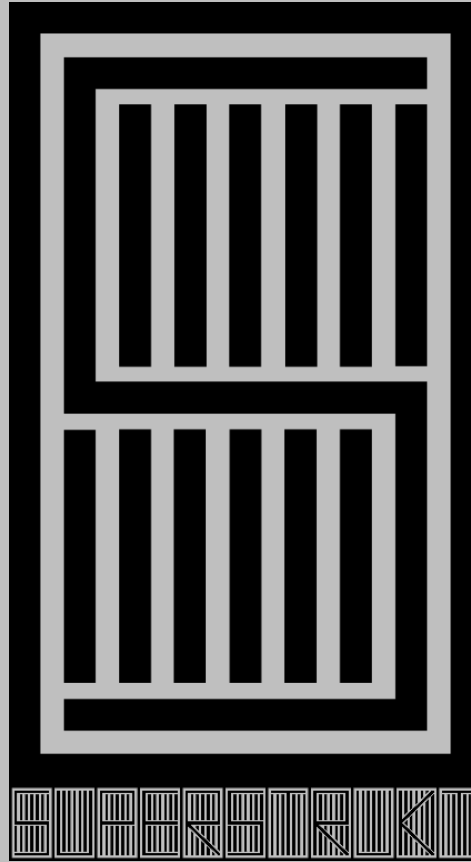


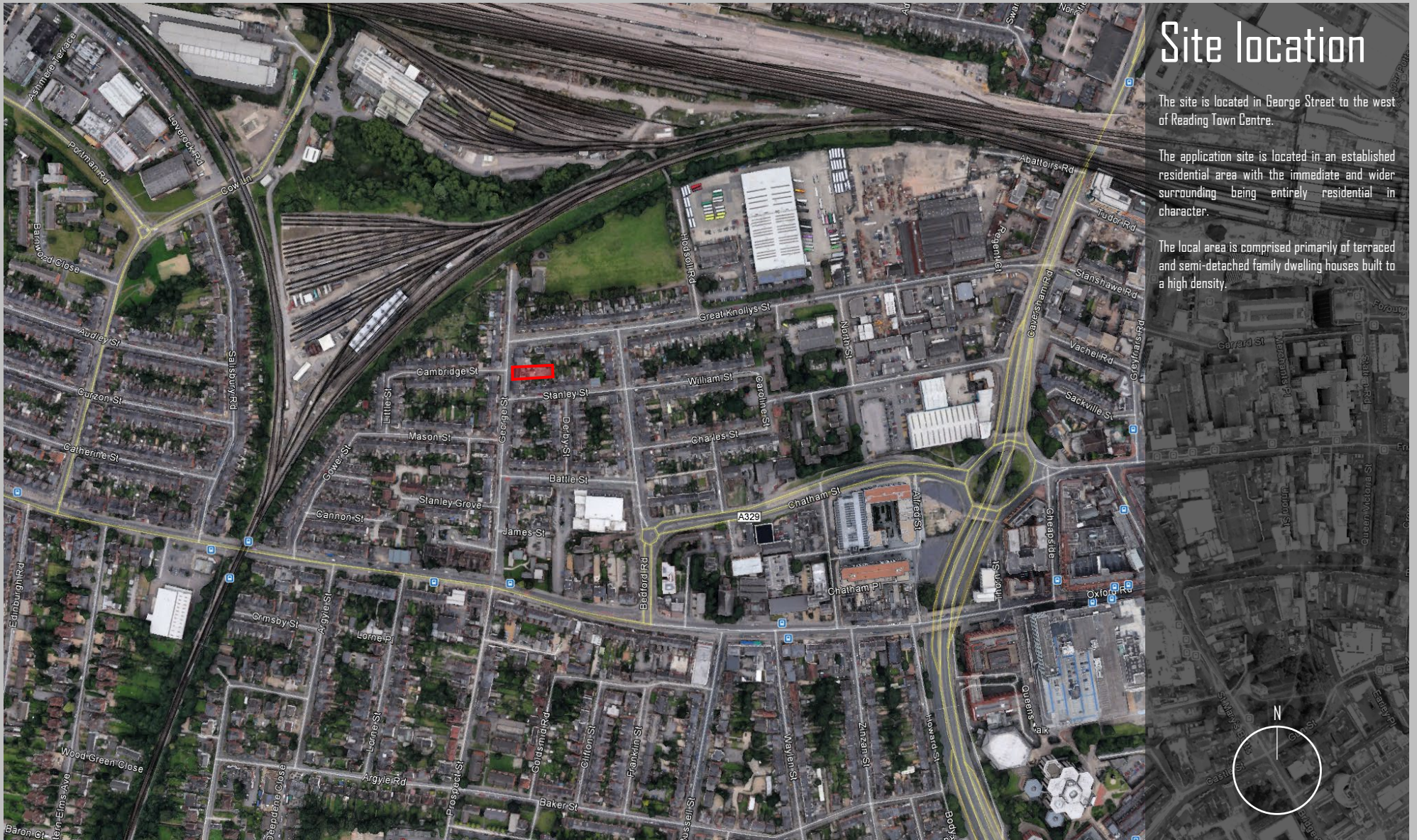


49a-51b George Street
READING RG1 7NP
DESIGN & ACCESS
STATEMENT



Contents

- Site Location
- Existing site
- Existing site plan
- Past planning proposal
- Pre Application
- Pre Application response
- Design statement
- Design reasoning
- Proposed site plan
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- Proposed site views
- Amenity provision
- Landscaping
- Materials
- Sustainability



Site location

The site is located in George Street to the west of Reading Town Centre.

The application site is located in an established residential area with the immediate and wider surrounding being entirely residential in character.

The local area is comprised primarily of terraced and semi-detached family dwelling houses built to a high density.



Existing site

The existing site forms part of a regular rectilinear urban block set within a greater 'grid' of terrace blocks

The site lies on the Western centre of the terraced block, it encompasses 2 terraced houses and extends rearwards into the centre of the residential block.

To the main terrace on George street there is existing access to the yard at the rear.

The terraced houses are classic two up two down properties and the yard contains a large single storey office/store workshop.

Neighbouring the site are further terraced houses over 2 and three floors with rear gardens and yards.

The topography of the area is generally flat with a slight rise towards to the south away from the Thames basin and railway.

The houses surrounding the site are mostly ground and first with many having had extensions or conversion of the roof space through permitted development however there are lower ground and upper ground floors found along George street and the surrounding streets alike.



Existing site

The site is formed of two main structures –

1 - The terraced houses along George street.

The terraced houses are formed of two addresses with the access separating the two at ground. The houses are of a classic terraced 2up 2 down in design and form mid quality living units with no sign of recent upgrades to the layouts or design to better the quality of living within. There are signs of historic changes to the dwellings within the access passage and these are of poor build quality. Both residencies have a small yard space to the rear with only hard surfacing and are fully walled in on all faces.

2 – The single storey office/workshop and store.

This element forms a ad-hoc structure of varying ages and design/build methods and provides extremely low quality office, storage and workshop space. The space has had a recent approval for change of use to residential however this is not the preferred route.



Existing site

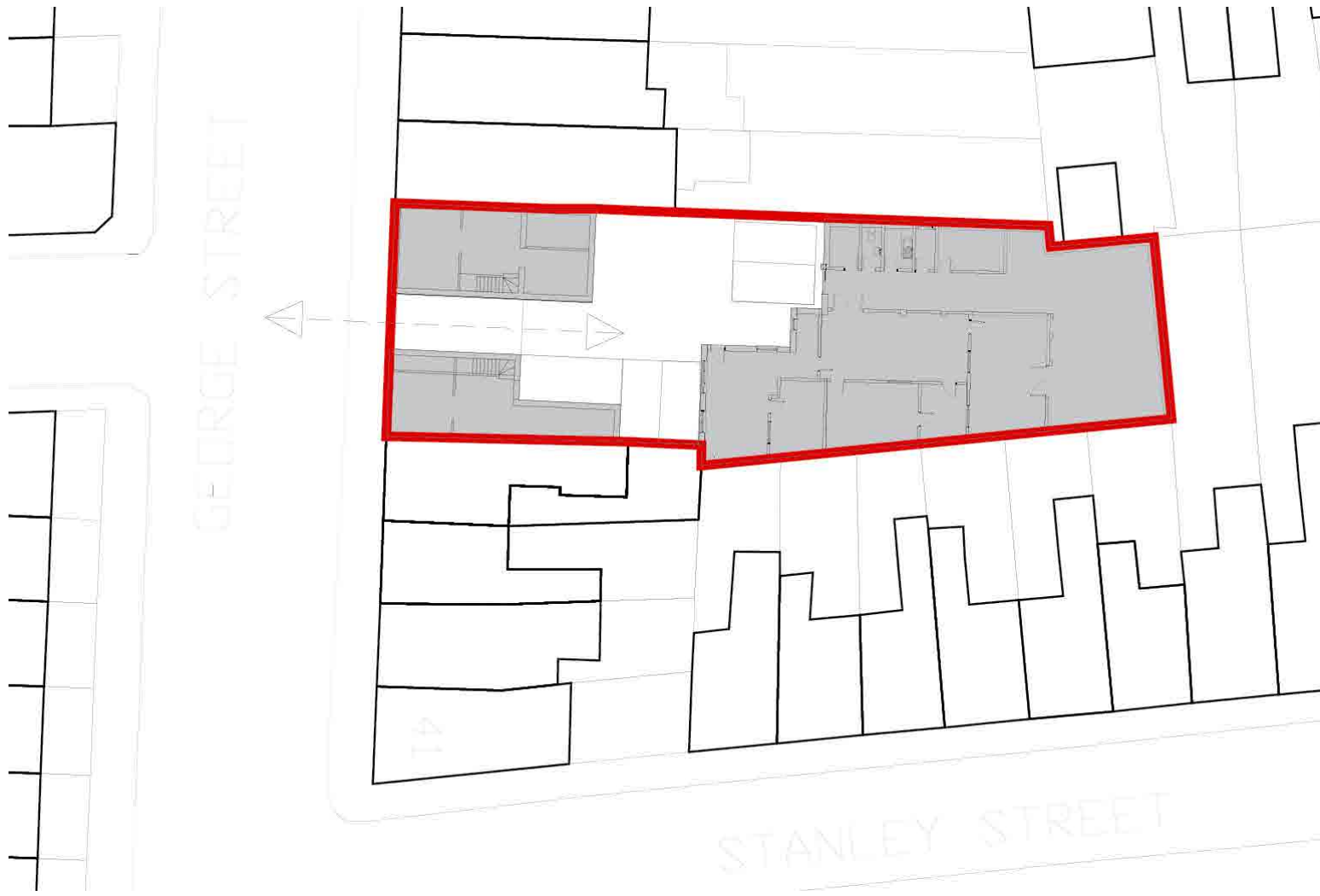
The residential buildings surrounding the site are fluctuating in quality and position with varying degrees of overlooking.

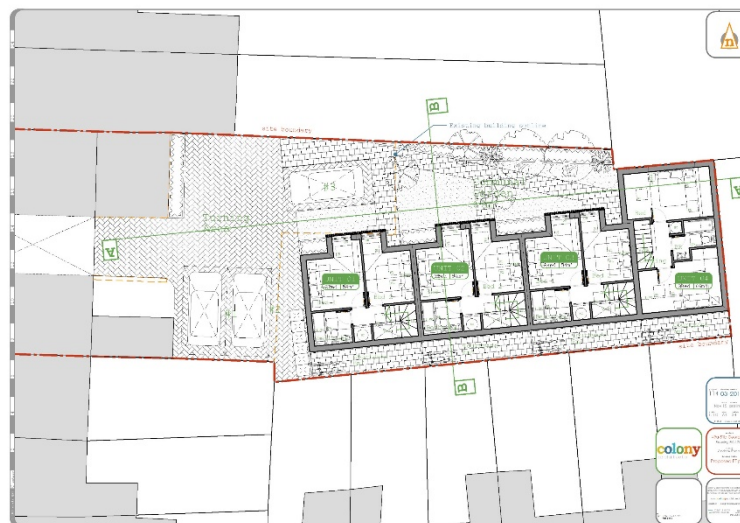
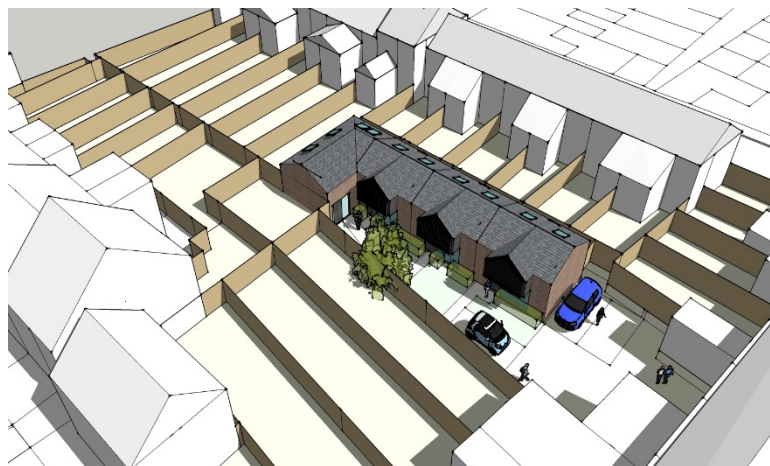
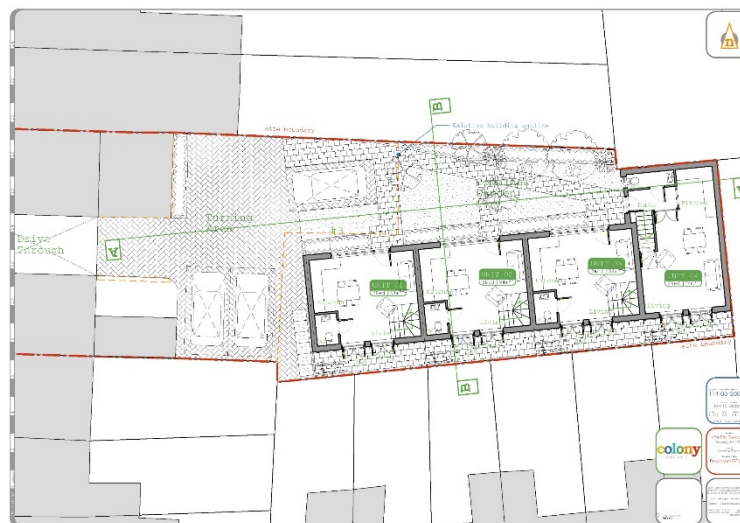
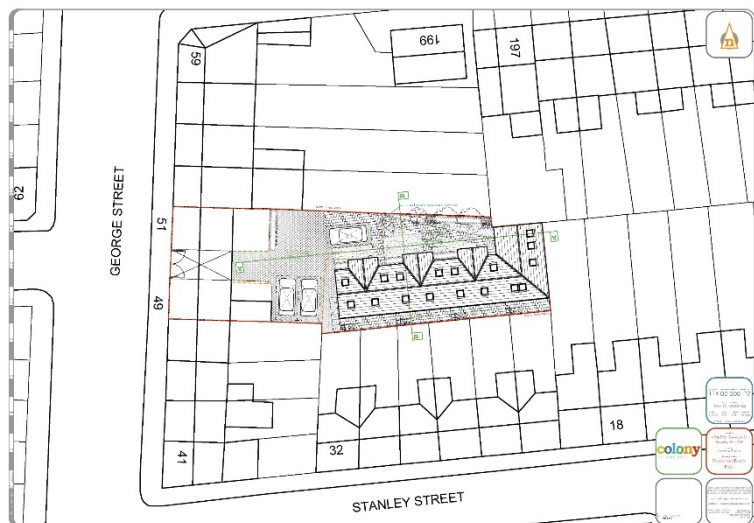
The yard to the rear of the George street houses abuts both gardens and yards.

The flat roof is parapeted to the rear in varying heights providing a perceivable scale greater than that of the actual flat roofed structure behind.

The roof is in a bad state of disrepair and is currently covered by a bright blue tarpaulin.

Existing site plan





Past planning Proposal

The Site in question has several planning approvals and refusals against it. Please refer to the planning history within the planning statement for full details.

The most recent application was for the redevelopment of the yard into 4x two storey houses facing north and south with the mass of the buildings pitching into the centre of the yard.

Further proposals were anticipated to include an upgrade of the yard into hard and soft landscaping with unusable 1m depth yard spaces behind neighbouring walls for private amenity space.

On reflection of the previous proposals, the scheme provided a strong argument to re-develop but took the mass and number of new build units past a critical point to which the scheme become symptomatic of an overdeveloped site.

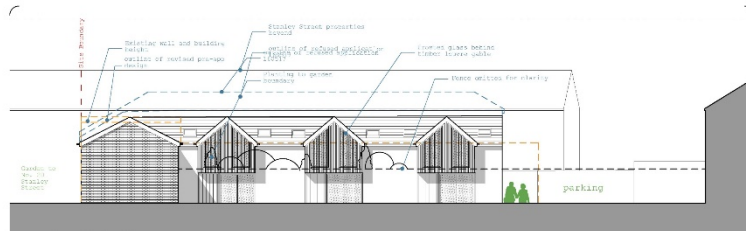
Past planning Proposal

The proposals sought to apply a east/west massing separated into 4 dwellings for which each unit would face north/south in its outlook.

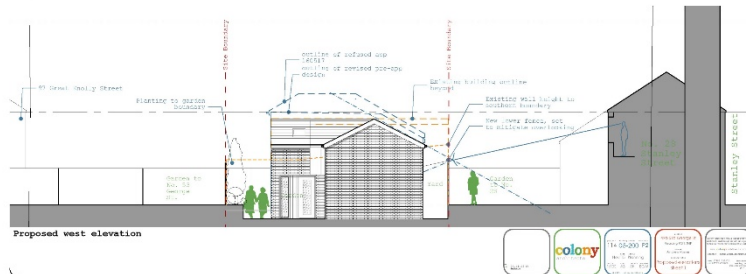
Due to the central location of the site coupled with the outlook which effected the houses to the north and south the scheme subsequently failed at planning.

The main points to this failure to gain approval were stated as follows -

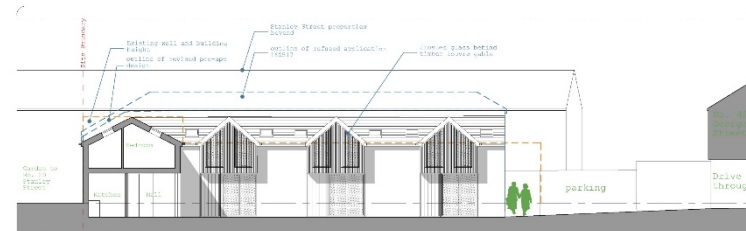
- The bulk and mass of the proposed residential block and specifically the long roof ridge, perception of increased bulk; and proximity to side boundaries and surrounding properties is such that the proposal would result in a cramped overdevelopment of the site
- Due to the cramped nature of the development, the proposed houses would not be supplied with a suitable opportunity for amenity space, or sufficient opportunity for adequate landscaping
- The proposed houses would suffer from generally poor outlooks from habitable rooms.
- The proposal would result in overlooking and a loss of privacy to the rear elevations of the adjacent properties along George Street (Nos. 49, 49a and 51) from the angled orientation of the first floor bedroom windows, particularly from Units 1 and 2.



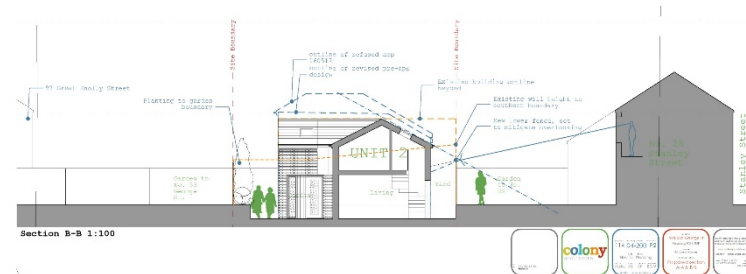
Proposed north elevation



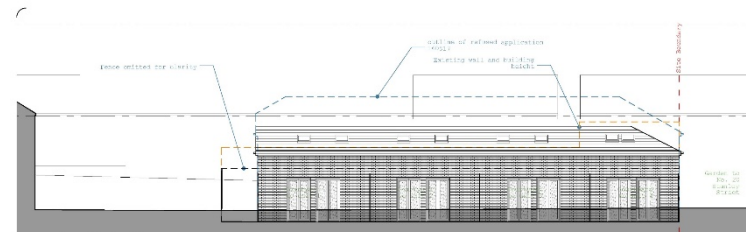
Proposed west elevation



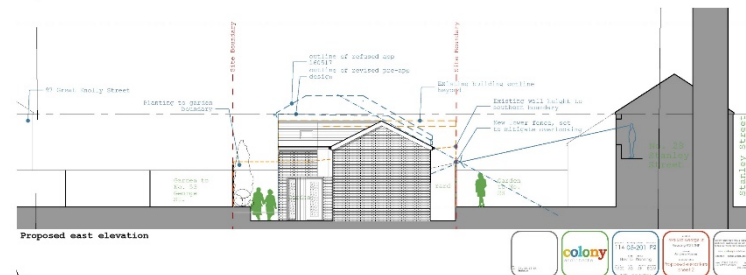
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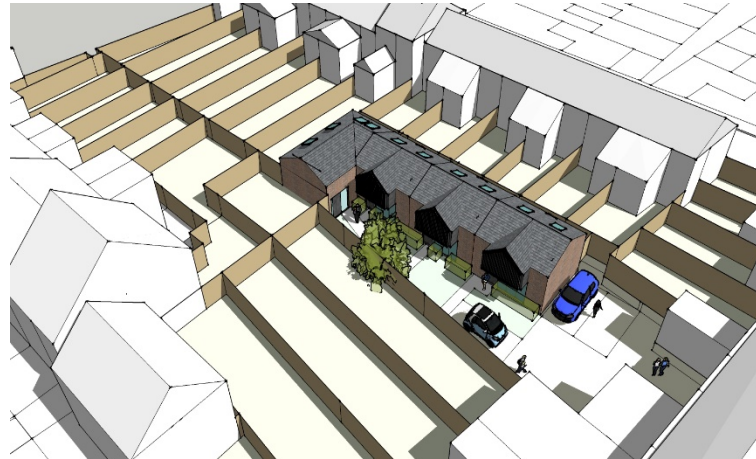
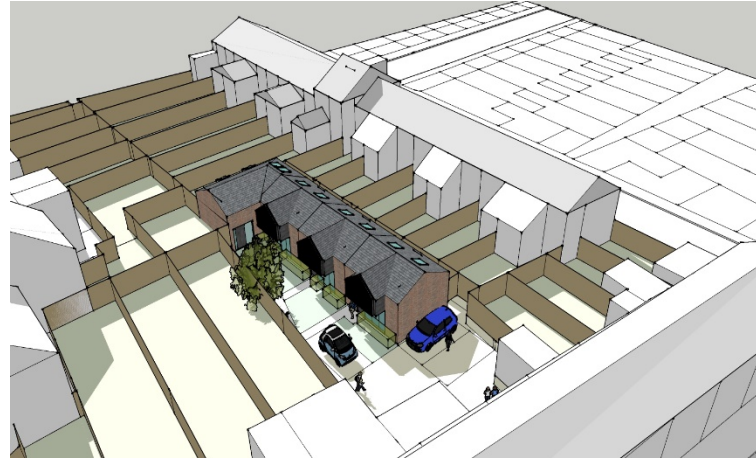
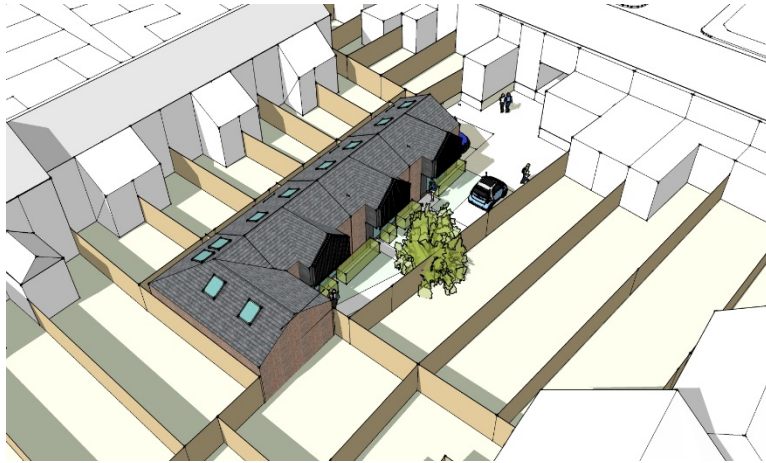
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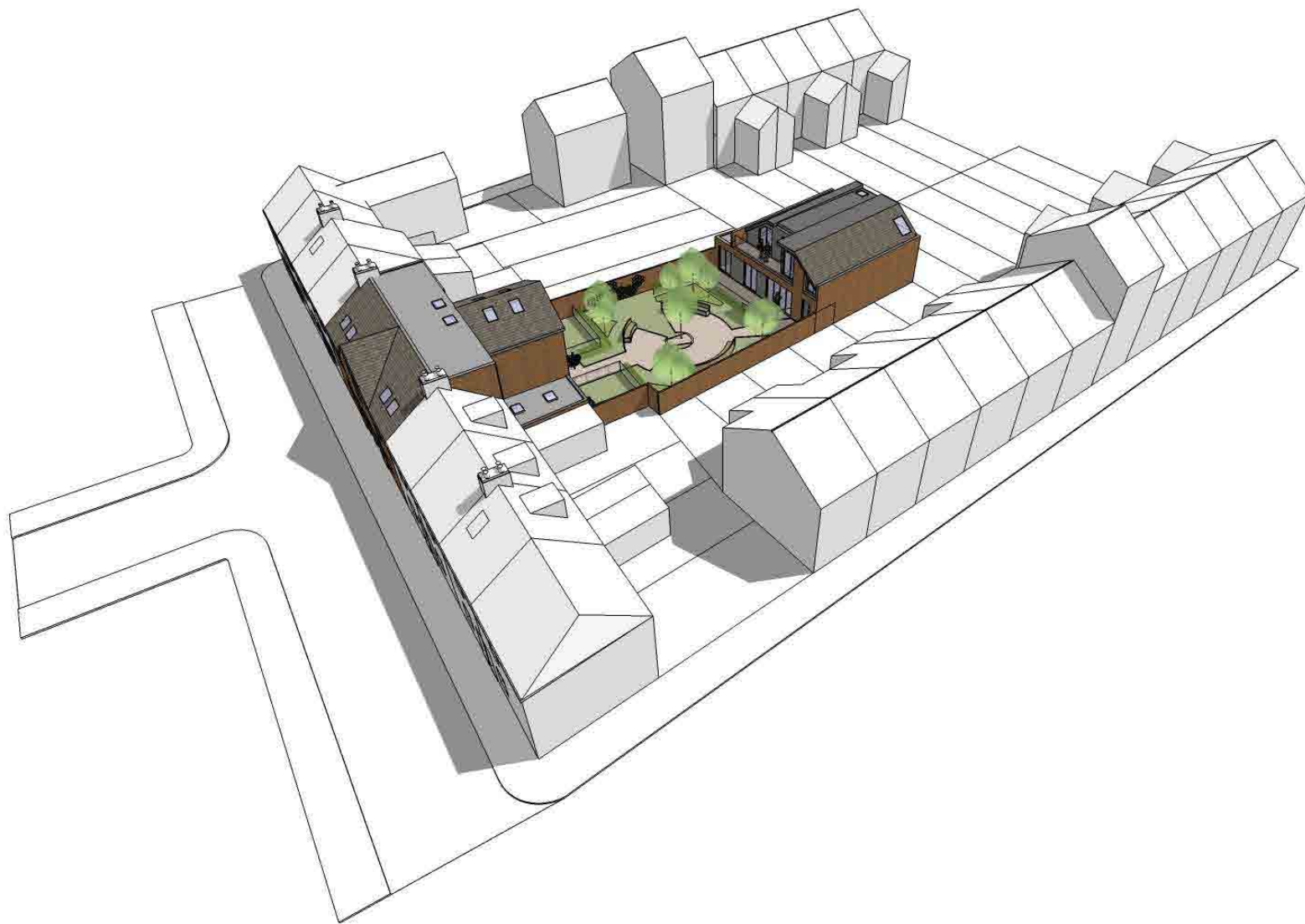
Proposed south elevation



Proposed east elevation



Past planning Proposal Views



Recent Pre-Application –

It was our clients intention to use the refusal points listed in the planning report to help re-formulate a proposal on the site which looks to address the main concerns highlighted by the case officer and provide a scheme which make better use of the yard site in terms of unit type, size, aspect, outlook, usability, compliance and good design.

The development looked to generate a scheme which provides a net additional 5 units on the site to provide a total of 7 across the development area.

Although this number is greater than the previous refused application the proposal looked to encompass the possibility and development potential found in the houses at 49 and 51 George Street.

Therefore only 2 new build dwellings would have been sought with the remaining 5 units housed within the extended footprint of 49 & 51 George Street

Pre-app Plans

The plans will provide the following accommodation -

Apartment schedule

House	Apartment 1 - 49sqm 1bed 2person with garden
	Apartment 2 - 49sqm 1bed 2person with garden
	Apartment 3 - 48sqm 1bed 2person
	Apartment 4 - 48sqm 1bed 2person
	Apartment 5 - 58sqm 2bed 4person
Courtyard	Apartment 6 - 87sqm 2bed 4person with garden
	Apartment 7 - 74sqm 2bed 4person with balcony

This will provide a suitable mix of apartments and provide occupants with a quality new build apartment.

Access to the courtyard and new build will be via a private and secure pedestrian only through route, this access will also provide access to the apartments at the upper levels in the terraced houses.

It is our intention to allow the parking spaces allocated to properties 49 and 51 George Street to the 2bed units and then agree with the council a no car agreement on the remaining units which are mainly 1 beds.

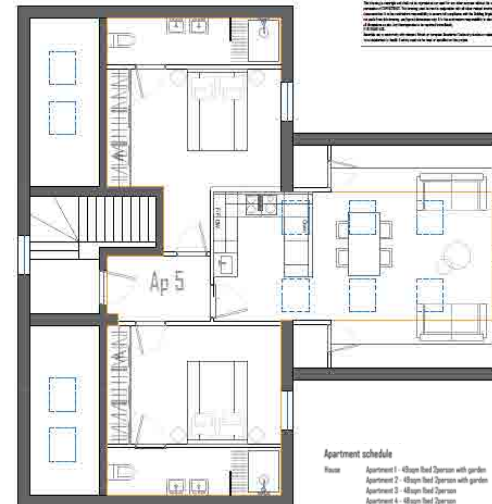
It is the intention of the client to retain the development once built and rent the apartments on the private market. The client is fully aware of Reading's requirements in social housing and is happy to formulate an agreement with the council to offset any on site social rental units in an off site contribution. We feel this is wholly appropriate given the new build aspect of the development will only provide 5 new dwellings on site.



Proposed house conversion apartment layout
Ground floor - 150B&A



Proposed house conversion apartment layout
1st floor - 150B&A



Proposed house conversion apartment layout
2nd floor - 150B&A



Proposed courtyard apartment layout
Ground floor - 150B&A



Proposed courtyard apartment layout
1st floor - 150B&A



Proposed workshop layout
Ground floor - 150B&A

Client: [Name] Address: [Address] Date: [Date] Drawn: [Name] Scale: [Scale] Project: [Project Name] Status: [Status] Notes: [Notes]

SUPERSTRUKT



A



B

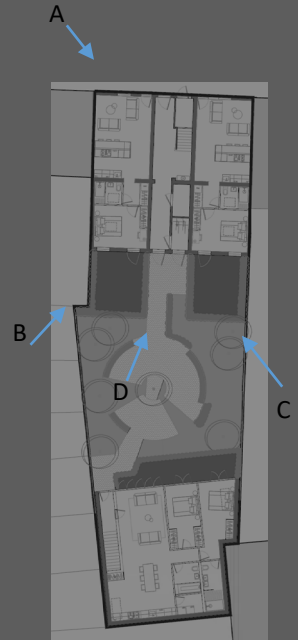


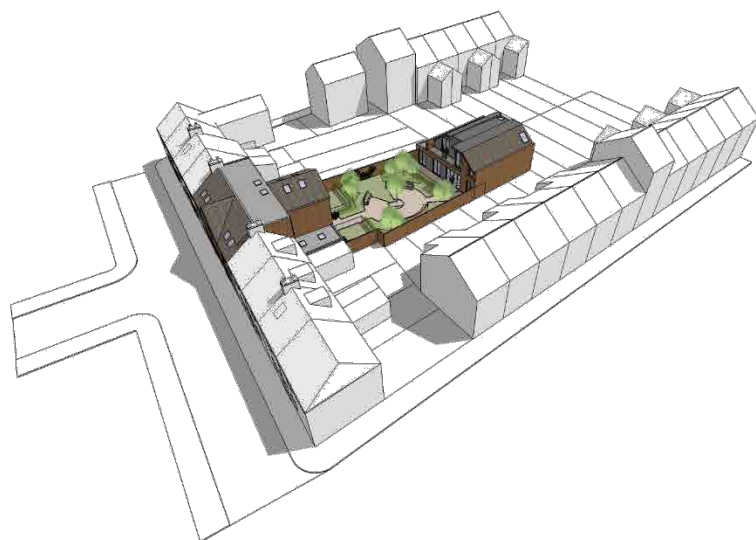
C



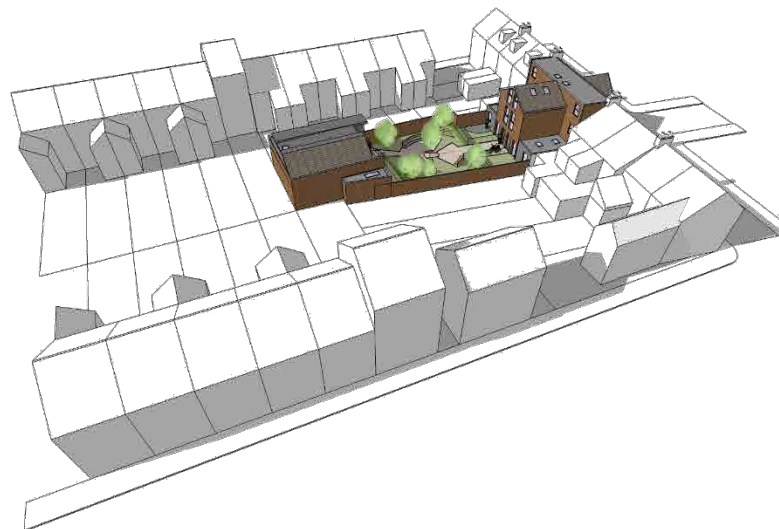
D

Pre-app Design & Views

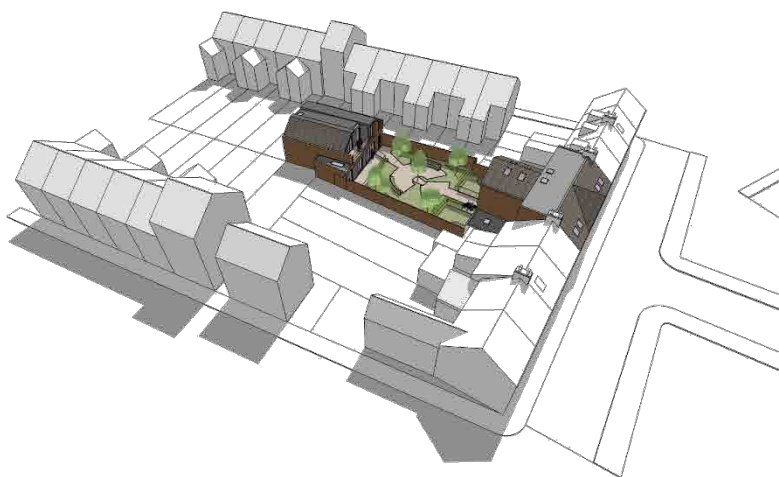




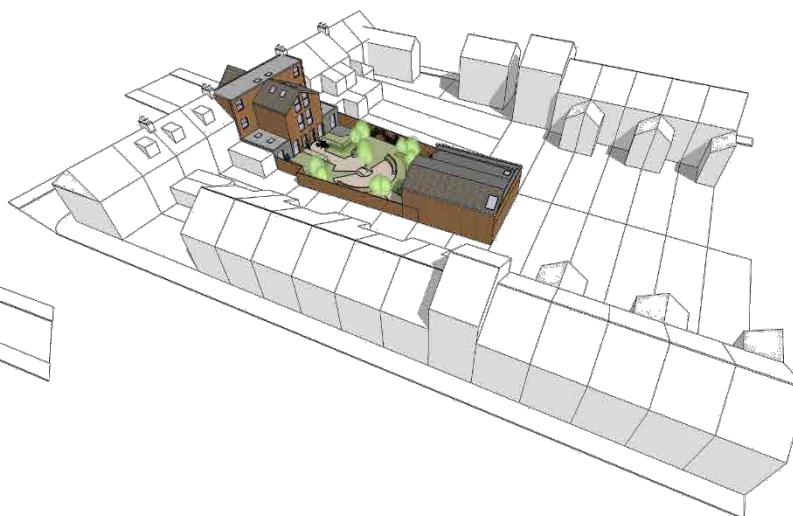
A



B



C



D

Pre-app response –

The pre application proposal tabled in front of the council was seen to be overdeveloped and overbearing on neighbouring properties.

The principle of residential redevelopment however was seen to be a good way forward for the site and certainly a better use of the land to the rear rather than the permitted development scheme.

These comments included within the pre-app response together with the refusal comments included within the past application will help form the brief for the revised application.



Design statement

It is our clients intention to use the refusal points listed in the planning report and pre application response to help re-formulate a proposal on the site which looks to address the main concerns highlighted by the case officer and provide a scheme which make better use of the yard site in terms of unit type, size, aspect, outlook, usability, compliance and good design.

The development therefore looks to generate a scheme which provides a net additional 4 units on the site to provide a total of 6 across the development area.

Furthermore the decrease in new build units and mass being proposed there will be or a reduced bed count allowing for an overall decrease in new build GIA across the scheme and removing the contentious nature of the two story element in the rear of the yard.

The landscaped main courtyard will remain to allow residents valuable private and general amenity space which is at a premium in this location.

This soft and hard landscaped area will also aid to reduce site run-off and increase biodiversity helping the site's sustainability and quality of living conditions.

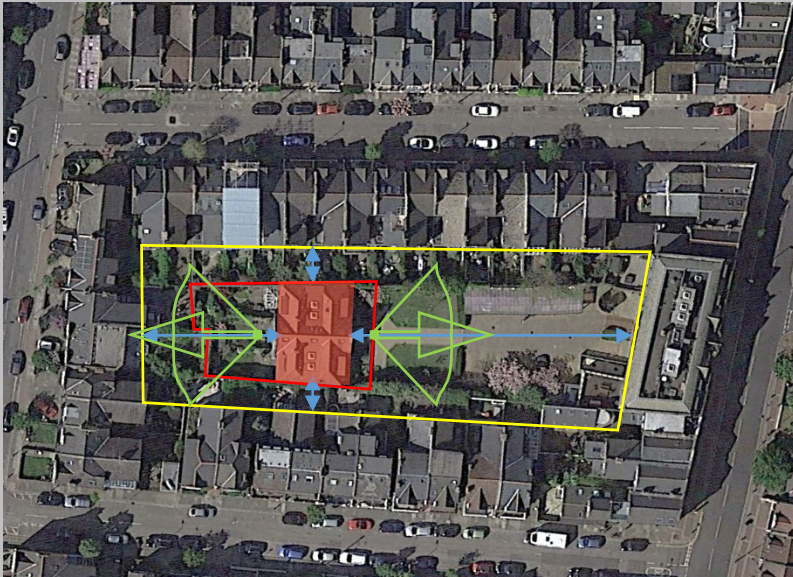


Fig 1



Fig 2

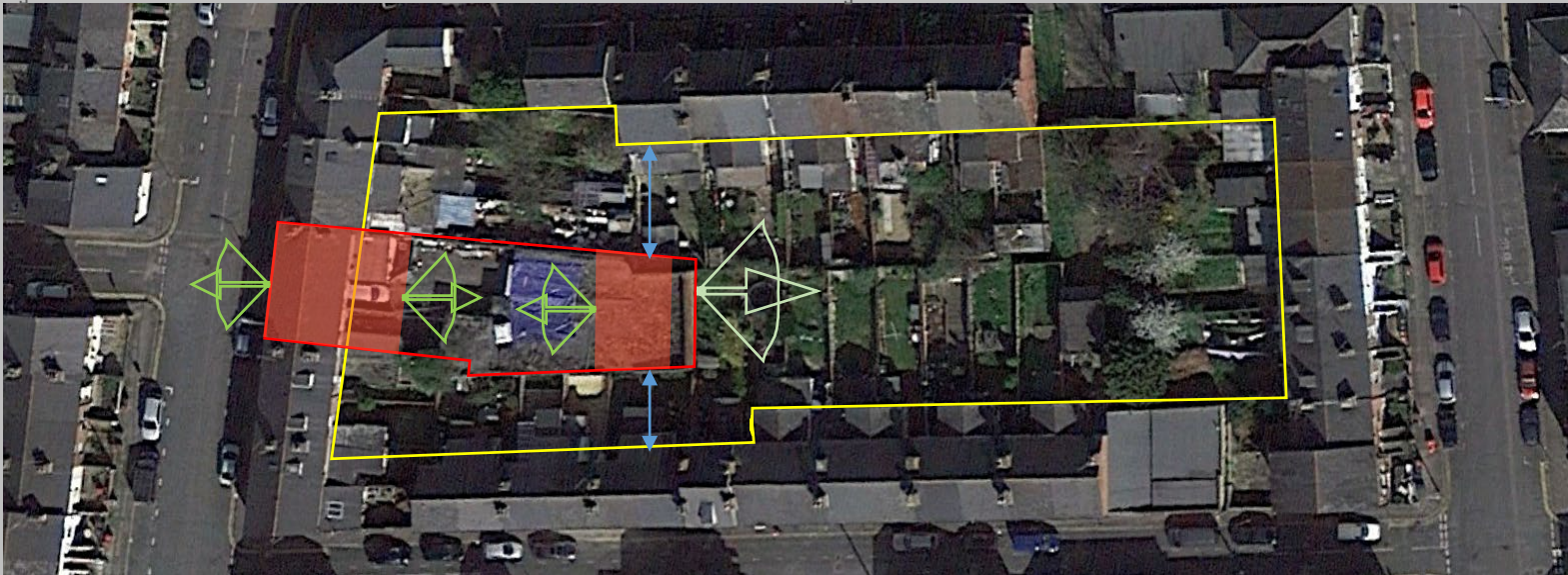


Fig 3

Design reasoning

A review of similar proposals which successfully take on the form similar to that of the revised design shows how new build units can be successfully realised within urban blocks.

The two sketches to the top of the page show how relationships can help design and form the mass of the new build.

Fig 1 shares many familiar relationships to the site in question but in a more confined space. The new build takes on a form where outlook is confined to the greater boundary as shown with the green arrows – and all windows are faced in an east/west facing direction with the roofline pitched inwards reducing the impact of the new build from its most sensitive aspects. Roof lights are brought in at high level allowing light into the central parts of the building where normally side windows would provide light.

Fig 2 shows a development with more generous relationships where face to face aspects are better but still only 10 meters away from neighbouring windows. The units range from 2-3 floors which overbear the neighbouring buildings in a less successful design than Fig 1. Further to the height this elevated face allows direct overlooking into gardens in front of the building which is something we do not wish to replicate.

Fig 3 shows the site in question with the proposed mass and outlook shown as per Figs 1 & 2. The light green arrow is shown only to highlight issues found in Fig 2 with overlooking and why the new proposal does not include any outlook from this façade.

Proposed Site Plan

The proposal forms into two main schemes -

- 1 new build
- 2 extended properties

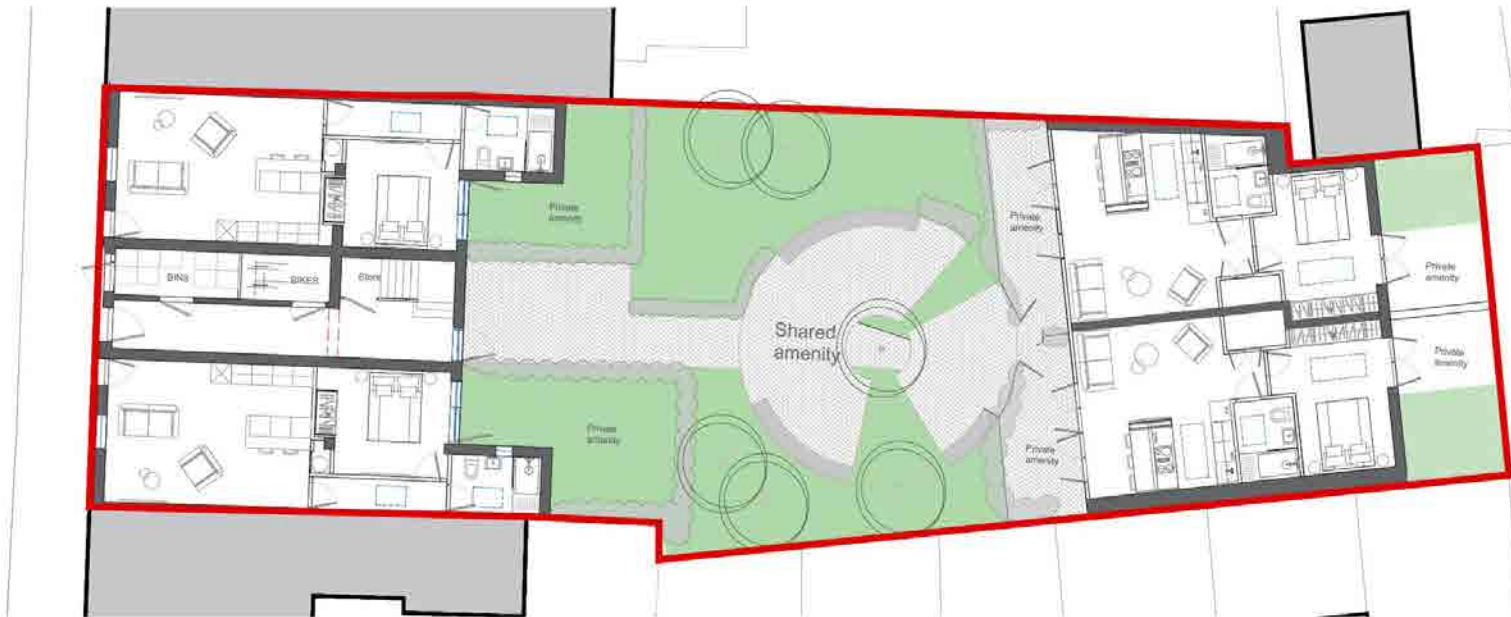
1 - The new build is designed to form a single storey 2x1bed lateral apartments with courtyard views and private, enclosed/screened amenity to both front and rear facades .

2 - The remodelled footprint of the terraced properties to the George street will enable a revision of the internal layouts and formation of 4 apartments all of which will be dual aspect and provide a much better standard of space and living conditions.

Access to the upper parts will be formed in the old access to the yard where bins and bikes will also be stored for residents.

The ground floor apartments will have their own private screened amenity space separating the general/communal amenity and allowing a buffer to residents of the apartments and those using the gardens.

In response to case officers concerns over living space / full apartments in the roof of the terraced houses at 2nd floor level the apartments have been re-designed to create bed and bath space only in this location and all living space is located at 1st floor more befitting the local.



access statement and unit plans

The proposal will create 6 units in total

Unit 1 - 1bed 2 person -48.2sqm
Unit 2 - 1bed 2 person -48.2sqm
Unit 3 - 2bed 4 person - 78sqm
Unit 4 - 1bed 2 person - 50.1sqm
Unit 5 - 1bed 2 person -45sqm
Unit 6 - 1bed 2 person -45sqm

Units 5 and 6 will be within the new build with the other 4 found in the existing terraced houses.

Access to units 1,2,5 and 6 will be from the ground floor level either from the courtyard or the front facade as existing.

Units 3 and 4 will be from the new stairs housed at the rear of the terraced houses.

Bins will be stored in a bin store off the communal access space along with 4 bike spaces. Further bike spaces can be found outside in the courtyard servicing visitors.

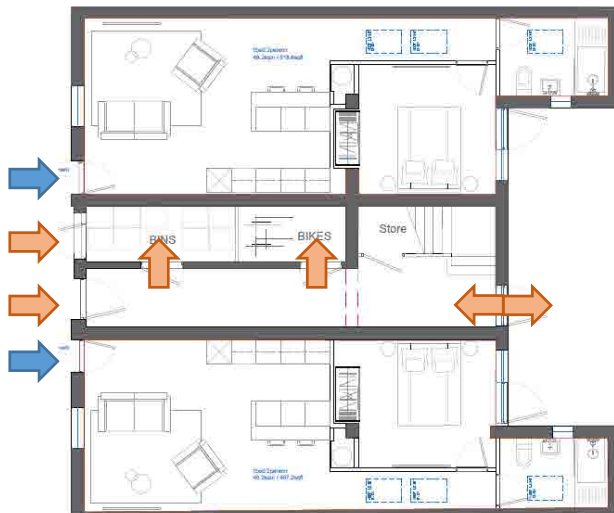
Parking will remain at 2 on street parking spaces as per the existing allocation to the terraced houses, due to the extremely accessible location of the site, together with close proximity to transport links, shopping and the town centre it is deemed that the two spaces are more than adequate for the site. As the units will be rented out the spaces will be allocated on a first come first served basis with no further allocation made available once the two spaces are taken.



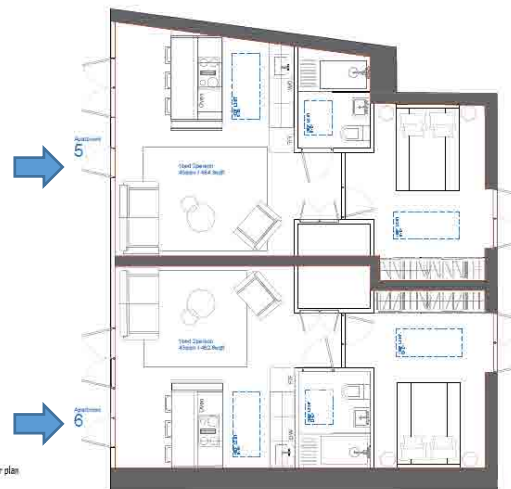
Proposed 1st floor plan



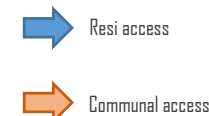
Proposed 1st floor plan



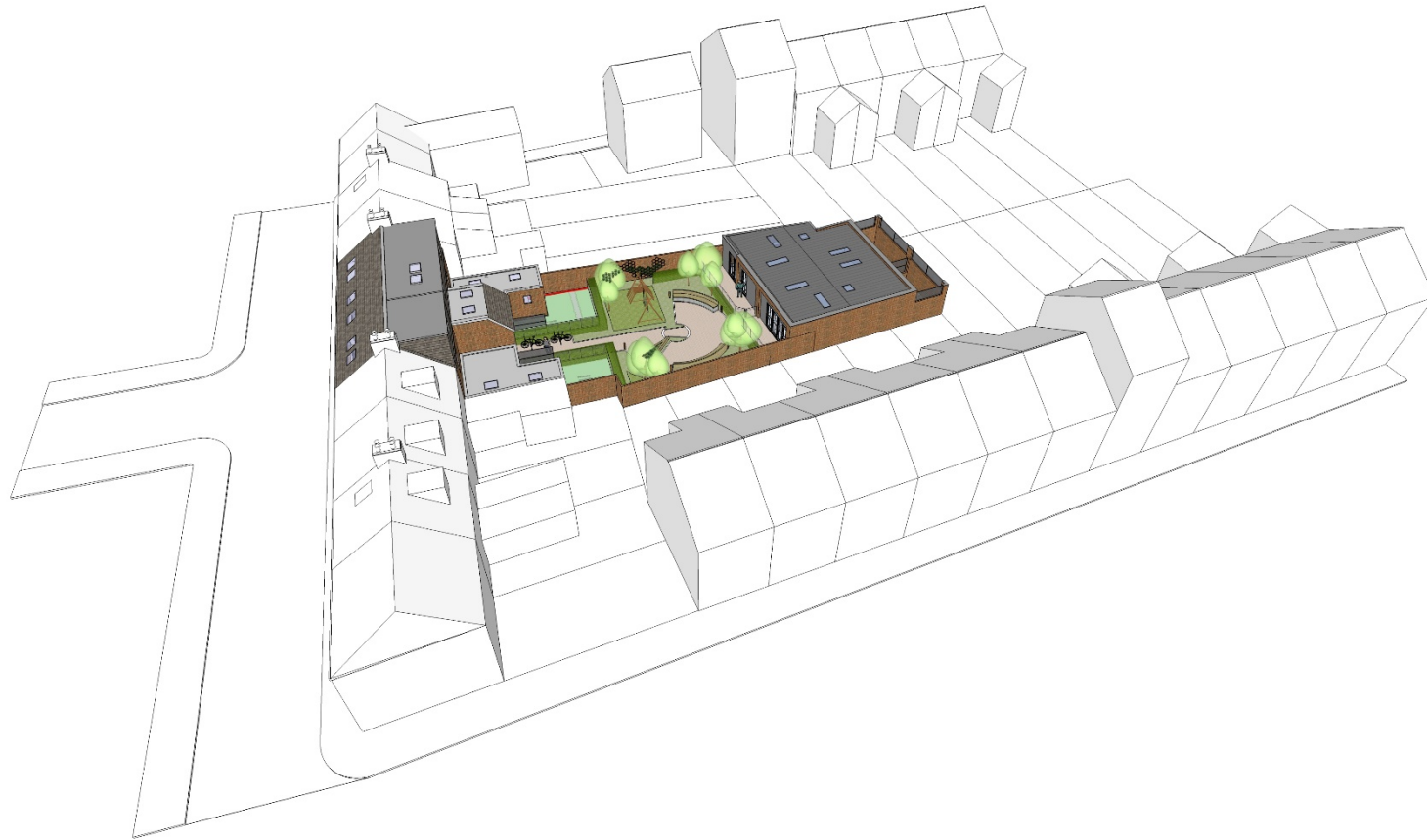
Proposed Ground floor plan



Proposed Ground floor plan - NEW BUILD



Proposed Site views



Proposed Site views



Proposed Site views



Proposed Site views





Proposed Amenity

One main downfall of the previous proposal and indeed the current living conditions is a total lack of amenity and garden space.

It is this new application's intention to enhance the quality and biodiversity of the site whilst helping reduce surface runoff and handstanding / built form across the site with the inclusion of a central courtyard space measuring 210sqm.

This amenity space will provide 4 of the units with valuable private open space also with similar sqm'age to the terraced houses surrounding the site providing ample private, courtyard space.

The open central gardens will be formed around a central feature and tree planting to enable the residents of the site and the surrounding properties a better, greener outlook.

The general open space will provide seating areas, access routes, play space, private and open areas and with the use of planted climbers on the internal courtyard walls will greatly enhance the feel of the development

The space will also provide a welcome break in the site as a whole reducing overlooking from within and from outside the development



Landscaping

The landscaping proposal for the development is to be simple and designed to be sustainable, adaptable and accessible by residents.

Large areas of grass will be formed around a centrally paved courtyard consisting of permeable paving in a light grey colour edged with further permeable blocks in a stone /tan colour.

Hedging will be planted in front of metal railings to delineate the private and general amenity spaces.

Within the private amenity off the rear of the new build apartments will be decking and grass with timber close boarded trellis between brick uprights allowing wall climbers to make use of the courtyard gardens and softening the urban feel of the spaces.

Further wall features will be affixed to the main, central general amenity area on the south facing wall allowing pockets of planting to be utilised by residents to grow fruit plants such as strawberry's along with herbs which will thrive in the warmer / dryer conditions

Lighting will be provided via downlights as shown in the image - these will be set to a timer and PIR system which will limit the usage of the lighting and not create unwanted light pollution at night.

Silver birch trees will provide a welcome vertical break in the gardens breaking up the views across the courtyard and providing valuable planting/shade and biodiversity to the development.



Materials

Surrounding the site are a number of different properties formed mainly of brick construction and finished in several ways.

It is our intention to utilise the materials found in similar 'terraced' style residences as noted on this page.

These materials consist of

- Slate tile to the roof.
- Red Brick finish to the external walls and facades.
- UPVC windows and doors in gray
- Dark grey guttering and face plates with minimal ornamentation.
- Roof lights will be frosted to all ground floor roofs with the remainder being clear.

All these elements would be incorporated in the proposed design to form a cohesive materials pallet complementing the local in a modern format.

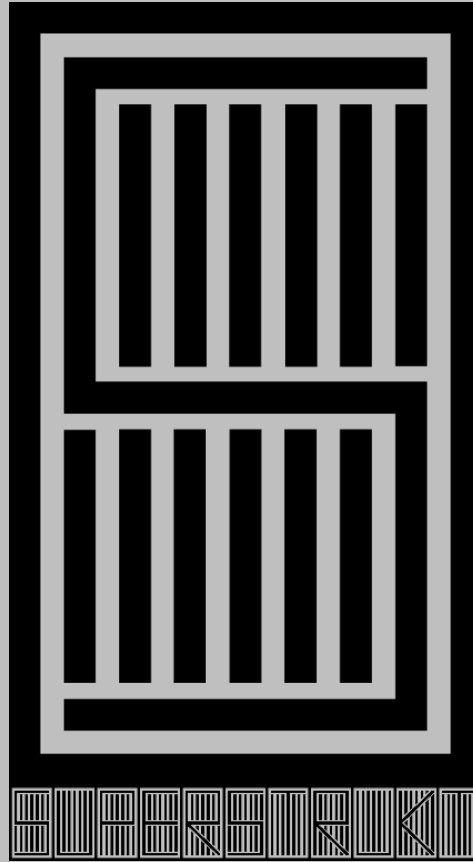


Sustainability

The current site lacks any form of sustainable attributes and the terraced houses have not been updated in terms of their thermal properties apart from UPVC windows. The rear yard buildings are of very poor quality and disrepair and provide the greatest opportunity of enhancement within the scheme.

The proposed scheme will look to provide the following sustainability enhancements.

- Thermal upgrades to the walls, floors and roof.
- Thermal upgrades to all door and windows improving heat retention and reducing heat leakage through drafts.
- Incorporation of modern boilers reducing the sites consumption
- LED lighting
- Water and electricity 'live' metering to increase awareness of user consumption.
- Re-use of existing brickwork to form new structures where possible reducing site waste.
- Reduction of hardstanding / non permeable surfaces
- Compliance with modern /current building regulations in line with the council's policy on the new build residential block and conversion which set a higher level of sustainability within the construction of new residential units.



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