

2.1 Site & Context

Site Constraints

Being an urban site next to a railway, the site has numerous constraints and challenges, the most significant of which are outlined here.

The Railway & Underground Tunnels

The railway runs the entire length of the site, affecting aspect and access, as well as generating noise.

Two Victoria Line sidings tunnels run directly beneath the northern part of the site. This affects loadbearing structural solutions around the tunnels and where buildings can be located. The diagram (right) illustrates an approach to building over the tunnels, which is complex. It is necessary to create a transfer structure at ground or basement level which bridges over the tunnels, this is then supported on piles threaded between the tunnel no-dig zones and on either side. This creates a structurally sound base to build from that does not place additional or undue loads on the existing tunnels.

Trees and Ecology

The street has a significant number of trees, of which many are considered to be of high value. The groups of trees, particularly along the northern edge, contribute positively to the overall character of the street.

A full tree survey has been carried out for the entire site and the classification of each tree is shown here. A range of tree species and quality of specimens is evident, with the best examples being London Plane trees.

Three key establishments of trees are identified on the site:

- Group 1 - The group of trees at the northern end of the site, adjacent to Carlton Mansions, including Plane, Cherry, Willow, maple and Alder trees
- Group 2 - The group of 7 Plane trees in front of the school building
- Group 3 - The group of 4 Plane trees in front of the depot

Where possible, we will be aiming to retain as many trees as possible, particularly the larger trees at the northern end of the site. However, given the various other constraints, in particular, building over the tunnels, some trees are proposed for removal.

Where trees are to be retained, they will be retained in meaningful groups, rather than as individuals.

A full Arboricultural Impact Assessment is being carried out in conjunction with this application to ensure that where trees are to be retained, that they can be successfully protected and maintained during construction and that root protection areas are respected.

Please refer to report prepared by Middlemarch Environmental.

Existing Buildings

There are two buildings that are proposed to be retained on site; the sub-station halfway along Somerleyton Road and Carlton Mansions at the northern end. The substation is within the ownership of London Underground and for operational reasons must remain in its current location.

Carlton Mansions is a four storey Victorian brick building, and is to be retained and refurbished.

There are also considerations made with respect to buildings outside the site boundary, with regard to Daylight/Sunlight.

Utilities, Noise and Access

Numerous utilities run along the length of the site and across the site. The railway line and roads (particularly at the northern end) are noise generating. Two key route must be retained; a vehicular route to the substation and a pedestrian route through Somerleyton Passage which is an important east-west pedestrian link between nearby communities.

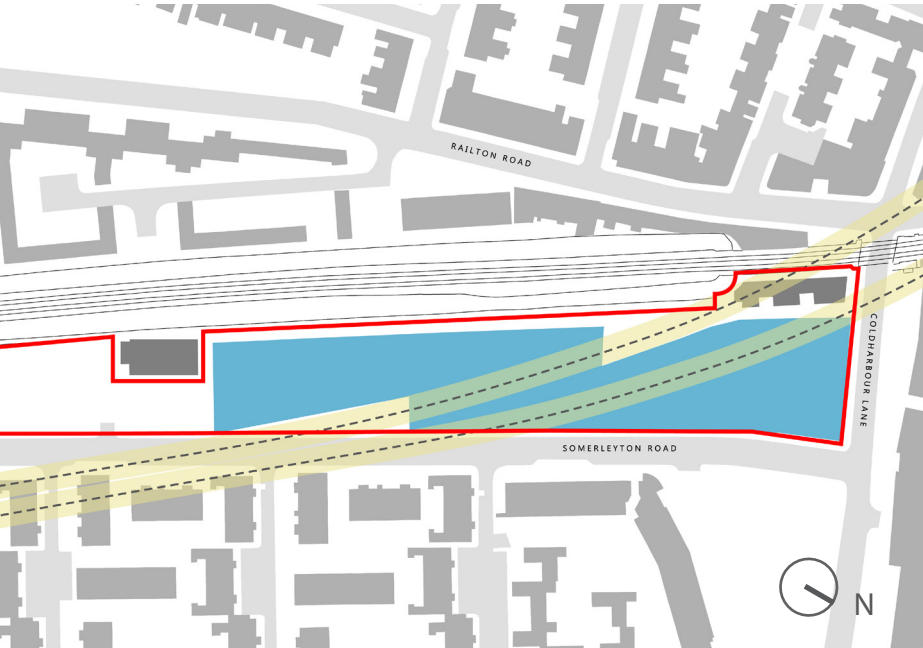
Site Boundary

The application boundary runs from the base of the embankment to the kerb line, along the entire length of Somerleyton Road, encompassing Carlton Mansions and Somerleyton Passage on the east side but excluding the substation.

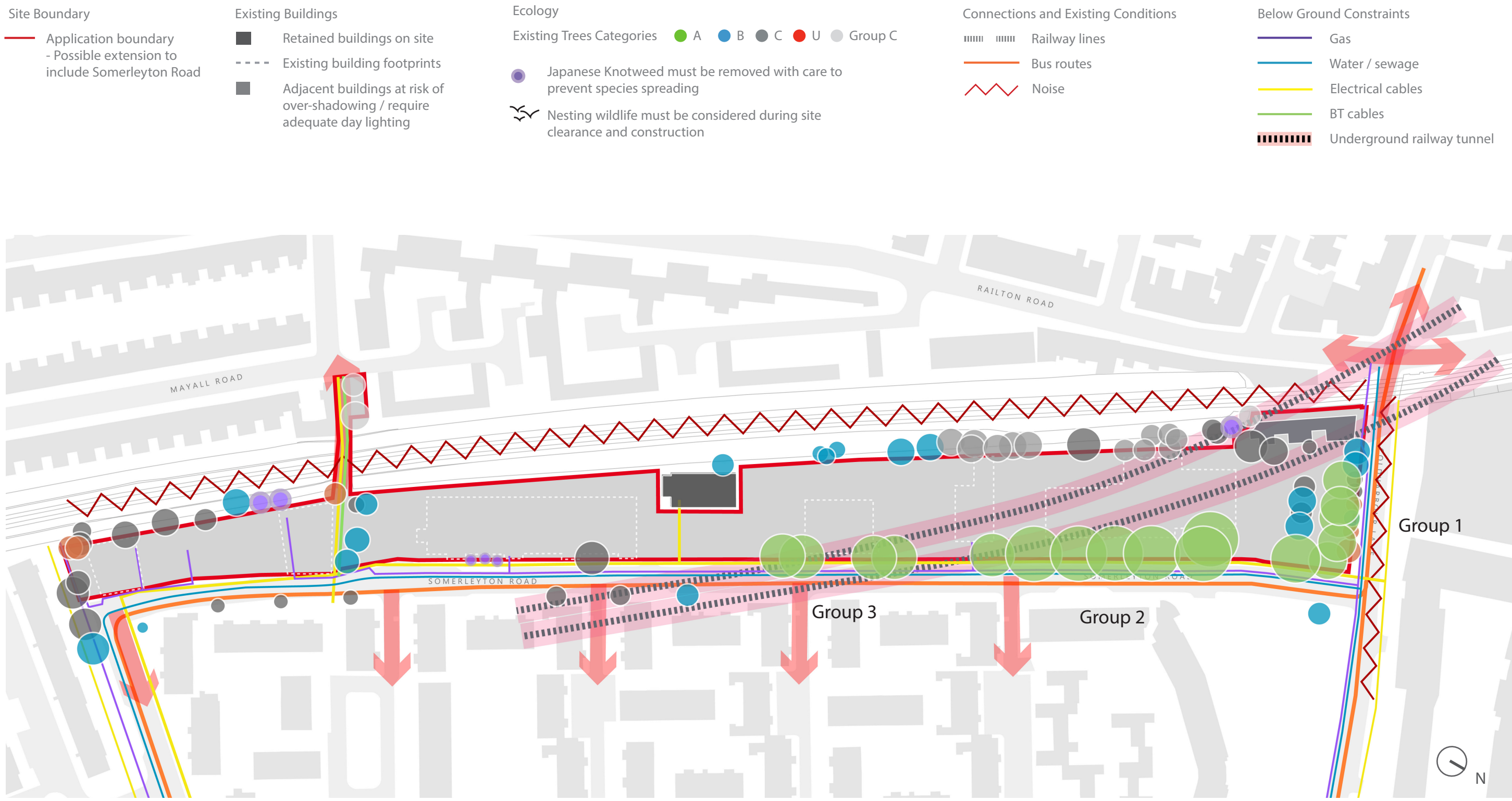
The scheme design has also considered improvements to areas of the public realm beyond the application boundary, chiefly Somerleyton Road itself, the western side of Somerleyton Passage. Suggested improvements are aspirational and are illustrated within the landscape section to suggest a long term vision for the street.



Avenue of mature Category A London Plane Trees



Structural Zones Plan
--- Underground tunnel
■ Transfer structure
■ Tunnel exclusion zone



2.2 The Proposal

The Master Plan

The masterplan has been designed to provide a set of buildings that deliver the brief within a massing envelope that is sensitive and appropriate to its local context.

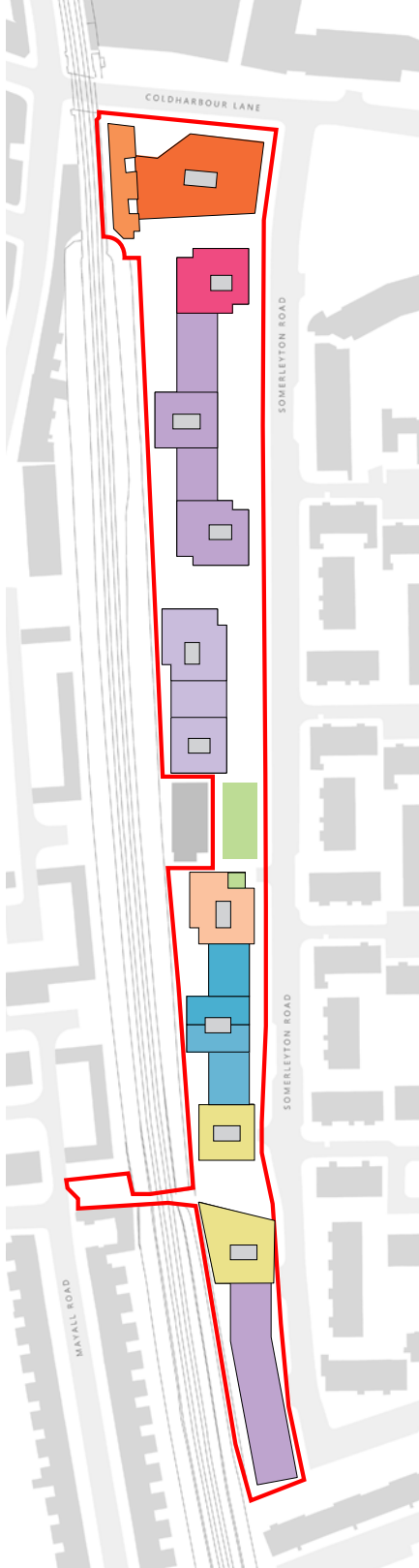
The masterplan comprises the following buildings;

- A six storey theatre and refurbished Carlton Mansions (A&B)
- A variable height residential building of maximum eleven storeys and employment and training uses (C)
- A 3-8 storey Extra Care building (D)
- A variable height residential and community-use building of maximum eight storeys (E)
- A 3-7 storey residential and retail building (F)

The diagram (right) illustrates the ground floor uses and how they have been distributed along the site. To the north is the theatre, cultural buildings and employment and training uses (potentially including chef's school), and to the south a cluster of community uses as well as retail outlets facing Somerleyton passage. Residential use at ground floor is either apartments with their front door addressing the street or communal lobbies to apartments above.

The massing diagram (right) illustrates the scale, heights and form and composition of the buildings that would comprise the masterplan and would go on to shape the preliminary brief to the block architects.

- Key
- Residential
 - Gym
 - Extra Care
 - Chef's School (preferred use)
 - Ovalhouse workspace
 - Ovalhouse theatre
 - Nursery + Community
 - Flexible space
 - Retail



Building Footprint



Building Massing

Block Architects

The five architect teams chosen and their respective blocks are as follows:

Block A – Zac Monro Architects – Creative Workspace (refurbishment of Carlton Mansions)

Block B – Foster Wilson Architects – Ovalhouse Theatre

Block C – Metropolitan Workshop – Homes & Chef School (preferred use)

Block D – Mae Architects – Extra Care Homes

Block E – Haworth Tompkins Architects – Homes, Nursery, Flexible Space, Gym Changing, Housing Office, & Retail Space

Block F – Metropolitan Workshop – Homes & Retail Space

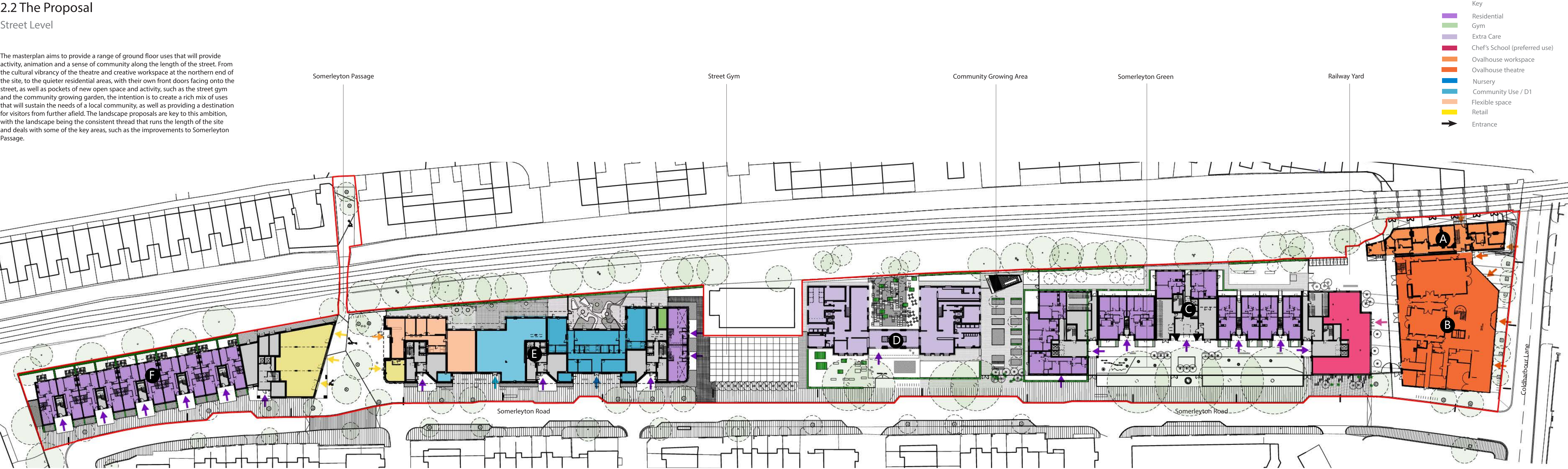


Aerial view of the Somerleyton Road Proposal as submitted for Planning

2.2 The Proposal

Street Level

The masterplan aims to provide a range of ground floor uses that will provide activity, animation and a sense of community along the length of the street. From the cultural vibrancy of the theatre and creative workspace at the northern end of the site, to the quieter residential areas, with their own front doors facing onto the street, as well as pockets of new open space and activity, such as the street gym and the community growing garden, the intention is to create a rich mix of uses that will sustain the needs of a local community, as well as providing a destination for visitors from further afield. The landscape proposals are key to this ambition, with the landscape being the consistent thread that runs the length of the site and deals with some of the key areas, such as the improvements to Somerleyton Passage.



Ground Floor Plan

2.2 The Proposal

Public Realm & Landscape

A series of new open spaces of different scales and uses will be provided as part of the proposals for Somerleyton Road. With a scheme of this size, provisions are being made for new Neighbourhood Amenity spaces along the street that will become exciting public spaces for both the new residents of Somerleyton Road and the surrounding neighbourhoods. The key spaces that are being developed are:

Application Boundary

The planning application is for the area shown in solid red. The dashed redline indicates the boundary to the aspirational wider public realm improvements

Somerleyton Passage

The passage will improve connections and feel safer with lighting and landscaping improvements, as well as active ground floor uses.

Streetscape

Widened pavements and streetscape improvements create a more pedestrian friendly environment. Shared surface raised tables at junctions will create new small plazas and improve the connections across the site.

Street Gym

The new Street Gym space will have a covered area for gym equipment along with landscaping and lighting. It will be locked and secured at night

Community Growing Area

A new community growing area shared by the residents of Somerleyton Road and the local community.

Somerleyton Green

Natural play elements for the resident's children.

Railway Yard

Primarily a hardscaped area for servicing the theatre this flexible space can also be used as a breakout area for both the chef's school and theatre.



Landscape Plan

2.2 The Proposal

Typical Upper Floor

The upper floor levels of the residential blocks are generally square in plan with a centralised core and 4 flats per floor. This allows all flats to have dual aspect and the short corridors encourage residents to get to know their neighbours.

Roof terraces between taller buildings elements provide communal amenity spaces for residents to meet, relax and play.



6th Floor Plan

- Key
- Residential
 - Extra Care
 - Private Amenity
 - Residential (communal areas)
 - Accessible Communal Rooftop
 - Biodiverse Roof