

**106_ PLANNING, DESIGN + ACCESS
STATEMENT**

FORMER ANGEL CROFT HOTEL, LICHFIELD

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FORMER ANGEL CROFT HOTEL, BEACON STREET, LICHFIELD

Residential Development
Planning, Design + Access Statement
David Plant Architecture Ltd. + Phase 2 Planning Ltd.

Client: One Property Group

Project Name: Former Angel Croft Hotel, Beacon Street, Lichfield.

Reference Number: 106

Date: October 2013

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1.0_Site Address: Angel Croft Hotel
Beacon Street,
Lichfield WS13 7AR.

1.1_Outline:

'David Plant Architecture Ltd' have been appointed by 'One Property Group' to complete the following Design and Access Statement relating to a planning application and application for listed building consent for the change of use of the former Angel Croft Hotel to residential use. The full description of the application, as set out on the application form, is as follows:

Change of use of former hotel and stable block to 8 no. residential apartments, including demolition and redevelopment of single storey side access to basement, change of use and extension of former bothy/gazebo to create 1 no. residential unit, partial re-instatement of former glasshouse, restoration of wrought iron work to Beacon Hill, creation of residential parking area within existing car park, erection of bin store, and associated servicing and landscaping.

The Angel Croft is a Grade II* Listed Building, and therefore much of the rationale for the design stems from the requirement to preserve the building and its features. The approach to the conversion, to the limited new build elements, and to the refurbishment of the structure has been heavily influenced by the analysis of the building undertaken by One Property Group's specialist historic buildings advisors, Heritage Collective, and by advice from the planning/conservation team at Lichfield Council. In order to avoid repetition, this Design and Access Statement frequently cross-refers to the separately produced Heritage Statement, which also accompanies this application.

The principal elements of the proposal are as follows:

- Conversion of the main hotel building in to 7 apartments, alongside landscaping of the rear gardens to provide amenity space;
- Conversion of the former stables to 1 apartment;
- Part conversion/part new build to create 1 dwelling unit from the bothy at the rear of the property (with separate access from the car park);
- Use of part of the existing public car park as private parking for residents of the main building and stables;
- Repair and refurbishment of the railings to the front of the property.

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to meet the requirements of Article 8 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order, and more particularly, since the application site falls within a Conservation Area and affects a Listed Building, Article 3A of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990.

1.2_Client Background:

One Property Group has been developing since 2007 creating high quality residential and commercial developments across the UK.

Independently owned with offices in Braintree and Birmingham, One Property Group are working on a diverse range of projects at various stages of planning and development.

In particular they specialise in developing listed buildings and on sites within Conservation Areas where a sympathetic approach is necessary.

They approach each and every site with fresh eyes and design buildings to suit the characteristics of the location as closely as possible taking into account the technical constraints of the site.

One Property Group Ltd. do not use 'standard products' within any of their developments.

They have great pride in their developments and their website gives a flavour of the developments they are currently working on;

<http://www.onepropertygroup.com/>

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FIG 1.2.1 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF SITE + SURROUNDING AREA.

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2.0_ASSESSMENT:

2.1_Existing site use and Character

The 0.21 hectare site is located in the center of Lichfield and is to the south-west of Beacon Steet. The site was formerly used as the Angel Croft Hotel and has remained vacant since 2008.

Angel Croft House (as the building was previously referred to before the hotel), dates from circa 1790, and was originally built as a large private residence. It was converted to a hotel in the 1930s. The historical context of the building is set out in more detail in the separate Heritage Statement.

The site's main frontage along Beacon Street consists of a grand decorative railing and a central double gated entrance to the building as shown in *fig. 2.1.3*. The railings and gates are also listed by English Heritage (entry no. 1187354).

To the left of the building there is a parking area which is currently used as a Pay & Display car park which serve the parkland west of the site (*see fig. 2.1.2*)

Within the rear gardens of the site there is unmaintained dense vegetation as well as the ruins of a glasshouse and Bothy.

The site is situated within a very sustainable location within close proximity to local amenities, schools and transport links making the site easily accessible by various modes of transport both public and private, including Lichfield City Railway Station with direct links to Birmingham New Street.



2.0_Planning History:

In terms of the recorded planning history, the Council's online records list applications in 2003 (planning and listed building) for conversion and extension of the bothy to hotel accommodation and erection of a mews block, with neither application determined.

In 2008, two applications were submitted for the installation of a hydraulic lift, the first of which was withdrawn, and the second of which was approved.

However, the application was not implemented. By April 2008 the property was vacant, and had been acquired by the Webb Group (owners of The George Hotel in Lichfield), with a view to its refurbishment and use as overspill accommodation. Shortly after acquisition, and before it could be refurbished, bedroom occupancy at The George began to fall as a result of the recession, and works were never commenced. The property has remained vacant since 2008.

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FIG 2.13. VIEW NORTH WEST FROM BEACON STREET.



FIG 2.12. VIEW NORTH EAST FROM PARKING AREA.



FIG 2.14. VIEW EAST SHOWING UNMAINTAINED REAR AMENITY.



FIG 2.15. VIEW NORTH SHOWING REAR BOTHY.



FIG 2.16. VIEW WEST FROM THE SITE SHOWING REAR AMENITY AND BOTHY.

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2.2_Surrounding Character

The property is situated along Beacon Street which is approximately a few hundred metres from the town centre of Lichfield and less than half a mile from Lichfield City railway station. The city of Lichfield lies 16 miles north of Birmingham. Lichfield is one of only eight civil parishes with city status in England. The city is most notable for its three-spired medieval cathedral (shown in *fig. 2.2.7*).

Beacon Street comprises of both commercial and residential developments, all have mixed appearances from traditional to contemporary.

The existing building's principle elevation, site entrances and boundary treatment along Beacon Street are all to be retained as part of the proposal.



FIG 2.2.1. NEIGHBOURING CATHEDRAL HOUSE.



FIG 2.2.2. NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES ALONG BEACON STREET.



FIG 2.2.3. LICHFIELD FREE LIBRARY AND MUSEUM.

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FIG 2.2.4. EXISTING PROPERTIES ALONG BEACON STREET.



FIG 2.2.5. EXISTING PROPERTY ALONG SHAW LANE.



FIG 2.2.6. EXISTING PROPERTIES ALONG BIRD STREET.



FIG 2.2.7. LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL. 100 METRES FROM SITE.



FIG 2.2.8. EXISTING PROPERTIES ALONG BEACON STREET.



FIG 2.2.9. NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES ALONG BEACON STREET.

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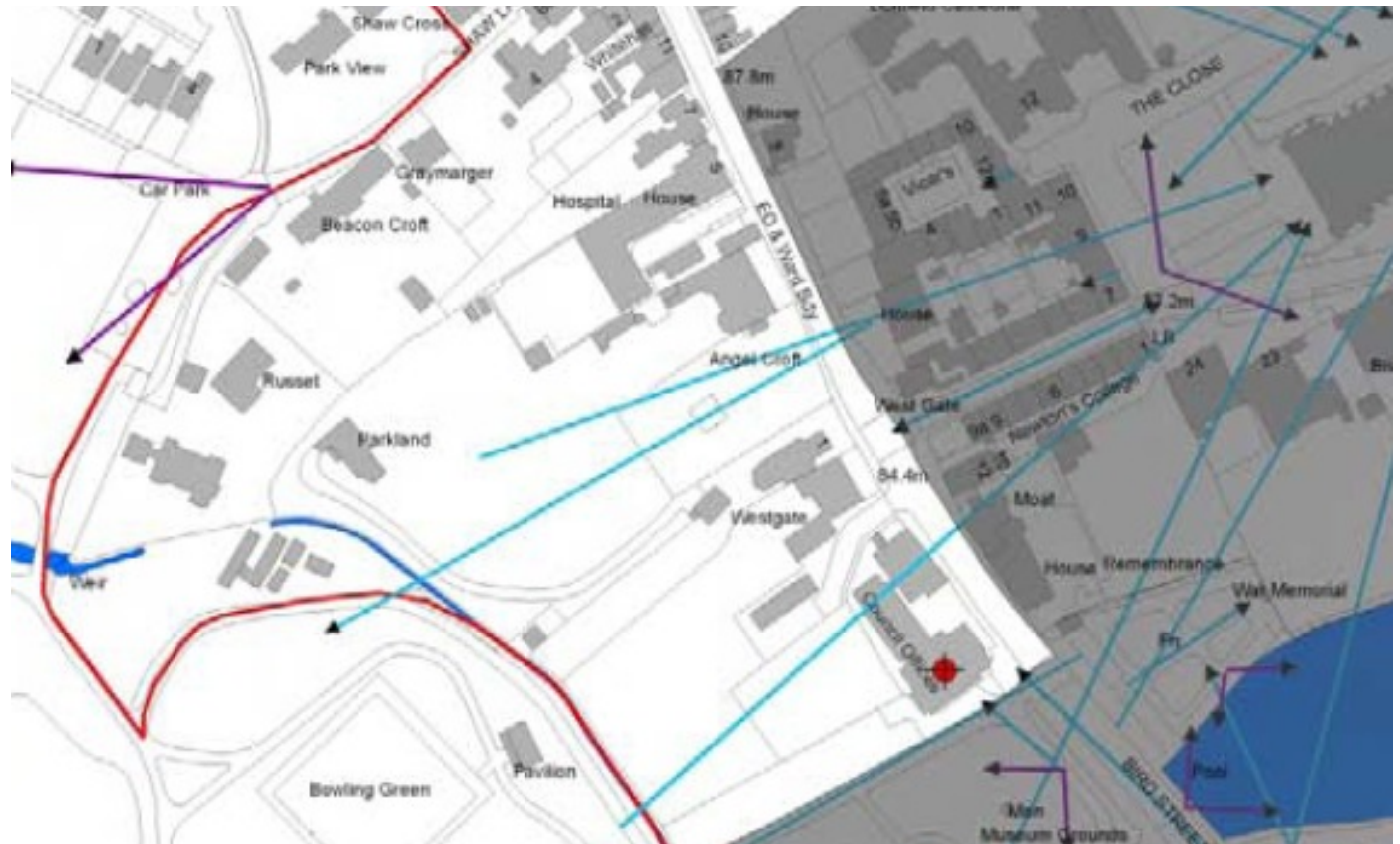
Angel Croft House lies within the Lichfield City Conservation Area, which was originally designated in 1970 to cover the historic centre of the City. An additional Conservation Area, known as the Lichfield Gateway Conservation Area, was designated in 1998 and covered Beacon Street. The District Council published a comprehensive assessment covering both Conservation Areas, now referred to together as the City Centre Conservation Area, in 2009. The Appraisal sets out the key features and characteristics of the area.

The application site falls within Character Area 14 (Beacon Street South) in the Appraisal, which notes that the principle character of the area is derived from the Georgian townhouses which line both sides of the road, and which generally become larger and of more high status the closer the properties are to the city centre. Materials are principally red brick with clay tile roofs and brick chimneys, with timber sash windows, pedimented doorcases and ornate fanlights.

The Appraisal notes that there are views in to this part of the Conservation Area from Beacon Park to the west, and to the Cathedral. Once such view is over the top of the car park which forms part of the application site. The Appraisal also notes the view from Darwin House, opposite the application site and Grade 1 listed, over the car park in the other direction towards Beacon Park.

Tree cover to the rear of properties fronting Beacon Street is identified as being a natural feature of positive benefit to this part of the Conservation Area.

One of the features highlighted in the Appraisal is the importance of boundary treatments – since many of the buildings in the city centre were built at the back edge of pavements, many do not have boundary treatments, but where they do exist, they are normally or red brick, or in some cases stone. However, some of the more prestigious properties, such as Angel Croft House (and nearby Beacon Lodge and Westgate House) had impressive railings and gates. The wrought iron work at Angel Croft House is listed in its own right.



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2.3_Opportunities & Constraints

In terms of constraints, the key considerations are the fact that the application site is a Grade II* Listed Building in a Conservation Area, and therefore any works to the building, or which affect the setting of the building and the Conservation Area, must have regard to the need for the character and appearance of the building/area to be preserved (or enhanced). The accompanying Heritage Appraisal assists by identifying key historic features of the site, and the design approach has been heavily influenced by the advice received both from the applicant's own specialist advisor, and from Lichfield District Council's specialist advisors.

Angel Croft House itself is a substantial vacant building which requires a new and viable use to ensure its future – in that sense, the building itself is an opportunity. The railings to the front of the property are in need of substantive repairs, and therefore establishing a new use provides an opportunity for repair and future retention of such features. The property has a substantial garden to the rear, which provides an opportunity to create an attractive private amenity space for future users of the property. The adjoining public car park (identified as an area potentially for improvement in the Conservation Area Appraisal) provides an opportunity for parking in association with the re-use of the building, in an area already used for parking.

Although there are therefore significant constraints imposed by the need to work sympathetically with the historic fabric of the building and the surrounding area, the building and its surrounds also represent a great opportunity for a high quality development that will give the building and the area new life, activity, and a viable long-term future.



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3.0_PLANNING POLICY:

In this section, we examine the key planning policies applicable to the proposed development. We explain why the proposed change of use to residential apartments is appropriate in this instance.

At the national level and local level, there are a number of planning policies concerned with the protection of built heritage – because these policies are covered in some detail in the accompanying Heritage Statement, we do not refer to these in detail here, to avoid repetition.

At the national level, planning policy is set out primarily in the National Planning Policy Framework. At the local level, the Development Plan comprises the saved policies of the 1998 Lichfield Local Plan. A new Local Plan Strategy (2012) has been submitted for Examination, but the Inspector has raised concerns that the Council has not identified sufficient land to accommodate it objectively assessed housing need, and the Council is intending to undertake further work. We touch on this document below, but it does not yet form part of the statutory Development Plan.

3.1_National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

At the heart of national policy is the presumption in the NPPF in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF explains that sustainable development means meeting socio-economic development needs as well as protecting existing assets and resources. Specifically, the approach is defined at paragraph 14, which states that for decision making, the presumption in favour of sustainable development means:

- (i) Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and

- (ii) Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless (a) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole; or (b) specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.

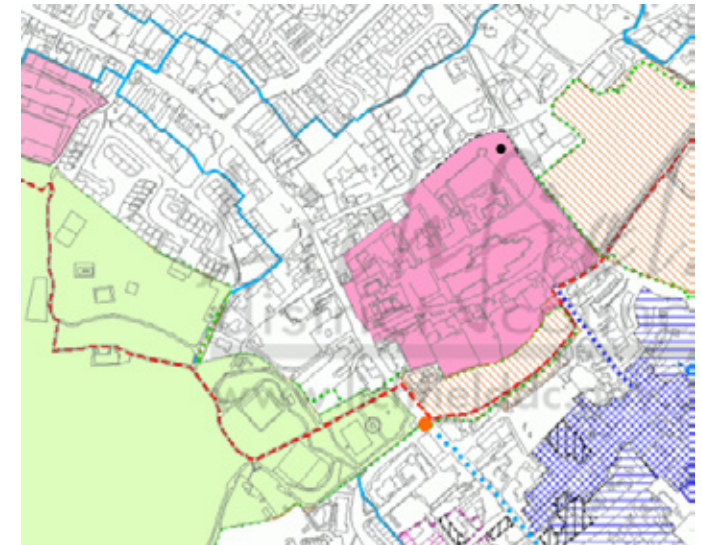
The NPPF explains the importance of heritage assets and the need to protect them as part of the planning process (see Heritage Statement for a fuller explanation).

The NPPF also has a major objective to “boost significantly” the supply of new homes, and there is particular emphasis on maintaining a 5 year land supply (paragraphs 47 and 49). Paragraph 51 notes that Local Planning Authorities “should normally approve planning applications for change of use to residential use ... where there is an identified need for additional housing in that area, provided that there are not strong economic reasons why such development would be inappropriate.”

3.2_1998 Local Plan Saved Policies:

The 1998 Local Plan pre-dates the NPPF, and in particular pre-dates the NPPF requirement to boost housing supply. It remains the adopted Development Plan only because the new Local Plan has not yet been adopted.

On the adopted Proposals Map, the site falls within the defined urban area (and within the Conservation Area), but is not subject to any site specific policies.



Originally the 1998 Local Plan had a number of policies aimed at promoting tourism, including new accommodation. However, these policies (EMP6, EMP7 and L54) were not saved and therefore no longer exist. Local Plan policies on heritage and conservation were saved, and are considered in more detail in the separate Heritage Statement.

Policy H5 relates to new housing in settlements, and states that proposals for housing will be acceptable, subject to meeting the Council’s normal criteria, and factors such as avoiding the loss of important open space etc.

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3.3_2012 Draft Local Plan:

Policy CP6 of the emerging Local Plan identifies a requirement for some 8,700 homes in the District up to 2028, although as noted above, the need for a higher figure has been raised through the Examination process. The strategy is to concentrate new housing within the most sustainable locations, the principal one being Lichfield City. The plan envisages 32% of the overall district requirement being in the City, with over 50% of this being either through existing commitments or new windfall sites.

Core Policy 9 of the emerging Local Plan supports tourism use within Lichfield City, but whilst new hotel accommodation in the city centre is supported, the loss of hotel accommodation is not prevented.

3.4_Justification for the proposed change of use:

Both the adopted and the emerging Local Plan policies are supportive of residential accommodation in Lichfield City. There is a substantial need for additional residential properties, identified through the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment, which the new Local Plan is seeking to deliver. Opportunities for 'windfall' residential development in the City is a key component of the new Local Plan strategy. The NPPF is particularly supportive of boosting residential supply, including through change of use/bringing empty properties back in to use, and the application site is in a highly sustainable location close to the city centre. The existing adopted Local Plan policies are also supportive of new residential development in the City.

There are no up to date adopted policies which seek to retain existing hotel accommodation. But in any event, the property is vacant and has not been in use as hotel accommodation for many years. The building is owned

by a hotel operator (Webb Hotels and Travel), and was originally acquired with the intention of using it for overspill accommodation. The owners have extensive experience of running hotels in the area, but even so, there was never any intention to use the building other than as overspill bedspace, because on its own, the property is too small, and would require too much investment to run as a stand-alone facility. In the event, the recession caused a fall-off in demand for bed spaces, and since then, Premier Inn has received permission for additional bedspaces which will cater for demand in the future.

In the absence of demand, and in the light of the high refurbishment costs, even were there a policy seeking retention of hotel accommodation, the Angel Croft does not have a future in this use, and a new use is needed.

The Angel Croft was originally a residential building, and change of use back to residential not only provides the most practical solution in terms of maintaining the character of the building and providing the funds for repair, but it is also returning the building to its original use.

Subject to compliance with the Council's policies for the protection of the existing heritage assets (see Heritage Statement), it is considered that the proposed development complies with the Development Plan, so far as it is relevant and up to date, and that in the absence of any policies to the contrary, the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF applies.

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4.0 DESIGN PROCESS

4.1 Pre Application:

A site meeting with Lichfield District Council was held in July 2013 to discuss some preliminary proposals for the change of use of the existing building to residential use. At that stage, no detailed plans had been prepared, but a rough breakdown of how the building might be subdivided with minimum interventions to the historic fabric had been prepared, to aid discussion.

Feedback from the Council at that site meeting was then used to prepare a first draft scheme for further consideration during August, leading to a formal pre-application meeting at the start of September. Further refinements of the design have continued since that meeting, informed by the feedback received.

A particular area of study at the pre-application stage has concerned the bothy/gazebo at the rear of the building. The structure is small, with one ground floor room and one first floor room, and in isolation, is not readily suitable for an alternative use. The concept of a glazed link and construction of a separate living area was therefore considered, and sent to the Council for comment and for consultation with English Heritage. Feedback from English Heritage suggested that the principle of this approach would be acceptable, but that possibly the size of the new structure could be reconsidered. Further consideration has therefore been given to this issue. The preference has been to use the dimensions of the existing brick base to determine the scale of the new building, and this is what is reflected in the current application drawings.

The scheme as submitted has evolved as a result of the input from the Council, and the pre-application process has allowed different ideas and approaches to be discussed, and either rejected or worked up in more detail depending on the feedback received.

The pre-application process has also confirmed the requirements for any s106 contributions, which in this case will comprise a contribution towards the Cannock Chase project.



FIG 4.2.1. INDICATIVE PRE-APPLICATION BOTHY DESIGN.

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FIG 4.2.2. INDICATIVE PRE-APPLICATION SCHEME LAYOUT PLAN.

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5.0_PROPOSAL:

5.1_Amount:

The application site has an area of 0.21 hectares. As previously mentioned the proposal consists of the following:

- Conversion of the existing main hotel building into 7no. apartments (G.I.A. between 73m² and 176m²). This is to include landscaping to the rear gardens to provide amenity space;
- Conversion of the existing stable into 1no. duplex apartment (G.I.A. 90sq.m);
- The conversion and part new build of the bothy at the rear of the property to create 1no. dwelling unit. This is to include a separate access from the car park and a private parking area and garden amenity space. (G.I.A. 114sq.m);
- Use part of the existing public parking area as private parking for residents of the main building and stables;
- Repair and refurbishment of the railings and gates at the front of the property

5.2_Design Principles and Concepts:

Angel Croft House was originally built as a residential property. Although it would be unfeasible to retain the building as a single house, the core philosophy of the design approach has been to facilitate a change of use back to residential accommodation, with the minimum alteration of the existing building fabric, and whilst preserving the appearance of a single dwelling so far as possible.

In order to ensure that all of the structures on the site are provided with a positive long term use that will encourage their future maintenance and repair, the design philosophy has included the objective of seeking to provide uses for all of structures on the site, and to provide for a practical sub-division of the external space to encourage ownership and upkeep. In some cases this means creating private areas, and in some cases it means establishing communal facilities, but always with clear boundaries.

Externally, and in terms of the setting of the building, the objective has been to keep the principle land uses the same. The setting of the building will benefit from future maintenance, but the underlying uses around the building do not materially change.

In respect of the internal conversion, the objective has been to provide the new accommodation in a manner that respects and maintains the original configuration of rooms, spaces, and entrances. At the lower levels this has led to duplex units (i.e. over two floors), which although less than ideal from a sales perspective, minimises the effect on the layout of the building. Where possible, existing internal stairs have been used to provide the necessary circulation, with the one exception being the part basement/part ground floor unit on the south side,

where a new external staircase is proposed in lieu of the existing modern staircase to the basement, which helps to reduce the need for internal changes.

Where new subdivisions are proposed, or where existing subdivisions are proposed to be removed, the principle has been to retain the main historic layout of rooms, to remove modern partitions only, and to add new subdivisions only in secondary locations, rather than in the principal rooms. In order to assist in access to the upper floor, a small lift is proposed (in the location of the lift previously approved), designed to have a minimum impact on the layout of the internal rooms, and to minimise the impact on the historic building fabric.

In recognition of the original use as a single house, the proposals retain the main entrance, the original hall way, and the main staircase which provides access to the first floor. The rear access to the garden is also retained, and the steps and railings to the rear garden will be retained and repaired as the main access to the communal amenity space.

The separate Heritage Statement provides further information in support of the design approach.

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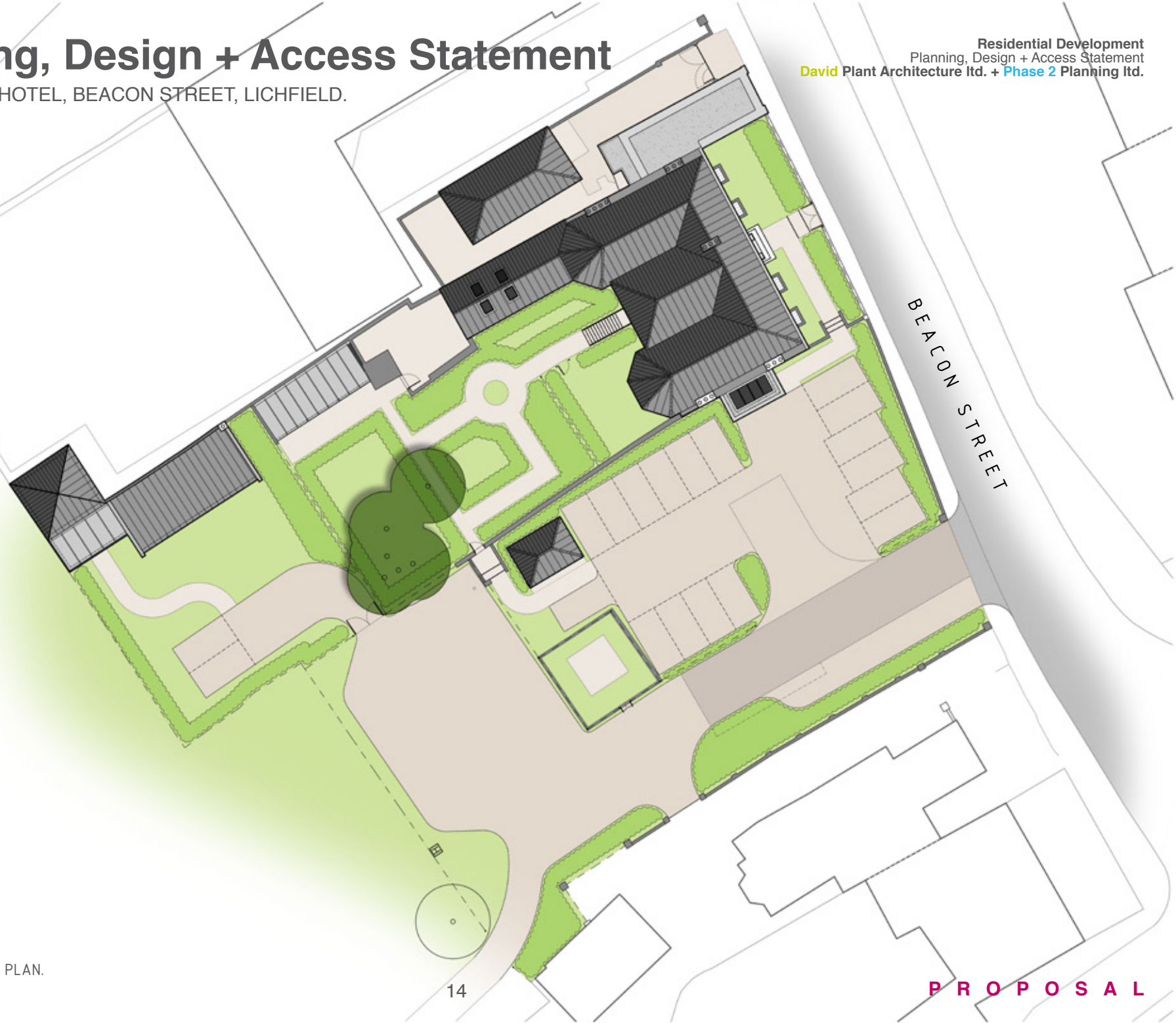


FIG 5.1.1 PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT PLAN.

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5.3_Appearance:

The proposal consists of a part new build upon converting the existing bothy into 1no. dwelling unit. The proposed materials have been carefully selected to be in keeping with the existing bothy.

In addition to the extension to the bothy we have also proposed a side extension (as shown in fig. 5.3.1). This will replace the existing staircase leading to the basement and will serve apartment 1. The proposed extension has been designed to have a similar appearance of the existing extension as shown in the visual below.

As shown in *fig. 5.4.1* we have proposed to retain the glasshouse at the rear of the property. This currently stands as ruin having only the iron supports remaining.

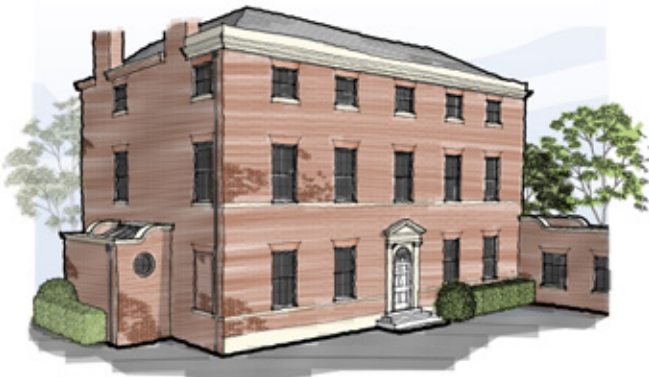


FIG 5.3.1. INDICATIVE VISUAL.

P R O P O S A L



FIG 5.3.2. RED BRICK WITH CREAM MOTAR TO MATCH EXISTING.



FIG 5.3.3. BLACK/GREY TILES TO MATCH EXISTING.

5.4_Scale:

In respect of the change of use of the existing buildings, the issue of scale is established already. In terms of layout, we have described in the previous section the approach to the layout of the main property. Externally, there are no material changes to the existing layout of the site.

In respect of the proposed demolition and re-erection of the southern extension, the scale has been determined by reference both to the minimum height needed to create a staircase that links the basement and ground floors, and to the proportions of the extension in the context of the flank elevation – the small extension is designed to appear as a minor addition, which in no way detracts or competes with the scale of the main house. Its appearance is designed to blend with the existing building in terms of materials and detailing.

In respect of the new build elements to the Bothy, the scale of the glazed link is dictated by the height of the ground floor openings, but otherwise is intended to be a small scale features which has the sole purpose of linking the Bothy to the additional living accommodation. The glazed form is used so that views of the frontage of the Bothy are retained.

The scale of the new living accommodation, in terms of footprint, is designed to match the existing and historic footprint in this location. The height is single storey, and designed to match but not compete with the two storey Bothy. The angle of the roof slope dictates the height of the structure against the existing rear wall.

The separate Heritage Statement contains an explanation as to how these works impact on the special architectural and historic features of the building, with reference to the specific features of the building referred to in the listing.

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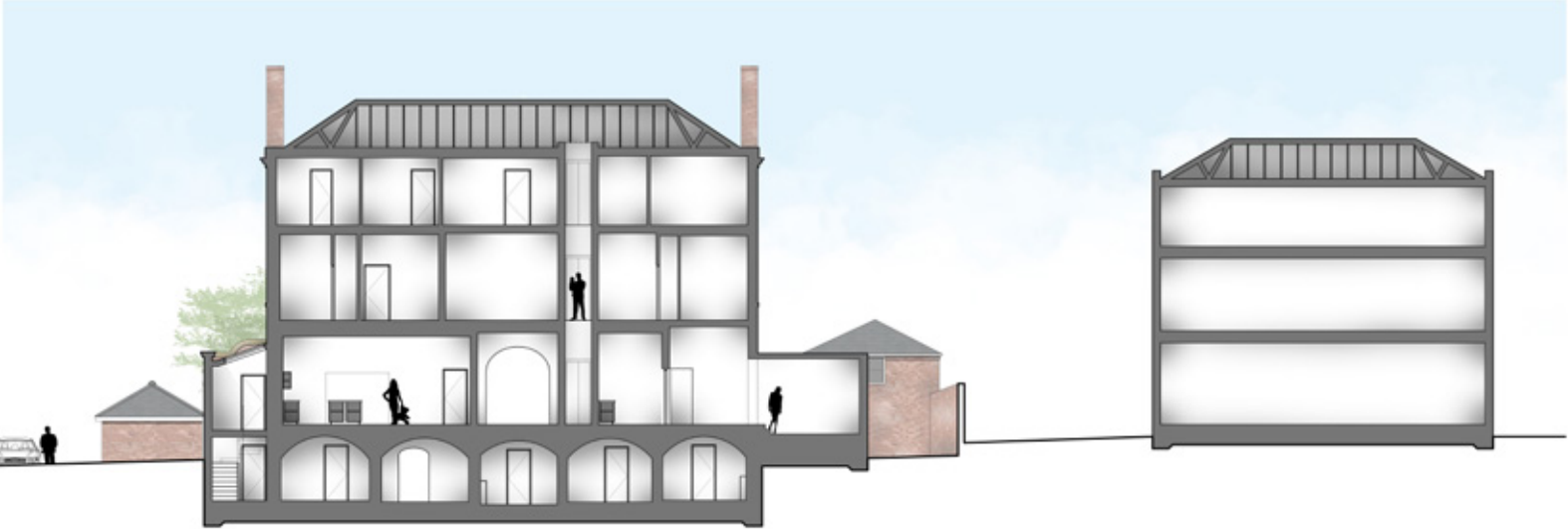


FIG 5.4.1 PROPOSED SITE SECTIONS.

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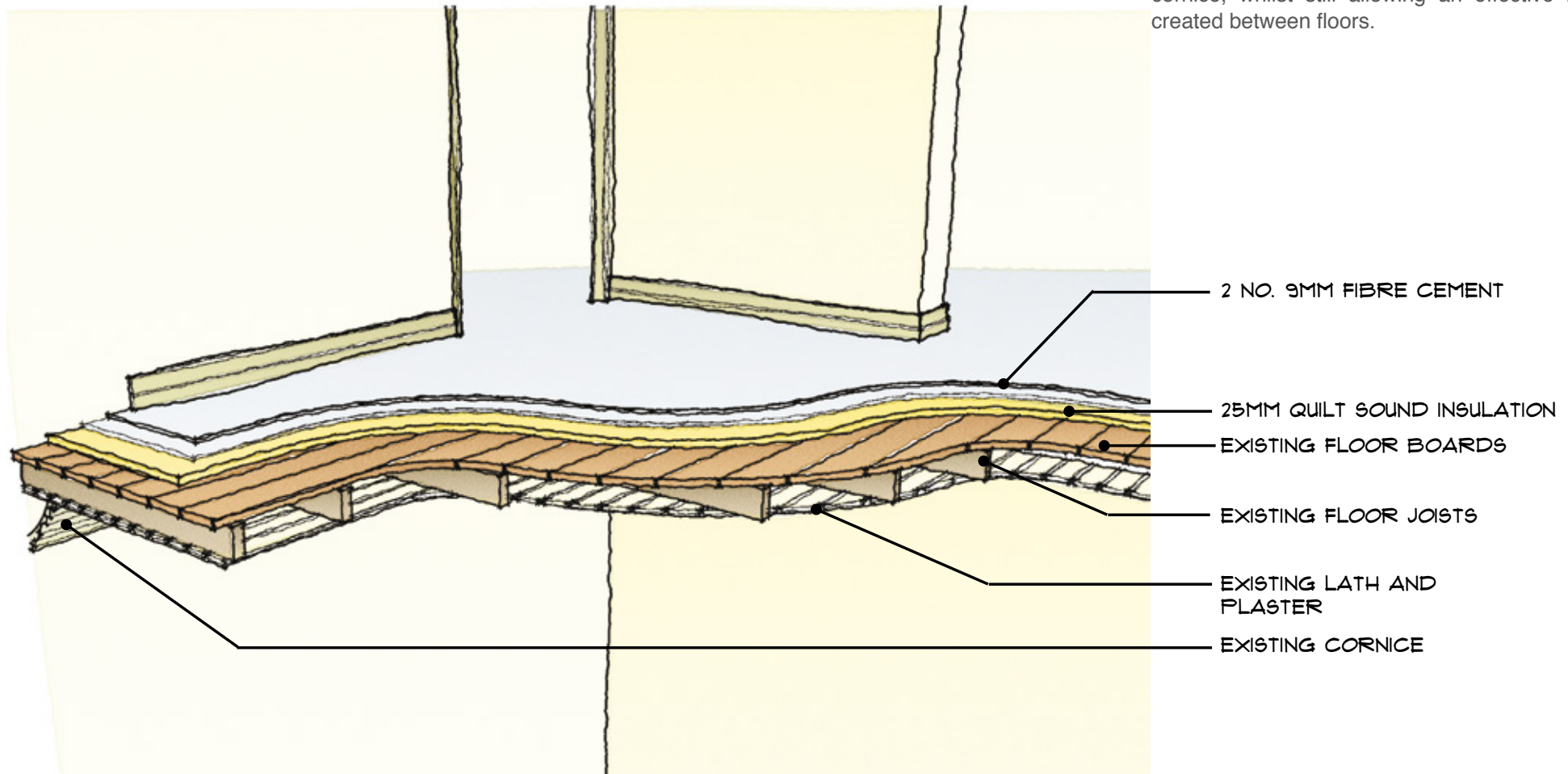
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5.5_Architectural Detailing:

As this building is Grade II* listed and within the conservation area of Lichfield the elevational treatment and internal detailing is very important to the project. To ensure that the original detailing is preserved where

possible, we are seeking to achieve the conversion with a minimum of intervention. The sketches in this section show possible treatments that could be used for key areas.

Below in *fig. 5.6.1* shows a possible approach to build up the proposed floor. To prevent sound travelling throughout the building we have proposed to add sound insulation and fibre cement on top of the existing floor boards. This will preserve the existing floor, ceilings below, and cornice, whilst still allowing an effective barrier to be created between floors.



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FIG 5.5.1. PRESERVATION OF EXISTING FLOOR.

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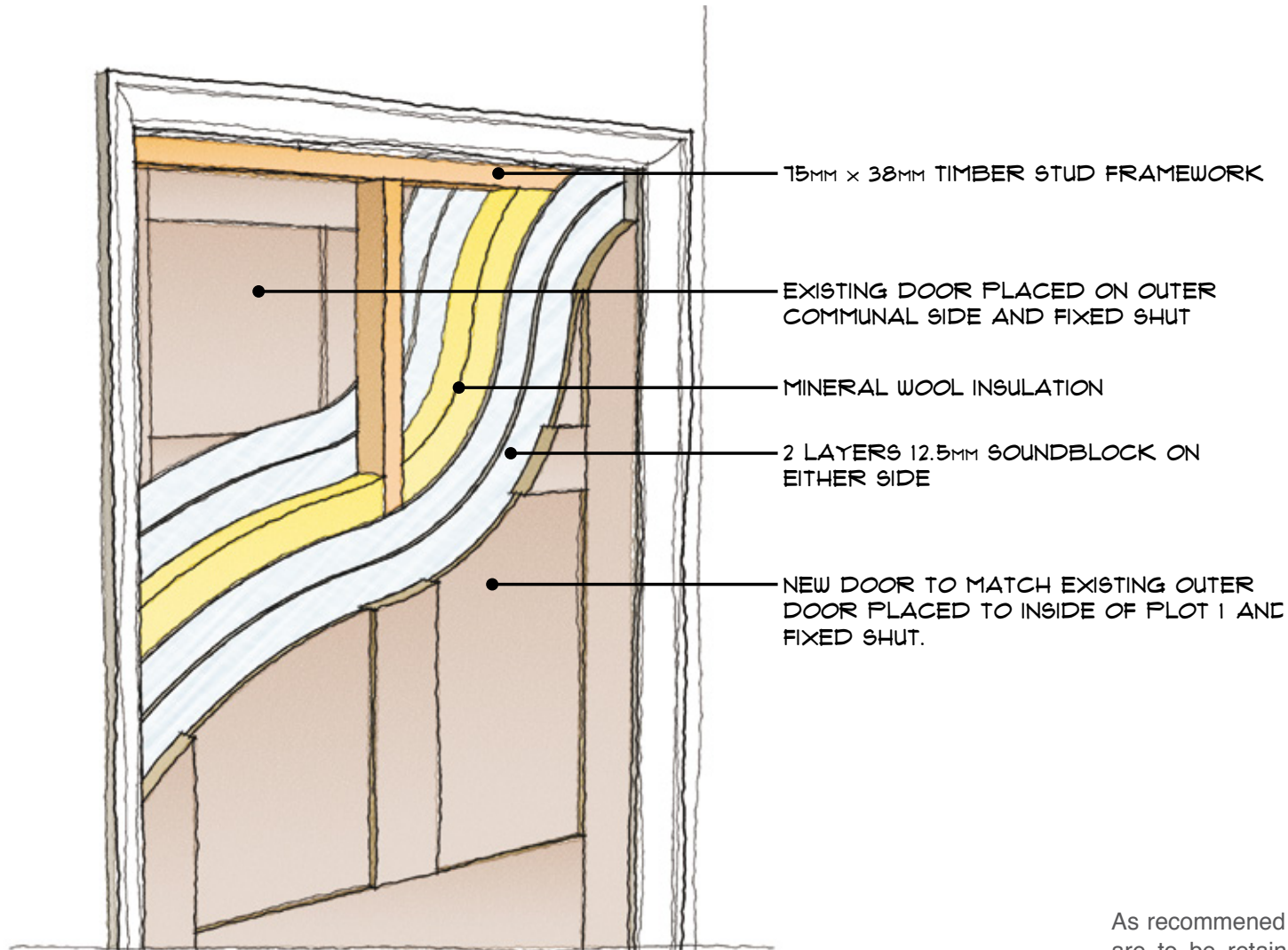


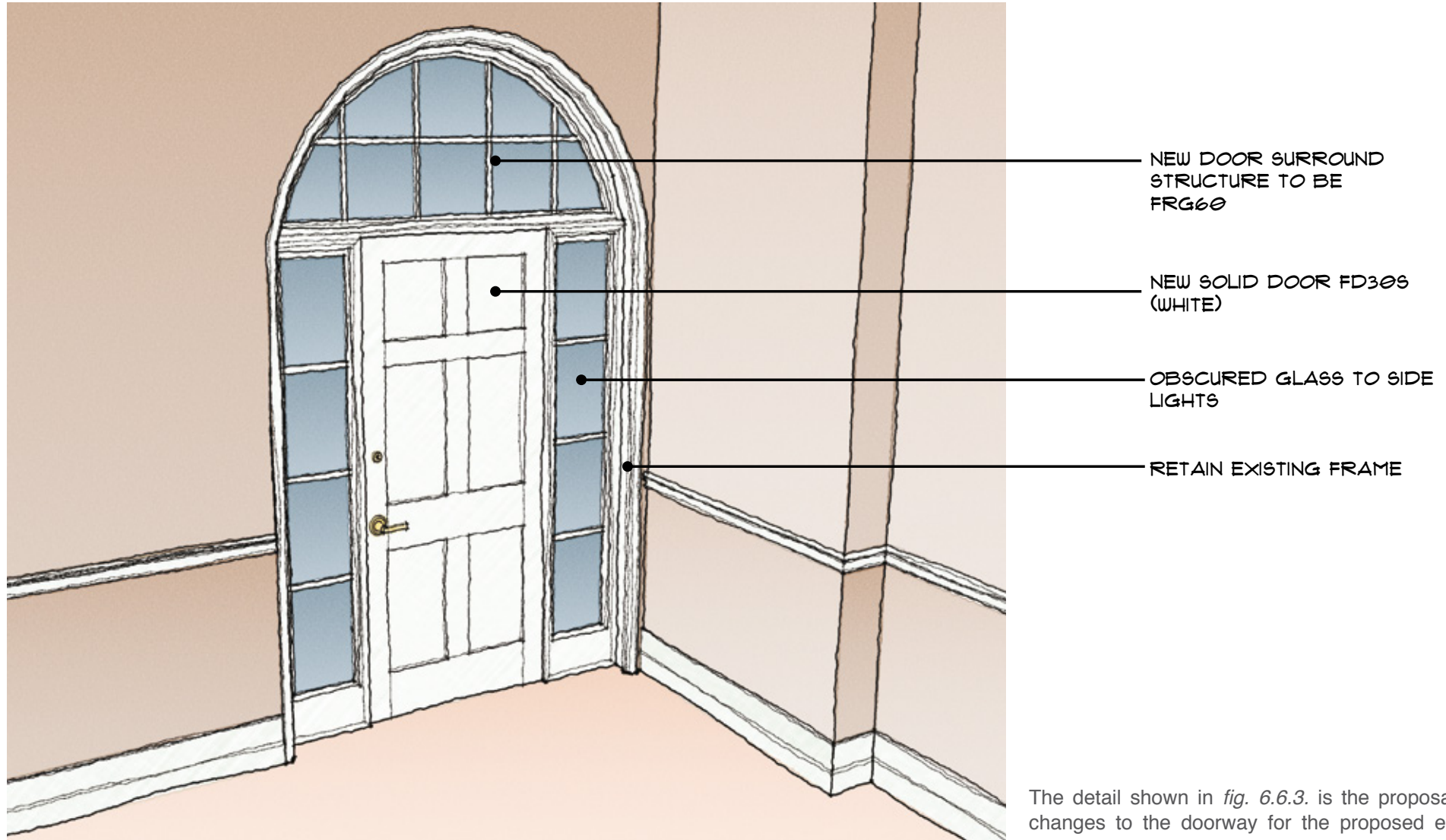
FIG 5.5.2. DOOR PRESERVATION.

As recommended at the pre-application meeting all doors are to be retained. In response we have proposed to create false doors with a wall construction. This ensures that the existing door detailing and character is preserved whilst also being a functional wall.

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The detail shown in *fig. 6.6.3.* is the proposal to make changes to the doorway for the proposed entrance to apartment 4. The existing frame for the doorway is to be retained whilst a new entrance door and obscure glass is proposed to ensure the privacy of the internal apartment.

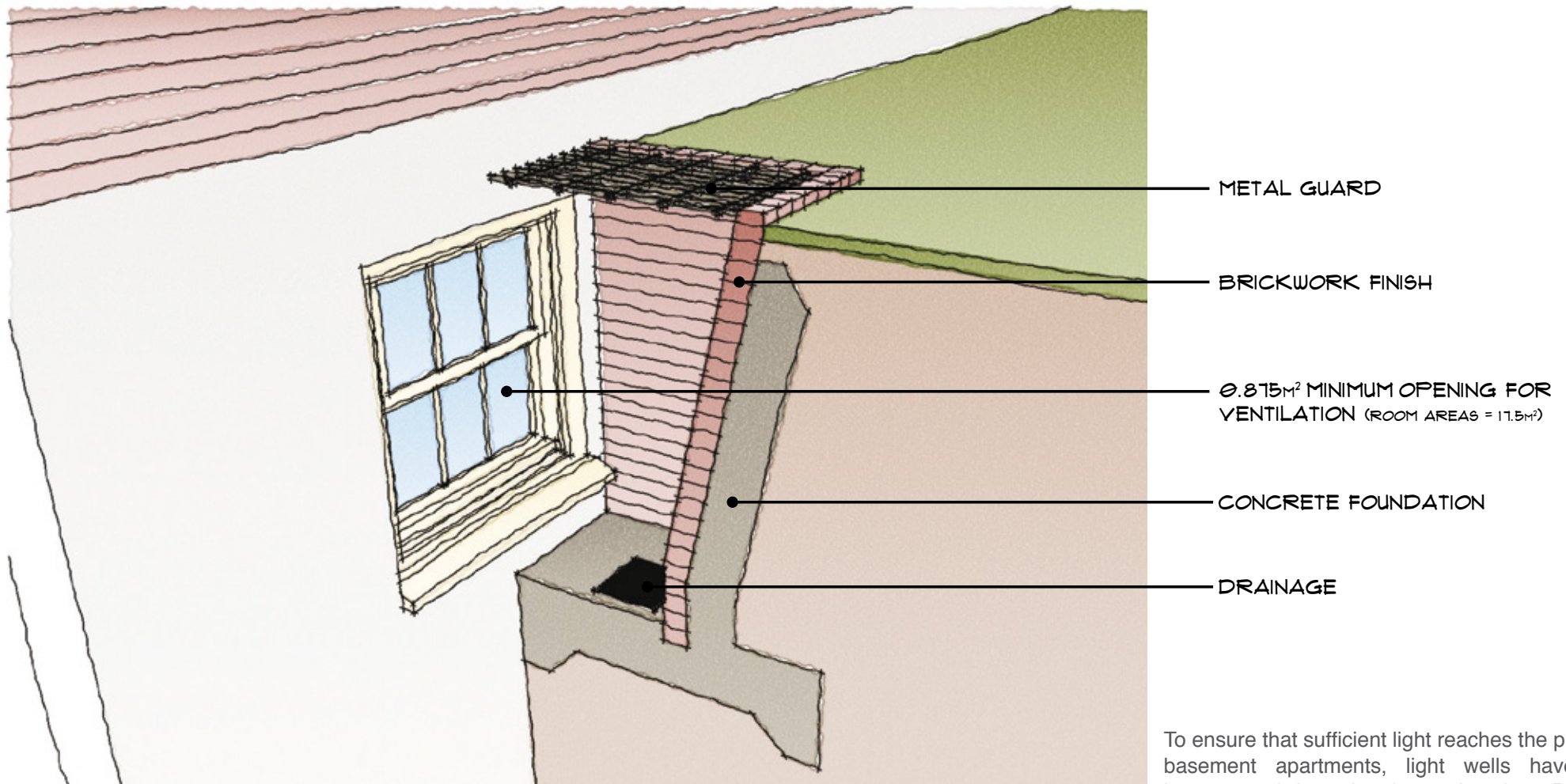
FIG 5.5.3. PROPOSED APARTMENT ENTRANCE.

P R O P O S A L

106_Planning, Design + Access Statement

FORMER ANGEL CROFT HOTEL, BEACON STREET, LICHFIELD.

Residential Development
Planning, Design + Access Statement
David Plant Architecture Ltd. + Phase 2 Planning Ltd.



COLOURS FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

To ensure that sufficient light reaches the proposed basement apartments, light wells have been incorporated into the front elevation. Designed to line through with the upper storey window continuing the buildings symmetry and by using the same window profiles and dimensions as those to the basement storey in the rear elevation we have sympathetically tried to preserve the buildings character as well as providing a quality of light necessary.

FIG 5.5.4. LIGHT WELLS.

106_Planning, Design + Access Statement

FORMER ANGEL CROFT HOTEL, BEACON STREET, LICHFIELD.

5.6_Landscaping:

A detailed landscaping scheme has yet to be prepared. The broad principles of the approach to the external spaces however is envisaged to be as follows:

- Frontage to Beacon Hill – to be communal space associated with the main house, laid out with a mixture of planting and grass areas, to be provide an attractive and relatively low maintenance border to either side of the entrance path;
- Rear garden – to be communal space for residents of Angel Croft House, laid out to provide a variety of opportunities for formal/informal planting, with a range of seating areas;
- Bothy garden – to be laid out as private amenity space for residents of the Bothy, marked by a new hedge to divide it from the communal garden for Angel Croft House. Existing hedgerow to car park to be retained, and retention/replacement of existing trees to be agreed with the Council's arboricultural officer in due course;
- Courtyard to stables – to be laid out as private amenity space for residents of the converted stables;
- Residents' parking area – to be resurfaced with a gravel finish to provide a communal parking area (other than any hard surfacing required to facilitate use of the refuse/cycle store).

5.7_Access:

Consultation with the District Council has occurred prior to the submission of this application. There are no specific access policies that we have been directed to as regards to this application. As discussed previously, the proposals have sought to provide safe and convenient access to the building, in a manner consistent with the retention of the preservation of the character and features of the building.

6.0_CONCLUSION:

The proposed residential development is in-keeping with the scale and massing of the surrounding area and as demonstrated in the contextual plans within this document show that the site is within a sustainable location.

The proposal has been designed to suit local policy, government and development plan guidance as has been outlined within this document following previous consultation with the Council.

Following all points outlined during this document and those highlighted previously, it is believed the scheme provides a quality development appropriate to the site and its context.

For the reasons set out above, the application proposals do not conflict with the statutory development plan and the proposals are acceptable taking into account all other material considerations. Having regard to the above, the Council is respectfully requested to approve this application for the development proposed.

