



# Royal Clarence, Exeter

**Design and Access Statement**  
February 2022

KTA Ref 2063



# 1.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

## 1.1 Introduction

This document has been prepared by KTA Architects in support of the full planning application and listed building consent for the proposed works associated with the former Royal Clarence Hotel. The application seeks permission to rebuild the historic facade to accommodate 23 new residential units from first floor and a restaurant and pub (formerly the Well House Pub) on the Ground Floor.

This document is to be read in conjunction with all submitted drawings and consultant reports.

# 1.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

## 1.2 Viability Statement

A Viability Assessment (VA) has been provided as part of the application submission. It provides evidence that the scheme sits on a knife-edge in viability terms and any additional burden over and above the preservation and conversion costs of the retained historic buildings will make the scheme unviable. In most instances a development should provide a commercial return of at least 20% to the developer. In this instance the scheme delivers a return of 17%. Akkeron is willing to progress that scheme at this level but clearly any further degradation of the commercial return cannot be supported.

This is a high-quality scheme on a difficult site in a region where house prices are relatively low. It restores the historic building and its presence on Cathedral Yard, delivers 23 new, high-quality apartments and much-needed commercial space.

The scheme cannot afford any developer's contributions towards S.106 or affordable housing. It does, however, include an allowance for CIL (albeit pushing the scheme into deficit).

Public consultation feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with some of the feedback being incorporated into the design as it develops.

Loss of historic fabric has been minimised insofar as practicable and alternative uses have been exhausted. Any further retention of historic fabric will see the scheme failing on viability grounds.

Sustainability has been considered and modern sustainable systems incorporated where practicable and reasonably affordable.



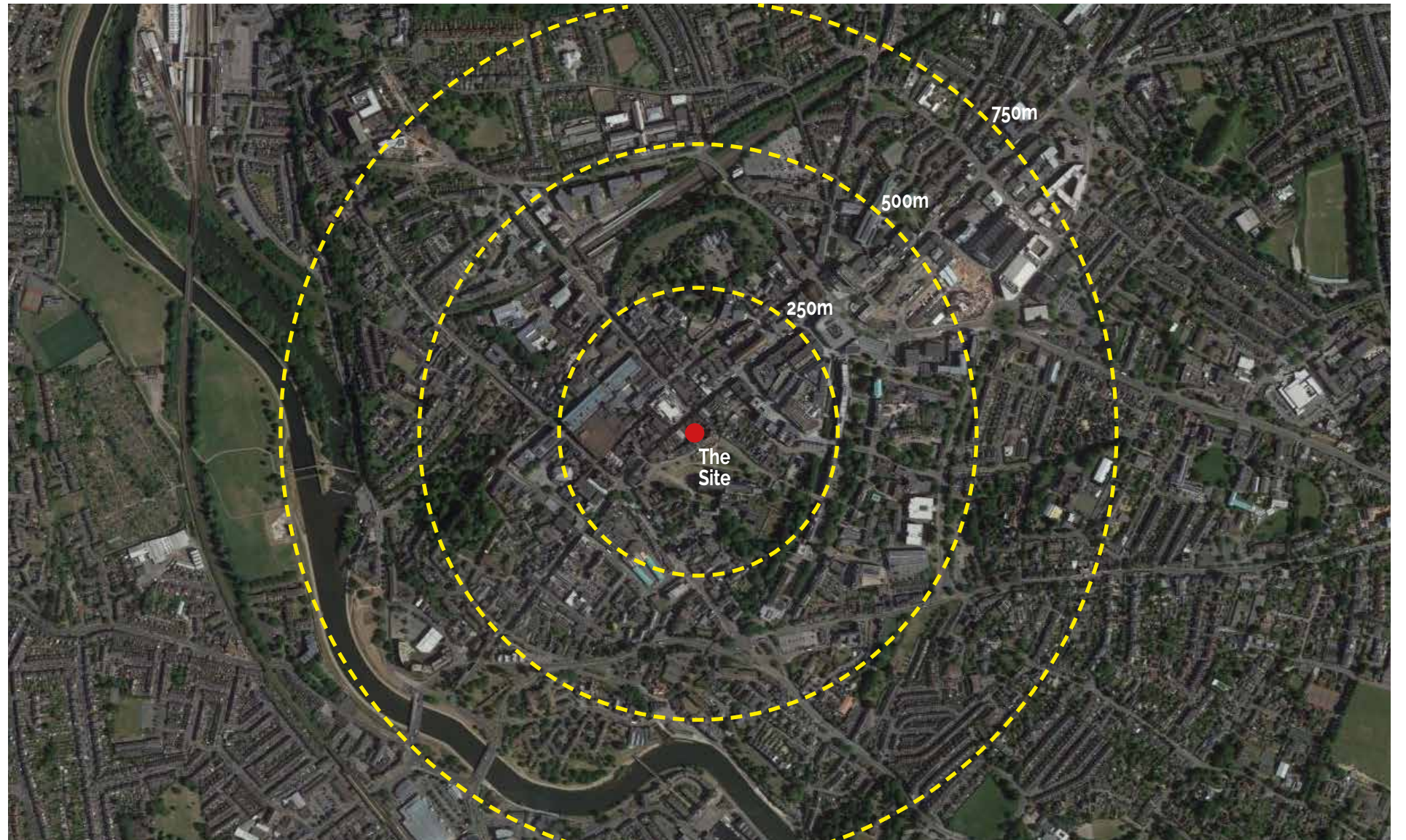
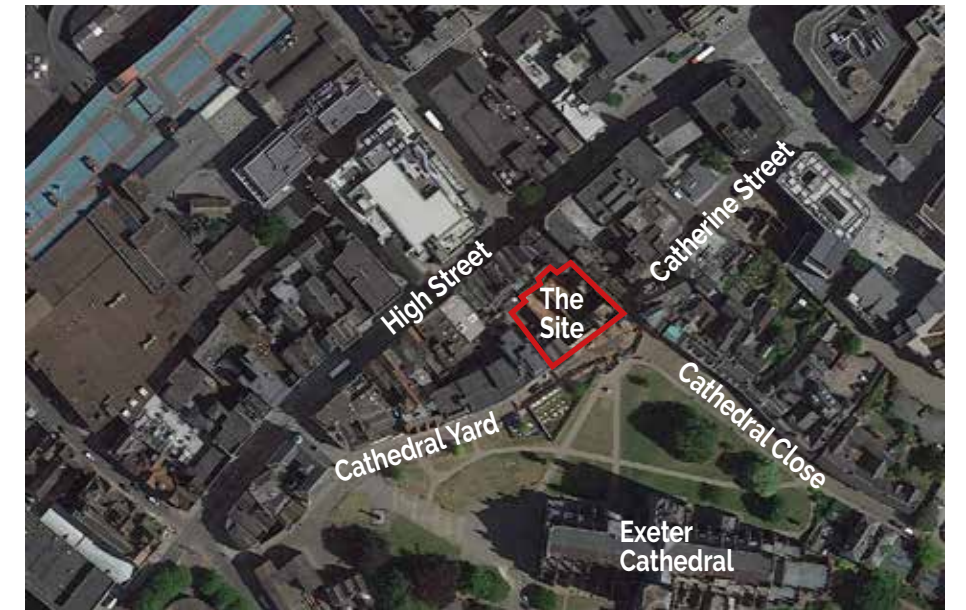
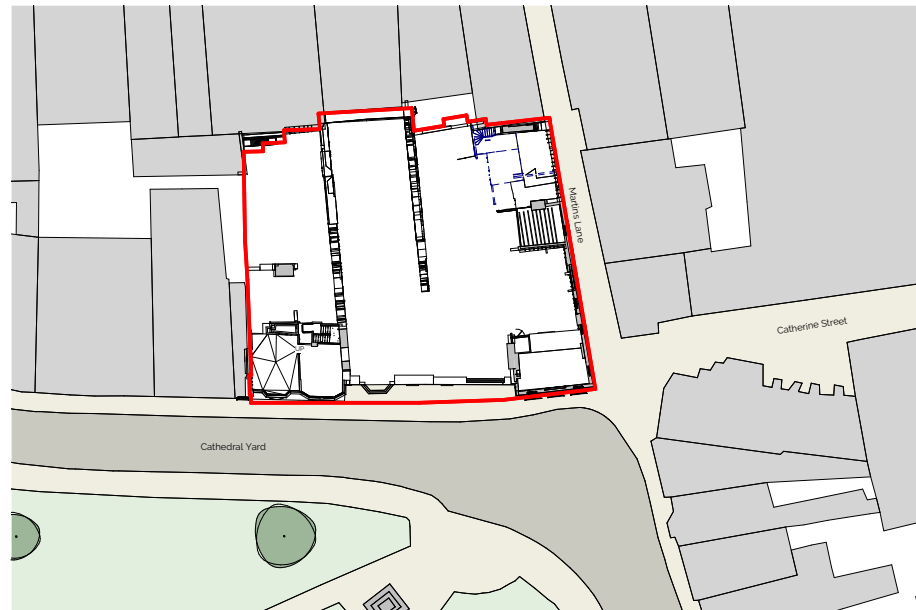
## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT

### 2.1 Location

Royal Clarence is located centrally in Exeter, approximately 30m off the main High Street and immediately facing Cathedral Green and Exeter Cathedral. The surrounding area is primarily retail and commercial, however there are also some pockets of city center residential development.

The site is located in the heart of Exeter, directly adjacent to Exeter Cathedral. The site is closely surrounded on three side by neighbouring properties, with the front facade facing Cathedral Yard.

The building itself is made up on five buildings which over time have been consolidated into the hotel. However, the front facade did not change and still had the appearance of individual units.





## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT

### 2.2 Context

Exeter has a rich history which is augmented through the variety of architectural styles throughout the city. Original building structures which have survived have been preserved and are nestled quaintly between more modern structures.

There are also examples of contemporary architecture, most notable is the John Lewis and Princesshay Shopping Center.

The careful use of materials creates an architectural time-line throughout the city and demonstrates how Exeter has developed over time.



Source: <https://www.devonlive.com/whats-on/shopping/dogs-allowed-john-lewis-exeter-3131129>



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exeter\\_Guildhall](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exeter_Guildhall)



Source: <https://www.realla.co.uk/details/11983748>



Source: <https://www.devonlive.com/news/business/businesslive-your-new-online-home-2915381>



## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT

### 2.3 The Site

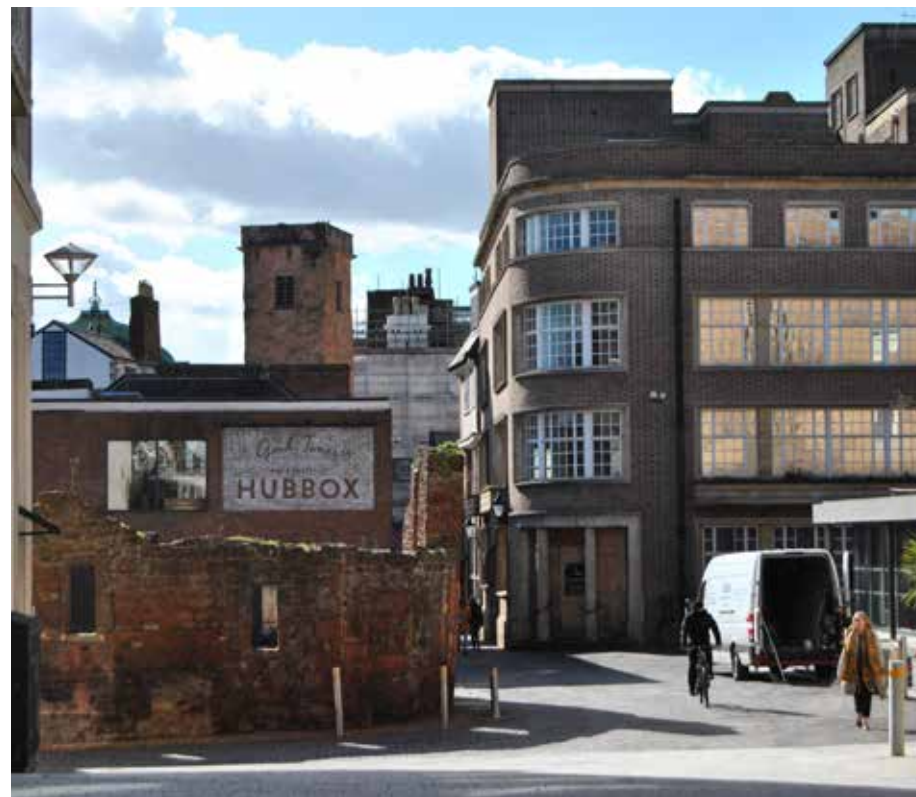
Royal Clarence is located on the corner of Cathedral Yard and Martins Lane. The remaining two side of the site are flanked with buildings and narrow alleys. Royal Clarence holds a prominent location within Cathedral Green as it sits centrally to key views from Cathedral Close and Catherine Street.



Source: Avalon Planning and Heritage (March 2021)



Source: Avalon Planning and Heritage (March 2021)



Source: Avalon Planning and Heritage (March 2021)



Source: Avalon Planning and Heritage (March 2021)



## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT

### 2.4 Existing Building

#### Key dates

- Historic planning applications prior to fire

There have been many applications since 1985, most relate to changes in signage and illuminated signage required for the business. There have also been a few applications for minor internal and external alterations to enable the changes in tenant requirements

- Fire - 28th Oct 2016
- LBC for demolition - May 2017  
*Retrospective application for post fire partial demolition works and stabilisation of remaining historic building fabric.* 17/0783/LBC
- Planning application and LBC - approved 5th Dec 2017  
*'Reconstruction and extension of building (including partial demolition and repair of remaining building fabric) following extensive fire damage to create 74 bedroom hotel'*  
Ref. No: 17/1360/FUL, 17/1361/LBC



Source: <https://www.exploringexeter.co.uk/history-exeter-royal-clarence-hotel/>



Source: <https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/royal-clarence-hotel-owner-confirms-257172>



Source: Howard West/Alamy Stock Photo



Source: <https://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2019-08-06/owners-announce-heart-breaking-decision-to-sell-royal-clarence-hotel-in-exeter-after-devastating-fire>



Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/oct/29/exeter-fire-still-burning-asruptured-gas-main-fuels-flames>



Source: KTA Architects (November 2021)



## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT

### 2.5 Site Photographs

These photos highlight the poor condition the Royal Clarence is in. Large parts of it were destroyed during the fire and has been left open to the elements allowing it to fall into a further state of disrepair requiring urgent action to be taken to save the remaining structure.

These photos were taken by KTA Architects between November 2020 and April 2021.





## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT

### 2.6 Planning History Approved Application

#### Design concept

The concept for the hotel seeks to work with the fabric that has been saved from the fire, and contrast that with contemporary, new interventions. The design looked to retain, repair and expose the existing fabric where possible with the existing grain and identity of the five separate buildings. The hotel was to be reinstated and improved with additional rooms and more natural light was to be brought into the heart of the building. The proposal had to respond to the urban grain and embrace the setting and context.

(Royal Clarence Hotel Design and Access Statement, Buttress Architects, August 2017, Page 25)

#### Heritage approach

The facade has been designed to reinstate as much as possible of the building's original facade. It was judged that this was an appropriate response to the context. The extension needed to be careful and considerably designed in relation to the listed elements of the building. It should not be overbearing or dominating. The overall key design principles are summarised as follows.

##### Presence -

The facade of the building is part of the composition of buildings from different periods in history that form the setting for the Cathedral. The building commands a prominent position in Cathedral Green, however it is always respectful to the Cathedral.

##### Character -

The Royal Clarence hotel has had a presence on this site for hundreds of years and has evolved with the city of Exeter. The rebuilding of the hotel is an acknowledgement of the belief and resilience of the character of Exeter.

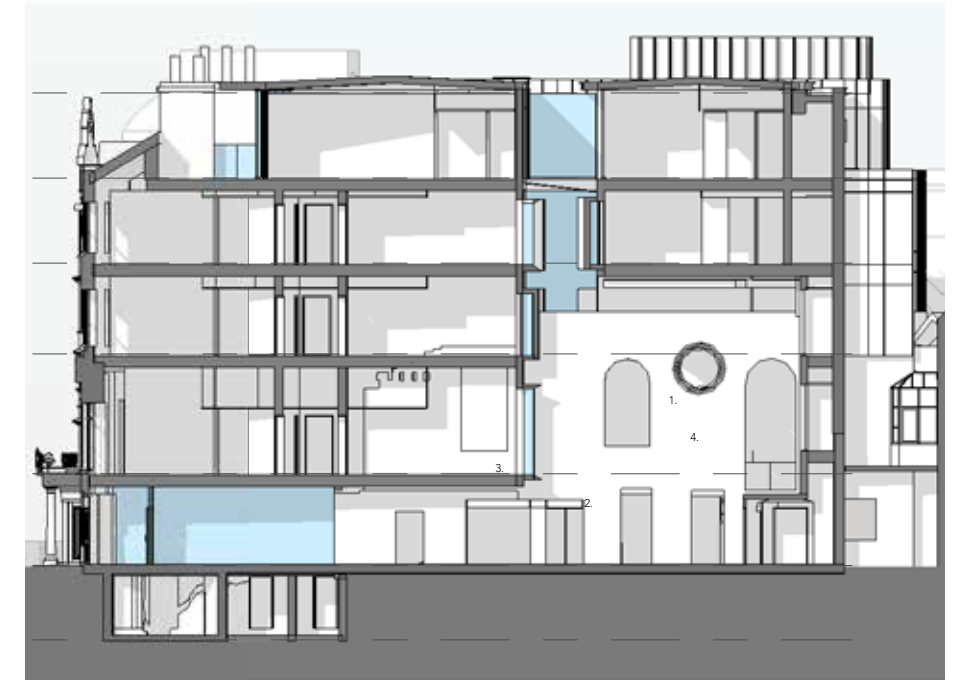
##### Identity -

The hotel facade and form are familiar and is part of the Royal Clarence's identity. The juxtaposition of old fabric and new will give the building a new identity.

##### Concept -

The interventions in the building should be rooted in the context and should not challenge or take away from the Cathedral. The idea that any extension to the building is set back so to have minimal impact on the roofscape and the context.

(Royal Clarence Hotel Design and Access Statement, Buttress Architects, August 2017, Page 38)



Source: Buttress Architects, 2017 Planning Application and Listed Building Consent

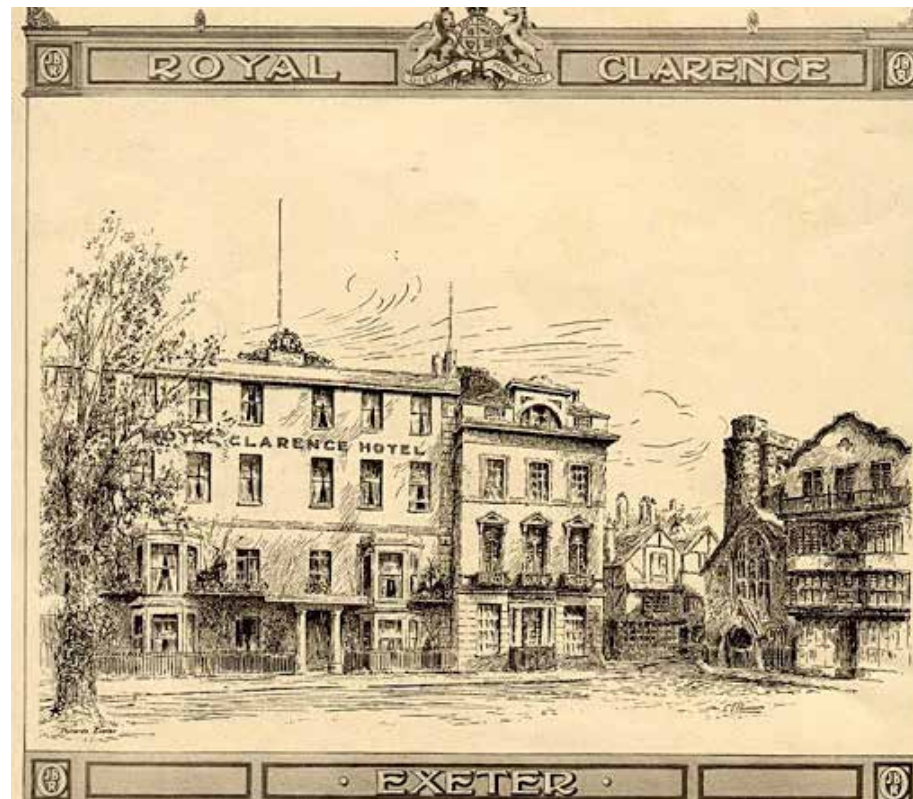


## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT

### 2.7 Heritage

The site is made up of five separate buildings, The Wellhouse, The Royal Clarence, The Exeter bank, Lamb Alley and 10 Martins Lane.

Although the units were all consolidated into the hotel, the external appearance remained relatively unchanged prior to the devastating fire in October 2016.



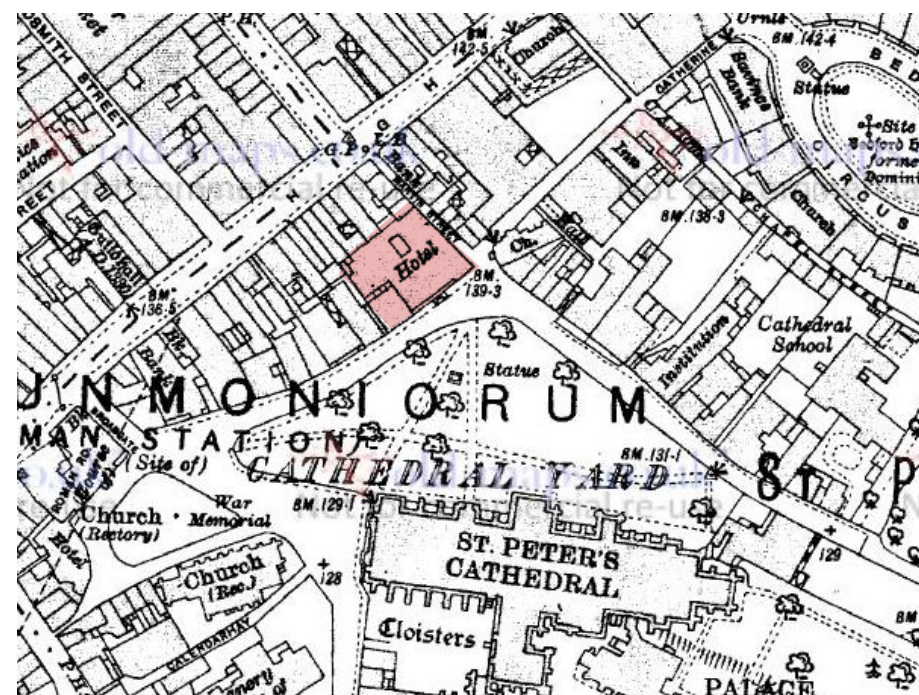
Source: [http://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/\\_pubs/royal\\_clarence.php](http://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/_pubs/royal_clarence.php)



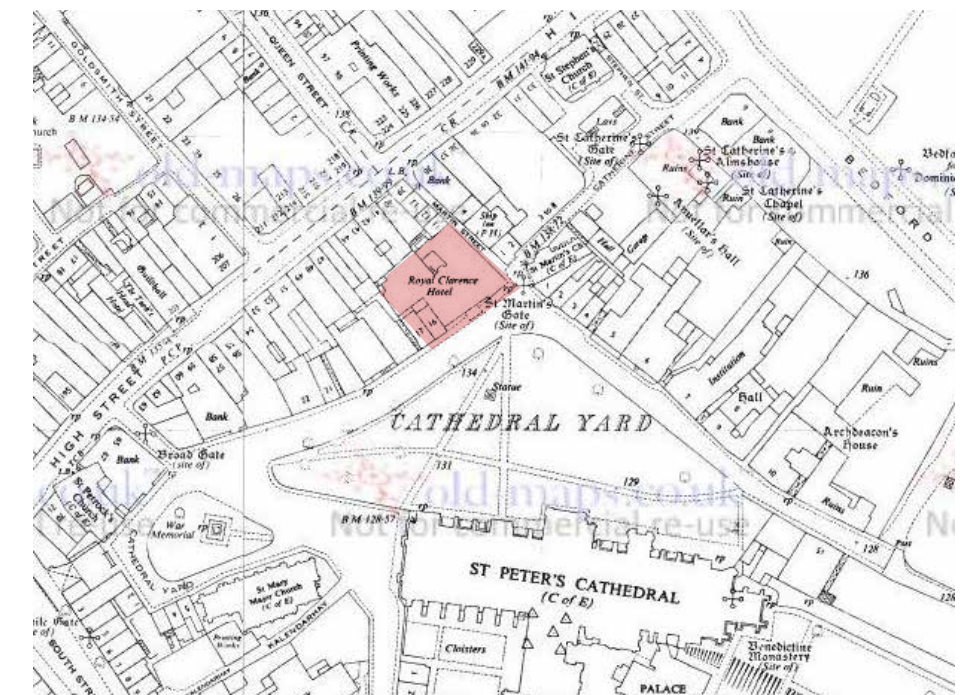
Source: <https://www.change.org/p/exeter-city-council-royal-clarence-hotel-and-local-fire-crews-for-exeter-city-christmas-lights-switch-on>



1880



1932



1966-73



## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT

### 2.8 Flood Risk

Royal Clarence is located 560m away from the River Exe and 470m away from the nearest flood zone. The site is not at risk of flooding. Which can be seen highlighted in the diagram on the right.



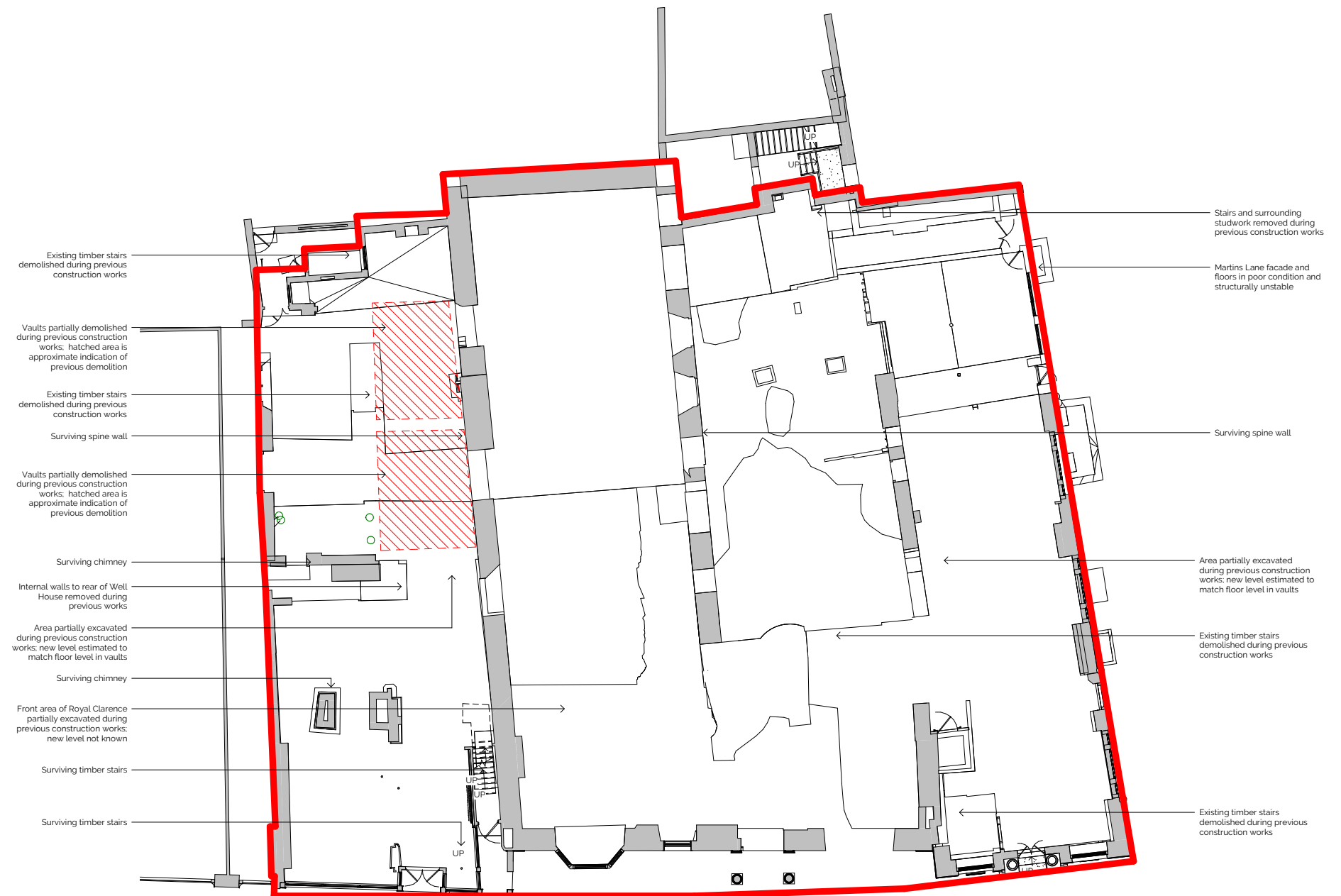
## 3.0 SITE ANALYSIS

### 3.1 The Site

Formerly a Hotel, the site has been vacant since the fire in October 2016.

Following the fire, little building fabric remained. The most significant features are the medieval spine walls which are shown in the adjacent drawing. The building fabric which is remaining has been exposed to the elements since 2016 and is deteriorating.

Some demolition took place during the previous construction works and is therefore not reflected in the current survey. Where possible, these works have been indicated on the existing drawings.

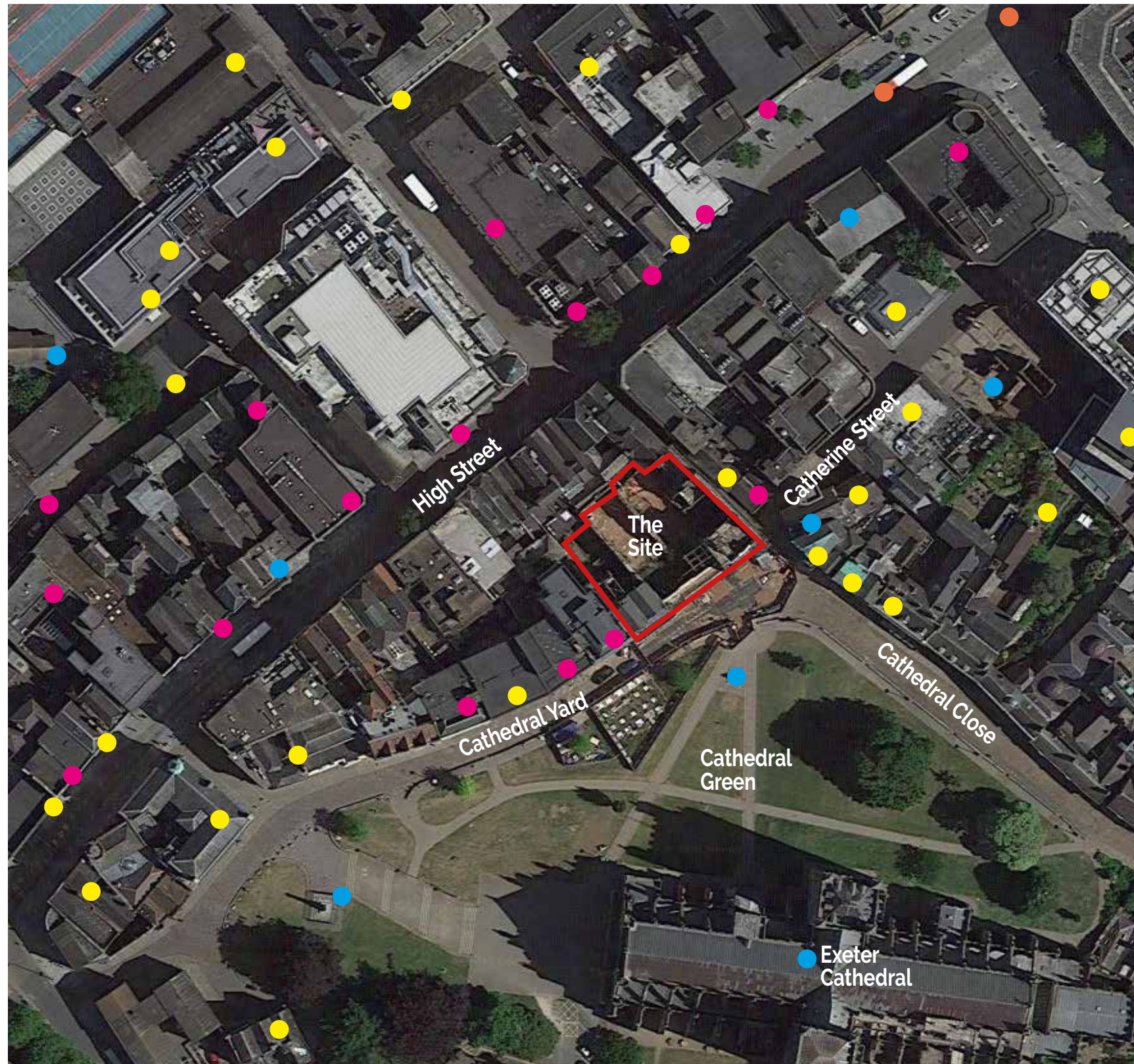


Existing Ground Floor Plan



# 3.0 SITE ANALYSIS

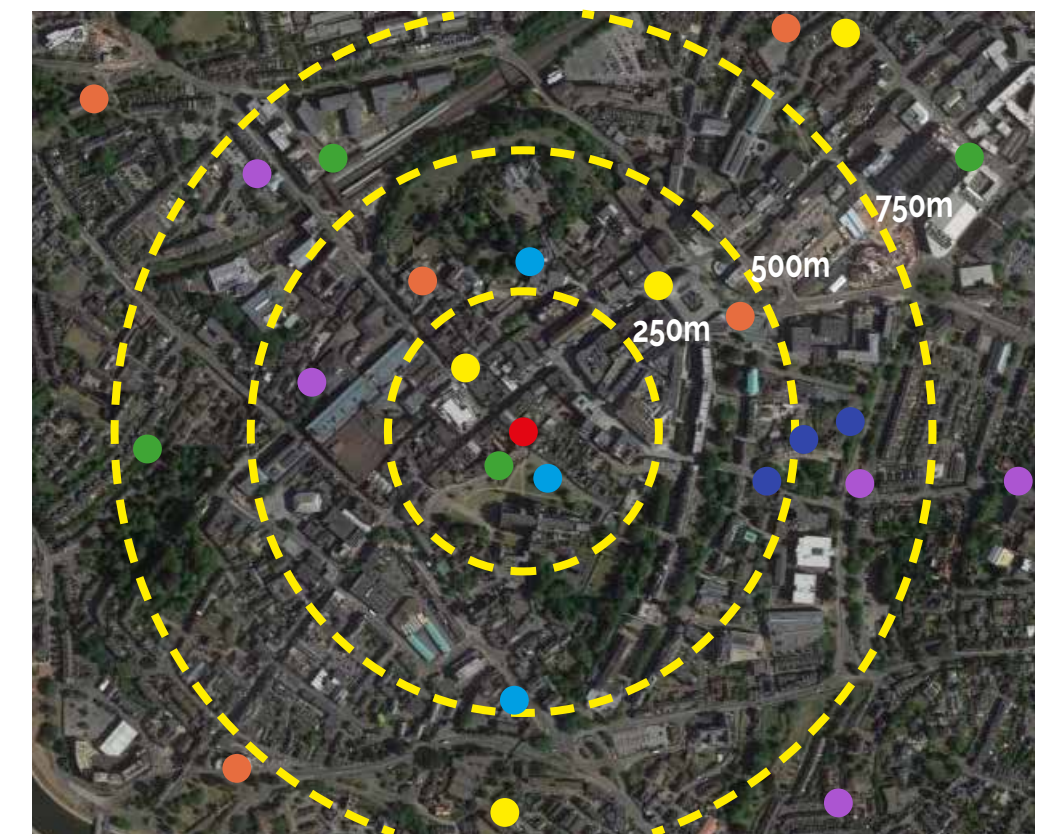
## 3.2 Context



Located in the city center and adjacent to the High Street, the site is surrounded by retail, hospitality and recreation units. These provide amenities for the proposed residential units. Local landmarks and heritage assets are also in close proximity to the Royal Clarence site. With this in mind, we have carefully considered the impact the proposal would have on the landmarks.

Across the city the residents have access to transport links, green spaces, medical and educational facilities.

- The Site
- Hospitality/Recreation
- Retail
- Landmark/Heritage POI
- Parkland
- Education
- Transport/Bus Stop
- Medical





## 3.0 SITE ANALYSIS

### 3.3 Structural Assessment

Following the approved planning application in Aug 2017 (17/1360/FUL) a large amount of work was undertaken on site including piling and laying of slab foundations for the new build elements.

X Consulting have undertaken a preliminary structural condition survey to ascertain the surviving structural elements with the Well House, Royal Clarence, Exeter Bank and Martins Lane buildings.

Almost all the timber work, including structural beams and floors, is heavily saturated due to constant exposure to the elements. With little chance to cyclically dry, it has caused the timber to rot and decay resulting in structural bearing end issues and mould growth. All the timber is inadequate for structural purposes and is recommended to be removed.

Much of the steelwork has corroded due to exposure to the elements. In some cases remedial works could be undertaken to salvage the steelwork, but in many cases the structure is no longer fit for purpose and is recommended for removal.

Many of the chimneys are unstable and unsafe. Due to the extent of works needed to stabilise the structures and the risk they pose to public safety, it is recommended they are removed either in part or as a whole.



Source: Extract from initial structural survey inspection report

## 3.4 Heritage Assessment

After the fire in Oct 2016 extensive clearance, re-mediation and stabilisation work was undertaken to make the building safe.

An extensive 'Post-clearance phase historic building record' was undertaken by AC Archaeology in Aug 2017. This was included in the planning application in Aug 2017 (17/1360/FUL).

There has been significant deterioration to the building since this survey was undertaken, especially to timber elements which have been exposed to the weather for over 4 years.

An updated Heritage Statement by AC Archaeology has been included in the application to support the current application.

The images adjacent were presented during the previous planning application.



Source: KTA Architects (April 2021)



Source: KTA Architects (April 2021)



## 4.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### 4.1 Pre-App

A Pre Planning Application was submitted in Spring 2021 to gauge responses to the initial proposal for Royal Clarence.

Generally comments were made regarding the mass of the proposal and the additional floors above the rebuilt facade. In response, the team looked at a series of design options to deliver a viable scheme whilst reducing the impact of any additional mass.

### 4.2 Co-Ownership

The design team worked closely with Exeter City Council members and Historic England to deliver a co-owned design solution to the Royal Clarence site. Design workshops were held over a series of weeks where primary aims were discussed and potential designs were explored.

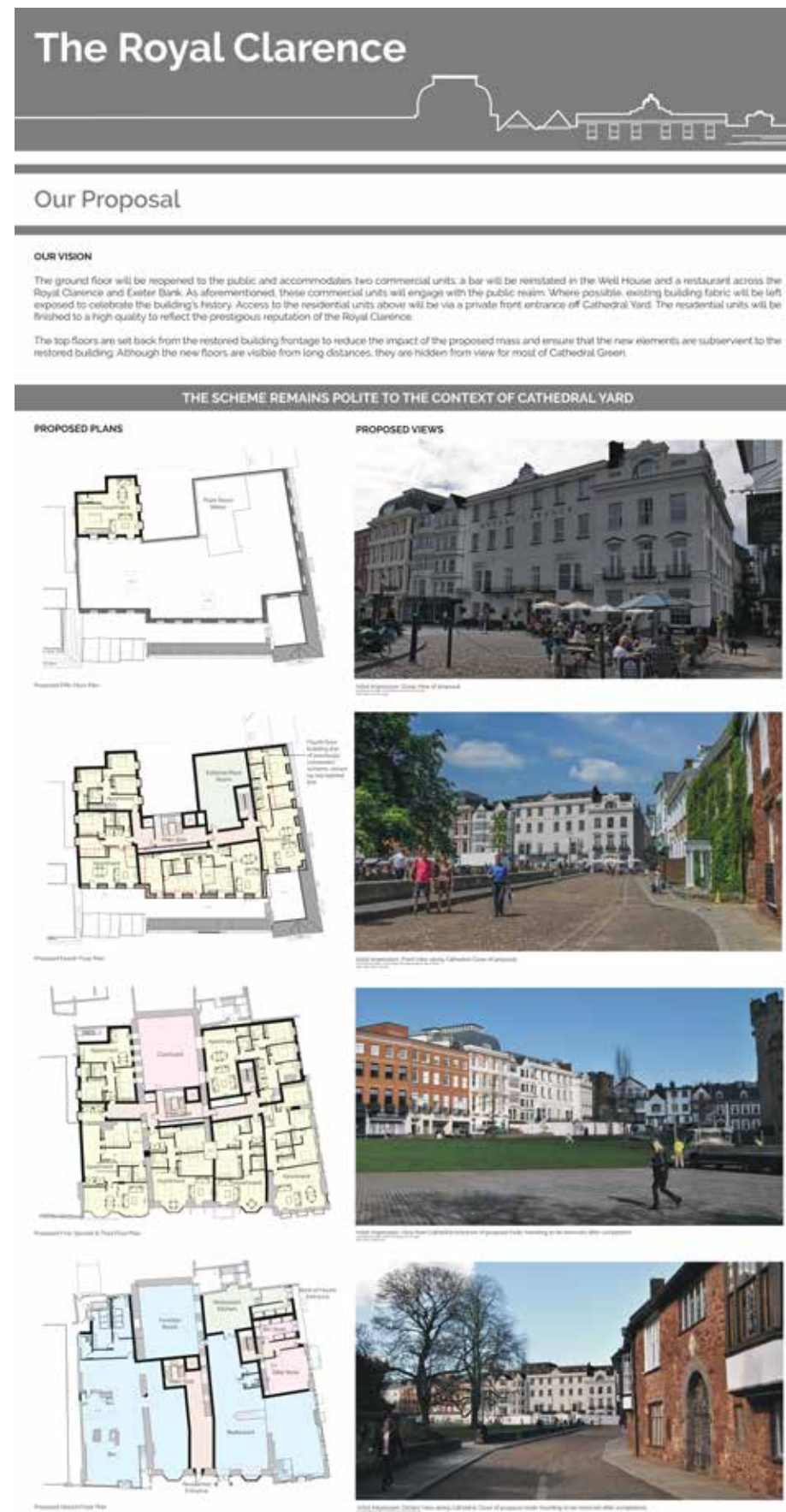
The outcome of these workshops was a collaborative design which fulfilled the primary aims of everyone involved.

### 4.3 Public Engagement

A number of stakeholders were consulted during the design development process, including council members, local historians and Historic England. Any feedback provided was taken on board to ensure the design would benefit the whole community of Exeter.

A public consultation was held in December 2021 both online and in person via a 2 day consultation event. During the public consultation, a total of 2,897 people visited the Royal Clarence Community Consultation webpage during the three-week period of the consultation, generating 3,810 page views. A further 41 people attended the two-day public exhibition. A total of 174 people have completed Feedback Forms to share their views about the proposals.

This activity has generated clear feedback, including many positive comments about the scheme, as well as raising some of the key concerns, most notably around the loss of a hotel on the site, the extended roof height, the style of the fifth floor roof design, the front door design, parking and access, heritage elements and access to the local community. The team has responded to these comments, either through written responses and amending the proposed design.



Source: DCA Public Relations (December 2021)



Source (Above): DCA Public Relations (December 2021)

Source (Left): KTA Architects Public Consultation Board



## 4.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

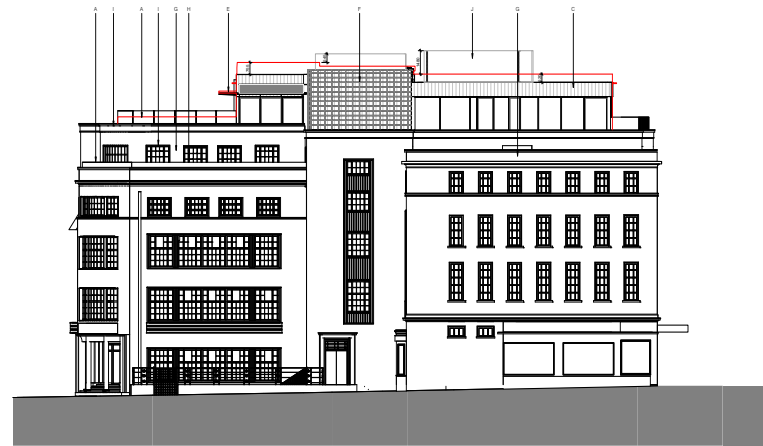
### 4.4 Contextual Precedents

#### House of Fraser

Changes have been proposed to redevelop the House of Fraser building in Exeter into a luxury hotel, shops, a bar and restaurant. House of Fraser is located in the urban block directly adjacent to Royal Clarence.

Retail units at street level will remain, as does a rooftop bar, while internal layout changes have been made to the configuration of the hotel's bedrooms on floors one to four.

A rooftop bar will have views over Exeter Cathedral in one direction, St Stephen's Church on the other side and will feature a contemporary 360-degree glass restaurant and rooftop bar with terraces.



Source: Expedite, Planning Application 2020



Source: Expedite, Planning Application 2020



Source: <https://www.bellair.co.uk/house-of-fraser-exeter/>



## 4.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### 4.4 Contextual Precedents

#### 18 Cathedral Yard

The building directly adjacent to the Well House was also devastated in the fire of October 2016. A planning application to reinstate the building facade with apartments inside was approved in May 2017.

The application sought to retain the original, mostly surviving facade and build new apartments behind



Source: <https://www.movehut.co.uk/property/488164--ground-floor-18-cathedral-yard-exeter-devon-ex1-1hb/>



Source: <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/5626146>



Source: Avalon Planning and Heritage (March 2021)



# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.1 Use

At ground floor, the food and beverage units will be reinstated, including the Well House Pub.

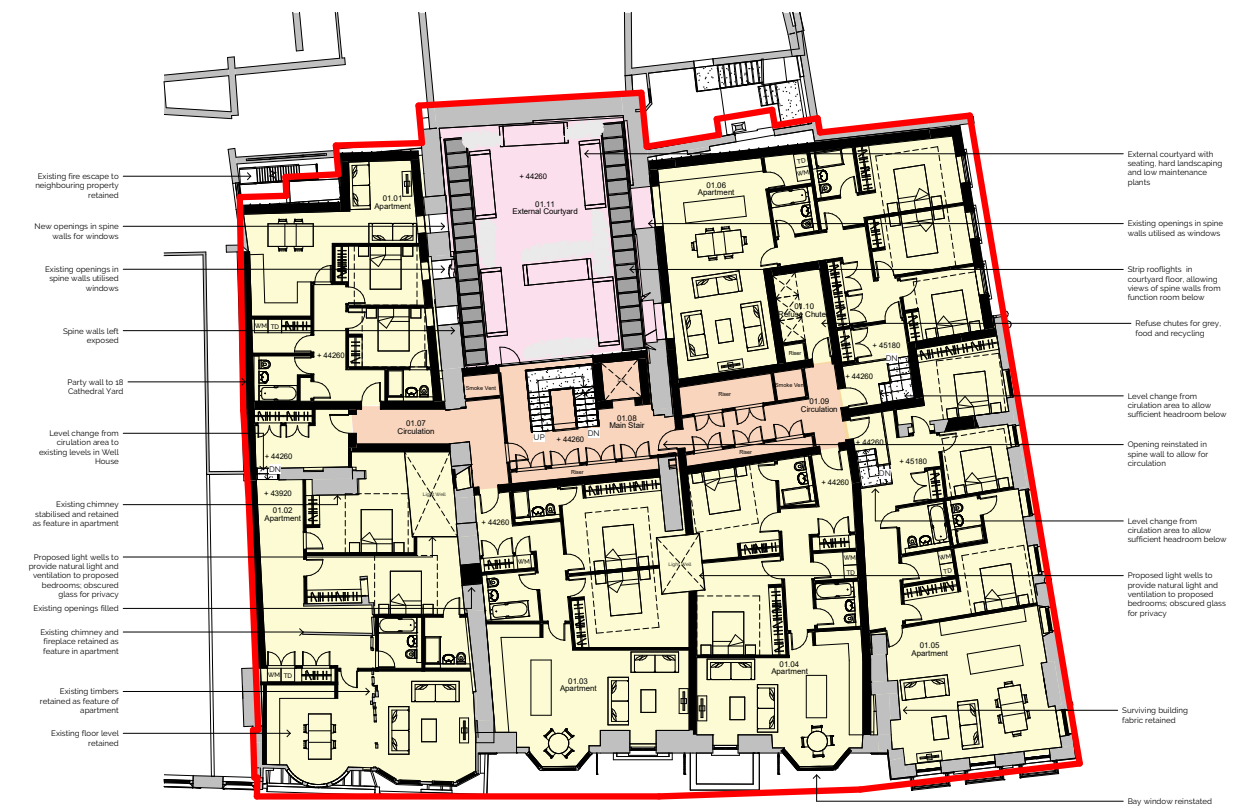
From first floor, 23 residential units are proposed.

- Food and Beverage
- Residential circulation
- Residential Amenities
- Apartments

Ground Floor



First Floor





# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.2 Amount

### Commercial:

Two commercial units are proposed with additional space for function rooms, WCs, kitchen, bin store, cellar storage.

The Well House Pub is 236sqm excluding additional storage and WCs

The Restaurant is 215sqm excluding additional storage and WCs, function rooms and Back of House accommodation.

### Residential:

A total of 23 residential units are proposed from first floor. Of these, 3 units are duplexes, with accommodation split across two floors.

There are 15 no. 2 bed units and 8 no. 3 bed units. The smallest unit is 70sqm and the largest is 125sqm.

## 5.3 Access

### Commercial:

Public access to both commercial units is at the front of the building along Cathedral Yard, as it was before the fire in 2016. Back of House access is to the rear of the build along Martins Lane.

Access to the vaults in the basement is via a rear door in the Well House Pub and stairs which will be rebuilt. This is highlighted in blue in the adjacent ground floor plan.

### Residential:

Residents have a designated entrance to the front of the building, off Cathedral Yard. This leads to a central stair and lift core which runs vertically up the building to the fourth floor. All residential units are accessed from the central circulation space, highlighted in orange in the adjacent images. Accommodation on the first floor mezzanine and fifth floor is accessed from within the duplex units.

The bin and bike store is accessed from Martins Lane.

Ground Floor

First Floor

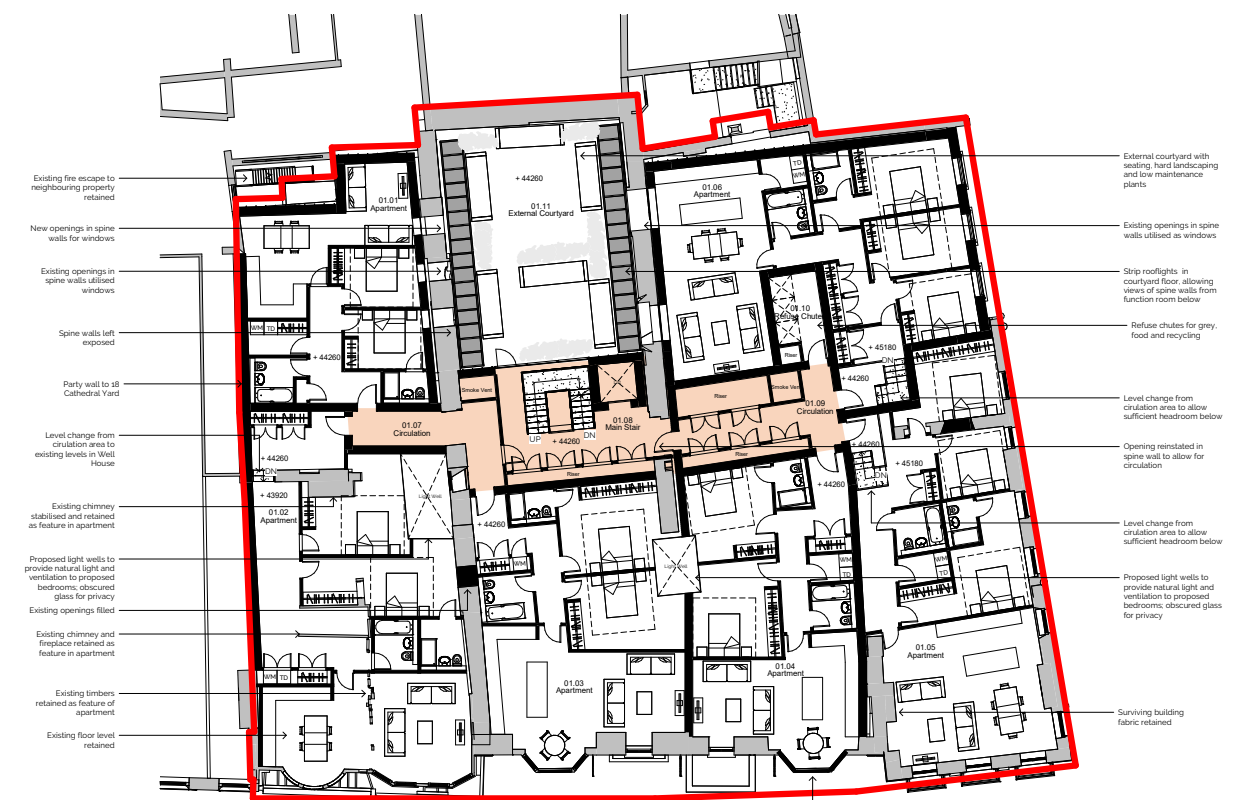
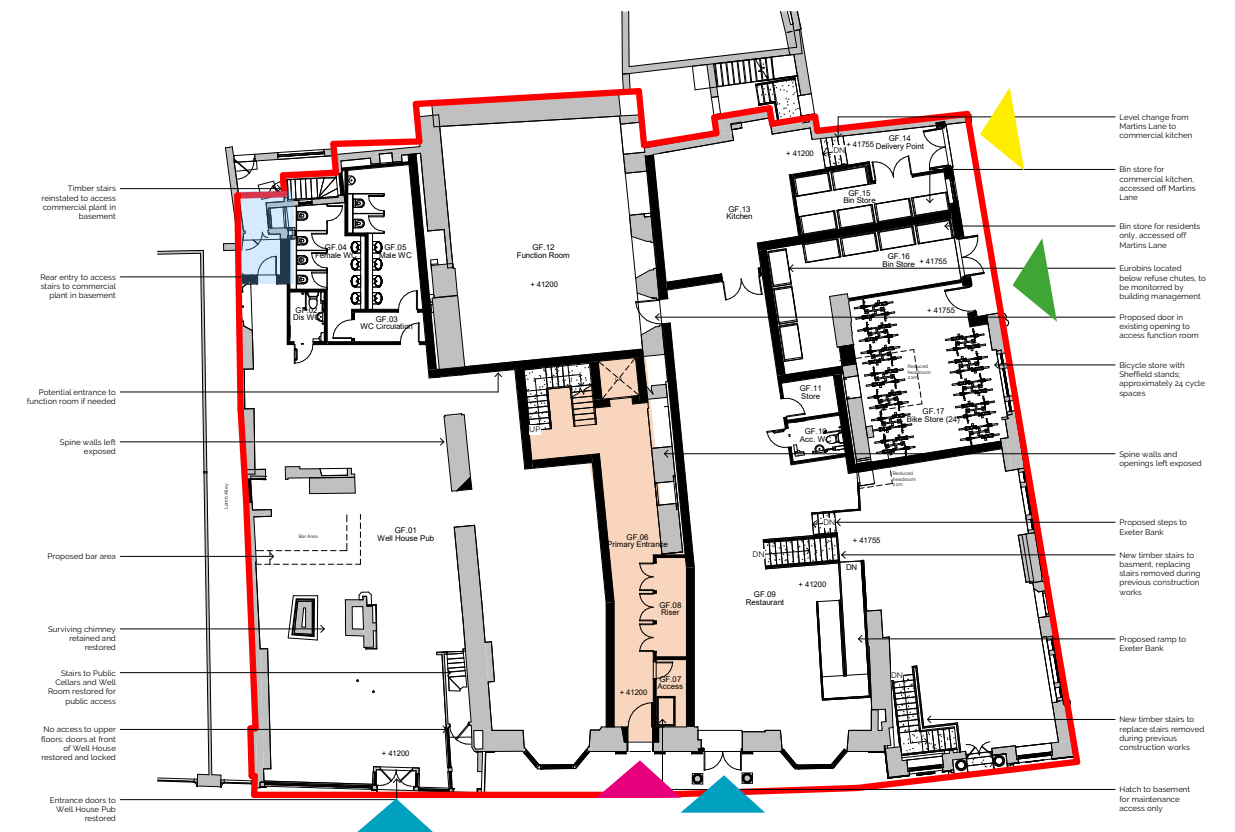
### KEY:

Front of House Commercial

Back of House Commercial

Main Residential

Back of House Residential





# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.4 Layout

The proposal looks to retain as much of the surviving building as possible. Most notably, the existing medieval spine walls are being retained and used as natural divide between commercial and residential units.

Residential units to the front of the site have a view over Cathedral Green and towards Exeter Cathedral itself. Residential units to the rear has views into the external courtyard, located at the center of the site. This courtyard is open and exposed to the elements.

Ground Floor



First Floor



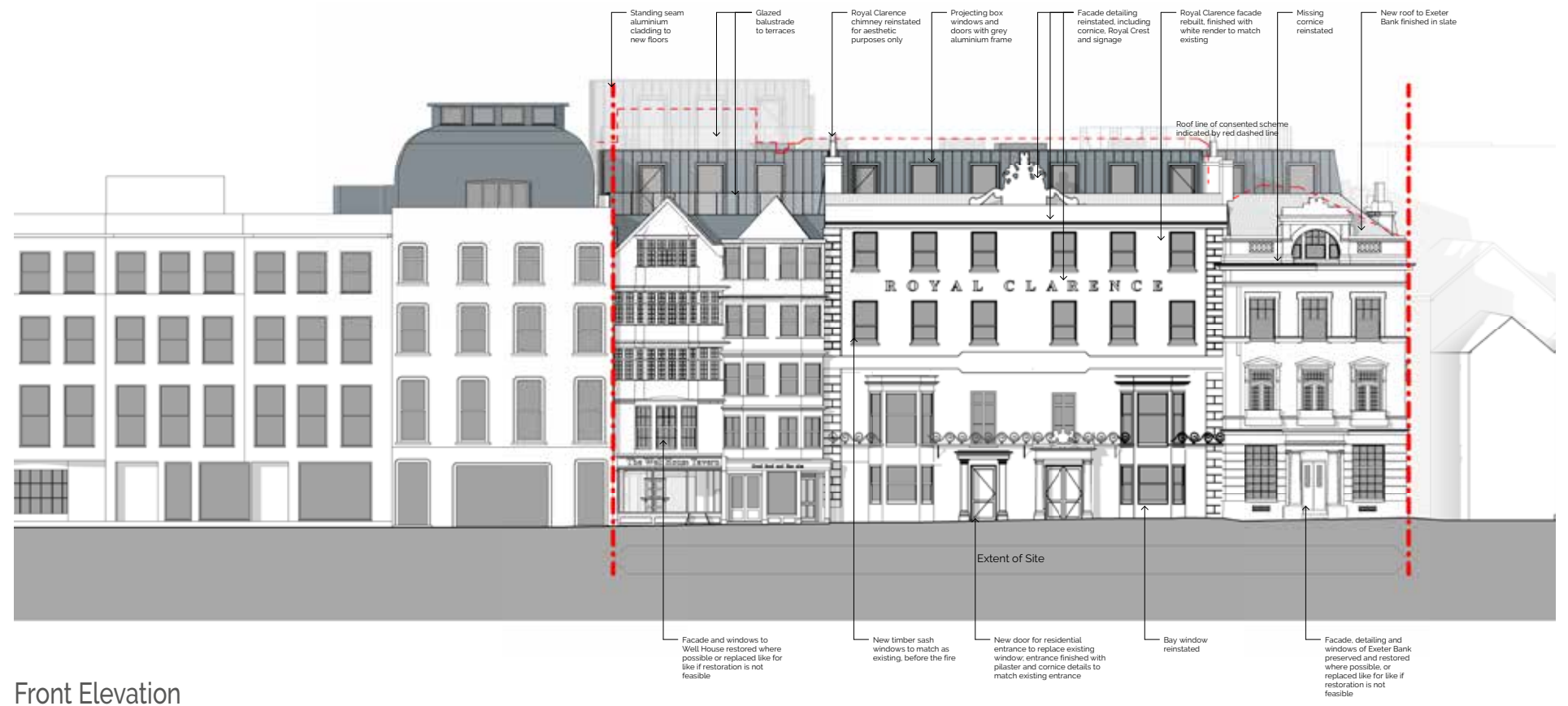


# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

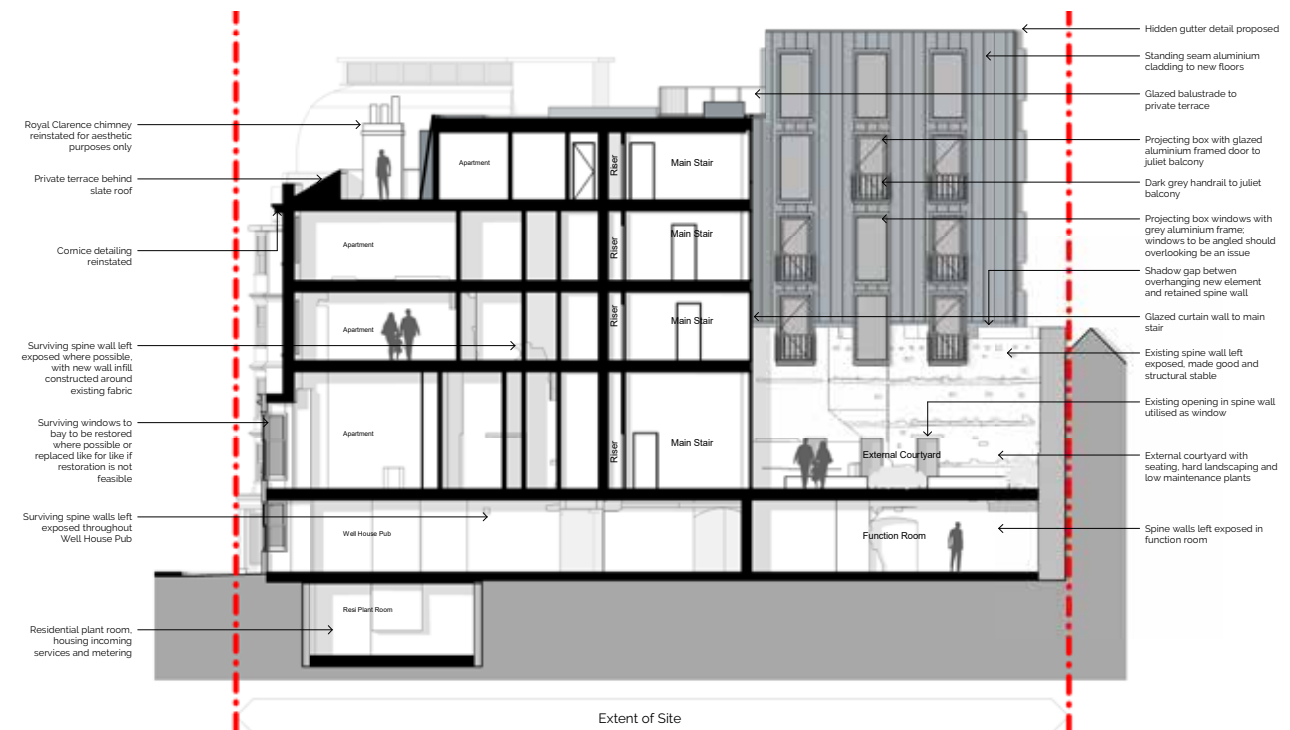
## 5.5 Massing and Scale

Comments were made during the Pre Planning Application regarding the mass on the additional floors above the rebuilt facade. In response, the scale of the fifth floor has been reduced and the entire extension set back so most of the mass sits within the approved scheme.

The architectural language and size of the additional floors responds directly to the domed roof adjacent to the site. By setting back the floors, their impact against the rebuilt Royal Clarence facade is significantly reduced.



Front Elevation



Section through proposal and courtyard



# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.6 Bike and Bin Storage

Highlighted on the proposed ground floor plan shows provision provided for Bin and Bike Store. A separate bin store is provided for the commercial restaurant.

Residents have access to refuse chutes on each floor which will deposit household waste into the ground floor bin store. Three chutes are provided to sufficiently accommodate all apartments. Chutes will be monitored by building management.

All these back of house areas are accessed off Martins Lane. Refuse will be collected via the High Street, as before.

- Commercial Bin Store
- Residential Bin Store
- Bike Store



Ground Floor

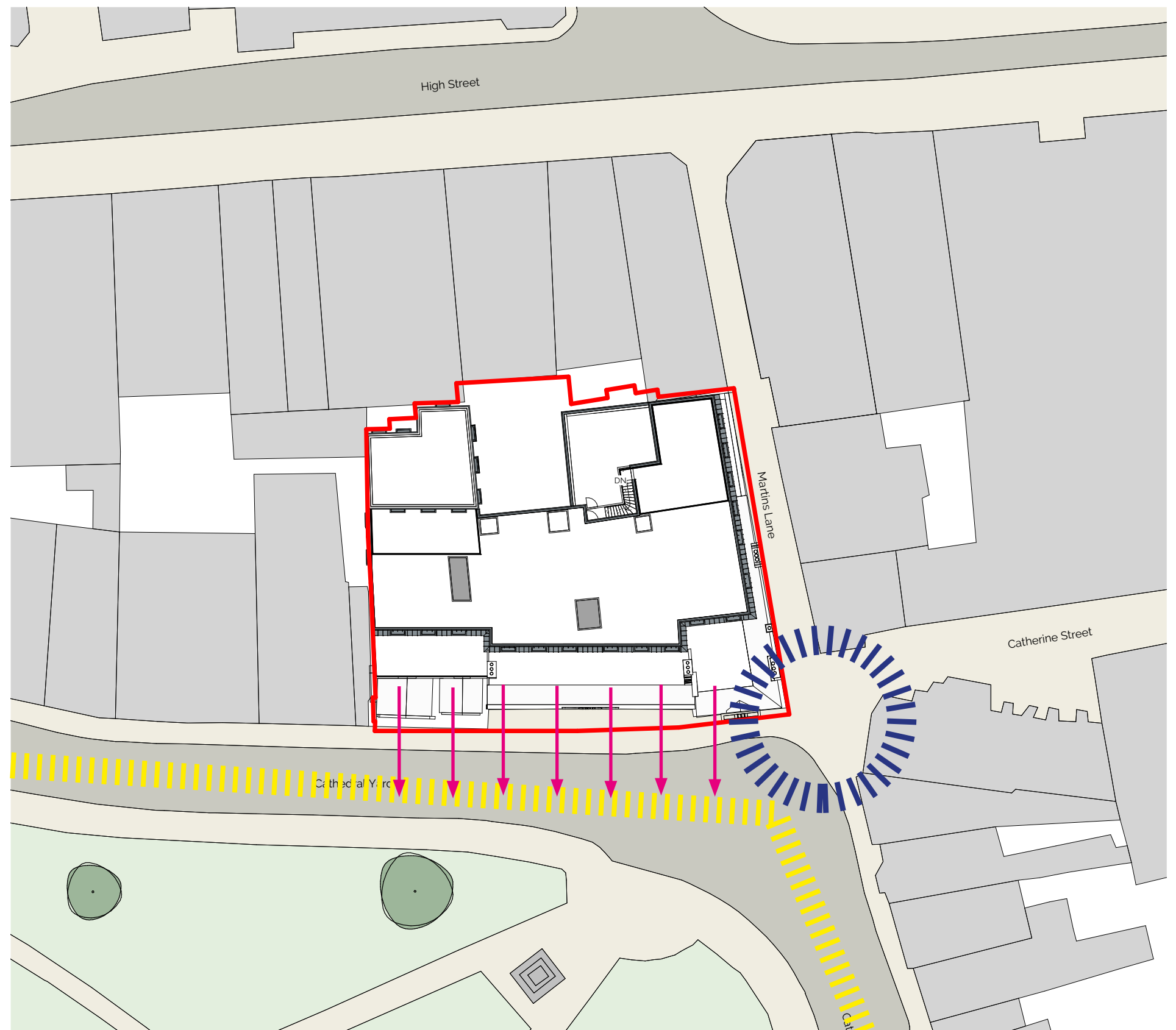


## 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

### 5.7 Active Frontage

Reinstating the Pub and Restaurant on the ground floor with help the site engage with the public realm adjacent. The will reinvigorate an active frontage along Cathedral Green and restore the area as it was before.

The intersection of Martins Lane and Catherine Street as become a congestion point due to the current scaffolding and hoarding. By reinstating the Restaurant, this key nodal point will be restored and any ongoing congestion removed.



Proposed Site Plan



# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.8 Public and Private

This adjacent drawings highlights the difference between public and private spaces within the proposed ground floor of the development. All public spaces have been positioned to the front of the site for primary view and easy access.

All residential floors are private and can only be accessed by the owners of the apartments.

Public ■  
Private ■



Ground Floor



## 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

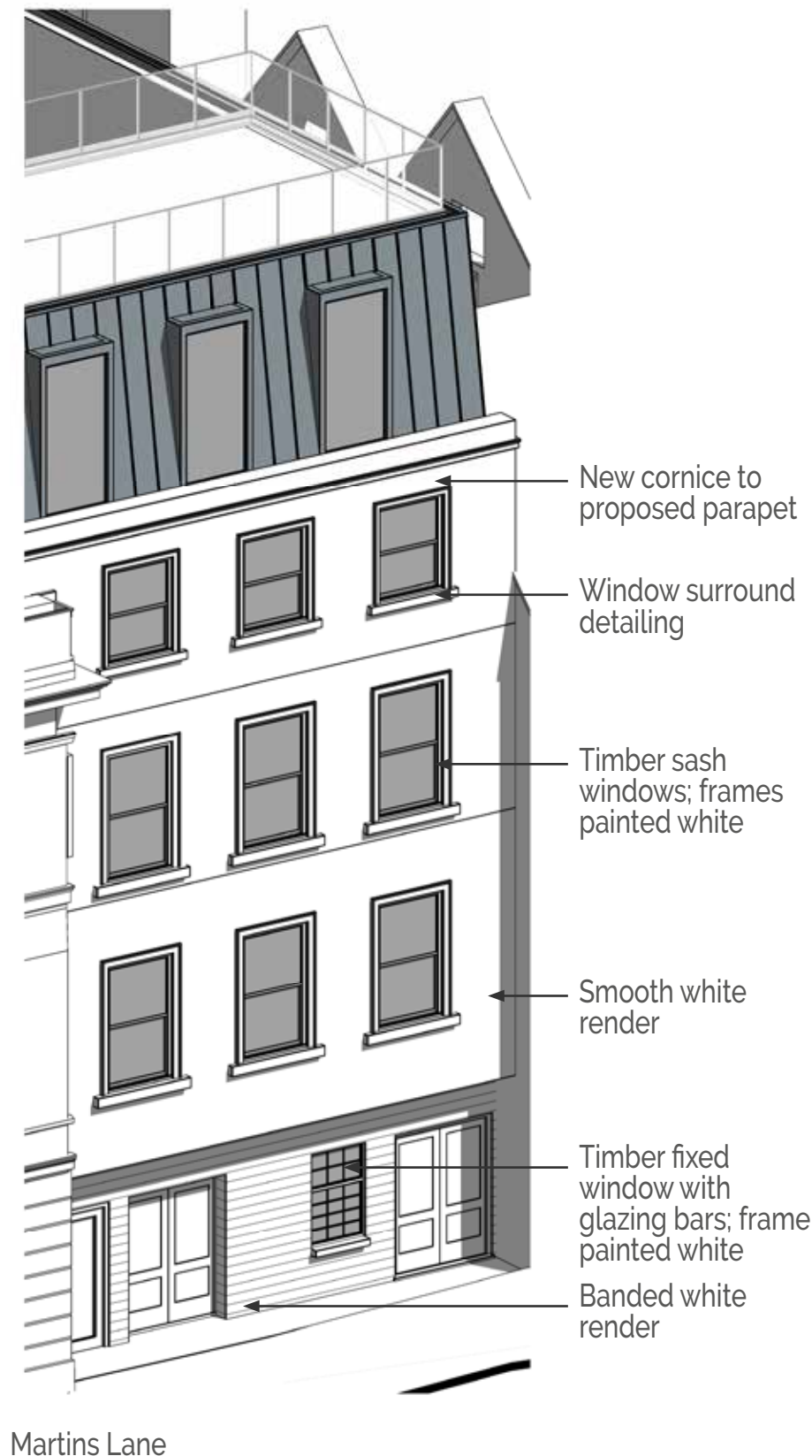
### 5.9 Appearance and Materiality

The design proposal has three primary elements:

1. The rebuilt Royal Clarence facade and restored Well House and Exeter Bank are to look as they were before the fire in 2016. The choice of materials will be compatible and will match the existing. Where possible, insulated render will be used to improve thermal performance of the building, whilst ensuring the external aesthetics are not compromised.

2. The additional floor will appear contemporary in style and finish, to clearly distinguish between 'old' and new elements. The simple finish will contrast with the decorative frames and cornices on the rebuilt facade. This is achieved by proposing hidden gutters, projecting box windows with aluminium frames and frameless glazed balustrades. The dark grey standing seam aluminium cladding directly contrasts with the light render and give the appearance on a roof.

3. The lone unit on Martins Lane will have to rebuilt due to the poor condition of what is existing. The new facade will be clearly new but the architectural language used will communicate with the neighbouring Exeter Bank. The facade will be finished in render and feature simple detailing such as relief around the frames, cills and cornices.



Foamstone cornice or similar; colour to match facade render



Foamstone window surround or similar; colour to match facade



White timber sash window with no glazing bars



Smooth white render to facade



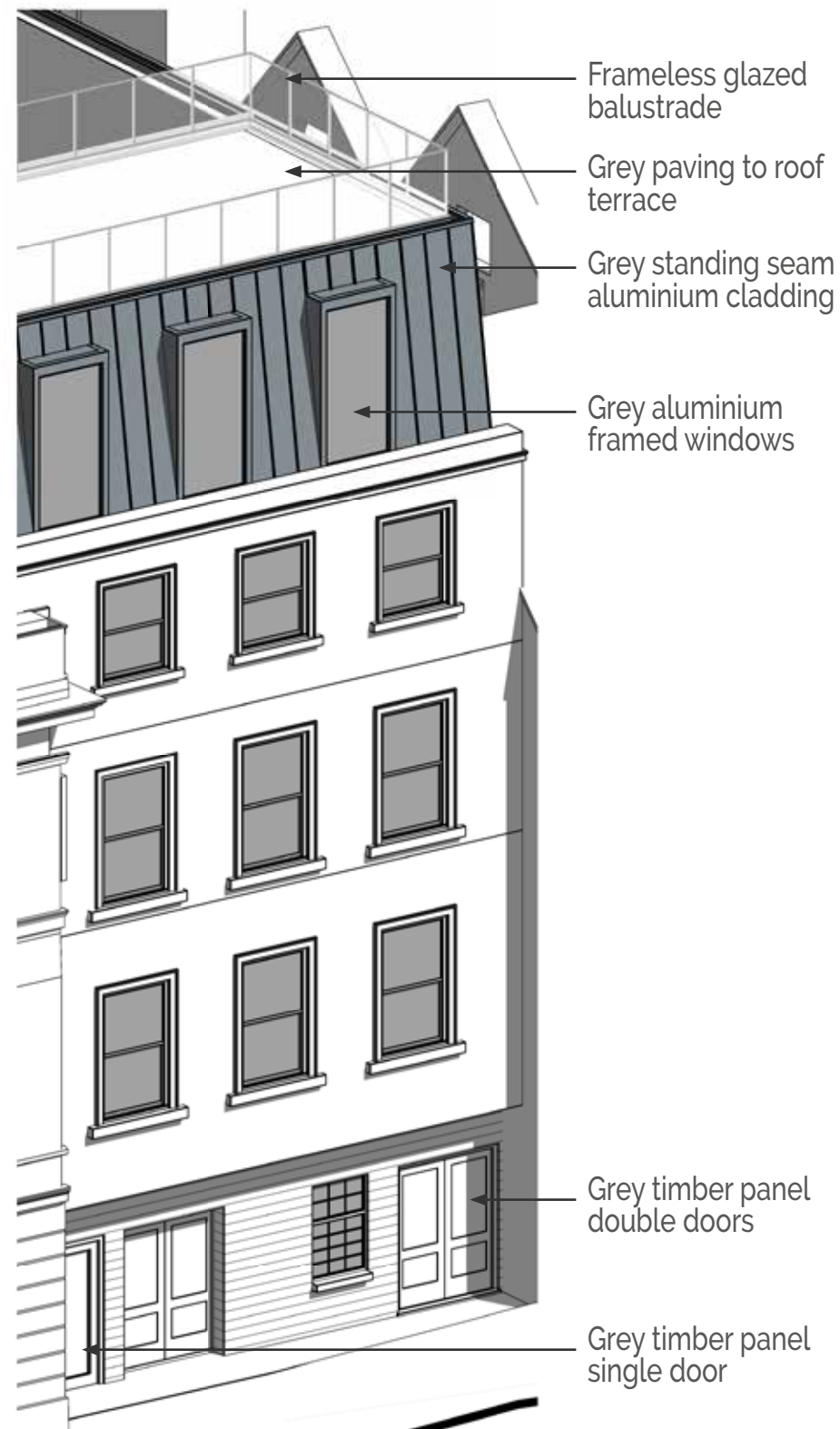
White fixed window with glazing bars



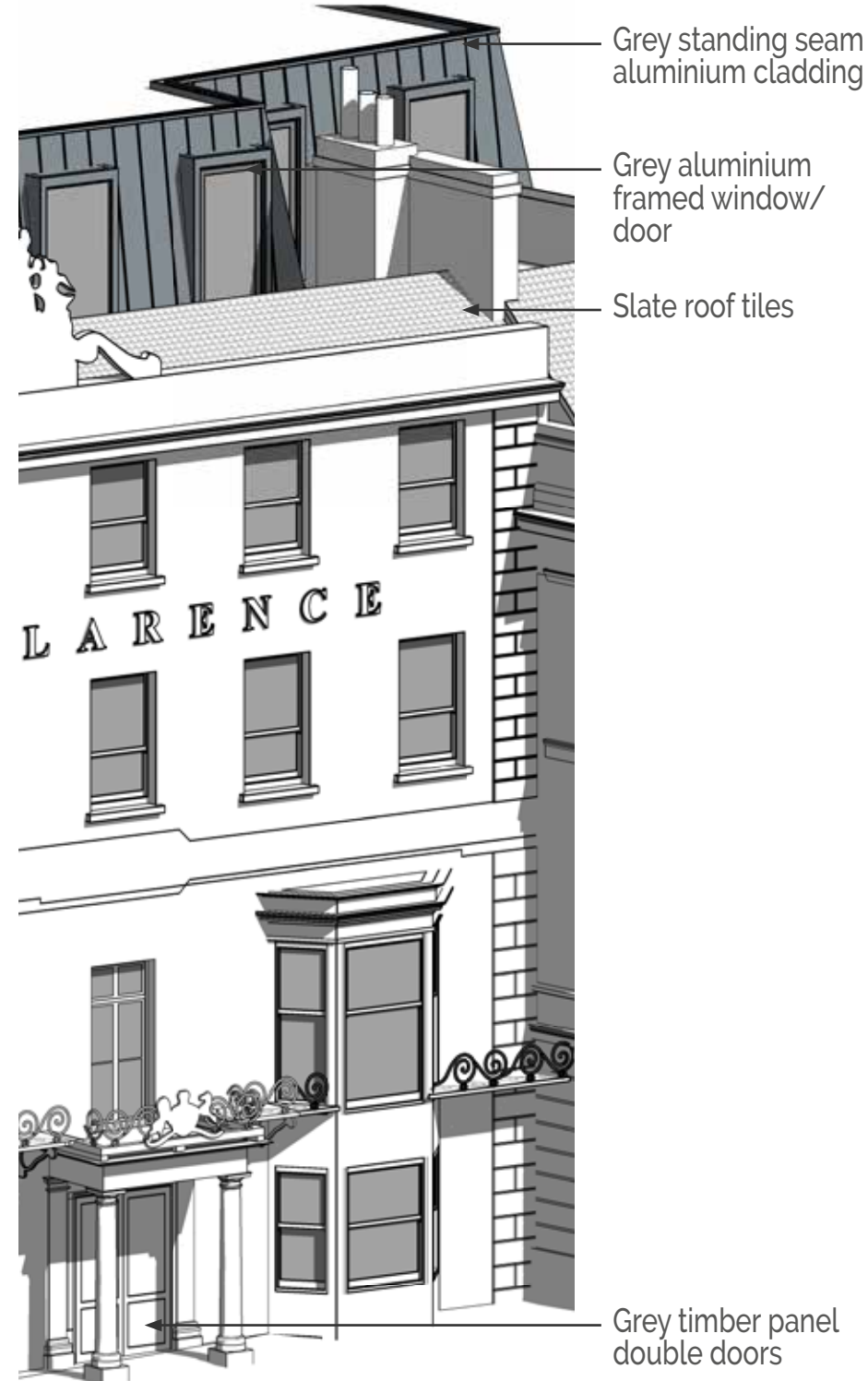
Banded white render to facade



## 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL



Martins Lane



Frameless glazed balustrade



Paving to roof terrace; Marshalls symphony grey or similar



Standing seam aluminium cladding RAL7012



RAL7016 aluminium full height windows

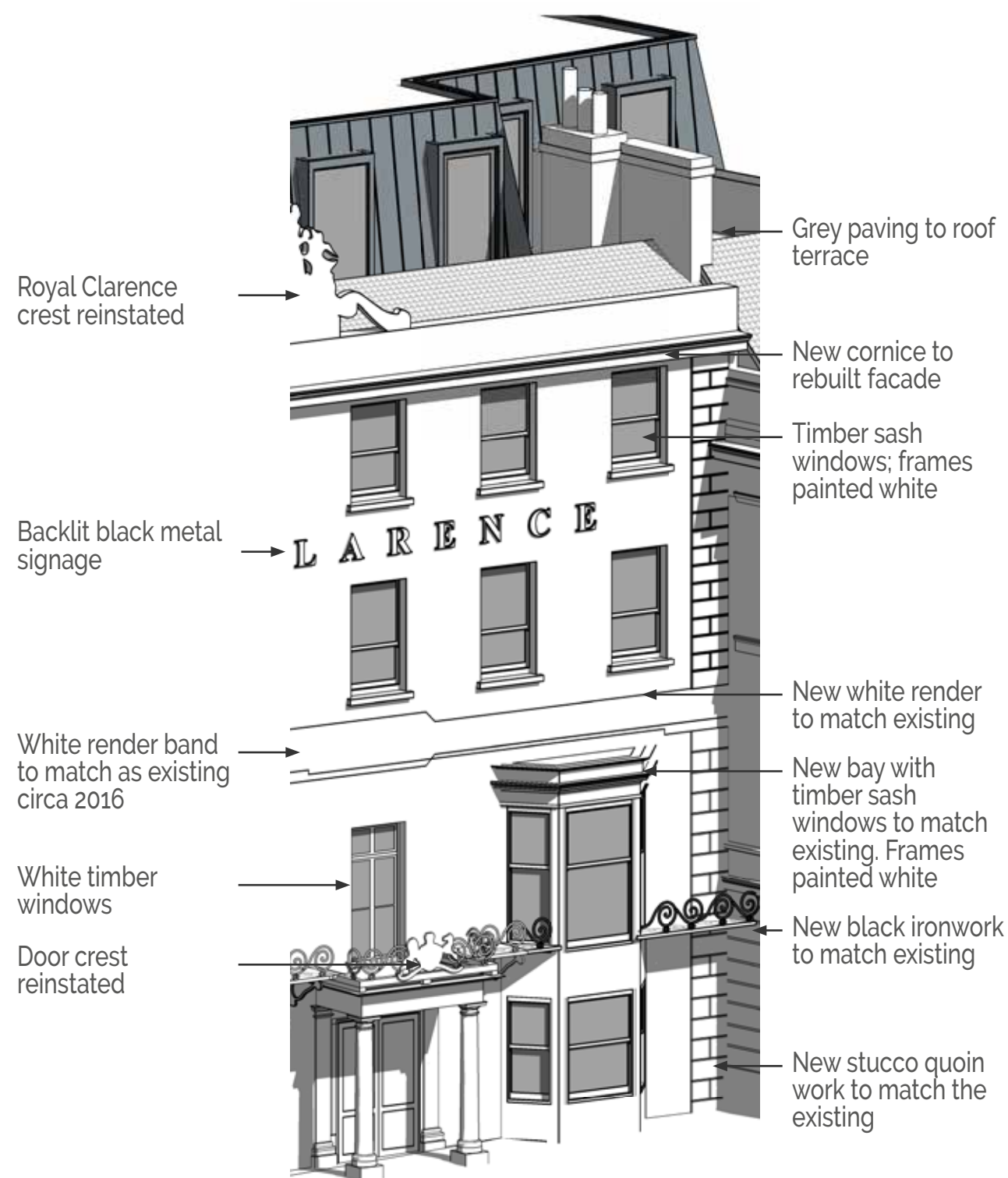


RAL7016 timber composite panel doors



Slate roof tiles





Royal Clarence crest reinstated



Paving to roof terrace; Marshalls symphony grey or similar



Foamstone cornice or similar; colour to match facade render



White render band



White timber sash window with no glazing bars; black cills



White bay timber sash window with no glazing bars



White timber windows



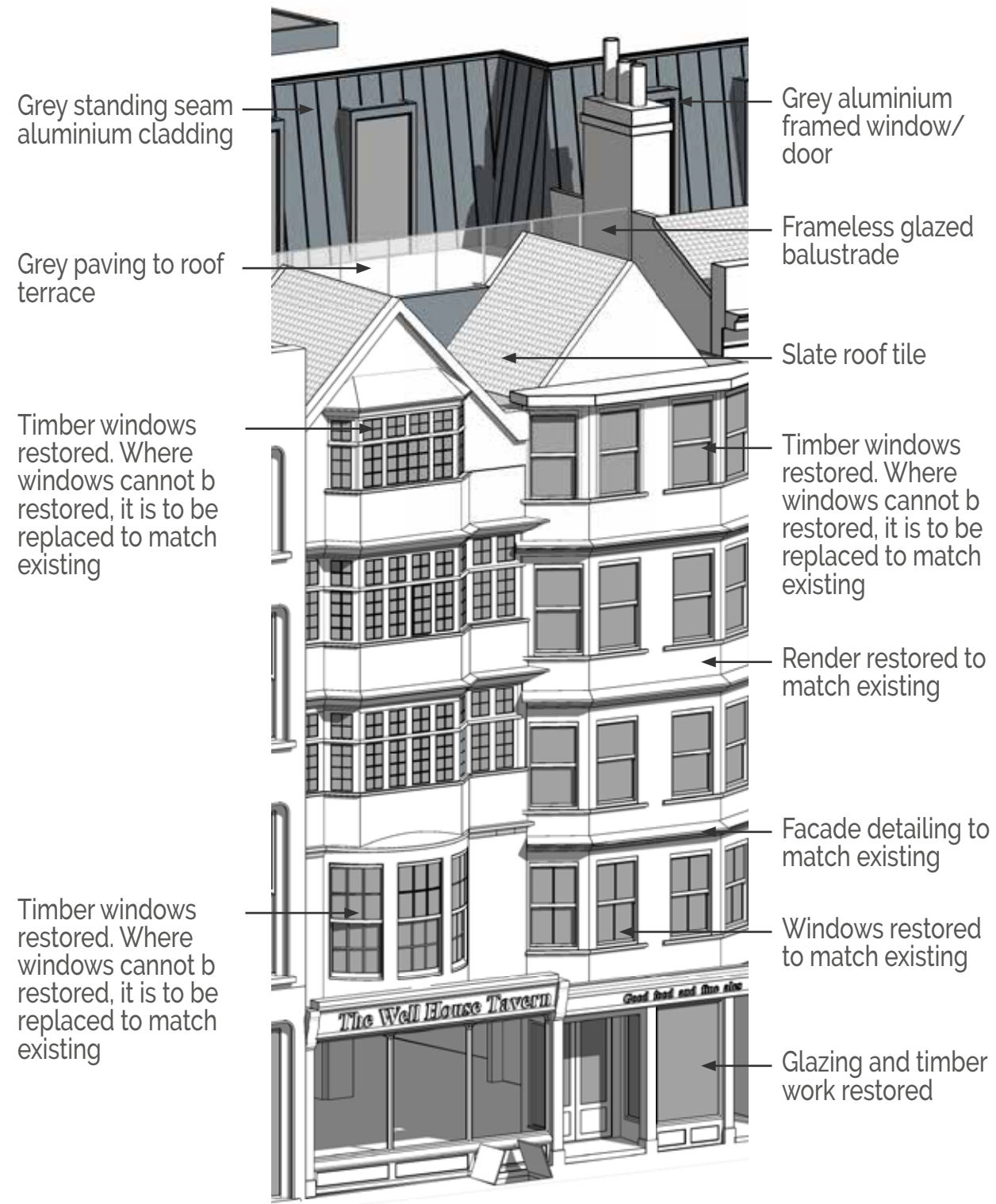
Black ironwork to match existing



White stucco quoin work to match the existing



## 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL



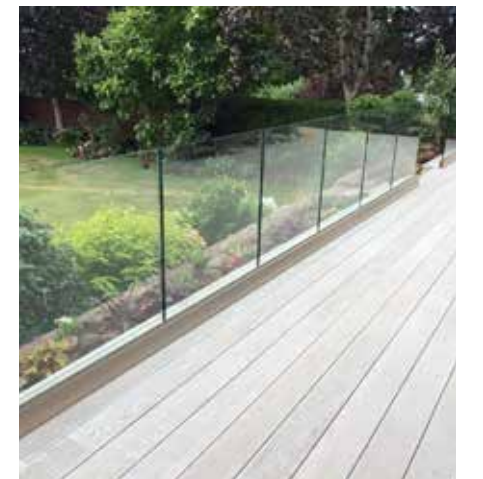
Standing seam aluminium cladding RAL7012



RAL7016 aluminium full height windows



Paving to roof terrace; Marshalls symphony grey or similar



Frameless glazed balustrade



White timber frame windows, render and detailing restored



Slate roof tiles



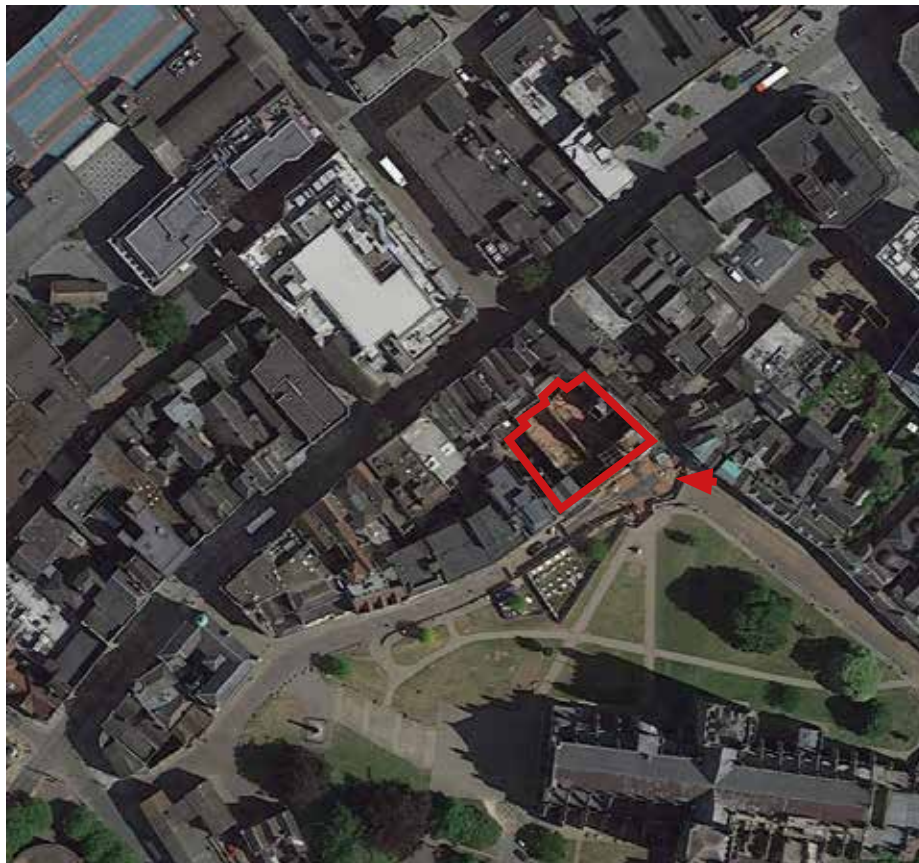
## 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

### 5.9 Views

These views show how the proposal will be viewed from real world perspective.

Note: these images are an artist impression taken from perspective views throughout the center of Exeter.

#### View 01 - Close View

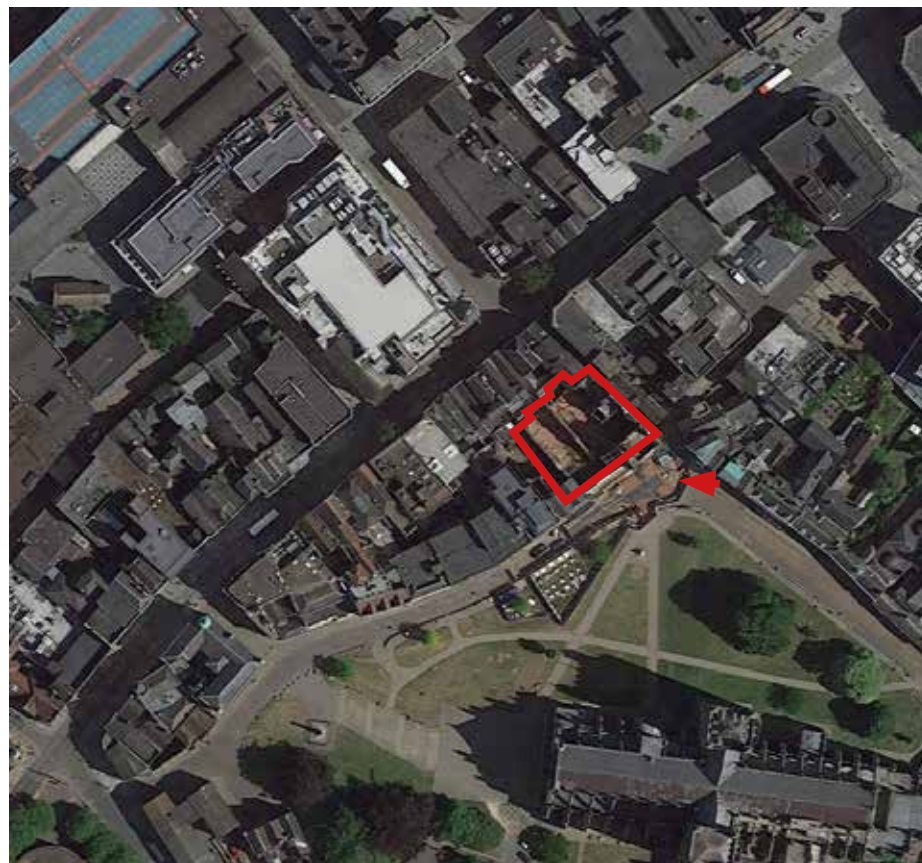




# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.9 Views

View 02 - Night View





# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.9 Views

View 03 - View from Cathedral Entrance

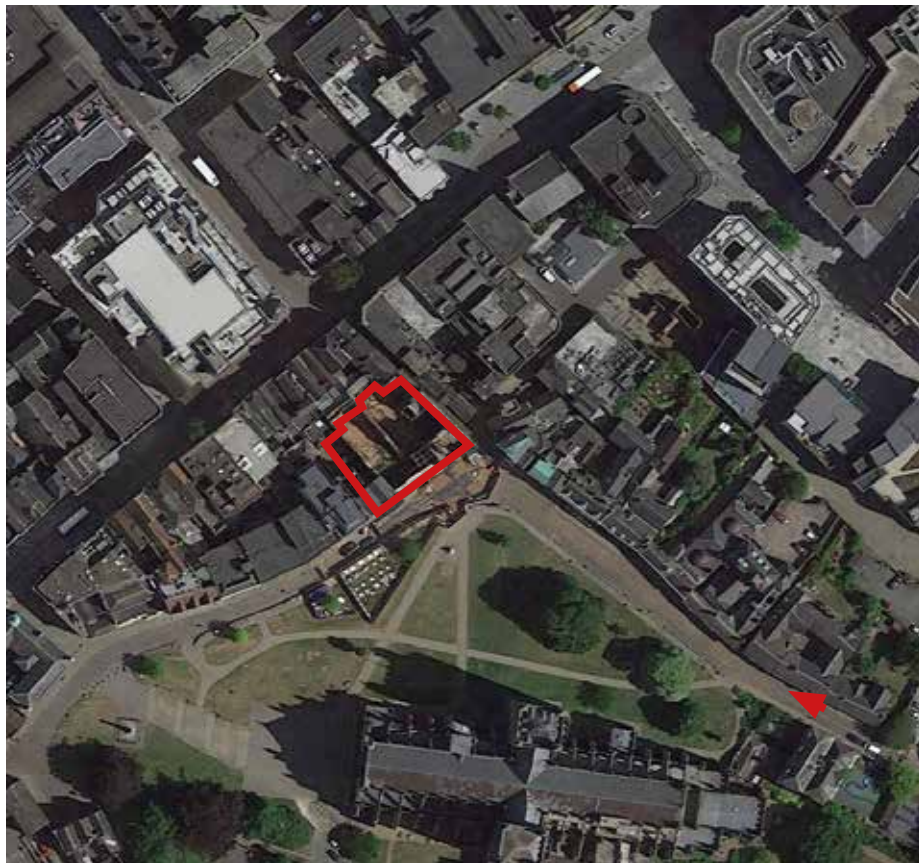




# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.9 Views

View 04.1 - View along Cathedral Close

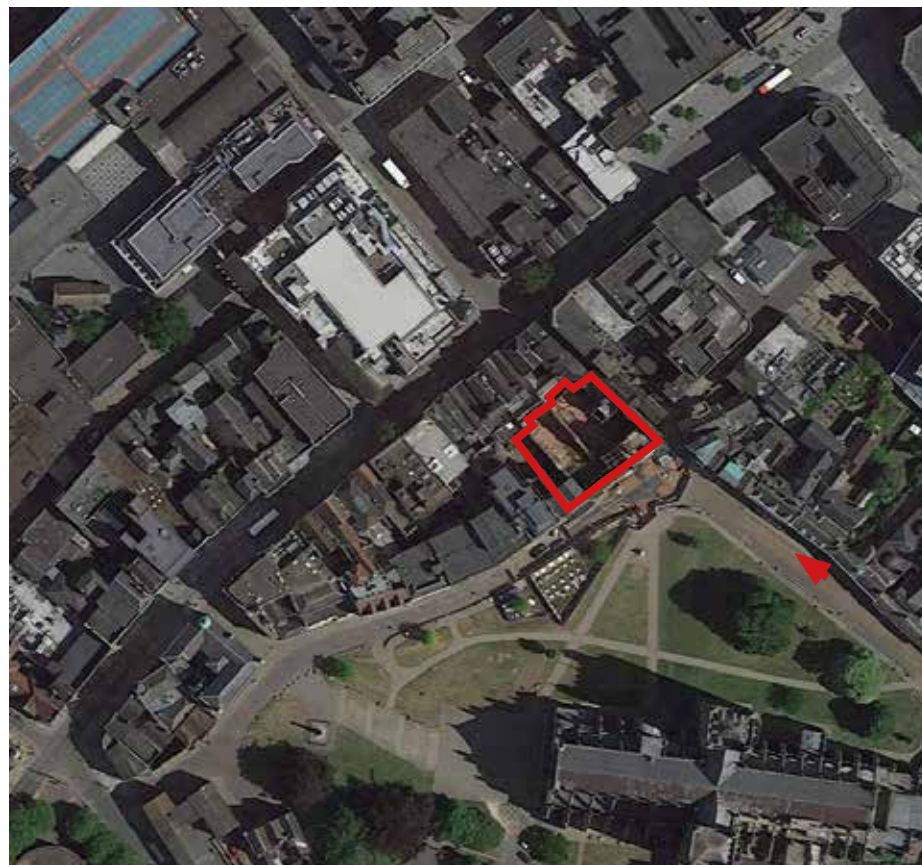




# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.9 Views

View 04.2 - View along Cathedral Close

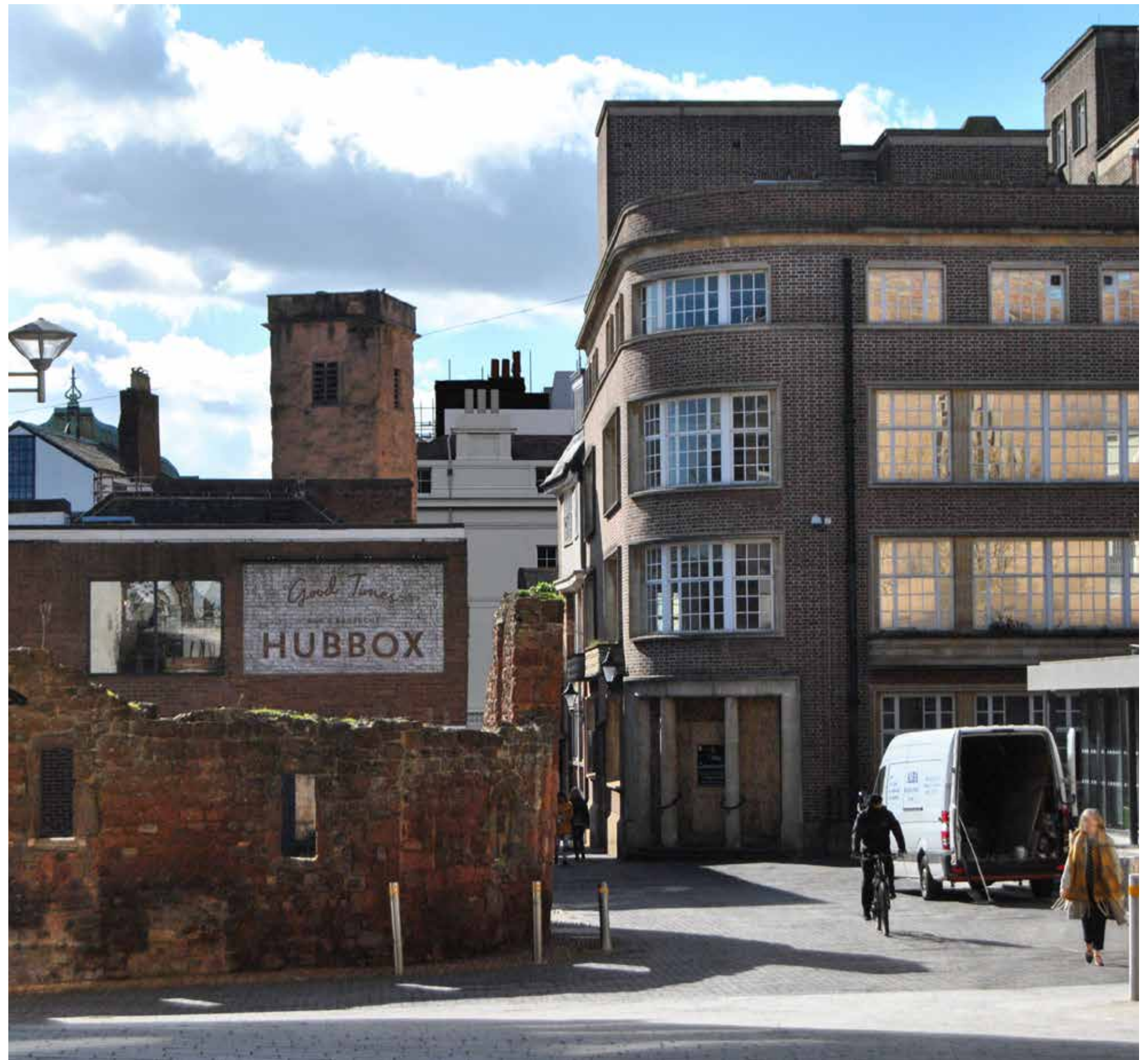
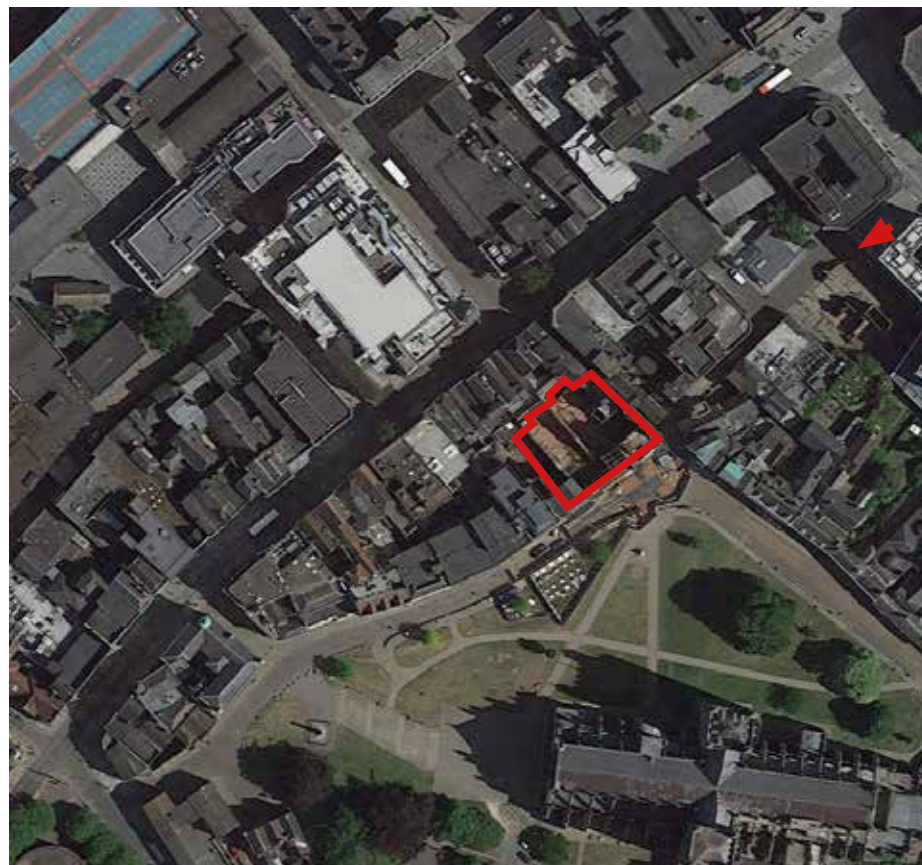




# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.9 Views

View 05 - View from Catherine Street

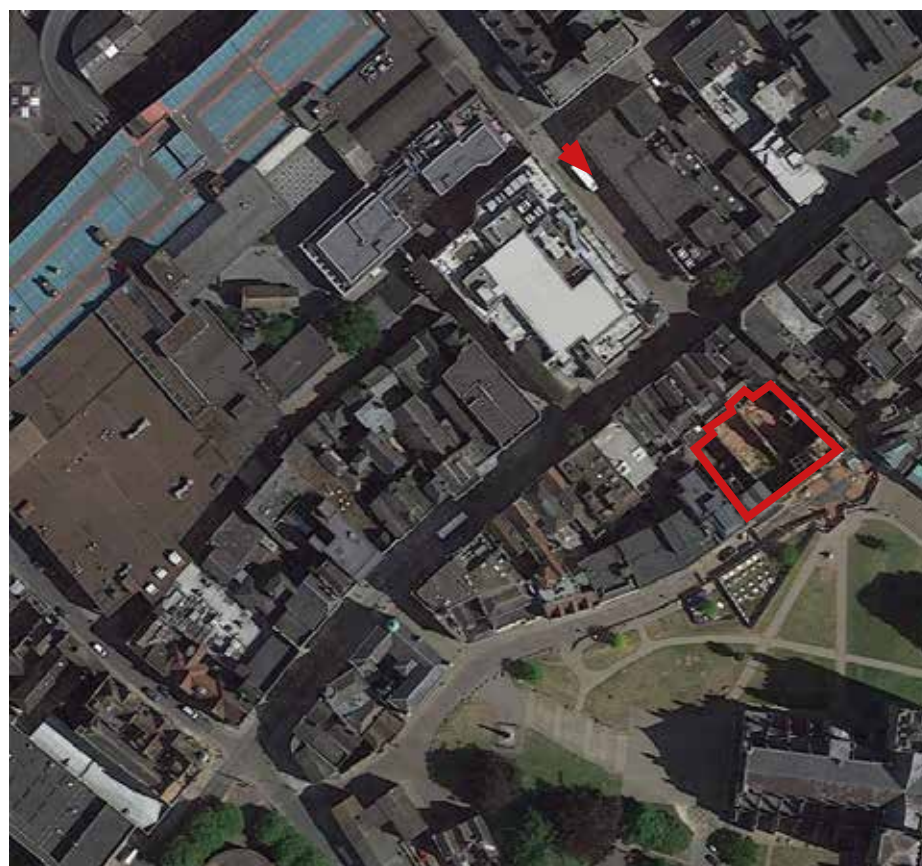




# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.9 Views

View 06.1 - View from Queen Street

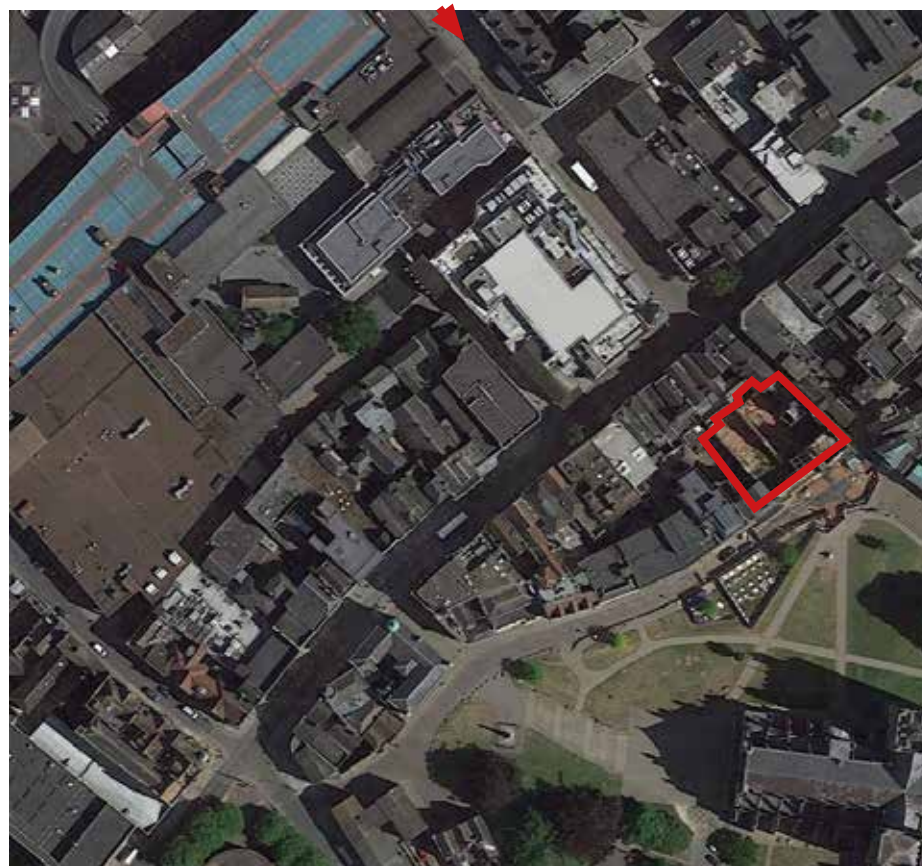




# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.9 Views

View 06.2 - View from Queen Street

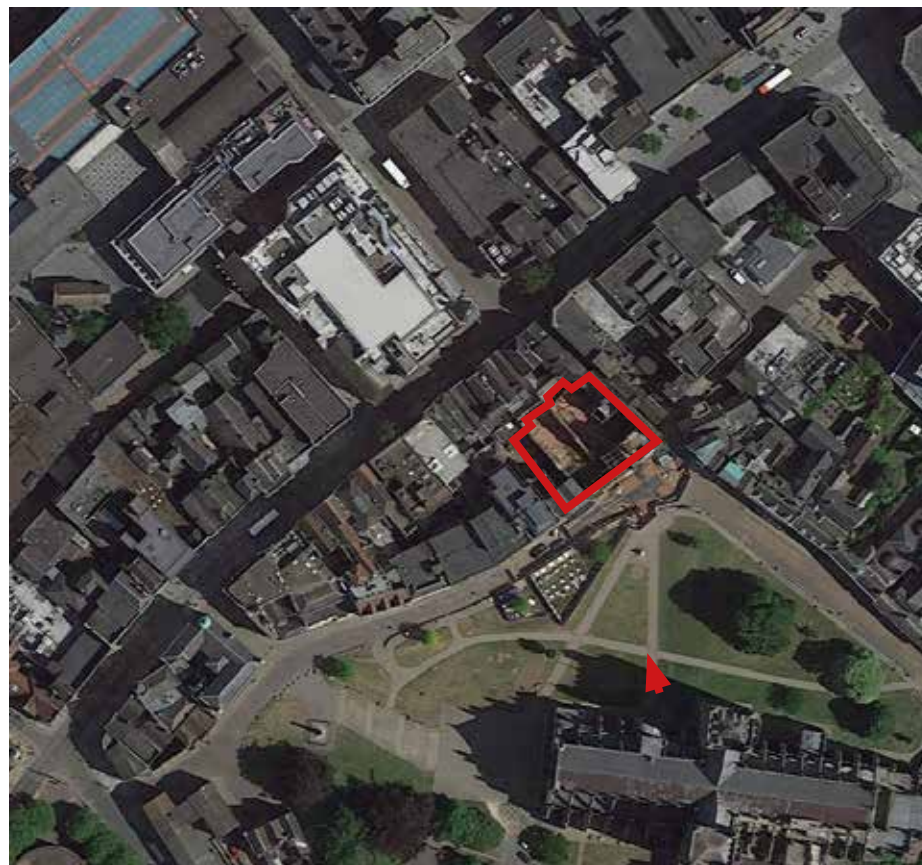




# 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

## 5.9 Views

View 07 - View from Cathedral Green





## 5.0 DESIGN PROPOSAL

### 5.10 Sustainability Statement

The Royal Clarence presents a unique opportunity to improve the sustainable characteristics due to the demolition of most of the existing building fabric following the fire.

Where new building elements are proposed, the depth of insulation will meet minimum building standards. Windows on the rebuilt front facade will be as existing or double glazed and all new windows to the rear of the building and upper floors are proposed to be double glazed.

We have, and will continue to, adopt a fabric-first approach to the design of the building. Whilst there are constraints working with an existing building, especially one of historic significance, we will seek to include High-Quality Insulation to reduce the need for heating and cooling. We will focus on increasing airtightness and avoiding thermal bridging wherever possible and maximise natural ventilation where possible throughout the building.

Further information on our approach to sustainability has been included in the planning application.

### 5.11 Preservation of Heritage

Some item of historical significance have survived the fire and will go on display in the public areas of the proposal. This will ensure that as much history is preserved as possible. Items that we have considered would be displayed are:

- Historic steelwork associated with the Exeter Bank, located between Zones 5 and 6
- Stained glass windows
- The existing well in the Well House basement
- The skeleton, currently located in the Well House basement



## KTA

WINSLADE HOUSE  
WINSLADE PARK  
MANOR DRIVE  
CLYST ST MARY, EXETER  
EX5 1FY

01392 360338

