

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

STUDIO
HEDG
ARCHITECTS

Project name: GYMBOUND
Project address: UNITS 1, 1A & 1B, QUEENSWAY,
ROCHDALE, W
Client: LAYRD DESIGN LTD
Date: July 2025

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION	2	6.0 APPEARANCE & SIGNAGE DESIGN	14
1.1 Vision	2		
1.2 Values	2	7.0 ACCESS	
		7.1 Vehicular Access	15
2.0 SITE		7.2 Inclusive Access	15
2.1 Location	3	7.3 Transporting Links	16
2.2 Existing Property	3		
2.3 Context	4	8.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	16
2.4 Flood Risk	5		
3.0 PLANNING POLICIES			
3.1 Policy E2 – Increasing jobs and prosperity	6		
3.2 Policy C6 – Improving health and well-being	6		
3.3 Policy C8 – Improving community, sport, leisure and cultural facilities	6		
3.3 Conclusion	6		
4.0 PLANNING CONTEXT			
4.1 Planning precedent - Units 1, 1A & 1B	5		
4.2 Planning precedent - Unit 2B Eagle Technology Park	5		
5.0 DESIGN			
5.1 Use	9-11		
5.2 Amount	9-11		
5.3 Layout	12		
5.4 Scale	12-13		

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document has been produced to support the planning application for the proposed development at Units 1, 1A & 1B, Queensway, Rochdale, OL11 1TQ. The project encompasses replacement of the existing Renault car Dealership with a new indoor sports gym.

The purpose of this document is to provide a detailed overview of the design objectives, highlighting the key aspects of the proposed changes. It should be read alongside the accompanying existing and proposed architectural drawings, the detailed site plan, and all other relevant planning documents associated with this application. Our aim is to ensure a cohesive understanding of the project’s scope, design rationale, and its alignment with local planning guidelines.

1.1 VISION

The vision is to replace the existing Renault car Dealership with a new gym to improve Rochdale’s appeal, sport facilities and employment rates, as well as the physical health of local residents. The proposal seeks to change the existing class use from Sui Generis, to Class E(d).

The proposal, Gymbound, is to provide an inclusive gym and studio with a wide range of expertise and facilities the full length of the fitness and wellbeing spectrum.

1.2 VALUES

Throughout the design process the following values have been a priority in developing the proposals;

Context – To ensure that the proposal is sympathetic to its setting and enhances the character of the surrounding area.

Consideration to Neighbours – We have ensured our proposals do not adversely affect the neighbours in terms of the scale, massing or fenestration.

Impact on the environment and landscape - Our design aims to help retain the biodiversity of the area by minimising its environmental impact.



Proposed property front as viewed from Queensway Road

2.0 SITE

2.1 LOCATION

The property is situated within the jurisdiction of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council. It is not a part of any Conservation Area or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Located at Units 1, 1A & 1B, Queensway, Rochdale, the site is situated in a primarily residential urban area. The locality is characterized by its proximity to essential amenities and urban centres, including the nearby supermarket, Iceland. The immediate neighbourhood comprises of industrial retail units and residential properties.

—— Site boundary

2.2 EXISTING PROPERTY

The existing property was a Renault car Dealership, under Class Sui Generis.



Location map



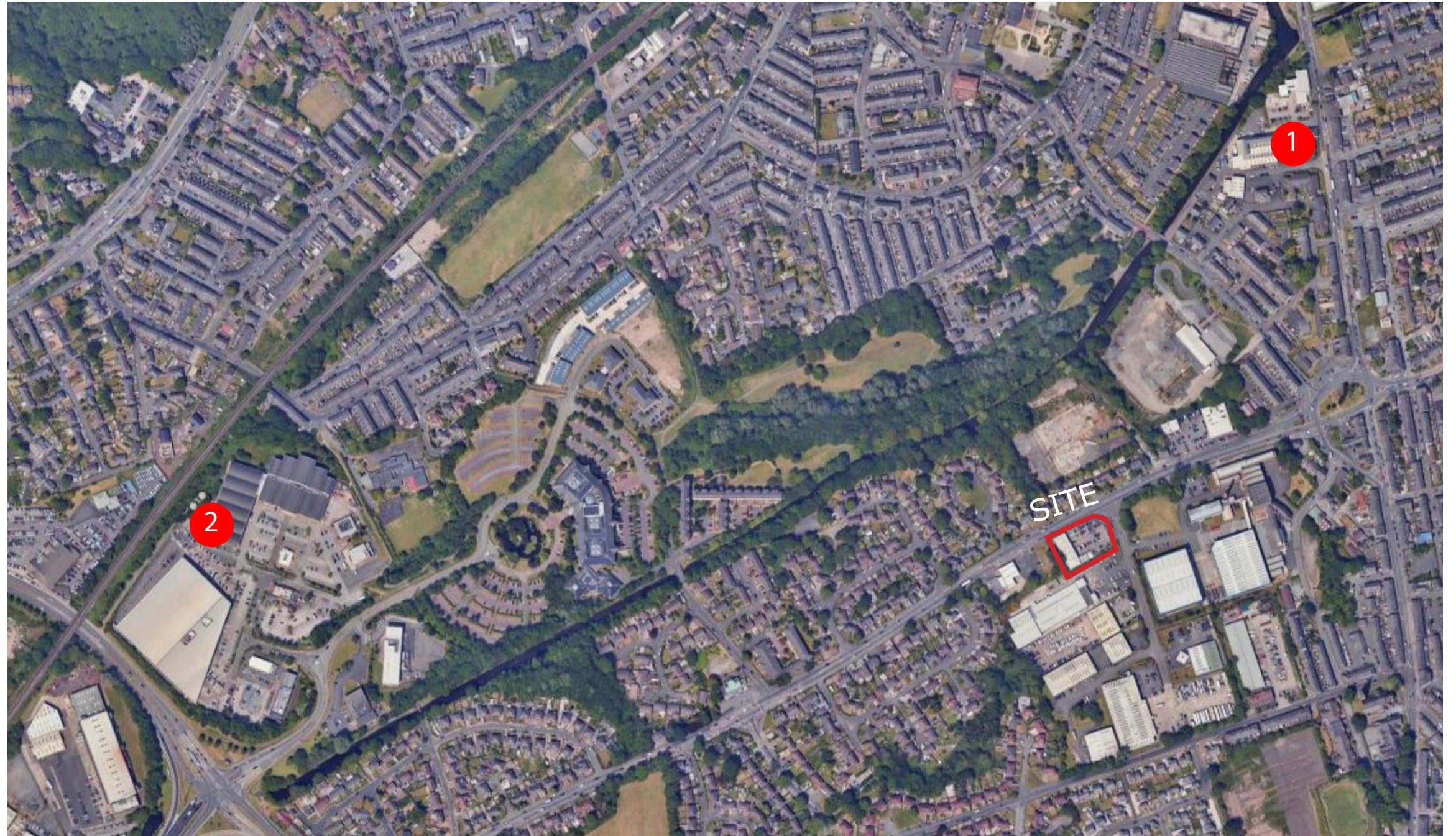
Site looking at the main facade from Queensway

2.3 CONTEXT

The site sits within a wider area of industrial retail units and residential properties.

While there are two existing gym facilities within the area, the broader site context reveals a significantly higher number of residential properties in close proximity. This imbalance underscores a clear demand for additional fitness amenities to adequately serve local residents, supporting the case for a new gym at this location.

- 1. Gymx
- 2. PureGym Rochdale

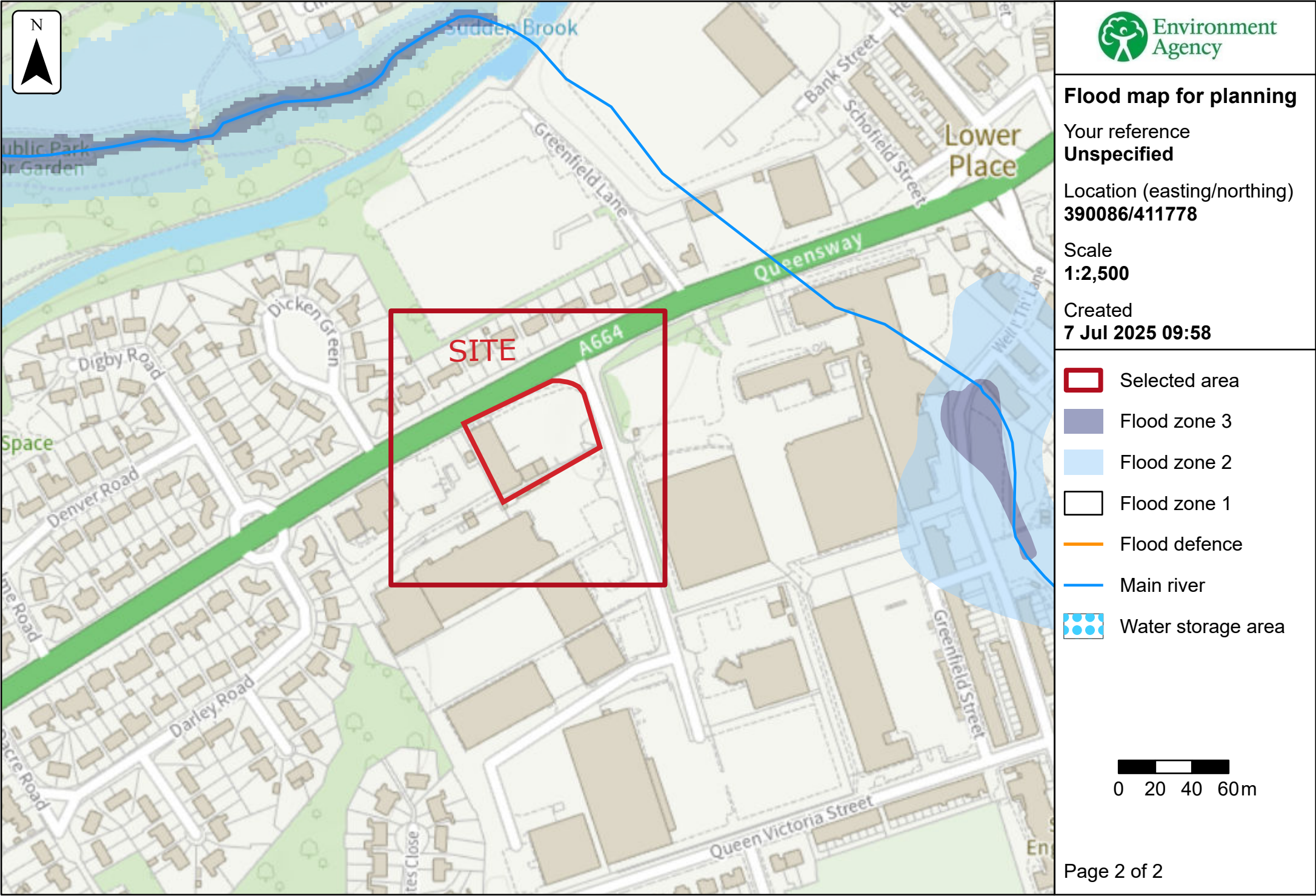


2.0 SITE

2.4 FLOOD RISK

The map shows risk of flooding in the area.

The location is Flood Zone 1, an area with a low probability of flooding.



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3.0 PLANNING POLICIES

3.1 POLICY E2 – INCREASING JOBS AND PROSPERITY

Policy E2 states that;

“We will ensure a sufficient supply of suitable land, buildings and infrastructure in the right places to support the creation and retention of successful businesses and increase the number and quality of jobs to create a more prosperous lower carbon economy...

- Support other employment generating uses that comply with the policies of this plan (e.g. retail, entertainment, leisure and tourism uses;”

The proposed gym aligns with Policy E2, which supports the increase of the number and quality of employment:

- The gym will create new jobs (estimated 5 positions initially in Phase 1) across management, personal training, customer service and maintenance.
- Its previous use was a car dealership unit, which would have employed less people than the client plans to employ with the site operating as a gym.
- It repurposes an under-utilised commercial site, helping to regenerate and revitalise the local economy.
- It supports diversification of the local economy and aligns with the Council’s goals to support inward investment and sustainable job growth.
- Where the previous use generated vehicle servicing traffic, the gym will generate consistent, but lower-intensity traffic aligned with peak gym times, reducing environmental impacts and traffic disruption.
- The existing property, being vacant since December 2024, does not currently have any employees. The new gym proposal will create an 5 new job opportunities initially, before increasing in the phase 2 scheme.
- The proposal also creates opportunities for part time or freelance work through personal trainers or independent instructors

3.2 POLICY C6 – IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Policy C6 states that;

“C6 - Improving health and well being

We will improve people’s health and well being and reduce health inequalities by:

- Creating an economic, physical and social environment which promotes and supports healthy lifestyles;
- Supporting and promoting accessible new health facilities and services in town centres and local centres; and
- Focusing the above actions in areas of deprivation, poor health and/or greatest need.”

The proposed gym aligns with Policy C6, promoting active lifestyles and tackling poor health outcomes.

The Rochdale borough suffers from some of the lowest life expectancy and highest health inequality rates in Greater Manchester (page 8).

The proposal:

- Encourages greater levels of physical activity.
- Provides an accessible, affordable indoor fitness facility.
- Offers a preventative approach to public health by supporting weight loss, cardiovascular fitness, and mental well-being.
- The site is particularly well placed to serve residents in central and south Rochdale, including communities identified in the Core Strategy as having below-average health indicators.
- The added cycle parking encourages greater use of bicycles as transport, encouraging additional exercise.
- There are plans for mental health meetings to take place in the studio which will benefit the mental wellbeing of users, benefitting the overall wellbeing of Rochdale residents.

3.3 POLICY C8 – IMPROVING COMMUNITY, SPORT, LEISURE AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

Policy C8 states that;

“We will improve people’s health and well being and reduce health inequalities by:

- Creating an economic, physical and social environment which promotes and supports healthy lifestyles;
- Supporting and promoting accessible new health facilities and services in town centres and local centres;”

Attention is drawn to subclause (e):

“Ensuring good provision of education, community, sport, leisure and cultural facilities in town centres, local centres and areas of greatest health deprivation (Policies C7,C8);”

The proposed gym aligns directly with Policy C8, which supports the delivery and enhancement of sport and leisure facilities, contributing to the health and wellbeing of residents.

Clause (e)(iii): The gym will be located within an existing employment/commercial area, re-using a previously developed site in a sustainable location, complying with Rochdale’s support for sport and fitness uses in commercial or employment zones.

Rochdale’s demographics shows there is a 34% Asian population. Research has shown ethnic minorities are less likely to use gyms and experience lower physical activity levels. Gymbound will be an inclusive space with more areas of privacy, a female only space and self enclosed cubicles to appeal to this demographic.

Hyrox fitness training is currently very popular at the moment. With Gymbound offering Hyrox facilities, the gym would attract more residents to use the unique facilities often not available elsewhere.

The Cafe is designed to appeal to those who do not necessarily want to use the gym equipment and so will attract more of the local community overall, improving the community engagement and facilities in Rochdale.

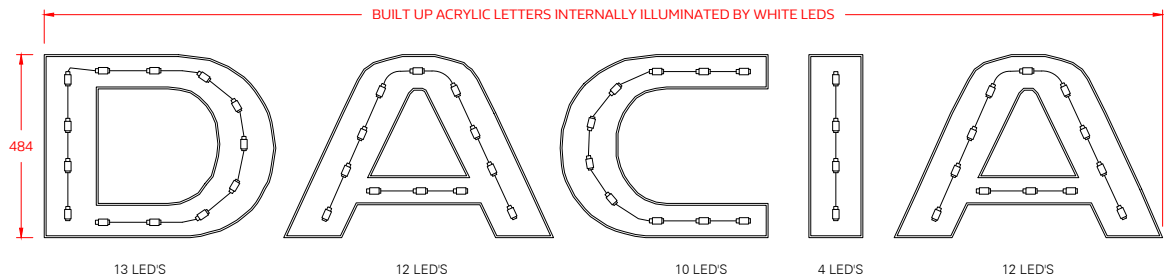
3.4 CONCLUSION

Due to the fact that the proposed gym would encourage physical exercise, improving the physical and mental health of residents, Rochdale’s policies as well as their Core Strategies are met and supported. This, combined with the employment opportunities generated by the operation of the new gym, contributes positively to meeting the objectives of Policy E2. The consideration for ethnic groups, inclusivity, and even spaces for non-gym users creates a space for the wider community. For these reasons, we believe the proposed development would make a positive contribution to Rochdale’s local economy and enhance the overall wellbeing of its residents.

4.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

4.1 PLANNING PRECEDENT - UNITS 1, 1A & 1B

The following drawings show the previously granted planning application for this unit, Pentagon Garage, Units 1, 1A & 1B for advertisement consent. (application No. 20/01322/ADV, Date of approval: 27/10/2020)



SIGNS 1A & 1B 900mm DACIA FASCIA
300 CD/M²

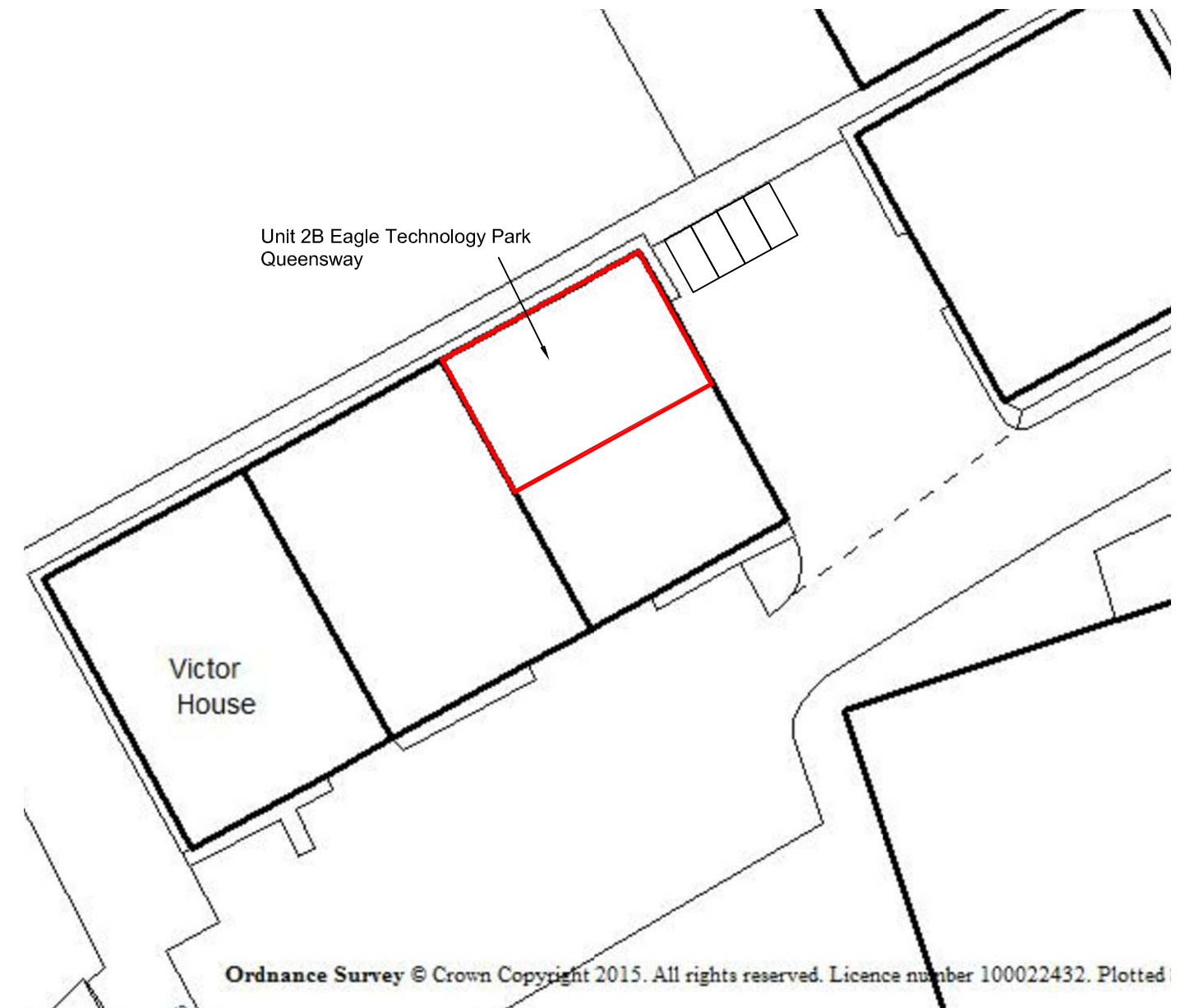
PROPOSED SIGNAGE

4.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

4.2 PLANNING PRECEDENT - UNIT 2B EAGLE TECHNOLOGY PARK

The following drawings show the previously granted planning application for Unit 2B Eagle Technology Park Queensway Rochdale OL11 1TQ.

The approved scheme is a change of use from B2 General Industrial to leisure D2 Assembly and Leisure [gymnasium](application No. 15/00243/FUL , Date of approval: 27/04/2015)



Approved existing site plan

5.0 DESIGN

5.1 USE

The property is currently categorized as Sui Generis. The proposal seeks to change the class to Class E(d) - Indoor sport, recreation or fitness.

Being an industrial retail unit and a car showroom, the building itself is predominantly a largely open plan space.

The maximum capacity at one time for phase 1 is 90 people, and will increase to 160 people in phase 2.

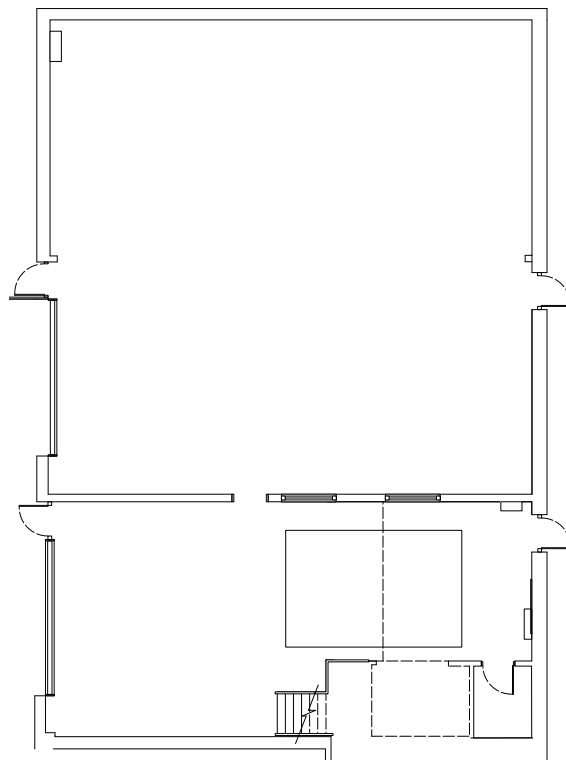
5.2 AMOUNT

There is no change to GIA in the proposal.

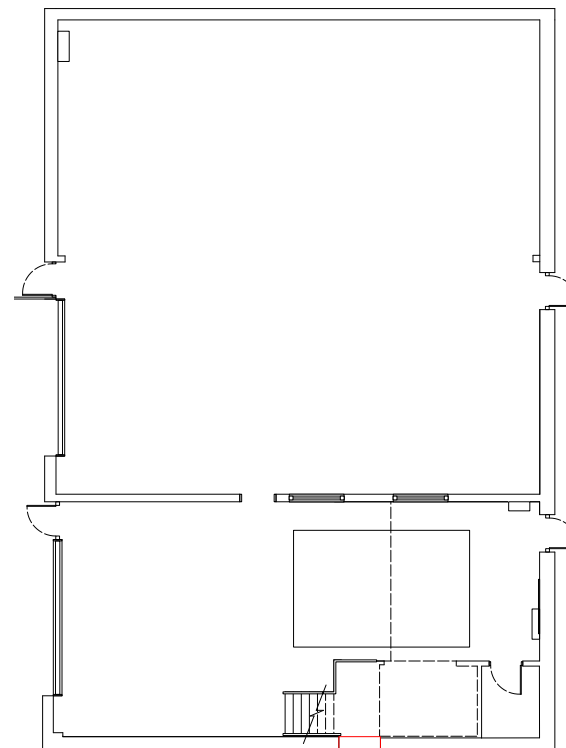
GYMBOUND

Lower Ground GA

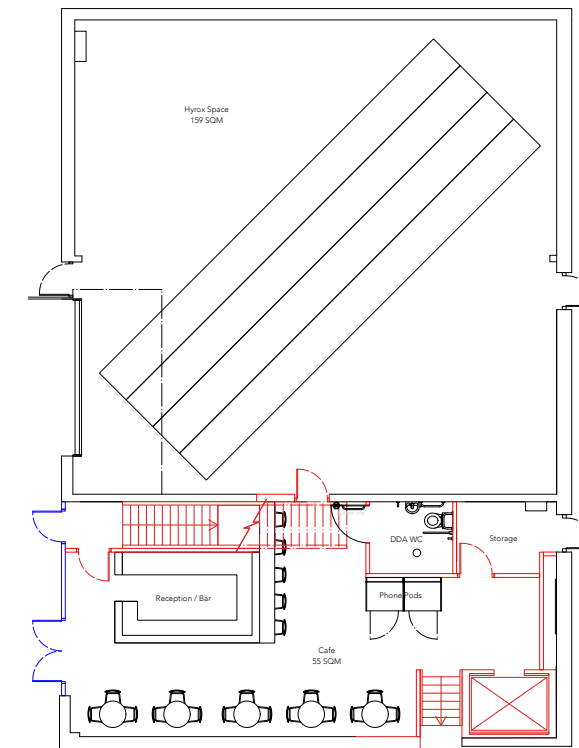
Existing Plan



Phase 1 Propsed Plan



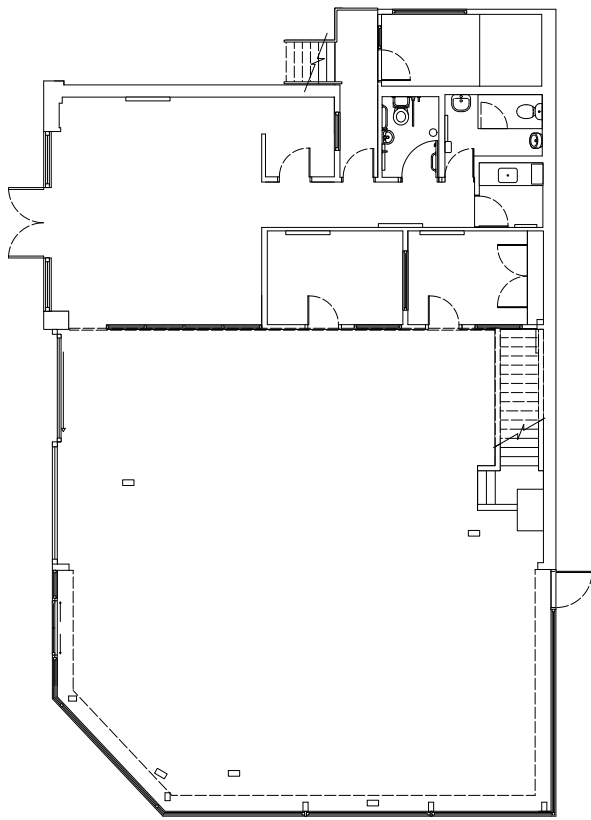
Phase 2 Proposed Plan Option A



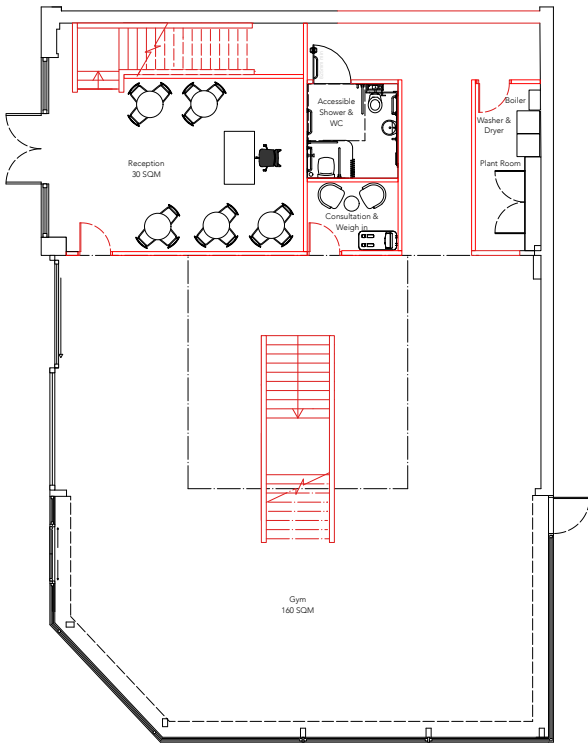
GYMBOUND

Upper Ground GA

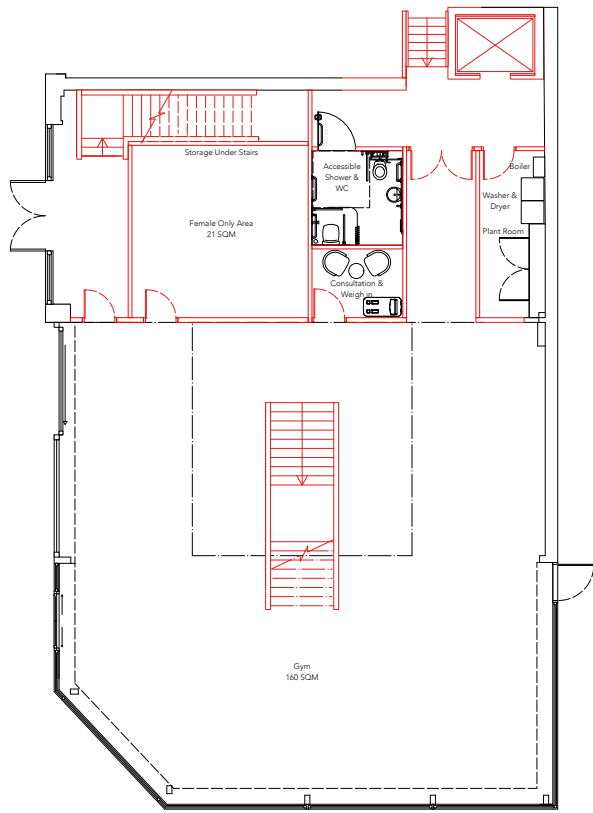
Existing Plan



Phase 1 Propsed Plan



Phase 2 Proposed Plan

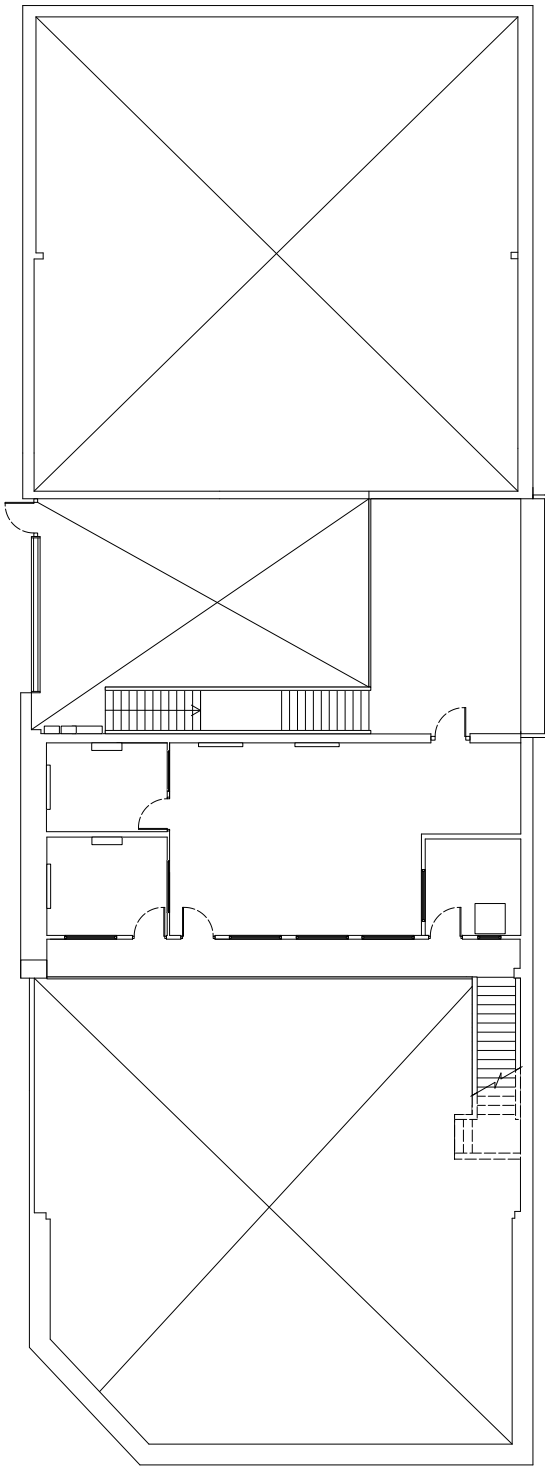


5.0 DESIGN

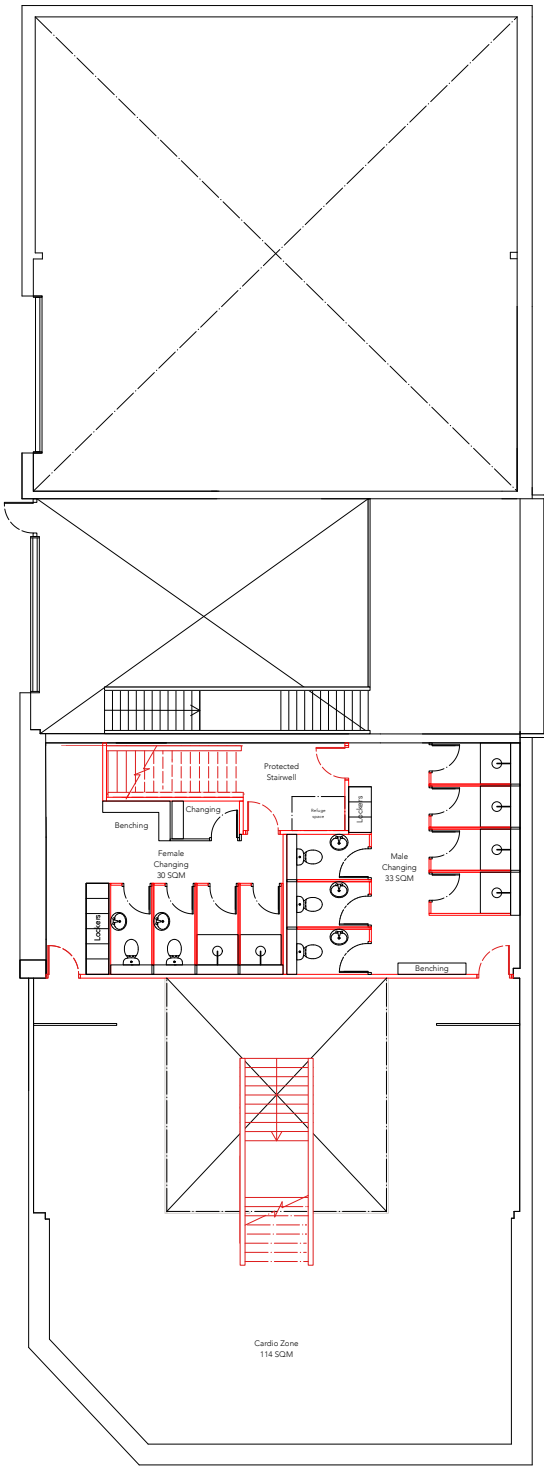
GYMBOUND

First Floor GA

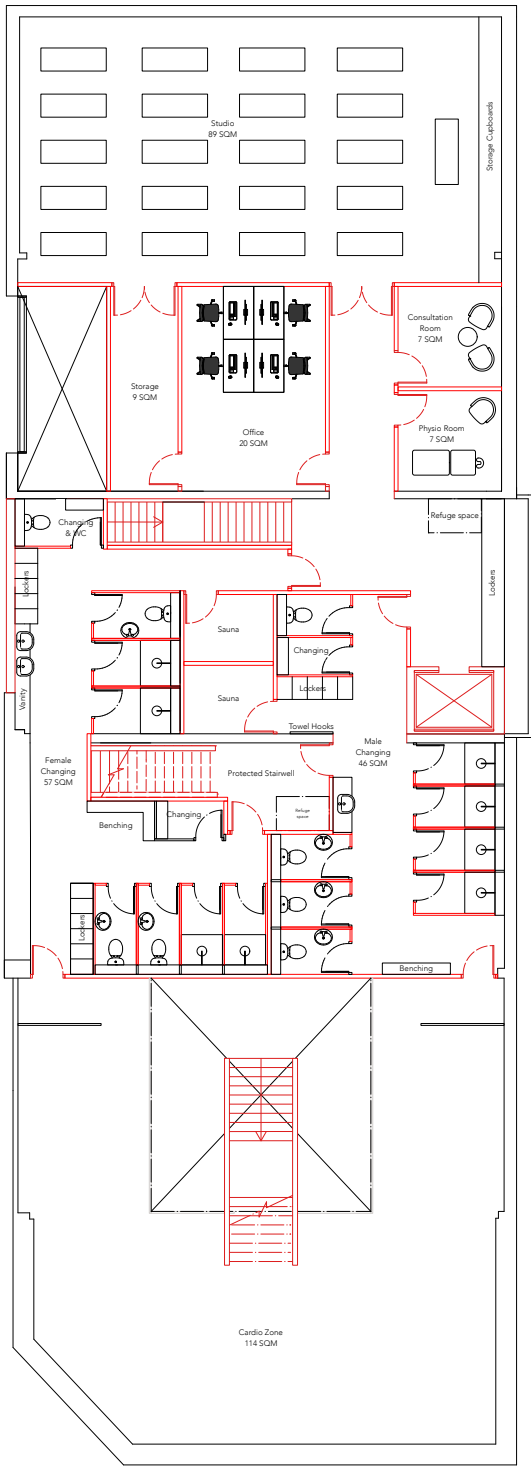
Existing Plan



Phase 1 Propsed Plan



Phase 2 Proposed Plan



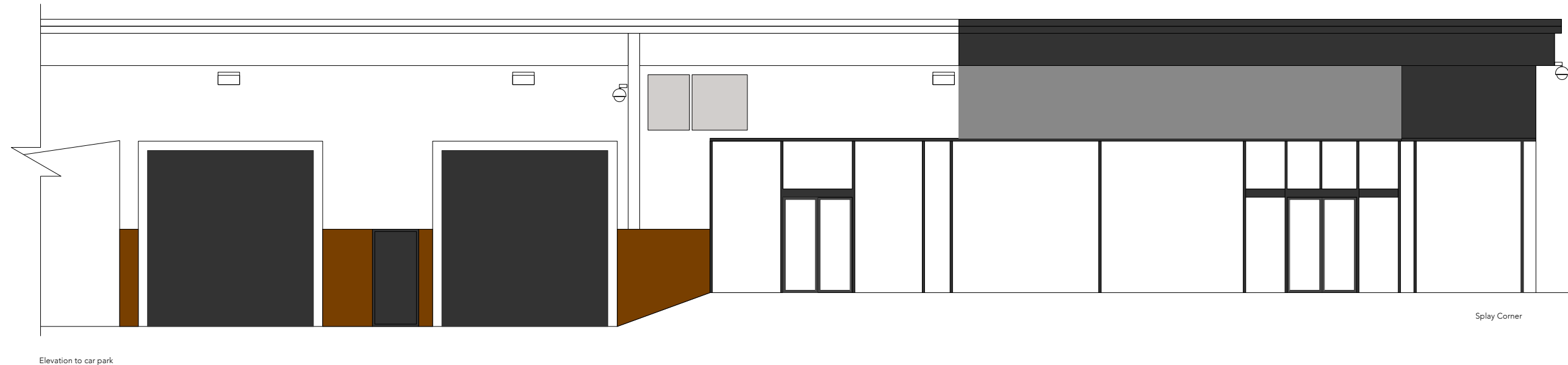
5.0 DESIGN

5.3 LAYOUT

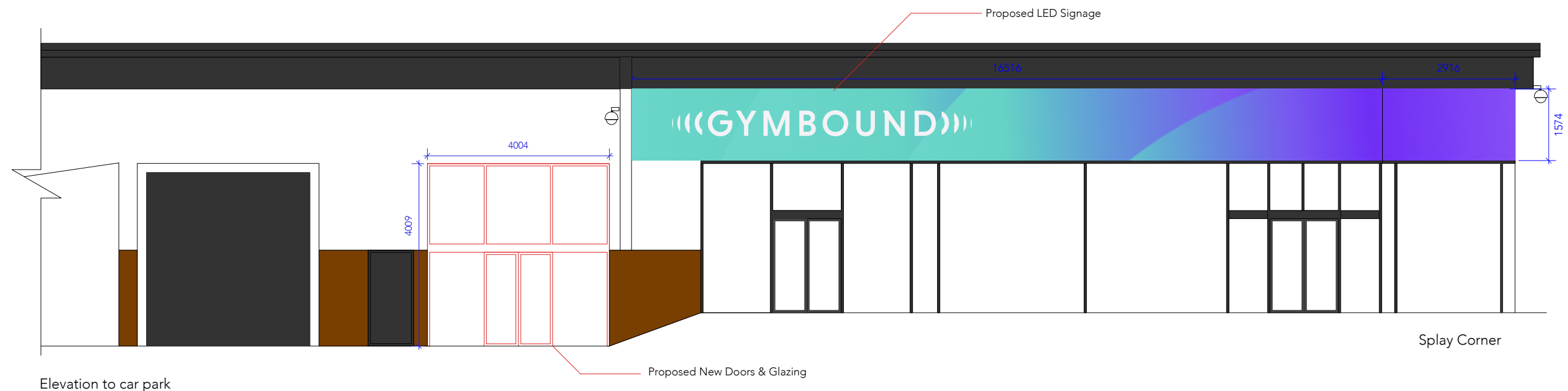
The floor plan footprint will decrease as the existing outbuilding is to be removed. However, the usable internal footprint will increase, particularly in the Phase 2 proposal. The amendments made to the layout will make it fit for the purpose of a new gym, including new toilets, changing rooms, consultation rooms, reception, cafe/bar and the gym exercise equipment space. The second phase also seeks to add additional changing rooms, toilets, saunas, physio, office and storage, studio and consultation rooms to the first floor.

5.4 SCALE

There is no change to the height, scale or massing of the existing building in the proposal.



EXISTING EAST FACING SIDE ELEVATION

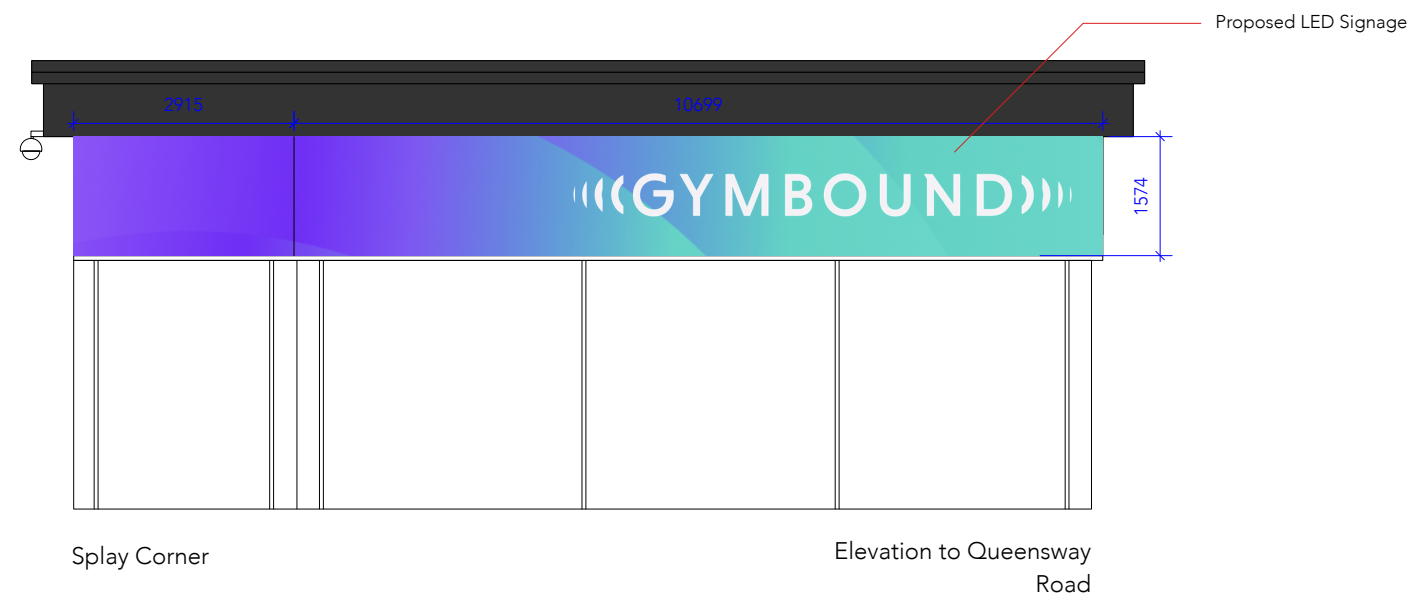


PROPOSED EAST FACING SIDE ELEVATION

5.0 DESIGN



EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION FACING QUEENSWAY ROAD



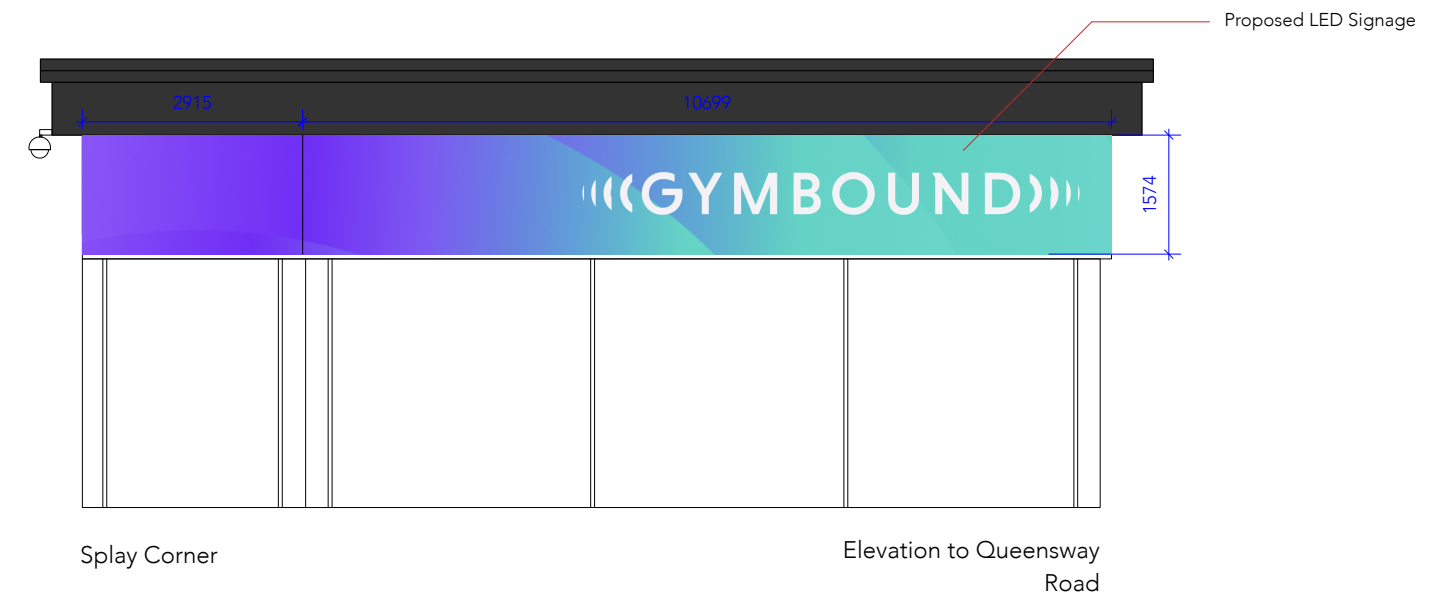
PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION FACING QUEENSWAY ROAD

6.0 APPEARANCE & SIGNAGE DESIGN

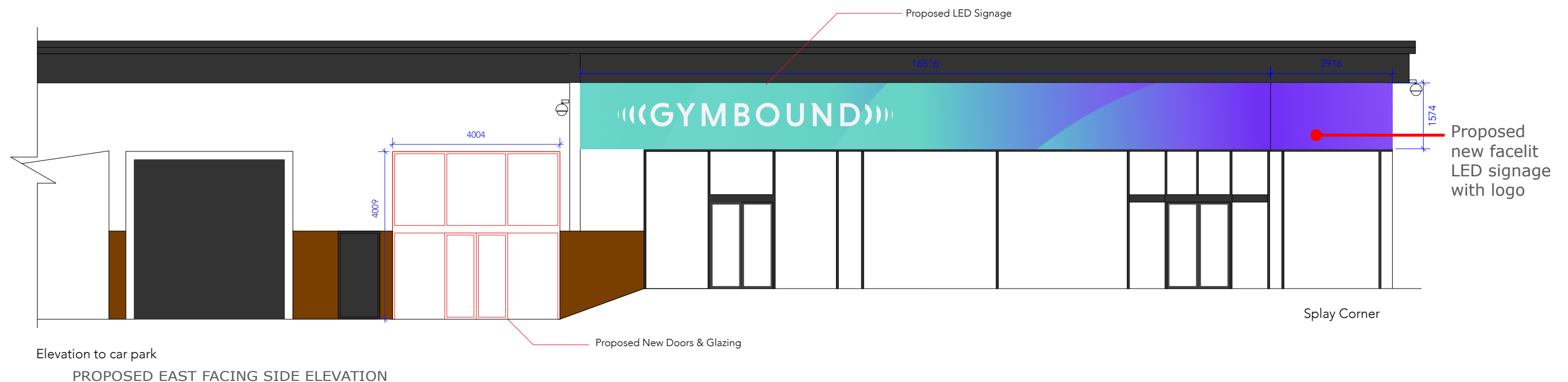
The proposed facades are predominantly as existing, but with the addition of new signage, indicating the name and logo of the gym, and a new door to the side elevation.

The proposal includes 1574mm tall signage on the front facade showing the logo of the gym "Gymbound" with a coloured background and 1574mm tall signage on the side elevation facing the car parking.

The proposed lettering will be facelit LED signage. The proposed material for the rectangular logo signs is acrylic or aluminium, also fixed with mechanical fixings



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION FACING QUEENSWAY ROAD



7.0 ACCESS

7.1 VEHICLE ACCESS

The vehicular access will remain as existing. The pedestrian access also remains the same.

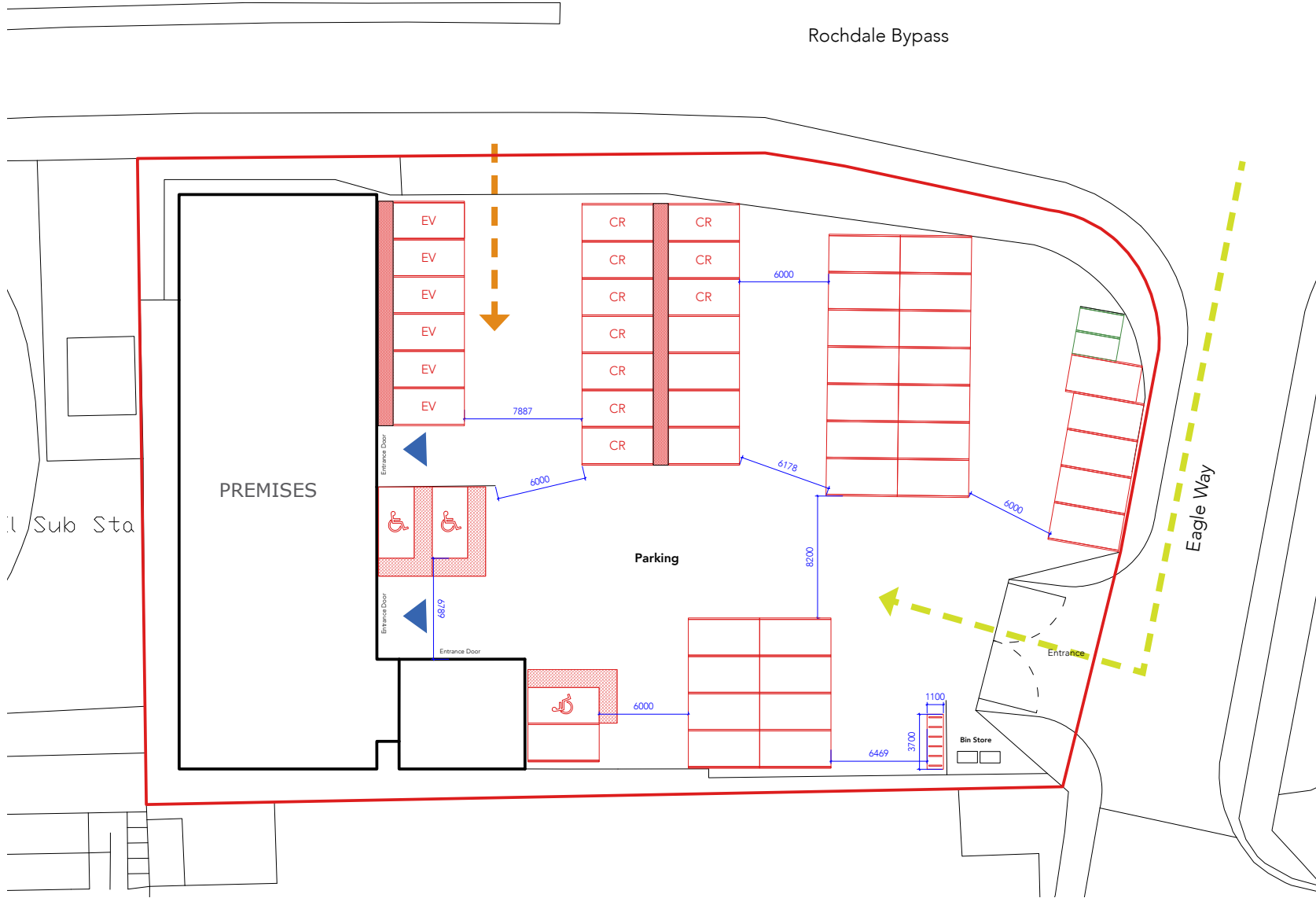
New parking spaces are to be added, consisting of 48 parking bays, of which 10 spaces have cable routes for future electric car charging points and 6 have EV charging points. In addition to these 48 spaces, there are 3 disabled parking spaces and 2 motorbike parking spaces.

A cycle park has also been added here, with a capacity of 12 bicycles, encouraging the use of green transportation and exercise to get to and from the site.

7.2 INCLUSIVE ACCESS

The main access is to remain as existing. The access into the building is non-stepped.

The car park has 3 disabled parking spaces located next to the entrance.



PROPOSED ACCESS

KEY

MAIN ACCESS

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO SITE

CAR ACCESS TO SITE

Key:

Site Boundary

Existing Building

EV 6 No. Electric Vehicle Charge Point

CR 10 No. Cable Route for future electric car charge points

48 No. Standard Parking Bays

3 No. Accessible Parking Bays

2 No. Motorcycle Parking

1m Clearance for EV Charge Points

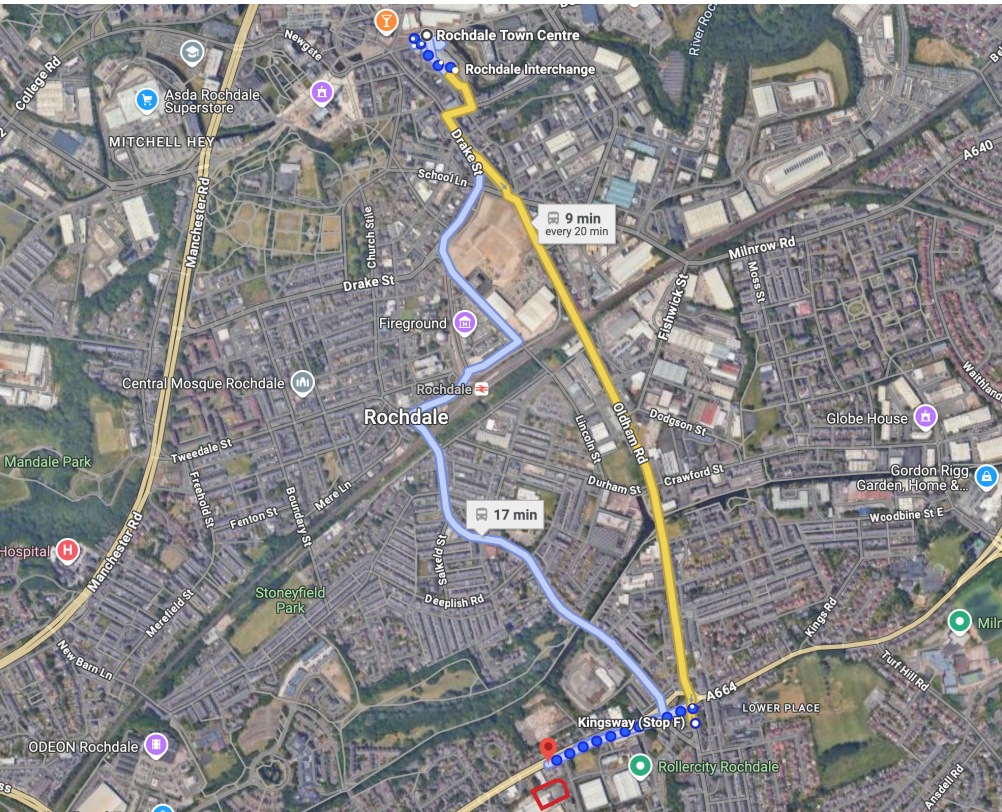
Bike Shed Indicative Image, 12 No. Bikes

7.3 TRANSPORTING LINKS

The site is located beside the Rochdale bypass, allowing for easy car access to the site.
There is a bus stop on either side of the road on Queensway, just a few metres away from the premises, as indicated below.



Site location map showing nearby bus stops



Site location map showing bus route from the town centre to the proposed gym

8.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Throughout this document we have proven that the proposal for change of use will enhance the existing building, enhance the wellbeing of Rochdale residents, create employment opportunities, support Rochdale’s Core Strategies and not cause any significant harm to the surroundings and context.

Our vision is to create a vibrant space that will attract fitness enthusiasts where they can train and change/shower in comfort.

The proposed gym, Gymbound, was created to give a different kind of choice: an inclusive gym and studio with a wide range of expertise and facilities the full length of fitness and wellbeing spectrum with a 360 approach to fitness and wellness. Absolutely everyone can find what they need to challenge themselves - and reset - the way they want to. Just as importantly, the social spaces and choice of mindful classes and groups mean you can wind down and reboot with self-care too, and leave feeling ready for life.

The dimensions and overall footprint of the design have been carefully considered to remain modest, prioritising functionality while minimizing the impact on the surrounding setting. The alterations to the existing premises have been thoughtfully planned to be as unobtrusive as possible.

Based on these considerations, we are confident that this scheme aligns well with planning guidelines and merits a favourable decision on the planning permission.