



APPENDIX 2.5

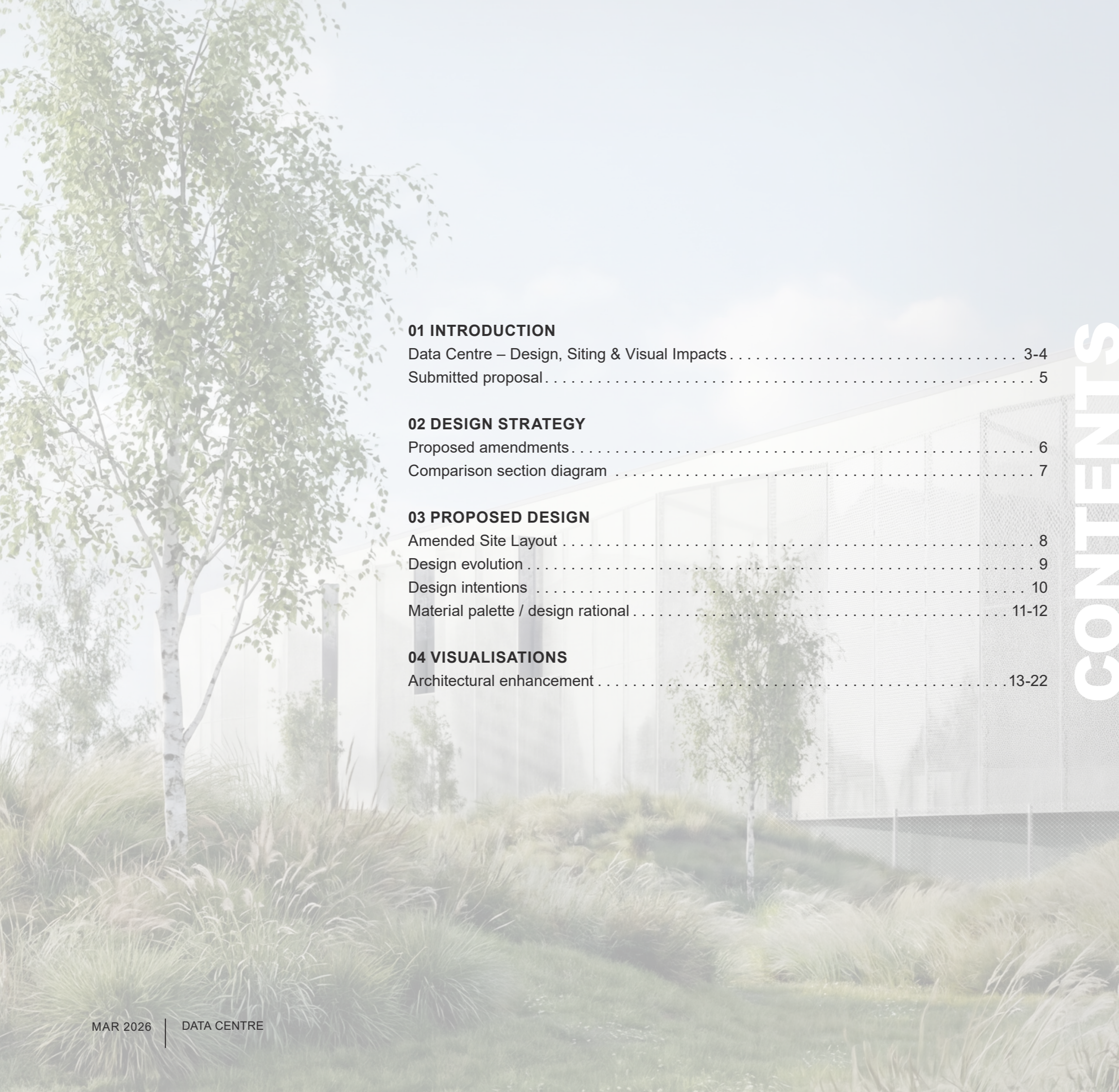


FURTHER INFORMATION



2530
DATA CENTRE

March 2026



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01 INTRODUCTION

Data Centre – Design, Siting & Visual Impacts

Design Statement – Response to Further Information Request (FI 25/60344, Section 13)

JFA Architects wish to respond to the Further Information request issued under FI Ref. 25/60344, Section 13, and in particular Section (b) which requests the preparation of a Design Statement addressing the architectural approach to the proposed development.

This submission is made on behalf of our client, Red Admiral DC Limited. The response has been prepared in collaboration with the wider project design team. In particular, JFA have worked closely with the appointed landscape architects and 3D visualisation consultants, who have contributed directly to addressing the remaining items contained within FI No. 13, Sections (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g).

The Further Information request raises concerns relating to the scale, siting, and architectural expression of the proposed development, specifically referencing the perception of the data centre buildings as “industrial-scale structures.” We acknowledge these concerns and have undertaken a comprehensive design review in order to respond constructively to the issues raised.

The purpose of this Design Statement is therefore to outline a holistic design response which seeks to reduce the perceived scale of the development, enhance its integration within the surrounding landscape, and strengthen the overall architectural quality of the scheme.

Through coordinated engagement with the design team, a series of targeted design refinements have been developed. These measures address the relationship between the buildings and the R446 corridor, the landscape strategy, the architectural articulation of the data centre buildings, and the overall composition of the campus.

The key elements of this design response can be summarised as follows:

- 1. Increased setback of the data centre buildings from the R446**, with the distance increased from approximately 49 metres to approximately 75 metres.
- 2. Expansion of the landscape buffer zone** along the R446 and adjacent residential boundaries to provide enhanced visual screening and ecological planting.
- 3. Reduction in the overall building height** of the data centre blocks fronting the R446, with parapet heights reduced from 18 metres to 16 metres.
- 4. Introduction of an architectural veiling system** using a simple metal mesh fabric to soften the appearance of the large-scale building volumes.
- 5. Breaking the linear repetition along the R446 frontage** through the introduction of contrasting architectural elements.
- 6. Creation of a campus-style development**, centred around a strong architectural identity for the office component, providing a focal point for the scheme and helping to humanise the overall development.

The following sections of this document provide a more detailed explanation of these measures and illustrate how the proposed design refinements respond directly to the issues raised within the Further Information request.

Extract from Further Information request:

13) Planning & Design

i) Data Centre – Design, Siting & Visual Impacts The Planning Authority requires the submission of Further Information in order to fully assess the visual, architectural, and landscape impacts of the proposed Data Centre development. The following concerns have been identified: It is considered that the siting, orientation, and overall layout of the proposed Data Centre buildings would create a visually dominant, industrial-scale frontage along the R446. This would result in a significant adverse impact on the visual character of the surrounding rural landscape. The six buildings are presented as repetitive, industrial-scale structures more typical of a heavy industrial estate, with little or no evident response to the visual sensitivity of the rural setting. The development would benefit from significantly improved architectural quality and stronger design integration to better reflect and respect the surrounding rural landscape context. The layout of both the Data Centre and Distributed Energy Resource components appears constrained, offering limited opportunity for the surrounding landscape or site boundaries to absorb the visual bulk of the scheme. The proposed 20–24 metre landscape buffer along the road frontage is considered insufficient to mitigate the development’s visual prominence. There is potential for the proposed Data Centre to adversely impact on the residential amenity of the two adjoining dwellings located along the Regional Road. It is considered that the current scale, layout, and siting of the data centre buildings demonstrate limited regard for the proximity, setting, and amenity value of these existing residential properties. The photomontages submitted fail to adequately depict the true scale and impact of the Data Centre on adjoining residences. Critical elements, including high palisade security fencing, lighting masts, and security camera masts are omitted, which would further exacerbate visual and residential impacts both from the dwellings and the R446. Accordingly, you are requested to submit the following:

a. Site layout plans to be submitted showing a revised configuration of the proposed data centre buildings that allows for clear separation from the regional road and existing roadside dwellings, thereby reducing visual impact and ensuring a more sympathetic relationship with the rural setting

b. A comprehensive Design Statement outlining the design rationale, architectural intent, and detailing proposed materials and finishes.

c. Enhanced landscape proposals, including mitigation measures and cross-sections showing how the development will be screened over time

d. Revised, accurate photomontages illustrating the Data Centre in combination with security fencing, lighting infrastructure, and security cameras

e. Updated plans clearly showing the extent, design, and finish of all security-related infrastructure

f. Revised viewpoint photomontage locations taken from the rear garden boundaries of all dwellings within 600m of the site

g. Additional viewpoint locations taken at 500m intervals from the site entrance extending along both the eastern and western approaches of the R446 for 2km h. A photomontage of the Data Centre, including associated security fencing, lighting, and cameras, as viewed directly from the R446 ii) iii) While the submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment acknowledges local visual sensitivities, it is considered that the assessment significantly underestimates the proposal’s visual impacts, particularly from key viewpoints along the R446, the roadside boundaries, and nearby residential properties. Large sections of the solar array will be located adjacent to several one-off dwellings, with the closest separation approximately 26m, which is considered insufficient to safeguard residential amenity. The proposed 2.4m timber post and tensile mesh fencing, in some cases located within 5.6m of residences, would create an overbearing and intrusive impact. You are therefore requested to submit revised plans illustrating a minimum set back of 40m of the solar array from all residential boundaries. You are therefore requested to submit revised photomontages of the solar array from the rear of all residential properties within 600m of the application site together with additional viewpoints at 500m intervals along both the eastern and western approaches of the R446 for a distance of 2km to enable a full assessment of visual and residential impacts. All photomontages should clearly illustrate security fencing, lighting, and security camera infrastructure. iv) It is noted that security cameras are proposed together with lighting masts. Please submit revised plans clearly illustrating the number, location and height of these structures.

01 INTRODUCTION

Data Centre – Design, Siting & Visual Impacts

1. Increased Setback of the Data Centres from the R446

Following a comprehensive review of the overall site layout in collaboration with the wider design team, the positioning of the four data centre buildings closest to the R446 has been reconsidered in order to maximise their separation from the road corridor. Through careful refinement of the internal arrangement of the blocks and associated roadways, it has been possible to increase the setback distance from approximately 49 metres to approximately 75 metres.

This adjustment has been achieved primarily by rationalising the spacing between the data centre buildings and the internal service routes. The revised configuration was assessed in consultation with both the project traffic consultants and fire safety consultants to ensure that the reduced internal spacing maintains full compliance with operational access, circulation, and emergency response requirements. The result is a more recessed building line along the R446 while maintaining the functional and safety performance of the overall campus layout.

2. Expansion of the Landscape Buffer along the R446 and Adjacent Residential Areas

The increased building setback enables the creation of a significantly enhanced landscape buffer along the site's R446 boundary and in proximity to adjoining residential properties. The revised arrangement allows for an additional 25 metres of landscaped buffer, resulting in a total separation distance of approximately 75 metres from the R446.

This expanded buffer zone will be designed and implemented in accordance with the landscape architect's detailed landscape strategy. The area will be planted predominantly with native tree and shrub species, selected for their suitability to the local environment and their capacity to establish a robust and sustainable ecological corridor.

The landscape design envisions a series of soft, undulating earth mounds arranged within the buffer zone. These subtle landforms will be integrated with layered native planting and tree clusters that will mature progressively over time. As the vegetation establishes, the buffer will develop into a woodland-like screening landscape, providing visual filtering of the development while offering a natural and visually appealing edge condition when viewed from the R446.

3. Reduction in Data Centre Building Height

In response to concerns regarding the visual scale and massing of the buildings, it is proposed to reduce the parapet height of the data centre buildings fronting the R446 from 18 metres to 16 metres.

This reduction will be implemented along the outer building edge facing the road, with the parapet profile stepped back towards the centre of the roof to conceal roof-mounted plant and equipment. By lowering the perceived building edge and recessing the plant screening elements, the development will present a reduced visual profile when viewed from the surrounding context.

The overall effect is a meaningful reduction in perceived scale and massing along the R446 frontage, contributing to a more moderated architectural presence within the landscape setting.

4. Architectural Veil to Soften the Appearance of the Data Centre Buildings

In order to address concerns raised by the Local Authority regarding the perceived industrial scale and massing of the data centre structures, it is proposed to introduce an architectural veiling system across the building façades.

The proposed veil will consist of steel mesh sheeting with a natural steel finish, designed to be durable and weather-resistant while maintaining a refined and contemporary appearance. The mesh will be arranged in a subtle wave pattern, creating depth and visual movement across the building surfaces. This approach serves several architectural purposes. The veil will soften the visual solidity of the large building volumes, breaking up the uniformity of the façades and introducing a lighter, more permeable layer to the architecture. The interplay of changing daylight, seasonal variation, and shadow patterns across the mesh surface will create a dynamic façade condition that evolves over time.

As the surrounding landscape matures, the mesh veil and planting strategy will work together to create a layered and visually animated backdrop, reducing the perceived scale of the buildings and integrating them more effectively within their environment. The veiling treatment will also be used consistently across the wider development to provide architectural cohesion between the primary frontage and the remainder of the campus buildings.

5. Breaking the Linear Repetition along the R446 through Architectural Variation

To further address the perception of large-scale linear building massing along the R446 frontage, the scheme incorporates a contrasting architectural intervention through the design of the office component of the development.

The office buildings will be designed using a high-quality aluminium curtain wall glazing system, providing a lighter, more transparent architectural expression that contrasts with the larger, more solid data centre volumes and the curved mesh veil. This change in architectural language introduces visual rhythm and interruption along the otherwise continuous frontage.

By punctuating the composition with a distinct architectural element, the overall elevation along the R446 will read as a series of varied components rather than a continuous industrial façade, thereby reducing perceived repetition and improving the visual quality of the development when viewed from the road.

6. Creation of a Campus-Style Development with a Strong Architectural Identity

The overall arrangement of the development has been conceived as a campus-style environment, designed to foster a sense of identity, orientation, and community within the scheme.

The office building has been strategically positioned as a central focal element within the internal site layout, forming the heart of the development. This central placement allows the office accommodation to anchor the internal spatial arrangement while supporting the operational needs of the data centre facilities.

Surrounding the office building, a central landscaped plaza will be developed with high-quality planting, seating, and pedestrian circulation areas. This shared space is intended to create an attractive environment for the workforce and encourage informal interaction and a sense of community within the campus.

From outside the site, the distinctive architectural character of the office buildings—combined with the landscaped setting—will provide a recognisable identity for the development, offering glimpsed views from the passing R446. The result is a development that balances large-scale technical infrastructure with carefully considered architecture and landscape design, creating a cohesive and legible campus environment.

01 INTRODUCTION

Submitted proposal

1. DISTANCE FROM THE ROAD

Buildings to be pushed back

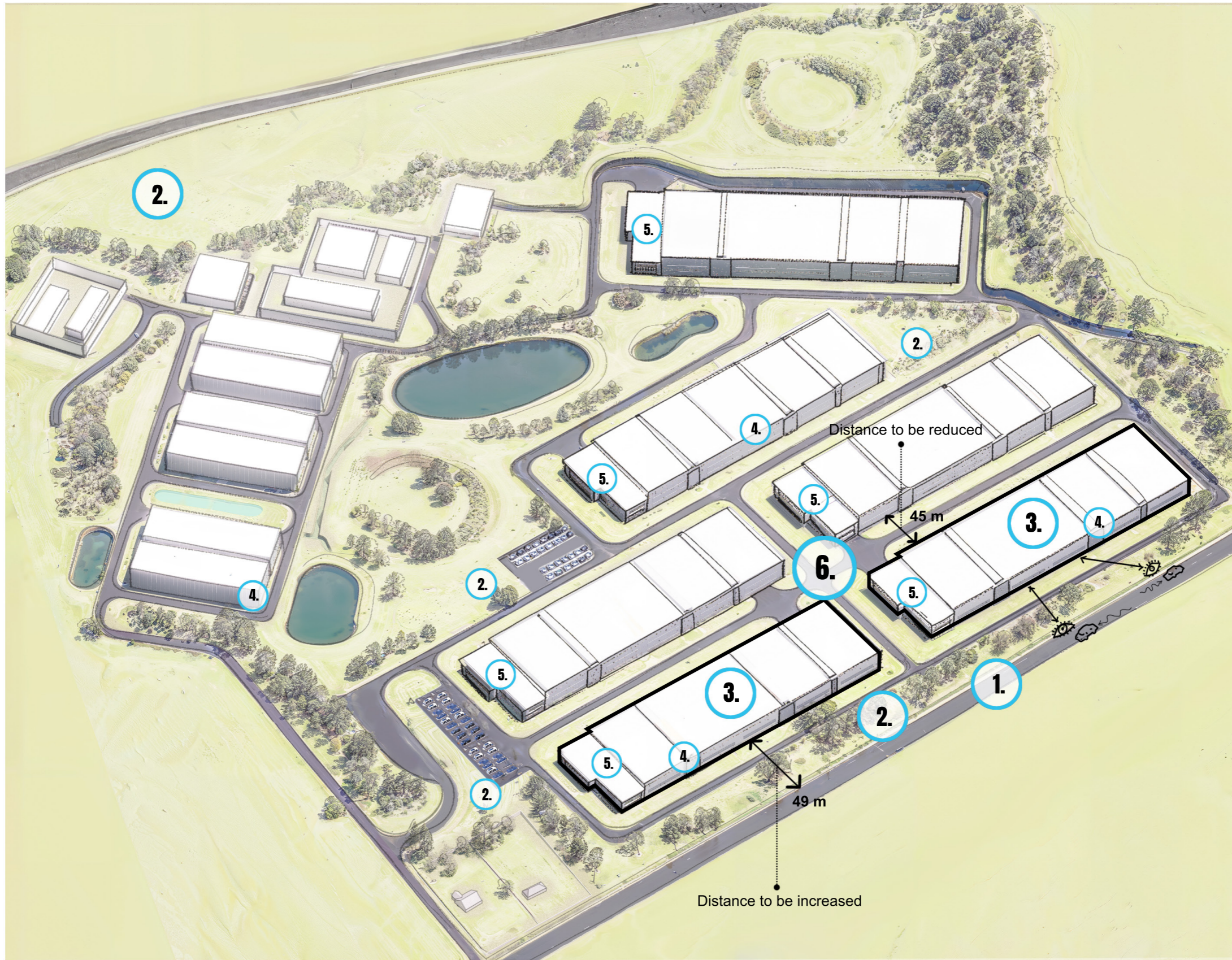
2. PLANTING AND VEGETATION

Wider landscape buffer/screening to be provided



3. MASSING

Massing perception to be reduced by lower parapets



4. SCREENING

New architectural language facing the road



5. OFFICES

To enhance and provide a more attractive architecture for the campus

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6. CAMPUS

The FI response aims to create a new "campus-style" environment. The revised layout positions the office buildings facing one another to foster a sense of community, with approximately 160 staff per office. The centralised arrangement, supported by high-quality hard and soft landscaping, establishes a clearer hierarchy and stronger identity for the development

ORIGINAL PROPOSAL SUMMARY

02 DESIGN STRATEGY

Proposed amendments

1. DISTANCE FROM THE ROAD

The distance between the buildings and setback from the road has been revised to create a wider gap that reduces the visual impact

2. PLANTING AND VEGETATION

A more intensive landscape is introduced. The new landscape will feature seasonal local species and grass mounds that help soften the impact on the surrounding context

The car parking spaces will be relocated to create new mitigation spaces



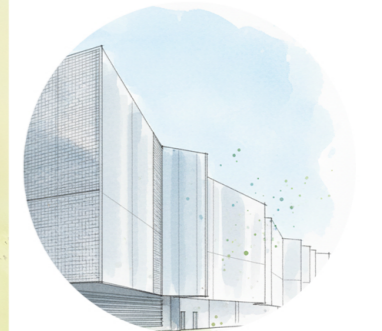
3. MASSING

Several actions will be taken to reduce the perceived massing, such as pulling the parapet back from the building edge, reducing the actual height by 2 meters



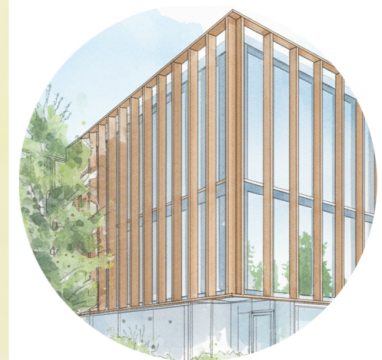
4. SCREENING

A metal veil will be applied to the buildings to soften their overall massing and scale on the primary R446 elevation and other prominent elevations visible along key internal routes.



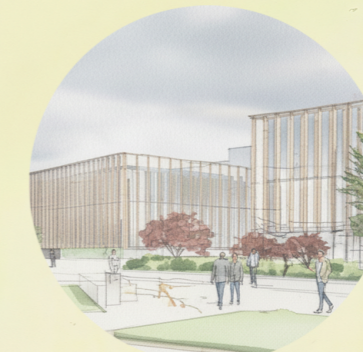
5. OFFICES

The buildings will receive enhanced architectural treatment to the office elements, providing a stronger sense of identity and place



6. CAMPUS

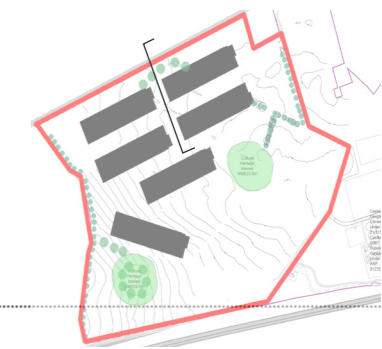
Bringing the offices closer together aims to create a campus-like environment. This layout can foster a sense of identity for the place reinforced by hard-landscaped areas



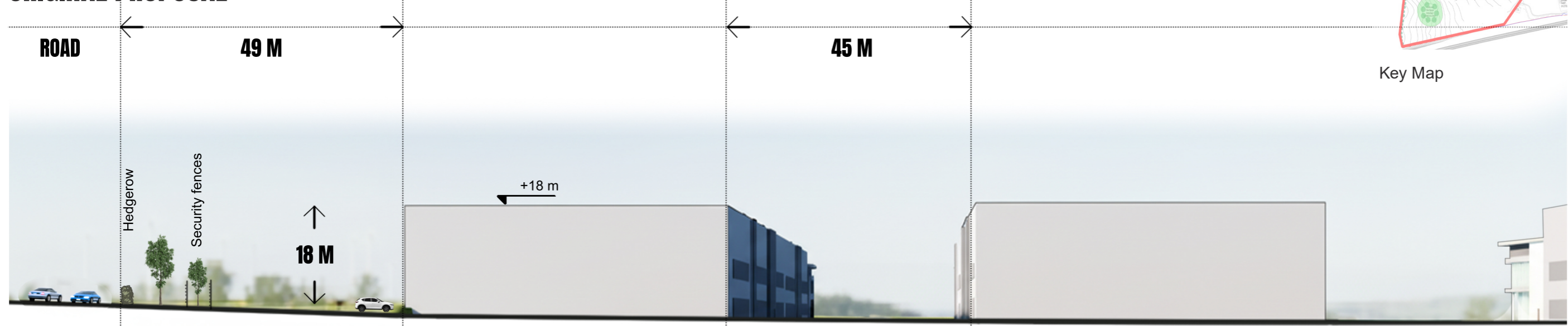
CURRENT PROPOSAL

02 DESIGN STRATEGY

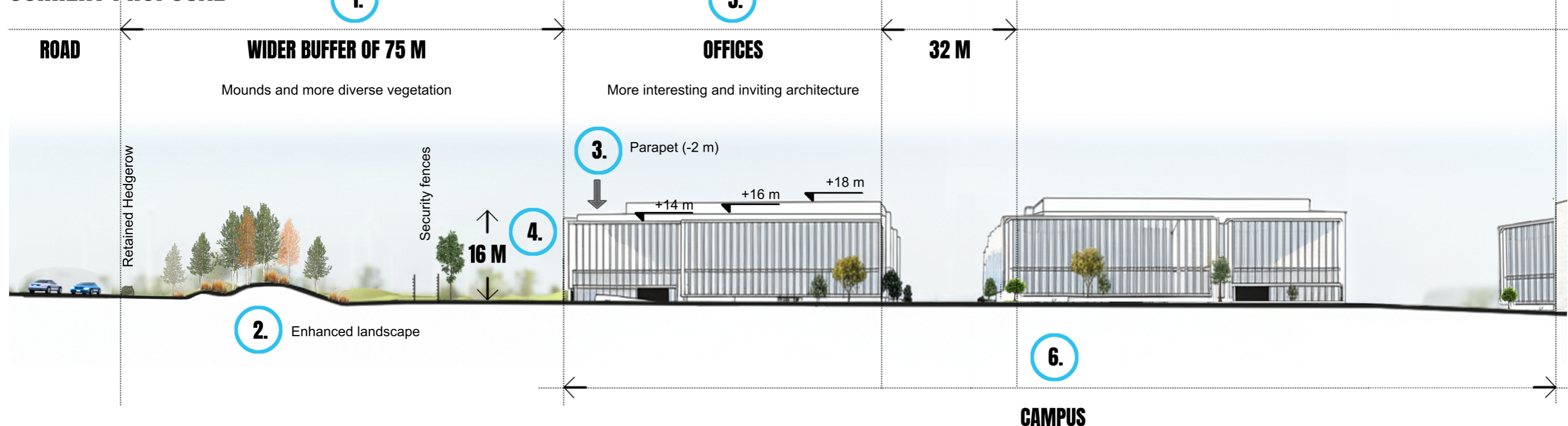
Comparison section diagram



ORIGINAL PROPOSAL



CURRENT PROPOSAL



Position of the offices changes to the center of the scheme

03 PROPOSED DESIGN

Amended Site Layout



PROPOSED SCREENING BERMS
New earthen berms proposed along the sites boundary and planted with a native woodland. Planted berms to provide screening of the development from the nearest residential receptors along the regional road to the north of the site.

NATIVE TREE PLANTING
Corridors of native trees planted internal to the site to further bolster the sites biodiversity levels and anchor the site into this landscape setting. Corridors of native tree planting to be selected in line with the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and will visual soften internal views of the proposed development

EXISTING BOUNDARY HEDGEROW RETAINED
Existing boundary hedgerow along the sites northern boundary to be retained and protected. Boundary hedgerow to be bolstered with a native whip planting mix and advanced nursery stock as necessary and managed at a height of 3-4m

PROPOSED PLAZA
Proposed plaza at the intersection of the data hall buildings, featuring terraced planters to soften level changes and planted with native trees and a shrub and perennial mix in accordance with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

NATIVE WOODLAND PLANTING
Sawtooths of native woodland planting along new earthen berms along the northern boundary of the site to visually screen and soften the proposed development from the nearest receptors to the north. Woodland to comprise a mix of advanced nursery stock and native whips with areas of grassland

PROPOSED NATIVE WOODLAND
Proposed native woodland planting along the northeast corner of the site. Native woodland planting to comprise a mix of advanced nursery stock and native whip planting

Previous building facade line



PROPOSED ORCHARD
Proposed pollinator friendly tree orchard comprising a mix of native apple and pear trees

PROPOSED WOODLAND & BERM
Excess soils used to creating berms along the western part of the site and to be planted with a native woodland planting mix comprising whips and advanced nursery stock.

EXISTING HEDGEROWS RETAINED AND BOLSTERED Existing hedgerow retained, protected and bolstered as necessary as per hedgerow Type 1. Retention of hedgerows retains the existing landscape structures and the green corridors throughout the site.

EXISTING VEGETATION RETAINED
Existing vegetation at ring fort retained and protected

NEW NATIVE HEDGEROW
New native hedgerow located to the south of the proposed data halls to contextually separate and diminish impacts on the visual setting of the heritage asset further to the south

SOUTHERN BOUNDARY TREATMENT
Staggered corridor of native Oak trees planted along the southern boundary of the site and under-planted with native scrub plantings

NATIVE WETLAND PLANTING
Areas of native wetland plantings to be provided around the full perimeter of the proposed attenuation pond and internal streams. Native trees provide around the surrounding area with native Salix species provided in the immediate vicinity of the attenuation pond

PROPOSED NATIVE PARKLAND TREE PLANTING
Native parkland trees planted throughout areas of species rich grassland to generate a parkland like aesthetic within the site and enhance local biodiversity levels

03 PROPOSED DESIGN

Design evolution

SUBMITTED PROPOSAL

The submitted building reflects an industrial-shed typology, defined by a grey-toned color palette, ventilation openings and vertical stair cores volumes. The office area continues this material language

FACADE TREATMENT

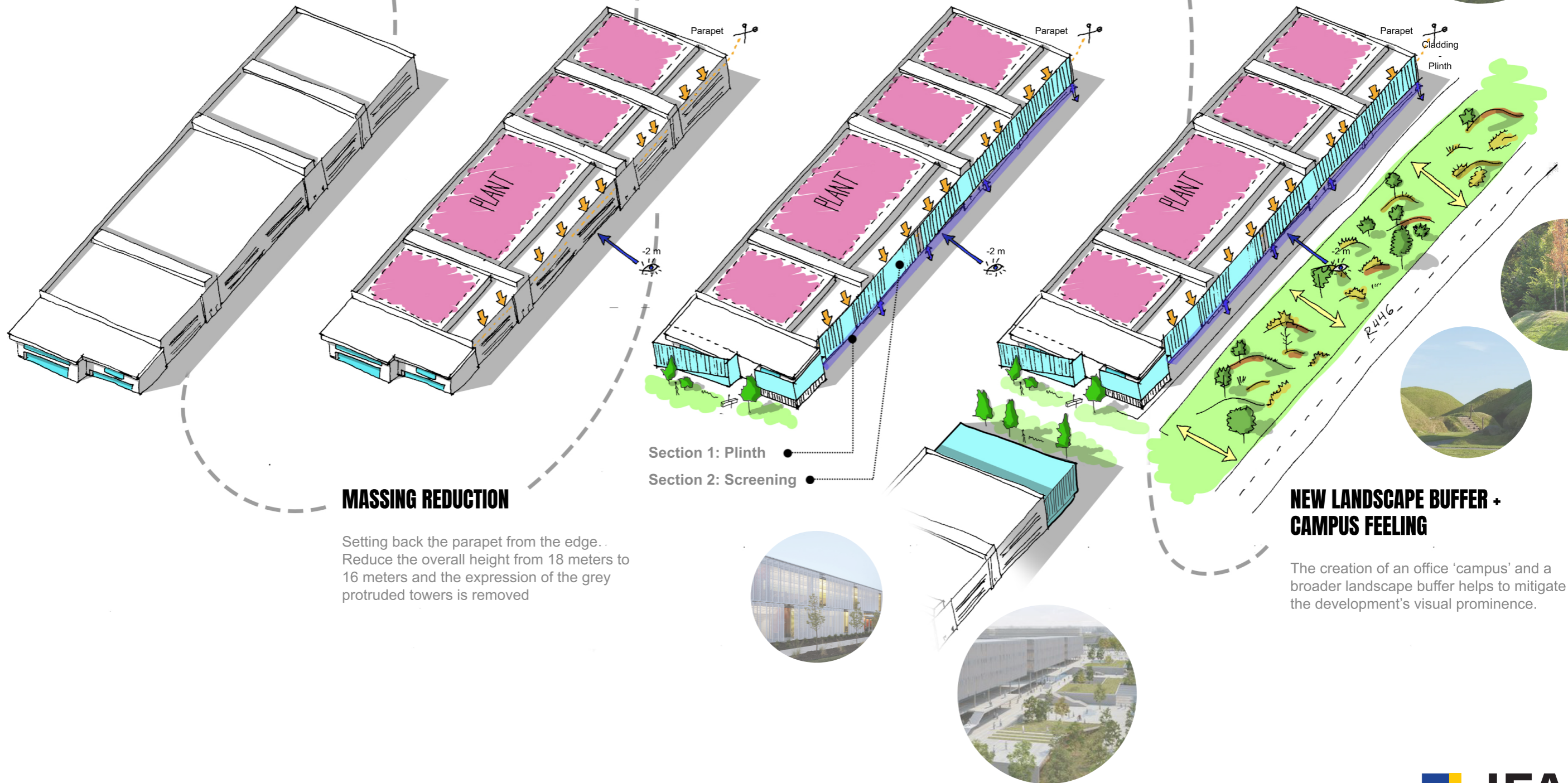
A screening is included wrapping around the building to provide a new attractive expression.

MASSING REDUCTION

Setting back the parapet from the edge. . Reduce the overall height from 18 meters to 16 meters and the expression of the grey protruded towers is removed

NEW LANDSCAPE BUFFER + CAMPUS FEELING

The creation of an office 'campus' and a broader landscape buffer helps to mitigate the development's visual prominence.



03 PROPOSED DESIGN

Design intentions

OFFICES

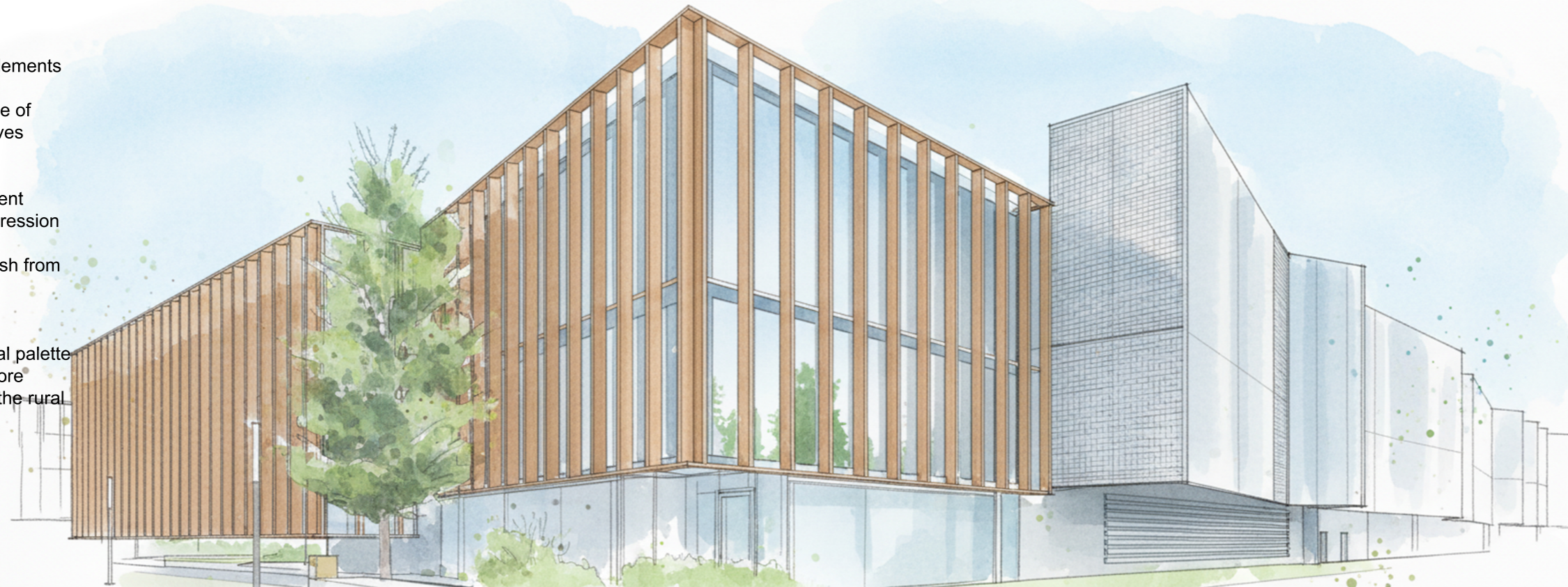
Use of vertical elements

Increases the use of glass and improves daylighting

Provides a different architectural expression

Easy to distinguish from the rest of the development

Include a material palette that responds more appropriately to the rural context



Conceptual sketch showing new screening and office end

SCREENING

Metallic materiality

Suggestive angles and shapes

Avoid monolithic forms

THE PLINTH

Breaks the scale

Grounds the building

Adapts to the operational doors and the topography

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CAMPUS

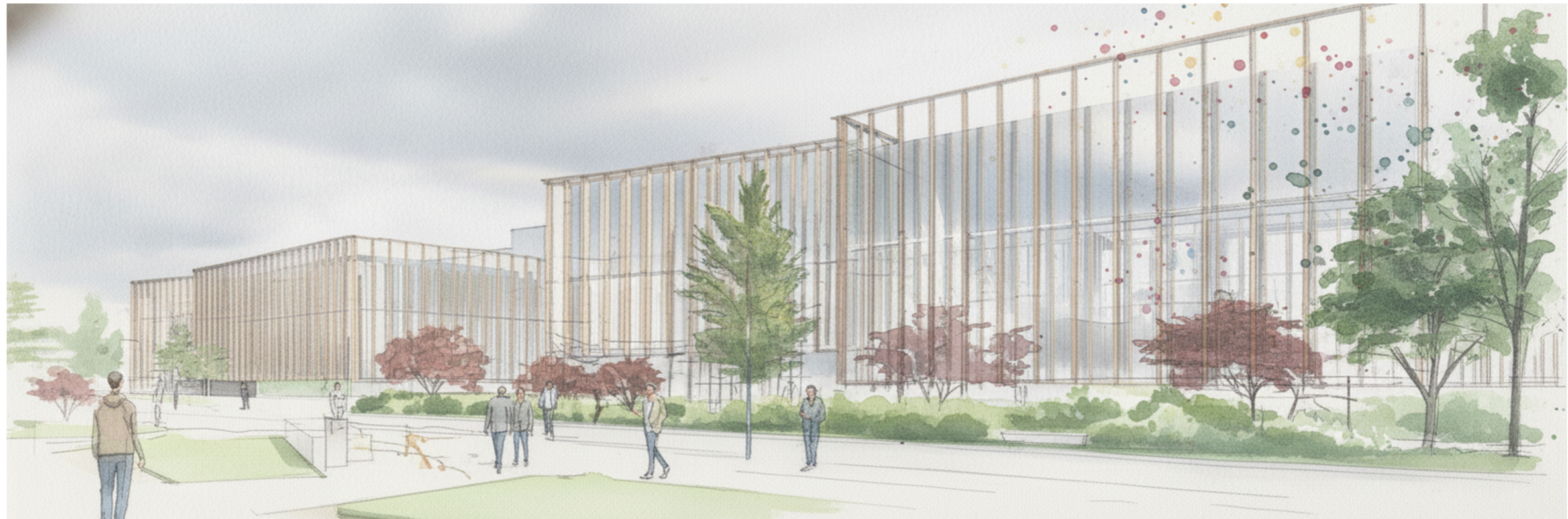
Generates a 'plaza' feeling

Introduces hard and soft landscaping

Grouping the offices together generates a development core

Results in a more human-friendly architectural appearance

Includes native Irish species which connects with the rural environment

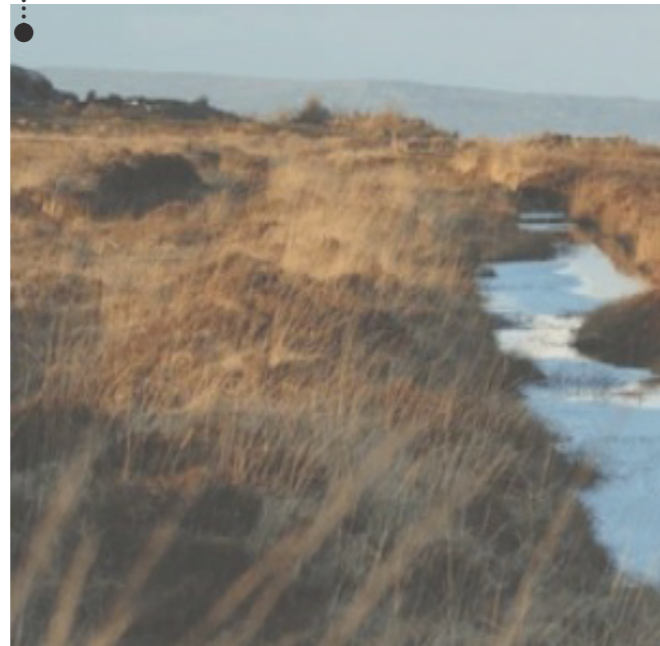
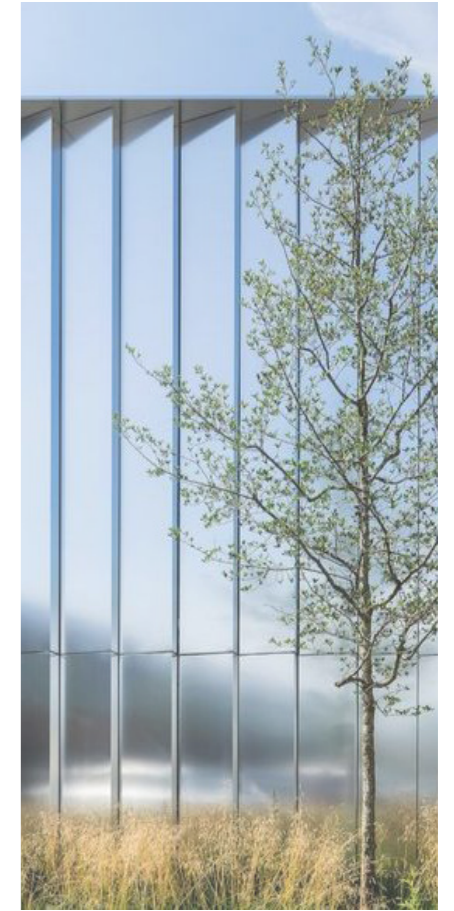
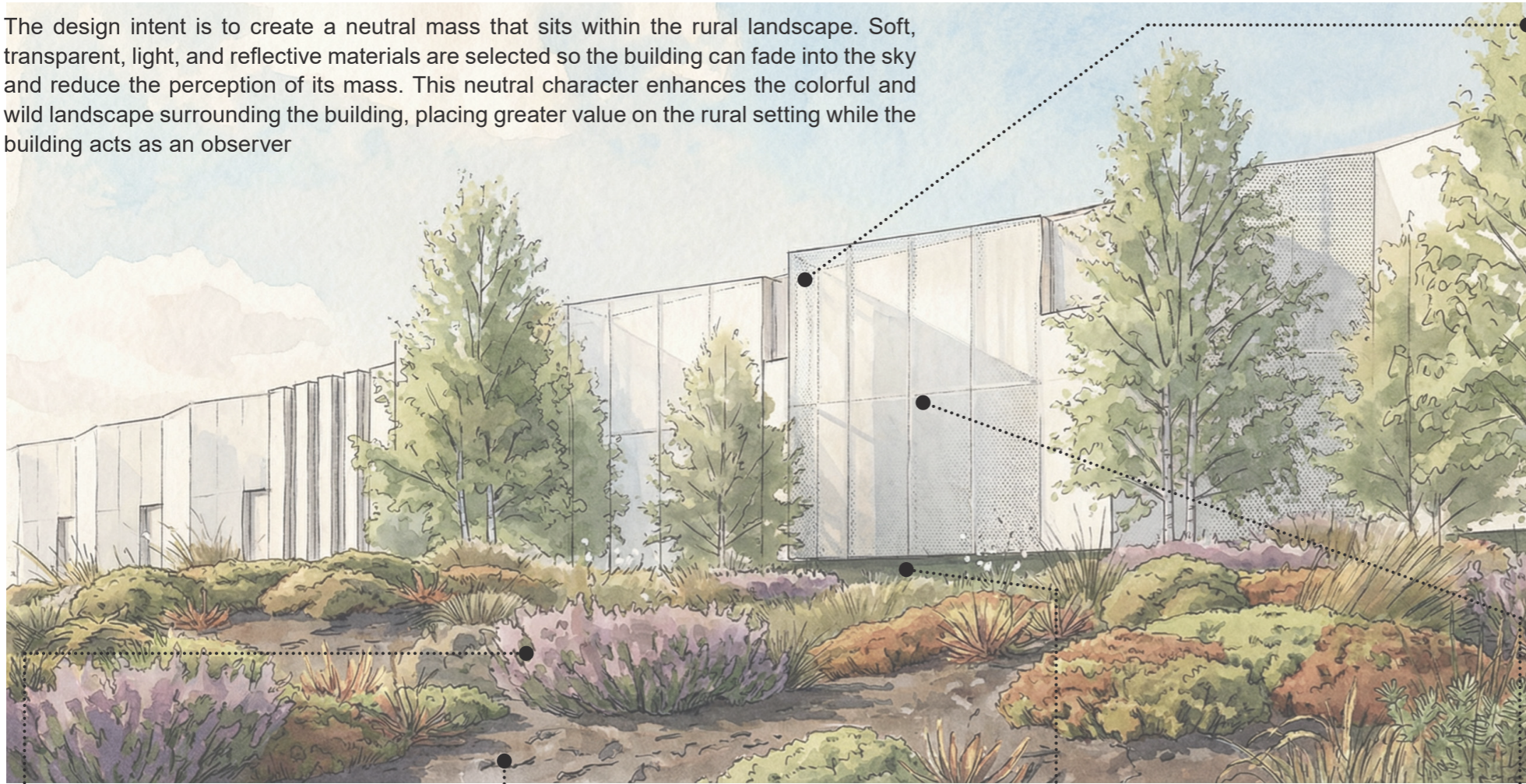


03 PROPOSED DESIGN

Material palette / design rationale

The design intent is to create a neutral mass that sits within the rural landscape. Soft, transparent, light, and reflective materials are selected so the building can fade into the sky and reduce the perception of its mass. This neutral character enhances the colorful and wild landscape surrounding the building, placing greater value on the rural setting while the building acts as an observer

The architecture will position itself in a secondary plane, where the rural landscape becomes the main character.



Typical earthy, wild vegetation types and colors are selected.

The plinth will be coloured using typical ground tones

The building looks to fade with the sky

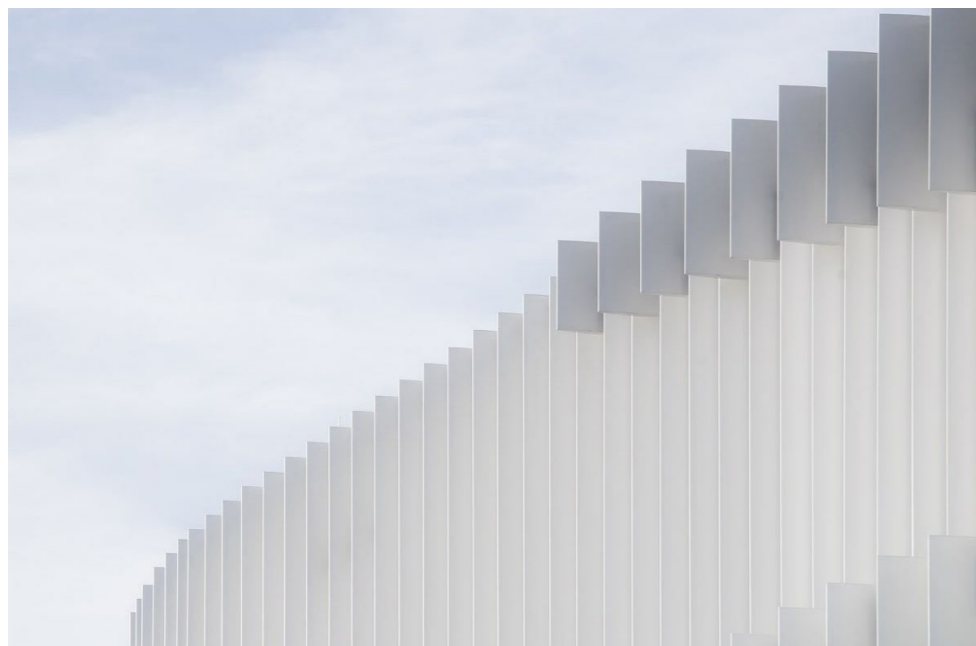
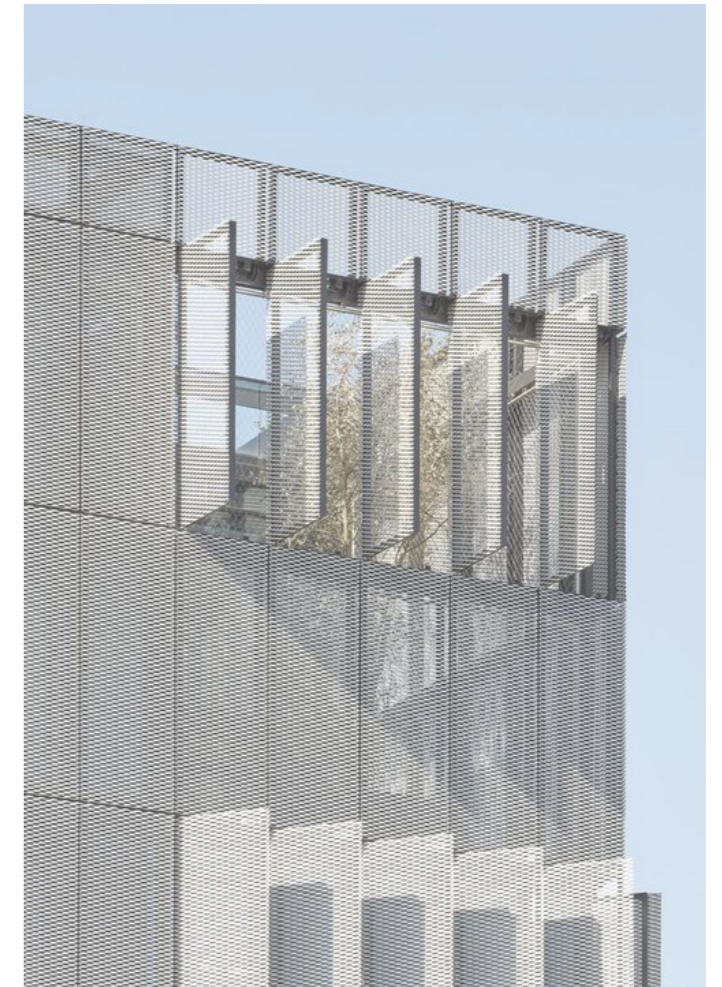
03 PROPOSED DESIGN

Material palette / design rationale

The screening consists of a composition of different combinable modules that create a play of shadows and reflections throughout the day. The angles, openings, and subtle shapes of the panels break up the building's mass and generate multiple dynamic façades as the day progresses, avoiding a purely monolithic industrial appearance. The material palette is based on perforated aluminium sheets that reinforce the veil concept and introduce a lightweight double skin. It is worth noting that perforated metal is a material commonly found in the Irish countryside context.



In addition to the shadow game, the metallic material and selected color of the façade seek to create a form that can imitate and adapt to the colors of the Irish sky, allowing the mass to fade into the horizon while giving greater importance to the landscape.



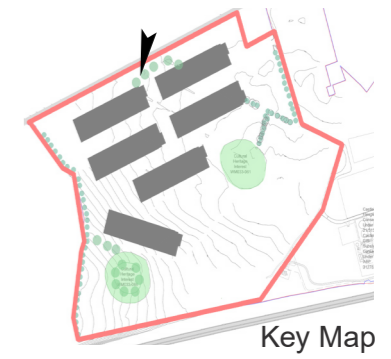
Proposed screening shown at two different times of day — with changing shadows and reflections



References from existing perforated steel buildings

04 VISUALISATIONS

Architectural enhancement

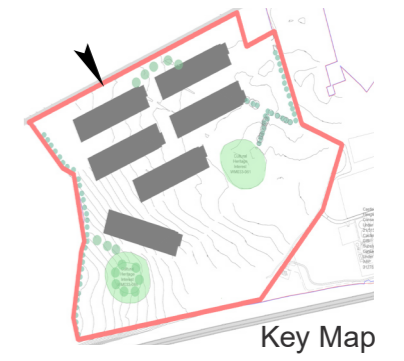


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Amended scheme - Corner view from office end

04 VISUALISATIONS

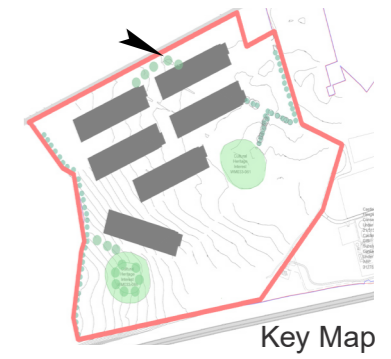
Architectural enhancement



Amended scheme - Front elevation - Road side

04 VISUALISATIONS

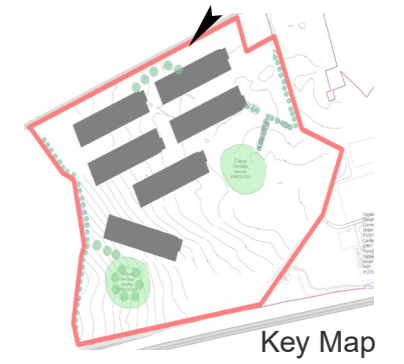
Architectural enhancement



Amended scheme - Front elevation - Road side and landscaped buffer

04 VISUALISATIONS

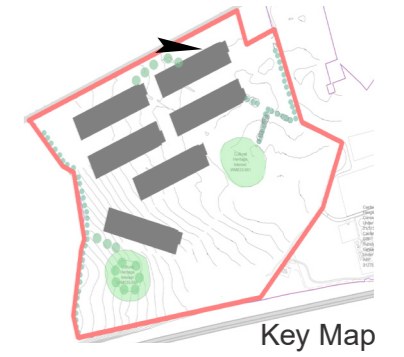
Architectural enhancement



Amended scheme - Front elevation - Road side showing both buildings

04 VISUALISATIONS

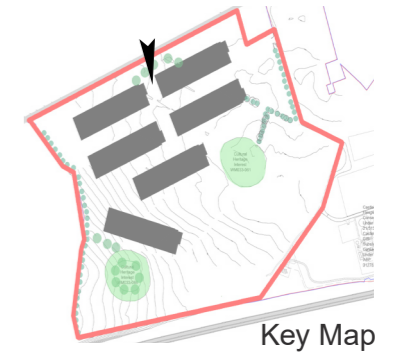
Architectural enhancement



Amended scheme - Front elevation - Closer look from landscaped buffer

04 VISUALISATIONS

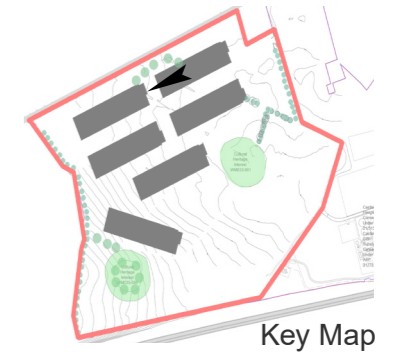
Architectural enhancement



Amended scheme - Office campus view

04 VISUALISATIONS

Architectural enhancement

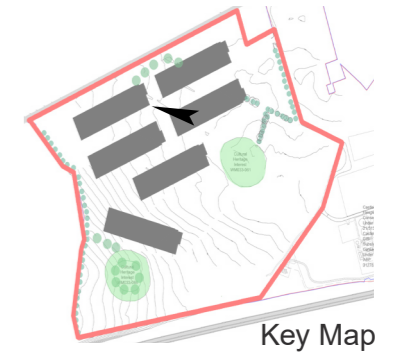


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Amended scheme - Proposed office facade

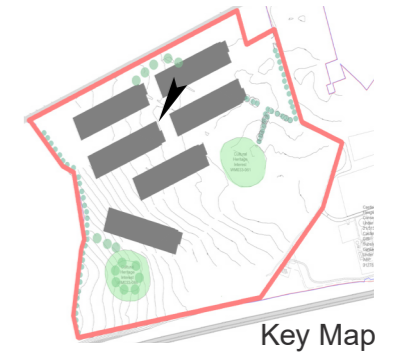
04 VISUALISATIONS

Architectural enhancement



Amended scheme - Proposed campus plaza

04 VISUALISATIONS
Architectural enhancement



Key Map

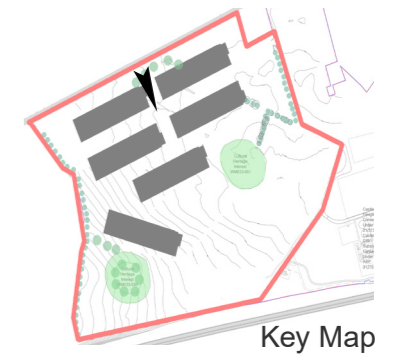


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Amended scheme - Proposed campus plaza closer look

04 VISUALISATIONS

Architectural enhancement



Amended scheme - Landscaped campus pathways



A R C H I T E C T S

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