

## 6.0 Application Scheme Summary





# 6.0 Application Scheme Summary

## 6.1 Scheme Summary & Key Benefits

Option 4 is the scheme submitted for planning as updated in September 2022 (application reference 2021/2954/P). Following the recent listing of 10-12 Museum Street and 35 and 37 New Oxford Street the application is being withdrawn, to be replaced by an amended Planning and Listed Building Consent application which responds to the Grade II status of these buildings. This section summarises the scheme proposals including the West Central Street site (see site map of page 43).

The submitted scheme aims to redevelop the currently vacant and derelick Selkirk House and West Central Street site to create a sensitive and high quality new urban neighbourhood through a landscape and public realm-led framework to deliver wide-reaching public benefits. The masterplan incorporates office and new homes, including much-needed affordable housing.

The proposed development provides the opportunity to regenerate this strategically important site through the demolition and refurbishment of the existing poor-quality buildings and replacement with a highly sustainable mixed-use development.

The application includes associated highway and public realm works. The landscaping proposals deliver both additional and much improved public realm on the site, as well as communal and private open space for the residential and office occupiers including residential gardens, roof terraces, play spaces and enhanced biodiversity.

Specifically, the proposed development will comprise:

- A series of new buildings across the site, ranging in height from 6 storeys to 19 storeys.
- The provision of 44 homes, totalling 3,992 sqm (GIA). This includes replacing existing residential space and an additional 19 affordable homes equating to 50.1% affordable housing on a floorspace uplift basis.
- The provision of 22,650 sqm GIA of office floorspace (Class E(g)(i))
- 1,481sqm GIA of flexible town centre uses floorspace (Class E)

The masterplan introduces a new pedestrian route through the site to increase permeability and tie the site to its surrounding area – Vine Lane as a north-south axis connecting New Oxford Street and High Holborn, reinstating an historic route.

Building on the development brief and principles, the submitted scheme provides high-quality, sustainable work spaces, homes, a town centre uses set in a public-realm led masterplan. The proposals will generate a significant amount of employment in construction and end-use.

The objective is to generate high-quality work spaces, homes, a sense of place, sustainable enterprise and employment across the whole site.

The proposed development seeks to deliver this through:

- Shaping a liveable and vibrant neighbourhood with character and authenticity;
- Interacting with streets and public spaces, providing animation at different times of the day / week;
- Creating sufficient critical mass of appropriate, diverse and complementary commercial uses that are sensitive to the current context;
- Curating uses that respond to local needs: knitting the new and existing communities together across a range of amenities including places to relax and socialise;
- Generating meaningful physical, social and economic connections with the wider area contributing to a thriving local economy.

The proposed development is designed to be inclusive, with high-quality homes provided for a broad range of people.



Axonometric View of Proposed Masterplan



# 6.0 Application Scheme Summary

## 6.1 Scheme Summary & Key Benefits

### Key Benefits

Overall, the masterplan proposals will deliver:

- A high-quality mixed-use development, providing workspace for up to 1,571 workers on the site of the vacant Selkirk House
- 44 new homes on site, including family sized affordable homes
- A sustainable development designed for longevity, adaptability and sustainability targeting BREEAM outstanding and Nabeers 5\*
- Substantial improvements to the public spaces on Museum Street and West Central Street, with new seating and plants, to improve safety and reduce anti-social behaviour
- New shops, restaurants and cafes bringing more footfall to the area throughout the day in the evenings
- A new pedestrian route through the site from High Holborn to West Central Street – called Vine Lane
- £15m in business rates per year for the Council to spend on local services and infrastructure
- Maximised retention of the existing Selkirk house basement and replacement of the building with a new development built for longevity, adaptability and sustainability
- Employment and training opportunities for local people
- The ground floor land uses are distributed across the site in order to maximise site activation
- Increase in local footfall and economic activity
- Cycle networks enhancements
- Microclimate, biodiversity, run-off reductions to mitigate local flooding.
- Addressing the ecological emergency by creating a valuable local addition of biodiversity in an Area of Deficiency through public access to nature by providing significant biophilic benefits for occupiers, their guests and the public. The scheme will deliver an Urban Greening Factor of 0.3 as a minimum.
- The scheme seeks to lower CO2 emissions by removing fossil fuel (gas) for the purpose of heating and cooling from the site, including the new Affordable Homes
- CO2 is also lowered through the removal of nearly 200 car parking spaces and encouraging sustainable travel choices by making use of a highly accessible brownfield site that is suitable for intensification of land uses
- Targetting Well Platinum and Wiredscore Gold accreditations

The proposed development provides the opportunity to regenerate this strategically important site through the refurbishment of the existing poor-quality buildings and replacement with a highly sustainable mixed-use development. The proposed development will deliver all the key master planning requirements and uses specified by the Local Plan (2017), the Holborn Vision and Urban Strategy (2019), and the Draft Site Allocations Plan (2020), providing the opportunity to deliver a wide range of planning and public benefits.

We believe that these proposals, as illustrated in this Design and Access Statement contribute to the townscape and the provide further affirmation of the local area as a beautiful place to live and work in London.



Proposed View along new public pedestrian route - Vine Lane (looking north)

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## 7.0 Key Findings & Conclusion



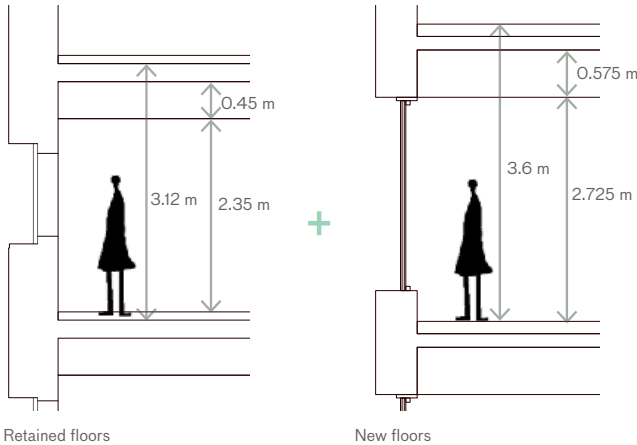


# 7.0 Key Findings & Conclusion

## 7.1 Key Findings

### Key Findings

- When seeking to assess the sustainability of development options for a site such as Selkirk House, **a host of factors** including carbon emissions, economic and social contributions such as affordable housing delivery and contribution to the urban environment and experience **should be taken into account.**
  - Local and regional Planning policy establishes a framework for a holistic approach to sustainability.
  - Recent London Plan Planning guidance seeks that developers to fully consider retaining buildings before demolition is proposed.
- The Selkirk House site sits in an area with high public transport connectivity (PTAL rating 6B) and in an area identified for growth in local planning policy.** A drive to optimise use of land in sustainable locations is reflected in both local, regional and national planning policy. This is in part due to the high carbon impact of travel to less well served locations.
- New build development options offer more efficient land use through an uplift in both floorspace quantum and quality. These options are also able to more fully deliver public and operational benefits** such as public realm design improvements, affordable homes (both through improved viability and optimising the site plan) and direct and indirect economic uplift by accommodating a higher number of workers. The scale and design of the new-build options also enables them to be operationally energy efficient.
- The existing Selkirk House building has design and structural limitations.** These include low floor to ceiling heights across the car park and Selkirk House that would result in 2.35m or lower head height, below minimum guidance for refurbishments
- The existing structure's limited loading capacity** means that additional strengthening - with associated carbon from construction and materials - would be required to enable the building to meet modern standards.
- The inflexible car park structure at floors 0-3 present a key challenge.** The existing car park is a continuously ramped structure with no level floors. In addition the floors have extremely low ceilings and deep floorplates, severely constraining the quality of space that could be provided and potential uses. The design studies undertaken conclude that the car park slabs would need to be demolished and the space rebuilt as the limitations of the existing space cannot be satisfactorily overcome. However, as the car park forms part of the supporting structure for the tower, substantial temporary works would be required to support the Selkirk House tower while redevelopment was carried out. These are associated with additional upfront carbon.
- Option 1 has been assessed for completeness, however can only be safely occupied at less than half the density of a standard office due to limitations on the fire escapes.** This constraint severely limits the usefulness of the space and demand from occupiers, making it economically unsustainable.
- Option 2 has been included as a retention baseline. It incorporates major modifications to elements including the cores to allow the safe occupation in line with current codes.** However, the investment and area loss required to incorporate the modifications required to bring the building's capacity up to a market standard occupational capacity would require considerable additional NIA to be delivered to enable a viable development.
- Option 3 incorporates further modification through expanding the floorplates of the existing building.** This results in an uplift in area compared to options 1 and 2. However the result would produce a greater level of poor quality floorspace as it maintains the characteristics of the existing building. The deeper floorplates of option 3 combined with the low floor to ceiling height would result in poor daylight levels to the middle of floors and exacerbate the feeling of the low ceiling height for users.
- Options 4 and 5 represent the planning application scheme, with the addition of a new build basement for option 5.** These options deliver good floor to ceiling height of 2.8m with a centralised core and flexible, adaptable floorplans.
- Active ground floors are supported in planning policy and key to creating enjoyable, safe spaces. **Options 1-2 offer a limited ability to improve the current, poor street level experience, as they require retention of much of the inactive frontage.** Active frontage is increased in option 3, however option 4 (and 5) offers the most holistic ground floor improvement through enabling the creation of Vine Lane and providing retail spaces and entrances on all sides of the site.
- Demolition of existing buildings and replacement with new buildings incurs a meaningful upfront embodied carbon impact when compared to options that retain existing structures.** This is to be expected given that the building structures typically represent a substantial proportion of the upfront embodied carbon associated with construction. This is reflected in the carbon assessment which finds that option 1 represents less upfront embodied carbon than option 4.
- When taking in account the overall embodied carbon associated with a building across a standard 60 year lifespan, the gap between the level of emissions of retained and new build options per m2 of space narrows substantially.**
- When compared to industry benchmarks the overall embodied carbon emissions per m2 associated with **option 4 is 1,112 kgCO2e/m2, below the GLA benchmark of 1,400.**



Retained vs New Build Floor to Ceiling Height

# 7.0 Key Findings & Conclusion

## 7.1 Key Findings

### Key Findings

• **Retaining the existing structure significantly impacts the capacity, quality and flexibility of the finished building.** These factors contribute to additional embodied carbon that is not captured by RICS methodology. Poorer quality workspace is let on shorter leases to less stable tenants. **The resulting anticipated turnover frequency increases likelihood of regular major refurbishment to keep up with market demand and a greater frequency of tenant fit-out activity. This incurs additional embodied carbon across the buildings’ lifetime.** The impact on a substantially shorter average tenancy options 1-3 compared with option 4 and 5 results in higher level of associated carbon per m2 over a 60 year period from the increased quantum of Cat-B fit-outs. Taking into account the more frequent refurbishment cycles anticipated with options 1-3 the difference in WLC emissions between retention and redevelopment narrow significantly, with options 4-5 performing marginally better.

• **When comparing operational energy, the options present broadly similar results with the new build options performing marginally better.** The opportunity to further improve this performance through detailed design and while in use is significantly great for options 4 and 5 due to the design flexibility offered by a new build and the economic viability of incorporating higher performing systems.

• **Options which increase the density and productivity of the site are associated with commensurate uplifts in public benefits.** In terms of affordable housing delivery, option 2 would be required to deliver around 1,928sqm GIA of additional residential floorspace of which 38% would be required to be affordable equating to 733sqm GIA. **Option 4 would be required to deliver over double the amount of affordable residential floorspace (1,787sqm GIA).**

• With an occupation density ratio of 1:10 applied to options 2-5, **options 4 and 5 would accommodate over 500 more people (1,571)** compared to option 3 (1,037). This uplift in employment offers direct local benefits in terms of employment opportunities, as well as indirect benefits of local spend. Options 4 and 5 also generate less operational carbon per employee accommodated.

• **Options 2 and 3 perform reasonably well against some of the sustainability factors** and provide an uplift in area. However, these options do not address the existing limitations of the building. **They result in a compromised outcome that would generate additional embodied carbon through its life-span and are not able to secure the majority of the wider benefits of options 4 and 5.**

• **When taking holistic sustainability factors into account option 4 – the planning submission – represents the best outcome against the criteria for redevelopment of the Selkirk House site.** This option is associated with higher whole life carbon per m2 than the option 1. Over a 60 year lifespan is the equivalent to the carbon displaced by around 2.5 weeks by Whitelee Windfarm in Eaglesham Moor\*. Arguably over time, taking into account additional factors such as travel connectivity, and the way it is likely to be adapted and refitted in use, this will result in the lowest carbon option of all over its life.

• **WLC emissions of option 4 per m2 are also lower than option 5 through the retention of the existing basement.**

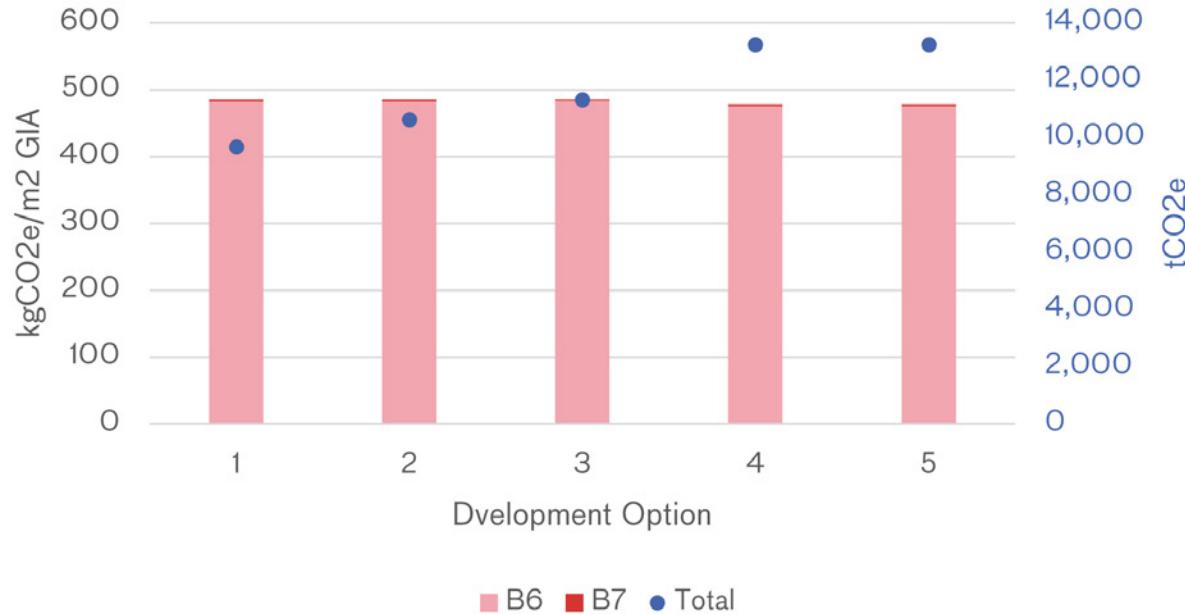
\* Whitelee Windfarm holds 215 turbines (source: <https://www.whitelee-windfarm.co.uk/>). With 2-3MW capacity these turbines produce an estimated 6 million kwh electricity per annum, equivalent to about 1,398tCO2e

Embodied Carbon Comparison



Embodied Carbon Comparison - refer to the Life Cycle Modules diagram (included on section 5.0) for details on the scope of the different modules

Operational Energy and Water



Operational Carbon Comparison - refer to the Life Cycle Modules diagram (included on section 5.0) for details on the scope of the different modules

## 7.0 Key Findings & Conclusion

### 7.2 Conclusion

This report sets out to assess whether it is appropriate to retain the existing Selkirk House in full or in part, or whether a new build scheme represents a better use of the site. It distils a huge amount of work by the design team over an extended period of time to review a far wider range of options and individual decisions and it represents these in the form of five options. The criteria against which theses should be judged are set out, and a rigorous and transparent methodology adopted for their assessment.

Whilst carbon emitted in creating the development and in use is given appropriate focus, wider considerations must be taken into account to assess holistically the environmental price and the resulting benefits of the scheme. The carbon accounting for the production of the building does not consider how and by how many people the development will be used, nor how they will get there and use it. It does not consider the quality and enduring appeal of the resulting product and therefore its utility and inevitable adaptation over time.

Whilst the planning application scheme (option 4) is not the best in every category, on holistic review of all the measures it provides the majority of benefits whilst minimising impacts, including carbon as measured by RICS. Importantly though, in delivering a higher quality, more flexible building with the urban benefits of public realm and active ground floor, it best meets the tests of utility and enduring appeal. This therefore represents the best investment of carbon. Arguably over time, taking into account additional factors such as travel connectivity, and the way it is likely to be adapted and refitted in use, this will result in the lowest carbon option of all over its life.

A review of the site shows that the existing building has a number of significant limitations, even before considering the age of the structure and the modifications that have taken place over time. The sloping and deep floors for car park, constrained headroom on the tower and small cores for lifts and fire escape mean that it is not possible to bring the building back into use without major modifications and temporary support. Option 1 is therefore not a workable option.

The analysis finds then that inevitably new build results in greater carbon invested up front, but that the difference between the options on a m2 basis, even on the relatively narrow RICS criteria is modest on a Whole Life Carbon basis.

In absolute terms the carbon emitted is materially greater for the larger options, but this is principally the result of creating more built area. This is supported by planning policy, and it is this additional density on the site that allows a number of the benefits to be delivered. Those most closely linked being housing (including affordable) and employment. If we consider there is a growing demand for space, the strong conclusion of planning policy and of the application team is that doing this on previously developed sites well served by public transport is far preferable to more remote or greenfield sites. Whilst it is outside the scope of this report, the carbon emitted for occupier journeys to and from any development through its life are material to the wider sustainability of our built environment.

Whilst the carbon emitted in development is significant, the report shows that all the options perform well against benchmarks and the ability to reduce carbon in use for the new build schemes is greater. The project team have a commitment to minimise carbon through the development.

Another point central to the discussion is the quality of the space created. The impacts on its utility over time and the likely cycle of adaptation and re-invention of poor quality space all has a carbon price. The report shows that when these scenarios are taken into account the new build options perform better over time. The existing building has already seen significant modification and change of use in the tower and the indication is that as the fundamental characteristics of the building cannot be changed this cycle will only be maintained and accelerate.

There are a number of other benefits identified in the report that can only be delivered through the new build, reconfiguring of site, public realm, and street activation. These are more difficult to quantify, but are certainly material to the consideration of the options.

The planning application scheme is targeting BREEAM outstanding and NABERS 5\* (based on actual energy in use) and the applicant is committed to seeking improvements in both embodied and operational carbon performance from the baseline established in the WLC report submitted.

Amongst the local benefits delivered by the scheme are the 19 new affordable homes (representing over 50% of the new residential floorspace), and a substantial improvement in public realm including a new pedestrian route - Vine Lane.

The proposed building would accommodate around 1,500 workers (at 1:10 occupancy), at least 50% more than option 3 and thus provide a substantial economic uplift from a currently vacant and derelict site. The scheme addresses the ecological emergency by creating a valuable local addition of biodiversity in an Area of Deficiency in public access to nature and an Urban Greening Factor of 0.3. The scheme will also lower CO2 emissions by replacing nearly 200 car parking spaces from the area as well as removing fossil fuel (gas) for heating and cooling from the site.

Subject to planning, the next stage of detailed design and advances in technology offer the opportunity to improve the scheme further in regard to operational and embodied carbon, while retaining the wider benefits that the proposals are able to deliver.



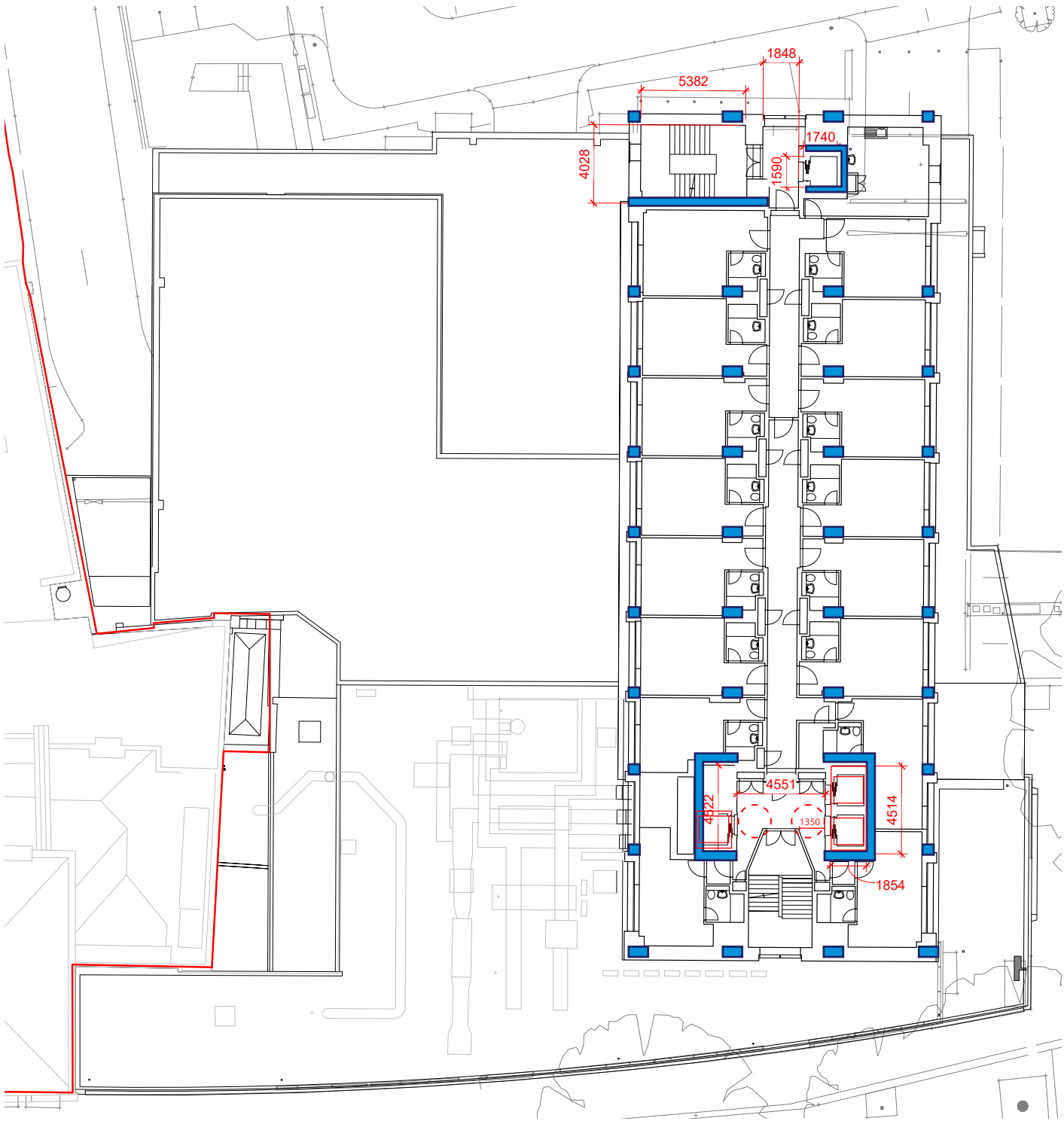
# Appendix





Typical Floor Plan Diagrams

Option 1 - Maximum Retention & Retrofit



Typical Floor Plan - Option 1

■ Retained Structure (refer to Structural Review section)



Typical Floor Plan Diagrams

Option 2 - Maximum Retention & Extension

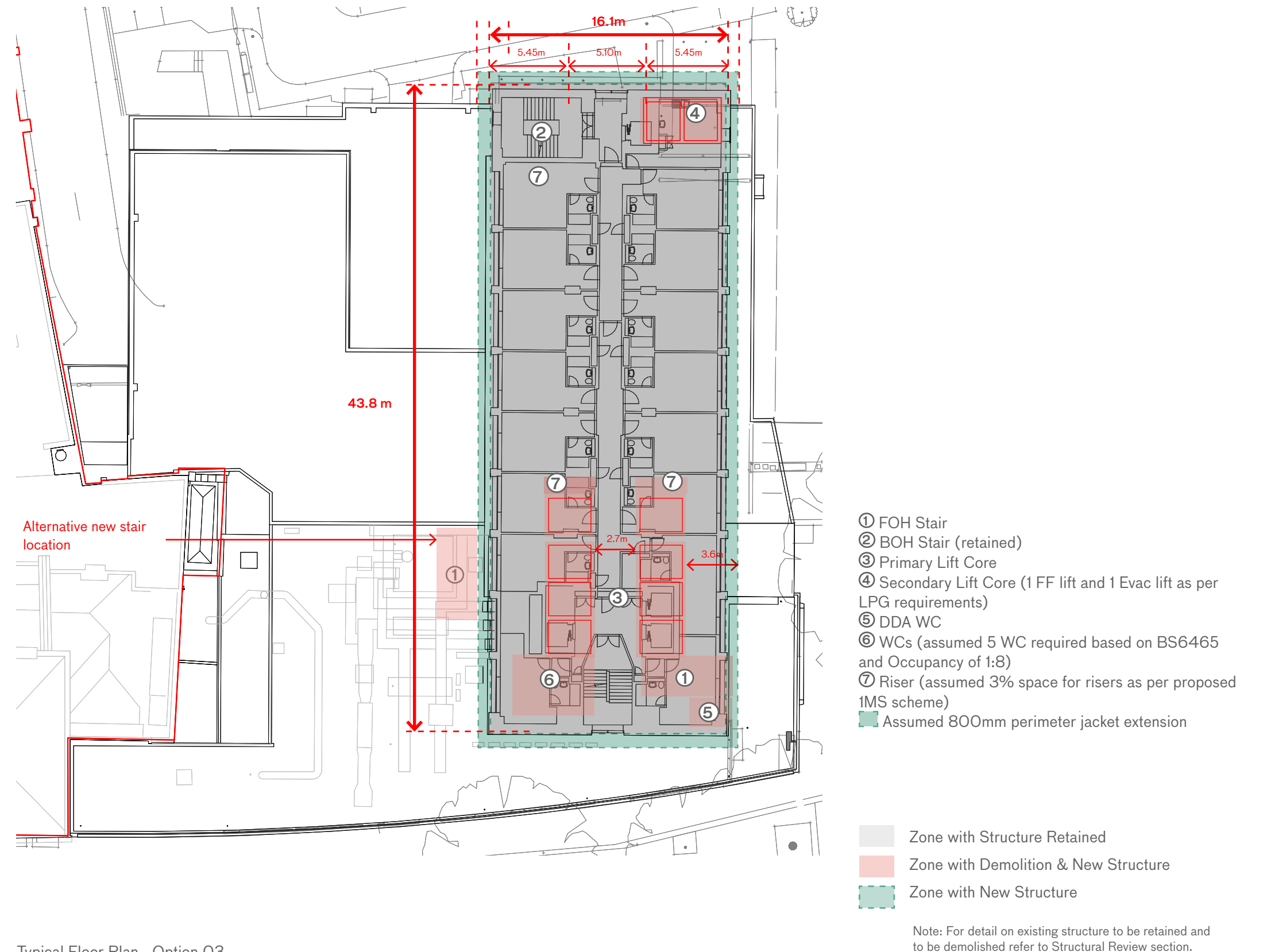


Typical Floor Plan - Option 02



## Typical Floor Plan Diagrams

### Option 3 - Partial Retention & Extension



Typical Floor Plan - Option 03



Typical Floor Plan Diagrams

Option 4 - Basement Retention & New Build  
(same for Option 5)



Typical Floor Plan - Option 04 (New build)



