

## Design Revisions Document

There were 15 key areas of concern raised by the planning officer:

1. Proposed Building Impact
2. Relationship Existing / Proposed
3. Cohesive Design Scheme
4. Enhancement of Local Character
5. Ground Floor Level / Street Activity
6. Lower Ground Floor Level Accommodation
7. Biodiverse Roof
8. Accessible / Adapted Units
9. Waste Capacity
10. Separated HMO & Hostel Bins
11. Waste Collection Vehicle Access
12. Dropped Curb at Waste Collection Point
13. Units With Internal Waste Storage
14. Refuse Lift Out of Order
15. Storage of Bulky Waste

## Summary

During the course of the planning application process officer's have raised a number of design related matters for consideration by the applicant. This document was first produced in early August 19 and submitted at a meeting with officers held on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2019. At the meeting these matters were discussed. Since the meeting the applicant has instructed us to respond to some of the points raised with further design amendments. This document now includes the responses to all design matters raised to date and includes illustration of the design revisions that followed the meeting. The key changes in the proposals since 16<sup>th</sup> August are summarised below:-

- Whole Building set back from Commercial Road in line with current building line and the previously consented scheme.
- Active frontage provided across whole ground floor facing Commercial Road
- Improved design and visibility of the entrance facing Commercial Road
- Provision of a dedicated cycle lift and storage
- We have included proposals for the improvement of the public street, Island Row, to form improved public realm and to match the cobbled street surface that exists farther down Island Row. We believe this proposal will benefit the setting of Our Lady Immaculate Church and the locality, but we would like highways officer's comments to refine the proposal.

1. Proposed Building Impact

**Officer Comment**

Concern has been expressed over the visual and physical relationship of the proposed building with designated and non-designated heritage assets (including Conservation Area as a whole) and Our Lady Immaculate Church.

**Response**

The proposal is of similar or less massing compared with the neighbouring buildings, with its setback from Commercial Road and Mill Place curb lines enhancing the breathing space to the adjacent locally listed church.



Surrounding Buildings Heights Key

- 4 Storeys
- 5 Storeys
- 6 Storeys
- 7+ Storeys

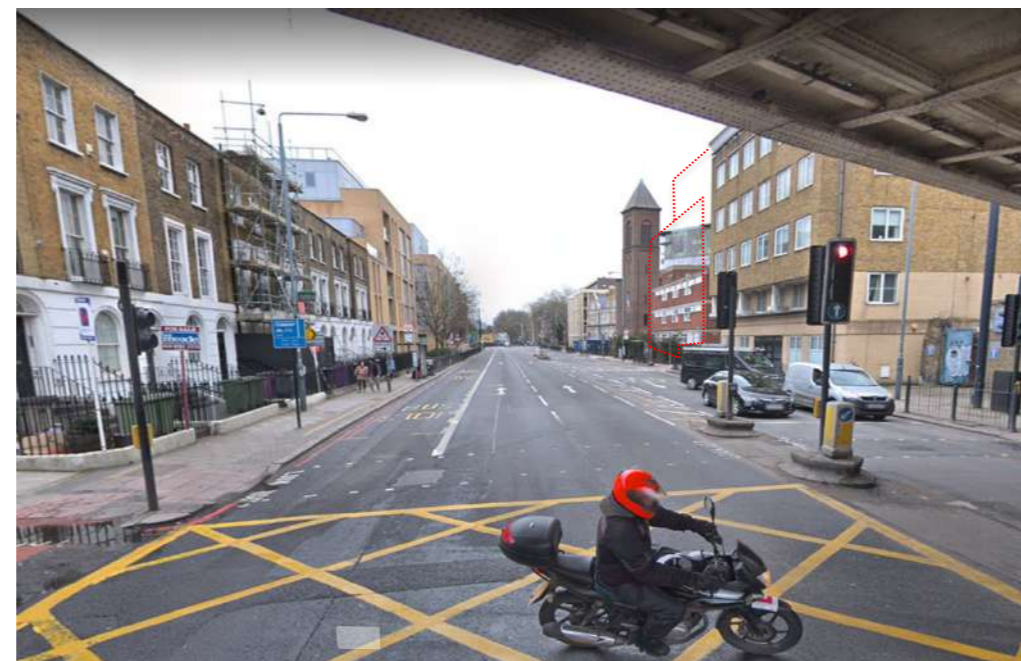
1. Proposed Building Impact

Response

The Church forms part of a now fragmented conservation area as the extract from the heritage appraisal below notes. There are isolated views of it along Commercial Road and these views are restricted and set within a mainly 20thC built context including the existing building.



The Church view is obscured from the west 1 building past the site by the railway viaduct.



Heritage Appraisal Extract:-

42. The historic built environment in the area is fragmented and very varied. The pre-20th century historic fabric of this part of London experienced radical change during the second half of the 20th century – firstly from WWII bombing and then from post-war renewal, and more recently from the large residential development. It is an area where radical economic transformation is highly evident in the physical evolution of the townscape – the change in circumstances of Limehouse Basin and the demise of the Limehouse Curve are the key examples. The large residential developments of the post-war era have had a major effect on the setting of heritage receptors throughout the area.

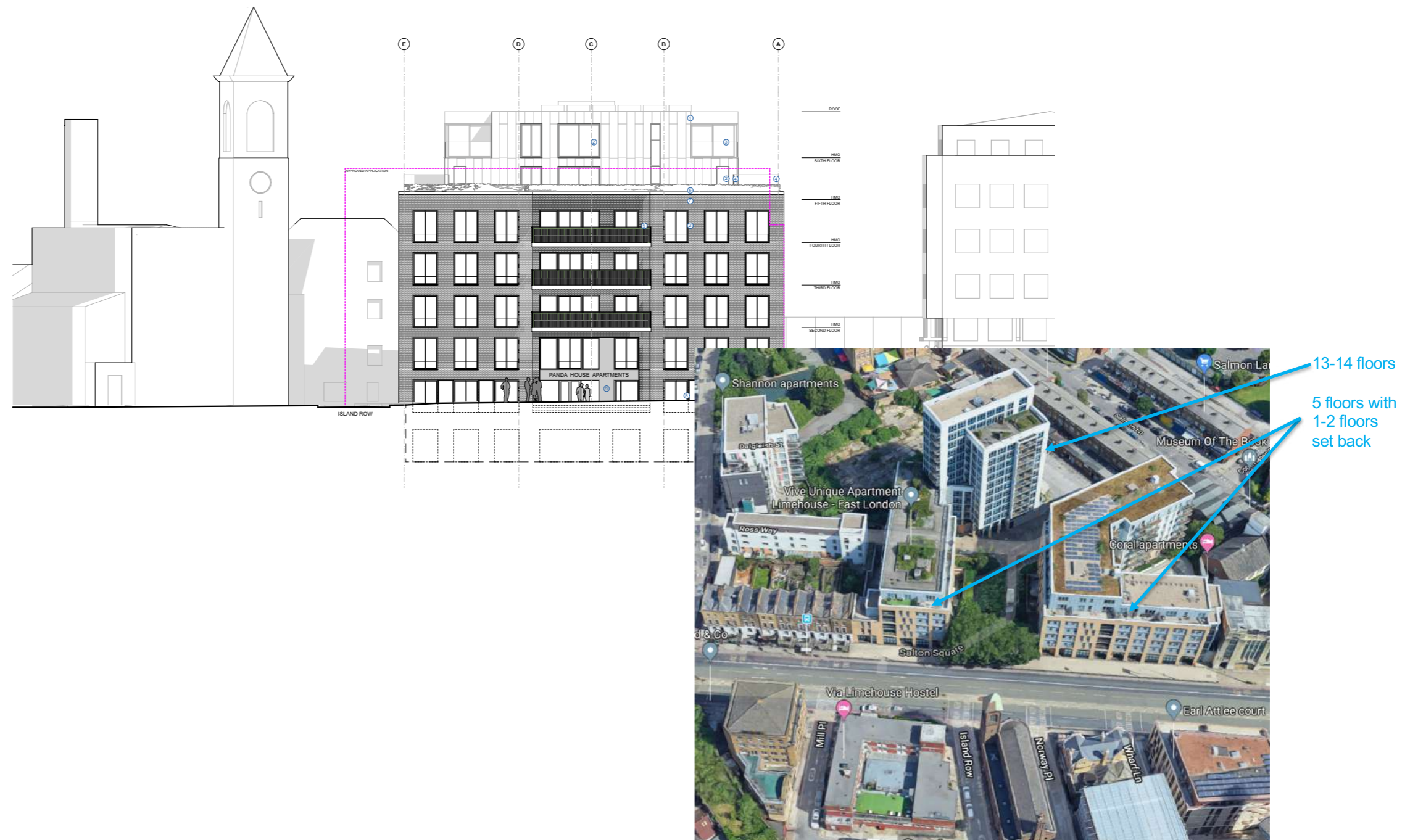
43.2.44 The result is that the heritage assets of the area are far less 'grounded' or integrated with their surroundings, and those assets have many very poor buildings in their immediate vicinity. The remnant of the Limehouse Curve that remains is now an anachronism, and is illegible as part of the historic townscape which it once – when it continued to the north of Commercial Road – dominated.

The Church tower element is revealed in views just under the viaduct looking east.

1. Proposed Building Impact

Response

The proposed elevation is illustrated below along with Our Lady Immaculate Church and the current building to the west. Below is Salton Square and the surrounding development which extends 5-13 floors. Those buildings directly opposite the site and to the east side of Salton Sq and Commercial Road are 5 full floors facing the street with 2 upper set back floors. The proposal is for lower building at 4 and a bit floors facing the street with two set back.



1. Proposed Building Impact

Heritage Appraisal Extract:-

1. Summary

2.4.11 Overall the proposals have had regard for the historic nature of the area – in particular the character and appearance of the conservation area, and those buildings within it that have been recognised as making a positive contribution – such as the adjacent church. Ultimately it is important to ensure that the proposals preserve or enhance the conservation area, and do not detrimentally affect the ability of other buildings – such as the church – to retain their significance within the area too.

12.4.12 It is believed that these proposals achieve that. The proposals replace a building that makes no contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and merely reflects the poor quality generic architecture of the post-war period – this includes its form, materials and proportions.

Response

From the east the proposal (indicated with a red line) will create little impact on the church in terms of loss of any view. Indeed the improved appearance of the proposed design will help form a new positive setting for the Church as noted in the summary of the Heritage Appraisal illustrated to the left. The increased set back means that there is no impact on views towards the church along Commercial Road.



The proposed Panda House street side elevation  $\frac{1}{2}$  lower than Salton Square street side elevation which is opposite Our Lad Immaculate Church and within the conservation area.

The reduction in scale of the proposal from the building across the street forms a hierarchy of scale surrounding the Church.

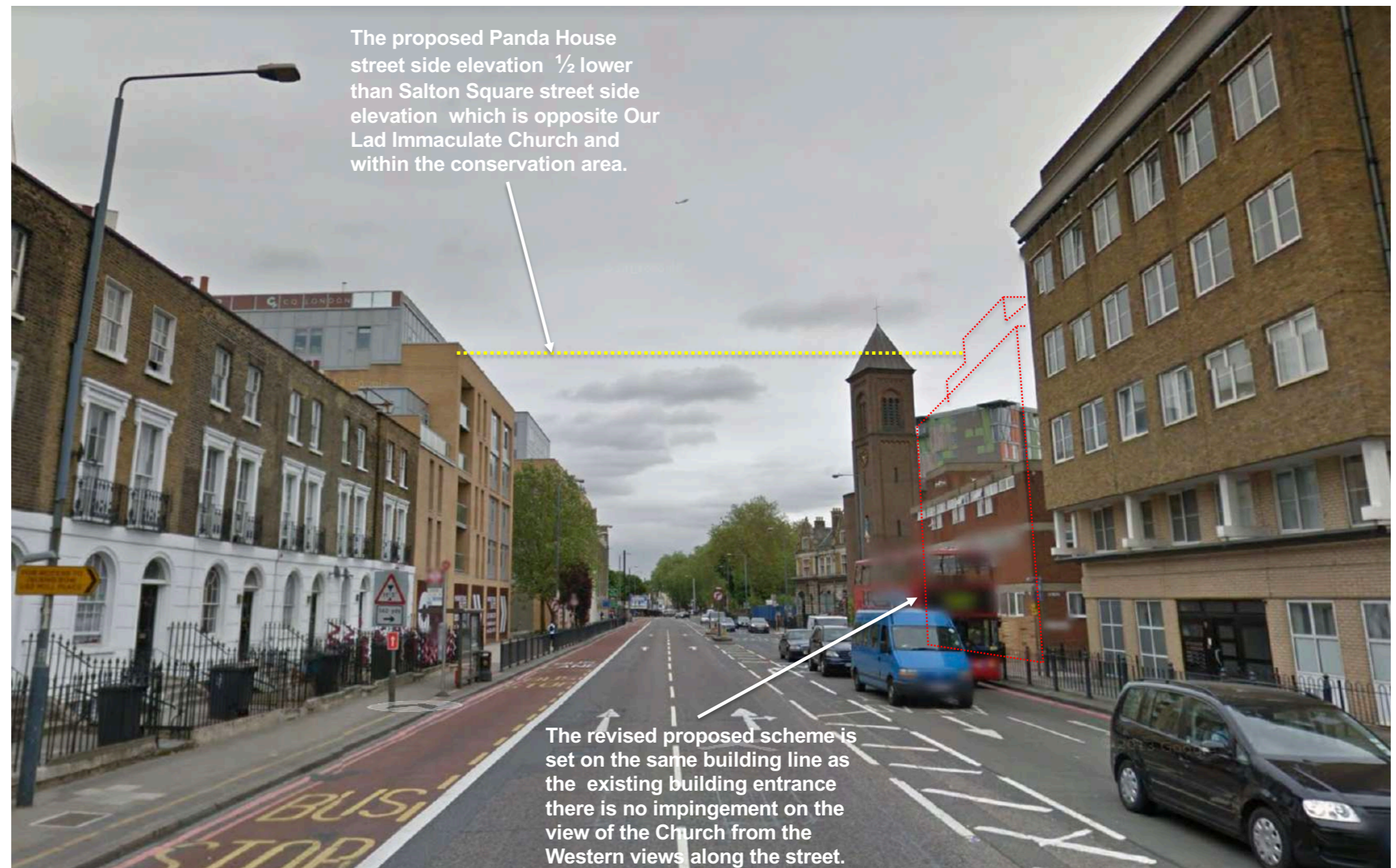
1. Proposed Building Impact

Response

The proposals reflect the eclectic mix of buildings types, form, scale and heights whilst allowing the landmark qualities of the church tower to retain its prominence – from classical, to art nouveau and Queen Anne – to modern, post war and industrial. The architectural style has made reference to surrounding buildings and the materials chosen for the proposals have been selected to both match and complement those found in the surroundings buildings. A predominant use of brick is typical of the area, and the documentation provided by the architects demonstrates the level of detail that has been considered to ensure that the proposal will be of a high quality.

4.14 The proposals can certainly be regarded as preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of nearby listed buildings, and further is a considerable enhancement over the existing Panda House. The development would secure the optimum viable use for the site in a much enhanced form over the existing.

Given the nature of the context and the restricted views of the church (by the railway viaduct from the west) it is only this view from the east side of the railway viaduct where any part of the tower of the Church is obscured by the proposed development. In this view the yellow hatch indicates the reduction of tower viewable from this location. This is the only angle where there is a minor impairment of the view of the church tower. The conclusion of the Heritage Statement is illustrated to the left and it concludes that overall the proposal will enhance the setting of the Church and not reduce it.



2. Relationship Existing / Proposed

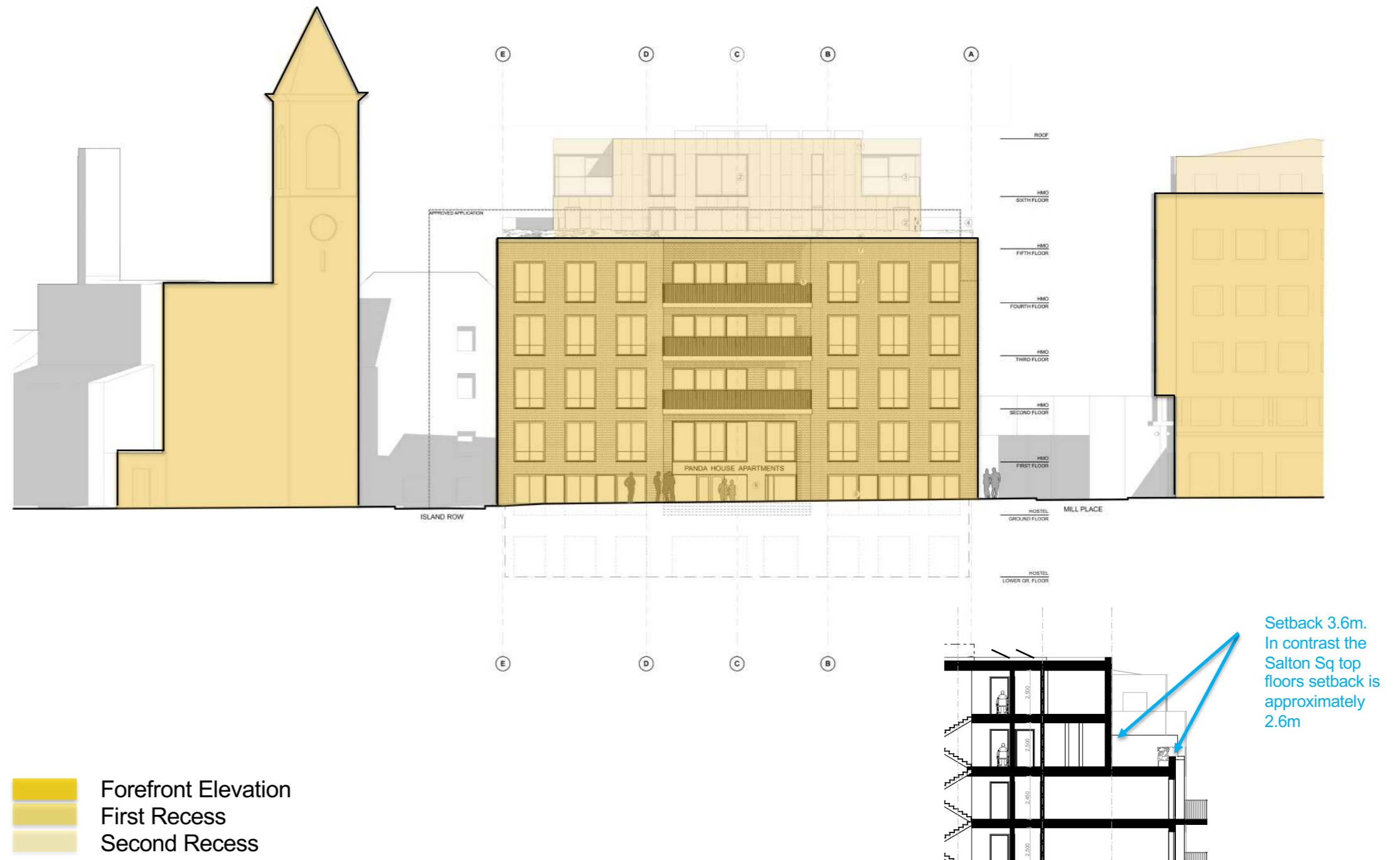
Officer Comment

In 2015, a six-storey building was considered excessive and this proposal is for a seven-storey building, which is even taller than the refused scheme.

There are concerns over the overly dominant relationship on the immediate setting of the Church, the Conservation Area and the general townscape character.

Response

The proposed Commercial Road primary façade forms a respectful step between its flanking buildings. Furthermore, the simple and bold tripartite massing of the façade echoes the 'austere exterior' (Pevsner) of the locally listed Our Lady Immaculate church next door. The proposal is lower than the previously consented scheme in terms of the elevation immediately fronting Commercial Road. The upper floors are some 3.6m set back from the street facing elevation and have minimal impact on views of the Church as noted in the earlier pages.





## 2. Relationship Existing / Proposed

### Response

The CGI to the right illustrates how recessed the top floors will be. They will not be visually prominent and will not detract from the prominence of the church.

Below is the current building and relationship. The poor quality of the existing building as a setting to the Church detracts from the church's appearance.



**3. Cohesive Design Scheme**

**Officer Comment**

The proposal includes public realm improvements, however, the proposed changes are unconvincing and do not feel as part of a cohesive design scheme.

This is particularly apparent in the location and design of the disabled parking bays and the surrounding footway.

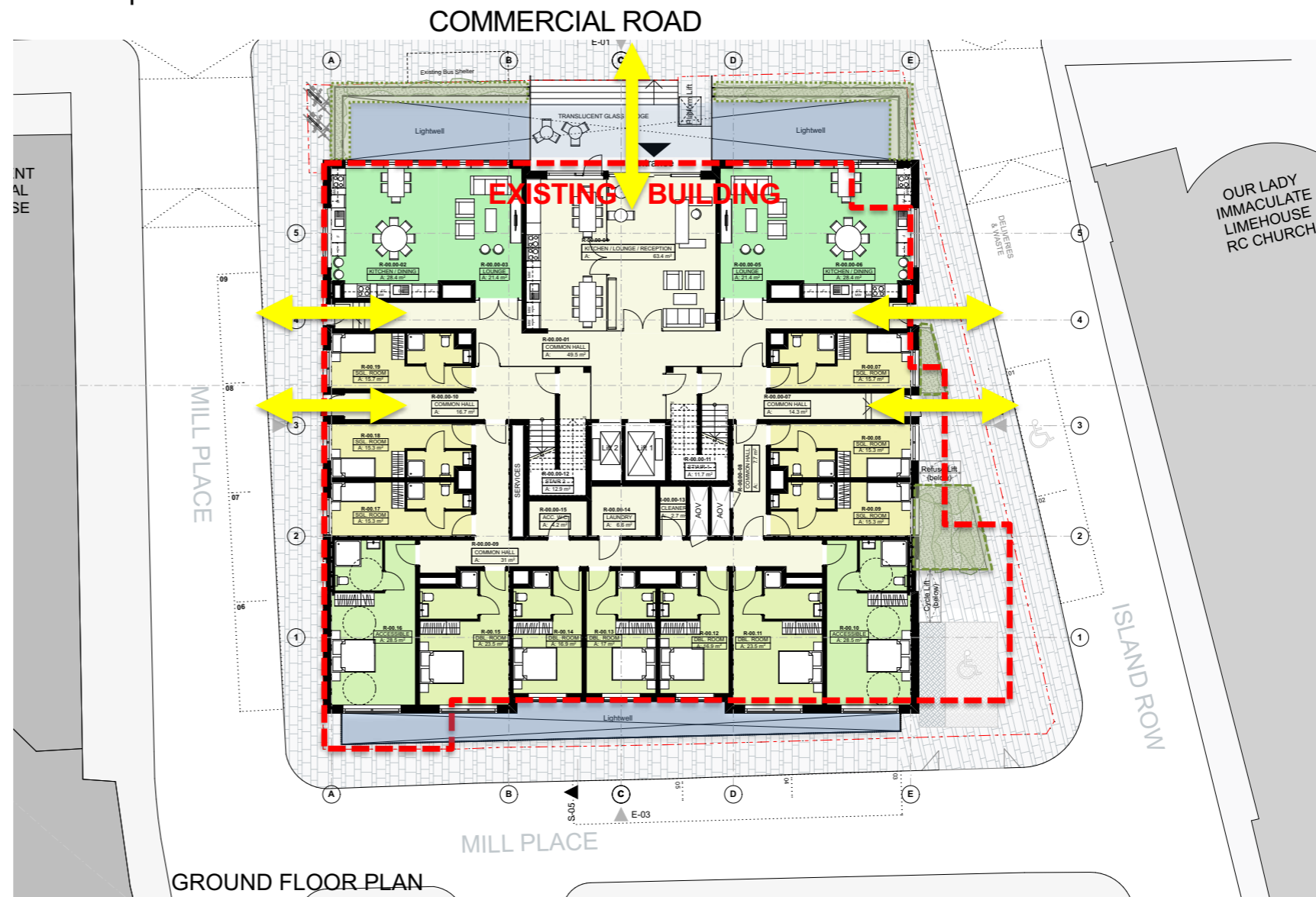
The plot coverage reinforces the poor design of the public realm and draws attention to the potential for vehicular and pedestrian conflict resulting from designing the building and then the space around it.

This approach results in spaces around the building feel like over- incidental and ambiguous spaces that lack clarity of purpose.

**Response**

The existing building almost completely fills the site and forms a city block. The proposal follows same line along Commercial Road, but with a simpler building form along Island Row. The proposed building sets back along this edge from Island Row, creating some space around the base of the adjacent church. There is mainly hard landscape and some planting to create defensible space against the building edge along with secondary access and egress points. The disabled parking bay is part of a shared pavement surface. The applicant is open to amending this landscape area of the proposal and locating the parking space in the street if this is preferred.

Access Points marked with a yellow arrow.



- Existing Building Footprint
- Proposed Green Spaces
- Proposed Lightwells

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**Response**

The plan below illustrates the applicant's proposed public realm improvements to extend the cobbled street surface along Island Row and to take advantage of the new public space created by the proposal where it is pulled back from the edge of Island Row. This new landscape could improve Island Row significantly unifying it.



Island Row; Cobbled on Southern Hall of Street



3. Cohesive Design Scheme

Response

The proposed building base forms a new front elevation and entrance to connect the building to the street in contrast to the present building. The new entrance illustrated in the drawing below and in the internal CGI below left will provide a new connection and activity along Commercial Road.

