


K2A





ENTERPRISE  
FACILITY  
RUNCORN STATION  
QUARTER  
INITIAL PROJECT  
BRIEF





Runcorn

Keep back from  
the platform edge

Passing train cause an accident

# Document Information

Client	Halton Borough Council
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Project Name	Enterprise Facility Runcorn Station Quarter
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# Document Control

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# INTRODUCTION & BRIEF





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# Introduction

There is more to Halton than being an industrial area and port on the river Mersey. Although perhaps lesser known, Halton is also home to Sci-Tech Daresbury, a nationally recognised research and innovation enterprise area. The aim of the project is to bring higher skilled 'Createch' jobs into Runcorn town centre in a micro style version of Daresbury, and also the change the perception of the town. The Town Deal represents an opportunity to attract new skills and jobs into the area. It offers a vehicle for investment in the town centre's social infrastructure, creating spaces for local entrepreneurs and professionals to meet and deliver projects bound together by the spirit of local pride. Providing such spaces offers a strong foundation on which to develop a local skills base and improve the community's social health and wellbeing.

In support of this aim the council have appointed K2 Architects to explore this challenge and offer a range of workspace options for Elite House to support and inform the Halton Council's emerging business case.

This initial project brief has been prepared in accordance with the outputs required by the RIBA Plan of Work 2020, Work Stage 1 (Preparation and Briefing). It sets the scene for a debate on what success will look like and proposes a pathway toward successful delivery of a preferred scheme.









## Project Vision

Runcorn Station Quarter (RSQ) has been identified as a recognised regeneration focus area as part of the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Plus strategy by Halton Council. The area is strategically located in the Liverpool City Region, with a railway station on the west coast mainline between London and Liverpool, just a five-minute walk from the town centre of Runcorn.

The transformation of the RSQ will benefit from a new enterprise facility, bringing higher skilled and paid jobs into the town centre, more accessible to local people. The facility will focus on the creative industries and will be complimentary to Sci-Tech Daresbury. The facility will benefit from association with Daresbury and Baltic Creative, whilst maximising the potential of the railway station location.

Halton Council acquired Elite House and its site early in 2022 and wish to repurpose it as a business incubator Enterprise facility as part of the Runcorn Town Investment Plan- Reconnecting Runcorn - the wider strategic transformation of the area to attract high-skill and high-wage jobs, funded by the Council's successful Town Deal funding application.

In support of this aim, this document explores the feasibility of refurbishing the building to deliver a landlord model that promotes a networked approach to business and skills growth, in the context of the recent improvements in infrastructure and attractive public realm delivered by the wider Runcorn Station Quarter masterplan. Design themes and architectural features will integrate a quirky, 'non-perfect' start-up aesthetic with functionality and social expectations. Its design will seek to explore the potential for maximising energy efficiency measures within the confines of the project budget, further enhancing the sustainable location of the building.

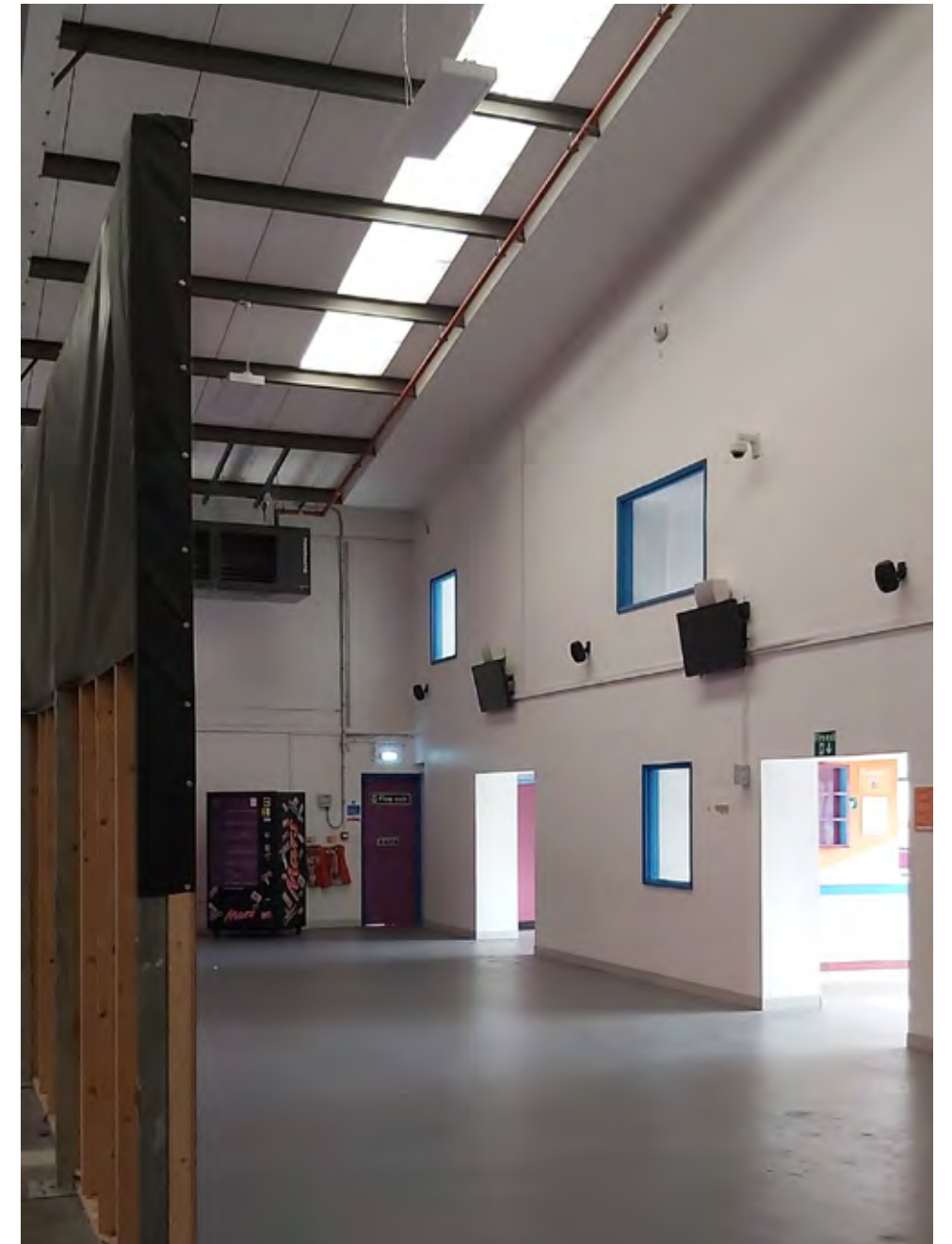


# Objectives & Outcomes

In support of the project vision, the following objectives and outcomes have been developed to guide, measure and ensure that the project successfully satisfies the council's core aims. Some objectives are quantitative and aimed towards ensuring a viable business case, while others are qualitative and guide the design process towards satisfying the emotional needs of the potential building users.

The Enterprise Facility at Runcorn Station Quarter shall be:

- A gateway/ landmark building and leader in Runcorn for experiential workplace design that is emotionally engaging and positively inspires the local community's perceptions of the new emerging Station quarter.
- It shall offer a range of spaces for a variety of business models that utilise the desk-rental model. It will be aimed at individuals, freelancers, enterprises, and independent professionals who are taking their first steps into setting up their own business, in the early incubator stages of growth or simply need flexibility and an agile approach to their working practices. Be distinctive, accessible and inclusive spaces for all.
- The building will also offer a variety of fixed term lease grow-on spaces up to a maximum 3000 ft<sup>2</sup> for small businesses requiring self-contained workspace.
- The building's shared workspace shall embrace the refurbished warehouse setting, featuring Industrial, 'non-perfect' finishes, polished concrete floors, banners draped within the double-height volume, coffee bars and kitchenettes. It shall represent a strong departure from the traditional workplace of stuffy cellular offices accessed from tight corridors, cheap carpet and suspended ceilings, and benefit from infrastructure including high quality Wi-Fi technology and support spaces including meeting rooms, break-out areas and secure storage.
- The spaces will convey a unique décor, a different atmosphere featuring distinctive themes that utilise a style that embraces nature and natural materials, daylight and greenery throughout to emphasise the benefits to health and wellbeing of naturally lit and well-ventilated spaces.
- The building shall promote activity-based working, where spaces are related to the tasks that people undertake within them. The approach will yield a diverse range of workspaces – from individual calm and secluded workstations for focussed work to vibrant collaborative spaces for actively sharing ideas.







# SITE & CONTEXT





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## Site appraisal

The site is within the administrative area of Halton Borough Council. It is located approximately 300m south-west of the Old Town, and 90m east of Runcorn Railway Station. The site is not in a conservation area; Elite House is not listed. It was built around the late 1980s as an industrial unit/warehouse and was converted in 2016 for leisure use as a trampolining arena. The site is approximately 0.4 hectares, and is a mix of hardstanding for vehicle access, loading and parking for approximately 40 cars to the north, east and west and banked soft landscaping including trees to the north, east and south. No trees have tree preservation orders.

The site and the building have gained a new prominence since the demolition of the Queensway A533 'trumpet loop' road arrangement that until 2021 lead up to the Silver Jubilee Bridge, and enclosed Elite House. The building is now clearly visible from the railway station, and on a direct axis across the attractive pedestrianised station piazza frontage created as part of the masterplan.

The site enjoys excellent connectivity due to its proximity to sustainable transport links including the railway station, bus stops serving it, and the Town Centre for pedestrians, and is easily accessed from Junction 12 of the M56 for motorists.

Although the demolition of the 'trumpet loop' has significantly reduced the volume and velocity of traffic passing nearby to the building, Shaw Street bordering the site to the south is still the primary vehicular route for railway station drop offs and bus routes, so the site is subject to some traffic noise.

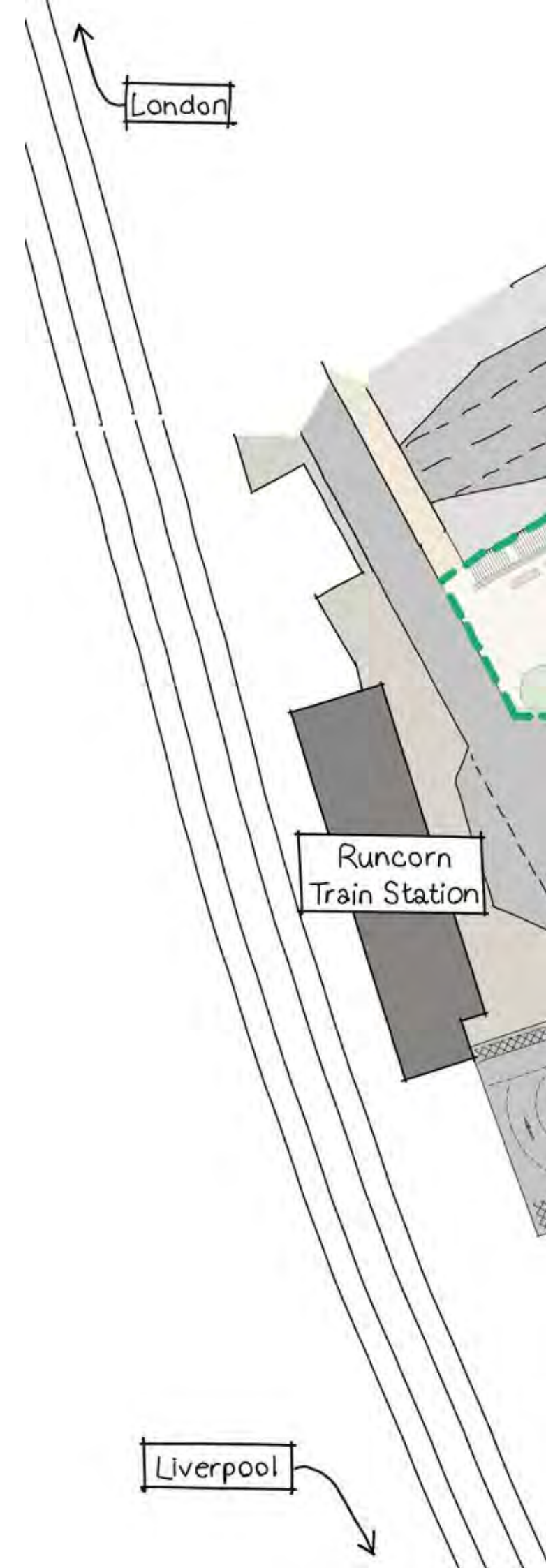
The building is a detached steel portal frame structure with internal clear spans of approximately 31m, over a length of 54m. The internal height at the central ridge is 7.7m, and 4.6m to the underside of the portal haunch. The pitch of the roof is 10 degrees. Walls are assumed to be cavity construction, with brick outer face and

concrete block inner skin. The ground floor is understood to be solid concrete. The roof is clad in composite insulated metal panels, supported by purlins spanning between the primary steel frame. Some of these panels are translucent, providing natural light to the interior. The roof drains to eaves gutters and downpipes along the north and south elevation. A visible change in the roof purlin spacing and composite sheets when viewed from the underside suggest the eastern most 3 bays, or 18m of the building may be a later addition to the original building.

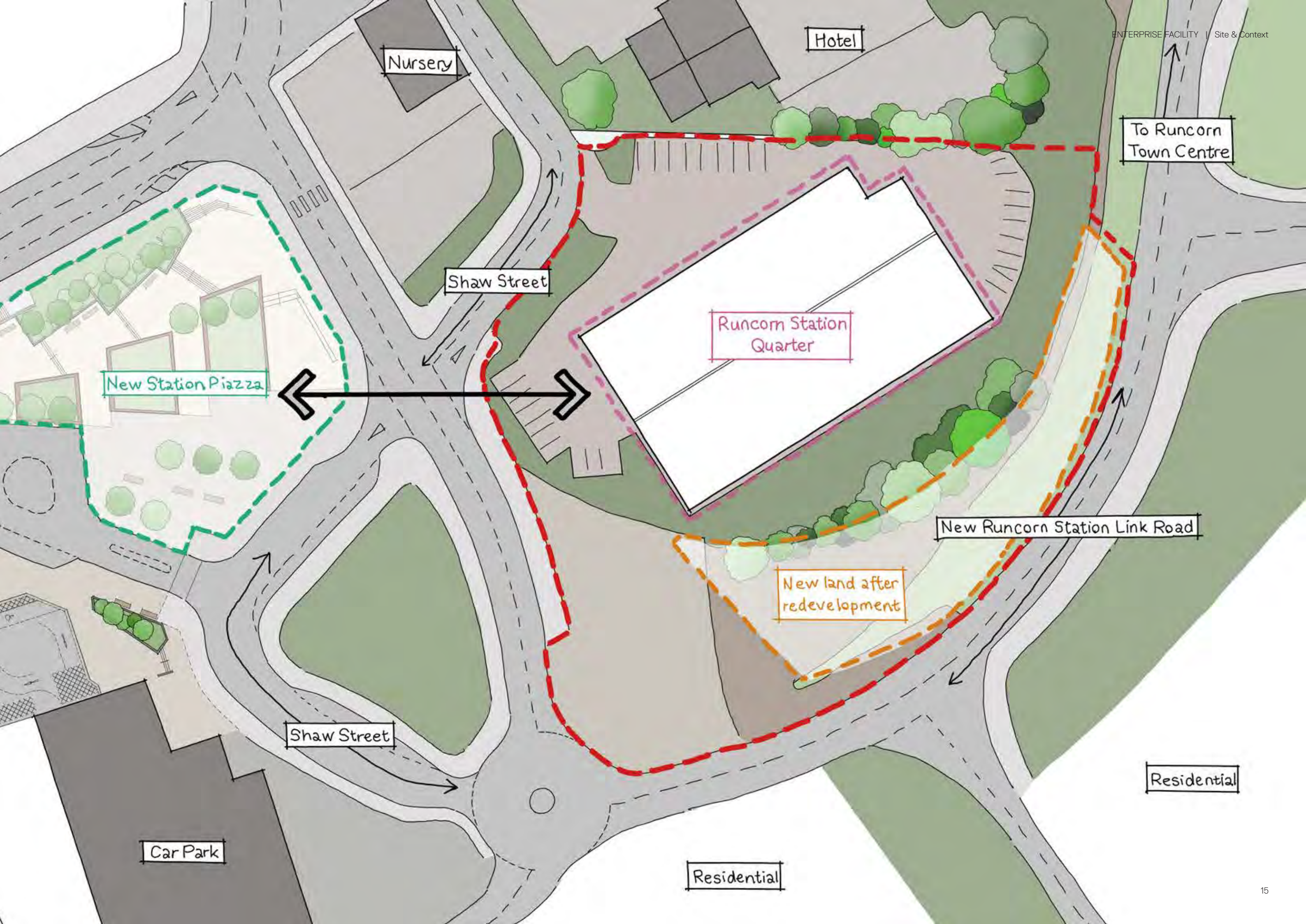
The primary entrance to the building is to the west elevation, with a central bay of curtain walling flanked by ribbon strip windows between brick spandrels. Two full-height up-and-over roller shutters allow access from the northern elevation, and numerous pedestrian doors are provided for means of escape.

The western most bay of the building houses a reception, wcs, plant and store areas to the ground floor, and a staircase to a lightweight mezzanine construction containing cellular office accommodation, further wcs and a viewing gallery served by a catering kitchen.

The building is generally sound and in a condition commensurate with its age as described in the condition report within the Appendices.









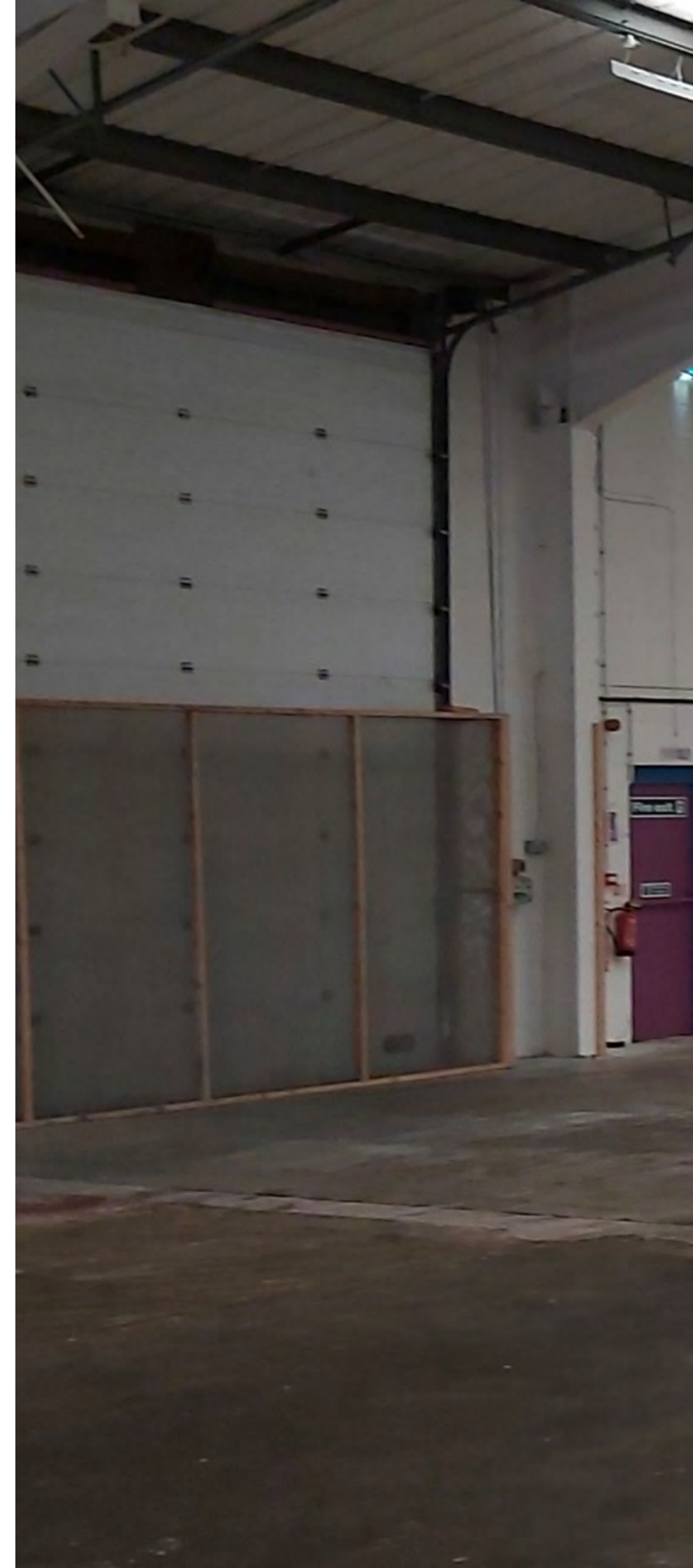
## The Building

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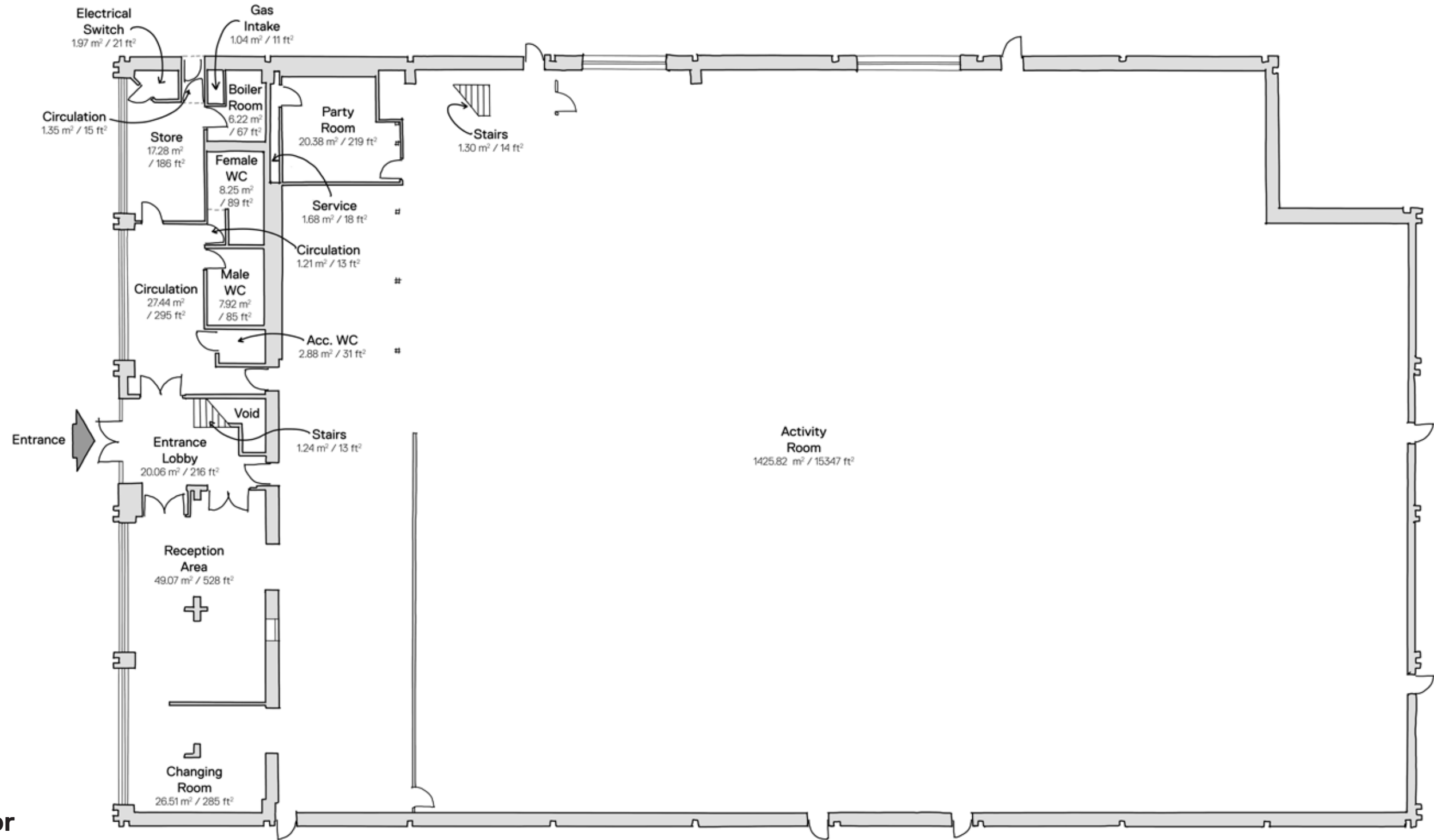




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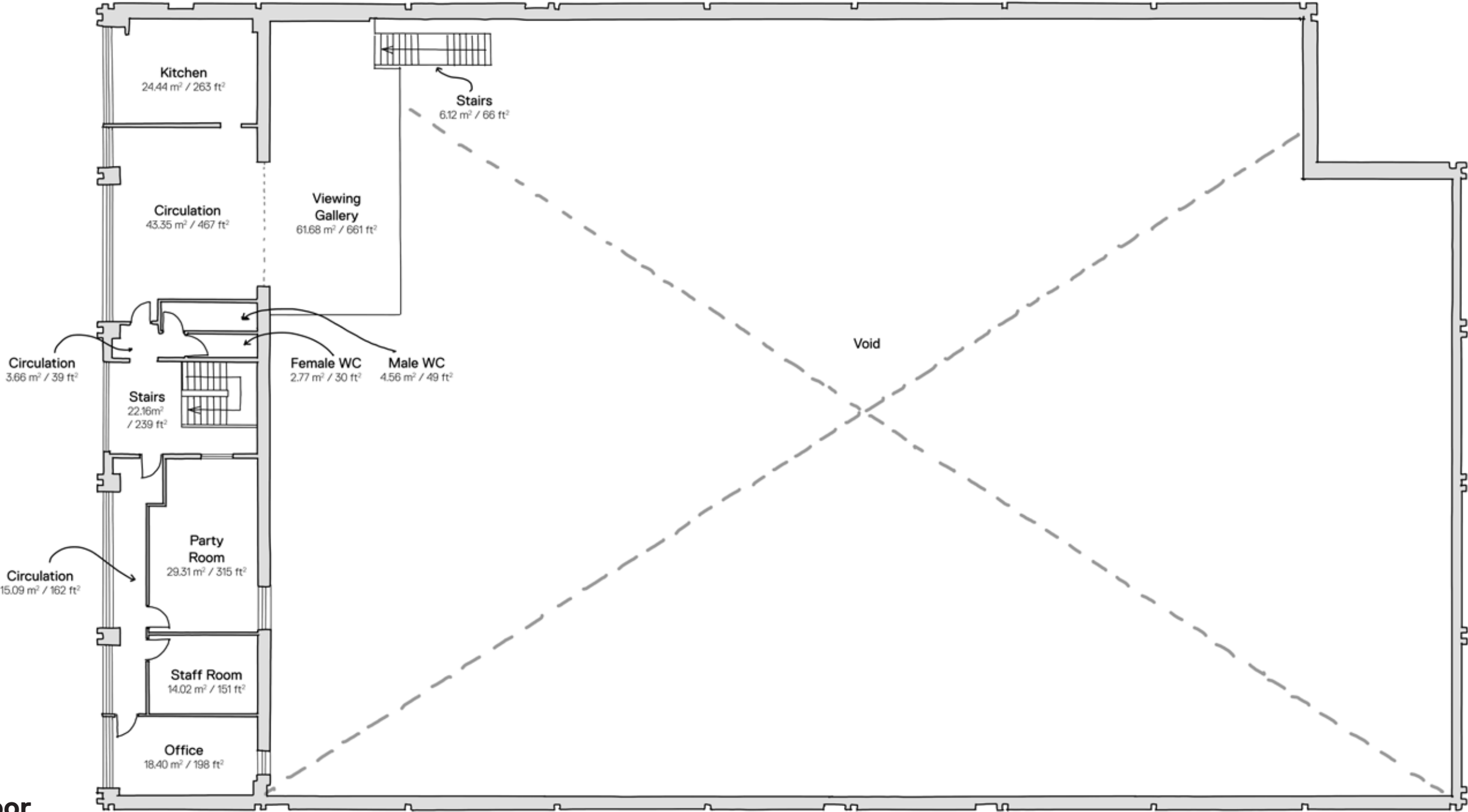
Existing Layout



Ground Floor



First Floor







# STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION





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# Stakeholder Consultation

Consultees for the project are Baltic Creative CIC as potential building operators/ management company in partnership with Sci-Tech Daresbury as pipeline development for potential SMEs and marketing partners for the facility.

A site visit to Elite House was held 23rd March, attended by project leads from Halton Borough Council, Mark Lawler from Baltic Creative and K2 Architects. Clancy Consulting attended separately 04th May 2022.

A further meeting was held 13th April 2022 across 2 sites of Baltic Creative CIC's Liverpool campus- Digital House on Norfolk House, followed by Baltic Creative on Jamaica Street. Attendees were the core project team, councillors from Halton, and representatives from the LCR region responsible for Town Deal Funding.

The purpose for these visits was to gain an understanding of the Baltic Creative CIC's Business model, its history, and future plans for expansion, before then visiting Baltic Creative Campus (as identified in Halton Council's initial briefing paper, this development is seen as a relevant precedent for the look and feel aspired to for Elite House) to gather lessons learnt if Baltic Creative CIC were to operate the facility on the Council's behalf.

A brainstorming workshop was held 19th April 2022 with Mark Lawler and K2 Architects to develop a schedule of accommodation and broad principles and adjacencies for developing Elite House to serve a sustainable Business model on the basis of Baltic Creative operating it. Floor plans and the site plan of the building were used in discussion.

The outcomes of this session were as follows:

- Overall target for lettable accommodation 22-25000ft2 across the ground floor and a substantial mezzanine.
- Likely maximum capacity 300-350 during the 'work day', potentially up to 500 during an event for means of escape discussions, WC calculations etc. (note subsequent briefing from Capita has suggested 110 Full Time Employees is likely for the proposed net lettable floor area based on current employment densities of businesses hosted by Baltic Creative as at 2019 figures).
- Likely sectors to be 'clean' desktop based creative & digital businesses/ SMEs ( software, apps, gaming, copywriters, photographers, film makers).
- 'physical' artists provided for elsewhere in Runcorn- Hazelhurst Studios & Camden Building, and Science uses catered for at Sci-Tech Daresbury.
- Aspiration for co-working/ we workspace in central atrium- 50 stations?- refer to Sharp workplace in Manchester as relevant precedent <https://www.thesharpproject.co.uk/>
- Desks are bookable. Banners hanging from the roof in the double height space, and greenery throughout to provide pleasant working environment. 'Street planters' very popular at Baltic Creative Campus.
- Cycle parking bays, recycling bins as part of open plan central space, to help define space and for convenience of adjacent units rather than single, centralised facilities.
- Café (inc. small kitchen) by main entrance as reception space- 1500-2000ft2. Kitchen to be to north elevation adjacent to existing services and car park for deliveries, waste collection etc.
- Kitchen fit-out extent to be 3-phase power, waste and water for catering operator to fit-out from.
- Coworking space to be flexible- desks able to be cleared to double as an event space.
- 2 no meeting spaces required- 1 publicly accessible adjacent to café @450ft2 for 25 people, 1 at 250ft2 for 6/7 people.
- 3 x zoom pods. Each 70-80ft2, to be used for private telephone calls, prayer room, breast feeding etc.
- Range of lettable workspaces- starter studios – 150-400ft2, grow-on studio 400-750/1000ft2, anchor unit 1000ft2 +.
- Anchor tenant should be no greater than 20% lettable space. Units to be fitted out with power, data and broadband as shell and core- no furniture provided to studios.
- A photography studio/ green screen studio could be attractive to potential tenants, or for external hire/ additional venue.
- Baltic Creative CIC would like polycarbonate to be used somewhere in the scheme interiors, for branding continuity/ potentially decorative more than functional purpose.
- Critical that the studio's wall facing into the co-working central space be glazed as a 'shopfront'.



- Partitions between units can be studwork (double as structure for mezzanine over?)
- Aspiration for coffee machines, fridges/ food storage units on wheels- movable within coworking space, or local/ satellite kitchenettes to serve studios.
- Ancillary spaces to include 1 no. shower, drying room for clothes, towels etc, print & post room.
- Building should be accessible 24/7 for tenants, accessed via fobs.
- Baltic Creative would want 10000ft2 minimum lettable space delivered as a first phase- ideal split 80/20 lettable/ non-lettable space.
- Approach to parking suggested to use existing provision and review after 12-18 months of operation rather than initial phase 1 capital expenditure- location opposite train station an obvious positive in potential reduced parking provision.



The Sharp Project, Manchester



# Area Schedule

540 Runcorn Station Quarter Enterprise Facility - proposed accommodation schedule

26/05/2022

net areas	occupancy	average area of space		total no. of spaces	Total Area		total occupancy*	Maximum capacity	notes
		m2	ft2		ft2	m2			
starter studio	1.5	26	275	23	6325	587	35	35	range 150-400ft2 (14-37m2)
grow-on studio	3.2	53	575	11	6325	588	35	35	range 400-750ft2 (37-70m2)
anchor tenant	17	280	3014	1	3014	280	17	17	no greater than 20% total lettable
co-working space	1	4	43	56	2411	224	13	138	assuming area cleared for performance or event
meeting room 1	7	23	250	1	250	23	1	7	
meeting room 2	25	42	450	1	450	42	2	25	
zoom pod 1	1	7	75	3	225	21	1	3	
multi-function studio	5	50	538	1	538	50	3	5	
green screen studio	5	50	538	1	538	50	3	5	
café & kitchen	80	186	2000	1	2000	186		80	
total net					22076	1865	110	350	
non-net									
cycle storage		2	22	20	431	40			minimum of 5 spaces then doubled per 100 employees
recycling		0.5	5	20	108	10			
wcs		3	32	18	581	54			18 required for 350 occupancy for an office/ workplace
shower room		5	54	1	54	5			
drying room		8	86	1	86	8			
print/ post room		12	129	1	129	12			
kitchenettes		3	32	4	129	12			
storage		30	323	1	323	30			
circulation					5519	466			25% net?
partitions					883	75			4% net?
total non-net					8243	712			
GRAND TOTAL					30319	2577			
non net/ net					37.34%				

\* Based on Baltic Creative current employment density (182ft2/ FTE)





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# DESIGN THEMES





**B**  
BALTIC COMMUNITY CENTRE  
40-42 Queen Street, Leeds, LS2 7PQ  
0113 243 1234

<b>A</b> Aparna 0113 243 1234	<b>F</b> Fiona 0113 243 1234
<b>C</b> Chloe 0113 243 1234	<b>D</b> David 0113 243 1234
<b>E</b> Ella 0113 243 1234	<b>G</b> Gemma 0113 243 1234
<b>H</b> Harry 0113 243 1234	<b>I</b> Isla 0113 243 1234
<b>J</b> Jack 0113 243 1234	<b>K</b> Katie 0113 243 1234
<b>L</b> Liam 0113 243 1234	<b>M</b> Mia 0113 243 1234

**BALTIC COMMUNITY CENTRE**  
ALL TENANTS AND VISITORS  
WELCOME TO OUR COMMUNITY



# Design Themes



Hybrid Cafe and Workspace, We Company



Comfortable Collaborative Spaces, The New Dollar Shave Club HQ



Inspiring work spaces, The Brain Embassy in Warsaw.







## Design Themes



Baltic Creative, Liverpool



The Sharp Project, Manchester







# DELIVERY







# Cost

The client feasibility brief identifies a construction budget of £840,000 including preliminaries, overheads and profit, to refurbish the building area of 1860m2/ 19805ft2 of ground floor and existing mezzanine to Elite House, together with an aspiration to incorporate the currently unregistered land to the south of the site boundary for additional parking and landscaping for the facility. This equates to a refurbishment rate of approximately £450/m2, or £42/ft2.

To test this brief, Baltic Creative advised of high-level construction budgets and rates of comparable schemes in their portfolio:

Northern Lights/ Cains Brewery Village - £16/ft2- (2017)

16 Jordan Street- £40/ft2 (2017)

22 Jordan Street(shop front studios) - £48/ft2 (2017)

As identified in the stakeholder consultation with Baltic Creative, they feel Elite House has the potential for an increased rental income for a nett lettable area (in excess of the existing GIFA) resulting a potential GIFA on completion of circa 30,319ft2.

Adjusted for inflation, and the likely extent of work needed, it is felt a figure of £59/ft2 for the building alone would be more realistic, requiring a construction budget of £1.8m based on the increased floor area, excluding any landscaping work.

If further funding cannot be secured for the construction budget, a phased approach may be required for the project to deliver the standard of working environment required to attract the desired tenant profile.

A phased build could be informed by the marketing strategy, and the projected rate of take-up of floor space – it is unlikely the entirety of the building could be let from day one and would likely grow more incrementally. The key infrastructure would need to be complete to allow the building to successfully serve its first tenants and provide an attractive proposition for prospective future tenants, and the disruption of further construction work to existing tenants would need to be mitigated.



# Programme

The Council wish to develop a Full Business Case, informed by the outcomes of the RIBA Stage 2 report, by 01/08/22. RIBA Stage 3 followed by a planning application would follow in late Summer/ early Autumn 2022. RIBA Stage 4 would begin at the start of 2023, with a target start on site date of mid-2023. It is anticipated the building would be operational by early 2024.

It has been highlighted that incorporating the unregistered land to the south and east of the current site ownership boundary needs to be addressed in advance of submitting the planning application.



# Project Risks

Cost- how has budget been arrived at? will construction budget be sufficient to deliver the change of use refurbishment required in terms of modification to the building fabric and services to provide a comfortable working environment?

Beyond the high-level observations regarding increasing the funding ask described above, will the construction budget be sufficient to -

support environmental, decarbonising and servicing strategies required to complying with policies outlined in HBC’s Climate Change Action plan 2022-27.

Sustainability development and development policies in Halton Delivery and Allocations Plan requirements to be considered and incorporated into refurbishment’s servicing strategies.

Services strategy to align with HBC’s commitment to reducing carbon emissions towards net zero by 2040.

Utility capacity pending the above, loads that result from the Stage 2 design.

Electricity substation- existing supply capacity likely to be insufficient for new use. Risk getting agreement with SP Energy Networks for upgrade as external stakeholder- permanent access required

Planning- early engagement suggested to get agreement in principle the project complies with planning policy/ Local Plan change of use etc.

Acoustics to be considered between workspaces, and in terms of building fabric- Acoustician to be consulted at Stage 3?





- General**
1. This drawing is to be used for delivery.
  2. All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise noted.
- Setting out**
3. All levels are given in metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).
  4. All co-ordinates and setting out information are to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.
- Existing drainage infrastructure**
5. Invert levels, dimensions and locations of existing sewers and manholes affecting the works to be verified and assessed for suitability prior to commencement, particularly at points of connection.
  6. Flows and levels in existing sewers, land drains and watercourses to be maintained throughout the contract.
  7. No existing sewers to be abandoned without Project Managers instruction.
  8. Existing sewers to be abandoned are to be 'grubbed up' or filled with PFA grout in accordance with the specification.
- Pipes and manholes**
9. All pipes below buildings and external to buildings with less than 1.20m cover to have 150mm min. concrete surround, to BS 8500, Mix ST4.
  10. All remaining underground pipework to be on Class S bedding.
  11. All pipework in manholes to be 'soffit level' unless otherwise noted.
  12. All pipework to be Vitrified Clay (extra strength) with 150mm min. concrete surround (Mix ST4) or similar.
  13. All pipework up to and including 300mm Ø to be Vitrified Clay (extra strength) or similar.
  14. All pipework 375mm Ø and above to be Class H reinforced concrete unless otherwise noted.
  15. Thermoplastics pipes and fittings (including structured wall pipes) may be substituted for the above materials provided they are acceptable to the relevant approval authority, compliance with the specification is demonstrated, their properties are appropriate for the installed conditions, and their application is not otherwise restricted by the adopting authority. For solid wall pipes, grades appropriate for use without structural calculation shall be used. Pipes shall have internal diameters not less than as stated on the relevant drawings.
  16. All branch connections to be made with swept bends in the direction of flow in the main sewer.
  17. All pipes are to be solid wall pipes unless otherwise noted as perforated.
  18. Manhole covers and frames to be BS EN 124, sizes and grades as indicated on manhole schedule.
  19. All gullies to be 450mmØ with Grade D400 covers and frames.
  20. All pipes to have Class S bed and surround. Backfill beneath carriageways to be Type 1 sub base to underside of road construction.
  21. All gully connections (150mm diameter) to have 150mm concrete surround.

- Key to symbols**
- Extent of phasing of works
  - Existing highway drainage (Exact location, depth, size etc TBC)
  - Existing combined public sewer (Exact location, depth, size etc TBC)
  - Proposed highway drainage
  - Proposed gully as per STD-500-01
  - Proposed foul drainage
  - Proposed channel drain
  - Existing road gully to be abandoned \*
  - Existing highway drainage to be abandoned \*
  - Existing Land Drain
  - Existing oil separator
  - \* Denotes limit of drainage to be abandoned TBC following CCTV survey
  - Potential for existing drainage pipework to be asbestos cement. Drainage survey to confirm existing pipe material. Any existing drainage to be found to be constructed from asbestos cement to be abandoned and replaced with new drainage.

Reference drawings

T01	26/03/2020	Issued for Tender	CC	AS	SA
Rev	Date	Description	Drawn	Cr'd	App'd

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**Runcorn De-Linking  
Cavendish Street Extension  
Proposed Drainage Layout**

Designed	K Howard	AS	Eng check	A Sims	AS
Drawn	C Chau	CC	Coordination	J Joinson	JJ
Dwg check	A Sims	AS	Approved	S Alexander	SA
Scale at A1	Status	Rev	Security		
1:500	TEN	T01	STD		

Drawing Number  
**390051-MMD-07-XX-DR-C-0501**

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P:\Manchester\Northwest\Projects (064)\390051 HBC RAV & V&V Recofy\10.2 Drawings\Highways\2. Detailed Design\07 Cavendish Street Link\Drawings\390051-MMD-07-XX-DR-C-0501\_Drainage GA.dwg Mar 25, 2020 - 1:23PM cna42642





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