UCL

New Student Centre

Design and Access Statement

June 2015

Nicholas Hare **Architects**

UCL - New Student Centre

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Note: this report has been formatted as a double-sided A3 document.

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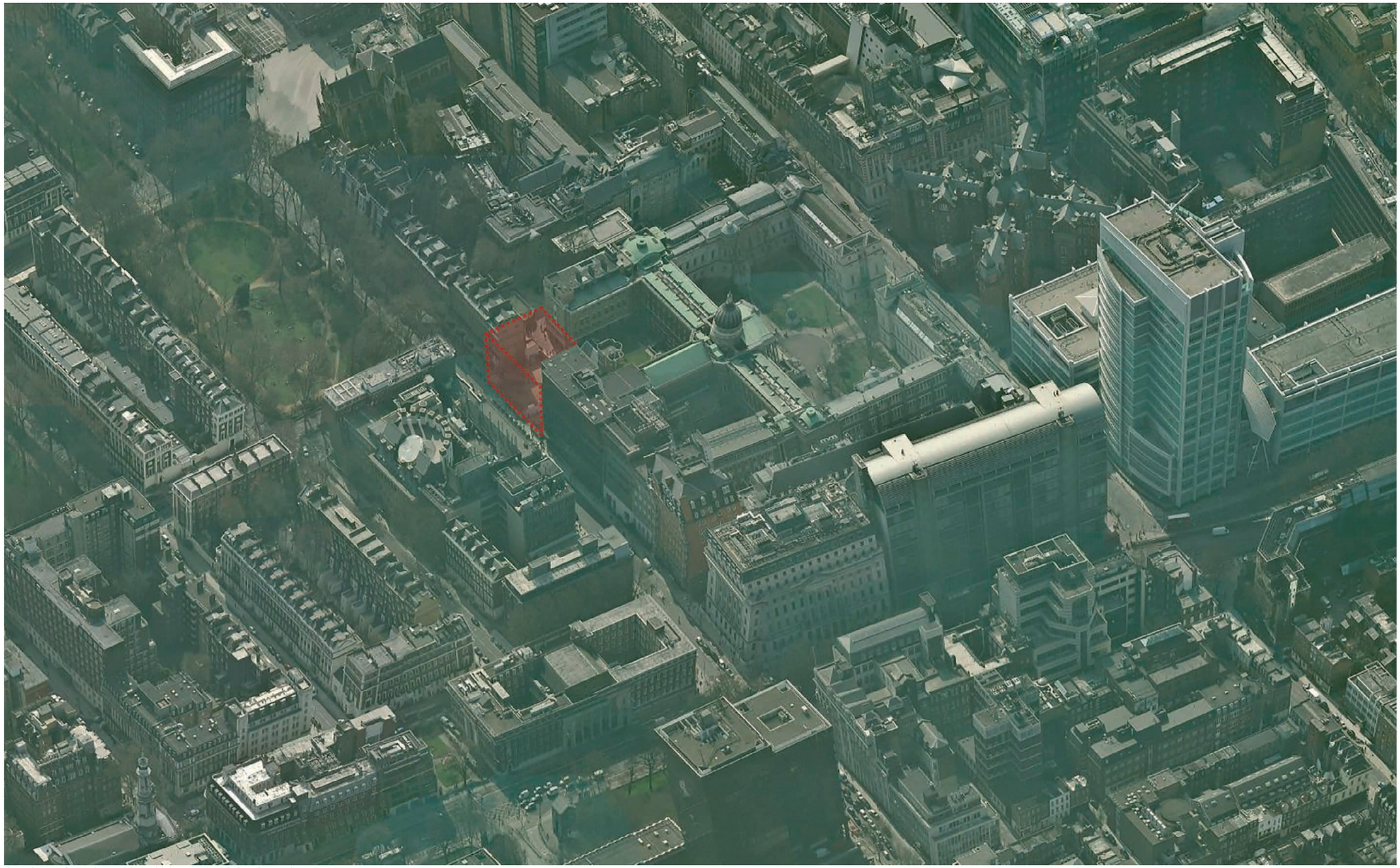


Aerial view from the north with the site highlighted in red

1. INTRODUCTION

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

"The vision is to make UCL the most exciting university in the world at which to study and work. UCL aims to be the UK's leading outward-looking university, making a major contribution to the society in which we function and enhancing the lives of our students. The New Student Centre must support and reflect this scale of ambition and will be the benchmark for excellence for all future UCL construction projects and it should have the highest design, quality, sustainability and procurement approach. It should enhance the student experience and create a new and exciting student experience at UCL. The design must be sensitive to the surrounding built environment, in particular the adjacent listed buildings and Bloomsbury Conservation Area, while staying true to the ambition of UCL to create a 'landmark' building and be London's Global University."

Extract from UCL's New Student Centre project description

This report sets out the basis of the design strategy for the New Student Centre, developed following the selection of Nicholas Hare Architects (NHA) to lead the design of the project. NHA's work commenced in early September 2014. The development by others of a previous scheme for a building on the site has led to a good understanding of the objectives and opportunities. Better strategic definition for the project has now developed; the design team and UCL have established a clear brief and a design approach that aims to create an outstanding New Student Centre on the site.

The purpose of a Design and Access Statement is to set out the thinking that has resulted in the design submitted in the planning application. It explains how the building's massing, layout and appearance has developed in response to the demands of its particular context and brief, and how the resulting building will be easy to use and navigate by everyone.

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in accordance with CABE guidance, both in terms of its structure and in reflecting CABE's feedback in the development of the design.

2. SITE CONTEXT - THE BLOOMSBURY MASTERPLAN

THE UCL MASTERPLAN

In 2011 UCL commissioned a masterplan for its Bloomsbury Campus that aims to shape the development of the university's academic, social and urban environment.

The development of the Student Centre design has been informed by the key objectives of this masterplan:

- To improve the quality, range and flexibility of the facilities and learning spaces on offer.
- To reflect the outstanding academic record of UCL through the quality of its built environment.
- To raise the public visibility of the University by means of buildings that more obviously communicate the activities undertaken within.
- To enhance the day-to-day experience of the University's public realm, increasing the permeability of the campus.

The UCL masterplan identifies a number of particular challenges for Gordon Street. These are summarised below:

- Lack of UCL identity;
- Little physical or visual interaction between buildings and street, with blank facades and limited street entrances;
- Lack of connection with other parts of the campus;
- Low-rise and empty sites forming a break to the street façade and undermining the high-density development of the rest of the street; and
- Low-quality appearance by comparison to the rest of the Bloomsbury campus.

The Bloomsbury Masterplan identifies the site between 26 Gordon Square and 15 Gordon Street for a New Student Centre. The delivery of this project is central to delivering the Masterplan vision.

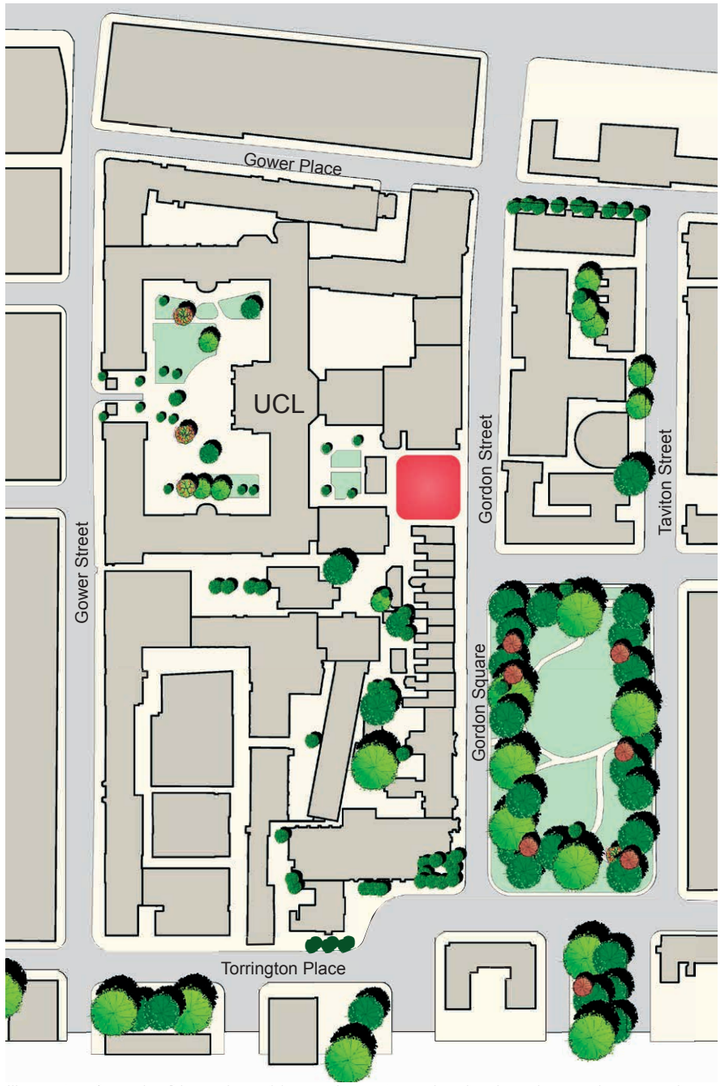


Illustration from the Bloomsbury Masterplan - site to be developed extends across the Japanese Garden and includes the ACBE plantroom and Bloomsbury 'Node'

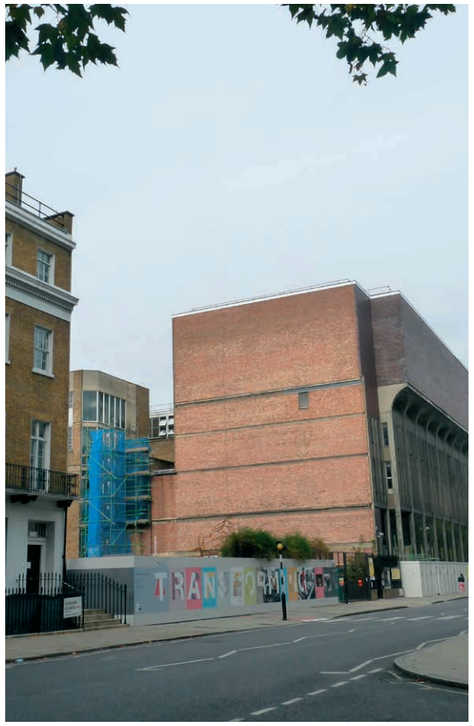
PLANNING CONTEXT

The site is located at the heart of the UCL Bloomsbury Campus, adjacent to the Bloomsbury Theatre and the Wilkins Building. The site is vacant, having been cleared following bomb damage during the Second World War. An east-west access route from Gordon Street to Gower Street runs through the site, along with a north-south route connecting a number of UCL departments.

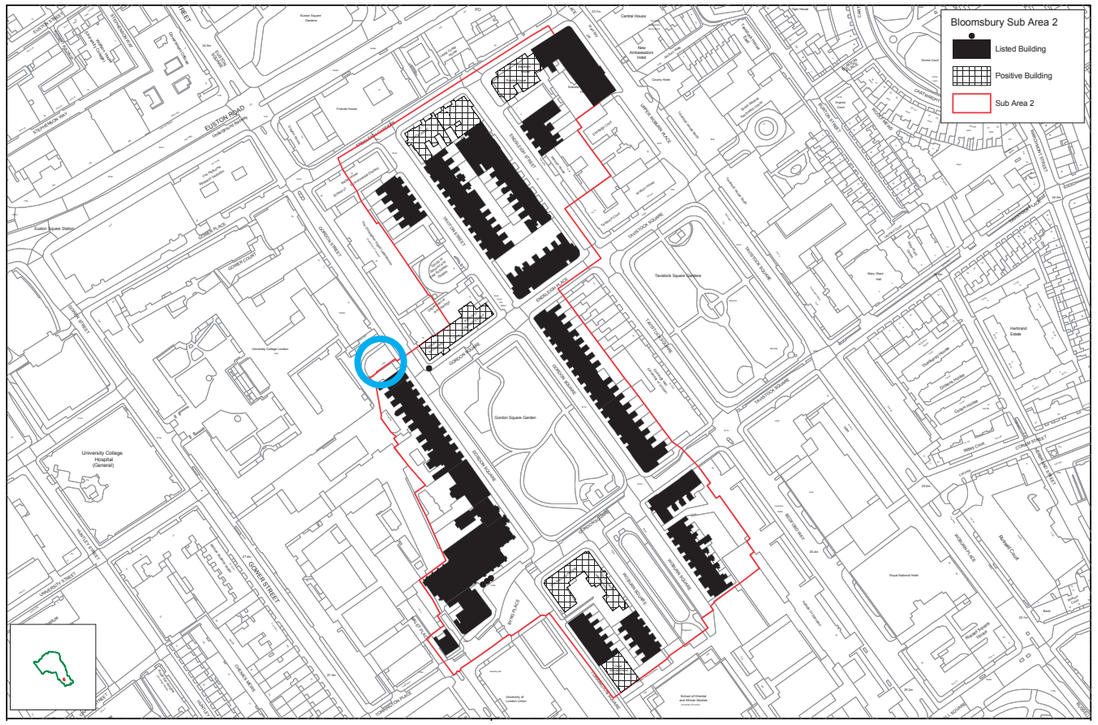
The site has been allocated for development for university, education, cultural and/or community related ancillary uses in the adopted version of the Site Allocations DPD (SADPD). The full site allocation (Site 22) states that development will be expected to:

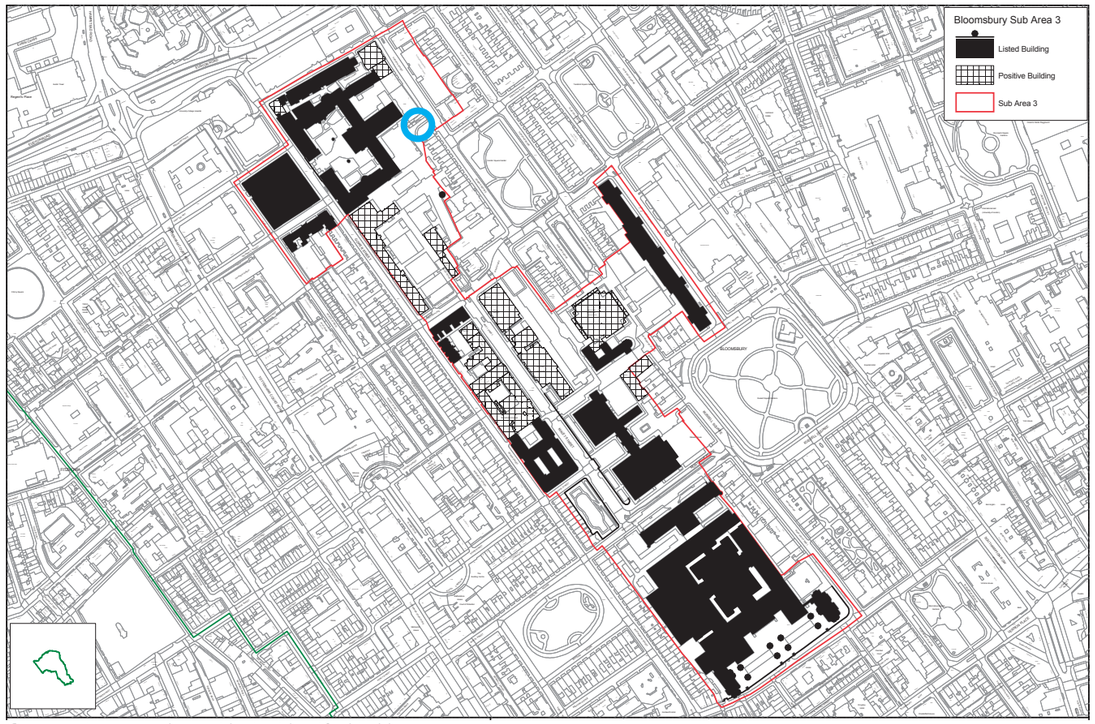
- Integrate development with associated development and improvements within and adjoining the UCL campus and assist providing a more legible entrance to UCL;
- Create an improved pedestrian entrance into the university campus;
- Support opportunities for activities and spaces encouraging public access;
- Safeguard the setting of nearby listed buildings;
- Provide infrastructure for supporting local energy generation on site and/or connections to existing or future networks where feasible; and
- Safeguard the future construction of the Chelsea-Hackney line.

There are two recent planning permissions for the site. In 2004, permission was granted (2004/4090/P) for the erection of a six-storey infill building with three basement levels to provide a museum gallery, lecture theatres and associated facilities for UCL. In 2006, a revised planning application (2006/2435/P) was granted permission, which approved design changes to the external envelope, additional bulk at roof level and the inclusion of a chimney. Both permissions have been implemented through minor works and demolition on site. Another scheme for the site was developed in 2012-2013 but was not progressed to a planning application.



Photos looking towards the site





Conservation area plans with site identified in blue

The site is in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and is in the Background Assessment Area of the Greenwich Park Wolfe statue to St Paul's Cathedral Strategic Viewing Corridor. However, any development on site will be below the height threshold of the strategic view due to townscape and heritage issues.

The site is located in Sub Area 3 of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and borders Sub Area 2. To the south, the terraces at No.s 1-26 Gordon Square are Grade II listed, while to the west, the Wilkins Building dates from shortly after the founding of UCL and is Grade I listed. The adjacent Institute of Archaeology Building on Gordon Street is identified as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

At the north-west corner of the site there is a 1960s brutalist tower known as the 'Node', containing stairs, toilets and plant for the Bloomsbury Theatre. Planning permission has recently been granted for the construction of a new plant enclosure on the roof of the Theatre (application reference 2015/1262/P). This will enable the 'Node' tower to be demolished and the plant it contains to be relocated, thus freeing up this portion of the site.

View of the New Student Centre across Gordon Square

3. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATIONS

Public displays
There have been two public exhibitions held in the Wilkins Terrace Cloisters, in March 2015 in the South Cloister, and in May 2015 in the North Cloister. The team displayed plans and images of the proposals and received useful and encouraging feedback from staff and students at both sessions.

UCL users
The design has been developed through a regular and constructive series of workshop, review and reporting sessions with representatives of Learning Environments and Student Services. A series of precedent visits has also been undertaken to help establish shared aspirations for the building.

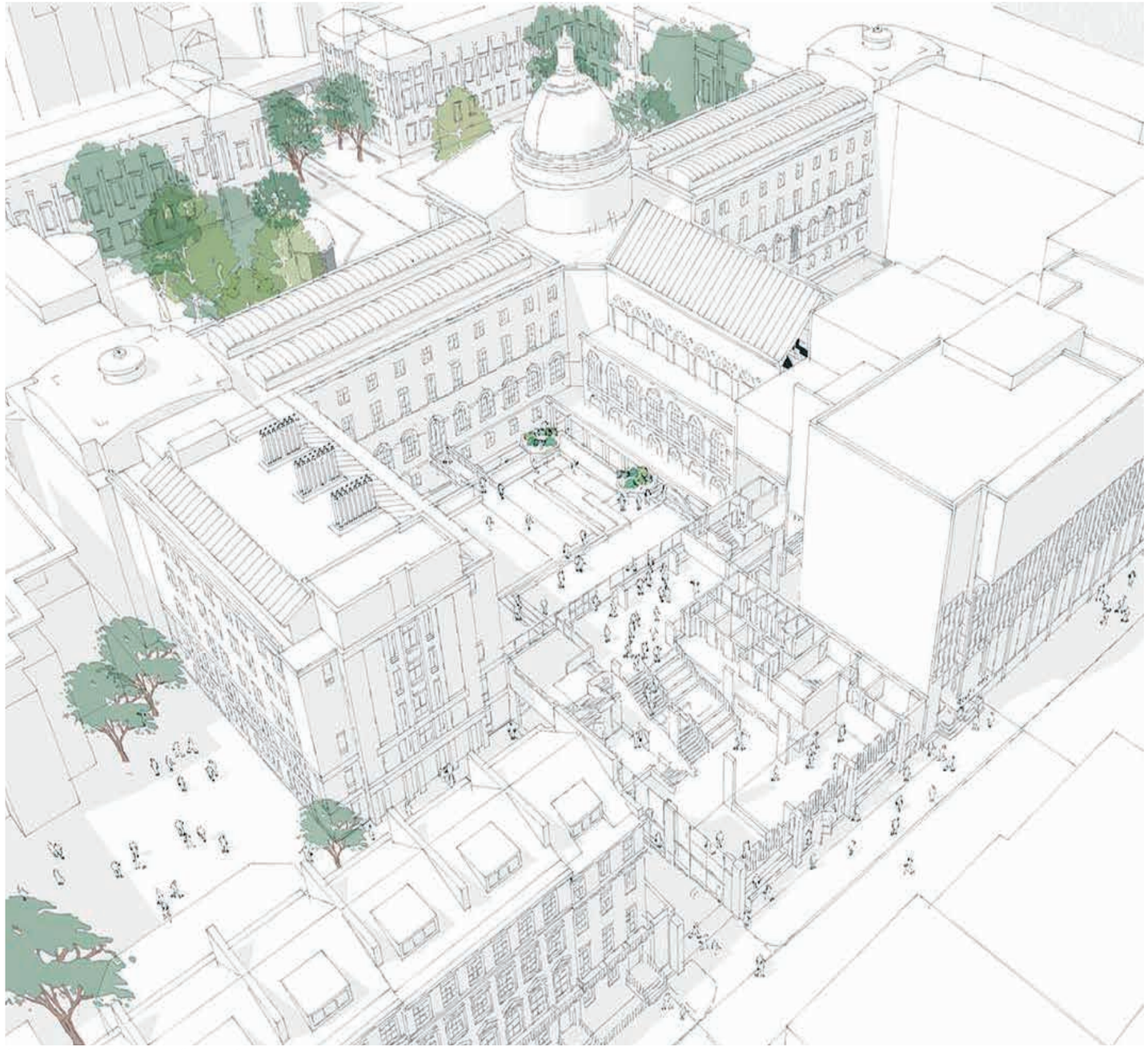
UCL stakeholders
Consultations have continued with representatives of neighbouring buildings, including the Bernard Katz Building, ACBE, Bloomsbury Theatre and the gym, together with teams dealing with other UCL campus projects which may affect or be affected by the project objectives.

There have also been a number of consultations with key UCL stakeholders with an interest in either the operation and / or maintenance of the building. These include sustainability, security, catering, EM&I, fire safety, Central Campus, accessibility, maintenance and window cleaning.

Public organisations
The following meetings have taken place with the Local Planning Authority and associated public organisations:
- London Borough of Camden Planning (LBC) (Pre-application meetings held in December 2014, March 2015 and April 2015)
- LBC Highways (January and February 2015)
- LBC Access (April and May 2015)
- LBC Sustainability (April 2015)
- Historic England (January and April 2015)
- Bloomsbury CAAC (February and May 2015)
- CABE (March 2015)
- Metropolitan Police (May 2015)

Several key points emerged as a result of these consultations, which have informed the development of the design from its earliest stages:

- The location of this building within the unique townscape of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area demands architecture of the highest quality.
- It is critical to provide clear links through the building from Gordon Street to the courtyard, with a strong sense of permeability through the site.
- The design of the east elevation and the planning of the internal spaces beyond should work to enhance the animation of Gordon Street.
- It is important that the main building entrance and the adjacent vehicle portal are welcoming and appropriate in scale.
- The resolution of the junction with 26 Gordon Square should be carefully considered to enhance the views from the south and across the Square
- The landscaping of the Japanese Garden should aim to create a green, unique and contemplative oasis in the heart of the campus.
- Well thought out junctions with existing buildings are required to form a strong and coherent whole to the elevation facing the Japanese Garden, and the use of a colonnade or cloister should be explored in this area.
- Plant at roof level should be minimised, though adding interest to the roofscape through the massing at roof level is welcomed.
- There is an opportunity to add attractive and useful open space at roof level.
- A strong focus on sustainability should be maintained, though the detailed design of shading devices should ensure bright, airy spaces are not compromised by overheating.
- It is desirable to demolish the 'Node' if the plant it contains can be relocated unobtrusively.



Cut-away view of the New Student Centre in context

4. THE BRIEF

THE ASPIRATIONAL BRIEF

"This is a unique opportunity for UCL to demonstrate its core values. The building should be truly student focused, responsive to change, inspirational and enabling, capable of reinventing itself as trends in education develop, accessible and inclusive to all, and reflecting the diversity of its users. It is not a building that people should be in awe of but want to be part of – the architecture should be easy to read and use, memorable by the experience that it provides. It should be an exemplar for other universities worldwide."

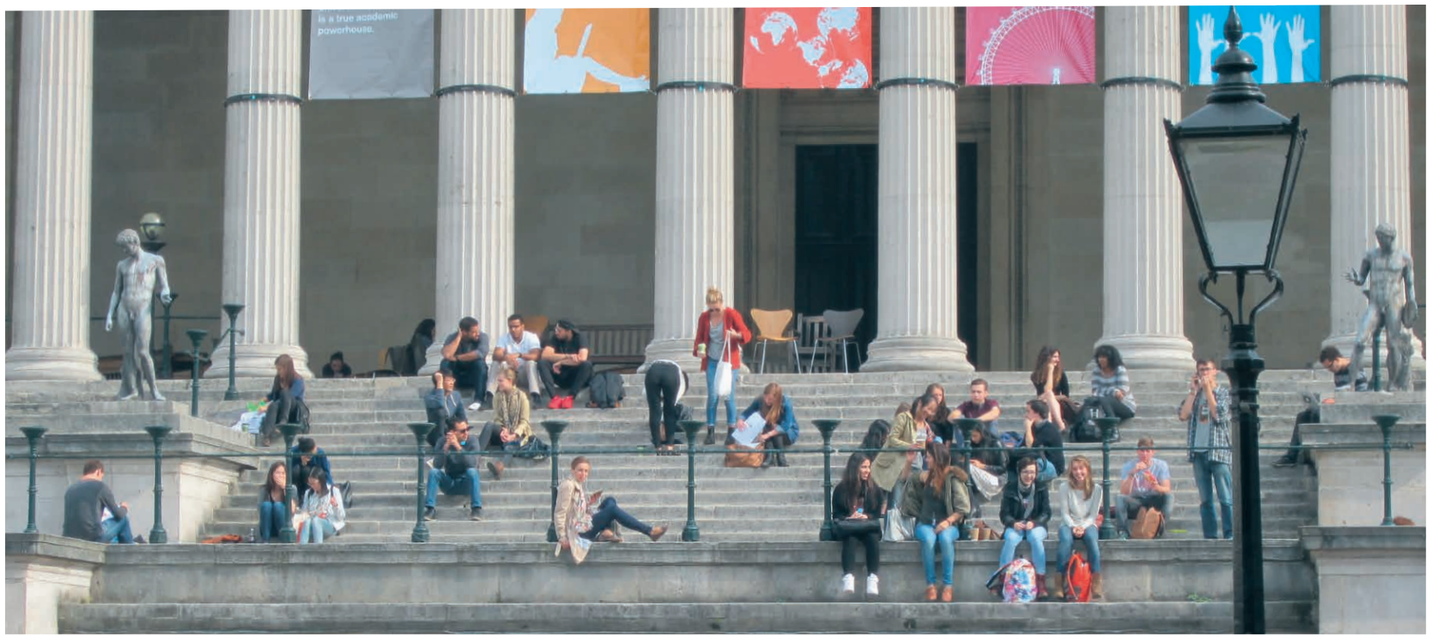
"The building must be of the highest quality finish, focusing on longevity (both durable, timeless and with careful management with regard to acoustics) and ease of maintenance. It is to be an intensively used environment that will have a lot of scene changes. The infrastructure must be planned to provide technology, AV and power / data with ease and reliability and high standards of acoustic performance are essential. The Environmental Strategy should reflect the range of capacities that the building will accommodate through an academic year / day and demonstrate latest thinking in resource efficiency and promotion of sustainable behaviours through the design."

Extracts from UCL's New Student Centre project description

The New Student Centre project demonstrates UCL's commitment to students, providing outstanding facilities that enhance the student experience. The brief has developed out of the work previously undertaken by UCL for a building on the site, and calls for a highly sustainable new building that is distinctive, with exceptional design quality, reflecting UCL's global significance whilst not appearing elitist. It should be a building that is accessible, inclusive, and welcoming.

BUILDING FUNCTION

In essence, the purpose of the building is to provide two core functions: student learning environments, and a Student Enquiries Centre, both of which will enhance the student experience at UCL.



Learning environments

UCL has a pressing need for new student study spaces, and this is supported by data collated by UCL Library Services, UCL Information Services Department (ISD), and from the National Student Survey. Students describe UCL's learning spaces as inadequate, along with identifying dissatisfaction at IT provision, and a lack of access to computers.

The New Student Centre will help rebalance these perceived issues, through providing a variety of learning spaces: 1000no. new 'seats' for studying is the stated aim. The spaces vary in character and size, creating different settings for individual study and group collaboration, as well as more social learning environments. Dedicated to the needs of the students, these are spaces and furniture solutions that are flexible, adaptable, and IT resourced, with effective power provision. The learning environments occupy the largest portion of the new building's area.

Student Enquiries Centre

Operated by a team of UCL Student and Registry Services (SRS) staff, the Student Enquiries Centre has a 'customer-facing' service desk providing a comprehensive enquiry point for students. The team of up to 20 staff operate between the front desk and a 'back-office' area dealing with phone / email enquiries. Co-located with the enquiries centre are a number of small consultation rooms for more private discussions, as well as an area dedicated to self-service and information points.

Other brief requirements

In addition to and supporting these two core functions, the following spaces and requirements also form part of the brief for the building:

- A welcoming reception point for students, the public and visitors, combined with a security presence.
- A lightly serviced café, essentially providing coffee and sandwiches.
- A Quiet Contemplation Room/Multi-faith Centre - a flexible space for prayer and meditation, including chaplaincy and pastoral support.
- Space for displays and pop-up exhibitions, ideally forming part of the publically accessible spaces at ground level.
- Cycle storage and associated facilities.
- Staff support facilities.
- Storage for laptops and personal belongings at each level.
- Waste and recycling facilities.

ACCESS

As stated in the UCL masterplan, a key objective for this scheme is to improve and encourage access through the site to the wider campus beyond. The ground floor levels are completely open to the general public as well as students, with security barriers only restricting access to upper and basement levels. Good levels of daylight and transparency throughout will help those unfamiliar with the building to find their way around, and all appropriate measures have been taken to ensure those with disabilities can make full use of the facilities.

Consideration has been given to access for deliveries and emergency services, as well as accommodating pedestrian and vehicular traffic flows.

The means by which the design aims to accommodate these requirements are described in more detail within the Access Statement on p43.

View of fourth floor study space looking west

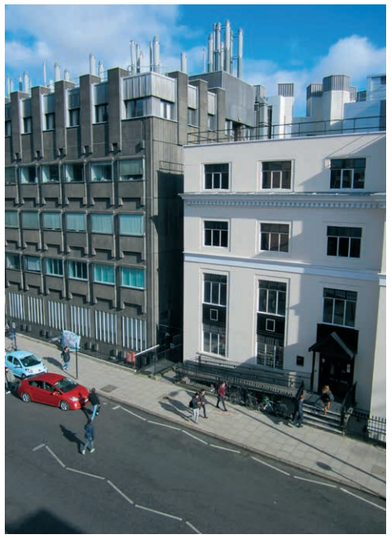
5. SITE CONTEXT

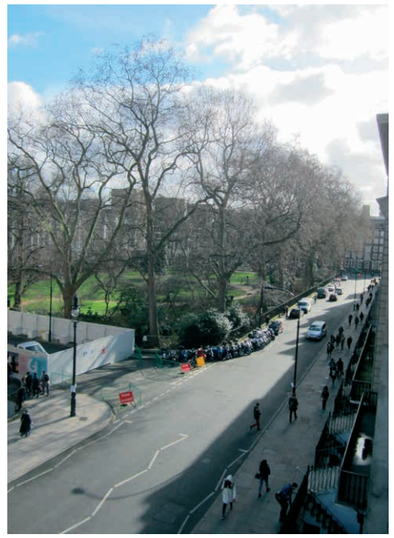
CONSERVATION AREA CONTEXT

The site is a largely vacant plot on Gordon Street, between 26 Gordon Square and the Bloomsbury Theatre. The site is defined by Gordon Street to the east, the Bloomsbury Theatre to the north, the Japanese Garden and Bernard Katz Building to the west, and Grade II listed terraced houses from the 1800s to the south. The Grade I listed Wilkins Building sits to the west, flanking two sides of the Japanese Garden. All of the buildings directly adjacent to the site are owned by UCL.

The urban landscape of this part of Gordon Street varies. The 1960's Bloomsbury Theatre dominates with the imposing bulk of its attic story, partnered by the robustness of UCL's concrete Chemistry building on the other side of the road, built around the same time. Further north, the screened façade to the London Centre for Nanotechnology offers a similar scale.

Further south, the listed terraces on Gordon Square offer something more refined in scale, establishing a sense of engagement through their articulation. The site for the New Student Centre currently provides the punctuation between these contrasting styles and scales, giving an opportunity to create something unique, distinctive, rich and rewarding, a building that engages with the street and the public, reflecting its point of interplay between UCL and the world.





THE SITE

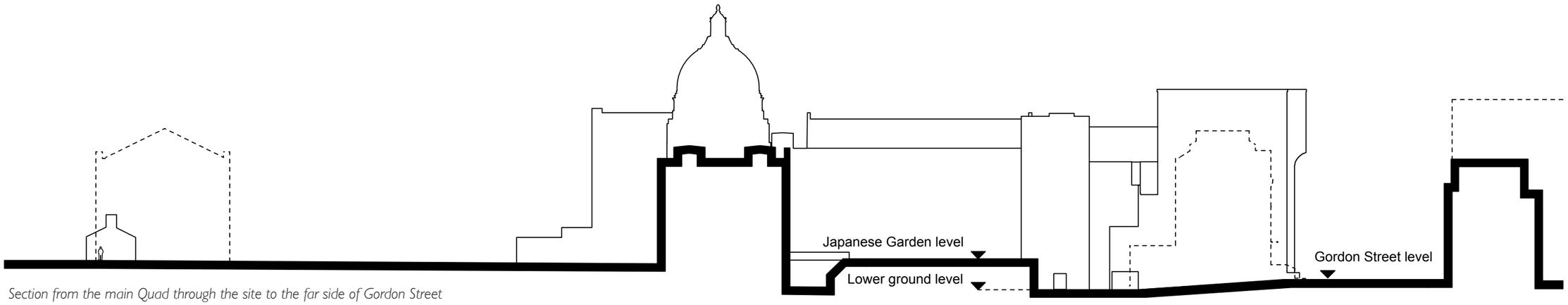
The site is a portal to UCL's Bloomsbury campus. It provides an essential and busy access point for pedestrians, emergency services, and deliveries. The new building must be fully accessible and continue to meet these circulation demands: these include primary routes into and through the new building at the Gordon Street entrance, and by the Bernard Katz Building, and essential connections through to the refectory and the lower ground floor of the Wilkins Building. In addition, the new building will establish a direct route to the Japanese Garden and the Wilkins Building ground floor.

The Gordon Street entrance sits at approximately 1.5m above the level of the Bernard Katz Building entrance and Wilkins Building lower ground floor, and approximately 2.5m below the level of the Japanese Garden.

The 'Node' (the Bloomsbury Theatre stair tower) currently stands behind the Bloomsbury Theatre, abutting the Japanese Garden. It contains stairs, WCs and servicing plant for the theatre. However this structure presents significant functional and aesthetic challenges for the development of the campus as a whole, and the design for the New Student Centre in particular. This being the case, it is proposed that it should be demolished.

The project scope includes re-inventing the landscape of the Japanese Garden. The eastern section of this courtyard space is currently occupied by the ACBE plant room, a pitched-roofed single-storey building containing air-conditioning plant to serve the laboratory spaces beneath. Any new link between Gordon Street and the Japanese Garden would be greatly impeded by this structure, and thus it is proposed that it is also demolished with the plant it contains relocated to the basement of the New Student Centre.

The proposed demolition of these two buildings is described in further detail in section 8.



Section from the main Quad through the site to the far side of Gordon Street

6. INITIAL RESPONSE TO THE SITE

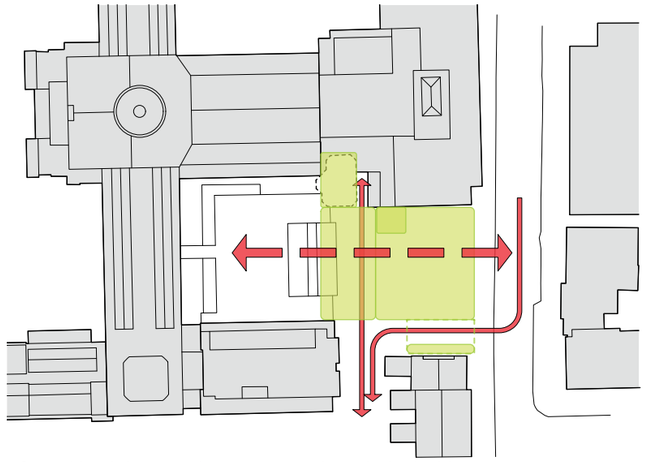
The building is intended to be inviting, legible and publicly accessible at its ground floor levels, encouraging people to enter without feeling constrained. Transparency and openness aid navigation and orientation, and generous space at the street and garden entrances will maximise the sense of welcome and accessibility.

Strategically, the levels of Gordon Street and the Japanese Garden extend into the central part of the building, the levels brought together with wide central steps that correspond to the Wilkins Building steps in the Main Quad. A direct and covered connection to the Lower Refectory becomes possible beneath the higher Japanese Garden level slab. The existing vehicle route to South Quad needs to be maintained for both daily deliveries and emergency vehicle access; this is most sensibly located to the south of the site.

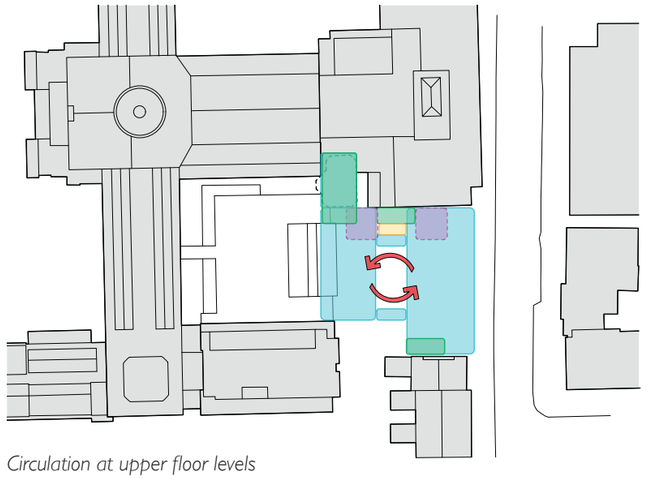
Analysis of the listed terrace elevations to Gordon Square acknowledges a vertical rhythm of grids at approximately 7m centres corresponding to building widths. By coincidence perhaps this pattern continues and aligns with the building grid of the Wilkins Terrace façade to the Japanese Garden behind. This suggests a composition for the New Student Centre elevation that recognises and continues the rhythm, and leads to a structural grid with four large bays of around 7m and a smaller bay of around half the width.

Internally, the building comprises two floor plates separated by a day-lit atrium rising for the height of the building, with bridges and stairs spiralling around the atrium and animating the space. The main core (including three passenger lifts) stacks vertically on the north side against the Bloomsbury Theatre.

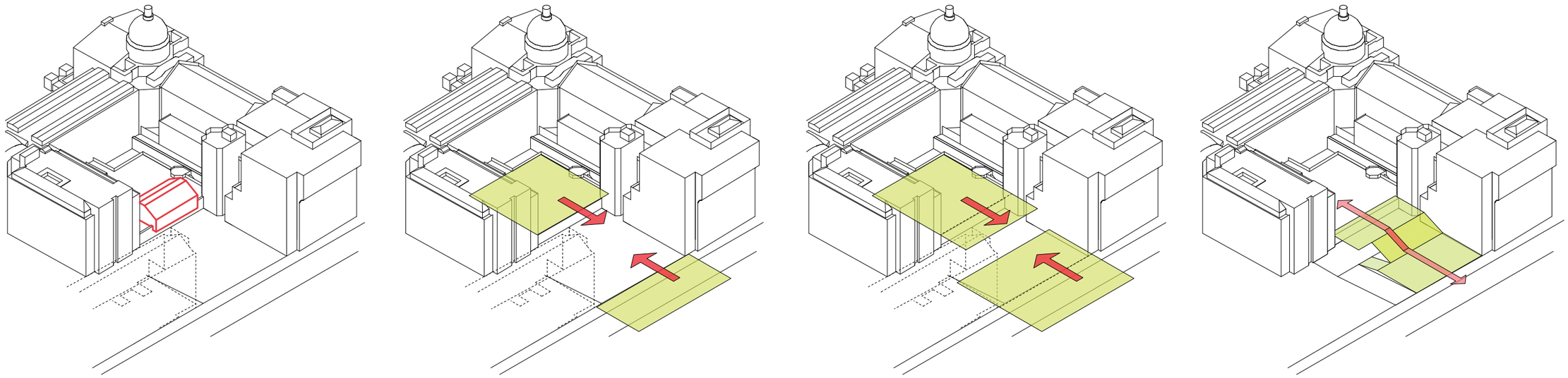
Working with the scale of neighbouring buildings, the New Student Centre has four floors of accommodation above ground level. It provides a refined 'book-end' for the adjacent listed terraced houses on Gordon Street, but remains visually lower than the Bloomsbury Theatre to the north. The building's height is set by generous floor-to-floor heights of 3.9m, providing the basis for creating pleasant studying environments and allowing good daylight penetration, as well as giving good adaptability for future changes in use.



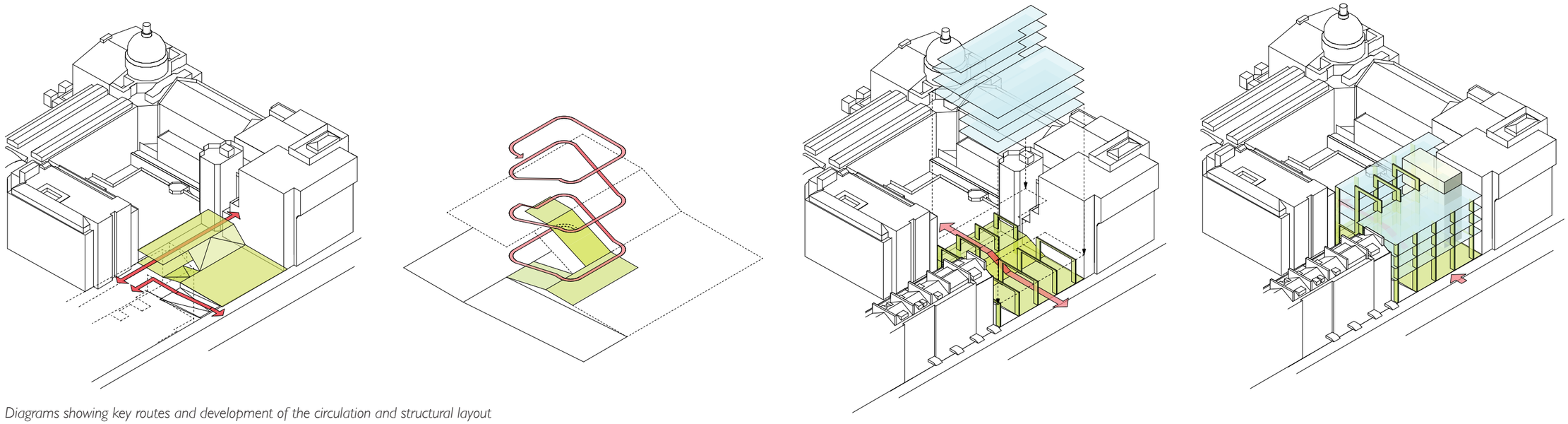
Ground level diagram showing routes through the building



Circulation at upper floor levels

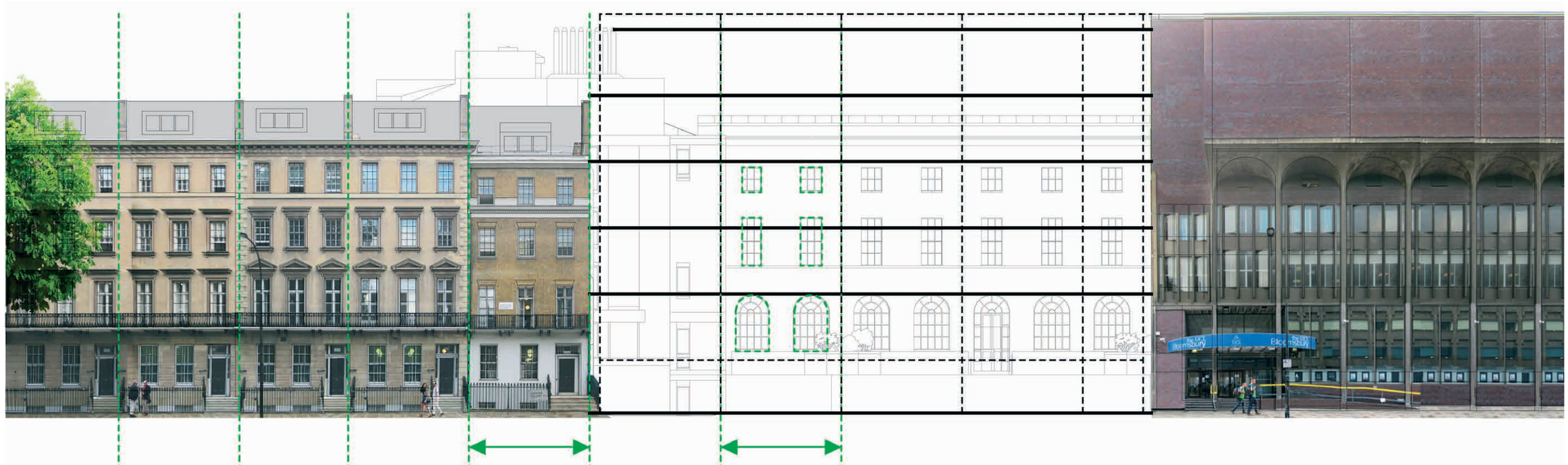


Diagrams showing the forming of the ground floor by extending the Gordon Street and Japanese Garden levels into the site

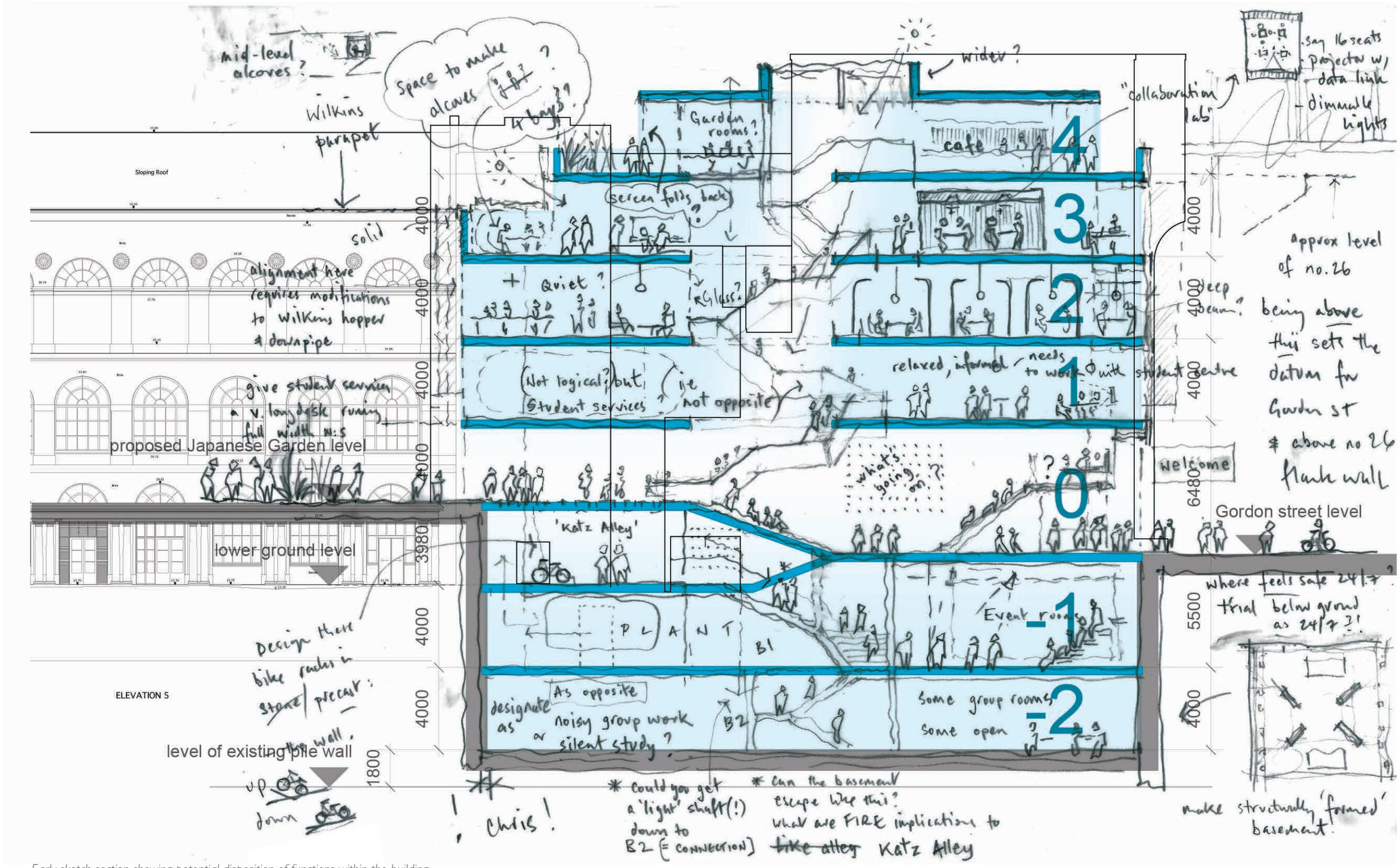


Diagrams showing key routes and development of the circulation and structural layout

Developmental sketches and study of indicative building volume



Gordon Street elevation study



Early sketch section showing potential disposition of functions within the building

7. PROPOSALS

USE AND AMOUNT

Site area: **0.26 hectares**

Existing floorspace: ACBE plantroom = 171m²
Node stairs, circulation, toilets & plant = 315m²
Substation adjacent to Theatre = 13m²
Total = 499m²

Total proposed GEA: **6,794m²**

Total proposed GIA: **5,838m²**

The table below sets out the proposed net internal floorspace at each level.

	Study space & main circulaton areas (m²)	Core areas, plant, WCs, lifts & escape stairs (m²)	Staff areas (m²)	Other (m²)	Total (m²)
Basement 2	68	409		134 (QCR)	611
Basement 1	290	317	26		633
Street level	326	185	10		521
Garden level	217	177			394
1st floor	210	195	17	294 (Student Enquiries Centre)	716
2nd floor	557	150			707
3rd floor	402	177		71 (Cafe)	650
4th floor	316	156			472
Total net area	2,386	1,766	53	499	**4,704m²**

54no. cycle parking spaces are proposed at Street level.

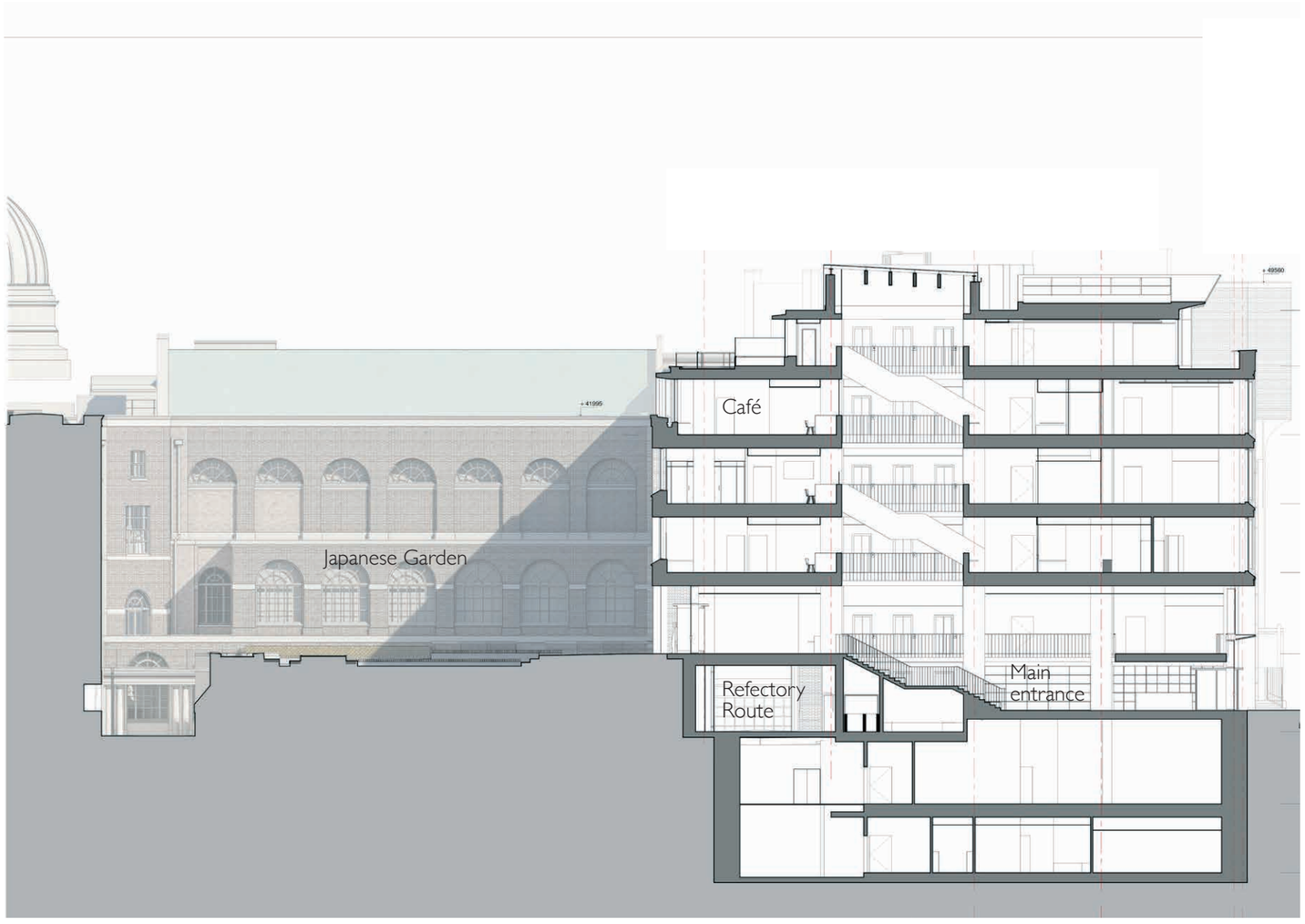
ROUTES AND LEVELS

The routes and changes in level through the ground floors are made easier to navigate by creating lofty day-lit space, the transparency and views through the building offering an extension to the public realm, and giving a sense of engagement with the street. A linear column structure, drawing the eye from Gordon Street to the Japanese Garden, allows the ground floor to feel open and publicly welcoming, the structure supporting the more private UCL learning spaces above.

From the higher Japanese Garden level the steps continue rising to upper floors, establishing a circulation route that spirals up around the day-lit atrium at the heart of the building. The route towards the Bernard Katz Building and the Lower Refectory flows naturally down from the central steps. A platform lift ensures that the three ground floor levels are accessible by all visitors.

Across the Japanese Garden the public route continues over the bridge, into the South Cloister and beyond to the Main Quad.

View from mezzanine level above Gordon Street entrance



Proposed section looking north

EXTERNAL CONNECTIONS

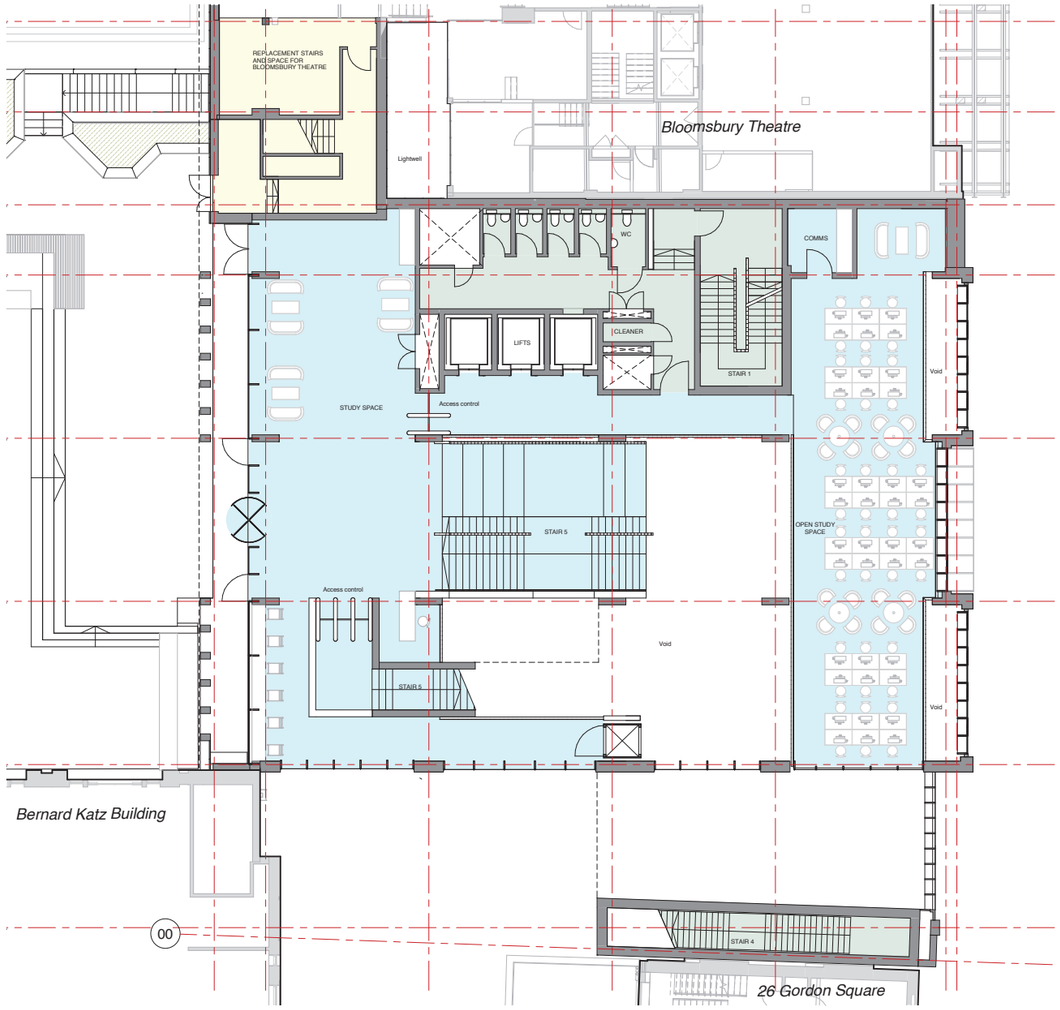
The route for vehicles to gain access to the South Quad is located close to the listed terraces and designed as a pedestrian route bridged over by the upper floors of the new building. Maintaining transparency between this route and the internal ground floor space helps the inclusive sense of pedestrians being part of the building.

Vehicles will use the route only at controlled times, or in emergencies. Sliding security gates on the Gordon Street façade maintain a secure line out-of-hours, and are controlled from a manned security point in the space below the escape stairway alongside the listed terrace party wall. Retractable bollards will also be controlled from the same security point.

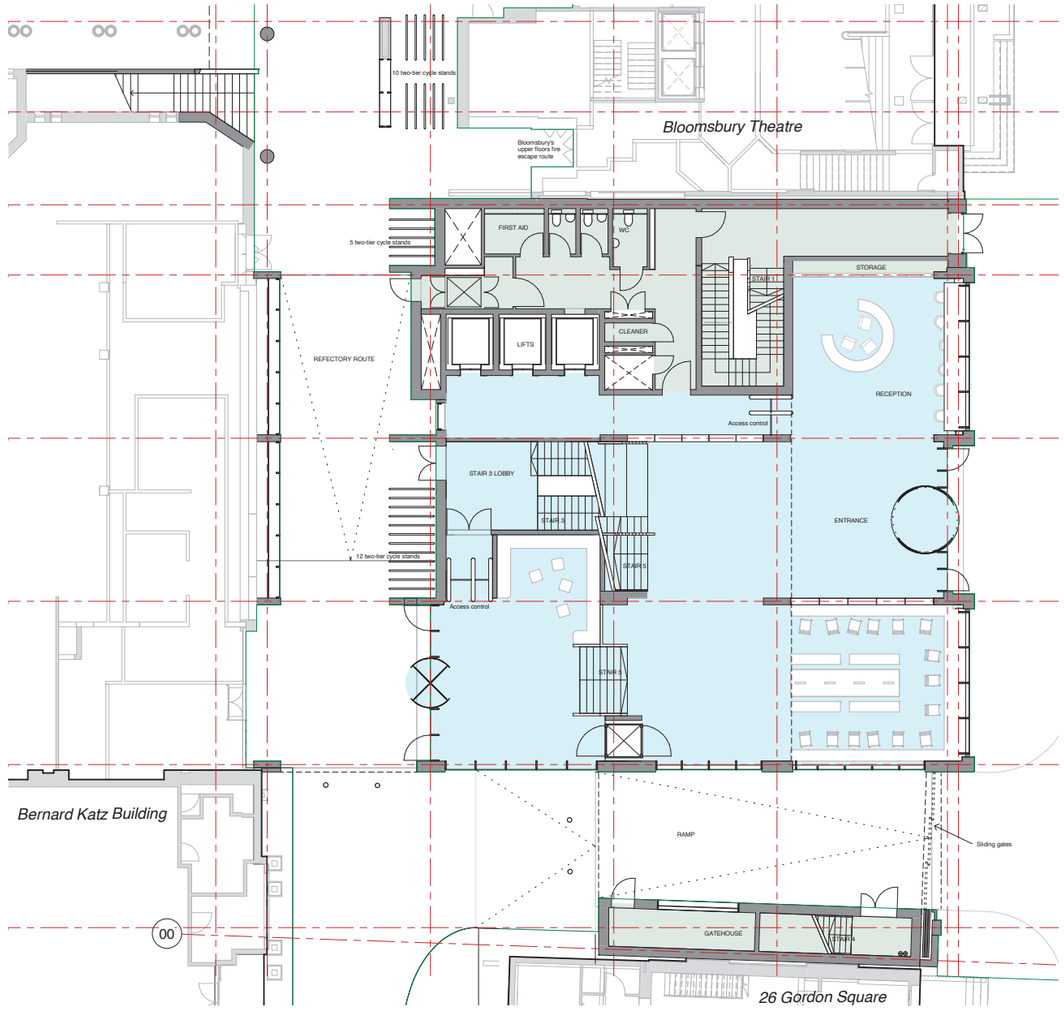
The route between the Bernard Katz Building and the Lower Refectory runs beneath the new building's Japanese Garden entrance level. This undercover route includes a series of lightboxes along its western wall to animate the space and ensure it does not appear as a dark corridor. It is lined with high quality, robust materials, as it will accommodate significant flows of people and deliveries. It is also seen as a practical space for accommodating cycle storage.

View along Refectory Route from future Lower Refectory

Views of sliding security gates: open and closed



Plan at Japanese Garden level



Plan at Gordon Street level

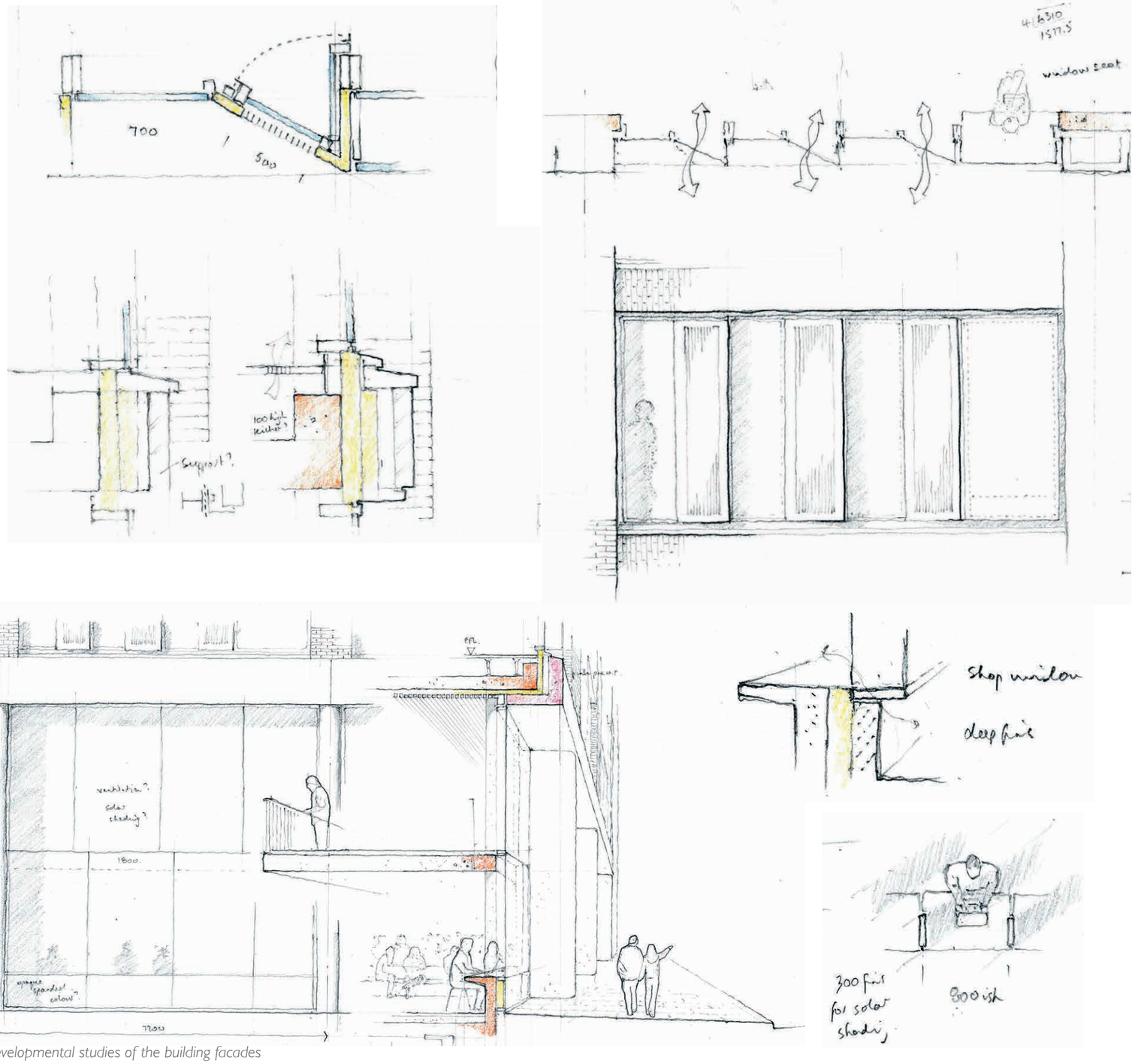
SCALE AND FORM

On Gordon Street, a notional building line is established from the corner of the Bloomsbury Theatre at the north to the corner of 26 Gordon Square to the south, with the elevation to the New Student Centre aligning with the theatre building.

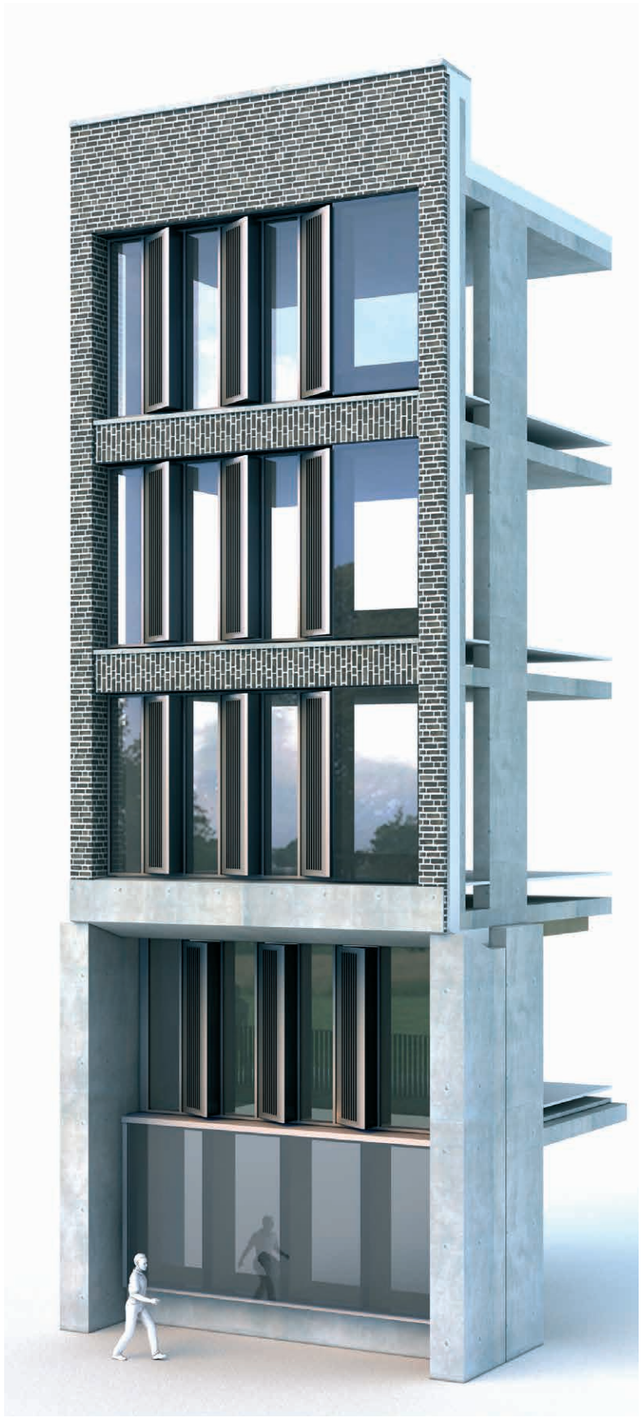
Numerous different arrangements of this fourth bay have been tested as part of the design process: continuing the line of the adjacent three bays; splaying the line of the façade at this point; adding a projecting bay window to the corner. Some of these elevational studies are shown here. It is felt that setting the fourth bay back in line with 26 Gordon Square gives the most successful overall composition and provides a more sensitive junction with the terrace.

Early study model

Options for expressing the bay adjacent to 26 Gordon Square



Developmental studies of the building facades



View from Gordon Square at around midday

Early morning view along Gordon Street from north

At street level the structure establishes a series of framed openings bringing balance and a sense of order and appropriate scale to the street composition. The structural framing to the openings unifies their different functions. Within this framework, three of the four bays are set forward, suggesting some emphasis to the building entrance and shop windows to the UCL campus. The fourth bay, with the pedestrian route into the Campus, steps back and provides a closer alignment with the more diminutive 26 Gordon Square.

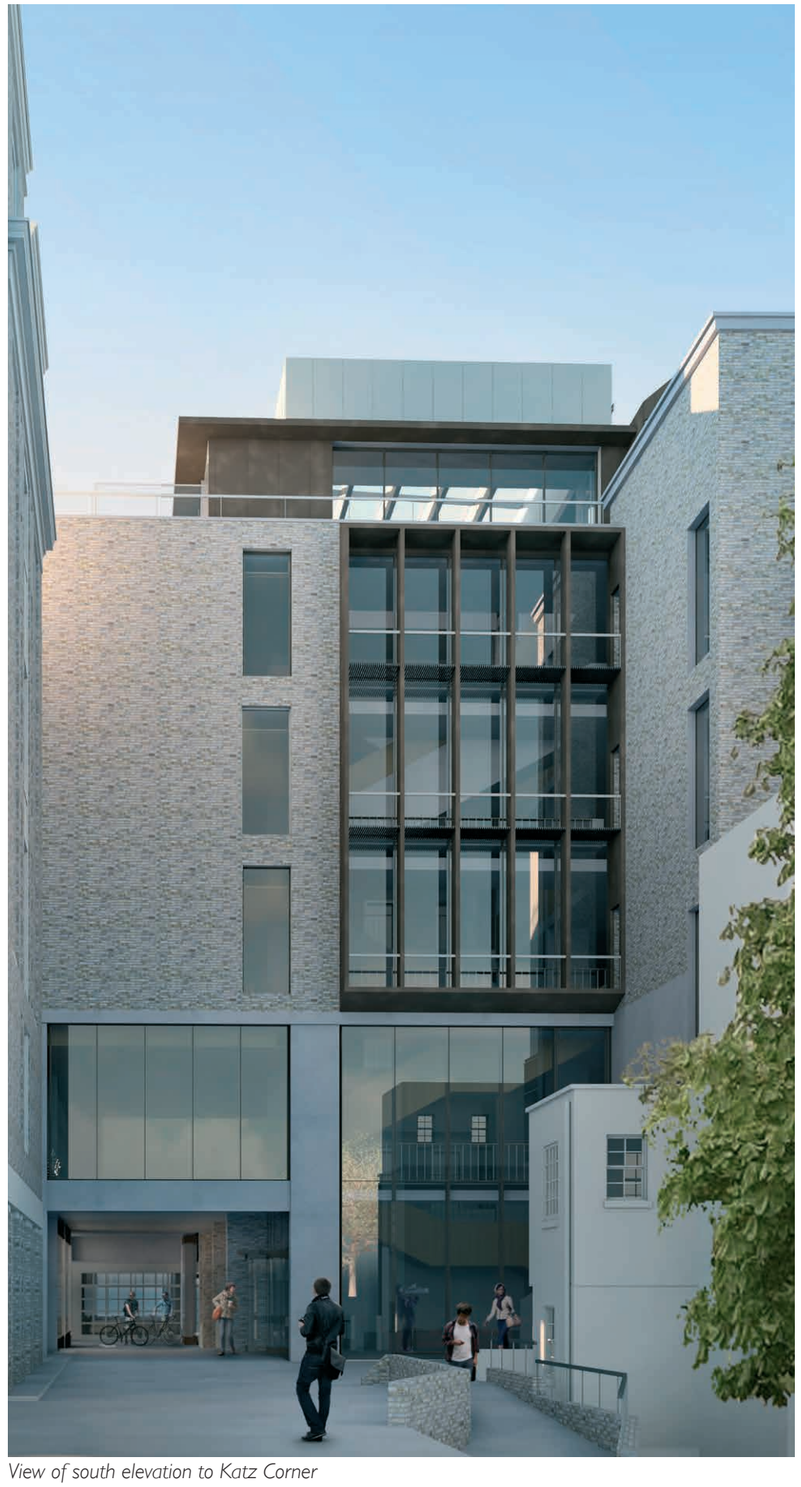
At roof level the fourth floor glazing and modular sloping north light roofs appear as distinct elements behind the main façade line. Viewed from the north, their form appears to echo the rhythm of chimney stacks on the listed terrace buildings facing Gordon Square.

Approaching the New Student Centre from the south, around the corner by the Bernard Katz Building, the building appears its tallest at effectively five storeys in height. Two connections 'through' the building are clearly articulated and defined by the structure: the slope running up to Gordon Street, and a direct route straight ahead towards the Lower Refectory.

From the latter, the entrance into the new building will be immediately apparent, made clear by glazing in the building's flank wall at this ground level. The elevation above is characterised by providing glazing up the height of the atrium, which in turn is protected from solar gain by a robust solar shading screen that also provides access for glass cleaning.

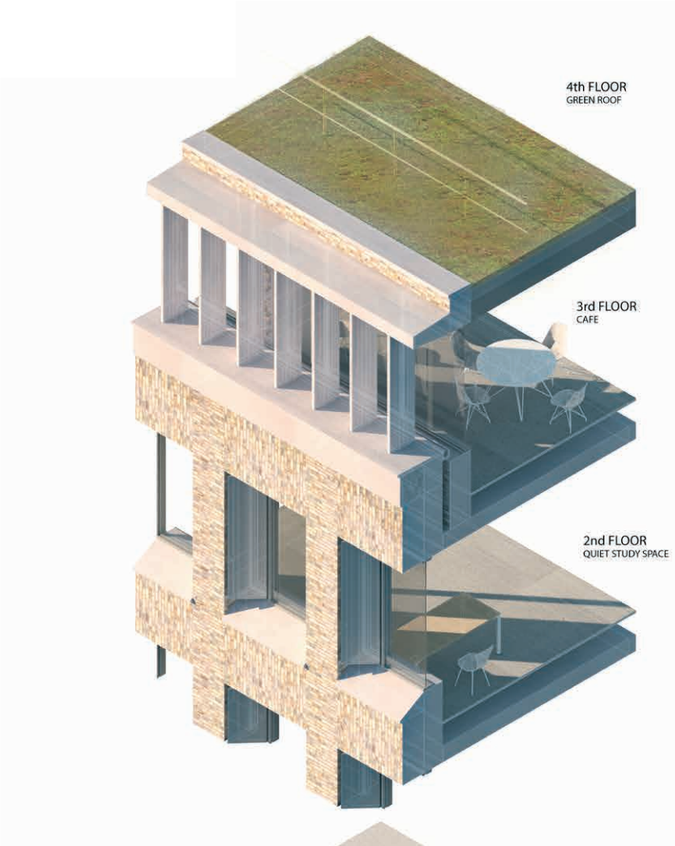
Developmental sketch of the south elevation

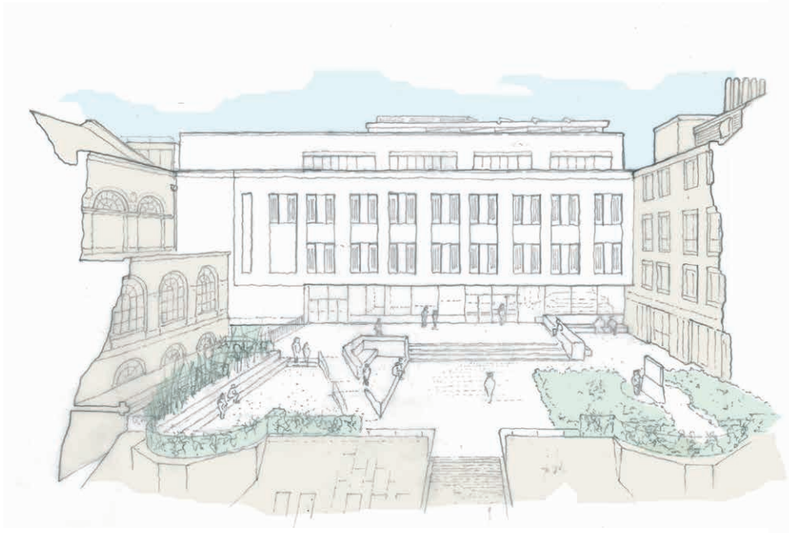
View of Refectory Route from Katz Corner



View of south elevation to Katz Corner

Extending the cornice line through to the Japanese Garden allows the consistent parapet height that already exists around the other three sides to be maintained, providing a sense of unity to the space. This establishes a predominantly three-storey façade, with the third and fourth floor levels above set back from the building line. Looking from the South Cloister the fourth floor façade will not be visible, whilst the elevation at third floor adopts a finer and more delicate approach that sets it clearly apart from the main elevation below. Two storeys of learning space appear to float above a transparent storey at ground level. Here the glass is set back behind a colonnade of reconstituted stone columns that provide shade and some weather protection to the benches lining one side.





Developmental studies for the Japanese Garden

Japanese Garden facade

View of the New Student Centre across the Japanese Garden

ROOFSCAPE

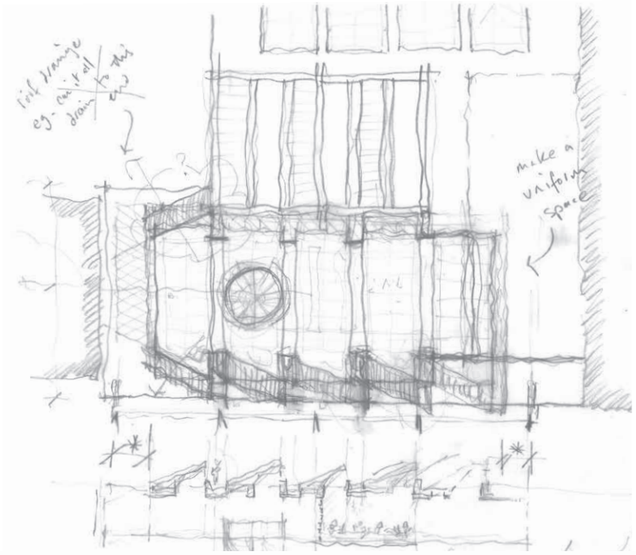
The roof structure is designed to articulate and give a sense of 'lightness' to the building, and bring generous daylight into the top floor space. Above the study space the angled roof planes provide linear north lights with photovoltaic cells attached to their sloping south surface. The atrium adjacent is topped with a monopitch glazed roof, also with integrated photovoltaic cells, these having the added benefit of providing solar shading to the interior.

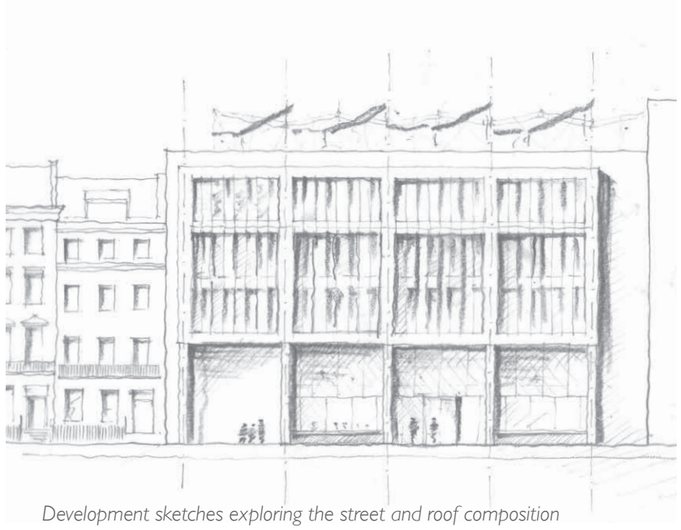
Modulating the line of the façade on the Gordon Street side orientates the top floor space towards the trees of Gordon Square; on the west side, views of the Wilkins Building dome are provided from bay windows with window seats and from the roof terrace proposed at this level.

Beyond the terrace area, and to the east side, are areas of brown / green roof that will enhance biodiversity. It is intended that these areas require very little maintenance.

An external plant enclosure sits immediately above the core. The enclosure is formed with anodised aluminium panels, its height limited to ensure the screen is not visible from the Main Quad. To reduce their visibility, early consultation comments from the planning authority encouraged the design team to relocate the roof level air-handling units that had been proposed at this level. Two new plant decks are now proposed behind the Bloomsbury Theatre for this purpose, with ducted connections to roof level riser openings contained within the plant enclosure.

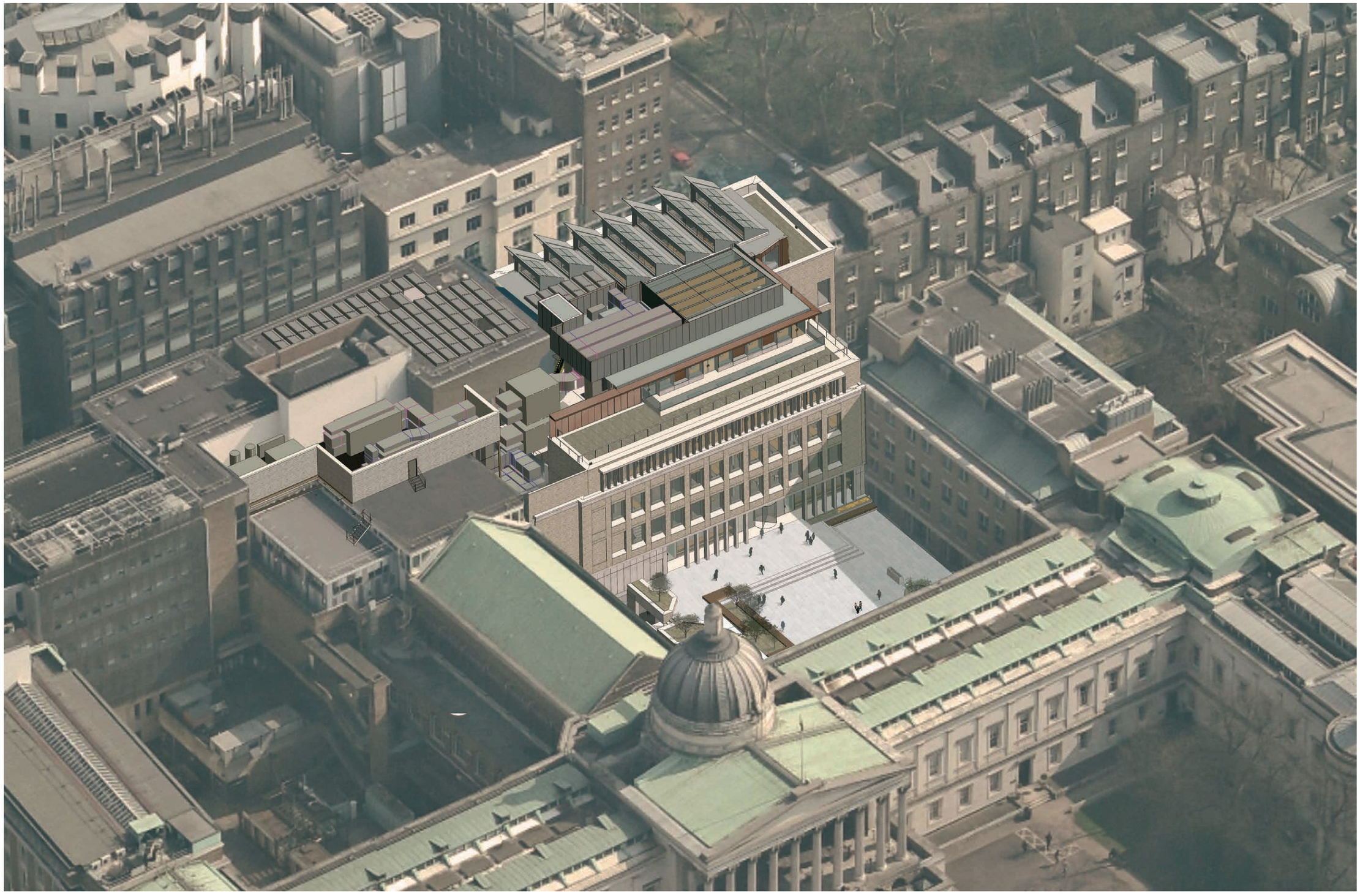
A further array of low profile photovoltaic cells is proposed for the southern end of the Bloomsbury Theatre roof. These will not be visible from street level.



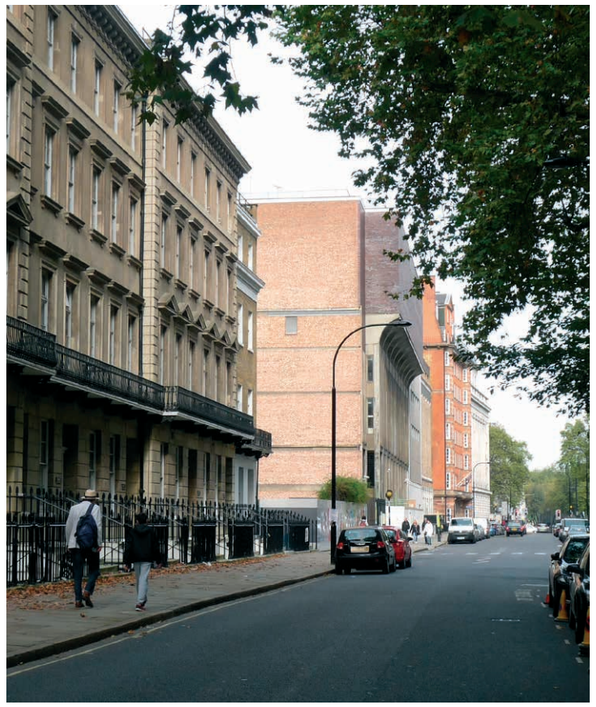


Development sketches exploring the street and roof composition

View looking north with roof terrace



View of New Student Centre montaged onto aerial view, from west



Images of materials found elsewhere around the Bloomsbury Campus

MATERIALS

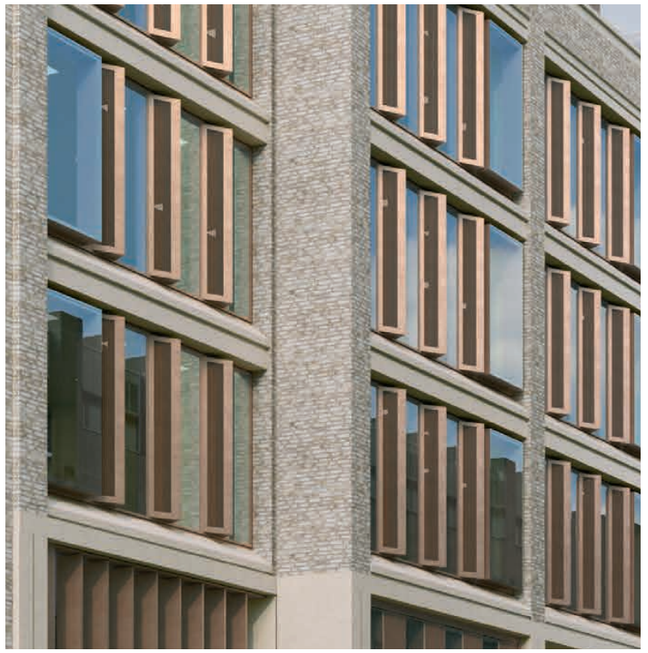
In general, two building materials broadly define the character of the Bloomsbury Campus: Portland stone, used for example, to dress the formal Main Quad and frontage of the Wilkins Building; and brickwork, usually from a buff colour range, used throughout the informal pattern of buildings and spaces within the campus 'interior'. The immediate context on Gordon Street is less easy to categorise with a mix of brickwork, stucco and render, although buff brickwork predominates.

A palette of robust, self-finished materials is proposed for the New Student Centre. Internally, this will be characterised by using in-situ concrete for the structural frame of the building. Where the structural frame becomes visible at street level, it is constructed from reconstituted stone, a high-quality form of pre-cast concrete. This will frame the openings at ground level, and provide visible support to the upper levels, clad with brickwork.

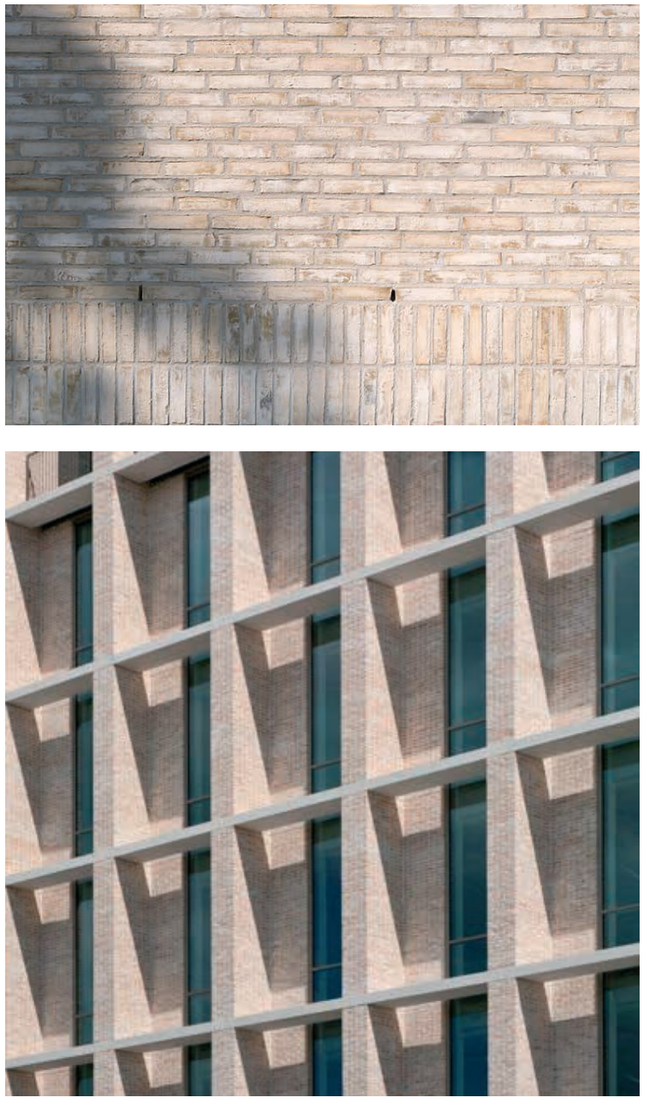
Within the framework set up by the structure, the upper floors lend themselves to a more refined scale with vertical emphasis. This allows for tall, storey height glazing to give deep daylight penetration into the building, but with controlled width to avoid excessive solar gain. The glazing will be fixed in place; between each is a projecting form that incorporates an opening window for natural ventilation, the forward projection providing shading to the adjacent glass, as does the deep reveals to the surrounding brickwork that delineates the structural bays. Externally, a flush grille protects the opening window, with vertical blades in front of horizontal angled blades. Window frames and panels have a bronze anodised finish.

Some regularity to the pattern of glazing and natural ventilation openings allows for flexibility of internal use, and for future adaptations to the functions within the building. This elevational approach is carried through to the Japanese Garden and the south-facing elevation to Katz Corner, where smaller window openings compensate for the greater potential for solar gain on these sides.

Brickwork is the predominant material for the Japanese Garden facing elevation, with reconstituted stone detailing for cills and copings and also the screen of vertical solar shading fins at the third floor café level and the ground floor colonnade. The theme continues into the landscaped area where the solid cast benches are topped with hardwood for seating.



Close-up view of proposed Gordon Street elevation



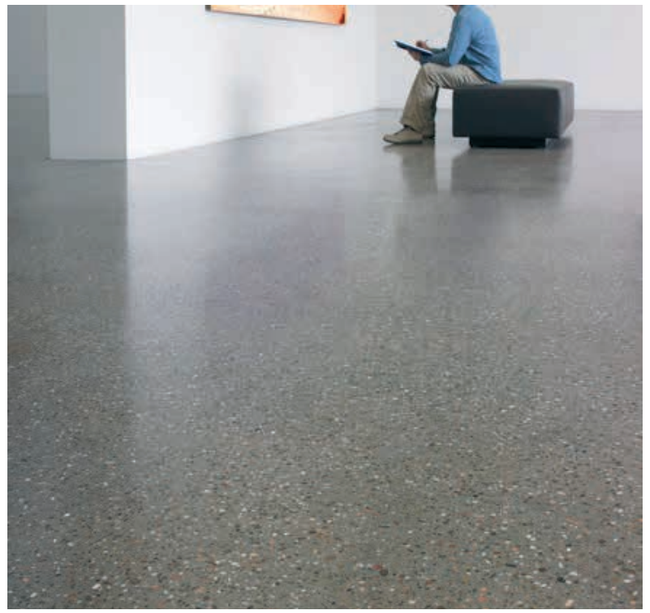
Examples of light buff facing brickwork

Internally, a simple and refined palette of materials is proposed with few applied finishes. Minimising future maintenance has been a key driver in the selection of robust and durable surfaces, particularly in busy circulation areas. In situ concrete columns, shear walls and soffits will be generally visible internally. The volumes of the main core and second escape stair are to be clad with facing brickwork. Internal partitions will be faced with either vertical timber battens to provide acoustic absorption, or panels of gypsum fibre board with a timber veneer or high-pressure laminate finish.

At the three entrance levels, a solid stone tile is proposed to coordinate with the external floor finishes. Above and below this, timber boards will be used to demarcate the central circulation zone with good quality carpet to the study areas beyond.

Wide strips of slatted timber ceiling will run either side of the atrium to allow the distribution of services, with timber rafts incorporating lighting fittings suspended from the concrete soffit in study areas.

Facing brick enclosing core volumes



Terrazzo in core areas

Timber batten linings to walls and ceilings to provide acoustic absorption

Timber faced boards lining study cabin walls

INTERNAL ARRANGEMENT

Public spaces

Similar in function to the Cloisters in the Wilkins Building, the ground levels of the New Student Centre provide open flexible space that encourages interaction, space that provides for informal study, exhibitions, displays, and pop-up events. Visitors using the primary entrance from Gordon Street are welcomed at a reception / security desk to the right of this doorway. To the left of the entrance is a study space with fixed perimeter benching by the street glazing and informal seating. Two large latticed screens form semi-transparent dividers in this space and can accommodate artwork, objects, notices and digital displays.

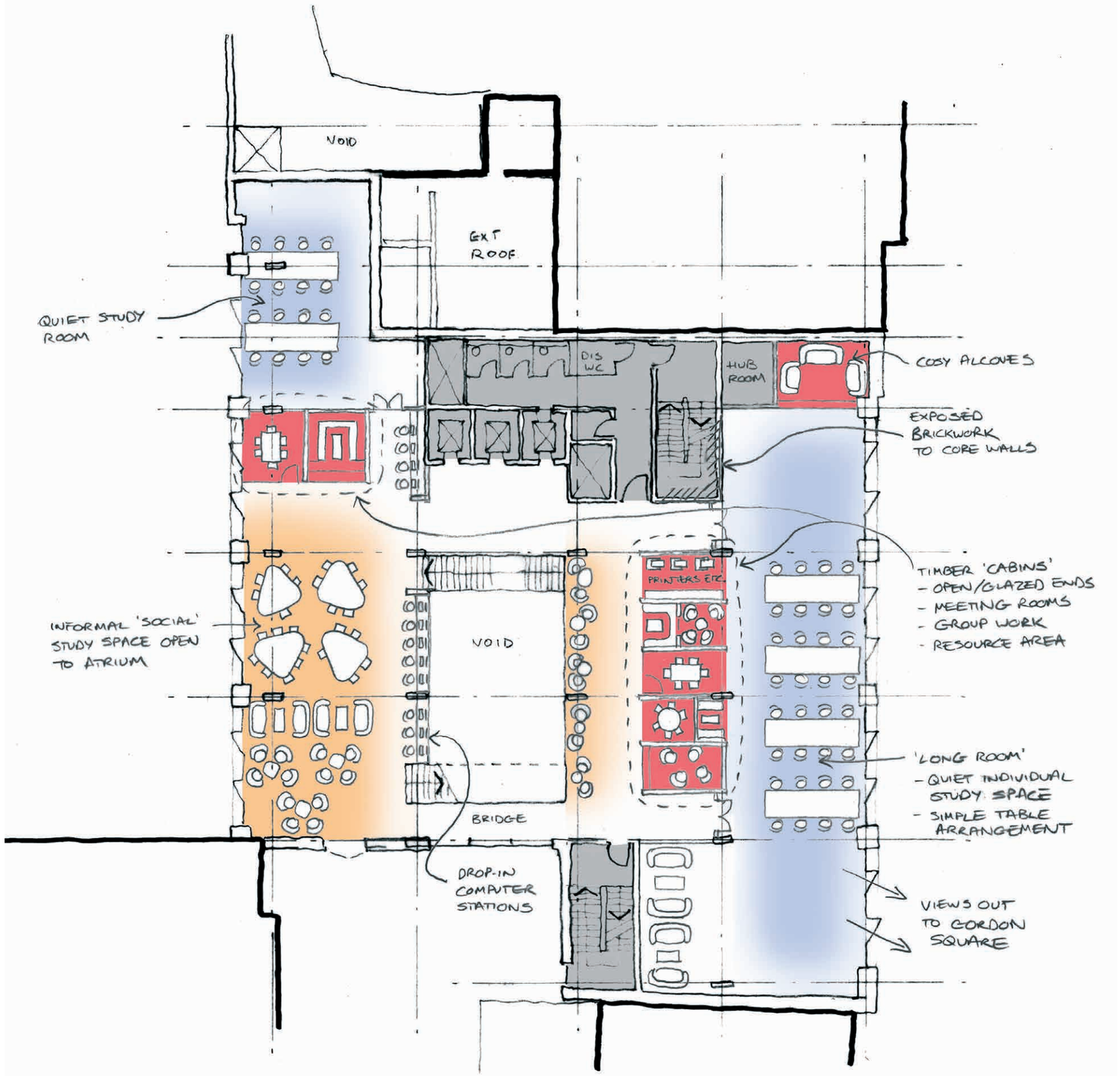
The entry from 'Katz Corner', adjacent to the Bernard Katz Building, will lead to a lobby containing the primary stair down to the basement levels. A wide set of stairs and a glass platform level will connect this lower level with the higher main entrance and also the route through to the Japanese Garden.

At the Japanese Garden entrance is a further open space to be used for exhibitions or informal study, from where the spiralling steps continue up around the atrium. Overlooking this area will be a second reception desk for the use of Library Services staff.

The considerable height at the Gordon Street entrance (7.8m floor-to-floor) allows a mezzanine level to be inserted across part of the plan. This provides an opportunity to enhance and further articulate the building on Gordon Street, as well as providing useful and enjoyable internal space.

Access to the upper levels of the building and the basement is restricted to UCL staff and students by access gates controlled by a card reader.

View from Gordon Street entrance



Study of typical upper floor zoning

Upper floors

The upper floors of the building are essentially composed of a broadly rectangular floorplate to the east and west side of a central atrium. Placing the building core (lifts, WCs, services risers etc.) to the north side of the atrium provides good orientation for those using the lifts, and allows the south side to remain transparent, providing good visual connectivity with the busy pedestrian route around the Bernard Katz Building.

The Student Enquiries Centre occupies the Gordon Street side of the building at first floor and will be the first space reached at this level. A long service desk will welcome visitors to the Centre, supported by a back office and a series of small consultation rooms for private discussions.

The east side of the building (facing Gordon Street) is wider, and at second and third floors is sufficient for this side to be divided into three zones. Nearest the street, a long, clear space, the 'long room', provides a calm learning environment for quiet individual study. To the west of this is a zone of study 'cabins' for group working that provide an effective acoustic screen from the busier atrium. The third zone is formed by the wide circulation route that spirals around the atrium, where there is an opportunity for more informal study spaces and workstations.

On the west side of the atrium (facing the Japanese Garden) is a less formal study space for social learning. This part of the building is open to the atrium at first and second floor, so the atmosphere will feel busier, with opportunities for more activity and group collaborative working.

The café is located at the third floor level facing onto more learning study space and the Japanese Garden. This is expected to be a lightly serviced café without cooking facilities, providing coffee and sandwiches rather than hot meals. A glass screen provides acoustic separation between the café and atrium.

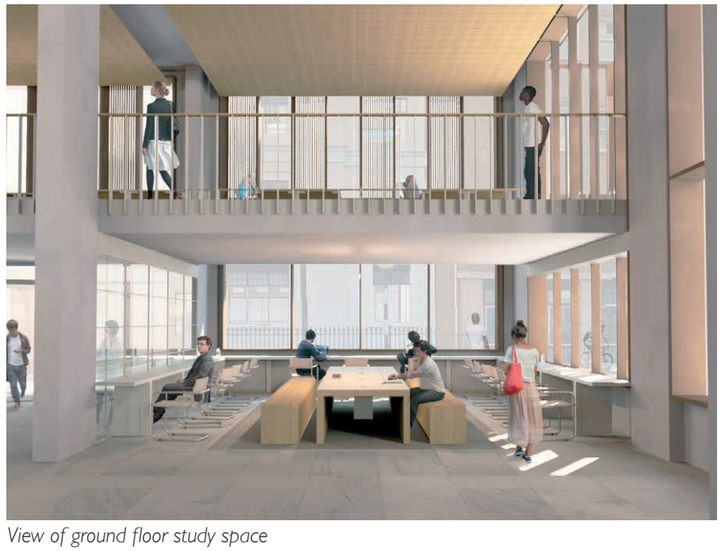
The top floor occupants will enjoy good daylight and natural ventilation from the continuous north facing rooflights overhead, with generous glazing allowing fine views across the campus and Gordon Square. A further glazed screen separating the atrium will help to minimise noisy intrusion from the main circulation area, and give this space a calm, peaceful atmosphere for quiet study. At this level there will also be a roof terrace accessed from the atrium space.

Study spaces

While the building as a whole will offer a wide variety of environments conducive to different kinds of work, three main types of study space are proposed:

- Quiet study - space where students can work alone with little or no talking, to allow concentration without distractions. These spaces will have large shared tables and comfortable task chairs with a mixture of fixed computers and open desks equipped for laptop use.
- Informal study - space to study in a more relaxed environment as well as to socialise and collaborate with others. There is likely to be a variety of furniture types in these areas, with large group tables, laptop tables, task chairs and sofas offering spaces for both individuals and groups which can be easily rearranged.
- Group study - these spaces will allow students to work together in groups of two or more, discussing ideas and working on presentations together. Some group space will be provided by fixed seating booths open to circulation space, but there will also be more traditional 'meeting rooms' with acoustic privacy afforded by glazed screens.

View of long room at second floor level



View of ground floor study space

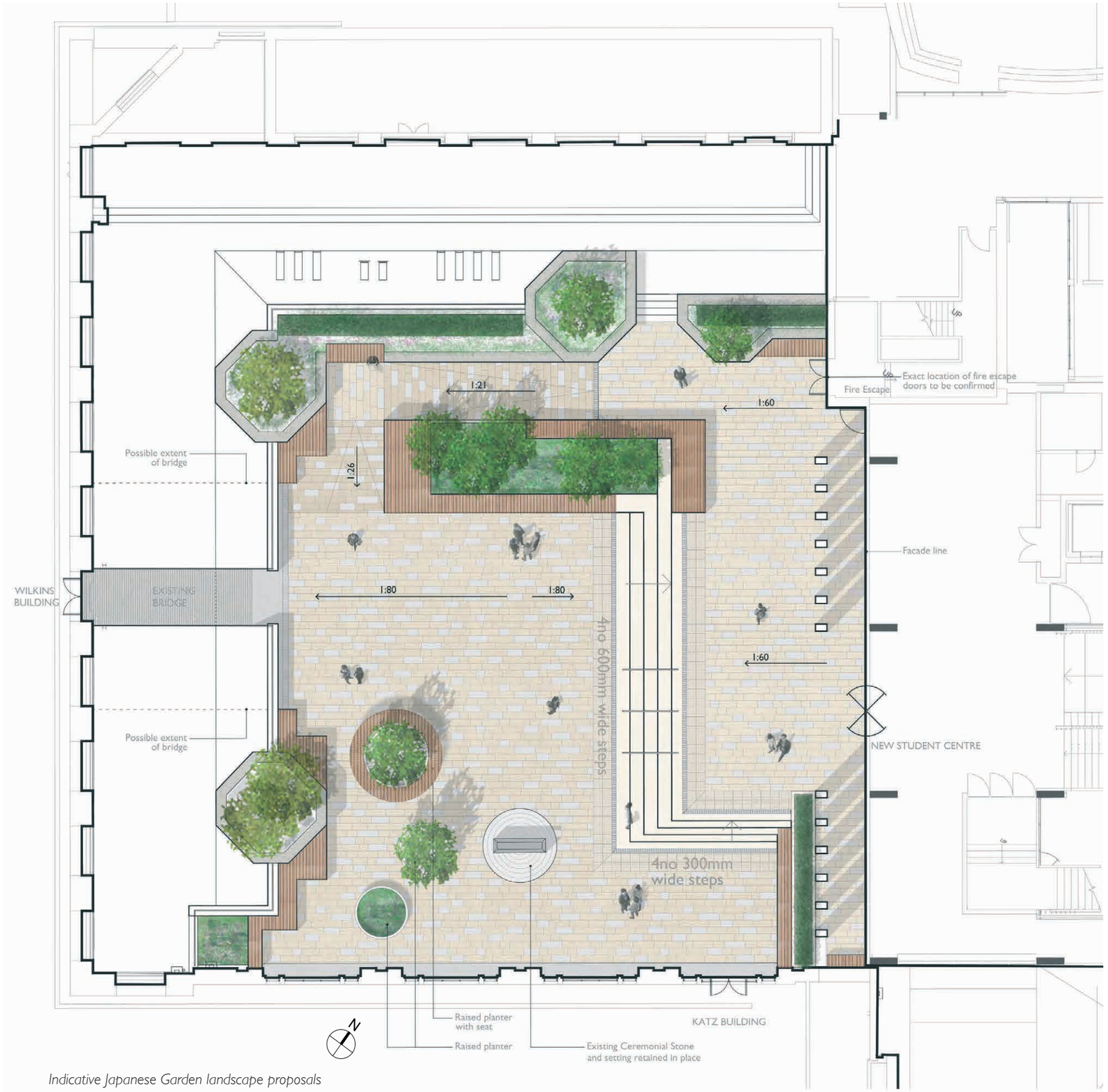
View of upper floor study space overlooking Japanese Garden

Basement
Two levels of basement are proposed. A large, lofty open plan learning space is provided at the upper basement level, with a suite of dedicated media rooms to one side. While this space will not benefit from natural daylight, it is proposed that this study area will be enhanced with a series of wall-mounted light boxes around its perimeter.

The lower basement level will provide an area for a multi-purpose Quiet Contemplation Room (QCR), with associated support facilities including toilets, ablutions facilities and storage for shoes and bags. Both basement levels will also accommodate mechanical plant.

Servicing and refuse
The principal service route into the building will be via means of the platform lift linking the Refectory Route to the Gordon Street level, located within the main core. From here, goods can be taken directly into the lifts and from there distributed around the building. Waste and recycling points are provided in two central locations at each level of the building. Bins will be emptied at routine intervals through the day, with refuse and recycling collected from outside the building equally regularly to avoid the need for a central refuse store within the building. Cleaners' stores are included within the core area at each level, and a larger store for maintenance purposes is provided at one of the basement levels.

View of Japanese Garden as existing with Site beyond

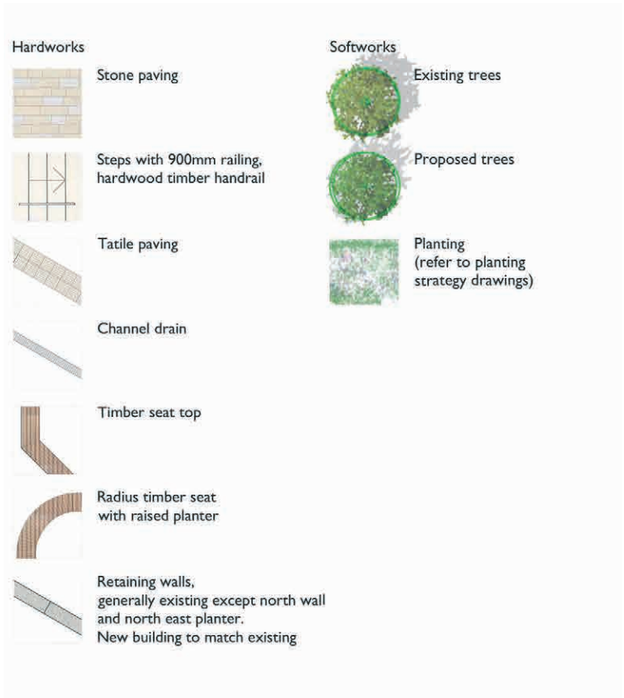


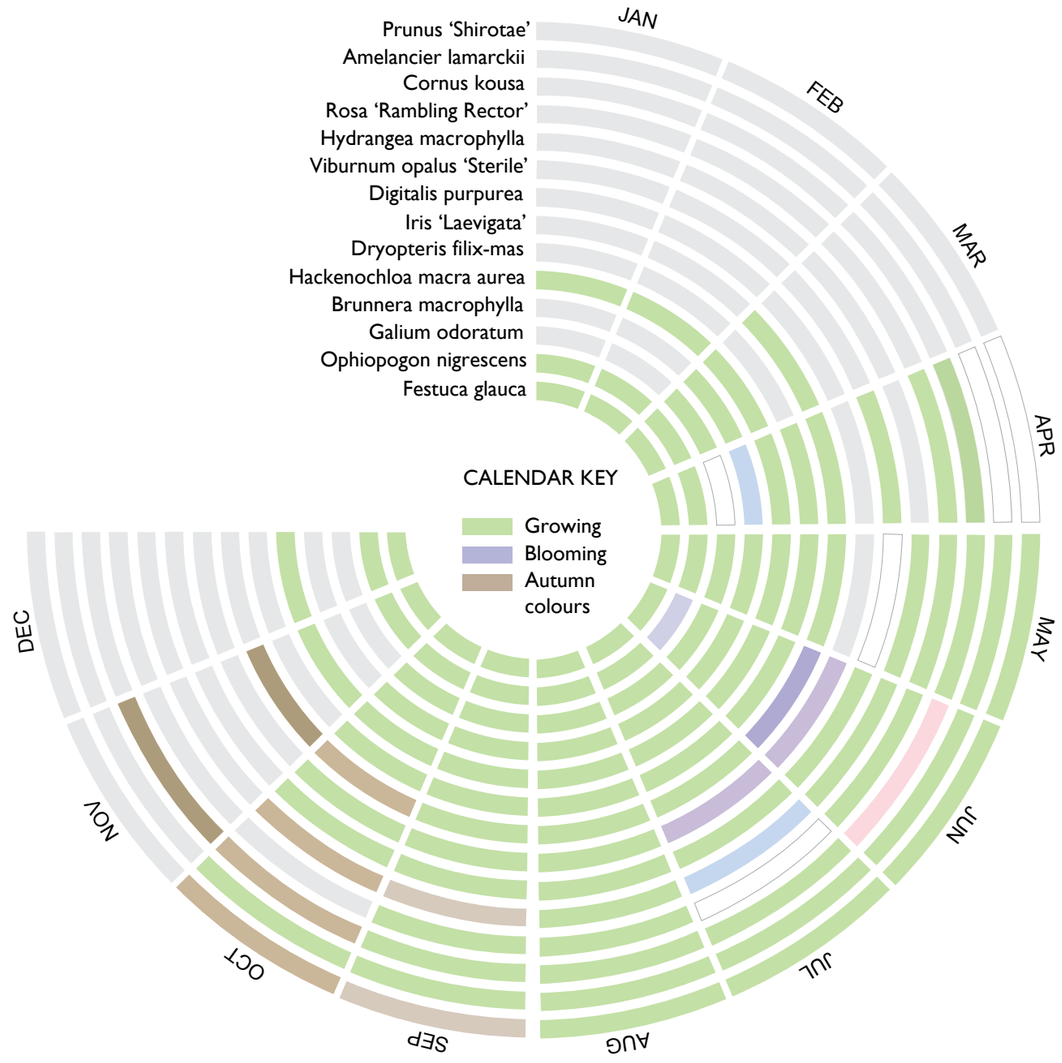
Indicative Japanese Garden landscape proposals

EXTERNAL AREAS

Japanese Garden

The removal of the ACBE plant room and the Node tower from the Japanese Garden provides an opportunity to create good connections between the new building and the courtyard and a straightforward route to the Wilkins Building. Whilst the garden has important functional aspects, it should also be a quality space affording peace and tranquillity at the heart of a busy university campus.





Prunus 'Shirotae'

Hydrangea macrophylla

Rosa 'Rambling Rector'

Galium odoratum

Dryopteris filix-mas

Brunnera macrophylla

Digitalis purpurea

Clerodendron trichotoma

Hackenochloa macra aurea

Festuca glauca

Indicative Japanese Garden planting strategy responding to changing seasons

The higher Japanese Garden level directly to the west of the New Student Centre is required to facilitate services connections between the ACBE plant room and the new basement level plant rooms. This will be level with the internal floor of the NSC. Wide steps resolve the change in level down to the existing garden, with a shallow slope around the northern and eastern sides of the courtyard; the steps will provide opportunities for sitting outside in the parts of the garden with the best sunlight. The existing narrow steel steps adjacent to the Node are to be replaced with a more generous and permanent flight of steps dropping to the new Lower Refectory entrance level below.

While the Japanese Garden provides an opportunity to enrich site ecology, the scope of the landscaping strategy is somewhat constrained by the multiple demands on the garden including pedestrian flows, space for access into adjacent buildings and seated areas. The shaded nature of north facing areas of the courtyard and the basement structure provide further constraints. Nevertheless the design team have sought to maximise the potential of this space within these limitations, and have developed a planting strategy that seeks to enhance the biodiversity of the space and its amenity value, using a mixture of plants common both in the UK and in Japan and responding to the changing seasons.

The freestanding Japanese monument is retained roughly in its existing location, and will be accompanied by several raised planters positioned to anticipate the opening up of the Wilkins Garden Room in the Bernard Katz Building to the garden. Furthermore, detailing of the western edge of the garden will anticipate the potential for future widening of the bridge link to the Wilkins South Cloister.

The existing grass and paved areas will be removed back to structure, re-waterproofed, insulated and built up to roughly the same levels as existing. The planter nearest to the Node will be raised to maintain adequate edge protection where the higher podium level of the garden sits alongside the new building. New linear planters are proposed, generally to the northern edge, to maximise opportunities for biodiversity. It is hoped that bricks can be salvaged from the ACBE plant room to provide a good match with the existing. The paving, new steps and slope are to be laid in UK sandstone slabs specified to be practical in maintenance and sympathetic to the existing fabric of the Bloomsbury campus. The central planters will be made with the same precast concrete used for detailing of the building, including the external colonnade and benches that form the eastern edge of the garden.

Photos of the Japanese Garden as existing

External roof areas

Opportunities for 'greening' areas at the fourth floor level of the new building have been explored with the aim of further enhancing biodiversity on the site. Space is available on the east, west and south sides for a variety of substrates used to elicit establishment of different plant types from sedum through to Downland wild flower species and other native species suitable for low fertility shallow depth soils. Other features will include timbers and paddle stones to provide habitat space for invertebrates. The design team are also exploring opportunities for bird and bat boxes.

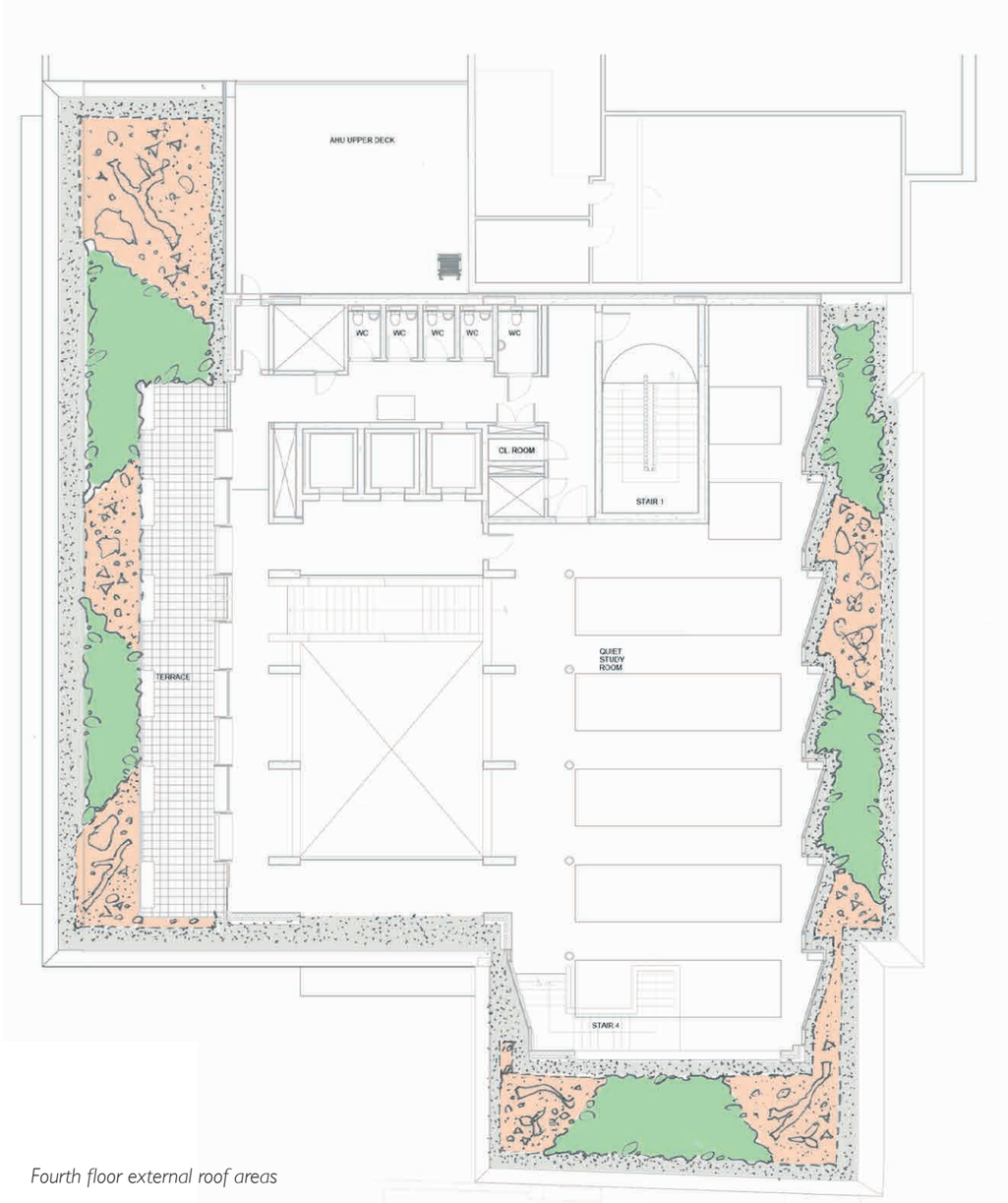
On the west side, overlooking the Japanese Garden, an area of roof is given over to an external decked terrace that will allow students to enjoy the outdoor space and roofscape views. The terrace is bounded by a glass balustrade, approximately 1.5m high, providing security but without limiting visibility.

Gordon Street

The proposals for the pavement reinstatement on Gordon Street will be developed acknowledging the potential future pedestrianisation project planned for the street. The pedestrian crossing will be relocated, and new hard surfacing to the pavement will lead to a new high-quality finish to the pedestrian and vehicle gateway into the campus, the gently sloping route beneath the south end of the building.

Katz Corner

This hard surfacing finish will continue towards the Bernard Katz Building, and will also line the undercover route to the Lower Refectory and the rear of the theatre. There had been an aspiration to consider demolition of the rear part of 26 Gordon Square to enhance the public realm in this area, but this does not form part of this project. The extent of resurfacing is currently proposed to align with the south façade of the Bernard Katz Building.



Fourth floor external roof areas

8. INTERFACE WITH EXISTING BUILDINGS

Rendered end wall of 26 Gordon Square

26 Gordon Square

26 Gordon Square is the most northern of the listed terraces fronting on to Gordon Square. The design team are considering possible replacement of the existing copings, which may be required to adequately form and make weathertight the junction between the existing and proposed buildings.

The party wall structure proposed is a precast concrete 'sandwich' panel that comprises a rigid insulation layer sandwiched by two layers of fairfaced concrete, one of which is thicker and structural. The storey height prefabricated wall panels are lifted into position and jointed to provide an immediate weathertight envelope. A minimum gap of 50mm will be maintained to any part of the rendered end wall of the listed structure.

No other works are proposed to 26 Gordon Square.

The Node

Containing stairs, toilets, and services plant for the Bloomsbury Theatre, the 'Node' is a late 1960s brutalist tower out of keeping with the context of the Grade I listed Wilkins Building. Its demolition is necessary in order to create the New Student Centre, as it forms an obstruction to circulation at the Lower Refectory entrance at lower ground level, and it has a bulk in terms of its height and position in plan that cannot satisfactorily be subsumed into the design of the New Student Centre.

A new stair and male toilets are proposed as part of the New Student Centre project, along with relocation and replacement of the air-handling plant serving the Bloomsbury Theatre. This will allow the new building to create a carefully considered junction to the Wilkins Building and fourth elevation to the Japanese Garden.

The strategy will require a temporary stair to be provided for the use of theatre patrons during the New Student Centre works; the stair is proposed above the existing steel stair adjacent to the Southern Colonnade, and will provide a connection between the Upper Circle and Auditorium levels, and emergency escape onto the Japanese Garden.

Demolition of the Node will require care and a good understanding of the existing structure. The work will inevitably be noisy and disruptive, particularly for the Theatre, as it shares a common structural frame. Temporary acoustic weatherproof screen walls will be erected to protect the otherwise exposed internal spaces of the Theatre.

The existing arrangement of stairs in the Node provides a circulation link between the Theatre Upper Circle and main Auditorium levels and also a means of escape in the event of emergency, the latter discharging at the Lower Refectory level. The permanent replacement stair to be constructed as part of the New Student Centre project will also provide the circulation link between levels, but will exit at Japanese Garden level. This allows an uninterrupted route to be created below, leading to the Lower Refectory entrance.

The Bloomsbury Theatre services plant area will be relocated from the upper levels of the Node to a new deck and enclosure above the gym roof, for which planning permission has now been granted. The works to achieve this are effectively split in two phases. The first phase will include preparation works, installation of the steel decking, enclosure and re-roofing; the second will include forming a new opening into the services duct, asbestos removal, installation of services and commissioning. The theatre is expected to be closed for 18 weeks.

The Node

Bloomsbury Theatre
Of all the buildings around the site the Bloomsbury Theatre will be the most affected, largely due to the removal of the Node. The Theatre will close for a period during the demolition works.

During this period, new openings will be formed in the external wall at the Upper Circle and Auditorium levels for access to the temporary stair in the Japanese Garden. On completion of the construction works, the existing bar areas will be reinstated.

The southern stair in the Theatre serves the full height of the building, exiting at the Lower Refectory level to the rear passageway. An alternative exit direction will be required during the Node demolition and during at least part of the construction works.

View of the Bloomsbury Theatre

ACBE plant room

The upper part of the ACBE plant room, the pitched-roofed single storey building sitting on the Japanese Garden, will be removed to allow the New Student Centre to properly engage with the garden and to establish direct connections across to the Wilkins Building.

The building contains air-conditioning plant serving the laboratory spaces beneath, which will be relocated into the basement of the new building as part of the project, to allow removal of the plant room.

There are several existing openings on to what will become the covered Refectory Route; these include the building entrance and adjacent hoist, a store access door and a fire escape door. The former openings will be retained, but the fire escape door is no longer required following demolition of the Node.

View of ACBE plantroom from the Japanese Garden

Bernard Katz Building

The New Student Centre has a key interface with the Bernard Katz Building at its southern corner. The primary grid is set out to provide clearance to the existing brickwork. The two buildings will overlap by around 2.5m, and at the upper levels the new structure will require closure of the north facing small windows to the corner rooms.

View of Bernard Katz Building

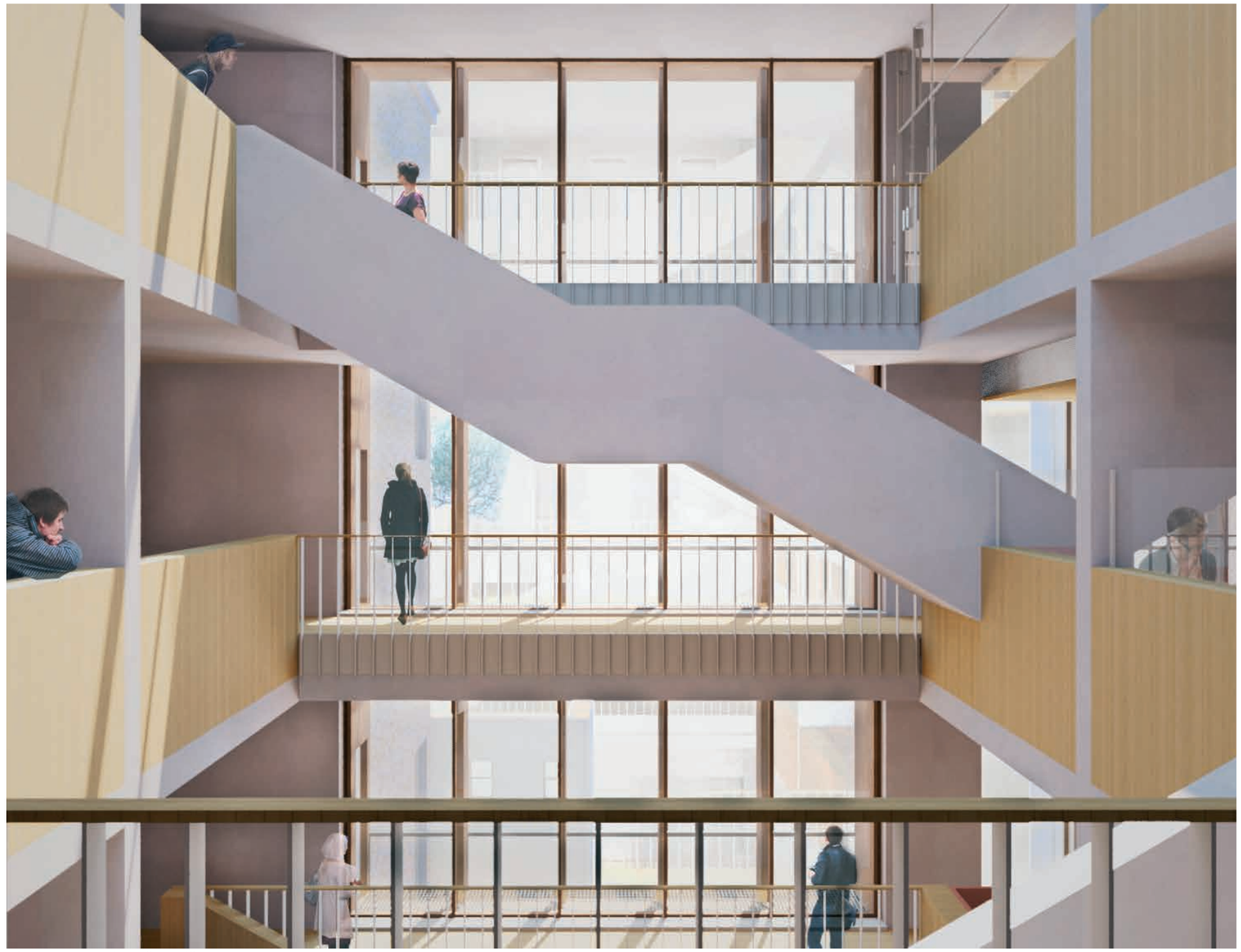
9. SUSTAINABILITY

The New Student Centre will be a flagship building for the UCL campus. The design of the building must support the wellbeing of building users, perform at the highest standard, and be adaptable to changing climates and future demands. This will be a durable and flexible building that will stand the test of time.

Particular measures employed to achieve these aims include the following:

- Mixed mode ventilation maximising the use of natural ventilation whenever possible and responding to seasonal variations.
- Prioritising the use of passive and low energy measures including ground source cooling and a connection to UCL's District Heating network.
- Enhancing daylight penetration through the central atrium.
- The use of photovoltaic panels, pitched roof lights and Bloomsbury Theatre roof.
- Monitoring air quality, with mechanisms to allow switching from natural to mechanical ventilation when poor external air quality demands.
- Zoning of the space to provide distinct areas with different acoustic qualities.
- Measures to increase biodiversity on the site.
- A simple structural frame and internal arrangement that can be easily adapted over time.
- An approach to the use of materials that emphasises exposed surfaces and therefore minimises applied finishes.

These measures are described in full in the Sustainability Statement prepared by Expedition. The project is currently on target to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating.



View across atrium from lifts

10. ACCESS STATEMENT

This statement is intended be an evolving document, which will record and explain decisions on accessibility at all design stages through to the detailed Access Strategy used for occupation and the ongoing management of the building. The form of the Access Statement is based upon recommendations set out by the Disability Rights Commission.

ACCESS REQUIREMENTS FOR THE USERS

The University will be employers and service providers under the Disability Equality Act 2010. In parallel with this Access Statement, which relates principally to the physical arrangements in the new building, the University will be required to review their accessibility policies as they move to the new accommodation.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The principal aim of the designers has been to enhance inclusion and maximise access for those with disabilities. This has included ensuring level access to all entrances and an easy transition from the surrounding external site areas, as well as within the building itself.

SOURCES OF GUIDANCE

The main sources of reference have been Approved Document M of the Building Regulations 2013 and UCL's Inclusive Design Standard for Buildings and Infrastructure Works. These have been supplemented by reference to BS8300: 2001 Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people.

Other design references in use for the project are:

- Current guidance on the provisions of the Disability Equality Act 2010
- Disability Rights Commission Codes of Practice
- Guidance on Access Statements
- Building Sight (RNIB)
- The Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) Access Directory
- Sign Design Guide (Joint Mobility Unit and the Sign Design Society)

ACCESS CONSULTATIONS

Discussions have been held with the University's access advisor, the UCLU Disabled Students' Officer and Camden Council's Access officer during the development of the design and will continue during the forthcoming design stages. The process has also included public consultations to open up discussion with all future building users.

These discussions have been especially helpful in framing UCL's particular aspirations for their new buildings, which in some instances go beyond the strict requirements of Approved Document M and BS8300: 2001.

11. SITE ACCESS

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

The site is in a highly accessible part of central London, with numerous bus, rail and underground routes stopping nearby. London Euston railway station is a short walk to the north east, and Euston Square underground station is 360m to the north west. The nearest bus stops are also located at Euston Square with several other bus stops within a few hundred metres of the site. There are wide, well-lit footways between these stops and stations and the site, providing safe, level and easy access for pedestrians. There is a zebra crossing adajcent to the site which will be relocated slightly further north as part of the development proposals.

There are three public entrances to the building. The Gordon Street entrance sits 1.4m above the level of the Bernard Katz Building entrance and Wilkins Building lower ground floor, and 2.4m below the level of the Japanese Garden. Level access will be provided at all these entrances.

The pedestrian areas around the building, including the routes to the building entrance, will be well lit, and the lighting strategy will be developed during the next stages of the project.

ACCESS FOR CYCLISTS

It is proposed that 54 cycle parking spaces are provided under the cover of the Refectory Route (to the west of the building at street level). The limited space available means that these are two-tier racks, spaced at 400mm centres. From here, cyclists can enter the building at its south-west corner and take the main stair down to the lower basement level where showers, toilets and lockers are provided.

There are currently 173 public cycle docks located within a 400m walk of the site as part of the Santander Cycles Scheme.

ACCESS FOR CARS AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES

Disabled users arriving as passengers by car or taxi can be set down on Gordon Street, close to the main building entrance. A limited number of car parking spaces are available on the UCL campus for disabled students who are blue badge holders.

A new route for vehicular access passing into the campus is provided adjacent to the listed terraces, bridged over by the upper floors of the new building. This will essentially be a pedestrian space, with sliding security gates and retractable bollards limiting vehicular use to controlled times. This route is also suitable for ambulances and fire tender vehicles.

SERVICING ACCESS

A fourth entrance point is provided at the north end of the Refectory Route, linking it with the main ground floor street level by means of a platform lift. This route into the building has security restricted access and is intended as the principal entry point for goods and deliveries, as well as the removal route for refuse. The platform lift leads directly into the core where the main lifts are located, from where goods can be distributed throughout the levels.

View of Gordon Street elevation

12. USING THE BUILDING

BUILDING ENTRANCES

The threshold at each of the three entrance doors is level. The main entrance onto Gordon Street has a wide set of curved automatic sliding doors to ensure all building users can make use of the same 'front door'. This will be flanked with single pass doors to each side with opening devices that allow mechanical opening when required for assisted operation.

The secondary entrances to Katz Corner and the Japanese Garden have a central manually operated revolving door and single pass doors to each side. It is acknowledged that revolving doors are unsuitable for wheelchair users, however it is considered that in this particular situation, this is the best solution to maintain adequate comfort conditions within the ground floor spaces. With three separate entrances leading into a large open volume, conventional sliding doors on both sides of the building would unavoidably lead to uncomfortable through-draughts unless a great deal of energy was devoted to increased local heating in these areas.

There is an area of matwell beyond the doors at each entrance; this is of firm texture and set flush with the floor.

Security access gates operated by swipecard proximity readers are situated in four locations to prevent unauthorized visitors from progressing beyond the ground floor levels. The sets of gates leading to the lifts (one at street and one at garden level) will include one wider aisle, suitable for wheelchair users and those with bulky luggage.

RECEPTION AREAS

The main reception desk reception area is a prominent part of the entrance area at street level, and is supported by a smaller reception point close to the garden level entrance. Staff at both these desks can distribute appropriate information and deal with many common enquiries from visitors and those unfamiliar with the building.

A separate reception desk is not proposed at the entrance adjacent to Katz Corner, however a set of wide stairs and a platform lift are located directly opposite this entrance, and once street level is reached the main reception desk will be clearly visible.

All reception desks (including those within the Student Enquiries Centre and the IT helpdesk) include a lowered section of counter with direct and unobstructed access for wheelchair users. Hearing induction loops are included at each of these desks.

HORIZONTAL MOVEMENT

There are few corridors within the building, but where these exist, corridor widths, lobbies and approaches to doors have been designed in accordance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations and good practice. Where possible, doors that might obstruct or provide an obstacle to users with disabilities are held in the open position by electro magnetic devices linked to the fire alarm. Surface finishes and colours will be selected in accordance with good practice and the guidance set out in BS8300. This includes the design of the lighting and the acoustics.

VERTICAL MOVEMENT

Stairs

All the stairs within the building have been designed as ambulant stairs, with goings of 300mm. All stairs have non-slip, colour contrasted nosings and are well lit. Handrails are made from timber so are warm to the touch, and these follow the statutory guidance in terms of diameter and position.

Lifts

The core contains a bank of three lifts, facing the atrium, with all lifts serving all levels. One lift needs to be a fire-fighting lift, due to the building's height, and therefore has double entry for access from the fire-fighting lobby within the core. It also serves as an evacuation lift suitable for safe escape by disabled people. These lifts lie beyond the security barriers and therefore their use is restricted to those with an appropriate swipecard, although staff at the adjacent reception desks can give assistance to visitors.

Two platform lifts are provided to link the ground levels. The first is a service lift positioned within the core at the north end of the building, linking street level to the level of the Refectory Route. This serves as a route into the building for deliveries, café servicing and waste removal, with access limited to building staff by a swipe card reader. The second platform lift provides public access between the entrance at Katz Corner, the main street level and the garden level. This is of a higher specification with a glazed enclosure and its use is unrestricted. Both lifts are designed for independent use with clear instructions provided.

MEANS OF ESCAPE

The University will develop evacuation management policies, including any Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans.

Wheelchair refuges are provided within the core at the north of the building and within the escape stair to the south. Disabled refuge intercoms, linked to the intercom panel adjacent to the fire alarm panel, are provided at each refuge point. Wheelchair users can also use the fire-fighting lift as an evacuation lift.

Final exit door thresholds are level, and the approach gradients are in accordance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations.

BUILDING ACCOMMODATION

Study areas

All types of study area within the building are accessible to those with disabilities. Within quiet study areas arranged with rows of desking, a number of accessible desk spaces are located close to circulation routes. These have adjustable-height desks and wider aisle widths to facilitate access. Library services staff (located on every floor) will manage the use of these spaces to ensure they are made available to disabled users when required.

Areas for social study contain a mixture of seating types, both fixed and loose, to allow all building users to rearrange furniture to suit their needs.

Consultation rooms and group rooms

Nine consultation rooms are proposed as part of the Student Enquiries Centre, and five of these allow space for a 1500mm diameter wheelchair turning circle. A number of small rooms and alcoves for group work are also proposed. Some of these are arranged with fixed booth-type seating, however the leading edge of the central table will allow a wheelchair user to join a group sitting here. Other group rooms have loose furniture which can be rearranged as required.

View of second floor informal study area

Toilets, showers and changing facilities
Toilets are provided within the core area, and all levels of the building include an accessible unisex toilet. This will be handed on alternate levels to provide a choice of transfer positions. All accessible toilets are provided with alarms linked back to the reception area. The size of the building is such that no part of the accommodation is more than 40m from an accessible toilet.

At the lower basement level a suite of individual shower cubicles is provided, including a larger accessible shower and toilet.

While it is not anticipated that the building will be used or visited by a large number of families, a baby changing facility is provided within the First Aid room at street level.

Multi-faith facilities
The Quiet Contemplation Room on the lower basement level provides a calm, neutral backdrop for prayer and meditation for those of all faiths. Washing facilities and storage for bags and shoes are located close by and include accessible provision.

INTERNAL DOORS
All doors have been designed in accordance with Approved Document M of the Building Regulations and BS8300. UCL's Inclusive Design Standard recommends that internal doors have a minimum clear opening width of 1050mm, and this guidance has been adhered to for all doors except those to non-accessible WCs and shower rooms, cleaners' cupboards and storerooms (which provide a minimum clear width of 800mm).

Doors are faced with coloured laminate to provide sufficient contrast and light reflectance to walls and ironmongery. In addition, the proximity and positioning of glazed panels within or to the side of doors will aid adequate differentiation. Where full height glazed panels are incorporated to doors or windows, these are provided with two-tone manifestations.
Where possible doors that might obstruct or provide an obstacle to users with disabilities are held in the open position by electro-magnetic devices linked to the fire alarm. Door closers are not provided except where required for fire safety. In the few instances where swipe card readers are required to activate a door (for instance in staff areas), these are positioned within easy reach of all users.

Ironmongery has been selected to take account of disabilities and general dexterity.

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS
The design details of fixtures and fittings have been developed in accordance with good practice.

There is a large amount of fixed desking included, and this is designed to ensure all worksurfaces will be no greater than 750mm in height with a clear height below of 700mm. Individual task lights are provided at each study position with controls mounted on the desk surface for easy access, along with power and data points.

Counters to the café servery, student food preparation areas and staff teapoints are designed to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities, incorporating projecting surfaces at low and high level.

Consideration of adequately configured and colour contrasting electrical switches will be discussed with the University.

INFORMATION AND SIGNAGE
Appropriate signage for the building as a whole will be in accordance with the UCL Inclusive Design Standard. Building signage is provided in English, supplemented with pictograms and symbols at an appropriate scale.

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