

**OUR VISION**

Our vision for St Albans City Centre Opportunity Site South (CCOS) is to generate an architecture which is fitting to its context in all regards. This is an approach that delivers a sensitive and considered scheme without being overtly apologetic and to that regard does not look to mimic or replicate but more take strong and positive reference from the best of St Albans, its history and heritage as well as the better aspects of current design.

Our approach to the facade treatments of the buildings is an holistic approach, which then enables the fulfilment of the brief set. That being:

- To enhance St Albans through excellent quality of design
- To provide a new landmark building as a key gateway
- To reflect the character and uniqueness of St Albans
- To respect the Conservation area, and...
- To bring a high level of sustainability and greening to the area

Taking into account the current consented scheme for the site, as well as the revised scheme proposed, we have looked to retrieve the best aspects of these schemes, re-work and re-imagine the proposals into an arrangement of buildings and uses across the site which ameliorates the immediate context and creates comfortable adjacencies. Hopefully, these can then be improved upon with time and future masterplan objectives, yet to be delivered, but which are clearly aspired to.

**THE QUAKER GARDEN PAVILION**

With the rich and long history of the Quakers use of the land facing Victoria Street, the Quaker Garden is a key element to any proposal.

The pavilion building could work to serve this garden as a resting spot to reflect, or as a cafe or a more openly community led building.



Architectural heritage in St Albans



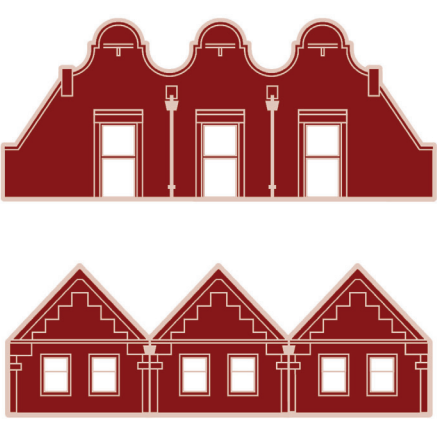
CREATING A LANDMARK

Addressing the corner of Victoria St and Bricket Road is key in the proposal, as it becomes the new gateway to the city centre. Commercial uses fill its raised ground floor sitting comfortably in its position to Victoria Street.



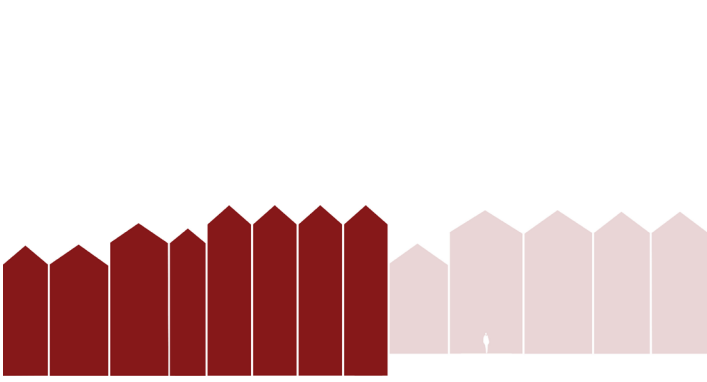
RELATIONSHIP WITH CONTEXT

St Albans has a very rich context and addressing the architecture of the city in a modern way is one of the key moves of the proposal.



CHARACTER AND UNIQUENESS

The detailing of the buildings is one that is approached from the study of the character of the architecture in St Albans.



ROOFSCAPE & IDENTITY

Victoria Street has a very characteristic roofscape and we take clear reference from this, but in doing so look to create an identity which whilst recognisable is modern in its motif and never pastiche.



GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

The scheme proposes a high level of sustainability. We have looked towards the office building in generating a very 'green' working environment for the future, as well as bringing good levels of greening to the public realm.



QUALITY EXTERNAL SPACE

A good external space is key for a community. The integration of the Quaker Memorial and the relationship with the magistrates Court are also key components of the scheme.



Internal view of the Quaker Garden Pavilion



View from Victoria Street



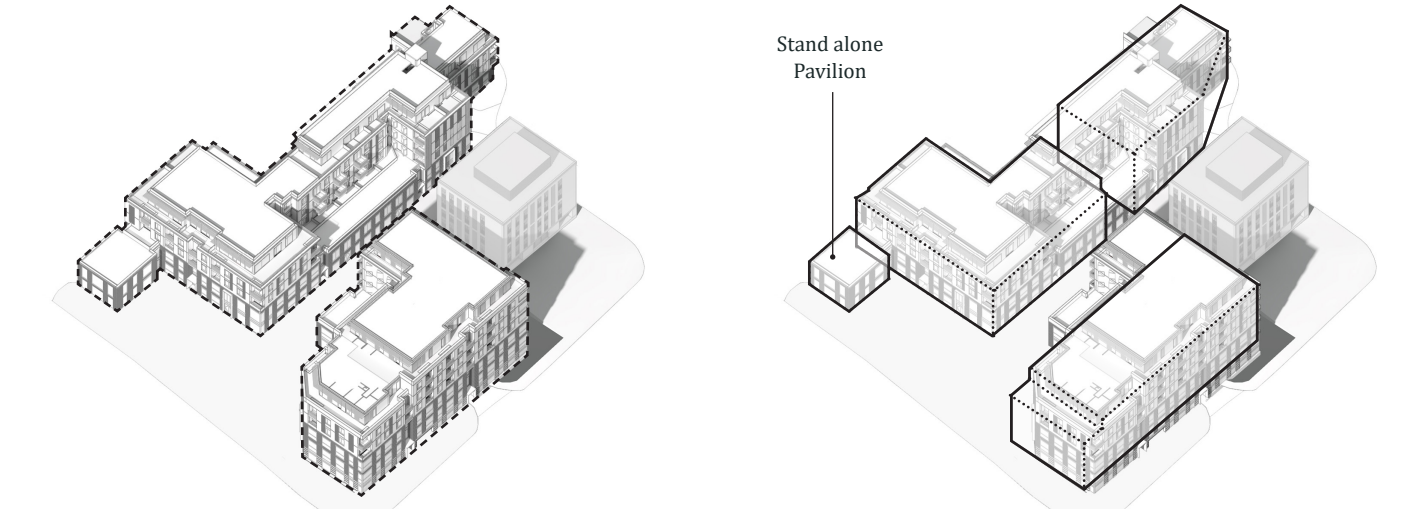
View from Victoria Street and Bricket Road



**THE PROPOSAL**

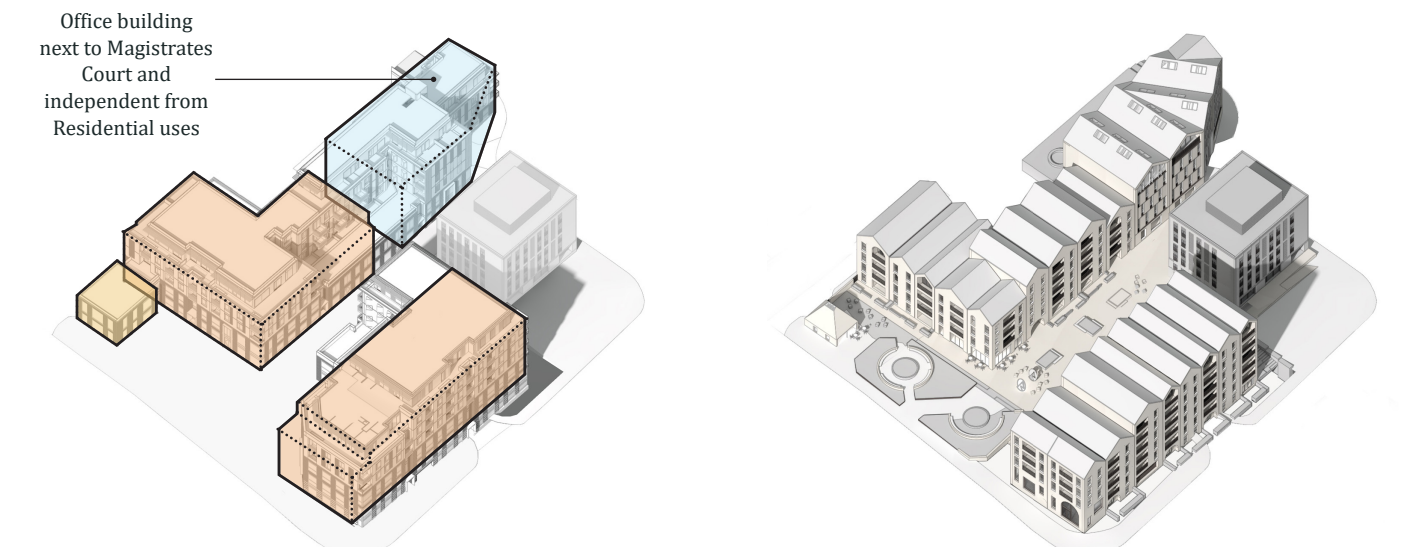
Our approach was to initially review both proposals for the site: the consented scheme and the forth coming BDP proposals. In review of the consented scheme there was merit in the separate office building, as opposed to spreading this use across all buildings. The outcome of this, is that you gain better adjacencies between uses; office against magistrates and office against residential, as opposed to residential against residential.

In rationalising the building blocks and being efficient with design layout we have been able to retain the current extent of proposed housing of 98 units, but with lower number of floors and greater distances between buildings. By bringing more homes down to the ground, you create front doors on to the street, with more natural activation.



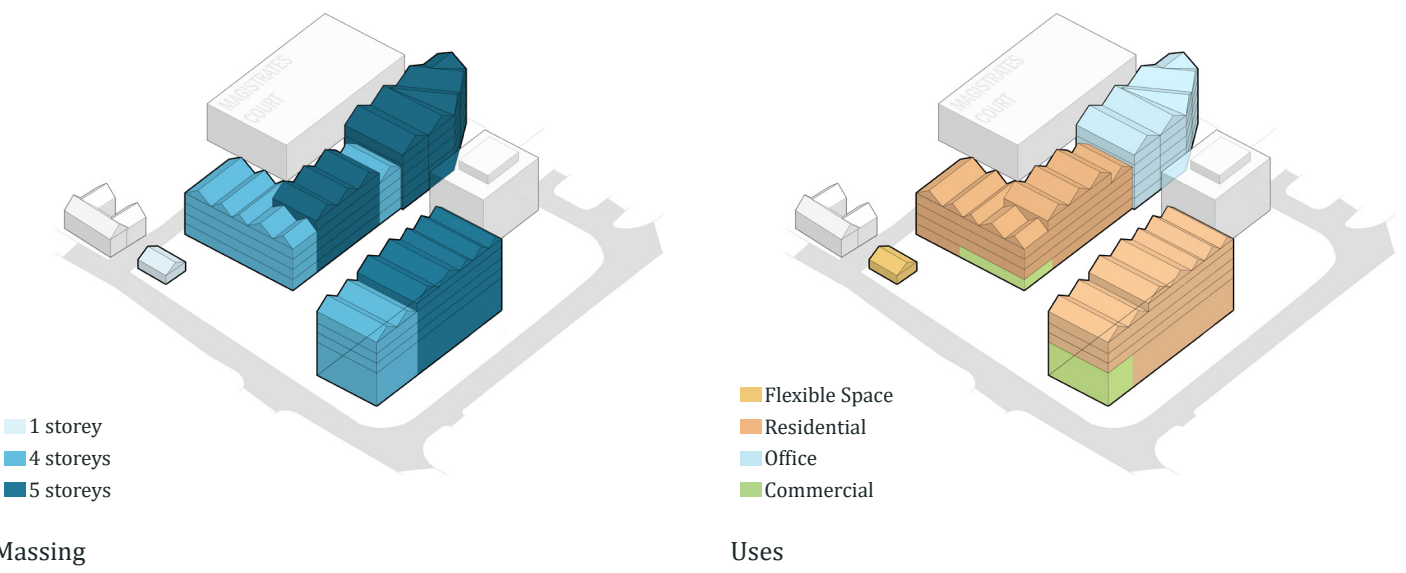
**BDP Proposal:** Altering the arrangement of the uses, taking the office spaces to the lower floors and residential to the upper floors has given way to unbalanced façades, with the appearance of 'top heavy' buildings.

**Rationalisation of the blocks:** by simple moves, we can rationalise the blocks to avoid many of the overlooking issues, whilst retaining area, creating better external spaces, together with a simplified construction phase and process.



Uses: the uses are organised as per the planning permission.

Proposal: simplified massing and separate uses.



Massing

Uses

Aerial View of the Proposal

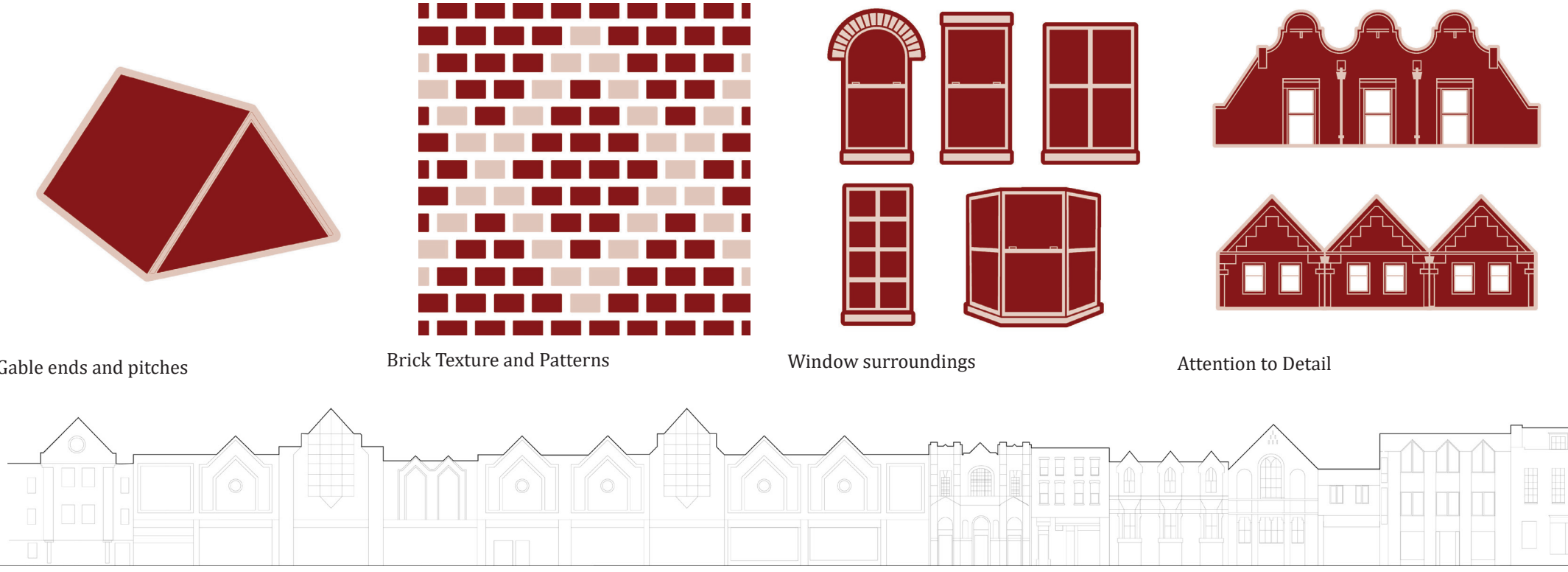


View looking towards Quaker gardens



ELEVATIONAL TREATMENT: REFERENCING ST ALBANS ARCHITECTURE

Roofscape and form are repeated through the streets surrounding the site, be it pitched roofs which zig-zag the skyline or dormers which puncture the roof scape, we have taken reference from this immediate context and through development of our proposals refined a modern roofline.



Gable ends and pitches

Brick Texture and Patterns

Window surroundings

Attention to Detail



Roofscape Analysis of Victoria Street

HOW TO ADDRESS BRICKET ROAD AND THE CHANGE OF LEVELS

Both Bricket Road and Victoria Street have a considerable change in levels.

As illustrated below, the change of levels in Victoria Street is simply addressed through the landscape and public realm, creating a soft transition between the street and the interior of the development.

Bricket Road is a quieter street but with somewhat more difficult levels to traverse. Our proposal has been simple, in the re-arrangement of the building blocks and uses across the site, we have the benefit of bringing residential down to the ground and creating front doors onto the street.



Bricket Road Elevation

1:500

ELEVATIONAL TREATMENT: CHARACTER AND UNIQUENESS

The immediate buildings of St Albans are of a particular character. Predominately brick in construction, the façades are enriched through the use of detailing as well as form. Soldier course bricks arch over windows, framing dormers or pitched roofs alike. Banding of bricks through colour or bonding are abundantly clear and further patterning is provided at times through highlight brick features of diagonal patterning.

In our approach to the site, our buildings generate a more encompassing design motif through the clean lines of a modern pitch and simple brick forms, creating recognisable architecture, referencing to the immediate context whilst not imitating. A further development and layering to our proposal could come from development and studies in the manner of special brick bonds to define a buildings base, grid or window reveal. Motifs could be delivered in reinterpretations of the existing tapestry found in St Albans today.



Facade Treatments in St Albans



Bay Study - Proposal for potential facade treatment



Victoria Street Elevation

1:500



View from Victoria Street

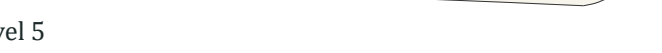


View from Bricket Road



Frontal View from Victoria Street





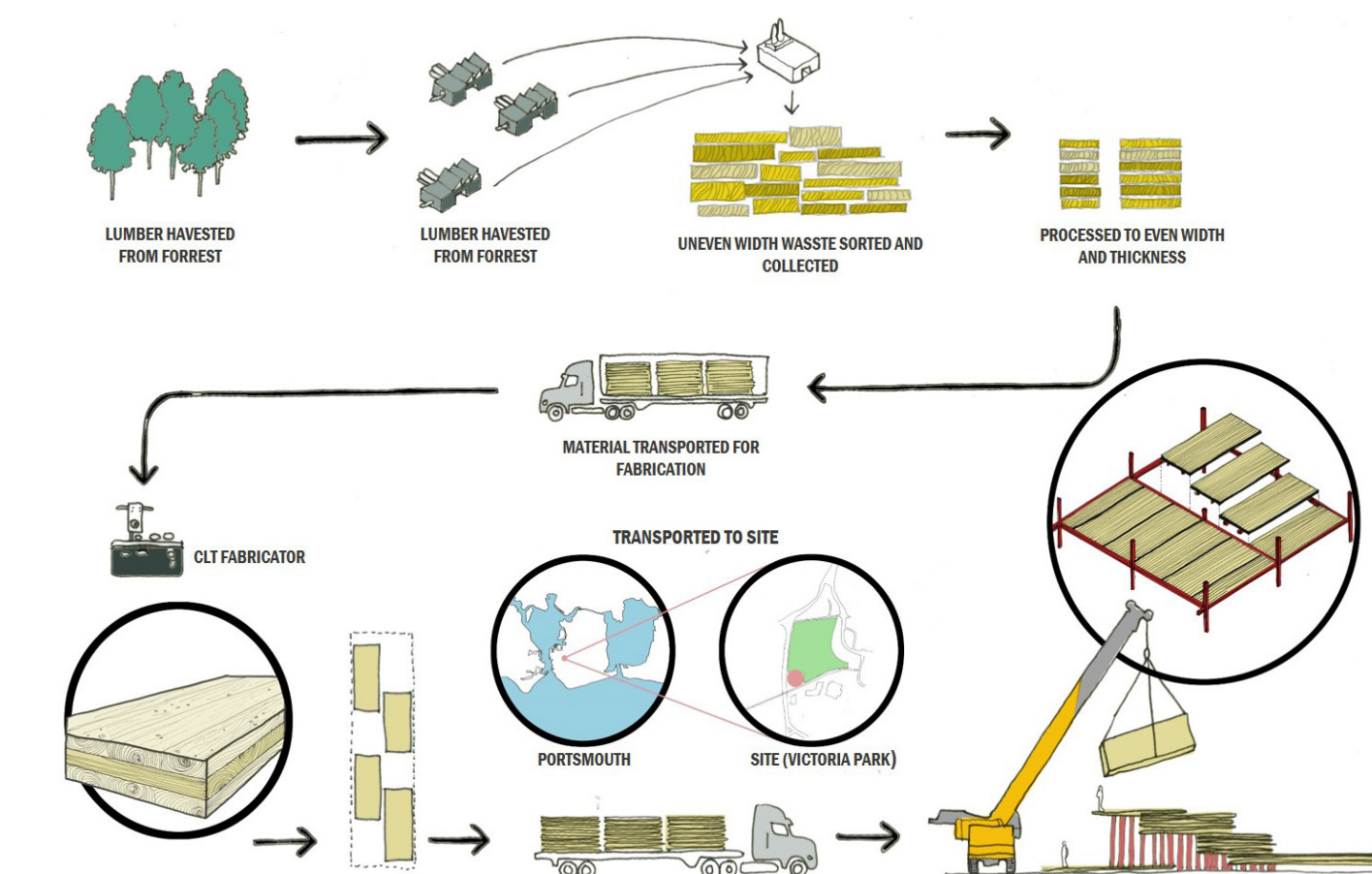
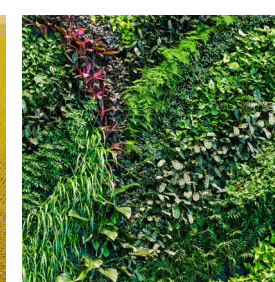
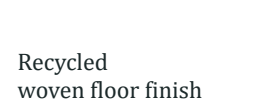
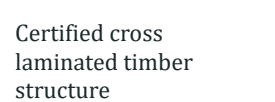
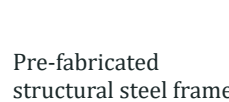


The proposal for the office building follows the character of the residential buildings. The building creates an internal courtyard with the Magistrates Court, inviting people to use a quiet space and that can be enjoyed by both the Magistrates Court workers, future workers of the office building as well as making connections to the residential amenities.

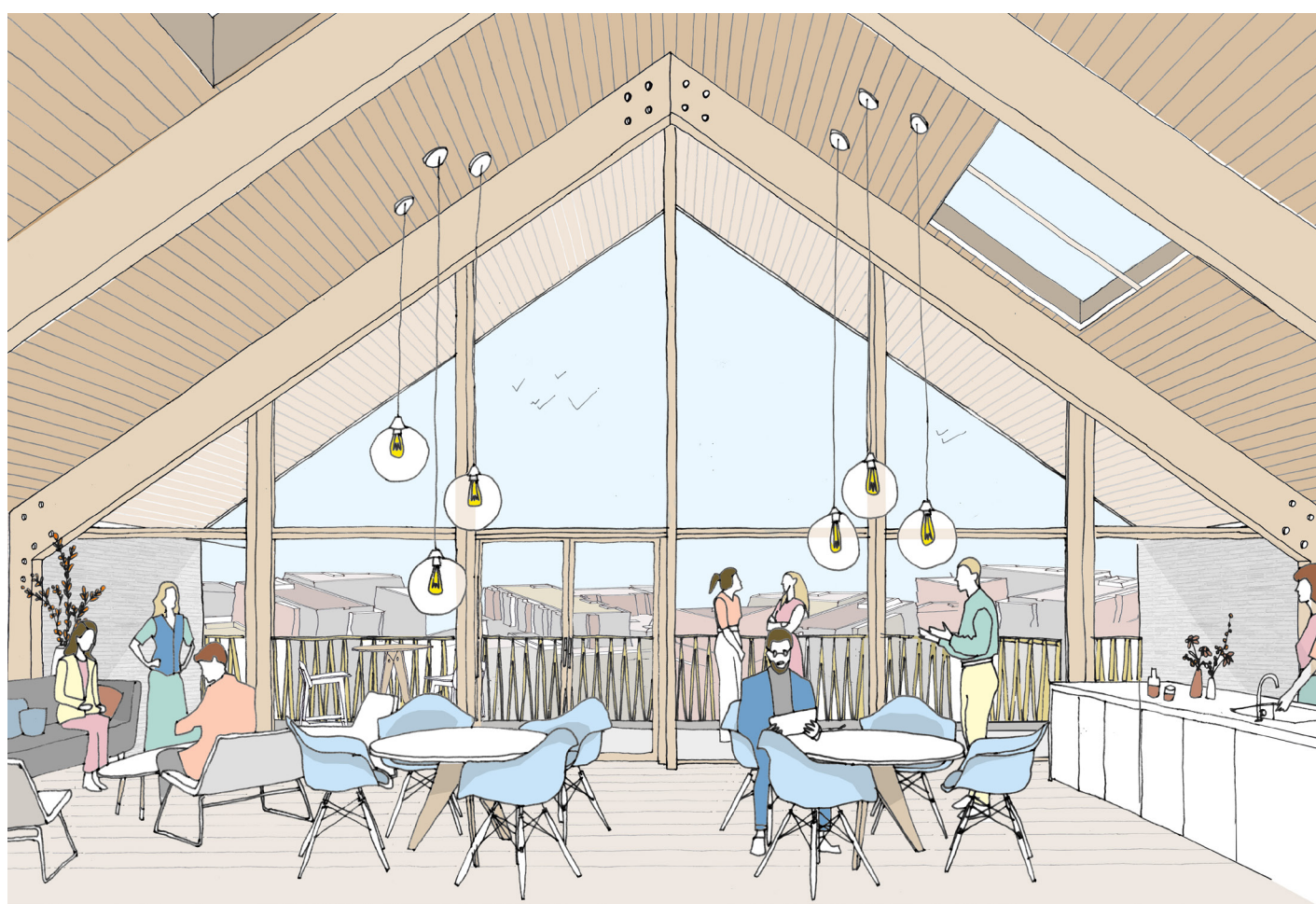
### A kit of parts and a low carbon structure

In terms of the construction and design of the office, engineered timber is by far the most sustainable structural material that is readily available and cost effective. When used in conjunction with a primary steel frame it delivers a reduction in embodied carbon over traditional structural frames whilst still enabling the long span, flexible spaces required by the office building.

Brick Cladding  
to integrate with  
surroundings



CLT and Steel structure for a sustainable and cost effective construction.



### Internal View of the Office



View from Civic Close



View from Civic Close



SUSTAINABLE EXTERNAL SPACE

Sustainable design is an holistic approach in our proposals and not merely a 'bolt-on'. This extends through the construction of the buildings and their materials to greening of the public spaces.



Environmental Strategy

QUALITY EXTERNAL SPACE

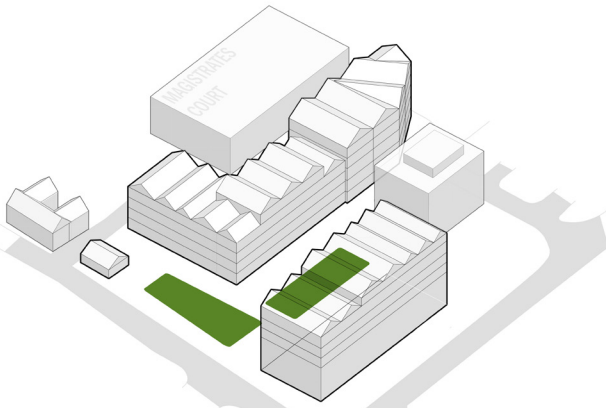
The principle behind the design is to create external spaces that contribute to the setting and uses of the proposed buildings while contributing to the enjoyment of the public realm by the community.

A large proportion of the space will be freely accessible to the public with improved connections. The design of the public realm envisages to create a contemporary language in the composition and distribution of components to create an identity for the scheme.

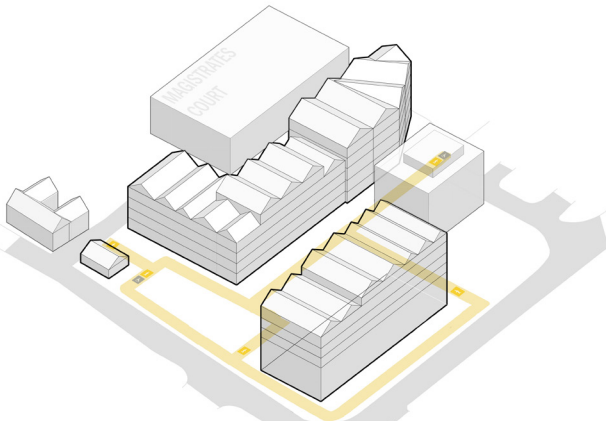
The public realm design also references the architectural language of the buildings in the proposed materials and forms to create a richly detailed sense of place, to be used not only by the residents but also by the people from St Albans.



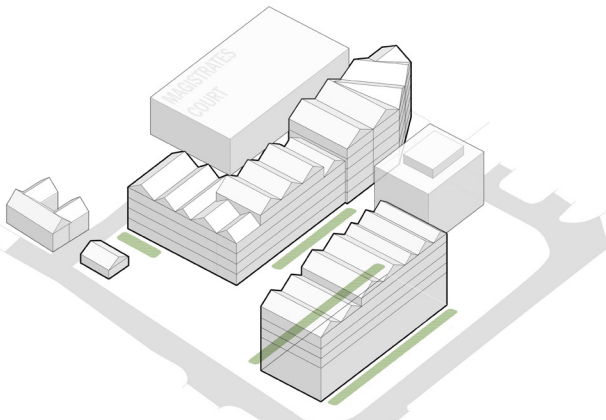
Residents Garden - Section AA



Civic Spaces



Pedestrian Routes



Residential Private Gardens



View of the Residents Garden