

44-46 The Grove, Gravesend

Design and Access Statement

Lower Ground Floor Residential Conversion | Five Additional Apartments
Planning Application | August 2026

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APPLICATION PROPOSAL

Conversion and extension of part of the existing lower ground floor / undercroft to provide five additional residential apartments, with private amenity space and associated cycle, parking and refuse arrangements.

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared for the Substantia Group as part of the planning process for the residential redevelopment of 44-46 The Grove, Gravesend.

This application proposes an additional five residential units with private gardens, within the Lower Ground Floor.

This is in addition to 37 residential units consented under a prior approval application for the change of use of the existing office building (Class E) to provide 37 residential units (Class C3) under Part 3, Schedule 2, Class MA of the General Permitted Development (England) Order 2015 (GPDO).



SITE IMAGE



SITE APPLICATION BOUNDARY



The site is located in Gravesend in the north of Kent. The town sits at the mouth of the Thames, 1 hours drive from London. The Town also benefits from the high-speed rail network which provides transport to London in 25 minutes.



The site is located a 10 minute walk to Gravesend Station which connects to London in 25 minutes.



- PRIMARY ROADS
- RAIL CONNECTION
- BUS STOP
- SITE BOUNDARY



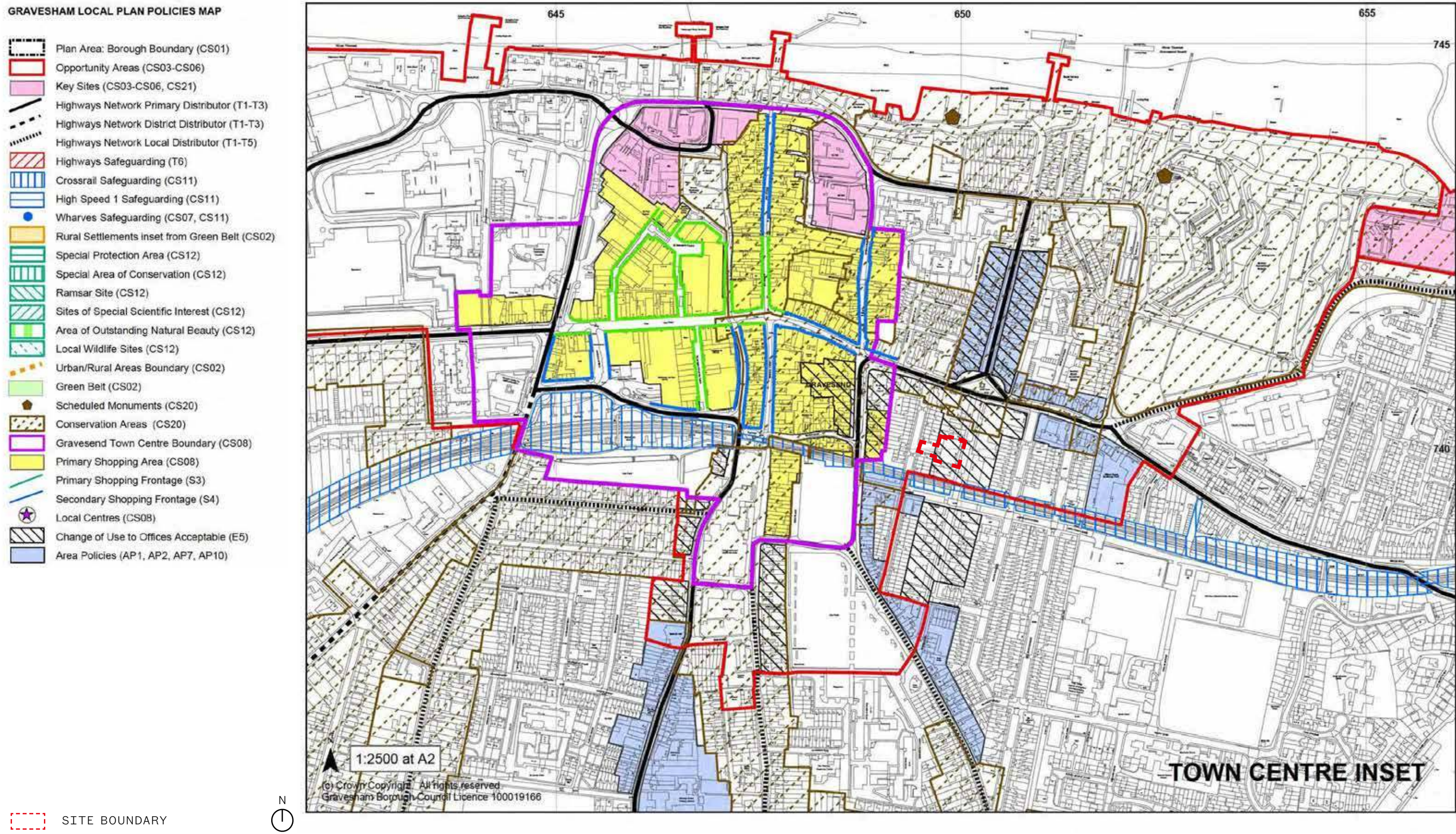
Conservation Areas

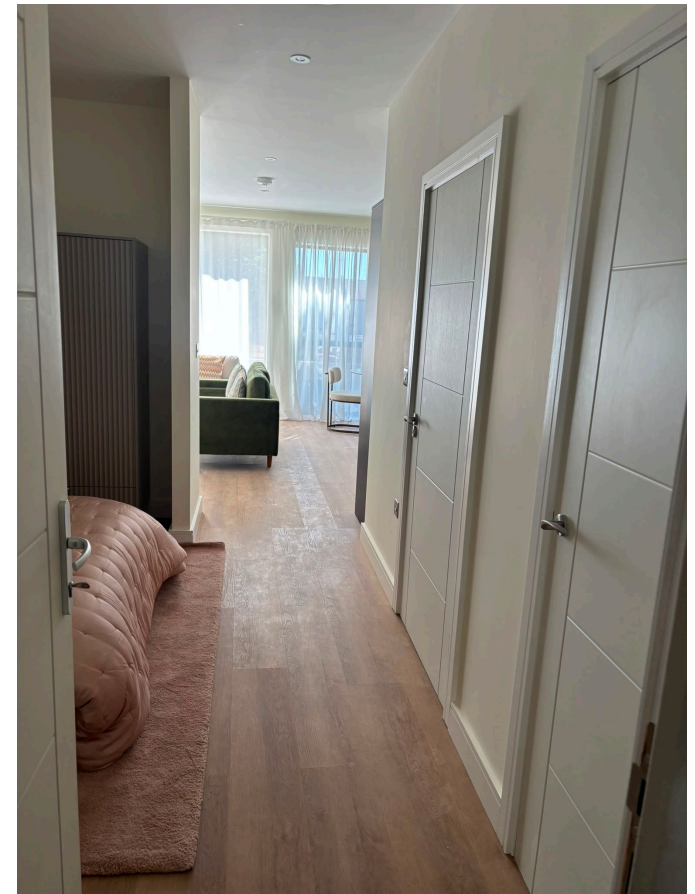
The site itself is not in a conservation area but is bordered by a number of conservation areas, such as Harmer Street and King Street.



- CONSERVATION AREA
- SITE BOUNDARY







Completed / dressed apartment interiors demonstrate the established residential character and quality benchmark within Heron House.



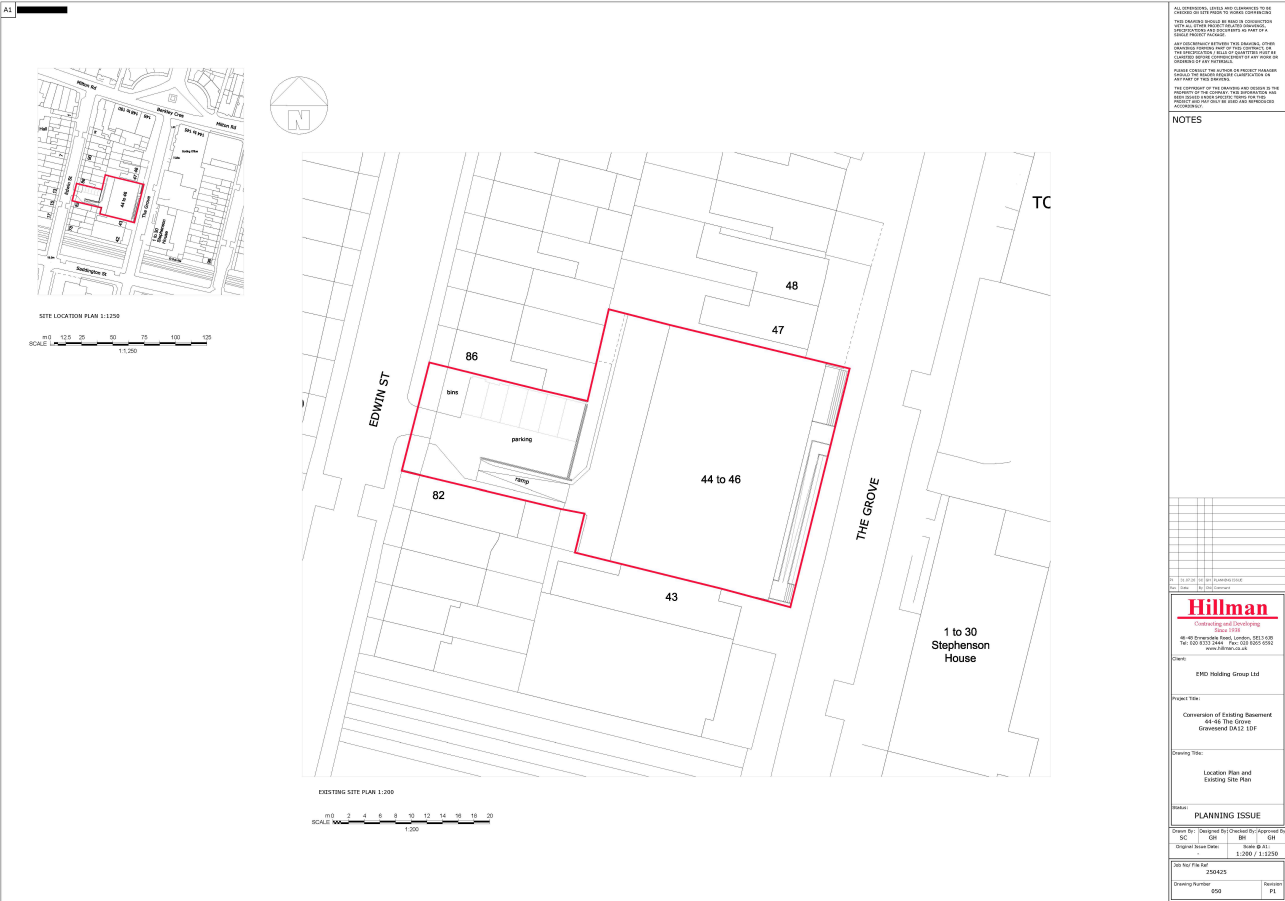
Current internal condition: contemporary finishes, generous glazing and residential fit-out already established within the building.

2. Design Development

IMPLEMENTED RESIDENTIAL CONTEXT

Heron House is no longer appropriately understood simply as a former office building. Prior approval was previously granted for the conversion of the existing building to 37 residential apartments under Class MA, and that scheme has been implemented.

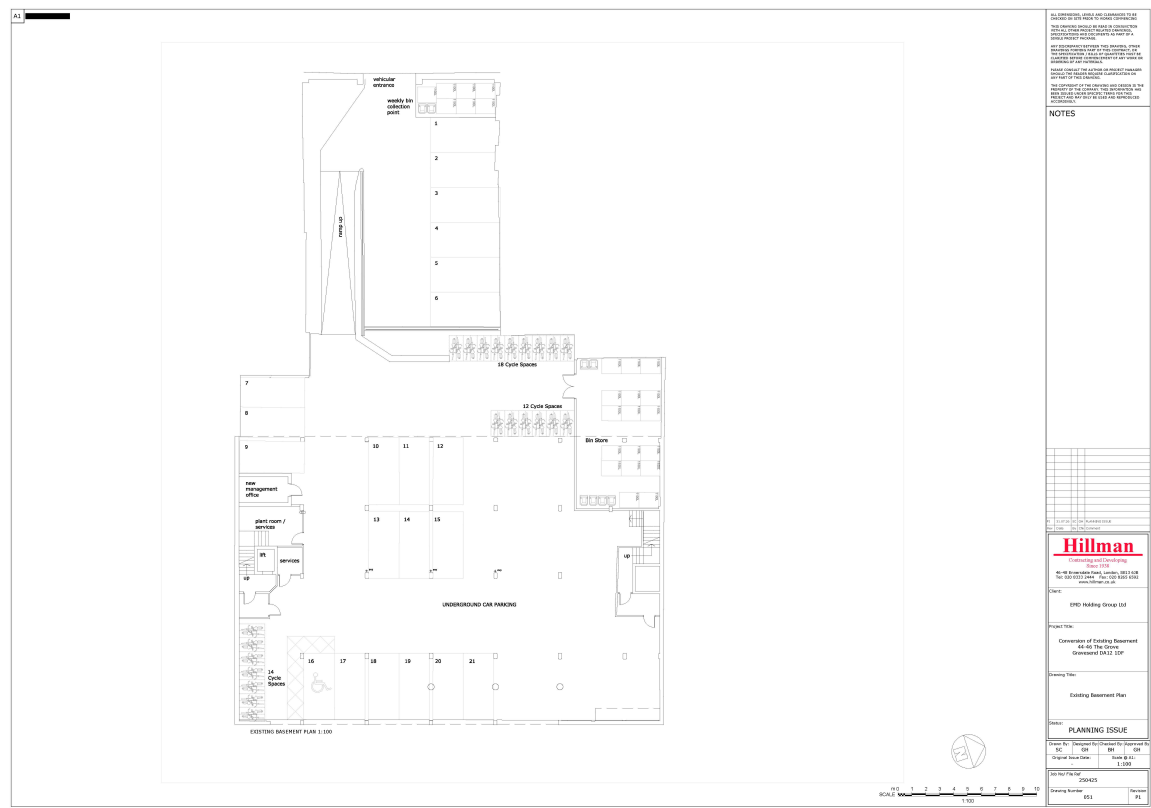
The current application is a focused intensification of that established residential scheme, making productive use of lower ground floor space rather than adding further height or significant external bulk.



A CONTAINED LOWER GROUND FLOOR INTERVENTION

The design has evolved around the existing structural frame, established access arrangements and the opportunity to turn an underused lower ground floor / undercroft into five additional homes.

- Four studio apartments and one one-bedroom apartment.
- Principal living spaces arranged towards the glazed rear elevation and private gardens.
- Existing upper-floor residential accommodation remains unchanged.
- Existing pedestrian and vehicular access strategy retained.
- Ancillary accommodation reorganised to provide cycle storage, plant, circulation and refuse facilities.
- Private external amenity introduced without materially changing the principal street-facing massing.



Existing basement / lower ground floor arrangement - drawing 250425-051.

3. Proposed Design

FIVE ADDITIONAL HOMES

The proposal converts and extends part of the existing lower ground floor / undercroft to provide five additional residential apartments.

The accommodation comprises four studios and one one-bedroom flat. Each dwelling is outward-facing, with its principal living space placed adjacent to the rear glazing and direct access to private garden space.

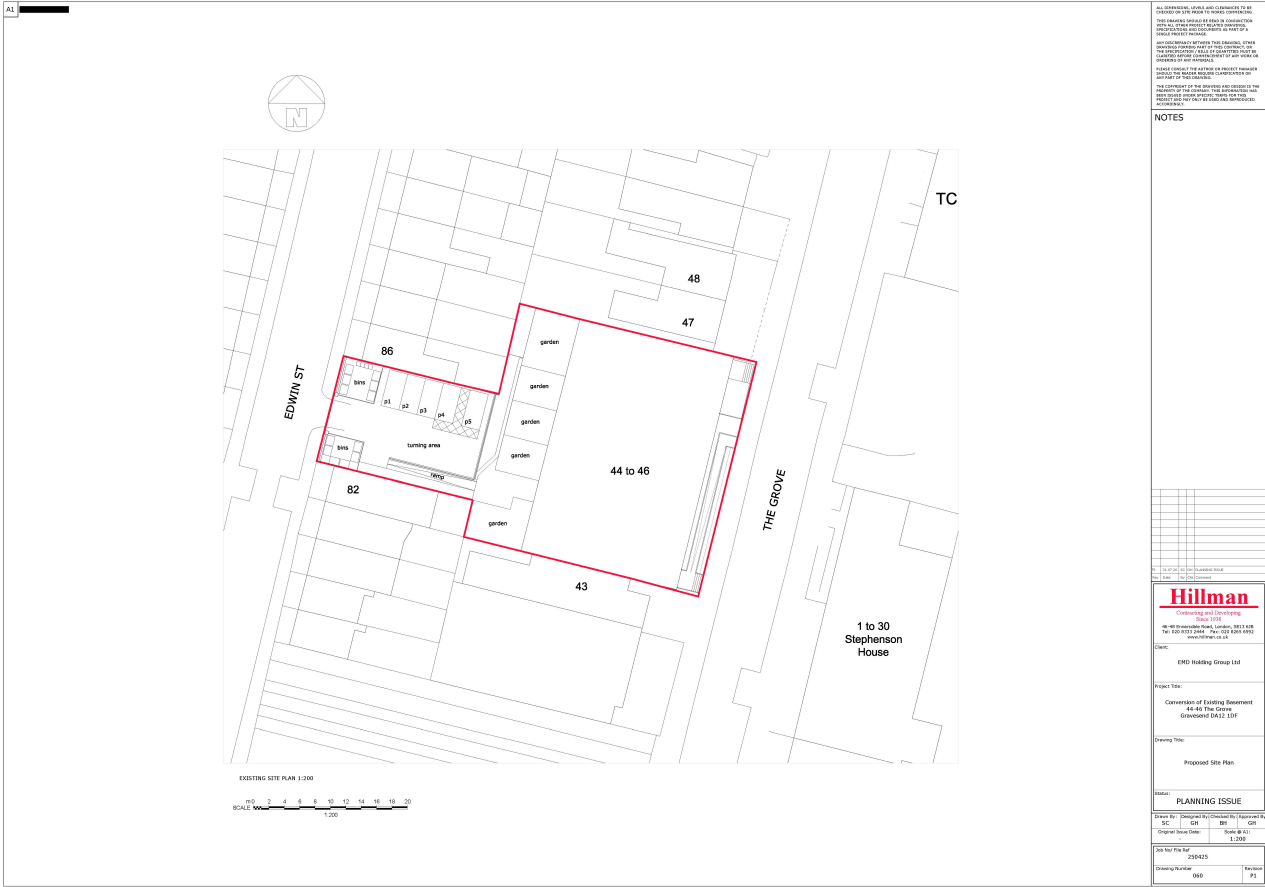
The arrangement retains the wider basement's essential servicing, parking, circulation and cycle functions.



Proposed basement / lower ground floor arrangement - drawing 250425-061.

ACCESS STRATEGY

- Existing pedestrian entrances from The Grove retained.
- Secondary access and vehicular access continue from Edwin Street.
- Existing lift provides vertical circulation from lower ground floor level.
- The proposal accommodates cycle and refuse provision for both the existing and proposed residential units. The provision does not account for the units approved under the consented upwards extension application as this will no longer be implemented due to viability reasons.
- Cycle storage and refuse provision are integrated into the wider site layout.



Proposed Site Plan / Access Arrangements- drawing 250425-060.

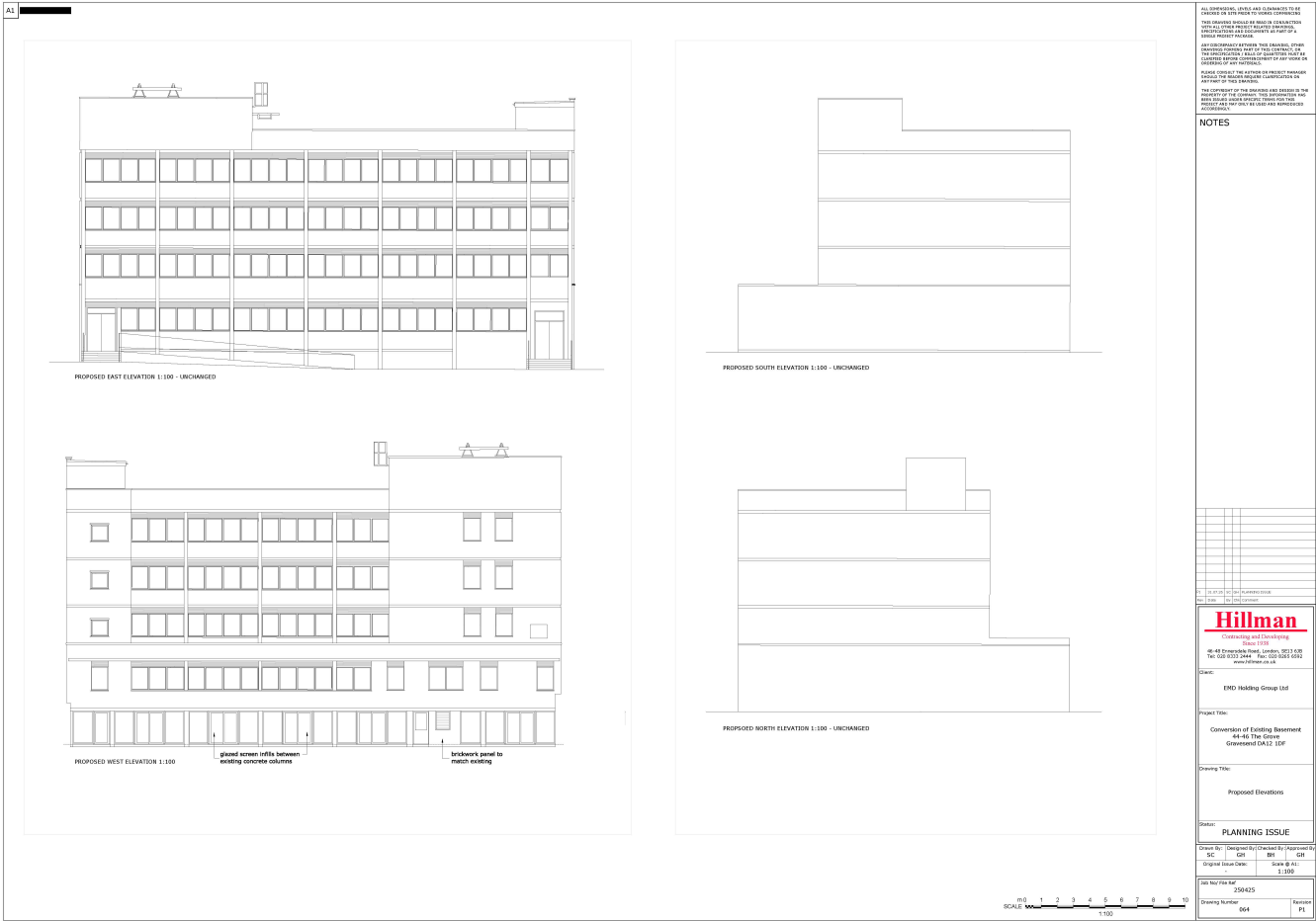
4. Appearance

LIMITED VISUAL IMPACT

The proposal deliberately avoids adding a further storey or materially changing the principal massing of Heron House. The Grove frontage and the overall architectural composition remain substantially unchanged.

At lower ground floor level, the open-sided undercroft is adapted to residential use with glazed screen in-fills between existing fair faced concrete columns with one brickwork face in-fill panel.

Individual private gardens and simple robust boundary treatments create a more domestic character while remaining subordinate to the established building.



Proposed Elevations- drawing 250425-064.



DESIGN LANGUAGE

The new lower ground floor homes are intended to read as a continuation of the residential conversion already implemented within Heron House: clean contemporary interiors, neutral finishes, strong natural light at the principal living edge and a restrained palette that complements the existing brick and structural frame.

5. Layout

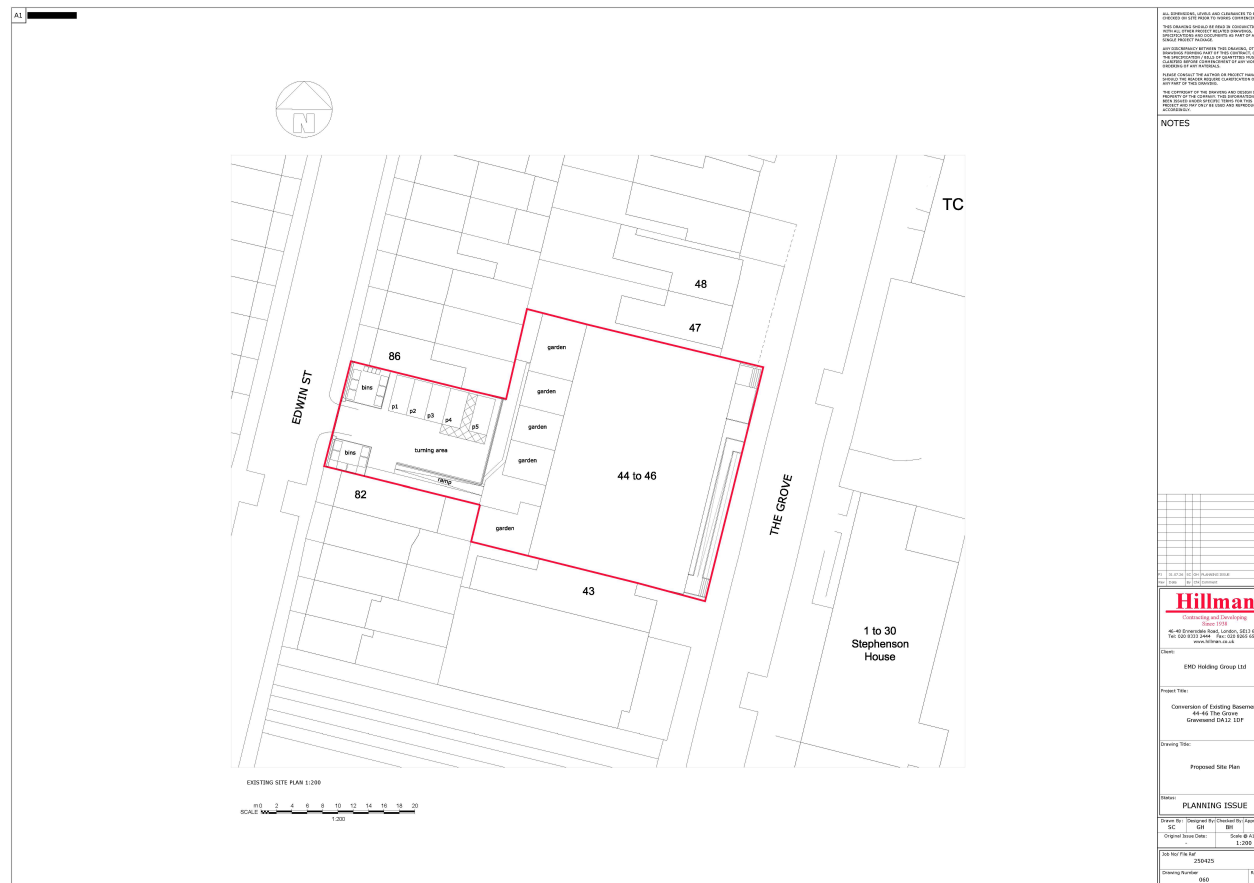
Studio	39 m ² with 40m ² of private amenity space
Studio	43 m ² with 25m ² of private amenity space
Studio	41 m ² with 25m ² of private amenity space
Studio	41 m ² with 25m ² of private amenity space
1-bedroom flat	57 m ² with 41m ² of private amenity space

PROPOSED BASEMENT PLAN 1:125

Architectural drawing of the Proposed Basement Plan 1:125. The plan shows a large basement area with various rooms including bedrooms, bathrooms, a kitchen/dining area, a living area, a study, a gym, a pool, and a garden. The drawing includes dimensions, room names, and a north arrow. A scale bar at the bottom indicates 0 to 10 meters. The drawing is labeled 'PROPOSED BASEMENT PLAN 1:125'.

The proposal has been developed alongside the transport strategy so that the five new homes can be accommodated without undermining the established access and servicing arrangements.

- Cycle parking retained and supplemented within the lower ground floor / rear site arrangement.
- Refuse stores positioned to maintain a practical relationship with collection from Edwin Street.
- Parking and turning functions retained in a reorganised layout.
- Private gardens kept distinct from the principal refuse storage areas.



DAYLIGHT & SUNLIGHT

A specialist assessment has been undertaken using BRE 2022 guidance. Three of the six habitable rooms exceed the living-room daylight recommendation. The remaining three open-plan studios are marginally below that criterion when assessed across the whole room, but the living portions nearest the glazing achieve the 150 lux target and the wider rooms exceed the bedroom target.

All habitable spaces meet the BRE sunlight recommendation. Four of the five gardens meet the BRE recommendation; the southernmost garden is constrained in March but receives good summer sunlight, with 82% of its area receiving at least two hours on 21 June.

GROUND CONDITIONS

The updated Phase 1 Desk Study identifies no potentially unacceptable direct-contact risk where site-wide hardstanding is retained. It does identify a potential moderate/low risk from ground gas or volatile vapours entering enclosed lower ground floor accommodation which cannot yet be ruled out.

A targeted Phase 2 Site Investigation and watching brief are recommended. Any required gas/vapour protection or ventilation measures can therefore be incorporated at detailed design stage.

HERON HOUSE

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Prepared for The Substantia Group