ACUMEN
Designers & Architects

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
CHAPEL LANE, HUDDERSFIELD.

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INTRODUCTION

This design and access statement has been prepared by Acumen Designers & Architects for the erection of a new student accommodation featuring 31 one-bedroom studio apartments.

This document has been produced to outline the design process which has led to the proposal in its current form. This document should be read in conjunction with the supporting reports and documents submitted as part of the application to ensure the proposal can be assessed on its individual merits.

This document outlines the principal concepts and design principles which have been applied in the design evolution.

This document will outline the client's needs and aspirations, site context and a summary of the design evolution. The document will summarize the key environmental and contextual design factors.

This statement has been produced and is submitted in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England)
(Amendment) Order 2015, CABE Design & Access Guidance, and DCLG Guidance on information requirements and validation.

A pre application enquiry was submitted to Kirklees Council in relation to the development of this site in August 2024 (2024/20999). The proposed development that is the subject of this planning application addresses the concerns identified by the council.

CONTEXT

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

The site is located on Chapel Lane, a side street off and adjacent to the A629 (Wakefield Road) which is the main road into Huddersfield Town Centre. The site is located at OS Grid Reference: SE 15566 16322.

The site sits approximately 1 mile to the west of Town Centre center. Huddersfield is known for its industrial past, especially in textiles, and its impressive Victorian architecture. It is home to the University of Huddersfield and the Huddersfield Giants and football club. The town blends history, education and sport with beautiful countryside nearby, it offers a mix of city life and natural charm.

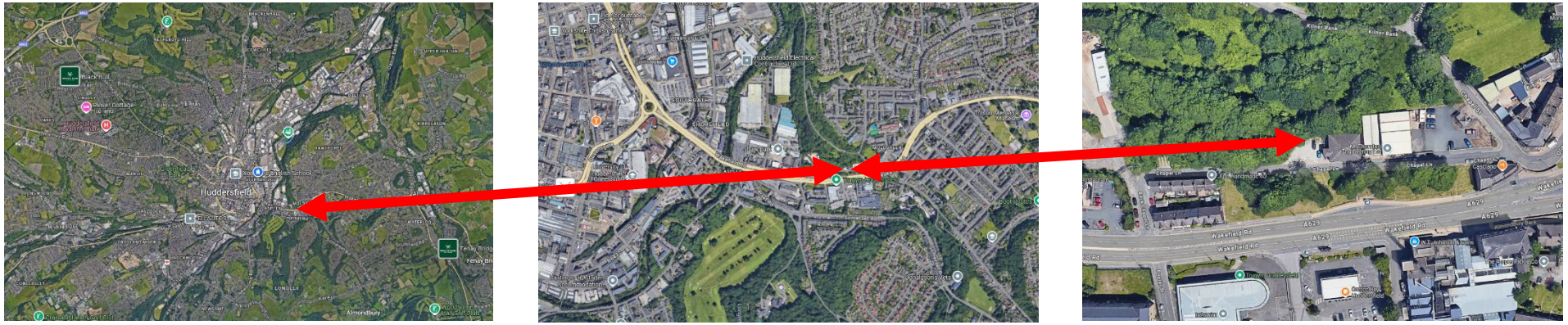


Fig.1 location of site. Satellite images from Google Earth

SURROUNDING LAND USE

Below shows the land uses within the vicinity of the site. The map highlights buildings and their current ground floor uses. The site is surrounded by a mixture of commercial premises such as gyms and coffee shops aswell as residential for both families and students.

North
No buildings use, land is urban green space with mature trees and vegetation.

South
Predominantly commercial use, including industrial warehouses/factories, popular coffee shops and gym and mixed residential living.

West
Residential living space and Wakefield Road retail park include commercial businesses such as pizza hut and other businesses.

East
Mainly commercial uses such as takeaways, hairdressers and electronic stores.



Fig 2. Land use diagram using Google Earth

CONNECTIVITY

The proposed student accommodation on Chapel Lane, Wakefield Road, offers excellent transport links both locally and further afield. During the weekdays, the accommodation will be occupied by students and professionals who need easy access to the university and other local amenities in the surrounding and town centre.

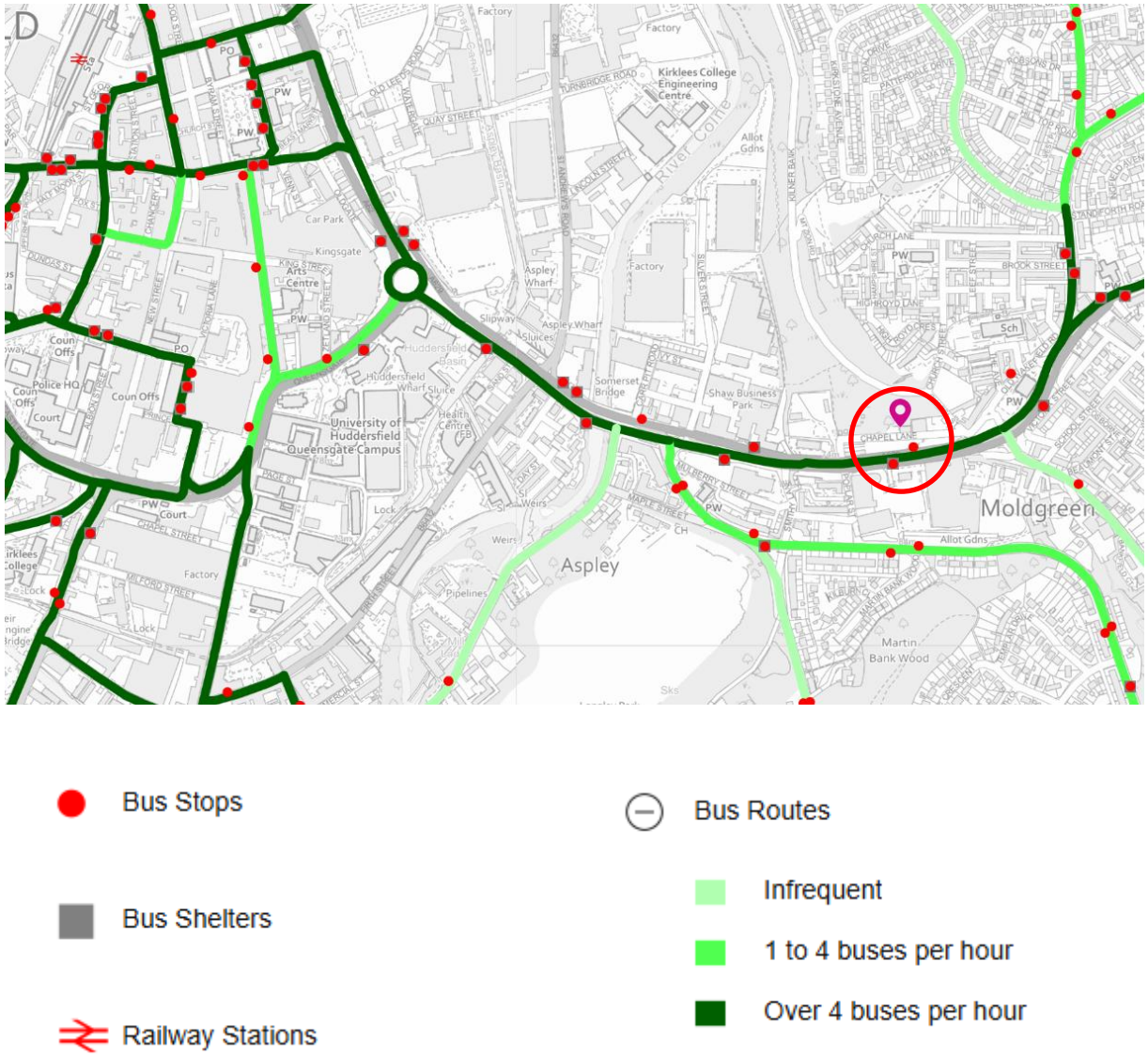
The site is conveniently located for students for those travelling on foot or by bike, also with key transport hubs such as Huddersfield Railway Station and the town centre within a 15-minute walk. From these stations, you could also easily reach destinations like Leeds, Manchester, as well as nearby towns and cities for visiting.

For road access, the site is well-connected, with direct routes to the A62 and A640, leading to the motorway network. There's a bus stop within a minute walk outside the building onto Wakefield Road serving routes with over 4 buses per hour into the town centre, bus station and beyond. These services make it easy to navigate the area without needing a car. Furthermore, Wakefield Road also has a core walk cycle route where you often seen many cyclists using.

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

There are no public rights of way through the application site. The site was formerly occupied by a warehouse building and has no historic public right through.

Fig 3. Diagram showing bus stops and routes and frequency from KC Kompass.



CONNECTIVITY

Cars will enter the site from the East using Chapel Lane (figure 4 shows access shown in blue and black arrows showing flow of traffic). Cars can enter the premises as shown for drop off only.

Cars will then exit the site to the West back onto Wakefield Road. (shown in Green).

Accommodation occupants and other Pedestrians have a variety of routes too and from the site. (shown in orange) There are clear pavements too and from the site including a shortcut through the grass banking via some steps. Occupants have 3 different access points in the building.

The site and surrounding roads and paths give a great existing natural flow to occupants, pedestrians and road users. There is also a bus stop directly at the end of the path through the grass banking.

Green – Wakefield Road
Blue - Access into site
Orange - Access to and
from the site via foot or bike

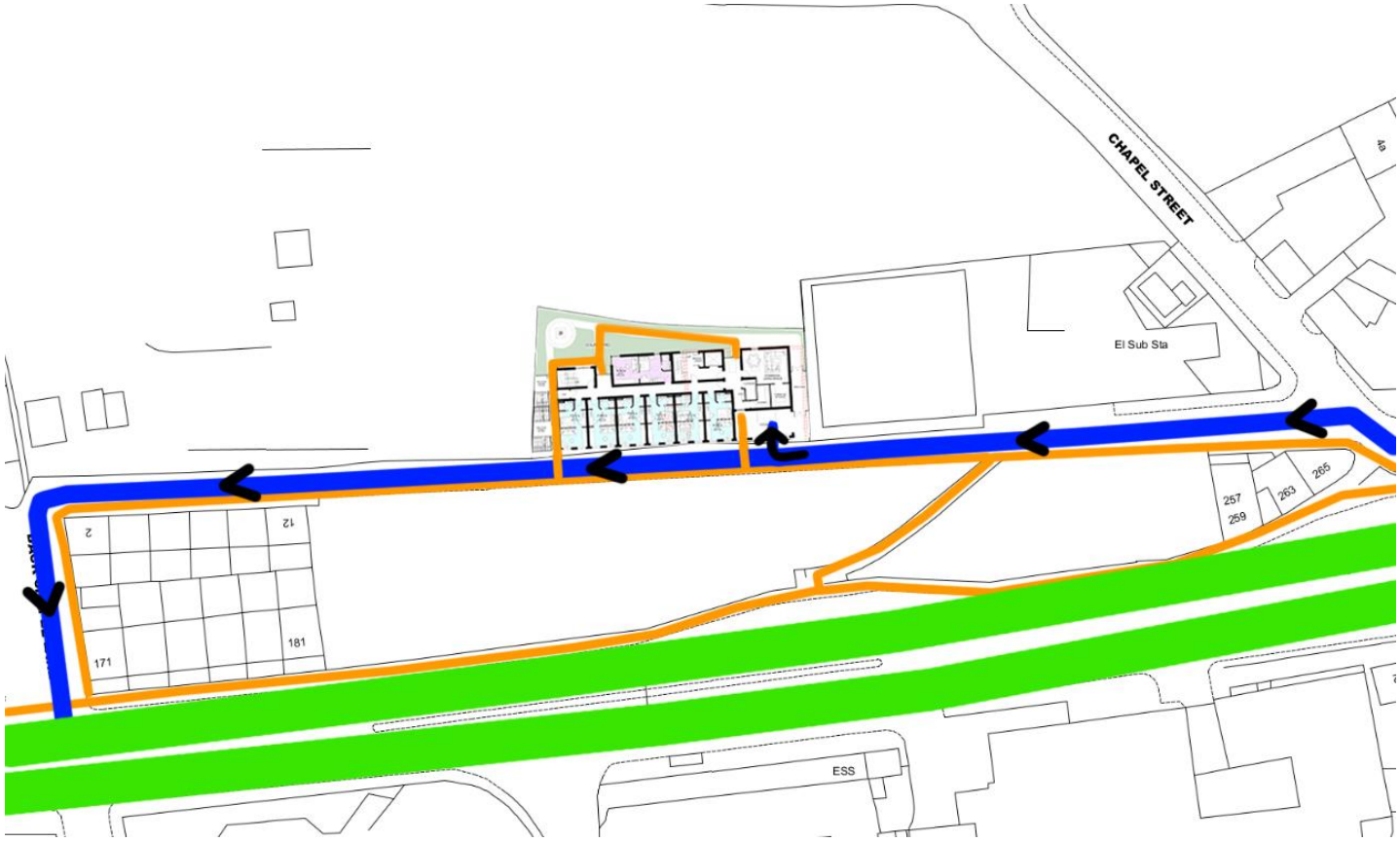


Fig 4. Diagram showing flow of traffic, pedestrian routes and bike routes using OS map.

EXISTING SITE APPRAISAL

The site currently has an existing building occupying approximately a third of the site with the rest being parking, overgrown trees and shrubs.

The existing building is to be demolished.

The site is relatively flat off chapel lane which itself is a flat road with no major gradients. Towards the back of the site, however, the land begins to bank upwards towards Kilner Bank. This banking is full of vegetation.

The site is relatively secluded in terms of immediate existing surrounding buildings but within the vicinity there are residential homes built out of stone, brick and there are some warehouses using cladding, brick and stone. There are couple of modern buildings adjacent to the site across the road such as a coffee shop and gym that use cladding, glass, brick and render.

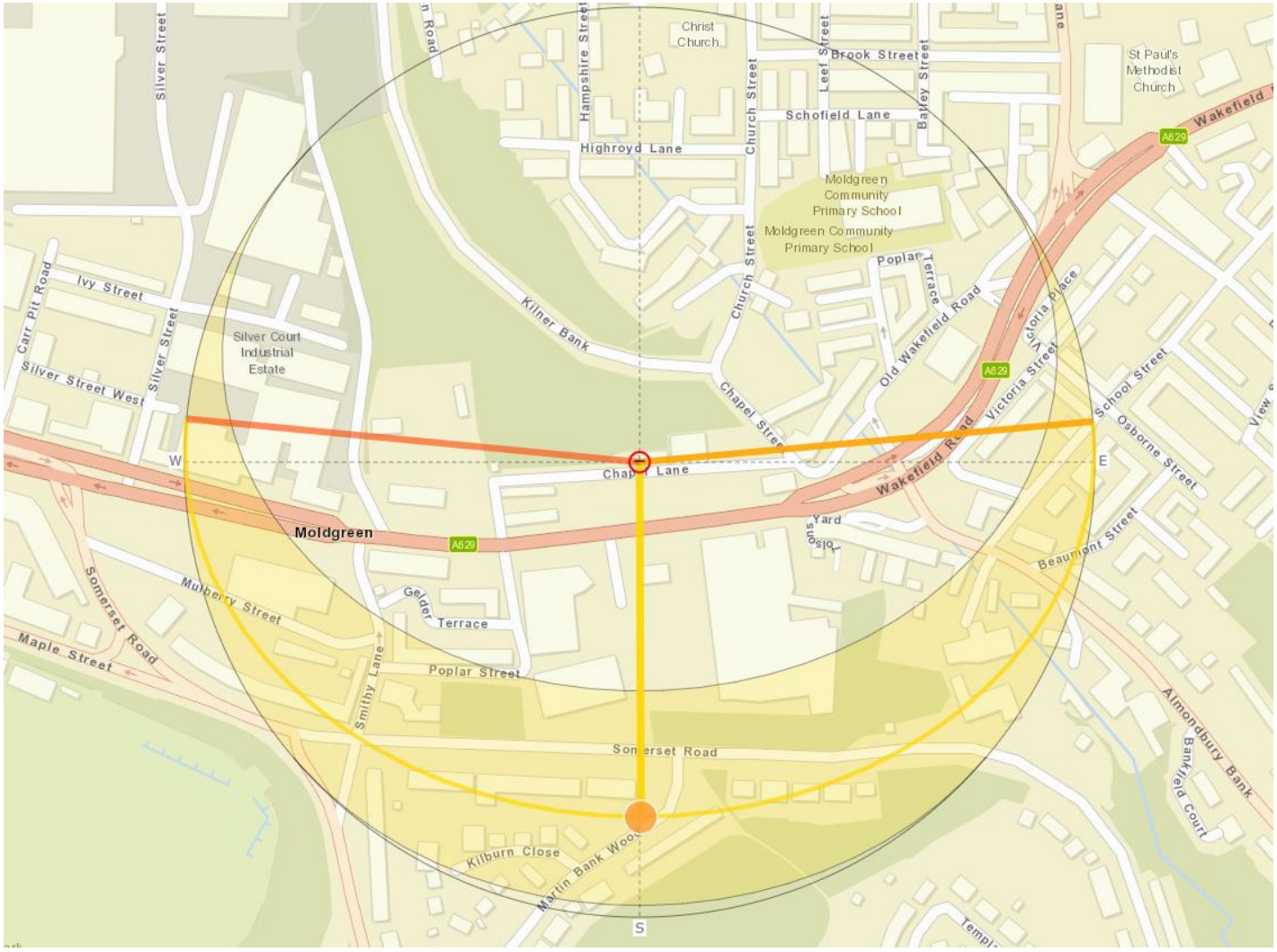
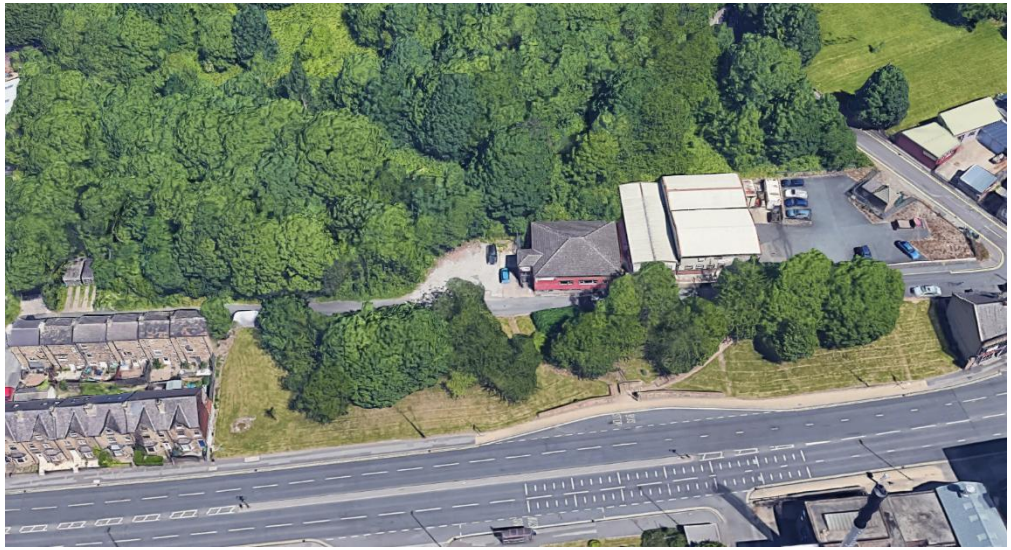


Fig 5. Diagram showing sun path for the site



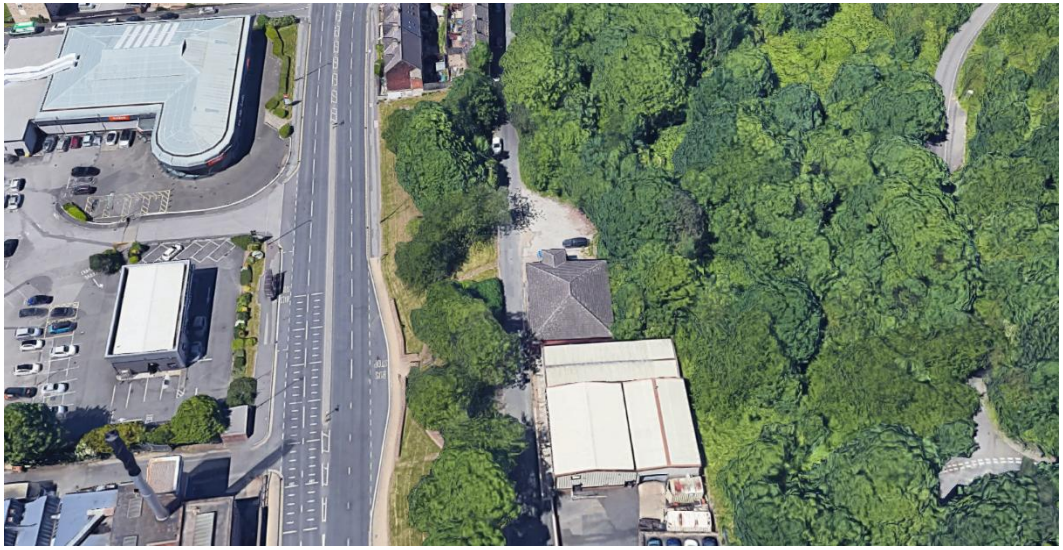






Fig 6,7,8,9. 3D images from google maps of site as existing

EXISTING SITE

To the right shows the site in its current form from the surrounding context. These images were taken in the summer of 2024.

The top left view is from chapel lane looking Northeast,

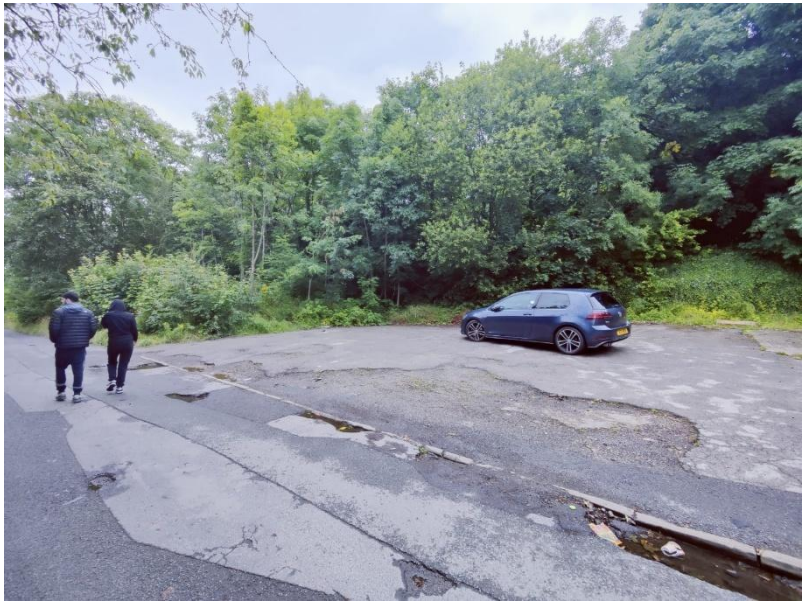
The top right view is from Chapel Lane looking north towards the back of the site (banking)

The bottom left view shows the Northwest view from Chapel Lane.

The bottom right view is from google maps looking South towards Wakefield Road.









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Fig 10,11,12,13. Images of the site, (authors own)

SURROUNDING

BUILDING HEIGHTS

The surrounding buildings are of varying scales. There is no pattern to the location of the taller buildings some are fronting onto major roads, with smaller warehouses and residential units to the rear and some taller buildings are off the main roads with smaller residential properties fronting the main road.

The diagram illustrates that taller buildings with 3 or 4 or more floors are not uncommon in the area, especially for residential accommodation.

4 Floors or more

3 Floors

2 Floors or less

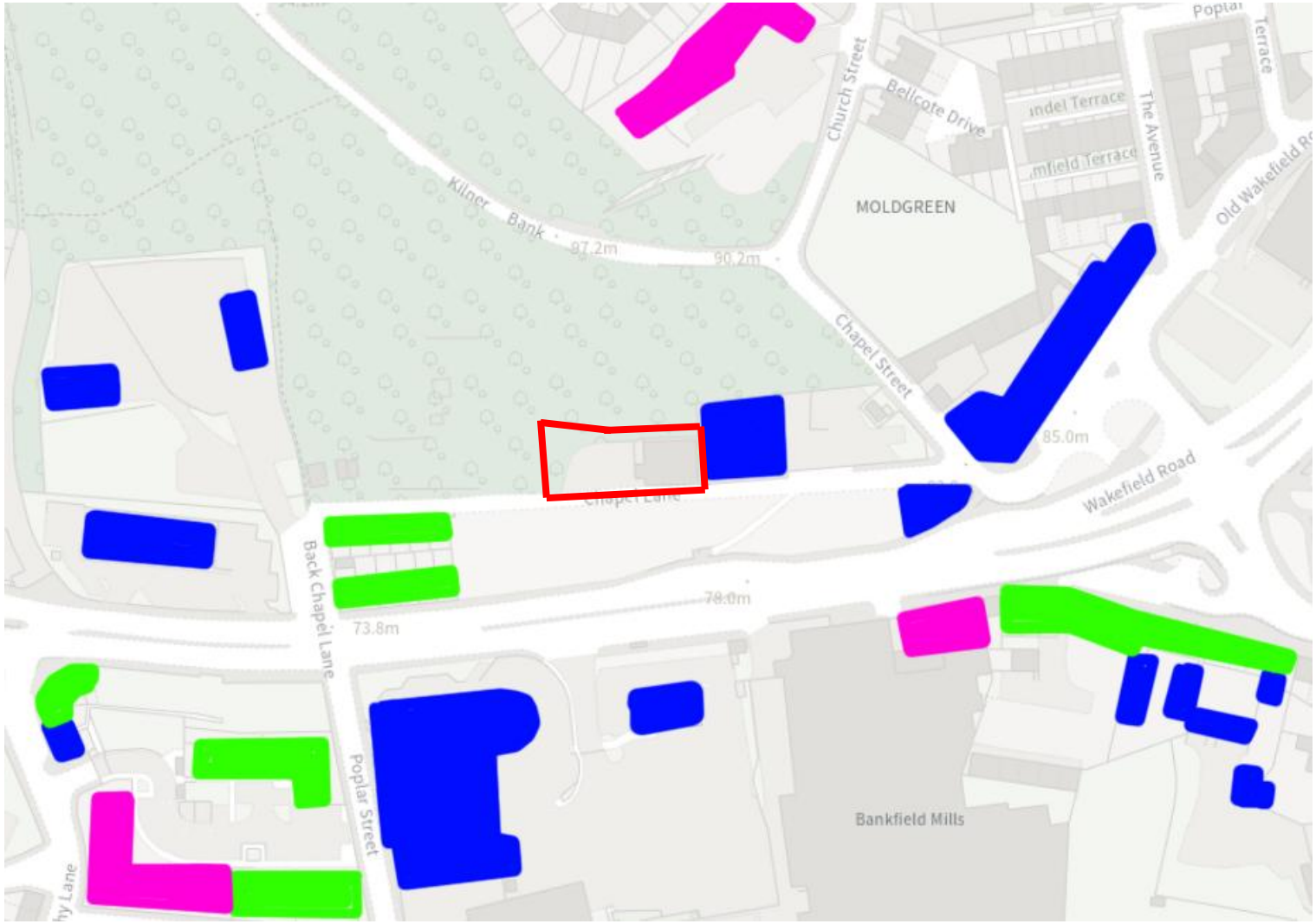


Fig 14. Diagram shows building height using OS map

PLANNING POLICY

NPPF

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It states that "The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development ". This then gives rise to specific guidance for local planning authorities when discharging their duty as local decision makers, namely:

- "Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way
- "They [Local Planning Authorities] should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfiled registers and permission in principle and work pro-actively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible

The NPPF requires that the planning system should drive and support sustainable economic development. The NPPF establishes the Government's commitment to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth and that "**significant weight** should be placed on the need to **support economic growth** and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. "

The NPPF states that good design is a key element of sustainable development: "In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote **high levels of sustainability** or help **raise** the **standard** of design more generally in an **area**, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND FLOODING

- The NPPF identifies the key role the planning system has in supporting the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, helping to 'minimise vulnerability and improve resilience. When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
- Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- The NPPF calls upon the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.
- When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged.
- The decisions of local planning authorities should aim to "prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at an unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability."

THE PROPOSAL

Site Context & Surroundings

The application site is located on Chapel Lane, within proximity to Huddersfield town centre and the University of Huddersfield campus. The immediate area is a blend of light industrial, residential, and educational uses, with a mixture of building scales and forms.

The site is currently occupied by an outdated engineering building and ancillary structures, which are to be demolished as part of this proposal. Mature trees and established green spaces surround parts of the site boundary, contributing to the character of the area. These existing landscape features will be retained as part of the scheme.

The site's rear boundary opens out towards further landscaped green space.

Site Layout

The proposed development is arranged to maximize the site's footprint efficiently while respecting neighboring buildings and green edges. The layout consists of two primary design styles:

- **Front**
  Facing Chapel Lane, designed to reflect a traditional industrial mill aesthetic, (similar to the mill across the road) and referencing Huddersfield's architectural heritage.
- **Rear**
  A contemporary interpretation with modern lines, softened by the use of stone cladding and generous glazing.

The arrangement creates a clear public frontage to Chapel Lane while providing a semi-private landscaped courtyard and amenity space to the rear, including a firepit seating area and pedestrian pathways.

A dedicated car drop-off area is included at the front, alongside secure cycle storage and refuse/recycling provision.





Fig 15, 16. Visual representations of proposal (authors own)

Amount, Use & Accommodation Schedule

The proposal comprises **31 self-contained student studios,** supported by shared communal spaces to encourage social interaction.
The accommodation is split as follows:

Unit Type	Size	Quantity
Type A	21m²	18 units
Type B	26-27m²	8 units
Type C	26m²	2 units
Type D	26m²	3 units

Each studio is fully en-suite, with integrated study areas and kitchenette facilities. Additional communal amenities333333333 include:

- A large communal kitchen and lounge
- Laundry facilities
- External green spaces and seating areas
- Secure cycle store and bin store

Scale, Massing & Orientation

The front block presents a 3-storey elevation to Chapel Lane, rising to 4 storeys with roof accommodation, in keeping with the historic mill scale of the area. The massing is broken into clear vertical bays to reduce bulk and provide visual interest.

The rear block adopts a modern, rectilinear form across 4 storeys, with deep vertical glazing panels and recessed entrance zones. The stepped massing ensures the building sits comfortably within its green context without being too overwhelming.

The orientation optimises natural light to the studio rooms and communal areas, while overlooking is carefully managed through building positioning and landscaping buffers.





Fig 17, 18. Visual representations of proposal (authors own)

Architectural Appearance & Materials

The design draws inspiration from Huddersfield's historic industrial character, interpreted in a contemporary manner. Key material choices include:

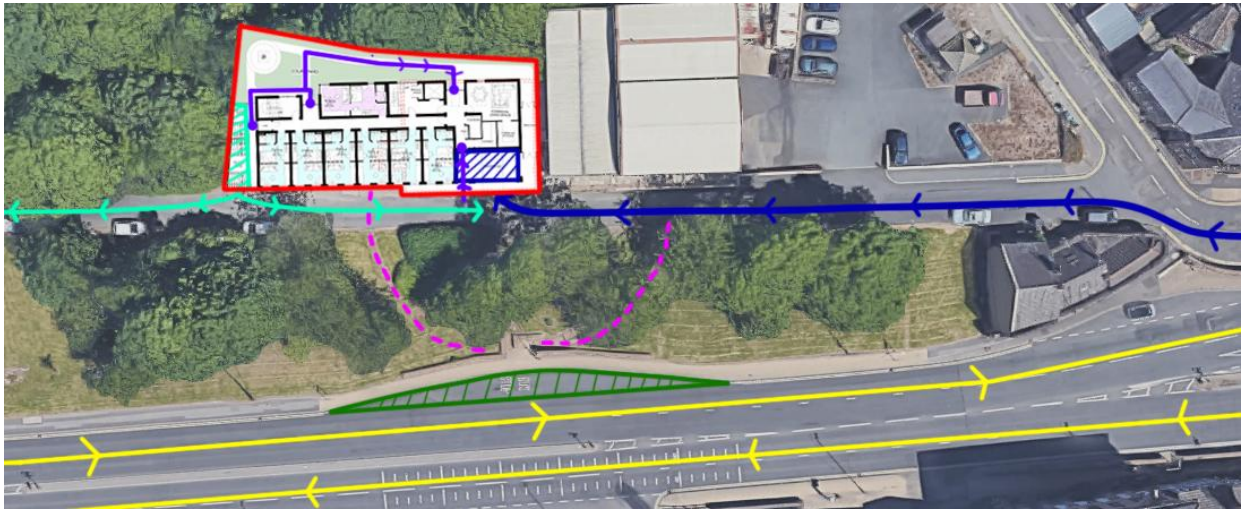
- **Natural stone cladding** to reflect local traditional buildings
- **A mixture of dark and white framed windows** and glazing to provide a modern contrast
- **Slate-style pitched roof** with roof lights to the front block
- **Flat roof and clean lines** to the rear block, modernising the rear elevation
- **Landscaping** incorporating lawned areas, planting beds, retained mature trees, and new tree planting

These materials have been carefully selected to integrate sensitively within the surrounding townscape while delivering a contemporary, high-quality student living environment. The linear pattern of the front façade of the building comes from the industrial architecture that is present around the area. They were most commonly built on a regular structural grid with repeating elements. The elevations which came because of this were often linear and regularly structured.



Fig 19. Visual representations of proposal (authors own)

Fig 20. Diagram showing access and movement using google maps



Access & Movement

Vehicular access is taken directly from Chapel Lane, with a car drop-off/pick-up area located at the front of the site. No permanent parking is provided to encourage sustainable travel habits in line with student needs and the site's excellent proximity to public transport links.

Secure pedestrian and cycle access is provided throughout, with clear, legible routes connecting all parts of the site and encouraging active travel.

All accommodation and communal areas are designed to meet accessibility standards, with level access provided to all entrances and circulation spaces.

Landscaping & Green Space

The proposal retains the majority of existing mature trees along the site edges, reinforcing the site's green character. New planting beds, lawns, and low-level shrubs will be introduced to soften building edges and enhance biodiversity.

The rear courtyard area offers a shared amenity space for students, including informal seating and a communal firepit area, promoting student wellbeing and social engagement.

External lighting will be discreet and pedestrian-focused to minimise light spill and preserve residential amenity.



Fig 21. Visual representations of proposal (authors own)

CONCLUSION

In summary, this proposal represents a carefully considered response to the site's context, ensuring that the development integrates seamlessly with its surroundings while enhancing the character of the area. The layout has been designed to maximize functionality of the existing site by creating a well-balanced scheme that respects both the existing built environment and future occupants' needs.

The proposed use and accommodation provide a practical and high-quality living environment, responding to local housing demands without compromising the integrity of the site. Thoughtful attention has been given to scale and massing, ensuring the development remains in keeping with its surroundings while contributing positively to the streetscape.

Materials and appearance have been chosen to complement the local vernacular, blending traditional elements with contemporary design principles to achieve a visually appealing and durable finish.

Overall, the scheme aims to deliver a sustainable, well-designed, and contextually appropriate development that enhances both the site and the wider area.

STATEMENT PREPARED BY

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Designers & Architects

27.03.2025

WRITTEN - AO

CHECKED HG/JC