Rose Avenue

Planning, Design & Access Statement

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BAILY GARNER

Gravesham Borough Council

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CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.1 Site Location - wider context
2.2 Wider Context
2.3 Site Location
2.4 Existing site
2.5 Existing Site Sections
2.6 Site Analysis
2.7 Site Photos
2.8 Typology & Materiality Analysis
2.9 Constraints
2.10 Opportunities
2.11 Tree Survey and Impact Assessment
2.12 Flood Risk

3.0 Design Evolution

3.1 Pre - Application Meeting
3.2 Post Pre - Application Response
3.3 Public Consultation
3.4 Design Development and Elevational Studies
3.5 Planning Policy
3.6 Design for Gravesham Design Code

4.0 The Proposed Development

4.1 Site Layout
4.2 Roof Plan
4.3 Heights
4.4 Overlooking and Separation distances
4.5 Use and Amount
4.6 Access, Parking and Cycle Store Strategy
4.7 Refuse strategy
4.8 Fire and Emergency Vehicle Access
4.9-17 Landscape Design
4.18 Sustainable approach to the development
4.19 Elevations – Design Intent
4.20 Material Palette Proposal
4.21 Scale
4.22 Sample Flat Layouts
4.23 Accessible Homes

5.0 Summary

5.1 Closing Statement

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1.0
Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Baily Garner Architects to accompany a detailed planning application submitted on behalf of Gravesham Borough Council for the redevelopment of the site at Rose Avenue, Gravesend.

The vision for the project is to deliver a high-quality, sustainable residential development that responds to the significant demand for housing within the borough. The Council is committed to increasing the provision of affordable homes, with the aim of reducing the number of households currently on the housing register and addressing the high levels of temporary accommodation usage.

As part of a wider strategic initiative, the Council is assessing underutilised sites across the borough to identify opportunities for redevelopment that can contribute meaningfully to local housing needs. The Rose Avenue site has been identified as a key opportunity, given that a substantial portion of the land is currently underused.

This document demonstrates that the site has the potential to accommodate a greater number of family homes. The existing 16 older-style dwellings are to be replaced with 29 new, high-quality, energy-efficient homes. This will not only increase the total number of homes by 13 but, more importantly, ensure that 76% of the new units are appropriately sized for families—addressing a critical area of housing demand.

This Statement outlines the design rationale and strategic objectives underpinning the proposal, including architectural approach, landscape design, and the treatment of external spaces. It also provides an overview of the site context, constraints, and the design development process that has informed the proposed scheme.

NOTE
Red line boundary is illustrative, refer to submitted drawings

2.0
The Site & Analysis

2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.1 Site Location - wider context

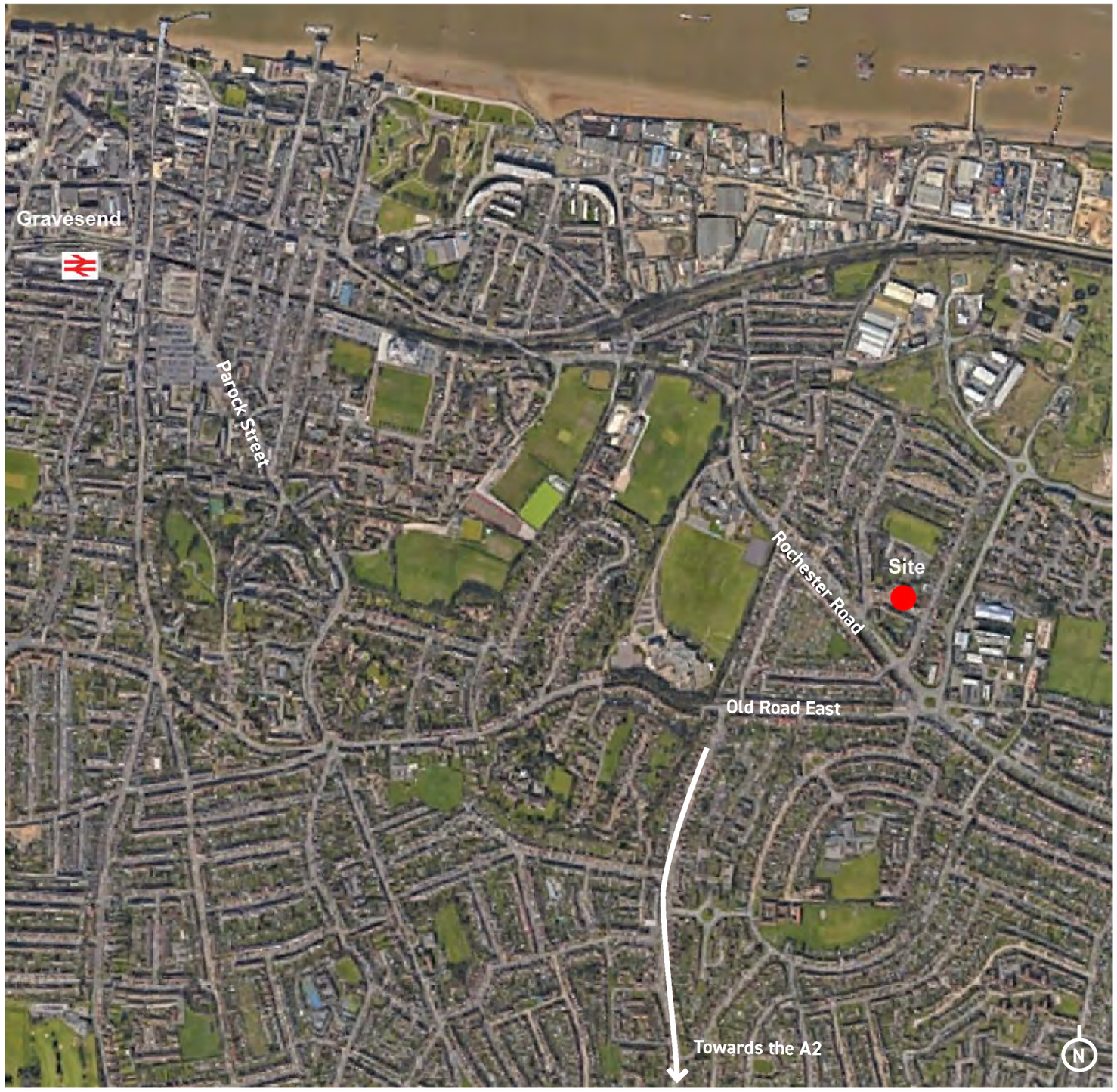
Transport & Accessibility

The application site is located to the south-east of the historic town of Gravesend, within the Borough of Gravesham. It lies less than one mile east of Gravesend Town Centre and approximately two miles north of the A2, offering convenient access to the wider road network.

Gravesend Railway Station, situated in the town centre, is approximately 2 km west of the site and can be reached via a 15-minute cycle ride. In addition, regular bus services along Rochester Road provide direct public transport links to the station.

Gravesend Station is well-connected, offering high-speed rail services to London St Pancras International and the Medway Towns. Frequent local services also provide access to intermediate destinations, including direct routes to London Charing Cross and Cannon Street via Dartford.

The site benefits from excellent public transport connectivity, with several bus stops located within a short walking distance. These routes serve key destinations including Gravesend Town Centre, Bluewater Shopping Centre, Dartford, and a number of surrounding villages and residential areas.



2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.2 Wider Context

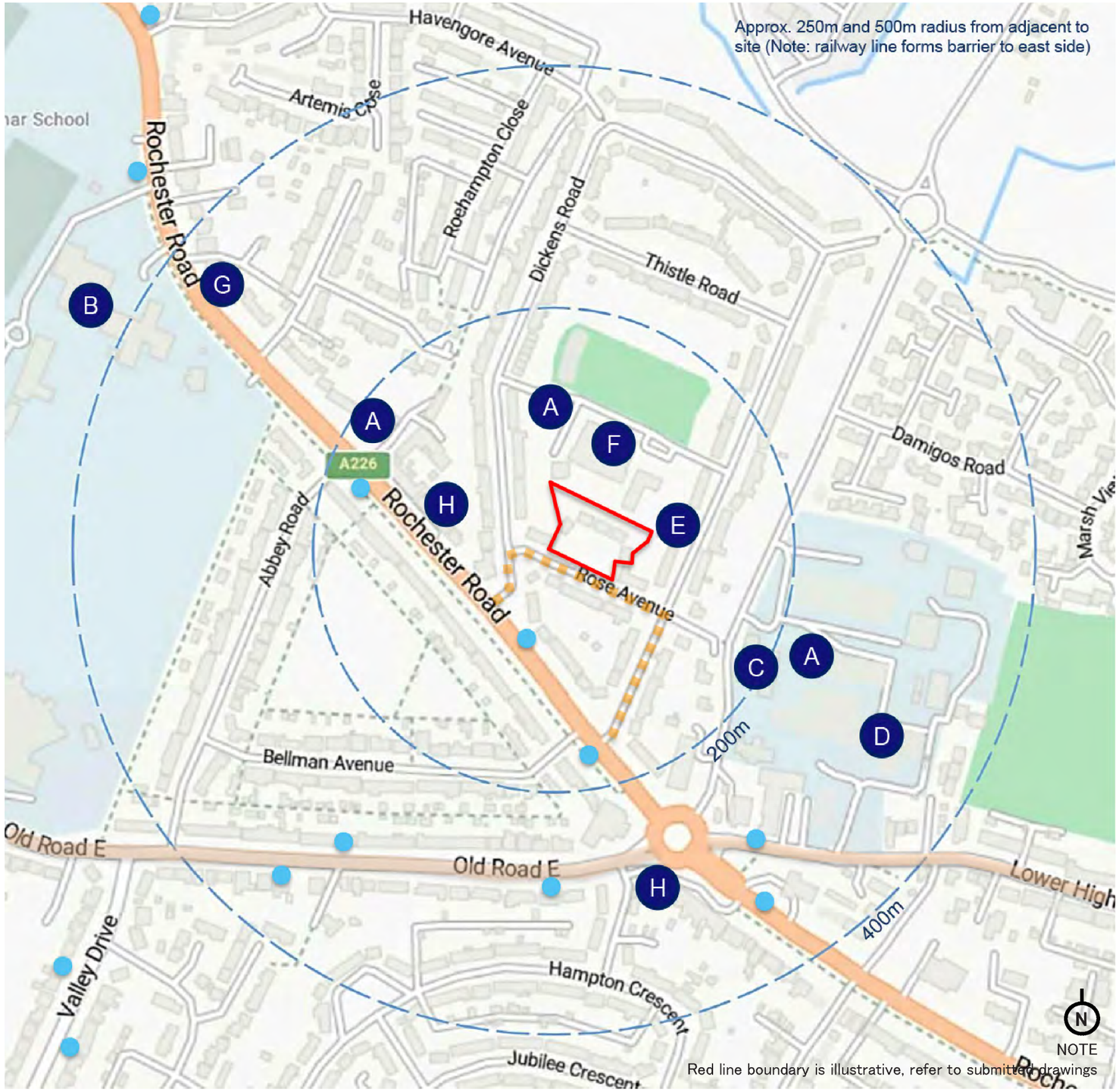
Local Amenities

The site benefits from proximity to a range of local amenities, all within walking distance. These include public open spaces such as recreation grounds, parks, and children's play areas, which contribute positively to the quality of life for future residents. While there is no defined high street in the immediate vicinity, several convenience stores and local businesses are located nearby. The Denton and Rochester Road local centres are situated to the north-west and south-east of the site respectively, both within a few minutes' walk.

A variety of community and recreational facilities are also easily accessible, including the Riverside Community Centre and Children's Centre. Educational institutions in close proximity include St John's Catholic Primary School and North Kent College, providing options for both primary and further education.

In terms of transport infrastructure, Rochester Road serves as a primary distributor route and is well-served by public transport. Bus stops are located at regular intervals along the road, with the nearest—Lion Garage bus stop—approximately 15 minutes from the site. Services run at 10-minute intervals and provide direct connections to Gravesend Town Centre, Dartford, Bluewater Shopping Centre, and Chatham, ensuring convenient travel options for future residents.

- Bus stop
- A Nursery
- B St John's Primary School
- C Ifield School
- D North Kent College
- E Riverside Children's Centre
- F Riverside Community - Resource Trust
- G Church
- H Local Shops



2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.3 Site Location

The Immediate Context

The application site is located within a predominantly residential urban area, characterised by two-storey dwellings of varying types and sizes. The surrounding built form comprises a mix of terraced and semi-detached housing, contributing to a well-established neighbourhood setting.

The development site is bounded by residential properties to both the east and west, and is framed by three local roads, providing clear access and integration with the existing street network.

To the north of the site lies the Riverside Children's Centre, which includes a recreation ground and a dedicated children's play area. This facility enhances the local amenity offer and provides valuable community infrastructure within close proximity to the proposed development.

2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.4 Existing Site

Current Uses

The site is currently occupied by three pairs of maisonettes, two pairs of semi-detached and one end-of-terrace house, forming part of the existing residential block at 1–7 Rose Avenue. In total, there are 17 residential units on the site, arranged around a central hardstanding area with patches of green and three small trees.

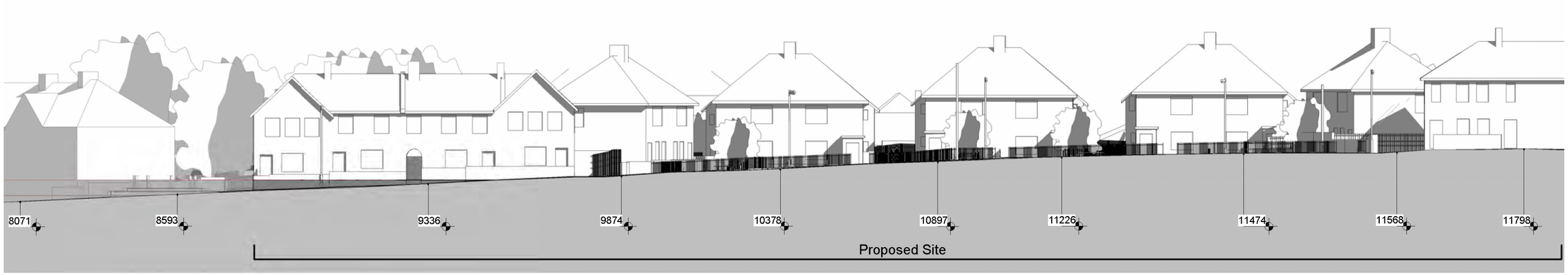
The existing housing stock is of an older style and does not fully utilise the potential of the site. The layout and condition of the current dwellings, along with the underused central space, present an opportunity for comprehensive redevelopment to better meet contemporary housing needs and improve the overall quality of the built environment.

There are a number of trees that are located around the perimeter of the site, contributing to the character and visual amenity of the area. These trees have been carefully considered as part of the design and planning process. Further details regarding the assessment of existing trees, their condition, and how they have influenced the proposed layout and landscaping strategy are provided later in this document.

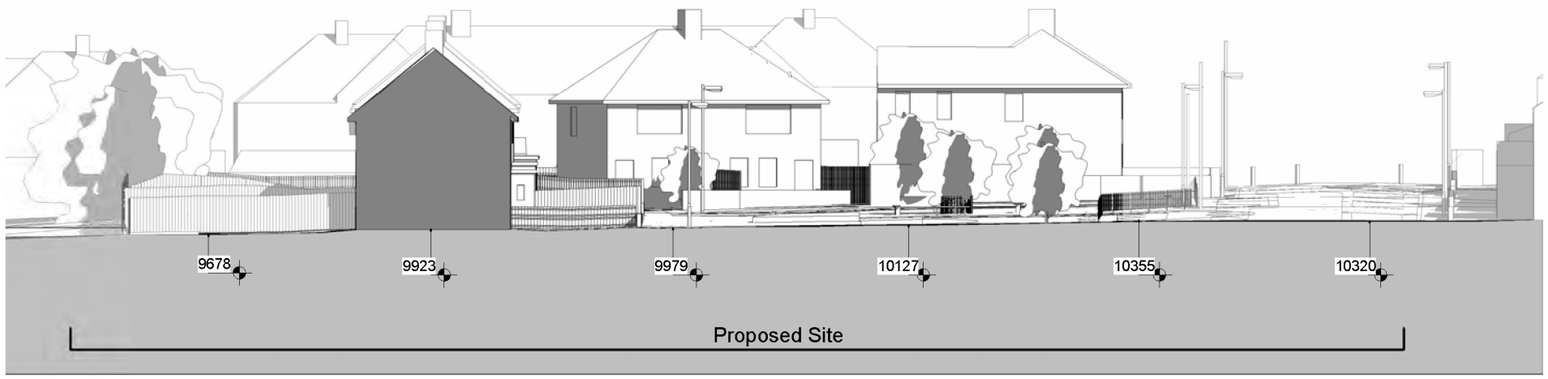
Site Area	4015sq.m = 0.40Ha	
Density	43U/HA	
Existing residential units to be demolished		16
Existing residential units to be retained		1
Existing garages to be demolished		0
Total Number of Bedspaces		49
Total Existing Number Units		17

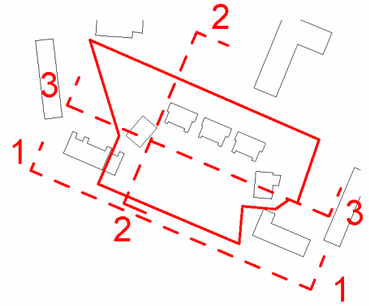
2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.5 Existing Site Sections

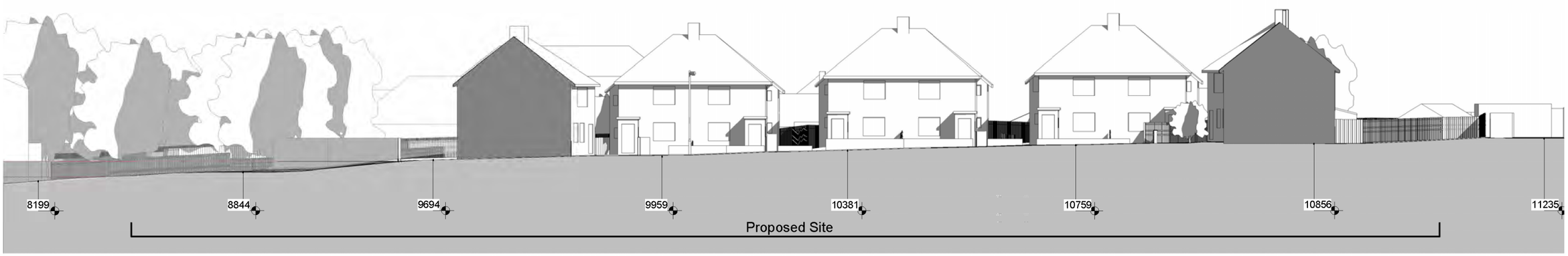


Existing Site Section 1





Existing Site Section 2

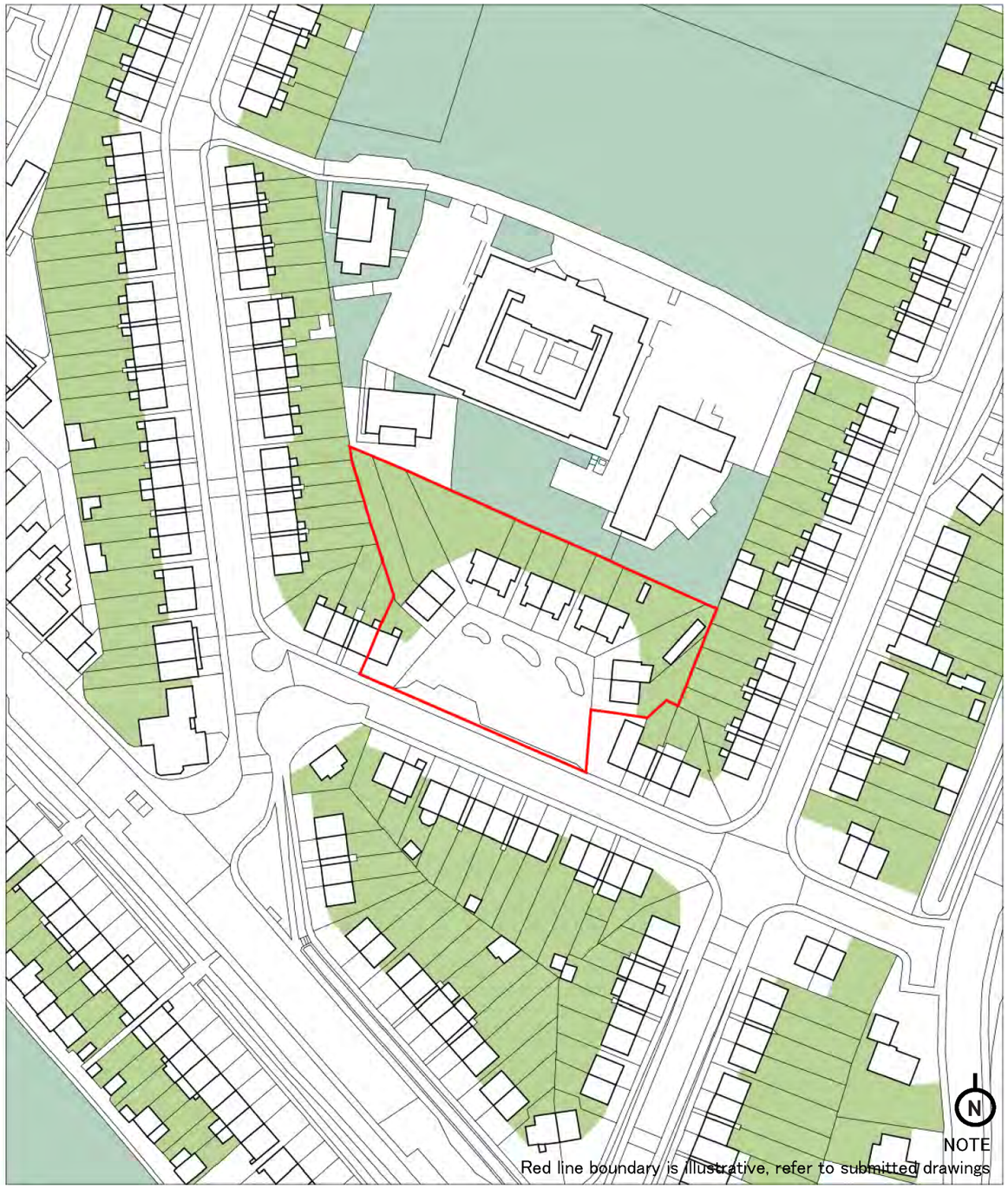


Existing Site Section 3

2.6 Building Heights and Urban Grain

Site Boundary | 1 Storey | 2 Storey | 3 Storey | Built Form

2.6 Site Analysis - Building Uses and Green Space



Site Boundary | Residential | Retail | Community | Public Green Space | Private Garden

2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.7 Existing Site Photos

Key Plan

1 View looking at 1-7 terraced houses at Rose Ave from Dickens Road

2 View looking east up Rose Avenue from Dickens Road.

3 View looking east along Rose Avenue towards Ifield school.

4 View looking west along Rose Avenue.

5 View looking at northern boundary treatment from Riverside Centre.

6 View looking at northern boundary treatment from Riverside Centre.

2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.7 Site Photos

Key Plan

7 View looking at 1-7 terraced houses at Rose Avenue.

8 View looking east up Rose Avenue.

9 View looking into southern boundary of site.

10 View looking northwest at existing semi-detached houses on site.

11 View looking northeast at existing semi-detached houses on site.

12 View looking north within playground.

2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.8 Existing Typology & Materiality Analysis

The site is located within a residential area that features a mix of architectural styles, building typologies, and massing. The surrounding context includes both two-storey houses and three-storey blocks of flats, contributing to a varied urban fabric.

Materials commonly found in the area include red and buff colour brickwork, cladding, and white-framed windows, which collectively define the prevailing aesthetic. Many of the terraced houses exhibit a combination of rendered and pebbledash finishes in pale creams and yellow tones, with original brickwork often obscured.

Architectural detailing tends to follow a consistent rhythm, with vertically proportioned windows and bay features contributing to a coherent streetscape. This varied yet harmonious character has informed the design approach for the proposed development, ensuring it responds sensitively to its context while enhancing the visual quality of the area.

Key Plan

A Jubilee Court - Rose Avenue

B Terraced house - Rose Avenue

C Terraced house - Dickens Road

D Terraced house - Ingoldsby Road

E Block of flats - Rochester Road

F Bungalow - Dickens Road

2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.9 Site Constraints

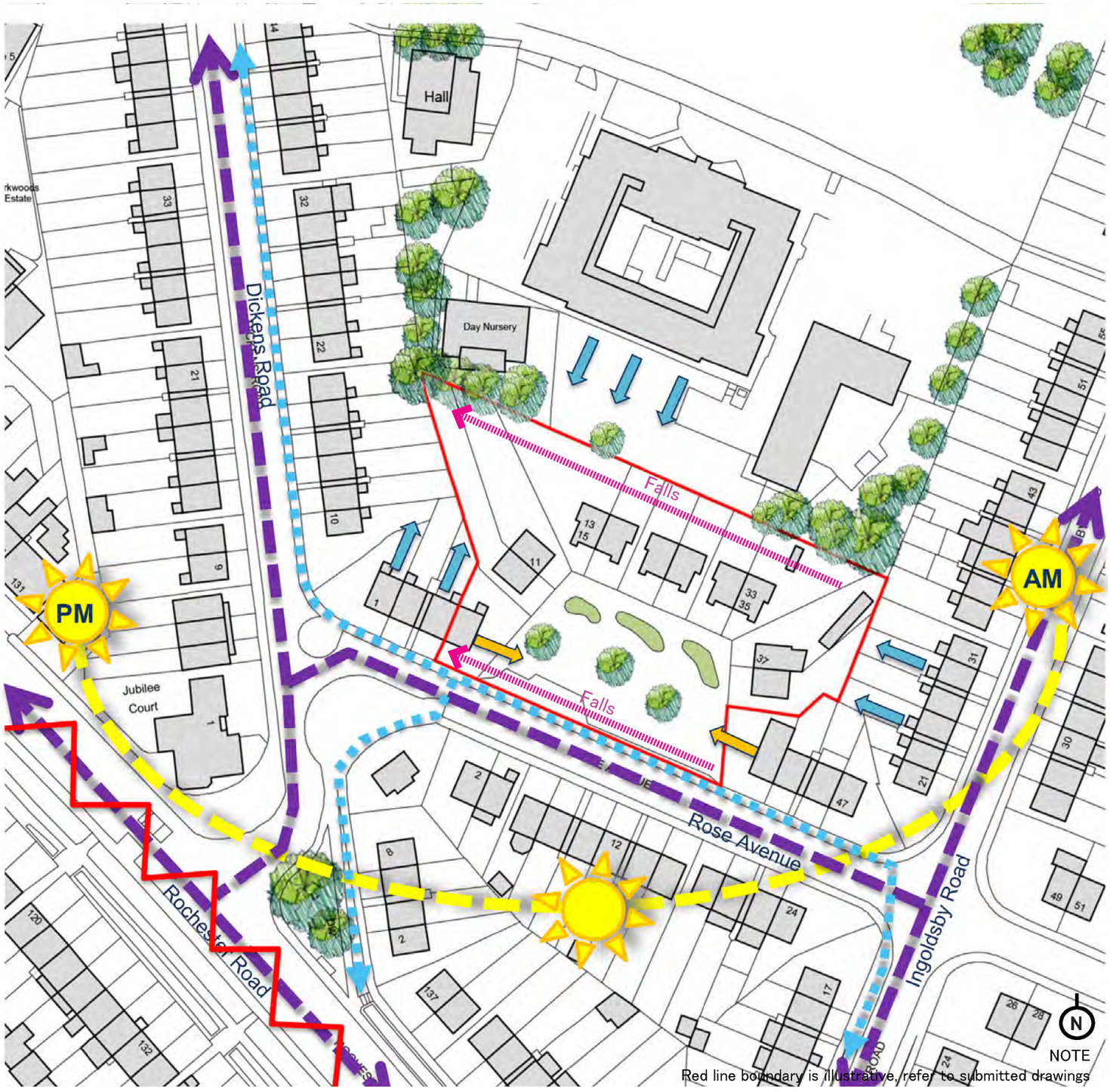
Following a detailed site visit and contextual analysis, a number of key constraints have been identified that have informed the design development process:

- **Existing Trees:** Mature trees located around the perimeter of the site require careful consideration to ensure their preservation or appropriate integration into the proposed landscape strategy.
- **Adjacent Buildings:** The presence of an existing building with a side elevation facing the site introduces considerations around privacy, daylight, and visual impact.
- **Overlooking:** Potential overlooking from neighbouring properties has been assessed to ensure that the proposed layout maintains appropriate separation distances and respects residential amenity.
- **Vehicular Access:** The primary vehicular access to the site is via Rose Avenue. This has influenced the internal road layout and access strategy for the proposed development.

These constraints have been carefully considered throughout the design process to ensure that the proposal responds sensitively to its context while maximising the site's potential.

Key

- Site Boundary
- Overlooking - side elevations
- Overlooking - rear elevations
- Green Space
- Vehicular Routes
- Pedestrian Routes
- Existing trees
- Sun Path
- Noise from Main Road
- Level Change



2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.10 Site Opportunities

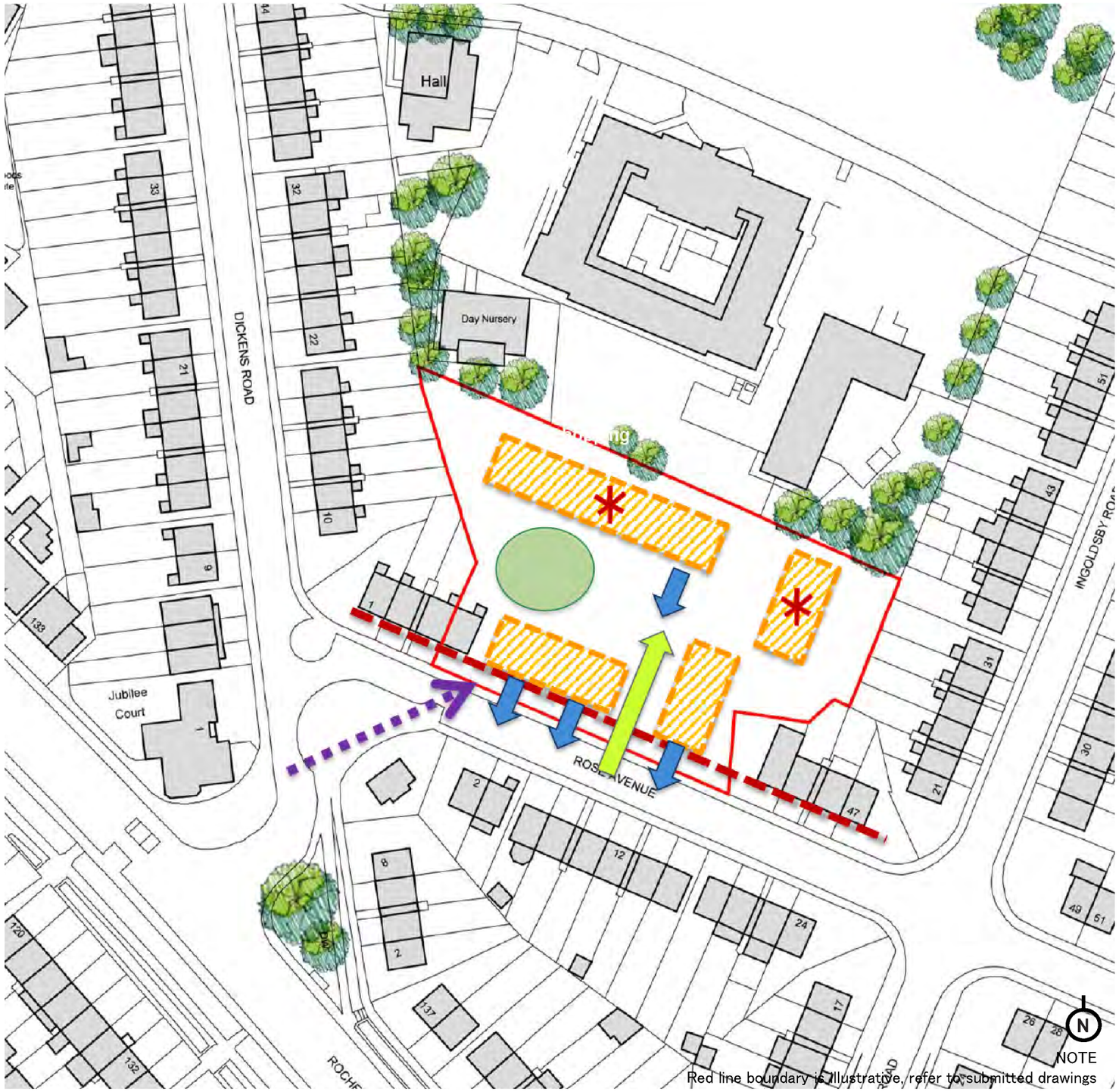
The existing site presents a valuable opportunity to deliver much-needed, high-quality housing within a predominantly residential area by maximising the site's development potential in a sensitive and sustainable manner. The key design objectives for the proposed development are as follows:

- **Enhance Enclosure and Security:** Establish a stronger sense of place by creating a more defined and enclosed urban form, improving both the perception and reality of safety for residents. The layout can provided 'eyes on the street' to ensure spaces benefit from passive surveillance.
- **Strengthen the Street Scene:** Improve the visual continuity of the surrounding area by infilling the existing site to form a complete and cohesive urban block that integrates comfortably with neighbouring development.
- **Deliver Characterful Architecture:** Introduce bold, well-articulated buildings that are in dialogue with the surrounding architectural context, contributing positively to the local identity and sense of place.
- **Improve the Public Realm:** Enhance the quality and usability of external spaces through thoughtful landscaping, improved pedestrian connections, and the creation of attractive, inclusive communal areas.

These objectives underpin the design approach and ensure that the proposed development not only meets housing needs but also contributes to the long-term vitality and character of the area.

Key

- Opportunity for perimeter block
- Improved frontage and views to Rose Avenue
- Opportunity for frontage development
- Opportunity for height
- Opportunity for green space
- Main access point
- Vista view



2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.11 Tree Survey and Impact Assessment

An arboricultural survey was undertaken by Middlemarch Environmental to assess the existing trees on site, with a particular focus on those located along the northern boundary. Note that the cluster of trees to the north-west sit outside the application boundary.

The survey confirmed that the site does not contain any ancient woodland, lies outside of any designated conservation area, and includes no trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

The trees were identified and categorised in accordance with BS5837:2012 guidelines. These include several Category B and C trees, primarily located along the northern boundary, with four Category C trees situated within the central area of the site.

The proposed development will result in the removal of six trees, all of which have been assessed as low quality and low value (Category C). Their removal will facilitate a more efficient site layout and enable the introduction of a comprehensive planting strategy, which will enhance the overall landscape quality and biodiversity of the site.

Importantly, the root protection areas (RPAs) of all retained trees have been respected, with no proposed building development encroaching into these zones. This ensures the long-term health and stability of the retained trees and reflects a sensitive approach to integrating existing natural assets into the scheme.

Key

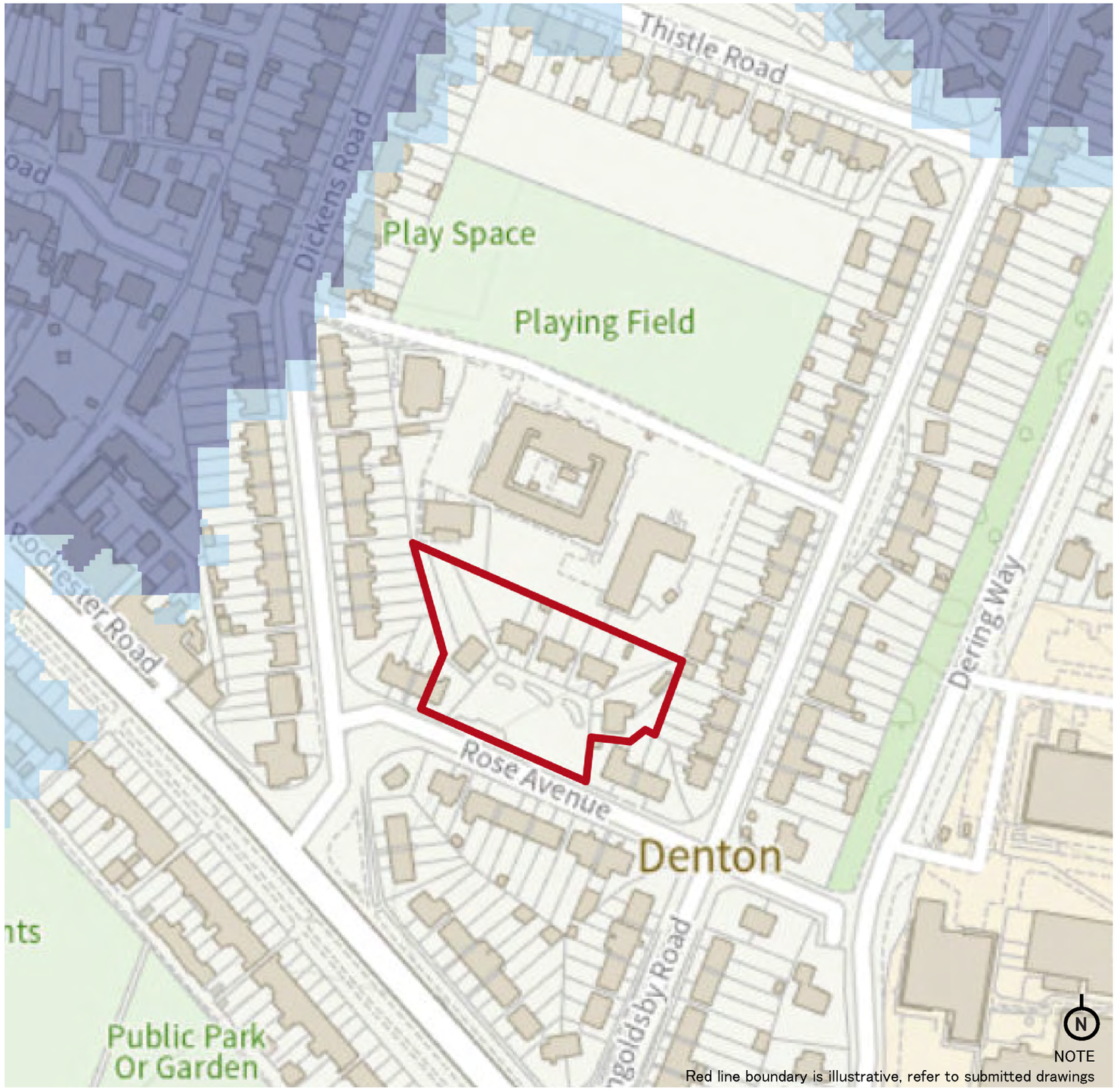
- Tree location and stem diameter
- Tree Category C
- Tree Category B group
- Tree Category C group
- Current canopy extent
- Root Protection Area
- Indicative tree shadow
- Tree to be removed

2.0 The Site and Analysis

2.12 Flood Risk

The site is located within Flood Risk Zone 1, as defined by the Environment Agency. This classification indicates that the site is in an area with a low probability of flooding from rivers or the sea (less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability).

As such, the site is considered suitable for residential development in terms of flood risk, and no specific flood mitigation measures are required beyond standard sustainable drainage practices, which will be incorporated into the design.



Flood Zones Map

Key

- Flood zone 3
- Flood zone 2
- Flood zone 1
- Site boundary

3.0
Design Evolution

3.0 Design Evolution

3.1 Pre-Application Meeting 01

The design proposals have been developed through a collaborative and iterative process, informed by a series of stakeholder meetings, including a formal pre-application consultation with Gravesham Borough Council.

Initial concepts were presented to planning officers at a pre-application meeting held in May 2024. This early dialogue was instrumental in ensuring that the emerging design responded appropriately to the site's opportunities and constraints, while aligning with local planning policy and aspirations for the area.

The proposed block layout has been carefully developed in response to the site's specific constraints and opportunities. The design establishes a clear and legible arrangement that supports both functional and aesthetic objectives.

The layout has been structured to accommodate a balanced integration of landscape and hardscape elements, ensuring a cohesive relationship between built form and open space. This approach enhances the overall character of the development, promotes ease of movement, and contributes to a safe, attractive, and well-defined public realm.

The pre-application proposal included 3no wheelchair accessible dwellings (WC), representing 10% of the total units. They were designed to meet the standards for Category 3 M4(3) dwellings, with all remaining units designed to the standards for Category 2 M4(2) as set out in approved Document M the current Building Regulation. The accommodation schedule below outlines the housing mix that was proposed at this meeting.

Schedule of Accommodation							
	Type	Unit size	Block				
			A	B	C	D	Total
A	1Bed/2P Flat	50 -51 sqm	2	2	1	-	5
B	1Bed/2P Flat WC	60 -62 sqm	-	-	-	2	2
C	2Bed/3P Flat WC	72 -74 sqm	-	-	1	-	1
E	2Bed/4P Flat	70 -74 sqm	2	2	5	4	13
F	3Bed/5P Flat	80 -90 sqm	-	-	2	6	8
			4	4	9	12	29

3.0 Design Evolution

3.1 Pre-Application Meeting 01

Feedback from GBC

The feedback from the Pre Application meeting was positive, with officers expressing support for the principle of redeveloping the site and recognising the potential benefits of the scheme.

However, concerns were raised regarding the scale and massing of the proposed development—particularly the three-storey blocks—and their potential impact on neighbouring properties in terms of privacy and sense of enclosure.

In their written response, planning officers acknowledged that the positioning of the taller blocks towards the rear of the site would not significantly affect the character or appearance of the street scene, due to screening provided by the proposed two-storey buildings fronting Rose Avenue. Nonetheless, the impact on neighbouring amenity remained a concern, and it was recommended that separation distances to adjacent properties be increased to mitigate this.

The two/three-storey flat-roofed link elements were also discussed during the meeting. It was confirmed that these would be designed to remain subservient to the main building forms, helping to reduce their visual impact.

There were no objections to the proposed material palette, which includes light buff bricks, dark grey windows and doors, and metal cladding. These materials were considered appropriate and effective in breaking up the visual mass of the buildings. The use of varied roof forms was also supported, as it adds architectural interest and contributes to a more dynamic streetscape.

The feedback received during the pre-application process directly informed a number of design amendments, resulting in a revised scheme that better addresses the concerns raised while maintaining the overall vision and objectives of the development.

Concept massing model

Proposed street view from Dickens Road towards Rose Avenue

Proposed street view along Rose Avenue

3.0 Design Evolution

3.2 Post Pre-Application Response

In response to concerns raised during the pre-application process regarding potential overlooking from habitable rooms and balconies, the design team has made a number of key adjustments to protect the amenity of existing residents.

Private amenity spaces have been repositioned further away from the western boundary, and separation distances between new and existing dwellings have been increased. The revised layout now adheres to a minimum distance of 26 metres, in line with the standards set out in Gravesham's Residential Layout Guidelines (2020). This ensures both privacy and a high-quality living environment for future occupants, while minimising any impact on neighbouring properties.

To further address concerns about scale and massing, Block C has been repositioned further from the eastern boundary. Additionally, the top floor of this block has been set back by approximately one metre, reducing its visual impact and mitigating any potential issues related to outlook or loss of light for adjacent properties.

These design refinements demonstrate a considered and responsive approach, ensuring that the development integrates sensitively within its context while delivering high-quality new homes.

Schedule of Accommodation							
	Type	Unit size	Block				
			A	B	C	D	Total
A	1Bed/2P Flat	50 -51 sqm	2	2	1	-	5
B	1Bed/2P Flat WC	60 -62 sqm	-	-	-	2	2
C	2Bed/3P Flat WC	72 -74 sqm	-	-	1	-	1
D	2Bed/3P Flat	64 sqm	-	-	1	-	1
E	2Bed/4P Flat	70 -74 sqm	2	2	4	4	12
F	3Bed/5P Flat	80 -90 sqm	-	-	2	6	8
			4	4	9	12	29

3.0 Design Evolution

3.2 Post Pre-Application Response

To support the refinement of the scheme's scale and massing, three-dimensional modelling has been used extensively throughout the design process. These models have served as a key design tool, enabling the team to analyse the proposal within its surrounding context and test its visual and spatial impact.

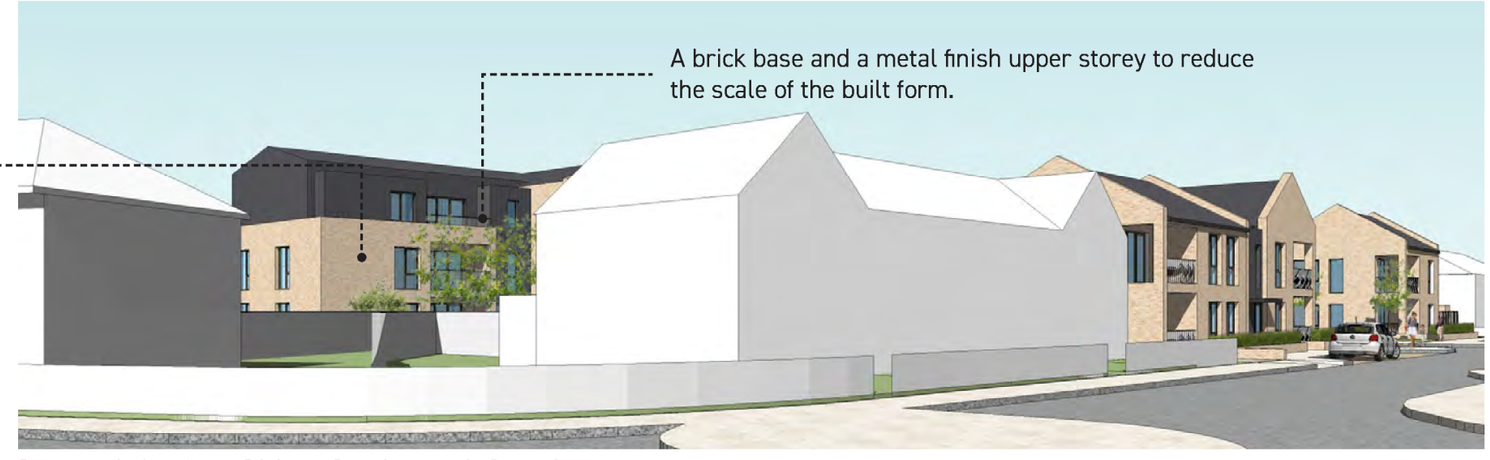
The use of 3D massing and roof form studies has allowed for a more informed approach to scale, proportion, and articulation, ensuring that the development integrates sensitively with neighbouring buildings while maintaining a strong architectural identity.

The adjacent images present a series of street-level views, illustrating how the proposed apartment blocks will appear from the public realm. These visualisations have been instrumental in testing the positioning, height, and overall presence of the buildings, helping to ensure that the scheme contributes positively to the character of the area.

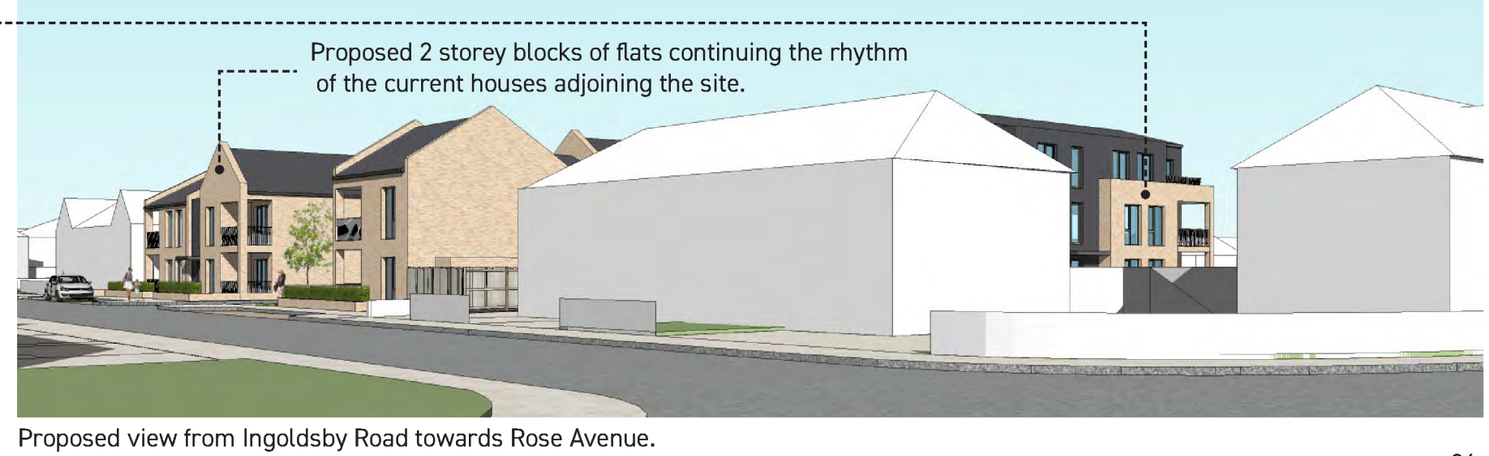
The end elevation of Block D has been repositioned further away from the southern boundary, and the design of the corner flats has been revised to ensure they do not impose on surrounding residents. These changes help to reduce visual impact and improve privacy for adjacent dwellings. Separation distances have been increased and now exceed the minimum 26 metres, ensuring that the development maintains a respectful relationship with its context and supports a high standard of living for both new and existing residents.

Block C has been repositioned further away from the eastern boundary to reduce its impact on neighbouring properties. Additionally, the top floor has been set back by approximately one metre, helping to soften the building's massing and reduce its visual prominence.

Proposed view from Rose Avenue towards Ingoldsby Road.



Proposed view from Dickens Road towards Rose Avenue.



Proposed view from Ingoldsby Road towards Rose Avenue.

3.0 Design Evolution

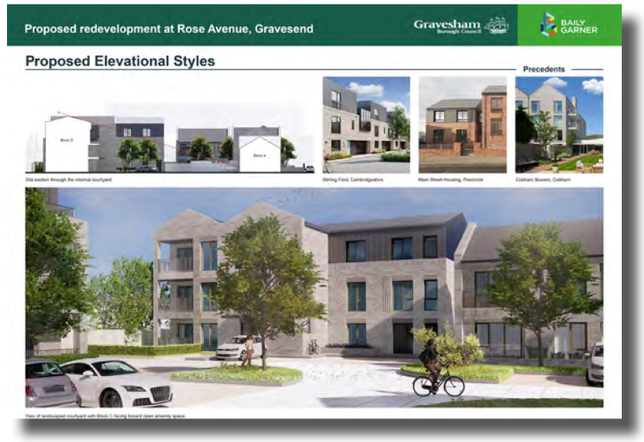
3.3 Public Consultation

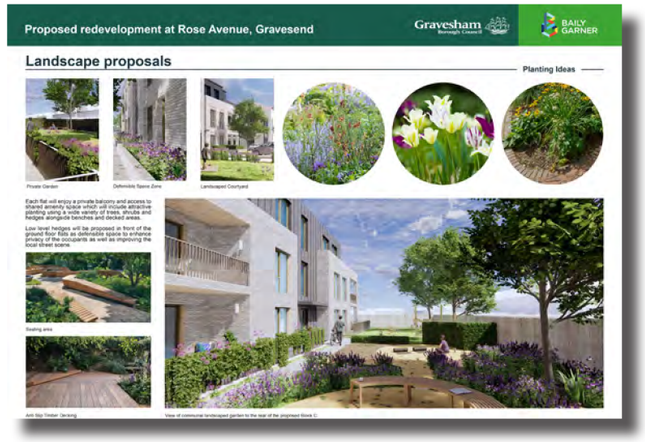
As part of the design development process, Gravesham Borough Council hosted a public consultation event in February 2025. The event took place in the community room at the nearby Riverside Community Centre on Dickens Road and was attended by a number of local residents.

A series of exhibition boards were displayed, presenting the initial development proposals, including general arrangement plans, elevations, and 3D visualisations. The purpose of the event was to involve the local community at an early stage, providing an opportunity for residents to review the proposals, share their aspirations, and raise any concerns.

Feedback was collected and recorded during the event. The key themes that emerged from the consultation included:

- Overall support and enthusiasm for the redevelopment of the site.
- Positive feedback on the overall design approach, particularly the landscaping proposals.
- Concerns regarding parking provision, specifically the potential impact on existing residents and the surrounding streets.
- Suggestions for improvements to the amenity space located outside the site boundary.
- The design team has reviewed and considered this feedback carefully, and it has informed subsequent revisions to the scheme to ensure it responds to local needs and expectations.





3.0 Design Evolution

3.4 Design Development and Elevational Studies

In response to concerns raised regarding the existing trees along the northern boundary, located between the rear fences of existing gardens and the nursery fence, the decision has been made to retain these trees as part of the development.

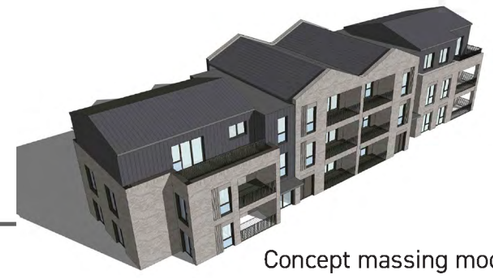
To accommodate this, the footprint of Block D has been revised to ensure that the root protection areas (RPAs) of the retained trees are fully respected and remain unaffected by any proposed construction. This approach supports the preservation of local biodiversity and maintains the established green buffer along the site's edge.

Given the proximity of the proposed apartment block at the northern end of the site to existing dwellings on Rose Avenue and Dickens Road, additional mitigation measures have been incorporated into the design. These include the use of obscure glazing and screening elements to minimise any potential overlooking and to protect the privacy of neighbouring residents.

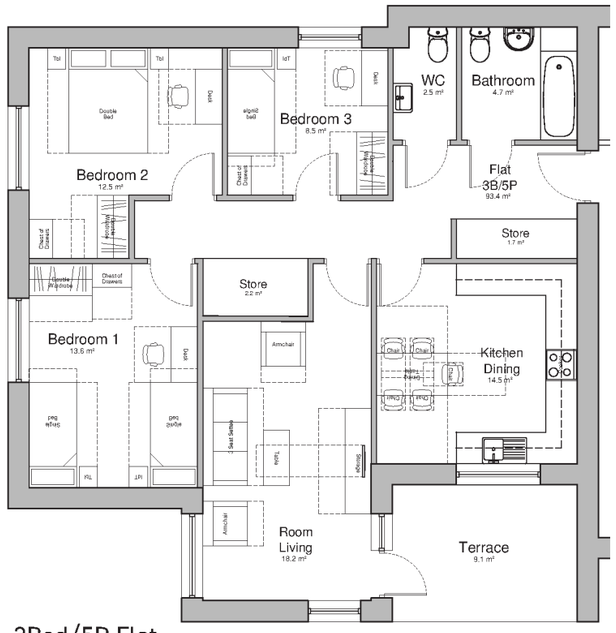
Block D - South Elevation - Pre Amendments

Concept massing model

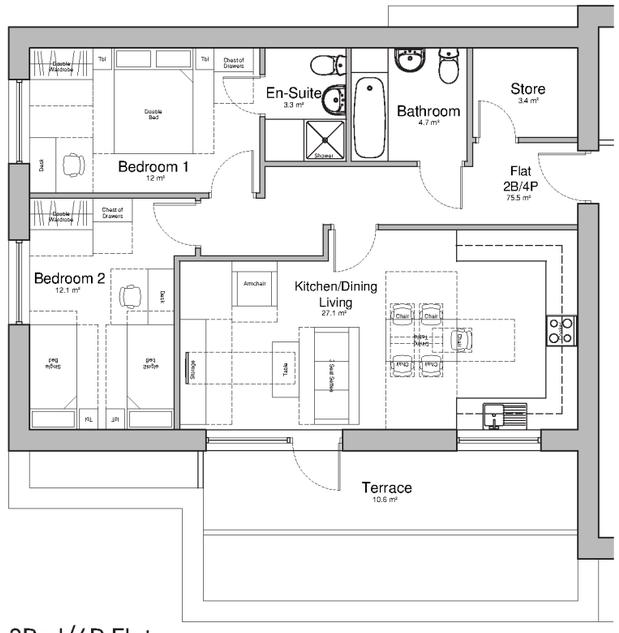
Block D - South Elevation - Post Amendments



Concept massing model



3Bed/5P Flat



2Bed/4P Flat

3.0 Design Evolution

3.5 Planning Policy

The scheme has been informed and guided by national and local planning policy documents. These include:

- National Planning Policy Framework (2023)
- Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)
- Supplementary Planning Guidance and other documents:

- SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (2020)
- SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (2015)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code SPD (2024)

The development plan policies relevant to the consideration of this application are as follows:

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS09 – Culture and Tourism
- CS10 – Physical and Social Infrastructure
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS14 – Housing Type and Size
- CS15 – Housing Density
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Design and Development Principle

CS01 - Sustainable Development

Our proposal responds to the changing housing needs of the local population. It aims to improve the social and environmental conditions in the area and will create an environment in which users and communities feel safe.

CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development

The proposed development includes a net increase of '13' residential units which will offer a significant contribution towards meeting the local need for affordable housing.

CS 09 - Culture and Tourism

The proposed development will contribute to the public realm by creating a welcoming and an aesthetically pleasing environment through landscaping and thoughtful design.

CS10 – Physical and Social Infrastructure

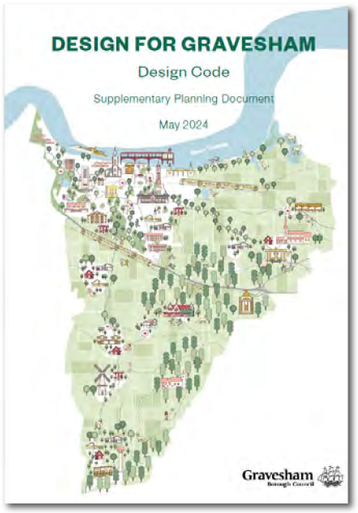
The proposed development supports the use of sustainable transport modes. There are multiple bus stops closely located to the site, which will promote the use of public transport minimising the need of car usage. Safe bike storage is provided within the blocks area.

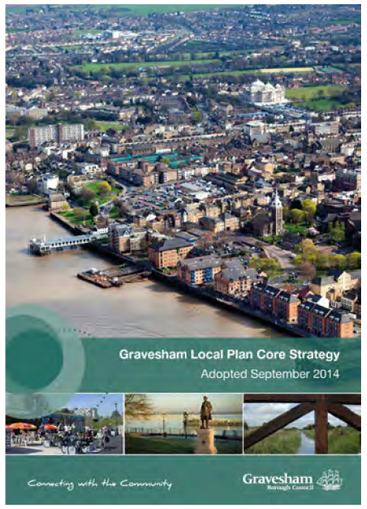
CS 11 - Transport

Sufficient parking has been provided. In light of the proximity to public transport links 1:1 parking ratio has been deemed adequate for the general needs of the proposed blocks.

CS12 - Green Infrastructure

The landscape strategy was carefully considered and integrated with the overall design. The proposed outdoor space will not only enhance the new development but will add value to the community and will contribute to a high -quality living environment.





CS 14 - Housing Type and Size

The new development provides a wide range of dwellings types, including family homes, identified as a local need by the council.

CS 15 - Housing Density

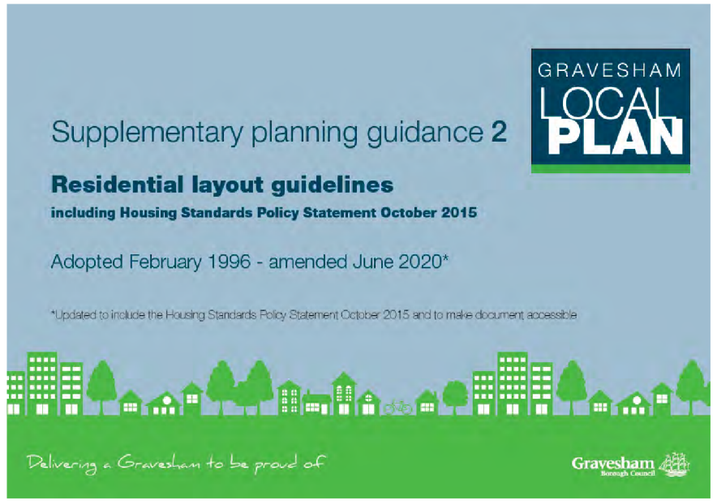
Policy CS15 requires that all new housing within the urban area to achieve a minimum density of 40 dwellings per hectare. The density of the proposal would be 75 dwellings per hectare, thus over the target minimum density.

CS 18 - Climate Change

The proposed development has been designed to comply with the current Building Regulations (Part L, G, M,S, O and F). The aim is to maximise water, heat and energy efficiency to create an environmentally sustainable environment and lower cost benefits to residents.

CS19 - Development and Design Principles

The proposal draws from the opportunities and constraints identified on the site and responds to the investigation of its surroundings. The scale of the buildings respond to the surrounding architectural landscape and roofscape, with impact on the context and overlooking of neighbouring properties driving the design.

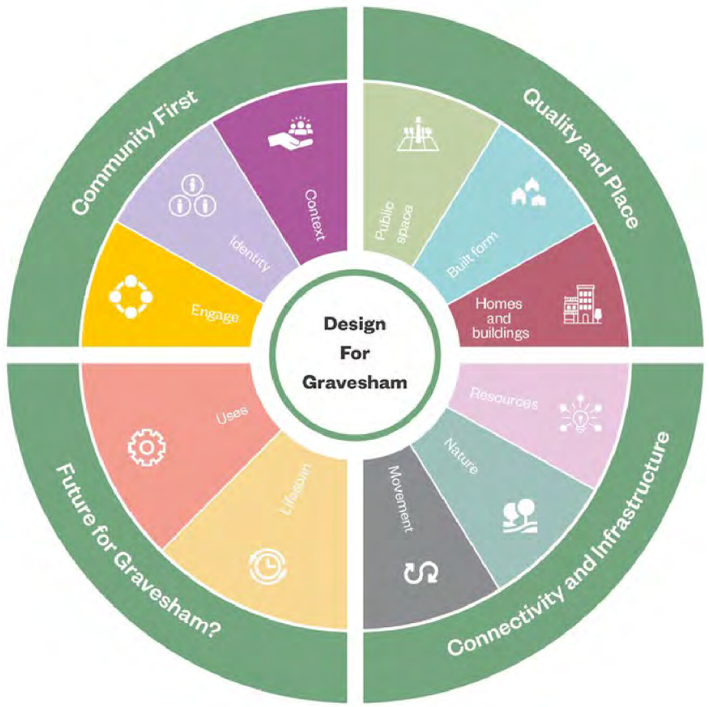


3.0 Design Evolution

3.6 Design for Gravesham Design Code

The proposed design has been developed in accordance with the principles and guidance set out in Design for Gravesham. The scheme addresses the eleven key characteristics outlined in the design code, ensuring that the development is efficient, contextually appropriate, and sustainable.

By aligning with this framework, the proposal contributes positively to the character of the local area, promotes high-quality placemaking, and supports the delivery of well-designed homes that meet the needs of current and future residents.



Community First

Context

The proposed design of the development takes inspiration from characteristics seen in existing buildings in the local area, such as materials and scale. The design process, from an analysis of the site context with regard to development pattern, scale and landscape character, has been illustrated in section 2 of this document.

Identity

The proposal strives to draw from the identity and character of the surrounding area in order to inform a more sensitive and high quality development, incorporating relevant materials and details in order to produce a more attractive and appropriate addition to this part of Gravesend.

Engage

The design has evolved through collaboration at the pre-application meeting with GBC, and the public consultation. The initial proposals were presented in order to involve the local residents in the design process and provide a necessary opportunity for them to voice their needs and aspirations.

Future for Gravesham?

Uses

The proposal will provide much needed affordable accommodation in order to reduce the number of households on the housing register and to help meet the high demand for housing within Gravesham. Temporary housing numbers in the borough are very high and the council are currently exploring the benefits of redeveloping a number of sites within the borough to see if they can contribute towards the affordable housing demand.

Lifespan

The proposal will provide high quality, energy efficient homes which will provide better accommodation and require less maintenance. The buildings will be easily managed and well maintained due to a sense of ownership created through empowering residents with greater control and responsibility. This will benefit future residents and prolong the life and use of the development.

Quality and Place

Public Space

The proposal will provide safe, social and inclusive spaces for future residents. The communal garden to the rear, sheltered from the main access road by the buildings, ensures it will be a quiet, protected and well-supervised space for future residents.

Built Form

The scale of the development has been considered in detail, taking on board the size of local existing buildings as well as aiming to respond to and mitigate impact on buildings in the immediate local vicinity. The new frontage buildings will complement and define Rose Avenue Road.

Homes and Buildings

The proposed buildings aims to provide functional, healthy and sustainable accommodation tailored to the needs of the site. All homes will meet NDSS ensuring a high level of comfort and quality for residents including good ventilation, natural light and access to green spaces.

Connectivity and infrastructure

Movement

The proposal prioritises the movement of all residents including step-free access to all parts of the development for full accessibility. The vehicle access and parking strategy ensures efficient and convenient access for residents whilst aligning with local policy aspirations.

Nature

A considerable proportion of the site is currently underutilised with hard-standing areas. This proposal enhances the landscaping to the site by introducing landscaped gardens, green areas, as well as proposing a number of new trees and areas of planting.

Resources

The proposal will comply with all government criteria for a sustainable development across design, materials and location. A holistic approach has been taken towards sustainability, considering not only environmental but also social sustainability.