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Introduction

This brochure presents a pre-application proposal to the Greater London Authority (GLA) for the re-development of 21 St George's Road in Elephant and Castle.

The proposal seeks to replace the existing sub-standard commercial buildings at 21 St George's Road with an outstanding building that offers significant townscape and public realm improvements providing a high quality hotel to modern sustainable standards of design and construction.

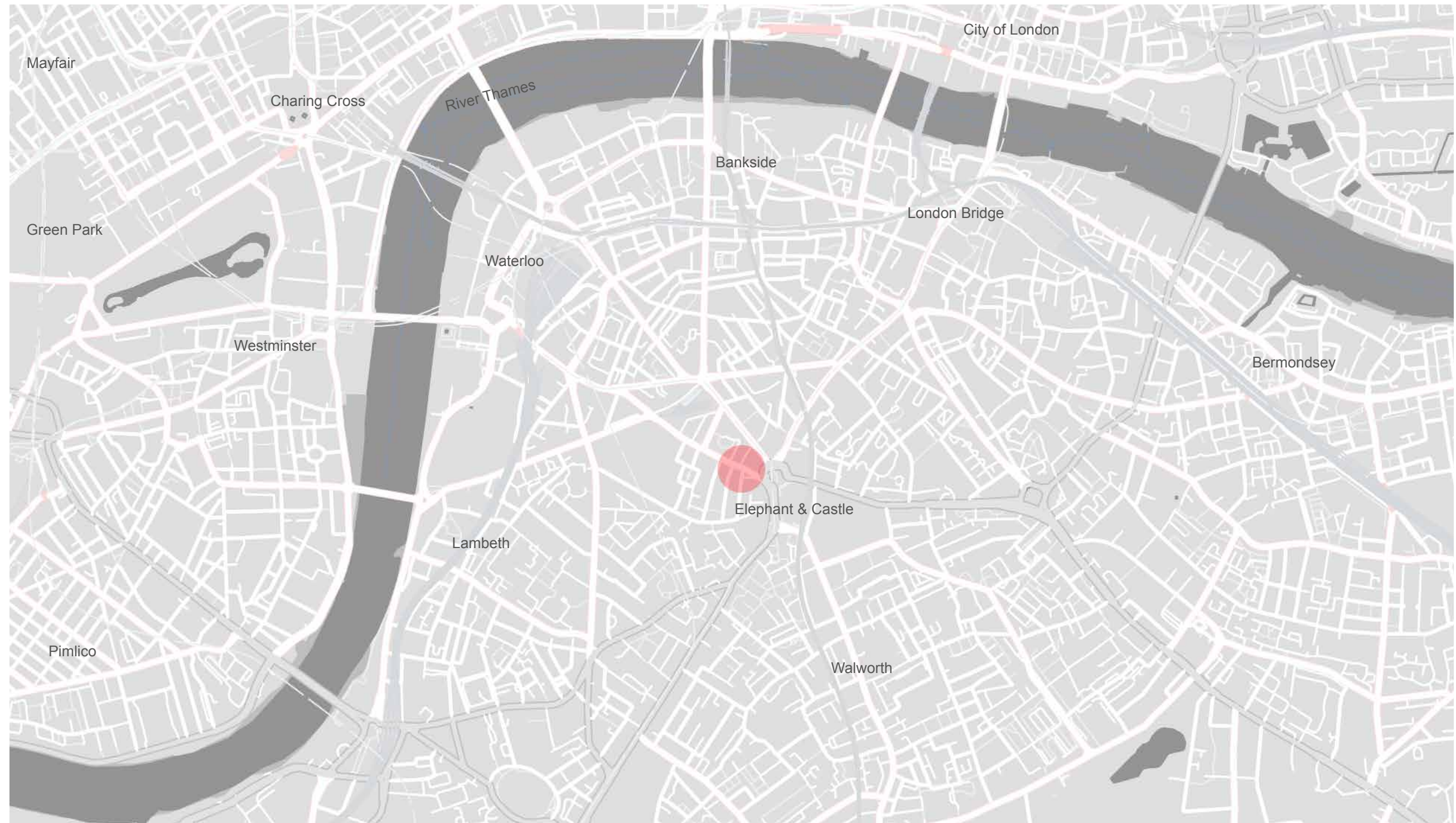
This submission includes an illustration of the existing building and its context followed by an explanation of the design of the proposed building and its relationship to the surrounding context, public realm and wider townscape. Design strategies for the technical aspects of the proposal complete the main body of the submission followed by appendices that contain additional reports.

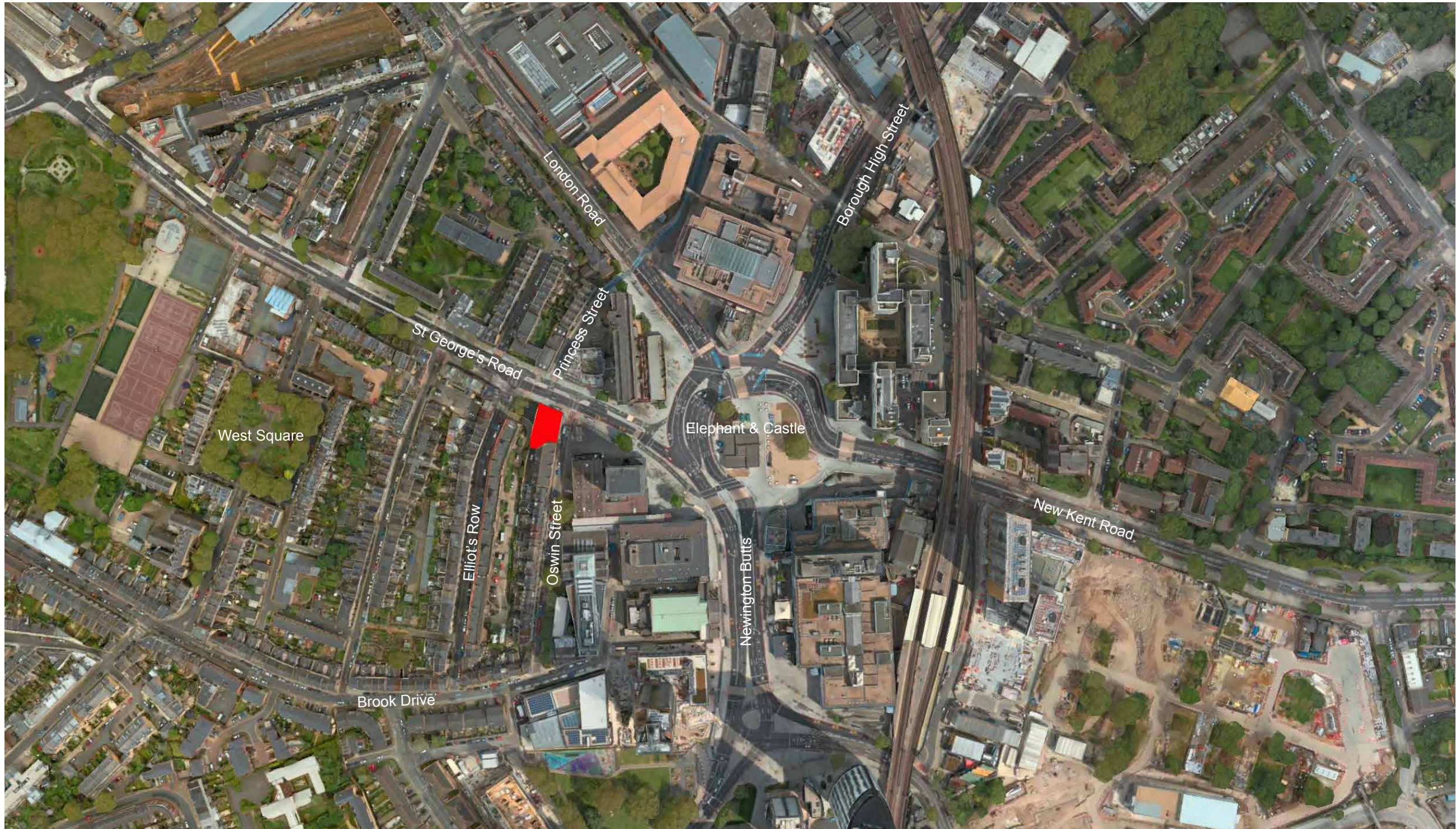
Create Reit have assembled the following development team that have contributed to the proposals set out in this submission:

Client	Create Reit
Architect:	Latitude
Planning:	DP9
Public relations:	Kanda
Heritage:	Oxford Archaeology
Daylight & sunlight:	Point 2 Surveyors
Transport:	Caneparo Associates
Townscape:	Peter Stewart Consultancy
Structure:	Price & Myers
M+E:	Chapman BDSP
Sustainability:	Chapman BDSP
Acoustic:	Chapman BDSP
Fire:	ChapmanBDSP
Wind:	RWDI
Cost:	Arcadis



21 St George's Road





Existing building

21 St George's Road comprises a pair of joined flat-roofed brick-clad steel-framed buildings arranged over 4 storeys with one being a lower ground storey.

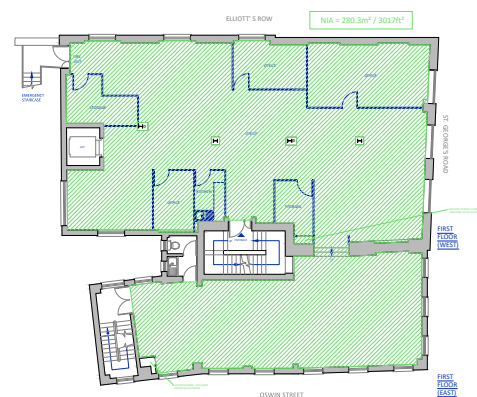
The existing building is currently in use as offices but provides sub-standard accommodation that has a poor and inappropriate entrance, does not offer disabled access to all levels and does not perform to modern thermal standards.

The site appears to have been in use as part of a larger brewery site in the late 19th century before being used as a 'Sugar products' works in the 1950's. Gillman and Spencer Ltd, whose sign appeared on the buildings in 1959, were hop merchants.

From examination of old maps, it appears the western part of the building was constructed between 1935 and 1952 whilst the eastern part was constructed between 1952 and 1959.

The eastern part of the building presents a bland elevation with an old loading dock infilled to form an office frontage whilst the street elevation of the western part is formed of brick with painted lintels and cornice. The west elevation is partly a rendered blank elevation that undoubtedly was previously adjoined by a long demolished neighbouring building which has been replaced by a green space. The remaining part of this elevation is formed of glazed brickwork with regular windows. The south elevation faces a small service yard and is utilitarian in nature.

The building currently provides 672 sqm of B1 office and 581.8 sqm of A2 retail space.



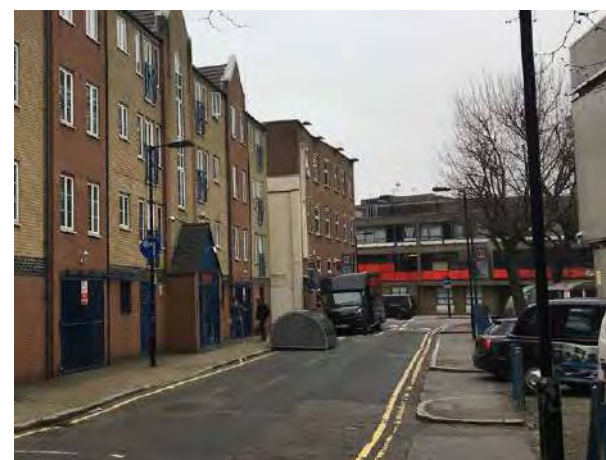
View of east elevation facing Elephant & Castle



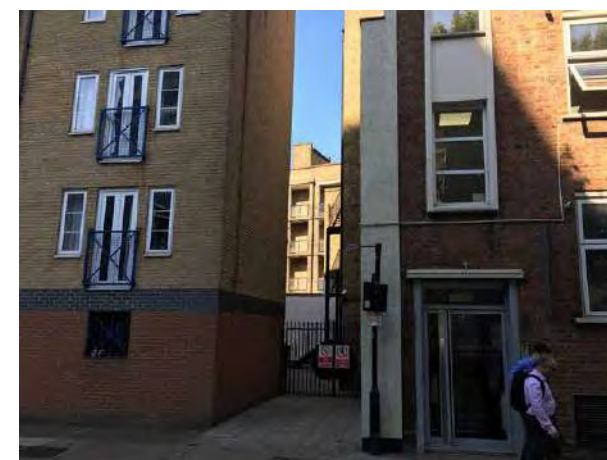
View of west elevation facing public green space



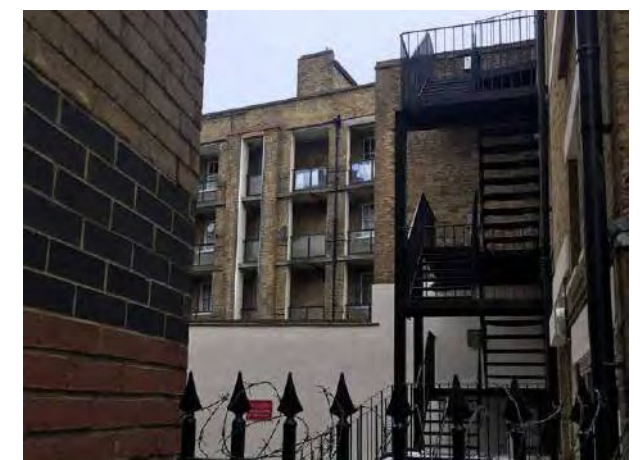
View of north elevation to St George's Road



View of east and south elevation from Oswin Street



View of main building entrance and alleyway to yard



View of external escape stair on south elevation

Approaches to the site

The approaches to the site are from central Elephant & Castle, along St George's Road and along Oswin Street. Each of the approaches has differing characteristics and frames the existing building and any replacement in a different context.

The approach from central Elephant & Castle currently presents an unattractive quality with a foreground of parking and ill-defined space set against the plain and unappealing flank elevation of the existing building.

The approach from St George's Road from the west presents a rendered flank elevation set against the backdrop of substantially taller buildings leaving the existing building with a sense of not belonging to its context.

The approach along Oswin Street highlights the building as a feature that is not consistent with the rhythm of the terrace that forms most of the street (excluding the Metropolis Building) nor distinctive enough to reinforce the uniformity of the terrace through effectively framing it in views down the street.

There is a clear opportunity for any proposed design solution for the site to address and mediate between these discrete settings.



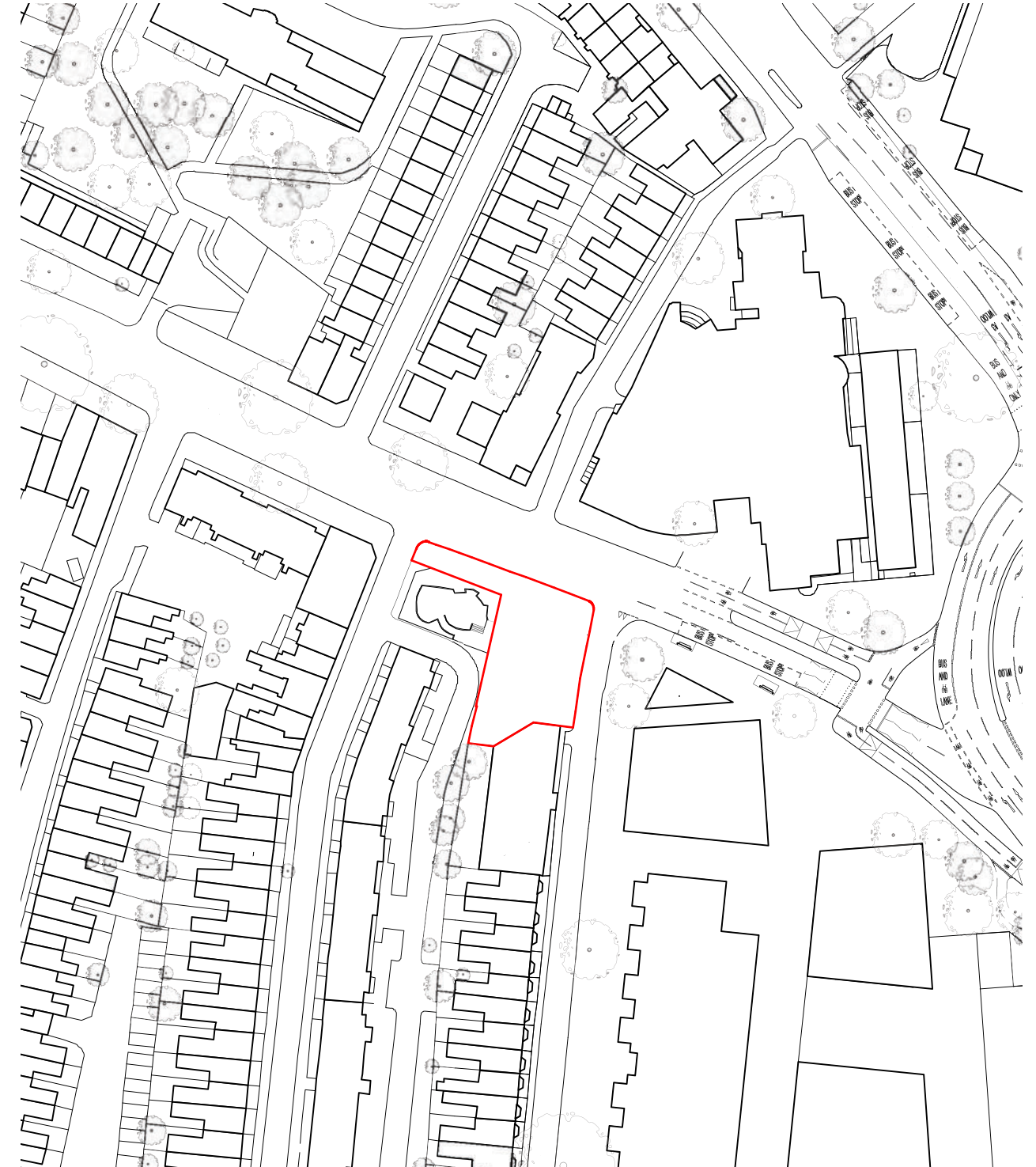
Approach from central Elephant & Castle



Approach from St George's Road



Approach from Oswin Street



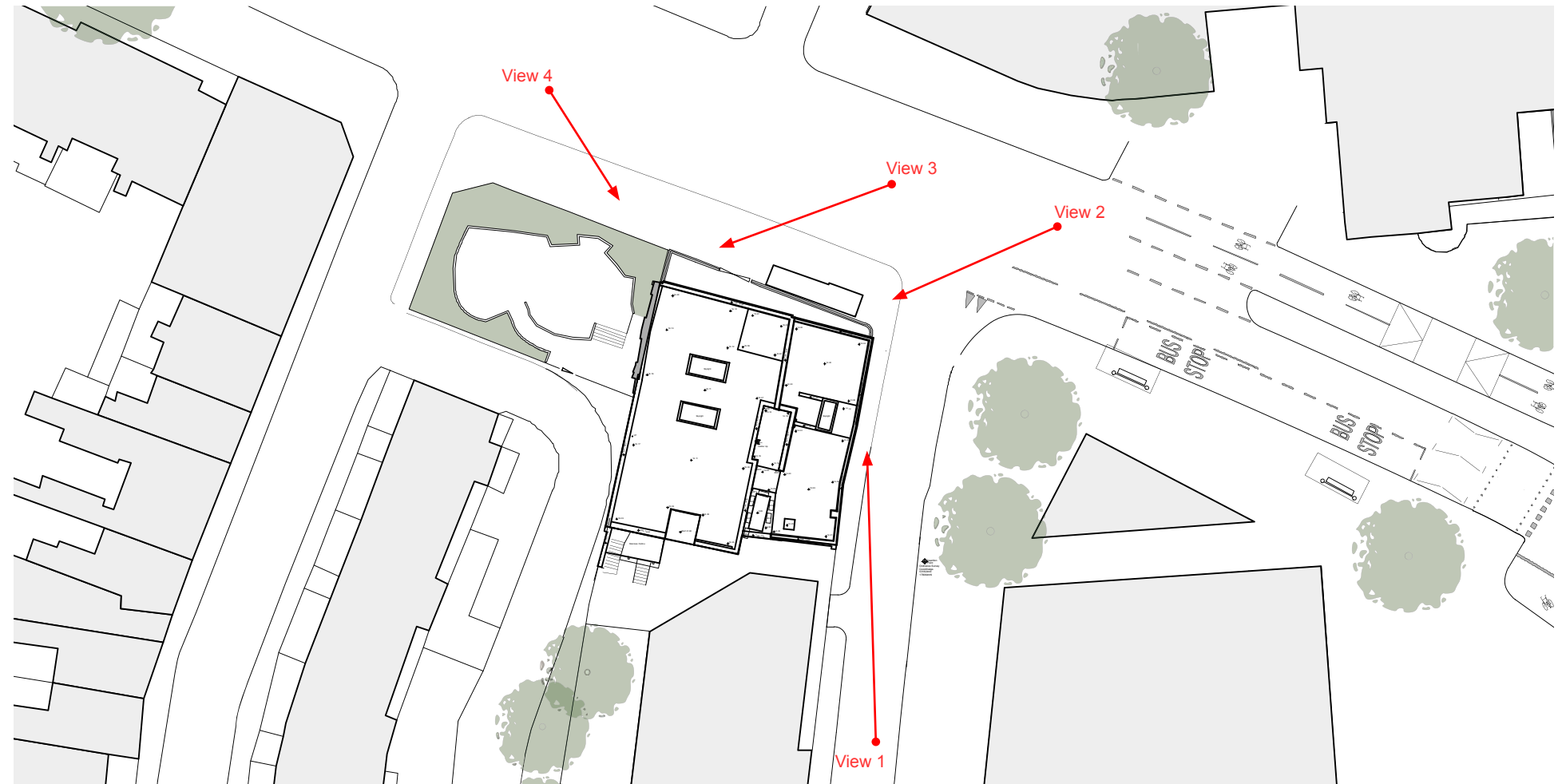
Existing public realm

The public realm surrounding the existing 21 St George's Road building is unsatisfactory and there is much scope for potential improvement in the combined re-developments of the existing building and the LCC site.

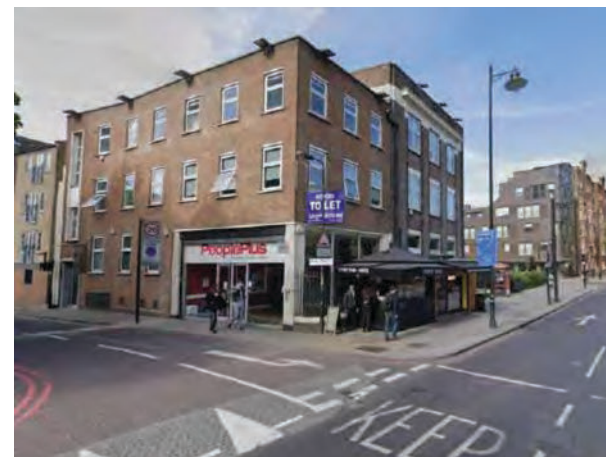
The pavement to St George's Road at 5m wide is generous but currently feels congested due to the retail kiosks and awkwardly sited telephone box.

The arrangements on Oswin Street are equally poor with random street furniture, poor ground finishes and ill-coordinated kerbs, table crossings and road markings creating a sense of clutter and of interstitial indefensible space.

The pocket park is a relative oasis being well tended and cared for, but bounded by a blank rendered wall and tall railings which offer nothing to the setting of the park.



View 1 - Existing Oswin Street table crossing and LCC bicycle



View 2 - Existing table crossing and kiosk



View 3 - Existing fixed railing to pocket park and street furniture



View 4 - Existing flank wall and fixed railing to pocket park

Evolving Elephant & Castle

The Elephant & Castle area is undergoing fundamental change of a similar scale and impact on the local character to that which occurred during the post war re-developments.

The adjacent images demonstrate the extent of this change and illustrate the scale of new impemented and proposed developments and their impact on the urban scale.



London College of Communications

The most relevant future development to 21 St George's Road is the wholesale re-development of the LCC and shopping centre sites by Delancey. The mixed use scheme comprises 3 residential towers of 20, 24 and 40 storeys at 119.9m AOD together with lower level buildings containing education, office and retail accommodation.

The LCC site is located immediately across Oswin Street from 21 St George's Road and the nearest proposed building is a 20 storey tower (rising 71.9m AOD) containing residential accommodation with a retail unit at ground.

A single storey retail pavilion sits in a limited public space adjacent to St George's Road and Oswin Street.

21 St George's Road



LCC - proposed ground floor plan



LCC - proposed elevation to St George's Road

21 St George's Road

Elliot's Row conservation area

The site sits adjacent to the Elliot's Row conservation area and whilst not inside, proposals coming forward will be assessed by the Local Authority for its impact on the setting of the conservation area.

The Elliot's Row conservation area was adopted in March 2013 and sits within the Elephant and Castle opportunity area.

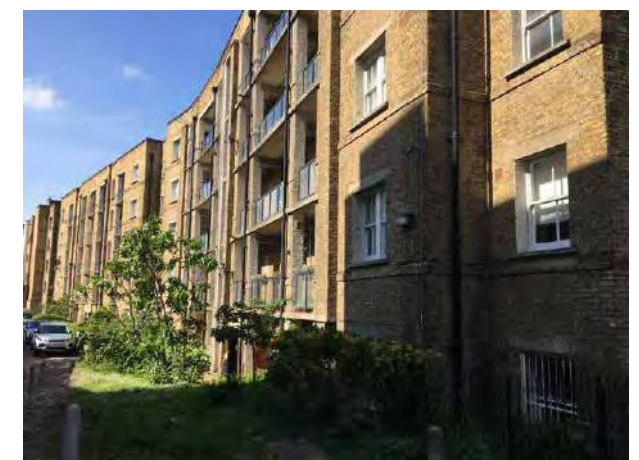
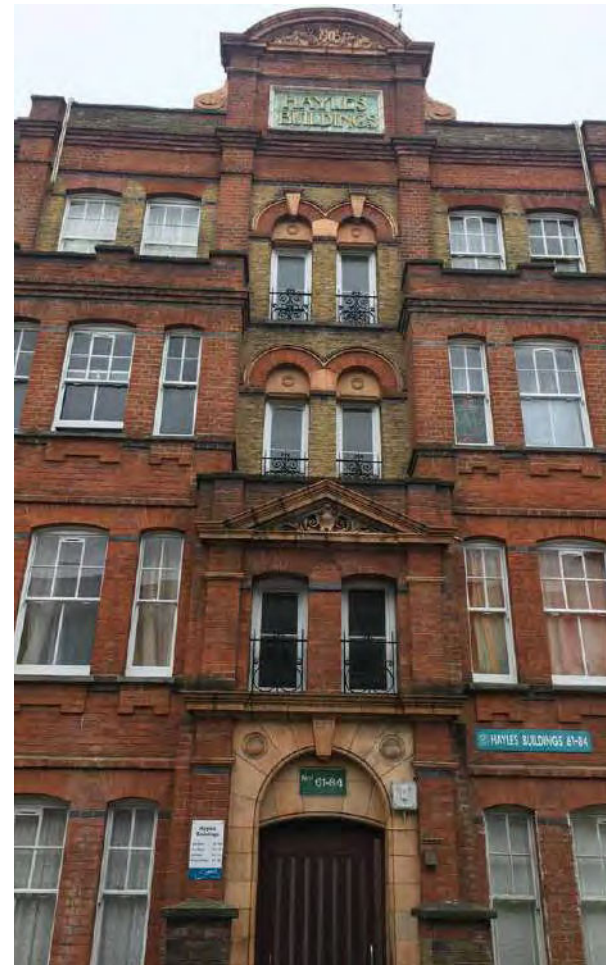
The conservation area is described in the Southwark Borough Council appraisal as follows:

'a cohesive townscape comprising development from throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. The historic street layout remains, creating a legible and permeable environment. Well defined streets are a feature with high quality and architecturally interesting frontage development. This is a highly urban environment with little in the way of soft landscaping.'

The West Square conservation area sits further to the west and whilst the proposals may be visible, they are likely to have a very minor visual impact.

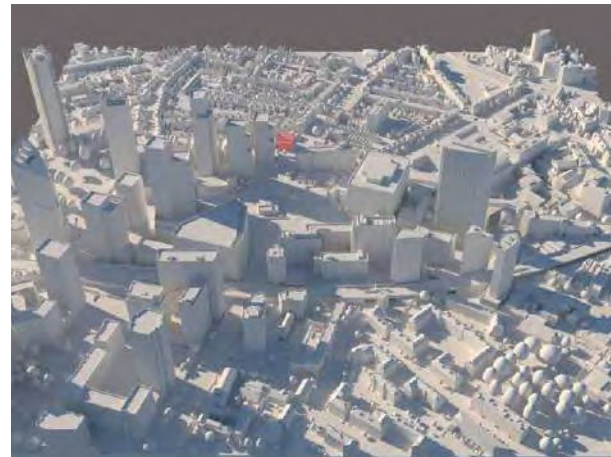


Elliot's Row conservation area

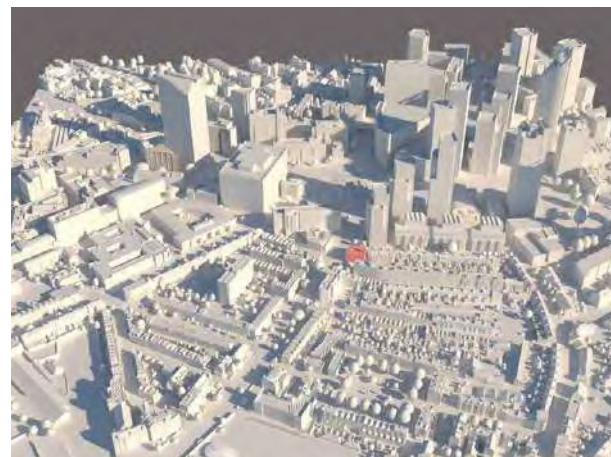


Aerial views of Elephant and Castle

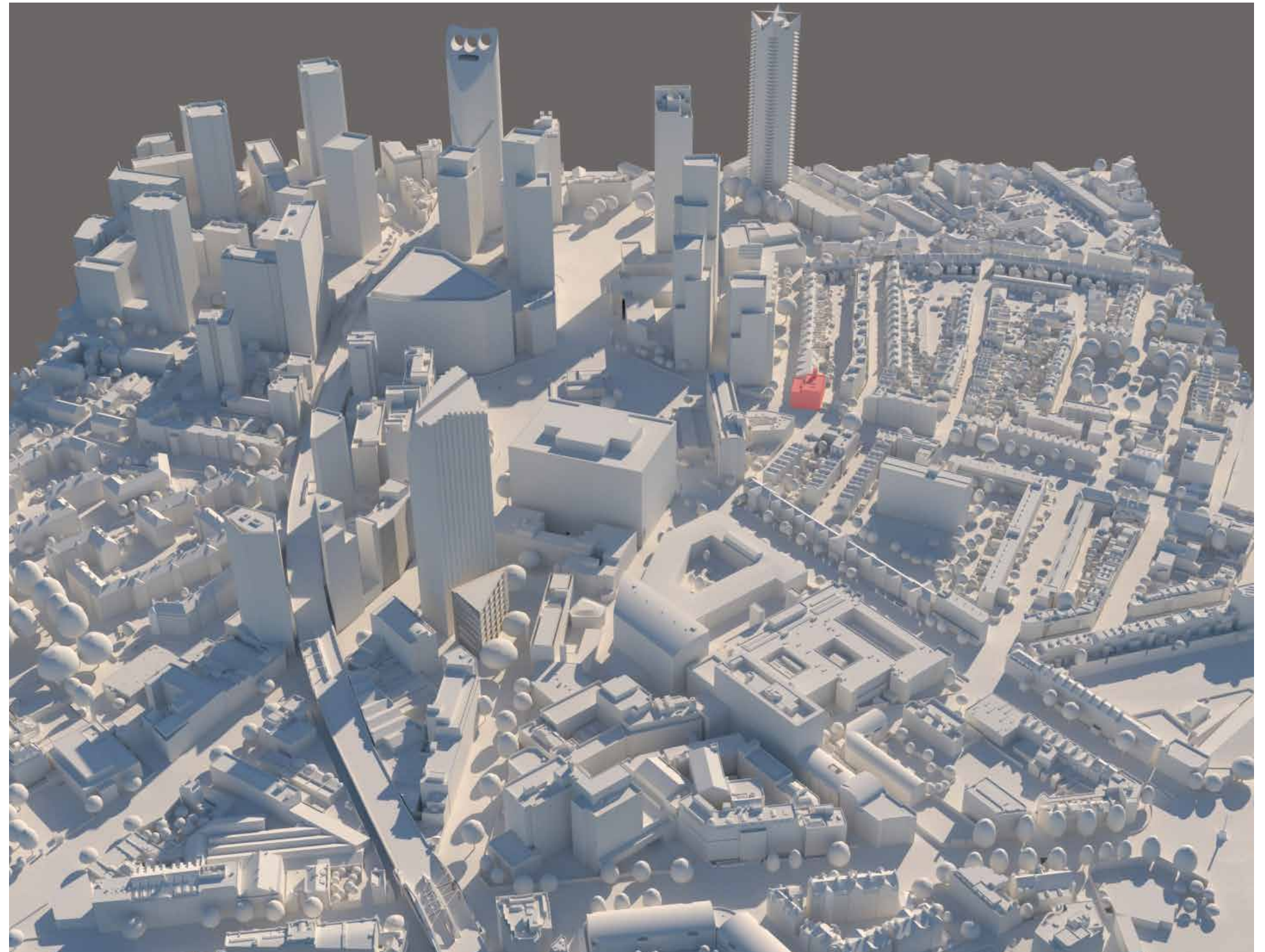
The aerial views shown here illustrate the position and mass of the existing building at 21 St George's Road (highlighted in red) relative to the Elephant and Castle central area which has been shown with recently consented or schemes under construction in their final form.



Aerial view from east with consented schemes



Aerial view from west with consented schemes



Aerial view from north with consented schemes

Background

1. DP9 is providing planning consultancy support to the the proposed redevelopment at No. 21 St George's Road in Elephant and Castle.
2. The site's current consented use, as recently confirmed in the Certificate of Lawfulness Application ref: 20/AP/0342 is:
 - a. A2 Professional and Financial Services - Level -1 and Level 0 - 581.8 sqm GIA;
 - b. B1 Office - Level 1 and 2 - 672.2 sqm GIA
3. Per the Use Class Amendment Order, these uses are regarded as Class E Uses as of 1 September 2020.
4. The current proposals for the site include the following uses:
 - a. C1 Class Hotel - Levels 3 to 14 - 3199.1 sqm GIA;
 - b. E Class Office - Levels -1 to 2 - 778.2 sqm GIA;
 - c. E Class Retail - Level 0 - 122.8 sqm GIA.

Purpose of this note

4. London Borough of Southwark officers requested a review of the compliance of the proposed land uses with adopted and emerging LBS development policies.
5. The adopted policy is the Core Strategy (2012) and the saved policies of the Southwark Plan (2007), as well as the London Plan (2017, as amended).
6. LBS is currently preparing the New Southwark Plan, which will replace the policies of the Core Strategy and the Southwark Plan. The New Southwark Plan was submitted for Examination in January 2020. As its policies have not yet been tested through Examination Hearings, it should be considered to hold limited weight in decision making. However, it is conceivable that it will have made further progress by the time the forthcoming planning application is determined.
7. The GLA is preparing a New London Plan that will replace the existing version once adopted. It is in its latter stages of preparation having undergone Examination throughout 2019. In December 2019 the Mayor released an 'Intend to Publish' version of the New London Plan. In March 2020 the Secretary of State issued a letter requiring amendments to the New London Plan prior to its adoption.

Planning designations

8. The following designations are of relevance in relation to the proposed land uses:
 - The site is in the **Elephant and Castle Major Town Centre** as identified on the adopted Southwark policies map. The emerging New Southwark Plan continues to identify the site as within the Major Town Centre.
 - The site lies within the **Elephant and Castle Opportunity Area**, a LB Southwark and GLA designation, which continues to be identified in the New London Plan.
 - The site is within the **Central Activities Zone**, a LB Southwark and GLA designation, which it also remains within in emerging documents.

Policy Review

9. The following policies are of relevance to the proposed land uses:
 - Core Strategy Strategic Policy 1 seeks **intense development for a mix of uses in growth areas**, including Elephant and Castle Opportunity Area.

- Core Strategy Strategic Policy 3 seeks to **maintain a network of successful town centres** which have a wide range of shops, services and facilities. It further seeks 5000 net new jobs and around 45,000 sqm additional shopping and leisure floorspace in Elephant and Castle between 2009 and 2026 in order to **strengthen Elephant and Castle's role as a Major Town Centre**.

- Core Strategy Strategic Policy 10 seeks to **allow the development of hotels within town centres** providing that there is no harm to local character.

10. The following emerging policies are of relevance to the proposed land uses:

- Emerging New Southwark Plan Policy SP4 seeks **more opportunity for people to find work** and to **make town centres thrive as places for uses including shops and leisure**.

- Emerging New Southwark Plan Policy P29 requires development in the Central Activities Zone and Town Centre to **“retain or increase the amount of employment floorspace on site (Gross internal area (GIA) of B class use or sui generis employment generating uses)”**.

- Emerging New Southwark Plan Policy P34 expects development in Town Centres to **“retain or replace A use classes with an alternative use that provides a service to the general public, and would not harm the vitality and viability of the centre”** and **provide active uses at ground floor level in areas of high footfall**.

- Emerging New Southwark Plan Policy P40 states that a **“minimum of 10% of the total floorspace must be provided as ancillary facilities in hotel developments that incorporate a range of daytime uses and offer employment opportunities”**. The supporting text also sets out **general support for hotel proposals**.

Policy assessment

11. Both existing and proposed development plan policies support the proposed land uses in principle in the site's location. The Class E cafe / restaurant is located at ground floor fronting St George's Road, creating an active main frontage. Thereafter, the main considerations are compliance with emerging New Southwark Plan policies P29, P34 and P40 guiding proposals involving the gain / loss of business, retail and hotel use respectively. Existing development plan policies are less specific in this regard.
12. Emerging policy P29 requires retention or increase of office floorspace by GIA in locations including the site. The proposals currently deliver a 106.2 sqm uplift in office floorspace and are therefore in compliance with this policy.
13. Emerging policy P34 requires retention / suitable replacement of A class uses, but notably without any floorspace requirements like Policy P29. The proposals would result in a loss of 459.0 sqm employment agency floorspace. This floorspace would be replaced by 122.8 sqm of cafe/restaurant use that provides an active frontage to St George's Road. In addition, the proposed C1 hotel use 'provides a service to the general public' as it is a use that is accessible to a wider range of people and would introduce a hotel use to a centre that is currently lacking visitor accommodation, supporting the local economy including businesses and the local higher education institutions. We consider that the proposals do meet the requirements of emerging Policy P34. Although we do not infer that the emerging policy expects re-provision of retail use by floorspace, it is worth noting that the only way this could feasibly be achieved would be through multi-storey retail use. It is our view that this would be a poor proposal compared to the existing scheme and such a proposal would call into question the deliverability of the scheme as a whole.
14. Emerging policy P40 requires schemes involving hotel use to include at least 10% of floorspace as ancillary facilities that incorporate a range of daytime uses and offer employment opportunities. Although in different use classes, the proposals are for one interconnected complex of which circa 20% is in an ancillary office or cafe / restaurant use, comfortably exceeding the emerging policy requirement.
15. The emerging New Southwark Plan is not yet tested through Examination therefore its policies are liable to change. However, we consider that the proposed development is in accordance with its emerging policies and would generally contribute to a positive balance of uses in Elephant and Castle.

Proposed building uses and organisation

5 - Levels 13 to 14 C1 Hotel

Levels 13 and 14 of the building accommodate hotel rooms set within a faceted facade that refers to the lower levels of the building.

A plant enclosure at roof level is inset approximately 2m from the parapet and is surrounded by a green roof in order to provide an attractive fifth elevation from overlooking buildings and to aid with sustainable drainage and urban greening.

4 - Levels 3 to 12 C1 Hotel

Levels 3 to 12 accommodate typical hotel floor plates of either 7 or 8 rooms depending on provision of accessible rooms and are served by 2 lifts and an escape stair. Each ensuite hotel room is articulated on the building elevation by a full height window and an infill panel with a fluted profile continuing the architectural language of the facets found elsewhere on the building. Each floor level is articulated by a band of reconstituted stone/ GRC.

3 - Levels 1 & 2 E Class Office

Levels 1 and 2 provide open plan office space and together with the ground floor are architecturally expressed as the base of the building. The glazing to levels 1 and 3 is faceted to give visual consistency with the top of the building, to provide visual interest when seen from the street and to indicate the change to an office use.

Green walls and integrated GRC fins that provide visual privacy and aid with the wind environment are proposed to the west elevation to the Elliot's Row pocket park.

2 - Level 0 C1 Hotel / B1 office reception and E Class retail

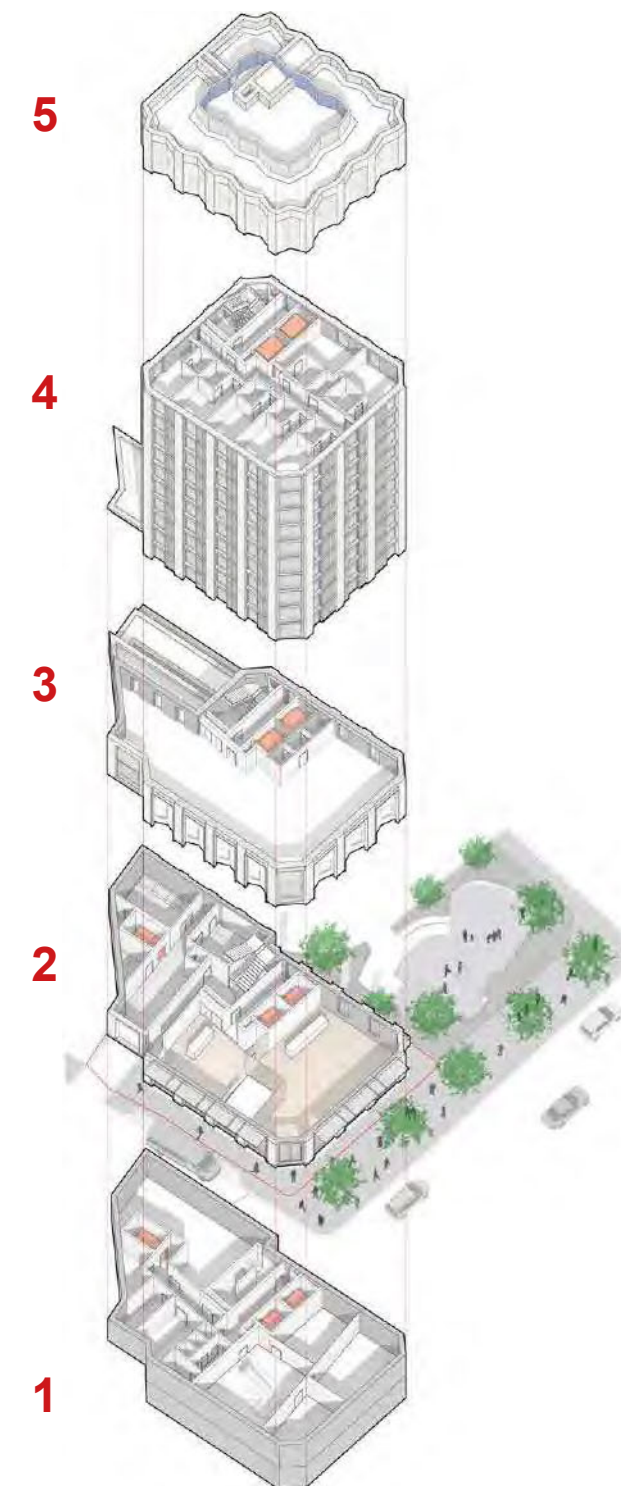
The ground floor accommodates the hotel / office reception together with an E Class retail unit that provides a highly active street frontage. Extensively glazed facades set within reconstituted stone / GRC reveals provide excellent visibility from St George's Road and Oswin Street whilst canopies over the entrances aid the wind environment and provide shelter from the elements.

The west elevation is separated from the Elliot's Row pocket park by a masonry planter that combines with substantial living green walls in order to dramatically improve the outlook and setting of the park, and to minimise any sense of overlooking by the park's users.

The link block to the rear contains a service zone that includes a shared refuse store, disabled parking space, substation and lift access to cycle parking, hotel back of house areas and plant at basement levels

1 - Levels -1 and -2 C1 Hotel back of house / plant and E Class office

The upper basement (level -1) houses is split into 2 parts with the rear of the building housing a hotel service area, wcs and cycle stores containing 19 and 10 spaces for the office and retail / hotel staff respectively. The front part of the upper basement contains office meeting rooms and a break out space linked by an open stair set within a double height space to the ground floor hotel/ office entrance lobby. The lower basement (level -2) contains plant areas that serve the hotel, office and retail areas.





Reinforcing the public realm

The location of the site provides a unique opportunity to visually link the new public space of the LCC scheme with the Elliott's Row pocket park by setting back the new building line whilst reinforcing the boulevard-like nature of St George's Road by the introduction of a row of street trees.

The sense of St George's Road as a broad and important thoroughfare linking Elephant & Castle and Westminster will be strengthened whilst the nature of the hard and soft public spaces will be significantly unified and enhanced.



A gateway to the Elephant and Castle

The location of the site presents an opportunity to create a gateway building to the Elephant & Castle from St George's Road that mediates between the architecture of the regeneration zone and that of the existing urban fabric of the conservation areas to the west both in terms of height and materiality.

The Elliott's Row pocket park provides an ideal green 'breathing space' to allow a new gateway building to visually meet the ground and present an appropriate gateway building form to the approach along St George's Road.



Proposed building height

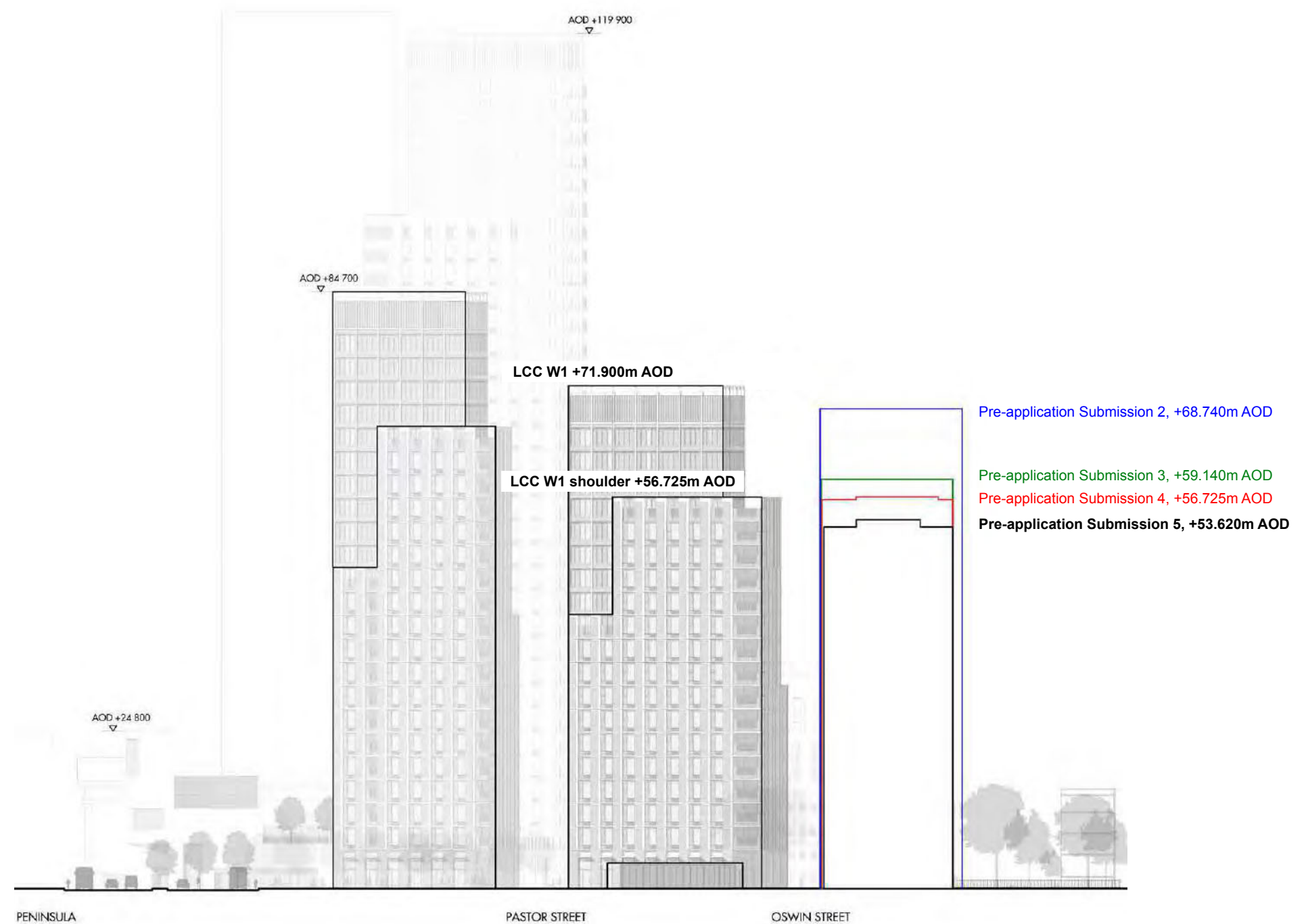
Following 5 pre-application discussions with officers from the London Borough of Southwark, the proposed building has been set at a height of 15 storeys plus plant above ground level meaning that the building now visibly sits below the shoulder of the adjacent LCC W1 building when seen from key views from surrounding public spaces

The overall height of the building is +53.620m AOD and the reduction over the course of the pre-application process is shown on the adjoining diagram.

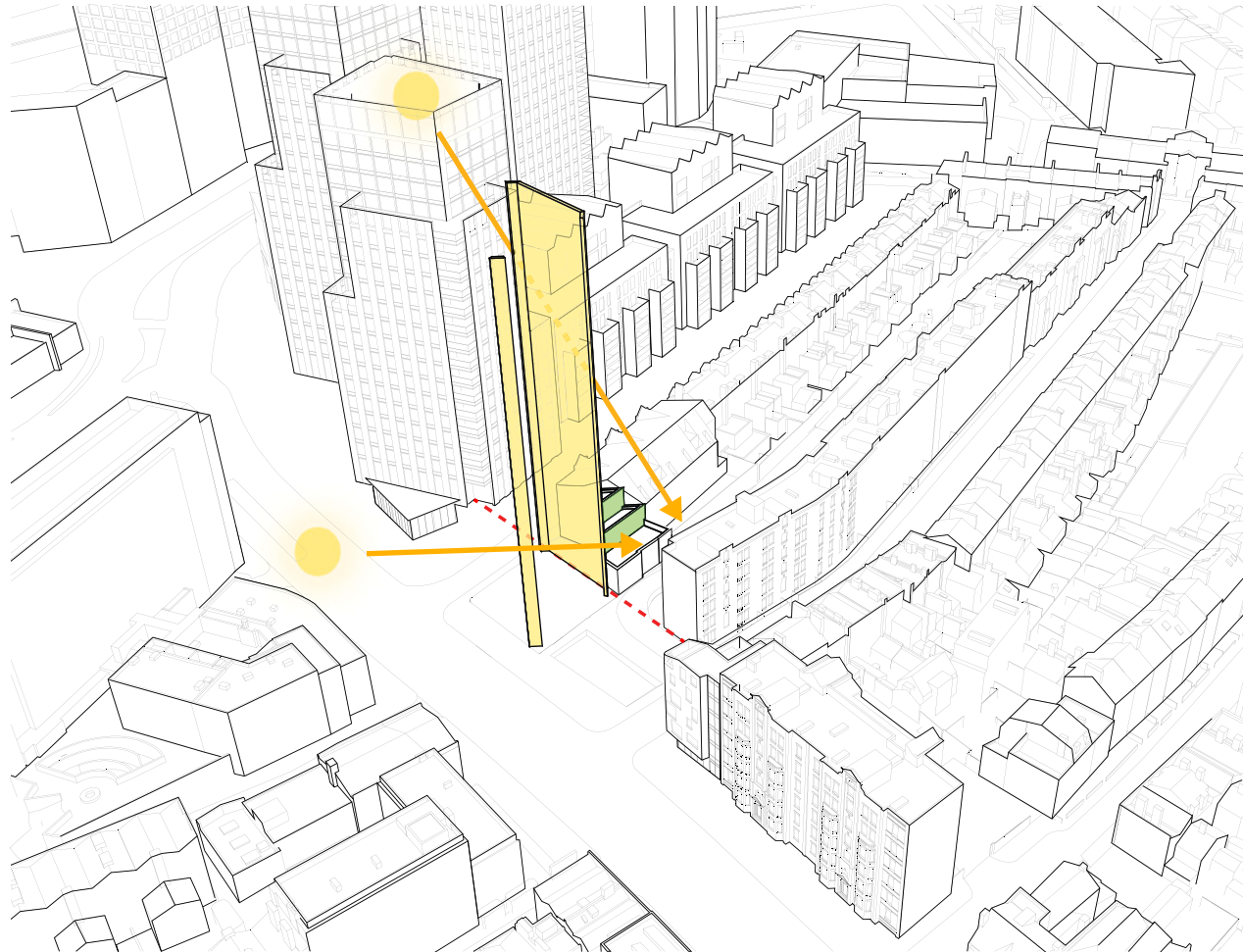
A townscape and visual impact study illustrating views of the building massing from agreed key locations is included at Appendix A of this document.



Relationship of proposed building to LCC towers



Alignment and enhanced relationship with the 'shoulder' of LCC W1 building

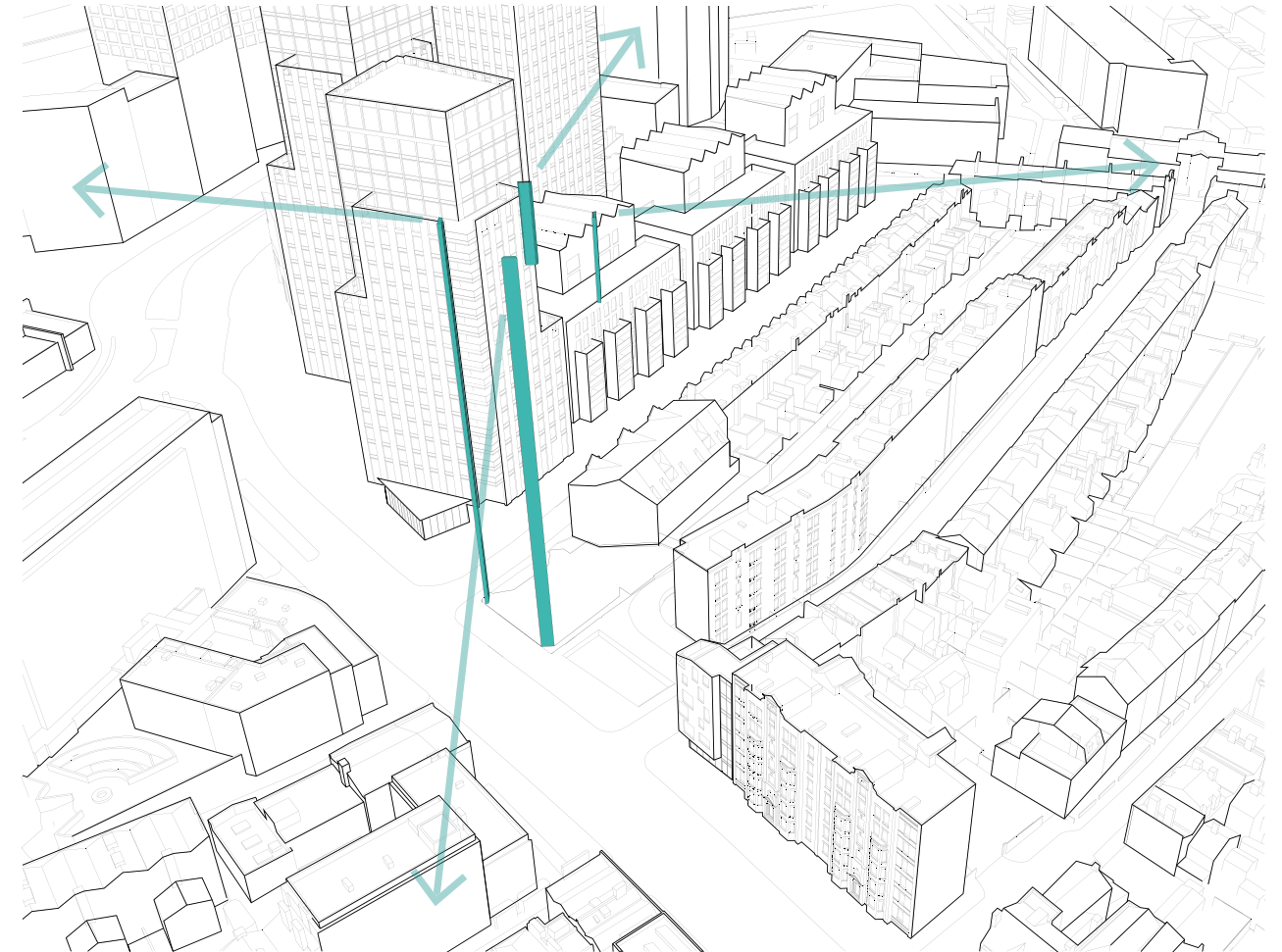


Environmental influences

The form of the proposed building has been carefully positioned and modelled to respond to the local environmental conditions and optimise relationships with the surrounding residential buildings.

The tallest part of the scheme is located and modelled to ensure access to sunlight and daylight for any potentially affected windows, whilst the lower link block is stepped and landscaped to create a pleasant outlook.

Chamfered corners to the tower create a visually slender and elegant form whilst also maximising solar access to surrounding properties and mitigating effects of the prevailing south-westerly winds.



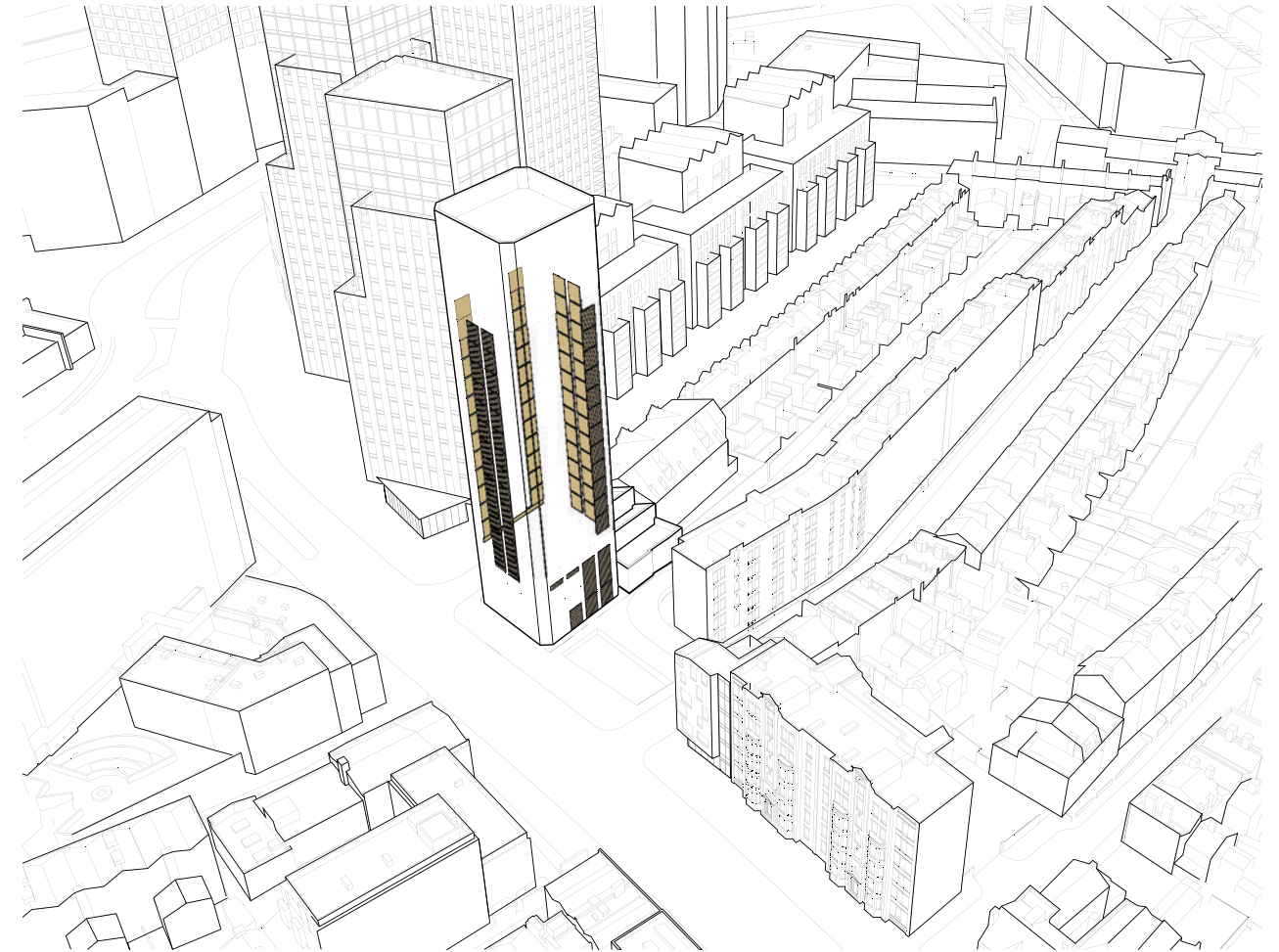
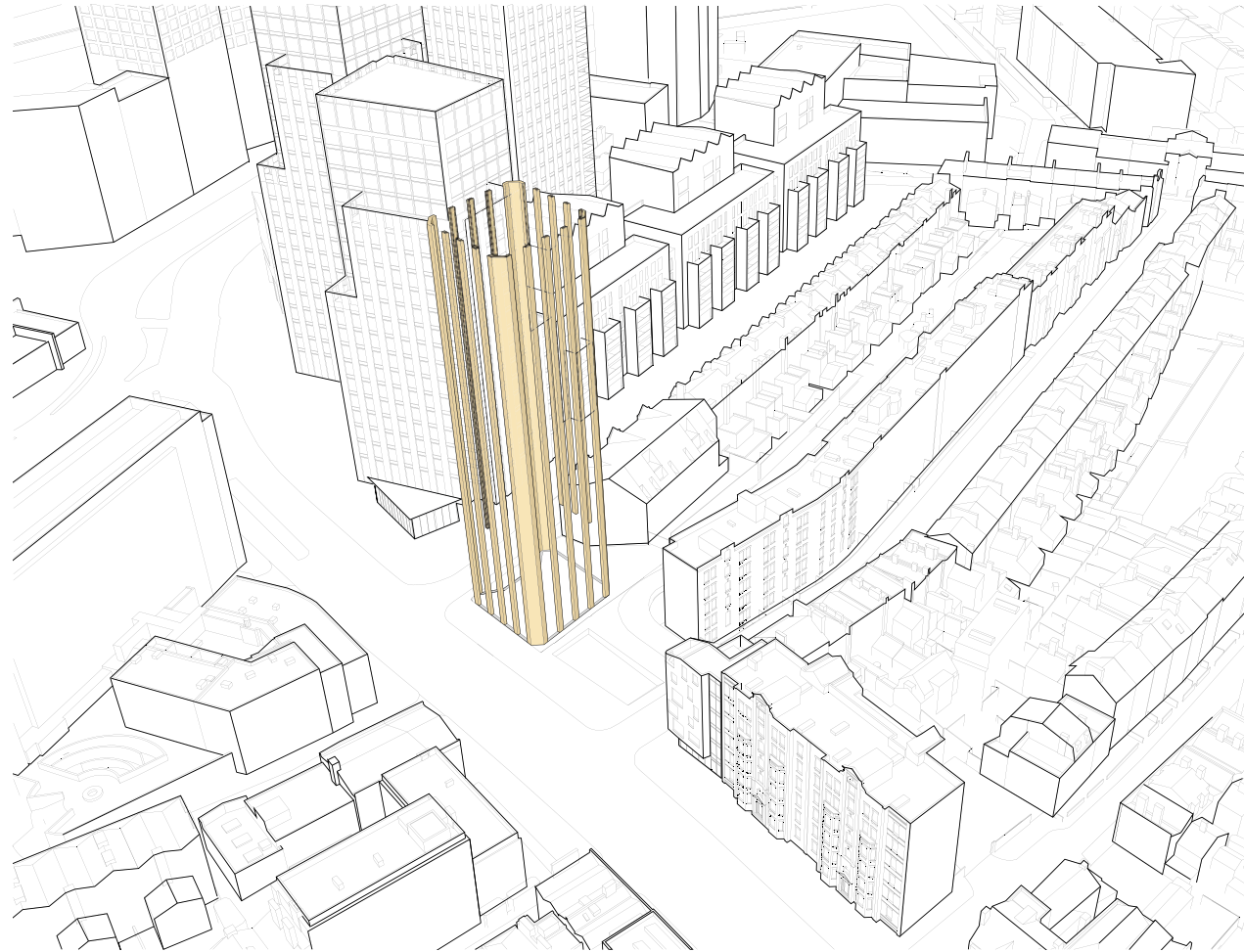
Key views

The siting of the building at the edge of the group of taller buildings offers excellent views of key landmarks in London, particularly from the higher levels.

Care has been taken in the modelling of the building to maximise views to Westminster, St Paul's, the City, Canary Wharf and Crystal Palace.

Glazed chamfered corners are introduced to address the key building corners onto St George's Road whilst those to the south of the site are solid to limit views onto the surrounding existing and proposed residential properties.

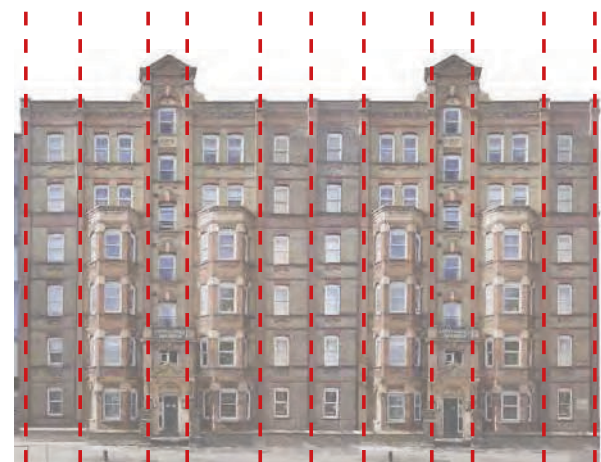




Elevational approach

The main elevational elements are a series of brickwork piers that are derived from and refer back to the brick pilasters of the architecture of the surrounding area. The proposed brick piers will be formed of slender bricks to add a contemporary aesthetic and to bring an elegant proportion to the masonry.

The piers will be divided at storey heights with reconstituted stone / GRC string courses that serve to bring scale and add a fine level of detail to the facades.



Textured panels

Within the ordering grid of the brick piers and the reconstituted stone / GRC string courses, it is proposed to include textured panels, either of brick or GRC, that add relief and offer a counterpoint to the clear glazed windows to the hotel bedrooms.

The textured panels refer to more recent architectural idioms within the Elephant & Castle area.



Peronnet House



Proposed fluted panels

Materials and detail

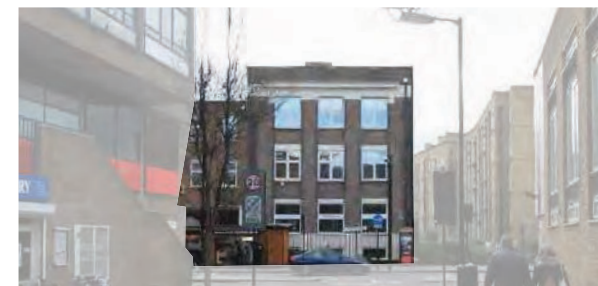
The site occupies an important mediating and transitional position between the Elliot's Row conservation area and the wider Elephant and Castle regeneration zone. As a result the architectural language, form and materiality has been carefully considered to refer to the industrial heritage of the site and to ensure the building relates to and sits appropriately in its setting. A heritage report by Oxford Archaeology on the history of the existing building will form part of the planning application submission.

The primary elevational material is proposed to be masonry, with brick piers referring to the architectural language found on the existing building, the nearby Hayles Building on Elliott's Row and the Saint George's Building on St George's Road (see below). 50mm high bricks are proposed to give a more contemporary appearance.

The chamfered corners to the building reflect the corner treatment of many historic buildings in the area, as well as projecting bays to residential building along Oswin Street and Elliott's Row.

Horizontal slab edges, canopies and reveals to the lower levels and the infill panels are proposed to be in reconstituted stone or GRC type cast product and refer to the strong horizontal articulation of surrounding architecture. Subtlety and nuance will be introduced by treating flat elements such as the slab edges in a matt finish whilst profiled elements with relief such as the canopies, projecting fins and infill panels to levels 3 to 12 will be in a more reflective gloss finish.

Grooved infill panels are introduced to provide texture and refer to nearby postwar buildings, with the precast hammered concrete panels to Peronnet House being a notable inspiration.



Brickwork piers to the Hayles Building on Elliott's Row



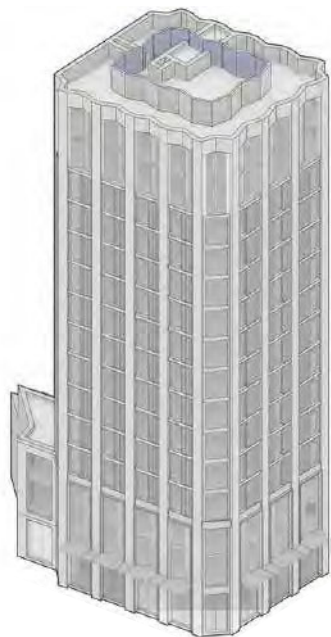
Relationship to public realm

The design has been carefully crafted to deliver a scheme which significantly enhances the quality and the space available to the public realm in the vicinity of the junction of St George's Road and Oswin Street.

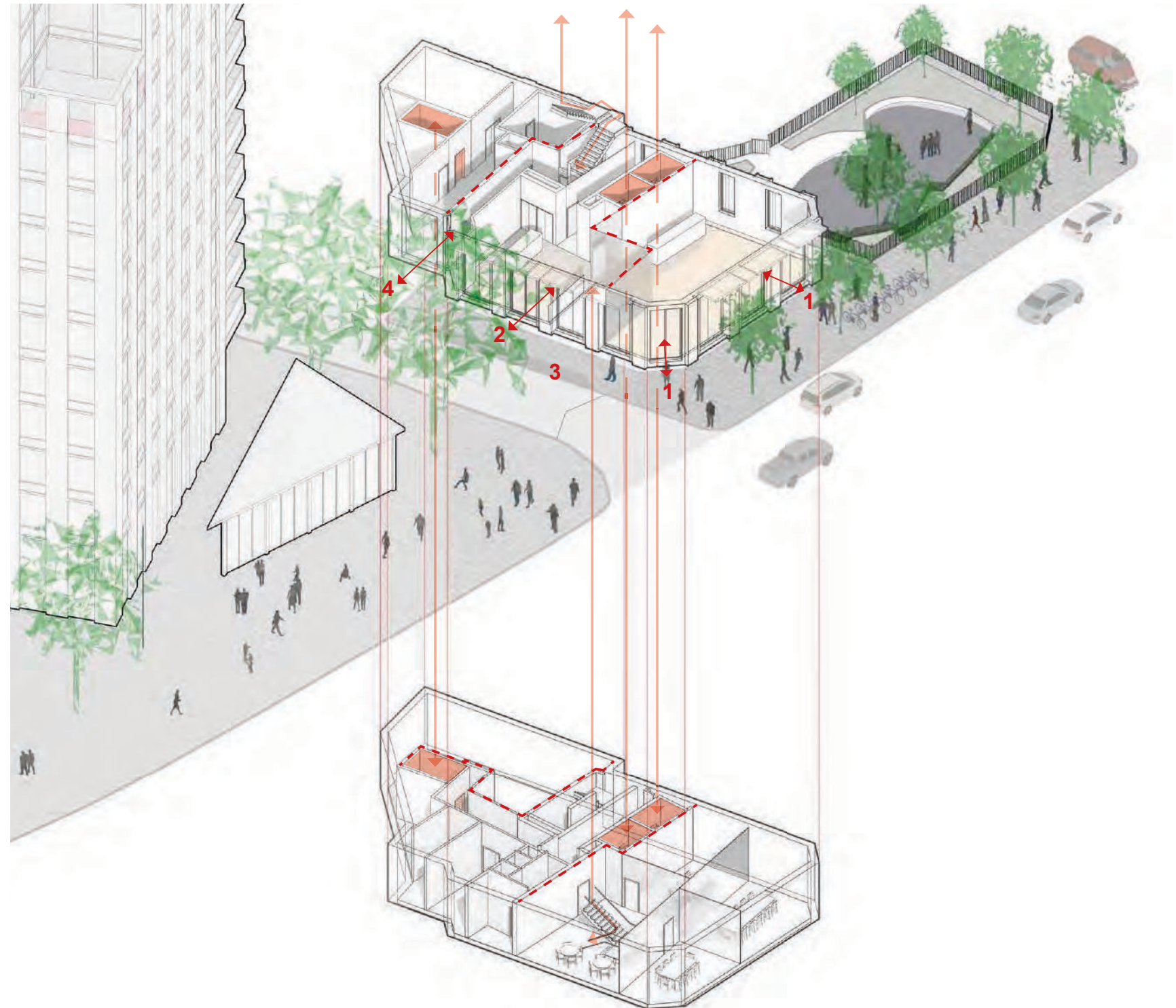
The proposed active street frontages of the integrated A3 unit, hotel and office reception visually and physically link the proposed LCC retail pavilion with the existing Elliot's Row pocket park to create a green and pleasant environment at a key gateway location to Elephant & Castle.

The following key interfaces between the proposed building and the public realm have been positioned in order to maximise the quality of the urban environment.

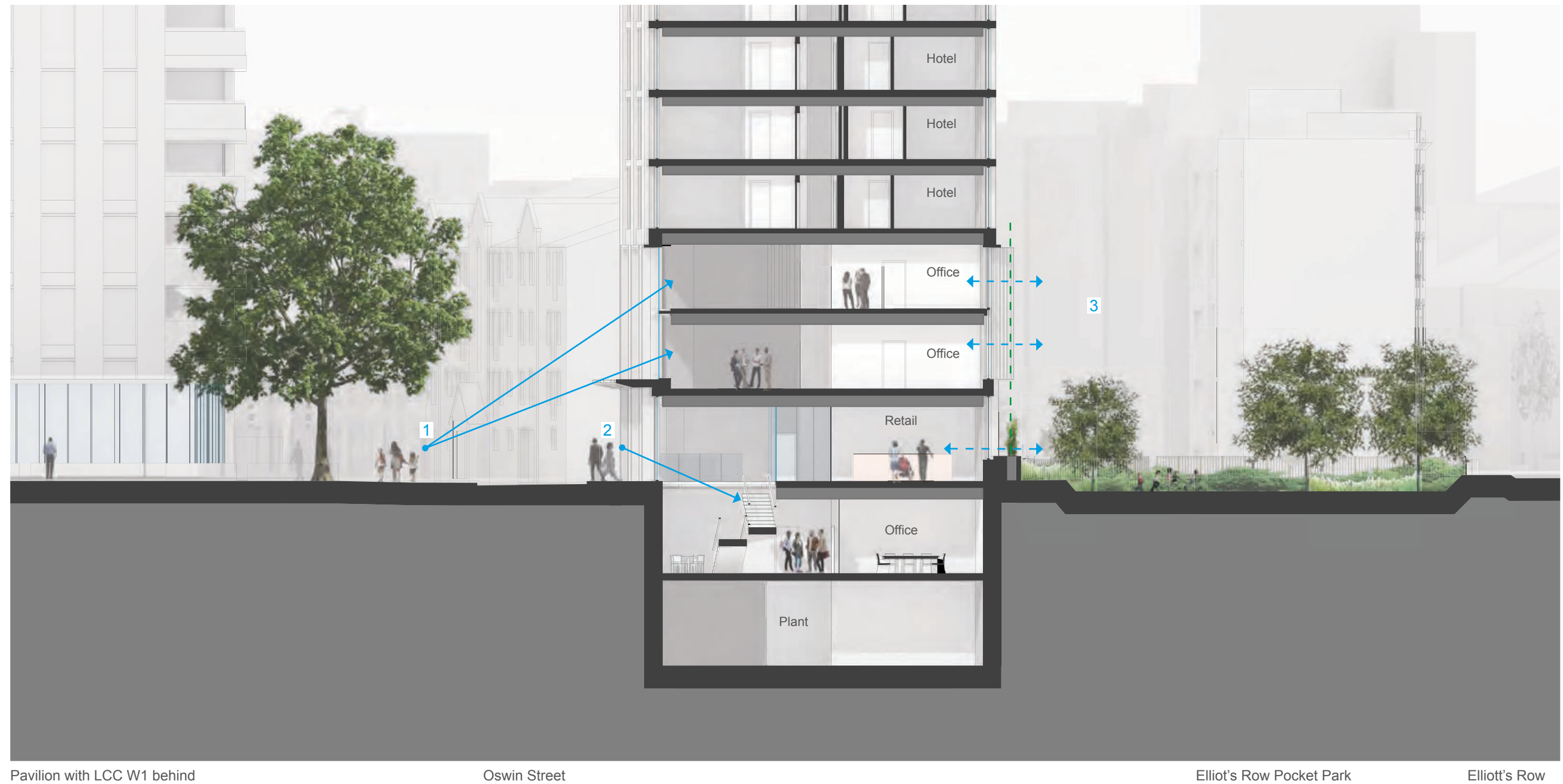
- 1 - Entrance to retail units from St George's Road and Oswin Street.
- 2 - Main entrance for hotel guests and office users.
- 3 - Road widening for deliveries and collections.
- 4 - Servicing access for refuse collection, deliveries, cycles and also disabled parking space for the hotel guests,



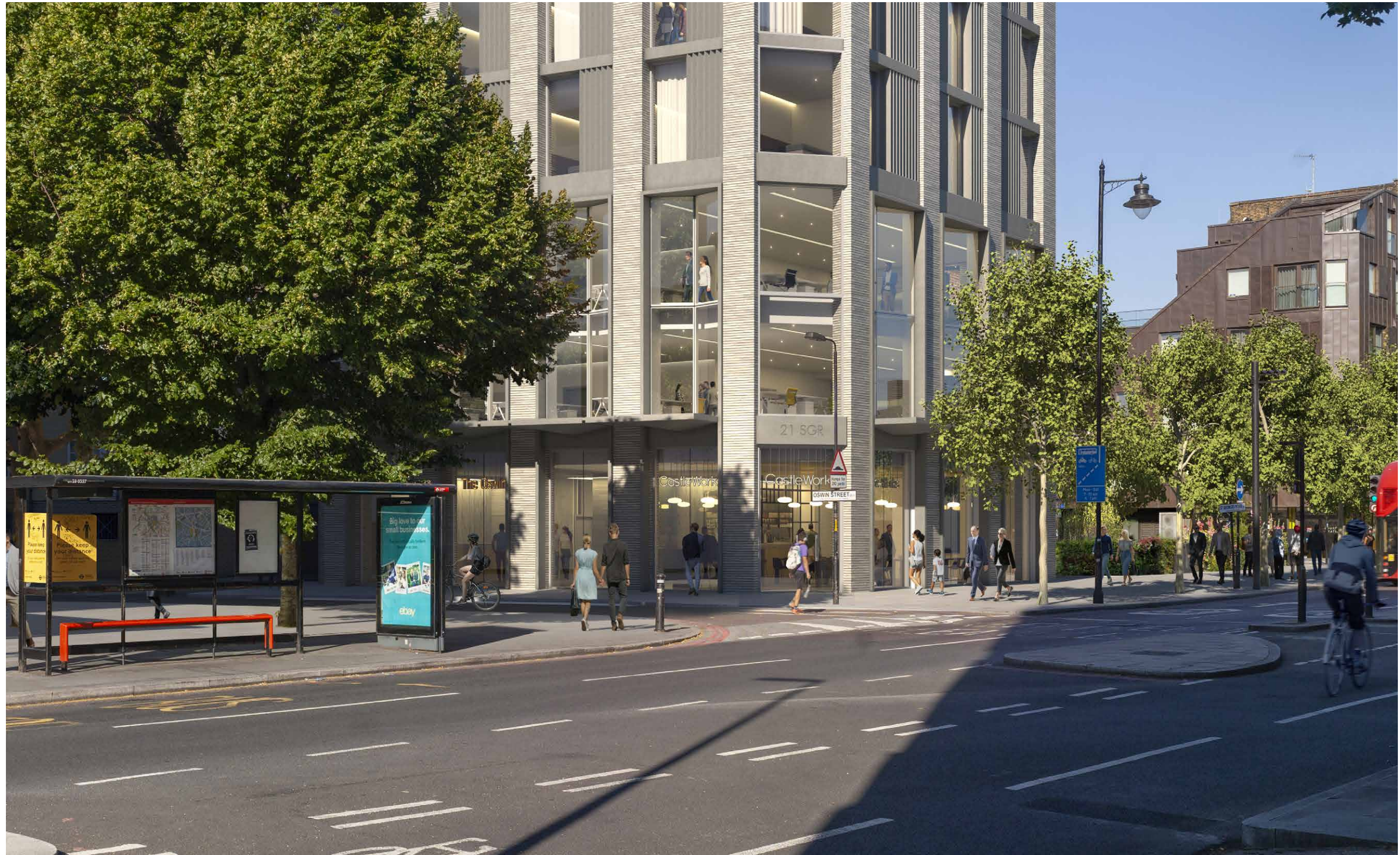
North-west isometric of proposal



Exploded isometric of ground and basement levels from the north-east



- 1 - Activity to levels 1 & 2 addresses the public realm and LCC pavilion opposite.
- 2 - Double height space onto Oswin Street allows light and views into basement space
- 3 - Views from retail and office controlled by narrower windows and planting, within park and to the west elevation at ground to second floor.



View of enhanced public realm at junction of St George's Road and Oswin Street

Relationship to Elliot's Row pocket park

The proposed building removes the unsightly rendered wall that currently forms the backdrop to Elliott's Row Pocket Park and replaces it with a soft and appropriately green elevation. The relationship to the park has been carefully considered as part of a series of measures to enhance the sense of the park as a green oasis.

1 - A line of new street trees are proposed to the pavement along St George's Road that will enhance the public realm and provide a visual green link to the pocket park from Elephant & Castle and continue the avenue of mature trees along St George's Road. Additional trees within the pocket park are possible, subject to agreement, to enhance the park further and to replace the four mature Robinia trees that were felled in 2018.

2 - A low brick planter is proposed on the boundary to the pocket park articulated to continue the rhythm of the brickwork piers.

3 - Green walls are proposed from ground to second floor facing directly onto the pocket park in addition to the set back levels to the link block to the Metropolis building in order to enhance the outlook from the neighbouring Hayles Buildings on Elliott's Row.

4 - Green roofs are proposed to the set back levels 1, 2 and 3 of the link block to the Metropolis building.

5 - The rhythm of the brickwork piers is continued to the rear wall that faces onto the private road to add interest to the flank wall.



Aerial showing green spaces and trees to St George's Road

