



Bowlee Football & Community Welbeing Hub.

Design and Access Statement

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1.0 Introduction.

1.1 Executive Summary.

This document has been prepared by Pozzoni Architects on behalf of Rochdale Borough Council and Rochdale Association Football Club.

The purpose of this document is to accompany the full planning application for a new build, Community Wellbeing Hub. See Annex A for RAFC Bowlee-Page: 31

This report reflects the project's development up to RIBA Stage 3. The document outlines the current brief requirements and outlines the overall concept design and further developed design.



2.0 Existing Condition .

2.1 Site.



Google Maps, 2026. Bowlee Car Park Globe View, Not to scale.

2.2 Existing Site Facilities.

Bowlee Community Park

The park is set within 40 hectares of land on the western edge of the town of Middleton, part of Rochdale District, and Greater Manchester beyond. The community park is a former RAF barrage balloon centre, and is now a home for local community sport, activity and wellbeing.

The park offers the local community and visitors a place to participate in a number of activities, from informal orienteering to 5aside and 7aside football. The site is a very popular location for amblers and dog-walkers. At the heart of the site is a well-used community centre, "bowlee Community organisation CIC", children's play area and associated car parking. The park links into the wider area with numerous trails, cycle routes and paths, and is home to a very popular Car Boot Sale, enjoyed by the local community and visitors alike.

Community Health & Wellbeing Hub

Located centrally within the park, the existing community centre is a well-used asset for the community of Bowlee, with many local groups and teams enjoying the facilities on offer. The existing centre contains multi-use spaces facilitating local engagement, along with toilet and changing facilities for the adjacent sports pitches.

The centre benefits from a dedicated children's play area with a humble multi-use play frame and perimeter fence, allowing young children to play safely.

The Community Centre also benefits from adjacent free parking, accessed off Heywood Old Road.

RAFC Bowlee

After being promoted to League Two, Rochdale AFC are looking to establish a new training ground and Clubhouse facility on the site. The new clubhouse will contain offices, wellbeing, recovery and social spaces, along with changing facilities for home and away teams. The new state of the art clubhouse will also contain a large community function space with views across the facilities and park beyond.

2.3 Current Leisure Provision.

Bowlee Community Park

The park is set within 40 hectares of land on the western edge of the town of Middleton, part of Rochdale District, and Greater Manchester beyond. The community park is a former RAF barrage balloon centre, and is now a home for local community sport, activity and wellbeing.

The park offers the local community and visitors a place to participate in a number of activities, from informal orienteering to 5aside and 7aside football. The site is a very popular location for amblers and dog-walkers. At the heart of the site is a well-used community centre, children’s play area and associated car parking. The park links into the wider area with numerous trails, cycle routes and paths, and is home to a very popular Car Boot Sale, enjoyed by the local community and visitors alike.

Community Health & Wellbeing Hub

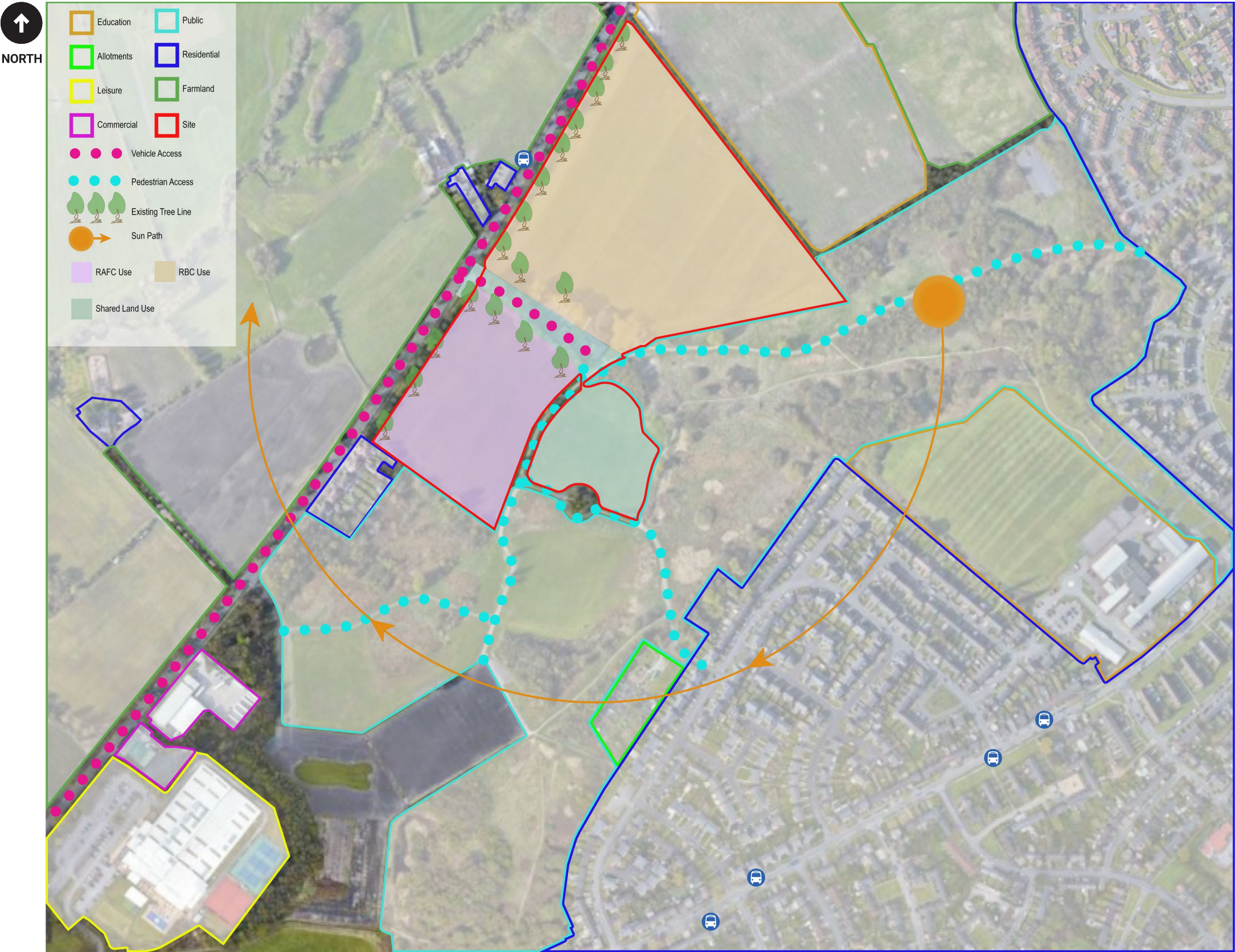
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Not to scale.



2.4 Existing Plan.



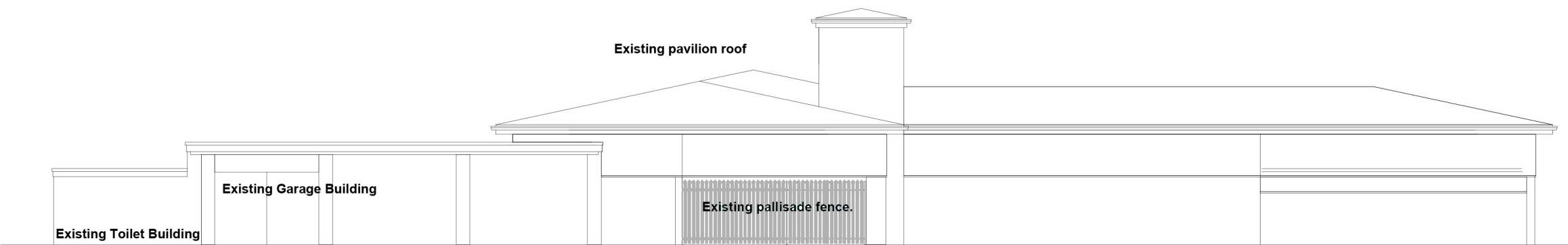
GROUND FLOOR PLAN

BOWLEE CHANGING ROOMS

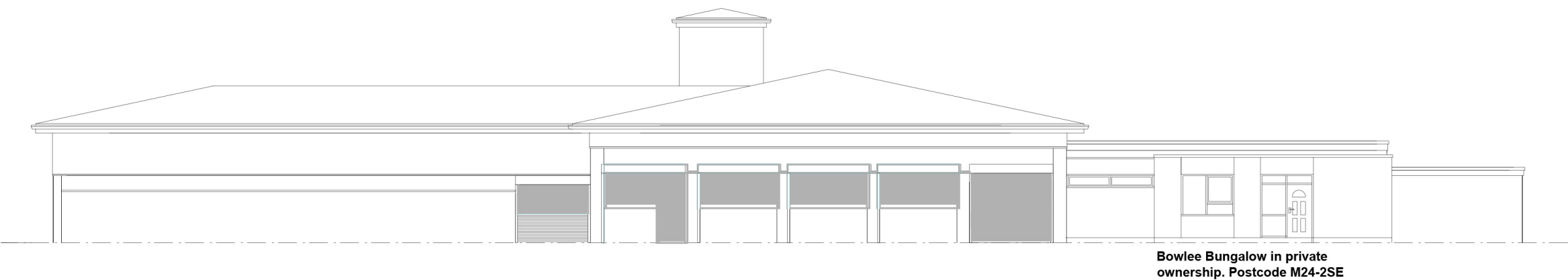
Pitch 01 96m x 60m	Pitch 04 not in use
Pitch 02 89m x 60m	Pitch 06 not in use
Pitch 03 95m x 60m	Pitch 07 not in use
Pitch 05 96m x 60m	

Not to scale.

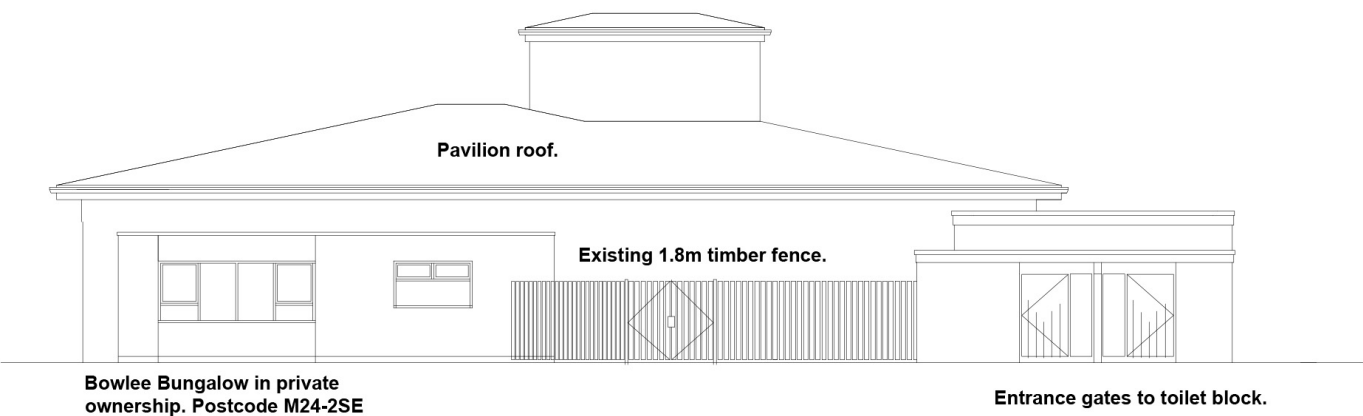
2.5 Existing Elevations.



EXISTING SOUTH EAST ELEVATION



EXISTING FRONT - NORTH WEST ELEVATION



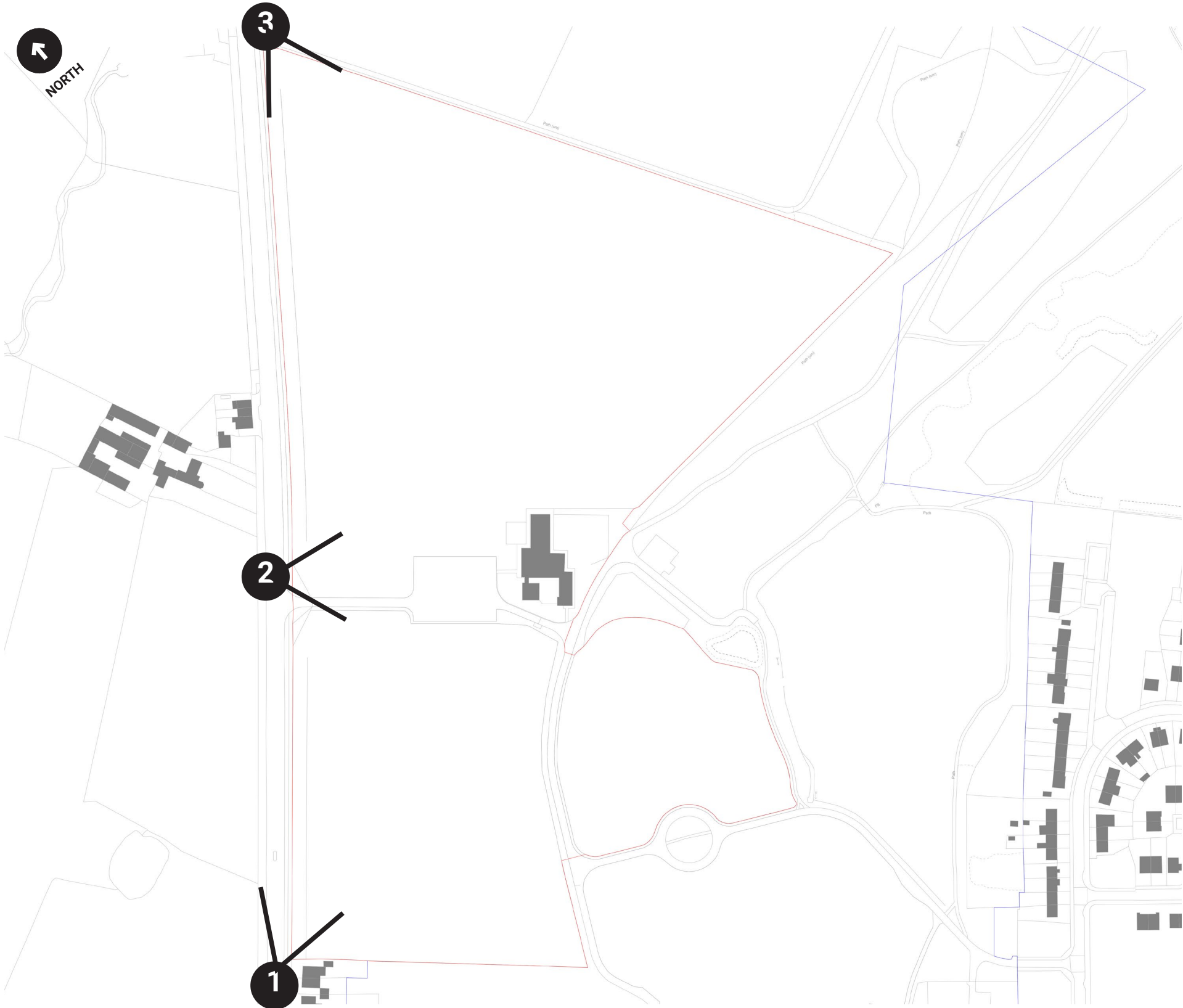
EXISTING SOUTH WEST ELEVATION

Not to scale.

2.6 Environment & Public Realm.



2.7 Site Context Photos.



Existing site / Not to scale



1 View looking east across site

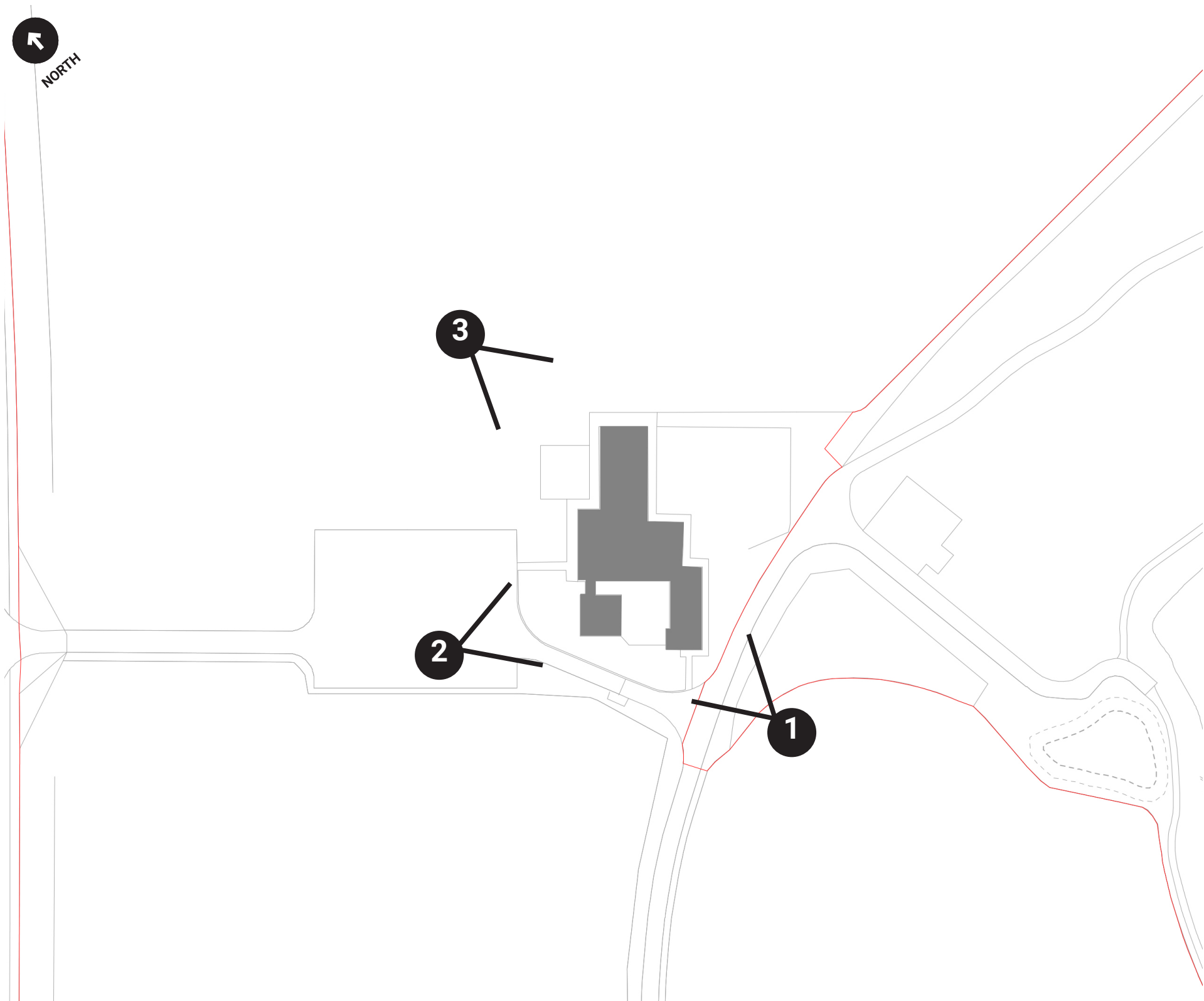


2 View looking south-east across site from site entrance



3 View looking south across site

2.8 Existing community Hub.



Existing site plan / Not to scale



1 Aerial View from Community Park looking north



2 Aerial View from Community Park looking east



3 Aerial View from Community Park looking south

3.0 Design Principles & Brief Development

3.1 Brief.

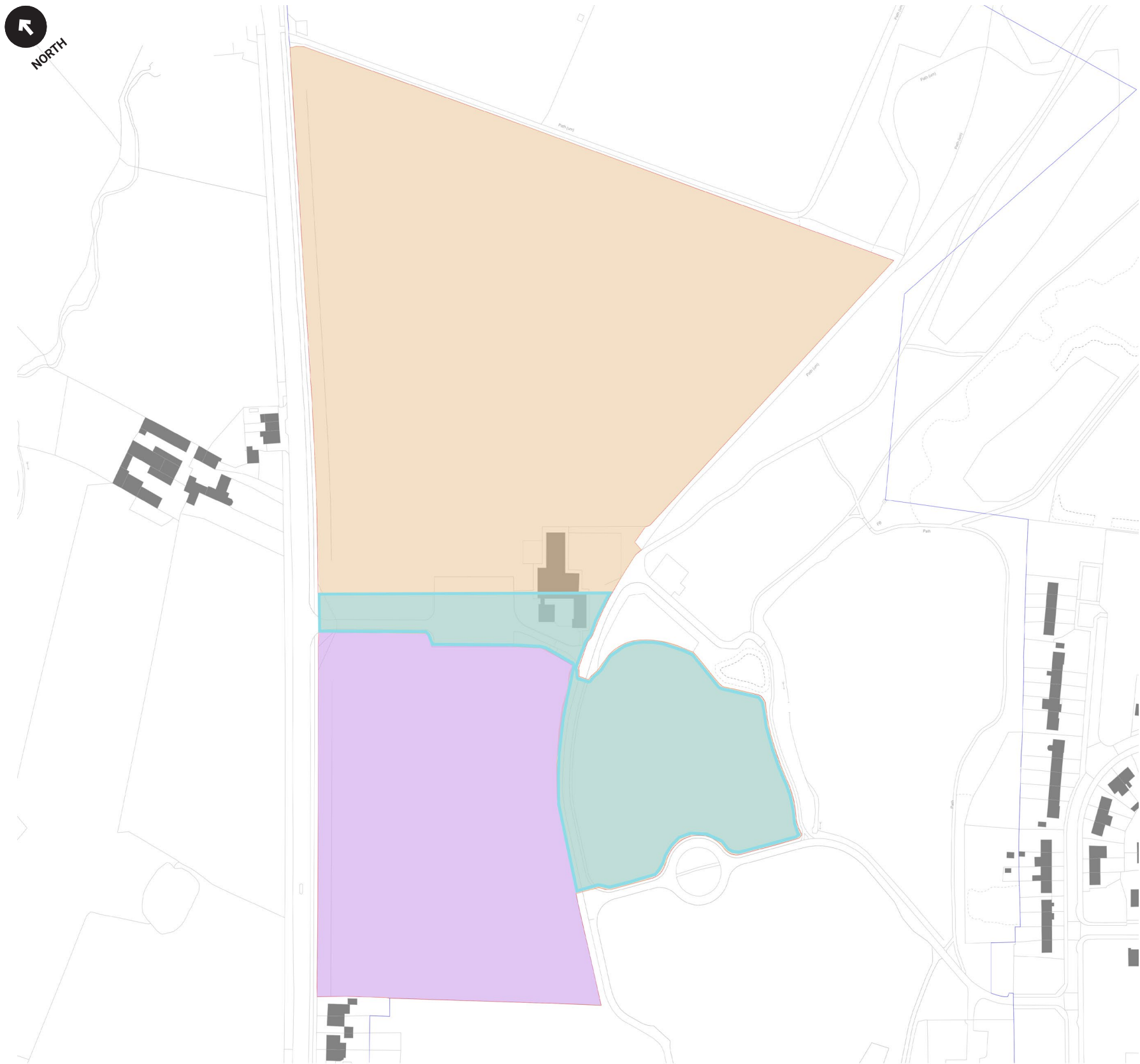
As an investment into the Borough and the local community of Bowlee, Rochdale Borough Council and Rochdale AFC are aiming to establish the site as a wellbeing and community-based activity centre. Centred around local facilities and supporting the community, the site looks to bring together training for RAFC and improved activity space on this well-established site.

The current facilities do a good job to support the community but do suffer from water logging of pitches and tired changing spaces. The existing community centre itself acts as a home for many local clubs and services. The project looks to build upon this by increasing the facilities on offer and providing a purpose-built hub for these much-needed services.

The site will increase the number and quality of sports pitches available for community use, while also offering facilities for a wider variety of uses. The project also looks to support the local, recently promoted, professional football team by providing a new training and clubhouse venue, allowing the local community to see their local team and also train along side them.

-  RAFC use
-  RBC use
-  Shared land use

Not to scale



3.2 Graphic Brief.

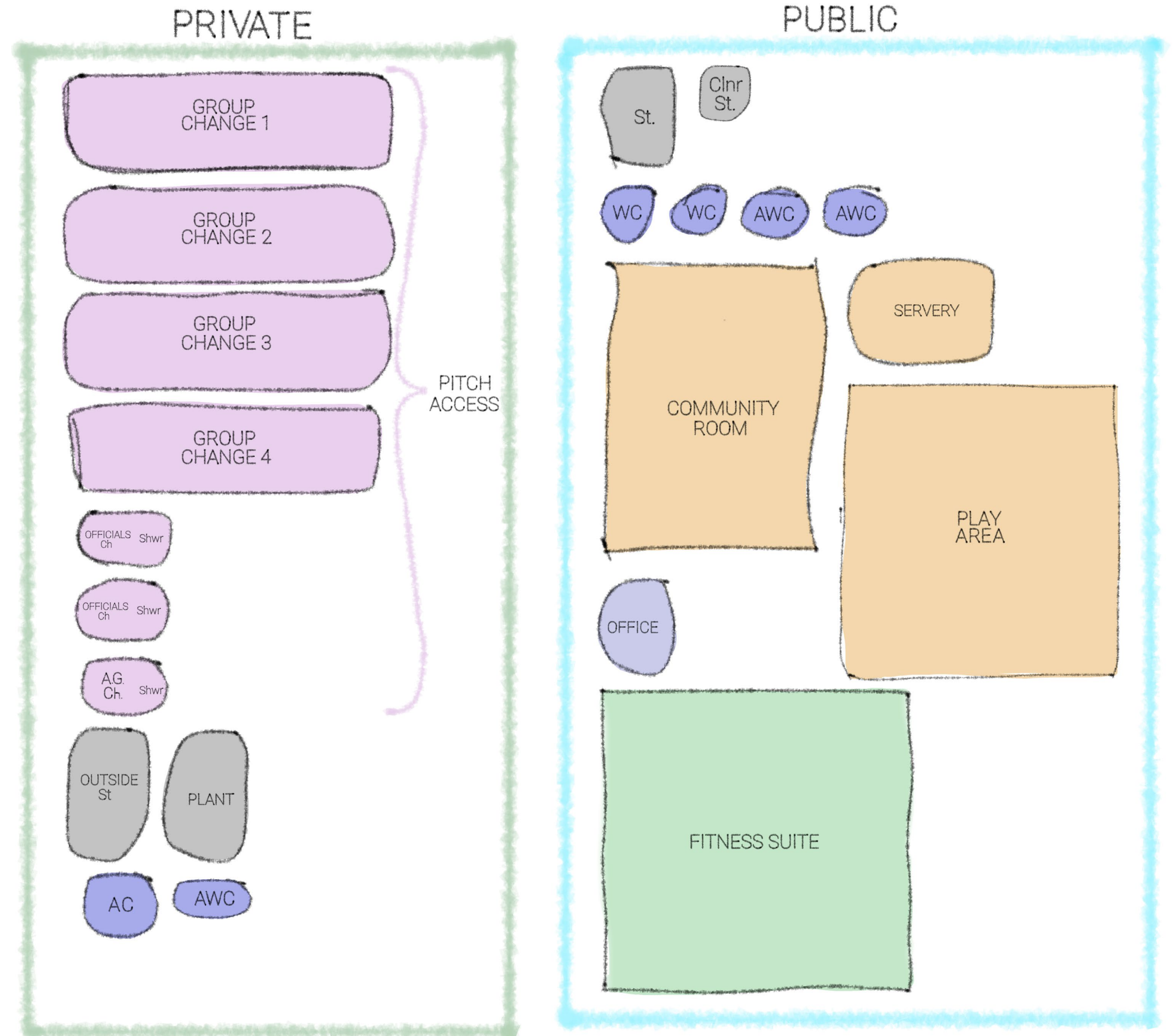
Bowlee Community Park

- Demolition of existing community building and associated car park, fencelines and intersecting pathways.
- Create 2no. full size training pitches for use by RAFC (1no.
- 3G pitch + 1no grass pitch). Create 4no. full size pitches (2no.3G pitches + 2no. grass pitches)
- 1no. grass training pitch for use by RBC.
- Create new community health and wellbeing hub building with associated setting.
- Create RAFC Clubhouse facilities with associated setting.
- Create shared car parking with associated cycle parking.
- Create appropriate wider landscaped setting to join allow the new development to sit within the wider community park.

Community Health & Wellbeing Hub

Create a wellbeing community hub facility comprising:

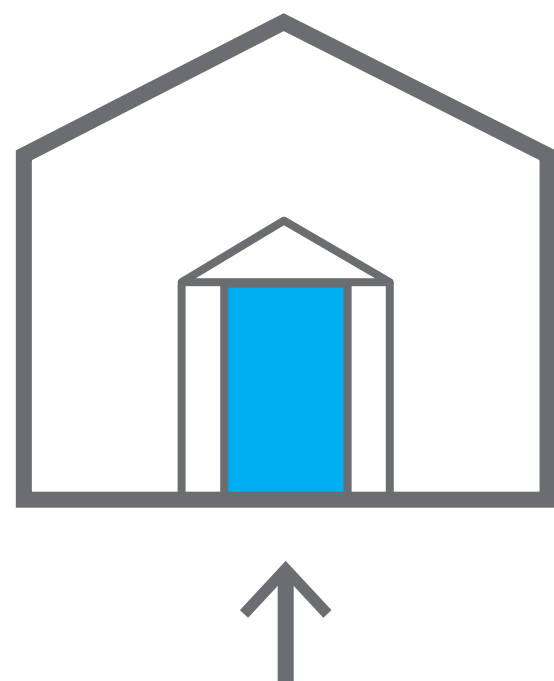
- community room with associated servery, toilets and storage
- fitness suite
- 4no. team change rooms
- 2no. officials change rooms
- WC facilities
- external store
- Allow for access from adjacent shared car parking facility and play area.
- Create secure line between publicly accessible car parking facilities and sports pitches.



*Not to scale / Representation of areas are indicative only

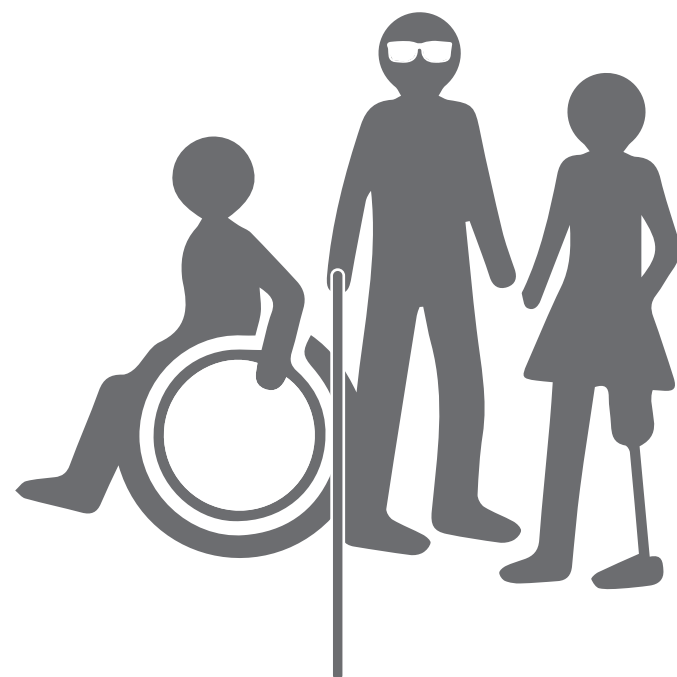
Bowlee Football & Community Wellbeing Hub | Design & Access Statement | Community Wellbeing Hub

3.3 Strategic Design Principles.



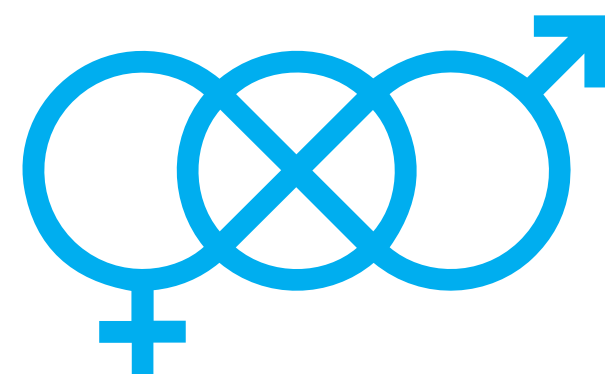
Prominent Entrance

Highly legible sense of arrival, easily to navigate route to entrance and into building. Highly visible for natural surveillance. High visibility from site entrance to welcome guests.



Accessibility

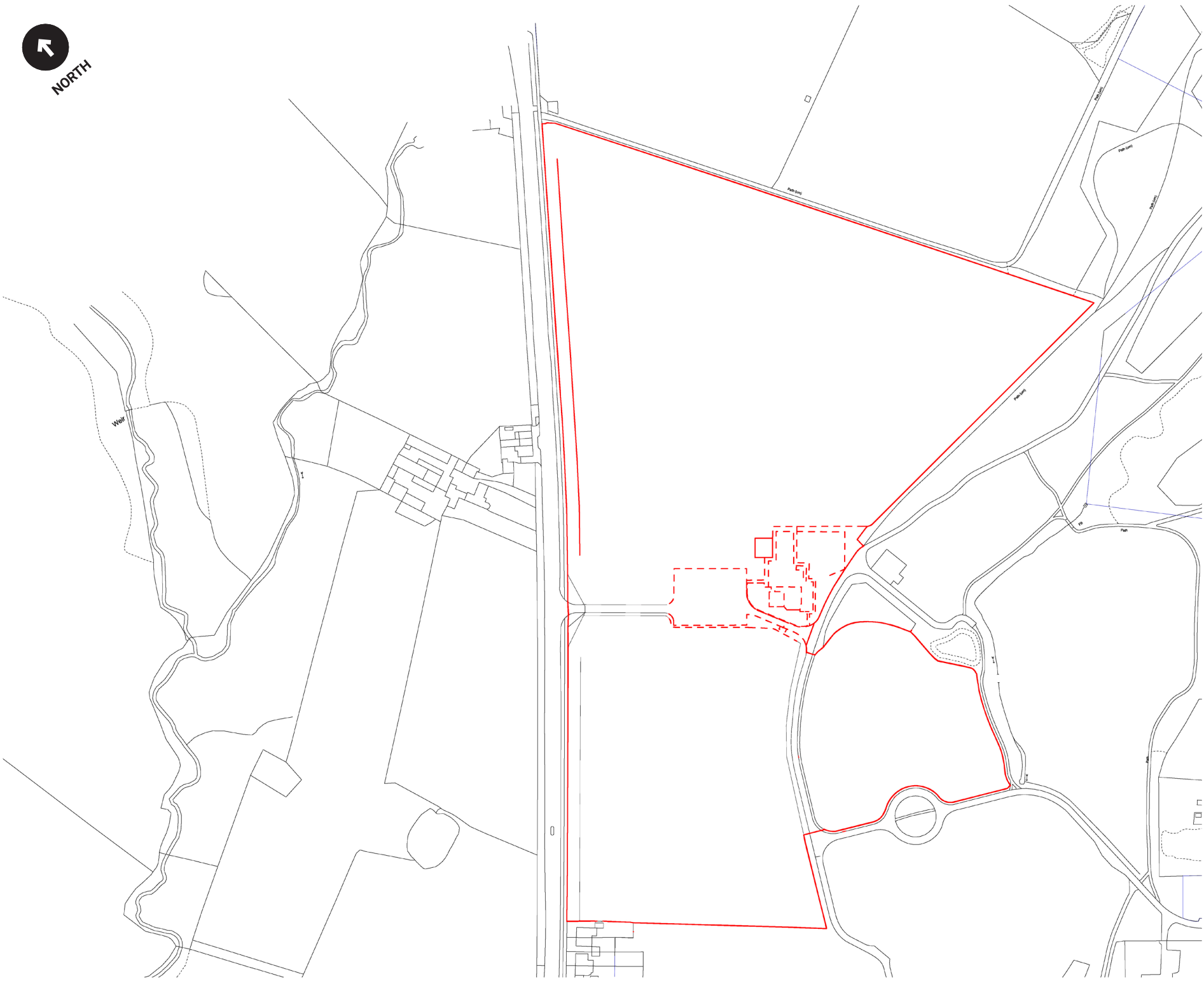
Equality of access and opportunity for all within the building. Provision of Disabled Parking and safe, accessible route to building. Ease of access throughout the building, with appropriate levels of accessible changing and WC facilities to increase participation within all corners of the community.



Integration

Gender neutral changing opportunities within the changing village, and gender neutral WCs in the cafe area will increase equality of opportunity within the scheme, enabling all members of the community to feel comfortable and included.

3.4 Site Demolition.



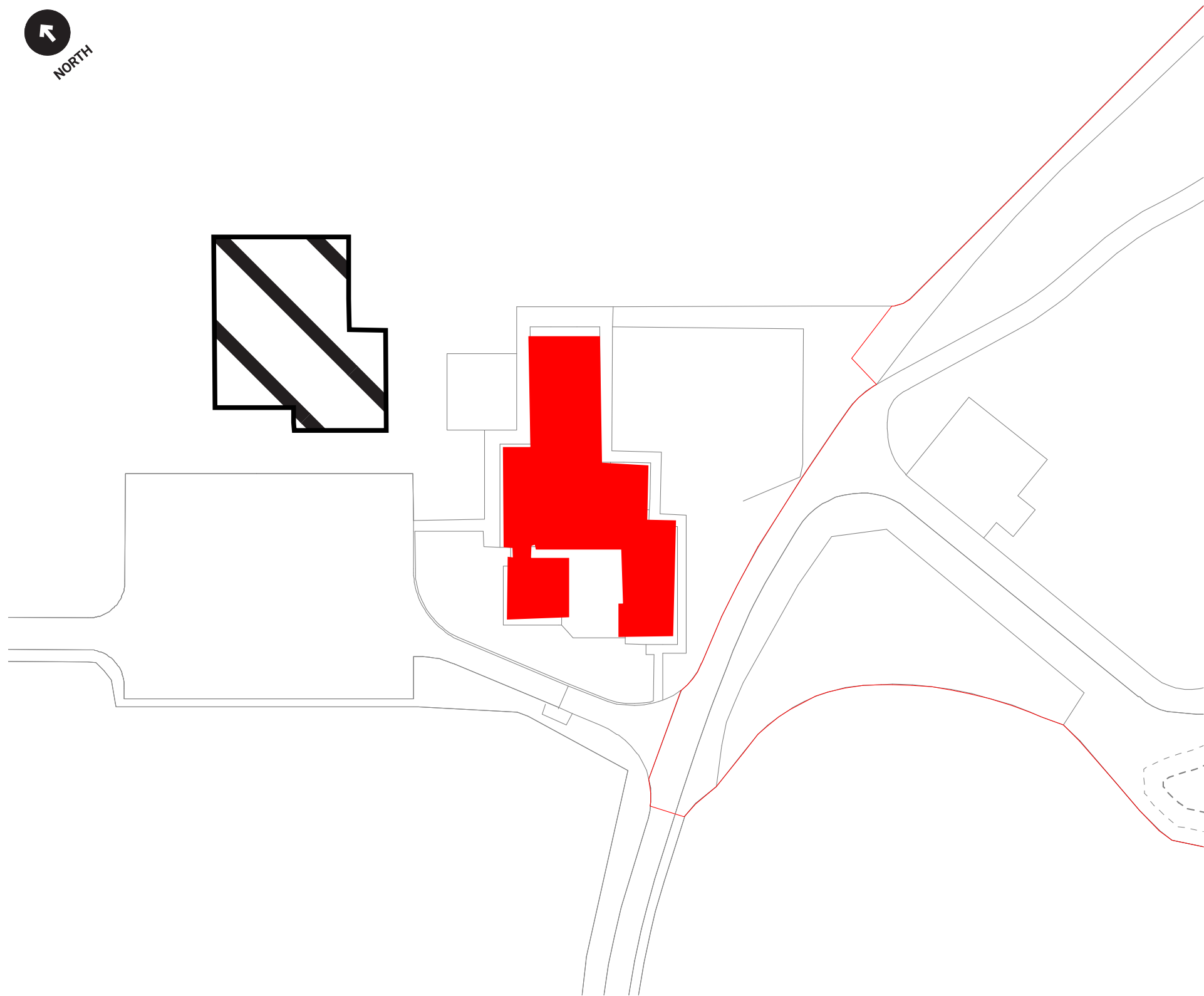
Existing site plan / Not to scale

Proposed Demolition

Prior to our engagement on the project, a review was undertaken by Rochdale Borough Council and the decision was made to demolish the existing community building on the site and invest in a new community wellbeing hub and new RAFC Clubhouse with extensive playing pitches and training facilities. The review found that the retention of the existing buildings would restrict the future use of the site and it's current condition offered limited opportunity to fulfil the wider brief.

3.5 Community Hub Demolition.

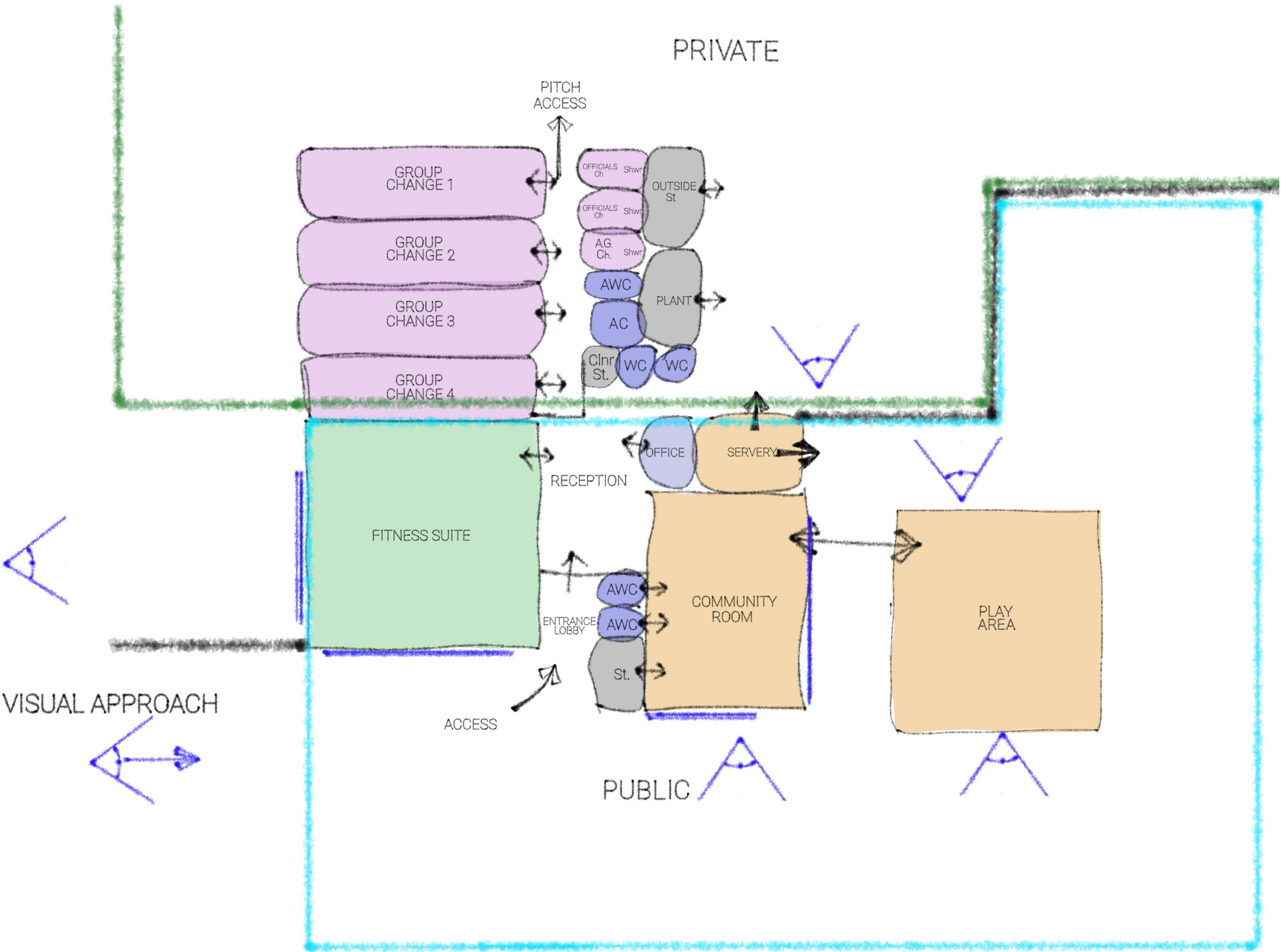
- Demolition of the existing community building, associated parking and surrounding landscape features.
- New build Community Wellbeing Hub and associated landscaped setting.



-  Proposed Community Wellbeing Hub
-  Demolition of Existing
-  Site Boundary

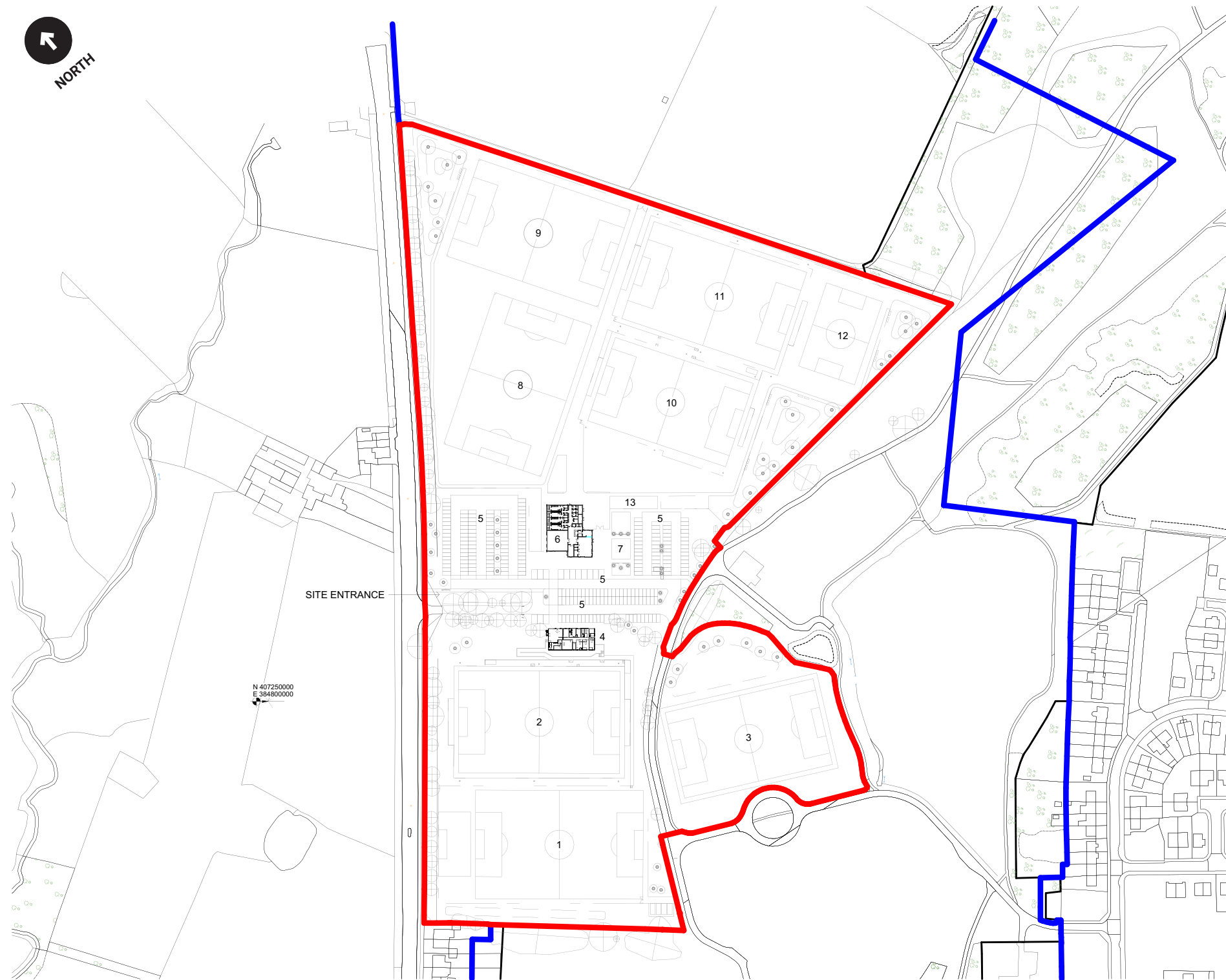
Not to scale

3.6 Graphic Plan.



4.0 The Proposal .

4.1 Proposed Site Plan.



Siting the facilities

Using guidance documentation from the associated governing bodies and the extensive knowledge and experience of the design team, the project has looked to build upon the community parks inherent qualities to accommodate the extensive brief.

The existing site entrance and infrastructure lends itself to retaining building mass at it's centre. Accessed off Heywood Old Road, parking is then accommodated adjacent to the two buildings.

The remaining land available to the north and south of this central service corridor, is split into private RAFC team training facilities to the south and publicly accessible playing and training spaces to the north.

An existing pitch to the east gives opportunity to share facilities between professional and aspiring athletes. The project aspires to use the facilities contained within it in such a way that the users and local community consider it to be an extension to the surround community park.

To be read in conjunction with other designers information.

Proposed site plan / Not to scale

4.2 Proposed Ground Floor Plan.

Bowlee Community Wellbeing Hub.

The plan has been designed to highlight the building’s function from the outside for maximum active frontage and impact. The entrance is clearly defined with a covered walkway, whilst the fitness suite and café / community rooms are clearly visible from the street, car park and play areas via large floor to ceiling glazing.

A generous draft lobby leads to a central reception area, from which point visitors can pivot towards all key spaces. Changing areas and fitness suite users are looked over by reception for safety and security (each door with access control), whilst all guests have access to the pitches and café / community spaces and public toilets.

The kitchen has three service points: café, spectator servery (behind the secure line) and play area server (in front of the secure line), allowing for maximum income generation. On quieter days, reception staff can have access to the kitchen via the office.

The fitness suite is 160sq.m in size and can accommodate up to 40 stations. The Client has accepted a derogation of 1 person per 4 sq.m instead of the Sport England Standard of 1 per 5sq.m. The fitness suite is glazed on 2 sides externally and internally from the reception area.



Not to scale.

4.3 Proposed Roof Plan.

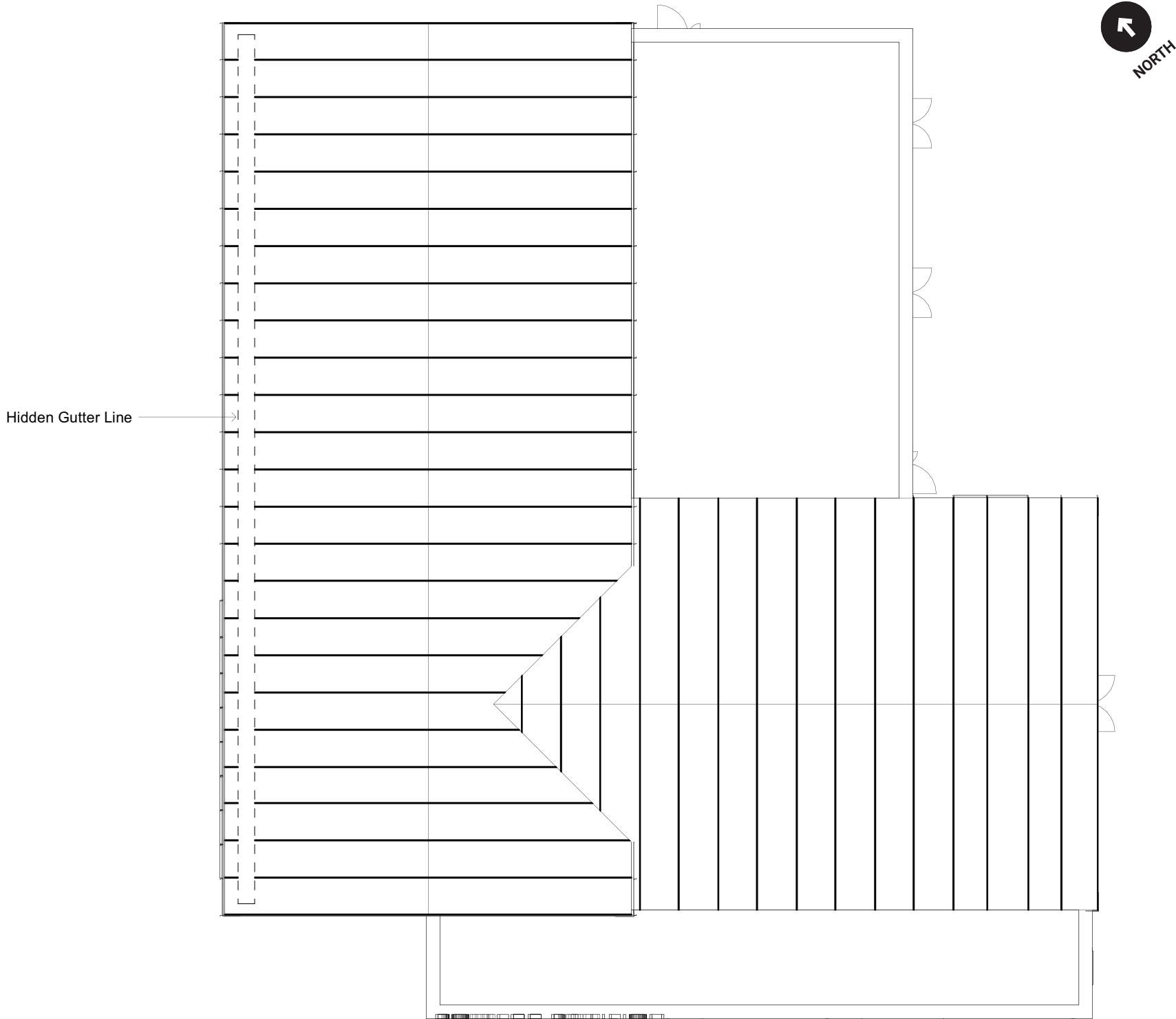
Bowlee Community Wellbeing Hub. - cont.

Changing facilities are comprised of 4No. changing rooms, 2No officials changing spaces and an all gender changing room, plus a fully accessible changing room and separate additional accessible toilet.

Each changing room provides 18 seats (including 2No. private changing cubicles), 4No. showers, vanity area and 1No. accessible toilet. An additional WC is also provided directly outside of each changing room, allowing players to use facilities without walking in to the changing area.

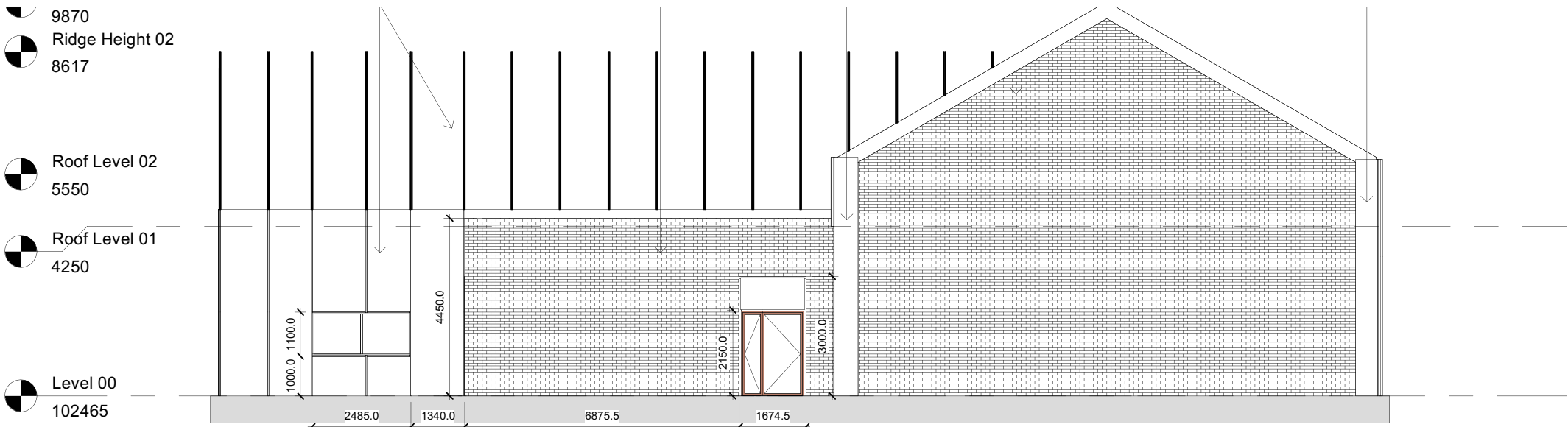
Lockers have been provided within the central communal corridor, thus freeing up changing rooms during match times for greater flexibility and usage.

An externally, accessed plant and store room completes the design.

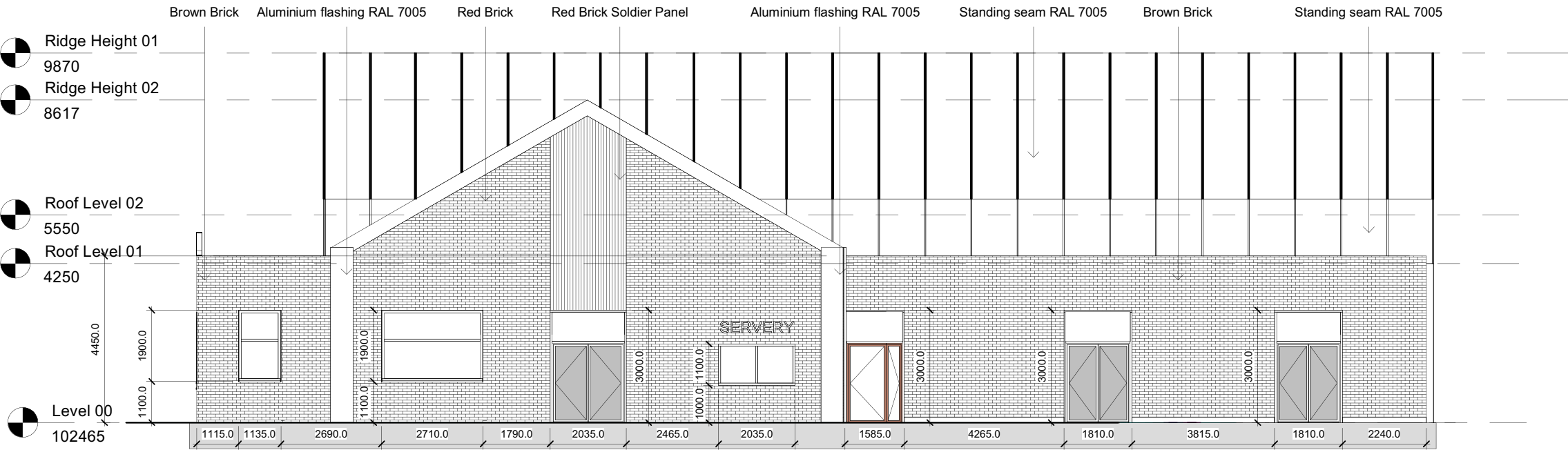


Not to scale.

4.4 Proposed Elevations.

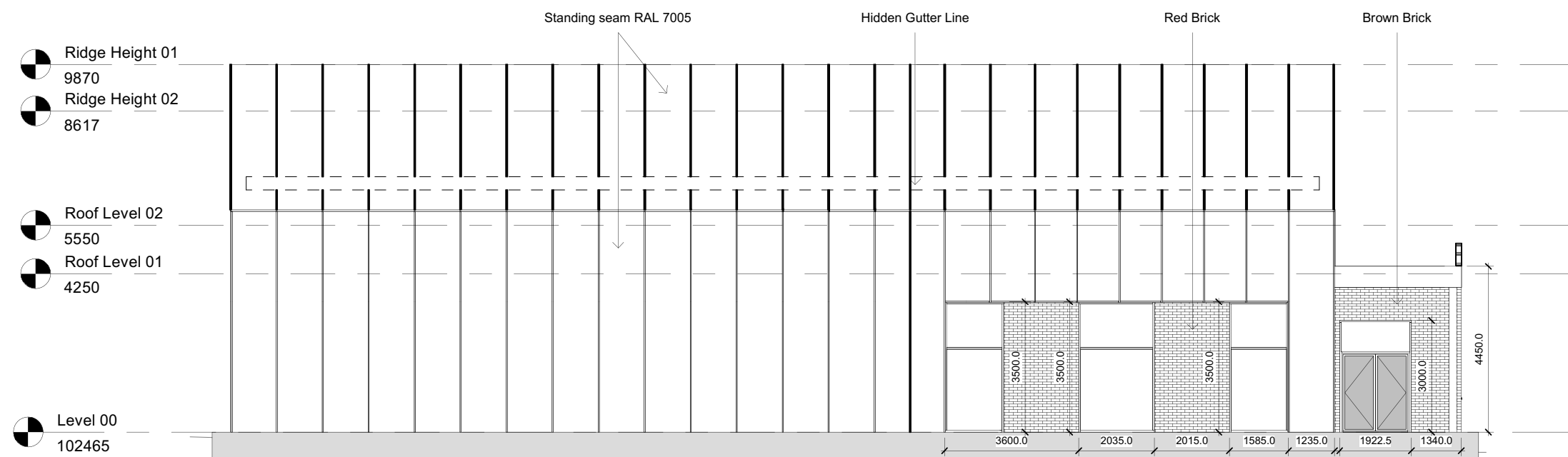
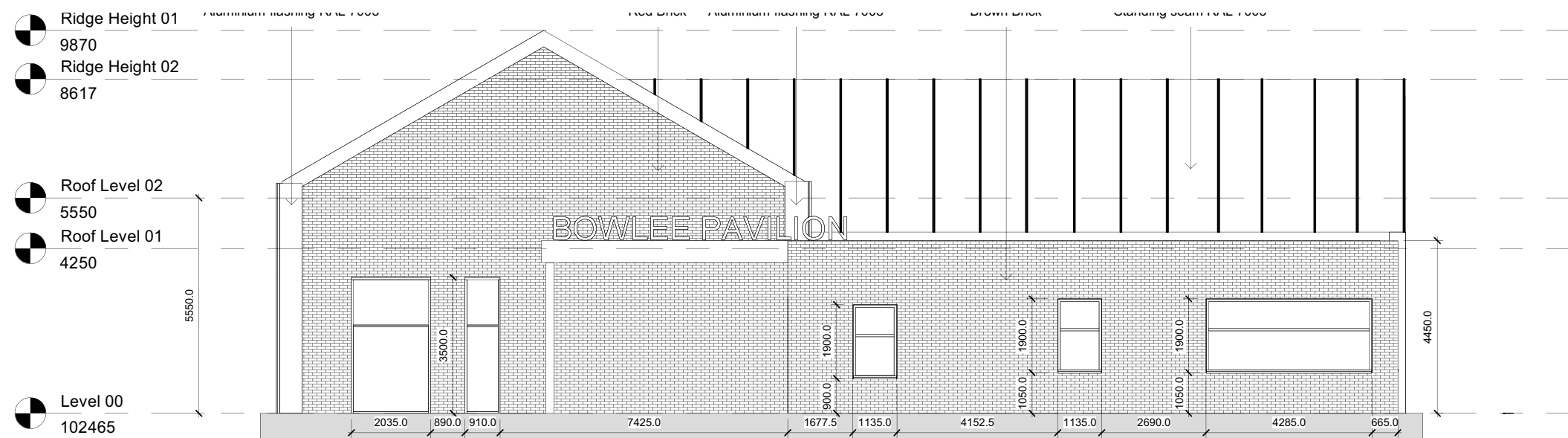


Proposed North Elevation
1 : 100



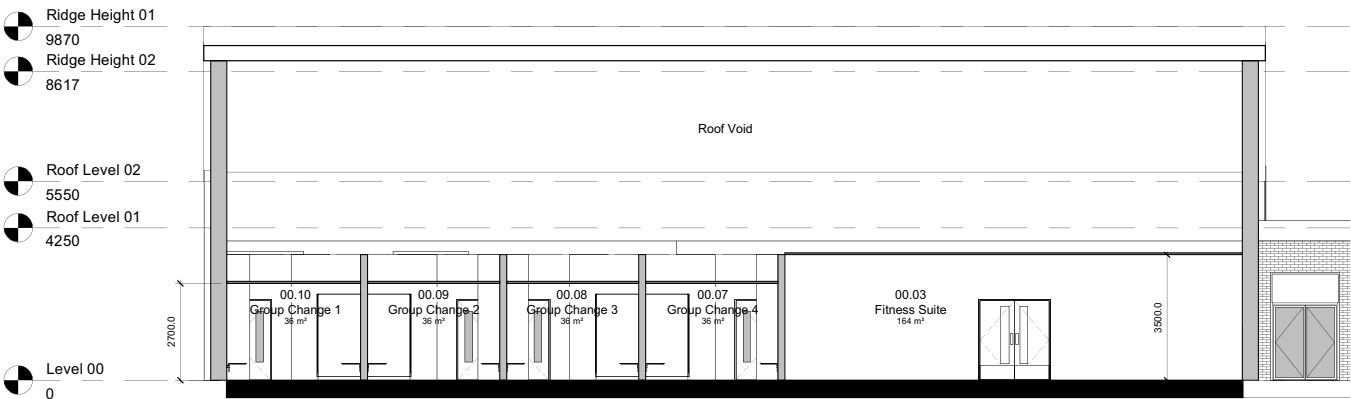
Proposed East Elevation
1 : 100

Not to scale.

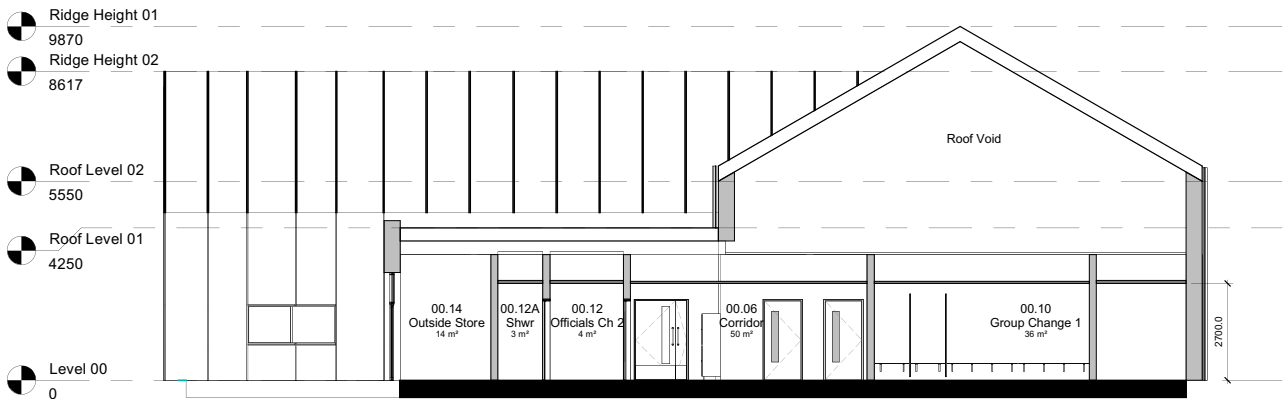


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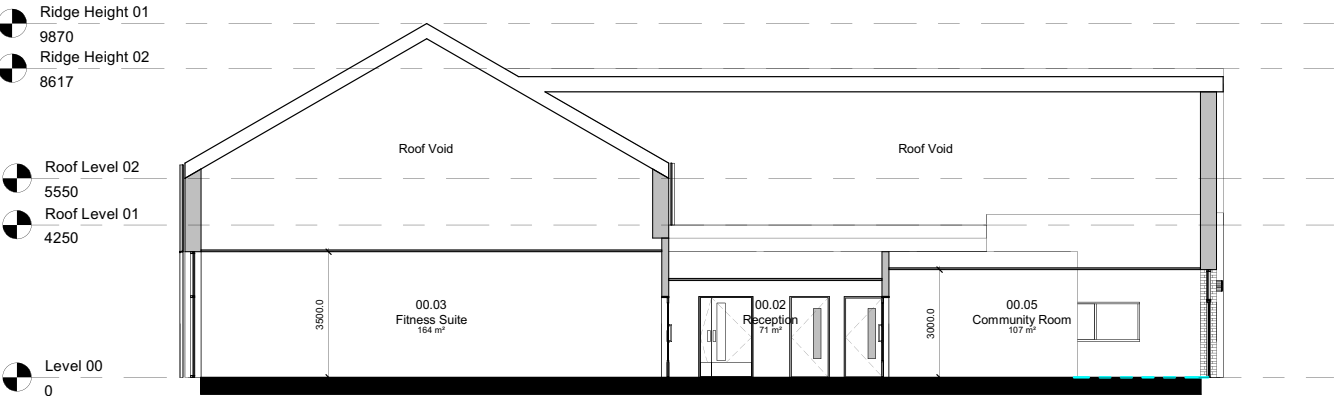
4.5 Proposed Sections.



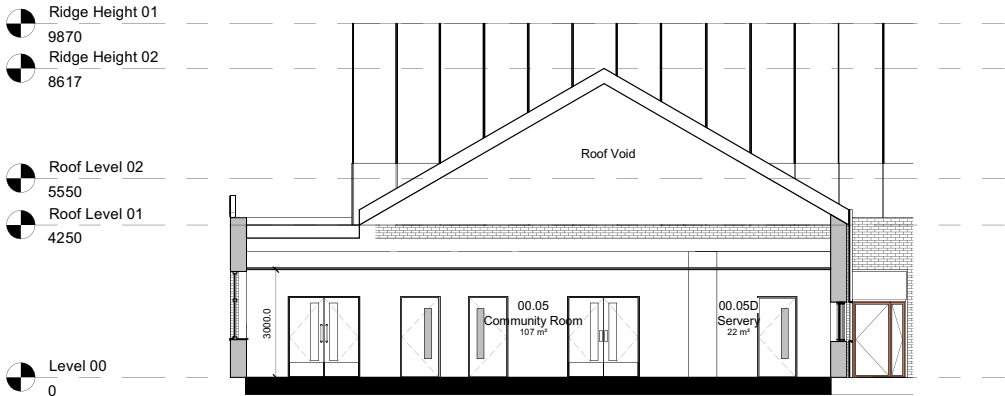
1 Proposed Section 1
1 : 100



2 Proposed Section 2
1 : 100



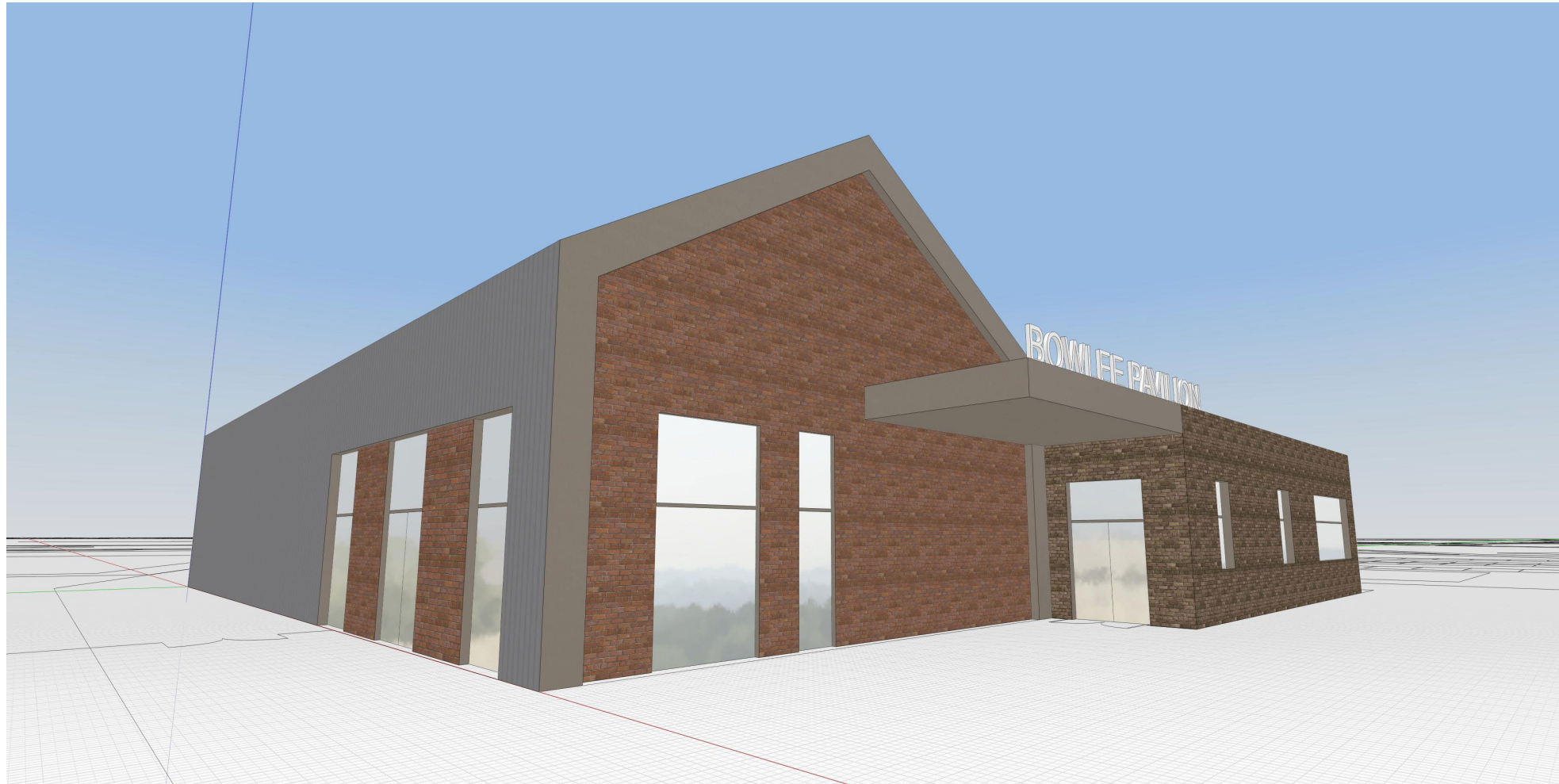
3 Proposed Section 3
1 : 100



4 Proposed Section 4
1 : 100

Not to scale.

4.6 Materiality.

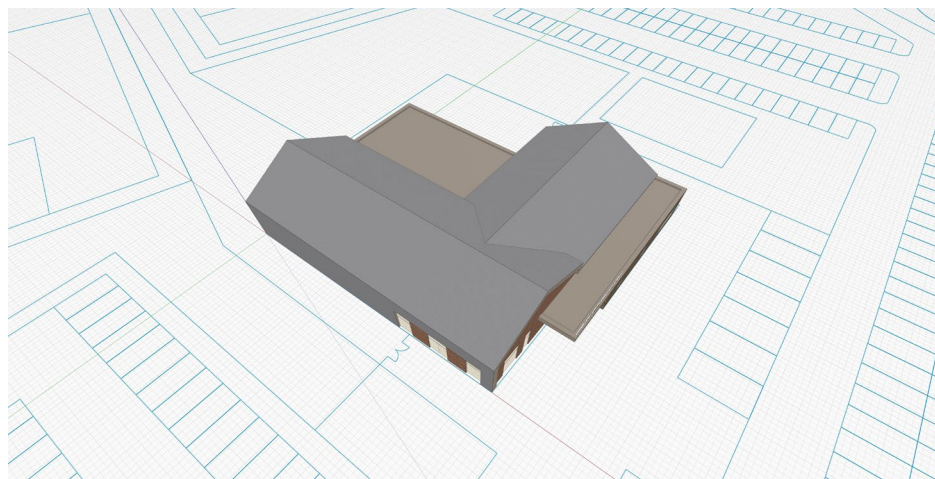


Elevational Treatment

The elevational treatment and materiality of the wellbeing hub has been developed to address each side equally. The hub is designed to be approachable and of high quality, in terms of design and materiality.

The building mass will be viewed from all sides and responds accordingly. From the main approach, the mass reads as being of sufficient weight and quality to form a point of reference on the site. As a visitor arrives within the site, the entrance reveals itself with clarity and purpose. An oversailing canopy leads visitors into the mass. From within the site the mass opens up and allows for easy and clear movement flows.

Materiality has been chosen to provide a robust palette of materials while also being warm and of high quality. The use of pitched roofs with reduced spans, plus a restricted material palette plays a game to make the mass seems smaller and more intimate than it would otherwise be.



Not to scale.



4.7 Visualizations.





