

Guys Cliff

**79-81 Conway Road,
Colwyn Bay**

Design and Access Statement

Ref: 22-252 - DAS - V03

Date: April 2025

Author: Phil Oliver



Munro Associates (Architectural Services) Ltd

Unit 29, The Rural Enterprise Centre

Stafford Drive

Battle Enterprise Park

Shrewsbury, SY1 3FE

Tel: 01743 341438

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Munro Associates Ltd. on behalf of Wales and West Housing, in support of their Full Planning Application for an affordable residential development on the land of the former Guys Cliff Residential Home Sites, 79-81 Conway Road, Colwyn Bay.

The proposals include the full demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of a three storey apartment building containing 23 No. 2P1B affordable residential apartments. The proposal includes landscaping and car parking for 13 cars.

Guys Cliff is a former residential care home owned by Wales and West Housing Association. The property is now vacant. The Care Home appears to be comprised of two existing residential properties that have been made into one large property and extended to create the Care Home.

The site is a brownfield site situated in a sustainable location, with good access to transport routes, employment opportunities, established residential neighbourhoods, and community amenities, services and public open spaces.

Planning History

This planning submission follows a previous application for an affordable residential development on the site by the same applicant (ref: 0/51353). The application was refused for the following reasons:

1. The application site is situated within an area consisting predominantly of early twentieth century dwellings and commercial buildings which display a high degree of cohesion in character. The application site is currently occupied by buildings which reflect the scale and character of that area. The layout, form, height, scale, massing and elevational treatment of the proposed building, together with its proximity to the road frontages, would result in a dominant and overbearing feature in the streetscape that would significantly detract from the character of the area. The proposal is therefore contrary to paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10 of Planning Policy Wales 12th Edition, Technical Advice Note (Wales) 12: Design and Policies DP/3, DP/4 and DP/6 of the Conwy Local Development Plan.

2. The proposal would result in a loss in the area of green space and a reduction in the number of trees within the application site which make a positive contribution to the character of the area. The application is not supported by a green infrastructure assessment which demonstrates that the compensatory planting identified in the application is proportionate to the proposed loss. Furthermore, the proposed site layout is too constrained to provide a replacement planting scheme that would effectively compensate for the impact of tree loss on the character and amenity of the area, and the proposed replacement planting falls well below the minimum ratio expressed in Planning Policy Wales of three trees for every one lost. The proposal is therefore contrary to paragraph 6.4.42 of Planning Policy Wales 12th edition, and Policies DP/3, DP/4 and DP/6 of the Conwy Local Development Plan.

Design Vision

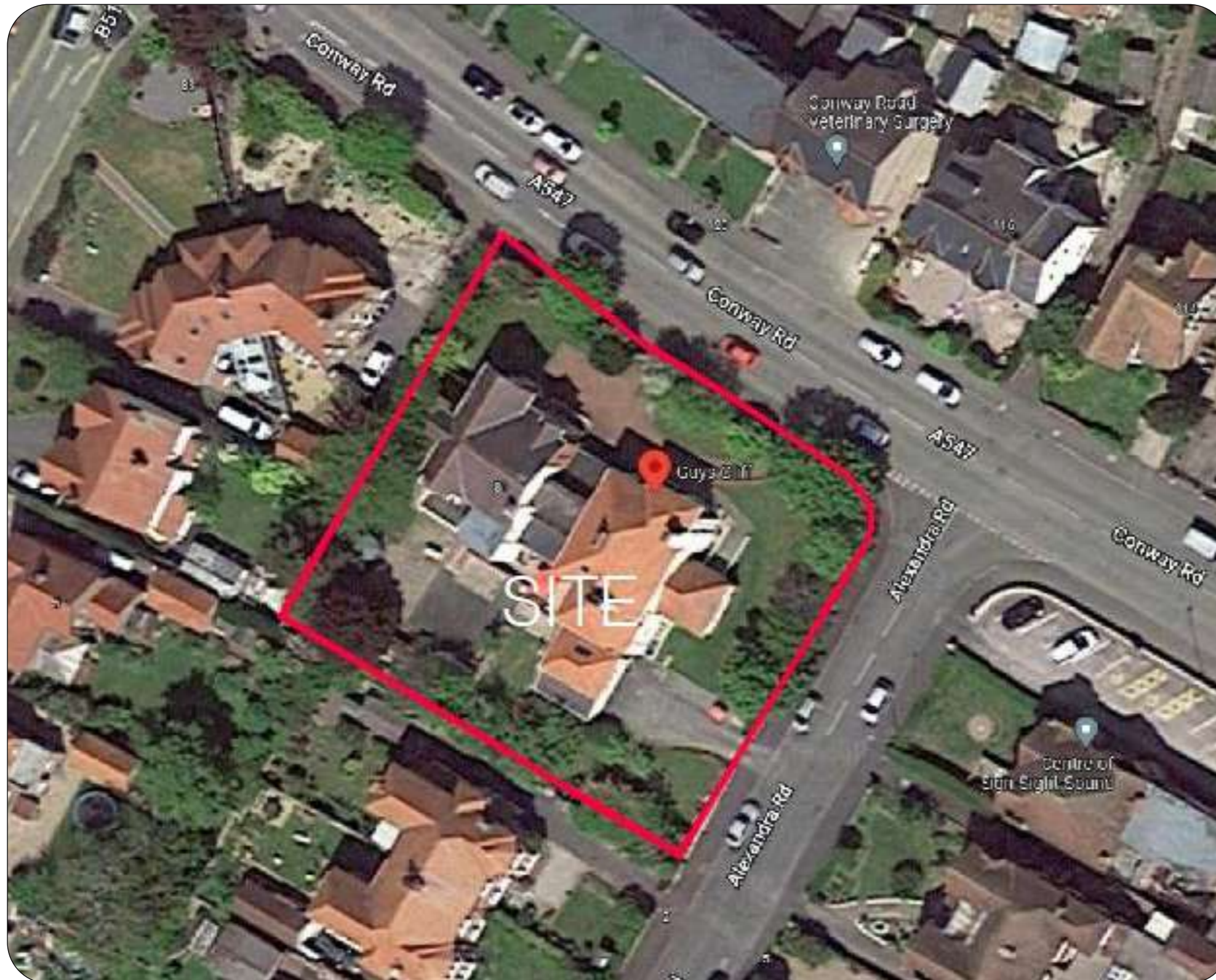
Wales and West Housings vision is for all developments *‘to create a place to achieve strong, sustainable growth to make a difference to people’s lives, homes and communities.’*

Overarching Strategic Objectives

- A scheme of 100% affordable homes for social rent, providing house types to meet identified local needs.
- A block of apartments in a form, massing and architectural style to complement the local vernacular.
- A coherent design with landscape finishes to create a distinctive development.
- A sense of place to meet Welsh Governments Placemaking Agenda and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- To create sustainable patterns of development to encourage walking and cycling and improve access to public transport.
- A sustainable home that meets the required standards of WDQR, Lifetime Homes and Secured by Design.
- To create an attractive, sustainable place that people respect and want to live.

Site Specific Objectives

- To create a development comprising of a block of one bed general needs apartments accessed from Alexandra Road, with parking to the rear of the building.
- To create a building to accommodate 23 one bed apartments.
- To achieve a fabric first approach with energy efficient technologies, meeting EPC A to reduce utility costs to residents.
- To minimise any adverse impact on the surrounding dwellings in terms of overlooking.
- To provide adequate car parking spacing.
- To meet WDQR and Lifetime homes.



Site Location Plan

Site Location & Assessment

The site is located in the town centre of Colwyn Bay in a predominantly residential area and on the edge of a shopping district. The site is outside of the Conservation Area.

The town has a population of approximately 34284 and is located off the A55 (North Wales Expressway), which links the North Wales coast and other nearby towns including Llandudno, Rhyl and St Asaph.

The site has an existing residential use. It is located on the corner of two streets (Conway Road and Alexandra Road) in a prominent street frontage location. The site is surrounded by other residential properties, which are a mixture of semi-detached and detached properties.

The site is within walking distance of a Supermarket, Shops, Medical Centre, a Church, Primary School, playing fields and many other facilities nearby. A bus stop is located adjacent to the site on Conway Road, providing a public transport links to the towns and villages on the North Wales coast and beyond.

The existing building on the site comprises of two original dwellings that have been linked together to create the former Care Home. The facades are a combination of red brick and render. The roofs are predominantly pitched with red tiles to one of the original dwellings and grey to the other. There are various modern extensions to the building some of which have flat roof.

Photos of the existing property can be seen on the next page.



Photos of Existing Care Home at Guys Cliff





Neighbourhood Structure

The site is within 5 minutes walk of a variety of essential facilities and a 10 minutes walk from the railway station.

The site is well connected to the major road network and public transport routes with a number of bus stops within the town.

Neighbourhood Structure

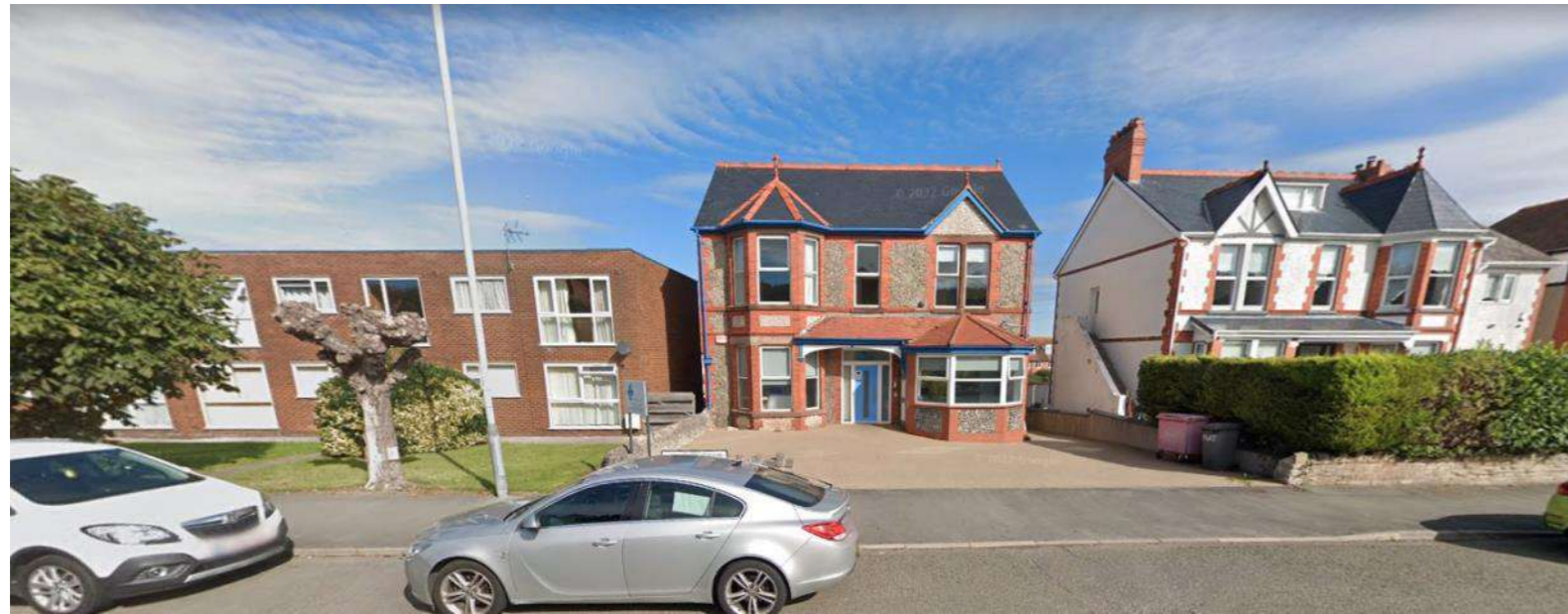


Photo 1



Photo 2



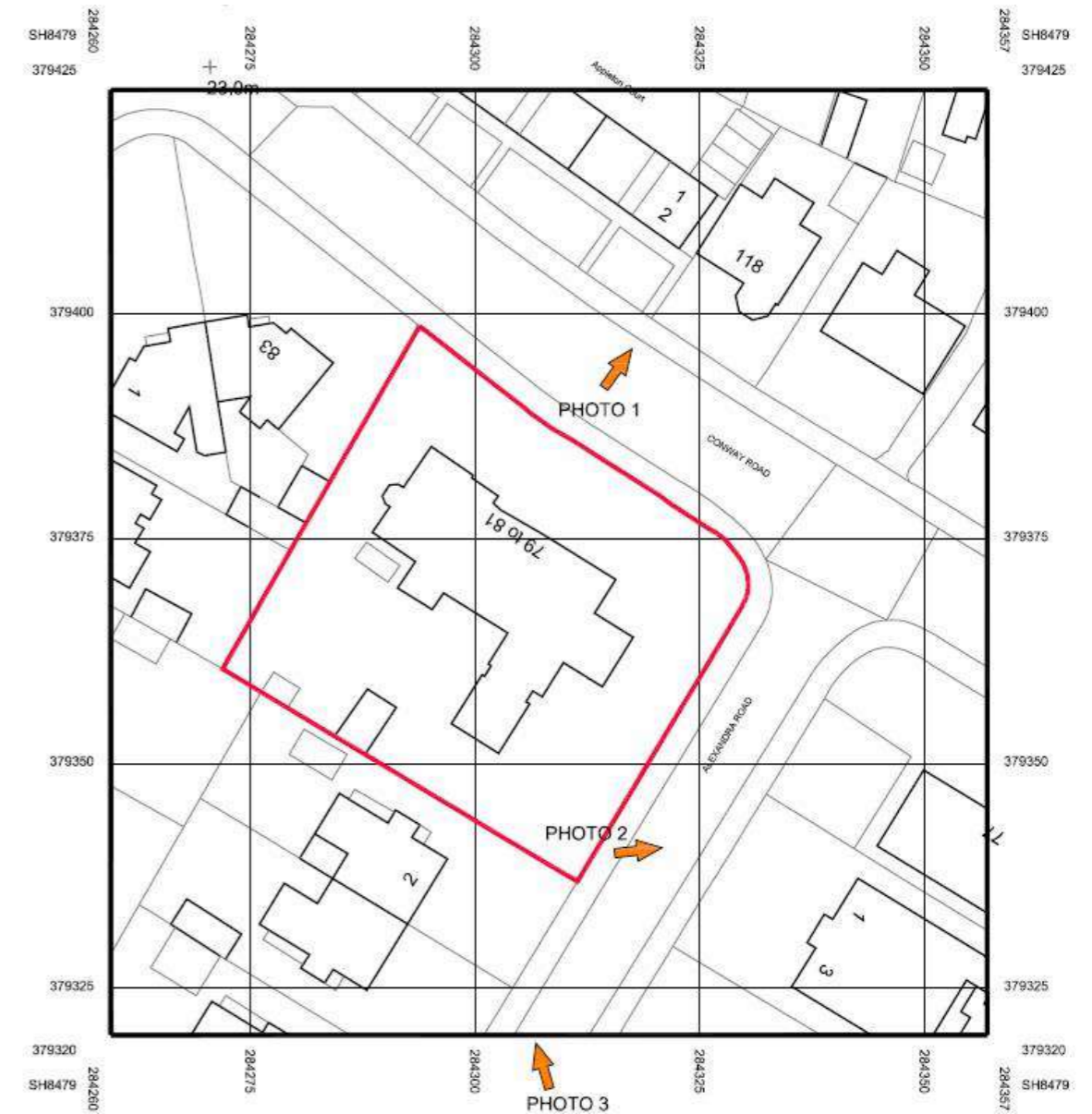
Photo 3

Site Context and Photographs of Surrounding Buildings

Generally the surrounding buildings are residential properties with traditional pitched roofs and brick facades, with feature render and timber detailing.

Low level stone walls to the dwelling boundaries fronting onto the streets are a common theme.

A more modern flat roof apartment building has been built on Conway Road and can be seen in Photo 1.

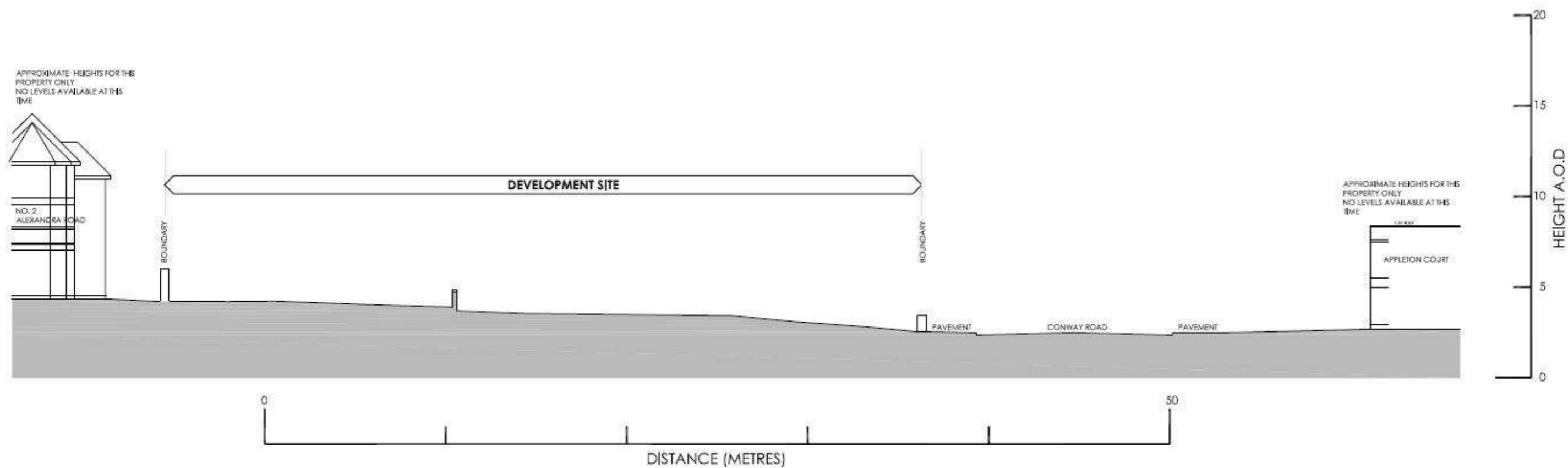




Site Topography

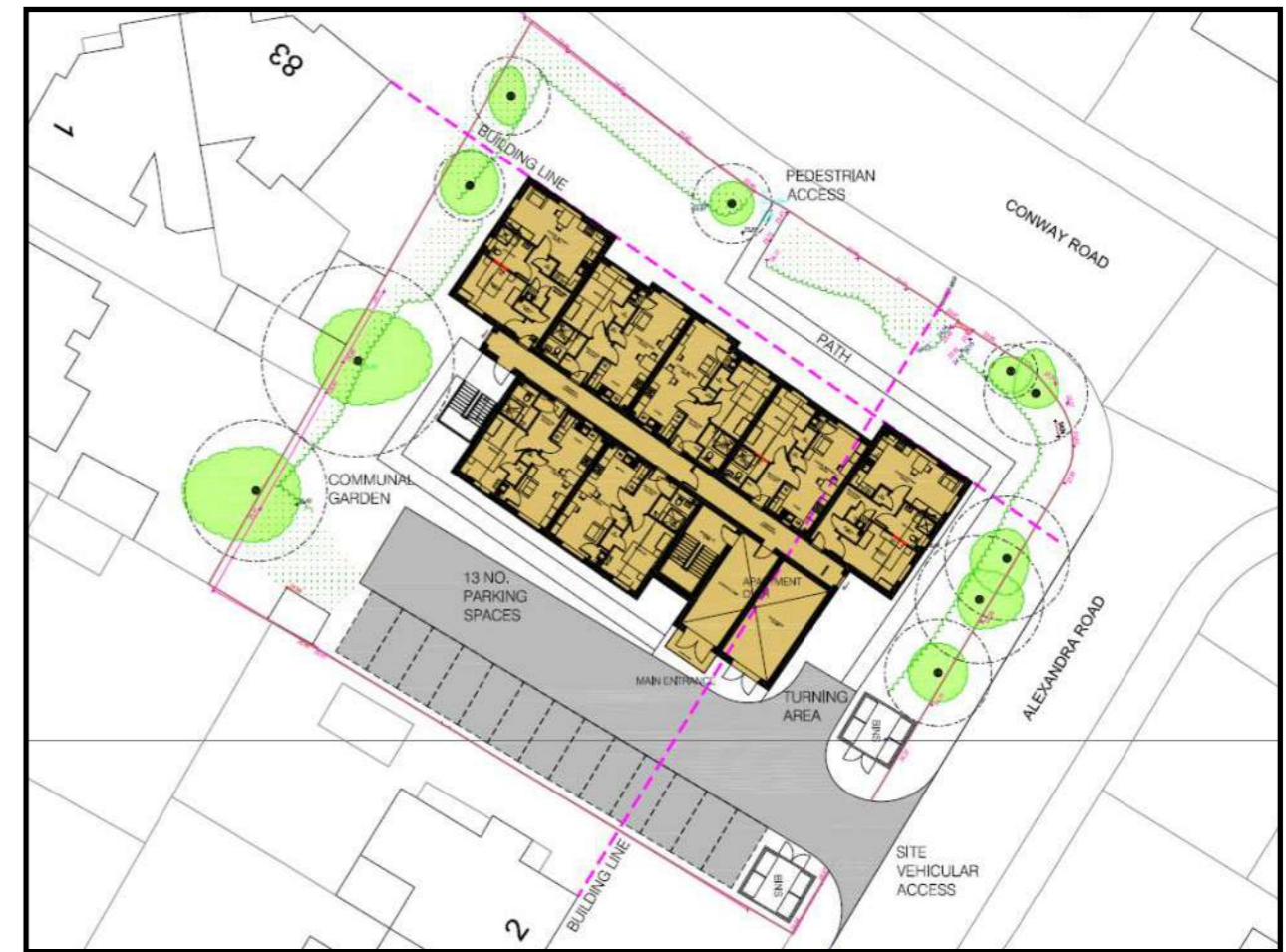
Topography & Site Constraints

1. New vehicular access to be in similar location to existing established access. Provides good visibility for exiting the site. Levels at access will dictate floor level of building.
2. Public footway on Conway Road leads to local amenities in town centre.
3. A Bus stop on Conway Road provides a sustainable transport option to North Wales destinations and beyond.
4. Existing Care Home buildings to be demolished. Low potential for Bats roosting in roof spaces.
5. The topography of the majority of the site is generally flat with a change in level of approximately 1.7m across most of the site falling from South West to North East. This is ideal for providing car parking at the rear with level access to buildings. A stepped approach will be needed to the entrance from Conway Road.
6. Existing building line frontage along Conway Road and Alexandra Road. Difficult to maintain due to the buildings being set back into the sites.
7. Existing 2 storey dwellings opposite located 24 metres away from site boundary. No overlooking issues.
8. Existing 2 storey business opposite located 26 metres away from site boundary. No overlooking issues.
9. Existing 2 storey dwellings adjacent located 3.6 metres approx away from site boundary. Some first floor windows face towards development site.
10. Existing 2 storey dwellings adjacent located 6.5 metres approx away from site boundary. Some first floor windows face towards development site.
11. Prominent view of the site on the corner of two streets.
12. Location of existing pole for overhead electricity cable serving existing building on site. Pole to be retained. Cable to be removed.
13. Existing low level stone wall to street boundaries is a common theme to most properties in the vicinity of the site.
14. Trees to be retained where possible. Tree Root Protection Areas to be observed for offsite trees.



Topography

Site cross-section illustrates the site has a slight crossfall of approximately 1.7 metres between No. 2 Alexandra Road and the adjacent Conway Road.



Preliminary Design Proposals.

Examples of sketch site layouts exploring options for a building floor plan

- Building floor plan based on single aspect apartments accessed via a central corridor with fire escape stairs to both ends.
- Site access off Alexandra Road with parking located to the rear of the building to reduce visual clutter on the street scene.
- Building line adhered to along Conway Road.
- Building Entrance located at the rear to provide level access to parking.
- Majority of trees and hedgerow to be retained where possible. Building to be outside of the RPA.

Preliminary Design Proposals.

Examples of options for the elevational treatment of the building. The examples show the elevations facing Conway Road and Alexandra Road.

- The options explore the use of mono-pitched roofs and dual-apex roofs to reduce the overall height of the ridge.
- The mono-pitched roofs and full height windows give a more modern aesthetic / appearance. Perhaps not appropriate for this location.
- Coloured window surrounds and coloured cladding to highlight the openings within the fenestration and break up the massing of the elevation.
- Brick and render finishes are in-keeping with the surrounding buildings.
- Dormer windows add interest and reduce the eaves height, but appear overbearing and “top heavy” if clad in a contrasting material.
- Adding stone heads and cills to windows provides a softer, traditional architectural style.



Design Development.

Further examples of how the design was developed into the final proposals through discussion with the planning department and comparison with the surrounding buildings.

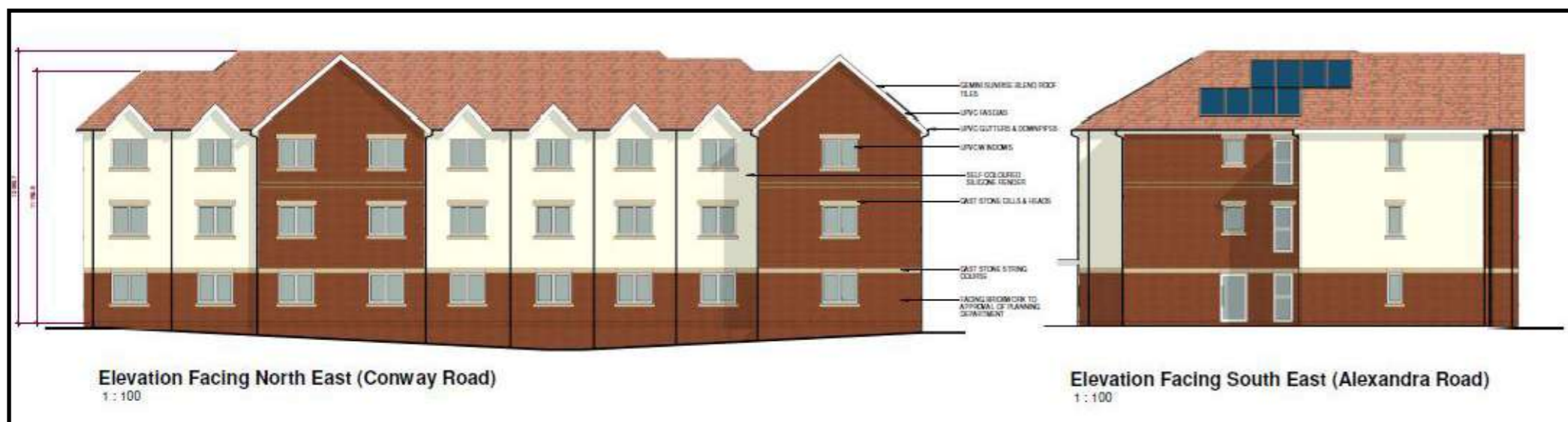
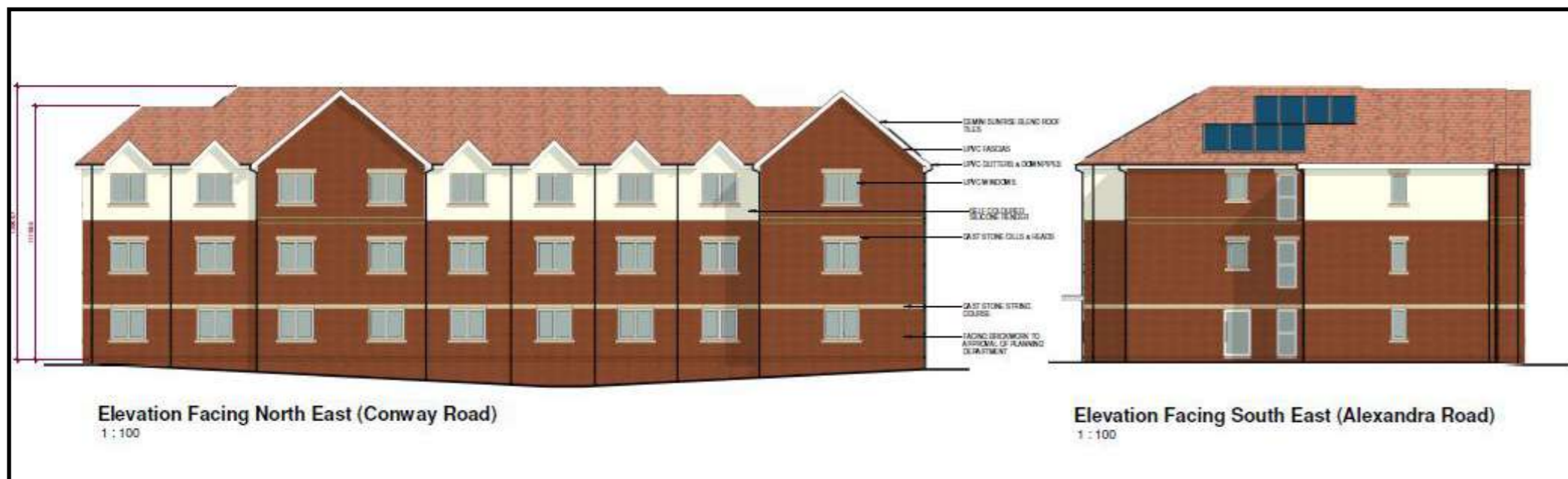
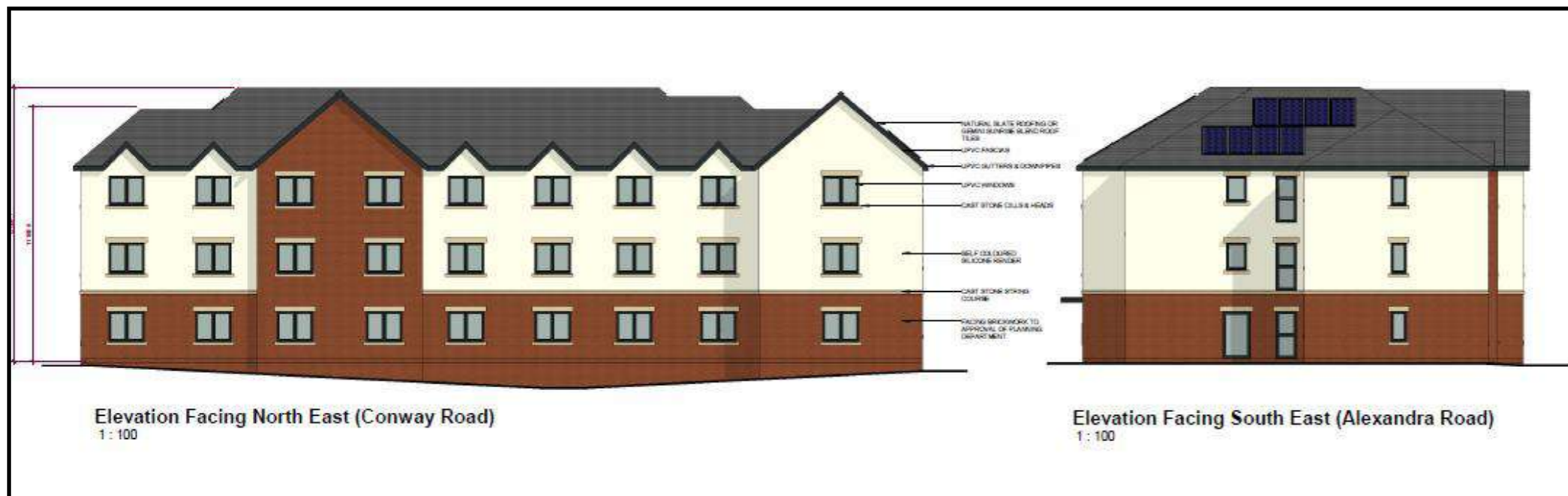
The roof design has evolved into a hipped roof with a truncated ridge and small gable features to the principle elevation.

The ridge height varies along the length of the elevation and the overall ridge height is reduced as far as practically possible.

Small dormer / gable features give interest to the elevation facing Conway Road, and look more refined in render compared to another cladding material.

A stone string course and contrasting brick banding help to break up the elevation by reducing the visual mass and altering the composition and ratios of brickwork.

The option of a red roof tile instead of slate grey has a dramatic affect on the buildings appearance.





Proposals

The proposed scheme provides 23no. 1 bed, 2 person apartments within a single, three storey building.

The building floor plan incorporates single aspect apartments, accessed via a central corridor arrangement with fire escape stairs at either end. This provides an efficient and effective building typology that will fit well within the physical constraints of the site.

The building is positioned to be parallel with Conway Road and set back from the road to adhere to the existing building line.

The size and position of the building allows for parking to be located at the rear of the building and takes advantage of the existing access on Alexandra Road.

The building avoids all tree root protection areas and therefore the majority of trees and hedgerow to the perimeter of the site can be retained.

The buildings main entrance is located at the rear of the building to be close to the parking area and provide level access from the parking into the building.

A separate pedestrian access is provided off Conway Road. A path will lead people around to the main entrance and will ramp up at a gentle gradient to accommodate the slight level difference.

Communal bin stores are to be located adjacent to the site entrance so as to be conveniently accessed by residents and the refuse collection vehicle.



Appearance

The proposed architectural style and selection of materials is to be in-keeping with the surrounding buildings to retain the appearance and character of the area.

Facing brickwork and coloured render are the predominant materials, and common detailing includes stone heads and cills to windows and decorative string courses in stone and contrasting brick. Surrounding roofs are generally covered in clay plain tiles or slate, and it has been decided that a red/orange tile is most suited to this building in this location.

The design process has explored many options for the elevational treatment of the building. The elevations facing Conway Road and Alexandra Road are most important and these have a well proportioned mix of brick and rendered elements, featuring a hipped roof, projecting gables and dormer windows to give a pleasant appearance that is entirely appropriate for the street scene.

The existing trees and hedge are to be retained, and this existing mature foliage will soften the appearance of a new development, complemented by the new landscaping scheme.

Character

Use

The site is located within a residential area and has had a residential and care home uses. The proposed redevelopment of the site intends to replace all of the buildings, and provide a fully affordable residential scheme.

We envisage that the development will have its own character and sense of place due to the unique corner setting.

Amount, Scale and Density

The proposed scheme comprises 23no. one bed affordable apartments within a single building.

The proposed housing mix was determined by the RSL applicant, based on the significant demand in Colwyn Bay, and the proposed dwellings are designed to comply with the requirements and space standards of Welsh Development Quality Requirements 2021 (WDQR 2021) as well as the applicants own specification and requirements.

The scale and density of the development is determined by the space standards required by WDQR 2021, and the constraints and opportunities presented by this site. The site layout adheres to the building line and retains the existing trees on the site, and yet still provides adequate space for car parking. The building sits comfortably on the site and does not overlook or overshadow neighbouring properties despite being 3 stories high. Therefore it can be concluded that the site can comfortably accommodate the size, scale and density of development and that the site is not overdeveloped.

Access and Movement

The site is well placed within the centre of Colwyn Bay and is served by the A547 Conway Road and Alexandra Road, providing links to surrounding settlements as well as a direct route to the A55 and the railway station.

The site is located within a residential area and can be accessed via adopted roads with public footpaths providing safe and convenient access to local shops, services and public open space. In addition, a bus stop is located adjacent to the site entrance on Conway Road providing a public transport link to the Town Centre and surrounding towns.

The position of the new vehicular access into the site is off Alexandra Road in a similar position to the existing established vehicular access, which provides good visibility in both directions for vehicles leaving the site.

The site access leads directly to a communal parking area, providing 13No. parking spaces.

The parking area gradients will comply with the requirements of Lifetime Homes, providing a level approach route from the parking spaces to the entrance doors of the apartment building.

A separate pedestrian access is provided off Conway Road. A path will lead people around to the main entrance and will ramp up at a gentle gradient to accommodate the slight level difference.

Community Safety

The proposed scheme is to meet with the requirements of the Welsh Governments Development Quality Requirements, and as such is required to comply with the principals of Secured by Design and be awarded the SBD Gold award. The scheme will be developed in consultation with the Police Architectural Liaison Officer to ensure that the proposals comply with the principals of Secured by Design and thereby achieving the SBD gold award.

The site layout incorporates the fundamental principles of secured by design in order to reduce crime risk.

- Only one site entrance / exit to prevent the site being used as a cut-through and to minimise escape routes for criminals.
- The boundaries to the rear of the site are to be enclosed with a 1.8m high fence.
- The site boundary along Conway Road and Alexandra Road will have a low stone wall and hedgerow. This boundary is well overlooked and will not be used as private space.
- The parking area is located within the curtilage of the site and is overlooked by many apartments, providing a high degree of natural surveillance.
- The parking area and bin stores will be lit to the SBD standard.
- The physical security of the dwellings will be to a high SBD standard. All doors and windows will be sourced from a manufacturer whose products have been tested and certified to SBD standards for security.
- Landscaping to be designed to provide physical barriers where needed, yet avoid hiding places.

Environmental Sustainability

The development site is currently occupied by existing buildings and is therefore classed as brownfield development. The existing buildings are no longer fit for purpose, they do not meet current space standards and have very poor energy efficiency and high running costs due to the age and form of construction.

The site is in a sustainable location, close to the services and amenities in Colwyn Bay and with good transport links providing access to pedestrians, cycles and vehicles, including the public transport network.

The proposed new buildings will be designed to exceed current building regulations with regard to energy efficiency and conservation of fuel and power. The building specification is likely to include the following elements:

- Construction to adopt a fabric first approach to U-value of construction elements.
- Each dwelling to achieve an EPC A rating if possible.
- Where possible, local materials and manufacturers should be used.
- Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) to be embraced where possible. Timber frame construction is preferred.
- Buildings to be designed to achieve improved airtightness.
- All buildings to use mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) systems where possible.
- Photovoltaic panels with battery storage to be used where possible.