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# CANADA WATER MASTERPLAN

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Design and Access Statement  
Volume III Part 3 of 9  
Plot A1

May 2018

Allies and Morrison

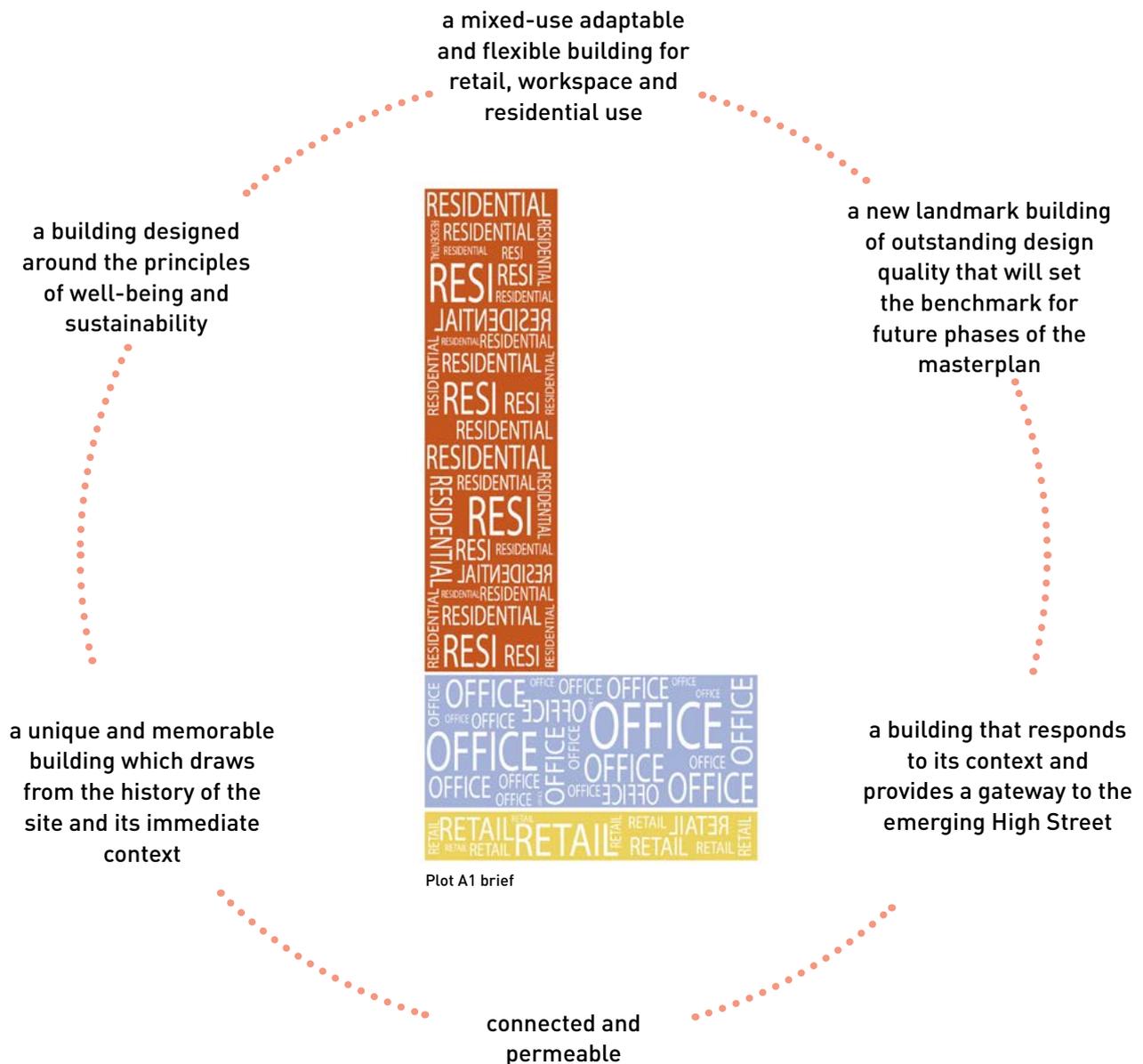




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# 3 DESIGN OBJECTIVES AND EVOLUTION

### 3.1 Design objectives Plot A1 will be...



**What will be here?**

- 973 m<sup>2</sup> GIA of retail, food & beverage
- 16 937 m<sup>2</sup> GIA of new workspaces
- 186 new homes.

**How can the aspirations be realised through design?**

- Develop a building with unique character, which at the same time alludes to the history of the site.
- Re-establish strong street edges to enhance the urban grain, address the various frontages and activate the public realm with dynamic street frontages.
- Create a public realm for the broader enjoyment, that interfaces with the building proposal and unites adjacent developments.
- Create a building with outstanding design quality, unique to Canada Water, and legible within the wider metropolitan context.
- Fragment the plot massing to respond to the adjacent urban grain, and create internal public routes linking the former Dock Offices with Canada Water.
- Provide the highest quality architectural design to set the standard for the emerging masterplan development.
- Provide a flexible structural framework to accommodate differing uses both now and in the future.
- Create flexible high-quality workspaces to facilitate numerous tenancy configurations.
- Design the envelope and footprint of the residential tower to allow for future changes in unit mix without affecting the overall building.
- Exceed current sustainability standards.
- Create spaces for the benefit of its surrounding community and with the end user needs at the centre of the design.

## 3.2 Design evolution and consultation

The overall design process up to planning submission has been well supported by five constructive pre-application meetings with Southwark Council, helping to direct the design at regular intervals. In parallel, a number of public consultation events and home visits were conducted to enable the integration of feedback from local residents and direct neighbours into the design development of the building.

The design as developed reflects the positive interaction during this process, with a building proposal that is innovative, yet reflective of the traditions and heritage of its context. This chapter summarises the pre-application meetings held ahead of the planning submission, and the reviews held with the Design Council / CABE and Historic England. A further chapter describes the public consultation process in more detail.

### Pre-application meetings with Southwark Council

The pre-application and design evolution process with Southwark Council can be summarised in the following six categories:

- Massing
- Urban context and setting
- Ground floor
- Lower office buildings articulation
- Tower articulation
- Residential parts

Each topic is described in more detail on the following pages.



## Massing

The massing of Plot A1 was discussed with Southwark Council early in the design stage and was refined in response to comments received from the Council and local residents.

### Family of buildings concept

The primary concept of creating a family of buildings, rather than one single form was established and presented early in the design process. This principle was positively received as it not only creates an interesting and unique building, but also addresses concerns over the scale of the building and its response to its existing and emerging contexts.

### Tower massing and location

Responding to concerns from the public over the height of the tower, this was carefully assessed together with Tavenor, the Townscape advisor. A number of key views from close and afar were modelled, tested and reviewed together with Southwark Council and agreed as appropriate for the location within Canada Water, and in relation to the wider views.

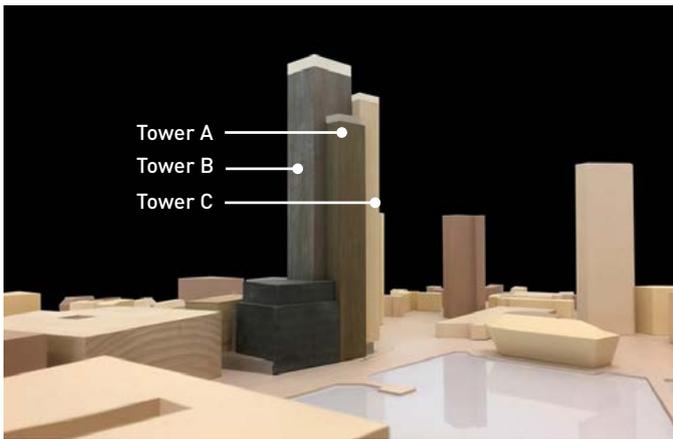
Following the design principle of a family of buildings, the tall element in Plot A1 is articulated as three distinct elements, stepped at different heights to help reducing its impact on the immediate neighbours. Furthermore, the tower has been placed in the north-east corner of the plot away from adjacent existing buildings. During the design process, this was further refined together with Southwark Council, and picking up comments received in public consultation events. See further detail below under tower articulation.

### Podium height

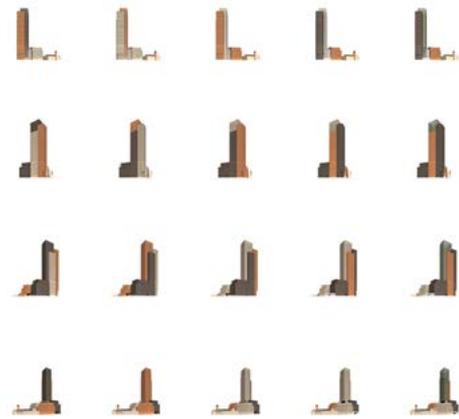
The podium height of Plot A1 is set out in line with the common massing of adjacent plots. This keeps the maximum height of the lower parts below 30m AOD as prescribed in the LVMF 5 viewing corridor.

### Adjacency to listed Former Dock Offices

Towards the West, the massing was revised to improve the building's relationship with the former Dock Offices and Orchard House. This was achieved by lowering the overall height, and in addition by creating setbacks on the upper floors that more harmoniously respond to the dock office softening the mass.



Massing proposal



Massing study



Family of buildings



Local cluster of towers



Dock edge - common podium height with Plot A2

## Urban context and setting

In its prominent location on the junction of Surrey Quays Road (SQR) and Deal Porters Way (DPW), and adjacent the Former Dock Offices, Plot A1 has a number of responsibilities for an adequate building response in this particular urban setting.

### Street frontage and street corridor

The current road corridor of SQR is very much fragmented, undefined and prioritised for vehicular use. The design for Plot A1 was developed to give this more clarity and strength, and to improve the quality of the footpath by generating adequate space for pedestrian use and to integrate cycle parking and landscape elements. The fragmentation of the low-rise parts of the proposed development picks up the existing pattern of the buildings along SQR further west.

### Adjacency to listed Former Dock Offices

The setback of Plot A1 from SQR was established by testing the distance from the street for a suitable footpath without losing the definition of the road corridor and maintaining adequate presence of the Former Dock Offices as seen from the East. In the proposed setting, the prominent position of the Former Dock Offices is maintained, while Plot A1 is set back from the street edge similar to the existing multi-residential buildings of Orchard House.

### Existing plane trees along Surrey Quays Road

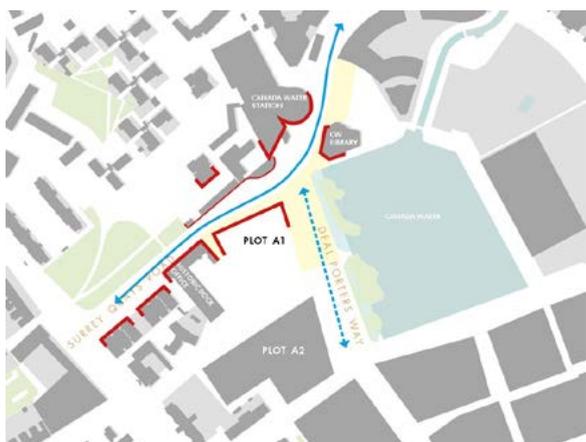
Part of this study included the ambition to retain three mature plane trees along the northern edge of Plot A1. This was reviewed with Southwark Council and confirmed with specialist input from the arboriculturalist to ensure tree roots would not be compromised by the building footprint.

### Adjacency to Orchard House and Columbia Point

Following consultation meetings with local residents, with feedback received in particular from residents of Orchard House and Columbia Point, the scheme was tested and reviewed in response to concerns and suggestions. The massing of the lower parts facing west was amended (as noted in the previous section). The fragmentation of Plot A1 was generally well received, as was the open character of the routes forming around the Former Dock Offices.

### Facades rhythm of Plot A1

The facade composition of the scheme was developed in conjunction with Plot A2 so that an elegantly composed frontage addresses the western side of the Dock forming a legible edge to the beginning of the New High Street. The façade grids were developed in a sequence starting from 12m in A2, 6m in A1 office building and narrower in the residential taller element, to create a granular and harmonious rhythm along the Eastern elevation.



Road corridor Surrey Quays Road



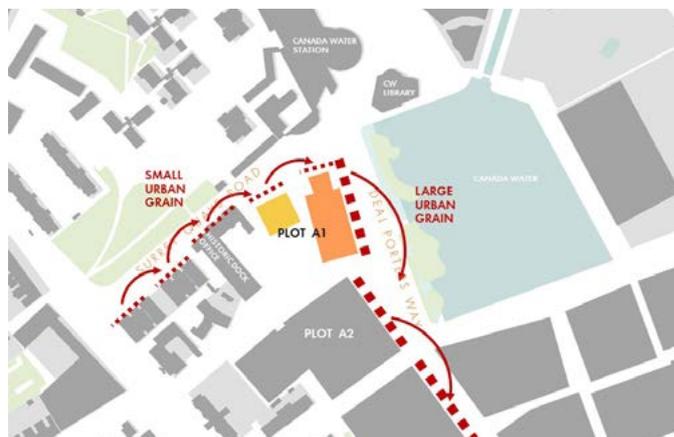
Plot A Public realm



Stepping of massing



High street facade rhythm



Urban context

## Ground floor

Plot A1 is a mixed-use development that caters for several functions on ground floor, all of these uses contribute to activating the public realm around the building.

### Active street frontage

A strong driver in the design of the ground floor was to generate high quality frontages with active uses, maximising well shaped retail spaces that offer flexible space planning allowing for a variety of uses. In its setting, Plot A1 has four main facades and no back frontage. It was therefore important to create a good distribution of uses along all edges and to achieve a high quality of architecture and details on all sides.

### Location of loading bay

In line with this, several possible locations for a loading bay entrance were presented and discussed with Southwark Council. The entrance shown in the submitted scheme was agreed as it causes the least impact to its surroundings, and as it provides direct vehicular access to Surrey Quays Road.

### Entrance Hall

The introduction of a semi-public entrance hall connecting the dock edge with the former Dock Offices courtyard enhances and improves the permeability through the building. The creation of an internal route was well received by Southwark Council and by the residents.

### Retail frontages articulation

Rather than providing fully glazed showcase windows, the ground floor fenestration of retail and entrances picks up the smaller scale crissall style windows system which are a feature of the overall façade and recall the glazing characteristic of the local warehouses. This creates a more intimate and human scale setting. Retail units distributed along the ground floor perimeter contribute to the different public realm spaces surrounding the building, such as the dock office courtyard, the pedestrian link between Plot A1 and A2, and Deal Porters Way.



Active street frontages along the future high street



Loading bay location



Main entrance hall



Retail facing Dock Office courtyard

### Lower office buildings articulation

The lower buildings with office use are articulated as solid brick buildings, which take reference from the warehouse typology in the area.

#### Three buildings, three bricks

The three buildings have been designed with three different brick colours to reinforce their identity. The brick colours take reference from the Former Dock Offices and the warehouses still present in Rotherhithe.

#### Screen between buildings

The three primary office brick buildings are connected by a glazed curtain wall façade screen which helps maintaining a distinct character for each of the three buildings while forming one single thermal envelop.

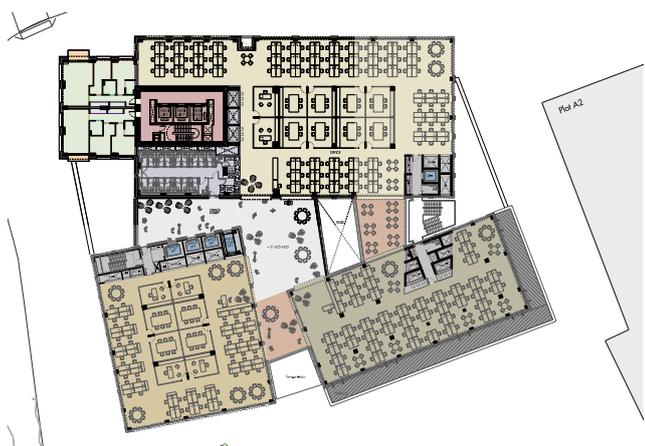
#### Details in facade (window openings, metalwork)

The architectural details around windows and openings were explored in detail, leading to references of old warehouses where more robust bricks are used on window reveals. In addition, metalwork details enhance the typical window bays without undermining the clear geometry of the primary brick facade grid. Where metal is used for louvre screens or blind panels, a pattern which will draw inspiration on the area will be developed.

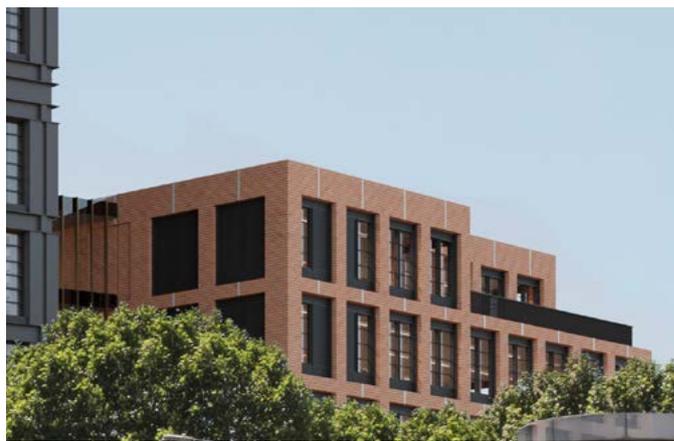
An external fire escape to the Southern end of the building has been developed as a reference to the warehouse still present in the Rotherhithe area.



Detail around windows



Three office buildings



Building setbacks



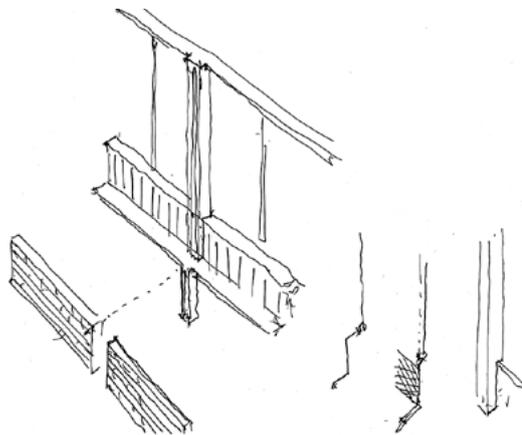
Double order facing East



Single order facing West



Office blocks facing West



Metalwork elements in facade

## Tower articulation

The residential parts are expressed as a group of three towers, further enhancing the principle idea of a family of buildings. The stepping and articulation of the towers were developed carefully in response to local concerns and feedback received from Southwark Council, Historic England and the Design Review Panel.

### Three towers

As noted previously, the idea of three towers was well received by Southwark Council. One of the key discussions held during the pre-application meetings was about exploring the character of the tower elements, and how to best express the contrast between the three parts, to avoid the risk of it merging visually, in particular from a far range view. This was achieved by overlaying two design principles, one relating to façade geometry, the other by use of colour. This is further explained below:

### Geometry of the facades

Three different grids were established for the facades. One horizontal, one vertical and one two-directional. With this geometry, each tower has its own particular language, following a common higher order.

### Colour of the facades

Following various colour studies, and in order to reinforce the identity of each of the three towers, three different tones of colour were selected for each of them: a dark grey, a red and a lighter tone. These tones of colour take reference from the heritage colours of the area.

### Materiality

A number of meetings were held over materiality. Initially shown with concrete panels, the design was felt too generic with no real connection to Canada Water and its heritage. A revised approach was established by picking up more of the industrial heritage of the site. The facade now expressed in metal makes reference to the industrial legacy of the area, which was well received by Southwark Council and the public.

### Tower B

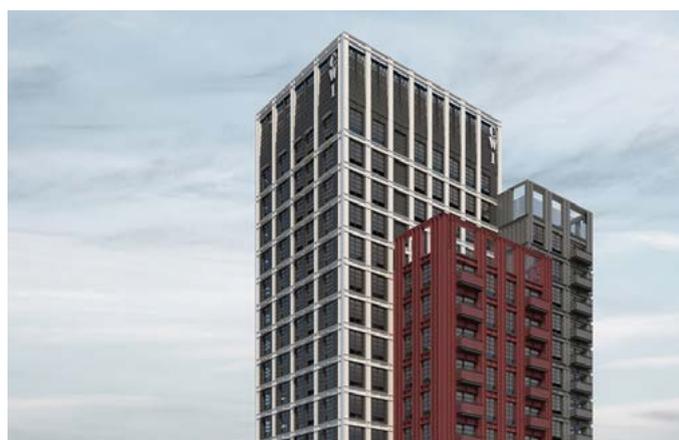
While the architectural treatment of the red and grey residential towers were positively received and referred to as refined and interesting, further discussions were held over the articulation of the light coloured tower (which is the more prominent of the three). Following several reviews, the design was taken back to first principles, and related back to the three grids in a more coherent overall expression.

### Top

Each tower has a slightly different crown, to which Southwark Council responded well. It was discussed that external lighting could have the potential to signify the Canada Water development in the wider context of London.

### Base

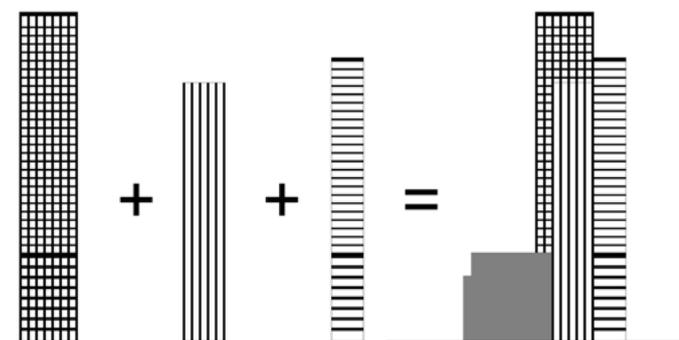
Each of the three towers land to ground floor ad has a strong base. At this interface, the materiality changes from metal to a more robust concrete finish.



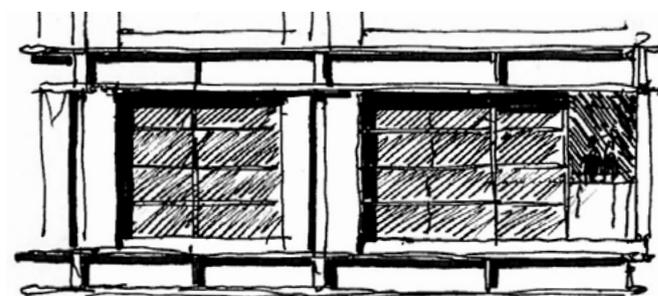
Top of the towers



Local reference (pump station)



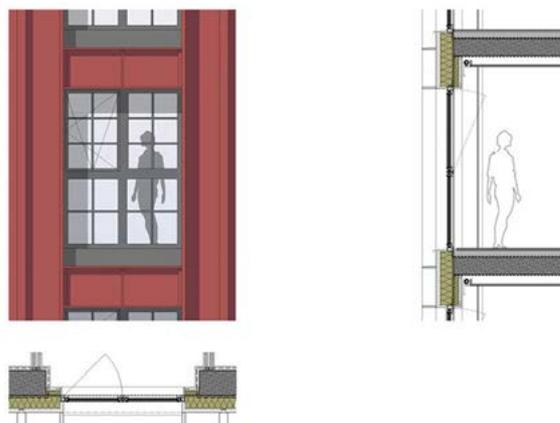
Geometry of the facades



Revised design articulation tower C



Base of tower A



Tower A bay study

## Residential parts

The design of the tower is driven by the internal organisation of the flats with an inside out design approach, ensuring best possible internal layouts for the end user. As part of this, large corner openings in the living spaces of the apartments maximise views from within apartments, with most units achieving a dual aspect.

### Private amenity strategy

The private amenity strategy was initially presented as a provision of oversized flats in conjunction with bolt on balconies, deep and shallow, depending on the exposure to wind. This was further refined to also offer loggias in areas with high wind loads and linked with the larger flats of the overall unit mix. In addition, and to make up a shortfall of the private amenity provision, external communal amenity areas in excess of Southwark Council requirements were developed on plot. This overall strategy was agreed with Southwark Council as an acceptable provision.

### Wind analysis

A driver for the external amenity provision was the aim to create balconies, that can be accessed throughout the year without excessive wind protection measures. A wind tunnel test analysis informed the design for the distribution of deep and shallow balconies and loggias, reviewing areas of high and low wind loads on the different facades and at different heights. As a result, all balconies can be designed with a maximum balustrade height of 1.1m, which retains good views out and also preserves a sense of connectivity between inside and outside.



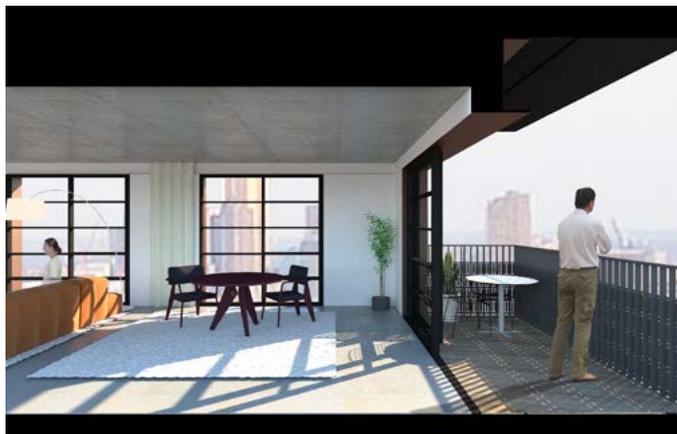
Typical residential floor



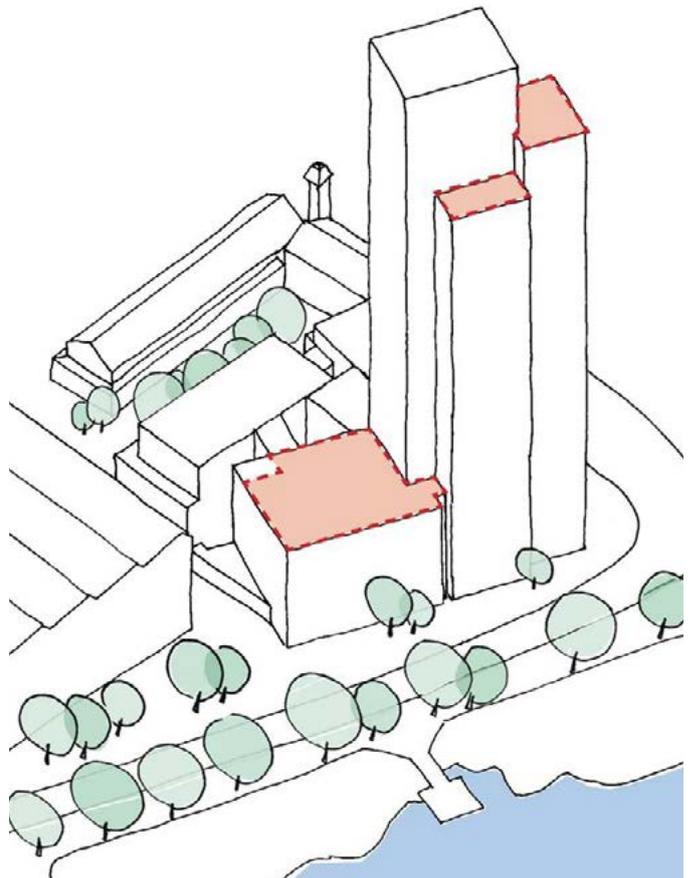
Communal amenity roof landscape



Tower C external balcony



Typical deep balcony section



Communal amenity terraces (shown in red)

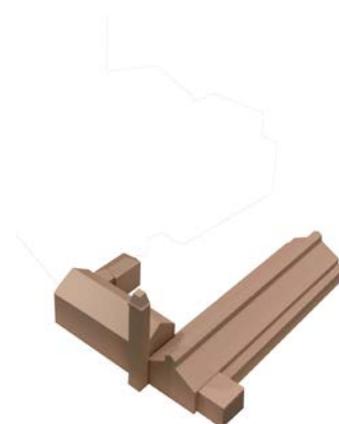
### Design Review Panel

A review was held by CABE and the Southwark Design Review Panel for the combined Zone A development plots (Plot A1, A2 and Landscape). The review included a walk-around of the development sites, concluding with project team presentations. The schemes overall were very well received, with acknowledgment that the local context has been considered in the proposals in orientation, massing and articulation.

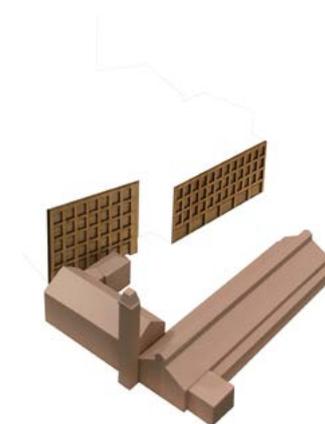
*'At present, we are highly supportive of the proposals which demonstrate a confident response to their context and a successful resolution of the form and massing, including for the proposed tall buildings.'*

The relationship between Plot A1 and the former Dock Offices was considered particularly successful in local views. The overall massing and location for a tower was regarded as successful, in particular in consideration of the LVMF5 view from Greenwich towards St Paul's cathedral.

*'The fine grain of the components of the tower and its varied materiality create a successful edge to this view corridor.'*



former Dock Offices

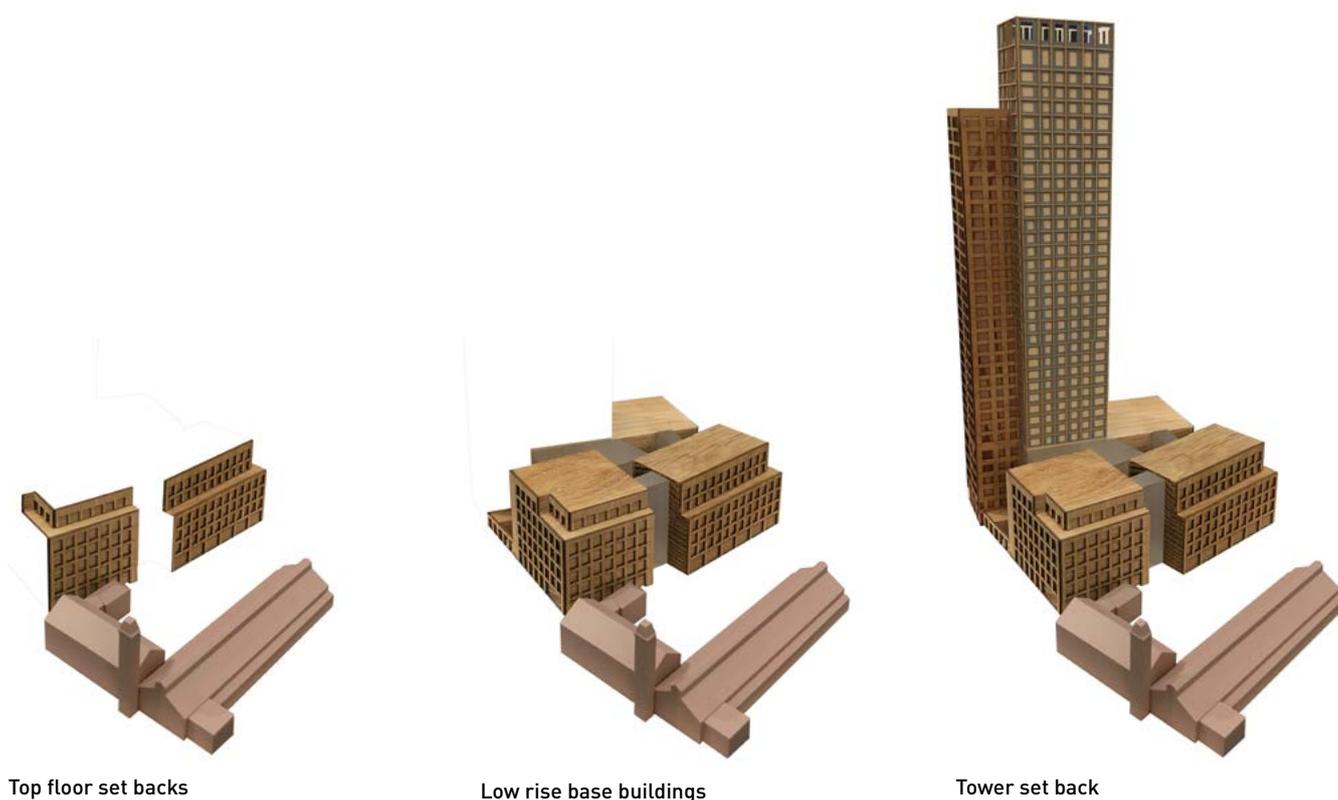


Low rise facades of A1

### Historic England presentation

Plot A1 was presented to Historic England (HE) in context of the Canada Water masterplan. HE recognised the opportunities of the scheme in improving the urban environment around Canada Water and reshaping the public realm, and the engagement with the surviving heritage assets in the area. Tall buildings as part of the local strategic planning policy were also acknowledged.

While HE suggested that the former Dock Offices would be challenged by the proposed massing of Plot A1, they equally acknowledged the potential of reconnecting the historic building with the surrounding townscape and improving the quality of its landscaping.







## 3.3 Public consultation

A number of public consultation events were held, differing in size and tailored to the audience. Exhibitions enabled the public to see Plot A1 on its own and in context of the Illustrative Masterplan, giving the public the opportunity to better understand the proposals and leave their comments for further consideration. In addition to this, home visits were arranged with individuals or groups specifically tailored to Plot A1.

### Consultation/community Involvement

The Masterplan has continued to evolve since its original conception in 2014 in response to ongoing public consultation.

### Visiting residents

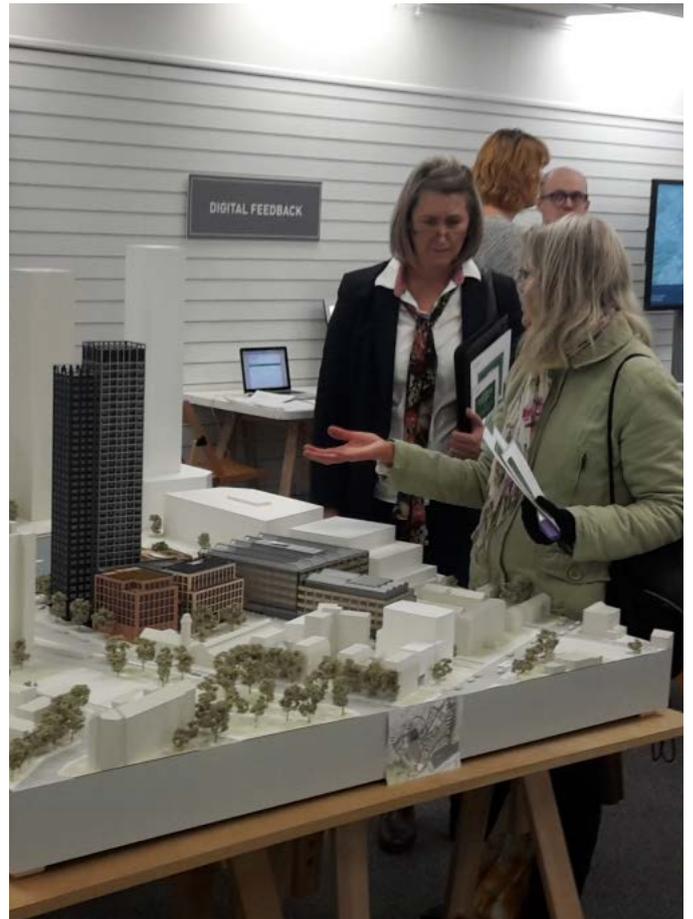
During 2017, several visits to meet local residents and immediate neighbours of Plot A1 have been conducted by the team to discuss proposals and understand a range of viewpoints.

### January 2018 consultation

An exhibition of the masterplan and three detailed plots A1, A2 and K1 was hosted by British Land in Surrey Quays shopping centre between 12 and 20 January. The team met with local residents to present the scheme and discuss their thoughts on the proposals. In addition to this, Plot A1 was presented on the evening of 17 January to the public.

For further information please refer to chapter 17: *Statement of Community Involvement* in the Masterplan Outline Application.







End of Part 3 of 9