

2.0 Site and Context

2.2 Existing Building Appraisal

Condition of the Existing Facade

The design team is currently investigating the condition of the existing façade to understand opportunities for reuse of materials.

The building is clad at ground floor level in marble and the upper floors in Portland stone with anodised bronze spandrel panels within bay recesses. Windows are double glazed with secondary glazing set within anodised bronze frames. Therefore, the team proposes replacing the existing façade with a more energy efficient upgrade. This new design will not only improve the thermal and operational performance of the building but also enhance the well-being of the future occupants.

Additionally, the replacement of the façade will contribute to the whole-life carbon evaluation of the building’s performance.

Glazing and Windows:

Secondary glazed units with 150-200mm gap between panes
External insulated glazing, internal single glazing
Vertical blinds for shading
Horizontal band infill windows with fixed and inward opening sections

Structural Elements:

Reinforced concrete columns, approximately 6 metres centre-to-centre
Columns clad with natural stone, piers approximately 900mm wide

Cladding and Materials:

Ground floor: More durable stone (likely granite)
Levels 1-4: Limestone cladding (possibly Portland stone)
Stone piers: Five stacked slabs per floor height
Spandrel zones: Bronze anodized aluminium panels

Construction Details:

Wider horizontal joints at top and bottom of windows
5mm horizontal mortar joints between stone slabs
Projecting nose on stone cladding

Current Condition:

Dust, dirt accumulation, and biological growth on stonework
Lack of regular cleaning and maintenance

Further Investigations Required:

Concealed facade configuration behind plasterboard



Farringdon Road facade with no active frontage



Areas opened up by the team



Uninviting and defensive facade



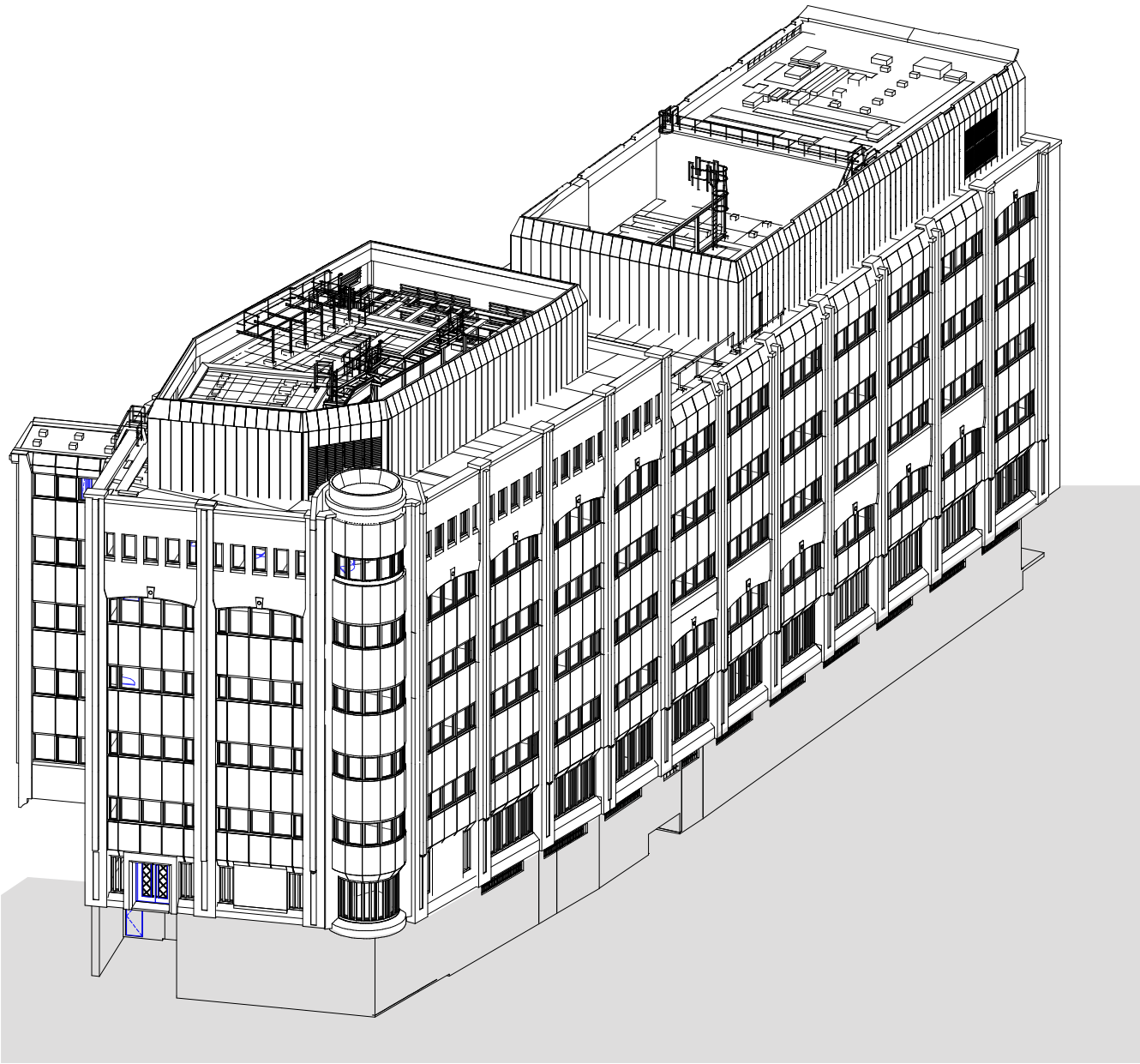
Poor relationship with outside views

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Overview

- Unengaging hierarchy to existing building, clumsy corner feature and very poor ground floor activation on primary facades
- Fails to act as a gateway to Hatton Garden and the London Borough of Camden
- No recognition or invitation to historic Saffron Hill
- Fortified aesthetic purposefully puts off passersby and denies any sense of wellness and nature.
- Very high window cill levels contribute to poor daylighting on the floorplates. The restricted window height further fails to engage with the amazing views out of the building to the local context
- The existing facade build up provides poor thermal performance by todays standards
- Existing in-situ concrete frame with ribbed slabs and floor to floor height of 3.825m
- Roof condition cluttered and overbearing with plant enclosures
- Internally, the existing three core arrangement breaks up the floorplate, reducing efficiency and functionality.



3D model of existing building

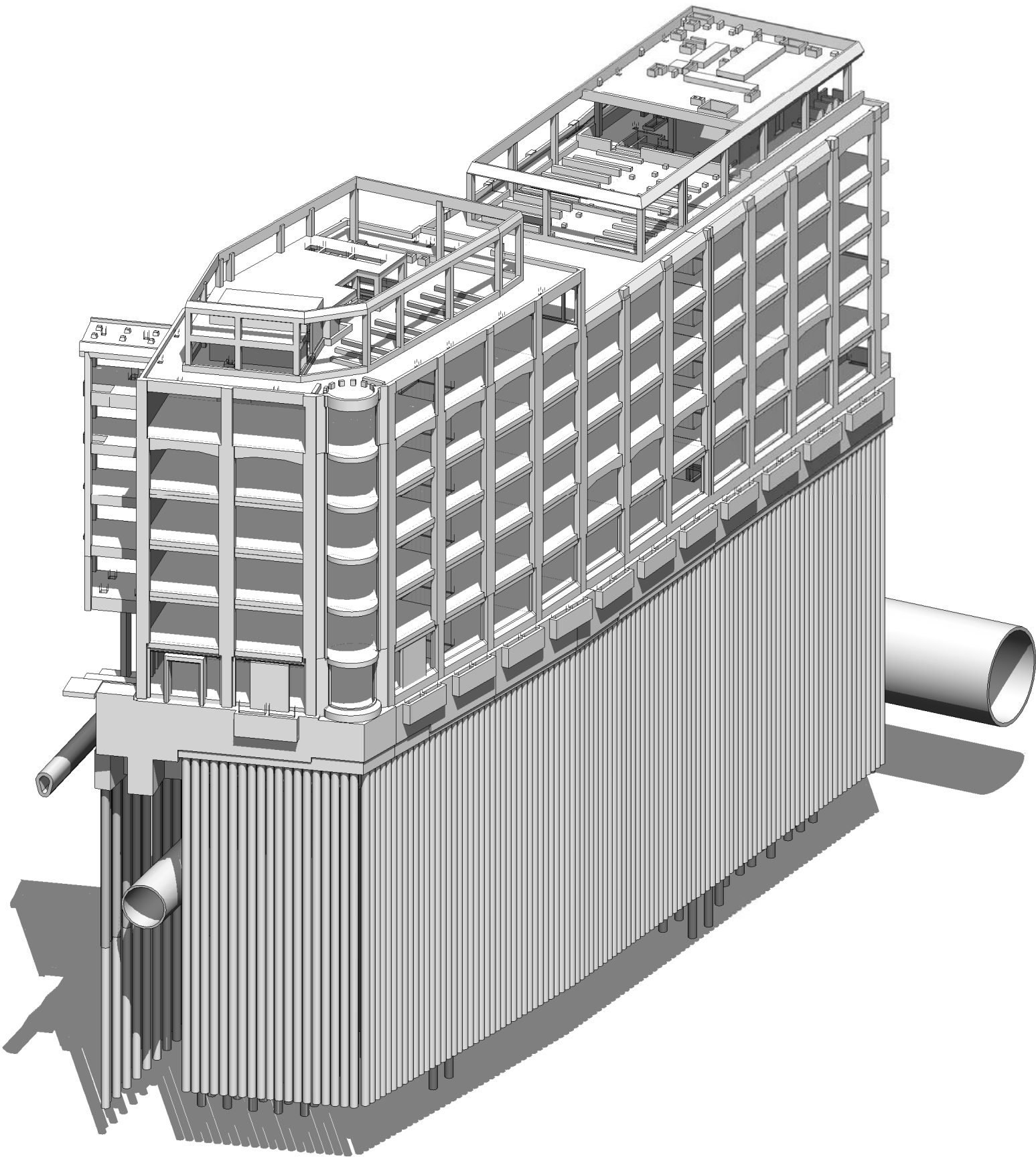
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Concrete Frame and Foundations

The existing building’s foundation extends to a depth of 30m below Saffron Hill street level. The main structure of the building consists of concrete columns and beams that support ribbed concrete slabs in combination with monolithic concrete slabs, particularly where adjoining the cores. Additionally, three concrete cores in the building serve as supporting elements and provide lateral stability to the structural frame.

The design team intends to retain and reuse the existing foundations and retaining walls, with a target to maximise the retention of the superstructure, while rationalising the existing three core system into a newly proposed single core.



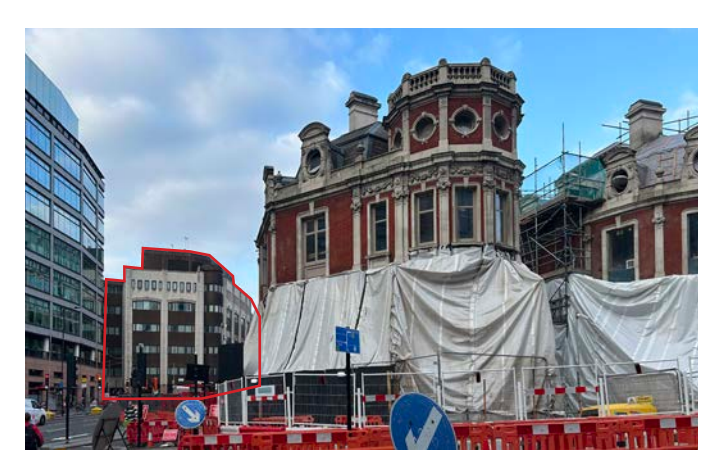
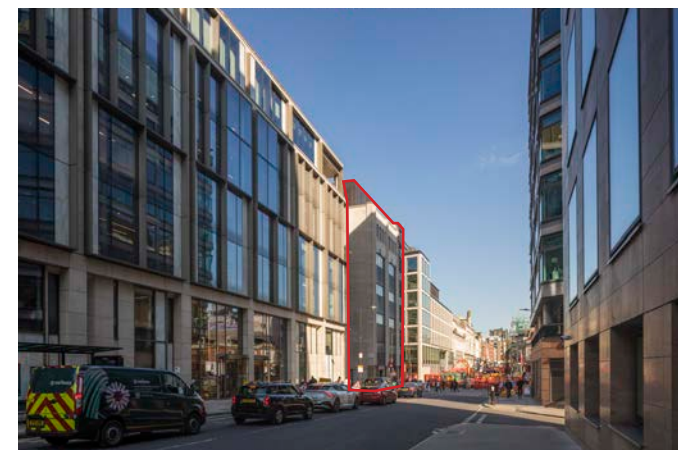
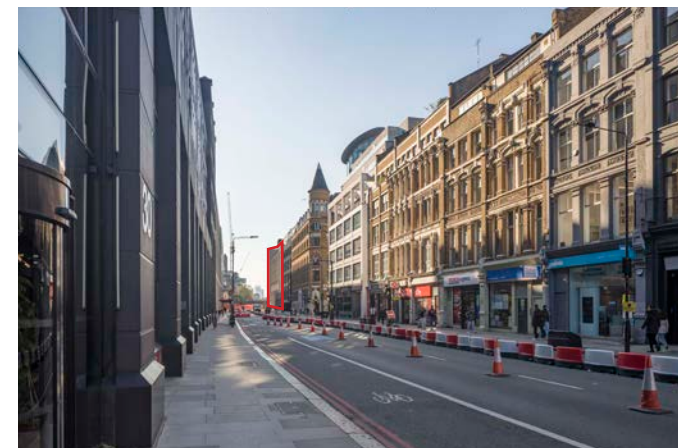
3D model of existing structure

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Views on approach to the site

19 Charterhouse Street occupies a prominent site on the corner of Charterhouse Street and Farringdon Road. Resolving the massing so that it takes account of this variation of approach has been key to the design process.



Approaches to the building with site highlighted

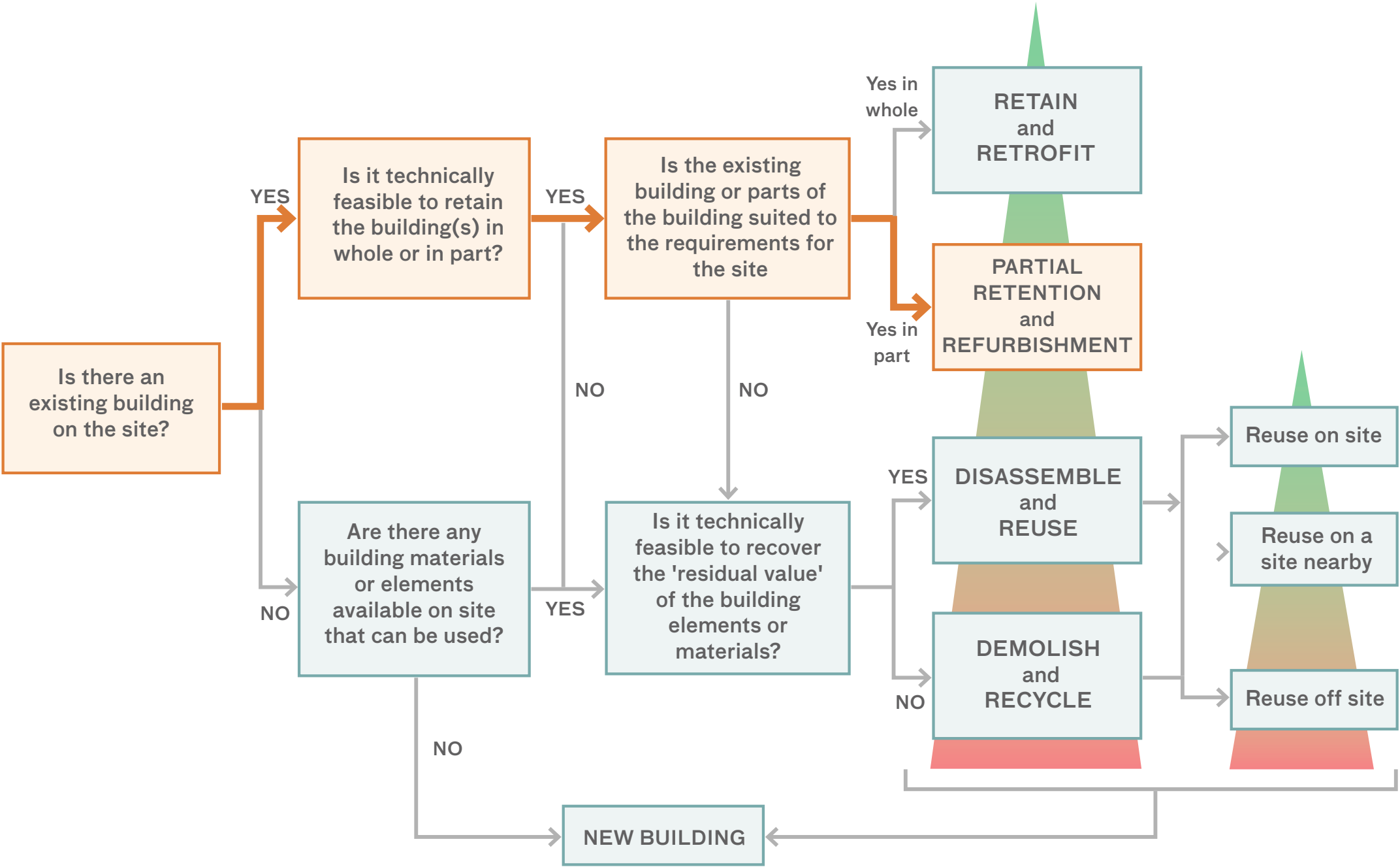
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2.3 Existing Building Approach

Utilising the GLA Decision Tree, the team will approach the proposal with the highest possible level of retention and refurbishment that the existing building can provide.

Based on the opportunities and difficulties the existing building provides structurally and functionally, the proposal will seek to provide a partial retention and refurbishment of the existing building to provide a carbon conscious and exciting building to the local context.

Much of the existing structural columns will be retained, as well as large portions of the concrete slabs, being cognisant of the complicated nature of the existing core arrangements. Reuse and recycling of removed materials will be investigated.



GLA Decision Tree

2.4 Overview of Site Considerations

Analysis and Observations

The analysis of the context has been fundamental in the development of the proposals. Understanding the character of the neighbouring buildings, their urban morphology, analysing vertical and horizontal articulation, identifying the significance and opportunity of key views, as well as the historic context of the site and the surrounding area, have all been used to inform the design proposals. As a result, the following is a summary of the current issues with the existing building:

- Poor / negative contribution to urban character.
- Inactive frontage to neighbouring streets.
- A poor relationship to surrounding public realm
- Confusing urban legibility in the context of surrounding buildings and Saffron Hill
- Inefficient and narrow floor plates and poor environmental performance which no longer meet the standards required of modern offices
- Poor environmental performance.

Objectives

- Create best-in-class retrofit with more sustainable and commercially viable workspace, including an attractive front door, whilst retaining a significant portion of the existing structure of the building.
- Enhance the appearance of the building to respond to its surroundings in a more appropriate manner and encourage biodiversity through planted terraces and open spaces.
- Try to encourage a better, clearer and friendlier pedestrian route to Saffron Hill
- Improve the public realm and wider permeability at ground level, especially in relation to Views through to Saffron Hill.
- Deliver a more attractive retail and affordable jewellery offer at ground floor, with increased active frontage around the building.
- Simplify the servicing and maintenance of the building.
- Realise the maximum potential of the site whilst being sensitive to the context in terms of scale and massing.

Opportunities

- Existing structure allows for significant loads to be added to the building without substantial changes to the foundations and structural loads.
- Existing floor to ceiling heights are suitable for modern office use
- Existing ground floor heights provide sufficient clear zone for a modern retail provision
- Existing partial Basement and Lower ground floor can accommodate most plant and cycle requirements, giving opportunities for maximised active frontage at the ground floor and generous roof top workspace
- The orientation of the existing building provides an opportunity to create terraces on each floor

Constraints

The existing building has a number of shared agreements and leases that impact the development of the proposal:

UKPN
The existing building has a UKPN substations at Lower Ground Level that is accessed via Saffron Hill steps. The substation must be maintained with the current level of access.

Third Party Arrangements

Oversailing/Servicing Access
The neighbouring property of 17 Charterhouse Street owns the southern portion of Saffron Hill as well as the base of the column which supports the bridge over Saffron Hill steps.

Ownership Boundaries
On both Saffron Hill and Farringdon Road, the building is subject to ownership boundaries of either neighbouring properties or councils. To Saffron Hill, the neighbouring building ownership boundary meets building line of 19 Charterhouse Street, and to Farringdon Road, the City of London own the public realm up to the building line of 19 Charterhouse Street.

2.5 Constraints and Opportunities

Opportunities - Views towards the building



1 View towards Charterhouse Street



2 View towards Charterhouse St Entrance



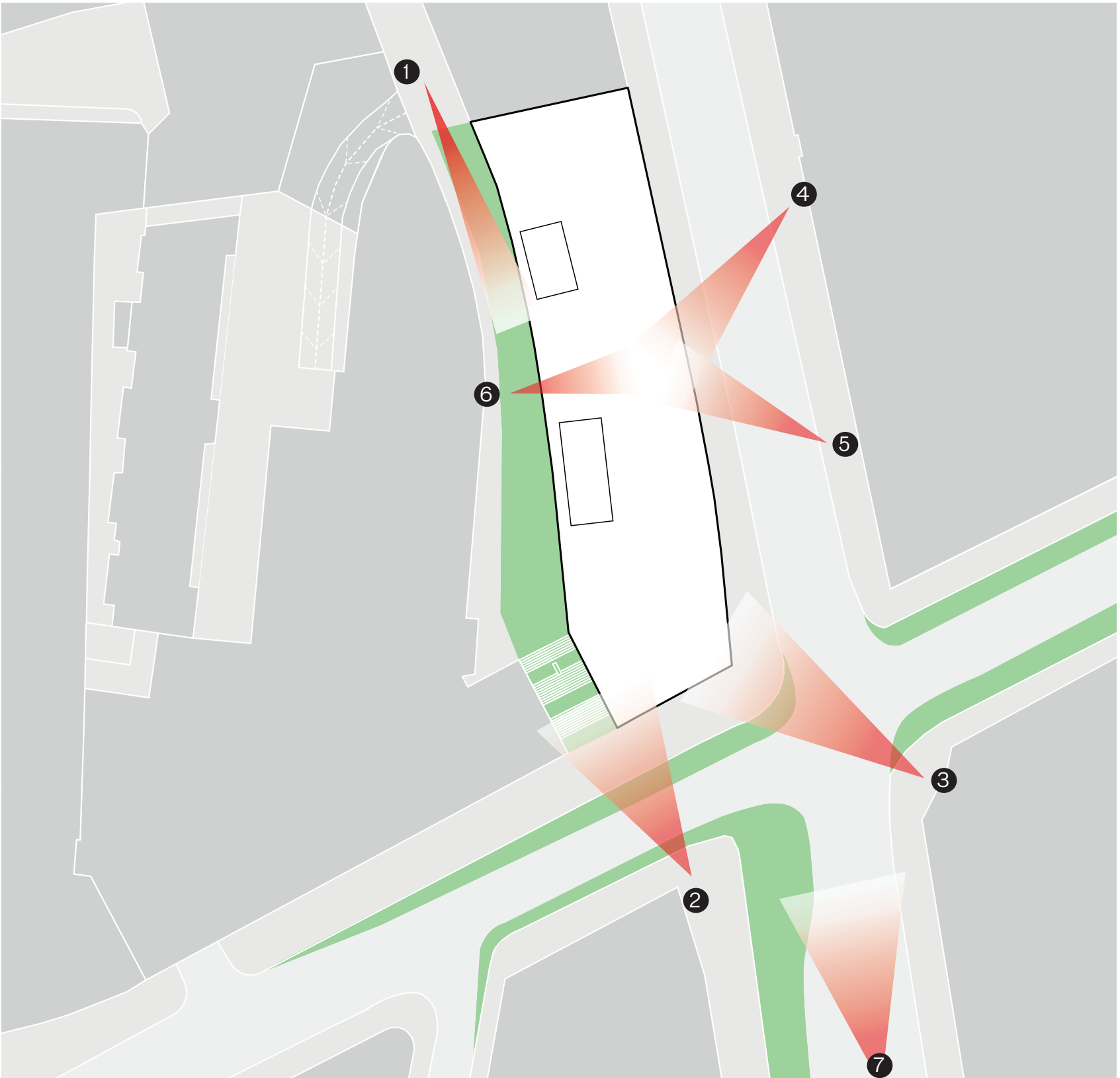
3 View from London Museum

4 Create view through lobby from Train Station approach

5 Create glimpse view through building to Saffron Hill

6 Create glimpse view through building to Farringdon Road

7 Views from further South



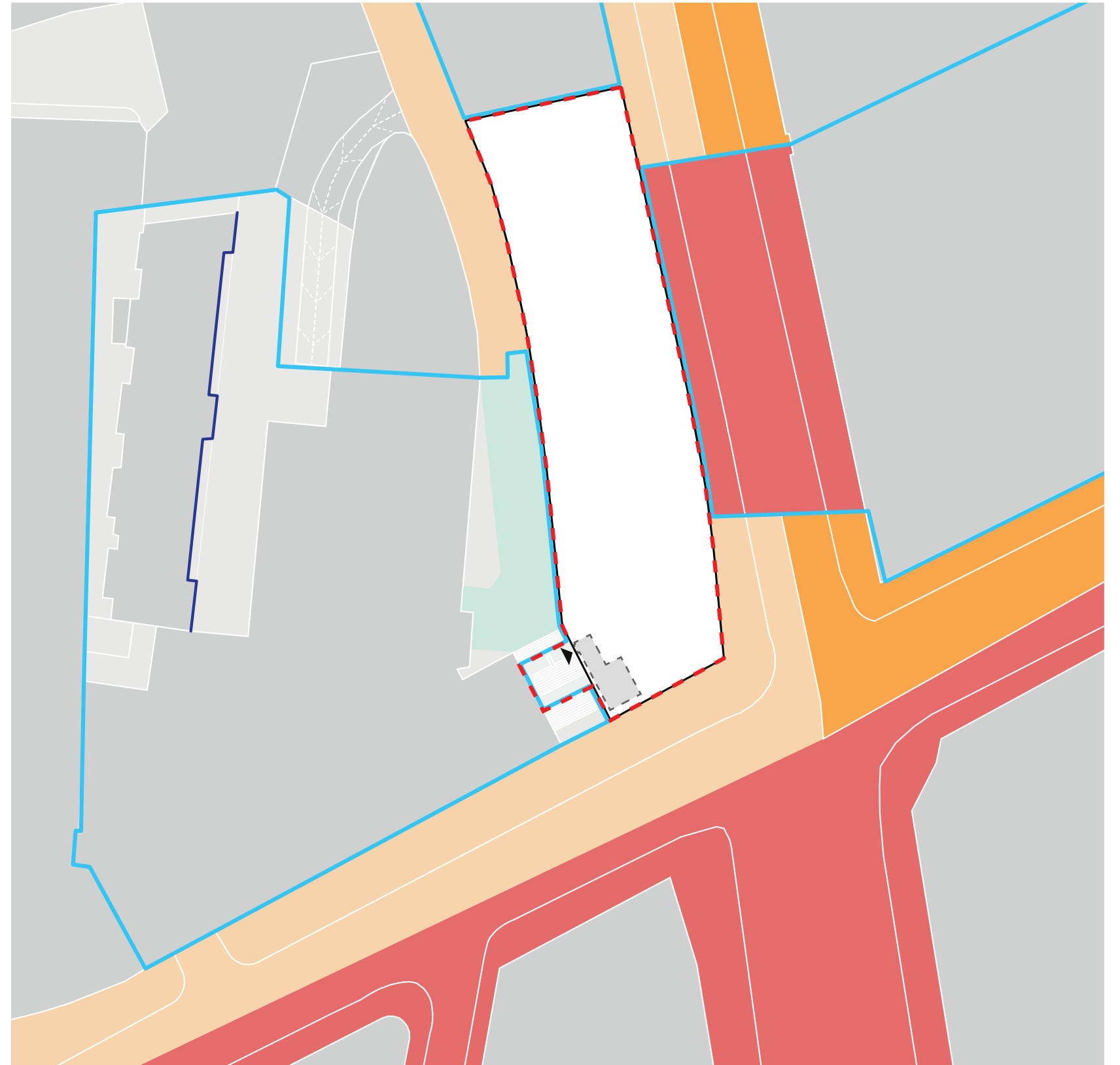
2.5 Constraints and Opportunities

Constraints - Legal

- Saffron Hill Ownership. The south part of Saffron Hill is privately owned by the neighbouring 17 Charterhouse Street, but 19 Charterhouse Street has third party access rights in order to access and maintain the scheme.
- An existing UKPN substation is present at lower ground floor, accessed directly from the Saffron Hill steps landing. The UKPN substation will need to be retained in its existing location.
- The City of London holds ownership of the JJ Mack building on the opposite side of Farringdon Road. This ownership extends past the centre of the road and all the way to the Eastern face of 19 Charterhouse Street facade line.

Constraints

- Site Boundary
- Site Boundary - Neighbour
- Camden Highway
- Islington Highway
- City of London Highway and Ownership
- Third Party Access Rights
- Existing UKPN Substation



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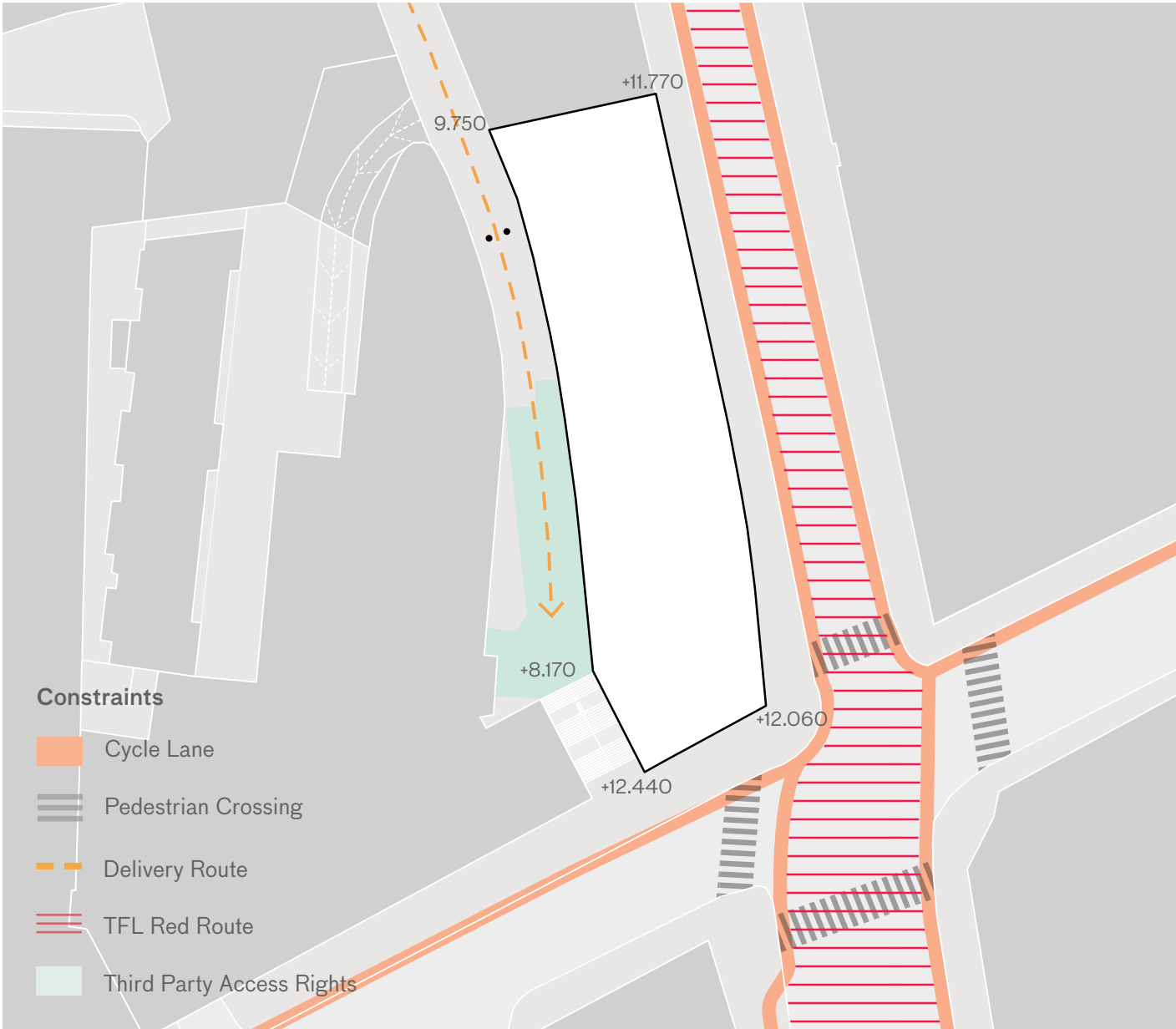
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Constraints - Transportation Route

- Heavy transportation pressure on Farringdon Road which is a TFL Red Route. This will need to be mitigated in facade design and also means no opportunities to provide vehicular deliveries along Farringdon Road. For the construction period it is proposed to service the building via Farringdon Road as per the CMP
- Saffron Hill is used by pedestrians and delivery vehicles, with access controlled by lowering bollards halfway along Saffron Hill.
- Pedestrian crossing points are provided at the junction of Charterhouse Street, Farringdon Road and Farringdon Street, but feels complicated and is not clearly legible. This corner is a particular pinch point on a very congested pedestrian route.

Constraints - Access

- Traffic on Saffron Hill. The main experience is one of lone or small groups of pedestrians along with delivery vehicles, primarily vans and scooters.
- Fire Exits on Saffron Hill. Most fire exits are located on Saffron Hill and in due course the team will liaise with LFB to develop a clear strategy for the proposal that aligns with Fire Tender access needs.
- Inactive Frontage on Farringdon Road and Saffron Hill.
- Existing pavement and finished floor levels are challenging on Farringdon Road as the finished floor level is approx 600mm above pavement level.

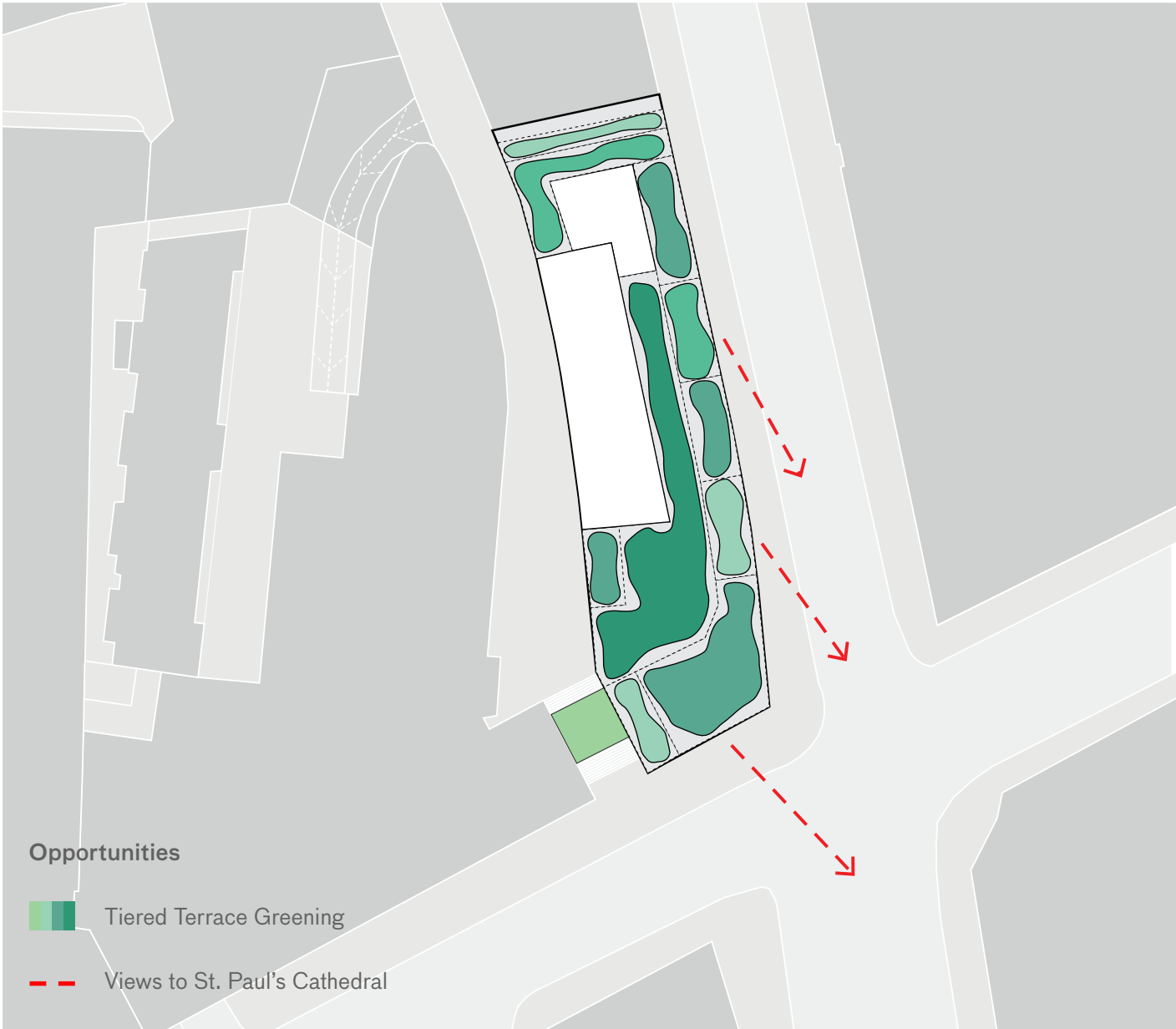


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2.5 Constraints and Opportunities

Opportunities - Roof Extension

- Roof gardens along Farringdon Road and Charterhouse Street act as a green frontage.
- Roof gardens offer panoramic views of iconic landmarks including St. Paul's Cathedral.
- This provides opportunities to enhance Wellness with generous biodiversity and improved ecology on site.
- Opportunity to provide superb amenities for future building occupants.
- Provision of a blue roof system to attenuate rainfall, but still avoid an attenuation tank and its associated space and carbon wastefulness.



Opportunities - Ground and Lower Ground

- A single flexible core with a route through at Ground and Lower Ground levels. Enhancing lobby accessibility and helping to open Saffron Hill up to Farringdon Road
- Potential vibrant ground floor activities such as jewellery workshops, retail and mixed use retail space that can enhance Saffron Hill, Farringdon Road, Charterhouse Street and beyond.
- Potential improvement on urban realm including enhanced greening.

