



This page: How the proposed family of facade typologies will appear on the proposed extended building:

- Type 1 - used exclusively for the 1st -3rd floor of the Market Place frontage and based on the existing strong structural grid of the existing facade
- Type 2 - used on 4th floor setback to Market Place frontage, and the Abbey Square frontage where the existing frame is glazed and panelised, with the new look providing a more open aspect
- Type 3 - used to modify the currently blank concrete wall overlooking Abbey Square
- Type 4 - a lightweight structure that sits above the existing building in Abbey Square
- Type 5 - the existing buff brickwork left and renovation of existing windows

Market Place frontage

Keeping faithful to the structure of the building, the grid is retained and the brutalist character of the facade is carefully stripped away leaving a simple and elemental expression of the existing skeleton of the building. By adding to upper floors, variety is added and a complexity of detail reminiscent of its diverse surroundings is brought to the building. The materials are kept simple and locally appropriate.



Market Place

FACADE TYPE 1 - a strong grid is created in a bolder red brick and a lighter grey brick infill. The structure underneath is retained, but will no longer be visible. This applies to the existing three upper floors.

A glassier more lightweight feel is then used above existing 3rd floor where the mass of the building steps back successively until the top (sixth) floor.

This gives a depth of visual interest to the facade currently lacking in the brutalist existing building.



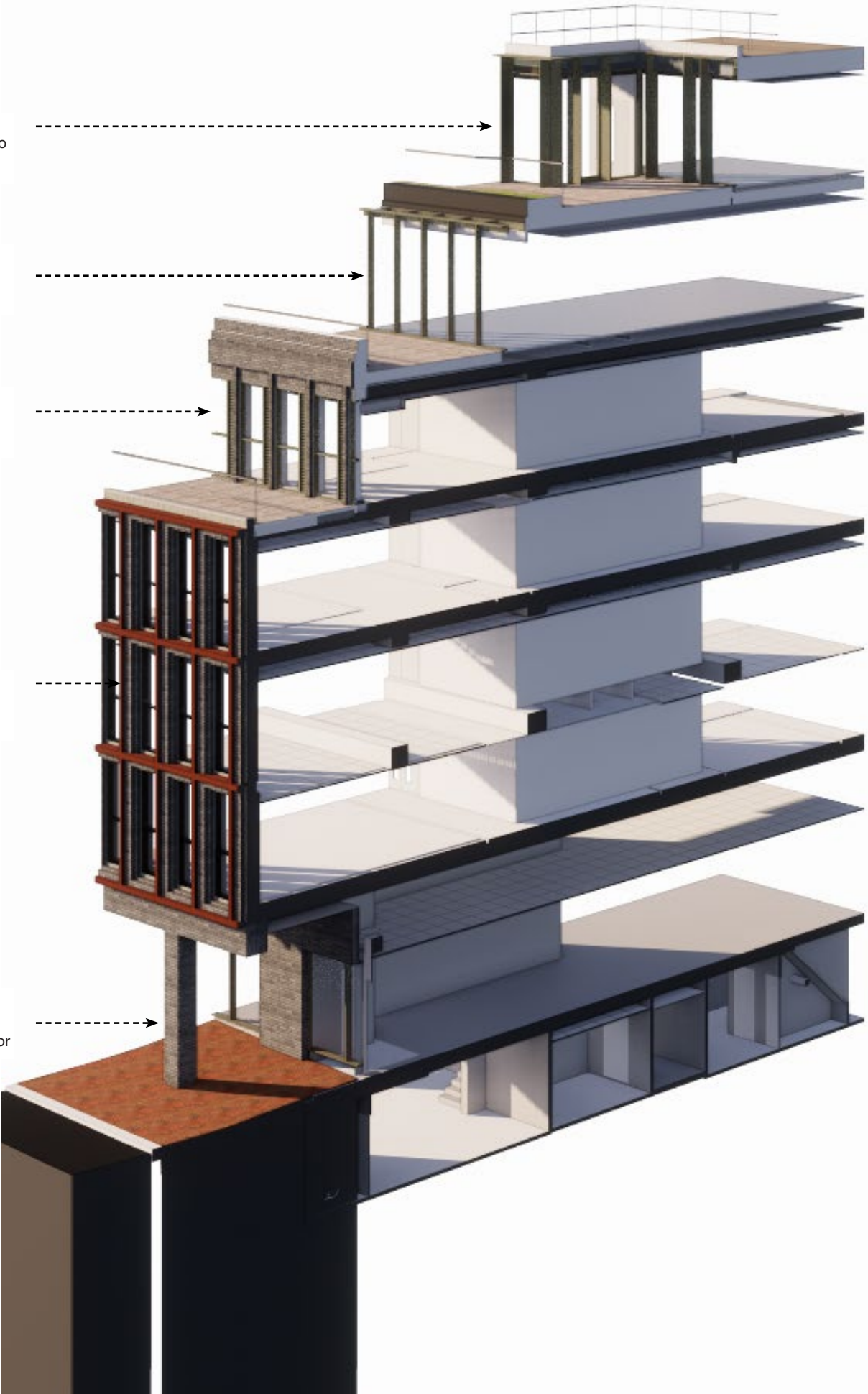
Facade Type 1

- Single full height window
- 1/2 brick red corbel
- Grey brick surround
- Full height louvre ventilation

- Simple, light glass facade treatment to upper massing
- Simple glass box with recessed parapet
- Grey brick with punched window

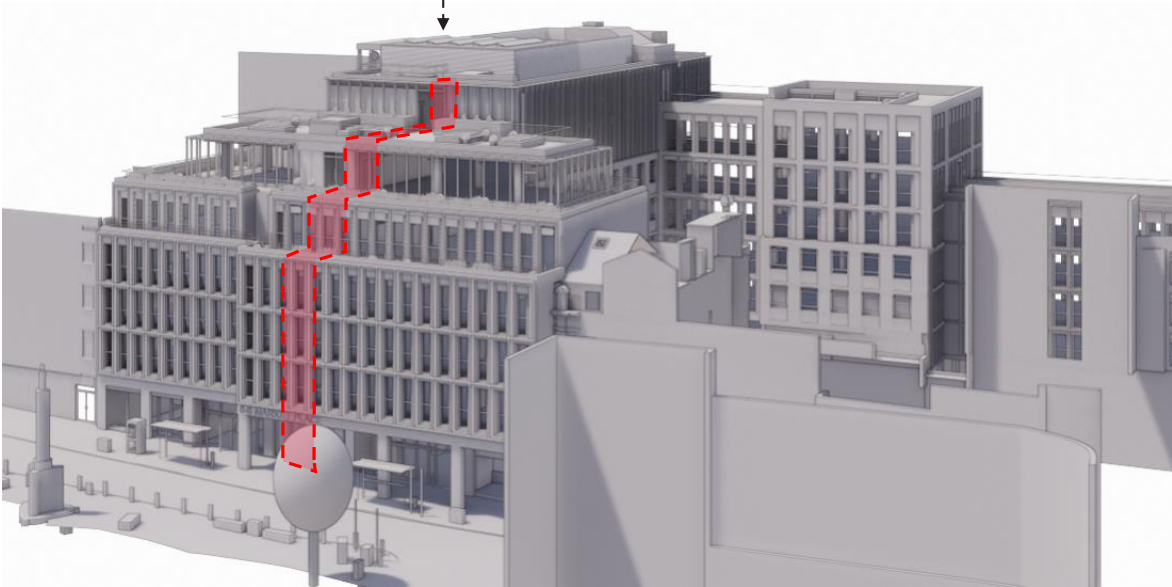
- Fine detail brick bay with red brick feature

- Grey brick coluns and surrounds to retail at ground floor



3D Sectional Study

BAY SECTION



Proposed West Facade

Abbey Square frontage

There is more scope for variety in this frontage. The existing building resembles a collection of plot frontages already and the design strategy builds on this grain to bring a family of facade types together, appropriate to the underlying form of the building's existing elements. In contrast to the Market Place frontage, this is more transformational in effect, creating a new identity for the street.



Abbey Square
 FACADE TYPE 2 - used for the southernmost part of the site, continuing with a grid but with a simpler and sharper outline in overall massing. A strong rhythm is continued across the frontage, with access underneath the building (to basement parking) retained and finished in a complementary brick colour



Facade Type 2

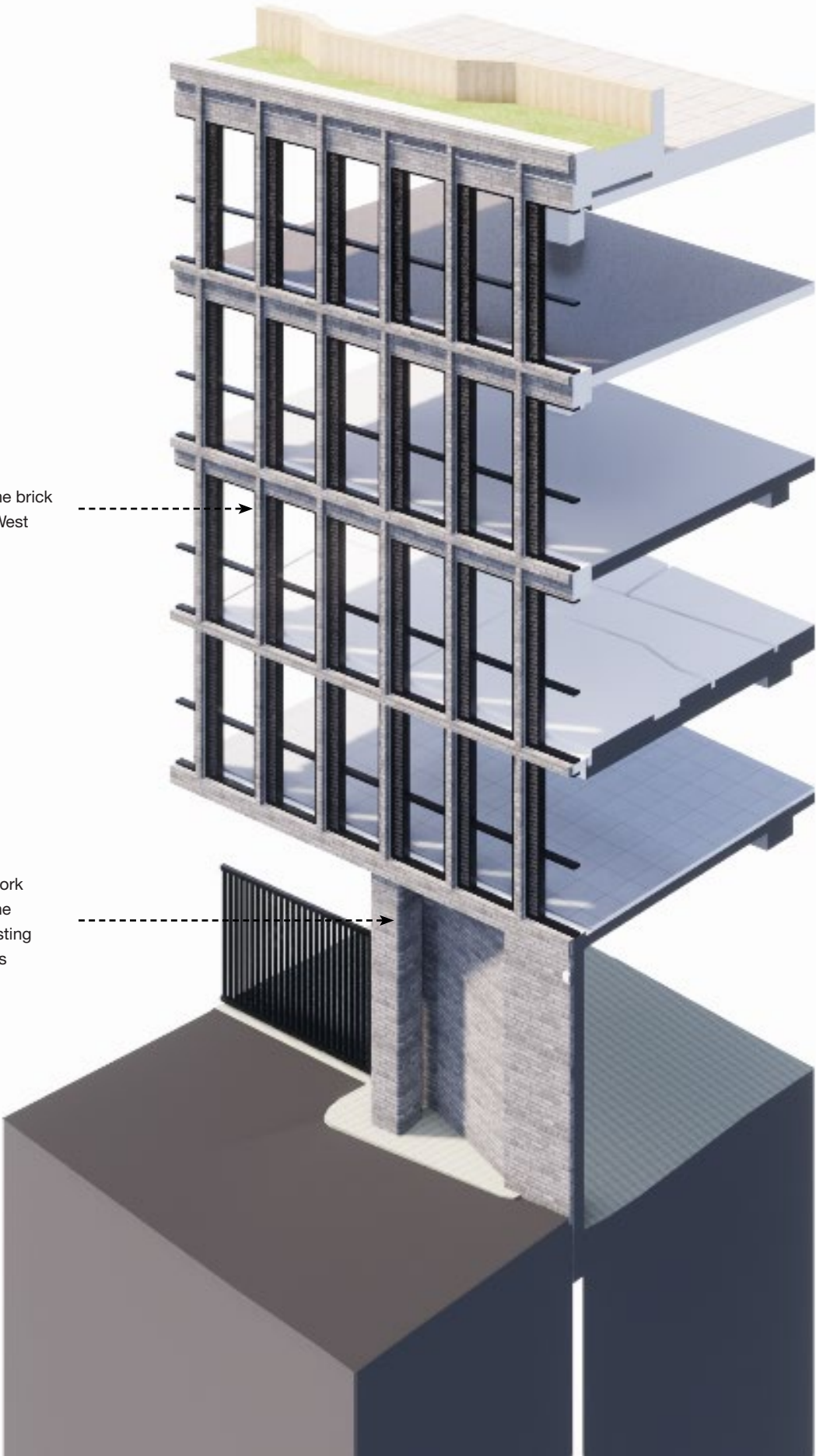
- Single full height window
- 1 brick grey corbel
- Grey brick surround
- Full height louvre ventilation



Proposed East Facade

- New facade following same brick pier type as West elevation

- Single brickwork cladding to the column & existing concrete walls



3D Sectional Study

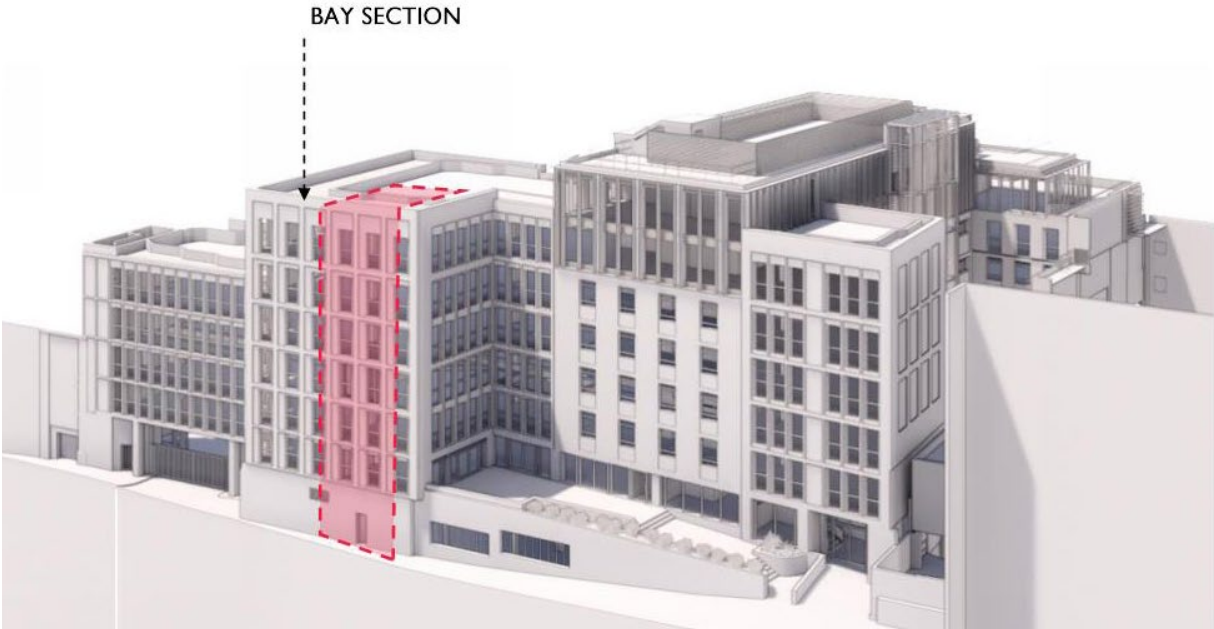
Abbey Square
 FACADE TYPE 3 - creating a new facade where a blank concrete wall exists, but tying into the buff brick material currently on the building.

The rhythm is syncopated with its immediate neighbours, overall vertical in emphasis, with the buff now the framing material and grey brick as the setback infill.

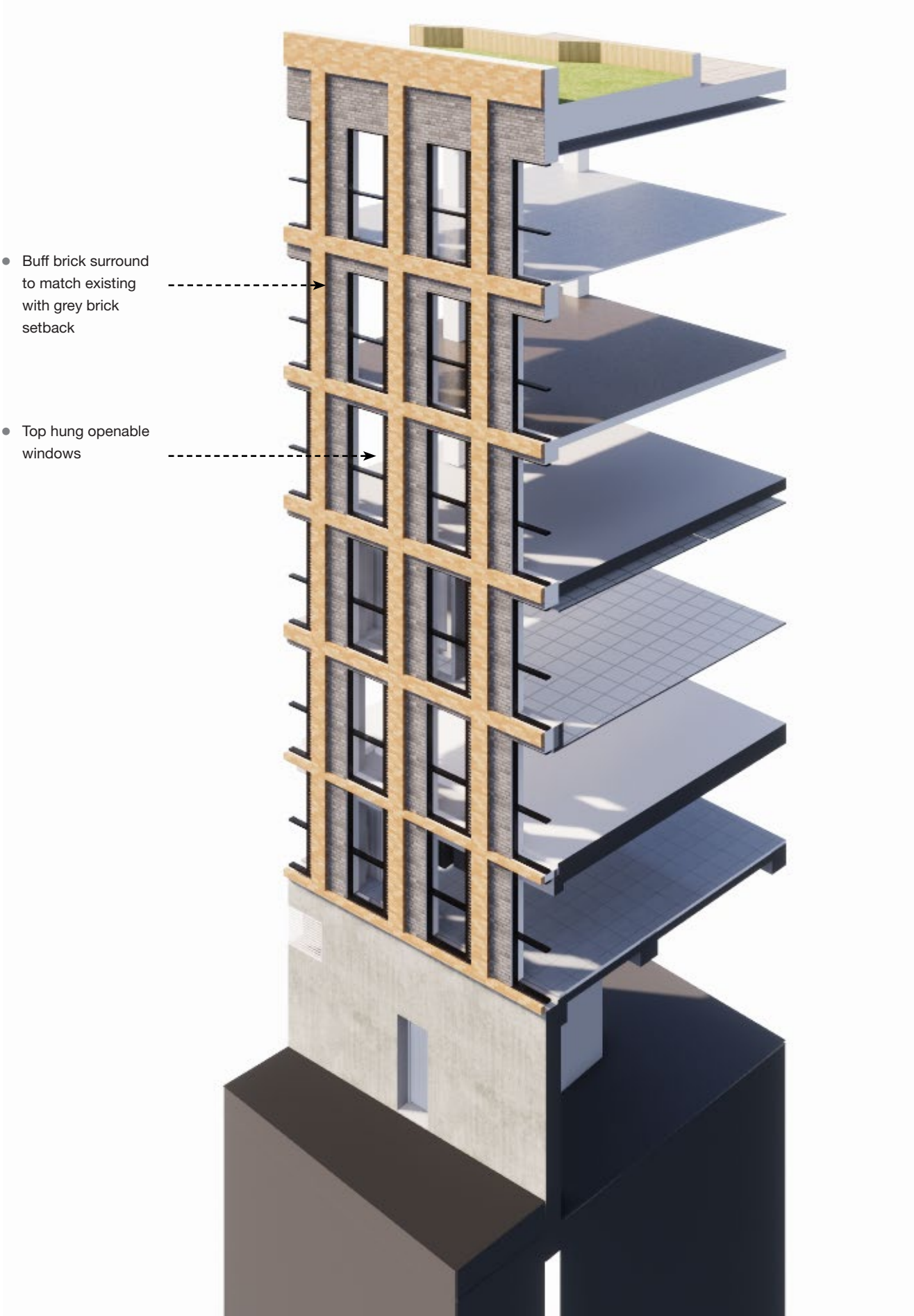


Facade Type 3

- Full height window with louvre ventilation
- Buff brick corbel
- Grey brick surround



Proposed East Facade



3D Sectional Study

Abbey Square
 FACADE TYPE 4- Used where the existing face of the connecting central block sits perpendicular to Abbey Square.

Largely unaltered on the existing 4 upper floors, a new structure will site on top with an altogether lighter feel, with the curtain wall frame of the new structure tying in with the window pattern below it, with a complementary muted colour. It is designed to be glassier as well as recessive in mass.

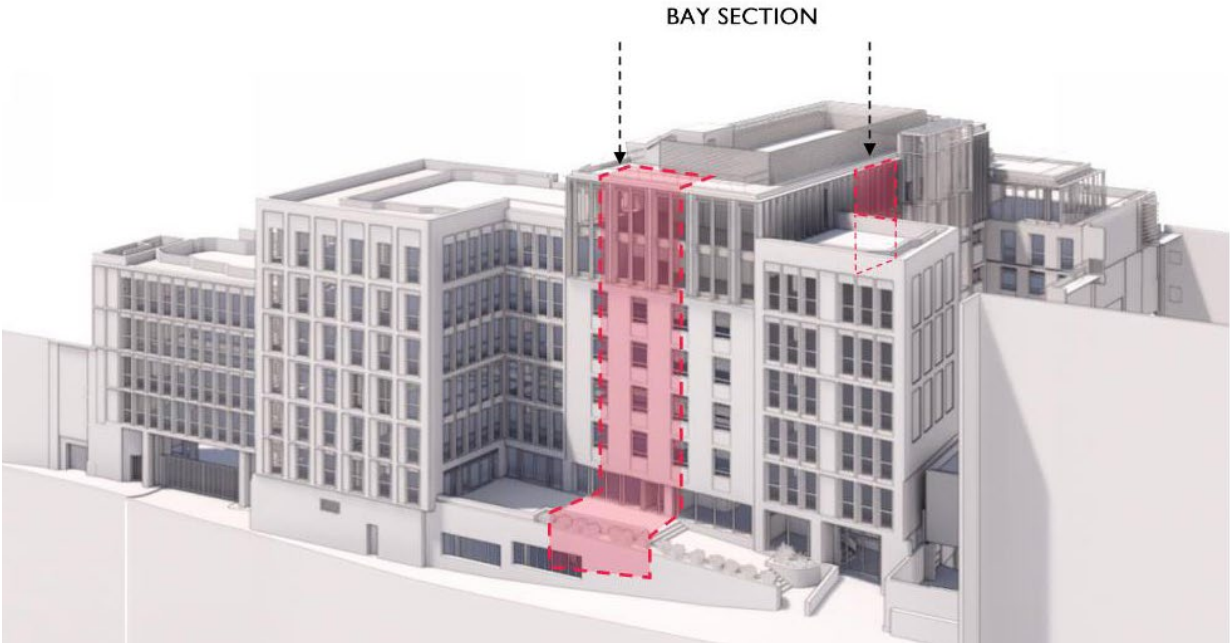


Type 5 - Existing



Facade Type 4

- Vertical mullions to accentuate structure
- Horizontal mullions to follow slab edge



Proposed East Facade



3D Sectional Study

3.7 Appearance - finishes & materials

The palette of materials proposed for the external additions and alterations to facades (see right) has been inspired by the many fine examples of local architecture in the conservation area.

Local historic precedents show a strong theme that comes out in renaissance inspired architecture, with the classical architectural elements expressed in stone and the main field of the wall is in a fill material, sometimes plaster, sometime brick.

Gothic inspired architecture uses the strong red brick to articulate the main structural elements and a grey brick to act as the background field of the wall. It is the play on the expression of these two types of brickwork that is emulated in a modern idiom within the proposed design aesthetic.

The design will employ polychromatic brickwork in a way that takes into account the rhythm of the existing structure and the requirement for a user controlled mixed ventilation system.

In order to retain the building as principally naturally ventilated or mixed mode to reduce the reliance on energy, the façade needs to continue to provide ventilation operable by the individual.



1. Georgian Red Brick



2. Grey Field Brick



3. Buff Brick to match existing



a.Bronze



b.Black

4. Frame Colour to match RAL

3.7 Key Views

As the building is situated in the conservation area, several key views of the building from street level were picked to assess the visual impact of the additional massing to the surrounding context.

In the views, the designated heritage assets we have identified are visible.

Overall, the views demonstrate how heritage assets in the vicinity of the Site would be conserved, and their significance either sustained or unaffected. They also show the potential to deliver “heritage benefits” that would enhance or better reveal the significance of heritage assets.

In terms of use and contribution to street character, the local distinctive town centre mix, vibrancy and vitality of the Market Place and conservation area is enhanced.

The new elevational design and use of high quality, locally referenced materials and detailing would improve the external appearance of what is considered to be the negative townscape impact that the existing building currently has.



Key View 1: Church view, looking south

This view is taken from the north next to St Laurence's church looking down towards Market Place.



Existing



Proposed

Key View 2: Butter Market, looking east

This view is taken from the furthest point to the west where the Site is still visible - the facade onto Market Place.



Existing



Proposed

Key View 3: Jackson's Corner, looking north

This view is taken from the junction of Market Place and King Street looking north towards the church.



Existing



Proposed

Key View 4: The Forbury looking south

This view is taken from the service route and shows the secondary entrance to the building that will be created.



Existing



Proposed

3.8 Landscaping

Landscaping is integral to the creation of a healthy and sustainable working environment that enriches lives and underpins wellbeing.

The proposals are designed to give those working in the building access to amenity and a connection with nature. It is part of the ethos of creating a business community.

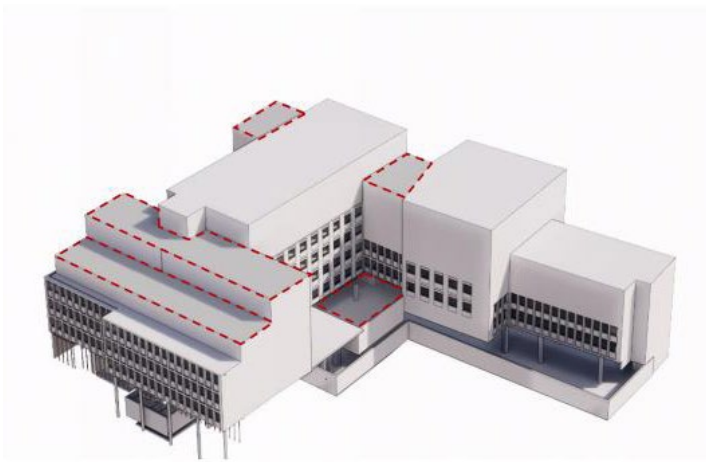
Space is utilised efficiently throughout the reformatted layout of the building and where opportunities exist, space has been allocated for amenity and landscaping.

Intimacy and visual connection

The centre of the site is currently dominated by highly visible tarmac, hard surfaced courts and exposed building services. It is a tightly enclosed space that is sheltered and intimate, but currently unattractive.

Part of the reclamation of car parking is aimed at the creation of communal space as the social hub of the building, and it is an important element of the landscaping strategy for the proposals to give that important heart of the business community a positive and restful outlook.

A landscaped amenity deck will be accessible to the south and the secondary entrance connecting to Abbey Square will incorporate planting on the street.



***This page:** The unique aspect of the location is the terraces at rooftop and their stunning outlook. They offer a rich setting for the proposed landscaping strategy of fostering wellbeing within a new business community through connection with nature*





Roof top amenity & contribution to biodiversity
Gardens are envisaged above each of the office blocks where stepped massing of the building at roof level allow their creation. Enclosed by glass balustrades, these spaces are designed to offer a variety of social spaces with minimal furniture nestled between raised metal planters with multi-stem shrubs. These are under-planted with a mix of hardy perennials and grasses and sustained with a central irrigation system. The terraces will be paved with a ground finish paver on pedestals.

A green roof system is employed above ground floor and overlooked by the connecting block north facing upper level windows. Such spaces provide important habitat for insects and birds within the town centre. It also helps to reduce urban heat gain and slow watershed from the development in conjunction with traditional storm water attenuation currently in the town's drainage network.

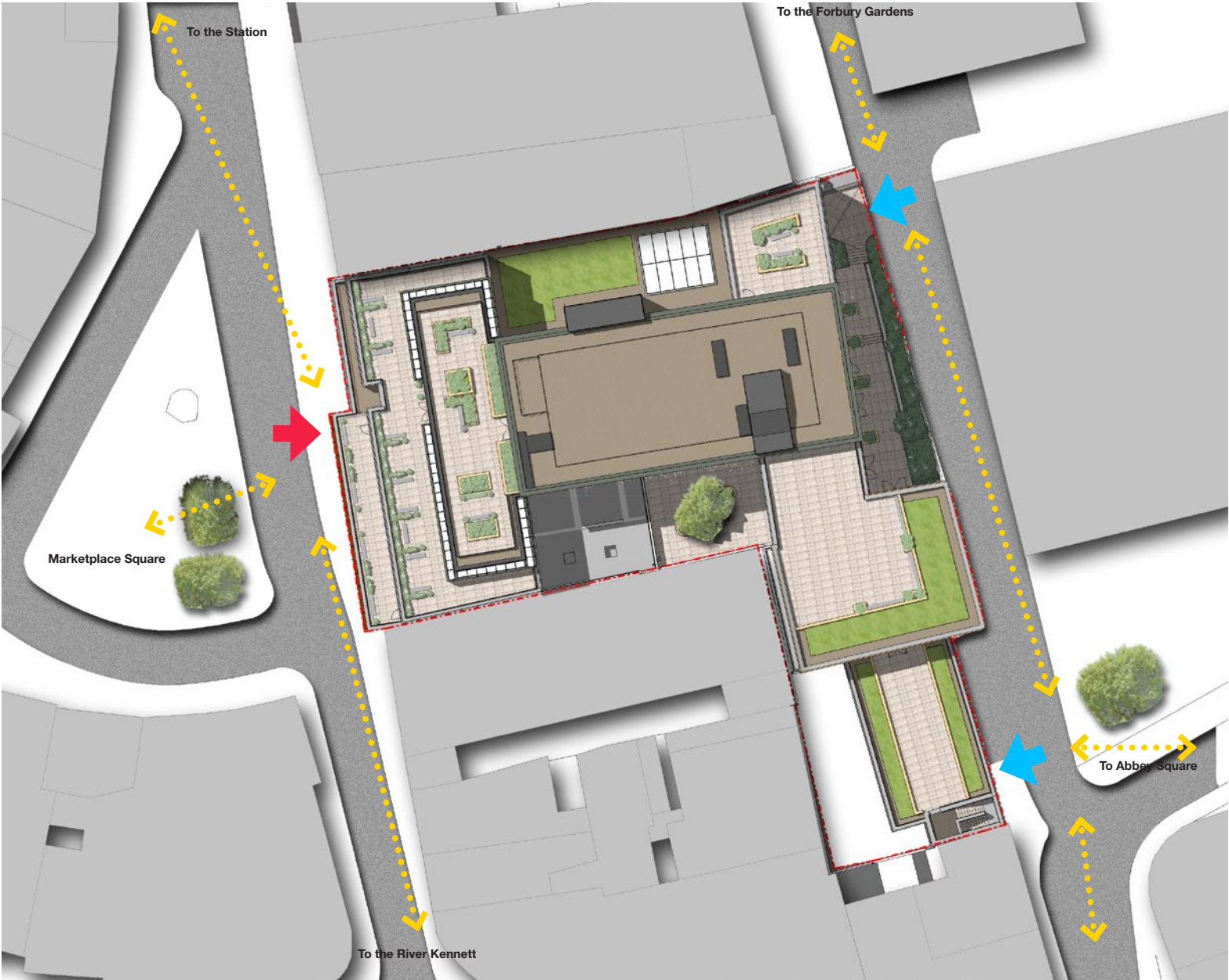


This page: Examples of terrace planting and biodiverse roof coverings found in urban commercial office schemes

Landscape enhancements at street level

A secondary entrance is created connecting to Abbey Square and Forbury Square and Gardens. The importance of this new link is given due prominence in the landscaping strategy.

Due to the significant level differences across the Site and the sloping ground at the rear, a substantial ramped area is required to achieve step free access. This will be landscaped to create the visual effect of a green corridor through what is currently a bleak and unwelcoming access route primarily designed for vehicles.



***This page:** The public realm around the Site and connections to them including (right) a new entrance to the building from Forbury Square and Gardens.*



3.9 Responses to Consultation

Design Review Panel

In response to both the pre-app feedback from RBC and the Conservation Officer and the Design Review Panel's comments, various changes have been made to improve the design of the building, particularly when viewed from Market Square.

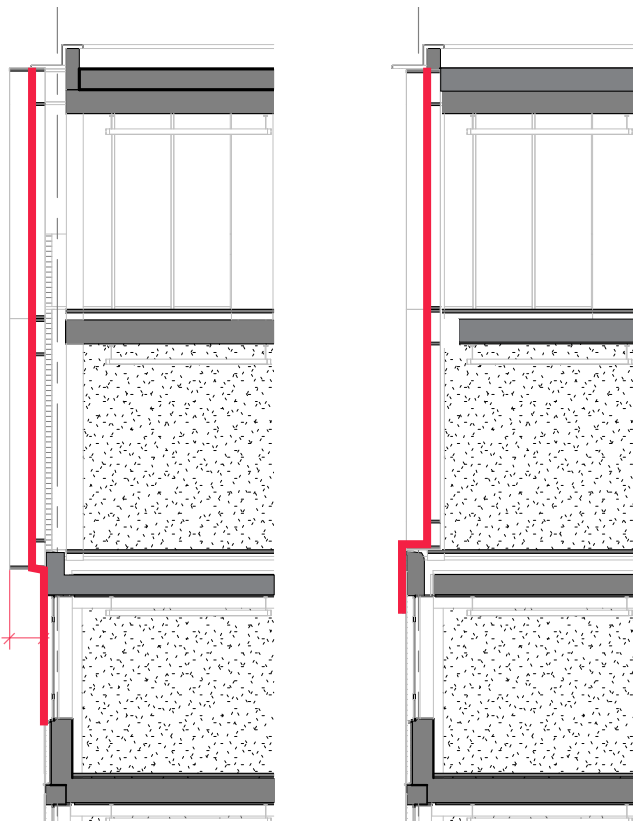
- 1) The 6th floor staircase has been stepped back away from the Market Place facade so it no longer presents itself as an additional tower element
- 2) The 5th floor office accommodation has been stepped in away from the Party Walls so that the gables are not visible in the oblique street views
- 3) The 4th floor parapet has been reduced in apparent mass so that its appearance is much less bulky and reflects the language and finesse of the more successful lower floors
- 4) The facade type 4 at the rear of the building has been stepped in plane so that it is set back from the existing rather than protruding. This makes the additional floors sit more comfortably on the existing elevations



Before



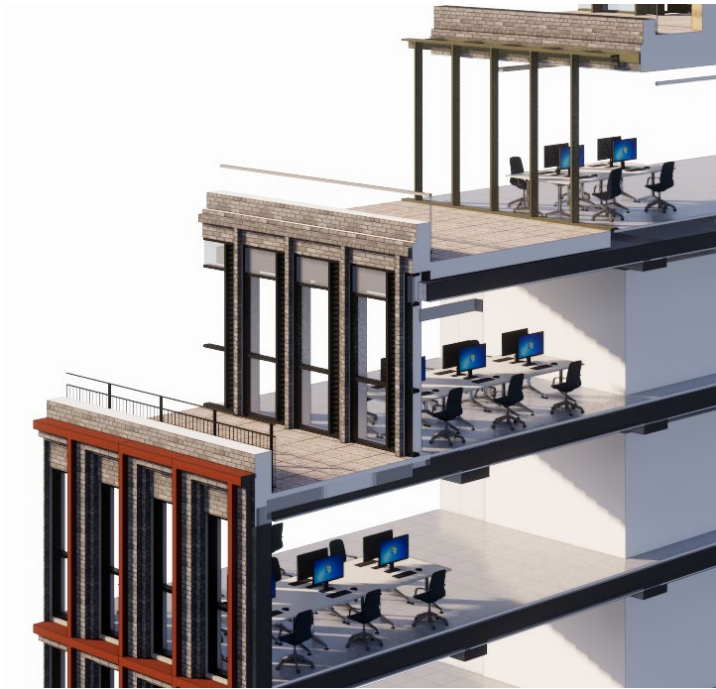
Original DRP



Before

After

Alterations to Type 4 Facade



After

Alterations to 4th Floor Parapet



Proposed

Buttermarket View: Original DRP Image & New Proposed Image

3.10 Sustainability

Utilities

The existing building is currently connected to the network of existing utilities in the town and will remain connected.

Sustainability targets

It is a requirement for the proposals to be assessed under the BREEAM 2018 Assessment. The target score is 'Excellent'. The assessment will be completed in two sections.

- Existing Refurbished Building
- New Build Building

The target EPC score is 'B' or better.

The client brief also requires a WIRED SCORE minimum target of 'Gold'

Employing green energies / low carbon equipment

The following elements have been reviewed and proposed as applicable:

- Rain water harvesting - not practical
- Solar energy - PV rooftop array is proposed
- VRF AC - Low carbon technology / energy efficiency
- Lighting - all LED lighting solution
- Ventilation - Heat recovery AHUS with Zero heating/cooling energy input

This list is not exhaustive and further technologies will be considered at later design stages.

Ventilation Strategy

The building's ventilation strategy is comprised of a mixture of HVAC units alongside natural ventilation.

The facades from the 1st to 4th floors on the West and East all feature a strip of louvred panels in addition to openable, purge ventilation via top hung windows. The upper curtain walling and glazed elements feature a mixture of horizontal and vertical louvred sections to continue the theme of natural ventilation.

The existing windows that are to be refurbished will also feature openable portions of window.

The risers have been located at the cores to allow even distribution of the HVAC units which will aid in the supply fresh air to the deeper areas of floor plate that cannot be relied upon with natural ventilation.

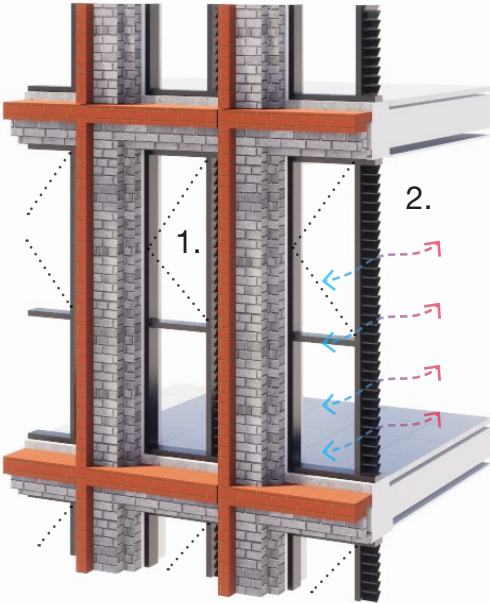
Other sustainability benefits

The proposals have been conceived of as supporting a socially and economically sustainable new business community in a highly accessible location.

The landscaping strategy contains within it the potential for net gain in biodiversity value compared with the existing situation.

With biodiverse roofs comes potential energy savings (in terms of heating) and also attenuation for surface water run-off. The Site currently discharges all run-off to the local drainage network.

- 1. Purge Window Ventilation
- 2. Passive Louvred Ventilation



Deep plan air conditioning
Naturally Ventilated

Re Use Strategy

The main fabric of the building has been carefully retained in order for the re sue and improvement of the existing structure. Selected, non structural areas of the building are proposed to be demolished in order to mitigate the impact of development to the environment.

Elements to be demolished:

- Existing windows and concrete fins to Western facade between levels 1 and 4
- Existing windows and concrete fins to Eastern facade above car park entrance
- Existing roofs to make way for additional massing
- Existing interior partitions and raised floors

Elements to be retained and refurbished:

- All structural or load bearing columns and walls
- Ground floor shopfront entrances
- Main entrance to office building
- Existing windows to retained facades

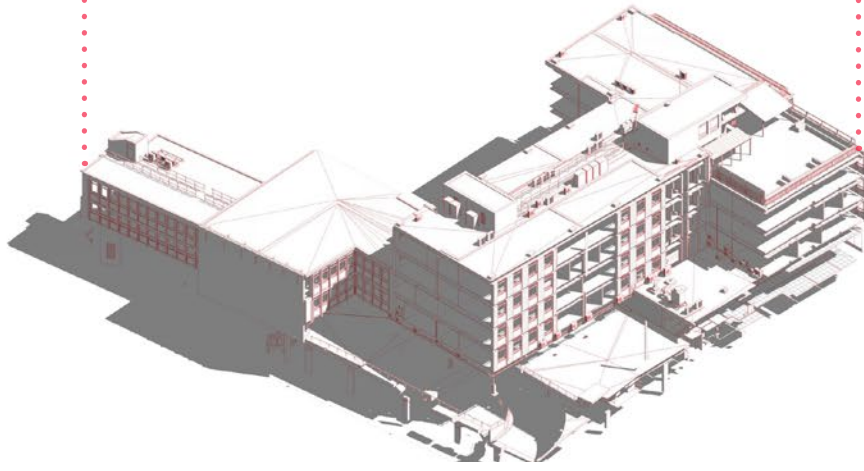
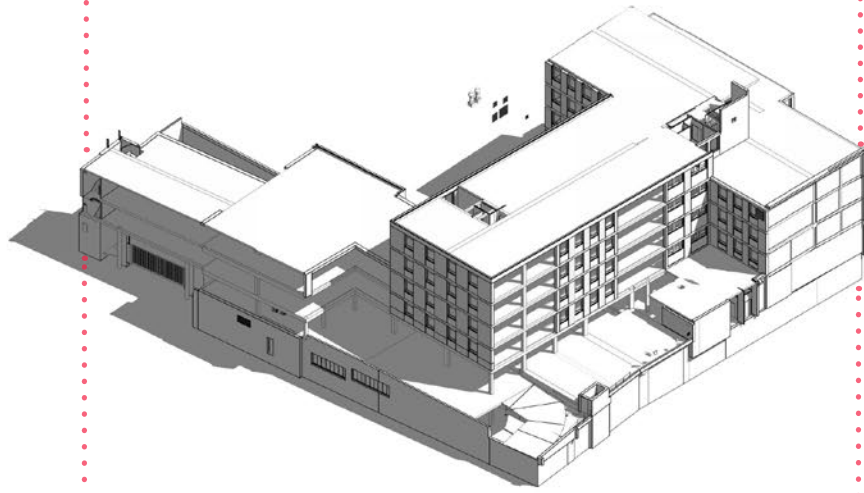
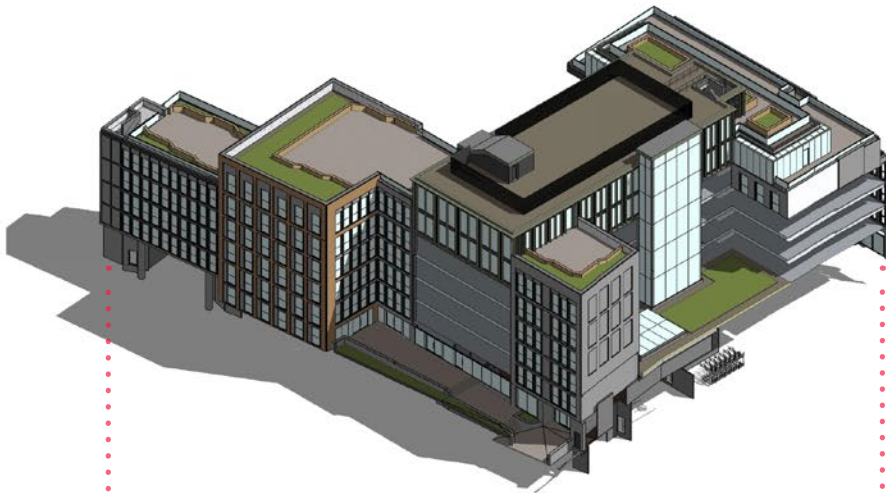
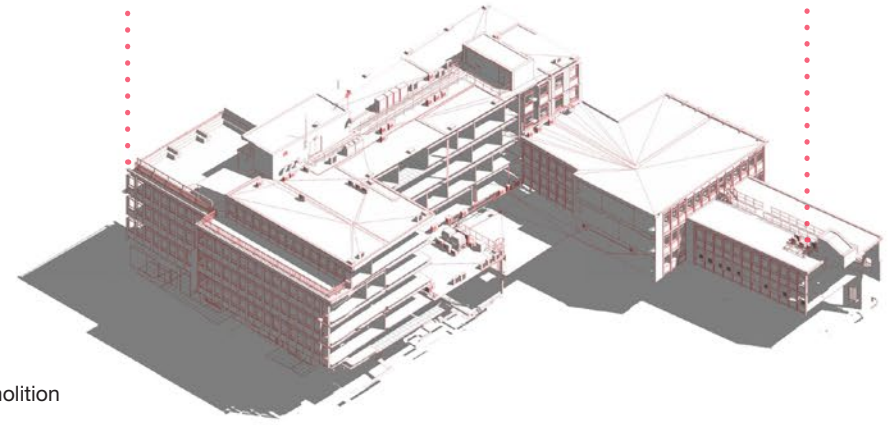
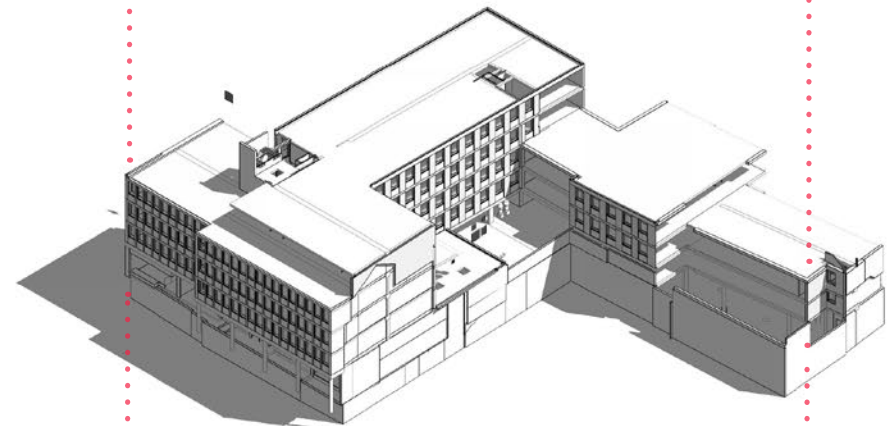
Elements of new build:

- New facades to west and east of building, utilising existing structure
- New massing and facade treatment above existing

Proposed

Retained

Demolition



Renewable Energy Strategy

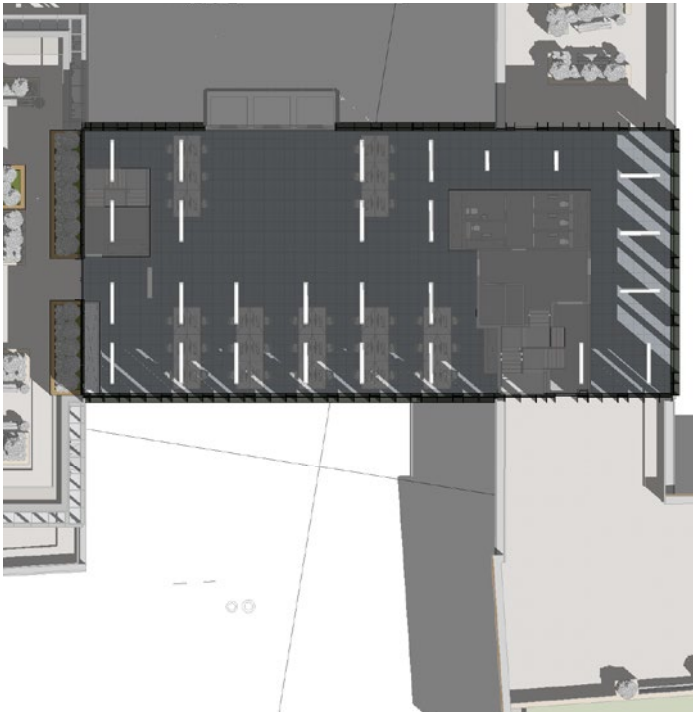
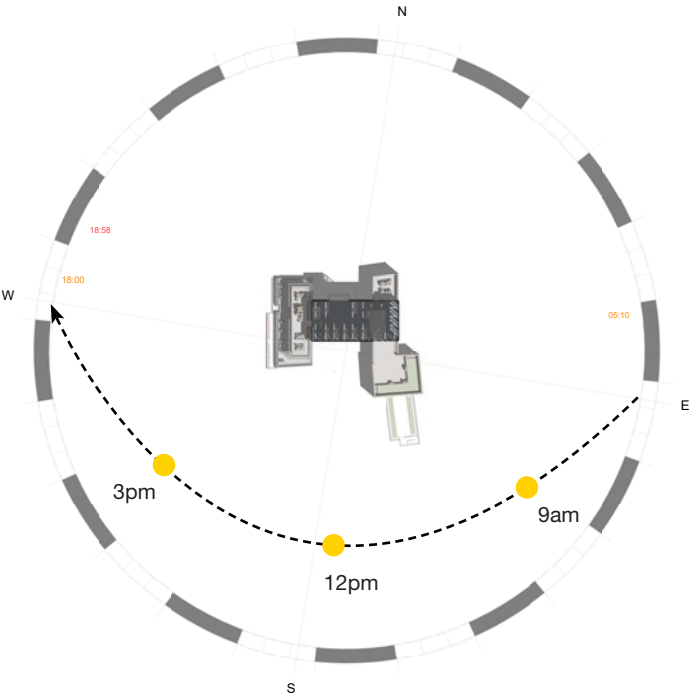
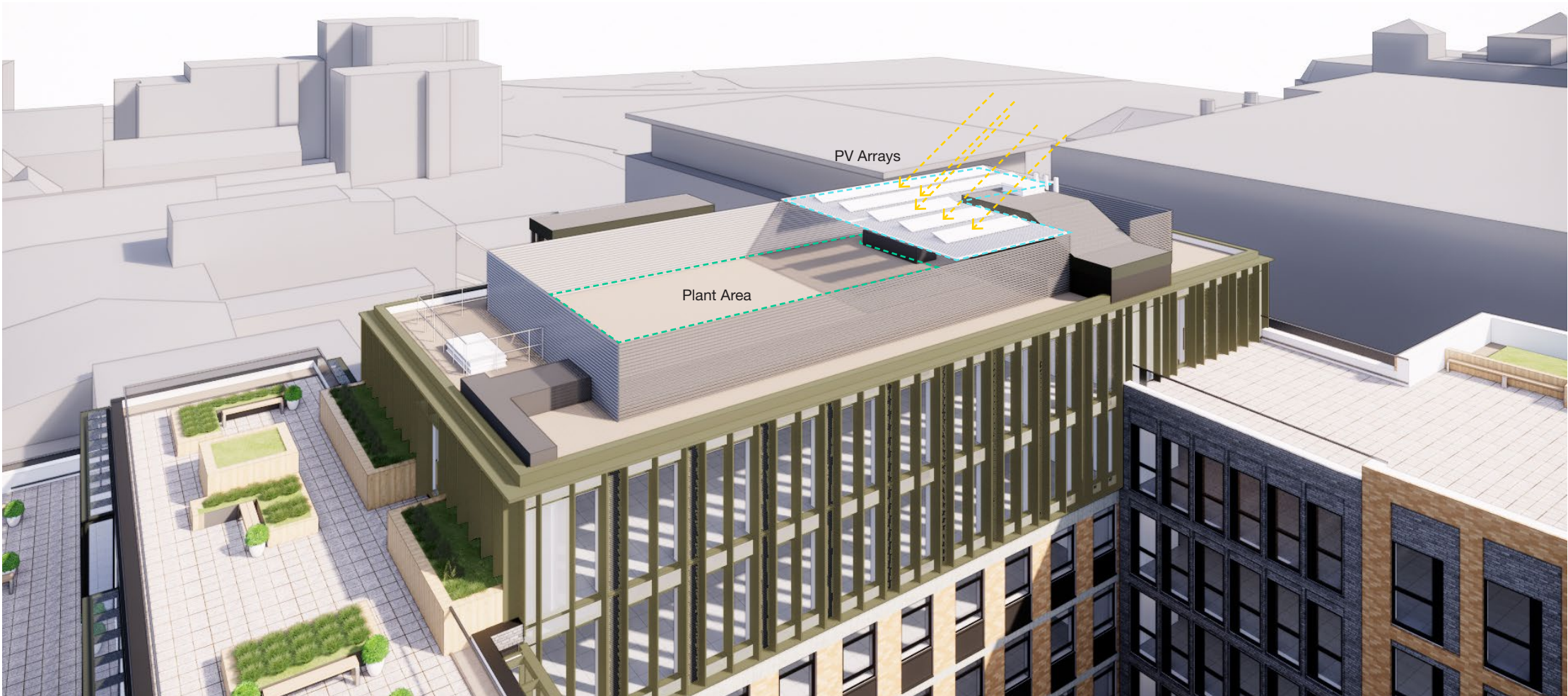
As part of the overall sustainable approach to design, the proposed project will be incorporating a series of Photo-Voltaic arrays on the roof.

These will be situated within the enclosed plant space on top of the 6th floor roof, along with the necessary mechanical equipment for handling the servicing.

Type 4 Facade: 5th & 6th floor solar gains

As the majority of the building fabric is to be re used the current orientation could not be altered. Instead, an approach to solar shading has been employed through the design of the new elements proposed, particularly the curtain wall facade treatment to floors 5 & 6.

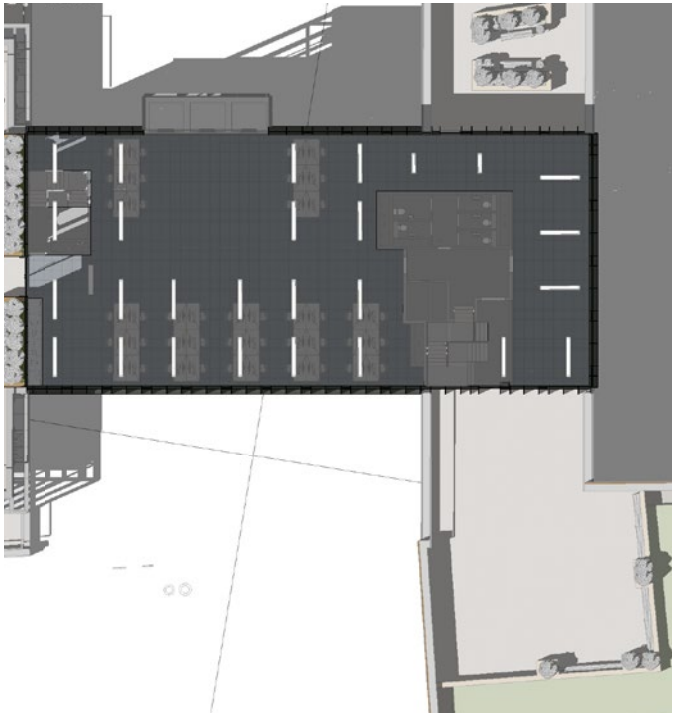
This curtain walling features a deep mullion section to minimise the impact of solar gain to the upper floors. As the majority of this facade is comprised of glazing, a deeper mullion allows for the glass to be inset from the existing face of the building, providing extra shading throughout the day. This in turn will mitigate the usage and reliance of the powered air cooling units.



Solar Study 9am



Solar Study 12pm



Solar Study 3pm



04 Access proposals

4.1 Access strategy

This statement is intended to meet the requirements of the Government’s Planning Practice Guidance (2014). It is necessarily confined to the strategic design principles, working within the limitations of the Site topography and existing building’s layout pertinent at the planning application stage.

This statement identifies ways in which the process of optimising accessibility and inclusion can be achieved within the scope of the project. It will be the intention to develop the statement as the detailed design undergoes specification leading toward submission of any necessary Building Regulations applications.

The site is within an area of excellent public transport accessibility.

Within five minutes walk from the site is Reading railway station, a busy interchange with fast connections to London, the south west, the Midlands and the North and local services to outlying towns and villages across Berkshire, Hampshire and Surrey.

Over 30 bus routes pass immediately outside the Site, connecting it to the town’s outlying suburbs and local towns and villages. Depending on direction of travel, further stops are located a few minutes walk from the site giving visitors and commuters to the site an extensive choice of sustainable modes of travel.

Streets surrounding the Site are cycling friendly and there are a number of Readybike cycle hire stations within a few minutes walk as well as on-street cycle stands available to the public.

The proposals involve providing secure, weather-proof cycle storage, lockers and showers.

Parking is available on Site. Streets surrounding the site have limited car parking available and this is time limited and charged for. The town centre has extensive public car parking available within a few minutes walk.



This page: Site location showing the transport connections available

4.2 Inclusive access

Connection with surrounding streets has been a key design aim for the proposals. In summary:

- The entry points to the building will be accessible from surrounding public space and is level or gently sloping to allow a flush and step free threshold;
- Materials will be used to differentiate between footway, dwell space, amenity areas and entrances within the buildings' perimeter to aid legibility;
- The main public entrances will be bright, spacious and clearly legible from within surrounding public space;
- Access to cycle storage and refuse/recycling storage, will be safe and secure, directly connected to the pedestrian network around the site and overlooked by adjacent buildings;
- Lifts serving buildings are Part M compliant with both audio and visual destination display, complete with stand-by generation power;
- Disabled parking bays are available within the retained car park area.

These and other features of national standards will ensure thoroughly contemporary and fully accessible buildings.

Step free access throughout is achieved as a result of the proposals.

Although this will be a commercial office, the most public facing function of the reception and communal hub space will remain located at ground floor where access is most straightforward and assistance can be provided if required.

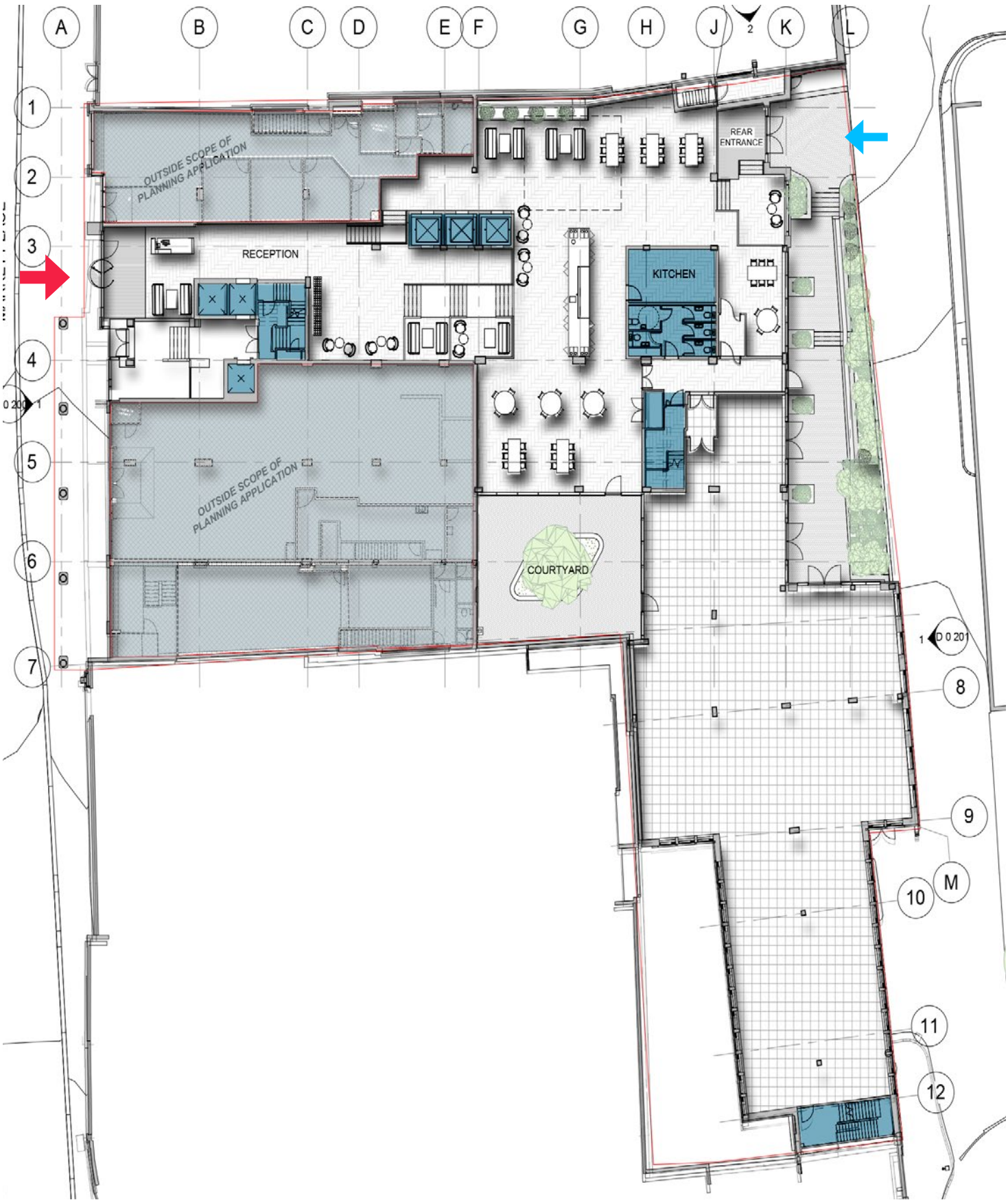
Office floors are designed to be open plan or cellular, so desk layouts can accommodate the generous dimensions for inclusive access required between bays.

An accessible WC is provided at each floor level for the use of occupiers and visitors. There is no provision currently within the building for people with disabilities.

The means of escape from the building in the event of an emergency is unaltered. The two staircases provide direct access to the proposed hub space and thereby the street. Appropriate refuge areas have been identified for wheelchair uses in the event of fire

A third egress from the ground floor through the doorway to no. 26 is available for occupiers of that office space.

The layout and dimensions of each comply with relevant guidance and regulation for safe egress from the building in the event of fire.



4.3 Cycle access

The proposals will result in changes to the layout of the basement in order to create a cycle store for the building. The building does not currently have any dedicated provisions.

The new store will be secure and fully equipped with 48 lockable racks accessible from the car park and served by the new lift core. Three male and three female showers are provided along with and locker facilities.



4.4 Emergency access

Three stair cores currently serve the building and these will be retained. Combined they provide means of escape in an emergency.

They will be refurbished and the services within the building will be clustered around them.

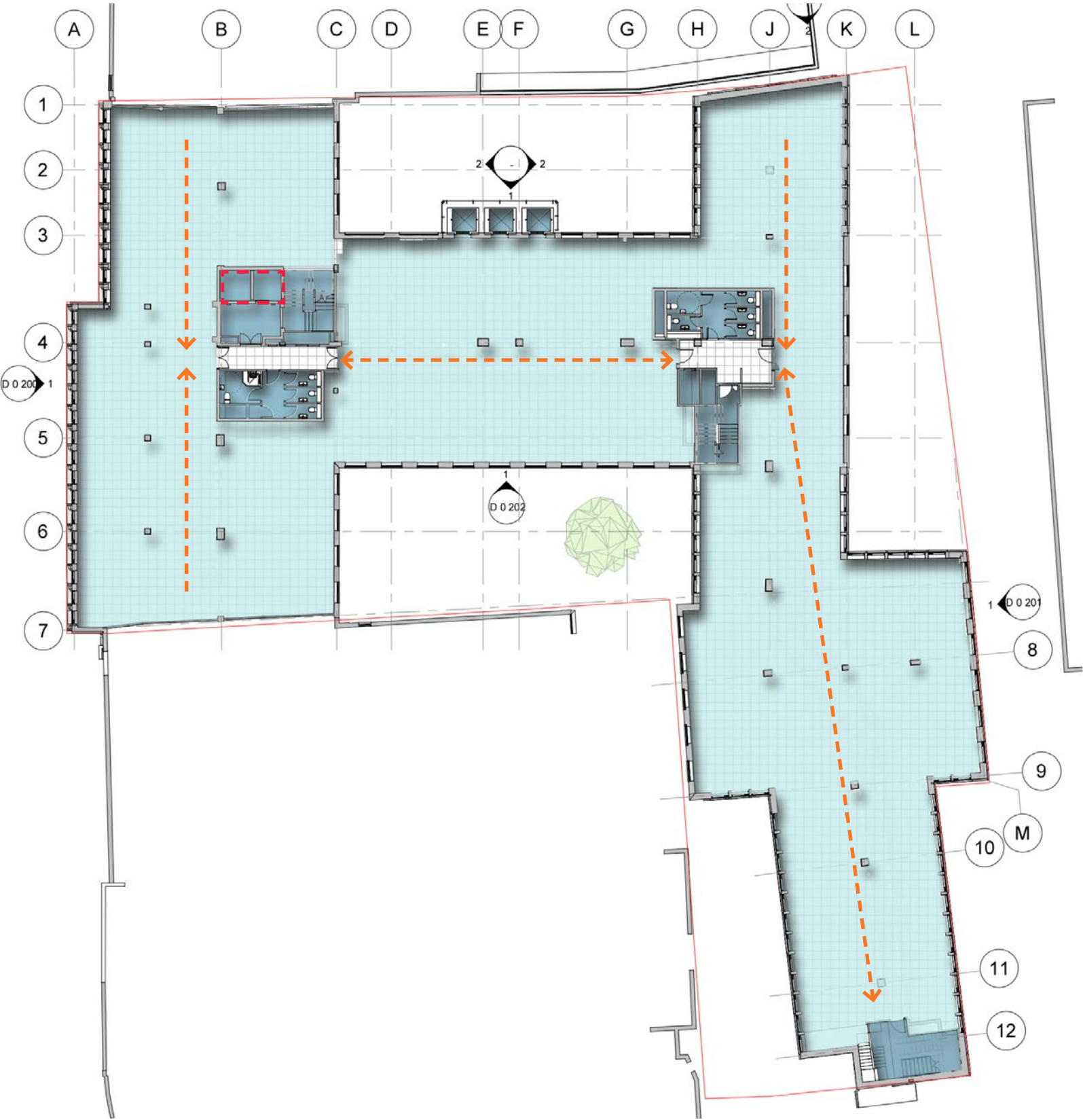
The two in the northern part of the building are positioned to serve the western block (Market Place) and the eastern block (Abbey Square and the connecting block between. The existing south wing connects at the north end and has a third stair core located at the southern end.

The spacing allows safe egress from the building, connecting at ground with a fire lobby in the case of the two northern cores and the southern core connects directly to the street (Abbey Square).

The existing core at the front of the building is upgraded to a new fire fighting core for access for the fire fighting brigade and emergency services. These will be provided with refuges for wheelchair users.

Office Space

Core



4.5 Vehicle access

Car parking is removed as part of these proposals at ground level on the Abbey Square frontage to create further office accommodation and facilitate a new pedestrian entrance to the building.

An existing vehicle access, also for servicing and deliveries, is retained at the southern end of the same frontage. This also accesses a small area of existing car parking proposed to be retained for operational purposes only.

Car parking associated with the building will be reduced from 98 spaces currently to 41 spaces. 2 spaces will be suitable for use by people with mobility impairment. The building currently does not have any disabled parking.

10% of the spaces in the reformatted car park will be fitted with electric vehicle charging points, with the scope for future adaptations should this be required.

Proposed Development

Retained Existing

Refuse Store



4.6 Servicing & deliveries

The arrangements for servicing and deliveries for the building remain largely unaltered.

At present, delivery vehicles are able to access the site from Abbey square, using an entrance underneath the building to a car parking undercroft. This will remain in use for deliveries to the retail unit fronting Market Place.

Refuse collection

The various refuse storage locations and collections routes are illustrated on the diagram adjacent.

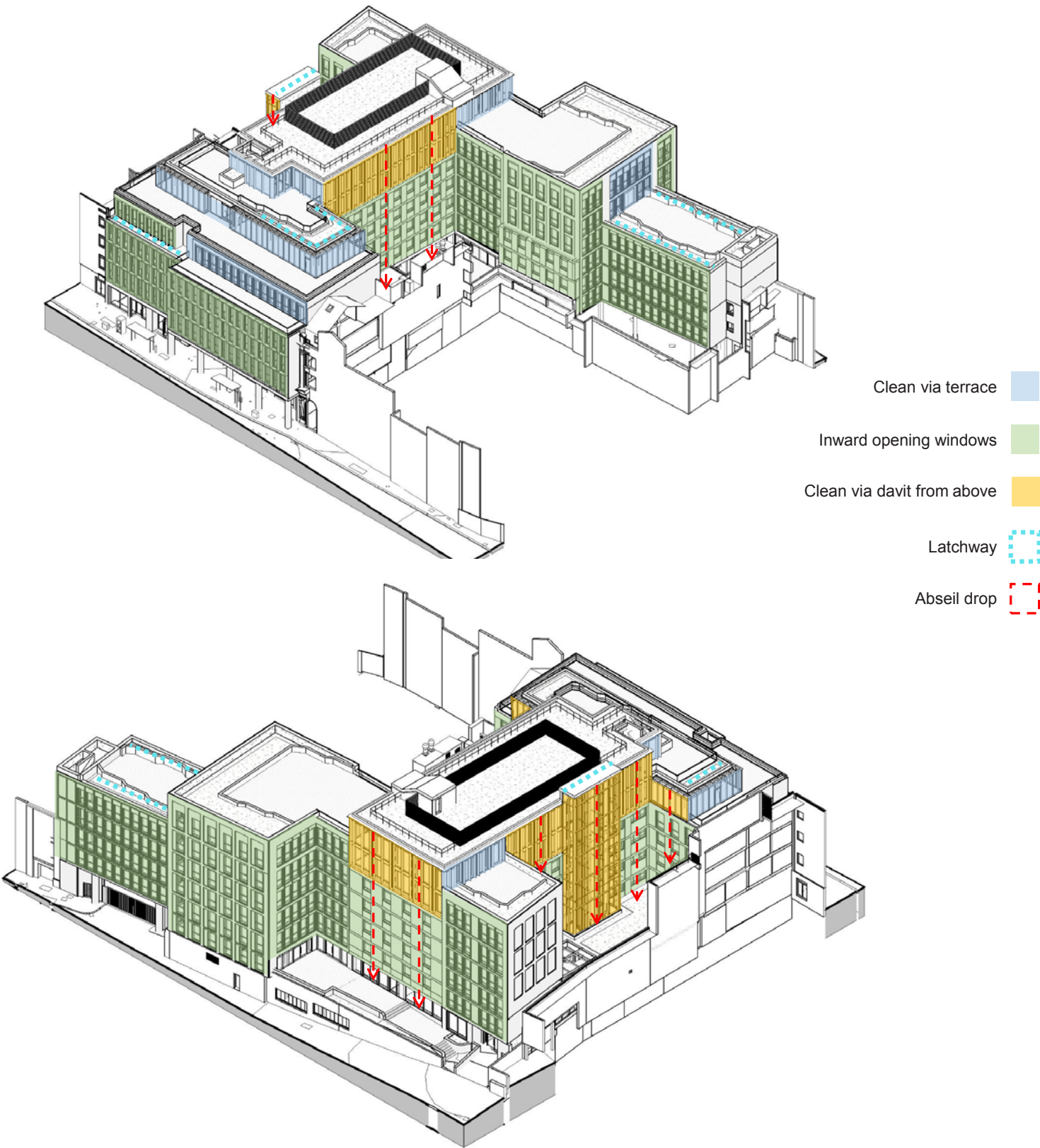
The final strategy for commercial refuse collection in terms of frequency etc will be subject to confirmation of the final use of the workspace. Routes have been located to avoid impact on the public realm. Final office refuse storage locations will form part of the tenant fit-out.

It is anticipated that refuse vehicles will not need to access the Site. As currently, the bins will be brought to there pre-designated location on collection day.

4.7 Cleaning and Maintenance

The building will be cleaned and maintained by a combination of openable windows and a hoist system via davit arms for some of the upper areas.

The diagrams opposite highlight he maintenance strategy.



6-8 Market Place Reading

Design & Access Statement

on behalf of Castleforge Partners

June 2020

