

MAP



COGNITA

North Bridge House



North Bridge House Prep School, Regent's Park

Design and Access Statement / Heritage Statement - December 2021

Project Lead: MAP Architecture

Prepared on behalf of: Cognita School Ltd

Development Description: Use of Existing Roof as a Science Garden With 2.0 Metre High Sandblasted Glass Surround

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1.0 Introduction

Introduction

MAP Architecture have been engaged to explore options for providing much needed outdoor teaching space at North Bridge House Prep School. This would be provided on the second floor of an existing post 1950s extension building.

Existing School

North Bridge House is a co-educational independent day school across six North London sites. North Bridge House Prep school borders the east side of Regents Park, and is within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area. North Bridge House Prep School has a long-standing reputation for providing a fully rounded education to the highest standard. The main building at North Bridge House Prep School was previously an old convent and chapel that was acquired by the school in 1987. The 1950's building which the project concerns, has classrooms over three storeys, a circulation core and support spaces.

Project Brief

The school is in need of an outdoor teaching space that would improve the quality of teaching and learning provision at the school. The existing rooftop space has been redesigned as a Science Garden that will allow the pupils to grow fruit and vegetables, cultivating an understanding of food, healthy eating, horticultural science and providing the opportunity to engage with the environment.



Image source – (Left and right images), Northbridgehouse.com

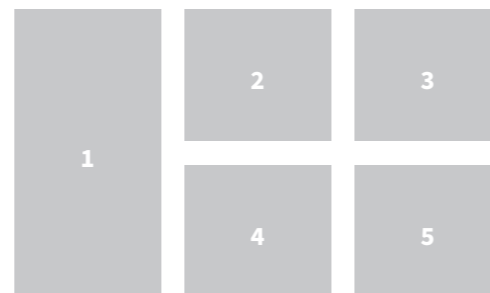
2.0 Site Description

2.1 Site Photos

The current rooftop is a disused space that is only accessible for maintenance. The rooftop space is bordered by the original four storey school building to the south, which is Italianate in style, and the three-storey pitched tiled roof chapel building to the west facing towards Regal Lane. The three-storey post 1950s extension building to the east overlooks the second floor rooftop. The rooftop in its current condition is underutilised and does not provide a positive view for the classrooms located on the second floor.



Existing Photographs



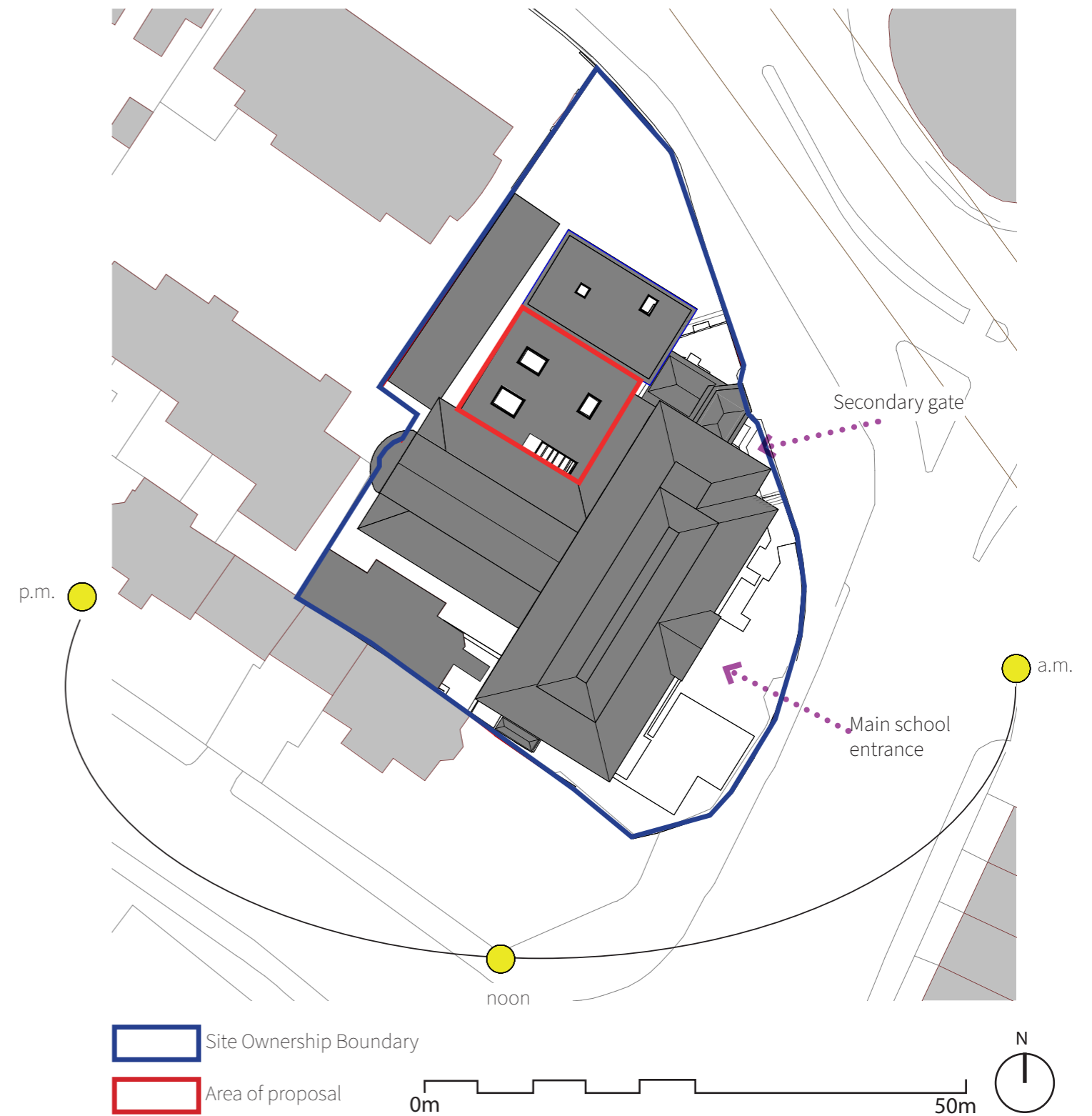
Photographs

1. Existing south-western boundary condition
2. View looking to the rooftop from the original school building. The paired five storey residential apartments can be seen in the distance to the north.
3. View of the eastern side of the rooftop facing the new flats
4. View from the rooftop facing south towards the original school building
5. Existing rooflights and mechanical plant equipment

2.0 Site Description

2.2 Site Analysis

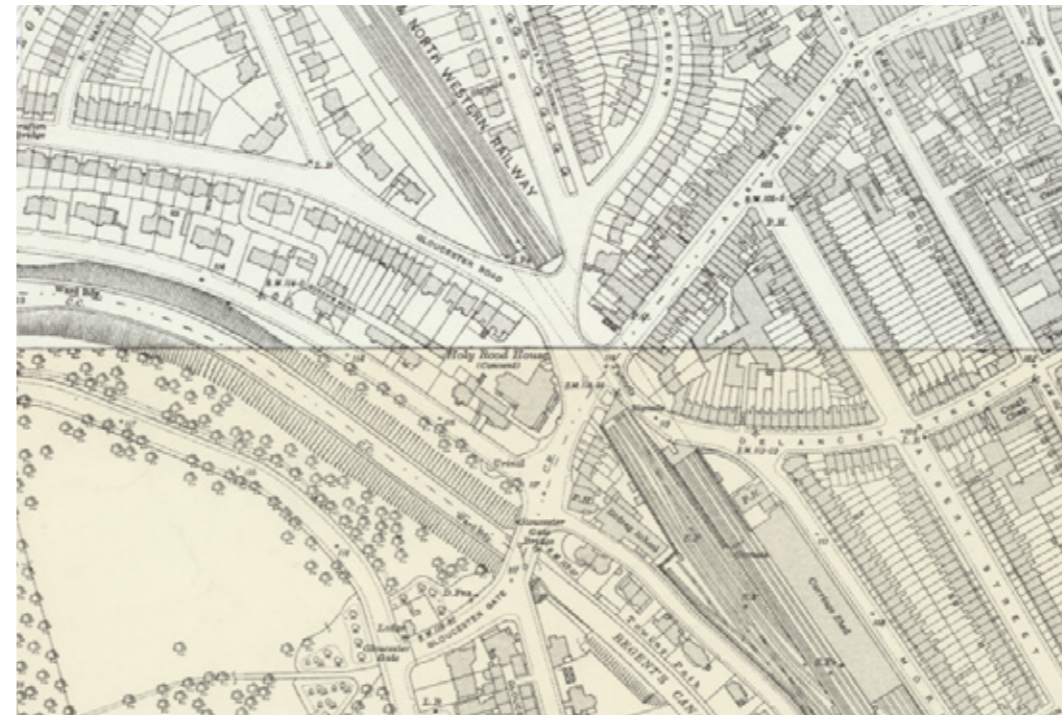
The main entrance to North Bridge House Prep School is orientated facing South East towards the opposite main road A4201 (Gloucester Gate) that runs between Regents Park and Camden Town High Street. The second floor rooftop in the centre of the site is flanked on three of its four sides, by the main school house to the south, the chapel to the west and the second floor classrooms to the east. To the north are two five storey apartment blocks with a shared central courtyard.



3.0 Heritage Statement

3.1 Historical Context

North Bridge Prep School was previously Holy Rood House Convent, which was constructed in approximately 1900. The convent building, now North Bridge House Prep School, replaced what appears to be a large residential villa facing south towards Gloucester Gate.



Heritage Map - 1892-1914 - Image Source: www.nls.uk



Heritage Map - 1893-1895 - Image Source: www.nls.uk





3.0 Heritage Statement

3.2 Surrounding Context

Italianate buildings dominate the primary and secondary roads in the Primrose Hill area, and these features can be observed in the main school building for North Bridge House Prep school. 1 Gloucester Avenue is an Italianate style of building with stucco frontage and original timber sash windows. It is set back from the main street and has a South-Eastern facing front garden with mature trees and high brick walls surrounding the boundary. 1 Gloucester Road is not a statutorily listed building, however, it is included in the Primrose Conservation Area Statement as a building that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The latest addition to the school is three-storey masonry extension built post 1950s. The extension does not follow the Italianate style of the rest of the school buildings. The glazed openings are rectilinear, regular in size and spacing and do not contain any of the decoration seen in the glazed openings of the original school building and chapel. Unlike the terracotta tiled roofs of the original school building and chapel, the extension has a flat membrane roof. Given these characteristics, it can be understood that the latest extension building does not have any notable heritage value, however, the proposal should respect and not deter from the original 1 Gloucester Road house building.

The proposed works are surrounded by the existing buildings and the rooftop is obscured from all public highways and is only visible from the adjacent new flats in Gloucester Avenue, Regal Lane, and from a very oblique angle from across Gloucester Avenue. The principle public views at the crossroad junction between Parkway and Gloucester Avenue are not impeded by the intended works. The design has been carefully considered to reduce the impact on the existing 1 Gloucester Road building and the northern boundary has been treated with sandblasted opaque glazing to blend into the surrounding context. This will provide privacy towards the adjacent flats to Gloucester Avenue and for pupils within the roof terrace. As a result, it is of our opinion that the proposed alterations will not detract from the original character of the architecture and surrounding context at 1 Gloucester Road.

-  Site Ownership boundary
-  Area of Proposal
-  Grade II Listed
-  Significant building



Aerial view (Google maps) looking north

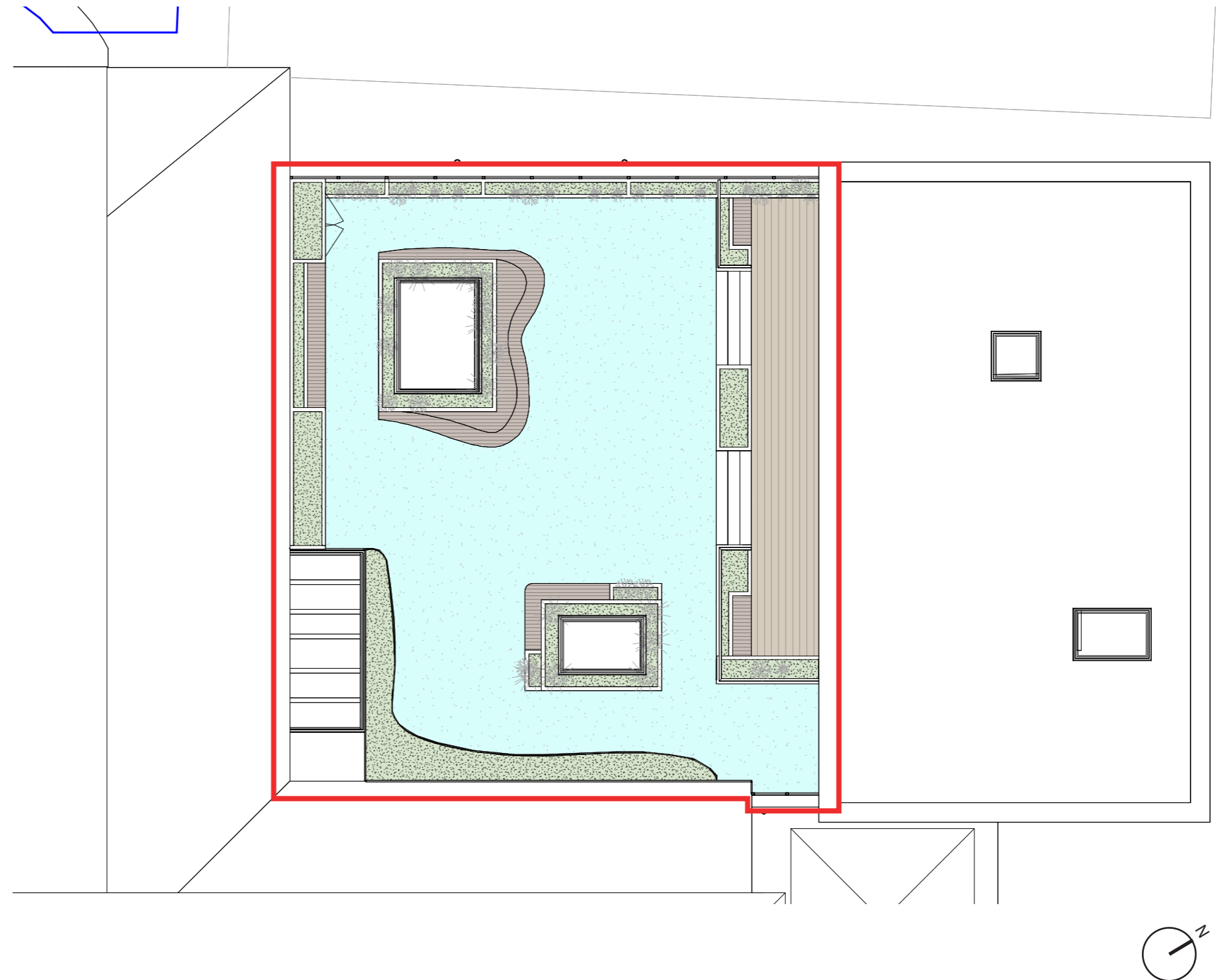
4.0 Description of Proposed Development

4.1 Proposed Site Plan

The proposal is to provide a new rooftop Science Garden with outdoor seating, raised roof lights and integrated planting solutions throughout. The rooftop will provide a space where pupils can grow plants and vegetables and learn about science and the environment in an outdoor setting as part of the curriculum.

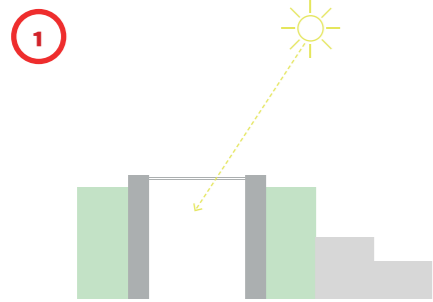
There is no existing level access to the rooftop. The design involves introducing a new structure and drainage layers above the existing roof surface, with a new porous rubber top surface. The Science Garden will be accessed with steps up from an outdoor level threshold area with new bi-folding windows to the second-floor classrooms. The main Science Garden will be approximately 650mm above the relative level of the second-floor classrooms and level threshold area. While the design raises the Science Garden to incorporate the supporting structure below, the introduction of a 1500mm level threshold area will be a significant improvement on the current condition, where level access cannot be provided.

Two existing rooflights will be replaced in their existing position and size with new flat roof lights, which are protected with built up planters and seating. This seating will form an assembly space to be used for teaching. Low level planting and integrated storage with sedum roofs will be used to form the boundary of the rooftop space and to create a protected distance from the proposed 2m high glazed balustrade and proposed mesh barriers.

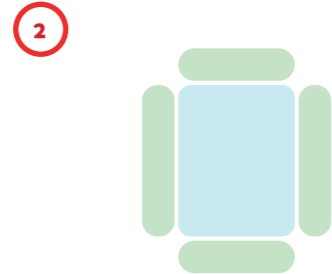


4.0 Description of Proposed Development

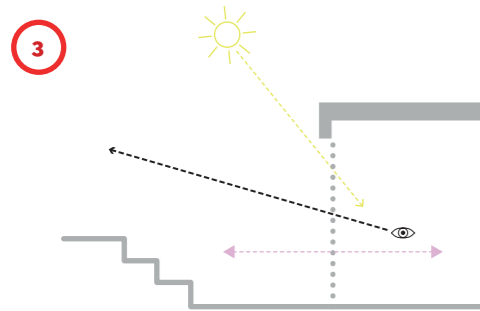
4.2 Science Garden Concepts



New flat rooflights continue the penetration of light into the classrooms below. Planters will be used as a natural barrier to prevent climbing and low rising seating will be used to assist the outdoor teaching space.



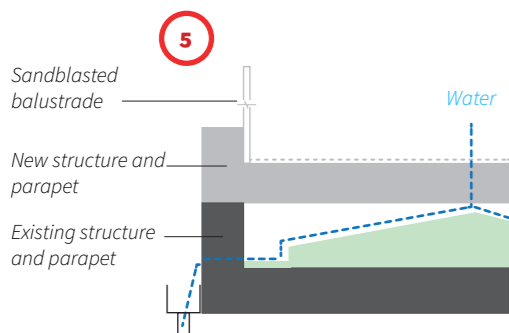
Planting solutions throughout to fulfil the curriculum requirements and add to the local biodiversity. Invasive species will be avoided with vegetation planted to relate to the scientific curriculum of the school.



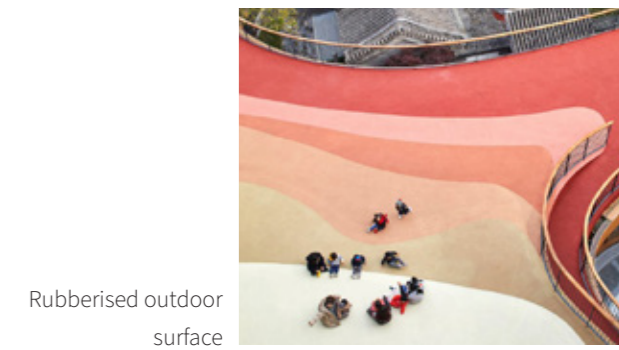
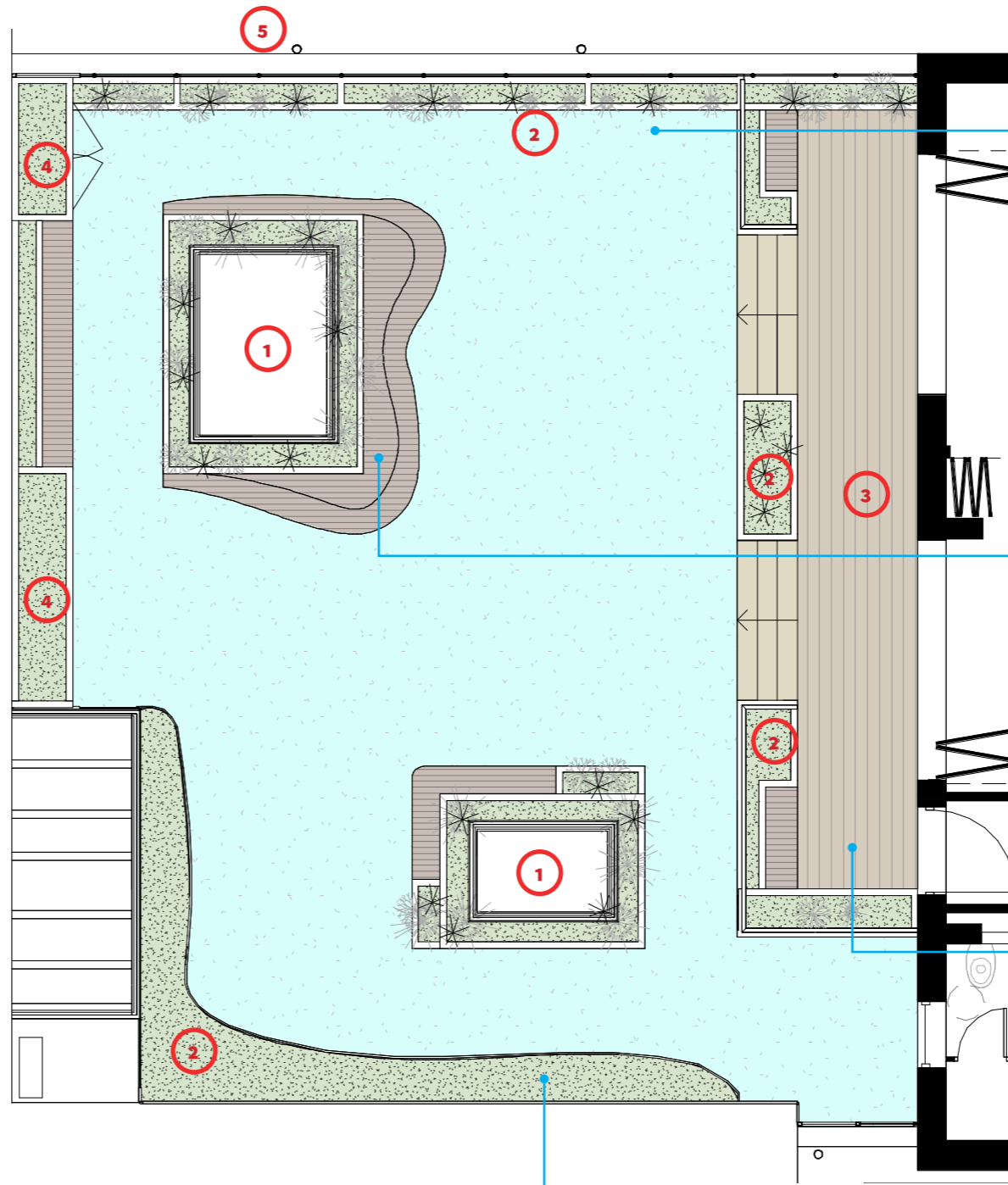
Incorporating an outdoor level threshold to the classrooms before moving up to the main Science Garden. This 1500mm deep outdoor space will be level with the classrooms to allow teaching to easily extend outside in summer months.



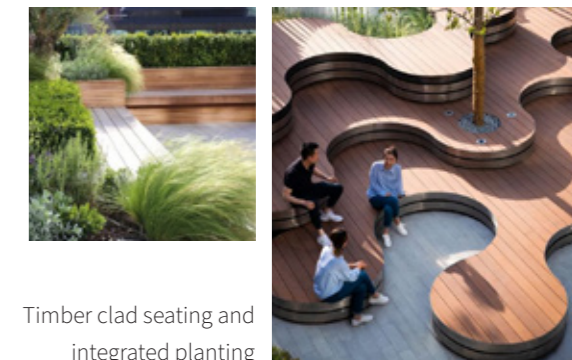
Integrated timber storage for outdoor teaching equipment with a green sedum roof surface to encourage biodiversity.



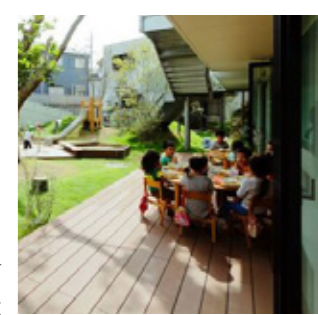
The rubberised outdoor surface has been proposed as a permeable material. Cut to falls insulation towards gutters at the north and south perimeters will allow surface water to discharge into the rainwater goods from below the new surface.



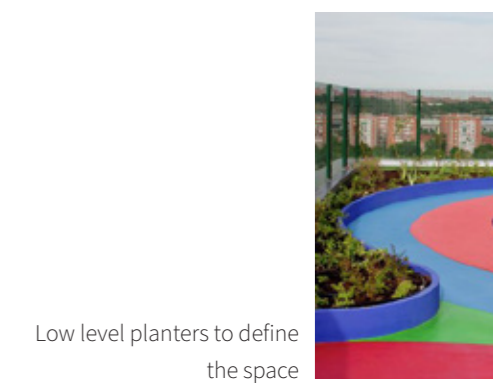
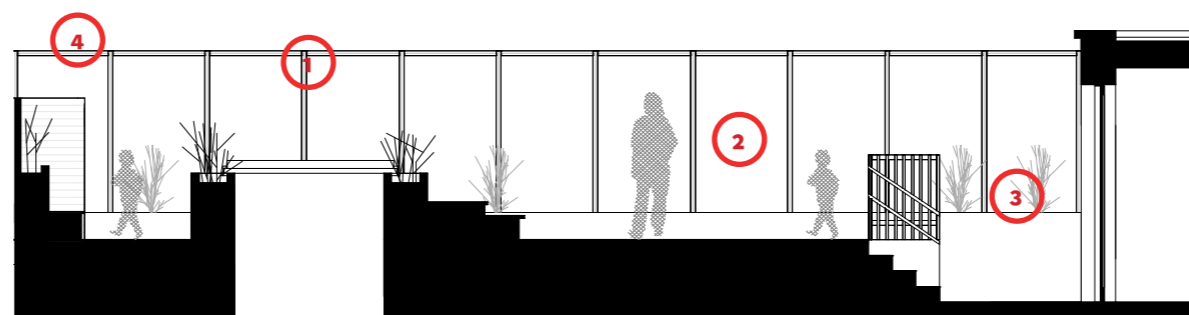
Rubberised outdoor surface



Timber clad seating and integrated planting



Composite timber threshold decking



Low level planters to define the space

4.0 Description of Proposed Development

4.3 Boundary Conditions

1



The northern boundary and part of the south-eastern boundary will be enclosed with a 2m high sandblasted glazed balustrade. Together with the boundary planters this will eliminate overlooking the neighbouring properties and add to the privacy of the Science Garden.

2



Outdoor storage will be clad in timber complementing the intended use of the Science Garden. A green sedum roof surface will be used to encourage biodiversity.

3

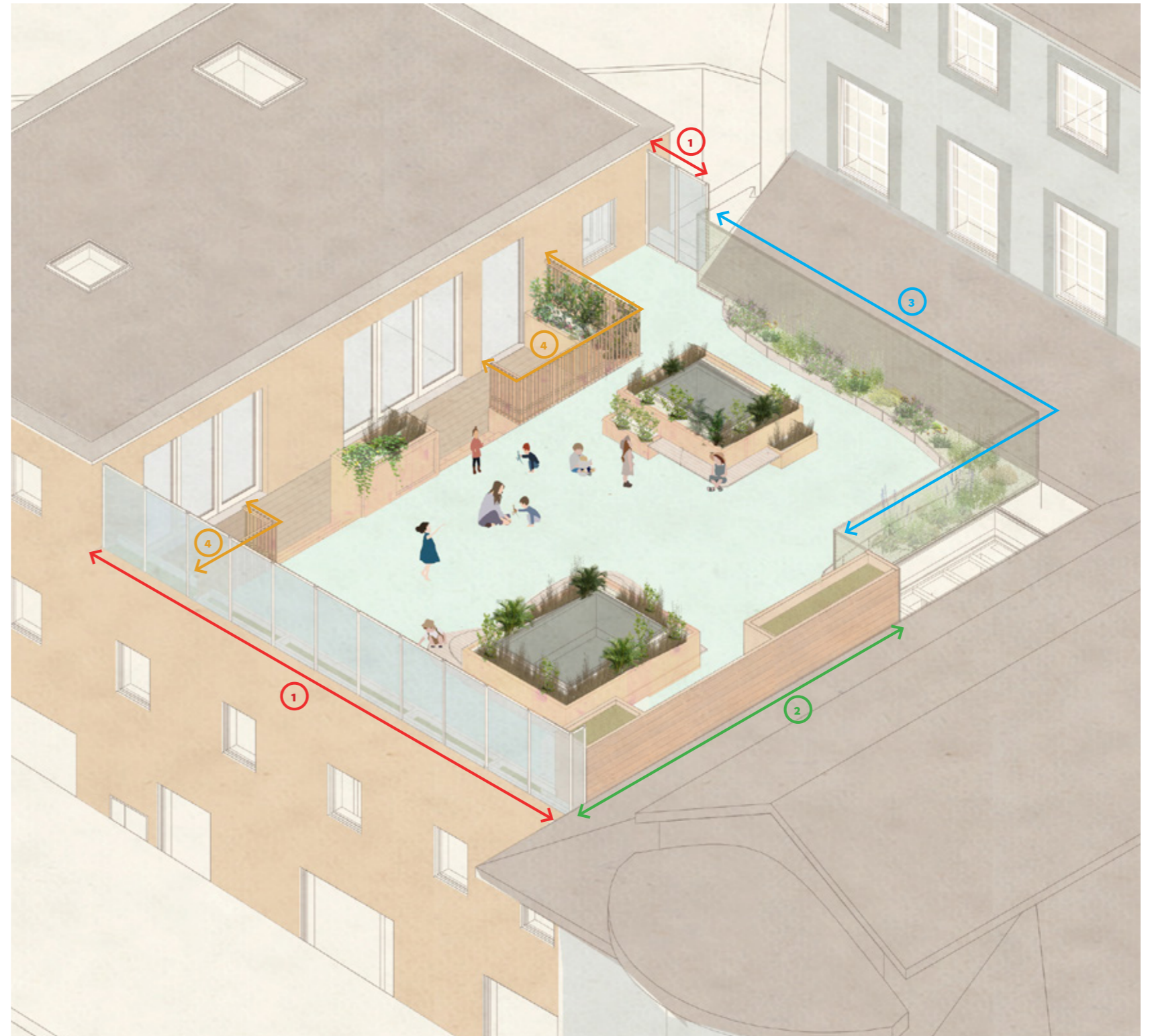


Traditionally used in school grounds, green coloured anti-climb welded mesh fencing is proposed for the eastern and southern boundaries of the Science Garden.

4



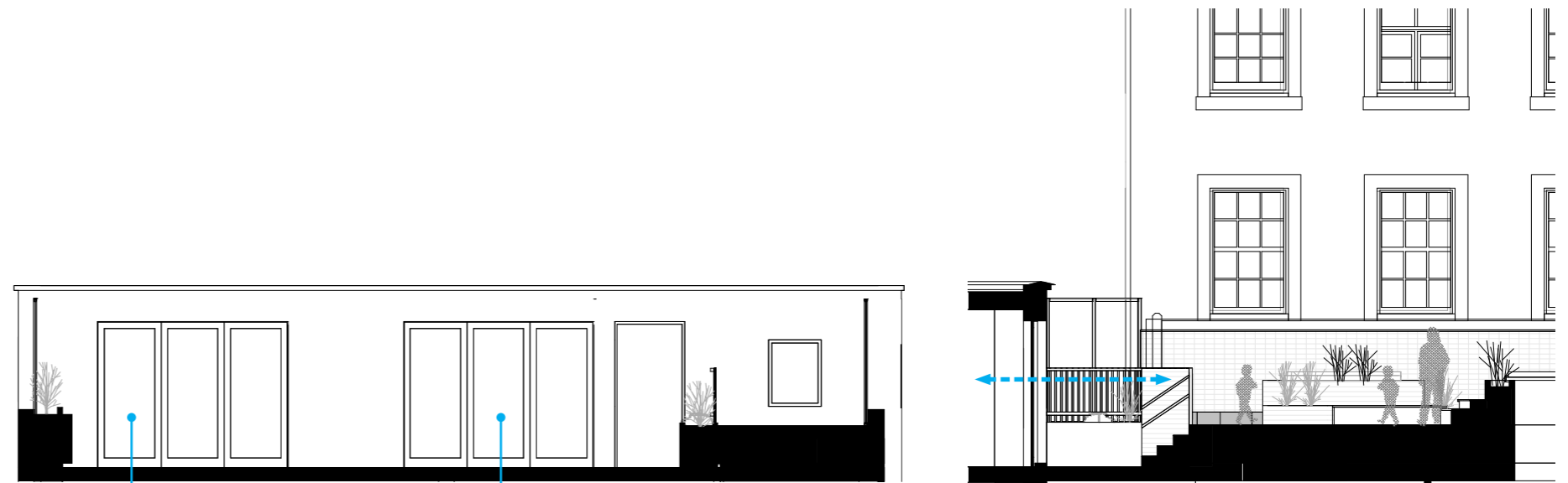
In keeping with the natural materials of the science garden, vertical timber battens have been proposed to act as a balustrade and anti-fall measure between the Science Garden and level threshold outdoor area to the classrooms.



4.0 Description of Proposed Development

4.4 Proposed Glazing

Glazed bi-fold doors have been proposed to the refurbished second floor classroom creating multi-functional internal and external teaching spaces for the staff and pupils. The bi-folding doors have been designed to increase the amount of daylight in the classrooms and bring the external learning environment of the Science Garden into the classrooms. To match the existing windows of the glazed extension the bifold doors have been proposed to have grey powder coated aluminium frames.



5.0 Visual Impact Assessment

5.1 Visual Impact

The rooftop area of the Science Garden sits behind the main four storey school building that faces A4201 Gloucester Gate, the three storey pitched tiled roof building facing towards Regal Lane, and the three storey extension building towards Gloucester Avenue. These surrounding buildings conceal the rooftop from public highways. The sandblasted opaque glass balustrades providing privacy to the north and south will be the only visible aspect of the proposal from an oblique view on Gloucester Avenue. Sandblasted opaque balustrades have been proposed to reduce the visual impact on the surrounding buildings and blend into the Primrose area. It can also be noted that glazed balustrades have been used on the fifth storey terrace of the residential apartments to the north of the site, further blending the proposal into its surroundings.



1 Proposed view of the north sandblasted opaque glass boundary on Gloucester Avenue looking south



2 Proposed view of the south sandblasted opaque glass boundary on Gloucester Avenue looking west



1 Existing view on Gloucester Avenue looking south



2 Existing view on Gloucester Avenue looking west

6.0 Executive Summary

The proposal has been carefully designed in relation to the site, neighbours and the Primrose Conservation Area.

The design creates a rooftop Science Garden that will allow pupils to learn outdoors and to grow fruit and vegetables as part of the curriculum. This will help cultivate an understanding of food, healthy eating, horticultural science and provide the opportunity to engage with the environment. This aspiration to encourage learning from engaging with food growing is part of the vision of The London Food Strategy, which explains how growing food in schools and community gardens can help people feel less isolated and positively encourage children to eat more fruit and vegetables.

It is our intention that the architectural detailing of the Science Garden will be of the highest standard in order to create a high quality space that contributes to the exemplary learning experience at the school.



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