

2.3 Evaluation

2.3.1 Opportunities and Constraints

There is an opportunity to develop this important site in Liverpool with a quality housing scheme, in order to secure a well managed future for the site, both to maintain the status and setting of the listed buildings, and to manage the mature landscaping and open green space which forms an important part of the character of the locality.

A low density, 'parkland' type housing scheme will allow the site to maintain an open green feeling, maintaining both the setting of Knolle House, and the open, green space to the west of the site. Providing a large apartment block adjacent to the main house will allow sufficient apartment numbers such that the detached houses around the perimeter of the green space can be reduced in number and spread out to achieve a very low density arrangement over the rest of the site.

Developing the listed building into a small number of large apartments will benefit the listed building by removing a number of internal partitions to better reveal the original room layout, whilst refurbishing the exterior of the building. The constraints are the listed status of the existing building, and the need to work with and better reveal the original layout and features, whilst also incorporating the requirement for safe means of escape and a lift for access by all. There is an opportunity to replace the mediocre red brick German Wing with a building of architectural quality which positively contributes to the setting of the main house.

Developing the Greek Lodge gatehouse will benefit the site by ensuring the building is maintained, with the addition of a small rear extension to allow contemporary family living. The constraints are the small size of the existing building, the listed status, the need to maintain a clearly legible driveway and gates, and the need to provide site separation without affecting the original site layout.

Developing the Orangery building will benefit the site by providing a modern interpretation of the glazed orangery building, restoring the visual connection between the front elevation of the main house and the glazed front elevation of the Orangery building. The restraints are the layout of the original base and curved brick wall, the existing gap between the brick wall and the sandstone boundary wall, and the need to maintain an inconspicuous, low boundary treatment at the front to maintain the visual connection, whilst also providing a rear garden.

The opportunities at the west of the site are to remove the poorly designed Taylor and Nugent House, and the gardeners cottage, and to replace these with a low density arrangement of well designed, new build housing set out in order to maintain a large green space.

2.3.2 Design Process

The above constraints have been taken into account when considering the site layout and architectural design solutions for the scheme. The design solutions encompass all of the above points from the analysis and evaluation, as well as incorporating design advice from Liverpool planners and the Places Matter design review, and comments from the local community. The solutions have been closely developed with the Client and whole design team, in order to meet both the potential of the site and the clients aspirations.

3.0 Description of Proposals



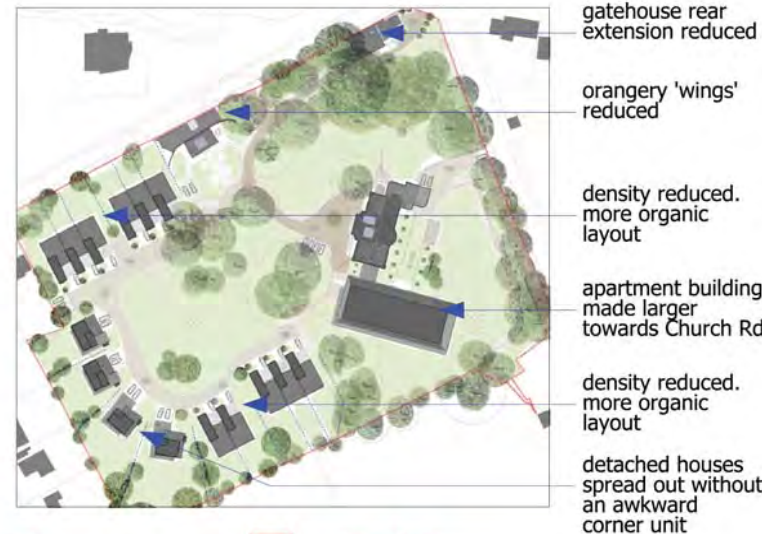
1 selection of preferred site layout with design team following multiple layout options

2 input from LCC planners

3 input from places matter



overview of design development



3.1 Design Objectives

- The proposed development of Knolle Park represents a unique opportunity to bring forward this prominent site for high quality residential use. The design is based around the following principles;
- to provide an innovative contemporary residential development set within an exemplary landscaped setting.
 - to carefully integrate contemporary architectural design with the Listed Building and structures on the site such that the proposals reinforce and enhance the historic setting.
 - to provide sustainable accommodation (in so far as possible) with regard to Lifetime Homes and low energy design.
 - to be compatible with the character and setting of the area in terms of design, siting, scale, proportions, emphasis, form, height and materials and will relate to the site contextual and building patterns.
 - the proposed new buildings will have sufficient space around them to be in character and preserve the nature of their surroundings.
 - to be designed so as not to unacceptably harm the neighbouring plots in terms of overlook/ loss of privacy
 - to contribute to, & not detract from the quality of the area and street scene.

3.2 Design Proposals

The proposals aim to meet the objects contained within para 3.1. The proposals involve:

- demolition of the German Wing, Taylor and Nugent House, the Nursery Building, the 2 x garages and the gardeners cottage
- refurbishment and conversion of the main house to form 7 apartments
- construction of a new garden deck to the east of the main house at ground floor level with basement car parking below
- construction of a new apartment building in place of the German Wing, to form 2 floors of under ground car parking, 3 floors of 2-bed apartments, and a top floor of 3 bed penthouses
- construction of 11 No attached villa houses - 4 bed, 2 storey
- construction of 4 No 5 bed, 3 storey houses
- refurbishment and extension of the Greek Lodge to form a single storey detached house
- re-construction and extension of the Orangery building to form a single storey, detached house
- associated hard and soft landscape works as described in the attached Landscape Report
- closure of the eastern vehicular entrance on Beaconsfield Road
- closure of 2No pedestrian entrances, one on Beaconsfield Road and one on Church Road.

3.21 Design Development

The proposals have evolved over a 10 month period in collaboration with the design team and external parties.

A significant number of site layout options were initially explored with the design team including conventional housing layouts retaining the German Wing, and more radical 'Accordia' type layouts with much denser terraces of houses with access to shared green space. A layout was eventually selected which retained a significant amount of green space to the western end of the plot, based around the principal of 'parkland' housing, with a lower density at this end of the plot balanced out by a higher number of apartments in the new build apartment block.

Following LCC feedback, this scheme was amended to further reduce the density at the western end, and increase the organic nature of the layout and permeability between buildings. The size of the apartment block was increased in size, although not as much as LCC suggested would be acceptable.

Following the amendments to suit LCC, the scheme was further revised following the Places Matter design review. Please refer to para 2.2.3 for a full description. In summary, the major amendment following this review was the design of the new apartment building and the connection to the existing building - we believe that this review had a strong positive impact on the scheme.

3.0 Description of Proposals

3.3 Principles of the Design

3.3.1 Use:

Please refer to the planning statement by Roman Summer for existing and proposed use classes.

3.3.2 Amount of development:

The scheme consists of the following:

- 7No converted apartments within the existing main house, 5No 2-bed and 2No 3-bed
- 28No apartments within the new build apartment block, 24No 2-bed and 4No 3-bed
- 11No attached villas, 4 bed, 2 storey
- 4No detached house, 5 bed, 3 storey
- 1 No bespoke Orangery house, single storey, 4 bed
- 1 No bespoke Greek Lodge house, single storey, 4 bed

In summary - 35No apartments, 17No houses.

3.3.3 Layout

The scheme is purposefully low density on the western side of the site in order to retain the parkland setting, with separated blocks distributed around a central green space. To the east side of the site, the extension to Knolle House occupies the site of the former German Wing, similar in location to the previously approved car home scheme, but cut back so as to reveal the full rear elevation of Knolle House.

The proposed layout uses two of the existing three site entrances. The current entrance to Taylor and Nugent house is proposed to be closed. The existing Beaconsfield Road entrance is proposed to be used to access the new houses, and for guest parking for the apartments only. The Church Road entrance serves to access the underground car parking for the apartment buildings. This approach relieves the site of the requirement for large areas of surface car parking, maximising the amount of green space retained.

The proposed site arrangement allows the traffic to be split roughly 1/3 on Beaconsfield Road (accessing the houses only), and 2/3 on Church Road (accessing the underground car parking for the converted and new apartments).



Proposed Site Plan

Key

- A - St Gabriel's Convent building - apartments
- B - New Apartment Block (German Wing replacement)
- C - Deck Garden above underground car park
- D - Greek Lodge (Gate House) converted into detached house
- E - Orangery House converted into detached house
- F - Attached Villas
- G - Detached Villa Type 01
- H - Detached Villa Type 02
- J - Substation
- K - Gas housing building
- L - Grotto
- M - Permanently closed gates (Listed Site Entrance)
- N - Retained formal garden
- P - New Landscape steps
- Q - Village Green

3.0 Description of Proposals



Selected local, national and international precedents

3.3.4 Appearance Overview

The new build elements of the proposals are unashamedly modern in overall form and detailed design, particularly in terms of massing and appearance. The design proposals directly reflect modern living conditions and requirements using contemporary design forms and materials, just as in their own way and in their own time, did the historic buildings on the site and within the surrounding area.

The appearance and the design of the buildings have been informed by modernism not minimalism, and embrace a contemporary lifestyle without imposing an impossible code of conduct for living. Exterior spaces are designed to merge with interiors, and buildings integrate with landscaping.

The elevational design of the proposals does not obviously echo the existing surrounding architecture, however they are considered comparable and complimentary in that they are respectful of the existing buildings form, mass and proportions.

The proposed design is a context driven solution for a contemporary dwellings that have strong visual and physical connections with the surrounding landscape.

Overall the proposals are recognisably of their own time, but offer a worthy partner for their surroundings, and as such they will add quality, character and interest to the wider area.

3.3.5 Materials Overview

The proposed materials associated with each element of the proposals are described further in the following chapter. The materials across the development site have been considered to be holistically complementary and individually appropriate to each dwelling type.

The proposed materials are chosen to complement each other, creating a contemporary expression whilst being harmonious with the location and the surrounding buildings without resorting to pastiche. The material selections for the proposed designs have been developed through an analysis of the materials used within the immediate area. This includes a rich mix of building types from traditional dwellings constructed in brick and stone, to contemporary rendered flat roofed dwellings.

The designs incorporate a high quality material palette that will weather well and stand the test of time. A limited palette of materials, with contrasting textures and colours, is intended to create an elegant scheme with a distinctive presence within the site.

3.0 Description of Proposals

3.3.6 Principles of the Design - Converted Apartments within main house

The proposals are for the conversion of the existing listed house into seven apartments. This involves the removal of lightweight partitioning which was installed during the 20th century by the convent in order to create a series of smaller rooms with sanitary facilities. The proposals involve the insertion of a lift to serve all levels.

Scale

The proposals do not alter the scale of the building - all alterations are contained within the existing external fabric. A garden deck is proposed on the rear garden facing elevation, above a basement car park level. The garden will be level with the existing ground floor and will be for the enjoyment of all apartment residents.

Appearance

The external appearance of the listed building will be largely unchanged, save for the repair of the existing external render which has become weathered and discoloured over time. The existing windows will be refurbished, as will the existing front door.

Internally the apartments have been designed to best utilise the primary rooms of the existing house. The 20th century lightweight partitions are proposed to be removed, and bar a small number of openings, the apartments utilise the original internal walls of the house, including incorporating features such as the large butlers cupboard at ground floor. At first floor again most of the lightweight partitions are removed and the original internal walls retained and worked around. On the second floor, very little remain of the original layout and it is proposed that a new layout is implemented to allow 2No apartments.

The entrance hall and internal rooflight is unaltered, save for the insertion of a lift within one of the dummy doorways on the rear elevation of the lobby.

The primary stairwells are unaltered.

Materials

The existing materials are retained and refurbished.



3.0 Description of Proposals

3.3.7 Principles of the Design - New Apartments

The new apartment block replaces the German Wing and connecting corridor which currently sits to the south of the main house. The new-build apartment block consists of two storeys of underground car parking (75 spaces in total), which three floors of two bed apartments, and a smaller top floor of three bed penthouse apartments. The new apartments are accessed either via the underground car park (and then via lift), or via the main entrance of the existing main house, and then via the connecting block.

Scale

The apartment block has been designed with several constraints in mind, notably the restraints of the setting of the adjacent listed house, its' position in the site set upon a higher 'knoll' (with levels that fall away to the rear), its location behind a dense screen of mature trees to Church Road, and its location next to several root protection zones. As can be seen on the sketch to the left, the massing has been designed to be complementary to the main house, with a narrower front elevation but a similar vertical proportion of window fenestration. A top storey is provided that is higher than the main house, but the large set-back of the top storey will significantly reduce the apparent reading of this from the site and surrounding areas.

Appearance

The proposed building is designed with a strong, regular grid of georgian-proportioned openings which lends the building a stoic solidity, complementary to the main house but not overbearing. This brickwork grid-facade is set forward of the main glazed facade of the building, which creates deep, generous balconies to all apartments. Selected openings are chosen to be double width which relate to internal primary living accommodation behind (living/dining/kitchen spaces). The western elevation incorporates steps which serve to manage the landscape transition from the lower to higher plateau, and the longer southern elevation is broken at 2/3 with a set-back for the fire escape stairs. Balconies overlook the garden deck on the north elevation, and a different facade treatment with the windows flush with the facade, is used on the east elevation.

Materials

This stoic solidity of the elevational treatment is further emphasised by a mature material palette - a good quality buff-multi brick set out to careful coursing pattern, with bronze metal ballustrades, and a warm timber lining to the balconies. Behind the balconies, the large glazed openings are formed using a bronze-colour alu-timber composite sliding window system

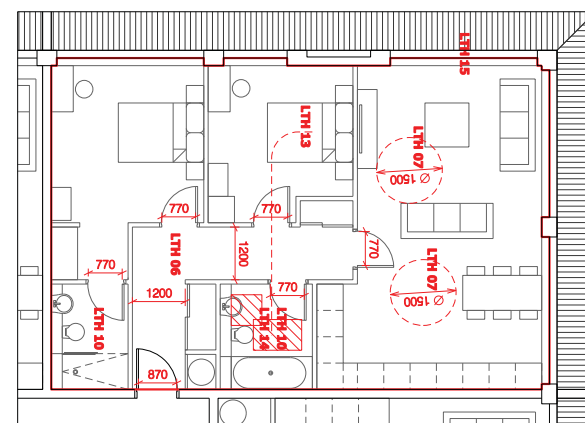
At the penthouse floor, a bronze metal roofing material caps the building with a lightweight, quality finish, with the elevations of the penthouses predominantly glazed with some ceramelite panels - all serving to make the top floor appear light and reflective.



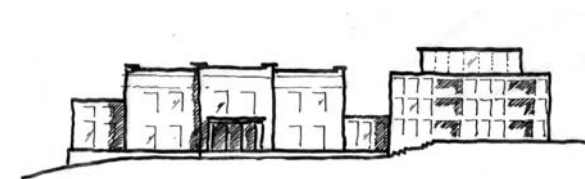
proposed first floor plan



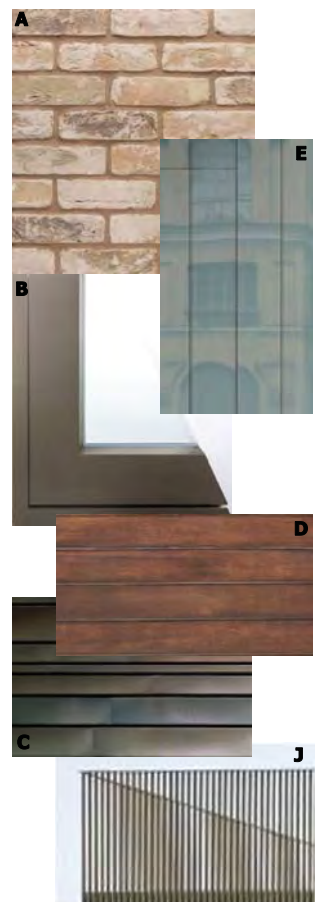
proposed elevations



Typical 2-bed apartment plan (LTH requirements in red)



sketch demonstrating overall building proportions and window proportions



3.0 Description of Proposals

3.3.8 Principles of the Design - Bespoke Greek Lodge gatehouse

The proposed Greek Lodge gatehouse is a unique, 4 bed house. The accommodation is arranged around existing Gate House. The plot incorporates 2 external car parking spaces to the side of the property. The layout is designed in accordance with Lifetime Homes standards.

Scale
The building is single storey. The size and scale of the new wing has been designed to be subsidiary to the historic building.

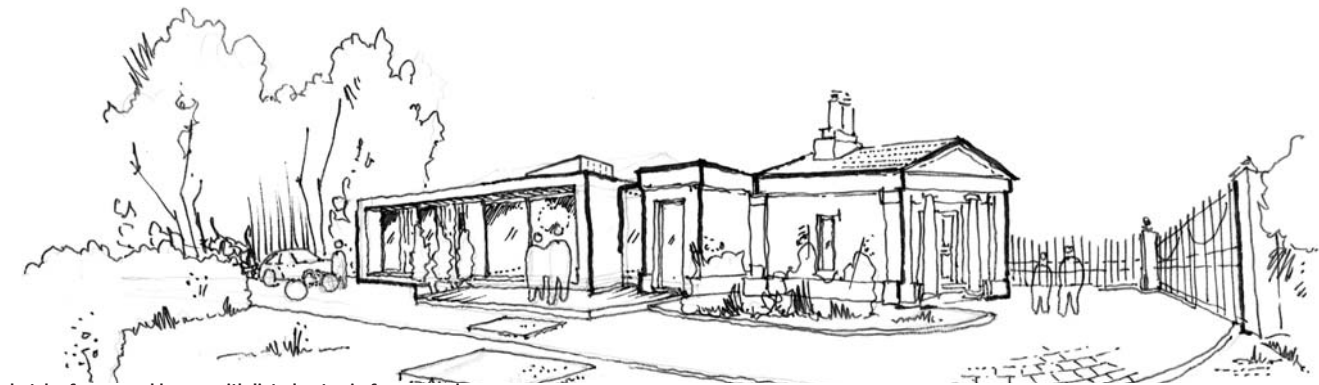
Appearance
The design of the new wing is contemporary so that it is clearly perceived as a later addition to the historic building.

The layout is designed with a small portion of accommodation in the gate house with a primary living space and bedrooms in the new wing facing the garden, with more private side gardens located at the each end of the ancillary wing. The curtilage of the dwelling is to be defined by estate railings so that the historic relationship and visual connection with Knolle House is retained.

Materials
The exterior of the historic element of the gate house is to be restored. The proposed primary materials of the new build wing are to be through coloured render with inset stone panels to complement the stucco of the original gate house. New flat roof areas are concealed behind a parapet, with a feature rooflight in dark grey standing-seam zinc.

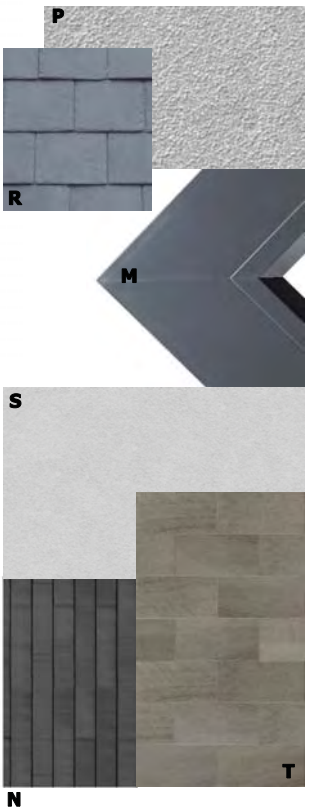


proposed plan and elevations



sketch of proposed house with listed gates in foreground

E. Greek lodge



3.0 Description of Proposals

3.3.9 Principles of the Design - Bespoke Orangery House

The proposed Orangery House is a unique, 4 bed house. The accommodation is arranged around the retained brick wall to the former walled garden, and the adjoining surviving base of the glasshouse/conservatory. The plot incorporates 2 external car parking spaces to the front of the property. The layout is designed in accordance with Lifetime Homes standards.

Scale

The building is single storey to reflect the scale, form and character of the orangery that would have previously occupied the site.

Appearance

The principal element of the house is a single storey glass box set on the glasshouse base, which provides a large open plan living space. The existing lean-to structures to the north of the brick wall are removed and replaced with a single storey flat roof volume that provides bedroom and ancillary accommodation. The overall form and appearance has been carefully considered so as to minimise the impact of the new elements of structure as viewed from Beaconsfield Road.

The layout is designed with primary living space facing the front garden, with more private side gardens located at the each end of the ancillary wing. The curtilage of the dwelling is to be defined by low level hedge planting so that the historic relationship and visual connection with Knolle House is retained.

Materials

The proposed primary materials are to be glass and dark grey aluminium wndow frames, with a refurbished brick spine wall, a red sandstone clad base, and a dark grey standing seam zinc roof with integrated glazed rooflight to the internal lightwell.



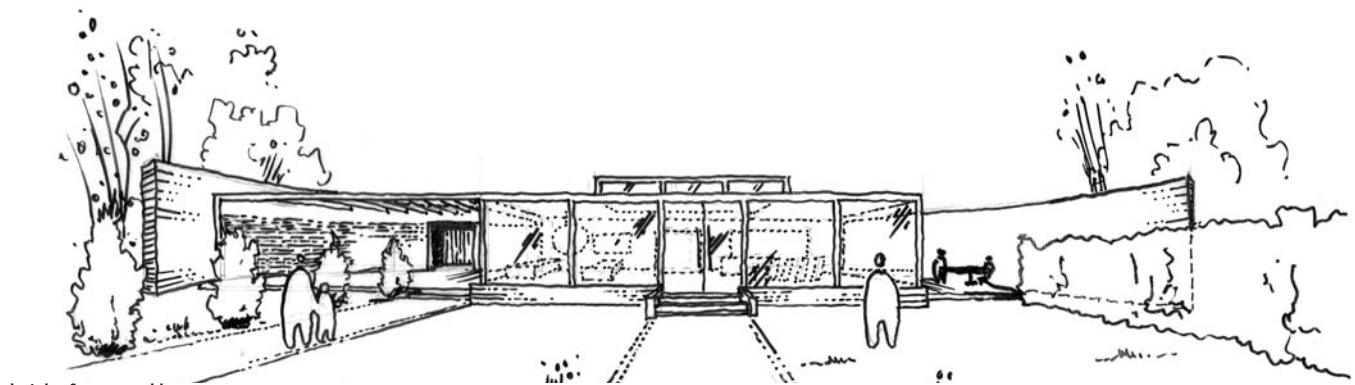
Proposed Front Elevation - SE (1:100)



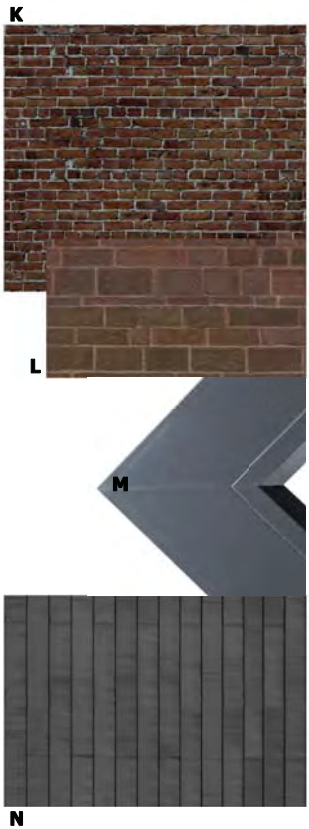
Proposed front and rear (from Beaconsfield Road) elevations



Proposed plan



sketch of proposed house



3.0 Description of Proposals

3.3.10 Principles of the Design - Attached villas

The proposed attached villas are two storey, 4 bed houses with 2 living spaces and integral single garages, as well as 2 external car parking spaces to the front of the property. Each dwelling has a front facing first floor terrace, and a private rear garden. The layouts are designed in accordance with Lifetime Homes standards.

Scale

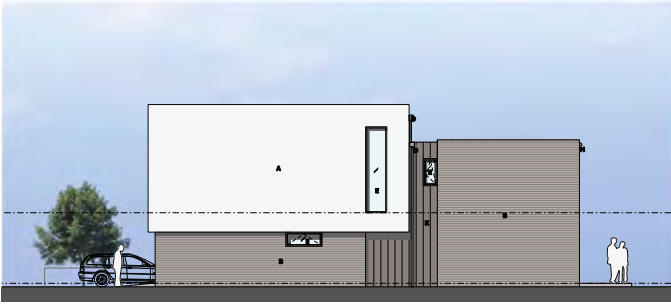
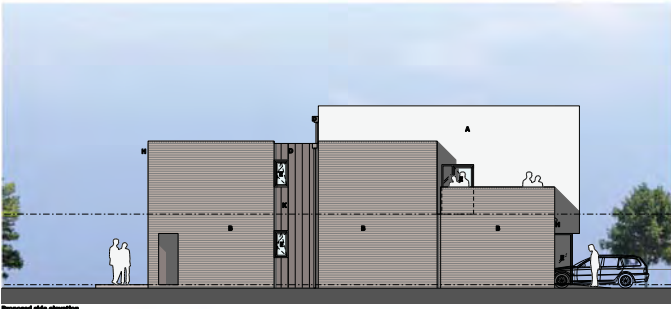
The buildings are two storeys and set in clusters of 2 and 3 units. The attached villas flank the 3 storey detached houses to the north and south site boundaries. The attached villas are 2 storeys in response to the scale of existing properties along Beaconsfield Road, and the adjacent single storey Orangery House.

Appearance

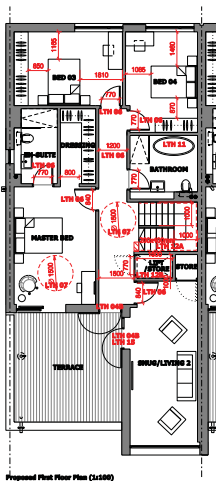
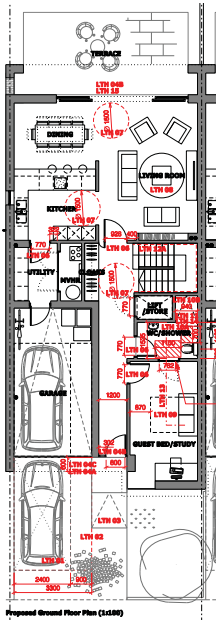
Each dwelling is designed as a contemporary, flat roofed house, arranged as a series of interlinked cubic volumes. A selection of carefully chosen materials acts to further reduce the overall visual mass. The front facing terrace and large first floor ‘picture window’ allows visual connection to the communal landscaped area whilst maintaining privacy. The layout is designed with primary living space facing the private rear garden. On the first floor, bedrooms facing both front and rear are complemented by a secondary living room.

Materials

The proposed primary materials are to be brick to ground and first floor, with a through- coloured render ‘box’ to the first floor. These are complemented by stained timber and bronze coloured metal wall cladding. Large window panels will be formed using alu-timber composite windows, with a predominantly vertical emphasis to echo the Georgian proportions of the listed main house, whilst serving to provide connection with the surrounding parkland.



Proposed front and rear (from Beaconsfield Road) elevations



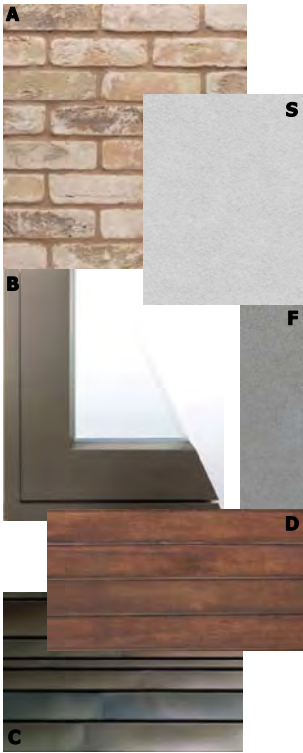
Proposed plan at 00 & 01



CGI of attached villas looking across central green



early sketch showing a terrace of attached villas



Material palette

3.0 Description of Proposals

3.3.11 Principles of the Design - Detached Houses

The proposed detached houses are three storey, 5 bed houses with 2 living spaces and integral double garages, as well as 2 external car parking spaces to the front of the property. The houses have two front facing balconies, and a large private rear garden. The houses have been designed to meet the Lifetime Homes standard

Scale

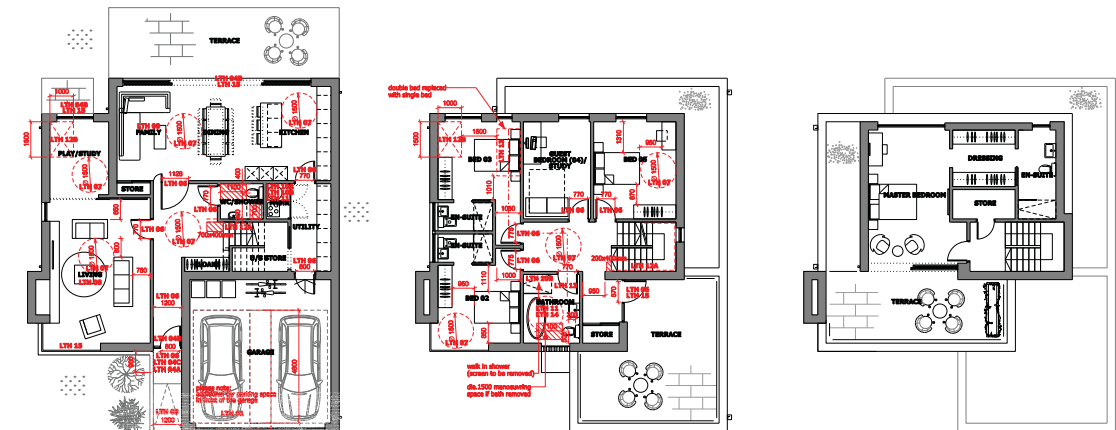
The buildings are three storeys and serve to act as a backdrop to the central green landscaped space - deliberately higher than the flanking two storey attached villa houses. The houses have sufficient space in between each house, and are a sufficient distance away from the houses on Baroncroft so as not to dominate or impinge on the existing rear gardens. The minimum back to back distances (habitable room to habitable room) are 25m (to number 9 Baroncroft), with most being 33m plus.

Appearance

Each dwelling is designed as a contemporary, flat roofed house, arranged as a series of 'broken down' cubic volumes, with a selection of carefully chosen materials which act to further reduce the overall mass. The tall chimney serves to add vertical emphasis to the front elevation, and the two front facing balconies allow connection to the communal landscaped area. The layout is designed with primary living space facing the private rear garden, with a 'through' living room providing views to both the front and rear. On the first floor, bedrooms face both front and rear, and on the smaller second floor is the master suite with front facing balcony.

Materials

The proposed materials are to be ashlar cut stone on selected elements at ground floor, brick to ground and first floor, and bronze-colour metal cladding to first and second floor. Large window panels will be formed using alu-timber composite windows, with a predominantly vertical emphasis to echo the Georgian proportions of the listed main house, whilst serving to provide connection with the surrounding parkland.



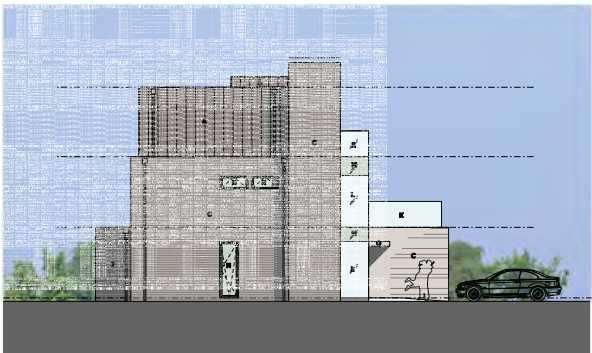
Proposed plans at ground, first and second floors



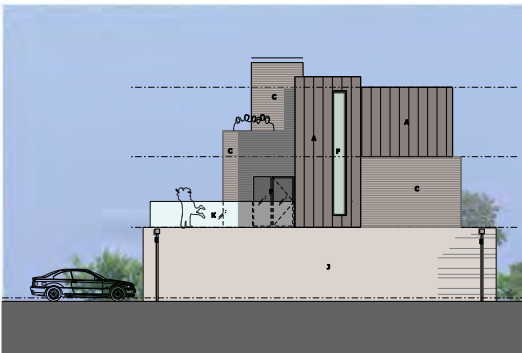
Proposed Front Elevation (1:400)



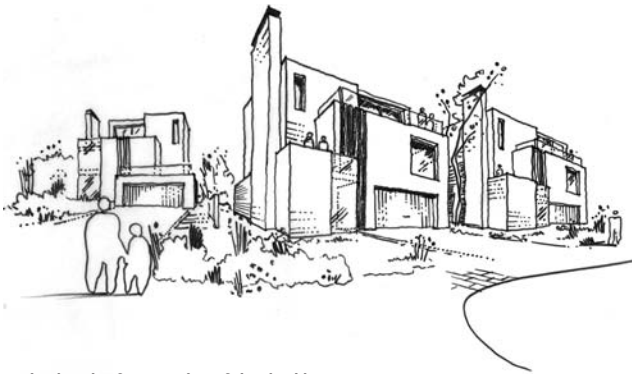
Proposed Rear Elevation (1:400)



Proposed elevations of detached house type 1



CGI of detached houses looking across the central green



early sketch of two styles of detached house



Material palette