

Henry J Lyons

INDEPENDENT HOUSE

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STATEMENT





DESIGN TEAM

Architect

Henry J Lyons

Project Manager & Cost Consultants



Planning Consultant



Structural, Traffic, Civil Engineer



Mechanical & Electrical Engineer



Landscape Consultant



Fire and Accessibility Consultant



Conservation Architects



Verified Views and Daylighting Analysis



Acoustic Consultant



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Report Content & Structure

This Design Statement is prepared by Henry J Lyons Architects on behalf of the applicant Summix IHD Developments Ltd to accompany the LRD Submission for a mixed use Student Accommodation, Retail, Café / Restaurant, Culture Community Arts Development at the former Independent Newspaper building referred to as ‘Independent House’ on Middle Abbey Street Dublin 1.

The statement outlines the principal approach to retaining and adapting key elements of the existing buildings, a justification for demolition of parts of the existing structures and the infill development of purpose built student accommodation. It also outlines the proposed development use, organisation, massing and architectural design in response to the above parameters and incorporates the client’s brief for a vibrant conservation, reuse, adaptation, and purpose built Student Accommodation and Commercial Development scheme on the site.

This document should be read in conjunction with the extensive set of other reports included in this planning submission and in particular the Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment by Molloy Associates which provides more detail on the proposal in terms of conservation, interventions, retention and refurbishment as well as impact on protected structures and the adjacent ACA.

Henry J Lyons		INDEPENDENT HOUSE STUDENT ACCOMMODATION										Refer to file naming convention doc for info		LRD Submission 13 11 2024		Planning Submission 28 03 2025	
		FILE NAME															
		SCALE	PROJEC T CODE	ORIGINA TOR CODE	VOLUME	LEVEL	TYPE	ROLE	NUMBER								
		DRAWINGS															
0000	SITE											0000					
	SITE LOCATION MAP	1 500	IH	HJL	ZZ	00	DR	A	0001	P01	P02						
	EXISTING SITE PLAN	1 200	IH	HJL	ZZ	00	DR	A	0010	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED SITE PLAN	1 200	IH	HJL	ZZ	00	DR	A	0020	P01	P02						
	TAKING IN CHARGE PLAN	1 200	IH	HJL	ZZ	00	DR	A	0021	P01	P02						
100	EXISTING DRAWINGS											100					
	EXISTING - BASEMENT	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	BM	DR	A	109	P01	P02						
	EXISTING - GROUND FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	00	DR	A	110	P01	P02						
	EXISTING - FIRST FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	01	DR	A	111	P01	P02						
	EXISTING - SECOND FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	02	DR	A	112	P01	P02						
	EXISTING - THIRD FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	03	DR	A	113	P01	P02						
	EXISTING - FOURTH FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	04	DR	A	114	P01	P02						
	EXISTING - FIFTH FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	05	DR	A	115	P01	P02						
	EXISTING - ROOF LEVEL	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	RF	DR	A	116	P01	P02						
120	EXISTING ELEVATIONS											120					
	EXISTING - ELEVATIONS NORTH AND SOUTH	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	BM	DR	A	121	P01	P02						
	EXISTING - ELEVATIONS EAST AND WEST	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	BM	DR	A	122	P01	P02						
130	EXISTING SECTIONS											130					
	EXISTING - SECTION AA & BB	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	BM	DR	A	131	P01	P02						
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	DEMOLITION & FABRIC REMOVAL - SECOND FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	02	DR	A	512	P01	P02						
	DEMOLITION & FABRIC REMOVAL - THIRD FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	03	DR	A	513	P01	P02						
	DEMOLITION & FABRIC REMOVAL - FOURTH FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	04	DR	A	514	P01	P02						
	DEMOLITION & FABRIC REMOVAL - FIFTH FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	05	DR	A	515	P01	P02						
	DEMOLITION & FABRIC REMOVAL - ROOF LEVEL	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	RF	DR	A	516	P01	P02						
	DEMOLITION & FABRIC REMOVAL - ELEVATIONS NORTH AND SOUTH	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	BM	DR	A	522	P01	P02						
	DEMOLITION & FABRIC REMOVAL - ELEVATIONS EAST AND WEST	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	BM	DR	A	523	P01	P02						
	DEMOLITION & FABRIC REMOVAL - SECTION AA & BB	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	BM	DR	A	524	P01	P02						
	DEMOLITION & FABRIC REMOVAL - SECTION EE (replaced by P1080 North Rear Elev)	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	BM	DR	A	525	P01	P02						
1000	PROPOSED PLANS											1000					
	PROPOSED PLAN - BASEMENT	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	BM	DR	A	1009	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED PLAN - GROUND FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	00	DR	A	1010	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED PLAN - FIRST FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	01	DR	A	1011	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED PLAN - SECOND FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	02	DR	A	1012	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED PLAN - THIRD FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	03	DR	A	1013	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED PLAN - FOURTH FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	04	DR	A	1014	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED PLAN - FIFTH FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	05	DR	A	1015	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED PLAN - SIXTH FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	06	DR	A	1016	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED PLAN - SEVENTH FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	07	DR	A	1017	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED PLAN - EIGHTH FLOOR	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	08	DR	A	1018	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED PLAN - ROOF LEVEL	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	RF	DR	A	1019	P01	P02						
2000	PROPOSED ELEVATIONS											2000					
	PROPOSED - ELEVATIONS EAST AND WEST	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	2000	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED - ELEVATIONS NORTH AND SOUTH	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	2001	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED - CONTIGUOUS ELEVATIONS NORTH AND SOUTH	1 200	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	2002	P01	P02						
3000	PROPOSED SECTIONS											3000					
	PROPOSED - SECTION AA & BB	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	3000	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED - SECTION CC & DD	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	3001	P01	P02						
	PROPOSED - SECTION EE (replaced by P1082 North Rear Elev)	1 100	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	3002	P01	P02						
1050	WORKS TO PROTECTED STRUCTURES											1050					
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - DEMOLITION / FABRIC REMOVAL BASEMENT	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1050		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - DEMOLITION / FABRIC REMOVAL GROUND FLOOR	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1051		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - DEMOLITION / FABRIC REMOVAL FIRST FLOOR	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1052		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - DEMOLITION / FABRIC REMOVAL SECOND FLOOR	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1053		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - DEMOLITION / FABRIC REMOVAL THIRD FLOOR	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1054		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - DEMOLITION / FABRIC REMOVAL FOURTH FLOOR	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1055		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - DEMOLITION / FABRIC REMOVAL FIFTH FLOOR	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1056		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - PROPOSED BASEMENT	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1057		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1058		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1059		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1060		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - PROPOSED THIRD FLOOR	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1061		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - PROPOSED FOURTH FLOOR	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1062		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - PROPOSED FIFTH FLOOR	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1063		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - DEMOLITION / FABRIC REMOVAL SECTION 01	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1070		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - DEMOLITION / FABRIC REMOVAL SECTION 02	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1071		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - PROPOSED SECTION 01	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1072		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - PROPOSED SECTION 02	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1073		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - DEMOLITION / FABRIC REMOVAL SOUTH ELEVATION	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1080		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - DEMOLITION / FABRIC REMOVAL NORTH (REAR) ELEVATION	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1081		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - PROPOSED SOUTH ELEVATION	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1082		P01						
	PS - EMERALD CHAMBERS & INDEPENDENT HOUSE - PROPOSED NORTH (REAR) ELEVATION	1 50	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	DR	A	1083		P01						
9000	SCHEDULES											9000					
	SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION	NA	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	SH	A	9000	P01	P02						
	HOUSING QUALITY ASSESSMENT	NA	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	SH	A	9030	P01	P02						
	ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STATEMENT	NA	IH	HJL	ZZ	ZZ	SH	A	9031	P01	P02						
STATUTORY REVIEW																	
BCAR																	
Planning - Precommencement conditions / Commencement Notice																	
Fire Cert																	
DAC																	

1.2 Executive Summary - Vision & Character

Incorporating the retention and revival of two historic structures on Middle Abbey Street, retention in part of the Independent Newspapers Printing Hall and also the original 5-bay Industrial facade to Prince's Street North, the Summix proposal for Independent House is for a comprehensive and carefully considered redevelopment of the site with a vibrant and active set of proposed uses.

The Summix proposal includes;

- Revitalisation of a derelict site, retention and restoration of Independent House and Emerald Chambers, intended partial retention, adaptation and re-use of the Printing Hall, retention of the original 5 bays of the Prince's Street Facade, provision of new active frontages and thresholds to Middle Abbey Street, William's Lane and Prince's Street North. Provision of a mix of appropriate city centre uses including student accommodation, retail / commercial / cafe & restaurant use and Community / Cultural / Arts use underpins the planning strategy for the project.
- The proposals hinge around the intended re-use and refurbishment of: the Protected Structures on Middle Abbey Street which will provide a mix of high quality, managed student accommodation on upper floors and two street facing retail / commercial units; part of the Printing Hall space located in the centre of the block intended to be re-imagined for Community, Cultural and Arts use and intended retention of ancillary spaces surrounding the section of Printing Hall.
- The construction of high-quality, managed Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (approximately 316 bed spaces) in shared 5, 6, and 8 bed clusters along with single and twin occupancy studios and associated internal and external amenity spaces.



Atmospheric sketch section through the proposed development

Continued on next page.

1.2 Executive Summary - Vision & Character

- Activation of Prince's Street North and William's Lane, including new thresholds and active frontages to provide a significant improvement in the public realm and an enhancement of passive security and pedestrian safety around the site.
- Retention of, and significant improvements to, the Prince's Street North façade to activate the street throughout the day including entrance to the Community, Cultural Arts space and prominent corner retail / commercial units which will see increased footfall through the GPO arcade and along the Penney's frontage.
- Enhancement and widening of William's Lane, with overlooking from the student amenity areas at ground floor level, complementing the permitted hotel development on the adjacent Arnott's site .
- Congruent with the recent permission for a 9 storey hotel on the adjacent Arnotts site (DCC Reg. Ref.: 4880/22), the new-build element ranges from five to seven storeys over ground and is set back to complement the historic buildings on Abbey Street which are five storeys above ground.



Visualisation of proposed scheme looking West along Prince's Street North



Visualisation of proposed scheme at corner of Prince's Street North and William's Lane



Visualisation of proposed scheme looking North along William's Lane

1.3 Description of Development

Summix IHD Developments Limited intend to apply to Dublin City Council for a permission for a large-scale residential development principally comprising student accommodation at a c. 0.3 Ha site at Nos. 87-93 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1, D01 NH70 (known collectively as ‘Independent House’). The site is generally bound by Prince’s Street North to the north, William’s Lane and Nos. 94-96 Middle Abbey Street to the west, Middle Abbey Street to the south, and Nos. 35-39 O’Connell Street Lower (known as ‘Penneys’) to the east. The site comprises 6 No. interconnecting, long-standing vacant structures as follows: (a) a principally part 5 No. to part 6 No. storey above basement level building fronting Middle Abbey Street, known as Independent House, with a single storey workshop building to the rear; (b) a 5 No. storey (above basement level) building at the corner of Middle Abbey Street and William’s Lane, known as Emerald Chambers; (c) a triple height (at basement level) structure towards the centre of the site, known as the ‘Printing Hall’; (d) a 2 No. storey (above basement level) warehouse and office fronting William’s Lane; (e) a part 3 No. to part 4 No. storey (above basement level) loading bay and office fronting Prince’s Street North; and (f) a 3 No. storey (above basement level) office in the eastern portion of the site, bounded by Penneys. The site includes 2 No. Protected Structures (RPS Ref. Nos. 18 & 8797)

The development’s surface water and foul water drainage network shall discharge from the site into the existing combined sewer located along Prince’s Street North to the north-west of the site. A new pedestrian crossing and upgrade works to the footpath and kerb along Prince’s Street North are proposed. Public realm improvements are also proposed to William’s Lane. The development site area, drainage works, road works and public realm improvements will provide a total application site area of c. 0.33 Ha.

The development will principally consist of: the retention and refurbishment of part of the building façade along Prince’s Street North; the demolition of the 3 No. former warehouses and offices (c. 5,270 sq m) and the lowering of part of the basement level thereat; the demolition of part of the adjoining wall to the north-east of the site, bounding the Penneys loading bay; the partial demolition of the Printing Hall (c. 457 sq m) and the rear of Emerald Chambers (c. 150 sq m) and Independent House (c. 100 sq m); the removal of the existing concrete roof slab at Emerald Chambers to facilitate an increase in floor-to-ceiling height at fourth floor level; the lowering

of part of the ground floor level in Independent House and Emerald Chambers for universal access; refurbishment works to the Protected Structures including general internal and external works for conservation repairs, maintenance, change of use and upgrading of the buildings; and the construction of a part 1 No. to part 9 No. storey over basement building connecting into the retained structures and principally comprising 316 No. Student Accommodation bedspaces (267 No. standard rooms, 5 No. accessible rooms, 2 No. twin studios (4 No. bedspaces), 10 No. accessible studios and 30 No. single studios) with associated facilities, which will be utilised for short-term let during student holiday periods. The 272 No. standard and accessible rooms are provided in 42 No. clusters ranging in size from 5 No. bedspaces to 8 No. bedspaces, and all clusters are served by a communal living/kitchen/dining room.

The development also provides: ancillary internal and external communal student amenity spaces and support facilities; cultural and community floor space (c. 644 sq m); 3 No. retail units (c. 216 sq m); a café/restaurant (c. 254 sq m); bicycle stores at basement and ground floor levels; visitor cycle parking spaces; bin stores; ESB substation; hard and soft landscaping; green/blue roofs; new telecommunications infrastructure at roof level, together with all associated equipment; boundary treatments; PV panels; plant; lift overruns; and all associated works above and below ground.

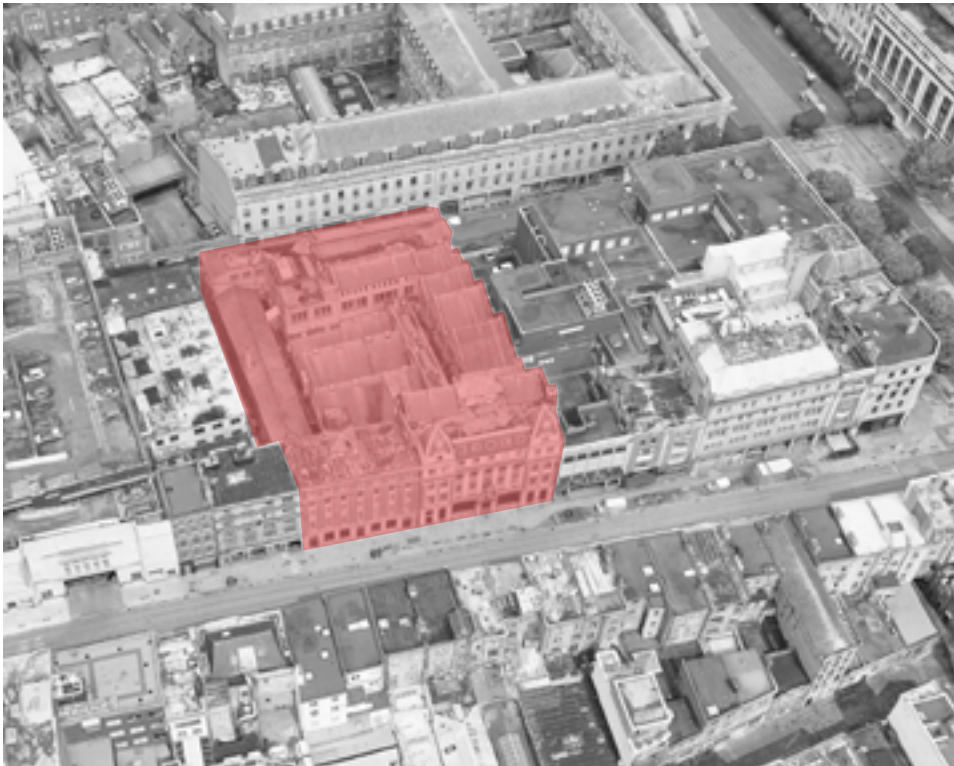
The gross floor area of the development is c. 15,413 sq m comprising c. 12,751 sq m above basement level.

2.0 SITE

- 2.1 Site Location
- 2.2 Site Context and Transport Links
- 2.3 Zoning
- 2.4 Planning History
- 2.5 Site History
- 2.6 Existing Structures
- 2.7 Considered Uses for Existing Structures
- 2.8 Analysis of Existing Structures for Potential Retention & Adaptation

2.1 Site Location

The subject site forms the majority of a block in Dublin 1, between Middle Abbey Street to the South and Prince’s Street North to the North. It has additional street frontage to William’s Lane to the West and is adjacent to O’Connell Street. The Printing Press closed in 2000 and the offices closed in 2004. As such, the building has been vacant with minimal activity for over two decades and has suffered from significant decay over the years.



Extent of existing buildings



Aerial map view, site outlined in red

2.2 Site Context and Transport Links

The site is ideally situated to serve a number of third level institutions in Dublin City Centre.

The site has very good transport links with a number of Dublin Bus route services that run along O’Connell Street.

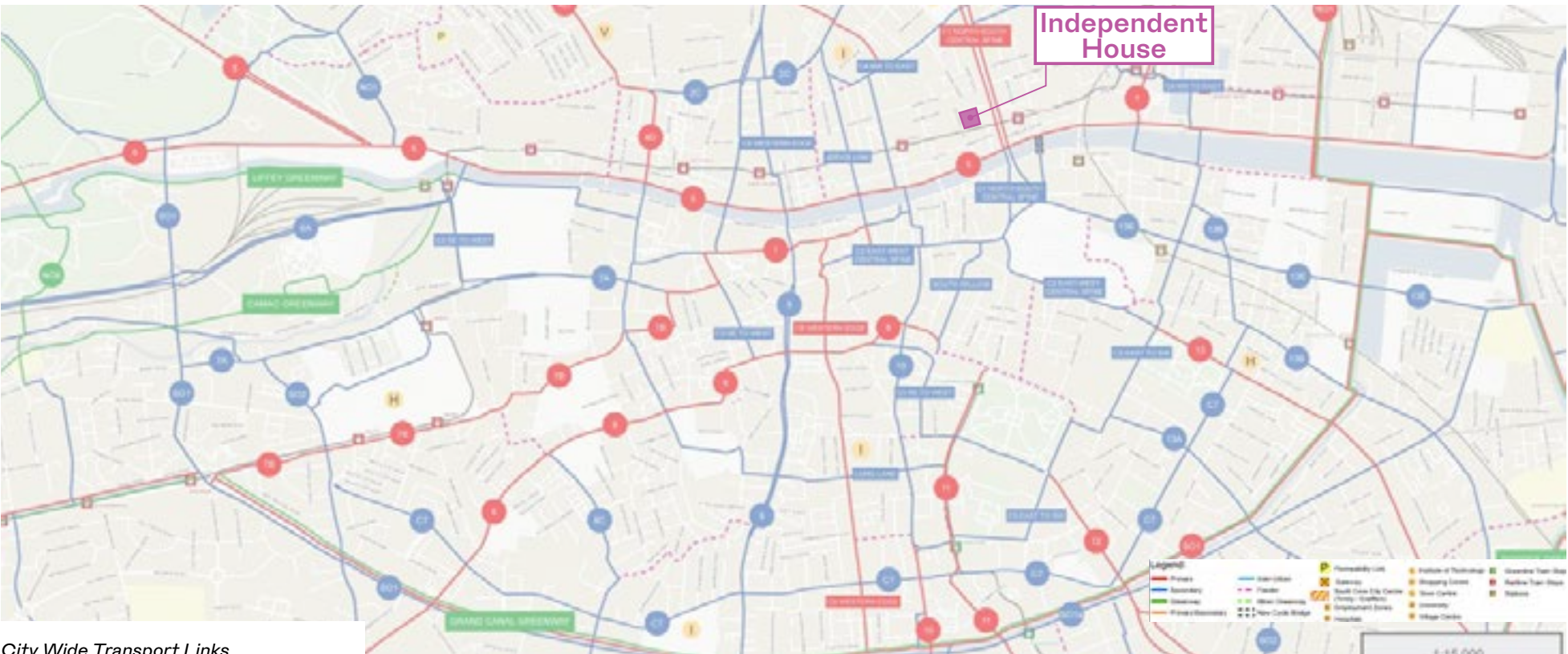
The site is also in close proximity to both Luas lines, situated approximately 4 minutes from the Luas Red Line stop at Jervis Shopping Centre in one direction and 4 minutes from Abbey Street Luas stop in the opposite direction and approximately 3 minutes from the Luas Green Line Stop O’Connell - GPO.

There are two Dublin Bike stations within a short distance of the site at Prince’s Street North and Jervis Street and bike sharing schemes, such as the Bleeper Bike, are also available in the immediate area.

The site is also within a reasonable distance of Connolly Station & Busáras both of which act as a terminus for nationwide bus and rail services.

Buses serving O’Connell Street Area:
1, 4, 6, 7, 7b, 7d, 9, 11, 13, 16, 32x, 33, 38, 38a, 38b, 40, 41, 41b, 41c, 46a, 46e, 122, 123, 130, 140, 155, H1, H2, H3

- Dublin Bikes Stand
- == Red Luas Line
- == Green Luas Line
- Dublin Bus Routes



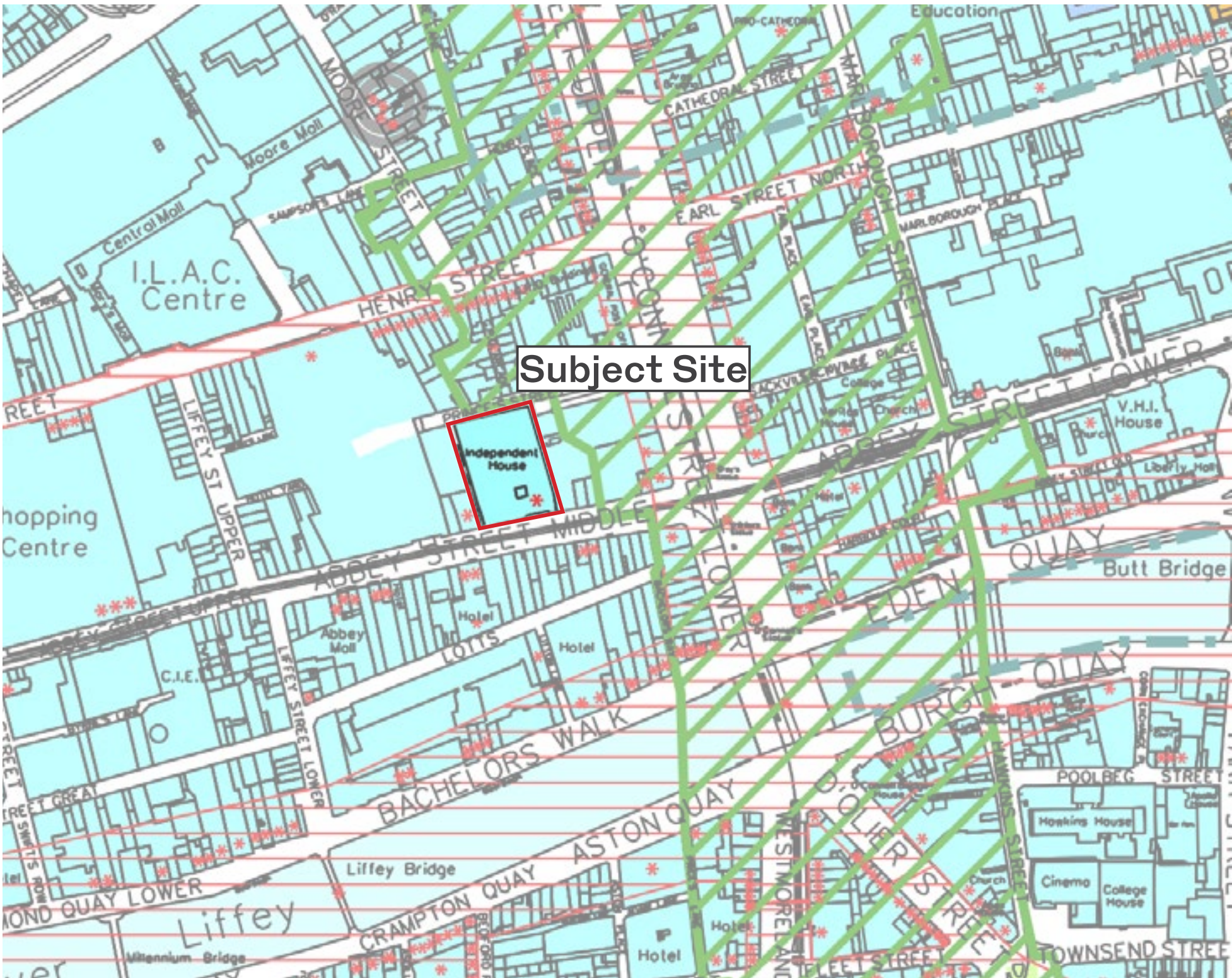
2.3 Zoning

The subject site is located within the administrative area of the Dublin City Council Development Plan 2022-2028 and bounds the edge of the ACA (The O’Connell Street Architectural Conservation Area). Under the DCC Development Plan the site is zoned as Z5 (See Zoning Map extract).

Student accommodation is classed as ‘permissible use’ under the Z5 zoning.

- Z5** City Centre - ‘to consolidate and facilitate the development of the central area, and to identify, reinforce, strengthen and protect its civic design character and dignity’
- ACA** (The O’Connell Street Architectural Conservation Area)
- Conservation Area**
- *

Protected Structure

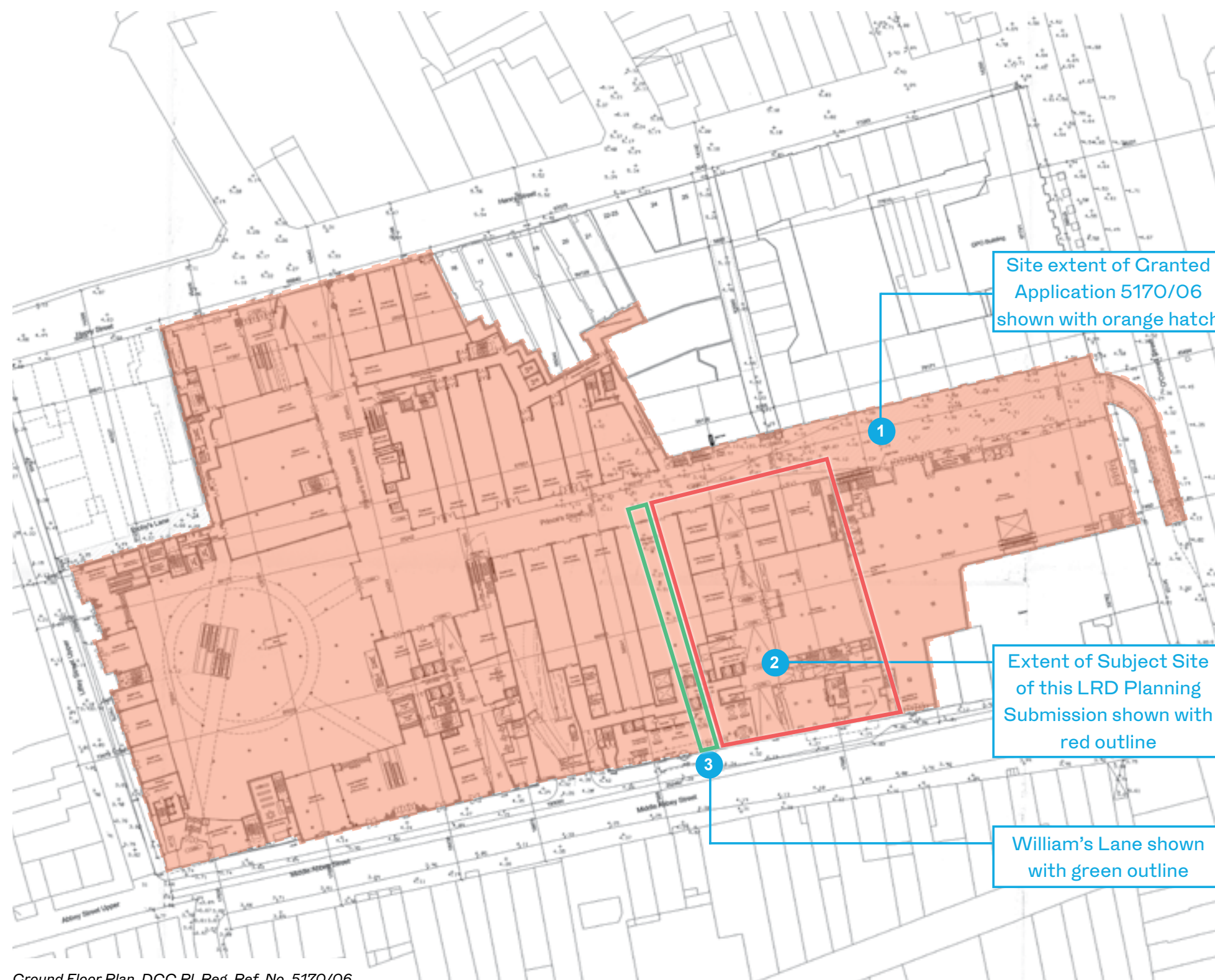


2.4 Planning History

PLANNING HISTORY

Previous Planning Application 5170/06

- Permission granted July 2008.
- Mixed-use retail and residential scheme measuring c. 38,000 sqm which principally proposed heights of 7 and 8 storeys with a 12 storey element.
- This application was in respect of a larger landholding which included the subject site as well as the adjoining Arnotts and Penney's sites.
- The proposals included the demolition of the buildings to the rear of Independent House. At that time 91-93 Middle Abbey Street (Emerald Chambers) was not a Protected Structure and the permitted scheme included its total demolition save for the Middle Abbey Street facade.
- The Independent House site formed part of Blocks C and D. Block D, which was located closest to the GPO, ranged in height from 3 storeys to 8 storeys (plus a lift run located at roof level (9 storey equivalent) 30.19m in height overall) above street level. The 8 No. storey element was sited to the rear of Independent House.
- An amendment application was granted permission in 2009 (Reg. Ref. 4765/08), however, neither permission was implemented, and they have now lapsed.



Ground Floor Plan, DCC Pl. Reg. Ref. No. 5170/06

2.5 Site History

Refer to Conservation Architects Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment for further detail

The 1916 Easter Rising resulted in extensive destruction of the areas surrounding the DPO including the loss of all the buildings on the subject site.

A complication in the reconstruction efforts was the shortage of building materials. The use of steel in construction had been banned due to its importance to the war effort, and timber was also scarce, leading to concerns about using such a flammable material. Concrete emerged as a viable solution, particularly because there was an abundant supply of rubble available for use as aggregate.

Redevelopment on the subject site commenced in earnest and by 1922 the present structure at 91-93 Middle Abbey Street was constructed. The five-storey office building, originally named ‘Emerald Chambers’, later renamed ‘Abbey Building’ was built by R. Gough Contractors on behalf of Fitzgerald’s & Co Wine merchants. The structure typified the building technology and architectural expression largely adopted by the newly reconstructed buildings on O’Connell Street and Henry Street.

Emerald Chambers was initially occupied by a multiple businesses, with Fitzgerald and Co. tea and wine merchants occupying the sizable warehouses on Williams Lane and Princes Street to the rear.

Independent House was constructed at 87-90 Middle Abbey Street and included a rear building range on Prince’s Street North. The building was constructed using a Hennebique concrete frame, with concrete floors with a neoclassical brick facade. The use of concrete circumnavigated the shortage of steel and also addressed concerns about fire-rating.

The building was purposed built for Independent Newspapers.

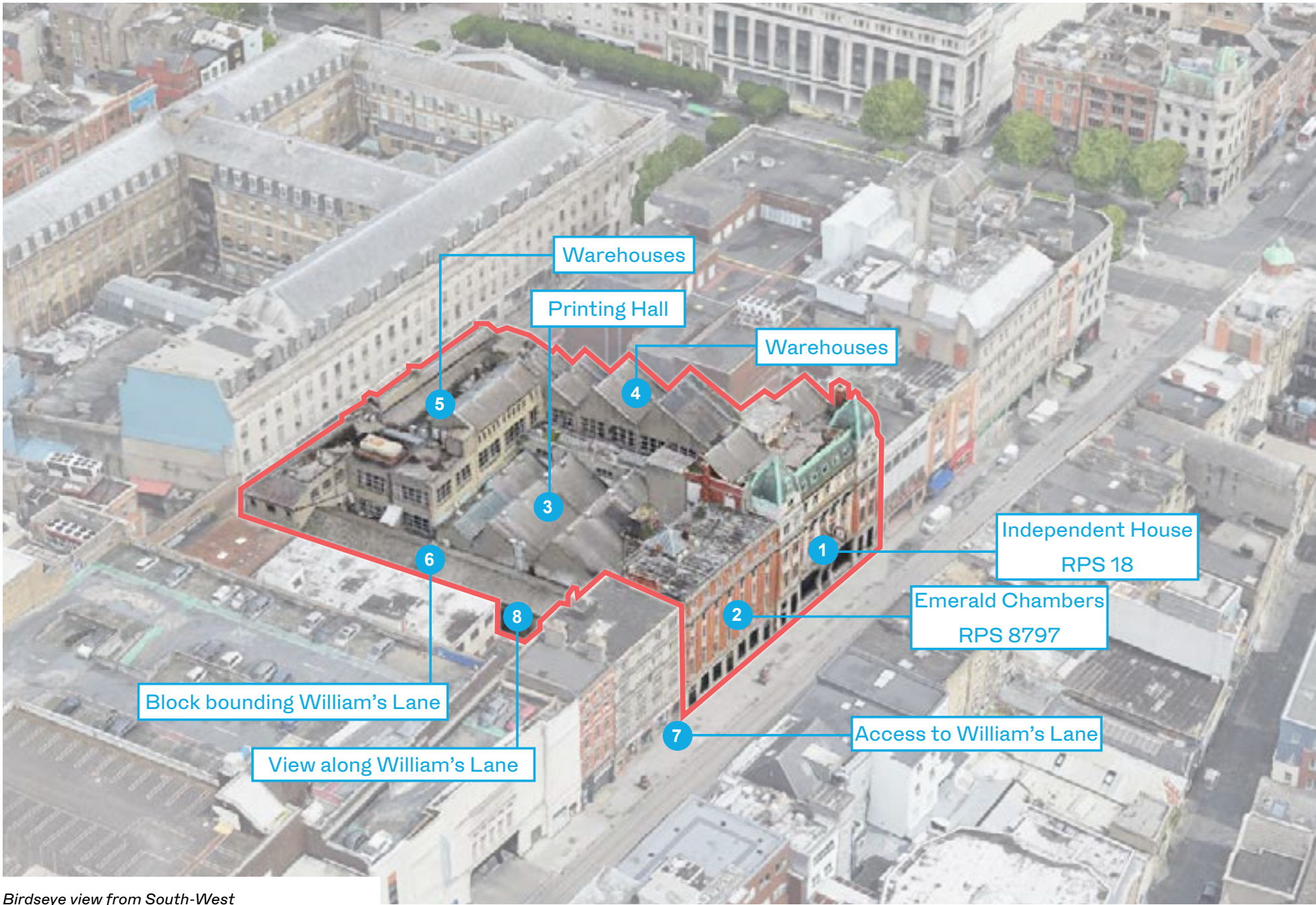
‘Post 1916 Rebellion – removing the debris from Middle Abbey Street’. The former entrance to William’s Lane to the extreme left of image. The site from William’s Lane eastwards (left to right) was occupied by Fitzgerald’s & Co. Wine and Spirit Store 91-93 Middle Abbey Street, The Nation Newspaper and Alexander Thoms.



2.5 Site History

Molloy Associates Conservation Architects have completed an extensive conservation assessment of the site, which has been included with this application for planning permission and should be referred to for detailed information and appraisal. The following is a brief summary of the existing fabric of the site.

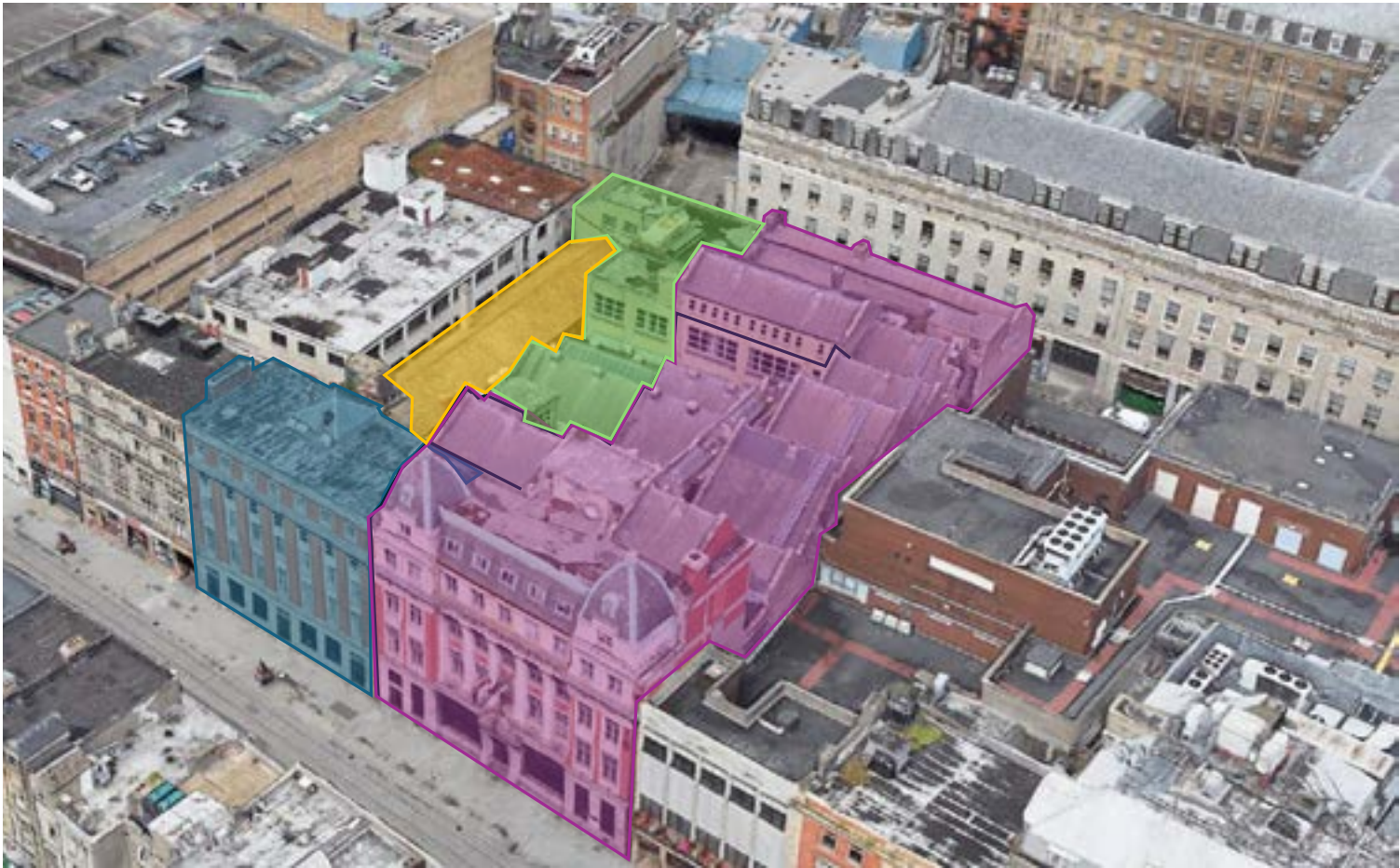
The subject site contains a collection of buildings that once housed the Offices and Printing Hall of Independent Newspapers and include two protected structures - No. 87-90 Middle Abbey Street Dublin 1 (RPS REF 18) (Independent House) and No. 91-93 Middle Abbey Street (RPS REF 8797) (Independent House - Emerald Chambers). This site comprises lands bounded by Abbey Street, Princes Street North and William's Lane. The structures are uninhabited and in very poor condition following 20 years of dereliction. They have suffered extensive water damage over the period. Fabric repair and retrofit of the existing structures (particularly the ones to the rear of the Abbey Street frontage) would be very significant if undertaken. The buildings do not comply with current regulatory codes and would require significant adaptation, intervention, and alteration to meet even basic fire and access requirements. Upgrading of thermal, heating, cooling and ventilation performance to modern standards would likely have a significant further impact on any extant architectural character. Alterations of use from industrial printing, paper storage, small journalistic offices and meeting rooms would require significant intervention and reorganization of the plan and section of the complex.



Birdseye view from South-West



2.6 Existing Structures



- C. 1922
Independent House
(Emerald Chambers)
91-92 Middle Abbey Street (RPS 8)
- Reconstructed post 1916, possibly
remodeled / reconstructed 1939
- C. 1924
Independent House
87-90 Middle Abbey Street (RPS 1
& Rear Buildings
- C. 1939
Extension to Machine Hall & Rear
Buildings

Chronology of the existing buildings

Introduction to Project Context

The site of the former Irish Independent Newspaper premises is a complex of buildings occupying part of the city block between Middle Abbey Street, Prince’s Street North, and William’s Lane has been vacant for more than 20 years.

The site contains a collection of structures that once housed the Offices and Printing Hall of Independent Newspapers and include two protected structures - No. 87-90 Abbey Street Middle Dublin 1 (RPS REF 18) (Independent House) and No. 90-93 Middle Abbey Street (RPS REF 8797).

To the rear of the Independent House and Emerald Chambers is an extensive complex of industrial style warehouse and office buildings. The buildings are utilitarian in character, although part of the elevation to Prince’s Street North is of some architectural heritage value and visual interest due to features such as the glazed brick piers flanking the loading bays, and large, multi-pane windows at ground level. The frontage to William’s Lane is a mostly blank wall at ground

level, variously of concrete render or brick. It is distinctly industrial in character with little passive surveillance and lacking in entrances and windows. The existing condition of William’s lane is attracting antisocial behaviour.

The printing hall at the centre of the complex is a triple height industrial space with a saw tooth factory style roof of significant history and character. The Eastern portion of this hall dating from 1924 is part of the original structure which was later extended.

The buildings became unsuitable for the function for which they were originally constructed (printing newspapers) in the early 2000’s with Independent Newspapers moving to a purpose-built facility in West Dublin. With the loss of that original active printing function, no new viable use for the site has emerged, notwithstanding its sale and resale, and receipt of a planning decision to redevelop.

As a result of the long term vacancy, the building has unfortunately suffered extensive water ingress, deterioration and decay. To prevent further decay & potential loss of important industrial/architectural heritage, significant funding will be required to ensure a sensitive restoration and adaptive reuse of the key elements identified for retention.

The site vacancy has also had a direct negative impact on the surrounding urban environment, neighbouring protected structures, and the adjoining ACA.

The financial viability of the overall proposal relies on there being a balance between the opportunity to redevelop the site with a meaningful outturn value while generating the funding required to ensure the sensitive restoration and reuse of key conservation elements on the site. As part of the overall conservation analysis and development strategy we have identified four key structures that can be incorporated into the new development- namely Independent House, Emerald Chambers, the Eastern portion of the original Printing Hall and the 5 bay Industrial facade on Prince’s Street North.

2.7 Considered Uses for Existing Structures

Multiple exhaustive uses for the building range in its entirety were explored to determine whether a commercially viable development typology exists without requiring demolition in part of the existing structures.

Adaptability of Purpose-Built Buildings Whose Original Function is Permanently Lost

The haphazard structural and spatial form of the existing buildings behind the Abbey Street frontages presents a significant and perhaps impracticable challenge in terms of effective and viable re-use. This was a purpose built structure, designed specifically for newspaper production. Significant adaptation and partial reconstruction with multiple new vertical circulation and fire escape cores would be required. Floor levels would also need to be altered to ensure an efficient, safe and compliant access arrangement. All roofs need to be replaced, all sloped glazing and windows need to be replaced and/or refurbished and enhanced. The structural concrete and steel are likely to be in need of repair and reinforcement. The basement slab and retaining wall structures are not waterproof and require replacement and/or remedial action. External walls will need to be insulated.

Consideration of Commercial / Office Use of Extant (ie ‘as existing’) Building Range

Core requirements of a commercial workplace include flexibility, adaptability, clear circulation and interconnection of floor plates, legibility, and orientation. These are all missing in the current arrangement. Significant interventions would be required to bring the collection of buildings up to standard including Part M & Part B compliant staircases (3 or 4 number stairs) and multiple banks of lifts. Even after these interventions, the lower levels suffer from very poor-quality daylight that makes the scheme very attractive and of low letting value. It would be very difficult to achieve adequate daylight on the eastern side of the building since windows would not be permitted along this party wall elevation. There is currently an oversupply of technically excellent Grade A commercial office space in the city. The latest Dublin Office Market Report by Knight Frank (published 1 May 2024) estimate the current Dublin vacancy rate at 14.9%. There is a

strong preference for Grade A space and large organisations are now focused on an ESG (Environmental and Social Governance) agenda and therefore require very energy efficient and “green” buildings. The vacancy rate among older “grey” buildings is higher than the overall average with many purpose-built office buildings developed as recently as 20 years ago been withdrawn from the market for redevelopment. The fact that this building was developed primarily as a printing house with ancillary offices added in a haphazard way over time means that realistically the space cannot be adapted to meet modern office requirements. This is particularly the case in an already seriously over supplied market. The physical layout of the building with multiple levels, varying floor plates, lack of natural light, non-compliance with fire and ventilation standards mean that the use as an office building is un-viable. In architectural heritage terms, conversion of the existing rear building range will arise in so many physical changes to meet daylight and ventilation requirements, that it will become unrecognisable from its extant character. Such a development might satisfy to an extent, heritage concerns- but it is likely that such radical alterations will not be reversible and will arise in a permanent change in character that does little to achieve genuine conservation objectives.

Consideration of Retail Use (food market or mixed use) of Extant Building Range

The only space in the existing collection of structures that could be considered suitable for this is the printing hall. Noting the hall is currently at basement level, access for the public and for goods and traders would need to be from the Prince’s Street North side. Public access would need to be from Middle Abbey Street. The entrance through Independent House is of a small scale and not particularly suited as the main entrance to a market hall. The facts that the space is below street level and is in a secondary location, means that it completely lacks the commercial presence required for such a use. Any value that could be gained from this space would not fund or support the redevelopment cost and refurbishment of the remaining structures. The question would also remain as to what the remaining floors could be used for, and any use would further compromise the retail use with new fire escapes, access points etc needed. The economics of providing retail accommodation in this space simply do not work. In architectural heritage terms, the opportunity of providing a single volume function to the rear building range presents the most favourable development option as it allows the exiting form to

survive. However, it is understood that such a use does not reflect the commercial challenges of the site. It is also worth noting that plans are currently in place to bring existing historic market structures, the Iveagh Market and the Victorian Fruit and Vegetable Market, back into beneficial use over the next two years. These buildings were both originally designed and built specifically to provide a market function, and benefit from the required 21 commercial frontage. It is further noted, that these market refurbishment projects are only coming forward following significant intervention and financial support from the City Council which substantiates the viability issues of such schemes.

Consideration of Residential Use of Extant Building Range

Retention of the existing buildings and conversion to residential uses is not a viable option. The development plan standards for private open space requiring balconies, and communal open space in the form of gardens is not feasible on a site with 98% site coverage. Subdivision, and access arrangements, acoustics, fire segregation and escape again present insurmountable issues in a fully or even substantially retained structure. In architectural heritage terms, conversion of the existing rear building range will arise in so many physical changes to meet daylight and ventilation requirements, that it will become unrecognisable from its extant character. Such a development might satisfy to an extent, heritage concerns- but it is likely that such radical alterations will not be reversible and will arise in a permanent change in character that does little to achieve genuine conservation objectives. Even with these radical interventions, it is likely that any resultant residential units would provide less than optimal living conditions. Considering all of the above limitations on adapting the existing buildings for residential use, the building would be so inefficient that such a use would not be economically viable.

Consideration of Cultural or Mixed Use of Extant Building Range

The haphazard structural and spatial form of the existing buildings behind the Abbey Street frontages presents a significant and perhaps impracticable challenge in terms of effective and viable re-use as a cultural and/or mixed-use facility. This is also certainly financially the least viable option. The best way to deliver a cultural use in part of the building is through comprehensive redevelopment which complies with the new Dublin City Council objective to provide 5% cultural/ community use in new developments. This is part of the current

development strategy for the site. In architectural heritage terms, the opportunity of providing a single volume function to the rear building range presents the most favourable development option as it allows the exiting form to survive. However, it is understood that such a use does not reflect the commercial challenges of the site.

Overview of Adaptive Re-use Considerations

Any use of this protected, purpose-built building will incur its alteration, with interventions ranging from minor to extensive. Thermal comfort, fire safety and emergency egress demands alone will arise in significant changes. The practical consequences of delivery of various alternative adaptive re-use strategies for the character of the building range can be explored in more detail, however at this time, are all considered as introducing extensive change in character. Outcome for each alternative strategy in terms of architectural heritage impacts are therefore considered to vary depending on a suggested use, with the least economically advantageous running in parallel with the most favourable in heritage terms, and vice versa.

Consideration of Hotel Use on the Site

Apart from Student Housing the only other viable use for the buildings is hotel. Noting the recent delivery of a number of hotels in the immediate area and the granting of planning permission for a hotel on the adjoining site there is an argument that the immediate area in already adequately supplied with hotels. The current strategy is therefore to primarily provide purpose built student accommodation on the site providing much need life to the street and providing a development option that will finally breath life back into this very important centrally located site.

SUMMARY

A series of possible use types have been considered and appraised financially:

Commercial Office – Currently an overprovision of supply in the area.

Retail – Proximity to Arnotts and Dublin Central developments make this a highly unlikely possibility.

Residential – Site remains unsuitable for BTS development due to lack of open space.

Hotel – Adjacent Hotel Permission limits attractiveness for operators and does not expand the mix of uses in the area.

Student Accommodation with small scale commercial uses at ground level – is a viable proposition.

The above appraisal introduces the concept of partial retention of the building group to secure a viable use for the development.

Retention of the Middle Abbey Street Facing buildings and demolition of the rear warehouse structures would provide a more suitable redevelopment solution.

2.8 Analysis of Existing Structures for Potential Retention & Adaptation

Having examined and rejected the possibility of retention of the entire complex of existing structures on the site, this section looks at the distinctive parts of the complex and examines suitability of each part for adaptation, retention and re-use. As such, this application in part seeks permission to carefully and sensitively restore selected key structures that can be incorporated into the new development. A certain level of demolition will however be required to enable a viable redevelopment of the site. Each existing building has been carefully examined, recorded & categorized which may be seen in the adjacent diagram.

Zone 1 (Pink): 5 storey over basement (Emerald Chambers) and part 5 storey part 6 storey above basement with single storey workshop to the rear (Independent House), concrete framed red brick and stone buildings facing Abbey Street
- 91-93 Middle Abbey Street, Independent House (Emerald Chambers), RPS 8797
- 87-90 Middle Abbey Street, Independent House, RPS 18

Zone 2 (Purple): 2 storey over basement brick and concrete linear pitched roof range bounding William's Lane

Zone 3 (Blue): Triple height at basement top lit volume that housed the original Printing Hall. Presses have been removed as well as all of the machine access gantries

Zone 4 (Green): Part 3 and 4 storey (above basement level) loading bay and office buildings that housed various journalistic departments as well as the newspaper baling and loading areas fronting Prince's Street North (including Industrial Facade to Prince's Street North) and a 3 storey (above basement level) office in the Eastern portion

The **Zone 1** structures (principal buildings facing Abbey Street) have the clearest structural and architectural order. This zone includes Independent house & Emerald Chambers. These buildings have been described in an extract from Molloy & Associates Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment:

"Independent House: This building is of social, historic and architectural interest. The façade and distinctive roofscape make a valuable contribution to the streetscape. Internally features of interest include the concrete frame system and architectural joinery, plasterwork within the former entrance lobby, representative of the early 20th century era.

Emerald Chambers: This structure is of social, historic and architectural interest. The red brick façade makes a valuable architectural contribution to the streetscape. Internally features of



interest include the concrete frame system and early 20th century Otis elevator (non-functional), granite stairs to rear, and mosaic floor and joinery to entrance hall."

Challenges in adaptation & re-use include:

- Managing the significant level change from Middle Abbey Street (steps up to the entry level) at Independent House for universal access.
- The two Abbey Street Buildings are currently interconnected via non-original, non-compliant staircases at upper floor levels. Keeping this connection would add a significant risk to fire compartmentation & accessibility issues.
- Providing Fire Fighting & Universal Access to all areas of the building. The buildings are each served by a single, un-lobbied and

non-compliant (with TGD Parts B, M and K) stairs with outdated and non-operational passenger lifts, one of which was retrofitted into the stairwell. It will be necessary to provide access to suitable Fire Fighting and escape stairs from both buildings.

- Servicing challenges to provide for the proposed of Student Accommodation use.

Conclusion: Notwithstanding the challenges, both buildings have a high architectural merit & can be adaptable with a moderate upgrading of fabric required and including interconnection with newer structures. In Sections 3 & 4 of this Design Statement an approach to retention and upgrading of these buildings is presented.

2.8 Analysis of Existing Structures for Potential Retention & Adaptation

The **Zone 2** structure two story over basement brick and concrete linear range.

These buildings have been described in an extract from Molloy & Associates Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment:

***"Warehouses and offices on Williams Lane:** This linear brick building was reconstructed post 1916, but it is unclear if it was developed separately to the rear building range; internal inspection of the building fabric suggests this may have been integrated into the complex when the Printing Hall was extended westwards circa 1939. The building has brick external wall with metal roof trusses exposed internally and a natural slate roof. The primary architectural heritage interest of this structure concerns its contribution to Williams Lane and forming its eastern enclosure".*

Challenges in adaptation & re-use include:

- This building is accessed via stepped links from other buildings in the complex. As such it has no independent access points or internal vertical circulation and has different floor levels to the other blocks.
- Windows exist at high level in the upper storey only and the ground and basements have no direct daylight.
- The range bounds Williams Lane and its retention would negate any possibility of improving and widening the lane itself.

Conclusion: As outlined in the AHIA, the primary architectural heritage interest of this structure within Zone 2 is its 'contribution to Williams lane & forming its eastern Enclosure'. William's Lane is a long & narrow lane with minimal passive surveillance which has attracted anti-social behaviour. As part of this application it is our intention to improve the security & attractiveness of this lane by increasing its width and footfall through active street frontage and passive surveillance. This requires the demolition of the warehouses and offices in Zone 2.

The **Zone 3** structure is a triple height at basement level volume with factory style pitched and partially glazed rooflight.

These buildings have been described in an extract from Molloy & associates Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment:

***"Printing Hall :** (Constructed in two phases, attached to the rear of Independent House and Emerald Chambers). The printing hall was constructed in two phases. The hall is a vast architectural space, the scale of which has been further amplified by the partial demolition of the original ground floor. The sawtooth roof, exposed roof trusses, and ink-stained tiles on the walls and contribute to its 20th century industrial character. All former industrial machinery has been previously removed from the printing hall".*

Challenge in adaptation & re-use include:

This space was the printing machine hall of the Independent newspapers group. The floor of the hall is 3 m below street level and the volume is dissected by a concrete structural frame. It has a strong industrial character being designed for a singular and specific use.

- Its position on the site means that it interconnects at some level with all other parts of the complex.
- The Printing Hall is in a state of significant dereliction caused by water ingress and the removal of the printing presses.
- Nonetheless it retains a spatial quality that if retained could be adapted for other uses.

Conclusion: The scale of the space is such that its full retention would severely limit the new development required to ensure the viability of the overall redevelopment. We have proposed as part of this application to retain the original Eastern part of the Printing Hall in order to protect the important memory of the industrial heritage of the site. It is our intention to also aim to salvage key internal fabric from the Western part of the printing hall including existing timber & glass screens, pendent light fittings and remaining intact tiles.

Zone 4 structure is a part 3 and 4 storey over part basement warehouse type concrete structure with previous loading bay and offices use. It is subdivided into several volumes of deep plan dimension and very limited daylight at basement and ground floors.

These buildings have been described in an extract from Molloy & associates Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment:

***"Warehouse / offices (on eastern boundary):** This structure is attached to the rear of Independent House and constructed contemporaneously. There is a sawtooth profile roof above three stories of accommodation. There are attractive coloured tiles within the narrow lightwell between the machine hall and this warehouse, but otherwise this particular area is of limited architectural interest.*

Warehouse / loading bay / offices (fronting onto Prince's Street):

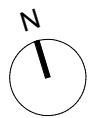
The remnants of original service and vehicular entrances on Princes Street including glazed tiles, multipaned metal windows, art deco style cornice and a bronze wall sconce contribute to the character of Prince's Street. This area was constructed in two phases, the three storey element to the west was a extension added circa 1939. Some original metal window frames survive, although the majority have been replaced. Interior features are of limited architectural interest"

Challenges in adaptation & re-use include:

- On the upper storeys windows in the Eastern range are mono orientated save for the top floor which has single glazed roof lights.
- Only a single non-compliant staircase serves this entire part (Northeast corner) which has several split levels.
- There is a single access lift which does not serve all floor levels.

Conclusion: The 5 structural bay elevation to Prince's Street North and the attractive coloured tiles within the narrow lightwell are the most interesting element and have been retained within the proposed development. All other warehouse buildings in Zone 4 have limited architectural value & would pose significant challenges for a successful adaptive re-use due to the elements highlighted above. Therefore it is proposed to demolish these.

2.8 Analysis of Existing Structures for Potential Retention & Adaptation



Overall Conclusion

The Analysis of Existing Structures has identified four key elements of significant historic value capable of retention and adaptation into the development.

The spatial arrangement of the two buildings fronting Middle Abbey Street (Independent House and Emerald Chambers) naturally facilitate adaptation, reuse and conversion to managed student residential accommodation- even though this was not their original purpose.

While not without challenges, the Eastern portion of the Printing Hall has both historic and cultural value and is in a form that is adaptable for cultural/ arts or community use. Its retention does have impacts on the proposed surrounding development due to its scale and height but on balance it can be integrated to the overall development.

The three-story industrial façade to Prince's Street North and in particular its structural rhythm has driven the form and shape of the proposed student bed spaces that it encloses. Again, although challenging structurally, can be incorporated into the development.

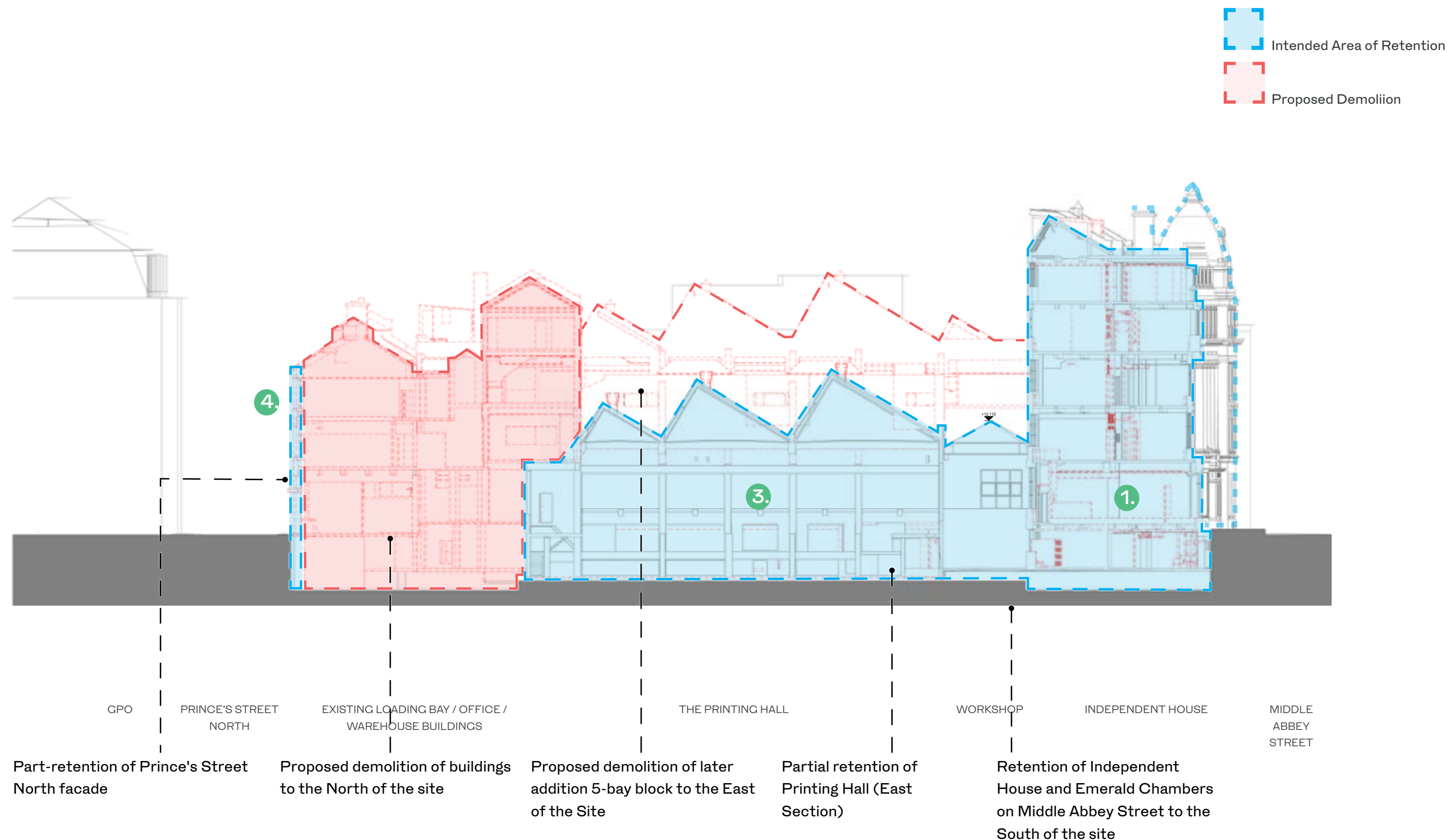
Key Areas of Retention & Adaption

- 1. Independent House
- 2. Emerald Chambers
- 3. The Printing Hall (East side)
- 4. 5-bay Facade to Prince's Street North

The Following Plan & Section Diagrams outline these 4 areas proposed for retention.



2.8 Analysis of Existing Structures for Potential Retention & Adaptation



3.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Development Proposal
- 3.2 Integration of Retained Structures with New Build Elements
- 3.3 General Arrangement of the Development Proposal
- 3.4 Massing & Facade Design

3.1 Development Proposal

General Overview

Having determined the extent of retained structures suitable for adaptation and re-use, the residual site area is u-shaped, bounding William’s Lane, Prince’s Street North and the party-wall line to the Penney’s site to the East.

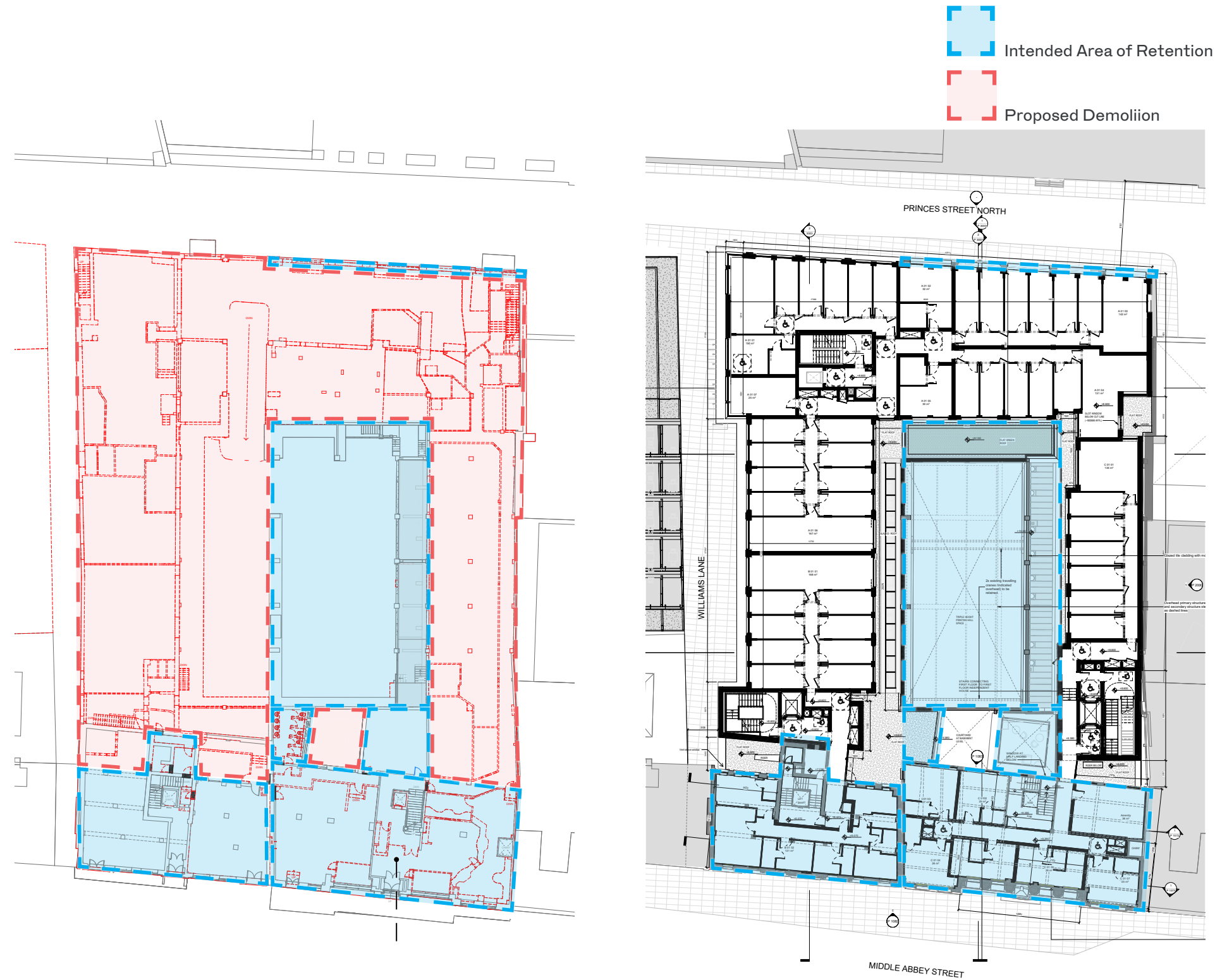
While incorporating the retained façade to Prince’s Street North the proposed new accommodation is arranged to fill the remaining space in double and single loaded corridors.

Three new cores are proposed to facilitate Universal Access and Fire Escape routes to and from the student apartments.

Two link bridges connect the new accommodation to the two protected structures fronting Middle Abbey Street.

The new accommodation reaches eight floors, matching the emerging context of the proposed hotel to the West and newly proposed developments at Dublin Central to the North of the GPO.

The building face is set back from the existing building line in William’s Lane to allow for widening of the lane. To the North, in the context of the GPO, the form is set back from the sixth floor up. The retention of the 5-bay printing hall at ground and basement levels fills what would otherwise be an open courtyard. External student amenity space is therefore located at roof level.



Existing Ground Floor Plan - Retention & Demolition

Proposed Upper Floor Plan - Retention & New-Build

3.1 Development Proposal

The development proposal includes;

- A purpose built and managed Student Accommodation Scheme of 316 bed spaces set out in shared cluster and studio arrangements.
- A significant new Culture/ Arts/ Community space at the heart of the development that exceeds the minimum area provisions of the development plan requirements.
- New retail units and a cafe/restaurant at street level revitalising both the Middle Abbey Street and Prince's Street North frontages.
- Active student amenity functions address a reimagined Williams Lane which is also subject to the recent permitted hotel development to the West.
- The proposal hinges around the conservation strategy of retaining, restoring and adapting for new uses 4 (four) key elements; Independent House, Emerald Chambers, the Eastern portion of the Original Printing Hall and the 5 Bay Prince's Street North façade.
- A range of new buildings is proposed in a U-shape to the North of the protected structures on Abbey Street. The buildings rise from single storey infill elements to shoulder level five storeys over ground on Prince's Street North, stepping up to six and seven storeys over ground with a small area at eight over ground to facilitate access to a roof top garden amenity space.
- The part retention of the existing facade and the design of the new elevation including its shoulder level to Prince's Street North respects and enhances the street. The Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment have concluded that there is an overall positive impact on the GPO.
- The central lightwell facilitates the retention of the Eastern portion of the newspaper printing hall, the saw tooth roof of which overlaps the first and part second floor of the lightwell-facing bed spaces. It should be noted that there is a consequential loss of daylight in these lower bedrooms and living spaces that cannot be avoided due to conserved and retained Printing Hall roof structure.

Basement Floor Accommodation Summary

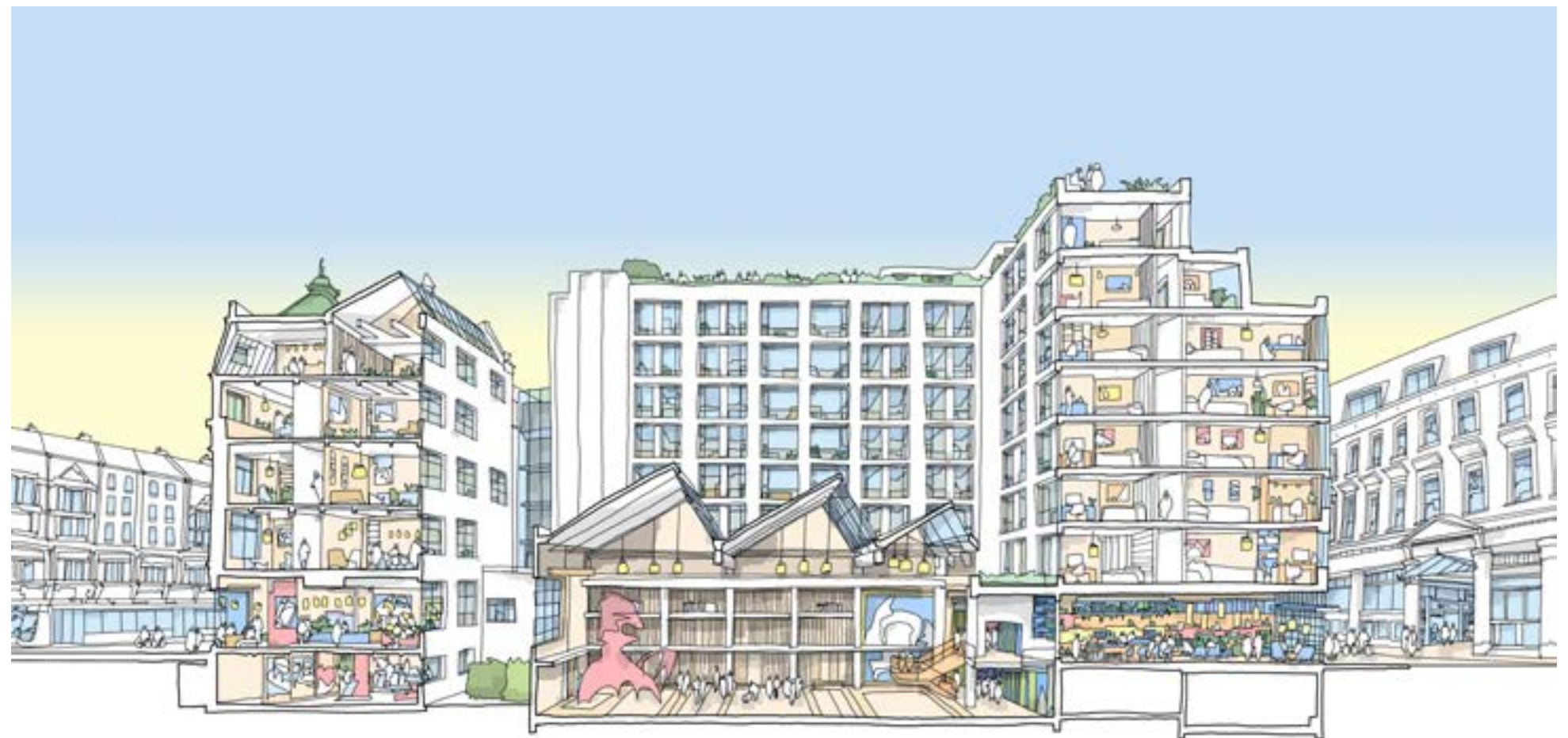
The site currently contains a full basement throughout although this is over several different floor levels (varying by approximately 600mm). It is proposed to retain the current basement levels within Emerald Chambers and Independent House as well as within the retained part of the Printing Hall. The basement slab itself will be removed and replaced to incorporate damp proofing, radon barriers and insulation. Outside of these zones – and to accommodate taller spatial requirements (large plant and double stacked bicycles for example- a new basement level is proposed beneath the proposed building elements.

The basement houses amenity and support areas under Independent House and Emerald chambers as well as retention of the existing light well courtyard.

The Community Arts Culture space is centered in the basement plan with dedicated access from ground level on Prince's Street North, opposite the GPO arcade.

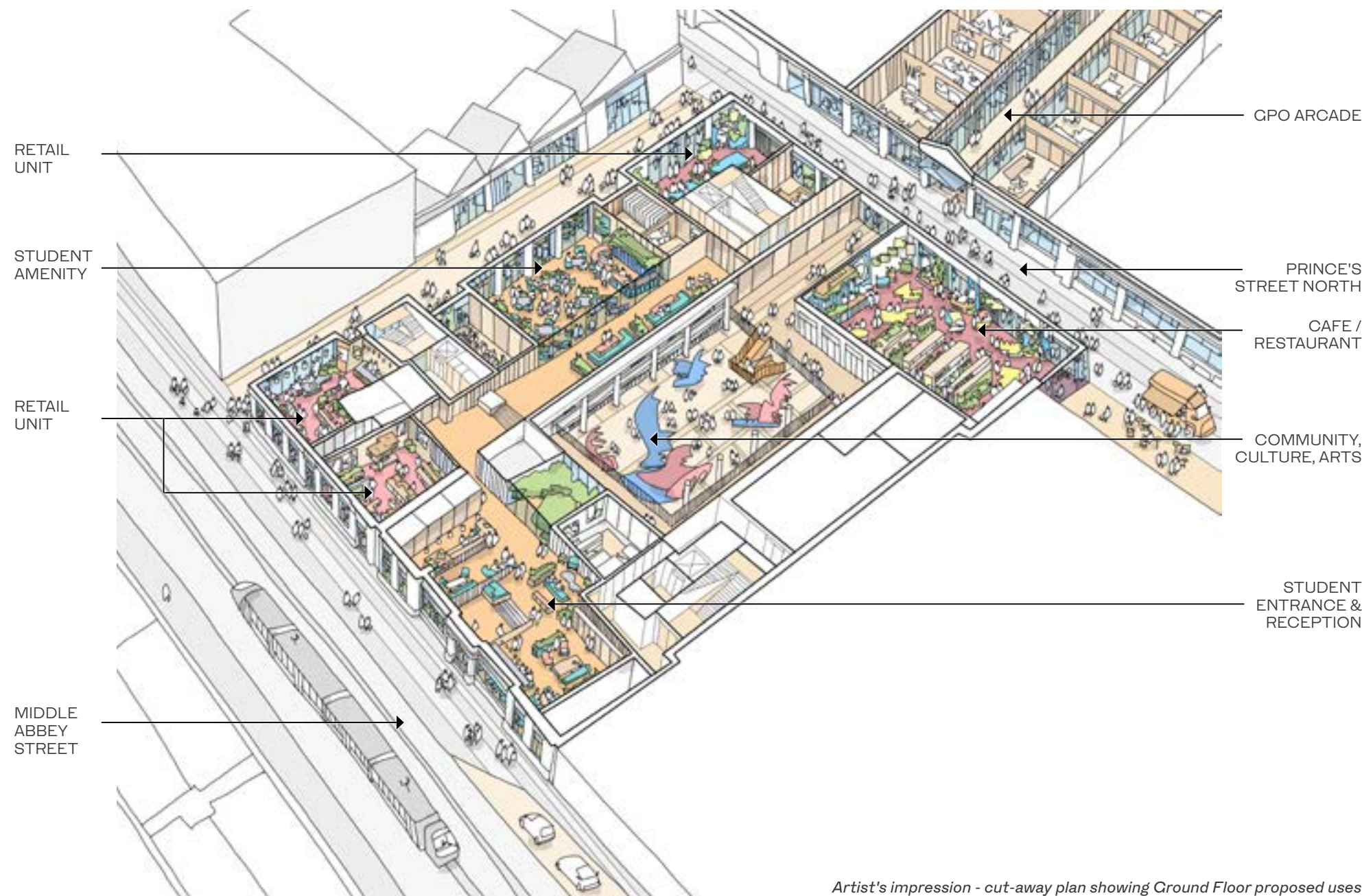
Bicycle storage for students and visitors of the managed Student Accommodation (384 spaces) and staff in a mix of double stacked and Sheffield stand arrangement accessed from Williams Lane by stair with ramp channels and a dedicated bicycle lift. Refer to Appendix 6.5 Bicycle Storage).

Plant rooms including sprinkler tanks, water storage tanks, Thermal store plant area and bin stores are also accommodated in the Basement.



Atmospheric sketch section through the proposed development

3.1 Development Proposal



Artist's impression - cut-away plan showing Ground Floor proposed uses

Ground Floor Accommodation Summary

The main entrance to the Student Accommodation is proposed beneath the clock and at the central doorway of Independent House. The Ground floor of Independent house proposed for use as a reception and management suite as well as student study and amenity breakout rooms.

The three main vertical circulation cores (which are also firefighting cores) are accessible from this level.

The main student amenity lounge area is orientated to address Williams Lane - providing passive supervision towards the lane.

The ground floor of Emerald Chambers is organised into 2 retail units opening onto Middle Abbey Street.

Two further commercial units comprising retail and cafe / restaurant use address Prince's Street North, and the Community Arts Culture space is also accessed from this street.

Bin stores access is located at the party wall with Penney's.

The significant frontage to Middle Abbey Street will benefit from activation and animated generated by the proposed use which will enhance the appearance and the pedestrian experience of the street.

Typical Floors Summary

Student bedroom clusters and studios are arranged around a central lightwell that houses the retained Printing Hall structure.

Two fire-fighting stair & lift cores are located behind the two protected structures on Middle Abbey Street and facilitate connections between the variant floor levels.

A third fire-fighting core is located in the North East corner.

A single five-bed cluster per upper floor level is proposed in Emerald Chambers

A series of individual Student single and twin studio type bedrooms are proposed at each upper floor level in Independent House.

Upper Floors Summary

The upper levels of the development have been set-back to achieve a balance in delivering an appropriately dense development that maintains the viability of the scheme while minimising any unreasonable impact on the neighbouring buildings.

External amenity space has been provided at roof level and additional amenity space is provided in study rooms at 4th floor level in Independent House.

Extensive testing was carried out to mitigate the impact of the proposed development on daylighting levels to the windows of the GPO facing Prince's Street North.

Further detail provided in Section 3.3.

3.1 Development Proposal



Artist's impression of the Culture, Arts, Community space - The retained portion of the Printing Hall

3.2 Integration of Retained Structures with New Build Elements

The integration of the new & retained part of the development finds its precedent in the organisation of the original buildings. The various original structures touched and overlapped allowing the entire complex to be accessed from within. So too the student realm requires a fully integrated approach where each bed space is fully connected with the amenity zones and reception area.

The re-use and adaptation of the protected structures therefore demands a level of connection and integration into the overall development. Full separation and segregation of new & old is not an option in this case.

The stair arrangements in the protected structures of Independent House and Emerald chambers are significantly deficient in terms of fire brigade access and occupant egress and so, in order to deal with this, it is proposed that the upper floors of these buildings are connected by short, glazed, bridge links to two new 'firefighting' cores that facilitate fire brigade access via firefighting lobbies.

The very limited frontage to the development on Abbey Street and Prince's Street North requires the development to provide three such firefighting cores, the third of which is to the Northwest corner of the site.

Limits to travel distances between bedrooms and safe escape routes drives the proximity of the stairs to the rear of the protected structures.

The scheme has been carefully designed to ensure it is respectful of its surroundings and does not prejudice the future development of neighbouring sites. Rear extensions seek to respect, rather than compete with, the architectural prominence of the primary group of buildings. Connections are carefully considered, to retain the detachment of the front building range from rear extensions.

The proposed development is designed to revitalise and reinvigorate the surrounding area, breathing new life into buildings that are slowly deteriorating. Significant improvements to the public realm are proposed, including increased activity in the immediate area through the introduction of new residents and reopening of closed frontages on Middle Abbey Street, new active frontages to Prince's Street North, a reimagined Williams Lane will promote future pedestrian movement and use, where it has previously been considered an unsafe route.

The Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment by Modelworks concludes that, ***'the site is well suited for intensification of land use through increased building height, as the new built form can be positioned on the site to avoid significant townscape and visual effects except on the immediate environs – specifically Prince's Street North and William's Lane.'***

These elements of the townscape are both currently in poor condition and could benefit from the site's redevelopment. The proposed development would significantly enhance the character, quality and visual amenity of these receptors - while avoiding any significant impacts on the wider context.'



Visualisation of proposed scheme at corner of Prince's Street North and William's Lane

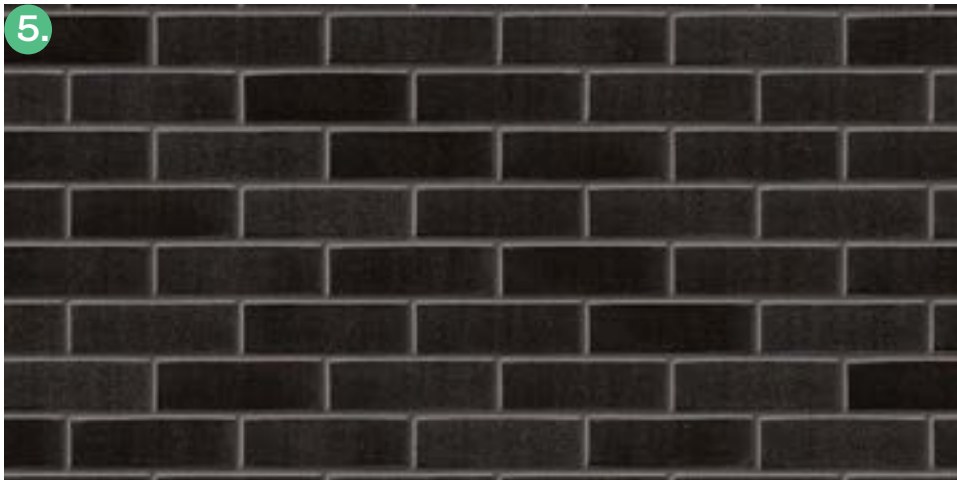
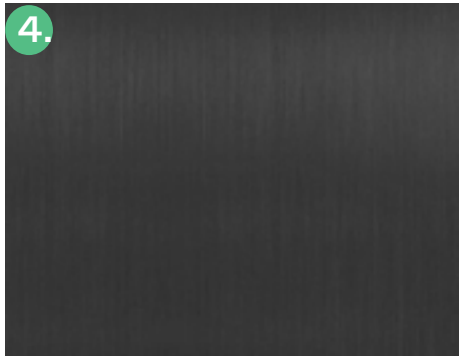
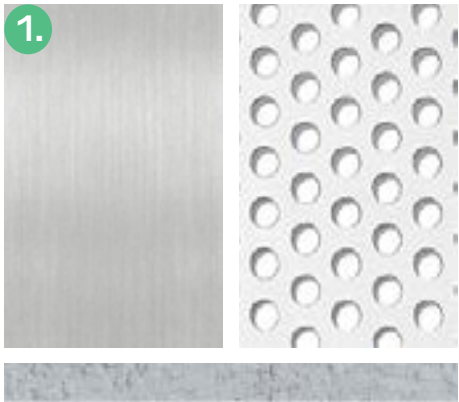
3.2 Integration of Retained Structures with New Build Elements

PROPOSED MATERIALITY

- 1. Perforated metal screening to roof terraces, plant screens etc at upper levels
- 2. Selected yellow / buff brick laid in stretcher bond with light mortar to upper floors of new building
- 3. Pre-cast stone banding to new building parapets and intermediate levels
- 4. PPC RAL 9011 Graphite Black window frames and metalwork to all new building facades
- 5. Black / purple brick with black mortar to ground floor / street level



Buff brick as seen in the courtyard of the GPO

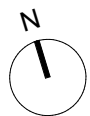


The Loom, London, UK by Duggan Morris



Cambridge Judge Business School by Stanton Williams

3.2 Integration of Retained Structures with New Build Elements



The existing buildings on the site have been carefully analysed and where it's considered possible existing fabric of interest has been incorporated into the project proposal including the following:

Retention & renovation of Emerald Chambers

- 01. GF retail units accessed from Middle Abbey Street, floor level dropped locally at entrance to provide level access.
- 02. Original floor level retained - stepped access.
- 03. 20 bedspaces of clustered student accommodation:

Retention & renovation of Independent House

- 05. Student Accommodation main entrance access point from Middle Abbey Street, floor level dropped locally at entrance to provide level access.
- 06. Student Concierge and related meeting / parcel stores, original floor level retained.
- 07. Escape from Block C.
- 08. Student Study Rooms, original floor level retained.
- 09. 23 units of studio-style student accommodation on upper levels with 93 m² of Internal Student Amenity Space at 4th floor level.

Partial retention & renovation of the Printing Hall

- 10. Considered re-imagination of this industrial space as Community, Cultural & Arts space / a focal point of the scheme.

Retention & renovation of retained Ancillary Buildings

- 11. Existing glass-roofed space to be retained.
- 12. Existing toilet block, original lower levels intended for retention only.
- 13. Courtyard retained.

New development

- 14. Original five-bay facade to Prince's Street North retained as part of proposed development.
- 15. Commercial / Cafe / Restaurant unit to Prince's Street North to activate corner and increase pedestrian footfall.
- 16. Retail unit to corner of Prince's Street North and William's Lane.
- 17. Staff bicycle store.
- 18. Access to basement level Student Bicycle Storage.
- 19. GF Student Amenity spaces.
- 20. William's Lane - widened and activated.
- 21. Bin store.



Ground Floor Plan

3.2 Integration of Retained Structures with New Build Elements

Retention & renovation of Independent House

- 05. Student Accommodation main entrance access point from Middle Abbey Street, floor level dropped locally at entrance to provide level access.
- 06. Student Concierge and related meeting / parcel stores, original floor level retained.
- 09. 23 units of studio-style student accommodation on upper levels with 93 m² of Internal Student Amenity Space at 4th floor level.

Partial retention & renovation of the Printing Hall

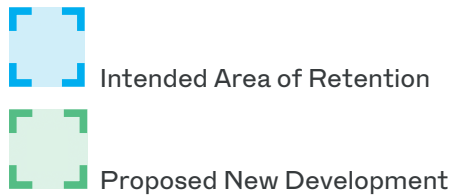
- 10. Considered re-imagination of this industrial space as Community, Cultural & Arts space / a focal point of the scheme.

Retention & renovation of retained Ancillary Buildings

- 11. Existing glass-roofed space to be retained.
- 13. Courtyard retained.

New development

- 14. Original five-bay facade to Prince's Street North retained as part of proposed development.
- 15. Commercial / Cafe / Restaurant unit to Prince's Street North to activate corner and increase pedestrian footfall.



GPO PRINCE'S STREET NORTH PROPOSED NEW BUILD STUDENT ACCOMMODATION THE PRINTING HALL WORKSHOP INDEPENDENT HOUSE MIDDLE ABBEY STREET