

THE SYSTEM AS INFRASTRUCTURE

This underlying logic is carried through consistently across all scales of the proposal. **The 600mm grid is not simply a dimensional tool, but a coordinating system** that aligns structure, envelope, and internal subdivision. It establishes a disciplined framework within which architecture can be organised with precision, reducing tolerance for inconsistency while allowing variation to occur in a controlled manner. In this sense, the grid operates as a form of spatial infrastructure, an ordering device that precedes and governs the architecture it produces.

The centralised service spine reinforces this order. By consolidating servicing into a fixed and repeatable zone, the remainder of the plan is liberated from technical constraint. This creates a **clear distinction between elements that must remain constant and those that can adapt**, enabling spaces to shift between uses over time without undermining the integrity of the building. The system therefore accommodates change not through flexibility alone, but through a deliberate separation of fixed and variable components. Structure and servicing provide stability, while occupation remains open-ended.

This approach also establishes a clear environmental strategy. The regularised grid minimises material waste, supports off-site fabrication, and enables efficient structural spans. The consolidation of services reduces distribution complexity, . . . reuse and reconfiguration. Together, these principles contribute to a **reduction in whole-life carbon** and support a more circular approach to housing delivery.

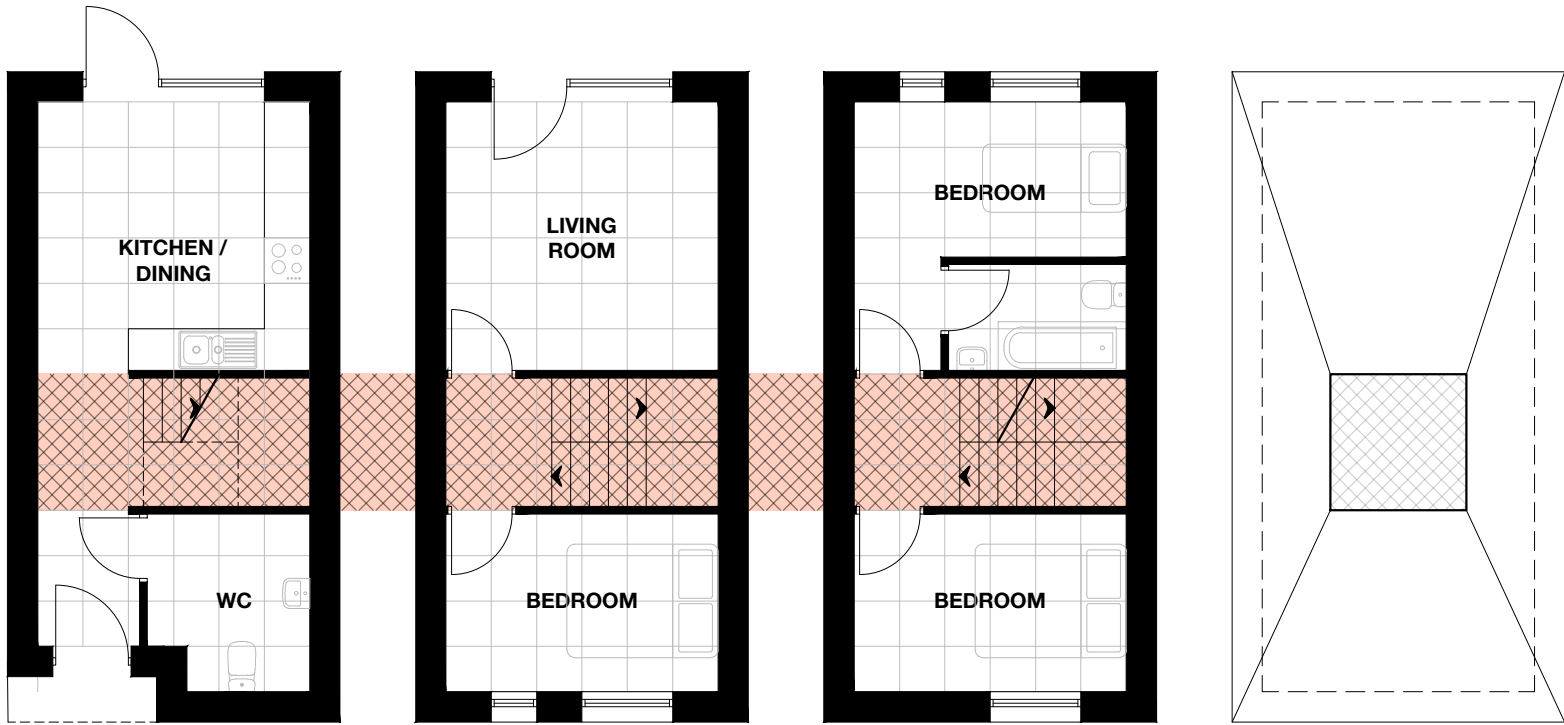
This distinction extends beyond the individual dwelling. Across the scheme, multiple housing types are derived from the same

organisational logic. Houses and apartments are **not treated as discrete typologies, but as different configurations of a shared structural and serviced framework**. Variation emerges through subdivision, aggregation, and orientation, rather than through the introduction of new systems. This ensures consistency in construction and performance, while supporting diversity in occupation, tenure, and household structure.

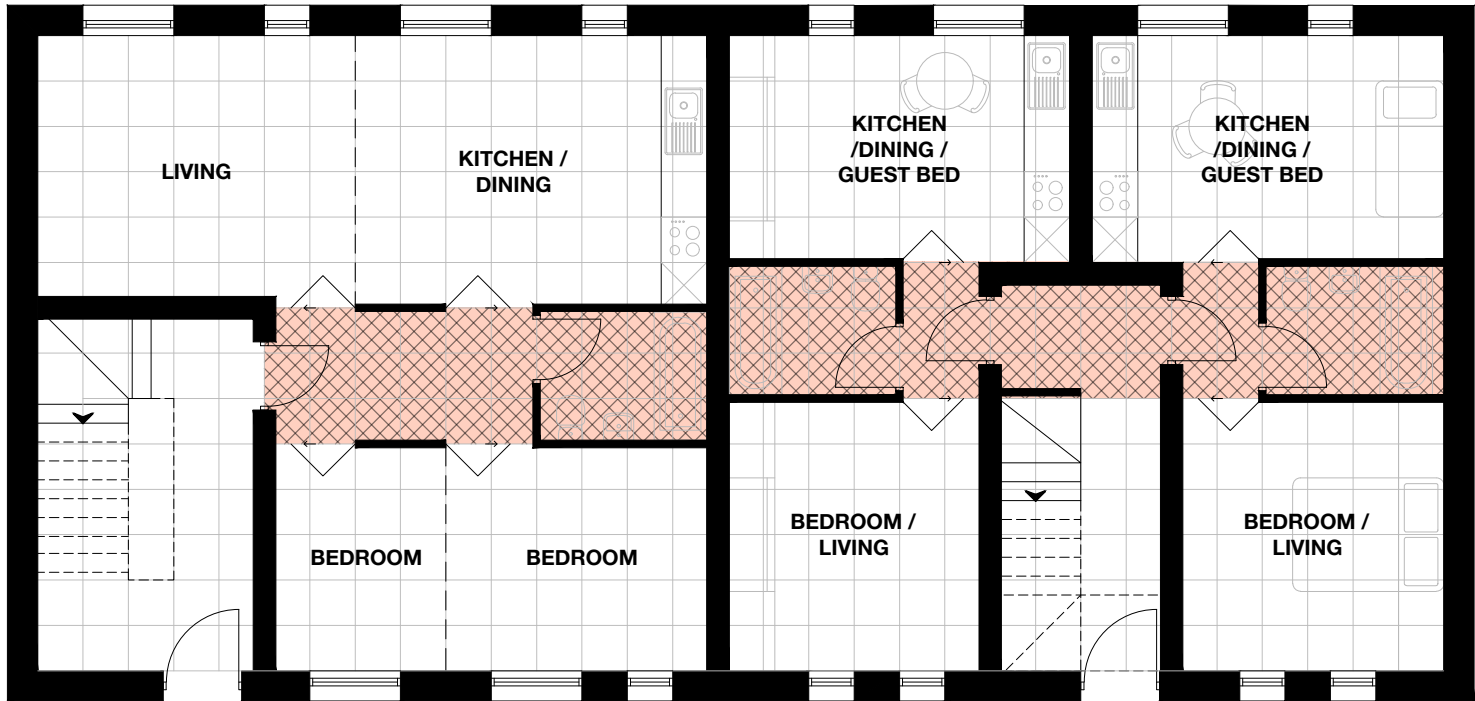
In this way, the system establishes a direct relationship between efficiency and adaptability. Repetition is not used to produce uniformity, but to enable clarity. Each building is constructed from the same set of rules, yet capable of responding to its position within the wider composition. The perimeter block, courtyard condition, and interfaces with the surrounding context are therefore not composed independently, but generated through the consistent application of this logic.

The axonometric drawing makes this relationship explicit. What appears as a collection of buildings is in fact an aggregation of a single system, applied repeatedly and adjusted to suit context. Individual units are understood as iterations of a common structure, while the overall urban form emerges through their arrangement. The system extends from the scale of the room to the scale of the site, ensuring that spatial order is maintained throughout.

Crucially, the integrity of the **architecture is not dependent on fixed form, but on the consistency of the framework that governs it**. This allows the scheme to accommodate change over time, whether through shifting patterns of occupation, evolving household needs, or future adaptation, without requiring fundamental alteration to its structure. The system also allows for future intensification, with additional storeys or infill development capable of being introduced without altering the underlying logic. Architecture is therefore repositioned not as a static outcome, but as a durable and adaptable framework for living.



Typical Terrace House - 3BP  
(Adaptable 600 Grid System)



Typical Apartment - 2B3P  
(Adaptable 600 Grid System)

Typical Apartment Block - 1B2P  
(Adaptable 600 Grid System)



# THE HOUSE IS THE SYSTEM

## A 600mm Grid-Based Housing Model for Adaptable Urban Living

The proposal reframes housing not as a collection of individual units, but as a coherent system. At its core is a simple organising principle: a 600mm structural grid combined with a centralised service spine. This establishes a consistent framework for structure, servicing, and spatial order, allowing homes to be arranged, repeated, and adapted without redesign.

Rather than fixing layouts, the system defines relationships. Serviced elements are consolidated within a compact spine, freeing the remaining space to operate as flexible living zones. These spaces can be subdivided, reconfigured, or opened up over time, supporting changing patterns of occupation without requiring structural alteration.

On the site, this logic is applied to form a perimeter condition that responds directly to its context. The existing church is treated as a fixed spatial anchor, around which new housing establishes a clear edge. This creates a protected internal courtyard, prioritising shared space, passive surveillance, and social interaction.

Movement is simplified, and the internal environment is largely free from vehicles,

allowing the courtyard to operate as a safe and legible communal landscape. The result is a housing model that is efficient to build, robust in use, and capable of adapting over time. Architecture is not treated as a static outcome, but as a structured framework for living.

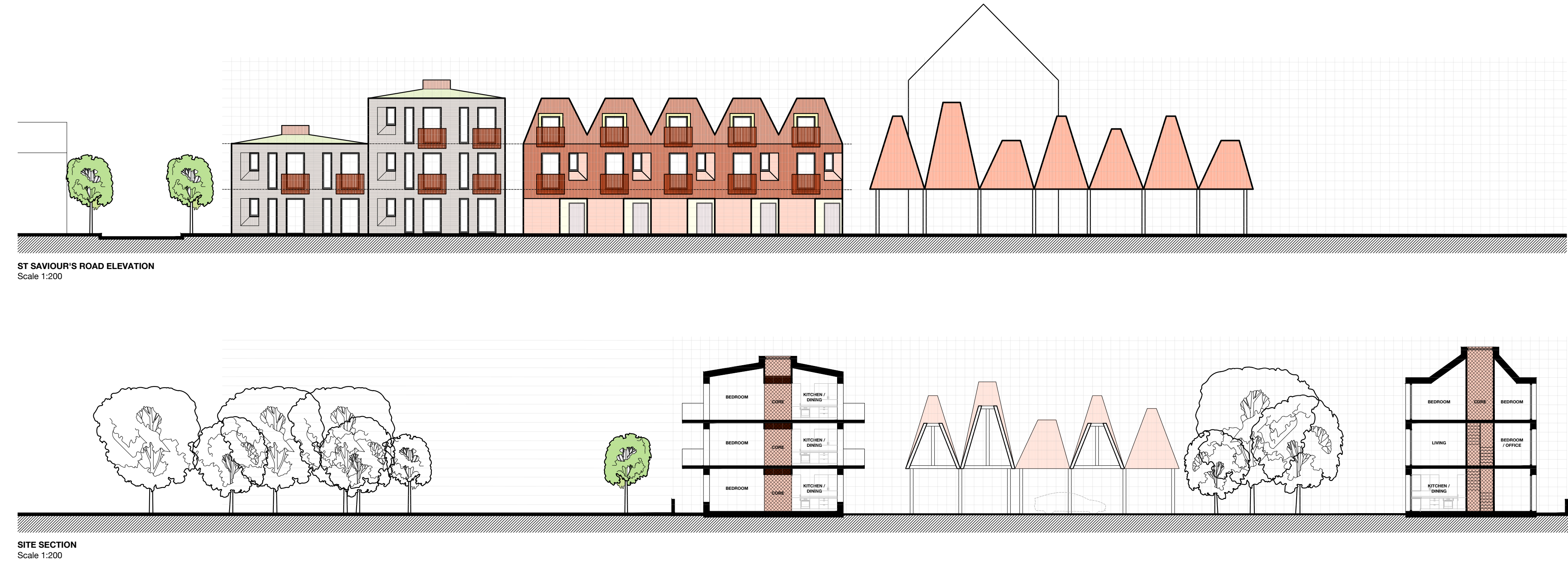
The proposal also responds to the social and spatial character of Saltley, where strong patterns of community life, shared space, and everyday interaction already exist. Rather than imposing a new model of living, the scheme builds on this condition by extending the idea of the street and the threshold into the heart of the site.

The internal courtyard operates not as residual space, but as a continuation of local patterns of occupation: a place for informal gathering, play, and visibility between neighbours.

The adjacent church is treated not simply as a constraint, but as an active civic anchor. Its presence informs both the spatial structure and the programme of the scheme, reinforcing a relationship between living and community infrastructure.

The introduction of a small community room and shared spaces at the interface with the church allows the development to support and extend its role within the area, creating opportunities for overlap between residents and the wider neighbourhood.

In this way, the system is not only spatial and technical, but social. It provides a framework that can accommodate change over time while remaining rooted in the existing character of Saltley, supporting a form of housing that is not only adaptable in plan, but connected in use.



# THE HOUSE IS THE SYSTEM

The proposal reframes housing not as a collection of individual units, but as a coherent system capable of organising space, supporting community, and adapting over time. At its core is a simple but rigorous principle: a 600mm structural grid combined with a centralised service spine. This establishes a consistent framework for structure, servicing, and spatial order, allowing homes to be arranged, repeated, and adapted without the need for continual redesign.

Rather than prescribing fixed layouts, the system defines relationships. Serviced elements are consolidated within a compact spine, separating what must remain constant from what can change. This allows the surrounding space to operate as flexible living areas that can be subdivided, reconfigured, or opened up in response to changing patterns of occupation. Homes are therefore not designed as static products, but as long-term frameworks capable of supporting different household structures over time.

On the site, this logic is applied to form a clear perimeter condition that responds directly to its context. The existing church is treated as a civic anchor, around which the new housing establishes a defined edge. This creates a protected internal courtyard that becomes the social heart of the scheme. Movement is simplified and largely pedestrianised, allowing the shared space to operate as a safe, legible, and overlooked environment that encourages interaction and collective use.

The relationship between the housing and the church is deliberately reinforced. Rather than turning away from the adjacent site, the proposal introduces a controlled interface that connects the residential courtyard to the church grounds. This establishes a shared threshold that supports community use while maintaining security and clarity of access. In doing so, the scheme builds on the existing social and cultural fabric of Saltley, where community life is already structured around local institutions and shared spaces.

Across the development, a range of housing types is derived from the same underlying system. Houses and apartments are not treated as discrete typologies, but as different configurations of a shared structural and serviced framework. This allows variation in unit size and arrangement while maintaining consistency in construction, performance, and spatial logic. The result is a development that is both efficient to deliver and capable of accommodating a diverse range of occupants.

The system also establishes a clear environmental strategy. The regular grid supports efficient structural spans and off-site fabrication, reducing material waste and improving buildability. The consolidation of services minimises distribution complexity, while the adaptability of the plan supports long-term reuse, reducing the need for future demolition or significant alteration. Together, these principles contribute to a reduction in whole-life carbon and support a more sustainable approach to housing delivery.

Ultimately, the proposal is not defined by its form, but by the integrity of the system that underpins it. Architecture is understood as a structured framework rather than a fixed outcome, capable of accommodating change while maintaining spatial clarity and coherence. The result is a housing model that is robust, adaptable, and rooted in its context, one that supports both individual living and collective life.

