



CMIQ Hub Building

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

OCTOBER 2024

NORR

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Introduction and Site Context

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to accompany the Reserved Matter Application for the new CMIQ Hub Building. The Outline Planning Application reference number is 4/22/2184/001.

The proposals form an early phase of the Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter (CMIQ) masterplan which will host the Innovation and Solutions Hub Campus. The CMIQ will utilise a business cluster approach to diversify the West Cumbrian economy away from dependency on the nuclear sector and Sellafield site by building upon the existing supply chain, knowledge and engineering capabilities in the nuclear and clean energy sectors.

This Design and Access Statement presents design proposals by Cumberland Council for the erection of the campus hub building, which will be the catalyst for the first phase of the CMIQ development, this report includes the background to the development scheme and key features of the proposals.

The proposals seek to deliver the Hub building to provide a central focus for the CMIQ campus. A key catalyst building to promote change in the area.



Indicative 3D view of the proposed Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter

Introduction

Site Location: Wider Context



The site for this development is the existing Leconfield Industrial Estate within the town of Cleator Moor, West Cumbria, UK.

Cleator Moor is located approximately 4 miles east of Whitehaven which has national rail connections and a good A road network including the following:

- A595 linking to Whitehaven (4 Miles)
- A595 linking to Sellafield (8 Miles)
- Link to West Lakes Science and Technology Park (3miles)
- A595 and A5086 linking to the surrounding area and beyond to the M6 motorway.

The Leconfield Industrial Estate is highlighted in red and is situated approximately 750m west of the Cleator Moor Civic core on the B5295, Leconfield Street.

Introduction

Site Location within Cleator Moor

One of the most famous national cycle routes 'the coast-to-coast (C2C) passes through Cleator Moor along the old railway line under the phoenix bridge and passes just to the east of the Leconfield Industrial Estate.

The surrounding countryside is world class with the edge of the Lake District national park a mile to the east. Nearby Dent Fell to the south east can be walked from Cleator Moor itself and Ennerdale Bridge at the head of the Ennerdale Mountain valley is only 4 miles drive to the east.

The Leconfield Industrial Estate provides important employment activity within the town, however, some of the site has fallen into disuse. It is hoped that the rejuvenation of the Leconfield industrial Estate will be the facilitator to further change within the area, helping to promote employment and skills (refer to fig 7.1)



Cleator moor Civic Hub



C2C Phoenix Bridge



Ennerdale (from Ennerdale Bridge end of valley)



Health Centre



Leconfield Industrial Estate –Existing Employment Occupier facing on to Leconfield street

Introduction

Site Location within Cleator Moor



The Leconfield Industrial Estate occupies a prime central location within the town, between the two main residential areas of the settlement.

The Town Centre, from which a range of shops and services can be accessed is located approximately 600m the site.

Fig 7. 1 Map showing the site in relation to Cleator Moor town centre. Copyright google maps

Introduction

The Site

Cleator Moor town developed rapidly in the 19th Century, as the industrial revolution demanded more and more coal, limestone and high-grade iron ore. Early in the 20th Century supplies began to decline, with the decline of traditional industries and the resulting high rate of unemployment, the town's economy is now dependent on the nearby Sellafield complex, which provides jobs to around half the town's people. Sellafield is now moving into a process of decommissioning with a move towards cleaning up the site which will lead to a slow but inevitable reduction in its economic activity.

The northwestern residential area of Cleator Moor is disconnected from the town centre by Leconfield Industrial Estate and the neighbouring swathe of woodland. The site, therefore, occupies a prime central location within the town, between the two main residential areas of the settlement.

The Masterplan for the estate is looking at connecting the two main residential settlements by improving safe pedestrian and cycle routes through the Estate.

The proposed Hub building will occupy the Northeast corner of the current Leconfield Industrial Estate. This location was established due to its central position between the 3 main development areas for the Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter. Leconfield Industrial Estate is area 1, with land to the east near the football club forming area 2 and the expansion land to the north forming area 3.

The site is occupied by an old building slab that has been tenanted out to the BOC company. An alternative suitable site has been identified for BOC to relocate to.



Aerial Photograph, 2003



Aerial Photograph, 2020

Introduction

Site Opportunities and Constraints



Introduction

Planning Policy Context

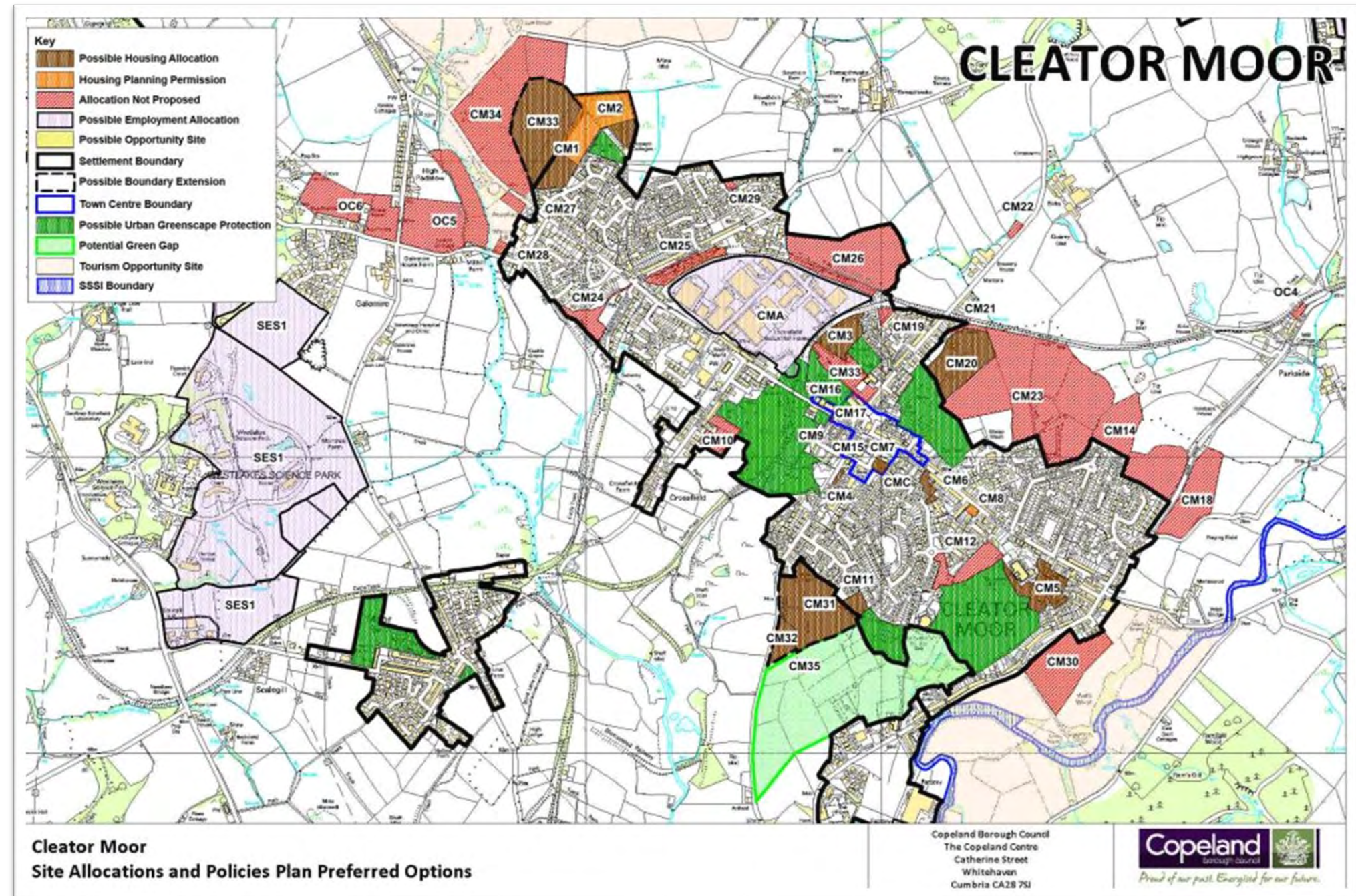
The policies relevant to the proposed development are contained within:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021
- Copeland Local Plan 2013-28 Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (adopted 2015) ('the Core Strategy')
- Remaining policies 'saved' from the Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016 (adopted 2006) ('the 2006 Plan')

Cumberland Council are currently preparing a new Local plan that will replace the current planning policies upon adoption. The latest version of the emerging Plan is the Copeland Local Plan 2021-2038 Publication Draft.

Given its level of progress through the local plan process at the time of writing its policies can be afforded some (limited) weight in the determination of the application. Accordingly, consideration is also made to the emerging policies of relevance to the proposals.

A full review of the planning policy context is included in the submitted Planning Statement.



Introduction

Planning Policy Context

The following design-related policies are highlighted:

National Policy

The NPPF recognises that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities (paragraph 126).

To achieve this design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals.

Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests (paragraph 132).

Planning Policies and decisions should therefore ensure that the development:

- Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- Is visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- Is sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change
- Help promote and maintain a strong sense of place, using the building types, spaces and materials to create a attractive, welcoming and distinctive place to work and visit;
- Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of use facilities to support local business;
- Create a place which is safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience. (paragraph 130)

Cumberland Council Local Plan

Policy ST1: Strategic Development Principles sets out the fundamental principles that will guide development management in the Borough by (amongst others) ensuring the creation and retention of quality places through:

Application of rigorous design standards that retain and enhance locally distinctive places, improve build quality and achieve efficient use of land

- A. Ensuring development provides or safeguards good levels of residential amenity and security
- B. Accommodating traffic and access arrangements in ways that make it safe and convenient for pedestrians and cyclists to move around
- C. Ensuring new development addresses land contamination with appropriate remediation measures

Policy DM10: Achieving Quality of Place sets out that the Council expects a high standard of design and the fostering of quality places. Development proposals will be required to:

- A. Incorporate a complementary mix of uses, especially within or near town centres or at sites adjacent to public transport routes.
- B. Respond positively to the character of the site and the immediate and wider setting and enhance local distinctiveness through:
 - 1. An appropriate size and arrangement of development plots
 - 2. The appropriate provision, orientation, proportion, scale and massing of buildings
 - 3. Careful attention to the design of spaces between buildings, including provision for efficient and unobtrusive recycling and waste storage
 - 4. Careful selection and use of building materials which reflects local character and vernacular.

Introduction

Planning Policy Context

- C. Incorporate existing features of interest including landscape, topography, local vernacular styles and building materials; and in doing so, have regard to the maintenance of biodiversity
- D. Address vulnerability to and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour by ensuring that the design, location and layout of all new development creates:
 - 1. Clear distinctions between public and private spaces
 - 2. Overlooked routes and spaces within and on the edges of development
- E. Create and maintain reasonable standards of general amenity
- F. Incorporate new works of art as part of development schemes where appropriate.

Policy ENV5: Protecting and Enhancing the Borough's Landscapes sets out that the Borough's landscapes will be protected and enhanced by:

- A. Protecting all landscapes from inappropriate change by ensuring that development does not threaten or detract from the distinctive characteristics of that particular area
- B. Where the benefits of the development outweigh the potential harm, ensuring that the impact of the development on the landscape is minimised through adequate mitigation, preferably on-site
- C. Supporting proposals which enhance the value of the Borough's landscapes.

Policy DM22: Accessible Developments requires development proposals to be accessible to all users and accord with the following principles:

- A. The layout of the development responds positively to existing movement patterns in the area by providing or contributing towards:
 - I. Permeable and legible layouts which are convenient for access into and through the site for pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people
 - II. Access for public transport iii) Access for emergency and service vehicles
- B. Incorporate innovative approaches to managing vehicular access and parking with:
 - I. Standards incorporated into the design of the development which manage traffic access and speeds without excessive engineering measures
 - II. Incorporate car parking, through a variety of on street and off-street arrangements which avoid vehicles dominating the street scene.

Emerging Council Local Plan

The following key Publication Draft policies have been highlighted as being of relevance to the proposals:

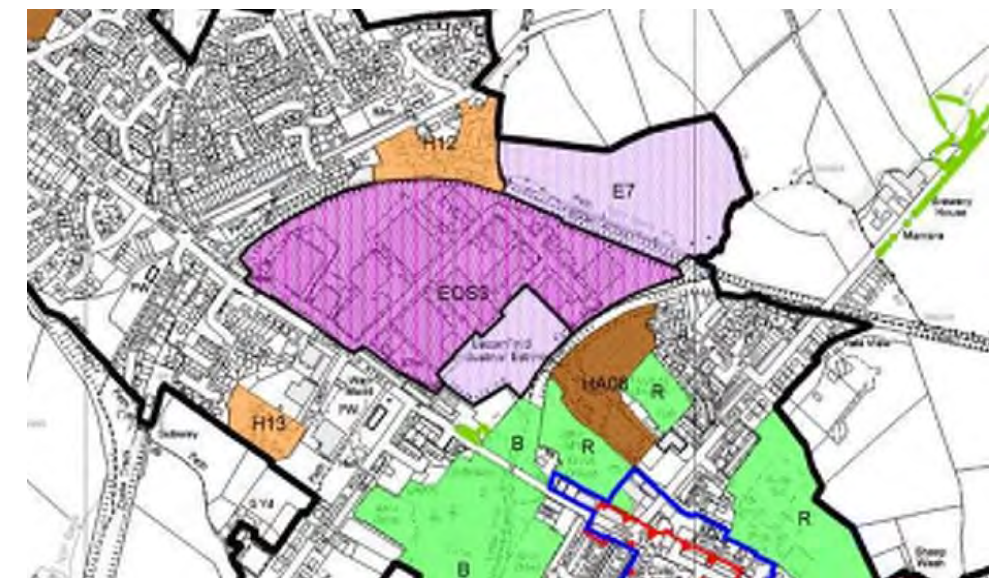
Strategic Policy DS1PU Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development states that the Council will take a positive approach to sustainable development by approving applications without delay where they accord with the Development Plan (and where relevant, any neighbourhood plan), unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Strategic Policy DS3PU Settlement Hierarchy directs development to the four towns of Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom as the most sustainable parts of the borough as they contain a high number and a broad range of services, as well as

greater infrastructure to support further development. Cleator Moor is identified as a second-tier settlement, a 'Key Service Centre', which is to be the focus for town centre developments, employment development and medium scale housing extensions, windfall and infill development.

Strategic Policy DS4PU Settlement Boundaries identifies the development limits of settlements in the Borough within which development is acceptable subject to other material considerations.

Strategic Policy E4PU Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter at Leconfield allocates Leconfield Industrial Estate and adjacent land to accommodate the Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter business cluster. The primary uses on the Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter development will be limited to Use Class B2, Use Class B8 and Use Class E(g) only. Community infrastructure, community facilities and ancillary uses to support to the primary uses on the development will be supported within a single building or small cluster of buildings within the development to act as a focal point for the development and local community, including uses such as café/restaurant, meeting spaces and education/training spaces (i.e., Use Classes E(b), E(d), E(f), F1(a) and F1(e)).



Extract from Copeland Local Plan (2013-2028) Proposals Map (2013)

Introduction

Planning History

A brief review of the Council's planning application portal has also been undertaken to understand any issues of relevance for the project arising from previous planning applications on and around the Leconfield site.

In summary, the planning history site shows that there have been no significant redevelopment applications.

Introduction

Pre-application Discussions

The development proposals have been subject to extended pre-application discussions with Officers at Cumberland Council where appropriate.

A series of meetings have been held in relation to the proposals since January 2022.

Key topics of discussion have included:

- Planning Application Format

In response to Officers recommendations an outline planning application covering the hub has been taken forward. The outline application was submitted and was granted provisionally in Jan 2023 subject to a Section 106 agreement.

- Highways and Transport Considerations

In response to comments and feedback received, the scope of junction modelling has been expanded to ensure a comprehensive understanding of potential highways impact.

In addition, detailed access arrangements for each site have been incorporated in the proposals.

- Scale and Design

Design has evolved throughout the process and has taken into account all of the advice received from the planning officers. Some of this design development is described under the design development section.

A range of different heights has also been discussed, and the current height parameter plan for both the masterplan outline application submission and the hub outline submission has been amended in line with previous discussions. This takes into account adjacent building fabric as well as possible impact on the surrounding areas. Residential housing is on the opposite side of the C2C cycle route to the proposed site.

Following discussions with Landscape Officers a series of viewpoints have been established from which rendered images have been produced to illustrate the impact of the proposals on the surrounding landscape character.

The results of this exercise have influenced the proposed maximum build heights across the CMIQ site and on individual plots to minimise impact, including that established for the CMIQ Hub Building.

- Proposed Uses

As part of the masterplan application a range of uses had been discussed, and in order to support the creation of the business cluster campus, the development proposals comprise of new floorspace to accommodate light industrial, research and development and storage and distribution uses alongside new education, hotel and student accommodation provision.

The hub building will be a multi-use covering light industrial workshop spaces for start-ups, as well as lighter duty innovation spaces to house R&D and office type functions associated with the businesses. As the hub will be main focal building knitting the campus together it will have facilities to support the wider campus and its businesses, such as bookable meeting facilities.

In response to feedback, noise and air quality assessments have been undertaken to understand current levels on the site and any potential impact on neighbouring residential amenity that may arise from proposed uses. Mitigation measures where required will be incorporated within the detailed design stages.

- Ecology and Habitat Considerations

Following feedback from officers, a wide suite of species and habitat surveys have been undertaken to establish the ecological value of the site.

The results of these surveys have influenced the location and extent of proposed development plots to avoid areas of highest value. We have also developed the design to include a proposed inclusion of a number of other measures including new habitat creation to improve the range and scale of species on the site and relocation of habitats to other parts of the site.

Drop-in Exhibition –

An initial two-day drop-in exhibition was held in Cleator Moor in March 2022. At the event a series of consultation boards were presented (shown below) setting out the background to the proposals, their design evolution and next steps. Feedback was actively sought from attendees and has been fed back into further design iterations prior to the submission of the application.

Public consultation boards

Building Proposal

Building Proposal

Introduction

Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter Masterplan

The layout of Area 1 (Leconfield Industrial Estate) forming part of the Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter follows the existing orthogonal road layout and takes into consideration retained buildings. New plots are mostly around the edges with the new Hub building located in a central place within the masterplan, allowing the linking of the future expansion land and creating a focal point to the development that will aid in the creation of the new 'community'.

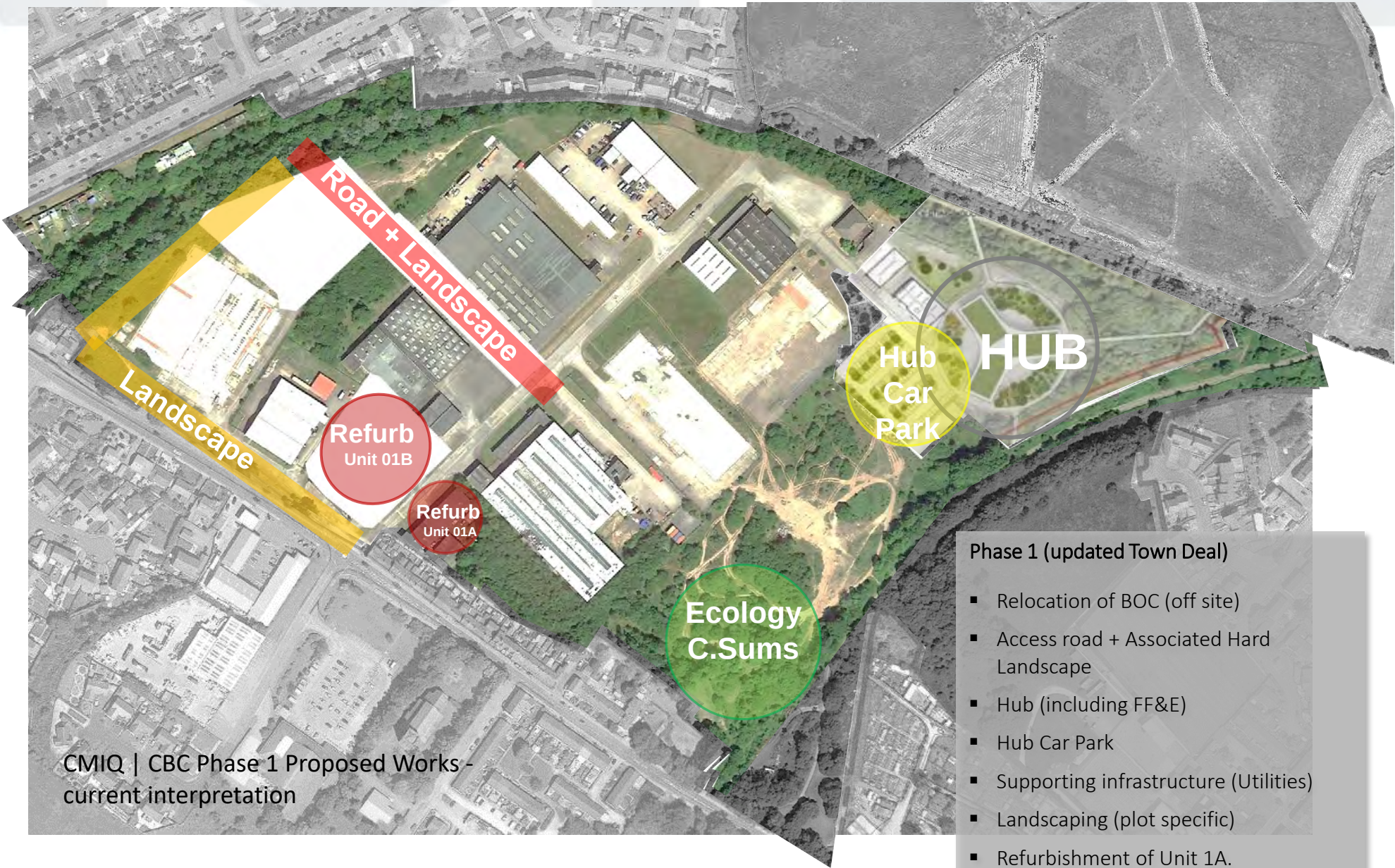


Phase 1

The Hub will be a centralised space that brings together different uses to create natural meeting opportunities for people and businesses across the site.

The Hub is envisaged to be the focal point of the Leconfield Industrial Estate and so will help to form links between the tenants, outside users, education and skills providers.

The strategy was to position the hub as the principal building acting as a link, open to all site users.



The hub building will act as an integrated centre of the proposed business cluster by providing:

- spaces for innovation and incubation,
- workshop areas,
- skills and employment development,
- shared reception,

Phase 1 (updated Town Deal)

- Relocation of BOC (off site)
- Access road + Associated Hard Landscape
- Hub (including FF&E)
- Hub Car Park
- Supporting infrastructure (Utilities)
- Landscaping (plot specific)
- Refurbishment of Unit 1A.
- Later Refurbishment of Unit 1B
- Ecology site wide works (incl. commuted sum provision)

The location of the hub is close to the existing C2C cycle route and path way. Further town centre projects are in the works to aid the pedestrians/ cycle connection between the Town Centre and the industrial estate, increase the number of access points to and around the hub building.

Building Proposal

Proposed Amount & Use

The Hub will be a mixed-use centralised building to form a focus for the Leconfield Industrial Estate, and offers the following amenities

- Work-spaces for innovation and incubation,
- Workshop areas,
- Skills and employment development,
- Prototype suites
- Communal spaces

The footprint has not exceeded 4000SQM, as proposed in the outline application. The proposed building foot-print is 1866sqm (including roof overhang)

The site will use landscaping to create pedestrian routes through existing habitats, allowing for a significant proportion of the site to remain as existing landscape or soft landscaping.

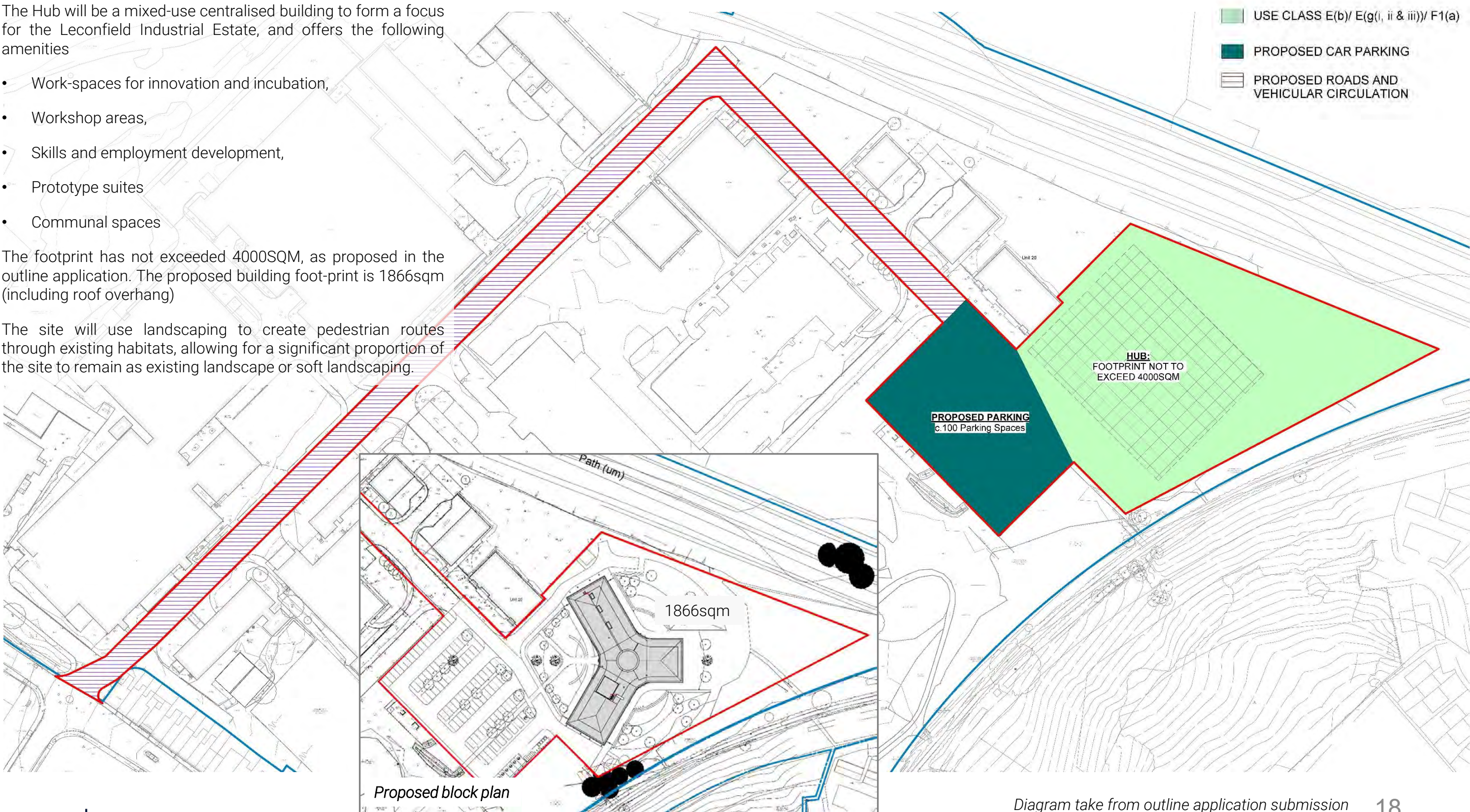


Diagram take from outline application submission

Proposed Layout

The Site

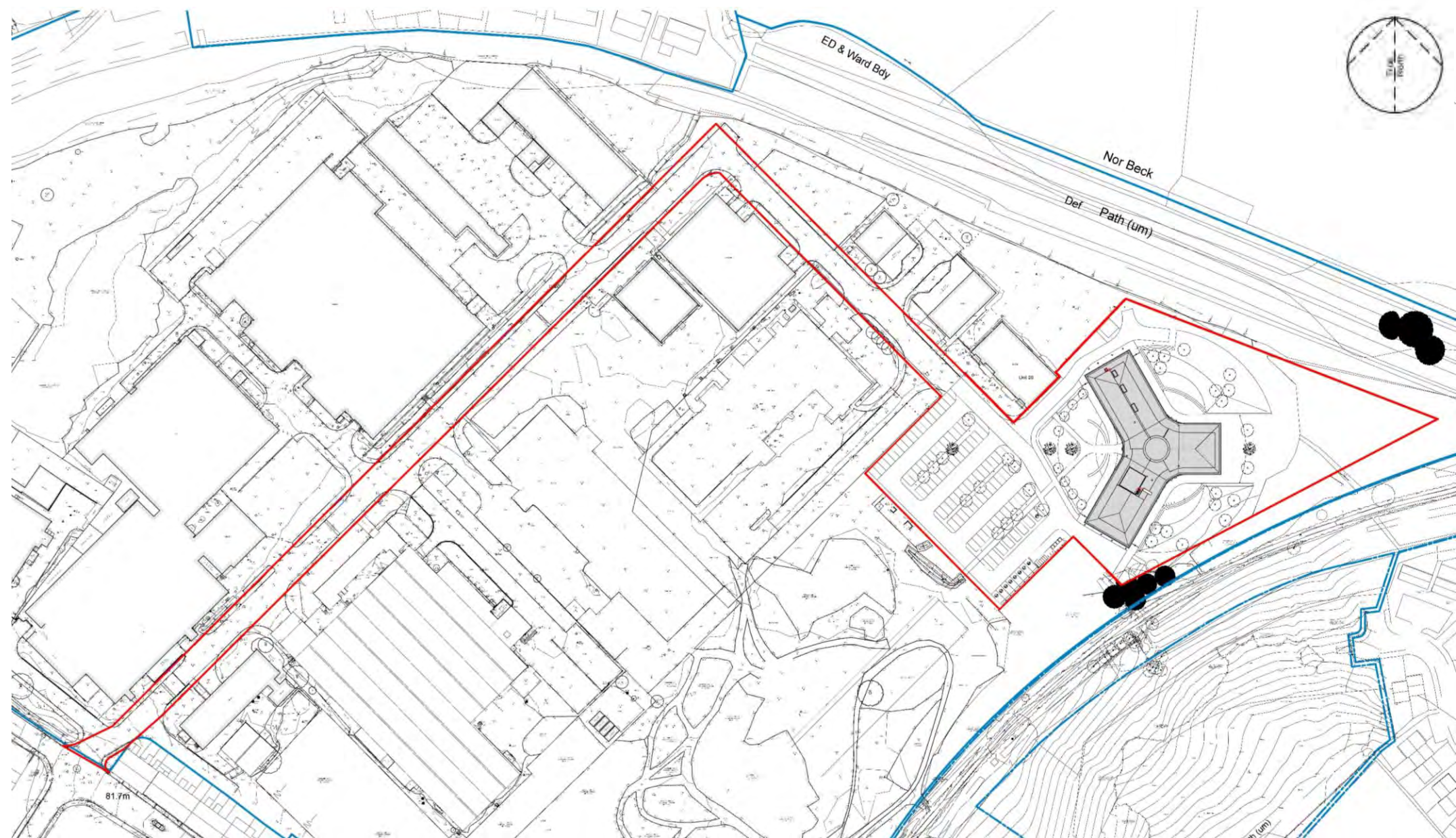
The Hub has been designed to accommodate links to future developments and allow for several different pedestrian approaches. This will help connect Cleator Moor and the Leconfield Site.

The building orientation has been largely dictated by the existing main road approach. The building is sited at the end of the existing Leconfield Street, with the car park being at the front of the building. A large grassed area greets visitors upon their approach to the main building entrance. The car parking bays closest to the building will be accessible spaces with 9no. EV spaces provided as part of the overall car parking provision.

The planting used has been carefully considered to highlight access routes and key design features whilst also encouraging wildlife to use the site. The site is relevantly flat with all access points being level access.

The lighting scheme for the site has been carefully considered and multiple workshops have been carried out with an ecologist to make sure the lighting positions, colour and lux levels are all appropriate for the local bat population. As well as ensuring that there is enough lighting provision to prevent crime and to ensure site users feel safe within the estate and around the hub building,

The south-facing facades of the larger space will have a level of solar shading by large vertical aluminium fins which protrude from the building. This will help with potential overheating in the summer.



Proposed site plan

Proposed Layout

The Building

GROUND FLOOR

Proposed Ground Floor

The proposed layout focuses on a central reception area with separate access points that lead visitors to different areas of the campus. This space also incorporates a communal tea prep and vending area with informal seating.

The Hub has three independent wings allowing for separation between different functions or tenants. This will also allow different wings to adapt in the future as needs develop and grow. The wings are split into two flexible innovation workshop spaces with heavy duty provision and double height spaces, and a general purpose innovation wing, which is single height space with lighter duty finishes suitable for R&D and office type functions. As this is a shorter wing there is also the potential to extend this in future should increased capacity be needed.

While each wing provides different functions targeted at differing business types, by combining them into a central building they can complement each other and allow for collaboration within the central space.



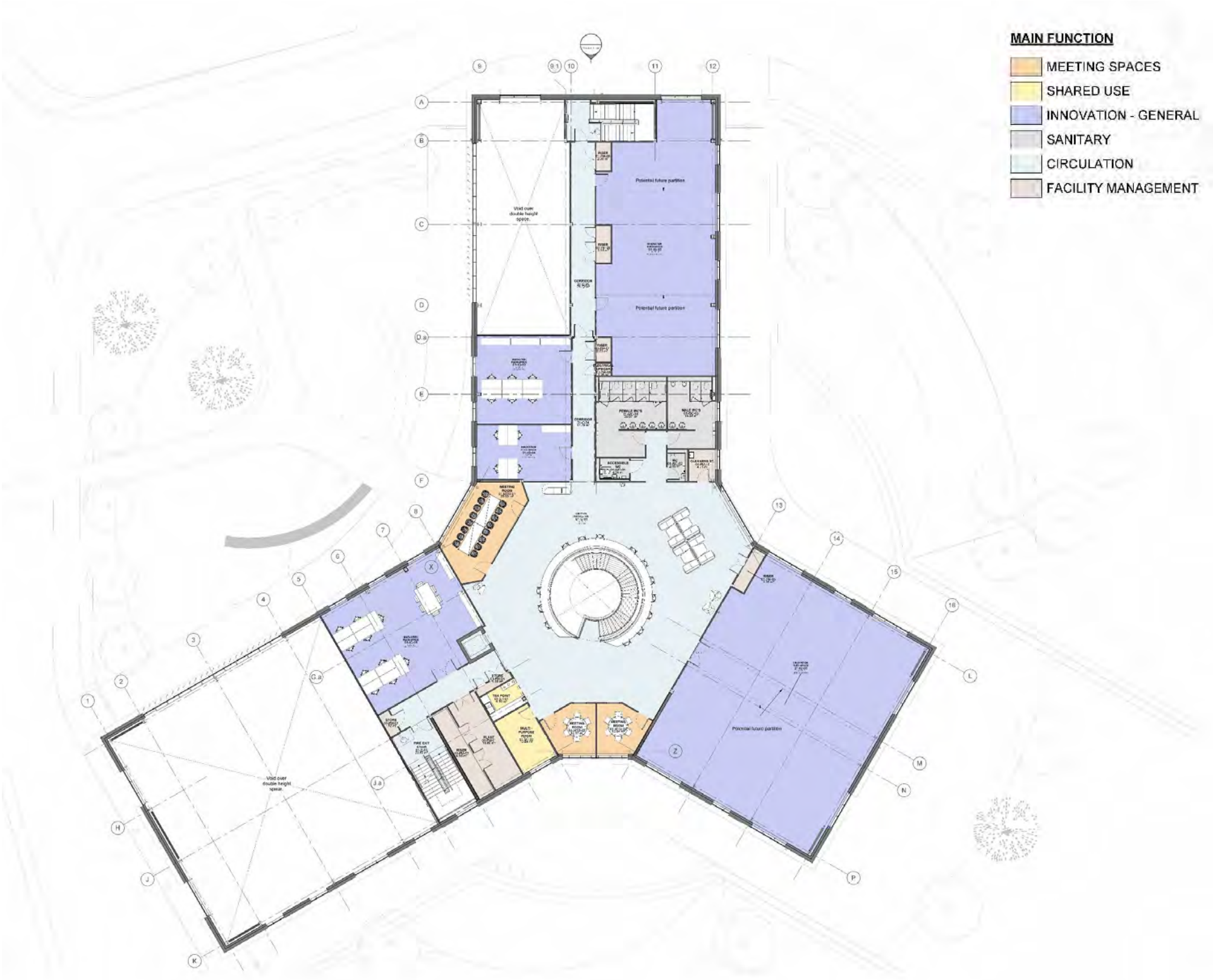
Proposed Layout

The Building

FIRST FLOOR

The first-floor layout continues the central circulation area shared by all and provides workstations and meeting/collaboration areas.

This floor also provides general purpose innovation spaces, dedicated to R&D and office functions, alongside bookable meeting rooms. By including innovation space in small individual spaces, as well as full / half wing floor plates, this allows future tenants to determine what is best for their individual needs.



Proposed Layout

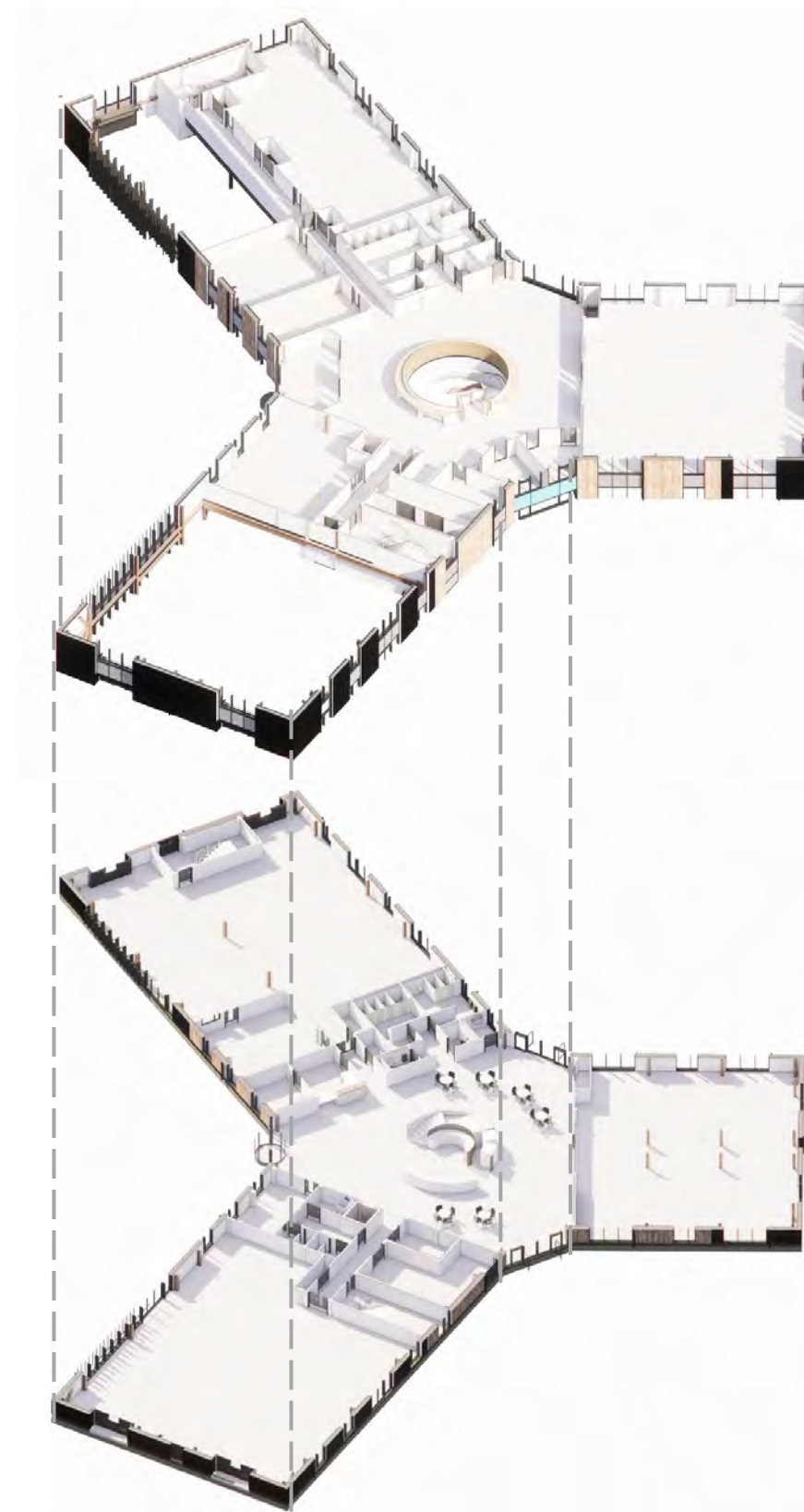
The Building

Proposed Floor Arrangement

The organisation of the building provides the following:

- Open central space which also provides:
 - Ground floor tea prep with informal seating / meeting areas
 - First Floor Break out spaces & meeting rooms
 - WCs & shower facilities
- Ground Floor
 - Reception
 - Technician Base
 - Meeting Room
 - 2 wings of workshops, with flexibility for unit sizes and future adaption
 - 1 wing of general innovation space, with flexibility for unit sizes and future adaption
- First Floor
 - Small Offices and R&D spaces
 - 2 larger floor plates of general innovation space, with flexibility for unit sizes and future adaption

The wings have been designed to accommodate the future flexibility of the workshop and general innovation spaces. These may become several smaller spaces or a mix of single and double height as the design develops in the future; therefore, all the core services are centred around the circulation space and allow for the wings to be reconfigured without interfering with other spaces.



Proposed Scale

Outline application

'The building will not exceed 12m in height, allowing for a two-story building plus roof plant accommodation.'

The height of the building is as follows

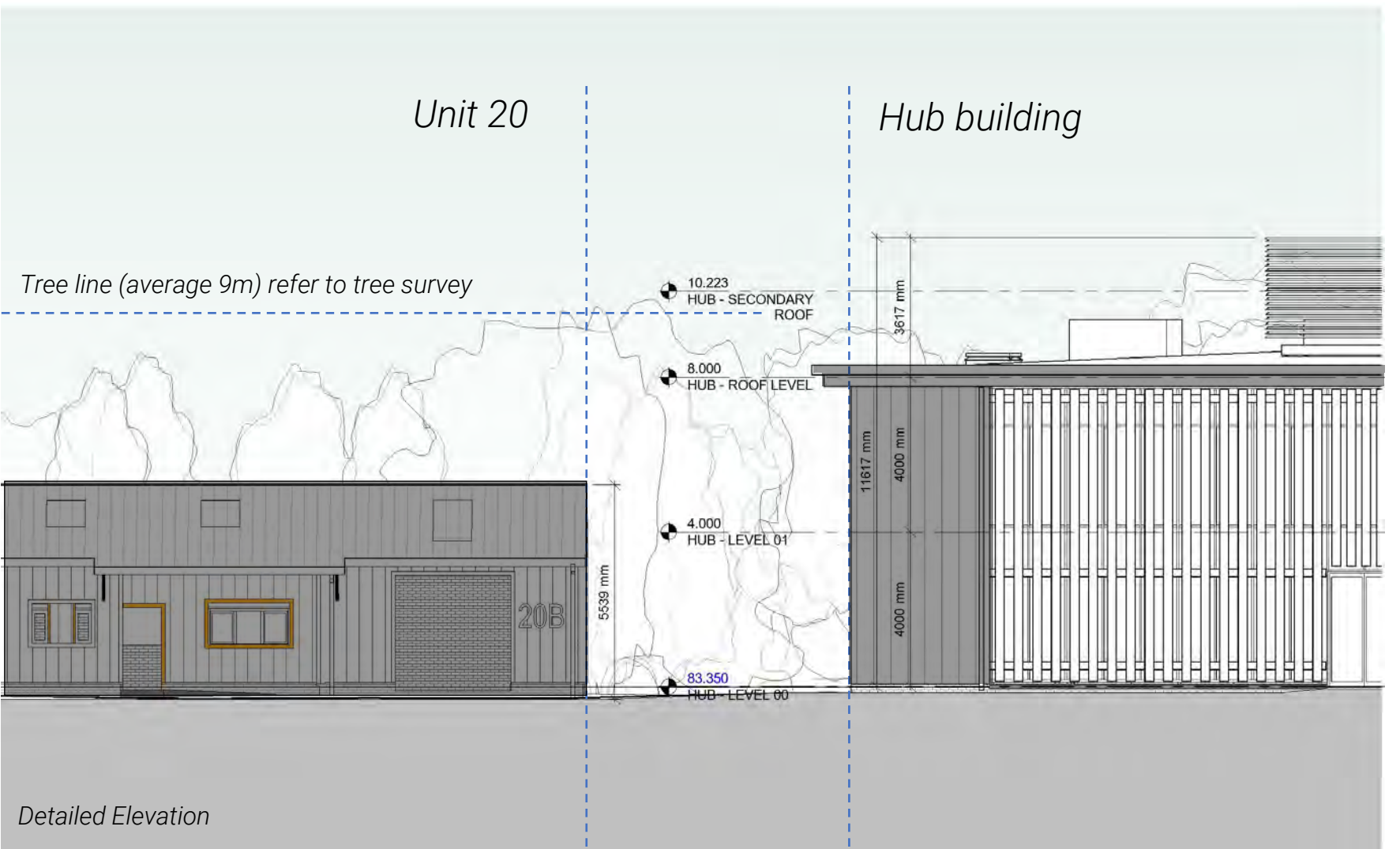
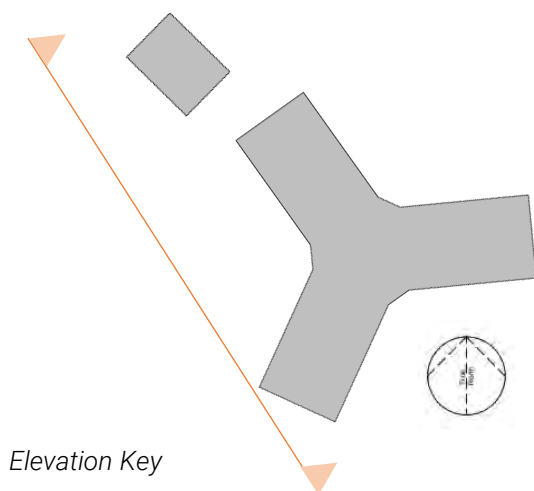
FFL 83350 – ROOF LEVEL (Highest point) 8700mm

FFL 83350 – TOP OF PLANT ENCLOSURE 11617mm

The building has 3 wings with maximum lengths of 29170mm

The overall all building height was established at the outline application stage. The building height was agreed to ensure that building considers adjacent building fabric as well as possible impact on the surrounding areas. Residential housing is on the opposite side of the C2C cycle route to the proposed site. The floor-to-floor height of 4m was decided upon due to the nature of the workshop spaces and the need to accommodate tall head height for potential equipment, this also allowed for overhead sectional doors for vehicle access. The building height fits in with its surroundings and the first-floor level does not exceed the heights of the surrounding tree line.

The main entrance comprises of double height glazed curtain walling from ground level up to underside of roof. The entrance itself is signified by an integrated curved glazed lobby to present a clear and welcoming public entry point to the new building.



Appearance

Masterplan Design Code

A document was produced as part of the CMIQ masterplan outline planning applications. This document sets out some simple design guidance to help establish design principles that will help ensure the successful implementation of the masterplan.

The design code set out the following design principle for the hub.

'The setting for the Hub building is surrounded by existing habitats and established trees. It is positioned as a key central location linked to each of the development areas.'

The material palette for the Hub will be distinct to create a landmark building that also remains settled in its context, for example using timber and then potentially incorporating a brown roof.

Colour and wayfinding should be used to emphasize entrance points and to create local interest.

The main façade should use high-quality materials and include signage and wayfinding. Glazing and translucent panels should be provided where possible to allow for increased visual connectivity and allow the activities within the building to be showcased.'

