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Façade Access & Maintenance – Planning Report

Station Hill Phase 3 Plot A/B and D



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Station Hill Phase 3 Plot A/B and D

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		Ramboll 240 Blackfriars Road London SE1 8NW United Kingdom T +44 20 7808 1420 https://ramboll.com/en-gb

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1. Executive Summary

Ramboll have been appointed to develop Façade Access and Maintenance strategy for Station Hill Reading Phase 3 designed by Gensler.

Ramboll has demonstrated the various options and highlighted the Statutory Requirements and obligations to align working at height activities within Health and Safety Regulations and industry guidance. Furthermore, we have also identified key risks for example, Safe installation, use & ongoing maintenance, weatherproofing. At the end of Feasibility Study, it is understood that the preferred strategy by the client is industrial rope access.

The geographical location of this development will necessitate regular cleaning of the facades, especially given that pollutants from the proximate roadways and railway tracks will significantly impact their visual appearance if left uncleaned. The building elevation largely comprises of low-maintenance materials (i.e. bricks, etc.) to minimise the need for frequent access for periodic cleaning with the exception of glazed surfaces. Besides this, the facades will require a periodic maintenance and inspection routine of the façade components such as glazing, external gaskets, sealants, structural silicon seals, and shading arrangements. The upkeep of such elements is pivotal for the purpose of maintaining facade warranties, façade operability, and the visual appeal of the building as a whole.

The permanent systems will pay particular attention to the safety afforded not only to the operatives but also to the surrounding occupants and general public. The systems are proposed for two-person operation, which shall be a requirement of their use, to perform cleaning and maintenance with an allowance for hand tools and equipment.

Efficient means of access and ease of use are also important considerations to reduce overall operating time, and level of disruption to the occupiers and public. All systems shall be designed for simplicity of use, access/egress, ongoing maintenance and inspection/examination requirements. Even so there is a requirement on those using and managing the use of the equipment to ensure only those trained and competent in the use of such equipment are given access to the systems for use, maintenance or inspection/examination.

Central to these proposals are Health & Safety concerns, which require control measures by the end user & maintainers to ensure that suitably qualified personnel are used where appropriate. Current rendering demands consideration to key access and maintenance design factors:

- Routes to and from the location where cleaning and maintenance activities are carried out will be direct and simple. Regular access (e.g., Monthly or weekly) activities should, where possible, be via permanent access and easily accessible.
- Minimal disruption to occupants/tenants and visitors particularly during glazing replacements, replacement of architectural lighting, etc. is of key importance. Design input will be essential at an early stage to coordinate with three key trades i.e., Structural, Façade and M&E for correct integration of the system.

- Facilities shall be available that allow access to the external fabric to each area of the building within this development for routine maintenance and cleaning of the facades. The current proposals are based upon the routine cleaning of the external elevations and details of the building by the facility managers of the site and shall not rely upon the residents being responsible for the routine cleaning (except for balcony glazing).

Building Management and Operations team must monitor the overall process ensuring works are carried out as per the window cleaning contractor's Risk Assessment & Method Statement (RAMS). Facilities shall be available that allow access to the external fabric to each area of the building within this development for routine maintenance and cleaning of the facades.

The strategy for access for routine maintenance and the ability to maintain and replace elements of the façade glazing shall take into account the proximity of the site and the buildings to the adjacent pedestrianised locations and vehicle access routes bordering the site. All access at height, irrespective of access methods proposed shall be carried out by competent, previous trained operatives, physically fit and capable of carrying out the tasks involved within the various required locations on each of the buildings. All works shall require a safe system of work, method statements and site-specific risk assessments to be completed prior to any works being carried out. Permit to work systems shall be in place to authorise access and works within all areas of the building.

1.1 Façade Cleaning Frequency – General Principles

A further consideration will be the warranty requirements of the cladding contractors. Clearly, there will be a minimum requirement for the frequency and cleaning processes they would expect. These details must be made available to building management team in order to arrive at the required cleaning cycles. Most of these parameters are not under our control, but they must be analysed and accounted for in the ultimate scheme. Façade contractors will specify the inspection regime and frequency to comply with the manufacturer's warranty terms similar to shown below as an example. The frequency of cleaning must be made available to building management team to establish the exact cleaning cycles.

Based on the façade geometry and the location of the development, we would recommend minimum four external cleaning cycles per annum. Final cleaning cycle must be confirmed by the façade specialist who might suggest alternative access frequencies to fulfil the client's expectation and façade performance demands. It is envisaged the following routines for cleaning the external envelope may be adopted subject to further discussion with preferred façade manufacturers.

- Coated metals should be cleaned at intervals required by the paint applicator.
- Copings, sills, ledges and near horizontal metal surfaces may require cleaning at the same intervals as glass in order to prevent dirt build-up and subsequent run-off, which can result in staining.
- Non-glazed surfaces are cleaned once per annum with the exception to bird fouling and local weathering.
- In all cases where cleaning is required, the more often a surface is cleaned, the easier it is to clean.

Cleaning activities are carried during normal hours throughout the year. Frequency will increase for low level glazing (fortnightly or monthly).

2. Compliance, Codes & Standards

As per the Working at Height Regulations 2005, working at height should first-and-foremost be avoided where possible. Where not possible, a hierarchy of controls is followed in which access options seen as preferable should be used if possible. The following extract is particularly useful in showing how the regulations might be interpreted.

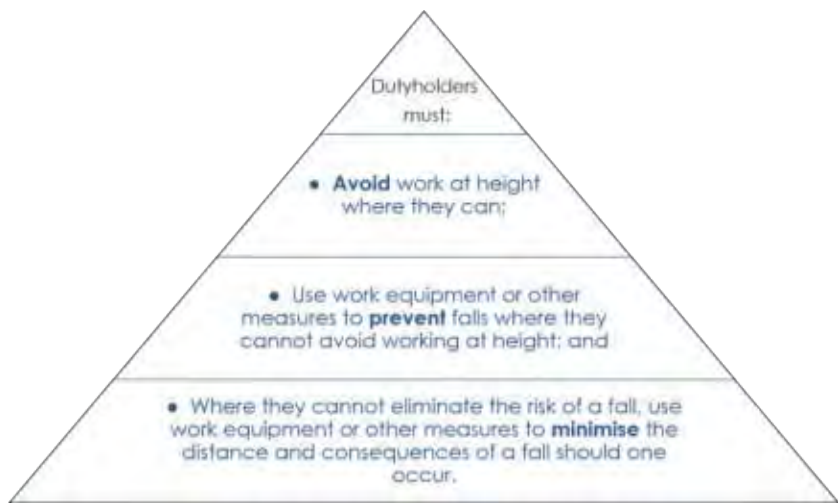


Figure 1 - Work at Height 'Hierarchy of Control' Diagram

Regulatory requirements for the provision of safe access to a building are found within the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM) as well as the Work at Height Regulations 2005.

Regulation 11 of CDM 2015 requires that designers and clients should allow for safe access to clean and maintain a building and in so doing shall give "Collective" measures priority over "Individual" measures.

Regulations 2 and 7 of the Work at Height regulations clearly establish "Collective" measures as a category of work equipment that does not necessitate an individual to possess specific competencies or training, such as working from within a guarded platform (BMU or MEWP). In contrast, "Individual" measures refer to work equipment that requires an individual to possess appropriate competencies and training, such as the use of a Horizontal Wire System or a Rope Access system.

The aforementioned delineation between individual and collective measures serves to promote the safe conduct of work at height activities by ensuring

that workers utilise equipment that matches their level of training and expertise, whilst constantly seeking to reduce the risk of a fall. The following Table 1 is a 'Working at Height' Matrix extracted from BS 8560 which indicates a useful hierarchy of access systems in order of their preference.

Table 1 - Hierarchy of access systems extracted from BS 8560

Control Measures	Examples of Control Measures	Desirability
Avoid working at height	Offsite prefabrication: modular construction, precast concrete, utilised curtain walling, steelwork assemblies. On site assembly at ground level: steelwork assemblies. Use of low maintenance materials and equipment. Self-cleaning glass, fibre optic lighting. Ground-based maintenance: lowerable light systems, long-reach washing poles, positioning of plant close to ground level. Inclusion of temporary protection measures: offsite pre-fixed handrails/guardrails to stairs and roof edge beams. Remote access solutions: robotic equipment.	Most
Prevent falls (Collective)	Parapets, guardrails, BMUs, MEWPs, scaffolding, non-fragile roofs.	
Prevent falls (Personal)	Rope access, fall restraint systems, fixed anchors.	
Minimise the height and consequences of falls (Collective)	Safety nets, crash decks, air bags positioned as close to the fall risk level as possible.	
Minimise the height and consequences of falls (Personal)	Fall arrest systems, retractable fall arrest blocks, work positioning systems.	
Minimise the consequences of falls (Collective)	Remote soft-landing systems (air bags, bean bags), safety nets fitted at low levels.	
Minimise the consequences of falls (Personal)	Personal injury reduction systems (inflating suits).	
No fall protection (Collective)	Unguarded edges, platforms, stages, loading docks.	
No fall protection (Personal)	Ladders, step ladders, hops-ups, stilts.	Least

All permanent and temporary façade access and fall protection equipment should be designed, installed, and operated in accordance with current British standards, codes, regulations, and guidelines such as (but not limited to) those provided in Table 2.

Table 2- Reference Standards

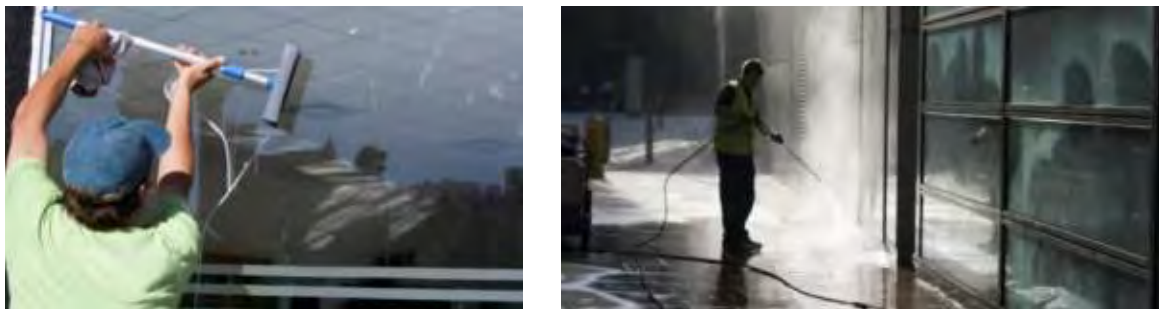
Standard	Description
BS 8560	Code of practice for the design of buildings incorporating safe work at height
BS 7985	Code of practice for the use of rope access methods for industrial purposes.
BS 7883	Code of practice for the design, selection, installation, use and maintenance of anchor devices conforming to BS EN 795
BS EN 341	PPE against falls from a height Descender device
BS EN 353-1	PPE against falls from a height. Guided fall arresters on rigid line
BS EN 353-2	PPE against falls from a height. Guided fall arresters on flexible line
BS EN 354	PPE against falls from a height. Lanyards
BS EN 355	PPE against falls from a height. Energy absorbers
BS EN 358	PPE for work positioning
BS EN 360	PPE against falls from a height. Retractable type fall arresters
BS EN 361	PPE against falls from a height. Full body harness
BS EN 362	PPE against falls from a height. Connectors
BS EN 363	PPE against falls from a height. Fall arrest systems

Standard	Description
BS EN 364	PPE against falls from a height. Test methods
BS EN 365	PPE against falls from a height. General requirements for instructions etc.
BS EN 795	PPE against falls from a height. Anchor devices Requirements and testing
BS 22846	Code of practice for Personal equipment for protection against falls
HSE Sheet MISC612	Safety in window cleaning using rope access techniques
GS25	Prevention of falls to window cleaners
	The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
	Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
	Working at Height Regulations 2005
	The Construction (Health Safety & Welfare) Regulations
	Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations
	Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER)
	Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER)
	Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations

3. Cleaning and Maintenance Equipment

3.1 Reach and wash for low-level façade

Facades at the lowest levels will typically require the most cleaning due to their proximity to pedestrian and automotive traffic. Such cleaning and minor maintenance can be easily achievable through the use of standard hand tools (including short extendable poles) at ground level.



3.2 Long reach and wash for Quick Clean

A Reach and Wash System is a method of window cleaning that incorporates water-fed pole technology to ensure efficient, effective, and safe cleaning of windows. Such systems operate by pumping water up through a long telescopic pole to a brush at the end. Window cleaners can stay safely on the ground while their equipment reaches up high, eliminating the need for ladders, cherry pickers, or other access methods.

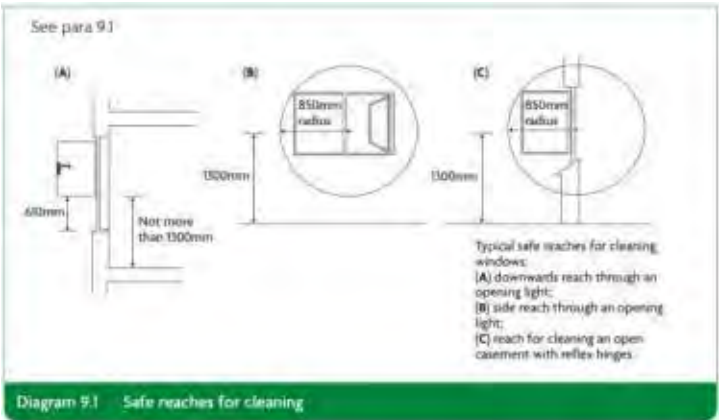
These systems are widely used and can be hired from local companies, owned by the contractor, or purchased and stored on site. Importantly, from a Work at Height Regulations perspective, it is highly preferable to use a Reach and Wash Pole to clean façade areas since no working at height is required.



The main drawback is that they only facilitate façade cleaning and that they do not enable hands-on access for maintenance or repairs. Additionally, their reach is limited, they may prove difficult to use for recessed areas of the facades, and they require the operative to stand a certain distance away from the façade in order to reach higher levels. Additionally, it should be noted that for all cases where the Reach and Wash System is being used, areas surrounding the equipment should be cordoned off to prevent persons from being injured due to slips/trips or falling objects / liquids.

3.3 Manual Cleaning (via openable windows)

Windows designed as inward opening shall comply with Section 9 of Document K of the building Regulations as diagram 9.1 below to achieve manual cleaning. Maximum manual reach is 850mm subject to level of cleaners' comfort and (ergonomically) within forearm length as illustrated below. For safety reasons, it is expected to use tethered tools to avoid falling from height.



3.4 Rope Access Technique for External Elevations

Industrial rope access is a method of work positioning that uses a double rope system, in combination with other devices, by which the user descends and ascends a working line to get to or from the workplace while further protected by a safety line. Both ropes are connected to the user's harness and separately secured to a pair of anchors. The technique is viewed as a form of fall arrest and as such is placed lower down the hierarchy of acceptable access solutions within the Working at Height Regulations.

The main draw back with the use of rope access is the reliance on individual and organisational competency. Due to the nature of the technique, only Industrial Rope Access Trade Association (IRATA) member companies and qualified individuals should be employed to perform rope access work. Such companies and individuals are audited and assessed against strict operating protocols to assure the safest techniques are used. Under IRATA's requirements, industrial rope access teams must be a minimum of two workers comprising a qualified Level 1 rope access technician and qualified Level 3 rope access supervisor as a minimum. This minimum combination will ensure that there is constant rescue provision available at the site. As precautionary measure to mitigate further risk, additional Level 3 personnel must be made available at roof level to rescue 'Level 3 in work position' during unexpected circumstances.

Rope Access Davit Arms can be a versatile and efficient solution for accessing facades for cleaning, maintenance, and potentially for replacement activities. A Rope Access Davit Arm is a portable leverage device that is temporarily affixed to a permanent or semi-permanent base which itself is attached to the building structure. The davit arm extends over the roof edge, providing a secure point for suspending a rope access technician.

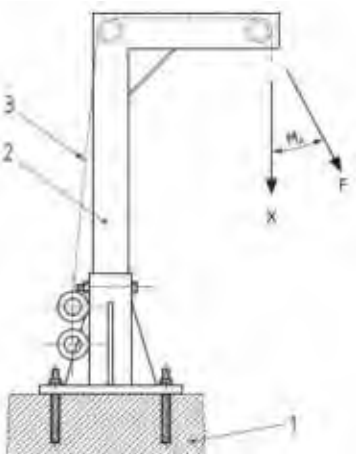
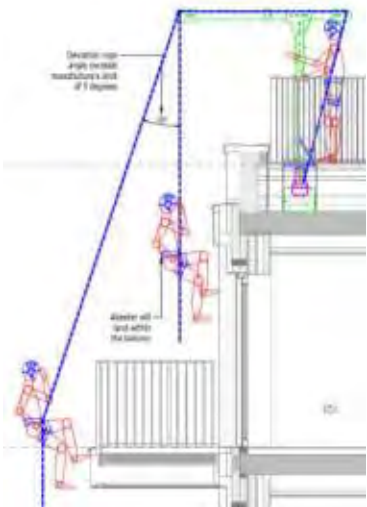
Davit Arms are typically capable of rotating, which allows the workers to cover a large area of the facade from a single setup position. Due to this ability, and the lightweight nature of davit arms, cleaning times can be relatively fast when utilising this form of equipment.

The robust and minimalist design of a rope access davit arm system presents several advantages. It is lightweight and portable, reducing the onerous loads which may be imposed on the building structure. The system provides an additional reach over obstacles on the roof or facade and is adaptable to the building's architecture. Additionally, the ropes from which the technician descends bypass the parapets and copings without imposing high tangential rope load (which could potentially cause damage) are prevented.



The maximum reach on the davit is 1.6m allowing the arm to slew and capture the façade radially from a single operating position.

The building consists of projecting bolt-on balconies which exceeds the 1.6m davit arm reach. In the event that the external facia requires external access, abseiling drop path will result in the abseil rope to position at an angle from the end of the davit arm routing over the uppermost balcony balustrade. It has been noted on several recent projects and from discussions with major suppliers that the maximum deviation angle (MA) of the abseil rope at the end of the davit arms, has now been restricted to 5° as shown below. This limitation is intended to prevent the introduction of unexpected forces that could exceed the parameters originally verified during testing. This will mean introducing abseil rigging point within the topmost balcony which will have impact on the balcony design for rerigging and future inspections.



The above approach can be eliminated by designed the balcony facia as low maintenance and acceptable to manufacturer if the surfaces are cleaned using short reach tool from the either sides of the projecting balcony.



The Amenity terrace on Block D comprises of 2m tall, glazed balustrade. Therefore, a bespoke davit will be constructed tall mast with built in rungs as shown in the image below. This will allow the abseilers to negotiate the tall balustrade whilst maintaining the rope offset from the façade line.

In case of landscaped Amenity terraces, architecturally, protruding davit bases (holding units) are not acceptable on terraces and common amenity roofs due to visual impact. Therefore, the davit sockets on stepping terraces shall be recessed below the roofing build-up. For majority of locations, the bases complete with welded 'L' anchors shall be cast within a raised plinth. At locations where the roof finishes are deep enough, standard top mounted bases can be adopted.



Subject to the final roof finishes, alternative davit base design can be a two-part system whereby the base itself will be demountable and designed to clip-on the flat welded base which will be short and recessed customised to fit within the finish depth.



In case of tall parapet on Block A, the height of the roof mounted davit exceeds the davits systems available in the industry. Therefore, the parapet will include series of abseil eyelets accessed via tethered ladder

All fixings are visually inspected biannually with annual load tests. Fixings shall be detailed with provision to carry necessary Statutory inspection. All façades, ledges, sills, etc must be designed/ reinforced to cater abseiler foot load during normal cleaning and rescue scenarios since the abseiler will utilise these surfaces to position themselves and / or use as 'transit points.

Abseilers will descend in a unidirectional path returning to roof through the building at ground level. Façade to be kept clear of trees and soft landscape to allow descent and return to roof at the end of each drop.

At the bottom of all drops the operatives will detach from their ropes at Ground Level and re-enter the building to make their way back up to roof level. The access routes around the building and building entry points will need to be agreed with the Building Management Team. After the first drop, the operatives shall then move to the next drop position allowing the operatives to work their way around the building. Furthermore, IRATA Code of Practice (CoP) suggests the following working time based on wind speed which can limit cleaning process.

Wind speed	Unprotected
Metres per second	Hours
2	8
5	5
7	4
9	3
11	2
14	1.5
28	0.5 a)

4. Glass Replacement

During construction, façade installation subcontractors will have the use of tower cranes for installation of the façade systems. Before practical completion, tower cranes will likely be removed, and another suitable means of replacement will be necessary for some smaller areas (perhaps due to damaged panels or the like). Whilst this is likely to be carried out on an infrequent basis, the principle must be considered and provision made.

Any hoisting / handling equipment used beyond the replacement winch, (required for the manoeuvring of cladding and glazing panels to the area directly below the replacement area at lowest floor level) is usually provided by the repairer on the day of the task (example glass lifting unit, vacuum manipulators, etc.).

There are a number of methods for the replacement of panels, and the exact sequence will be selected by the cladding contractor. The glazing shall be hoisted into rough position, and the cladding contractor is to verify all points including how to finally fix the glazing. No part of the scheme is to limit the cladding contractor's responsibilities for providing a full replacement strategy.

Internal replacement of the glazing may be performed using equipment that is widely available on the market such as glazing trolleys or glass handling units. A wide array of this type of equipment is available to suit many glass types and sizes and assists in replacement by safely handing the glass from the location of repair and throughout the building.

Safety signage, cordoning off of areas and pedestrian management must be considered along with the imposed loadings on the various ground finishes and surfaces. The crane will rely on outriggers for stability which either drops vertically or extends depending on type of crane. The outrigger positions shall be set with minimum disruption to the current landscape layout.

Temporary boards, underlays and spreader mats must be used beneath the outriggers / jack (to align with jack forces and surface pressure) plate during transient and operating positions to distribute the load evenly and protect the landscape finish. No storage space shall be necessary for the crane as they are hired for cleaning/maintenance purpose. The Building Operators / Facility Management team will arrange site survey prior to finalising the type of the crane to deploy correct make and model to suit the 'As-built' site conditions.

5. Health & Safety

This development falls under safety Regulations followed in the UK as identified in section 2. With this in mind, the safety of operatives, those affected by the maintenance operations and members of the public must be considered in developing the proposed scheme and significant emphasis is currently being exercised by the United Kingdom's Health and Safety Executive to reduce risks as low as reasonably practical (ALARP) particularly when considering working at height and maintenance of facades. Recent EC Health & Safety directives and legislation have played a direct role in the manner and application of access equipment systems to buildings.

Regulation

The field of "maintenance equipment" offers a very diverse range of applications and types. It is not only important that the equipment will carry out its intended task, but it must offer an acceptable level of safety to its operators and perform reliably. Codes and standards will give the necessary guidance on the straightforward aspects of the equipment and specific standards exist that we would apply. Various areas will require consideration of different authorities and their specific requirements.

As a minimum, the maintenance contractor shall comply with the Project Health and Safety requirements as laid down in the Contract Documents. They shall include for complying with all current and proposed statutory requirements, Codes of Practice issued by the Health and Safety authorities, guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executives, and use of products, methods of work and protective measures which shall minimise Health and Safety hazards.

Risk assessments shall be made available to ensure that all significant risks likely to arise throughout the construction phase are anticipated and appropriate steps taken to eliminate, reduce or control the risk. All risk assessments must be submitted prior to commencement of Works on site. All personnel must wear protective clothing, shoes, goggles, gloves and hard hats whilst on construction sites and use personal protective equipment (PPE) required for specialist operations (e.g. safety harnesses attached to suitable anchorages). All PPE must be regularly inspected, and a log kept. All personnel employed or sub-contracted by the contractor must carry out all work in a safe manner. They must take precautions to avoid accidents to others (including the general public).

The building facades are generally accessed at height, which signifies that all operatives are to be aware of the dangers when working at height. There is an ever-present danger of dropping tools, etc. All personnel must take care to ensure that at no time tools can be dropped into an area occupied by other persons, including the general public. The area must either be cordoned off or tools attached to a safety line, or both.

Emergency Rescue

The operatives / abseilers will work in pairs at all times, as this will satisfy the requirement to rescue an operative in the event of incapacitation. Each operative should be trained in this technique and where possible be a trained first aider.

Securing Area During Cleaning

During maintenance, the operatives are responsible to secure and cordon off the areas where cleaning operation is in progress. This includes all levels above and below the path cleaning. Exclusion Zones will change as they make their way around the building. During the cleaning a flagman or traffic barriers complete with signage will be required to warn people to stay outside of the working zone to prevent potential injuries and accidents.

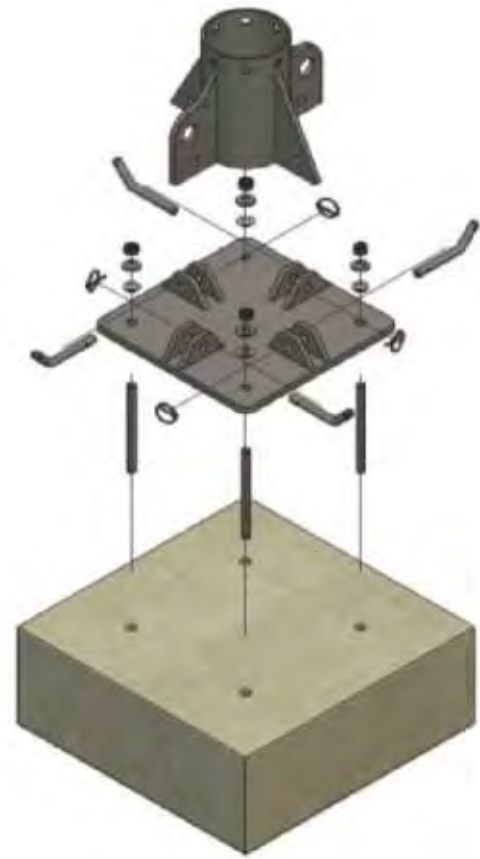
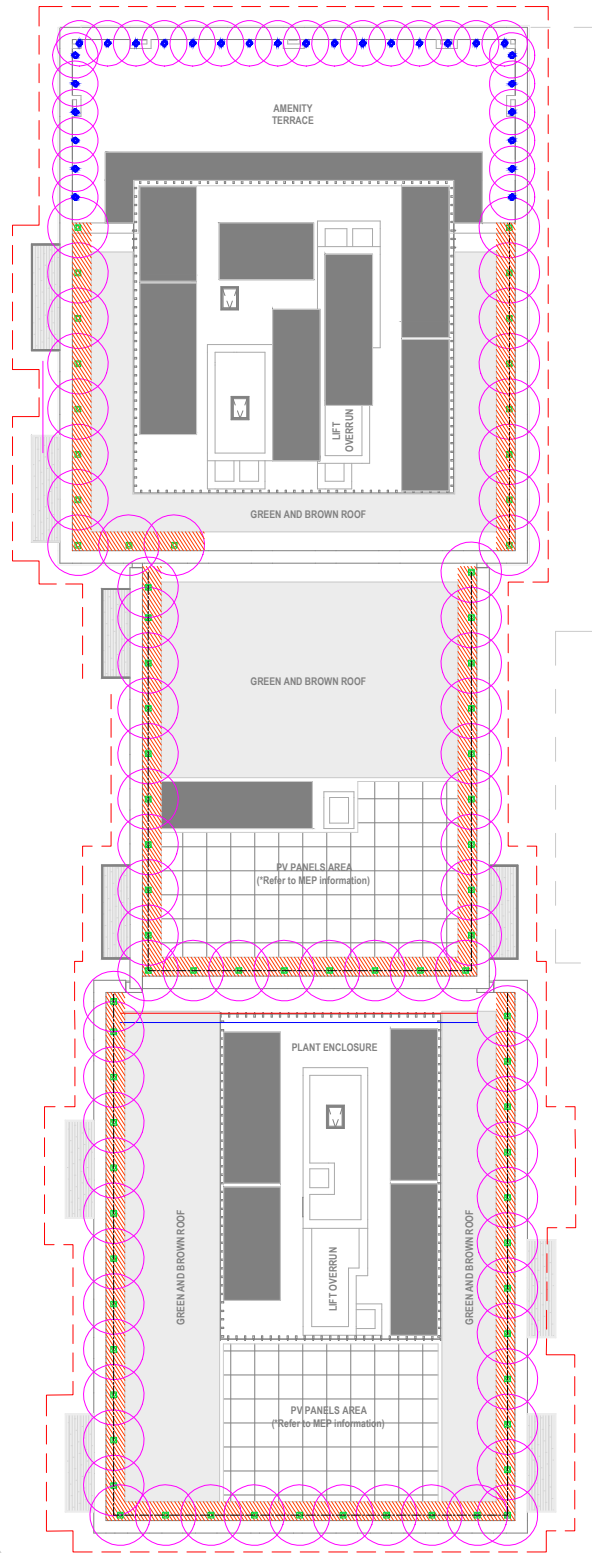
Risk control measures that apply to all rope access work:

- Operatives to be appropriately skilled and trained (competent) to carry out the intended operation.
- Operatives will always be attached to at least two independently anchored safety systems.
- Connection to the rope access system should be in an area where there is no risk of a fall from a height, unless there is protection by other means.
- Exclusion zones should be established as appropriate. This may require zones at locations other than top and bottom of the rope access work.
- An efficient communication system should be established, e.g. mobile phone, radio, whistle etc.
- All practicable measures should be taken to avoid injury-causing impact with the structure or obstructions.
- Operatives should be properly dressed and equipped, appropriate to the work situation and condition.

Pre-Cleaning Documentation

- Prior to any work commencing, the cleaning contractor will provide, confirm or adopt:
- A documented system of work and a documented safety method statement.
- Permits to work, where necessary.
- Site induction requirements.
- Hand-over procedures, e.g. between shift changes or site contractors.
- Site-specific documentation e.g. rope access technicians' logbooks; end of shift documentation; Hours worked/accident/incident report forms; work log; equipment user instructions.
- Worksite facilities, e.g. for resting; for emergency washing; showers; toilets.
- Where appropriate, a documented site inspection, including suitable provision for anchors, and rigging/rescue plan.
- Planning for emergencies, e.g. fire; entrapment (including rescue), suspension trauma, including any equipment required.
- Protection of third parties, e.g. exclusion zones; barriers; warning signs.

6. Schematic Layouts



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Davit base cast in or fixed based on slab thickness or plinth height.



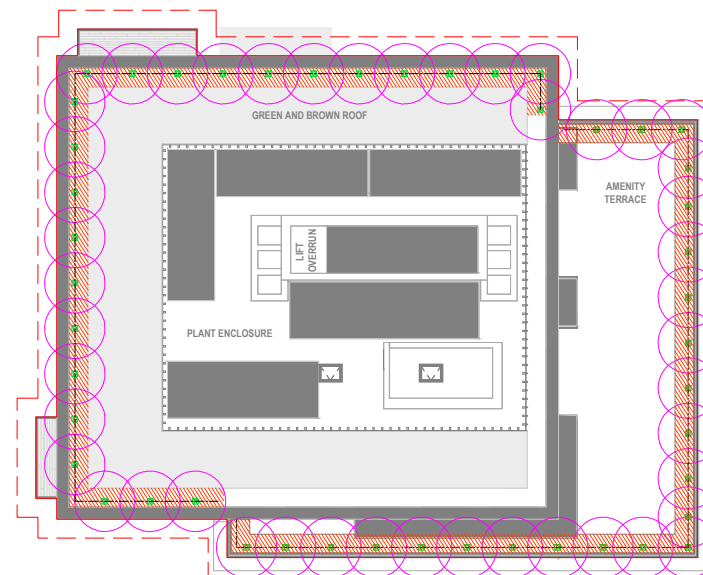
Abseil eyelets



1m oversailing zone from facade line during periodic cleaning



Clear operating zone for to allow multiple rigging and de-rigging at roof level including zone for future inspection



GENERAL NOTES:

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- These sketches must be read in conjunction with other relevant architectural, structural, mechanical and electrical drawings and all relevant sections of the specification.
- All dimensions and sizing of steel / aluminium profiles, anchors, brackets and other accessories should be justified by structural calculations and manufacturer's recommendations. however, such dimensions and sizing should be not less than the minimum sizes as specified in technical specifications.
- The purpose of these sketches is to show the general design intent of the specified system and Ramboll is not the system designer.
- The specialist facade access / fall protection contractor should produce the final design and calculations in the capacity of the system designer as defined in BS 7883:2019 and should refer to architectural drawings for all crucial dimensions.
- Any discrepancies should be brought to the attention of the engineer and resolved prior to commencement of any work.
- The performance should meet the requirements of the specification at all times.

Station Hill Phase 3, Reading

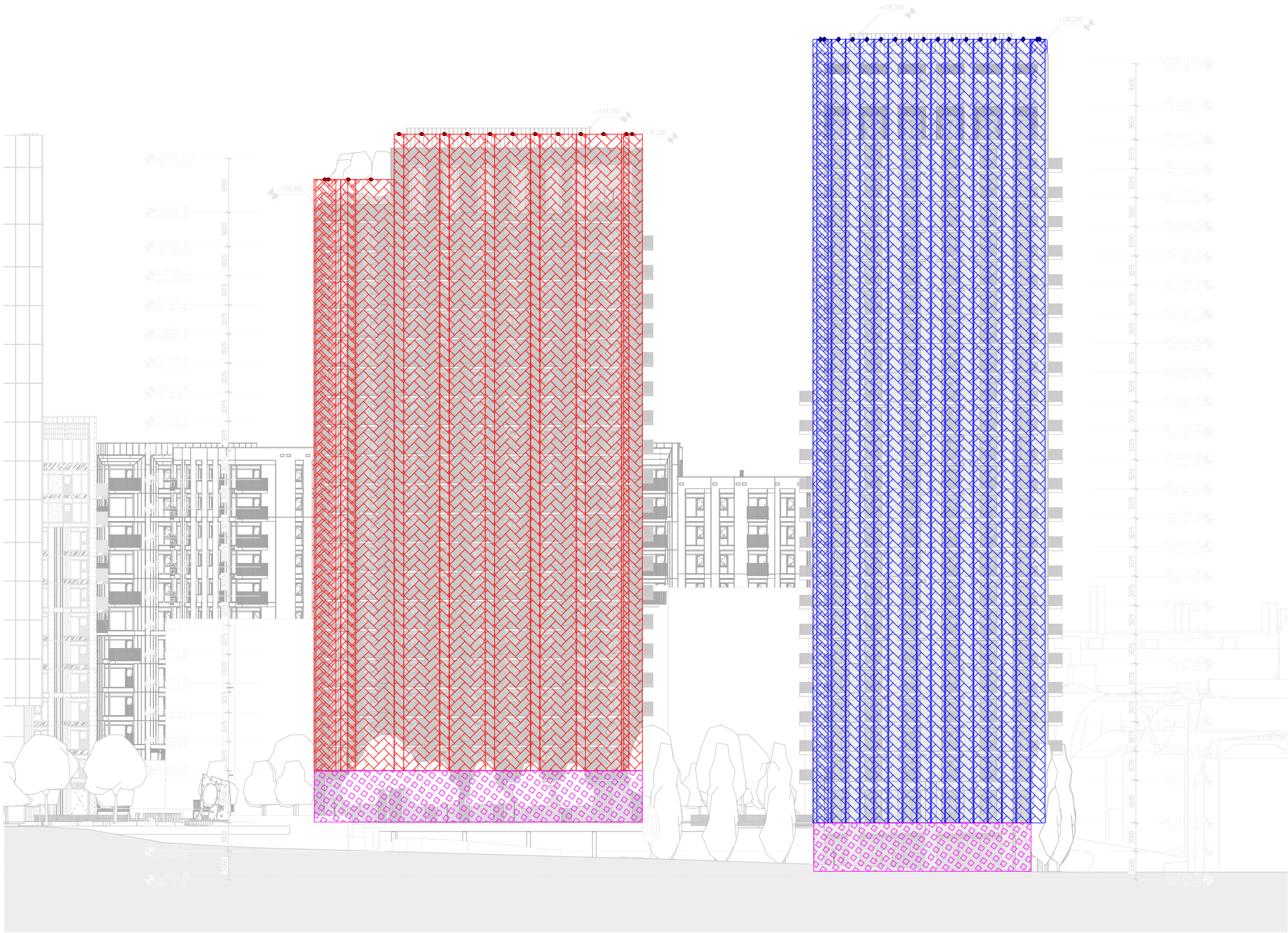
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Abseil Layout

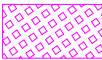
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-  Davit base cast in or fixed based on slab thickness or plinth height.
-  Abseil eyelets
-  Ground Floor Strategy
-  Davit base cast in or fixed based on slab thickness or plinth height.
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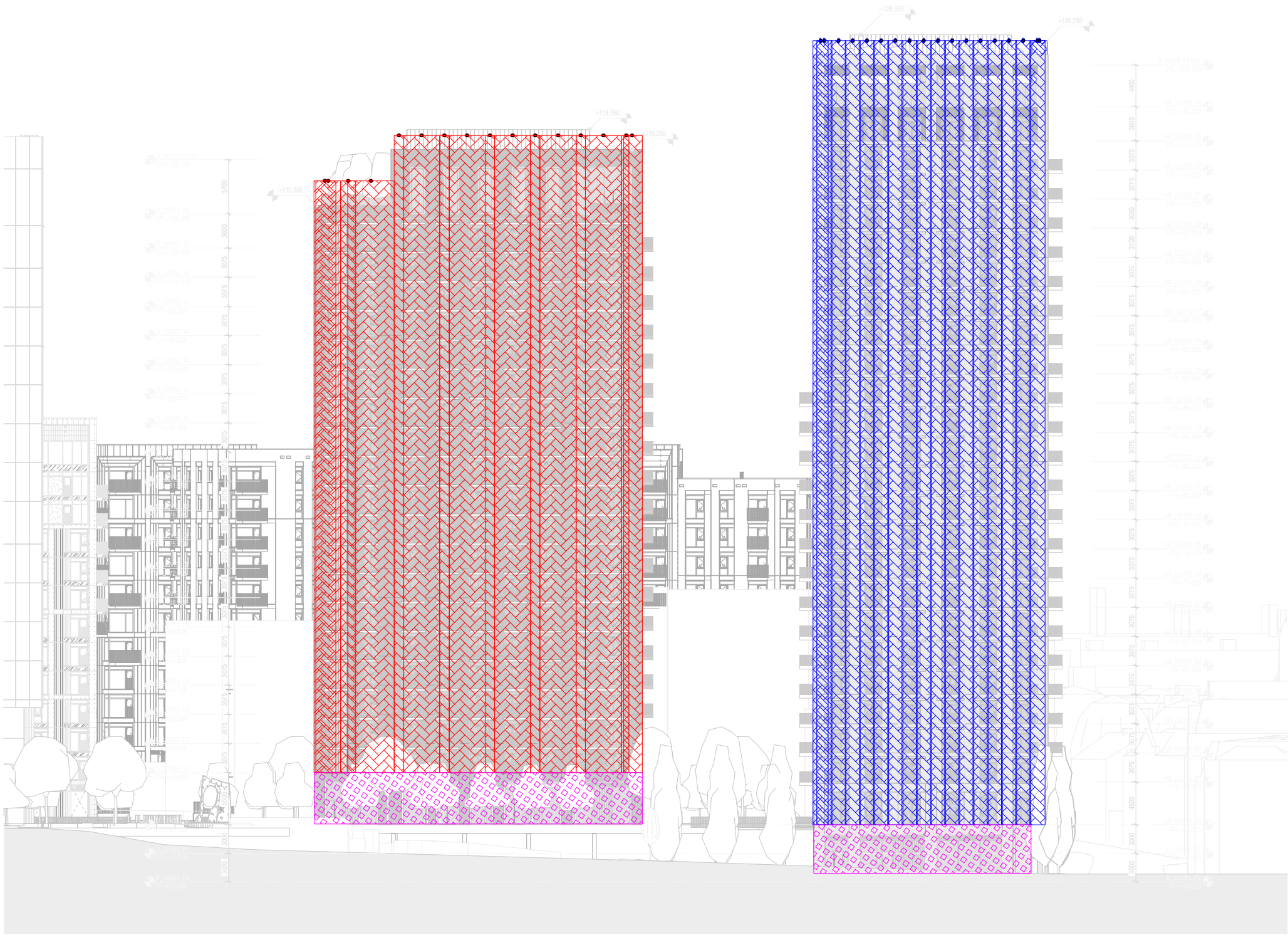
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North Elevation

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-  Davit base cast in or fixed based on slab thickness or plinth height.
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-  Ground Floor Strategy
-  Davit base cast in or fixed based on slab thickness or plinth height.
-  Abseil eyelets
-  1m oversailing zone from facade line during periodic cleaning
-  Clear operating zone for to allow multiple rigging and de-rigging at roof level including zone for future inspection

GENERAL NOTES:

- These sketches are the copyright of Ramboll UK and must not be retained copied or used without the above consultant's authority.
- All dimensions are in millimetres and levels in meters, unless otherwise noted. all dimensions should be verified on-site and approved by the engineer.
- These sketches must be read in conjunction with other relevant architectural, structural, mechanical and electrical drawings and all relevant sections of the specification.
- All dimensions and sizing of steel / aluminium profiles, anchors, brackets and other accessories should be justified by structural calculations and manufacturer's recommendations. however, such dimensions and sizing should be not less than the minimum sizes as specified in technical specifications.
- The purpose of these sketches is to show the general design intent of the specified system and Ramboll is not the system designer.
- The specialist facade access / fall protection contractor should produce the final design and calculations in the capacity of the system designer as defined in BS 7883:2019 and should refer to architectural drawings for all crucial dimensions.
- Any discrepancies should be brought to the attention of the engineer and resolved prior to commencement of any work.
- The performance should meet the requirements of the specification at all times.

Station Hill Phase 3, Reading

16200XXXXX

South Elevation

16200XXXXX-RAM-XX-XX-FA-003

Rev	Date	Drawn by	Checked by
P01	16/01/24	KA	GG

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