4 Proposed scheme

4.1 Refurbishment rationale

The alternative proposal addresses challenges with the deliverability of the new build scheme in terms of viability arising from the significant increase in construction costs and the practical construction challenges. Through further studies and explorations the potential to refurbish the property has been revisited.

By retaining the existing building stock the proposal is sustainability-led. Internal alterations are then designed to improve and increase the student accommodation provision currently on site.

Refurbishment of the existing building will ensure the property delivers good quality student accommodation. The existing building was last refurbished and extended around 20 years ago. Due to this, the current building is non-complaint with Empiric brand standards, has inefficient floor plates, and has issues with fire escape and maintenance. Therefore, refurbishment works are necessary to provide the quality of accommodation expected and warranted by students today. The required space standards will be met or exceeded.

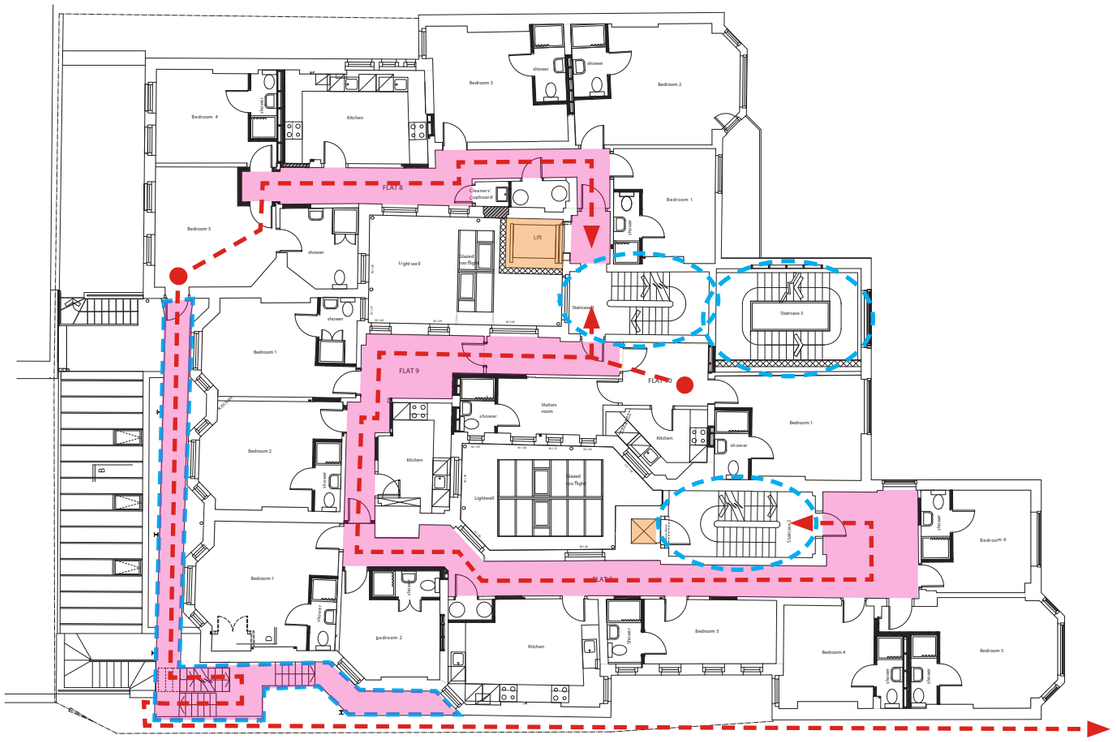
An additional floor marginally increases the number of bedspaces to address the growing need for student accommodation within the Camden borough. The refurbishment will provide accommodation for 72 students in total. At the lower ground floor an entertainment room, lounge and gym will be provided. A communal lounge and small outdoor terrace will be located in the new rooftop extension.

4.2 Layout Improvements

Key improvements:

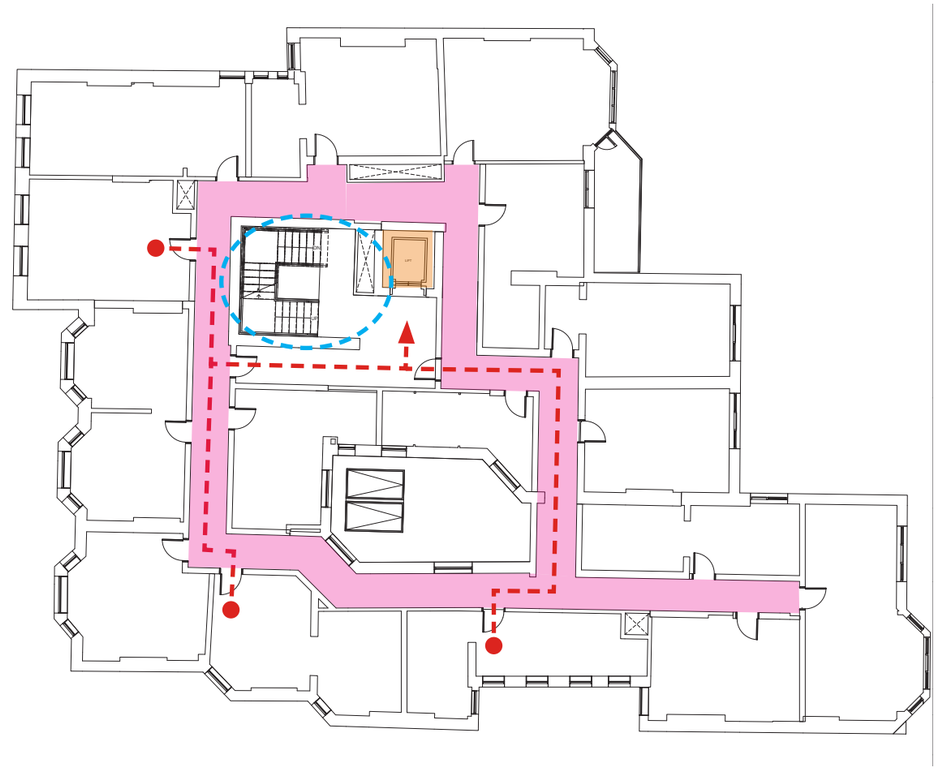
- Clear and efficient fire strategy
- Core consolidation
- Circulation efficiency improvement

Existing fire strategy - 1st floor plan



- Convoluted escape routes.
- Multiple cores making egress unclear and compromising efficiency of layouts.
- Confusing circulation routes and access through neighbouring apartments.

Proposed fire strategy - 1st floor plan



- Consolidated core in the centre of the building with clear egress routes.
- Lift consolidated to one in the main core next to the stairs.

Fire egress routes

Cores/vertical circulation

Circulation/corridors

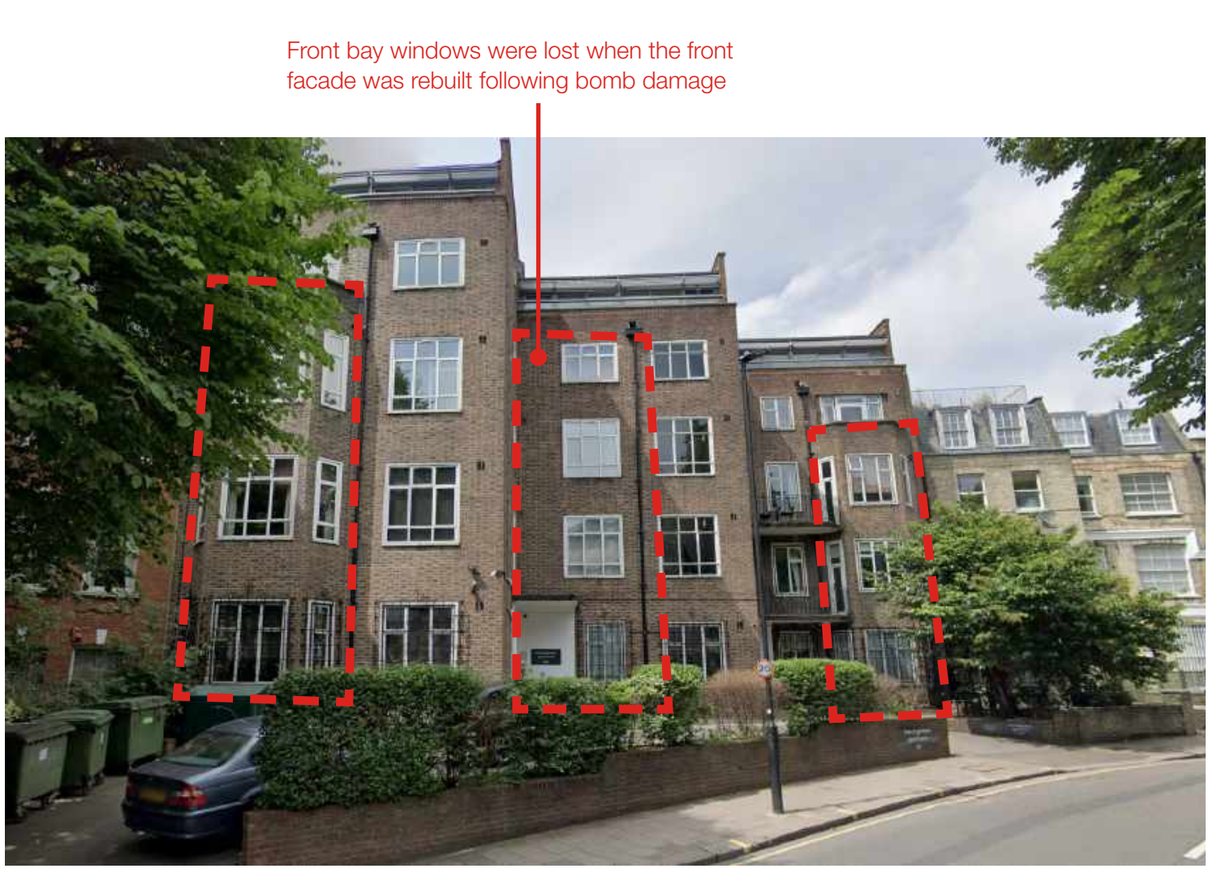
Lifts

4.3 Visual enhancements

4.3.1 Context

Contextual sensitivity is key to the design development. The proposal aims to respect the existing rich character of the surroundings and enhances the streetscape.
The form of the existing building has been used to establish the interventions with the facade.

View of Gascony Avenue / West End Lane showing bomb damage



Current building photo

4.3.2 Strategy

The proposal takes advantage of what is already existing by focusing on interventions that reorganise the scale, proportions and general look of the building whilst adding character that brings it in line with nearby buildings.

This proposal seeks to maintain the existing brickwork any bay window features. The bricks will be cleaned and repointed to rejuvenate the facade.

All windows are to be replaced with new sash windows that are inset to provide articulation of the facade and improve on the facade performance.

Interventions at ground floor level redefine entrances to provide a clear distinction at street level. Providing interest to the central bay and giving a sense of arrival.

The addition of a single setback rooftop extension provides additional student accommodation and communal facilities. The extension is modest in massing.

Proposed alterations

Proposed additions

4.3.3 Elevation Studies

The proposed rooftop extension reflects the approval of a rooftop extension in the previous proposal. It marginally increases the student accommodation provision on the site and provides additional amenity facilities. The proposal to extend at rooftop level provides the opportunity to create a more cohesive facade design through removing the ad-hoc extensions and replacing these with more in-keeping and higher quality extensions.

Camden Case Officer comments reiterate the lack of coherent design at roof level: “Unsympathetic alterations and extensions made to the building in recent years, particularly at roof level, further add to the building’s anomalous appearance within the immediate townscape.”

The height of the proposal remains within the heights proposed in the consented scheme, which is in keeping with the neighbouring property Kings Gardens (to the south). As shown in the elevation diagram below. This was fully tested as part of the previous planning application. Use of appropriate material and detailing to the rooftop extension are proposed which take reference from neighbouring properties.

Proposed scheme to match height of consented.

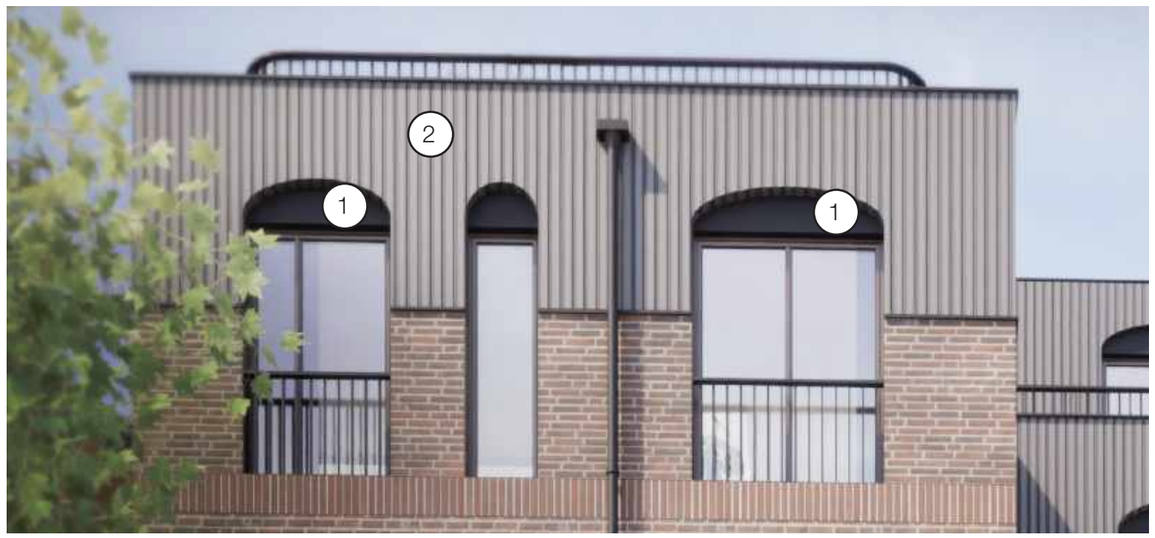
Existing front elevation

Consented front elevation

Proposed front elevation

The proposed arch detail above the windows on the rooftop extension takes reference from the arched details above the windows and balcony canopies on the facade of Kings Gardens mansion block. The arches provide richness and interest and provide a distinct “top” to the building.

The materiality and colour of the rooftop extension also takes reference from the surrounding residential terraces which have a traditional slate grey mansard roofs. The proposed rooftop extension consists of a standing seam zinc cladding in a similar grey tone.



1. Arched details above windows and balcony reveals to provide symmetry and bay definition.

2. Change of material at rooftop level to break up and articulate the facade.

Kings Gardens mansion block to the South

Residential terraces to the North.

4.4 Pre-application discussion

A pre-application meeting was held on 30th March 2022 with Camden Council Planning.

A pre-application discussion document which was issued prior to the meeting was used to guide discussion, and the revised proposals were presented which included the refurbishment of the existing building/windows and additional works/extension at roof level.

Main comments were as follows:

Principle of development:

- The planners confirmed that the scaled back proposals were preferred in regards to the retention of the building and its sustainability grounds.

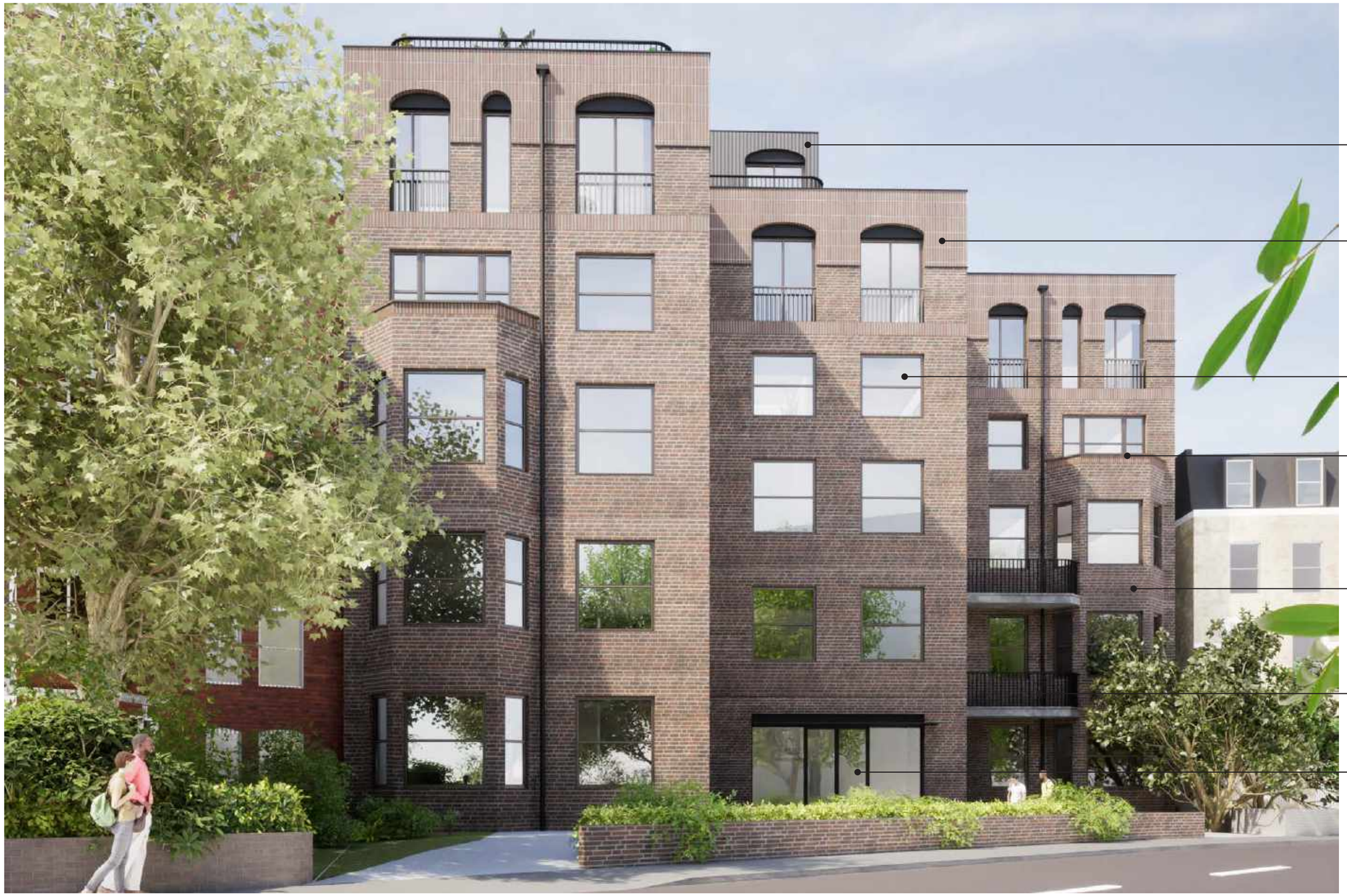
Design:

- The roof set back at 5th level was deemed acceptable to the area and the use of contrasting building materials at this level.
- Preference to remove zinc on principal elevation and use brick up to parapet level.
- Arches above windows well received. Noted that they add to the design quality and are a “subtle and effective change” which refers tastefully tot he higher quality mansion blocks in the surrounding area.
- Preference for “elegant” timber sash and case slender windows rather than metal aluminium window frames. However council prepared to be convinced of the merits of aluminium windows if frames are slender.

In summary the council agrees with proposed low key/modes approach and acknowledged the sustainability benefits of the proposed scheme over the consented scheme.

Visual at pre-application stage.

4.5 Visualisations



4.5 Visualisations

4.5 Visualisations
Comparison of Existing and Proposed

Existing street visual 01

Proposed street visual 01

4.5 Visualisations
Comparison of Existing and Proposed

Existing street visual 02

Proposed street visual 02

4.5 Visualisations
Comparison of Consented and Proposed

Consented street visual 01

Proposed street visual 01

4.6 Materials

The proposal looks to retain much of the existing fabric. The existing brickwork is to be cleaned and re-pointed. New fenestration is then installed in the existing openings to provide depth in the reveals and improve energy efficiency.

The fourth floor extension is to be constructed from brick to match the existing. A different stacking technique is used on the upper half of the elevation to create contrast and detail on the facade, making reference between the existing and new.

The materiality and colour of the rooftop extension takes reference from the surrounding residential terraces which have a traditional slate grey mansard roofs. The proposed rooftop extension consists of a standing seam zinc cladding in a similar grey tone.

Zinc extension

Brick bond details

5 Access & amenity

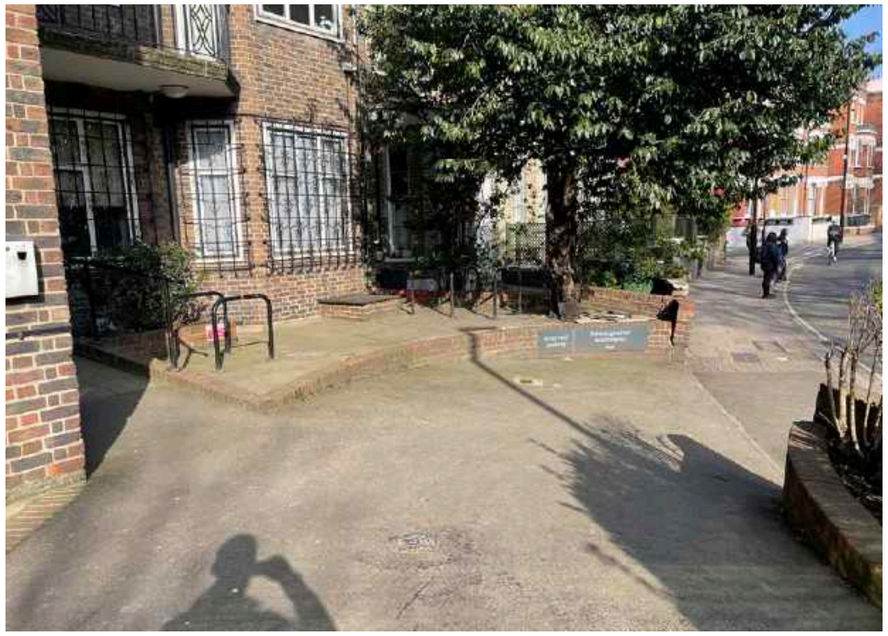
5.1 Landscape

5.1.1 Introduction

The existing landscaping to the front and rear of the building is tired and unwelcoming.

The proposal provides small, effective interventions to the front and rear of the property to help accentuate the finish to the building, bringing out the colour in the brick while providing a contemporary finish to the overall appearance at ground floor level.

A sedum roof and communal roof terrace are located at fifth floor level, improving the amenity provision and sustainability and biodiversity credentials.



Existing front entrance

Existing front entrance

Existing rear garden

Existing side garden

5.1.2 Front Entrance

New feature planting beds frame the entrance points adding seasonal interest and a sense of arrival. Defensible planting beds are located in front of ground level windows to add privacy and security. Planting beds to the southern boundary shall be increased to improve the area that was once a bin store.

Along the boundary adjacent to the pavement, the wall is to be remade using brick to match the building façade, due to the limited soil volume available, a choice of smaller, drought tolerant shrubs and perennials will be used here maintaining open views into the front entrance space. A mix of foliage rich plants interspersed with more colourful species will revitalise the front of the building, using low brick planters and planting that softens this front entrance.

The existing tarmac driveway is to be resurfaced with high quality and hard-wearing block pavers utilising principles of a shared surface with flush kerbs that aid wayfinding and emphasise pedestrian priority.

Currently there are two trees on site that will need to be retained, T1 and T9 which are both of moderate value. Care shall be taken to ensure that the existing trees that are being retained in this area are not harmed during the construction phase.

Front entrance sketch proposal

Pachysandra

Vinca

Shuttlecock ferns

Tactile paving

5.1.3 Rear Garden

To the rear of the property, the outdoor space will again feature small interventions that will provide much needed bursts of colour and look to maximise the limited space on offer.

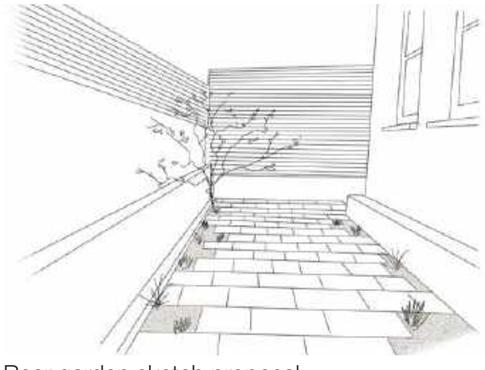
Climbers and low growing ornamental grasses and ferns will provide greenery throughout the year, creating small garden terraces for students to relax and socialise in.

The choice of materials will rejuvenate the space with timber slatted venetian fencing providing privacy and a much needed uplift from the chain link fence which is currently on offer here.

Pockets of planting will bleed in from the edges of the spaces to provide a contemporary finish and will be dressed with a light coloured gravel to help with moisture retention while also providing a clean tidy finish.

Plants like Liriope muscari and Hakenochloa macra will add foliage and interest to the space while climbers like Clematis spp. and Trachelospernum jasminoides will add colour and scent.

Vividly coloured bistro chairs and tables will complete the space, creating a social, usable area to relax and eat/drink with friends.



Rear garden sketch proposal

Trachelospermum jasminoides

Liriope

Paving

Timber slatted venetian fencing

5.1.4 Roof Terrace

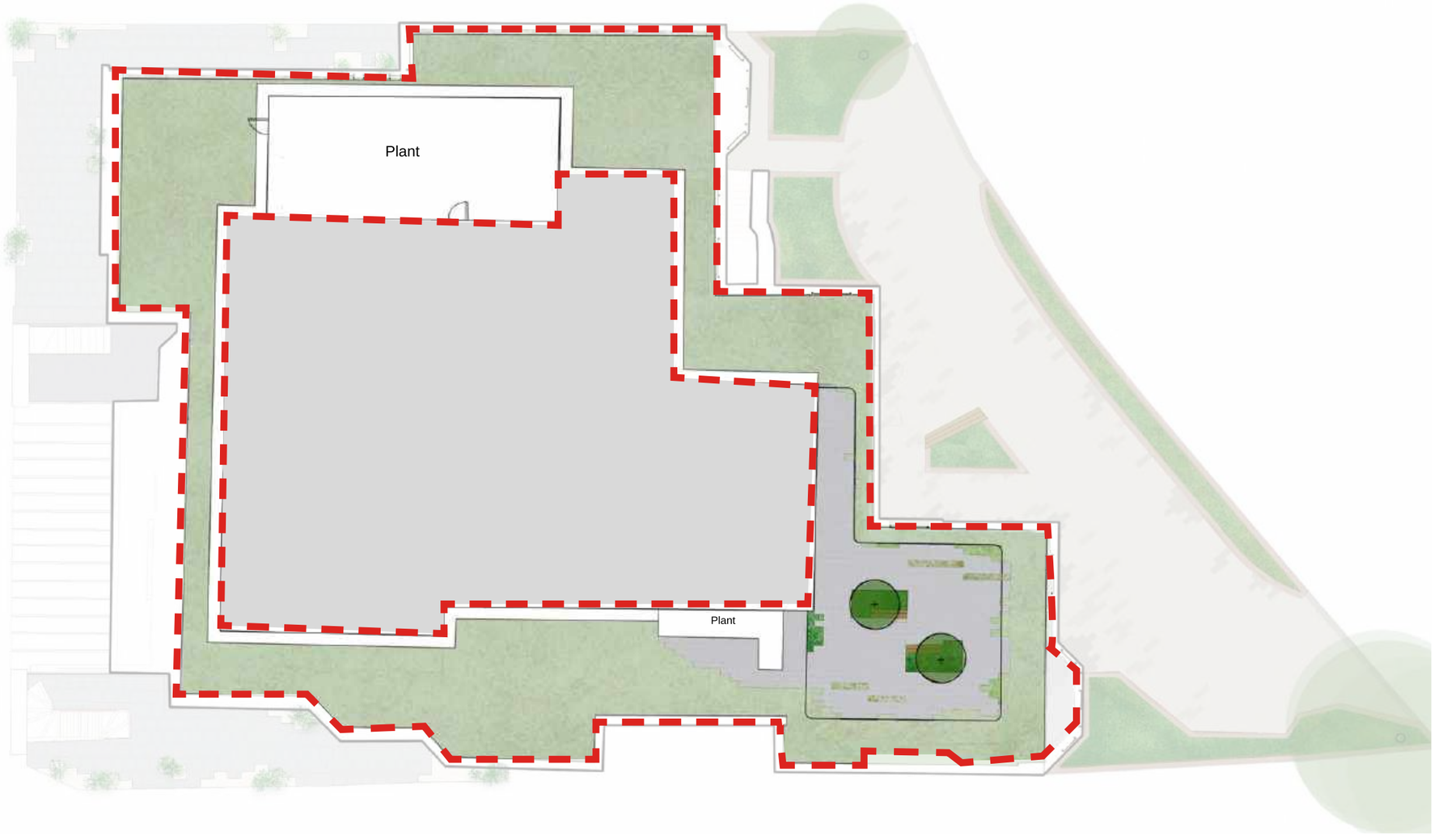
At fifth floor level a sedum roof is proposed for the majority of the roof area to increase biodiversity and reduce the level of hard surfacing.

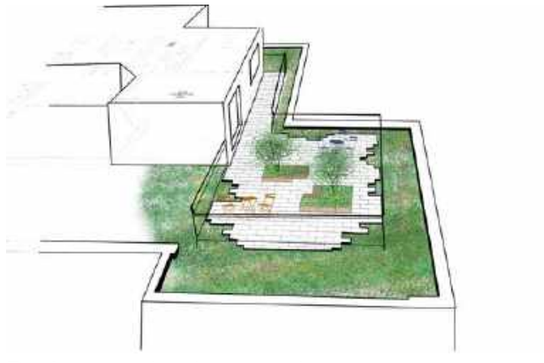
The new communal roof terrace on level 5 will include a similar finish to that of the communal spaces, allowing the greenery to bleed seamlessly into the space.

The terrace shall be surrounded by a 1100mm high balustrade and the surrounding sedum matting shall bleed through into the terrace paving helping to visually link the two spaces as one.

Small, raised planters with integrated seating planted with structural grasses and herb mixes break up the areas, offering a safe environment that promotes social interaction as well as more passive areas for quiet contemplation. Due to the orientation the species used will need to be more drought tolerant and plants like Erigeron karvinskianus and trailing rosemary will add scent and colour to the space.

Informal bistro seating will provide a pop of colour and help connect the lower communal spaces by providing a coherent theme, and a flexible use of space.





Roof terrace sketch proposal

Erigeron karvinskianus

Trailing rosemary

5.2 Access & facilities

Access
The site location is well served by bus, train and underground, with connections at West Hampstead and Kilburn close by.

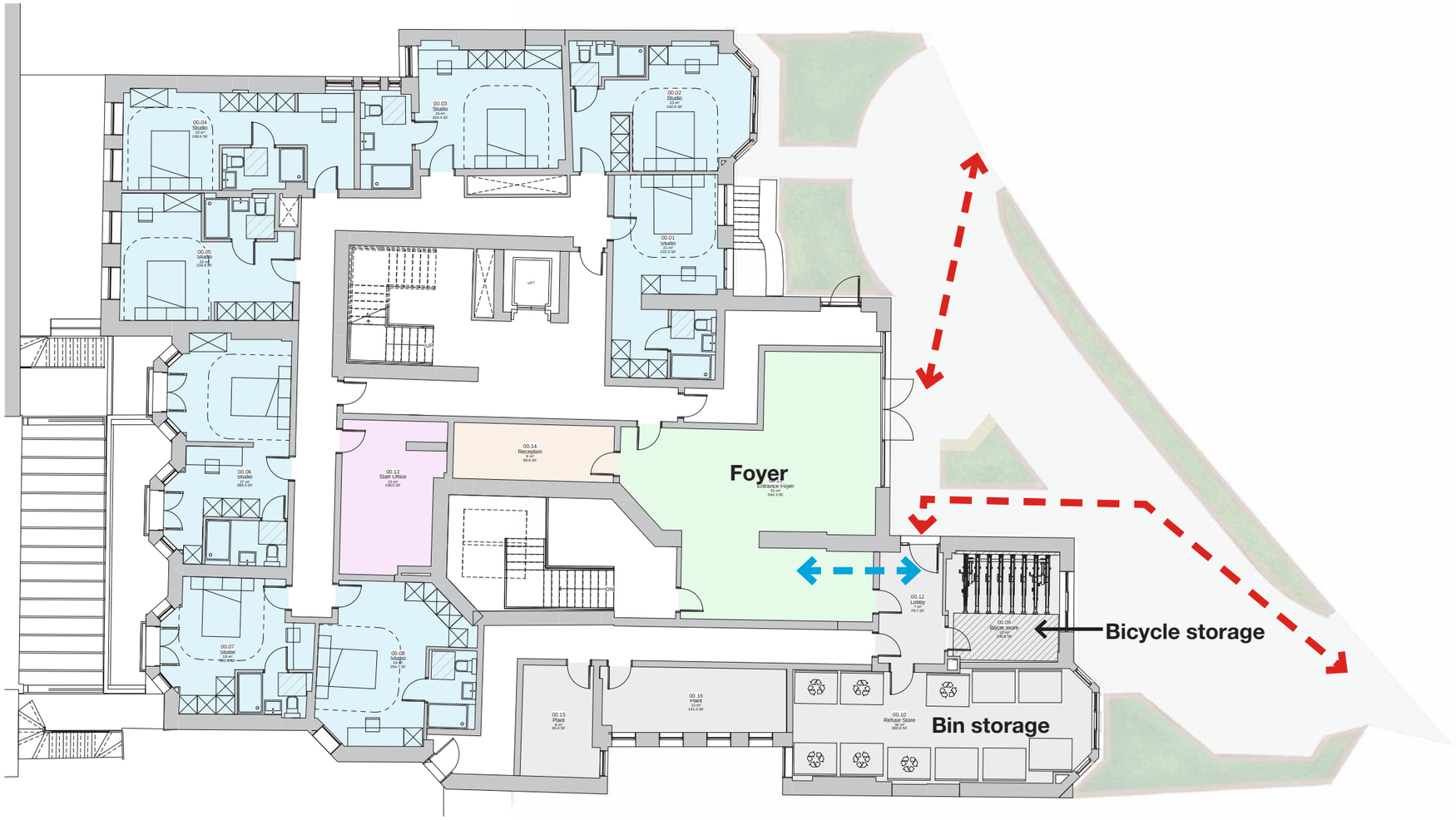
The entrance to the building is off West End Lane. The main entrance foyer is overlooked by the reception allowing supervision of the entrance lobby and front garden areas. Bicycle and bin storage is also accessed from the main entrance foyer or side entrance door. The internal layout has been reconfigured to provide clear navigation of the floor plan.

Bicycle storage
Currently there are 10 external bicycle spaces provided on the site.

This proposal provides space for 16 internal secure bicycle parking spaces. This is above the requirements to provide an additional 4 cycle spaces with the uplift in bedspaces.

The secure internal enclosure is provided at the front of the building with access via both the main entrance foyer and side entrance.

A Sheffield stand is located in the external landscape to provide cycle parking for 2 short-stay visitors.

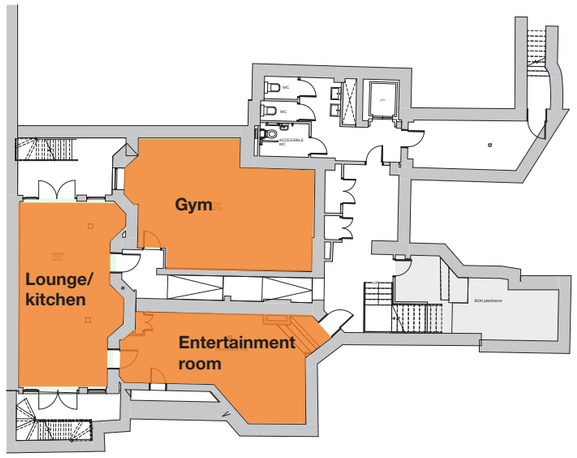


Ground floor plan

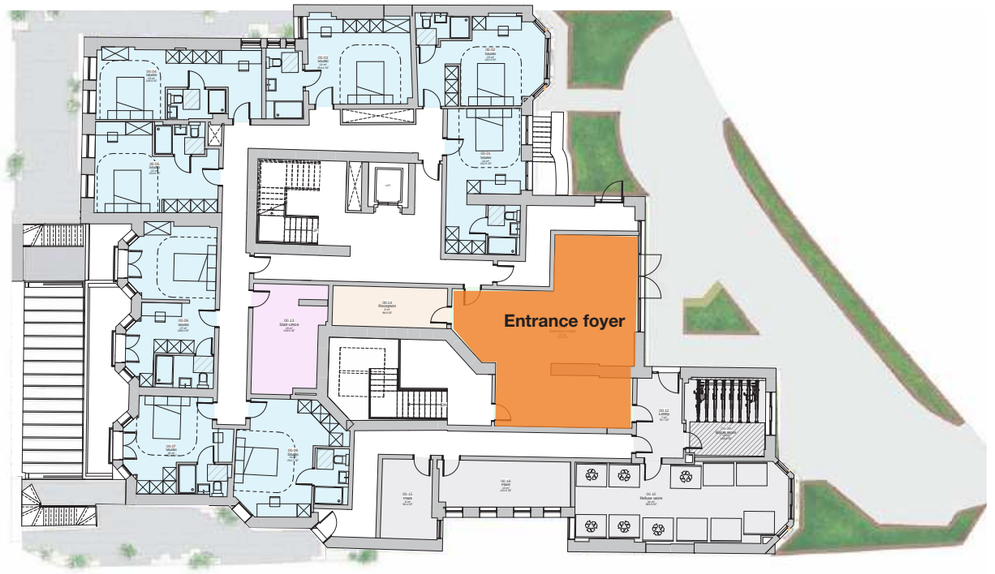
5.3 Amenity space

The proposed scheme offers a variety of amenity facilities from basement to roof level.

At roof level there is the addition of a large communal lounge with access to a communal roof terrace. Further details of the roof terrace are described in section 5.1.4.

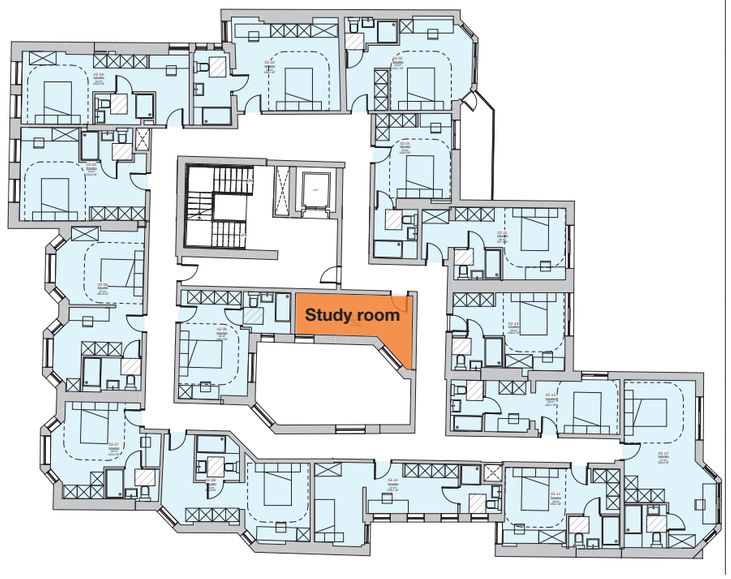


Lower ground floor plan

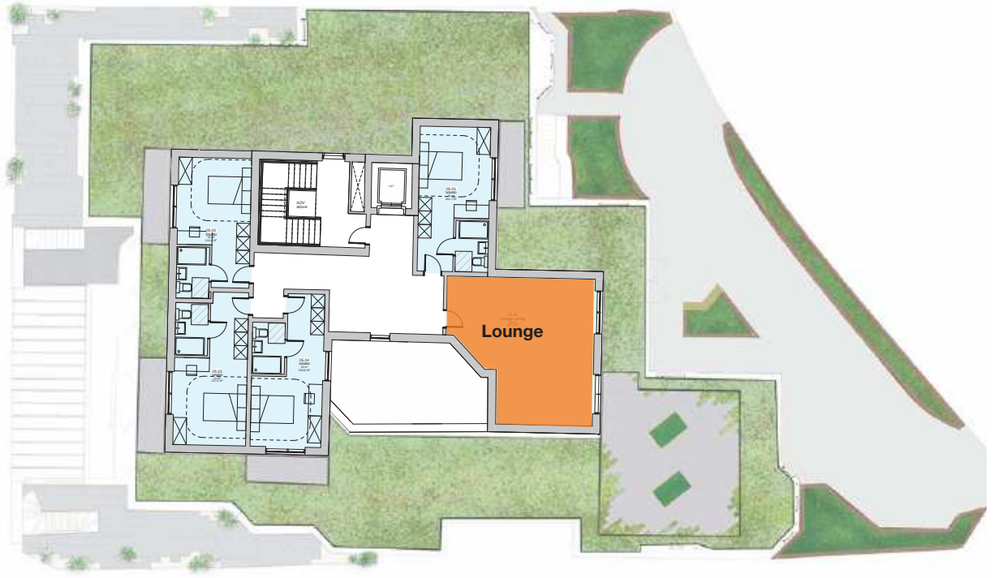


Ground floor plan

Internal amenity



Typical floor plan



Level 05 (roof terrace) plan

6 Sustainability

The development will comprise of the reuse of existing structure and fabric material as far as practically possible with the emerging proposals, building upon the principles of circular economy by way of limiting the amount of ‘additional’ carbon associated with the new build elements.

As part of the proposals, fabric upgrades will be incorporated principally including new windows and heating/hot water systems in order to minimise the operational energy consumption of the building.

The 5th floor extension will be built to exceed the requirements of Part L of the building regulations, this will include high performance building fabric, good levels of air tightness and a low carbon heating system.

Refer to MWL Energy and Sustainability Statement.

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