

CAVERSHAM BLOCK A DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

NON-MATERIAL AMENDMENT APPLICATION

MAY 2025

Contents

1.0 Introduction and Context

- 1.1 Purpose of Document
- 1.2 Client: Sorbon Estates
- 1.3 Scheme within Wider Context
- 1.4 History of the Scheme

2.0 Non-Material Amendment Design Approach

- 2.1 Elevation Study
- 2.2 Elevational Treatment
- 2.3 Entrance Link
- 2.4 Ground Floor
- 2.5 Upper Floor Flats
- 2.6 Top Floor Design

3.0 Comparison to Previously Consented Scheme

- 3.1 Site Plan
- 3.2 Ground Floor Plan
- 3.3 First Floor Plan
- 3.4 Second Floor Plan
- 3.5 Third Floor Plan
- 3.6 Fourth Floor Plan
- 3.7 Roof Plan
- 3.8 Elevations
- 3.9 Sections
- 3.10 Street Elevations
- 3.11 3D Views

1.0 Introduction and context

1.1 Purpose of Document

Purpose of Document

This document has been produced in support of the Non-Material Amendment (NMA) application on the approved planning application (140997) which was granted permission in March 2015. Changes to Block A were also approved in August 2018 under a NMA submitted under application 180673. The changes that are being sought in this application relates to Block A of St Martin's Centre in Caversham to Reading Borough Council. This document sets out to describe the changes that are proposed from the original application.

Block A retains the uses that were approved in the original application, and is a mixed use block with Restaurant use at ground floor, and a mix of 6 no. 1 bed and 11 no. 2 bed flats (Class C3 use) across four stories. In total, Block A is five stories tall with a total of 17 no. residential units, restaurant and residential amenity accommodation at ground floor, and roof top plant.

The changes to the scheme as described in this document have been proposed following a review by the applicant to tie into the local character of Caversham, provide better residential amenity, and comply with the latest requirements of the Building Regulations. The key changes are summarised as follows:

- Inclusion of balconies, juliette balconies or terraces to all flats for residential amenity. An update to the palette of materials to compliment the traditional aspects of the surrounding local character in Caversham village centre.
- Development of the layout to comply with the latest version of Approved Document B Volume 1 and to simplify construction.
- Larger entrance area and lobby at ground floor for access into residential flats.

Project Team

Client: Sorbon Estates

Architect: Stantec

Planning Consultant: Stantec

1.2 Client: Sorbon Estates



Trinity, Windsor Road, Slough



Waterside Quarter, Maidenhead



Windsor House, Spittal Street, Marlow



The Colonnade, High Street, Maidenhead



Copthall House, St Ives Road, Maidenhead



Elmwood Gate, Oldfield Road, Maidenhead



31-33 High Street, Maidenhead



Regal House, Station Road, Marlow



Thameside, Windsor

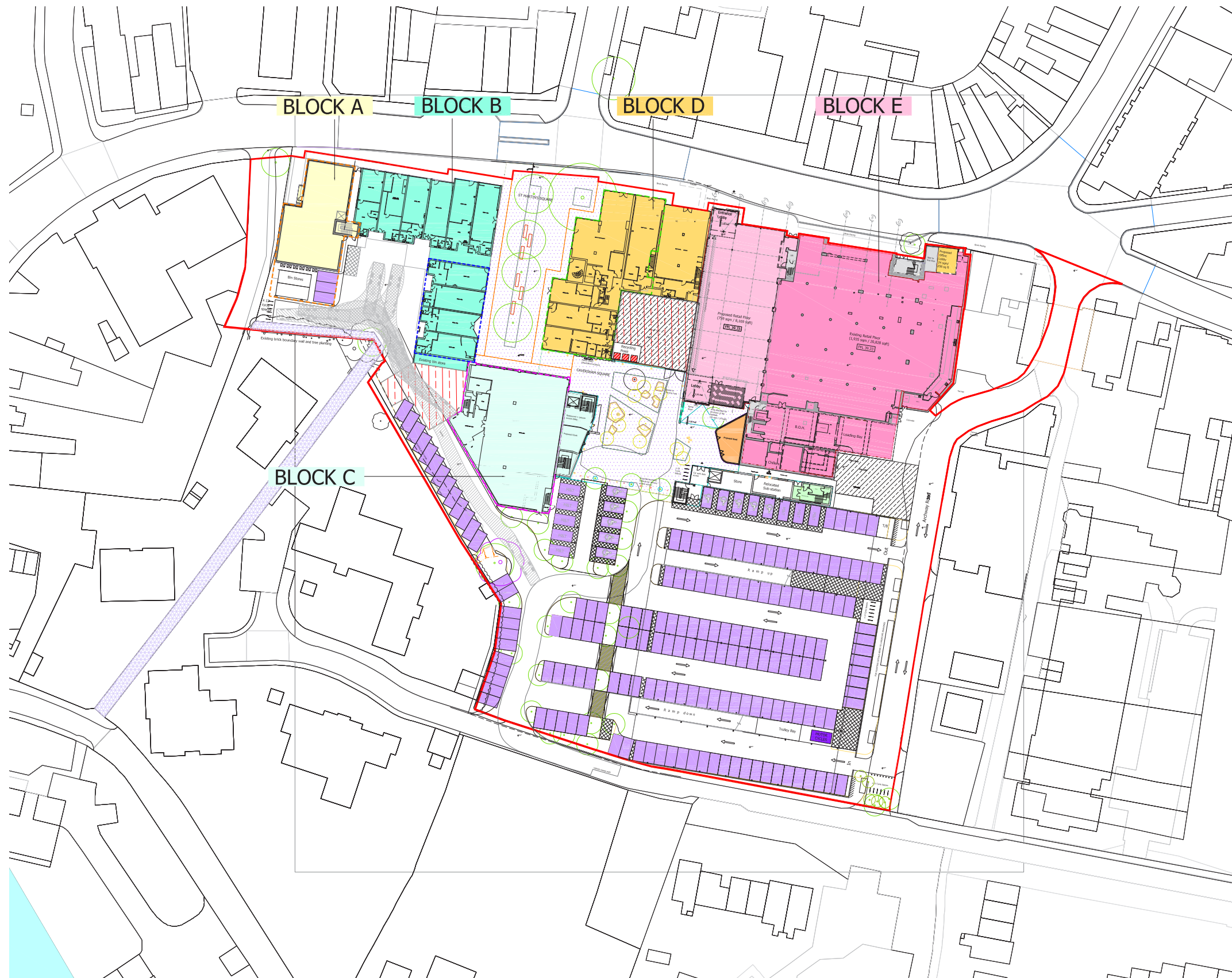
Sorbon Estates

The applicant, Sorbon Estates, are property investors, developers and asset managers working on developments in the South East, Thames Valley and Greater London regions with a base in Beaconsfield.

Established for over 50 years, they have delivered transformations of urban centre sites in the region, with examples of these shown. These projects are primarily mixed use with a number of the schemes located in conservation areas, which creates an emphasis on traditional materials and form.

Sorbon Estates have acquired the site in Caversham from the previous applicant, therefore the changes sought through this application look to update the scheme to be in keeping with their portfolio and their other town centre developments.

1.3 Scheme within Wider Context



Site Wide Master Plan (PP-MP-02 Rev P6) approved as part of application 140997

Scheme within the wider masterplan

Block A forms part of Phase 1A of the wider redevelopment of St Martin's Centre in Caversham. The proposal for the whole redevelopment was submitted as a Full Application to Reading Borough Council in June 2014 with approval granted in March 2015. Parts of the wider redevelopment covered under the planning approval have been implemented.

Block A occupies a corner plot within Caversham village centre, with the site presenting a key elevation as Church Street turns into a shopping street with multiple local amenities. The site in its current use is a surface level car park, therefore the addition of Block A in this location offers a proposed restaurant use and 17 no. flats within the locality.

1.4 History of the Scheme

Evolution of the scheme following approved NMA

As previously described, Block A had gained initial planning approval in March 2015 and there was subsequently a previous non-material amendment (NMA) application submitted and approved in August 2018. The changes sought in this NMA application has incorporated the principles already established and approved under the previous NMA scheme, with these principles described below. It is necessary to offer a comparison to both approvals to show the development of the scheme.

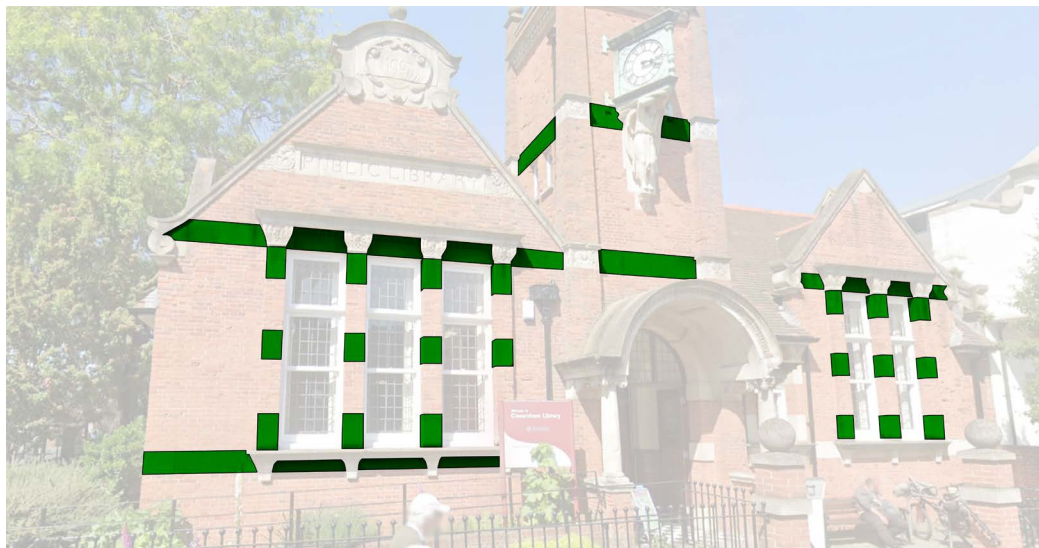
Principles already approved under NMA reference 180673 in August 2018.

- Extent of building at ground floor extended.
- Additional lobby added at ground floor for residential entrance.
- Inclusion of ancillary accommodation including plant rooms and cycle store at ground floor.
- Arrangement of upper floor plans for residential accommodation to comply with Approved Document Part B Volume 1.
- Inclusion of plant space at roof level.
- Additional window to south elevation at first, second and third floor.

The next section of this document provides the rationale behind the changes sought through this NMA application, and shows the evolution between each application.

2.0 Non-Material Amendment Design Approach

2.1 Elevation Study



Caversham Library

Stone Banding:
Adds definition to horizontal sections of the brick elevation, using contrasting stone to highlight key divisions. The juxtaposition enriches the character and overall detail of the building.

Local Character Study

The following pages show a character study of the buildings within Caversham village centre, which highlights key elevational details that have informed elevational changes proposed in this Non-Material Amendment application.



Caversham Baptist Church

Decorative Brickwork:
Incorporates unique patterns and textures to break up the brick elevation, adding charm and individuality to the design. The detailed craftsmanship nods to traditional practices.



14-16 Church Street

Dormers:
Bring light and space to upper levels while breaking up the roofline. They add variation and proportion to the design, making the structure more visually balanced and interesting.

Quoining:
Adds definition to the edges of window openings, emphasizing their importance within the design. The material contrast creates subtle decoration, enhancing the character and detail of the elevation.

Banding:
Adds definition to horizontal sections of the elevation, emphasizing their structure within the design. The material contrast creates subtle accents, enhancing the character and overall detail of the building.

2.1 Elevation Study



2-4 Church Road

Door Surround:

Frames the entrance with a crafted stone detail, emphasizing the doorway as a focal point. The material and design reflect traditional Caversham architecture styles.

Brick Header:

Defines openings within the design, adding depth and visual interest to the brick elevation. Its integration connects to surrounding architectural styles.

Stone Base:

Blends with the local surroundings while offering subtle contrast. Stone provides a sturdy, timeless feel, and brick adds a touch of warmth and character to make the building stand out gently.



18-40 Abbotsmead Place

Stone Base:

Blends with the local surroundings while offering subtle contrast. Stone provides a sturdy, timeless feel, and brick adds a touch of warmth and character to make the building stand out gently.

Projected Walls:

Common in Caversham and surrounding Reading. Adds depth and dimension to the elevation, creating a balanced yet distinctive feature that complements the surrounding elements.

Stone Header and Cill:

Defines openings within the design. The stone complements the base material and reflects traditional architecture in Caversham, tying the design to local building practices.



2 Gosbrook Road

Stone Banding:

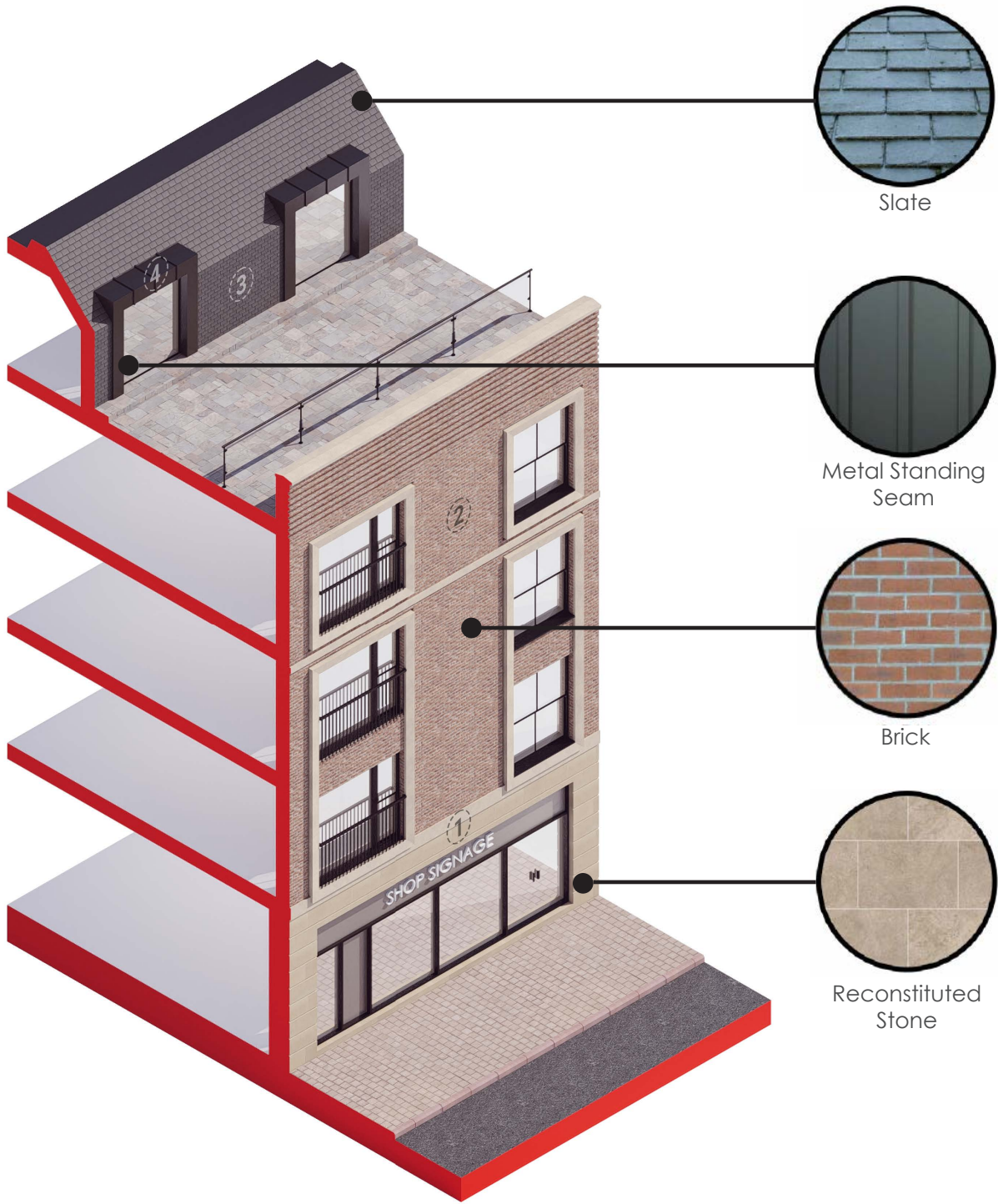
Adds definition to horizontal sections of the brick elevation, using contrasting stone to highlight key divisions. The juxtaposition enriches the character and overall detail of the building.

Soldier Course Banding:

Adds definition to horizontal sections of the brick elevation, with vertically aligned bricks creating subtle accents. The material continuity enhances rhythm and detail within the design.

2.2 Elevational Treatment

Proposed Materials



Development of West Elevation



Original Approved West Elevation (140997)



NMA Approved West Elevation (180673)



Proposed West Elevation for NMA Application

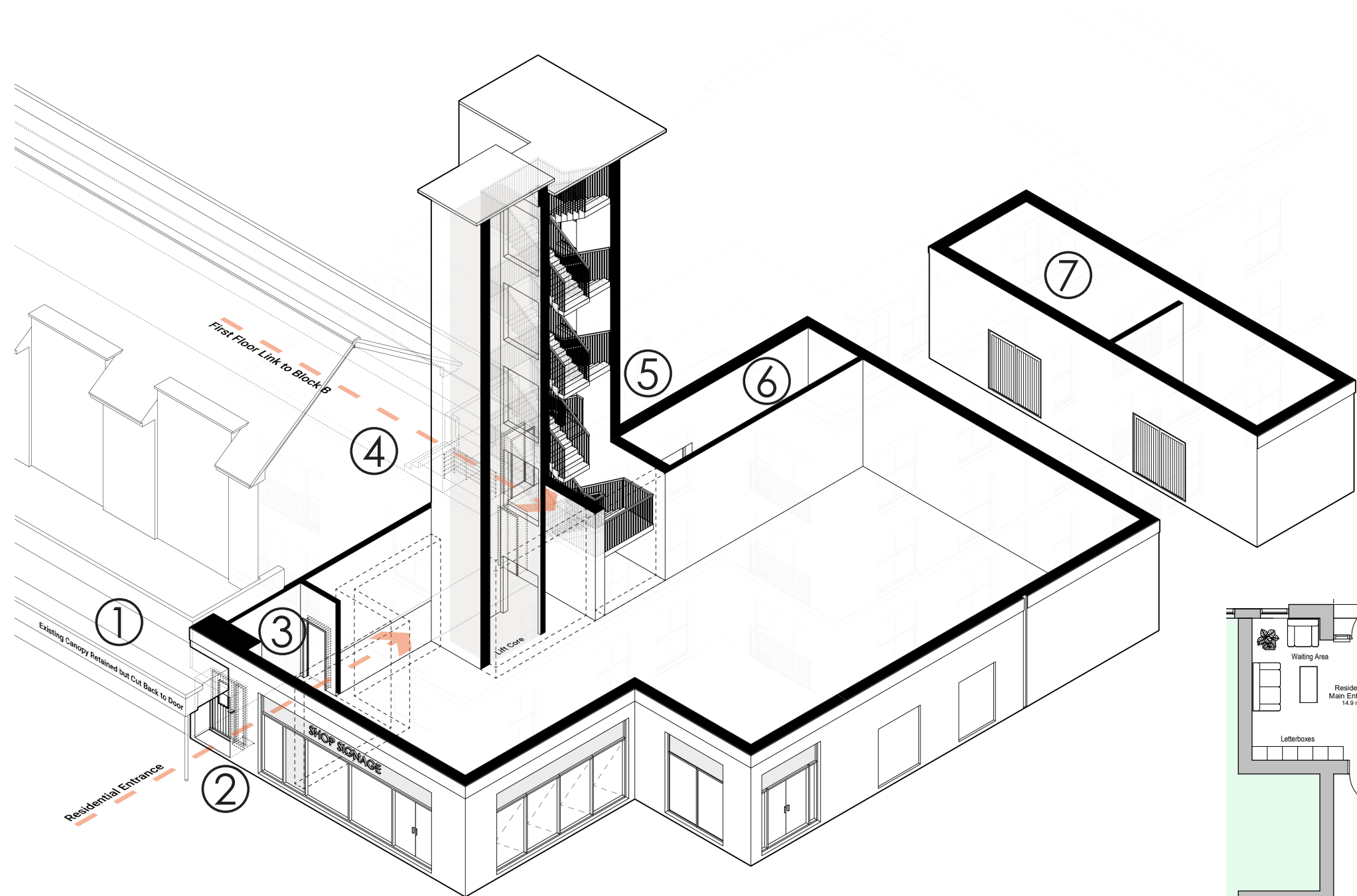
Proposed Amendments to Elevations

- The elevation study of Caversham has informed the proposed amendments to the elevations for Block A. This includes the following changes:
- Stone surrounds around windows to North and West elevations.
 - Stone finish to ground floor.
 - Stone banding to break up mass between second and third floor.
 - Feature brick banding at parapet level.
 - Replacement of standing seam with brickwork for more traditional appearance.
 - Slate tiled fourth floor with mansard roof.
 - Standing seam surrounds to fourth floor windows, with standing seam finish retained around circulation core to rear of the building.
 - Balconies and juliette balconies generally added for residential amenity with painted railings.

The rationale behind the elevational treatment proposed in this NMA application is to present a more traditional appearance, in keeping with character elements identified in the study of Caversham village centre. This has meant the removal of corner windows, traditional style finish to windows and using a traditional palette of materials with modern detailing.

Generally, there are no additional windows shown when compared with both the original application and the previously approved applications. Window positions have been altered to correspond with the internal layout, and to present a more traditional rhythm to the elevations.

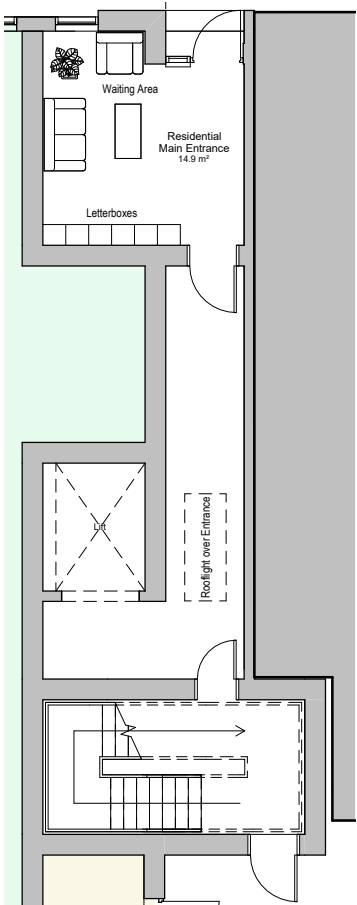
2.3 Entrance Link



Proposed Changes to Entrance into Flats

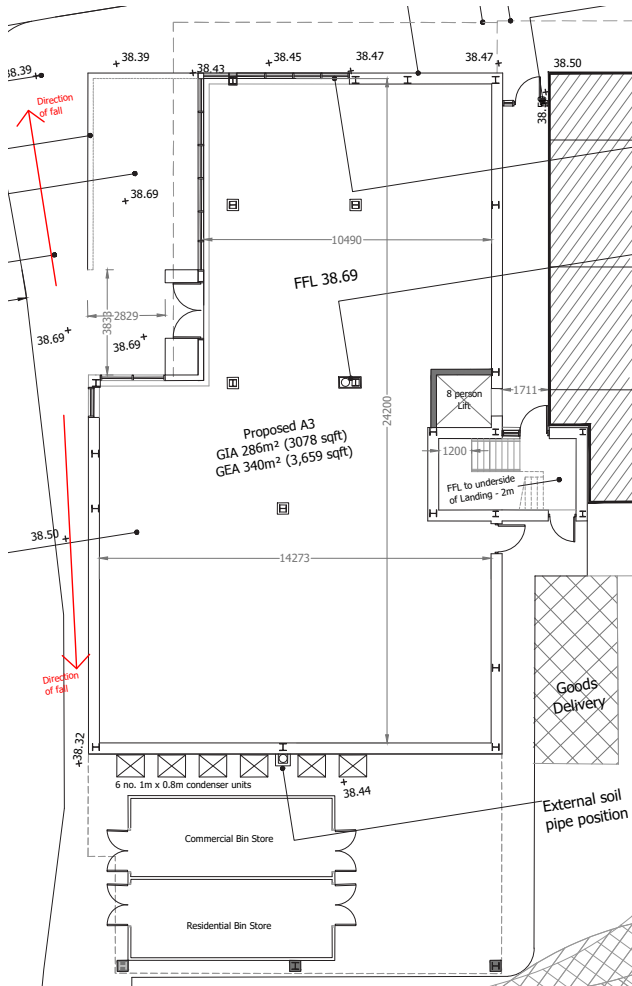
To improve upon the entrance into the flats from Church Street, an enlarged lobby has been proposed, along with an additional lobby where the lift can be accessed separate from the staircore. Within the enlarged entrance, a waiting area and large area for post boxes is proposed. Key changes are as follows:

1. Retains the existing canopy remaining consistent with the rest of the street.
2. Residential entrance is distinct - through both the setback from the street and the change in materiality (standing seam to match the core walls).
3. Entrance corridor widened which facilitates space for letter boxes and waiting area.
4. Lift core changed location to allow for link from Block B into the first floor of Block A.
5. Stairs re-worked to allow for link from Block B into the first floor of Block A.
6. Externally accessed plant area introduced.
7. Cycle store added and bin store relocated.

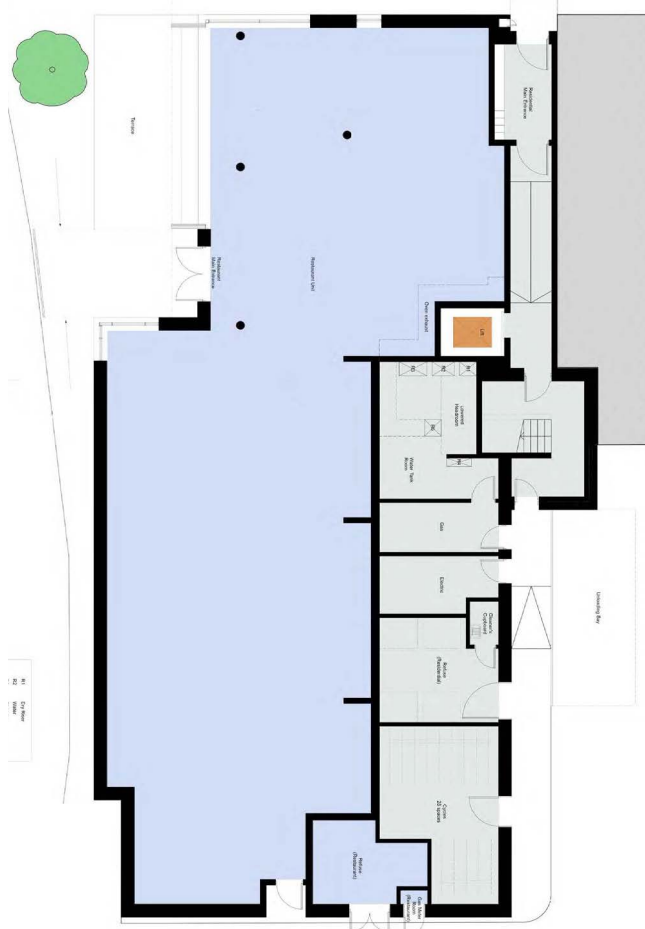


Plan extract

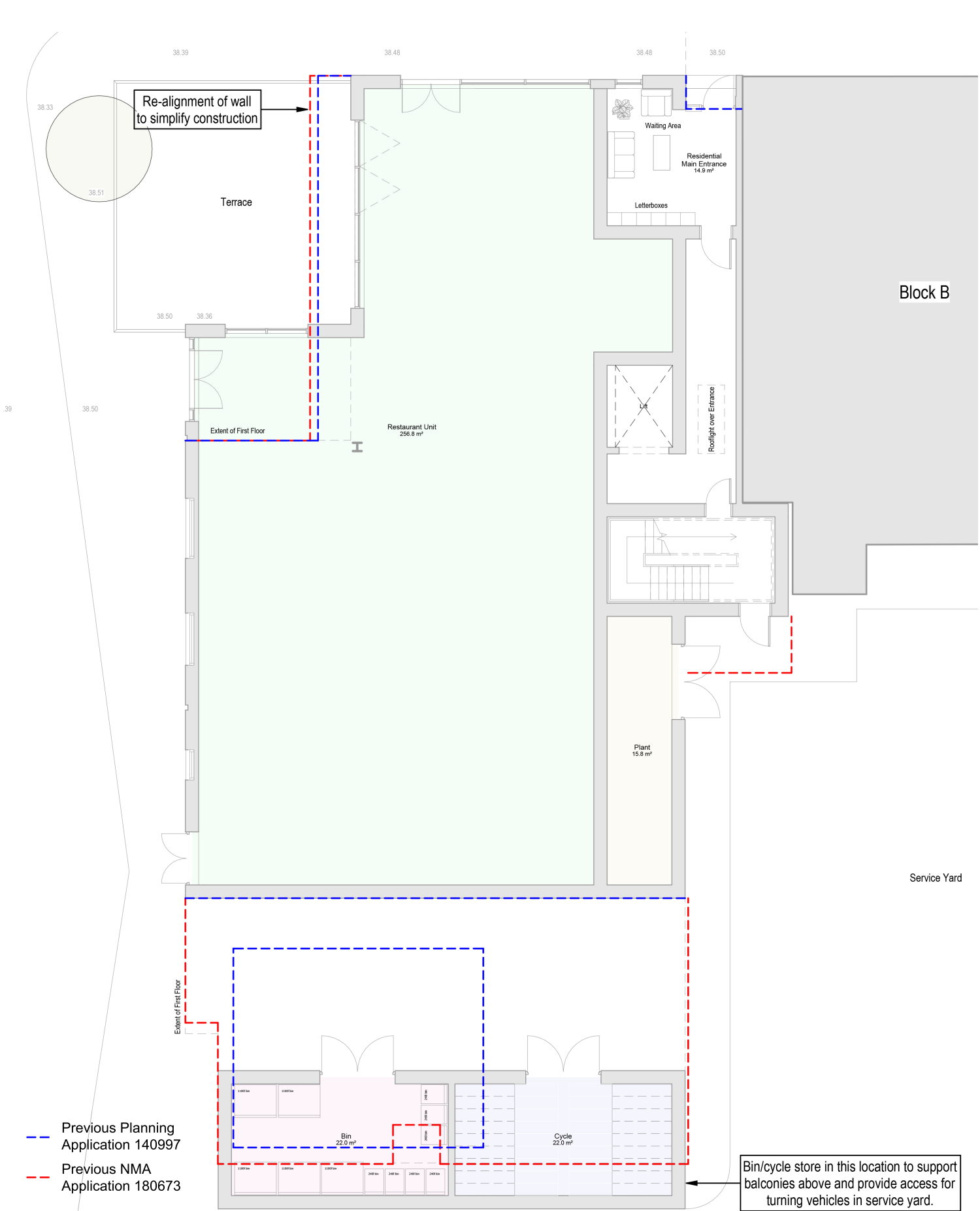
2.4 Ground Floor Plan



Original Approved Ground Floor Plan (140997)



NMA Approved Ground Floor Plan (180673)



Proposed Ground Floor Plan with comparison to footprint of previously approved schemes

Proposed Changes to Ground Floor Plan

- Changes from Original Application 140997 (blue outline) to previous NMA application 180673 (red outline)**
- Separate lobby for lift.
 - Externally accessed plant area.
 - Relocation of entrance into restaurant.
 - Cycle store added.
 - Bin store repositioned.

- Changes from previous NMA application 180673 (red outline) to current proposals**
- Extent of plant space downsized (plant space available on roof).
 - Larger residential entrance with space for letter boxes and waiting area.
 - Reorientation of lift core.
 - Bin and cycle store separated from main building.
 - Relocation of restaurant entrance.
 - Larger external terrace for restaurant.

Comparison of Ground Floor Areas of Proposed Scheme, NMA Approval (180673) and Original Planning Approval (140997)

Proposed Scheme Areas

Ground Floor Unit	Area (m²)	Area (ft²)
Restaurant	257	2772
Bin Storage	22	237
Cycle Storage	22	237
Plant Space	16	170
Total Floor GIA	382	4111

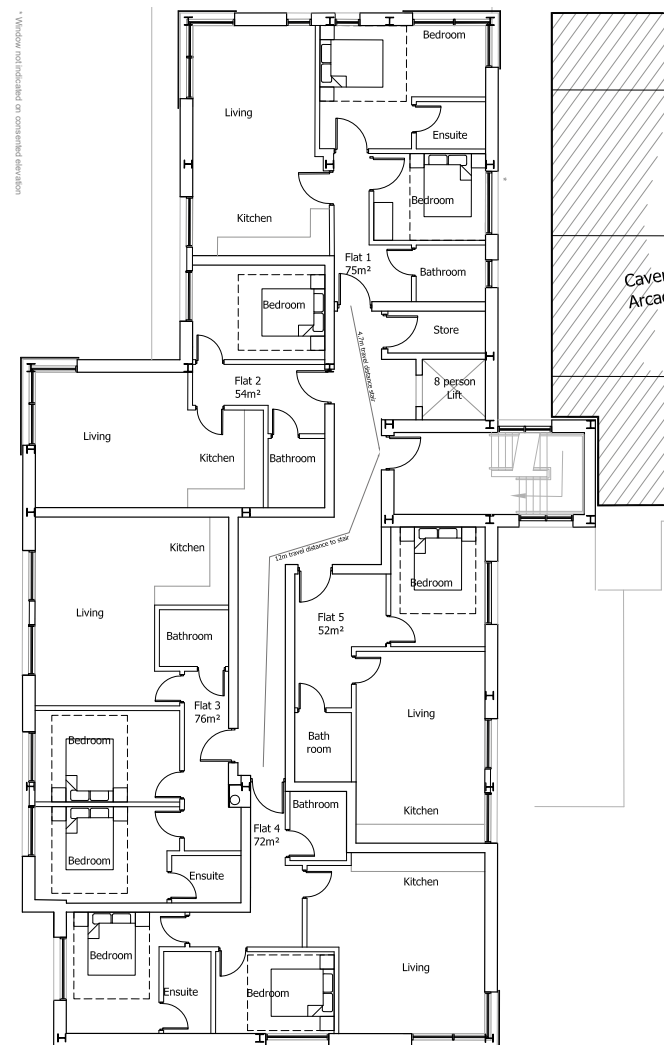
NMA Approved (180673) Areas

Ground Floor Unit	Area (m²)	Area (ft²)
Restaurant	299	3220
Residential Ancillary Accommodation	119	1285
Total Floor GIA (approx)	418	4499

Original Planning Approval (140997) Areas

Ground Floor Unit	Area (m²)	Area (ft²)
Restaurant	286	3079
Bin Storage	20	215
Commercial Bin Storage	20	215
Total Floor GIA (incl. bin stores)	377	4057

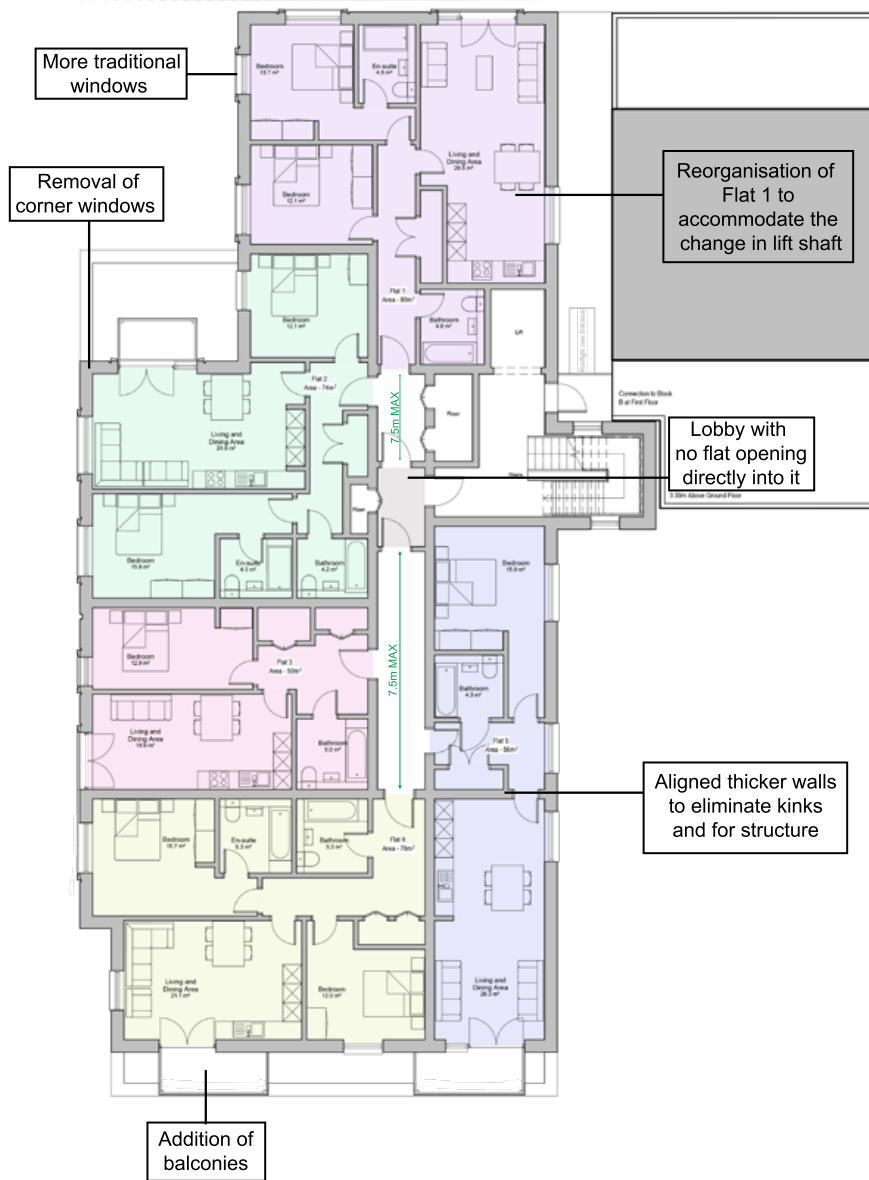
2.5 Upper Floor Flats



Original Approved Upper Floor Plan (140997)



NMA Approved Upper Floor Plan (180673)



Proposed Upper Floor Plan for NMA Application

Proposed Changes to Upper Floor Plans

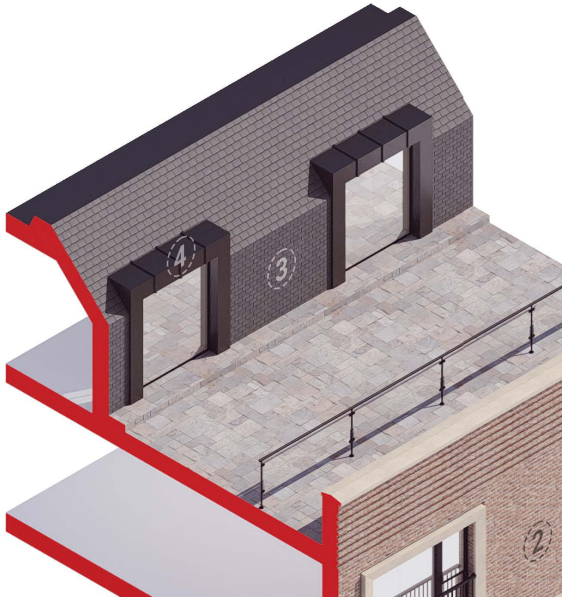
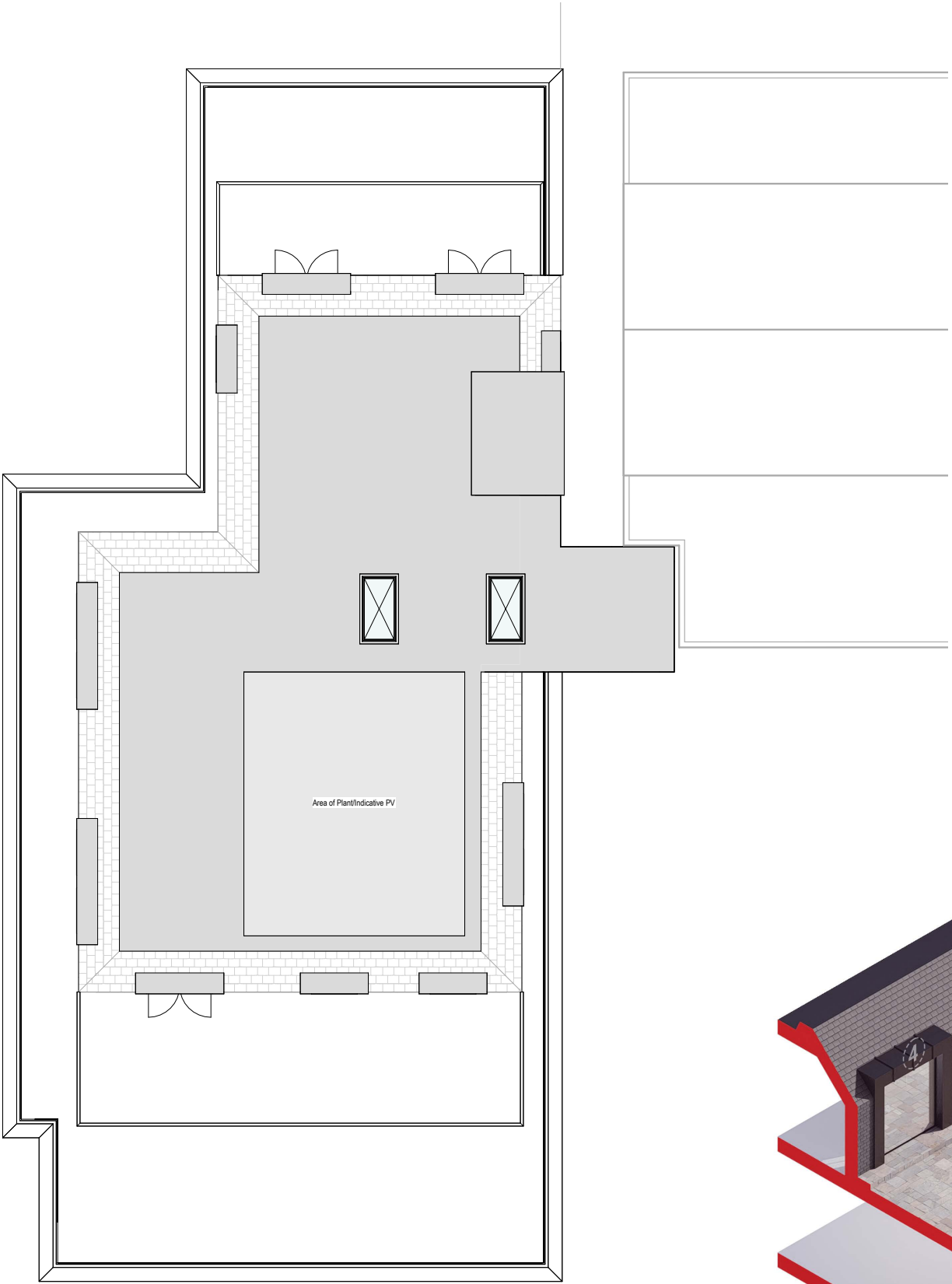
Changes from Original Application 140997 to previous NMA application 180673

- GIA of flats updated.
- Rearrangement of flats to comply with Approved Document B Volume 1.
- Additional lobbies added in access corridors.
- Changes to ensure 7.5 metre escape in one direction achieved with additional lobbies to comply with diagram 3.7a in Approved Document B Volume 1.

Changes from previous NMA application 180673 to current proposals

- Lift relocated to be accessed in staircore.
- Link provided from Block A staircore to Block B (first floor only).
- Rationalisation of layout to ensure structural continuity with ground floor layout.
- General update to window positions and spacings including removal of corner windows.
- Balconies added for residential amenity (some Juliette balconies retained).

2.6 Roof Plan



3D extract showing mansard roof on fourth floor.

Proposed Changes to Top Floor Plan

- Form of top storey changed to mansard roof, finished in slate to present more traditional appearance.
- Indicative location for plant and PV shown.

Change to Mansard Roof



Neighbouring building with mansard roof.



Sorbon Estate - Elmwood Gate with traditional mansard roof.



Precedent - slate mansard roof to wall transition.