

# 45 McLaren St

## North Sydney

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**CASA**

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Response to Council RFI

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February 2024

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# Executive Summary

This design report has been prepared to address items identified by North Sydney Council in the Request for Information (18th December 2023) and subsequent correspondence (22nd January 2024).

The proposed design amendments provide practical changes and provide clear benefits to the community and future users of the building as well as a better design outcome for the applicant.

Additional detailed responses to all RFI items are included in a separate RFI response document prepared by Urbis and cross referenced to this document.

## Summary of changes and benefits

**Reduced massing** - Reduction in development area - with FSR reduced from 6.17:1 to 5.87:1 - resulting in less building bulk, improved relationships to heritage and neighbours, and better public domain outcome. The amended design is well below the maximum permissible FSR of 6.25:1.

**Heritage interface** - Walker Street podium is refined to provide a clear transition in scale from 3 storey podium to 2-storey on the corner to reduce the apparent scale of the podium and improve the visual and physical relationship with neighbouring heritage buildings.

**Expanded through site link** - the link has been widened to over 5m to incorporate additional planting, improve the interface with the adjacent building, improve the amenity of the commercial space, and promote greater utilisation and activation of the space. This represents a 70% increase in the width of the link.

**More and better landscape** - The sandstone planters along Walker Street have been reduced to soften appearance. Modifications to the basement provide deep soil zones of 78m<sup>2</sup> to support new and existing trees. Together with the widened through site link, the quantity and quality of landscape has been significantly improved.

**Driveway optimised** - extensive studies of alternative approaches have confirmed that the proposed driveway location in the SE corner is the logical and practical location. The modifications to the basement and adjacent landscape further mitigates potential impacts on the existing trees.

**Quality commercial spaces** - the enlarged through site link results in better daylight, access, and identity for the commercial tenancies facing Harnett Street. The revised design results in a lower commercial FSR (approx. 0.72:1), providing smaller but better quality tenancies.

**Harnett St activation** - Harnett Street is suitably activated with the majority of the frontage dedicated to commercial tenancies, including commercial entry lobby, and new canopy to provide continuous shade and shelter per the DCP requirements. The enhanced through site link and landscape improves the presentation in the south-west corner.

**Servicing** - A dedicated residential waste collection room has been discretely integrated along the Harnett Street frontage to provide for waste collection within 2m of the boundary, per Council's requirements.

**Bigger and better communal spaces** - the resident amenity spaces proposed in the basement levels have been relocated to Ground Floor. A new stair and void integrates this amenity space with the main residential lobby and introduces natural light and outlook to the amenity spaces.

The level 8 communal roof terrace has been increased by over 60%, from 143m2 to 231m2, including a modest but flexible communal room with direct access to the terrace.

## Revised Development Summary

The proposed design amendments have resulted in the following changes to the development yield and residential unit mix:

	DA submission	Amended Design
Res GFA	8,903m <sup>2</sup>	8,874m <sup>2</sup>
Res Amenity GFA	315m <sup>2</sup>	362m <sup>2</sup>
Non-Res GFA	1,818m <sup>2</sup>	1,285m <sup>2</sup>
Total GFA	11,036m <sup>2</sup>	10,521m <sup>2</sup>
FSR	6.17:1	5.87:1
Units	71	71
3b/4b	36 (51%)	34 (48%)
2b	15 (21%)	16 (22%)
1b	20 (28%)	21 (30%)



## Driveway location

*Council has raised concern on the proposed driveway location and its the potential impacts on T10 and T11.*

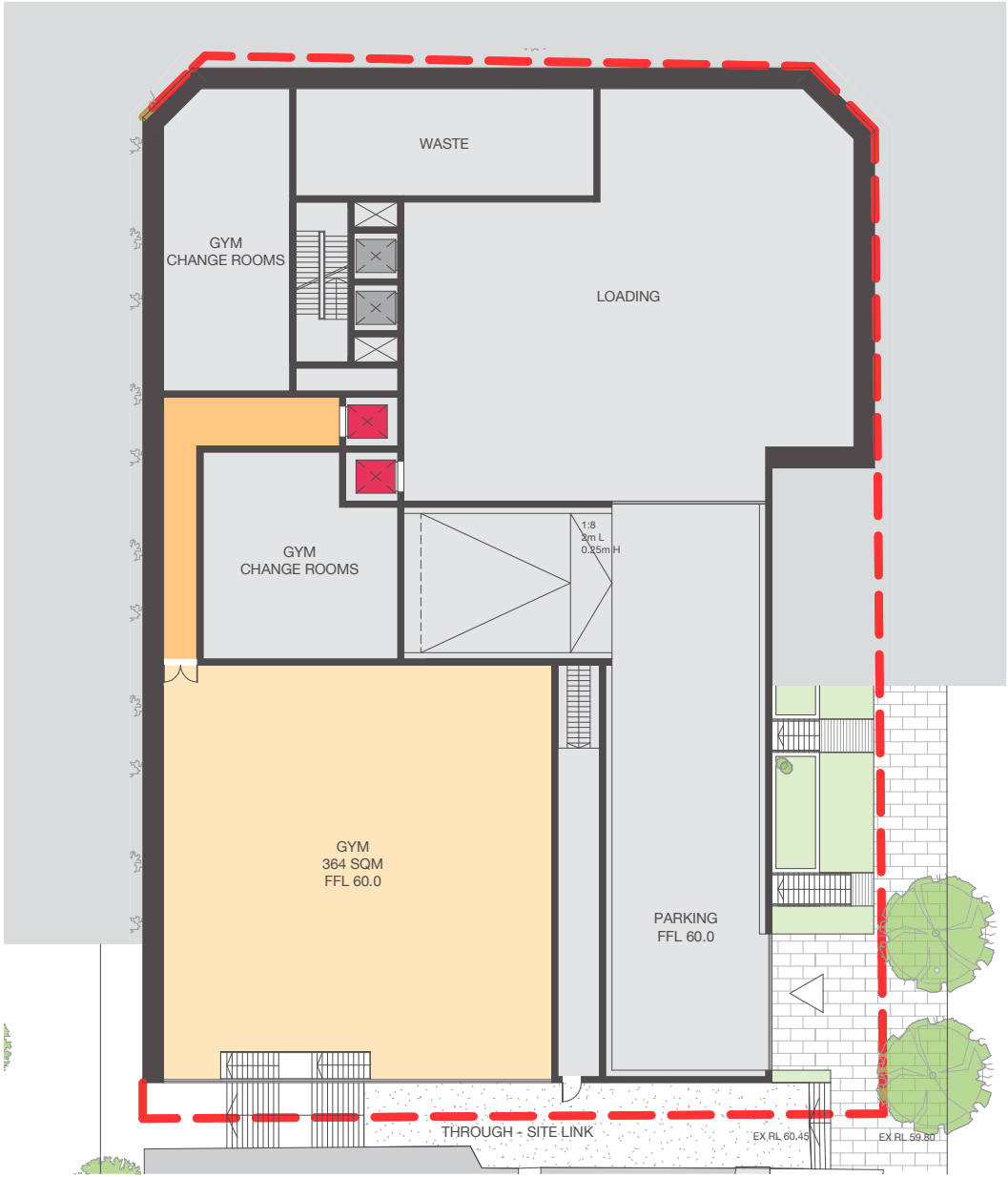
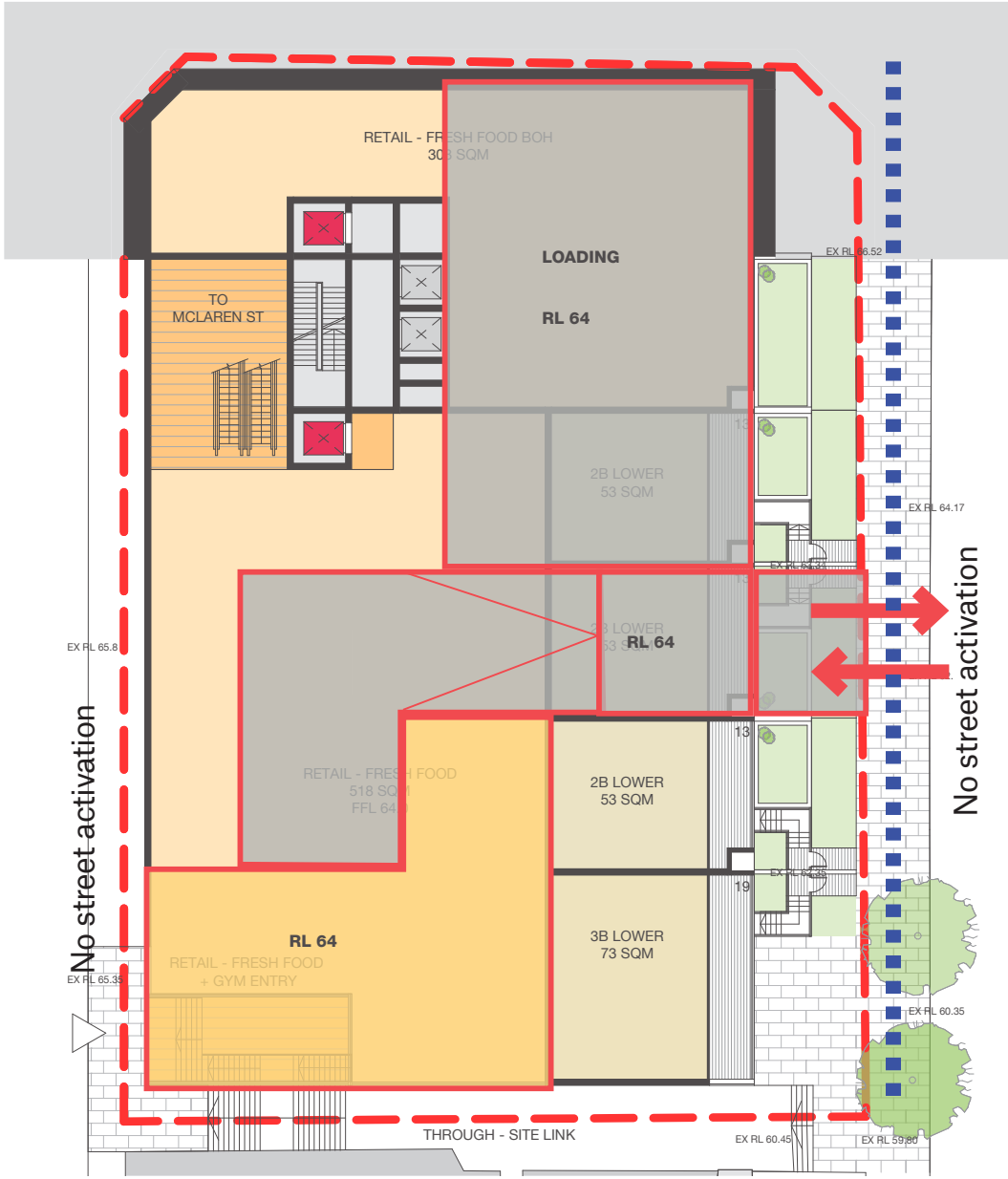
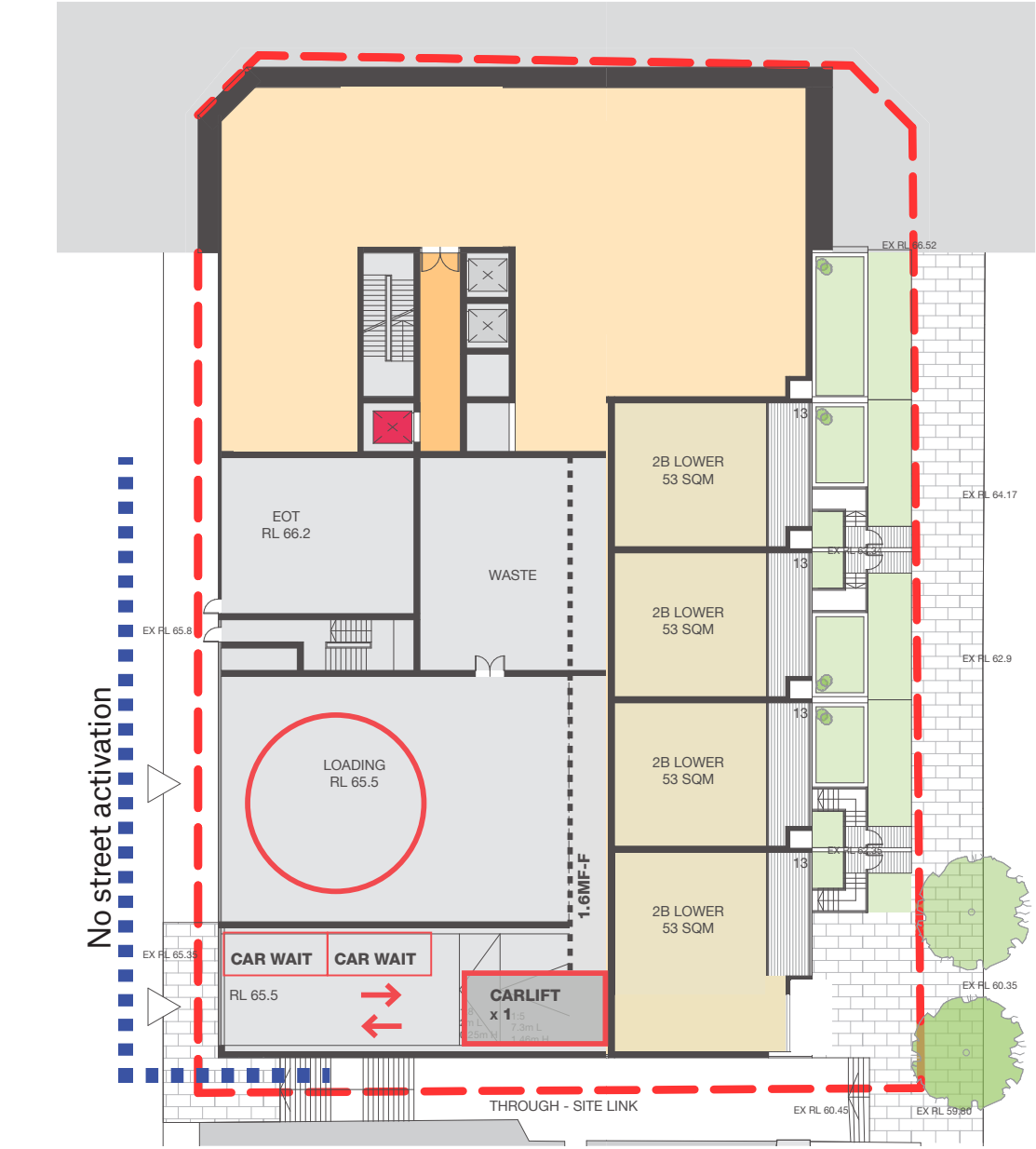
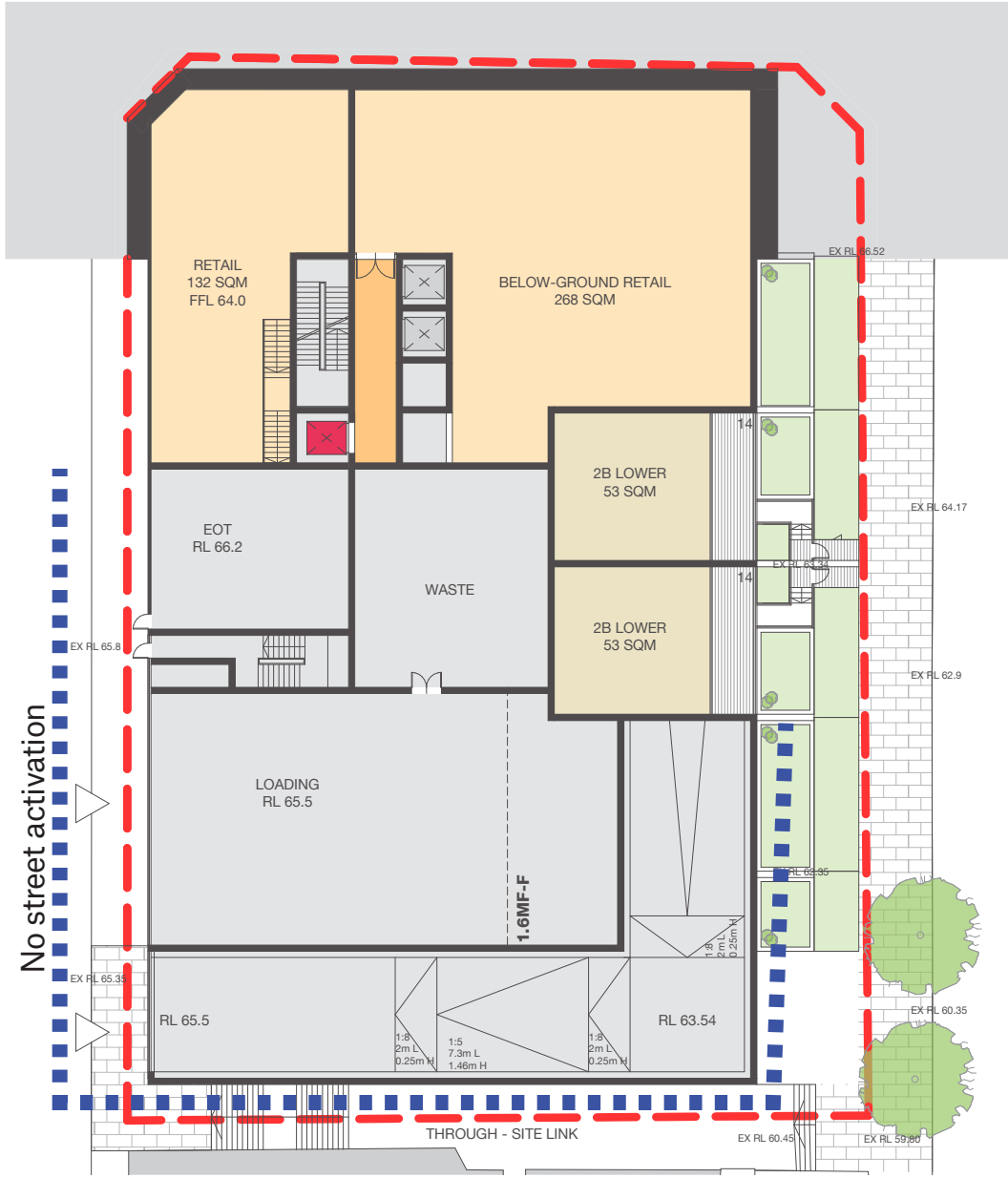
*A revised application to include **diagrams** and **commentary** demonstrating options considered for vehicle access and **why the proposed option was selected***



# Driveway location

## Previous studies

RFI Item 3d, 5a



### Harnett St Access ❌

- Significantly reduces activation on Harnett St and through-site link.
- Restricts passive surveillance.
- Negative impact on ability to achieve viable commercial tenancies. (approx. 700m<sup>2</sup> of commercial)
- Loss of residential activated frontage (terrace homes) on Walker St
- Inferior response to heritage homes on Walker Street

### Harnett St Access ❌

- Significantly reduces activation on Harnett St.
- Negative impact on ability to achieve viable commercial tenancies. (approx. 1000m<sup>2</sup> of commercial)
- Car lift access may result in increased waiting times for access and queuing.
- The introduction of a loading dock and driveway entrance on Harnett Street is likely to worsen the traffic congestion, especially considering the proposed school drop-off plan for 41 McLaren Street

### Walker St Access (existing driveway location) ❌

- Loss of residential activated frontage (terrace homes) on Walker St.
- Inferior response to heritage area on Walker Street.
- Negatively impacts viability of commercial tenancies. (approx. 800m<sup>2</sup> of commercial)

### Walker St. Access (SE corner) ✅ Planning proposal/DCP

- Entering basement from lowest level of the site to minimise ramp to loading dock. Most logical carpark entry from site topography perspective.
- Site specific DCP have confirmed Walker Street as the preferred access point to basement.
- Maximise activated frontage on Walker & Harnett Street by minimising the ramp length



# Driveway location

## DA Submission

Extensive studies of alternative approaches have confirmed that the proposed driveway location in the SE corner is the logical and practical location with notable benefits:

### Topography

The proposal strategically selects the SE corner, aligning seamlessly with the site's topography. This minimises the length of required ramps, enhancing overall development functionality.

### Commercial Efficiency

The minimisation of the ramp length leads to maximising the economic viability of commercial spaces within the development.

### Traffic

The proposal mitigates potential traffic congestion on Harnett Street, accounting for the expected increase in traffic resulting from the proposed school drop-off plan for 41 McLaren Street.

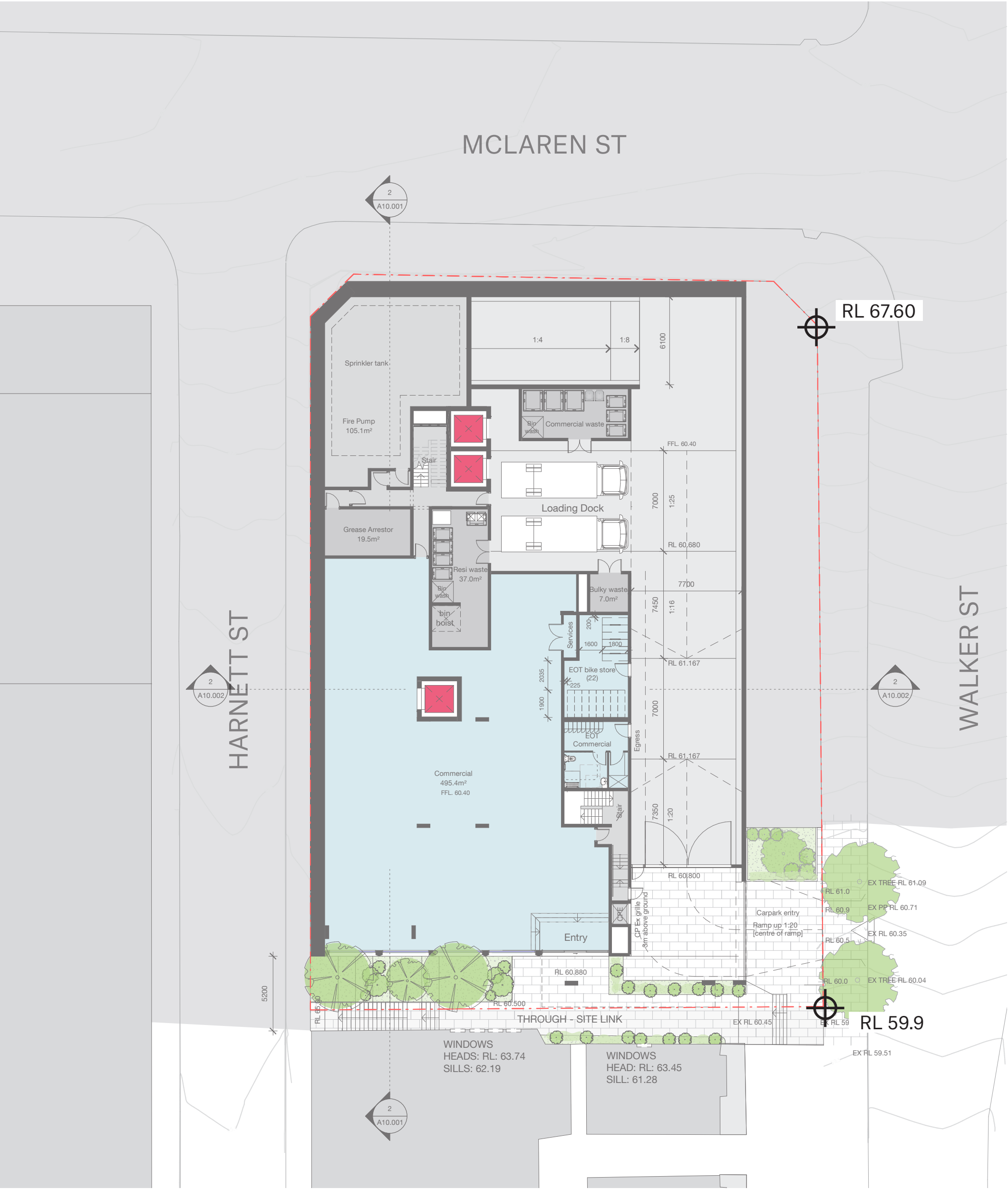
### DCP Compliance and Streetscape

Ensuring compliance with the site-specific DCP, the proposal maintains active frontages on McLaren Street and Harnett Street, contributing to a vibrant streetscape.

### Heritage Harmony

By maintaining residential frontages on Walker Street, the proposal fosters a harmonious relationship with adjacent heritage dwellings, enhancing the street's character.

Together, these strategic considerations and design elements present a compelling case for the proposed driveway entry location, ensuring not only compliance but also favourable outcomes for the development and its surroundings.





# Heritage

***Transition in scale*** across the site from **North to South.**

***Appropriate stepping down in the built form*** between 168 Walker and the Heritage dwelling.

***Podium setbacks*** to Walker Street and more generally the design of the ***south-eastern corner of the building*** do not appear to ***relate appropriately*** to the adjacent heritage buildings.

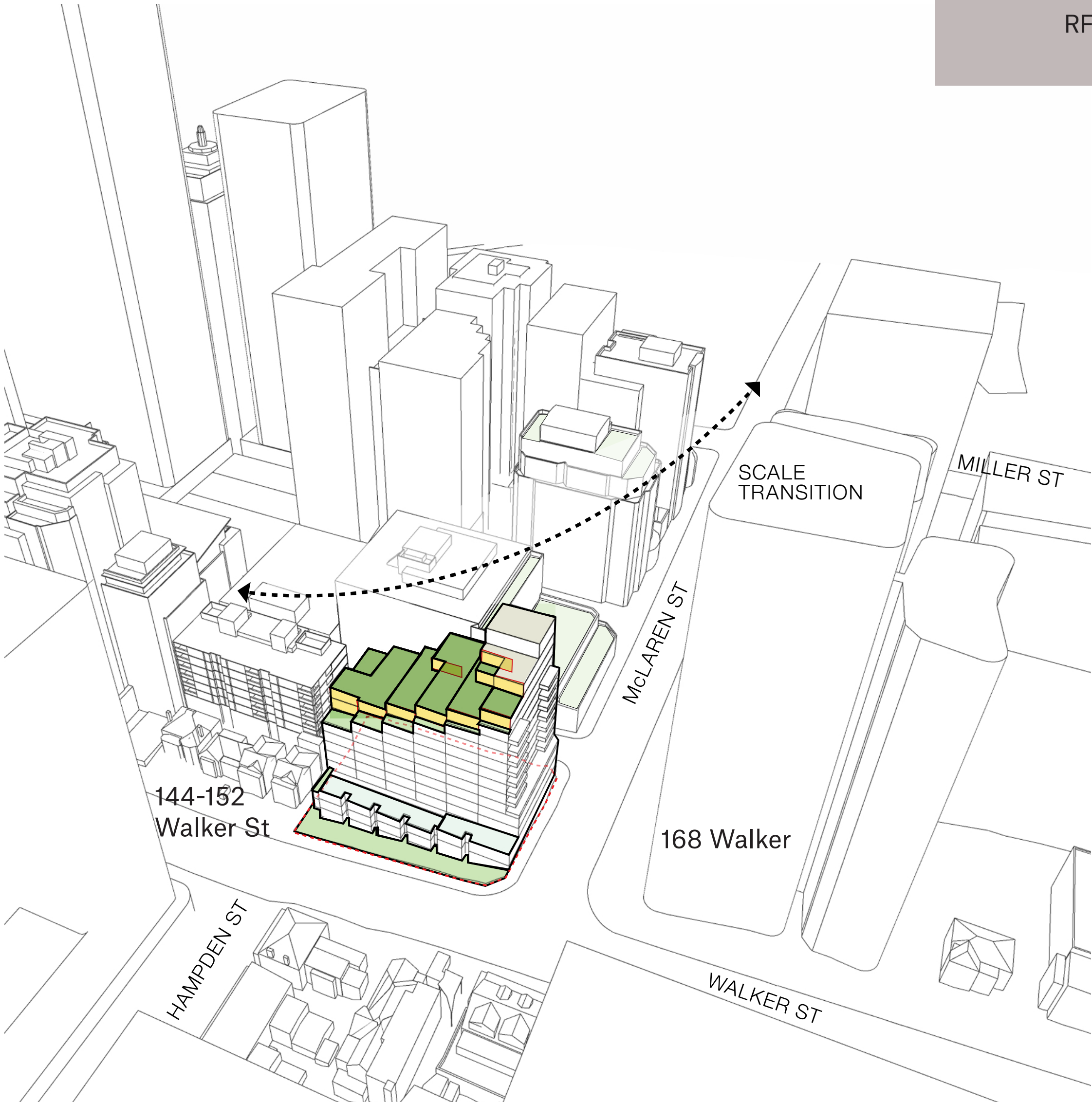


# Stepping down of built form

## DA submission

The stepped design of the building envelope serves to create a gradual transition in scale between 168 Walker and the heritage dwelling group at 144-152 Walker Street. This design approach not only aligns sympathetically with the existing scale transition but also ensures necessary solar access for the future Ward St. Precinct Plaza.

RFI Item 2b, 2c





# Stepping down of built form

## DA submission

### DA submission

Terrace homes along Walker Street have constant two storey residential volume to harmonise with neighbouring heritage dwellings. To accommodate sloping topography of the site, terraced planters & driveway entry are incorporated underneath.

However, due to steep topography on site, terrace home on southeast corner can be perceived as a three storey volume instead of two.









Walker St view  
Comparison

DA submission





# Walker St view

## Comparison

### Amended Design

- Lower the height of concrete frame in south east terrace home.
- Create a visual recess on the third-story volume to highlight the shift in the prominent street wall height, ensuring a harmonious scale relationship with the neighbouring heritage dwelling





# Podium setbacks on Walker St

RFI Item 1d

Terrace homes in the podium are setback to align with adjacent heritage dwellings, which results in 4.95m & 5.3m setback from Northern & Southern end of Walker St boundary respectively.

Additionally, the apartment on the south eastern corner also adheres to the outer alignment with adjacent heritage dwellings.

This particular apartment also incorporates a deeper balcony, ensuring compliance with NSW Apartment Design Guidelines (ADG).





# Corner treatment at Walker & McLaren St

The Northeastern corner of the proposal has been specifically designed to respond to the changing context between McLaren and Walker Street. This is achieved through a thoughtful combination of scale variation and the incorporation of concrete frames and awnings.

To ensure a harmonious relationship with neighbouring homes along Walker Street, the terrace homes feature concrete frames that create a 2-storey scale. Additionally, the main tower is intentionally set back generously, preserving a 2-storey podium to maintain the lower-scale residential character along Walker Street.

At the intersection of Walker and McLaren Streets, the 2-storey height is reduced to a single storey due to the site's slope. This reduction in height also suggests a shift in use from residential to retail/commercial tenancy, comparable to the mixed residential, commercial, and hotel character of McLaren Street.

The concrete frames typically used in terrace homes are transformed into a continuous awning that wraps around the corner, providing cover along McLaren Street. This awning promotes the activated street frontage on McLaren Street with a 3-storey podium, maintaining consistent scale of the street wall with the podium of heritage building at 41 McLaren Street.



**Pictured**  
Corner of McLaren & Walker Street



# Corner treatment at Walker & McLaren St

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**Pictured**  
Corner of McLaren & Walker Street

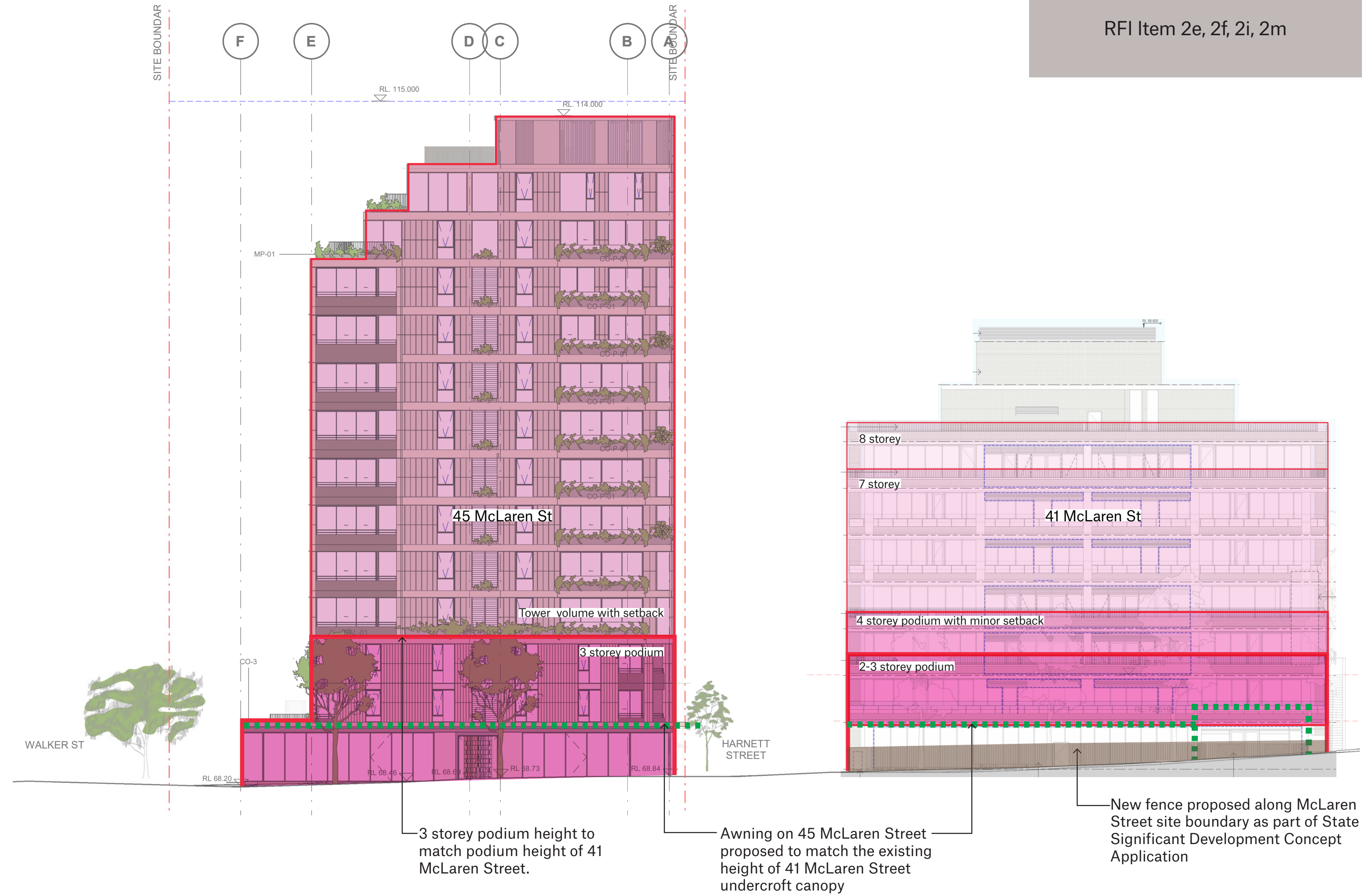


# 41 McLaren Street

RFI Item 2e, 2f, 2i, 2m

The McLaren Street podium of the proposed development have compatible relationship with podium of 41 McLaren Street.

- Proposed awning height align with existing under-croft canopy of 41 McLaren Street. (shown dashed in green)
- Similar podium height along McLaren Street to maintain consistent scale of the street wall on McLaren Street.



**Pictured**  
McLaren Street Elevation



# 41 McLaren Street



**Pictured**  
Proposed 45 McLaren St with heritage 41 McLaren St.



## Landscape Integration

*Landscaping in public domain to improve the **softening of the building** at its edge to Walker Street.*

*A **lack of deep soil** was noted as one of the key site constraints. Council recommend increasing the deep soil area by reducing building footprint.*



# Terraced planting along Walker St

DA Submission



RFI Item 3a, 3j, 3k, 7g

**Pictured**  
Planters along Walker Street  
(DA submission)



# Terraced planting along Walker St

## Amended Design

Terracing of sandstone planters are adjusted to lower height. Also, cascading plants will be allowed to planters to minimise visible hard surface such as sandstone to visually soften the building at its edge.



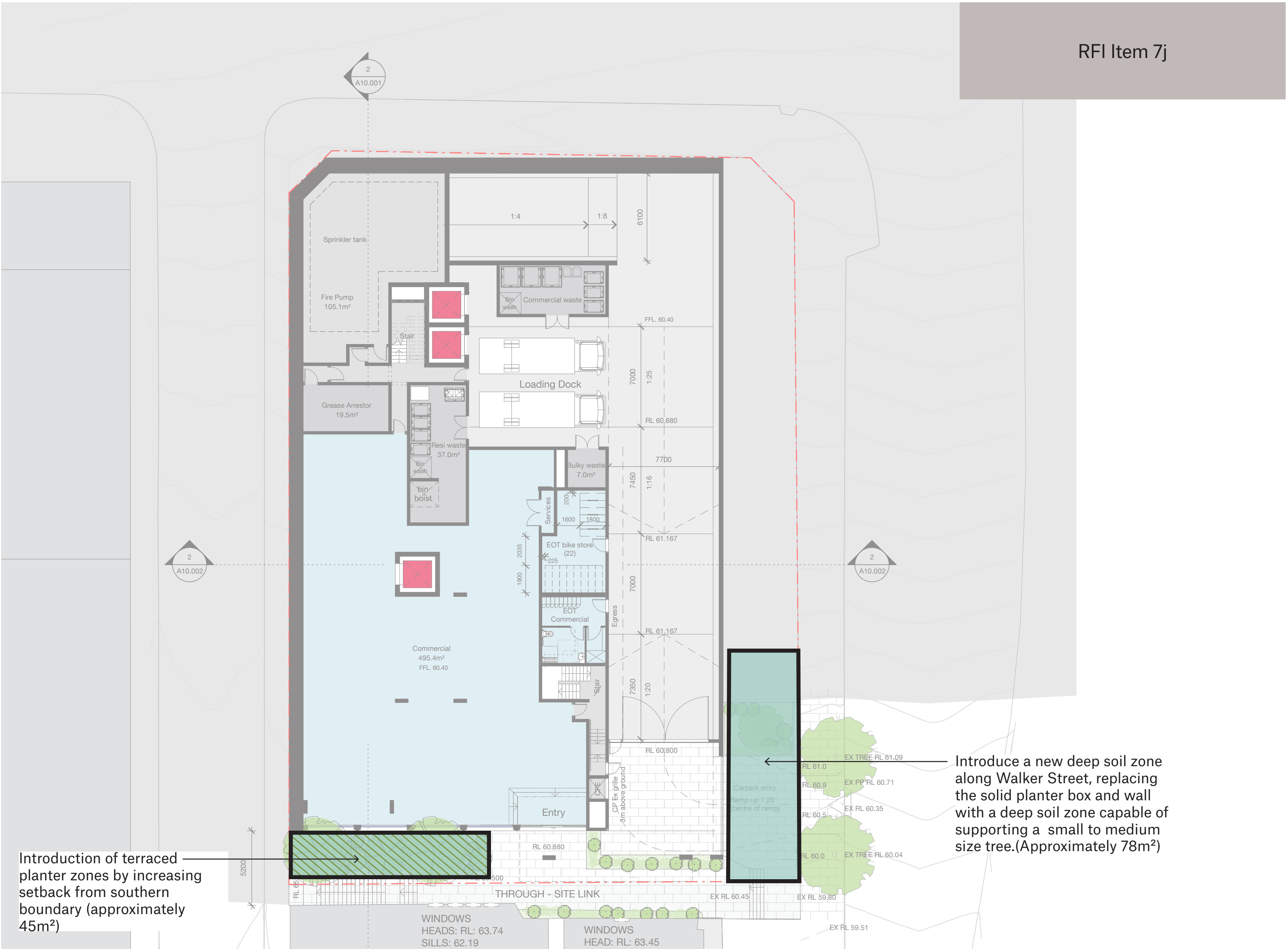
**Pictured**  
Planters along Walker Street with adjusted sandstone walls and planting



# Deep soil area

There will be following updates to address councils concern for lack of deep soil area.

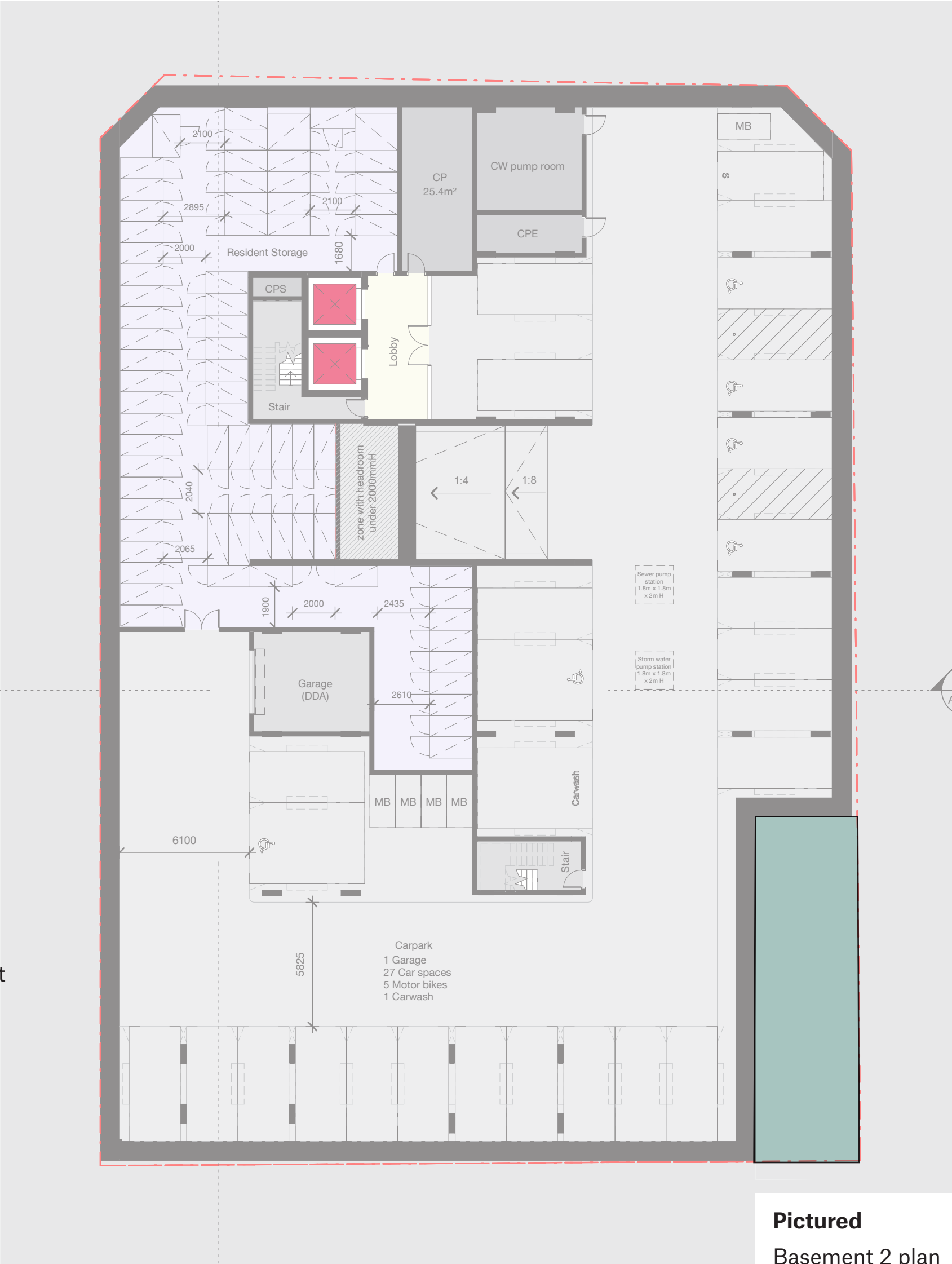
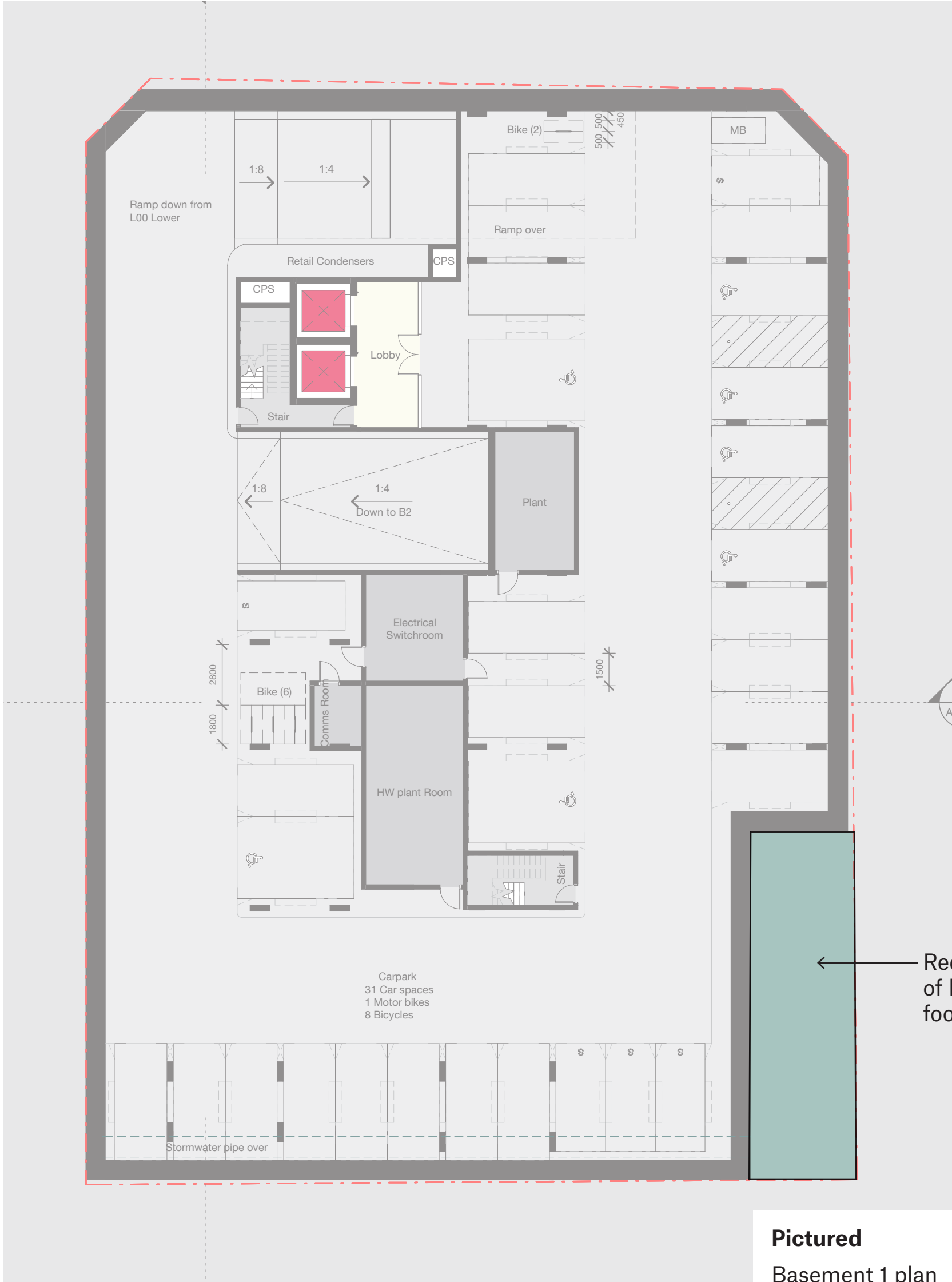
- Increase the setback on through site link to introduce built planter zone with depth ranging from 500mm deep to 4m deep - allowing small to medium sized trees (approximately **45m<sup>2</sup>**).
- Reduction of basement footprint to introduce a new deep soil zone along Walker Street, replacing the solid planter box and wall with a deep soil zone capable of supporting a small to medium size tree.(approximately **78m<sup>2</sup>**).





# Deep soil area

- Reduction of basement footprint to increase deep soil area to the development (approximately **78m<sup>2</sup>**).





## Communal area

*Communal open space - The **deck proposed on level 8** is unacceptable, in terms of area and amenity offered, particularly given the reduced solar access to other areas of the proposal. The space seemed to have a poor relationship with the internal and external living areas of apartments next to the communal space. The deck should be significantly **enlarged** and **better connected to the main circulation and a genuine internal communal space**.*

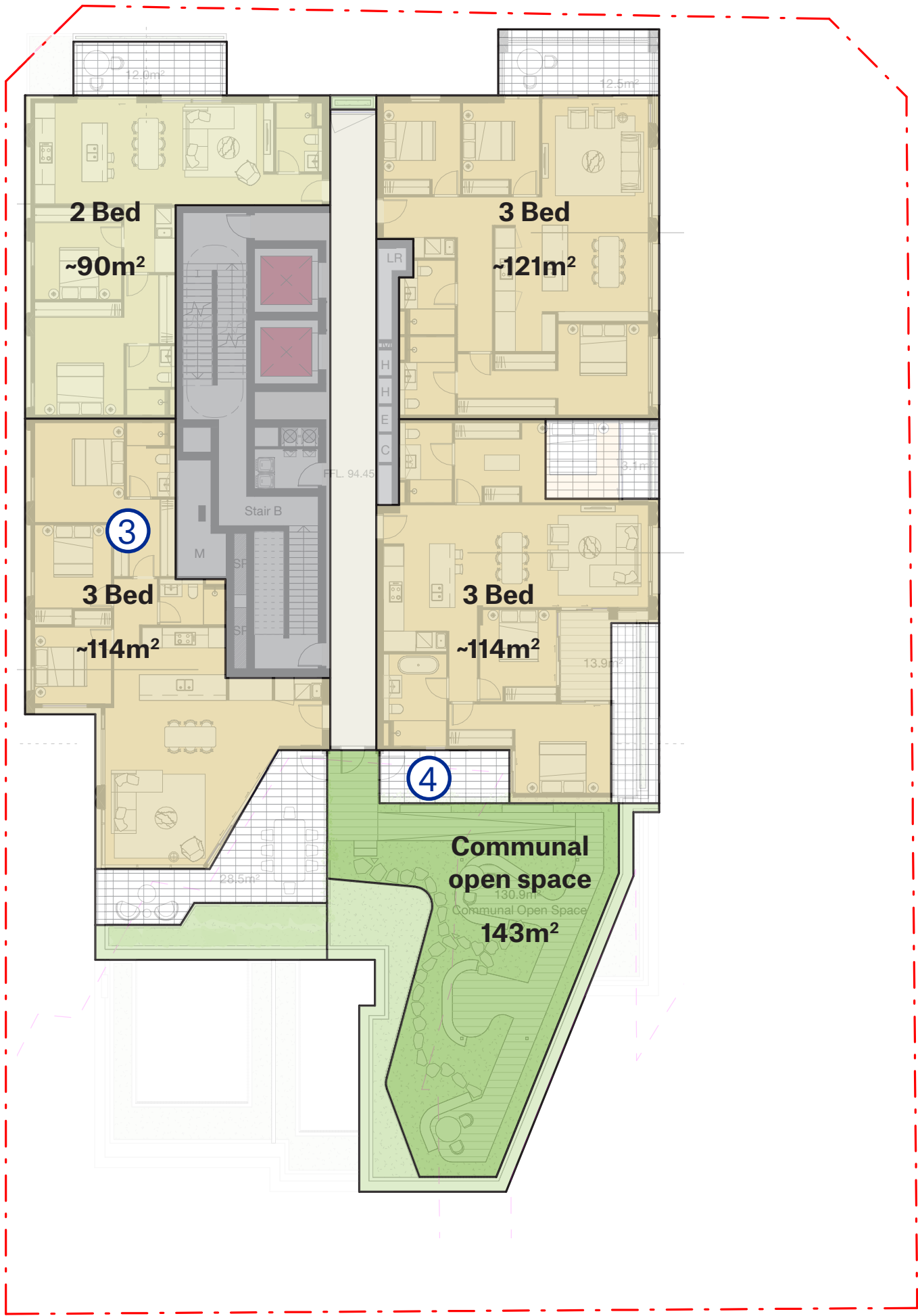
*The **underground communal space** is **not considered appropriate**, it should be located above ground.*



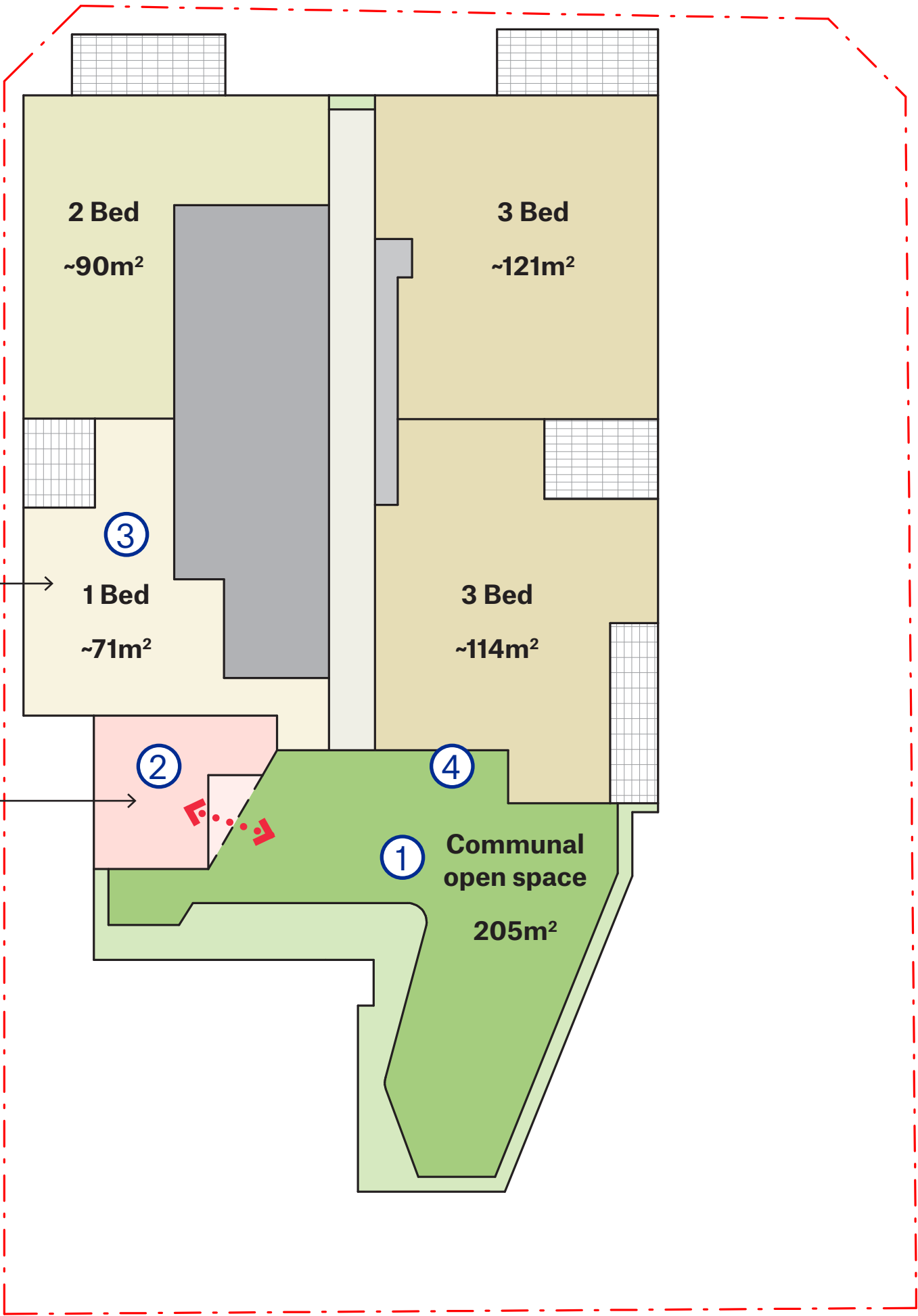
# Communal area

## Level 8

RFI Item 3f, 7h



**Pictured**  
Level 8 (DA submission)



**Pictured**  
Level 8 with increased communal open space (Amended Design)

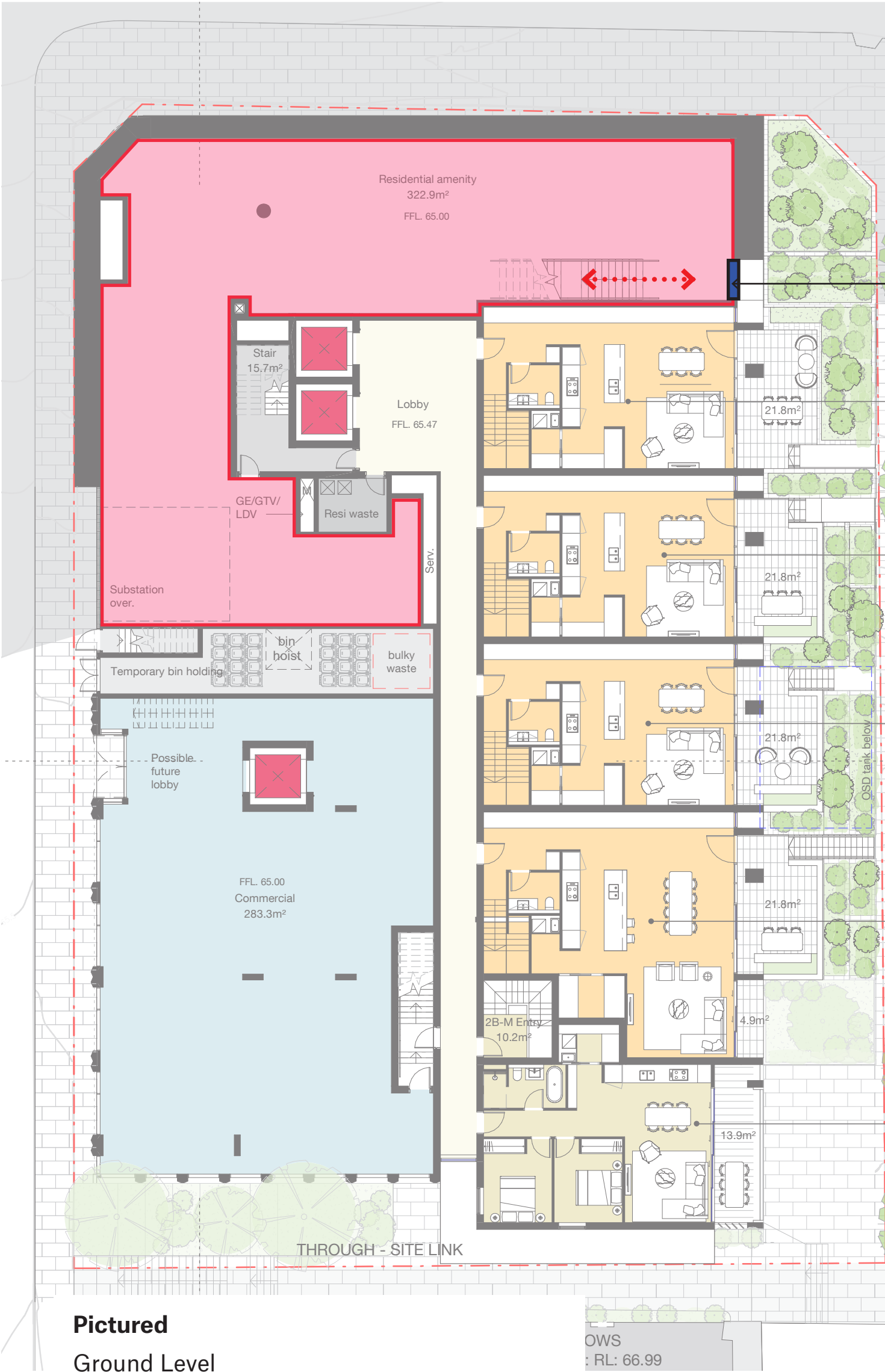


# Communal Area - Residential Amenity Ground Level

## Amended Design

In addition to landscaped communal area on L08 and private open spaces, residents will have access to internal resident amenities on the Ground level.

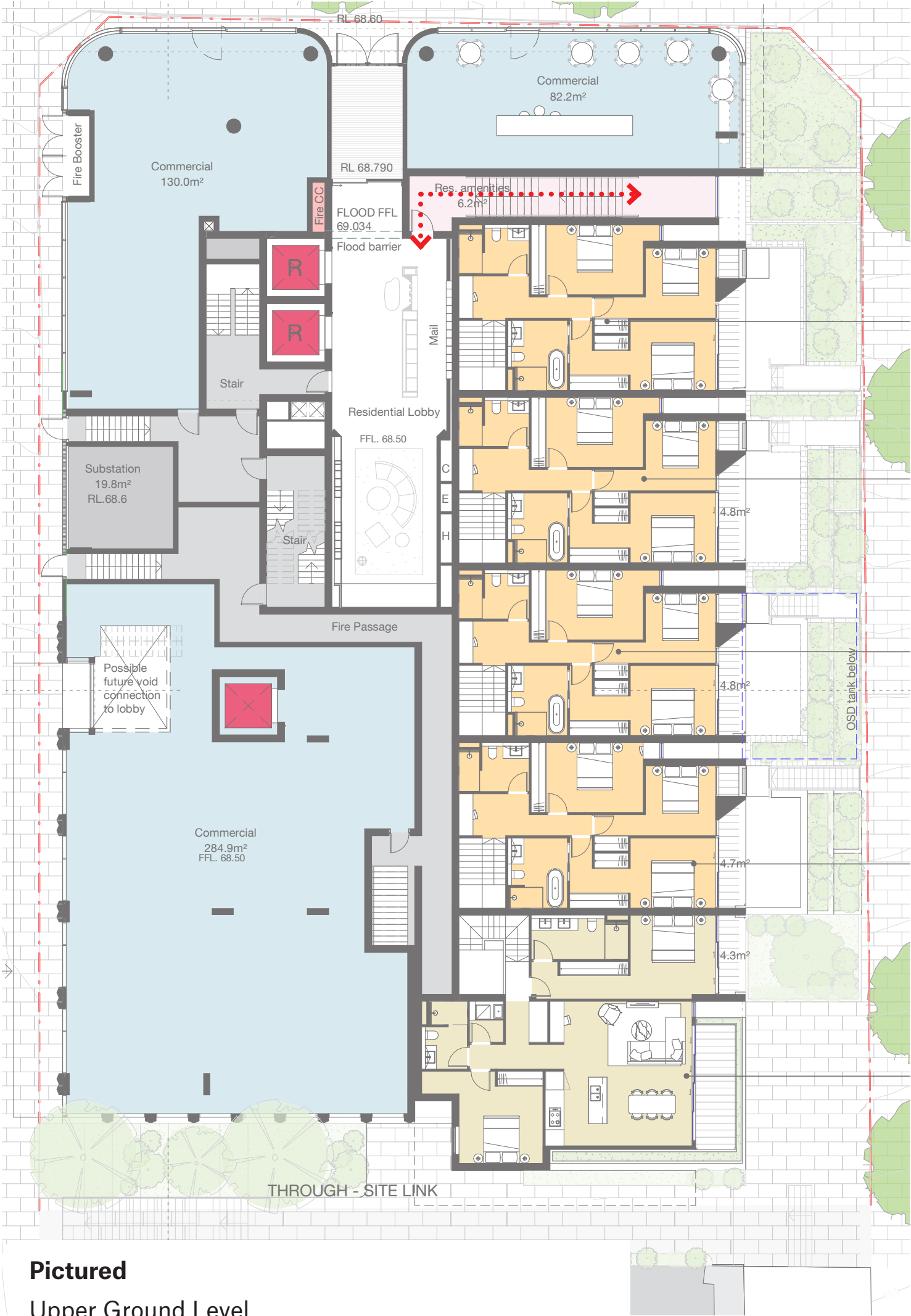
The resident amenity spaces proposed in the basement levels have been relocated to Ground Floor. A new stair and void integrates this amenity space with the main residential lobby and introduces natural light and outlook to the amenity spaces.



Pictured  
Ground Level

Window with  
slab opening to  
allow natural light  
penetration into  
residential amenity

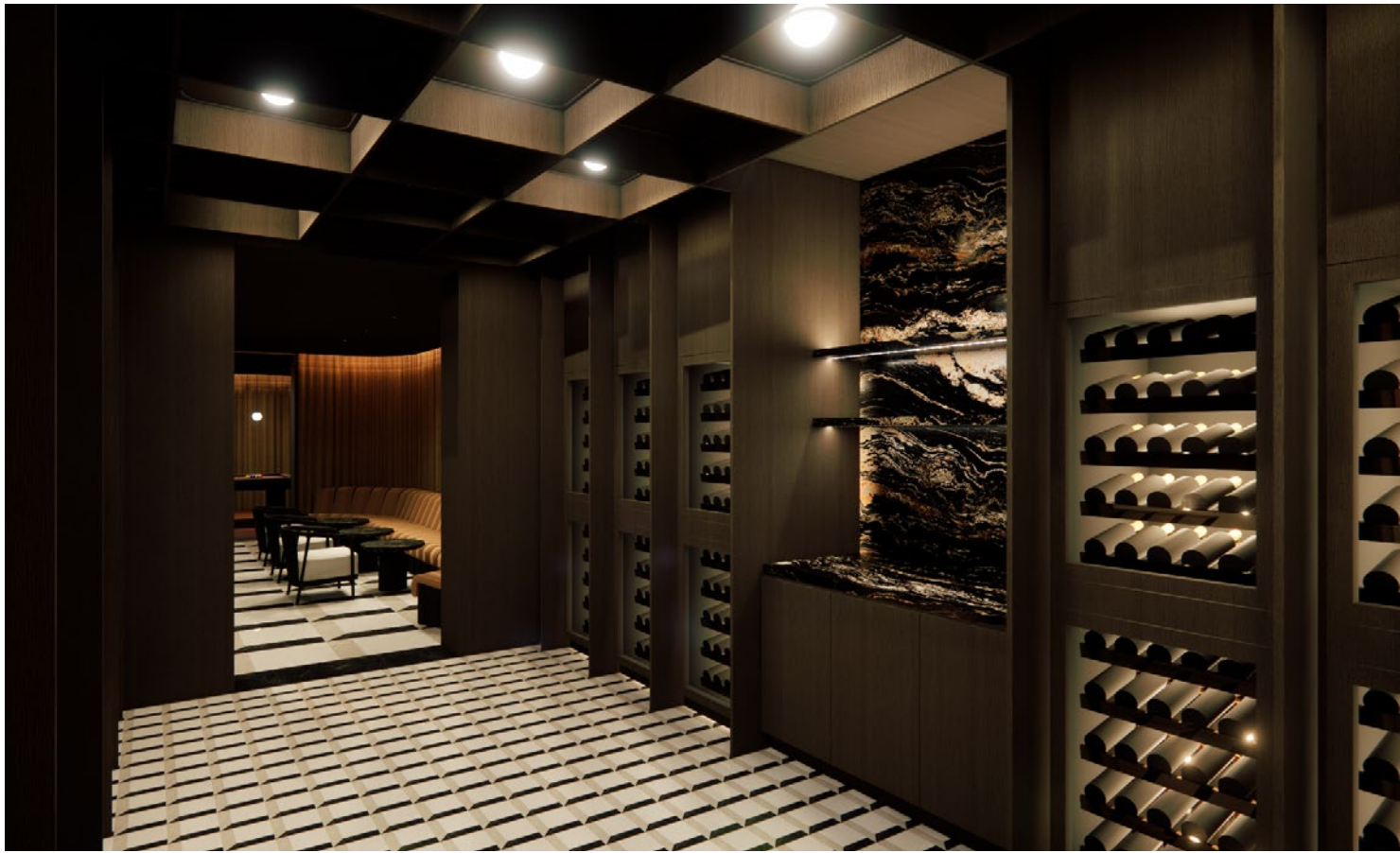
RFI Item 7i, 7m



Pictured  
Upper Ground Level



Communal Area -  
Residential Amenity  
Ground Level



**Pictured**  
Indicative concept/design for residential amenity



## Through Site Link

*The Panel observed that the **improved pedestrian path on the southern boundary** provides some community benefit. Opportunities to **increase the width of the through site link** to **improve passive surveillance and activation** of this space should be considered such as the creation of a small public space with natural light and air.*

*This would also substantially improve the amenity and functionality of the commercial tenancy on the lower ground floors.*



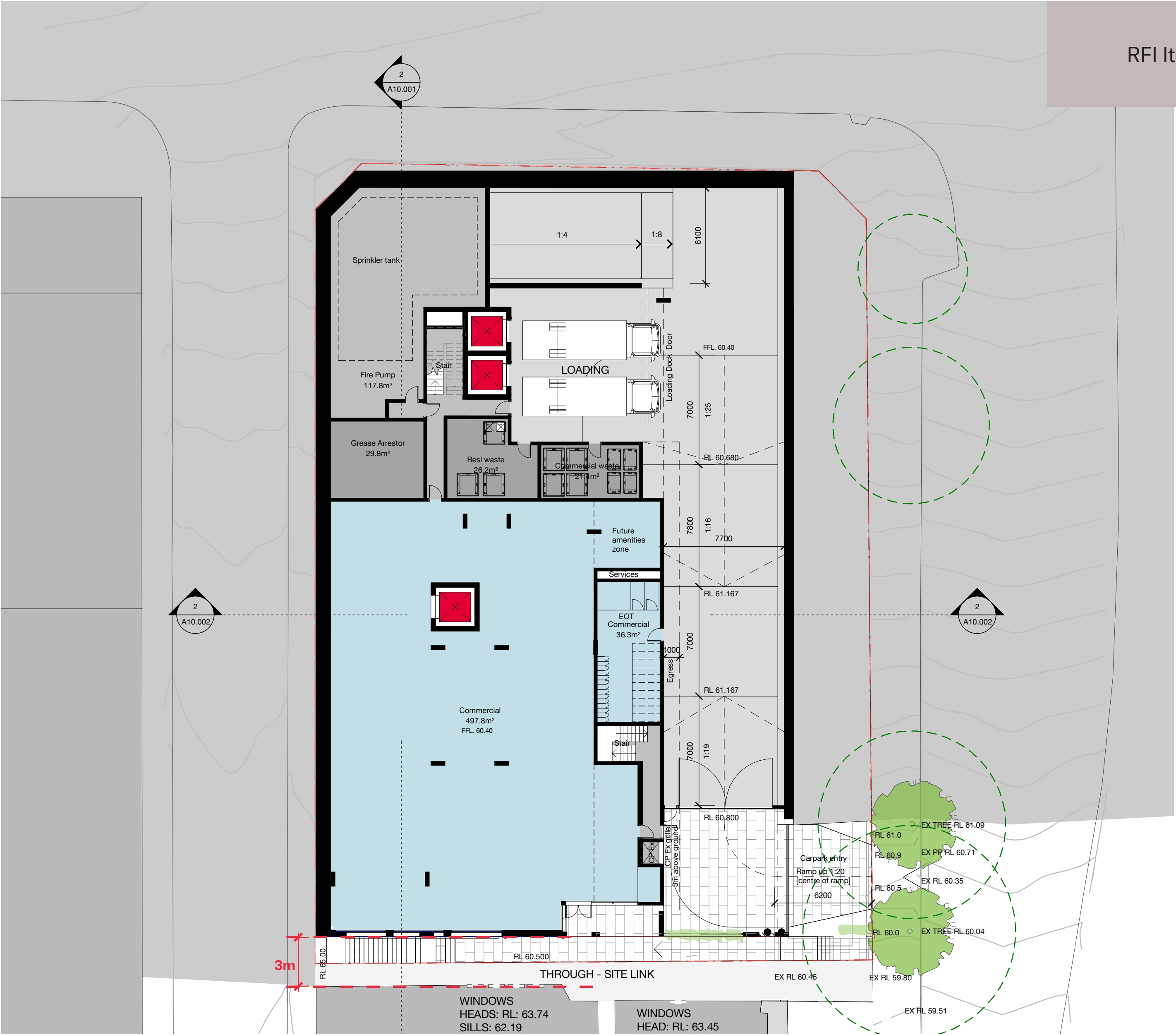
# Through Site Link

## DA Submission

### Lower Ground

- Podium with 1.5m setback from Southern boundary to meet DCP setback requirement, seeking to widen the existing through-site link by doubling its width to 3m clear.

RFI Item 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d





# Through Site Link

## Amended Design

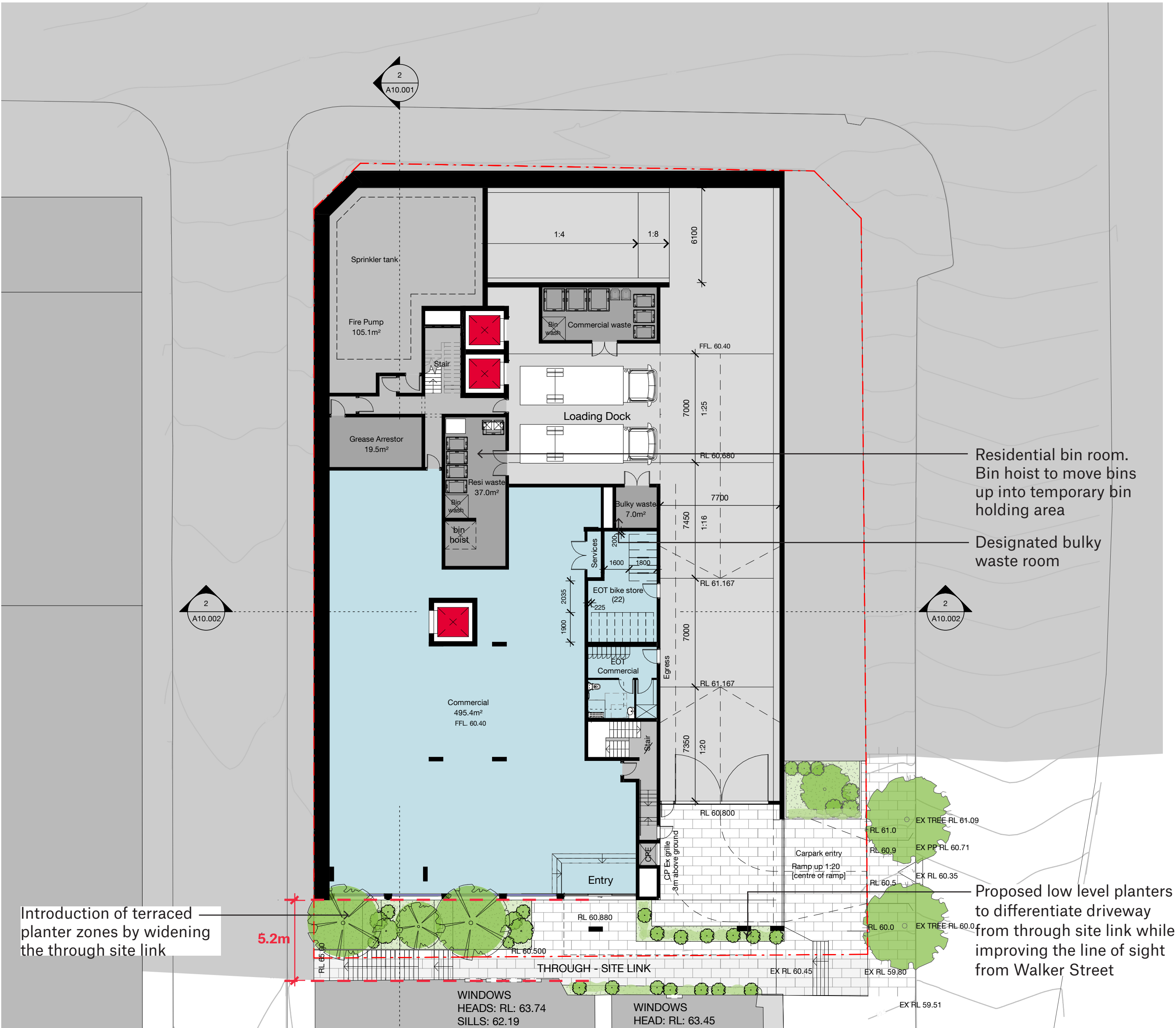
### Lower Ground

Increase setback from southern boundary on SW corner podium to widen through site link to approximately 5.2m, which represents a 70% increase in the width of the link.

Low height planters are proposed along the driveway to differentiate but visually open up southeast corner from Walker Street and improve line of sight.

By widening the through site link, this will result in numerous benefits;

- More natural light and air to improve the amenity of the lower ground tenancy.
- Improved line of sight to through site link and improve passive surveillance with more street activation - making through site link feel more inviting.
- Introduce terraced deep planters which allows additional trees along public through site link and soften the building at its edge.



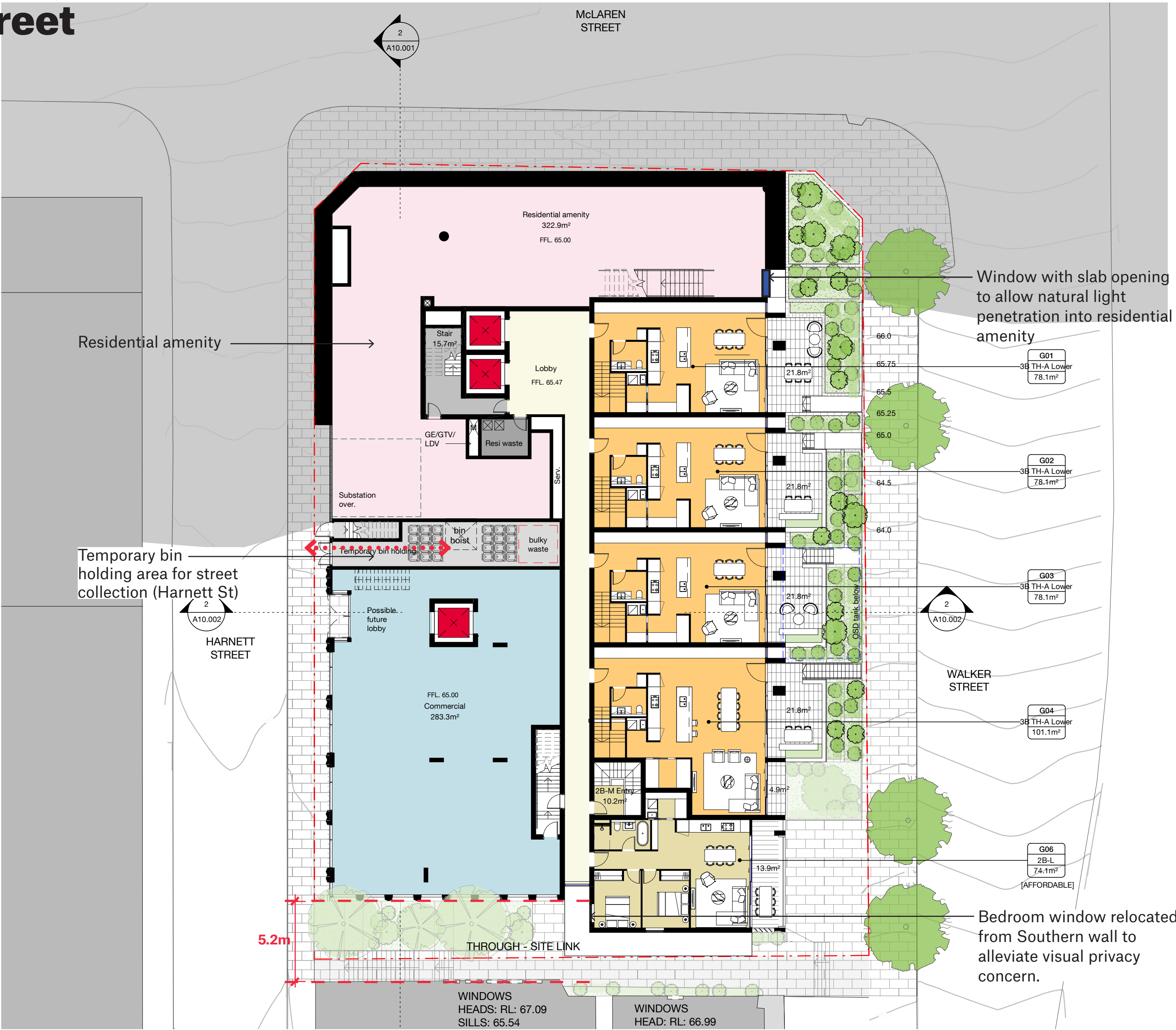


# Through Site Link & Harnett Street

## Amended Design

### Ground

- Temporary bin holding area on Harnett Street, enabling street collection. Bin hoist connection from loading dock.
- Residential amenity room relocated to residential floors. Slab on Upper ground has been cut back to allow natural light penetration.
- One of the bedroom window to SE corner apartment is relocated to face West to minimise visual privacy concern with heritage dwelling adjacent.





# Through Site Link

## Amended Design

### Upper Ground

- SE Corner apartment changed from 3 bed apartment to 2 bed apartment.
- The bedroom window to SE corner apartment is relocated to face West to minimise visual privacy concern with heritage dwelling adjacent.





# Through Site Link

## Amended Design

### Level 01

- Increase setback of podium from southern boundary to reduce the overall building footprint and reduction in small courtyard associated with the SW corner 2bed apartment.
- Reduction in podium allows for trees & landscaping to grow along the South.





# Through Site Link Comparison





# Through Site Link Comparison

DA submission



**Pictured**  
View of through-site link (DA submission)



# Through Site Link Comparison

## Amended Design



**Pictured**  
View of through-site link (Amended Design)



# Through Site Link Comparison

DA submission



**Pictured**  
View of through-site link from Walker Street (DA submission)



# Through Site Link Comparison

## Amended Design



**Pictured**  
View of through-site link from Walker Street (Amended Design)



# Walker St view

## Comparison

DA submission



**Pictured**  
View of through-site link (DA submission)



# Walker St view

## Comparison

Amended Design



**Pictured**  
View of through-site link (Amended Design)



# Facade

*Façades rely heavily on **full height performance glazing**, particularly to the **east and west facades**. **External solar shading** should be incorporated to **limit the dependence on heavily tinted performance glass**.*

***Awnings** are to be provided in **compliance with the DCP***



## RFI Item 7f

## 40



# Awning

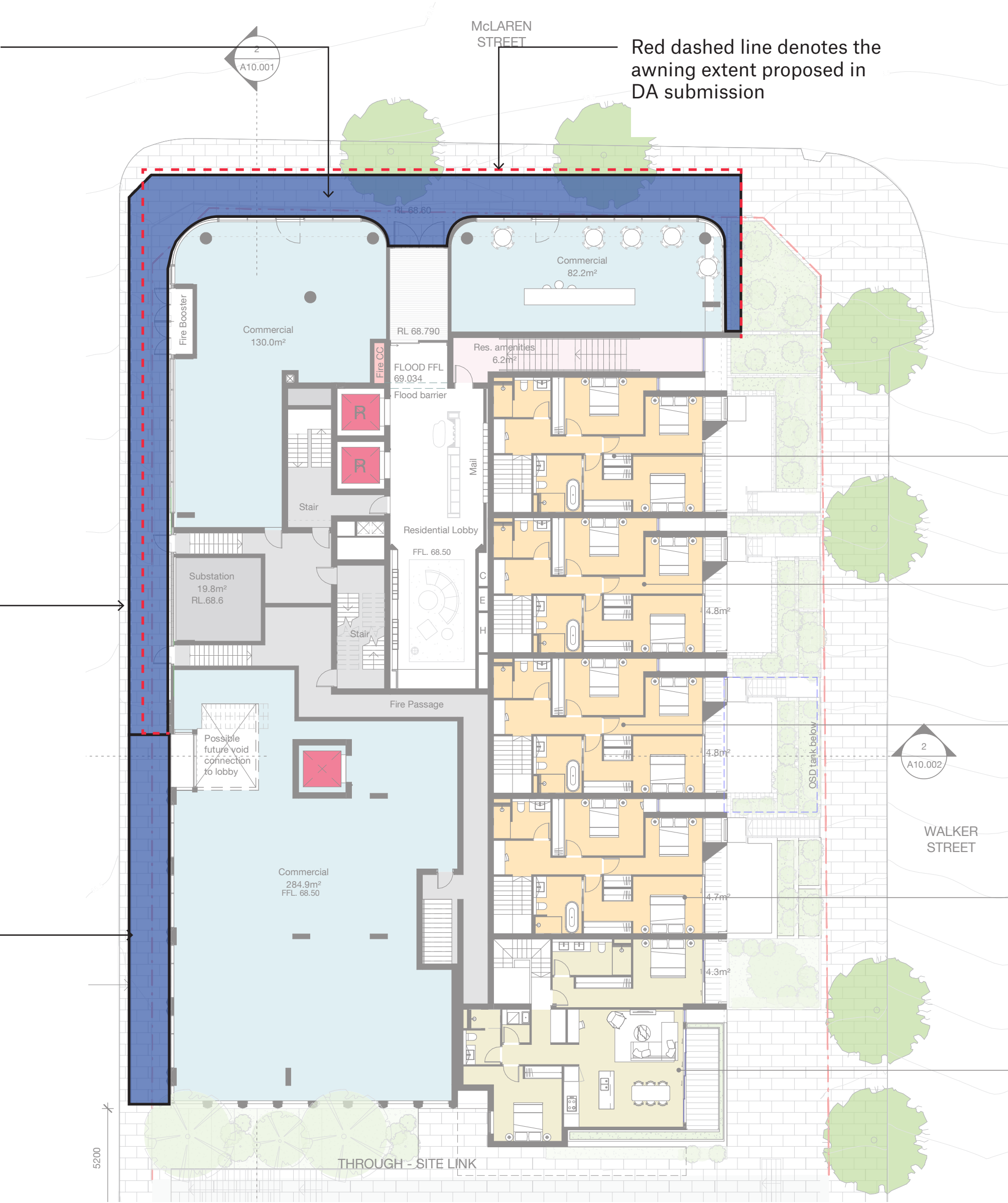
The revised awning will feature a minimum width of 2000mm, ensuring a setback of at least 600mm from the kerb along Harnett Street and a minimum setback of 1.5m along McLaren Street to accommodate street trees.

Refer to subsequent pages for elevations & 3d views.

Revised awning on McLaren Street will be 2250mm deep, ensuring 1.5m setback from kerb is allowed for street trees.

Awning on Harnett Street to be 2000mm deep with min. 600mm setback from the kerb.

New extent of awning shown in blue.



RFI Item 1b, 1c

**Pictured**  
UG plan with new awning extent



# Awning

The awning height in the commercial podium along Harnett street (southwest) has been set at a level to comply with the height above footpath level in the DCP.

To achieve this, the aluminium spandrel has been added to UG commercial level at nom. Height of 900mmH AFFL

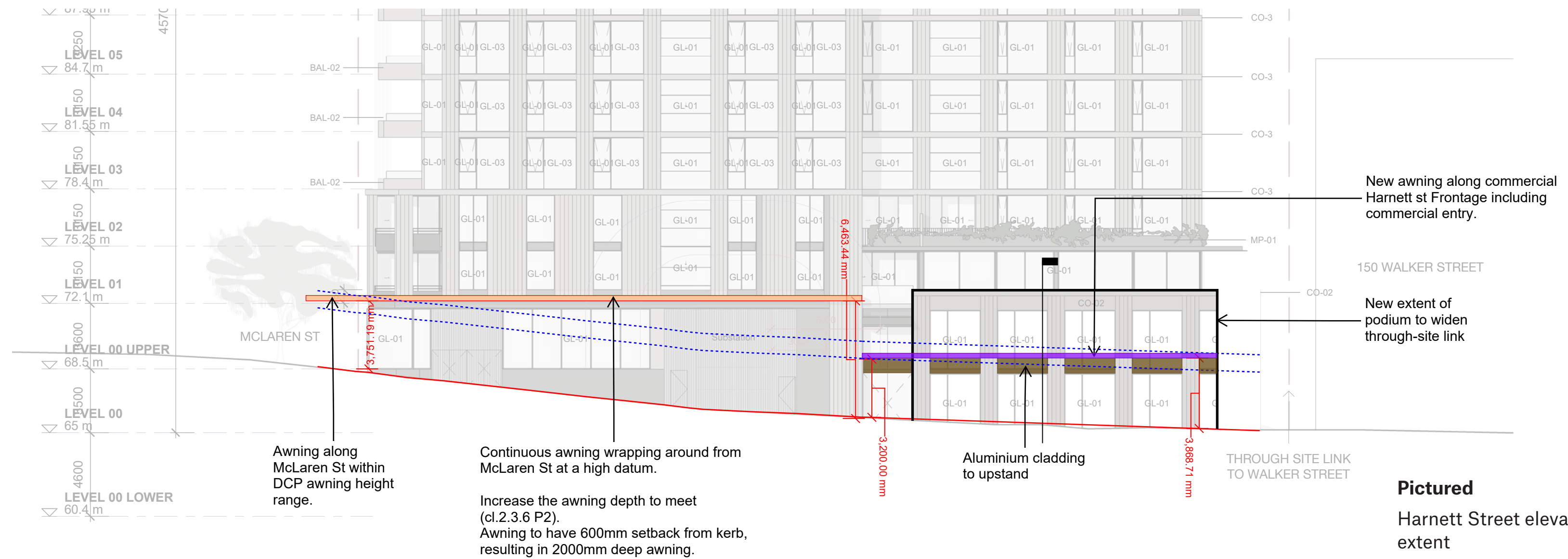
The awning on the northwest, extending from McLaren St, maintains its height datum, leading to an awning with increased height when measured from Harnett street footpath.

Given the rapid fall from McLaren St to Harnett St and the desire to maintain commercial glazed façade to NW corner along Harnett St to enhance street frontage activation, height of awning remains as per DA submitted height.



## Pictured

Harnett Street elevation with awning extent  
as per DA submission



## Pictured

Harnett Street elevation with new awning  
extent



# Awning Comparison

DA submission



**Pictured**  
View of Harnett Street (DA submission)



# Awning Comparison

## Amended Design



**Pictured**  
View of Harnett Street with awning (Revised)



# Waste Management

*The **residential waste bins** need a **temporary bin holding area for collection from the street** within 2 metres of the property boundary. The holding bay must be large enough to fit 24 x 240L bins (compacted waste) and bulky waste material and be consistent with NSDCP 2013 Appendix 3 – Waste Management Guide, for high-rise, residential and mixed residential/commercial buildings.*

*Onsite collection for residential premises is not permitted, the **bin holding bay must be accessible from the kerb**.*

*However, **commercial bins** must not be presented kerbside and **must have a bin holding bay for collection on-site**.*

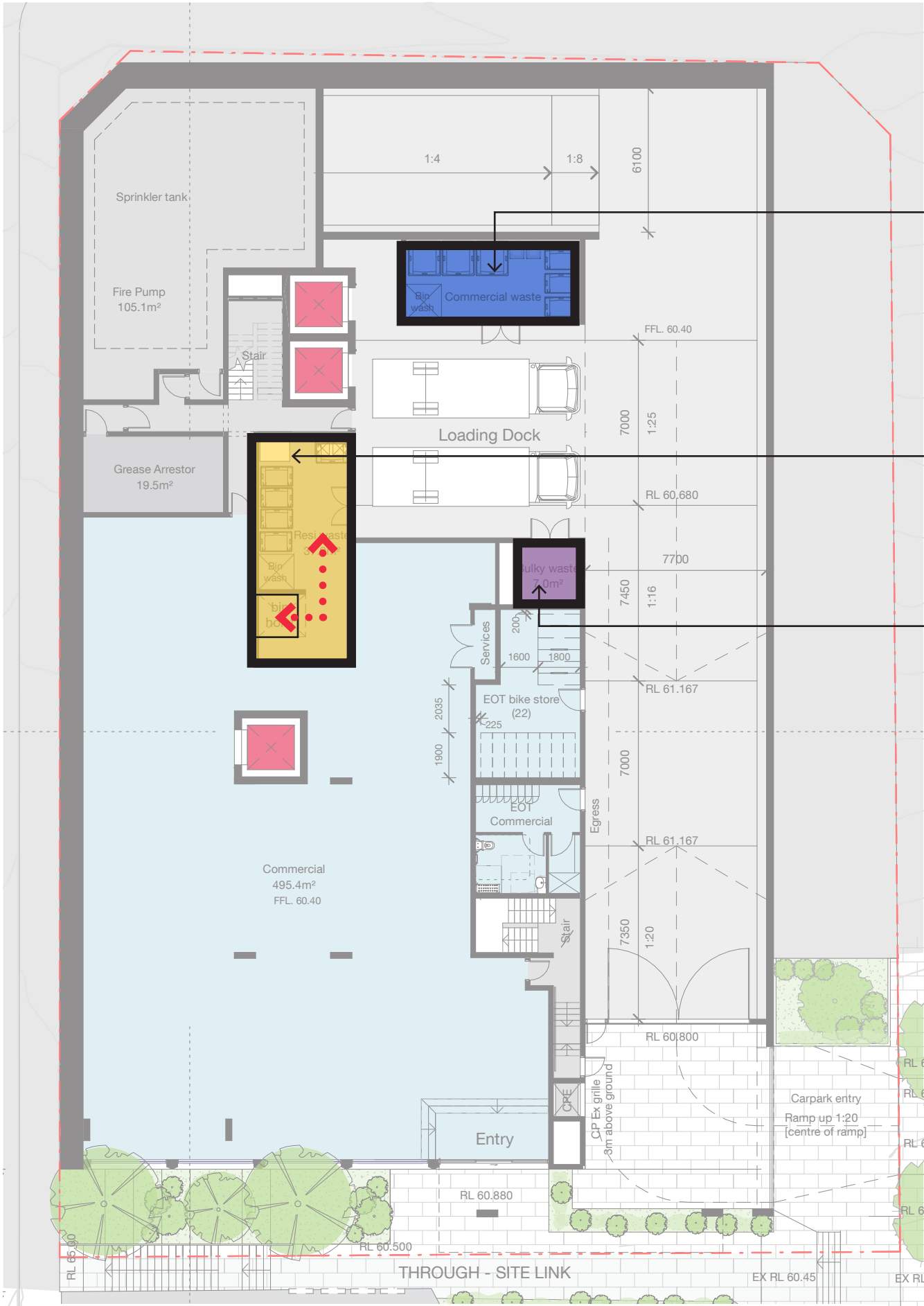


# Waste Management

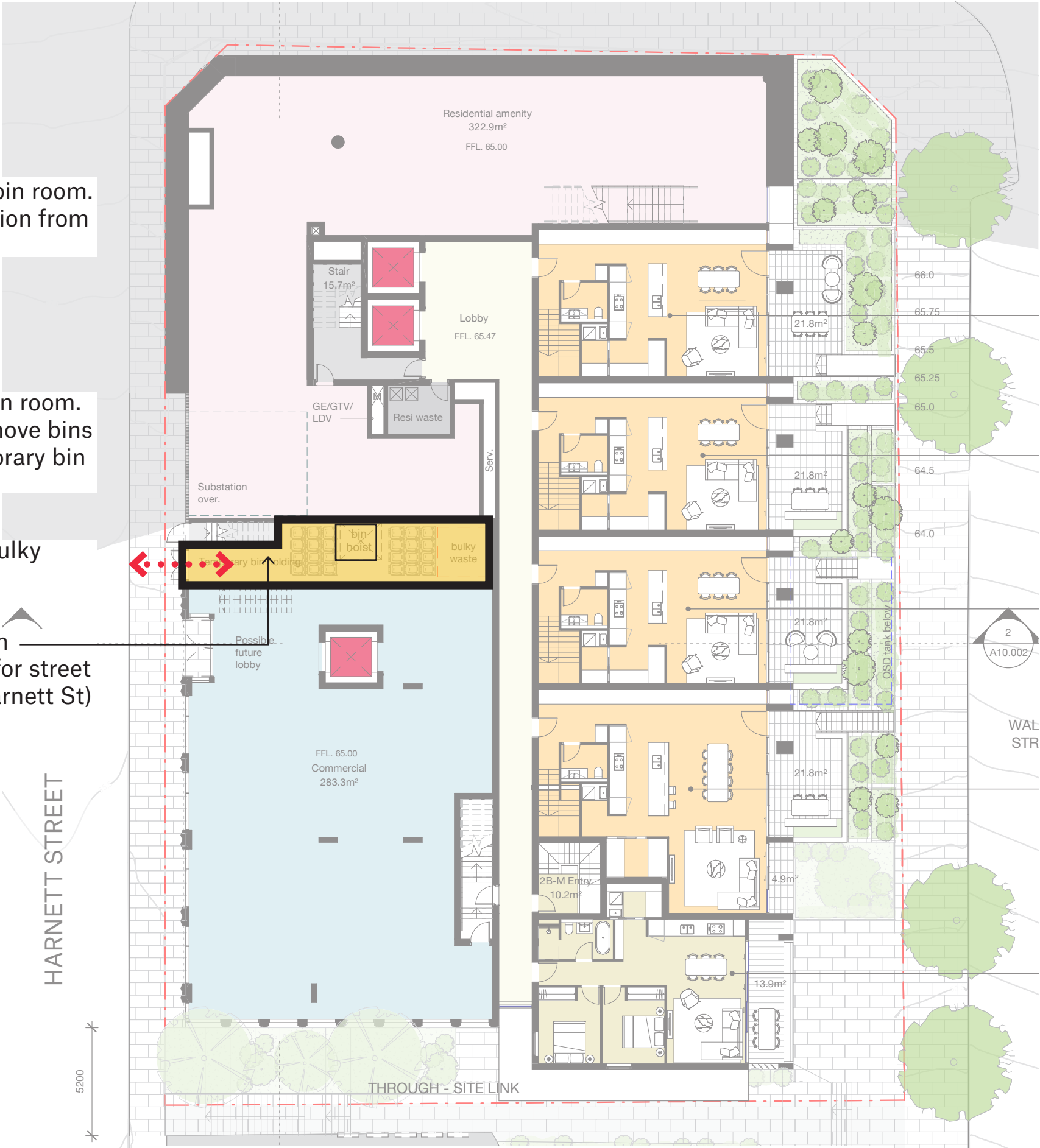
RFI Item 4a, 4b, 4d & 4f

The following plans highlight the path of travel for bins from loading dock to temporary bin holding area for residential waste on Harnett Street. As noted in council RFI, a designated bulky waste room has been proposed in the loading dock.

The commercial waste is proposed to be collected from loading dock on site.



Lower Ground



Ground



## Bicycle parking & facilities

*All aspects of bicycle parking and facilities must comply with the **Australian Standard AS2890.3** and **Council's DCP**. Details of all bike storage/parking spaces required by the DCP must be shown on the architectural plans*

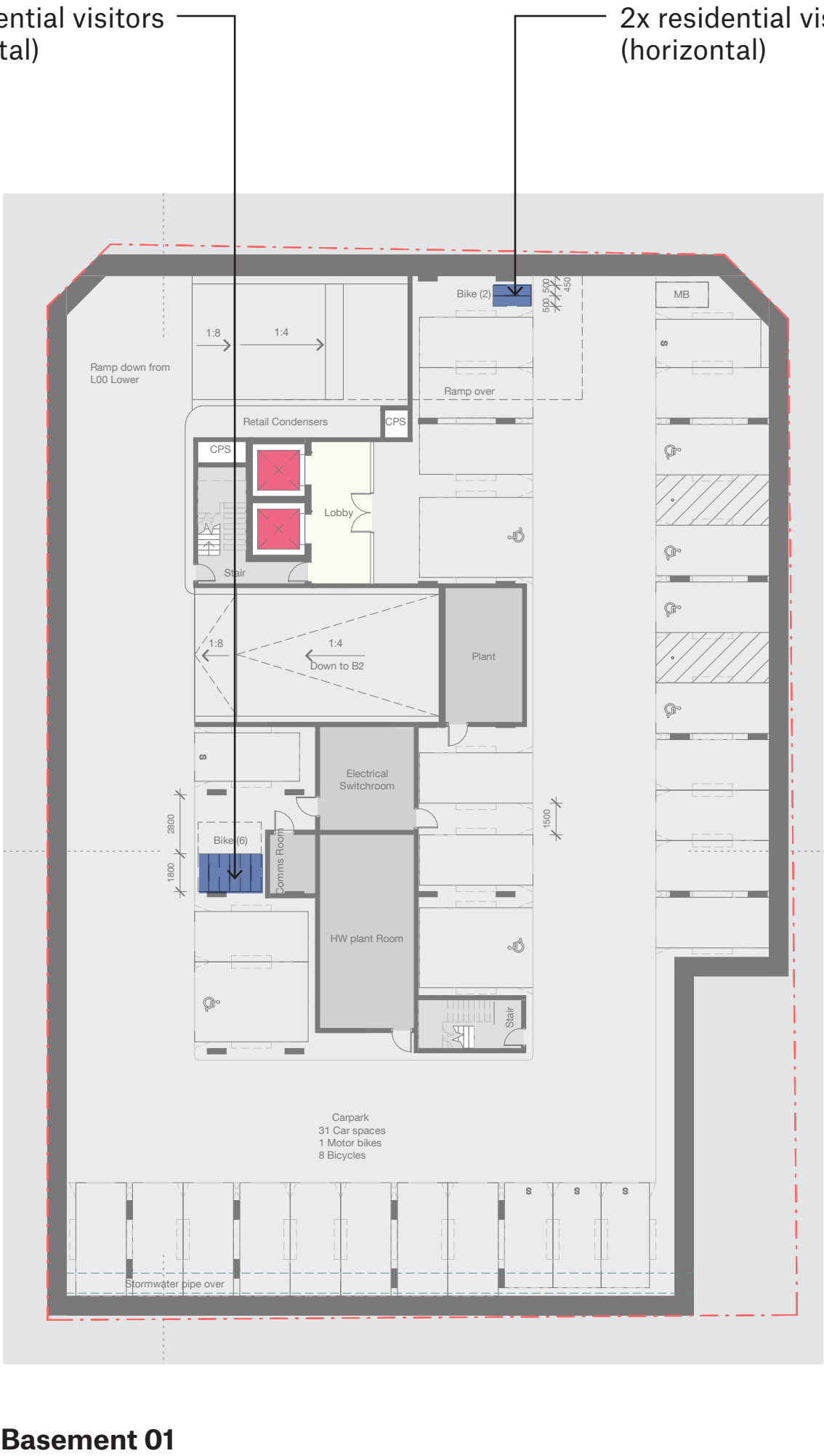
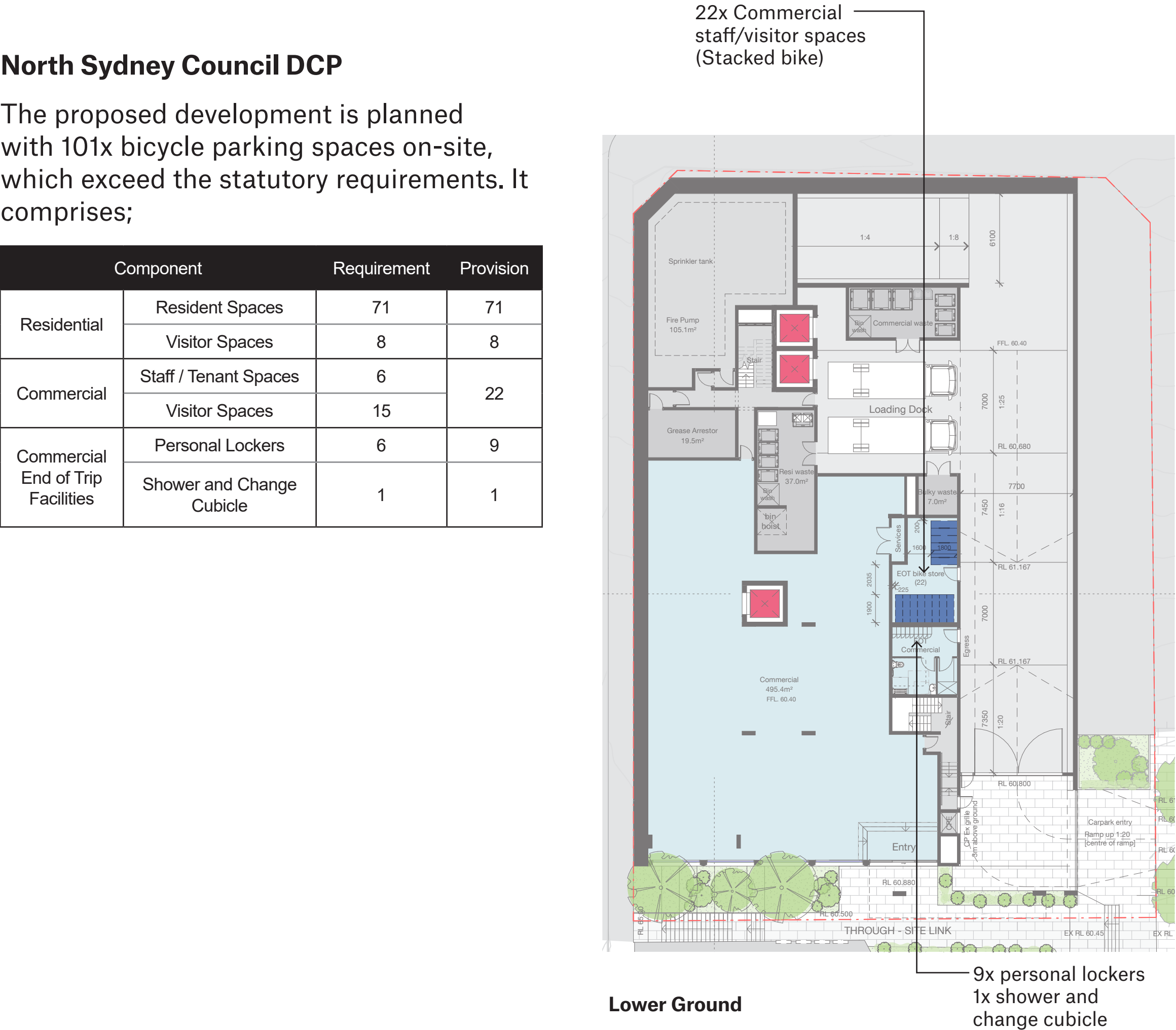


# Bicycle parking & facilities

## North Sydney Council DCP

The proposed development is planned with 101x bicycle parking spaces on-site, which exceed the statutory requirements. It comprises;

Component		Requirement	Provision
Residential	Resident Spaces	71	71
	Visitor Spaces	8	8
Commercial	Staff / Tenant Spaces	6	22
	Visitor Spaces	15	
Commercial End of Trip Facilities	Personal Lockers	6	9
	Shower and Change Cubicle	1	1



RFI Item 5c



## Building Core

*Common circulation - The 35m long **internal corridor serving up to 10 apartments** per floor is unacceptable. The ADG limits this to eight dwellings. **A second core** and / or an open stair **should be considered** up to level 6, which could also allow enhanced daylight penetration to the corridor.*



# Building Core Proposed DA

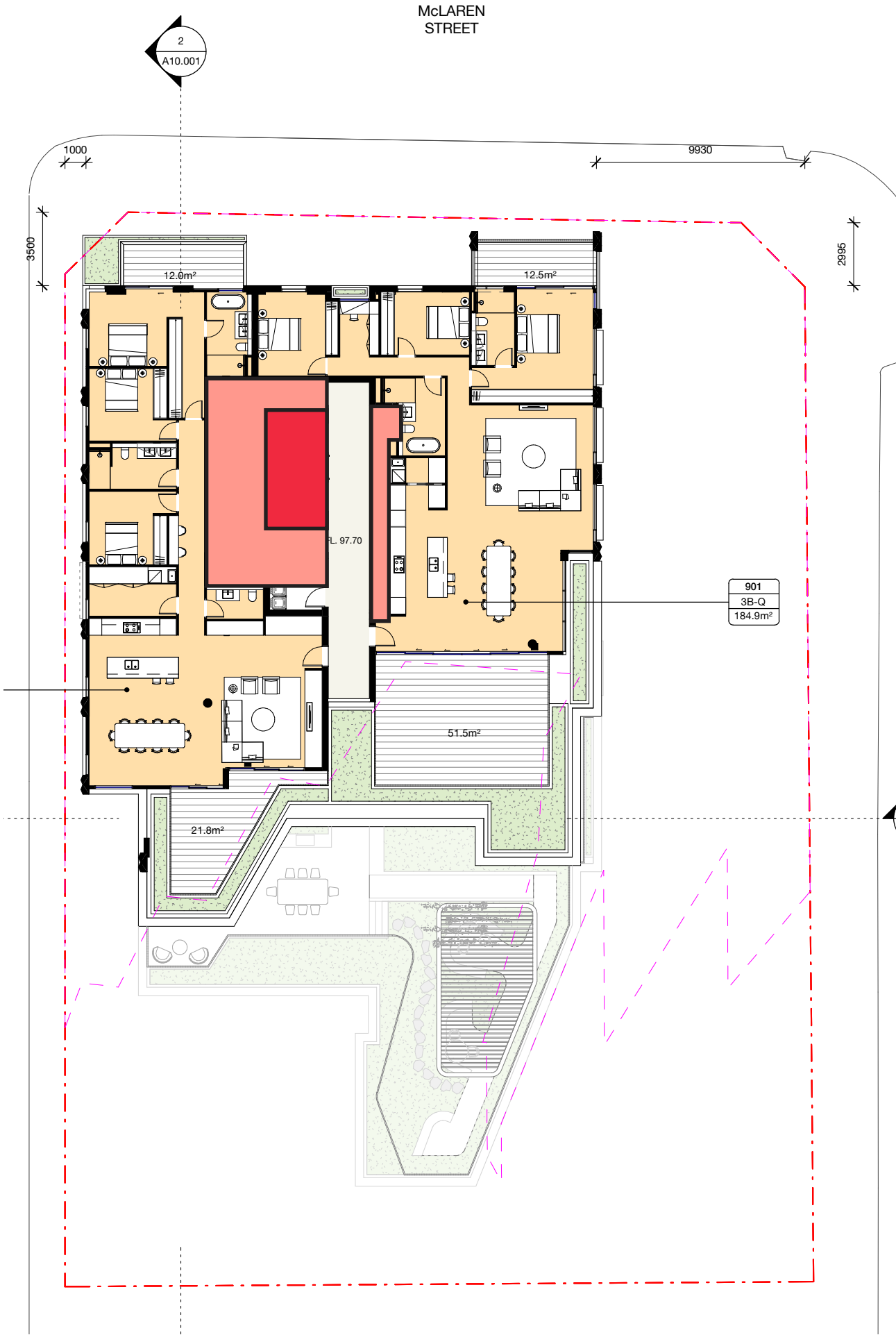
RFI Item 7I

North Sydney Council have questioned whether single core design is sufficient and whether second core may need to be introduced.

Due to its stepped form allowing solar access to future Ward St Precinct Plaza, the only feasible location for high-rise core to the building is North West



Low rise floor (L1)



High rise floor (L9)



# Building Core

## Apartment design guide

Apartment design guide (ADG) notes that the maximum number for apartments off a circulation core on a single level is eight.

However, it is worth noting that ADG also notes if this cannot be achieved, no more than 12 apartments should be provided off a circulation core on a single level

Apartments off a circulation core on a single level in the current DA submission;

- **Level 1** - 10 units
- **Level 2 & 3** - 9 units
- **Level 4 & up** - No more than 8 units

<b>Objective 4F-1</b> Common circulation spaces achieve good amenity and properly service the number of apartments	
<b>Design criteria</b>	
1.	The maximum number of apartments off a circulation core on a single level is eight
2.	For buildings of 10 storeys and over, the maximum number of apartments sharing a single lift is 40

<b>Design guidance</b>	
Achieving the design criteria for the number of apartments off a circulation core may not be possible. Where a development is unable to achieve the design criteria, a high level of amenity for common lobbies, corridors and apartments should be demonstrated, including:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• sunlight and natural cross ventilation in apartments</li><li>• access to ample daylight and natural ventilation in common circulation spaces</li><li>• common areas for seating and gathering</li><li>• generous corridors with greater than minimum ceiling heights</li><li>• other innovative design solutions that provide high levels of amenity</li></ul>	
Where design criteria 1 is not achieved, no more than 12 apartments should be provided off a circulation core on a single level	
Primary living room or bedroom windows should not open directly onto common circulation spaces, whether open or enclosed. Visual and acoustic privacy from common circulation spaces to any other rooms should be carefully controlled	

Apartment design guide



Lift lobby & corridor on residential levels



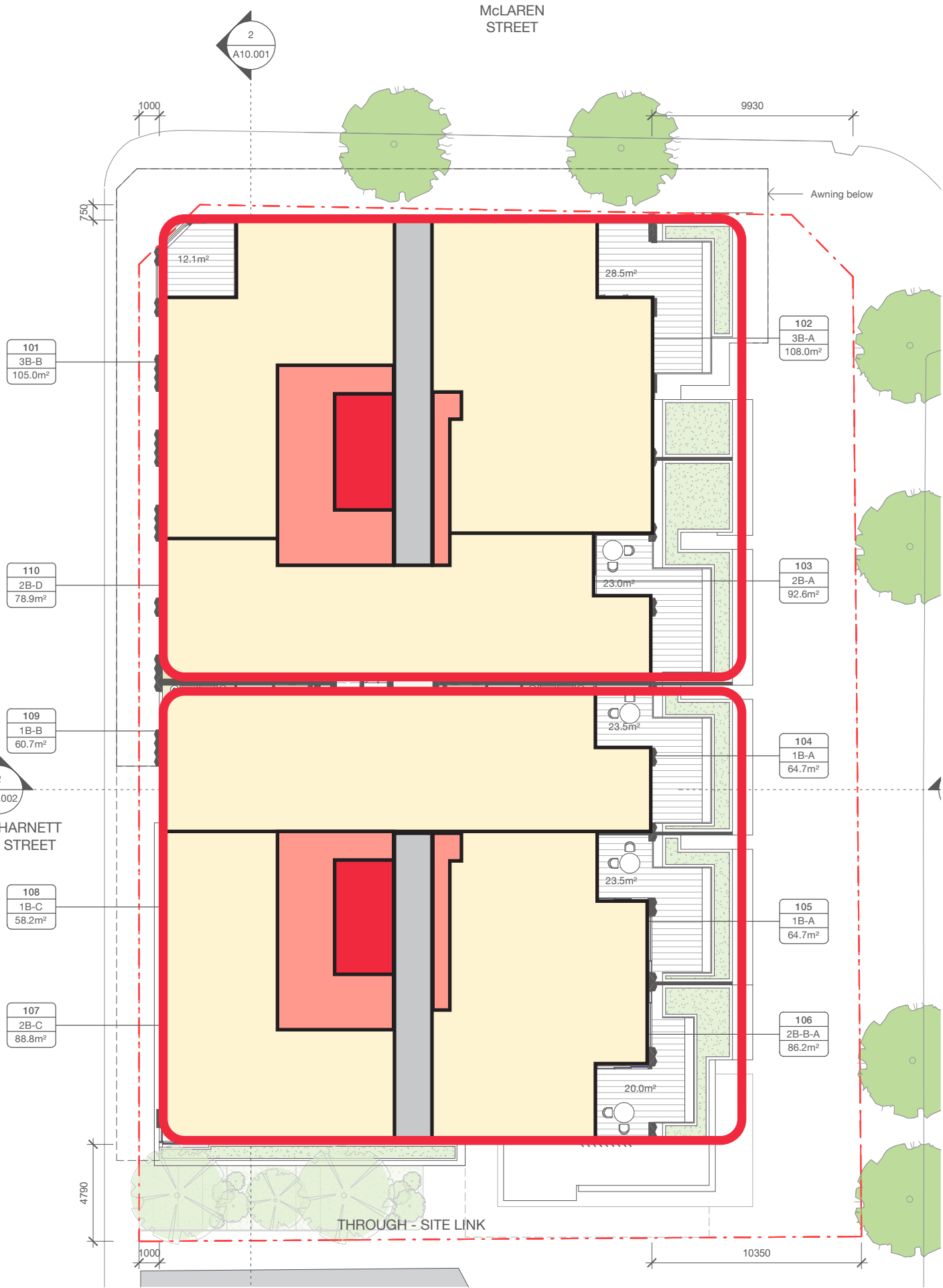
# Building Core

## Dual core study

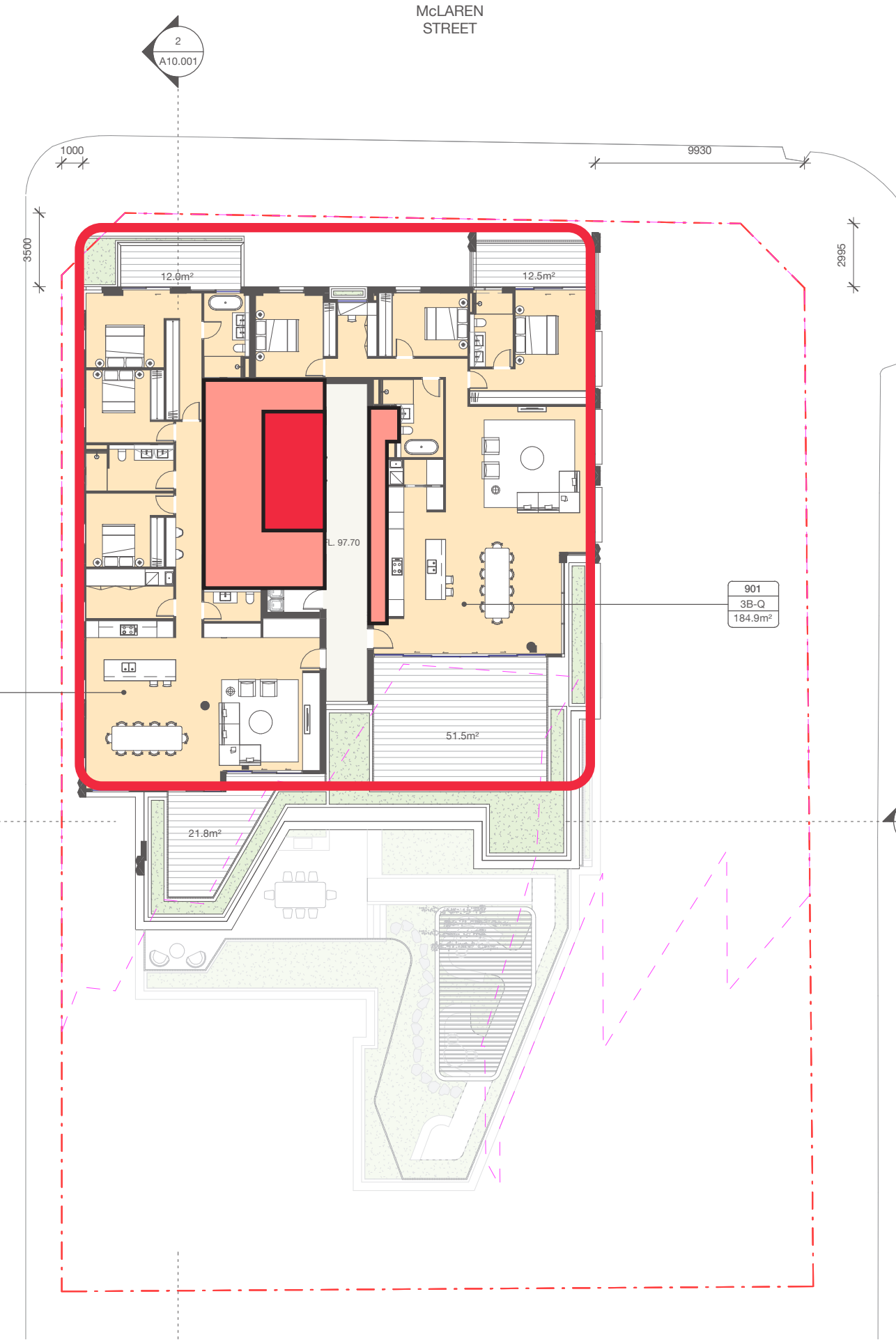
If additional core is be introduced, the most logical location for second core is located further south, dividing the floor plate into two - serving lower floors only.

By introducing additional core, it will lead to;

- Duplication of lifts, stairs and services
- Need to additional plant areas (ie. stair press etc.)
- Less efficient building
- Increased embodied carbon due to additional structure
- Likely to reduce number of units & carspaces
- Negatively impacts viability of commercial tenancies on podium levels.
- Likely to increase cross ventilation.



Low rise floor (L1)



High rise floor (L9)



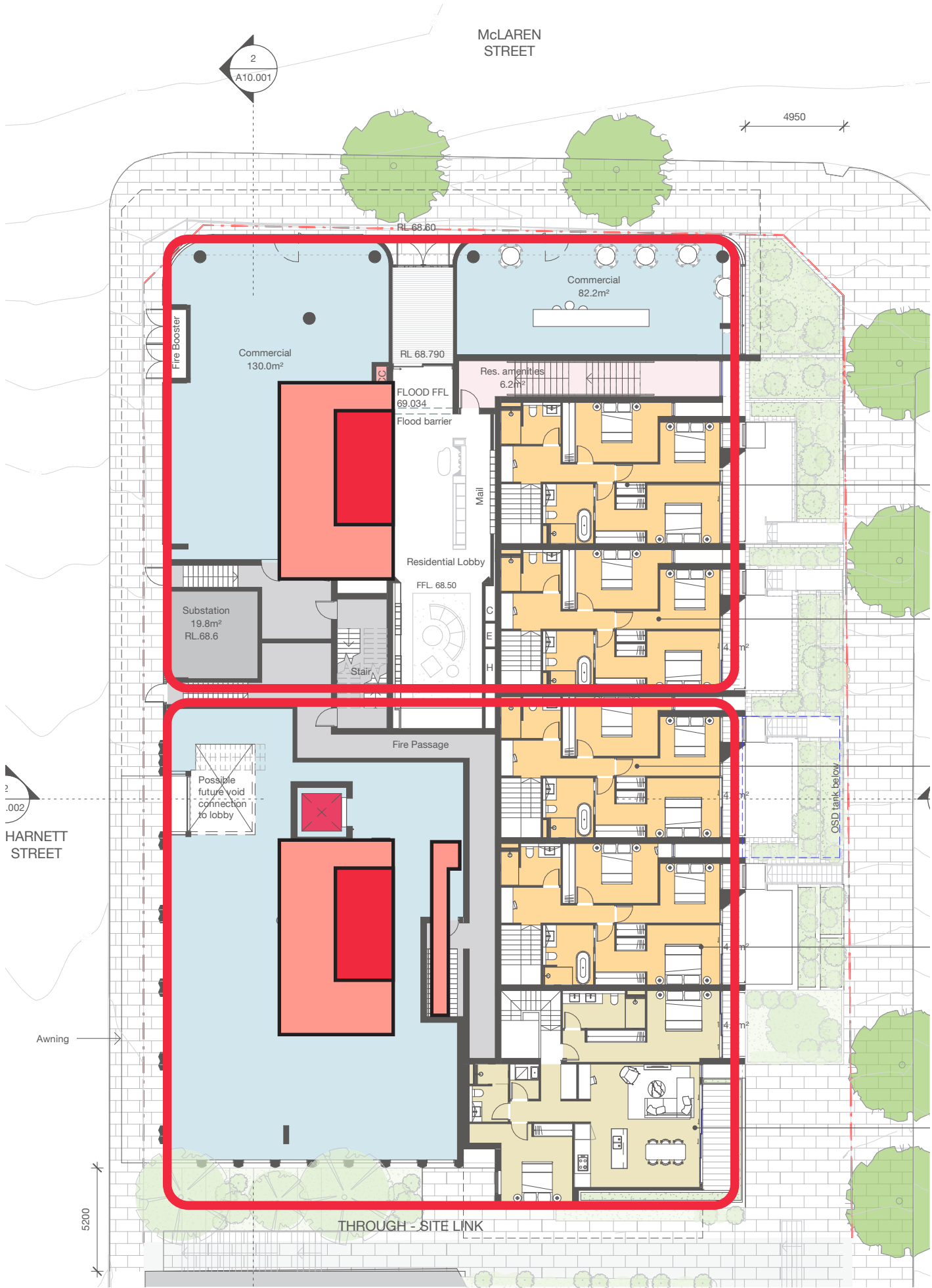
# Building Core

## Dual core study

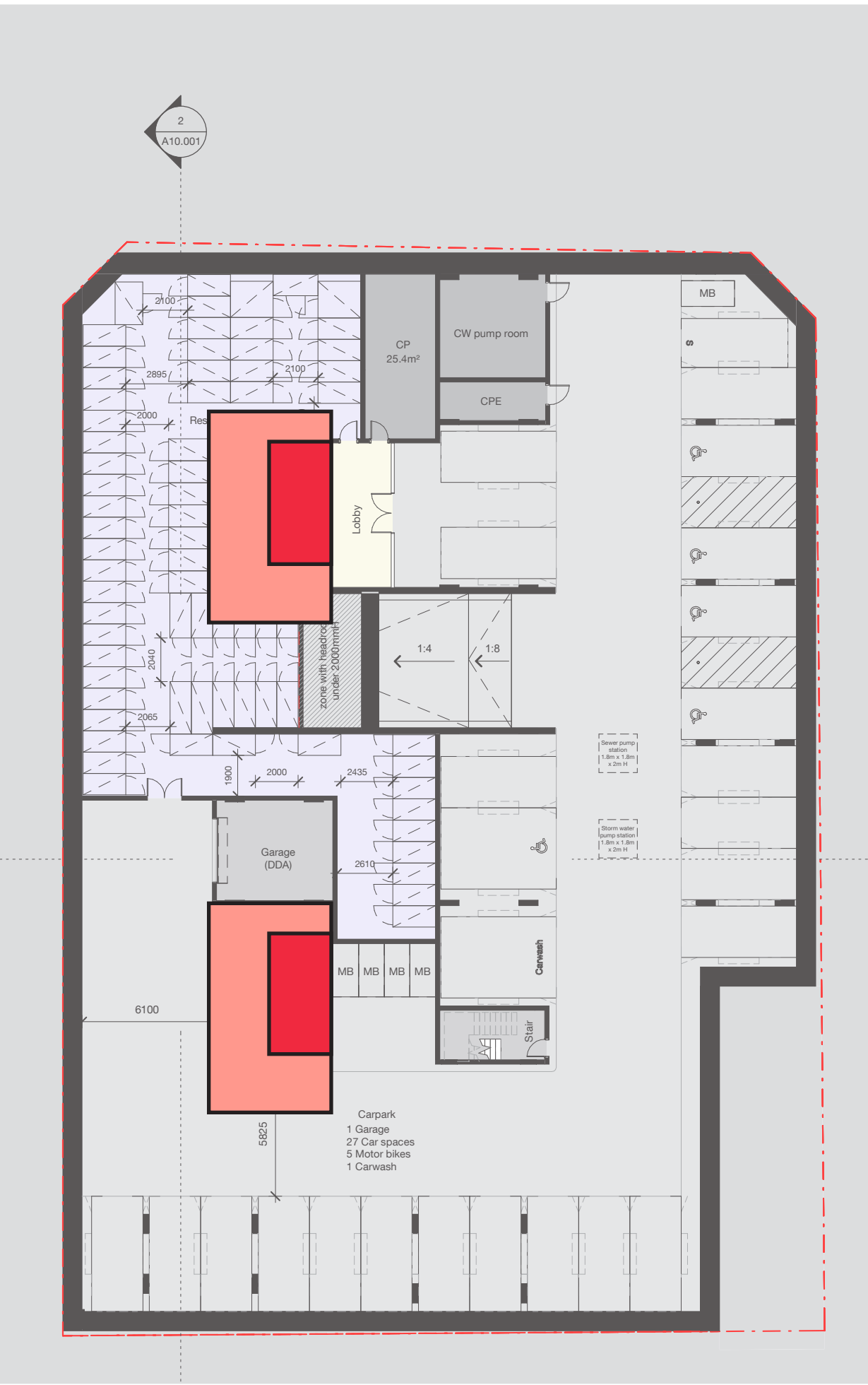
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Podium Level (Upper Ground)



Basement Level (B2)