

# 33-41 RATCLIFFE TERRACE | EDINBURGH

## DESIGN STATEMENT

24012-56T-P1-ZZZ-R-A-001  
30.04.2025



# SUMMARY

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This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of the redevelopment of 33-41 Ratcliffe Terrace in Newington, Edinburgh.

The site is a brownfield gap site within the traditional tenements of Newington. An existing building to the rear of the site operated as a food market up until 2018, when it became a plant-based cafe and wellness centre, and later in 2023 Orcadia Creative Learning Centre. The building and its associated car park have since become vacant.

The applicant seeks to redevelop the site to address the void within the street elevation along Ratcliffe Terrace and provide quality living accommodation to complement the neighbouring existing and proposed developments within the area.

The proposal is for purpose-built student accommodation which will retain the existing commercial premises on Ratcliffe Terrace. This will complement the residential-led development of the area, whilst enhancing the mix of uses. External and internal amenity spaces will be provided for residents to create active frontages which integrate the proposal within the landscape of Newington.



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# CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

# 1.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

## 1.1 THE SITE



A / Site Location

The site is located along Ratcliffe Terrace on what is currently an industrial brownfield site. It sits adjacent to an existing commercial business to the north and opposite private residential flats and a petrol filling station. The neighbouring properties to the south are traditional tenement buildings, featuring ground floor commercial premises with residential use on the upper floors. The site benefits from its close proximity to public amenity space at the Meadows and Holyrood Park.

The site currently presents a void within the established Ratcliffe Terrace street elevation and has limited street presence. The development proposal contained in this document seeks to readdress this imbalance.

— Site Boundary



B / Aerial View of the Site Looking North East

# 1.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

## 1.2 SITE HISTORY



A/ Historical Aerial View (1957) Showing the Application Site in Yellow

The application site sits between the Newington and Grange areas. The Grange was built between 1830 and 1890 and is representative of the idealisation of country living within an urban setting.

Newington was developed from the early 19th century from a predominantly rural area into a suburb around the time of the creation of the new route from New Town to Liberton. This accelerated the development of the city southward. The area was predominantly Victorian tenements and Georgian terraces which largely remain today.

Over time, light industrial use developed along Causewayside leading to Ratcliffe Terrace becoming a local town centre amongst the two residential areas of Newington and the Grange. The listed ground floor public house, adjacent to the site, is recorded on maps as early as 1897, indicated by the letters, P.H.

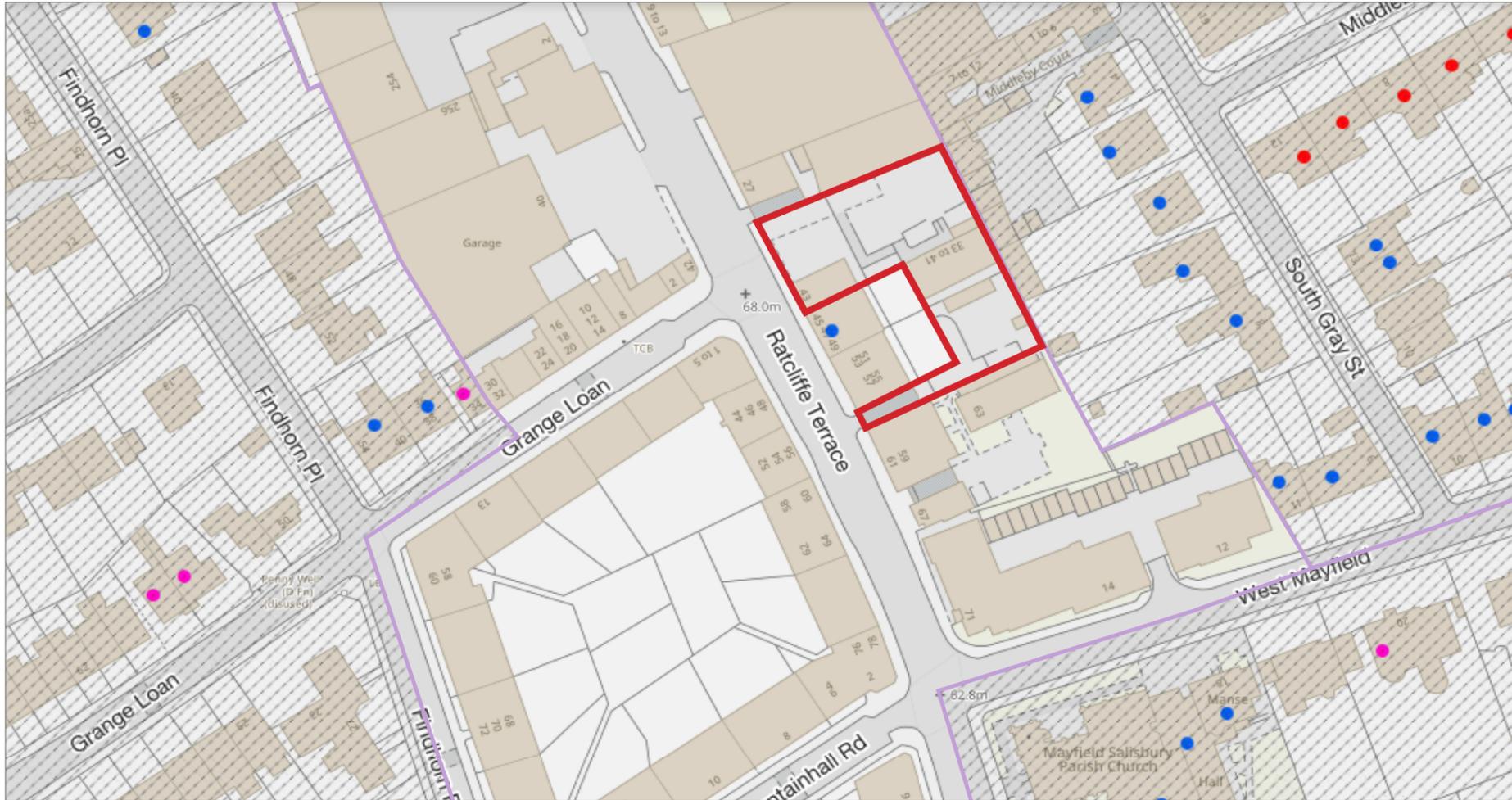


B/ Historical Context 1897

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# 1.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

## 1.3 CONSERVATION AREA



The site is located adjacent to, yet not within, the Blacket Conservation Area to the east, the Craigmillar Park Conservation Area to the south, and the Grange Conservation Area to the west. The character appraisals of these neighbouring conservation areas emphasise architectural homogeneity through building lines, heights, massing, the use of traditional materials, and the predominant residential use.

While the site falls outwith surrounding Conservation Areas, it is still important to consider the impact of the proposal on their character and appearance.

### Listed Buildings

- Category A listed building
- Category B listed building
- Category C listed building

### Conservation Area



A/ Edinburgh City Council Conservation Area Map

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# 1.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

## 1.4 LISTED BUILDINGS



A / 45 Ratcliffe Terrace, Leslie's Bar

The building listing to No 45 Ratcliffe Terrace lies immediately adjacent to the site boundary. It is a ground floor public house within a sandstone tenement building. It was designed by P.L. Henderson in 1895 and is noted for its timber plastered and panelled frontage.

This is the only designated asset that has a physical link to the proposal. Numbers 43 and 45 share a common stonework frontage that would be difficult to separate without negatively impacting on both. We have therefore chosen to retain the stonework to the ground floor of No 43 as well as the stonework margin of the first floor that continues over the boundary to number 45. This avoids any evidential impact on the designated building, and the historic link to the neighbour is retained.

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# 1.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

## 1.5 LOCAL CHARACTER



The prevailing architectural character within the area is predominantly 4-5 storey tenement buildings, reflecting the residential nature of Newington. Retail, hospitality and light industrial ground floor establishments are present on Ratcliffe Terrace, providing active frontages along the street.

A variety of architectural forms and roofscapes are employed with a varying level of dormers, chimneys, inhabited roofs and spires. Additionally, the street elevation steps in and out, creating splits in the facade which provide vertical emphasis to the elevation.

The contemporary buildings within the area are able to situate themselves within the historic context of the street through an observation of scale and proportions to create parallels with historical features and maintain the rhythm of the street.

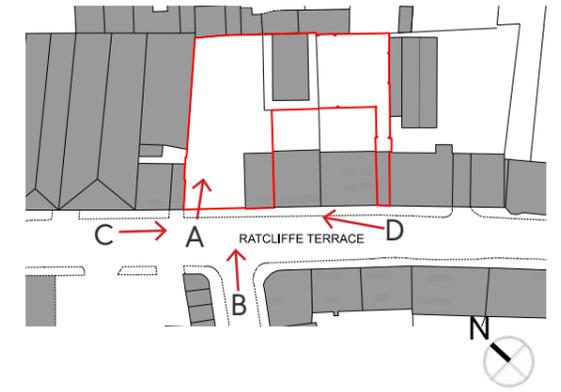


- A /** Ratcliffe Terrace, Edinburgh  
Aerial view showing the context of the street and the varied roofscape.
- B /** 1 Grange Loan, Edinburgh  
View at the junction between Ratcliffe Terrace and Grange Loan illustrating an active ground floor use with residential above, as well as, a varied roofscape adorned with dormer windows.
- C /** 43 Ratcliffe Terrace, Edinburgh  
View of the existing 2-storey building located on the site along Ratcliffe Terrace, featuring traditional first floor windows, renovated ground floor and a terracotta tile pitched roof.
- D /** 59 Ratcliffe Terrace, Edinburgh  
A contemporary example, granted planning permission in 2005, which illustrates the varied roofscape and expressive street elevation to create modern ties to historical features.
- E /** 63 Ratcliffe Terrace, Edinburgh  
View at the junction between Ratcliffe Terrace and West Mayfield showing an ornate corner development with an ordered rhythm of window openings.

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# 1.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

## 1.6 SITE PHOTOS



A/ View from Ratcliffe Terrace looking east across the site



B/ View from Grange Loan looking east across the site



C/ View looking south down Ratcliffe Terrace

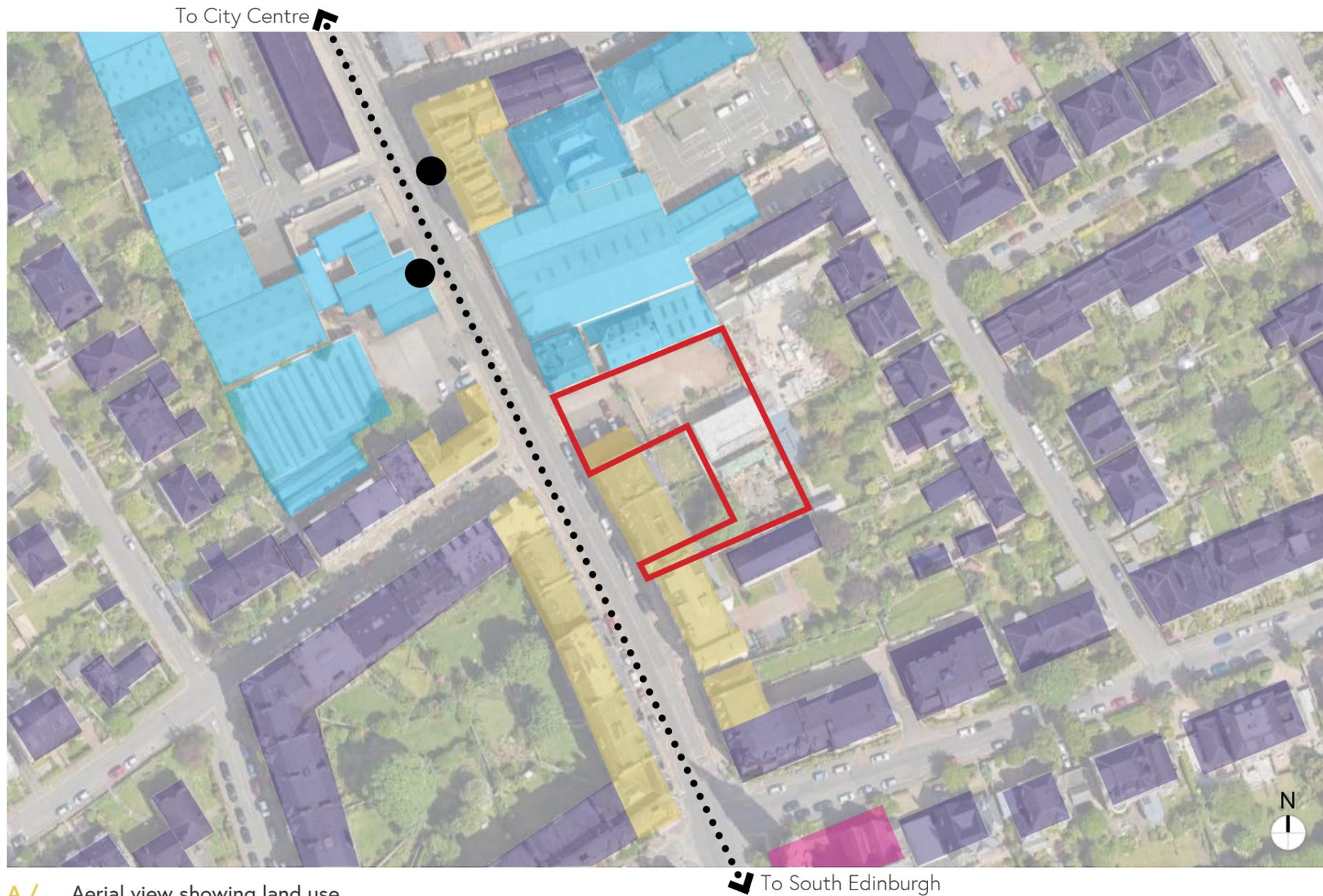


D/ View looking north along Ratcliffe Terrace

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# 1.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

## 1.7 LAND USE



The site is situated on one of the main arterial routes into Edinburgh on the east side of Ratcliffe Terrace. Key public transport routes link the south of Edinburgh to the city centre from the 2 no. bus stops 1 minute walk from the site.

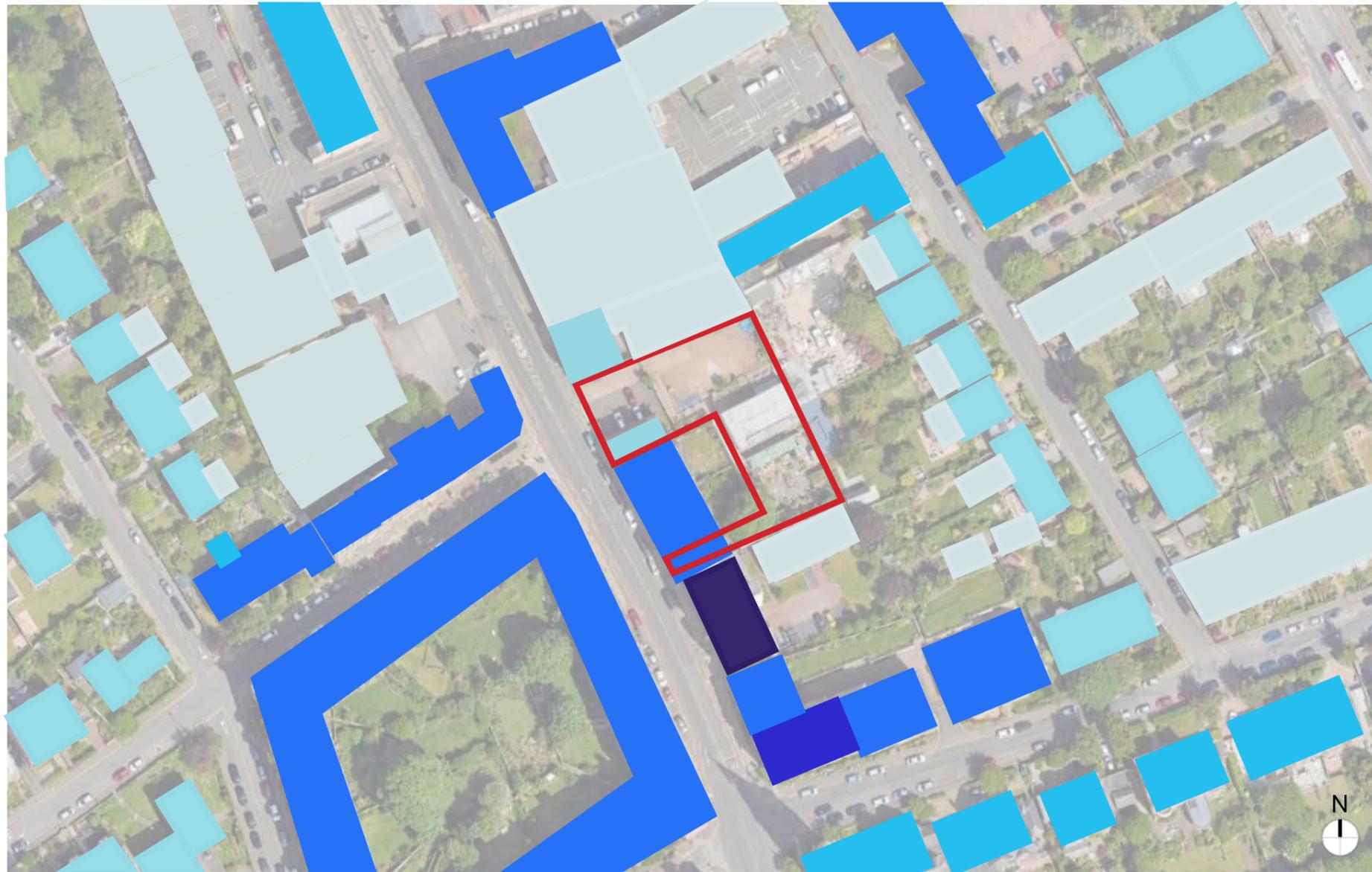
The site is an existing brownfield site where commercial and business uses are prevalent. Mixed use residential and commercial properties are prominent along Ratcliffe Terrace whereas the surrounding area is populated with residential buildings.

### Key:

- The Site
- Main Transport Routes
- Bus Stops
- Residential
- Future Residential
- Commercial / Business
- Mixed Use Residential / Commercial / Business
- Places of Worship

# 1.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

## 1.8 SURROUNDING SCALE & MASS



The site is surrounded by predominantly 4 and 5 storey traditional tenement buildings along Ratcliffe Terrace and 2 storey buildings to the east of the site. The wider context offers a varied mix of scales and heights ranging from six storeys to single storey.

A number of single storey warehouse buildings have proliferated to the north and north west of the site. These are generally light industrial uses such as vehicle servicing and timber merchants.

### Key:

- Application Boundary
- 1 Storey Building
- 2 Storey Building
- 3 Storey Building
- 4 Storey Building
- 5 Storey Building
- 6 Storey Building

A / Location Plan Showing Massing

# 1.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

## 1.9 CONNECTIVITY



The site is ideally located in close proximity to a range of educational campuses. The University of Edinburgh's George Square campus and King's Buildings are both only a 20 minute walk from the site. Each campus can be accessed via the number 12 bus (route shown in orange) with a bus stop located adjacent to the site. King's Buildings is also accessible via the number 24 bus (route shown in blue) which has a bus stop located on Dalrymple Crescent, 2 streets across from the site. Students attending Edinburgh Napier University can catch the number 5 bus (route shown in purple) from Causewayside. This site is ideally located to respond to Policy 9 and Policy 13 of NPF4.

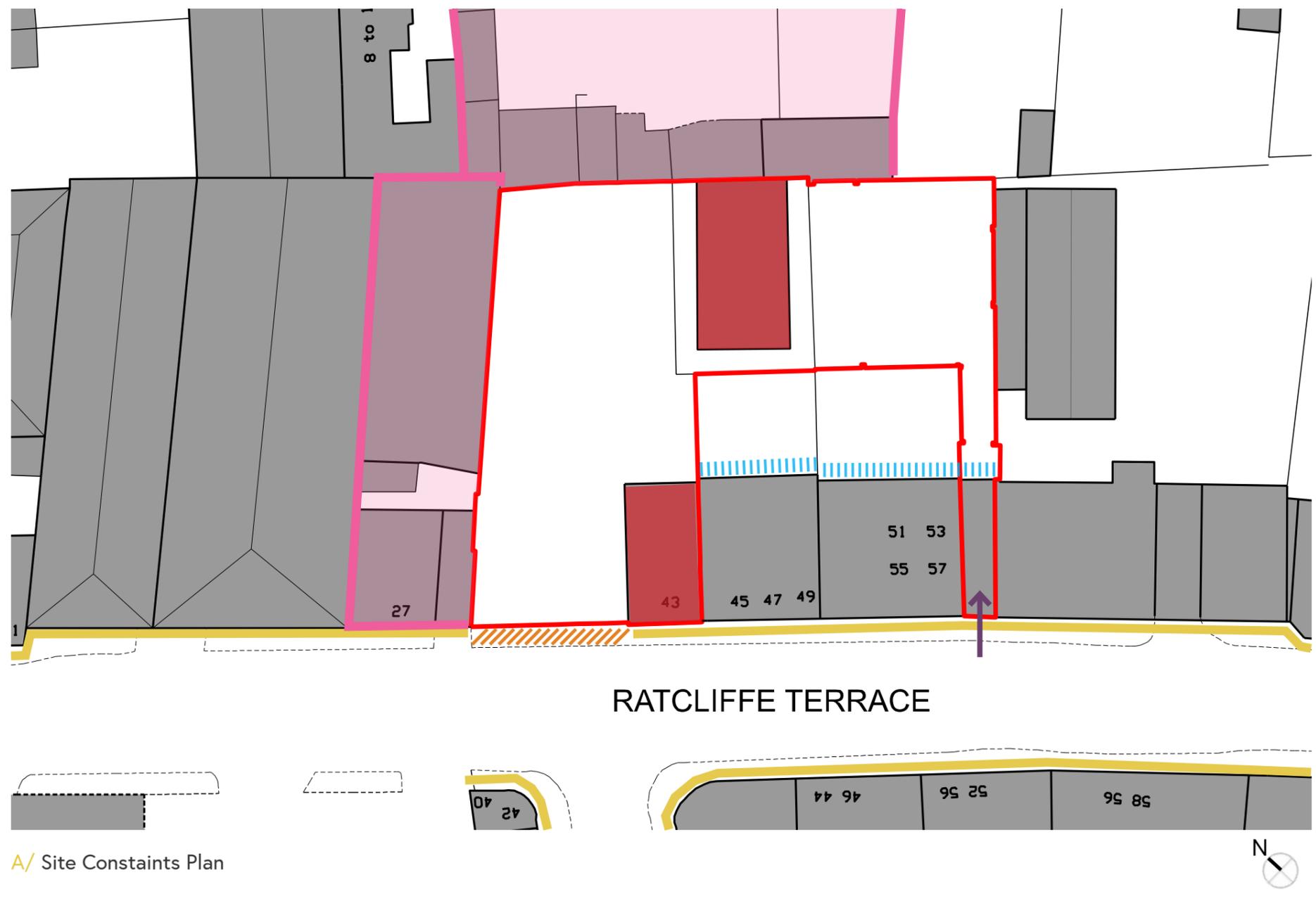
- The Site
- Bus Stops
- No. 12 Bus Route
- No. 24 Bus Route
- No. 5 Bus Route
- Additional Routes

Educational Institute	Distance	Connectivity
<span style="color: yellow;">●</span> The University of Edinburgh (George Sq)	0.9 miles	21 minute walk or 7 minutes by cycle. 10 minutes via the No 12 bus
<span style="color: blue;">●</span> The University of Edinburgh (King's Buildings)	0.8 miles	17 minute walk or 5 minutes by cycle. 20 minutes via the No. 12 or 24 bus.
<span style="color: pink;">●</span> Napier University (Merchiston Campus)	1.6 miles	37 minute walk or 12 minutes by cycle. 24 minutes via the No 5 bus.

A / Aerial map indicating the travel distances to nearby higher education institutes

# 1.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

## 1.10 CONSTRAINTS



The site's south-west boundary fronts onto Ratcliffe Terrace, a busy thoroughfare connecting the south to the city centre. This boundary may experience potential noise from the street. It is important that this elevation takes into consideration the established building line and character of the street, in order to relate positively with neighbouring properties and address Policy 7 of NPF4 and ENV11 of City Plan 2030.

Additionally, the site wraps around the back of 45-57 Ratcliffe Terrace and has a secondary access route through a pend further down the street. The proposal will be positioned to respect the neighbouring developments and ensure daylight, sunlight and privacy standards are maintained, addressing ENV33 of City Plan 2030.

The site is adjoined by land which will potentially be developed in the near future. The proposal put forward will be mindful of this potential development to ensure the sites work positively together.

- Key:
- Application Boundary
  - Existing Buildings - to be Part or Totally Removed
  - Potential Future Development
  - Established Building Lines
  - Potential Noise
  - Existing Access Route to Pend
  - Overlooking From Neighbouring Properties
  - ✱ Gable of Existing Building

A/ Site Constraints Plan

# 1.0 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

## 1.11 DEMOLITION

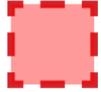


The extent of demolition on the site is outlined on the adjacent site plan. The two storey building at No. 43 Ratcliffe Terrace has heritage value that merits integration with the new site proposal. On its own the building is at odds with the surrounding tenemental scale and makes development of the site far more challenging.

By removing the terracotta tiled roof, accommodation can be extended above whilst retaining the existing stone walls. These can form a feature to the site entrance and retain heritage value to the street. A slight reduction to the height of the stonework will be required and this will be carried out sympathetically to tie in with new stonework to the front facade.

### RATCLIFFE TERRACE



-  To be Demolished
-  Application Boundary

A/ Proposed Downtakings Plan

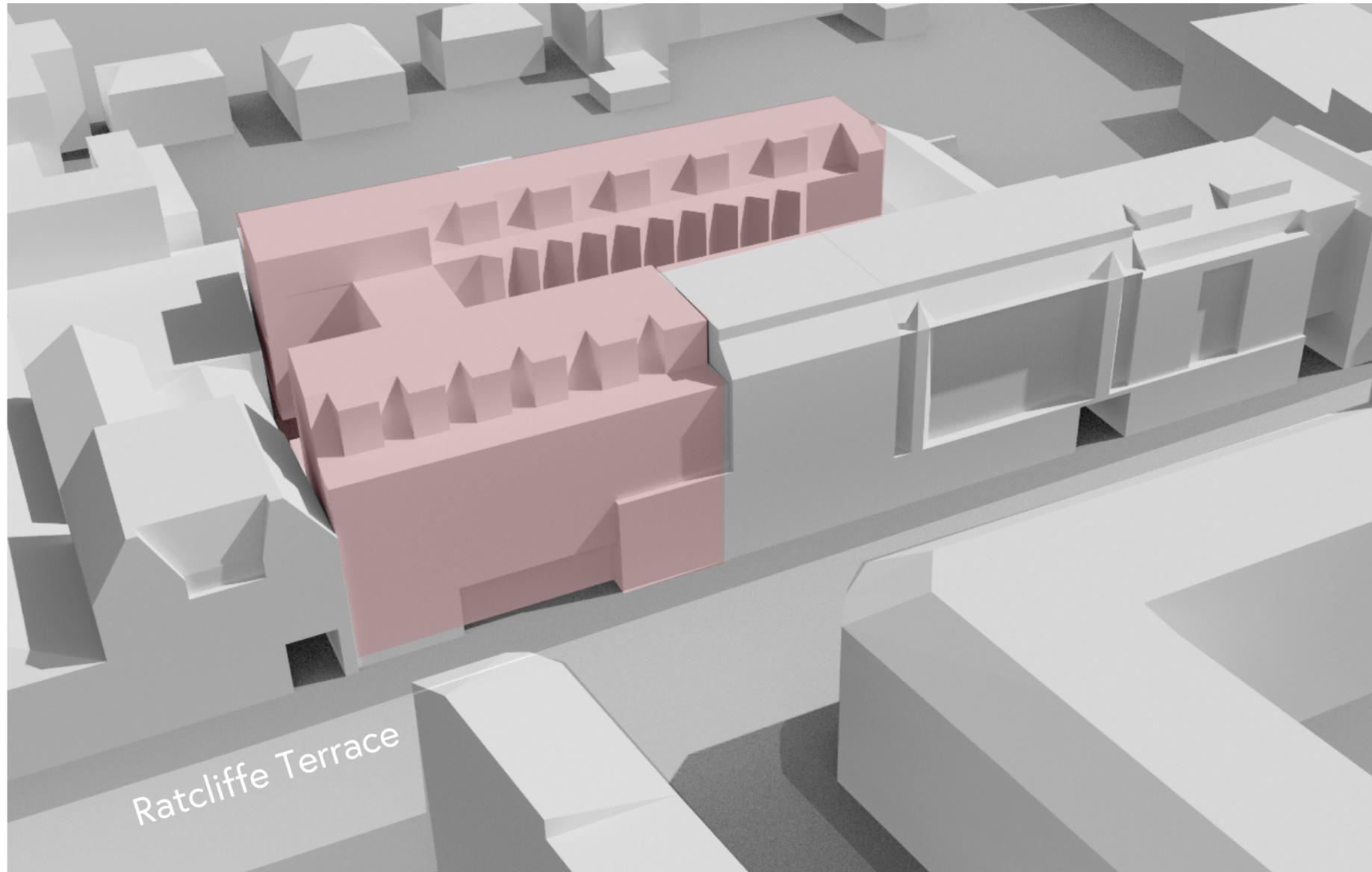


# 2

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

## 2.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 CONCEPT DESIGN



A / Concept Massing Proposal

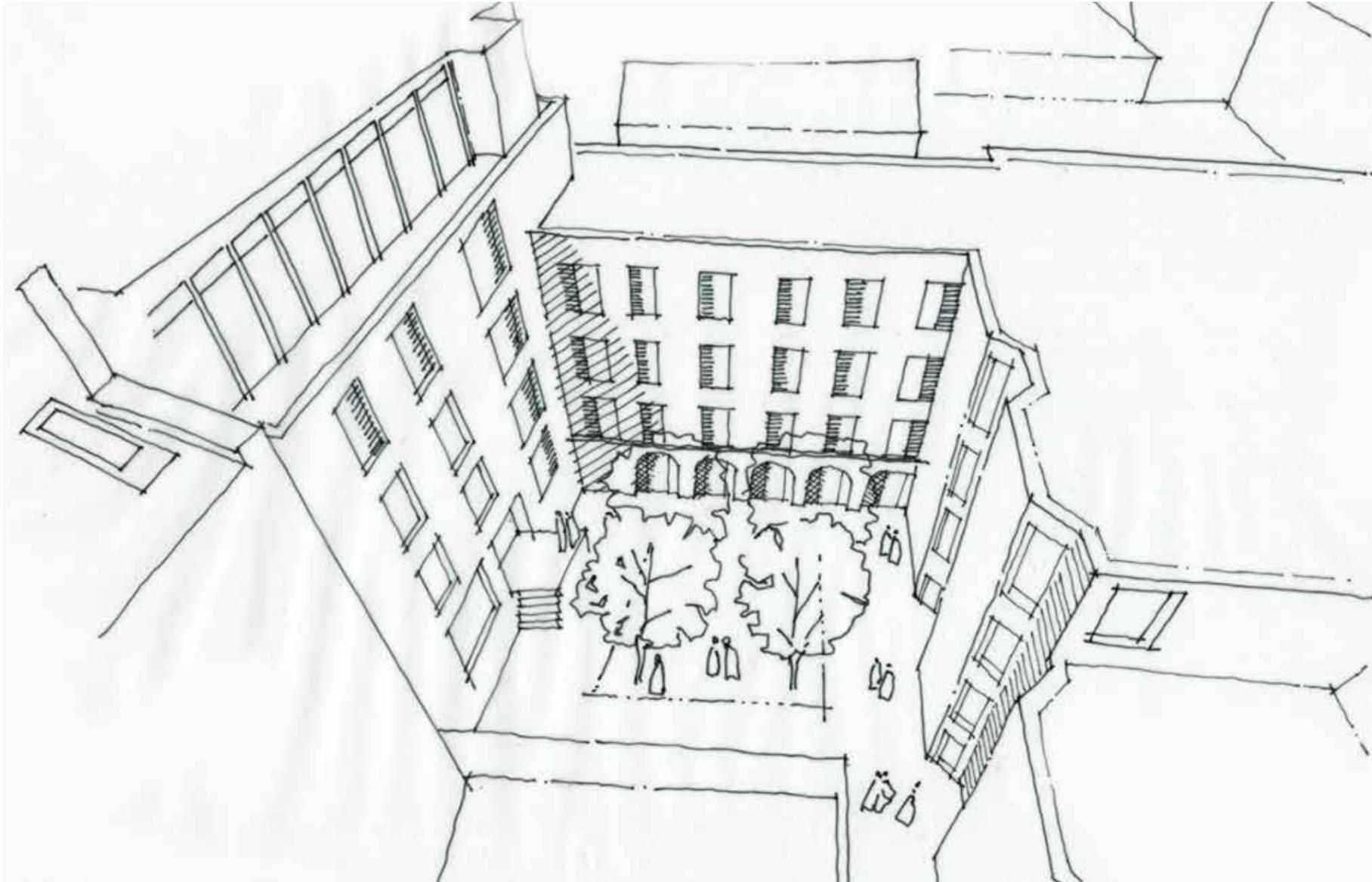
The site is L-shaped on plan with an obvious gap in the street where tenement buildings once stood. The intention is to provide a new infill element to restore the broken street frontage at a scale and height to match the existing tenements.

To the rear of the site we are proposing a lower block that stretches from north to south at a more subservient scale and design to the main block.

A third linking block will join the two buildings together and provide enclosure to a south facing courtyard.

## 2.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### 2.2 DESIGN PRINCIPLES



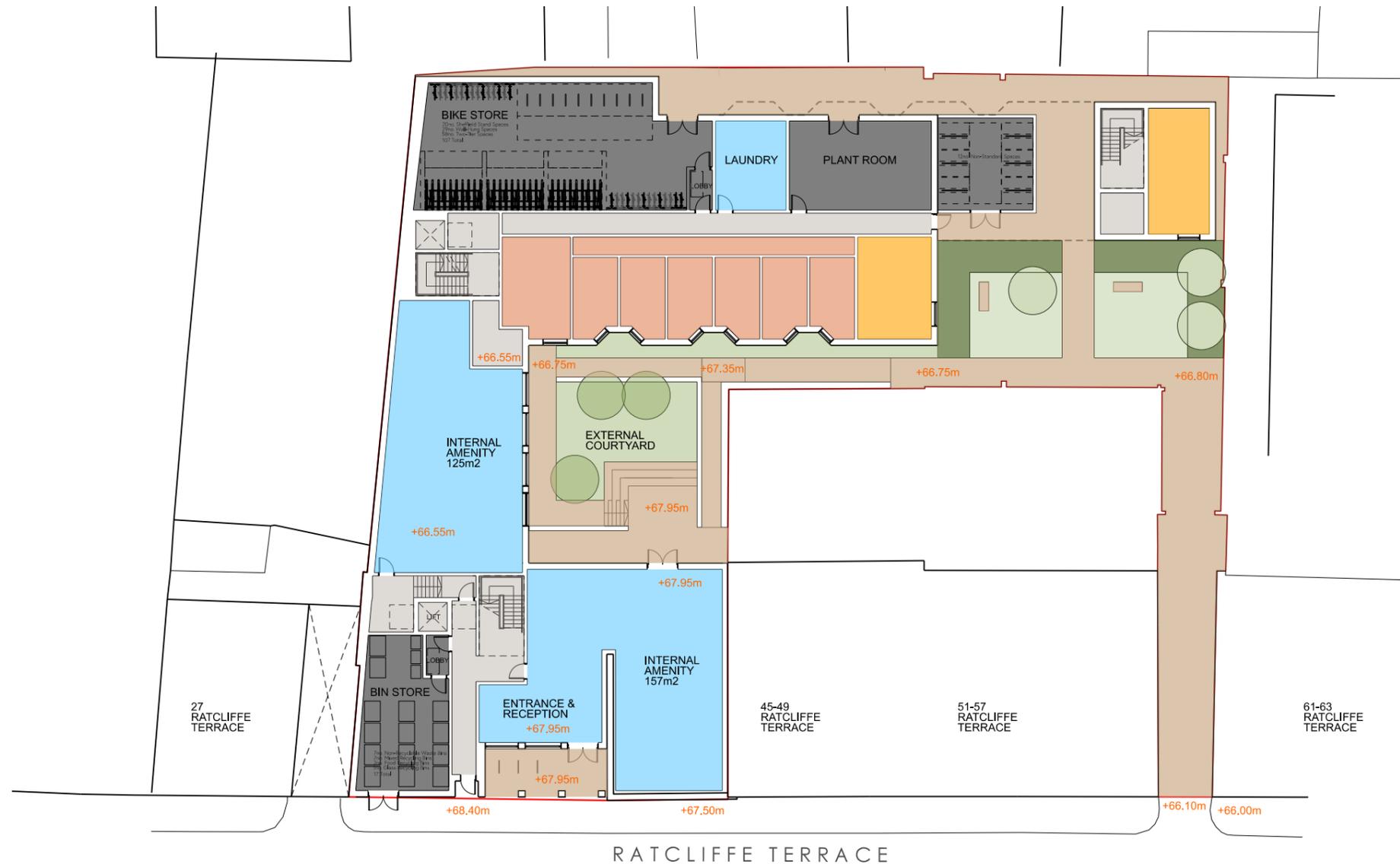
A / Courtyard concept sketch

The courtyard is a central focus of the development with access to internal amenity areas directly off the space. Larger accessible studios will be placed at the lower ground floor level to ensure that there is easy and level access to the amenity spaces for all.

The external amenity space is designed to be accessible, high-quality, and contributes to the overall external amenity requirement of least 20% of the total site area in line with Policy 14 of NPF4 and ENV1/ENV31 of City Plan 2030.

# 2.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

## 2.3 EARLY STAGES



Retention of employment use on the site is a key aspect to the site to maintain Newington's vibrant street life and mix of uses, whilst maintaining an active frontage of the proposal to the street.

The main entrance has therefore been positioned centrally to the west boundary, flanked by the retail unit to the south and servicing and access route to the north.

The pavement to this part of Ratcliffe Terrace is narrow so the design introduces a set back the entrance to increase the area of public realm space. This covered area will provide transitional space behind a stone colonnade for pausing and waiting before entering the building.

The remaining ancillary space is set up for critical access and escape routes from the building and positioning of bin stores for direct collection from the street.

A / Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan

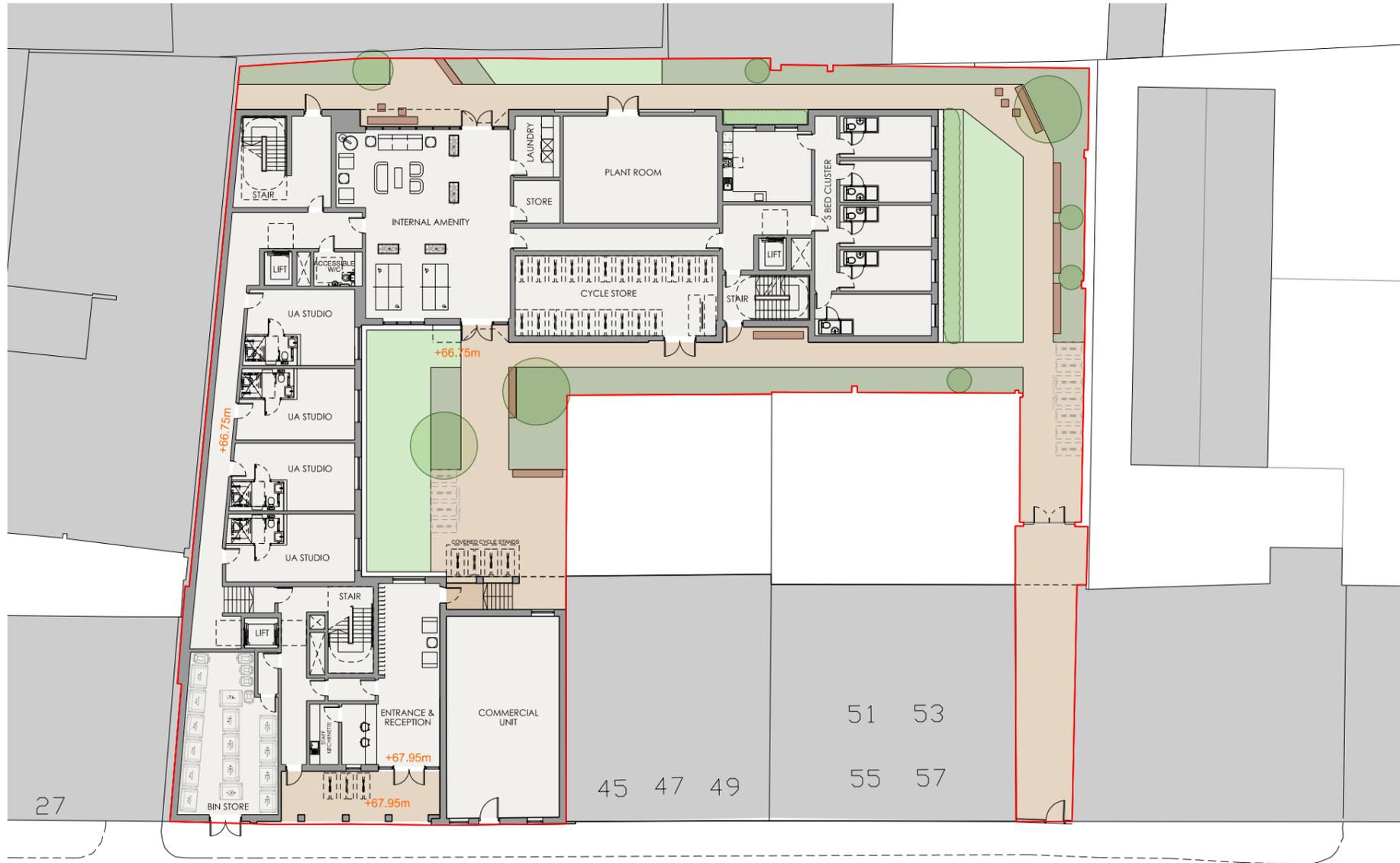
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PROPOSAL

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# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.1 LOWER GROUND FLOOR



The proposed development delivers an active frontage to Ratcliffe Terrace, featuring a covered entrance and a widened public realm to enhance the pedestrian environment. The ground floor commercial unit is retained, ensuring the continuation of employment use on site.

Waste storage is located for direct collection from Ratcliffe Terrace, minimizing disruption to public areas. South-facing external amenity spaces are provided to maximize natural light, supported by additional internal amenity and ancillary spaces within the rear wing.

External amenity areas have been positioned to the south of the development to maximize access to natural daylight and sunlight, providing high-quality outdoor spaces for residents' use. In addition, the rear wing of the building will incorporate internal amenity space and ancillary accommodation to support a strong residential community and deliver a comprehensive range of resident facilities.

Accessible accommodation is provided at ground floor level, designed in accordance with relevant accessibility standards to promote inclusive living environments and meet the needs of future occupiers with a range of mobility requirements.

A/ Proposed Site Plan

# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.2 UPPER GROUND FLOOR



A/ Proposed Site Plan

Due to the sloping topography of Ratcliffe Terrace and the design preference to tie in window levels with the adjacent development, this has created a generous height to the entrance area, and providing a sense of importance and grandeur to the street.

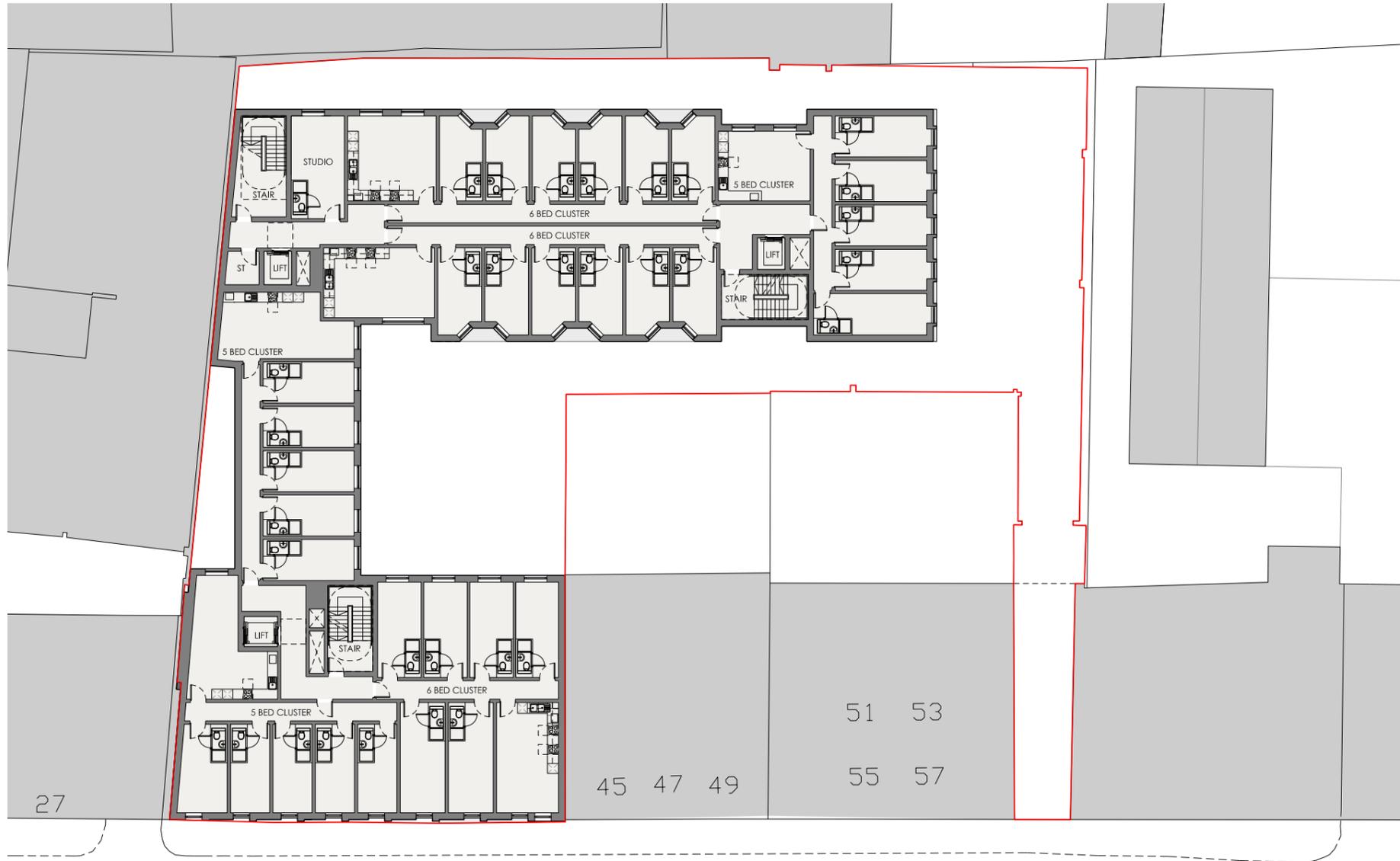
The step in site levels is required to tie in the second site entrance through the pend access, lower down on Ratcliffe Terrace.



B/ Proposed Section (part)

# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.3 FIRST FLOOR

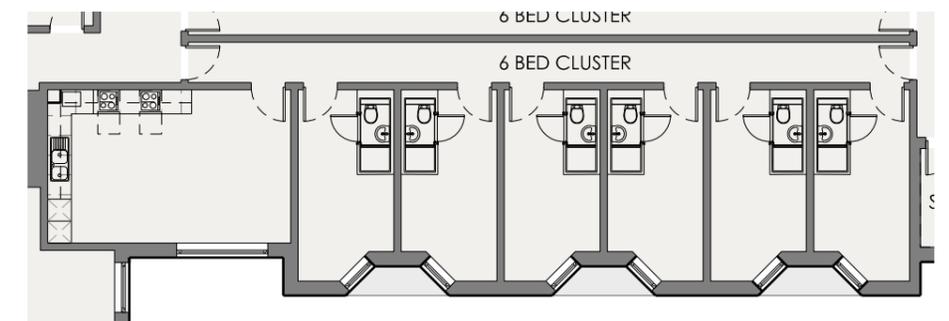


A/ Proposed Site Plan

Internally the accommodation is primarily formed of cluster bedroom accommodation with bedrooms arranged around a shared kitchen in line with planning guidance.

91% of the proposed bedspaces are in the form of cluster apartments, which vary from 3 bedroom to 6 bedroom apartments to suit site constraints and 9% of proposed bedspaces will be studios.

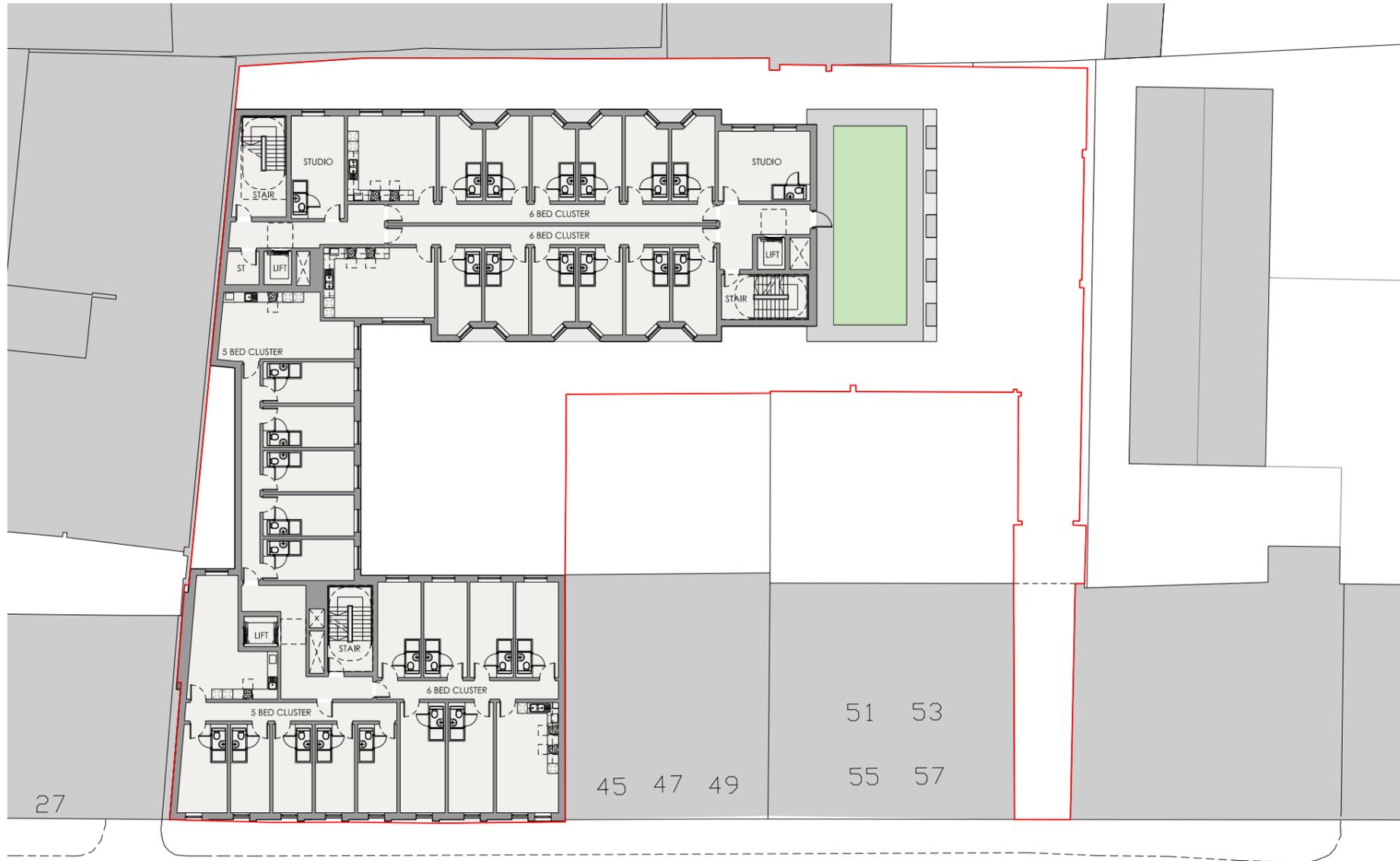
A typical apartment layout is shown below.



B/ Typical Cluster Bedroom Apartment Layout

# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.4 SECOND FLOOR

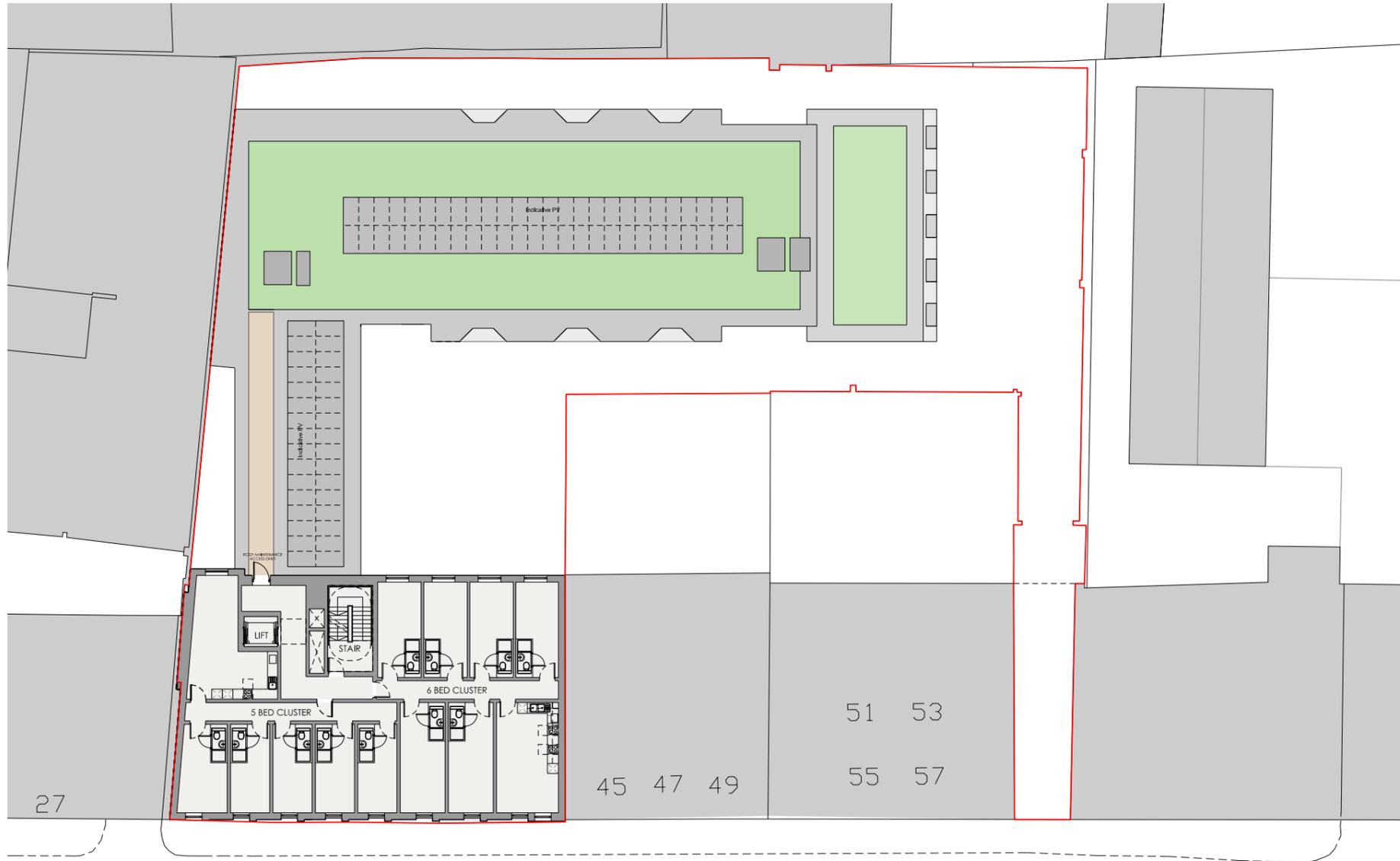


The building form begins to step back at the second floor level so that the scale of the building responds to its surroundings, which are also stepped in response to the sloping site.

A/ Proposed Site Plan

# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.5 THIRD FLOOR



Green roofs will be investigated as part of the site drainage strategy which will also include silt traps and raised planters.

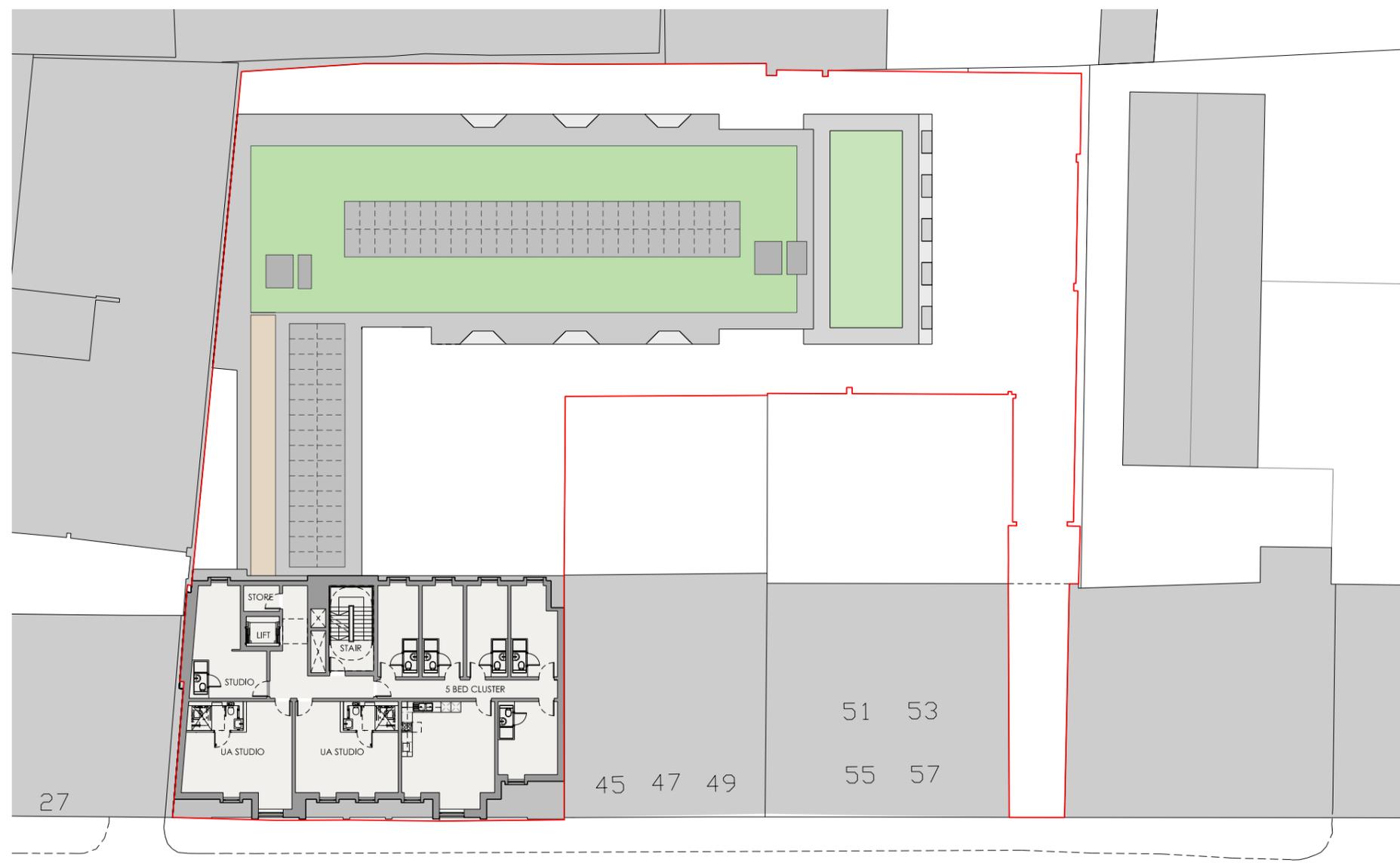
Further detail can be found in the Drainage Strategy and Surface Water Management Plan.

We have also made allowance on the roofs for photovoltaic arrays that can be considered as part of the site energy strategy.

A/ Proposed Site Plan

# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.6 FOURTH FLOOR



The top floor plan to the Ratcliffe Terrace elevation is partially set back from the main facade. This allows an eaves line to be formed that continues that of the adjacent tenements. Above the eaves level the facade steps in and out to reflect the articulation of tenemental roofscapes where there is an established rhythm formed by chimney stacks and pitched slated roofs. Further evidence of this can be seen on the proposed 3d visuals on the coming pages.

A/ Proposed Site Plan

# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.7 WEST (STREET) ELEVATION



A/ Proposed West Contextual Elevation

# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.8 EAST ELEVATION



A/ Proposed East Contextual Elevation

# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.9 3D VISUALS

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A/ View from Grange Loan

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# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.9 3D VISUALS

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A/ View along Ratcliffe Terrace, looking south

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# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.9 3D VISUALS

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A/ View along Ratcliffe Terrace, looking north

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# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.9 3D VISUALS

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A/ View of rear block and courtyard, looking south

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# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.9 3D VISUALS

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A/ View of rear block and courtyard, looking north

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# 3.0 PROPOSAL

## 3.10 MATERIALITY



This design proposal is informed by a careful selection of a limited palette of materials which respond to the surrounding context.

High quality stonework has been chosen as the primary material for the street facing areas of the building. A light buff brick is proposed to reflect the colour and character of the surrounding buildings.

Anthracite grey coloured accent metal cladding is proposed for the top storey, and to be woven throughout the building in the window frames and flashing details. This will introduce a level of detail and interest in the facade.

- A / Elevation detail
- B / Anthracite grey coloured textured metal cladding
- C / Anthracite grey coloured spandrel panel
- D / Light buff brick
- E / Buff Stone