
NEIL

DAVIES

ARCHITECTS

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
THE CHALCOTS TOWERS

JANUARY 2018



Chalcots Towers Aerial View

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
CONTEXT	3
SITE & EXISTING BUILDINGS	4
PLANNING & CONSULTATION	10
PROPOSALS	11
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT	16
SUSTAINABILITY	22
CONCLUSION	23



Taplow Tower NW bird's eye view



Burnham Tower NW bird's eye view



Bray Tower NW bird's eye view



Dorney Tower NW bird's eye view



Blashford Tower NW bird's eye view

INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full application for the complete recladding of four 23-storey towers, and one 19-storey tower, on the Chalcots estate in Camden.

The Design and Access Statement has been prepared in accordance with government guidance. It provides a description of the existing site and planning application proposals and explains how the design and access principles of the scheme have been formulated and dealt with under this application.

The document should be read in conjunction with drawings prepared by Neil Davies Architects LLP.



Initial Cladding Removal Works



CONTEXT

In the aftermath of the Grenfell disaster, the London Borough of Camden (LBC) undertook a review of its housing stock to identify tower blocks which were clad with polyethylene-core Aluminium Composite Material (ACM-PE) cladding panels. Cladding samples were taken from the five Chalcots Towers and sent to Building Research Establishment (BRE) for testing. These were found to be Category 3 according to the screening tests as defined in guidance set out by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). Category 3 means that the core material of the cladding, sandwiched between two sheets of aluminium, did not meet the limited combustibility requirement of materials as an individual element in a tall building, i.e. one whose floors are over 18 metres above ground level.

On 23rd June 2017, the London Fire Brigade (LFB) undertook a fire inspection of the towers. LFB then served Enforcement Notices for each of the towers, identifying areas of concern in relation to fire precaution works and proposed remedial actions. On the same day, LBC took the decision to evacuate all of the occupants from the 5 towers over the weekend of 24th- 25th June 2017.

From this date onwards, work has been carried out by three firms of contractors: Wates, Kier, and Mulalley, in order to remedy the contravention. The building works dealt with issues of firestopping and compartmentation between communal areas and flats. Protocols were also established to ensure that the management of the towers and record keeping addressed the contraventions as set out in the Enforcement Notices.

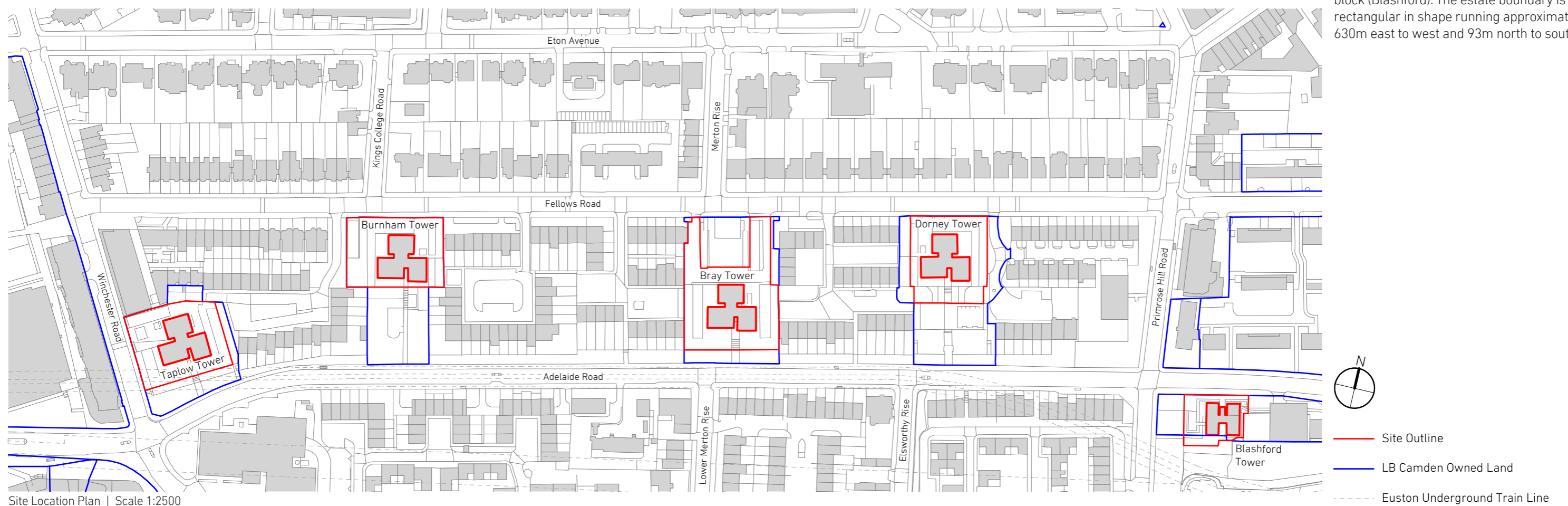
During this period, large-scale cladding tests in accordance with BS 8414 were later undertaken by the BRE for the DCLG. The rainscreen cladding used on the Chalcots Estate is approximated by Test no. 2 in the DCLG tests. This test failed the criteria of BR 135, noting that such cladding represents a 'substantial fire hazard' for buildings over 18m.

As a result of these tests, LBC undertook works to remove the existing ACM panels from each of the towers and appointed Neil Davies Architects (NDA) and Eckersley O'Callaghan Engineers (EOC) to carry out more thorough investigations of the Chalcots Towers in order to identify options for replacing the cladding to improve its fire performance.

SITE & EXISTING BUILDINGS

Site Location

The Chalcots estate lies to the north of Regents Park, between Finchley Road and Chalk Farm. It is located to the centre-west of the London Borough of Camden, in the Swiss Cottage neighbourhood. The estate comprises five tower blocks, with four 23-storey blocks (Taplow, Burnham, Bray, and Dorney), and one 19-storey block (Blashford). The estate boundary is rectangular in shape running approximately 630m east to west and 93m north to south.



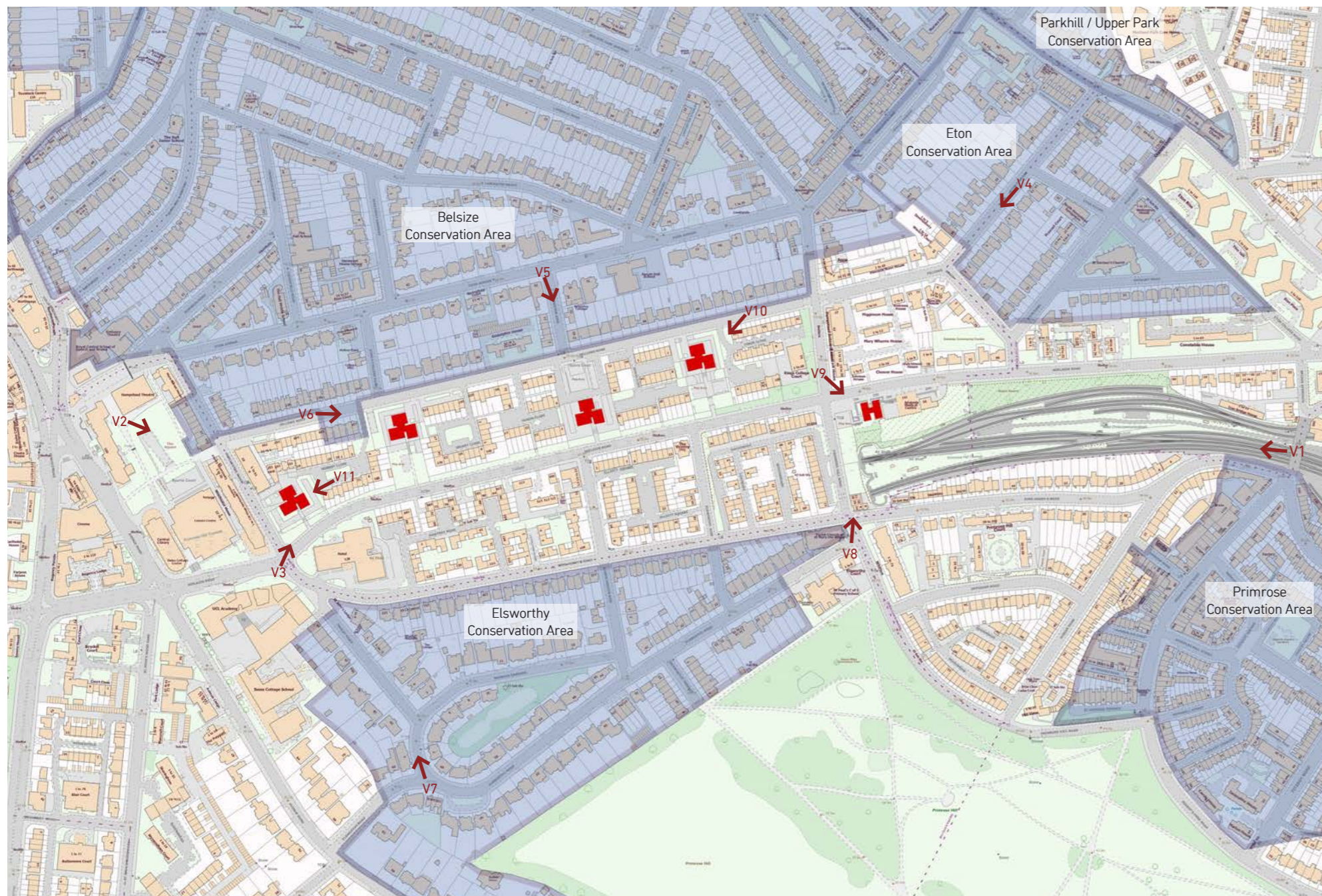
Site Location Plan | Scale 1:2500

Decision Date	Building	Application Number
13.01.04	Taplow	2003/3490/P
	Alterations and refurbishment including: recladding, new windows, demolition of podia, alterations to entrance, reprovision of 1x2 and 1x3 bed flats by conversion of part upper ground floor and external landscaping.	
22.01.04	Blashford	2003/3488/P
	Alterations, refurbishment and extension to tower block including: recladding, new windows, alterations to entrance, extension at basement for residents meeting room, provision of 4x 2-bed flats in new floor at roof level and 1x 2 and 1x 4-bed flats by conversion of part existing basement and ground floor and external landscaping.	
	Dorney	2003/3489/P
	Alterations and refurbishment including: recladding, new windows, demolition of podia to create level access and new entrance, reprovision of 1x studio flat and new 1x 1-bed flat and 1x 2-bed flat and external landscaping.	
	Bray	2003/3492/P
Alterations and refurbishment to tower block including: recladding, new windows, demolition of podia, alterations to entrance, reconfiguration of ground floor and basement to reprovide 2 flats, 1x 1-bed and 1x 2-bed, and provide new 1x 2-bed flat, and external landscaping.		
23.01.04	Burnham	2003/3491/P
	Alterations and refurbishment to tower block including: recladding, new windows, demolition of podia, alterations to entrance, conversion of part basement to 3 flats, 1x studio, 1x 1-bed and 1x 2-bed, and residents meeting room and external landscaping.	
22.03.06	Blashford	2006/1384/P
	Approval of details pursuant to planning permission dated 16/06/04 (2003/3488/P) for alterations and refurbishment. NB: the scheme is to be part implemented including new cladding and windows to the tower block only, omitting landscaping, podia, car park alterations and extensions. Therefore, submitted drawings pursuant to condition 2 show no alterations to existing landscape.	
	Dorney	2006/1394/P
	Approval of details pursuant to planning permission dated 16/06/04 for alterations and refurbishment. NB the scheme is to be part implemented including new cladding and windows to the tower block only, omitting landscaping, podia and car park alterations. Therefore, submitted drawings pursuant to conditions 4 and 6 show no alterations to existing landscape for boundary treatments.	
	Bray	2006/1393/P
	Approval of details pursuant to the planning permission dated 16/06/04 for alterations and refurbishment. NB the scheme is to be part implemented including new cladding and windows to the tower block only, omitting landscaping, podia and car park alterations. Therefore, submitted drawings pursuant to conditions 2, 6 and 7 show no alterations to existing landscape, boundary walls and playground area.	
	Burnham	2006/1387/P
Approval of details pursuant to planning permission dated 16/06/04 (ref. 2003/3491/P) for alterations and refurbishment. NB the scheme is to be part implemented including new cladding and windows to the tower block only, omitting landscaping, podia and car park alterations. Therefore, submitted drawings pursuant to conditions 2 and 6 show no alterations to existing landscape or boundary walls.		
Taplow	2006/1392/P	
Approval of details pursuant to planning permission dated 16/06/04 (ref. 2003/3490/P) for alterations and refurbishment. NB the scheme is to be part implemented including new cladding and windows to the tower block only, omitting landscaping, podia and car park alterations. Therefore, submitted drawings pursuant to conditions 2 and 6 show no alterations to existing landscape for boundary treatments		

Planning History

The towers were built between 1967 and 1968 in two stages and were renovated in 2006-09. The renovation comprised the following works: -

1. Upgrading the external fabric through the addition of a rainscreen cladding system to the existing uninsulated in-situ concrete facades
2. Replacement of the windows and screens set further out from the existing glazing line of Crittal windows which were removed
3. Replacement of the existing roof covering and insulation
4. New lighting protection
5. New entrance doors
6. Installation of Automatic Openable Vents (AOV's) to communal lobbies
7. Upgrading of existing services to the towers
8. Upgrading of kitchens, bathrooms, WC's
9. Landscaping works were also carried out at that point to create level access



Neighbouring Conservation Areas | Not to scale

Planning Designations

The Chalcots estate does not benefit from any site-specific policy designations (Camden's Policies Map, July 2017). However, the estate is located adjacent to the Belsize Park Conservation Area and approximately 121m, at the closest point, from the Elsworthy Conservation Area. There are a number of listed buildings nearby the estate, the closest of which are the Grade II listed houses (13, 31, 37, 39, 43, 45, 57, 59, 61, 63, 65, 69 and 73) on the south side of Eton Avenue, approximately 90m from the estate, and the Grade II Swiss Cottage Library on Avenue Road, approximately 140m to the west to the Estate.

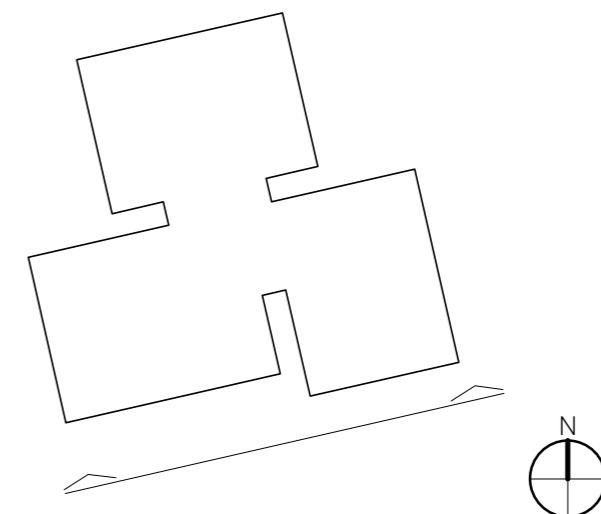
The Adelaide Road Private Nature Reserve, Adelaide Community Garden and the Swiss Cottage Public Open Space are all located within 115m of the Chalcots estate and identified as Open Spaces by Camden's Policies Map (July 2017), safeguarded accordingly by Camden's Local Plan (2017) for delivering a wealth of benefits for the local population and wildlife. As well as this the Finchley Road Town Centre area is located to the west of the estate, on the opposite side of Winchester Road.



Burnham Tower Existing South Facade (taken from Adelaide Road)



Burnham Tower Existing South Elevation



Burnham Tower Existing Plan

EXISTING BUILDINGS

Taplow, Burnham, Bray and Dorney

The four 23-storey towers are identical in plan, with three wings arranged around a circulation core which contains 2 lifts and a communal central stair. There is a total of 7 units per floor. The 3 rectangular blocks are arranged in a cluster on plan and offset from one another, creating a slot recess in the mass of the elevation to allow natural daylight into the core and the AOV's to ventilate directly to the outside.

The ground and first floors of the four towers are faced in a brick outer skin with window openings and acts as a plinth for the floors above. The 2nd to 22nd floors above are either clad in alternate vertical strips of rainscreen cladding or inset grey-framed glazing and spandrel panels. There is a subtle difference to how the cladding reveal is fixed on Dorney, but in essence the cladding arrangement is identical.