

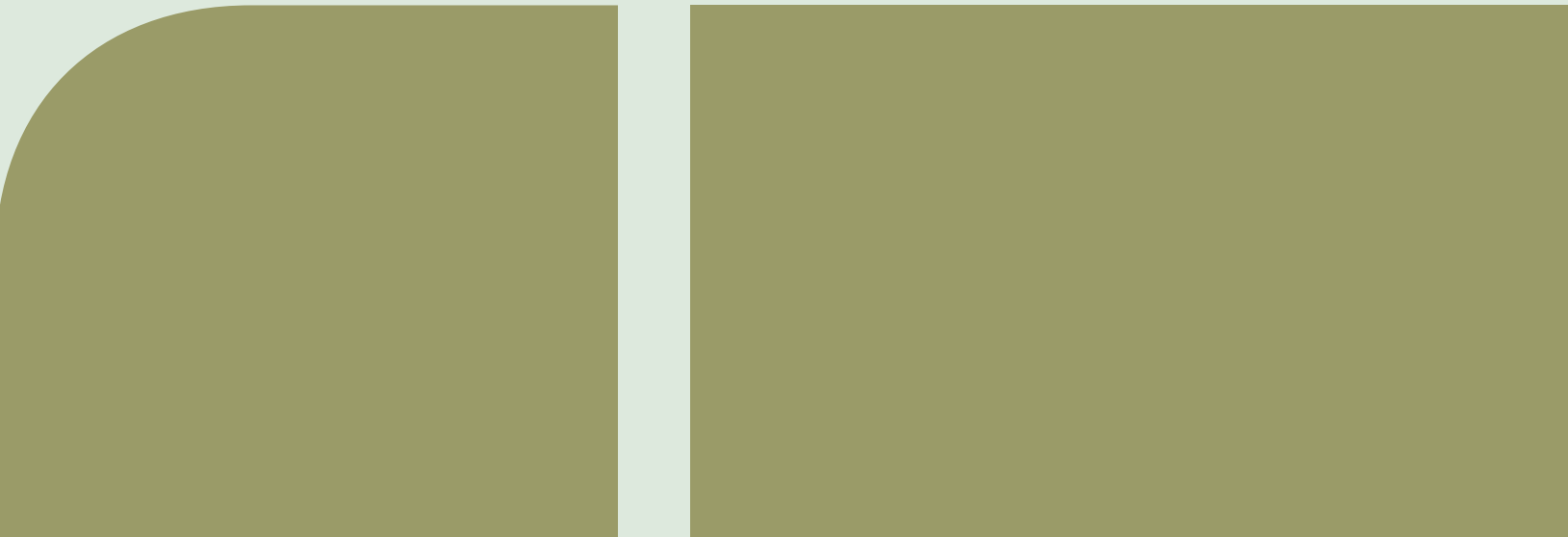


# ATELIER.MB

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

ABBEY HOUSE ROOFTOP

|              |           |
|--------------|-----------|
| REVISION     | -         |
| DATE ISSUED  | JULY 2025 |
| PROJECT REF. | 2088      |



ARCHITECTURE + HERITAGE

AMAZON HOUSE • BRAZIL STREET  
MANCHESTER • M1 3PW

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Image: View of Abbey House from Mosley Street.

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

# 1.0

## INTRODUCTION



Image: Abbey House rooftop.

This Design and Access Statement is submitted in support of a planning application for the conversion of part of the existing roof of Abbey House into two rooftop terraces.

The proposal seeks to revitalise an underutilised area of the building by removing a disused caretaker's flat and replacing it with high-quality external amenity space for the benefit of the office occupiers.

The development will enhance the building's functionality, improve accessibility, and contribute positively to the wellbeing of its users.. It was produced by Atelier MB in July 2025. The statement relates to changes to the rooftop space only.

# 2.0 SITE + CONTEXT

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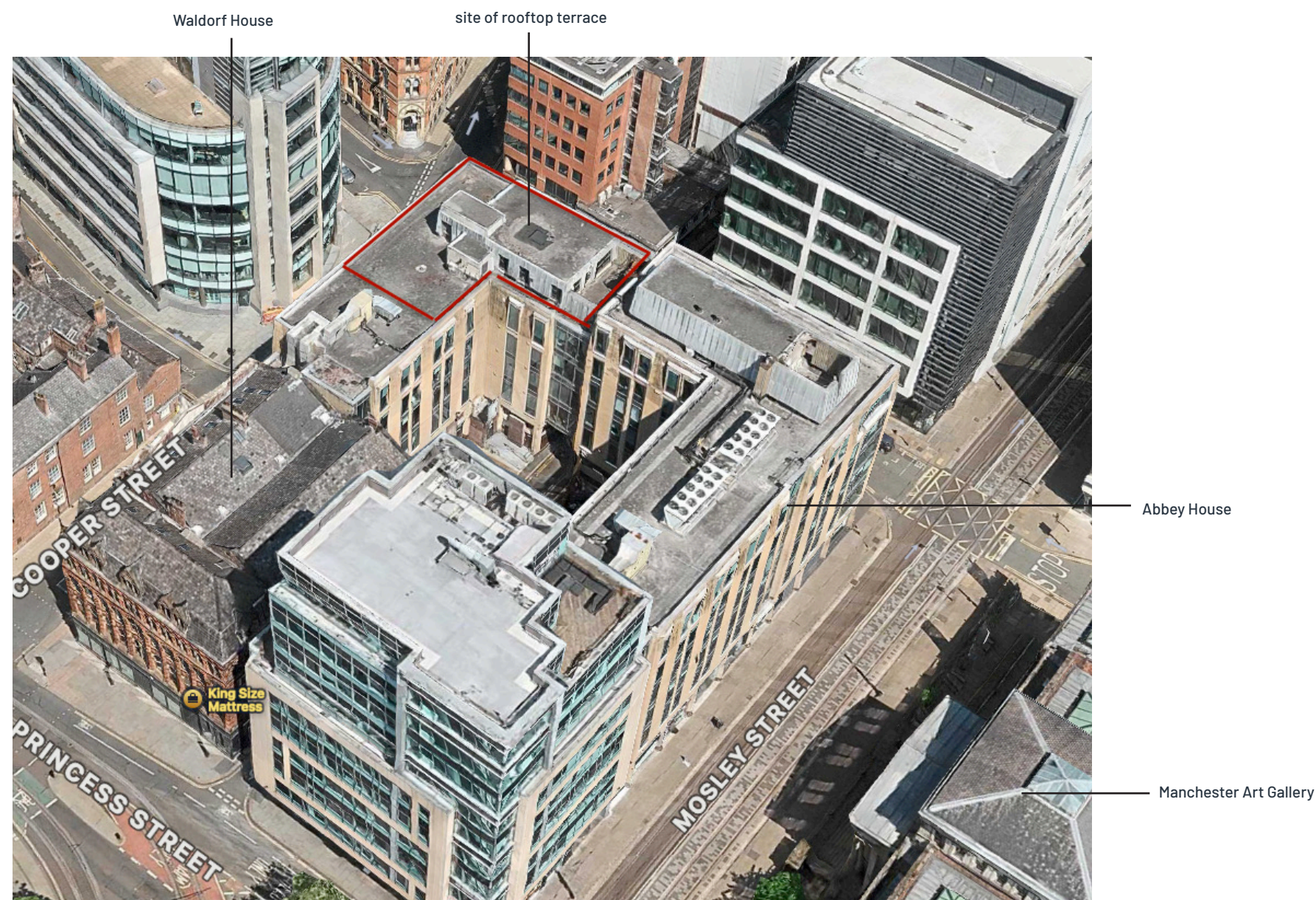


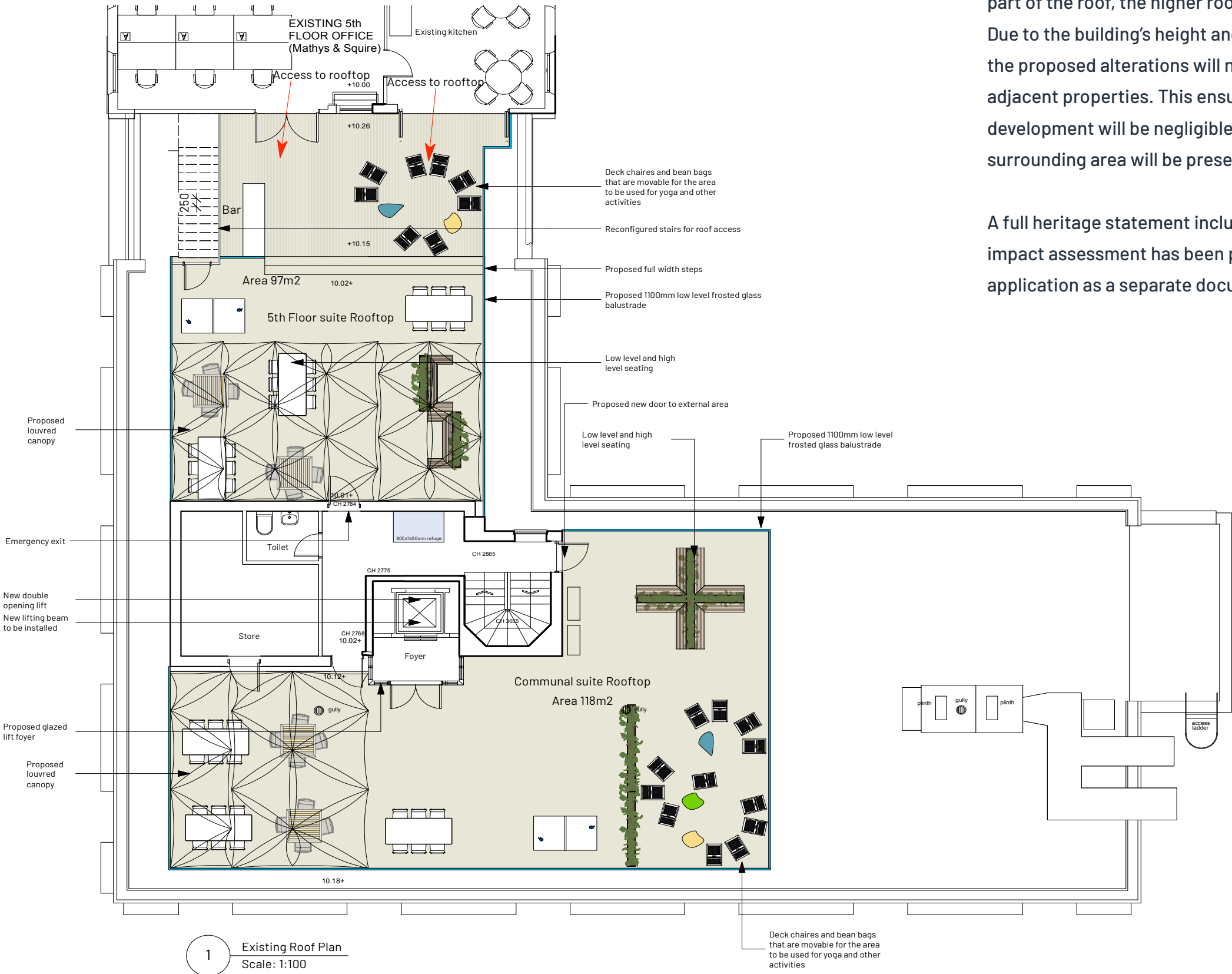
Image: Aerial view of Abbey House with rooftop site highlighted in red.

Abbey House is a part 6-storey, part 5-storey commercial office building located at 32 Booth Street in Manchester city centre. The building is situated in a dense urban environment, surrounded by a mix of commercial, civic, and institutional buildings. The rooftop currently houses a caretaker's flat, which has been vacant and unused since 2005. The building is not listed but is located within the Upper King Street Conservation Area. The building adjoins 1 listed building (Waldorf House) and is in close proximity to the Grade I listed Manchester Art Gallery. The site is also in the immediate vicinity of George Street Conservation Area and Albert Square Conservation Area.

The building is of modern appearance with sandstone coloured cladding and large floor to ceiling windows. It straddles West Mosley Street with a road and a right of way in an undercroft underneath the building. On the ground the accommodation is predominately retail, whilst the upper floors house commercial office tenants.

The subject of this application is the Booth Street/Cooper Street part of the roof, the higher roof not being part of this proposal. Due to the building's height and the set-back nature of the rooftop, the proposed alterations will not be visible from street level or from adjacent properties. This ensures that the visual impact of the development will be negligible and that the character of the surrounding area will be preserved.

A full heritage statement including a heritage assessment and impact assessment has been prepared and is included with this application as a separate document.



# 3.0 PROPOSED WORKS

## 3.0 PROPOSED WORKS

Abbey House is not listed but is within the setting of a The proposed development includes the following elements:

- Demolition of the existing caretaker's flat, which occupies a portion of the fifth-floor rooftop.
- Creation of two rooftop terraces:
  - One terrace will be exclusively allocated to the fourth-floor office occupiers and accessed from their suite exclusivley.
  - The second terrace will be shared by the remaining office tenants.
- Extension of the existing lift shaft to the fifth floor to provide step-free access.
- Installation of a fully accessible WC at rooftop level.
- Installation of glass balustrades around the perimeter of the terraces.
- Laying of porcelain tile paving across the terrace surfaces.
- Installation of two lightweight canopies to provide shelter in each separate terrace.
- Incorporation of subtle feature lighting to create a welcoming ambiance.

The materials proposed have been carefully selected for their durability, aesthetic quality, and compatibility with the existing building fabric. Key materials include:

- Glass Balustrades: Frameless, toughened laminated safety glass panels with stainless steel base channels and minimal capping.
- Porcelain Tile Paving: 20mm-thick external-grade porcelain tiles with a textured, anti-slip surface (R11 rating), laid on a pedestal support system.
- Canopies: Powder-coated aluminium frame structures with tensile fabric or polycarbonate roofing, finished in muted tones.
- Lighting: Low-level LED strip lighting integrated into the balustrade base and canopy structures, warm white and dimmable.
- WC Fit-Out: Slip-resistant vinyl flooring, moisture-resistant wall panels, and stainless steel grab rails, compliant with DDA/Equality Act standards

4.0 DESIGN + ACCESS

# 4.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

The design approach is contemporary yet restrained, ensuring that the new rooftop elements integrate seamlessly with the existing building. The use of glass and lightweight structures ensures that the intervention remains visually unobtrusive, while the high-quality finishes elevate the user experience. The layout of the terraces has been designed to maximise usable space while maintaining clear circulation routes and safe access. The canopies are positioned to provide shelter without overshadowing the space.

The proposed terraces will provide much-needed outdoor space for office users, supporting mental wellbeing, productivity, and social interaction. The ability to step outside for fresh air, informal meetings, or quiet reflection is increasingly valued in modern workplaces, particularly in the context of post-pandemic working patterns. By repurposing an underused rooftop area, the proposal makes efficient use of existing building stock and contributes to the long-term sustainability and attractiveness of Abbey House as a workplace.

Accessibility is a core principle of the proposal. The extension of the lift to the fifth floor ensures that all users, including those with mobility impairments, can access the rooftop terraces. The inclusion of a fully accessible WC further supports this inclusive approach.

The view of the roof from other neighboring buildings is currently unsightly and this proposal will enhance the part of the roof that is the subject of this application.

The terraces to the communal terrace will be level throughout, with no steps or thresholds. All materials and fixtures will be selected and installed in accordance with relevant accessibility standards, including tactile indicators and compliant handrails where required.

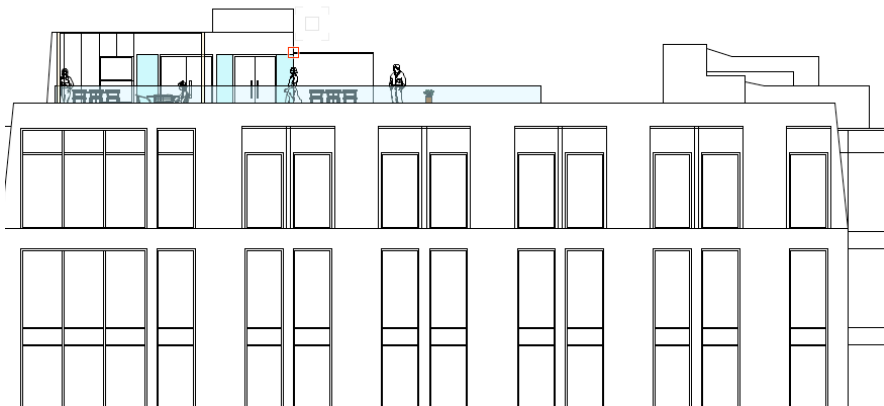


Image: Showing proposed elevation of new rooftop.

# 5.0 CONCLUSION

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The proposed rooftop terrace conversion at Abbey House represents a thoughtful and well-considered enhancement to the building. It delivers high-quality, accessible outdoor space for office users, improves the building’s functionality, and does so with minimal visual or environmental impact. The materials and design approach have been carefully selected to ensure durability, elegance, and compatibility with the existing structure.

We would ask the City Council to support this application, recognising the positive contribution it will make to the building’s users and the wider urban environment.

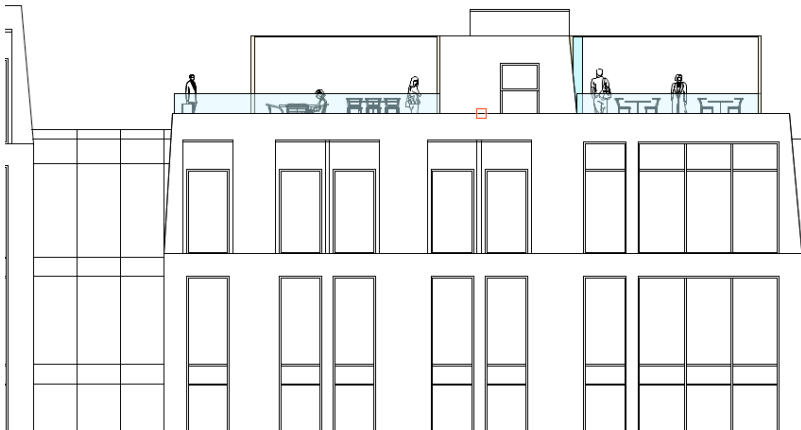


Image: Showing proposed changes to rooftop.

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