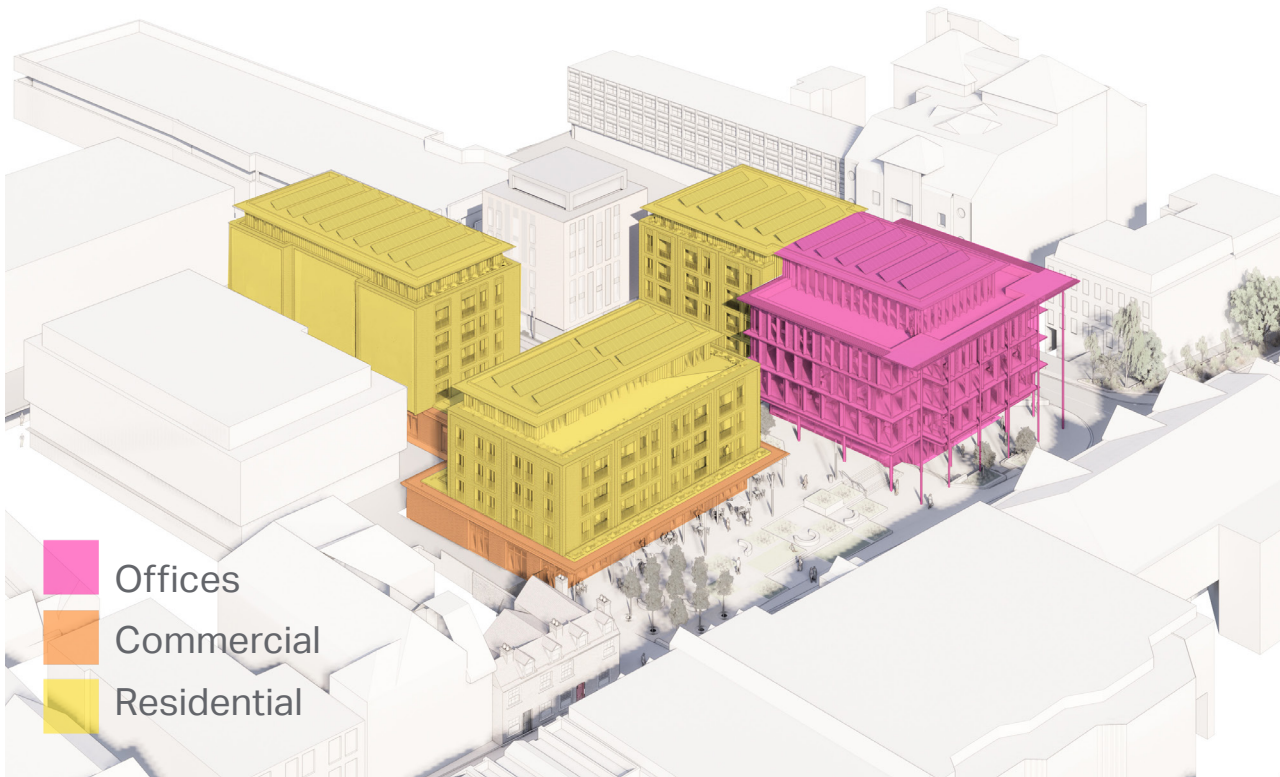


# Masterplan and Townscape Analysis

This proposal takes its core brief from the previous scheme. It offers the same overall area configured in a different way to prioritise townscape and public realm. Rather than providing two floors of commercial space across the whole site with residential above, we propose a separate office building at the gateway to the development on the corner of Victoria Street and Bricket Road, with three separate residential buildings located above a single podium floor of commercial and retail activity. In townscape terms, we have respected the grammar of St Albans town centre by providing a civic building on a prominent corner site and with residential streets with ground floor commercial activity behind. Taking a cue from the Town Hall itself, the office building has a strong civic quality in both its proportion and location on the site. Colonnades provide covered pedestrian routes around the building and glazed ground floor frontages are animated by the office foyer and a café.



Use diagram



Site plan

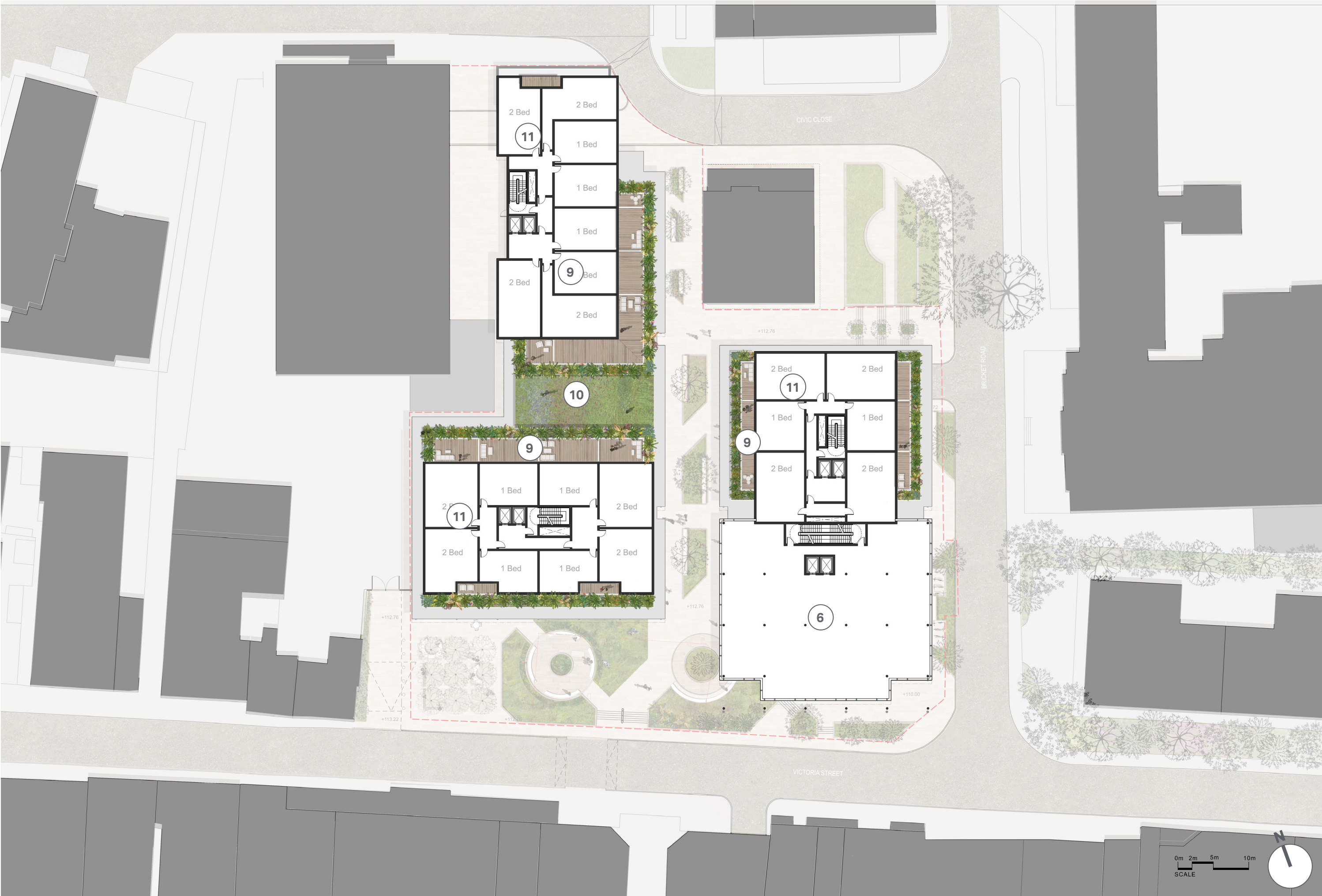


Concept diagram

- Key
1. Landscaped piazza
  2. Residential entrance
  3. Cafe/retail
  4. Office building entrance & foyer
  5. Commercial space
  6. Office
  7. Car park entrance
  8. Pedestrian crossing
  9. Private terraces
  10. Landscaped terrace
  11. 1 & 2 bed flats
  12. Cycle parking



Ground floor plan



First Floor Plan



# Contextual Analysis and Response

The height and massing of the buildings is similar to the previous scheme with the parapet level of the office building being at +129.1m AOD. The façades of this building are brought a little closer to the site boundary than in previous schemes, but this is compensated by setbacks around the lower two levels to create covered pedestrian colonnades around three sides of the building. Along Victoria Street and Bricket Road, the residential façades are set back above a ground floor colonnade. The western and northern blocks provide four floors (above the podium level) with a fifth floor setback behind a parapet. The southern block facing Victoria Street is one floor lower to improve the amount of sunlight reaching the interior of the site and to minimise overshadowing to the residential blocks and public realm behind.

The façade design of the residential buildings ( shown in detail on Board 5) has been carefully considered to create an elegant ratio of solid to void. Above the ground floor colonnade, each block is composed as a terraced street arranged in 6.5, 7.5 and 8.5m wide modules. This vertical subdivision breaks down the otherwise horizontal proportions. Smart and contemporary detailing includes a 100mm projecting brick portal to each bay with glass reinforced concrete / cast stone 'picture frames' projecting a further 100mm and surrounding each window and terrace recess. On the top storey of each block (below the setback penthouse), each picture frame includes a band of richly detailed texture – made up of projecting hit and miss special bricks – that echoes the high level terracotta details associated with Victorian high street buildings in St Albans.

**Area schedule of proposed development**  
Residential GIA (gross internal area) - 10 770 sqm  
Commercial GIA - 2206 sqm  
Office GIA - 3144 sqm  
Plant GIA - 366 sqm  
Total GIA - 16 486 sqm



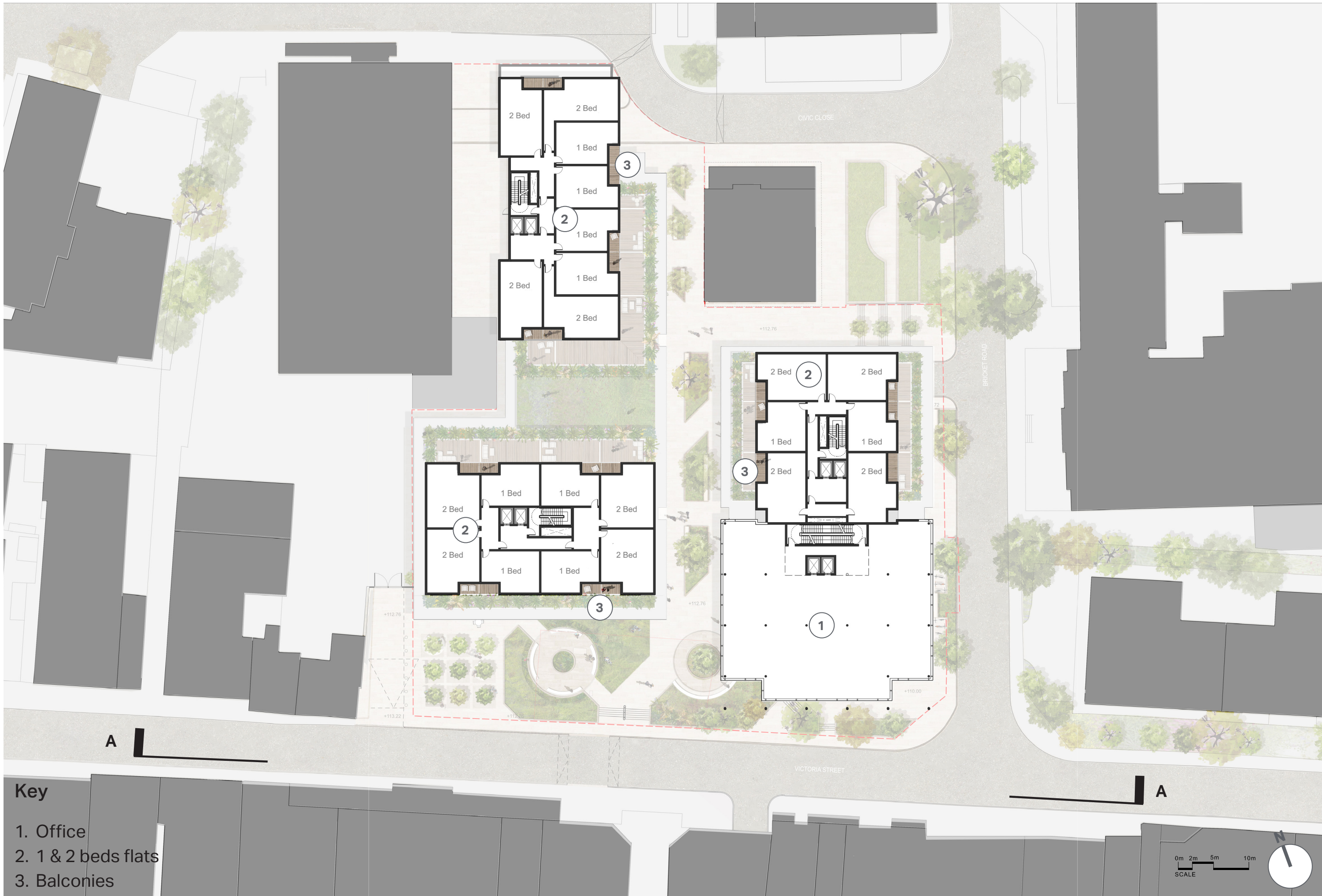
Bricket Road elevation A-A



Ariel view of the proposed development



Victoria Street view looking West towards Town Hall



Typical Upper Floor Plan



# Civic Landmark

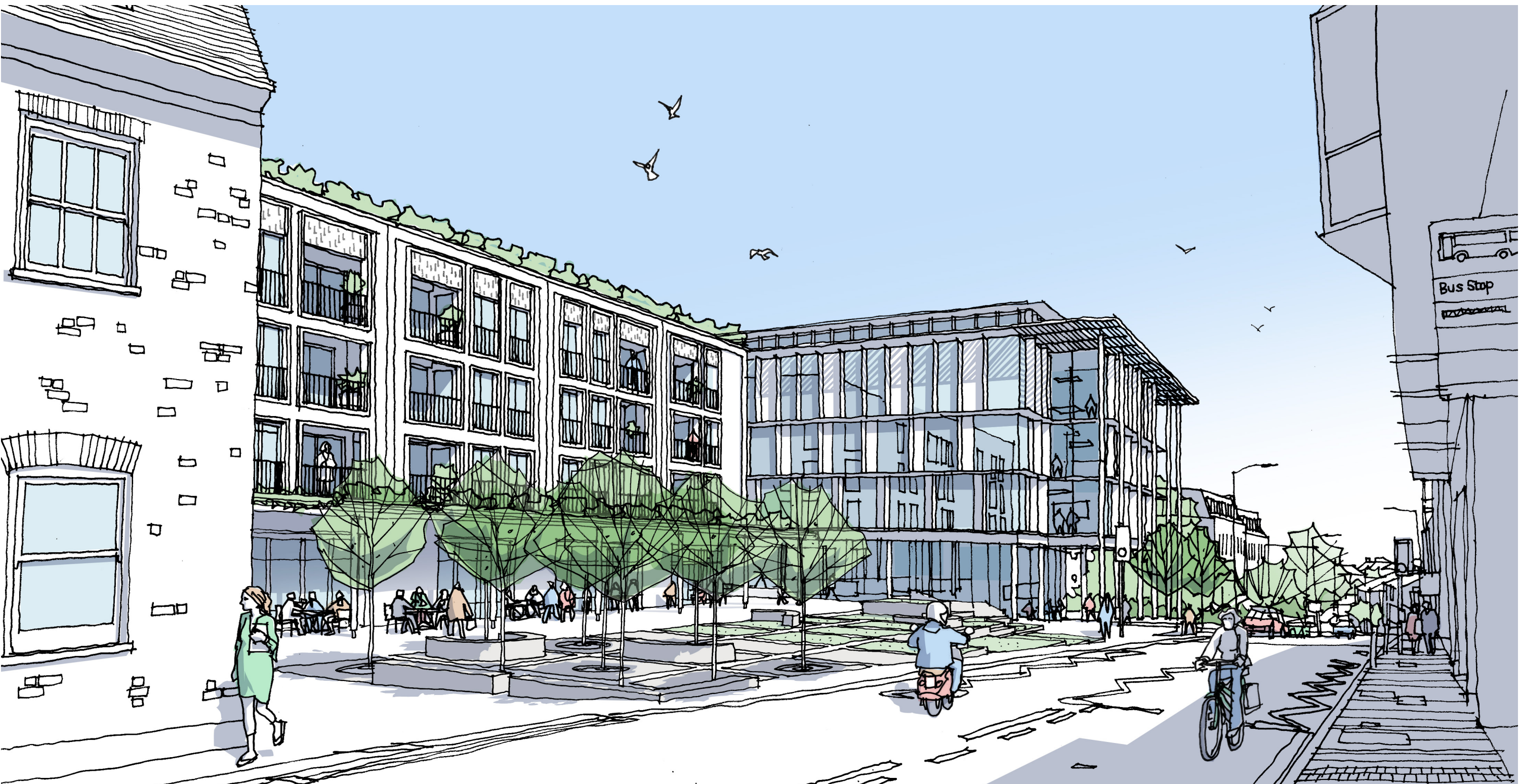
The architectural composition of the new office building engages in a dialogue with the historic form and proportion of the Town Hall at the end of Victoria Street and has carefully composed elevations with elegant proportions. Structural bays of six metres on the south elevation mean that the office floors can be easily planned out as Grade A office space. Each bay is subdivided into glass and solid panels, the rhythm of which changes across the elevations to give hierarchy, solidity and interest to the composition. Projecting vertical and horizontal fins are distributed differently on each elevation to reflect the path of the sun, providing adequate shading and helping to reduce glare and overheating. On the top floor a projecting brise-soleil provides additional shading and creates a striking architectural feature that gives the building a strong presence within Victoria Street.



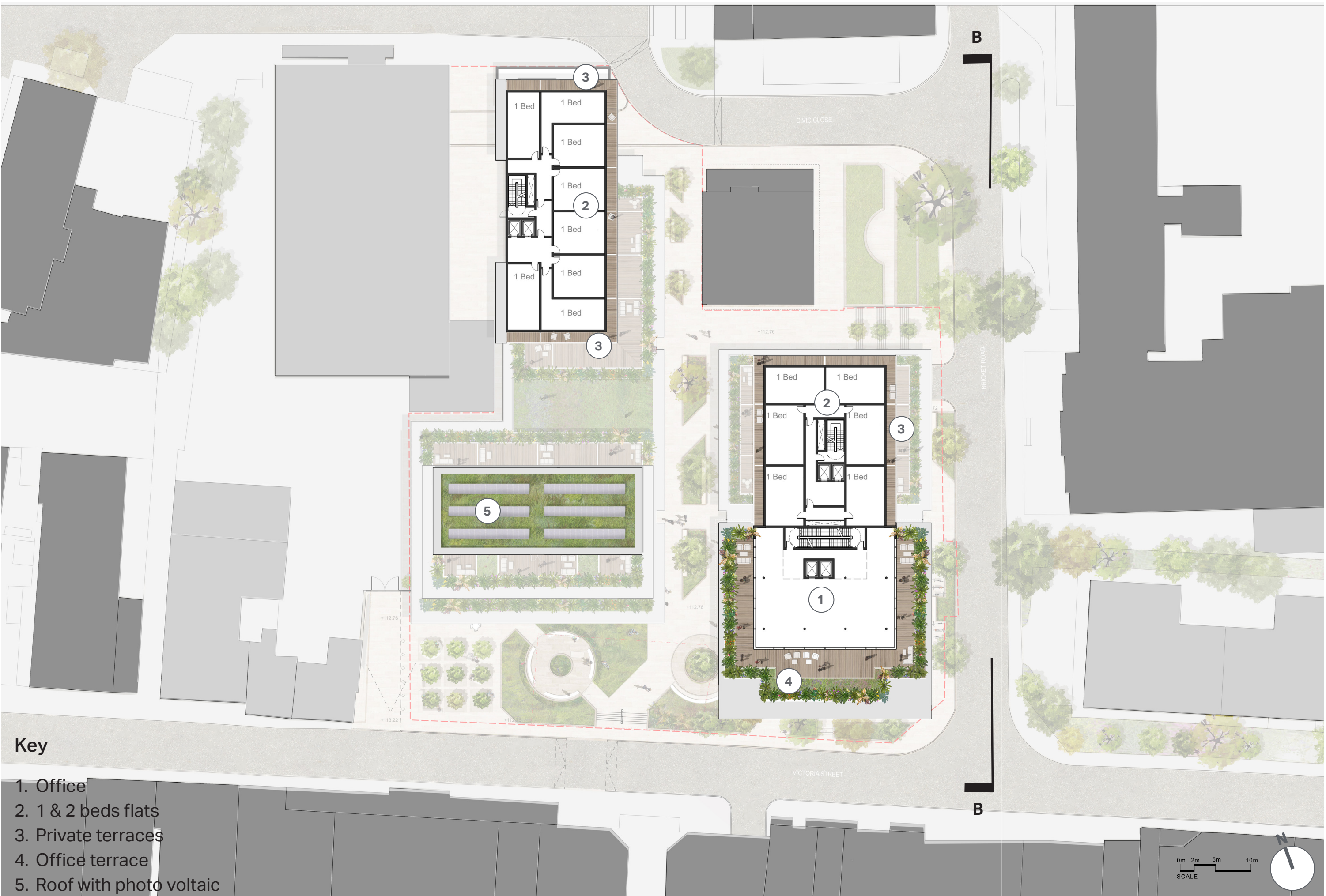
Victoria Street elevation B-B



View looking down the promenade



Victoria Street view looking East

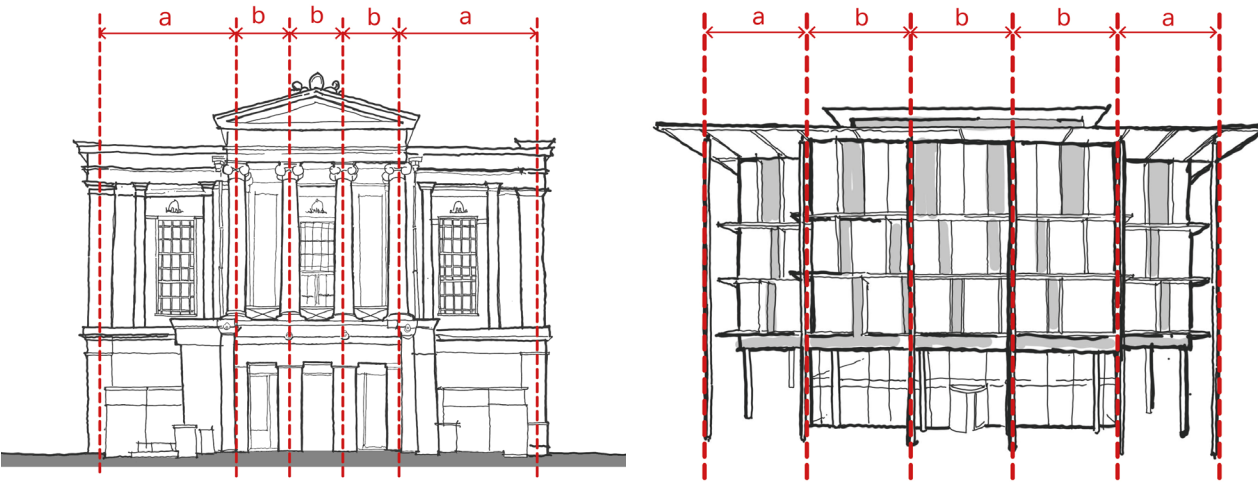


Top Floor Plan



# Office Building

Like the Town Hall, this office landmark building has projecting central bays on three elevations and the introduction of a double height colonnade to all three sides significantly enhances the public realm. The proposed office building steps out on the upper floors, recalling the stepped Tudor buildings of French Row, while the different spacing of window modules and the greater height of the top floor create the appearance of a loggia in classical terms.



Facade proportions study diagram of Town Hall and office building



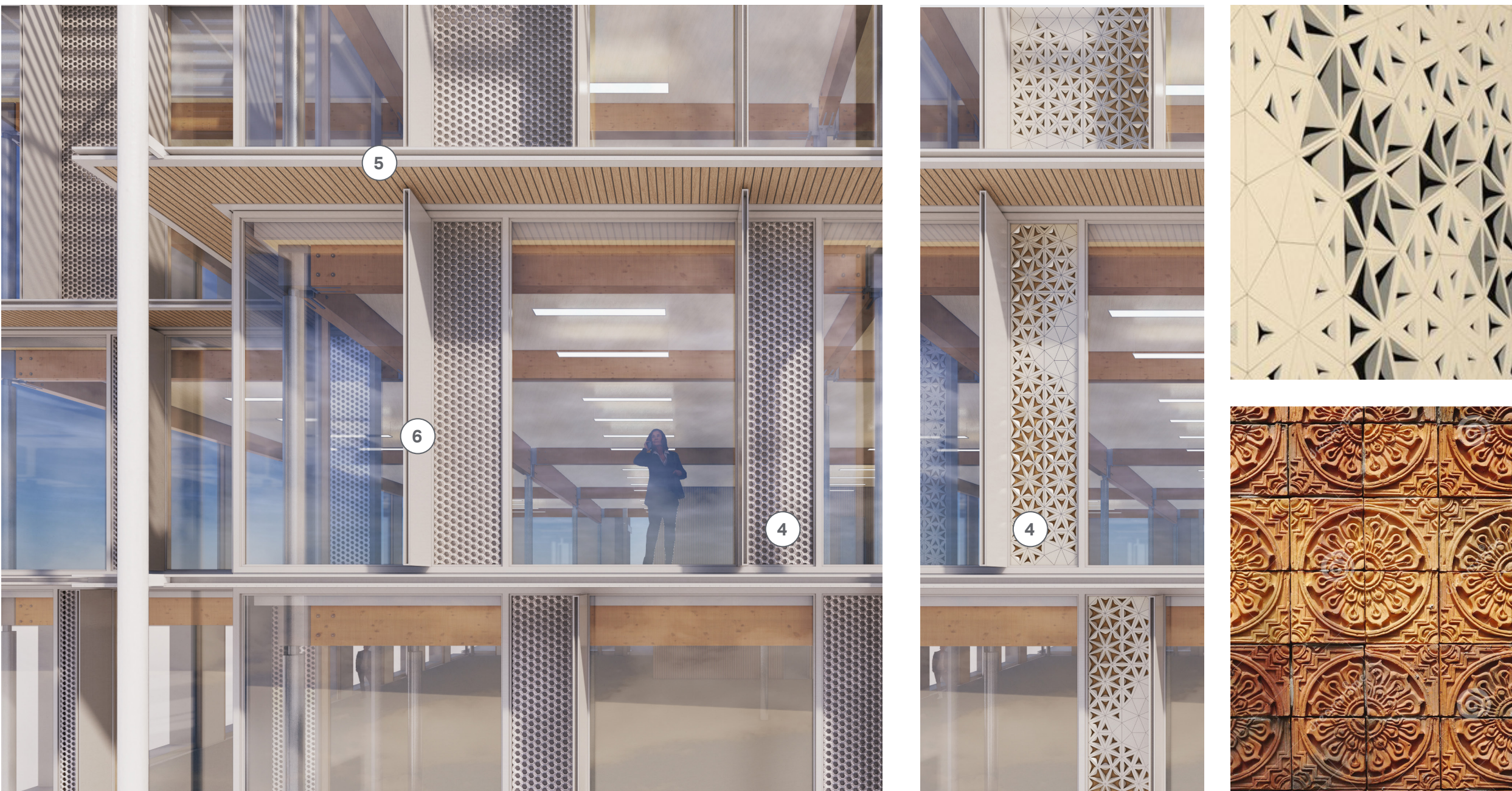
Sectional 3D view of the commercial building



Office building facade to Victoria Street

## Key

1. *Brise soleil* canopy provides shading to south facing windows
2. Colonnade
3. Exposed cross-laminated timber (CLT) panels inside creates a light and contemporary interior
4. Natural ventilation through perforated panels fitted with acoustic attenuation. Perforation pattern refers to terracotta details associated with Victorian high street buildings in St Albans.
5. Horizontal ledge provides shading solar control
6. Vertical fins for shading and solar control
7. Landscaped planter
8. Amenity terrace
9. Office main entrance foyer in colonnade



Elevation detail showing ventilation panels

Perforation pattern and terracotta precedent



# Residential Apartment Buildings

98 apartments are proposed spread across the three residential buildings and a mix of one and two bedroom apartments is provided in accordance with the Council’s brief. The apartments have been designed to London Plan space standards and are slightly larger than the previous scheme, which was below these space standards by special dispensation. The apartment sizes can, of course, be adjusted as necessary if the smaller flats are still deemed acceptable. Each apartment building is arranged around a central core with ground floor access off a primary elevation. The three blocks have been carefully arranged to prevent overlooking and, as far as possible, reduce to an absolute minimum the number of north-facing units. Affordable units can be provided either in one self-contained block or ‘pepper-potted’ through the development as part of a mixed tenure development. Each apartment has access to a private terrace or balcony. The first floor apartments have large terraces while the top floor penthouses have ones set back behind a parapet wall. On the floors in between, the apartments have inset balconies.

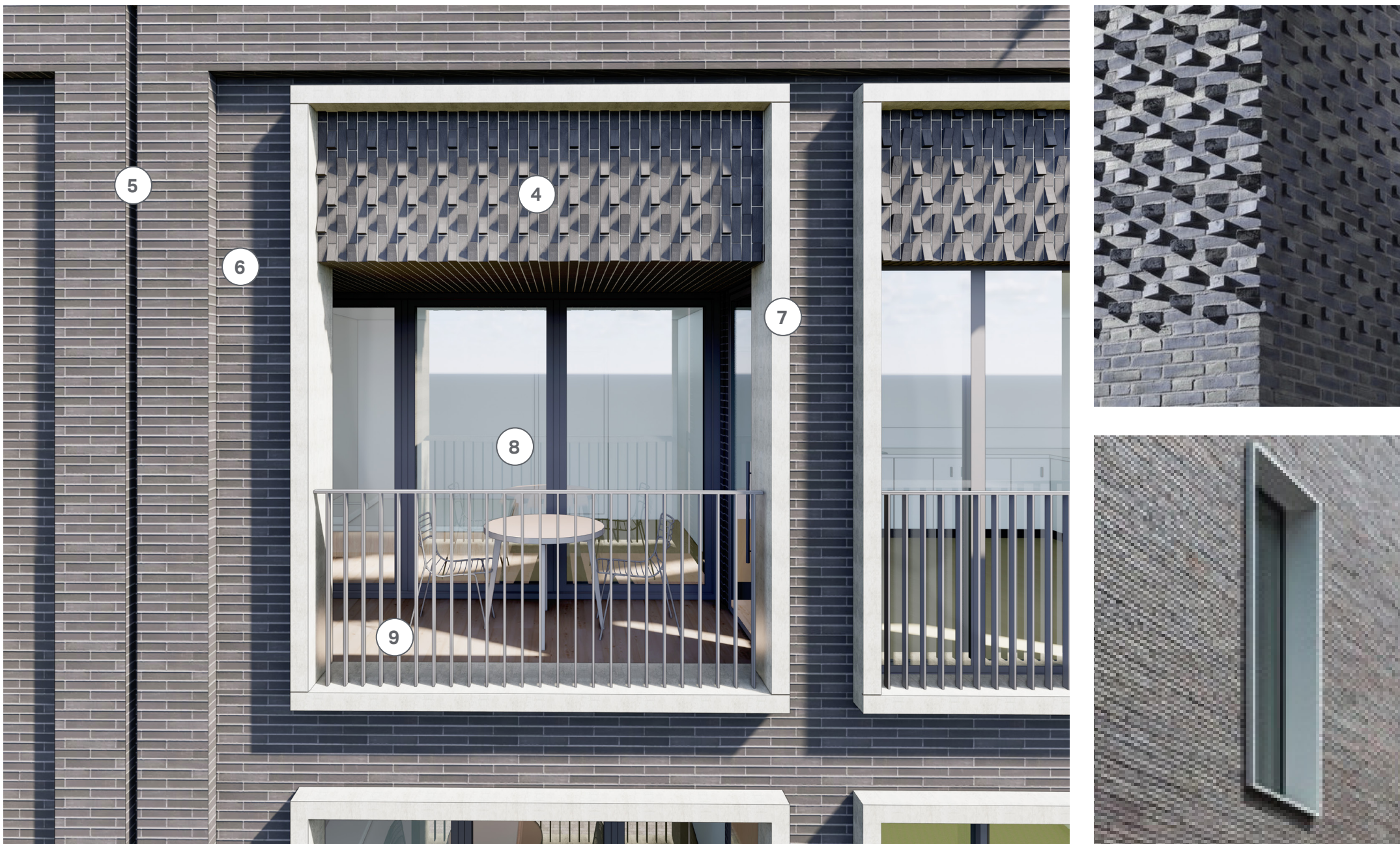


Sectional 3D view of the southern residential building



View of the landscaped piazza and residential building along Victoria Street

- Key
1. Projecting canopy
  2. Set back top floor with metal cladding panels
  3. Planter along edge of terrace
  4. Three dimensional brick pattern
  5. Brick facade with relief detail
  6. Recessed brick panel
  7. Pre-cast stone frame around the windows and balconies
  8. Inset balcony
  9. Metal balustrade to balcony
  10. Lightweight canopy with columns
  11. Cafe/ restaurants / commercial units at ground floor



Residential facade detail

Materials reference



Public Realm

The previous design for the Quaker burial ground has been retained in this proposal although the entrance on the chamfered corner of the office building that was criticised previously has been removed.

We have an alternative proposal (not shown here) that would ‘square-off’ this chamfer without affecting the integrity of the burial ground and reroute the majority of the pedestrian footfall to the side of the burial ground - thereby allowing the burial ground to be re-landscaped as a contemplative green amenity space. This would go hand-in-hand with moving the pedestrian crossing on Victoria Street to a raised table-type of shared surface crossing in front of The Maltings arcade to align with this desire line. We hope this alternative could be reviewed and discussed with the Quaker community and St Albans Council planning team in due course if this design is selected

To the west end of the site adjacent to no21 Victoria Street, a listed building, we have removed the pavilion previously proposed and suggest a landscaped piazza with a clump of 9 trees with seating underneath in the European tradition and similar in feel to the very successful Granary Square at Kings Cross in London

The main civic landmark building has covered colonnades and it is proposed that the ground floor retail/commercial space of each apartment building also has covered pedestrian walkways. The north south pedestrian spine through the development to CCOS North is maintained; planting and trees are provided up the middle of the pedestrian route with colonnades to either side

- Key
- 1. Landscaped piazza with cluster of trees
  - 2. Quaker burial ground
  - 3. Outline of existing Quaker burial ground
  - 4. Raised planters
  - 5. Bike parking
  - 6. Office entrance and foyer
  - 7. Cafe
  - 8. Steps linking Bricket Road level with promenade
  - 9. Pedestrian crossing



View of the landscaped piazza and office building along Victoria Street looking East



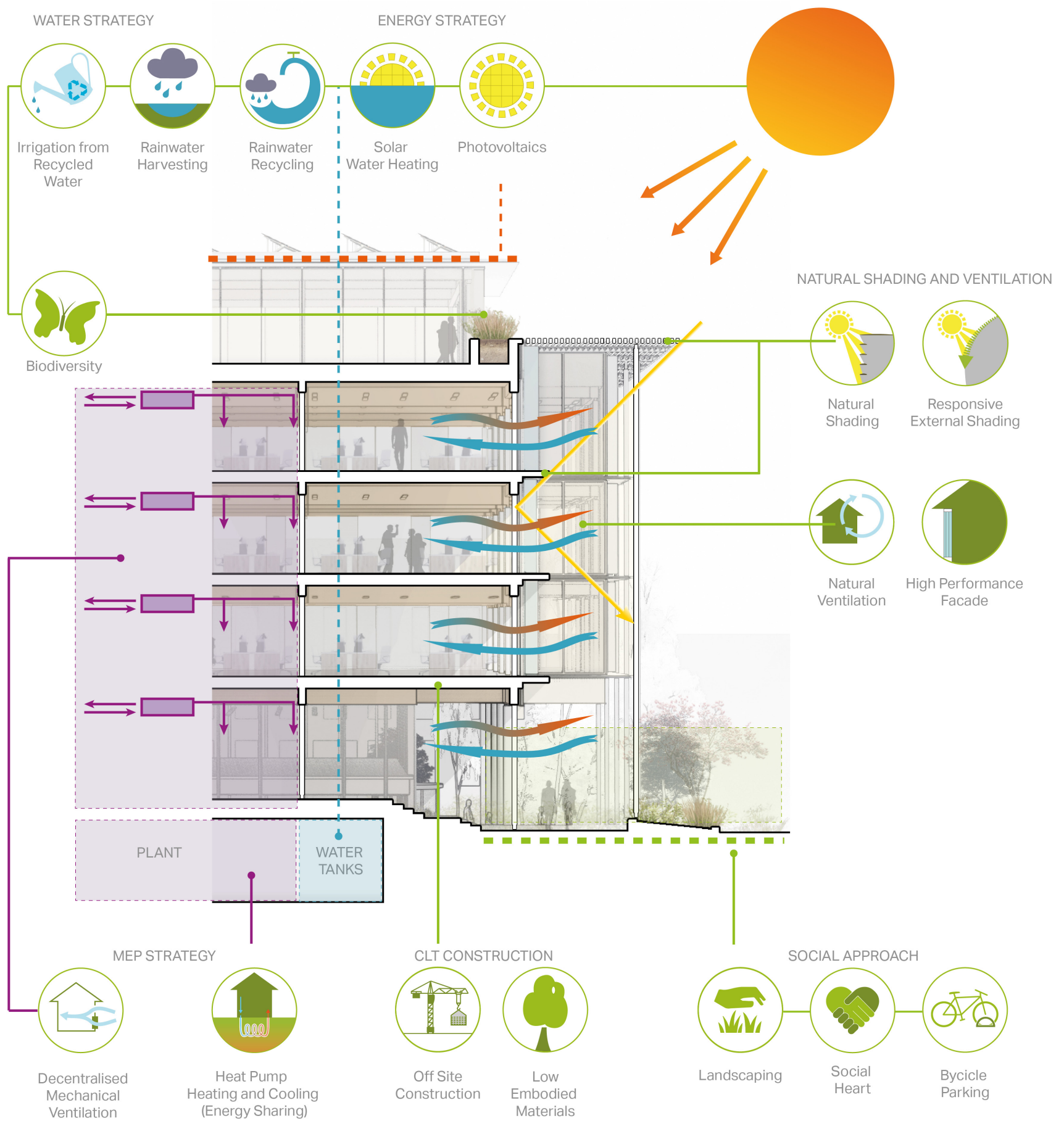
Detail plan of the public realm proposals facing Victoria Street



Landscape precedent of raised planters and meadow planting

Sustainability

It is proposed to use cross-laminated timber (CLT) within the structure of the buildings to achieve state-of-the-art environmental design standards. CLT buildings weigh much less than conventional concrete ones and therefore the depth and cost of foundations can be reduced accordingly. For the residential buildings a CLT honeycomb structure could be used built off a first floor podium. For the office building the timber panels (either ‘glulam’ timber or steel frame) will be visible internally to create a modern light interior. Good daylighting will ensure minimal need for artificial lighting and ventilation will be provided using a mixed mode system – opening vents in the façades, with acoustic attenuation to control noise, will provide fresh air that can be supplemented with mechanical ventilation as required to suit climatic conditions. A generous floor-to-floor height of 3.6m will ensure a light and airy feeling for the occupants. Heating and cooling can be provided via a centralised system that uses either ground-source or air-source heat pumps to reduce energy use. Planted areas are provided along first floor and top floor balcony edges and roofs in addition to the raised planters located around the scheme at ground floor level as part of the public realm design. Photo Voltaic panels are proposed on roofs to generate electricity on site to help offset carbon emissions from the development.



Sustainability strategy diagram



Photovoltaic panels on green roof Examples of of CLT slab and glulam structure