

Wrexham Gateway | Design & Access Statement

June 2025 | P01

stephenson hamilton risley
STUDIO

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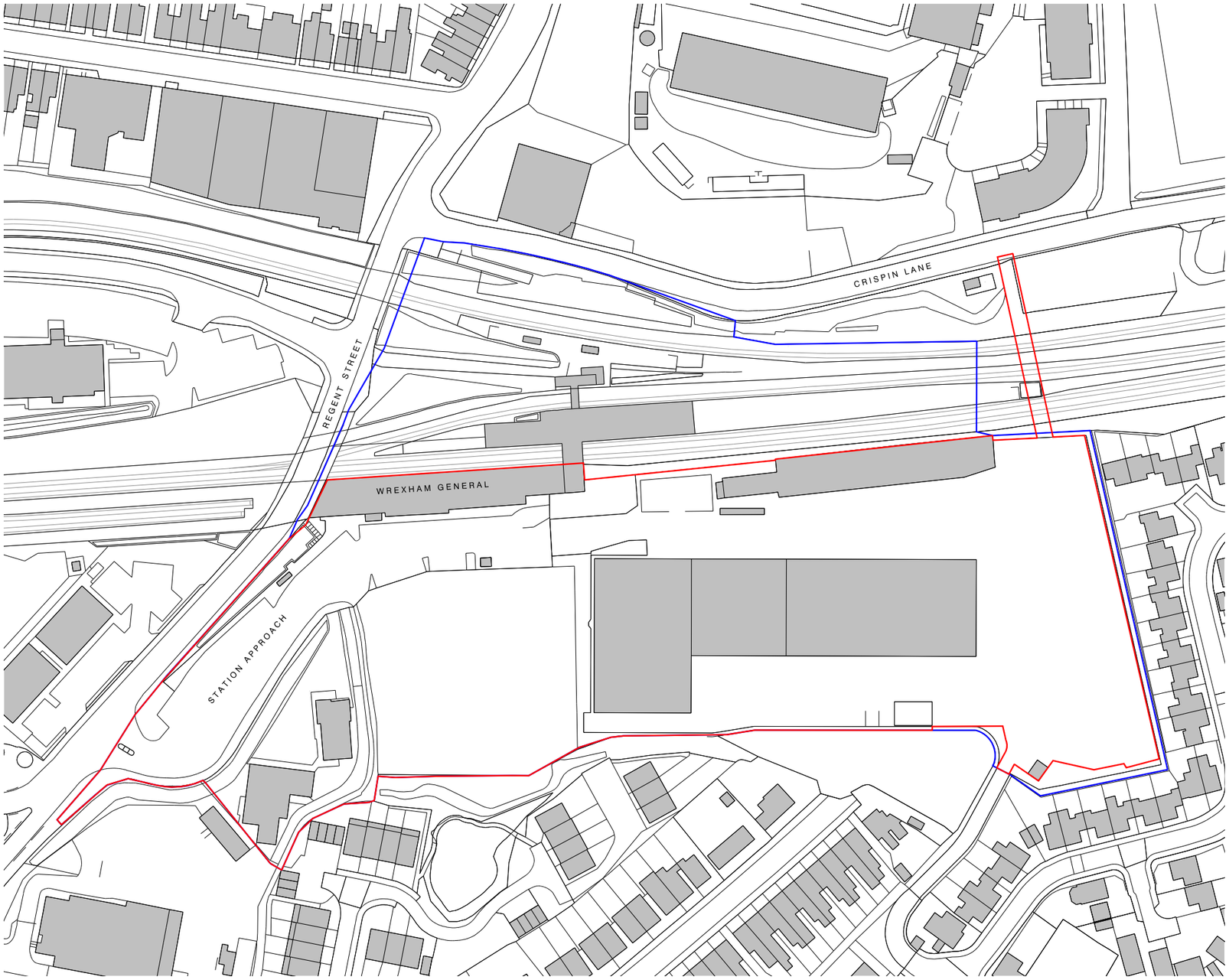
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1.0 introduction

1.1 purpose of the document

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by stephenson hamilton risley STUDIO on behalf of Wrexham County Borough Council and Transport for Wales in support of an outline planning application for the redevelopment of site edged red on the drawing shown adjacent.

This document explains the thinking and design rational behind the proposed development within the context of the site, including the wider aspirations for Wrexham. This document also analyses the local constraints / opportunities and how these have informed the design proposals including layout, scale, massing and façade design. In order, the remainder of this Design and Access Statement is structured as follows:

Section 2: sets out the background to the project including site location and brief
Section 3: sets out the site context
Section 4: explains the landscape development and design principles
Section 5: explains the building development and design principles
Section 6: explains the access and maintenance principles
Section 7: provides a conclusion.

This document should be read in conjunction with all other drawings and documents provided as part of the application.

1.2 application description

The description of the development is as follows:

"Outline planning application for new commercial office building, creation of public realm and landscaping, conversion of existing buildings to brewery, with associated museum and taproom/restaurant, accessibility improvements including new highway infrastructure and pedestrian footbridge, including parking facilities and coach/taxi drop off, with all matters reserved except for access."

While the following document presents a developed level and design and consideration, this application will be seeking outline planning permission only, with matters relating to appearance, layout, scale and landscaping reserved from consideration at this stage. As such, details on these aspects of the scheme will be subject to future reserved matters applications, where additional information and confirmation of design will be provided.

1.3 application boundary

The application boundary is presented in the adjacent drawing with the following colours:

application boundary
site ownership boundary

The design evolution has considered the whole area and future delivery of the wider Wrexham Gateway proposals, meaning several plans and graphics throughout the document may show differing boundary lines. The application represents one element of Wrexham Gateway development, therefore always refer specifically back to the adjacent boundary and corresponding site location plan drawing.



1.0 introduction

1.4 application design team

There has been a wide range of professionals involved during the evolution of the scheme. The companies and their role in the development are described below:

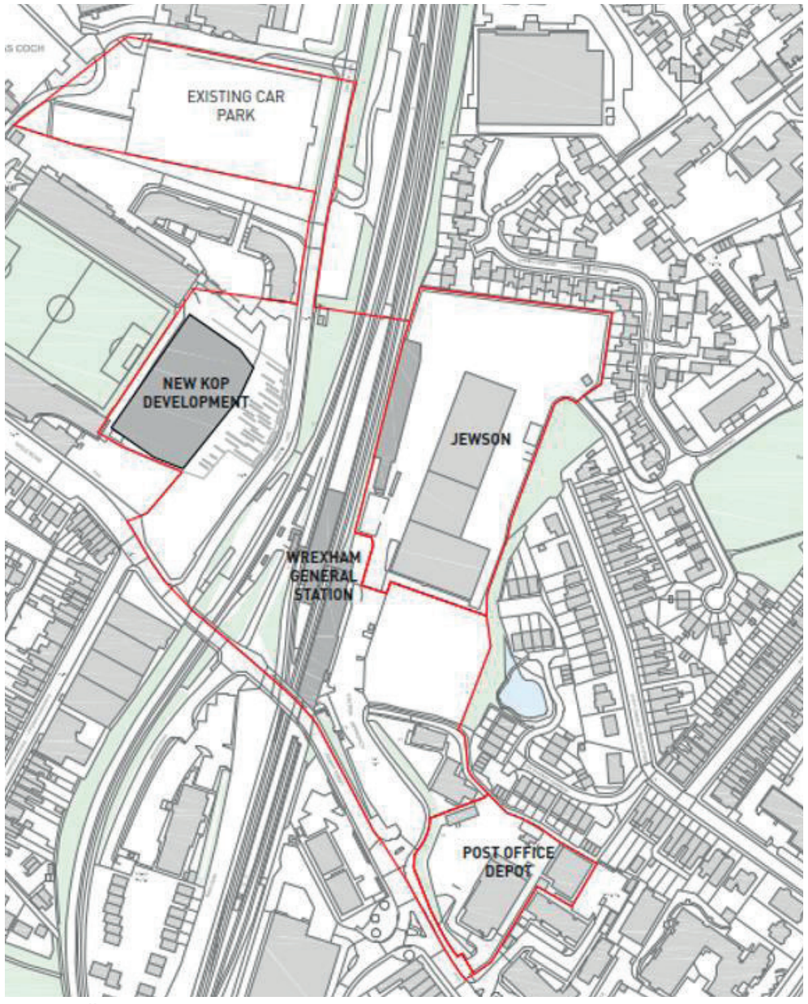
Client:	Wrexham County Borough Council Transport for Wales
Architect:	stephenson hamilton risley STUDIO
Landscape Architect:	Exterior Architecture
Planning Consultant:	Spawforths
Project Managers:	Cushman & Wakefield
Cost Consultant:	Cushman & Wakefield
Civil & Structural Engineer:	Civic Engineers
MEP Consultant:	Hoare Lea
Sustainability Consultant	Cushman & Wakefield
Principal Designer:	RJD Associates
Heritage Consultants:	Civic
Arboriculture:	Antea Group

The proposal has been developed through a process of collaboration and review to ensure that the scheme presented for consideration is appropriate for the site and deliverable. The design team has a proven expertise in the construction of high quality masterplan and commercial developments.

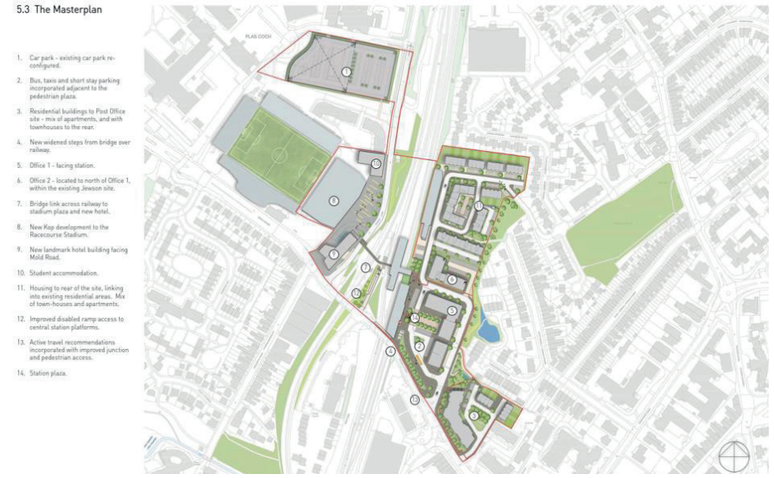
1.5 consultation

The proposals have been shaped through numerous pre-application meetings with varied stakeholders. Key consultant dates are as follows:

21st March 2025	Leaflet drop to residents and businesses
25th March 2025	Full Council briefing
26th March 2025	Design Commission for Wales Review Panel
31st March 2025	Website Launch
1st April 2025	Public Consultation Event
7th April 2025	Key Stakeholder Workshop
9th April 2025	Public Consultation Event.



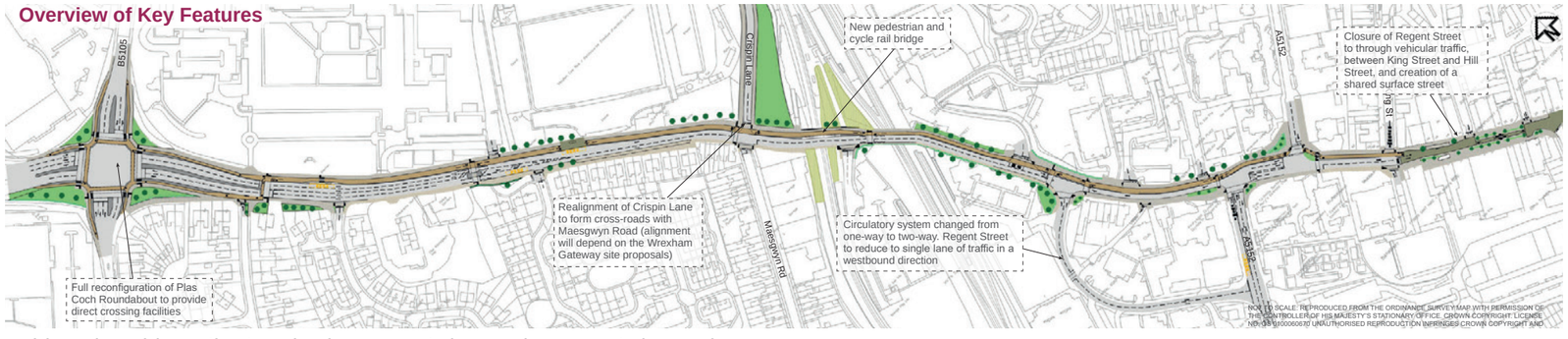
surrounding context



wrexham gateway masterplan 2022



wrexham gateway masterplan 2022 proposed implementation plan



mold road corridor active travel enhancements by wrexham county borough

2.0 brief

2.1 site description

The Wrexham Gateway site is a strategic regeneration site that incorporates Wrexham General Station and surrounding areas. The site extends from the Post Office in the south-eastern corner through to the Wrexham University car park in the north, incorporating Wrexham General Station, and the consented Racecourse Ground Kop development.

2.2 masterplan context

Previous iterations of the Wrexham Gateway Masterplan were developed in 2019 and 2020. However, the Masterplan has been subsequently updated considering significant new requirements, including:

- Transforming Wrexham General Station into a Transport Hub, serving as the focal point of the regeneration scheme.
- Expanding commercial floor space to accommodate potential major national tenants.
- Integrating input from the City Centre Masterplan team, ensuring a clear and direct route from the city centre to the station entrance.
- Incorporating proposals for the Mold Road Active Travel corridor, requiring coordination with WCBC.

2.3 placemaking wales charter

Additional documents have informed the planning, design and concept for the scheme such as the principles listed within the Placemaking Wales Charter. The below bullet points provide a summary of relevant points incorporated into the design approach.

People & Community
- local community involvement
- proposals shaped to help peoples needs
- create, integrate, protect, enhance a sense of community

Movement
- walking, cycling and public transport prioritised
- less dependence on vehicles
- well designed, safe active travel routes
- public transport stations positively integrated

Public Realm
- public spaces are well defined
- welcoming, safe and distinctive identity
- connecting to existing places
- creating opportunity for social interaction

Location
- well connected
- location of employment are planned to reduce need to travel

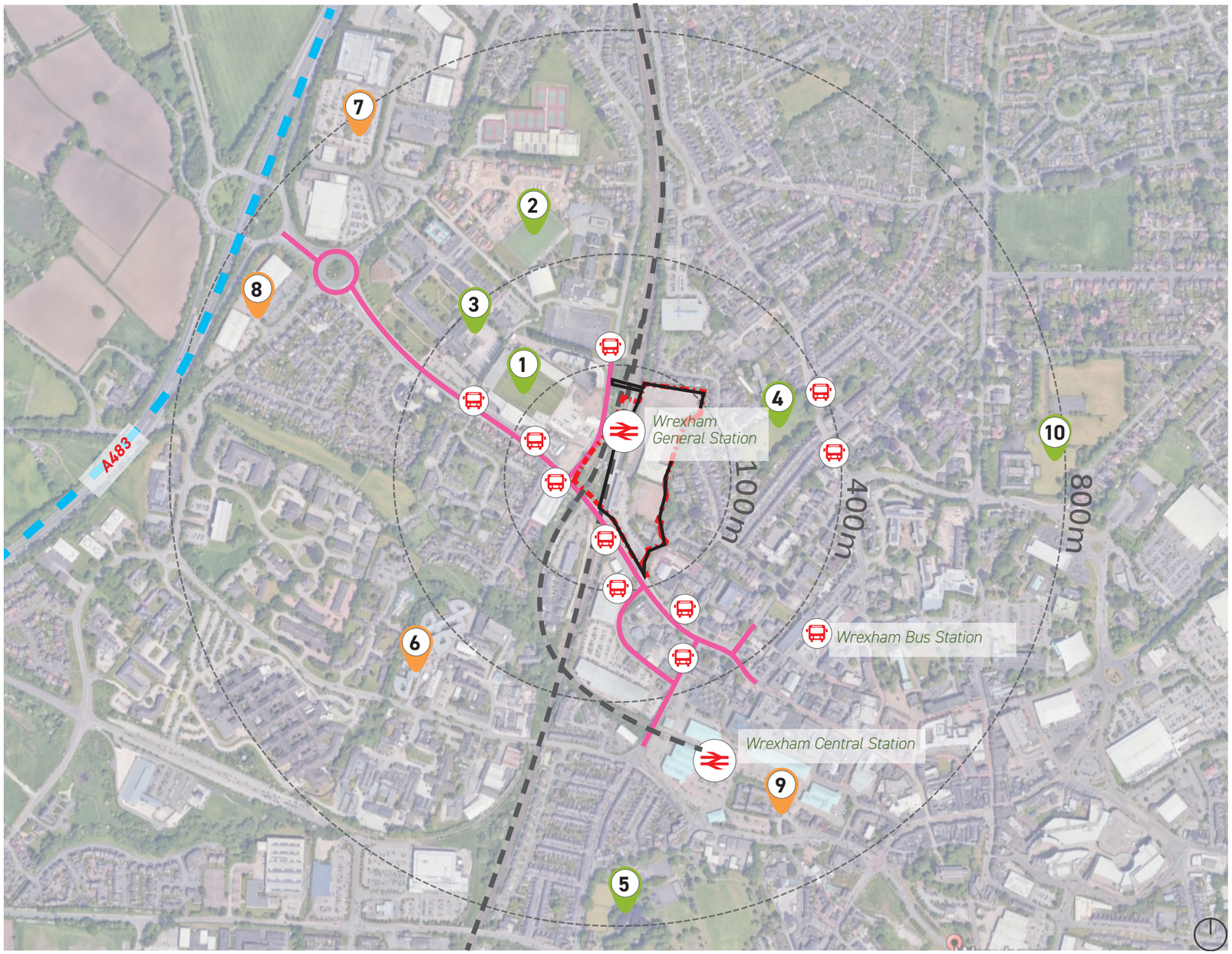
Mix of Uses
- opportunity for community development, local business growth
- access jobs via walking, cycling or public transport
- well designed, safe active travel routes

Identity
- positive, distinctive qualities of existing places are respected
- heritage, culture, language, built and natural attributes are identified and responded to.

3.0 site context

3.1 site context & connections

The adjacent map shows the site within the context of Wrexham and its surrounding buildings, uses and infrastructure.



1 Wrexham AFC
2 North Wales Regional Hockey Stadium
3 Wrexham University
4 Rhosddu Park
5 Bellevue Park
6 Wrexham Maelor Hospital
7 Retail Park
8 Berse Road Retail Park Car Park
9 Island Green Retail Park
10 Wrexham Netball Club

Train Station
Bus Stop
Mold Road Active Travel Corridor
Proposed Regional Coastal Bus Network
Railway
application boundary



3.0 site context

3.2 nearby developments

The adjacent map shows new developments in close proximity of the site.
☐ application boundary

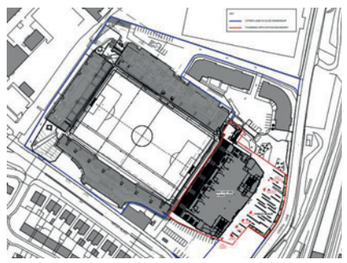
1 A541 Mold Road Residential Development



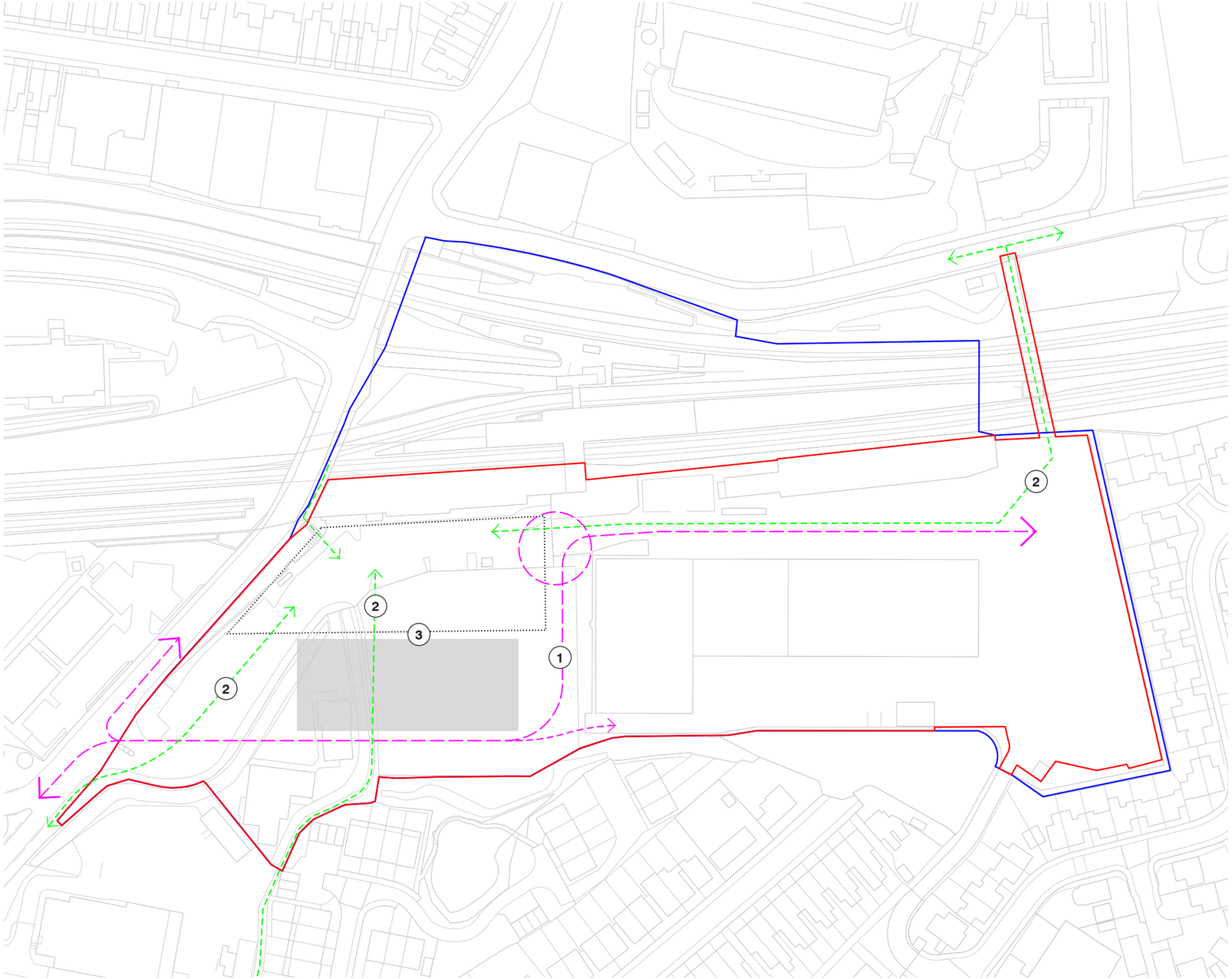
2 Plas Coch Campus Redevelopment



3 Racecourse Ground Kop Redevelopment



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3.0 site context

3.3 site strategy

Following the contextual analysis of the site and wider area the adjacent site strategy was formulated. The adjacent and below key principles shaped and formed the initial layout of the site.

1. Vehicular Access and Transport Infrastructure

Ambition for improved vehicular accessibility including parking, bus stops, coach stops and taxi ranks meant highways is a key factor to the site. With consideration for new generous public realm and office provision the most appropriate position for vehiculars is deemed to be on the general perimeter of the site boundary. This ensures maximum space can be utilised to form the new building, public realm and solely pedestrian activity areas.

2. Pedestrian Access and Site Permeability

Pedestrian footfall to, from and through the site is the next key principle to address. The aim for the proposals are to maintain improve and introduce routes into the site with key elements as follows:

- retaining and improving the Station Approach route (without vehicles)
- retaining and improving pedestrian route adjacent to the post office building into the site
- improvement to the stair access from Regent Street
- introduction of a new footbridge to Crispin Lane with consideration for all activity areas to the North-East of the site.

3. New Office Building & Public Realm

Positioning the new office building parallel to the new transport infrastructure creates a buffer for new fully pedestrian areas ensuring there is a safe and clear divide between the two. Further to that, the area then bound between the station frontage and new office building naturally forms the new public realm.



4.0 landscape development

4.1 landscape vision & approach

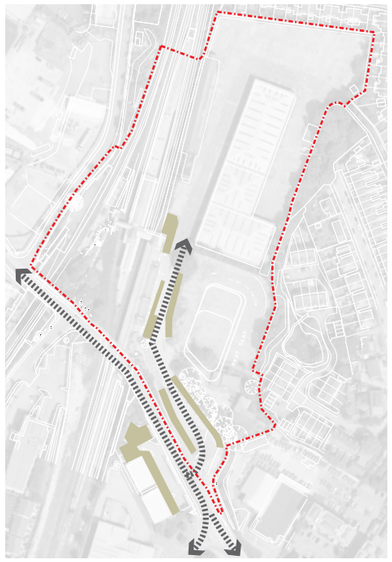
A key part to the site development concerns the landscaping element undertaken by Exterior Architecture in coordination with Stephenson Hamilton Risley Studio and the wider design team.

The adjacent diagram describes the three primary visions that guide the focus of the landscaping analysis and subsequent design proposal described on the following pages.

Movement & Access

EXISTING NETWORK

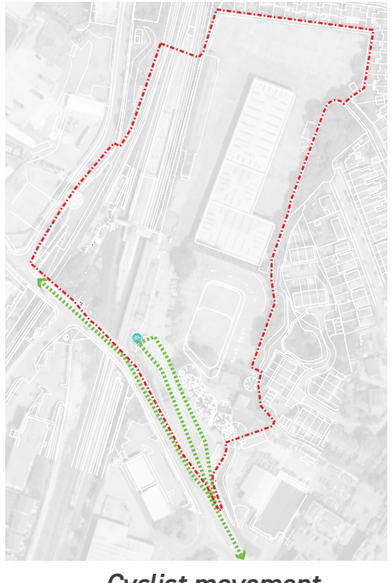
The existing site access is dominated by vehicles, with stepped access and broken pathways for pedestrians and no dedicated cycle paths for cyclists.



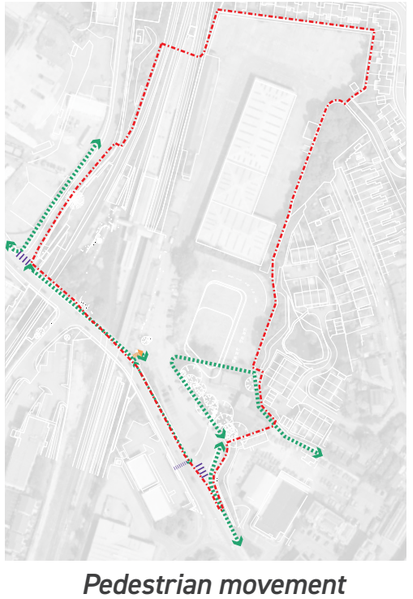
Vehicle movement



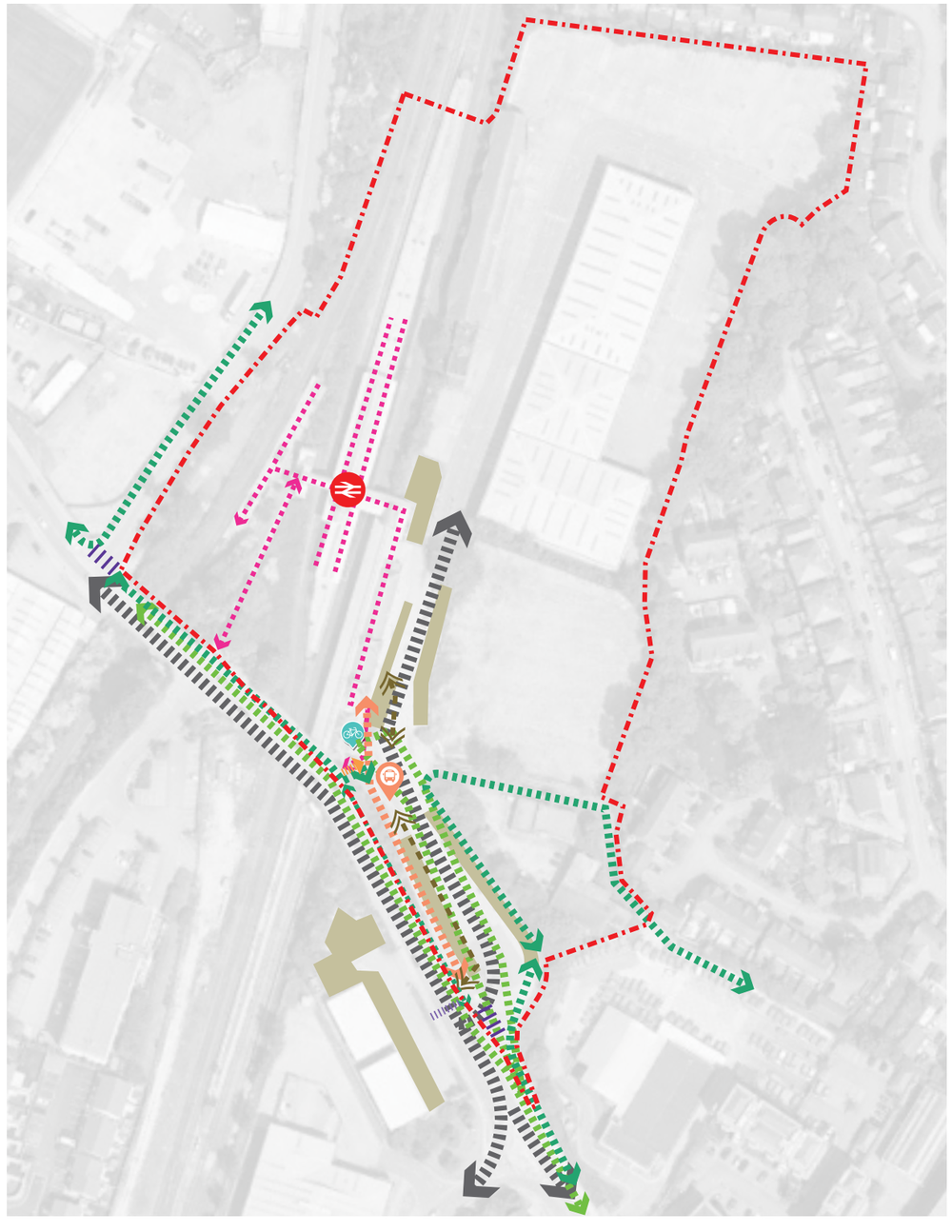
Bus & bus user movement



Cyclist movement



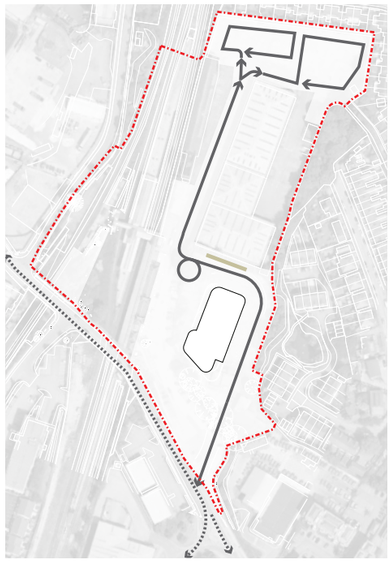
Pedestrian movement



Movement & Access

PROPOSED NETWORK

The proposed network aims at providing inclusive and equal access for all types of travellers.



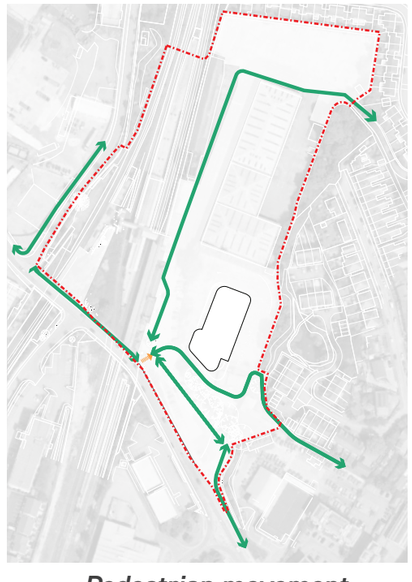
Vehicle movement



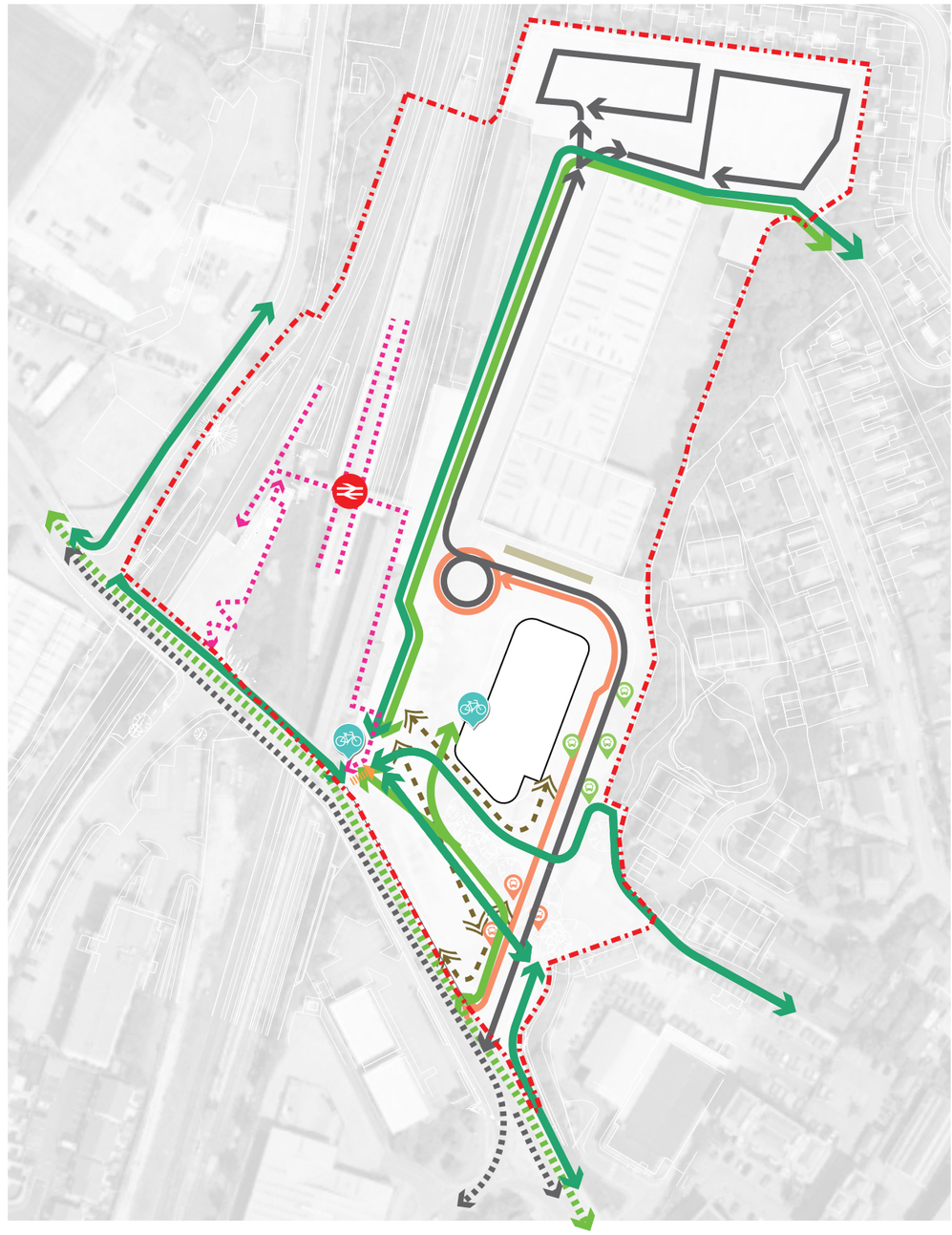
Bus & bus user movement



Cyclist movement



Pedestrian movement



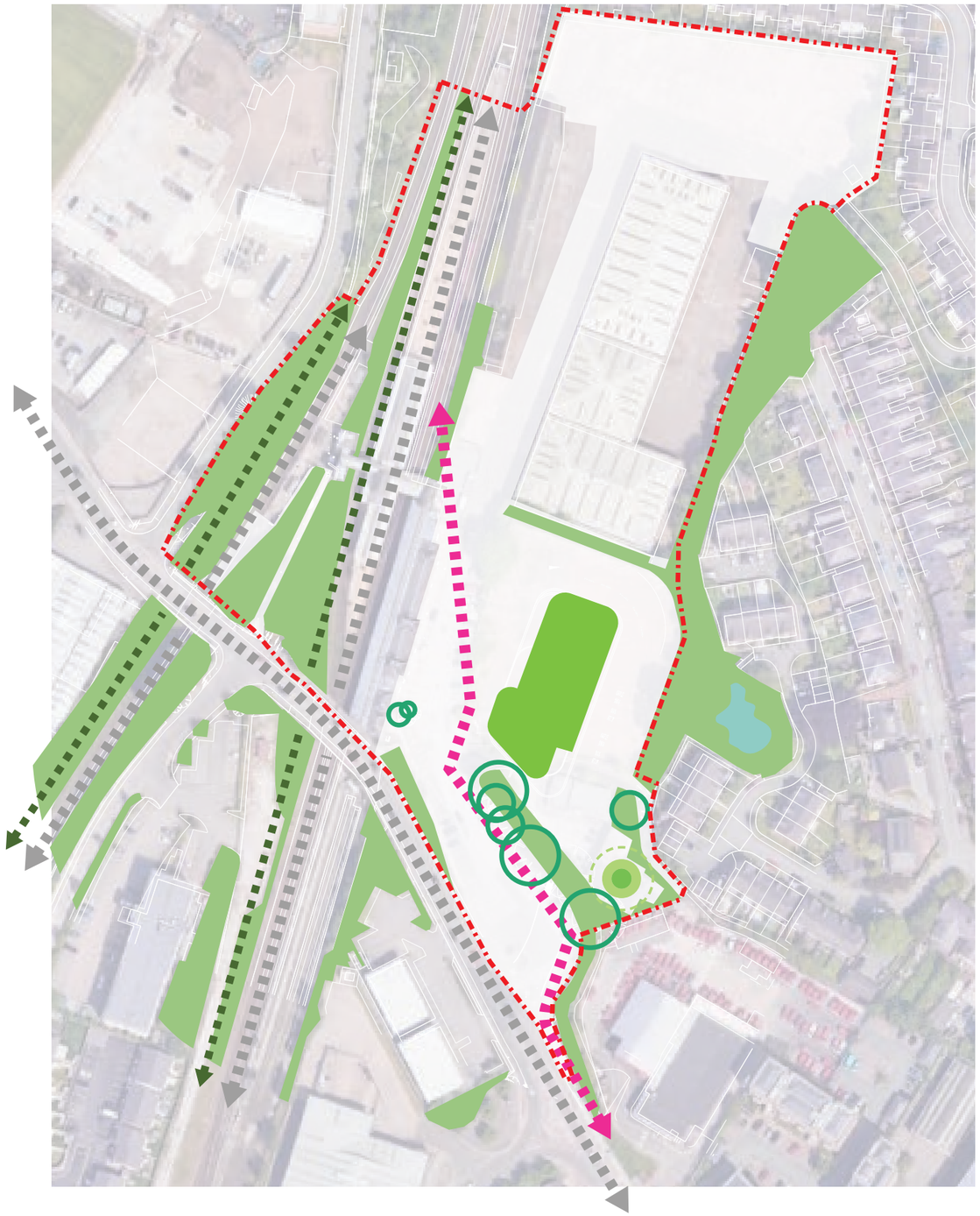
Green infrastructure

The existing railway tracks have given rise to a biodiverse green corridor, formed by self-seeded vegetation and natural regeneration over time.

The site sits at the junction of this green corridor and a key infrastructural connection.

There is an opportunity to introduce a secondary green link, which would complement the existing corridor with designed planting and ecological enhancements such as a biodiverse . This secondary link would create a more structured transition between the hard infrastructure and the naturally established green corridor, improving connectivity for both people and wildlife.

- Existing green assets
- Primary green link along rails
- Pocket green space
- Opportunity for intensive biodiverse roof
- Existing pond
- Proposed secondary green link
- Existing tree to be retained
- Railway



Transport Hub

VEHICLES

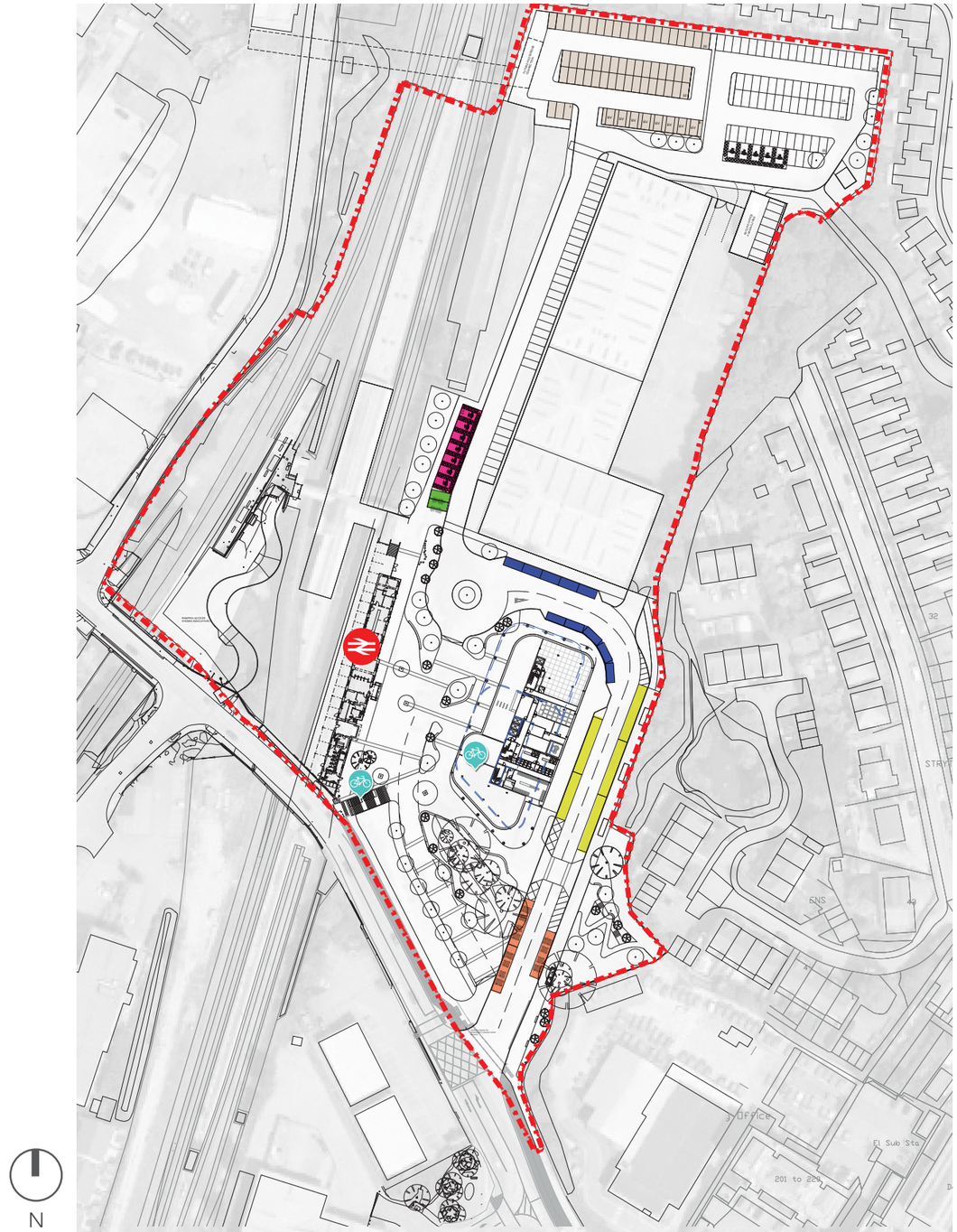
- Carpark for rail passengers and station staff
- Accessible parking - 8no. for station users
- Loading/drop-off - 10no. spaces
- Taxis - 2no. Designated spaces

BUSES & RAIL REPLACEMENT COACHES

- Bus - 3no. bus bays
- Rail replacement - 5no. 'flexible replacement coach bays

WALKING, WHEELING AND CYCLING

- Cycle storage / stands - 10no. covered spaces + cycle hub
- Train station fronted by public plaza with generous clear entrance space



Landscape Character Areas

Boulevard

wide street / high quality finishes / seating opportunities / clear direction

Station Front

waiting area / informal performance arts / verdant planting

Plaza (Primary connection between train station and bus stops)

space to gather / social / interactive / space to sit / tree planting / biodiverse planting

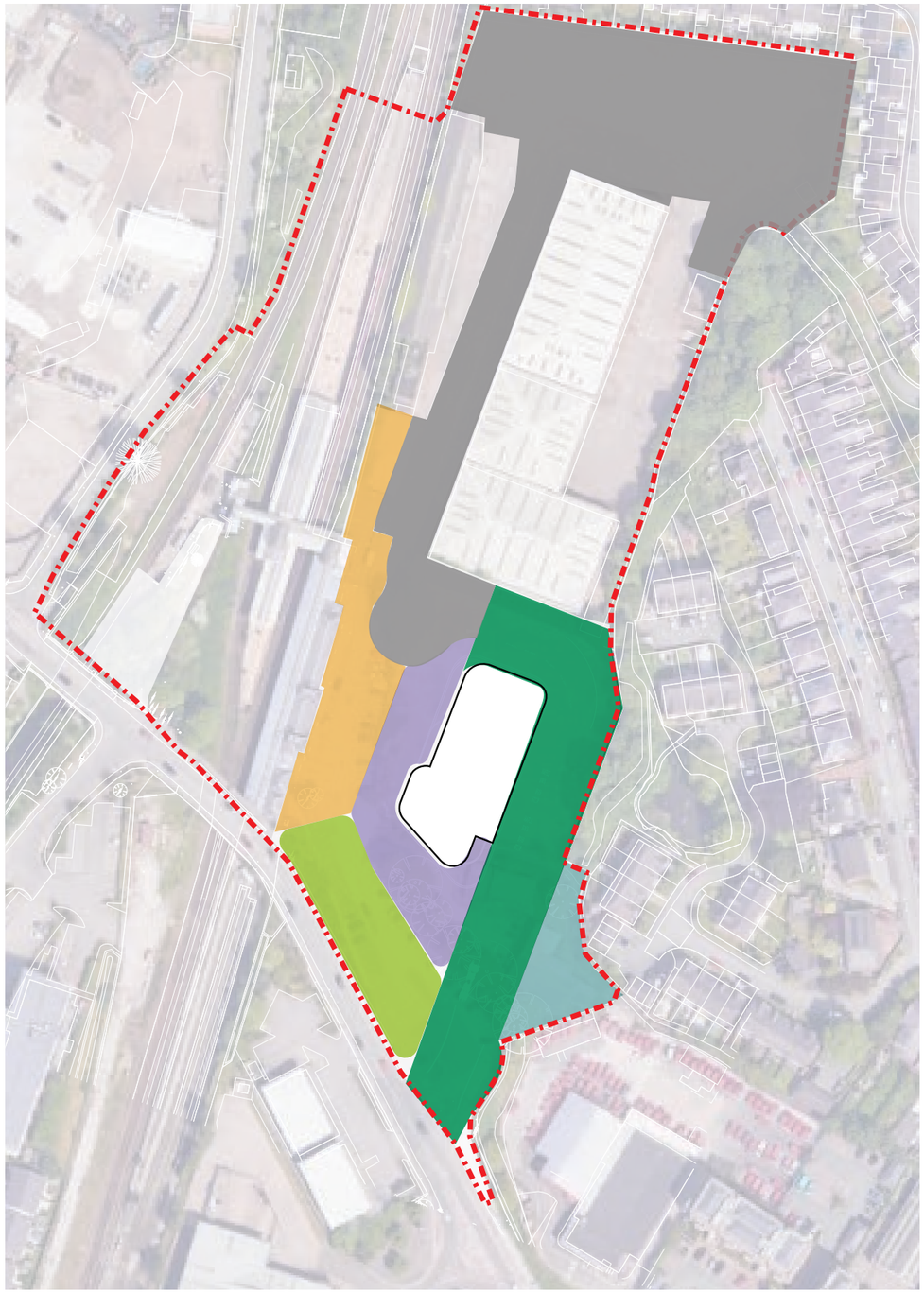
Interchange

unobstructed view/shaded bus canopy

Pocket Garden

a verdant edge / high ecological value / tree planting / transient spaces / lush understorey planting typology

Car Park



Station Frontage Masterplan

1. Bus Stop
2. SuDS Planting
3. Pocket Garden
4. Station Plaza
5. Boulevard
6. Retail Spill-out
7. Seating Area
8. Station Frontage
9. Pedestrian Crossing Point
10. Rail Replacement Coach Bays
11. New Ramp Access
12. Enhanced Step Access from Mold Road
13. Station drop-off bays





EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURE

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Northern site Masterplan

1. Office car parking
2. Station car parking
3. Station accessible car park
4. Car park associated with commercial unit
5. Private car parking for office
6. Pedestrian and cycle access to Spring Gardens/Rhosddu Park
7. Station drop-off bays
8. Designated Taxi bays



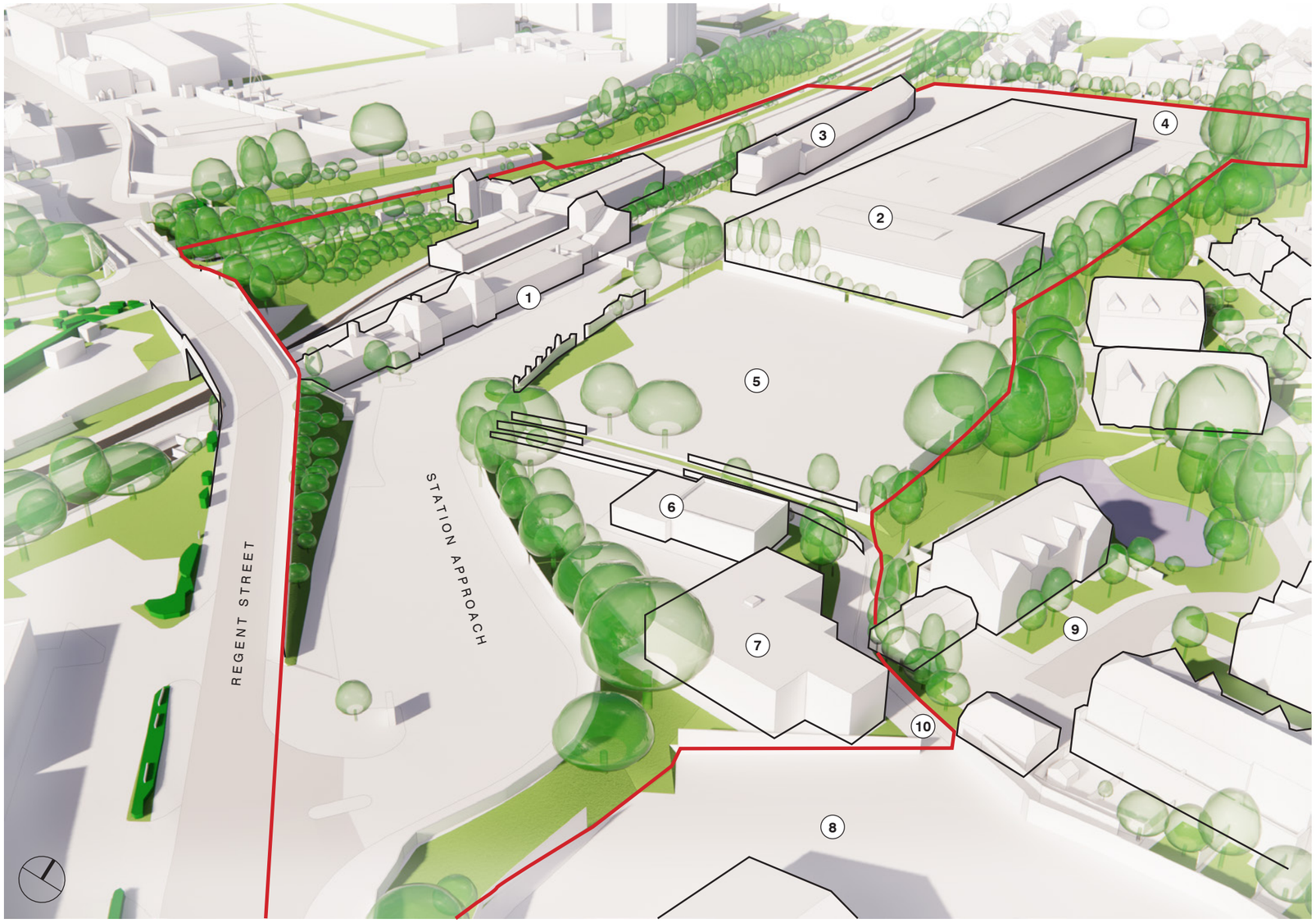


5.0 design development

The second key part to the site development concerns the new office building. The following pages describe the strategic thinking that has developed the site into an appropriate scale and appearance of architecture.

5.1 existing site context

The adjacent image shows the existing site context and key surrounding attributes.



1 wrexham general railway station
2 jewsons commercial unit
3 jewsons site storage
4 jewsons site compound
5 vacant site
6 former girl guides facility
7 wrexham district scouts
8 royal mail wrexham
9 grosvenor gardens residential buildings
10 existing pedestrian access route to/from town centre



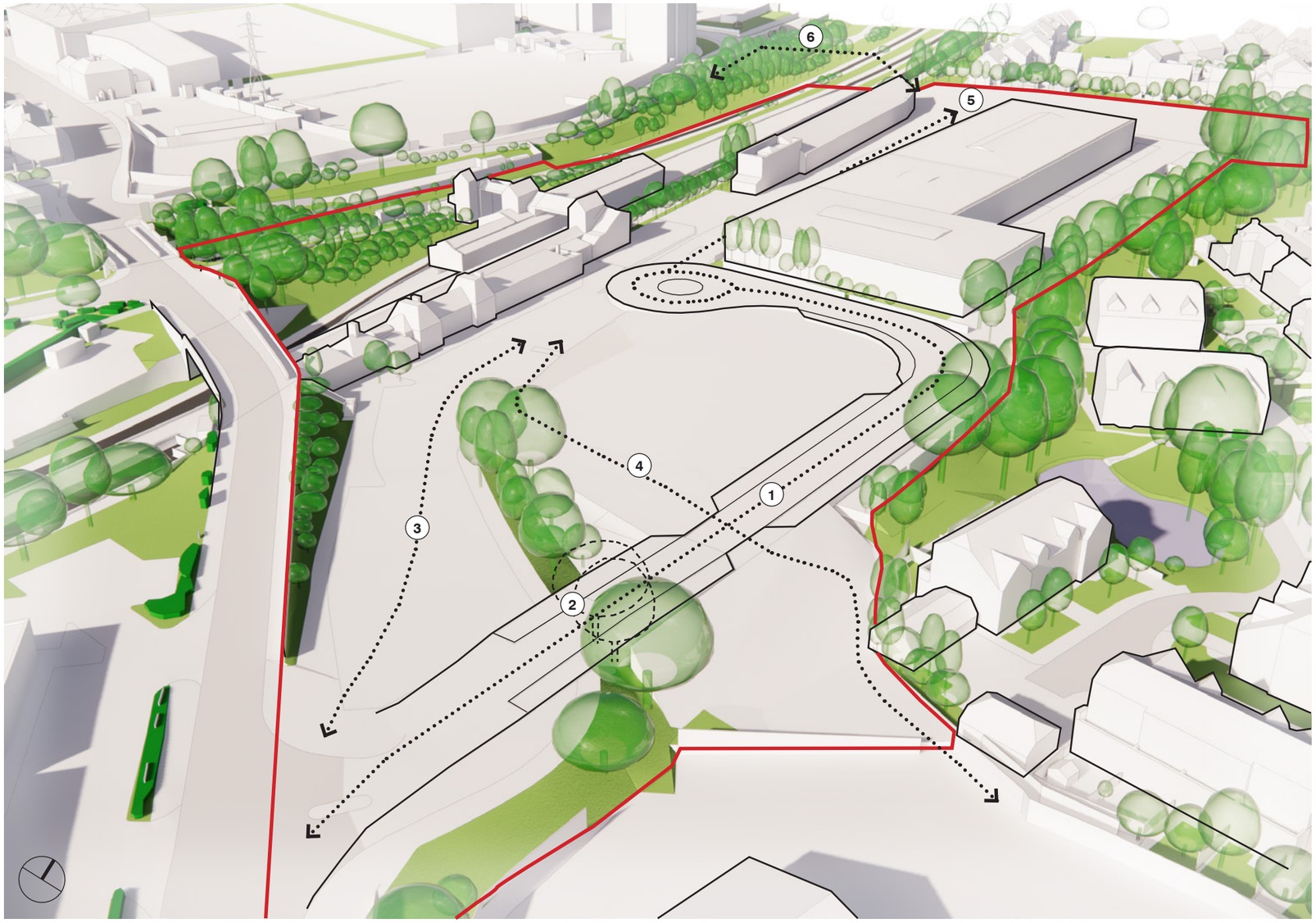
5.2 site clearance

1 Removal of existing boundary walls & fences from former commercial unit.

2 Removal of concrete post & metal fencing that current defines the boundary split between the former commercial unit, the Girl Guides facility and pedestrian route to town centre.

3 Demolition of former Girl Guides facility and Wrexham District Scouts Building to enable future development.

4 Retention of as much existing trees and soft landscaping as practically possible.



5.3 transport infrastructure and pedestrian links

1 Introduction of key transport infrastructure that enables vehicular links from Regent Street to new bus stops, coach parking, taxi ranks and new station car parking.

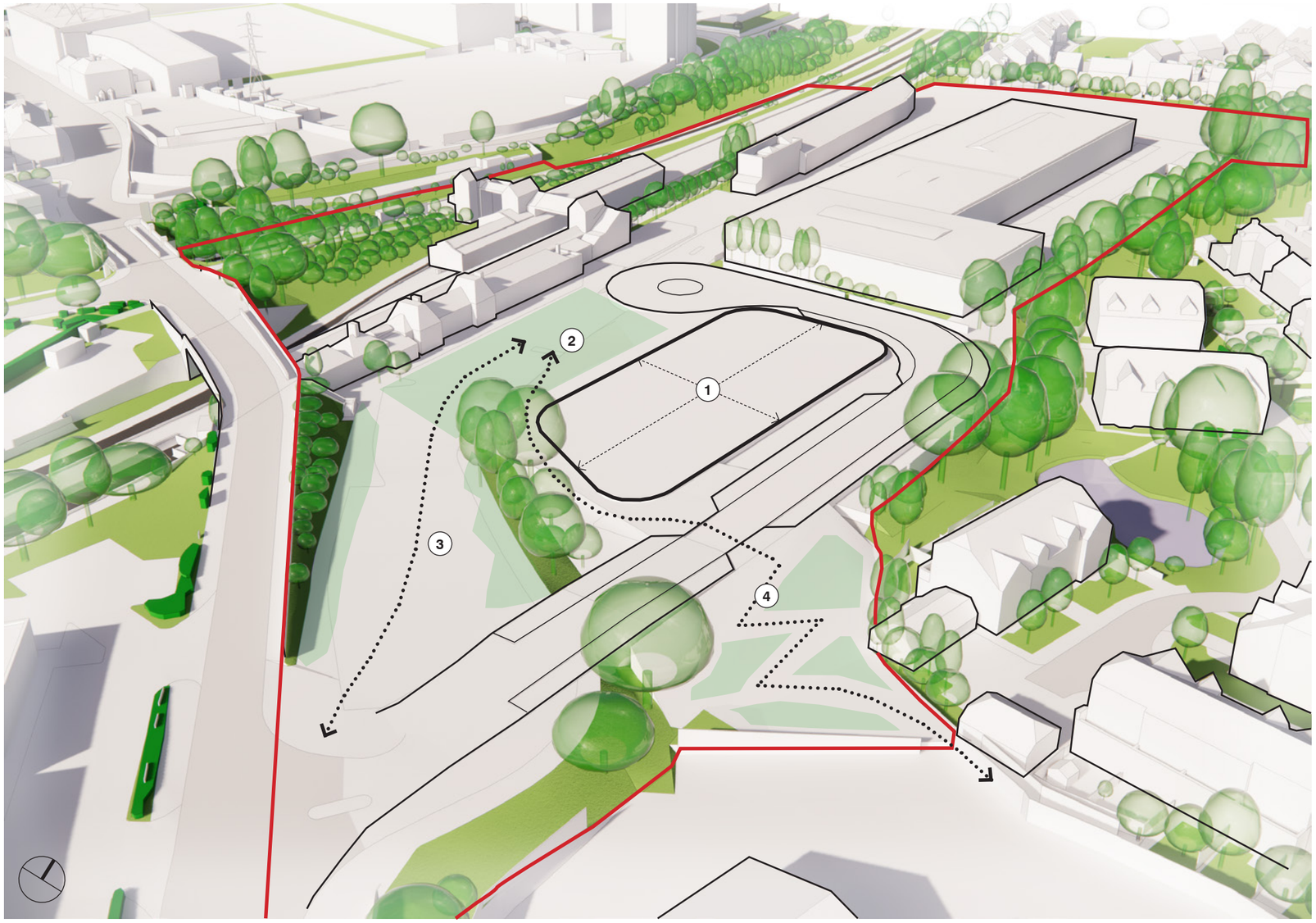
2 Removal of a minimum possible number of trees and soft landscaping to allow vehicular route into the site.

3 Station Approach not only provides a key pedestrian link from Regent Street to Wrexham General, but also very much a visual link. This approach will be retained but solely as a pedestrian route, facilitating wayfinding and providing a grand approach to the station.

4 Another key link that exists is the pedestrian route from Wrexham General to the town centre via the boundary of the Royal Mail site. This will be retained but manipulated and improved to cater for the introduction of the new office building.

5 New station car parking located to the North West of the site on the former Jewsons site compound.

6 Introduction of new pedestrian connection from site to Crispin Lane allowing increased accessibility and permeability to the site.



5.4 building positioning & public realm

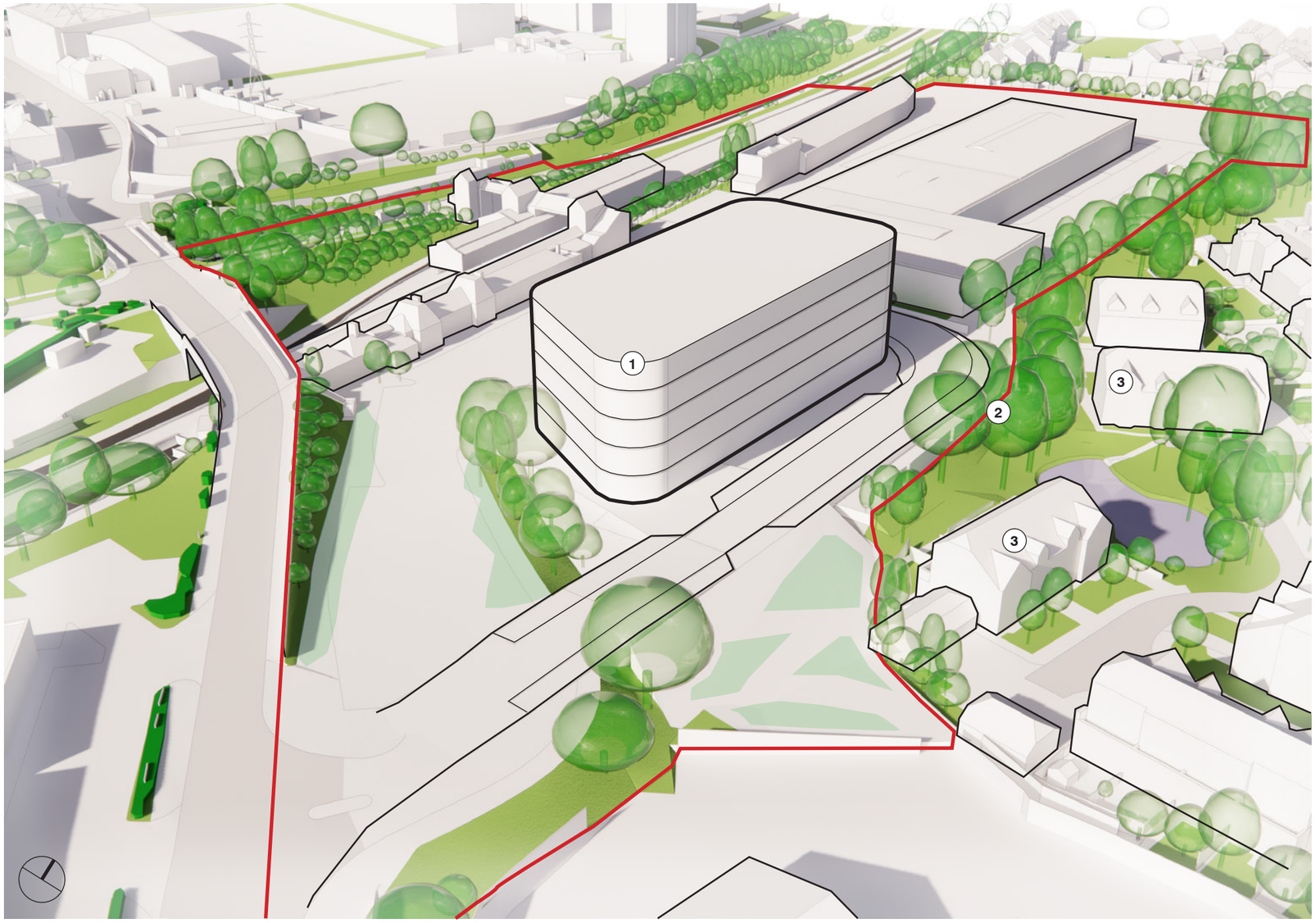
1 The siting of the new office building is dictated by the constraints formed in the previous pages; the introduction of the new highways, the retention of the existing trees and soft landscaping and the retention of the existing pedestrian route.

The width and depth has been formed by maximising the potential floor plate north to south, while creating an appropriate zone east to west between the new building and the station for the creation of a generous public realm.

2 Creation of a generous public realm providing a grand entrance / exit for Wrexham Station.

3 Pedestrianising and greening of Station Approach

4 The existing pedestrian route adjacent to the Royal Mail site currently follows the site boundary and is practical and understated. Redeveloping this route and making use of the former Wrexham District Scouts building allows it to become something more special and significant.



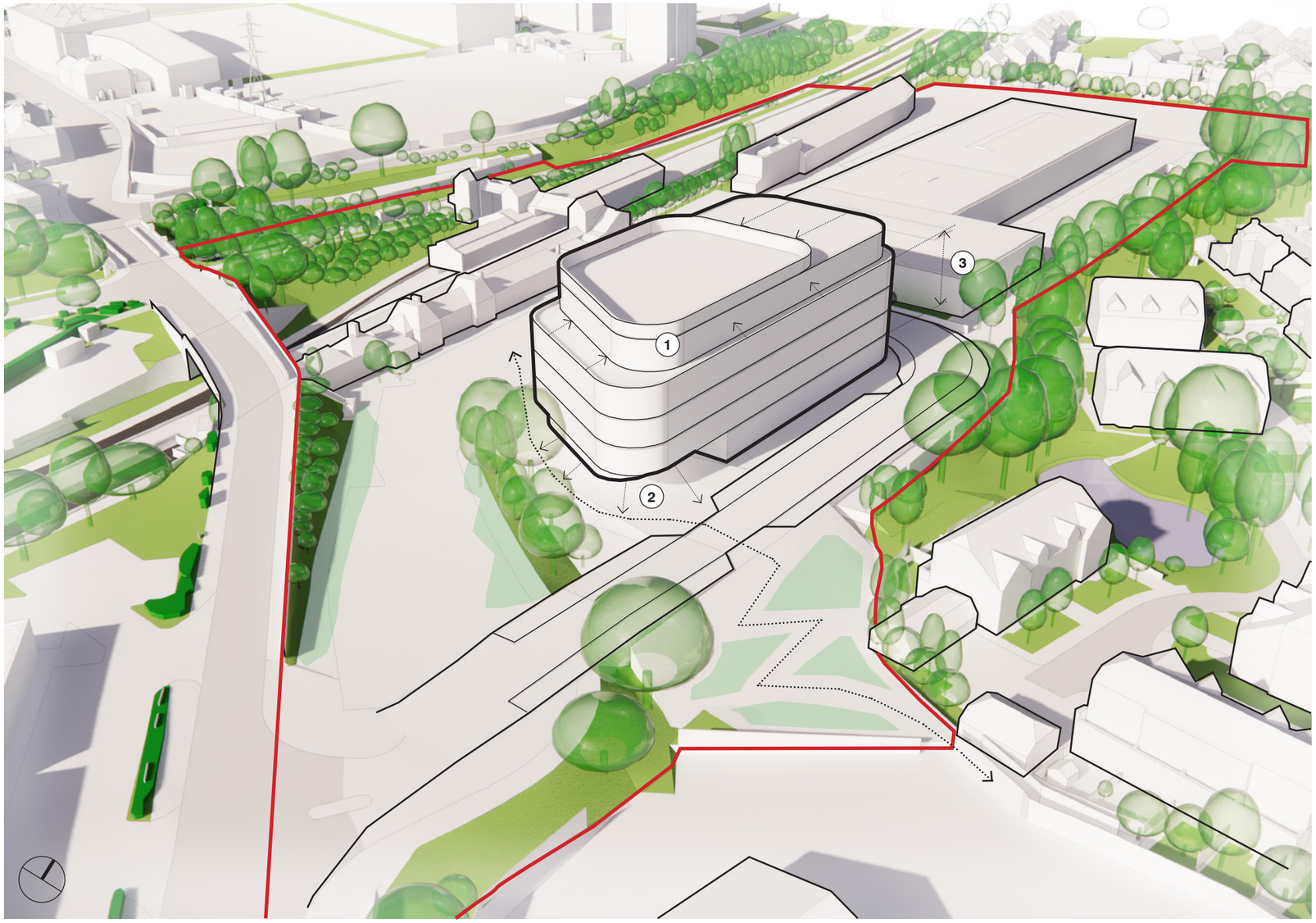
5.5 building massing & quantum

1 The brief requirements meant a total of ground plus four storeys would be required to facilitate the necessary quantum of accommodation. When formulating this massing, several factors have been key to the decision making;

- creating a generous and impactful public realm for the station by constraining the building footprint west to east (discussed on previous pages)
- impact on neighbouring context
- providing a visual beacon for the station and surrounding public realm.

2 Trees surrounding the existing boundary are of a significant size and will provide a generous amount of protection to the neighbouring residential areas.

3 The neighbouring residential areas present three-storey semi-detached and terraced housing. The overall massing of the new building should be developed to reduce the overall visual impact.

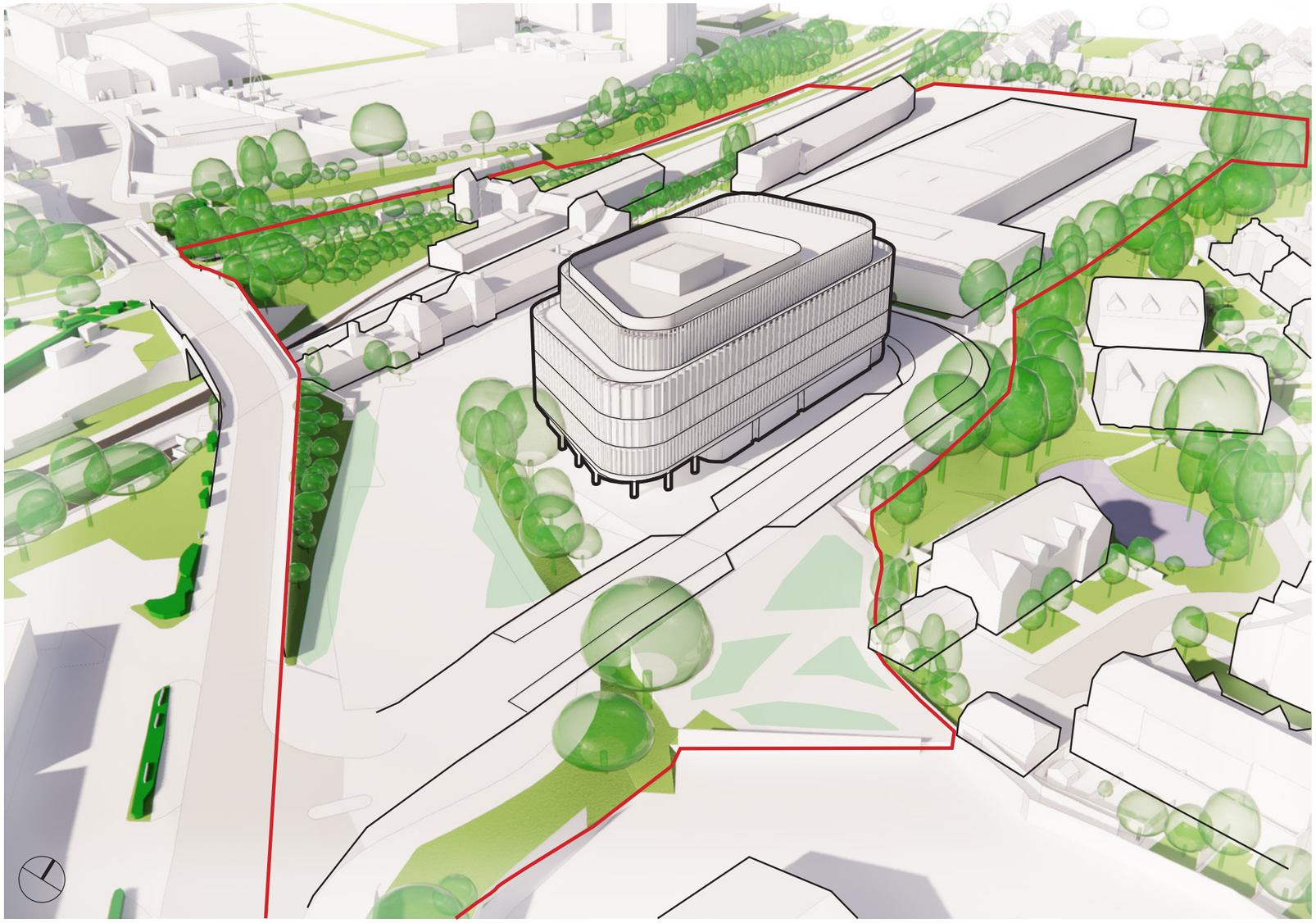


5.6 massing development

1 The massing has been developed and broken down to reduce the impact on the surrounding context. Upper floors have been set back to provide external terraces to office space while creating a lower overall ‘building line’.

2 Ground floor areas have been cut and carved to create covered zones. This will facilitate active frontages and natural surveillance along the pedestrian route.

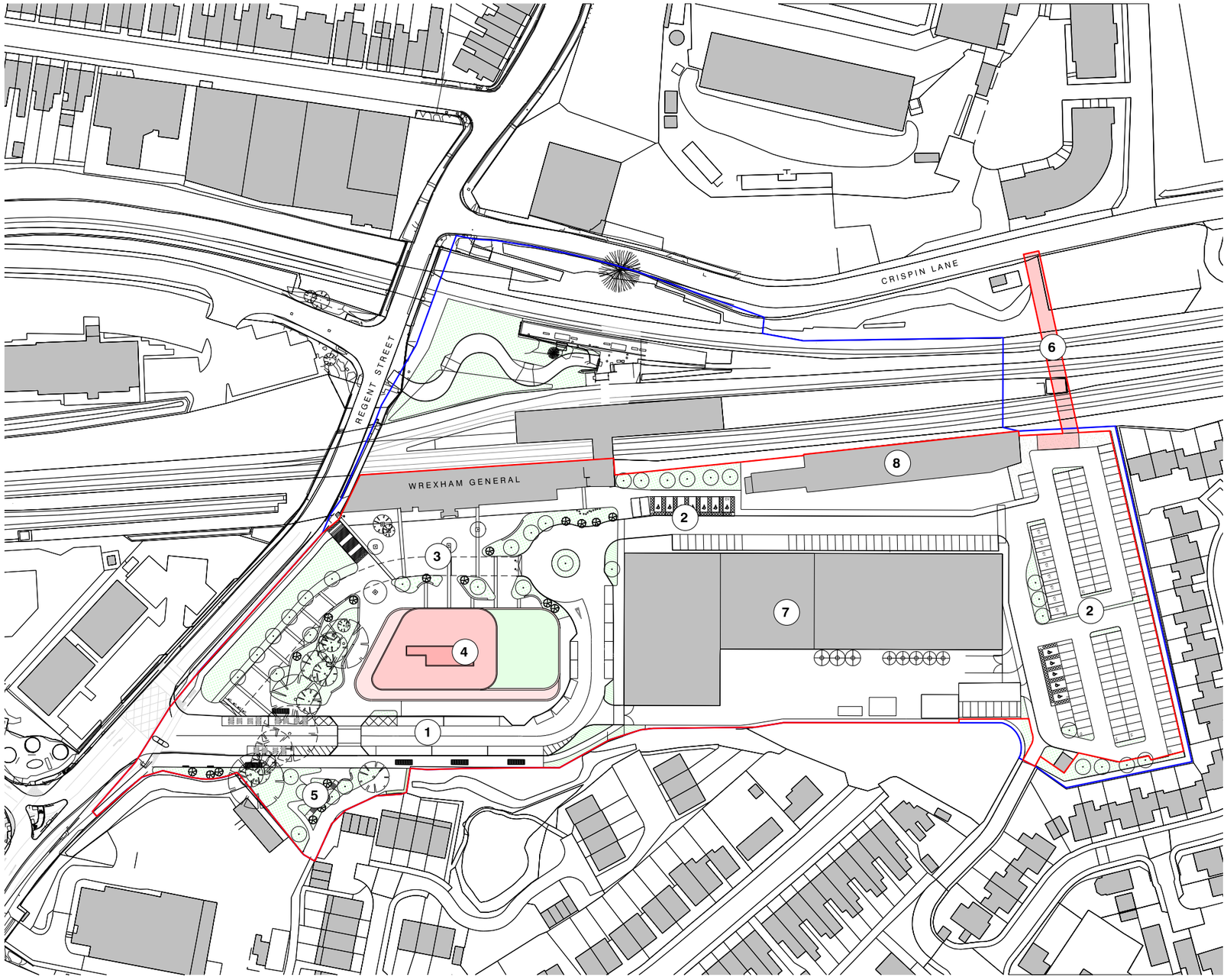
3 The steps and recesses between the ground and fourth floor allow the main portion of the massing to be expressed as a three storey expression, breaking it down from the former 5 storey massing.



5.0 design development

5.7 articulating the facade

The massing development created an appropriate base for the proposals. Articulating the facade through solids and opening further animates the proposals. The concept and development of the design approach is discussed in more detail later in the document.



5.8 Indicative Site Plan

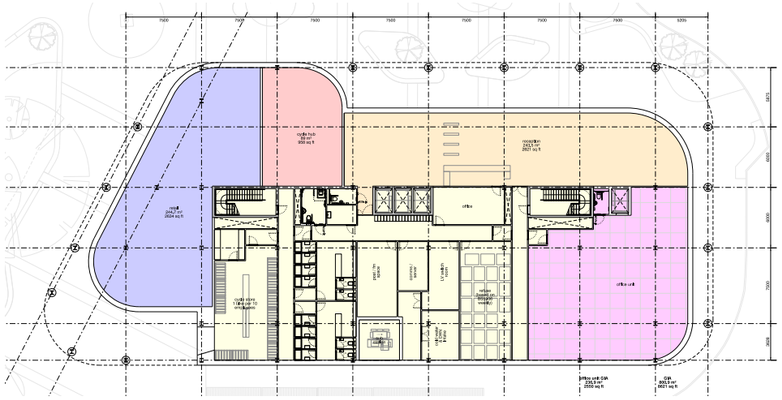
The landscaping, masterplanning and architecture principles discussed in the previous sections of this report have formulated the adjacent overall indicative site plan. The proposals are made up of 6 key elements listed below.

1 main vehicular access & egress into site
2 wrexham general and office building parking area
3 public realm
4 new office building
5 pocket park / public footpath route into wrexham
6 new pedestrian footbridge
7 existing warehouse change of use to brewery use
8 cambrian shed change of use for museum and tap house

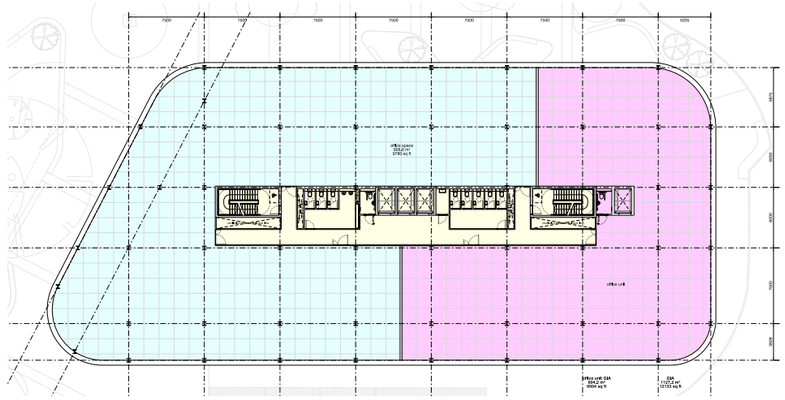
5.9 Indicative Floor Plans

In addition to the wider site plan, indicative developed design proposals were prepared specifically for the office building. This process involved the design and coordination of architectural, structural and MEP disciplines to ensure the overall parameters proposed are of an appropriate size and scale.

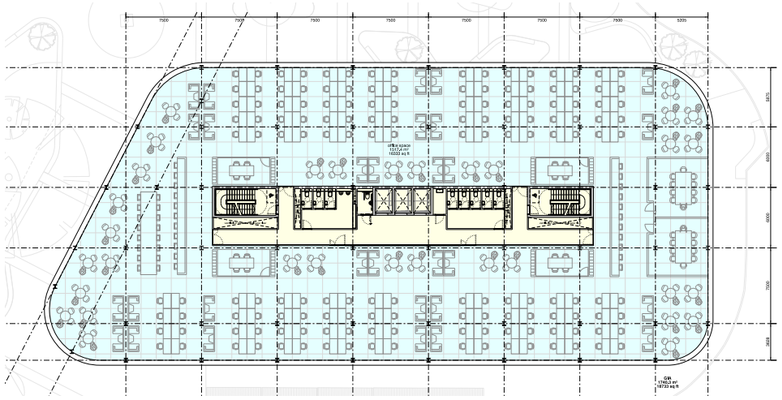
Further to the building practicalities, the developed scheme has also been assessed from a cost perspective to ensure affordability and deliverability.



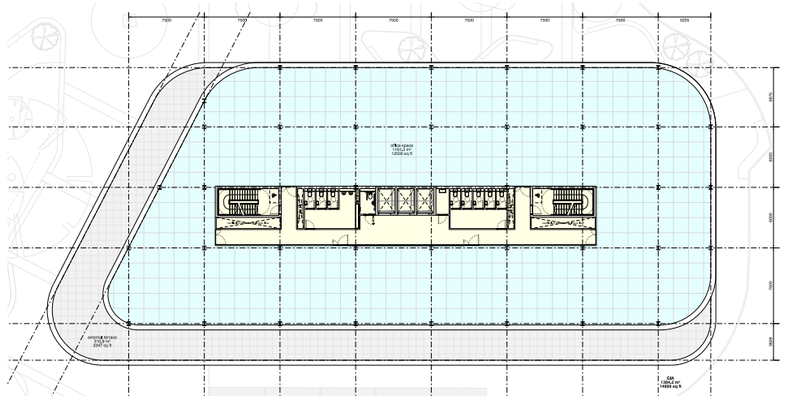
ground floor plan



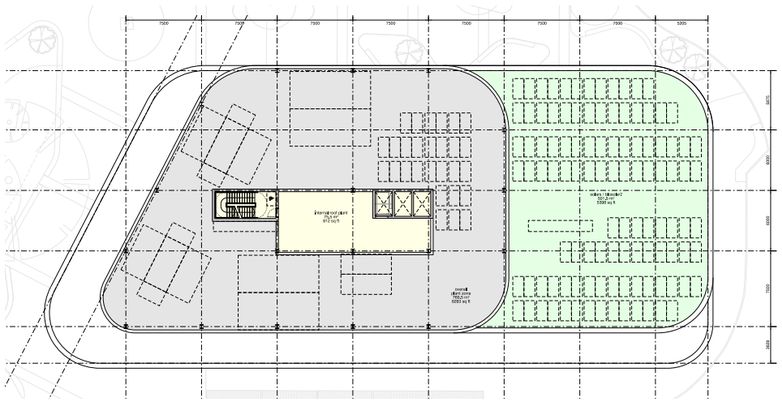
first floor plan



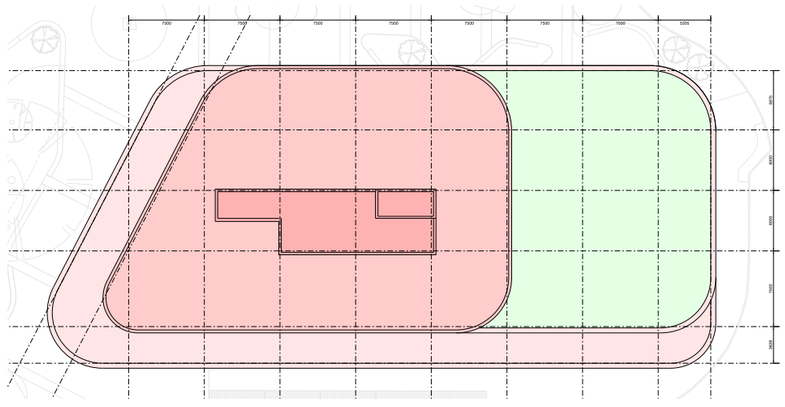
second floor plan



third floor plan

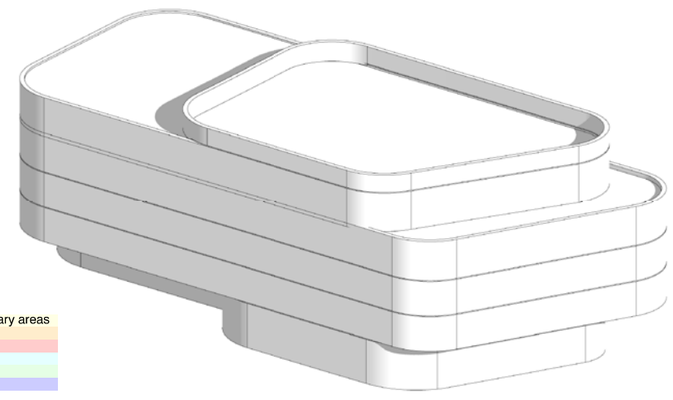


roof plant floor plan



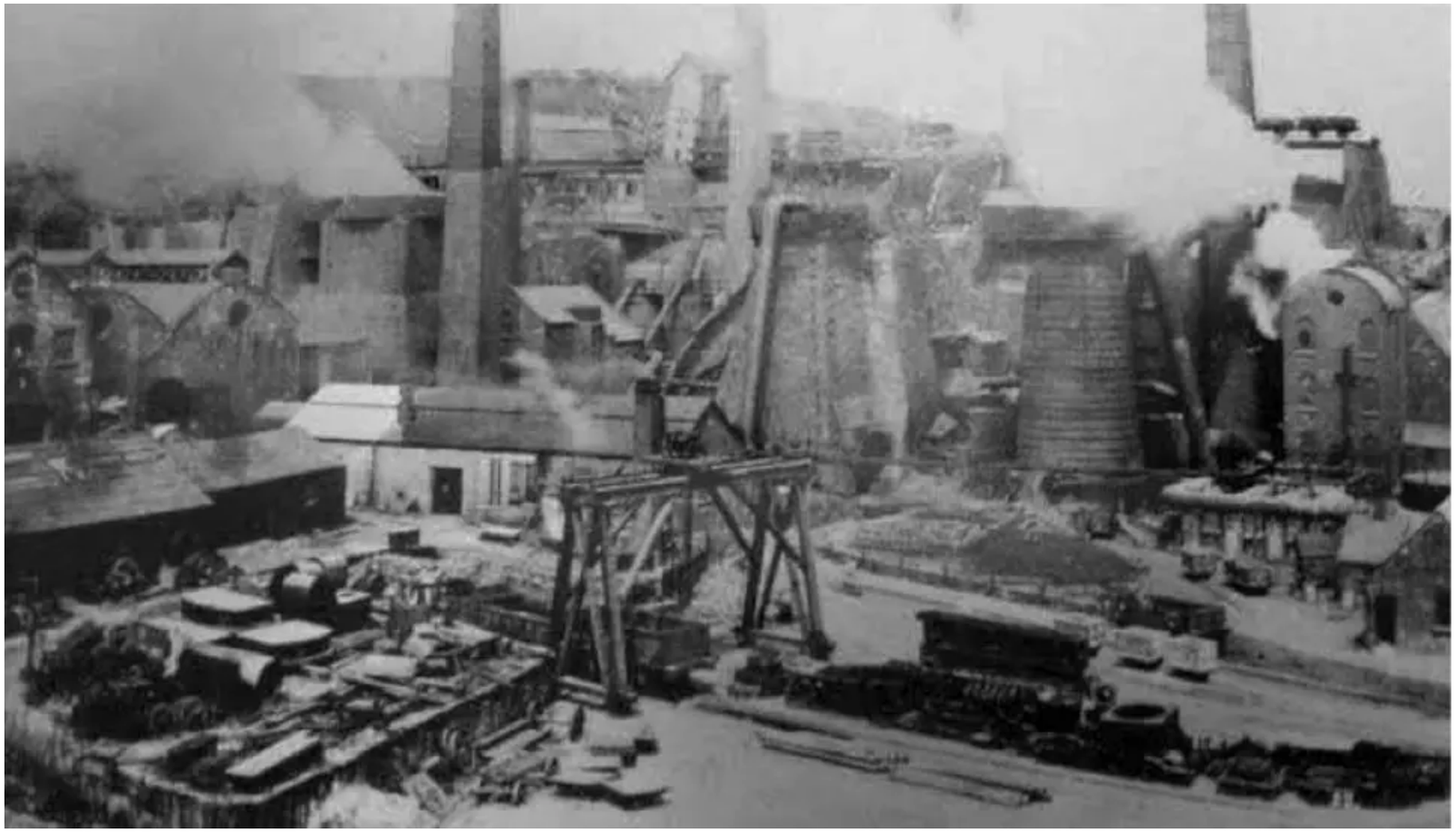
roof plan





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6.0 concept development



brymbo steelworks

6.1 Transforming Wrexham

Industrial Revolution

In the late 18th century Wrexham was transformed by the coming of the Industrial Revolution. It began when the famous entrepreneur John Wilkinson (1728-1808) known as ‘Iron Mad Wilkinson’ opened Bersham iron foundry in 1762. In 1793 he opened a smelting plant at Brymbo.

In 1801, the population of Wrexham was 2,575. By the standards of the time, it was a small market town. Wrexham grew rapidly in the 19th century. By 1841 the population reached 5,854. By 1881 it was 10,903.

In the early 19th century the old wool industry died out. However, Wrexham’s other industries boomed. In the 19th century, coal mining in the vicinity prospered.

Wrexham Gateway & Wider Masterplan

The Wrexham Gateway represents a major redevelopment in Wrexham, focused on revitalising the area around the city centre and key transport hubs, the project intends to enhance infrastructure, boost the local economy, and create a vibrant welcoming environment.

This ambitious scheme could be one of the more transformative periods for Wrexham since the Industrial era and therefore should be celebrated through the architecture.

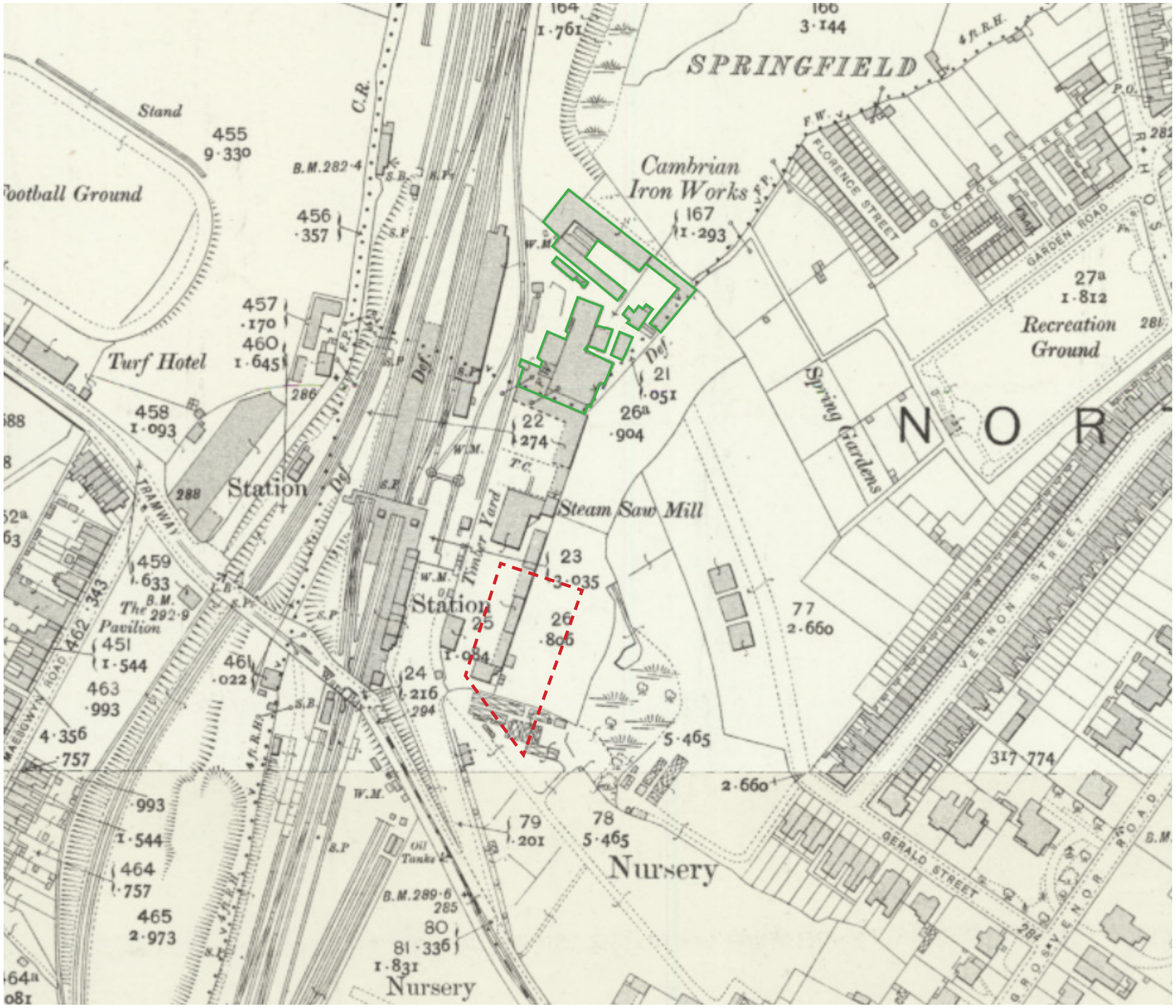


6.2 cambrian iron works

Wrexham's Jewson outlet occupies the site of the former Cambrian Ironworks (edged in green adjacent), which hosted an ammunitions factory in the First World War and afterwards produced motorcycles.

The ironworks was founded by John Evan Powell and Robert John Powell in 1876, joined by John Whitaker in 1877, with premises ideally placed next to Wrexham General station. The firm exported its award-winning agricultural machinery to many countries.

The factory even had its own football team. The old drawing below shows the factory from the north west.



1892-1914 map of wrexham general



drawing of former cambrian ironworks



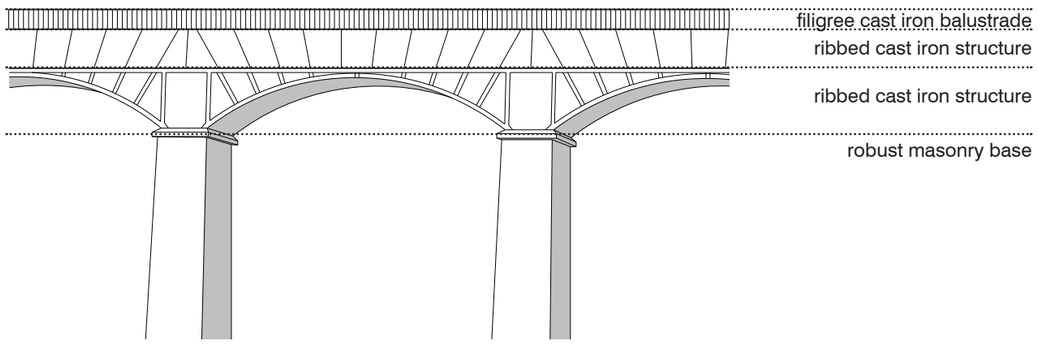
pontcysyllte aqueduct

6.3 industrial jewels

Pontcysyllte Aqueduct was completed in 1805, located near Trevor in Wrexham County Borough approximately 8 miles from the Town Centre.

The aqueduct was designed as part of the Ellesmere Canal to connect industrial centres in North Wales and England. It played a crucial role in transporting raw materials like coal and iron, where were key industries in the Wrexham area. The enhanced trade bolstered the economy.

While it does not serve is as an industrial transportation route today, it lasts as a relic and a significant example of engineering of the Industrial era. The structure is now Grade I listed and part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



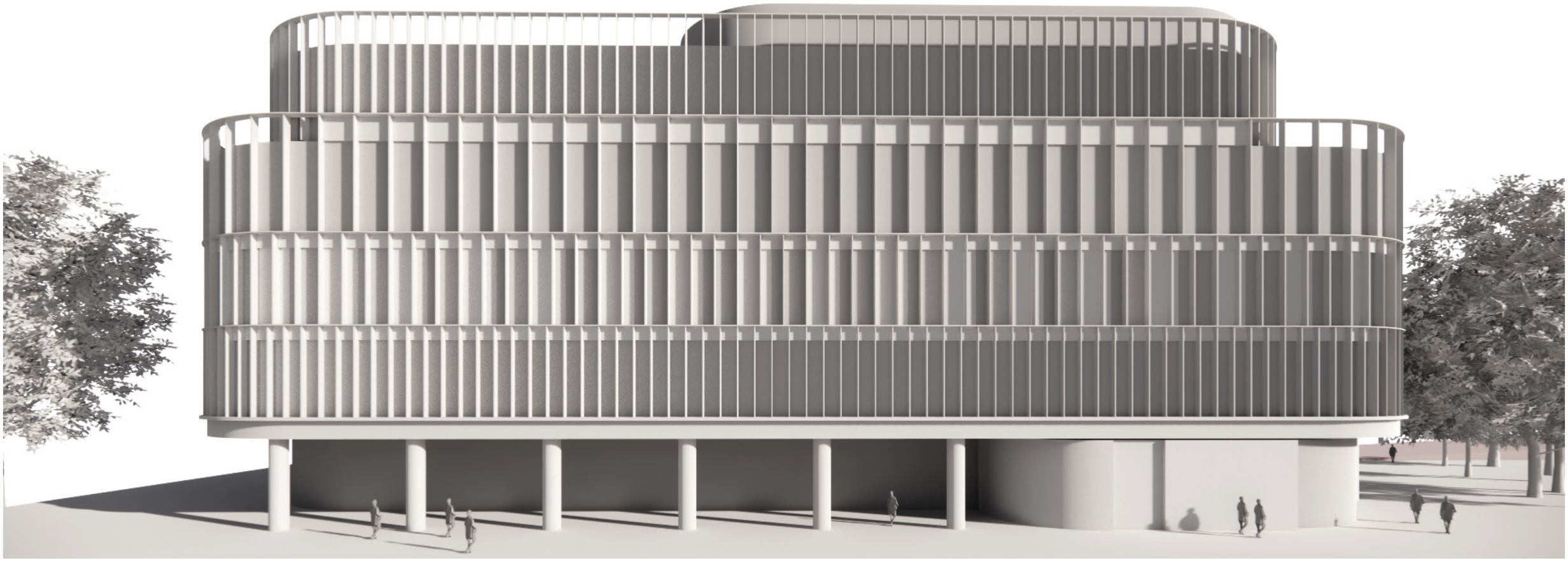
6.0 concept development

6.4 modern jewel

Many beautiful buildings and structures such as the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct have been left as a lasting memory from the thriving Industrial era across the whole of UK, including around Wrexham.

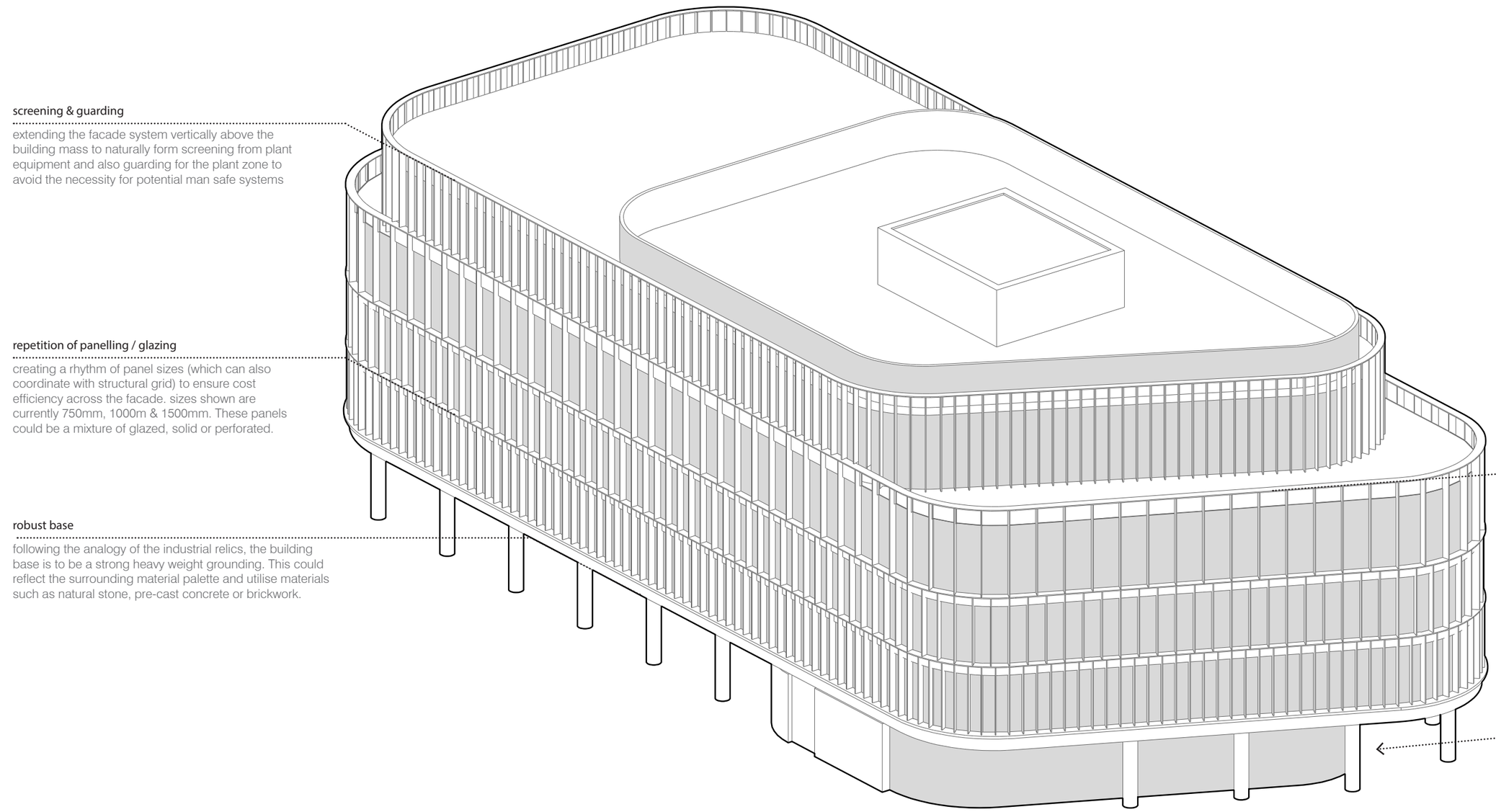
The intention for the scheme is to leave a lasting marker of the modern day regeneration of Wrexham through the Gateway project.

Taking cues from its rich historic context, the scheme intends to provide a contemporary interpretation of the industrial uses and structures.



6.5 potential envelope strategy

The adjacent diagram shows the principles considered when approaching the building envelope. The proposals intend to create a rich architectural proposal while still maintaining practicalities and efficiencies throughout.



screening & guarding

extending the facade system vertically above the building mass to naturally form screening from plant equipment and also guarding for the plant zone to avoid the necessity for potential man safe systems

repetition of panelling / glazing

creating a rhythm of panel sizes (which can also coordinate with structural grid) to ensure cost efficiency across the facade. sizes shown are currently 750mm, 1000m & 1500mm. These panels could be a mixture of glazed, solid or perforated.

robust base

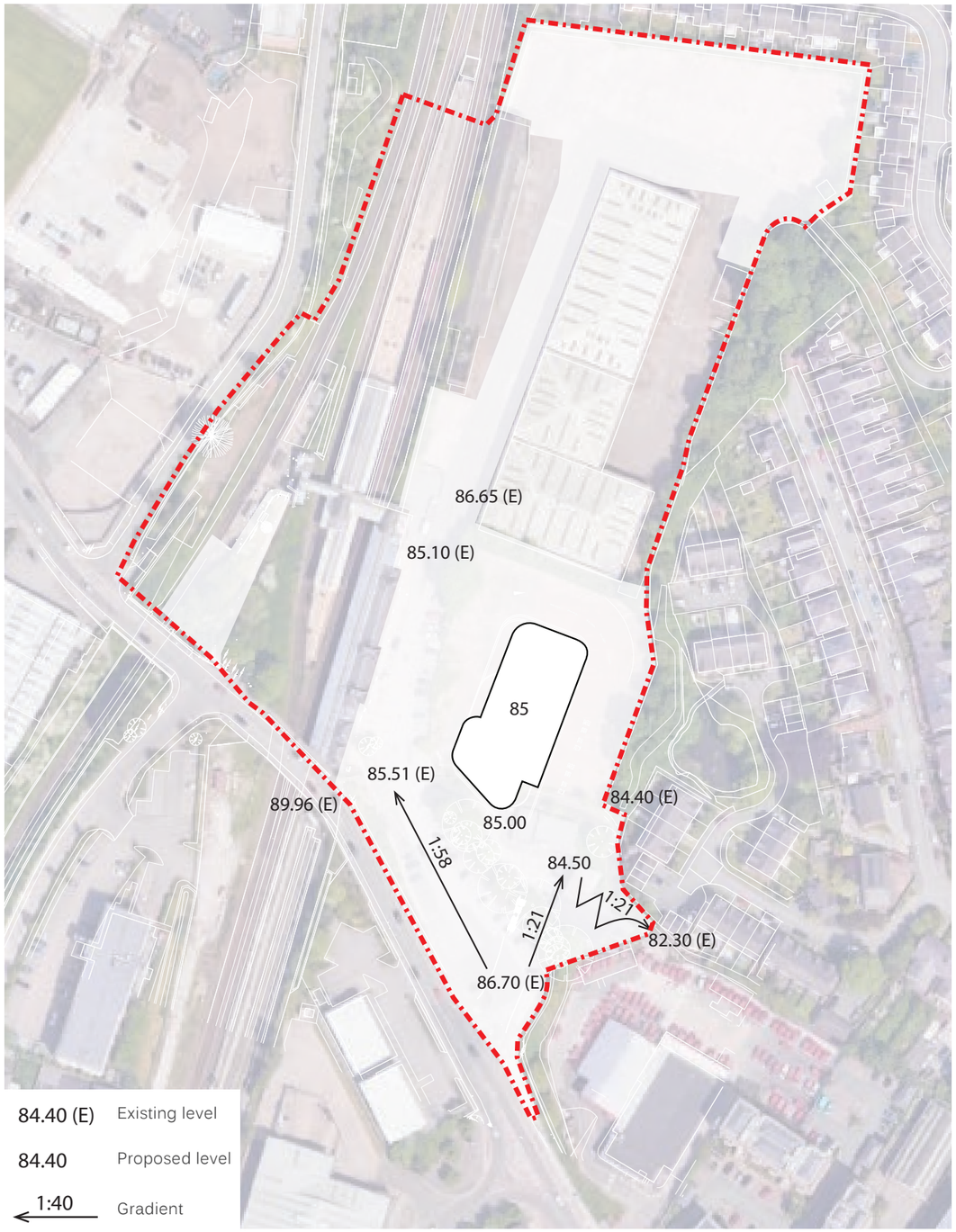
following the analogy of the industrial relics, the building base is to be a strong heavy weight grounding. This could reflect the surrounding material palette and utilise materials such as natural stone, pre-cast concrete or brickwork.

balustrades

extending the facade treatment above the building height will allow the external balustrade to be formed, forming a crown element to the main building mass while creating transparency and variance in the facade

deep covered recesses

recesses formed to provide obviously markers for entrances, to provide shelter from the elements and to provide interest in the elevations



7.0 access

7.1 general access

The application site has a proximal location to a suite of major transportation hubs within Wrexham. This is further increased by the improved transport links within the application that have been discussed earlier in the document. Therefore, the proposal can be considered extremely accessible.

7.2 inclusive access

The proposed development has applied inclusive design principles to both external (shown in the landscaping elements) and internal environments in order to maximise access and egress for disabled people. In particular, the aim is to design an inclusive environment regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or disability.

All ground floor uses benefit from a level threshold access with the proposed internal finish floor levels. Internal levels to the commercial components are all connected by Part M compliant lifts and ambulant disabled stairs that ensure equal access by all. The office uses will be subject to a future fit-out works by the tenants, whose responsibility will be to install the necessary infrastructure to comply with current legislation.

The design team is committed to the principles of inclusive design an will, as far as reasonably possible, ensure that the project is accessible both internally and externally. The development has been designed to satisfy the provision for access as outlined in Part M of the Building Regulations and these requirements are exceeded where practical.

7.3 servicing, maintenance & emergency

The proposed landscaping and transport infrastructure will be designed to ensure servicing and maintenance of the site is easily achievable. Consideration will also be provided to allow appropriate emergency vehicle access in and around the site.



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8.0 conclusion

The masterplanning, landscaping and architecture principles discussed in the previous sections of this report have formulated the basis for this outline application. The level of indicative detail the design team has worked to has ensured the application parameters are appropriate and achievable. The adjacent and following pages show artists impressions of the overall scheme proposals.









