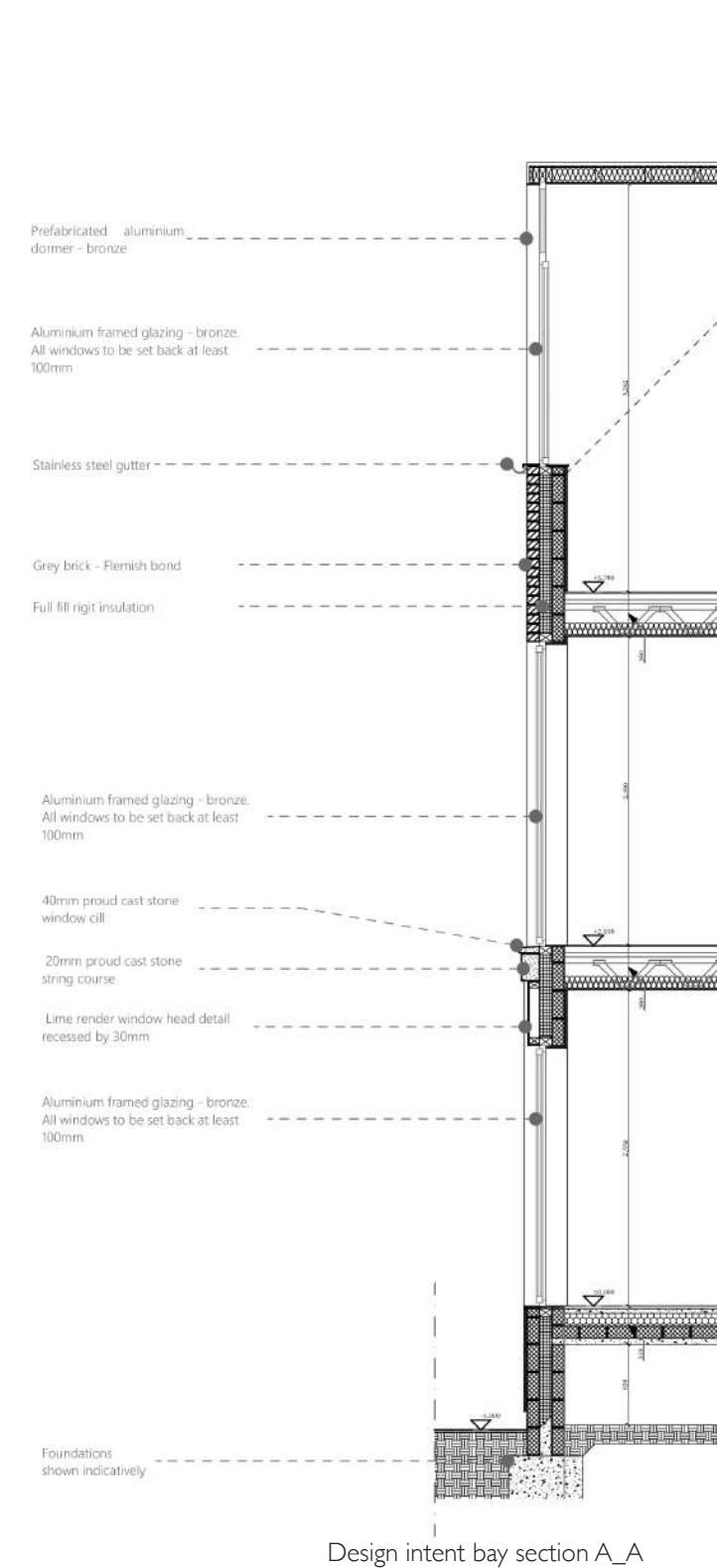
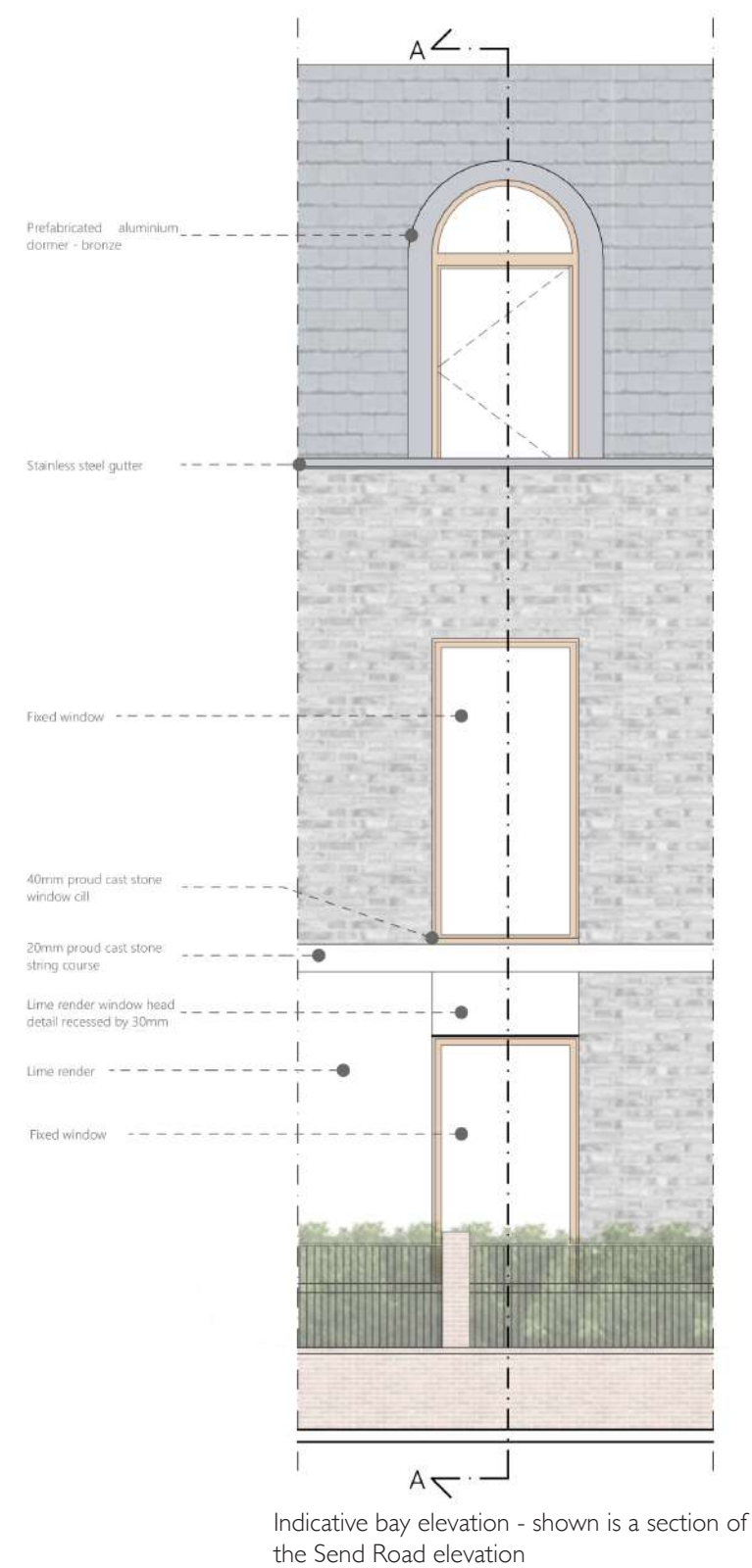


C

04 the proposal

Architectural Appearance - Detail

Architectural bay elevation and section - Send Road
Illustrating elevational depth and material junction



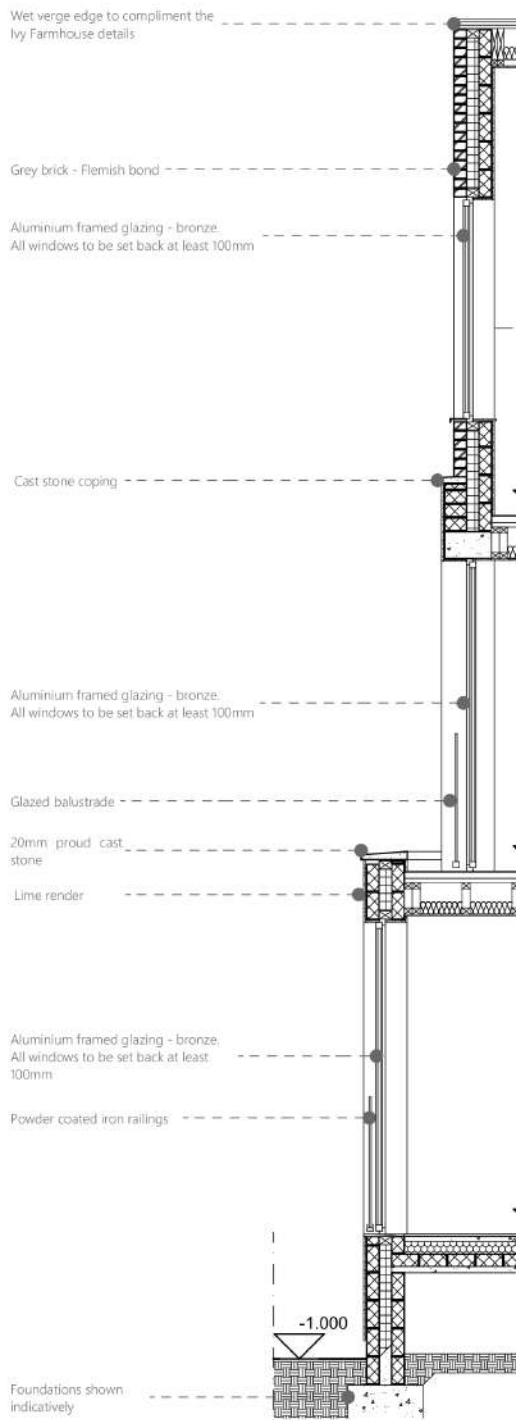
04 the proposal

Architectural Appearance - Detail

Architectural bay elevation and section - Gosbrook Road
Illustrating elevational depth and material junction



Indicative bay elevation - shown is a section of the Gosbrook Road elevation



Design intent bay section B-B

04 the proposal

Architectural Appearance

Artistic representations of design details



South facing terrace to apartment 04 with arched lintel details and dormers



Curved dormer windows on the north, east and south elevations reference local door lintels



Flint paneling references the use of flint on the neighbouring Ivy Farmhouse. A cast stone stringer course separate the flint from the brick creating a crisp junction.

04 the proposal

Proposed Gosbrook Road Elevation



Street scene illustrating how the proposal sits at a similar scale to and respectful of adjacent buildings regardless of the raised ground floor level

04 the proposal

Proposed South Elevation from Send Road



04 the proposal

Proposed West Elevation on Send Road

- KEY
- a. natural slate roof with arrowhead detail TBC
 - b. grey brick - flemish bond
 - c. flint stone relief panel
 - d. lime render TBC
 - e. aluminium framed glazing, bronze
 - f. pre formed curved dormer, PPC aluminium

- KEY
- a. natural slate roof with arrowhead detail
 - b. grey brick - flemish bond
 - c. flint stone relief panel
 - d. lime render
 - e. aluminium framed glazing, bronze
 - f. pre formed curved dormer, PPC aluminium
 - g. frameless glazed balustrade
 - h. black iron railing



Street scene illustrating how the proposal sits at a similar scale to and respectful of adjacent buildings regardless of the raised ground floor level

04 the proposal

Artistic Visualisation



View looking north from parking and shared surface supplementary amenity

04 the proposal

Artistic Visualisation



View looking south from Gosbrook Road

04 the proposal

Artistic Visualisation



View looking north from Send Road

05 conclusion

The scheme seeks to enhance the character of the street scene through the implementation of a responsive and identifiable building that is set within an enhanced site, exhibiting a contextual boundary and a complementary soft landscaping scheme.

The proposal provides a cohesive and uniform building some 40% smaller in footprint than the existing building coverage. It addresses the scale variation and relationships between surrounding buildings and Ivy Farmhouse.

The proposal provides an enhancement to Ivy Farmhouse through improvements to the setting and improving its placement within the wider street scene from the west and south.

The proposed design is both responsive and efficient architectural proposal for an under-utilised plot of vacant land.

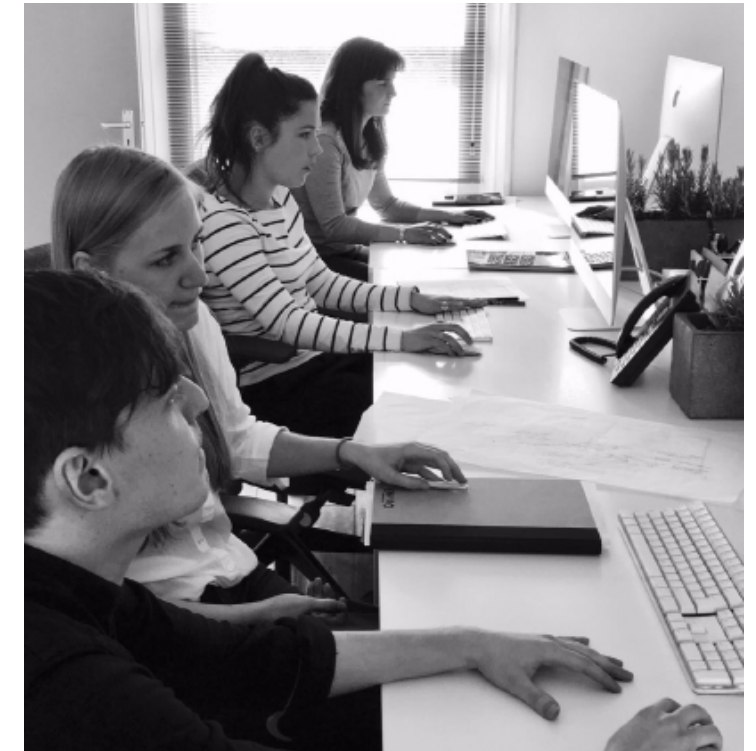
It provides the opportunity to create an appropriately sensitive architectural development in what is a predominantly residential area.

The proposal provides a good quality, responsive and valuable housing development in a highly sustainable location.



06 OB Architecture

about us



OB Architecture is an award-winning RIBA Chartered Architects Practice based in Winchester, with projects located all over London, the South of England and Wales.

The practice is experienced in designing a wide range of building types, including: offices, private homes, large residential schemes, hotels and interiors.

The practice was established in 2010 and has since grown to 15 employees.

The quality of their designs has been recognised with a number of awards and publications around the world.

07 OB Architecture

recent work



ob
architecture.