

## Pre-application briefing to Committee

### 1. DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

Reference No: PPA/2022/0012

Ward: Tottenham Hale

Address: 'Berol Quarter' Berol Yard, Ashley Road, Tottenham Hale N17 9LJ

#### Proposal:

##### Berol House

Refurbishment of Berol House (c. 3,300sqm) for a mix of flexible commercial & retail floorspace with 3-storey extension (c. 2,200sqm) at roof level.

##### 2 Berol Yard

2 Berol Yard would comprise a part 6, part, part 18, part 25, part 29, part 30 storey building with lift overrun core incorporating c. 210 Build to Rent (BTR) homes with a mix of flexible retail & commercial floorspace at ground floor level with community floorspace and enabling works for a bridge connection over Watermead Way & the railway line to the east.

The BTR accommodation will include 35% affordable housing by habitable room including homes let at London Living Rent (LLR) and Discount Market Rent (DMR).

The proposal would include associated public realm works and landscaping within the quarter which would include a public square.

**Applicant:** Berol Quarter Limited (Berkeley Square Developments or BSD)

**Agent:** Lichfields

**Ownership:** Private

**Case Officer Contact:** Philip Elliott

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The application site falls within site allocation TH6 – Ashley Road South Employment Area (as noted in the Tottenham Area Action Plan 2017 (TAAP)). The site is allocated for an employment-led mixed-use quarter north of the new Tottenham Hale District Centre, creation of a new east-west route linking Down Lane Park and Hale Village, and enhanced Ashley Road public realm. The allocation states that residential use will be permitted to cross subsidise improvements to employment stock.

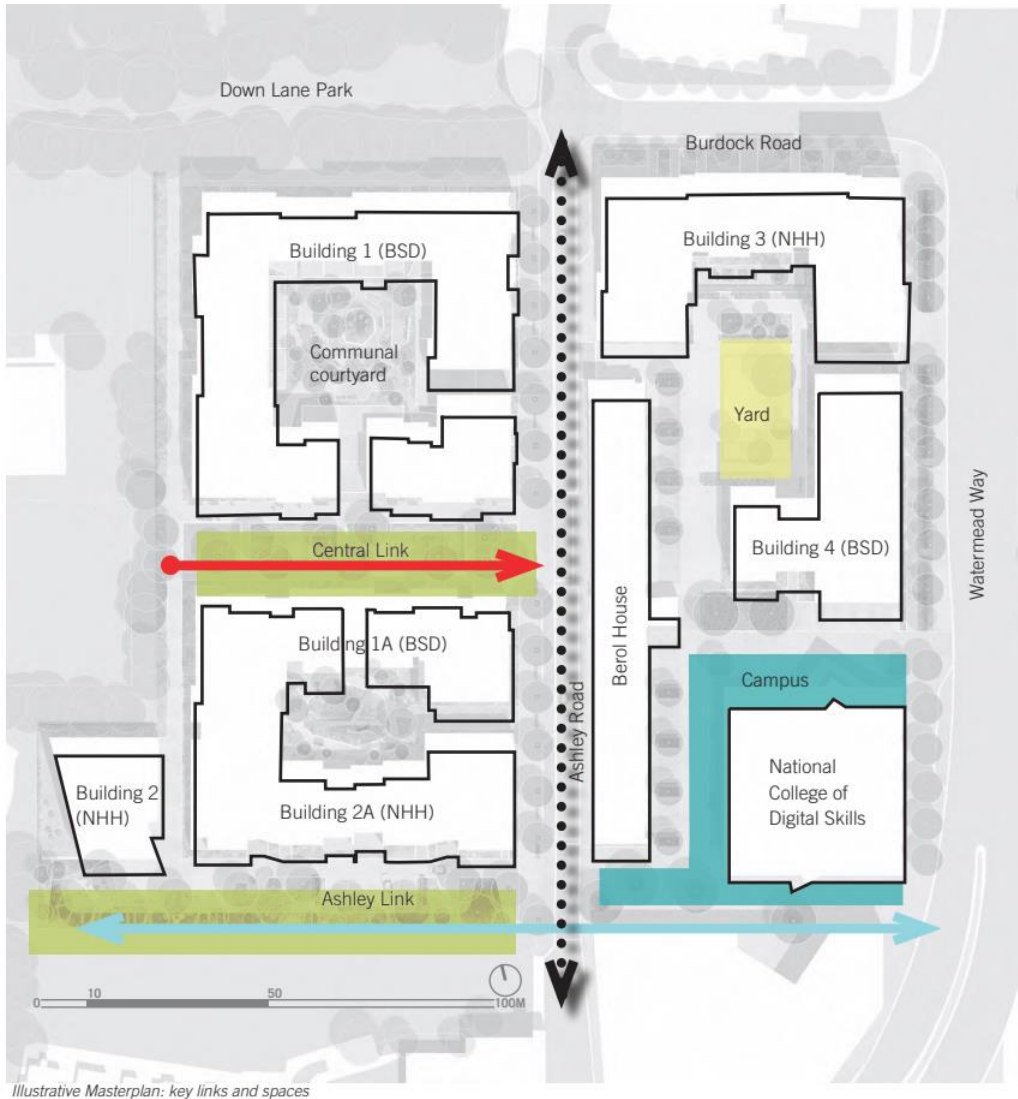
*Ashley Road South Masterplan*

2.2 The Ashley Road South Masterplan (ARSM) was developed jointly by BSD (the applicant) and Notting Hill Genesis (NHG) on 2.67ha of land north of Tottenham Hale Station within TH6. The area was previously occupied by a number of one and two storey industrial warehouses with their associated yards.

2.3 The development of the ARSM area has been brought forward through three discrete planning applications. Two have already been delivered in part by BSD (Building 4 or 'The Gessner', Building 1A 'Rosa Luxemburg', & Building 1 'The Sessile') alongside adjacent permissions for the NHG sites immediately to the south of Ashley Gardens (Buildings 2 & 2A) and to the north of Berol Yard (Building 3) which have not yet been implemented. The images below identify these sites within the masterplan as approved and as proposed. The ARSM comprises the following development parcels:

- Berol Yard (including Berol House) (BSD) – 158 units, 891sqm commercial space and an education facility approved in June 2018.
- Ashley Gardens (BSD) – 417 units and 1,200sqm commercial space approved in June 2018 (amended April 2020)
- Cannon Factory/Ashley House (NHG) – 256 units and 3,600sqm commercial space approved in May 2018
- Ashley Park (NHG) – 97 units and 170sqm commercial space approved in April 2020 (Ashley Park is located to the south of the Ashley Link)

Plan 1- Masterplan as approved



Plan 2- Masterplan as proposed



2.4 Planning permission reference HGY/2017/2044 covered this site with a hybrid permission being granted that included the following:

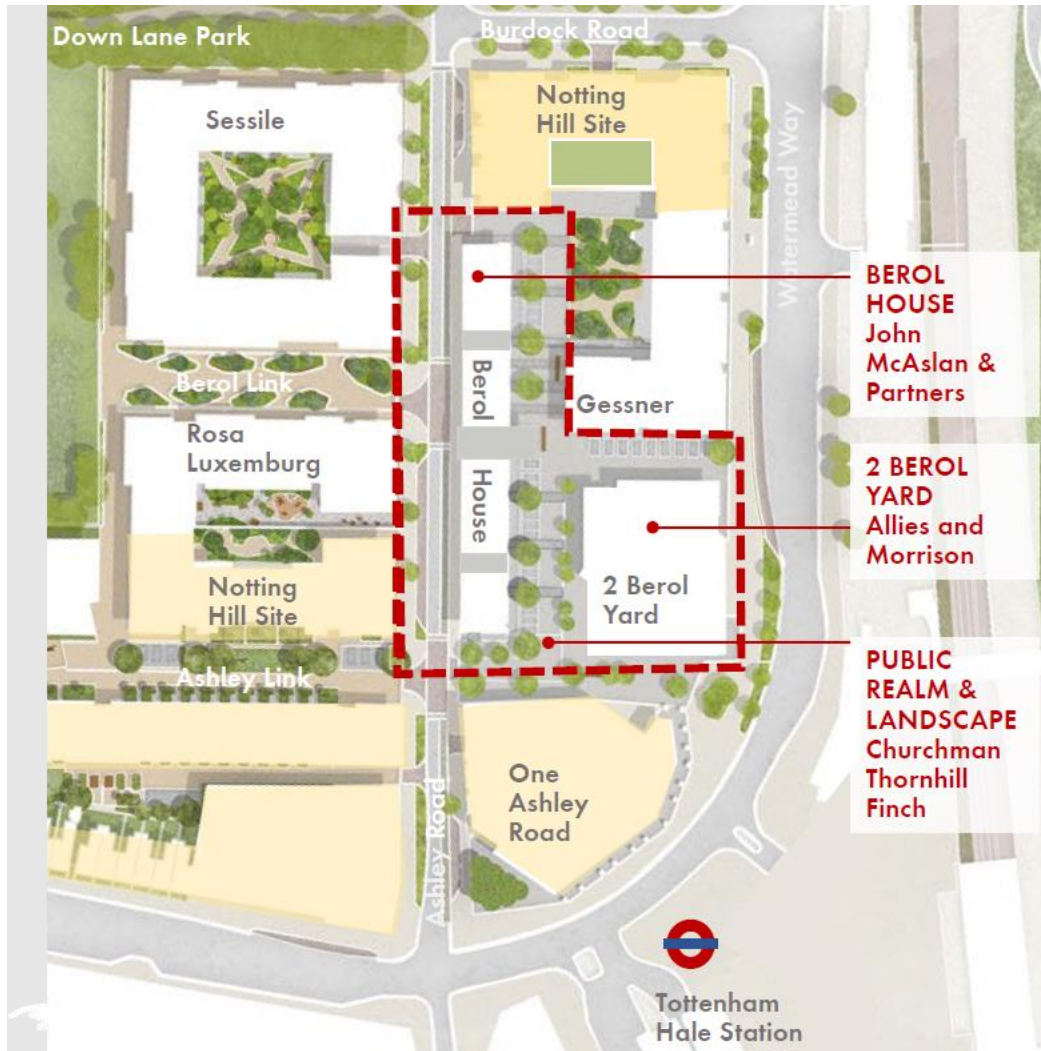
- Retention of Berol House;
- Erection of two buildings between 8 and 14 storeys providing 166 build to rent (BTR) residential units, 891 sqm (GEA) of commercial floorspace (Class A1/A3/B1/D1), 7,275 sqm (GEA) of education floorspace (Class D1); and
- Outline proposals (all matters reserved) for the alteration/conversion of ground, first and second floors of Berol House with up to 3,685 sqm (GEA) of commercial floorspace (A1/A3/B1/D1) and the introduction of a two storey roof level extension introducing up to 18 residential units.

- 2.5 The works to Berol House and the new building hosting the educational floorspace (meant for Ada, the National College of Digital Skills (NCDS)) have not come forward whilst the BTR residential building known as “The Gessner” (formerly Building 4) and associated landscaping has been constructed and has been occupied since 2021.
- 2.6 A separate reserved matters application for the detailed design of Berol House was approved under HGY/2020/0080 on the 31 March 2020. However, Berol House has not been progressed and the site of the NCDS remains undeveloped. The proposed operator of the college, Ada, was unable to finance and deliver the college and pulled out of the contract to provide the facility.
- 2.7 The applicant subsequently marketed the site for 16 months in an attempt to secure an alternative academic or life science occupant/operator but was unable to secure an alternative educational use.
- 2.8 A new full planning application at the ‘Berol Quarter’ site is now proposed comprising comprehensive refurbishment and extension of Berol House to provide high quality workspace and retail accommodation, alongside a new mixed use building accommodating Build to Rent (BTR) homes with commercial/retail space at ground floor.

### **3. SITE AND SURROUNDS**

- 3.1 The application site is made up of Berol House (3-5 storeys and locally listed) - currently occupied by office uses with affordable rents (c. 3,300 sqm), associated car parking areas, and a cleared site - most recently used as a construction site for neighbouring development. The image below shows the site location.

Plan 3 site location within the ARSM



- 3.2 It is bounded by Ashley Road to the west, the applicant's recently constructed BTR development (The Gessner, up to 14 storeys) and the Cannon Factory (a Notting Hill residential development site of up to 16 storeys) lie to the north. Further to the west is Down Lane Park.
- 3.3 Watermead Way lies to the east, with railway lines and Hale Village (up to 10 storeys plus a 34 storey tower) beyond; a recent Argent Related residential development of up to 19 storeys lies to the immediate south, beyond which are Tottenham Hale Station and bus station. Further Argent Related sites around the Station are under development, including tall buildings of up to 38 storeys.
- 3.4 Most of the site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 6a, with the northern part of the site having a PTAL of 5.
- 3.5 The surrounding area of Tottenham Hale (TH) has been experiencing transformative regeneration over the past few years and will continue to do so into the near future. Whilst the NHG sites have not come forward, 'The Gessner'



on Berol Yard and the Ashley Gardens buildings have been occupied (Rosa Luxemburg Apartments) or are nearing completion (Building 1 / The Sessile).

- 3.6 Alongside the ARSM developments, Argent Related (5 sites, multiple buildings in TH centre), Anthology (Hale Village), Newlon (Millstream Tower/One Station Square with BSD) and Muse developments (Hale Wharf) have progressed planning applications for developments close to the site, many of which have been constructed or are under construction.
- 3.7 Tottenham is identified as one of the GLA's Housing Zones, earmarked to deliver 1,965 homes, and Tottenham Hale also falls within the GLA's Upper Lea Valley Opportunity Area, which has scope to provide a minimum of 15,000 jobs and 20,100 new homes. Within the Upper Lea Valley, Tottenham Hale is considered a growth point, suitable for higher density development.
- 3.8 At a local level, the area (Tottenham Hale) has also been identified as a new District Centre through the District Centre Framework (DCF, 2015), promoting a mix of town centre and residential uses in the immediate area. The DCF sets a clear ambition for housing and employment-led regeneration around Ashley Road. The southern end of the site falls within the District Centre.
- 3.9 The TAAP and DCF provide useful context in terms of the vision for Tottenham Hale and how they allow the recent permissions and patterns of delivery to be considered against the development capacities identified.

#### 4. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The Berol Quarter site forms the remaining parts of Berol Yard that have not been redeveloped – i.e. not including The Gessner building. The proposals include the following development:

##### Berol House

- 4.2 Refurbishment of Berol House (c. 3,300sqm) for a mix of flexible commercial & retail floorspace with 3-storey extension (c. 2,200sqm) at roof level.

##### 2 Berol Yard

- 4.3 2 Berol Yard would comprise
  - a part 6, part 18, part 25, part 29, part 30 storey building with lift overrun core
  - 210 Build to Rent (BTR) homes
  - a mix of flexible retail & commercial floorspace at ground floor level
  - community floorspace and enabling works for a bridge connection (over Watermead Way & the railway line to the east).

The BTR accommodation will include 35% affordable housing by habitable room including homes let at London Living Rent (LLR) and Discount Market Rent (DMR).

- 4.4 The proposal would include associated public realm works and landscaping within the quarter which would include a public square.

## 5. PLANNING HISTORY

- 5.1 As set out above the most relevant planning permission reference HGY/2017/2044 which realised part of the site allocation with a hybrid permission being granted included the following:

- Retention of Berol House;
- Erection of two buildings between 8 and 14 storeys providing 166 build to rent (BTR) residential units, 891 sqm (GEA) of commercial floorspace (Class A1/A3/B1/D1), 7,275 sqm (GEA) of education floorspace (Class D1); and
- Outline proposals (all matters reserved) for the alteration/conversion of ground, first and second floors of Berol House with up to 3,685 sqm (GEA) of commercial floorspace (A1/A3/B1/D1) and the introduction of a two storey roof level extension introducing up to 18 residential units.

- 5.2 The scheme has been part implemented with the BTR building 'The Gessner' having been constructed and occupied.

## 6. CONSULTATION

### 6.1 Public Consultation

#### *Development Management Forum (DMF)*

- 6.2 A DMF for Berol Quarter was held on the evening of the 6th of October 2022. The summarised minutes of this meeting can be found at Appendix 1. In summary there was:

#### *Support*

- for the Berol House element of the proposals

#### *Concern*

- for the height, scale and massing of 2 Berol Yard and the impact of the design on the area
- over the capacity for the area to host more homes and whether there are too many studios and smaller homes
- about the affordability of the homes
- about pollution



Questions and comments were also made about accessibility, the deliverability of the bridge, sale of the units to overseas buyers, cycle accessibility and provision, and construction logistics.

### 6.3 Quality Review Panel

6.4 A very early iteration of the scheme was presented to the panel in July. The full advice report can be found at Appendix 2. The panel's comments for that meeting are summarised as follows:

- Warmly supportive of the proposals for Berol House, subject to continued development of the details of the design
- They felt the design for thermal performance and environmental sustainability should underpin the design of the new elements, and the refurbishment and repurposing of the existing elements
- The panel were unable to support the proposals for 2 Berol Yard and felt that a building of that scale and mass would not be appropriate for the Berol Quarter
- They were concerned about the impact on privacy and outlook of nearby flats in The Gessner, microclimatic impacts at ground level, as well as the environmental and thermal performance of the building
- They wanted to see the creation of a distinctive and high-quality place, with a comfortable pedestrian environment
- They also wanted to see the east-west green link within the site reinforced and facilitated with a pedestrian footbridge across Watermead Way and the railway being contributed to financially.

6.5 The applicant team subsequently developed the design of the proposals and presented their revised scheme to the panel on the 19th of October 2022. At the time of drafting this report the full written comments have not been received and will be reported by way of an addendum to this report.

## 7. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The Planning team's initial views on the development proposals are outlined below.

### Principle of development

7.2 The principle of the development is supported given the location of the site and its allocation within local and London plans for regeneration and commercial & housing growth.

7.3 Haringey's Local Plan Strategic Policies and the TAAP promote new homes and business floorspace in the Tottenham Hale Growth Area. London Plan policies E1 and E2 support new office provision and mixed-use development, with the

focus on identified geographic areas and town centres. London Plan policies SD6, SD7, SD8 and SD9 support mixed use development in town centres.

- 7.4 The London Plan identifies the District Centre as a Future Potential Network 'District' classification with high commercial and residential growth potential. The proposals would include c.6,000 sqm of non-residential floorspace, including an uplift of c.1,600 sqm in Berol House compared to the extant permission. Ground level non-residential uses would provide welcome activation to the public realm.
- 7.5 The increase in non-residential uses in Berol House and across the site is positive but would be less than that originally envisioned in the Site Allocation and previous permissions. The applicant will be required to submit detailed marketing information regarding the previously proposed academic / education / life science uses and show they have maximised employment and community uses on the site to meet planning policy and site allocation requirements.
- 7.6 The proposed development would contribute to the site allocation aim for a mixed-use quarter given that the works to Berol House would support a range of business uses and create new commercial floorspace. The proposal would activate the surrounding public realm and would include good quality buildings with the retention and adaption of Berol House for flexible employment use.
- 7.7 London Plan policy H1, Strategic policy SP2, and Policy AAP3 of the TAAP all encourage the delivery of additional new homes. The site comprises a significant development opportunity within Haringey. The proposed residential use of 2 Berol Yard is supported given that it would deliver high density mixed use development on an under-utilised brownfield site partly within a district centre and growth area with very good public transport connections.
- 7.8 Build to Rent (BTR) housing is supported in the London Plan by policy H11. To qualify as a Build to Rent scheme the policy identifies 10 criteria that all BTR schemes must meet. These include:
- The homes must be held under a covenant for at least 15 years (apart from affordable units, which must be secured in perpetuity);
  - A clawback mechanism must be put in place to ensure that there is no financial incentive to break the covenant;
  - The units must be self-contained and let separately;
  - There must be unified ownership and management of the private and affordable elements of the scheme;
  - Longer tenancies (three years or more) must be available to all tenants with break clauses for tenants;

- Rent and service charge certainty for the tenancy period on a basis made clear before the tenancy agreement is signed including any annual increases, which should be formula-linked;
- On-site management;
- Providers must have a complaints procedure in place and be a member of a recognised ombudsman scheme; and
- Providers must not charge up-front fees of any kind to tenants or prospective tenants outside of deposits and rent-in-advance.

7.9 The full policy is set out in Appendix 3. The applicant has confirmed that the scheme would meet the 10 criteria and conditions and obligations could be used to ensure ongoing compliance. BTR accommodation makes up approximately 8% of tenures across new and emerging developments in Tottenham Hale so there is not an oversupply of this type of accommodation.

#### Housing mix

7.10 The Council will not support proposals which result in an overconcentration of 1 or 2 bed units unless they are part of larger developments. The TAAP states that the proximity of the Harris Academy to the north and Down Lane Park to the north and west make the area particularly suitable for larger units along those edges.

7.11 2 Berol Yard would partly reside in the District Centre and would not be located along the edges of the masterplan area closest to the school and park. The location of the building makes it suitable for smaller unit sizes. The site is less suitable for family housing which the TAAP focuses to the edges of the masterplan to the north and other sites nearby such as Ashley Road Depot.

7.12 Approximately 68 of the 210 homes would be studios or 1-beds. With 114 being 2-beds and 28 being 3-beds. The need to achieve inclusive and mixed sustainable communities is acknowledged but given the site circumstances and a requirement to optimise the site, the proposed unit sizes and mix are considered to be acceptable at this stage by Officers when seen in the wider context, albeit the applicant will be challenged to deliver a higher number of larger units .

#### Affordable Housing

7.13 London Plan Policy H11 states that where a BTR development meets the 10 criteria, the affordable housing offer can be solely Discounted Market Rent (DMR) at a genuinely affordable rent, preferably London Living Rent (LLR) level.

7.14 The requirement under policy H11 to have unified ownership and management of the private and affordable elements of the scheme mean that BTR accommodation cannot accommodate housing provided by a housing

association or the local authority. The policy requires genuinely affordable intermediate rents.

- 7.15 To follow the fast track viability route set out in the London Plan, BTR schemes must deliver at least 35% affordable housing by habitable room, and the Mayor expects at least 30% of DMR homes to be provided at an equivalent rent to London Living Rent, with the remaining 70% at a range of genuinely affordable rents.
- 7.16 The applicant is proposing to follow the fast track route and meet these requirements. Discussions around the level of discount on the market rate are ongoing but it is likely that the larger 2 and 3-bed units would be DMR with the rent levels set at approximately 70 to 80% of market value. Officers will seek to ensure that the DMR homes meet the Mayor's definition of genuinely affordable.

#### Design and appearance

- 7.17 The site is partly within a District Centre; in an area with recently completed high density development including tall buildings; and has excellent public transport connectivity, which supports higher density development on the site. The quantum of development proposed indicates a high density scheme including a tall building, which will therefore require a greater level of design scrutiny.
- 7.18 The site falls within a tall building growth area and the proposed height of 2 Berol Yard requires compliance with London Plan policy D9 (Tall buildings). Policy D9 sets out requirements for assessing tall buildings (Part C) including addressing visual impacts at different distances; aiding legibility and wayfinding; having exemplary architecture and materials; avoiding harm to heritage assets; not causing adverse glare; and minimising light pollution.
- 7.19 Functional impacts should consider internal and external design; servicing; entrance capacity; area and transport capacity; maximise benefits to the area; and not interfere with communications. Environmental impacts should consider wind, daylight, sunlight, and temperature; air movement (dispersal of pollutants); and noise creation. Cumulative impacts should also be considered.
- 7.20 Officers and the QRP have been convinced by the work the applicant has formulated to show that there is a compelling argument for another tall building to mark not only the station but also the green link. Verified views, CGIs and VU.CITY have been used to show how the building would largely be seen in the context of other tall buildings and would not have an adverse visual impact in short, mid, and long range views.
- 7.21 There are a number of Conservation Areas and listed buildings in the wider area. Although these designated heritage assets are generally greater than 400 metres

from the site with limited visual connection. The impact on heritage assets is still under review but it is expected that any impacts are unlikely to be adverse to an extent that would not be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.

- 7.22 Officers and QRP have been encouraged by the design approach which incorporates a number of blocks in a variety of bricks around a central core that vary the heights, better reflect neighbouring development, and break up the visual impact of the building. The information so far indicates that the building could constitute exemplary architecture, although the comments of some of the panel are noted that more could be done to improve the design.
- 7.23 The QRP has highlighted that aspects of the functional design such as the residential entrance to 2 Berol Yard could be improved but the early indications are that environmental impacts would be minimised and/or kept to acceptable levels. The detailed information on wind and daylight & sunlight still needs to be reviewed in full so that Officers can be completely convinced of its impact.
- 7.24 The proposed tall building is oriented to address the east west link to the south, which the masterplan envisages as a key connection across Watermead Way and the railway to Hale Village to the east. The proposed streets and frontages to the tall building are well activated with blank frontages to servicing and external parking bays minimised. Officers will continue to seek as much activation/informal surveillance as possible.
- 7.25 The footprint of the tall building steps in at its south-west corner, providing a public open space (Berol Square) connecting to the green link to the south and 'Berol Walk' to the north, between the proposed tall building and the refurbished/extended Berol House.
- 7.26 Officers are supportive of the sensitive design approach for Berol House and the QRP support for this part of the scheme is noted. Discussions are ongoing with Conservation Officers to ensure the locally listed building and its setting and context is enhanced as much as possible whilst delivering on the aims of the site allocation for permeability and attractive flexible commercial spaces.

#### Public benefits / Community contributions

- 7.27 The scheme would deliver the enabling works for a bridge over Watermead Way and potentially the railway in the future to connect the proposal into Hale Village and the Lea Valley beyond. The works would secure the bridgehead and support for a future bridge as well as a lift/stair/elevator and a platform. Above/alongside the enabling area would be a community space (approx. 160sqm).
- 7.28 The QRP has commented on the enabling works being positive but there still needing to be a strong justification for the scheme by making a further

contribution to, or delivering, the section of the bridge over Watermead Way. This would add further weight to the justification for the height acting as a marker for the Green Link. Officers are in discussions with the applicant about the potential for a contribution/delivery, but it is acknowledged that this would be subject to viability.

#### Residential quality and impact on residential amenity

- 7.29 Policy D6 states that single aspect units should normally be avoided and should only be provided where it is considered a more appropriate design solution than a dual aspect dwelling and where it can be demonstrated that adequate passive ventilation, daylight and privacy can be achieved, avoiding overheating. Approx. 67% of the homes would be dual aspect with the remaining 33% being single aspect.
- 7.30 North facing is usually defined as an orientation less than 45 degrees either side of due north. The northeast facing single aspect flats do not fall within this criteria so cannot be considered to be north facing single aspect. These flats also have enhanced aspect from the inset balconies which provide another view (albeit limited) and opening to living spaces.
- 7.31 Separation distances between habitable rooms would be approx. 12 metres at the closest point adjacent to the Gessner building. The north facing openings are secondary windows to living spaces, and in the northeast facing block the closest windows are angled away and the distances increase as the elevation runs towards the southeast. Impacts on overlooking and privacy to The Gessner will need to be fully evidenced and justified, noting the urban context.
- 7.32 The applicants will be required to demonstrate that the relationship between the lower levels of the residential building (2 Berol Yard) and Berol House is acceptable as well as the impact on the proposed units and recently constructed homes to the south in the Argent Masterplan.
- 7.33 Internal daylight to the proposed building has not been fully assessed but the early signs are that the majority of the building would be able to receive good daylight and sunlight and would meet the requirements of the latest BRE guidance.
- 7.34 As the design develops, Officers will seek to ensure that the applicants maximise the quality of the lower level homes, which are likely to have lesser quality outlook, daylight and sunlight. The proposed communal terraces at high level are supported as they provide additional residential amenity and quality.
- 7.35 Acoustic mitigation measures for the residential units facing Watermead Way and the railway will likely be required, and can be provided at application stage,

along with confirmation of accessibility to the communal terraces for all residents.

*Inclusive access*

- 7.36 The applicants will be required to show in any future application where the wheelchair accessible homes would be located and how many there would be. It is expected these would be distributed across tenure types and sizes to give people with disabilities and older people a wide variety of choice. M4(2) and M4(3) requirements could also be secured by condition as part of any permission.

*Fire safety*

- 7.37 The application would be subject to fire safety 'Gateway 1' consultation with the Health & Safety Executive and would need to be accompanied by detailed fire engineering analysis / fire statement to ensure all the appropriate measures are in place. Two stairways, two fire evacuation lifts, and two fire-fighting lifts are proposed, which, subject to the detailed analysis, suggests the building is likely to meet the requirements.

Energy & sustainability

- 7.38 The taller elements of the building have been designed to minimise heat gain. The proposed approach to minimising potential overheating, in terms of window design and shading, as well as photovoltaic provision on some of the roof spaces are strongly supported. The full details of this will need to be supplied and reviewed by the Council's Carbon Management team but the emerging signs are that the proposals would be able to meet policy requirements.

Impact on transport, parking and highway safety

- 7.39 The proposal would be car capped – i.e. it would be car free albeit for blue badge provision and the temporary provision of 10 spaces for use by existing tenants of Berol House to satisfy existing lease obligations. The applicant has proposed to submit a phasing plan to deal with the transition of these spaces to more town centre uses as the leases expire.

Other matters

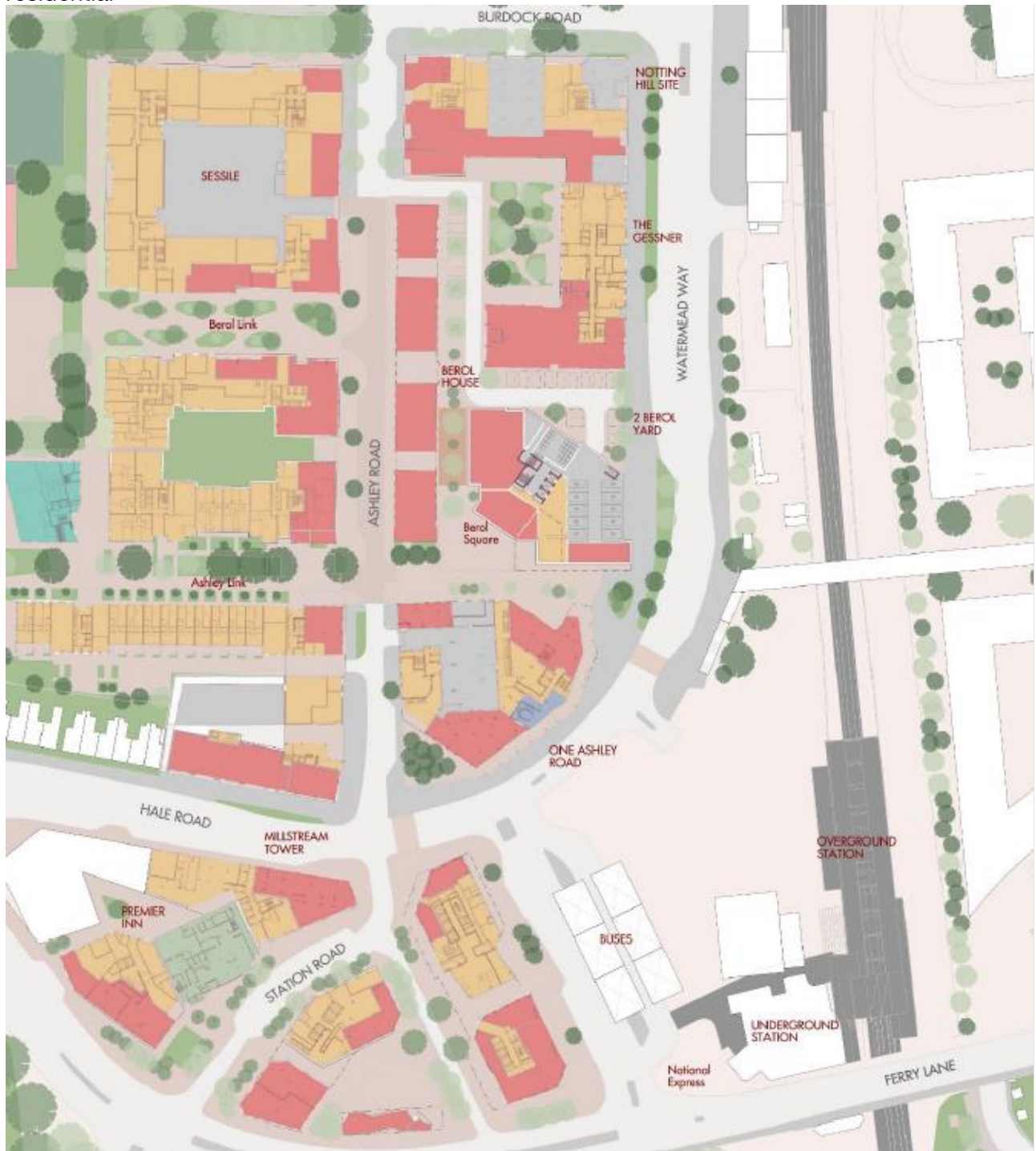
- 7.40 Matters such as playspace, landscaping, greening & public realm, flood risk & drainage, air quality, cycle parking & other transport matters, and energy and sustainability have not been assessed in detail at this stage, but the early signs are that the proposals would meet or exceed the associated London Plan policies. Officers will seek further information in these areas to ensure policy compliance as the scheme progresses.



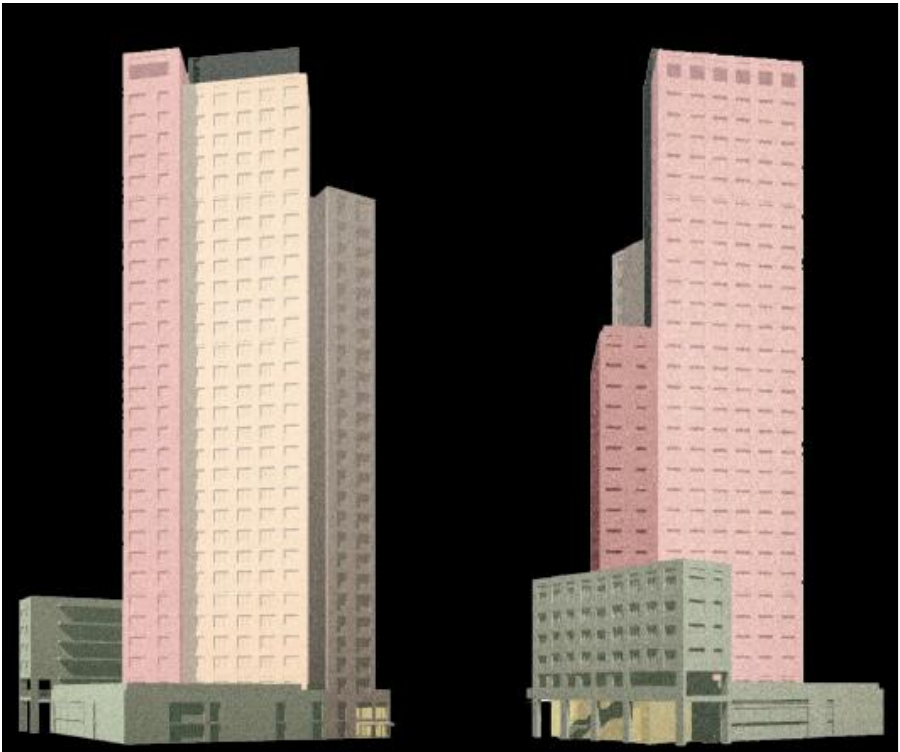


## PLANS AND IMAGES

Image showing proposed ground floor uses in the area. Red = commercial & Orange = residential

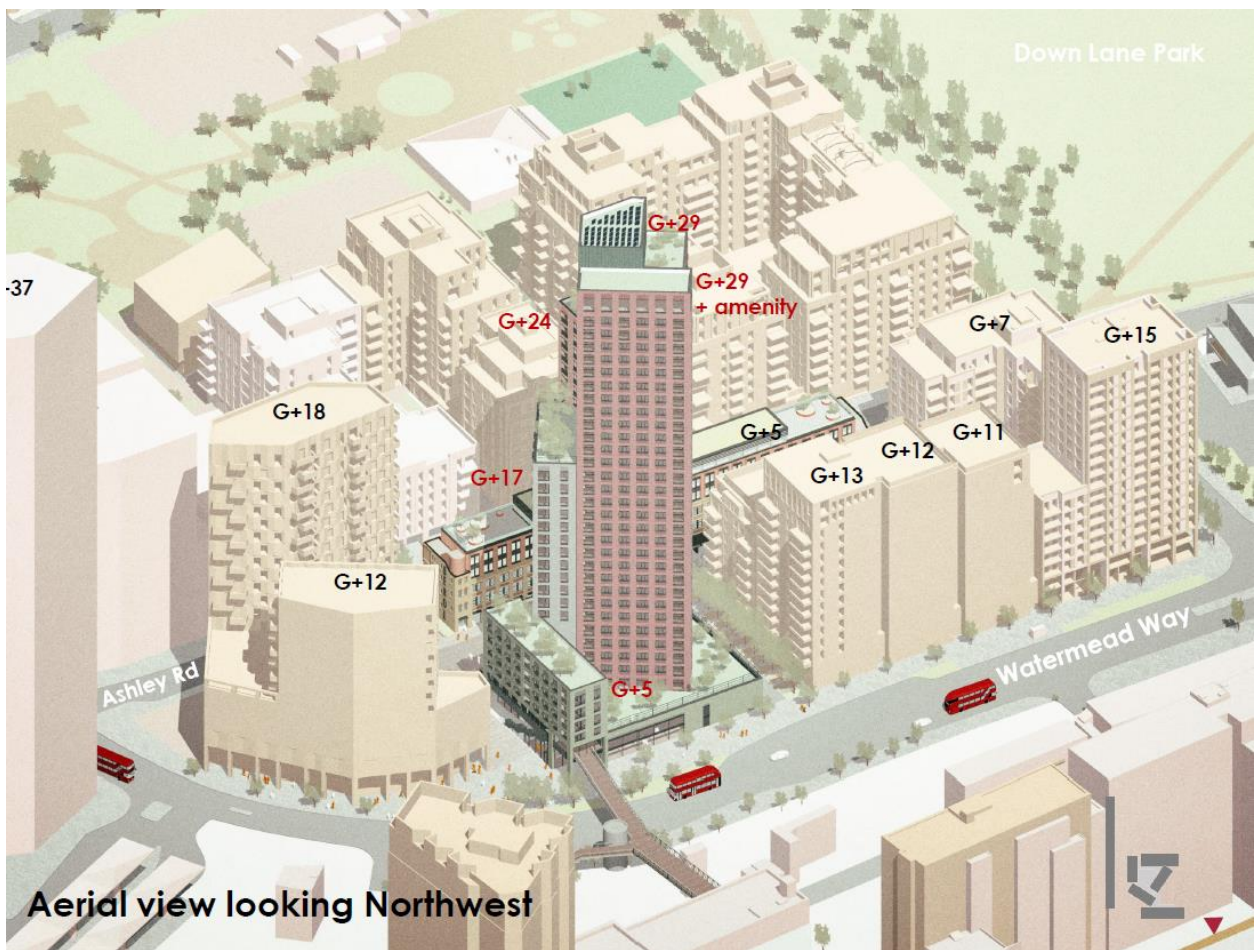
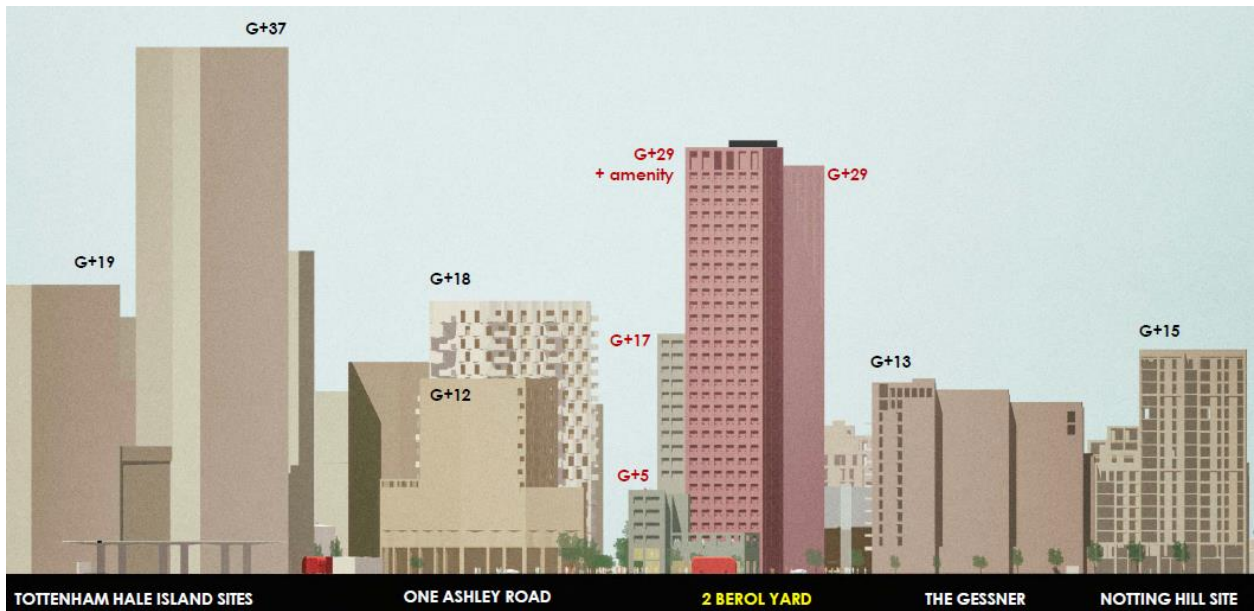


Images showing the stepped and varied form of proposed 2 Berol Yard





Images showing the 2 Berol Yard and the development in context





Images showing justification for height of 2 Berol Yard

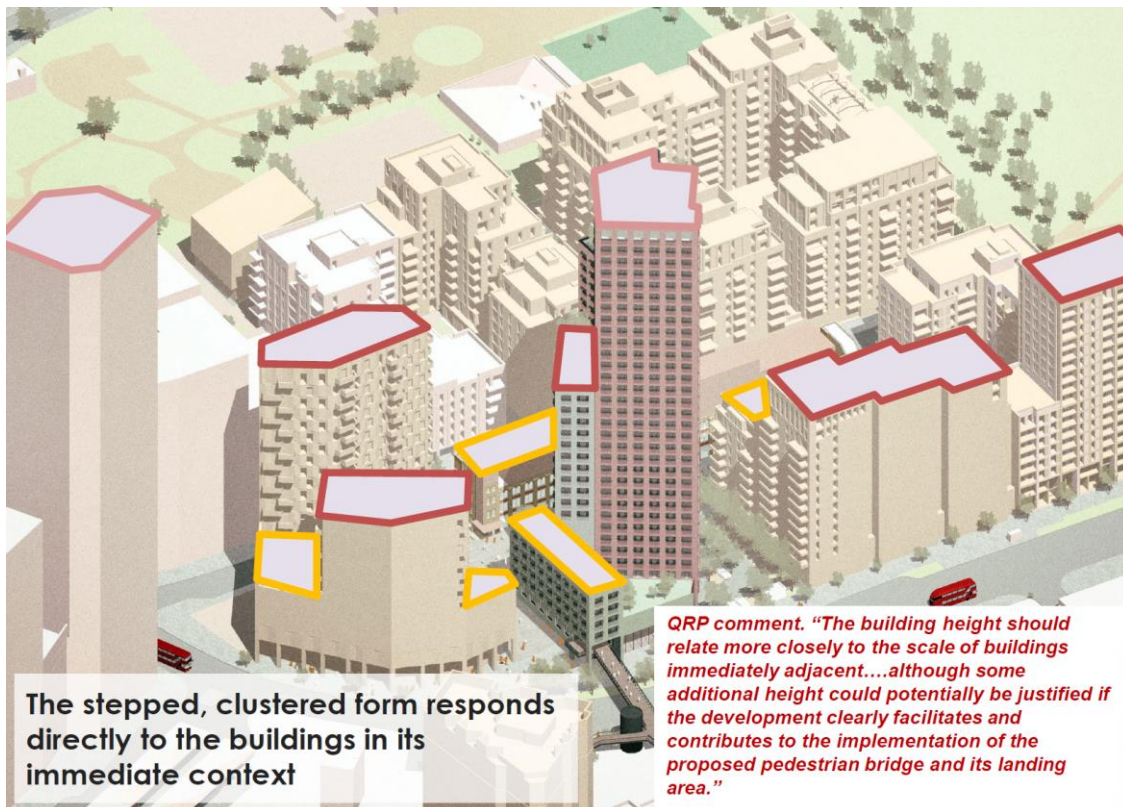
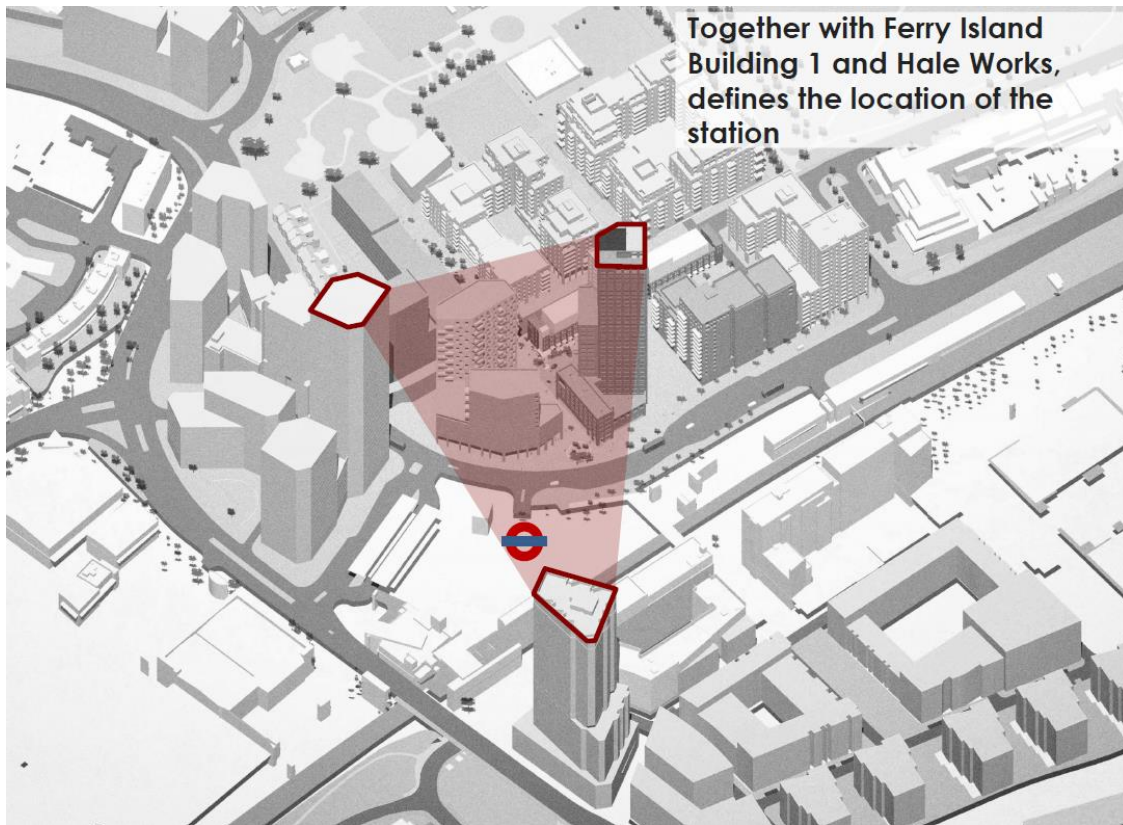
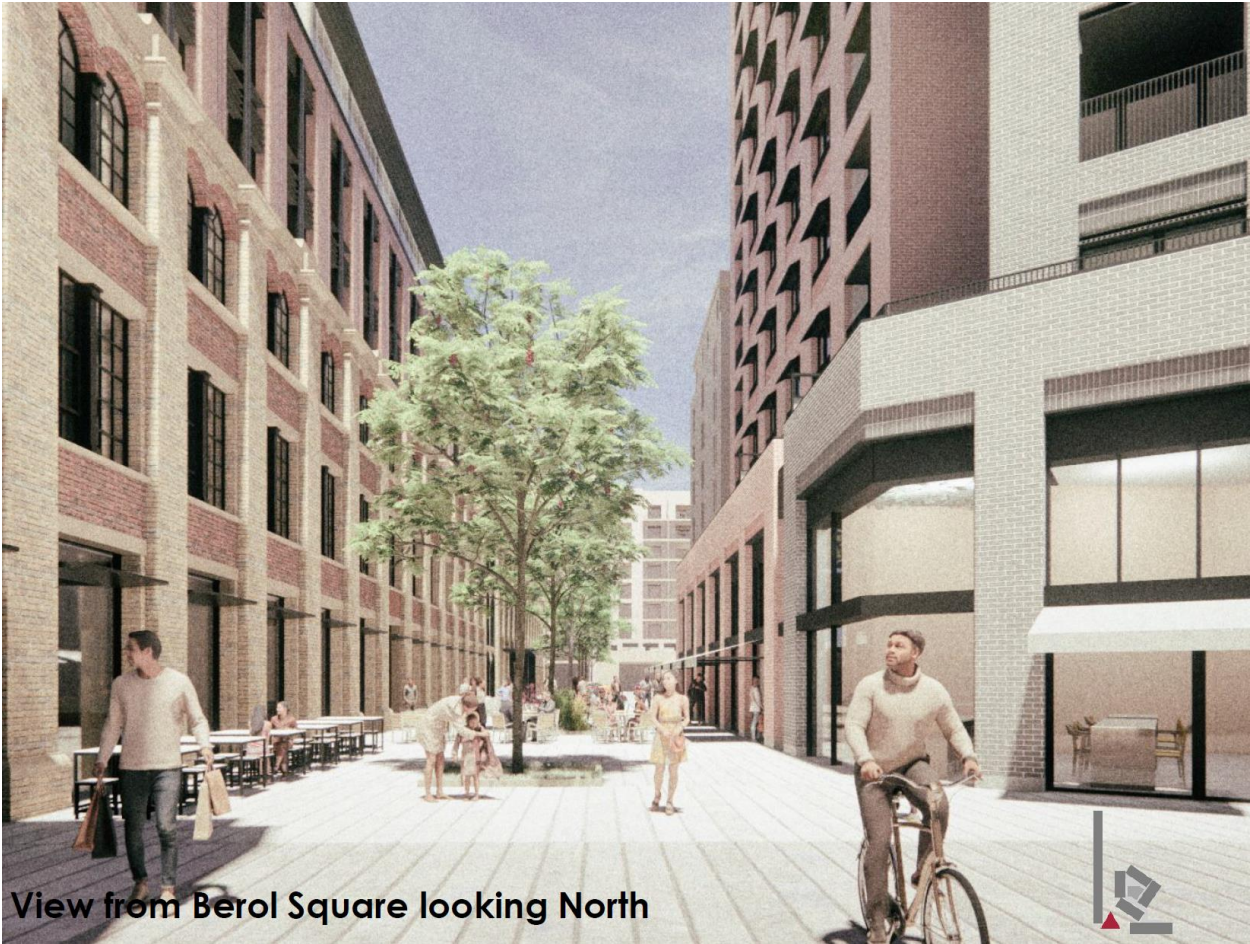




Image showing views of the proposal



Axonometric view towards Berol Square



View from Berol Square looking North







**View from Ashley Road**

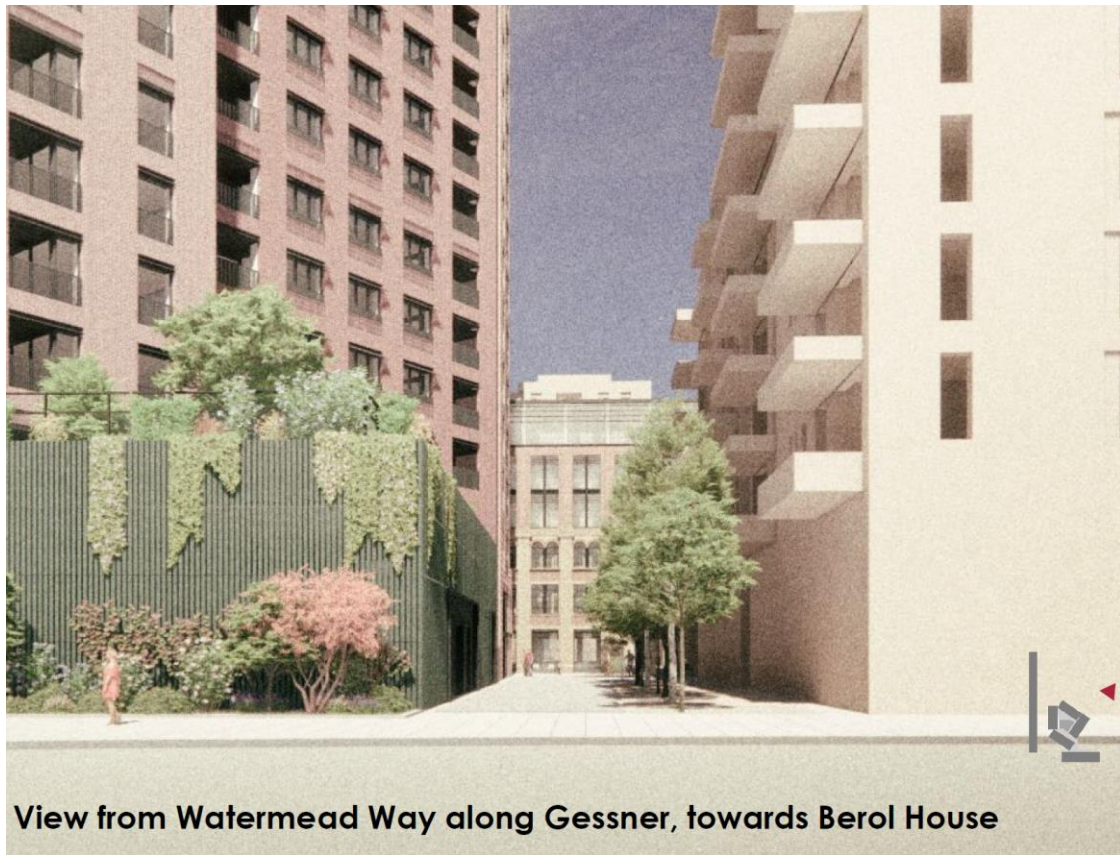


**View from Berol Square**



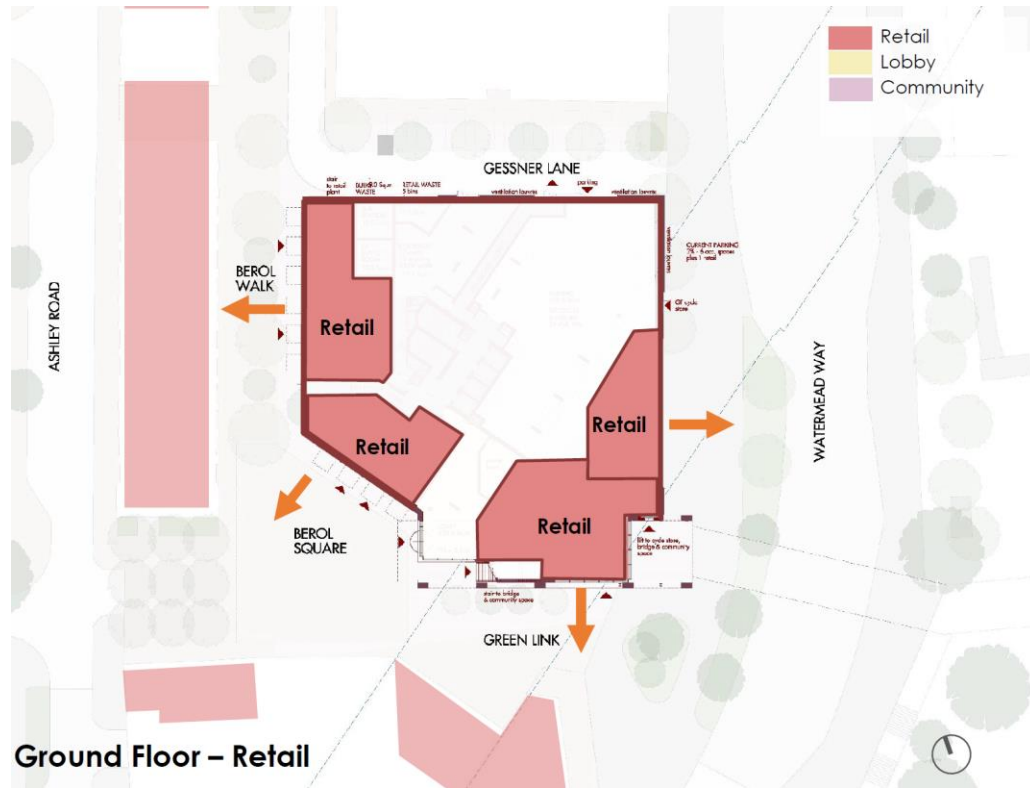


View from Berol Square looking East



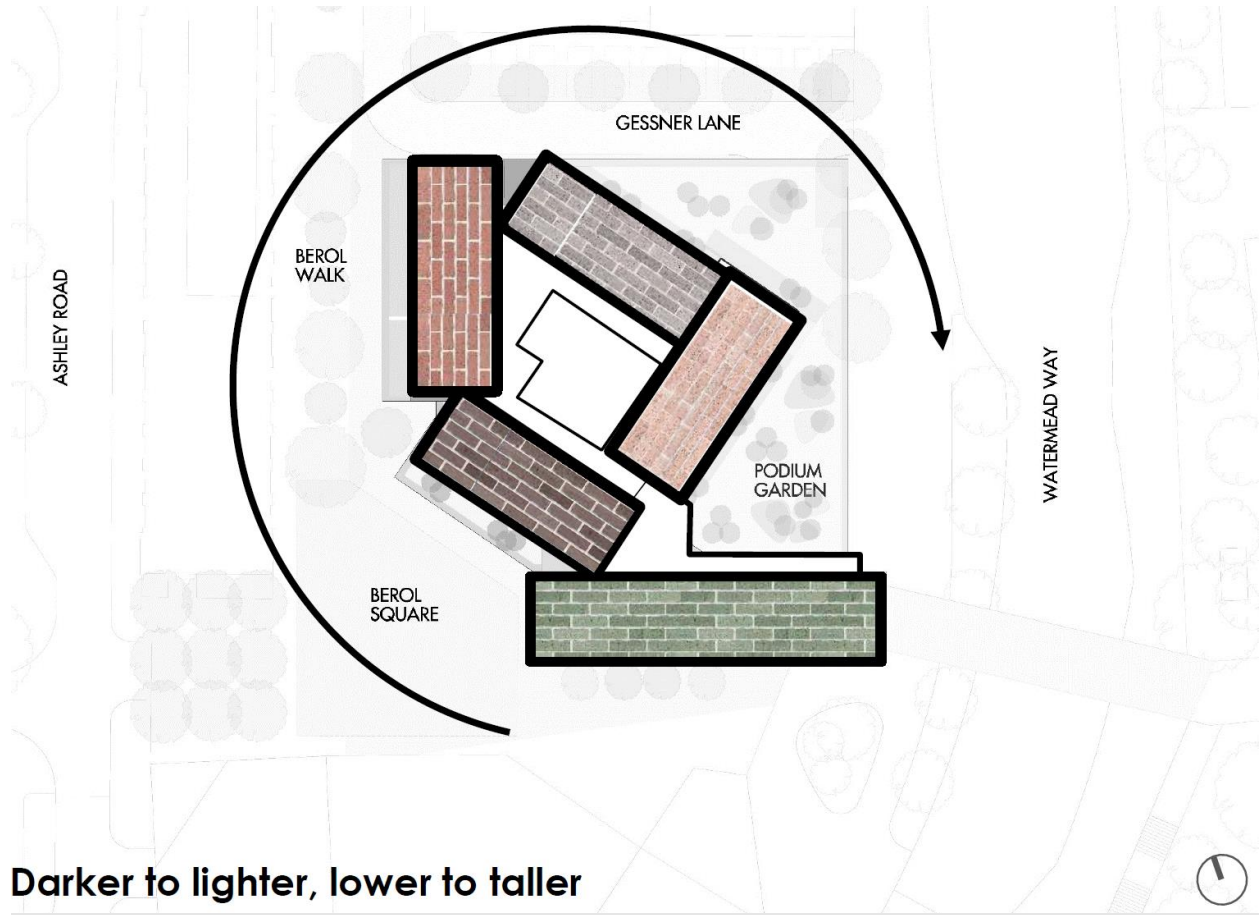
View from Watermead Way along Gessner, towards Berol House

Image showing the proposed commercial spaces at GF in 2 Berol Yard & typical resi plan





Materiality of 2 Berol Yard



**Darker to lighter, lower to taller**

Berol House images





