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RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT/
FORMER WOOLTON LIBRARY
ALLERTON ROAD
WOOLTON L25

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

LPA ISSUE 18.10.2016

DOCUMENT ISSUE SHEET

DATE	STATUS	NOTES
10.02.2016	Pre-application	LPA issue for pre-application enquiry reference 0047/16.
25.04.2016	Pre-application	Preliminary client issue for comment.
01.07.2016	Application	LPA issue in support of applications for Planning Permission & Listed Building Consent
18.10.2016	Application	LPA issue in support of applications for Planning Permission & Listed Building Consent

INTRODUCTION

This statement accompanies applications for Planning Permission & Listed Building Consent for the alteration, refurbishment, and conversion works to change the use of the vacant former Woolton Library, Allerton Road, Woolton L25.

The applications have been prepared by MgMaStudio Ltd. on behalf of the applicant and building owners, Ms Lay Yuan Lim and Mr Matthew Coughlan, who have purchased the building with a view to refurbishing and converting to comprise their new home. The Grade II Listed structure has stood vacant following the closure of the library in 2013.

The property is situated within a predominantly residential area, in the Woolton Village Conservation Area.

The site comprises three linked structures, accessed by way of common external steps to entrances at upper and lower ground levels.

The main building comprises a two storey structure of masonry construction with dressed sandstone facing to all elevations, a pitched slate roof with gable facing Allerton Road, with openings to front, side (facing Chapel Place), and rear elevations.

The ancillary structures comprise a lower ground entrance lobby with a mid-C20 concrete roof, linking to a set of rear outbuildings which abut the boundary.

This statement has been prepared with reference to the guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 128, which states:

Local Planning Authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Accordingly, this statement provides the following information to assist the LPA in the consideration of the enquiry:

- a description of the heritage asset/setting
- a description of the proposed development, including an assessment of the potential impact on the heritage asset

A previous scheme was submitted for pre-application feedback to the local authority, reference number 0047/16.



NAME: WOOLTON LIBRARY

LIST ENTRY NUMBER: 1356271

GRADE: II

LIST ENTRY DESCRIPTION: Methodist chapel and cellar dwellings, now Library. Early C19. Stone with slate roof. One storey with basement 2 x 2 bays. Top cornice and pediment. Windows have flat surrounds and are sashed with glazing bars. Entrance in left return. Plain iron area railings.

CONTEXTUAL STUDIES



The main building defines the street edge, the prominent gable a marker of the Chapel typology.

The main building is in reasonable physical condition, with some evidence of water penetration to the eaves at the junction with the adjacent terraced dwelling. Entrance to the upper and lower ground floors is by way of the external steps from Allerton Road.

There is evidence of spalling to the face of the stonework on the front and side elevations, the short return to the adjacent terraced dwelling is particularly affected. Evidence of lime mortar pointing can be observed throughout, however certain sections have been repaired using cementitious mortar, with an ultimately deleterious effect on the surrounding blocks. Discussions with the local authority revealed that the side elevation and front parapet frieze have been repointed in lime under the direction of a Conservation Officer.

CONTEXTUAL STUDIES



View of Chapel Place
towards Allerton Road
showing boundary/ retaining wall

The setting of the main building is defined by the perimeter ancillary structures at lower ground level, together with the stepped access to the front. The sandstone entrance steps are supported by facing brickwork retaining walls, which continue along the boundary to Chapel Place.

The character and materiality of the setting contrasts with the Woolton sandstone facing masonry of the main building.

1. Yorkstone steps at entrance with iron railings
2. Rear facing brickwork boundary wall
3. External 'lobby' between main building (sandstone) and rear outbuildings (painted facing brickwork)
4. Side extension (early C20) with concrete roof and rooflights

CONTEXTUAL STUDIES

The photograph right shows the setting prior to 1886, with the entrance central to the front elevation as per the Wesleyan Chapel configuration.

This entrance was subsequently infilled and a new, side entrance, extensions and steps formed circa 1924, from which date the building was used as a library. The image below left shows the interior of the ground floor reading room. Below right can be seen the modified exterior in library configuration.

Source: Paul, David. *Woolton Through Time* (2nd Ed.). Amberley Publishing (Stroud, 2009).



DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development may be in outline described as follows:

- Refurbishment & conversion of main building to change the use from vacant D1 (non-residential institution (library)) to C3a dwellinghouse
- Demolition of side entrance steps and outbuilding/ boundary wall, formation of new parking area, and erection of bespoke entrance extension
- Demolition of rear outbuildings to form courtyard garden for the new dwelling

The proposed demolitions are limited to those external elements added to facilitate the use as a library, the justification for which is the improved external amenity, and therefore the setting, of the main building. The improved external amenity is important in enabling the viable use of the building as a dwelling, and thus safeguarding its future.

Internal alterations include formation of new partitions, a new staircase, together with refurbishment works associated with upgrading the existing fabric, such as insulated dry lining, and the installation of a membrane-based waterproofing system at below ground level.

When considering the conversion of the space, care has been taken to respect the character and integrity of the principle upper ground floor space. Built as a Methodist Chapel, and most recently used as a branch library, the upper ground floor space has retained the quality of an assembly space. For this reason, the interventions at this floor are deliberately restricted in height; all partitions are three-quarter height, meaning that the sense of the complete volume is maintained.

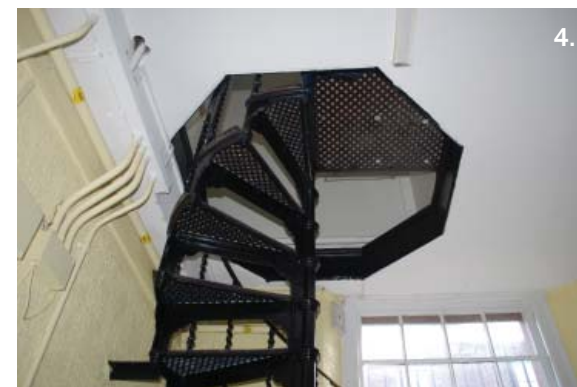
1. Concept sketch showing three quarter partition approach to maintaining open character of upper ground floor space
2. View of interior showing elevation with casement windows
3. View of interior showing elevation with box sash windows
4. Existing cast iron spiral staircase to be removed



1.



2.

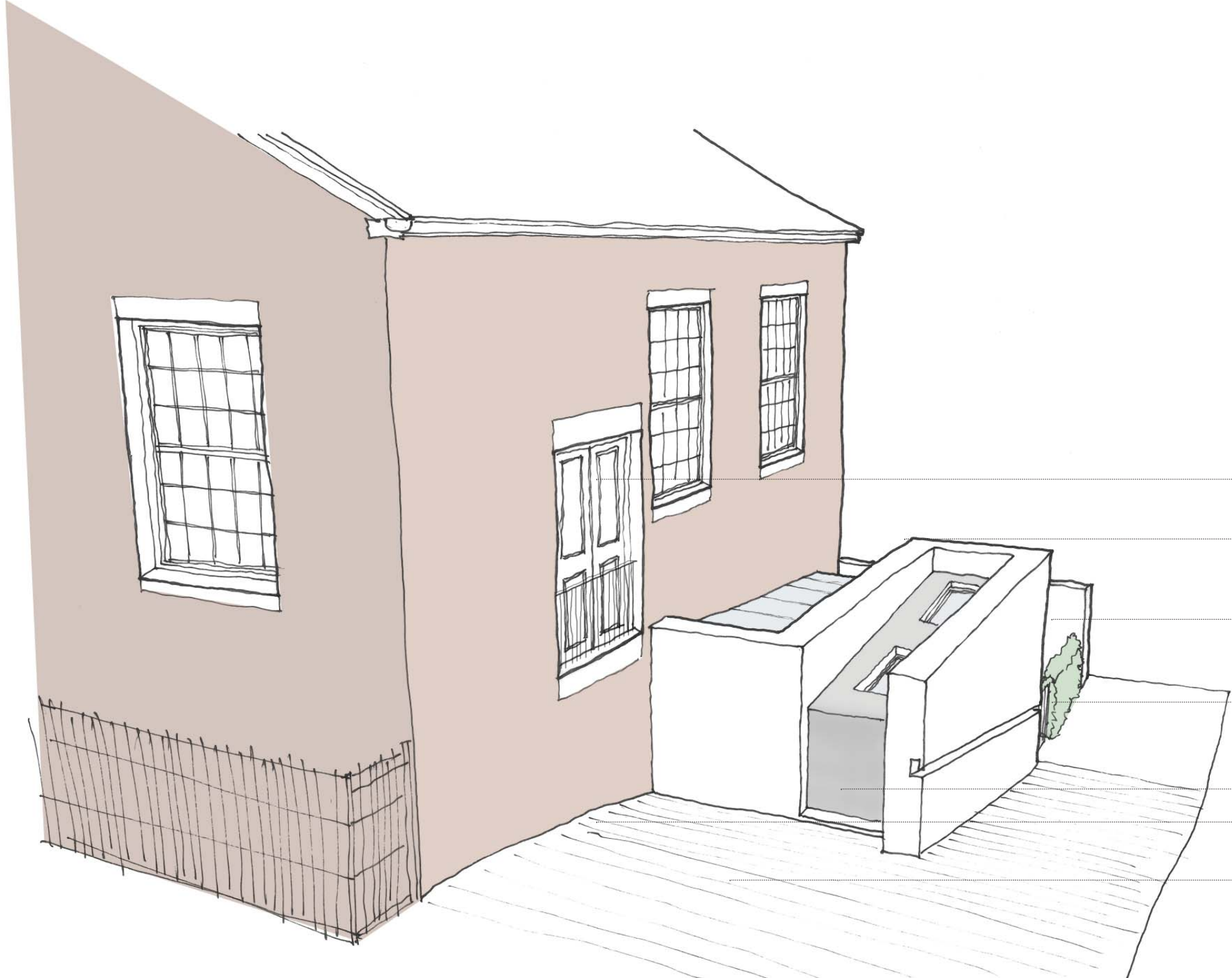


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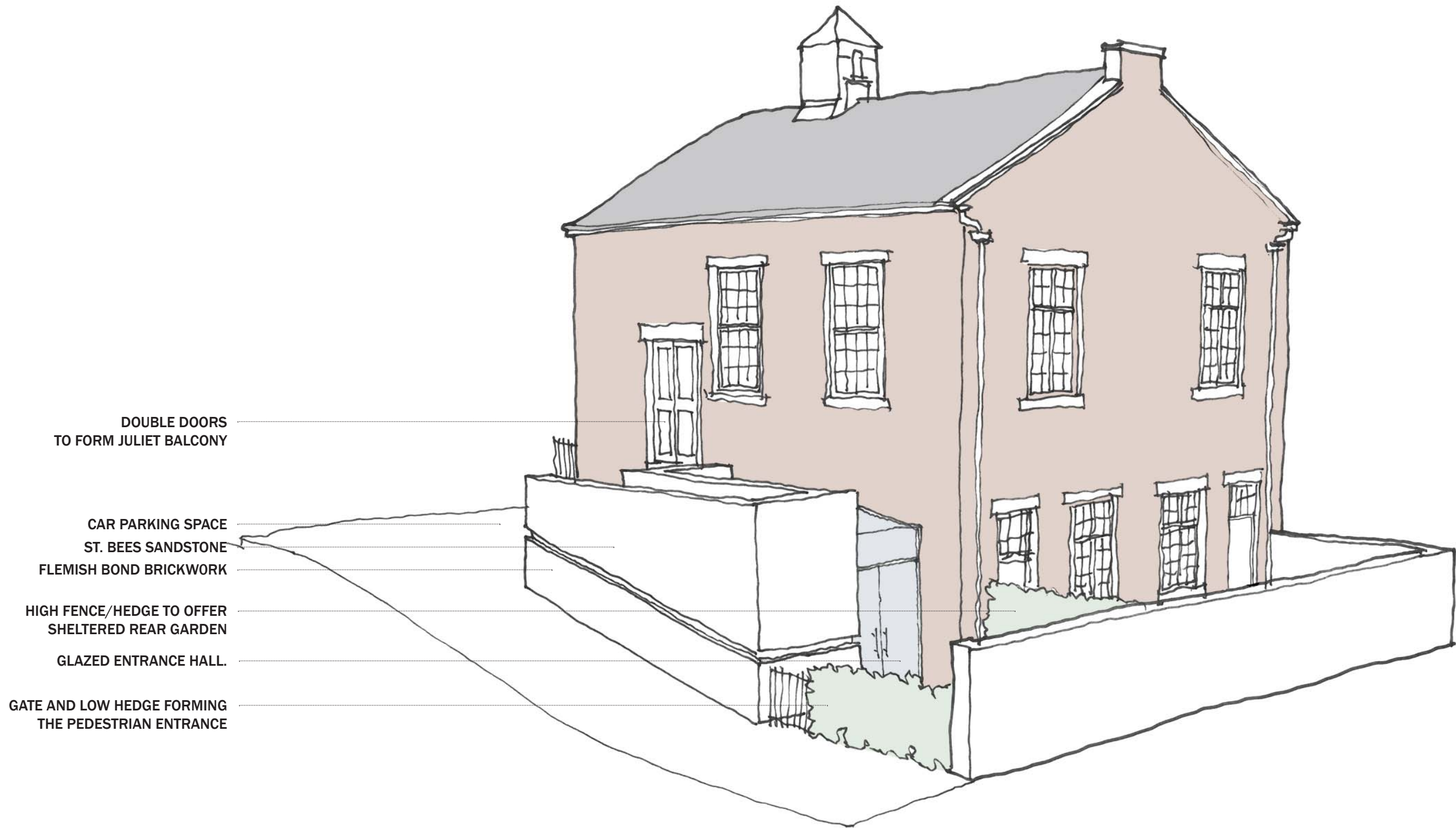
4.

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT



- DOUBLE DOORS
TO FORM JULIET BALCONY
- HEIGHT OF PROPOSED WALL TO
BE NO HIGHER THAN EXISTING
STRUCTURE
- EXISTING BOUNDARY WALL
REDUCED IN HEIGHT TO
MAXIMISE SUNLIGHT
- HEDGE AND GATE TO FORM
'FRONT' GARDEN
- TIMBER ROOF CLADDING
- EXISTING EXTERNAL STAIR
REMOVED
- CAR PARKING SPACE

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT



DOUBLE DOORS
TO FORM JULIET BALCONY

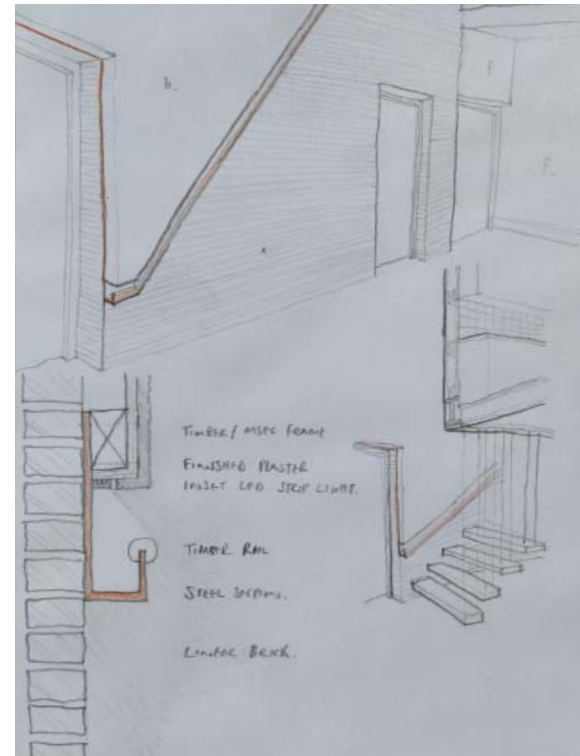
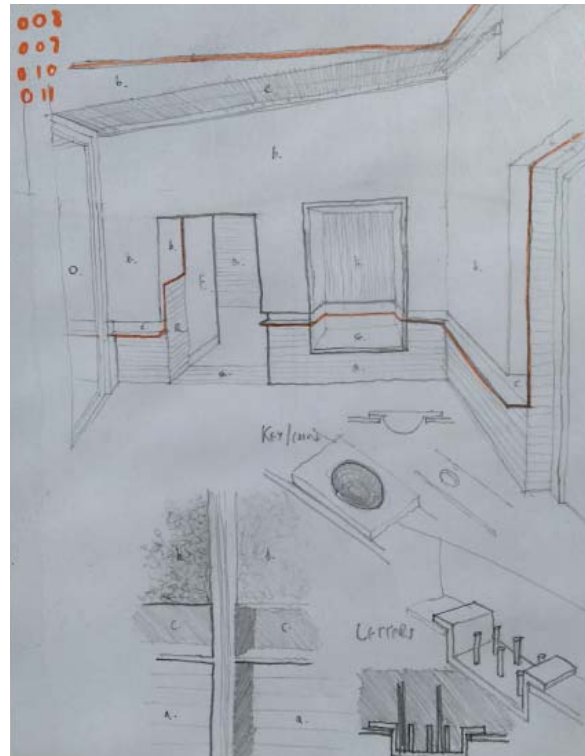
CAR PARKING SPACE
ST. BEES SANDSTONE
FLEMISH BOND BRICKWORK

HIGH FENCE/HEDGE TO OFFER
SHELTERED REAR GARDEN

GLAZED ENTRANCE HALL.

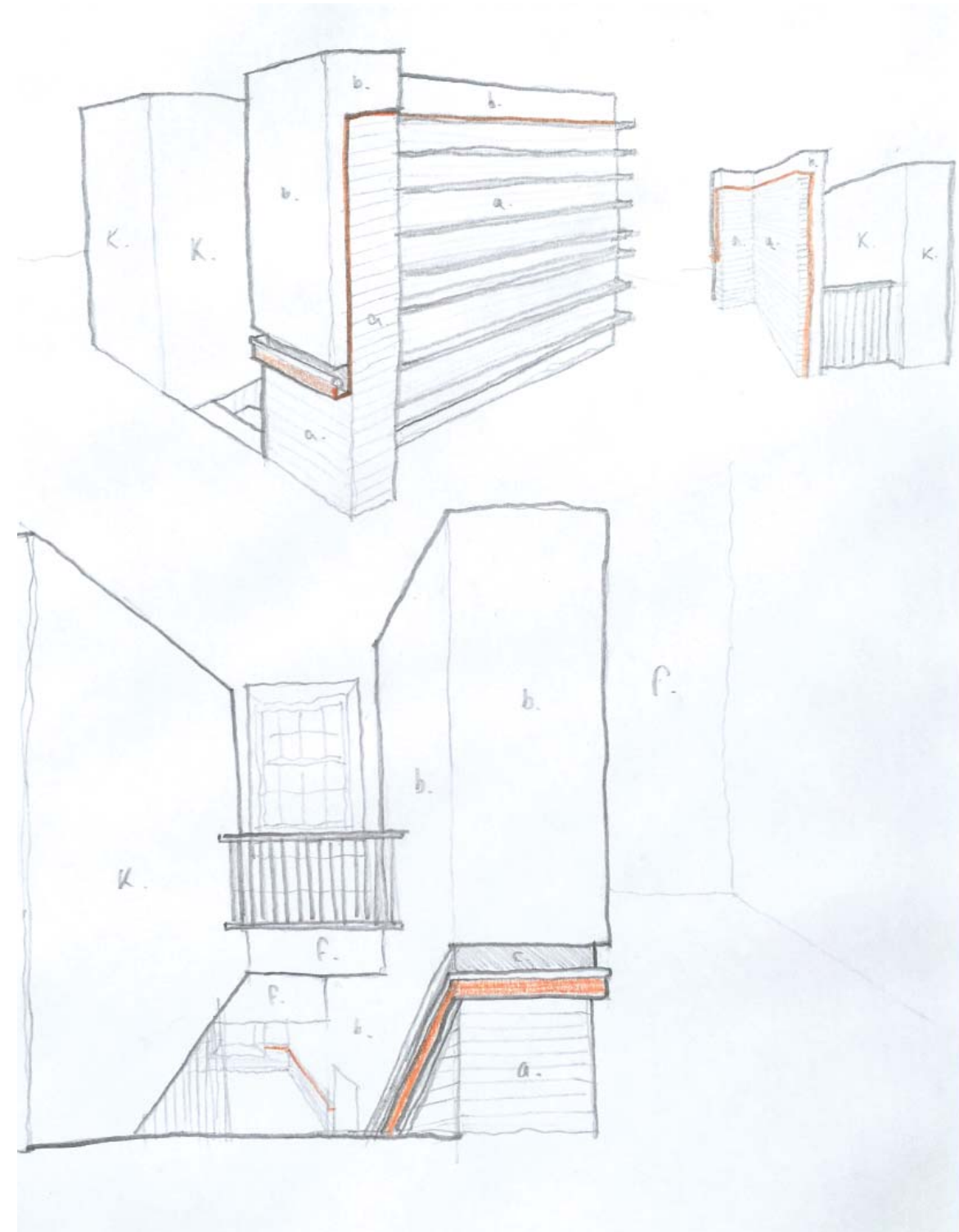
GATE AND LOW HEDGE FORMING
THE PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCE

CONCEPT DESIGN DEVELOPMENT



The elevation to Chapel Place is an amplified essay in the materiality of Woolton; sandstone and facing brickwork in Flemish bond. The narrative thread is here a literal thread; a steel bracket separates the materials, and guides the visitor down to the entrance as a handrail, before drawing into the interior circulation, repeating the handrail detail on the new staircase. The architecture thus establishes a tactility which unifies the exterior and interior through the unbroken line intervention.

Framing openings, providing support as a handrail, defining the niche of a seat, the unbroken line is a continuous device which characterises the new intervention within the historic fabric.



CONCEPT DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

ACCESS

The new extension is a distinct intervention into the Listed building, a linear insertion which at once demarcates the entrance, provides utility and service accommodation, and redefines the means of vertical circulation.

The new entrance represents the third means of access for the property, each in turn linked to the contemporaneous use.

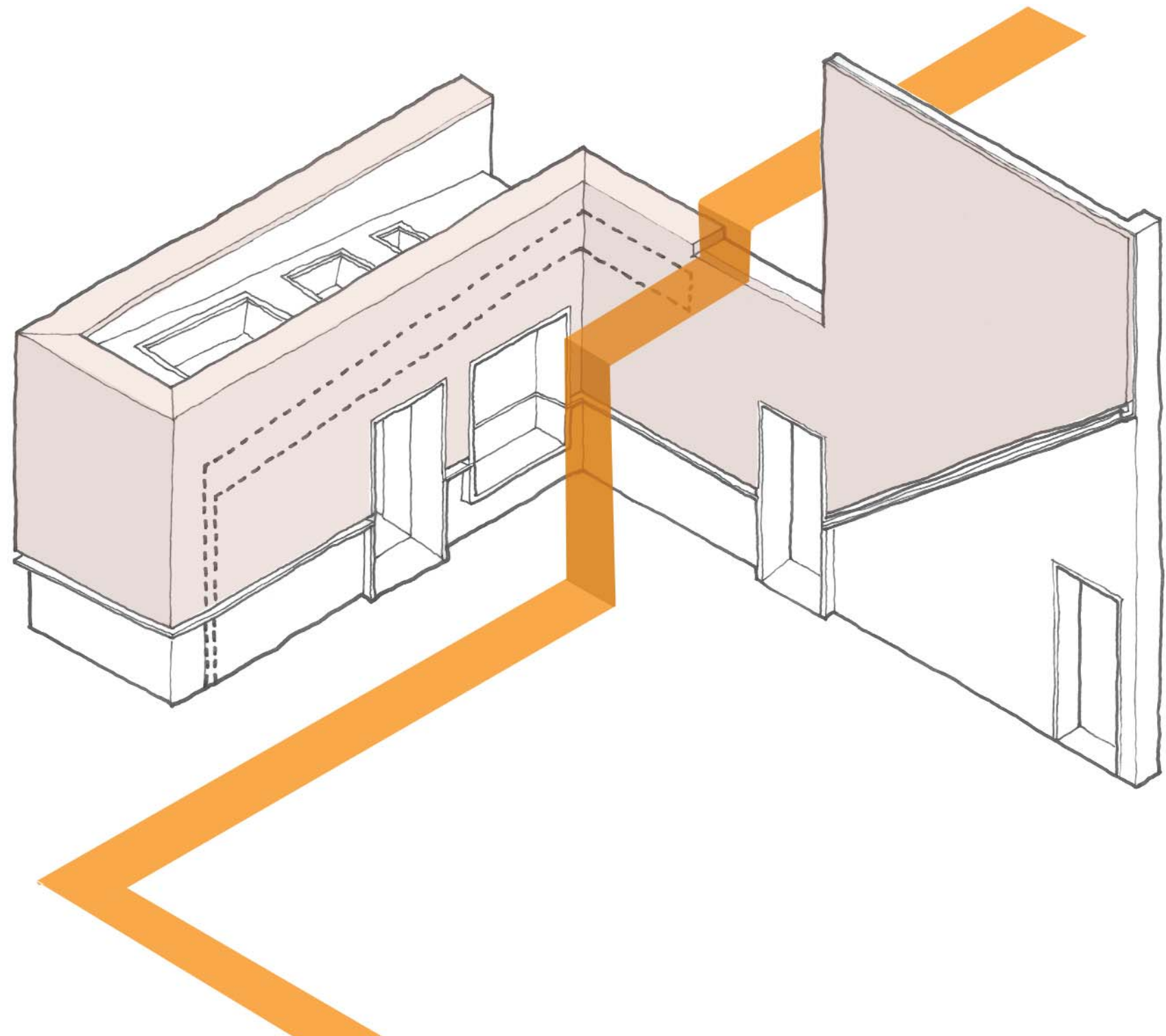
The original entrance is no longer visible, being from Allerton Road in the centre of the elevation, as noted earlier. This entrance served the ecclesiastical use of the building.

The second entrance, to the side elevation, related to the use of the building as a Public Library, and is somewhat pedestrian in nature compared to the sandstone of the main building.

The third entrance, which replaces the side entrance steps, shifts the principal means of access for the dwelling to the lower ground floor level of the property. The line draws the visitor down Chapel Alley, into the courtyard garden, and in to the building interior, shifting perpendicularly to pass through the monolithic sandstone of the existing building, before rising to ground floor as the staircase.

The new entrance provides for step-free access to the lower ground floor of the property, which features sanitary provision in accordance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations.

The unbroken line wall element, which supports the new staircase, may easily be adapted to carry a stairlift if required. The development has therefore considered future adaption to meet the changing needs of potential future occupiers.



SCALE/ FORM/ SETTING

APPEARANCE

The minimal height of the new extension, the clarity of the design concept, and the quality of the facing materials, can be seen to significantly enhance of the setting of both the Listed Building, and the wider Conservation Area.

Key views between broken rows of housing perpendicular to the street are a characteristic feature of the context, and the proposed development enhances this by reducing the mass of built fabric at Chapel Place.

The demolition of the rear outbuildings also offers significant benefits to the setting of the Listed Building, revealing for the first time in nearly a century the full height of the rear gable elevation unimpeded.



SCALE/ FORM/ SETTING

View showing improved openness at Chapel Place, together with the contextually responsive materiality of the new extension.



SCALE/ FORM/ SETTING

View from the rear in Chapel Place, showing the descending line drawing the visitor to the entrance, the offset mass of the extension against the existing elevation, and the significantly improved external amenity space for the dwelling.



SCALE/ FORM/ SETTING

The cutaway view shown right illustrates how the new intervention is a singular architecture; both internal and external elements are defined by the unbroken line, a thread of contextually defined materiality.

The proposed development seeks to provide a viable new use for a vacant Listed Building, achieved through a design of high quality, and it is respectfully requested that the local authority support the applications for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent.

