

Iteration 01: plant consolidated and located in one enclosure fronting High Holborn

Iteration 02: plant consolidated and split into smaller enclosures arranged around the building and integrated into the tiered massing approach



Views from the street showing the proposed articulated roofscape

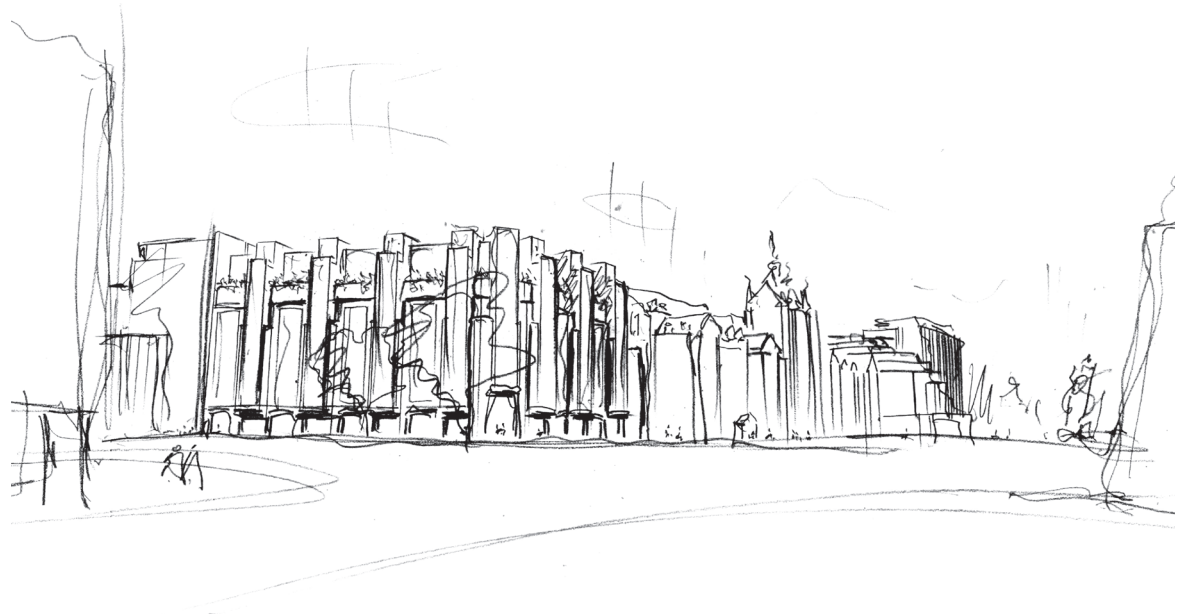
# Development of the architectural language

The approach is to re-clad the existing brick building with an insulated rainscreen cladding system, providing a continuous architectural language, materiality and detailing and integrating the old and new elements of the building. The vertical emphasis and secondary horizontal alignments with neighbouring buildings will be maintained and enhanced, anchoring the proposed building to a wider composition. The building's massing, materials and detailing will work together to limit the perception of mass from street level. The proposed materials will make a clear contextual response, enhancing the existing streetscape composition.

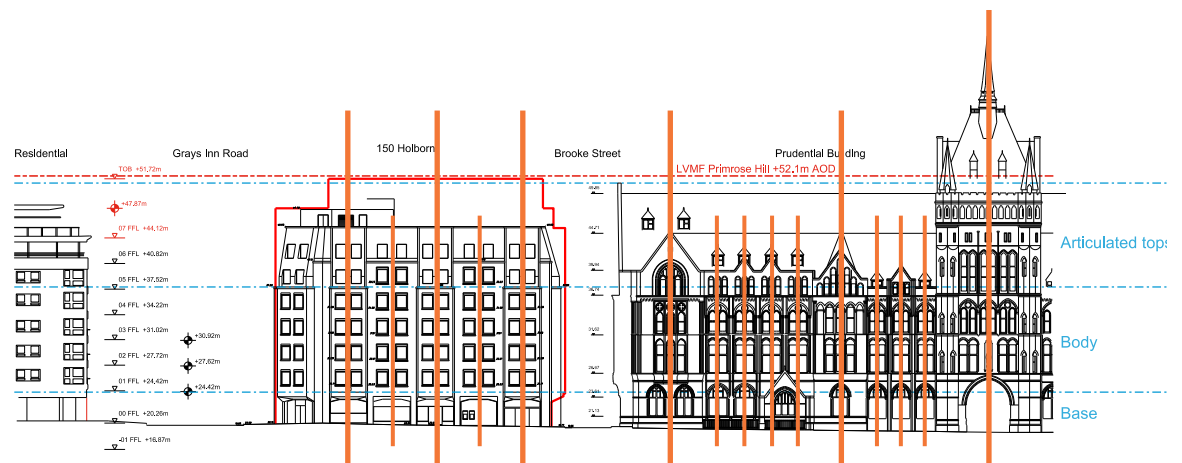
This architectural approach evolved through a number of iterations. The design team tested the following principles;

- 1 Retain the existing building (light refurbishment, no additional area). This was rejected as it does not maximise the potential of the site, and there are no townscape benefits.
- 2 Retain the existing building and provide additional floors which express a new architectural language to contrast with the existing. This was rejected as the design team felt that the quality of the existing materials and architecture could be improved.
- 3 Strip away the existing brick and re-clad it with curtain walling (floor-to-ceiling glass). This was rejected as the process of demolishing the existing brick facade would cause too much disruption to the existing retail tenants (who are to remain in operation during construction).
- 4 Retain the existing brick envelope and general window positions; replace and enlarge the existing high performance glazing and wrap the existing envelope in a new insulated rainscreen. This approach was accepted as it retains the basic architectural language established by the existing building, but improves upon the performance, material quality and expression of the building whilst minimising disturbance to existing retail tenants.

The depth of the recessed windows evolved following consultation with LB Camden. It was felt that an increased depth would help to articulate the facade further.

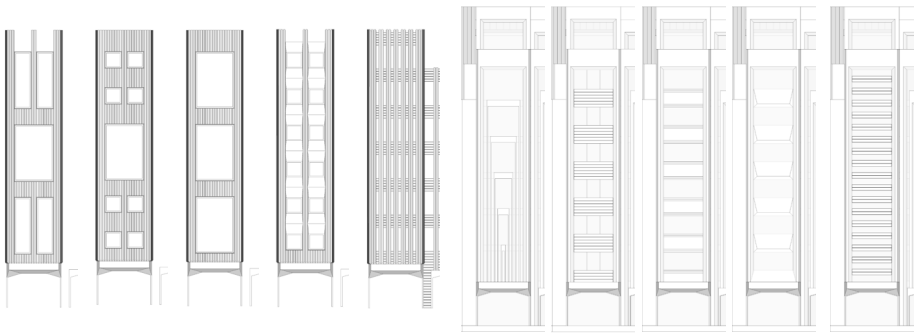


Concept sketch; view of the proposal for 150 High Holborn looking east along High Holborn. The vertical projecting bays step away from all three street elevations, minimising the perception of mass while responding positively to context.

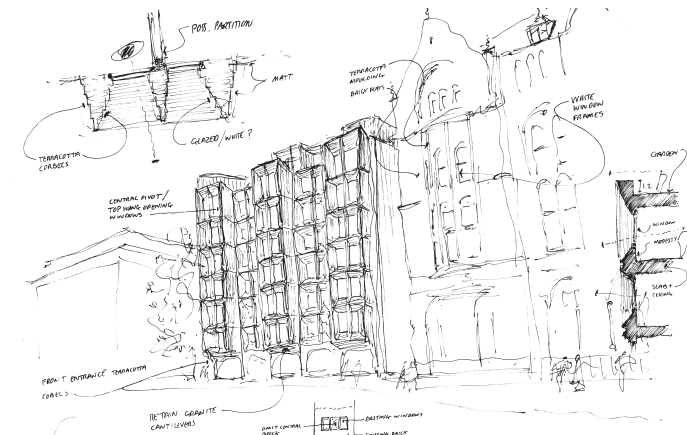


Existing High Holborn elevation showing the interplay between 'primary' vertical and 'secondary' horizontal emphasis (proposed mass shown as a red outline for comparison)

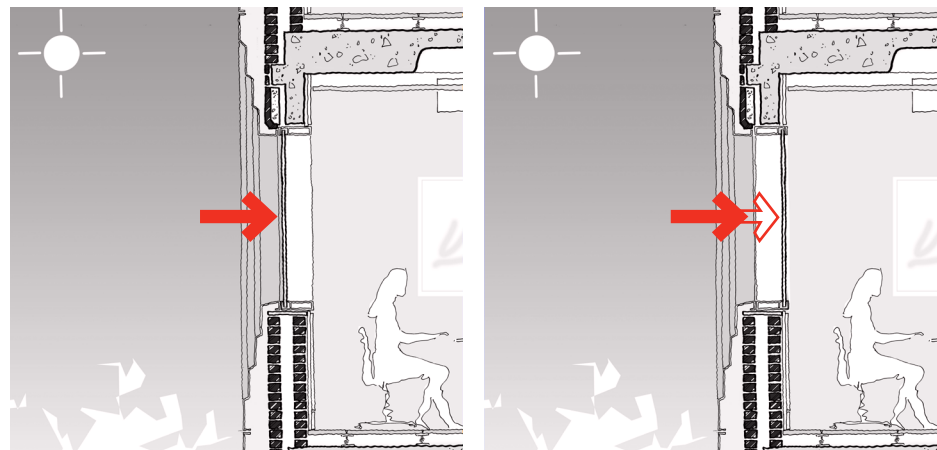




A number of cladding ideas were tested leading to the final proposal



Initial sketch exploring the idea of recessed windows and stepped framing



Illustrations showing the aspiration to maximise the depth of the facade by aligning the window with the inner face of the envelope

Images showing the development of the cladding

# Enhanced entrance lobby

The principal public route around the site is concentrated along Gray's Inn Road and High Holborn and for this reason the existing office entrance is located on the junction of the two roads. The team agreed that the existing location is a suitable point of access, due to its prominence to the street.

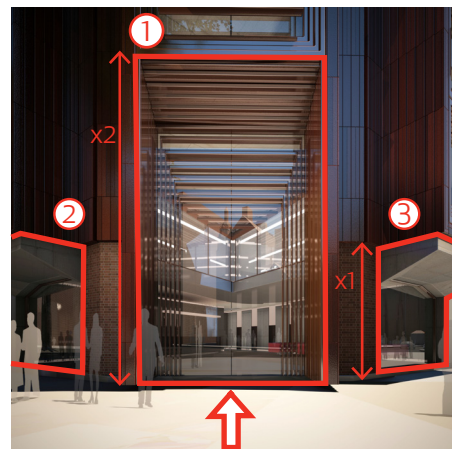
Despite its corner position, the existing language of the building brings no hierarchical importance to this part of the site. The design team felt that this could be improved.

- 1 The original idea was to expand the width of the office entrance from two bays to three, the central bay being the entrance while the flanking bays would provide large areas of glass looking into the reception space. The central bay would provide a double-height entrance lobby, flanked by a bulkhead on either side.
- 2 Despite the constraints of the existing building, the design team felt certain aspirations for the development should not be compromised. This philosophy motivated the client and team to develop the design of the office entrance lobby by providing a continuous double-height entrance lobby, expanding to all three bays and not just the central portion.
- 3 The final iteration of the office entrance lobby aims to provide an entrance 'air lock' to control the thermal comfort of the lobby. A bespoke revolving door and a side passing door frame the entrance to the building, leading visitors into the lobby through a bespoke portal.

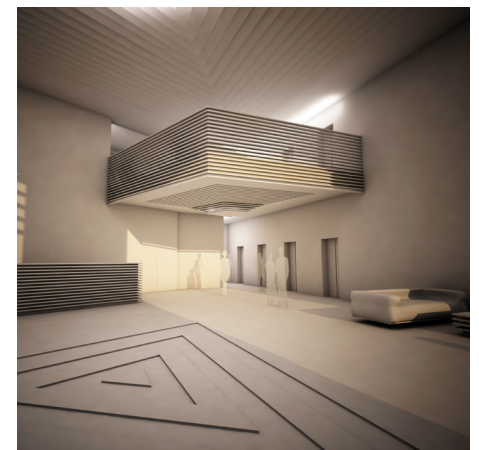
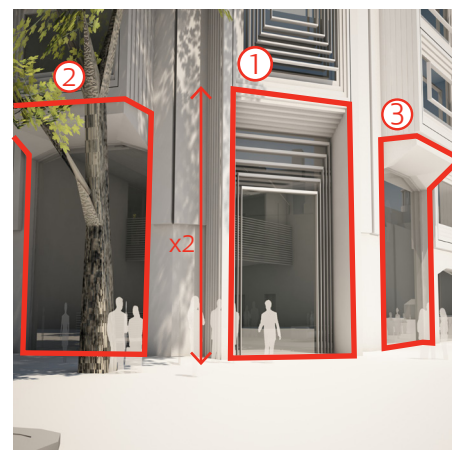
Existing office:  
• 2 bays wide.  
• Single storey height.



1  
Iteration 01:  
• 3 bays wide.  
• Central bay double-height with flanking single-height bays.



2  
Iteration 02:  
• 3 bays wide.  
• Double-height throughout (no flanking bulkhead).  
• Mezzanine floor.





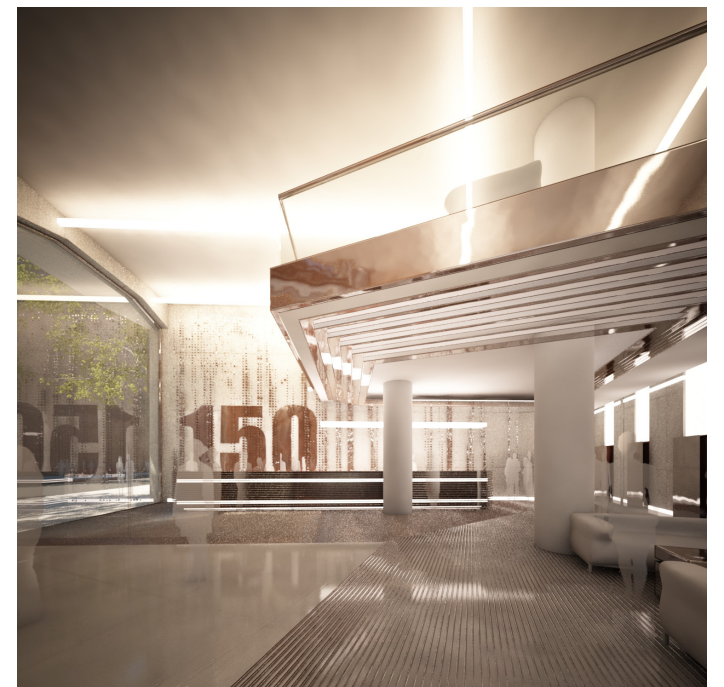
3

Iteration 03:

- 3 bays wide.
- Double-height throughout (no flanking bulkhead).
- Mezzanine floor.
- Bespoke portal, revolving door.



Study model of proposed entrance lobby



Proposed double-height, 3-bay wide office entrance and lobby



# Garden deck and service yard

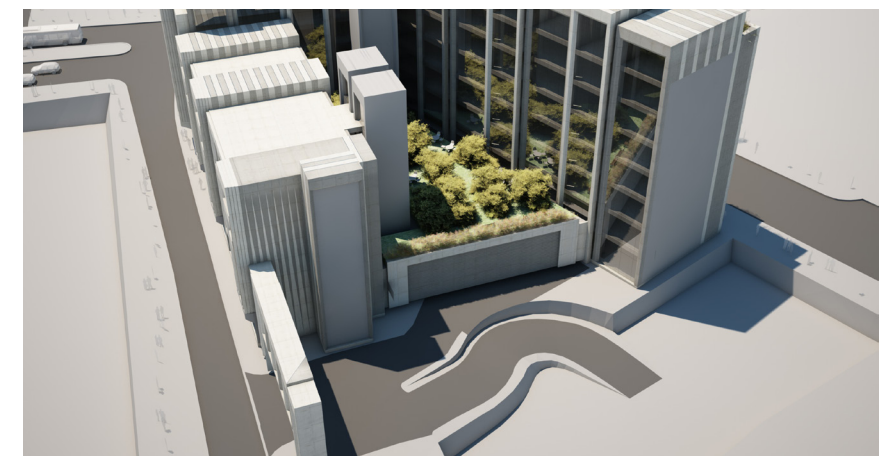
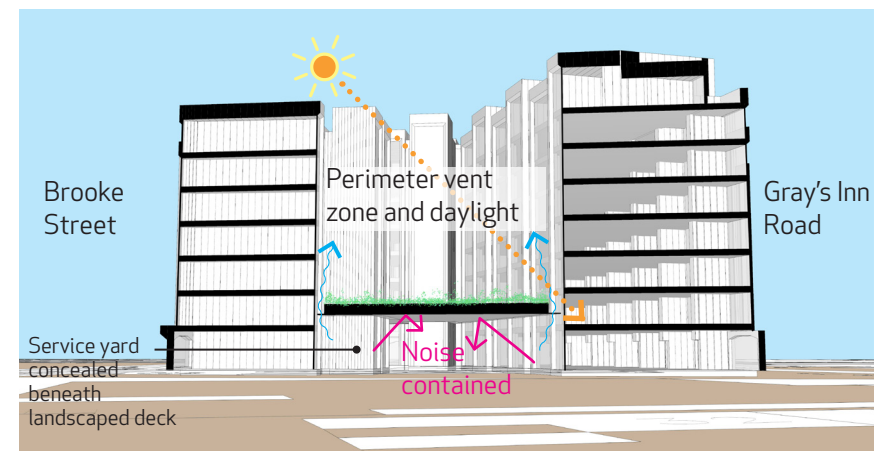
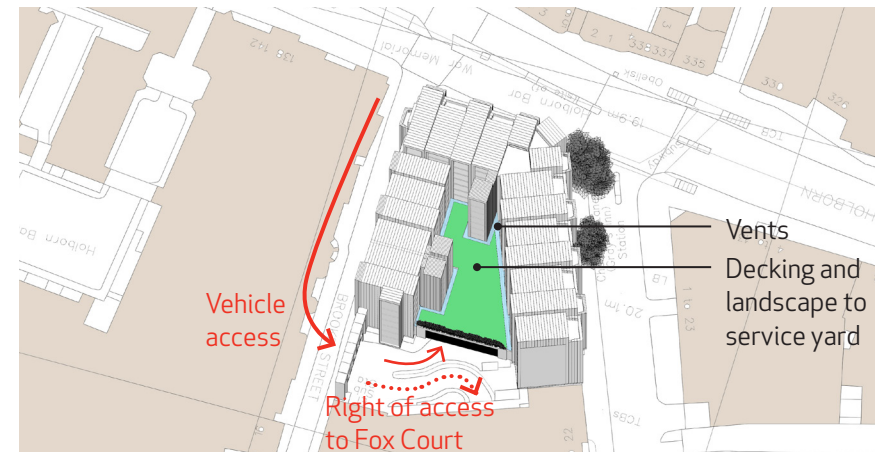
The brief required that the existing service yard be enhanced. The design team felt that there was an opportunity to deck over the existing service yard with a garden. This would conceal the back-of-house services, provide an external amenity and an updated (water-tight) service facility and improve the security of the site. The deck would also control noise pollution.

The design development of the garden deck/service yard went through a number of iterations:

- 1 The initial sketches looked at a new garden deck located mid-way between floors O1 and O2. This provided a clear height below the garden deck suitable for vehicles to access the new loading bay area. The perimeter detail of the deck allowed the concealed service yard to be ventilated and allowed light into the first floor by means of a clearstory.
- 2 The design team explored an option to provide additional office floor space at second floor level, above the new service yard area. The roof of this infill space would be planted and an array of roof lights would allow daylight into the floorplate.
- 3 The final iteration of the garden deck solved a number of issues associated with the previous options. Splitting the garden deck into a lower and upper garden enables direct access from first floor level, while retaining a clear height above the loading bay area for vehicles. The compromised clearstory glazing, associated with the initial option, is also solved.

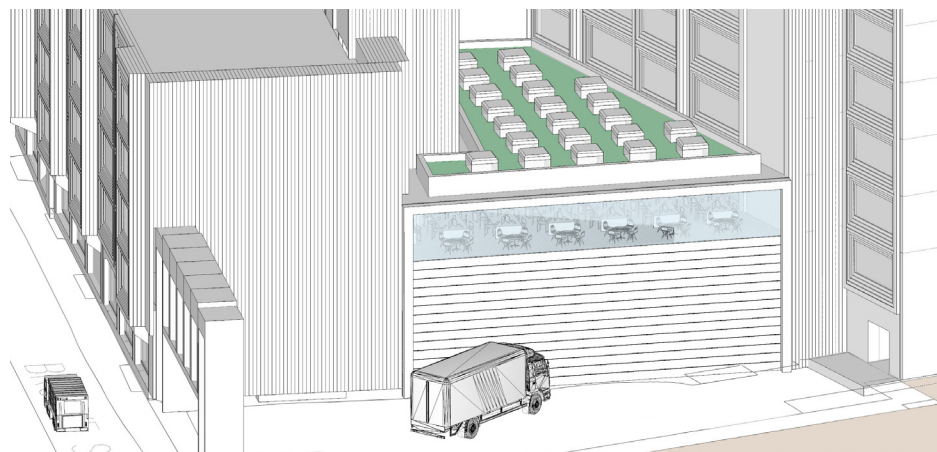
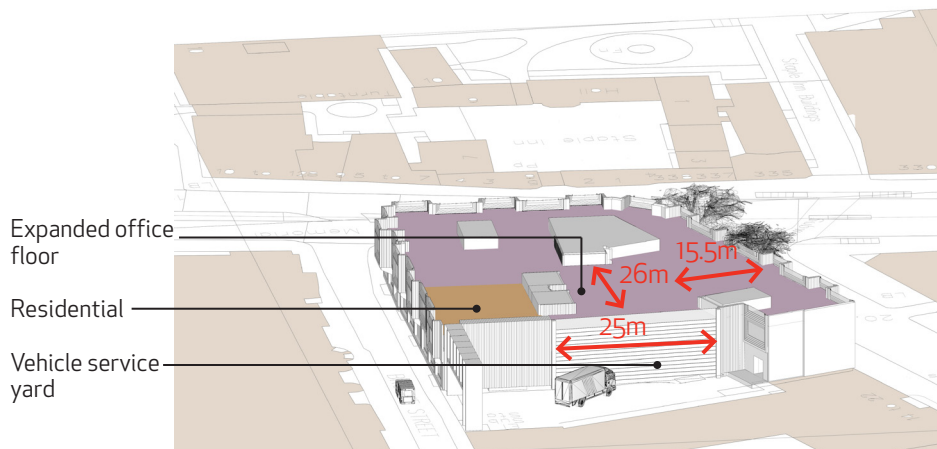
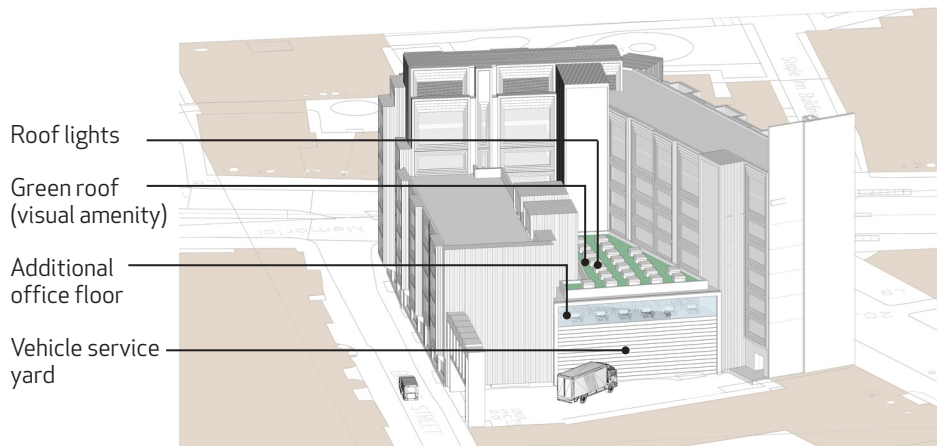


View of existing service yard, currently open to the elements

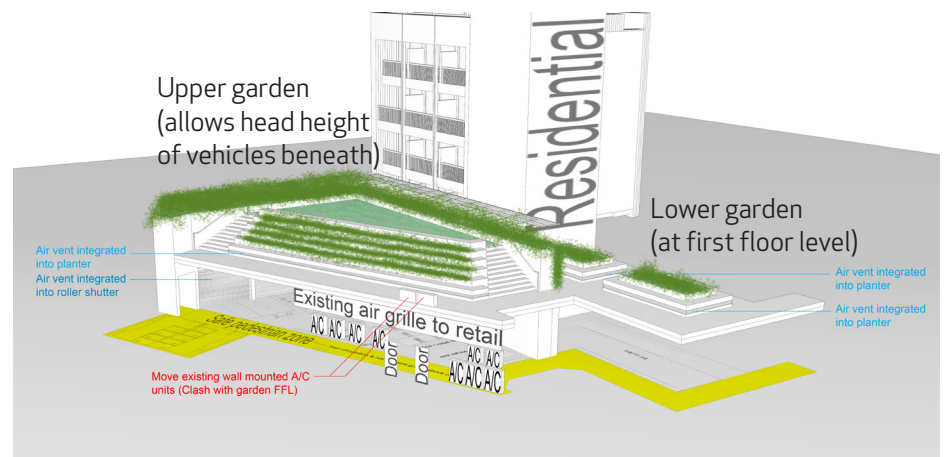


- 1 Service yard option 01: plan, section and visualisation of initial proposal (non-accessible garden access - visual amenity)





**2** Service yard option 02: visualisations and 3d plan showing extended office floorplate concealing the service yard (roof lights puncture sedum roof, allowing light to access the deep second floor plan)



**3** Service yard option 03: lower and upper garden providing at-grade garden access (first floor) and the head height required for vehicles

# Residential

Currently there is a 3-bed residential unit located at second floor with access to a roof terrace.

- 1 The team looked at two locations for the residential units. The first was to locate a residential level at floor 07 (the top of the building), arranged along the Gray's Inn Road and High Holborn frontages. Although these units would benefit from views across London to the south, they would not provide 100% dual-aspect units due to the existing arrangement of cores. Access to this level from the street also proved to be inadequate. A number of options were explored, but each failed to deliver something that could be implemented within the context of the existing building. A services zone, used to consolidate drain aways from the residential units before they penetrate through the office floors below, threatened to push the massing higher, thus breaching the London View Management Framework (LVMF).

Concerns over the noise generated from the street, combined with the agent's nervousness of locating residential above office, led the team to look for an alternative location.

- 2 The second location explored the idea of creating a vertical 'stack' of residential at the end of the Brooke Street wing, occupying the floors from ground to floor 05. Access to the residential lobby is via Brooke Street, while vertical circulation is provided by a lift and stair core.

In this location the team investigated two sub-option residential layouts:

- 3 A centrally located core enabled units to be arranged either side, providing 100% dual-aspect units. However, this proposal was rejected due to the core landing in the centre of the ground floor retail unit below.
- 4 Locating a dedicated residential core on the north elevation of the Brooke Street wing minimises disruption to the street level retail, as the core comes to ground outside the demise. The aspiration for 100% dual-aspect units is realised through the provision of duplex units.

- 1 Option 01: residential - Gray's Inn Road/High Holborn (floor 07)

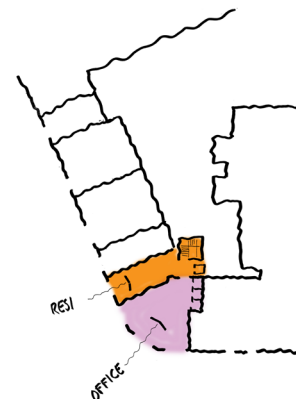
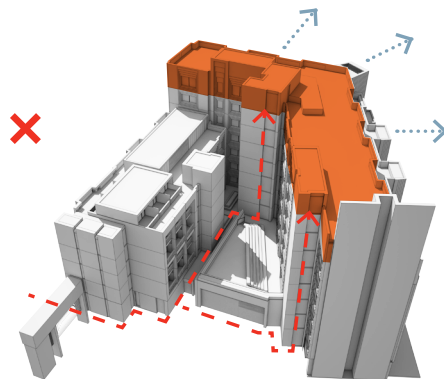
Views ✓

Dual-aspect ✗

Noise attenuation ✗

Access ✗

Headroom/  
LVMF ✗



Residential access options showing problems associated with residential located on the top floor of the Gray's Inn Road and High Holborn wings



**2** Option 02: residential - Brooke Street (floors 01-05)

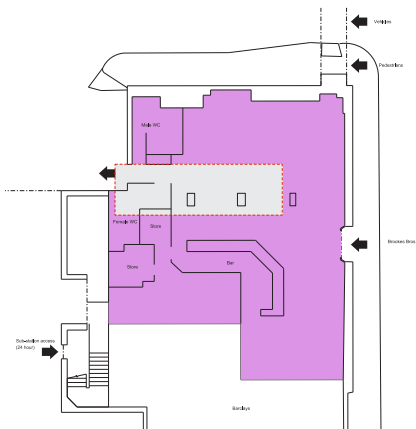
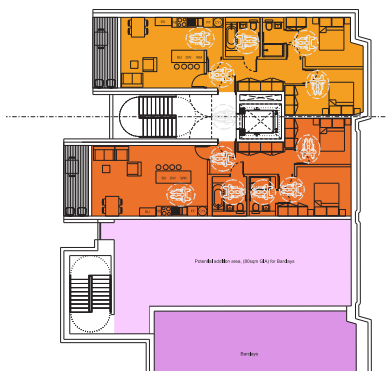
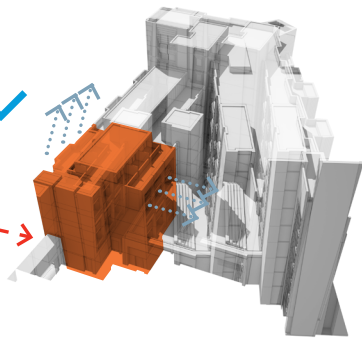
Views ✓

Dual-aspect ✓

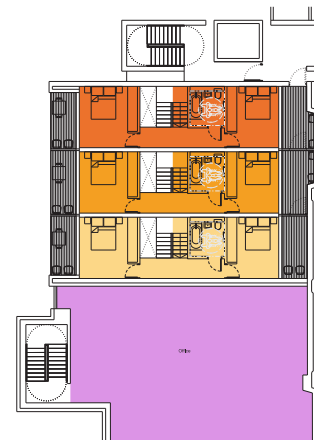
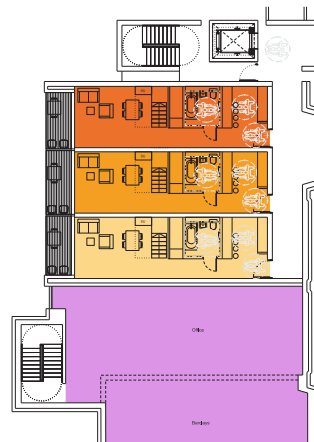
Noise attenuation ✓

Access ✓

Headroom/  
LVMF ✓



**3** Central core option: clashes with existing ground floor retail tenant



**4** North core option: minimises disruption to existing ground floor retail tenant



View of the proposed residential

# Design development summary

The design evolution was influenced by the consultation process. The iterative development of ideas began with the client's brief and feasibility, continuing over a ten month period of development and ultimate refinement.

- Initial meetings between the client and the design team led to the creation of a working brief.
- The feasibility study explored a variety of ideas, including light refurbishment of the existing building, additional floors and a change of use. The chosen scheme promoted a balanced approach; working with the existing building, looking for opportunities and ultimately regenerating it and retaining its mixed use nature.
- The massing and architectural language of the building were developed during a number of meetings with London Borough of Camden planning officers and English Heritage. A clear aspiration emerged to break down the building mass into a series of vertical projecting bays that tier away from the street, providing balconies and roof terraces while positively responding to context.
- The desire to respond positively to the demands of energy efficiency and internal environmental conditions was established at an early stage. The proposal sought to control the amount of glazing (self-shading cladding, privacy, light spillage). Rooftop plant minimised by updating, replacing and consolidating the existing plant, largely into the basement area.
- The enhancement of the entrances was developed considering the building's presence on the street, internal environmental conditions, improved spatial quality and building organisation/circulation. Meetings with the London Borough of Camden's Metropolitan Police security adviser helped to develop the principles and details surrounding access into the building, vehicle access, service yard and garden deck and internal circulation.
- Consultation with London Borough of Camden Highways helped develop the enhancement of the service yard, including the arrangement of the refuse storage and cycle parking.
- Further London Borough of Camden consultation informed the development of the elevation and roofscape in relation to key views.

Laffly LLP



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