

3 The Site

3.7 St John's Conservation Area

"The area... is largely residential and many of the houses are mid-19th century, locally listed, with fine detailing and have special group value and well-balanced scale."

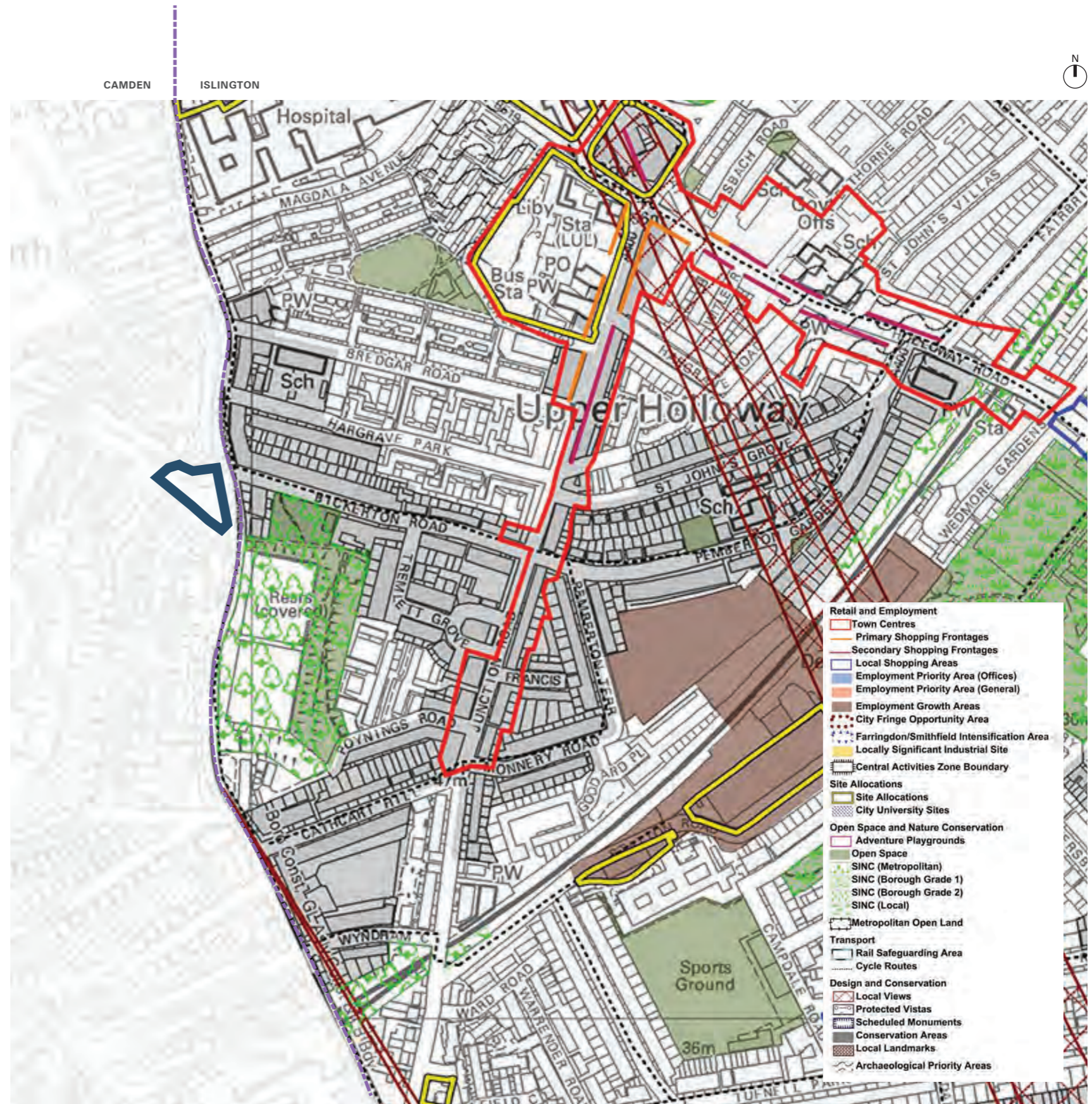
- St John's Grove Conservation Area Design Guidelines

3.7.1 Character of St John's Conservation Area

Chester Road is located adjacent to and outside of the St John's Conservation Area in Islington. The site is highlighted in the mapping opposite with a blue outline.

Policy CA28 outlines relevant policy to the St John's Conservation Area, and makes the following observations about the character of this area that have informed the proposals for the site:

- "The area has many fine mature trees both on public and private land which enhance the quality of the environment."
- "The predominant character of the St John's Grove Conservation Area is residential."
- Generally, the Council recognises that often the best use for a building is that which it was designed for ... The removal of individual established uses within the conservation area will not be permitted where they contribute to the character."
- "The area consists of an exceptionally high quality and variety of roof types with mansards, gables, exposed pitched roofs and decorated eaves being present."



3.8 Views

1. This section of Chester Road features a distinctive sweep both in its horizontal curvature and in the way in which the slope dips in the middle of this road.
The existing hostel sits at the southern tip of this sweep, however it is concealed from view due to its low height. At this junction the prominent order of the street ends.
2. Looking south along Dartmouth Park Hill a number of London landmarks can be seen.
3. The nearby reservoir (approx. 40m south of the site) offers a slightly elevated view south-east towards London, key landmarks shown below.
This view could be harnesssed by the scheme on the apex of the site.



1 View towards the site along Chester Road, facing south-east



2 View facing south along Dartmouth Park Hill



3 View facing south-east towards central London from the nearby reservoir

3 The Site

3.9 Townscape

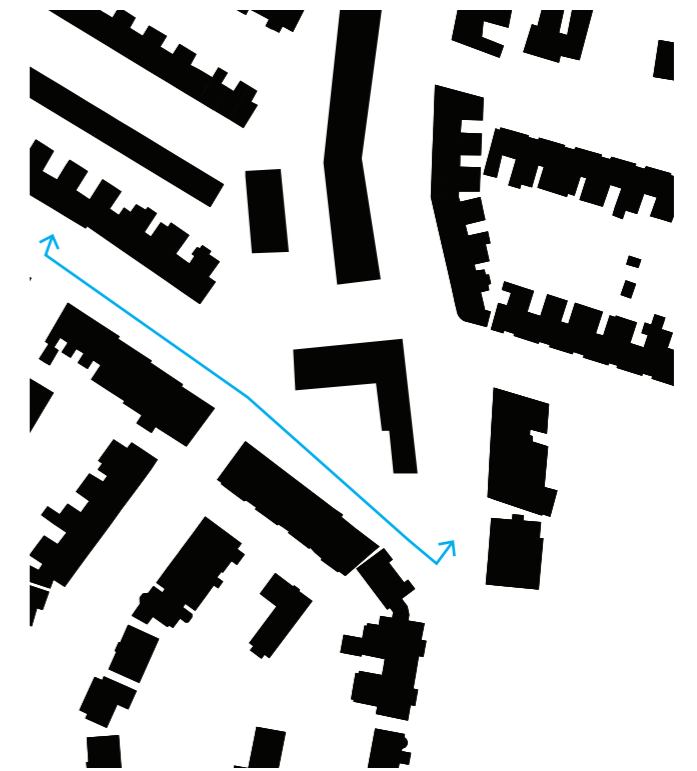


SITE

Chester Road Townscape Study

The photo study along Chester Road describes the following characteristics of the street:

- Increasing elevation to the south
- Dense urban grain of three-storey Victorian terraced housing; single family residences dominate the street
- Pedestrian route linking to Dartmouth Park Hill contains a number of pleasant mature trees, and provides a green buffer between the existing Chester Road Hostel and the historic terraced housing
- The existing building presents an inactive frontage to the street





SITE

Dartmouth Park Hill Townscape Study

The photo study along Dartmouth Park describes the following characteristics of the street:

- Increasing elevation to the south, though a less prominent level change than that observed along Chester Road
- Adjacent properties are of a larger scale, presenting two different approaches to the urban grain
 - To the south, 4-storey semi-detached, red brick 'villa' houses
 - To the north, 3-storey flatted linear block development
- Pedestrian route linking to Dartmouth Park Hill contains a number of pleasant mature trees, and provides a green buffer between the existing Chester Road Hostel and the linear flatted development
- The existing building presents a largely inactive frontage to the street
- The prominent corner of the site is not addressed



3 The Site

3.10 Site Analysis



Urban grain

- Granular immediate context
- Terraced house is dominant typology and scale
- Existing building is not integrated into urban grain and street patterns
- Site is a focal point of surrounding street geometries
- Southern tip of the site forms a prominent corner
- Existing hostel and adjacent building to north disrupt the surrounding back-to-back urban structure

Building heights

- Majority 3 and 4 storey terraced housing
- Level changes across the site and in the surrounding context exaggerates differences in height

- 1 to 2 storeys
- 3 storeys
- 4 storeys
- 5+ storeys

Amenity

- Dartmouth Park is located diagonally opposite site
- A number of pocket parks are in the local area
- Highgate Cemetery and Hampstead Heath are nearby
- Mature trees are located close to and within the site boundary

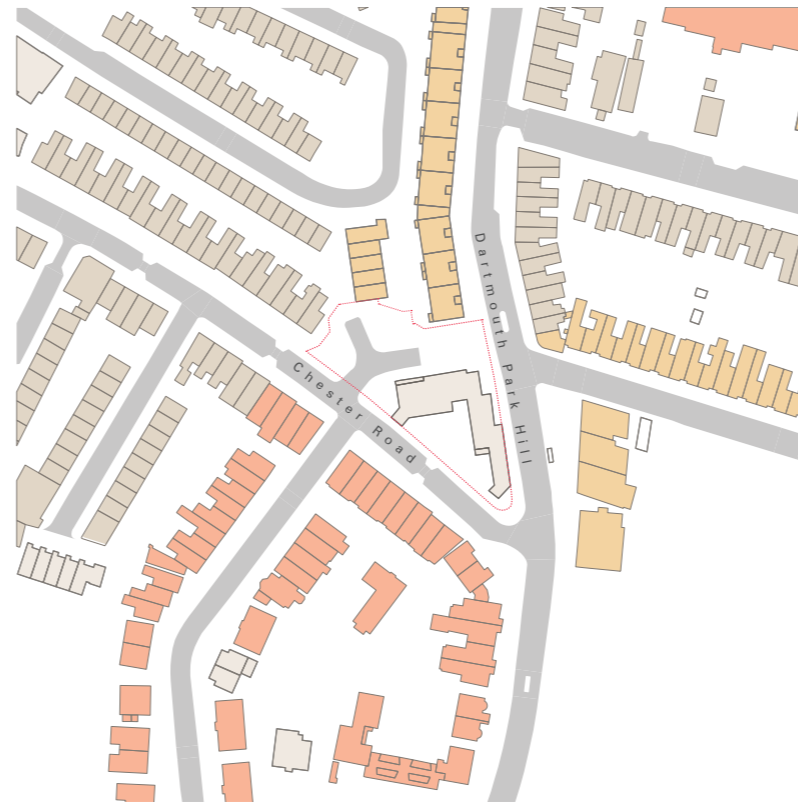
- Private gardens
- Communal or shared gardens
- Public gardens and parks
- Buildings



Ground floor uses

- Majority residential use in the immediate surrounding area
- A number of schools are located nearby
- A cafe and pub are located opposite and close to the site

- Temporary housing
- Residential
- Cafe/pub
- School

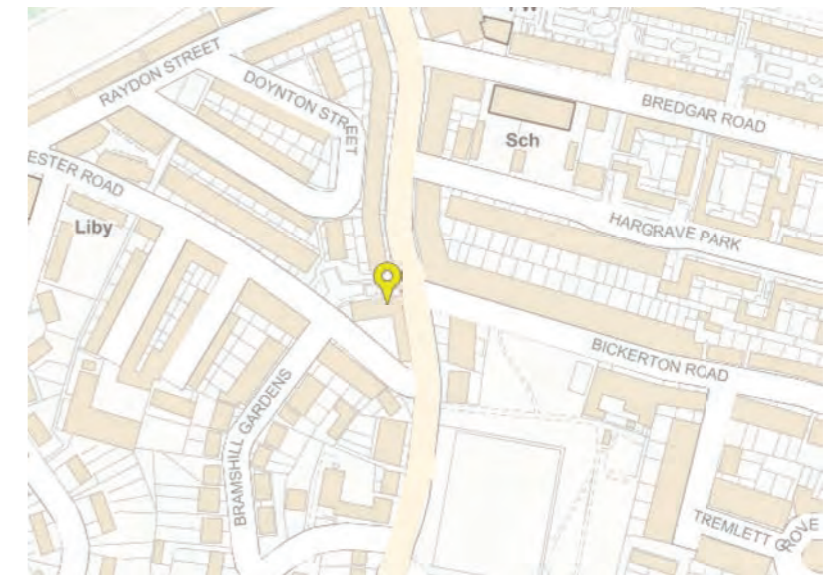


Materiality

- Immediate surrounding material context is comprised of varying tones of brick
- A number of significant contemporary buildings are in the wider neighbourhood, including Highgate New Town and Winscombe Terrace, both of which are faced with concrete
- The existing hostel itself is constructed from painted blockwork with some areas finished in white render

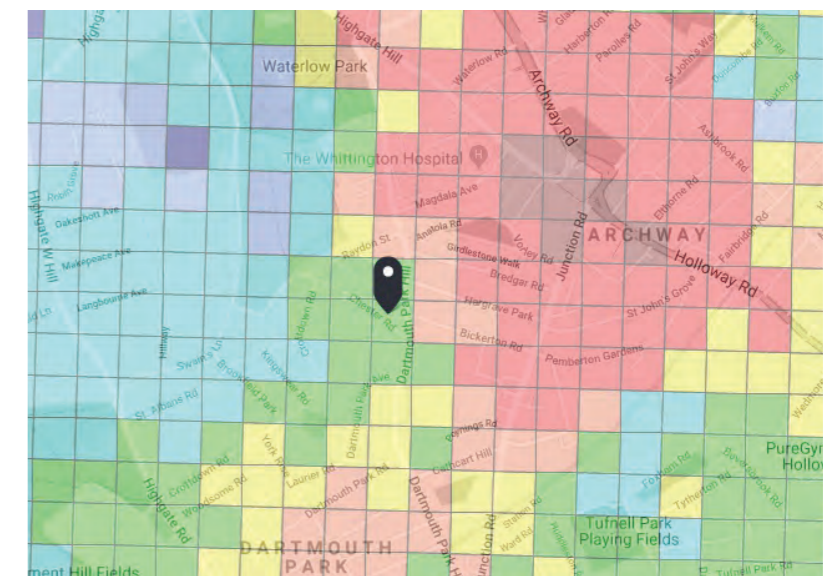
- Red brick
- Beige brick
- Yellow brick
- Yellow brick modern
- Other materials

3.11 Mapping



3.11.1 Flood Risk

The site is located in flood risk zone 1, in an area of low risk of flooding.



3.11.2 PTAL Map

The site is located in Public Transport Accessibility Level 3, and is adjacent to areas that reach PTAL 5-6a.

3 The Site

3.12 Existing Building and Site Photographs

Refer to the full heritage assesment prepared by Bidwells examining the significance of the existing building and considerations for the site within the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area.



Street facing frontages

1. Facing south east from Chester Road
2. Facing south along Chester Road
3. Facing north from Dartmouth Park Hill



Pocket park walkway and communal garden

1. Walkway viewed from Dartmouth Park Hill
2. Walkway viewed from Chester Road
3. Garden, facing north



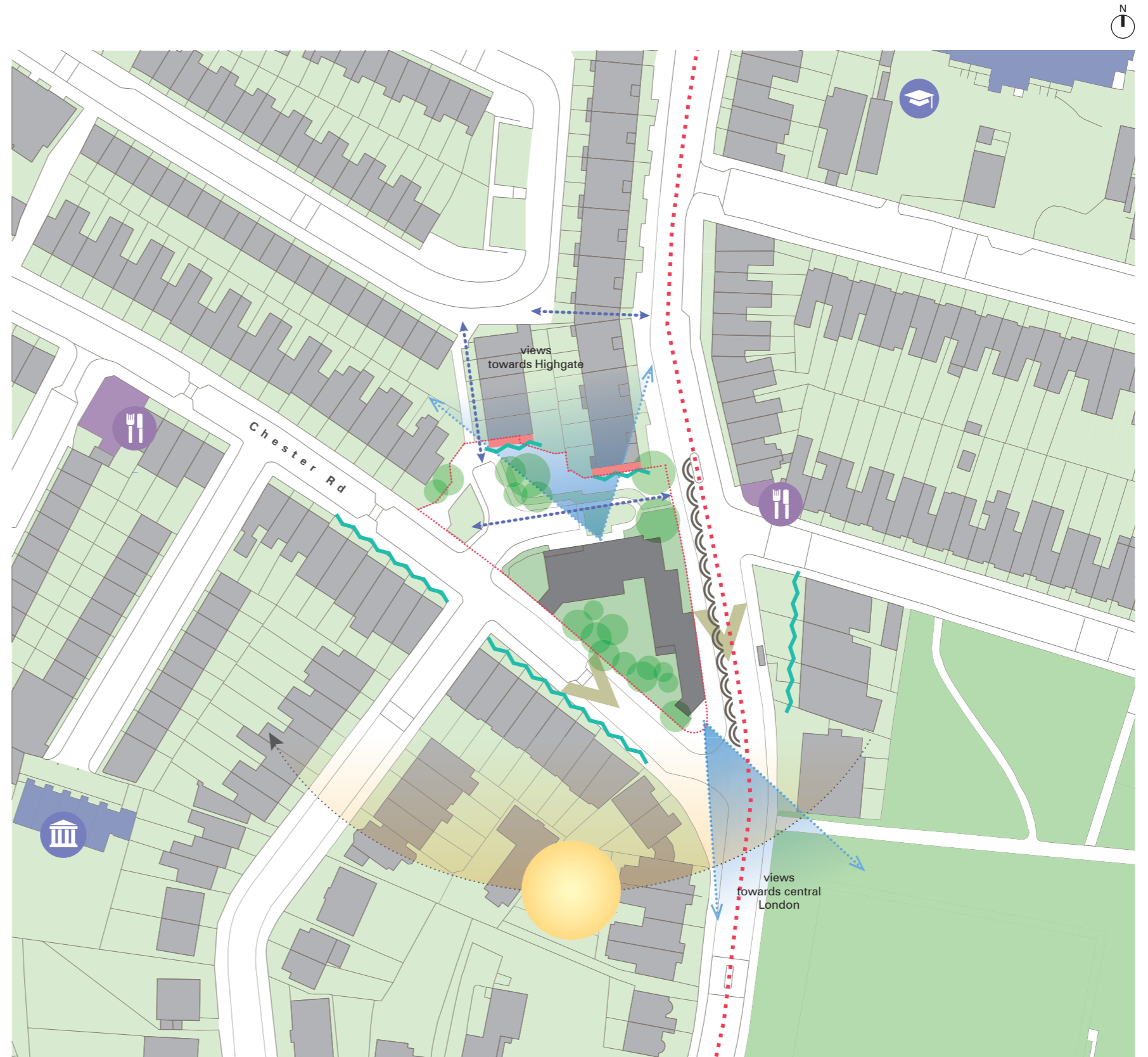
Details

1. Covered walkway and external staircase
2. Glazed brick detail and colourful handrails
3. Single person WCH room, vacant

3.13 Opportunities & Constraints

- Opportunity to restore the historic urban grain and street frontages at this prominent corner
- Potential views north towards Highgate, and uninterrupted views south across Dartmouth Park Hill towards central London
- Good local amenities and transport links within a few minutes' walk
- High quality, historic context of Dartmouth Park Conservation Area and nearby listed contemporary and historic buildings
- Inactive frontages facing the site and surrounding area
- Potential to introduce active frontages to the site
- Existing mature trees create pleasant aspect
- Existing mature trees may restrict development potential
- Possible daylight and sunlight impact
- Possible noise impact from Dartmouth Park Hill
- Level changes surrounding the site will require careful consideration and may introduce complexity

- Site boundary
- Pedestrian right of way
- Viewing cones
- Potential daylight and sunlight impact
- Inactive frontage facing the site
- Potential noise impact from Dartmouth Park Hill
- Level changes surrounding the site
- Cafe / Pub: Cricks Corner & The Star Pub
- School: Hargrave Park School
- Listed Building: Winscombe St by Neave Brown
- Sun path



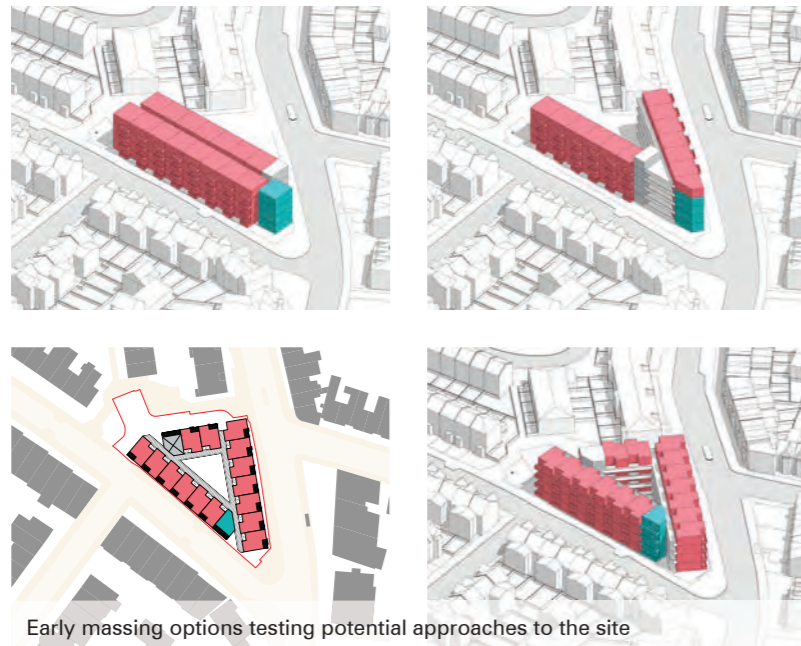
4 Consultation & Design Development

4.1 Planning, Design Review Panel and Community Consultations

Throughout the design, a number of meetings have been held with LBC Planning Officers to review the brief, site and project aspirations as the proposals have been developed. In addition, a Design Review Panel took place during Stage 2 and a Design Review Chair's Meeting took place during Stage 3. Three public consultation events have been held for the local community. All of these meetings have informed the proposed design.

Reference should be made to the Statement of Community Engagement prepared by HTA.

The following is a summary of the scheme development at each stage, and key feedback provided during these meetings and events:



4.1.1 Pre Application Meeting 1, Stage 2: 10th June 2019

A formal pre-app meeting was held with LBC Planning to review the early stage proposals.

Comments

The following comments were received from LBC Planning by email:

- We need to see a detailed heritage appraisal to fully understand the significance of the existing building
- The proposal needs to have better regard to conservation areas from both Camden and Islington in enhancing their character and appearance. Needs to make more of an effort to settle into the immediate setting of the conservation areas, which includes historic terraces on Chester Road and Dartmouth Park Road.
- The tree survey slide shows that the building line encroaches on the crown of the Horse Chestnut tree at the junction of Chester Rd and Dartmouth Park Hill. Given the form of this tree there is no scope for pruning without disfiguring the tree and potentially compromising tree health. The building should give at least 1m clearance of the crown spread, ideally 2m.

- *The design is progressing from the last version seen but we need to see more architecture coming through*
- *The general layout seems ok with potential for a view through the site from Bickerton Road to Bramshill Gardens but still need needs a lot of work on the detailed design.*
- *Why don't the internal decks join up?*
- *Could there be more rounding of corners as per the stairwells?*
- *Why is there a tall parapet on the corner (is it screening anything)?*
- *Design of the "prow" needs improving*
- *Bay windows seem superficial and should have a better function (either providing more space or better views out of the rooms)*
- *Discussion about whether height was appropriate to context, especially in relation to neighbouring properties. Is there room for any reduction in height?*
- *Is red brick appropriate in the context of surrounding buildings?*
- *Better articulation needed in the façade.*

4.1.2 Stage 1 Community Consultations

Two community consultations have been held, sharing the stage 1 proposals with the local community:

- Consultation 1: 16th May 2019 at St Mary's Brookfield Church.
- Consultation 2: 19th June 2019 at St Mary's Brookfield Church.

A model of the proposal was presented, along with the boards on the opposite page.

Approximately 35 responses were received over the course of the two events.

Comments

The summary as prepared by the planning consultant HTA is as follows; *Overall, there was support for the proposals, but this was often caveated with suggested changes, particularly in relation to height and the number of proposed new hostel homes / families planned for the site.*

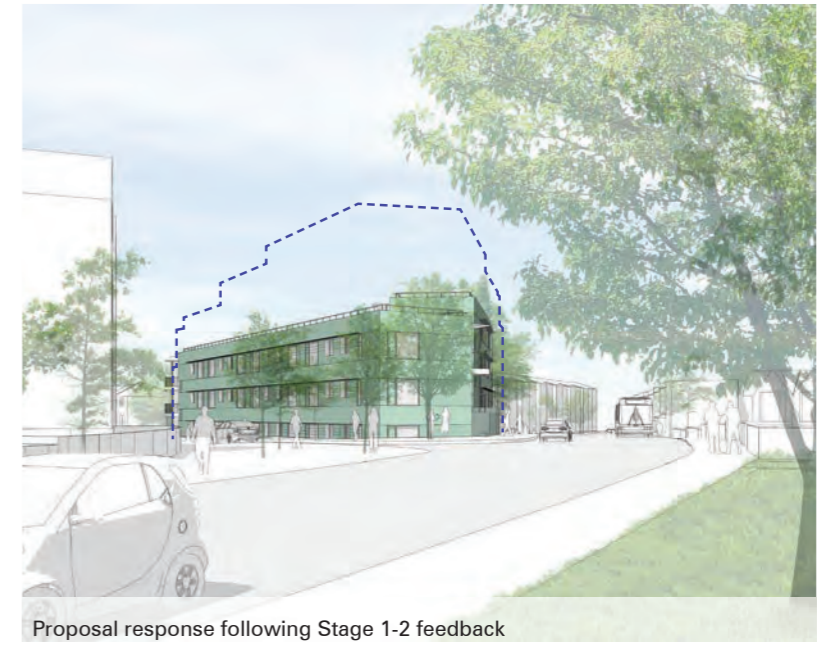
Refer to the full Statement of Community Involvement prepared by HTA .



Physical 1:500 Site Model prepared by BPA



Streetview presented at the DRP



Proposal response following Stage 1-2 feedback

4.1.3 Design Review Panel (DRP) presentation including site visit, Stage 2: 5th July 2019

Bell Phillips Architects met with LBC's DRP on 05.07.19. This took the format of a site visit to appraise the existing building and its context, and observe the project site from surrounding streets and key views, followed by a presentation and review.

Comments

Below is the summary section extracted from the formal DRP feedback:

The Design Review Panel thanks the team for a thorough and clear presentation which has allowed a very detailed discussion.

The panel commends Camden Council's commitment to deliver a high-quality development at Chester Road, that contributes to the local Conservation Area. It welcomes the quality of design that is developing in response to the brief, and is broadly supportive of the proposals, but suggests further refinement in some key areas.

The panel acknowledges the difficult topography of the site, and feels further work is needed to resolve the relationship between the building's ground floor plan and the courtyard / street.

Making the ground floor programme work in relation to the courtyard is important to the quality of life it will provide for residents.

The panel also feels further work is required to reduce the perceived density of the scheme when viewed from the street.

Elevational treatments are being explored, and the panel would encourage a domestic rather than civic scale and appearance.

4.1.4 Stage 1-2 Design Team Response

Key design developments in response to the comments received:

- Heritage - a detailed heritage assessment has been commissioned.
- Trees - advice from the arboricultural assessor and coordination with the landscape architect has informed the proposal. Pathways, levels and the building extents are designed to retain the large mature trees on the site.
- Bay window - the facade approach no longer incorporates a bay window.
- Architectural detail and facade articulation - detail and windows are expressed in the proposal through horizontal proportions, along with a more domestic rather than civic approach to scale throughout.
- Materials - a glazed terracotta tile is proposed as the primary external facade material.
- Height and the tall parapet in the corner - the overall building height is significantly lower and the tall parapet has been removed altogether.
- Internal decks - the access walkways are linked at each level.
- Courtyard and entrance - the entrance location is improved. This is positioned closer to Dartmouth Park Hill and is visible from the street.
- Ground floor level - the ground floor and courtyard level matches the level along Dartmouth Park Hill, improving connectivity and activity in this space.

4 Consultation & Design Development

4.1 Planning, Design Review Panel and Community Consultations



Stage 3 Developed Design



Stage 3 Community Consultation



Physical 1:500 Site Model prepared by BPA

4.1.4 Pre-Application Meeting 2 (Stage 3): 19th September 2019

After incorporating design comments from the first DRP, BPA presented these design changes within a second formal pre-app meeting undertaken by LBC.

Comments

- Generally the design changes in terms of layout, height and massing and design of the elevations are considered to be positive and an improvement on previous proposals.
- You will need to provide justification on why the entrance is proposed on Dartmouth Park Hill and not Chester Road or the existing location.
- It is not clear which of the ground floor plans adjacent to the main entrance and path off DPRd is being adopted, whether it is the Landscape Plan or the Architect's plan. In which case you need to consider the steps and their impact on the root zone of the adjacent tree.
- Similarly the architects will need to provide appropriate details for the foundations of the common room for the same reason. As mentioned in the meeting further consideration is required with regard to the impact of the walkways on the adjacent tree.

- As mentioned in the meeting, the health of the Horse Chestnut on the corner of Chester Rd and DPRd is currently under review by the arboricultural team. Any consent will require an appropriate condition to secure its protection or replacement depending on whether it recovers its vigour or not.
- More detail is required on the detailing of the brise-soleil.
- Whilst we do not usually support the use of render particularly on the publically visible elevations of a building for the reason that it usually weathers poorly and can soon detract from the appearance of the building, given that it is being proposed for the courtyard side which is only partially visible in some views, its use may be acceptable provided the architect's select a render finish that is more durable (there are render products that are more durable than others) and select a colour tone where discolouration is not so readily apparent, this finish could be considered.
- In the meeting [the Conservation Officer] discussed the detailed design of the window and whether more vertical elements could be introduced. I would suggest you test [the Conservation Officer's] proposal to see if the appearance of the building is improved or not and/or reads more contextually in relation to its surroundings.

4.1.5 Community Consultation: 26th September 2019

The third community consultation event gave BPA an opportunity to present the stage 3 proposal to the local community. After consolidating the feedback from previous design consultations and public consultations, the feedback was generally positive with regards to how BPA had progressed since the last consultation.

Comments

HTA's summary of the consultation is as follows;

Overall, the feedback received highlighted continued support for the proposal, particularly with it being the delivery of hostel accommodation for homeless individuals, but the responses highlighted fewer concerns relating largely to the design, particularly height and the design standards used to develop the proposed new homes.

Refer to the full Statement of Community Involvement prepared by HTA .



Stage 3 Streetview presented at DRP Chair's Review



Stage 3 Proposal presented at DRP Chair's Review

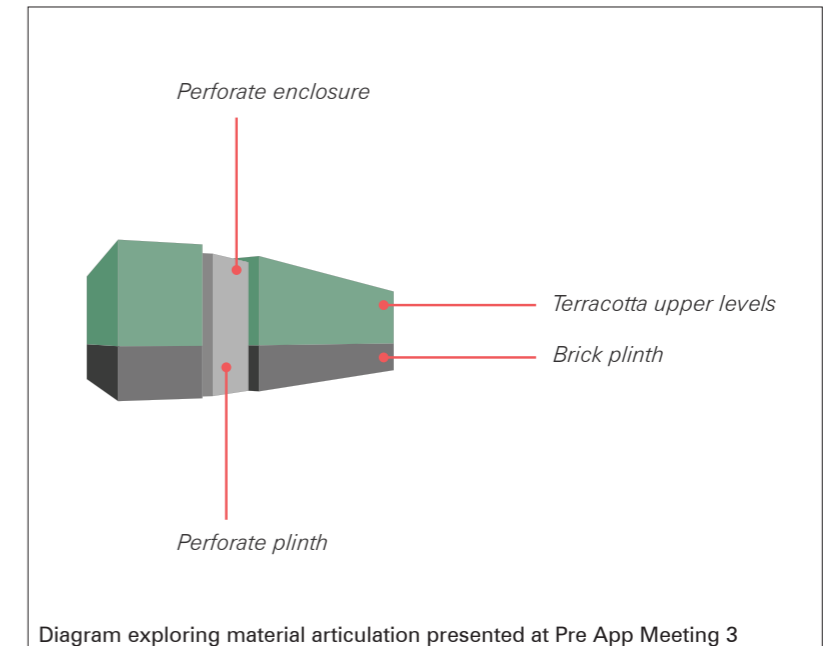


Diagram exploring material articulation presented at Pre App Meeting 3

4.1.6 DRP Chair's Review: 11th October 2019

BPA met with the Design Review Panel to discuss changes made since the last DRP in response to the second pre-app and public consultation. This review consisted of a presentation made by BPA followed by a review.

Comments

Below is the summary section extracted from the formal DRP feedback:

The panel considers that the designs have developed in a positive direction.

Particular attention should now be paid to resolving the south-east corner of the site where two blocks meet at the junction of Chester Road and Dartmouth Park Hill. This element of the design is on a prominent corner and should contribute more to the townscape.

The panel considers there is potential for an extra storey to be added to the Chester Road block, without undermining the design. The south-east corner of the site could also be higher, which could also support its resolution.

The success of the development will depend significantly on the quality of cladding materials, so it is essential that these are protected through the planning and procurement processes.

Glazed terracotta could work well, but alternative options such as brick could be explored.

The panel also feels that the spaces between blocks should be filled, so that the courtyard and internal walls are not visible from the street. This could also contribute to resolving the junctions between blocks more clearly.

The location of bicycle storage and lift access should be reconsidered, to avoid ramps and level changes next to the public footpath. Further thought should also be given to avoid ramped access to the refuse store.

The new entrance location works well.

The possibility of raising the buildings should be explored, to reduce sunken spaces around the edges.

Finally, the panel strongly encourages the use of cross-laminated timber as a more sustainable structural option than steel.

4.1.7 Pre Application Meeting 3 (Stage 3) : 4th November 2019

BPA met with LBC Planning after the Chair's DRP to present key changes that were made in response to the comments received. Verbal feedback at this meeting has informed further proposal development and the submitted scheme.

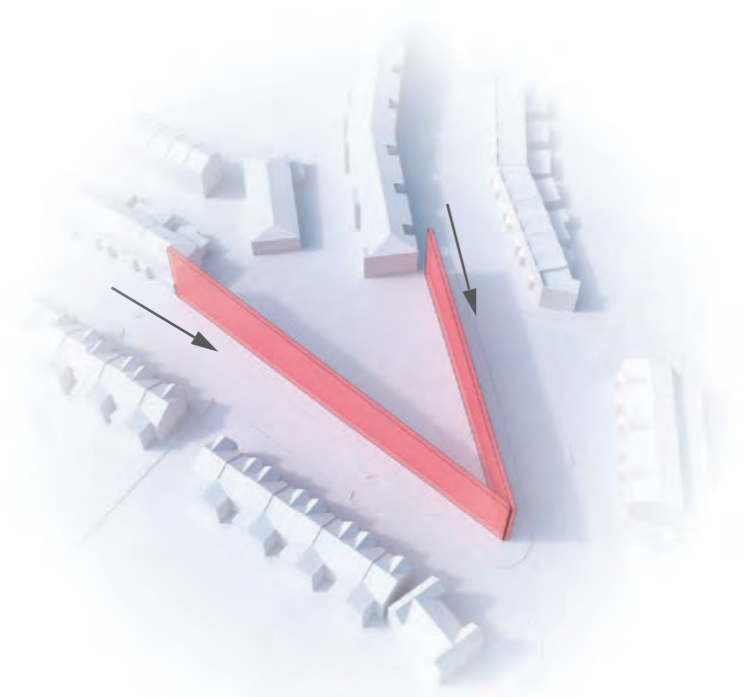
Design Team Response

- Levels - all levels raised by 0.5m to improve the relationship to surrounding streets at boundaries and for ground floor dwellings.
- Bike storage - this has moved to the communal courtyard, reducing the need for ramped access into the lower ground level.
- Lower Ground Level - access points to the lower ground are at a similar level to the existing street, reducing the need for long ramps or 'wells'.
- Stair core - enclosure created with decorative aluminium perforate screen, resolving the junctions between blocks and providing more generous landings at each level.

5 Proposal

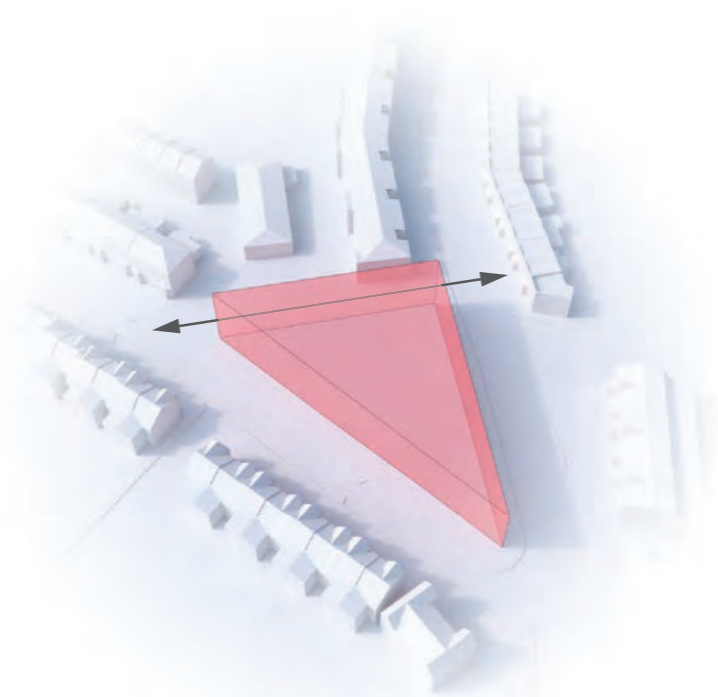
5.1 Approach to the Site

Development of the Proposed Form and Massing



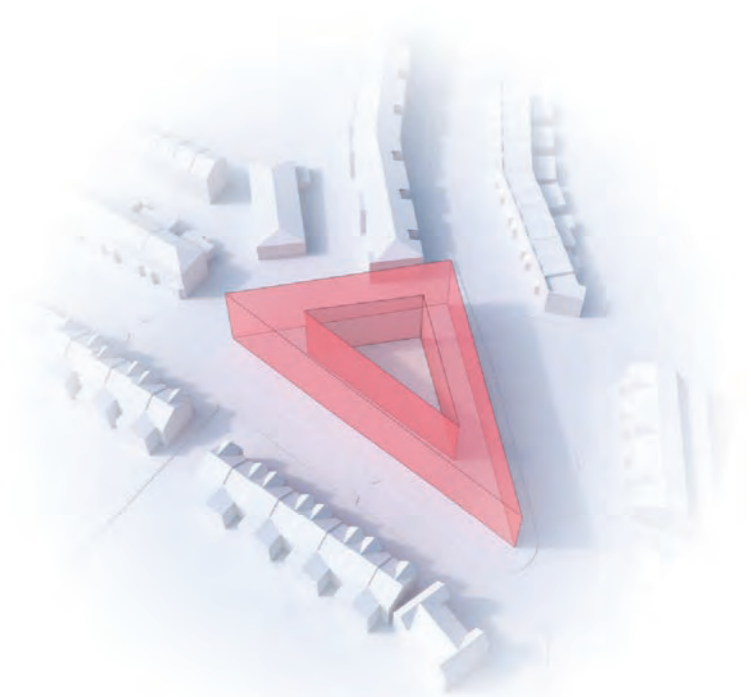
Reinstate historic street frontages

Restore the historic urban grain and complete the junction of Dartmouth Park Hill and Chester Road.

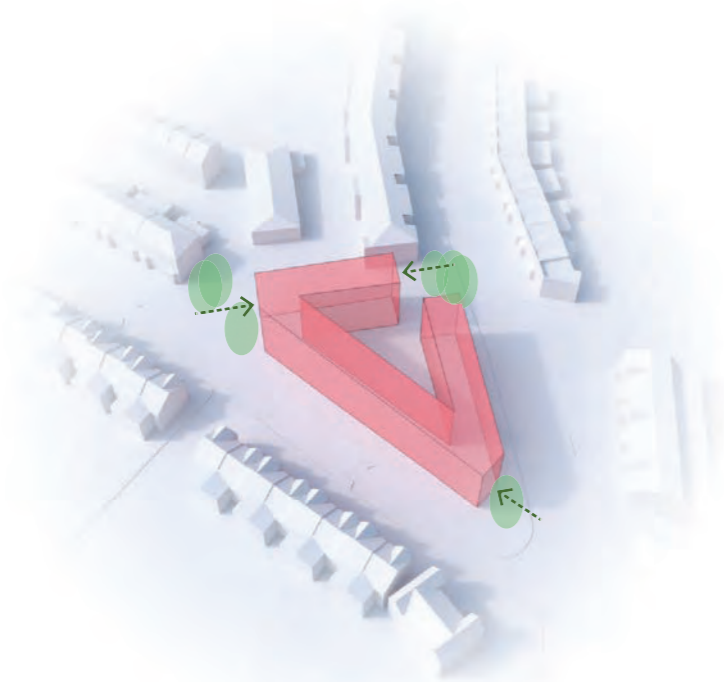


Reinforce and improve pedestrian right of way

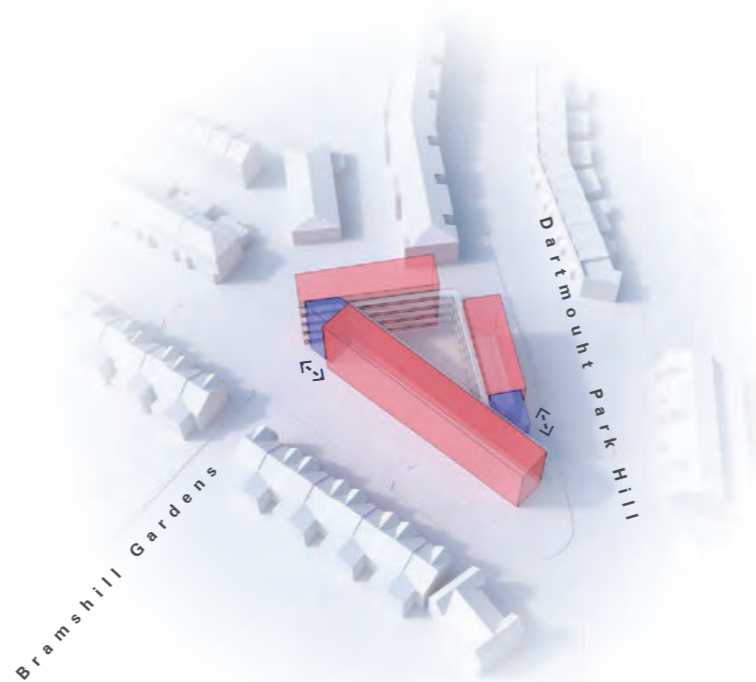
Create an active frontage and strong boundary along the pedestrian pathway to the north.



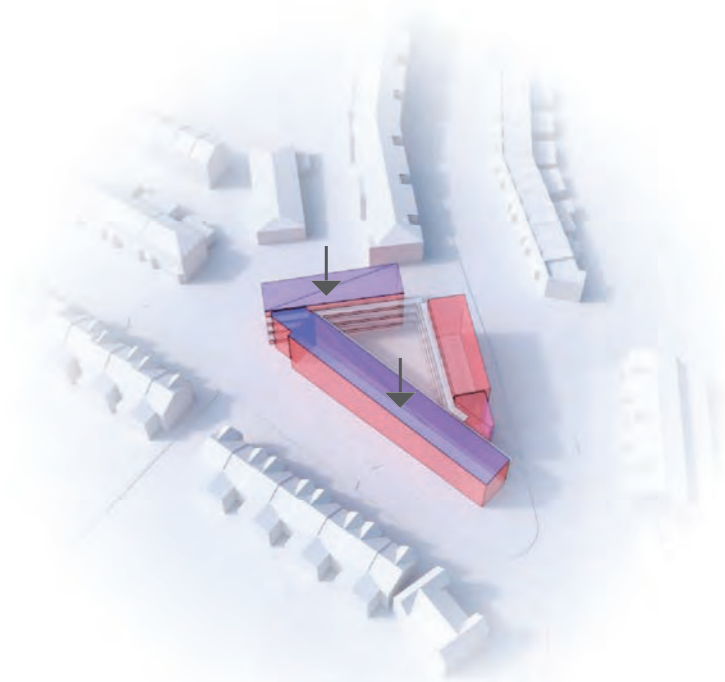
Create central communal courtyard to improve daylighting to dwellings



Adjust footprint to retain and celebrate existing mature trees
 Setback the building form away from existing mature trees to the northeast, northwest and south of the proposed building.



Articulate two circulation cores terminating Bramshill Gardens and providing views along Dartmouth Park Hill
 Create two cores that take advantage of long views to the south and west, and provide ease of access to all users of the building.



Reduce the height in response to the site topography and surrounding buildings
 Reduce height along Chester Road and to the north.

5 Proposal

5.2 Proposed Plans

5.2.1 Summary

The proposal provides 50 dwellings in a mixture of studio, one-bed, two-bed and wheelchair dwellings, within a three and four storey massing across the site. The dwellings are arranged around a communal garden and the proposal incorporates improved landscaping to the north pedestrian access route and along street boundaries.

5.2.2 Layout Considerations

The proposal takes advantage of the existing level changes across the site to minimise the extent of retaining structures. All dwellings are dual aspect with a street-facing frontage and a more private, courtyard facing frontage.

The entrance to the proposed scheme is along the existing pedestrian passage linking Chester Road and Dartmouth Park Hill, providing direct access into the courtyard. Both vertical circulation cores are accessed via the covered walkway around the perimeter of the garden. 2no. designated wheelchair parking spaces will be provided along Dartmouth Park Hill. Within the scheme, 2no. Emergency Rooms will be located to suit the hostel team's needs.

Communal accommodation is located on the ground floor adjacent to the entrance in the form of a multi purpose Common Room which fronts onto a Pocket Garden. This takes advantage of the mature existing trees that have been retained.

5.2.3 Accommodation Schedule

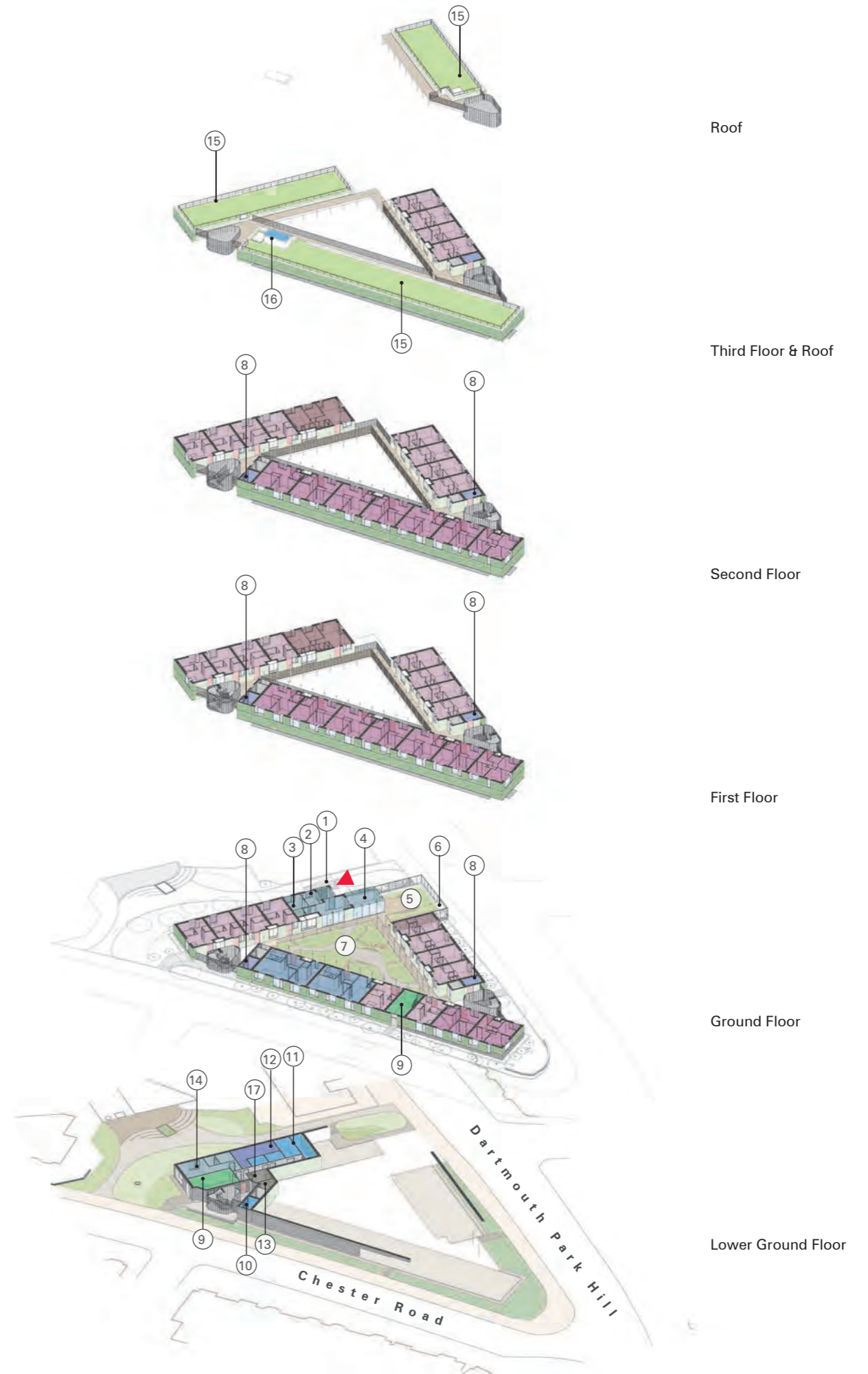
The table below provides a summary of the proposed accommodation at each level.

	Studio	1-Bed	1-Bed (WCH)	2-Bed
LG				
00	10	2	2	
01	8	7		1
02	8	7		1
03	4			
TOTAL DWELLINGS	30	16	2	2
DWELLINGS	50			

Key

- Studio Dwelling
- 1 Bed Dwelling
- 1 Bed Wheelchair Dwelling
- 2 Bed Dwelling

1. Entrance
2. Reception
3. Interview room
4. Common room
5. Pocket Garden
6. External Sheltered Cycle Store
7. Communal Courtyard
8. Buggy & Cycle store
9. Refuse Store
10. Electrical Intake
11. Plant
12. Furniture Store
13. Cleaner's Store
14. Staff Room and Changing
15. Green Roof with PV
16. Plant Enclosure
17. Server Room
18. Pedestrian Walkway



Axonometric Drawing of the Proposal