

BARCX

241 BARLOW MOOR RD
Design and Access Statement



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01.1 INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to accompany the planning application for the extension of the Sky Lounge restaurant in Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton. The proposal is a direct response to concerns raised by Manchester City Council’s Enforcement Notice, aiming to resolve these issues while ensuring the continued viability of the business. The revised design reflects a careful balance between regulatory compliance, architectural integrity, and the restaurant’s operational needs.

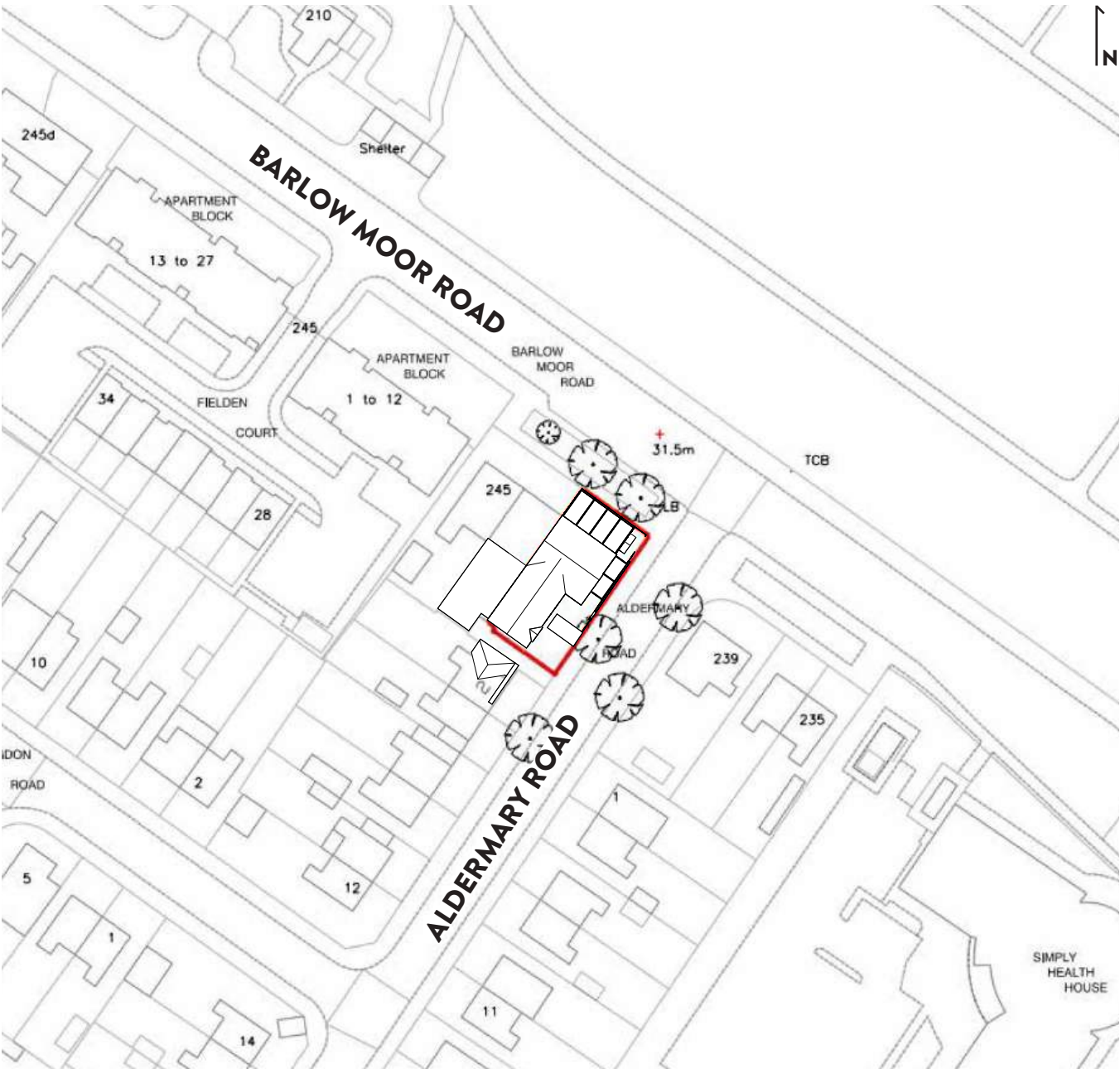
By integrating key amendments, the proposal seeks to mitigate the visual impact of the extension, improve its relationship with the streetscape, and retain the historical character of the existing structure. Consideration has been given to local precedents, ensuring that the design aligns with established patterns of development in the area. Material choices, including frameless glazing and mirror-finish stainless steel, have been selected to create a subtle and contextually sensitive appearance while enhancing the longevity of the extension.

Beyond its architectural considerations, this proposal also addresses practical concerns related to accessibility, traffic, and parking. The site’s strong connectivity to public transport, coupled with the longstanding precedent of limited on-site parking use, supports the case for the proposed amendments. Furthermore, the economic and community benefits of the restaurant are central to this proposal, reinforcing its role as a valued local business and social hub.

This statement outlines the rationale for the proposed changes, demonstrating how the extension contributes positively to both the built environment and the local economy while adhering to planning policy and community interests.

01.2 Site Analysis

The site, known as Sky Lounge, is a well-established restaurant located at 241 Barlow Moor Road in Chorlton. It sits within a vibrant area characterised by a mix of independent businesses, restaurants, and retail spaces. The property is positioned along a key thoroughfare, benefitting from strong pedestrian footfall and excellent public transport links, including nearby bus routes and the Chorlton Metrolink stop.



01.3 Brief

The proposal aims to amend the existing extension of Sky Lounge to align with planning regulations while improving its integration within the urban context. The design responds directly to concerns raised in the enforcement notice, with a focus on mitigating visual impact, enhancing materiality, and ensuring the long-term viability of the business.

- Key objectives include:
- Retaining and refining the extension to maintain the operational needs of the restaurant.
 - Improving the architectural coherence of the façade by introducing high-quality materials such as frameless glazing and mirror-finish stainless steel.
 - Reducing the perceived bulk of the extension through careful material selection and strategic design interventions.
 - Ensuring the revised proposal aligns with both local precedents and broader planning policies.



02 PRECEDENTS AND SIMILAR EXAMPLES

02.1 Local Examples of Extensions to the Street Edge

The revised design acknowledges the concerns raised in the enforcement notice regarding the extension’s siting in relation to the streetscape. However, there are existing precedents within the immediate vicinity where developments have extended up to the pavement, demonstrating an established pattern of built form that supports the revised proposal.

Two notable examples along Barlow Moor Road illustrate how commercial properties have extended towards the pavement, influencing the character of the streetscape:



249 Barlow Moor Road (Damascus Cuisine) – A front extension approved under planning reference 108698/FO/2015/S1, which extends forward in a similar manner to the application site, reducing the visual impact of open forecourts. This structure remains in place, forming part of the area’s established character.



285 Barlow Moor Road (Amma’s Canteen) – A restaurant that has extended into the forecourt space, establishing a precedent for similar commercial developments extending towards the pavement.

02.2 Similar Local Precedents

Similar precedents are located along Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton and Didsbury

Chorlton



Olive & Thyme, 416-418 Barlow Moor Rd



Rudy's, 577 Barlow Moor Rd



Tutku Cafe, 428 Barlow Moor Rd



Sali's Souvlaki, 559a Barlow Moor Rd

Didsbury



FOLK., 169-171 Burton Rd



Gusto, 756 Wilmslow Road



Volta, 167 Burton Rd



Alberts, 120-122 Barlow Moor Rd

02.3 Material Precedents for Frameless Glazing and Mirror Finish Stainless Steel

The selection of frameless glazing and mirror finish stainless steel has been informed by successful precedents that demonstrate the effectiveness of these materials in urban settings. Notable examples include:

Frameless Glazing: Creates a visually lightweight and contemporary frontage that enhances transparency and openness. This design choice allows for a seamless transition between the interior dining space and the external environment, reinforcing a sense of connection with the streetscape.



Mirror Finish Stainless Steel: The reflectivity of the material ensures that the extension interacts dynamically with changing light conditions, softening its presence while maintaining a sleek, high-quality appearance. By reflecting its surroundings, this helps the structure blend into the streetscape, minimising its impact on the public realm.



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03 VISUAL MITIGATION AND CONTEXTUAL INTEGRATION

To ensure that the extension blends seamlessly with the surrounding context, a series of design strategies have been employed to minimise its bulk and visual impact. The following diagrams illustrate how key design features contribute to this objective:



Removal of Side Awning: To enhance visibility and openness along the side elevation. Improves the overall transparency of the extension and ensures the original façade remains more prominent.



Removal of Framed Glazing: Eliminates visual clutter and enhances the contemporary aesthetic.



Removal of Pitched Roof: The removal of the pitched roof reduces the overall bulk of the structure, resulting in a more streamlined and less intrusive form.



Structural Frame Wrapped in Mirror-Finished Stainless Steel: Reflects its surroundings and helps the extension visually recede into the streetscape. Minimises the perception of mass and ensures the structure integrates more effectively with its context.



Retractable Roof Fabric Replaced with Lighter Colour: Reducing its visual dominance while improving solar reflectivity. Enhances thermal comfort within the restaurant and creates a more subtle and cohesive appearance.



Frameless Glazing: Enhances natural light and strengthens the interior-exterior connection with a clean, modern look that respects the site's historical character.



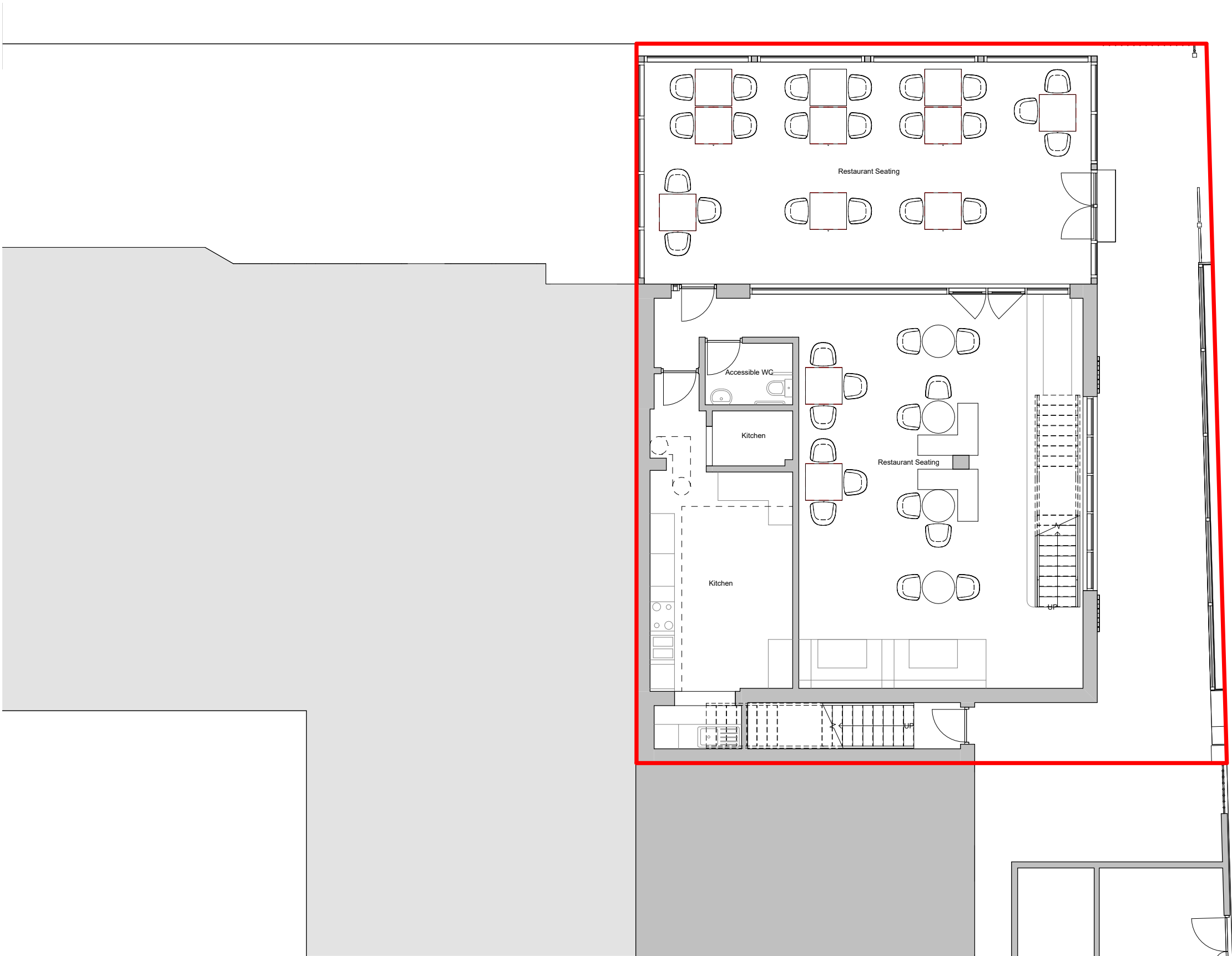
Addition of Ramp for Improved Accessibility: This ensures compliance with inclusive design principles and enhances ease of access for all visitors.



Planting at Front Elevation: Softens the appearance of the extension and introduces a natural element to the streetscape. Contributes to a more welcoming and visually appealing frontage.

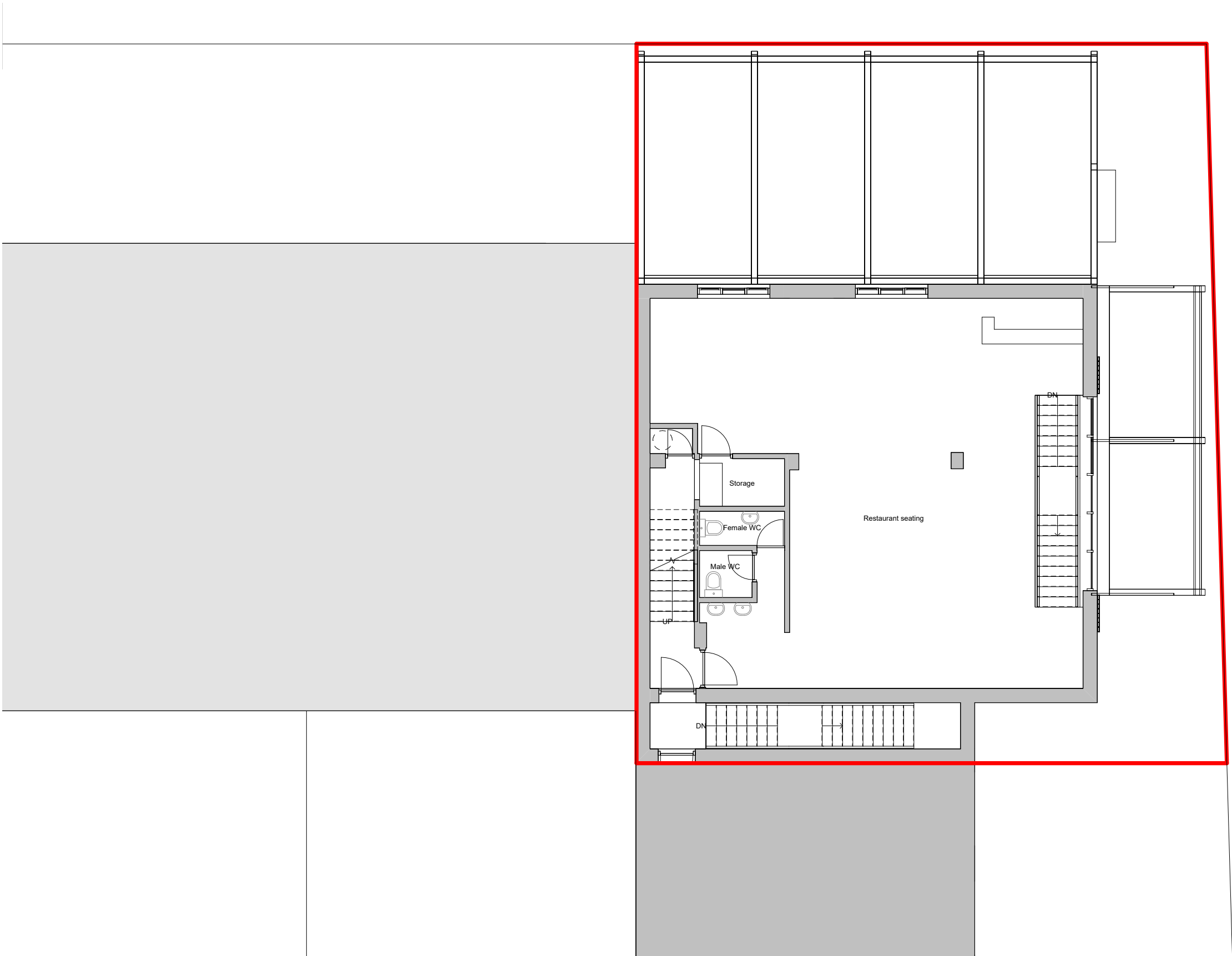
04 EXISTING AND
PROPOSED DRAWINGS

04.1 Existing Ground Floor Plan



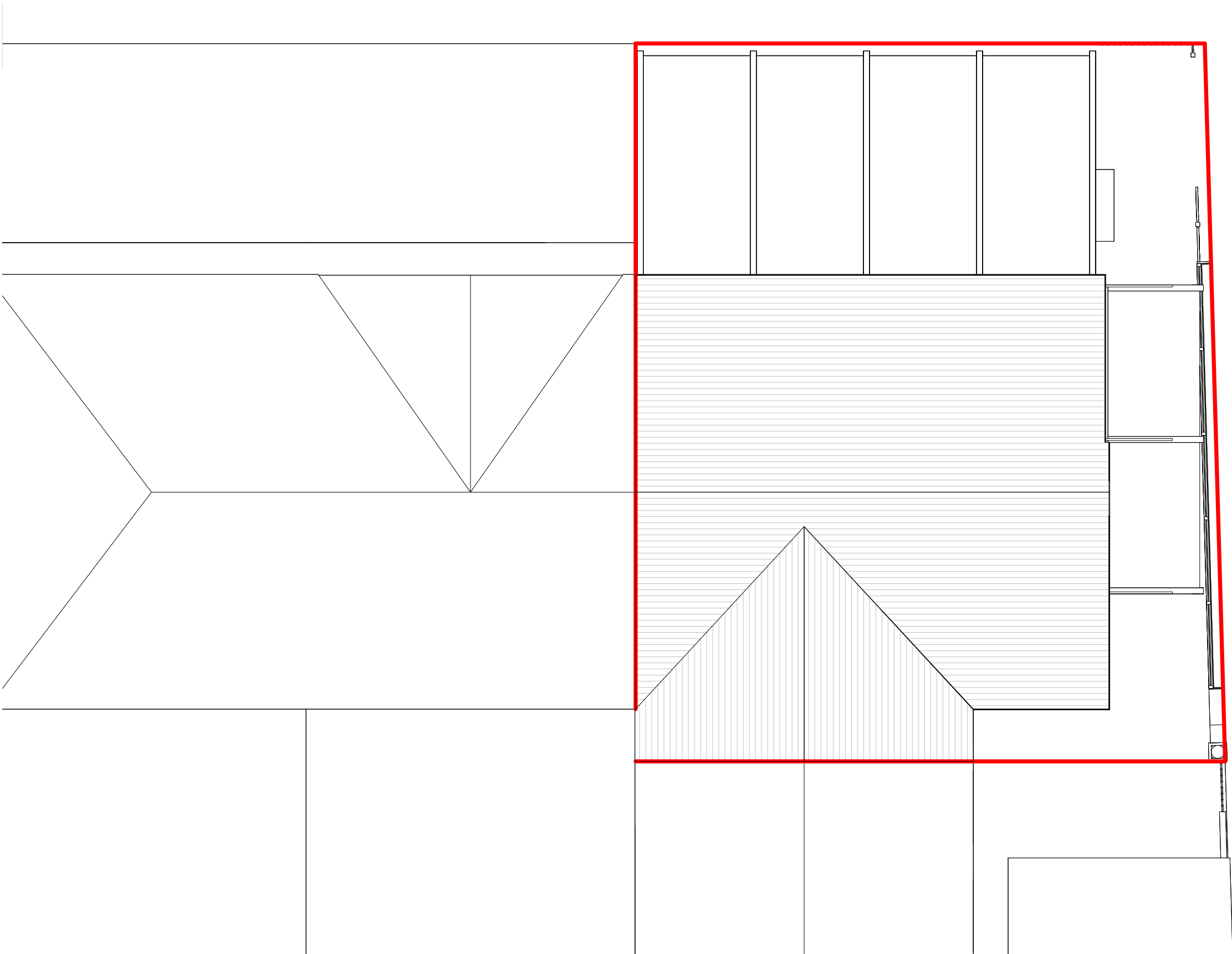
04 EXISTING AND
PROPOSED DRAWINGS

04.1 Existing First Floor Plan



04 EXISTING AND
PROPOSED DRAWINGS

04.1 Existing Roof Plan



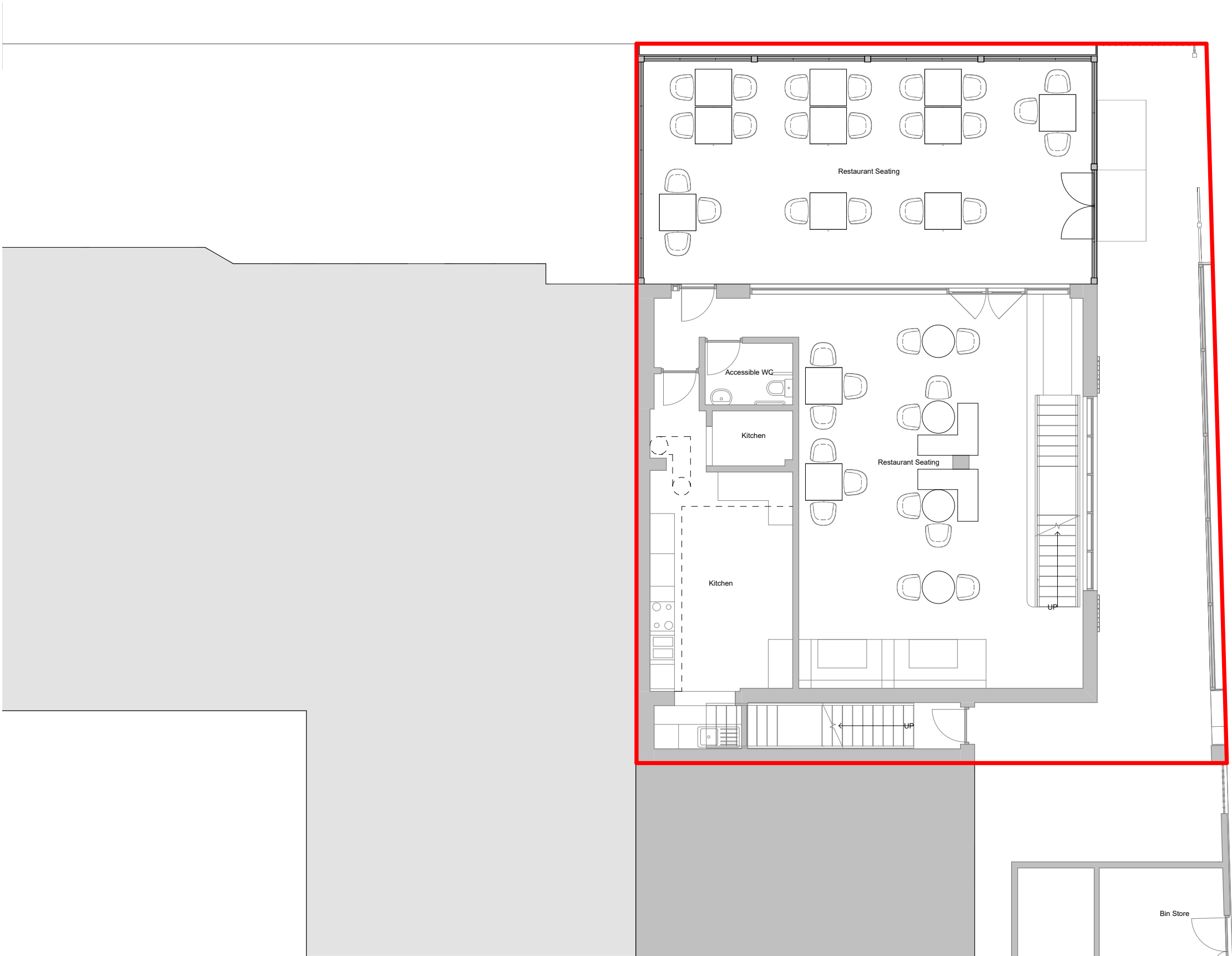
4.2 Existing Front Elevation



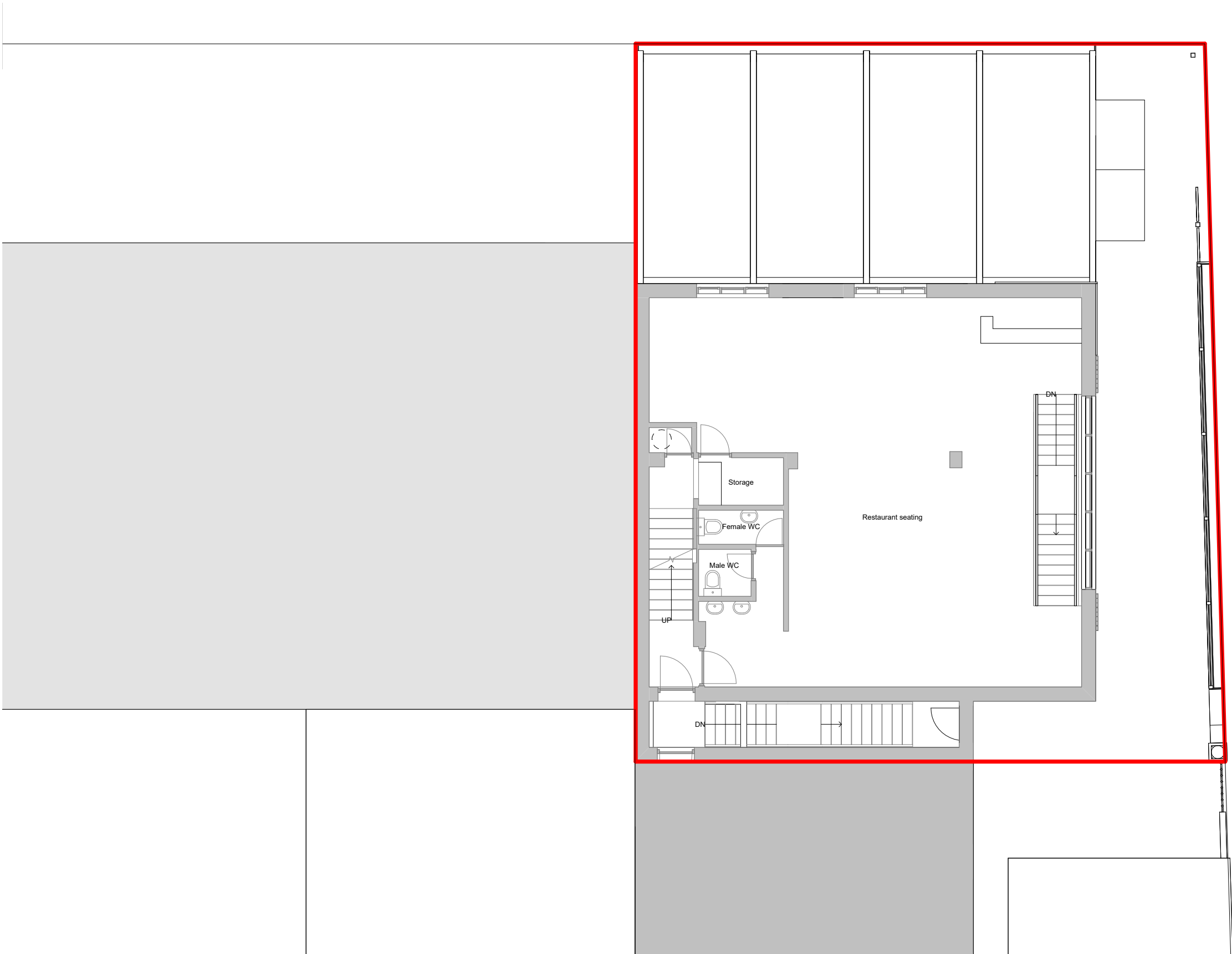
4.2 Existing Front Elevation



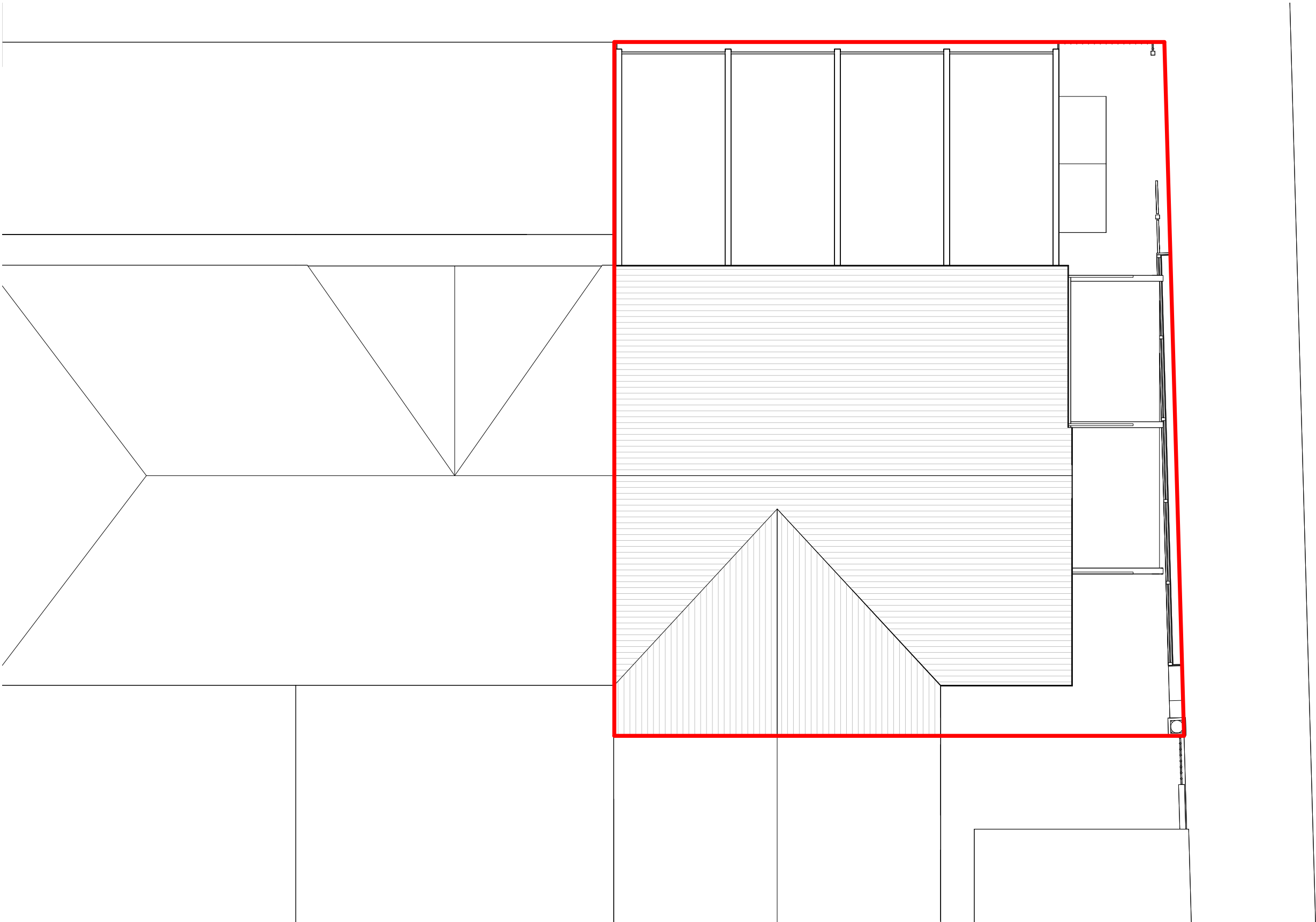
4.3 Proposed Ground Floor Plan



4.3 Proposed First Floor Plan



4.3 Proposed Roof Plan



4.4 Proposed Side Elevation



4.4 Proposed Front Elevation



05 VISUALISATIONS

05.1 Aldermary Road



05.2 Barlow Moor Road



06 ADDRESSING PARKING AND TRAFFIC CONCERNS

06.1 Mitigation of Forecourt Loss

The enforcement notice states that the forecourt was designed for small vehicular parking; however, historic use of the site contradicts this assertion:

McGarry Memorials: The forecourt was never actively used for parking. Instead, it was fenced off and used as a display area for gravestones until the business closed. This layout prevented vehicle access and set a long-standing precedent for non-parking use of the space.



Aug 2017

Post-Renovation Use: After the site was purchased and redeveloped, the forecourt remained a private, fenced-off area with gated access. Notably, this fencing and gating were approved by the local planning authority, reinforcing the understanding that the space was not designated or relied upon for parking.



Nov 2022

06.2 Impact on Highway Safety

Given this historical context, there is no evidence to suggest that removing the forecourt for development has caused a loss of essential parking or increased demand for on-street parking in a manner detrimental to highway safety.

Accessibility & Public Transport Links

The site is well-served by sustainable transport options, significantly reducing the need for dedicated on-site parking:

- Bus Services: Multiple high-frequency bus routes operate along Barlow Moor Road, providing convenient connections to key destinations in Manchester.
- Metrolink: The Chorlton tram stop is within walking distance, offering quick access to the city centre and wider transport network.
- Walking & Cycling: The area has well-maintained pedestrian pathways, and there is existing provision for cycling in the vicinity, aligning with Manchester’s sustainable transport objectives.

Impact on Parking & Traffic Flow

The extension does not materially increase traffic demand or impact local parking pressures, as the site has functioned without public on-site parking for many years.

The removal of a historically private, fenced-off forecourt does not lead to an increased reliance on Aldermay Road for parking, as visitors and customers were never dependent on this space for vehicle access.

07 BUSINESS VIABILITY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

07.1 Economic Justification

The proposed amendments are crucial for maintaining the financial viability of the restaurant. Without these revisions, the business faces significant challenges in continuing its operations. The additional space is essential for accommodating increased demand and ensuring ongoing employment for local staff. If the proposal is rejected or further modified, the restaurant's ability to remain financially viable would be compromised, potentially resulting in job losses and damaging the local economy. The enforcement action, if not followed by these amendments, risks undermining a well-established local business that serves as an important community hub.

07.2 Community Asset

Sky Lounge has become an integral part of the local community, attracting residents and visitors alike. The restaurant contributes to the area’s cultural and economic vitality, supporting local suppliers and creating a space for social interaction. The proposed amendments ensure the business’s long-term sustainability while respecting planning concerns. A petition and letters of support from the community have been gathered to demonstrate the strong local backing for the retention and improvement of the extension.

08 CONCLUSION

The revised proposal offers a considered and pragmatic response to the enforcement concerns raised by Manchester City Council, presenting a solution that aligns with planning policy while safeguarding the restaurant’s long-term sustainability. Through key design refinements, including bulk reduction, contextual integration, and material adjustments, the amendments successfully reduce the visual impact of the extension while maintaining the character and identity of the local streetscape.

Crucially, the proposal acknowledges the economic and community significance of Sky Lounge. The restaurant serves as an important social and cultural asset, supporting local employment and contributing to the vibrancy of the area. The amendments ensure that the business can continue operating viably while addressing concerns related to urban design, accessibility, and environmental considerations.

By working collaboratively with planning authorities and responding to community feedback, this proposal represents a well-balanced and practical approach to resolving enforcement issues. It provides a sustainable path forward that benefits both the restaurant and the wider neighbourhood, reinforcing the importance of thoughtful and responsible urban development.



