



Thank you for viewing this consultation information for 36 Russell Road, a proposed Purpose-Built Student Accommodation development on Russell Road, Edinburgh. This is the first public consultation following on from our Proposal of Application Notice submitted to Edinburgh City Council, in April 2025. We are presenting our developing building and landscape proposals.

We are looking for your views – are our thoughts travelling in the right direction? Please tell us what you think by filling in a feedback form, to help inform the design process before we consult on updated designs in June 2025. Your comments will inform our on-going design development before a planning application is submitted in July 2025.

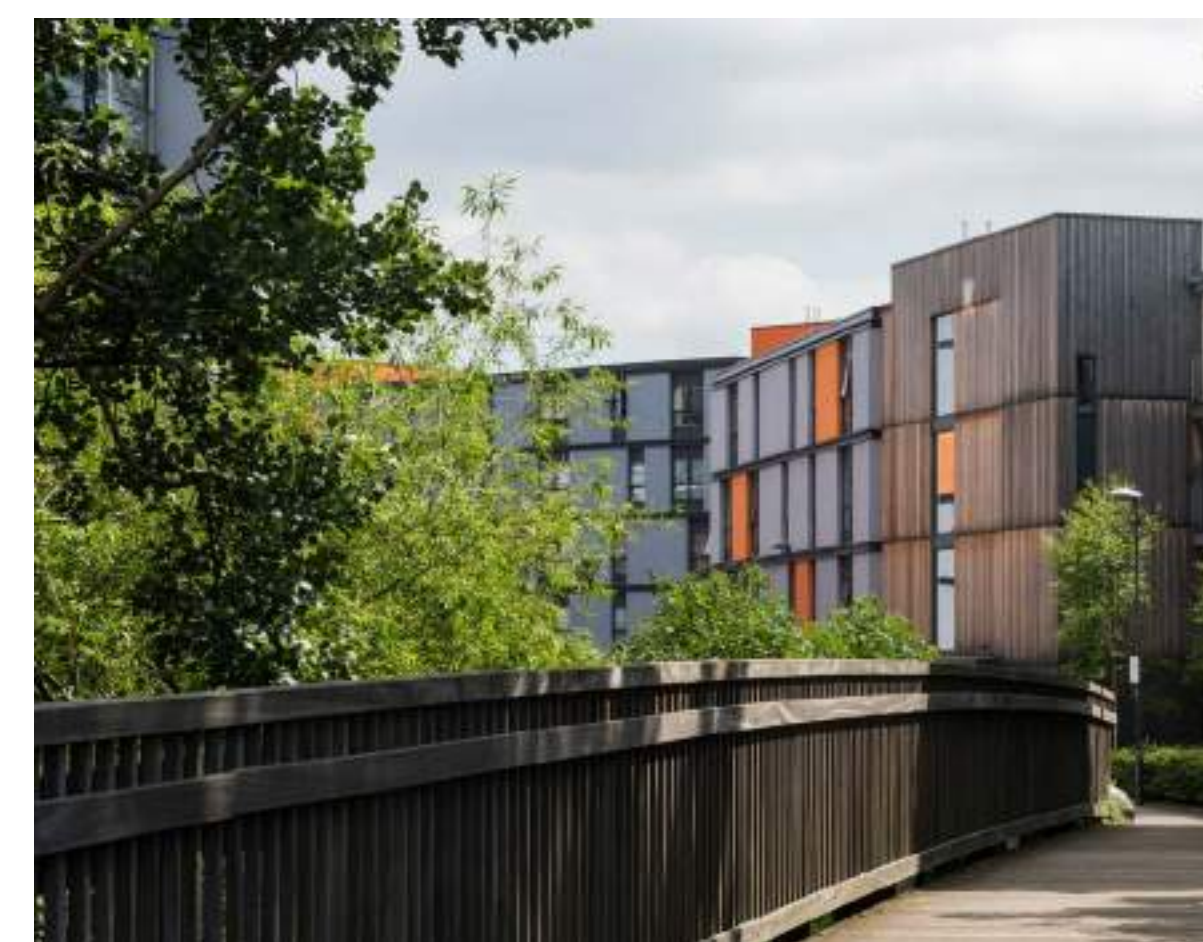
The site is one of a series of brownfield sites across the west of the city created as a result of the 19<sup>th</sup> century railway boom. These sites remained under-developed, even as the city expanded and densified around them, and now offer the opportunity to establish new identities within the wider city context. 36 Russell Road presents an opportunity to address Edinburgh’s shortfall of student bedspaces, giving the site a long-term, sustainable use that makes an active contribution to the neighbourhood.



36 Russell Road Proposed Scheme, illustrative view from Roseburn to Union Cycle link look West.



Buccleuch Street Student Housing, Edinburgh  
7N Architects



Westfield Avenue Housing, Edinburgh  
7N Architects



Rowanbank Gardens Housing, Edinburgh  
7N Architects

**Ardent Group** are an established property development specialising in delivering high-quality residential and commercial developments across Ireland and Scotland, with a strong focus on regeneration and sustainability. Committed to revitalising underused brownfield and infill locations, and transforming them into vibrant, well-designed communities.

**7N Architects** bring an integrated approach to place making. 7N specialise in generating innovative ideas that deliver simple solutions to complex problems and focus on delivering transformational change by unlocking the full potential of buildings, places and spaces.

# 02 Site History

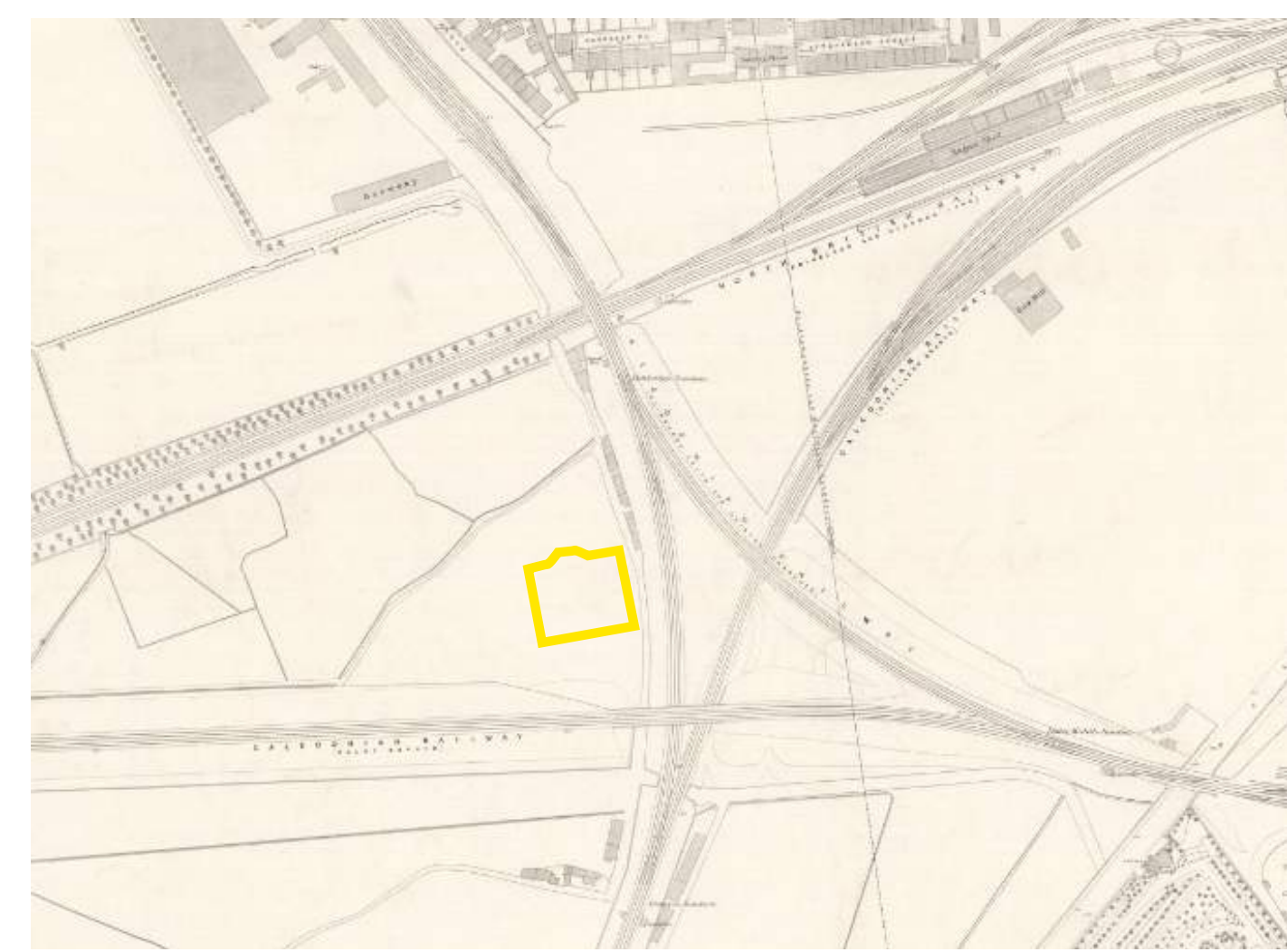


The site was enclosed by the North British and Caledonian Railway Lines in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It was developed as a Bowling Green in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and Charles Henshaw & Sons established their foundry and metalworking business to the rear of the site. The majority of the Caledonian Lines were closed by the end of the 1960s with the infrastructure re-purposed for the West Approach Road; the site remained physically separated from the surrounding city fabric.

The bowling green and social club closed in 2011. The site was partially cleared and run as a builder's yard. The building is now unoccupied and derelict. Charles Henshaw and Sons entered administration in 2024 and the site has recently been sold. New public transport and active travel initiatives are already opening up new connections to the wider city which allows sites like this to be re-appraised in terms of how they can meet the city's developing needs.



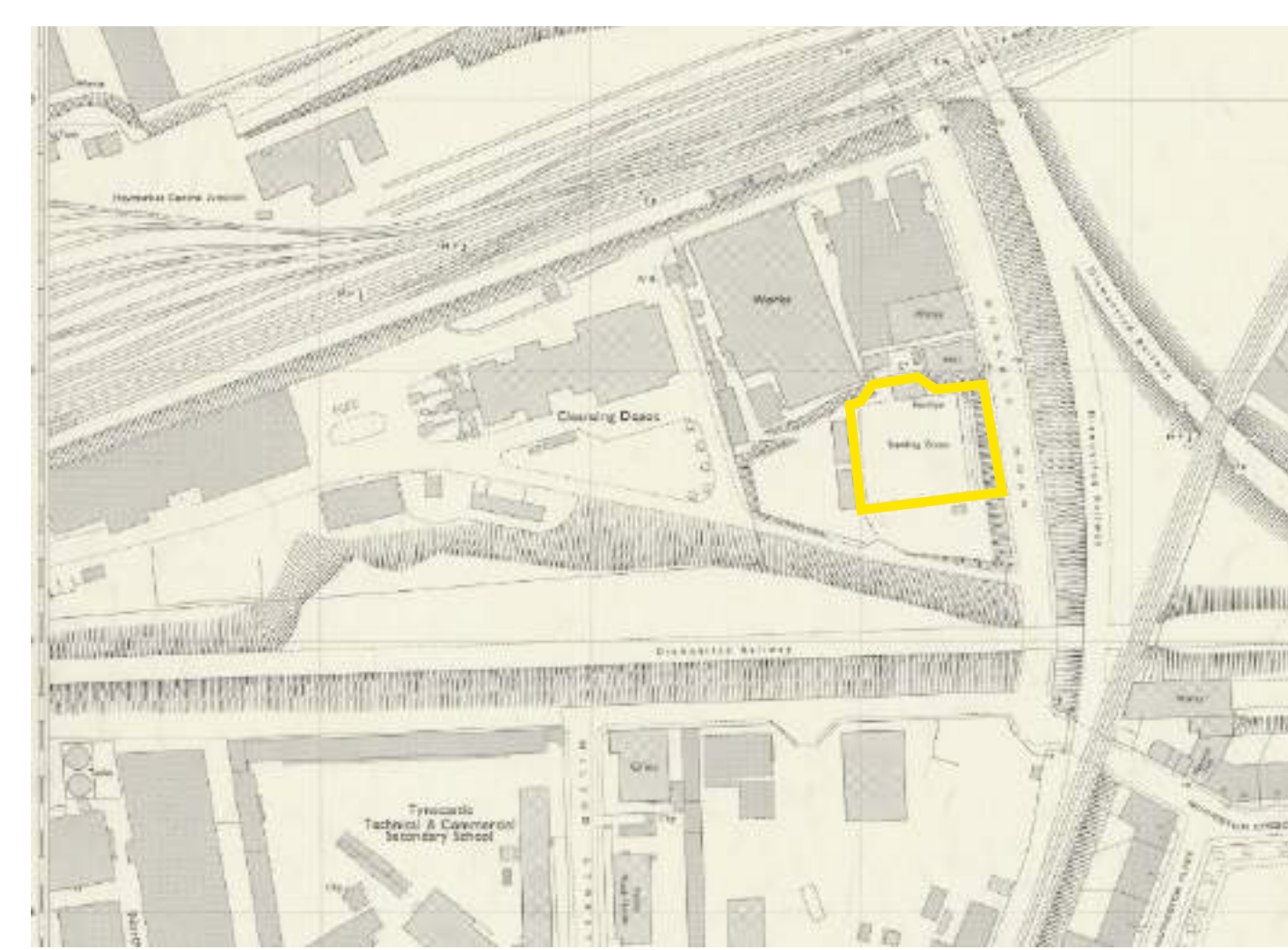
The Existing Site - Aerial looking East



1881; Land enclosed by railways



1912; Bowling green and industry



1970; The railways recede



2024; New connections



The Existing Site - Aerial looking West



Any future planning application on this site will be required to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The applicable Development Plan comprises:

**National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)**  
**Edinburgh City Plan 2030 Local Development Plan (City Plan 2030)**

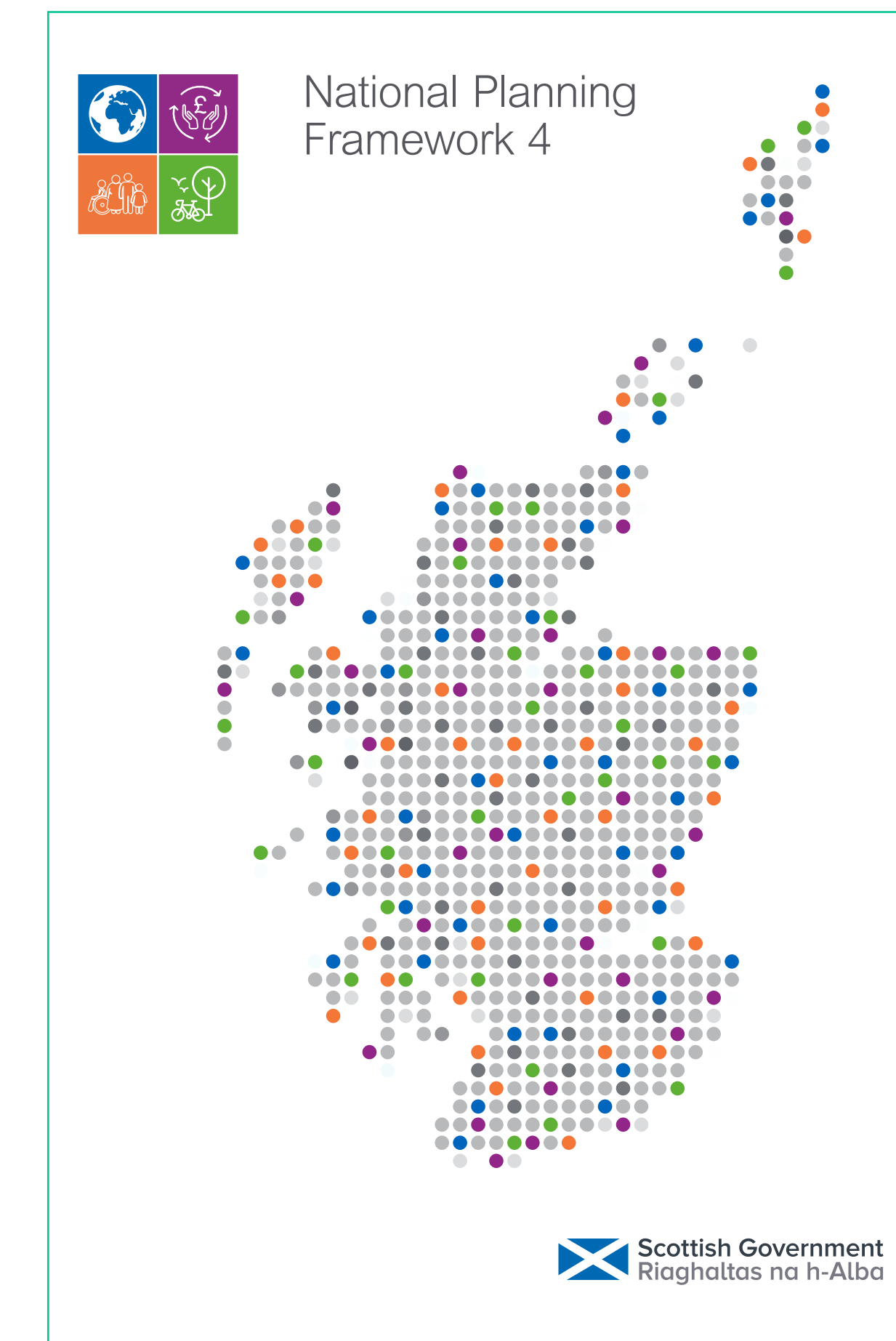
The following policies in NPF4 are particularly relevant:

- **Policy 16** supports proposals for new homes that improve affordability and choice, such as student accommodation.
- **Policy 9** supports proposals that result in the sustainable reuse of brownfield land.
- **Policy 15** supports proposals that contribute to local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods, where people can access most of their daily needs near their homes.
- **Policy 13** supports proposals which align with sustainable travel.

City Plan 2030 designates the entire site as being within the ‘urban area.’ City Plan encourages growth on brownfield sites within the ‘urban area’, including uses such as student accommodation. The following policies of City Plan 2030 will be key in assessment of the planning application.

- **Policy Hou 5** requires student accommodation to be appropriately located with good access to higher education institutes and where the established character of the area is not adversely impacted. The policy also limits the number of studio apartments and requires suitable amenity for future residents.
- **Policies Env 7 and Env 8** require the development to meet specified sustainability standards, addressing the climate emergency and contributing to sustainable living.
- **Policy Env 31** requires new-build development to include good quality, attractive and useable open space amounting to at least 20% of the site.
- **Policy Env 33** supports development that does provides suitable levels of amenity for occupiers and does not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring development.

Policy Econ 2 requires proposals for commercial uses (including student housing) within the urban area on sites 0.25ha or larger, should, where compatible and appropriate, provide at least 50% of the site for housing. The site area is 0.23ha and therefore Policy Econ 2 does not apply. Developing designs show approximately half of the site being provided as usable open space for future residents.



**Area of site: 0.23ha**  
**Area of building footprint: 0.12ha**  
**48% of site is proposed as open space**

The application will be accompanied by a suite of supporting studies. We will look to agree these with the City of Edinburgh Council prior to submission. We anticipate the following will be provided:

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| • Planning Statement               | • Sustainability Statement                       |
| • Report of Consultation           | • Transport Statement                            |
| • Design and Access Statement      | • Ecology Report including Biodiversity Net Gain |
| • Student Market and Demand Report | • Landscape Strategy                             |
| • Noise Impact Assessment          | • Archaeology Desk Based Assessment              |
| • Townscape and Visual Analysis    | • Ground Conditions Information                  |
| • Daylight and Sunlight Assessment | • Drainage Strategy                              |



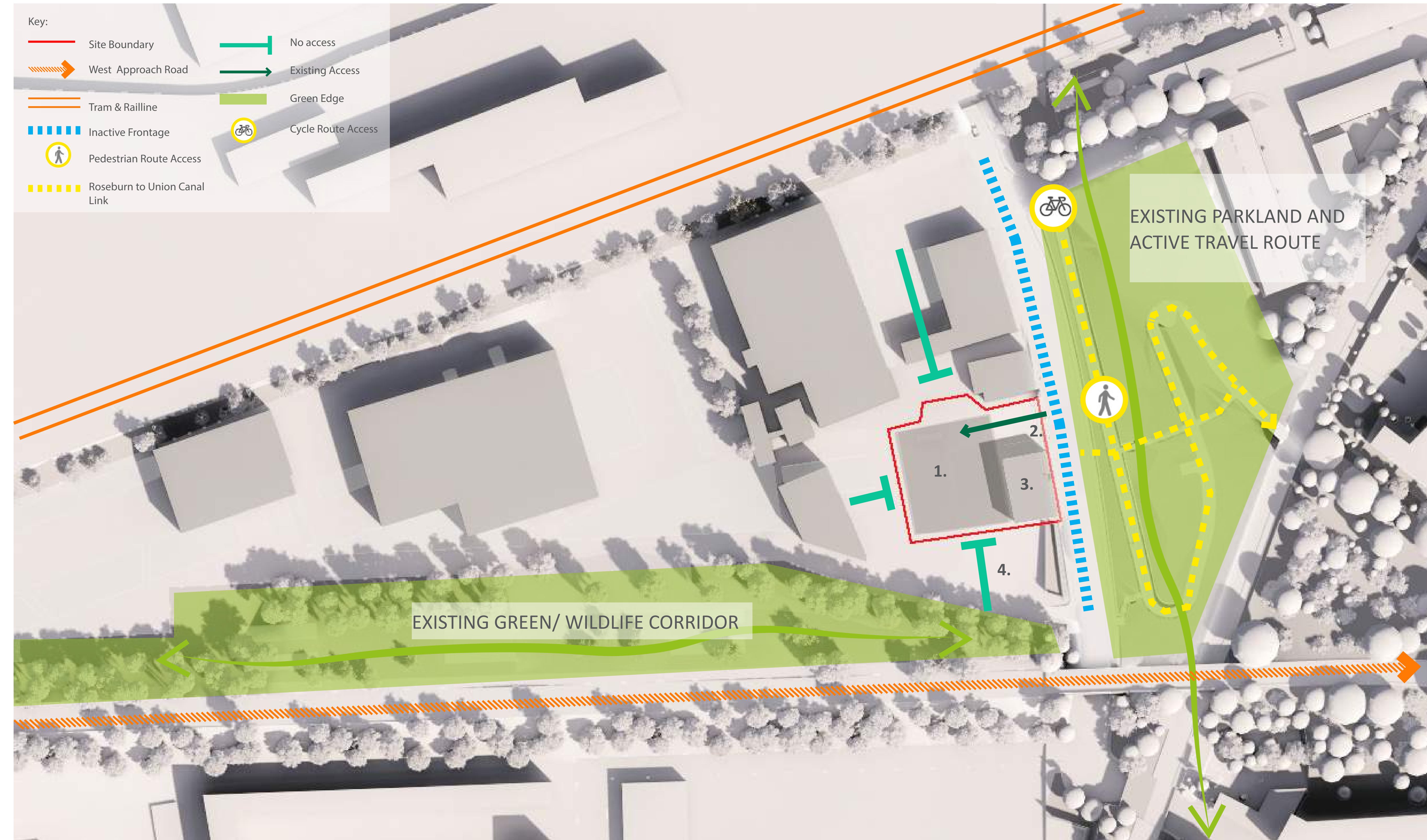
The site sits within 10 minutes walk of the local centres of Roseburn, Gorgie and Dalry, with public transport connections including tram, rail and bus services all within a 20 minute walk. City of Edinburgh Council’s recently completed £17m Roseburn to Union Canal link is located adjacent to the site creating a new active travel route between Roseburn and Fountainbridge. There is the opportunity to densify the site in line with the “brownfield first” approach of City Plan 2030, acting as an anchor building for the potential wider mixed use redevelopment of the area that both utilises and enhances these connections.

### Existing Site Constraints:

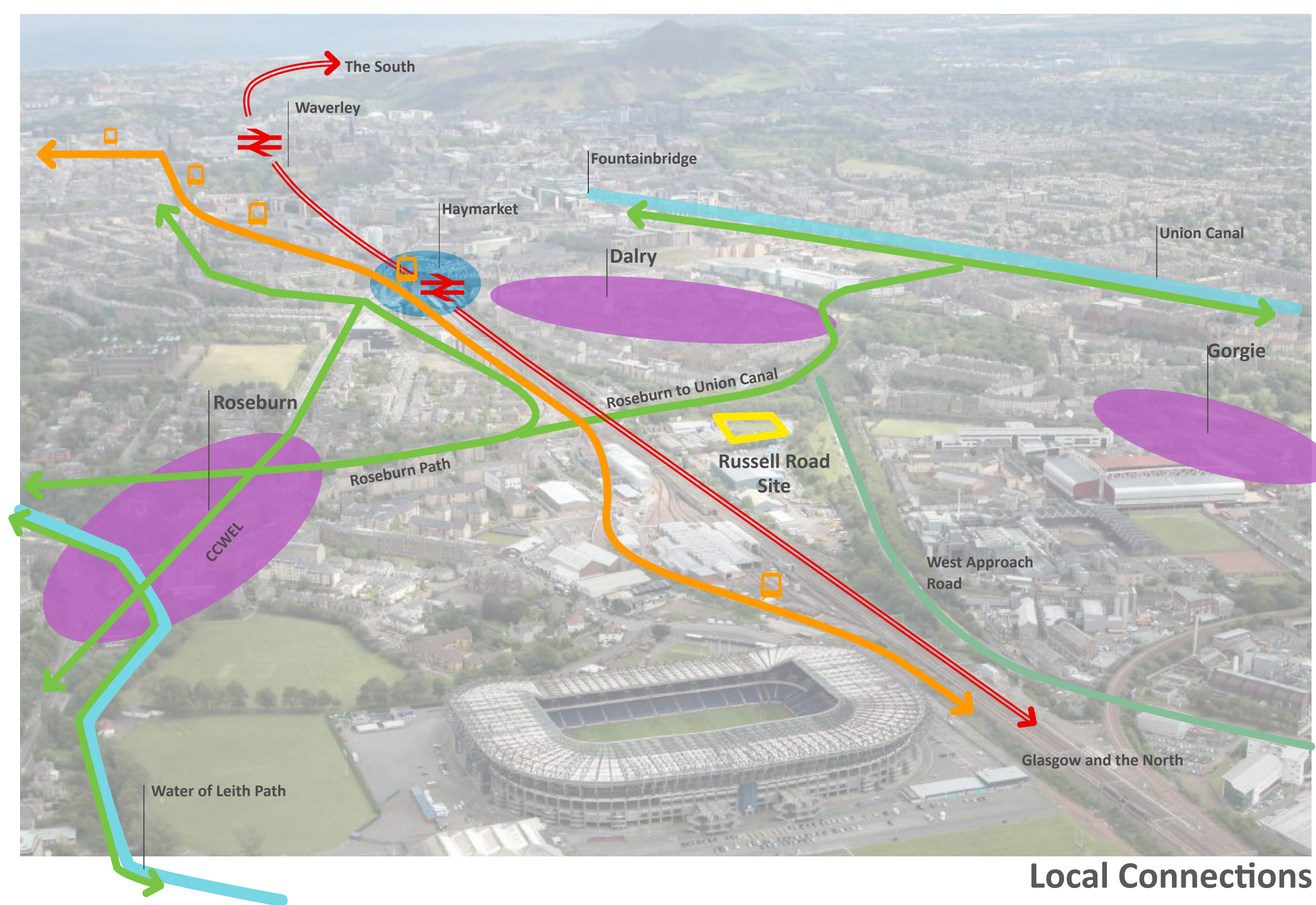
### Opportunities for Improvements:

- Inactive and Derelict Frontage**, contributing little to the surrounding public realm and offering poor permeability through the site.
- Low-Quality Existing Buildings**, not suitable for adaptation to meet contemporary standards for accommodation or employment use.
- Lack of Green Infrastructure**, offering no biodiversity value or green amenity space.
- Challenging Site Levels and Limited Accessibility**, Significant level changes across the site, resulting in a lack of universal access.

- Enhanced Site Conditions:** Site challenges are addressed through strategic landscaping, building orientation and efficient high-performance building fabric.
- Active & Inclusive Public Realm:** The scheme delivers a permeable, active frontage with universal access across the site.
- Optimised Solar Gain & Biodiversity:** A south-facing courtyard maximises solar gain, with garden spaces enhancing amenity and supporting biodiversity.
- Future-Proofed Masterplanning:** The design enables coordinated development of neighbouring plots



Existing Site Constraints



Local Connections



The vacant social club building fronts onto Russell Road



The existing building is derelict with little architectural merit.



Rear of the vacant social club building from within the site



Existing southern boundary to the site



The proposal will establish an active street frontage to Russell Road with visibility into the ground floor social spaces and the garden beyond. The building's form and landscaping have been carefully designed to coordinate with the future redevelopment of adjacent land. Garden spaces are placed to the south of the site to optimise sunlight, incorporating 'green & blue infrastructure' such as swales and rain gardens to manage rainwater and contribute to making an attractive, sustainable place.

The proposals have been developed in line with NPF4 to improve the quality of the existing area, following the principles of the Scottish Government's "Six Qualities of Successful Places"

**1 - Healthy:** Supporting the prioritisation of women's safety and improving physical and mental health

**2 - Pleasant:** Supporting attractive natural and built spaces

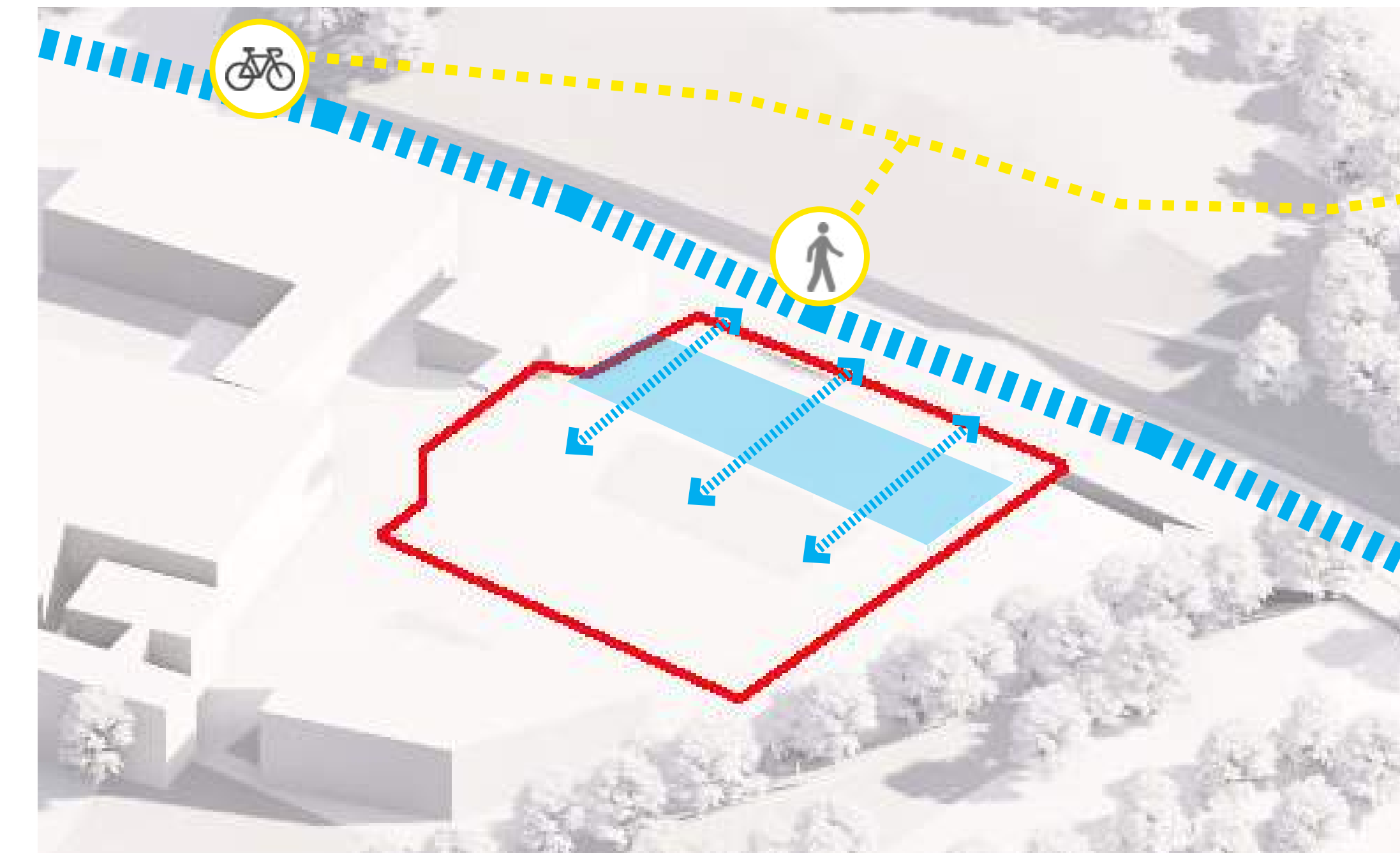
**3 - Connected:** Supporting well connected networks that make moving around easy and reduce car dependency

**4 - Distinctive:** Supporting attention to detail of local architectural styles and natural landscapes to be interpreted into designs to reinforce identity

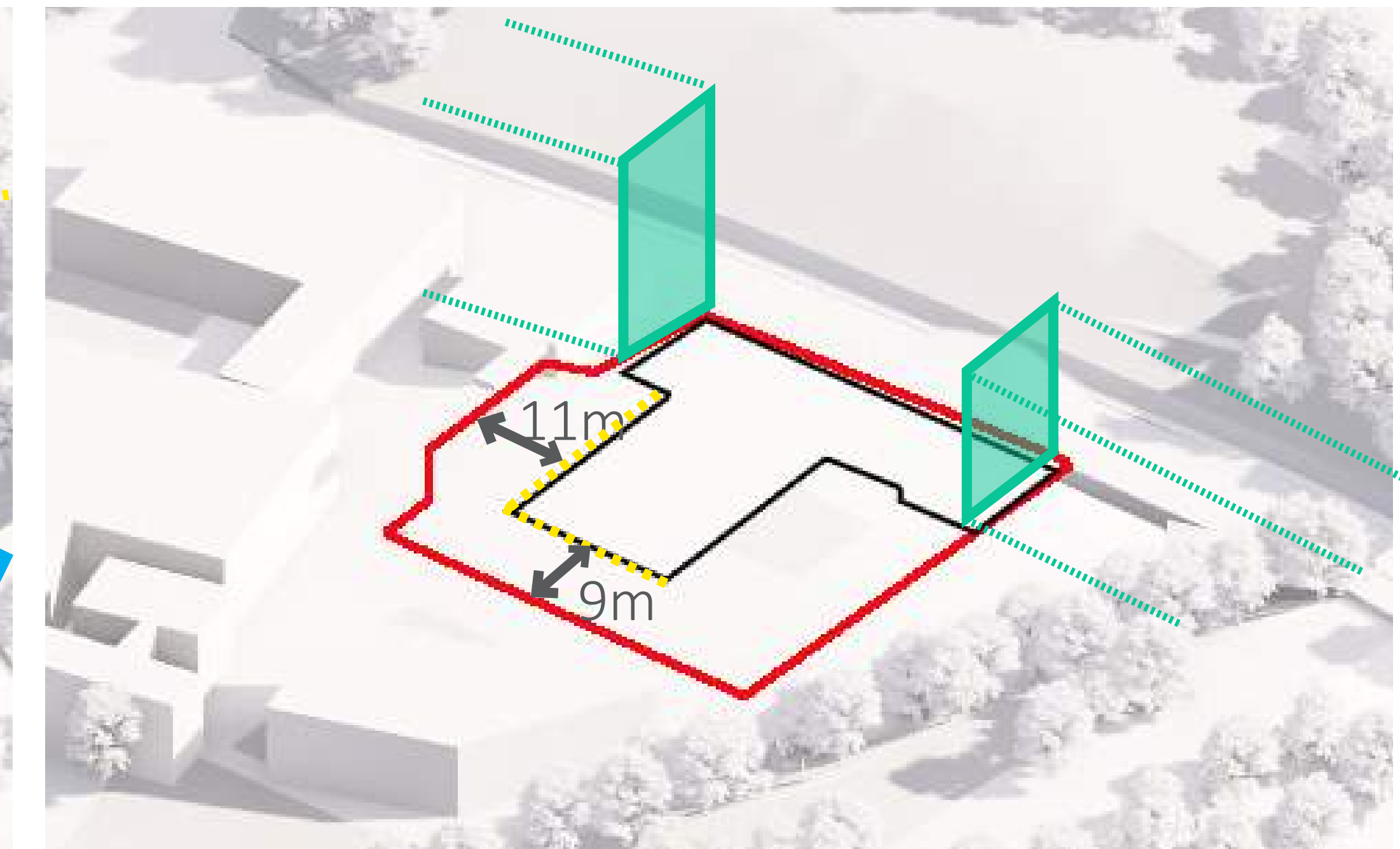
**5 - Sustainable:** Supporting the efficient use of resources that will allow people to live, play, work and stay in their area, ensuring climate resilience and integrating nature positive biodiversity solutions

**6 - Adaptable:** Supporting commitment to investing in the long-term value of buildings, streets and spaces by allowing for flexibility so that they can meet the changing needs and

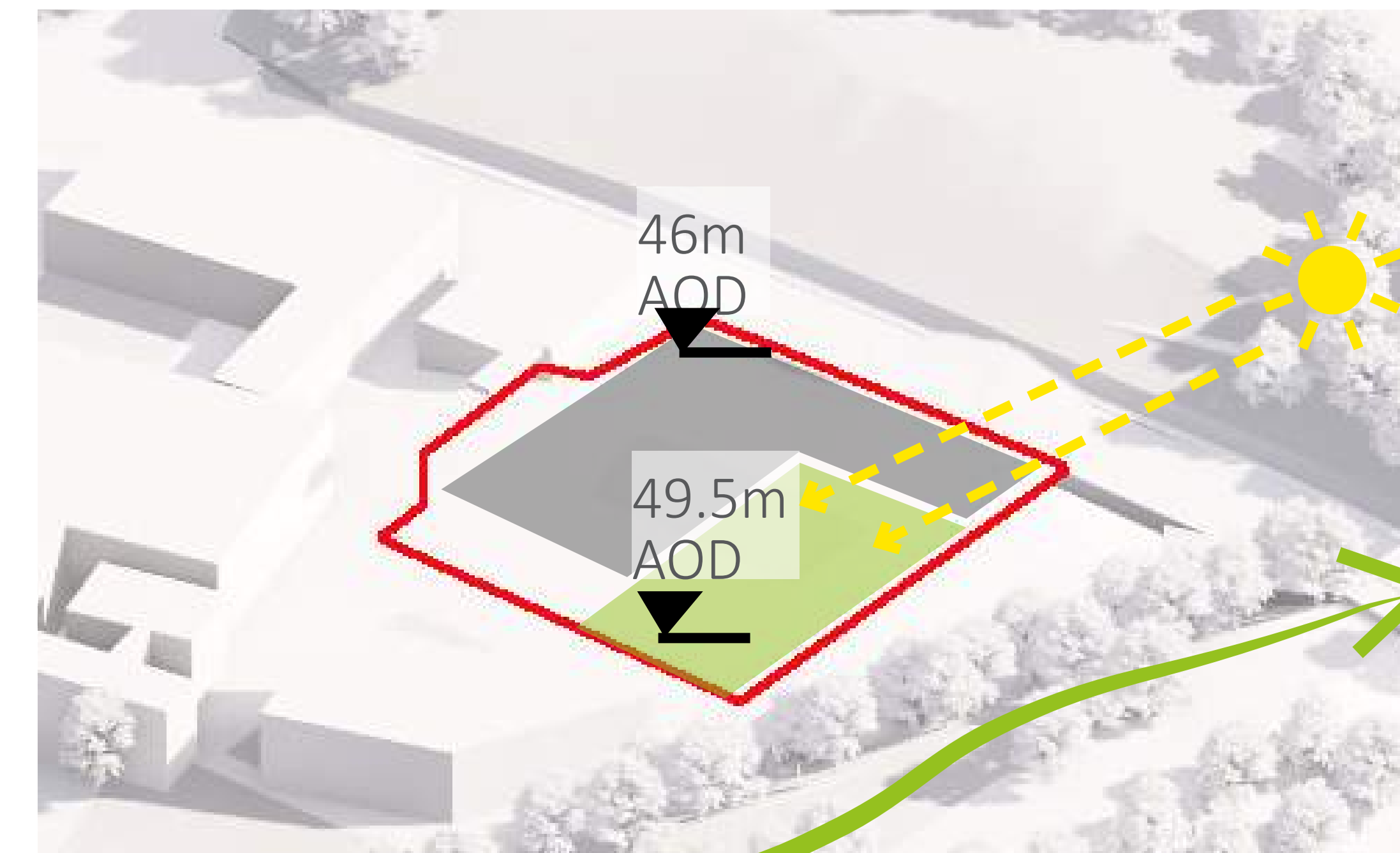
- Key:
- Site Boundary
  - Soft Landscaping
  - Visual permeability
  - ▬▬▬▬▬▬ Inactive Frontage
  - Pedestrian Parkland Ent.
  - Cycle Route Ent.
  - ▬▬▬▬▬▬ Roseburn to Union Canal Link



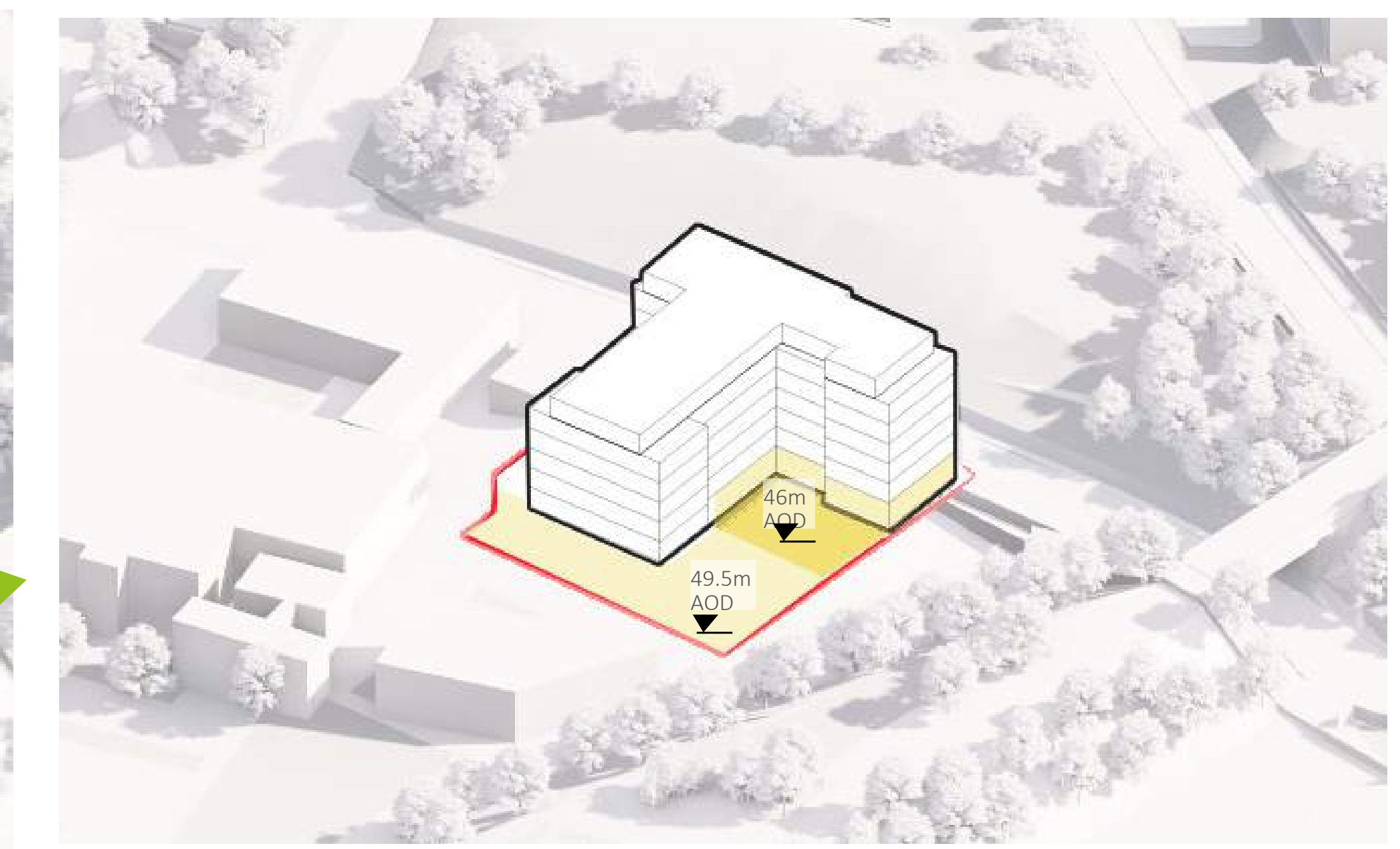
An active street frontage will be created with large windows onto ground floor social spaces



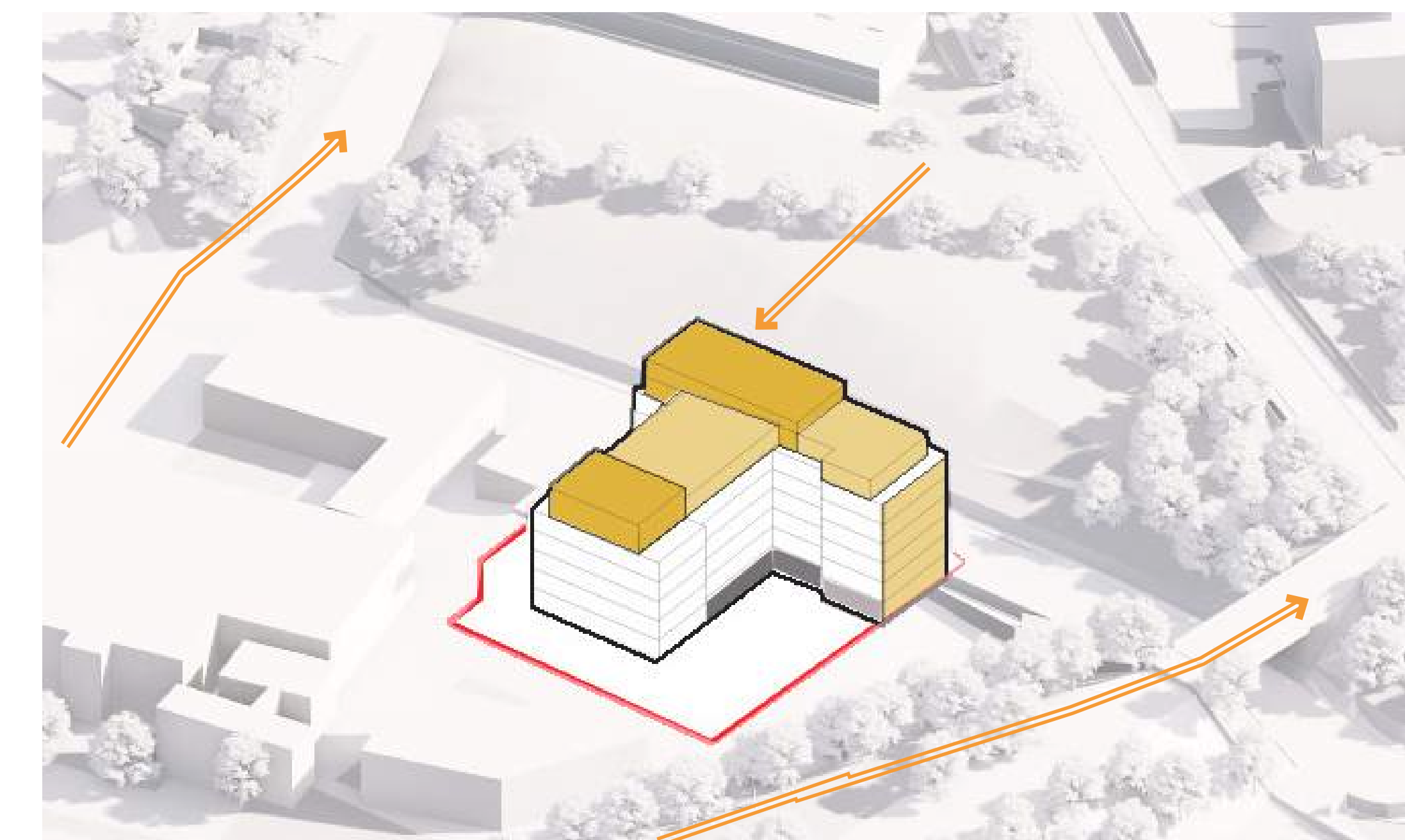
The footprint has been designed to allow flexibility for the future development of neighbouring plots. This approach supports coordinated planning and ensures that any adjacent redevelopment can integrate well with the overall site layout.



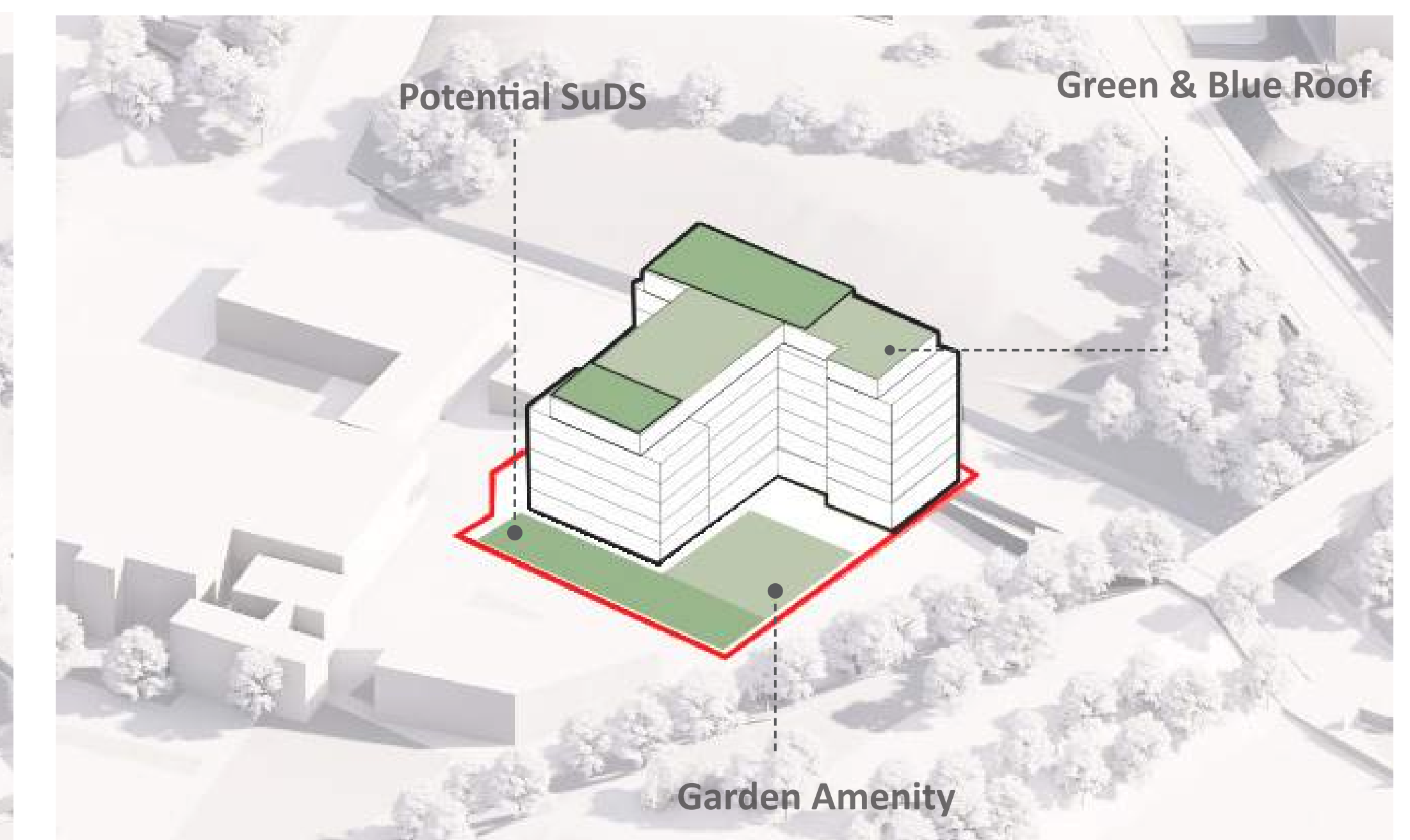
North-facing, single-aspect accommodation is minimised to improve natural light. A high-quality, accessible south-facing garden is created that connects to existing wildlife corridors, enhancing the site's ecological value



The site's 3.5m level difference is used to create a tiered garden. An open ground floor provides views through from Russell Road into the garden spaces beyond.



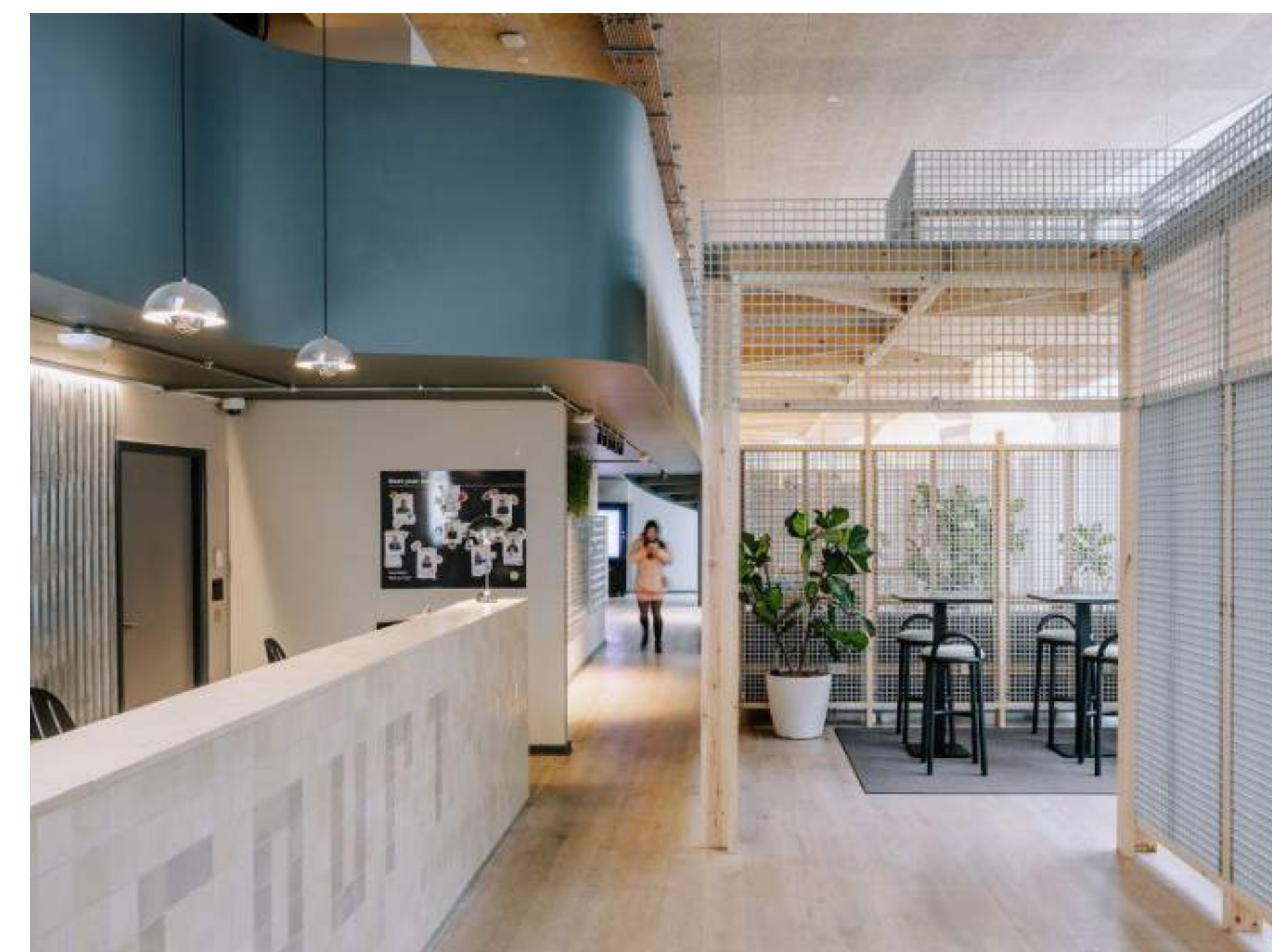
The site is visible from a number of elevated approaches. The roof form has been setback and articulated to breakdown the building massing and create visual interest from key approaches.



The 'L'-shaped footprint of the proposal provides a well surveilled south facing garden amenity. The setback from the western boundary allows for sustainable drainage features (SuDS). Green and blue roofs will reduce surface water runoff and enhance biodiversity.



Site Plan



① Focus on wellbeing and sustainable design



② Active street Frontage



③ Visibility into high quality social spaces



④ A variety of internal/external amenity



⑤ Formal and informal gathering spaces



⑥ Introduction of soft landscaping and biodiversity

# 07 Massing & Materiality - Developing Proposals

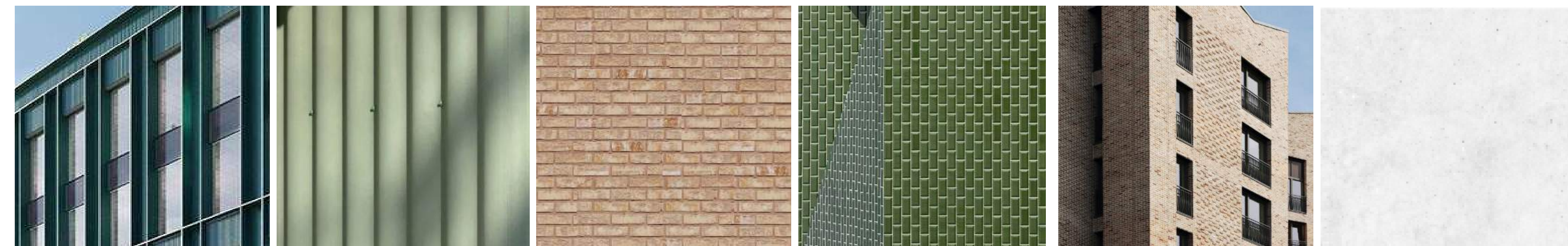
36 Russell Road  
RussellRoadPBSA@montagu-evans.co.uk



We are currently refining the building's massing and developing the building's façades. The building's proposed material palette has taken references from the local context which is primarily of a brick and metal industrial vernacular. In particular we have taken influence from profiled colourful metalwork and glazed tiles found on the bridges along Russell Road.



Architectural Context



Proposed architectural material palette



Illustrative view of the proposal from the Roseburn to Union Cycle link looking West.

Do you agree that a south facing landscaped courtyard that is a good idea for this site?

Do you agree that having more windows and activity at street level would enhance Russell Road?

Do you agree the proposed building is an appropriate scale for a city centre brownfield site?

Do you agree the materials proposed are appropriate for the site?

Do you agree that a distinctive colour palette helps give the proposal a clear identity?



A hierarchy of views has been proposed that will be used to test and demonstrate the impact of future proposals on the area. The yellow outlines indicates the developing proposals for 36 Russell Road.



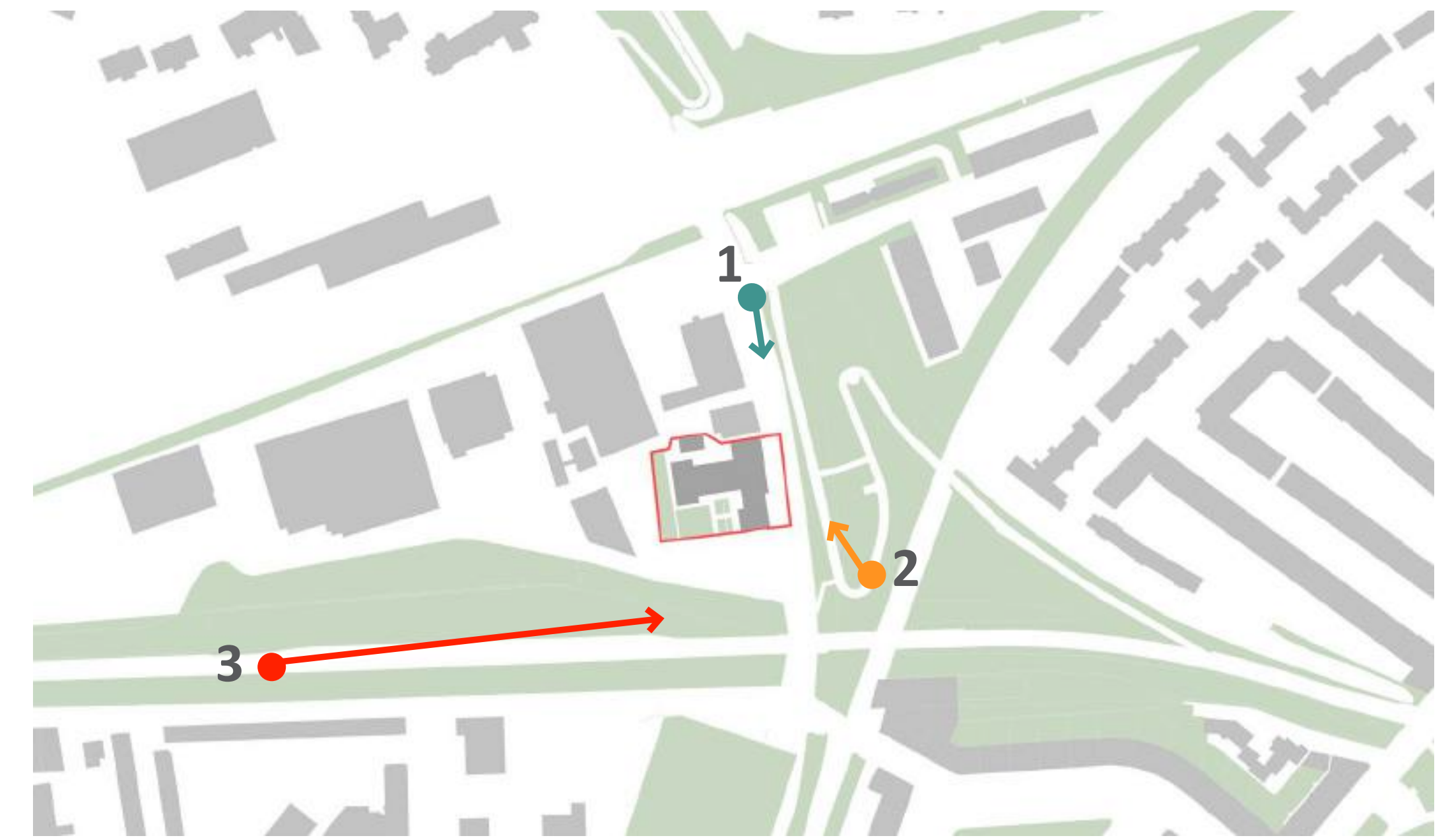
1 - Local Street View - Russell Road looking south



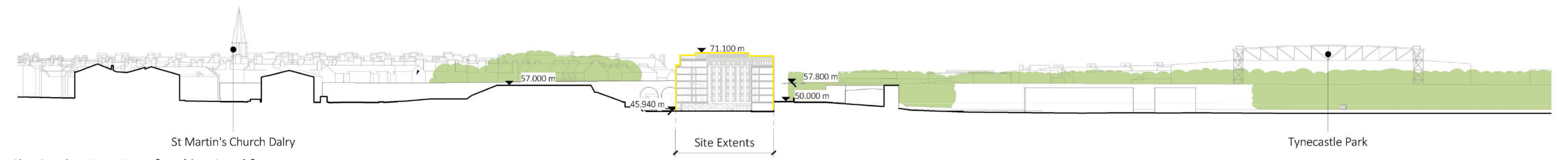
2 - Middle Distance View - Roseburn/Union Canal Cycle Link



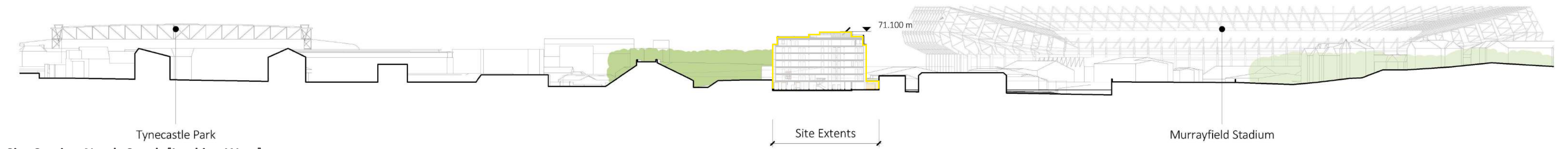
3 - Long Distance View - West Approach Road looking East



Key Plan



Site Section East-West [Looking South]



Site Section North-South [Looking West]

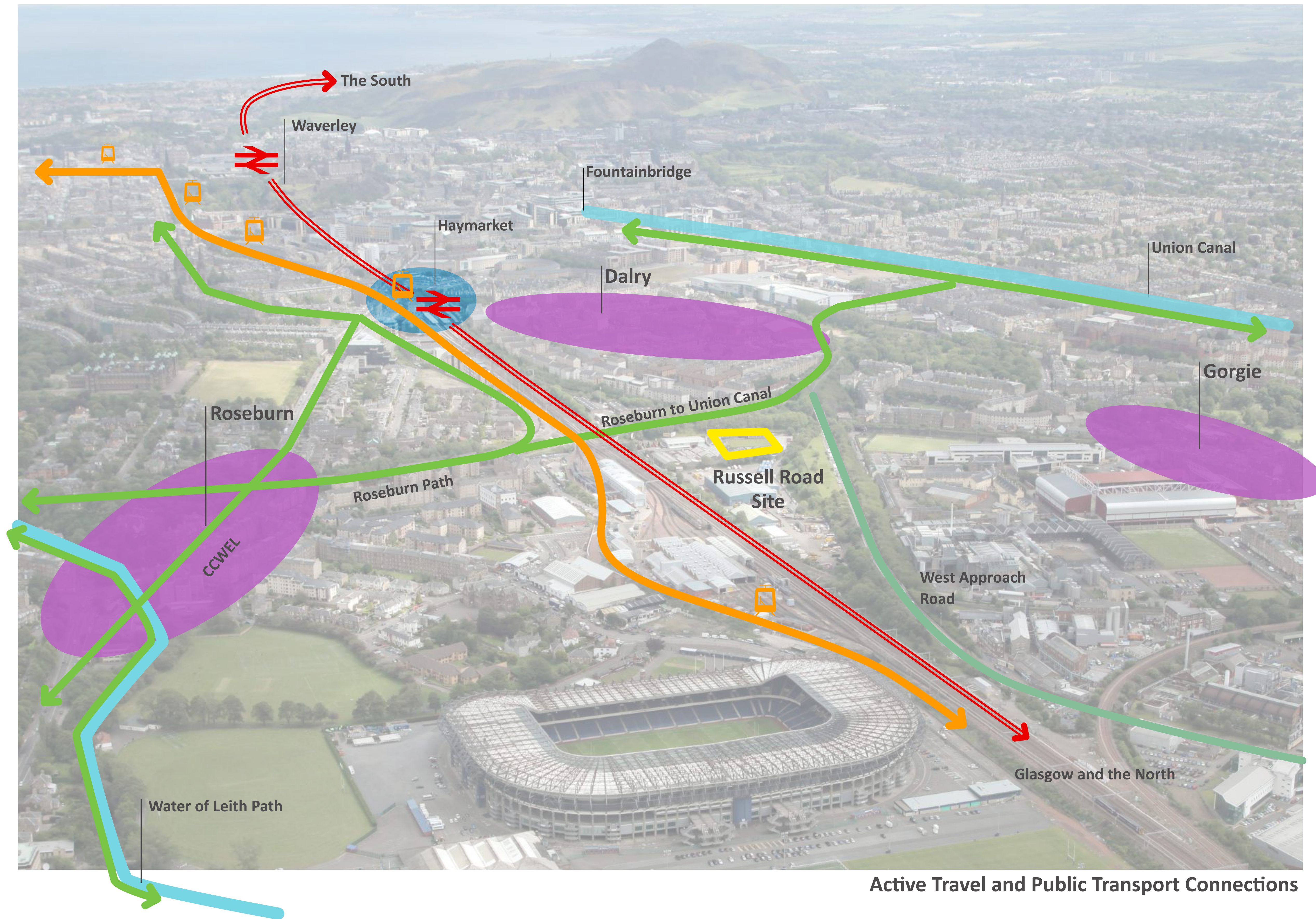


The development aligns with The City of Edinburgh Council’s “brownfield first” policy, which prioritises the redevelopment of brownfield land over greenfield sites. The existing buildings on the site are vacant, of poor architectural quality, and unsuitable for retrofit. They currently present a dilapidated frontage to Russell Road, which is out of keeping with the vision for a vibrant new neighbourhood.

The proposals promote sustainable travel and support the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood with walkable connections to the existing local centres of Roseburn, Gorgie and Dalry. Most students do not own cars and will rely on active travel and public transport. To support this, secure cycle parking for 182 bicycles (100% provision) will be provided, designed in accordance with CEC guidance to accommodate a variety of cycle types.

The scheme has been developed following the Net Zero Operational approach set out by the UK Green Building Council. All-electric systems will be used for space heating and hot water, with no fossil fuels incorporated into the development. This strategy supports the achievement of Net Zero through the ongoing decarbonisation of the national electricity grid.

The development will also deliver significant improvements in biodiversity and sustainable urban drainage, with generous soft landscaping and integrated SuDS features alongside high-quality external amenity spaces.



Active Travel and Public Transport Connections

# 10 Next Steps



This consultation event is the first of two such events that will take place ahead of a likely planning submission in July 2025

Subject to planning approval, which is anticipated by early 2026, further detailed design will then continue towards a future start on site by early 2027.

We are keen to consult closely with existing residents and key stakeholders as we develop our detailed proposals for the planning submission.

A second exhibition will be held in June and we would urge residents to come along and hear more about the exciting plans for 36 Russell Road which will include our responses to the feedback we receive following this event.

Comments made to the prospective applicant during this process are not representations to the planning authority. If the prospective applicant submits an application, there will be an opportunity to make representations on that application to the City of Edinburgh Council.

**Email: [RussellRoadPBSA@montagu-evans.co.uk](mailto:RussellRoadPBSA@montagu-evans.co.uk)**  
**Website: [www.montagu-evans.co.uk/public-consultation-russell-road-pbsa](http://www.montagu-evans.co.uk/public-consultation-russell-road-pbsa)**

