

Horizon

Lee 5 Honeysuckle

Newcastle, NSW, 2300

Design Report

2 Background & Context

The project team consisting of CKDS Architecture, Hill Thalís & Jane Irwin Landscape Architecture articulated a strong concept plan for 'Horizon' at Lee 5. As a result of this initial concept plan the scheme was successful as part of competitive tender.

The project team continued to develop the scheme and presented to the State Design Review Panel on three occasions.

This design report illustrates the design process with feedback and commentary from the panel.



1. Competitive Tender Process

1.1 Competitive Tender Process

The project team articulated a strong concept plan for 'Horizon' at Lee 5. The building form and surrounding interfaces consider all the key design objectives set forth in the Chrofi guidelines.

Considerable reference has been had to the lines and sweep of planned developments and that the natural topographical opportunities are maximised. At the same time, the articulation and materiality of its proposed built form ensures Horizon will delineate its own place along the grand boulevard of Honeysuckle Drive, as well as from the waterfront.

The vision can be summarised as having complementarity and harmony. Through careful accents in the materials palette and placement, it hints an industrial elegance that harks back to history of the harbor and its important role in Newcastle's past, and its future.

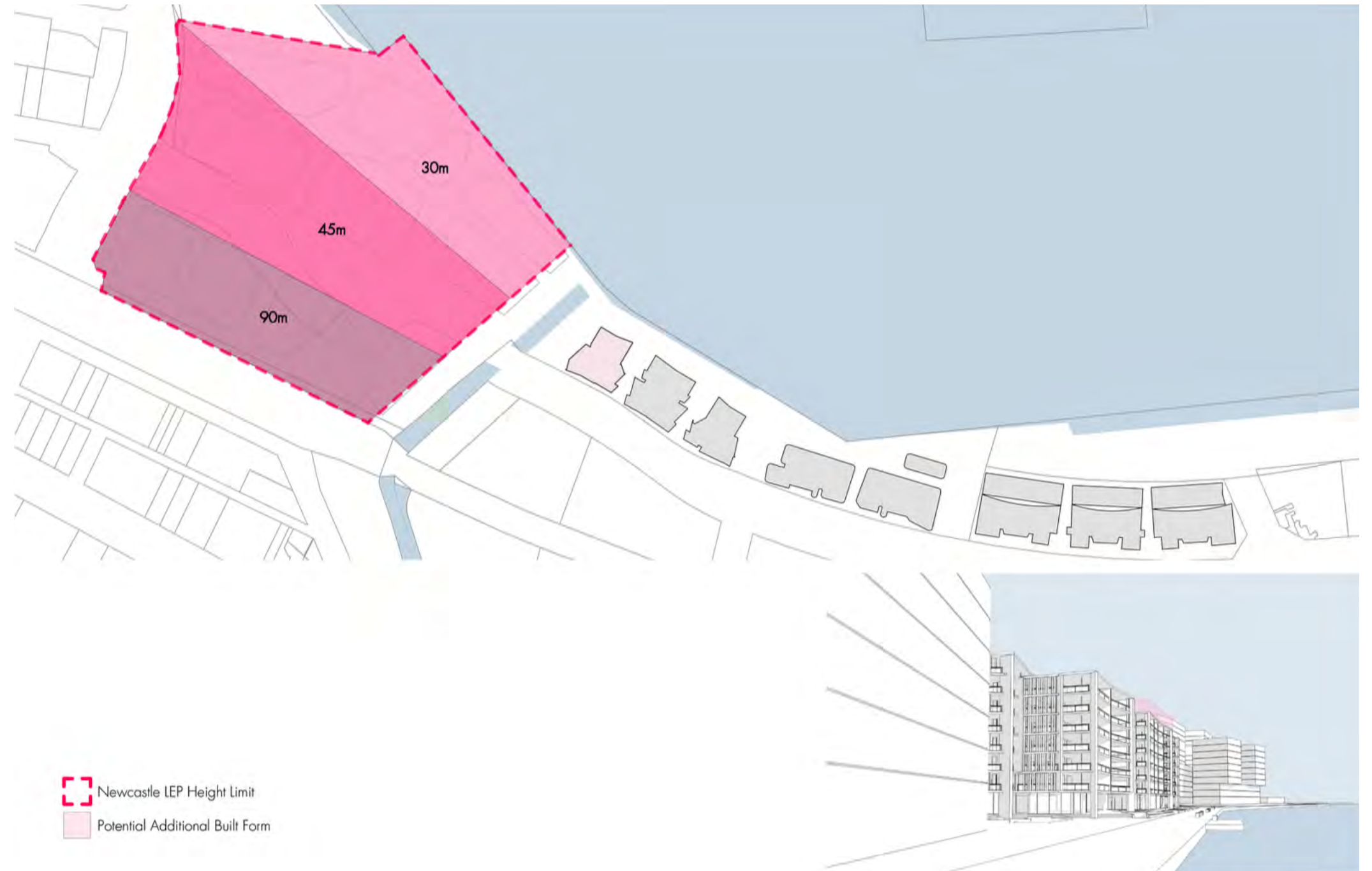
The proposed development offers buyers a range of choice, with a consistent promise of quality. The development comprises 105 apartments, each with generous external spaces in the form of terraces, balconies or roof gardens. 90% of the living spaces and bedrooms included have water views.

The predominant residential product offered is two and three bedroom apartments. This ensures that the majority of apartments offer highly articulated and breathable floor plates. It also ensures superior solar access to the majority of apartments, excellent cross ventilation taking advantage of the temperate climate that draws so many people to Newcastle, and delivers an apartment density that offers privacy and sanctuary from the highly activated ground plane below.



1.2 Site Analysis

Horizon sits at a key moment of transition to significantly higher built forms to the west and south around the Newcastle Interchange new station. Where Horizon holds the corner of Cottage Creek Park is a significant corner within the city's urban fabric and may be well suited to higher built form.



1.3 Site Analysis

The site is framed by two 'major precinct view corridors' in both Cottage Creek to the site's west, and Steel Street, to the site's east. These primary axial channels provide important public access to sun and view access. In addition, they provide significant opportunities for the development of quality public spaces and ground level activation.

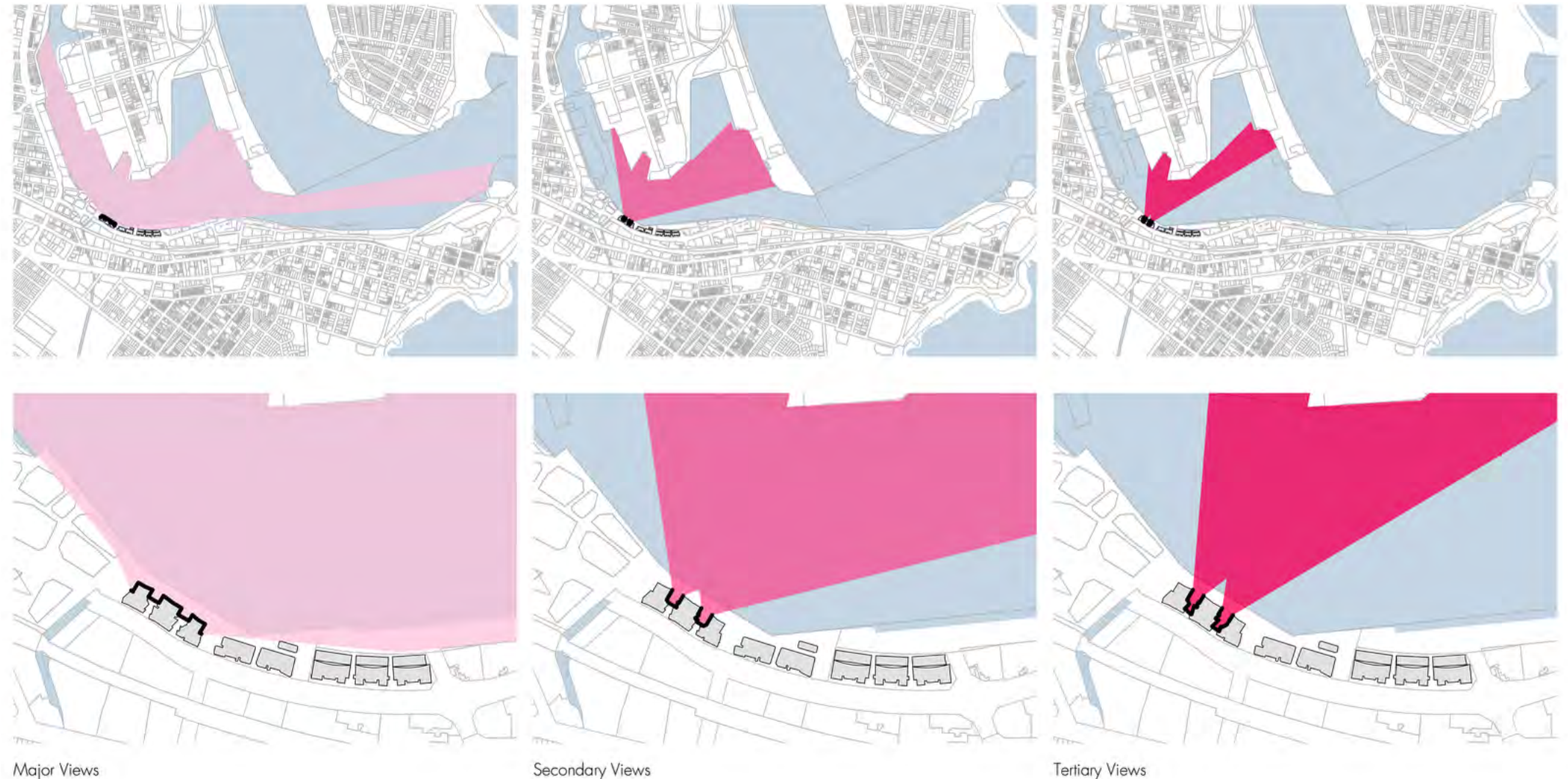
In addition to these precinct level view corridors, the site offers the potential to generate through site links that relate to existing built form to the south and connecting Honeysuckle Drive with the Harbour Promenade. These additional links provide further public access to both light and water views while also providing street level activation.

It is intended that the north-eastern edge of the Lee 5 site will retain and enhance the continuity of the strong promenade facing street wall, which will strengthen the promenade view corridor.

In addition to the major public view corridors, two additional view corridors are created by the site planning. Horizon proposes three distinct buildings, with open garden courtyards between the buildings. This allows much better visual connections from Honeysuckle Drive to the harbour, and much better solar access to this significant street. Importantly it also allows properties deeper within Newcastle's urban fabric to retain more connection to the harbour.

The sculpting of 3 forms within the block allows even for apartments further back in the floor plan to acquire long water views across the internal courtyards.

The 3 distinct building forms of Horizon not only provide variation and interest to the harbour's edge, but significantly increase the amenity to the street and neighbours behind. Honeysuckle Drive is gifted multiple sweeps of sunlight throughout the day promoting activation along the southern side of this important civic spine.



1.4 Site Analysis

Neighbours across Honeysuckle Drive maintain view corridors to the water through the Cottage Creek Park and Steel Street Square, as well as through the vegetated courtyards of Horizon. A hierarchy of proportion and character are created to enable way finding - where the courtyards are sculpted and tighter than the park and square - maintaining the major connections from the city to the water and complementing the pedestrian network with finer, more intimate spaces.



1.5 Site Analysis

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1.6 Ground Plane

The ground plane has been considered as a holistic plinth - gently raised from the predominant public domain level to provide flood-proofing and prospect over the adjoining public spaces.

Generous ramps and gentle runs of shallow steps provide numerous points of access along the majority of the perimeter to let activity spill to and from the harbourfront, Cottage Creek Park and Steel Street Square.

Ground floor residential addresses and home occupations have been integrated to provide additional openings and activations, maintaining privacy but at the same time enabling easy flow of pedestrians into and around the ground floor. Multiple entries to lobbies ensure that each frontage is given maximum activation and passive surveillance with services limited only to small lengths along the southern facades.



1.7 Ground Plane

The foreshore promenade is becoming Newcastle's signature public place. Horizon's design creates a coherent presence to the foreshore promenade. It takes its cues from the planning documents to extend this major new urban space to the west.

The foreshore promenade itself is broad and distinctively planted. Major waterfront spaces such as this often have a width in the order of 10 metres, supplemented by connecting broader spaces. This is precisely the proposal at Lee 5. The width of the promenade is enhanced by a 4.5 metre wide landscape frontage and generous podium which seamlessly deals with both flood levels and equitable access.

Retail uses are concentrated towards the Steel Street Square, while Community Uses engage with the Cottage Creek interface. The 10 metre wide promenade includes a boardwalk edge and the nominated grand tree plantings, supplemented by further landscaped areas and upper terraces on the podium.

Along the northern edge in the centre of the site are three residential apartments with generous terraces facing north east across the harbour. The open north faces of the building will provide both spatial definition and passive surveillance of this important public space.

Secondary entries from the promenade add further grain to this already sculpted edge. Between the buildings the garden courtyards can be flexibly managed to suit the time of day and year, supporting the adjoining community and retail uses.



2. State Design Review Panel - Meeting 01

2.1 State Design Review Panel Meeting 01

As the successful proponent for the competitive tender the team were invited to present the scheme to the State Design Review Panel on the 12th December 2018. The panel represents the NSW Government Architect and would oversee the design excellence for the project prior to the lodgement of the development application.

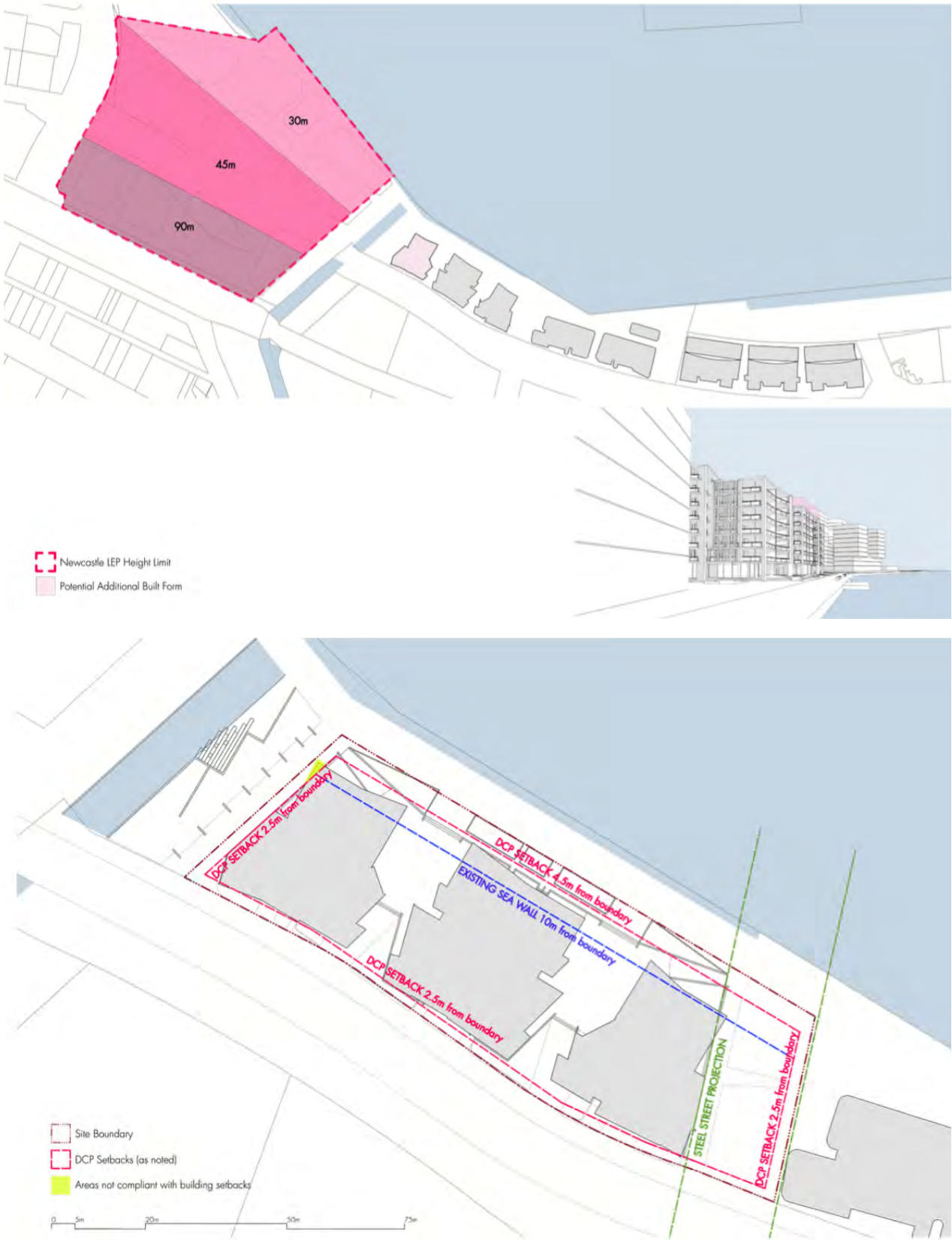
The panel generally supported the design presented. The civic qualities of the architecture and the considered approach to public domain and common areas were particularly noted. The three-building form was supported and the mix of residential and retail tenancies is deemed suitable to the area. The panel advised focused on public domain, hierarchy of entries, bulk and form, and the material resolution of the scheme.



2.2 State Design Review Panel Meeting 01

The panel noted the success of the scheme hinges on its relationship to the public domain. The panel acknowledged the ambitious public domain proposal which includes Cottage Creek revitalization, waterfront promenade and the park adjacent to Steel Street. As the public domain is not currently within the project budget, the panel recommended that HCCDC and Newcastle Council work with the designers to find a workable solution to realise it. Panel suggestions included dedicating Steel Street park to Council or entering into a voluntary planning agreement with Council to fund Cottage Creek.

Given the high-density development proposed to the west of the site, the panel noted they would support increased height to the westernmost building of Lee 5 and/or changes to setbacks if these would help achieve public domain outcomes and allow for a significant communal open space at roof level to one of the other two buildings.



2.3 State Design Review Panel Meeting 01

The panel noted the proposed scheme effectively acknowledges the dual frontages to Honeysuckle Drive and to the foreshore promenade. Efforts to conceal building services within the ground floor are noted. The panel supported the layered entry system and dual-side access to the building foyer but requested that the entry hierarchy be interrogated further. Issues raised for further consideration included: the proportion of openings and their relation to one another; distinct facades to provide identity and wayfinding; access for home deliveries or drop-off; greater clarity and distinction between the public, common and private areas at the entry. The panel supported more generous common areas in the foyer and rooftop.



2.4 State Design Review Panel Meeting 01

The panel supported the apartment planning generally. The three-building form reduces bulk and improves light and ventilation for most apartments. The voids between buildings do not comply with the 18m minimum separation distance required by the Apartment Design Guide. The panel can support this ADG breach if the architects can demonstrate that sufficient amenity is achieved and provide a solid planning justification. The panel encouraged careful refinement of voids as strong architectural features in the design.



2.5 State Design Review
Panel Meeting 01

The panel supported the proposed setbacks to align with other developments in the precinct. The building bulk is suitably porous. Some western height uplift is supported as mentioned above. The panel commented on further articulation to the roof profile. The panel strongly supported provision of common roof space over the central building.



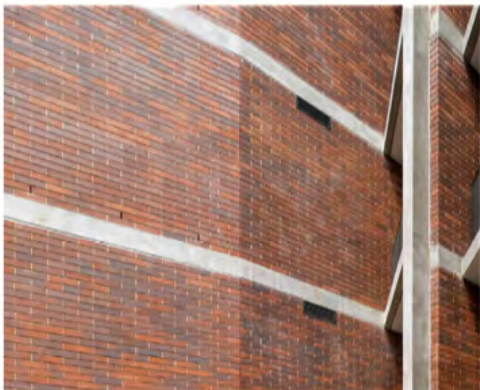
South Elevation
SCALE 1:500 @ A3



West Elevation
SCALE 1:500 @ A3

2.6 State Design Review Panel Meeting 01

The panel commended the robust, well-mannered architectural character of the scheme. The elegant material palette was noted; panelists look forward to further resolution of the facades as the project develops. The weight of the north façade was supported, however brick masses on the south façade seemed unresolved. East and west facades are significant and need further design. Given the generous balconies, the panel suggested that partly solid balustrades would reduce reflectivity, improve privacy and enhance the outdoor room quality of these spaces. Sharp angular corners of balconies could also be resolved. Risks for the seaside location were discussed; the panel expressed concern that concrete elements are constructed by skilled contractors and to a high class finish. Wind will be an issue post occupation and should be carefully considered in the design of all façades.



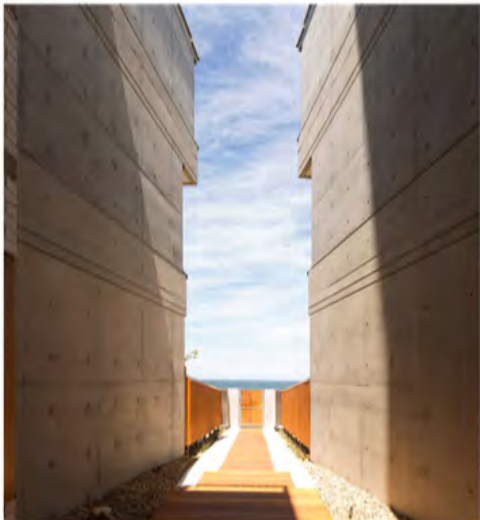
Hawkesbury Bronze Pressed Bricks



Bronze coloured external louvers



Bronze coloured external perforated screens



Off Form Concrete Blades



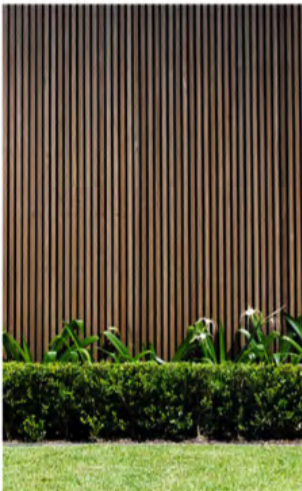
Off Form Concrete Columns



Bronze coloured handrail +
Frameless glass balustrades



Expressed Bronze coloured
metal frame openings



Vertical baton fencing



Concept Sketch - Play of solid elements along Honeysuckle Drive that frame the lighter, reflective materials along the harbour.

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER + MATERIALITY



3. State Design Review Panel - Meeting 02

3.1 State Design Review Panel Meeting 02

The design team presented the revised scheme for a second time to the State Design Review Panel representing the NSW Government Architect on the 6th February 2019.

The amendments to the scheme since the previous review are generally supported. The rational planning of apartments, the refined entry hierarchy and the material quality of the voids and balconies are noted. Panel advice focuses on the proposed common areas [rooftop and foyer] and the privacy and resolution of facades. Formal variance at each orientation to respond to climatic and contextual conditions is also encouraged.



3.2 Public Domain

The panel were generally supportive of the emerging landscape plan. Raised planting fronting the northern foreshore provides intimate seating alcoves and a dynamic edge condition. Interior courtyards and entry gardens are an asset to the common areas.

The panel supported common areas at roof level and acknowledged that the proposed central rooftop common area provides good resident amenity. The covered space could be improved to accommodate family functions and a kitchenette.

- ① parks bookending this part of the public domain network – green open spaces with:
 - community meeting places, events spaces and gateway features
 - active recreation, flexible open spaces, play elements, connections to the water
- ② promenade – visually and physically ties the foreshore together east west, with planting for shade and shelter, seating, lighting, smart technology
- ③ Cottage Creek – western face to Lee 5 – southern section to be naturalized, and northern section will have canal exposed; family friendly park and community event park
- ④ street connections – these currently are not active spaces, disconnected from the built edges. Steel Street provides pedestrian connection, view corridor, and opportunity to activate the areas between buildings and create amenity to supplement the promenade – small urban squares



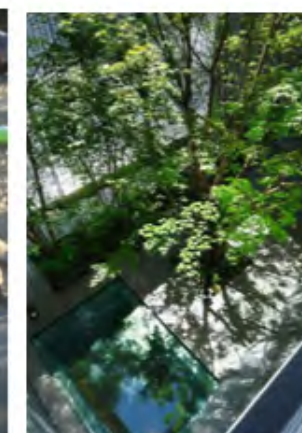
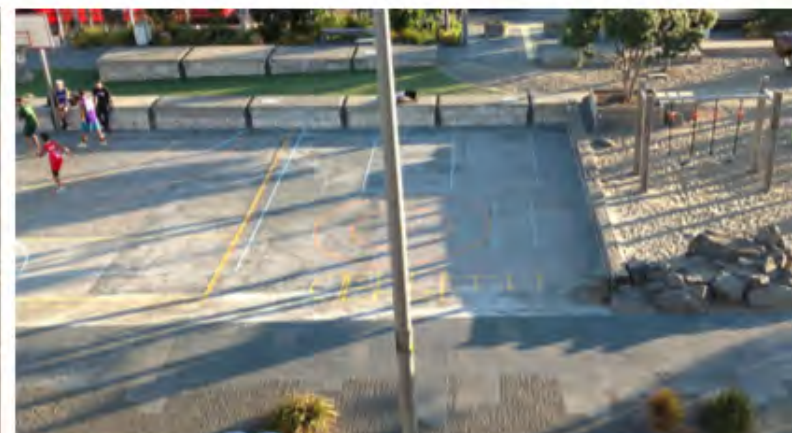
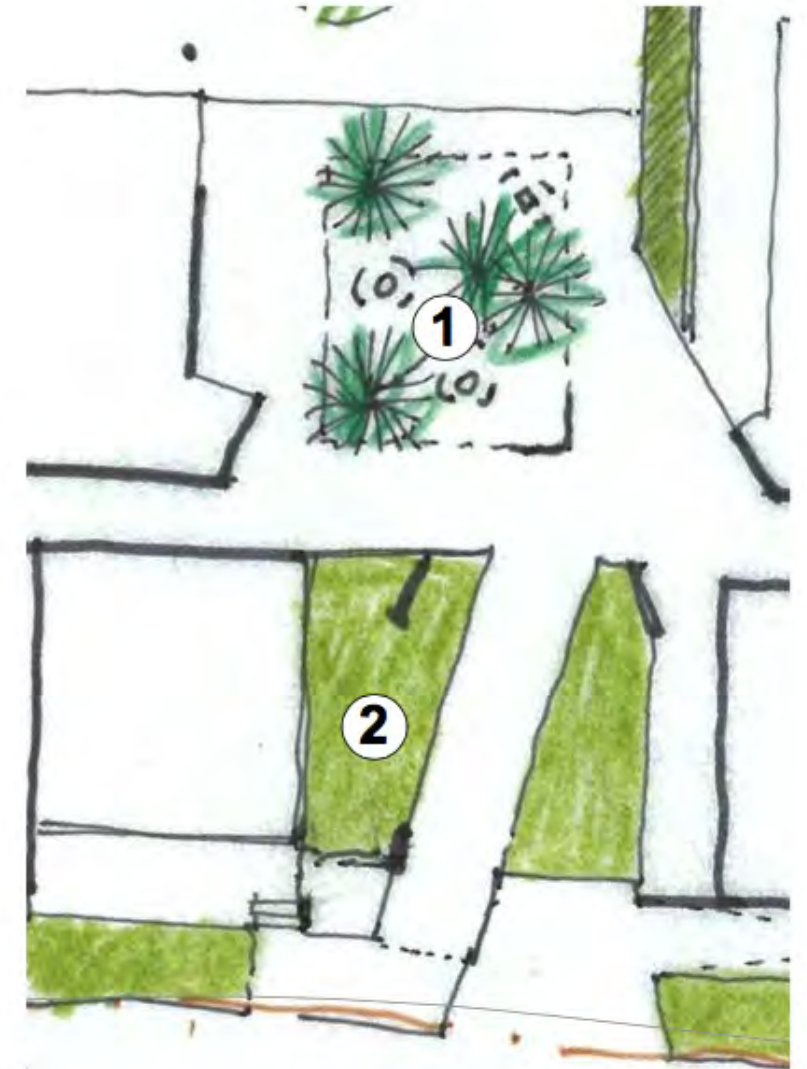
3.3 Public Domain

PUBLIC DOMAIN

- Connect to street and promenade to promote activation
- Create diverse spaces, including some active areas in Steel St square
- Planting that responds to pre-existing landscapes - perhaps reeds, sedges etc associated with WSUD and past mud flats
- Tactility: detailed paving and planting for interest and human scale

PRIVATE DOMAIN

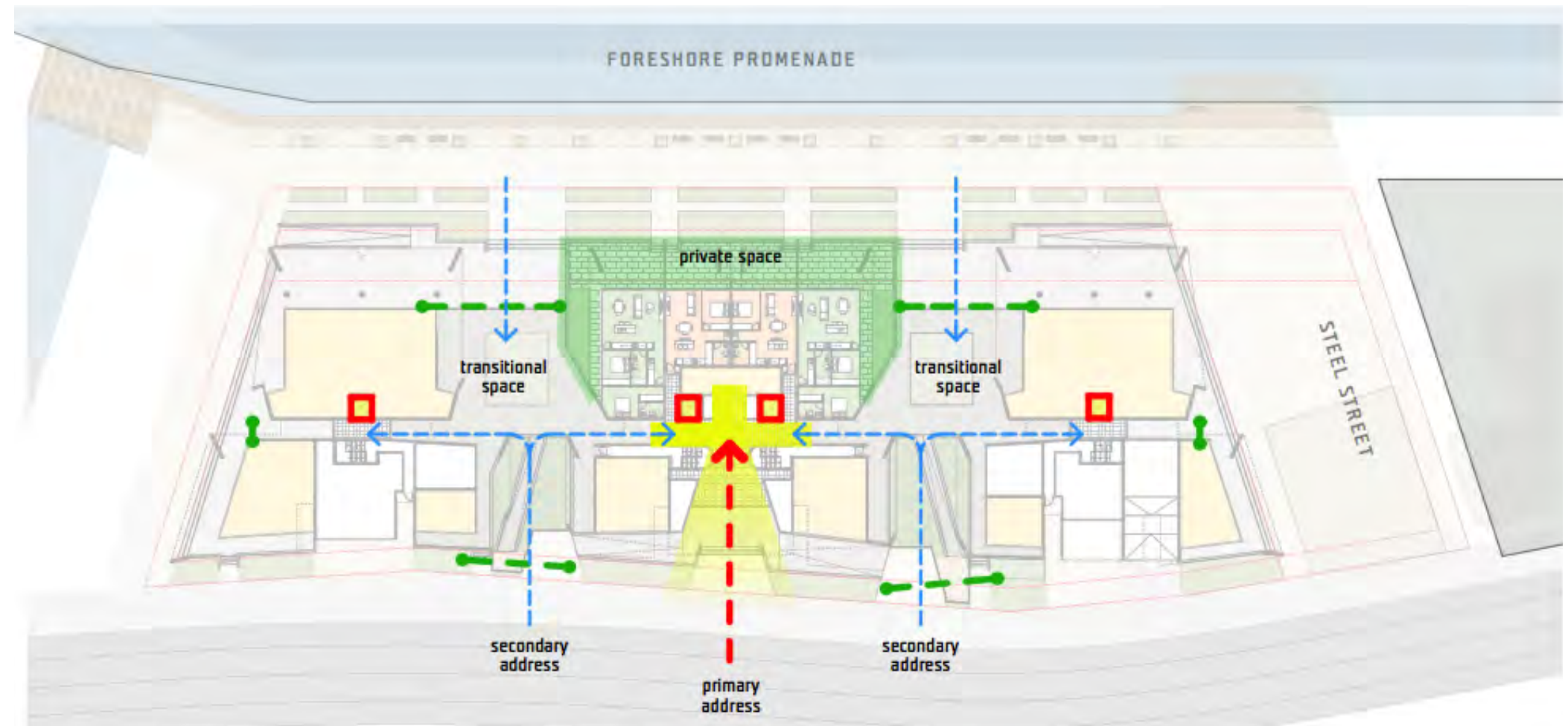
- Trees defining space for shade, shelter and privacy, like a Moroccan courtyard (1)
- Entries: wilder planting, moving through a lush garden (2)



3.4 Entry Hierarchy and Circulation

The panel noted the proposed scheme continues to navigate the dual frontages to Honeysuckle Drive and to foreshore promenade. The panel supported the revised entry hierarchy. A legible main entry has been established from Honeysuckle Drive through the central building, and secondary front entries are provided in the eastern and western buildings.

On the ground floor, the through-site access from the park (east) to the creek (west) is a successful method of organizing the three buildings. The interior courtyards enhance this connection



3.5 Internal Planning & Circulation

The panel supported the refined apartment planning and noted its closer compliance with the Apartment Design Guide. The breaks between buildings are expanded to improve light and ventilation and create more slender built forms. The wider void was commended and contributes to internal amenity and the public domain. The internal circulation is effective. The panel encouraged further testing of the exterior screening from multiple angles to ensure privacy from all directions. Irregularity in the screen spacing could be considered to improve performance. Passive cross ventilation for long apartments is encouraged. Operable highlight windows or dampers into the void or to bulkheads in common lobbies are possible mechanisms to achieve ventilation.



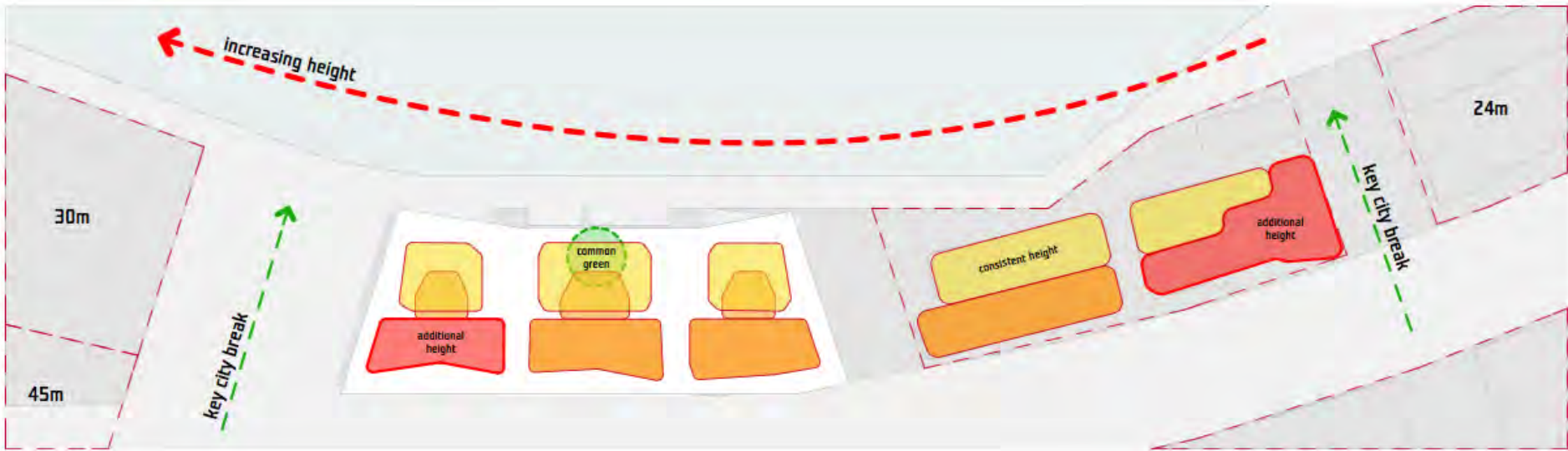
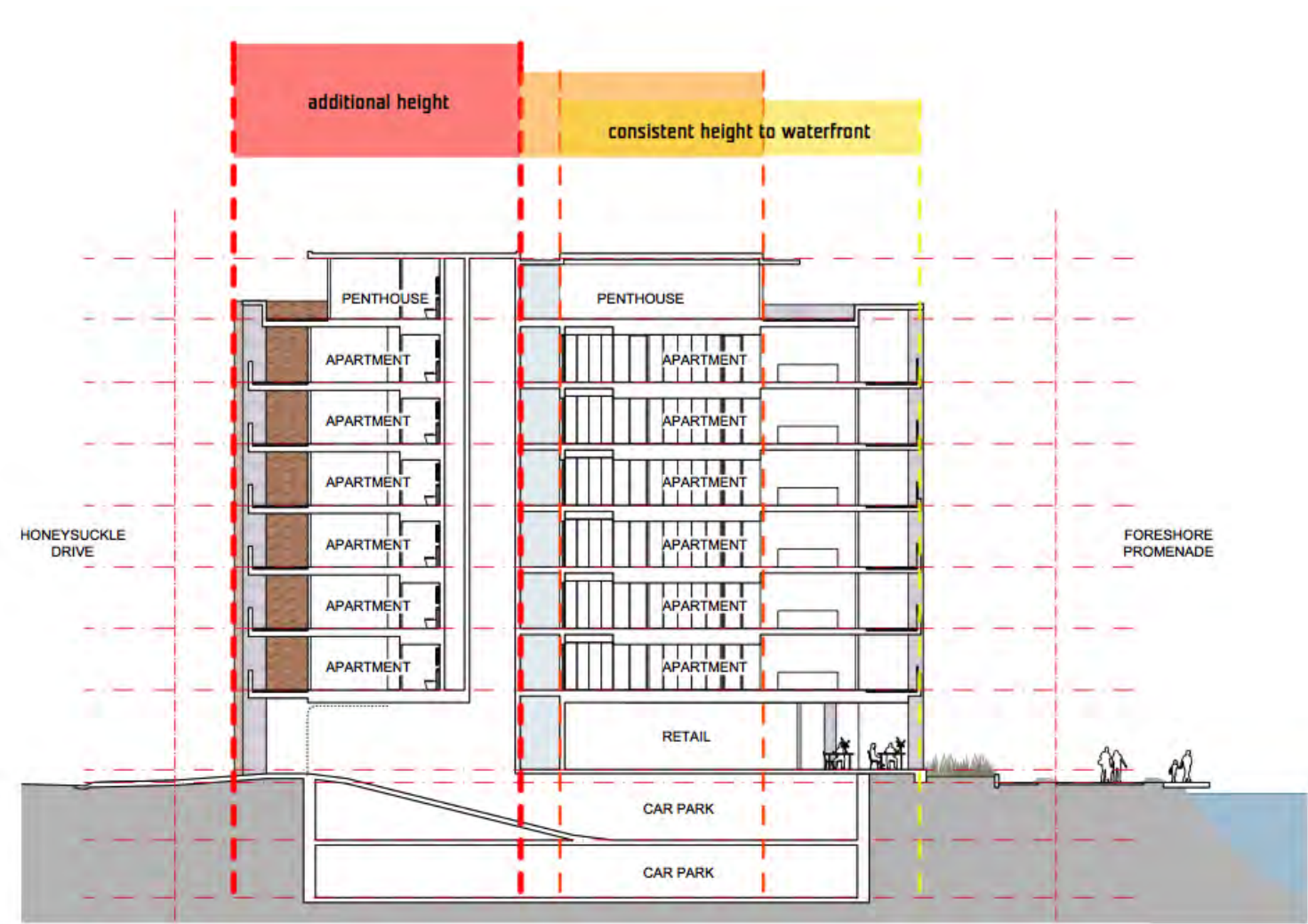
Level 07



Typical

3.6 Additional Height

At SDRP 1, the panel supported investigation of increased height to the westernmost building of Lee 5. Redistribution of height and floor area could afford improved communal open space at roof level and better respond to the unique urban design context of the site and its adjacency to future high-density development proposed to the west. The panel supported the team in exploring increased height where impacts to neighbouring buildings and public space can be demonstrated to be negligible.



3.7 Facade Materials

The panel noted that the architectural resolution continues to develop. The articulated concrete structure and subsequent layering of brick and block materials was supported. The design detailing and material resolution of this scheme are significant to its success and a commitment to delivering a high construction standard must be maintained throughout the life of the project.



3.8 Facade Materials

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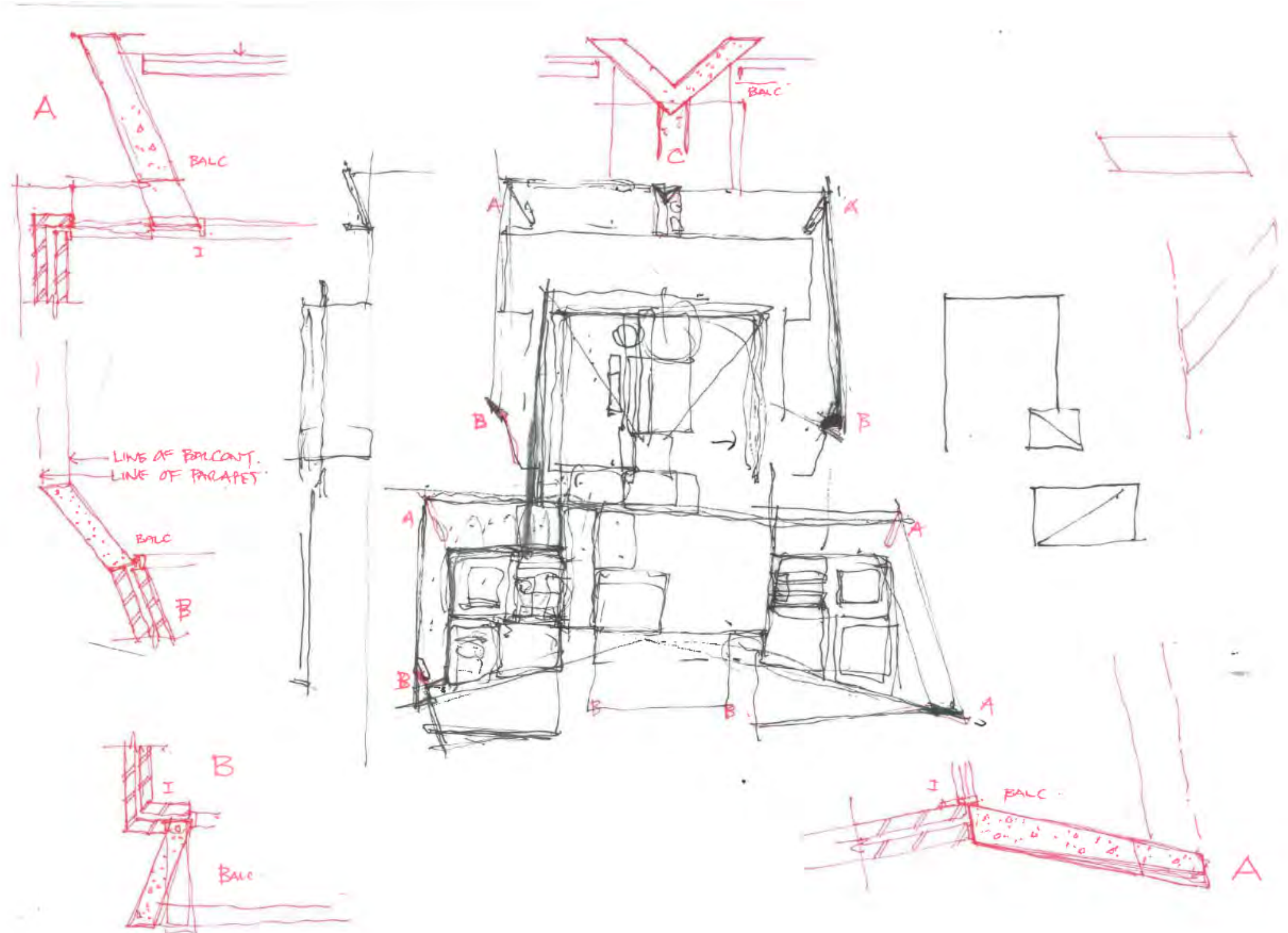


3.9 Facade Materials

The panel noted that the diminishing balustrade successfully responds to previous feedback around reflectivity and privacy.



3.10 Material Junctions



4. State Design Review Panel - Meeting 03

4.1 State Design Review Panel Meeting 03

The design team met with the State Design Review Panel representing the NSW Government Architect for a third time on the 11th April 2019.

The panel noted that the amendments to the scheme since the previous review are generally supported. The generosity to the public domain and integration of landscape, the proposed expression of plinth and brick materiality, and the modulation of the skyline created by the additional height at the western end are supported.

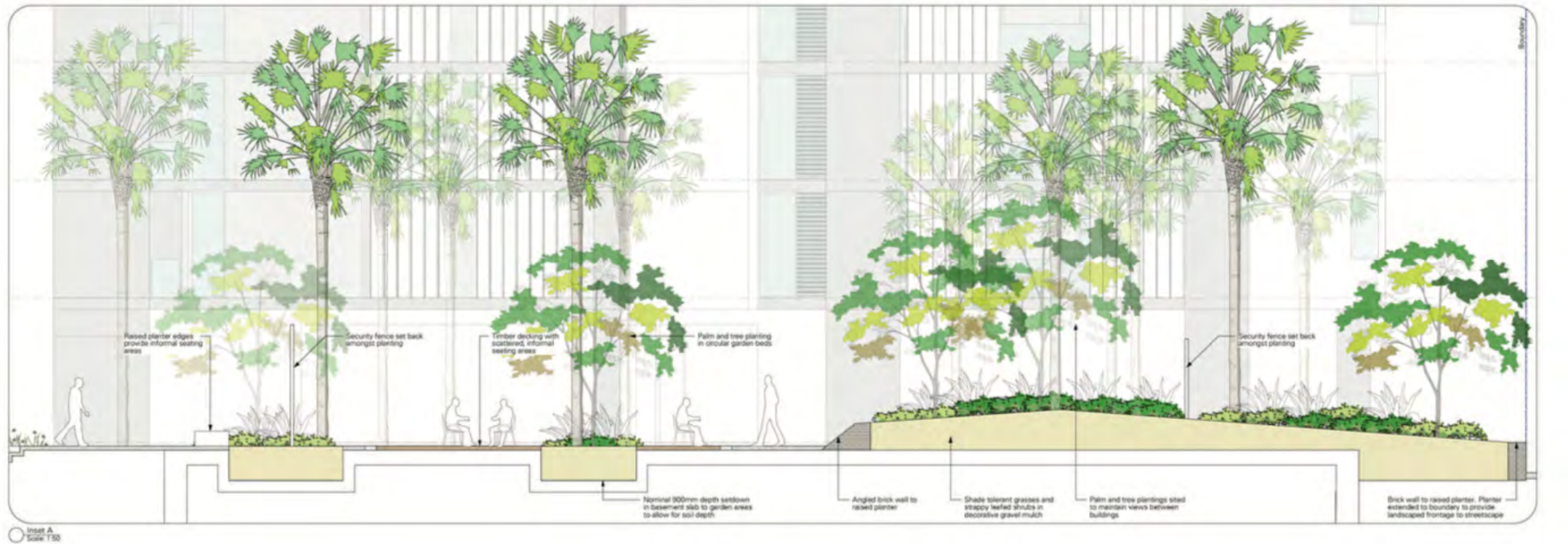
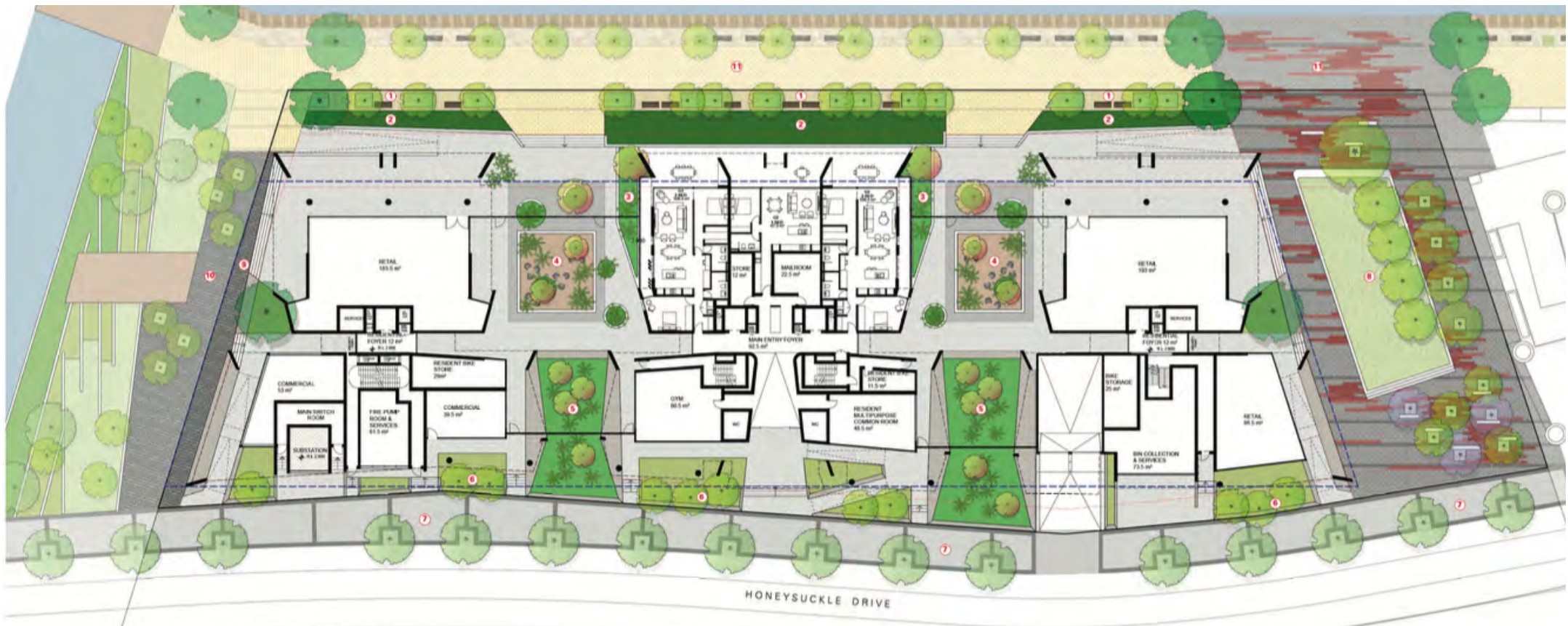
The panel noted that further meetings with the SDRP would not be required after reviewing the detailed design presentation and 3D model of the resolved scheme.



4.2 Landscaping & Public Domain

The panel supported the overall proposed landscape approach is supported, with further detail requested to illustrate the integration of landscape with the architecture and public domain.

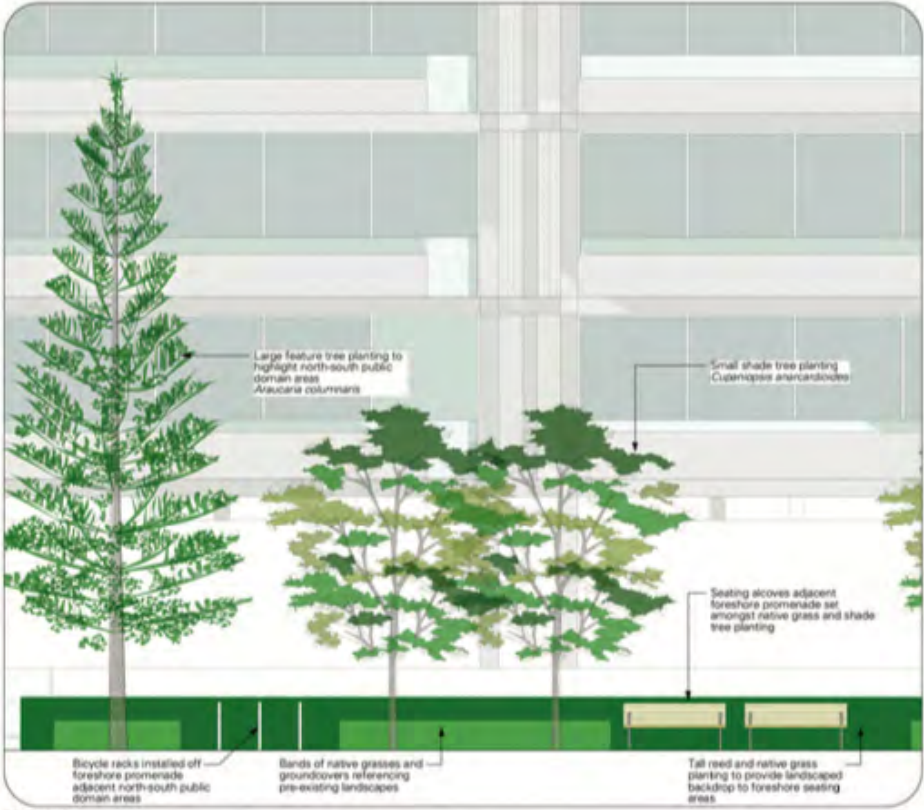
Further resolution and additional details are requested for the courtyard areas and the planter boxes along the foreshore. As currently illustrated the courtyard areas present as overly rigid in relation to the articulation of the building at the ground plane.



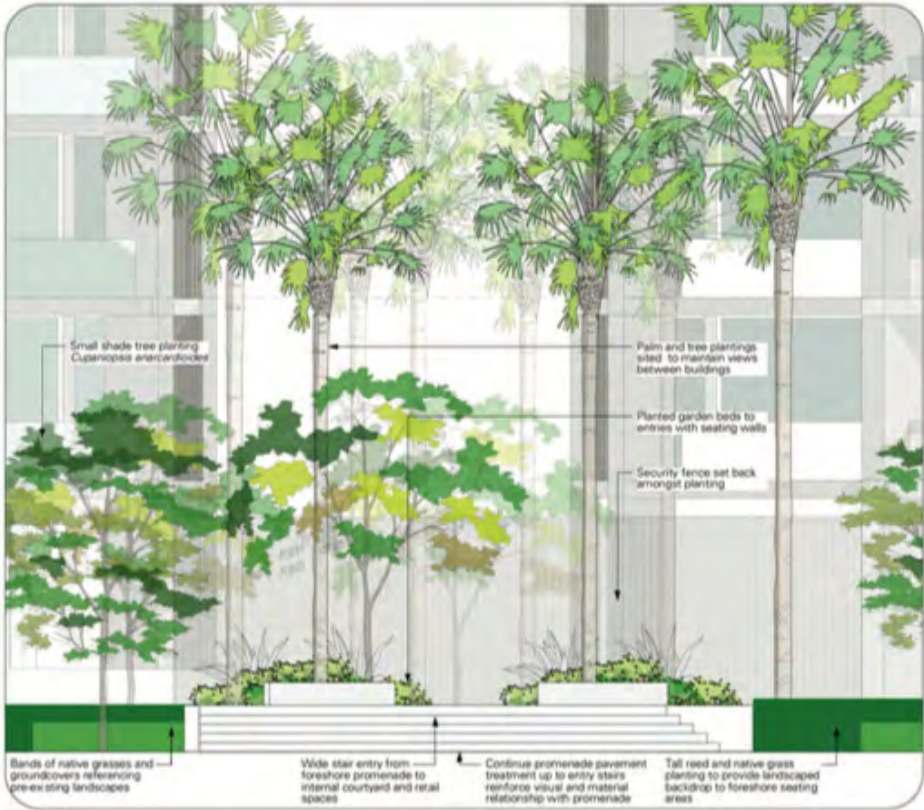
4.3 Landscaping & Public Domain



North Elevation
Scale: 1:200



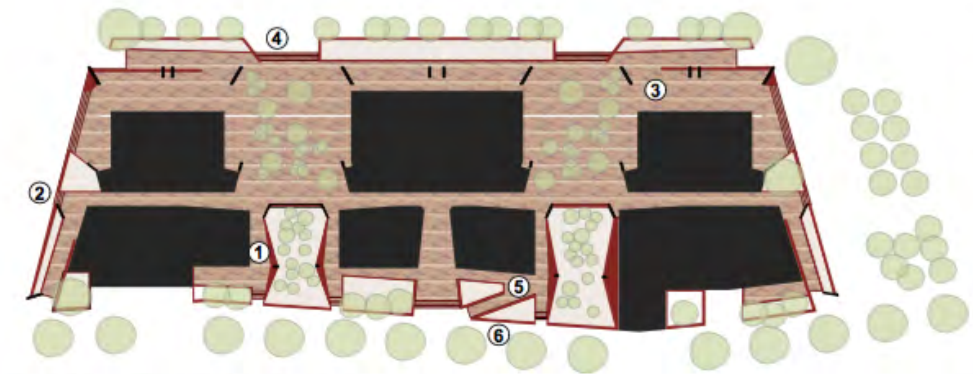
Inset A
Scale: 1:50



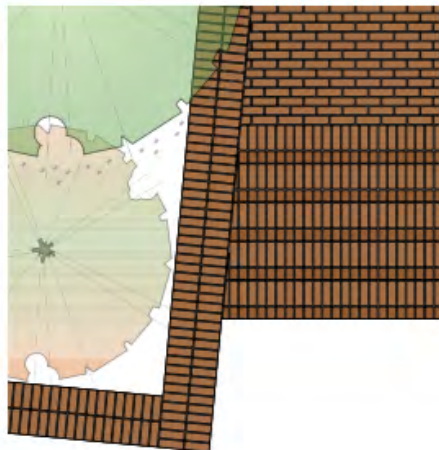
Inset B
Scale: 1:50

4.4 Ground Plane

The ground plane was developed further in relation to form and materiality. The panel supported the brick plinth strategy and an successful treatment to unify the ground plane.



BRICK PODIUM PLINTH - GROUND LEVEL



Brick Edge Wall Studies - Stair Plan



Brick Edge Wall Studies - Stair Elevation

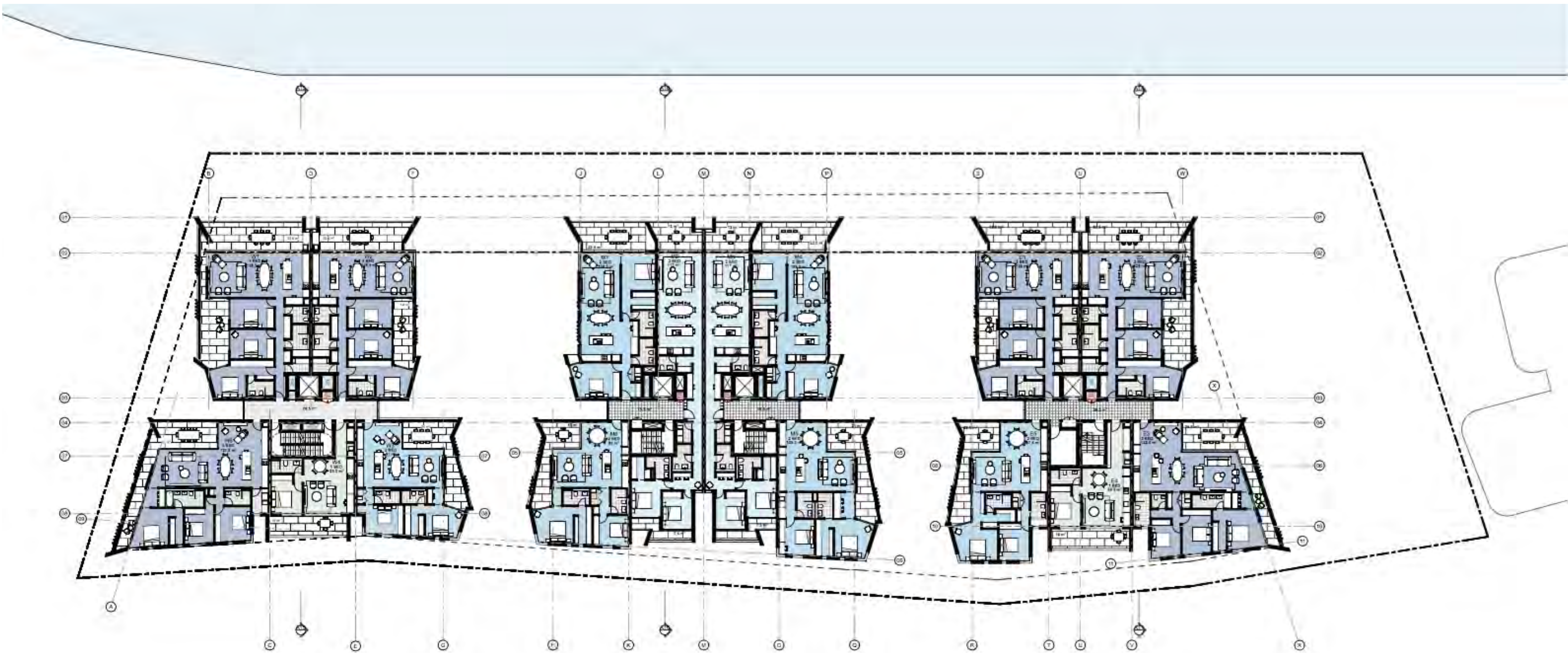


Brick Edge Wall Studies - Wall Elevation

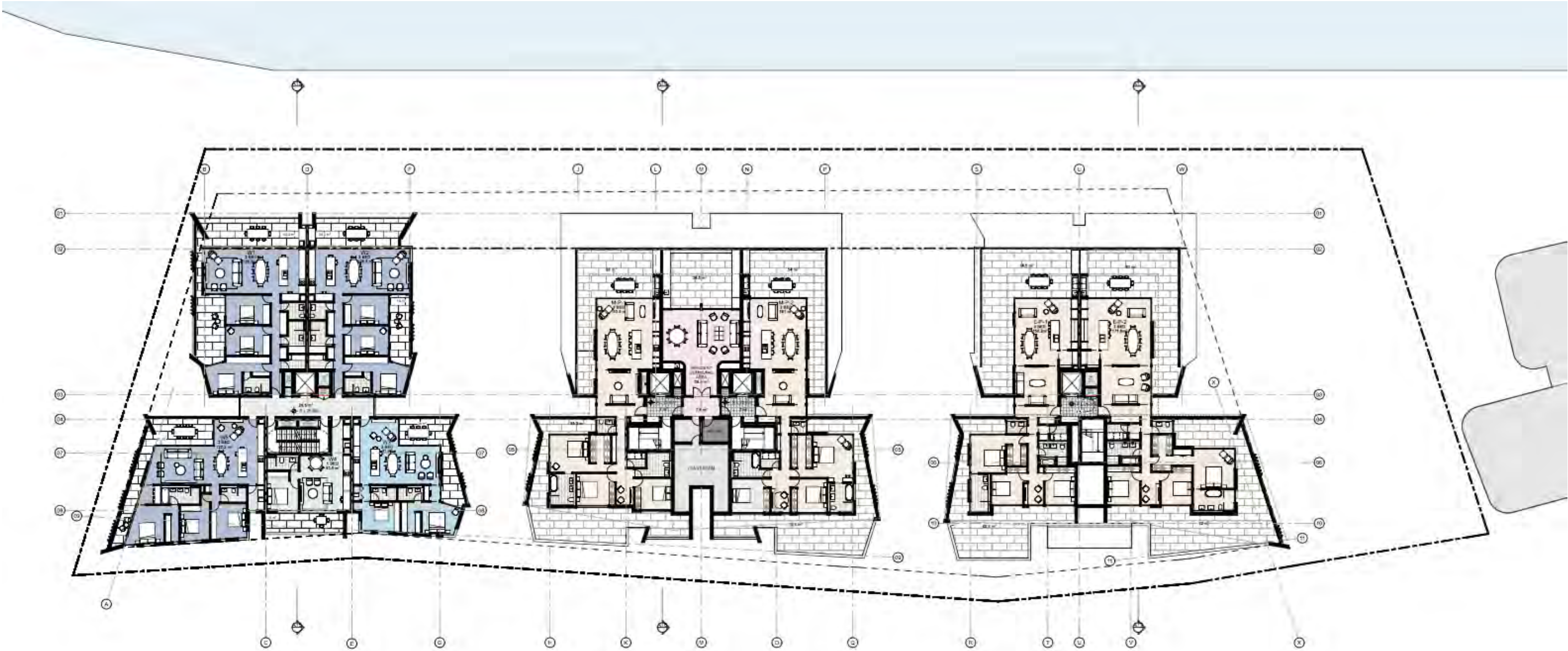




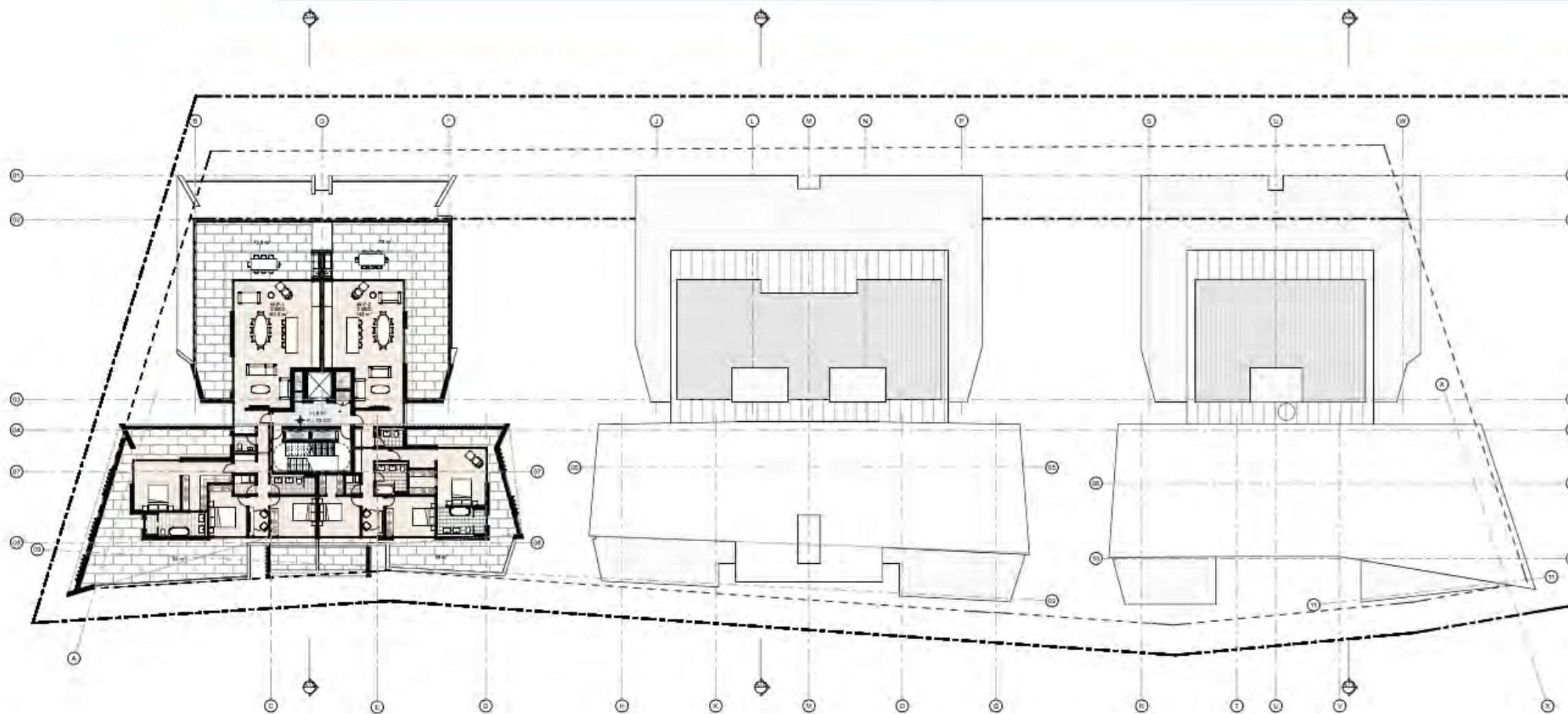
4.6 Revised Typical Floor Plan



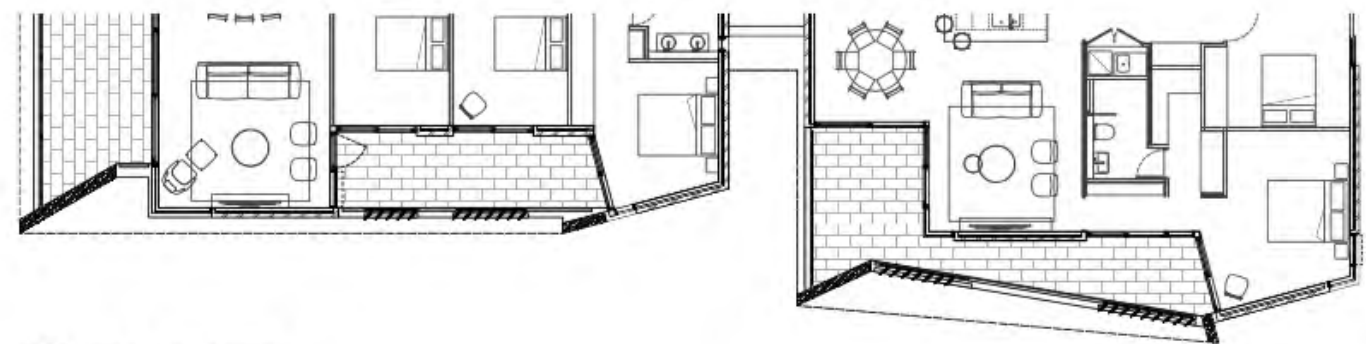
4.7 Revised L07 Floor Plan



4.7 Revised L08 / Roof Floor Plan



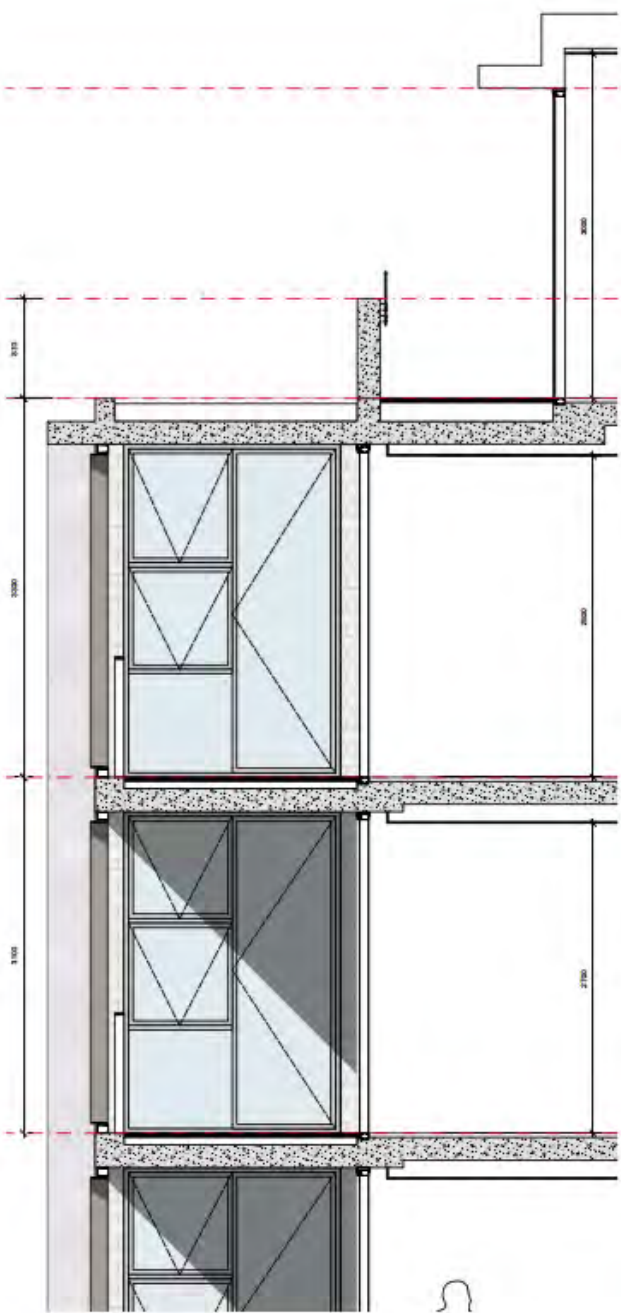
4.8 Detail Elevations



1 Detail Plan - Internal Perimeter
Scale: 1:75

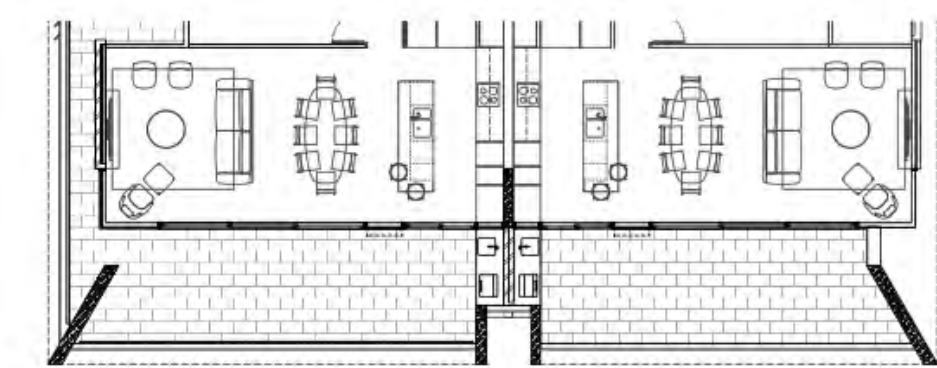


2 Detail Elevation
Scale: 1:75



3 Detail Section
Scale: 1:25

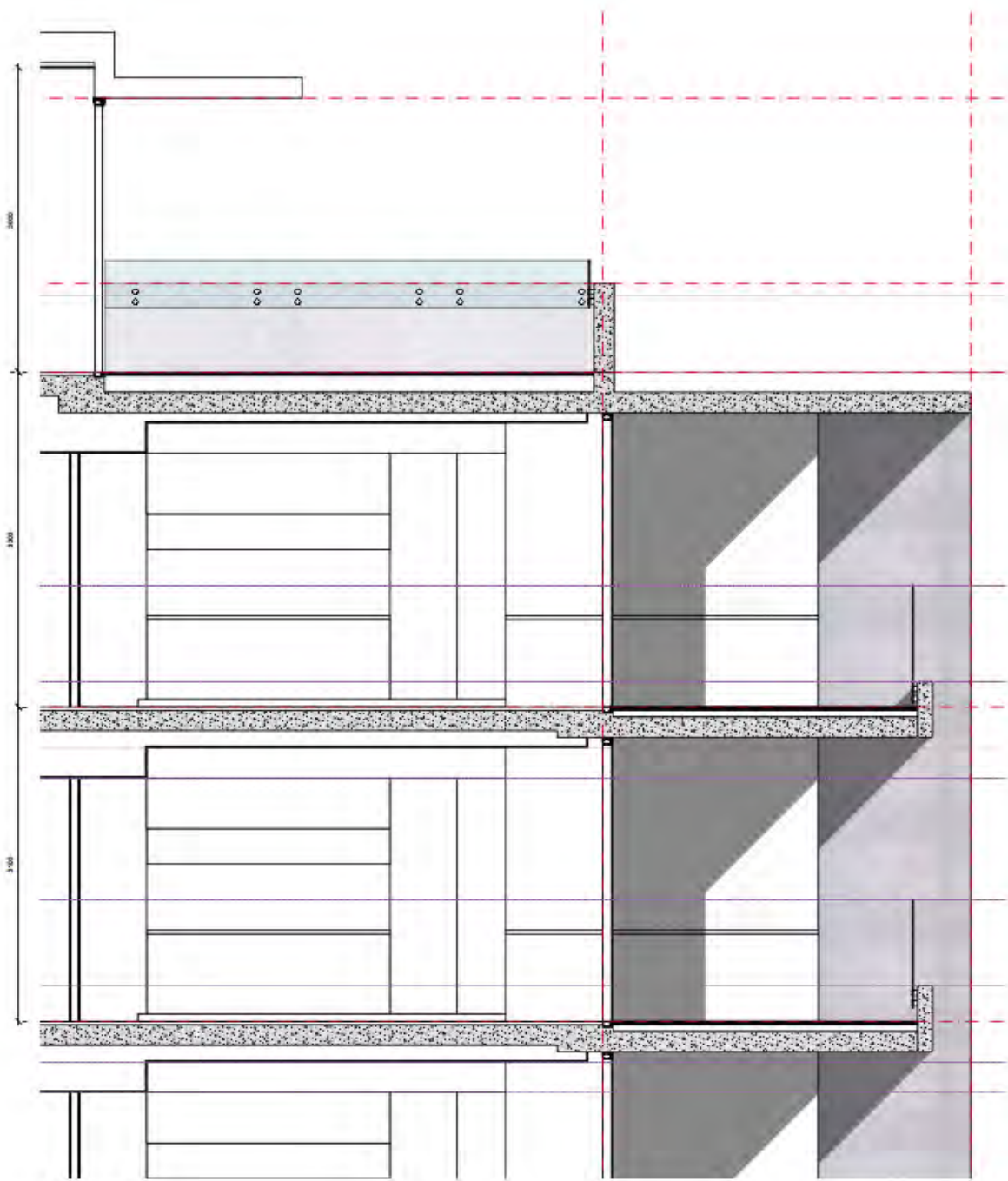
4.9 Detail Elevations



1 Detail Plan - Northern Perimeter
Scale: 1:75



2 Detail Elevation - Northern Perimeter
Scale: 1:75



3 Detail Section
Scale: 1:25

4.10 Perspective



4.11 Perspective



