

PURPOSE OF THIS CONSULTATION

WELCOME

This consultation is presented on behalf of Churchill Retirement Living and invites you to view and provide feedback on the initial proposals for Former Police Station, 133 Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1DB. The consultation consists of a number of information boards including the following:

- The Purpose of the Consultation;
- Introduction to Churchill Retirement Living;
- Planning Policy;
- Housing Need;
- Benefits of Older People Housing;
- Location & site;
- Context;
- Constraints & opportunities;
- Design evolution;
- Indicative plans;
- Preliminary views;
- Next steps

We value your comments on the proposed development. The comments are considered following the consultation to help steer the proposals prior to a planning application being submitted to the Local Planning Authority. How Churchill Retirement Living have considered your comments will be detailed in a Statement of Community Engagement that will support any planning application.

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the construction of Retirement Living Accommodation on the site of Former Police Station, 133 Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1DB; comprising 72no. one and two-bed apartments with associated communal areas, parking and landscaping.

The site is a longstanding regeneration opportunity for the Authority and has an extensive planning history detailing proposals for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site accordingly. Despite this, the site has been vacant for a prolonged period and the historic permissions have not been forthcoming for over a decade. The proposed scheme by contrast is deliverable and would be built out quickly should planning permission be granted.

VISION

Churchill Retirement Living's vision for the site is to deliver a development that meets our customers' needs and the local need for retirement apartments whilst also contributing to the character of Gravesend and making a positive contribution locally in terms of socio, economic and environmental benefits.

Our aim is to create a high quality development that embraces sustainable design, enhances the setting of the area and maintains the local vernacular.



INTRODUCTION TO CHURCHILL RETIREMENT LIVING

WHO ARE CHURCHILL RETIREMENT LIVING LTD?

Churchill Retirement Living (CRL) is a privately-owned British Company, highly trusted and respected within the housing industry. CRL prides itself on building beautiful purpose-built one and two bedroom retirement apartments in desirable locations across the UK, for those looking for an active independent, safe and secure lifestyle. Our developments can be found in 23 counties throughout the UK.

Throughout our history we have undertaken over 160 developments and sold over 5,000 units. Through our group company, Millstream Management Services Limited, we retain the operation, management, care and responsibility of every apartment of our completed developments.

Our commitment to developing excellence and quality on every occasion rests in our continuing to provide the lifetime needs and communal services requirements of each of our 10,000+ resident home owners.

Our developments not only provide well documented benefits to our customers but also to the wider community. Our customers tend to shop locally providing much needed 'daily shoppers' for local shops and businesses.

"People living in specialist retirement homes typically experience reduced health risks, contributing to fiscal savings to the NHS and social care services of c. £3,500 per person per year." Healthier and Happier – Homes for later Living, September 2019.

Typically, our customers downsize from a 3 or 4 bedroom family home. Therefore, for each retirement apartment occupied, a family home is released for sale into the wider housing market.

CRL is an award winning business having recently won a number of prestigious industry and wider business awards including;

- The WhatHouse Awards. The only retirement housebuilder ever to have been awarded 'Housebuilder of the Year' and in 2019 were again named 'Best Medium Housebuilder'.
- The HBF Customer Satisfaction Survey. Churchill retain the top '5 star' status having been recommended by more than 90% of our customers.
- The Sunday Times 100 Best Companies to Work For. In 2019 Churchill achieved 2nd place in this prestigious business award and in 2020 we achieved 3rd place.

Summarised below are some of CRL's key statistics;

- 7,545 apartments under management.
- Owned and contracted land bank of 3,009 plots.
- Five regional offices around the country.

All land purchases and developments are funded from existing company resources and revolving credit facilities, and no external valuations or other external approvals are required for land acquisitions.

CRL has a full complement of in-house professionally qualified Architects, Town Planners, Surveyors and Engineers employed in the seamless delivery of projects through every stage of the process from site identification to construction completion and home sales. The business benefits from a wholly owned town planning consultancy, Planning Issues, who advise on planning related and public consultation matters.



HOUSING NEED

A NATIONAL NEED

It has been widely acknowledged that the UK has a housing crisis. Not enough homes are being built to meet the needs of the population.

People are living longer lives and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing. The 2014-based Subnational Population Projections identifies that England's population will grow by 4,427,000 individuals aged 60 and over between 2014 and 2030, this equates to an increase of 35.56%.

National Planning Policy includes Planning Practice Guidance on 'Housing for older and disabled people' to assist Councils in preparing local planning policies for the delivery of housing to meets the needs of its older residents. This sets out that providing housing for older people is 'critical'.

Offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems.

A LOCAL NEED

The age profile of the population can be drawn from the 2018 population projections from the Office for National Statistics. This advises that Gravesham Council area had 18,450 persons aged 65 and over in 2018, accounting for 17% of the total population. This demographic is however projected to increase by 6,354 individuals, or 34%, to 24,804 persons by 2043. The population aged 65 and over is expected to increase to account for 22% of the total population of the Borough by 2043.

Notably however the number of individuals aged 80 and over, who are generally more likely to be frail and in need of long-term assistance, is expected to increase more sharply over the same period. In 2018 there were 5,237 persons aged 80 and over. The number of people in this age range is forecasted to increase by 2,903 individuals, or 55%, to 8,140 persons between 2018 and 2043.

AREA	AGE GROUP	2018	2043
Gravesham	65-69	4,943	5,738
Gravesham	70-74	4,815	5,767
Gravesham	75-79	3,455	5,159
Gravesham	80-84	2,754	4,110
Gravesham	85-89	1,620	2,471
Gravesham	90+	863	1,559
Gravesham	All ages	106,385	111,743



BENEFITS

Older peoples housing produces a large number of significant Economic, Social and Environmental benefits.

ECONOMIC

Retirement housing gives rise to many economic benefits:

- Each person living in a home for later living enjoys a reduced risk of health challenges, contributing fiscal savings to the NHS and social care services of approximately **£3,500 per year** (Homes for Later Living September 2019).
- With circa 72 apartments, at a ratio of 1.3 people per unit, there will be around 94 occupants. At a saving of £3,500 each per year, this equates to a saving of £320,000 per year in NHS and social care costs. In comparison to mainstream housing, this is a significant economic benefit.
- A recent report entitled “Silver Saviours for the High Street” (February 2021) found that retirement properties create more local economic value and more local jobs than any other type of residential development. For an average 45 unit retirement scheme, the residents **generate £550,000 of spending a year, £347,000 of which is spent on the high street**, directly contributing to keeping local shops open.
- An average retirement scheme will support the following new jobs:
 - * 85 construction jobs
 - * 1 permanent job in repairs and renovations
 - * 2.3 permanent jobs in management and care
 - * 3.2 permanent jobs on the local high street (residents are basket shoppers and will do their shopping locally)

SOCIAL

Retirement housing gives rise to many social benefits:

- Churchill Lodges offer significant opportunities to enable residents to be as independent as possible in a safe and warm environment.
- Retirement housing helps to reduce anxieties and worries experienced by many older people living in housing which does not best suit their needs by providing safety, security and reducing management and maintenance concerns.
- The Housing for Later Living Report (2019) shows that on a selection of wellbeing criteria such as happiness and life satisfaction, an average person aged 80 feels as good as someone 10 years younger after moving from mainstream housing into housing specifically designed for later living.

ENVIRONMENTAL

The proposal provides a number of key environmental benefits by:

- Making more efficient use of land thereby reducing the need to use limited land resources for housing.
- Providing housing in close proximity to services and shops which can be easily accessed on foot thereby reducing the need for travel by means which consume energy and create emissions.
- Providing shared facilities for a large number of residents in a single building which makes more efficient use of material and energy resources.
- The proposal includes renewable technology through the use of solar panels to assist in the reduction of CO2 emissions.
- All areas of the building will be lit using low energy lighting and where applicable utilise daylight and movement sensor controls.



Our schemes free up family housing by older people looking to downsize - a typical 41 unit retirement development generates approx 92 moves in the housing chain.



A development that maximises the use of previously developed land reducing pressure on Greenfield sites for development.



Our developments bring health and social care savings - Each person living in a Home for Later Life saves the NHS & Social Services approximately £3500 per year.



Economic and social benefits of older people using local shops, services and facilities.
Our residents are basket shoppers and primarily tend to shop locally - supporting local businesses and communities.



Due to its sustainable location, retirement living housing reduces the need to travel by car.
Residents often relinquish the use of their car and instead shop locally on foot or by public transport.



A scheme that allows for independent living whilst at the same time reducing security worries for older people and providing companionship.
This helps to reduce isolation and loneliness.

POLICY

Planning Applications are required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise.

Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

National Planning Policy

The revised NPPF was updated on 20th July 2021 and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

The Government's policy, as set out in the NPPF, is to boost significantly, the supply of housing.

Paragraph 60 reads:

“To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, **that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed** and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.”

In June 2019 the PPG was updated to include a section on Housing for Older and Disabled People, recognising its importance. Paragraph 001 states:

“**The need to provide housing for older people is critical.** People are living longer lives and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing. In mid-2016 there were 1.6 million people aged 85 and over; **by mid-2041 this is projected to double to 3.2 million.** Offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems. Therefore, an understanding of how the ageing population affects housing needs is something to be considered from the early stages of plan-making through to decision-taking” (emphasis added).

Paragraph 003 recognises that “the health and lifestyles of older people will differ greatly, as will their housing needs, which can range from accessible and adaptable general needs housing to specialist housing with high levels of care and support.” Thus a range of provision needs to be planned for.

Local Development Plan

The Development Plan comprises of the Gravesham Core Strategy (2014).

GRAVESHAM CORE STRATEGY (2014)

The Gravesham Core Strategy forms part of the statutory development plan for Gravesham Council. The relevant policies in relation to the redevelopment of the site for older persons' housing are listed below:

- CS01: Sustainable Development
- CS02: Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS05: Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area
- CS11: Transport
- CS14: Housing Type & Density
- CS15: Housing Density
- CS16 Affordable Housing
- CS18: Climate Change
- CS19: Development & Design Principles
- CS20: Heritage & The Historic Environment

The Redevelopment Principle

The site is located just outside the Gravesend town centre boundary and comprises the site of the former police offices. These functions have been reallocated to the other sites in the police estate and the land has been cleared save for the high, brick perimeter walls since 2016. The land and has a negative visual impact on the setting of the Conservation Area and the adjacent Listed Buildings.

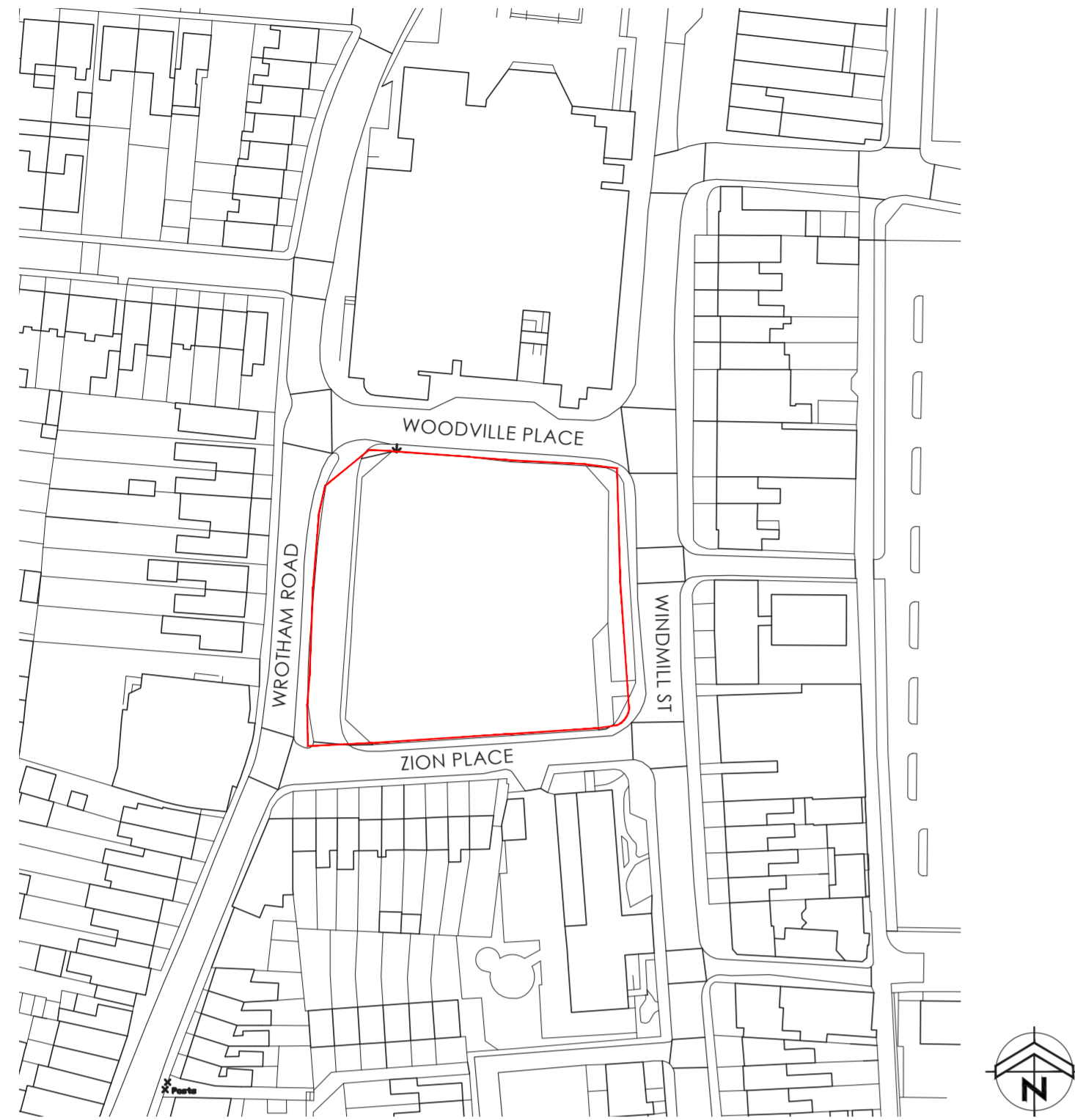
The site is specifically referenced in the supporting text to Policy CS05: Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area. The site is a longstanding regeneration opportunity for the Authority and has an extensive planning history detailing proposals for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site accordingly.

Despite the above, the site has been vacant for a prolonged period and the historic permissions have not been forthcoming for over a decade. This is because the revenue generated by the scheme is not sufficient to off-set the high build costs from features like the underground car park.

The proposal is far more deliverable than the historic planning permission and would be built out quickly should planning permission be granted. It will make efficient use of previously developed land in a sustainable location close to the town centre. It will provide much needed 1 and 2 bed retirement living apartments and help free up family housing elsewhere within the Borough. The principle of residential development on the site is considered acceptable.

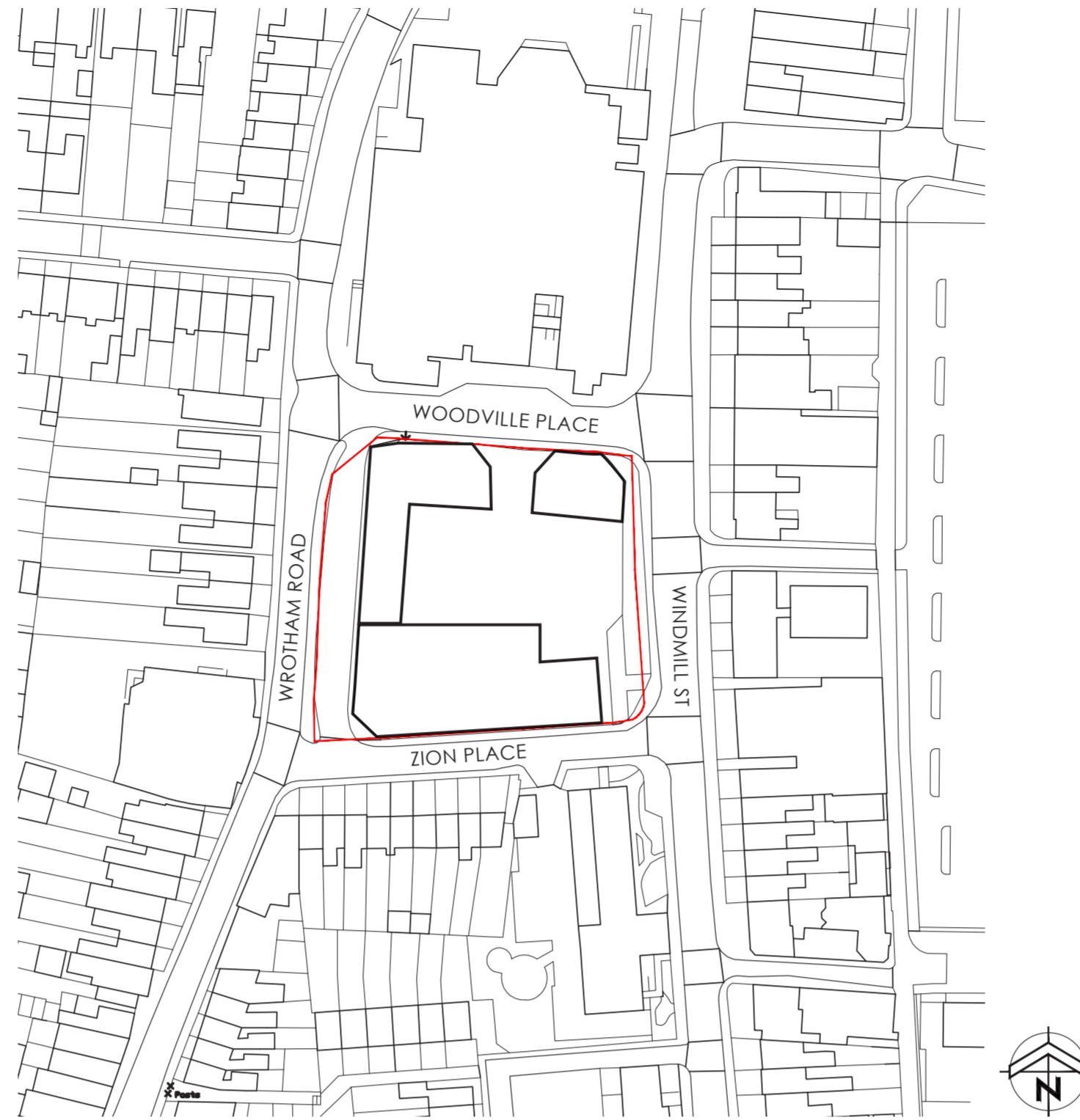
LOCATION MAP

CURRENT VACANT SITE 2016-2022



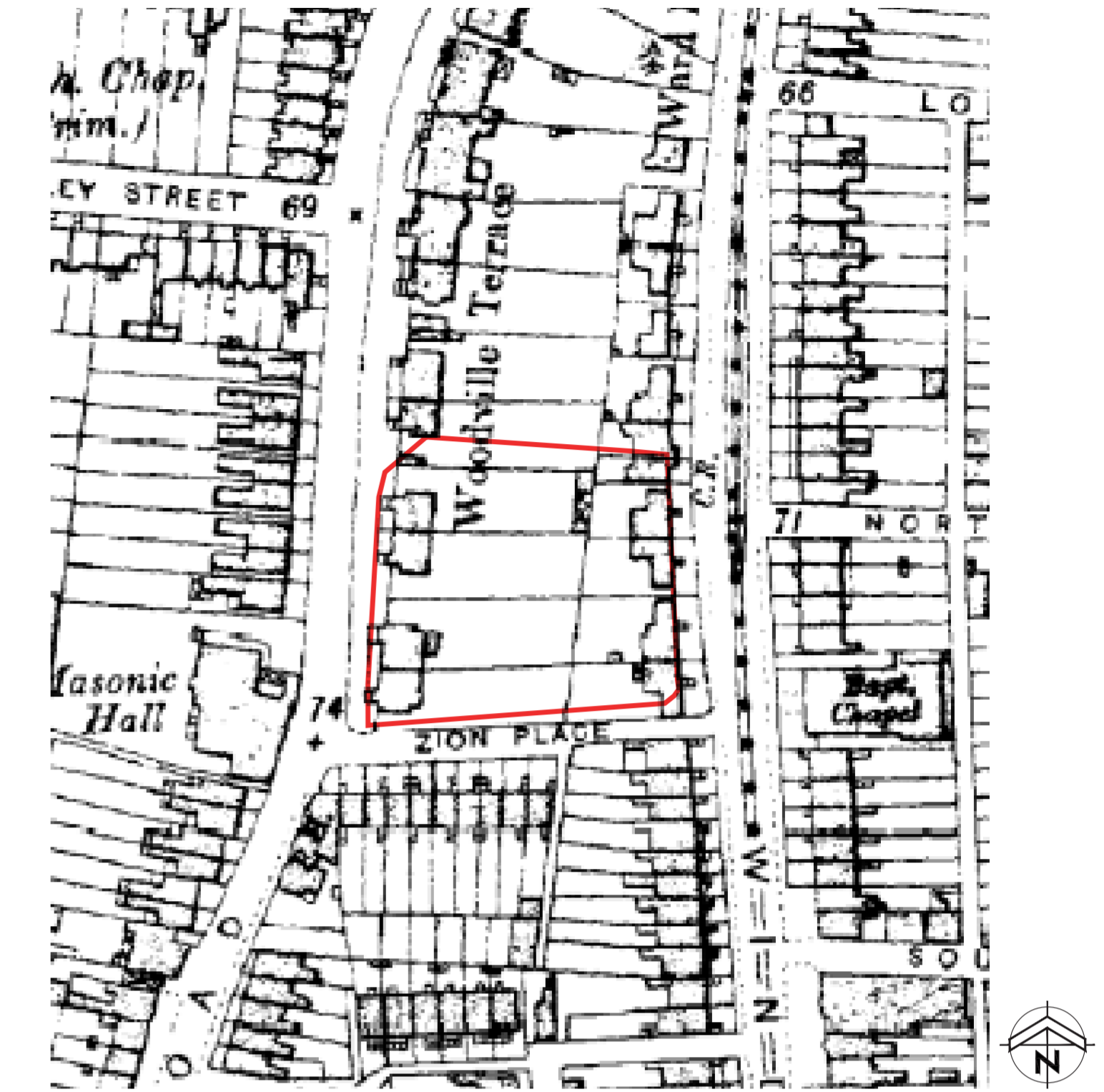
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GRAVESEND POLICE STATION 1975-2016



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HISTORIC MAP 1919-1943



Following demolition of the Police Station, except for the brick boundary wall, the site has been cleared since 2016. While there have been numerous planning applications made for a proposed development on the site in the last 12 years, no development has come forward. There is an application pending planning approval since 2016, which we understand was given a resolution to grant planning permission in 2018 subject to the s106 agreement being agreed. This is still pending, presumably because the permission is unviable.



The Gravesend Police station was opened in 1975 and is one of the three buildings that comprised the The Civic Character Area along with Cygnet House and the Civic Centre - erected in 1965 as the divisional headquarters of Kent County Council. The three buildings are each surrounded by hard-standing and car parks and were expressive of a particular architectural period in the mid-20th Century with a Brutalist idiom and extensive use of reinforced concrete. Cygnet House underwent refurbishment and conversion to residential use in 2014 with the Police station being demolished in 2016.

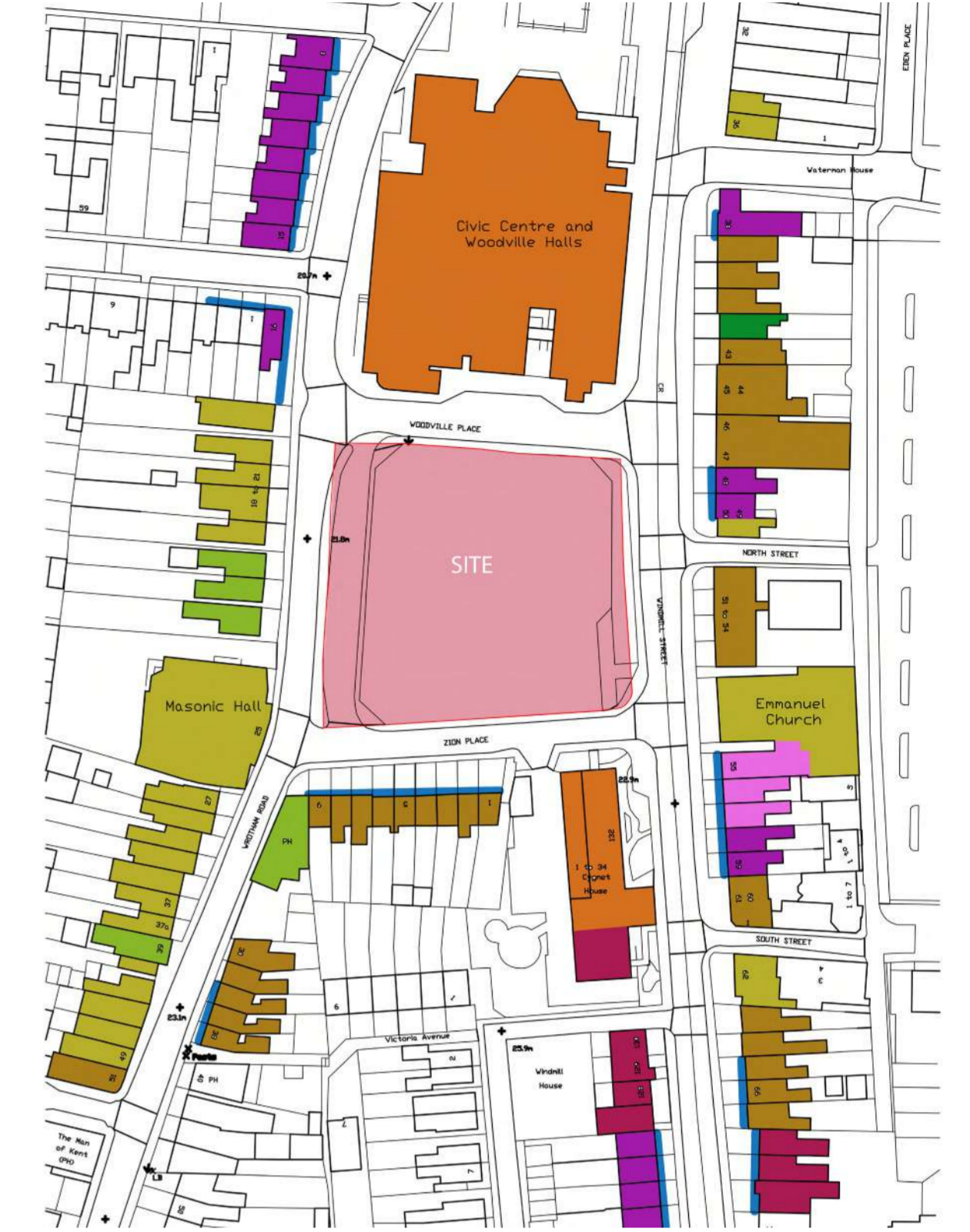
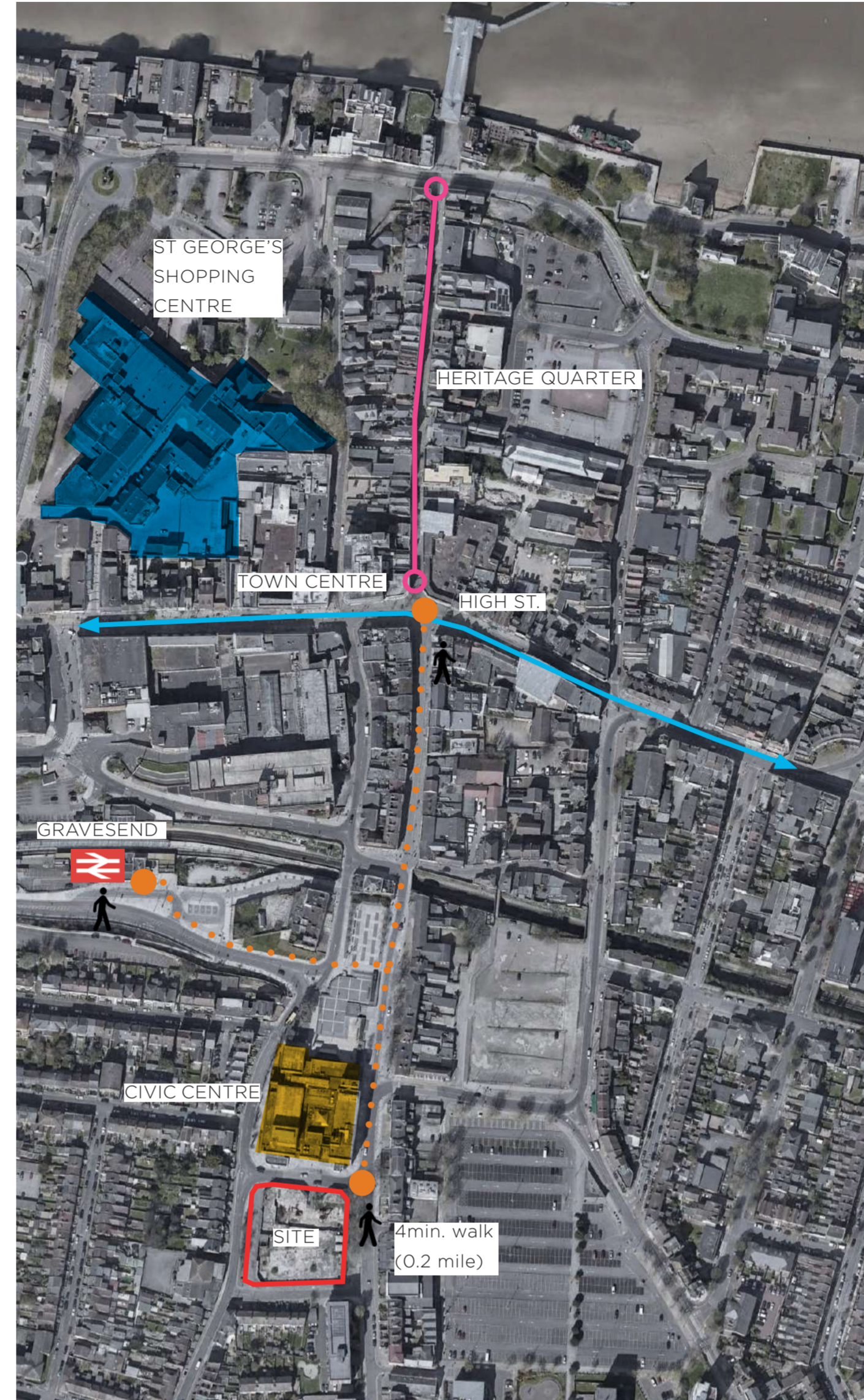


A group of four early 19th C. terraces fronting Windmill Street and another four fronting Wrotham Road once occupied the site until a large-scale clearance of houses in the mid-20th century commenced to provide a site for the Civic Centre, Woodville Halls, Cygnet House and the Gravesend Police Station. During the 19th C. Windmill St developed as one of the principal arterial routes into Gravesend and to the river from the old London to Rochester Road. The linear route connected directly to the High Street and became a principal thoroughfare between the Town Pier and Windmill Hill.

PHOTOGRAPHS WITHIN SITE BOUNDARY - 2021



CONTEXT



2 STOREY	3.5 STOREY	5 STOREY
2.5 STOREY	4 STOREY	UP TO 6 STOREY
3 STOREY	4.5 STOREY	LOWER GROUND FLOOR (HAI F. STOREY BASEMENT F. FV1)

The site at 133 Windmill St is located in a largely residential setting, with the exception of the Civic Centre situated directly north, and is located within the Upper Windmill Street Conservation area. The town centre of Gravesend is located a short 4 minute walk north from the site and contains a host of amenities including a shopping centre, banks, libraries, supermarkets, chemists and a mainline train station with direct connections to London.

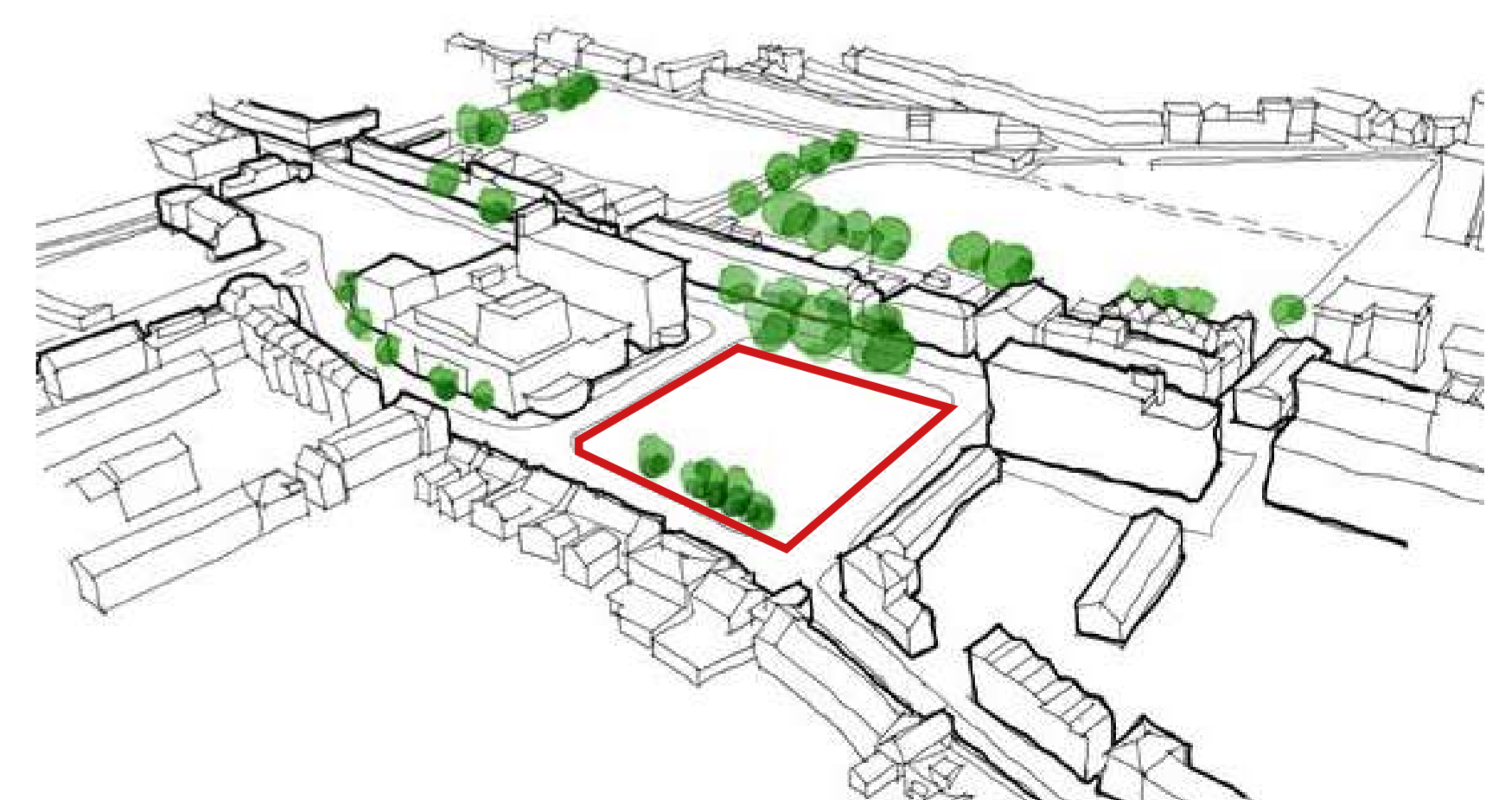
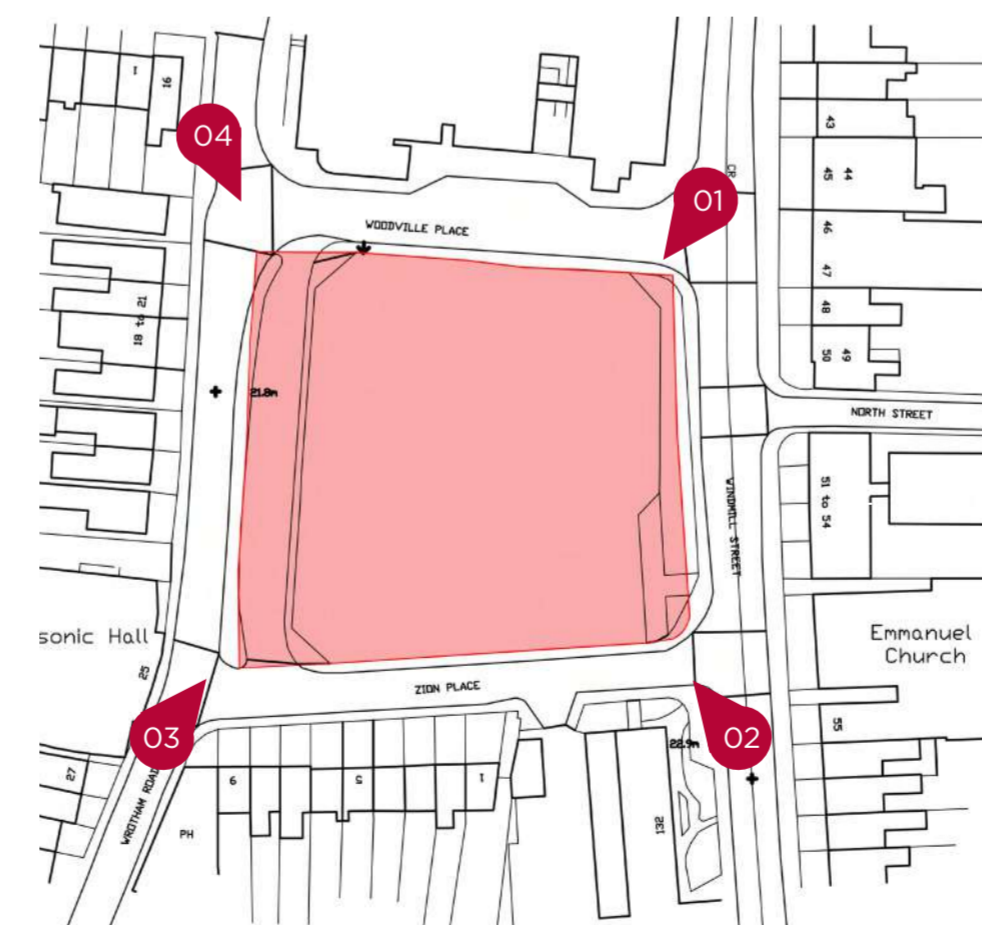
A range of building types and scales can be found within the immediate context and surrounding area.

Buildings to the north of the site are generally taller ranging up to five and six storeys. There is however a six storey residential building situated immediately south of the site.

Buildings along the east/west axis are predominantly residential and between two and three storeys in height. Zion Place to the south is mainly comprised of residential houses two and a half storeys in height with raised ground floor levels.

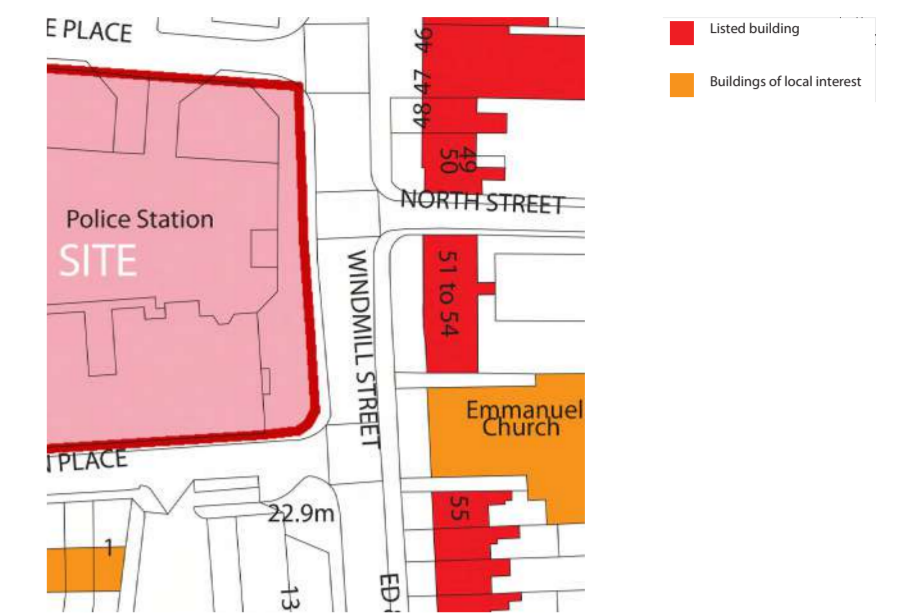
The five storey office block, Civic Centre and Woodville Hall Theatre to the north of the site share the same Brutalist aesthetic as the former police station and are of a similar massing and height of up to 6 storeys.

With civic use to the north and residential use to the south, the site highlights the transition between residential and mixed use built form. Wrotham Road and Windmill Street terraced properties are a mix of housing, offices and commercial properties ranging between two and three storeys in height.

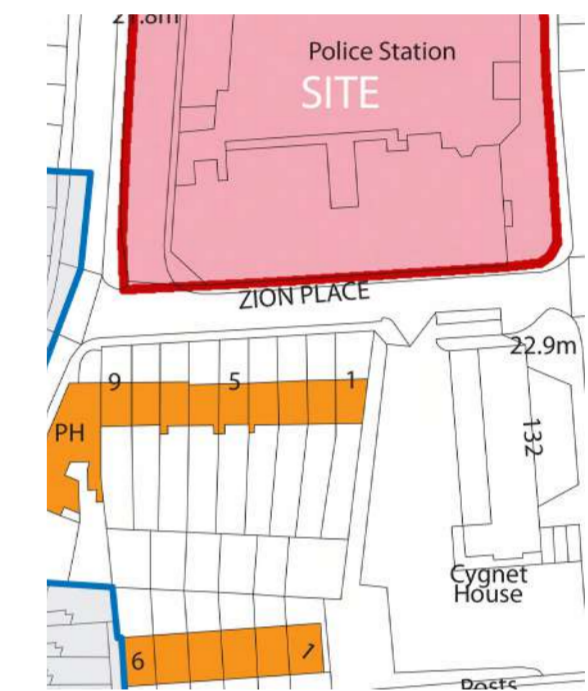


SITE PHOTOS

Windmill Street Frontage



Zion Place Frontage



Wrotham Road Frontage



Woodville Place Frontage



CONSTRAINTS



- Outlook from surrounding buildings
- Principal Views towards the site
- 🔊 Noise / traffic pollution
- 🌳 Significant groups of trees
- Undesirable outlook from site

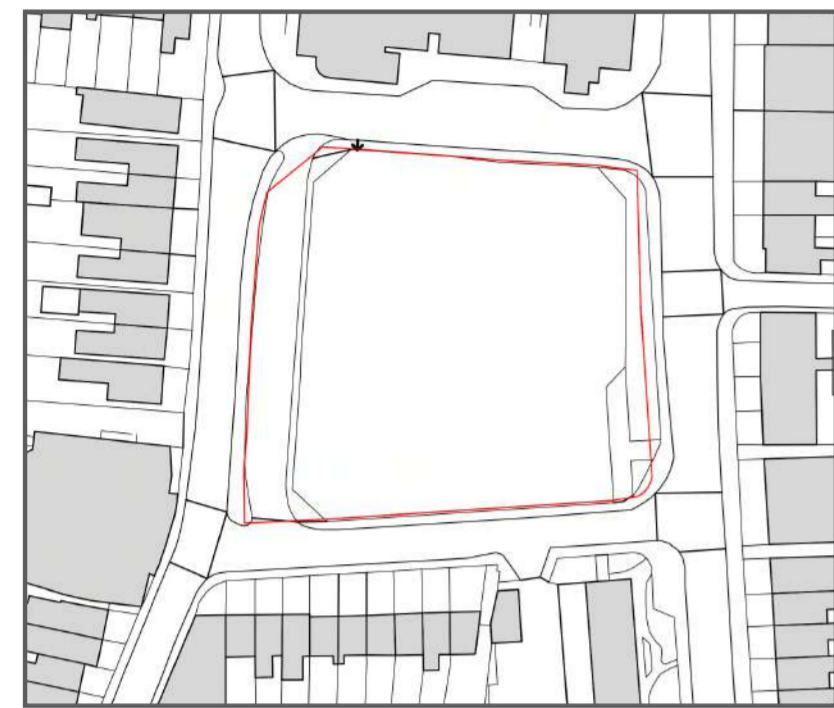
OPPORTUNITIES



- Introduction of positive visual green space to heavily urbanised area
- ▲
▼
▶
◀
 Principle approach to site via foot from town centre
- ▲
▼
 Principle approaches to site via car
- ▶
 Access to site
- ▲
▼
 Continuation of tree lined frontage to perimeter of site - Street enclosure
- Parking concealed behind perimeter landscape buffer
- Building line maintained
- ▶
 Active frontages provided to all elevations
- ▶
 Increased visual permeability into site following removal of 4.5m high boundary wall.
- *
 Removal of unsightly layby parking (negative open space following demolition of police station)
- ▶
 Heritage-lead development - new relationships formed with surrounding heritage assets

DESIGN EVOLUTION

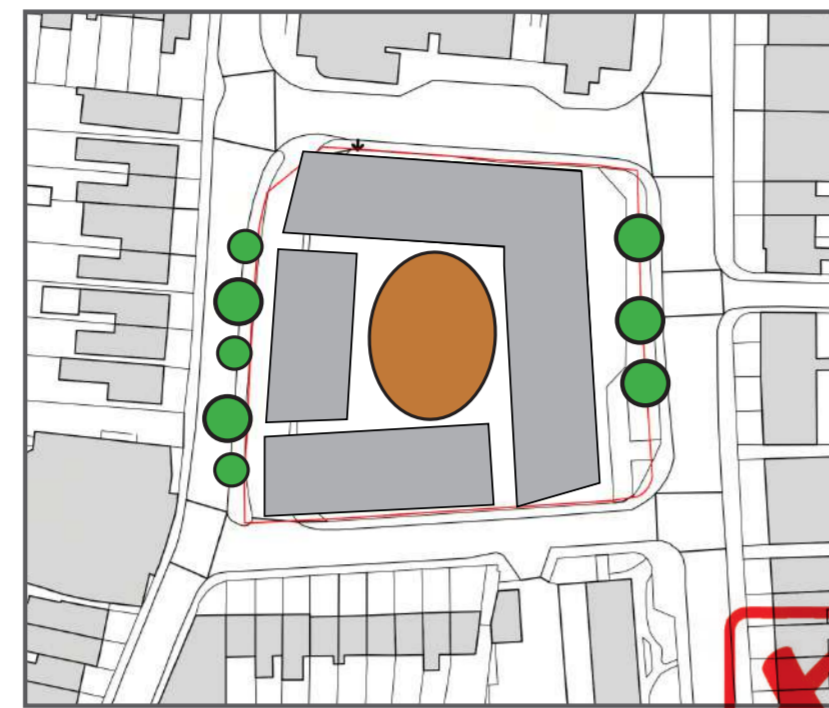
BUILDING DISPOSITION



Existing.



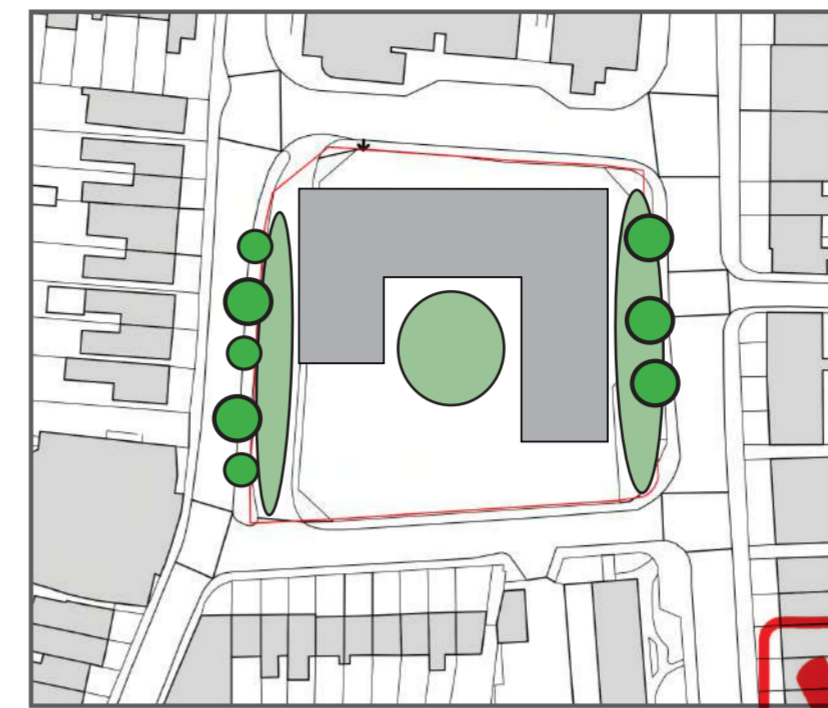
Courtyard arrangement creates low-quality amenity space with little opportunity for "greening". Parking provision fulfilled via a basement level which could be considered to be prohibitive to the viability of development.



Extant permission



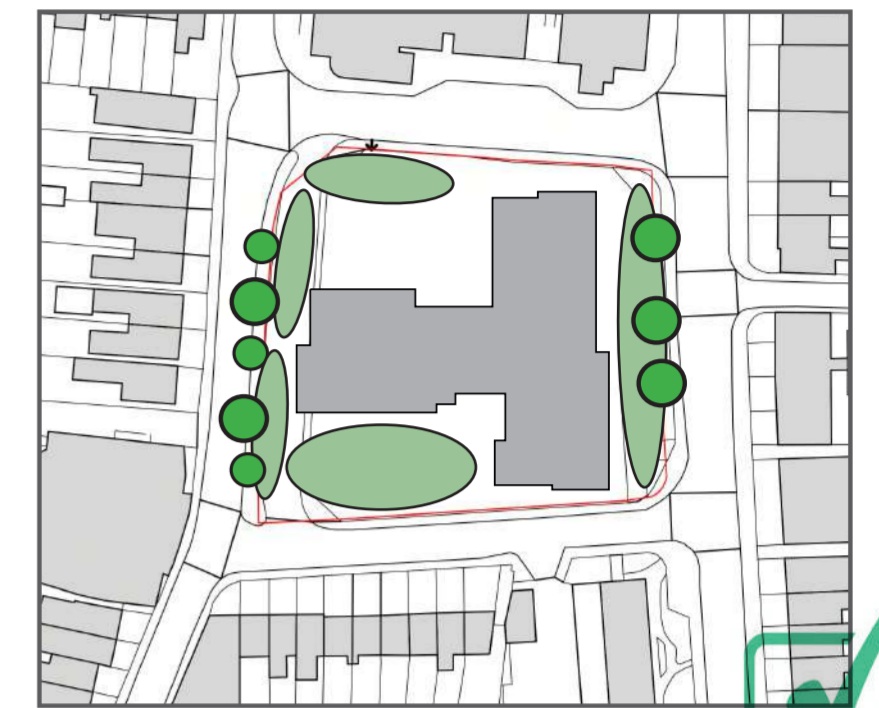
No separation and little privacy between parking and residents amenity space.



'U' Shaped block.



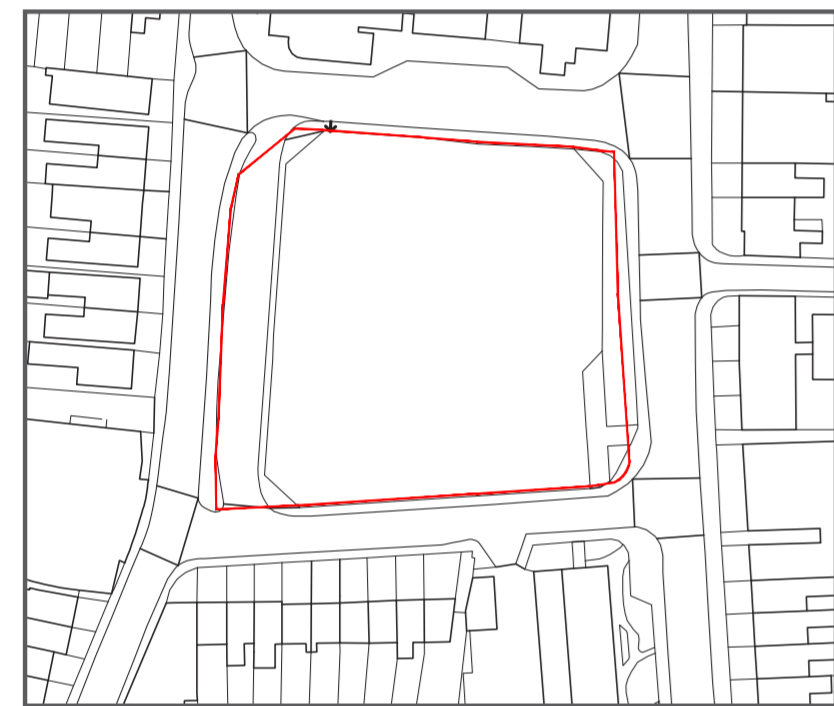
Good separation to boundary with primary elevation positioned appropriately on Windmill St - 'T-shape' block naturally divides the site with good sized communal amenity space separated and enclosed, positioned to the south.



'T' Shaped block



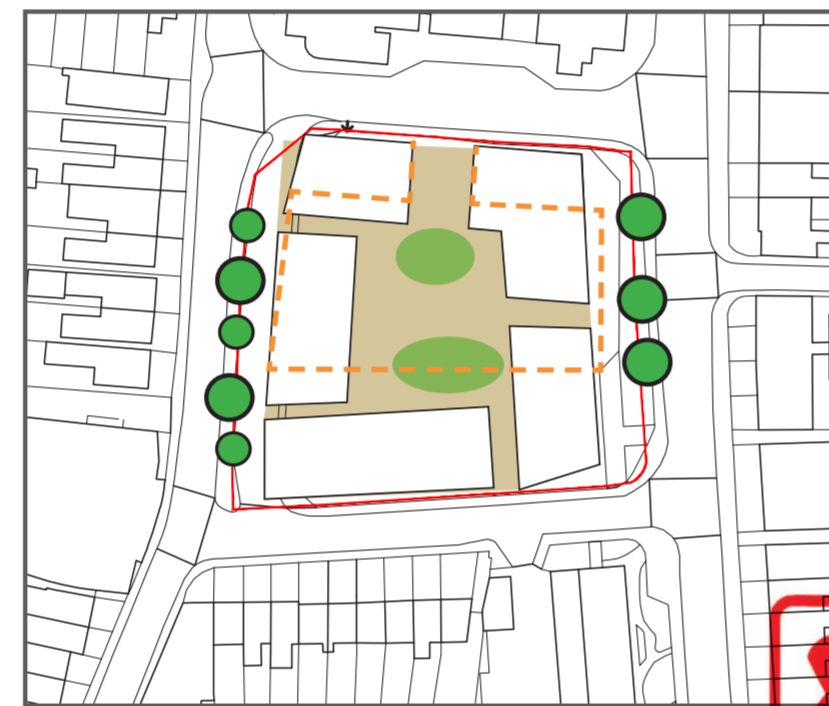
PARKING / AMENITY



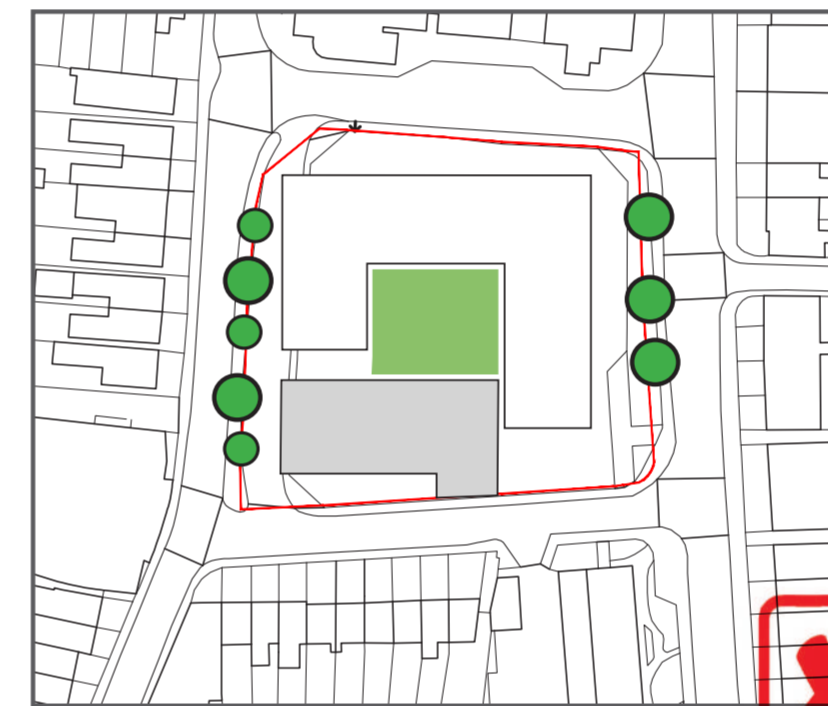
Existing.



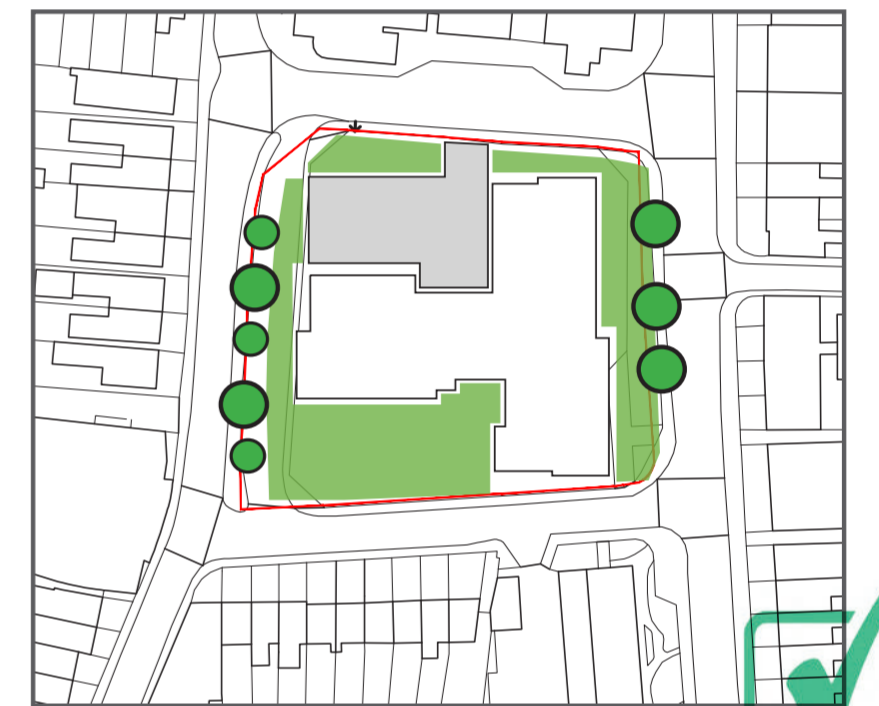
Minimal greening within courtyard



Parking underground / amenity space in centre of courtyard



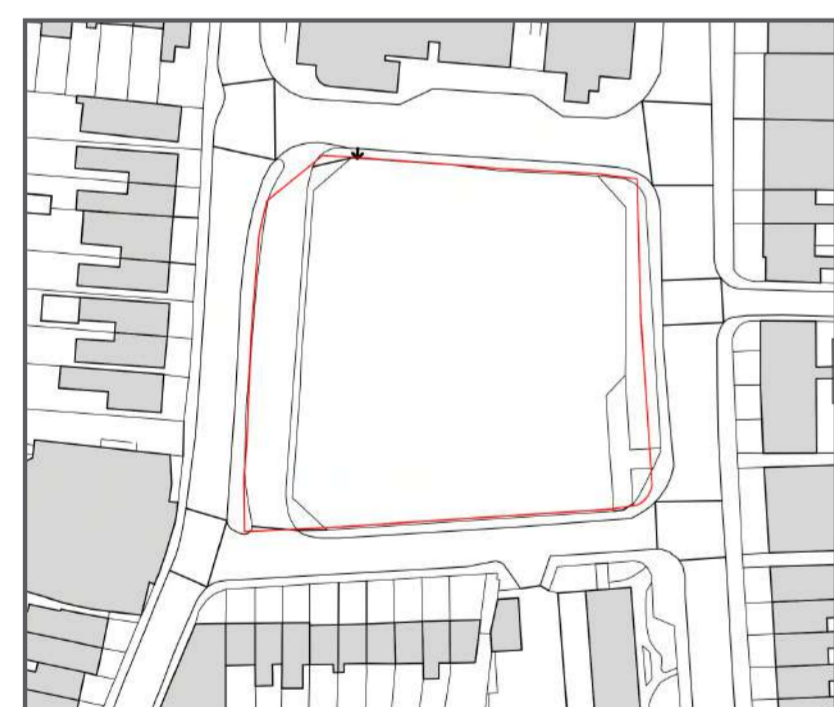
Within courtyard only connected to parking



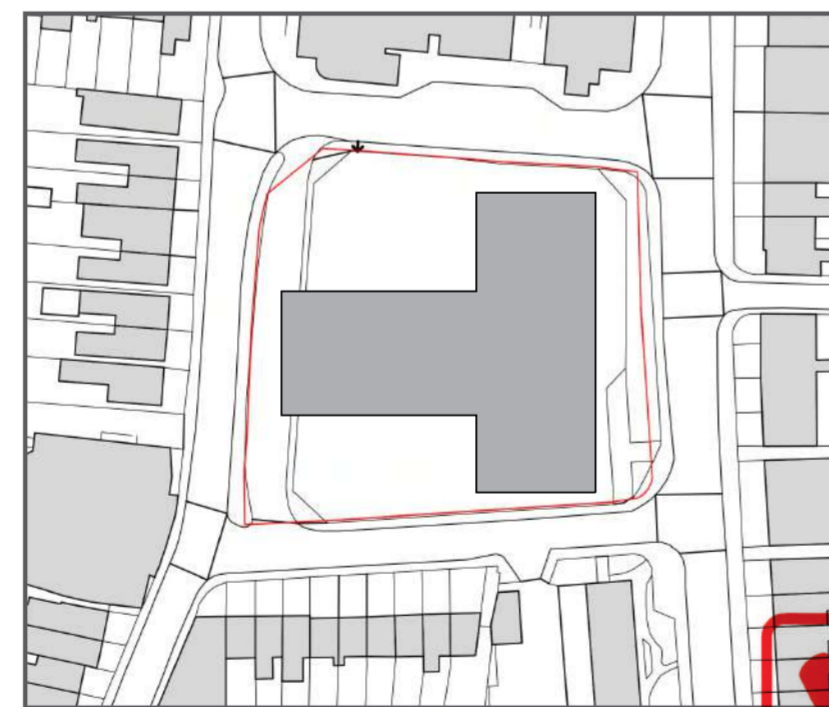
Amenity and parking divided



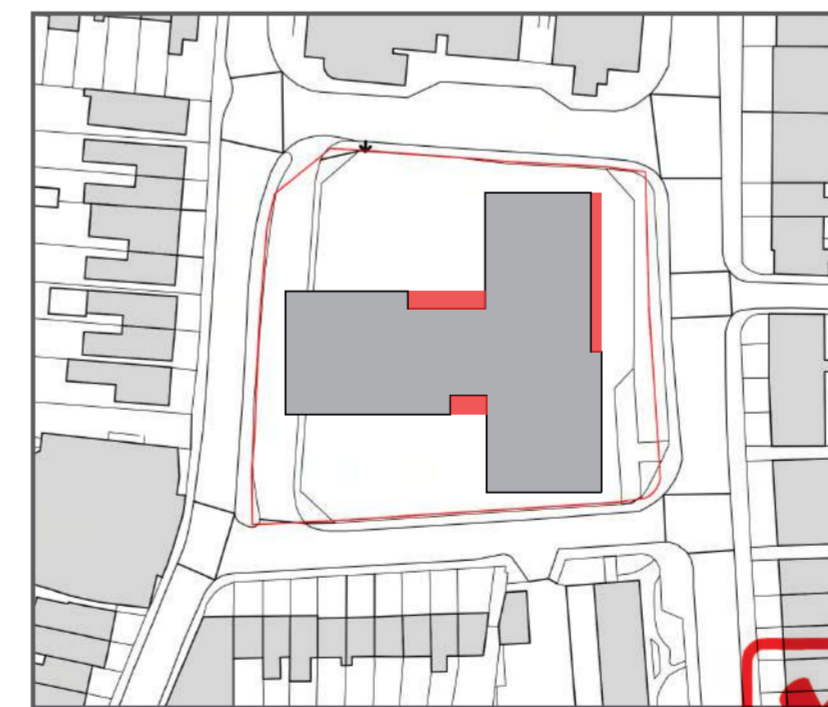
ARTICULATION



Existing - Perimeter wall around entirety of site boundary



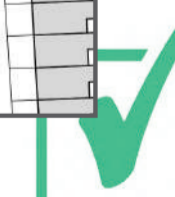
'T' shape block form with set backs along Zion Place and Woodville Place.



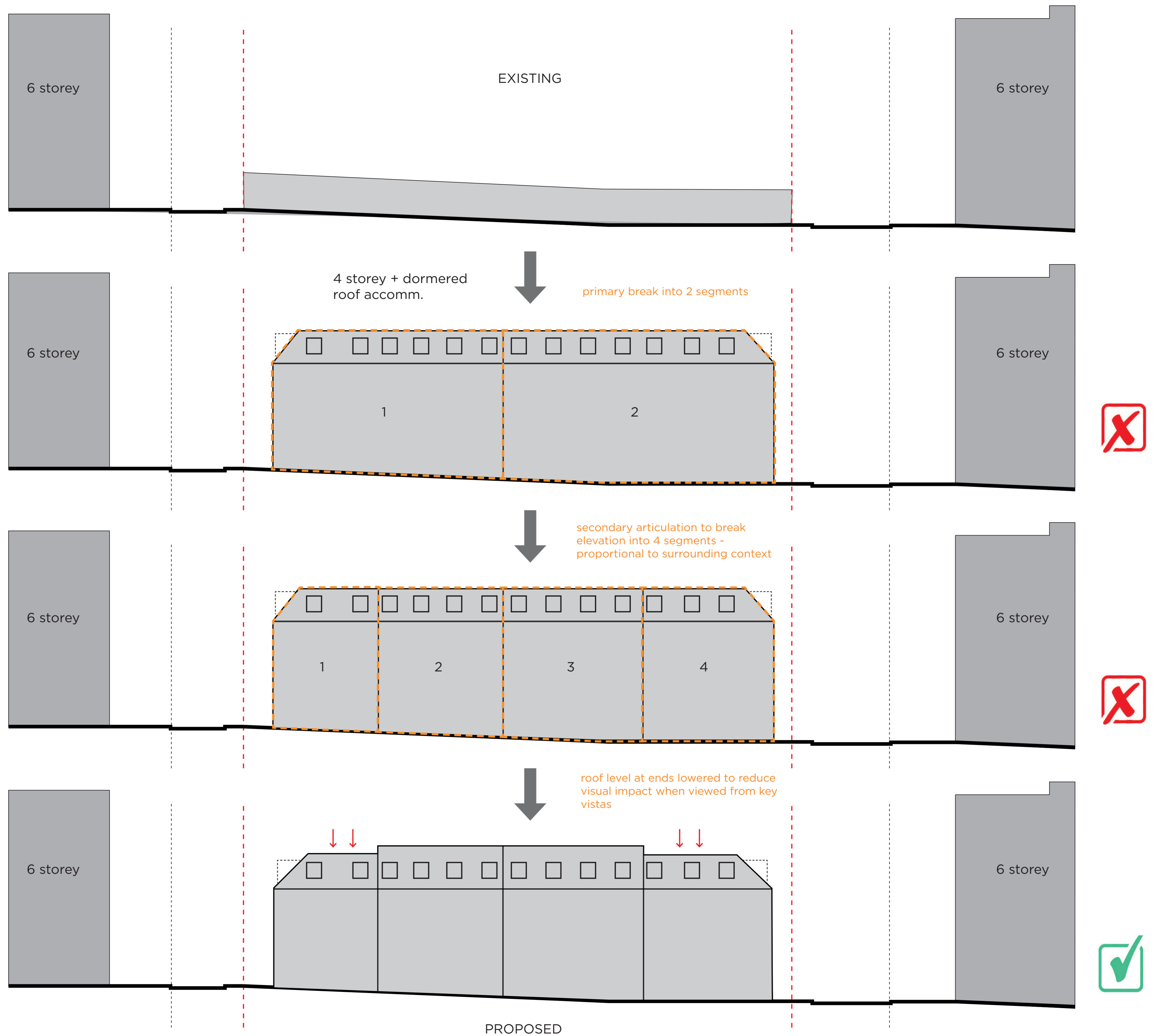
Primary breaks / recesses introduced into mass to spilt into several key components.



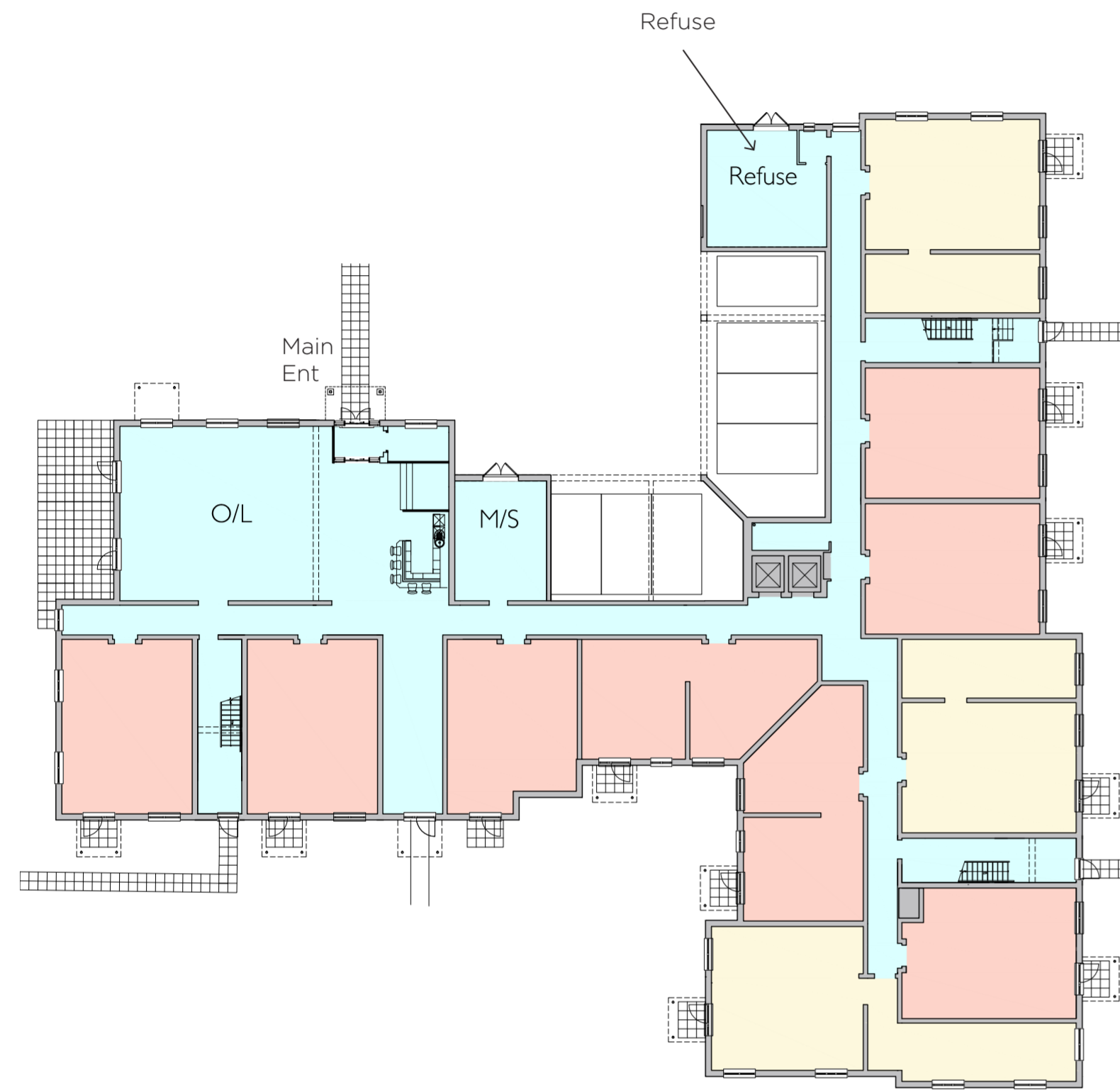
Secondary articulation added through projections / steps in the building line and breaks at roof level to break the form down into a comparable scale to the surrounding context.



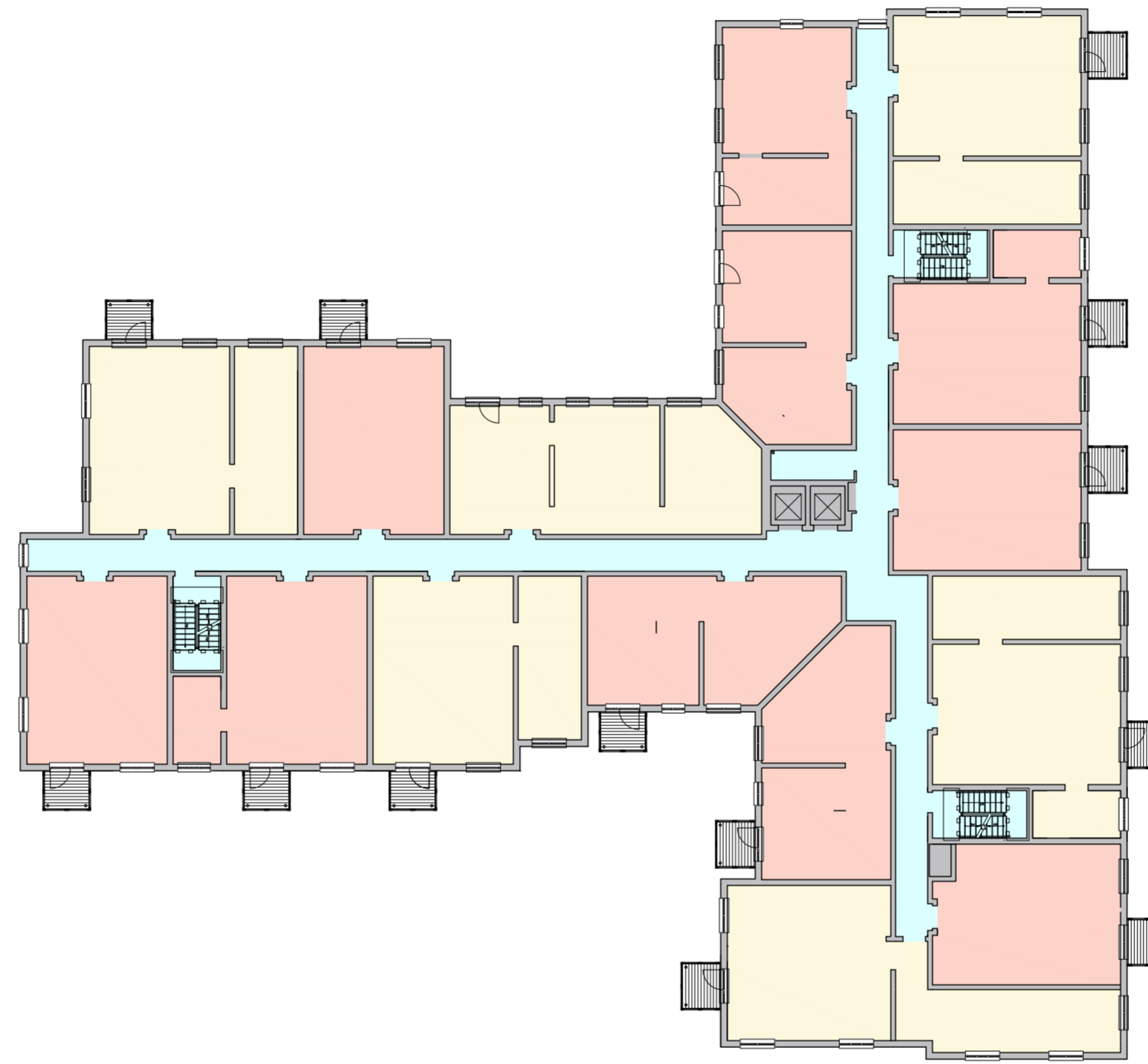
DESIGN EVOLUTION



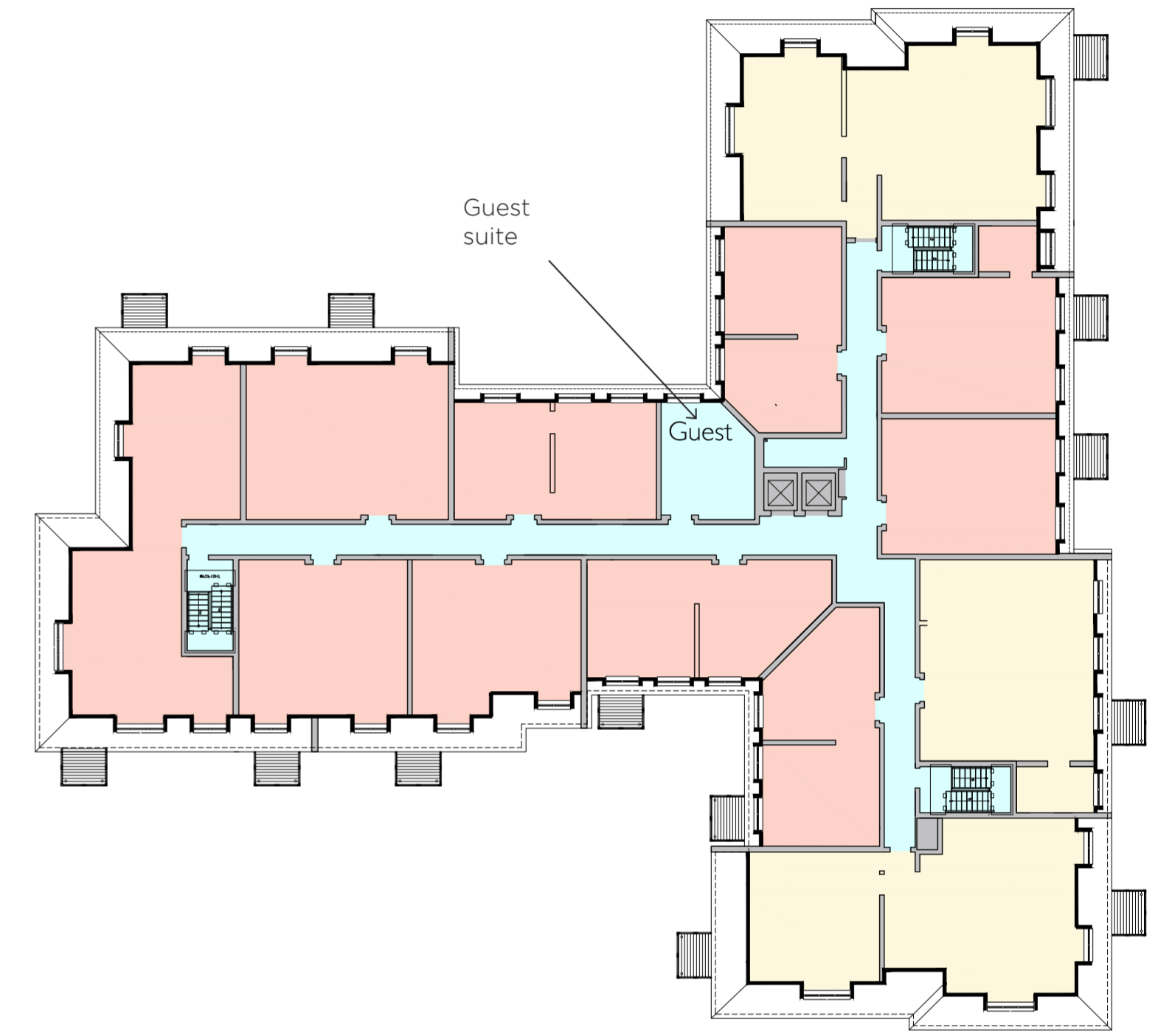
INDICATIVE FLOOR PLANS



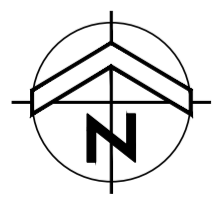
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN



LEVEL 04 PLAN

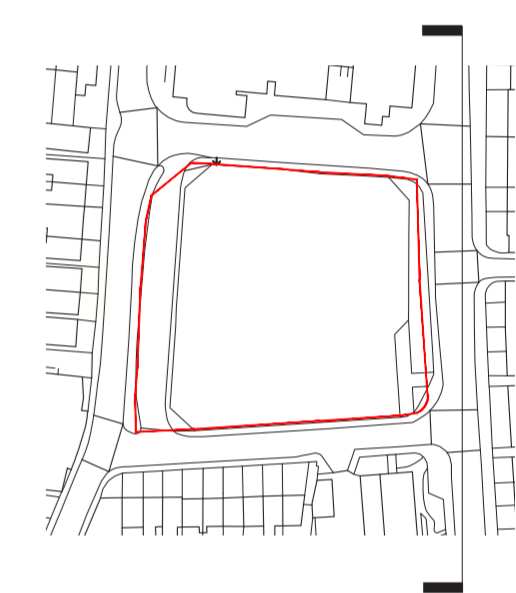


- One bed apartment
- Two bed apartment
- Communals / Circulation
- O/L Owners lounge
- M/S Mobility Scooter store

INDICATIVE STREET ELEVATION



Context Elevation (Windmill Street)

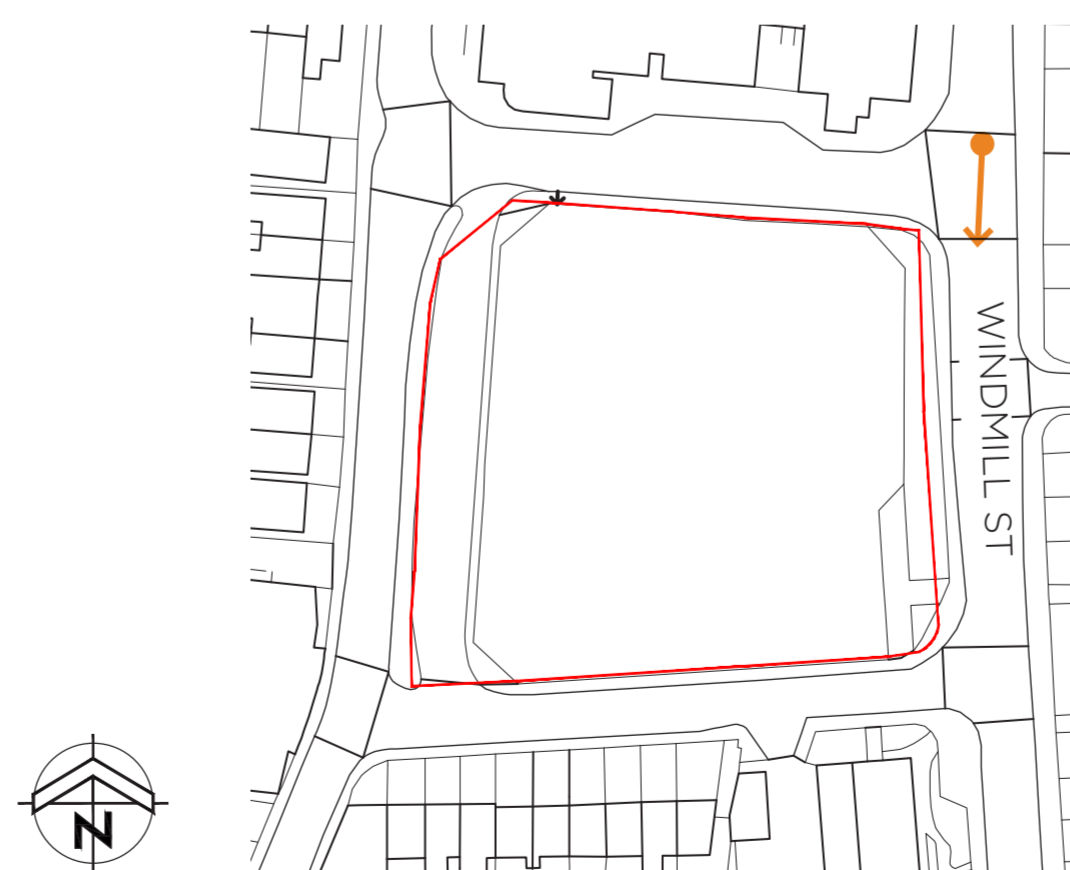


East Elevation (Windmill Street)

PROPOSED VIEWS TOWARD SITE



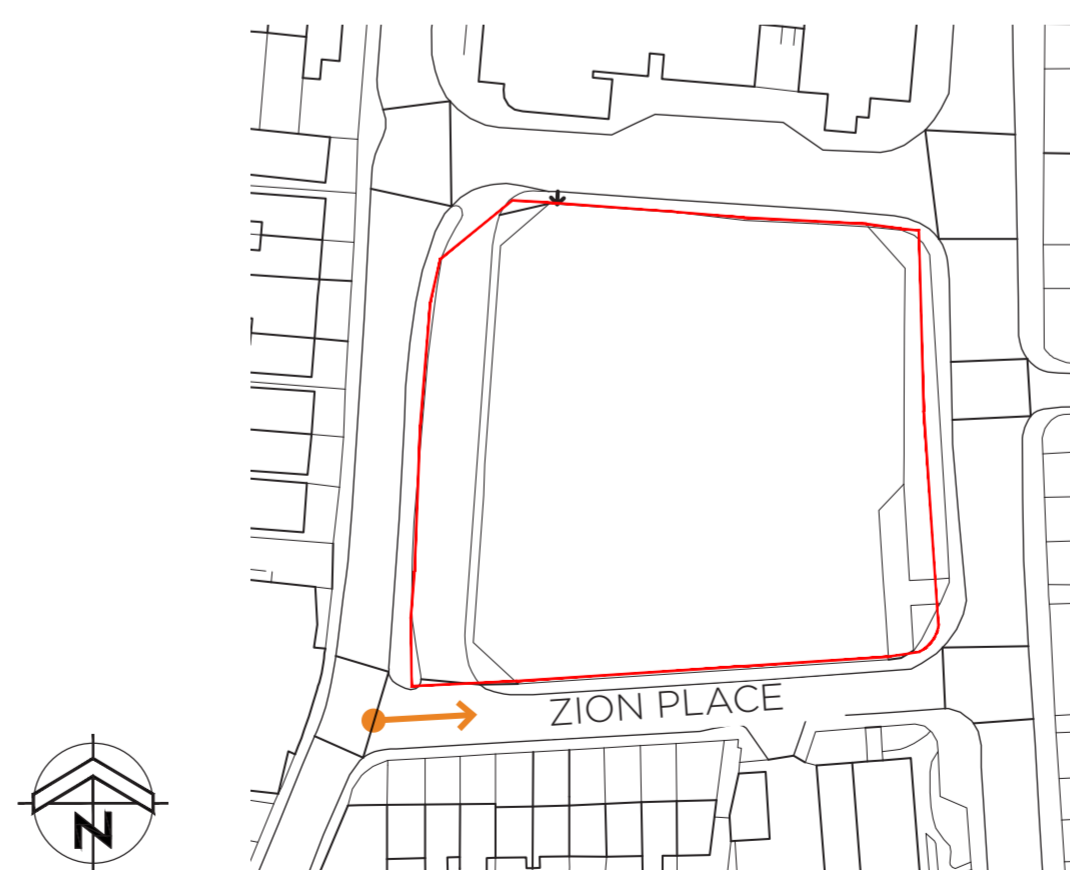
Proposed view looking south along Windmill Street toward Tivoli House



PROPOSED VIEWS TOWARD SITE



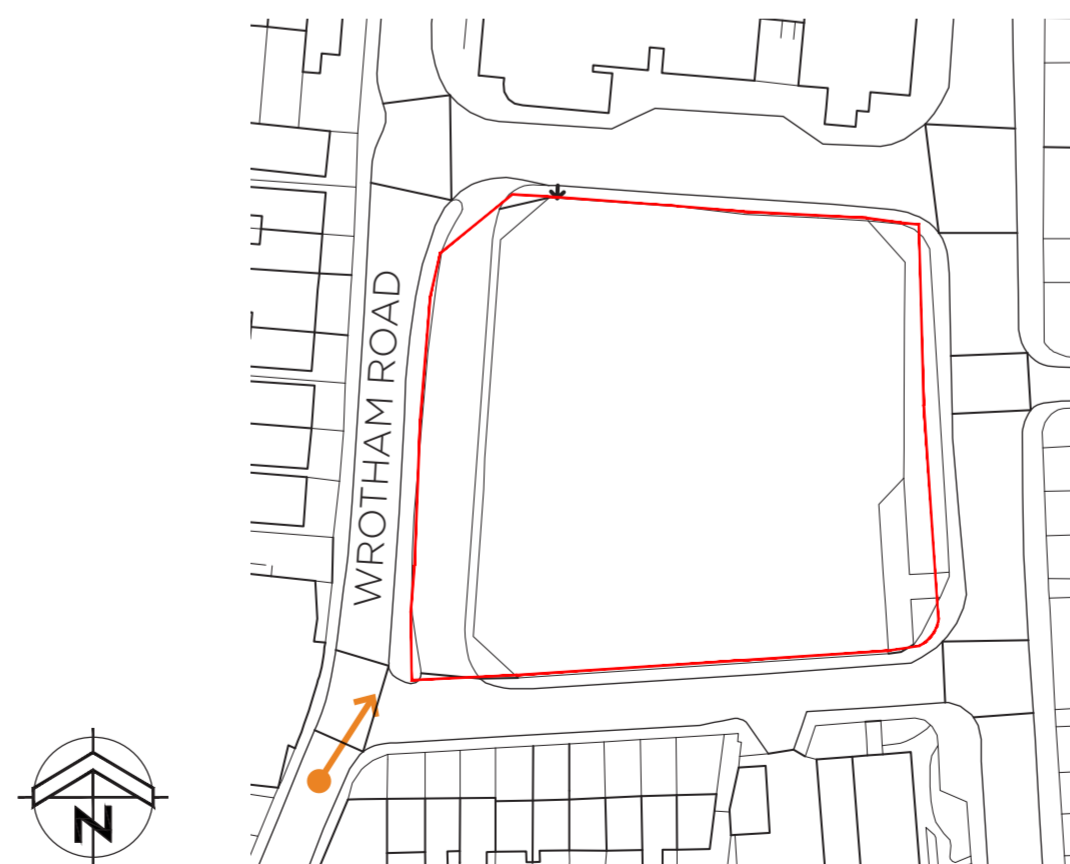
Proposed view looking east along Zion place toward the Emmanuel Baptist Church



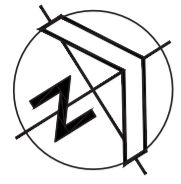
PROPOSED VIEWS TOWARD SITE



Proposed view looking north along Wrotham Road on the corner of the Prince Albert Public House



PROPOSED VIEWS TOWARD SITE



NEXT STEPS

Thank you for taking the time to review our initial proposal for the redevelopment of the site at 133 Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1DB; your time is appreciated.

We would be most grateful if you could take the time to put any comments or questions you may have into an email. Please include the words 'Windmill Street' within the email subject title and send it to:

info@planningissues.co.uk

Feedback received online will be considered by Churchill retirement Living and where feasible inform further development of, or changes to the design and layout of the proposed scheme.

The next step is continued consultation and ongoing discussions with the Planning Authority with the potential submission of a planning application in March 2022.

