



**Full Planning Application  
Howitt Close, Howitt Road,  
London NW3 4LX**

**05/08/2021**

# Contents

---

1. **Introduction**
2. **Historical Analysis**
3. **Site Analysis**
4. **Context**
5. **Howitt Close**
  - 5.1. Howitt Close
  - 5.2. Existing building images
  - 5.3. Existing building plans
6. **Brief**
7. **Planning Consultation**
8. **Analysis / Development design**
  - 8.1. Existing building analysis
  - 8.2. Development design
9. **Proposed Design**
10. **Conclusion**

This document is written in support of a Full Planning Application proposal to provide 7 new apartments in a new attic storey on the existing flat roof of Howitt Close, a 3 storey with part basement residential block constructed in the 1920's on Howitt Road.

The L shaped building is located on the bend at the Southern end of Howitt Road. The road slopes down from the North to the South and there is a long view of the building from the North of the front facades and main entrance which is partially screened by some mature trees to the front of the site. In addition, being located on the bend, there is a clear long view of the building from Glenilla Road to the West. Whilst this is essentially a flank wall with a secondary entrance, its location means it has a prominence to the streetscape.

In developing our proposals, the impact on these key views has been considered and before and after images included within this document.

Howitt Close is a well-designed 1920s building with a series of projecting bays denoting the major spaces within and appears in massing to reference the terrace housing adjacent. At the lower levels, it utilizes contrasting brick colours to frame openings and brick is again used to frame the openings within the top stucco floor.

Large windows with fine frames are provided to the major spaces within the projecting bays with smaller windows behind to secondary spaces such as bathrooms and kitchens. Again this is a similar approach to the adjacent terrace housing.

In contrast to the adjacent terrace houses that have generally large mansard roofs with major and minor dormers, Howitt Close has a large flat roof over the entire footprint of the building with only the cores extended above. There is a cantilevered eaves detail that runs around the perimeter of the building and this is retained in our proposals.

In developing our proposal, we have sought to respond to the character and qualities of the existing building described above as well as the context.

In massing terms, whilst there is an appropriate reduction in scale at the roof level, the new attic storey continues the hierarchy with the main dormers denoting the major spaces and the smaller set back dormers denoting the secondary spaces. Full alignment is achieved with the fenestration pattern below as all the proposed major and minor spaces are located directly above the existing spaces. In addition, the existing stairwell will be extended upwards and the circulation hallways also aligned

with those below.

To maintain the integrity of the cantilevered eaves detail, the new roof form is recessed with the mansard walls aligned with the recessed walls below.

The long view from Glenilla Road illustrates how the new roof storey relates to the existing flank wall and maintains the hierarchy of front and side.

With regard to materials, we propose to use a limited palette of materials that are sympathetic to the host building. The new mansard roof will be clad in red clay tiles with the dormers clad in zinc. The proposed slender frames to the dormers windows reference the brick detailing around the existing openings at lower levels.

The original 1920's building took a number of clues from the adjacent terrace housing in its own design development and whilst not replicating, it embodies a number of design elements to make it look both unique as well as sensitive to the original terrace building.

In a similar vein, in developing a design for the attic storey we have also sought to take some clues from the terrace housing whilst providing an appropriate attic storey that responds to the original 1920's building.

The proposal has been informed by extensive discussions with the planning department and the advice contained within the 2 Pre-Applications responses.

# Historical Analysis

2

Extract from Heritage Statement produced by Costwold Archaeology, submitted as part of this Pre-Application:

## Introduction

By 1915/1916, Howitt Road had been constructed, aligned between Haverstock Hill to the north and Belsize Park Gardens to south. The road incorporated a continuous terrace of properties to both sides. At this time, the Site was vacant and appeared to contain some trees, possibly remnants from the former garden of 'Woodlands', but the plot did not appear to be associated with any neighbouring plots. The Site was situated to the rear of detached villas that fronted Belsize Park Gardens and Belsize Grove.

The building was first illustrated on the 1934-1936 OS 25-inch map which annotates the building as 'Howitt Close', occupying a position at the southern extent of Howitt Road. The footprint of the building has remained the same to the present day and little change is evident to the building's surroundings apart from some redevelopment along Belsize Grove, to the east where a later apartment development has replaced Victorian villas.



Left: extract from the 1915/1916 OS map; right: extract from 1934-1936 OS map

## Howitt Close

(...) Howitt Close comprises a residential apartment block of three storeys in height that was constructed in a single phase, between 1920 and 1935. The footprint of the building is L-Plan, evidently to allow for an efficient use of the existing plot

boundary. The building was constructed predominantly in brown brick, with red brick dressings around the window apertures. The brick bond is predominantly English Bond; (...). This possibly indicates that the building was constructed in the early 1920s.

Windows to the principal living spaces comprise a tri-partite arrangement with a single, six light aperture to the centre with flanking two light apertures, all with glazing bars. These are set within projecting bays that add interest to the rhythm of the western and northern elevations. This fenestration configuration appears to continue to the less visible southern and eastern elevations.



The second floor is distinguished by a rendered façade that is carried across all elevations, which sits beneath a deep projecting eaves. In contrast with the surrounding built form, the roof of the building is flat. This is most appreciable from Glenilla Road, to the west, where the western elevation of the building appears diminutive alongside residences with pitched or mansard roofs. This view also highlights the utilitarian style of the western elevation, which does not incorporate the sequence of projecting bays found to the majority of the building's elevations and also incorporates a stairwell, as evidenced by the misaligned fenestration.

## Significance of Howitt Close

The principal significance of Howitt Close lies in its aesthetic value as an example of 1920s/1930s architecture, with elements of Art Deco architectural features. The principal northern and western facades represent the elevations of greatest interest and are the most visible parts of the building's exterior.



## Belsize Conservation Area

*The built form in the sub-area is predominantly comprised of Edwardian terraces, developed in the early 20th-century. Along Howitt Road, each house is characterised by large, square, double height bay windows, incorporating plain lower window panes with glazing bars in the lights above. Mansard roofs are ubiquitous along the terraces and are clearly an original feature of their construction, with each roof separated from the neighbour by brick upstands. The mansards mostly comprise slates although this is interrupted by cement tiles where a building has been replaced or renovated.*

*The character of terrace housing is broken along Glenilla Road where the built form is less consistent. Consequently, views along the road are less uniform, allowing for a greater variety of architecture styles.*



## Contribution of Howitt Close to Belsize Conservation Area

*The undulating topography of the sub-area means that the building sits at a low point within sub-area 4. Additionally, the flat roof of the building contributes to its diminutive form which is visually subservient to neighbouring terraced houses, despite its greater overall size. The low visual impact of the building is emphasised through views southwards along Howitt Road. The descending street terminates at the Site. However, the building does not dominate the view, by virtue of its lower situation and set back position within its plot.*

*The clearest view of the building is of its western elevation, facing the junction between Howitt Road and Glenilla Road. From this vantage point the building is more exposed and the absence of a pitched or mansard roof is apparent. The*

*pronounced eaves appear exaggerated against the sky and provide an almost unfinished appearance.*

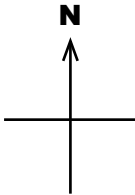


*Overall, the building provides a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. However, its flat roof is considered to provide a neutral contribution. The considered use of materials and form is complimented by the designed green space to the front of the plot which accords with the use of front gardens throughout Howitt Road.*





## 3.1. LOCATION



← ● Key Long views

Aerial View





View from Glenilla Road towards West facade



View north towards rear facade



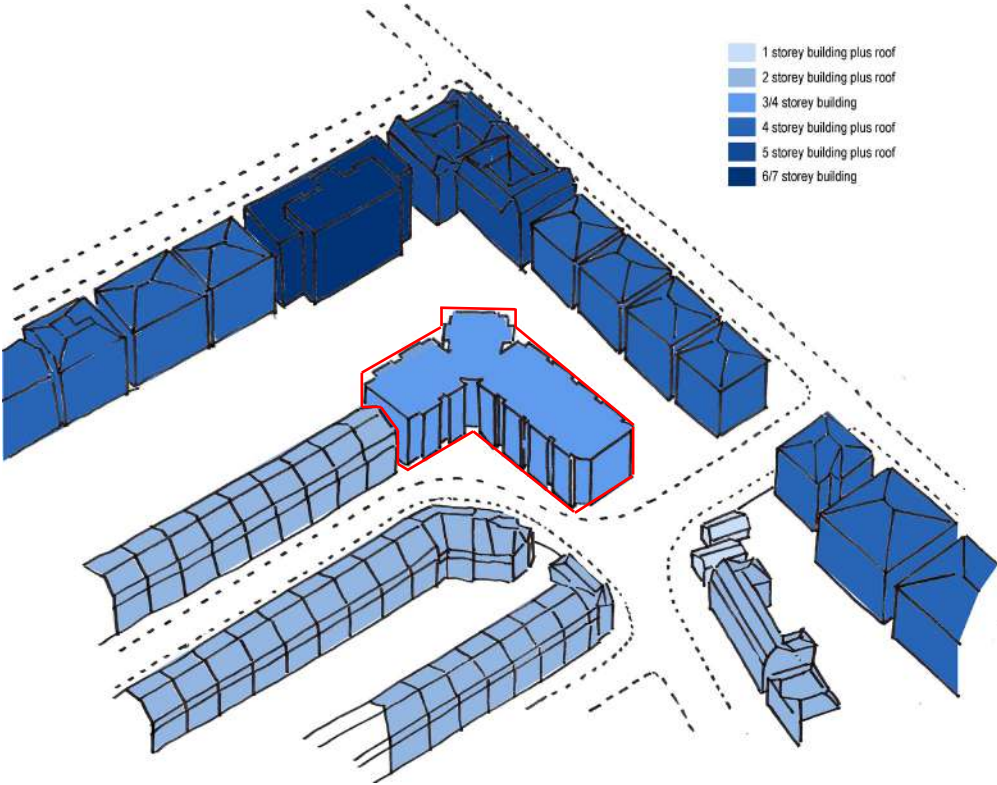
View from Howitt Road of North (front) facade



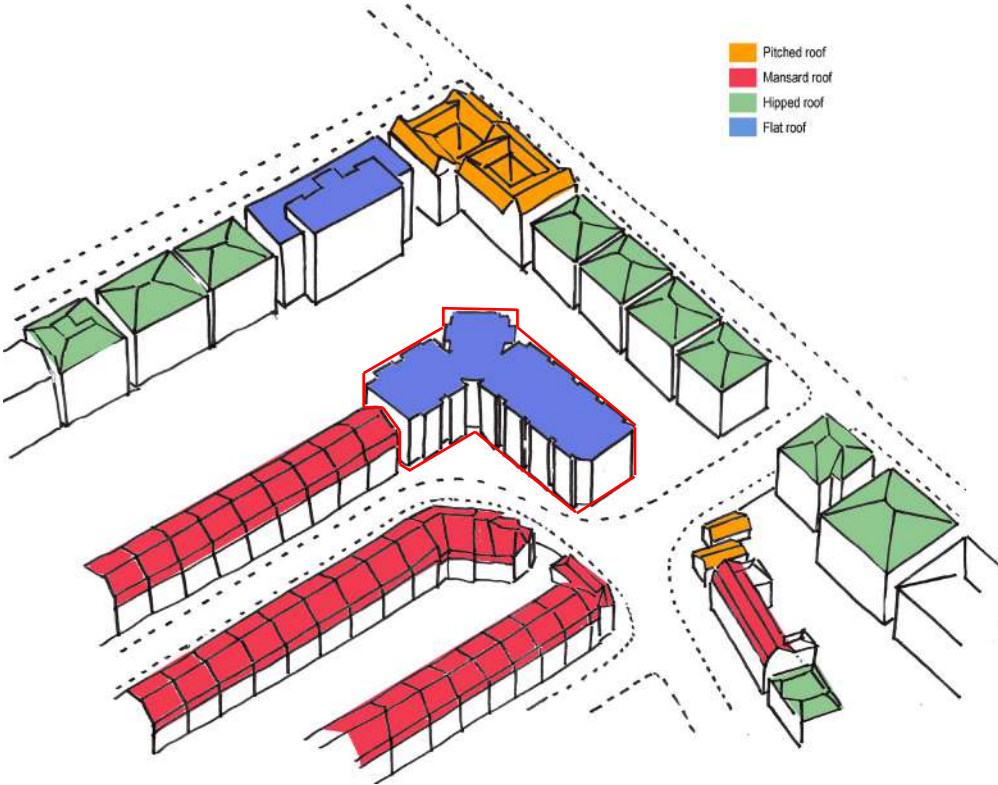


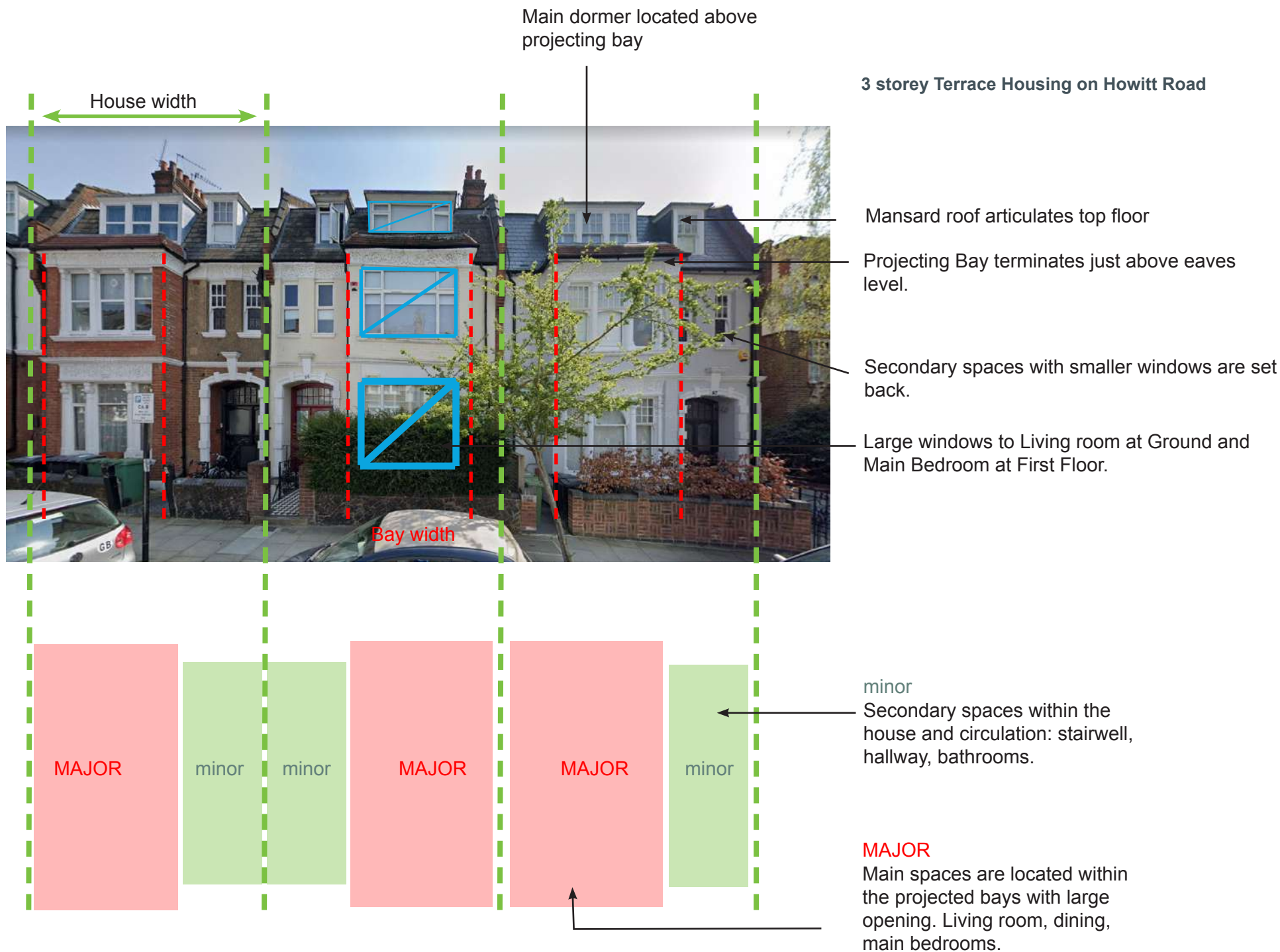


Surrounding building heights



Surrounding building roof forms







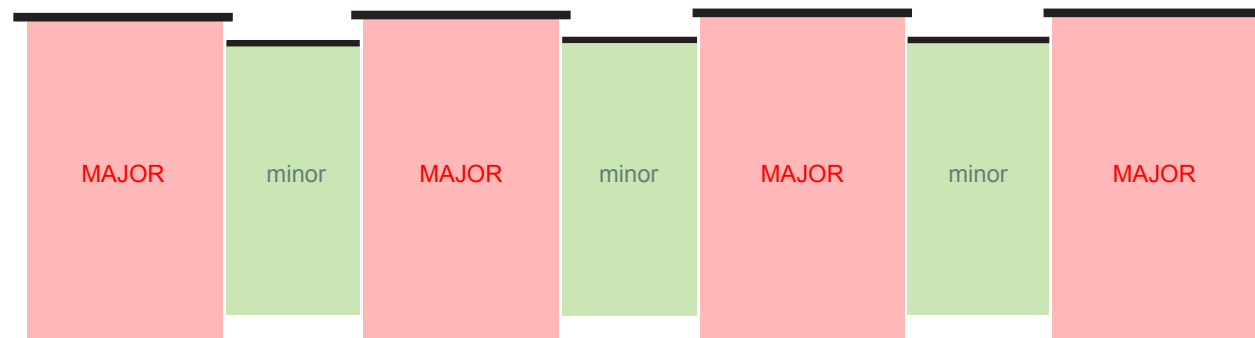
## 5.1. HOWITT CLOSE

Howitt Close presents an absence of a pitched or mansard roof. The existing eaves provide an almost unfinished appearance.

Howitt Close has a clear distinction between the main and secondary spaces. The size of the openings presents is accordingly.



Howitt Close uses a similar strategy to the terrace Housing and locates the main spaces within a series of projecting bays with the secondary spaces set back. The hierarchy of opening sizes also follows the Housing. In terms of detail there is a simplification of those found on the housing with contrasting brick colours used in lieu of stone details to framing openings.





5.2. EXISTING BUILDING IMAGES



Front Entrance View



Main Entrance

Stone used around main entrance





Front View



West Side View



Main Entrance

Use of brick to frame the window openings

Different colour brick frames openings at the lower levels

Stone details limited to around the entrance as opposed to generally.

5.3. EXISTING BUILDING PLANS







**Existing North-East Front Elevation**



**Existing North-West Front Elevation**

The proposal is to create a new attic storey on the existing flat roof of Howitt Close to create 7 new apartments in a mix of 1 and 2 bed units.

The existing projecting eaves detail will be fully retained with the attic storey set back so they are aligned with the recessed walls between the bays.

The existing main and secondary stairs will be extended upwards to a new central hallway providing access to all the apartments.

The new apartments have been designed to align all the main spaces with those below.

Additional bin and bike storage will form part of this proposal.







Pre-Application Ref: 2020/5007/PRE - September 2020



New Proposal

The final design has been developed in response to the Local Authority guidance. Two previous Pre- Applications have been submitted and all comments raised by Camden council have been addressed in the final design.

The issues identified in the Pre Application Advice are set out below along with our revised proposal and our responses (in blue).

## **Conservation Comments on updated drawings 2020/5007/PRE September 2020 & December 2020**

The Local Authority has no objection to the principle of providing additional residential floorspace in this location.

Moreover, after several discussions with the planning department, it is thought that the proposed scheme is moving in the right direction.

### **White Rendered Dormers**

*The key problematic feature that remains is the larger white rendered projecting dormers. Their relationship with the mansard roof appears awkward, with the top of the mansard overlapping the main roof and creating an unsatisfactory junction. The additional height created by the dormer rising higher than the mansard roof does not appear necessary in terms of achieving desirable internal headroom.*

*The more lightweight slimline dormers are considered to be more effective and achieve a more sensitive relationship with the mansard roof and host building. We would welcome seeing a further design iteration with a dormer of this character and style in place of the largest white rendered dormers.*

The larger dormers have been reduced in height and the rendered surrounds omitted. Zinc is used to create fine framing details around the dormers that reference the brick frames below.

### **Smaller Panels Windows**

*For the smaller dormers, could the windows be broken into smaller panels as per the larger dormers as currently a single panel looks excessively modern and jarring against the more traditional design of the adjacent larger dormers. Same goes for the tripartite dormer above the entrance door.*

The revised dormers introduce additional glazing bars with smaller window panes in line with the existing building.

### **Materiality**

*In terms of materiality, a traditional material is thought appropriate and we would encourage you to consider copper which feels fitting for a building of this age and character and the weathering process would bring about a complementary contrast with the warm brick tones and white render of the host building.*

*The conservation officer suggested exploring a green tile like the roofing materials seen on buildings of a similar period in Ealing Village.*

Different materials, geometries and colour palettes were tested as per the Officer's suggestions to establish the preferred solution. Please refer to Section 10 of this document.

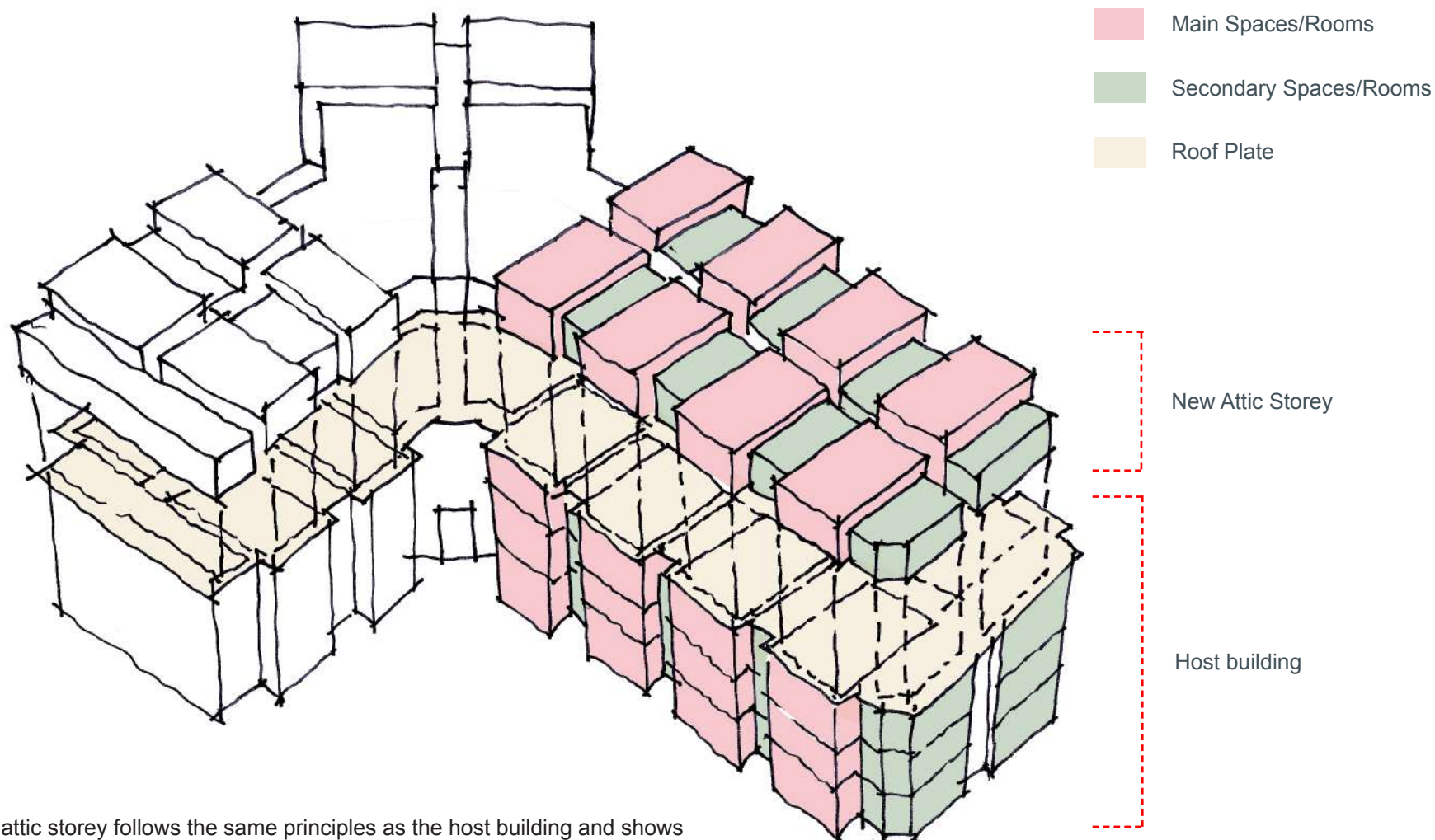
Ultimately, the client team believes the red clay tiles will sit more comfortably with the host building.

### **Existing Communal Space**

As part of this proposal, bike and bin storage provision on the site has been included.

The new cycle storage will provide 16 bike spaces.

## 8.1. Existing Building Analysis



The new attic storey follows the same principles as the host building and shows a clear distinction between main and secondary spaces. The main rooms within the new floor will be located within the main dormers, with the secondary spaces being recessed. Both the main and secondary spaces are directly aligned with the main and secondary spaces below them.



## 8.2. Development Design



1. Pre-Application August 2020



2. Pre-Application November/December 2020



3. Full Planning Application April 2021

### 1. LARGE BAY WINDOWS - August 2020

*The existing 3 storey terrace building is finely proportioned with a clear rhythm and restrained finishes. In addition, it incorporates some fine detailing such as the brick surrounds to windows referred to above.*

*Our initial approach was to respond to this simple elegance by introducing an attic storey that responded to the rhythm below whilst being secondary in scale to the main building.*

*The entire attic storey was set back from the main facades with a series of lightweight glazed bays centred on the bays below. These bays had a tripartite arrangement to reflect that below. In the recesses between the bays, we proposed a full height slot windows. These windows were 'framed' with fine metal detailing similar to the brick framing below.*

### 2. MANSARD ROOF WITH RENDERED PROJECTING DORMERS - December 2020

*In developing this proposal, we looked closely at both the similarities and differences that exist between Howitt Close and the surrounding housing and used that to create a new attic storey that both acknowledged the adjacent roofscapes but was specific to the 1920's building in the same way the original building acknowledges the lower floors.*

*We proposed a 'framing' of the windows similar to the strategy of the brick frames used below. The new bay windows were smaller whilst still maintaining a hierarchy with the secondary windows and those below. The smaller windows were paired as below and reduced in height.*

*The new attic storey wanted to give the existing 1920's building a greater presence on the street as befits it's prominent location. The additional roof 'turned' the corner and abuted the flanking walls of the projecting bays of the main facades thereby maintaining hierarchy of Front and Side of the existing building.*

### 3. SLIMLINE DORMERS - April 2021

*Following the same principles of the previous design, we have now developed a proposal that reduces the scale of the proposed dormers as suggested by the Planners. The proposed attic storey will now appear more recessive to the host building.*



New reduced Dormers aligned with the existing bays below.

Projecting eaves detail retained.

Articulated roofscapes within Belsize Park Area:







New dormer windows aligned with those below

The new roof has been designed to follow the existing chamfered profile of the existing building.

The proposed design maintains the hierarchy of the main and secondary facades.



Secondary roof elevation above secondary roof spaces.





Existing street view from the north



Proposed street view from the north - The new attic storey will give the existing 1920's building a greater presence on the street as befits it's prominent location.

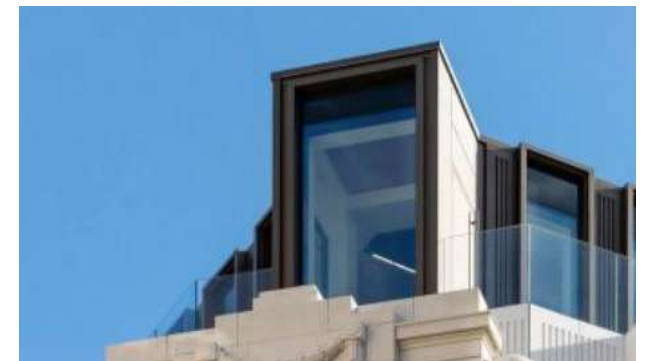
## Proposed Materials:



Red clay tiles



Metal Dormers



Zinc Clad



Proposed street view from Glenilla Road - The new attic storey will give the existing 1920's building a greater presence on the street as befits it's prominent location. The additional roof 'turns' the corner and abuts the flanking walls of the projecting bays of the main facades thereby maintaining hierarchy of Front and Side of the existing building.





Proposed aerial view





Existing Stair to be extended



Dotted line shows existing walls below.

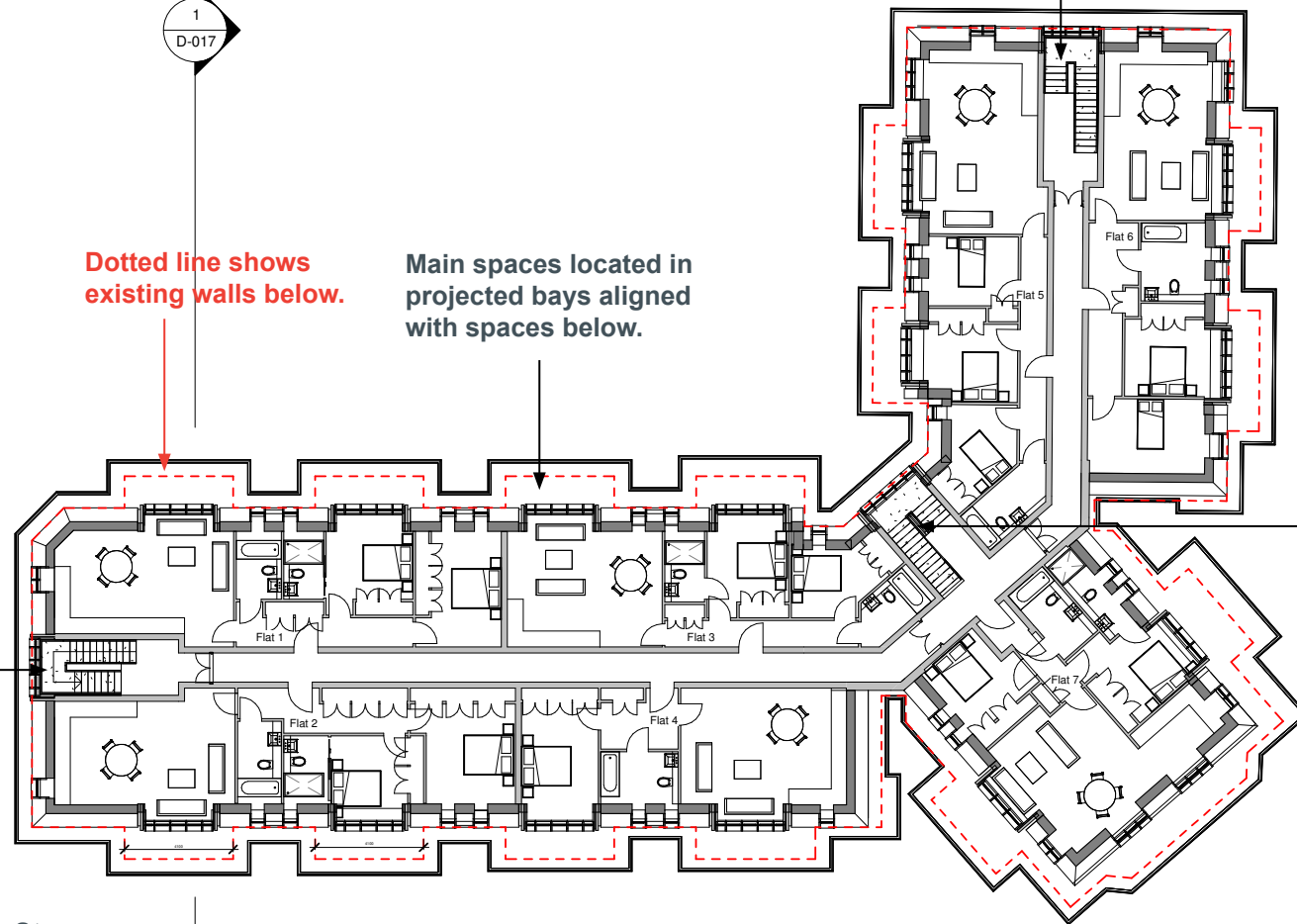
Main spaces located in projected bays aligned with spaces below.

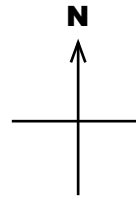
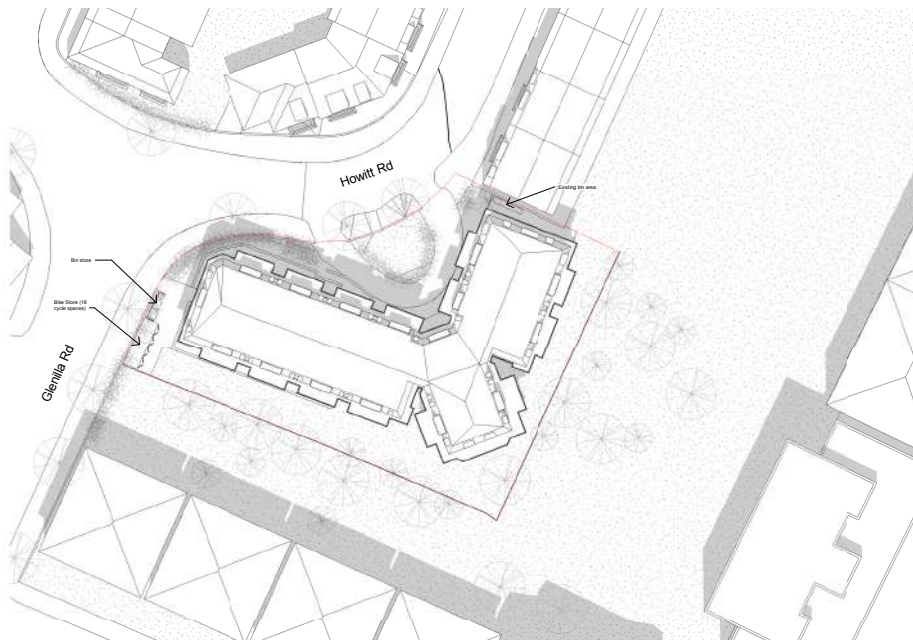
New stair from Second Floor to the new attic storey

Proposed Attic Storey

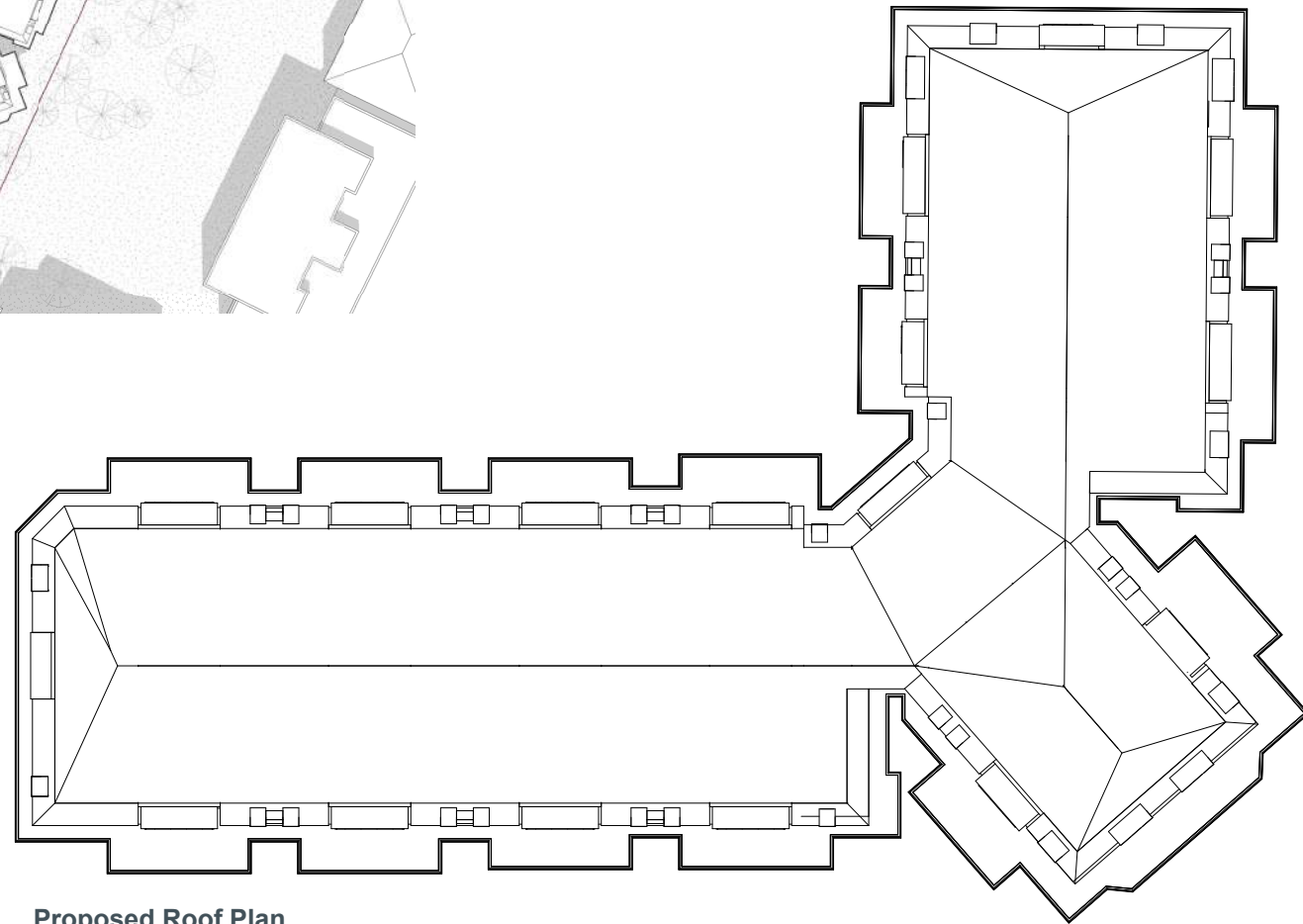
New stair from Second Floor to the new attic storey

New stair from Second Floor to the new attic storey



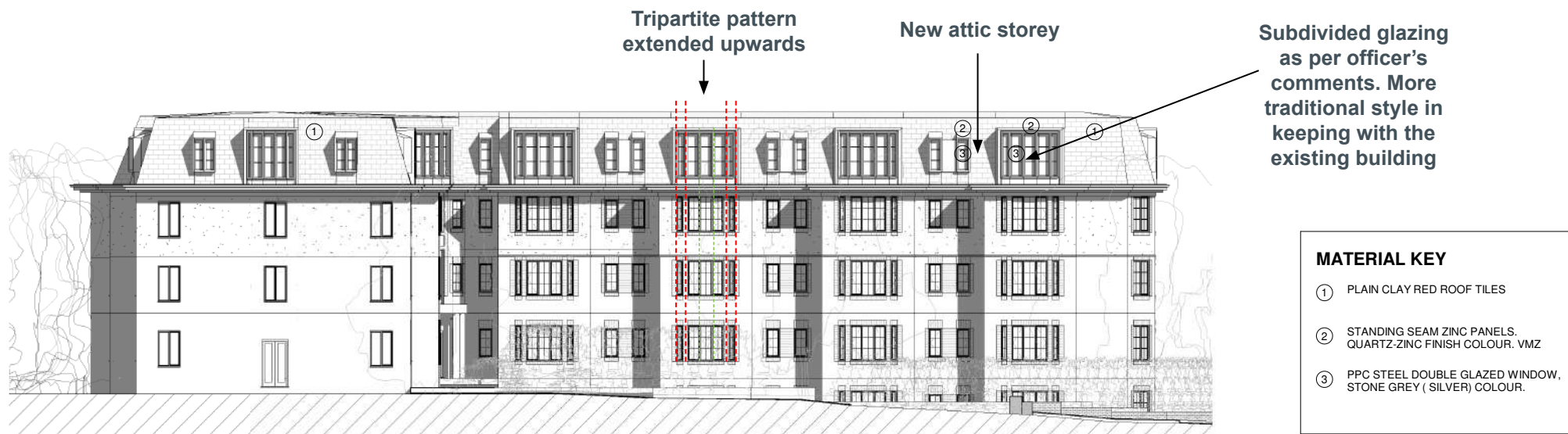


**Proposed Site Plan**

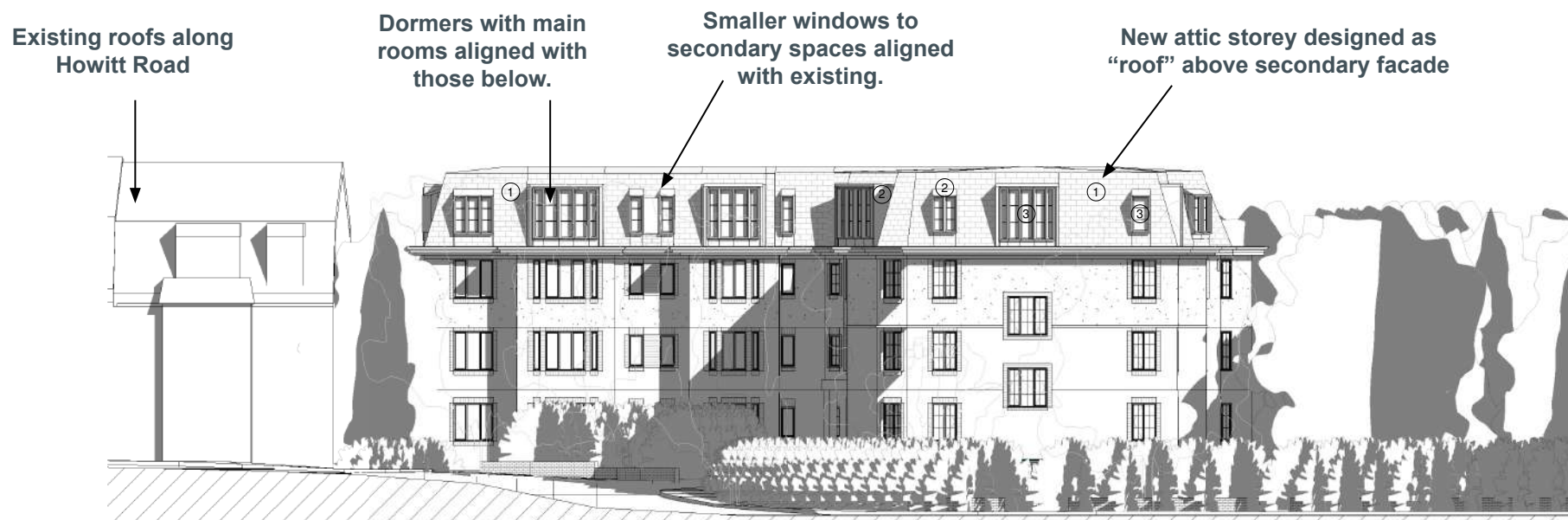


**Proposed Roof Plan**





**Proposed North-East Front Elevation**



**Proposed North-West Front Elevation**



**Proposed South-West Rear Elevation**

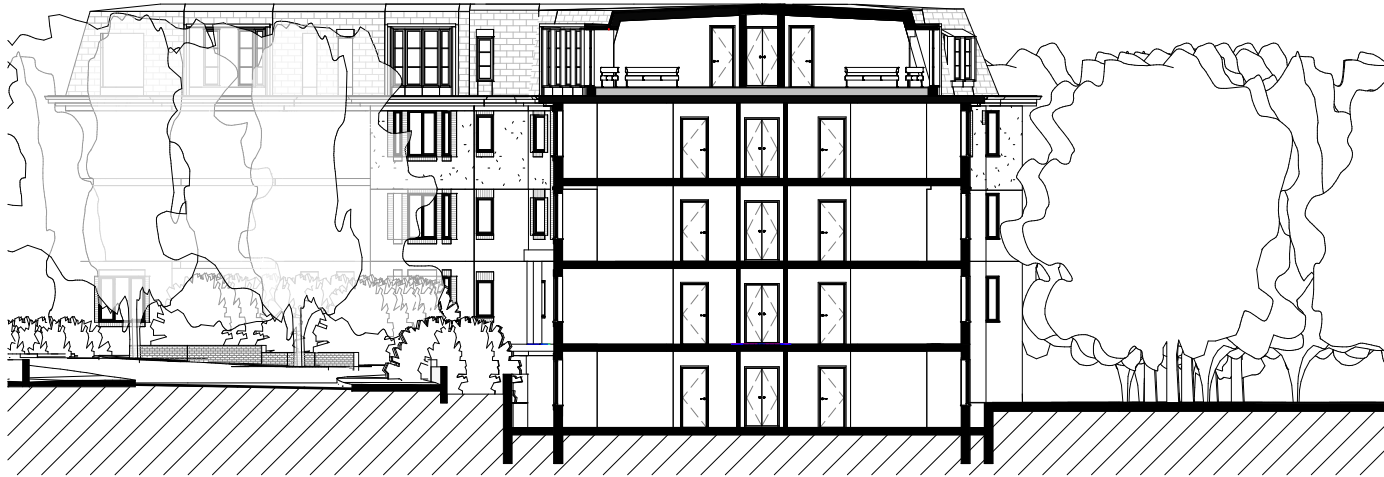


**Proposed South-East Rear Elevation**

**MATERIAL KEY**

- ① PLAIN CLAY RED ROOF TILES
- ② STANDING SEAM ZINC PANELS.  
QUARTZ-ZINC FINISH COLOUR. VMZ
- ③ PPC STEEL DOUBLE GLAZED WINDOW,  
STONE GREY ( SILVER) COLOUR.





**Proposed Section AA**

GIA		
Name	Area	Comments
Flat 1	75 m <sup>2</sup>	2b4p
Flat 2	77 m <sup>2</sup>	2b4p
Flat 3	69 m <sup>2</sup>	2b3p
Flat 4	57 m <sup>2</sup>	1b2p
Flat 5	78 m <sup>2</sup>	3b4p
Flat 6	71 m <sup>2</sup>	2b3p
Flat 7	70 m <sup>2</sup>	2b4p
497 m <sup>2</sup>		



1. Red Clay Tile roof with Zinc window frames



2. Green Tile roof with Zinc window frames

Following the Planning officer guidance, several materials have been explored during the design process (red clay tiles and green tiles).

The final scheme proposes a new red clay tiled roof which it is thought to be sympathetic with the host building.

The new dormers (main and secondary) will be constructed in metal cladding which will allow the creation of a slimmer membrane around the new openings.

The colour of the new materials will fit within the existing building colour palette.







This proposal has been developed after extensive discussion with Camden Council's Planning Department. There have been 2 Pre-Applications and this proposal has been developed in response to the comments made during that process.

The scheme will compliment both the 1920's host building as well as the context.

The proposal will provide 7 new high quality residential apartments within an existing residential building located within a residential street.

The addition of a new attic storey to the original 1920's building will give it a greater presence more befitting its location whilst being comparable to the surrounding context.

As part of this proposal, the communal areas will be enhanced for all the residents.