
THE WHEAT QUARTER
DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

7. DESIGN
LOUIS DE SOISSONS

7.1. CONCEPT

OVERVIEW

Sitting at the eastern end of the footbridge, the Louis de Soissons building is one of the first buildings seen by pedestrians approaching the new residential and Cultural Quarter from the town centre and the train station. Accordingly, the proposed building has a special significance in the master plan. It accommodates a mixture of uses and sits on the most prominent location – Goodman Square – opposite the former factory buildings designed by the late Louis de Soissons.

Louis de Soissons Architects – the practice that carries on the legacy of Welwyn Garden City’s original chief architect – had been appointed to design the Civic Building which forms part of the extant consent.

ColladoCollins have since updated this design to accommodate an additional floor of accommodation within the previously consented envelope.

The proposed design for the LDS Building aims to provide an elegant, contemporary and suitably powerful entrance to the exciting and vibrant new Quarter. The distinctive form and materials contrast with the adjacent buildings – both existing and proposed – and are intended to complement the building’s setting.

The Louis de Soissons building has been set out in accordance with the current BCO (British Council for Offices) ‘Guide to Specification’.

Internal floor to ceiling height will be a minimum of 2.7m to main office areas (no ceilings provided within main floorplates – exposed structural soffits). 2.4m minimum to toilet core areas.

The LDS Building is proposed to be 6 storeys in height.

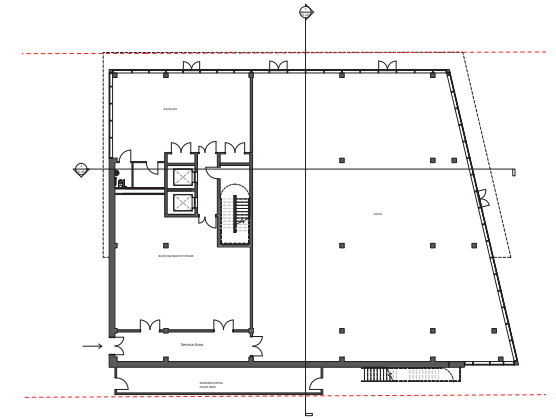


The LDS location diagram

USE, LAYOUT, ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Gross internal area (GIA) | 3,256 m ² |
| Number of storeys | 6 |

| Floor | Use | GIA (m ²) |
|--------|------|-----------------------|
| Ground | E/F1 | 745 |
| First | E/F1 | 526 |
| Second | E/F1 | 526 |
| Third | E/F1 | 526 |
| Fourth | E/F1 | 526 |
| Fifth | E/F1 | 406 |

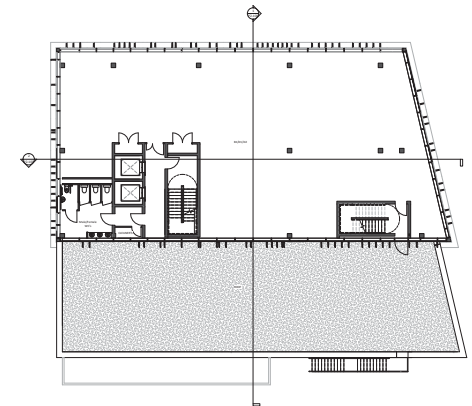


Ground floor plan

The ground floor unit is intended to be a restaurant or coffee shop for residents and visitors to the Cultural Quarter.

The First floor benefits from access to a south facing roof terrace. This terrace is proposed as communal space accessible by all the upper floors of the building.

Service access to the ground floor A3 unit and offices is discreetly located at the rear of the building, for deliveries and rubbish collection via Hydeway.



First floor plan



7.2. APPEARANCE

DESIGN DETAILS & MATERIALS

Initial sketches for this building were aimed at creating a gridded, white framed building, sympathetic to the character and form of the retained Listed Buildings.

That architectural language, however, was used for many of the proposed residential blocks elsewhere in the proposed scheme. It became clear that this prominent building needed to have a singular design, deliberately contrasting with the Shredded Wheat factory and the surrounding new blocks, and reflecting its particular use – neither residential nor cultural.

The building is designed as an elegant and simple dark glass block, clad with an irregular grid of projecting black metal fins that provide depth and a changing appearance when seen from around the Wheat Quarter site.

The ground floor is set back some two metres from the upper floors, so that the main bulk of the building appears to float above the ground. The overhang also provides shelter and shade to the ground floor unit.

The top floor is also set back some two metres, partly to create an attractive wrap-around roof terrace to the offices, but also to reduce the apparent bulk of the building.

The dark glass, minimal framing, and the black metal fins are elements of a contemporary design with an industrial legacy, in response to the previous use of the Wheat Quarter site and to the black metal framework of the important pedestrian railway bridge. Also, the original industrial building on this location was a tall, thin and unusually dark building, with deep bands of dark grey brickwork, so the design pays subtle homage to that building.

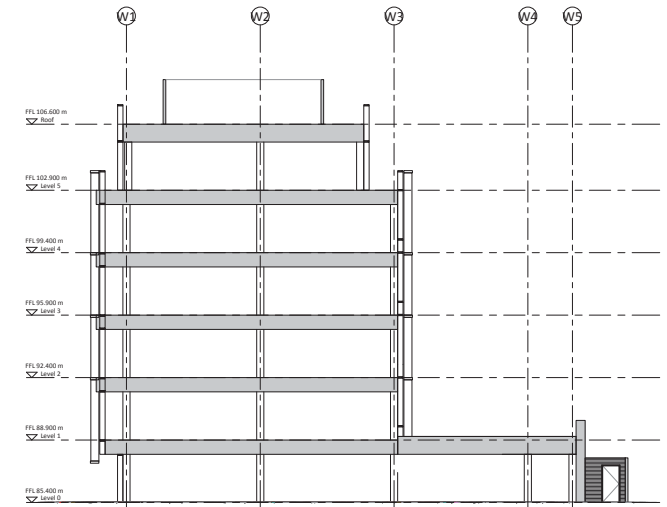
The projecting metal fins provide vertical emphasis to the elevations, which reflects the verticality of the



Design precedents. Left: Vincent Van Duysen. AVH Offices. Antwerp, Belgium. 2002 (unbuilt). Right: Park Associati. La Serenissima building. Milan, Italy. 2012.

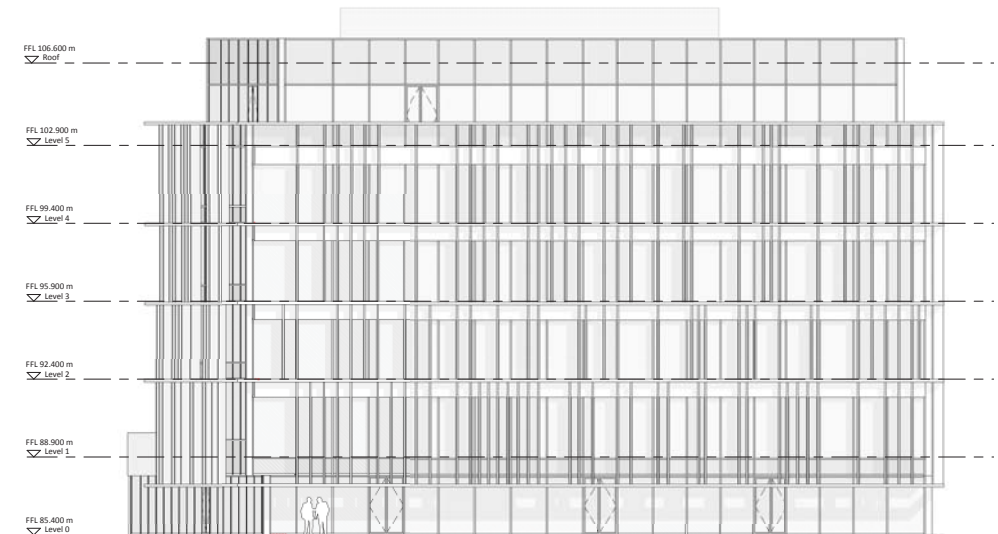


retained adjacent silos. A landscaped deck has been created outside the building's first floor. This deck will form an attractive feature for pedestrians approaching the Wheat Quarter site.



Goodman Square Elevation

Section



TYPICAL BAY DETAIL



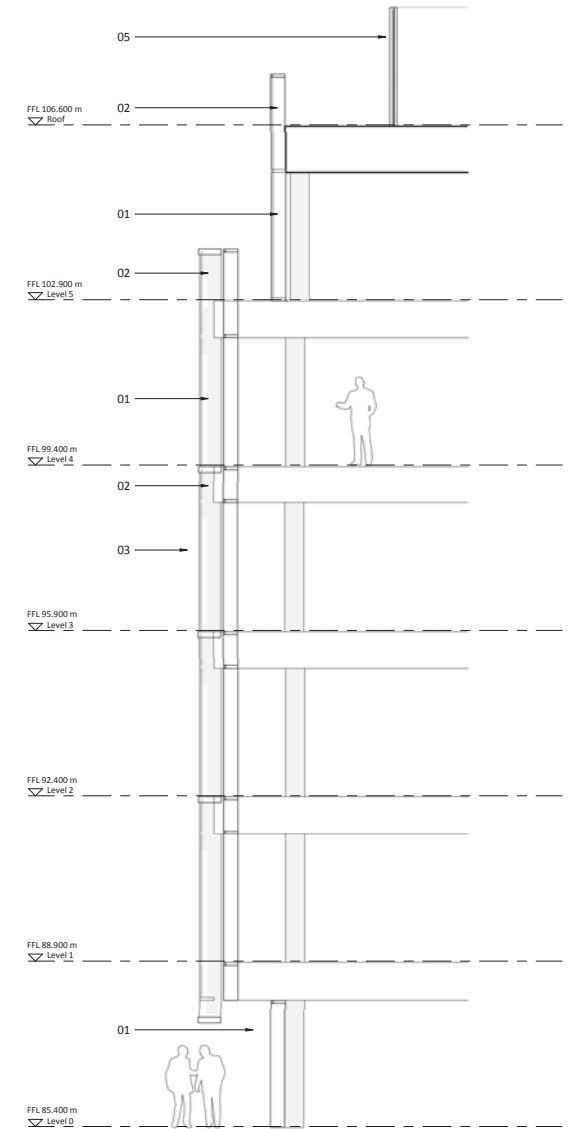
1 Facade Elevation Detail

1 : 50

Material Notes:

- 01. Double glazed PPC Stick Curtain Wall System
- 02. Double glazed PPC Stick Curtain Wall System - Back Painted Spandrel
- 03. GRC (Glass reinforced concrete) vertical and horizontal fin system, smooth finish
- 04. GRC (Glass reinforced concrete) rainscreen panels, semi-sandblasted finish
- 05. Screening single bank PPC louvre system

SECTION & MATERIALS



2 Facade Section Detail

1 : 50

