

## **Objection to proposals for 20-23 Greville Street**

This objection is made on behalf of the following businesses in Bleeding Heart Yard.

### **Bleeding Heart Restaurants**

The Bleeding Heart Restaurant was established by Robert and Robyn Wilson, when they restored a derelict, dirt-floored cellar beneath the historic Bleeding Heart Yard into a wine bar and bistro in 1983. They have since developed a critically acclaimed series of restaurants including the reopening of The Bleeding Heart Tavern, which was first licensed in 1746.

Robert and Robyn are acutely aware of the history of the Yard and have worked with other longstanding businesses to be custodians of the historic space that they occupy. This has involved some sensitive repairs and extensions of the buildings under their stewardship as well as to the public Yard itself. 10 years ago, when Camden needed to repair the drains but lacked the £100,000 budget needed to retain the historic surface, proposing tarmac instead, Robert initiated an approach to English Heritage, who agreed to match fund the £50k donated by Debeers and Bleeding Heart to allow the original granite setts to be relaid.

In addition to their own operations, the redevelopment of Number 7 Bleeding Heart Yard created two jewellery workshops on the first floor and converted of the two upper floors into the Wilson's own residence.

The Bleeding Heart business employs 90 people, some of whom have been with the company for more than 15 years. It is not being alarmist to say that the current proposal, and particularly the proposed construction management plan, put those jobs at risk.

### **Hirschfelds of Hatton Garden**

Hirschfelds have been established in Hatton Garden since the 1920s and have premises in No 7 Bleeding Heart Yard. Alexander Hirschfeld is also a local resident and has lodged a separate objection to the application with with LB Council

### **Howard Kaye**

Is the landlord (Samjess properties) of 3-5 Bleeding Heart Yard as well as running a watch business (Topical Time Ltd) from 5 Bleeding Heart Yard. He is particularly concerned that his tenants, and his own business would suffer extreme inconvenience should the yard be used as a building site.

**We have reviewed the application submission and the comments from the Design Review Panel at the pre-application stage and set out our strong objection to the application below.**

### **Heritage Issues**

Bleeding Heart Yard has considerable historic significance and value and any development which impacts on The Yard needs very careful consideration. We believe that the proposed changes to 20-23 Greville Street will have both a short term and long term negative impact on the character of the yard and the conservation area more widely. We have commissioned the Architectural History Practice (AHP) to review the proposals and provide a Heritage Impact Assessment, which we enclose (Appendix A). This assessment has the benefit of being prepared after the erection of the sample cladding panel, whereas the applicant's HIA was produced before this was available. The AHP reports final conclusions are clear:-

*"The proposed metal cladding is an interesting idea but would not disguise the increased bulk of the building, which would become unduly conspicuous. On the basis of the sample piece of cladding already in place, there must also be considerable doubt that the overall effect would be to produce greater movement and variety in the façade, as has been claimed by the applicants. In fact, the actual visual effect would be monochrome, disturbing and not at all accord with its surroundings.*

*The inescapable conclusion is that while the proposed development is an interesting concept by an original architect, it would not be beneficial to the conservation area. The enlarged and re-clad building would cause harm to the setting of several undesignated heritage assets and would have a damaging and adverse effect on the character of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area as set out in the 2017 Appraisal."*

The Camden Design Review Panel supported the proposed height increase to the building providing the cladding material could be shown to create the intended appearance. This is the nub of the issue, can the perforated cladding achieve the desired effect? We are clear from having seen the sample provided on site that it will not be durable, will not deliver environmental improvements to the building and will be completely out of character with the area. The Panel described the proposal as bold and provocative but had insufficient information to judge whether the design ideas would succeed. Now we have seen the mock up on site it is quite clear **that the projection into Greville Street is substantial (300 - 400mm) and** that the design will not be successful.

- Has the application been reconsidered by the Panel now the mock up is in place?
- Can the planning committee be invited on a site visit to review the mock up?
- Has it been determined whether there is any likelihood of a licence to occupy the pavement being provided by LB Camden?

The AHP report assesses the impact of the proposed projecting façade on the designated views along Greville St and on the neighbouring buildings. It concludes that,

*'... The projection of the new façade forward of the adjacent building line will increase the bulk of the building and increase its impact in both close and distant views, partially masking views of other buildings which make a positive contribution to the conservation area...*

*The enlarged and re-clad building would cause harm to the setting of several undesignated heritage assets and would have a damaging and adverse effect on the character of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area as set out in the 2017 Appraisal.'*

In addition to the serious concerns raised about the overall design intent, we share the specific concerns raised by the Panel about the extension into Bleeding Heart Yard which we believe must be revisited. **The colonnade has the wrong proportions and the extent of the rearward extension into the intimate yard is overbearing and harmful.** (See drawings in Appendix C which show that the bulk is actually greater than the applicants drawings appear to show). Bleeding Heart Yard is noted as adding an interesting dimension to the historic townscape and the buildings in the Yard are positive contributors to the character of the Conservation Area. The proposals will damage the intimate scale and nature of the buildings that surround the cobbled yard and should be refused.

#### ***LB Camden Policy Issues***

In addition to the concerns about the overall design of the proposal, we do not consider the scheme meets the Council's Local Plan Policies for Hatton Garden as set out in the Camden Local Plan 2017 Chapter 5. The Council seek to promote Hatton Garden as the centre for the jewellery industry, seeking to secure and promote premises suitable for jewellery workshops and related uses. **Policy E2 seeks to resist the development of business uses for non-business use, unless the building is no longer suitable for its existing business use.** The higher intensity redevelopment of business sites is supported providing various criteria are met including:

- The proposed premises include floorspace suitable for start-ups, SMEs and managed affordable workspace where viable.
- The scheme includes other priority uses such as housing, affordable housing and open space.

Furthermore, and specifically in relation to Hatton Garden the policy states the Council will resist the development of business premises and sites for a non-business use. Where proposals increase the GIA by more than 200 sq m 50% of the additional space should be affordable space for the jewellery sector.

The scheme proposes the change of use of the ground floor and basement to Class A1/A3 retail/restaurant. This is contrary to policy E2. A1/A3 use is not a non-business priority use, and policy E2 resists its introduction. **The overall increase in floorspace proposed through the upwards**

**and rear extension is 1057 sq m – only 62 sq m is for B1 business use. Under 6% of the floorspace.**

This demonstrates the extensions are simply to bring in higher value retail/restaurant floorspace rather than the business uses supported by policy.

Policy E2 in Hatton Garden requires 50% of the floorspace uplift for affordable space for the jewellery centre. None is proposed in this scheme. So, not only is the uplift in floorspace principally for A1/A3 use, there is no benefit for the jewellery sector. Anecdotally, we understand that contrary to the comments in the planning statement, the majority of the existing tenants have not been led to believe they can retain their tenancies. The justification for A1/A3 is weak and refers to the changing nature and role of the area. This is insufficient justification for replacing viable Business use with non-business uses, and not providing on-site Jewellery workshops. Bleeding Heart Yard has other workshops and so provides an ideal location for the use as supported by policy. Camden Planning Guidance: Employment Sites and Business Premises (March 2018) states that it will only be in exceptional circumstances that workspace cannot be provided on site, following the provision of clear evidence accepted by the Council. The evidence for the proposed extent of A1/A3 floorspace is ‘the changing nature and role of the area’. This changing role away from the jewellery sector is precisely what the policy seeks to protect against, and does not provide suitable justification for a further weakening of the role of the area.

The application also proposes that the entrance to the B1 floorspace will be through the colonnade to the rear of the site on Bleeding Heart Yard. Notwithstanding the design concerns of the colonnade, the focus of the building would change from business to retail, further undermining the unique role of Hatton Garden as the jewellery sector. **At least 500 sq m of the space on site should accommodate Jewellery Workshops to meet policy E2 and this can easily be achieved by reducing the proposed A1/A3 floorspace.** The applicant’s offer to support a jewellery market in the yard should be rejected and on-site workshops provided. Such workshops would support the character and role of Bleeding Heart Yard. If the applicants would prefer to introduce active frontage in this location (part of their justification for A1/A3) then a Hatton Garden jewellery visitor centre would also be an appropriate use. This has been a long-desired specific ambition of the local BID.

#### ***Applicant’s Proposed Construction Management Plan***

Bleeding Heart Yard is a very small and confined space. The existing businesses in the yard and particularly the restaurants, already struggle with maintaining a quiet peaceful environment whilst dealing with the delivery requirements of the businesses and particularly their waste collection. Its achievement is testament to the successful collaboration and proactive management of the various

businesses. Any additional construction traffic will have a very detrimental impact both on the efficient running of the businesses as well as on the enjoyment of the yard by the residences and the visitors to the restaurants and other businesses. The impact on businesses within the enclosed yard, which only has a single entrance passing adjacent to the proposed building site, would be much more significant than any affect on neighbours along Greville St, which is open at both ends.

The historic granite sett surface of the yard has, in recent years, been restored by LB Camden (paid for jointly by Historic England and the yard businesses) and if concrete lorries and other construction vehicles are allowed into the yard there is a danger that this historic surface could be irreparably damaged.

The businesses of Bleeding Heart Yard are therefore wholly opposed to the use of the area as a construction depot. There are, within London, numerous examples of large building redevelopments that are solely serviced from the front without any access from the rear of the building. Nearby Minerva House in Hatton Garden is one such recent example, as is the building currently being developed on the corner of Greville Street and Saffron Hill. The fact that Greville Street has recently become a one-way street should allow easier access from the front of the building than might otherwise be the case. Given that many building redevelopments such as this are serviced from the front, it is wholly unacceptable that in this case the proposal is to cause disruption to the existing businesses in the yard. In addition, given that other businesses must be allowed to operate, we feel that the use of the yard for construction purposes would raise significant Health and Safety concerns. Lastly if the yard were to be used for this purpose it would effectively subsidise the construction cost at the expense of the businesses in the yard.

We would therefore ask that in the event that some form of planning permission is granted in the future, the current construction management plan be wholly rejected and the applicant required to work on the basis that there is no rear access to the building for the purposes of construction and that the access road into the yard is unimpeded throughout any construction period.

## **Other Issues**

### ***Refuse Bins Bikes***

Although the application makes reference to the bins of the Bleeding Heart restaurant being in the open yard, it should be noted that the restaurant has recently gained planning permission to relocate its bin storage internally. This application includes a proposal for new bins to be incorporated in a store accessible from the entrance road to the yard, but given the very narrow

width of this entrance we question whether this is really feasible without blocking the whole access to the yard.

We note that LB Camden's refuse collectors already have the great difficulty entering the Yard and are concerned that projection of the proposed cladding some 300-400 mm over the public pavement will produce a diminution of the width that will be an absolute barrier. If Viola's trucks cannot enter the Yard, neither will fire engines. The vulnerable nature of the material proposed is not suitable for this location as it is likely to be damaged by any of the vehicles servicing the businesses of the yard.

### ***Bicycles***

The applicant proposes that visitors to the building will require 23 bicycle racks and proposes that they are placed in the Yard along the entire frontage of No 1 Bleeding Heart Yard, a situation that will be hugely disruptive to those delivering and picking up from businesses in the Yard. Surely if the applicant requires visitor bicycle spaces these should be accommodated alongside tenant bicycles in the basement site allocated for this purpose. The pavement alongside One Bleeding Heart Yard already provides as much bicycle parking as can be accommodated.

### ***Basement accommodation***

The submitted plans show Bleeding Heart Restaurant occupying part of the basement. Whilst there have been some discussions about this possibility in the past, Bleeding Heart Restaurant has not agreed to occupy that space.

### ***Consultation***

The application claims to have invited neighbours to a December 2017 public consultation at a private room in Bleeding Heart Restaurant. However, to the best of our knowledge no one working in the Yard received any such invitation. We also understand from the Bleeding Heart Restaurant that their staff monitored the numbers attending and were surprised that the number of attendees claimed in the submission did not match their own assessment.

### ***A3 extraction and ventilation***

Despite the extensive space devoted to A3 use, the application plans do not reveal how the associated kitchens will deal with the need for air in and air out. Extract fans and ducts could have further detrimental visual and environmental effects on the yard and we feel that no A3 use should be agreed unless full proposals for extraction and ventilation have been provided and reviewed.

## **20-23 Greville Street Alternative Proposal**

It is acknowledged that the existing building detracts from the environment of the yard and existing local building owners are not opposed to sensitive redevelopment of the building. They have therefore commissioned work from Architects Greig & Stephenson to look both at the impact of the proposed development on the existing environment as well as to suggest positive alternatives to provide a sensitive redevelopment of the building.

Appendix B shows a simple Space Study of the yard. The first sketch shows the existing single space but with the “hole” left by the unfortunate 1970s development. The second sketch shows how the existing proposal projects too far into the yard and has the effect of dividing it into two separate spaces. The final sketch shows how, if the building was extended only to the existing building line of No 1 to 3, the Yard could be resolved to a more harmonious single space.

Appendix C then provides a Massing Study, looking at the applicant’s proposal and comparing it with the suggestion above. The first page shows (in Red) how the applicant’s drawings appear to show some of the Bleeding Heart buildings as being higher than they actually are in relation to the proposal, thereby falsely minimising the mass of the proposal. The second page shows, we think, a more accurate relationship to the existing buildings. The rest of the pages show how the proposal, and our suggested reduction, would look from outside the yard and from within No 7 Bleeding Heart Yard.

Appendix D shows an alternative ground floor plan that would accommodate uses more in line with the current local planning policy and would occupy a slightly smaller footprint, so allowing the Yard to continue to read as a single undivided space. This is not a full redesign but a feasibility study which (within the resources available to businesses in the yard) we believe is sufficient to show that there is an alternative to that being currently proposed. The 1970s redevelopment is now seen as a mistake and we believe that were the existing proposal to go ahead the same judgement will be made in the future.

***Appendix A 20-23 Greville Street Impact Assessment***

***Appendix B Yard Space Study***

***Appendix C Massing Study Document***

***Appendix D Bleeding Heart - Alternative Ground floor***

## Heritage Impact Assessment

# 20-23 GREVILLE STREET & BLEEDING HEART YARD. LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN



**May 2018**



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## **1.0 Introduction**

This Heritage Impact Assessment was commissioned in April 2018 by Robert Wilson. The subject of the Assessment is number 20-33 Greville Street, a 1970s office block at the corner of Greville Street and Bleeding Heart Yard in the London Borough of Camden (grid reference TQ 314817). The site lies within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area and there are several listed buildings and undesignated heritage assets nearby.

An application has been made to the London Borough of Camden for Planning Permission to alter and enlarge the existing building (Application ref. 2018/0910/P). This Heritage Impact Assessment has been commissioned to supplement the heritage appraisal submitted with the application for planning permission.

The Assessment has been prepared by Neil Burton BA FSA IHBC, a director of The Architectural History Practice Ltd. AHP is an established research-based consultancy, providing advice for owners and others concerned with historic buildings in the form of listed building assessments, heritage impact assessments, conservation plans and statements and conservation area appraisals. Clients include Historic England, The National Trust, many Local Councils, public bodies and private individuals.

Neil has been a director of AHP since 2001. He is an architectural historian with over forty years experience of the listed building and planning control process. For fifteen years he was with the Greater London Council Historic Buildings Division. After the abolition of the GLC he became an Inspector of Historic Buildings within English Heritage where he drafted the *Guidance on Alterations to Listed Buildings* contained in Government Circular PPG15 concerned with Planning and Historic Environment. In 1994 he left English Heritage to become Secretary of the Georgian Group, one of the National Architectural Amenity Societies, where he remained until joining AHP.

## **2.0 The Proposals**

An application has been made to Camden Council for full planning permission (Application ref. 2018/0910/P). The application is for Change of use of existing office (Class B1a) use at basement, ground floor and 1st floor to retail/restaurant (Class A1/A3) use; demolition of existing 5th floor plant room and erection of new 2 storey roof extension for office use; erection of 5 storey rear extension; infill of rear lightwell to create cycle storage and changing facilities at basement level; external alterations including new facade and glazing, and associated works.

The architects for the new scheme are Groupwork + Amin Taha. This locally-based and award-winning practice has a track-record of producing inventive and thoughtful designs for both new buildings and refurbishment.

This assessment is concerned solely with those aspects of the proposal which have a heritage impact on the conservation area and on designated and undesignated heritage assets. These are taken to be:

- 1 The enlargement of the building at the rear in Bleeding Heart Yard, covering the existing ground level lightwell and enlarging the footprint of the building to its pre 1970s extent
- 2 The alteration of the upper storey (removal of the present top storey and the construction of a new tall mansard storey).
- 3 The cladding or ‘cloaking’ of the whole of the exterior of the enlarged building with pierced and patinated metal sheeting, shaped to reflect the appearance of the previous buildings on the site.

## **3.0 The Site and Surrounding Area**

A detailed history of the site and surrounding area is set out in section 2 of the Heritage Statement prepared for the applicant by Donald Insall Associates Ltd. and issued in January 2018. What follows is a brief summary.

The area north of Holborn which is now commonly known by the name of Hatton Garden and which includes both Greville Street and Bleeding Heart Yard once belonged to the Bishop of Ely and was the site of his palatial London residence. In 1576 the Elizabethan courtier Sir Christopher Hatton acquired the northern section of the Bishop’s property. In 1659 Hatton’s descendant of the same name laid out much of the land for building with a grid of streets including Hatton Street (now Hatton Garden) and at right-angles, Grevill Street and Cross Street or Charles Street (which were all merged and renamed Greville Street in 1936). Map evidence suggests that Bleeding Heart Yard was formed later in a subsequent phase of development at some time between the 1720s and the 1740s.

The Hatton Estate was sold off in 1760 and by the end of the eighteenth century the social character of the area had begun to deteriorate. Various urban improvements including the building of Farringdon Road in the mid-1850s and the opening of Farringdon Station in 1863 greatly improved communications and stimulated the growth of business in the area. One result was extensive redevelopment of the existing buildings with new commercial premises, though

many of them still had the narrow plots dictated by the original leaseholds. It was during the second half of the nineteenth century that Hatton Garden became established as a centre of the jewellery trade.

By 1880 number 21 Charles Street (now 21 Greville Street) was occupied by John Millet Newton, a glass manufacturer and by 1890 he also occupied numbers 22 and 23. By 1910 he had acquired number 20. Immediately to the west of this last property and fronting onto the alley leading from Charles Street to Bleeding Heart Yard was another, lower, building numbered 19A.

It appears that numbers 21-23 were rebuilt in the 1880s or 1890s. Numbers 22 and 23 had matching ornamental brick fronts four storeys high with full-width arches at fourth floor level. The façade of number 21 was slightly different, suggesting a different building campaign. In 1922 J M Newton & Sons commissioned the architect Spencer Grant to refurbish the whole of their Charles Street property, adding a new façade to number 20 matching those of 21 and 22 and reconstructing the whole of the rear of the premises with a new functional warehouse façade to Bleeding Heart Yard. Number 19A Charles Street was not part of this development.

The Hatton Garden area was badly damaged by bombing in the Second World War but Greville Street was largely unaffected. In 1976, permission was given for the redevelopment of the whole of the site including 19A-23 Greville Street and 8-10 Bleeding Heart Yard with a new 5-storey office block designed by Carl Fisher and Partners. The building is faced with dark red brick with continuous bands of windows across the whole of the Greville Street façade and a flat roof. The building is roughly L-shaped and at the rear of the building towards Bleeding Heart Yard a large lightwell was formed within the footprint of the previous building, providing daylight to the basement storey of the new block.

The other properties in Bleeding Heart Yard are modest three-storey commercial premises of yellow brick which mostly appear to date from the second half of the nineteenth century. The late Victorian character of this pleasant enclosed space is enhanced by the cobbled surface of the yard itself.

#### **4.0 The Heritage Significance of the Site**

The assessment of the significance of heritage assets is not an exact science and should be based on detailed historical knowledge, comparison with what exists elsewhere, and the extent to which the asset or assets may be distinctive or have special meaning for different groups of people. In this case, the heritage significance of the development site cannot be understood in isolation from the surrounding area.

Statutory and non-statutory designations provide some guide to the importance of heritage assets. The development site does not include any listed buildings, nor are there any listed buildings immediately adjacent to the site although the large Grade II-listed block of 25-27 Farringdon Road is intervisible with 20-23 Greville Street. Both Greville Street and Bleeding Heart Yard lie within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area, which was first designated by Camden Borough Council in 1999. In the Conservation Area Appraisal, adopted in 2017,

Greville Street is included within Sub-area 3, named The Trading Centre. This is described as ‘a fine-grained area [which] accommodates a variety of specialist shops, workshops and offices, many linked with the diamond and jewellery trade. The regularity of the street grid creates a strong sense of formality, tempered by the fall of the land to the east.....The straight streets of Sub-area 3 rely for much of their visual effect on variation in the frontages, which is ensured where the original plot-widths survive. The survival of many original plot widths lends a satisfying rhythm to the east side of Hatton Garden and to both sides of Greville Street and St Cross Street. However, the west side of Hatton Garden and both sides of Kirby Street have a weaker character owing to the amalgamation of many of the original plots.’

The appraisal of Sub-area 3 goes on to say that, ‘Bleeding Heart Yard and Hatton Place are important as large yards that have survived from the seventeenth century street plan. They depend on lower heights, irregularity of outline and a strong sense of enclosure for their effect.’

Four key views are identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal. View 1 is from Cowcross Street, just outside the conservation area, looking westwards towards the Farringdon Road/Greville Street corner and up Greville Street. Because of a slight bend in the road, this view is terminated by number 20-23 Greville Street, which has additional prominence as a result. View 2 is the same viewing corridor, but looking eastwards along Greville Street towards the corner with Farringdon Road. The most prominent feature in this view is the conical turret of number 25-27 Farringdon Road. Number 20-23 Greville Street is not prominent.

The Appraisal identifies number 20-23 Greville Street as a building which makes a negative contribution to the character of the Area. Numbers 1-7 Bleeding Heart Yard and numbers 8,9,12, 15, 16, 18, 19, 24, 27, 35, 36, 38, 39 & 41 Greville Street are identified as buildings which make a positive contribution and number 19 Greville Street (The Bleeding Heart Tavern) is also identified as a building with a shopfront of merit

In 2008 English Heritage published *Conservation Principles*, which identified four principal heritage values which should be taken into account when assessing the significance of heritage assets. These values are *Evidential*, deriving from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity; *Historical*, deriving from the ways in which past people events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present; *Aesthetic*, deriving from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place; *Communal*, deriving from the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience and memory.

In 2012 the Department of Communities and Local Government issued the National Policy Planning Framework which suggests that for planning purposes, the significance of historic buildings should be assessed under the headings of *archaeological*, *architectural*, *artistic or historic* (which are closely related to the English Heritage values) and points out that significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence but also from its setting.

Heritage Significance is essentially a hierarchical concept, using descending levels of value. The levels most commonly adopted are as follows:

- *Exceptional* - important at national to international levels
- *Considerable* - important at regional level or sometimes higher
- *Some* - usually of local value only but possibly of regional significance for group or other value
- *Little* - of limited heritage or other value
- *Neutral* - features which neither enhance nor detract from the value of the site
- *Negative/intrusive* - features which detract from the value of the site

The following summary assessment considers the significance of number 20-23 Greville Street on its own and in relation to its immediate surroundings.

Archaeological Significance/Evidential value:

On the basis of the MOLAS study submitted with the application, it is clear that the site of 20-23 Greville Street is of *Little Evidential value/Low Archaeological Significance*. The building on the site dates entirely from 1970s and there are unlikely to be any significant below ground remains.

Architectural Significance:

The present building at 20-23 Greville Street is an unexciting mid-1970s office block of conventional form with no particular distinguishing features. It is of *Little Architectural Significance*. The buildings in Bleeding Heart Yard are modest commercial buildings of the later nineteenth century which are of *Some Architectural Significance*.

Artistic Significance/ Aesthetic value:

20-23 Greville Street is an undistinguished modern building of *Little Aesthetic Value and Little Artistic Significance*. The building has been identified as making a negative contribution to the character of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area. Bleeding Heart Yard has some aesthetic value as a secluded urban open space with a cobbled surface surrounded by modest Victorian commercial buildings.

Historic Significance and Value:

The site of 20-23 Greville Street has *Some Historic Significance and Value* as an element in the historic late seventeenth century street pattern established when the Hatton Estate was laid out for building, although several of the original narrow house plots have been submerged in the present building's footprint and there is no visual evidence of the previous uses on the site which were linked to jewellery-making.

Bleeding Heart Yard also has *Considerable Historic Significance and Value*, as a small town yard which was apparently formed in the early eighteenth century and is typical of the early development pattern in London. The yard was probably formed originally to provide stabling,

and was redeveloped in the mid to late nineteenth century to provide accommodation for the small business enterprises which were a feature of Hatton Garden at this time.

#### Setting:

The immediate setting of 20-23 Greville Street is the street itself with a varied mixture of mainly 19<sup>th</sup> and twentieth century commercial buildings, described in the Conservation Area Appraisal as 'fine-grained'. Greville Street has particular prominence within the conservation area because of the views along the street to both east and west, which the appraisal identifies as key views.

Another important component of the immediate setting is Bleeding Heart Yard to the rear of the property, which is self-contained pocket with an open and low-rise character.

### **5.0 National Policy Guidance**

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of designated [conservation] areas.

Section 66 of the Act requires that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority....shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting...

Para. 131 of The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) notes that,

In determining planning applications local planning authorities should take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

Para.132 of the NPPF notes that,

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.....

Para.137 of the NPPF notes that,

Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

## 6.0 The Impact of the Proposed Works on the Historic Environment

The supporting documents available on Camden's Planning Portal include a *Heritage Statement* prepared by Donald Insall Associates and a report from the Camden Design Review panel.

The Heritage Statement sets out the development history of the present building on the site and of the Hatton Garden area in general and includes a heritage impact assessment. The Statement considers that the existing building is of no architectural or historic significance, but makes no assessment of the significance of Bleeding Heart Yard and other elements of the immediate setting.

The report argues that,

*In terms of architectural treatment and townscape, the proposals are an inventive response to both the history and the architecture of the area and would rectify the negative contribution this building makes to the Conservation Area in every sense... The proposals would strengthen the character of the Conservation Area by restoring the traditional grain, plot widths and rhythm, by introducing variety to Greville Street and by restoring vitality to the street scene... the proposed rear elevation would acknowledge the difference between the formal high street façade and the industrial character of the rear and the infill would reinstate a portion of the 17th century street plan.*

The report concedes that,

*The additional storeys could be perceived as causing harm to the conservation area by providing additional bulk, however, the roof form been skilfully articulated and so this perceived harm is mitigated by good design.*

In relation to the cladding of the exterior of the building the report suggests that,

*Any perceived harm would be very much 'less than substantial' and would be greatly outweighed by the significant improvements to the appearance of the building, which would stitch this building back into the fabric of Greville Street and Farringdon as a whole. The views analysis shows clearly the proposed alterations to the building represent an overall improvement on the local townscape. Overall, the proposed alterations to the building would enhance the setting of the listed and locally-listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.*

The report by the Design Review Panel is generally supportive of the proposals but does express serious reservations about the visual effect of the proposed external cladding and the impact of the scheme on the character of Bleeding Heart Yard.

It is clear that the principal heritage impacts of the proposed new development would be on the character of the Conservation Area and on the setting of the undesignated heritage assets in Bleeding Heart Yard. For present purposes, both impacts can be considered together, using the headings from the check-list in the Historic England document *The Setting of Heritage Assets*,



*Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning:3*, which was issued in March 2015. The principal headings are, Location and Siting; Form and Appearance and Other Effects.

#### Location and siting of the new development

The existing building on site would remain but would be enlarged at the rear. The proposed rear addition would occupy the footprint of the building which stood here until the 1970s. Although this does have some historical logic, it does not question the validity of the enjoyment of light and space which has been a characteristic of the yard over the past 40 years. This visual enlargement of Bleeding Heart Yard is probably the only positive aspect of the otherwise unsightly 1970s development.

#### Form and appearance of the new development:

The principal change to the exterior of the building would be the addition of a new external skin and the addition of a new mansard storey.

The building would be 'cloaked' in perforated metal cladding with a patinated brass finish, moulded into the form of the 19th and early-20th century commercial buildings which once stood on the site. The design of the new elevation to Greville Street has been loosely based upon archive drawings and photographs and will have shop-fronts at ground floor level, vertical projections recalling the thin pilaster strips on the facades of the earlier buildings and a tall arched opening under a gable at roof-level recalling the arched attic of the previous number 21 Charles Street.

In truth, the constraints of the existing building mean that many of the features of the present structure, like uniform storey heights and long uniform window strips will remain and it will still appear as a single large structure. The new cladding would be mounted on the façade of the existing building and would have the effect of bringing the front of the building 300-400mm further forward into the street. The projection of the new façade forward of the adjacent building line will increase the bulk of the building and increase its impact in both close and distant views, partially masking views of other buildings which make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

The historic interpretation of the mesh facade shown at the rear is less literal than that on Greville Street. The pre-1970s building had a four storey warehouse front to Bleeding Heart Yard with tall windows flanking a narrower central bay which was originally a hoist bay. The proposed new structure would have double-height openings at ground floor level with a tall open colonnade fronting a terrace for the proposed new restaurant use. The piers of the colonnade would be continued upwards as pilaster strips, which would have the effect of increasing the apparent height of the façade and make the building into a dominant feature of the yard.

The ground floor colonnade is something of a very different nature to anything that previously existed or now exists within this very low key environment. The other businesses in the yard have been developed with a very light touch to the existing buildings, which retain their modest scale and appearance. This new design seems rather formal and grand in comparison and will have an impact on the nature of the yard. This point was made in the report by the Design Review Panel which voiced some unease that,

*The building has a formal frontage on Greville Street but an informal rear on Bleeding Heart Yard. The double-height colonnade risk confusing these proportions by bringing a civic scale into this back street space.*

Obviously, the actual appearance of the proposed new cladding is a key factor in any consideration of the impact the proposals will have on the character of the conservation area. The pre-1970s buildings were faced with a varied mixture of red and yellow brick with stone dressings. The 1970s building is faced with uniform dark red brick, relieved only by the window strips. The proposed new cladding is also of a uniform colour. A sample of the cladding has been erected on the corner of the building at the entrance to Bleeding Heart Yard. From this it is clear that the overall effect will be of a matt dark grey coating, which will make it hard to read variations of surface and will appear from a distance as a single undifferentiated shadowy mass of slightly forbidding character.

The Design Review Panel report expressed concerns about the appearance, durability and jointing of the cladding and concluded that,

*There is not yet sufficient information on detailing and construction to convince the panel that the building really will appear the way it is shown in the illustrations.*

At present the building has a flat-roofed windowless top-storey addition containing the lift overrun which is considerably set back from the Greville Street frontage. The proposed new mansard would rise from the Greville Street frontage-line and contain tall windows front and rear with an arched window under a central gable on the Greville Street frontage. The blind east end wall of the new mansard storey is an unattractive feature which would be prominent in the long view looking westwards from Cowcross Street, which is identified in the conservation area appraisal as a key view.

#### Other effects of the new development:

There is a rather vague proposal to host a Saturday market in the yard for jewellery makers. How that will work from a business point of view is one thing, but there is nowhere obvious to store market stalls and, if they are left within the yard when not open, they will be detrimental to the environment of the yard.

The existing businesses are currently in the process of improving the Yard by removing the waste bins (and their enclosure) to within the buildings. Planning Consent has been granted for this measure. It would be unfortunate if the proposed development introduced new clutter into the yard.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

In this case, the principal heritage issues are the effect the development would have on the setting of nearby undesignated heritage assets and whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area. If the effects are considered to be adverse, there needs to be a judgement, following NPPF requirements, about the level of harm which would be caused.

Most of the buildings fronting Bleeding Heart Yard, and which form the immediate setting of the rear elevation of 20-23 Greville Street, are undesignated heritage assets which were identified by Camden Council in their 2017 appraisal document as making a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. As the appraisal notes, part of that contribution lies in the relatively low height of most of the buildings and this uniformity would be disrupted by the proposed addition at the rear of the Greville Street Building. The new building would be taller than any other building in the yard and would make the space seem smaller and more confined. The setting of the undesignated heritage assets in the yard would certainly be adversely affected by the proposed new development, but the level of harm to the listed buildings should probably be judged as 'less than substantial' in the terms of the NPPF (para 134).

On the other hand, it is clear that the proposed scheme would have a more substantial visual impact on the character of this part of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area, which is described in the 2017 appraisal as 'a fine-grained area' with a mixture of buildings of different dates and styles, most of which are of fairly modest scale. Number 20-23 Greville Street has already been identified as making a negative contribution to the conservation area because of its discordant scale and character. The proposals would actually enlarge both the height and the footprint of the building, which would be taller and more conspicuous in the important views along the street.

The proposed additional height was considered acceptable by the Camden Design Review Panel, but blind end wall of the large new roof would be unsightly and would be conspicuous in long views from Cowcross Street and the Farringdon Road.

The proposed metal cladding is an interesting idea but would not disguise the increased bulk of the building, which would become unduly conspicuous. On the basis of the sample piece of cladding already in place, there must also be considerable doubt that the overall effect would be to produce greater movement and variety in the façade, as has been claimed by the applicants. In fact, the actual visual effect would be monochrome, disturbing and not at all accord with its surroundings

The inescapable conclusion is that while the proposed development is an interesting concept by an original architect, it would not be beneficial to the conservation area. The enlarged and re-clad building would cause harm to the setting of several undesignated heritage assets and would

have a damaging and adverse effect on the character of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area as set out in the 2017 Appraisal.

The Architectural History Practice Ltd.,

70 Cowcross Street,

London EC1M 6EJ

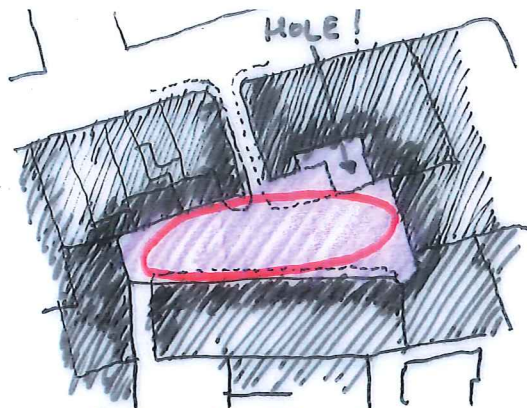
[www.architecturalhistory.co.uk](http://www.architecturalhistory.co.uk)



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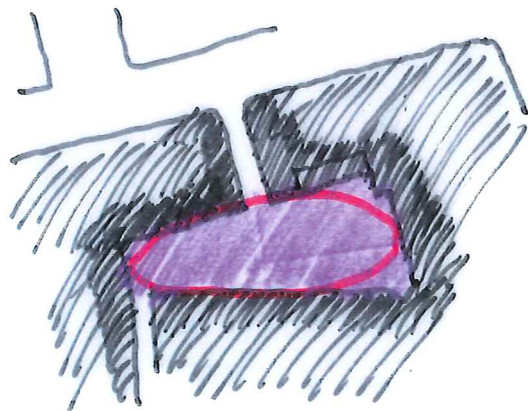




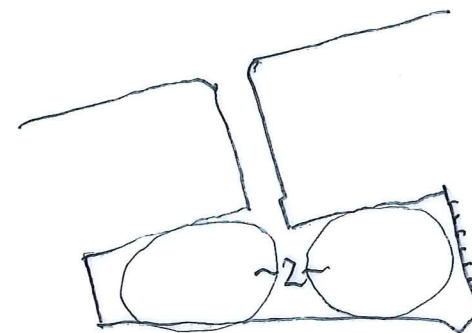
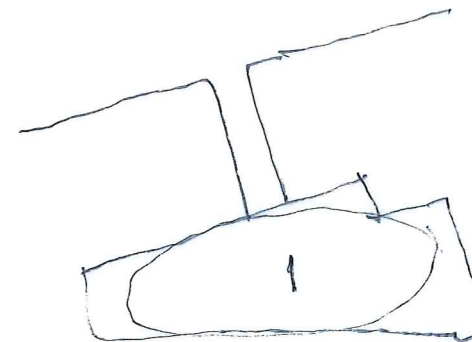
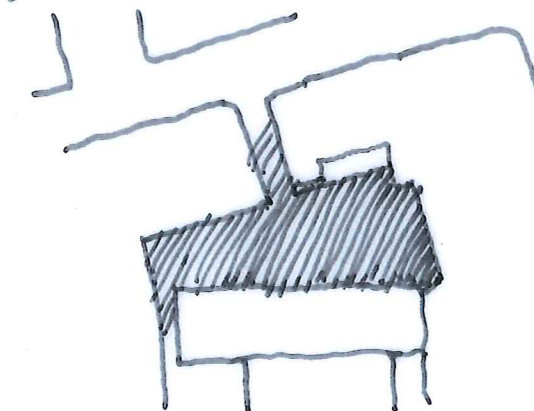
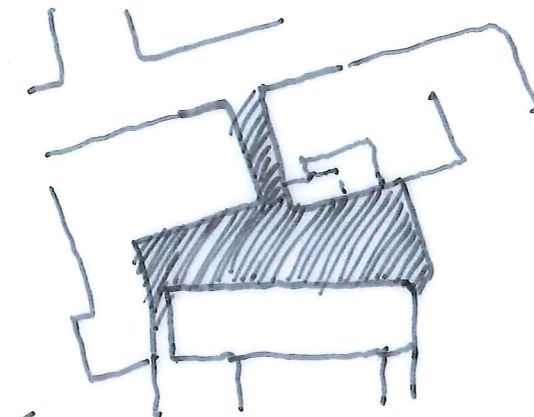
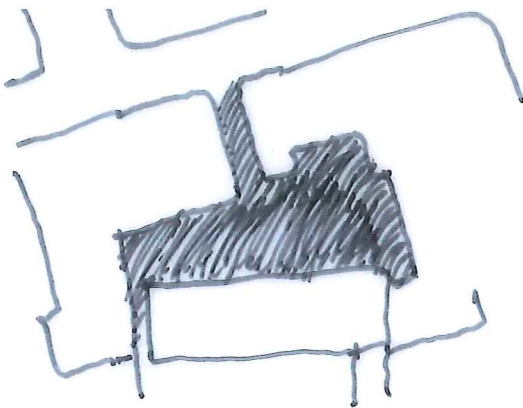
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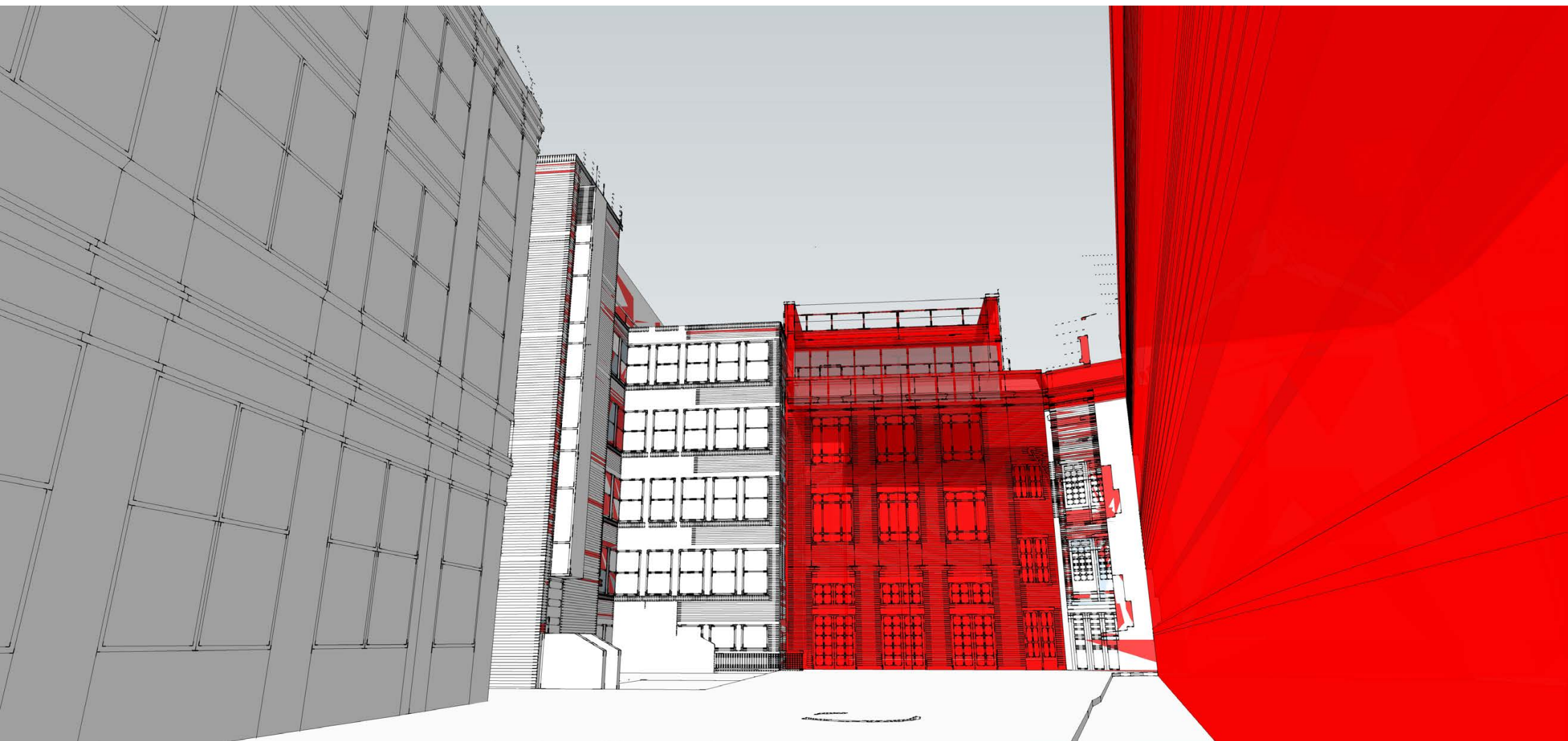
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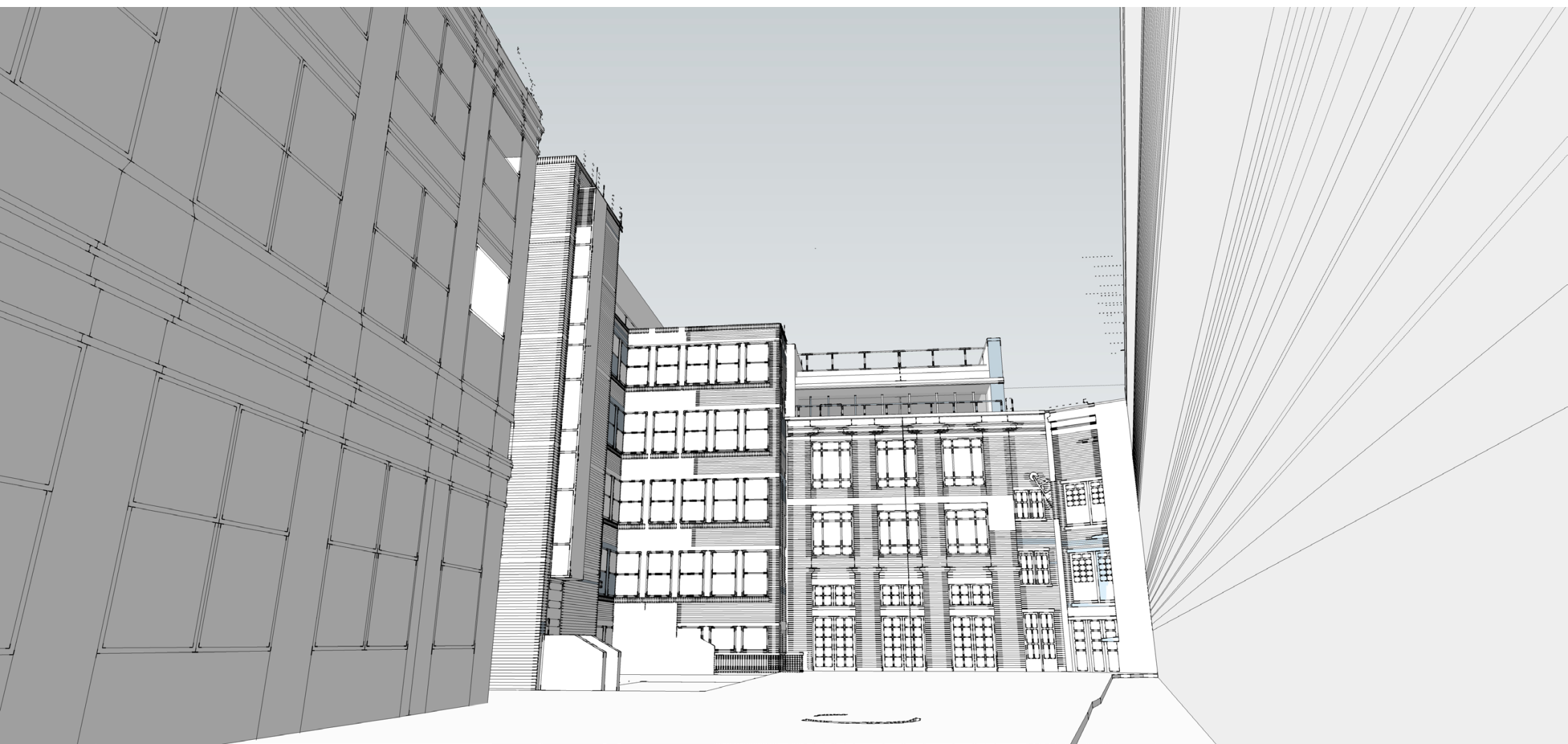






**Context taken from planning drawings - larger than actual**

When modelling the proposals and context, it was noticed that the BHY buildings adjacent were approximately 1.8m higher than they should be - assuming the proposals are drawn accurately. The red shows the height of the context in relation to 20-23 Greville Street



**Existing View:** This view shows how the context should appear in relation to 20-23 Greville Street

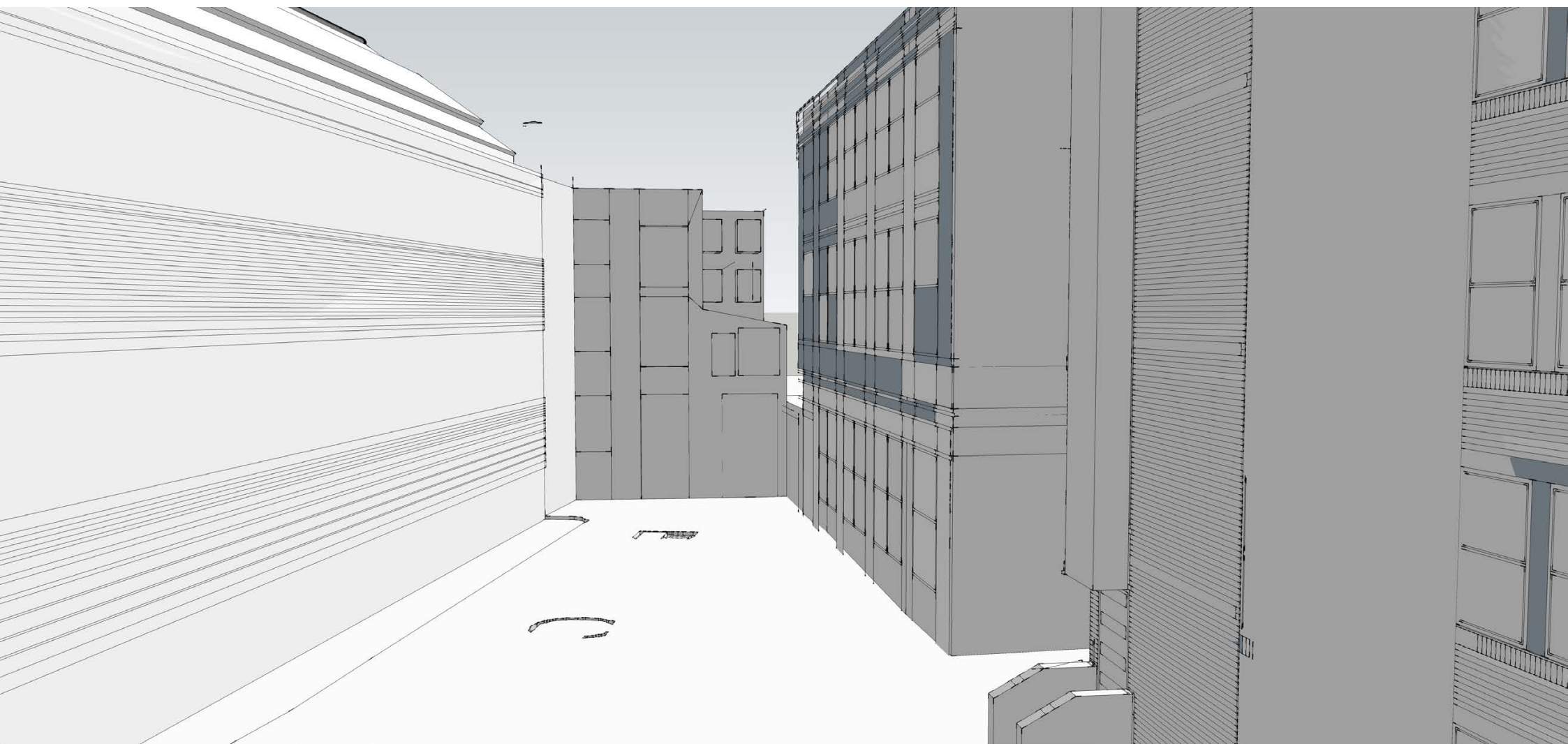


**Proposed Mass:** indication of proposed building mass in relation to the yard context

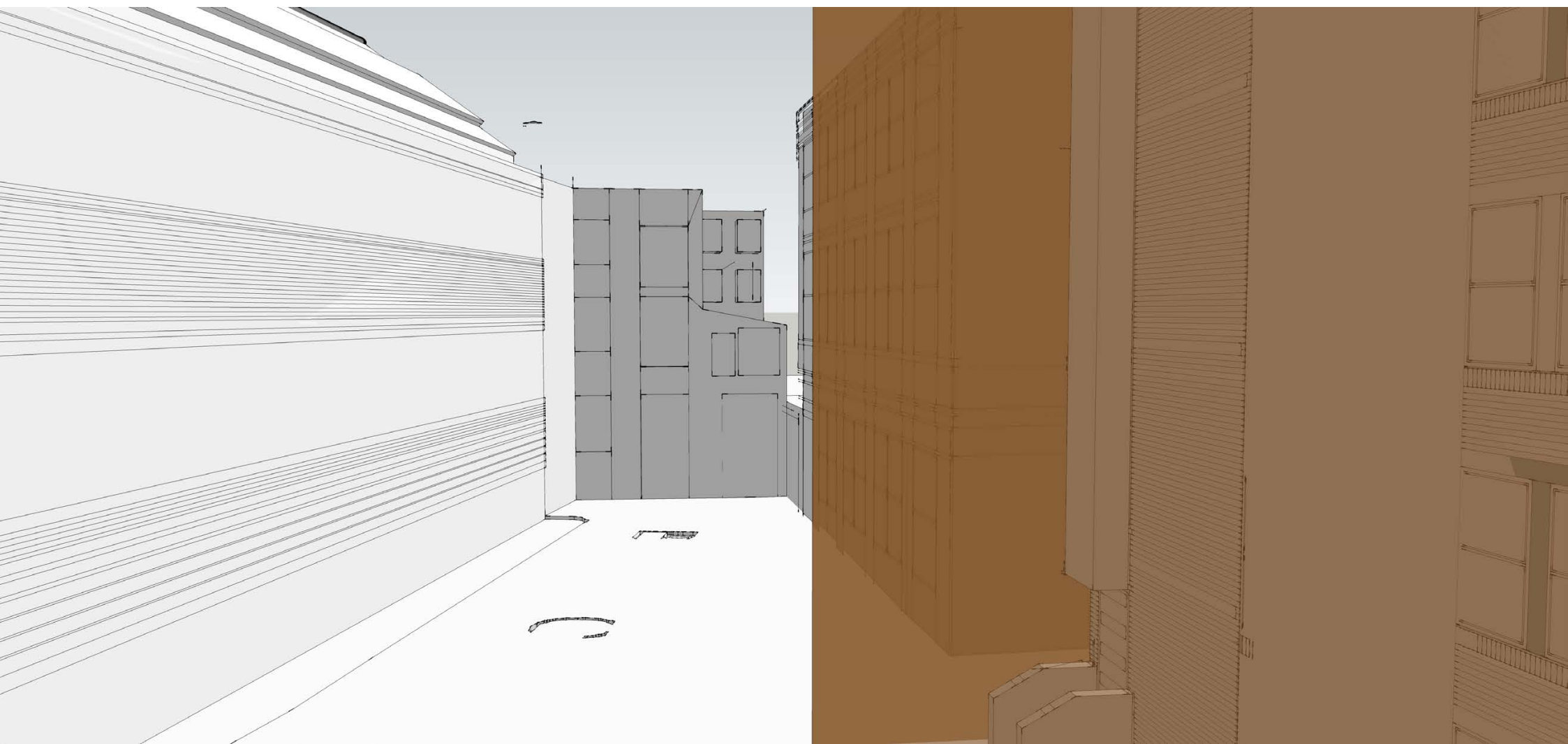




**Alternative Proposal:** the new development could take more cognisance of the building perimeter of yard.

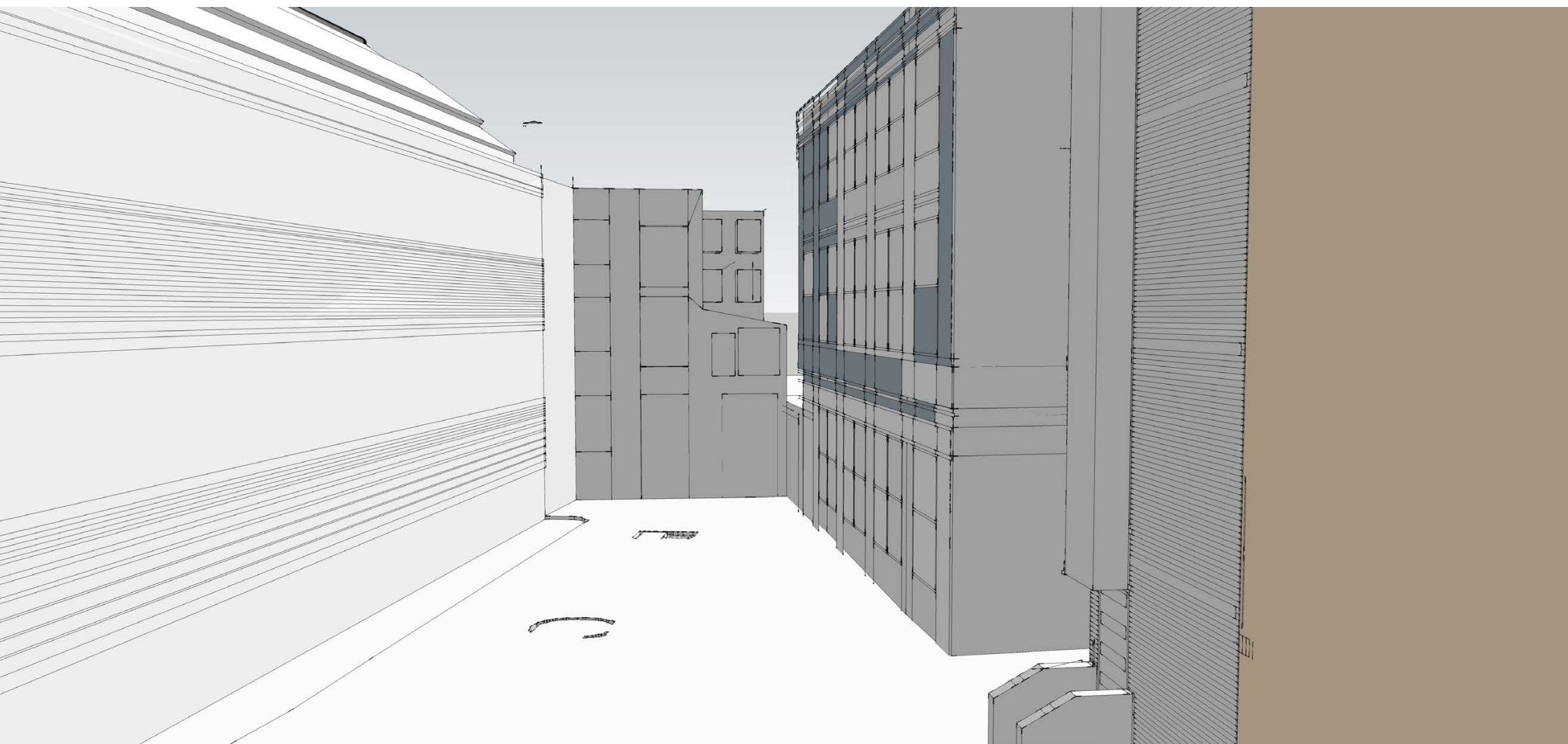


Existing view from office

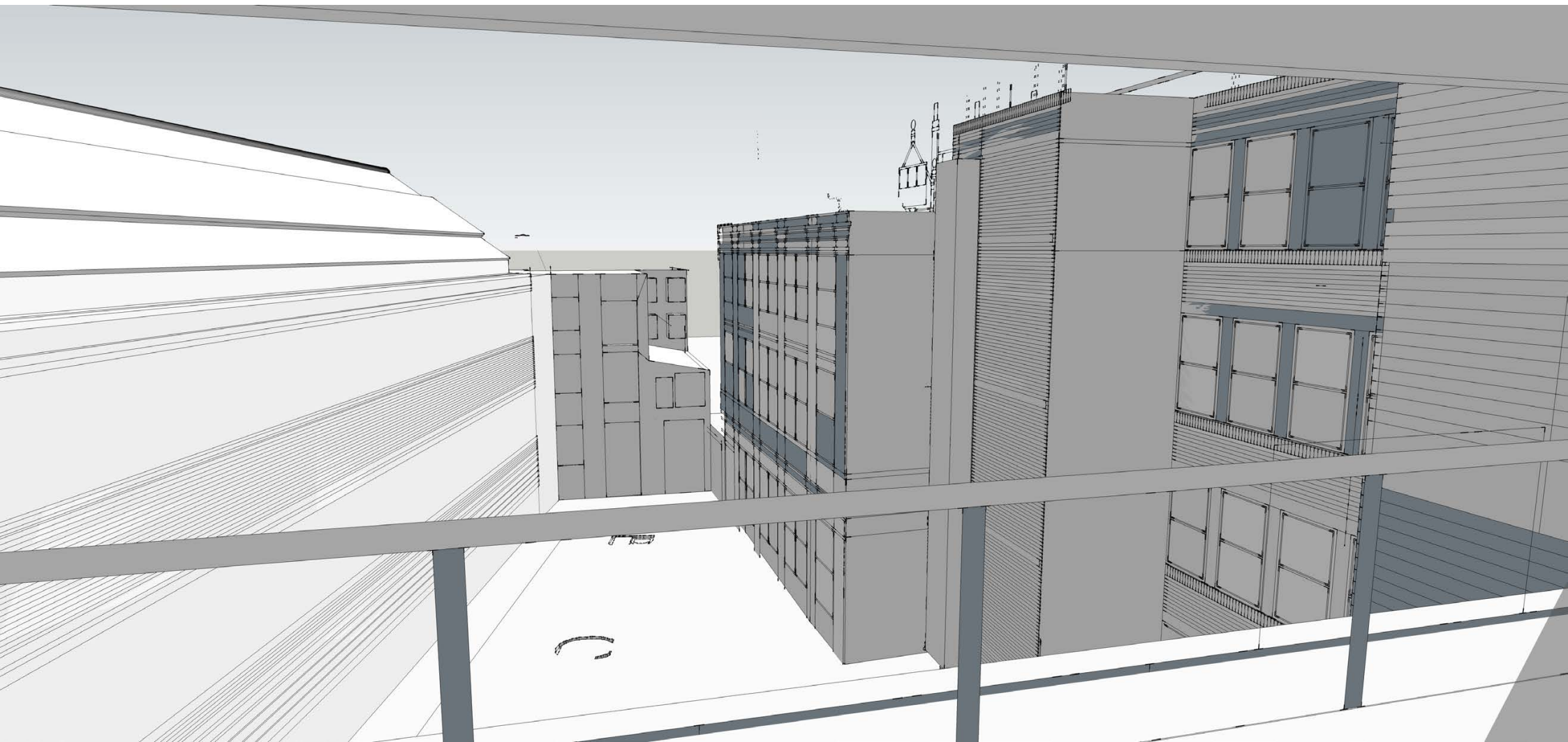


**Current proposal view from office**

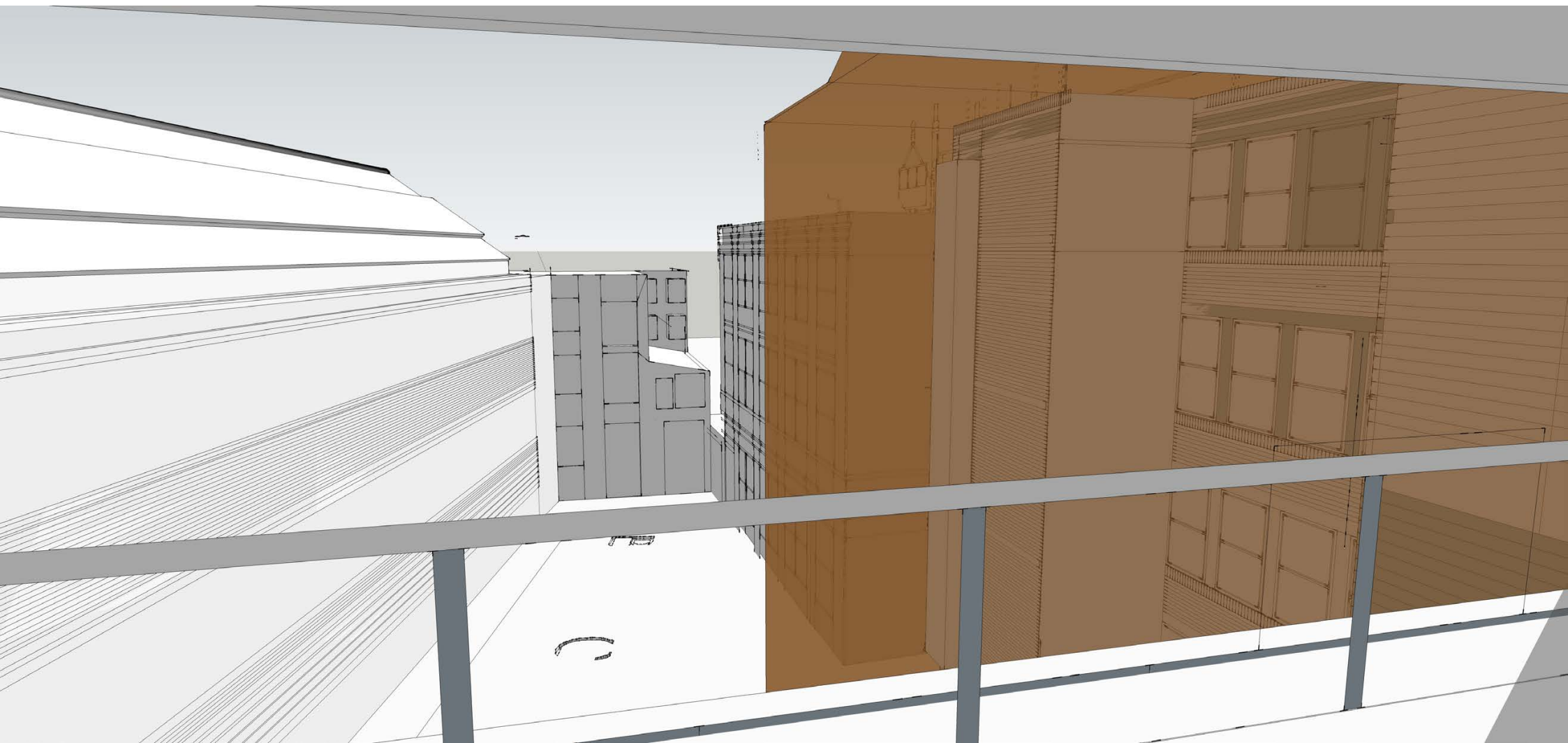




Alternative proposal view

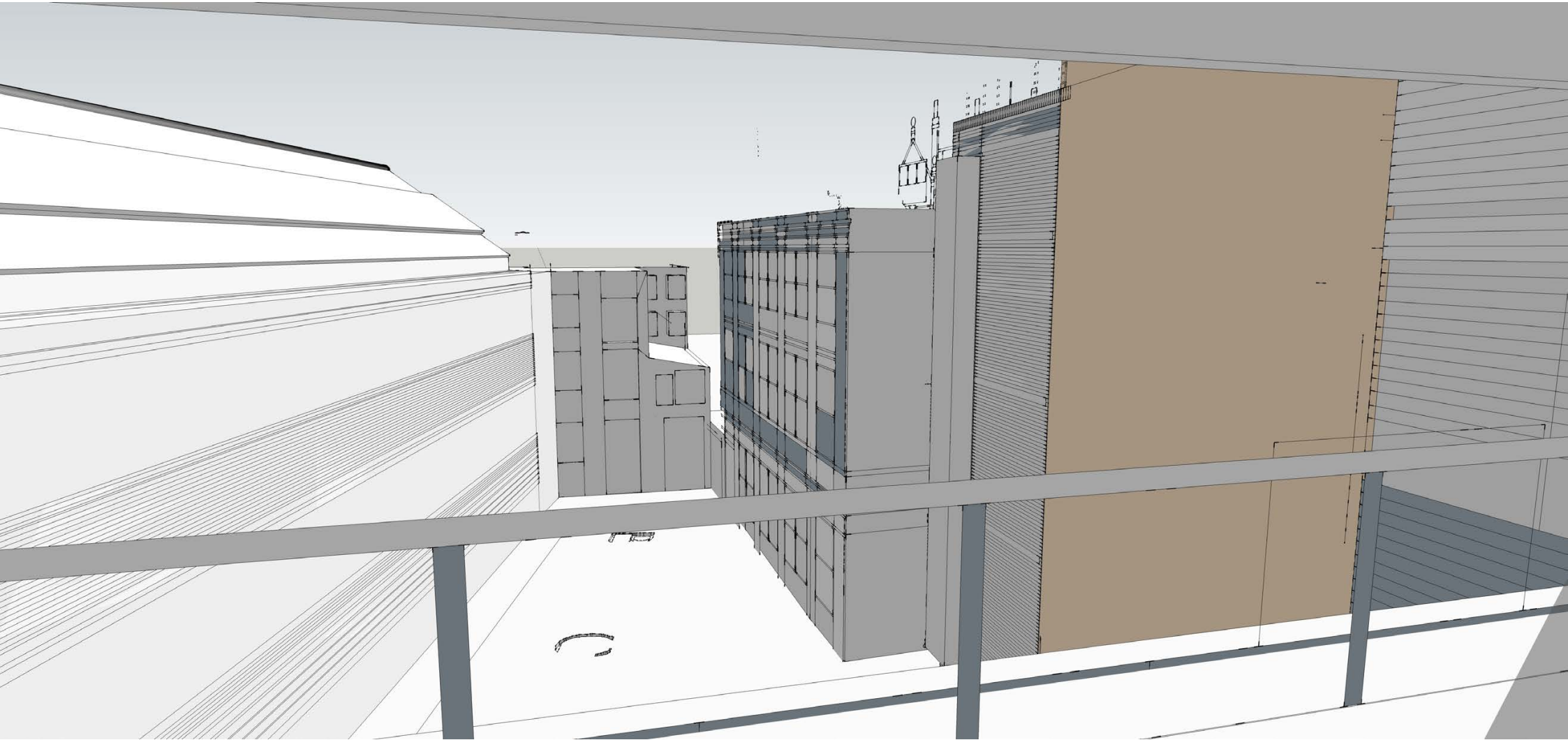


Existing view from kitchen

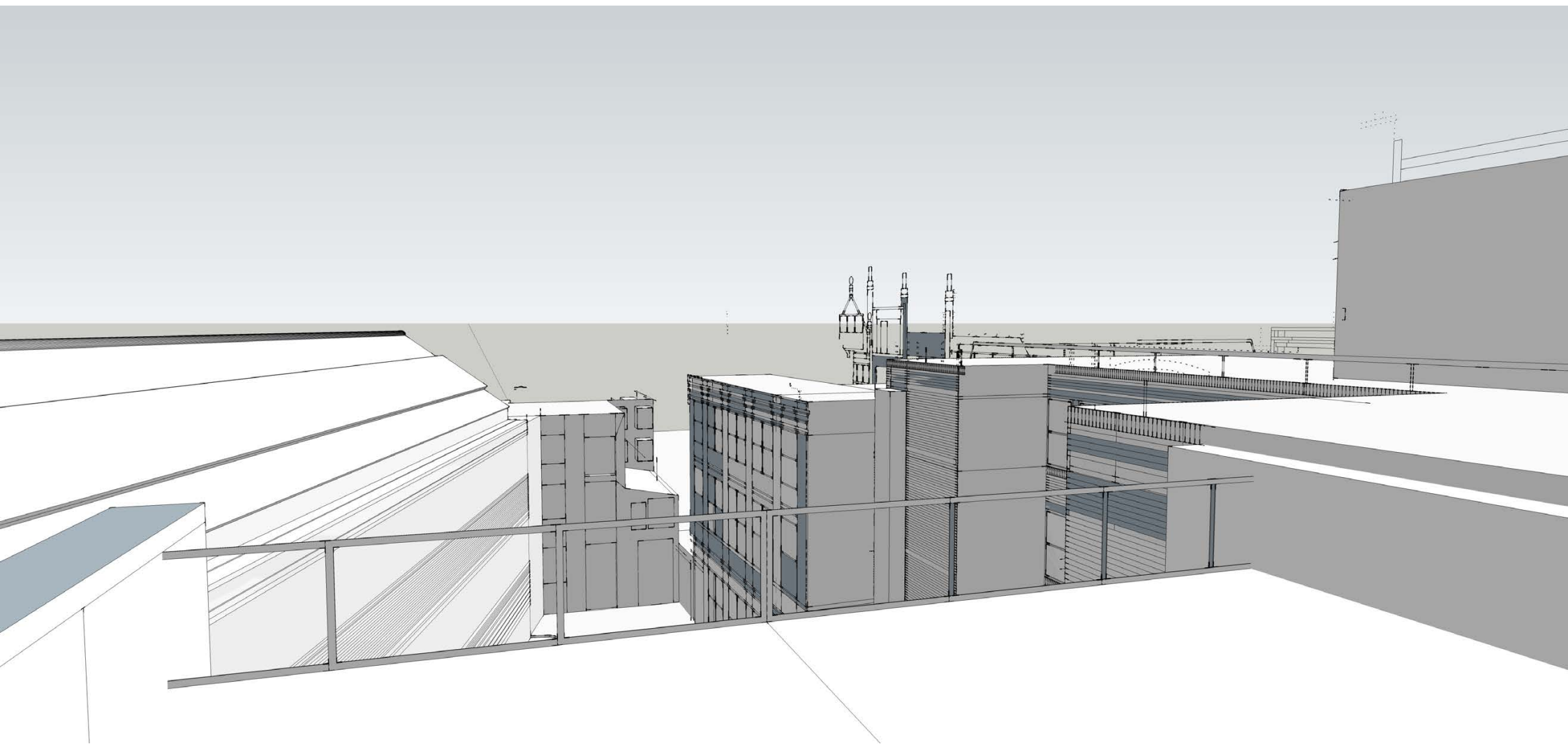


Current proposal view from kitchen



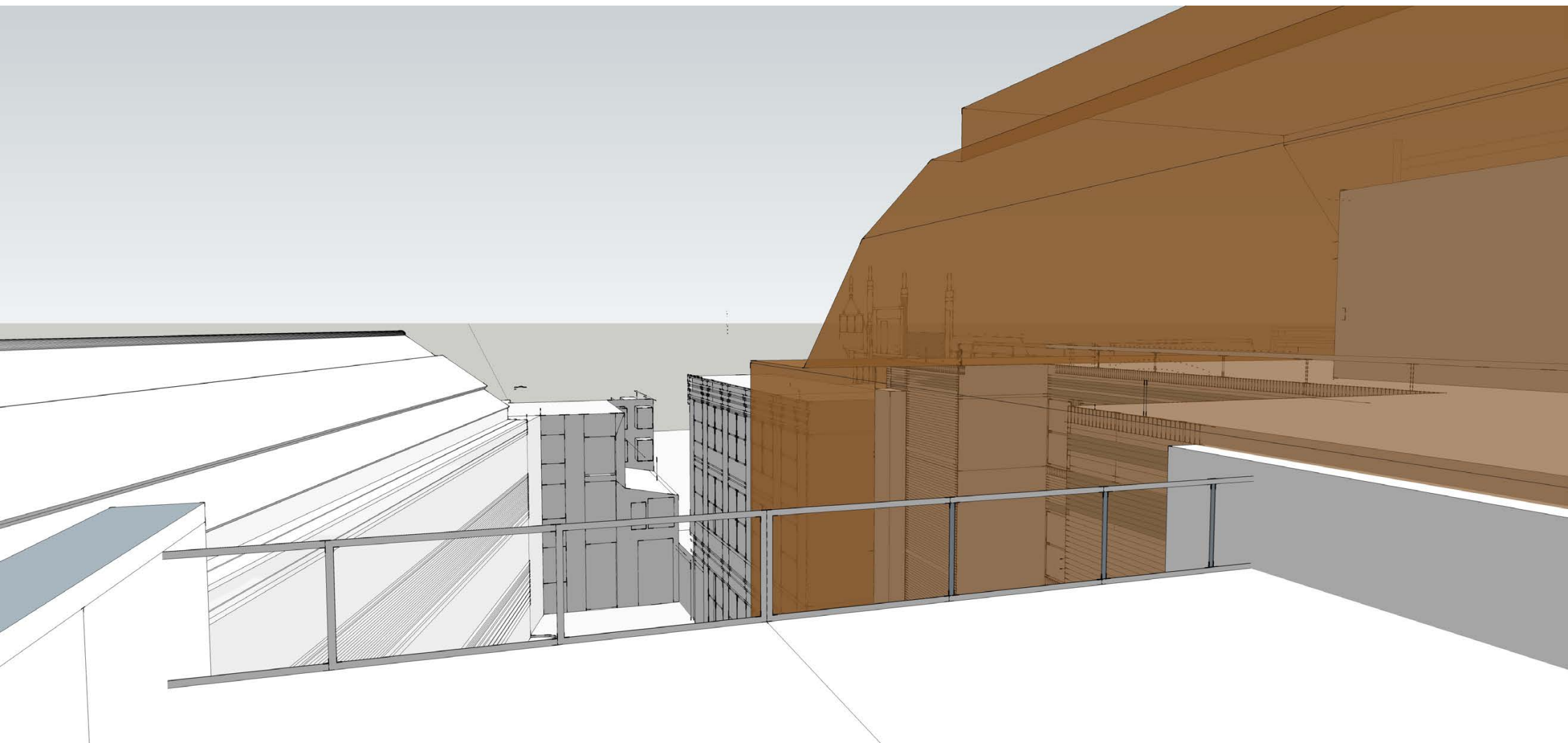


Alternative proposal view from kitchen

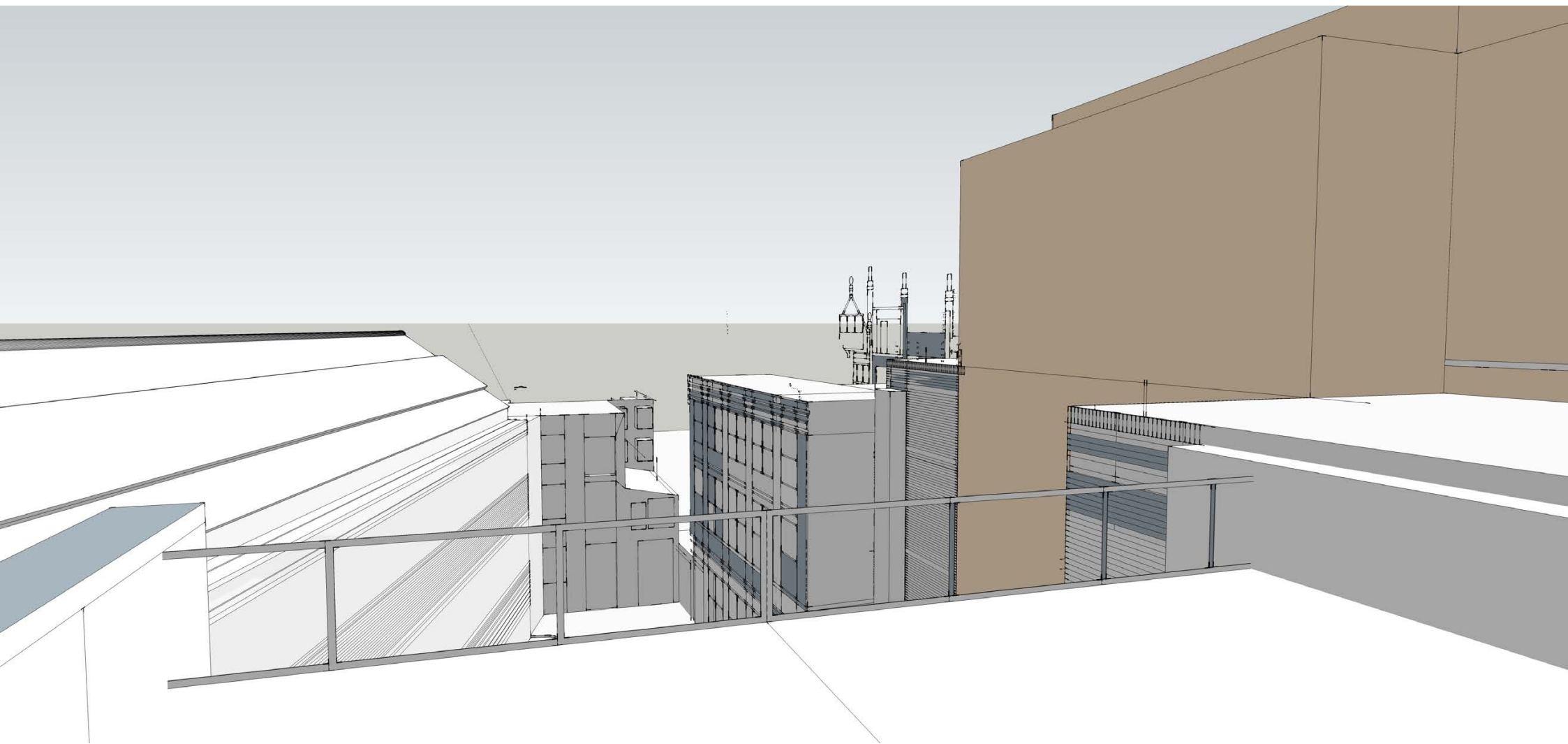


Existing view from roof terrace

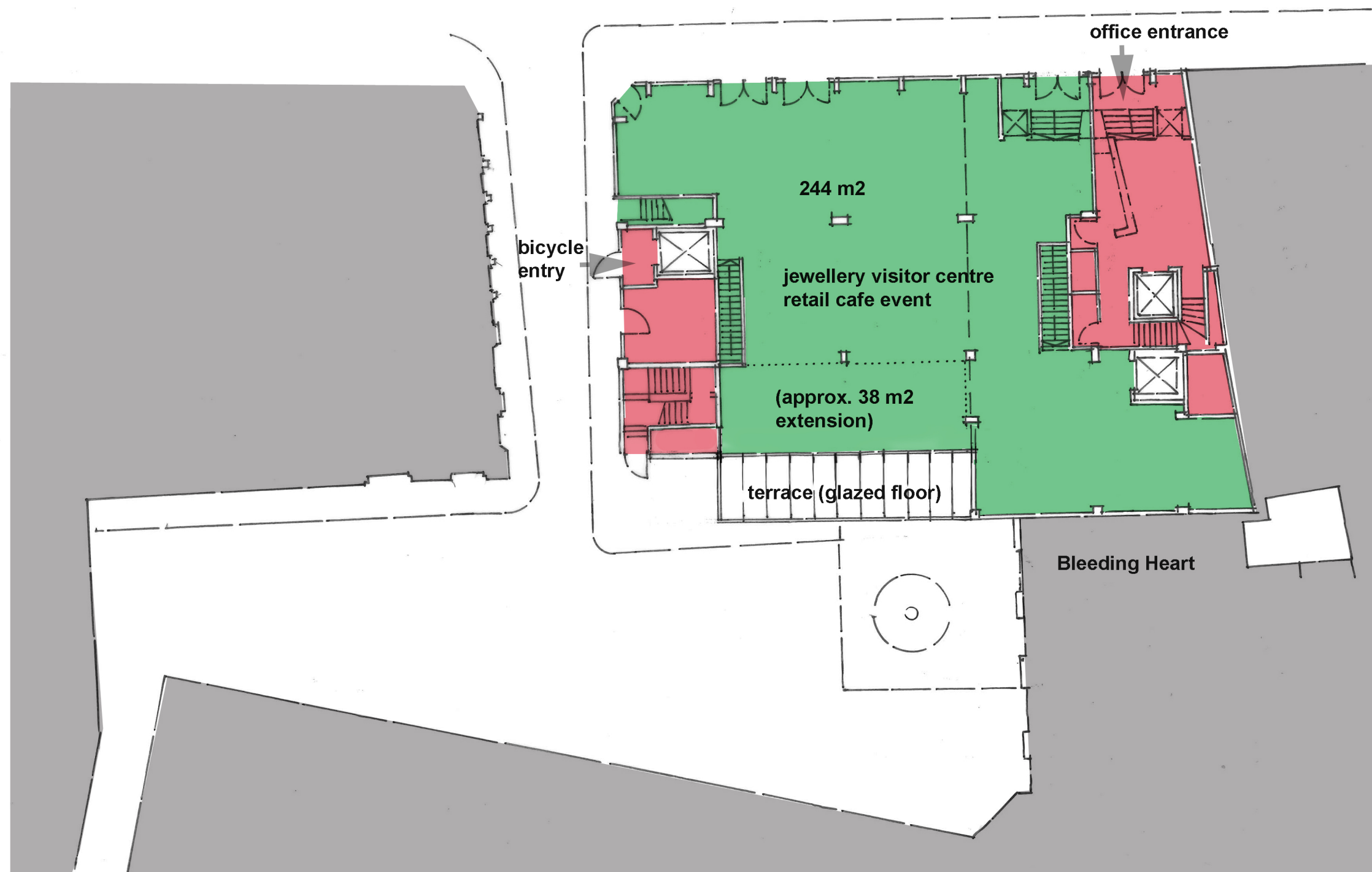




Currentl proposal view from roof terrace



Alternative proposal view from roof terrace



**GROUND FLOOR** approx. 1/200