

6.12 A Tower Responding to its Context

Summarising the Relationship of the Developed Tower Design to Notable Context in Camden

As initially described in Chapter 4.4, the developed tower design establishes a thoughtful relationship with Camden’s architectural heritage, particularly its notable tall buildings such as Centre Point, Space House, and the Old Camden Town Hall Annex. These structures are characterized by their calm, ordered facade articulation and distinctive materiality, which have informed the tower’s design approach.

The refined facade of the tower embraces a similar sense of rhythm and proportion, ensuring it complements its context while asserting its own identity. The use of vertical divisions and a cohesive material palette echoes the clarity and elegance seen in these Camden landmarks, while the tower’s massing and articulation balance solidity and transparency to create a sculptural yet approachable presence.

By integrating these principles, the tower not only contributes to Camden’s evolving skyline but also honours the borough’s architectural legacy through a design that is contemporary yet contextually sensitive.

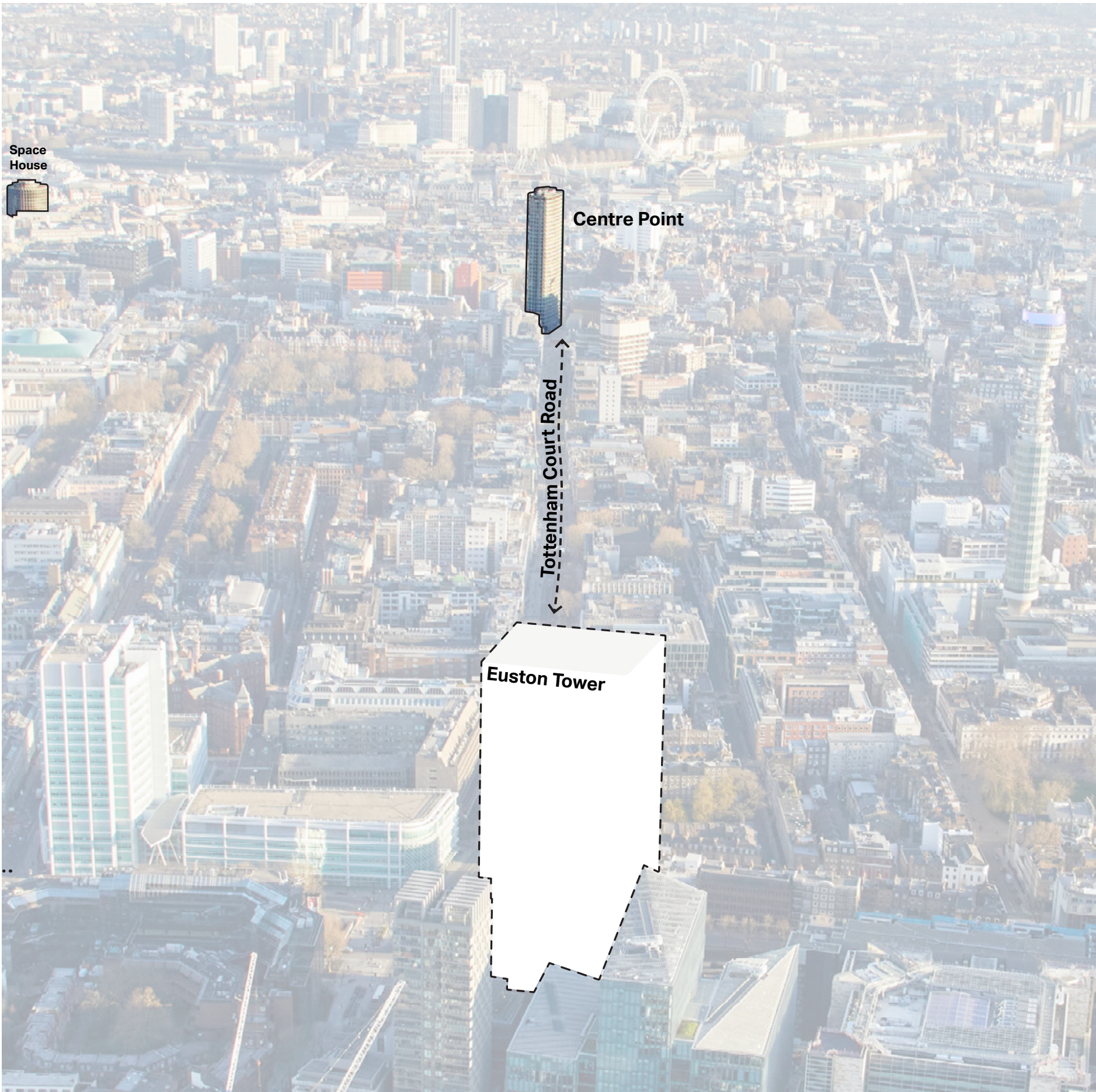
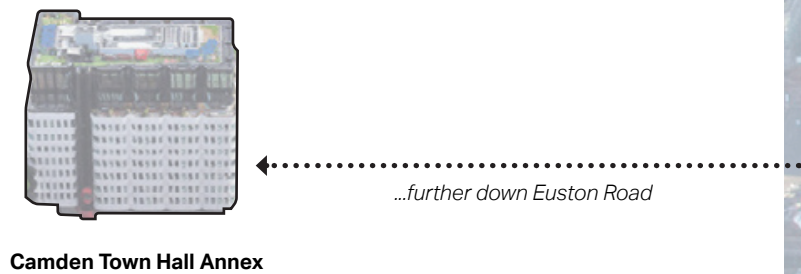
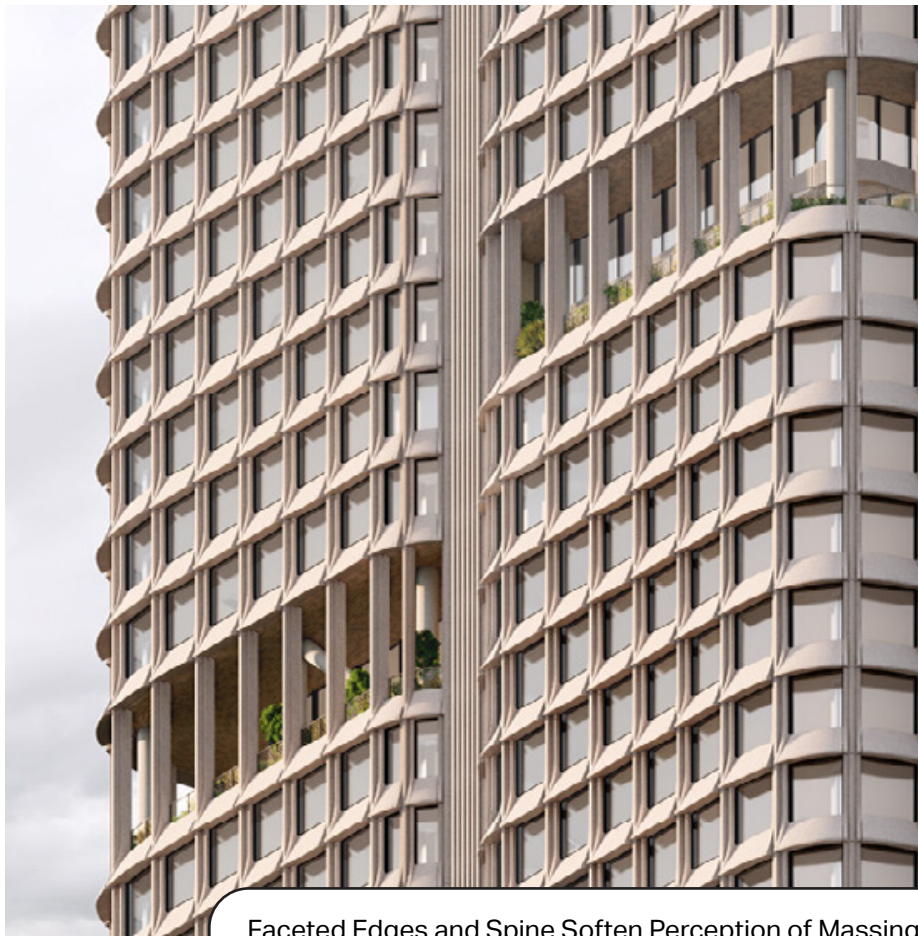
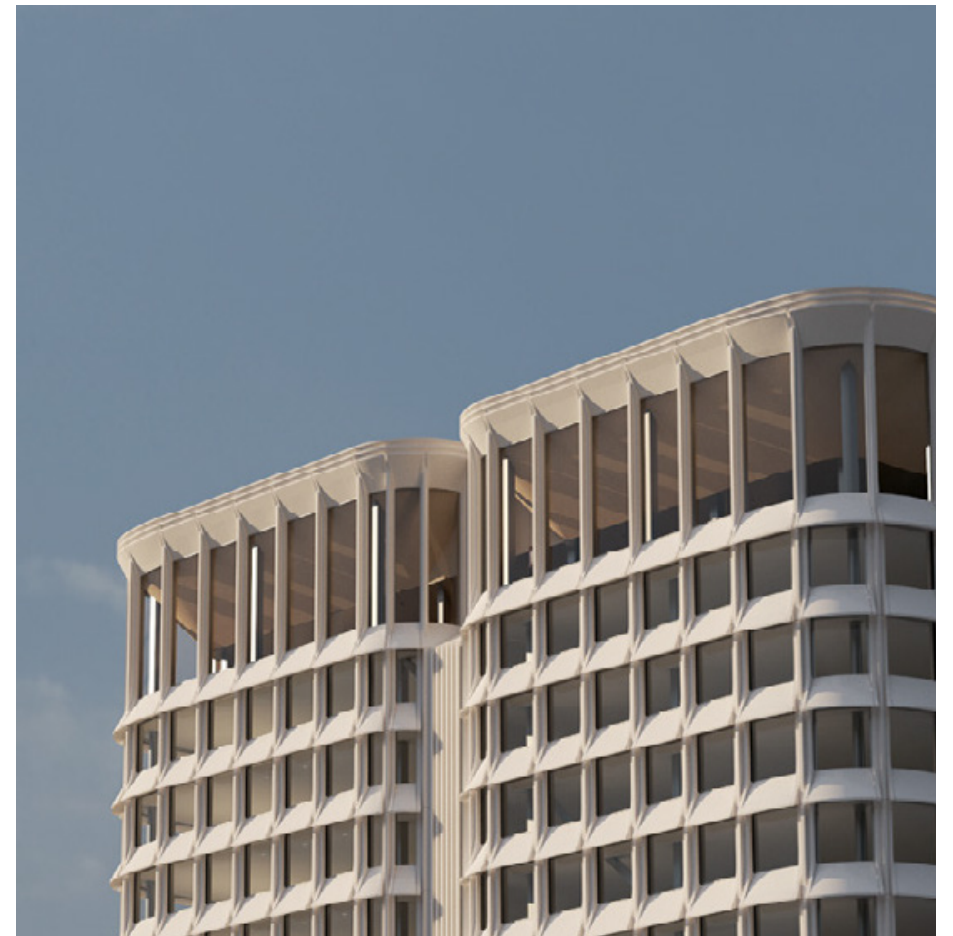


Diagram - “A Conversation Across Tottenham Court Road” making a contextual link to Centre Point, as well as other notable buildings in Camden

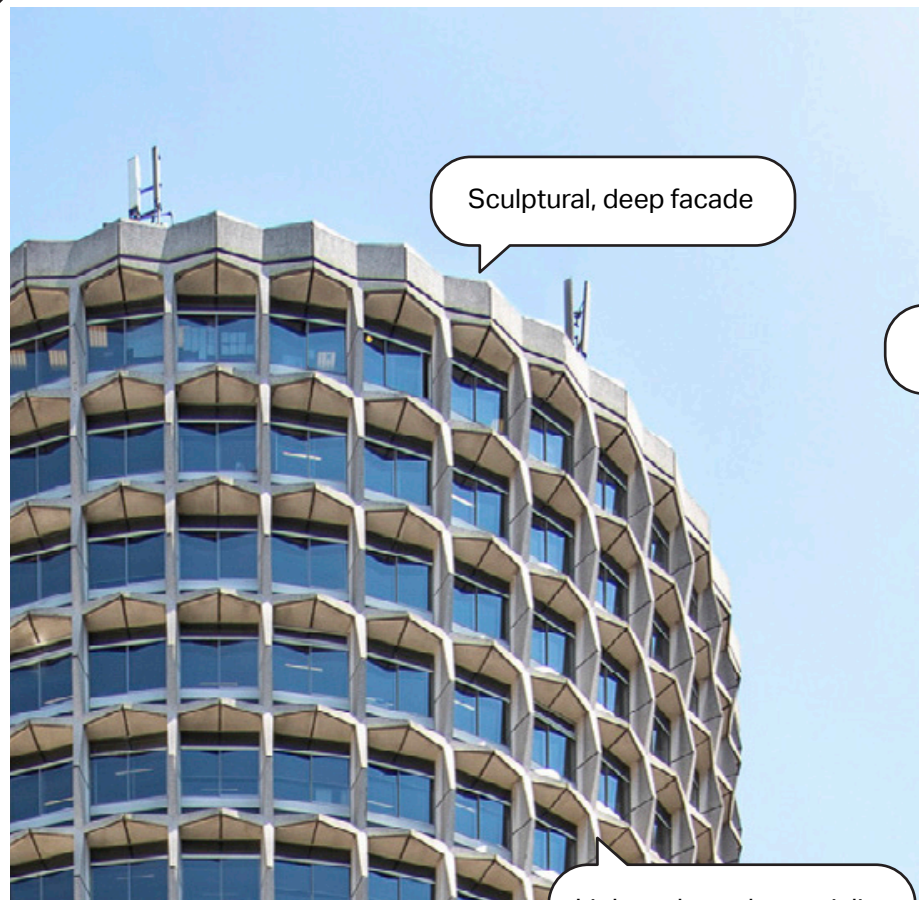


Faceted Edges and Spine Soften Perception of Massing



Upstands in facade

Photograph - Camden Town Hall Annex



Sculptural, deep facade

Light-coloured materiality

Photograph - Space House



Articulated crown

Regular facade rhythm

Photograph - Centre Point

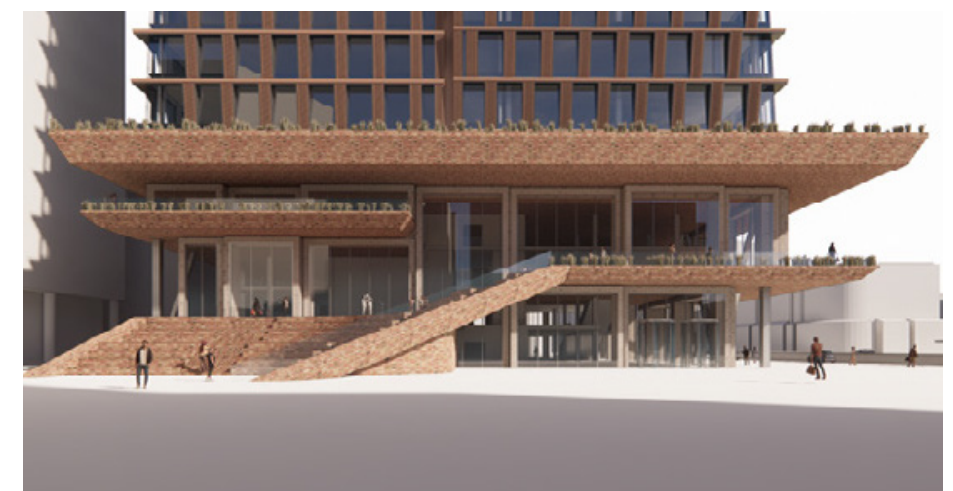
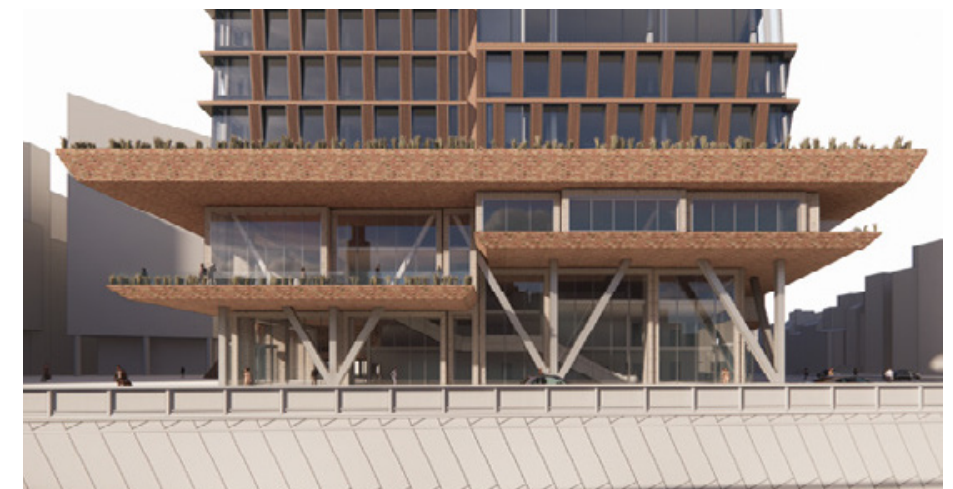
6.13 Podium Articulation Evolution

Podium Articulation Evolution (December 2023 Application)

The podium articulation has evolved in conjunction with the development of the podium massing.

The initial concept for podium articulation was a design which simultaneously differentiated the podium façade from the tower façade so that the podium would be seen as separate from the tower while also portraying a consistency in materiality and geometry which would tie the building together as one.

The following design studies illustrate how the podium articulation has developed while keeping the central concept consistent. Principally, the podium protrudes out as a volume, with the tower setback above. Most studies feature prominent multiple storey vertical elements which help to define the podium levels above ground floor as a 'volume'.

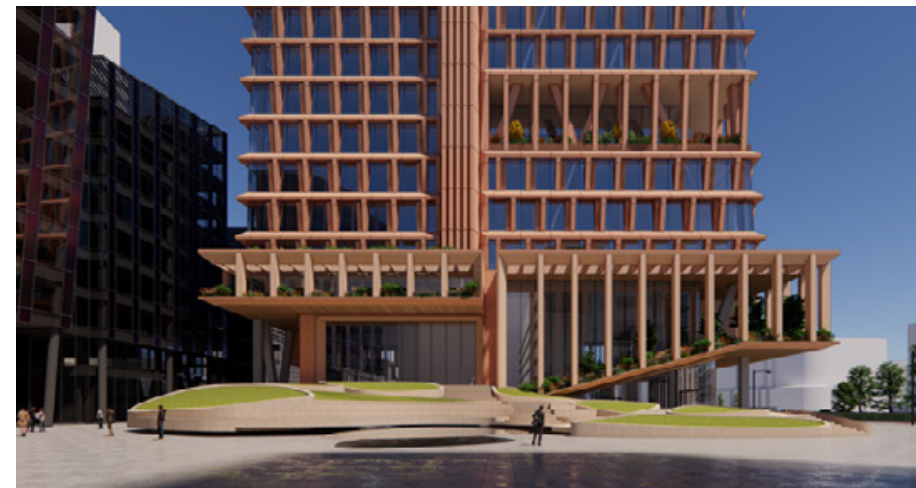
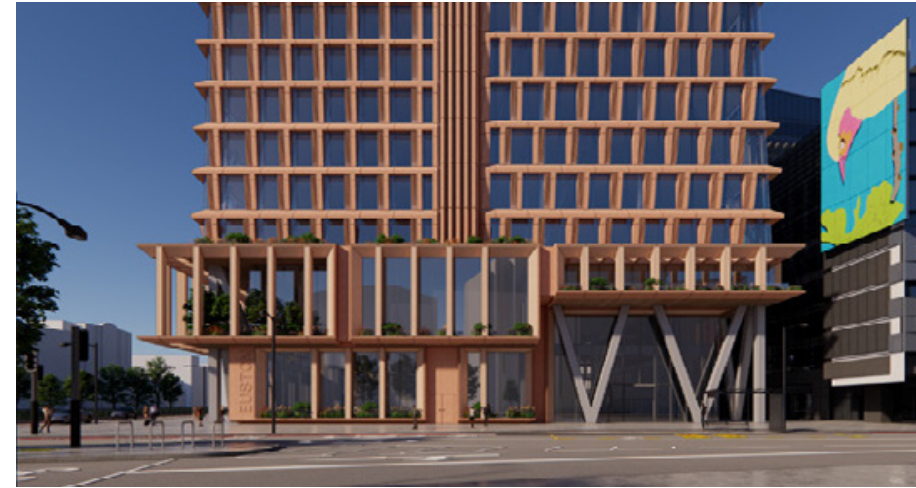


1. Pushed & Pulled Podium Boxes

In early studies the podium articulation concept was developed as vertical podium façade patterning which changed rhythm to match pushed in and pulled out podium boxes

2. Simplifying Podium Massing

When the front faces of the podium boxes were aligned and the north-western corner was lifted up at the main Regent's Place Plaza entrance, the podium articulation was simplified and emphasis was put on the ability of slab lines mimicking the tower façade's horizontal shading elements to indicate triple height entrance spaces.



3. Framed Boxes

The podium articulation was further developed to frame each of the podium boxes as their own elements. The podium boxes have vertical façade elements spaced in a varied but regular rhythm

4. Simplifying Podium Articulation Rhythm

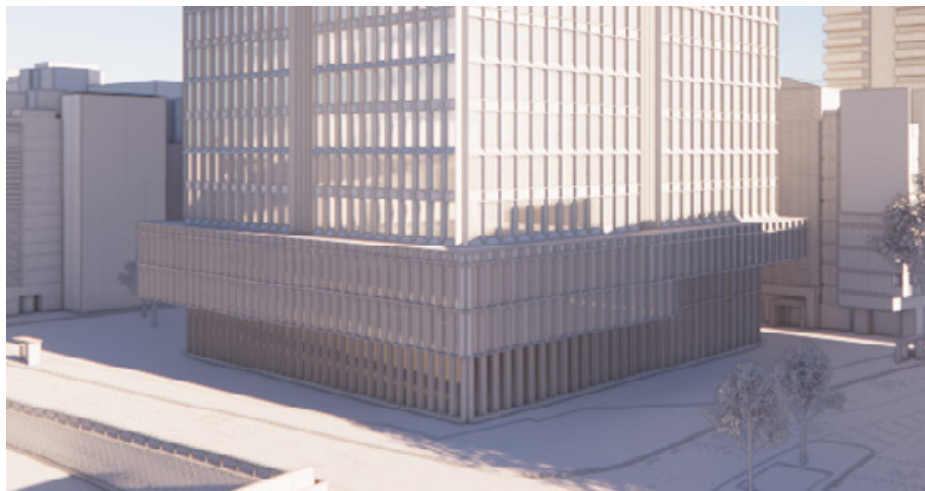
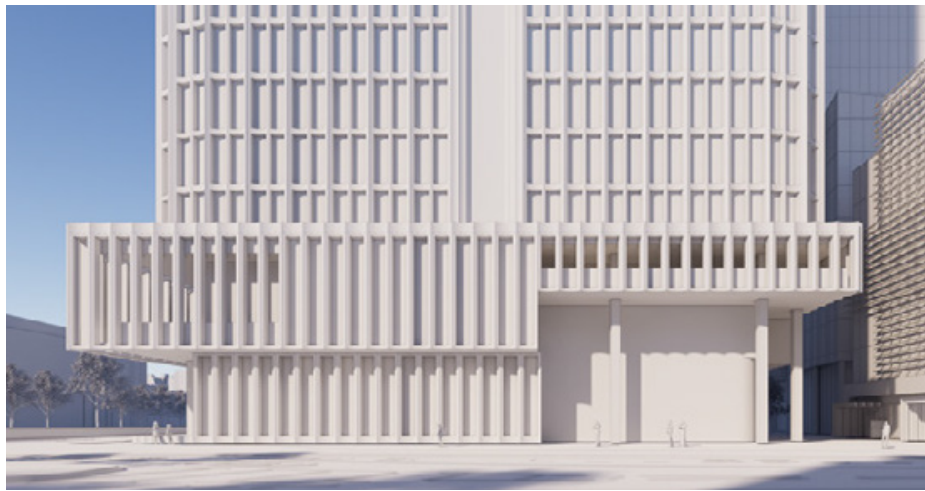
The north-eastern corner of the podium boxes was lifted up at the corner of Brock Street and Hampstead Road as a gesture to highlight the public entrance along Hampstead Road and create a significant public welcome space on that north-east corner at ground floor. The podium articulation was simplified further and vertical façade elements are spaced at regular intervals

5. Consistency with Tower Facade Design

The proposed podium articulation features a façade design which is simplified so that the geometry of vertical elements and the horizontal slab lines reflect the geometrical principles of the tower façade design. Vertical louvres have been incorporated into the podium facade to reflect the evolving podium ventilation strategy and create a consistent and connected design language to the tower facade above

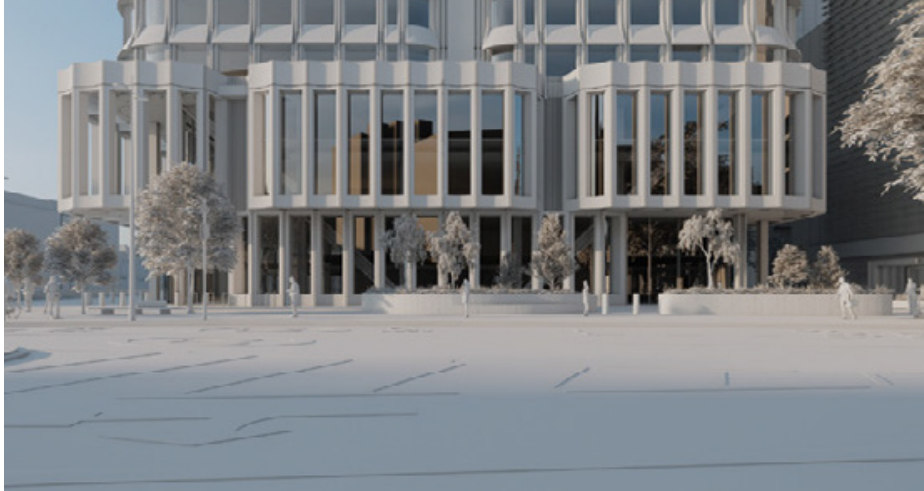
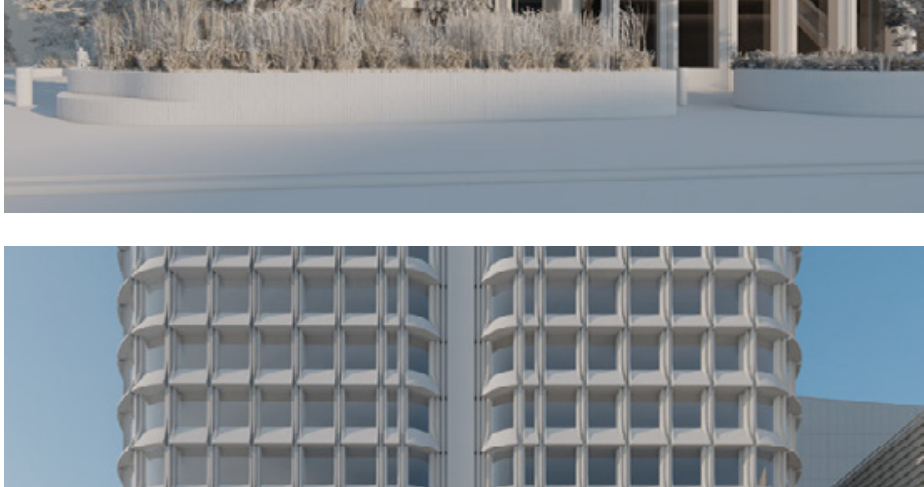
**Podium Articulation Evolution
(Post-December 2023 - The Proposed Development)**

Following the December 2023 planning application, the decision to reconsider the tower and podium massing required a rethinking of the podium facade design and articulation. The feedback received suggested a more regular, calm and ordered approach to the podium articulation was preferable, and this was a key driver for how the design of the podium facade evolved over 2024. Filleted corners play a key role to tie the podium to the tower massing above. The regular rhythm of vertical elements helps to ground the podium and tie it to buildings in the immediate context covered in the proceeding pages. Careful consideration was then given to detailing and ornamentation of spandrels and window framing.



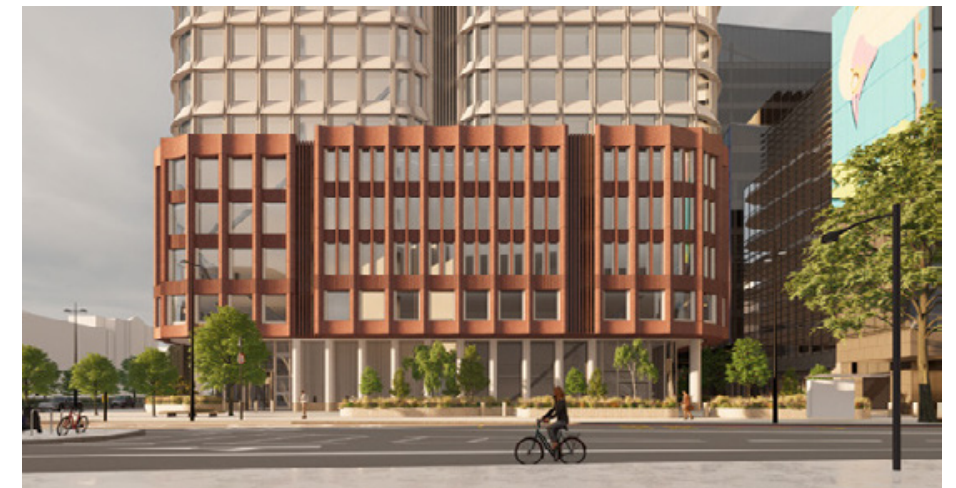
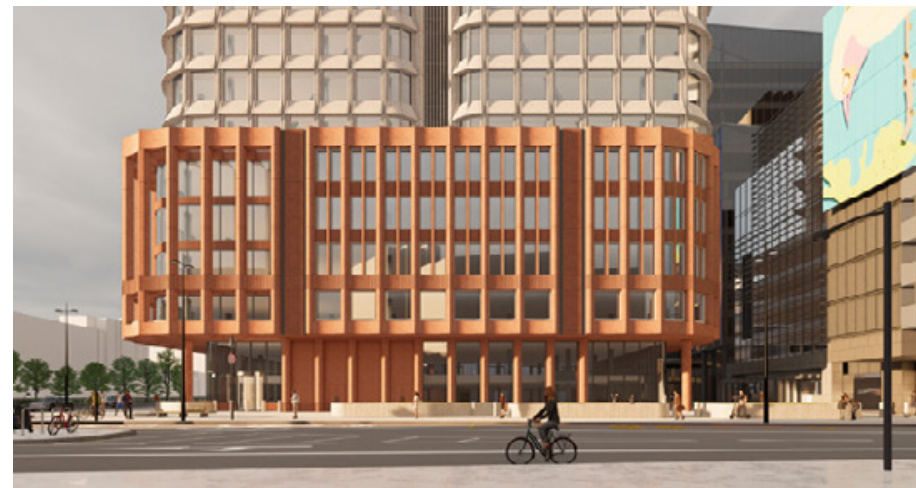
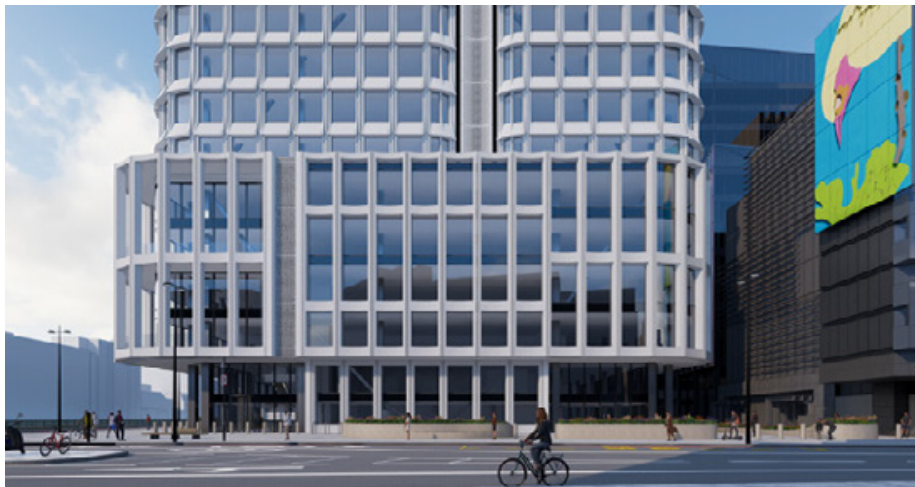
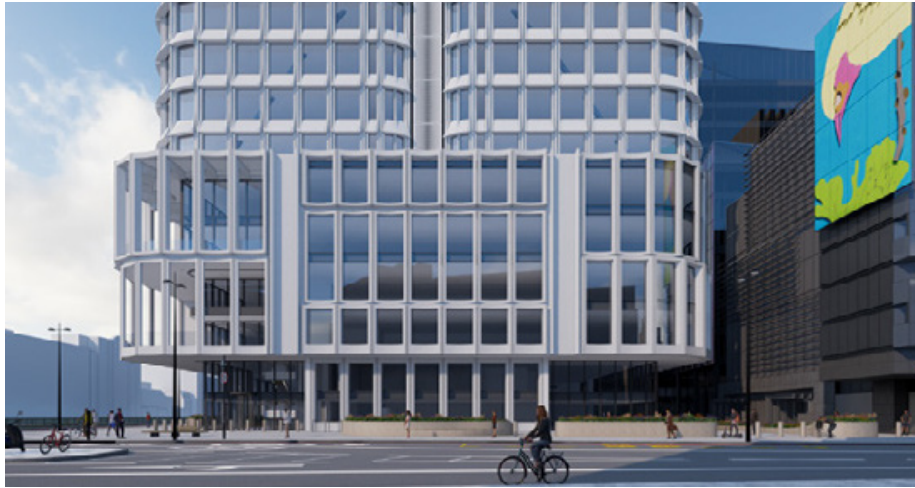
6. A Rectilinear, Gridded Approach to the Facade and Articulation

Following the orthogonal massing change, a more regular rhythm for the podium facade design evolved, to better reflect the calmer form.



7. “Breathing Spines” and Rounded Corners

Taking cues from the tower design, smaller “Breathing Spines” were added to express the air-flow and ventilation requirements for the podium spaces, breaking up the repeating facade grid and adding play and depth to the podium facade design. The vertical articulation both helped reinforce a sense of verticality and integrated well with the rounded corners in the massing. Some play of light and shadow was also explored in the larger fluted form in the facade.



8. Articulating an Additional Two Levels

The decision to increase the height of the podium by two levels provided the opportunity to consider it more as a building in its own right, upon which the tower was sitting. The articulation was developed to give these levels more of a defined character, commensurate with its increased scale, whilst also harmonising with the language of the tower above. Changes in elevation, setbacks, fenestration, and rhythm were tested to find an architectural language that related to the tower articulation yet retained its own identity.

9. Learning from Tottenham Court Road

The Tottenham Court Road Streetscape Study, as detailed in sections 6.14 and 6.15, provided a finer grained understanding of the character of the townscape. The study was used as a framework with which to critically evaluate how well the podium facade articulation sat within, and related to, the buildings down Tottenham Court Road. Reinterpreting the recurring features, qualities and proportions found in the conclusion to that analysis helped ground the design evolution of the podium in its specific context.

10. A White Base, White Detailing, and an Address of the Junction

Further work was done to refine the development after the Tottenham Court Rd. Streetscape Study. The warmer terracotta tones that were introduced to reference the red brick heritage of the area were adjusted when tested against the tones of the nearby buildings. Through conversations with planning officers, the GRC mullions and spandrels help add substance and solidity to the fully-glazed areas of facade and the white detailing evolved to better respond to the scale of the individual windows.

6.14 A Podium Responding to its Context

Summarising the Relationship of the Developed Tower Design to Notable Context in Camden

Whilst the proposed design of the tower makes references to Centre Point, the tall buildings book-ending Tottenham Court Road with a shared architectural language, the podium design draws inspiration from the space between the two towers and the architectural language prevalent in the lower rise buildings along Tottenham Court Road. In this way, both the tower and the podium respond to the Proposed Development's prominent location on this historic north-south axis in the city.

Many buildings along the street, including Maple House (141 Tottenham Court Road), the Heal's Department Store, and others, share a common composition: a highly-glazed ground floor with a low upstand at the base, horizontally banded 'piano nobile' levels, vertically articulated upper floors, and a setback or pronounced parapet at the roofline.

The podium adopts these defining characteristics and reinterprets them, creating a strong connection to its neighbours. Its glazed ground floor enhances transparency and openness, encouraging active engagement at street level. The corners on surrounding buildings at the ground floor are sometimes chamfered or filleted at the ground floor. Above, the horizontal banding of the intermediate levels introduces a rhythm that echoes the piano nobile designs typical of the area, providing visual continuity. The upper levels incorporate vertical elements that align with the established streetscape language, reinforcing a sense of order and elegance.

At the top of the podium, a robust parapet and then setback to the tower, ties the design to the contextual framework while signalling a transition to the tower above. By responding to the architectural cues of Tottenham Court Road, the podium ensures that the development integrates into its surroundings, enhancing the street's character and urban fabric.

The following pages analyse and describe, in more detail, the architectural characteristics of a number of notable buildings along Tottenham Court Road - outlined in red on the adjacent diagram. Buildings from both sides of the road were studied with the aim of discovering a prevailing and contextual architectural language with which to develop the podium design.



Diagram - "A Conversation Along Tottenham Court Road" making a contextual link with the podium to the streetscape of Tottenham Court Road

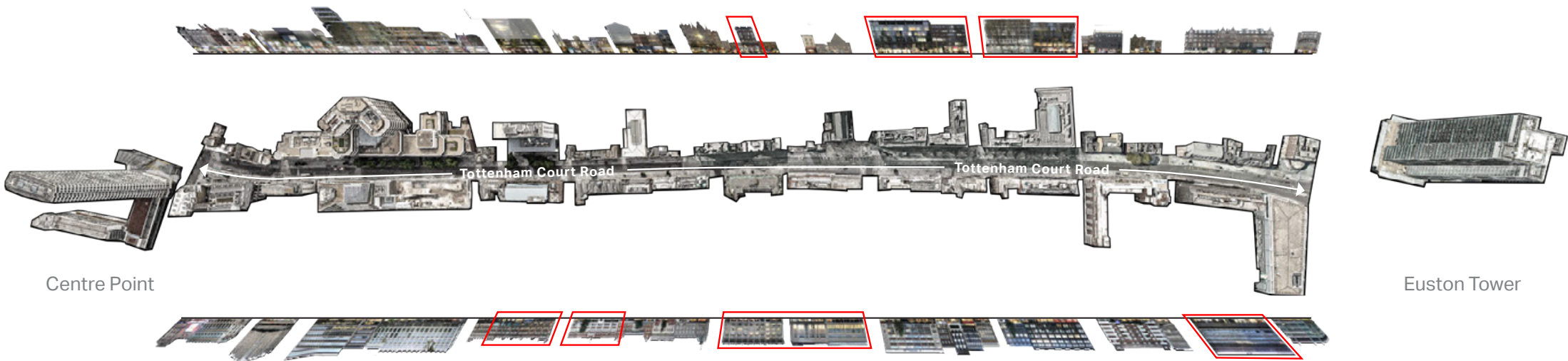


Diagram - Collage plan / street elevation diagram, outlining in red the key buildings studied as part of the Tottenham Court Road Character Study



Photograph - Maple House, Tottenham Court Road

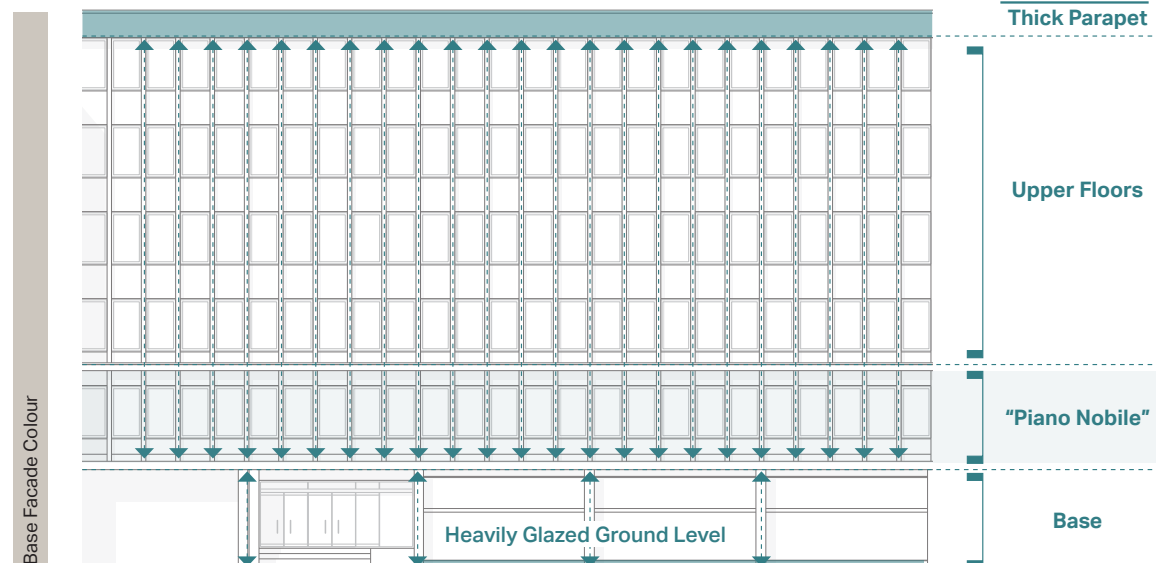


Maple House, 141-149 Tottenham Court Road

Maple House is characterized by a heavily glazed ground level with a short kicker or upstand. The glazed ground floor corner is also chamfered. A thick solid horizontal element oversails the ground level. The two levels above also feature thick horizontal elements and solid banding. The upper floors are defined by a denser vertical regular rhythm in the facade. The horizontal spandrels are consistently solid. Finally, the building culminates with a setback. The facade colour is predominately a muted earthy grey-brown tone with subtle olive undertones.



Photograph - Heal's Department Store (Torrington Place elevation)



Heal's Department Store (Torrington Place Elevation)

The Torrington Place elevation of the Heal's Department Store, is of similar stock - a heavily glazed base with a protruding "Piano Nobile" level above. Upper floors have a regular vertical facade rhythm where the vertical elements protrude out and past the solid horizontal spandrel. There is a vertical format to the fenestration. A thick parapet defines the top of the building. The facade colour is largely a warm light beige with subtle grey undertones.

Heal's Department Store (North)

The Heal's Department Store's ground level features expansive glazing. Exposed columns land periodically at ground level. Above this, a thick, solid band anchors the building and transitions to the upper floors, where a strong vertical rhythm is established through primary vertical elements.

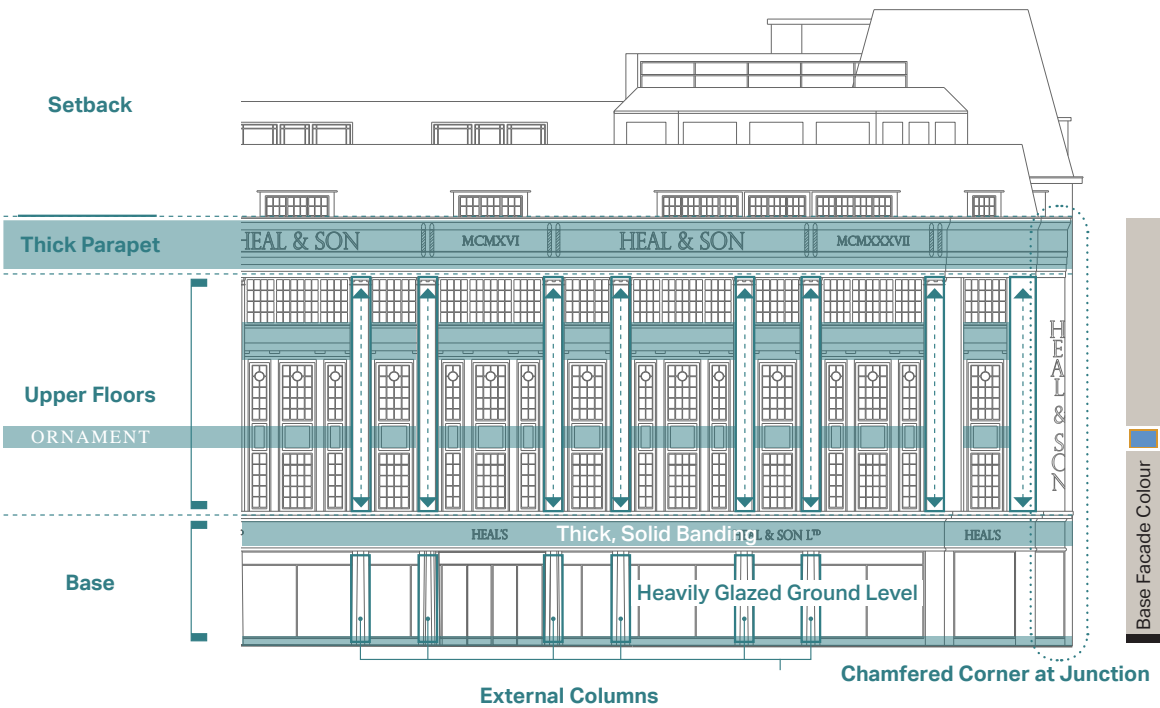
One of the spandrels on the upper levels is adorned with ornamentation, adding texture and visual interest to the facade. This band also features signage for the department store. The fenestration is characterized by a vertical format with framed windows. Solid spandrels further articulate the facade. At the roofline, a prominent parapet provides a robust conclusion to the structure, while an even tighter vertical grid on the higher levels introduces a variation on the established facade rhythm. The base facade colour is a warm light beige while the ornamentation, in contrast, is a cool blue that stands out.



Photograph - Heal's Department Store, Tottenham Court Rd (north elevation)

Heal's Department Store (South)

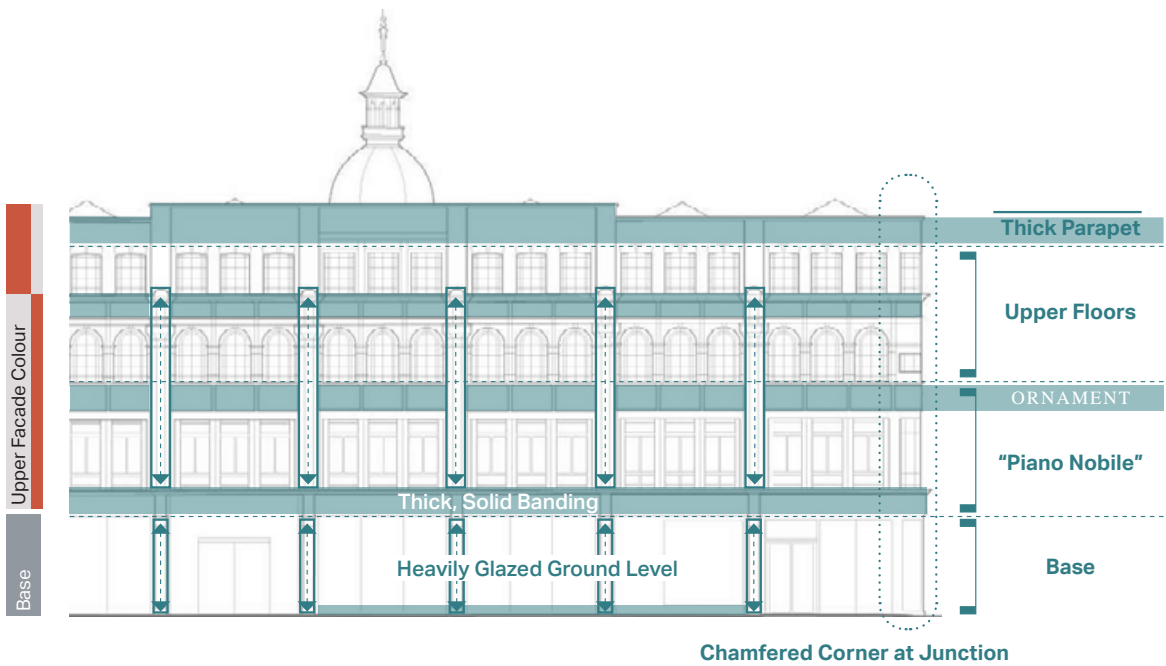
Similar to its North counterpart, Heal's Department Store (South) has a heavily glazed ground level, a thick horizontal band above separating it from upper floors with primary vertical facade elements, a band of striking cool blue ornament located at one of the solid spandrels, a thick parapet at the top, and then a setback. Notably, the entire building mass is chamfered at the corner junction. And the ground floor features a slim dark upstand in contrast to the primarily beige facade colour. The windows are also more heavily visually framed with detailing and a play of depth in the facade.



Photograph - Heal's Department Store, Tottenham Court Rd (south elevation)



Photograph - 220-226 Tottenham Court Road



220-226 Tottenham Court Road

With a regular facade rhythm, 220-226 Tottenham Court Road, features the thick horizontal banding, primary articulated vertical elements, and richly framed windows. One of the middle solid spandrels is ornamented. The corner junction is also chamfered. Unlike the other contextual buildings discussed thus far, the upper floors play with two contrasting colours, grey and a reddish-orange colour that could be described as terracotta. The grey defines main portions of the elevation but is also used for drawing attention to vertical articulation and elements. The terracotta colour on the other hand is used primarily to emphasize a horizontal reading.



Photograph - 227-230 Tottenham Court Road



227-230 Tottenham Court Road

Similar to 220-226 Tottenham Court Road, 227-230 plays with colour to emphasize particular elements. The nearly black heavily glazed ground level, is in sharp contrast to the more solid, and brown hue of the above levels. On the upper floors, a deep warm brown, almost rust coloured, acts as the base colour which is then accented by a soft gold colour with brown undertones used to draw attention to ornamentation, vertical articulation, and the window frames. Still, like many others described thus far, thick horizontal banding, a thick parapet, regular facade rhythm, and a detailed solid spandrel band, make this building a near relative of its neighbours. Glazed windows are predominately of a tall vertical proportion. The corner is also chamfered as a response to the intersection.

101-106 Tottenham Court Road

A more recent addition, 101-106 Tottenham Court Road is largely defined by it's floor-to-ceiling glazing. A smaller horizontal spandrel on every level runs continuously across the facade. The colour is of a neutral grey.



Facade Colour

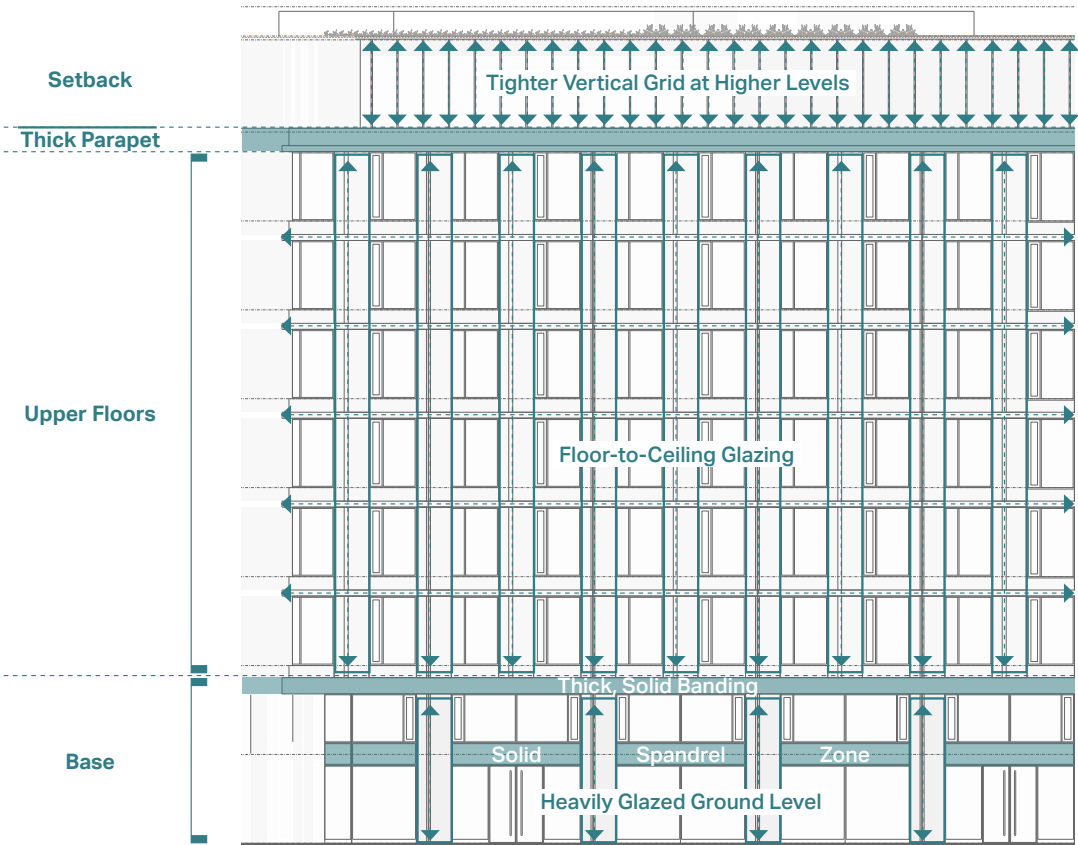


Photograph - 101 - 106 Tottenham Court Road

96-100 Tottenham Court Road (Network Building)

Currently under construction

The Network Building is also a new addition to Tottenham Court Road. There is a striking play of contrasting colour between the darker two ground levels and the brighter colour of the upper floors. The vertical rhythm of the facade densifies higher up the building on the setback above the thick parapet. Floor-to-ceiling glazing makes up the majority of the facade. Subtle variation in the vertical and horizontal elements make the articulation of the facade read as both vertical and horizontal, where clear lines are visible throughout defining each direction.



Upper Facade Colour
Base Facade Colour



Illustrative view - Network Building CGI (image: Piercy&Co. / Studio Archetype)



Photograph - 90 Tottenham Court Road

Upper Facade Colour
Base Facade



90 Tottenham Court Road

With its heavily glazed ground level, thick solid banding, vertical rhythm on upper floors and setback of the top most volume, 90 Tottenham Court Road has very similar principles to what has been mentioned thus far. But, instead of floor-to-ceiling glazing, there is an upstand which increases the height of the horizontal elements. The horizontal elements coloured olive brown are setback from grey vertical elements running continuously on the upper floors. Strikingly, the "Piano Nobile" level is differentiated from ground floor and from the levels above.



Photograph - Goodge Street Station

Upper Facade Colour
Base Facade Colour



Goodge Street Station

Goodge Street Station is broken up into zones by horizontal bands. The first band separating the base from the "Piano Nobile" level above, is of a contrasting colour to the dark base colour of the ground level facade. Above the "Piano Nobile" level, an ornamental band draws the eye. The tan facade above this features a few vertically dominant elements. A thick parapet defines the top of the vertical face of the mass.