

THE DOWNINGS, GLOUCESTER DOCKS

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
DOWNINGS MALHOUSE & DOWNINGS TOWER

Design and Access Statement
May 2022



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ISO 9001:2008 AJA12/ 15418
ISO 14001:2004 AJA12/ 16322
IHAS 18001:2007 AJA12/ AN1673

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May 2022
Job Number 9959
Version 1

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gloucester City has a proud heritage of being one of the most important historic cities in England. One of the jewels in the crown of Gloucester is the Docks area, which is not only one of the finest remaining examples of Docklands in the UK, but also a vibrant and flourishing regeneration area that brings in locals and tourists alike.

This Design and Access Statement relates to a site within this important Docklands area - part of the larger 'Bakers Quay' development.

The scheme is broadly split into two major elements, linked by a central external plaza. This central heartspace links the two entrances of the main buildings on site to the dynamic cut through that defines the landscaping scheme - and links this development to the wider Bakers Quay development and the Gloucester Sharpness Canal.

The Heritage Block: Downings Malthouse.

Downings Malthouse refers to the redevelopment of the remaining Downing's Malthouse walls, and the refurbishment of the High Orchard Street Warehouse. This beautiful structure will be sensitively restored to create a truly unique living space within Gloucester. The design uses modern interventions within the Heritage context - establishing a fresh approach to warehouse redevelopment.

The Contemporary Addition: Downings Tower

The regeneration and restoration of

the Downing's Malthouse is enabled through the proposed new Downing's Tower, that will offset the substantial costs associated with rebuilding the Downing's Malthouse building, and also enable the recommencement of works on the Malthouse House Extension (to the west of our site, and a future phase in the overall Bakers Quay masterplan).

Downings Tower is a bold, new building to the south of the site that sensitively steps away from the existing Heritage Block. Design discussions with the Council and Historic England have led to a preference for a tall building in this location. With that in mind, we have sought to create an addition to the Gloucester skyline that stands proud, whilst responding to its surroundings.

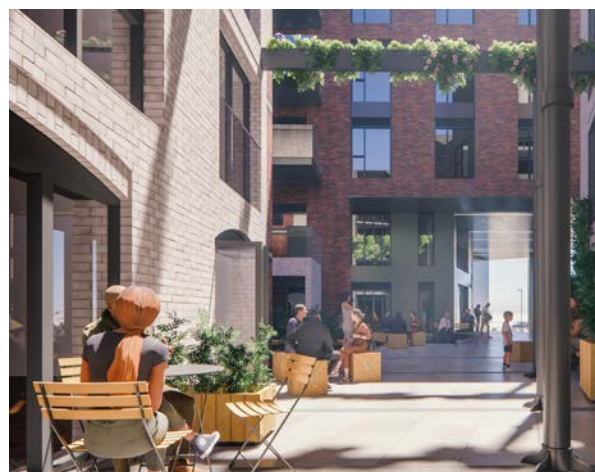
Careful consideration of materiality, form, scale and massing has been key to the design of Downings Tower. Ensuring that the scheme is a clear reference to the history of Gloucester and the Docks, whilst looking boldly to the future of development in Gloucester as a whole.

This document will explain how we have approached creating a new landmark development that embraces the challenge of redeveloping heritage assets, and citing a modern building within the historic context.

We will explore the complex and extensive planning history in relation to the site, and how the proposed scheme has responded to the many challenges that have arisen throughout the design process.

We will explain the importance of the design discussions that have been held with important consultees such as the Council, their conversation officers, Historic England and the Gloucestershire Design Review Panel. We will also reference the input from other design consultants, much of which is covered in detail by the supporting documents submitted with this application.





View from the cut towards Downsings Tower



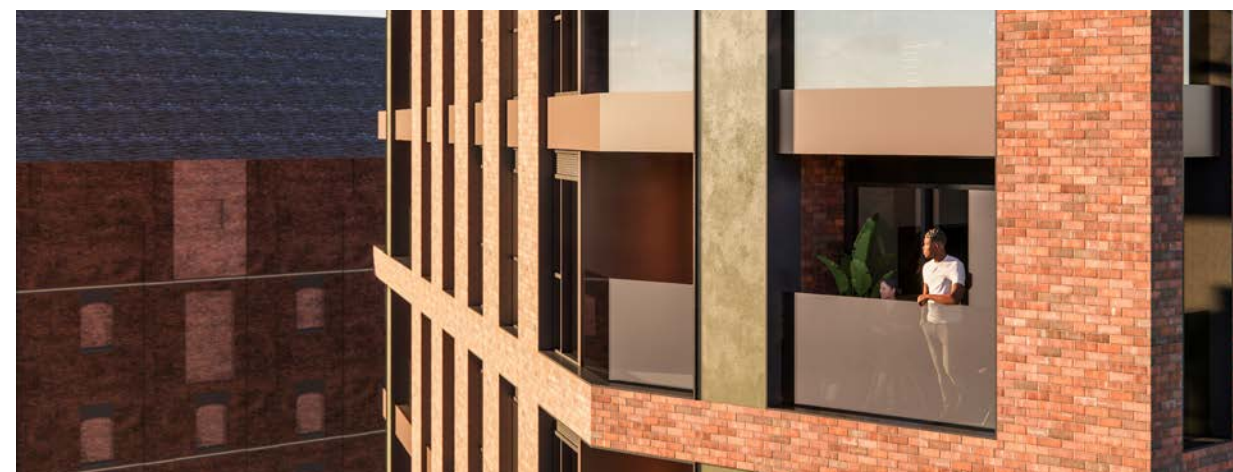
View of Downsings Tower entrance



View towards South East Elevation - Downsings Tower



View towards North West Elevation - Downsings Malthouse



View of corner balconies - Downsings Tower



01

INTRODUCTION



1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement, prepared by Roberts Limbrick Architects, has been produced in support of a Full Planning application for the redevelopment of The Downings at Gloucester Docks.

A description of the scheme has been provided below:

“Alteration, including partial demolition, restoration, development and extension of Downings Malthouse and the High Orchard Street Warehouse, plus the creation of a new basement level in Downings Malthouse accessed from Merchants Road to provide basement car parking and an extension and bridge link to Downings Malthouse Extension to provide 49 residential units and 60m2 of commercial floorspace for use for Class E purposes on the ground and upper floors. The development of a new building comprising basement ground and nine upper floors on the site of the former Silo and High Orchard Street Kiln comprising basement car parking, a ground floor plaza, reception and ancillary accommodation linking the building to Downings Malthouse, to provide 68 residential units on the ground and upper floors together with additional ancillary parking to the south of Downings Malthouse Extension, access, turning and landscaping all at Bakers Quay Merchants Road/High Orchard Street Gloucester.”

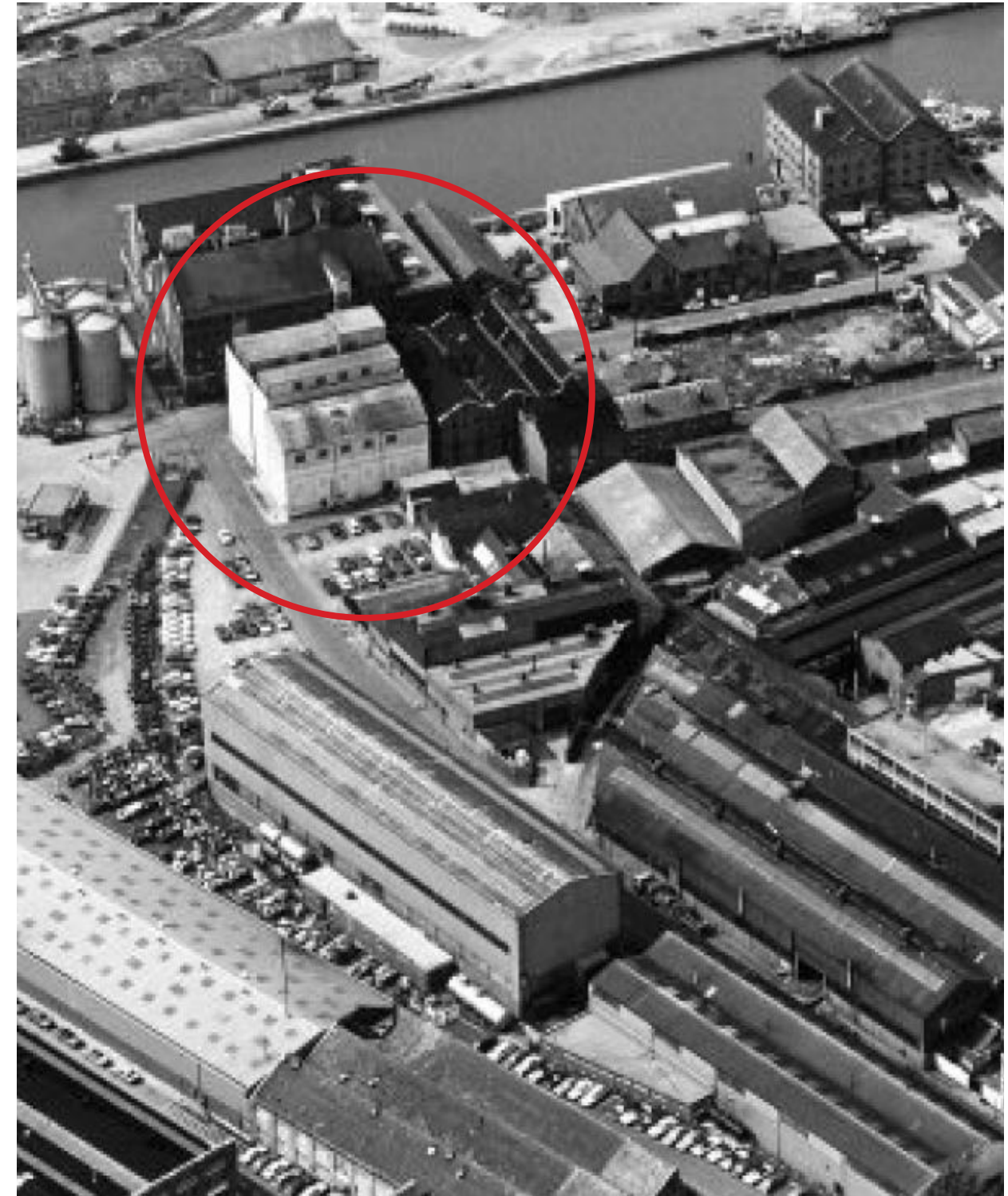
This statement has been prepared in accordance with NPPG guidance and with reference to guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the JCS. It is intended to

provide an overview of the proposed scheme and site, including the principles and concepts governing the design. It also gives details of the spaces within the proposed building and the consideration given to accessibility, inclusion and ease of use.

The statement has a straightforward structure. Following this introduction it will:

- Review the site location and context;
- Assess the historical occupation of the site and which elements we can retain going forward;
- Review surrounding built form context to help influence the look and design of the proposals;
- Set out an analysis of the site and identify its key constraints and opportunities;
- Review the design process that has led to the completed design;
- Explain in detail the design decisions within the final design;
- Address the access, movement and landscape proposals that support the scheme.

All drawings in this report are for illustration purposes only. The drawings which constitute the application have been submitted separately and should be referred to in all matters of record.



1.2 BACKGROUND

Roberts Limbrick Architects were commissioned by Rokeby Merchant Developments (Gloucester) Ltd (Client) to prepare (in conjunction with the Feasibility Architects, JAA) a design proposal for The Downings, Gloucester.

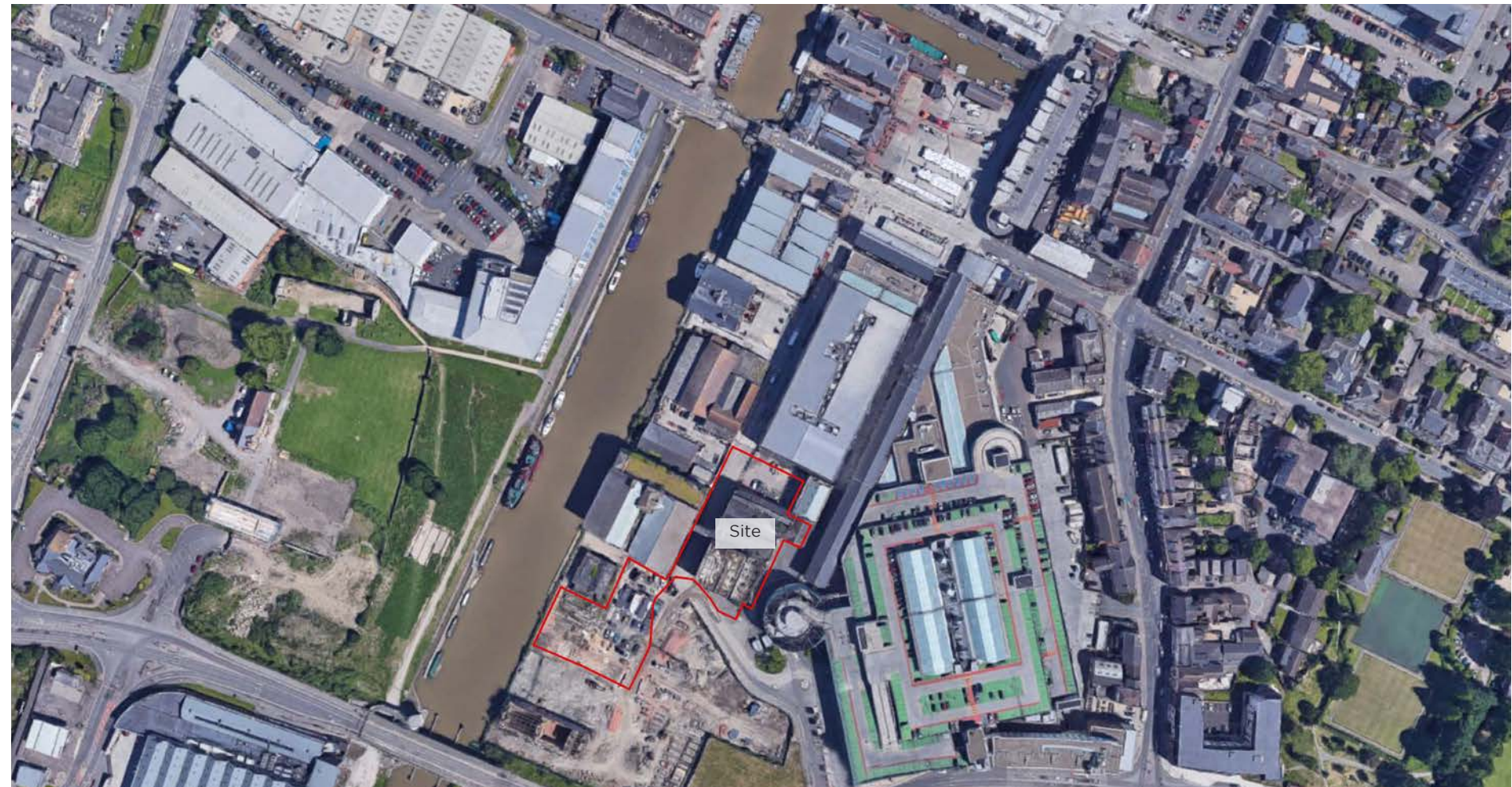
The site is located between High Orchard Street and Merchant's Road and has an area of approximately 5040sqm (1.245acres).

The site is currently occupied by the remains of a number of buildings. Since the previous schemes submitted to the Council for consideration, following 20 years of neglect and decay prior to the site being purchased by our client, even with their best efforts the building has fallen into a further state of disrepair.

A huge amount of safety works have been undertaken to do everything that can be done to save what remains, but this will require a swift redevelopment programme - which this scheme hopes to address.

We will highlight what remains of the site within this document (although this is covered in far greater detail in the information provided by Cotswold Archaeology attached to the application) and address how we intend to bring the site back to life through retaining, reusing and redeveloping the site as a whole into modern use as an apartment scheme.

The address of the application site is:
Downings Malthouse,
Gloucester Docks,
GL1 2ER





02

PLACE



2.1 LOCATION & REGIONAL CONTEXT

The city of Gloucester is located in western England. The Downings site is located to the South West of central Gloucester, in a wider area known as Bakers Quay, south of the main basin of Gloucester Docks and in close proximity to the Gloucester Sharpness Canal. Gloucester Docks is considered an area of historical importance within the UK, rich in industrial architecture, specifically Victorian.

Bakers Quay is 0.5 miles away from the city centre of Gloucester and is strategically located between the canal, Peel Retail Park, the

Gloucester Quays Outlet Centre, Premier Inn, Travelodge, Cineworld and numerous visitor attractions.

The site is bound to the west by Merchants Road and to the east by High Orchard Street and the Gloucester Quays outlet centre.

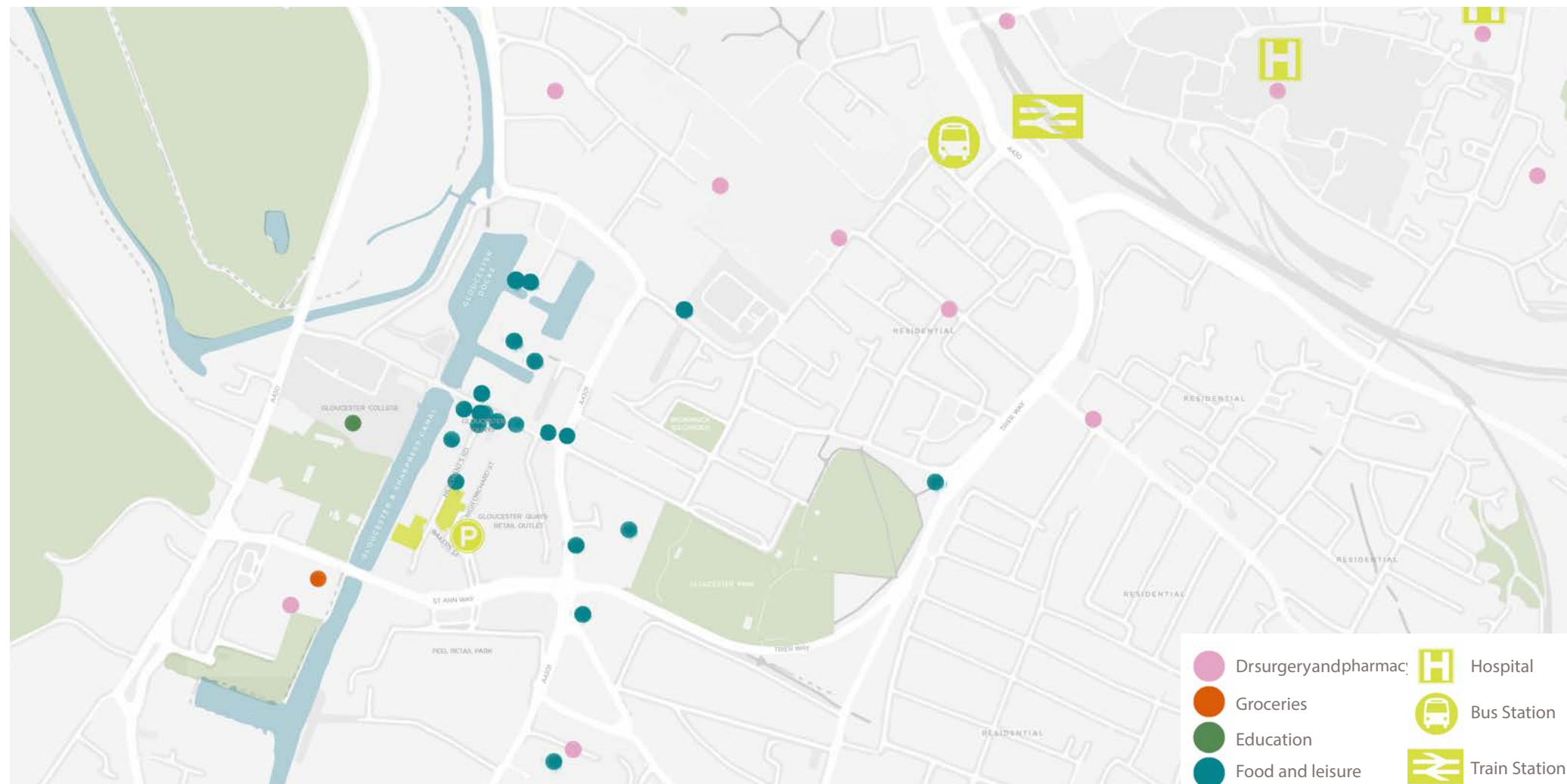
Bakers Street runs to the south of the site and to the north lies the recently regenerated area of the Gloucester Quays.

Public transport facilities are available with bus services supplying Bakers Quay site and the surrounding area. The nearest bus stop is a short 0.2 mile walk and 1.1 miles to Gloucester station which takes an average 21 minute walk.

This station is directly connected to Bristol, Bath and Cheltenham, along with further regional and national destinations through GWR and national rail.

These connections mean there is extensive access options to regional employment and leisure opportunities.

The site also has good connections with the A38, connecting widely to the M5, M50 and M4.



Wider Context Plan

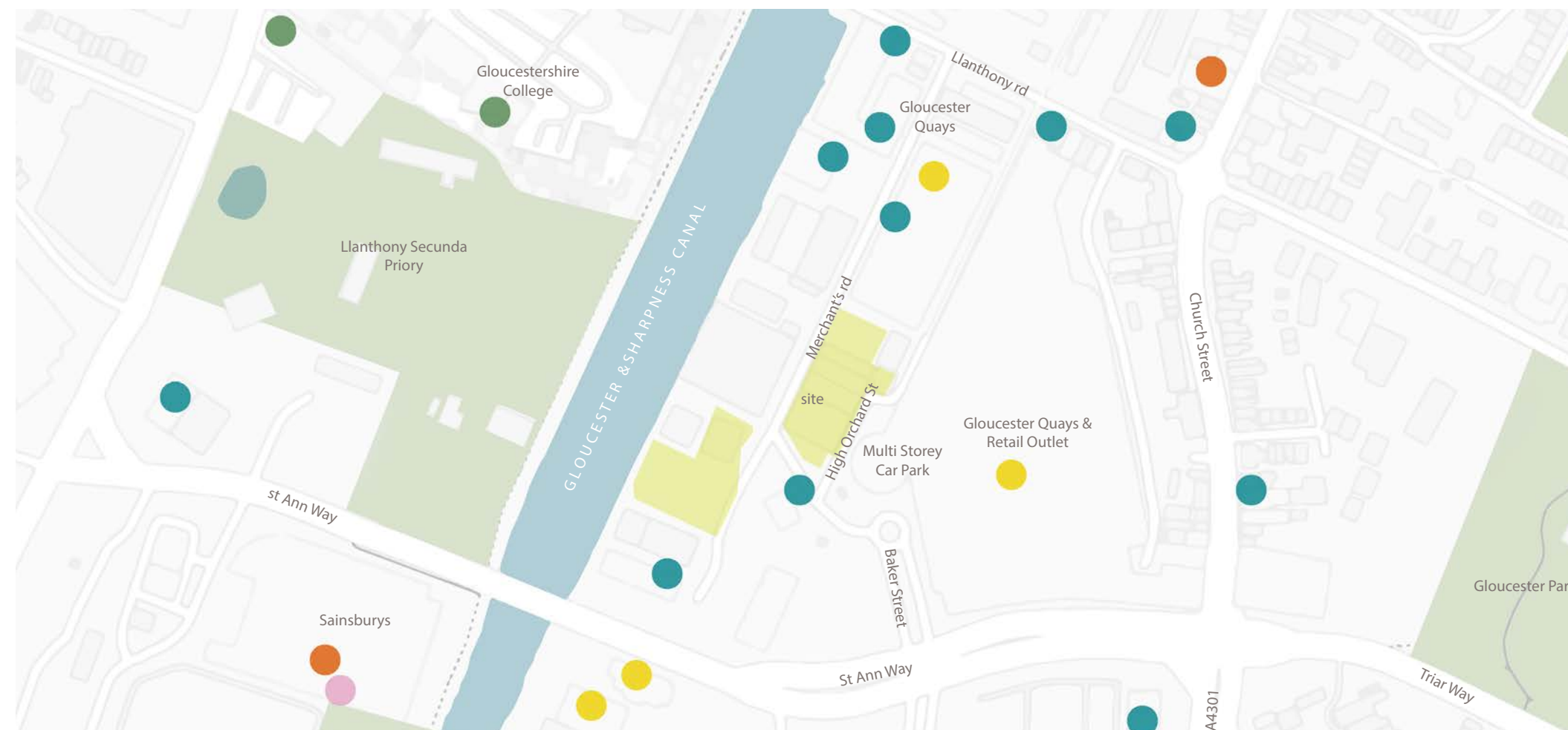


UK Wide Location Plan



Railway Connections

London Paddington.....1 hour 52 mins	Bristol Parkway..... 26 mins
Birmingham New Street.....55 mins	Bristol Temple Meads.....36 mins
Oxford..... 1 hour 35 mins	Cheltenham Spa 8 mins



- Dr surgery and pharmacy
- Groceries
- Retail shops and outlets
- Education
- Food and leisure

Immediate Context Plan

2.2 LOCAL AMENITIES

1. Gloucester Park is a public park a short 0.5 mile walk from the site and includes open spaces, a play area and sports grounds.
2. Gloucester train station and Bus Stations are within a short walk from the site.
3. Kingsholm Stadium is 1.6 miles to the north of the site.
4. The site is local to Alney Island nature reserve, which is located 1.1 miles from Bakers Quay.
5. The site is homed within the hub of Gloucester Quays and is surrounded with a large variety of shopping facilities, restaurants, coffee shops, cinema and other leisure facilities including a gym. These amenities are all within a short 3 minute walking distance of the site and do not require public transport or a vehicle to access.
6. A Sainsburys supermarket is within 0.6 miles of the site.



2.3 LAND USE & CHARACTER

A physical assessment of the site and its setting has been carried out to analyse its character and quality. This assessment covers both the immediate area affecting the visual perception of the site, and the wider area which sets the site into the greater context.

The following images illustrate the character of the immediate and wider area, in terms of its, distinctive architectural features, material finishes, the quality of spaces and the scale, mass and height of the buildings.

Gloucester is rich in architecture demonstrating its historical past. The image to the right, a map created by Historical England, shows the extent of listed buildings in this area of Gloucester Docks and Gloucester City Centre.

The area of Gloucester Docks has an impressive ensemble of 19th century warehouses, now redeveloped into a predominantly commercial area with a large variety of retail and leisure facilities, a need for residential has driven a surge in flats and apartments being developed.

Despite the disappearance of industrial activity there are still a number of items, large and small, related to the former uses around the docks e.g. mooring rings, an obsolete steam crane, rail tracks and the Atlas Bell. These contribute to the special interest of the conservation area and should be preserved. Street name signs (e.g. Merchants Road, High Orchard Street) and the painted lettering on the sides of the warehouses add to the area's character.



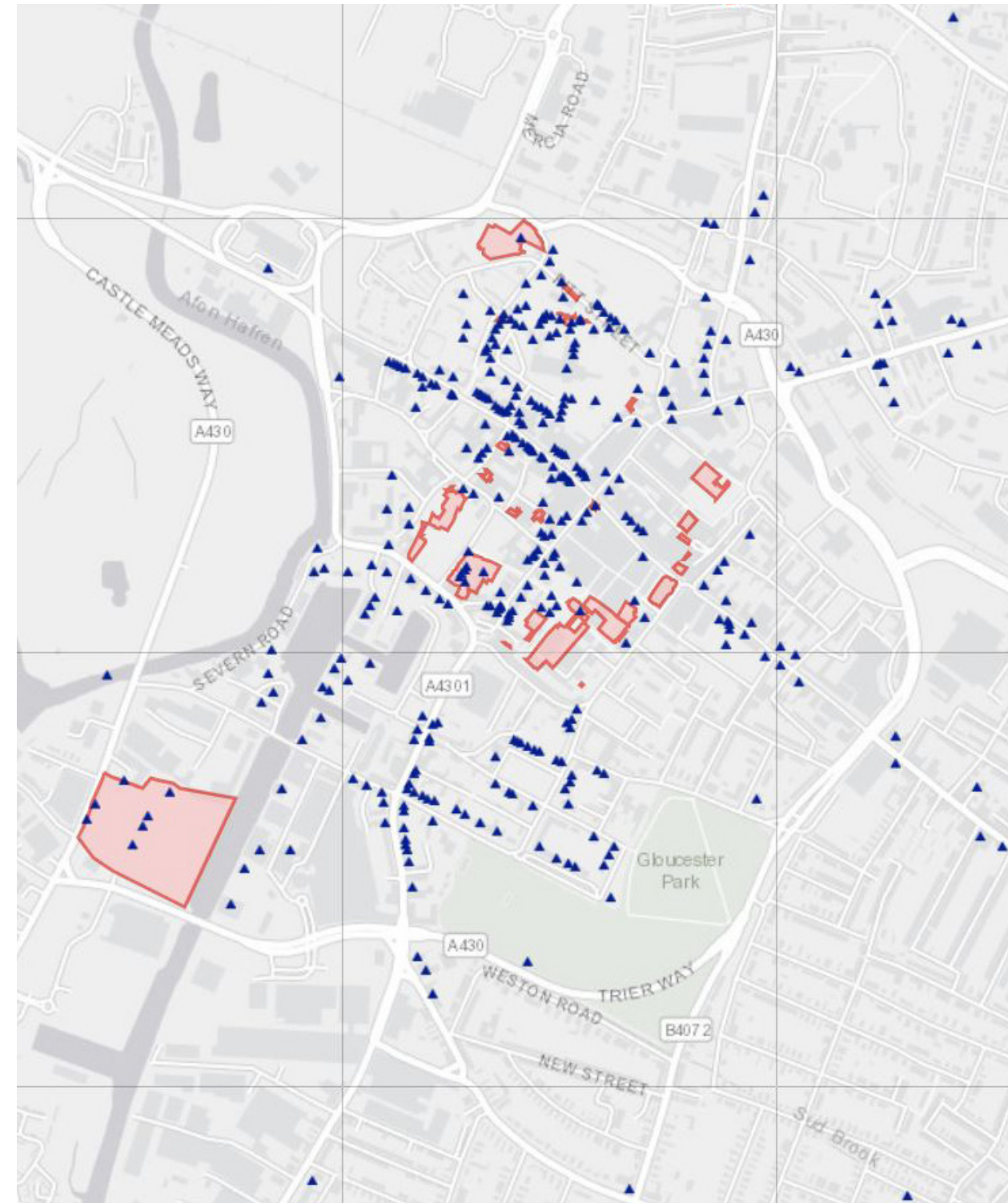
Llanthony Priory - Grade II



Pillar Warehouse - Grade II



Downings Malthouse Extension- Grade II



Historical england listed building map

Most of the historical Docks buildings have successfully been brought into modern use, whilst their period features have been retained or restored. The images (right) are just a few examples of the buildings which have been adapted to a variety of different uses.

These features include a strong grid-like window arrangement, predominant use of brick, vertical emphasis created by changes in material (in the centre of gables on these examples), painted white signage, dormer features in a contrasting material to the brick, and individual buildings that feel taller than they are wide.

This section concludes a study of listed buildings within Gloucester Docks that have been brought into modern use. This demonstrates the modern materials which have been chosen which sensitively marry into the areas industrial style.



Llanthony Warehouse- Grade II



Philpotts Warehouse- Grade II



Fox's Malthouse - Grade II



Vinings Warehouse - Grade II

2.4 MODERN BUILT CONTEXT

Although the Docks area of Gloucester is famous for its historic buildings, many of which are listed, recent development projects have been numerous and varied.

These new additions have shown how the historical language can be interpreted in a number of different ways. The Gloucester Quays Designer Outlet reused a number of existing facades to create the key streets through the scheme.

The major residential development adjacent to Llantony Road has shown that a modern development that takes design cues from the docks, rather than producing a modern replica can be successful in this setting. Importantly, the language of the quays changes as you move further South, with the rear entrance to the Outlet Centre sharing little in common with the docks itself.

The newest developments in the Bakers Quay area also bring a more modern architectural language, with the new hotel and Provender residential development referencing the docks in far more subtle ways than the mock warehouse schemes around the basin.

Many of these more recent developments have used rainscreen cladding as a contrast to the main brick material of the docks area. Due to the recent changes to fire regulations, we feel that cladding as a predominant elevational treatment is inappropriate and was ruled out at an early stage.

With these schemes in mind, and following advice from Historic England, we are keen to take a modern approach - learning from these surrounding buildings - by creating a strong contemporary building that subtly references the docks setting rather than overtly copying it.



Provender, Bakers Quay - Residential



Provender, Bakers Quay - Residential



No 04 St Ann Way - Commercial



Llantony Road - Mixed use



Gloucester Quays - Retail



High Orchard Street - Retail



Merchants Quay - Residential



Existing commercial buildings - Commercial



Gloucester Quays - Commercial

2.5 SITE ASSESSMENT

The application site is positioned within Gloucester Docks, on the edge of Gloucester City Centre.

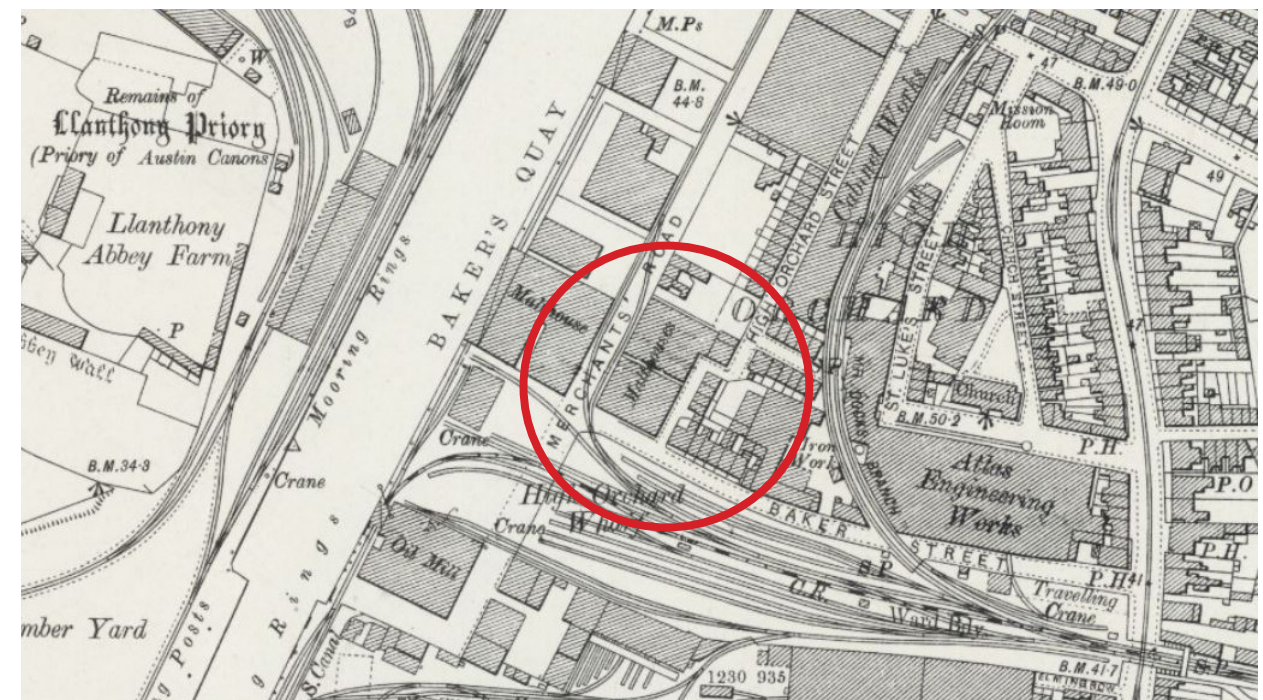
The main element of the site is occupied by the remains of Downings Malthouse. The former Downings Malthouse is a Grade II Listed building. It was Listed by Historic England on 12 March 1973, and the Listing was most recently amended on 15 December 1998. The building is in a serious state of disrepair with various sections now in ruin.

The buildings on the site were built in 1876 and extended in 1895, with later alterations. The 1895 extension is also by Walter B. Wood of Gloucester for G. and W. E. Downing and it is believed that the 1876 building is also to his design. It is of red brick with narrow bands of contrasting brick, and gabled slate roofs with coped parapets. There are four storeys to the front ranges, and three stories to the rear ranges. The 1895 kiln range was on the north and has an unusual clerestorey louvre arrangement.

More detail regarding how the remaining existing fabric has been intergrated into the scheme can be found later in the document.



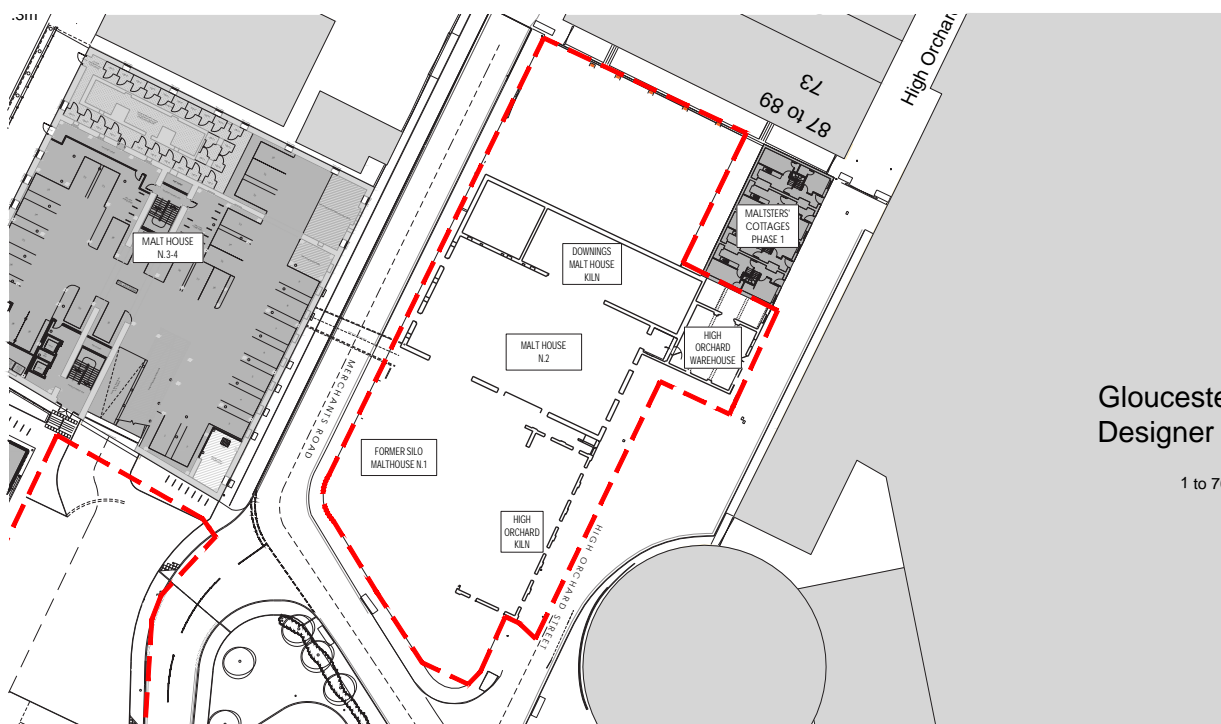
Historical map Gloucester 1881-1882



Historical map Gloucester 1901



Aerial View of the site prior to demolition of the concrete silo



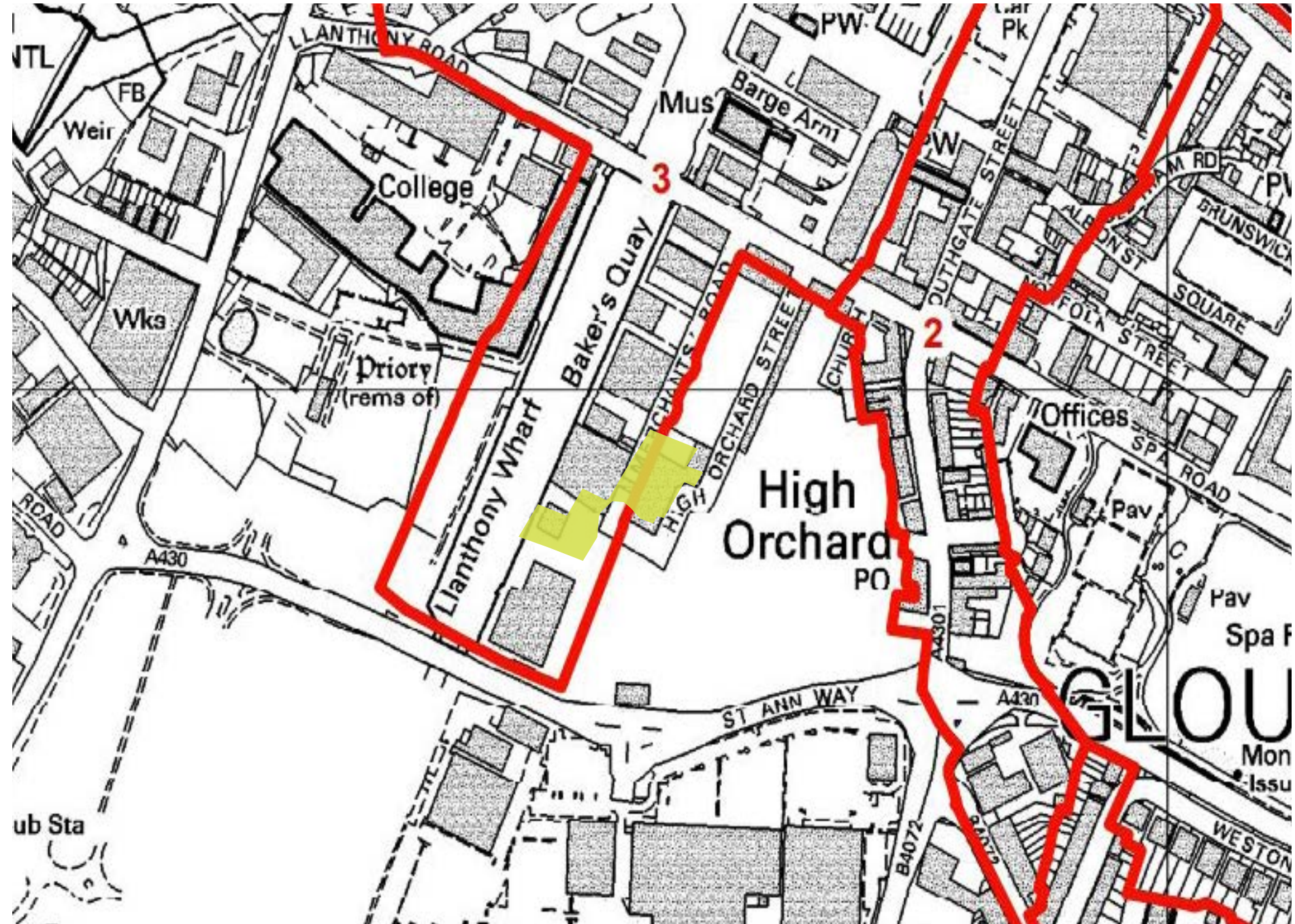
Current Site Plan, indicating relevant building names



2.6 CONSERVATION ZONES

The key development area of the site sits outside of the Conservation Area, however, the planning application includes an area allocated for parking.

Part of this parking site is within the Conservation Area, however it does not have any existing buildings or structures in place, and is already consented for its use as a car park.



2.7 PLANNING CONTEXT

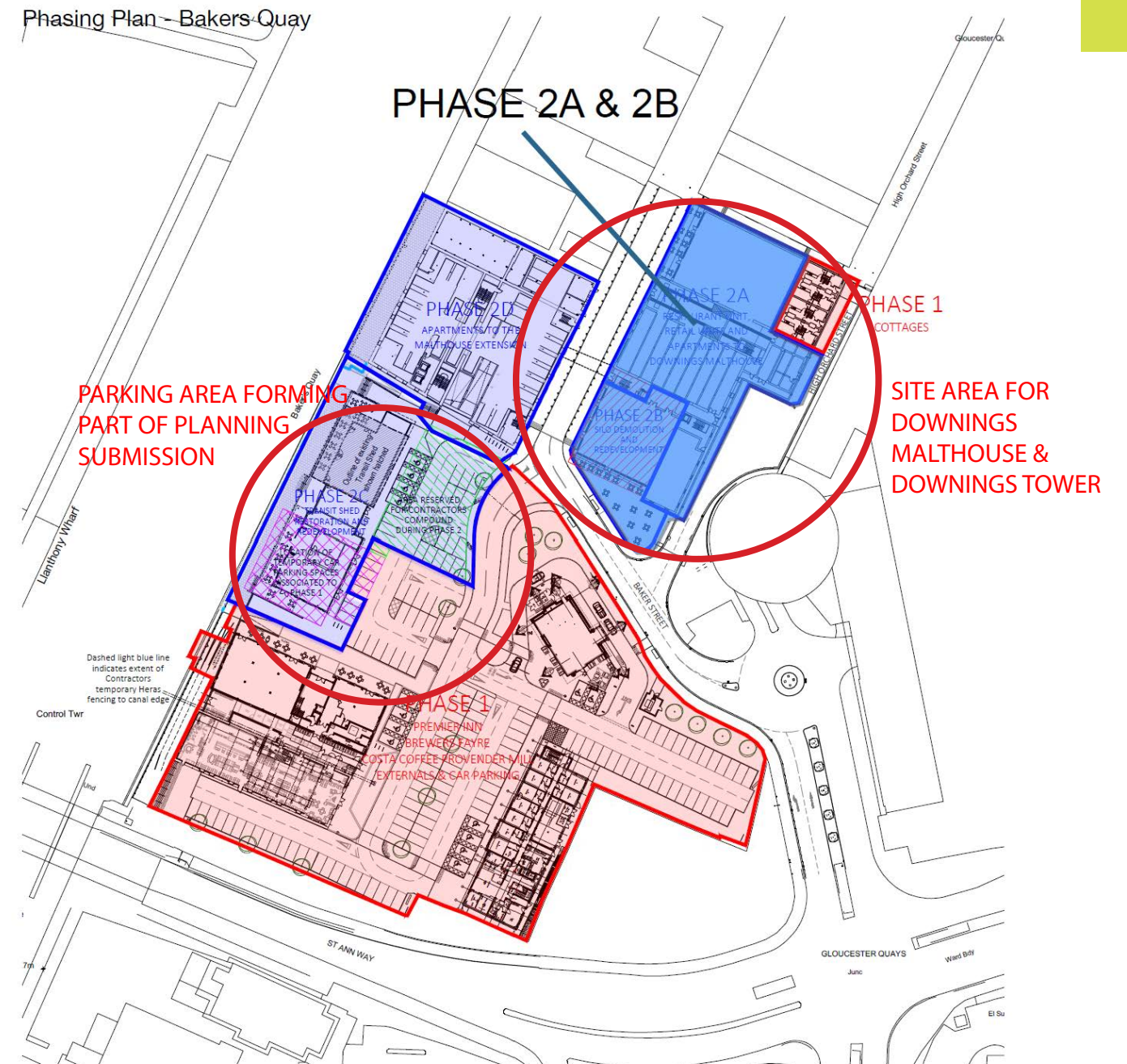
In August 2016 Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent were granted by Gloucester City Council for the comprehensive restoration and refurbishment of the collection of buildings currently known as Bakers Quay (although this name is to be reconsidered). The development was described as follows:

“Alteration, including partial demolition, refurbishment and restoration of Downings Malthouse and Downings Malthouse extension, the demolition and redevelopment of Provender Mill and the restoration and extension of the Transit Shed to provide commercial floorspace for A3/ A4 purposes at ground floor level in Downings Malthouse, Provender Mill and the Transit Shed, conversion of basement and ground floors of the Downings Malthouse extension for ancillary car parking, and the upper floors of Downings Malthouse, Downings Malthouse extension and new-build Provender Mill to provide 162 new residential units, and the restoration of 4 no. three-storey cottages. The development of a 105 bed hotel and freestanding unit for use for A3/A4 purposes on the site together with ancillary parking, turning, access and landscaping all at Bakers Quay Gloucester”

Following the grant of consent a phasing plan subdividing the scheme into 2 phases was subsequently

approved. The detailed conditions relating to Phase 1 comprising Provender Mill, The Engine Shed, the Dock Cottages and the development of a new 105 bed hotel and Drive Thru Coffee Shop at the southern end of the site, were discharged.

Sadly during the approval process Provender Mill was the subject of an arson attack and the building was destroyed. A replacement modern building was approved and the development of this phase implemented. The works were completed in 2018.



Following the completion of Phase 1, work commenced on Phase 2. Phase 2 was reclassified into 4 sub phases comprising phase 2A (Downings Malthouse), phase 2B (the Silo Site), phase 2C (The Transit Shed) and phase 2D (the Malthouse Extension). An application was submitted in December 2019 to revise the approved phasing plan.

It was decided to undertake detailed work on Phases 2A - 2B, restoration and refurbishment of Downings Malthouse (2A) and the new development of single storey A3 units on the Silo site (2B).

Conditions since the grant of the original consent have substantially changed, particularly in the last 3 years, which has been exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic. This has seen the collapse of the restaurant and cafe market.

These elements of the development, particularly in respect of Downings Malthouse, which proposed 3 such units, were crucial to the viability of the proposal to create residential units within the Malthouse and to restore and rebuild the building to maintain its historic qualities.

As a result of this change, and the determination of the parlous state of the existing building resulting in the loss of virtually all of the interior, it was necessary to rethink the form and the uses within this part of the development in order to find a scheme that would allow the restoration and rebuilding of Downings Malthouse and create a viable

scheme to secure the long term future of the building.

A residential scheme was prepared and consulted on in 2020 which was heavily criticised in terms of impact on the heritage elements and architectural character. Since this there has been a substantial reappraisal of the approach which is detailed in Section 3 of this document.



Extant Consent 2016 - no longer viable due to collapse in A3 market



Subsequent 2020 proposal - criticised on heritage and architectural grounds

03

PROCESS



3.1 ASSESSING THE CURRENT DOWNING MALTHOUSE'S VIABILITY

As noted in the previous sections, the scheme is split into two clear areas - the Downings Malthouse and Downings Tower.

The starting point for any design on this site needs to be how best to respond to the Heritage element - Downings Malthouse.

As time has passed, the condition of the existing building has become significantly worse, and although a key aspect of this proposal is to bring this building back to its former glory, the re-building of Downings Malthouse now faces significant and compound challenges, including:

Cost of Reinstatement

The internal structure needs to be re-built in a way that is sympathetic to the original but we have also had to carefully consider the complex relationship between its former use as a 19th Century kiln and warehouse and a building capable of beneficial use.

Collapse of A3 Market

The last 3 years has witnessed the collapse of the A3 restaurant/dining market. This market was a key contributor to value in the original August 2016 planning consent generating a £6,000,000 subsidy from the ground floor restaurant uses.

Impact of Covid Pandemic

The impact of the Covid pandemic (apart from additional delay and deterioration) has been the complete collapse of the A2/3 market. The original 2016 proposition is now unviable and unfundable.

Sustainability

Rightly, the requirements for the creation of a sustainable environment are no longer possible to ignore. This has a significant impact on cost which now has to be accommodated.

The whole project has had to be reviewed afresh, removing any reliance on the commercial market and increasing the value from the residential component to secure an alternative viable scheme. In addition it is anticipated that the residential market will become more competitive - meaning the quality and variety of the accommodation needs to respond with even better consideration of light and views.

Specifically, the scheme has been carefully considered in terms of the mix of units. Across the whole development there is a broad mix of units tailored towards the reality of the private housing market. This means a range from 1bed studios up to large, high quality,duplex units.

Although these constraints create complexity and add additional cost to the scheme, they also offer opportunity to create something truly unique.



3.2 CONSIDERING THE OVERALL HERITAGE CONTEXT

Notwithstanding the specific design complexities relating to the redevelopment of Downing's Malthouse, the site as a whole needs to respond not just to the Malthouse, but also the wider Heritage context. Throughout this design process, we have considered this respond using 3 key aspects -

Relationships between old and new, and how best to design the new build element of the scheme to best suit the context.

High quality attractive accommodation - fit for purpose, ensuring the long term success of the scheme and helping to revitalise the area.

The financial viability of the scheme, without which there will be no development.

When considering Downings Tower, the first principles have been set by the written feedback from the Conservation Officer at Gloucester City Council in response to a previous pre-application submission from August 2020.

The key statements are listed below, and set the bar for the bold and modern response we have taken with this scheme:

- 'Its design should be that of one which does not wholly replicate the docks area form but presents a new form of architecture in this historic setting'
- 'the opportunity is being missed to create an authentic 21st century heritage for Gloucester....Copying the fabric that survives from past innovation is not the same as continuing that spirit of innovation.'
- 'contemporary development is not objectionable - this should be innovative

and unique to Gloucester and of a high quality.'

This challenge - to create something unique and authentic to its time - has been something we have relished in the design process.

As noted, the additional key criteria have been more practical in terms of the short and long term viability of the scheme.

Firstly, by establishing a golden rule that all apartments must be of the highest standard, and offer a variety of sizes and number of occupants, we are ensuring that the scheme meets the needs of Gloucester today, but also long into the future. We have aimed to create a development that is desirable, with purchasers and occupants in mind. To do this, we have included key features such as appropriately sized windows, balconies, adequate parking and sustainability features to meet the demands of modern living.

Secondly, in the short term, the scheme has had to be considered in terms of financial viability. Downing's Malthouse needs to be developed to ensure that the structure isn't lost forever, but the financial cost of this work is significant and rising by the year. To offset this cost, Downings Tower needed to be designed to add enough value to make the total scheme viable.

Current View across site



High Orchard Street Warehouse

3.3 SITE CONSTRAINTS

Taking into consideration the site context analysis, constraints and opportunities plans have been developed. The primary constraints, and site characteristics are identified below and illustrated in the adjacent diagram:

The site is bound to the east by High Orchard Street, the west by Merchants Road and the south by Baker Street. All of these roads are active highway and will still require vehicular access once the scheme is complete.

The development needs to work with and aim to enhance the historic walls remaining of the Downings Malthouse and the High Orchard Street Kiln.

The High Orchard Warehouse is in good condition, and will be developed as a refurbishment.

Careful consideration has been given to the relationship between any new buildings and Merchant's Road. Although there is potential for overlooking across this road, the need to create a coherent edge to the development - in keeping with the Docks language - is considered a significantly more important consideration. This point was also made by the Conservation officer in response to our previous pre-application submission.

To the north and east of the site, the views out are undesirable (looking over a car park and the Gloucester Quays cinema), but the views to the south are a real selling point of the site. Any design needed to make the most of the southern elevation and avoid as many units as possible facing unattractive views.

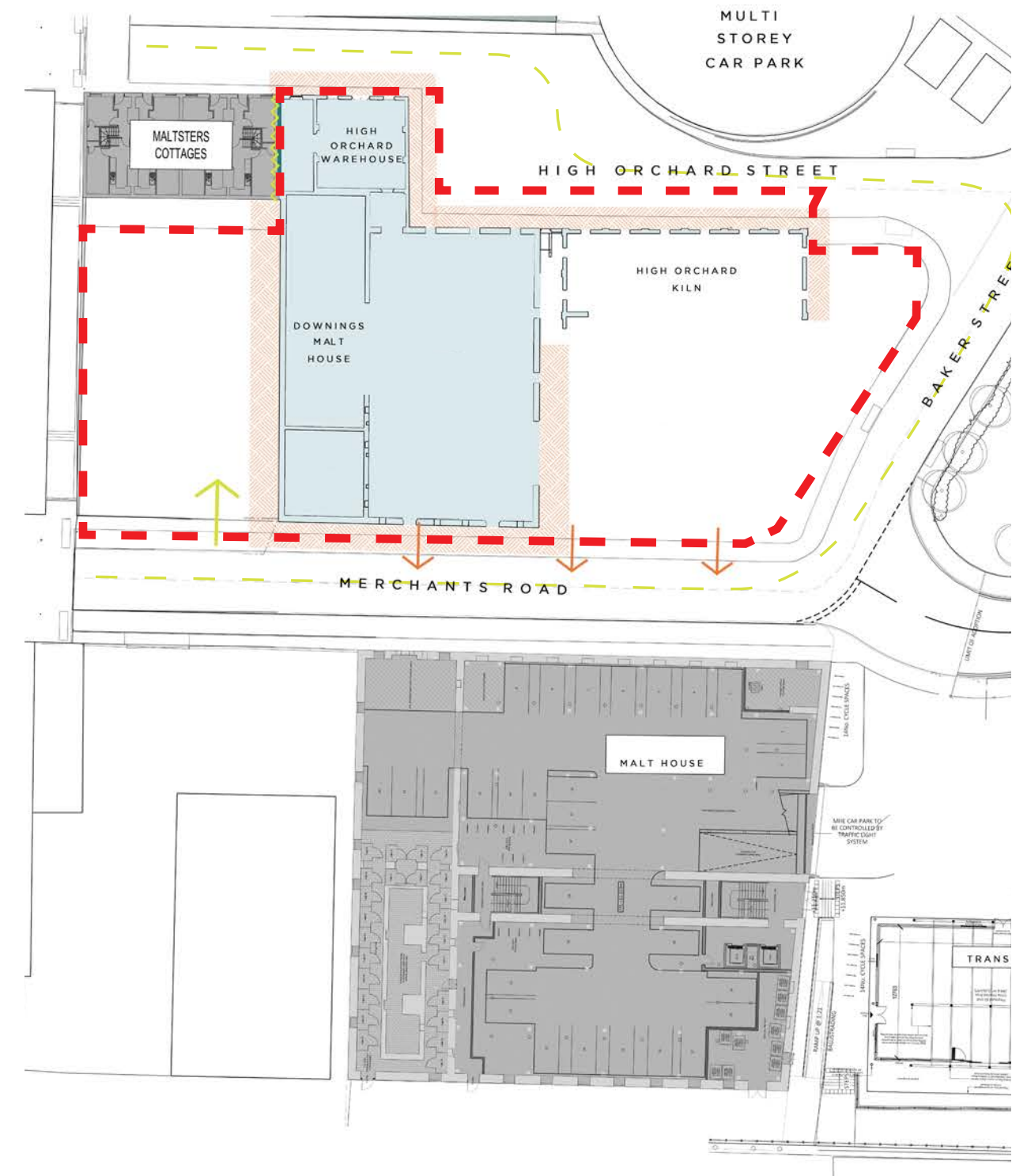
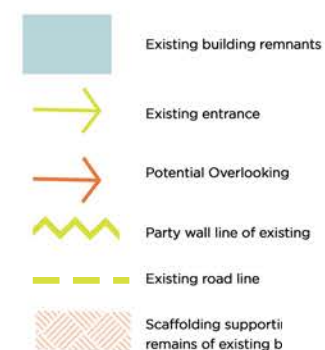
The depth of the site means that creating a scheme where all apartments get adequate daylight is a challenge and needed to be

carefully considered.

It was also established during previous applications that the scheme needed to take into account the requirement to reinstate the bridge link between Downing Malthouse and the Malthouse Extension.

The levels on the site are also potentially complicated. Although the area as a whole is largely flat, our site has a basement level left over from the previous buildings. How best to integrate this into the scheme has been carefully considered.

In addition to these considerations, the relationship between the site and the wider Bakers Quay context is an important aspect of the scheme.



3.4 DOWNINGS MALTHOUSE: SPECIFIC CHALLENGE AREAS

The remaining walls of the Downing Malthouse represent an opportunity to create a one of a kind residential property, but this is not without it's challenges. The specifics of how different aspects of the remaining structure have impacted our design thoughts are listed below.

Downings Malthouse Kiln - spine wall - part - 5

In the main this only remains to a little above ground floor level and has a structural crack diagonally across the eastern part. This means that this wall would be very difficult to rebuild. The floor plans have taken account of where this wall would have been positioned, and this is reflected in the design.

High Orchard Street Kiln - 3

Whist the retention of this is problematic for both structural and architectural reasons (provision of light and views), the wall is considered of high importance and the design of Downings Tower has been adjusted to accommodate the retention of the remaining part as much as possible. This will require the provision and reprovision of openings in existing and new locations to provide some light and view to be available to the accommodation behind.

Downings Malthouse Kiln - North Wall - 4

This is currently supported with substantial scaffold. The plan makes provision for studios along this wall and these will need good light and balconies for which the current openings are insufficient. The new openings in this wall have been considered carefully to strike a balance between a considerate response to the existing wall and create high quality residential accommodation that helps with viability.

Downings Malthouse - South wall - part - 8

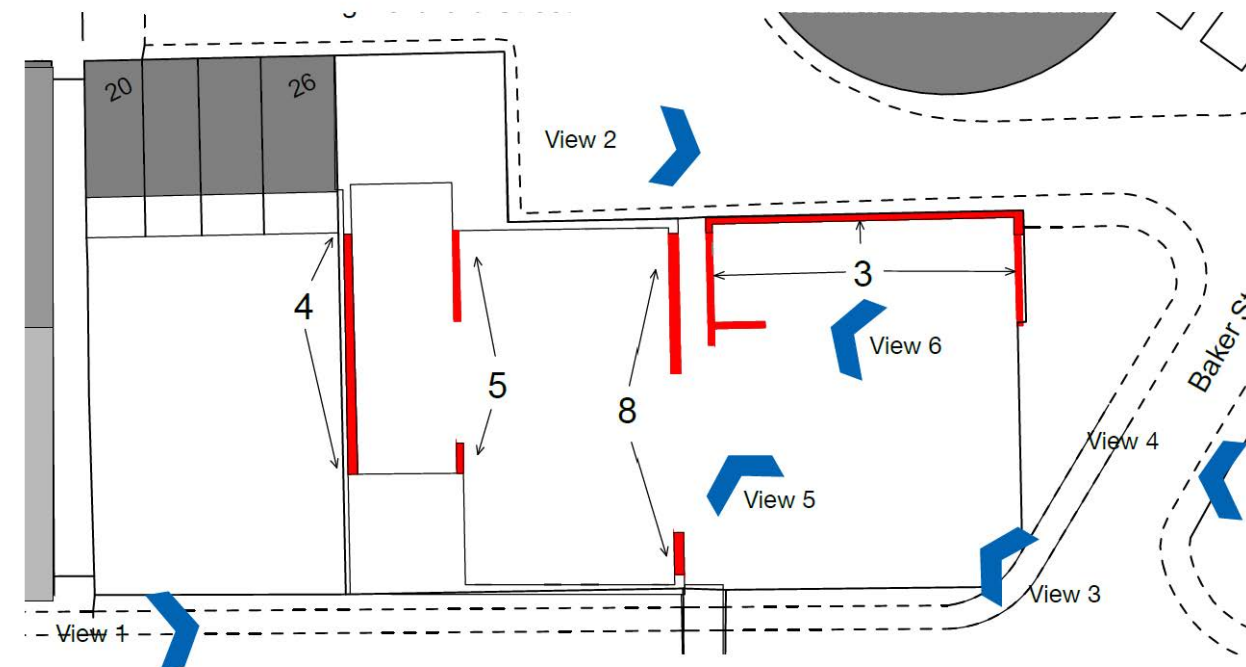
The design has been adjusted to allow for the retention of the substantial remaining part of this wall - though some tidying will be required in the light of the collapsed edge - and to allow for viable apartment plans adjacent. It is anticipated that the collapsed opening in the wall will provide an opportunity for a cut into the heart of the building, allowing light into adjacent apartments and a view into the core.



Downings Malthouse Kiln - 5



High Orchard Street Kiln - 3



Downings Malthouse Kiln - 4



Downings Malthouse - 8

3.5 OVERALL SITE DESIGN AIMS & OPPORTUNITIES

The team looked at numerous options in terms of use, scale and architectural approach to save what is left of the heritage. The design is the result of this process which considered a variety of options (some illustrated here) including much reduced size, the 'what if' test of treating the site in a non-heritage context and the substantial rebuilding of the now collapsed listed structures. The presented scheme is the only approach we have been able to make work in the context of viability, quality and heritage.

Use - with regard to use we reviewed all options, in particular the A3 that supported the previous scheme. In the current market the only fundable use for this site is residential and studies have been tailored around this.

Quality - the provision of good daylight and views (of both the area and where possible the canal) for both the Heritage Block and the Contemporary Addition is critical in achieving value. Some options have been deemed inappropriate on this basis.

Quantity/ Density - in order to achieve the necessary value to pay for fixed costs a certain quantity is required. We have tried various options with lower density and a variety of massing options for the Contemporary Addition. None of these proved viable whilst still achieving any degree of heritage retention.

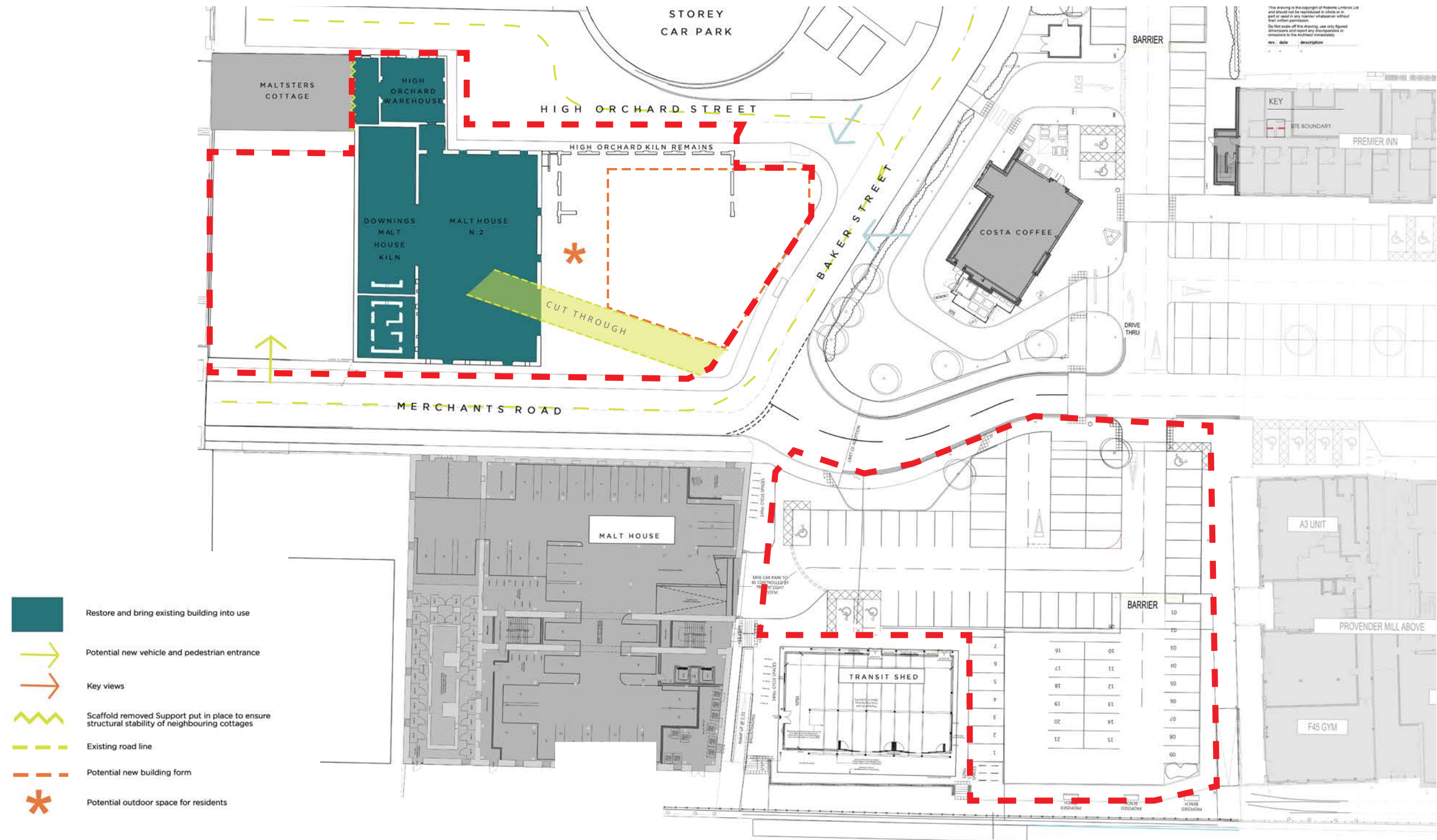
Heritage approach - the objective has always been to achieve as positive a response as possible regarding heritage. Notwithstanding this, we have reviewed entirely new build options alongside different architectural approaches. We are clear that the balance of retention of heritage and appropriate architectural response is as robust as possible in the context of the requirements for viability and the creation of high quality living space and

place.

Architectural approach - our approach is that of complimentary contrast with the warehouse architecture, making reference in terms of grain, materiality and scale.

Amenties - The scheme needs to provide adequate parking to ensure the viability of the project. To avoid creating a car dominated scheme, and to make best use of the existing site levels, as much parking as possible has been placed in a basement level.

Access to the basement is at the northern edge of the site. Through the design process we considered a number of different access points, but due to the depth of the basement, we need to use the lowest part of the site as the starting point for our ramp down. This means the area to the north of Downings Malthouse is the only viable option.



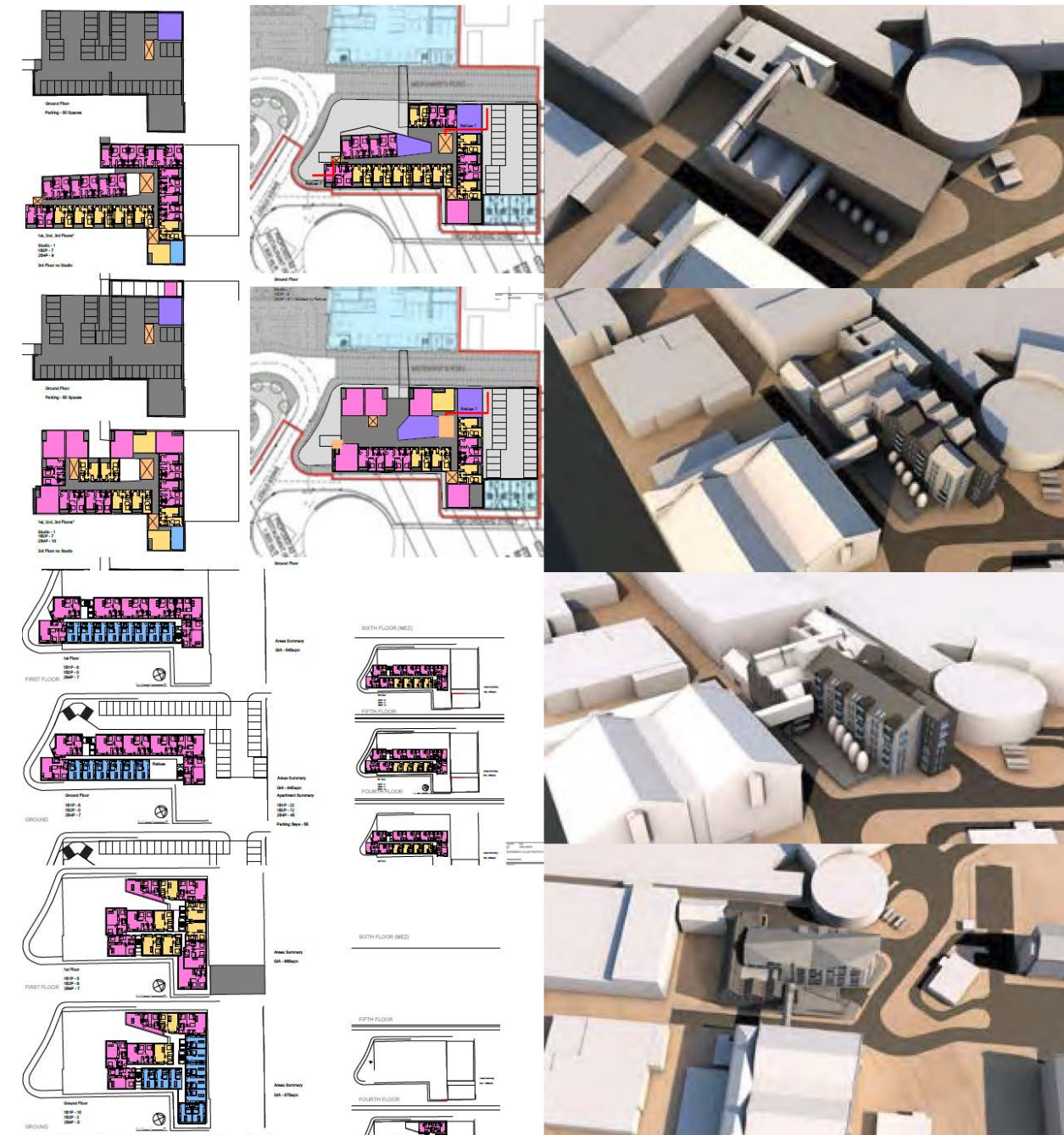
3.6 INITIAL DESIGN RESPONSE & OPTION DEVELOPMENT

Downings Malthouse with the Malthouse Extension (to the west of the site) define the southern gateway to the Gloucester Quays and - along with the iconic link bridge - represents an opportunity to help define the quality of the whole area.

In developing the design approach, as well as the preservation of existing heritage, we looked at how the proposed building will fit in the context of the Malthouse Extension. We explored an opportunity to create an open space leading into Merchants Road - this gave an opportunity to open up light and views to Malthouse Extension. This original strategy led to a variety of schemes where the new build element and the heritage works were strongly intersected.

This scheme was submitted in April 2021 for pre-app but the comments back suggested that we needed to move towards a scheme that retained the High Orchard Street Kiln wall, and looked to retain the language of the streets within the docks by bringing the building line out to the edge of the site.

We looked at a number of different ways of adjusting the relationship between the new build elements, the road, the Malthouse Extension and the remains of Downings Malthouse, but the only logical conclusion that was acceptable to all parties was the creation of a separate new build block (Downings Tower) and the sensitive redevelopment of Downings Malthouse and the High Orchard Street Warehouse.



The design strategy relating to the heritage has evolved over a number of different iterations, and through consultation with the Conservation Officer via the previous pre-application submission. The design process can be best summarised below.

Key notes for consideration as part of any heritage design:

The retained and restored structures define a specific framework, which, in place of the temporary scaffold need associated structure to maintain their integrity both structurally and architecturally. A new structure to support the bridge link is also needed.

An assessment of viability and scheme quality indicated that the retention of certain structures is difficult to deal with architecturally. Despite this the design has been adapted to retain structures wherever possible.

Initial Option (1A, 1B and 1C)

The initial option focused on creating an integrated scheme, where the walls of Downings Malthouse were seamlessly combined with the extended structure of the new build elements. This created a longer building with a more public 'square' to the south west of the site.

As discussed in section 3.6, we were asked to provide a stronger edge to the site and to minimise the impact on the heritage elements.

Revised Option (2A, 2B and 2C)

The revised scheme took on board the comments around retaining more of the existing heritage assets, and also about creating a stronger relationship with the buildings on site and edge of the site.

The revised scheme was presented to the conservation officer and Historic England in August 2021. The response to this has been positive in that the heritage elements are preserved to their maximum extent and the settings enhanced so far as possible.

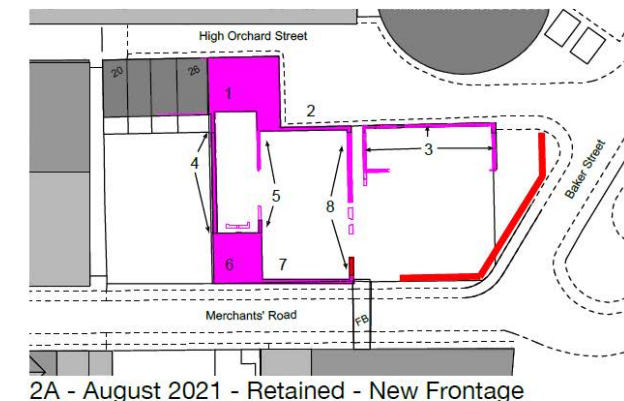
Following this positive initial response from the pre-app and Historic England, the scheme was taken to the Gloucestershire Design Panel in December 2021. The principle of separating the old and new was discussed in detail, and although the panel didn't necessarily agree with the approach of creating two buildings on the site, preferring to see a more interconnected overall scheme with greater intervention on the heritage elements, the overall response was that the solution reached within these constraints was well considered.

The Design Panel also suggested that any subsequent planning application should take into account the impact of the scheme from further afield and on those walking past the scheme.

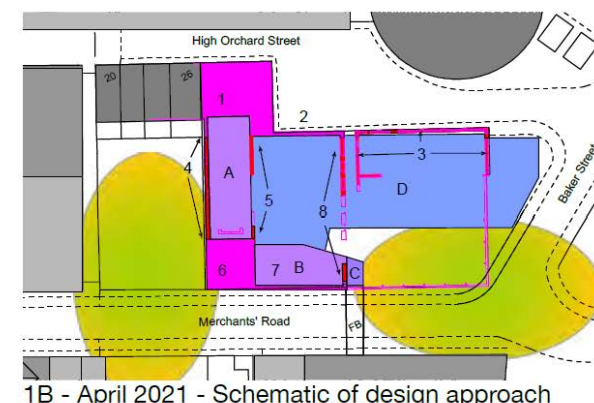
With that in mind, an LVIA in support of the scheme has been submitted with the application. This positive response includes consideration of distant views. In addition to this, details of the external environment have also been included in the application.



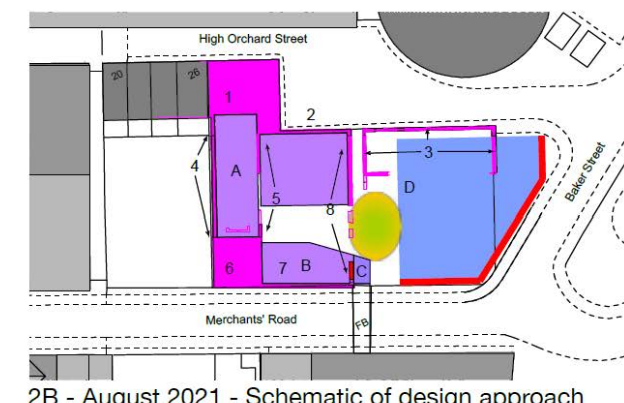
1A - April 2021 - Retained/at risk Structures



2A - August 2021 - Retained - New Frontage



1B - April 2021 - Schematic of design approach



2B - August 2021 - Schematic of design approach



1C - April 2021 - Aerial View



2C - August 2021 - Aerial View



04

PROPOSAL



4.1 LAYOUT

The updated proposal was much preferred by the conservation officer and Historic England and on this basis has been developed into the scheme that has now been submitted for planning approval.

The primary design driver is the separation of Downings Malthouse from Downings Tower. This has resulted in a number of exciting and interesting decisions, created by the contrast and separation that two distinct elements allows.

Creating an Urban 'Heartspace'.

The first example of this can be seen on the ground plan, which uses the external areas to create a lively and vibrant plaza between the two buildings. This dynamic space not only connects every route through and into the site, but also provides an opportunity to experience both buildings at the same time. The plaza will be bounded by active commercial and communal spaces alongside the necessary access to parking and refuse.

The reinstatement of the bridge link between our development and the Warehouse Extension completes the 'gateway' to the Quays area along Merchants Road, helping to integrate this scheme into the wider context of the Docks.

The Broader Urban Context

As well as preserving the integrity of the retained heritage elements of Downings Malthouse (creating a strong relationship between the old and new) the proposed design has been developed to provide a new edge to the site.

The building line and mass, seek to improve the clarity of an urban space which is currently

poorly defined and confused by the form of the car park drum.

This robust edge to Baker Street is only softened at the south west corner of the scheme, where the bottom two floors of Downings Tower are pulled back to create a cut through that leads all the way through to the heart of Downings

Malthouse. This not only adds architectural interest, but also opens the centre of the scheme up to Bakers Quay as a whole.



4.2 SCALE AND MASSING

Significant effort has been undertaken to ensure viability and it is this balance which has confirmed the massing previously presented to the conservation and planning team.

Although viability has been the initial driver for the height of the building, this has led to the opportunity to create a new landmark on the skyline of Gloucester.

The location for such a tall building is ideal, and it is worth noting that the site adjacent to the Premier Inn had previously been identified as appropriate for a tall building.

Once the height of the building had been established, the focus became about ensuring it sits comfortably within the surrounding urban context.

Much like the warehouses of the Docks, we have designed the building to be unapologetic about its height, and instead we have focused on ensuring that the form, materiality and overall mass are of the highest quality design.

With that in mind, the roofline of the new building is designed such that in perspective it sits within the mass and scale of the surrounding buildings, whilst also reflecting the asymmetric nature of the Malthouse Extension gable.

The building has been designed as a three dimensional object, with the roofscape and angled walls creating a unique streetscene from whichever angle you approach the building.



4.3 APPEARANCE

When considering appearance, the development plays with the split of the site into two distinct buildings.

Downings Malthouse has been designed with the understanding that the existing walls are the key design element, and we have looked to make modern interventions clean and crisp, so as not to distract from the existing fabric.

Where the new 'cut' is formed, we have deliberately changed the colour but not the materiality. Brick is still the prominent material, but by using white bricks, we are establishing a modern look whilst helping to bring light into the space, and providing clear separation between the old and the new.

Detailing on Downings Malthouse 'cut' is still clean and crisp, but has a subtle hint towards the historic setting. We will seek to re-use some of the columns saved from the building to create a feature leading to the buildings entrance. Arched openings at Ground Floor level, and soldier course headers to windows also help to provide a reference to history.

On Downings Tower, we have taken a more modern approach. The key characteristics taken from the surroundings are the grid-like rhythmic windows and the use of brick. Clean lines and knife-edge metal window surrounds ensure that the building is contemporary in its detailing. Whilst the grouping of windows into pairs pulls the eyes up the building, expressing its vertically.

The recessed stacked balconies break the elevation and reference the stacked openings and crane housings of the warehouse district.

Importantly, the entrance arrangement of Downings Tower - on a contemporary pillar

arrangement - not only opens the building out into the wider context, but also makes reference to the weight of the masonry structure supported on the iron columns of the Malhouse Extension as it faces the canal. Merchants Road is in effect to the new building as the canal is to Malthouse Extension.



4.4 ACCESS & MOVEMENT

The development can be accessed by prospective users in the following ways:

Train - The scheme is walking distance from Gloucester Train Station.

Road (Cycle) - Baker Street connects to main road network, which has established cycle lanes. Baker Street provides direct access to the main cycle store in the Malthouse Extension, opposite the main entrance.

Road (Car) - Baker Street provides access to Merchant Road which leads to the entrance to the basement car park. The position of the entrance is here as it is the lowest point on the site, reducing the required slope for access into the car park.

Road (Pedestrian) - Accessed via High Orchard Street and Merchant Road - in both directions. A key entrance is on the corner of Baker Street and Merchant Road. This entrance leads to the 'cut' under Downing Tower and into the heart of Downings Malthouse.

Road (Accessible) - The 'natural' level entrance is on High Orchard Street as this is the highest point on the site, removing the need for a ramped access for wheelchair users.



Further notes on access:

As already noted, the scheme looks to integrate with the surrounding area, whilst also creating a central plaza for the residents of the two buildings.

The access to the site by car is from the south, via St. Ann Way. Due to the pedestrianisation of the Gloucester Quays development, this is the key access for almost all people approaching the site. This means that the approach from the east and south is a key feature of the scheme.

The development includes a large amount of car parking, both under the proposed buildings and as part of the wider Bakers Quay area, however these are kept simple and unobtrusive. Disabled parking bays have been allowed for, both in the basement and the wider parking scheme.

However, when considering the external environments within the scheme, design decisions have been made based on the movement of pedestrians, rather than on cars.

Pedestrians have been provided with two clear main entrances into the site - one from High Orchard Street and one from Merchant's Road and Baker Street. This dual aspect will create a vibrant and interesting urban space, with easy and clear movement for all people visiting the buildings.

The scheme has the need for accessibility as a core feature, and the access from High Orchard Street has been designed to be level, providing an inviting and well considered accessible entrance. In addition to this, access from the basement up to the ground floor (and beyond) of both buildings is served via a lift directly from the main lobby areas.

Although the majority of the cycle parking for the wider scheme will be created in a bespoke cycle store in the next phase of development, some allowance for cycle parking in the basement has also been included.



4.5 LANDSCAPE

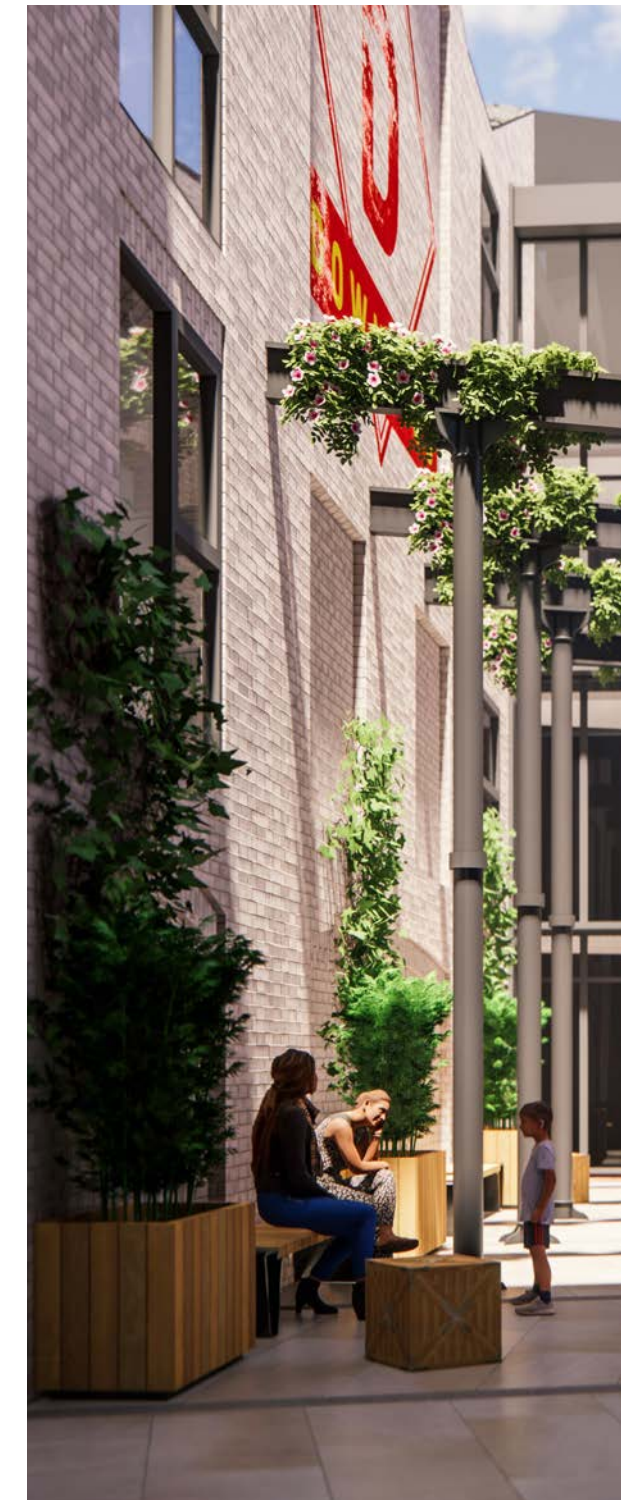
The scheme responds to the overall aesthetic of the Docks area by providing a predominantly hard landscaped design, we have sought to integrate soft landscaping where is it both appropriate and managable.

This provides a softening to the edges of the high quality external finishes being uses around the site.

The hard landscaping has been carefully considered to ensure that the scheme provides a quality external enviroment. Sandstone

paving and granite setts are used in key areas to enhance the externals. These have been chosen to tie in the already successful external environment created around the previous developments in the area.

Space for external seating, benching and pedestrian movement ensure that the landscaped areas are welcoming and activated.



4.6 PHOTO MONTAGES



View from St. Ann Way, looking north



View from St. Ann Way, adjacent to the vehicular access into the site



View from Llanthony Priory, looking east

4.7 SUSTAINABILITY

With Covid and COP 26 there are transformational changes in perceptions and needs. For example working from home and resulting and appropriate amenity need to be part of an attractive living environment. The use of gas for heating is no longer acceptable and therefore efficiency and conservation of heat is essential.

Where before viability and cost have made it hard to adopt technologies such as MVHR, these will become an essential rather than a 'nice to have'.

An energy based strategic review has already been undertaken and it is anticipated that this development will also use air source heating in combination with PVs, high levels of insulation and consideration of solar gain as part of combined system.

The urban nature of the site and transport links make this site appropriate for less reliance on cars however it is recognised that most will expect their own private transport and a high provision of electrical charging is anticipated using dedicated charging points.

To meet the 'Sustainability Objective' the following development hierarchy methodology will be adopted –

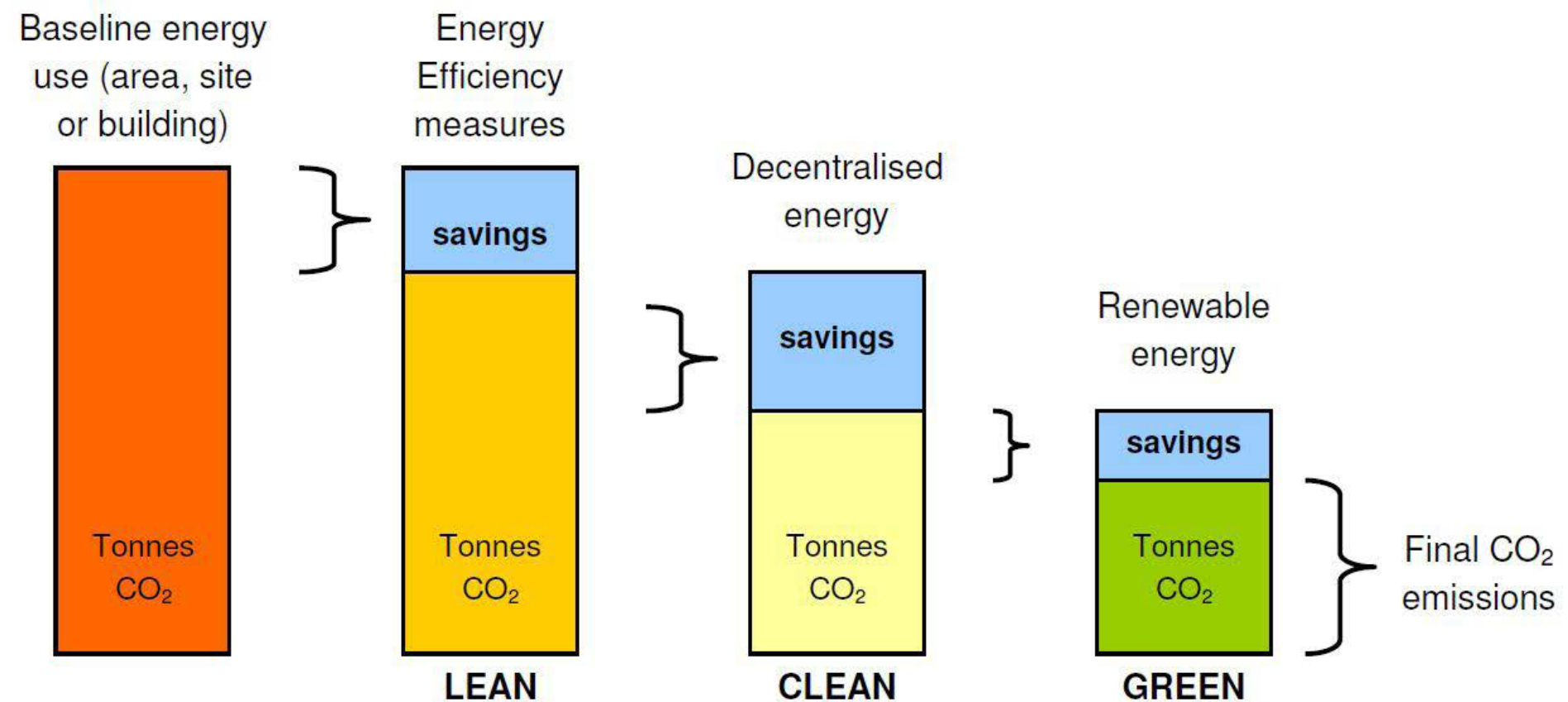
Lean – Passive solutions first – to reduce energy demands to a minimum by utilisation of exemplary construction methods and quality control, choice of materials, high levels of fabric insulation, air tightness to ensure low infiltration rates and adoption of natural ventilation via openable windows for rapid ventilation purposes.

Clean – Meet the minimised energy demands of the building engineering services installations;

background ventilation, heating, lighting and small power etc., by selective and appropriate use of energy efficient low carbon technologies to efficiently maintain internal comfort conditions for occupancy, which in this case will include adoption of electrically powered air source heat pump technology comprising a centralised low temperature ambient loop heating infrastructure such as manufactured by Daikin – 'Altherma' or similar system, combined with individual apartment heat pumps and MVHR (mechanical ventilation and heat recovery) background ventilation and use of LED lighting throughout the development.

Green – Finally after application and incorporation of all appropriate and properly applied passive construction and energy efficient installations, apply the use of 'on site' zero carbon renewable energy generating installations such as photovoltaics and potential solar thermal.

The detailed energy proposals are covered within the Energy Statement provided as part of the planning submission.



05

HERITAGE RESPONSE



5.1 HIGH ORCHARD STREET WAREHOUSE

The High Orchard Street Warehouse is a separate structure which was incorporated into the Downings Malthouse when it was constructed by means of a link staircase on the South West corner of the building.

The building has been further expanded to the North as shown from the clear demarcation line visible in the elevation that shows the different stages of construction.

The works will commence from this area of the site and we will now be referring to this initial works as Phase 1.

The structure consists of timber floors supported by timber beams propped by CHS columns (a later addition) at ground and first level and by timber column at second floor level.

The roof is a dual pitched structure that benefits from generous cantilevered eaves. The roof is slate tiled but has been over painted with a bitumen covering. It shows signs of water ingress and growing vegetation where the internal gutter has failed.

Compared to the rest of the Site the structure of this building is relatively well preserved and only presents areas of localised decay.

The intention is to retain and restore where possible the entire internal and external structure of this building with the original floors and columns being left in situ where possible. The existing fabric will be largely retained with the addition of the openings already consented under the previous Listed Building Application.

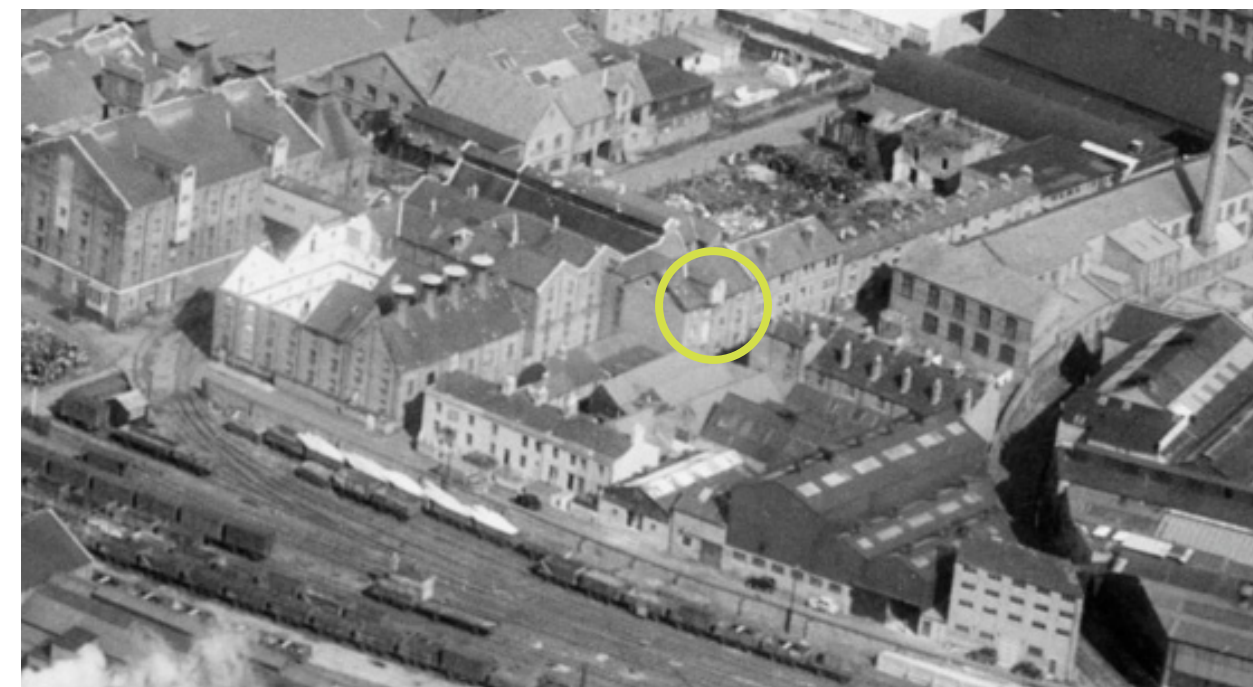
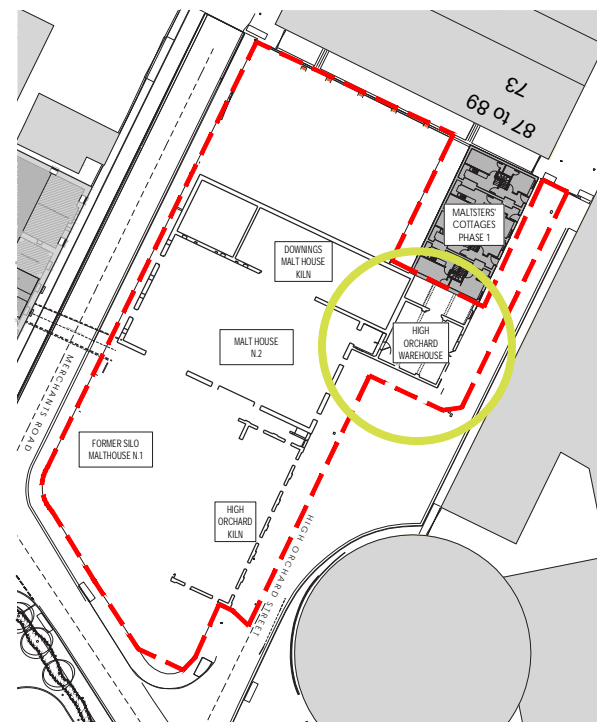
It is also proposed to reinstate the projecting dormer feature that is visible from historical aerial photos.

The top image depicts a rectified photo taken prior to the installation of the scaffolding showing the clear demarcation line between the old and new construction.

The bottom image shows evidence of a projecting dormer feature in the central section of the original building.

The building will be converted into 6 flats across 4 floors, with the majority of windows created by reopening existing openings.

The new dormer feature will create a stand-out feature on the front elevation, whilst remaining in keeping with the original building's design aesthetic.

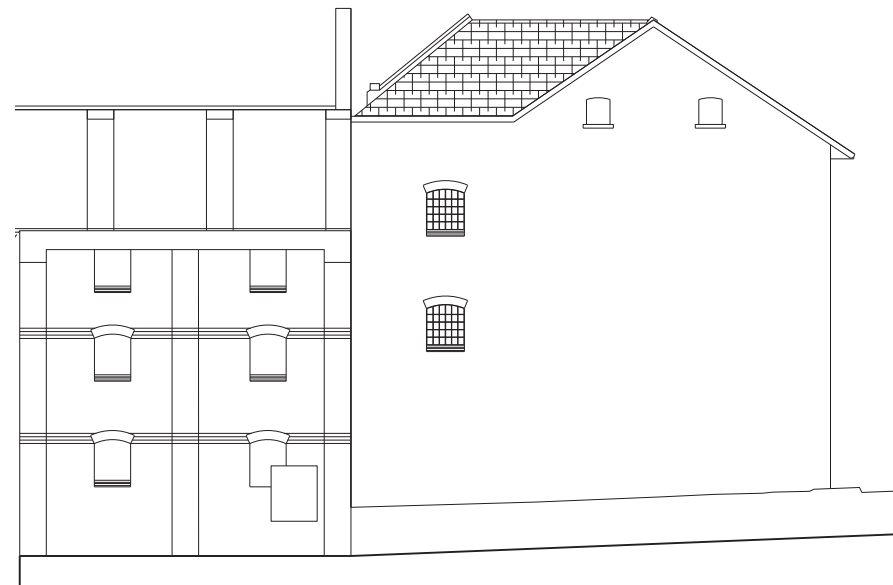




Existing Elevation: East



Proposed Elevation: East



Existing Elevation: South



Proposed Elevation: South

5.2 HIGH ORCHARD STREET KILN WALL

The High Orchard Kiln is the remaining fragment of the original Malthouse number 1. All original internal/ roof structure has been lost in this building, removed during the construction of the concrete silo.

At the time of construction of the concrete silo, all the internal floors and roof structure of the earlier malthouse were removed leaving two storeys of the Kiln unit on High Orchard Street which was used to house machinery.

No internal floor structure remains, leaving a freestanding (supported currently by scaffold) wall - the majority of which fronts onto High Orchard Street. The concrete silo was cast against the kiln brickwork; the removal of the concrete silo allowing access.

The removal of the cast in situ concrete silo has necessitated removal of parts of the brickwork where it was cast against and bonded into the brick. This includes a section of the West wall.

The brickwork to this building has been historically overpainted in a non breathable white masonry paint which has caused moisture buildup in the outer surface of the existing brickwork resulting in some spalling of the brick outer surface.

The proposal looks to retain this wall as a feature onto High Orchard Street with the exception of the concrete ring beam, which will be removed - acting as a defensible boundary for the apartments on the ground and first floors.

The brickwork will be cleaned and restored. New breathable paintwork will be used to recreate the original appearance.

New openings within the wall be introduced. The positioning of these has been carefully

considered to tie in with coursing brickwork details already existing on the kiln wall. The previously blocked up windows will also be reopened.

In the furthest north section on the wall a larger opening has been created as a gateway into the scheme. The opening has been sized to tie in with the existing structure.

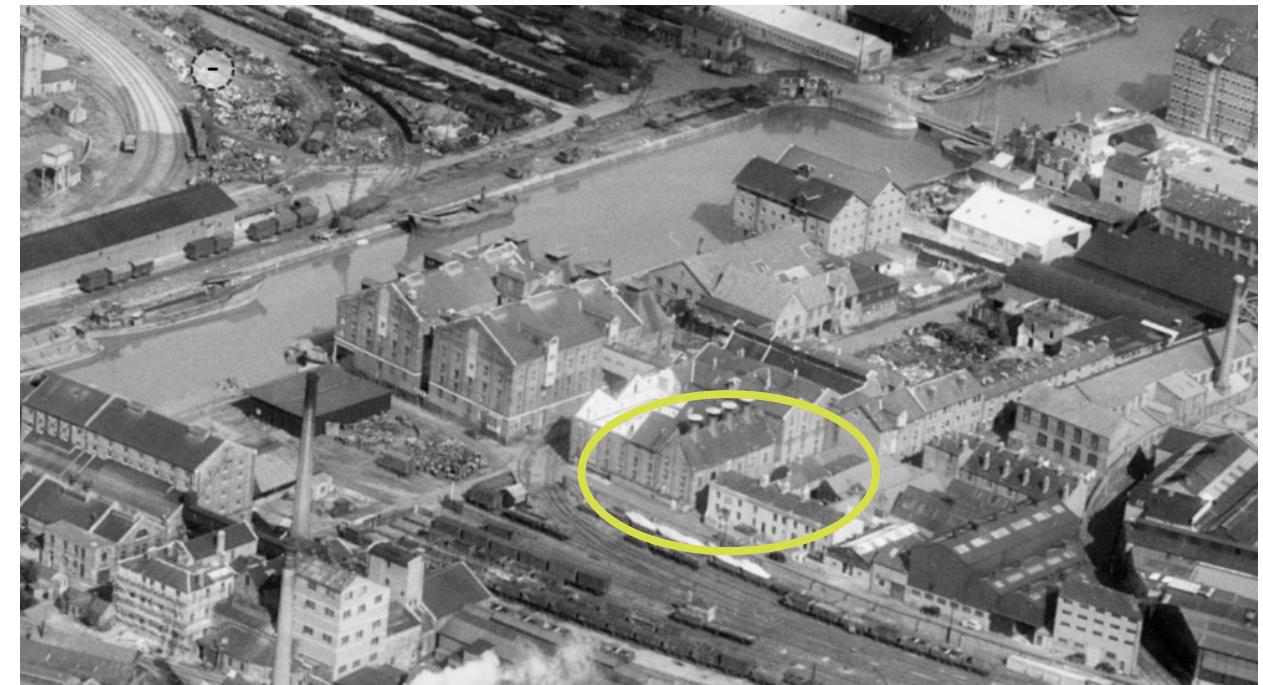
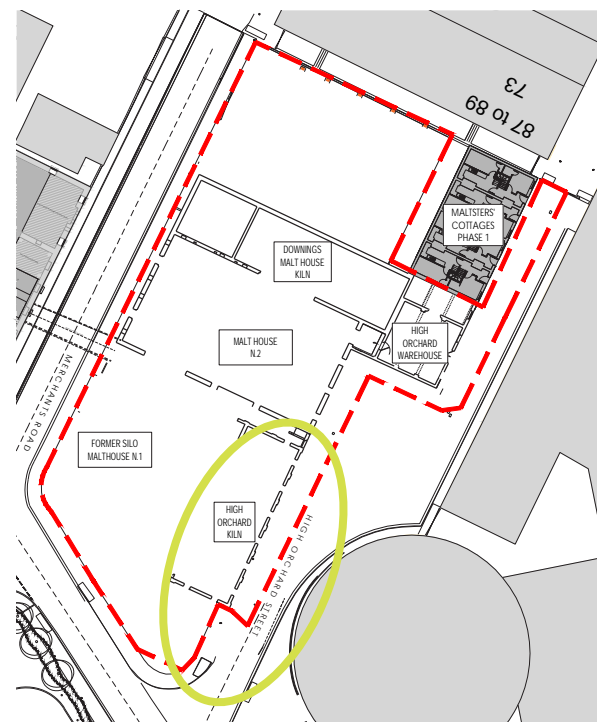
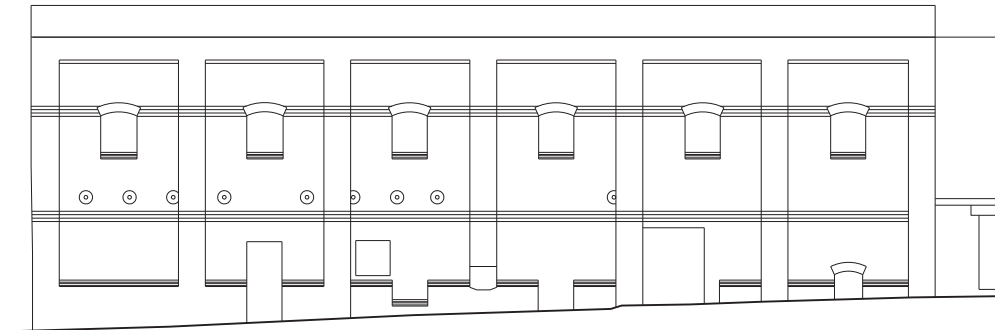


Photo of original building



Photos taken before the removal of the concrete



Existing Elevation



Proposed Elevation

5.3 DOWNINGS MALTHOUSE: EAST AND WEST ELEVATIONS

The Downing Malthouse was constructed in 1895 as Malthouse N.2 in the empty site adjacent Former Silo Malthouse N.1 and was concomitantly linked to the High Orchard Warehouse with a stair.

The structure of the building consisted of timber beams and cast iron columns supporting the intermediate floor levels and roof with wrought iron straps and plates tying the columns to the timber beams. The solid brick external walls are load bearing elements giving a hybrid semi framed construction typical of warehouses and large structures of the period. The large central space was roofed in 3 parallel pitches linked by wide valley gutter.

An unusual feature relating to the use of the structure as a Maltings was the screed topping to the timber floors used to protect the timber from wet/ germinating grain. The additional weight of this topping on the existing damaged structure contributed to its collapse.

The roof valley linings have been lost for a number of years allowing large quantities of water to penetrate the structure throughout the roof. This has resulted in the total loss of timber elements in these areas leaving the structure in a state of near collapse. The timber beams were built in to the external walls giving rise to the possibility of progressive collapse and total loss of the building. In the approved scheme it was hoped to retain the internal structure of The Downings Malthouse, however due to the extensive damage found within, this has proved not to be possible.

The 2015 application acknowledged that retention might not be possible due to condition of the existing structure. To address the loss of structure in this section of building

and to save the remaining external walls, a new steel frame is proposed.

During demolition it was possible to recover 19 original columns from various levels and it is proposed to utilise at least some of these in the main entrance atrium and in the external 'cut' leading to the main entrance as acknowledgment of the former internal structure.

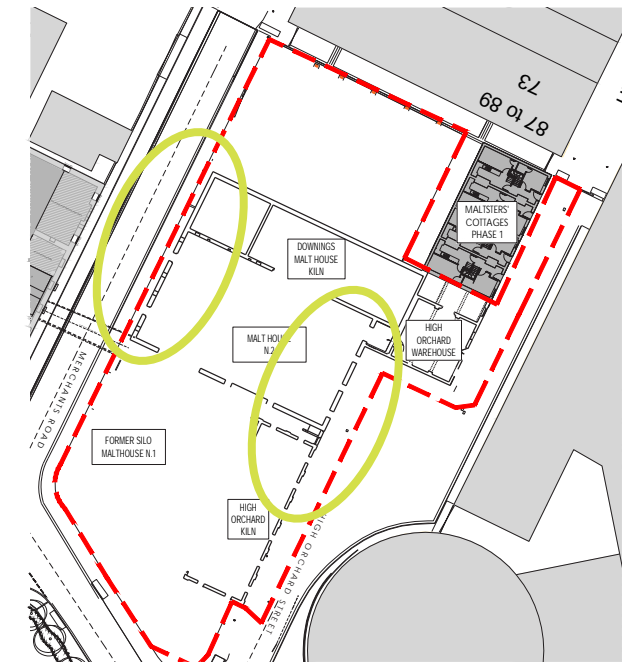
During demolition works the building has been stripped of all existing pipe services. Any remaining machinery and grain hoists were lost in the structural collapse.

The proposed scheme will create a new internal structure to the building, reinstating the malthouse as a 4 storey building - now for

residential purposes. Wherever possible we have sought to use existing openings as proposed new windows.

Where new windows have been required, or larger openings are needed to meet to requirements of modern day living accommodation, the design of these openings has been sensitive to the existing built fabric, using rhythms and existing detailing as a guide for where to place new openings.

The original window boxes are a key feature of the elevation and will be replaced as part of the development with modern interpretations, matching the scale and design principles of the original windows.



Downings Malthouse photometric overview front (west) elevation prior to demolition and installation of scaffolding.



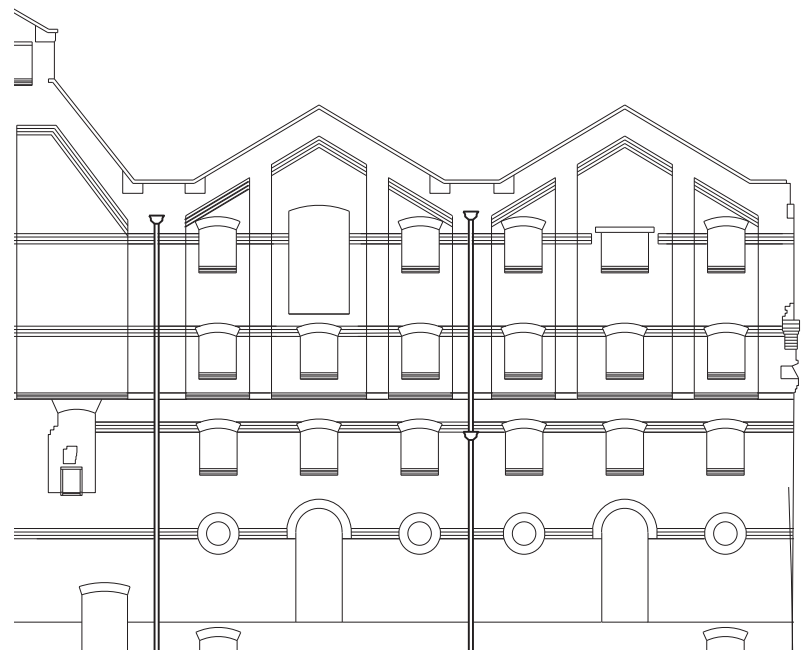
Downings Malthouse photometric overview rear (east) elevation prior to demolition and installation of scaffolding.



Existing Elevation: East



Proposed Elevation: East



Existing Elevation: West



Proposed Elevation: West

5.4 DOWNINGS MALTHOUSE: SOUTH (CUT THROUGH)

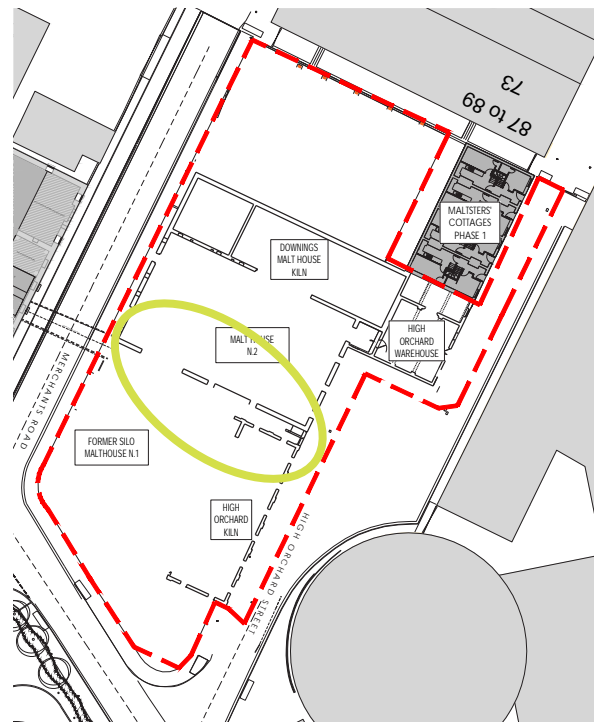
The southern wall of the Downings Malthouse has suffered significantly more damage than the east and west elevations, with a large section of the wall having been safely removed as part of the necessary demolition works.

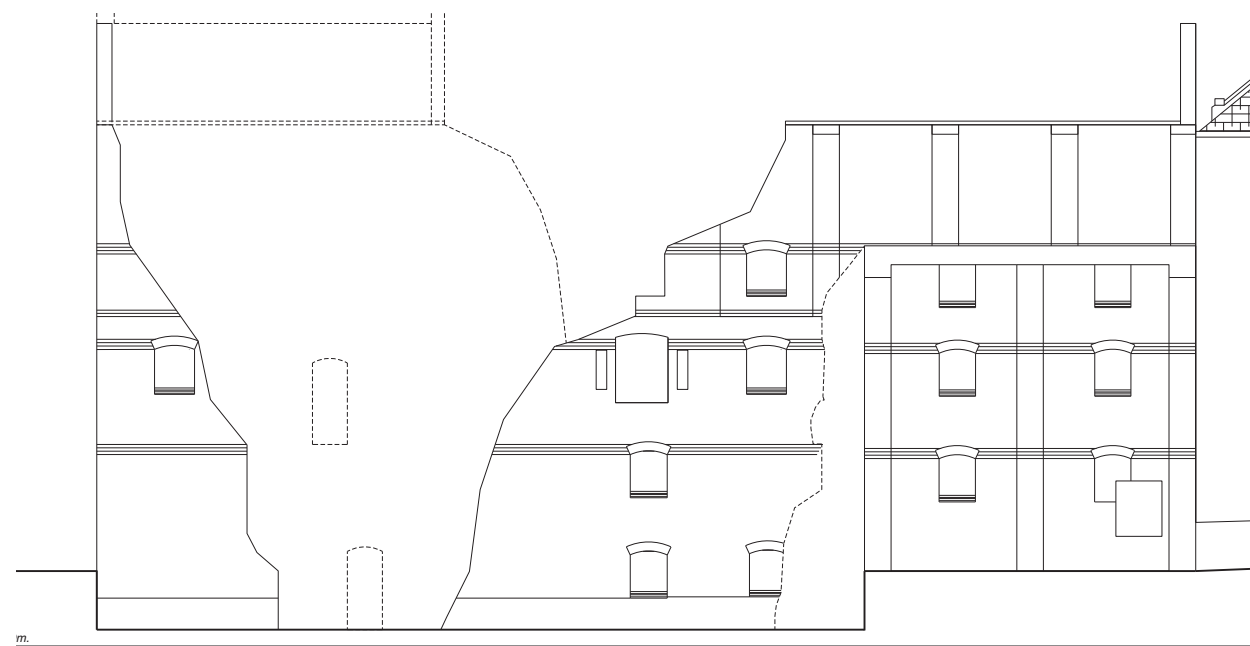
This opening in the existing wall has been treated as a design opportunity, with a new 'cut through' created into the heritage block's entrance.

This cut through, and the walls that wrap to meet the existing building fabric have been clad in white brick. This allows us to create a material link with the existing whilst not detracting from it by trying to replicate the existing brick colour.

This contrast adds visual interest, and the use of white will also bring additional light down into the central plaza between the two buildings on site.

As with the east and west elevations, wherever possible we have used existing window openings for new window locations, only looking to create new openings where completely necessary.





Existing Elevation: South



Proposed Elevation: South

5.5 DOWNINGS MALTHOUSE: KILN & NORTH ELEVATION

The north elevation of Downings Malthouse has followed the same principles as the east, west and south. However, this elevation requires additional openings to create suitable living spaces. This includes larger openings on the north facing wall, and roof lights and dormer windows in the roof structure.

These additional details have been carefully considered, and are sensitively designed around the carefully reinstatement of the original roof shape and detailing.

The north west corner of the kiln is still standing but in a perilous state. It is still unclear how much of this it is possible to save. The plans show the retention of part of the kiln structure as part of the cafe and reinstates upper floors. Externally, the painted gable will be retained and restored.

Retention refurbishment of the existing signage

The signage on the downings kiln section of the building is to be repainted to match the original signage. A breathable/ mineral paint will be specified to prevent water damage to the brick surface.

It appears that the sign was painted twice, changing the wording of the sign to suit various branch locations of the Downings Company.

The text below is the summary of wording (with thanks and acknowledgement to "painted signs and mosaics blogspot" and "ipswich lettering" their contributors for the interpretation.)

G. & W. E. Downing

Maltsters

Head Office Spon Lane Smethwick

Branch Maltings

Smethwick * Bristol *

Birmingham * .a..

West Bromwich * Tewkesbury *

Wednesbury * Gloucester *

Blackheath Oswestry *

Walsall * ...

... Oxford

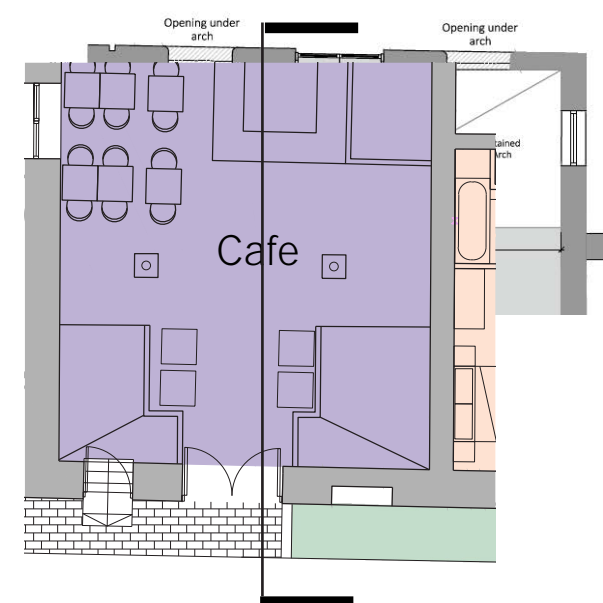
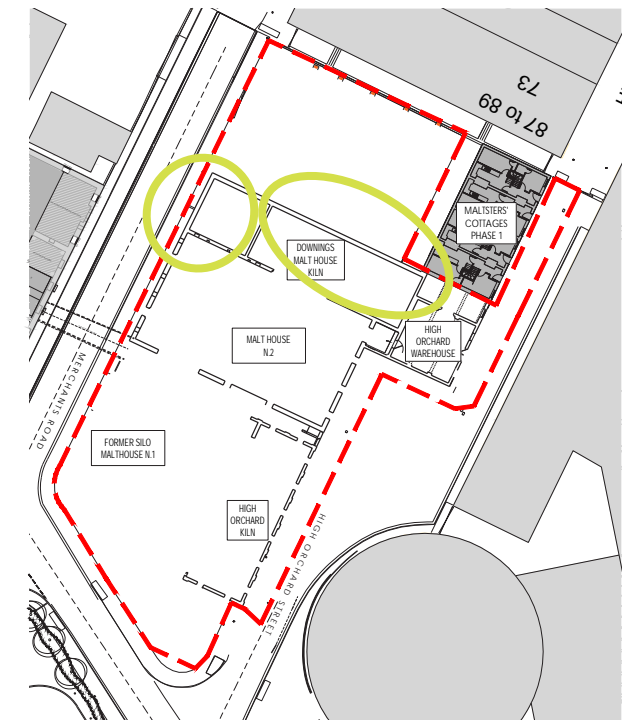
And

London

Originally, the names of towns and cities were written in larger letters (they are indicated by a '*'). However as G. & W. E. Downing expanded, it became necessary to list more locations, hence the smaller font.

The order was also altered. The words of the first painting appear better preserved (and was also photographed during the construction of the malthouse extension). So we propose to repaint to this original arrangement.

We have found an archive referenced photo taken when the sign was legible which we intend to use to fill in the gaps should it be sufficiently clear.



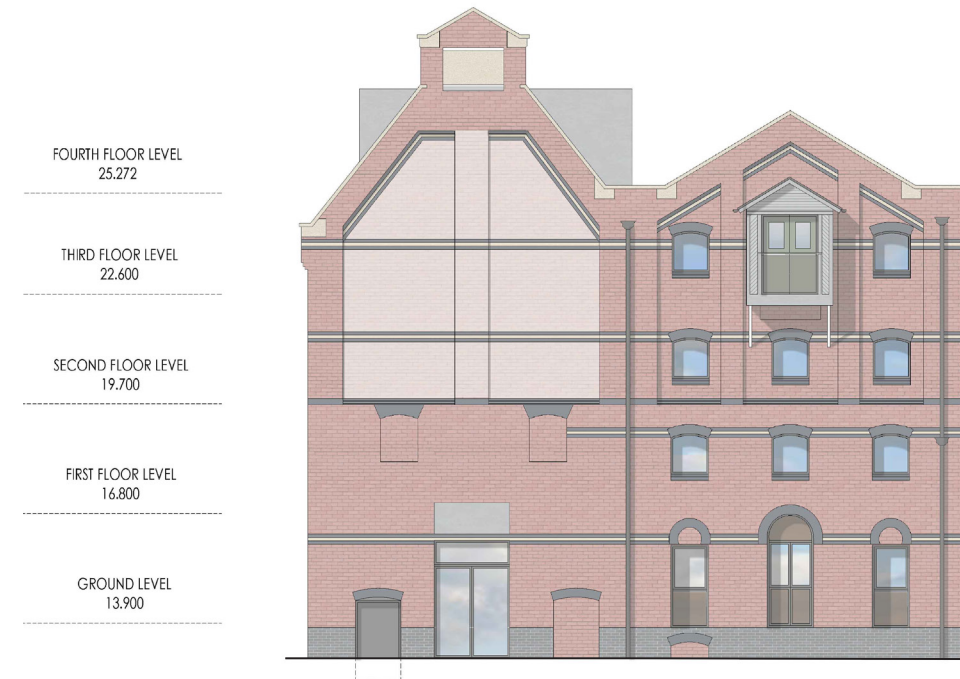
Proposed Cafe in Downings Kiln



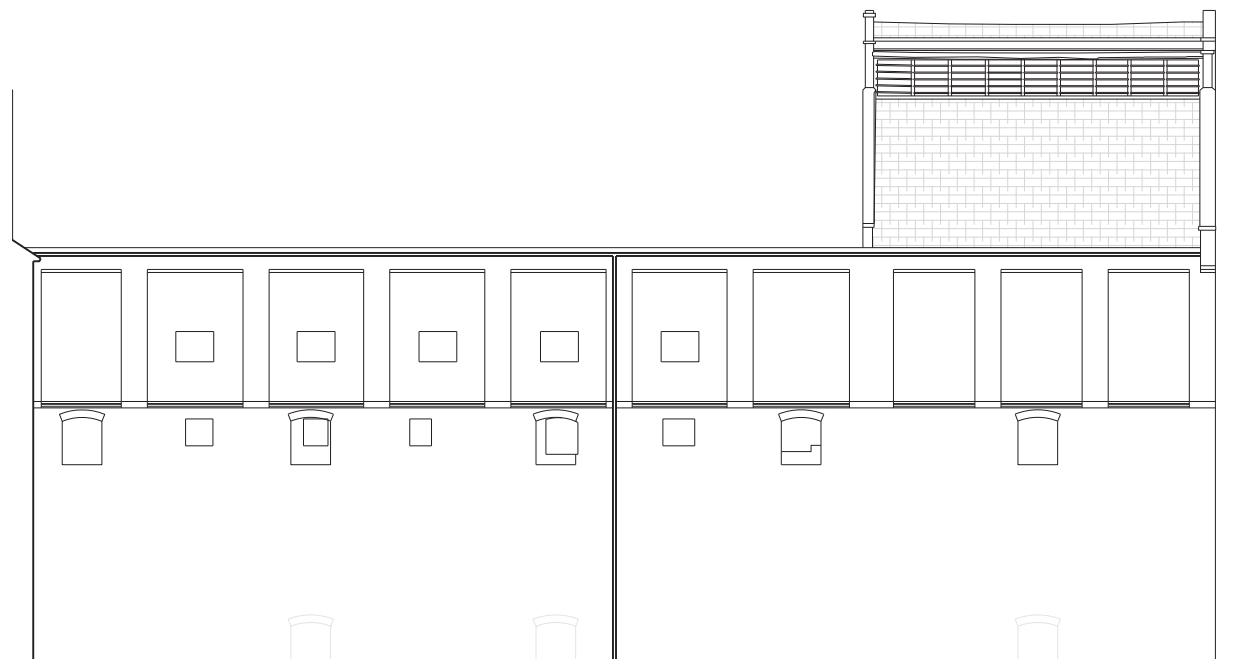
Proposed Cafe in Downings Kiln



Existing Elevation: West



Proposed Elevation: West



Existing Elevation: North



Proposed Elevation: North

5.6 RESTORING THE LINK BRIDGE

One of the key makers at the end of Gloucester Docks has always been the bridge link between Downings Malthouse and the Malthouse Extension building.

This physical link is a key design feature which has sadly been lost. As part of our proposals, we will reinstate the bridge - using key design cues from the original, whilst reimagining the link as a modern structure and a new icon for the future of the docks.

The new bridge will be clad in sage green cladding, tying the bridge to the new development. This colour is reminiscent of the green/blue of the original bridge structure. Long horizontal windows have been incorporated

into the design as a reference to the original windows.

The most noticeable modern addition is a series of prototype wind turbines under the bridge, which are not only striking in appearance, but are a functional and visible link to the exemplary sustainable credentials of the new buildings.

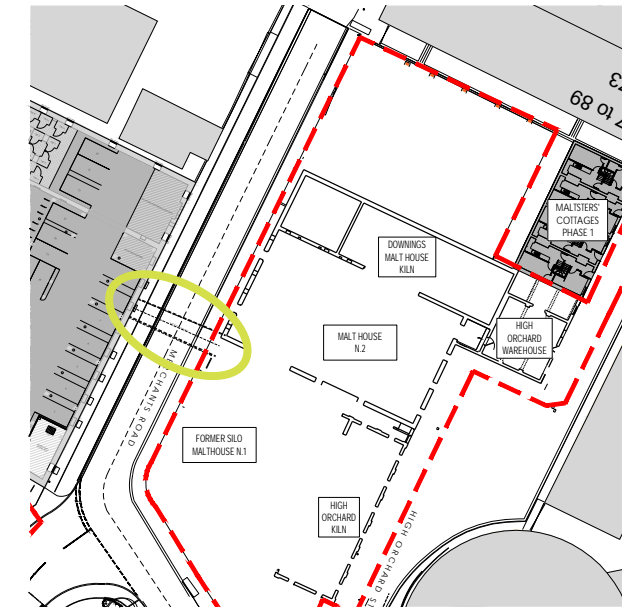


Photo of original bridge link



Indicative 3D image of proposal

5.7 DOWNINGS SILO

Although the silo has been removed as part of the safety demolition works, for many years it was the most dominant feature of the southern end of the docks. This large monolithic structure offered no sensitivity to its surroundings, and its windowless facades made this end of the docks seem unwelcoming and unloved.

The proposed new building is a larger structure, but sits in a similar location. Where the silo was unresponsive to its context, our building is sensitive to its location. The angled facade brings you into the larger Baker's Quay development area, and brings you to the Malthouse Extension buildings.

Where the silo brought no life to the Bakers

Quay site, the main elevation of our proposal is filled with windows and balconies. This space - the key route into the quays and docks from the south - will now be active and lively at all times of the day.

The new block uses a light red / salmon brick as a sensitive nod towards the surrounding historic buildings, without trying to replicate or detract.

The roofscape is also a reference to the neighbouring buildings.

Overall, we believe that although the submitted proposal is a larger building than the original silo, it is a significantly improvement as a response to context and urban design.

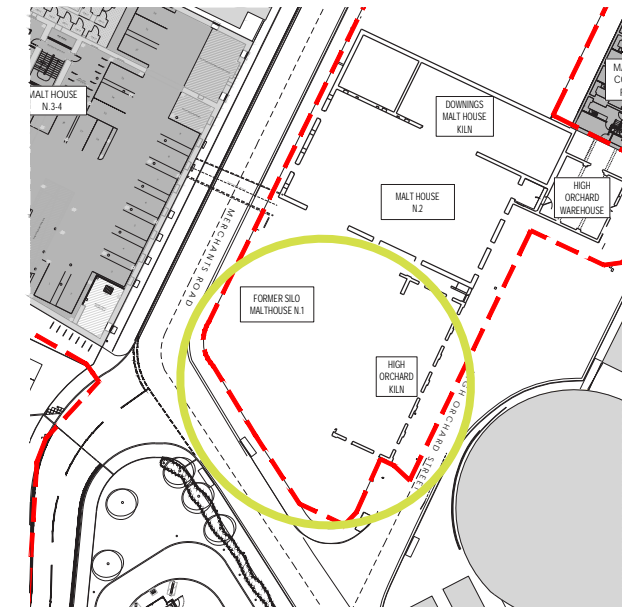


Photo of original silo building



Indicative 3D image of proposal

