

CIVIC.

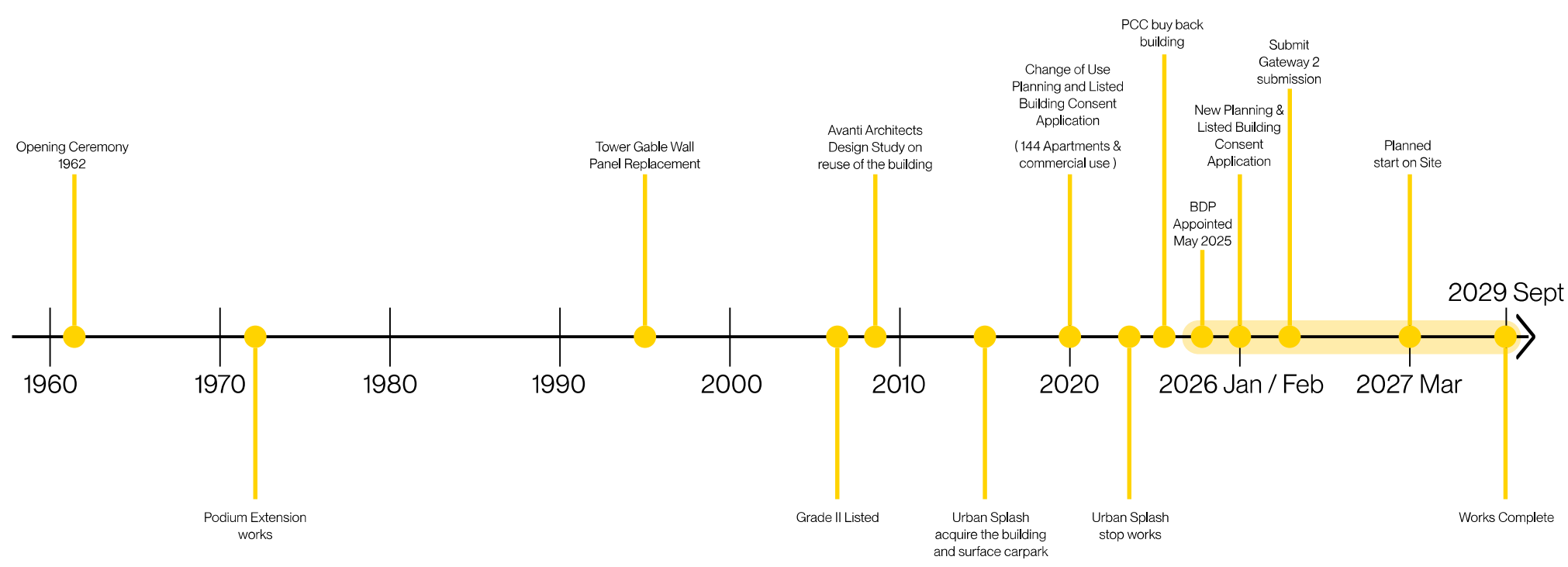
Plymouth Civic Centre Cabinet Design Update Presentation

December 2025

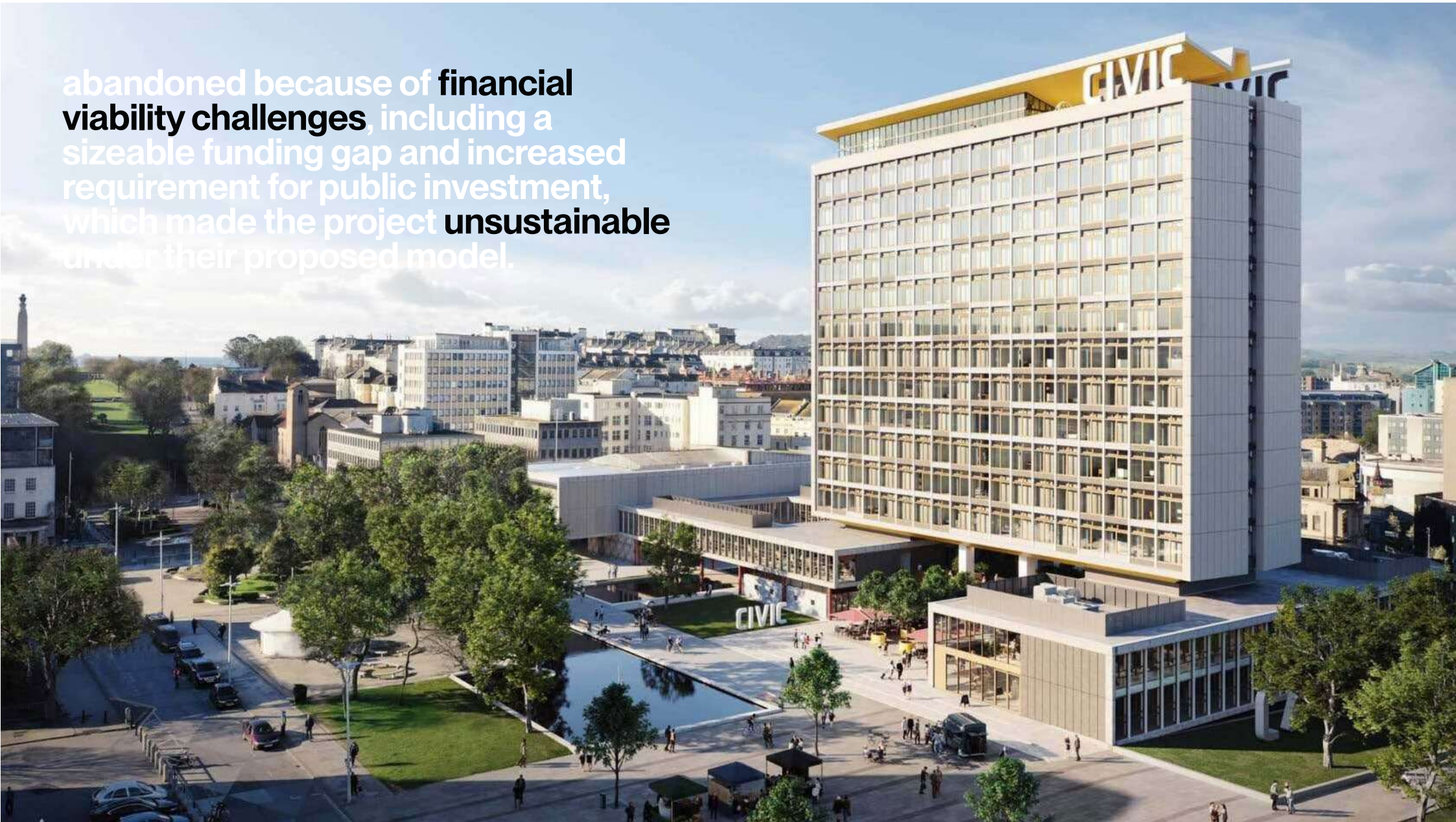
BDP.



WHERE WE ARE UP TO.



abandoned because of **financial viability challenges**, including a sizeable funding gap and increased requirement for public investment, which made the project **unsustainable** under their proposed model.



THE TEAM.

client.

architects.

consultants.

client advisors.

2018

urbansplash

gillespie
yunnie
architects.



HOARE LEA 



FAITHFUL+GOULD

2025



CAPITAL&CENTRIC

BDP.

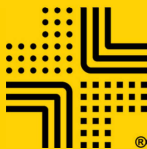
shell and core

AtkinsRéalis
college fitout

BDP.
residential fitout



HOARE LEA 



AECOM

THE WORK SO FAR.

THE HEADLINES

BDP Appointed in May 2025

Delivered Baseline Assessment in May 2025

City College area subdivision study May 2025

Delivered Stage 2 Design Report July 2025

First Pre App held with PCC LPA & Historic England July 2025

HRB Strategy issued to the HSE Aug 2025

First Pre App held with C20 August 2025

First 'actual' internal site visit August 2025

Pre App 02 held Sept 2025 with PCC LPA & Historic England

College Redline Agreed in Sept 2025

Pre App 03 held November 2025

Public Consultation Events held between November - December 2025



THE VISION.

STRATEGIC PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Re-connect the Civic Centre with the city and bring back the love for the building

Submit a **full new Planning and Listed Building Consent** Application at the end of the year (Target December 2025)

144 Homes within the tower to align to Homes England Grant Funding and create a high quality new build to rent market in the city centre

City College Plymouth
Education use within the Podium alongside residents amenities

Remove unsympathetic additions, and **bring the building back to its former glory**

Create **active and animated street frontages and public spaces**

Create **a stronger connection to the Theatre Royal**

Rooftop Tower Amenity Space to allow occasional access for public

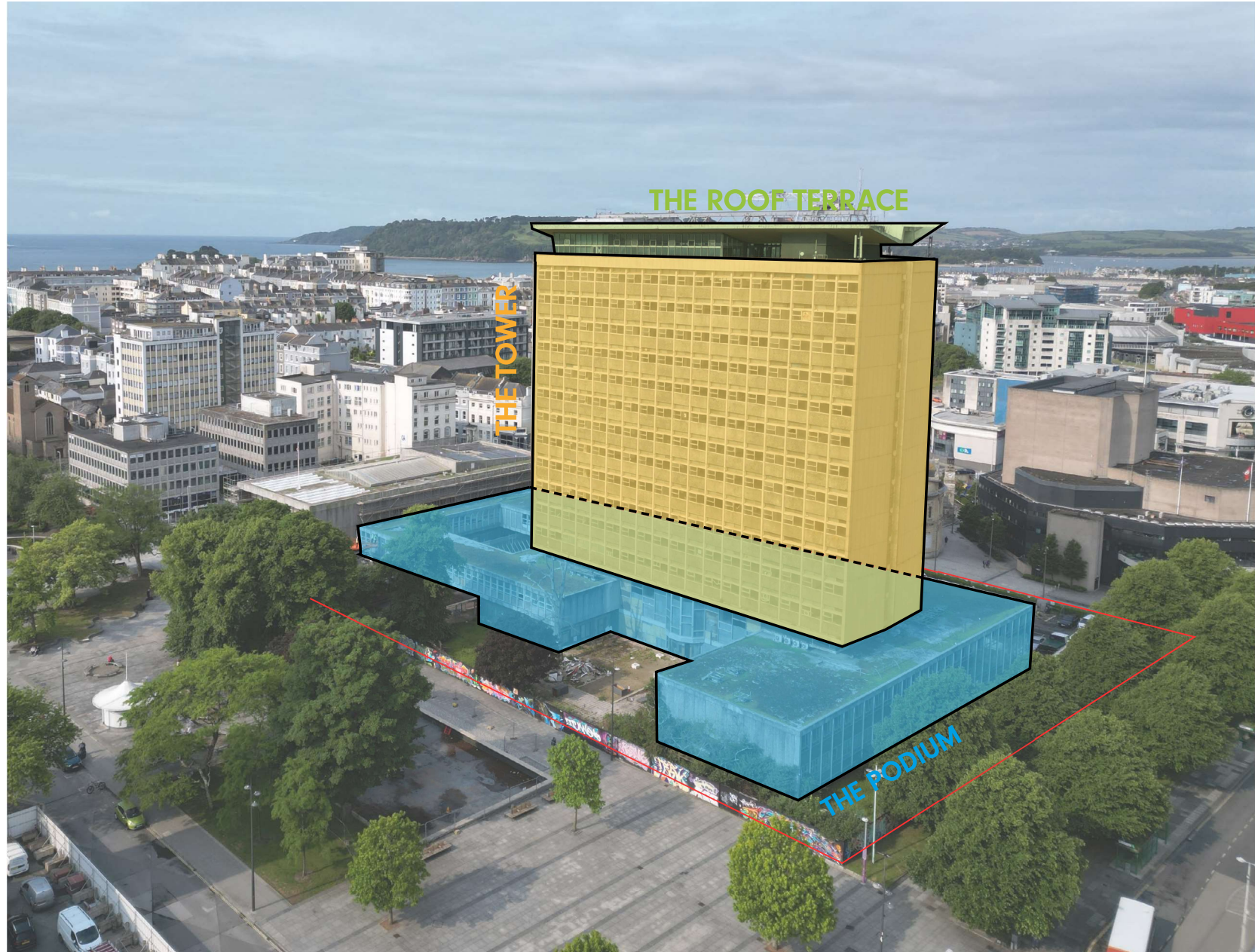
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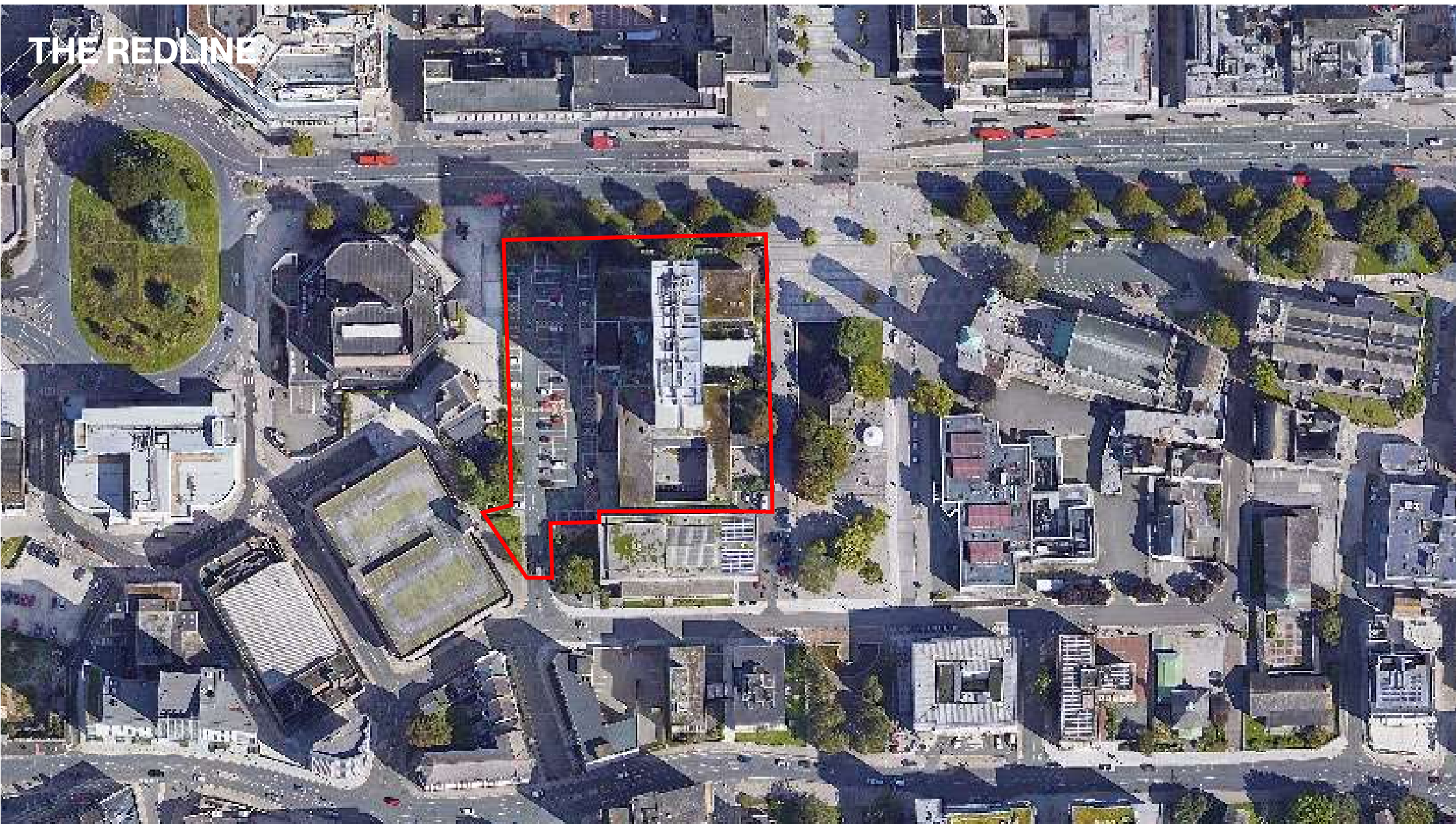
THE PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT.



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THE REDLINE



THE EXISTING BUILDING

The building “towers above the city”
and is seen as a **landmark** in
Plymouth’s regeneration story.













THE BASELINE

The Site //

- There is **a surface water flood risk to the surface carpark** which requires mitigation
- The redline to **Council House needs to be defined to reflect the split in use**
- The **Civic Square works are now complete** which was previously identified in the planning commentary as an issue

The Building //

- The condition of **the existing building requires a detailed schedule of surveys with the external cladding of particular concern + the strength of some areas of the floors**
- **Current building access is very limited due to the Asbestos strip-out works**, which is limiting the concrete survey information, and measured survey to the podium in particular
- The **previous Urban Splash consented scheme was not compliant with the latest fire regulations**, and nor was the revised GYA Stage 3 schematics that were the starting point for the BDP commission
- **The current building is not designed to provide the required fire escape for a High Risk Building (HRB)**, and will require an additional fire fighting lift adding and smoke shaft alterations
- There were a number of concerns raised by Historic England and C20 on the design proposals with **the C20 lodging a formal objection - most notably to the alterations to the tower facades**
- The **tower gables are large void spaces** and present potential pathways for fire

CIVIC.



- **Consented scheme allows for 13 public visits a year**, but will be impacted by the HRB requirements

Revised Brief //

- **The extent of demolition proposed by GYA does not suit the increased space requirements of the College**, and presents the key driver for a full new Planning and Listed Building Consent being required
- The **previous consent looked to utilise a natural ventilation approach to the dwellings, this was not inline with the Building Regulations** and dispensation was being sought on the grounds of a Listed Building. This is not felt to be appropriate for a long term rental asset
- **The lower ground / basement area is now being proposed to be used for accommodation for the first time in its history** - this is a key consideration for the college and could drive costs

High Risk Building Key Issues //

- **With the proposed use of the podium and the adjoining Council House there is a risk of both being treat as part of the residential High Risk Building.** This could impose unacceptable limitations, and as such requires agreement on an 'Independent Section' being agreed with the BSR
- **Previously there was an intent that the stairs within the Council House may be able to be utilised by the redevelopment, however with residential use this is not acceptable**

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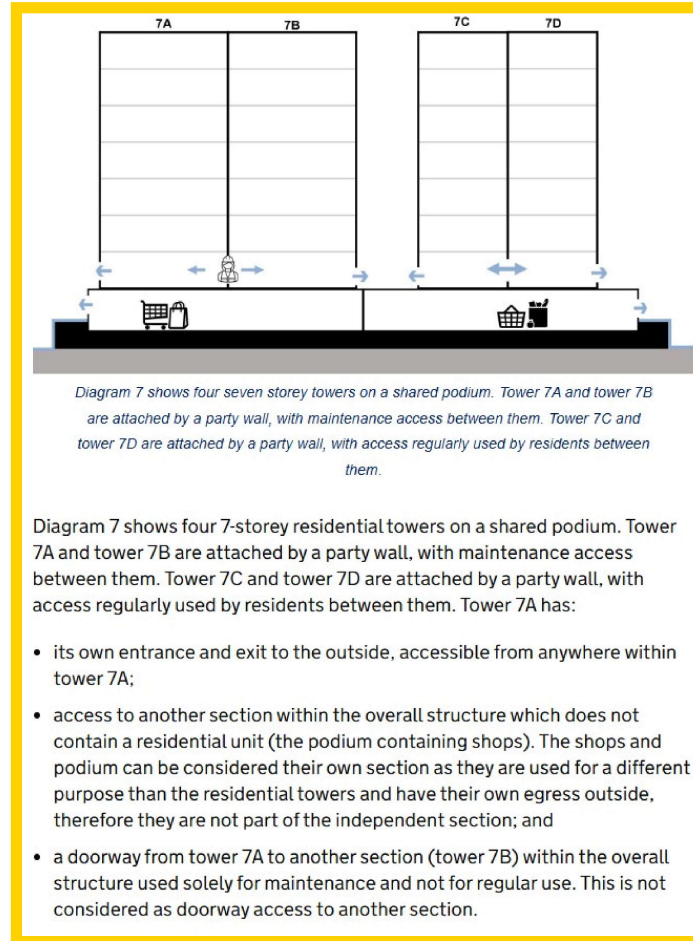


THE HIGH RISK BUILDING CONTEXT

- The Building Safety Act became mandatory for any High Risk Building in April 24
- A Higher Risk Building (HRB) is defined as any building over 18m, or 7 stories with at least 2 residential accommodation. As such the Civic when converted to residential use constitutes a HRB.
- All HRB's require minimum two stair cores including:
 - Fire Fighting Stairs connect to:
 - Fire Fighting Lifts with Evac function
 - Smoke Ventilation to corridors, stairs and lobbies
 - Sprinklers
 - Wet risers to suit height of building
 - Illuminated wayfinding in cores (ref's an old standard that no longer exists)
- As a building over 50m we are identified as a non standard 'very tall' building.
- Building Regulations Guidance documents do not directly apply to buildings over 50m, and require a Fire Engineered Approach to justification.
- As a building with multiple uses / access points, the BSA allows for 'independent sections'. This potentially allows for the podium non residential uses to be treat as a non HRB outside the shell and core works. This strategy is to be confirmed with the BSR. Contact with College BR consultants required to agree.

Process involves 3 Gateways:

- Planning Gateway 1 - submitted as part of the Planning Application
- Gateway 2 - based on construction information and to discharge Building Regulations Approval prior to start on site.
- Gateway 3 - Prior to occupation



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THE HERITAGE CONTEXT

- **Grade II Listed Asset**
- Built to mark **a post war era of change, of openness and transparency of government and the importance of the public**
- **Statutory Heritage Consultees** on the Planning will be; **Historic England, 20th Century Society and Gardens trust**
- **Key interest in changes to the tower facade** - however it is agreed that the condition of the concrete panels to the building (East and West in particular) warrant replacement
- **Visibility of the tower floating above the podium** from the Theatre is a key positive from US approval
- **Concern over additional stair added below bridge podium on previous application**, and removed as a result on consented drawings
- **Internal reconfigurations appear to have a lower significance for HE and C20**, however plans for HRB changes to be agreed
- The **previous GYA proposal for removal of the glazed link was supported, but it was unresolved on how the terrazzo floor would be waterproofed**
- **Strip out works undertaken by UrbanSplash created a store of salvaged materials** - this is being catalogued to understand what has been retained, and plans developed to understand the heritage reuse potential
- **The Council House is identified as a key part of the Civic Centre campus of buildings**, and at the moment is not part of the regeneration plans
- **The public rooftop access was a key part of the buildings vision**



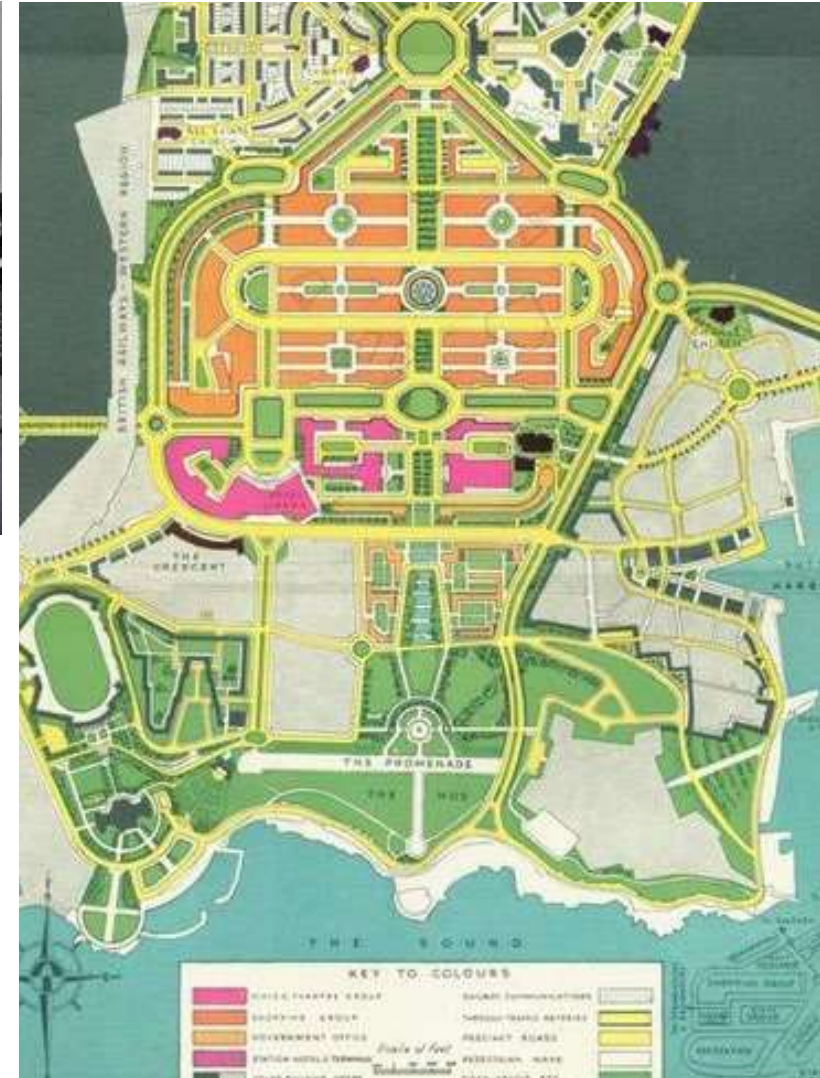
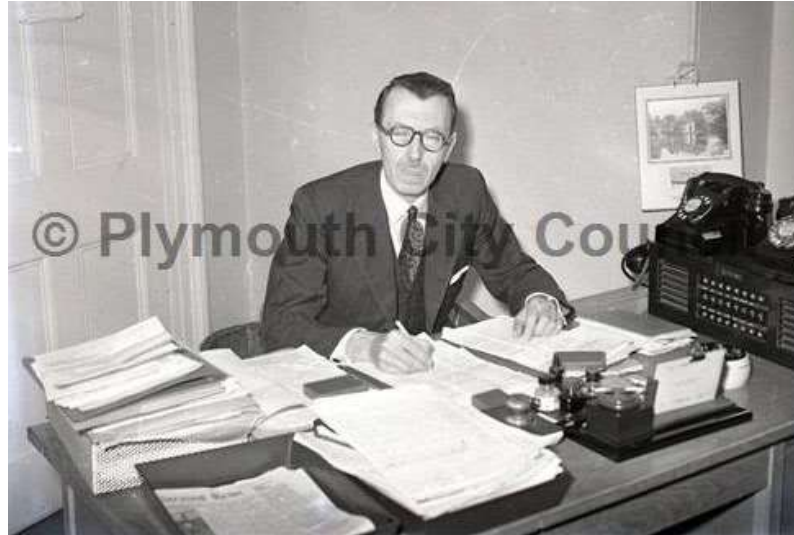
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CIVIC.

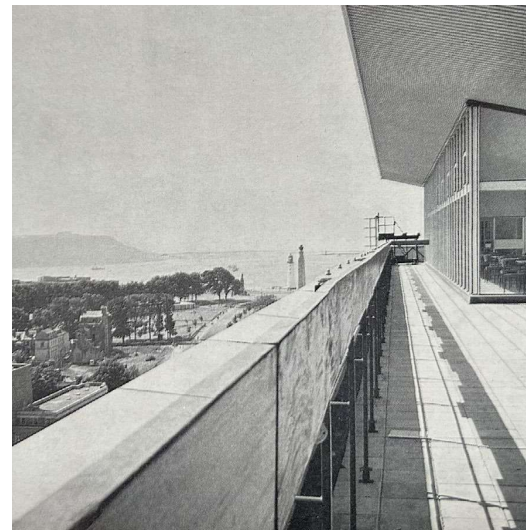
**It is a striking symbol of
post-war regeneration & modernism.**





A PLAN FOR PLYMOUTH.

CIVIC.



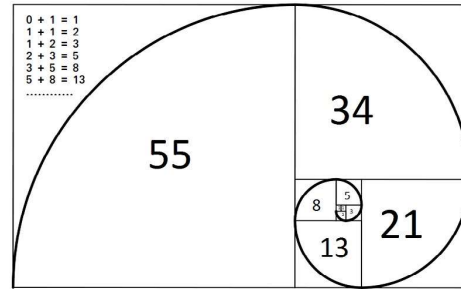
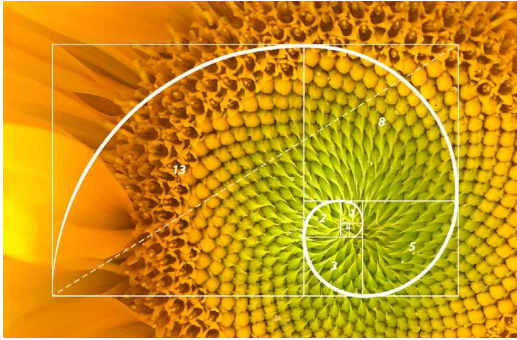




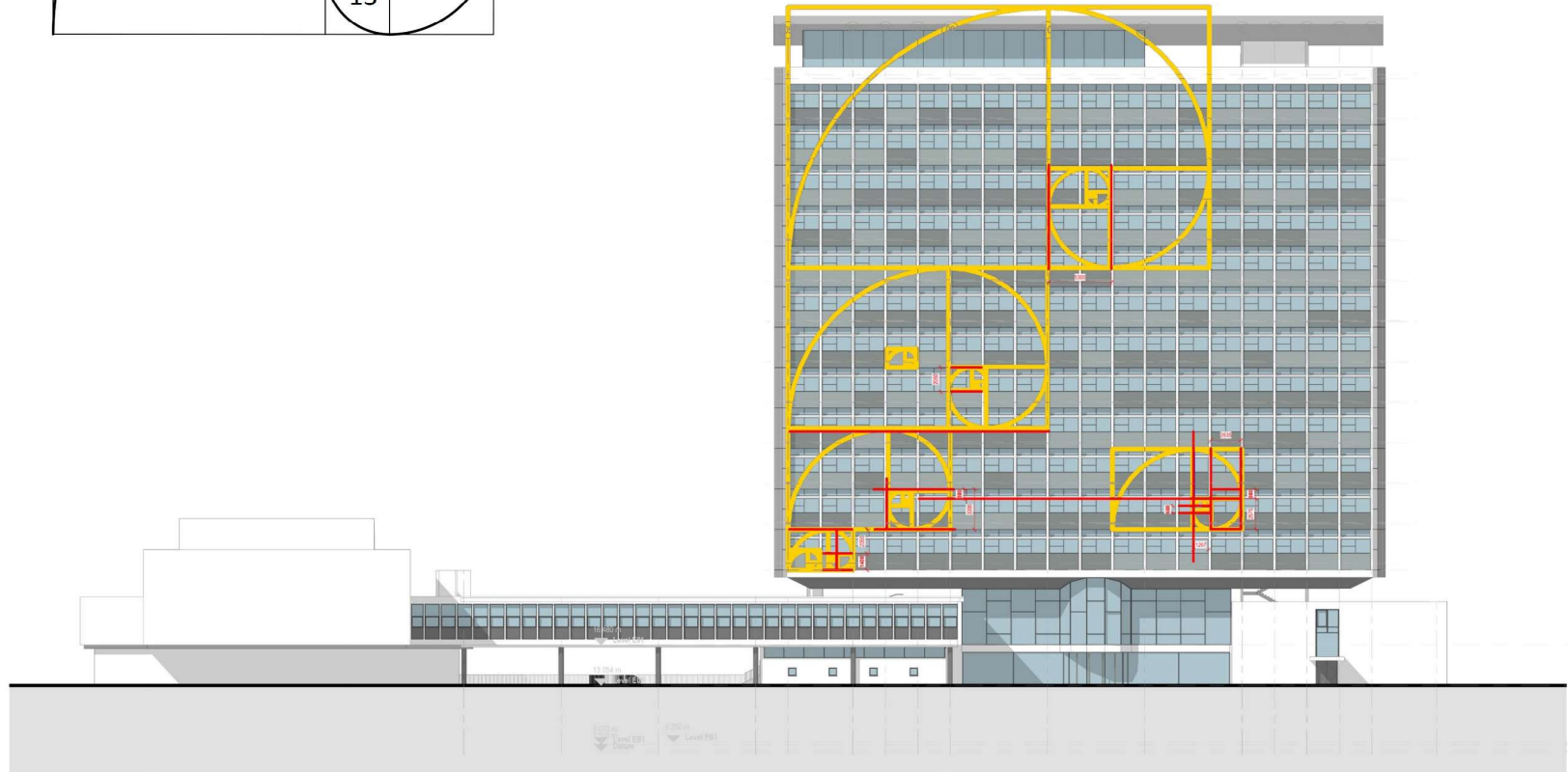


Tower Entrance Lobby - 1964



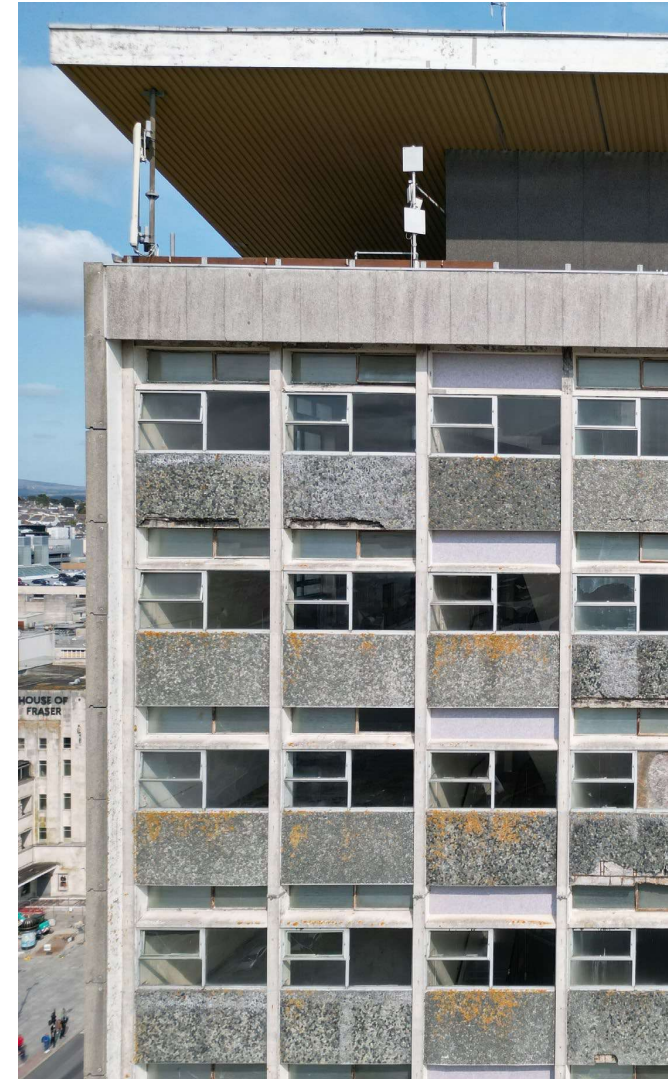
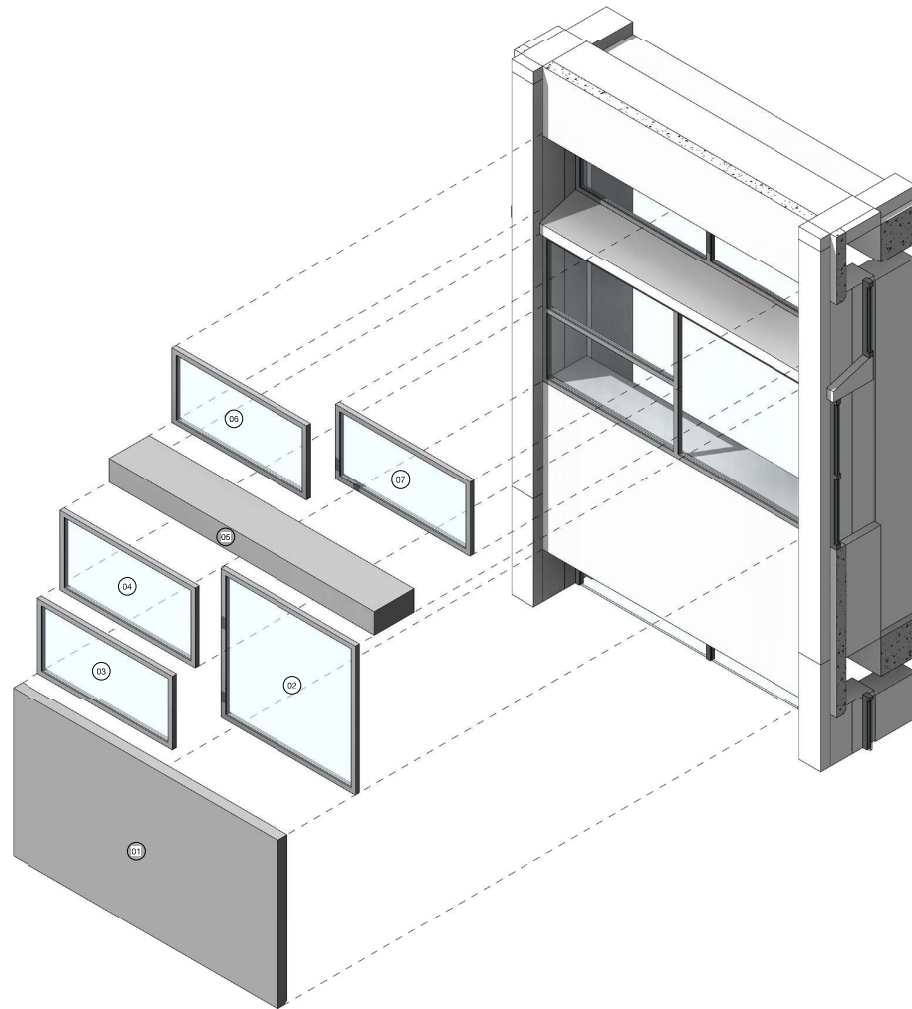


UNDERSTANDING THE BUILDING



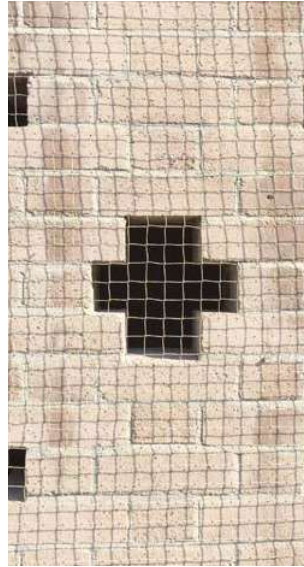
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THE FIBONACCI 'KIT OF PARTS'



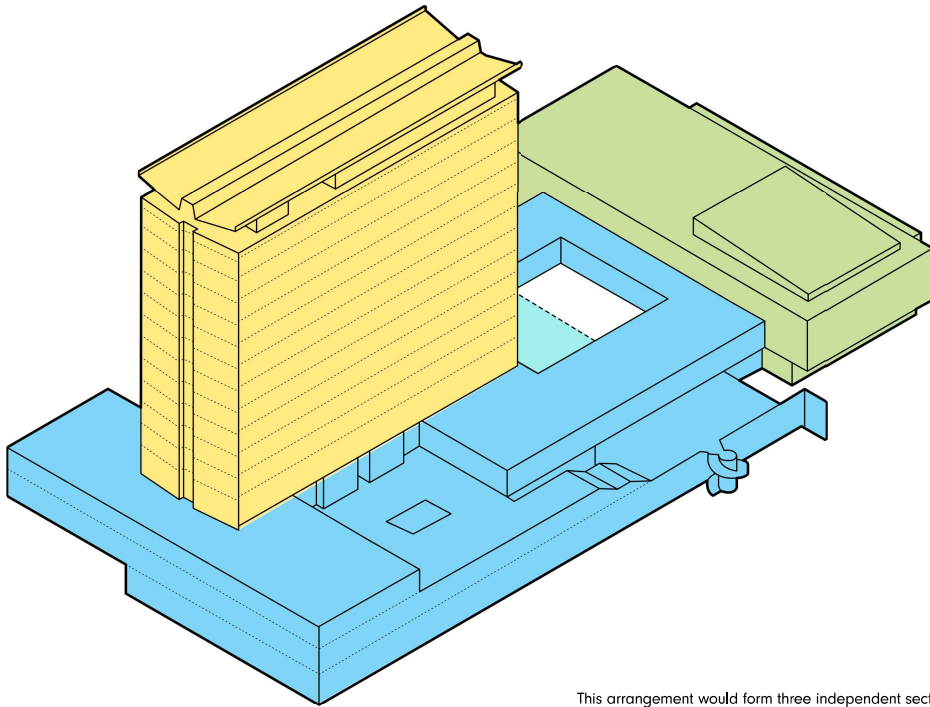
CIVIC.

A BUILDING OF LOCAL TEXTURE, COLOUR & LIGHT



A CORE DESIGN DRIVER

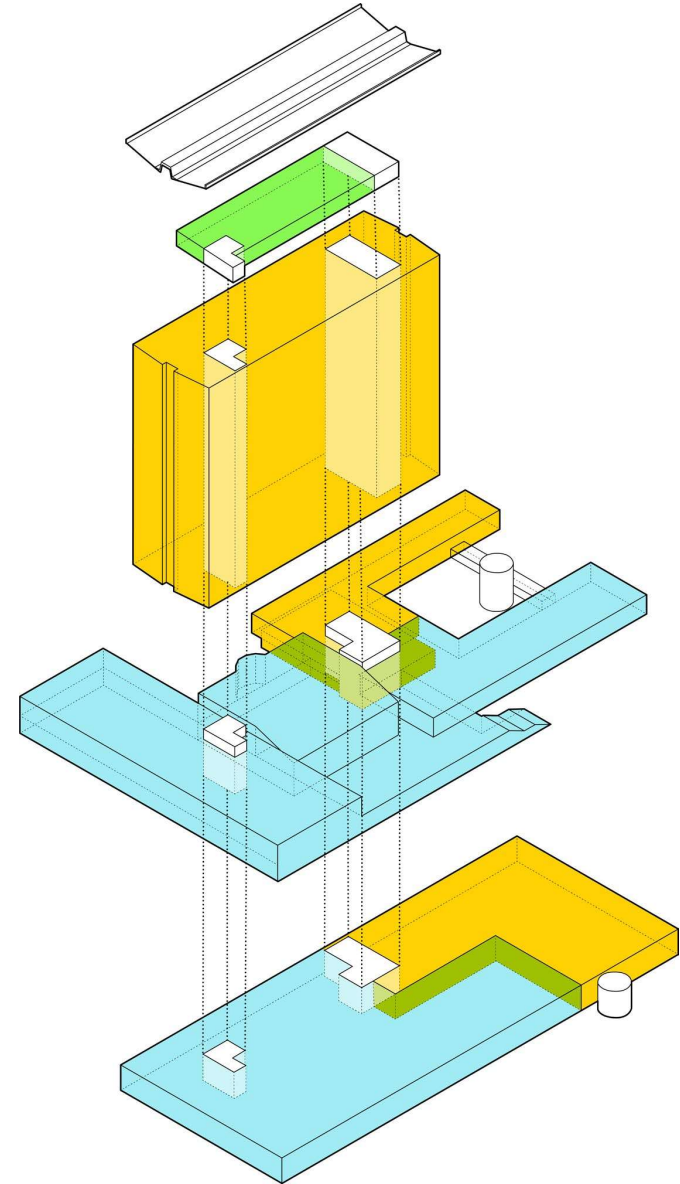
ESTABLISHING INDEPENDENT SECTIONS.



This arrangement would form three independent sections,
which is applicable to the completed buildings:

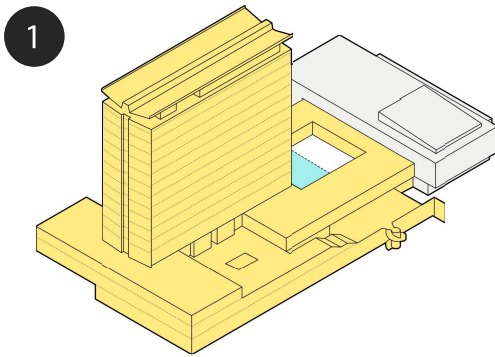
- Council house
- College podium
- Residential areas (incl amenity spaces in the podium)

CIVIC.



A PHASED APPROACH TO HRB DELIVERY.

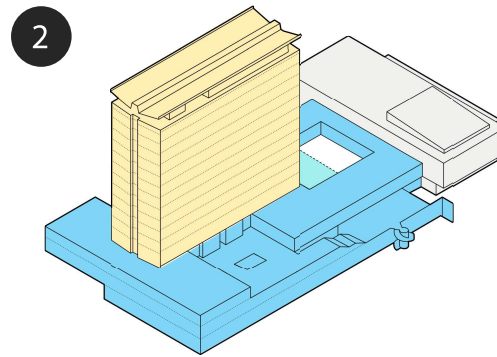
It is proposed the application, approvals and completion certificates are structured so that the HRB procedures are used to ensure the compliant design of the building where applicable and allow the other buildings sections to be subject to the appropriate non-HRB approvals authority. The following sequence is proposed for pre-application agreement with the BSR to confirm this is a compliant strategy.



Phase 2 design work will be submitted to the BSR for the GW2 application for the following building components:

- Podium shell and core
- Tower shell and core
- Tower residential fit out
- Podium residential amenity spaces
- Roof terrace

The council house is an independent section.

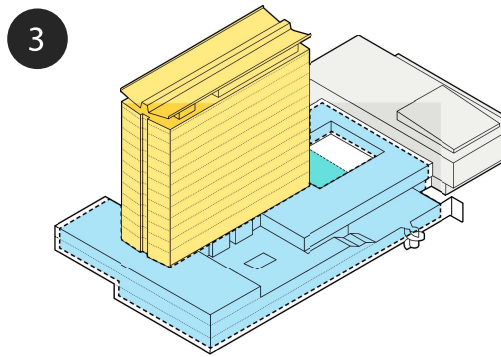


Completion of the podium Phase 2 construction works to the shell and core will conclude in accordance with the GW2 approval, followed by an application for partial completion.

The podium is then an independent section for the college fit-out works, which is decoupled from HRB procedures.

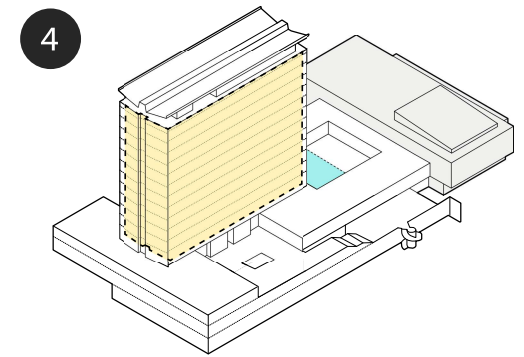
Phase 2 works associated with the tower shell and core will continue.

The college area of the podium will become an independent section.



Phase 3 college fit-out works undertaken with Building Regulations approvals using non-HRB routes.

Completion of the Phase 2 tower shell and core works in accordance with the GW2 approval and could continue in parallel with the college fit-out, with managed access / egress required until all works are complete.



Phase 3 residential fit-out works are undertaken in accordance with the GW2 approvals, concluding with an application for GW3 approval, registration and occupation.

Independent sections are created as described in section 1.6.3 following practical completion.

THE BIG IDEA

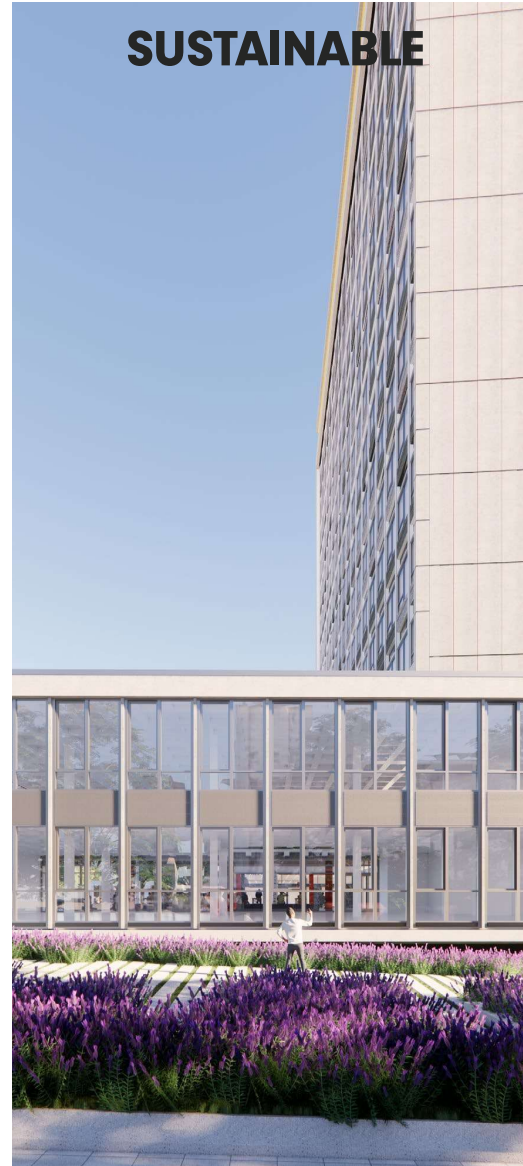
**ESTABLISHING
THE PROJECT
VISION.**

**RESTORING
THE CIVIC'S
PRIDE**

ICONIC

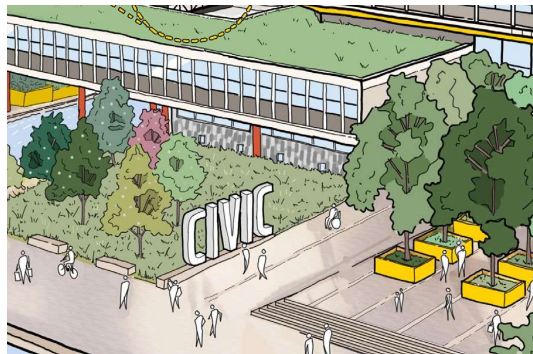
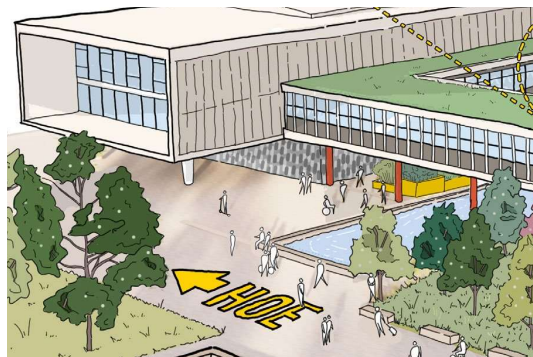


SUSTAINABLE

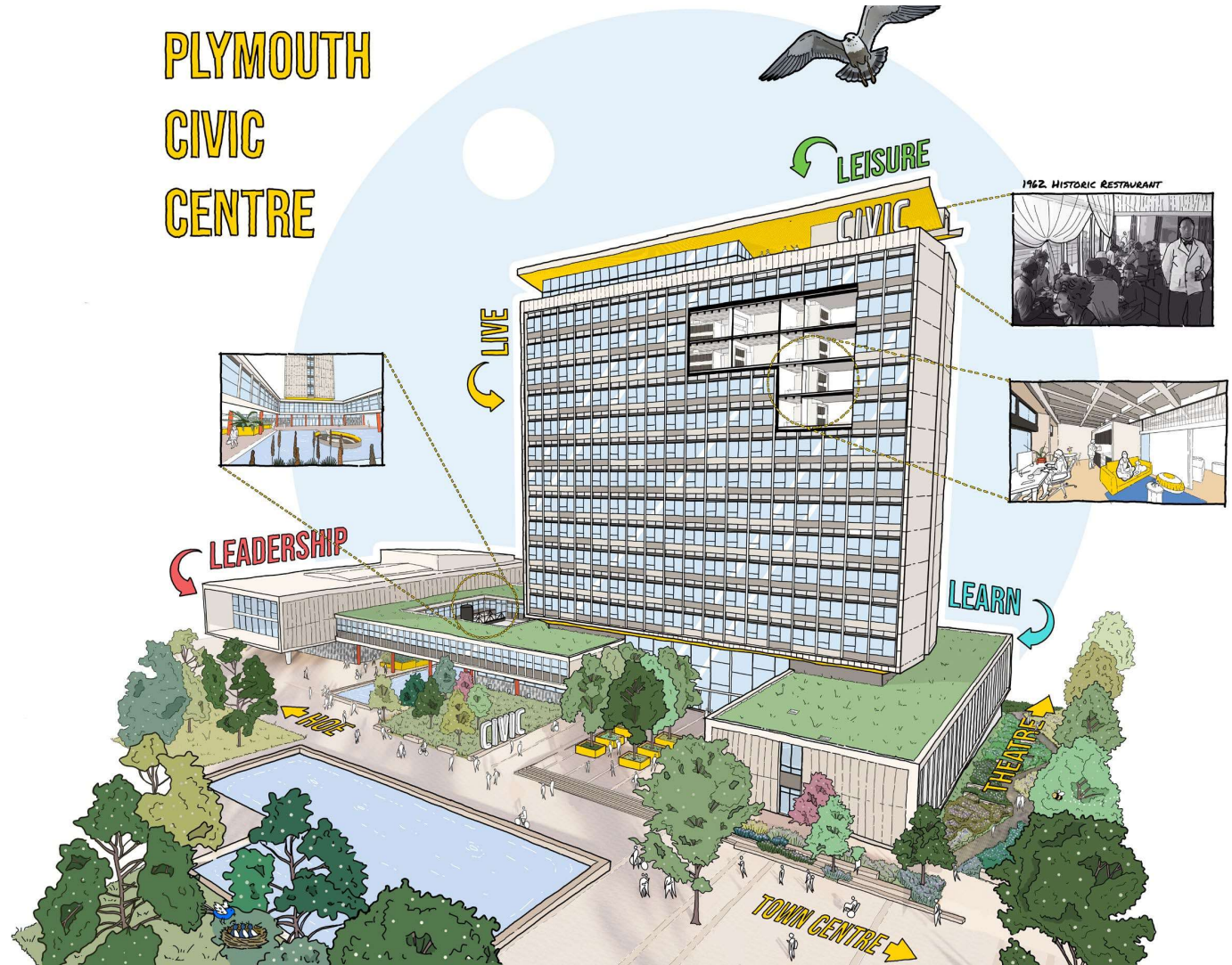


TRANSFORMATIONAL





PLYMOUTH CIVIC CENTRE



CIVIC.

DESIGNING WHAT'S RIGHT.

1

WHAT'S RIGHT FOR STUDENTS?

Creating exceptional, inclusive environments that support learning, well-being, and growth.

2

WHAT'S RIGHT FOR RESIDENTS?

Balancing community needs through thoughtful integration, accessibility, and long-term value.

3

WHAT'S RIGHT FOR THE BUILDING?

Respecting the structure's integrity while unlocking its full potential through adaptive, sustainable design.

4

WHAT'S RIGHT FOR THE BUILDING?

Contributing meaningfully to Plymouth's urban fabric — culturally, socially and architecturally.



Key Themes

CIVIC.















A NEW CONNECTED PODIUM















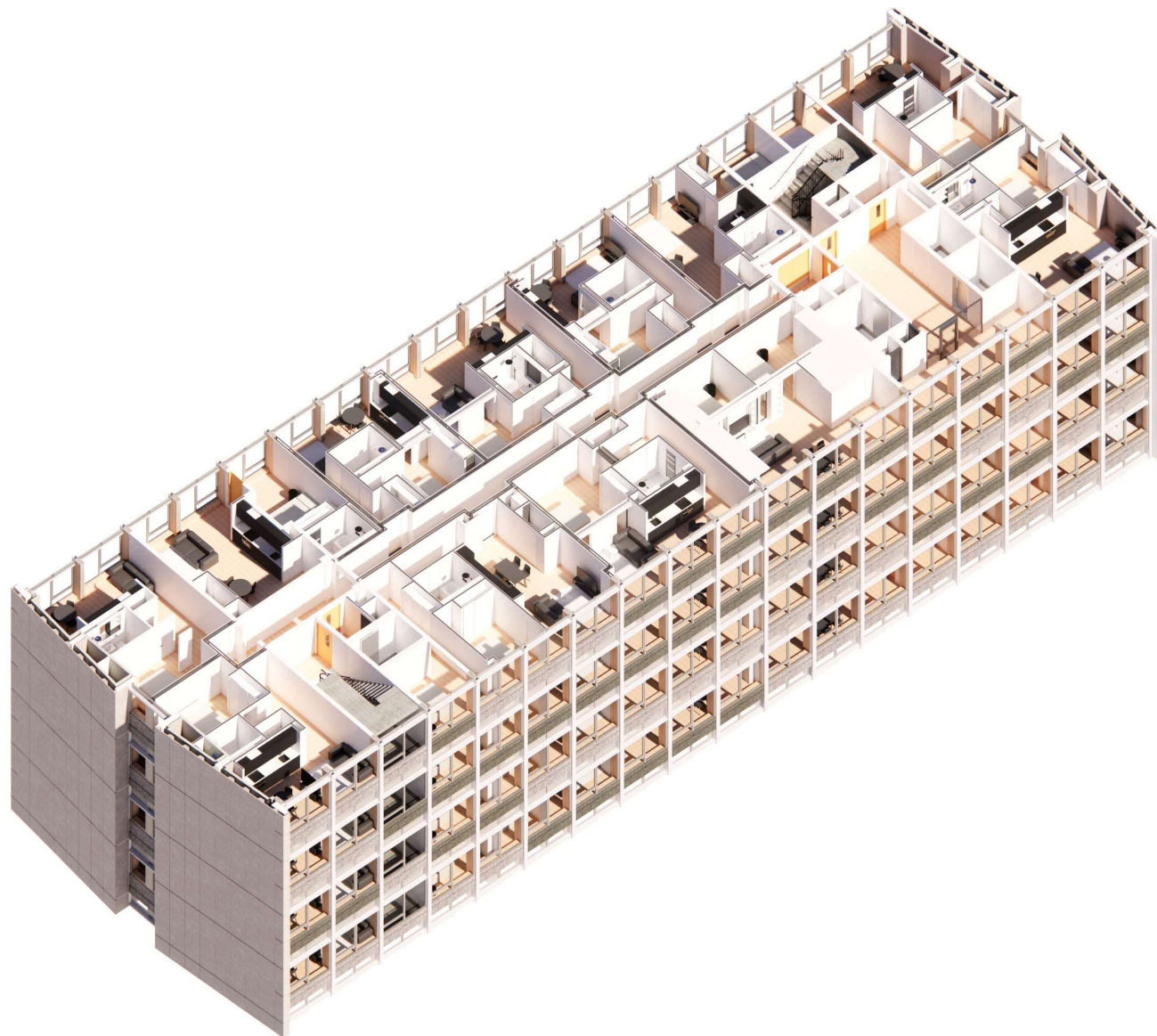




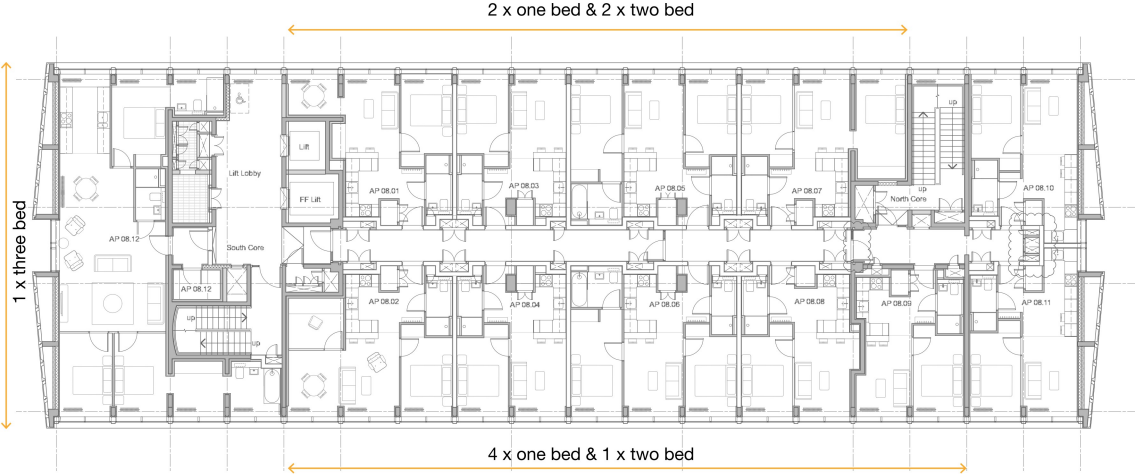
CREATING HIGH
QUALITY HOMES +
HRB COMPLIANCE.



Typical Apartment Level



APARTMENT PLANNING.



Previous Scheme - Typical Floor Layout



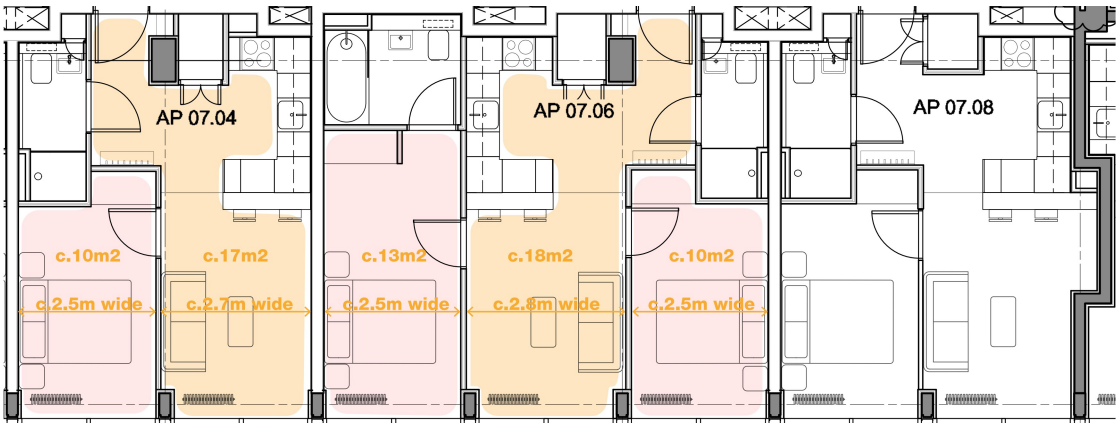
Proposed Scheme - Typical Floor Layout

1 bed
1 person
41-46m²

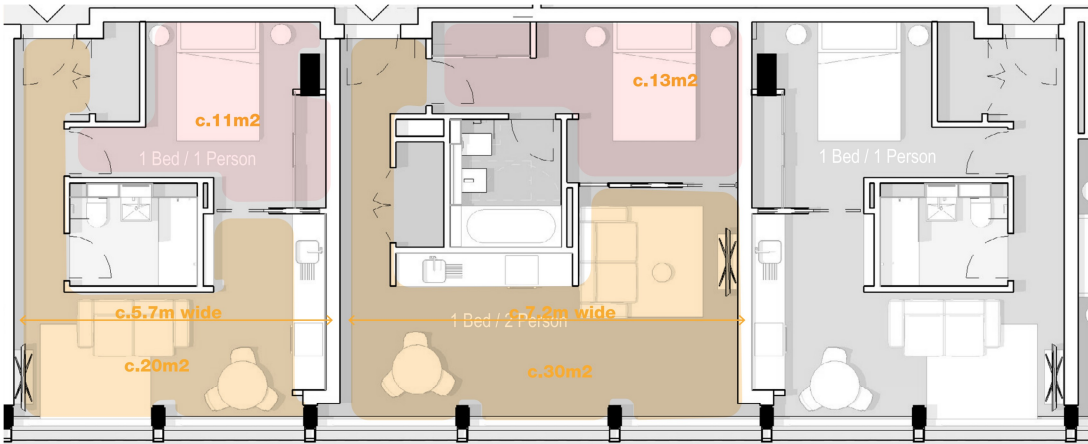
1 bed
2 person
55-56 m²

2 bed
3 person
63-68m²

HIGH QUALITY
HOMES IN A
HERITAGE LED
CONTEXT.

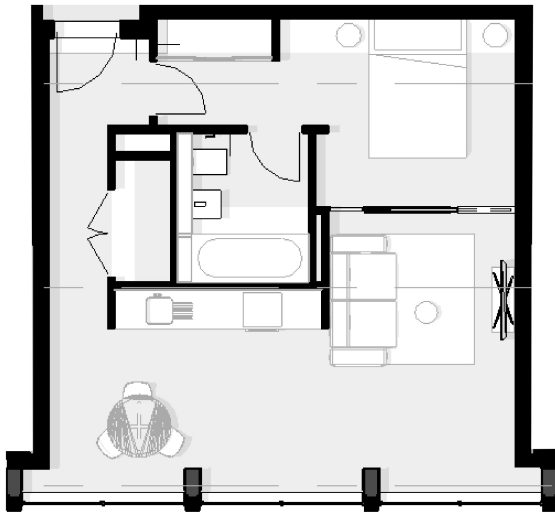


Previous Scheme - A standard approach to residential planning



Proposed Scheme - Our approach to residential planning at the Civic

**144 NATIONALLY
DESCRIBED
SPACE STANDARD
COMPLIANT
HOMES.**

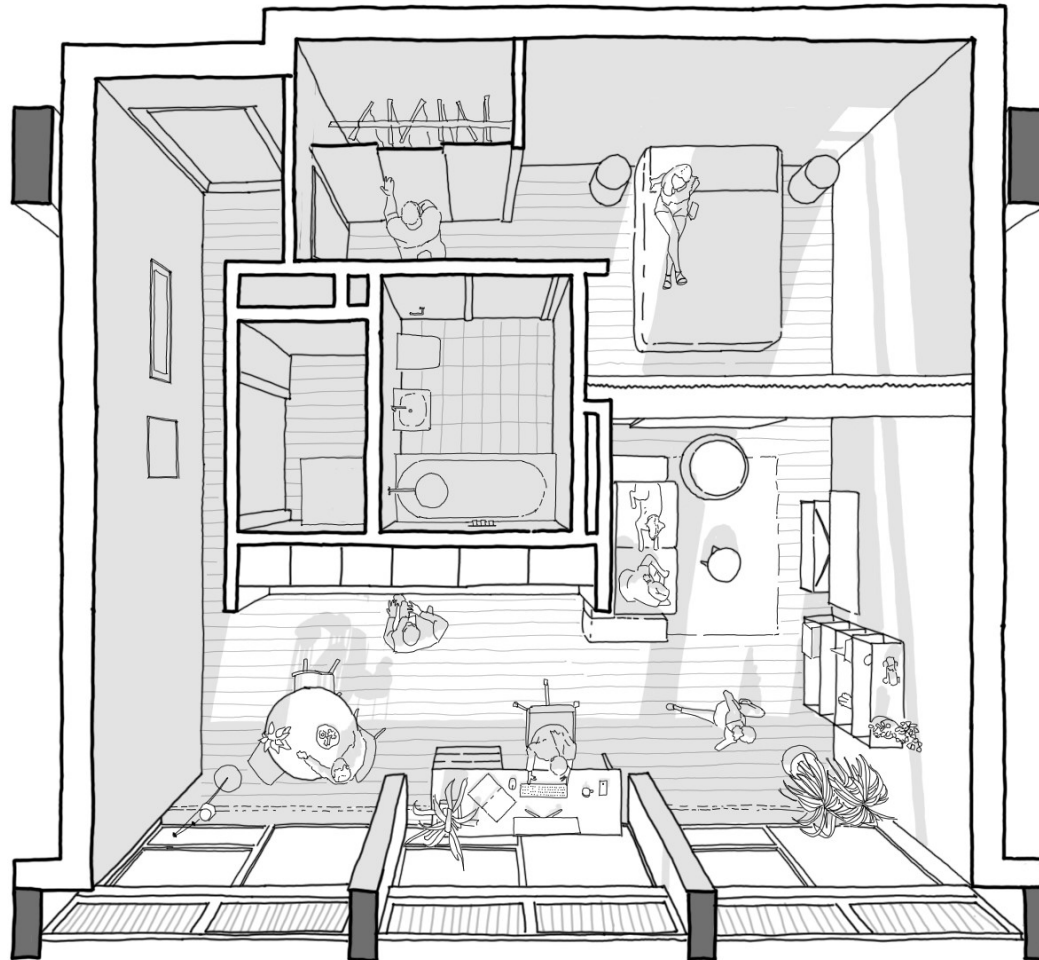


One Bedroom Unit - Plan



One Bedroom Unit - Axonometric

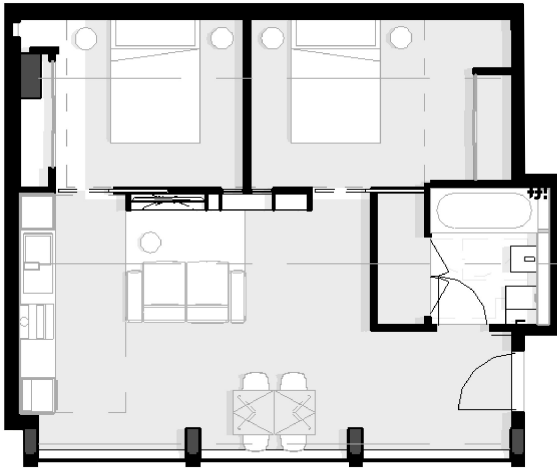
CIVIC.



One Bedroom Unit - Sketch Visual



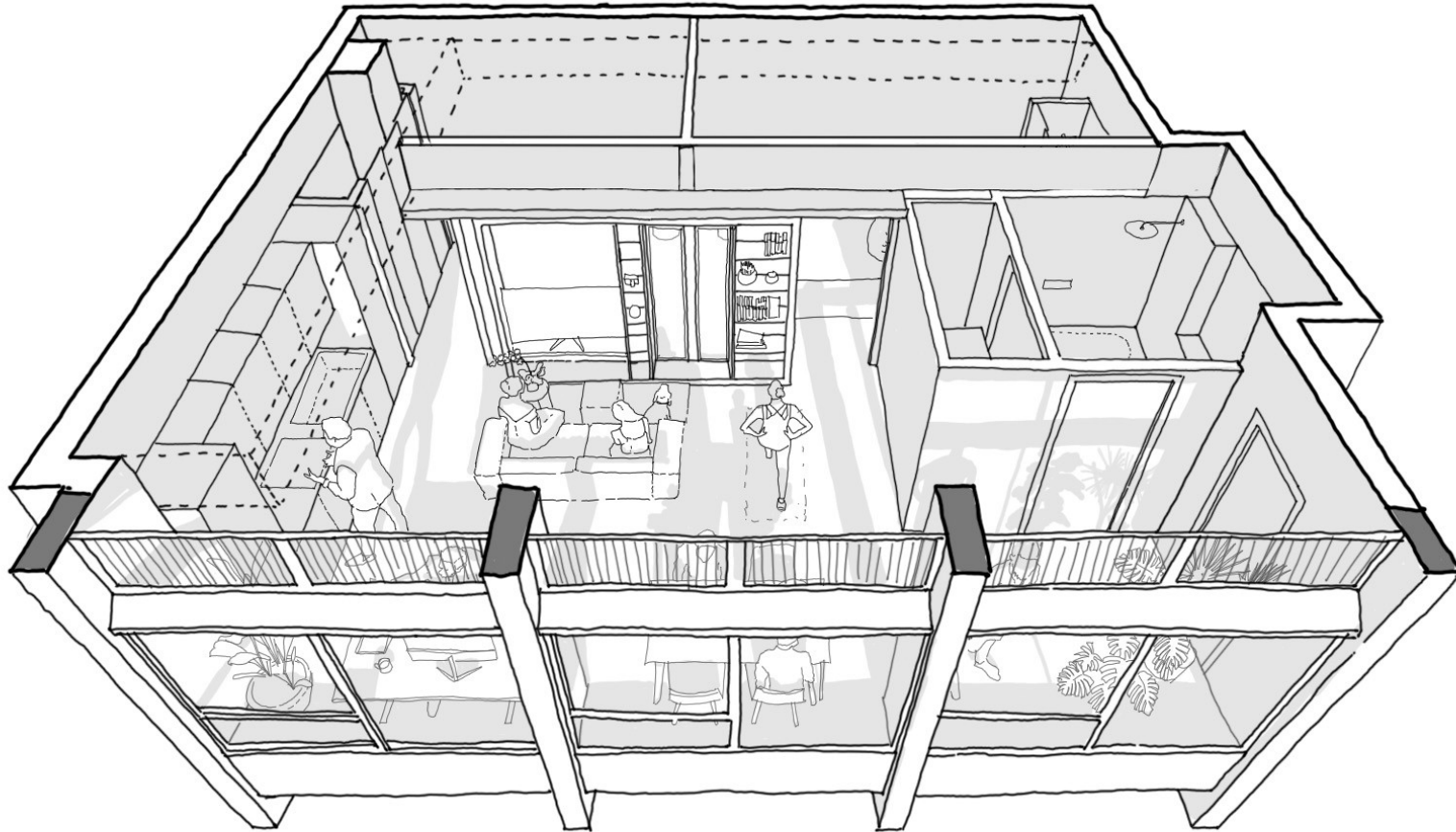
FULL ACCESSIBLE (M4(2)) COMPLIANT HOMES WITH THE POTENTIAL FOR M4(3).



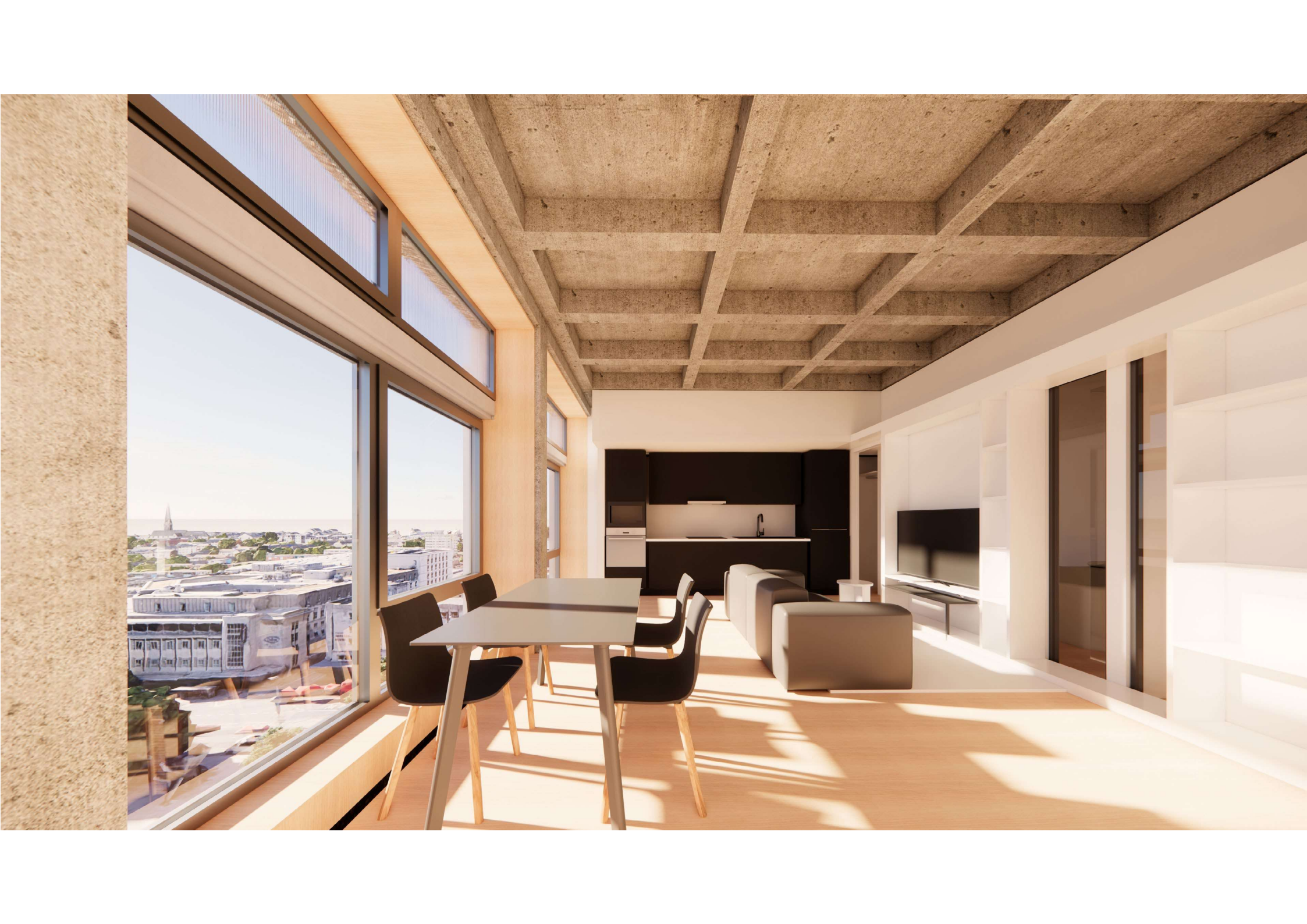
Two Bedroom Unit - Plan



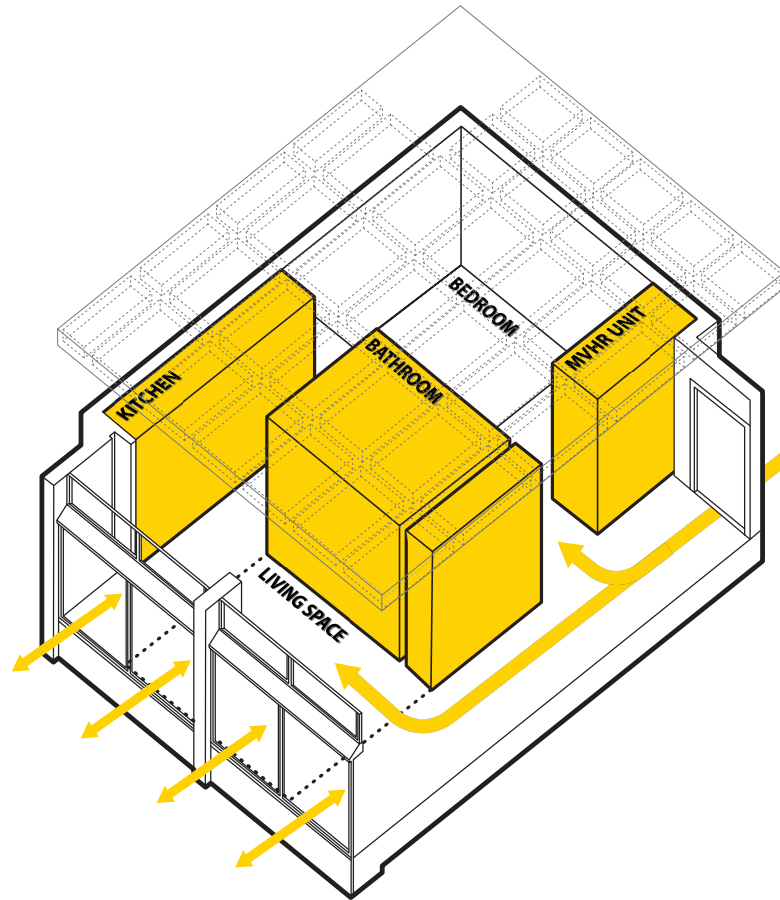
Two Bedroom Unit - Axonometric



Two Bedroom Unit - Sketch Visual



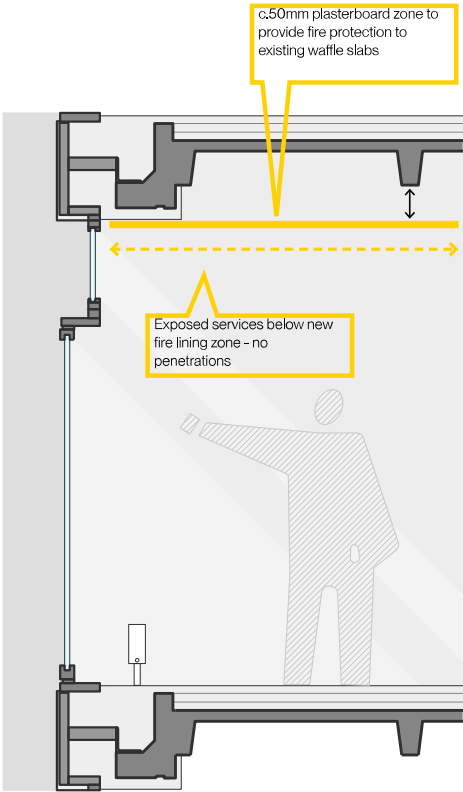
LIVING ON THE ELEVATION - IN UNIQUE HIGH QUALITY HOMES.



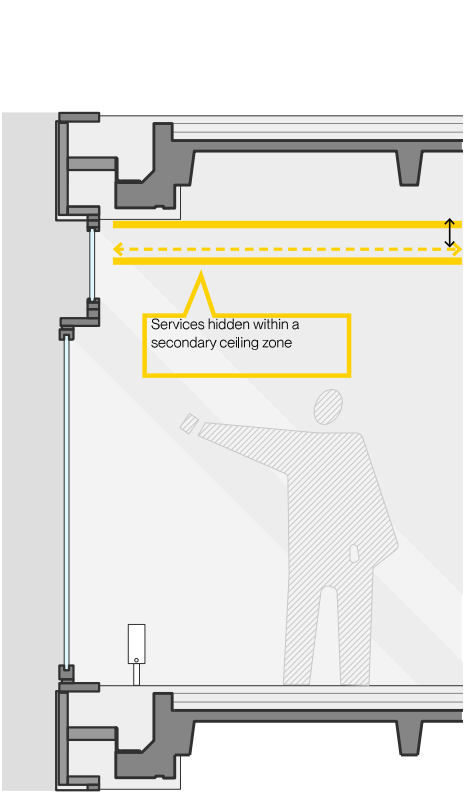
CIVIC.

VENTILATION APPROACH + HERITAGE

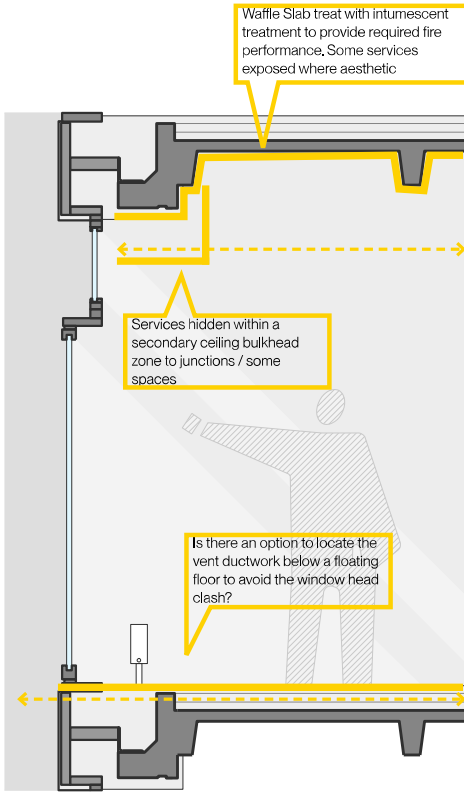
FIRE PROTECTION OF THE SLAB + SERVICE STRATEGIES



Option 01

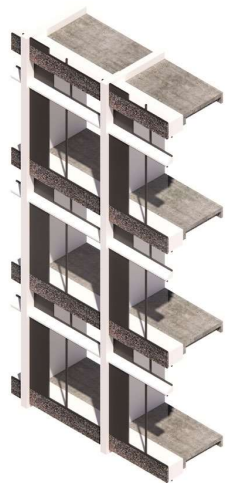
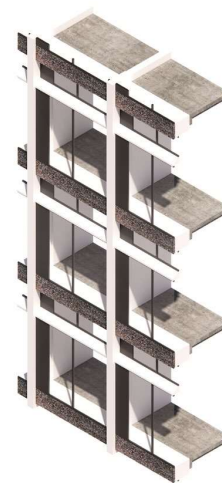
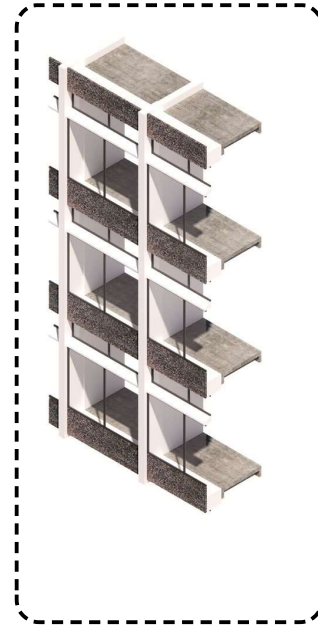
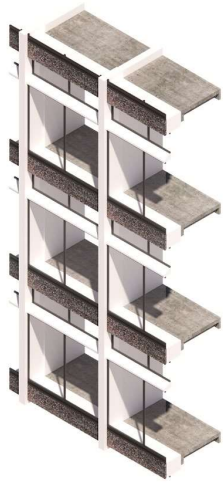
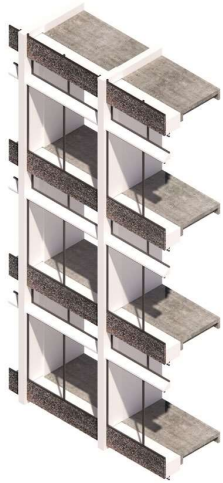


Option 02



Option 03

EXPLORING THE FACADE APPROACH.



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LEISURE THE TOWER ROOF.



Civic Tower Restaurant - 1962

CIVIC.

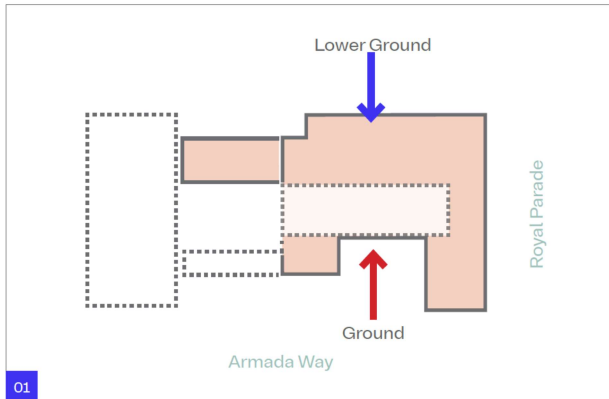
CITY COLLEGE PLYMOUTH

City College Plymouth Impact Statement

The Green-Blue Skills Hub will:

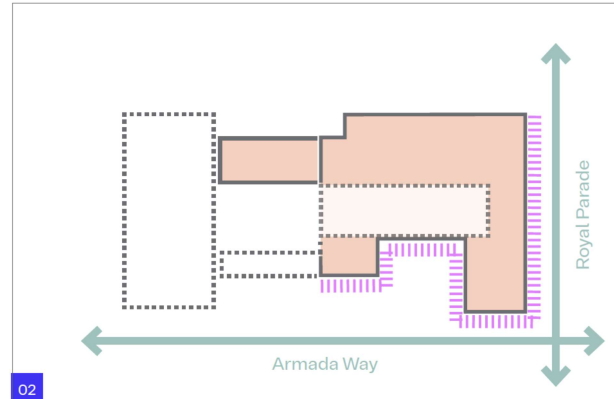
- be dedicated to training people for the skills of the future
- focus on high-value skills for the green and blue economies, such as offshore wind, sustainable energy and electric transport
- offer up to 60 courses, from Apprenticeships to higher education and adult skills programmes, supporting around 2,000 learners each year
- support local people and employers to prepare for new industries and opportunities
- reinvigorate the city centre by increasing daily footfall in the Civic Centre and the surrounding area.

City College Plymouth Design Drivers



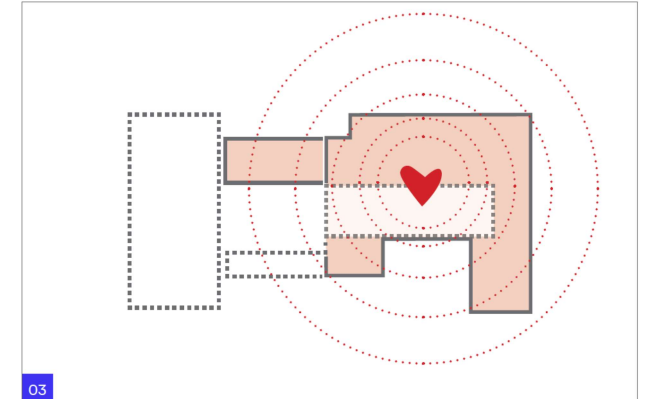
01 Access

Primary access is at ground level, off Armada Way. Secondary access at lower ground level.



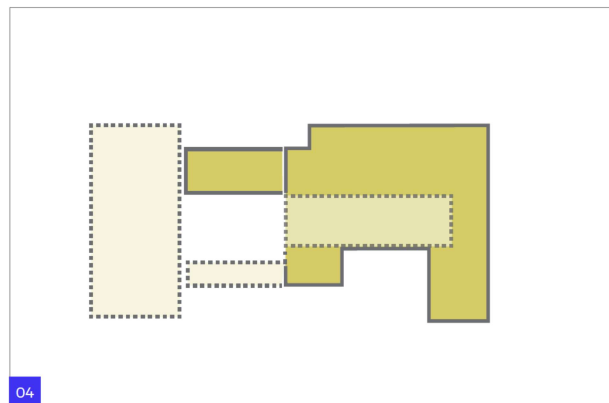
02 Active Frontage

Generate an active frontage on the 3 key elevations to publicise the College.



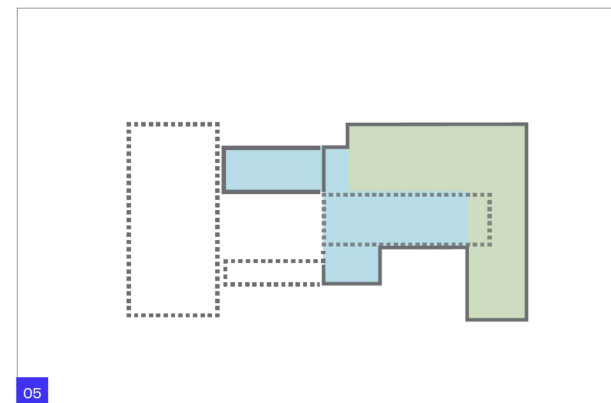
03 Community and Connectivity

A welcoming atrium space at the main entrance with space to gather and circulate.



04 Conserve History

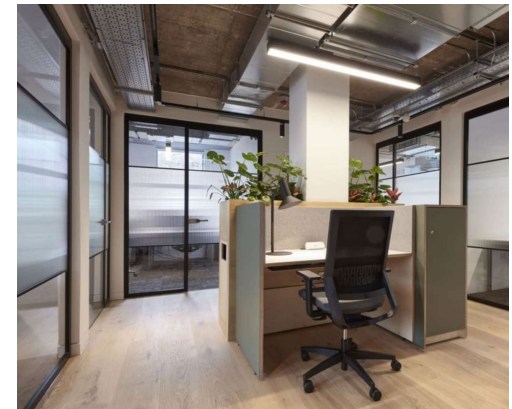
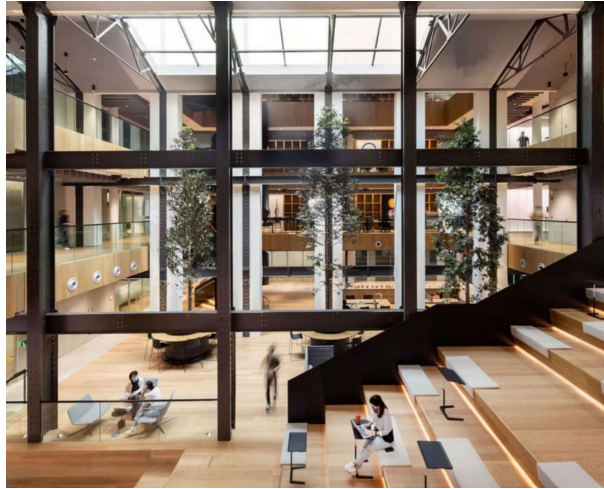
Aim to conserve the existing building and its features by continuing the architectural language throughout the design.



05 Embed 'Blue Green' Ethos

Promote the Blue Green curriculum through expression of design, whilst also embedding a strong sustainability strategy.

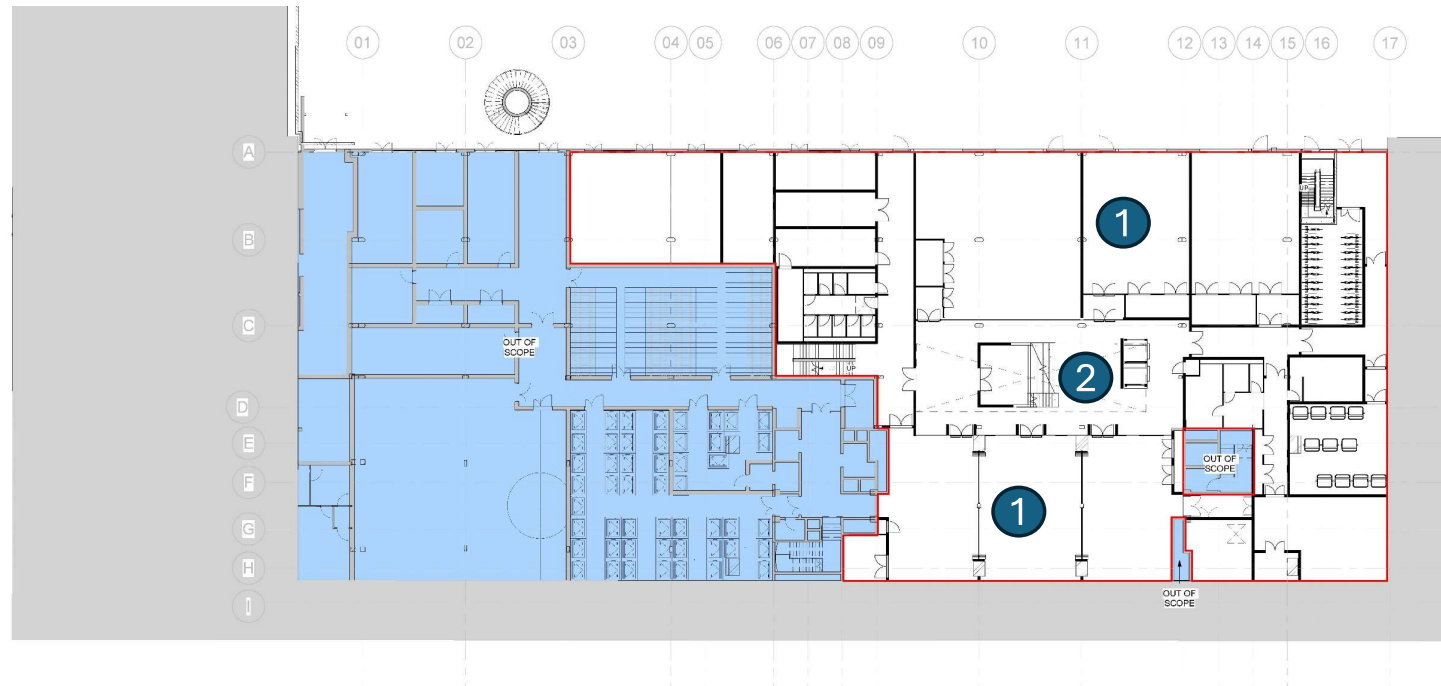
City College Plymouth - Look & Feel



Lower Ground Floor Plan

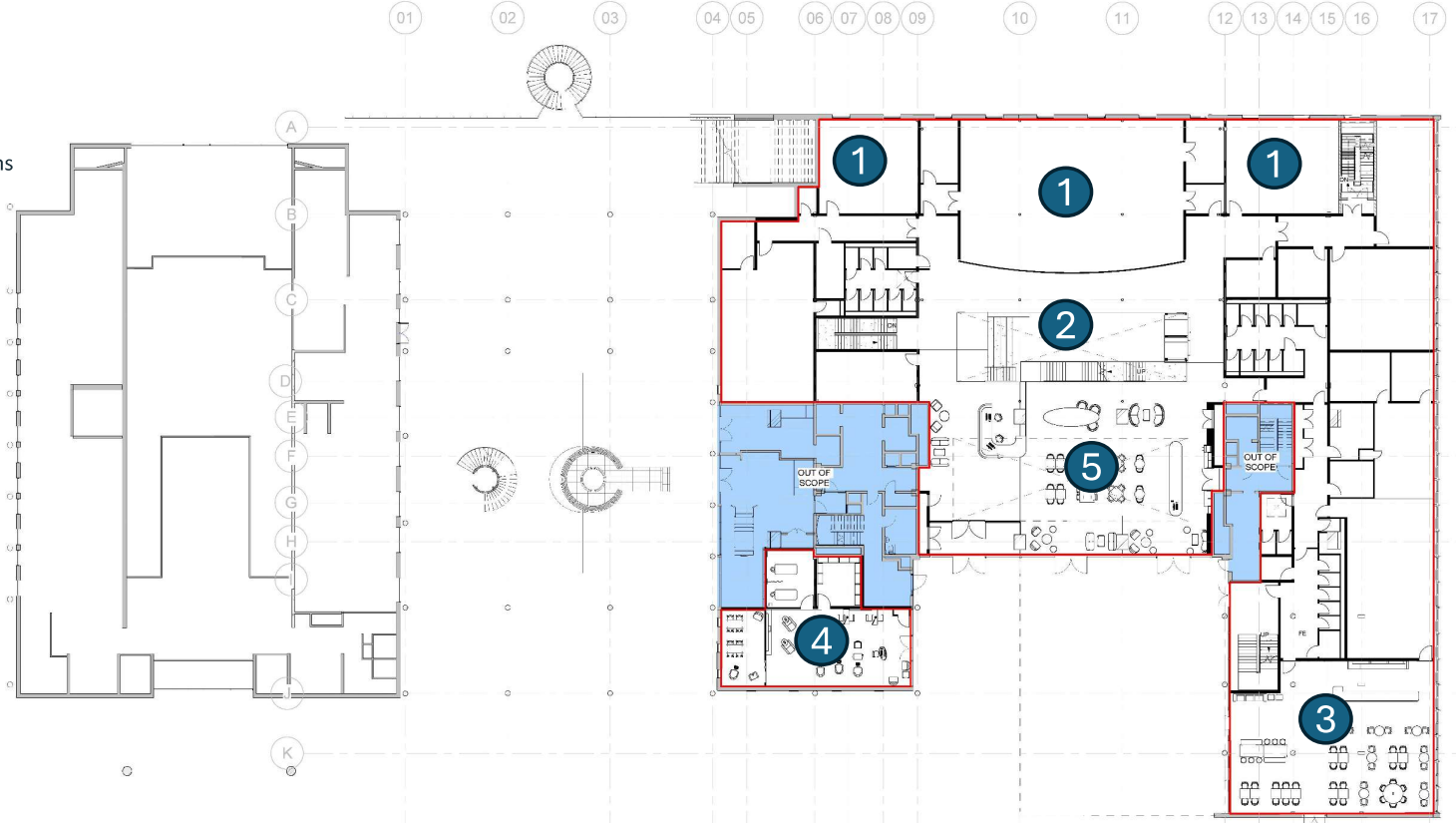
1 6no. Workshops for technologically advanced curriculum teaching

2 Heart Space



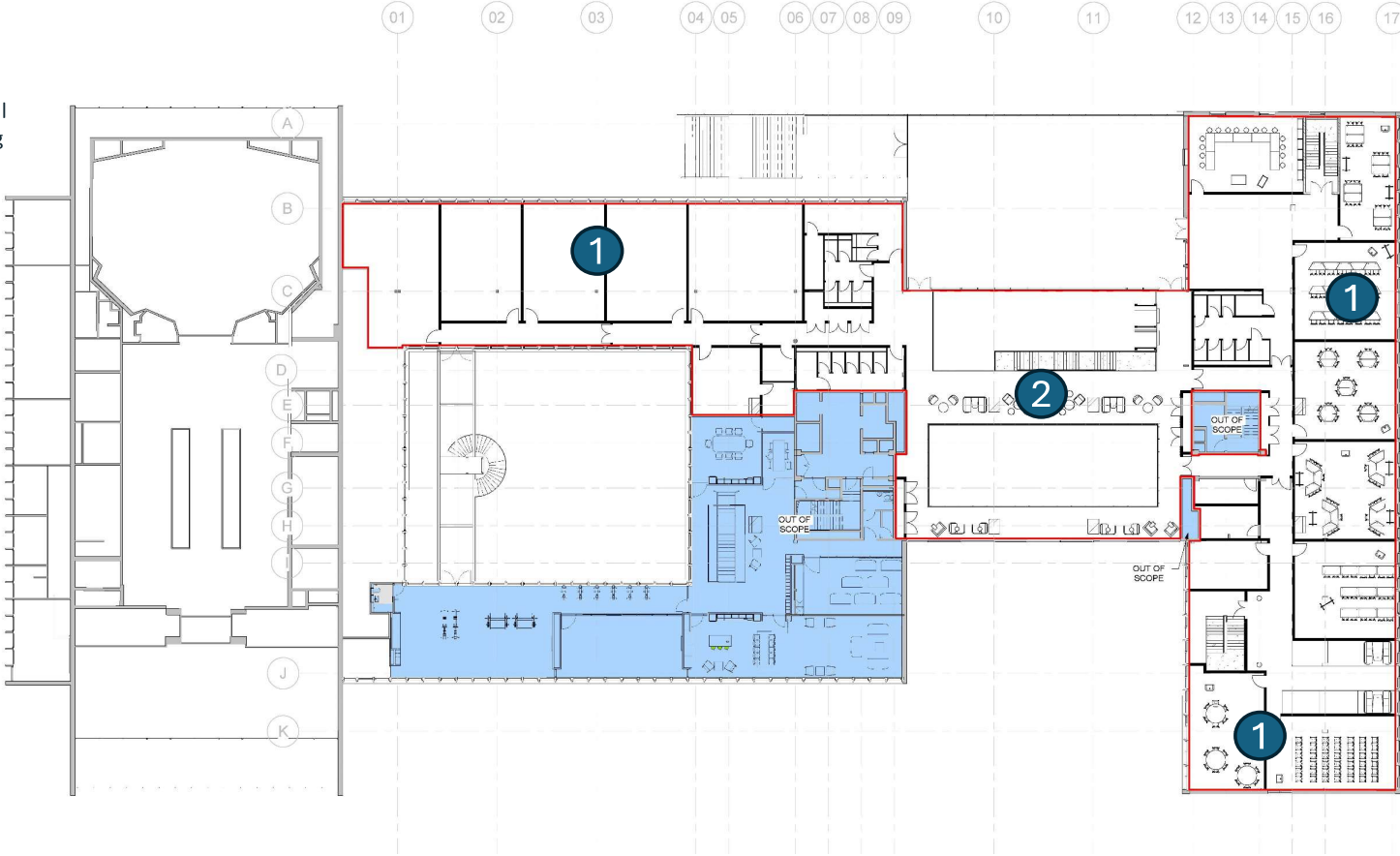
Ground Floor Plan

- 1 Digital space with innovative AR/VR rooms
- 2 Heart Space
- 3 Restaurant
- 4 Wellness spa
- 5 Cafe



First Floor Plan

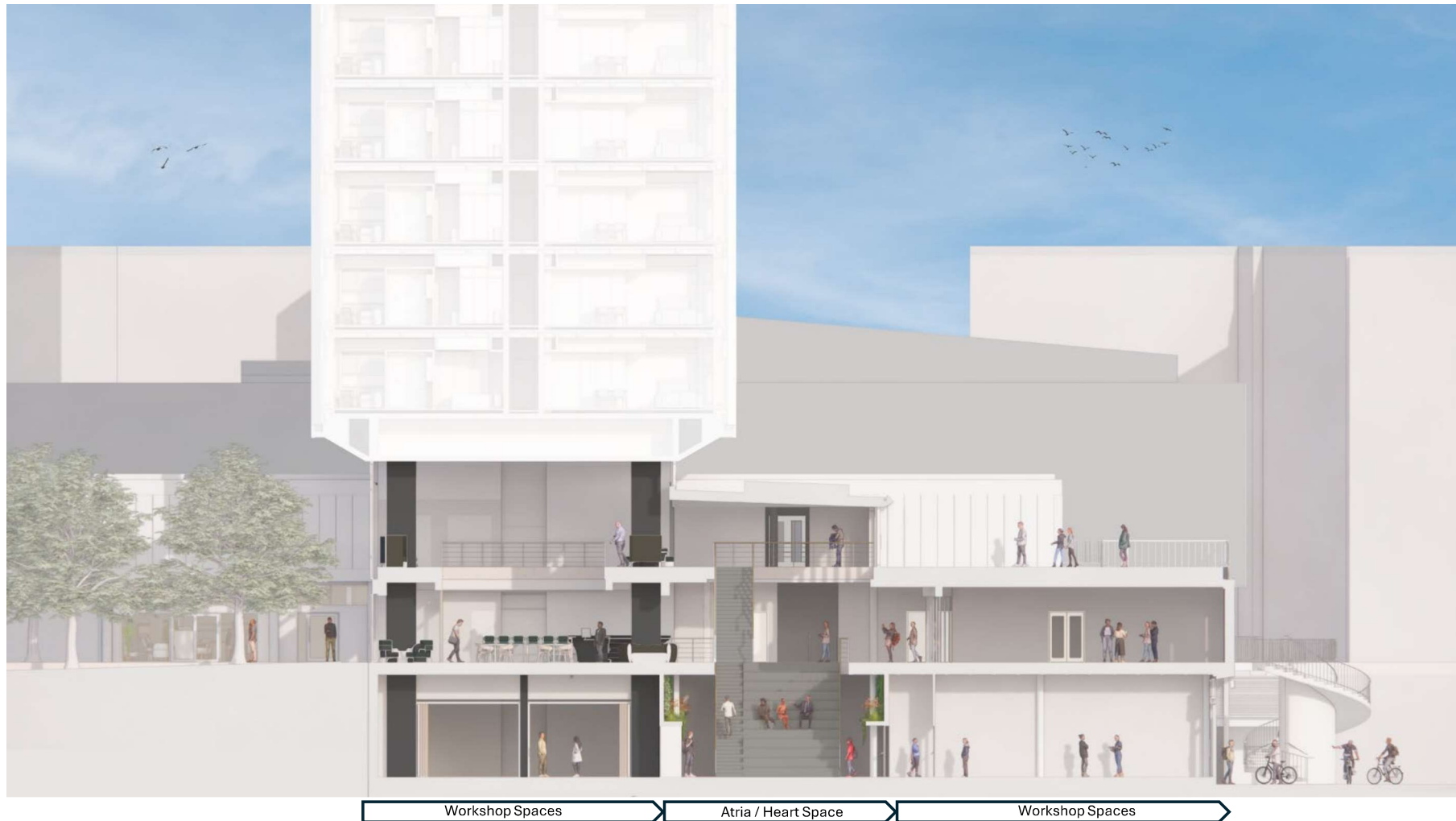
- 1 Classrooms for formal teaching and learning
- 2 Heart Space



Proposed Section



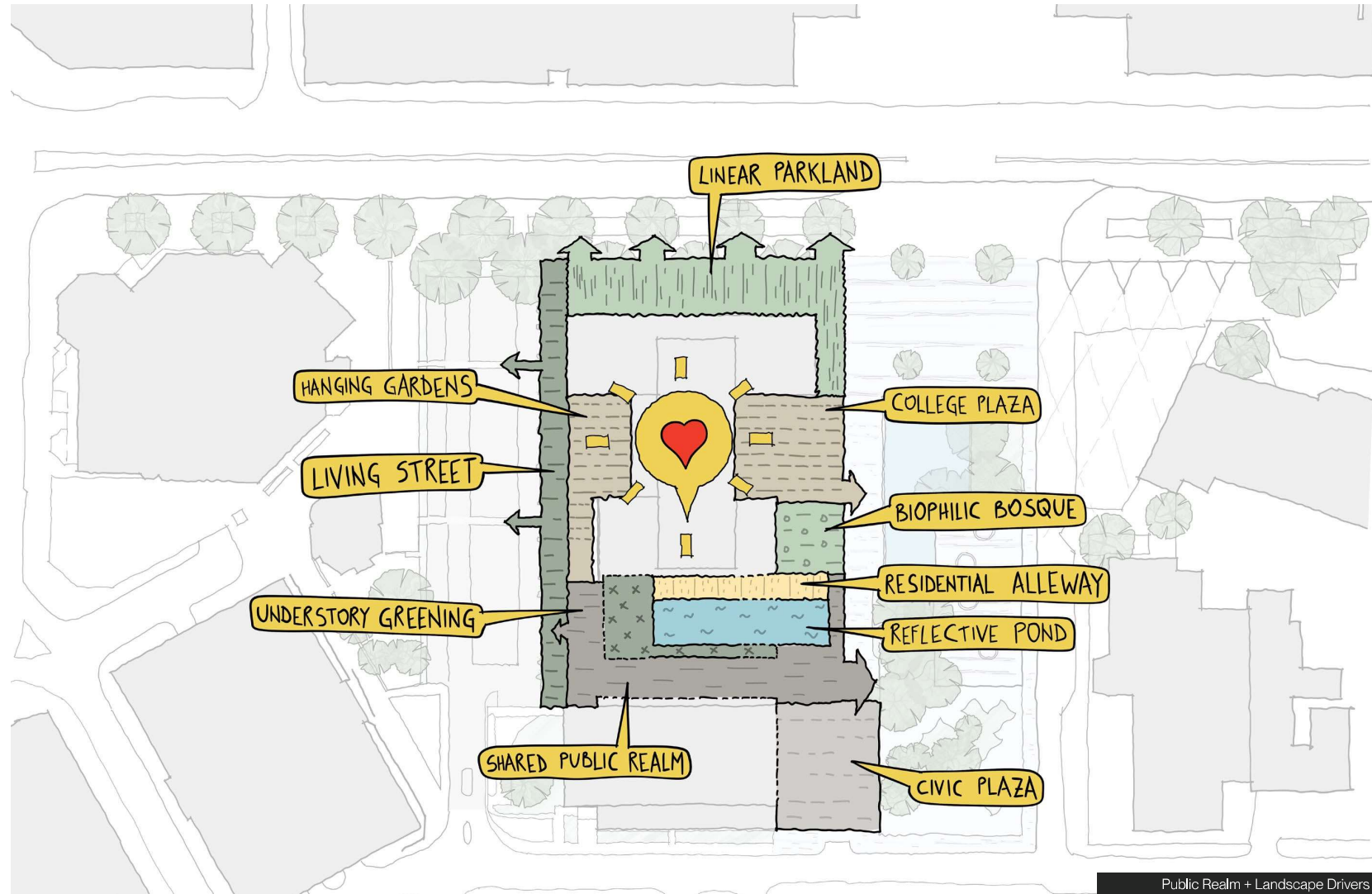
Proposed Section





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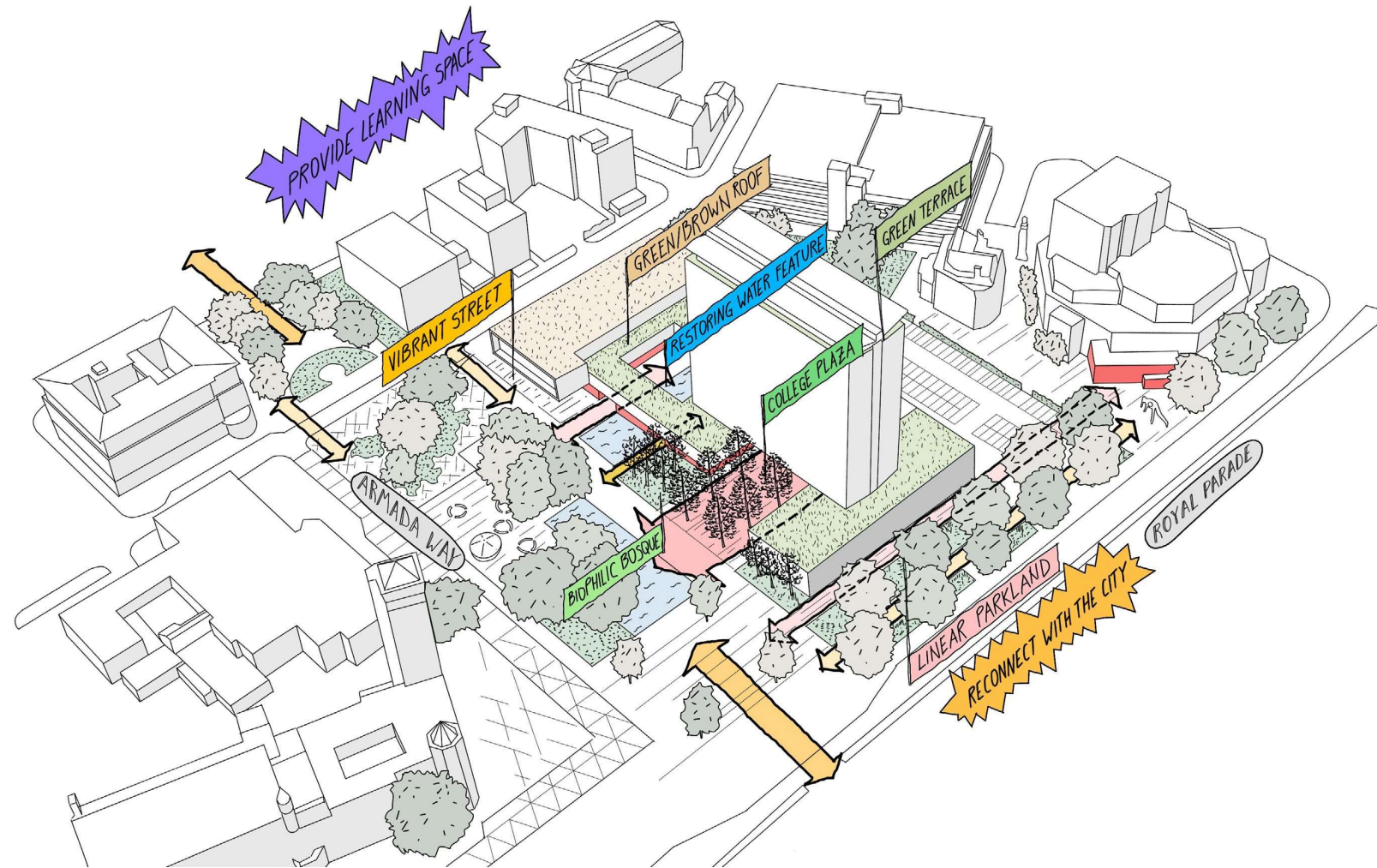
LANDMARK PUBLIC REALM.



Public Realm + Landscape Drivers

CIVIC.

**AN ATTRACTIVE,
VIBRANT,
VIBRANT + ROBUST
CANVAS.**



Key Masterplan Themes

CIVIC.



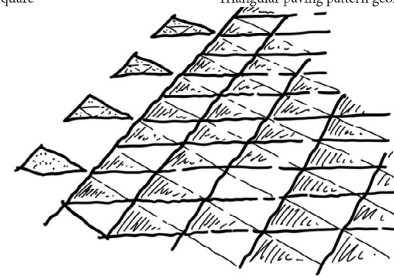
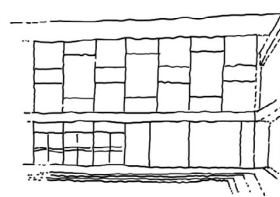
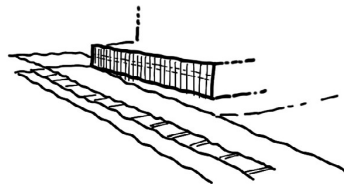
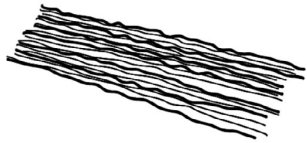
Early model of Plymouth Civic Centre - The Stirling Scheme

Linear soft and hard landscape

Jellicoe's plan for the Great Square

Triangular paving pattern geometry of Guildhall

Fibonacci system of harmonic proportions within indoor paving



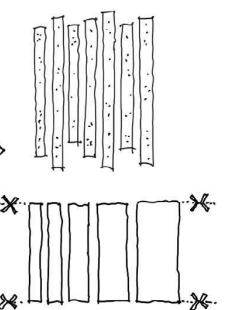
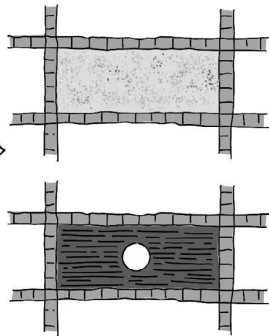
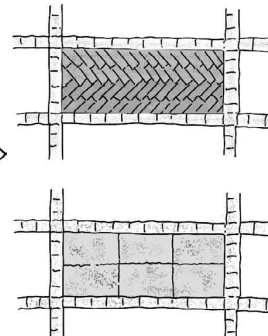
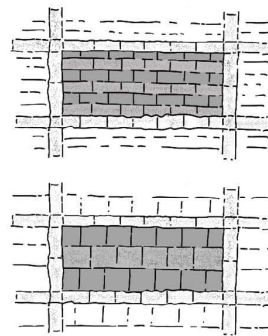
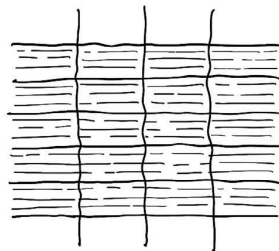
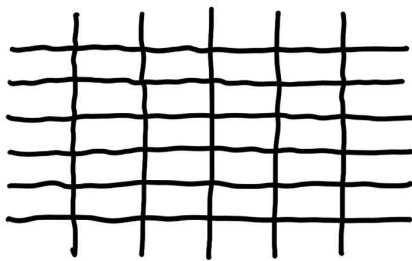
Linearity and main grid interpretation

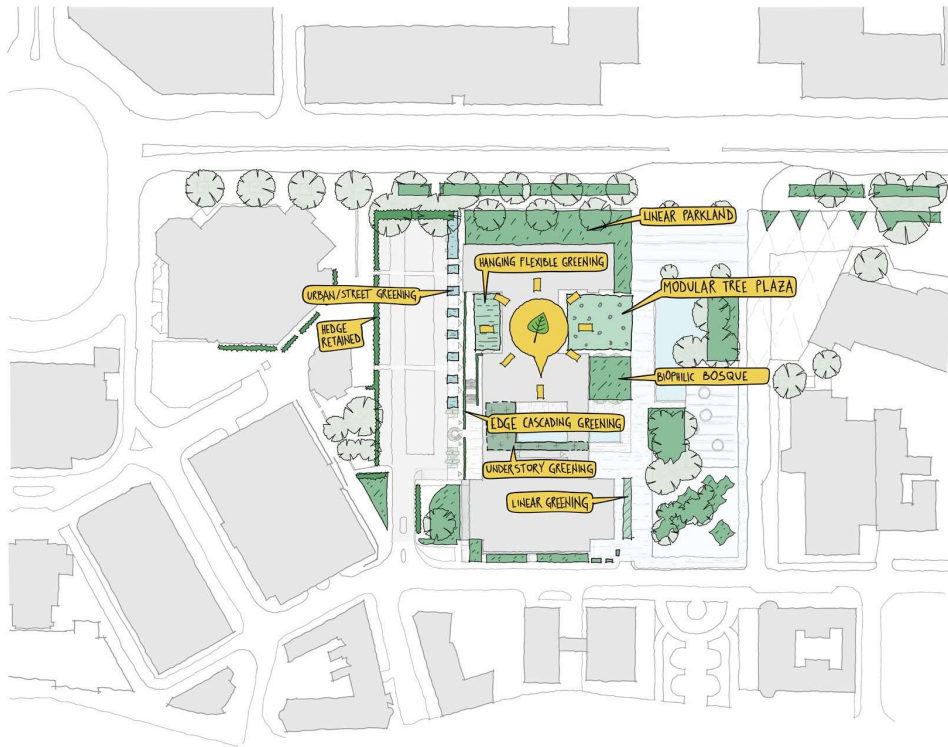
Interpretation of the secondary grid

Linear grid and stepped detail interpretation

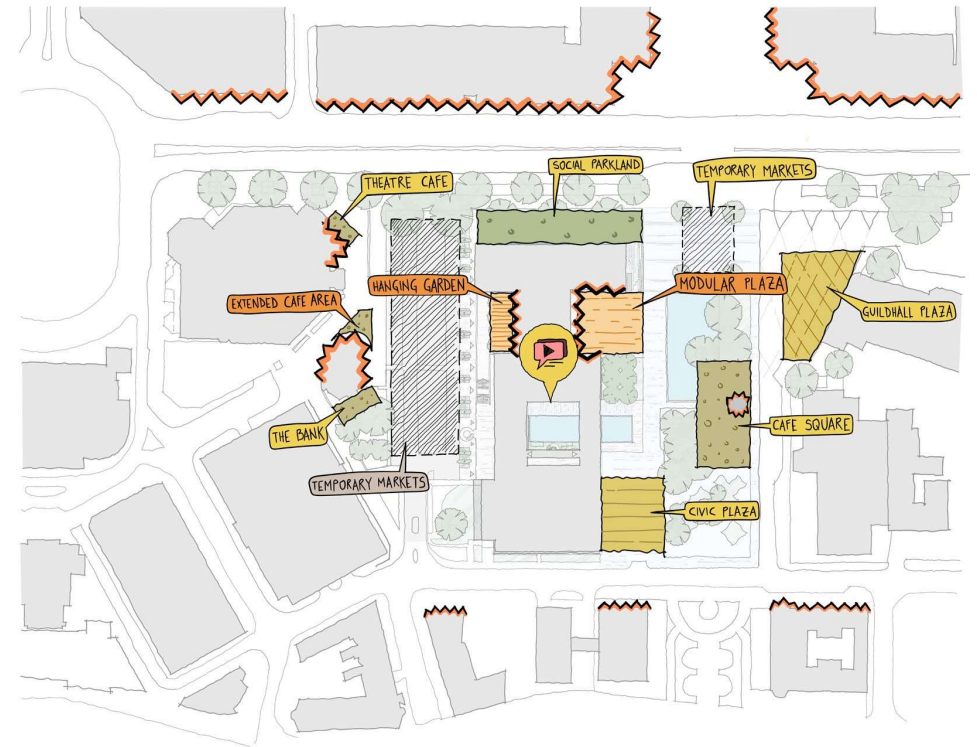
Geometrical patterns, bond typology systems and textures

Applying Fibonacci system to dimensions, proportions and colour alternation



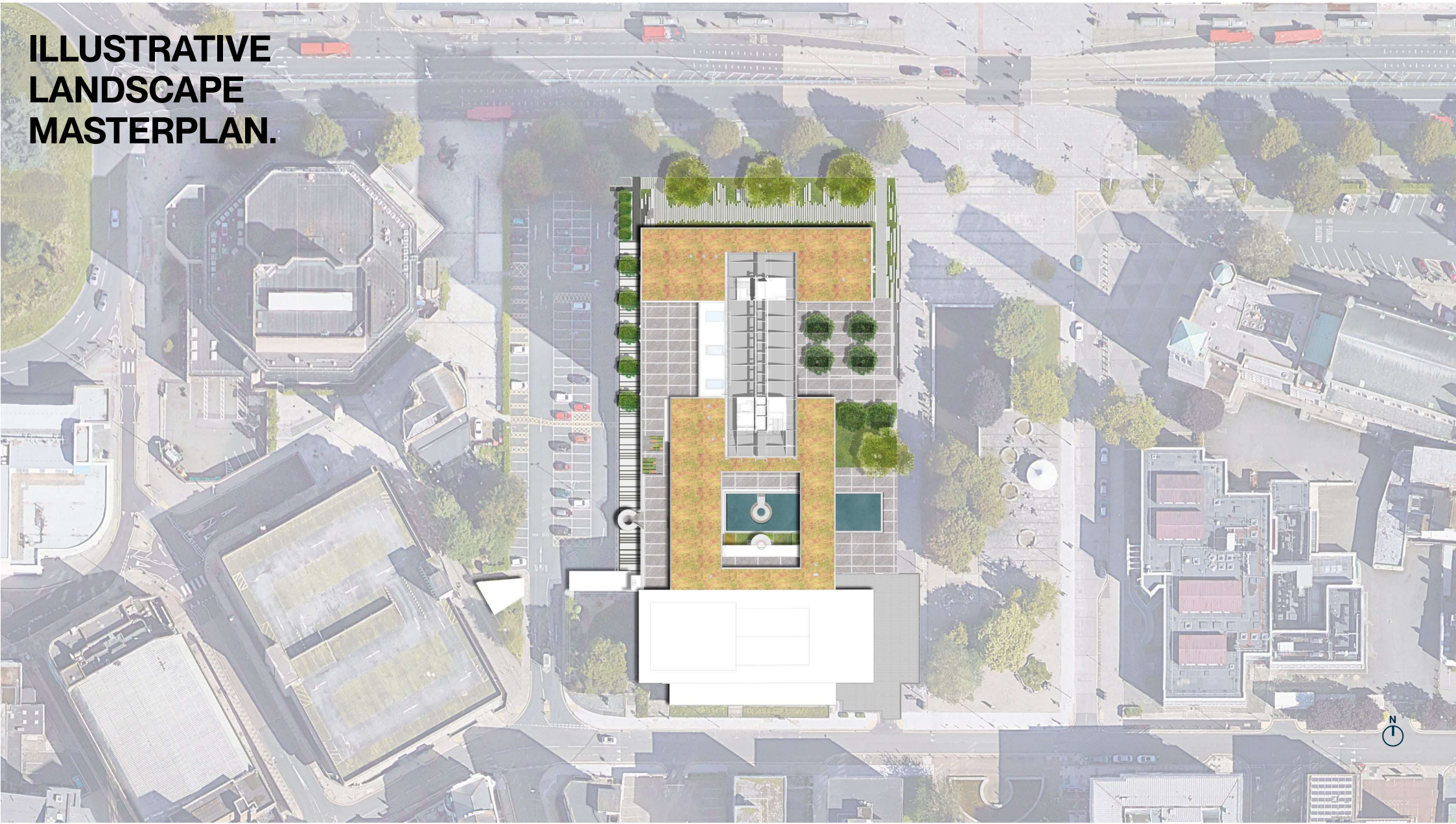


Living Infrastructure



Active Zones + Active Edges

**ILLUSTRATIVE
LANDSCAPE
MASTERPLAN.**





**PREVIOUS STAGE 3
CONSENTED
SCHEME.**



CIVIC.

**CURRENT STAGE 3
WORK IN
PROGRESS.**



CIVIC.

THE KEY CHANGES

- Design Updated to include **a new stair and lift to allow compliance with latest fire regulations** and guidance for the new homes within the tower
- Replanning of the **apartments to provide compliance with National Space Standards** and **Accessibility Standards** with a change to the mix of homes
- **Greater retention of the existing building** to allow the College to occupy the podium levels, and a clear subdivision of uses to allow forming of an independent section
- **Active uses of the lower ground level** by the College and a new active facade created to the surface carpark
- Approach to the **elevations updated to allow for mechanically ventilating the new homes**, and create **a more heritage sensitive design response** to the east and west facade replacement
- **Inclusion of a new stair and lift to the bridge podium** to disconnect the Council House from the High Risk Building
- **Investigation of a full public access approach to the rooftop**



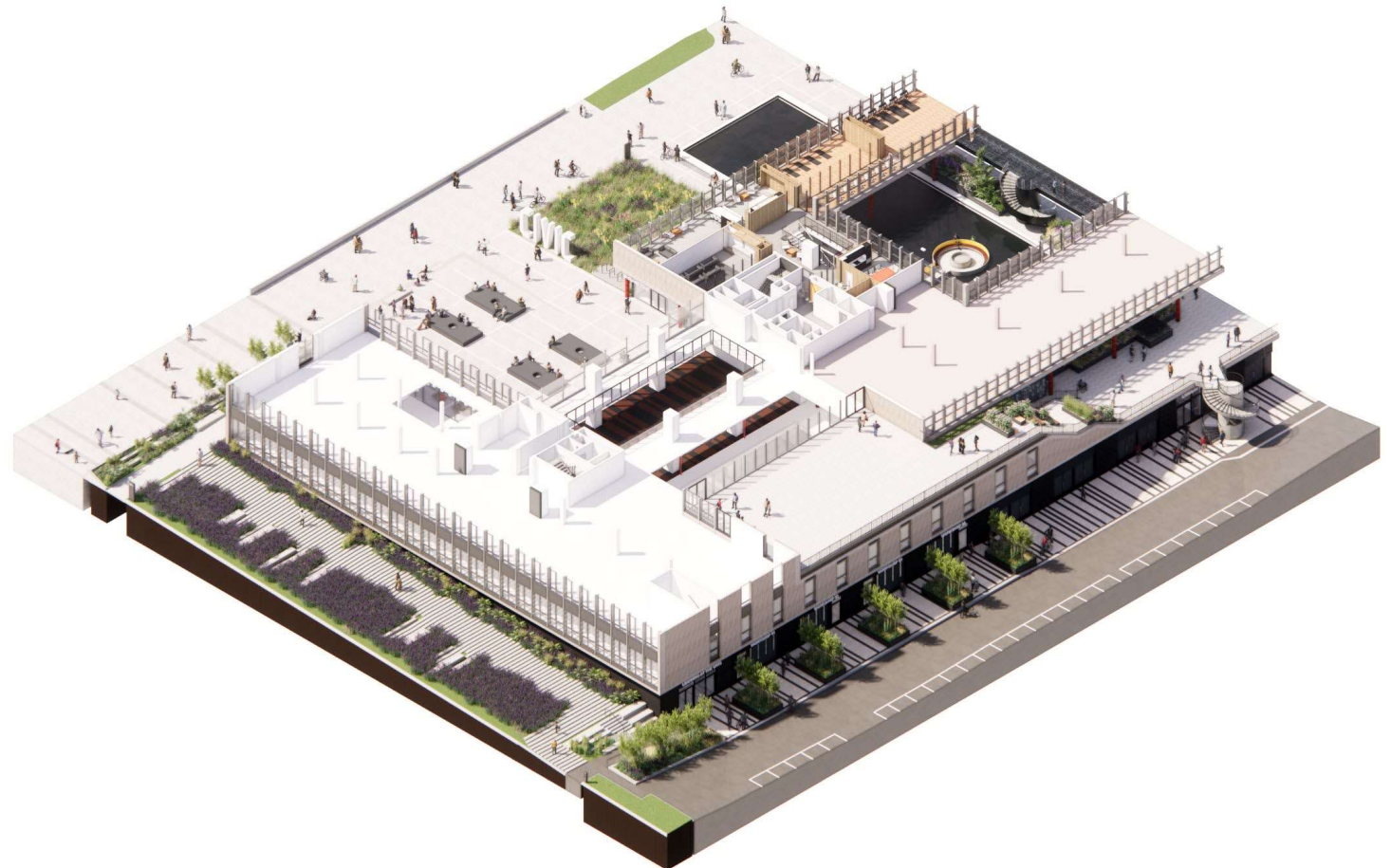
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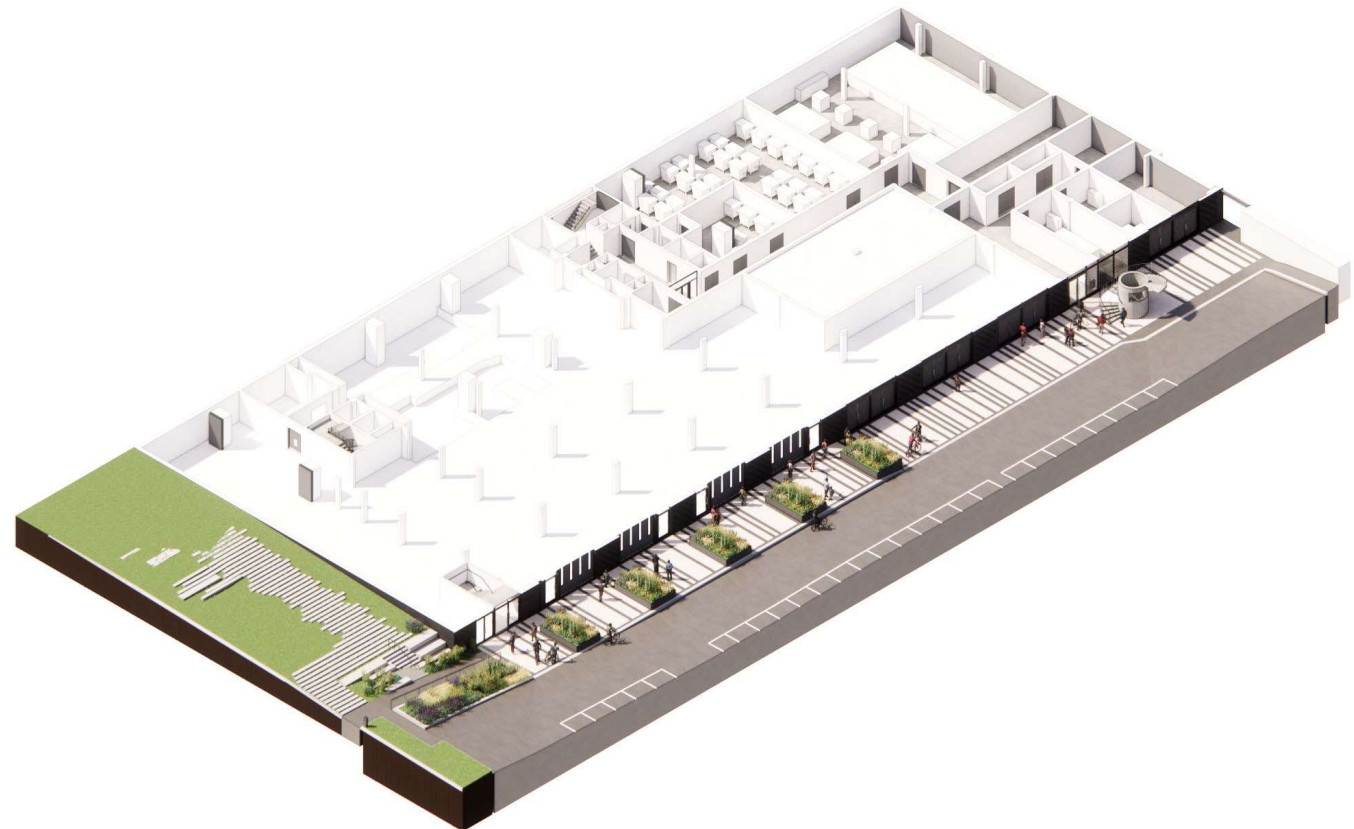
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NOW TIME FOR A QUICK
FLYTHROUGH