4.6 EMBELLISHMENT

The shape and profile of the brick piers has been tested. The splayed reveals were an attempt to enliven the elevations and reduce the size of the window aperture at the lower levels. This gives the top of the building a lighter appearance.

A wider bay at the ground level entrance helps articulate the front door of the buildings. A finer set of components for the attic floor creates a more delicate top.
4.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING

4.7 GROUND FLOOR TREATMENT TO CONLAN STREET

The ground level floor to ceiling height at Conlan Street and Middle Row is greater than at Kensal Road. This is due to the level change from north to south.

As such, the ground storey, to the south, appears to have a grander scale than on Kensal Road. Whilst this gives rise to the opportunity for inserting a mezzanine level into the Conlan Street studio spaces, the scale of the ground floor is large.

A number of studies explore how the scale of the ground level might be reduced in appearance and give the entrance doors and screens a more human scale.

- Initial test with large scale doors and screens
- Studio doors articulated as smaller elements
- Vent panels introduced to create finer detailing
- Faceted pre-cast window elements
- Secondary band introduced at ground level
A secondary band, inserted between the brick piers at ground level, brings the scale of the ground level storey down in scale. This element protrudes above each studio entrance to articulate the location of each front door, but also to create a small canopy. The leading face of the canopy might also be used for signage.

The band brings the size of the glazed screens down in scale. The secondary band also acts as a light shelf, helping to bounce light into the mezzanine level of the studios within; much like Erno Goldfinger’s fist floor salon space at Willow Road.

The entrance door is solid to reduce the amount of glazing and to make the entrance doors more recognisable from the street.
4.0 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING

4.8 FACADE TREATMENT TO MIDDLE ROW

The elevation to Middle Row is relatively short in comparison to the elevation to Kensal Road and Conlan Street. It is also set back from the back of pavement, creating a more generous setback from the street in this location.

The third floor has been made more recessive and can not be seen from certain positions on Middle Row and Conlan Street. The spacing and depth of the brick piers have been explored. Making them closer together and increasing their depth creates a more dramatic elevation and in practical terms helps reduce the penetration of low westerly sunlight.

Initial test with large scale doors and screens at ground level and similar facade elements to Conlan Street

Third floor becomes more recessive and can not been seen from this view

Ground level articulation to Conlan Street and Middle Row to reduce the scale of the ground storey

Spacing of the upper piers is tightened and deepened to create a more dramatic elevation
The Middle Row elevation is a simple, well articulated composition. The entrance at ground level affords direct access into a self-contained studio and has an appropriate relationship with the more generous pavement in this location.

The brick piers become more slender, with real depth being created in the facade.

The width of the slender piers continue through the ground floor storey.
The proposals have a number of boundaries with adjacent buildings. In some instances the proposals are taller than its neighbours and in these instances the flank elevations on the boundary are visible.

It is normal for these elevations not to have any windows in them. Solid construction, in these locations, prevents the external spread of fire and enables development of neighbouring plots in the future.

However, there are methods for enriching the appearance of these elevations and range from creating depth within the facade to using brick pattern to create a rich set of elevations.
Brick pattern to flank elevation

Brick pattern to flank elevation

Brick pattern within organised bays
The exploratory work outlined in the previous chapter has been consolidated into a set of final proposals. The design rational and organisation of the final proposals is illustrated in this chapter.

The scheme has been shared with and reviewed by the local authority during a series of pre-application meetings and with the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea’s Architectural Appraisal Panel.

The final proposals are the culmination of this process and have also been the subject of wider public consultation.

Illustrative model of the final proposals
The building’s organisation relates specifically to the site and its surrounding context. A number of urban adjustments have been made in acknowledgement of neighbouring buildings. The typical floor plate has also been organised to create an efficient, flexible and well daylight series of spaces for its occupiers.

The diagrams below explain how the typical floor plan has been generated.

01 Site Boundary
The existing site comprises a series of light industrial buildings and two detached houses. The existing buildings are of limited architectural quality.

02 A Cleared Site
The existing buildings are proposed to be demolished and the site considered as a single development plot.

03 Adjustments
The proposed footprint is adjusted to acknowledge the site’s urban context. The Middle Row elevation is aligned with its neighbour, creating more generous public realm. The eastern boundary is also adjusted to respect the neighbouring building.

04 Planning Grid
For the purposes of organising the internal arrangement of the proposed building a 1.5 metre planning grid is applied to the plan. A primary structural grid of 7.5 and 9 metres is generated.

05 Core
The core, which accommodates vertical circulation, wcs, risers and other ancillary elements is located in the centre of the plan. This enables the occupied space to benefit from the best daylight and views outwards.

06 Atrium & Circulation
The core is split into a major and minor core enabling a central atrium to be located in the centre of the plan. This enables natural daylight to enter the deepest part of the plan giving each part of the occupied space good levels of daylight.

07 Sub-division
Whilst a typical floor plate can be let to a single tenant it can also be sub-divided into small units. The arrangement of the galleried circulation around the atrium enables the space to be sub-divided without the need for internal lobbies.

08 Upper Floor Plan
The upper floor plan provides good quality, flexible space enabling the building to be adapted over time. The occupied space benefits from good levels of daylight and fully serviced from the vertical cores.
5.3 THE TYPICAL FLOOR PLATE

The typical upper floor is split into two sections: a northern part and southern part. Both elements are split by the major and minor cores, atrium and galleried circulation.

A floor plate can be let to a single tenant or be sub-divided into smaller units, with their own entrance accessed from the shared circulation space.

The proposed floor plan is serviced by a major and minor core. The major core, located in the centre and west of the plan contains the main passenger lifts. There are 3no. 17 person lifts, which discharge directly onto the galleried circulation zone surrounding the internal atrium.

The major core also contains a means of escape stair along with male and female wcs. There are 6no. cubicles in each block, including an ambulant disabled wc. A fully disable wc, a cleaners’ cupboard and service risers are also located within the major core.

The minor core contains a 26 person goods lift, means of escape stair and service risers.

The central atrium affords daylight to the deepest part of the plan giving good levels of light to the floor plan. A galleried circulation zone runs around the eastern, southern and western edges of the atrium. This enables each quarter of the floor plan to be accessed from the common parts. If a floor plate were sub-divided, each unit could be accessed without the need for creating sub-lobbies.
5.0 FINAL PROPOSALS
5.3 THE TYPICAL FLOOR PLATE

The building is intended for the cultural and creative industries - modern studios and work space for the technology, media and fashion industries.

As such, the building is flexible and adaptable. The building's finishes are simple, yet robust and anticipate change over time.

On a typical floor plate the reinforced concrete structure and building services are exposed. This exploits the thermal mass of the building and enables services to be easily adapted as the use of the building evolves.
Exposed concrete soffits and surfaces mounted services

Exposed concrete and simple screens

Illustrative view of a typical floor plate
The ground floor plan is organised in response to the site conditions and context identified in the site analysis described earlier in this report.

The ground floor is organised in an intuitive and straightforward way to enable users and visitors to access each part of the building quickly and efficiently.

The diagrams below describe how the ground floor plan is organised.

01 Extent of Plan
The extent of the ground plan relates to the upper storeys and the adjustments that acknowledge neighbouring buildings. The major and minor cores contain vertical circulation and other ancillary accommodation.

02 Entrance & Reception
The principle entrance is from Kensal Road, the principle road to the north. The reception is on axis with the entrance and enables the main waiting area to exist at the base of the atrium, benefiting from good levels of daylight.

03 Servicing & Escape
Servicing access is via Conlan Street, enabling deliveries and refuse pick-up to happen from the tertiary street. The service entrance connects directly into the minor core containing the goods lift. A means of escape from the major core discharges onto Middle Row.

04 Retail
A small retail unit is proposed and accessed from Kensal Road. This is envisaged as a cafe offering amenity to the local area and proposed building. This unit can also open into the central atrium.

05 Active Frontages
A number of smaller, self-contained studios are accessed directly from Kensal Road, Conlan Street and Middle Row. These are envisaged as smaller studio-type spaces. A series of front doors and generous screens activate the building’s elevations.

06 Ground Floor Plan
The ground floor plan creates a generous and welcoming series of spaces. The street is activated by a series of front doors. The entrance sequence is intuitive and enables occupants and visitors to move around the building in a straightforward way.
5.5 THE GROUND FLOOR PLAN

The ground floor has its principle entrance on Kensal Road. A double-height entrance lobby creates an appropriate sense of arrival. The building's main reception is on axis with the main entrance and can be easily seen.

The main waiting area is located in the centre of the plan, within the main atrium volume. This is a generously top-lit space. Visitor toilets are discreetly located on the southern edge of the space.

A retail unit, envisaged as a cafe, is also accessed from Kensal Road and connects internally to the atrium and waiting area. This provides a useful amenity for the public and proposed building users.

A series of smaller, self-contained studio units are accessed from the surrounding streets.

The main lifting core, in the centre and west part of the plan, is access from the main waiting area, via a number of discreet access gates. The access gates and lift lobby is visible from the main reception. The major core contains a means of escape stair that ultimately discharges onto Middle Row. The core also contains a disabled wc, office welfare facilities and service risers.

The minor core contains a goods lift, means of escape stair and service risers and can be accessed from the reception and service entrance on Conlan Street. The main reception is also equipped with a small store.

A bin presentation area and sub-station are located adjacent to the service entrance and can be accessed directly from Conlan Street.
The existing collection of buildings on the site have largely blank elevations, presenting a relatively inhospitable series of facades to the surrounding streets.

The proposals create a series of front doors to each of the streets, adjacent to the building. These include the building’s main entrance and cafe entrance accessed from Kensal Road.

There are also a series of self contained units that are envisaged as smaller studio-type spaces. Each have their own dedicated entrance from Kensal Road, Conlan Street and Middle Row.

The unit adjacent to Kensal Road also has access to lower ground floor space. The studios in the southern part of the plan, accessed from Conlan Street and Middle Row, have similar access to lower ground floor space via their own internal stair.

These units also have a lightweight mezzanine floor that is open to the accommodation at ground level.
The smaller studio spaces on Conlan Street and Middle Row comprise ground level space with dedicated entrances from the street.

The ground level also connects to a lower ground level space via a dedicated internal stair. A series of double height voids at the perimeter enables daylight to penetrate the lower ground floor.

A light-weight steel mezzanine is inserted above the ground floor with continuous double height voids at the building’s perimeter enabling daylight to enter the ground floor level.
5.0 FINAL PROPOSALS

5.7 MASSING

The massing and external appearance of the building has been developed and tested over a period of time and through detailed discussions with the local authority; the early development of which is outlined in the Design Development and Testing chapter of this report.

The massing of the final proposal responds to the emerging context, characterised by some of the new developments in the surrounding area.

The prevailing character of the area is very mixed, both in terms of architectural treatment and scale. However, the hierarchy of existing streets, the pattern of development and existing infrastructure does begin to suggest how a new building might be organised and development.

This section describes the design rational for the massing and external appearance of the proposals.
The site is proposed to be taken forward as a single, coherent development. This ultimately enables the building to be as flexible as possible - able to be let to a single tenant or to a variety of smaller enterprises.

In broad terms, the edges of the existing buildings (that define the back of pavement) set-out the proposed building footprint. This maintains a well defined series of street edges, in line with how the existing context has evolved. There is an exception to this principle, which occurs along the small frontage to Middle Row. In this location the proposed building footprint sets back slightly from the site’s boundary following the building line of the two existing detached houses rather than the back of pavement line.

This makes the proposed Middle Row frontage align with the neighbouring building at 1-3 Middle Row and creates a more generous widening of the pavement in this location. This creates a well scaled piece of public realm and an appropriate setting for the building. This also acknowledges the anticipated residential development opposite on the western side of Middle Row.

The massing of the building is determined, in part, by the hierarchy of existing streets. The principle mass addresses Kensal Road, the principle street. A ground plus 3 storey shoulder height is proposed with a further set back fourth floor. The massing of the building is smaller on the secondary streets of Conlan Street and Middle Row. A ground plus 2 storey shoulder height is proposed. The third floor is set back from the building edge on Middle Row and Conlan Street.

A small plant enclosure is proposed at the top of the building. This contains a very small element of plant - the majority of which is confined to the basement.

In order to control and organise the changes of massing a series of horizontal bands are introduced. These hold the top of each level enabling floors to set back in a controlled manner.

Illustrative massing diagram from the north-east
Illustrative massing diagram from the south-west
Illustrative massing diagram with organising horizontal bands from the north-east
Illustrative massing diagram with organising horizontal bands from the south-west
5.0 FINAL PROPOSALS

5.7 MASSING

The building sits within a diverse and varied context. The massing broadly reflects the emerging schemes that have been developed in recent years and those anticipated in the near future.

The overall massing responds to specific streets and edge conditions. The set-back or attic floors respond to the varied roofscape of the local context.
Proposed model viewed from the north-east

Proposed model viewed from the south-west
5.0 FINAL PROPOSALS

5.8 EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

The architectural character and treatment of buildings within the local context is varied and a consequence of the diversity of building uses and types. Clearly one would expect the local domestic properties to appear very differently from the large span industrial units, and indeed this variety characterises the local context. In many ways the external appearance of individual buildings is determined by the functional requirements of each building, rather than by a prevailing architectural character. The proposals also acknowledge that the area is undergoing an element of renewal with the emergence of larger scale developments. The diagrams below describe the organisation of the external appearance of the building to Kensal Road.

01 Establishing an Appropriate Shoulder Height
A ground plus three storey shoulder height is proposed for the Kensal Road elevation. This is broadly in line with the emerging context of Kensal Road.

02 An Attic Storey
The top floor attic storey is set back from the ground plus three storey shoulder height. The top floor ‘crows’ the building, giving the overall design a balanced composition.

03 Horizontal Organisation
Horizontal bands are introduced to organise the massing of the building as it responds to the context to the south. The bands give the building a horizontal emphasis.

04 Organising Grid
The internal planning grid is expressed in the elevations to create a well-organised and refined series of elevations. Whilst the organising grid controls the majority of the elevations, the edges are adjusted to adapt to the actual site dimensions.
**05 Apertures**
Within the organising grid that sets out the primary piers, a series of apertures that increase in width on the upper floors. This gives the higher levels a feeling of ‘lightness.’

**06 Embellishments**
There are a series of embellishments at ground level that articulate entrances and frame openings into the café and studio spaces. The attic storey also has a different treatment in order to differentiate it from the lower levels.

**07 Fenestration**
Within each aperture is a window and screen assembly that gives the elevation a second layer of articulation. The majority of windows have a side ventilation panel.

**08 Depth**
The elevations contain depth within the window, screen and door reveals. Shadows are cast into the deep reveals giving the elevations a sense of depth.
5.0 FINAL PROPOSALS
5.8 EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

Whilst the architectural character of surrounding buildings is varied, a number of the existing buildings are masonry - often brick with punched openings for windows or doors. Often there is some depth to these opening at the reveals.

Our proposal is for a masonry-led building, with a series of regular, punched openings.
The Kensal Road elevation is set-out on the existing building frontage and therefore maintains the existing pavement width. The proposal retains a sense of street enclosure without being overbearing. The shoulder height of the proposal is set at ground plus three stories, with a set back attic floor.

The height of the proposal to Kensal Road is generally in line with the modern housing scheme and student accommodation opposite the site.
An appropriate sense of street enclosure is proposed. The cross section demonstrates that the shoulder height on Kensal Road is broadly comparable with the residential scheme opposite the site to the north.

The shoulder height on Conlan Street is reduced to acknowledge the lower scale of buildings to the south.