SHOP, RESTAURANT + ACCOMMODATION, DINNET

Design Statemen

November 2023



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Photograph of former Auld Alliance Antiques Shop and neighbouring building.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Application Summary

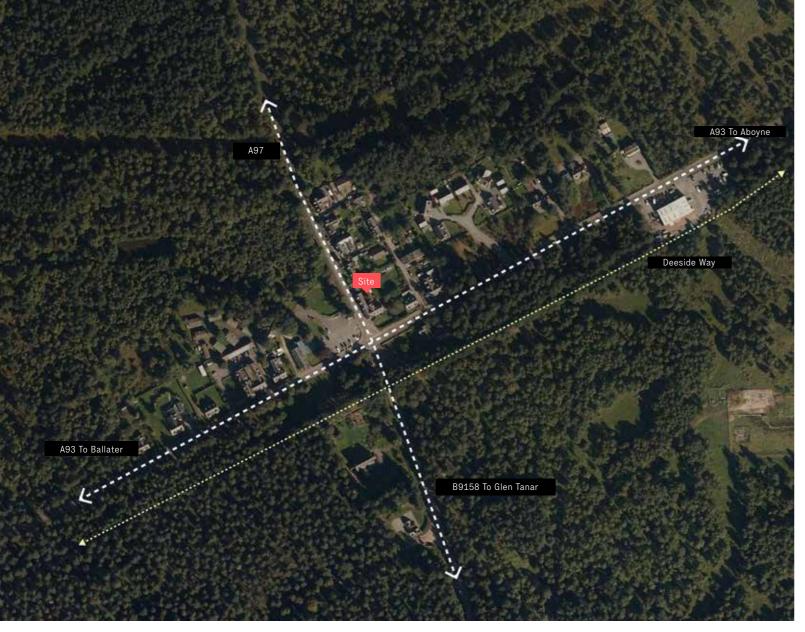
This proposal is for the sympathetic refurbishment of the retail facility and redevelopment of associated buildings of the former antique shop and general store within the village centre of Dinnet.

The proposal includes:

- · Reinstatement of General Store
- · A pizza restaurant to rear of store
- · A 2-bedroom rental apartment above store
- A self-catering 'bothy'
- A self-catering cottage (in line with previous planning approval)

Refer to architectural drawing pack which has been submitted as part of the pre-application enquiry.





Aerial photograph of the site and surrounding area

2 SITE

2.1 Location

The site is situated within the North Deeside village of Dinnet on the eastern boundary of the Cairngorms Natural Park. Located at the crossroads central to the village, the former retail building bounds the edge of the A97 and forms a landmark at the junction. The A93 and the Deeside Way are popular tourist routes, providing connections between Aberdeen, Ballater and the national park beyond.

2.2 History

The property was formerly the General Store and Post Office before becoming an antique shop until closure in early 2021. The original character of the exterior of the stone and slate building has remained unchanged, however shows sign of deterioration around the windows, dormers and the dilapidated sheds to the rear.

In 2020, planning approval was received by the previous owner for the demolition of the sheds to the rear of the property and erection of new dwellinghouse. (APP/2020/1099)



Historic Photographs



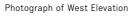
Photograph of existing garage and boundary wall

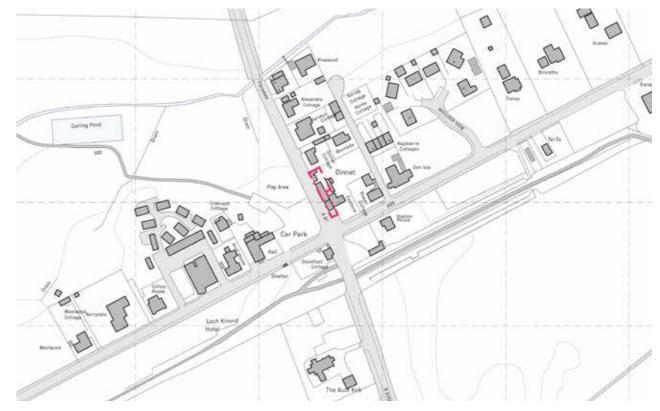
2.3 Site Characteristics

The site is known locally for its position on the corner of the primary crossroads in the village of Dinnet, opposite the large car park. The shop front faces the main road (A93) and the long elevation of the building sits on the path along the A97 - both facades have large windows in the existing granite walls which allow street-side views into the shop.

The north end of the site is comprised of a large garage / shed which has 2 granite walls along the boundary; and a smaller timber shed. All timber elements of these structures are dilapidated and unsalvageable.

The sheds and existing shop define a small courtyard space to the rear, which offers interesting opportunity for a private garden space.



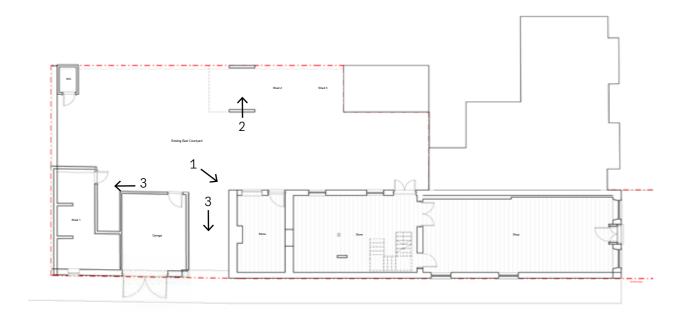




1. Photograph of inner courtyard showing dilapidated garage



3. Photograph of pend



2. Photograph of existing timber sheds

4. Photograph of northern boundary wall

2.4 Pre-App Feedback [ENQ/2021/1696]

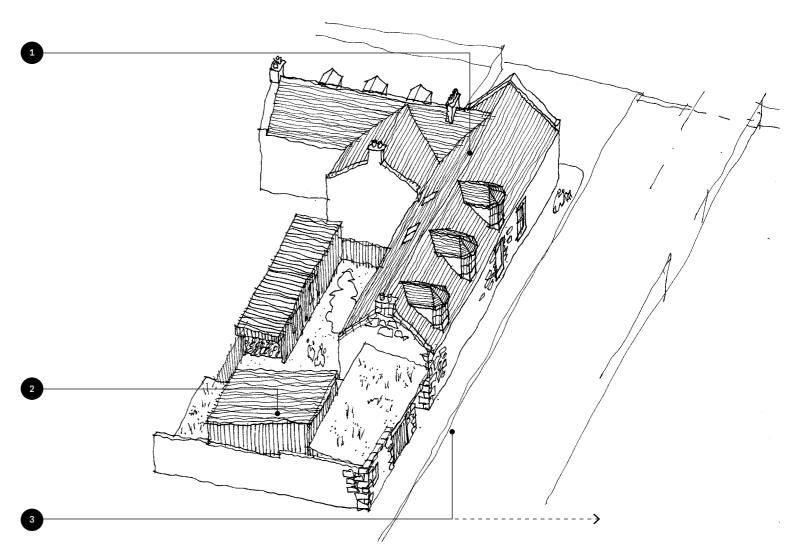
The existing upper floor of the building is currently used as storage space and is proposed to be converted to a 2 bedroom flat with the expressed goal of offering an affordable housing opportunity to employees of the restaurant. It would be difficult to justify this as a true affordable housing development as it would not be possible to condition the restriction of its occupancy to emp of the business below. The flat would be a conversion of an existing traditional building into a dwellinghouse which would not greatly alter the appearance of the existing structure in compliance with Policy 1.8. Additionally, the small size of the flat would meet the aims of Policy 1.4 which encourages a mix of dwellinghouse types with an emphasis on smaller dwellings.

The proposed conversion of the existing garage and shed would involve extensive exterior changes to the existing structures, including to the western elevation facing the A97. The eastern portion of the existing shed structure would be enlarged to create a coherent structure combining the existing structures with the proposed extension to the east. The shed would have its eastern and southern walls taken down to be incorporated into the proposed structure. The extension would have timber siding exterior walls and the whole structure would feature a green roof. In regards to design of the structure, the proposed monopitched upper level does appear to be incongruous to the design and appearance of the existing and surrounding developments, which feature more traditional styled features. It would also create an unusual massing along the elevation facing the A97. The general principle of the conversion of the existing structures to a dwellinghouse complies with Policies 1.2, 1.8, 3.1, and elements of Policy 3.3. Environment and Planning Services would like to see either more justification of the upper extension design through a design statement or a more sympathetic design.

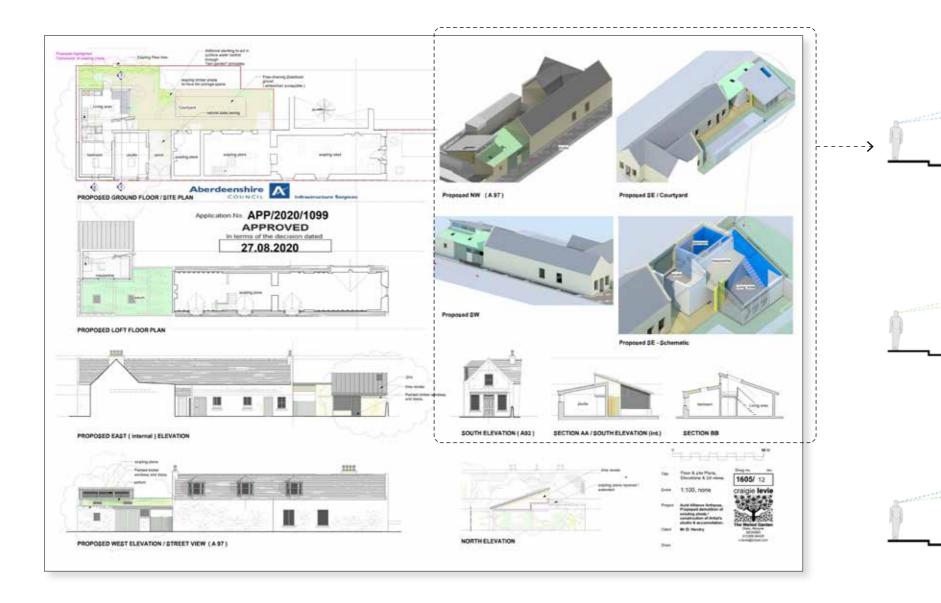
Roads Development commented that they have concerns regarding the potential increase in parking demand at the A97/A93 junction. They note that the parking arrangement is an existing issue and any proposal should address the potential for an increase in risk to other road users due to vehicle movements at the site and also the potential for parked vehicles obscuring the visibility splay.

The above feedback addresses points both in terms of the proposed function of the development, and also the proposed design. In response to the 3 main issues raised by the pre-app feedback, we have made the following updates:

- 1. Whilst the housing element associated with the restaurant / shop redevelopment cannot be conditioned as exclusive to the staff employed by the business, it is the intention to make the dwellinghouse exclusive to staff.
- 2. The upper level of the previous design (sketch shown adjacent) has been removed and the geometry simplified to a single mono-pitch element with a lower grass roof contained below the level of the garage wall.
- 3. The existing car park across the road is sufficiently large to accommodate increased demand. Additionally, a new car park (Site EDI in the CNPA LPD) has recently been completed a short walk from the site (see 4.2 & 4.4).



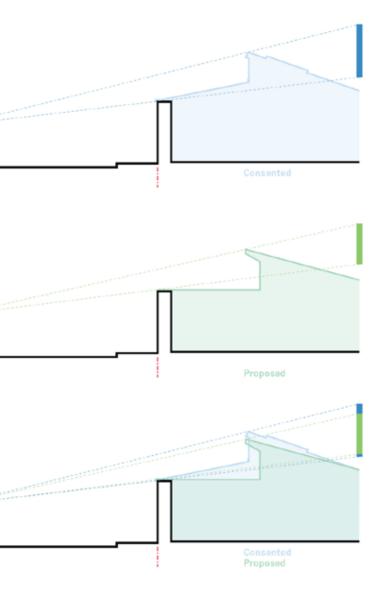
Pre-App sketch - Aerial view showing redeveloped sheds to rear to provide new dwelling

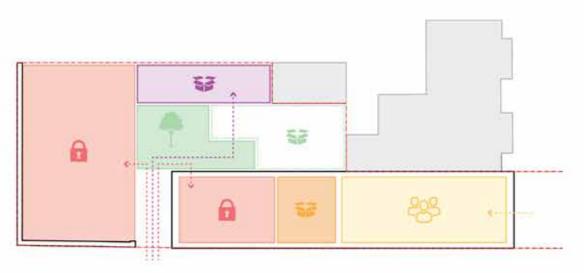


2.5 Extant Permission [APP/2020/1099]

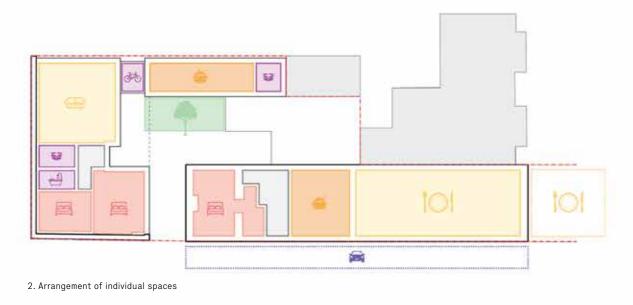
The previous proposal was granted permission in 2020 for a new two-storey dwellinghouse to the land at the rear of the site. The above excerpt from the submission documents shows a similar cross-sectional profile, with some differences to the cross section in order to reduce visibility:

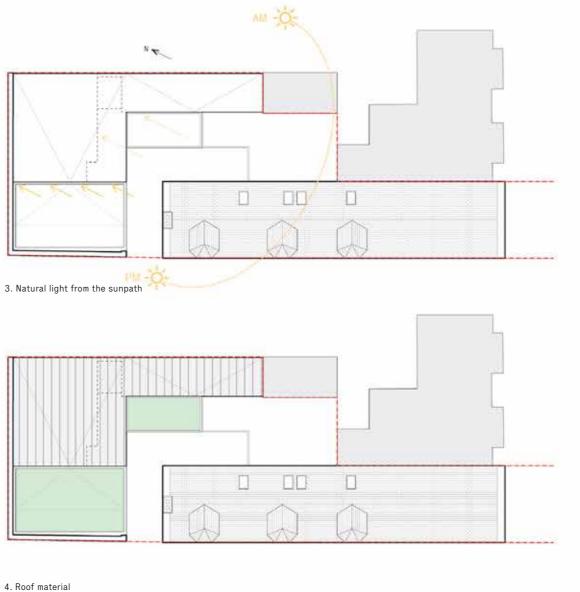
- The approved scheme contains a large canopy over the access route into the courtyard spanning from the existing granite wall at the north, across to the north gable of the shop.
- The approved scheme is comprised of a two-storey building, which results in a higher roof profile (as shown in above visibility comparison)





1. Organisation of public, shared semi-public, and private







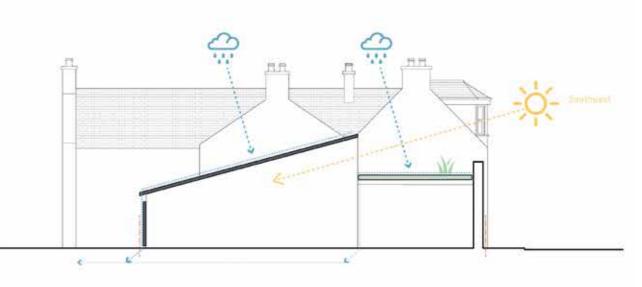
DESIGN 3

3.1 Approach & Massing

The proposal separates the existing building into a general store, restaurant and kitchen at the front (south), utilising the existing street-facing shop front which will be refurbished and will include an outdoor seating area. The rear and first floor of the existing property will become a standalone 'bothy' accommodation, and staff accommodation respectively.

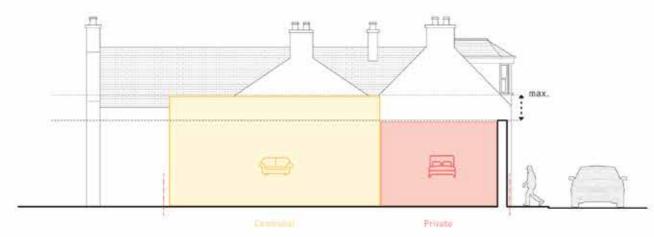
The rear (north) of the site will be comprised of a new-build, single storey 2-bed accommodation apartment and separate bakery/food preparation shed, organised around a semi-public courtyard space. Access to the rear will be through the existing gate, which will be replaced to match existing. The rear courtyard will be a shared green space with access to a designated service yard for the restaurant's kitchen and bakery.

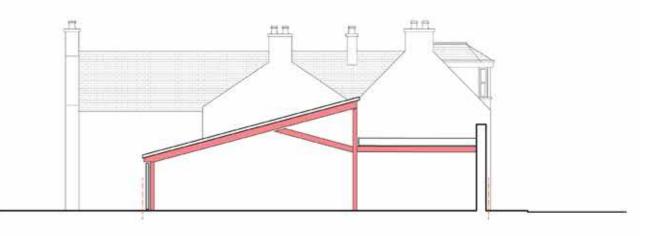




1. Section through the existing rear garden space to the north

4. The roofs are drained separately, and the space between offers a large area of high level glazing to the southwest





2. Arrangement of communal and private spaces within the new build element

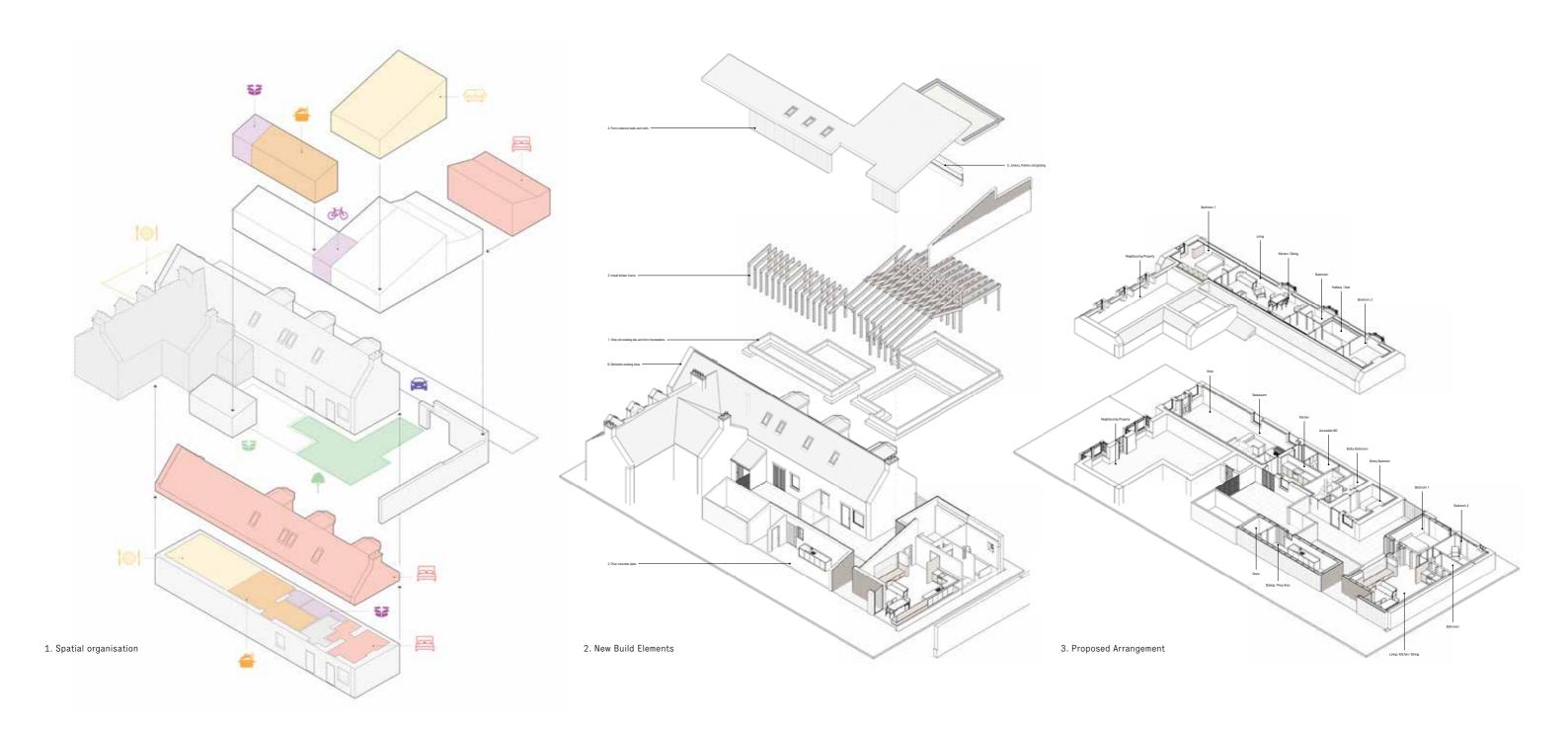




3. Dual volume simplified. Large monopitch as the primary element, and a smaller sloped roof which does not protrude above the existing wall

6. Central entrance and lobby (see plans for detail)

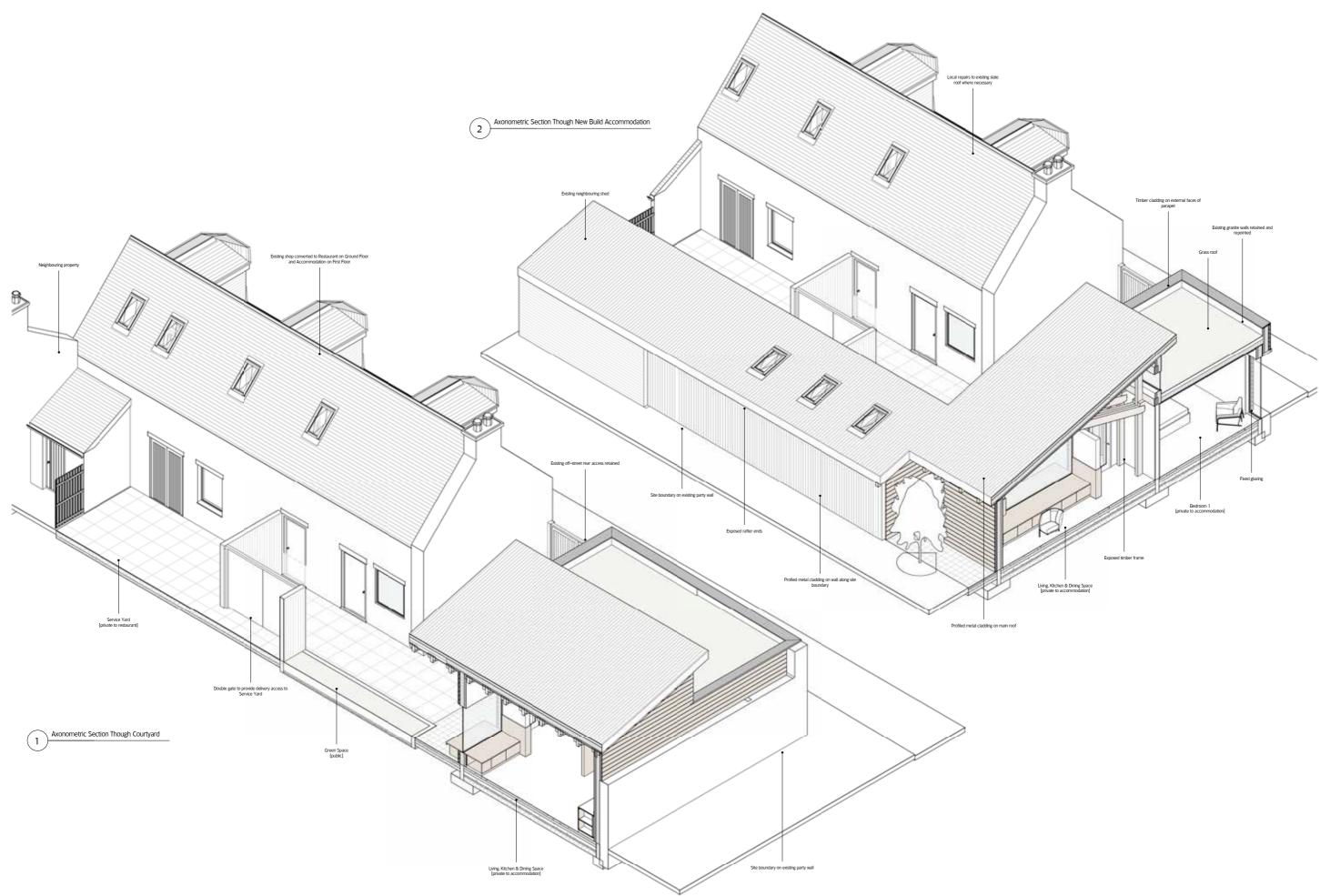
5. Internally exposed rafters, and repetition of 'kinked' element creates continuity and retains the high level glazing to the large communal space

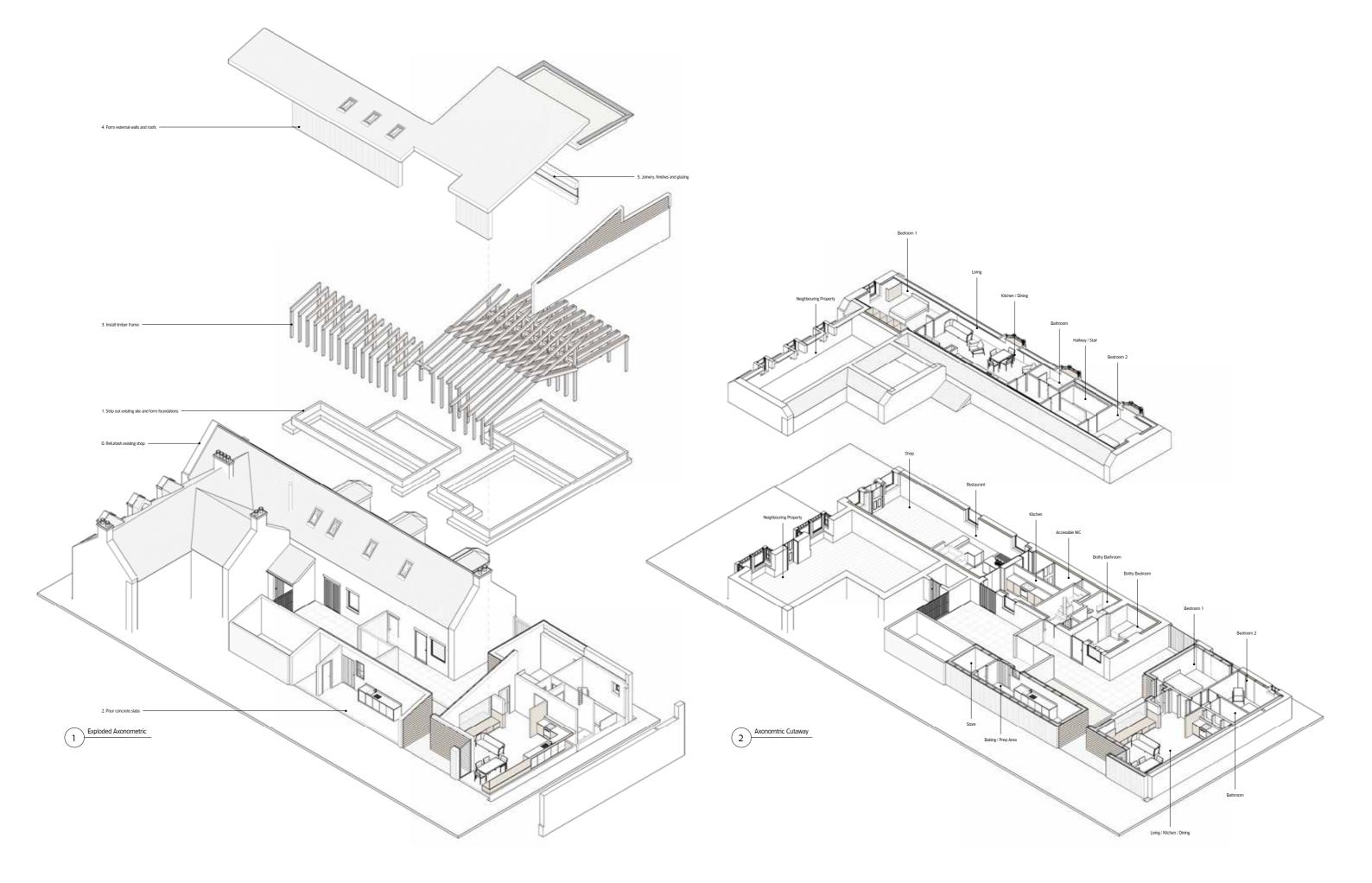


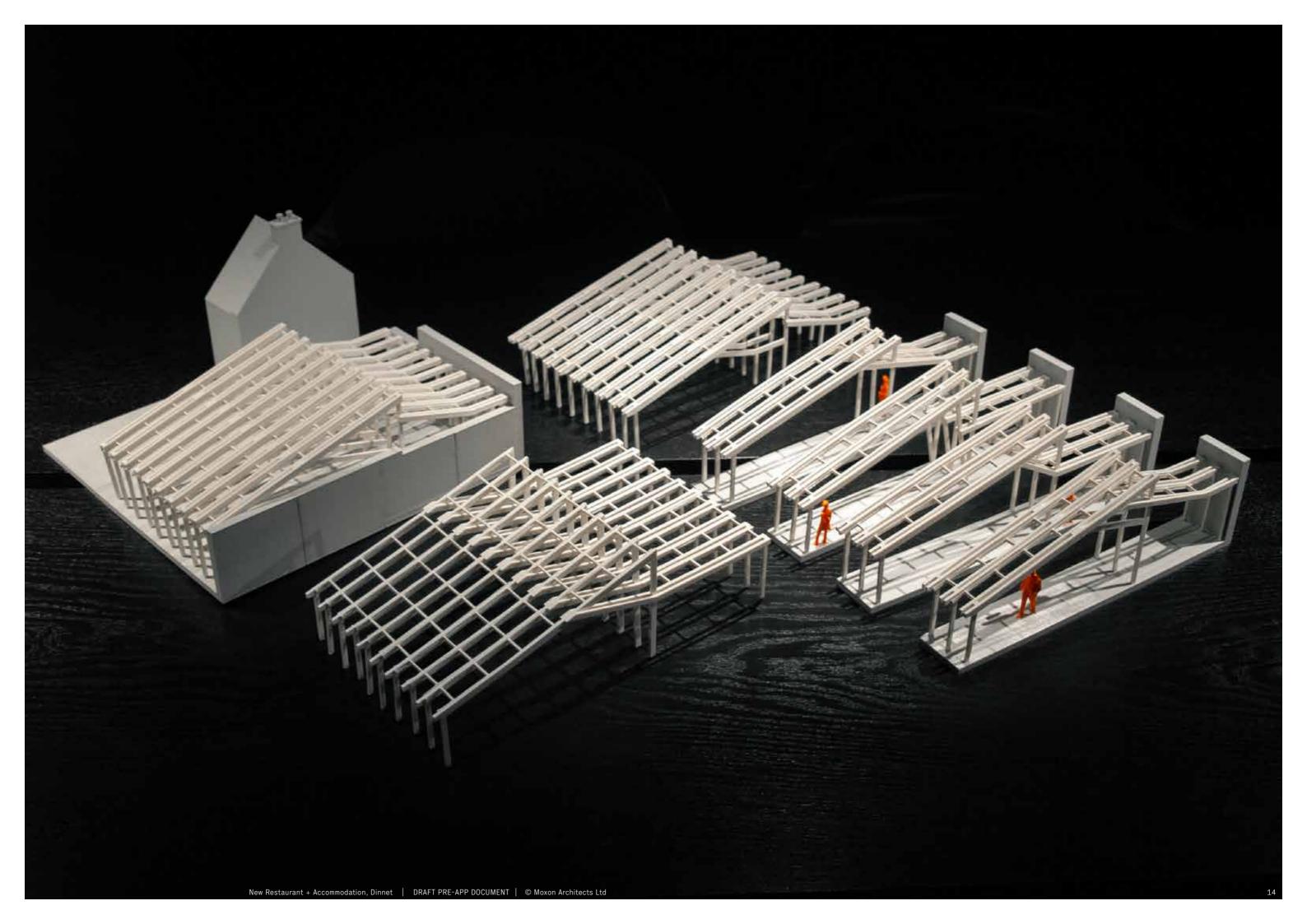
3.2 Proposal

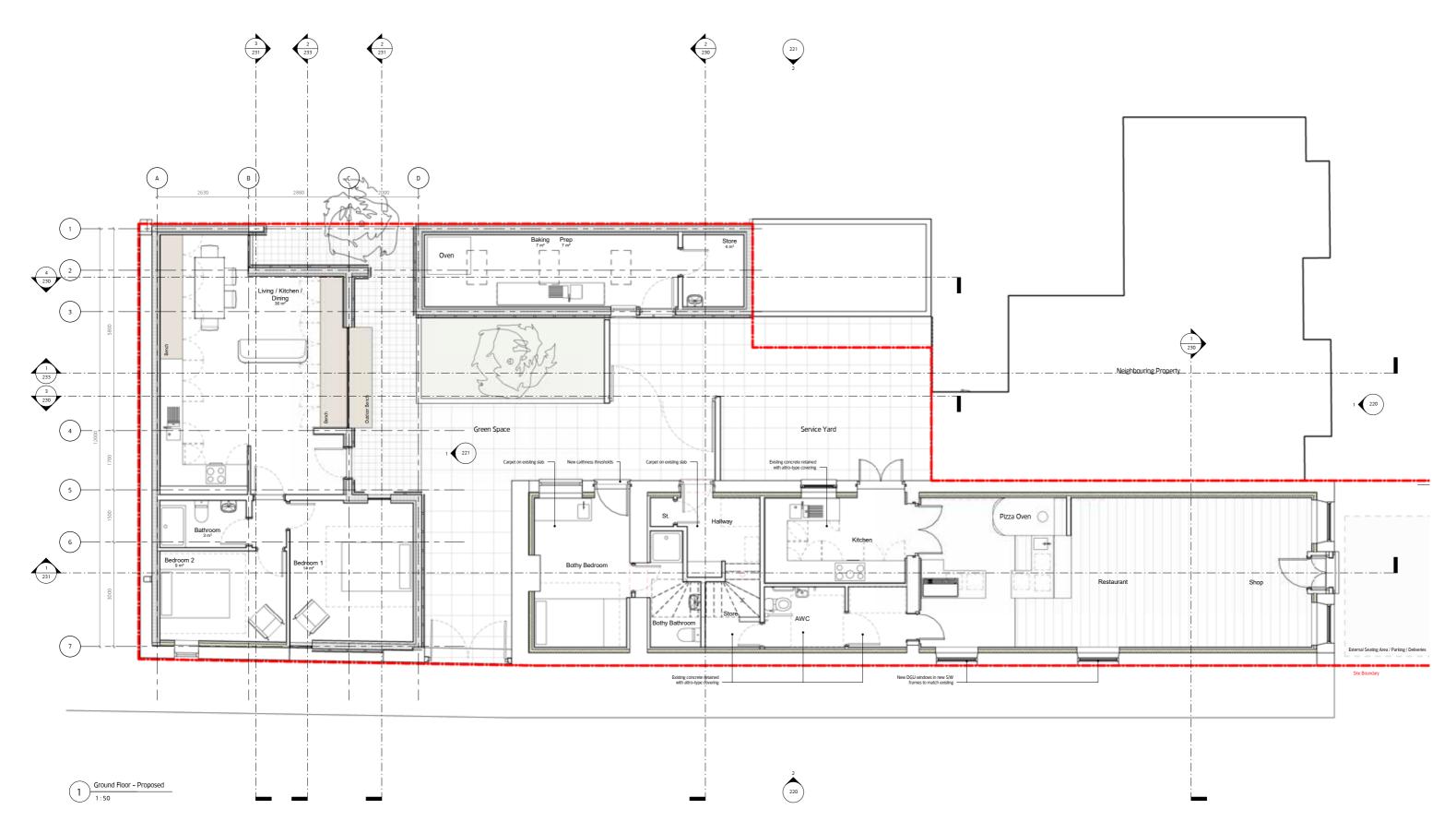
The new build element is a single-storey, 2-bedroom apartment which will be used as guest accommodation. Primary roof elements are defined by an exposed timber frame, the geometry of which reflects the public and private spaces of the building: a large mono-pitch roof above the living and kitchen areas offers natural light through the clerestory glazing; and a low-lying grass roof above the more intimate spaces such as the bedrooms and bathroom.

The mono-pitch roof is shared by the adjacent bakery and bike store, creating continuity across the rear elevation and enclosing the central courtyard space with a small garden and service yard.



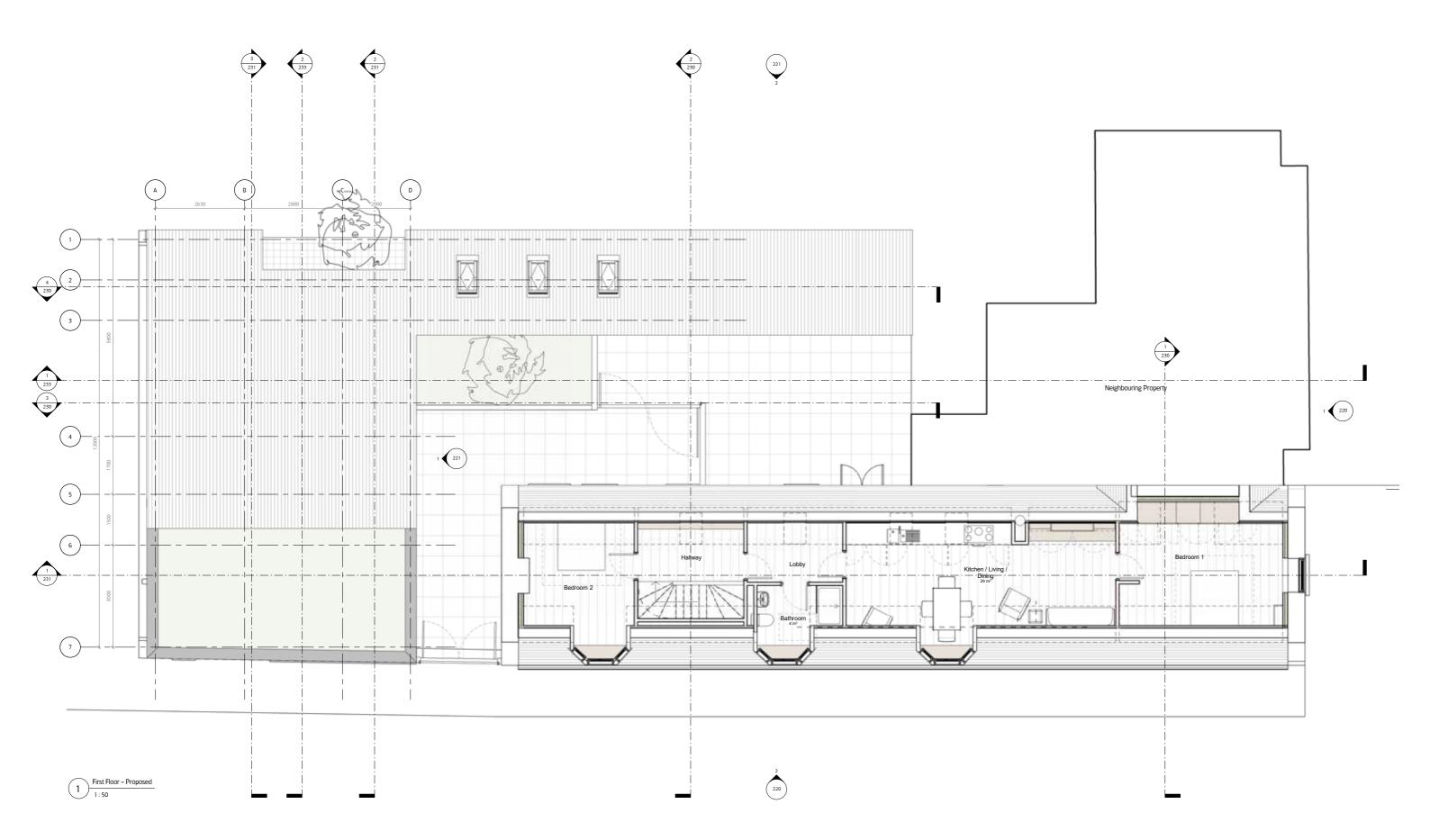


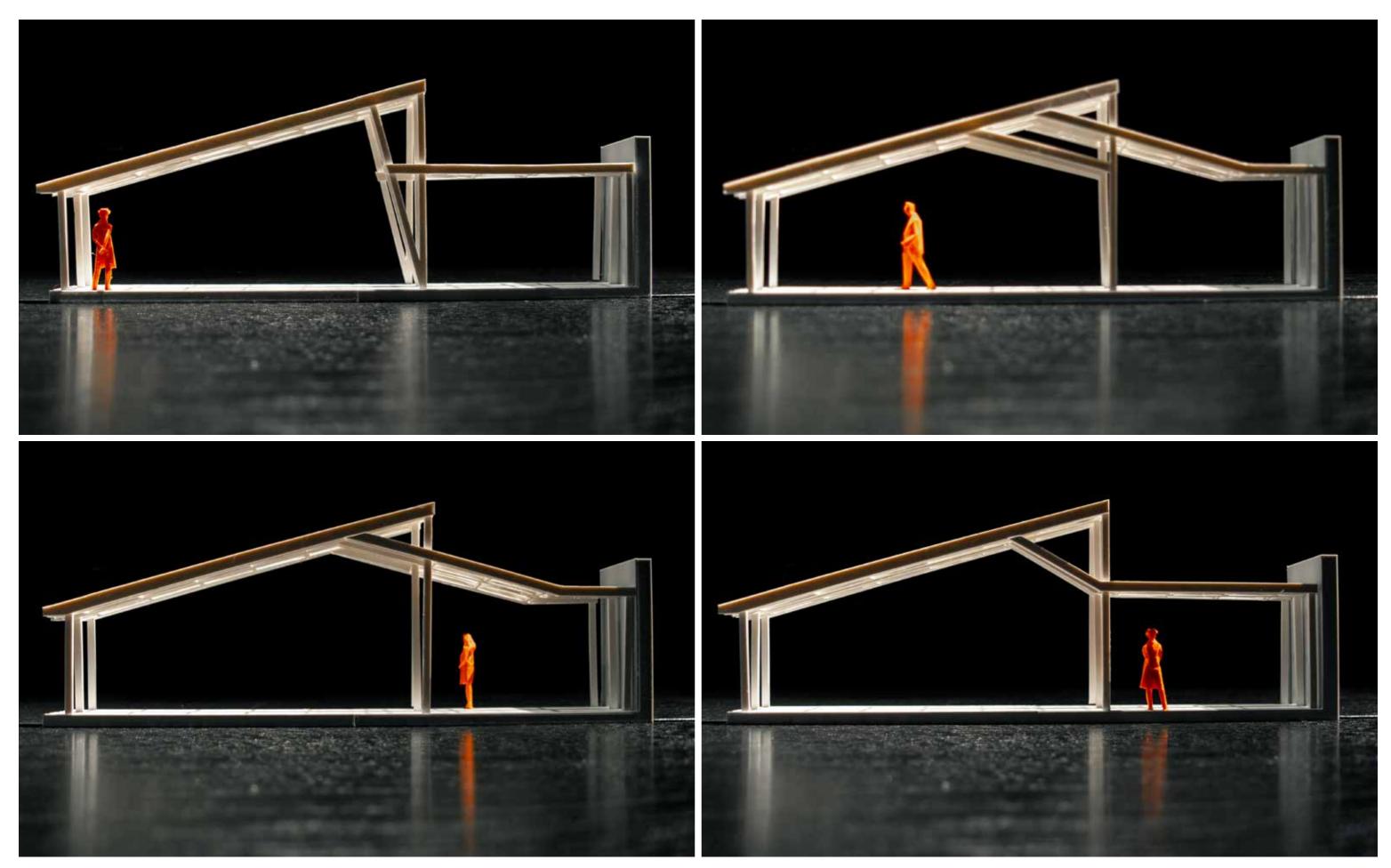




Key

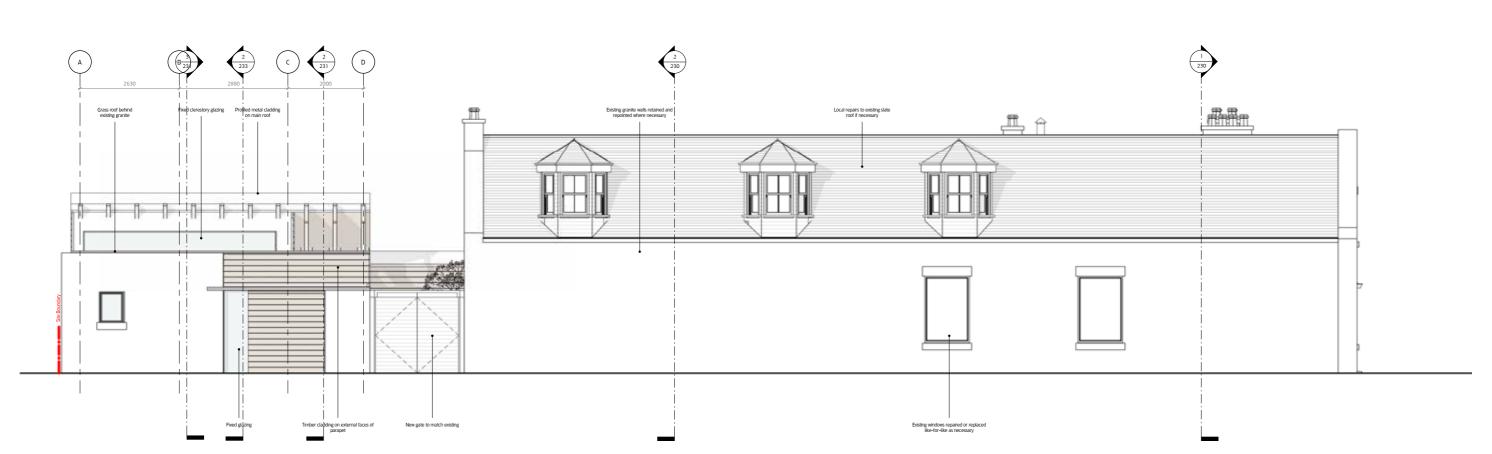
Site Boundary



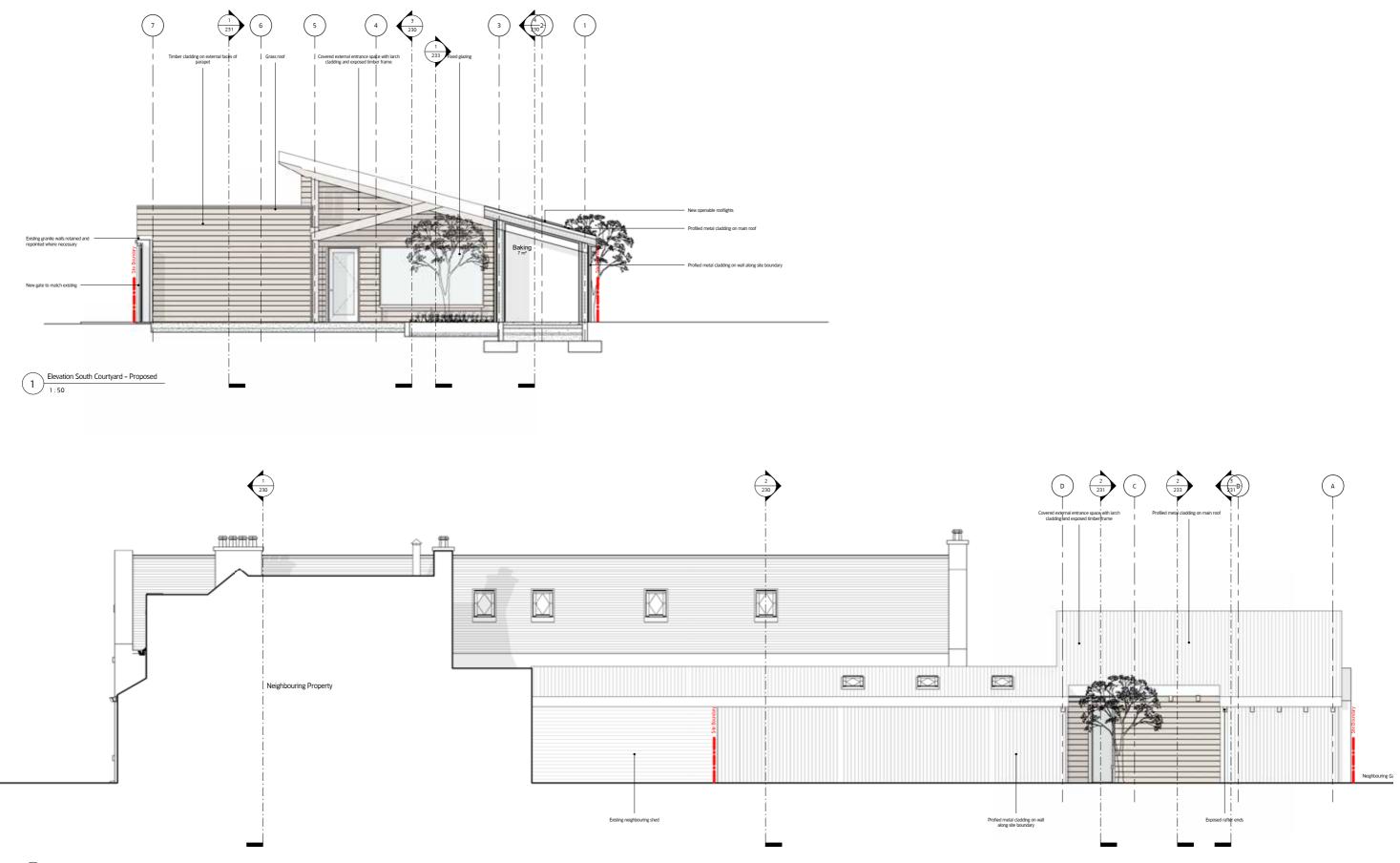


A series of truss options has been explored to establish an arragement which balances visual interest (internally), a large clerestory and minimal visual impact from the street.

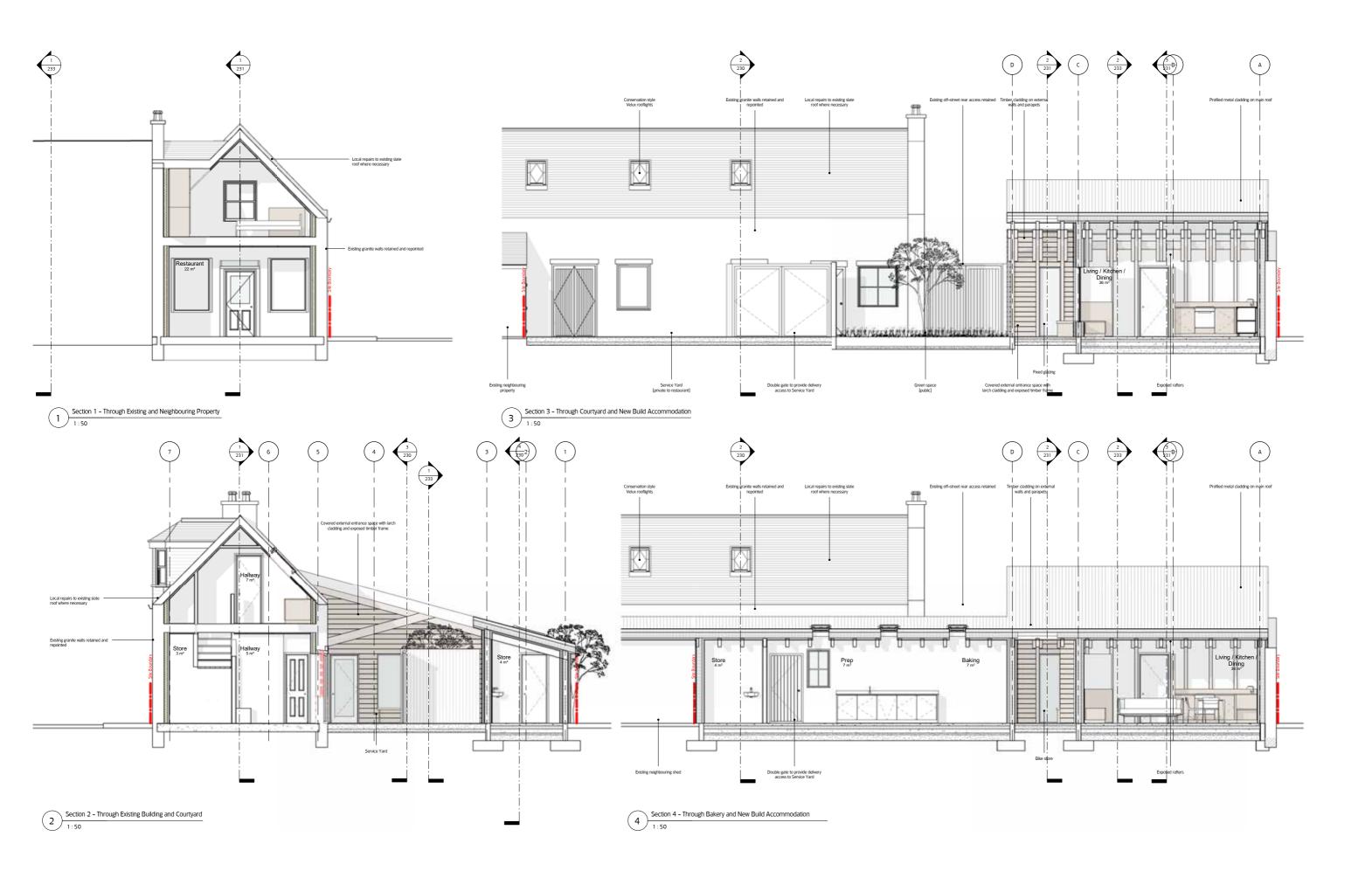




2 Elevation West - Proposed 1:50

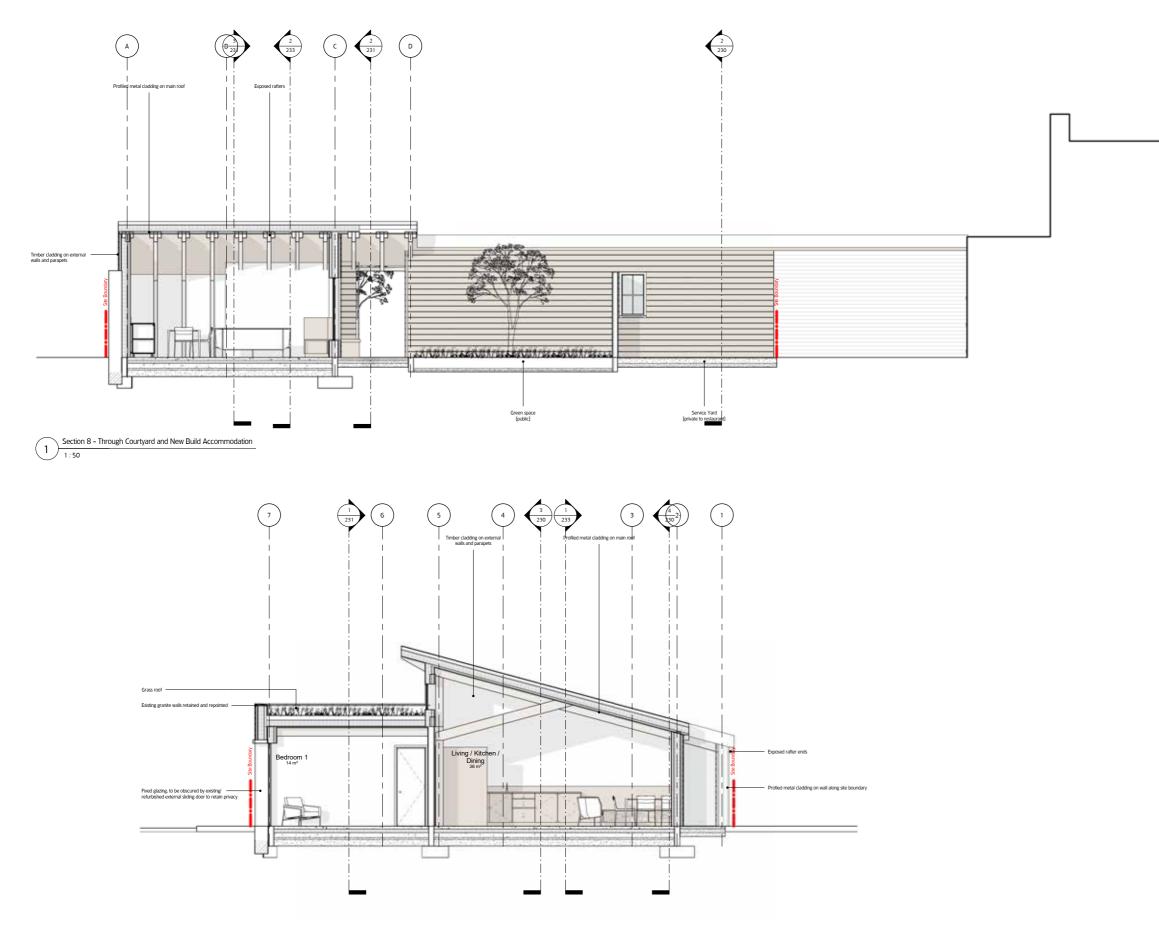


2 Elevation East - Proposed 1:50

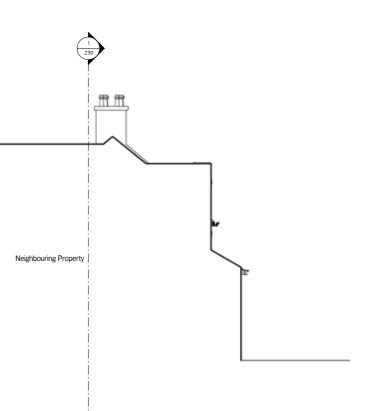




2 Section 6 - Through New Build Accommodation



2 Section 7 - Through New Build Accommodation and Bedroom





3.4 Materials

The material approach has been developed to match that employed on many of the vernacular buildings in the immediate surrounding area: hard wood cladding and zinc. These materials have been used together for the construction of outbuildings and private houses throughout the North of Scotland.

Principle walls of the proposal will be finished with a combination of zinc standing seam cladding and square profile larch boards. The use of zinc can be continued onto the roof to create a high quality design through careful detailing.

Proposed materials palette:

- · Corrugated metal cladding
- · Square profile larch
- High iron glazing
- · Local reclaimed stone
- Planted flat roofs



View from crossroad looking towards restored shop and accommodation

Support the role of Dinnet as a key gateway into the National Park

POLICY

4.1 Site Objectives & **Developer Obligations**

- As noted in the LDP Dinnet is one of the gateways to the National Park and is the location of one of the CNPA boundary marker stones
- In addition the proposal is located at the village crossroads a strategically important junction in the National Park where the A93 and A97 meet, with the B9158 also connecting the village with the River Dee, Glen Tanar and the South Deeside Road
- The proposals will significantly improve the appearance of what is currently a rapidly deteriorating complex of buildings through careful renovation and the rejuvenation of the presently rundown street frontage.
- The proposals entail the activation of the most important (if not the only) retail premises in the village with an offer that is relevant to local, passing and tourist trade.
- The proposals also involve the rectification of semi-ruinous outbuildings, prominent from the street, with the introduction of economically sustainable and architecturally appropriate tourist facilities well connected to local services.

Support the delivery of housing that meets local needs, particularly affordable housing

Proposal includes provision of a 2-bed apartment on the upper floor of the existing building (where living accommodation was located previously). In recognition of the sparsity of affordable rental accommodation on Deeside within CNP, this accommodation is intended to be offered on a first refusal basis to staff of the premises below.

Support proposals for small-scale business development

The proposals are small scale in nature but diverse in offer, contributing to the range of business activities available in Dinnet:

- Reinstatement of modest general store (none currently exists in the village)
- Pizzeria (none currently exists in the village)
- The rental apartment is intended to directly support the provision of the store and pizzeria (staff accommodation, supporting the small-scale business development)
- A self-catering cottage (high end, design conscious offer no such equivalent offer exists on Upper Deeside)
- A self-catering 'bothy' (similar to the concept of a 'Mazot' in the alps) compact and as a result comparatively low cost and accessible. Similar properties are available on Speyside [e.g.; 'Bothy Project'] but none on the Deeside part of the Park)

Affordable housing - All housing developments should include 25% affordable housing

2 bed apartment would be configured for low cost end of rental market, intention is to provide accommodation for staff

Planning obligations - Contributions will be sought from any housing developments towards: Aboyne Primary School, Aboyne Medical Practice

As required



Map showing the site relative to other development sites in Dinnet (Cairngorms National Park - 2021 Local Development Plan)

4.2 LDP Policies

As the site is located within the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA), any proposal will be assessed against the policies contained within the CNPA Local Development Plan (LDP) 2021. The relevant policies in this case are:

Policy 1: New Housing Development

Policy 2: Supporting Economic Growth

Policy 3: Design and Placemaking

Policy 10: Resources

4.2 LDP Policy 1: **New Housing** Development

1.1 Housing delivery in settlements

Proposals for housing will be supported where they are located: a) on an identified allocated site; or b) within an identified settlement boundary.

The development site is located within the settlement boundary of Dinnet, and is not within an identified allocated site.

All proposals for housing will need to: a) meet the requirements for the settlement as outlined in the Community Information section; and b) reinforce and enhance the character of the settlement.

Proposal reinforces and enhances the character of the settlement through its reinstatement of former living accommodation (upper level) and bothy accommodation (to rear)

1.3 Other housing in the countryside

Proposals will be supported where they reinforce the existing pattern of development, and: a) are necessary for or improve the operational and economic viability of an active business which has a locational requirement directly linked to the countryside; orb) are on a rural brownfield site.

Given acute constraints on the current rental market, the housing component of the proposal improves the viability of the commercial use.

1.4 Designing for affordability and specialist needs

Residential development will be required to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to help secure a balanced housing stock, with an emphasis on smaller dwellings.

Development is for a smaller unit, distinct from other typologies in the village (above a retail premises etc.)

1.5 Affordable housing

Proposals for fewer than four market dwellings will also be required to make a contribution towards affordable housing. This will be a monetary payment towards meeting housing need in the local community.

Developers seeking to negotiate a reduction in affordable housing provision must demonstrate through a Viability Assessment that the requirements make an otherwise commercially viable proposal inviable.

As required

1.7 Alterations to existing houses

Proposals will be supported where:

a) the appearance and character of the dwelling and the surrounding area is protected or enhanced; and b) appropriate and proportionate provision of private garden is maintained; and

Minimal / no alteration to the appearance of the existing building to facilitate reinstatement of residential upper level. Provision of a shared external space to the rear courtyard will be included, of which a portion could be allocated for private use if necessary

c) adequate off street parking and vehicular access to the property is maintained.

Off street parking could be implemented, however ideally the proposal could be implemented without this provision in recognition of the following:

- Crossroads location with excellent public transport frequency and provision (201 bus stops hourly, 7-days a week at the stop 45m from the development site)
- Located on the Deeside Way a fully segregated cycle route east to Aboyne and onwards to Aberdeen, west to Ballater
- Urban and extra-urban developments are being advanced with zero parking provision in recognition of climate change. Rural development where good public transport exists (per above) should follow this lead
- The courtyard space provides for ad-hoc parking and deliveries
- The street edge is used for parking by all properties to the north, and has historically been the location of parking for Canmore / Auld Alliance
- A large and under used public car park is located directly opposite the property

1.8 Conversions

Conversion of existing traditional and vernacular buildings to housing will be supported where:

a) it is demonstrated that the building is capable of the proposed conversion works; and

b) it maintains the style and character of the original building in terms of form, scale, materials and detailing, where they contribute positively to the context and setting of the area.

The building is capable of the proposed works (reinstatement of previous residential use). The style and character of the building will be maintained, and where necessary enhanced by remedial works.

4.3 LDP Policy 2: Supporting Economic Growth

2.1 Town Centres First

Proposals for high footfall generating developments, including retail, commercial, leisure, offices and community facilities, will be supported where they are located in a way which uses a sequential approach to site selection: a) within an identified town centre; b) within identified settlement boundaries; c) outwith settlements where the development supports the economic vitality and viability of that community.

Developments should have no adverse impact on neighbouring properties and should support the vibrancy, vitality and viability of existing town centres or settlements. Exceptions to this should demonstrate social or community need for the proposal. The potential cumulative impact of similar proposals will also be taken into account.

Since the development does not reduce the area of retail / commercial space within the existing site (compared to the existing condition, the proposals increase commercial area) the development does not have any adverse effect on the surroundings in terms of economic viability.

Property is in the centre of Dinnet, and the directly supports the vibrancy, vitality and viability of the village centre. Improvements to the existing commercial building will increase footfall in the area - and the external restaurant seating will provide a sense of destination which is currently lacking in the village. Similarly, the new build proposals create an attractive and interesting courtyard with enclosed semi-public space as a new offering for the village.

2.2 Tourist accommodation

Proposals for tourist related accommodation, other than dwellings built to residential standards, will be supported where they:

a) have no adverse environmental or amenity impacts on the site or neighbouring areas; and b) contribute to/support the provision of a wide range of visitor accommodation options including low cost accommodation;

Accommodation will have no adverse amenity impact – bothy is 'landlocked' with no boundary to adjacent residential properties while the self-catering unit is based on an already consented live / work unit with a blank masonry wall boundary to the adjoining residential property.

c) support or contribute to a year-round economy.

Proposal includes two distinct and distinctive tourist accommodation units: high end, design conscious cottage and a compact and low cost bothy. Proposals will support year round economy through the mutually beneficial combination of accommodation and retail / restaurant



Image showing cars parking outside property.

2.5 Protecting existing economic activity

Proposals for the alternative use of allocated economic development or tourism sites and non-allocated sites or buildings currently in, or last used for, economic, employment or tourism purposes will only be supported where:

a) it is satisfactorily demonstrated that it is not practical for financial or other reasons to sustain the existing or last economic, employment or tourism use; or

The property was formerly the General Store and Post Office before becoming an antique shop until closure in early 2021. The closure of the previous business (prior to resale) demonstrates it was no longer practically and / or economically viable. Anecdote suggests the proposal for a new food / restaurant business in the village has been well received.

b) the site or buildings are unsuitable for the business needs and impact adversely on the built or natural environment, local character or neighbouring properties.

Whilst the site / building in its current state do not adversely impact on the local environment, they do sit unused and appear tired - representing somewhat of a missed opportunity for a charming building on a prominent site in the centre of the village.

3.1 Placemaking

4.4 LDP Policy 3: Design and Placemaking

All developments must meet the six qualities of successful places, which in accordance with Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 41 to 46, are to be:

i. distinctive; ii. safe and pleasant; iii. welcoming; iv. adaptable; v. resource efficient; and vi. easy to move around and beyond.

The proposals will meet the requirements of SPP para 41-26. The proposals will be simple in terms of form, yet high quality in the architectural finish and materials used. The result will be a recognisable and legible arrangement with interesting and distinctive material and detailing.

3.3 Sustainable Design

All development proposals must also be designed to:

a) minimise the effects of the development on climate change in terms of siting and construction and, once complete, achieve at least the minimum standard in compliance with the Building Standards Technical Handbook;

The key driver in the Sustainable Design strategy for the proposal is to create a sense of place made exceptional through the highest standard of design and delivery. The site will be developed to meet the performance requirements of the current Building Standards, whilst delivering a proposal that is sensitive to the existing ecology. All new build elements of the proposal will meet or exceed current standards, involving a coherent approach to saving on lighting and heating, the two major energy consumers in retail units.

Similarly, the building has been designed with locally produced materials in mind, thus reflecting the local vernacular whilst also minimising the embedded energy of all building material used.

b) be sympathetic to the traditional pattern and character of the surrounding area, local vernacular and local distinctiveness, whilst encouraging innovation in design and use of materials;

Proposals are sympathetic to surroundings being either refurbishment or else adjustment of existing consented scheme (also largely hidden from public view).

The local vernacular is understood as an architecture of simple, elemental masses and materiality used in direct response to both the climate and landscape. The proposals aim to draw from the austerity and ad-hoc charm of the local architecture, typical of the Cairngorms, but also continue the use of vernacular materials - honest and elementary.

c) use materials and landscaping that will complement the setting of development;

Materials are used as an appropriation of the local vernacular: timber frame structure clad in natural materials such as metal cladding and European untreated larch - archetypal of contemporary buildings in the Cairngorms.

Similarly the building's masses are positioned within the site in a deliberate attempt to appear 'nestled' and 'tucked away' amongst the 'town grain' that defines the area (see page 9)

d) make sustainable use of resources, including the minimisation of energy, waste and water usage, within the future maintenance arrangements, and for any decommissioning which may be necessary;

Construction waste will be minimized through the efficiency of design - sizes will be determined where possible according to standard supplied sizes of panel material - cutting down on waste and reducing the need for bespoke alterations on site.

The primary construction materials (timber, green roofs, slate and lead) have long life spans with minimal maintenance requirements, but have been chosen so that they can be easily recycled or re-used when, and if, ultimately necessary.

Proposals will not use fossil fuel of any kind for heating or cooking. Existing and new build will be highly insulated in excess of Building Standards. Water butts will be included for garden maintenance. Throughout the building the use of high performance insulation and glazing units [where possible] along with energy efficient LED lights will help to reduce the carbon footprint of the building.

e) enable the storage, segregation and collection of recyclable materials and *make provision for composting;*

The proposal will have a dedicated area for the segregation, storage and collection of recyclable material.

f) promote sustainable transport methods and active travel, including making provision for the storage of bicycles and reducing the need to travel;

The regular 201 bus service from Braemar to Aberdeen via Dinnet stops at Dinnet Cottage, 45m from the application site. From Aberdeen, there are good rail and bus connections to Dundee, Perth and Edinburgh. The development also benefits from a large number of existing car parking areas nearby, and the site sits adjacent to the Deeside Way, a segregated cycle route off the main road.

g) incorporate accessible multifunctional open space of appropriate quantity and quality to meet the needs of development and provide green infrastructure to connect to wider blue/green networks;

Proposals will include bicycle parking for e.g.; 8 No. bicycles to rear (private & inhabitant use) and 4No. to front (public use)

4.4 LDP Policy 3: Design and Placemaking [cont]

h) maintain and maximise all opportunities for responsible outdoor access, including links into the existing path network and ensuring consistency with the Cairngorms National Park Core Paths Plan;

The site is at the intersection of two Core Paths (Scottish Natural Heritage, https://www.nature.scot/enjoying-outdoors/routes-explore/local-pathnetworks), further emphasising the utility of the proposal site as a destination.

i) protect the amenity enjoyed by neighbours including minimisation of disturbance caused by access to the development site;

An overshadowing study has been carried out. This analysis shows that the proposal does not overshadow any adjacent buildings throughout the year.

j) include an appropriate means of access, egress, levels of private amenity ground, and space for off-street parking;

All existing access, egress, private amenity ground and off-street parking are retained. Space for off street parking provided for 1No. vehicle. Multiple spaces available in the underused adjacent car park

k) create opportunities for further biodiversity and promote ecological interest;

Green roof to new build and retained and enhanced planting will be key features of the proposal, replace existing low quality planting. Additional opportunities for compensational planting can be investigated.

I) promote good health and well-being.

Scheme promotes good heath through high quality food offer, connection to Deeside Way and Muir of Dinnet, encouragement of the use of bicycles for staff & inhabitants.

3.4 Replacing existing building stock

Replacing existing building stock will be considered favourably where:

a) the existing building is not a listed building or an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character of a conservation area; and

b) the original footprint of the building is incorporated into the new development unless an alternative adjacent site would minimise any negative environmental, landscape or social effects of the development.

Consented scheme for new build element makes use of existing building line to street and similar approach to massing - both features are retained in this proposal.

3.5 Converting existing building stock

Converting existing building stock will be considered favourably where:

a) the building is redundant for its original use, and is unlikely to have a commercial or economic future in its current form;

Proposals are to reinvigorate / regenerate the presently neglected building located in key central position in the village.

b) the conversion works maintain the style and character of the original building in terms of form, scale, materials and detailing, where they contribute positively to the context and setting of the area;

Proposals will maintain the style and character of the original in full.

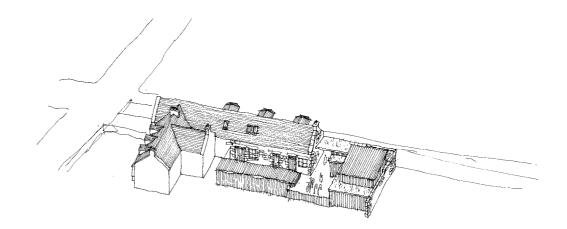
c) it does not introduce a more vulnerable use in terms of flood risk

No impact on flood risk

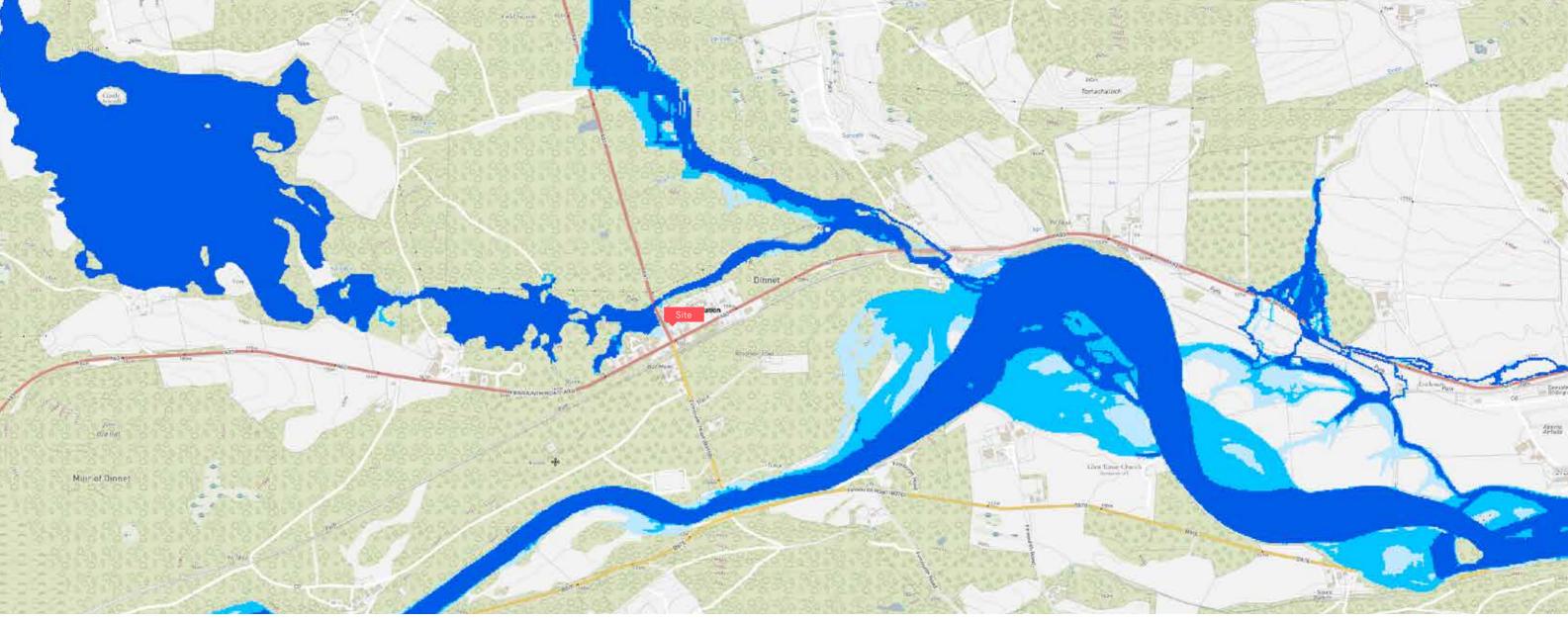
3.6 Alterations to existing building stock

Alterations to existing building stock will be considered favourably where they: a) respect the design, massing, proportions and general visual appearance of the building and area; and b) maintain an appropriate level of private ground, including space for off-street parking

Minor alterations only are proposed to the existing, with no impact on style & character. Private ground to the rear of the existing building is limited, however the proposals include an appropriate level of outdoor space for semi-public / inhabitant use, as well as shared bike storage facilities.



Concept sketch - aerial view showing shared courtyard space to rear.



SEPA Floor Risk Map (https://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmaps)

Each year this area has a: 🗾 high (10%) chance of flooding. 🧰 medium (0.5%) chance of flooding. 🔲 low (0.1%) chance of flooding.

4.5 LDP Policy 10: Resources

10.2 Flooding

All development should:

a) be free from Medium to High risk of flooding from all sources taking into account predicted impacts of climate change;

As shown above, the site is outside of any of the low, medium or high-risk areas for flooding.

b) not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere; and c) not add to the area of land that requires flood prevention measures; and d) not affect the ability of the functional floodplain to store or move flood waters.

The proposal does not increase the risk of flood elsewhere, nor does it add to the area of land that requires flood prevention measures, nor affect the ability of the functional floodplain to store or move flood waters.

10.3 Connection to sewerage

All development should be connected to the public sewerage network unless:

a) it is in a small settlement where there is no, or a limited collection system, in which case a private system may be permitted where it does not pose or add to a risk of detrimental effect, including cumulative, to the natural and built environment, surrounding uses or the amenity of the area; or

b) it is in a larger settlement where the connection is currently constrained but is within the Scottish Water investment programme. In such cases systems must be designed and built:

i. to a standard to allow adoption by Scottish Water; and

ii. to allow easy future connection to the public sewer.

Property will be connected to mains sewerage

