

Improvements to Public Realm and Conversion of Office to Residential
Terlingham Forum and Land off Hurricane Way, Hawkinge, Kent

DESIGN STATEMENT

29653B
ISSUED 1 April 2020



INTRODUCTION

01

Sub-sections

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In November 2019 Clague Architects were appointed by Pentland to undertake a review of the current layout and features of the public realm at Terlingham Forum, Hawkinge, as part of a wider proposal to improve the area and utilise the existing unoccupied commercial buildings on this and the opposite site for a suitable new use as part of a revitalised public space.

This purpose of this Design Statement is to supplement the application drawings and Planning Statement to describe the proposals in further detail.

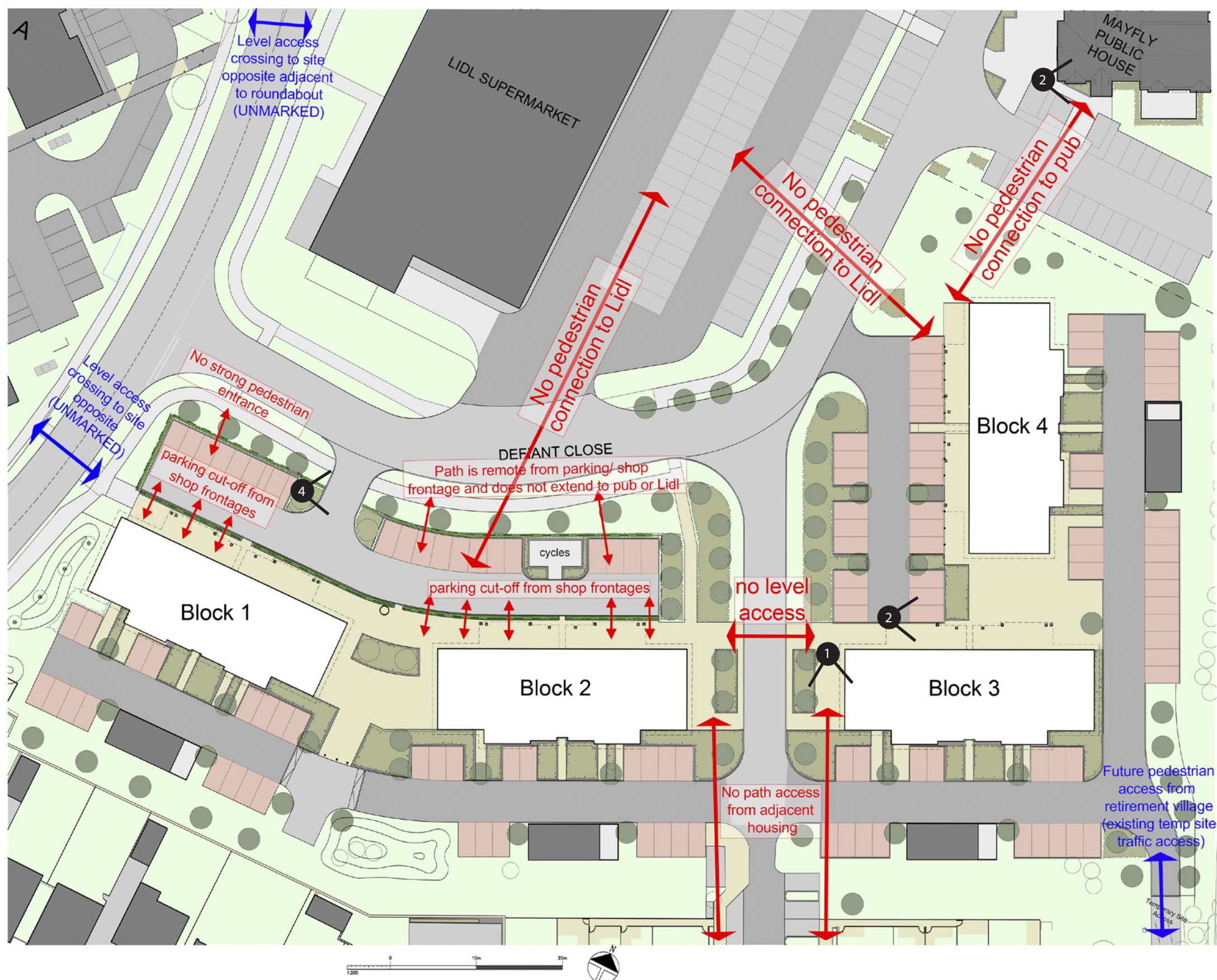
Descriptions of the existing use of the site are based on analysis of the layout drawings and a site visit in November 2019 which involved observations of pedestrian and vehicular movement and conversations with users and shop owners.

The site is located toward the south of the village of Hawkinge on the former RAF Hawkinge airbase.

The overall site is directly adjacent to the A260 Spitfire Way, which lies within a cutting to the east. To the north is a supermarket and public house To the south is recently completed housing, and a retirement village currently under construction. To the west is a care home.



Site Location



Analysis of Existing Site

Connectivity

The four buildings that front Terlingham Forum are separated into two equal areas each with two blocks, divided by a road giving access to the rear residential parking, service vehicles and housing to the south.

Vehicular access and parking dominate the layout with no strong connection between the two areas, and no level access across the central road. commercial interest. The external areas are dominated by parking and vehicular access.

Analysis of Existing Site

Connectivity (cont)

Arriving by car, the parking areas are also separate, and the parking to Blocks 1 and 2 is cut off from the shop frontages by hedges with limited gaps. There is one area of disabled parking in front of Block 1, and an area designated as cycle storage, but with no hoops installed in front of Block 2.

Walking into the site, there is no focal entrance, which, when combined with the barriers described above lead to pedestrians following desire lines that cut across parking areas and roads without crossings or following long routes. Pedestrian links to the buildings that form the wider public realm are poor. The adjacent Mayfly public house has a parking area and soft landscaped area between it's entrance and the Forum.

The Lidl supermarket has a wide vehicle access for parking and service vehicles. The road crossing adjacent does not lead to any link to either of the adjacent buildings.

Whilst the planted areas are generally well established and offer visual breaks and natural screening, they also block desire lines, and segregate the areas from each other and the surrounding pedestrian connections.

The site on the opposite side of Hurricane Way features five Business Units that are currently empty due to lack of commercial interest. The external areas are dominated by parking and vehicular access.



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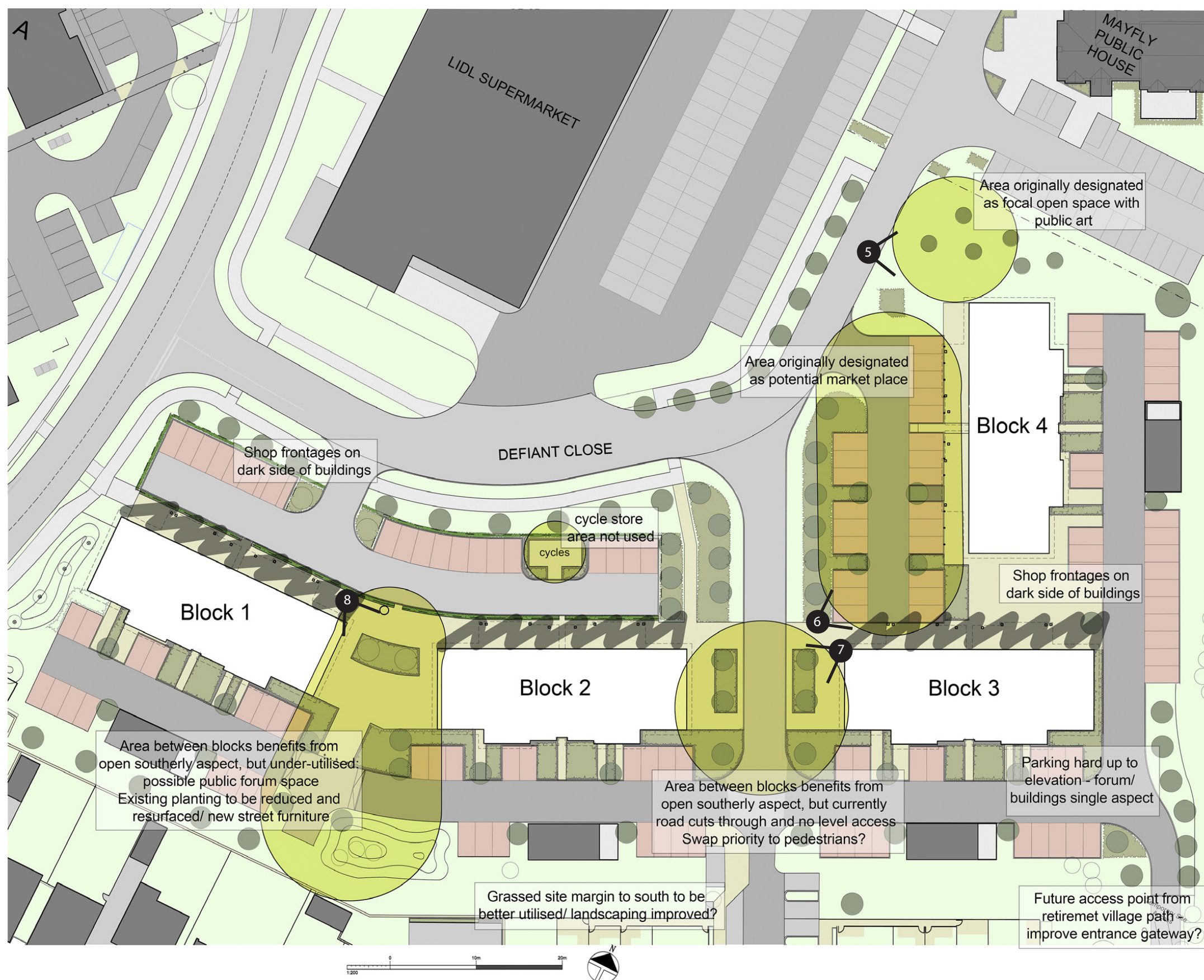


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Analysis of Existing Site

External Spaces

The original indicative planning layouts showed a potential area for public art to the north, between Block 4 and the Mayfly pub, and use of the parking area adjacent as a possible marketplace. Neither of these were implemented, and could offer a significant benefit for the wider public.



External Spaces (cont)

The site orientation is such that the main shop frontages are all to the north of three storey buildings, so are fully in shade through the day. There are two breaks in the buildings with better southerly outlook, and the car park to Blocks 3 and 4 is sufficiently set-back to give potential for a better public space.

Users of the Forum are split into two groups. Firstly, visitors using the shops etc who will travel into the site from elsewhere, generally by car. There is currently little public amenity benefit for visitors to remain, browse, rest or meet with others. This reduces the communal connection that is needed for the local people to view the site as an ongoing benefit to the community.

The other group to consider are the residents of the upper floors, who have parking to the rear, but no private amenity space.



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Site Analysis – In Conclusion

The cumulative effect of all of these factors results in a disjointed series of spaces, without strong connections to the wider community that negatively impacts the experience of visiting the Forum both by car and on foot. This in turn impacts on the business potential for the units, which is reflected in the current situation of empty units.

PROPOSALS 03



The proposed alterations are intended to strengthen the connections into and within Terlingham Forum, and provide a positive destination for the local community to utilise. This should provide the stimulus for a more commercially viable development. The proposals for the empty commercial site opposite are to convert three of the five buildings to residential apartments with the parking area reduced to the appropriate number of spaces for the new use, and the external areas improved.

Key to Proposals

1. New pedestrian entrance
2. Newly resurfaced informal public space with shade and seating
3. Reconfigured parking area
4. Newly resurfaced area for pedestrian level access to connect external spaces
5. Newly resurfaced flexible public space for use as parking, occasional marketplace and gatherings
6. Focal public art, and pedestrian connection to Mayfly public house
7. New seating and secure cycle parking
8. New pedestrian access to converted office/residential buildings
9. Reconfigured external areas adjacent to Blocks A, B and C for private amenity space
10. Reduced parking areas - additional shared amenity/landscaping areas
11. New path connection from retirement village

The proposed alterations are intended to strengthen the connections into and within Terlingham Forum, and provide a positive destination for the local community to utilise. This should provide the stimulus for a more commercially viable development. The proposals for the empty commercial site opposite are to convert three of the five buildings to residential apartments with the parking area reduced to the appropriate number of spaces for the new use, and the external areas improved.

A new pedestrian entrance is proposed for the Forum, with the parking reconfigured and the surface finish and levels changed to create a more pedestrian focussed approach.

Gaps will be formed in the hedges that separate the parking from the shopfronts, to increase permeability.

The road that divides the site will be altered to give pedestrians priority, and the large planted areas adapted to link the two spaces into a single defined public space.





The public space directly opposite the new entrance, between Blocks 2 and 3 will be provided with new benches, and shade, primarily intended to offer the residents of the apartments some external amenity space. It also provides the opportunity for spill out space from the adjacent units, should the final use be suitable and appropriate.

The parking area adjacent to Blocks 3 and 4 will be adapted to provide a flexible event space, for use as farmers market, charity book sales etc. To the north, there will be a new path link to the Mayfly, with new public art area adjacent.

To the south of the site, there will be a new path link from the retirement village and housing directly adjacent. New trees will be planted to better define the southern edge, and provide screening to the parking area from the rear of the new houses.

The external areas adjacent to the converted residential buildings will provide new direct pathways to the entrances, and additional planting to the communal parking areas and access. The areas directly adjacent to the ground floor apartments will become private amenity spaces.



CONCLUSION

04

The proposed design has been formulated to make significant improvements and to ensure the long term benefits will continue to sustain an important community hub.

Published by Clague architects LLP

First published in December 2020

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