

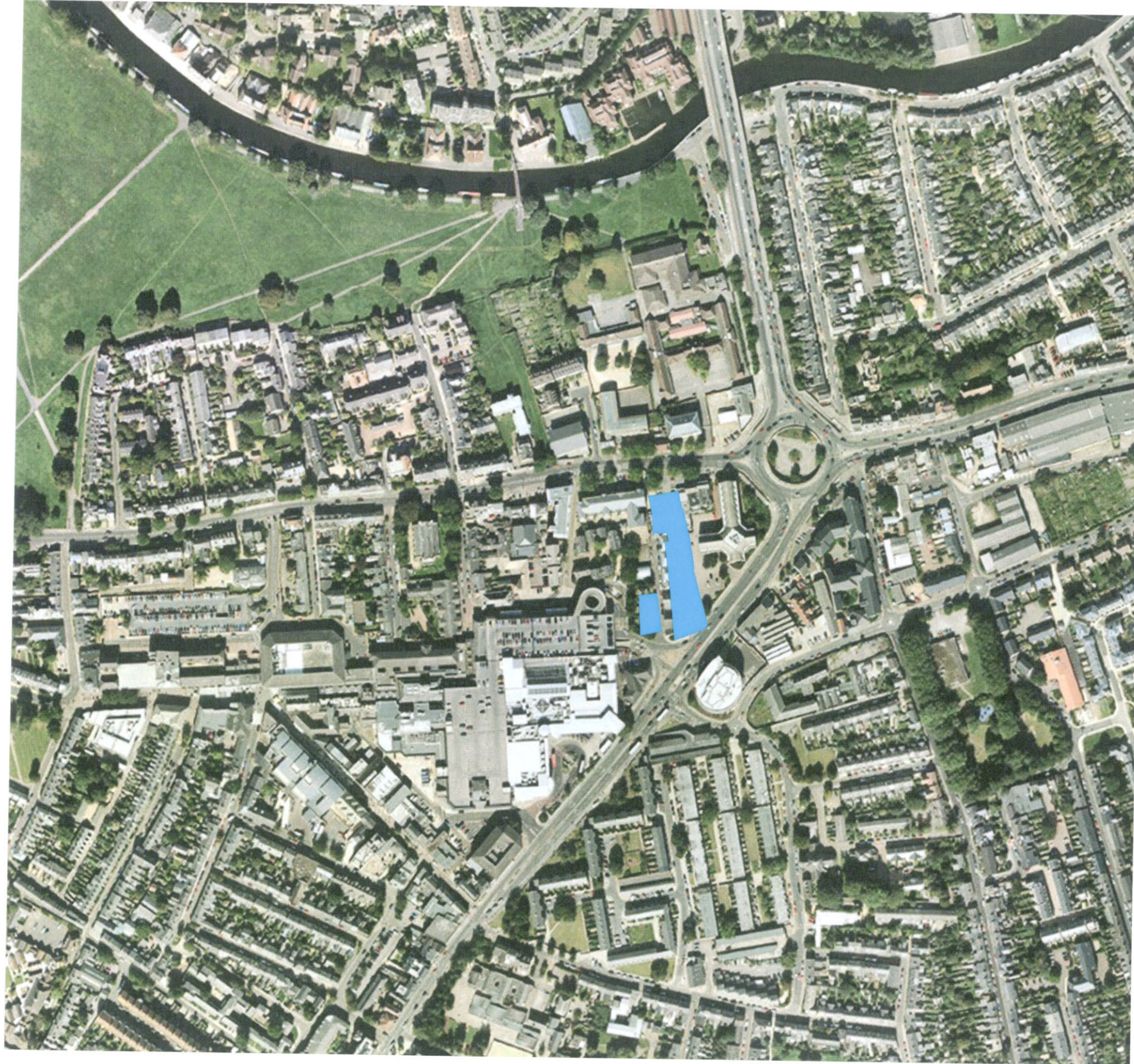
The Atrium Site

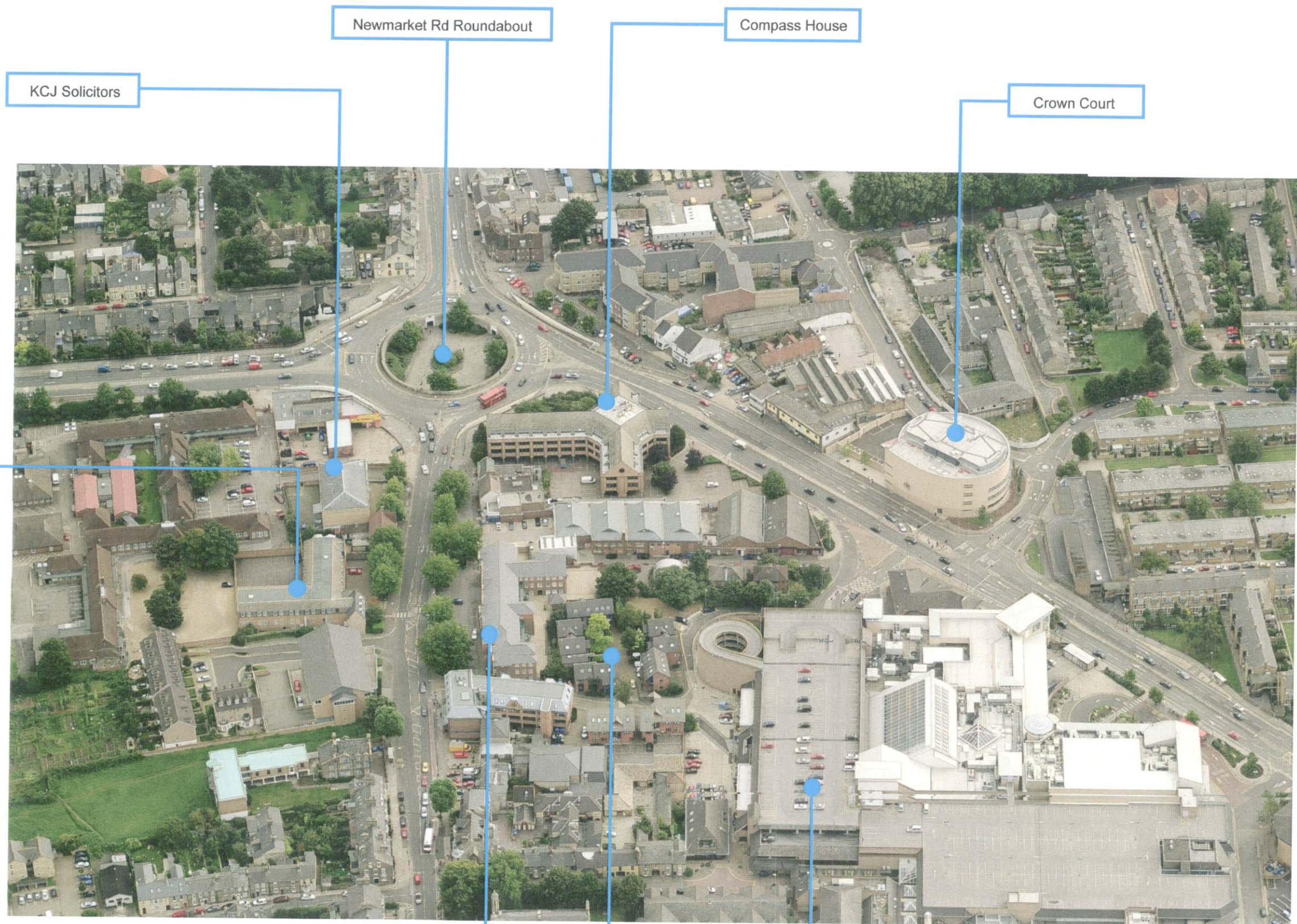
64-68 Newmarket Rd. Cambridge

Concept Proposals
Prepared for Unex Group Holdings
March 29th 2011

ABA

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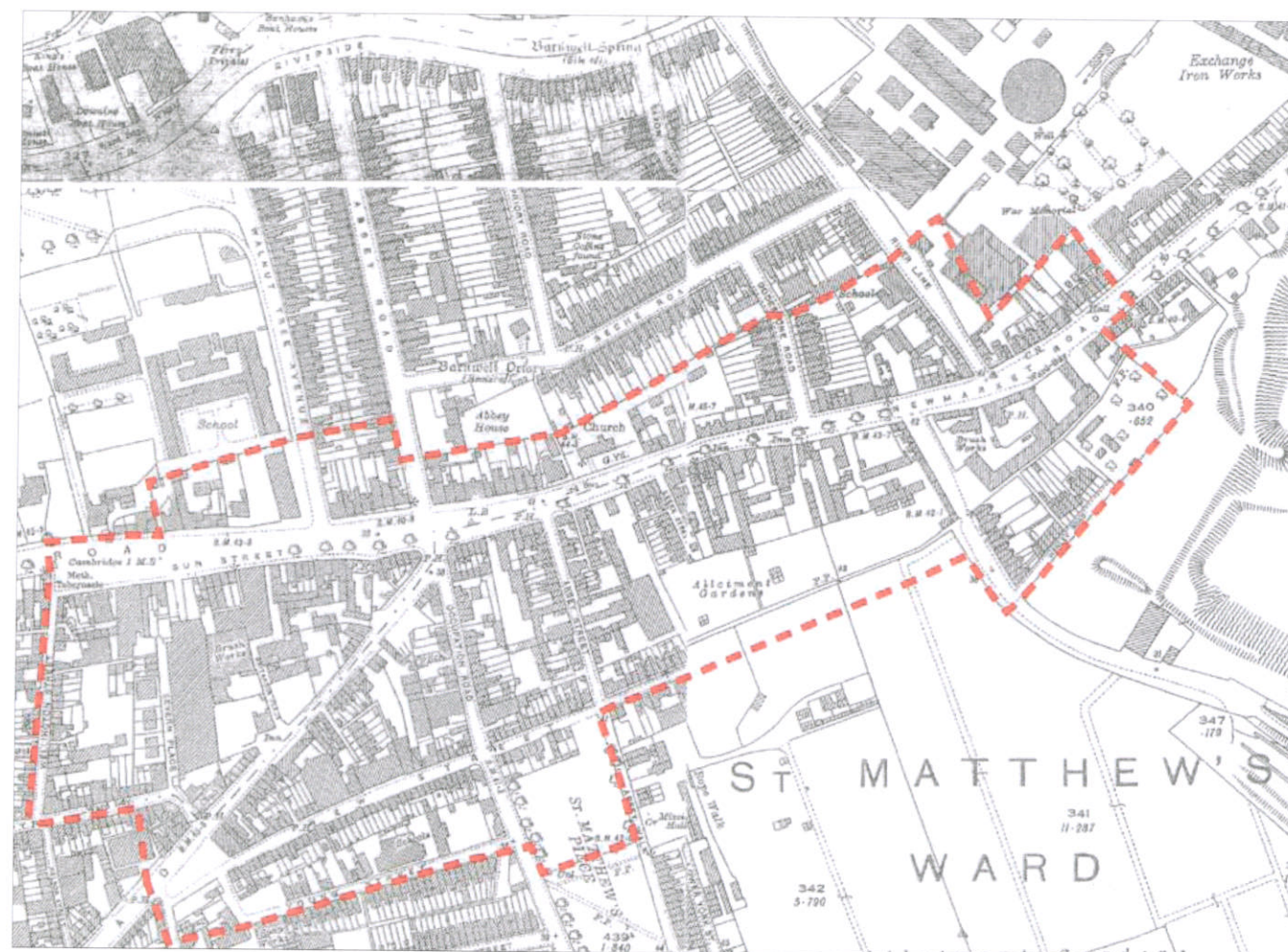
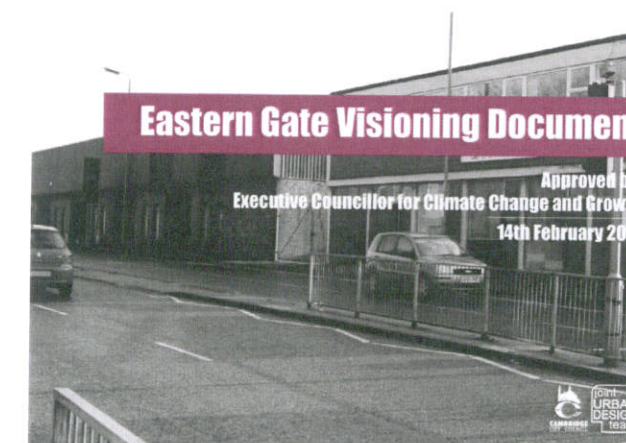


Figure 16: 1925 OS Plan showing the location of the Eastern Gate study area



Introduction

Alison Brooks Architects is delighted to submit a Concept Proposal for the development site at 64-68 Newmarket Road for Unex Group Holdings. Further to our introduction to the project and Client team, our ambition has been to offer both a creative and a robust solution for the site that will deliver value and will contribute positively to the urban realm and its future growth.

We have carefully studied the constraints and opportunities offered by the site, both within its immediate context and wider Cambridge setting. From these investigations, and along with ABA's broader experience of Cambridge development such as Accordia, we have developed an architectural proposal that is

- highly contextual
- improves the quantity and quality of amenity space for residents
- improves the views, outlook and aspect from dwellings
- offers an exceptional new piece of public realm to the City
- contributes positively to Cambridge City Council's Vision for the Eastern Gate

1.1 Introduction & background

The need for co-ordinated change

Situated to the north east of the city centre, the 'Eastern Gate' study area stretches from the Crown Court (East Road) and Elizabeth Way roundabout to the beginning of the retail park (refer to figure 1). Over the years, the area has experienced significant change. The large-scale highway interventions of the 1970's, the application of standard highway solutions and the introduction of unsympathetic bulky buildings that have little relationship with the public realm have eroded the qualities of place and severed neighbouring communities.

For some time now, there has been widespread recognition for the need to improve the environment within the Eastern Gate study area. Over the years, many sites within the area have been subject to a number of planning applications, some of which are still extant. In addition, fragmented landownership further complicates matters.

However despite these challenges, attractive, well-established spaces and neighbourhoods, with a strong sense of community, surround the Eastern Gate study area. There is much opportunity and exciting potential for transformation...there is a great need for guidance to co-ordinate positive change within the area.

This 'Visioning' Document is the first step towards producing a formal Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that will co-ordinate and guide future

redevelopment in line with the Council's local plan policies.

The study area

The study area (refer to figure 3) has been drawn to include areas, which contain potential development sites, both allocated in the 2006 Cambridge Local Plan and unallocated, as well as areas where the quality of the public realm has been significantly undermined by the application of standard highway solutions.

What is the process?

The proposal sites of 7.01 and 7.03, as identified within the Cambridge Local Plan (2006), fall within the Eastern Gate study area (see figure 3). The production of a Development Framework for the area will further expand upon these area-based allocations, as well as the saved policies contained within Chapter 3 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2006), in particular policies: 3/4 Responding to Context, 3/6 Ensuring Coordinated Development, and 3/7 Creating Successful Places. In addition, it will form part of the Local Development Framework for Cambridge.

In progressing the SPD, it is proposed that the work is split into two parts. Firstly to produce a Visioning Document in consultation with the local community, members and key stakeholders, and then secondly, use the Visioning Document to feed into the production of a Development Framework (SPD) for the Eastern Gate area.

This Visioning document forms part of this first key stage and will form part of the evidence base for the production of a formal SPD to co-ordinate and guide redevelopment of the area.

Therefore, the overall purpose of producing a SPD in the form of a Development Framework for the Eastern Gate area is threefold:

1. To articulate a clear vision and build consensus about the future of the area;
2. To establish a Development Framework to co-ordinate redevelopment within the area and guide decisions (by the Council and others); and
3. To identify a series of key projects, to guide investment (by the Council and others) within the area.

The adjacent flowchart (figure 2) provides further detail regarding the key stages in the SPD process.

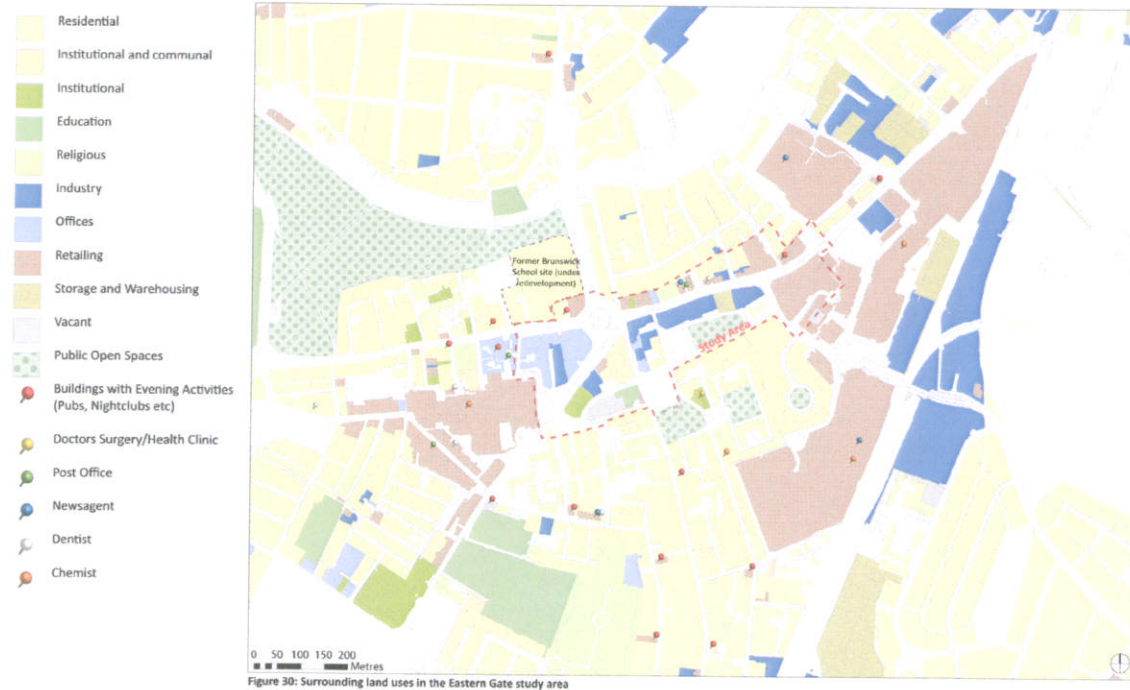
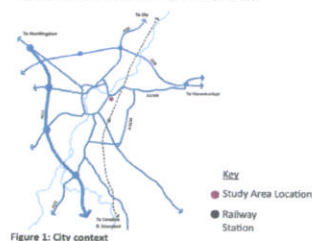


Figure 30: Surrounding land uses in the Eastern Gate study area

Planning Context

Cambridge City Council's Eastern Gate Visioning Document, distills the primary aim of their study in the following quotation:

'Breaking down the barriers...reconnecting people, reconnecting place'

The document illustrates how the current scale of Newmarket Road and the developments that line these heavily trafficked routes has resulted in the severing of the Riverside and Petersfield communities from each other and from the Market area, now dominated by the Grafton Centre.

In addition to the Eastern Gate Visioning document intended for Adoption into the Local Plan, we understand the Local Planning Policy Context as follows:

- LocPlan - City Centre
- LocPlan - Lords Bridge Consultation Area
- PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPS3 Housing
- PPG 16
- PPS25
- East of England Plan 2008
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Cambridge Local Plan 2006
- SPD Sustainable Design and Construction
- SPD Affordable Housing
- CCC Planning Obligation Strategy
- CCC Open Space and Recreation Strategy
- CCC Public Art Provision
- CCC Eastern Corridor Area Transport Plan

3.7 Existing Scale and Massing

This section provides an analysis of the arrangement, volume, size and shape of buildings as well as frontage/plot widths and dimensions of street blocks. The map (figure 43) illustrates the following key elements;

- The area predominantly comprises of residential housing with a domestic scale of 2-2.5 storeys, arranged in groups of terraces and semi-detached pairs.
- Larger scale industrial and retail buildings with wide plot widths front the southern side of Newmarket Road forming a barrier between the residential areas to the north and south.
- Taller buildings line east road and form a transition between the smaller domestic scale and edge of the city centre.
- The Crown Court forms the tallest built element within the study area and acts as a local landmark.



Figure 43: Existing Scale and Massing

Note: Building heights have been derived from Lidar data. Storey heights expressed are based on a typical residential floor to ceiling height of 2.7m.

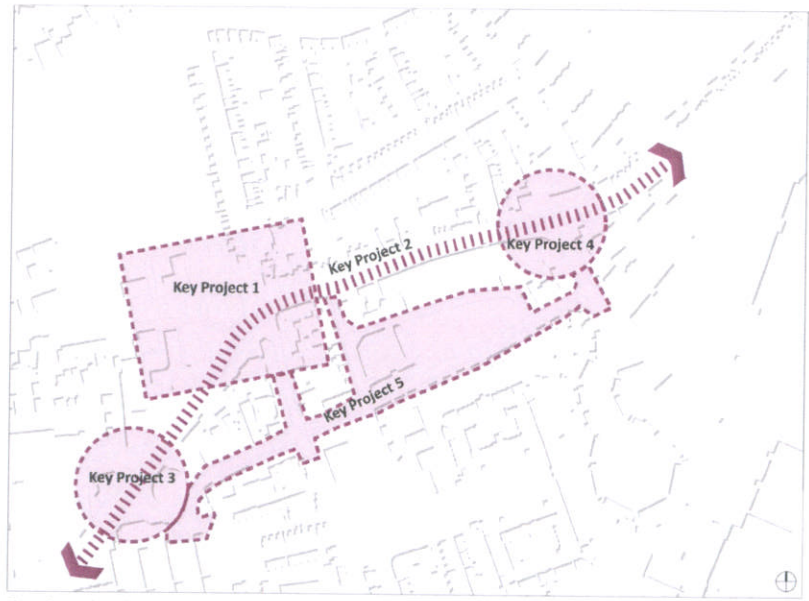


Figure 62: Locations of key projects

Key issues identified by the community

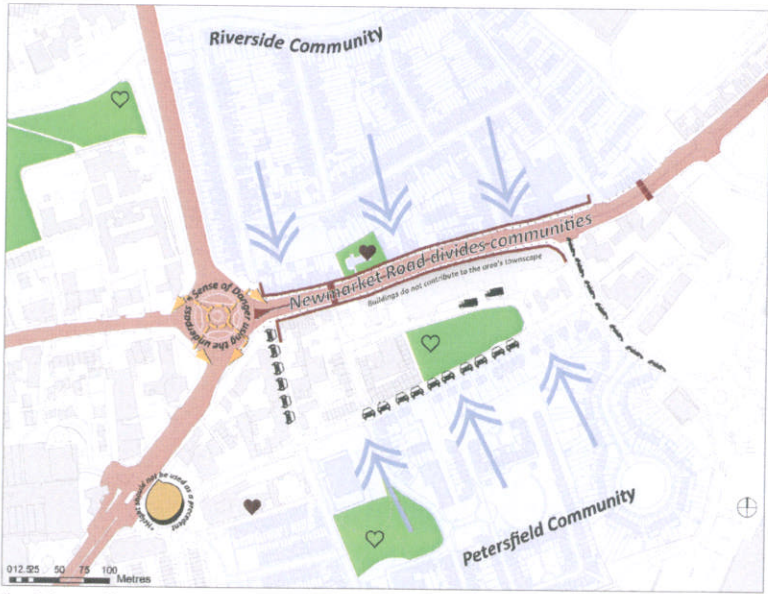


Figure 5: Summary of key issues raised by the community

- Existing narrow pedestrian crossings restrict pedestrian movement between Petersfield and Riverside communities.
- Fragmented cycle lanes along Newmarket Road.
- Poor condition of historic frontage along Newmarket Road.
- Historic buildings that are well valued: Church of St Andrew-the-Less and the Old Ragged School particularly.
- Existing open spaces well loved and valued by the community.
- Wheeler bins and parked cars obstruct pavements and cycle lanes along Occupation Road and New Street
- Lack of vehicle capacity along Coldham's Lane resulting in traffic congestion.
- Industrial uses generate heavy lorry movements, which struggle to navigate the narrow streets.
- Concerns that the height of the Crown Court is used as a precedent for future developments.
- Lack of routes between communities.

- Other key issues raised by the community included:
- Lack of benches and play areas
 - Deficiency of open space within the area
 - Lack of parking for users of Newmarket Road shops
 - Lack of community centres and facilities
 - Pubs closing down
 - Poor quality and unsafe feeling routes to important facilities & shops.

5.4 PROJECTS 3 & 4 - Remodelling traffic dominated junctions

Two traffic dominated junctions sit at either end of the study area; one at the corner of the Crown Court and the other at the corner of Newmarket Road/Coldham's Lane. The latter junction in particular, was highlighted by the majority of local residents at the public meeting (November 2009) as being particularly hostile for pedestrians and cyclists.

Projects 3 and 4 on the following pages offer suggestions for remodelling these two junctions. Both key projects aim to simplify and rationalise the layouts of the two junctions so that the environment for pedestrians and cyclists is improved.



Figure 76: Existing St Matthew's Street/East Road junction



Figure 77: Project 3 Proposed St Matthew's Street Junction

- Project 3 - Detailed design elements:
- 10 car capacity at junctions (30m).
 - 1.5m wide cycle lanes (minimum) and 2m wide where possible, along the length of East Road.
 - 10m tracking radius on all junctions allows access for HGV's.
 - All carriageway lanes are 3m wide to allow HGV's to pass one another.
 - Bus lanes 3.1m wide.
 - Tightening of the junction allows for increased areas of public realm.
 - Explore possibility of achieving a direct crossing from the Grafton Centre to New Street.

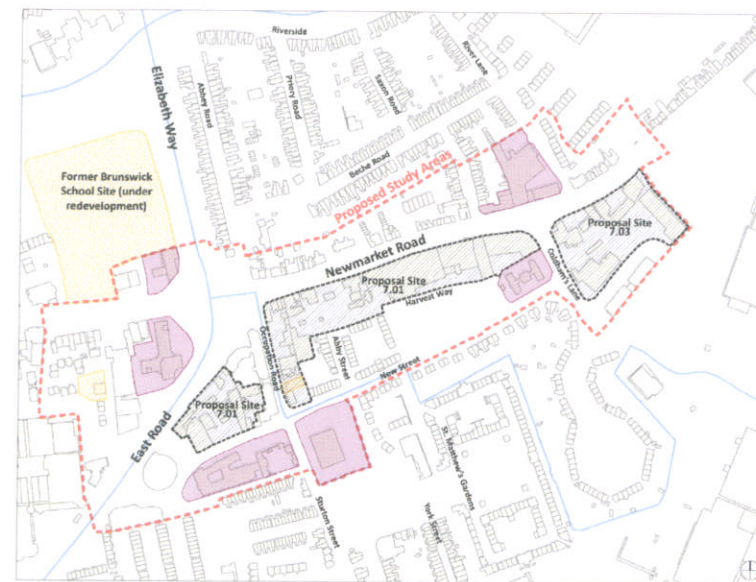


Figure 50 - Potential development sites



Figure 56: Built Form, Scale and Massing Strategy



Creating Successful Places

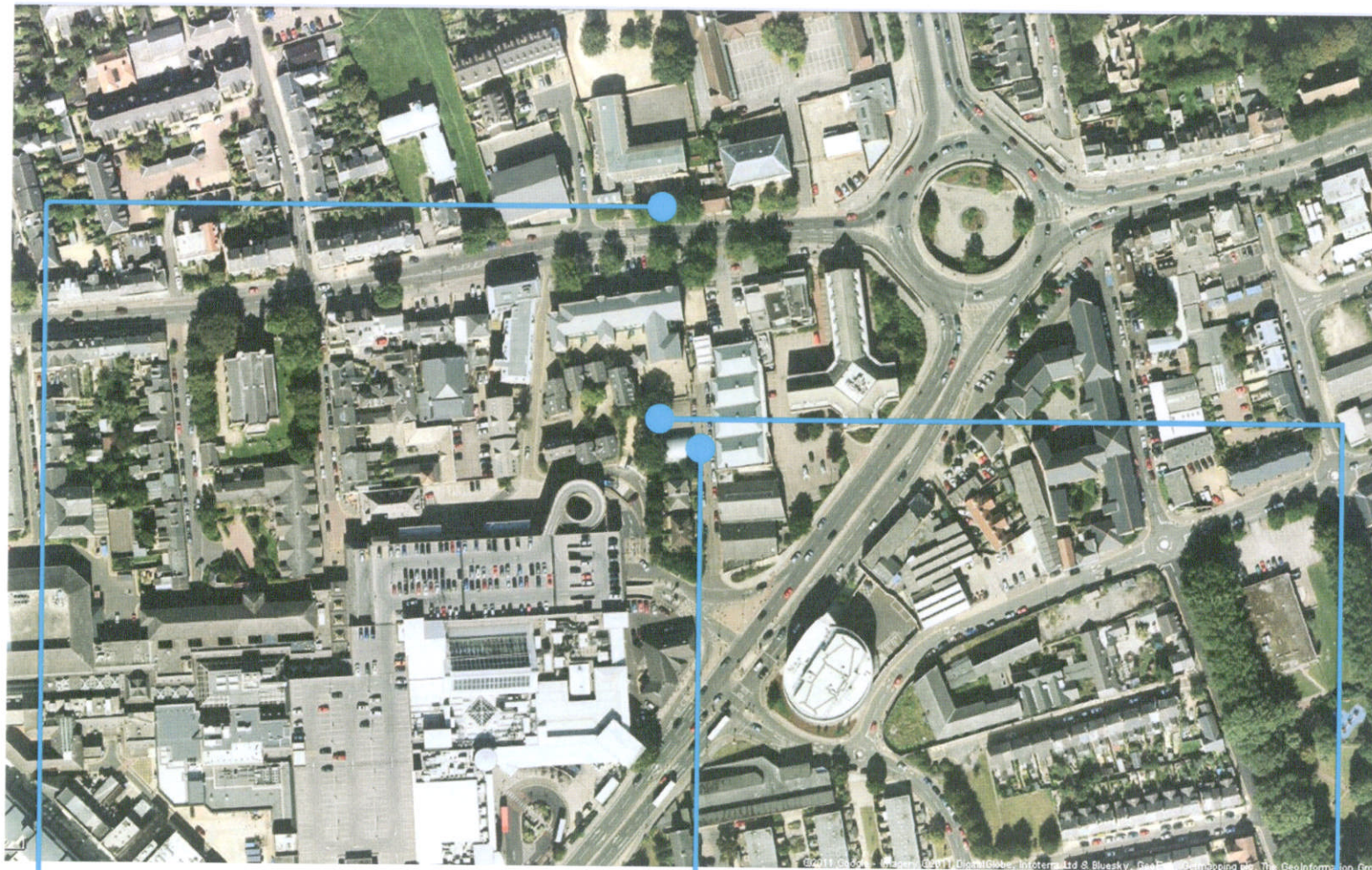
“ Development will be permitted which demonstrates that it is designed to provide attractive, high quality, accessible, stimulating, socially inclusive and safe living and working environments.”

Factors to be taken into account are:

- A - a comprehensive design approach which achieves good interrelations and integrations between buildings, routes and spaces;
- B - the development of a hierarchy of streets which respond to their levels of use whilst not allowing vehicular traffic to dominate;
- C - the creation of attractive built frontages to positively enhance the townscape where development adjoins public spaces and streets;
- D - the orientation of buildings to overlook public spaces and promote natural surveillance;
- e - the provision of active edges onto public spaces by locating entrances and windows of habitable rooms next to the street;
- F - the provision of clearly distinct public and private spaces and the design of such spaces so that they are usable, safe and enjoyable to use;
- G - the integration of affordable and supported housing in ways that minimise social exclusion;
- H - designs which avoid the threat or perceived threat of crime, avoid insecurity and neglect and contribute to improving community safety;
- I - the use of high quality traditional and modern materials, finishes and street furniture suitable to their location and context;
- J - a contribution to the improvement and enhancement of the public realm close to the development;
- K - provision for the adequate management and maintenance of development;
- L - the inclusion of public art within new developments; and
- M - a consideration for the needs of those with disabilities to ensure places are easily and safely accessible.

Recent Local Planning Applications Include:

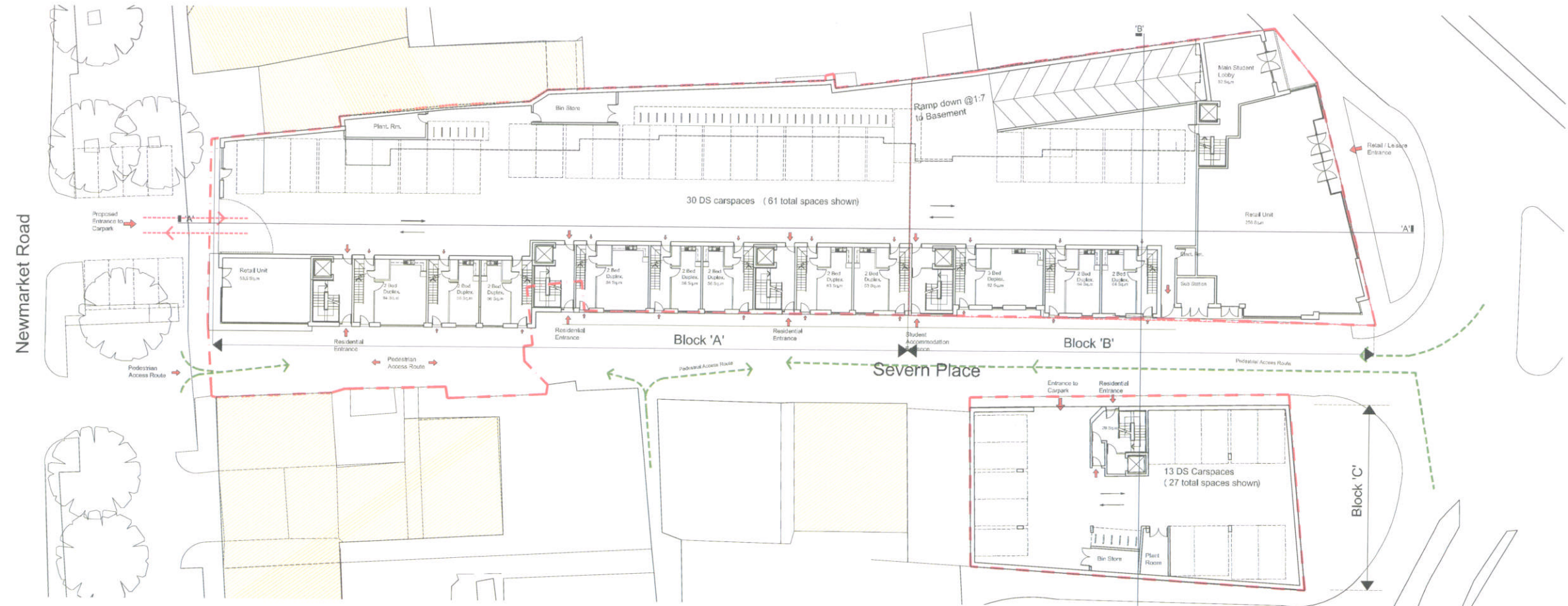
- Wellington Street Studio Apartments for Gibson Developments
- 11 Studio Flats at 7 Severn Place
- Cambridge Riverside Midsummer Common - 168 Res. Units & 251 Student Rooms



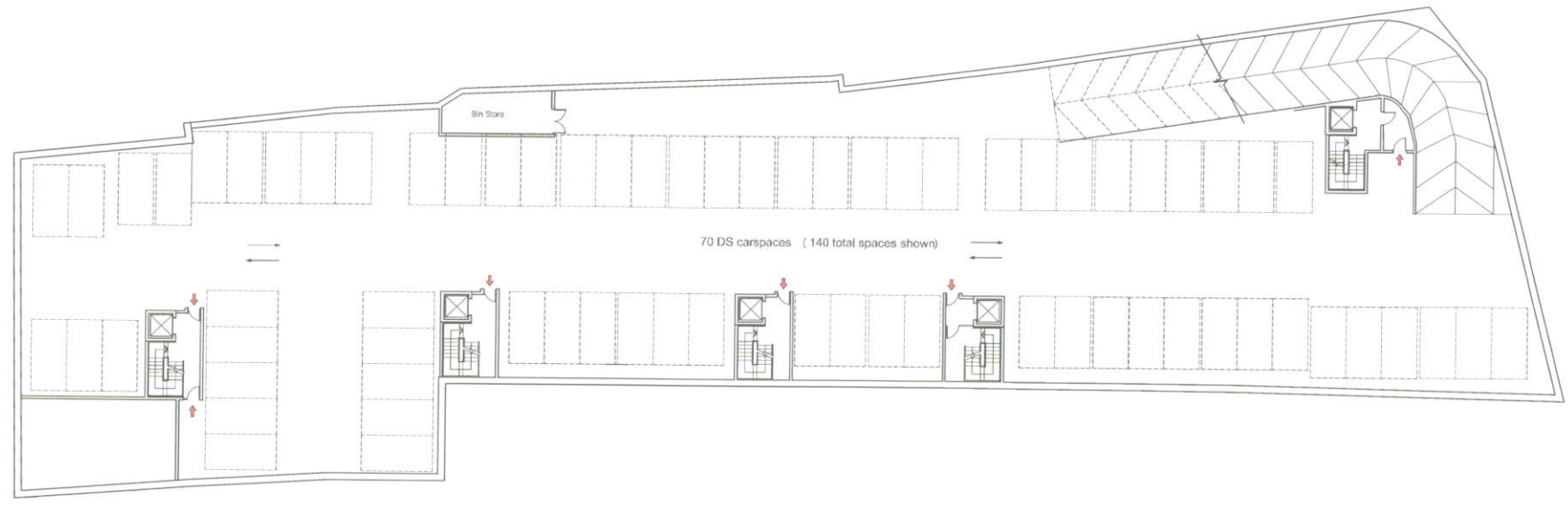
Midsummer Common

Severn Place

Wellington Street

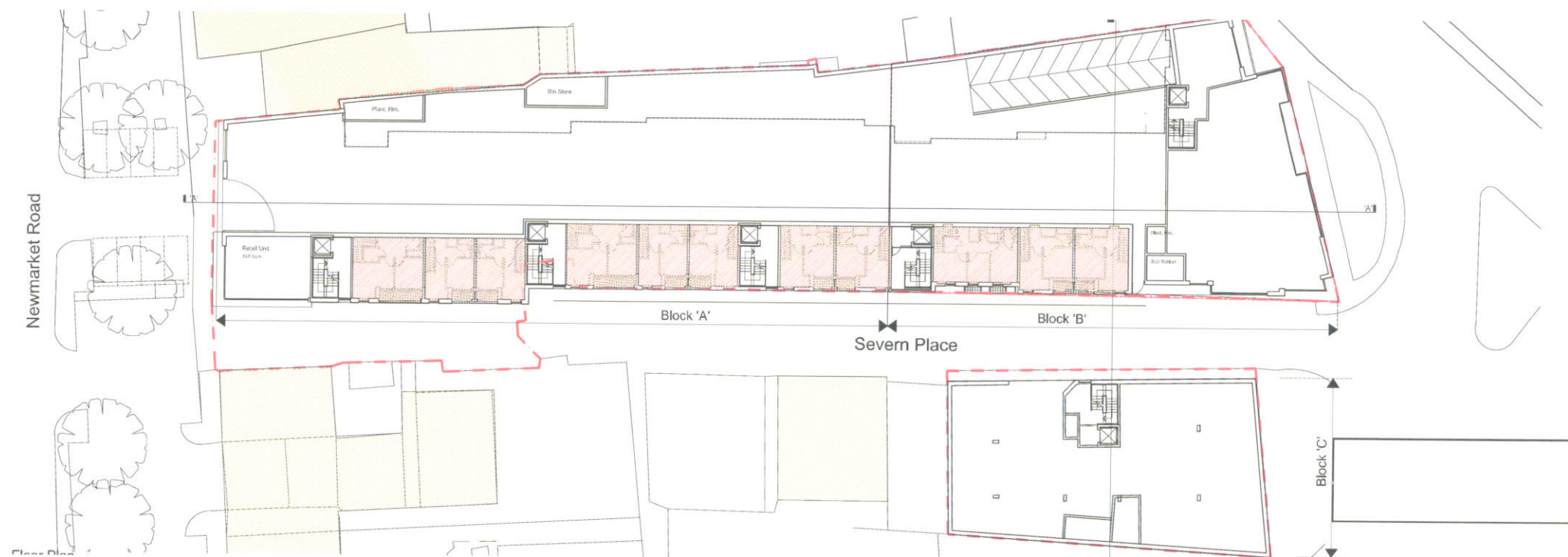


Ground Floor Plans



Basement Plans

Site Plan



1st Floor Plans



2nd Floor Plans

Current Proposal Plans



1 View of site from Nelson close



2 View from East Street looking North

ABA

Photo Key Plan



Panoramic Photographs of Site and Context



1 View of site at South entrance



2 Halfway up Severn Place



3 End of Severn Place, Duke's Court



4 Existing semi-detached houses in context with new block of 11 studio flats



5 Existing semi-detached houses in context towards South entrance

Photo Key Plan



Experience of Site from Eye Level



1 Approach to the Grafton Centre via Wellington Street Business



2 Grafton Centre Wellington St. Public Realm looking East



2 Grafton Centre Wellington St. Public Realm looking West



3 Grafton Centre Fire exits



4 View down Wellington Street toward Severn Place

Photo Key Plan



Grafton Place Entrance



The nearby Cambridge Riverside Midsummer Common by Berkeley Homes indicates a degree of higher quality development along the Cam riverside. We believe the Atrium site on Severn place can offer equally as high quality scheme, but calls for a different, more highly tailored response to its context. Our scheme draws on the spirit of the passages and streets that once led from the south side of Newmarket Road to the allotments and residential areas of Petersfield.

"In addition to a fine grained pattern of streets a multitude of small passages on the southside of Newmarket Road, such as Leek Street, Browns Yard, Shamrock Passage and Dragon Yard all provided additional routes between Newmarket Road and the allotments and residential areas of Petersfield."



1 Cambridge Co-operative Society



Photo Key Plan



Urban Grain and Historic



1 James Street Staggered Facades view to towards Grafton Centre



2 Newmarket Road Stepped and Staggered Facades



4 View from East Street looking North



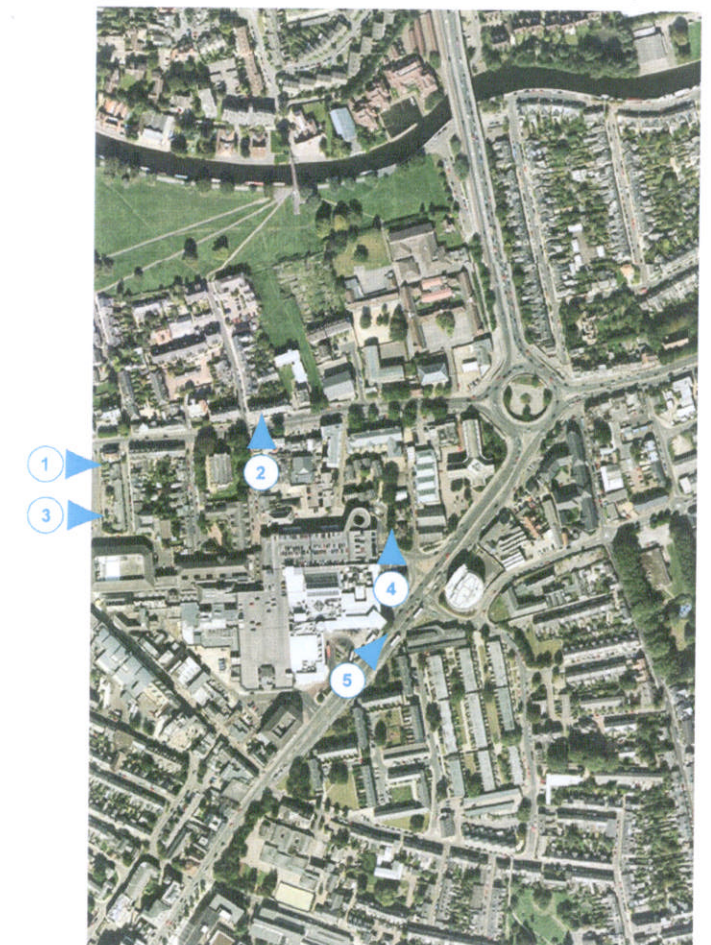
3 Subtle variations in brick colours



5 View of Site from Nelson Court

ABA

Photo Key Plan



Streetscape Study



1 View of site from Newmarket Road



4 View of site from Duke's Court Terrace



2 Building opposite site



3 Building opposite site



5 Newmarket Road - passage to the river

Photo Key Plan



North Site Entrance



1 Local Allotments



2 Midsummer Common/River View



3 Bridge at Midsummer Common

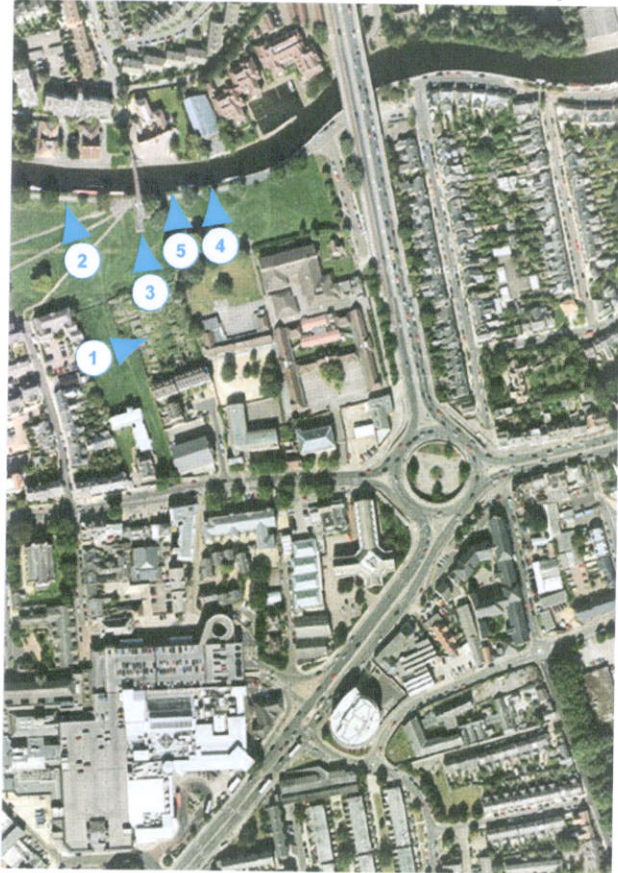


4 Spectacular Nature



5 Arts & Crafts Boathouses

Photo Key Plan



Local Area



1 Berkeley Homes Development



2 Boundary Wall to Compass House- 10m High



3 Compass House Carpark

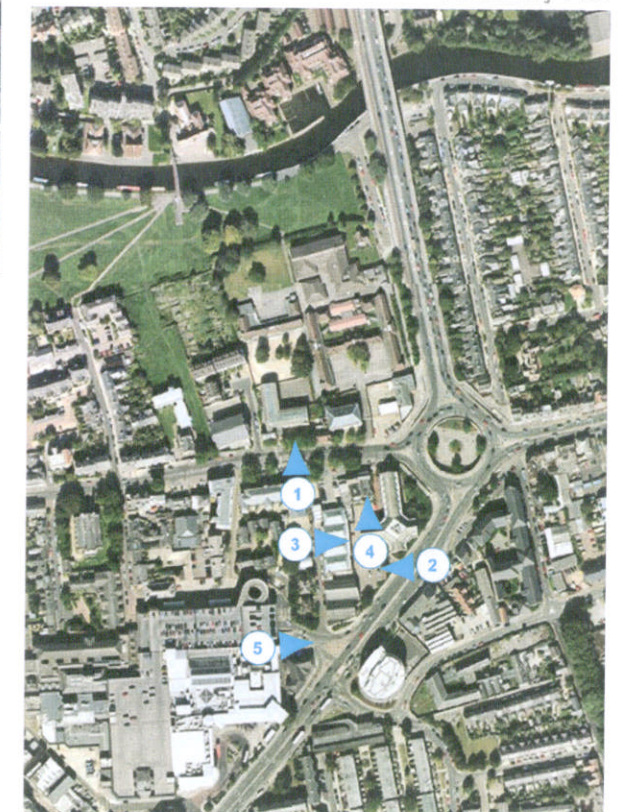


4 North Boundary of site - Arnold & Harris



5 Site from the Grafton Carpark

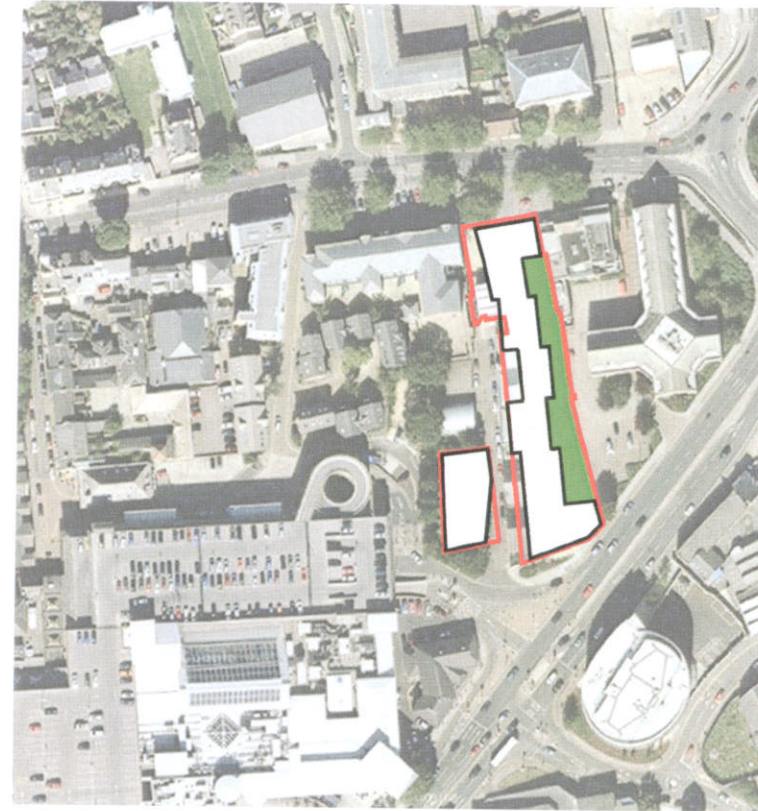
Photo Key Plan



Compass House/East Side of Site



Current Scheme Footprint



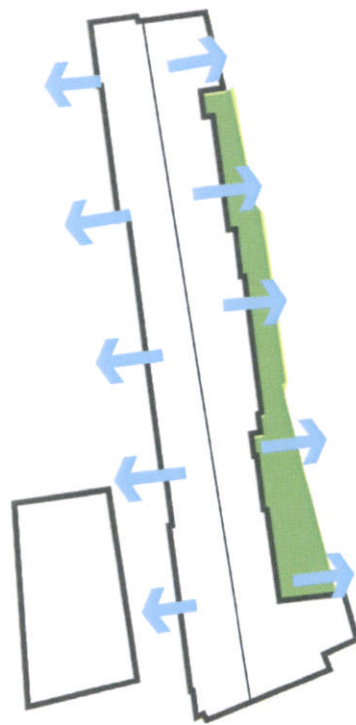
Proposed Scheme Footprint

We appreciate that the current Unex Development scheme's key gesture: connecting Severn Place to Newmarket Road with a generous pedestrian passage. This strongly supports the Council's vision for the Eastern Gate. We also appreciate the attempt to keep the new development in a scale appropriate to the existing context as a consistent 6 storey high building. The Current scheme provides a total of 87 residential units and service spaces; 315sm commercial space; 103 parking spaces; and 98 Student Rooms in one block (A&B) approximately 113m long and 17m deep and a second 'Block C' at the Nelson Close entrance to the Grafton Centre Carpark.

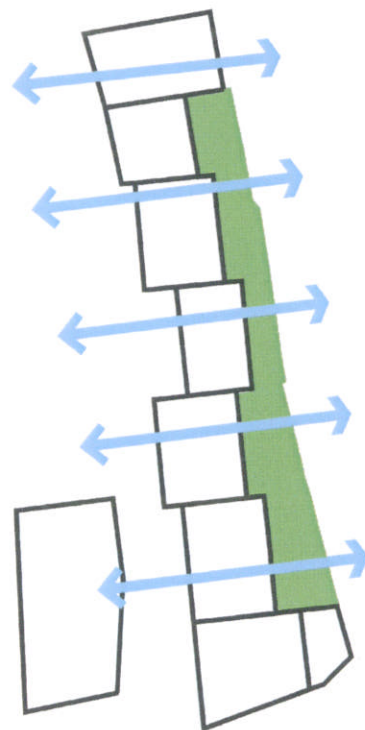
Our recommendations and response to the current scheme is as follows:

- 1 Separate the Student Accommodation from the Residential block to remove potential conflict areas of use, noise and privacy that might result from immediate adjacencies
- 2 Increase dual aspect flats to reduce energy consumption and improve dwelling quality
- 3 Increase private residential green amenity space
- 4 Improve upon the recommended 5-9sm balcony space per flat and depth of 1.5sm
- 5 Break up the building massing into a series of smaller, more discreet elements

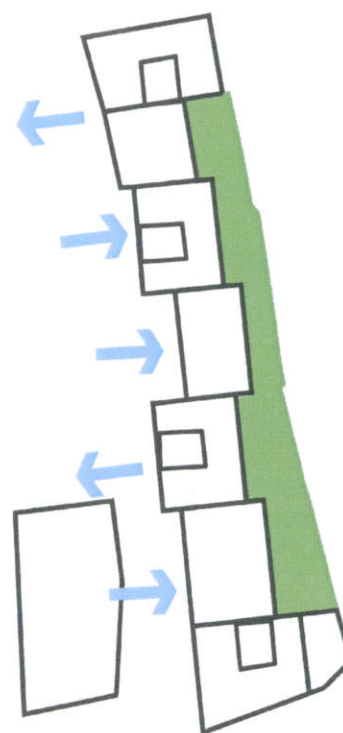
Current & Proposed Scheme Footprints



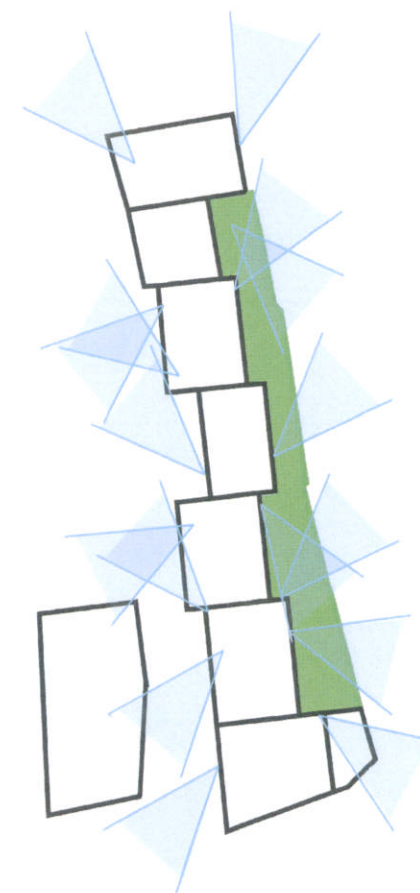
Current Scheme Single Aspect Flats



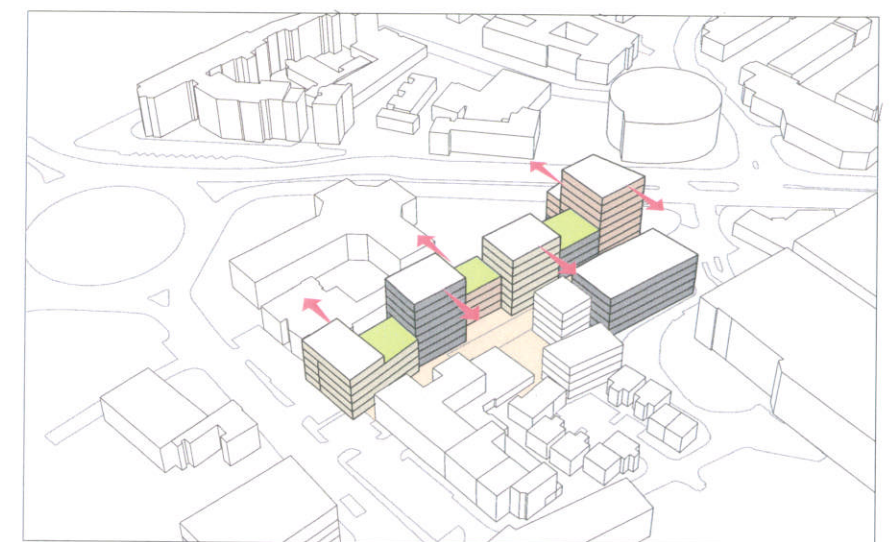
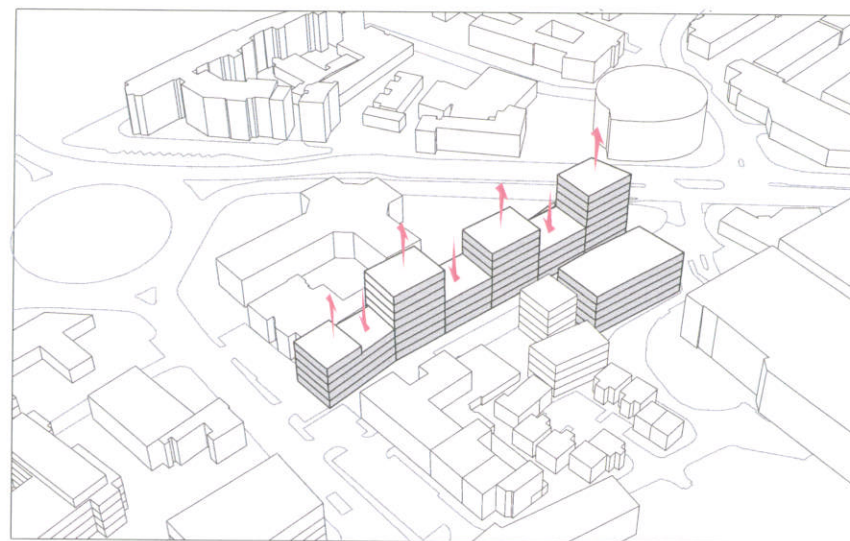
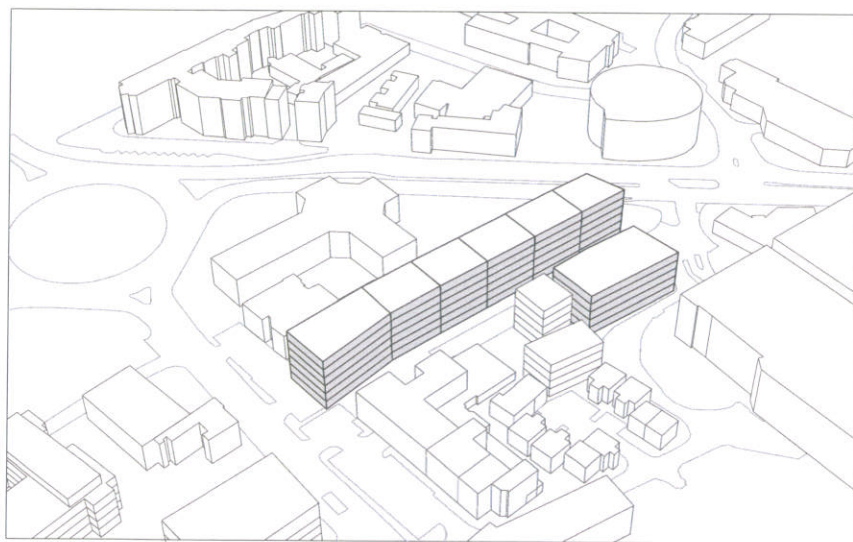
Proposed Dual Aspect Flats



Staggered Blocks/ 4 Cores



Oblique Views & Passive Surveillance



Architectural Strategy 2D & 3D

Site Concept

Taking into account the planning context and our direct response to the site, ABA have developed a scheme based on these three main concepts:

1 A Series of Individual Buildings: Through a staggered approach to the project massing, both in plan and in building height, a finer grain of development is achieved with diversity of scale. Each block is expressed as an individual building, ranging from four to eight storeys with its own entrance and core. This approach increases sun-light penetration into the site, offering more flats with 180 degree, oblique views rather than restricted views opposite. The approach creates a more interesting streetscape and much better natural surveillance of Severn Place from ground and upper floor windows. The roofs of lower blocks will offer opportunities for communal roof gardens and extra large private roof terraces.

2 A New Public Square: An opening up of Severn Place midway along its length into a new square, a suntrap for evening light, creates a local amenity and unique urban feature for the Newmarket area. The new square will provide a key point of connectivity to the pedestrian passage leading to Wellington Court and the Grafton Centre. A tree planting strategy for this square and improved public realm at the Sun Street and Nelson Close site entrances will create a new 'chain of green' linking the north and south extremes of the site.

3 Great Garden Flats: Staggered building plans creates opportunities for corner windows and balconies, allowing views to the north and south along with the primary orientation toward the west. Every flat will have generous private amenity space and access to community roof gardens. By providing 90% dual aspect apartments, dwellings will benefit from cross ventilation and daylight in both morning and evening

Heights

To achieve the above principles, our scheme proposes a maximum height of eight storeys on the Newmarket Road frontage, with the lowest four storey blocks B, D and F acting as 'spacers' between the taller ones. The scheme is in fact symmetrical around the central block fronting new Severn Square. We have also reduced the number of cores in the main north south Block to four. The scheme provides a slight reduction in units to 82, with 80 parking places within the main block.

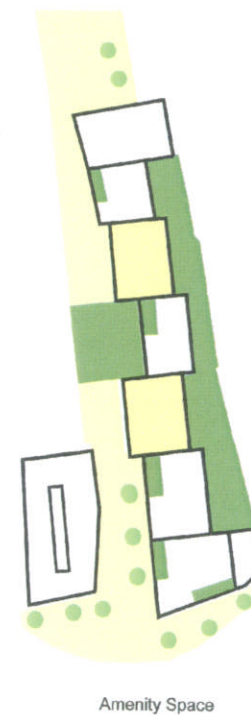
Layout and Arrangement

Each 'building block' is a combination of ground floor maisonettes, ground floor entrances onto Newmarket Road, Severn Place and Sun Street. Upper level flats are accessed from lift and stair cores.

As a result of the staggered massing strategy, flat layouts have been designed to take advantage of morning and afternoon light and fantastic corner orientation. With a maximum of six and minimum of two units per floor accessed from each lift core, access to units can be via a high quality exterior balconies finished in timber.

Amenity Space

The proposed scheme provides minimum 6sm private balcony space per unit. Additionally the first floor deck above the carpark provides amenity space. This first floor space along with the three roof terraces above building blocks B, D and F together provide a potential further 1260 sm of communal roof terrace. This space can also be partly separated off for direct access from private residents flats at the same level as the roof terrace.

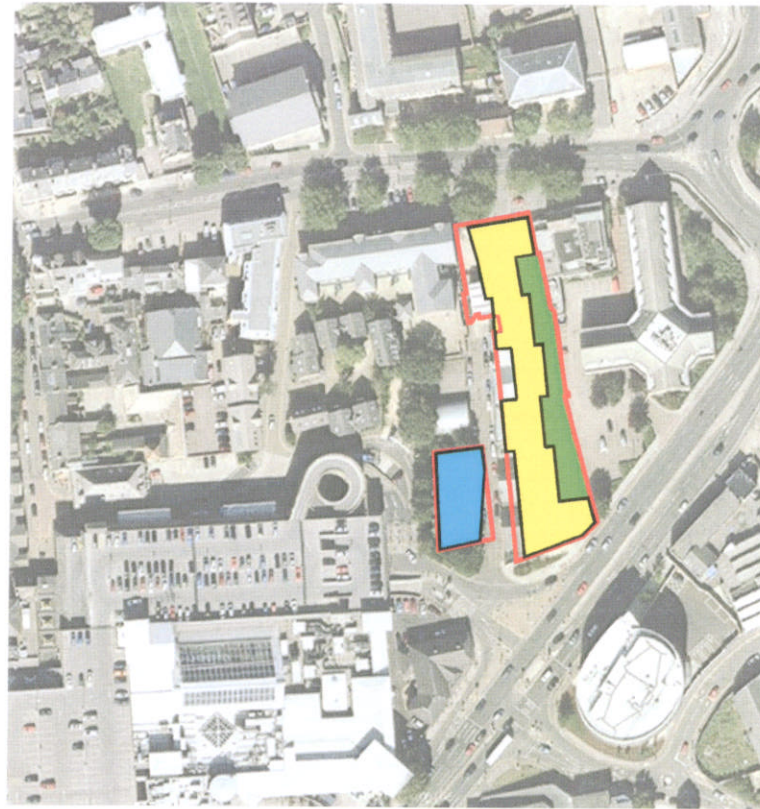


Student Accommodation - Academic Block G

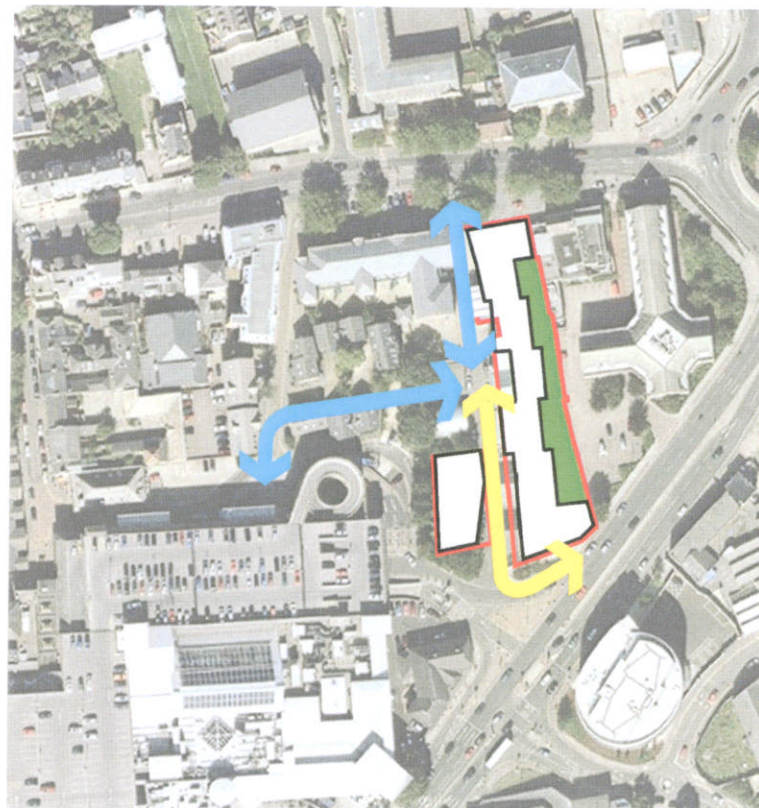
The student accommodation has been provided in a single standalone location on Nelson Close on the site of the existing semi-detached houses. This location means that the student block provides an effective screening of the Grafton Centre carpark, and cleanly separates the uses of private residences from more temporary and sometimes noisy student dwellings.

At five storeys the Academic Block provides 80 student rooms with three kitchens per floor. Conceived as an atrium building, the internal void can act as a thermal chimney enabling natural ventilation. We feel this building has the potential to act as a prototype for more sustainable models of student housing, offering flexibility of internal partitioning to adapt to private sale in time.

Communal kitchens are located strategically in the plan (one per six student rooms) with large sliding windows and Juliette balconies. In this way the kitchens can be opened to act as balconies in fine weather. The ground floor management offices and recreation room will create an active animated frontage to Nelson Place.



Residential Mix
 Student
 Private



Pedestrian/Vehicular Connectivity
 Pedestrian
 Vehicular



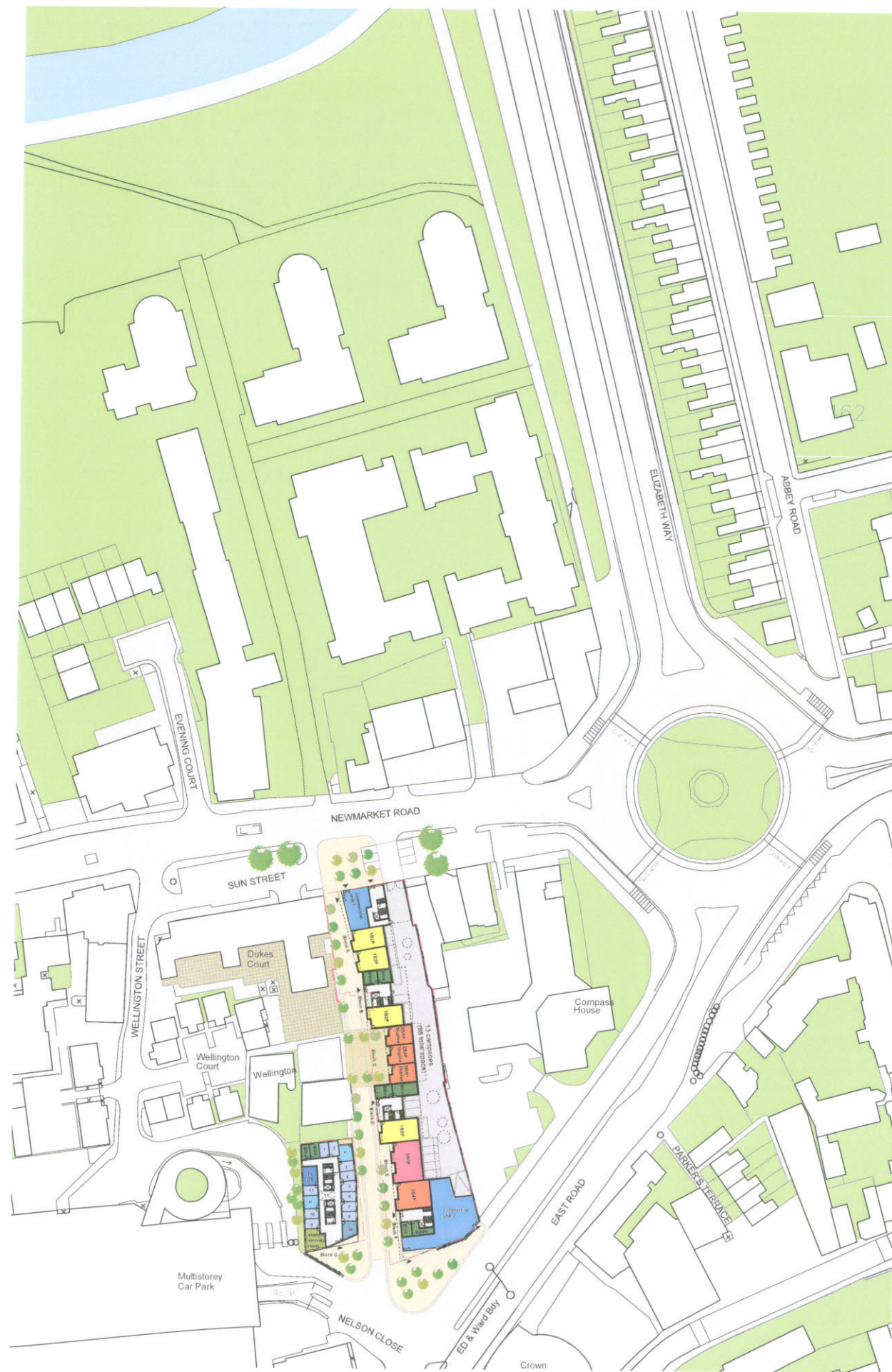
Massing & Building Heights
 8 Floors
 7 Floors
 5 Floors
 4 Floors



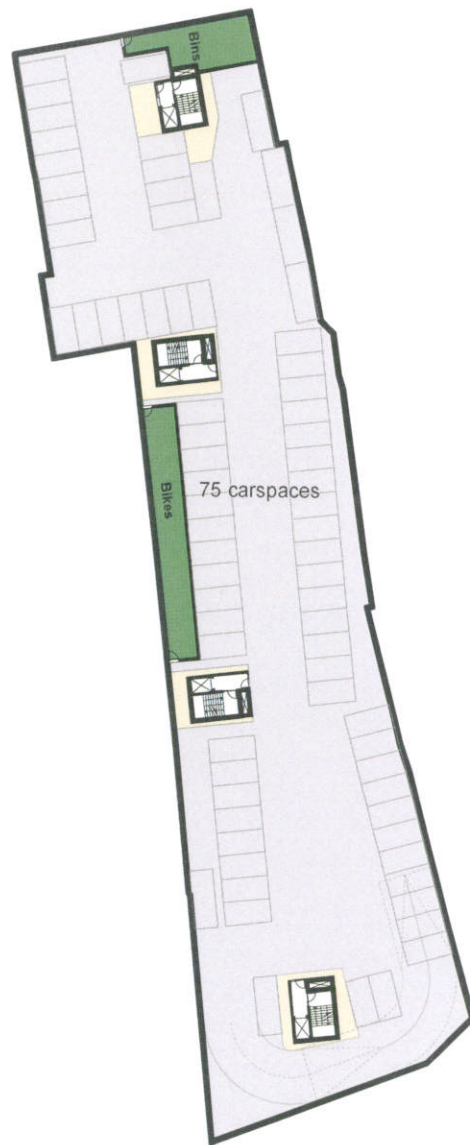
Figure Ground



Landscape & Amenity



Location Plan



Key:



ABA

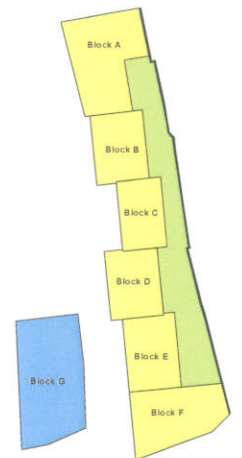
Basement Plan

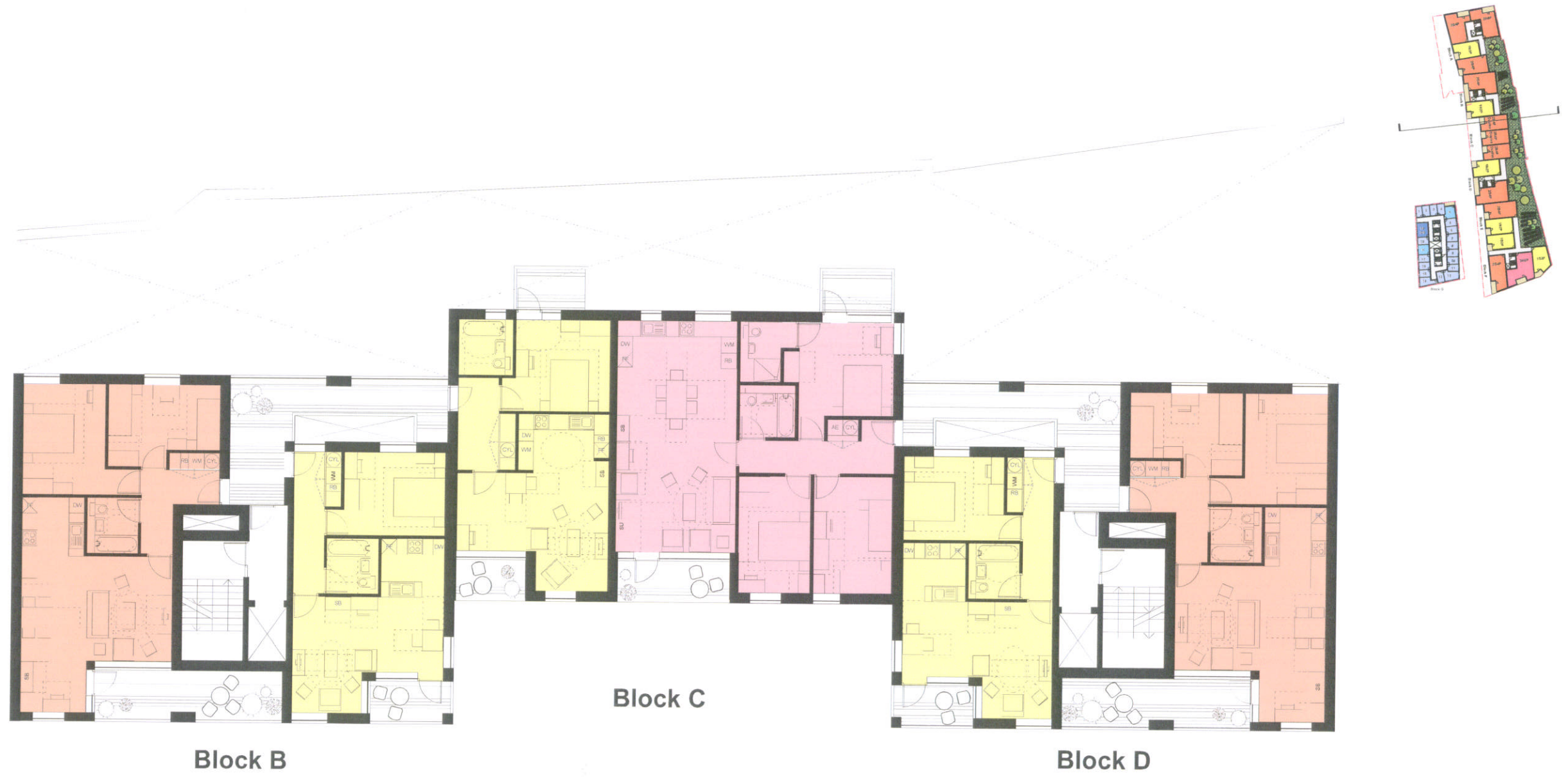


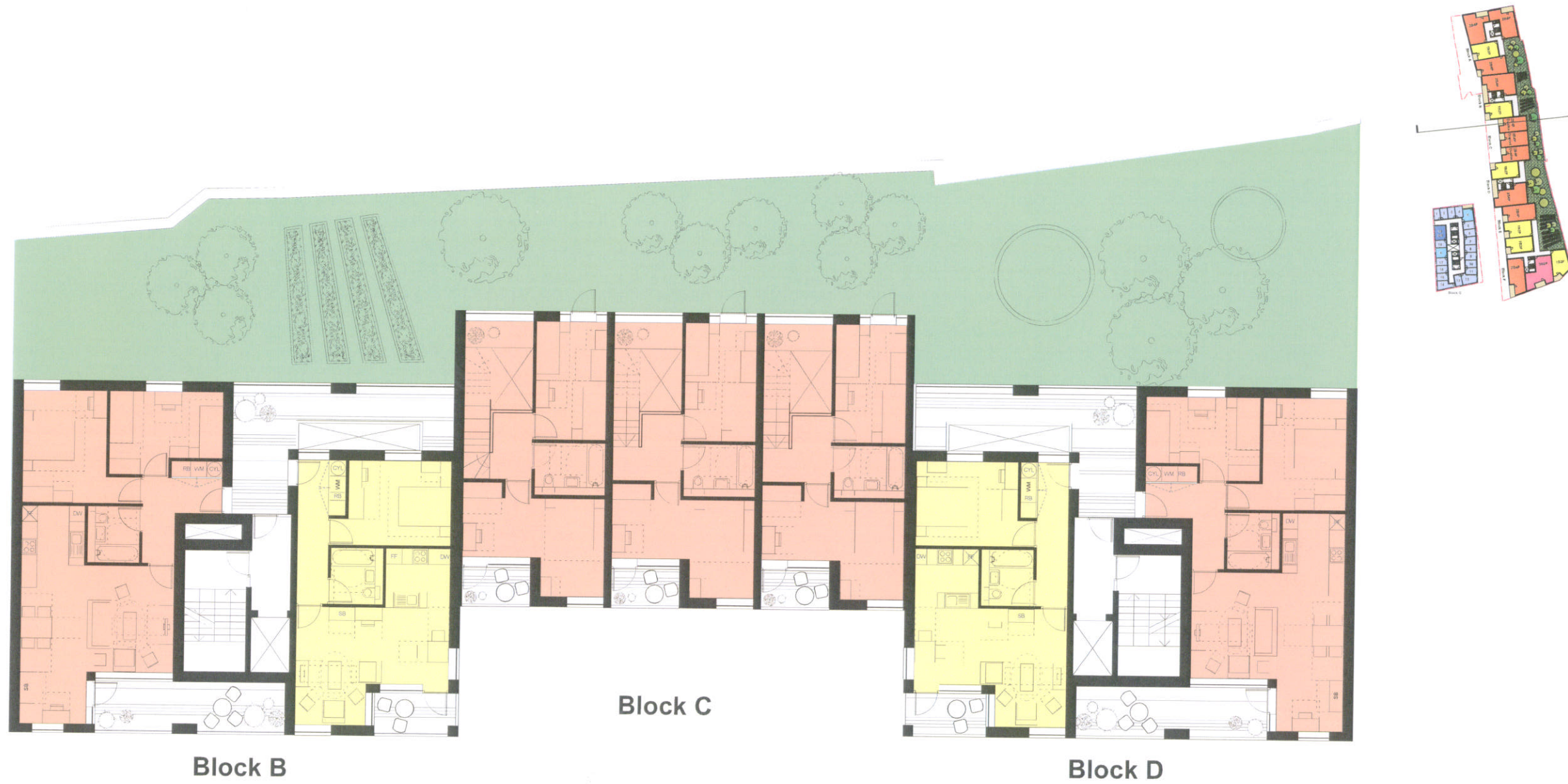
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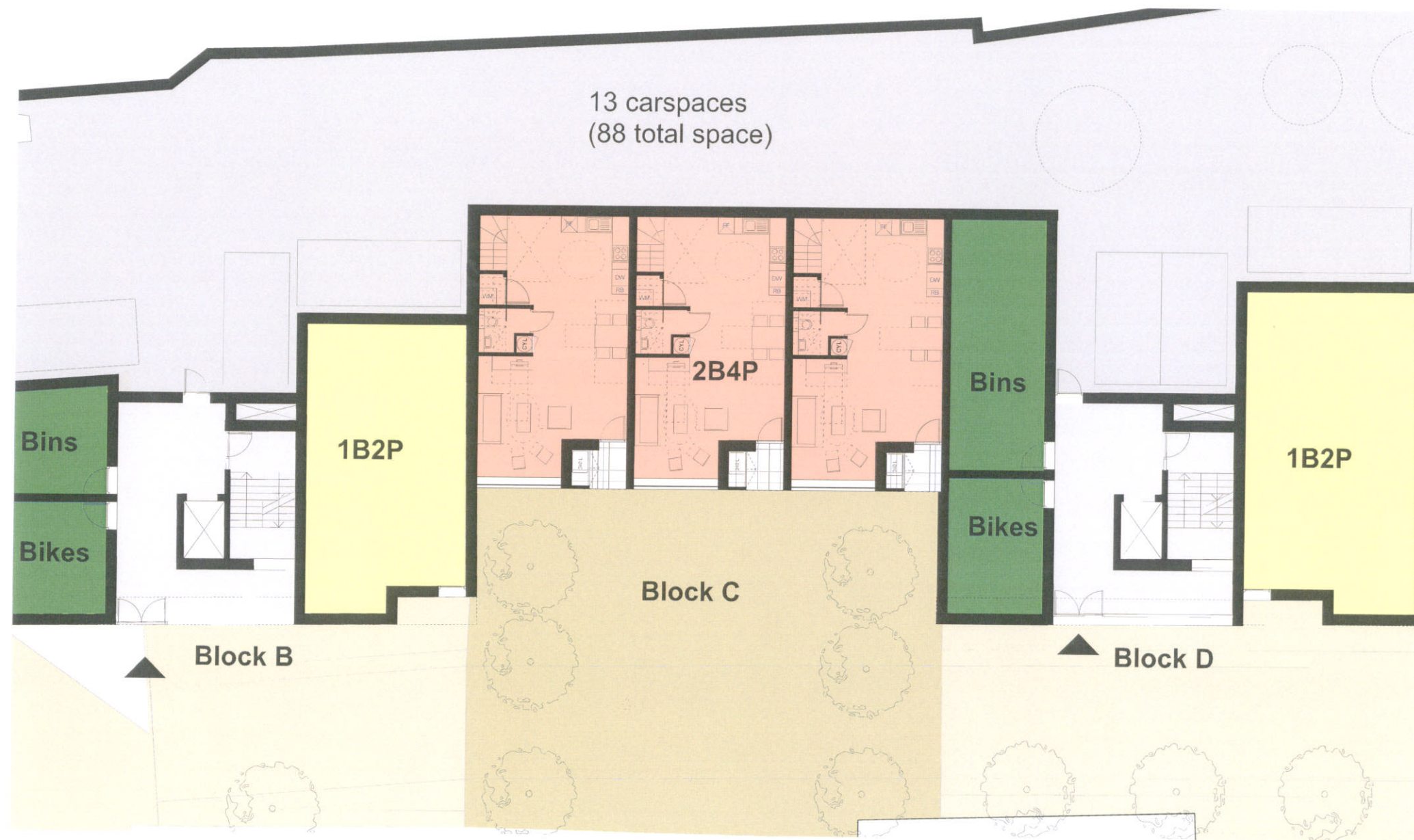


1st Floor Plan

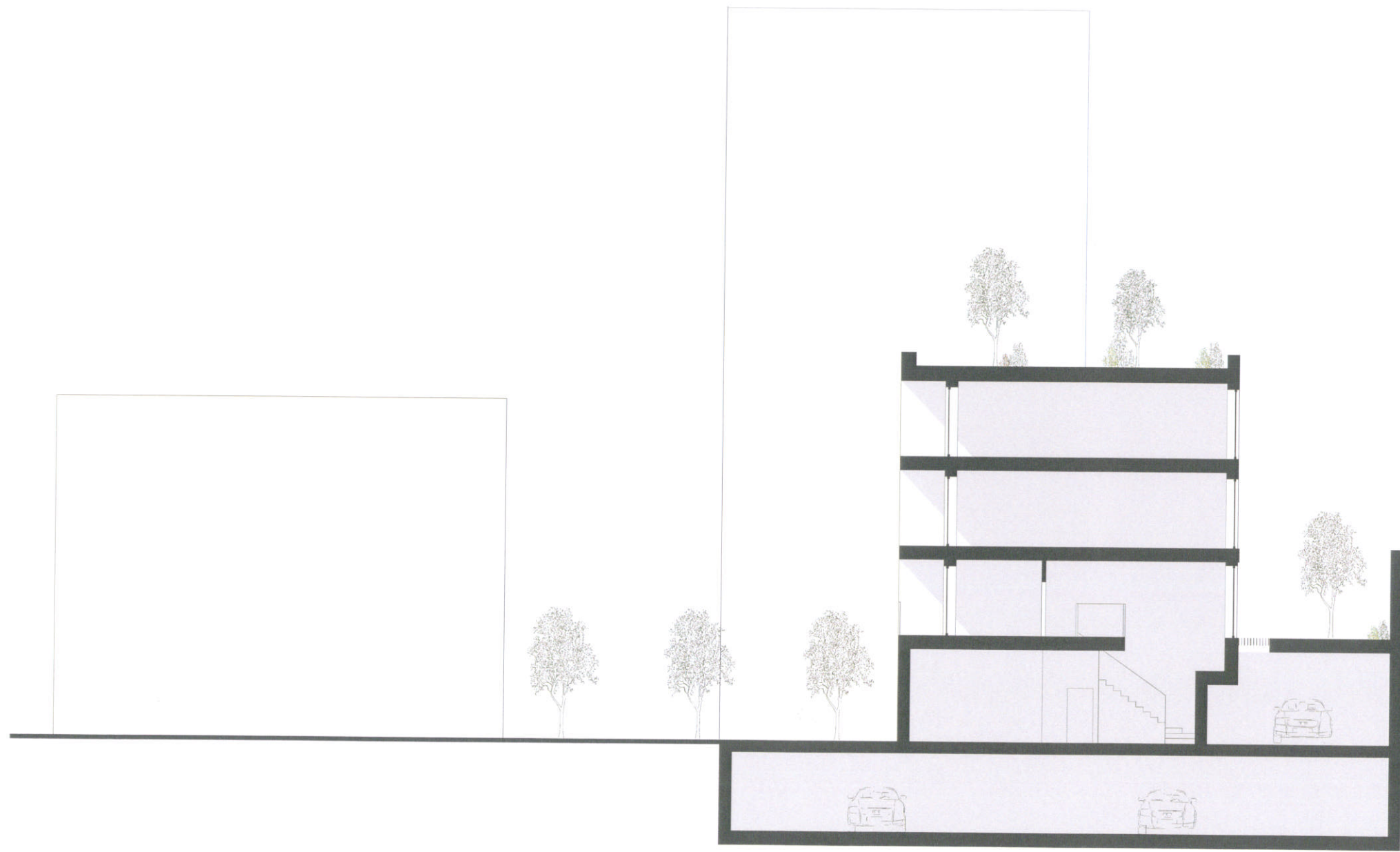








Typical layout plan 2B4P, Maisontte - Ground floor



ABA

Typical section 2B4P, Maisontte



Newmarket Road

Severn Place

East Road

Crown Court

ABA

Elevation



Aerial View

ABA



Street View

ABA

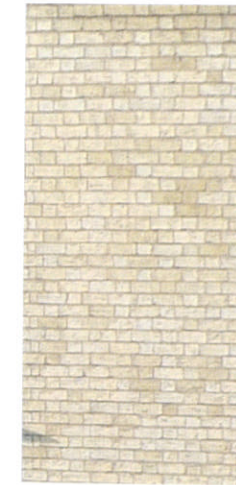
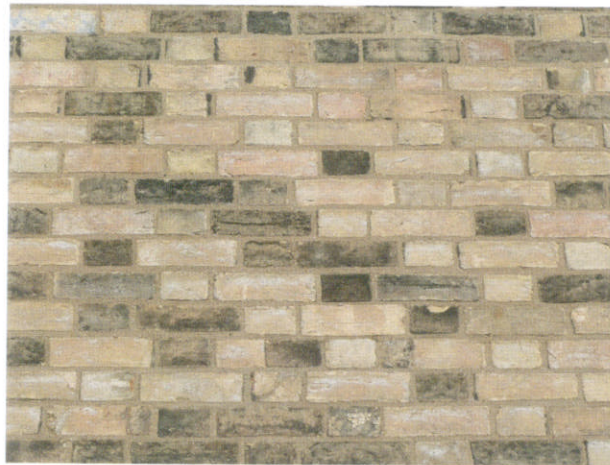


View from East road

ABA



We have been inspired by the subtle colour variation and village-like character of the terraced houses jostling together in nearby streets such as James Street, Christchurch Street, and Maids Causeway. By utilising brick as a primary material, but introducing subtle differences in colour shade and texture between blocks, the proposed scheme further reinforces the distinction between individual residential blocks.



View from East Street looking North



View of site from Nelson close

Material Strategy

ABA

Block	sqm per unit	UNEX	phase	storey	RESIDENTIAL	GIA (sqm)	GEA (sqm)	No. of units	% units	Hab rooms	Sub-total Hab rooms	GEA / GIA Ratio	UNEX	request No.	STUDENT ACCOMONDATION	GIA (sqm)	GEA (sqm)	No. of units	% units	GEA / GIA Ratio	UNEX	request No.	NON - RESIDENTIAL		
		number of the cores			number of the cores								GIA (sqm)		GIA (sqm)						GIA (sqm)		GEA (sqm)	units	
*																									
A		varies		varies: 4- 5	1	1468.33	1717.34																		
A.1 - 1B/2P	56	42.6	n.a					5		2	10														
A.2 - 2B/4P	78	70	n.a					12		3	36														
A.3 - 3B/6P	99	92.8	n.a					0		5	0														
A.4 - Duplex 2B/4P	78	70.6	n.a					0		3	0														
B				8	1	1584.53	1924.32																		
B.1 - 1B/2P	56	42.6	n.a					5		2	10														
B.2 - 2B/4P	78	69.6	n.a					10		3	30														
B.3 - 3B/6P	99	92.8	n.a					0		5	0														
B.4 - Duplex 2B/4P	78	70.6	n.a					0		3	0														
C				4	0	615.38	772.08																		
C.1 - 1B/2P	56	42.6	n.a					2		2	4														
C.2 - 2B/4P	78	69.6	n.a					0		3	0														
C.3 - 3B/6P	99	92.8	n.a					2		5	10														
C.4 - Duplex 2B/4P	78	70.6	n.a					3		3	9														
D				7	1	1415.16	1693.91																		
D.1 - 1B/2P	56	42.6	n.a					7		2	14														
D.2 - 2B/4P	78	69.6	n.a					6		3	18														
D.3 - 3B/6P	99	92.8	n.a					0		5	0														
D.4 - Duplex 2B/4P	78	70.6	n.a					0		3	0														
E				4	1	839.63	1007.62																		
E.1 - 1B/2P	56	42.6	n.a					6		2	12														
E.2 - 2B/4P	78	69.6	n.a					3		3	9														
E.3 - 3B/6P	99	92.8	n.a					1		5	5														
E.4 - Duplex 2B/4P	78	70.6	n.a					0		3	0														
F				8	1	2164.46	2496.88																		
F.1 - 1B/2P	56	42.6	n.a					4		2	8														
F.2 - 2B/4P	78	69.6	n.a					8		3	24														
F.3 - 3B/6P	99	92.8	n.a					7		5	35														
F.4 - Duplex 2B/4P	78	70.6	n.a					0		3	0														
Total No. of 1B/2P								29	36%	2	58		30	-1											
Total No. of 2B/4P								42	52%	3	126		44	-2											
Total No. of 3B/6P								10	12%	5	50		13	-3											
					5	8087.49	9612.15	81	100%	234	119%	87	-6												
G				5											2										
G.1 - student studio	Varies: 12.5/18.5/20	15	n.a															90	96%		98	-8			
G.2 - accssibe room	25	30	n.a															4	4%		4	0			
G.3 - student kitchen	Varies: 17/19	20	n.a															10	n.a		10	0			
G.4 - office space	19		n.a															1	n.a		1	0			
G.5 - amenity room	33.5		n.a															1	n.a		1	0			
TOTAL																2413.43	2632.23	106	100%	109%		-8			
Retail / leisure																									
Live / work units																									
parking area																									
office space																									
Bins & bikes																									
Amenity space																									
TOTAL																									
TOTAL GIA																									
TOTAL GEA + Amenity space																									
14335																									
16864																									

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UNEX unit area schedule:
1B(sqm): 46, 38.5, 45, 41.5, 44, 46, 39, 40.5
2B(sqm): 84, 63, 64, 80, 69, 68, 70, 56, 100, 76, 108, 102, 63
3B(sqm): 92, 100, 99, 93, 87, 86
Duplex: 84, 64