

Neal Court | Hertford

Residential Development



FBMArchitects

Pre-Planning Public Consultation - February 2021

1 Welcome

Welcome to our online public consultation. This consultation document provides an overview of Network Homes' latest residential proposals for Neal Court, Hertford.

Network Homes are seeking to submit a planning application to redevelop the site to provide 16 new affordable homes and we are seeking your feedback on the proposals shown here.

This document provides background information about the site, and an overview of the proposals, including the layout, number and types of homes, design and appearance.

We welcome your feedback and we look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you.



Site location and boundary

2 Introduction

The Applicant: **Network Homes**

Network Homes is an award winning housing association. With 20,000 quality affordable homes across London and Hertfordshire, we build, sell, rent and manage homes in thriving communities, housing over 38,000 people.

Housing associations were set up to support people in housing need and this remains at the heart of everything we do today. We're an independent, charitable organisation and all the money we make is reinvested in building more affordable homes and delivering services for our residents.

We give people the key to all the possibilities that come with a good home, because good homes make everything possible.

Examples of recent schemes completed by Network Homes, including Tudor Way, Roman Court and Francis Road, are shown on the right.



Tudor Way, Hertford



Francis Road, Ware



Roman Court, Ware

The Architect: **Fraser Brown MacKenna**

Fraser Brown MacKenna Architects is a design led and award winning practice with a strong track record in creating popular places to live. Through architecture that is human in scale and contextual in response, we strive to create neighbourhoods that are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

We believe that the identity of a place is forged by the individuals within a neighbourhood and the bonds and networks they develop. As a practice we are committed to engaging with each community we serve; unlocking and employing the social capital that already exists to create places that allow communities to flourish and grow.

Examples of projects designed by FBM Architects are shown on the right.



Orchard Mews, Farnham Royal - FBM Architects



Salcombe Road, Hackney - FBM Architects



Walnut Tree Close, Guildford - FBM Architects



John Keble Vicarage Site, Middlesex - FBM Architects

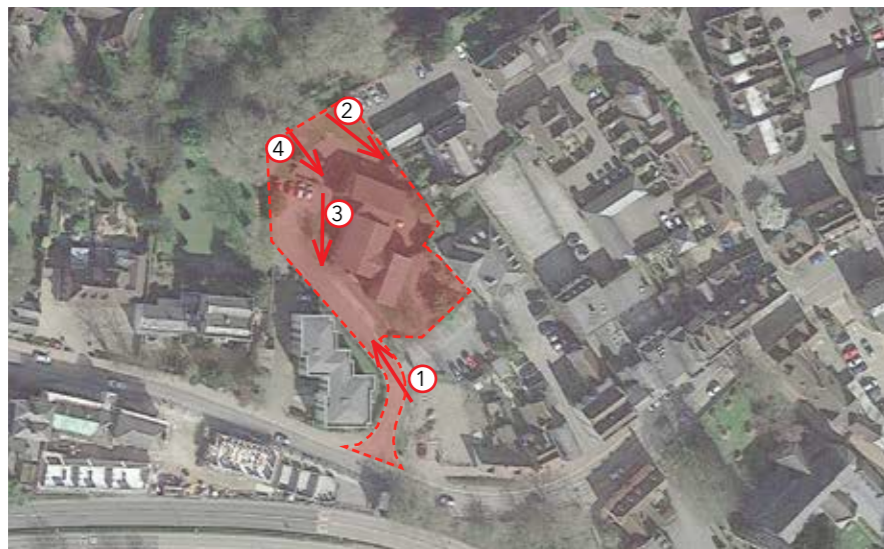
3 The Proposal Site

Neal Court currently comprises a two-storey building providing 14 bedsits, communal facilities, a small site office, resident parking and landscaped gardens. The scheme was originally developed as a supported housing scheme, but it is understood that the scheme no longer houses the original client group.

The building is constructed in a light brown brick and a concrete tiled pitched roof.

The building is set away from North Road and is accessed from this street.

The River Beane runs alongside the northern boundary but is separated from the site by a brick wall and planting. To the east are several terraced houses along with Hanscombe Road Surgery - all of these are two and a half storey in height. Ebenezer Court is a three storey building to the south-west.



Key



1) site seen from the south



3) The site and adjacent Ebenezer Court (south-west)



2) The site seen from north-east







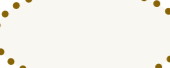


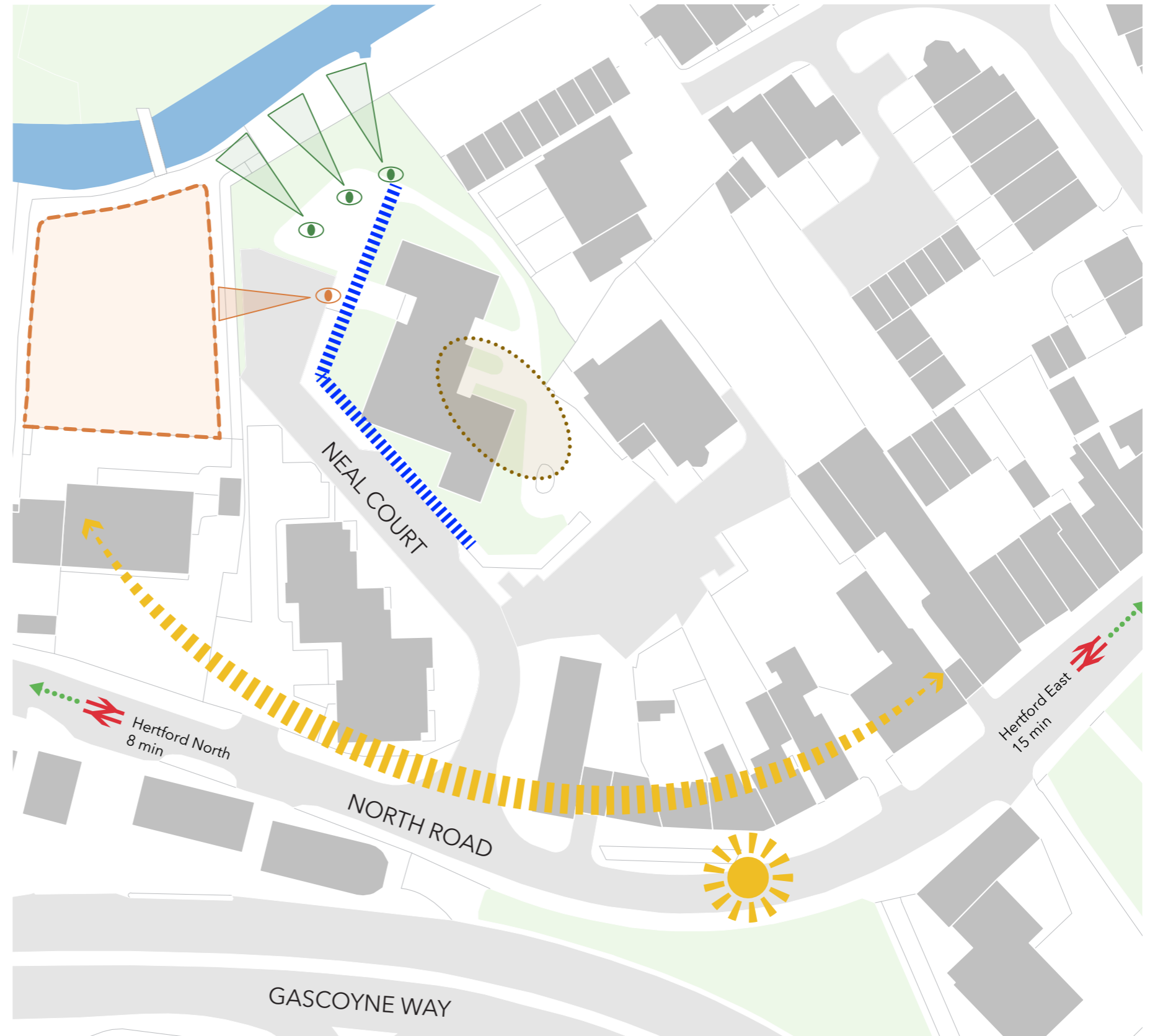
4) Northern part of the site

Existing Site - **Opportunities**

At the beginning of a project we consider the opportunities of the site to help inform the design rational of the proposed scheme. The key opportunities at Neal Court are;

- Site orientation, a good level of daylight and sunlight around the site.
- Close proximity to Hertford Town centre.
- Site located away from Gascoyne Way.
- Valuable architectural context.
- Potential for views over River Beane.
- Urban grain - connecting with existing.
- Views over grounds of North Road House.
- Opportunity for communal green/space.

-  Site boundary
-  Site access
-  Train stations within walking distance
-  Opportunity for optimising orientation and aspect
-  Potential to align with existing urban grain
-  Grounds of North Road House and The Cottage
-  Potential views over the grounds
-  Potential views over river
-  Opportunity for communal green/space



Opportunities Plan

4 Context

Area history & urban grain

Hertford comprises of small-scale, dense urban grain with narrow streets, mews and passageways typical of a market town with medieval origins.

Buildings along St Andrew Street, Old Cross and Mill Bridge create a continuous frontage and commercial corridor. This frontage is characterised by multiple passages which connect the high street with residential and service courtyards behind.

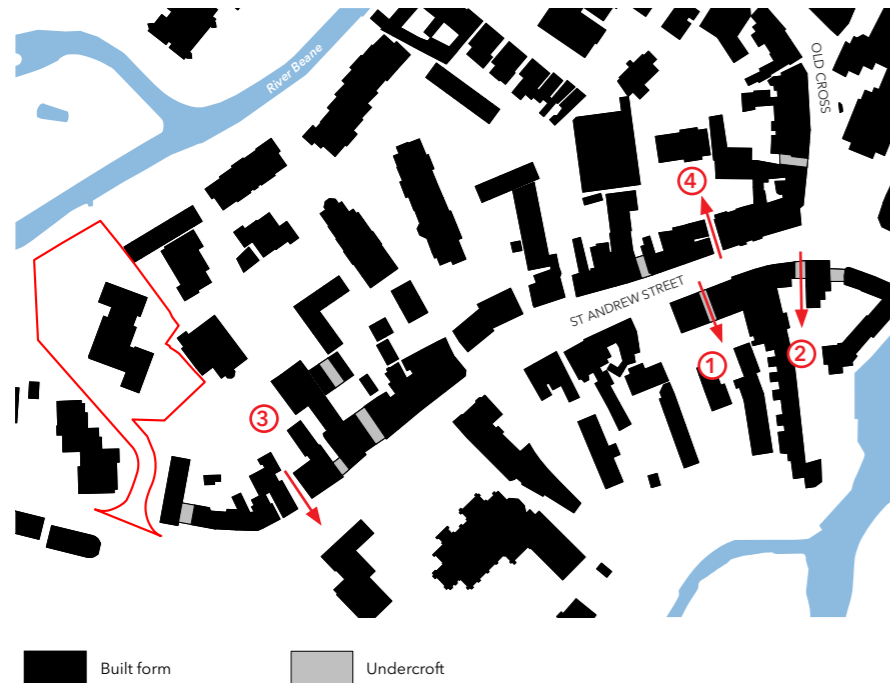
Mews-type streets are recreated in more modern developments such as Mill Bridge & St Andrew Mews.



1 St Andrew Mews built in mid 90's



2 Mill Bridge Mews - grade II listed buildings



3 Service courtyard by Hanscombe House Surgery



4 Office building access off the high street

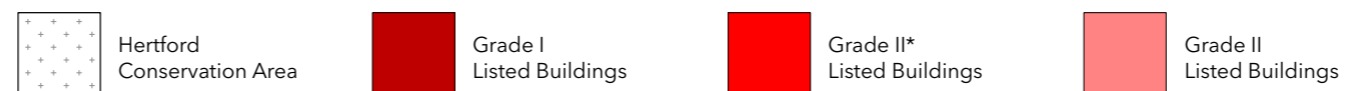
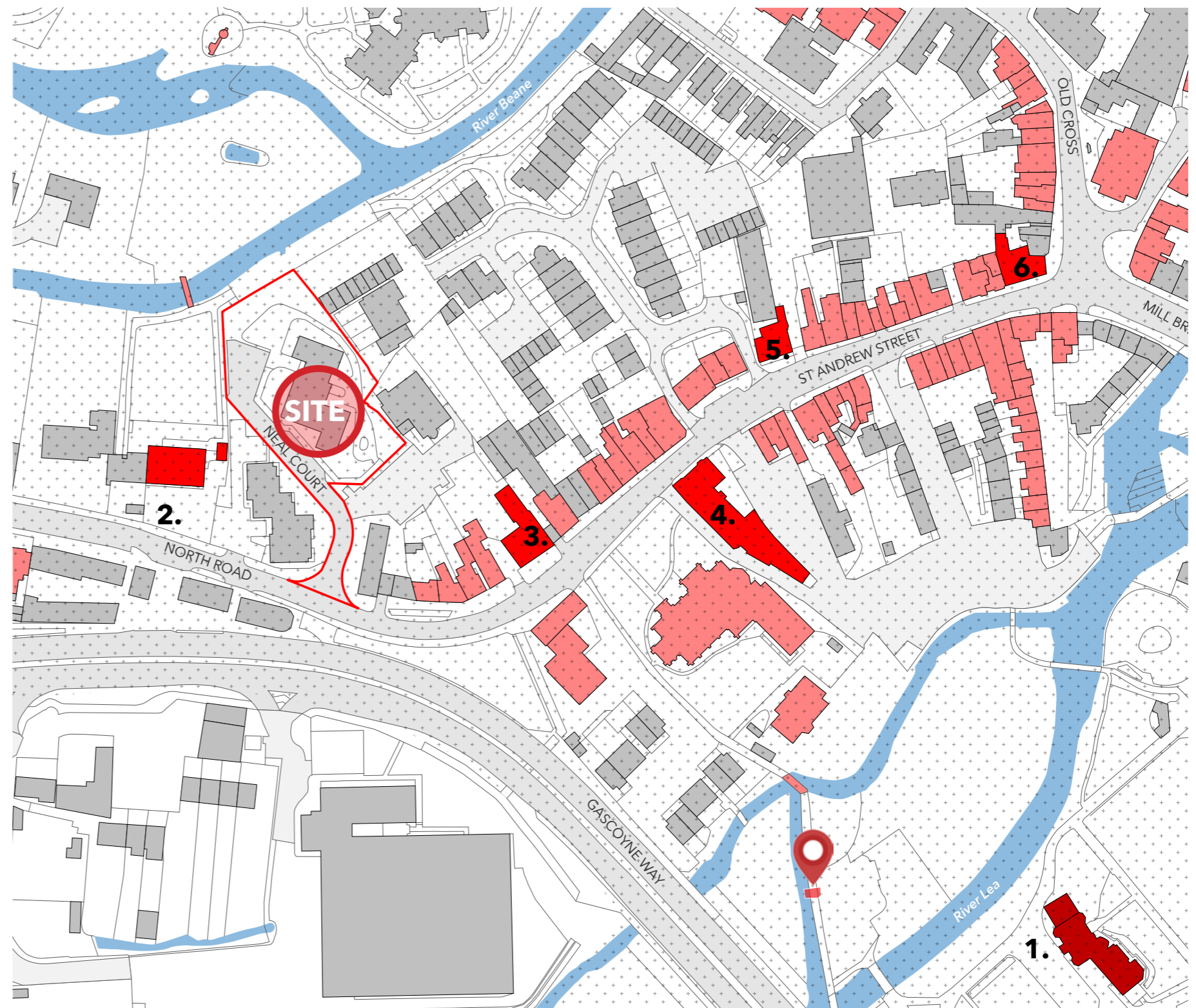
Context - Conservation

The central historic core contains a significant number of historic buildings dating from the 12th century (Castle walls) to fine buildings from the early 20th century (Bluecoats Avenue). River features on the edge of the area are important, as is the River Lea that adds to the high quality of the Castle grounds in the centre of the area.

The site sits within a Conservation Area and is located adjacent to North Road House, a Grade 2* Listed building. There is also a Grade 2 Listed bridge over the River Beane to the north of the site. The site is also within an Area of Archaeological Significance.

Listed buildings Grade I and II*:

1. Hertford Castle (Grade I)
2. North Road House (Grade II*)
3. Cecil House (Grade II*)
4. St Nicholas Hall (Grade II*)
5. Yeomanry House (Grade II*)
6. No. 2 St Andrew Street (Grade II*)



Context - **Recent neighbouring developments**

There have been a couple of recent developments in the immediate area. 62-68 St Andrew Street is a recently constructed three storey, pitched roof, part brick, part rendered building located to the entrance of Neal Court Road to the south. It's west elevation has aesthetic references to historical waterfront and light industrial uses, with recessed balconies providing private amenity.

Carriage Court was completed a few years ago and is a three storey, rendered building with a flat roof, and is located to the south-west of Neal Court.



1) 62-68 St Andrew Street



1) 62-68 St Andrew Street



Key Plan



2) Carriage Court




2) Carriage Court

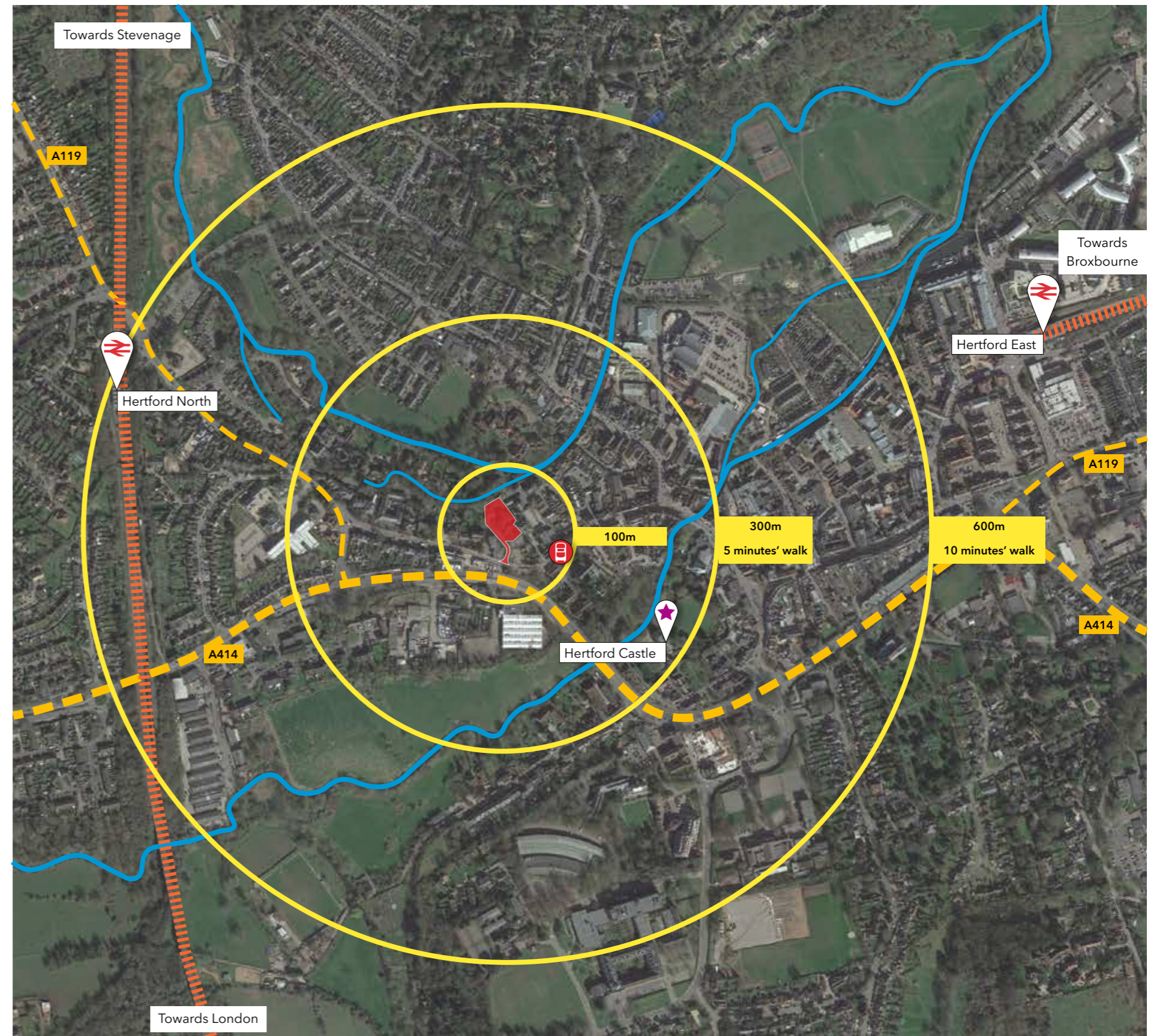
Context - **Accessibility**

The site is in an urban area of Hertford and is in very close proximity to the town centre with many amenities.

The site is situated within walking distance to two train stations. Hertford North, located within 8 minutes' walk, provides Great Northern trains to Central London and Stevenage. Hertford East, 15 minutes' walk, provides Great Anglia trains to Central London and Broxbourne.

There are also bus services from North Road to Hatfield, Stevenage, Broxbourne and Ware.

-  Site
-  Motorway
-  Main road
-  Rail tracks
-  Train station
-  Bus stop
-  Landmark



5 Proposed scheme

Scheme Summary

The proposal comprises 16 residential homes for Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership. It consists of a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom homes, with associated amenity space and landscaping, car parking, cycle storage and refuse storage. Three of the units are 3 bedroom, family sized homes.

Spacious accommodation is provided, with all flats meeting or exceeding space requirements set out by the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS). Each home is either dual or triple aspect and two of the proposed homes are wheelchair accessible homes located at ground floor level.

The proposed buildings are predominantly three storeys in height, dropping down to two storeys in part, respecting the building heights of surrounding properties.

The buildings will be comprised of light grey brick and pitched slate roofs to relate to the surrounding and historical context.

A total of 19 car parking spaces will be provided along with a secure and covered cycle store which can accommodate 16 cycle spaces. The proposal also includes 2 wheelchair parking bays.

Each home will benefit from their own private balcony or garden as well as access to communal amenity space. Residents will be able to enjoy a new courtyard garden, which includes landscaping, tree planting and play space provision.

A number of trees identified to be removed to provide space for the development and new tree planting as part of the wider landscaping strategy is proposed across the site.



Proposed - Site plan

There are two distinct blocks that fit into the urban grain - a large villa **(A)** block that relates to the adjacent surgery and a terrace block **(B)** that creates an edge to the central courtyard garden.

The proposed buildings are accessed via a pavement extension **(C)** (subject to agreement) to allow a continuous segregated route from North Road to the site.

The development form and layout maximises orientation and dual aspect, whilst providing views through to the surrounding landscape **(K)**.

The pedestrian entrance arch/gateway **(D)** and integrated shared surface parking court **(E)** will take on the characteristics of the passages and courtyards found within the historic town centre.

A shared garden **(F)** will offer semi private amenity and playspace, whilst acting as a landscaped buffer to the adjacent properties to the east of the site.

The proposed buildings have been positioned to ensure adequate separation distance to neighbouring properties.

The proposed design promotes passive surveillance with windows that overlook the public realm.

The proposal provides two wheelchair parking bays for the two wheelchair accessible units **(G)**.

There are 16 secure cycle store spaces provided **(H)**.



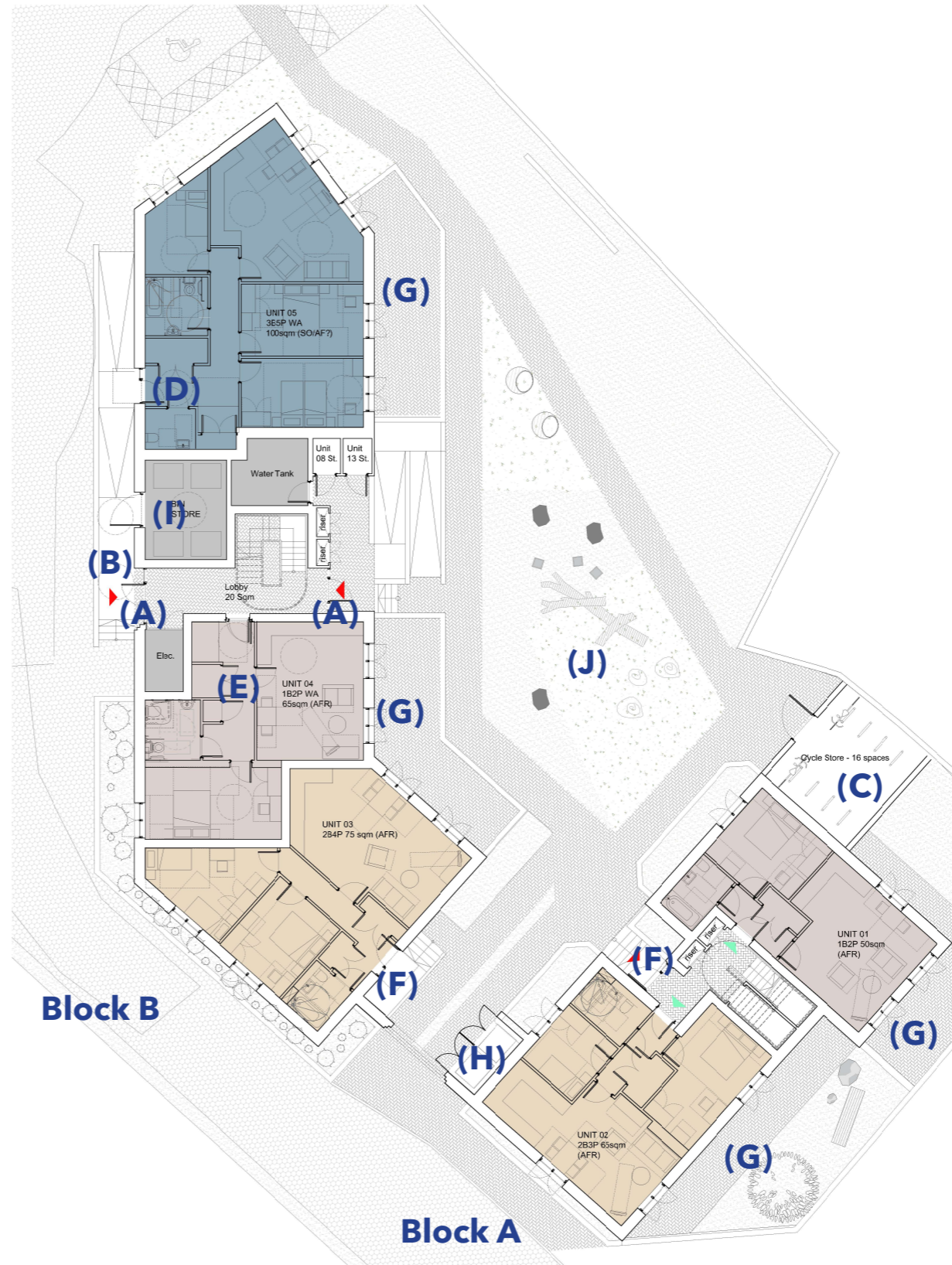
Proposed site plan.

Proposed - Unit types

- One bedroom homes = 7 units
- Two bedroom homes = 6 units
- Three bedroom homes = 3 units
- A total of 16 homes.

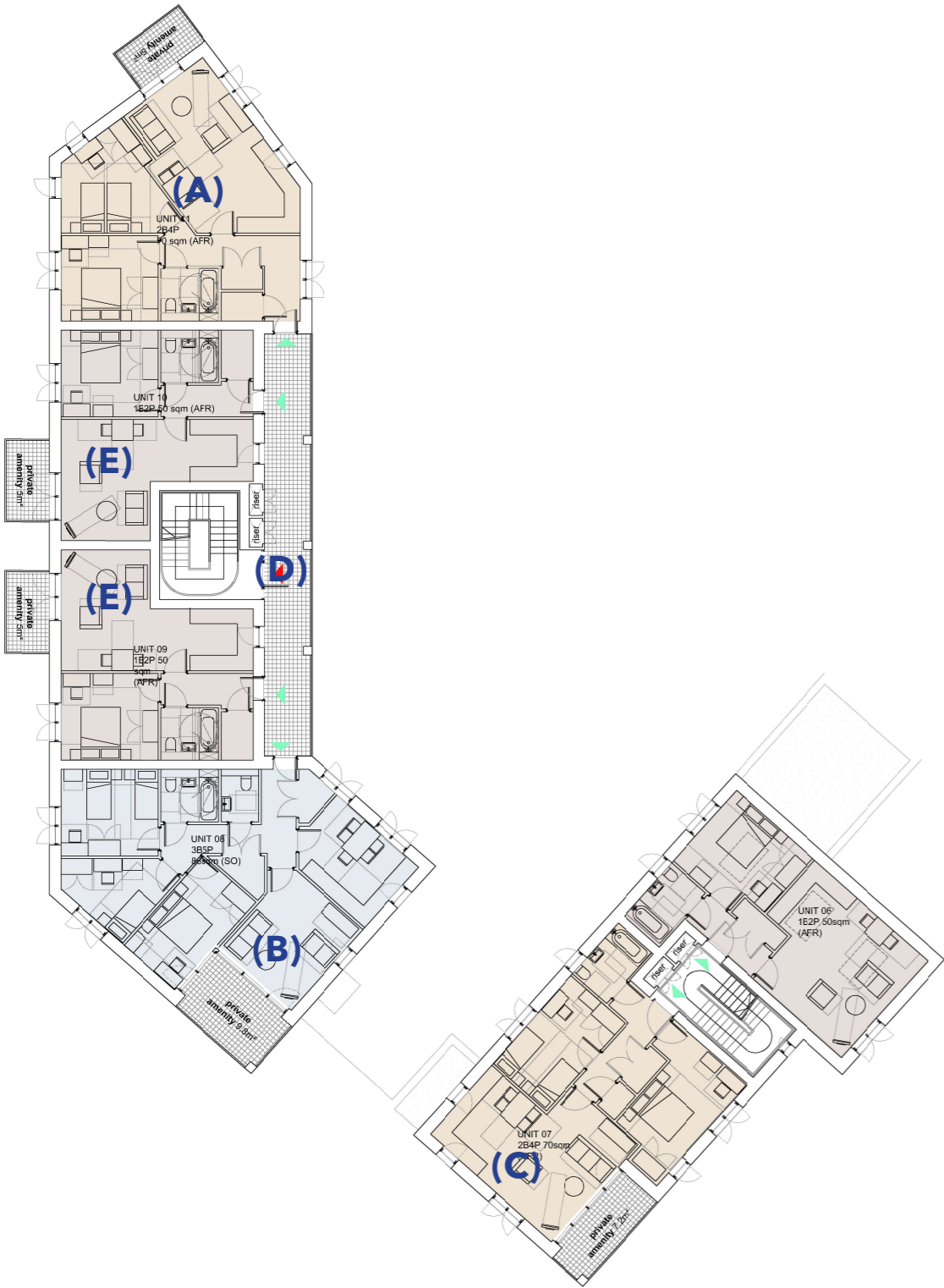
Proposed - Ground floor plan

- The proposed entrances to new dwellings in Block B provides an active frontage and overlooks both the internal courtyard garden and parking court (A).
- A canopy is proposed over the doors into block A, which provides weather protection over the resident entrance (B).
- Cycle storage for the new development is located in a secure roofed enclosure off the shared amenity garden (C)
- Unit 05 is a wheelchair accessible unit and has its own private entrance (D).
- Unit 04 is a wheelchair accessible unit with level access, with a ramp proposed along the both the east and west elevations of block B (E).
- Stepped access is proposed for block A in order to raise residential units above flood levels (F).
- Private amenity terraces are provided for the ground floor units (G).
- Refuse store for block A (H).
- Refuse store for block B (I).
- Play area incorporating natural play elements, seating and low level planting (J).

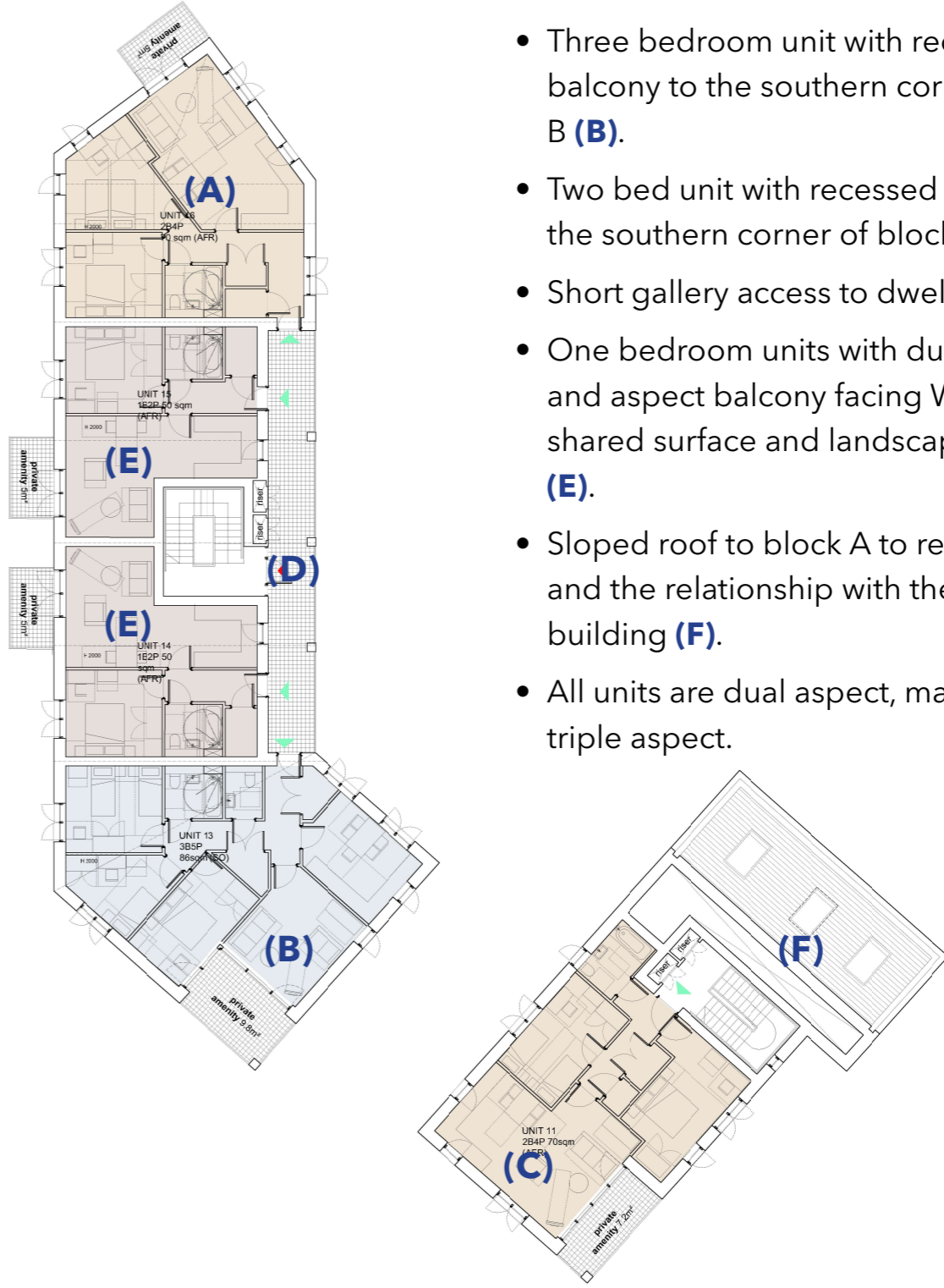


Proposed ground floor plan

Proposed - Upper floors



Proposed first floor plan



Proposed second floor plan

- Two bedroom unit with balcony placed to the northern corner, overlooking the river **(A)**.
- Three bedroom unit with recessed balcony to the southern corner of block B **(B)**.
- Two bed unit with recessed balcony to the southern corner of block A **(C)**.
- Short gallery access to dwellings **(D)**.
- One bedroom units with dual aspect and aspect balcony facing West over the shared surface and landscape beyond **(E)**.
- Sloped roof to block A to reduce height and the relationship with the adjacent building **(F)**.
- All units are dual aspect, majority are triple aspect.



6 Height & appearance

Context - surrounding appearance

We have taken design references from buildings in Hertford and the surrounding area. There are a range of styles and materials used that reflect different periods of population and growth in the town - from small market town, to the industries that were established around the river.

Library: The ground floor is treated differently to the upper storeys which are celebrated and step forward of the main building line. Gable ends are presented in different orientations.



Hertford Library

Riverside buildings: The use of different materials to the upper floors can be seen in several buildings in the area and typical of this original use. Materials are darker in colour and have different textures. Along the river, buildings angle around to the available site area, following the curved river edge.



Priory Street



Richness of detail: The use of brick to form robust and solid buildings can be seen nearby. Brickwork detailing around windows and feature horizontal 'stringer' courses helps to break down the overall elevations. Window patterns are simple and repeat whilst projecting elements are light and metallic.



McMullen's Brewery - Hertford



Hertford Granary

Precedents - Contemporary buildings with similar design features as proposed

Scale



Example of a similar three storey building that drops down to two storeys in part. This example also uses brickwork and has similar window and balustrade railing details.

Facade composition



This example uses timber to the upper floors as a contrast to the more 'solid' ground floor brickwork walls. Timber is a good material and relates to historical buildings but does require regular maintenance.

Features



Brickwork textures are added to key locations to help add further richness and quality to the scheme. These brick patterns are effective in helping to make key areas such as entrances stand out and provide a more 'tactile' experience at the ground floor level.

Materials



Traditional roofing materials can be incorporated into contemporary schemes but with hidden gutter helping to avoid visual clutter to the elevations. These examples help to create crisp and clean roof lines.

Proposed - Height and appearance.

The proposed building responds to the surrounding context with its three storeys in height. The ground floor level is raised up slightly due to the flood risk but the pitched roof design helps to reduce and break up the overall scale of the building.

The materials used are light grey brick walls and a tiled roof which follow the materials found in the local area and works well as a contrast to the existing and proposed trees. The top floor wall projects forward slightly to replicate the timber cladding detail found in surrounding buildings as shown on the previous page.

The ground floor textured brick and boundary wall creates an edge to the site, with the archway between buildings leading you into the communal garden and entrance. Window proportions and metal railed balustrades echo riverside warehouses.



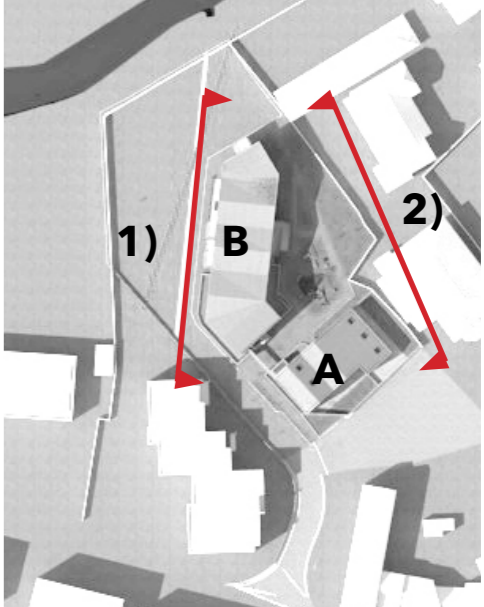
Proposed development - sketch view looking from the access road, just up from North Road.

Proposed - Elevations

1) West elevation - facing the access road and parking court



2) East / southeast elevation - facing the courtyard garden



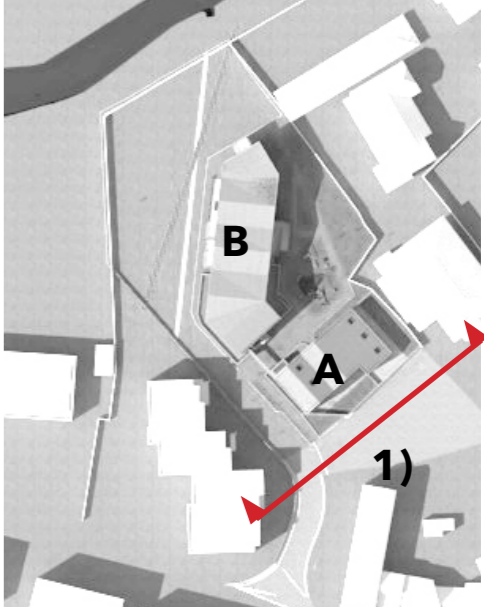
Key map

Proposed - Elevations

1) South elevation - facing the access road and private car park (adjacent to the Surgery)



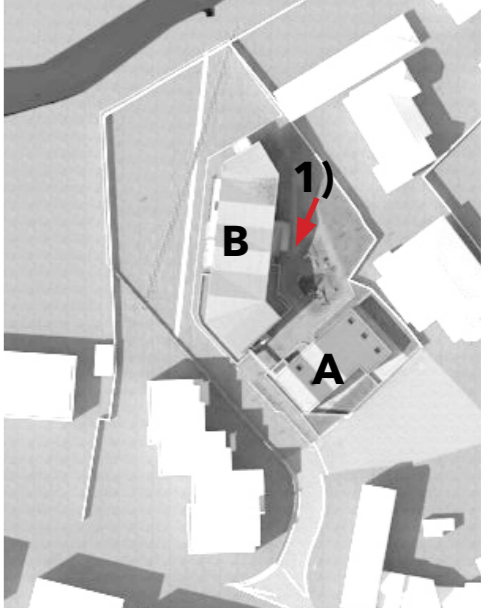
2) South elevation - zoomed in.



Key map

Proposed - Appearance

1) View from within the courtyard garden.



Key map

Proposed - Detailing and materials

- Roof tiles - plain - mid grey.
- Concealed gutter detail
- Balustrades + Railings : Metal balustrades with powder coated finish
- Projecting brickwork to the upper level.
- Soft brickwork with dark grey mortar
- Soft brickwork with light grey mortar
- Projecting brick course to create a definition between the ground and upper floors.
- Projecting brick pattern to key parts of the ground floor - around entrances

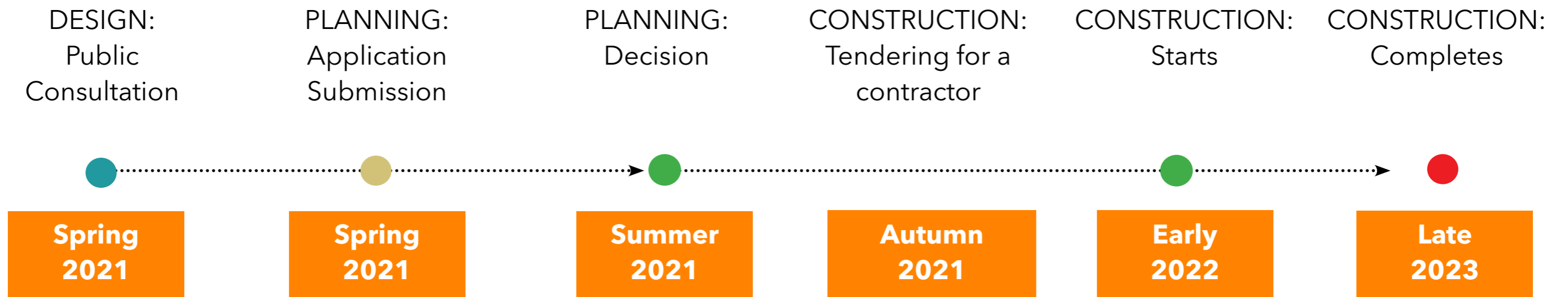
Surrounding brick wall on site has similar colour/tonal

1) Typical elevation details - west elevation of Block A shown.

7 Expected project time line

1) Consultation & planning stage

2) Construction stage



Thank you for taking the time to view our development proposals for Neal Court.

- Timescale shown above are a general guide and are subject to change as the schemes progresses.