

Court Street

Largs

Design & Access Statement

March 2021



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Section **1.0**
INTRODUCTION



1.0 INTRODUCTION

MAST Architects were appointed via Ashleigh (Scotland) to provide architectural services for the delivery of residential dwellings on behalf of North Ayrshire Council through the Hub South West procurement vehicle.

The proposals realise a total of 12nr one and two-bedroom properties for social rent across a three-storey flatted block with associated common areas, landscaping, roads and parking.

The proposals have been developed in conjunction with North Ayrshire Council, with pre-application comments received from planning and roads, which have been incorporated within the proposals.

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Section **2.0**
SITE



2.1 SITE LOCATION

The proposed site is located to the east of Largs promenade, close to the town centre, and is within an established residential area of the town.

The site is brownfield and is currently occupied by the former Largs Police Station which is now in the ownership of the applicant and will be demolished.

The site is bounded to the south by School Street, and to the east by the development of a new block of sheltered accommodation homes being delivered by the applicant.

1. Largs Train Station
2. Largs Town Centre
3. Largs Promenade
4. Nardini's Ice Cream Parlour and Restaurant
5. St Colm's Place Development





2.2 SITE OVERVIEW

The proposed site is to the east of Largs Promenade and was formerly known as the Largs Police Station. The police station is bounded on all sides by residential dwellings, one of which to the east is a new development replacing sheltered accommodation also owned by the applicant.

The surrounding context is primarily residential with some standalone retail properties and ground floor retail below residential flats. The immediate context is largely two and three storey flats and the current police station building is a two storey block. Adjacent to the east of the police station is the St Colms Place development currently being developed by North Ayrshire Council.

The contextual aesthetic is characterised by traditional materials, with painted dry dash render/roughcast and sandstone prevalent. There are a mix of different colours and textures, which have been layered inconsistently as development as been undertaken periodically within the locale. With this, and the the new St Colms Place development, the opportunity is presented to incorporate some material consistency and replicate the material palette.

While the existing police station building is not listed, it has been noted as a prominent and well known feature of Largs. Investigations were undertaken to consider the restoration and reuse the existing building envelope but unfortunately these have proven to be unfeasible.



2.3 SURROUNDING PHOTOGRAPHS



EXISTING POLICE STATION BUILDING



VIEW TOWARDS SITE - LOOKING EAST



CORNER OF SCHOOL STREET AND COURT STREET - ADJACENT SITE



VIEW ACROSS COURT STREET - LOOKING SOUTH



ADJACENT SITE ON SCHOOL STREET - LOOKING SOUTH



CONCEPT IMAGE OF NEW ST COLMS PLACE DEVELOPMENT

2.4 SITE ANALYSIS

Orientation

The site is bounded on the north by a private carpark serving surrounding properties and to the west and south by residential properties which front directly on to the footpaths with little or no defensible space.

The new St Colms development to the east provides the opportunity to create a new, more coherent streetscape to School Street as well as creating a green boundary and defensible space around the new building.

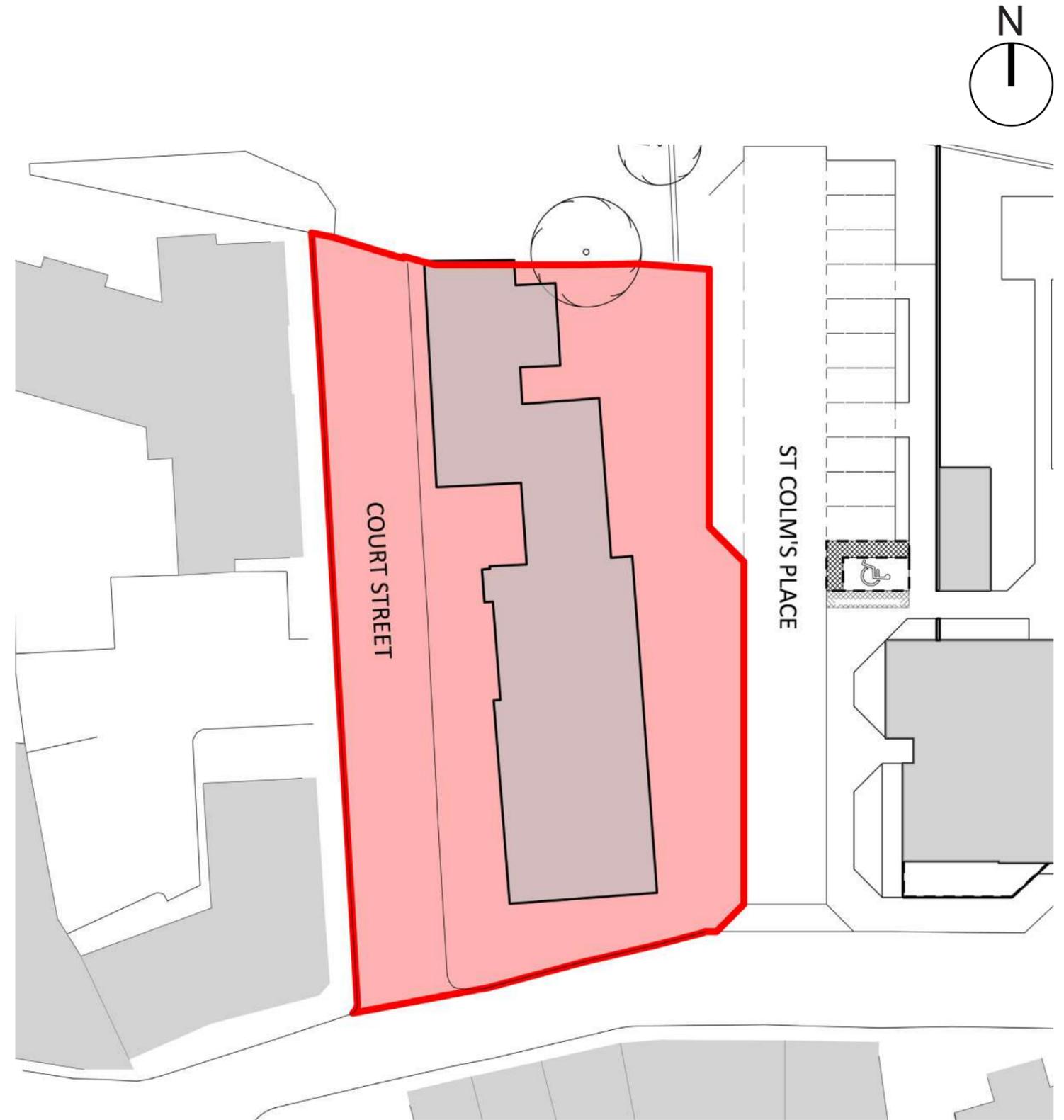
Existing Roads/Paths

The site benefits with the existing adopted road and footpath network prevalent within the local area. Court Street is adopted by North Ayrshire Council and will allow vehicular access to the site. This also presents the opportunity to form new parking to serve the new development.

Topography and Remediation

The site is relatively flat and can be constructed with no steps across the block.

A Site Investigation report has been completed and is submitted alongside the planning application. This identifies that there are no contaminants present on the site and as such it is suitable to build with no remediation works necessary.



Section **3.0**
CONSULTATION



3.1 PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

Throughout the design development of the proposals, North Ayrshire Council planning and roads departments have been continually consulted, with their advice and comment incorporated where possible within the proposals.

This consultation was undertaken via email, owing to the global COVID-19 pandemic, with confirmation of the general site and roads/footpath network provided.



Section **4.0**
PROPOSALS





4.1 PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT - ANALYSIS

Distinctive

The proposed development is conceived to be sympathetic to the demolition of the existing police station while addressing the urban scale of the context and creating a familiarity by utilising a similar material palette as St Colms Place.

The delivery of a three-storey development, which directly addresses the immediacy of Largs town centre, is conceived to continue the appropriately scaled development of St Colms Place and enhance the character of the urban streetscape.

The design of the block is intended to accentuate this urban form with extended and standard cavity brickwork alternated along each façade in contrasting brick tones creating elevations with depth and texture, and which acknowledge the three-storey height of the proposals relative to its context. It is hoped that the development, alongside St Colms Place, will become a prominent feature within Largs with the attractive design proposals signalling a desirable offering, whilst regenerating the visual integrity of the immediate context.

The creation of an entrance to the west along Court Side encourages traffic away from the narrow School Street and allows a private journey for the residents. The rear courtyard, secluded from the main surrounding streets, will offer an attractive amenity space for residents, further enhancing the residential amenity offering which already exists given the proximity of the site to Largs town centre and the seafront.

Safe & Pleasant

The internal layout of the block is orientated to provide active living spaces to the adjacent streets creating opportunity for increased passive surveillance of the development and the immediate context. It is hoped that the creation of a frontage development will enable the streetscape to be enhanced, inherently feel safer, and the likelihood of use by residents and the local community be increased.

The development has been designed in line with the 'Secured by Design' standards, with a consultation and formal application to be progressed with Police Scotland in due course.

This includes the provision of 1800mm high wall to the rear courtyard defining the boundary between public and private spaces as well as a 1500mm perimeter wall around the block creating a defensible area to the ground floor properties.

Efforts were made, through consultation with North Ayrshire Council roads department, to develop proposals which exemplify the principles of Designing Streets, and which create a people centred environment whilst still advocating vehicular traffic which can be expected of a contemporary residential environment.

Resource Efficient

The proposed site is currently home to a police station which has closed in recent years as it has been deemed no longer fit for purpose. After extensive investigation into the possible conservation of the existing building this was deemed an unsuitable option. Consequently, re-use of a brownfield site can be seen to promote regeneration through activation and enhancement of redundant spaces, rather than leaving them to be derelict.

The proposed dwellings are designed and will be delivered to exhibit high levels of energy efficiency through the use of high performance and sustainable building elements and renewable technologies. These dwellings are designed to meet Silver Aspects 1 & 2 of Section 7 (Domestic Technical Handbook).

The proposed site utilises the existing sewer network within the adjoining streets, with new sewers/connections constructed within the proposed site, and thereafter connected to the existing sewer network. A Sustainable Urban Drainage system has been incorporated within the design proposals, with parking bays utilised to attenuate and treat surface water with soak away storage installed to the rear garden to provide treatment prior to its integration into the combined sewer network.



4.1 PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT - ANALYSIS

Welcoming

The proposed development aims to provide a welcoming environment with a distinct frontage to Court Street which derives traffic away from the narrow School Street and gives residents a semi-private journey to their entrance.

Following the existing building line, and taking lead from St Colms Place, allows incorporation of a semi-private defensible area between the street and the ground floor properties. This creates a visual transition between the public and private and offers residents a privacy whilst allowing an urban response to be delivered. This configuration also gives an indication to the history of the site as the existing police station benefited from a similar formation.

A large glazed curtain walling panel gives a distinctive and light entrance to the block directly accessed from the public footpath. This provides a welcoming entrance to the building and a buffer to the threshold between outside and inside.

Adaptable

The proposed development is delivering a mix of one and two-bed flats to provide availability for different tenant groups, specifically intended for the over 60's profile.

Each plot is designed to meet the basic standards outlined within the Housing for Varying Needs Guidance, ensuring that the internal spaces are designed to offer maximum flexibility for tenant use, and are future proofed to enable changing lifestyle or needs to be accommodated with relatively simple modifications.

A 'day room' has been allowed for on each of the upper floors which presents a social opportunity for neighbours to gather in a common area.

The rear courtyard provided is considered to promote use by residents for recreation and relaxation tucked away from the busy Largs town centre.

Easy to Move Around and Beyond

The proximity of the site to Largs town centre allows the promotion of a pedestrian focused development. The building adjoins existing pedestrian routes on School Street which provide direct pedestrian links to the key destination points of Largs town centre and seafront. This short walking distance to the town centre also provide opportunities to connect directly to the wider area with public transport services - trains, buses and ferries - available on the doorstep of the development.

Given the proposed tenure of the development, an electric scooter store is provided and is accessed directly from Court Street. This promotes further use of the pedestrian network and will also break down a potential barrier that prospective tenant's may have faced in being able to venture out within the local area independently.

Parking spaces are provided to allow visitors and residents to maintain vehicular transport, which may assist further in their ability to retain independence within their lives. The provision of parallel parking bays, as well as more spaces to the rear, will, it is hoped, provide a deterrent to unsolicited on-street parking which has previously been prevalent on School Street and Court Street. This is important as these streets are narrow.



1. ROTATED GABLES

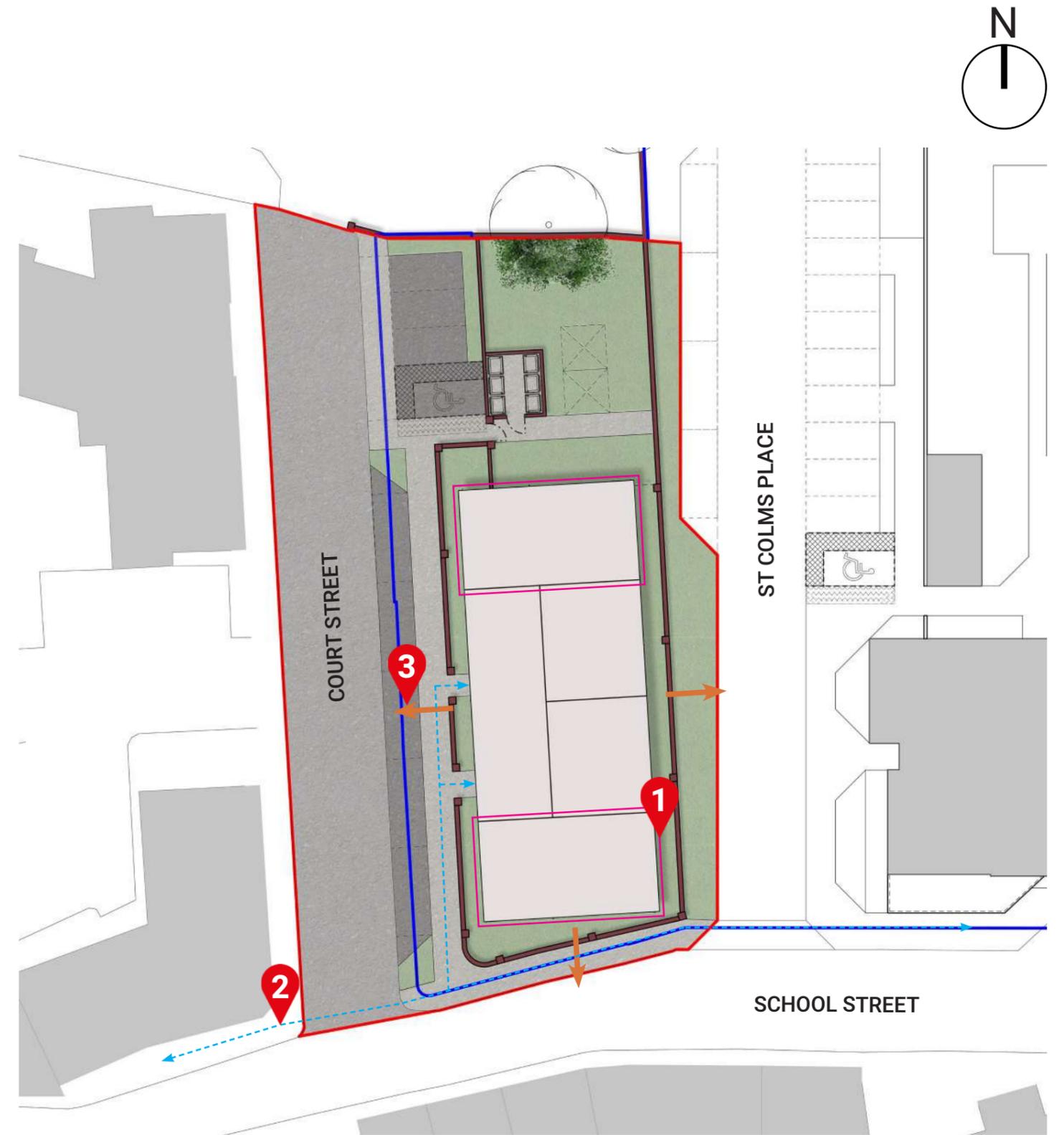
Gables rotated to frame block and create multi-frontage to all surrounding streets.

2. APPROACH

Turning the entrance away from the busy School Street creates a semi-private journey to the dwellings.

3. MULTIPLE FRONTAGE

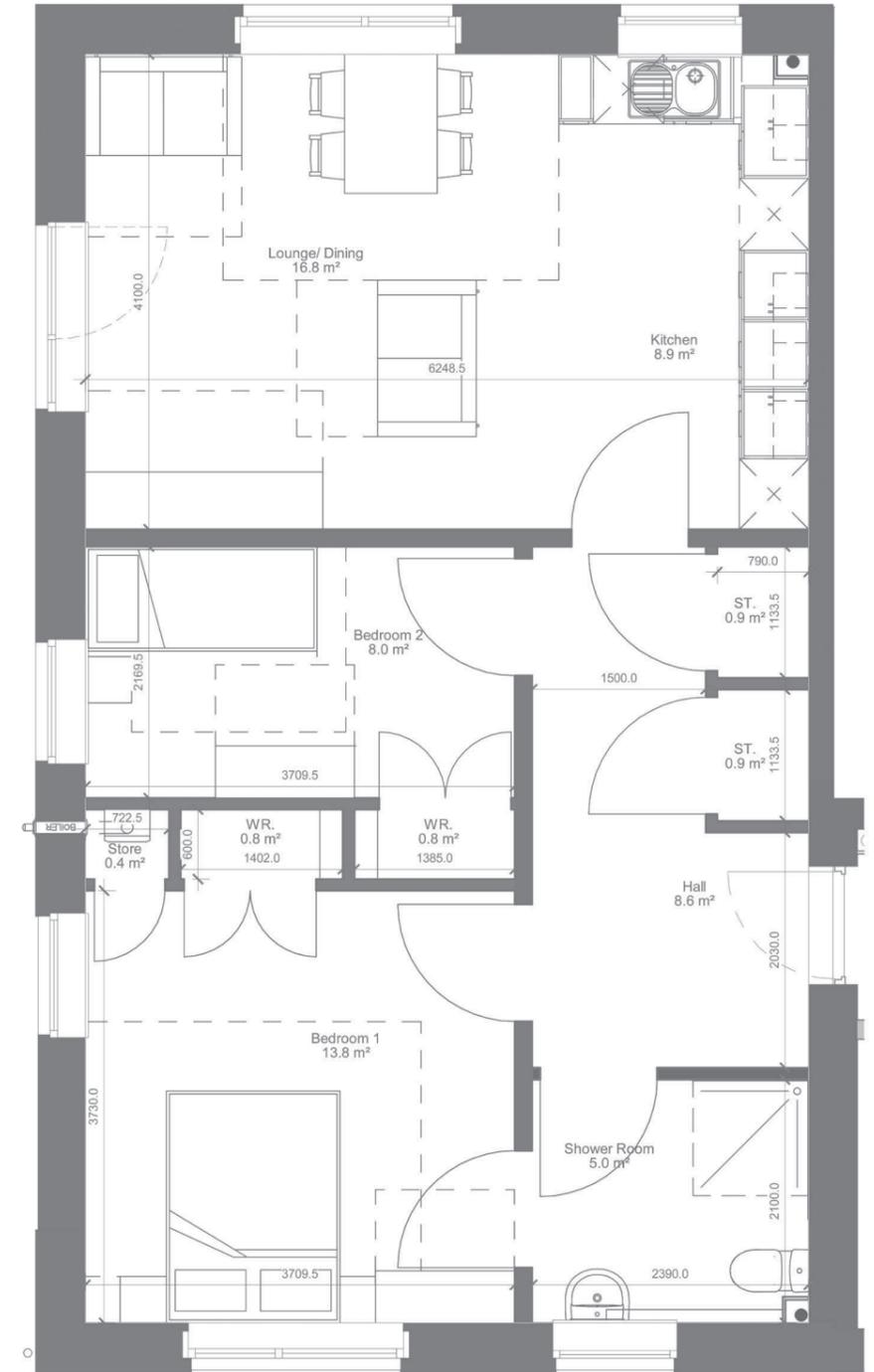
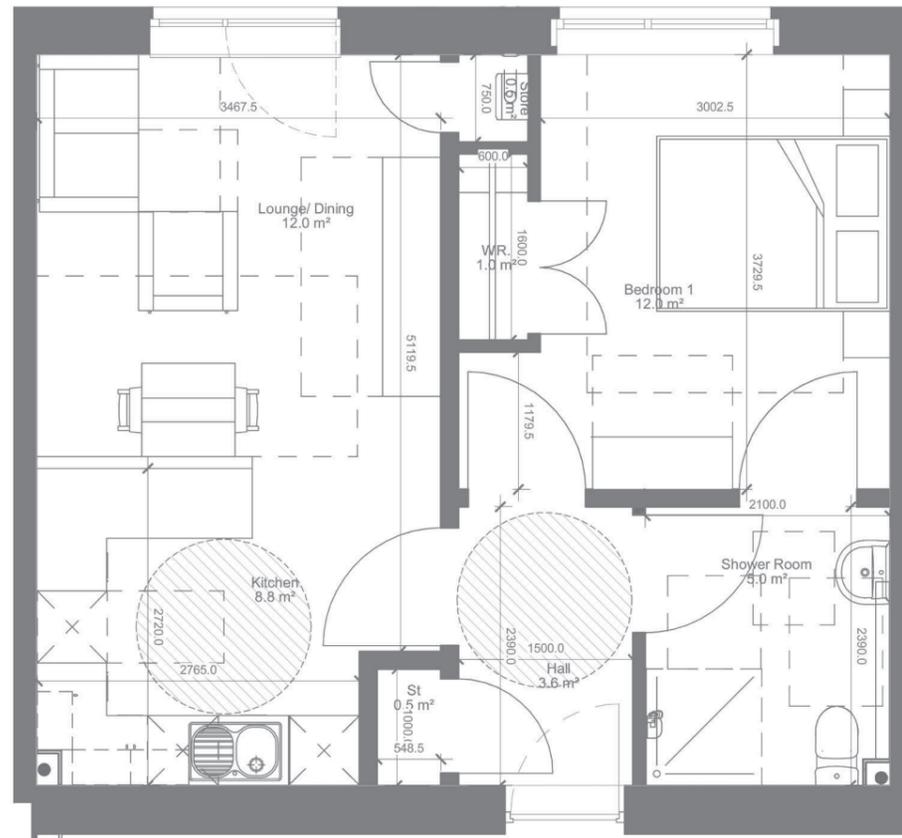
Each elevation has been given due consideration to fronting the prominent streets.



4.2 HOUSE TYPES

The proposed development delivers a mix of 1-bed and 2-bed amenity flats, with the mix of dwellings developed in conjunction with the applicant to meet the understood requirements of those on housing waiting lists, and the future tenant profile that this expected within the local authority.

All plots and the associated common spaces throughout the building are designed to meet the basic requirements of the Housing for Varying Needs Guidance (HfVN) with the desirable aspects of each category delivered where appropriate.



4.3 ROADS & PARKING

The proposed layout has been designed and discussed with North Ayrshire Council Active Transport and roads departments throughout the pre-application stage, with comments incorporated where possible, and agreement reached on the layout submitted for planning.

Parking is provided at 75% for the properties with these being targeted at those who require amenity accessible accommodation, where it is understood, that car ownership levels are lower.



4.4 LANDSCAPING

Detailed landscaping proposals are still to be fully resolved, with the expectation that these can be conditioned, with designs and specifications of planting etc to be confirmed prior to the works commencing on site.

The dwellings benefit from an area of common landscaping, with small defensible spaces provided to the immediate perimeter to provide privacy for residents. Within the rear courtyard, shared drying areas and a common bin store will be provided.

Soft landscaping, including turf and tress, will be used throughout to create streetscapes, delineate parking bays, footpaths and private/public spaces more generally.



Section **5.0**
DESIGN & MATERIALITY



5.1 DESIGN AESTHETIC

The proposed block design has been conceived to provide a contemporary aesthetic and attractive residential development, which promotes placemaking and the regeneration of the dense urban setting while giving reflection to that which stood before.

Continuing design themes from the development at St Colms Place, the proposals are able to work together to re-establish urban streetscape and consistency. Like St Colms Place, the brickwork is layered in standard and extended cavities to provide depth and modeling within the facade. The verticality of the three-storey block, which addresses the inconsistency of building heights established in the context, is accentuated further by the materiality of alternating contrasting brickwork.

The lighter brick colour is chosen to project with the extended cavity reflective of the surrounding dry dash render materials while the darker brick is then used to create recesses, encouraging the verticality and creating columns in the elevations.

The combination of brick colours is also used to frame the overall development alongside the alternating roof orientation. The overall block is deliberately turned away from the main route of School Street and faced on to Court Street giving a private access point to residents, however, these dutch gables allow a consistent facing on to School Street, reflective of the overall streetscape.

While consistencies are recognised between this development and that at St Colms Place, it is important not to fully replicate the neighbouring facility so as to create its own stand alone identity.

A nod to the police station is given in the proposed boundary wall which will be constructed using reclaimed materials from the existing building and be replicative of the boundary wall which currently stands. By replacing this existing boundary wall, the narrow pathways can be widened to become more accessible while maintaining some of the site's history.



5.1 DESIGN AESTHETIC



PROPRIETARY ANTHRACITE
COLOURED ROOF TILES

GREY STOCK BRICKWORK
STANDARD 50mm CAVITY
TO TIE WITH ST COLM'S
DEVELOPMENT

BUFF STOCK BRICKWORK
WITH 70mm CAVITY

OPAQUE PANEL COLOURED
TO COORDINATE WITH
BRICKWORK

FEATURE GLAZED CURTAIN
WALL SYSTEM TO
STAIRWELL AND ENTRANCE.

NEW BOUNDARY WALL TO
REPLICATE EXISTING USING
EXISTING MATERIALS FROM
SITE

VIEW FROM SCHOOL STREET LOOKING EAST

5.1 DESIGN AESTHETIC



PROPRIETARY ANTHRACITE
COLOURED ROOF TILES

CLIPPED VERGE AND EAVES

3-PANEL AND 2-PANEL
WINDOWS TO COMPLIMENT
NEIGHBOURING ST COLM'S
DEVELOPMENT

GREY STOCK BRICKWORK
STANDARD 50mm CAVITY
TO TIE WITH ST COLM'S
DEVELOPMENT

BUFF STOCK BRICKWORK
WITH 70mm CAVITY

NEW BOUNDARY WALL TO
REPLICATE EXISTING USING
EXISTING MATERIALS FROM
SITE

VIEW FROM SCHOOL STREET LOOKING WEST

5.1 DESIGN AESTHETIC



VIEW OF SCHOOL STREET SHOWING ST COLM'S DEVELOPMENT



5.1 DESIGN AESTHETIC



VIEW OF COURT STREET LOOKING TO SCHOOL STREET



Section **6.0**
SUSTAINABILITY



6.1 ENERGY & SUSTAINABILITY

The proposals are evaluated using the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP), which utilises a scientific calculation method to offer a 'Target Emissions Rate (TER) that should not be exceeded in order to achieve compliance with the Scottish Building Standards. The proposed dwelling is then considered, implementing the design deliverables, including Air tightness, U-Values and the use of Low and Zero Carbon Generating Technologies (LZCGT), which then offers the Designed Emissions Rate (DER). If the DER meets or exceeds the TER, then the dwelling achieves compliance with the Building Standards.

The design proposals will be designed to achieve as a minimum, compliance with Silver Aspect 1 (Carbon Dioxide Emissions) & Silver Aspect 2 (Energy for Space Heating) of section 7 of the Domestic Technical Handbook.

The development will be provided with Photovoltaic panels to serve each dwelling to supplement their energy consumption from the grid.



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