

Hanover Court and Princess Court, Cambridge
Pre-application Meeting 4
23 October 2023
Advance Pack (19.10.2023)



Project partners

Client

Cambridge Investment Partnership

Local Authority

Cambridge City Council

Architects

Pollard Thomas Edwards

Planning Consultant

Carter Jonas

Arboriculturalist

Haydens

Revisions

Rev	-
Date	19.10.2023
Notes	Advance Pack

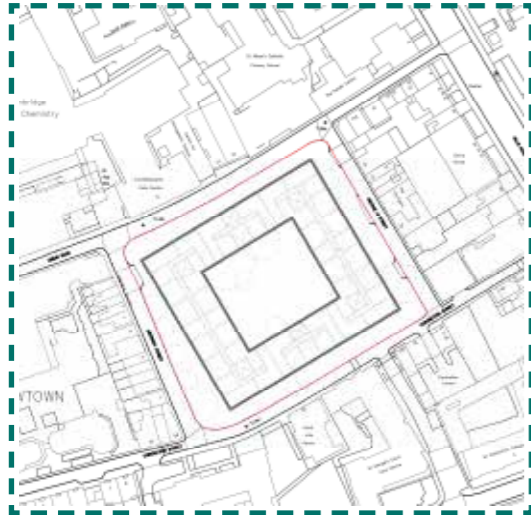
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Site location

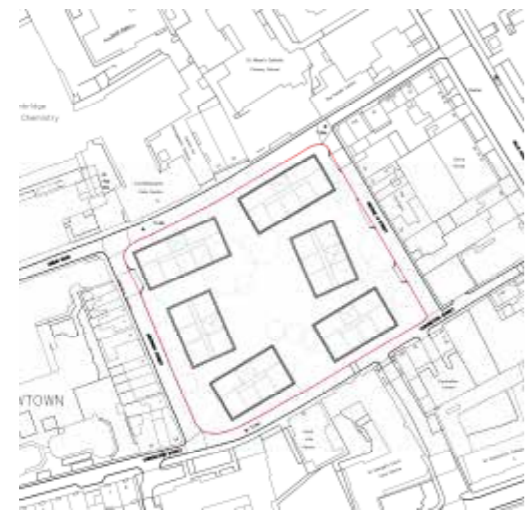


Project history

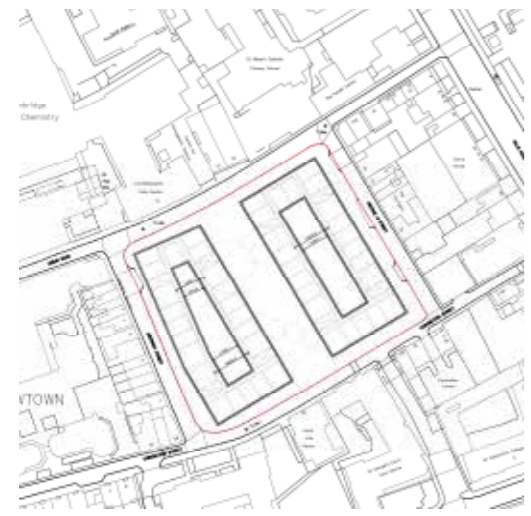
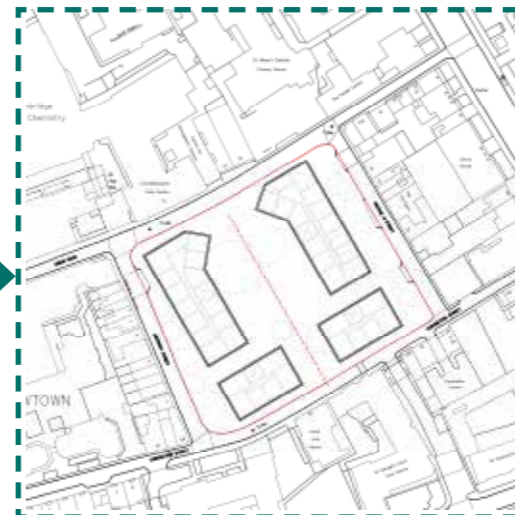
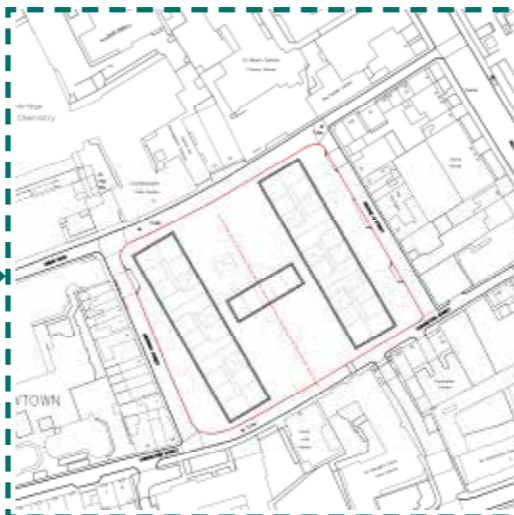
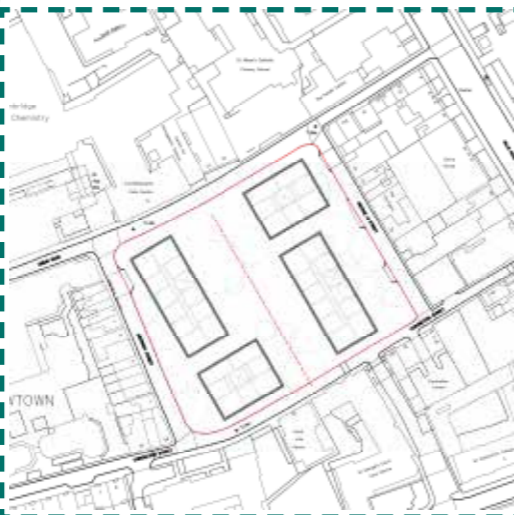
Site testing



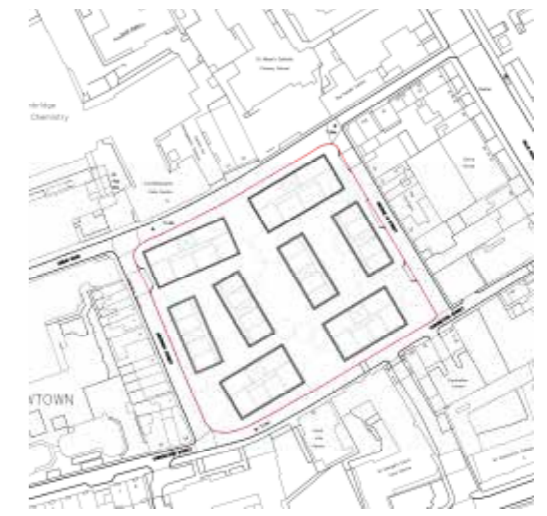
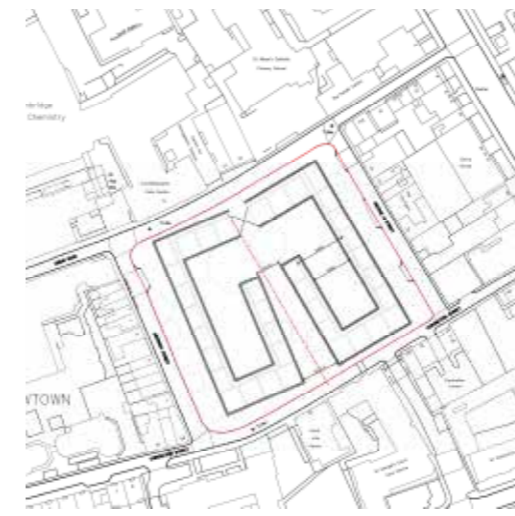
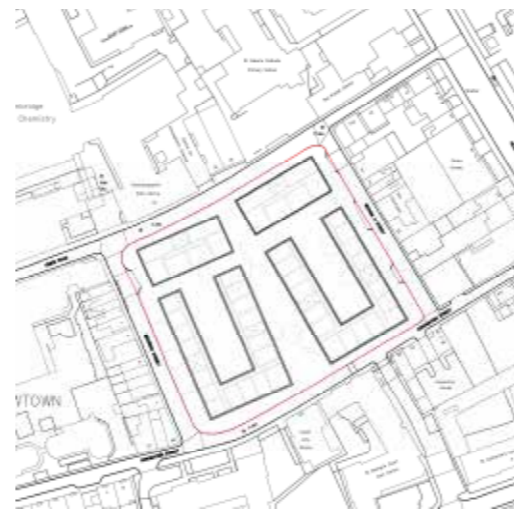
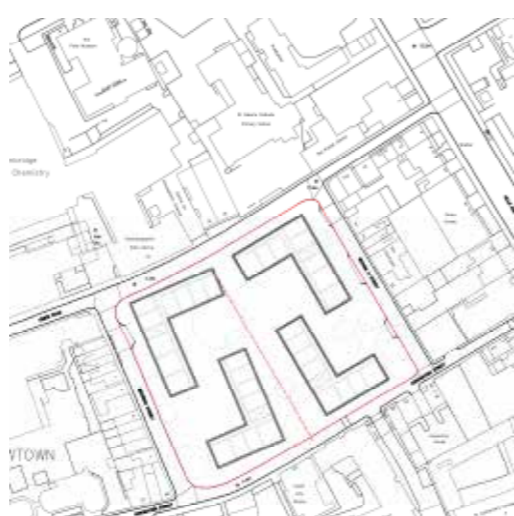
COURTYARDS



MANSION BLOCKS



GALLERY ACCESS



← [Red dashed box] INITIAL LAYOUT CONCEPTS TAKEN FORWARD AT START OF PRE-APP PROCESS

Conservation

Gail Broom (GB) observed that the option presented is both taller and bulkier than the existing buildings and is therefore problematic in conservation terms.

Existing buildings are already harmful to the Conservation Area and we need to preserve or enhance the designated area. The increased height and mass of the development would not achieve this.

GB observed that the proportions of the existing buildings (narrow span), their set back from the roads, the screening impact of trees and the reduced mass of the car park (although a detracting feature in its own right) all help mitigate the impact of what are already tall buildings.

GB concerned that the increased span of the blocks, the closer proximity and increased height, particularly towards George IV Street and Union Road would increase the harmful impact.

GB's view was that this proposal in its current form is likely to be towards the higher end of less than substantial harm to the character of the conservation area.

GB also noted that we will need to review the impact on the setting of nearby listed buildings and the Conservation Area. While the existing development does not impact on the wider area (its visual presence being very contained) subtle changes in height/location of blocks could change that.

no in principle issue with demolishing the existing buildings but any proposal to demolish would need to be accompanied by an appropriate redevelopment proposal.

Urban design

A revised option (Option B) was therefore presented which showed, in a basic form, how a frontage block might be provided along Union Road that allowed G05 to stay.

Key observations were as follows

Design should either allow views of G05 from Union Road or replacement tree planting on the corners with Bentinck Street and George IV Street.

This does not need to reflect the existing situation but may look at vistas towards trees at either end or may focus on new planting features as well.

The corners of Union Road are felt to be important. An appropriate scale of development is needed here. More height may be able to be added to the centre of the block.

Also, it was felt that there may be opportunities for height near to the Chemistry block but the building does then need to step down on Bentinck Street.

Along the Bentinck frontage, some height may be able to be added centrally if the alignment of the block and retention of trees can help justify this.

On Coronation Street, it was questioned if the block might step away from the pavement edge to allow views of T10 from the west. This may help break up mass/height.

Some of the gaps between the blocks may also be able to be filled in if the revised "gallery block" option is pursued

Layout does not need to be symmetrical.

The surrounding tight grain of street is acceptable to integrate on/around the site, so long as previously discussed views towards trees are incorporated.

Officers also suggested that while tree retention was clearly important, if a specified density was necessary for the development to include policy compliant affordable housing, a balance may need to be struck between tree retention and impact on the conservation area. Further options should be tested to assess this balance. While a strong tree objection would be made to the loss of trees identified as Primary constraints above, it was agreed that this would be a useful exercise so that the other benefits of the potential development (impact on conservation area, delivery of affordable homes etc) can be fully understood when appraising options for the site.

Next Steps

It was agreed that the Option B scheme would be worked up in light of the comments raised. It was also agreed that a new Option C layout with some tree removal would also be prepared to help test options more fully and to understand what opportunities might arise if some tree removal was proposed.



Pre-app 2 Massing diagram



Alternative option tabled during Pre-app 2, showing gallery access building fronting Union Road

During the June pre-app, officers requested that two schemes be reviewed;

- a scheme that retains all the trees identified as essential for retention (Approach 1)
- a scheme that removed the group of trees towards Union Road (Approach 2)

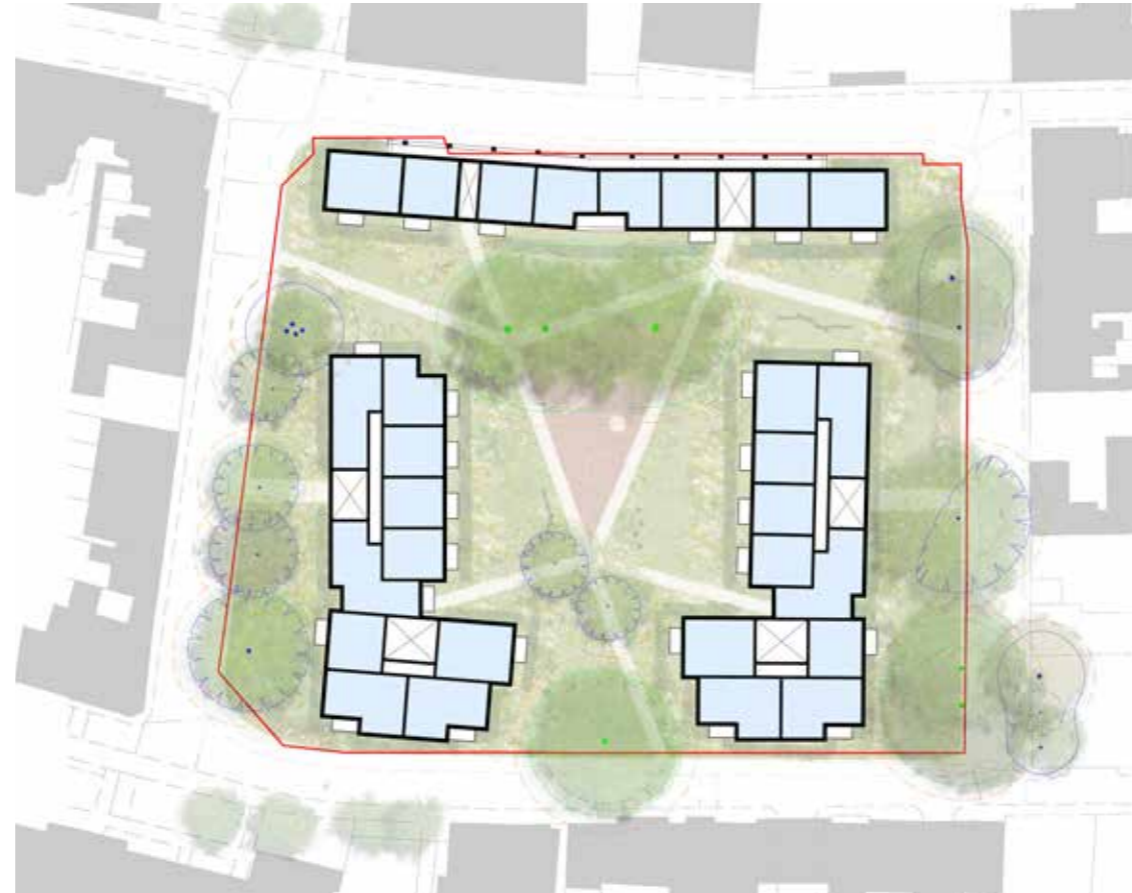
Following the presentation, concerns with the viable option were raised by the Urban Design Officer with respect to form, scale and mass, with the development considered out of keeping for the surrounding area.

The Conservation Officer considered the development would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the Central conservation area, and this is particularly concerning when the starting point is the existing buildings on site which make a negative contribution to the conservation area.

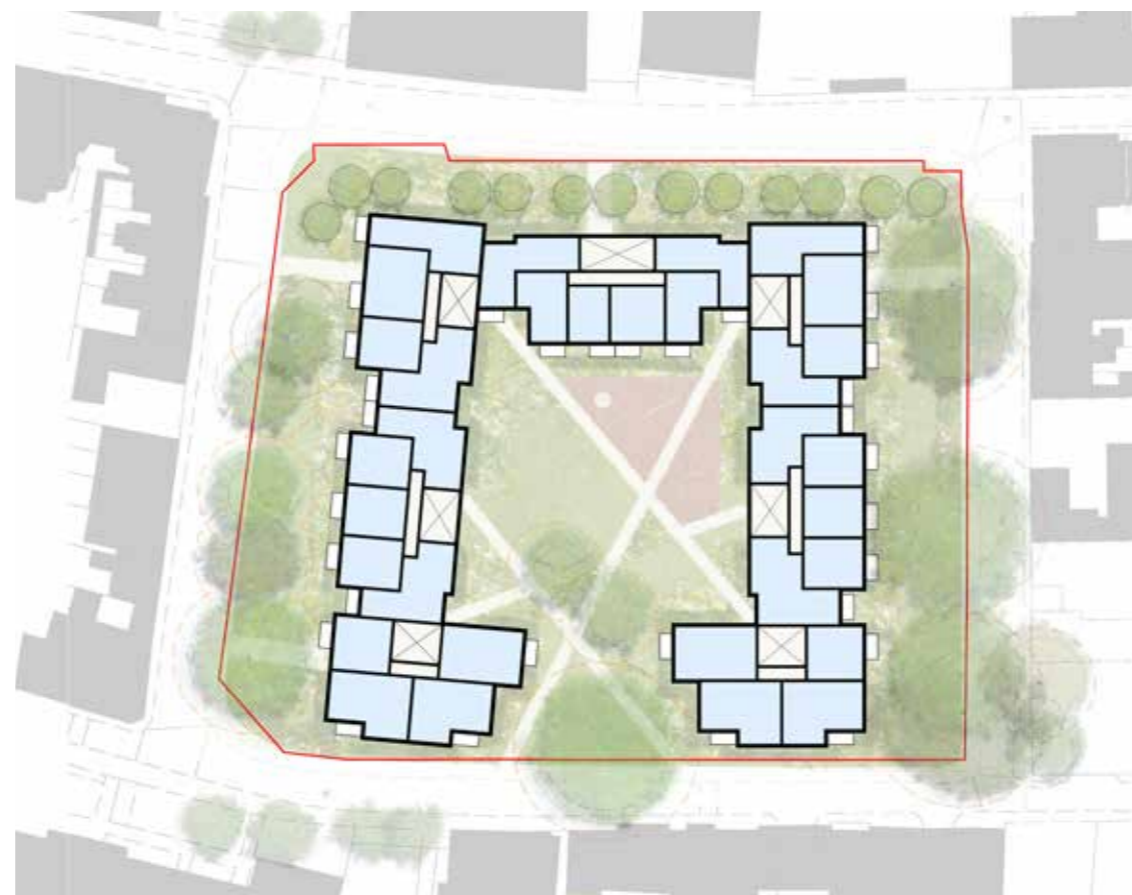
The reduced scheme has more merit in its layout and legibility, with the routes through the site helping to break up the mass of the buildings. This said, there is still some concern over the heights of some elements, with the Conservation Officer noting that the blocks facing Bentinck Street and George IV Street might need to be a storey lower than shown to be acceptable with regard to the conservation area.

The Landscape Officer has raised concerns with the design of the landscaped area in the viable scheme, with the 'U' shaped tall building providing a harsh and goldfish bowl-like feeling to the space. Although there are benefits to the space being overlooked, the quality and useability of the space is in question, especially as much of it will likely be in near-permanent shade.

The reduced option provides more variety in building heights as well as greater permeability through to the open space, and there is considered to be some merit in this approach.



Approach 1



Approach 2



Tree retention priorities

The adjacent diagram describes the Tree Officer advice on which trees offer a constraint to development and others which do not, received during the Pre-application Workshop on 28 June 2022 and further clarified in a post-meeting note.

In addition;

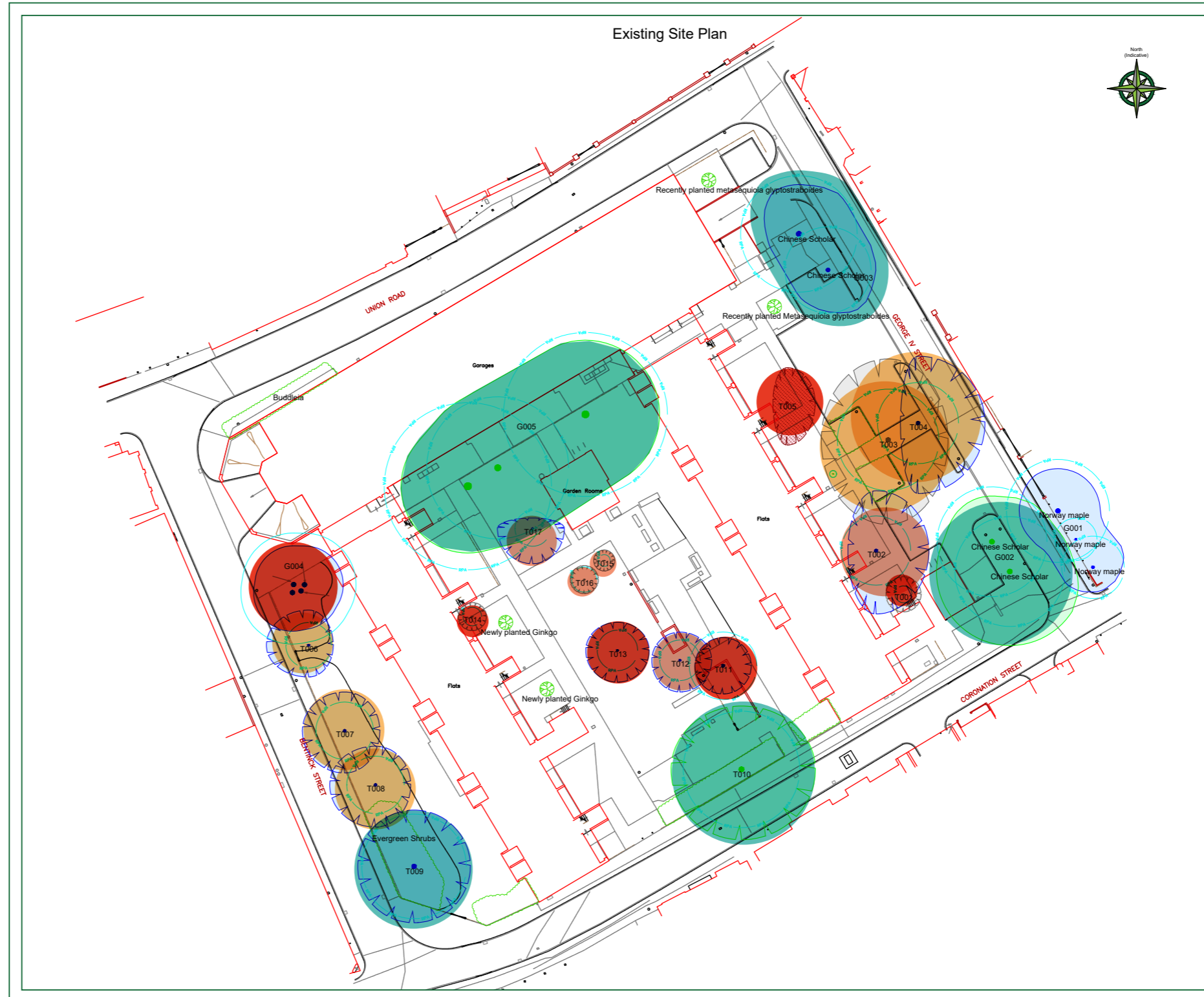
- The Tree Officer confirmed that the removal of trees G05 is not supported. These are existing Category A trees that are in good condition. These trees can, in the Tree Officer's opinion be suitably protected during the demolition of the car park and during the redevelopment of the site.
- These trees offer important amenity value to the street and should be retained.
- A very clear and detailed demolition method statement would be needed and some below ground structure may need to be retained but given the importance of the trees, these protective measures are needed.
- The Tree Officer expressed the view that the basement area of the car park could be backfilled, and frontage development of an appropriate scale could be provided along Union Road.
- The Tree Officer observed that because of the presence of G2 and G3, removal of T3 and T4 would be supported if this released pressure on primary constraint trees.
- The Urban Design Officer did however observe that T4 is important in terms of visual filtering/screening so if it is removed, replacement planting would be needed to help soften the impact of a building of height.
- The distance from existing tree canopies to development was discussed. The Tree Officer observed that many of the trees are now mature and in which case, a 2m level of separation would be appropriate.

Primary constraints
T9, T10, G2, G3 and G5

Secondary constraints
T3 and T4 (closely spaced trees), T6, T7 and T8

Tertiary constraints
T2, T12, T15, T16 and T17

Trees not a constraint
T1, T5, T11, T13, T14 and G4



CATEGORY AND DEFINITION	
Trees unsuitable for retention	
Category U	Those in such condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the current land use for longer than 10 years
Trees to be considered for retention	
Category A	Trees of high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years
Category B	Trees of moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years
Category C	Trees of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150mm
CP NOTE:	
This document details the constraints created by the trees on the site and should be used as a design tool to inform the layout of the proposed development. This document is not sufficient for planning submission purposes.	
NOTE:	
Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants were provided with a Topographical Survey but these do not always show the positions of all the trees/features on site. The locations of any additional features have been fixed using GPS. As such the position of the trees/landscape features should not be taken as exact but gives a fair distribution of their locations on site.	
LEGEND	
	Existing Tree/Feature BS 5837:2012 Category A
	Existing Tree/Feature BS 5837:2012 Category B
	Existing Tree/Feature BS 5837:2012 Category C
	Line of Root Protection Area (RPA) - calculated following guidelines set in BS 5837:2012
	Existing Tree/Feature to be Removed BS 5837:2012 Category U
	Additional feature which doesn't meet BS 5837:2012 categorisation but is included for reference
14/01/22 HVB Based on Randal Surveys drg no 16581GN1	
The position, condition, and dimensions of the trees are based on a site survey undertaken on 21/12/21	
"The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon"	
Scale 1:500	
0m 5m 10m 15m 20m 25m	
© HAYDEN'S 2021	
5 Moseleys Farm Business Centre, Fornham All Saints, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP28 6JY. Head Office: 01284 765391 Southern Office: 01722 657423 Email: info@treesurveys.co.uk www.treesurveys.co.uk	
Cambridge Investment Partnership Constraints Plan	
Hanover & Princess Court, Bentinck Street, Cambridge, CB2 1HG	
14/01/22	HVB CIP/Pro/9132-D-CP
1:500 (A3)	AG 9132-D-CP

Baseline response incorporating trees

Baseline response incorporating trees

This response was developed as a baseline position, as the preferred approach following the last pre-application meeting in November 2022. This layout aimed to retain the primary and secondary positioned trees.

It was modified so that no buildings were above 6 storeys following recent guidance requiring second stairs and evacuation lifts on buildings above 18m.

Block AB was retained at 5 storeys dropping to 2 storeys at the corners to enable visibility of the central trees as approaching along Union Road.

Block C was reduced to 6 storeys and blocks D, E and F at 5, 4 and 6 as previously presented.

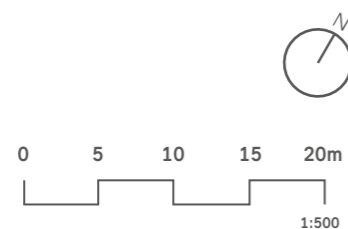
This arrangement provided c. 130 new homes with a mix of 56% 1-bed, 37% 2-bed and 7% 3-bed homes.



Home Type	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed
Apartments	73	48	9
Mix	56%	37%	7%
Grand Total	130		

2M CANOPY CLEARANCE ZONE

- 1B2P
- 2B3P
- 2B4P
- 3B4P
- 3B5P



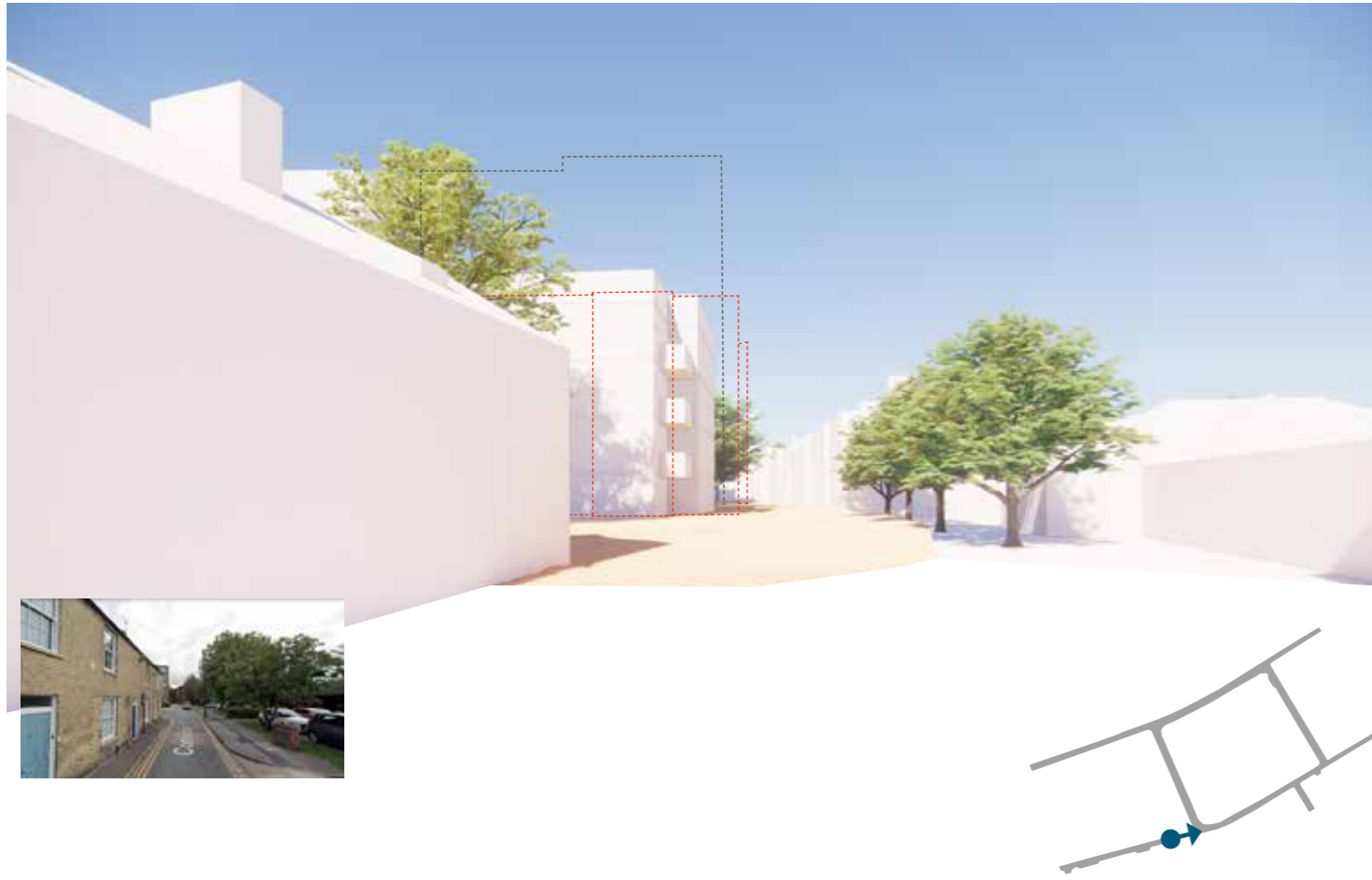
Baseline - aerial views



Aerial view from South-West



Aerial view from North-East



View along Coronation Street



View at corner of Coronation Street and George IV Street

- Existing Building
- Pre -Application Meeting 02 Massing

Baseline - street views



View looking east along Union Road, at corner with Bentinck Street



View looking west along Union Road

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing

Technical and safety review of tree retention

To proceed with the redevelopment in accordance with the Housing Scrutiny Committee approval in March 2023, the existing buildings need to be demolished as they are in a significantly dilapidated condition and residents are living in substandard accommodation.

A Chartered Safety Engineer has confirmed that trying to retain the three London Plane trees during demolition is outweighed by the potential and real risks to personnel having to undertake the works.

An Arboriculturist Consultant has also advised that an unacceptable increase in the risks to the health and safety of the workforce engaged in the demolition works would exist if the three London Plane trees are retained.

In addition, the Arboriculturist Consultant has confirmed that there are major concerns which prevent the retention of the trees, relating to the volume and severity of works affecting them.

The recommended course of action is to remove the Plane trees and demolish the dilapidated structures by remote mechanical demolition (high reach excavators) as this is the safest option.

It is of critical importance that associated health & safety legislation is strictly followed. This has been made evidently clear by the Consultants who have been engaged to provide professional advice to CIP. CIP and the Council have legal responsibilities under the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015, for example; and both parties cannot promote redevelopment which retains the trees and increases health and safety risks which can be reasonably avoided (CDM Reg. 9(2)).

Ultimately, health and safety concerns arising from demolition activities prevent the retention of the existing three London Plane trees located in the central courtyard. The majority of the other existing trees can be safely accommodated within the scheme designs.



Current thoughts

Buildings within the trees

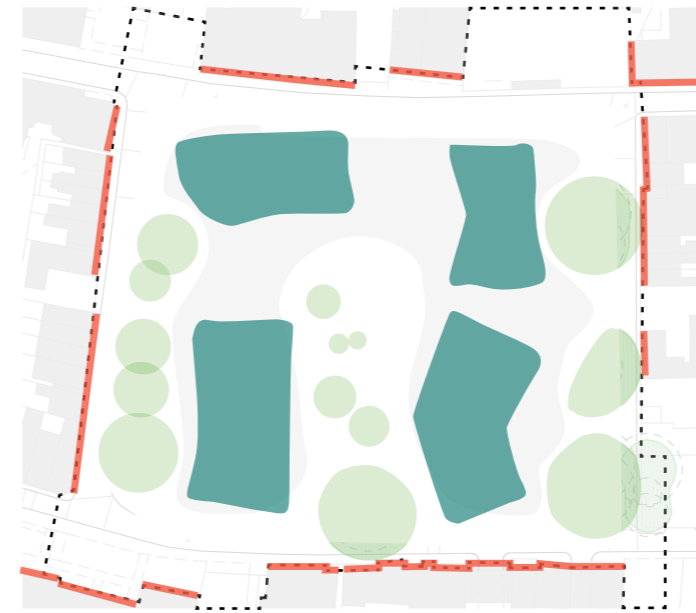
Our current thoughts consider the site arrangement as a series of buildings within the trees rather than a singular urban block. These can be positioned and adjusted according to specific site constraints, trees and neighbouring buildings, and can aid with the visibility of this site as a 'green' pocket in the area.



1 - Site Constraint



2 - Site Opportunity



3 - Buildings within the trees



4 - Landscape 'carpet'

Option 1: Slipped blocks

The 'slipped blocks' approach considers a series of similarly massed blocks that where paired, slide past each other. They can each respond to their specific position on the site, and can be further developed to 'bend' around the trees.



Option 1: Slipped blocks (baseline position)

Baseline (150 homes)

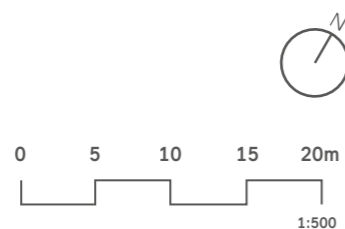
This position is financially driven. A baseline figure of 150 homes comprising a 50% affordable (75 units) and 50% private (75 units) tenure mix supports the following:

- Partial offsetting the significant decanting costs. The Council has to purchase 45 leasehold interests in a prime location and compensate 82 Council tenants in the form of home loss and disturbance payments.
- To accommodate extensive demolition costs naturally inflated on this confined and access restricted city centre site.
- To enable the Council to purchase the affordable rented units from Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) at a market rate which is typically equal to, or below, actual build costs.
- To overcome the increased build costs associated with the specific site characteristics.
- To generate adequate revenue from private sales to achieve the financial hurdle rate set by CIP to enable development to proceed.

The massing approach shown here achieves the baseline position as shown in the schedule below.

Home Type	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed
Apartments	74	63	17
Mix	48%	41%	11%
Grand Total		154	

- 1B2P
- 2B3P
- 2B4P
- 3B4P
- 3B5P



Option 1: Slipped blocks - aerial view from south-west corner (baseline position)



Option 1: Slipped blocks - aerial view from north-east corner (baseline position)

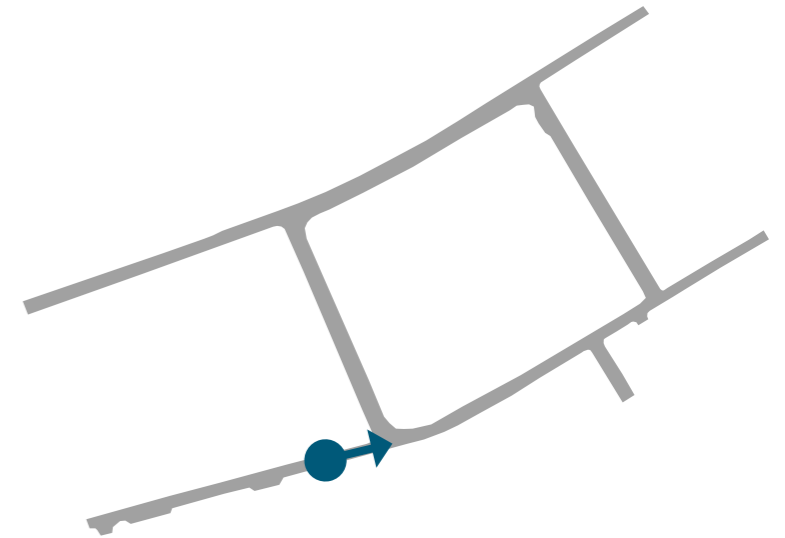


Option 1: Slipped blocks - street views



View looking east along Coronation Street

- Existing Building
- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing



Option 1: Slipped blocks - street views

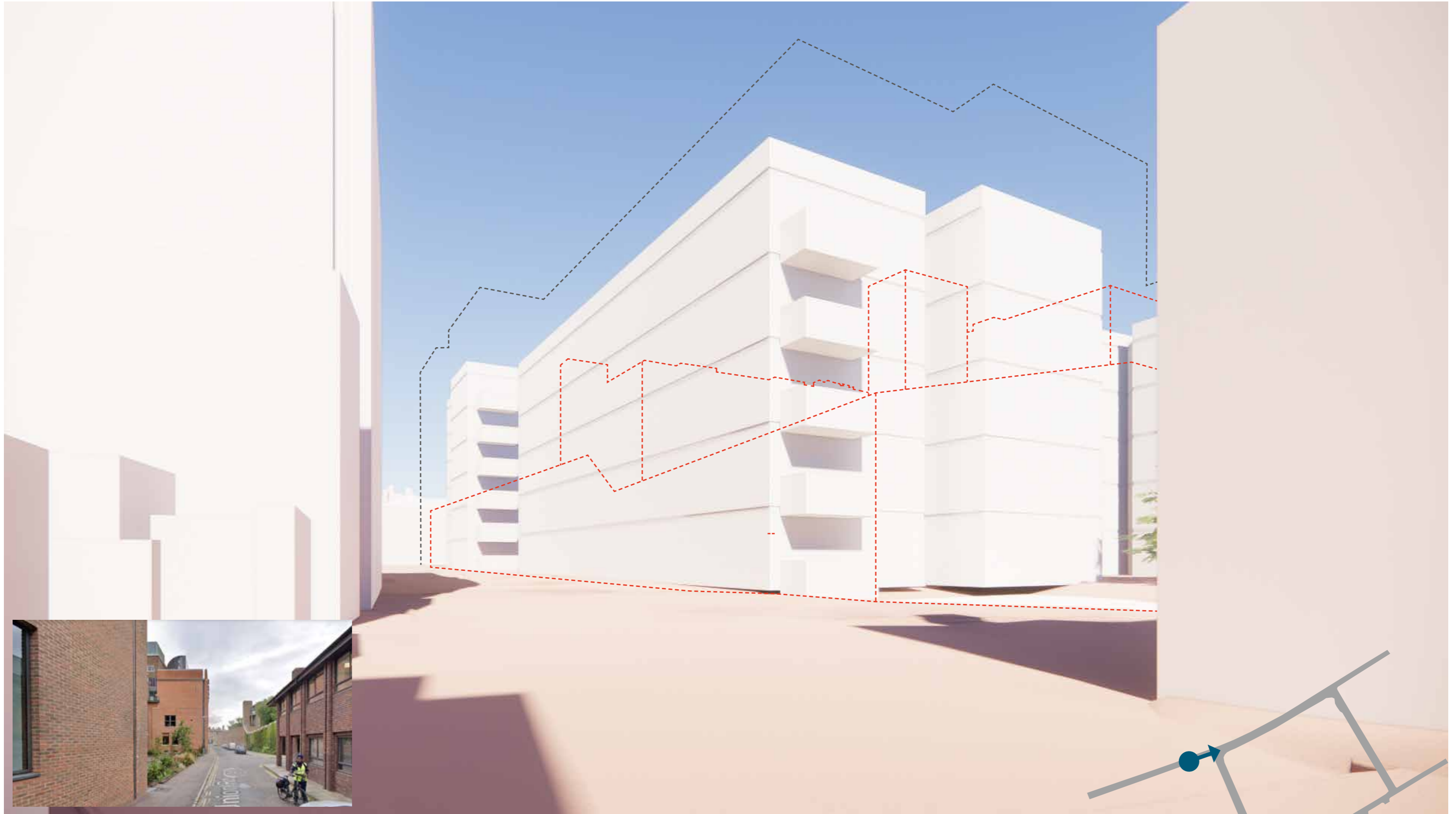


View at corner of Coronation Street and George IV Street

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing

Option 1: Slipped blocks - street views



View looking east along Union Road, at corner with Bentinck Street

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing

Option 1: Slipped blocks - street views



View looking west along Union Road

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing

Option 1: Slipped blocks - street views



View looking south between Blocks A and B

Option 1: Slipped blocks - street views



View looking west between Blocks B and C

Option 1: Slipped blocks - street views



View looking north from Coronation Street into central courtyard

Option 1: Slipped blocks - street views



View looking east between Blocks A and D

Option 1: Slipped blocks - Alternative massing study to achieve baseline position



Alternative massing study achieving 155 homes

Option 1: Slipped blocks - Massing study optimal position

Optimal (164 homes)

This position is also financially driven to achieve the same matrices indicated in the baseline position whilst also re-providing the existing 82 Council rented homes.

It is not proposed to achieve any net new additional homes which would be the ideal. This optimal position would comprise a 50% affordable (82 units) and 50% private (82 units) tenure mix.

The massing approach shown here achieves the optimal position to achieve 164 new homes.



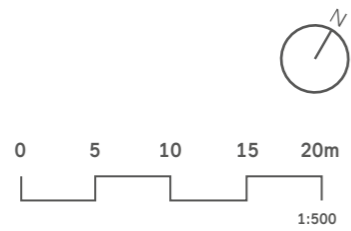
Aerial view from south-west



Aerial view from north-east

Option 1 variation: Slipped angled blocks

- 1B2P
- 2B3P
- 2B4P
- 3B4P
- 3B5P



Current thoughts: Option 2

Option 2: Cinched blocks

The 'cinched blocks' approach considers a series of blocks 'cinched at the waist' to give the appearance of smaller joined masses. They can each respond to their specific position on the site, and can be further developed to 'push and pull' around the trees.



Option 2: Cinched blocks - baseline position

Baseline (150 homes)

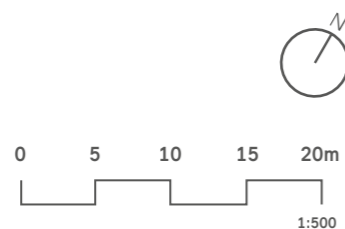
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- To overcome the increased build costs associated with the specific site characteristics.
- To generate adequate revenue from private sales to achieve the financial hurdle rate set by CIP to enable development to proceed.

The massing approach shown here achieves the baseline position as shown in the schedule below.

Home Type	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed
Apartments	67	71	16
Mix	44%	46%	10%
Grand Total		154	

- 1B2P
- 2B3P
- 2B4P
- 3B4P
- 3B5P



Option 2: Cinched block - aerial view from south-west corner (baine position)



Option 2: Cinched block - aerial view from north east corner (baseline position)



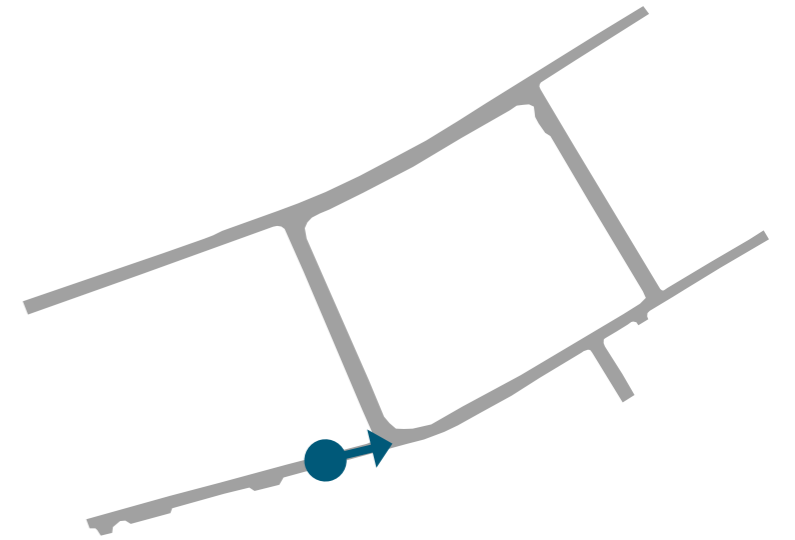
Option 2: Cinched block - street views



View looking east along Coronation Street

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing



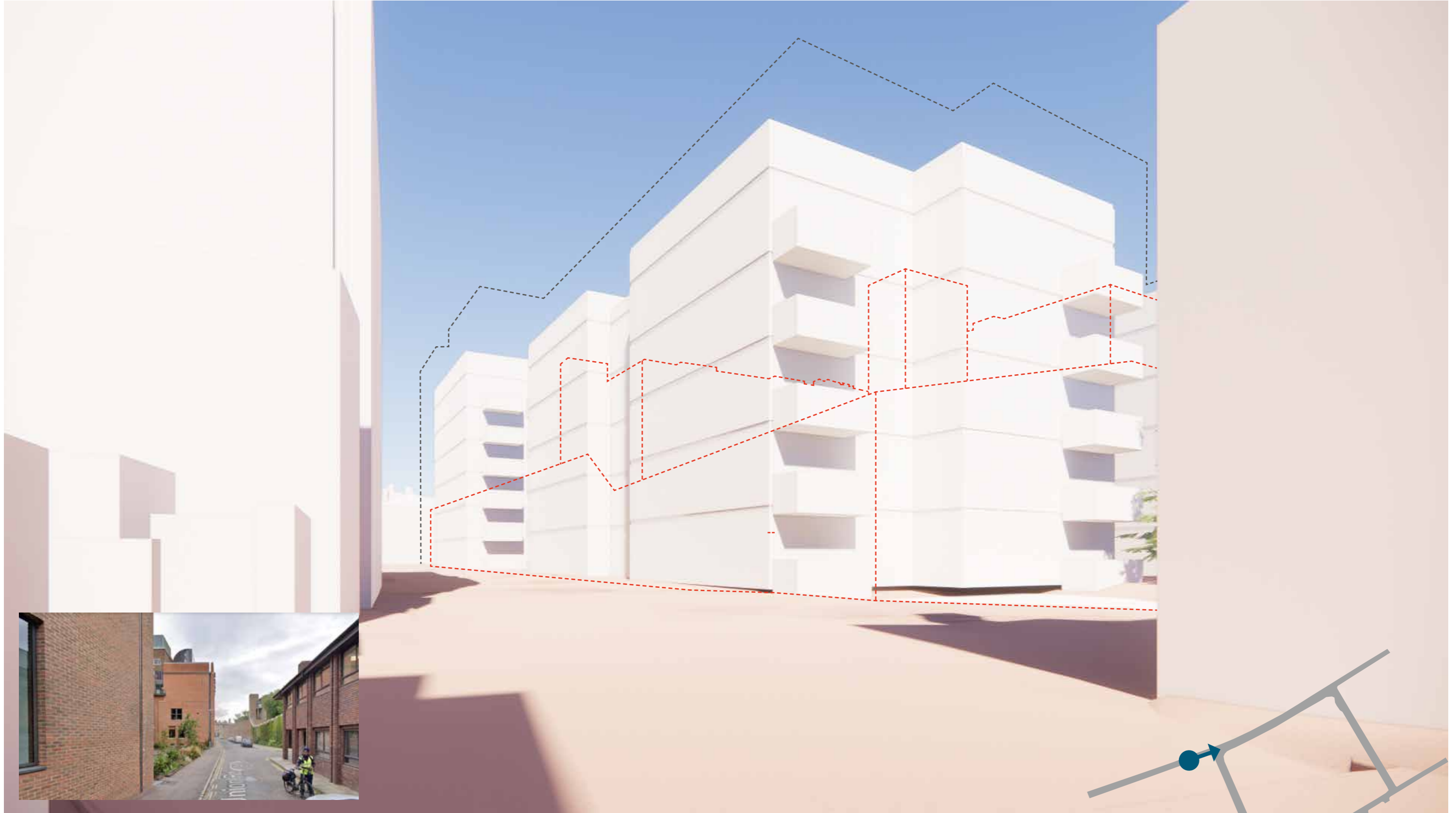
Option 2: Cinched block - street views



View at corner of Coronation Street and George IV Street

- Existing Building
- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing

Option 2: Cinched block - street views



View looking east along Union Road, at corner with Bentinck Street

--- Existing Building

--- Pre-Application Meeting 02 Massing

Option 2: Cinched block - street views



View looking west along Union Road

----- Existing Building

----- Pre -Application Meeting 02 Massing

Option 2: Cinched block - street views



View looking south between Blocks A and B into central courtyard

Option 2: Cinched block - street views



View looking west between Blocks B and C

Option 2: Cinched block - street views



View looking north from Coronation Street into central courtyard

Option 2: Cinched block - street views

Baseline (150 homes)

This position is financially driven. A baseline figure of 150 homes comprising a 50% affordable (75 units) and 50% private (75 units) tenure mix supports the following:

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- To overcome the increased build costs associated with the specific site characteristics.

- To generate adequate revenue from private sales to achieve the financial hurdle rate set by CIP to enable development to proceed.

The massing approach shown here achieves the baseline position as shown in the schedule below.



View looking east between Blocks A and D

Option 2: Cinched block - alternative massing study (baseline position)



Alternative massing study to achieve baseline position achieving 155 homes

Option 2: Cinched block - massing study optimal position

Optimal (164 homes)

This position is also financially driven to achieve the same matrices indicated in the baseline position whilst also re-providing the existing 82 Council rented homes.

It is not proposed to achieve any net new additional homes which would be the ideal. This optimal position would comprise a 50% affordable (82 units) and 50% private (82 units) tenure mix.

The massing approach shown here achieves the optimal position to achieve 164 new homes.



Aerial view from south-west



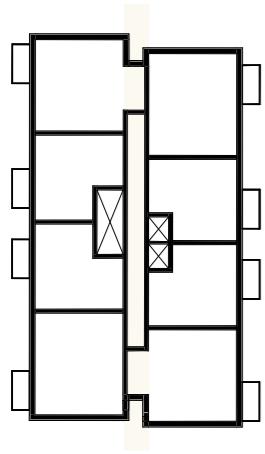
Aerial view from north-east

Option 2 variation: articulated cinched blocks

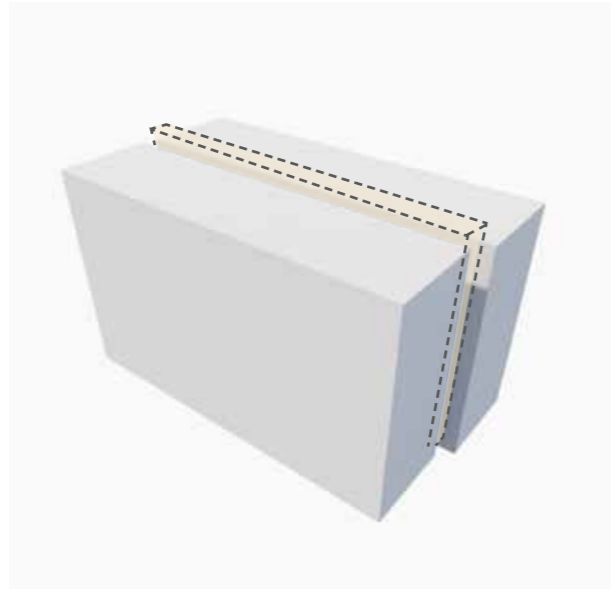


Design development opportunities: architecture

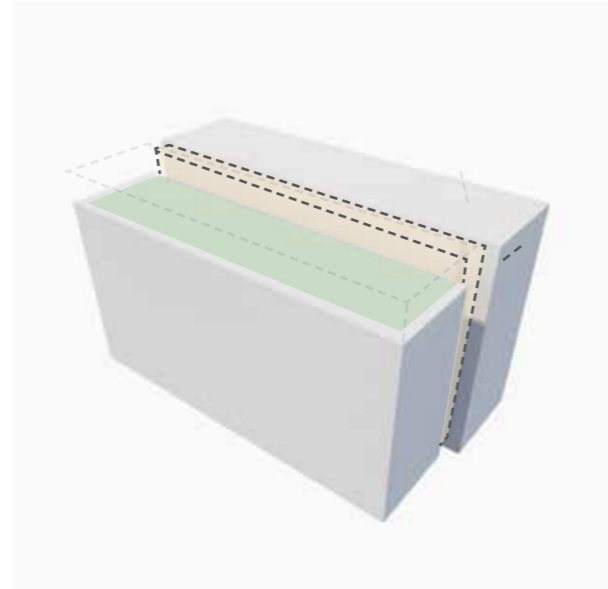
The following studies begin to explore articulation to reduce mass, enhance detail and relate to context, and are opportunities to be further developed.



SLIP BLOCK



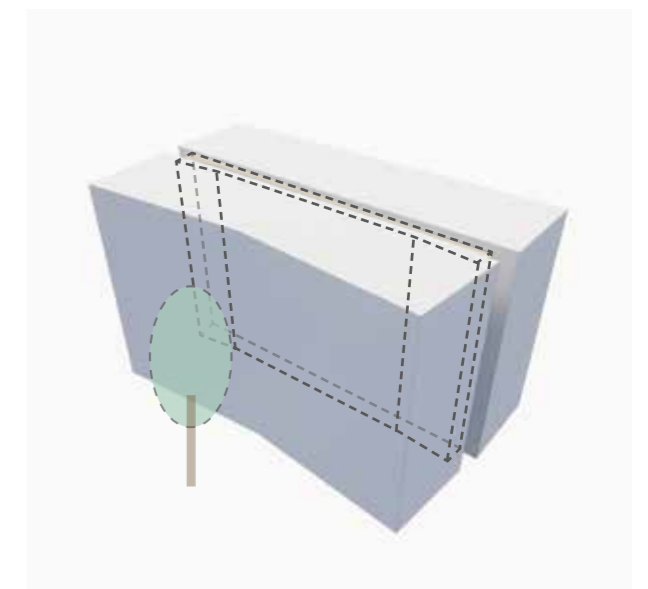
LANTERN



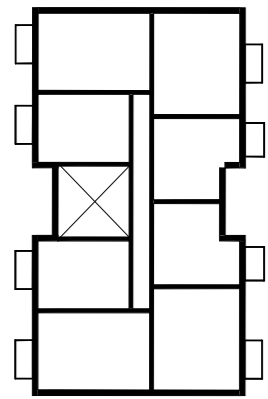
STEP CREATES OPPORTUNITY FOR INCREASED BIO-DIVERSITY



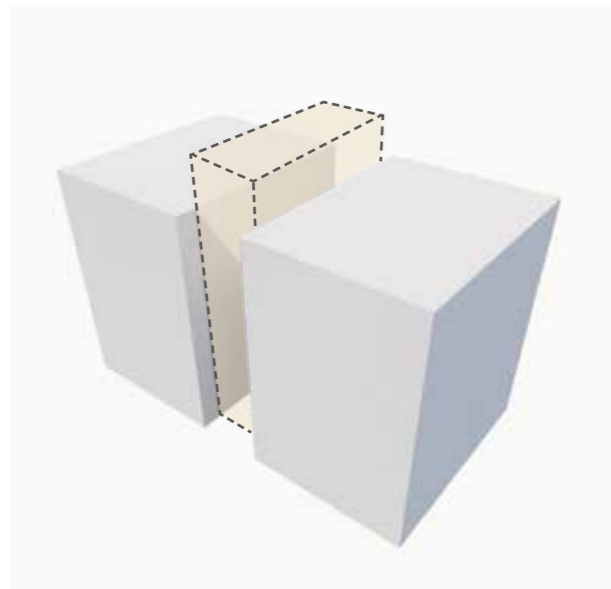
SCULPT BAYS/ BALCONIES TO CREATE RICHER FORM



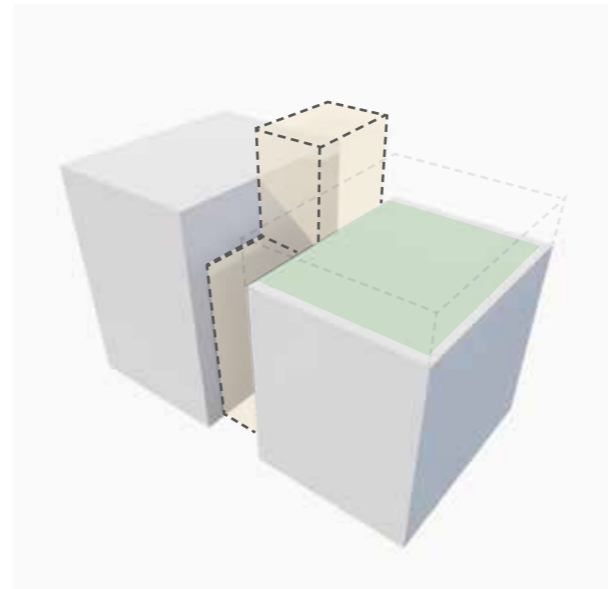
BUILDING FORM FLEXES IN RESPONSE TO LOCATION



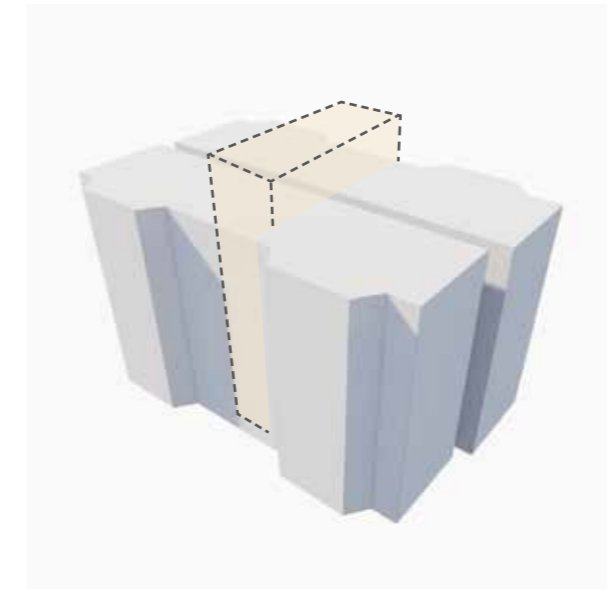
CINCH BLOCK



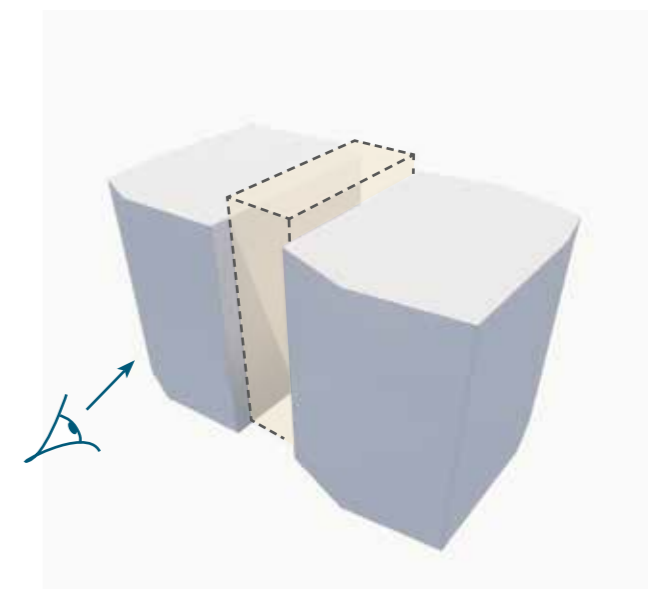
LANTERN



STEP CREATES OPPORTUNITY FOR INCREASED BIO-DIVERSITY



SCULPT BAYS/ BALCONIES TO CREATE RICHER FORM



BUILDING FORM ANGLES TO PROVIDE VISUAL CONNECTIONS



Play



Grow



Socialise



Care

Central landscape space proposals

Prior to submitting a planning application, CIP is looking to engage with residents and the wider local community to explore potential uses for the central space. As part of this, CIP will be engaging with a wide range of stakeholder groups, including decanted residents, local schools, residents associations, creative groups and environmental groups to help create buy-in for the project and ensure that the redevelopment aligns with the diverse needs of the community.

Preparation ahead of consultation beginning

CIP will identify key political and community stakeholders and set out a recommended engagement programme. As part of this activity, a contact database will be created and updated throughout the consultation process. A set of key messages and narrative around the proposals will also be formed to guide the production of consultation materials. A strategic communications plan will also be prepared setting out timescales and key deliverables.

Stakeholder meetings

Meetings will be organised with key stakeholders identified as part of a stakeholder audit to provide an overview of the project and seek their input on potential uses for the open space.

School workshops

We will also organise workshops with St Paul's Church of England Primary School and St Alban's Primary School to help design an aspect of the open space, which could involve designing a playground, public art, such as murals or creating habitats for wildlife, steered by the project team.

Door knocking

A traditional door-knocking exercise in the local area is proposed to understand how the local community currently uses the central space, if at all, and to gather their input on what they would like to see provided as part of the redevelopment to encourage its use.

Public consultation

A public consultation on the proposals will be organised with a mix of digital and in-person engagement.

Digital engagement will include the existing project website which will be updated to incorporate information about the current proposals and the proposed consultation. There will be an online survey for people to complete. For those who are unable to access the consultation website and online survey, a freephone number will be available and printed copies of material will be distributed, as required. A community briefing webinar will also be offered which will involve a presentation on the proposals and give members of the public the opportunity to ask questions of the project team. The consultation will be advertised via traditional mailing to the local area, ward councillors and community group mailing lists.

In person engagement will include a drop-in public consultation event to share information about the proposals. Members of the project team will be available to answer any questions and understand community concerns. Exhibition boards will be presented at this event.

Overall the consultation will be live for a period of three weeks to ensure the local community are fully aware of the consultation activities and scheme proposals. Feedback will be collated and analysed from all meetings, consultations and events.

THE EXISTING BUILDINGS

The estate was built in the late 1960s. The blocks were built in the 'brutalist' style of architecture that was seen in many developments of the post-war era.

Hanover Court and Princess Court provide 127 flats, with 82 of these rented to Cambridge City Council tenants together with a low-rise garage block, a community building and a communal garden.

Despite £2.5m expenditure on the blocks over the past ten years, significant work is still required in addition to the ongoing programme of works and required routine planned maintenance.

- Problems with structure identified, two phases of works have been carried out but further works are still necessary to address inherent issues.
- The ceiling heights are below modern standards and there is not enough room to create greater sound insulation between floors.
- In addition to completing the removal of gas piping a substantial programme of works to upgrade fire safety is required; this will require intrusive works in individual flats which will cause further disruption to residents.

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL HOUSING ASPIRATIONS

The Council is committed to delivering high quality homes which come with a lot of benefits:

- Modern space standards - both size of rooms and height
- Private amenity space - balconies
- High level energy performance means lower bills
- Ventilation with heat recovery
- Environmentally friendly homes
- Lower maintenance costs
- Accessible homes
- Better sound insulation
- Security - crime designed out
- Bike storage
- Fire safety above building regulation

CONSTRAINTS OF REDEVELOPMENT

If the decision is taken to redevelop Hanover Court and Princess Court, there are a number of constraints we need to consider:

- New Town and Glisson Road Conservation Area
- Trees - at the edges and in the centre
- Neighbours are varied - including schools, two storey houses and larger buildings
- Viability - need to re-provide at least the existing 82 council flats

OPTION 1

Site plan and Courtyard view.

OPTION 2

Site plan and Courtyard view.

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