



# Dovedale Close Caversham, Reading

Feasibility Study  
October 2013

*Site Address*

**Arthur Clark Care Home Site**

1 Albert Road  
Caversham  
Reading RG4 7AN

*Client*

**Reading Borough Council**

Level 3 Civic Centre  
Reading RG1 7TD

*Architects*

**PRP**

Ferry Works  
Summer Road  
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Surrey KT7 0QJ

*Arboricultural*

**SJ Stephens Associates**

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Great Bedwyn  
Marlborough SN8 3LL

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# Introduction

Introduction  
Extra Care Housing  
Summary of Proposals



## Introduction

This document contains information prepared for a 'Pre-Application Advice' submission to Reading Borough Council and should be read in conjunction with the scaled drawing package.

The feasibility proposes the demolition of the vacant Arthur Clark Care Home and Day Centre and replacement with 40 Extra Care apartments and associated ancillary facilities.

The existing buildings on the site do not meet current standards and redevelopment of the site offers the opportunity to respond to the enhanced standards for the provision of housing for older people as set out in the HAPPI report (Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation).

This study has been developed for Reading Borough Council Housing & Community Care Teams and the proposals form part of a wider programme of new housing and care facilities for older people in the Reading area.

## Extra Care Housing

### 'The Demand for Extra Care'

"The population of pensionable age will grow by 3.8million over the next 25 years and the number of 'oldest old' – those of 85 – will more than double (Office for National Statistics, Statistical Bulletin 21/10/09). Injuries due to falls among older people have been estimated to cost the state over £1 billion a year – 1 in 4 falls involve stairs and the majority take place in the home (Help the Aged, Preventing Falls 2007); postponing entry into residential care by one year could reduce non-care costs by £26,000 per person (Adams, Small things matter: the key role of handyperson services. Care & Repair England 2006). Taken with the mounting challenges of climate change, affecting transport and fuel poverty, the obligation to address how and where older people live is self-evident..." (HAPPI Report, HCA 2009)

HAPPI (Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation) was established in June 2009 to consider how best to improve and enhance housing options available to older people in the UK. Their report not only identifies key design recommendations for new older housing, providing case studies for guidance, but also highlights potential planning policy recommendations to encourage providers to build attractive, spacious and manageable homes for older people in places where they want to live.

The report also highlighted that by providing enhanced housing options for older people, many under-occupied family homes could be released for sale and rent.

Extra Care housing aims to provide a 'Home for Life' for older people enabling them to live independently in their own home, with care and support to meet their specific needs brought to them at home. A strong community is created and supported with management and shared facilities within a single development. The HAPPI report emphasises the importance of creating a supportive community atmosphere whilst respecting individual privacy and maintaining the individual opportunity to choose 'when to be alone and when to be with others'.

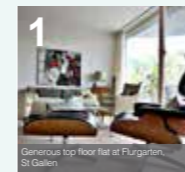
### Extra Care at Dovedale Close

Residents at the new development will have their own front door and individual self-contained accommodation together with a variety of communal facilities within one development. Every encouragement will be given to maintaining independence and lifestyle choice. The apartments, circulation, communal rooms and gardens will be wheelchair accessible throughout and designed specifically to suit older people.

The apartments benefit from generous internal space standards with flexible layouts. Natural light and ventilation to habitable rooms and circulation areas has been maximised through apartment orientation and single-banked, open deck access, and all apartments have been provided with their own generously sized patios or balconies. Apartments will be suitable for care to be delivered to support individual resident needs, thus reducing the need to move into residential care or a nursing home.

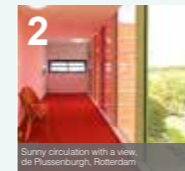
Community interaction will be reinforced by the provision of large communal spaces and gardens. Older people in the local area will be actively encouraged to participate in functions and events organised by the housing managers and to make use of the facilities of the new building.

The design embraces many of the HAPPI recommendations:



1 Generous top floor flat at Flurgarten, St Gallen

the new retirement homes should have generous internal space standards, with potential for three habitable rooms and designed to accommodate flexible layouts



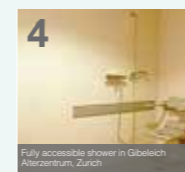
2 Sunny circulation with a view, de Pussenburgh, Rotterdam

care is taken in the design of homes and shared spaces, with the placement, size and detail of windows, and to ensure plenty of natural light, and to allow daylight into circulation spaces



3 Balcony as garden in Maartenshof dementia unit, Groningen

layouts maximise natural light and ventilation by avoiding internal corridors and single-aspect flats, and apartments have balconies, patios, or terraces with enough space for tables and chairs as well as plants



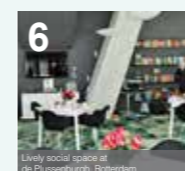
4 Fully accessible shower in Gibelech Alterszentrum, Zurich

in the implementation of measures to ensure adaptability, homes are designed to be 'care ready' so that new and emerging technologies, such as telecare and community equipment, can be readily installed



5 Access deck as defensible space at Sankt Antonius, Stuttgart

layouts promote circulation areas as shared spaces that offer connections to the wider context, encouraging interaction, supporting interdependence and avoiding an 'institutional feel', including the imaginative use of shared balcony access to front doors and thresholds, promoting natural surveillance and providing for 'defensible space'



6 Lively social space at de Pussenburgh, Rotterdam

in all but the smallest developments (or those very close to existing community facilities), multi-purpose space is available for residents to meet, with facilities designed to support an appropriate range of activities – perhaps serving the wider neighbourhood as a community 'hub', as well as guest rooms for visiting friends and families



7 Manicured gardens for sustainable drainage, Padi 55, Pickering

in giving thought to the public realm, design measures ensure that homes engage positively with the street, and that the natural environment is nurtured through new trees and hedges and the preservation of mature planting, and providing wildlife habitats as well as colour, shade and shelter



8 Expressive awnings at Kofel, Zurich

homes are energy-efficient and well insulated, but also well ventilated and able to avoid overheating by, for example, passive solar design, the use of native deciduous planting supplemented by external blinds or shutters, easily operated awnings over balconies, green roofs and cooling chimneys



9 Spacious and convenient bike store, de Pussenburgh, Rotterdam

adequate storage is available outside the home together with provision for cycles and mobility aids, and that storage inside the home meets the needs of the occupier



10 Shaded surfaces, Bo01, Malmo

shared external surfaces, such as 'home zones', that give priority to pedestrians rather than cars, and which are proving successful in other countries, become more common, with due regard to the kinds of navigation difficulties that some visually impaired people may experience in such environments.

## Summary of Proposals

The new development will provide 40 no. 1 bed dwellings with additional communal, administrative and ancillary accommodation.

All apartments are for the rental market and rent levels will be set so that they are affordable for residents who are receiving housing benefit. In addition to the apartments the scheme will provide these ancillary facilities:

### Communal Facilities

- Reception area
- Communal lounge
- Resident's restaurant
- Laundry
- Hairdressing and therapy rooms
- Buggy store
- Accessible WC's
- Assisted bathroom
- Guest room

### Ancillary Accommodation

- Staff office - 2 no.
- Refuse and recycling store
- Plant room
- Cleaners store
- Kitchen
- 2 no. lifts

The principle features of the proposed building form for the new extra care apartments are as follows;

- A building form that reinforces the street frontage and encloses a courtyard garden
- A single point of entry from Albert Road via a clear and welcoming entrance.
- A secure and secluded garden providing a major outdoor amenity space for the residents
- Wheelchair access throughout
- Circulation around the building via open deck walkways where possible, which allows dual aspect apartments, contact with the outside spaces and optimum natural light and ventilation.
- A private balcony
- Communal facilities available to residents and possibly the wider community. These spaces are clustered around the entrance to ensure a vibrant social heart to the scheme and privacy to the residential areas beyond this semi-public area.

## Site

Site Location

Site Appraisal

Local Character

Tree Constraints and Opportunities

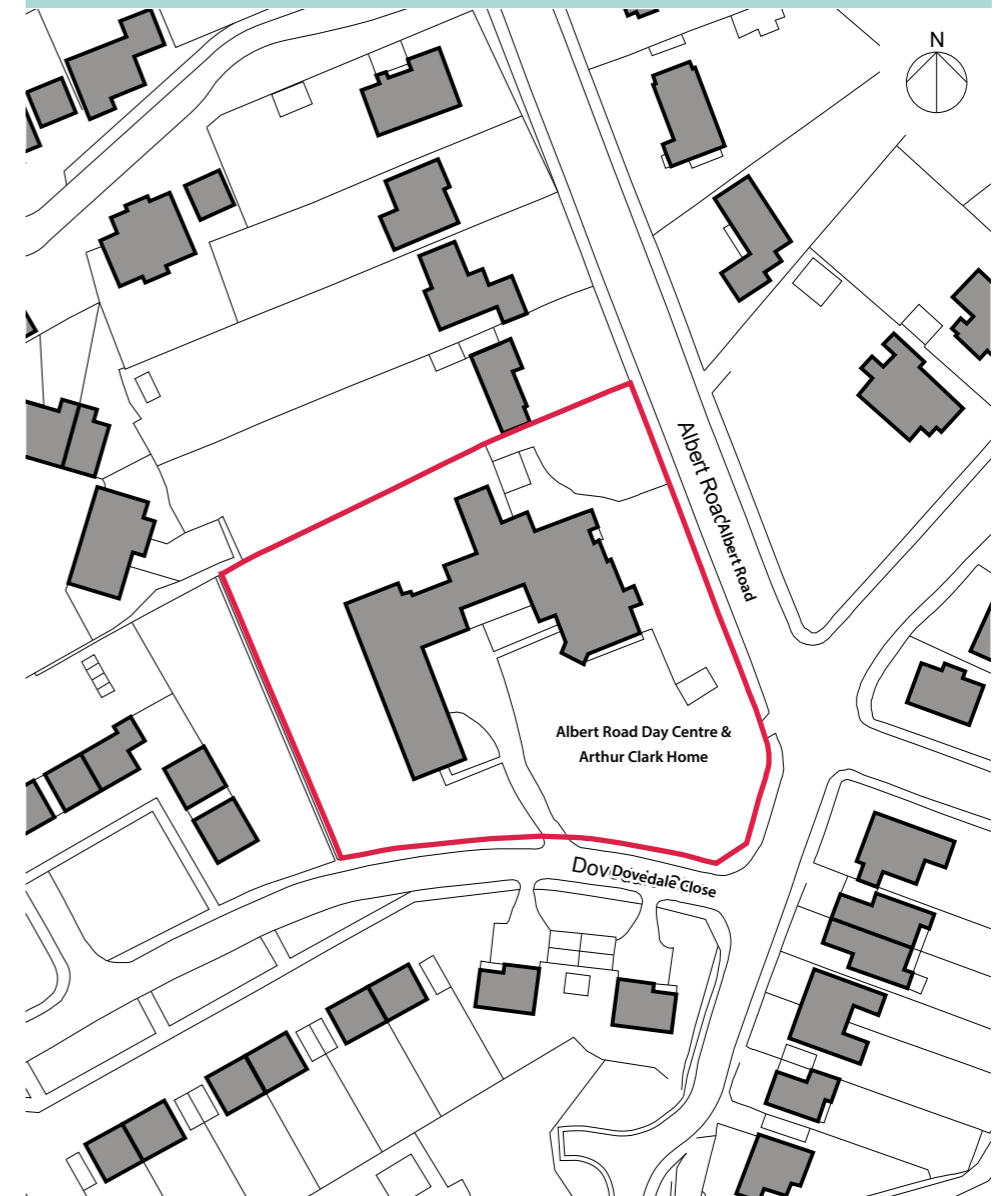
## Site Location

The site of 0.47 hectares is located in Caversham, approximately 1.4 miles to the North of Reading Town Centre. The immediate area is predominantly residential in nature and is characterized by family dwelling houses of larger scale and proportion.

The immediate area is well served in terms of public transport with a regular bus service to the centre stopping directly outside the site on Albert Road.



Aerial Photo



Site Location Plan 1:1250

## Site Appraisal

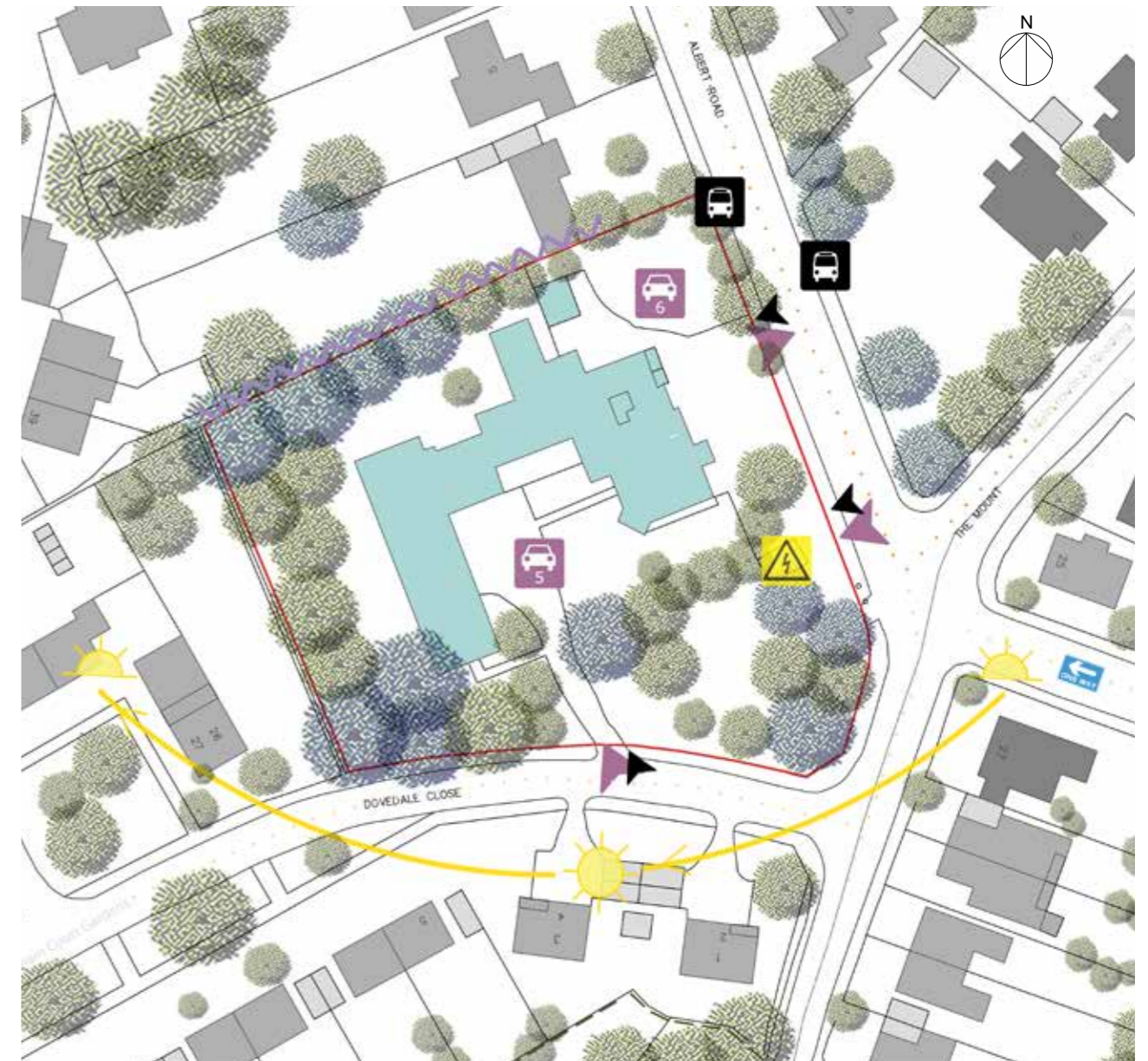
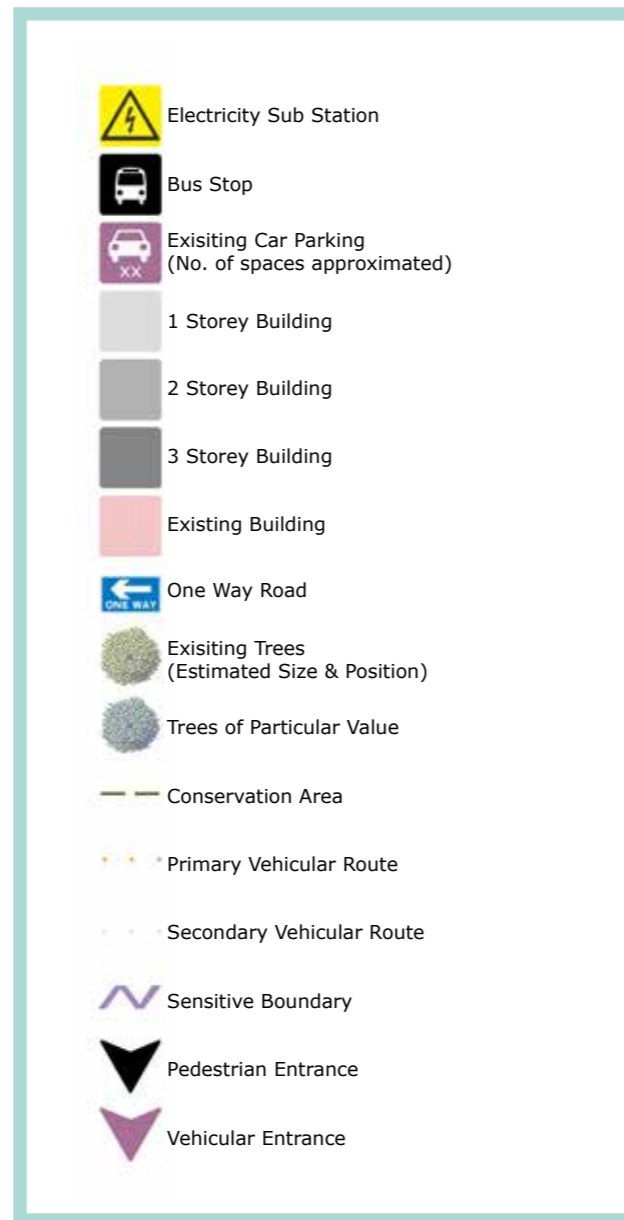
The site is currently occupied by the Albert Road Day Centre and the Arthur Clarke Care Home, which are now vacant. The facilities were recently closed as they do not meet current minimum standards.

The site occupies a prominent corner location in residential Caversham, sandwiched between Albert Road and Dovedale Close. Albert Road is relatively busy and leads to a junction with 3 other roads, whilst Dovedale Close is a quieter cul-de-sac. The site has three existing access points; one from the south via Dovedale Close and two from Albert Road, forming an 'In' and 'Out' loop. The access point furthest from the junction will be retained as the main entrance, and the Dovedale Close access point as a secondary staff entrance only.

Existing facilities on the site are formed of two conjoined buildings: the 3 storey Albert Road Day Centre constructed in the early 1900's, and the 2 storey Arthur Clark Care Home, built in the 1960's and not considered to be of architectural merit. Both buildings are outdated and no suitable for conversion due to layout constraints. There are also a number of single storey ancillary buildings on the site. The main building footprint sits centrally within the plot.

The site is relatively flat with a gradual fall of around 1.5 metres from east to west. The existing landscape includes areas of lawn, paving, and asphalt surfaces to the parking areas. The boundaries are planted with a significant number of mature trees which provide an excellent level of natural screening and represent a valuable visual amenity for residents. The health, life expectancy and category rating has been established in an Arboricultural Report and considered at length when putting together these proposals.

The site is located in a residential area and the existing housing comprises of larger 2 and 3 storey family homes. This stock is interspersed with newer houses built on subdivided plots and occasional larger housing blocks. In terms of building appearance the dominant local architecture is characterised by red brick facades with rendered relief and pitched gabled roofs. The immediate neighbours on Dovedale Close represent a departure and are smaller 2 storey houses and flats built in the 1960's.



Site Analysis (NTS)



# Local Character



Albert Road Day Centre building on Albert Road



Care Home on Dovedale Close



Housing on Dovedale Close







Site viewed from the corner of Albert Road and Dovedale Close



Looking up and down Albert Road

**TREE CONSTRAINTS KEY**

-  EXISTING TREES - ON SITE
-  ROOT PROTECTION AREA
-  TREES REMOVED
-  EXISTING BUILDING FOOTPRINT

## Tree Opportunities & Constraints

### Opportunities

The site is notable for its trees, with the most significant specimens close to the eastern boundary adjoining Albert Road. There are also a number of mature trees along Dovedale Close. Every effort has been taken to preserve as many trees as possible.

The trees on the site represent a valuable visual amenity for the Extra Care user group, who often spend significant amounts of time at home.

### Constraints

Guidance has been sought in the form of an Arboricultural Report in order to ascertain and protect the most valuable specimens. Advice provided by the tree officer at Reading Borough Council has also been taken into account, and the proposals adapted accordingly.

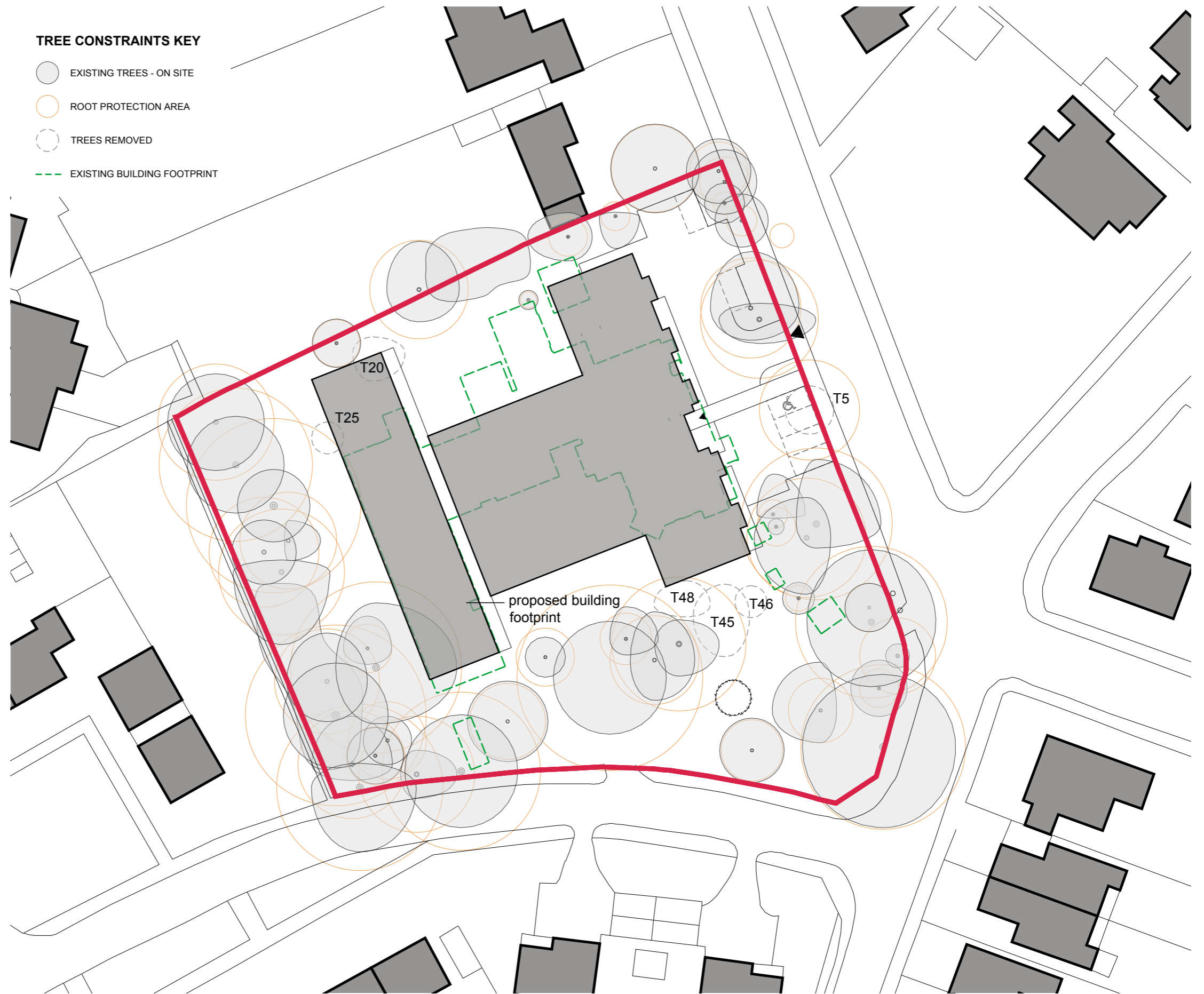
The drawing opposite illustrates the careful location of the proposed building in order to avoid the root protection zones of significant trees.

### Tree Removal

In order to utilise this site for Extra Care Housing some tree removal is necessary, as shown opposite. After careful consideration the following trees are recommended for removal:

- T5 - Lawson Cypress - Category B-C2
- T20 - Lime - Category C2
- T25 - Sycamore - Category C2
- T45 - Yew - Category B2
- T46 - Lawson Cypress - Category B-C2
- T48 - Holly - Category C2

**Please see the Arboricultural Report and associated Tree Constraints Plan prepared by SJ Hodder for further information.**



Tree Constraints Plan

## Scheme Proposals

Dwelling Layouts

Ground Floor Layout

First & Second Floor Layouts

Appearance & Materials

Massing

## Dwelling Layouts

Within each of the individual residential units, careful consideration has been given to guidelines in the Wheelchair Housing Design Guide. The flats have been designed to comply with the DoH Factsheet (for Extra Care), with the one bed apartment being a minimum of 54m<sup>2</sup>. All flats also comply with Lifetime Homes Standards and have been designed with the recommendations of the DoH/HCA HAPPI report in mind.

All rooms in the flats have generous space standards and sufficiently wide doors for residents using a wheelchair or walking frame and all walls have the strength to accommodate grab rails as required in the future. The en-suites in the flats have been designed to enable side transfer from the wheelchair to the WC, knee space under the basin for wheelchair users and full access to the shower via a level access design. There is direct access from the bedroom to the bathroom with the potential of a hoist to

be fitted at a later date. The kitchens have been designed to be suitable for older people with wheelchair turning space and an eye level oven which prevents residents from having to bend.

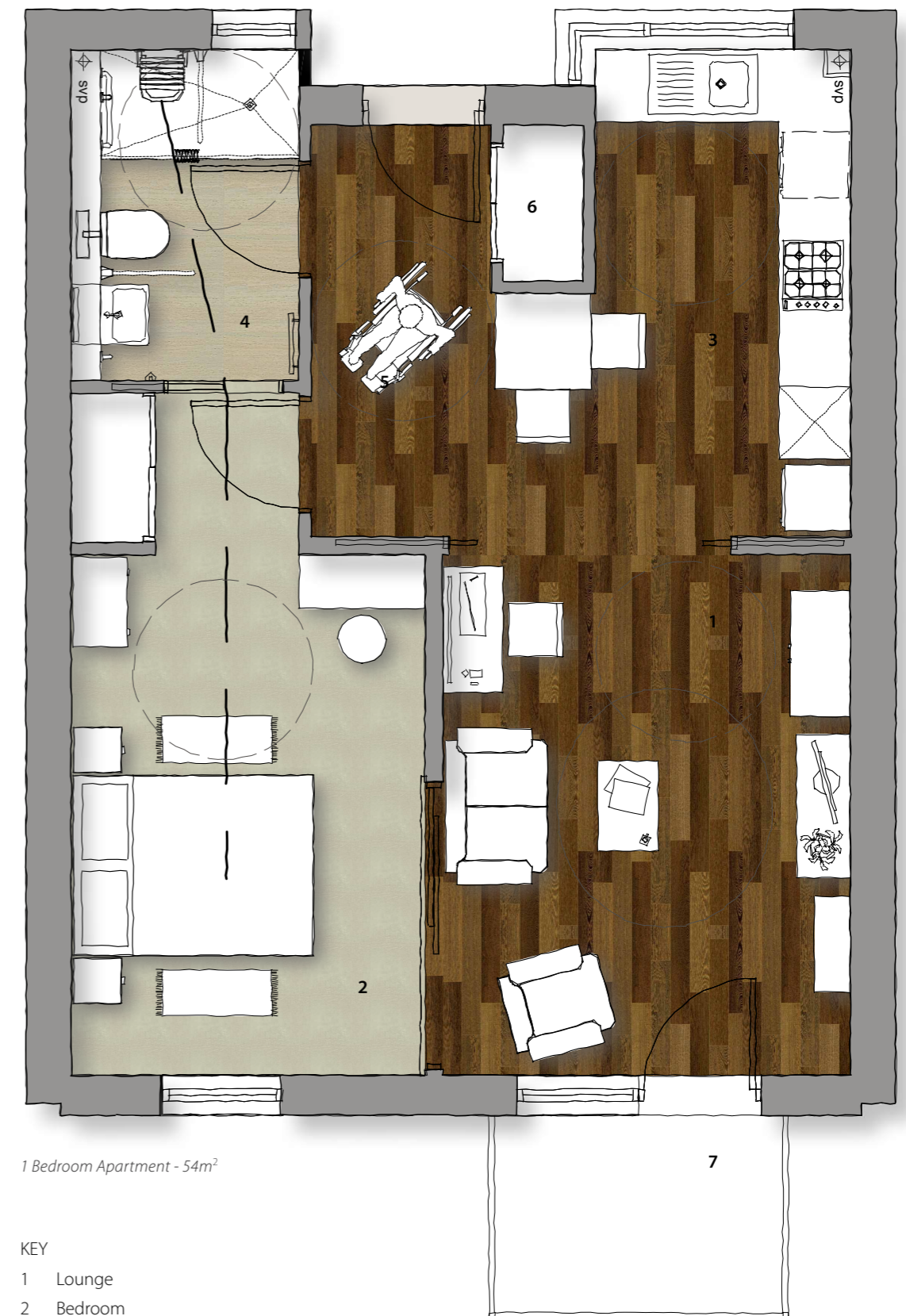
All apartments will benefit from private amenity space in the form of balconies. In addition, a small number of residents on the ground floor will have a small patio area for their private use.

Many apartments are dual aspect in order to maximise natural light and cross ventilation. All dwellings will benefit from generous windows to bedrooms and living rooms to ensure optimum levels of natural light.

Adequate sound separation is important between flats where some, but not all, residents suffer from hearing impairments. The requirements of Part E of the current Building Regulations for the resistance of passage of sound will be exceeded.



Apartments



1 Bedroom Apartment - 54m<sup>2</sup>

- KEY
- 1 Lounge
  - 2 Bedroom
  - 3 Kitchen
  - 4 Shower Room
  - 5 Hall
  - 6 Store
  - 7 Balcony



Ground Floor Plan

## Ground Floor Layout

The building has been designed to reinforce the street scene along Albert Road, whilst maintaining the valuable tree screen. The main entrance is located centrally on the Albert Road elevation and expressed by a glazed canopy. The communal spaces are clustered around the main entrance to ensure both an active frontage and a vibrant social heart to the scheme. The bistro restaurant is adjacent to the main foyer space and enjoys a dual aspect. The communal lounge is situated to the south with views to three sides and access to a terrace and wandering routes through the communal gardens. Other communal facilities in the building include a hairdresser, laundry, pamper bathroom and buggy storage.

All of these spaces will be monitored from the main office which is located adjacent to the entrance with views into the foyer and surrounding spaces. A progressive privacy security strategy will be employed to ensure that the residential areas of the scheme are only accessible via fobbed entry doors and lifts from the foyer space.

As many as possible apartments enjoy dual aspect layouts. This allows all apartments to benefit from maximum natural light and natural ventilation to kitchens and bathrooms. Apartments are instead accessed via colonnades at ground floor and open deck galleries to upper floors. These circulation spaces will provide views out, contact with the garden and spaces for seating areas to encourage spontaneous interaction within the community of residents. The central internal corridor spine is top lit, with generous light wells to filter daylight down to floors below.

# First & Second Floor Layout



### KEY

- 1 BED EXTRA CARE APARTMENT
- COMMUNAL FACILITIES
- ANCILLARY
- EXTERNAL ACCESS DECK
- EXISTING TREES - ON SITE
- EXISTING BUILDING FOOTPRINT

FOR PROPOSED TREE REMOVAL PLEASE SEE TREE CONSTRAINTS DRAWING

First and Second Floor Plan



Local Materials - left to right  
 1. Reading silver grey facing brick  
 2. Berkshire Orange multi brick  
 3. Off-white render  
 4. Timber - stained and painted

## Appearance & Materials

The building form has been designed to respond sensitively to the scale and appearance of the residential neighbourhood, drawing particularly on a number of local architectural features:

- a strong local vernacular of gables to articulate the roof and break the building mass down to a more domestic scale
- a use of bays to break up the elevation, as is common amongst the larger houses in Caversham
- a palette of local materials, in particular a Berkshire orange brick complemented by a Reading silver grey (shown above).

These elements have been drawn together to provide two elevational options for the Albert Road elevation, shown on the next page.

The proposed building is three stories in height, as are many dwellings in the area. As the overall height is greater than that of the immediate neighbours, a two storey bay (or recessed balcony) is used on the Albert Road elevation, to relate to the eaves line of the neighbouring property and reduce the massing.

In both options a glazed slot serves to break up the elevation, demarcate the central entrance and bring light into the central spine of the building. The glazing is shaded with timber brise soleil where necessary to avoid overheating.

The grey stained timber windows and brise soleil complement both bricks shown and reflect the timber detailing used in many houses in the Caversham area. The amount of fenestration used varies in Option 1 and Option 2 to reflect the desired public presence of the building.

Roofs may have photovoltaic and solar thermal panels fitted in order to assist in meeting environmental design criteria.

The combinations of quality design and carefully chosen materials will produce a building that is both contemporary and respectful of its historic context.



Berkshire orange brick, bay fronted house on The Mount, Caversham



Silver grey brick building on Caversham High Street



Gables along Albert Road



Sketch street scene using the gables to articulate the building along the street frontage

## Elevational Treatment - Option 1

- Gabled roofscape to break the building mass down into 'dwellings'.
- Alternating red and grey local bricks.
- Zinc bays aligning with the eaves of the neighbouring dwelling.
- Central glazed entrance to visually break the street elevation.
- Domestic scale fenestration to blend in with the residential area.



Albert Road Sketch Elevation - Option 1



Sketch Street Scene - Option 1

## Elevational Treatment - Option 2

- Gabled roofscape to break the building down into 'dwellings'.
- Simple red brick gables with rendered relief to the top floor recessed balcony. The facing brick to each gable could also alternate, as in Option 1.
- Recessed top floor balconies aligning with eaves of the neighbouring dwelling.
- Central glazed entrance to visually break the street elevation.
- Increased glazing at ground floor to highlight the non-domestic uses within. This may be useful to promote the restaurant, cafe or hairdresser if they are open to the public.



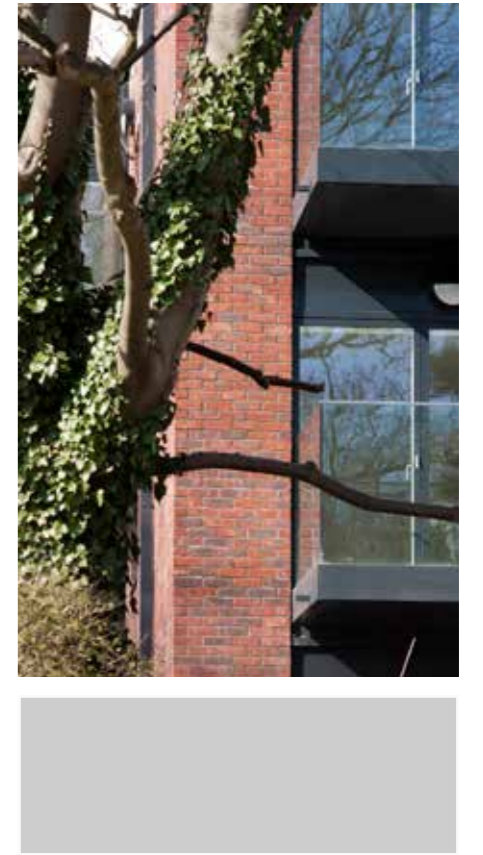
Albert Road Sketch Elevation - Option 2



Sketch Street Scene - Option 2



### Precedent Images



# Landscaping

Landscape Plan

# Landscape Plan



- KEY**
1. Vehicular access
  2. Main entrance
  3. Cycle parking
  4. Car park
  5. Secured railing + gate
  6. Railing + formal clipped hedge planting
  7. Courtyard garden
  8. Private patio
  9. Seating area at the end of visual axis from main entrance
  10. Communal terrace
  11. Outdoor seating terrace
  12. Kitchen garden
  13. Raised planters
  14. Woodland glade walk
  15. Benches
  16. Staff parking
  17. Railing + native edge planting
  18. Close-board fence + native hedge planting
  19. Natural edge planting

