

The University of Manchester

CRAWFORD HOUSE SAFETY ALTERATIONS

Design & Access Statement

7367_Crawford House December 2025

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architecture and interior design

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Revision	Details	Prepared By	Checked By	Date
01	Design & Access Statement	HT/ES	ES/EW	08/12/2025
02	Genral Update	JW	EW	18/12/2025

1.0 | Introduction

1.1 | Project Visions and Objectives

Design & Access Statement
This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of the planning application for the proposed works at the University of Manchester to address the unsafe tiling and open public areas at Crawford House, causing health and safety risks. The Design and Access Statement is intended to allow the Local Planning Authority, to understand the design principles behind the proposed works.

Crawford House
The University of Manchester's Crawford House is a large mixed-use complex located on the Oxford Road campus. It houses teaching and admin spaces, a library and lecture theatres.

The building is made up of a number of elements including a seven storey block to the north (alongside Booth St East), a two/three storey block alongside Oxford Road with upper level concourse and a Lecture Theatre building to the East.

The Works are located at;

Crawford House
Booth St East
Oxford Rd
Manchester

M13 9EP

Brief and Project Background
The project objective is to address two key issues present on the existing Crawford House complex which pose safety and security concerns;

1) Risk of falling tiles and glazing

2) Access to the concourse level

The existing concrete frame is clad in terracotta tiles, the majority of the tiles are located in the covered area off Oxford Road. A proportion of the tiles have become loose and there is an ongoing risk that tiles could fall from the building. The University of Manchester have been proactive in managing this risk and have instigated a programme of regular tap testing to minimise the risk. However, to address the risk in full, the tiles need to be removed.

In addition the glazed roof which provides shelter to the open area off Oxford Road is in a poor condition. A number of the glass panels have large cracks, should any of the glass fall from the frame it could cause injury to those using the space below. To remove the risk of glass falling it is proposed to install temporary netting to the underside of the glass until a permanent way forward is agreed for the roof.

Crawford House has an open concourse at first floor level. This is accessed via the staircase adjacent to St Peters House and by another staircase on the eastern elevation of Crawford House adjacent to Booth Street East. The concourse level includes a large sheltered area which is frequented by rough sleepers and there have been regular issues with anti social behaviour in this area. The concourse looks out over the roof structures of the Crawford House lecture theatres, there have been reported issues of members of the public climbing / jumping from the concourse level on to these roofs practising 'Parkour'. The University of Manchester are seeking to close off the access to the concourse level to address these issues.

2.0 | The Site

2.1 | Location



Area of proposed works

Buildings Adjacent to the site

01	Alliance, Manchester Business School (AMBS)
02	Kilburn Building
03	St Peter House
04	The National Graphene Institute Building
05	Booth Street East Building
06	Crawford House

2.0 | The Site

2.2 | Existing Building Photographs

Crawford House Primary Entrance

The primary entrance to Crawford House is accessed from the Oxford Road side of the building. The approach to the entrance is a covered area with a central void to the first floor. At first floor there is a glazed roof providing shelter, although this remains an external environment.

There are a number of walls above this area clad with tiles, a number of which have been failing and debonding from the substructure. This poses a substantial health and safety risk to users of the building and members of the public. This risk is currently being managed by regular tap testing and removal of loose tiles.

Adjacent to the St Peters House entrance area is an external set of stairs that leads to the upper concourse level. This stair is unrestricted and therefore allows full access to the external upper level of the building to not only staff and students of The University, but also members of the public.

This unrestricted access has led to a number of anti-social activities taking place within this space. This poses a security risk to the University and a Health and Safety risk users of the building.

The glazed roof is in a poor condition with a number of cracked or slipped panels.



External view to entrance area from Oxford Rd



External view of stairs to the upper level



View to upper level from entrance area



View to the top of the stairs from the upper level



View of upper level walkway above entrance

2.0 | The Site
2.2 | Existing Building Photographs

Crawford House Lecture Theatres External Stair
The external upper level can also be accessed via stairs to the north east of the complex, adjacent to the lecture theatre building.

These wide stairs start at pavement level off a private road, in UoM ownership, that runs between Crawford House and The National Graphene Institute Building. The stair is abutted by buff brick fin walls that diminish the width of the stair as it rises to the upper level.

There is a surface water drain and varying surface gradients at the base of the stair. There is also an escape route from the lecture theatres that crosses the bottom of the stairs.



External view of the stairs from the private street



External view of the stairs from the pavement

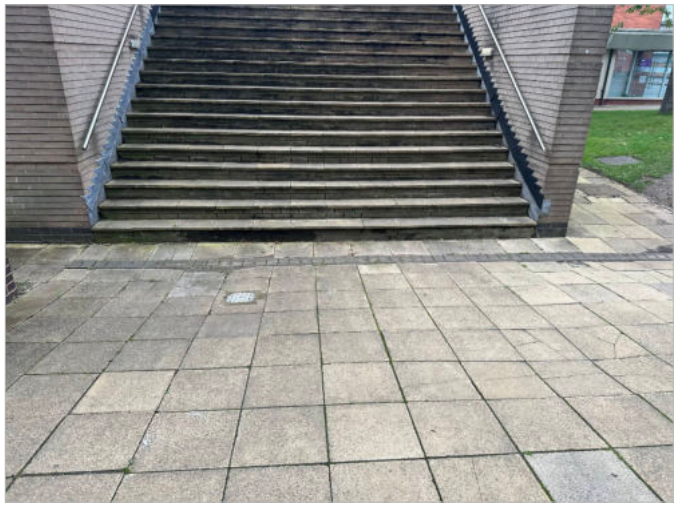
External view from Booth Street East



A view of the service and utility access

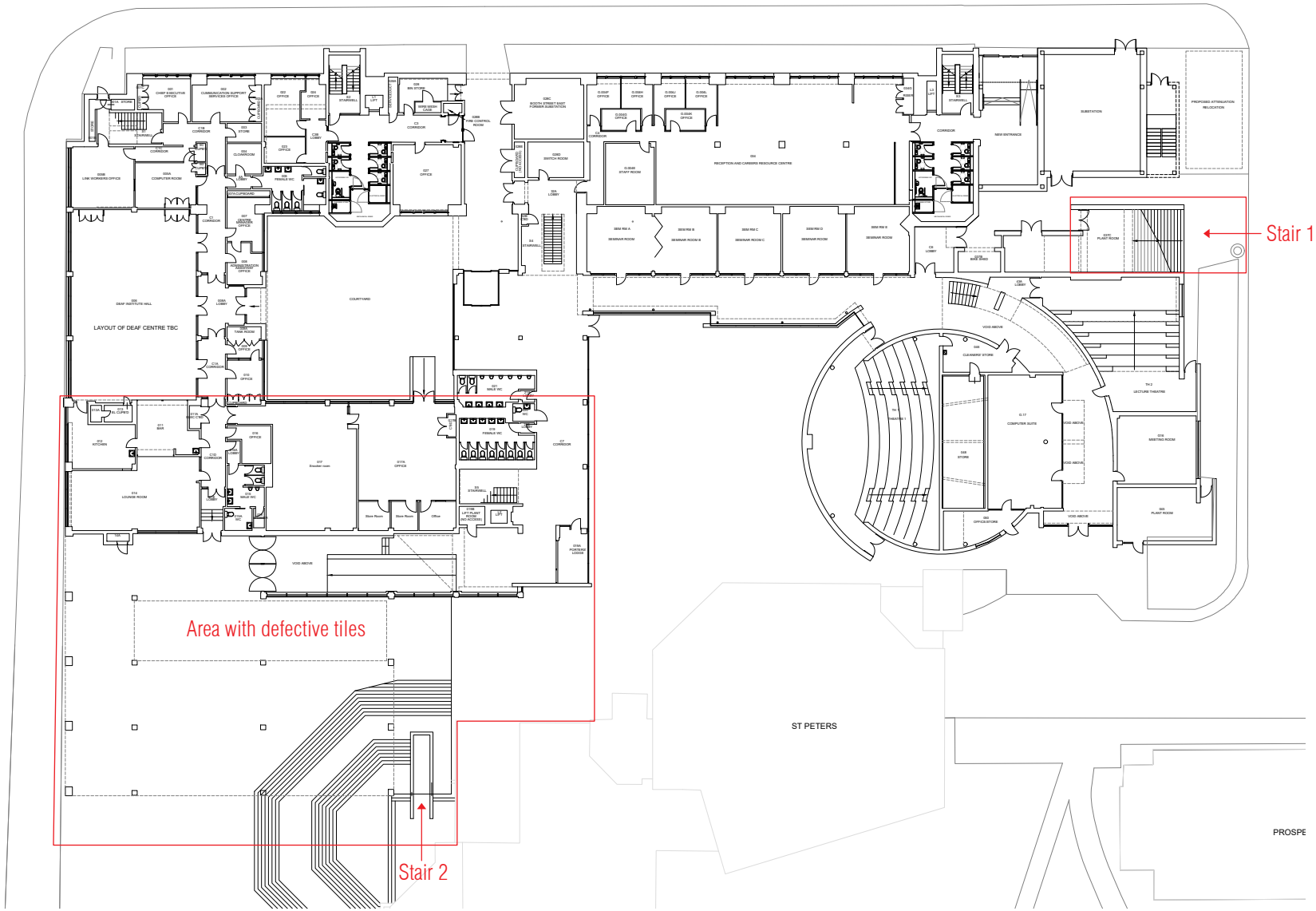


A view of the stairs flooring



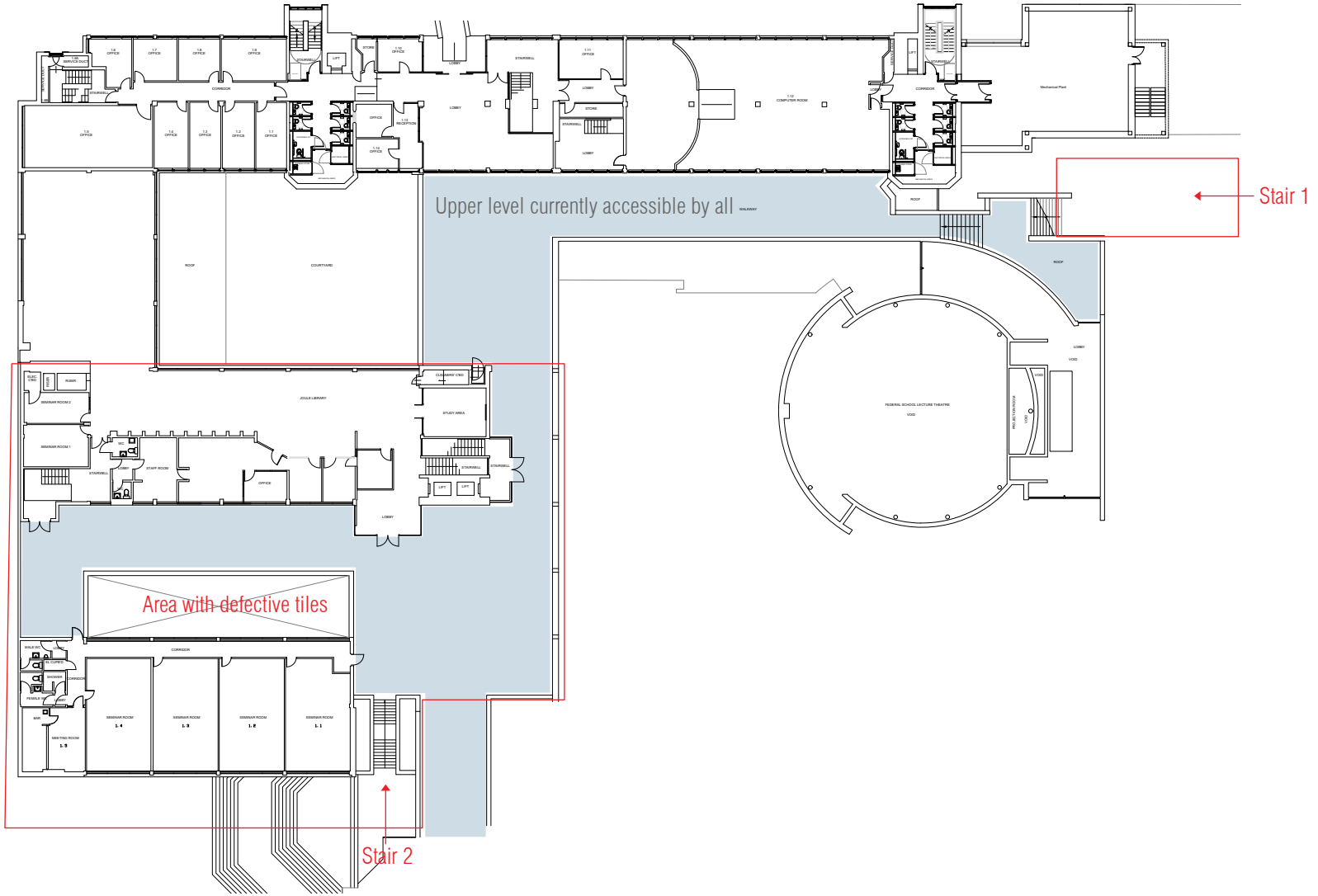
2.0 | The Site

2.3 | Existing Floor Plans - Ground Floor Level



2.0 | The Site

2.3 | Existing Floor Plans - Upper Level (Concourse)



3.0 | Design
3.1 | Design approach

Stair Access Control
To address the issue of unrestricted access to the external upper level of the building, it is proposed that each of the staircases are closed off and access limited. This will be achieved with a combination of walls, fences and gates designed to fit in with the existing context.

Protection from Falling Debris
To protect staff, students and members of the public from falling tiles or glazing, the following measures are proposed:

- Remove all cladding tiles from the building and replace with render
- Installation of netting below the existing roof light at the upper level to prevent any debris reaching walkways.

3.0 | Design
3.2 | Stairway 01

Proposal
The proposal for Stair 1 is to construct a new brick wall to enclose the area at the base of the stair, restricting access. Within the wall there will be a security gates. To maintain the fire escape from the lecture theatres there will be escape hardware on the internal side of the gate.

Singage will be installed on the gates to reinforce the 'no parking' restriction in front of the gates. In addition two bollards are to be installed in front of the gates to ensure vehicles do not park or pull over on the pavement.

Materiality
The new wall is to be constructed from a dark brick to compliment the existing buff brick and to match the existing dark brick accent at the base of the existing walls.

The use of matching brick assists to integrate the new into the existing, with the intention of delivering an entrance which looks as though it was part of the original installation.

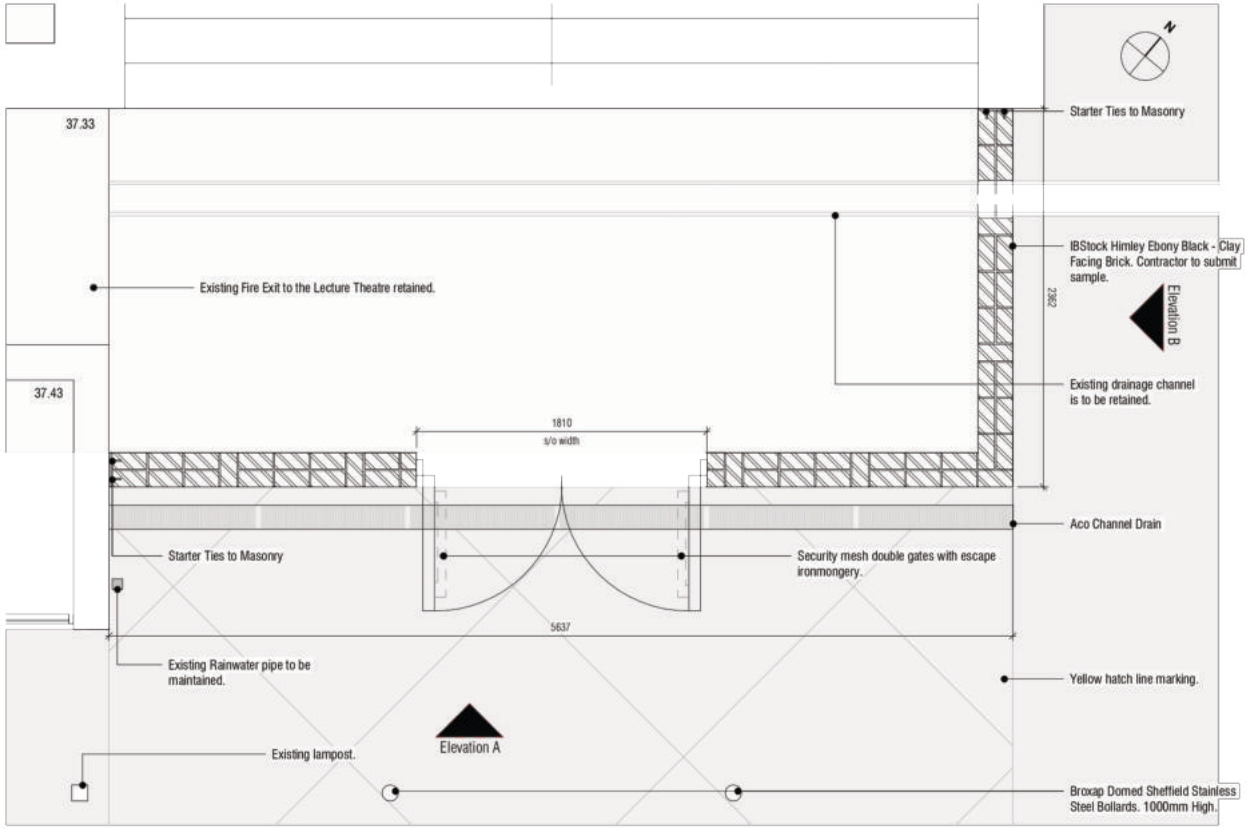
Proposed view of new wall and gates



3.0 | Design

3.2 | Stairway 01 - Plan

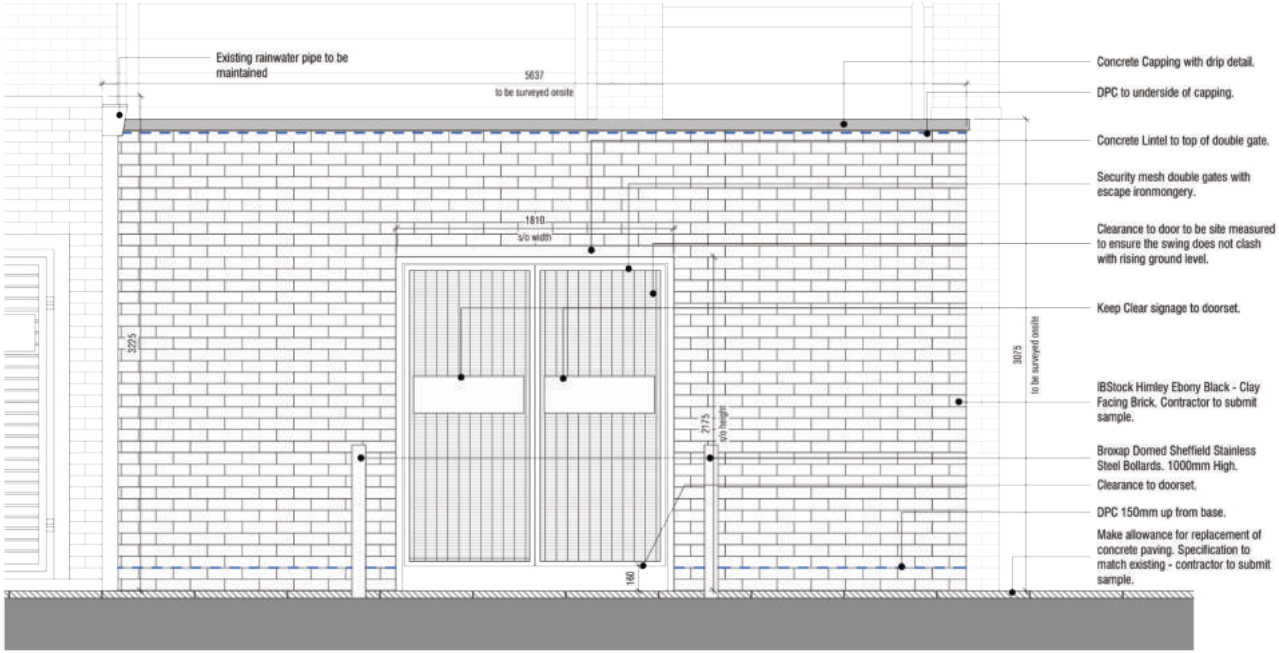
Proposed Floor Plan | Not to Scale

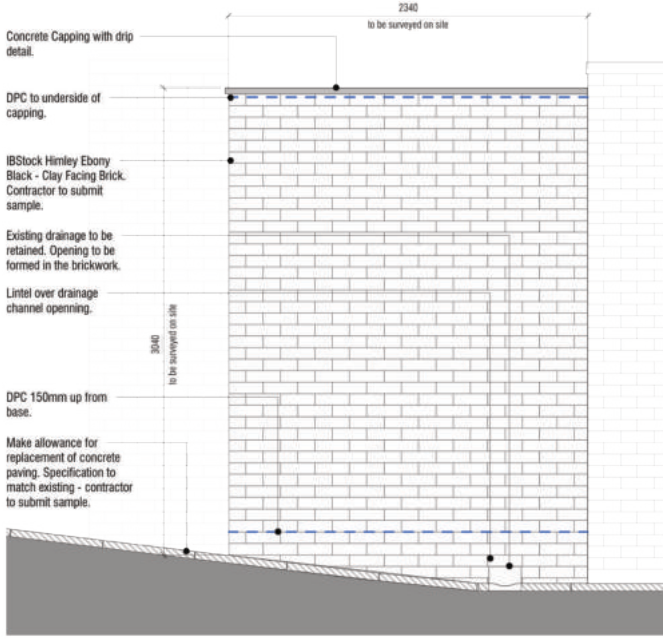


3.0 | Design

3.2 | Stairway 01 - Elevations

Proposed Elevation | Not to Scale





3.0 | Design
3.3 | Stair 2

Proposal
The proposal for stair 2 is to construct a security fence at the upper level landing of the stair a gate is to be integrated into the fence with escape ironmongery. Positioning the gate at the top of the stairs results in a simple and less intrusive solution than at the bottom. All existing escape exits and routes shall be maintained.

The staircase is located at the top of the steps leading to St Peters House. It is quite well set back from the road. The location of the proposed fence cannot be seen from the highway.

Materiality
The proposed fence and gate is to be constructed from dark grey powder coated metal with matching mesh infill.

This dark grey colour will match existing elements on the building and will have a minimal impact aesthetically.

Existing view from Oxford Rd - note that the top of the stairs is not visible.



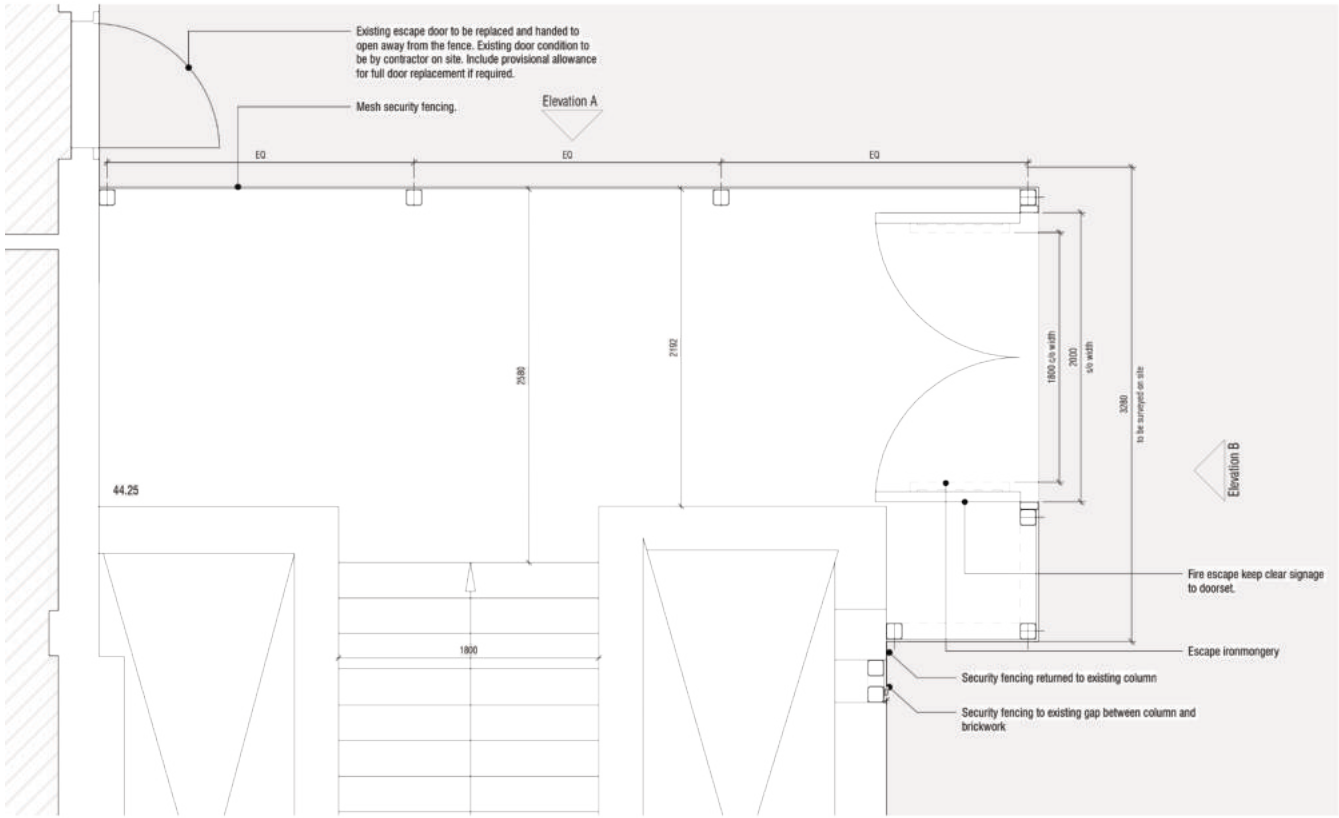


Proposed view of new fence and gate from base of stair

3.0 | Design

3.3 | Stair 2 - Floor Plan

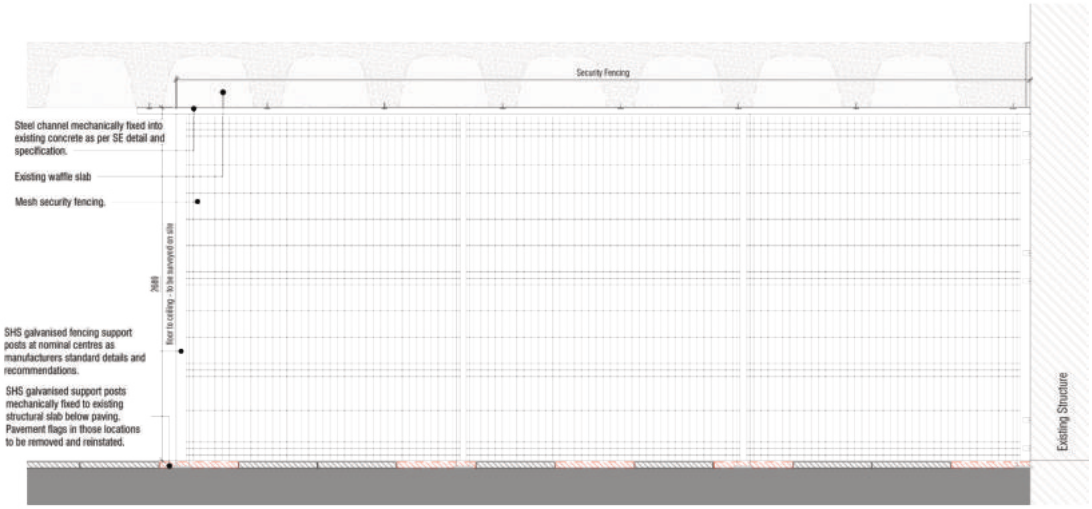
Proposed Floor Plan | Not to Scale

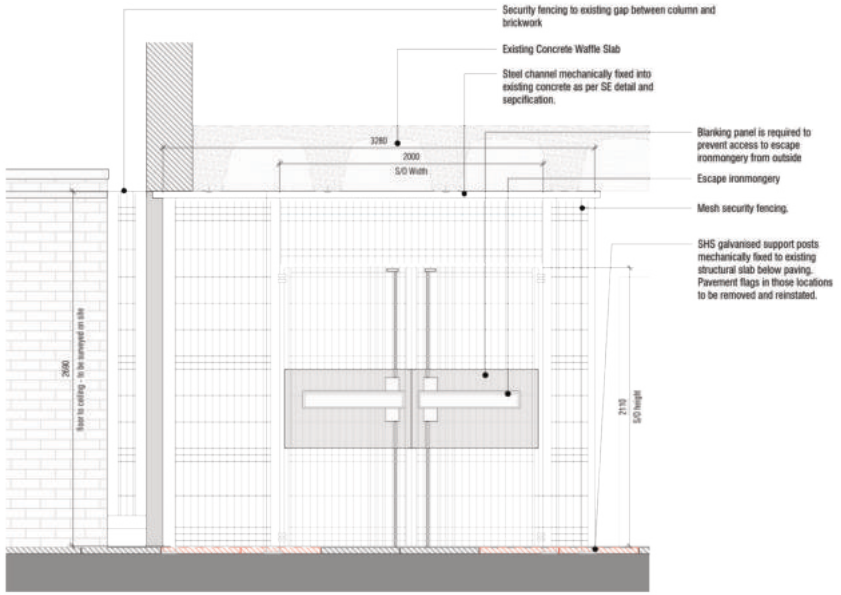


3.0 | Design

3.3 | Stair 2 - Elevations

Proposed Elevation | Not to Scale

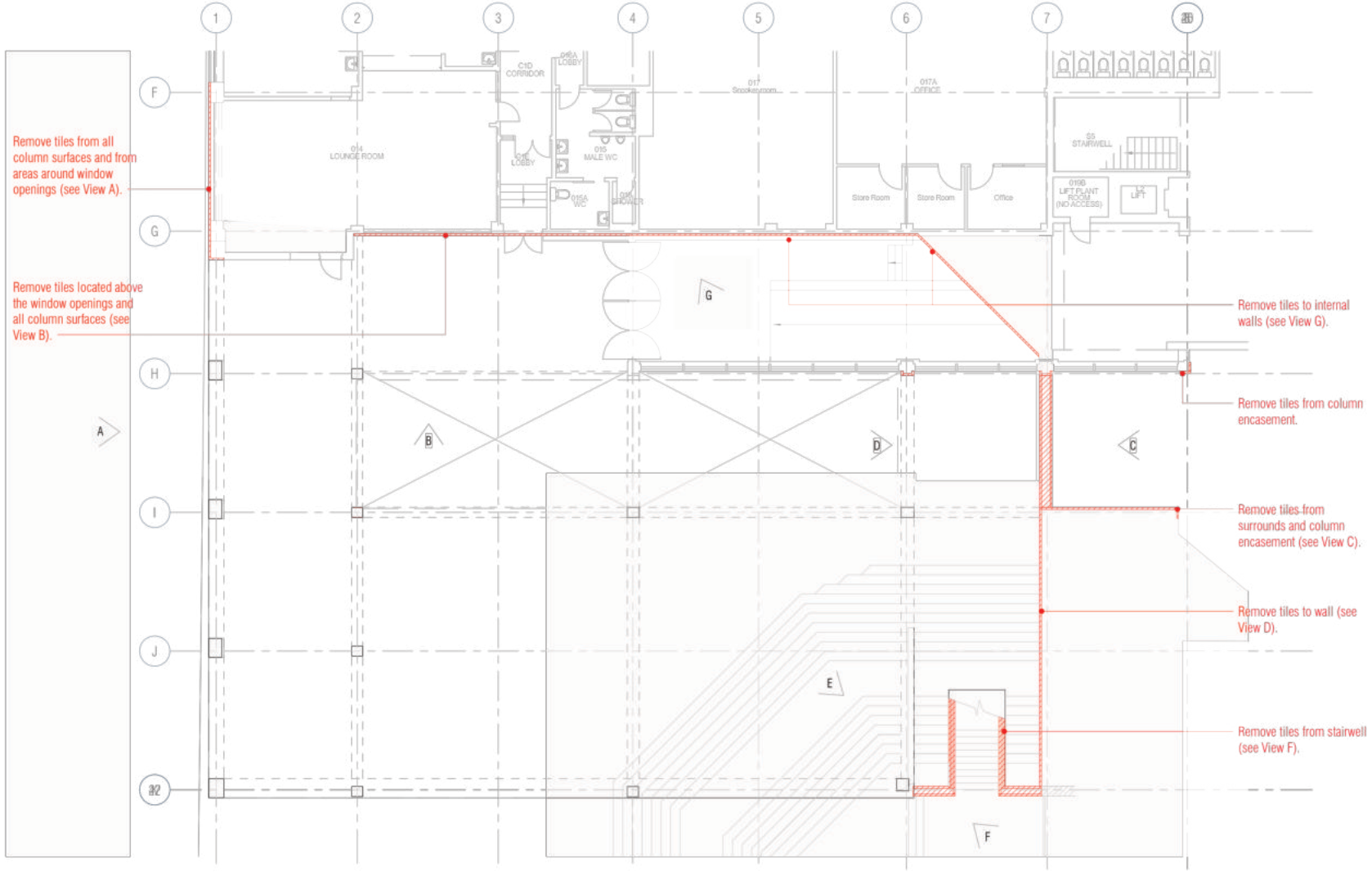




3.0 | Design

3.4 | Tile Alterations - Ground Floor

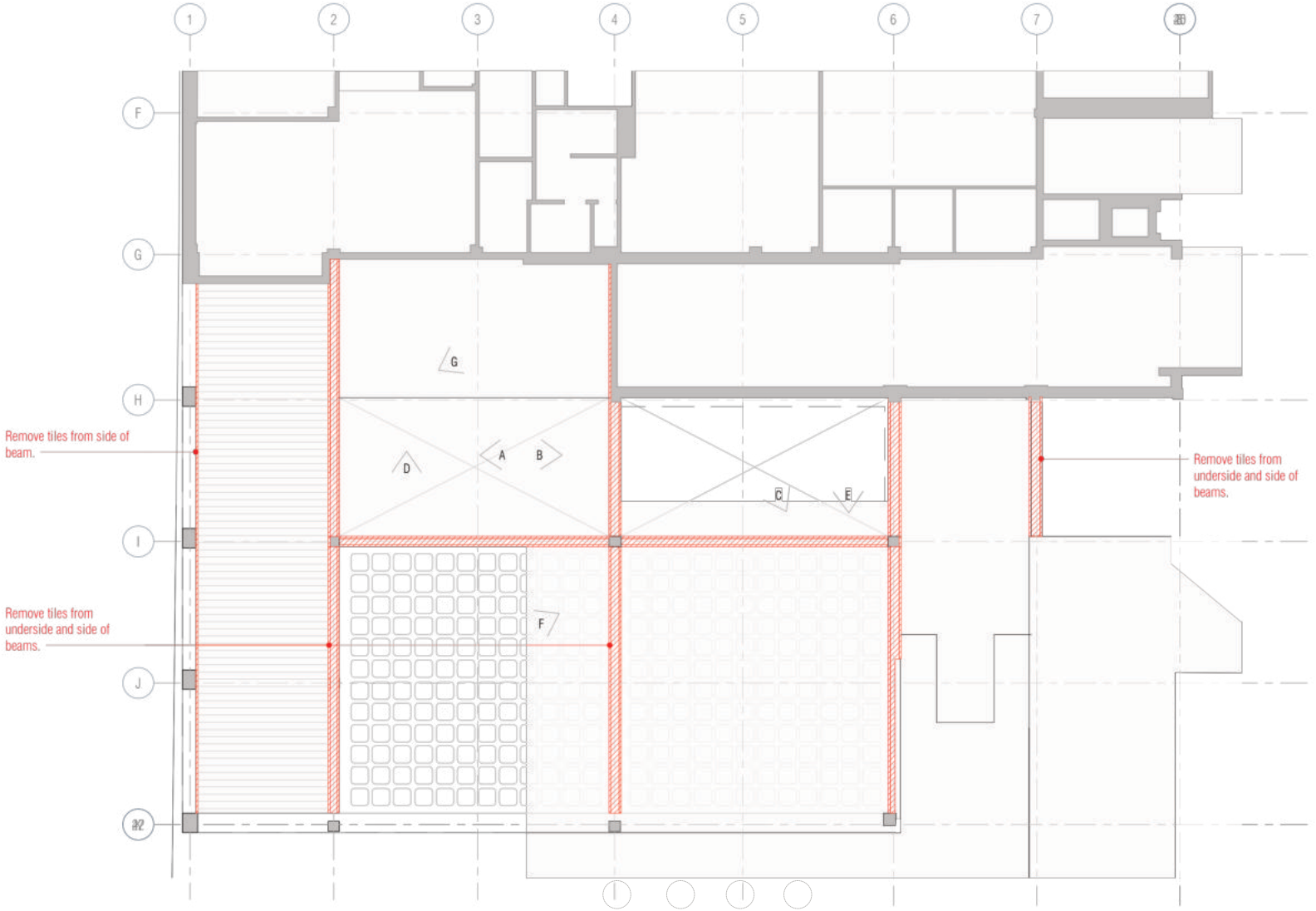
Proposed Ground Floor Plan | Not to Scale



3.0 | Design

3.4 | Tile Alterations - Ground Floor Soffit

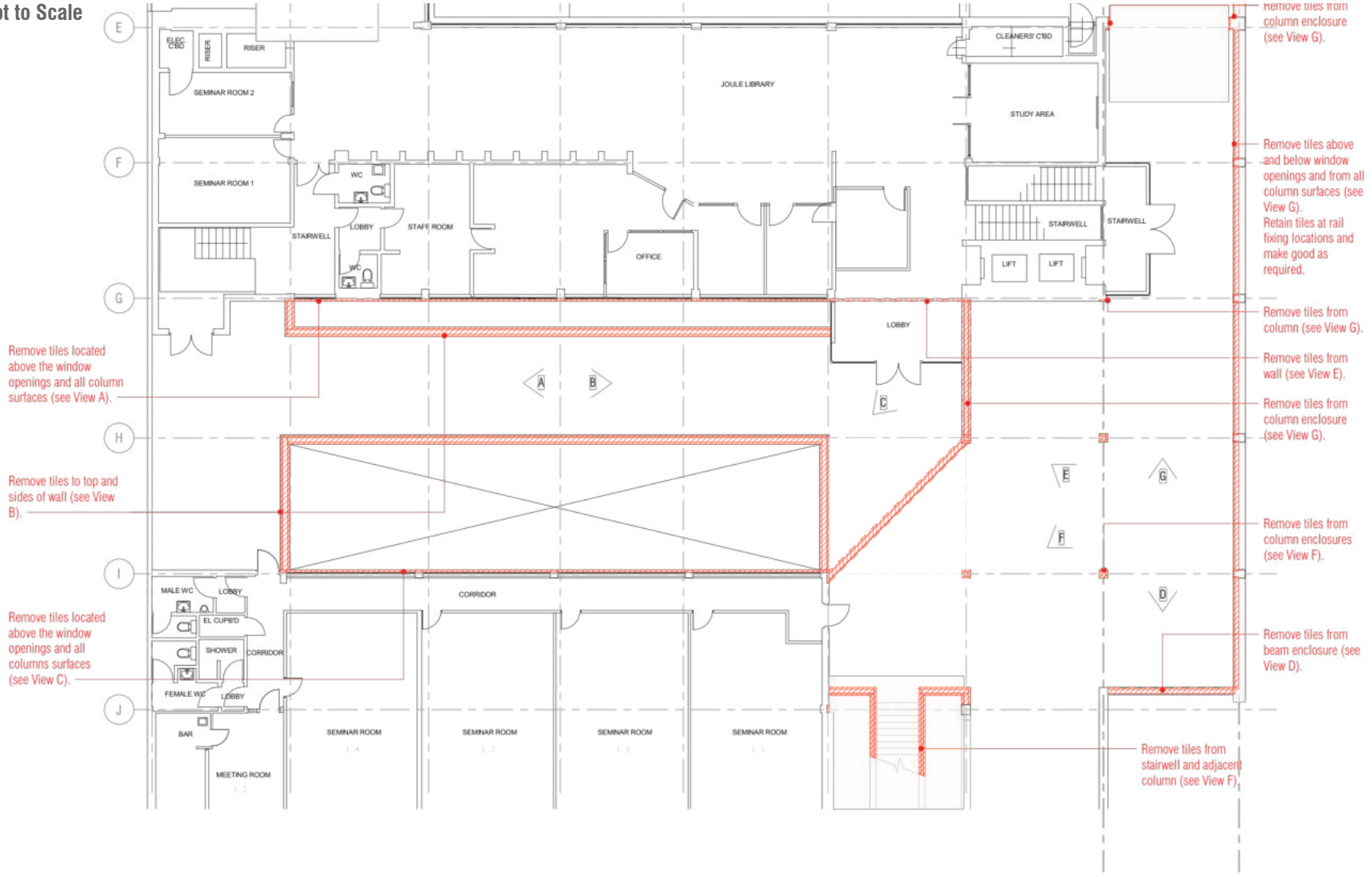
Proposed Ground Floor Ceiling Plan | Not to Scale



3.0 | Design

3.4 | Tile Alterations - Upper Level

Proposed Upper Level Plan | Not to Scale



3.0 | Design

3.4 | Tile Alterations - Visuals

Proposal

The adjacent images illustrate the proposal for the areas of tile removed and replaced with render.

The proposal for the render is a white roughcast finish to tie-in with existing finishes on site.

As the existing columns are already rendered there won't be a significant visual change to the principal external elevational view of Crawford House. The majority of the tile removal and proposed render occurs within the covered area at high level or to the internal elevations of the covered space.



Proposed view of new render

Proposed view of new render to stair balustrades



Existing rendered columns



Existing external view

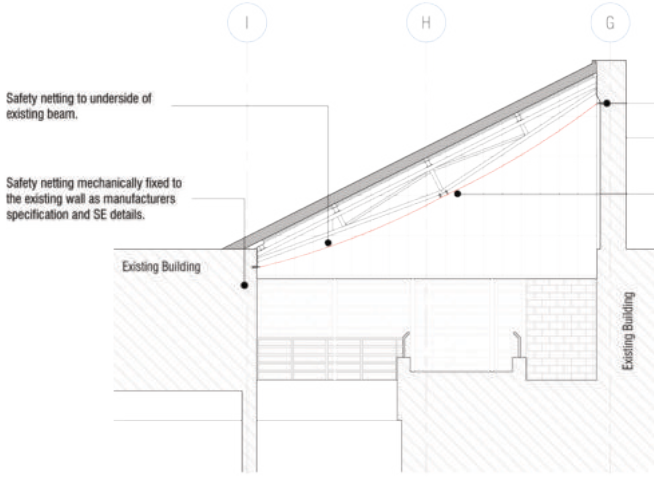


3.0 | Proposed Design
3.5 | Safety Netting

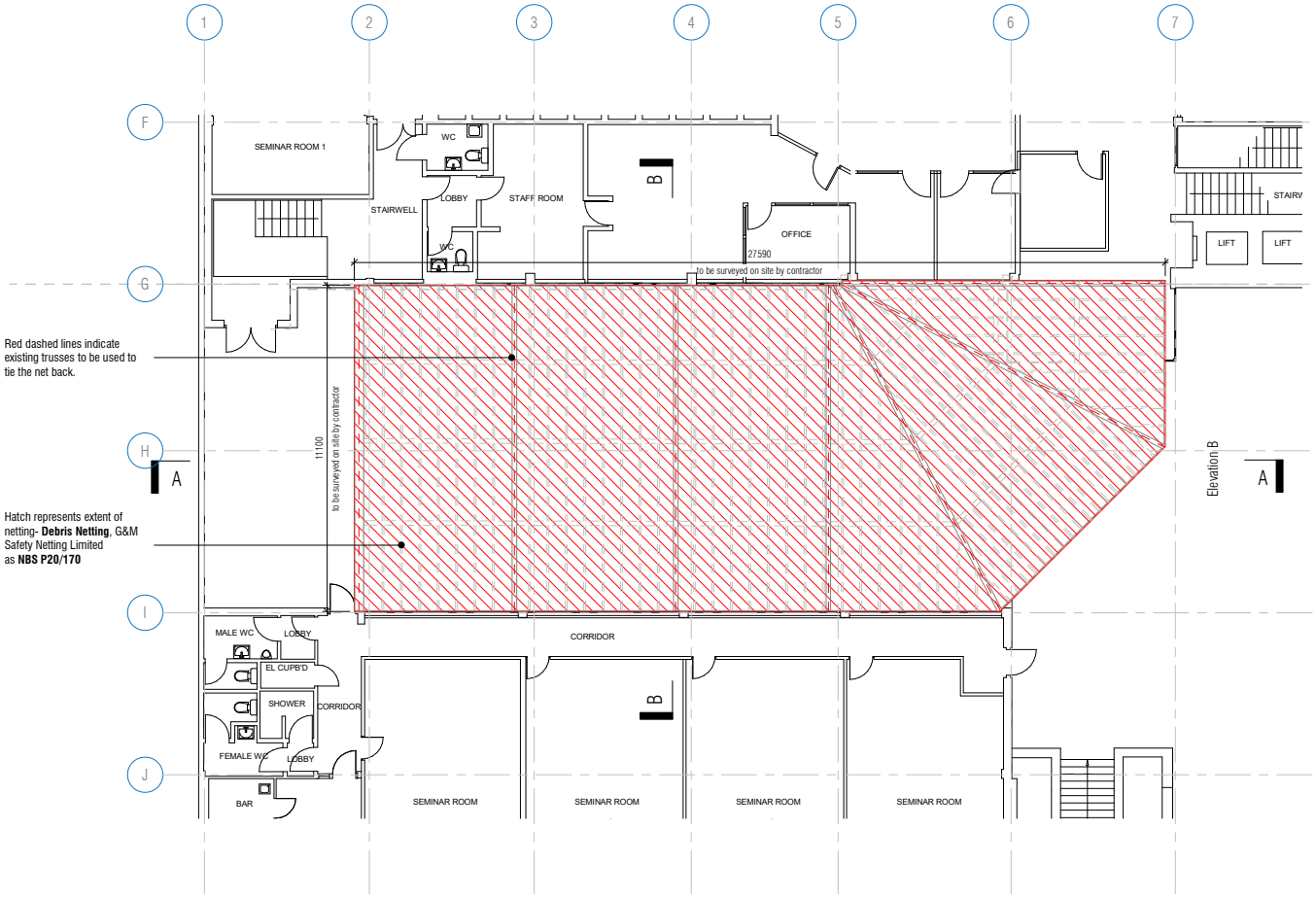
Proposal

To prevent any potential falling glass from causing injury to those using the space below, the proposal is to install safety netting to the underside of the existing steel structure of the glazed roof.

The netting is to be tied to the existing steel frame and the masonry walls.



Proposed section



Proposed reflected ceiling plan

5.0 | Access

5.1 | Access

Access

The Crawford House concourse walkway used to provide access between several buildings on the campus, but since the demolition of the bridge across Oxford Road it is no longer in regular use by students. Building entrances from the concourse have been closed for sometime and the concourse has ceased to be an access route.

As such, there are no proposed changes to the existing principal access routes into Crawford House as part of these proposals. These will remain as the ground floor entrances from Oxford Road and Booth Street East.

There are no proposed changes to vehicle access to Crawford House as part of these proposals.

Emergency egress routes will be maintained through the new gates by the use of escape ironmongery.

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