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Figure 1: Visualisation of the proposed roof extension

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.01 Background

This report has been prepared by Clements & Porter Architects on behalf of the applicant, Church Road Estates Ltd, in support for proposals at Highcroft, North Hill, London, N6 4RD.

The applicant, Church Road Estates Ltd is wholly owned by existing apartment leaseholders who share freehold of the building.

The proposed development is intended to replace the unsightly telecommunications infrastructure with a high quality roof extension. This additional storey would provide 6 additional dwellings while enhancing the condition and appearance of the existing building. As a resident led development the proposal is intended to complement and integrate with the existing building and wider context.

### 1.02 Planning History

The recent planning history for Highcroft relates largely to the installation of telecommunications infrastructure equipment on the roof. Following a number of refusals the current equipment was approved in 2004 (HGY/2004/2025). Although originally supported by the residents, due to the changes in management and the condition that the equipment is kept in, the residents are seeking options to have the equipment removed.

Meanwhile the telecoms companies are now seeking to upgrade and enlarge the equipment on the roof of Highcroft. Their recent application (HGY/2019/1625), which was opposed by the residents, has been refused by Haringey.

 Site Boundary



Figure 2 (above): Site location.



Figure 3 (top): Existing building.  
Figure 4 (bottom left): Unsightly telecommunications equipment to be removed.  
Figure 5 (bottom right): Existing garages to rear of the building.

## 2. SITE AND CONTEXT

### 2.01 Site Location

The site is located on the corner of North Hill and Church Road approx. 700m north of Highgate Village.

### 2.02 Site Description

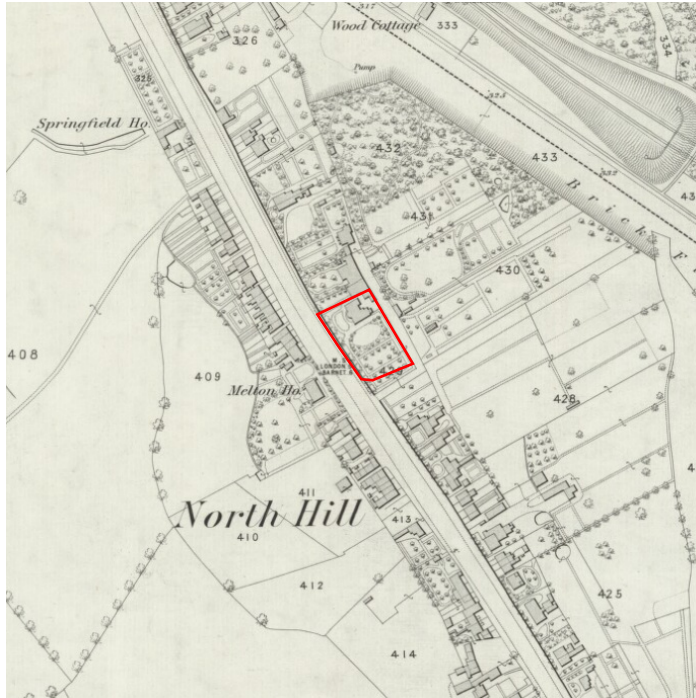
The site comprises a 1920's 4 storey L-shaped residential block with a 5 storey wing to the rear, provides a total of 38 apartments. The building is clad in a mix of red/ brown bricks with projecting balconies and white painted rendered bands facing the streets. The rear of the building is clad in white bricks. The windows are generally of a steel Critall style with a small number of imitation uPVC windows to the rear. Large and intrusive telecommunications equipment has been installed on the roof which is highly visible from surrounding streets

The building is set back from the edge of the pavement by 5-7m accommodating large hedges on the boundary screening the ground floor flats and a path around the building. The boundary is marked by a low brick wall along Church Road and a gradually increasing brick wall along North Hill as the road slopes away.

The rear of the site comprises a run of 10 single storey garages along the rear access road with a communal garden between them and the main block. A separate courtyard to the north of the site is used to store bins and a cabin for use by the telecoms companies.

### 2.03 Transport Access

The site has a PTAL rating of 3, which is considered good. It is within 12 minutes walk of Highgate Station and various bus stops on North Hill and Archway Road. The area is also covered by the Haringey CPZ.



## 2.04 Local Character

The site is located in the north of the Highgate Conservation Area, which covers a large area spanning between Haringey and Camden. The Conservation Area Appraisal states that historically North Hill was a major route out of London and became a place of ribbon development to the north of Highgate Village.

It is now characterised as a wide avenue with mature trees (generally London plane) lining each side. The buildings are a mix of styles, with 19th century villas set back from the road, late Georgian terraces are interspersed with 20th century blocks of flats and houses.

This variety of residential accommodation is seen as a positive contributor to the character and vitality of the area.

There are a number of listed buildings in the area including the no. 50 North Hill directly to the north of the site. This early 19th century villa is set back significantly from the street possibly reflecting a historical easement of the former toll road through Hornsey Park.

## 2.05 Site History

Based on historical maps there was a large villa and garden on the site prior to the existing blocks. The existing block would have been constructed between the wars and at the time was the first block of private leasehold flats in Highgate.

The building has remained largely unchanged since it's construction with the exception of the telecommunication equipment added in the 2000's. These alterations are considered as "intrusive" and to have had a "negative effect" as stated in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

Figure 6 (top left): Historic map showing site before Highcroft was built.  
Figure 7 (bottom left): Historic map showing Highcroft during the 1920s.

Figure 8 (top right): North Hill road looking south.  
Figure 9 (bottom left and right): Local early 19th century buildings of note.



## 2.06 Telecoms Equipment Removal

A key part of the rationale for the development, the removal of the existing telecoms equipment on the roof and ground floor of the building is proposed in this application.

The parts to be removed include:

- The telecoms towers or masts on the roof
- Aerials attached to the building in various positions on the roof
- All related cables and ducting fixed to the side of the building
- The telecoms hut and boxes on ground floor

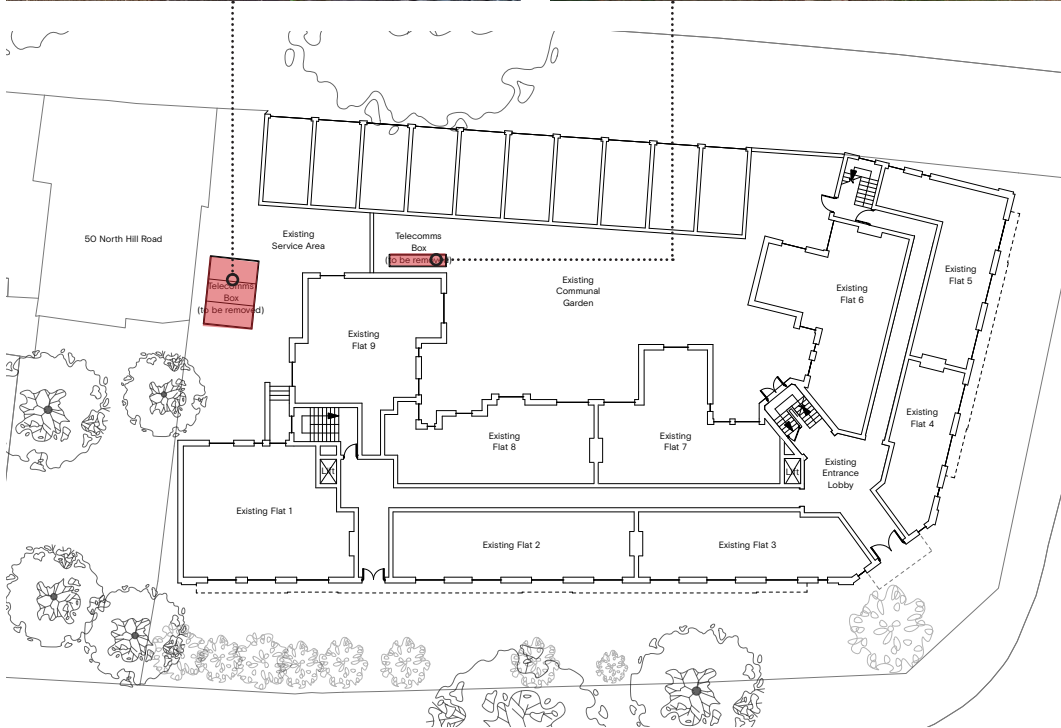


Figure 10&11 (top): Telecoms boxes at ground floor level  
Figure 12 (bottom): Existing ground floor plan showing the positions of the telecoms boxes.

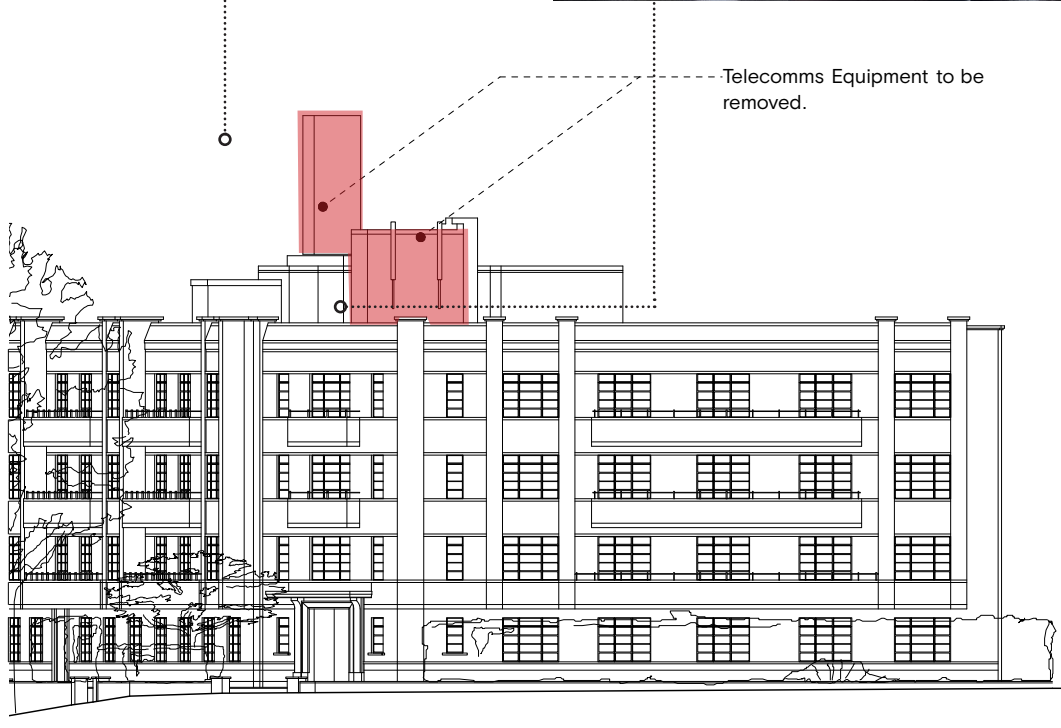


Figure 13&14 (top): Telecoms equipment on the roof, masts, aerials and cables.  
Figure 15 (bottom): Existing south elevation showing the position and scale of the masts and aerials found on the roof.

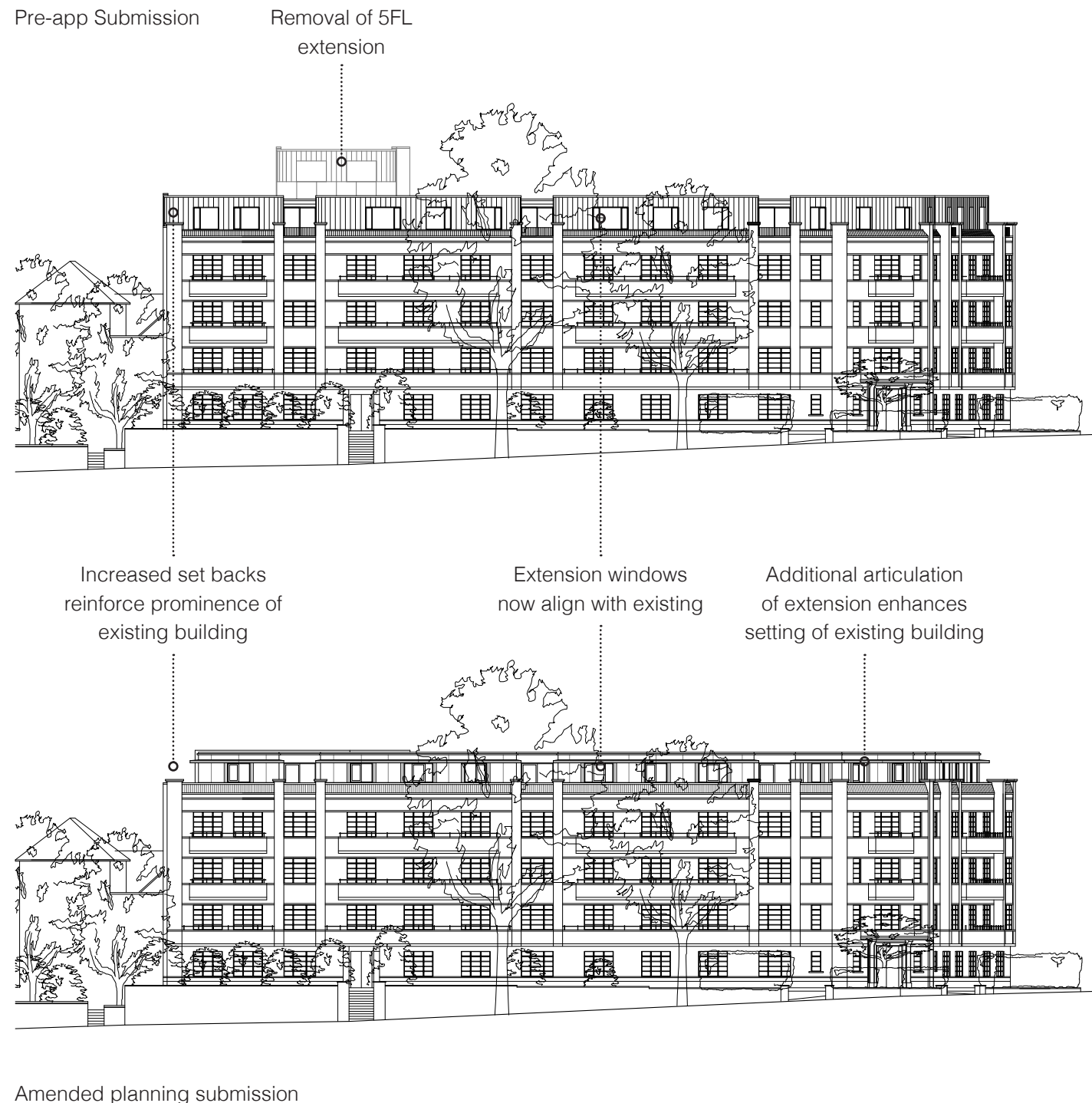


Figure 15 (top): Proposed North Hill elevations as submitted as part of the Pre-App Submission  
Figure 16 (bottom): Proposed North Hill elevations amended following pre-app response

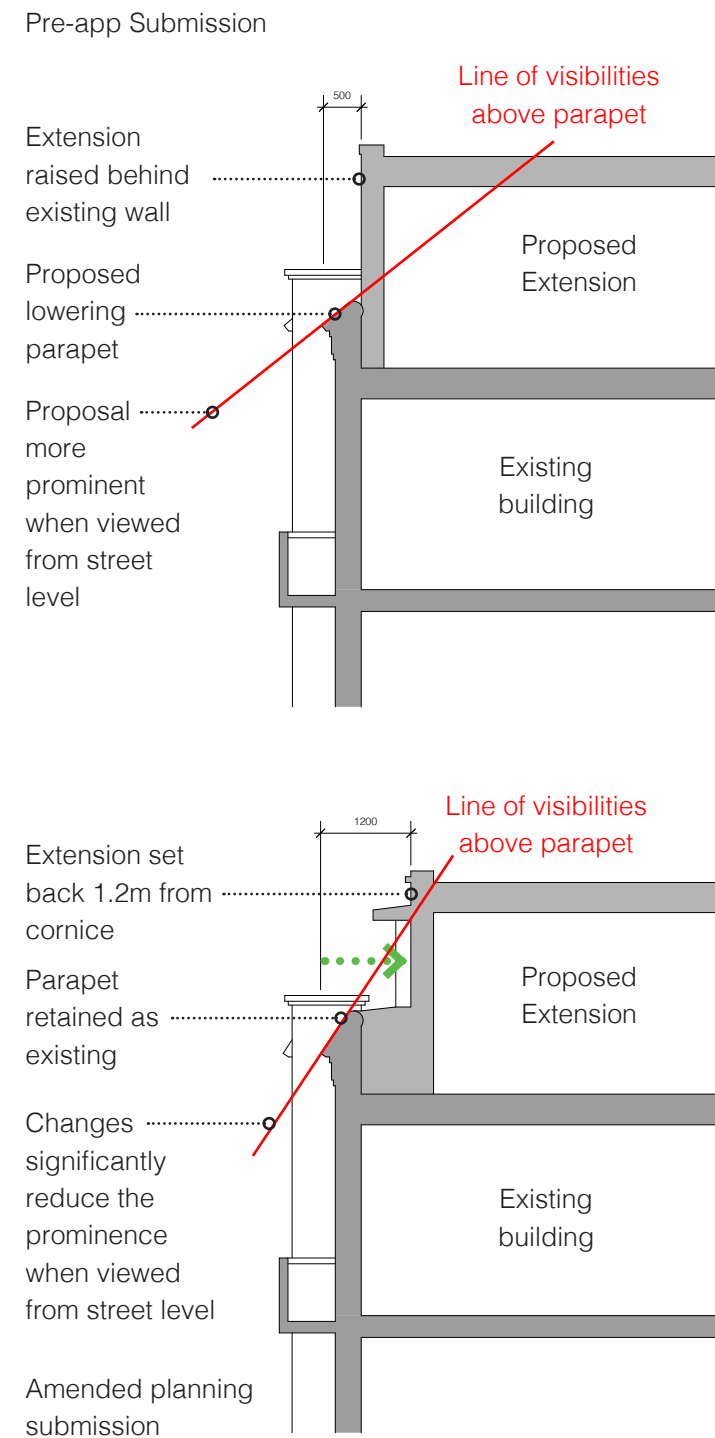


Figure 17 (top): Typical section from pre-app submission  
Figure 18 (bottom): Typical section showing increased set back following pre-app response

### 3. PRE-APP RESPONSE

#### 3.01 Recommendations

Prior to submission the scheme was subject to pre-application advice from Haringey (ref: PRE/2019/0200). This advice provided the following recommendations relating to the proposals on this site.

- Removal of the 5th floor extension
- Increase set back to 1-2m
- Improve relationship between extension and existing building.

#### 3.02 Proposed Design Changes

These recommendations have been incorporated in full into the submitted proposal. This has been achieved as follows:

- The proposed 5th floor extension has been removed from the scheme entirely.
- The proposed extension is now set back more than 1m from the front of the building with additional set backs of between 2-4m where terraces are proposed.
- The design of the extension has been developed further to preserve and enhance the special character of the existing building.

Alongside these changes the general design development addresses issues of access, parking, and servicing, raised in the pre-application report.

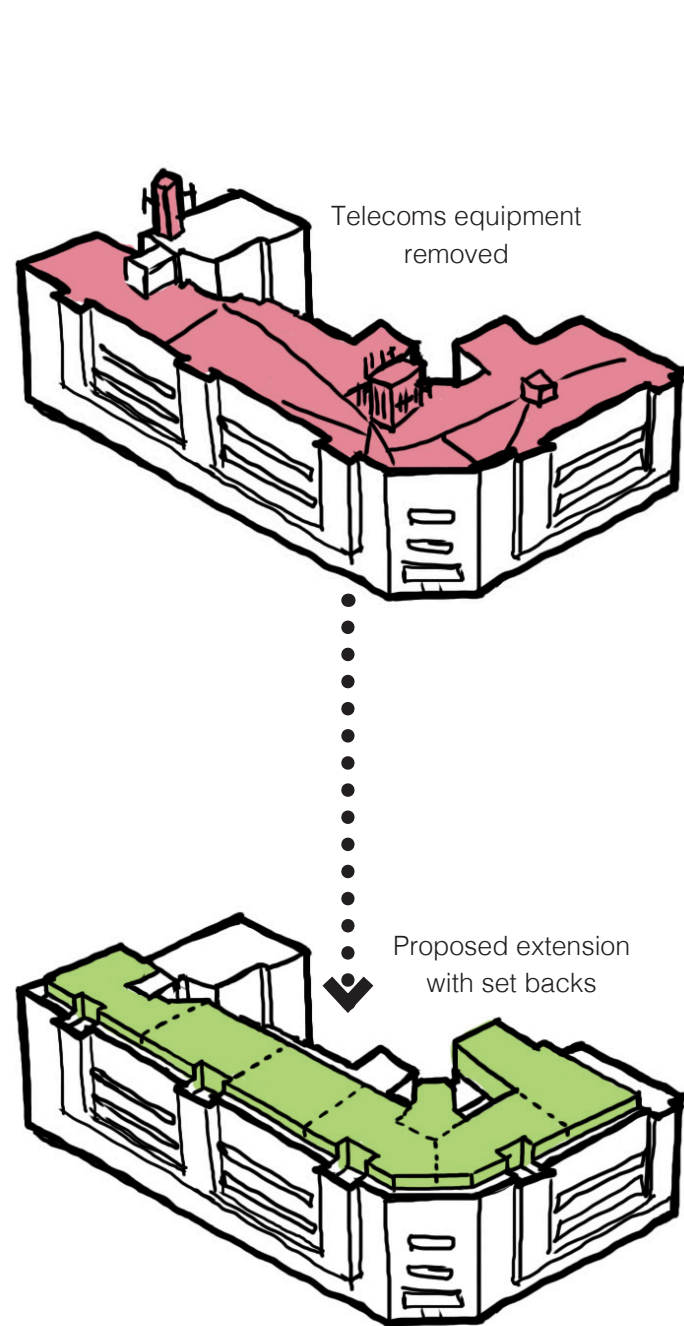


Figure 19: Concept massing showing replacement of the existing rooftop with unsightly telecommunications infrastructure and addition of 6 new flats.



Figure 20: Plan diagram showing the set backs of the proposed extension from the existing building

## 4. DESIGN STATEMENT

### 4.01 Design Brief

The design brief comprises the following key criteria:

- Remove intrusive telecoms equipment from roof.
- Create high quality residential accommodation adding to the existing building community.
- Integrate proposals with existing building, by preserving and enhancing the building's special character.
- Mitigate impact on surrounding properties and existing residents.

### 4.02 Design Concept

The proposed design is based upon raising the existing building by an additional storey. By careful consideration the additional storey is designed to complement the existing building's character, integrating with the overall facade and enhancing the building's contribution within the Highgate Conservation Area.

The existing main entrance stair and lift will be extended to serve the new dwellings integrating them into the existing building community.

Setting the extension back behind the existing parapet ensures the proposal is visually subservient to the existing building.

Further set backs to the rear create deck access to the new dwellings and mitigates the impact of the extension on the existing rear garden courtyard. This also allows for all the new flats to be dual aspect.

### 4.03 Massing and Scale

The existing building is part 4 and 5 storey building. The 5 storey element situated as part of a wing to the rear of the site, not generally visible from the street. The proposal is for the 4 storey part of the building to be raised a single storey to match the existing 5 storey element.

#### Local Area

The resultant massing of a 5 storey block is entirely in keeping with the local area where the general 2-3 storey townhouses are mixed with large blocks of flats such as High Point and Hillcrest which are significantly larger than the surrounding buildings and this proposal. There is also the more recent example of the flatted development at the other end of Church Road on the corner with Archway and Bishops Road. This is mostly 5 storeys stepping up to 7 storeys at its highest. This reinforces the approach that prominent corner sites can sustain larger developments.



Figure 21: Location of housing blocks in Highgate Conservation Area.



Figure 22&23 (top): Street elevations showing the extension set back from building edge  
Figure 24 (bottom): Proposed section showing the significant set backs reducing impact

### Massing in Context

Further to wider context the proposed development is designed to have a minimal impact on the building's apparent massing viewed from the street. This is achieved by setting the proposed extension back from the face of the building and using the existing high parapet to screen the proposed extension. As the proposed extension is less than 2m higher than the parapet and set back more than 1m the extension is mostly not visible from street level.

Careful consideration has been taken where the proposed extension could be more visible or have a greater impact on the local context. As such greater set backs have been used from the end gables. This results in the apparent massing of the building being unchanged when viewed on the approach from the north along North Hill and the east along Church Road. This also has the additional benefit that adjacent properties will not be affected by the proposed massing.

In developing the massing further periodic additional set backs of over 2m have been provided. Aligning with the vertical projections of the existing building these set back perform a similar affect in reverse by breaking the horizontality of the building and creating a rhythm to the facade. This reverse affect reinforces the status of the extension as subservient to the existing building. The resulting increase set backs provide the opportunity for the private terraces for the proposed flats.

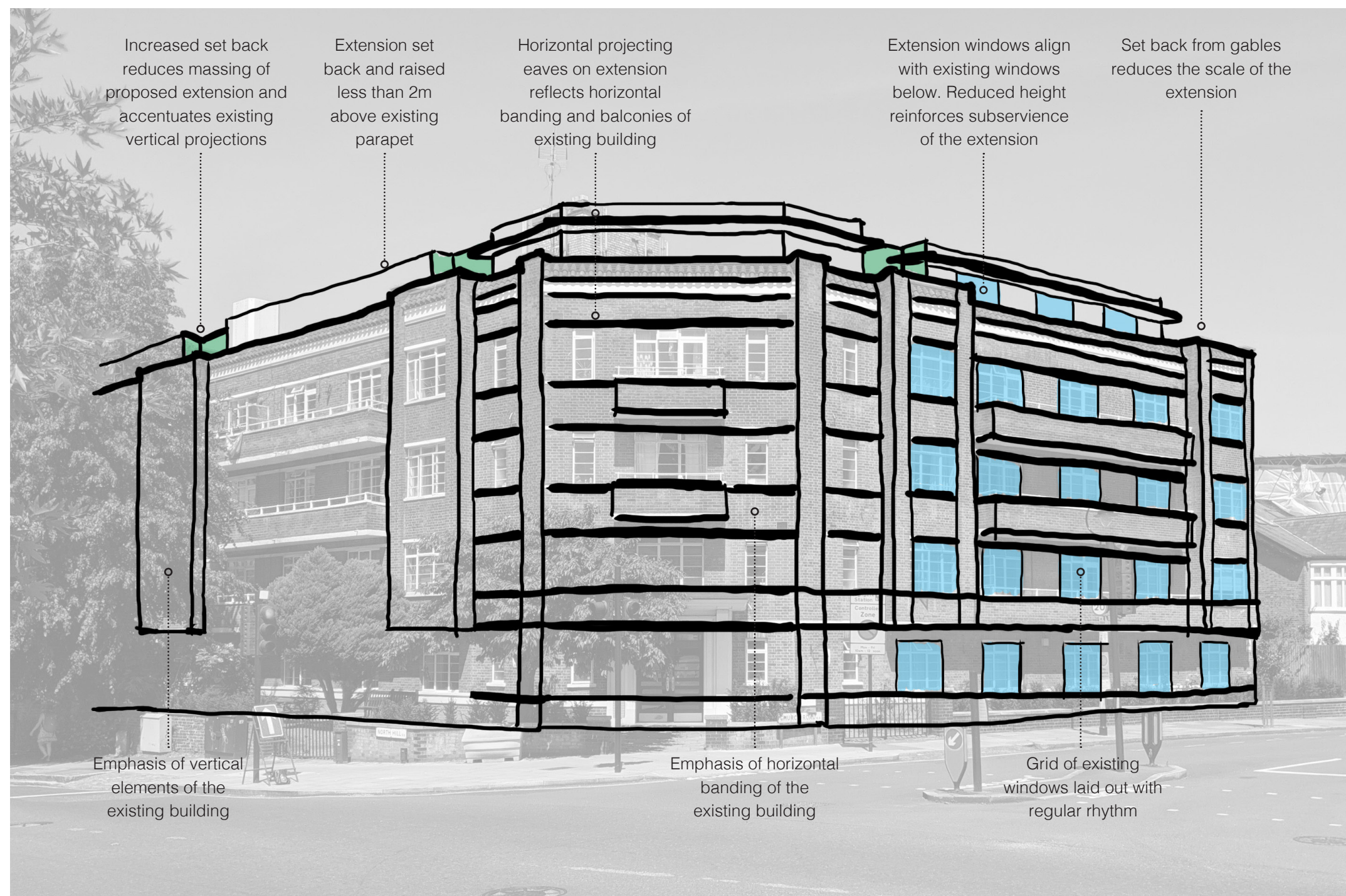


Figure 25: Diagram showing how the proposed massing and articulation of the extension complements and accentuates the character of the existing building

#### 4.04 Conservation Context

Highcroft is highlighted in the Conservation Area Appraisal as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area however the 'intrusive' antennas on the roof undermine the potential of this building to enhance the local context.

The building emphasises a strong horizontal form through the prominence of the projecting balconies, white stringers, and red and brown brick banding. This horizontality is broken up at regular intervals with projecting vertical bays flanked with brick pilasters. These pilasters create a distinct profile for the block which is undermined by the roof equipment.

The proposal is designed to reinforce the existing rhythm of the facade. This is achieved by following the existing elevations, breaking up the largely horizontal roof extension with a recesses where the existing vertical elements project forward. This inverse relationship also serves to reinforce the subservience of the extension to the existing building.

As well as the set backs the proposed extension is further articulated to reflect the character of the existing block. The horizontal banding is reinforced by a horizontal eaves projection which provides depth while also reducing the scale of the extension.

The position of the windows in the extension follow the position of those of the existing building, however as they are significantly set back and have a reduced height they remain a subservient element.

It is considered that this gentle intervention will complement the existing building and enhance its appearance within the Conservation Area. This would contribute positively to the character of the streetscape whilst the absence of the telecoms towers would remove a major detractor in the conservation area.