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23 Radium St

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Introduction

This document, prepared by BARCX, is a proposal outlining the planned improvements for 23 Radium Street. The main focus of this proposal is the addition of a glazed rooftop extension, which will serve as a covered terrace, providing additional ancillary space for the floor below.

The design has now been revised from the previous mixed-use approach. Due to concerns over the right to light and disagreements with neighbouring properties, the client has had to reassess their strategy and incorporate a design that minimises the impact on the surrounding neighbourhood and existing tenants.

Site Description

Located in Ancoats, Manchester, the site features a former factory currently utilized for commercial purposes, alongside a loading bay situated adjacent to its southern elevation. The building on this site, a product of twentieth-century architecture, stands where St Paul's Church School and a terrace of unspecified-use buildings once existed.

The structure, rising to three stories, adopts a rectangular layout and is distinguished by its brick walls and a flat roof concealed behind a parapet. School Court borders the site on its side and rear. Historically, a canal arm, now filled, was positioned to the north of the property. Behind the building lies an array of lower-rise industrial structures, some accompanied by external yards or storage spaces, and patches of undeveloped land.

Southward, beyond School Court, lies a two-story brick structure, formerly the Cross Keys Inn, anchoring the intersection of Radium Street and Jersey Street. The site is part of the Ancoats Conservation Area and is surrounded by notable structures, including the Grade II* listed Beehive Mill (NHLE: 1291735) directly across the street, and the Grade II listed Little Mill (NHLE: 1282961) to the south.

The building itself is constructed with a reinforced concrete frame, adorned with brown and red brickwork and features cross windows. Notably, the south elevation, near the loading bay, exhibits distinctive steel supports, likely historical remnants used for hoisting equipment to an upper shaft opening.

Project Overview

This project proposal, now featuring fully retractable glazing, takes inspiration from the horizontal lines of the existing sash window proportions. It sits sympathetically, set back from the roof parapet, with the building height not exceeding the existing lift overrun height.

The development closely aligns with the recently approved mixed-use project by Manchester Life, adopting complementary approaches in terms of height, mass, volume, and material use to enhance and revitalise the streetscape.

The proposed floor consists of a covered roof terrace, serving as ancillary and breakout space for the tenant floor below. The design layout complies with Manchester City Council's design guidelines and has been further refined from the previous pre-application engagement.

Breakdown

Covered terrace: c.183 m2.

Design and Heritage Celebration

The rooftop level incorporates significant setbacks, carefully designed to minimise the visual impact on Beehive Mill and align with the new sightlines proposed by MCR Life's Radium Street project. These design choices ensure that the development not only respects but also honours the historical context, allowing the new construction to blend harmoniously with the character and heritage of the surrounding area.

The documentation will demonstrate that the development's visual impact is minimal, seamlessly integrating with the existing streetscape. This further underscores our commitment to preserving the area's rich industrial past while embracing contemporary architectural expressions.

We are confident that our proposal not only fits within but also enhances the fabric of the existing landscape of MCR Life's development, fostering a meaningful connection between Manchester's industrial heritage and its ongoing urban evolution.

Construction

This project is designed to minimise impact on the existing tenants and the surrounding neighbourhood. The glass and steel frame will be prefabricated and delivered to site, requiring only a small mobile crane to lift the materials over the course of a few days.

There is sufficient space on the side of the property to position this crane, and it will be situated within the curtilage of our site, ensuring no disruption to the street.

The modular and sustainable nature of the build means an estimated turnaround of 10 weeks for assembly. The remaining work involves replacing all the existing windows with grey anthracite frames, helping to revitalise the building.

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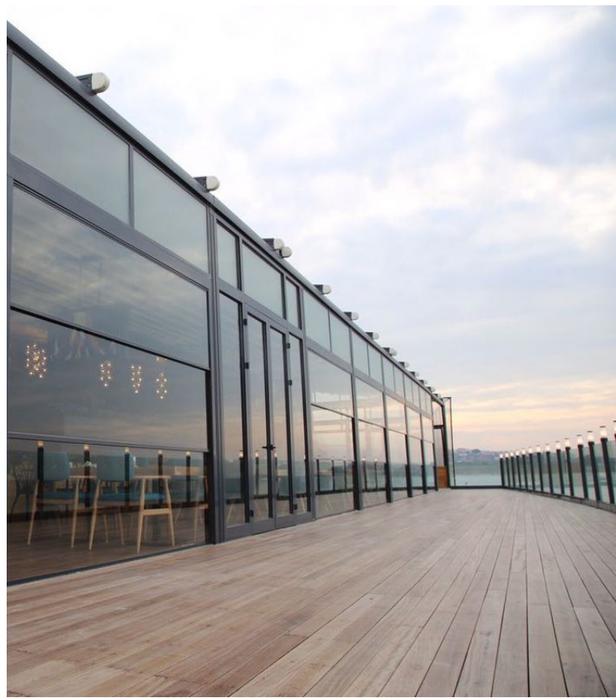
Relevant Precedents

The material strategy features a steel grey frame, in keeping with the metalwork and industrial character of Ancoats, alongside translucent glazing to ensure generous natural light filters through, while also addressing right to light concerns for neighbouring developments.

Both the walls and roof are electrically operable. The roof will feature a louvered system that can retract fully.

Lighting and plumbing are already fully integrated, as it’s a modular system.



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Relevant Precedents

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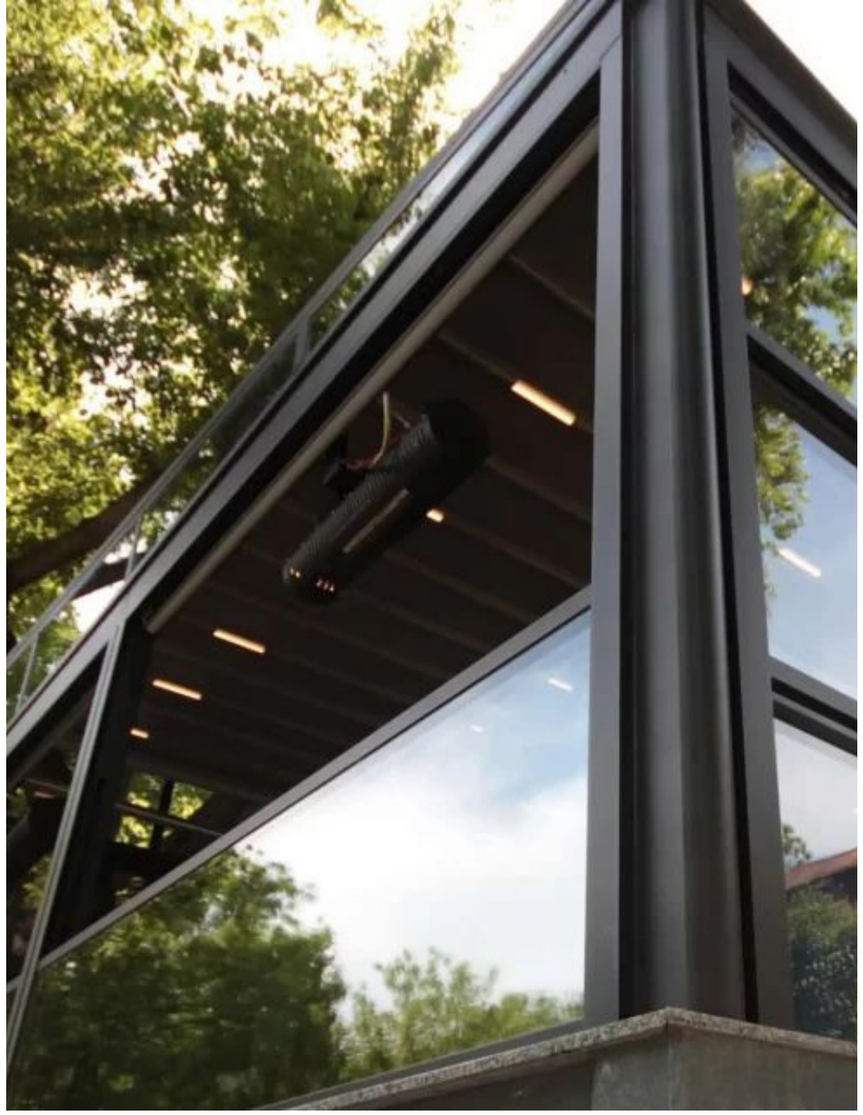

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Site Context

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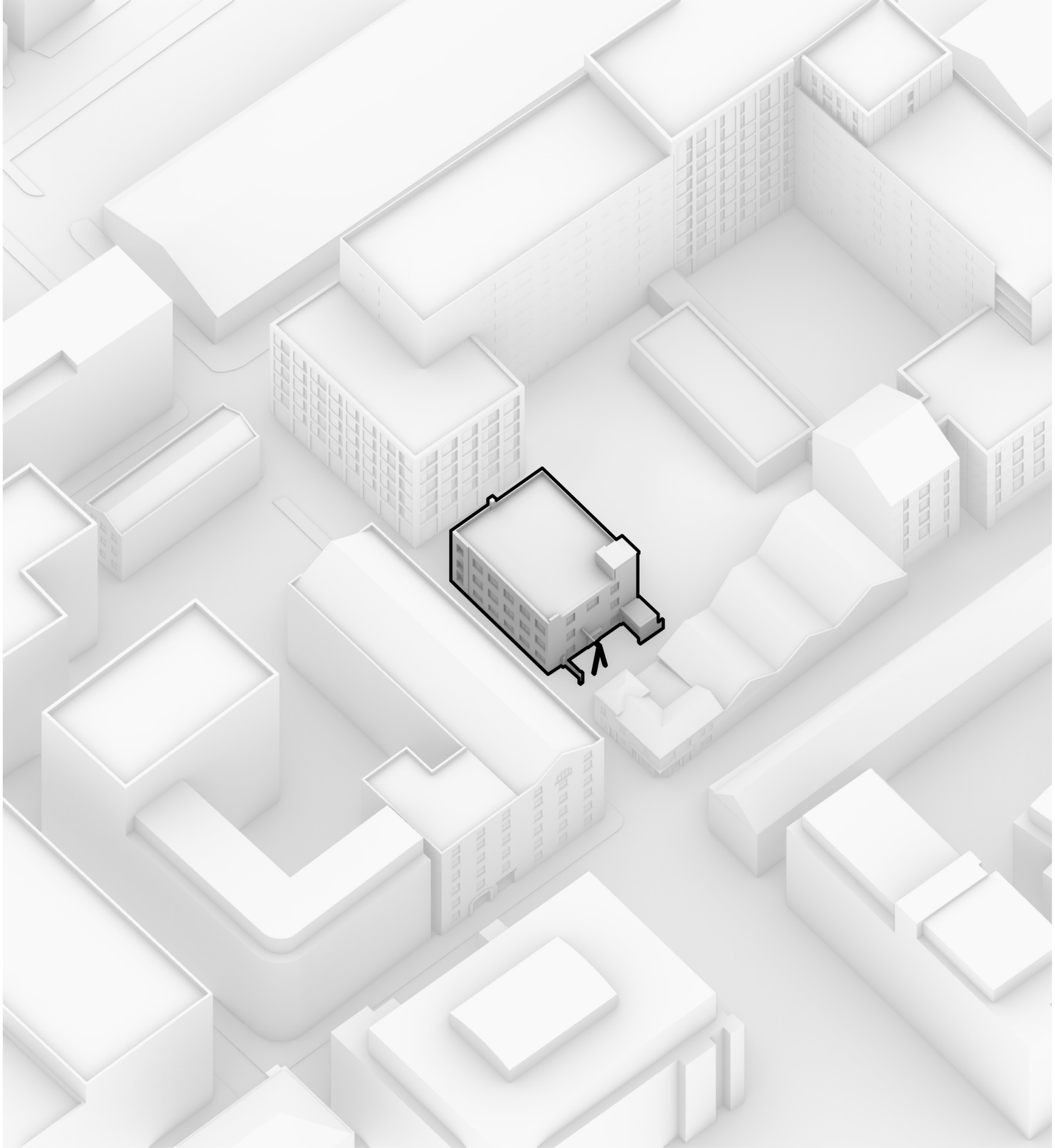
Concept - State of Play

Under the directive of the Manchester City Council, it was advised that the development at 23 Radium Street aligns seamlessly with neighboring structures, emphasising a collaborative and coordinated policy.

Given the gridded urban pattern characteristic of Ancoats, a decision was made to delicately fill any voids within the street scene. This was achieved by introducing setbacks strategically, effectively minimising the impact on the corner junction buildings.



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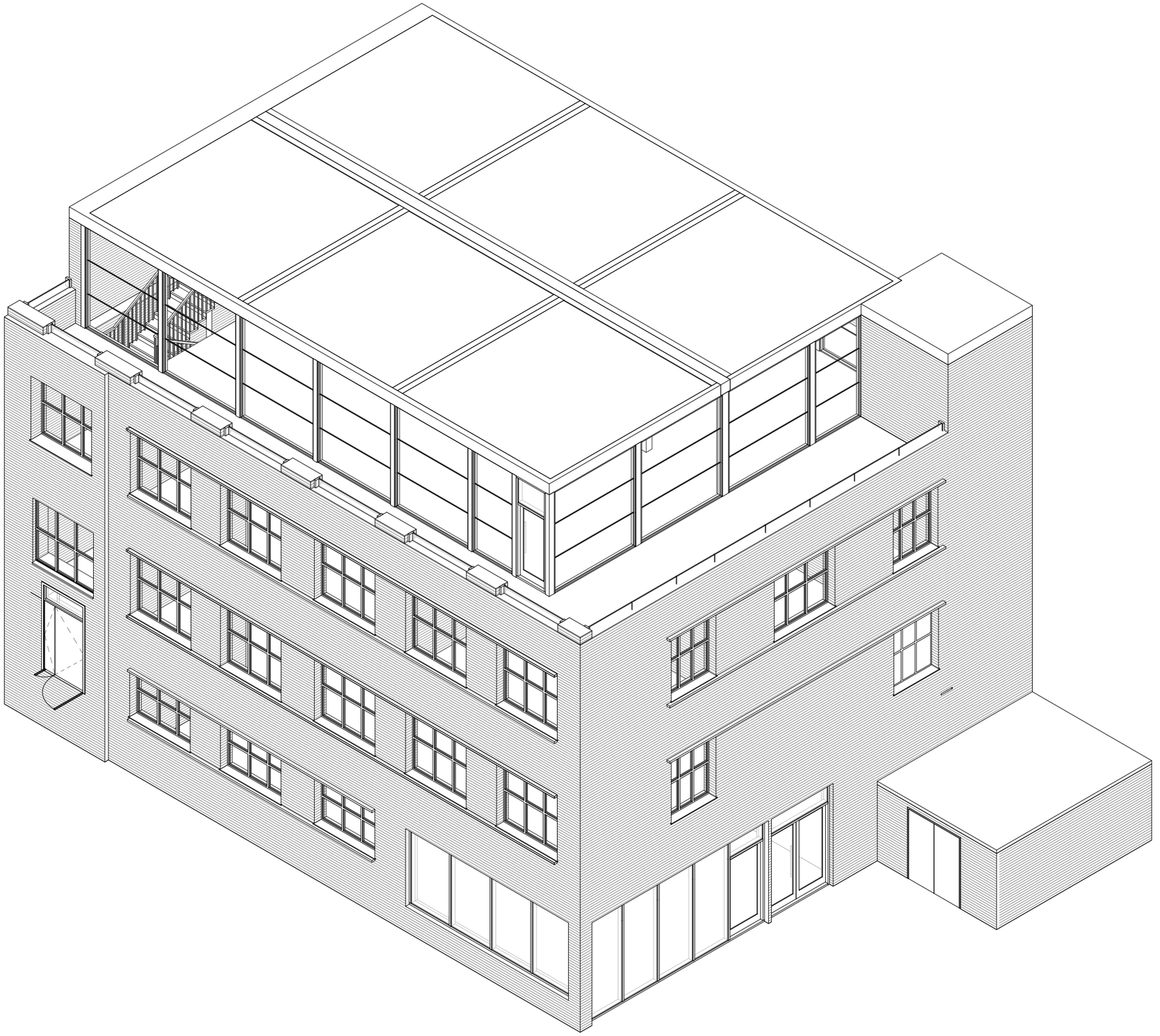
Concept - New Mass (Closed)

The initial approach involved expanding the structure to its maximum footprint, ensuring it aligned with the approved scheme by Manchester Life. However, the scheme has since been revised to a single-storey glazed addition, with even greater setbacks than originally intended.

A crucial aspect of the assessment was determining the potential impact of this mass on the Beehive Mill, particularly whether it would compete with or enhance the mill's overall value.

Ultimately, it was concluded that implementing necessary setbacks was essential to minimise any potential impacts as effectively as possible.



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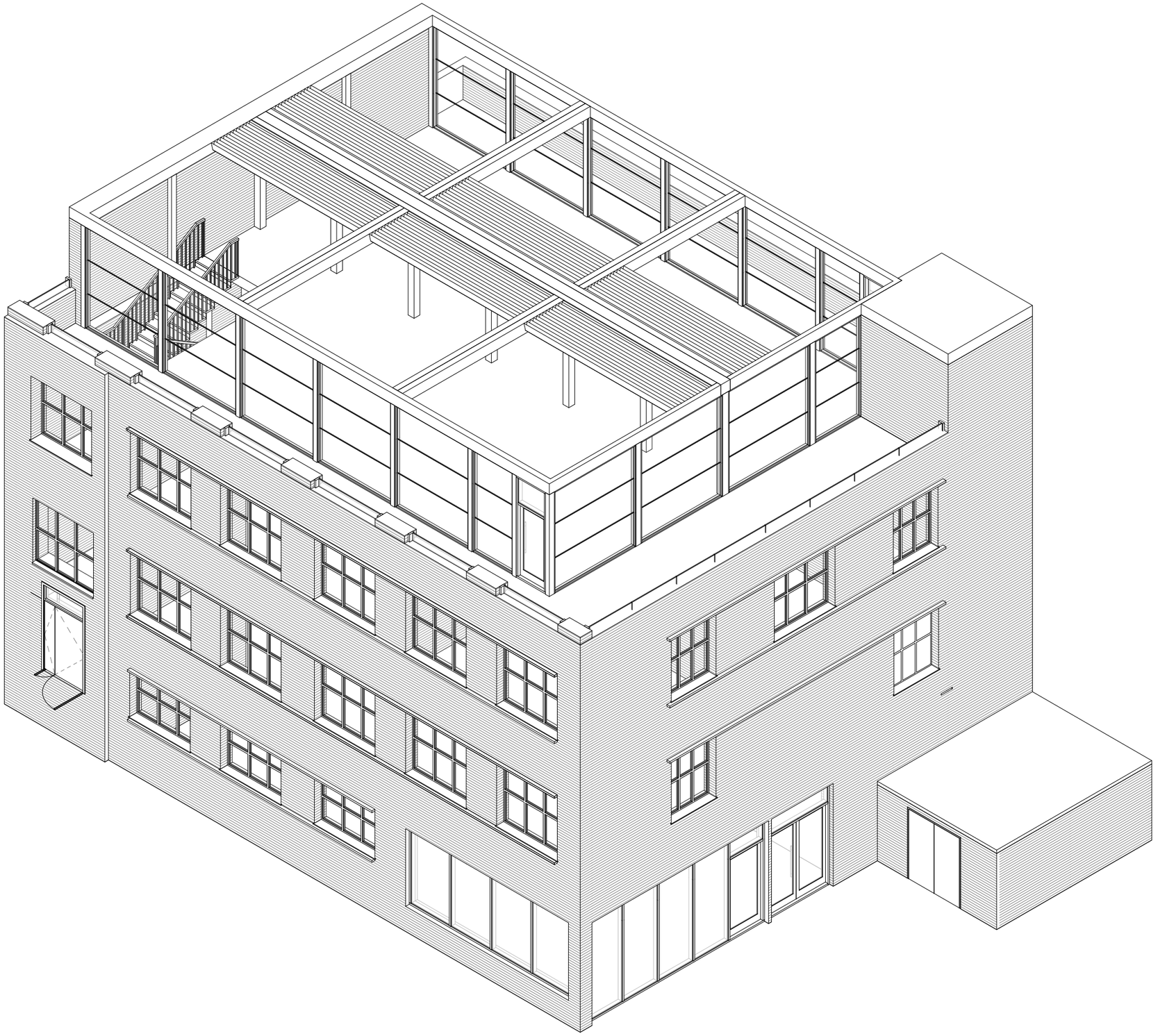
Concept - Lightweight and Visibility

The glass box is fully transparent, regardless of whether it is retracted or not. The existing parapet wall conceals a third of its mass, and the sightline does not exceed the height of the existing lift overrun. The massing is now harmonised with Manchester Life's new scheme, providing an appropriate stepping down to the corner of the Dance Bar building.



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Composition - Elevations

The elevation and plan details should be examined in conjunction with the separate drawing packages provided.

Our proposal is structured into two distinct tiers. The first tier comprises a brick base, designed to seamlessly integrate with the existing architectural characteristics of the building, ensuring continuity.

The second tier is a rooftop addition, featuring a lightweight steel glazed frame construction.

A notable element of the rooftop design is the use of steel frame and full glazing chosen for its industrial aesthetic, which reflects both the building's inherent character and the broader context of its surroundings.

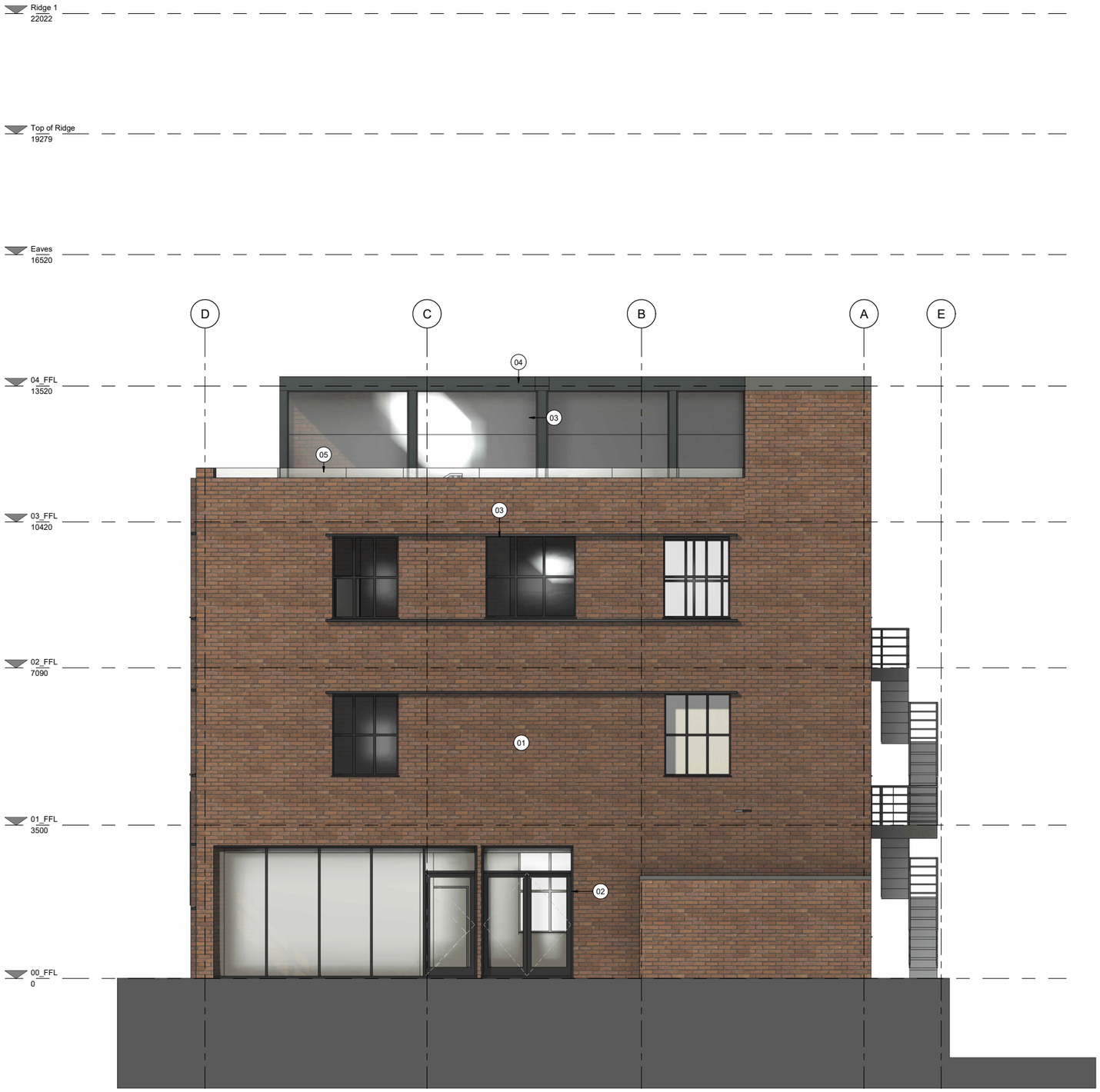
The specified materials for this project are as follows:

1. Brick to match as existing
2. Grey Steel frame and full glazing
3. Anthrocite Grey Window and Door Frames

These materials have been carefully selected to complement the existing structure while introducing contemporary elements that enhance the building's overall aesthetic and functionality.

We have also decided to activate the corner street-level frontage to create a clear threshold and entrance to the building.

The side brick fencing has been removed to showcase the building and highlight its new entrance.



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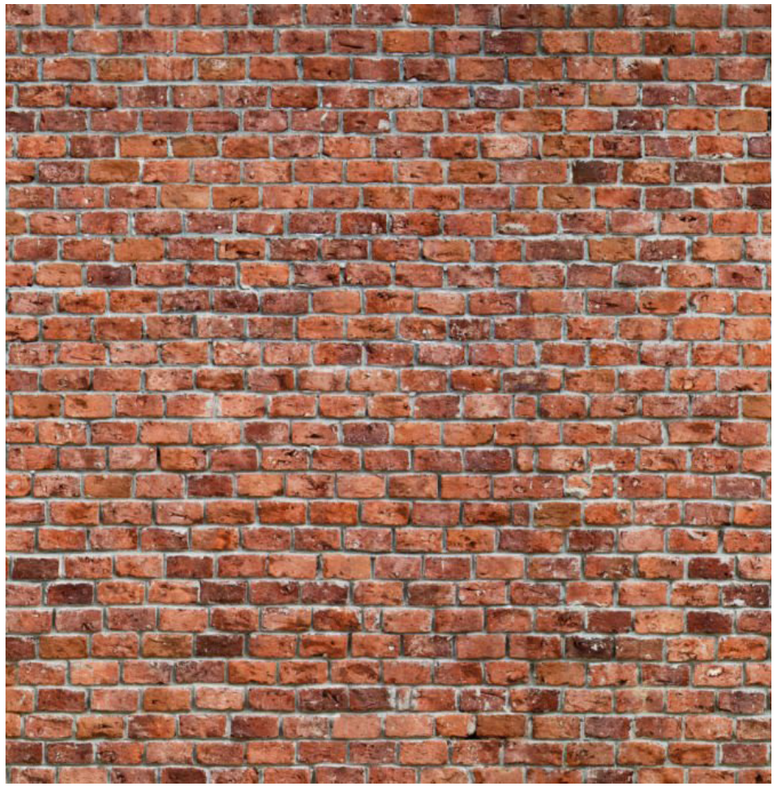
Composition - Material

The proposed materials demonstrate a thoughtful contrast with the existing building and its industrial surroundings. The carefully selected color palettes and textures, especially the rustic metal finishes, seamlessly complement the anthracite grey window frames. In an effort to revitalize the facade, a comprehensive strategy involves the replacement of all existing windows.

Concurrently, precise attention will be dedicated to the restoration of the original brickwork through a process of cleaning and repointing. This thorough approach is employed to ensure a unified and sophisticated aesthetic, mitigating any semblance of a disjointed or piecemeal appearance in the development.

The railing in between the parapet will be a modern interpretation and a imple frameless glass infill.



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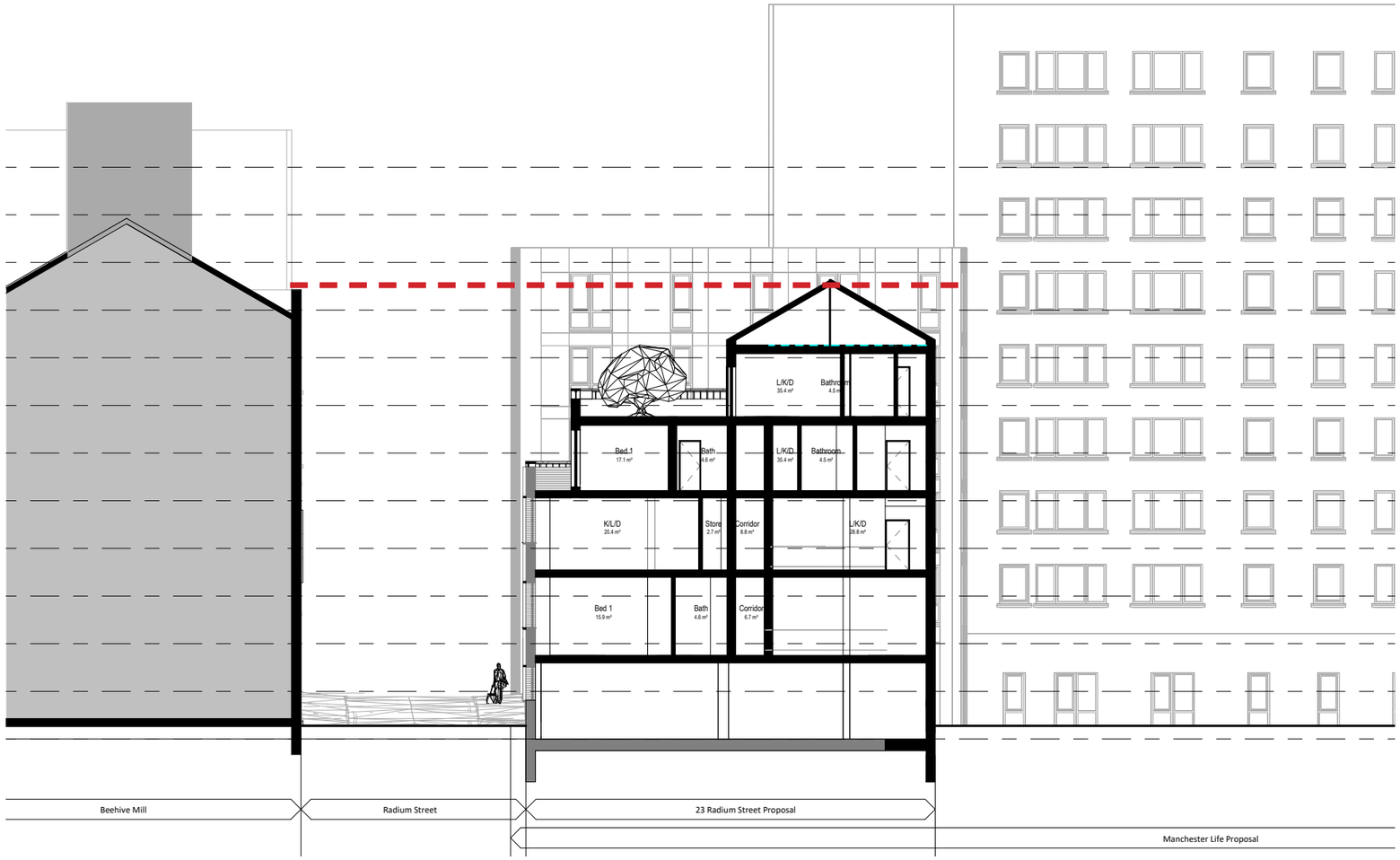
PREVIOUS SCHEME Composition - Height

Investigations and evidence gathered during our previous pre-application engagement with the city supported an increase in height and massing, which was further endorsed by Historic England.

However, due to unrelated issues outside of planning considerations, we have now revised the scheme, as evidenced on the following page.



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Composition - Height

The difference in massing and how the building sits in relation to the surrounding new context, as well as its heritage context, feels more appropriate and in keeping with the area.

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PREVIOUS SCHEME Views - Eye Level Perspective

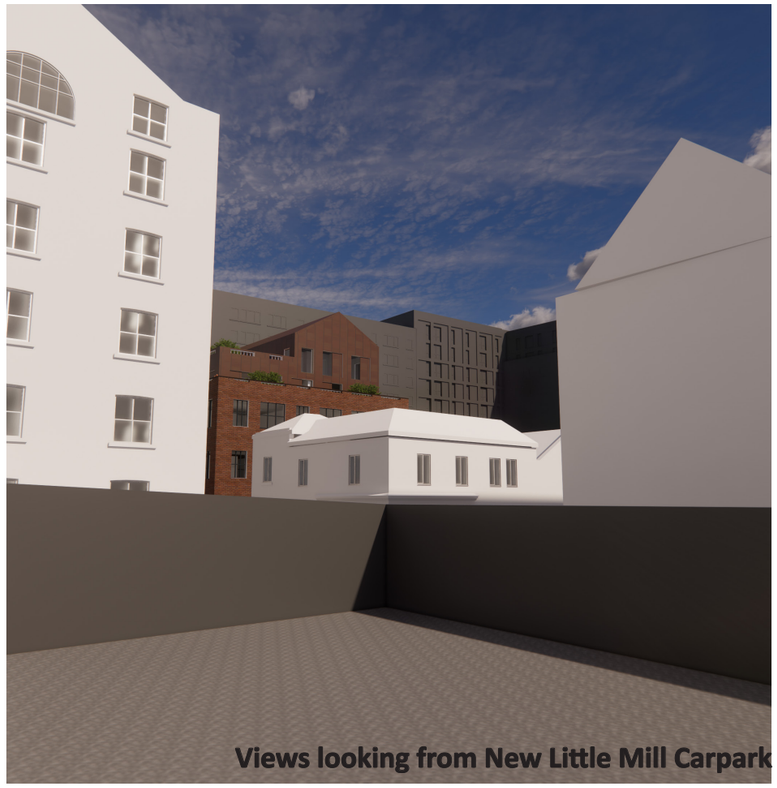
Once again, the eye-level views, as previously agreed with the council, have been further reduced in impact in the new design, which is detailed on the following page.

Views looking from Jersey Street

Views looking from Radium Street North

Views looking from Redhiil Street

Views looking from Radium Street South



Views looking from New Little Mill Carpark

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Views - Eye Level Perspective

Views looking from Jersey Street

Views looking from Radium Street North

Views looking from Redhiil Street

Views looking from Radium Street South

Views looking from New Little Mill Carpark

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PREVIOUS SCHEME
Views - Perspective

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Views - Perspective

New scheme.

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