

### Scale.

The historic movement routes through the Town Centre comprise a mix of storey heights, most notably however, the scale of the majority of the built form is 3-storey.

This scale increases in some key locations, such as Mansion House Lane (the Town Hall Clock Tower) and Bridge Street (currently Lloyds Bank).

It should be noted, when we describe the historic storey heights, that while there are usually 3 floors, the height of the ground floors in particular are of Georgian proportions (i.e. greater in height than the modern day conventions). Therefore, the historic built form actually reads more like 4 storeys in height, based on modern storey height standards.

South of the site, a modern development - known as Weavers Yard - has recently been completed that offers 4 storeys, progressing to 5 and 6 storeys as the development progresses Southwards towards the railway station.

To conclude, save for some isolated examples, the principle storey height along the main historic movement routes are predominantly 3 storeys. However, more recent developments have increased the scale in localised areas, such as 'Oddfellows Heights', Oddfellows Road (5 Storeys) and the 'Newbury Telephone Exchange', Bear Lane (7 storeys), and 'Weavers Yard', Market Street (6 storeys).



Figure 3.50: 2024 Aerial Image of Newbury Town Centre. Generally, save for isolated examples, the storey heights increase to the South from the Town Centre.

The application site contains a range of scale.

- The Multi-storey Car Park is up to 4 storeys.
- The Cinema is the equivalent to 4 and 5 storeys.
- The Kennet Shopping Centre is 3 storey along Bartholomew Street. It may have the fenestration of a 2 storey building in places. However, the exaggerated ground floor retail storey heights brings the overall scale of the building to match the surround 3 storey built form.
- The Kennet Shopping Centre is up to 4 storeys.

**Mass.**

With the construction of the Kennet Multi-Storey Car Park, the Cinema and the Kennet Centre itself, the massing of this part of the Town Centre has changed.

As described earlier in this document, these facilities are alien to the historic character of the Conservation Area.

In order to understand what a typical mass may look like upon the site, we can study the c.1880's map and measure the 'solid to void' ratio. We can then compare that to the current position and use this information to inform the proposed scheme.

1880's Mass.

If we measure the solid to void ratio of the 1880's map from the site boundary to the North all the way up to Bartholomew Street, Market Place/Cheap Street and Market Street - but excluding the Car Park & Cinema site, we can appreciate the massing of the historic character as offering a 61% built form coverage.

2024 Mass.

Rather obviously, the solid to void of the current situation on the site is far more dense, offering a 98% built form coverage.

In order to assist in the delivery of the overall *Vision* for the site, the design team have used the 1880's solid to void figure to inform the proposals, which has assisted in the creation of an appropriate massing reflective of the historic character of the site and wider Conservation Area. This is demonstrated in Figure 3.51 & 3.52 below.

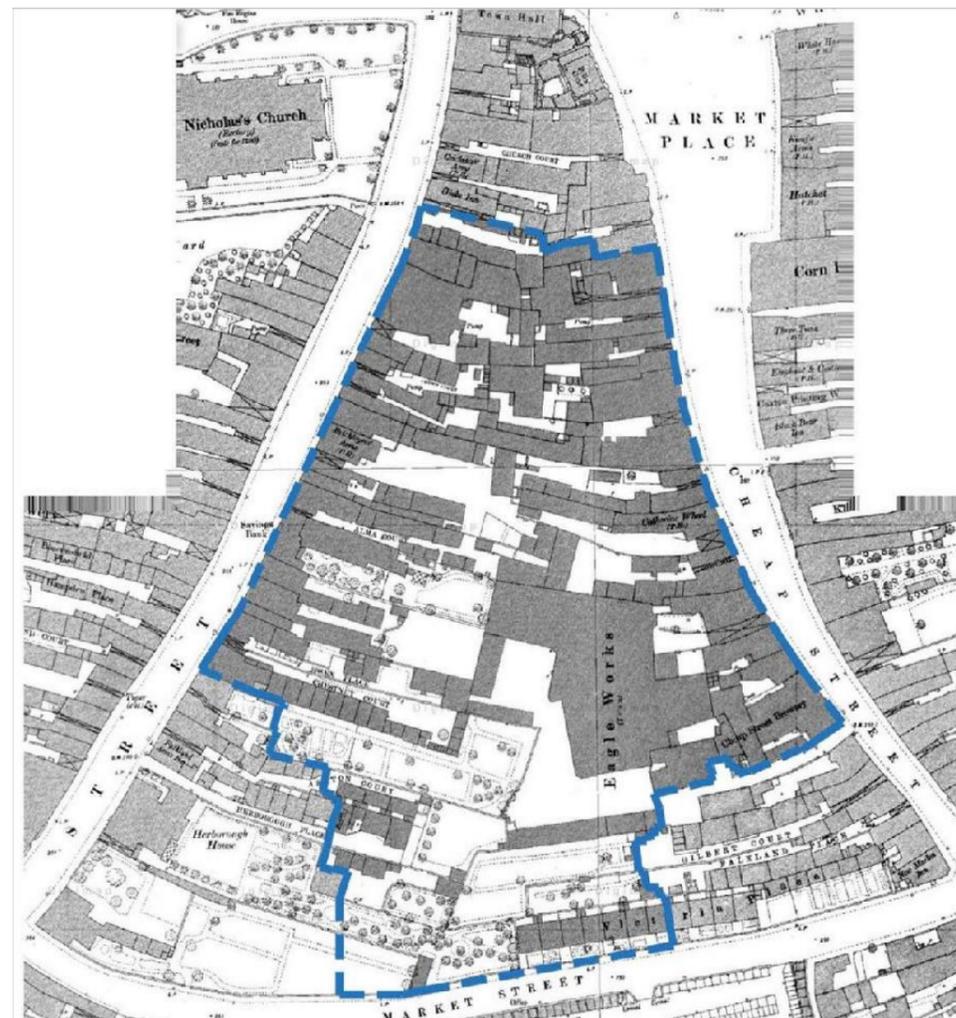


Figure 3.51: 1880's Map.



Figure 3.52: 2024 Map.

### Summary.

#### Circa 1880's.

- The Application Site was once a thriving area of manufacturing surrounded by a collection of courts, yards, places that offered Public Houses, Inns, Cottage Industries and modest Residential Accommodation.

The 1880's Map illustrates the NTCAAMP characteristics;

- Numerous carriageway arches, ginnels and passageways leading from the main routes into the rear of the plots.
- Greater massing of built form towards the North of the area, dissipating towards the South.
- Opportunity for permeability between Bartholomew Street and Market Place/Cheap Street.
- Tight-knit urban grain formed around the courts & yards.

#### 21st Century.

- The historic urban grain and character of the Application Site has been wholly lost.
- The monolithic structure and bland facades are alien to the Conservation Area, resulting in a *Negative Contributor finding* to the Conservation Area.

#### C.1940–1950 Photographic Study.

- c.1940-50 aerial photographs of the site supplement the 1880's mapping and NTCAAMP conclusions and commentary illustrating the formation of the burgage plots.

The photos illustrate the following characteristics;

- Tight-knit built form environment.
- An East-West axis of deep plots served by Carriage Arches, Ginnels and Passageways.
- A transition of high mass to lower mass from North to South.
- A wonderful juxtaposition of roof forms, differing building typologies, differing scales and orientations.
- Use of Courts and Yards as amenity space.

#### 21st Century Re-development.

- The Kennet Centre offers very little in terms of architectural merit nor assist in the creation of a vibrant street-scape.
- The construction of the Kennet Centre resulted in the demolition of the entire historic building form that once occupied the space.

Spatial Study of existing examples of courtyards and passageways (in order to better understand the spaces that historically occupied the site).

- Narrow passageways off the main route that lead to wider linear yards and places.
- These spaces are usually formed behind grander buildings that address the main routes.
- The linear yards and places are defined by a mix of active building frontage and/or a more utilitarian character (stable, outbuilding etc).
- The Yards and Spaces are usually intimate, hard landscaped with little opportunity for soft landscaping.
- Where soft landscaping is incorporated, this is usually quite poor taking the form of poorly stocked this threshold planting and/or raised planting beds.
- Private amenity, in the form of rear gardens, is rare and usually very small.

#### Scale.

- Save for some isolated examples, the predominate scale of buildings along the main routes is 3 storeys.
- Recent development to the South of the Town Centre between the site and the railway have increased the scale to 6 storeys.

#### Mass.

- The built form coverage of the c.1880's map is 61%
- The built form coverage of the present scheme is 98%.
- In order to assist in the delivery of the overall Vision for the site, the design team can use the 1880's solid to void figure to inform the proposals, which has been used to assist in the creation of an appropriate massing reflective of the historic character of the site and wider Conservation Area.



**4 Concept**



Figure 4.1: Initial High-level Layout Concept.

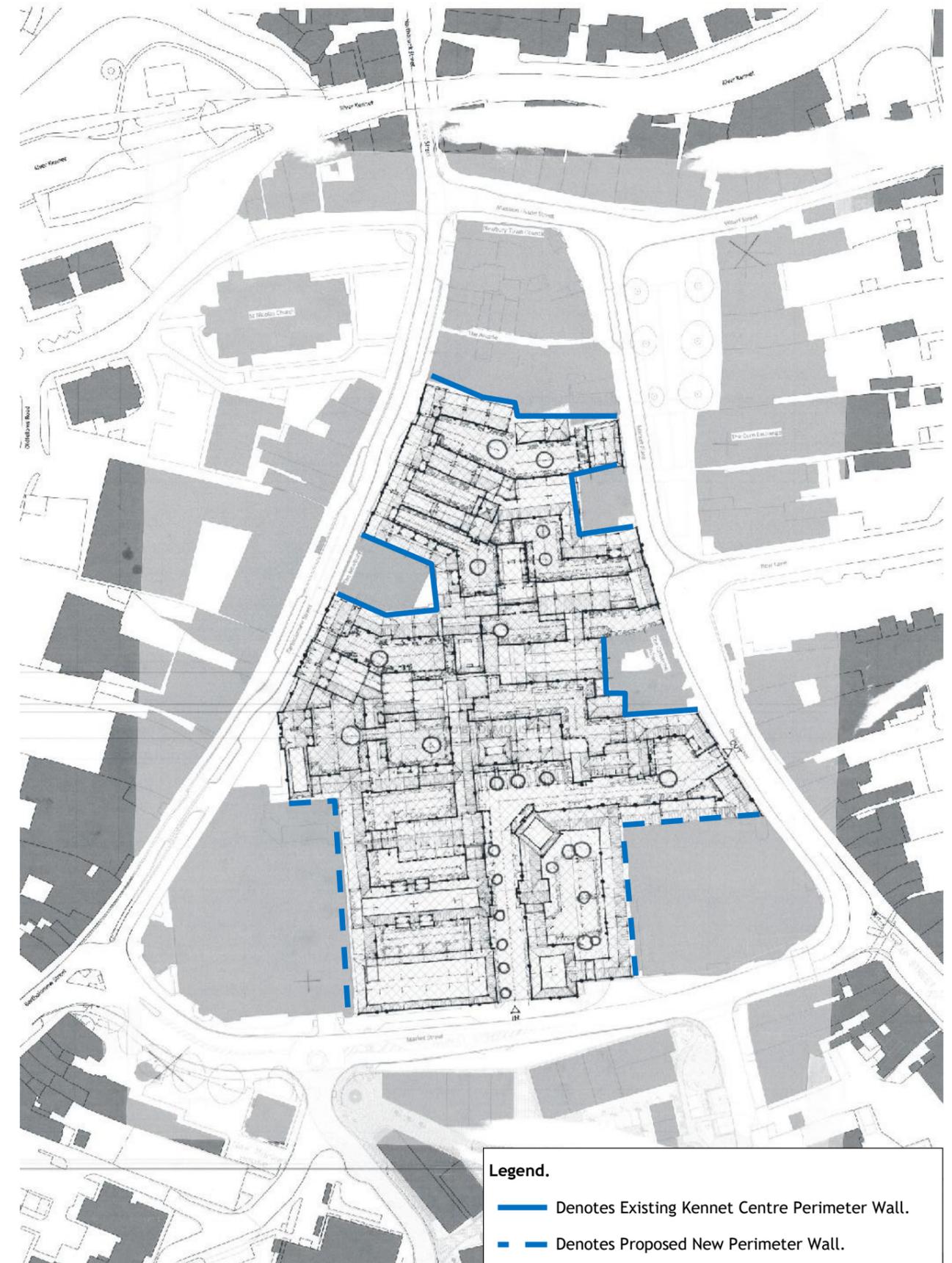


Figure 4.2: Developed Layout Concept.

# 4 Concept

In articulating the concept for the redevelopment of the site, consideration has been given to the Conservation Area Character, the Historic Context and the detrimental impact the Kennet Centre has on the overall character of Newbury Town Centre. This has led to exploring how the historic urban grain of the site can be adapted to embrace modern technologies and living expectations and has resulted in the development of 'Old Town'.

**Vision.**

To enhance the Newbury Conservation Area by restoring the look, feel and character of - this part of - Newbury to intrinsically knit back into the urban grain of the historic settlement pattern. To deliver that objective within the remit of modern expectations for living accommodation, sense of place, ownership and belonging within a development rich in charm, character and amenity.

This development will need to be unique, with the capacity to be an exemplary scheme that wholly enhances the Conservation Area, restores the identity of Newbury and offers a creative take on modern living expectations.

**The Kennet Centre.**

When the Kennet Centre was constructed, it was done so by delivering a perimeter wall along side all retained buildings, such as the Catherine Wheel, The Newbury, The Globe Inn as well as the other building that the Kennet Centre abuts.

This perimeter wall ensured that the Kennet Centre did not affect or influence the building fabric of those buildings while also providing an external envelope to accommodate the retail facilities and withstand the weight of the service yards, store rooms, plant rooms and offices above.

It is the intention of the scheme to retain the perimeter wall where it abuts the existing buildings and build off/from it. Where the proposed scale of the scheme is less than the existing perimeter wall, the wall will be reduced in height accordingly.

A Demolition Plan has been prepared and forms part of the Application that illustrates this.

**Urban Grain.**

Given the context of the site, as set out in the preceding section, a conceptual layout was explored while seeking to achieve the following;

- Creation of East-West axis';
- Cloaking of the existing buildings;
- Reflect the historic massing;
- Reflect the historic juxtaposition of forms, scale and roofs;
- Creation of Carriage Arches, Ginnels and Passageways serving Courts, Yards and Places;
- Creation of creative amenity;
- Permeability and Security.
- Broadly, larger scale buildings to the perimeter with smaller cottages and courtyard housing to the rear.

Creation of East-West Axis'.

The below Ground-Figure Plans of the c.1880's and the Proposed Scheme (figures 4.3 & 4.4) illustrate the objective of the scheme to create East-west axis of a similar character by utilising built form around the creation of Courts, Yards and Places.

Cloaking of the Existing Buildings.

The Developed Layout Concept Plan (figure 4.2) opposite illustrates by way of solid and dashed blue lines where the scheme utilises the existing Kennet Centre wall and a new wall respectively to cloak the rear of the adjacent buildings. The aspiration being that only glimpses of the rear of those buildings would be visible when within the proposed development.

Reflect the Historic Massing.

The below Figure-Ground Plan (figure 4.4) also illustrate how the scheme has sought to reflect the historic massing dissipation from North to South by virtue of there being a greater void to mass ratio (i.e. space about buildings) further South.

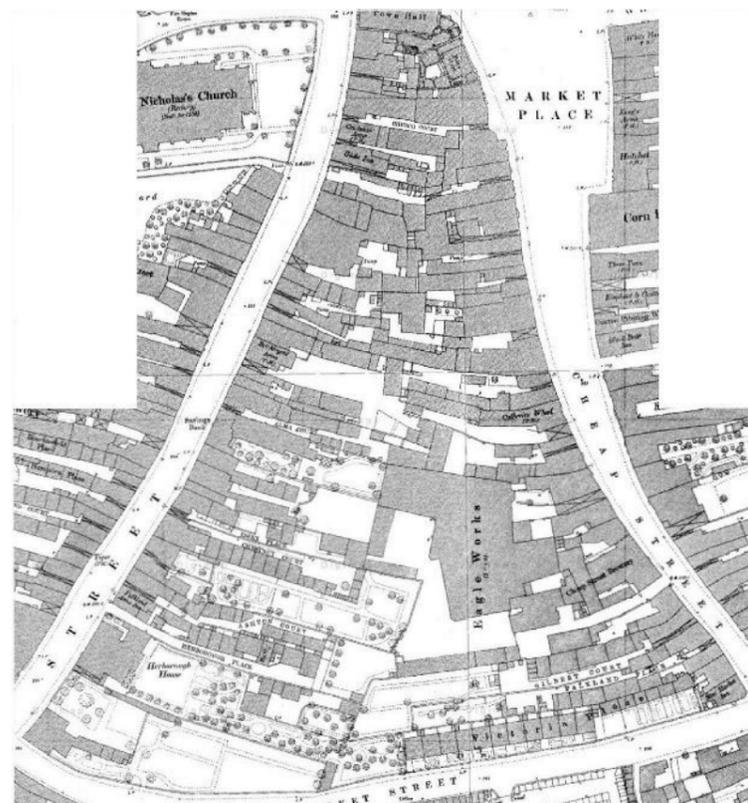


Figure 4.3: Circa 1880's OS/figure-Ground Plan.

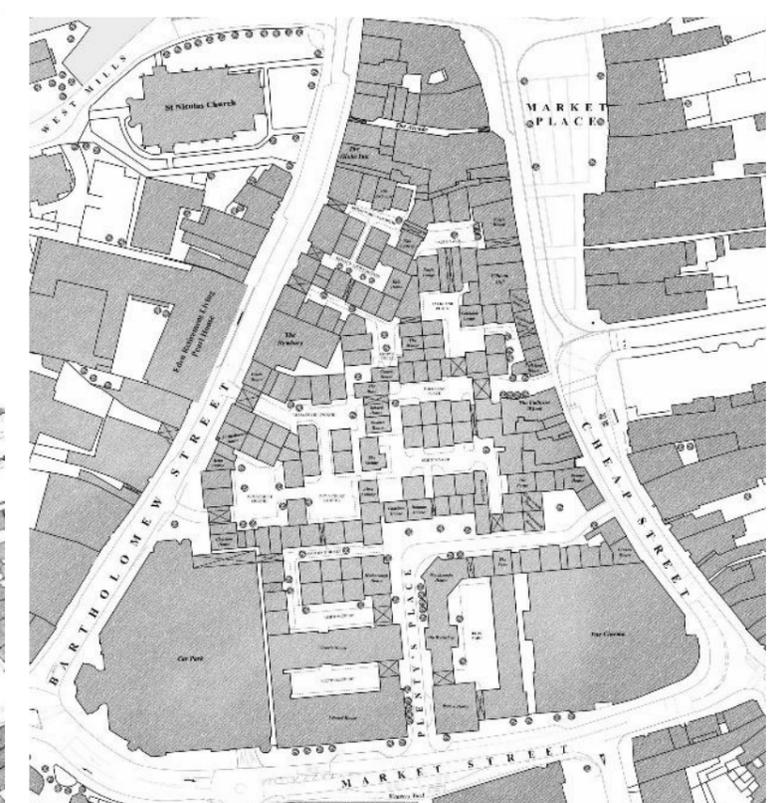


Figure 4.4: Concept/Proposed figure-Ground Plan.

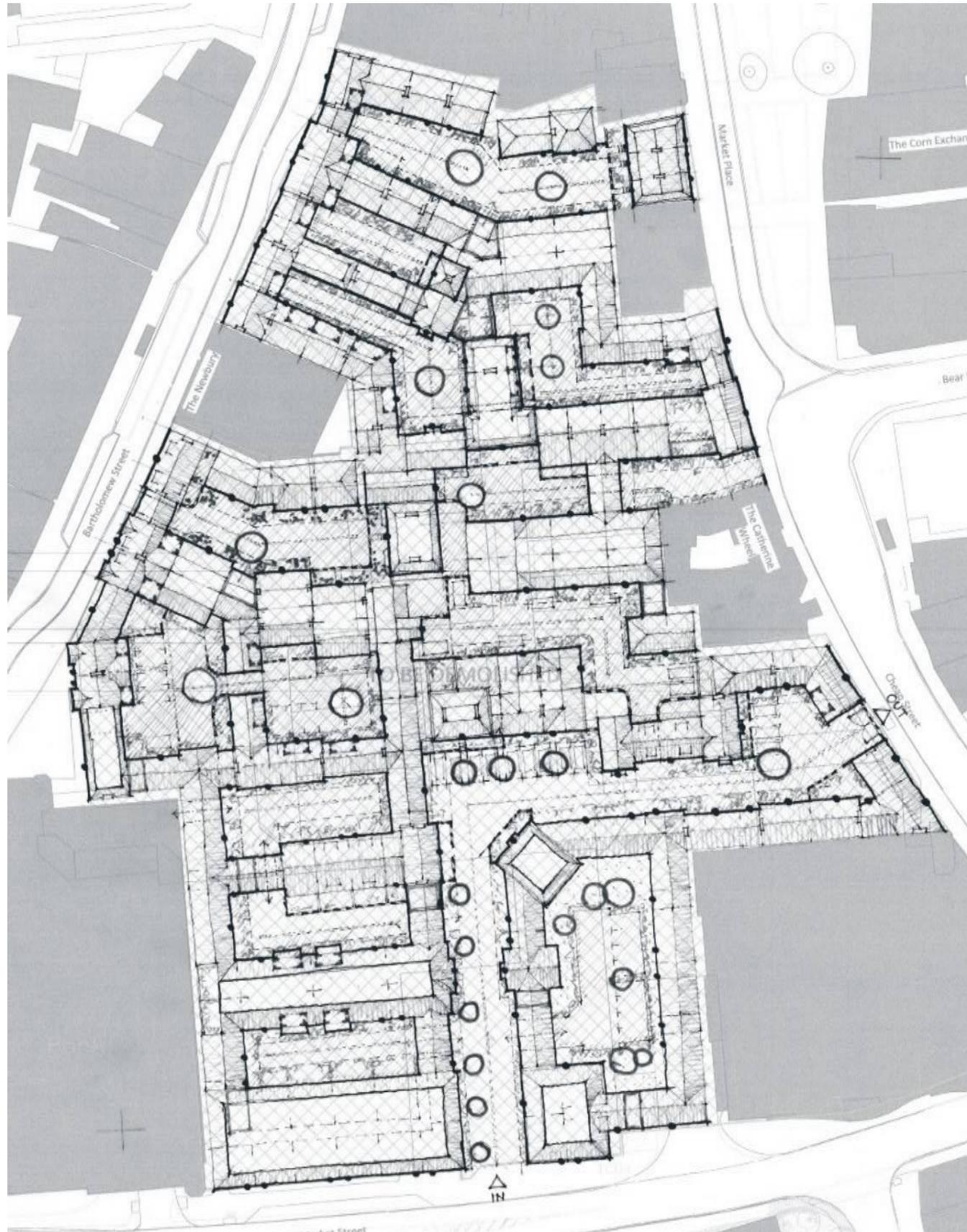


Figure 4.5: Initial High-level Layout Concept.

Reflect the Historic Juxtaposition of Forms, Scale and Roofs (cont.).

The creation of organic building lines and forms that take the appearance of a 'jumbled' collection of differing building typologies, differing heights and Scale and with differing Roof Geometry was also explored.

This will assist in creating a strong visual interest with a mix of building typologies within intimate settings that predated the 20th and 21st Century demolition of the historic fabric.

Creation of Carriage Arches, Ginnels and Passageways serving Courts, Yards and Places.

The scheme strives to create a collection of Courts, Yards, Places accessed via Carriage Arches, Openings and Passageways (Ginnels) akin to the historic site.

In order to allow for adequate amenity and privacy, the Courts, Yards and Places are designed to be reflective of historic proportions but will not be as 'cramped'.



Figure 4.6: c.1940's Aerial Photograph. Illustrates the 'jumble' of differing roof geometry within an intimate setting.

Creation of Creative Amenity.

Modern living expectations are not wholly conducive with the historic spatial composition.

However, the scheme works hard to reflect the historic character but also provides creative amenity provision that meets the needs of future residents. The amenity has been thoughtfully and carefully designed from the outset to ensure excellent levels of amenity are provided while balancing the overall vision.

That balance is achieved by offering different typologies of amenity provisions, such as;

- Balconies;
- Roof Terraces;
- Frontage 'Spill-out' Space;
- Courtyard Gardens.

One or a combination of which may serve each dwelling,

These types of amenity provisions are well established and excellent examples have been successfully delivered to existing built form all over the country as well as in new developments and highly sustainable locations. The design team has planned for a varied high quality amenity from the outset, as opposed to *retro-fitting* amenity as an after-thought.



Figure 4.7: Examples of Roof Terrace Amenity.



Figure 4.8.1: Examples of Spill-out Amenity in Parkway (Newbury).



Figure 4.8.2: Examples of Spill-out Amenity.



Figure 4.9: Examples of Spill-out & Balcony Amenity in Parkway (Newbury).



Figure 4.10: Examples of Roof Top and Terrace Amenity in Parkway (Newbury).



Figure 4.11: Example of Linear Landscaped Space with spill-out amenity. (Award Winning - Bathurst)  
(Source: Lurot Brand).



Figure 4.12: Example of semi-private communal amenity space with spill-out amenity. (Source: Lurot Brand)).



Figure 4.13: Examples of Landscaped Yard with spill-out amenity space. (Award Winning Bathurst Mews)  
(Source: Lurot Brand).

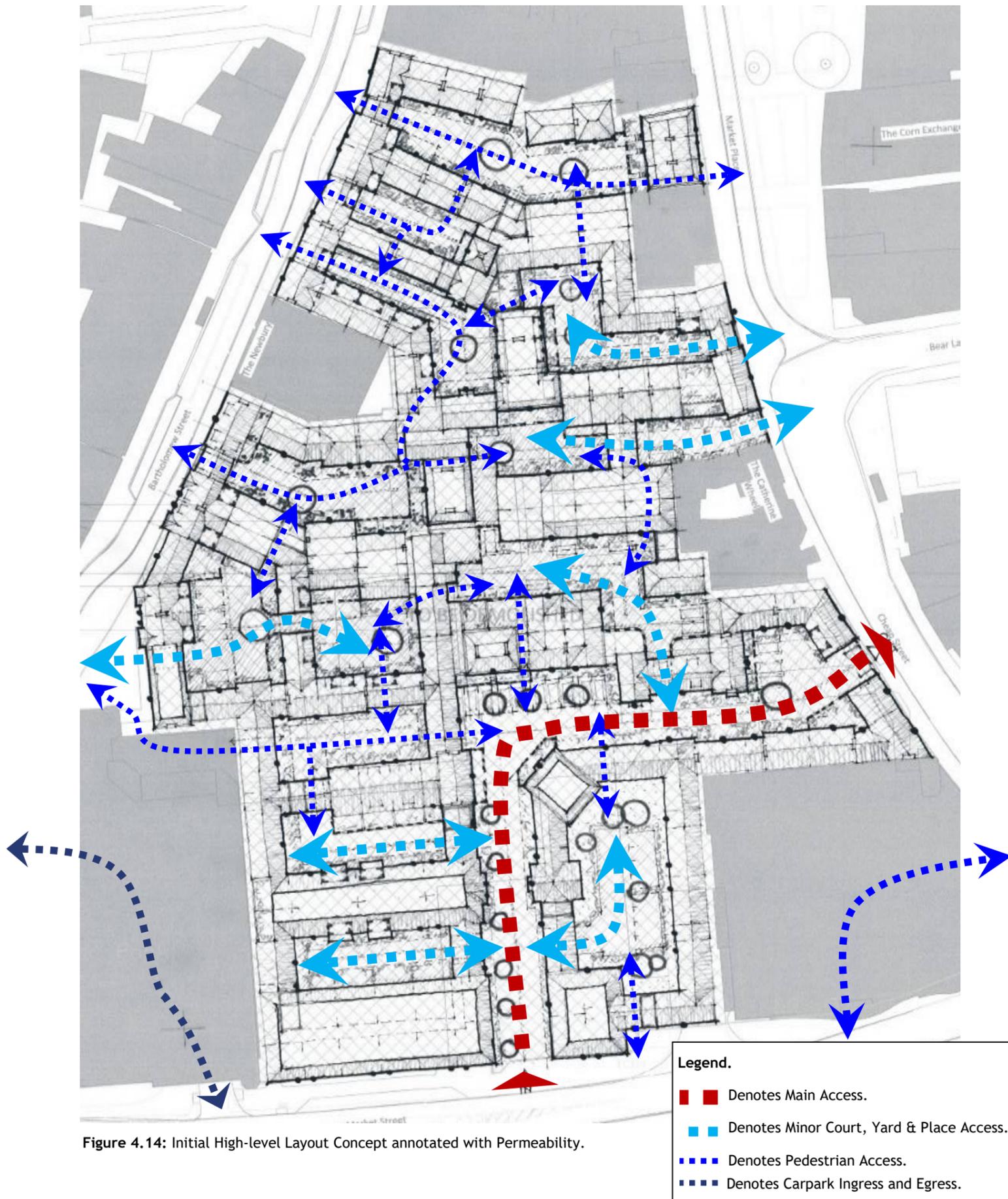


Figure 4.14: Initial High-level Layout Concept annotated with Permeability.

Permeability and Security.

Access and permeability balanced with security are key considerations at Concept stage.

The Kennet Centre provides for an East-West pedestrian link, but only when open, and takes the pedestrian inside, which is alien to the Conservation Area.

The concept explores a *Main Access* from Market Street through to Cheap Street via a one-way In-Out route. This will offer vehicular access that can then serve minor court, yard and place vehicular accesses and the bulk of the on-site car parking.

The Concept also explores the creation of *minor court, yard & place vehicular accesses* off the *main access*, Bartholomew Street - which will require some off-site highway works - and Cheap Street.

In addition to the above, there are numerous perimeter *pedestrian accesses* along Market Street, Market Place and Bartholomew Street. Further to the perimeter accesses, the Concept explores numerous *pedestrian accesses* via passageways (ginnels) within the site offering connection through the development via all courts, yards and places.

In order to ensure adequate security, it is intended to secure as many courts, yards and places as possible with a time-controlled electronic gate in key locations.

It is proposed that the electronic gates would be locked shut - and only accessible by those with the key-code and/or fob - between the hours of, say 7pm - 8am, preventing free movement by the public between those hours. This would also provide private communal amenity space during these hours.

**Summary.**

The Concept will offer a unique development that offers modern living while reflecting the historic urban grain and wholly enhancing the Conservation Area and reinstating the pre-mid 20th Century character of Newbury.

**Dwelling Design Concept.**

The historic urban grain and building forms appear, from the photographic and mapping evidence presented earlier in this document, to be so closely knit that many of the building forms would have been single aspect or, with very small gaps to the rear elevation before the neighbouring building.

In order to deliver an intimate urban setting, reflecting the historic form and character, the dwelling typology will principally be one of larger building forms around the perimeter - and along the Main Access - with smaller, more modest housing within each of the Courts, Yards and Places.

Therefore, the Layout Concept has sought to explore the delivery of high density floor plans.

The sketches opposite illustrate the concepts, which can be described as follows:

- Modest dwellings of shallow depth.
- Large fenestration/openings on exposed façade(s).
- Living accommodation presented to the front of the dwelling.
- Servicing (i.e. stairs, WC, Halls and storage) presented to the rear.
- Exploration of access to Roof Terrace amenity.

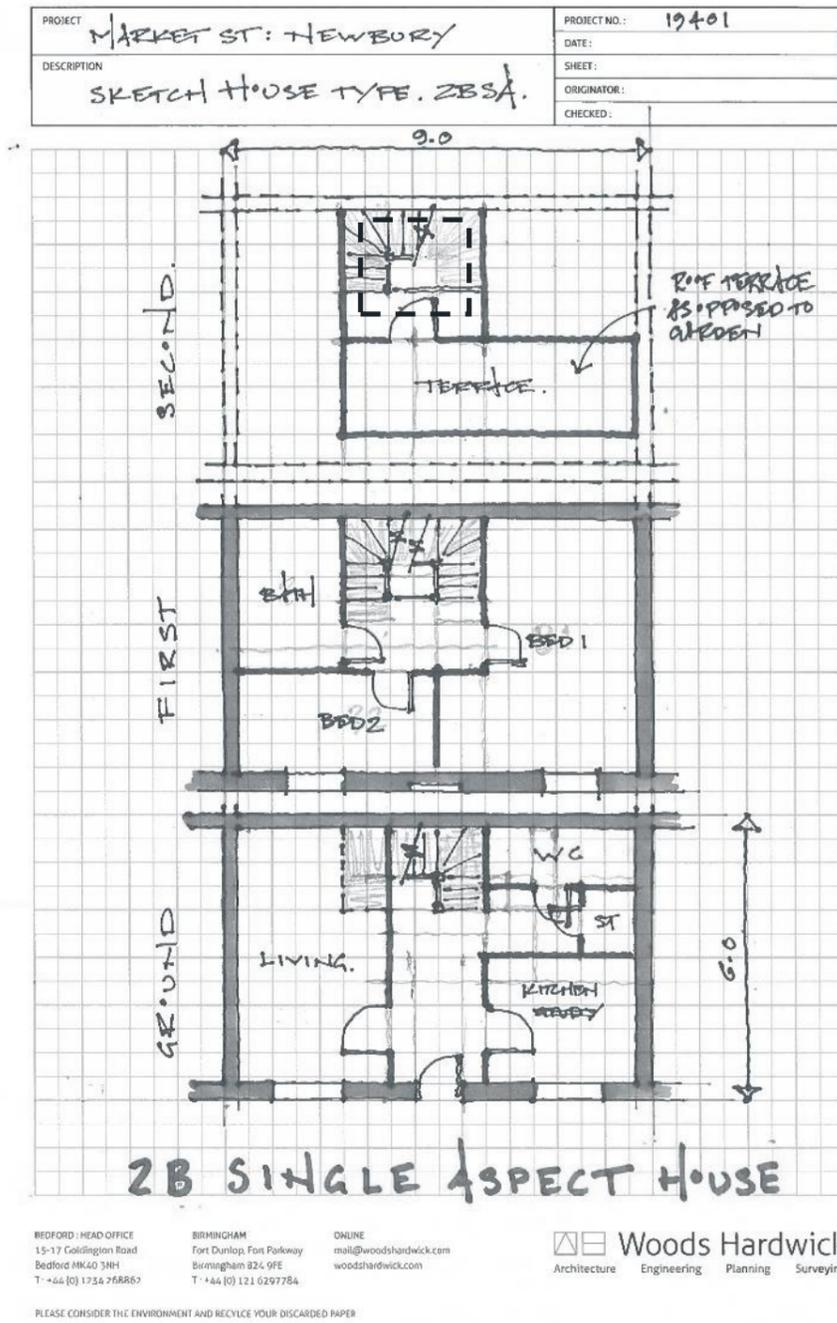
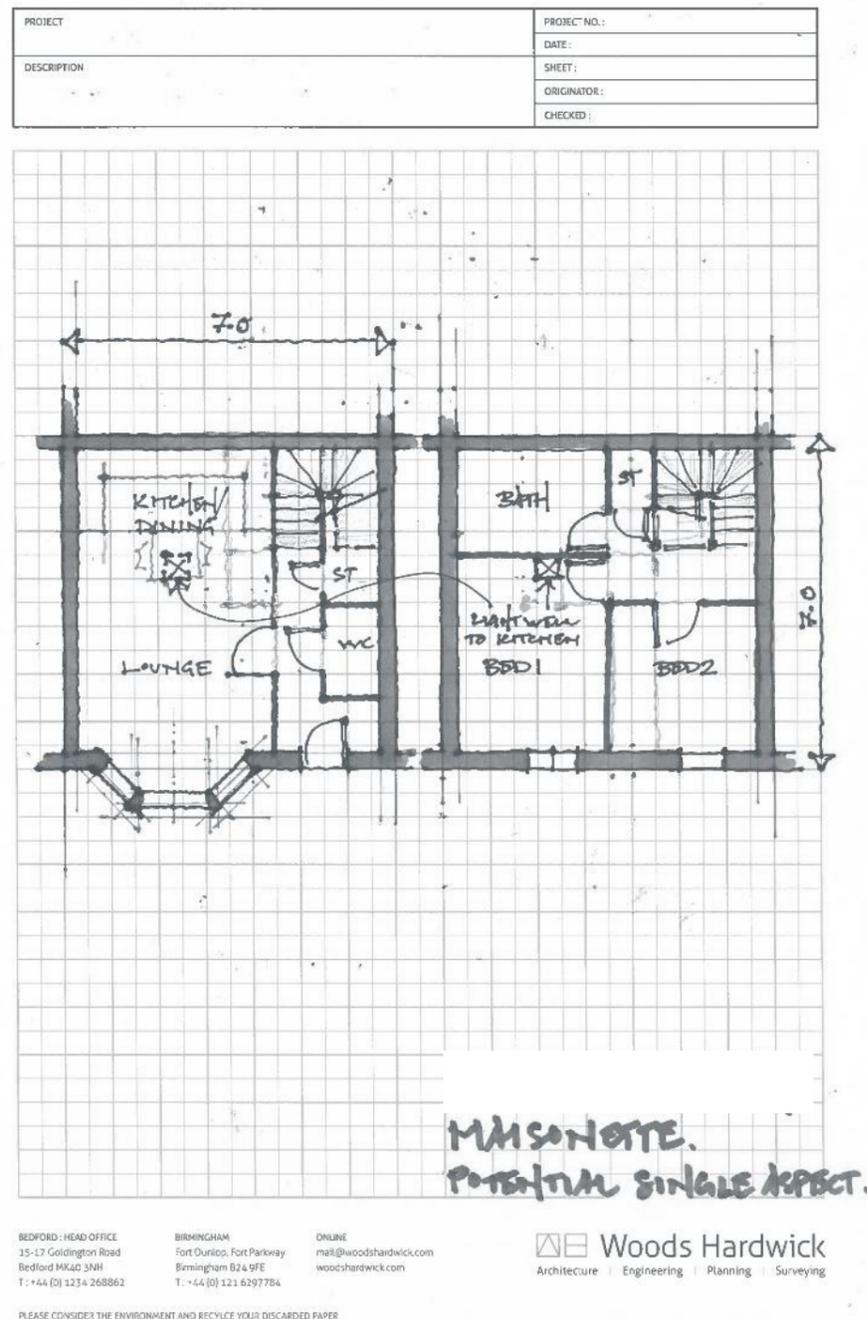


Figure 4.15: High Density Dwelling Concepts.



Figure 4.16: Large format Lantern Roof-light.



Figure 4.17: Glass Partition.

The shallow depth of the dwelling will allow for each dwelling to achieve adequate sunlight and daylight.

This is enhanced through the use of lanterns and/or roof lights positioned above the stairwells) as well as being above upper level rooms) and internal glazed partitions.

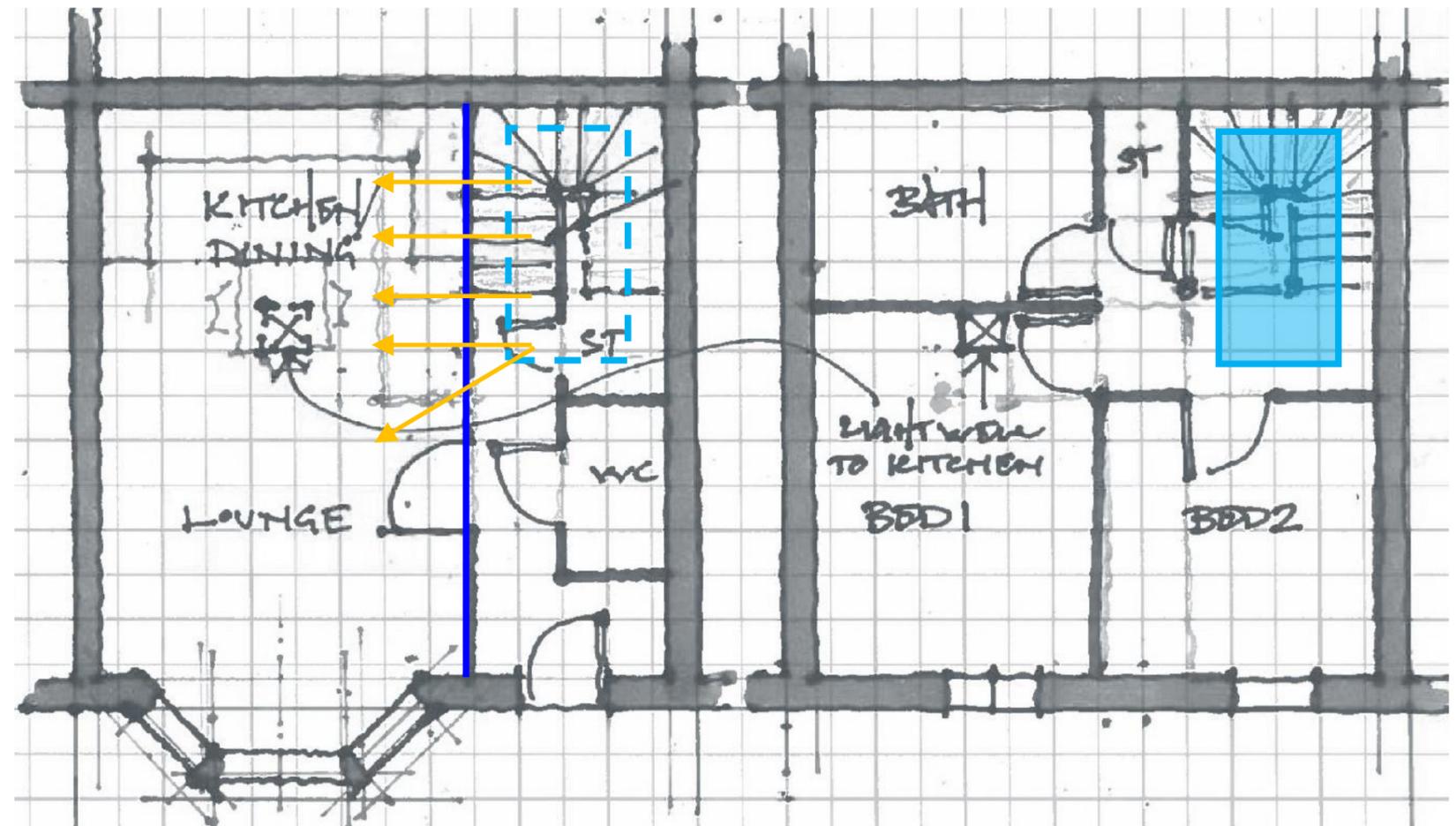


Figure 4.18: High Density Concept Floor Plan with Lantern (indicated light blue), glass partition (indicated dark blue) and potential light transference (indicated yellow).



Traditional Shutters.



Opaque Glazing.



Leaded Beveled & Coloured Glass.



Acid Etched Glass.



Beveled Glass.



Dual Shutters.

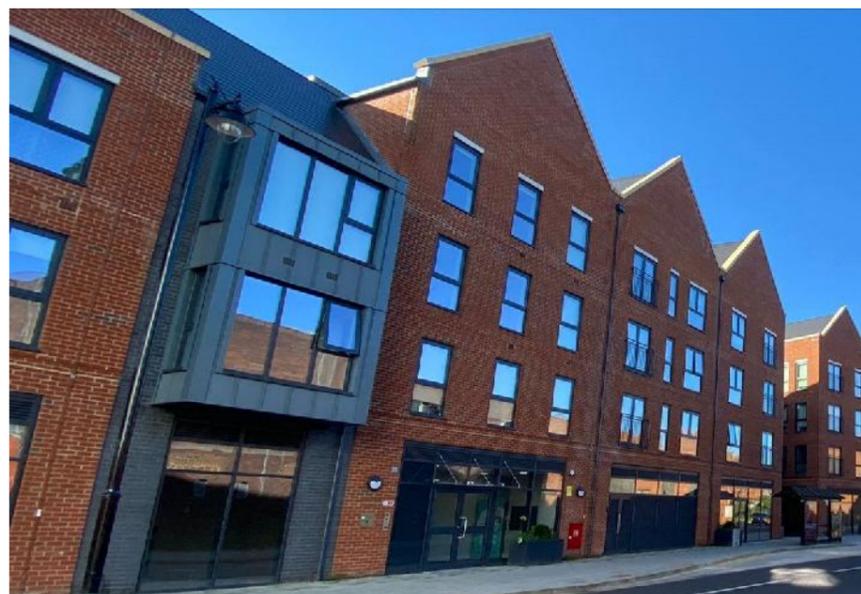
Window Dressing.

The overall Vision for the development is for the creation of high-quality, beautiful and close knit built form coupled with modern living expectations.

Essential to this is the need for space and light. While the internal arrangements of the dwellings will explore open plan living to assist with the creation of internal space, good levels of daylighting is also an essential ingredient for the creation of high-quality living.

Daylighting needs to be considered alongside privacy, as large openings in close proximity to other dwellings is not always conducive to privacy.

However, this has been considered and there are many ways to protect privacy while also allowing daylight to spill through large openings. This can be done via internal window dressing, such as blinds, shutters and curtains, or within the fabric through obscuring the visibility through the glazing. Opposite are examples of these traditional techniques, including, opaque glazing, leaded beveled coloured glass, acid etched glass, reflective glazing, opaque glazing, beveled glass and obscure glazing.



Reflective Glazing (Market Street).



Atlantic Milky Chinchilla



Kura Crepì Waterdrop

Obscure Glazing.

Figure 4.19: Window Dressing.



Figure 4.20: Bartholomew Street.



Figure 4.21: Northbrook Street.



Figure 4.22: Market Place.



Figure 4.23: Cheap Street.

**Building Typologies.**

With all of the dwellings/buildings long since demolished from within the application site, pre-Kennet Centre, there is an absence of detailed information of the type and style of buildings that were once present.

However, we can see from the c.1950's aerial photos that there appears to be an eclectic mix of scale, form and orientation.

While this proposal does not profess to re-create a replica of what was once on the site, the objective is to restore the look, feel and character balanced with delivering modern living expectations.

To that end, the Design Team consider that the best way to deliver these objectives is to explore the use of Courtyard housing within the development while using grander buildings around the perimeter and along the Main Access.

Therefore, we can broadly categorise the buildings typologies into 3 groupings, number in hierarchical order;

1. Commercial & Municipal Buildings.
2. Main Route Buildings.
3. Courtyard houses and Cottages.

**Commercial & Municipal Buildings.**

These buildings are located along the perimeter of the site and take the appearance of ground floor shops with accommodation above, (former) inns, municipal buildings and formal workshop/manufacturing buildings.

These larger, usually more important buildings in the townscape, hide behind them the typically smaller courtyard houses/cottages that may once have contained the workers, servants and/or smaller cottage industries.

Main Route Buildings.

A 'Main Route' is proposed through the site. The proposed narrative here is that these buildings are important in their scale and architecture, but a little more diverse than the perimeter, ensuring that they are subservient to them.

These buildings take the appearance of large villas, converted municipal buildings, converted workshops and utilitarian buildings.

As above, the buildings along this route hide the smaller courtyard housing/ cottages to the rear.



Figure 4.23: Newton Road.



Figure 4.24: Inch's Yard, Market Street.



Figure 4.25: West Mills.



Figure 4.26: West Mills.

Cottage & Courtyard Housing.

Cottages and Courtyard houses are proposed in the tighter-knit parts of the site, particularly in the northern section.

In terms of architecture, these buildings span a number of styles including ‘mews’ style houses, traditional workers cottages and live-work accommodation, reflecting the historic uses on the site that would have incorporated both living and commercial spaces, as well as ancillary buildings such as stables and garaging, and outbuildings.

They comprise broadly two and three storey buildings, constructed in stock or painted brick with smaller openings on the upper floors over larger openings at ground floor level.

They are generally flat fronted and have strong building lines, giving the spaces and places they frame a high degree of enclosure.

Common features include winch brackets above haylofts, vents, lanterns and timber carriage doors.

Traditionally, hardstanding areas sat between these buildings, forming yards and storage areas. The proposed cottages and mews sit around courtyard areas and are accessed through passageways from the surrounding streets. Amenity space is provided within these courtyards as well as via roof terraces and private courtyards.



Figure 4.27: R/O % The Broadway.



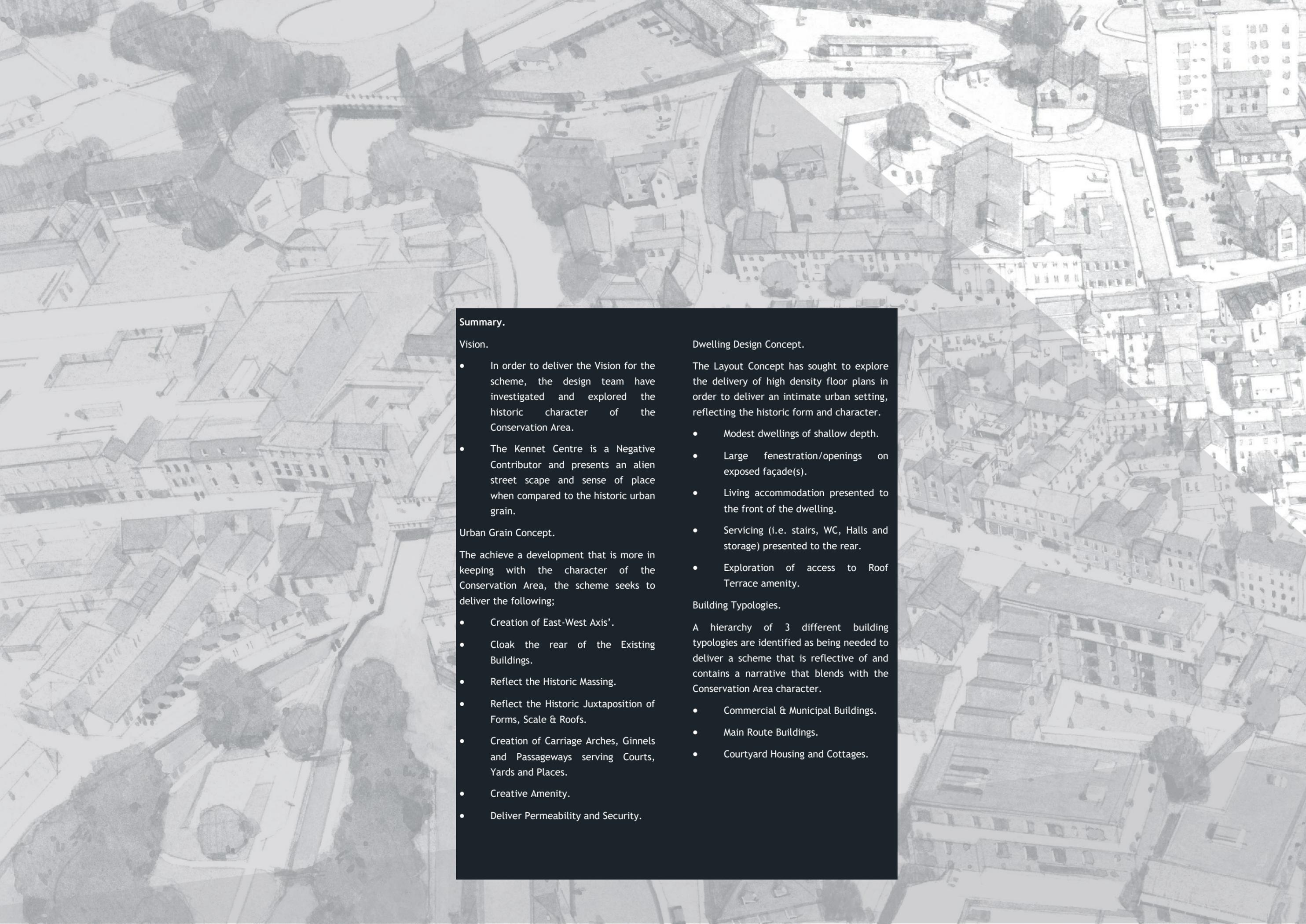
Figure 4.28: Saddler’s Court.



Figure 4.29: R/O Northcroft Street.



Figure 4.30: Cromwell Place.



### Summary.

#### Vision.

- In order to deliver the Vision for the scheme, the design team have investigated and explored the historic character of the Conservation Area.
- The Kennet Centre is a Negative Contributor and presents an alien street scape and sense of place when compared to the historic urban grain.

#### Urban Grain Concept.

To achieve a development that is more in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area, the scheme seeks to deliver the following;

- Creation of East-West Axis'.
- Cloak the rear of the Existing Buildings.
- Reflect the Historic Massing.
- Reflect the Historic Juxtaposition of Forms, Scale & Roofs.
- Creation of Carriage Arches, Ginnels and Passageways serving Courts, Yards and Places.
- Creative Amenity.
- Deliver Permeability and Security.

#### Dwelling Design Concept.

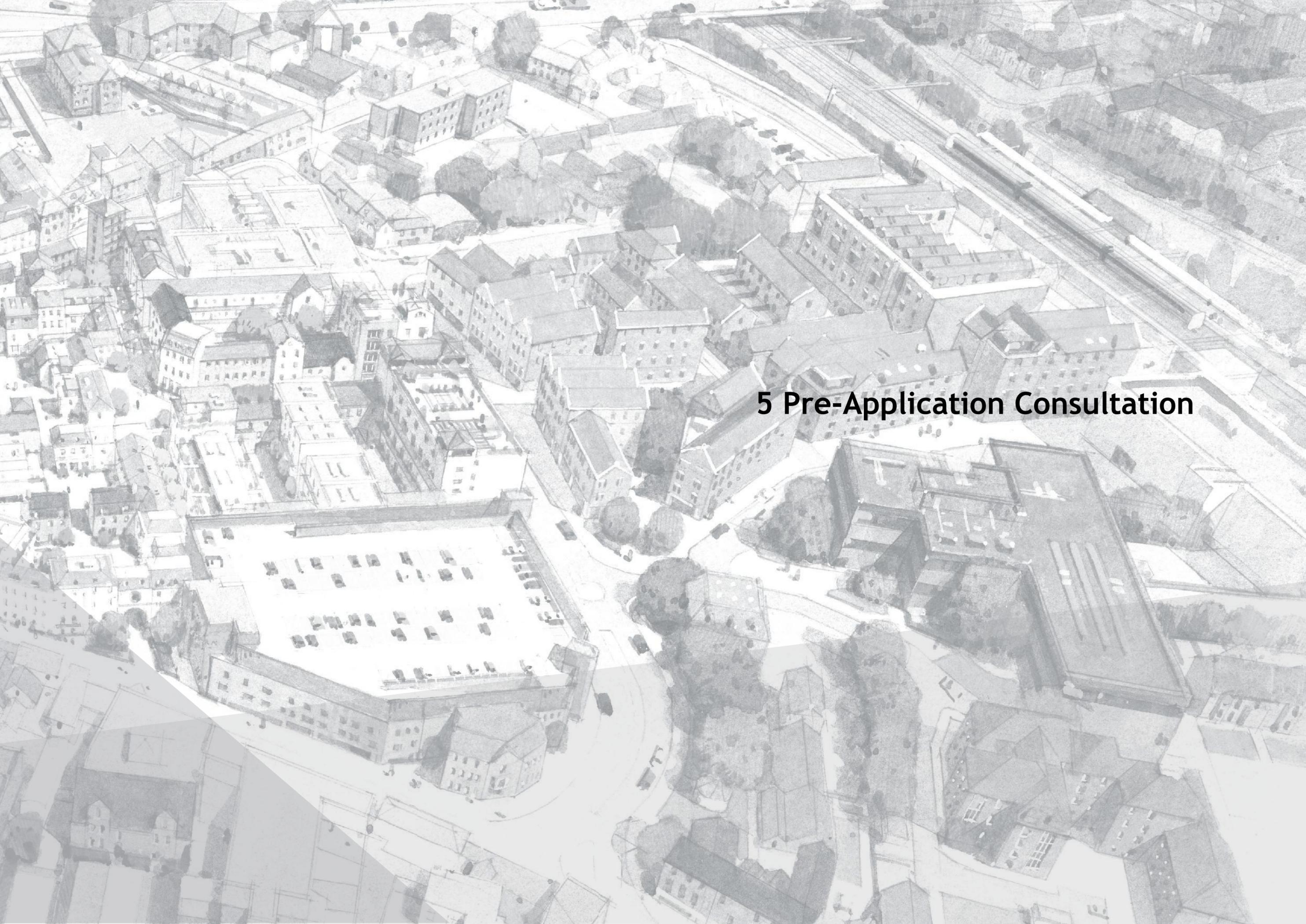
The Layout Concept has sought to explore the delivery of high density floor plans in order to deliver an intimate urban setting, reflecting the historic form and character.

- Modest dwellings of shallow depth.
- Large fenestration/openings on exposed façade(s).
- Living accommodation presented to the front of the dwelling.
- Servicing (i.e. stairs, WC, Halls and storage) presented to the rear.
- Exploration of access to Roof Terrace amenity.

#### Building Typologies.

A hierarchy of 3 different building typologies are identified as being needed to deliver a scheme that is reflective of and contains a narrative that blends with the Conservation Area character.

- Commercial & Municipal Buildings.
- Main Route Buildings.
- Courtyard Housing and Cottages.



## 5 Pre-Application Consultation



**Old Town, Newbury**

**Redevelopment of The Kennet Centre**

**BOOK NOW FOR THE PUBLIC EXHIBITION DATES ON:**  
 Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February and Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February

Doors open at 3pm - hourly slots available at 3pm, 4pm, 5pm and 6pm  
 Please call 01635 40748 to book.

**REGISTRATION AND BOOKING ESSENTIAL**  
 At 139 Bartholomew Street located next to Café Nero, Kennet Centre, Newbury.

Come and view our new proposals for the redevelopment of The Kennet Centre. Members of our team will be there to answer any questions.

[www.oldtownnewbury.com](http://www.oldtownnewbury.com)

**LOCHAILORT**

Figure 5.1: Exhibition Space.

Figure 5.2: Exhibition Advertisement.

## 5 Pre-Application Consultation & Statement of Community Involvement

Prior to the submission of the Application, the Applicant considered how best to engage with the public, Officers, Councillors and Stakeholders. The design team considered that the best way to articulate the scheme, its historical references and context would be to install an exhibition in one of the vacant shops within the Kennet Centre.

### Old Town Exhibition.

Prior to the submission of the Application, the Applicant considered how best to engage with the public, Officers, Councillors and Stakeholders. The design team considered that the best way to articulate the scheme, its historical references and context would be to install an exhibition in one of the vacant shops within the Kennet Centre.

The Old Town Exhibition, figure 5.1, opened in early January upon an invitation only basis and then opened to the public in early February - advertised in the local paper.

The exhibition space was laid out into 4 sections that covered the following topics;

1. Heritage Context, Concept and Inspiration.
2. Landscape and Amenity.
3. Sustainability, Materials and Fenestration.
4. Detailed Proposals complete with Artist Impressions.

The exhibition also had a separate meeting space for detailed discussions and debate, which was primarily used by Officers, Councillors and Stakeholders to discuss the proposals with the Applicant.

Finally, *Application Support* and *Buyer Interest* forms were provided for the Public to complete and deposit in the letter box to gauge public opinion.



Figure 5.3: Application Support & Buyer Interest forms ready for the public to complete.

A list of attendees includes the following;

By invitation:

- Acting Team Manager (East) Development Management, West Berkshire Council.
- Acting Development Control Manager, West Berkshire Council.
- Principal Planning Officer, West Berkshire Council.
- Conservation Officer, West Berkshire Council.
- Leader of West Berkshire Council.
- Deputy Leader of West Berkshire Council.
- Vice Chairman of West Berkshire Council.
- Principal Place-Shaping Officer (Town Centre).
- UK Property Forum.
- Chairman of the Newbury Society.
- Newbury Society Members.
- PennyPost.
- Local Estate Agents.
- The BBC.
- Newbury Today.
- Planning & Highways Committee, Newbury Town Council.
- Conservative - Hungerford & Kintbury, West Berkshire Council.
- Conservative - Downlands Ward, Beedon, Chaddlesworth.
- Newbury BID Directors.
- Leader Newbury Town Council.
- Mayor & Chairman of Newbury Town Council.
- Deputy Leader, LibDems, Speenhamland, Planning & Highways, Policy & Resource, Community Services (Vice Chair), VP Sub-Committee Newbury Town Council.
- LibDems, Clay Hill, Planning & Highways, Community Services, Newbury Town Council.
- LibDems, East Fields, Planning & Highways, Policy & Resources, Community Services Chair), Staff Sub-Committee, VP Sub-Committee, Newbury Town Council.
- LibDems, West Fields, Policy & Resources, Staff Sub-Committee, Newbury Town Council.
- LibDems, Wash Common, Planning & Highways, Community Services (Vice Chair), VP Sub Committee Newbury Town Council.
- LibDems, West Fields, Community Services, Grants Sub-Committee, Newbury Town Council.
- Chief Executive Officer, Newbury Town Council.
- Head of Department Apprenticeships & Skills, Senior Leadership Team, Newbury College.

Members of the public that had registered an interest to view the Exhibition attended over four 1 hour sessions on the 4th and 7th February.

The Old Tow Exhibition was attended at all times by the Applicant who gave a presentation to all and took questions and invited discussion.



**Feedback.**

The response and feedback from the attendees has been very positive. Equally, a number of pieces have been written and released by journalists in the local press, newspaper, blogs, web-sites and podcasts, all of which also reflect positively upon the proposals.

Press Releases.

As cited above, numerous media outlets were engaged with, including;

- UK Property Forum.
- PennyPost.
- Newbury Today.

UK Property Forums.

Written as a descriptive piece, on the 30th January by Alan Bunce, following a tour of the Exhibition, the article points the reader towards the Old Town Newbury web-site where readers can find out more information.

The feedback on comment page are very encouraging, citing;

*“This is a fabulous scheme and should be adopted to lead the way for other town centre redevelopments across the country.”*

*“This looks incredible. The detail is exquisite. This end of our town so desperately needs to be rejuvenated and I can’t think of a more sympathetic way to provide much needed housing as well as leave a lasting legacy for Newbury.”*

Penny Post.

Written as an descriptive and entertaining piece by Brian Quinn in January, following a tour around the Exhibition, it contained a useful observation from the author and a Councilor.

*Old Town Newbury “surely addresses the biggest single concern,” of the previously submitted scheme(s), “that of scale. It also provides architectural aspects that were lacking from earlier plans and which will be to the liking of erstwhile opponents. Parking issues seem also to have been addressed.”*

Penney Post also contained a quote from WBC Councilor and DPC and WAPC member Adrian Abbs, which says; *“We have to wait for the actual application to arrive and for officers to review. However, what I’ve seen appears positive.”* The quote went on to say, *“Every application must be looked at without predetermination, but this one seems to have a lot going for it.”*

Newbury Today.

Written as an synopsis of an interview with the Applicant, the piece by Niki Hinman in January, following a tour around the Exhibition does not offer much opinion on the scheme save for,

*“...the new plans dial up the heritage.”*

Newbury Weekly News.

Within the Your View section of the February 6th edition of the Newbury Weekly News, a supportive entry by Mr A. Pick was written.

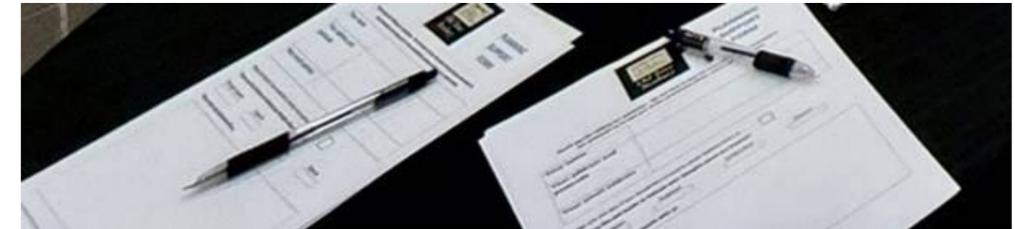
*“I am writing in a personal capacity to express my general support for the newly-announced development plan for the Kennet Centre.”*

*The scheme “...is much closer to the design principles which we had always hoped would be adopted.”*

*“The buildings are of reasonable height and mixture of flats, Maisonettes and houses of varied architectural design.”*

*“...they should fit in well with the architectural pattern of Newbury town centre, as a market town which developed gradually over several centuries.”*

*“...it was always our hope that any replacement...” building(s) of the Kennet Centre “...should reflect Newbury’s general character. These new proposals should do so.”*



Stakeholder Releases.

As cited above, numerous Stakeholders were engaged with. A comprehensive response was received from The Newbury Society.

The Newbury Society.

The Newbury Society is a registered charity and a member of Civic Voice. The ‘aims’ of the Society, as stated in their ‘Constitution’, are;

The Society is established for the public benefit in the area comprising the former Borough of Newbury together with the adjacent civil parishes for the following purposes:-

- To stimulate public interest and educate the public in the geography, history, natural history and architecture of the area and in the transport and communications serving it.
- To promote high standards of planning and architecture in or affecting the area.
- To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest.
- To promote civic pride.

The Newbury Society were staunch objectors to the previous Applications upon the site, so the Applicant sought to engage with them and invited the society for a tour of the Exhibition.

The society then released their ‘initial response’ (Feb. 2025) to the proposals on their website, which made the following insights and observations.

*“We support the change in character of these proposals, and the designs of the internal parts of this “Old Town” scheme, which we think will be an asset to Newbury and to the town centre conservation area.”*

*“We have no objection to the substantial reduction in the amount of retail space, nor to the loss of much of the north-south street from the previous ‘Eagle Quarter’ schemes. We welcome the new elevation for the Bartholomew Street street-frontage as a whole, which is a significant improvement on the previous scheme.”*

*“We do retain concerns about some of the external elements of this ‘Old Town’ scheme. In particular, we would need to see the thin six-storey building in Cheap Street (between the former ‘Save the Children’ and the cinema) reduced in height.”*

*“We have reservations about the Market Street facades.”*

*“In spite of our reservations... ..we whole-heartedly welcome the character of the scheme.”*

Public Responses.

Members of the public that registered an interest in the scheme all enjoyed a tour around the Exhibition by the Applicant.

All of the written responses returned presented a positive and supportive opinion to the proposals. Some of these are cited below.

- Looks really good and well thought out.
- Well thought out. A celebration to returning what was already there. Looking forward to it.
- Impressive - a breath of fresh air.
- Much more in keeping with Newbury as a town.
- Very well thought out scheme and will enhance the town.
- Very sympathetic and aesthetic to the centre of Newbury will benefit both occupiers and those visiting the town centre.
- Very impressive. Great to see people centric scheme rather than car centric.
- Achieved sense of place.
- Looks like it belongs in Newbury.

- Really like the link back to historical styles and town centre mews.
- Newbury lags behind its potential partly because of Kennet Centre this scheme goes a long way to addressing the problem.
- Brilliant scheme design and layout. Can only be good for Newbury.
- Like this proposal that references the history and local vernacular of Newbury.
- Sympathetic to town character and environment.
- Well done, major step forward, sets a standard for other town centres.
- Very attractive in keeping with the character of Newbury. Pleased to see GSH included.
- Fantastic. Fits in with the character of the area. Fully supportive.
- Very well considered scheme. Has my full endorsement.
- Time to get this done. Excellent solution.
- Very attractive design in keeping with an old market town. Strongly in favour.
- Should be congratulated on an excellent scheme exactly what Newbury needs.

### Other Public Feedback.

Members of the public also gave feedback during the Exhibition tour(s). Two items of note were;

- The proposed Market Street street-scene was dominated by red brick which may be a little oppressive. Perhaps some other material could be introduced.
- A resident from Weavers Yard expressed concern over potential nuisance lighting from the proposed additional floor on the Kennet Centre Multi-Storey Car Park.

### Engaging with Feedback.

The Pre-Application and Community Involvement process brought a few notable items to the design team's attention;

- Public observation that perhaps the proposed Market Street street-scene had too much red brick and not enough relief/variation in material.
- A neighbour from Weavers Yard expressing concern over nuisance lighting from the proposed additional floor on the Kennet Centre Multi-Storey Car Park.
- The Newbury Society's reservations over the scale of the proposed building adjacent to the Vue Cinema off Cheap Street.

The Applicant and Design Team have sought to address these comments by way of revisions to the scheme of offering further justification and explanation.

These amendments and explanations are set out below.

### Market Street Street-scene.

The public said...

*"The proposed Market Street street-scene was dominated by red brick which may be a little oppressive. Perhaps some other material could be introduced."*

What we did...

We have revised the materials palette to offer relief from the red brick which assists in breaking up the mass of the street-scene and brightens the façade.



### MARKET STREET

Figure 5.4: Market Street Street-scene presented at the Public Exhibition.



### MARKET STREET

Figure 5.5: Market Street Street-scene revised following public comment/opinion.



Car Park Lighting.

A Weavers Yard neighbour said...

*“We have concerns over nuisance lighting from the proposed additional floor on the Kennett Centre Multi-Storey Car Park.”*

For context, Weavers Yard has 6 storey apartment blocks, the inference being that the higher apartments will overlook the Car Park and may find the lighting a nuisance.

Our response...

The Applicant engaged with the neighbour to refine the design of the proposed additional floor upon the Multi-Storey Car Park and provide the neighbour with additional information, which is included within the Application.



Cheap Street.

The Newbury Society said...

*"We do retain concerns about some of the external elements... ...In particular, we would need to see the thin six-storey building in Cheap Street (between the former 'Save the Children' and the cinema) reduced in height."*

Our justification...

The Vue Cinema and adjoining red/brown brick buildings are defined in the NTCAAMP as 'Negative Contributors' to the Conservation Area and Town Centre character.

Screening views of the Vue Cinema, especially the functional Northern and Western Elevations of the building along with the visible roof top plant housing is a key consideration and design objective.

The design team have work incredibly hard to find a way to protect and enhance near and distant views from well populated vantage points, such as Market Place.

Unfortunately, the more distant views from Market Place towards Cheap Street are terminated by the Kennet Centre's 'negative' façade and Vue Cinema.

The Application seeks to enhance the Conservation Area and character experienced from Market Place (and Cheap Street) by demolishing the Kennet Centre façade and replacing it with something more sympathetic while also seeking to screen/obscure the unsightly Northern elevation, bulk and mass of the Vue Cinema.

Figure 5.6 is a photograph taken from the approximate view point. From this vantage point, one can see the Vue Cinema, which would clearly become more prevalent once the Kennet Centre is demolished.



Figure 5.6: Photograph of the view from market Place towards Cheap Street.

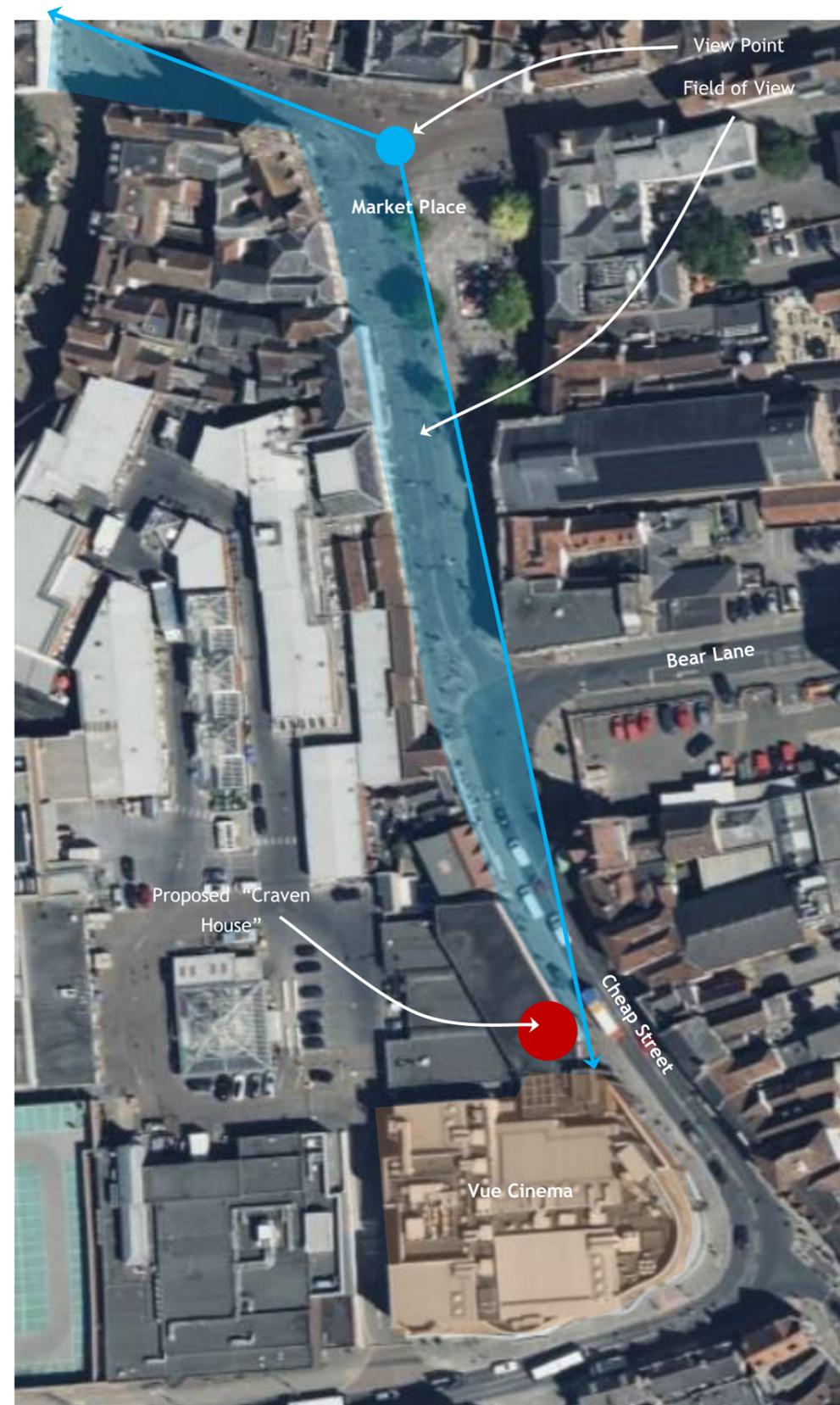


Figure 5.7: Aerial View illustrating field of view being addressed.

Figure 5.7 illustrates the view point in an aerial image. What any proposed building at the end of the vista - located by way of the red dot - must achieve is two-fold.

- 1 Obscure but ideally screen the Northern façade of the Vue Cinema and the plant housing on the roof-top.
- 2 Offer a definitive vista to the view corridor which would act as a landmark for those navigating the site.

While the Exhibition, and Application, illustrates proposed elevations and street-scenes in the 'traditional' manner, i.e. as flat linear elevations, one must keep in mind that elevations and street-scenes, such as figure 5.11 overleaf, are rarely experienced in this way. This is why the design team used 3D modelling and created Artist Views, as these offer a more accurate appreciation of the scale, mass and sense of place as views will be seen oblique and with perspective.



Figure 5.7: Artist View from Market Place Northwards towards Cheap Street.

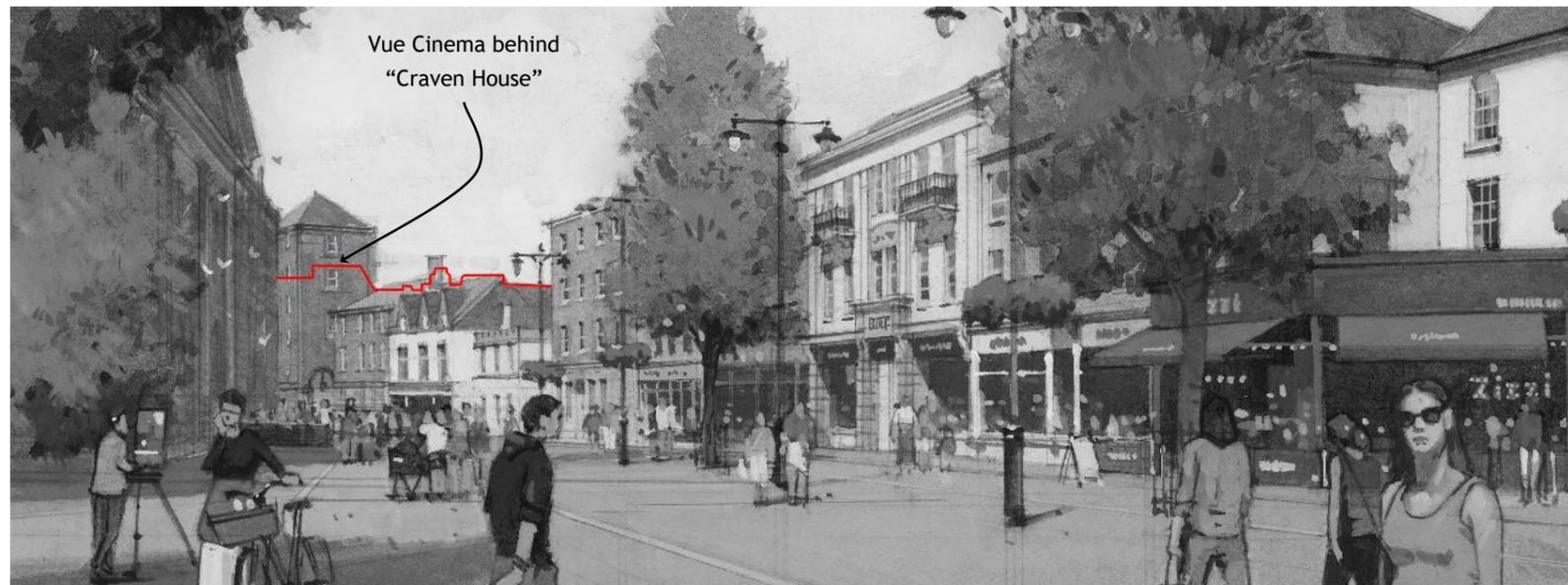


Figure 5.8: Artist View with the Vue Cinema outlined in red.

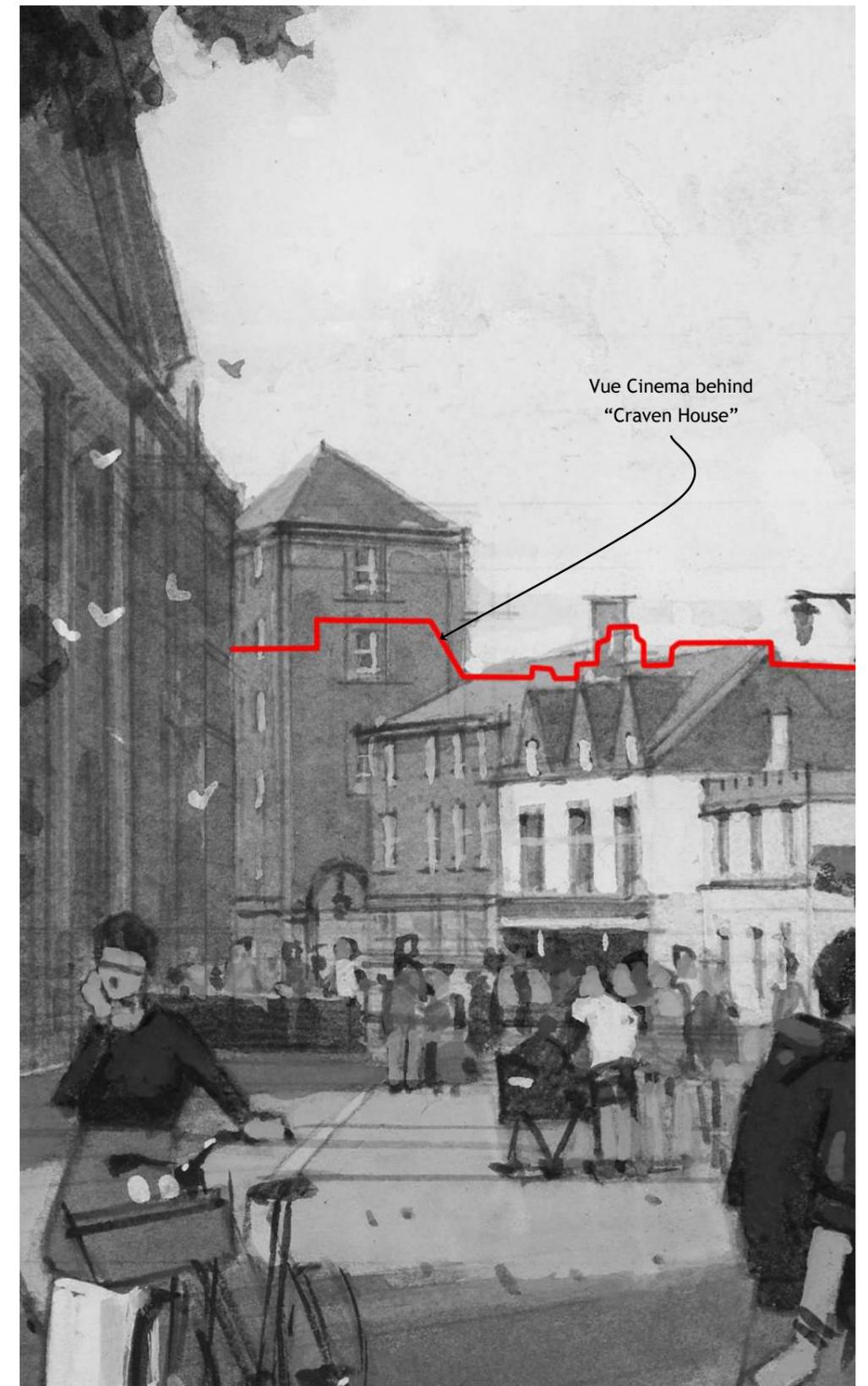


Figure 5.10: Enlarged extract of Figure 5.8.

In order to prepare the Artist View, figure 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10, a detailed Model was constructed to inform the artist but also sense check the objectives cited above.

We can superimpose the outline of the Vue Cinema upon the Artist View (figures 5.8 & 5.9) to illustrate that the objective; *to obscure but ideally screen the Northern façade of the Cinema and the roof-top plant housing;* has been achieved.

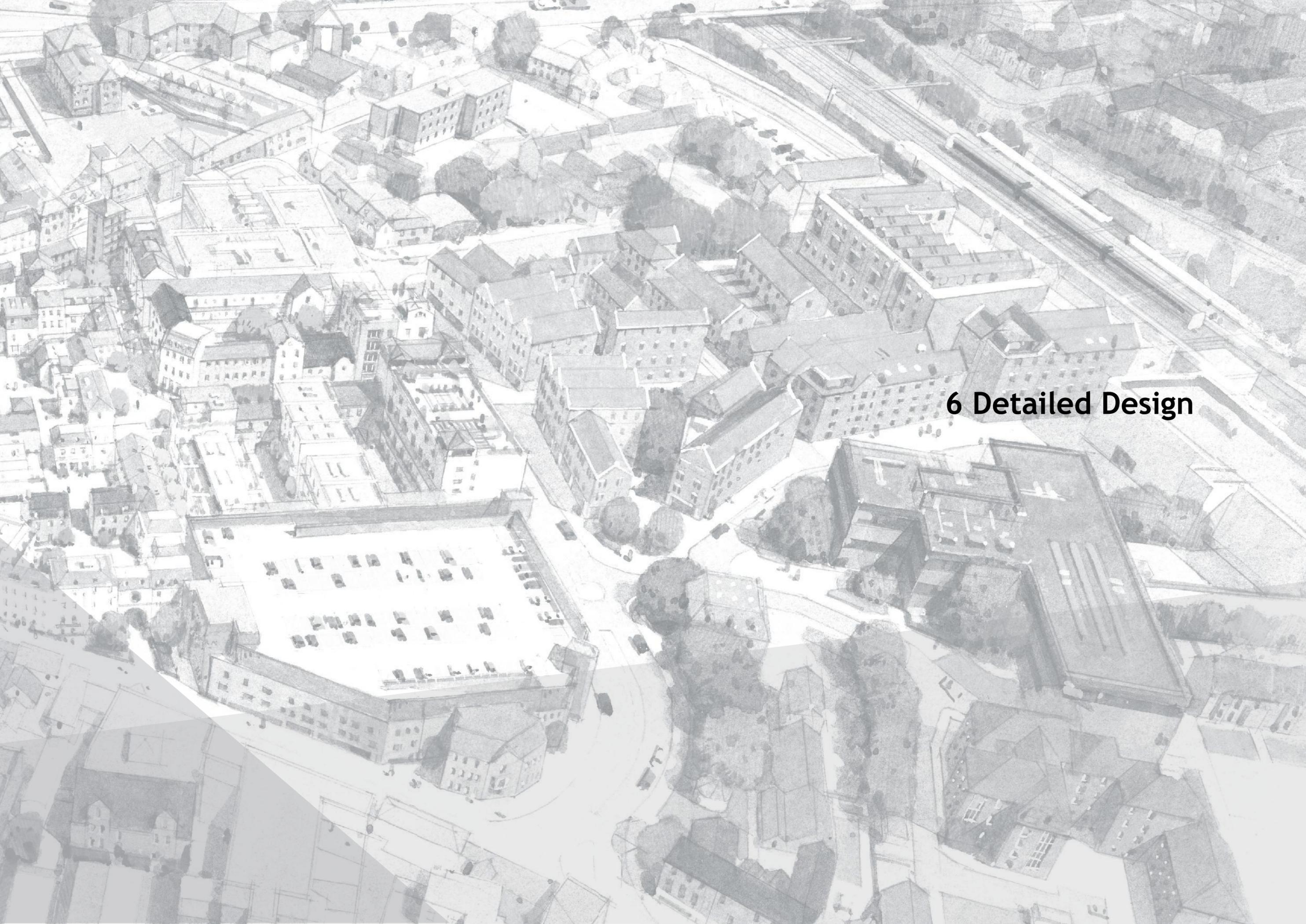
The Artist View itself, illustrates that the second objective; *to create a definitive vista to the view corridor which would act as a landmark for those navigating the site;* is also achieved. To achieve a dominant vista and landmark, we felt it necessary to create a building that is slightly taller than the Vue Cinema. The Cinema would overbore a smaller building, resulting in the proposed “Craven House” failing in it’s objectives.

In meeting these objectives, it was also important to ensure that the proposed built form and scale cascaded down Northwards towards 33 & 34 Cheap Street, which further enhances the role of “Craven House” as a vista and landmark.



Figure 5.11: Proposed and Existing Street-scene comparison.





**6 Detailed Design**

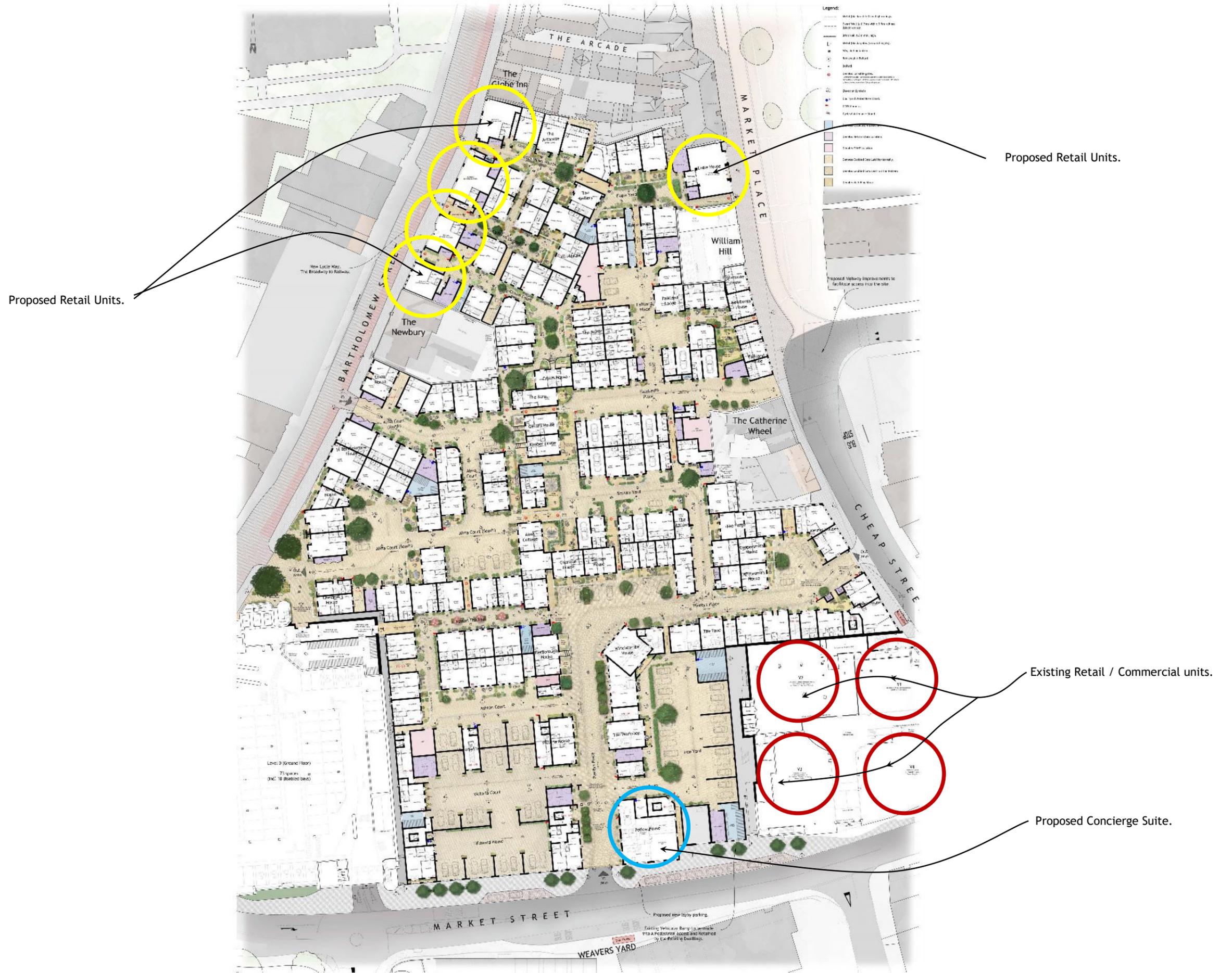


Figure 6.1: Proposed Site Plan.

## 6.1 Detailed Design - High-level Overview

Layout, Form, Movement, Scale, Appearance & Landscape are described at a high-level before zooming into the detail of each area. The purpose here is to offer the reader an overview of the scheme design principles before articulating the detailed design response for each area of the development.

### Mix & Quantum.

The proposal is for a mixed-use development comprising:

- 317 Build to Rent and/or Private Sale Dwellings. 2 Bed Houses x 48;
- 9 Retail/Commercial Units (5 new units, in addition to 2 refurbished and 2 existing units located in the Vue Cinema).
- Retention of the Vue Cinema.
- 1 Community Hub (Concierge Suite inclusive, Parcel Storage & Community Meeting Rooms).

### Dwelling Typology.

A mix of dwellings are proposed, comprising;

- 1 Bed Apartments x 114;
- 1 Bed Duplex Apartments x 6;
- 2 Bed Apartments x 6;
- 3 Bed Apartments x 2
- 2 Bed Duplex Apartments x 20;
- 3 Bed Duplex Apartments x 2;
- 1 Bed Maisonettes x 19;
- 2 Bed Maisonettes x 23;
- 3 Bed Maisonettes x 18;
- 2 Bed Coach-house x 3;
- 2 Bed Houses x 44;
- 3 Bed House x 47, and;
- 4 Bed Houses x 13.

### Retail/ Commercial Units.

The scheme proposes 5 separate retail units as follows;

- Retail Unit 1: 69sq.m
- Retail Unit 2: 104sq.m
- Retail Unit 3: 75sq.m
- Retail Unit 4: 47sq.m
- Retail Unit 5: 47sq.m

In addition, the scheme proposes to refurbish and retain the following, within and alongside the Vue Cinema complex;

- Existing Refurbished V1.
- Existing Refurbished V2.
- Existing Retained V3.
- Existing Retained V4.

### Community Hub.

The site is proposed to be serviced by a Concierge that is situated in the Community Hub. The Hub will also accommodate a Parcel Storage Room - for the delivery and collection of parcels, a Community Meeting Room and a modest Gym.

The Concierge Suite is 170sq.m (inclusive of Reception, Meeting Room/Gym, Parcel Storage Room, Street Vacuum Store Room.

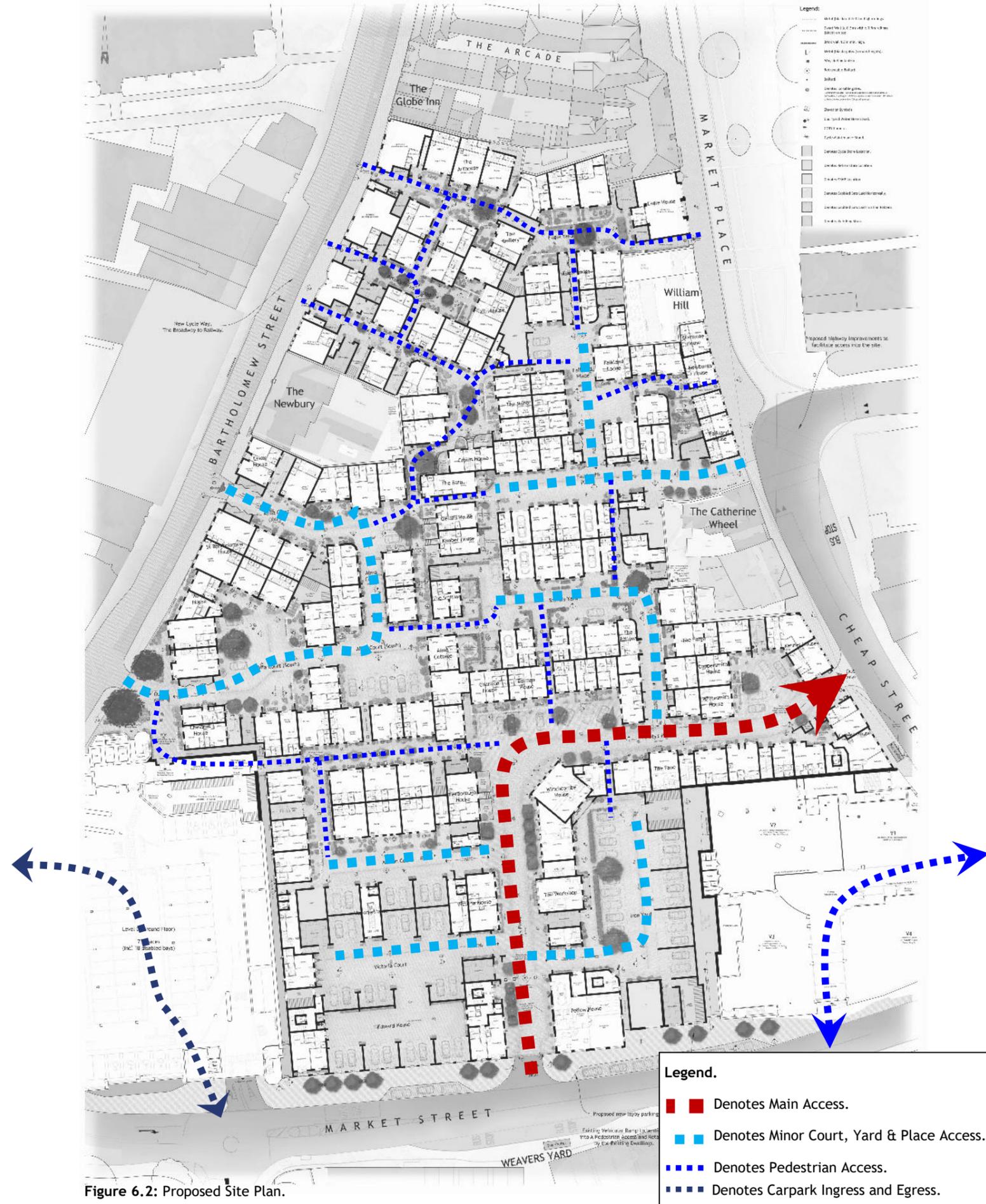


Figure 6.2: Proposed Site Plan.

**Layout, Form, Movement, Scale, Footprint Mass/Density, Appearance & Landscape.**

As described in the preceding Concept section, the Vision for the site requires a creative approach to the general layout form, dwelling design (both scale and layout), authenticity of appearance and a creative approach to landscape and amenity.

While the Concept has evolved and refined, the objectives that underpin it and the Vision have remained.

The sub-sections below describe the scheme in detail.

Layout & Form.

- Reflective of the historic East-West axis.
- Depth of the site predominately accessed via carriage arches, modest gaps between buildings, passageways and ginnels.
- Layout comprises numerous interconnected courts, yards and places.
- Massing dissipates from North to South.
- The Main (Route) Access provides the main servicing access linking Market Street to Cheap Street.
- Characterful juxtaposition of built form, spaces and roofscape.
- Each court, yard and place has it's own sense of place, identity and belonging assisting in the creation of a strong sense of community and neighbourliness.
- Predominance of on-site parking located in the Southern sector of the site, reflective of the more space about buildings (lesser mass) evidenced in the historic photographs and maps.

Movement.

The site is surrounded by the major movement routes. Historically, movement beyond the perimeter would have been via passageways, carriage arches and gaps between buildings.

The proposal reflects this by including;

- Strong building lines to the perimeter of the site.
- The majority of the site is served via passageways off Bartholomew Street, akin to the historic development pattern.
- As the linear massing dissipates further South—reflective of the historic context—the scheme proposes a Main Access off Market Street through to Cheap Street.
- Off this Main Access are other vehicular access via Carriage Arches into small courtyards along with other pedestrian access connecting to the wider permeability of the site.

- There are two other vehicular connections, one from Bartholomew Street and one from Cheap Street, both will require off-site highway works to facilitate them.
- Pedestrian permeability is a key consideration and influence upon the design of the scheme. This provides for a strong sense of neighbourliness and community.



Figure 6.3: Concept/Proposed Figure-Ground Plan.

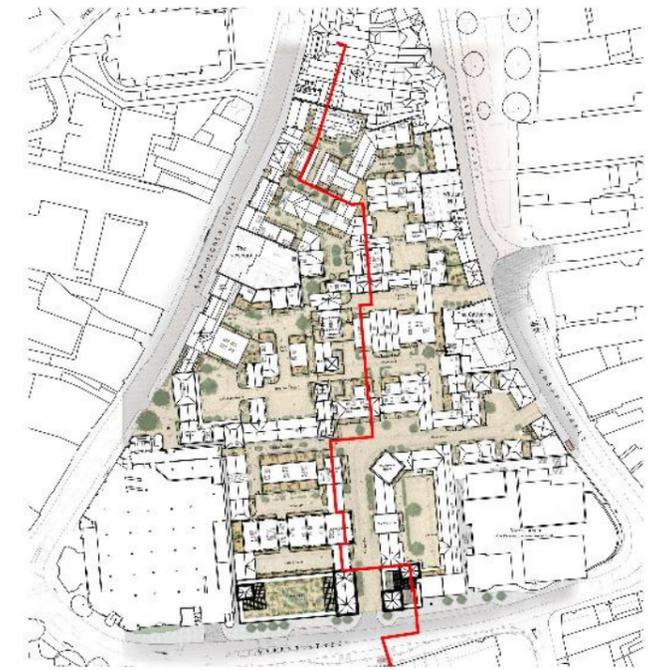


Figure 6.4: Site Section Location..

Indicative vertical topography.

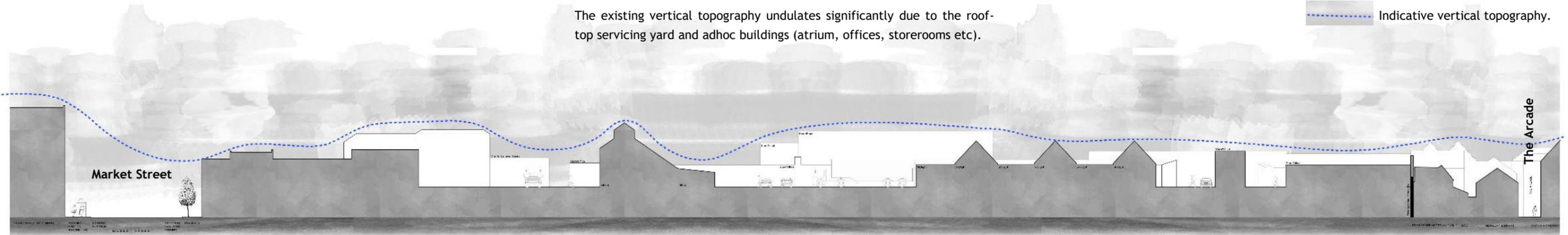


Figure 6.5: Existing South to North Site Section.

Indicative vertical topography.

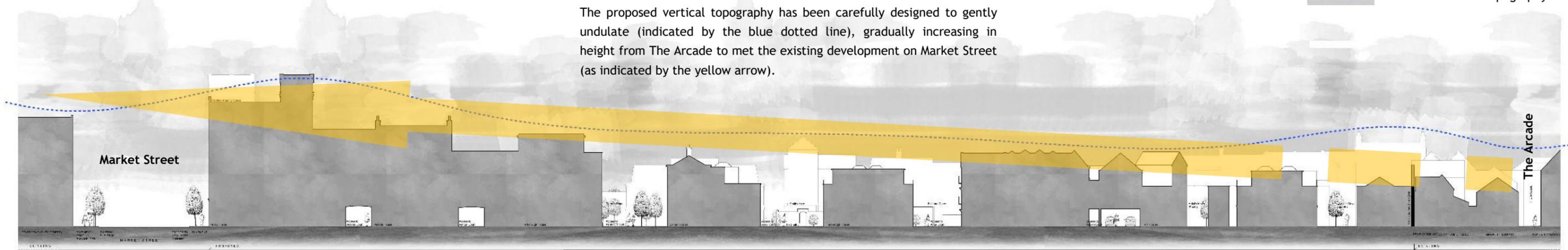


Figure 6.6: Proposed South to North Site Section.

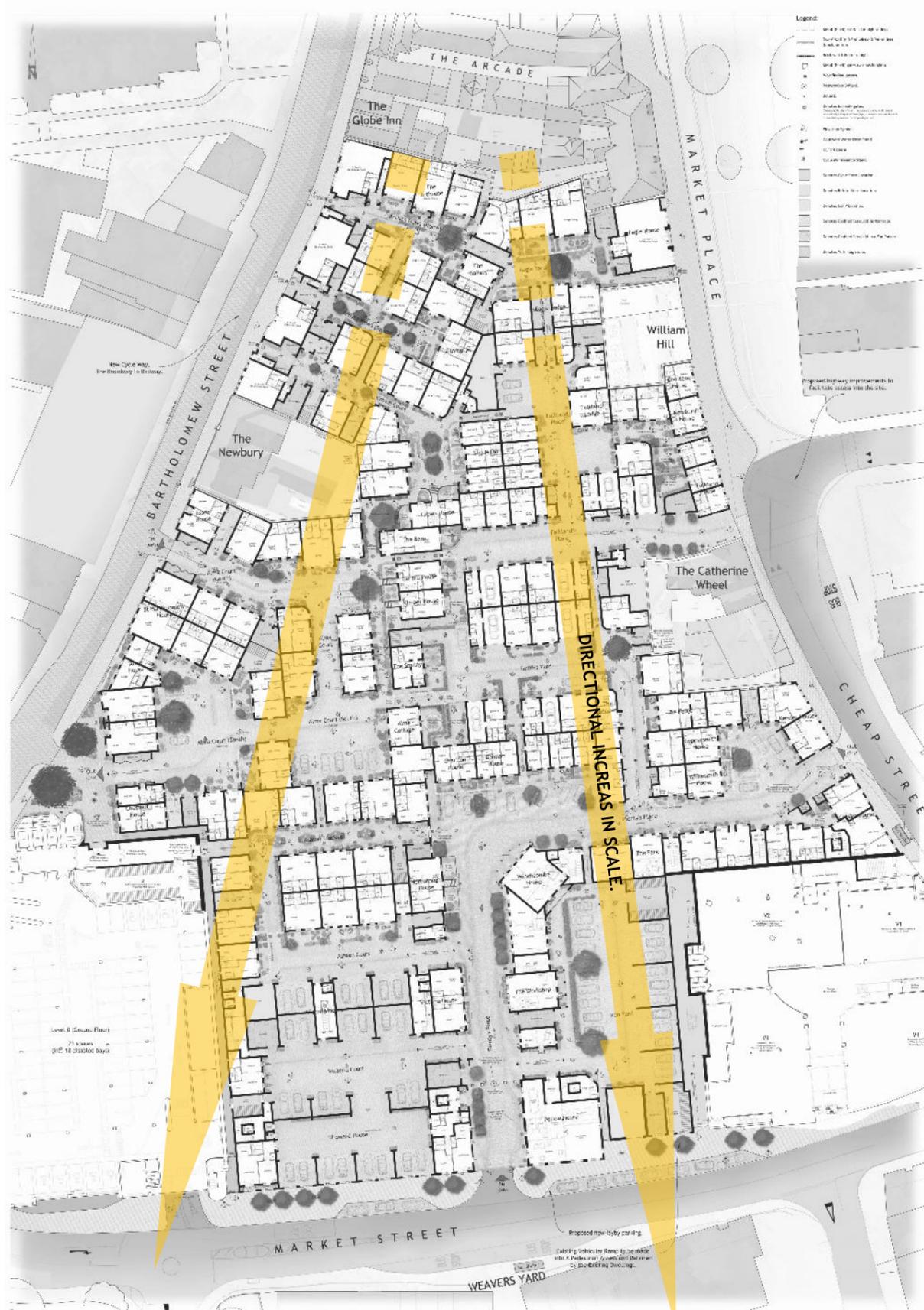


Figure 6.7: Proposed Layout showing direction of increase in scale.

**Scale.**

An appropriate response to scale is an intrinsic consideration for the proposal.

**Existing Context.**

The scale and appearance of the Kennet Centre detracts from the surrounding built environment, most notably the Kennet Centre itself, the Kennet Multi-storey and the Cinema.

While the Kennet Centre is proposed to be demolished, the Car Park and Cinema will remain. The potential impact of the scale of these existing buildings needs to be considered upon the proposed low-rise residential development.

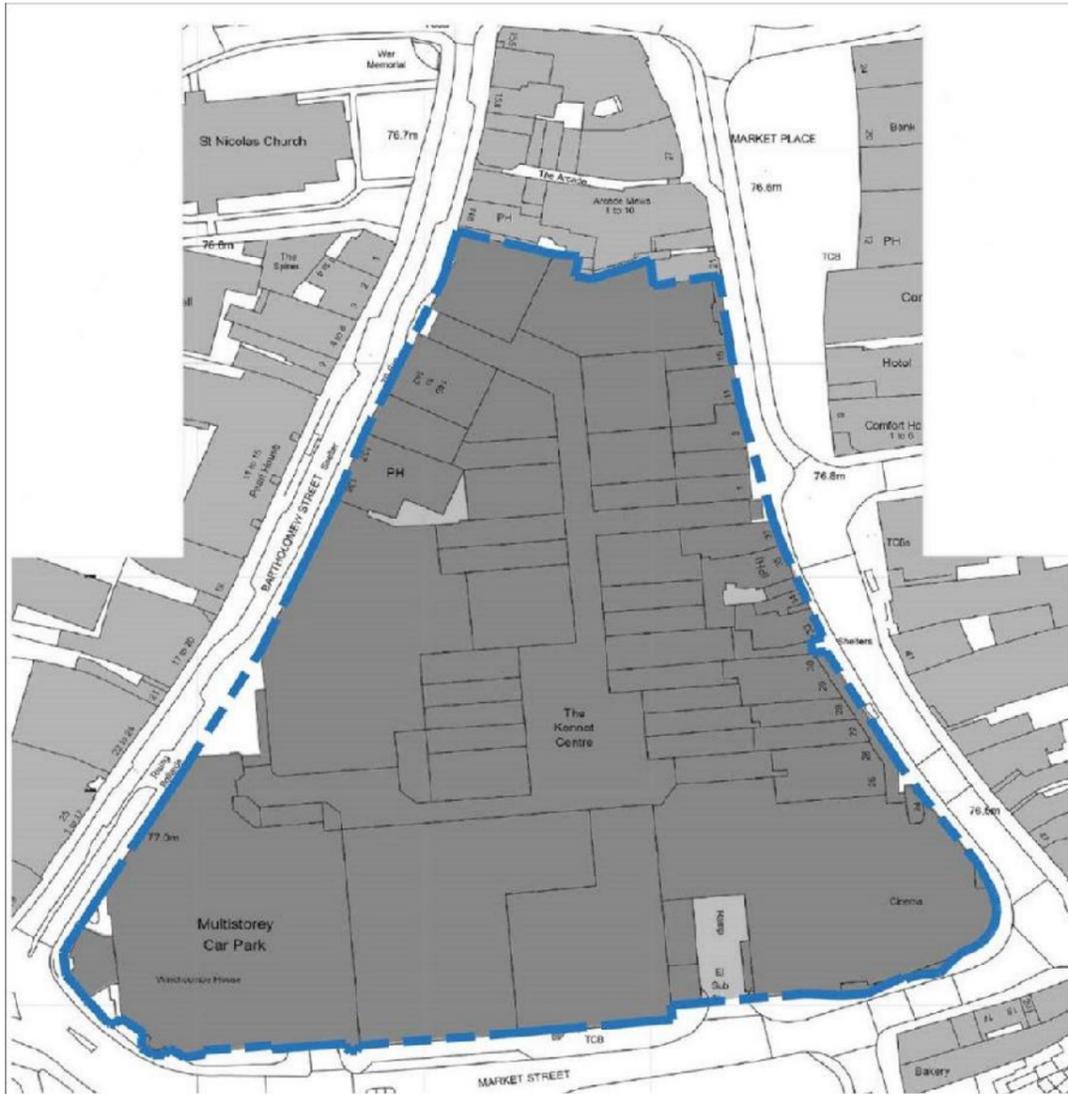
Away from the Car Park and Cinema, the scale of the surrounding built form varies between one and four storeys.

The modern development to the South presents up to 6 storeys building form that needs to be responded to.

**Proposal.**

The development proposes the following.

- Use greater scale around the existing Car Park and Cinema to screen the blank, bland and unremarkable facades from the development as best as possible.
- Scale increases steadily from lower rise at the North to higher rise to the South, bringing the scale up as the scheme interfaces with the modern development.
- Lower rise buildings have also been proposed where the Kennet Centre wall was lower to ensure that existing amenity of neighbouring buildings is not unduly affected.
- The predominate scale within the heart of the site is two storey with a third storey 'added' in the form of a roof terrace and access.
- The proposed building forms around the perimeter of the site have been carefully designed to blend in and reflect the existing built form of the retained buildings.



**Current OS**  
 Built area - 2.25 ha (98%)



**1880's Historic Map**  
 Built area - 1.1 ha (61%)

Figure 6.8.1: Figure-ground Density/Massing Study.



**Proposed Site**  
 Built area - 1.05 ha (61%)

Footprint Mass & Density.

The design works hard to deliver a historic look and feel which is evidenced, in part, by the resulting figure-ground plans opposite.

As previously mentioned, the historic environment delivered built form across 61% of the site.

The Kennet Centre is alien to that context, occupying 98% of the site with built form.

The proposed scheme, by way of echoing the historic settlement pattern of linear yards, courts and passageways, occupies 61% of the site, the same as the historic pattern.

Proposed Context Plan.

The purpose of figure 5.8.2 is to illustrate how the development integrates into the surrounding built form.

The Application Site is deliberately unidentified by a coloured outline as this would detract from the purpose of the illustration. Save for the obvious location of the Vue Cinema and Kennet Centre Multi-Storey Car Park, the site blends in well with the surrounding context, a testament to the overall vision.

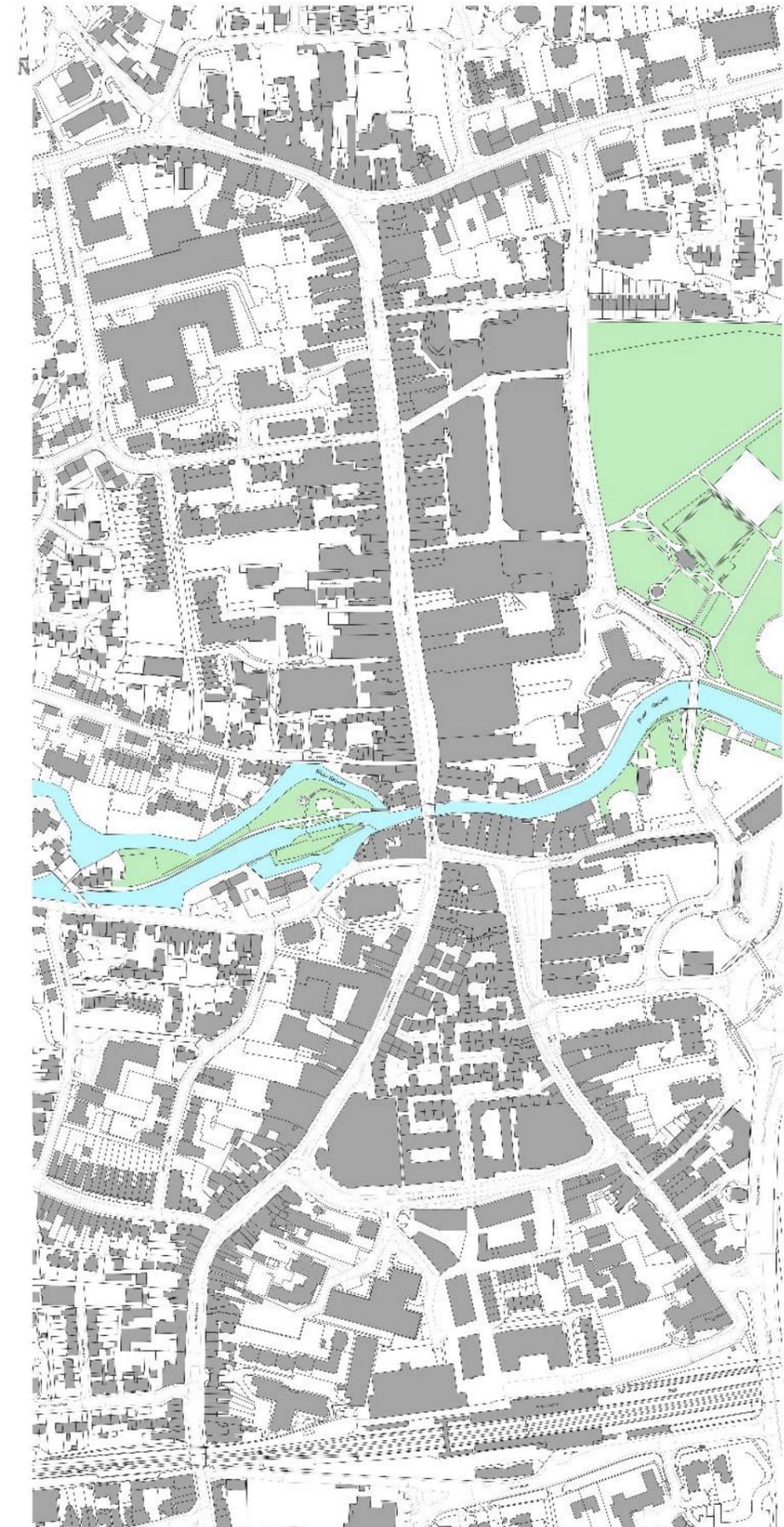


Figure 6.8.2: Proposed Context Plan.



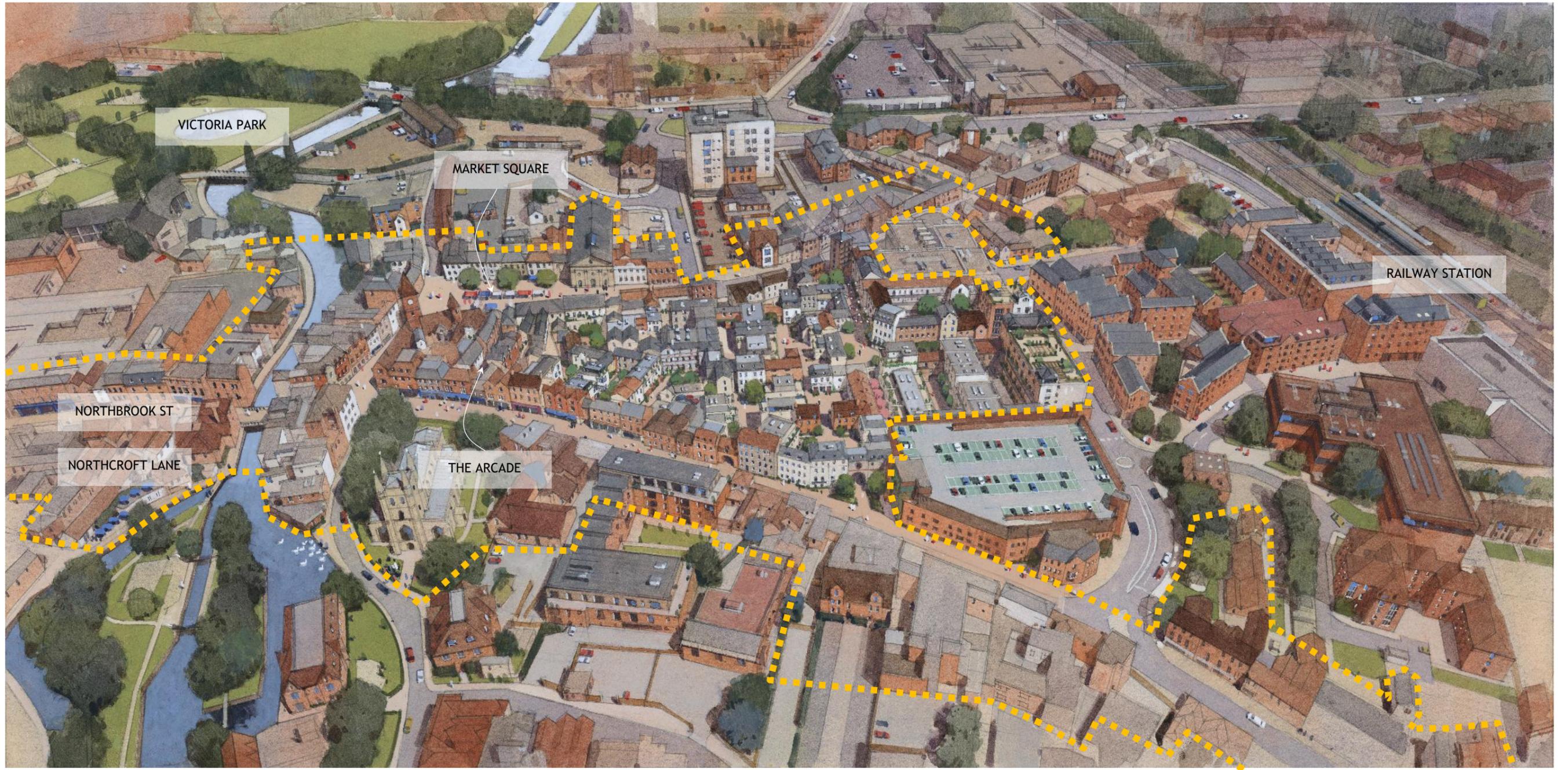


Figure 6.8.4: Proposed aerial view from the West looking Eastwards.



**Appearance.**

A significant amount of work has gone into understanding what makes Newbury look and feel - in the more successful areas - the way it does.

The design team held numerous site visits and recorded a vast amount of information and precedents comprising scale, form, detailing, material, fenestration, door sets and landscape (hard and soft) that would all be used to inform the appearance, quality and success of the proposed buildings and private/public realms.

The images opposite help to illustrate the significant undertaking invested by the design team and the illustrate just some of the appearance elements of note.

The overriding objective of this exercise was to absorb all the criteria of what makes a tight-knit residential development successful and illustrate examples of that within Newbury and further afield where necessary.



Figure 6.9: Design Team Office illustrating a workshop character study of Newbury.



Windows.

A collection of windows around Newbury Town Centre illustrate a strong Georgian theme of predominately sliding sash and all-bar casements.

Also prevalent on the grander buildings is ornamentation around the windows, such as contrasting brickwork and/or arches.

Smaller, less grand buildings, have a more understated fenestration style, reflective of their hierarchical standing.



Figure 6.11: Examples of windows and surrounding detailing found within the Conservation Area of Newbury Town Centre.



**Doors.**

Doors, not only within Newbury Town Centre itself but further afield, are all very similar, serving the same purpose, but are all very much individual - unless they belong to a collection of Almshouses, for example. What does appear to be a common theme is that the most successful doors, i.e. those that accentuate the threshold into the dwelling, have either grander frames/sets and/or have fanlights.

Doorways that serve grander dwellings also have the benefit of ornamental door surrounds or canopies.



Figure 6.11: Examples of doors and surrounding detailing found within the Conservation Area of Newbury Town Centre.



Passageways & Openings.

A collection of history, modern and altered Passageway and Carriage openings along with gateway ironwork in lieu of an build-over. The Passageways are signposted where as the Carriage Arches are demarcated with contrasting finish around the opening and - most often - are arched.

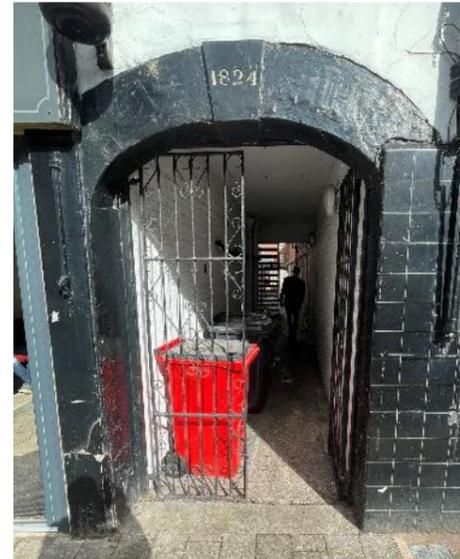
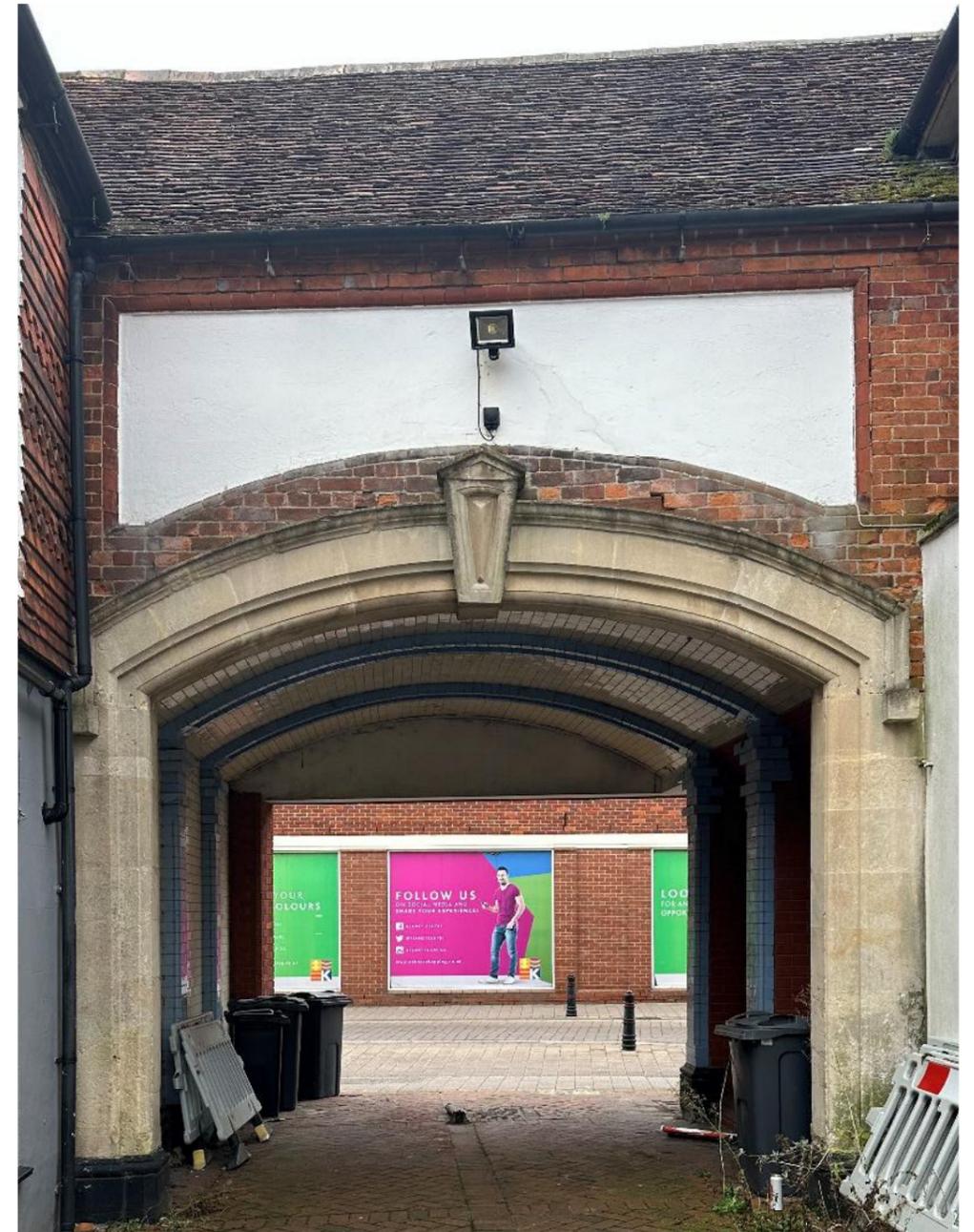


Figure 6.12: Examples of passageways & openings and surrounding detailing found within the Conservation Area of Newbury Town Centre.



Brickwork Detailing & Render.

The majority of the more remarkable buildings along the main routes usually present in brick and contain decorative brick, and sometimes stone, detailing by way of string courses, quoining and dental courses.

Whereas the buildings set behind the main routes and along secondary routes offer very simple detailing. One can see occasional banding contrasting with the brickwork. Some of these dwellings have been rendered or painted, which creates a charming character.

Also of note, there are numerous examples of painted mural on exposed gables which provides a contrasting impression to the materiality in the local.



Figure 6.13: Examples of Brickwork Detailing & Render found within the Conservation Area of Newbury Town Centre.