

6.0 Landscape Design

Landscape Design Features

- 6.1 The scheme’s landscaping is a key design feature, and forms part of a wider strategy of ecology, daylight provisions, sustainability, drainage and residents’ health.
- 6.2 Three landscaped courtyards are proposed, each with it’s own unique character. These will encourage different uses and interactions. These are connected with a pedestrian path, demarcated with stonework that is reminiscent of that found in Hitchin’s Market Place square. Natural materials reinforce the design of the buildings, resulting in a coherent and well-considered scheme.
- 6.3 The courtyards form part of the SuDS strategy, as set out in the separate SuDS Strategy Assessment and Report.
- 6.4 Perimeter planting forms part of the site’s screening strategy towards neighbouring buildings, increasing levels of privacy and separation. The boundary on Paynes Park is also screened by a planter and foliage, so as to bring greenery to an urban fabric which is lacking in areas of ecological benefit.
- 6.5 The supporting Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment further explains the benefits presented by these courtyards. Within the report, appropriate species of trees and planting are proposed. These also feed into the comments from local residents to encourage the growth of a local bee-friendly corridor. Also included are bird boxes and bee bricks.
- 6.6 To the north, the boundary to the existing access path is to be populated with low-maintenance planting and climbers, to reduce the impact of the boundary wall to the neighbours, and minimise risk of graffiti and extent of expansive brickwork.
- 6.7 Where units face directly onto courtyards at ground floor, entrances are detailed to provide seating and private planting areas, providing users with a sense of resident ownership and involvement in the scheme.



English Lavender



Red Fescue



Wild Privet



Plum Tree



Selfheal



Common Bent



Lady's Bedstraw



Cherry Tree

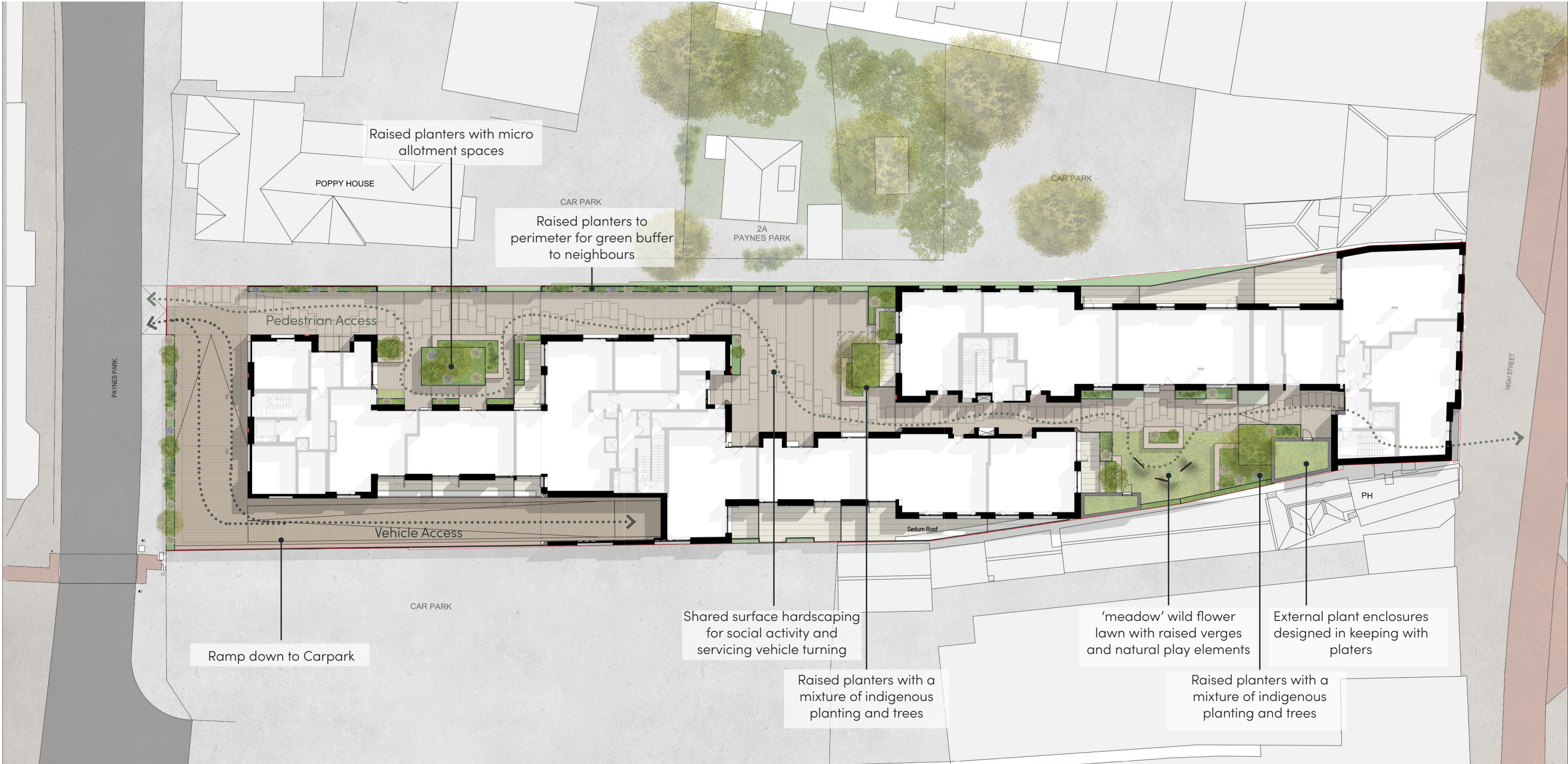


Stone Pathway through Market Place Square



Recessed Timber Benches to Entrances

Landscape Overview Plan



Landscape Proposal

External Surfaces									
Permeable Paving, Primarily Pedestrian, with vehicle access	Permeable Paving, Vehicle Access	Balcony/Terrace Hardscaping	Raised planter bed	Surface level green space/grass	Low maintenance sedum roof	Clay tile roof	Standing Seam Zinc Roof	Concrete Flat Roof	



Material Palette



View of Eastern Courtyard

Proposed Landscaping Materiality



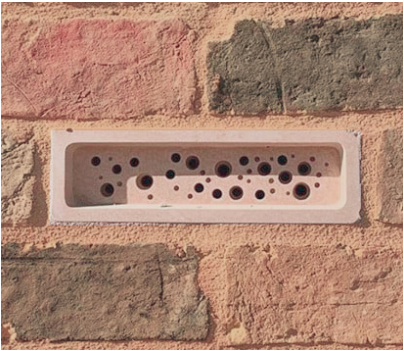
Weathered Steel Planters



Timber Seats



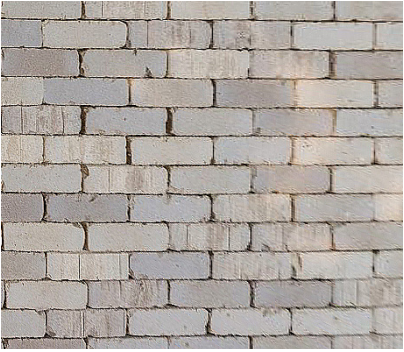
Pigmented Concrete



Bee Bricks in planters/ building



Stone Slab Pathways



Permeable Concrete Sets



Stone Pathway through Market Place Square

7.0 Neighbouring Considerations

Adjacent Cottage

7.1 2a Paynes Park is an existing cottage located approximately half way along the Northern boundary of the site. This cottage is currently listed.

7.2 The cottage is located on a dead-end access way, which serves 3no. parking lots and the rear of some of the High Street units.

7.3 The cottage's current outlook is onto a long and expansive brick wall and windows directly opposite, which clearly do not take into consideration the cottage's location. The current car park also brings vehicles far into the proposed site, contributing to higher pollution and noise levels around this building.

7.4 The scheme has directly improved the relationship between the cottage and site. The proposed central courtyard is located South of the cottage to improve its outlook. The building core that is most-closely opposite the cottage has been set back from the boundary. This reduces any issues of privacy as well as daylight levels. Furthermore, general car use is restricted to the West of the site, and no longer impacts the residents of the cottage to the same degree.

7.5 In addition to the above benefits, the new scheme incorporates landscaping and low-maintenance planting to screen the cottage from any overlooking. Planters are added along the boundary wall to screen large expanse of brick wall, as well as add ecological benefits site wide.

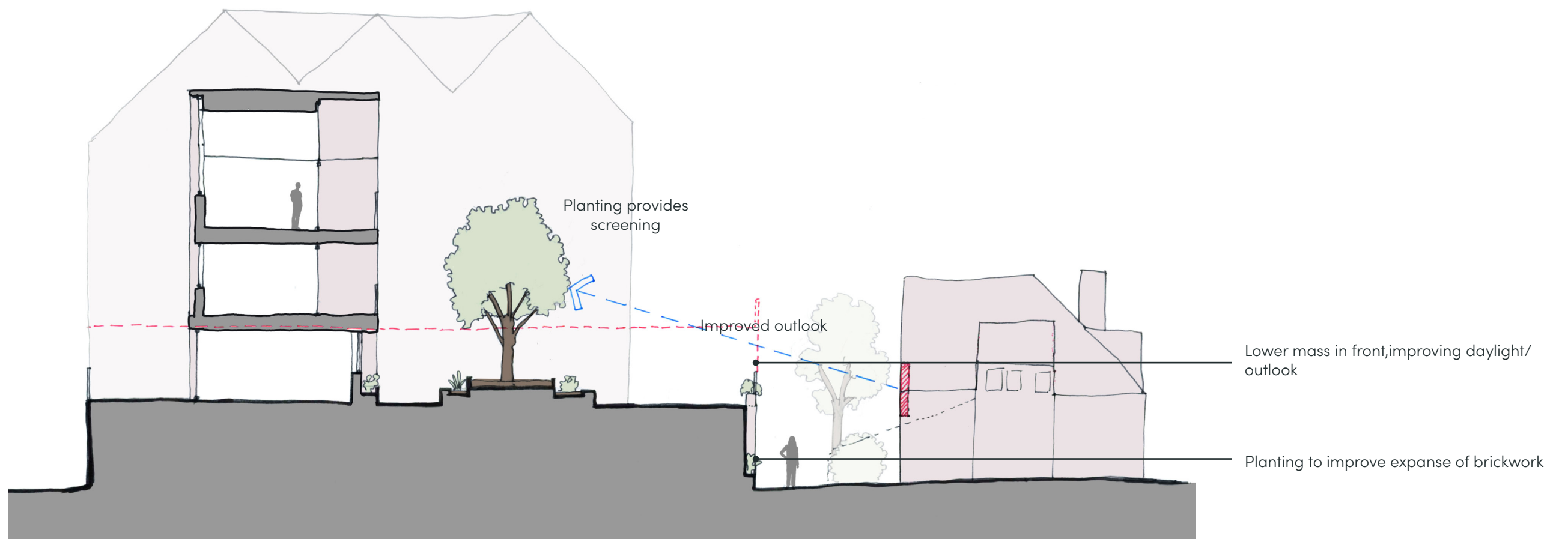
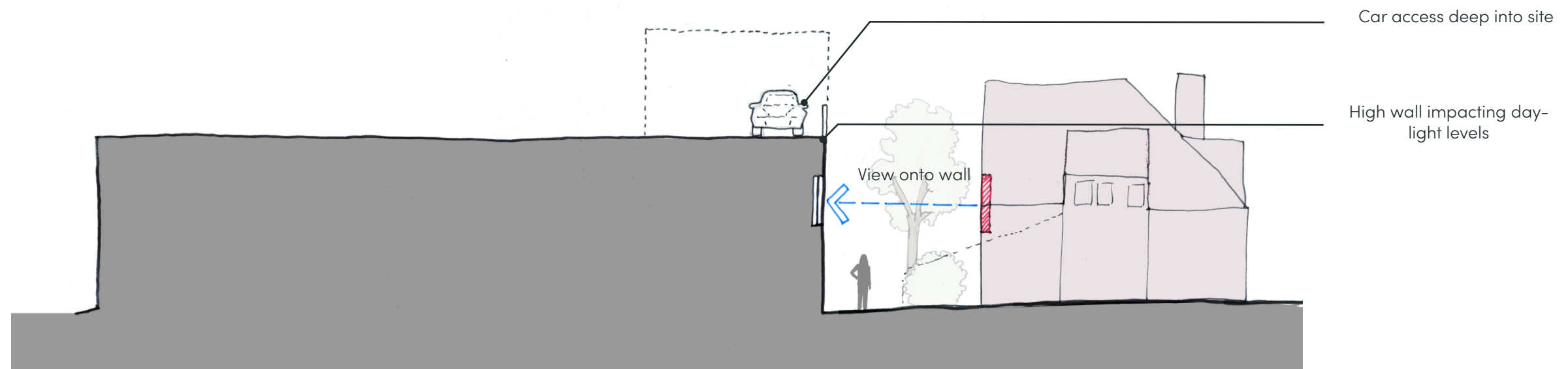
7.6 The increased opening will contribute to an overall more positive relationship between the site and the listed building. The sectional diagrams overleaf illustrate this.



Existing View of Cottage Facing Paynes Park



Existing Outlook of Cottage



Poppy House

7.7 It should be noted that the neighbouring building (Poppy House) has been constructed close to the shared boundary line. The side elevation of the building has an increased number of windows facing onto the application site, which has sterilised development and negatively impacted the achievable design to this side of the site.

7.8 The core block of the proposal on Paynes Park responds to the distance of Poppy House to the boundary, by mirroring its position, massing and height. As such the impact on each unit is reciprocal.

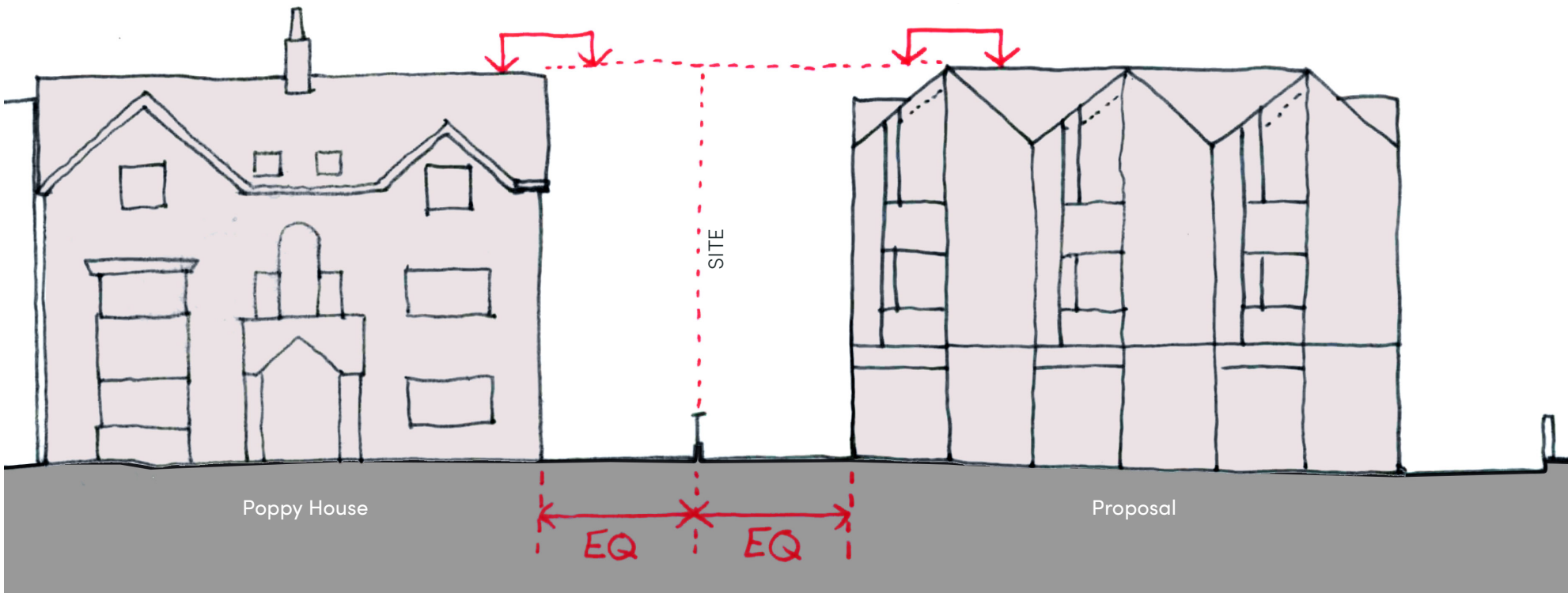
7.9 The roof language of the neighbouring building (and rest of the street) has been extended and responded to on the core facing Paynes Park, hence directly responding to its context.

7.10 Windows facing onto this neighbouring elevation are secondary to their retrospective apartment, and hence lessen the impact of overlooking to this side.

7.11 The accompanying Daylight/ Sunlight Report provides additional commentary on the impact to neighbours.



Existing View of Poppy House Paynes Park Elevation



Proposed Strategy for Paynes Park Elevation



View along Proposed Entrance

8.0 Sustainability Strategy

8.1 The scheme provides a robust and considered approach to sustainability. The below reports have been developed by the Applicant's Consultant team to accompany this application:

Air Quality Assessment
Noise Impact Assessment Report
SuDS Strategy and Assessment Report
Energy and Sustainability Statement
Overheating Analysis
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
Sustainability Report

These reports provide additional details on the site strategy to Sustainability.

8.2 The scheme incorporates renewable energy appliances and energy efficient heating methods, through the use of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) and Photovoltaic (PV) panels. The inclusion of PV panels is a direct response to the suggestion of inclusion by local residents. These are either located within semi-recessed plant locations on the core roofs, or discretely between roof pitches.

8.3 The noise impact of the ASHPs has been assessed in the accompanying report and cross-checked with the accompanying Overheating Analysis. Both reports show appropriate compliance.

8.4 High performance fabric values have been included as part of the accompanying Energy and Sustainability Statement. This shows the Applicant's commitment to providing an energy-efficient design that responds to the current climate crisis.

8.5 A SuDS has been included, showing a considered strategy responding to any concerns over water-runoff and site drainage issues. This includes the use of a blue-roof podium deck over the car park and further attenuation at carpark level.

8.6 The scheme includes landscaping and ecology in the heart of it's design concept and delivery, ensuring that a site with close-to-no ecological benefit now provides a drastic improvement, introducing an exemplary ecological scheme in the heart of this dense local fabric.



9.0 Access

Vehicle Access & Parking Strategy

9.1 The scheme is designed as people-first, prioritising the main access through the site for cycle and pedestrian access. Any car access is generally limited to the West of the site, from Paynes Park, where vehicles turn off the main axis into a holding area before the ramp access to the parking below.

9.2 A traffic light system controls car access to the car park.

9.3 Due to the narrow nature of the site it is accepted that occasional access is needed for refuse and emergency vehicle access. The landscaping has hence been designed in such a manner which allows vehicular access to be shared

with the pedestrian access, up to the second courtyard space. Adequate turning circles have been designed in response to this.

9.4 All cycle and bin storage spaces are located on the Ground Floor, and are accessible from both Paynes Park and the High Street.

9.5 A total of 32 parking spaces has been provided, accessed via a ramp, and is for residents' use only. The proposal encourages residents to utilise sustainable modes of transport, and as it is located in a dense local fabric and on a narrow site, this is hence considered an acceptable proposal.

9.6 Additional analysis on the above can be found in the accompanying Residential Framework Transport Plan, Transport Statement and Air Quality Assessment.



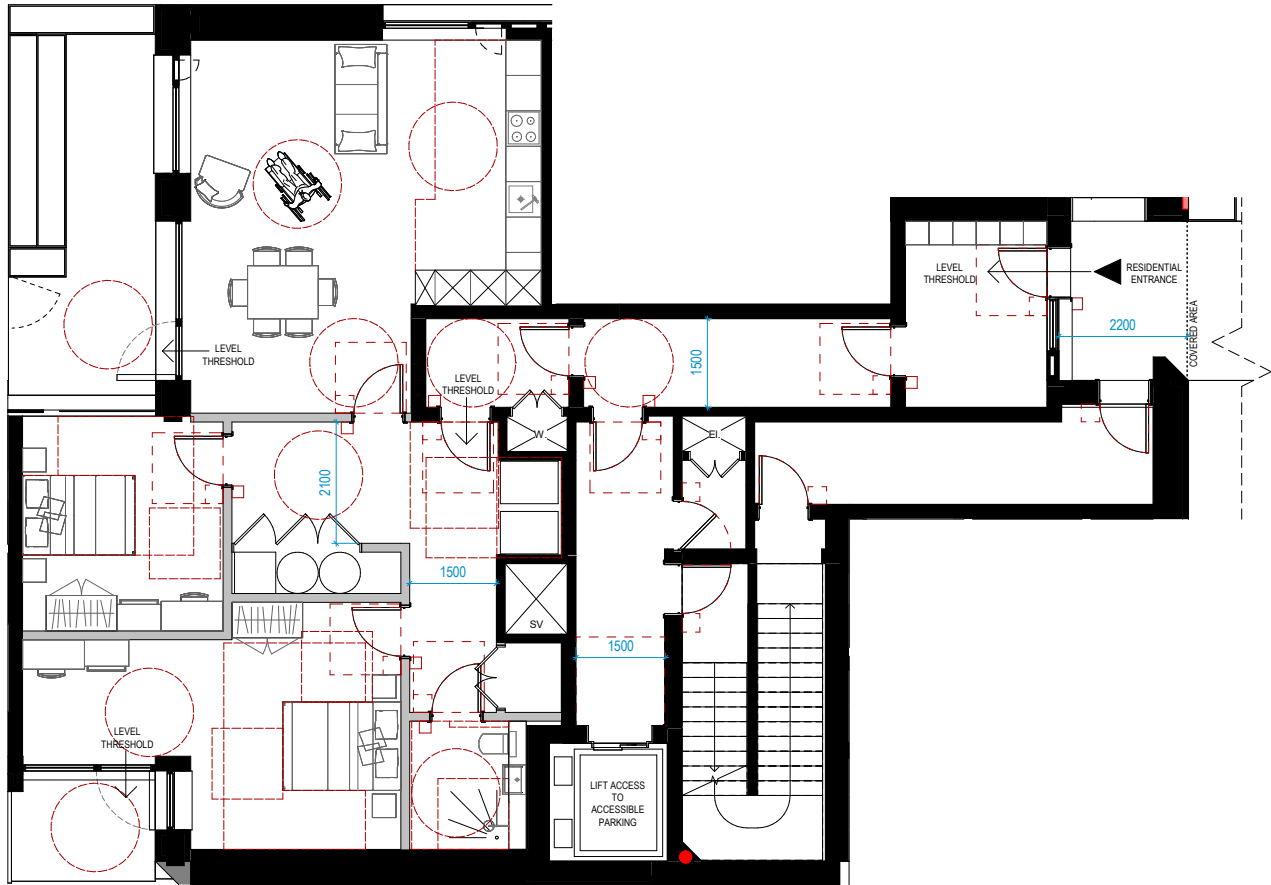
Accessibility of Units

9.7 Five apartments within the scheme have been designed to conform to part M4(3) of the building regulations with all remaining apartments meeting section M4(2).

9.8 All apartments have been cross-checked for compliance to the relevant M4 standard - The more M4(3) units are illustrated in the adjacent drawings as a sample.

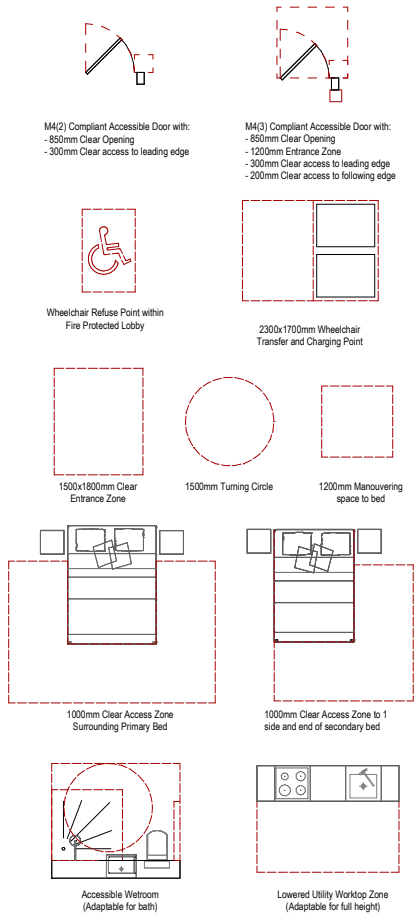
9.9 All communal areas including external communal spaces have been designed to meet section M4(3) in order to allow access for all users around the site.

9.10 Each of the Five M4(3) apartments have a dedicated accessible parking space as a part of the proposal.



Layout Unit 003

Accessible Symbol Key



Typical Layout Units 103 & 203

Typical Layout Units 106 & 206

M4(3) UNITS			
UNIT	TYPE	INTERNAL AREA (m ²)	EXTERNAL AMMENITY (m2)
003	2B 4P M4(3)	92	12
103	2B 4P M4(3)	90	7
106	2B 4P M4(3)	91	7
203	2B 4P M4(3)	90	7
206	2B 4P M4(3)	91	7

Designated M4(3) units

10.0 Conclusion

10.1 This document accompanies the application for Full Planning Application at 9-10 High St, Hitchin SG5 1BH

10.2 The scheme includes 44 residential units, and 1 commercial unit, set out over Ground Floor + 3 storeys over, with a car park below. The car park provides 32 spaces for private residential use, with 5no. spaces allocated for disabled users.

10.3 The design of the proposal considers Hitchin's unique history, heritage and fabric, and is a sensitive yet contemporary response.

10.4 The application is supported by a number of supporting statements, reports and studies. These should all be considered alongside this report.

10.5 The scheme responds to issues of design, sustainability and accessibility by presenting a high-quality proposal that would become an exemplary example of residential and mixed use development in a market town setting.

