



HB-RKD-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-3000

HODSON BAY WATERFRONT PARK

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STATEMENT

Planning Submission

August 2026



The Hodson Bay Waterfront Park Project is co-funded by the government of Ireland and the European Union through the EU Just Transition Fund

DESIGN THAT WORKS



Hodson Bay

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Section 00

Introduction + Executive Summary

00 Introduction + Executive Summary

Applicant + Professional Team

This Design Statement is prepared by RKD Architects on behalf of Roscommon County Council to outline the concepts behind the proposal for the development of Hodson Bay’s new Water Sports Pavilion Development

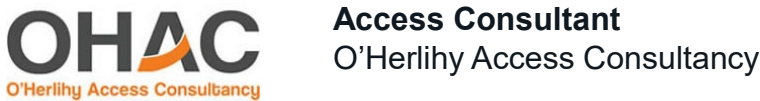
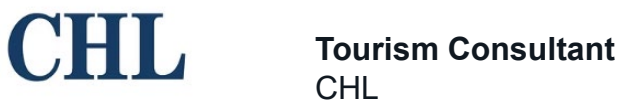
This document explains the collective thinking behind the proposed scheme, and how the Applicant brief responds to the site context. This Design Statement should be read in conjunction with the other documents and drawings submitted in support of the application. All figures and illustrations within this document are for illustrative purposes only, unless otherwise noted.

Funding and Programme Partners



The Hodson Bay Waterfront Park Project is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the EU Just Transition Fund.

Project Design Team



00 Introduction + Executive Summary

Executive Summary

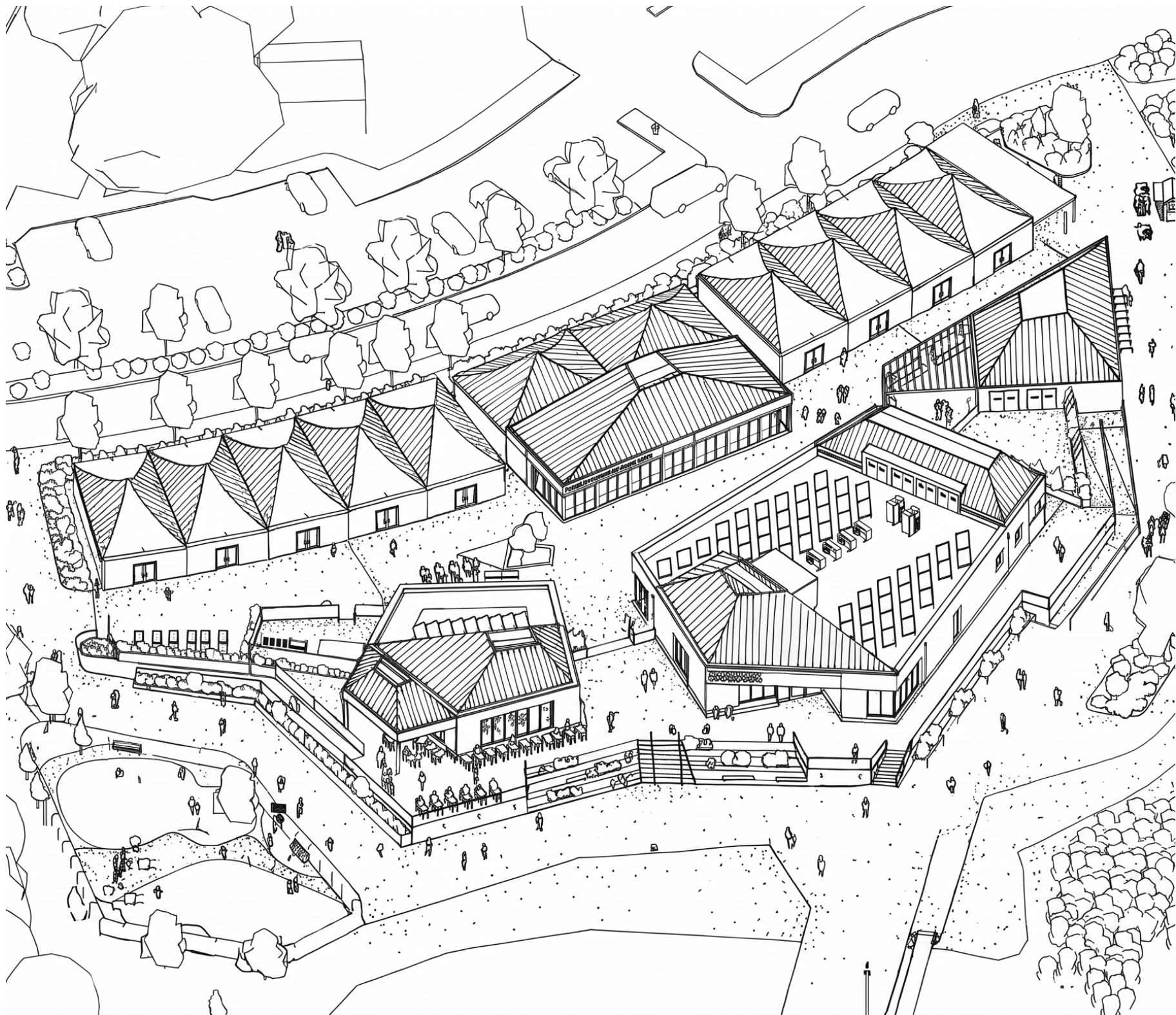
The Hodson Bay Waterfront Park Project is a regeneration initiative lead by Roscommon County Council. The masterplan and civil infrastructure is led by Civic Engineers. This statement details the architectural building proposals designed by RKD.

Water Sports Pavilion Development

- Water Sports Building:** A single-storey building housing the water sports reception, safety briefing rooms, staff facilities, offices, changing rooms, and toilets.
- Waterfront Café:** A single-storey space for visitors and the public.
- Maintenance Building:** A single-storey support space for equipment care and storage.
- Outdoor Amenities:** Outdoor showers, secure bin storage, and an attractive, secure courtyard plaza that can be safely closed off after hours.
- Marina Building:** A single-storey facility serving the proposed marina, incorporating toilets and hot showers.
- Changing Pavilion:** An outdoor changing shelter located on the northern edge of the site, specifically designed for local lake swimmers.

Project Vision

1. The project vision focuses on creating a flexible, high-quality water sports facility that serves both water sports users and the wider community.
2. The proposal responds to the context, history and heritage of the area. Located next to a SPA and SAC, it aims to minimise its overall impact on the natural landscape while reflecting the historical character of the site. The design is influenced by the form and arrangement of crannogs, helping to connect the proposal to the cultural history of Lough Ree.
3. A key aim is to activate the public realm. The proposal extends approximately 550 metres along the edge of Lough Ree, creating a necklace of activities from north to south. These interconnected amenities are linked by the landscape proposal, encouraging movement through the site.



Section 01

Site, Context + Brief

01 Site, Context + Brief

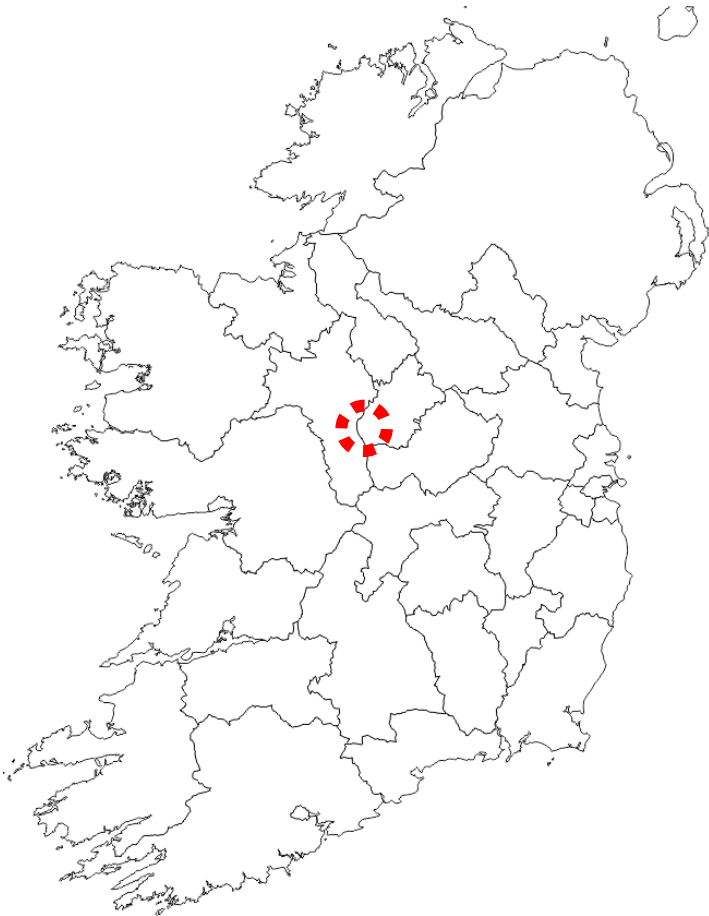
Site + Context

Hodson Bay is located on the western edge of Lough Ree. The site is close to Athlone Town and is directly connected to the River Shannon lake system. Its lakeside setting makes it suitable for water-based recreation, tourism, and outdoor leisure use.

The site is easily accessed from the surrounding Midlands region and from the N6

The proposed development is located approximately:

- 8 kilometres from Athlone town centre by road.
- 30 kilometres from Roscommon town
- 85 kilometres from Galway
- 125 kilometres from Limerick
- 130 kilometres from Dublin



01 Site, Context + Brief

Site Description

Hodson Bay is located on a peninsula, accessed by the L2020 road directly off the N6. The L2020 is a country road bordered by residential houses. Near the end of the road, the Hodson Bay Golf Course sits to the west. The Hodson Bay Hotel lies immediately adjacent to the site of the proposed development, on the west of the spine road running through the site, opposite the marina and existing water sports facility.

Moving north along the water's edge, the landscape transitions into a flat, grassy area bordered by reedbeds. Here, the existing water sports facility, a single-story concrete block building with a pitched roof is surrounded by a cluster of temporary white marquees that completely enclose the space.

Further north, a quieter patch of grass sits in front of another car park, which is popular with locals as a spot for wading and swimming in the lake.

Legend

- 1. North portion of the site / wild swimming area
- 2. Existing car parking
- 3. Inflatable water sports adventure park
- 4. Existing Water Sports Operator
- 5. Hodson Bay Hotel
- 6. Pier
- 7. Existing car parking
- 8. L2020 Access Road to Hodson Bay
- 9. Athlone Golf Club



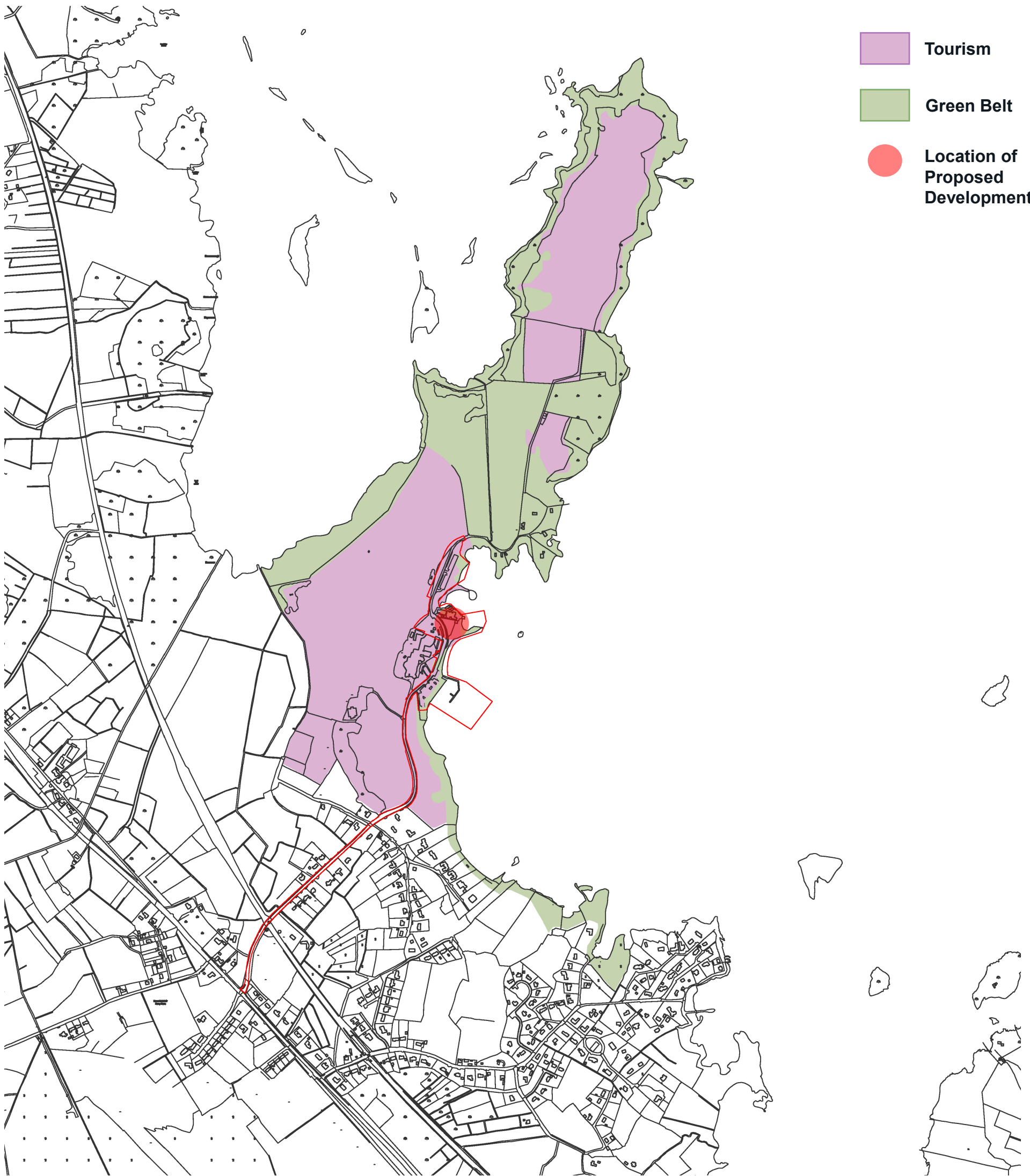
01 Site, Context + Brief

Planning Policy and Context

Hodson Bay Policy Objectives

- HB 1**
Facilitate leisure, tourism, and amenity developments in zoned areas to enhance Hodson Bay / Barrymore as a key tourism attraction in County Roscommon and regionally.
- HB 2**
Support the expansion of existing tourism and leisure facilities while ensuring public access to maintain Hodson Bay as a valuable amenity resource.
- HB 3**
Encourage high-quality, architecturally meritorious developments that respect the area's environmental and visual sensitivity.
- HB 4**
Allow low-intensity tourism and amenity developments (e.g., camping, glamping, walking/cycling routes) in undeveloped areas near Natura 2000 sites, using existing infrastructure.
- HB 5**
Promote low-intensity green infrastructure accessible to all users.
- HB 6**
Require new permanent facilities to meet high architectural standards.
- HB 8** Maintain greenbelt lands as a visual and environmental buffer to preserve natural amenities along waterways, rivers, and floodplains.
- HB 9**
Protect greenbelt lands from inappropriate developments that could harm the environment, biodiversity, or amenity value.
- HB 10**
Safeguard flood-prone lands from developments that could negatively impact the environment.

Refer to P169-170 of the Roscommon County Development plan 2022-2028 Vol II for further information



01 Site, Context + Brief

Site History

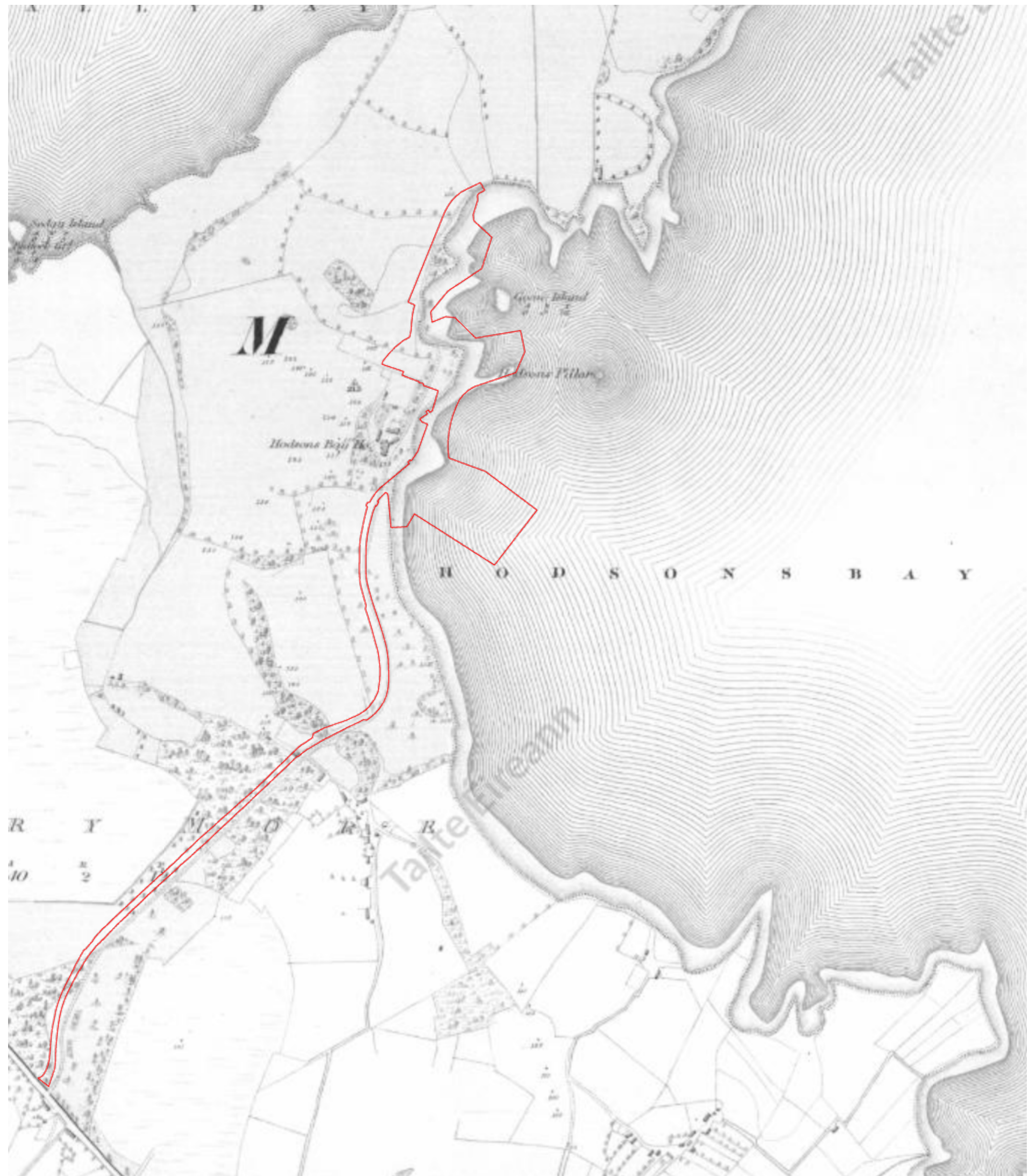
Lough Ree has a rich history dating back to early medieval times. Nearby islands, such as Inchcleraun and Hare Island, were home to ancient monasteries, and the area has strong historical links to Viking activity and Norman settlements.

The Hodson Name

The bay gets its name from the Hodson family, who owned a 35-acre estate here in the 18th and 19th centuries. Historically, Hodson Bay was a quiet family landholding rather than a busy village or town.

Modern Tourism (1940s to Present)

The bay transitioned into a leisure destination in 1949 when a small, family-run hotel first opened. In 1992, the O'Sullivan family redeveloped the property, expanding it into the hotel resort seen today.



01 Site, Context + Brief

Ecology + Sustainability

Refer to MKO ecological constraints report

Hodson Bay is designated as an SPA and SAC as part of the Natura 2000 network. An SPA, or Special Protection Area, protects important bird species and their habitats, while an SAC, or Special Area of Conservation, protects valuable habitats, plants, animals, and ecosystems.

The architectural proposal is carefully considered to offset any building elements away from the protected areas.

Design decisions should minimise disturbance to wildlife, avoid habitat loss, control surface water run-off, reduce light and noise pollution, and respect the ecological sensitivity of the site. This required early consultation with ecologists and planners, and careful site strategy.

To protect the balance of the Lough Ree SPA and SAC, the project focuses development on a previously developed brownfield site. By utilising and tying into existing hardstanding utility lines, we avoid habitat fragmentation and ground disturbance, to minimise impact on the natural shoreline.

Conservation of Energy

The proposed buildings will minimise operational energy demand through a fabric first approach, the use of energy efficient building services and the integration of appropriate renewable energy technologies.

The proposed building will be designed to comply with the requirements of Technical Guidance Document Part L (2022) – Buildings Other Than Dwellings and achieve the Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) standard.

Refer to Civic's accompanying Energy Statement for more information.

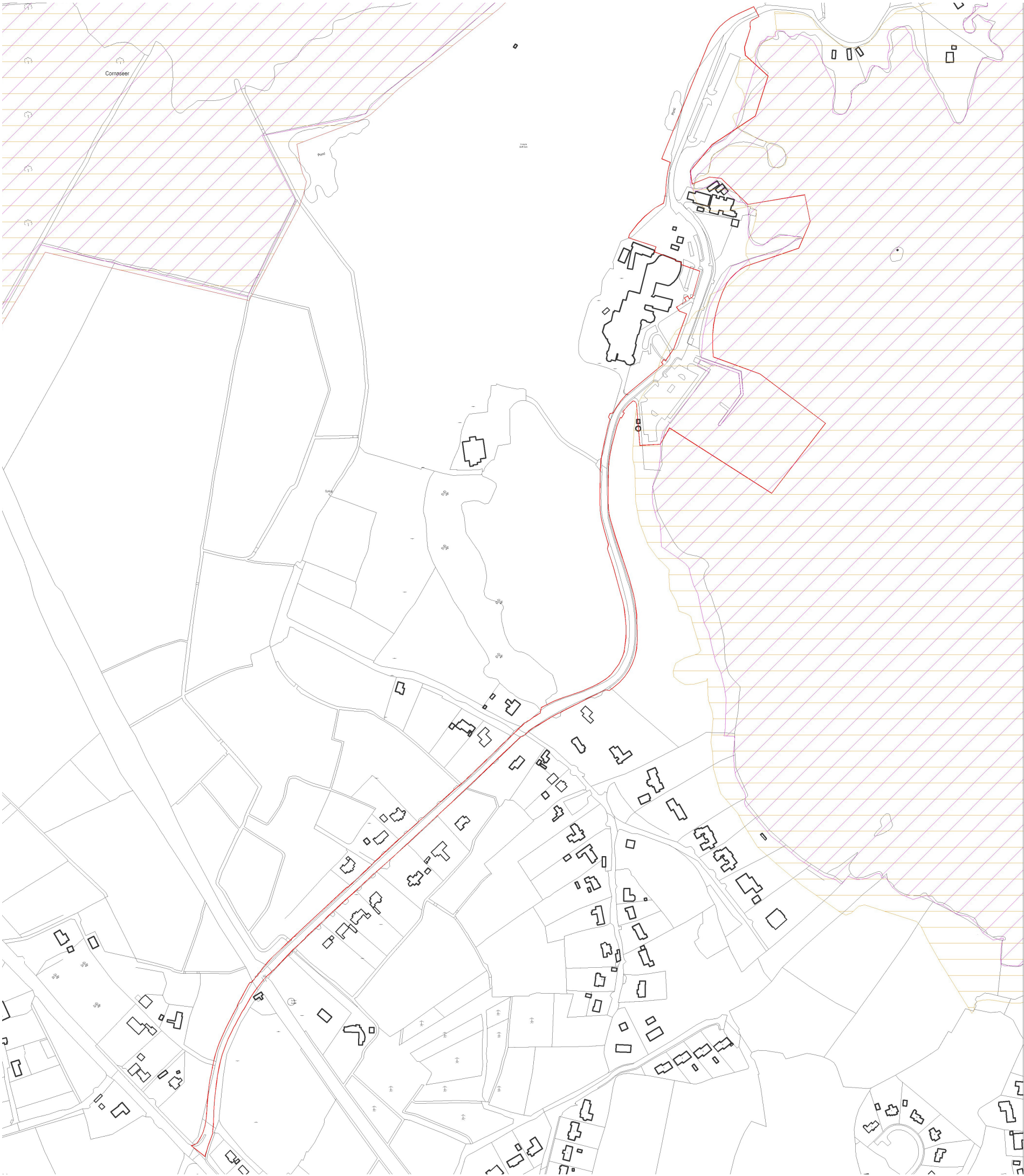
Legend



SPA (Special Protection Area)



SAC (Special Area of Conservation)



01 Site, Context + Brief

Flood Risk

The Lakeside Flood Risk

The site sits directly on the shores of Lough Ree, and it is exposed to lake flooding:

Flood Zone A: is High Risk, which represents the 1-in-100-year flood zone (1% chance of flooding in any given year)

Flood Zone B: is Moderate Risk, representing the 1-in-1000-year flood zone (0.1% chance)

The proposed water sports facility and café are classified as "Less Vulnerable" developments. Because of this classification, a formal planning Justification Test was required to locate the building in this area. This test has been successfully satisfied as part of the project's Flood Risk Assessment.

The Finished Floor and ground levels of the Water Sports Building, Café, and terrace have been set to +38.00m OD (Ordinance Datum), 0.50m above the extreme flood level of 37.50m.

Refer to Civic's flood risk assessment for further information

Design Response:

- The floor level for main occupiable buildings for the water sports facility are set at 38.00.

Note: Ordinance datum is a fixed vertical reference used for ground levels, river levels and predicted flood levels ie. 38.0. OD means 38.0m metres above the relevant Ordnance Datum.

Legend

- Flood Zone A** - 100 Year Flood Extent (1% AEP)
- Flood Zone B** - 1000 Year Flood Extent (0.1% AEP)



01 Site, Context + Brief

Site Photo's



01 Site, Context + Brief

Site Photo's



Image: Drone photograph from April 2025

01 Site, Context + Brief

Site Photo's



Image: Drone photograph from April 2025

01 Site, Context + Brief

Existing Context: Scale + Character + Materials



Central to the site is Hodson Bay hotel, a large white-rendered hotel with dark pitched roofs, repeated dormer windows with a predominantly glazed extension to the north.



The Existing Water Sports Operator building is a single-storey blockwork structure with yellow rendered walls and a series of pitched roofs. It is located centrally within the site and is surrounded by a hard concrete terrace.



Scattered white tensile marquees occupy a substantial portion of the centre of the site.



The northern section of the site is characterised by mostly flat grassland bordering Lough Ree, with the area backed by surface car parking.



The southern section of Hodson Bay is dominated primarily by car parking, with views towards the water framed by a concrete pier. This area has a more hard-surfaced, infrastructural character.



The natural landscape of Hodson Bay is open and flat. The site is defined by grassed ground, reedbeds, and the edge of Lough Ree. The predominately flat topography leaves the water, sky, and reedbeds as the dominant features of the landscape.

01 Site, Context + Brief

Existing Context: Scale + Character + Materials



01 View from activity centre



02 View towards pontoon



03 View from main road



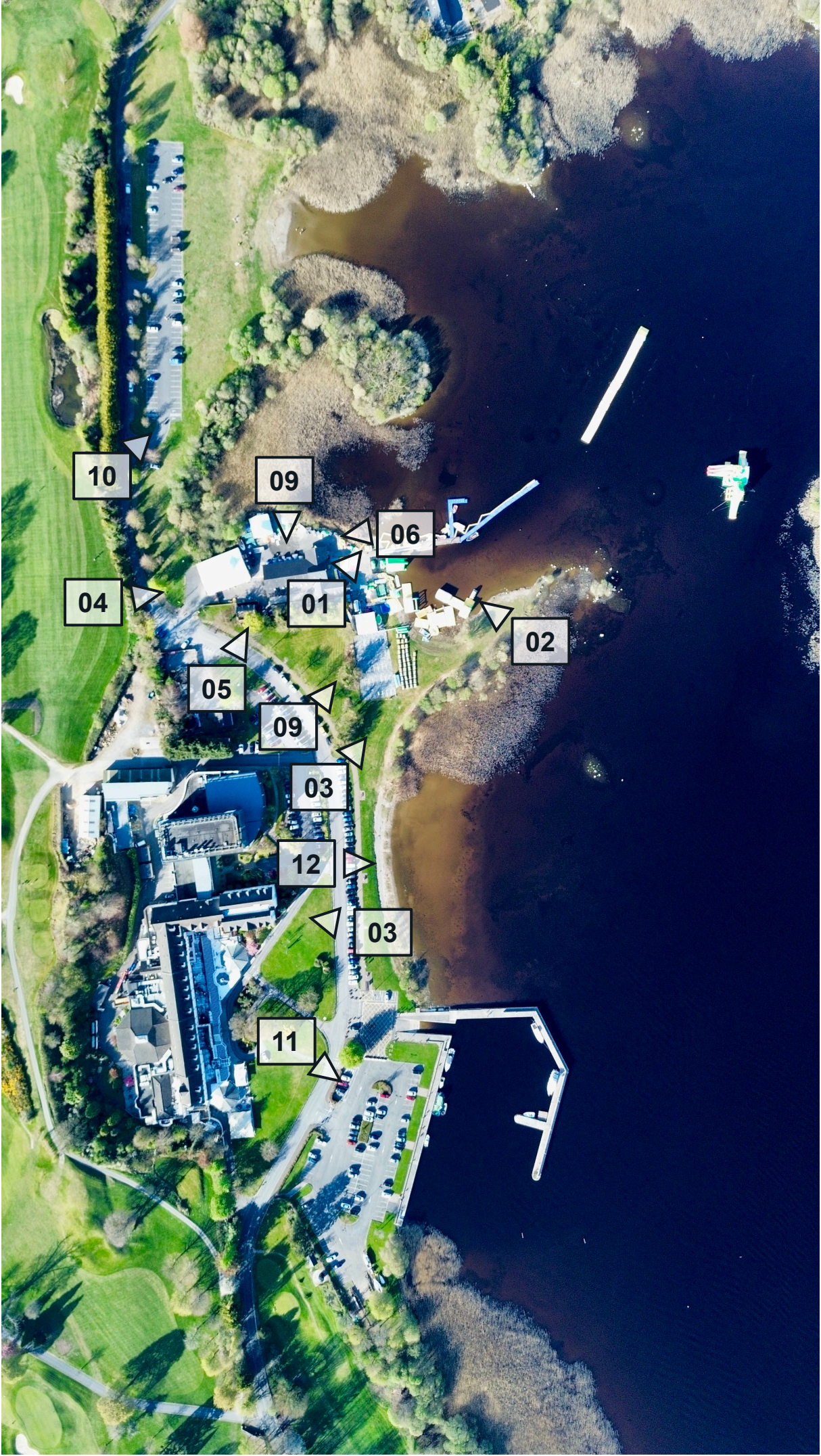
04 View from entrance



05 Existing WC



06 Safety / wet suit tent



01 Site, Context + Brief

Existing Context: Site Plan

Site Boundary
sqm 90144
(ha 9.0144)



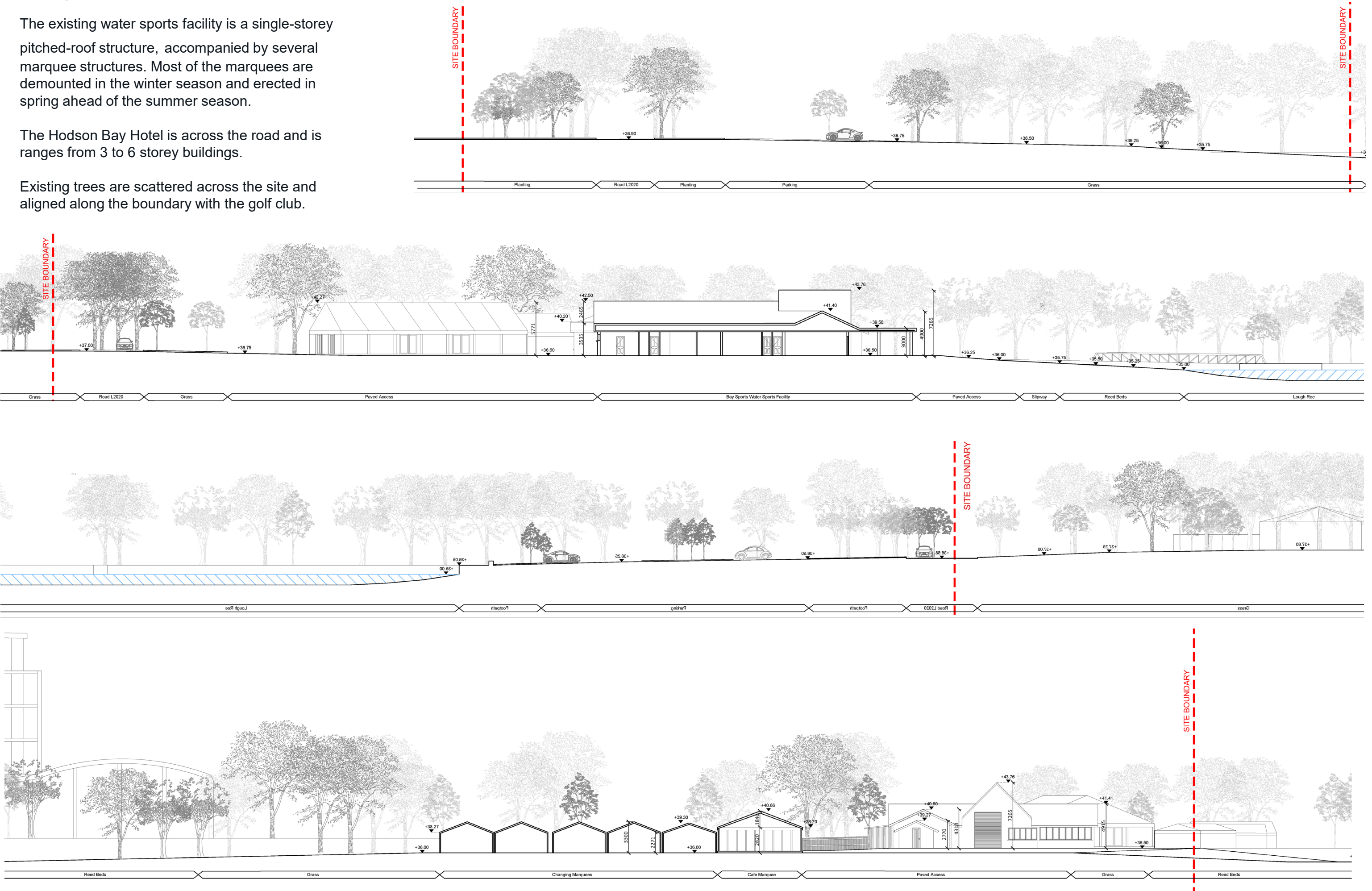
01 Site, Context + Brief

Existing Context: Scale + Character + Materials

The existing water sports facility is a single-storey pitched-roof structure, accompanied by several marquee structures. Most of the marquees are demounted in the winter season and erected in spring ahead of the summer season.

The Hodson Bay Hotel is across the road and is ranges from 3 to 6 storey buildings.

Existing trees are scattered across the site and aligned along the boundary with the golf club.



01 Site, Context + Brief

Universal Design Principles

1. Equitable Use

All facilities, including the shoreline promenade, should feature wide, level pathways and flush finishes to accommodate wheelchairs, strollers, and mobility aids. The architecture will create an inviting arrival experience with a clear hierarchy of spaces and intuitive pedestrian flows that welcome everyone equally.

2. Flexibility in Use

The design should accommodate diverse abilities, ages, and group types. The proposed water sports facility will offer multiple entry points and adaptable equipment for various skill levels, while the architectural layout is highly flexible to allow easy adaptation for different seasons and recreational uses over time.

3. Simple and Intuitive Use

To prevent disorientation in busy areas, the proposal will feature a straightforward layout supported by a consistent visual language, colour-coded mapping, and universal symbols. This clear wayfinding system extends beyond the site to coordinate with key public transport links and local hotels.

4. Perceptible Information

Crucial information will be communicated through multiple sensory modes, combining visual displays, tactile elements, and audible instructions. This is further enhanced by integrating digital and smartphone applications to guide visitors seamlessly to activities and locations.

5. Tolerance for Error

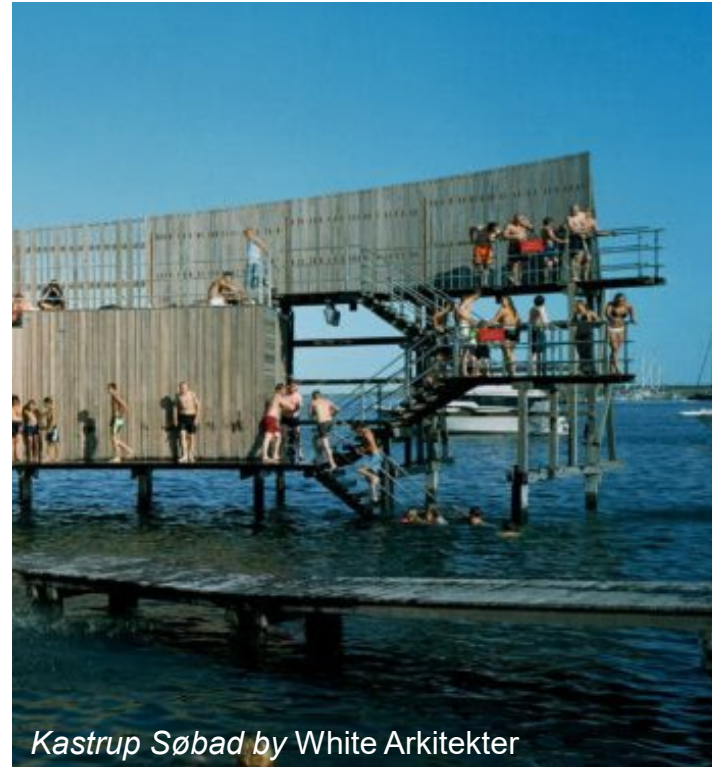
Hazards and accidental slips will be minimised through non-slip surfaces, secure railings, and a fluid layout that avoids sharp corners or sudden drops. Detailed design of exposed water edges will use distinct lighting, materials, and contrasting colours to ensure high visibility of all transitions.

6. Low Physical Effort

The scheme will be designed to minimise fatigue and allow comfortable movement for those with limited strength or stamina. This will be achieved by incorporating automatic doors, gentle ramp gradients, and strategically positioned resting areas throughout the entire development.

7. Size and Space for Approach and Use

Generous spatial clearances will ensure a comfortable approach, reach, and usability for all visitors regardless of mobility or body size. This principle is directly integrated into the marina extension, which features accessible docking options for safe embarkation and disembarkation.



Kastrup Søbad by White Arkitekter



Whitlingham Adventure by Robin Snell



Quayside Watersports Centre by Urban Agency



Centre of Water and Ice Sports by Restudio Jacaszek

01 Site, Context + Brief

Universal Design Principles

Designing for Neurodiversity and Universal Design

Designing for Neurodiversity

1. **Lighting:** Provide areas with softer, lower-level lighting.
2. **Acoustics:** Create a mix of active and quiet spaces using sound-absorbing materials.
3. **Wayfinding:** Ensure clear, consistent navigation in and around all buildings.
4. **Choice:** Offer a variety of different spaces and seating options.
5. **Calm Spaces:** Provide quiet retreat zones away from busy circulation areas.
6. **Temperature & Shelter:** Maintain moderate indoor temperatures and provide outdoor protection from sun and rain.
7. **Facilitate Planning:** Use clear physical and digital mapping to help visitors plan their trip in advance.

Key Priorities / Actions

Audit and Learn: Review the existing site to identify accessibility barriers, focusing on the needs of the elderly and those with physical or visual impairments.

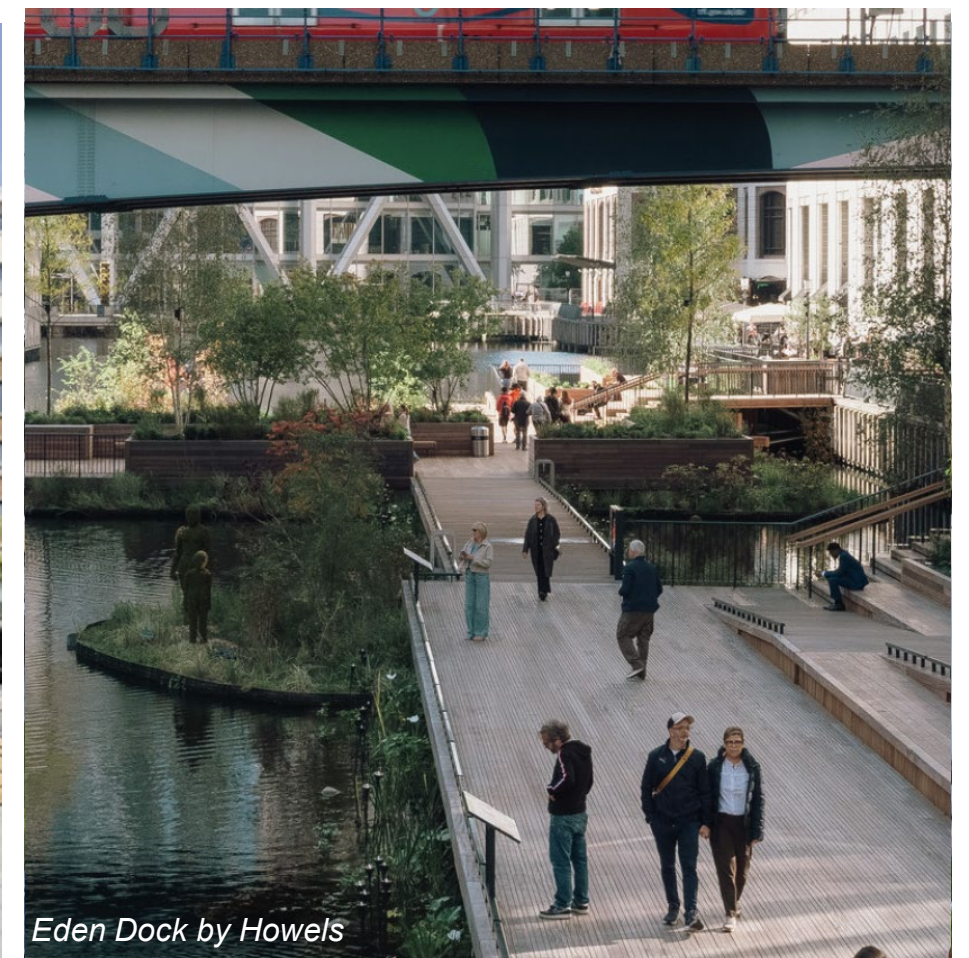
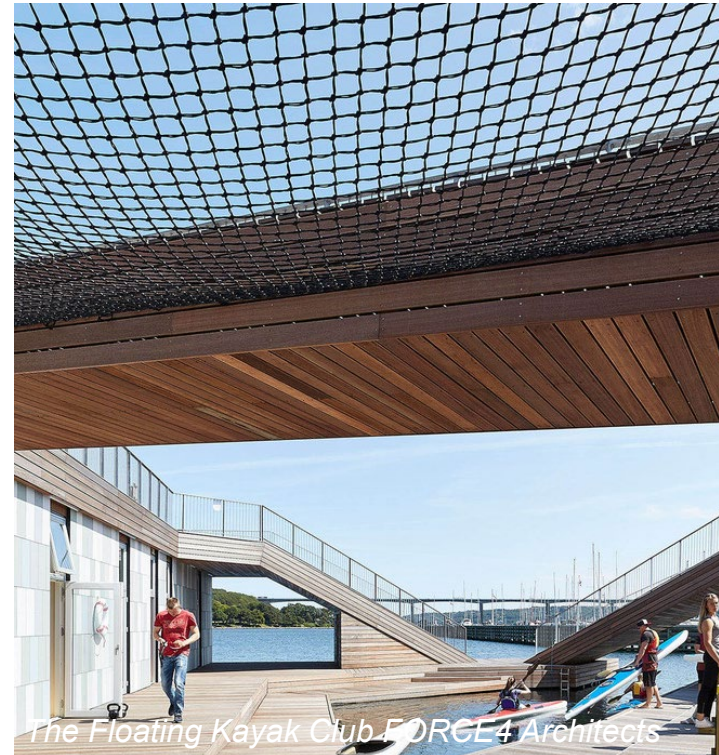
Stakeholder Engagement: Work with disability representative groups and the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design to ensure the site is usable by all.

Risk Mitigation: Carry out risk assessments to design out hazards and prevent accidents, especially for vulnerable users.

Inclusive Amenities: Install high-quality seating and street furniture so people of all abilities can relax and enjoy the waterfront.

Wayfinding Enhancements: Add targeted navigation elements to help visually impaired visitors find their way easily.

Universal Design Compliance: Ensure all proposals strictly align with the seven key principles from the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design. By embedding these principles, we will create a waterfront that is functional, safe, and enjoyable for everyone, regardless of age or ability.



Section 02

Design Development

02 Design Development

Design Vision + Objectives

The proposal for the Water Sports Pavilion reflects the design vision and objectives for waterfront plan. The project will revitalise the full 550-metre stretch of waterfront and create a destination for the community and visitors.

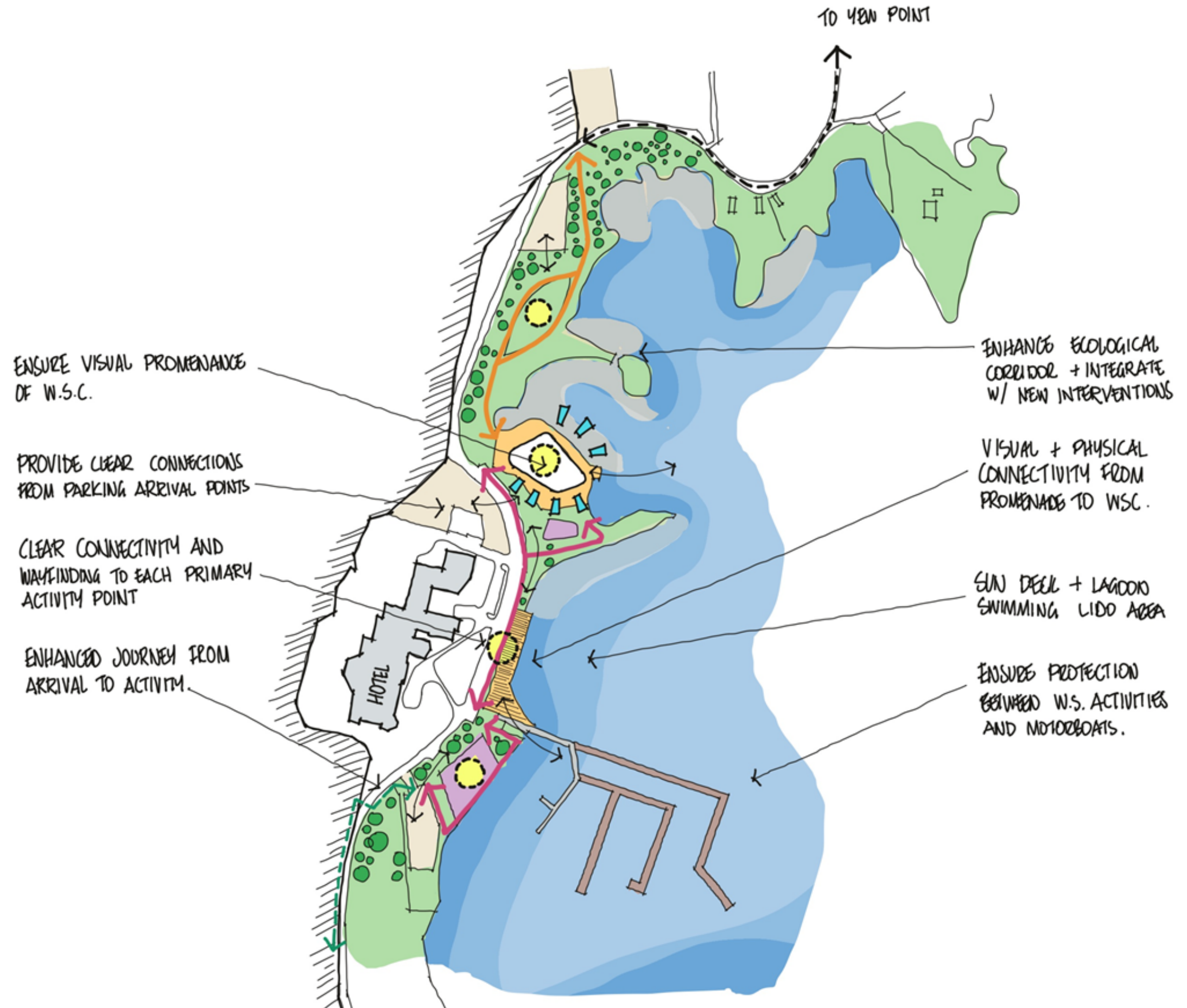
Lough Ree is the defining feature of the site. The earlier feasibility work by Dickson Fitzgerald Architects drew on the arrangement of Irish lakeside dwellings, particularly crannogs. RKD supported the concept and developed it further as part of the architectural approach.

Given the site's proximity to the Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation, the design intent is to respect the existing ecological context. The proposed architectural response is to create a positive relationship between the users of the building and the waterfront. The integrated landscape, engineering and architectural design ensures that the waterfront is activated for use by people. All car parking is moved to contained locations, ensuring the public realm, promenade, marina, water sports, and swimming area are car-free zones.

The water sports pavilion development is located on the site of the existing water sports facility. This location is seen as the central point of the waterfront park, where visitors can come together not only to take part in water sports activities, but also to meet, socialise and spend time at the café, outdoor terrace and adjoining playground.

The wider landscape strategy aims to create a visitor experience from top to bottom. A series of activities and public spaces are distributed along the waterfront and connected by walking routes, and paths through existing and proposed planting. These landscape interventions allow visitors to better experience the lake and the site's natural ecology.

Together, these elements form the Hodson Bay "necklace" a connected sequence of destinations located at the base of the peninsula. This route creates a recreational corridor towards Yew Point, while establishing Hodson Bay as a primary public destination.



02 Design Development

Original Design Brief

Masterplan Brief

The goal of the Hodson Bay Waterfront Project is to transform the shoreline into an accessible tourism and leisure destination. The general brief focused on revitalising the entire public realm, reclaiming the waterfront for pedestrians, upgrading the marina, and introducing safe active travel routes and landscaping

The Water Sports Facility Brief

As the project architects, our primary role was to develop the design for the new water sports pavilion development. The core brief for this building required:

A Fit-for-Purpose Facility: Replacing the outdated, flood-prone temporary structures with a modern building to house the water sports operator

Flood-Resilient Design: Elevating the building above flood levels so that it year-round

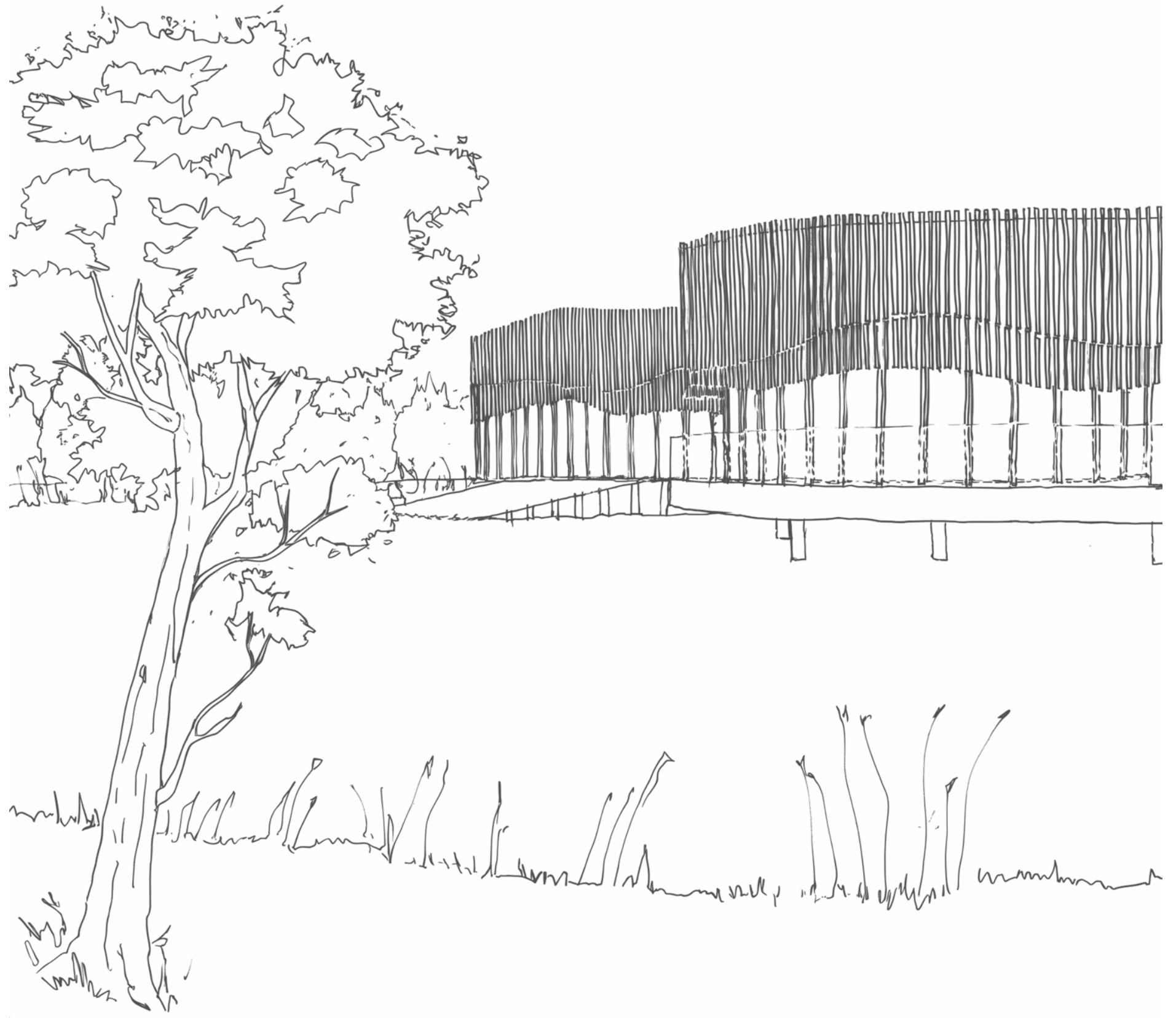
Architectural Expression: designing a structure that responds sensitively to its context.

Hodson Bay Constraints Study and Preferred Options Report

Prepared in 2023 by SLR Consulting Ireland on behalf of RCC, the report identified a strategy for long term development within the area as a flagship tourism facility.

Within this report, a preliminary study was completed by Dickson Fitzgerald Architects.

Their initial work established the basic concept of combining the water sports facility with a two-storey cafe. Our role during the current stage was to take these early, high-level ideas and develop them into resolved, functional architectural proposals that meet the physical, environmental, and operational realities of the site.



Feasibility study sketch by Dickson Fitzgerald Architects illustrating the concept of a crannog like building

02 Design Development

Brief Development

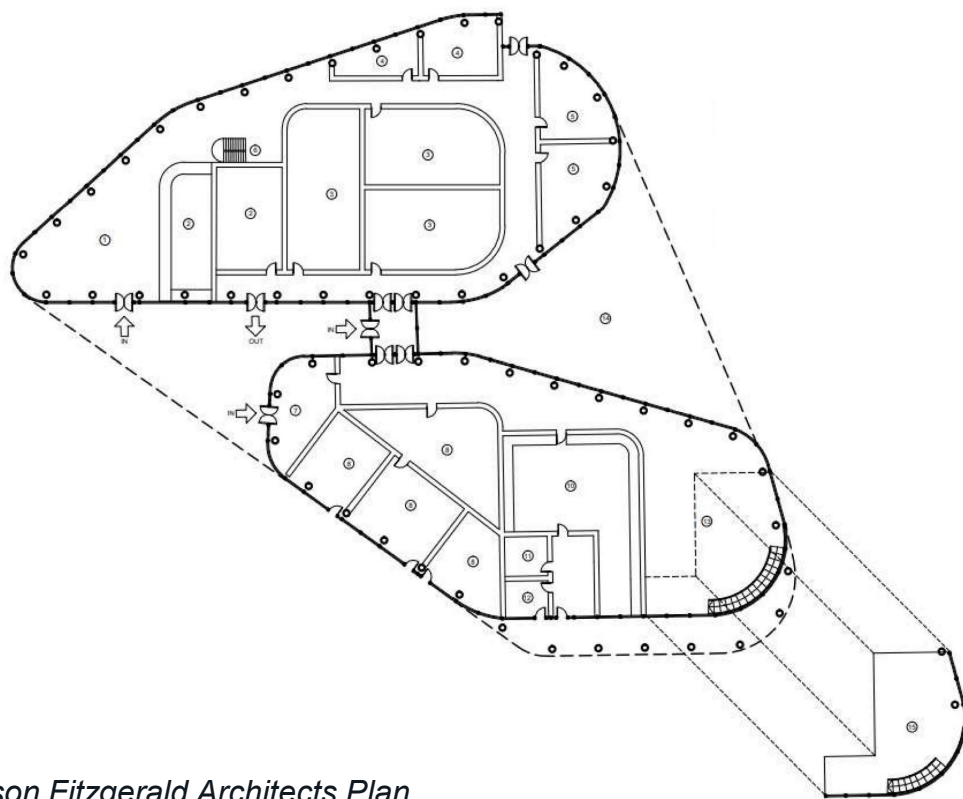
The next step was to analyse and expand on the initial feasibility design. While the previous study gave us a high-level understanding of the basic requirements, we used design team meetings to better interrogate the proposal.

The architecture is inspired by traditional crannogs. The brief and layout were interrogated by test fitting layouts on the site and having workshops with the client and design team.

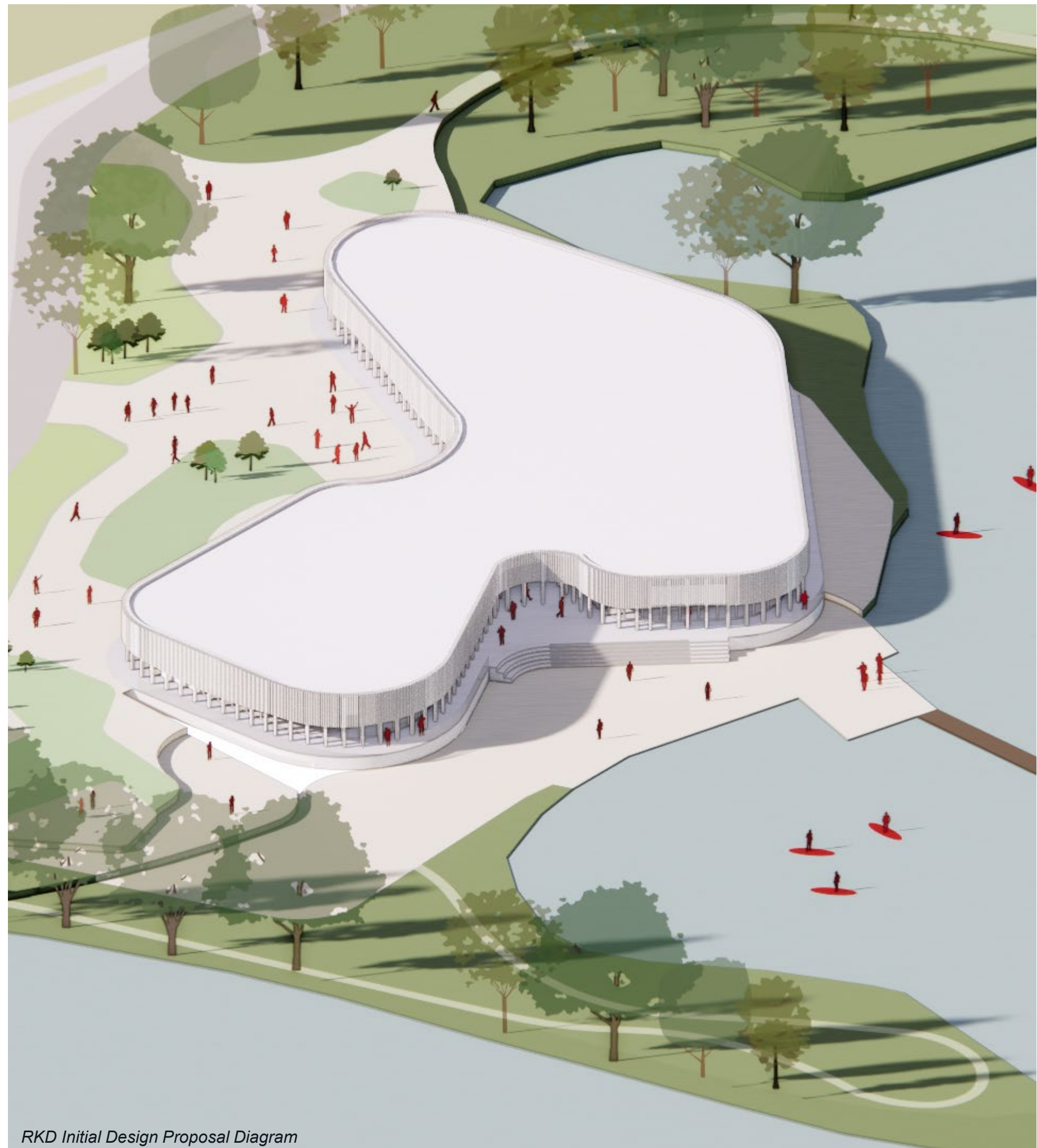
From the start, the brief divided the facility into two distinct, functional zones:

Private/Operational Zone: Dedicated entirely to water sports activities, incorporating briefing rooms, hot showers, locker facilities, and administrative office space.

Public/Social Zone: Focused on a mixed-use space featuring a smaller, independent café structure that can be enjoyed by the general public without interfering with the daily operations of the water sports facility.



Dickson Fitzgerald Architects Plan



RKD Initial Design Proposal Diagram

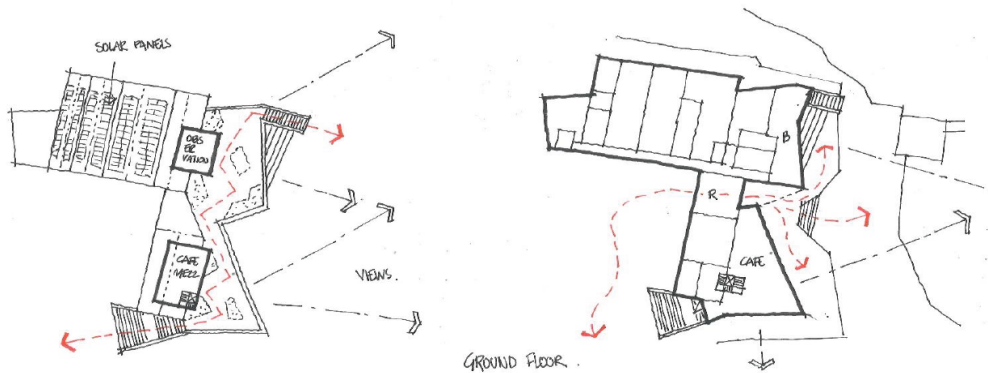
02 Design Development

Brief Development: Stage 01 Design Development

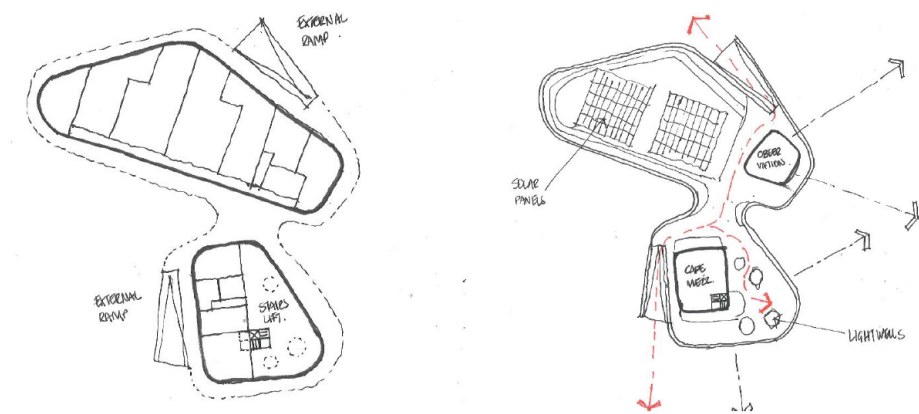
Two design proposals emerged during Stage 01 design development in preparation for the first public presentation. Both options arose from different approaches to the floor plan and building shape.

Design Proposal A: Was based on a single linear building with a central reception space. The design used a straight and structured form, creating stronger edges. This approach was developed for both aesthetic and practical reasons. It gave the building a simple architectural expression, also making it more cost-effective.

Design Proposal B: Took a more organic approach, inspired by historic crannogs. Instead of one building, the proposal was divided into two smaller structures. This created a central plaza between the buildings, allowing views out towards the water.



Design Proposal A: Sketch Plan



Design Proposal B: Sketch Plan



02 Design Development

Brief Development: 1st Public Consultation

The first public consultation aimed to narrow down the design options presented for Hodson Bay. As part of this process, MKO, the planning consultants, prepared a public survey to gather feedback on the proposals.

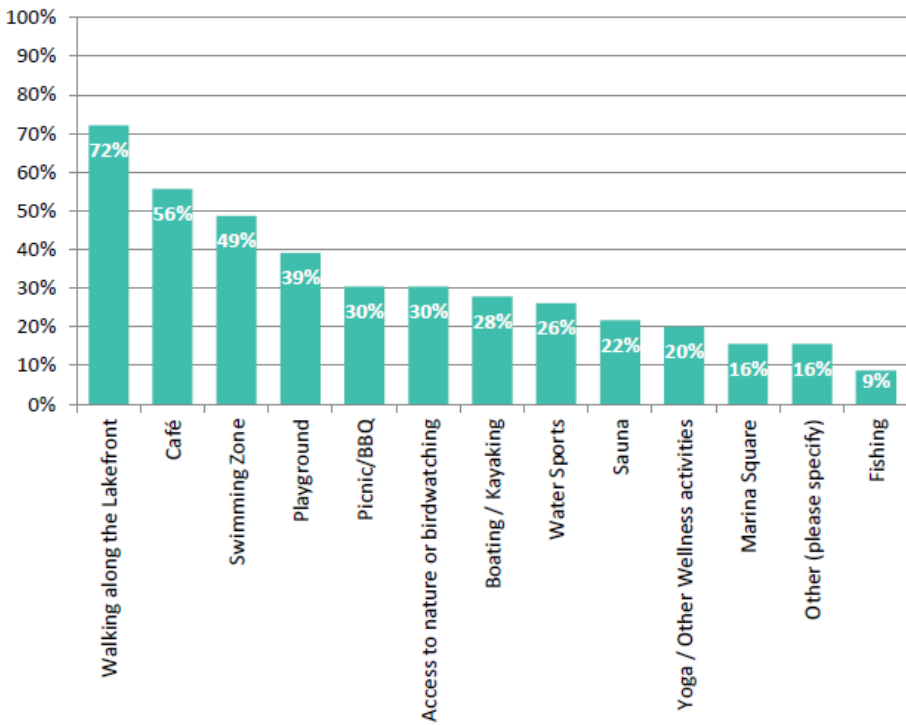
The survey questions covered a range of topics, including ecology, parking, access, activities and the overall design approach. The charts to the right show the questions most relevant to the architectural design of the water sports facility.

From the public consultation, it was possible to identify a stronger preference for the organic building. This helped guide the design development towards a proposal that responded more closely to the site, the lake edge and the expectations of the local community.

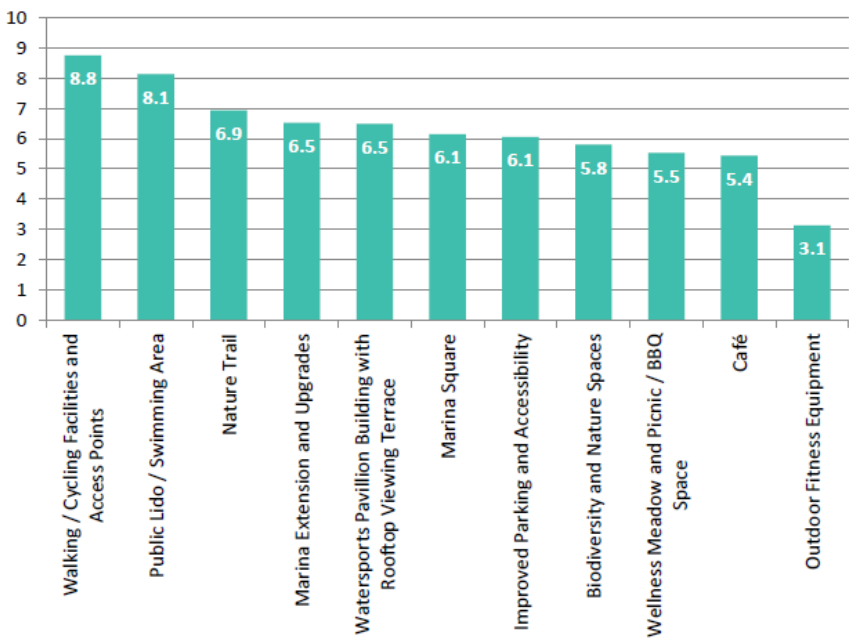


Photograph of the 1st Public Consultation held in the Hodson Bay Hotel

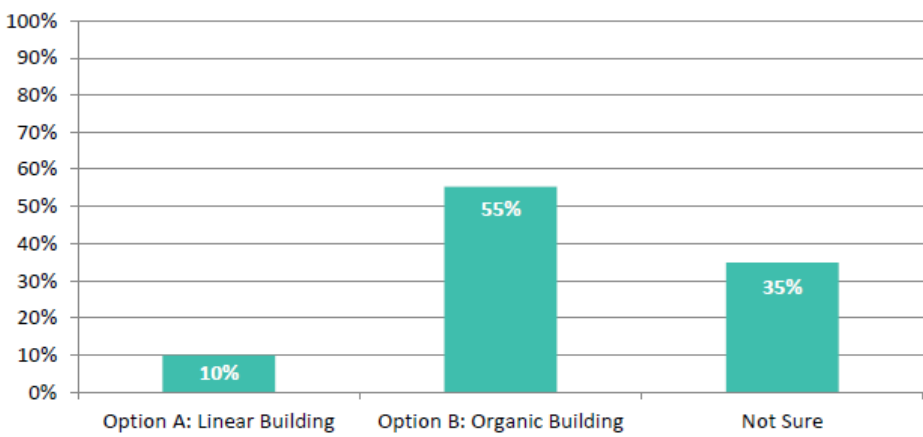
Question 1: Which of the proposed facilities are you most likely to use at Hodson Bay? Please select as many as you feel is appropriate.



Question 2: To enable us to understand where the design emphasis should be when considering design options, please rank the following facilities and features in order of most to least beneficial to you.



Question 3: Overall, which design concept for the Water Sports Pavillion Building do you think best suits the expectations of your local community?



"Low impact on the environment is important for me. More green space, less artificial and blends with environment"

"This design will allow for greater views of the waterfront area"

"It suits the site and location much better. Interesting integration and interaction with the landscape and waterside should be prioritised"

"More stylish and more in keeping with the natural curves of the bay"

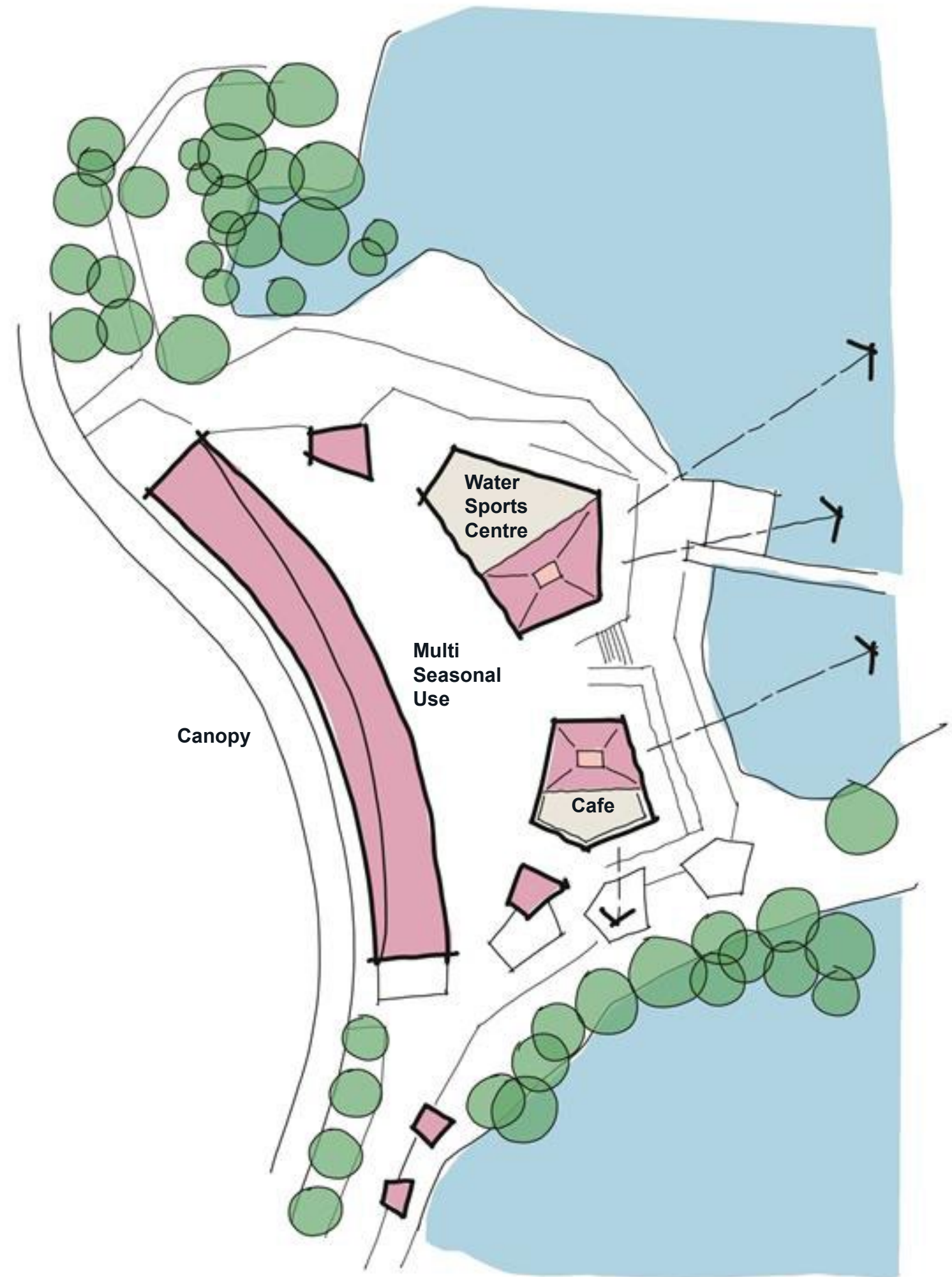
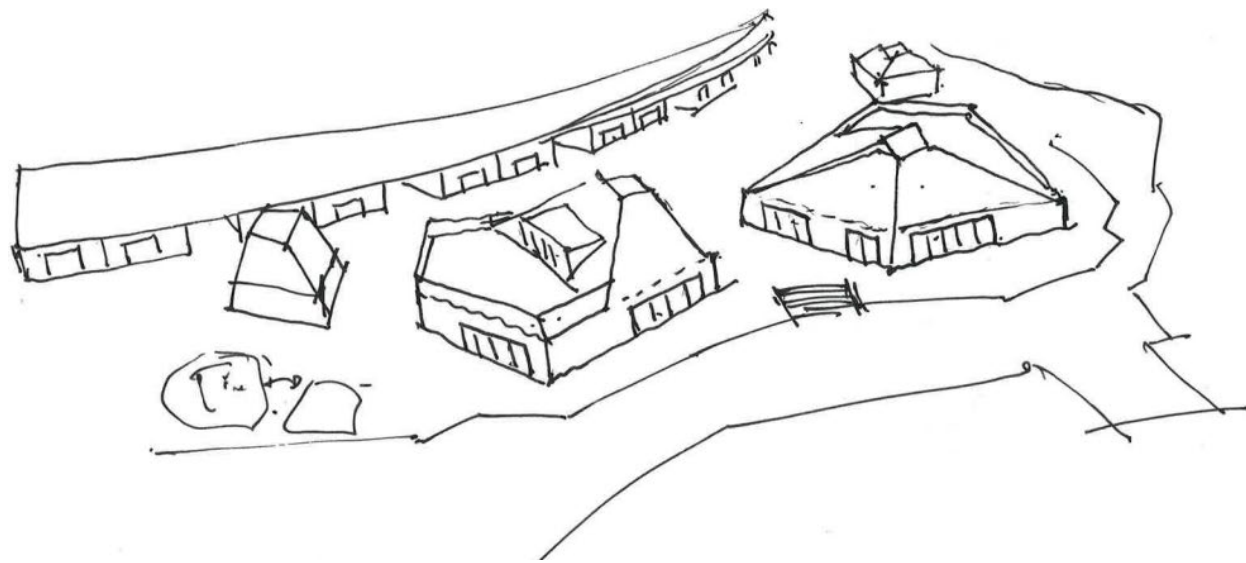
"Linear buildings look out of place by the water"

02 Design Development

Brief Development: Stage 02 Design Development

Updated site layout following report and public consultation stage:

- Maximise the efficient use of space while minimising the permanent building footprint and providing flexible spaces for seasonal variation.
- Off-site winter storage of water sports equipment.
- On-site requirement for external / day-to-day water sports vessel storage.
- Adopt an "organic" building type that takes inspiration from the Crannógs.
- Aligns with the user requirements of the existing water sports provider.
- Allows for flexible use in winter season, including food market, Christmas market / trees, winter wellness, etc.

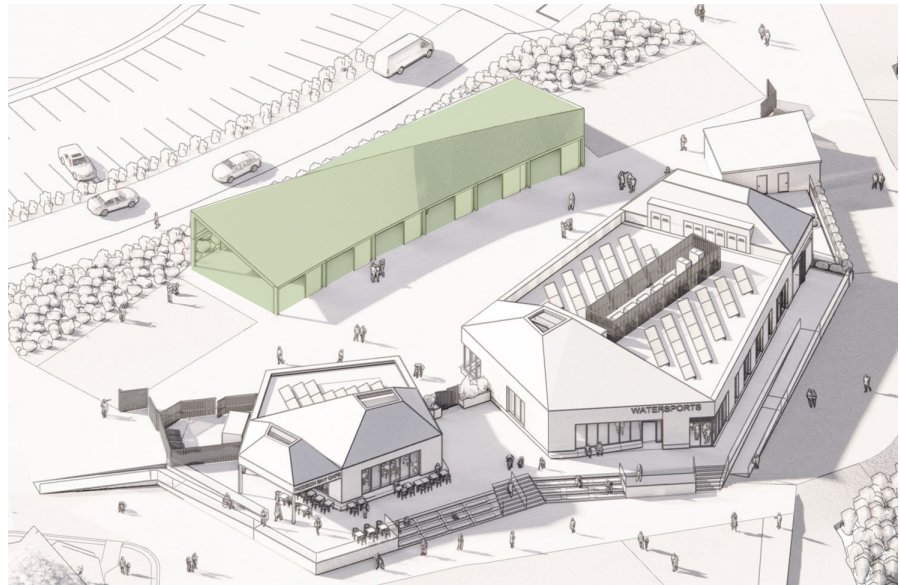


02 Design Development

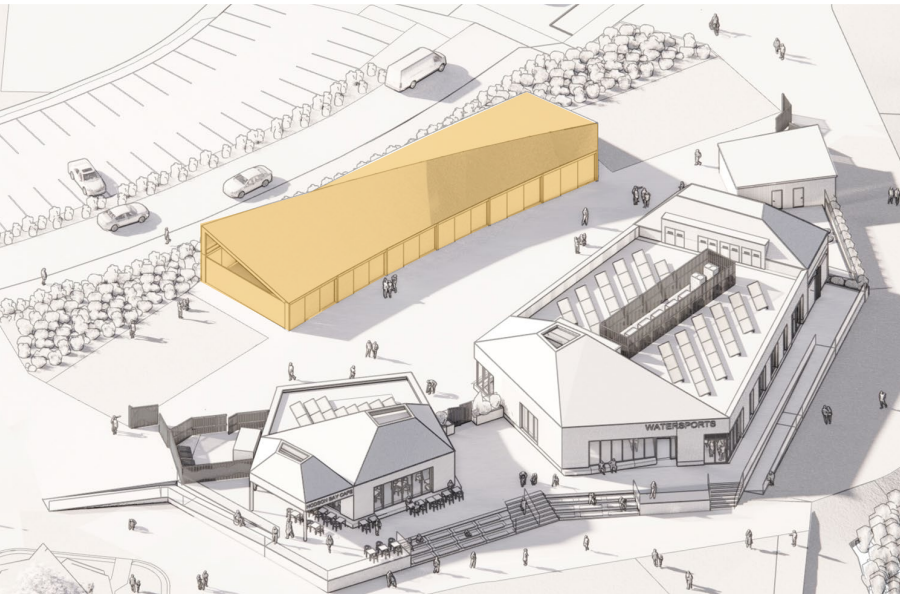
Brief Development: Stage 02 Design Development



- Changing Canopy 6 bays at 62sqm.
- Demountable Changing Marquees 6 bays at 60sqm.



- Changing Canopy 6 bays at 62sqm.
- Demountable Changing Marquees Removed



- Open Canopy One External Space at 372sqm
- Demountable Changing Marquees Removed
- Bandstand / Public Realm / Gallery

Update Summary

Following the first public consultation, the proposal developed as a combination of both design options. The linear construction approach was retained for cost-saving reasons, while the concept of the crannóg was brought forward into the architectural design.

The building was broken into different functions, including the water sports facility, café, permanent canopy and maintenance building. This helped the proposal feel less like one large structure and more like a cluster of related buildings.

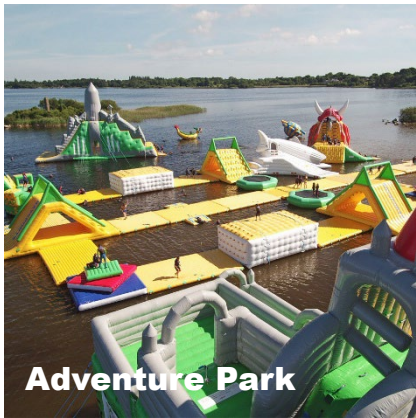
The form was intended to reference old Irish lake dwellings, with the triangulated roofs acting as a modern interpretation of the crannóg. Through further consultation, the plaza was later developed as a more enclosed space. This provided greater privacy while also reflecting the idea of the timber palisade traditionally found around these lake settlements.

02 Design Development

Brief Development: Stage 02 Design Development

Summer Season Usage

During summer, the yard functions mainly as storage for equipment and temporary changing spaces supporting on-site water sports activities. The sports facility will serve its main purpose as a water-sports centre.



Adventure Park



Water Sports

Winter Season Usage

The yard is designed as a flexible, multi-use space. During winter, the equipment can be stored off-site, and the marquees can be removed allowing the area to accommodate seasonal activities such as Christmas tree sales, small winter markets, archery, obstacle courses and other outdoor events. The building can also operate as an event venue while continuing to support a wide range of activities for both locals and visitors.



Outdoor Performances



Pop-Up Market



Event Space



Sauna

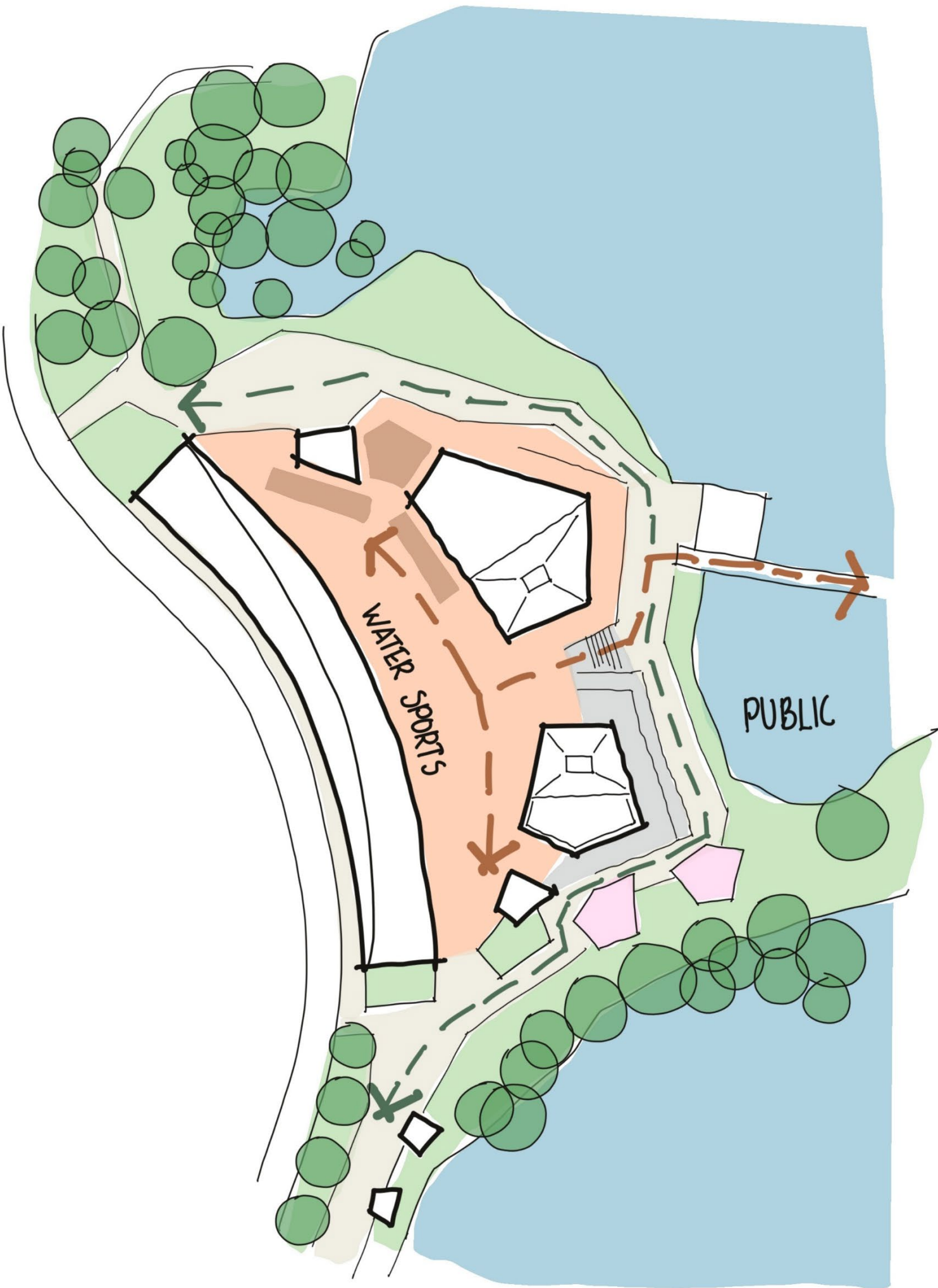


Obstacle Course



Archery

Activities Indicative of Potential Use



02 Design Development

Brief Development: 2nd Public Consultation

A second public presentation was held on 22 April 2026. Key points raised by local residents and businesses included:

- **Internal Building Layout:** Review required with existing water sports operator.
- **External Structure:** Review peak/off-peak usage arrangement with existing water sports provider
- **Storage Provision:** Existing operator equipment stored off-site.
- **Plaza Accessibility:** Confirm public access periods
- **Saunas & Hot Tubs:** Confirm location, access and control
- **Pontoon Extension:** Confirm peak-season kayak/equipment storage
- **Pontoon Access:** Confirm control of unauthorised access
- **Existing Water Sports Operation:** Confirm operation during new facility construction
- **Safe Water Access:** Provide child-safe access
- **Public Toilets:** Consider additional daytime public toilets within marina block
- **Public Swimmers:** Confirm toilet/changing access and public/private integration through signage, hedging and public realm



02 Design Development

Brief Development: 2nd Public Consultation



02 Design Development

Operator Consultation

To ensure the new design works in practice, we held detailed follow-up meetings with the existing operator. These workshops helped us better understand their day-to-day operations, allowing us to adapt the architectural layout to the needs of similar operational environments.

Reception Location & Visitor Flow

Use a dual-reception strategy. Place a secondary reception desk near the North-West entry (near the changing rooms) for peak season, and use the internal reception for quieter, off-peak times.

Lack of Storage

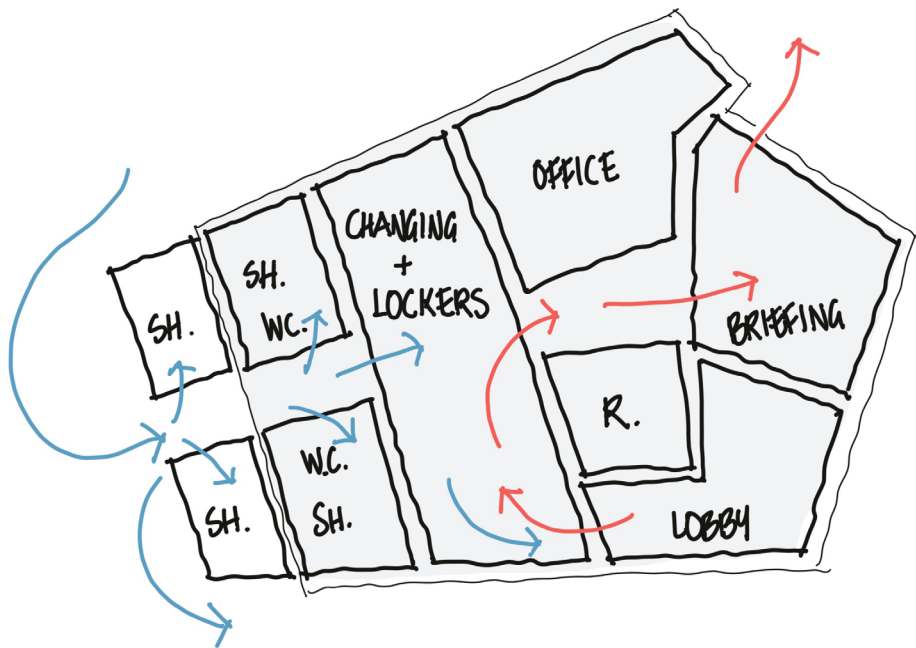
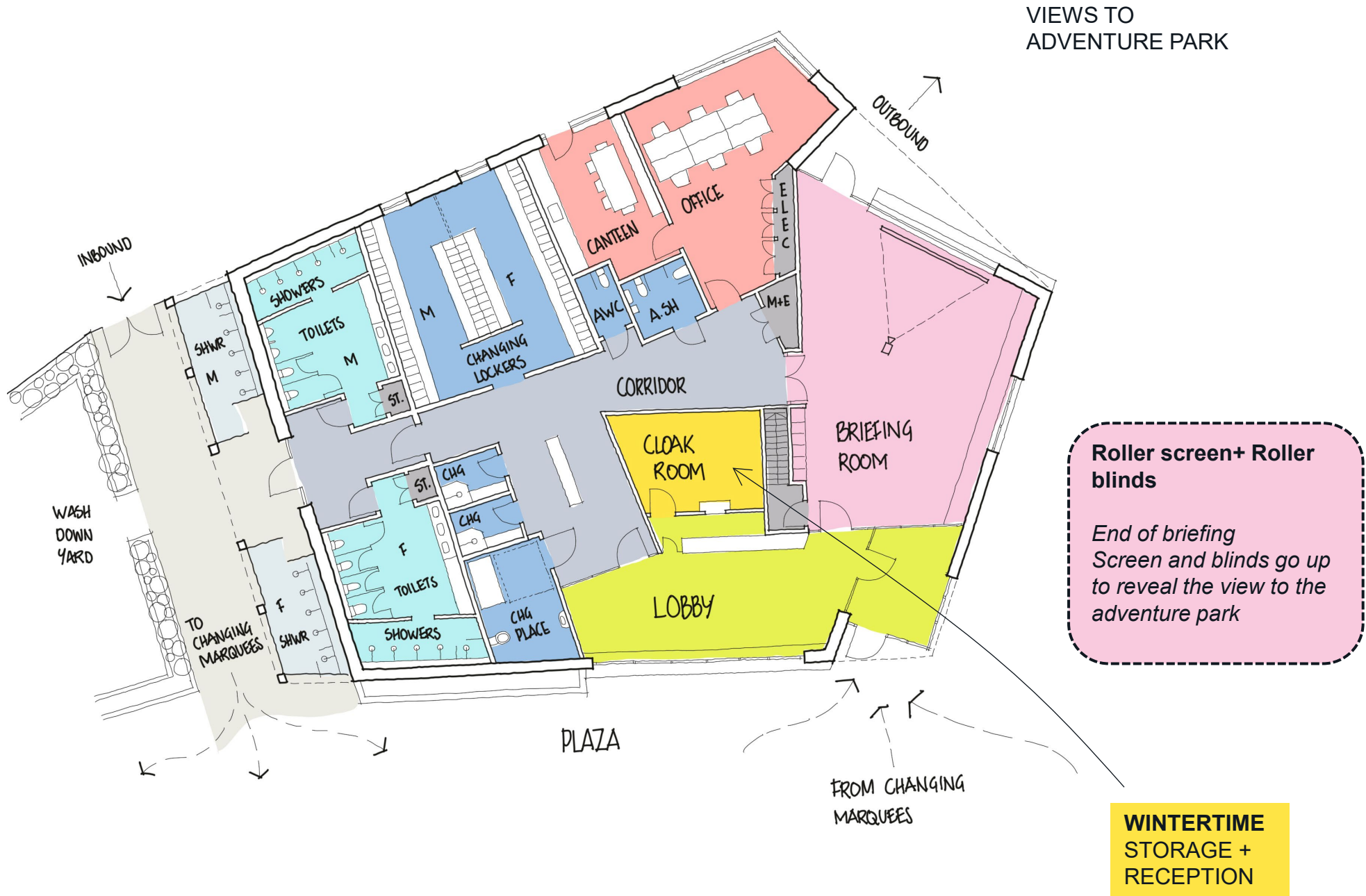
Increase the storage allocation. On-site storage for heavy equipment, wetsuits, and stock.

Staff Facilities for Peak Season

While the office size was good, we must ensure there is enough dedicated room in the layout for daily staff briefings, lunch breaks, and staff restrooms.

Changing & Toilet Reconfiguration

Reorganise the lockers, showers, and toilets to improve flow. Consider a more open, flexible layout that can double as a multi-purpose room for marine training courses.



Movement diagram

SUMMER

- Peak capacity of visitors requires maximum amount of changing space.
- Internal and external changing canopies are in use.
- Access is from the plaza into the main lobby. From the lobby, visitors can drop their stuff to the cloak room, go to either the briefing room, or the changing rooms.

WINTER

- Reduced capacity of visitors. The internal changing rooms will cater for a variety of winter activities.
- The cloak room changes to function as the main reception with storage room behind it.
- The briefing room can be multi-functional and be used for a variety of uses, like workshops, wellness or other activities.

Section 03

Site Response / Design Approach

03 Site Response / Design Approach

Site Layout + Description

The water sports pavilion development is located at the same location as the existing facility. The site layout is arranged with the building pavilions facing the water and an enclosed plaza between the buildings and the road.

The water sports and cafe pavilions are separated with the main pedestrian entrance to the site between them. The multi-use canopy structure sits in the centre of the plaza. This can be used as the main entrance reception for check in and wetsuit collection. Alternatively in the shoulder and winter season the main building desk and reception can be used. The ancillary buildings include the maintenance and storage shed and the ESB substations. A perimeter fence is designed with the landscaped boundary to enclose the plaza. This ensures the water, sports activities, and changing areas are safe and secure. The plaza space is intended to operate as a multi-use space in the shoulder and winter season. It is intended that sports, wellness and leisure activities will be hosted there by the water sports operator. Thus, making the plaza available for activities to the public year-round. The plaza is not to be used for vehicle parking or storage of watercraft equipment.

The marina pavilion is located beside the marina. It serves boat users and other visitors by providing facilities, including WCs, showers, and a wash-down tap for equipment.

The swimming canopy is located further north, within an area already popular with local swimmers. the canopy is set back from the water edge so it is set above the typical winter water level

Legend

- ①

Swimming Canopy
- ②

Maintenance Shed
- ③

Water Sports Pavillion
- ④

Café
- ⑤

Permanent Canopy
- ⑥

Marquee
- ⑦

Playground
- ⑧

Promenade
- ⑨

Marina Pavilion
- ⑩

Marina

Site Plan



03 Site Response / Design Approach

Access, Parking, Roads + Servicing Strategy

Pedestrian access

Pedestrian Access throughout the site will be aligned to the upgraded road. North from the marina the pedestrian path will be offset from the road closer to the water edge.

Active Travel

Cycle and cargo bike parking is strategically located at key points around the site.

Vehicular Access and Parking Strategy

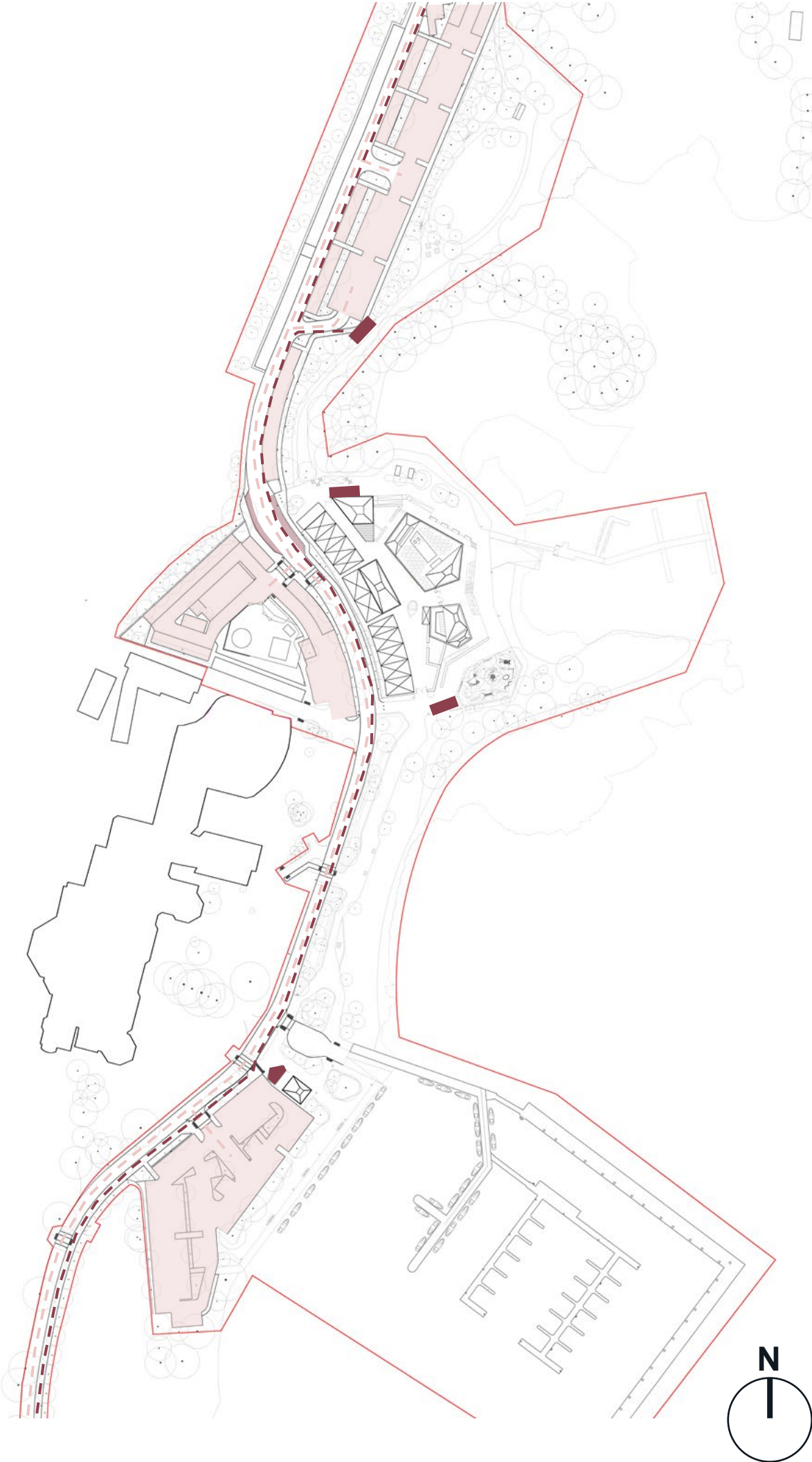
Vehicular access is from the road which will be upgraded as part of the project. Vehicular parking is reorganised and removed from the waterside plaza.

A coach drop off zone is located adjacent to the water sports facility.

See Civic Engineers drawings and reports for more information on the vehicular access and parking.

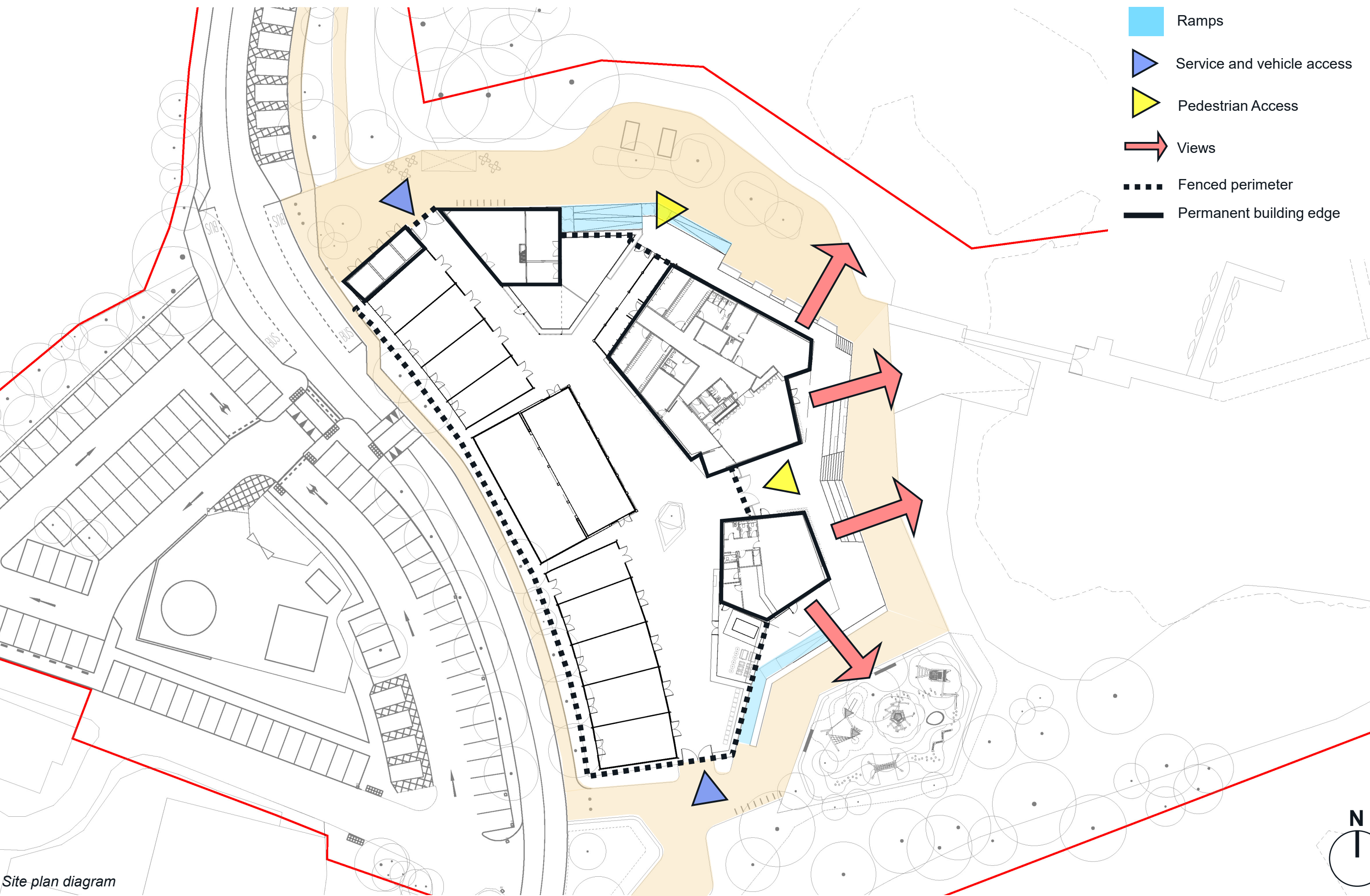
Legend

-  Pedestrian Access
-  Shared Path
-  Cycle Parking
-  Bus Drop off
-  Proposed Parking
-  Vehicle Access
-  Cycle Access



03 Site Response / Design Approach

Water Sports Pavilion Development Layout



03 Site Response / Design Approach

Water Sports Pavilion Development Layout



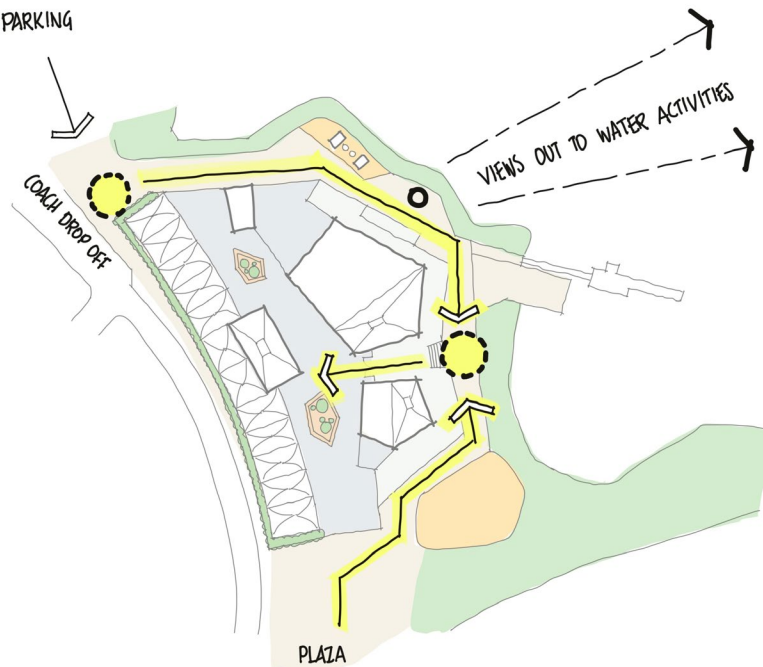
SUMMER SEASON

- Peak capacity of up to 1,200 visitors / day.
- Demountable marquees for the increase changing room capacity demand.
- Large reception / wetsuit collection as primary arrival point.
- Customer sequence and flow.



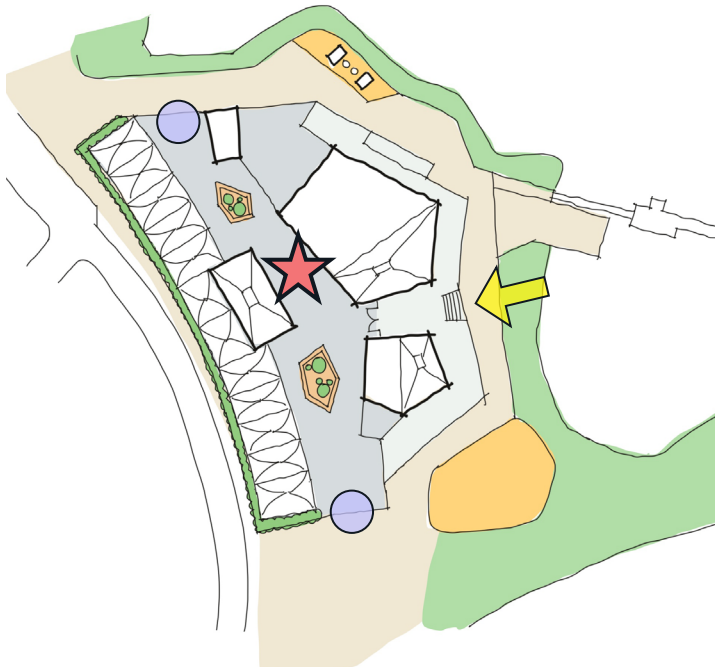
WINTER SEASON

- Reduced capacity of water sports visitors / changing rooms.
- Main water sports building capacity to cater for winter season water sports and other activities.
- External plaza space to be used for off season uses like training, wellness, outdoor events, outdoor on shore activities.



ARRIVAL + ACCESS

- Main car park and bus coaching to the north. Waterfront plaza and hotel to the south.
- Visitors are guided to the front of the building facing the water.
- Main entrance and access is between the buildings and into the centre of the plaza.



ACCESS + SERVICING

- Main entrance is to the front facing east towards the water.
- Central check in and reception is in the wetsuit collection canopy in the summer and in the front door of the water sports building

Legend



Entrance



Arrival point / check in reception



Servicing and emergency access only



03 Site Response / Design Approach

Water Sports Pavilion Development Layout



Outbound Sequence

- 1. Reception / wetsuit collection
- 2. Changing rooms
- 3. Cloak room / information point
- 4. Briefing room
- 5. First dip in water to acclimatise
- 6. Out to aqua park / water sport activities



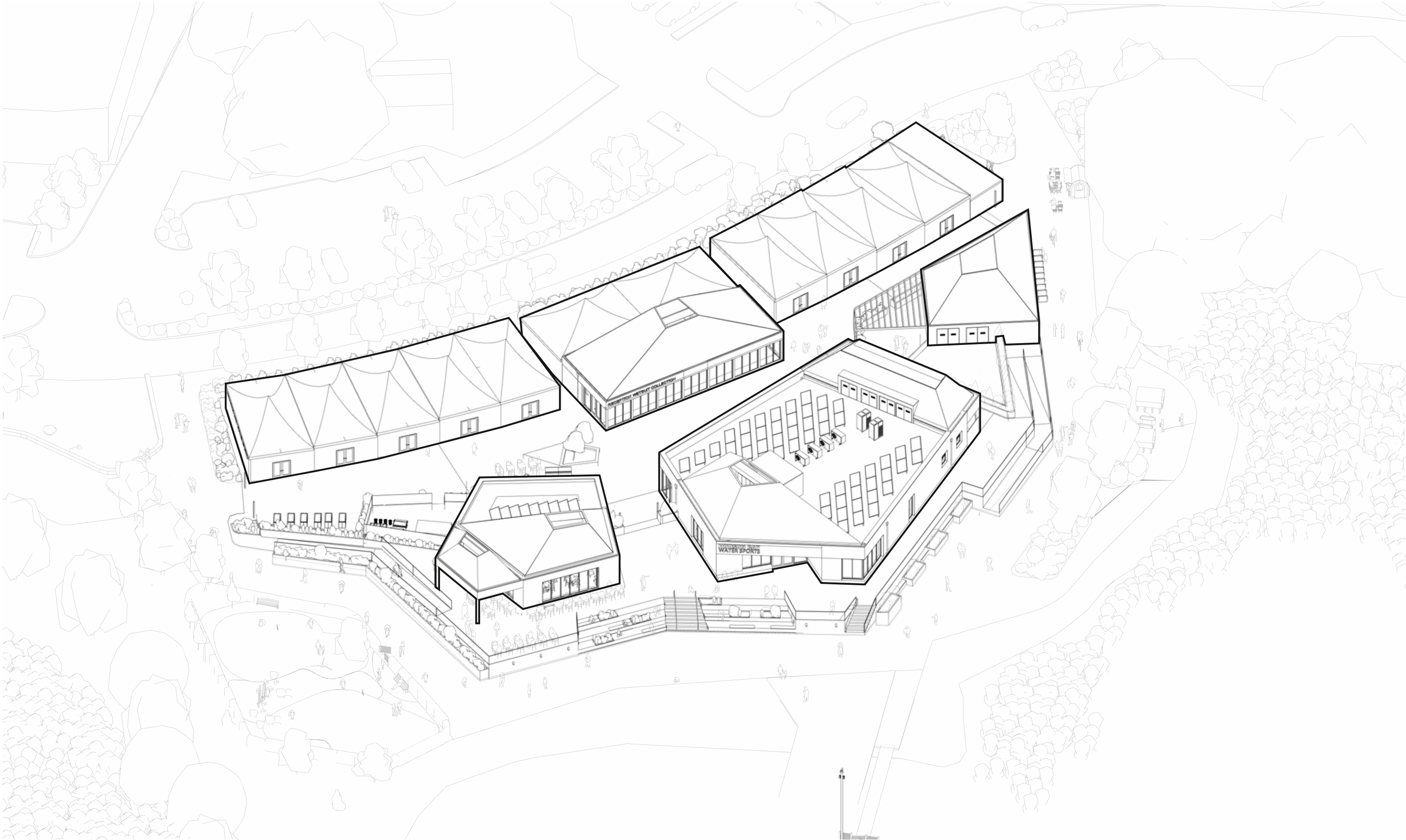
Inbound Sequence

- 1. In from aqua park / water sport activities.
- 2. Showers – internal and external.
- 3. Changing areas – internal and external.



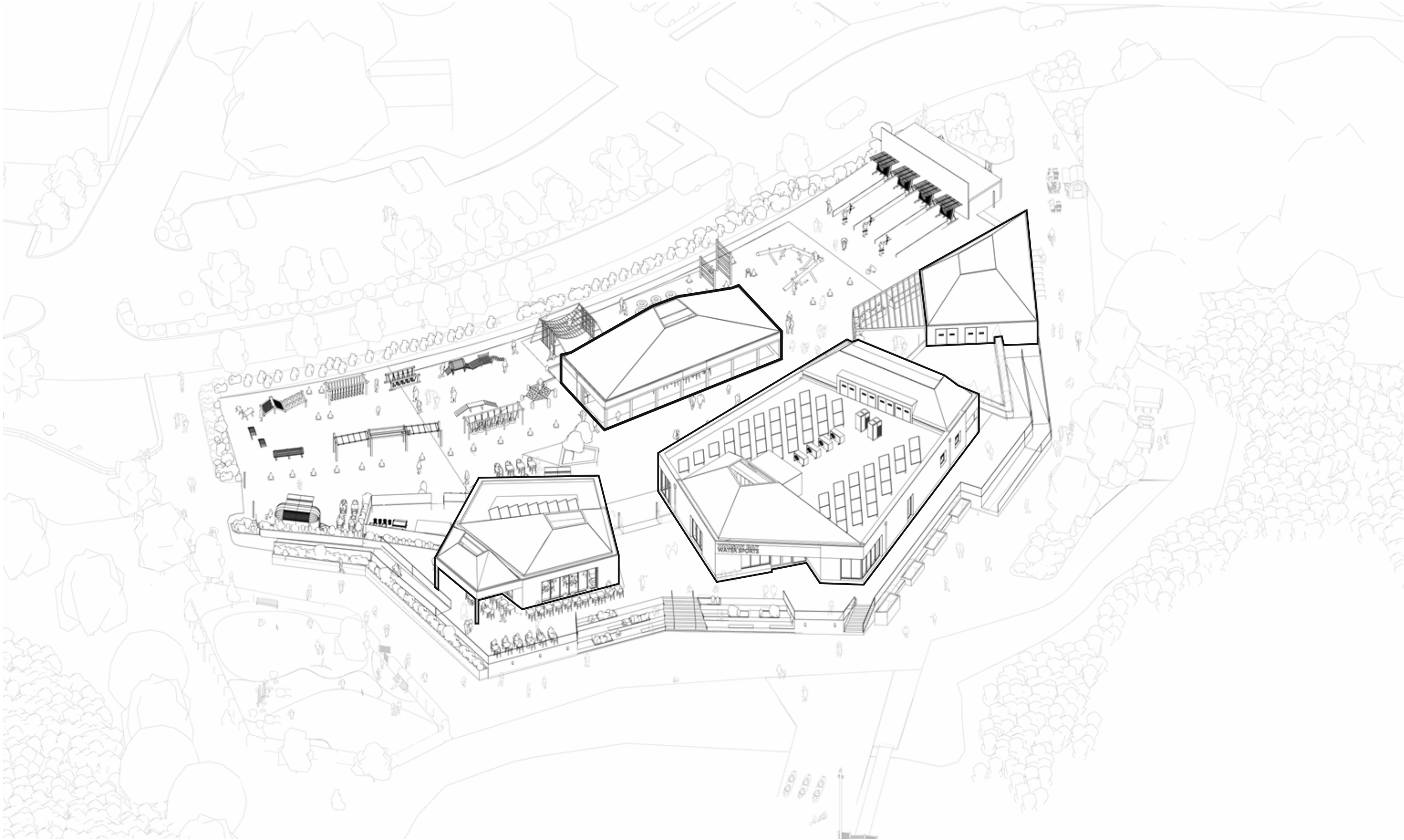
03 Site Response / Design Approach

Height, Scale + Massing Summer Mode



03 Site Response / Design Approach

Height, Scale + Massing Winter Mode



Activities Indicative of Potential Use

03 Site Response / Design Approach

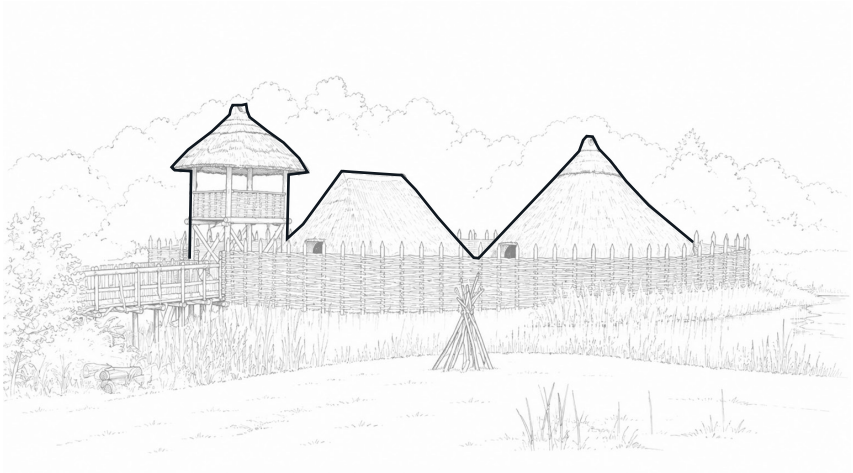
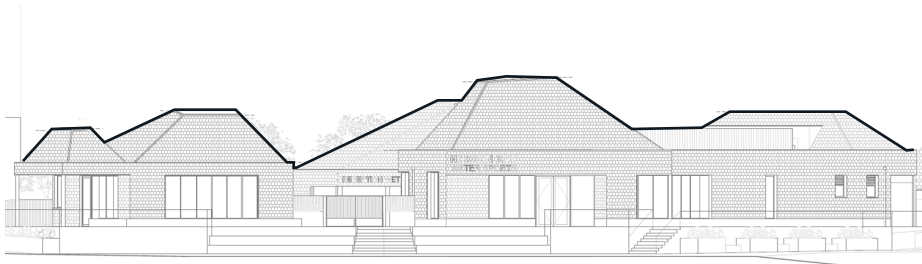
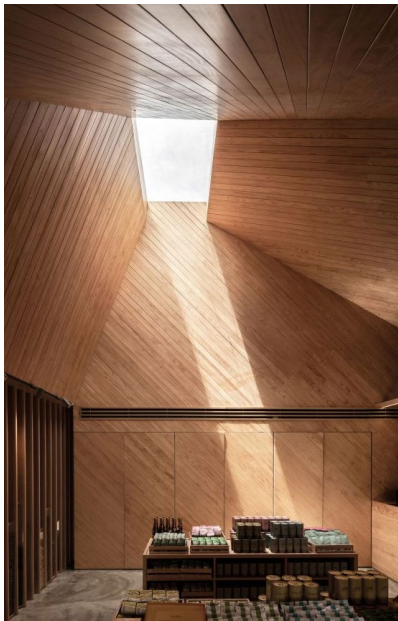
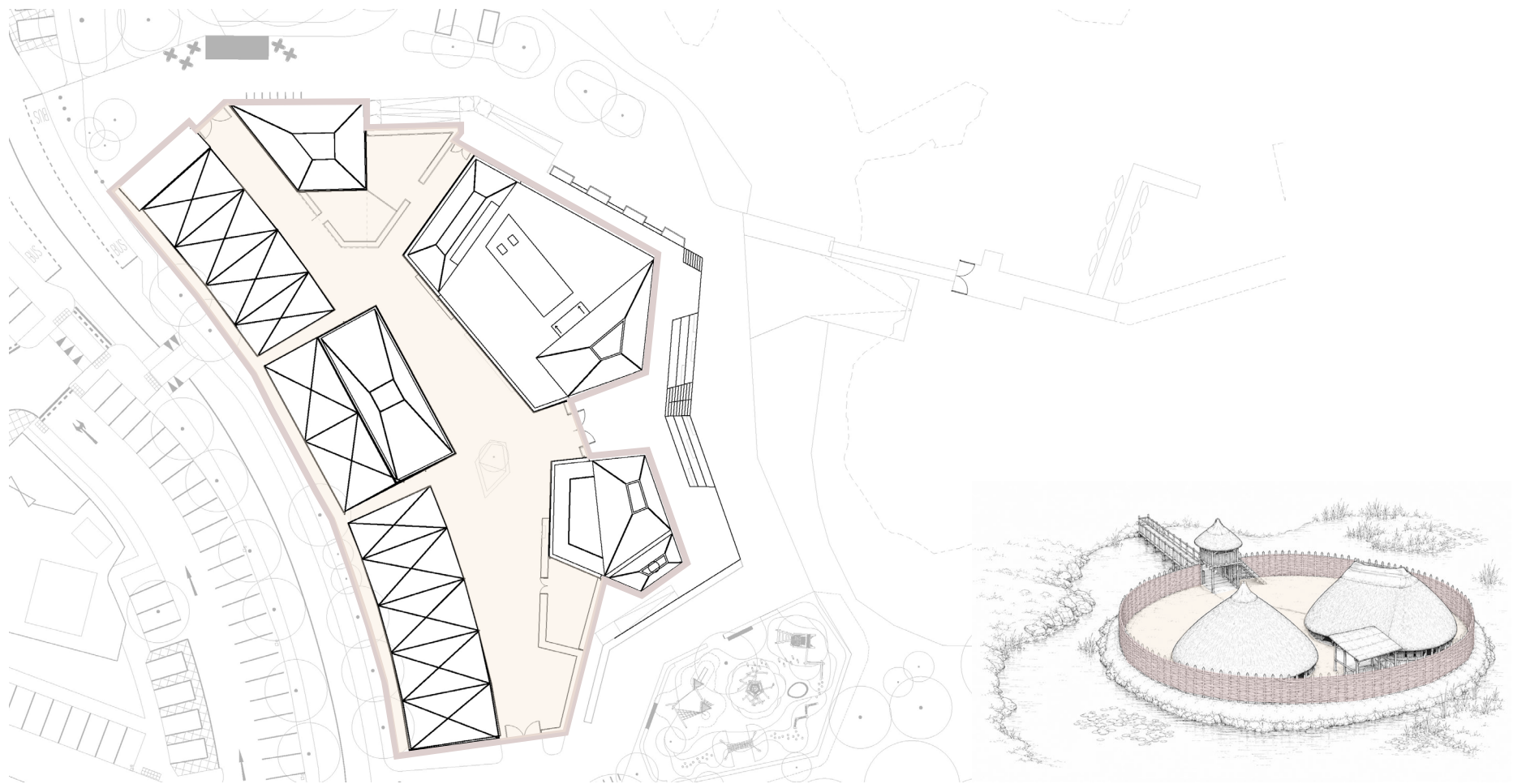
Height, Scale + Massing



03 Site Response / Design Approach

Character, Appearance + Materiality Concepts

- Perimeter
- Protected Area



03 Site Response / Design Approach

Character, Appearance + Materiality Concepts



03 Site Response / Design Approach

Character, Appearance + Materiality Concepts – Café Section



03 Site Response / Design Approach

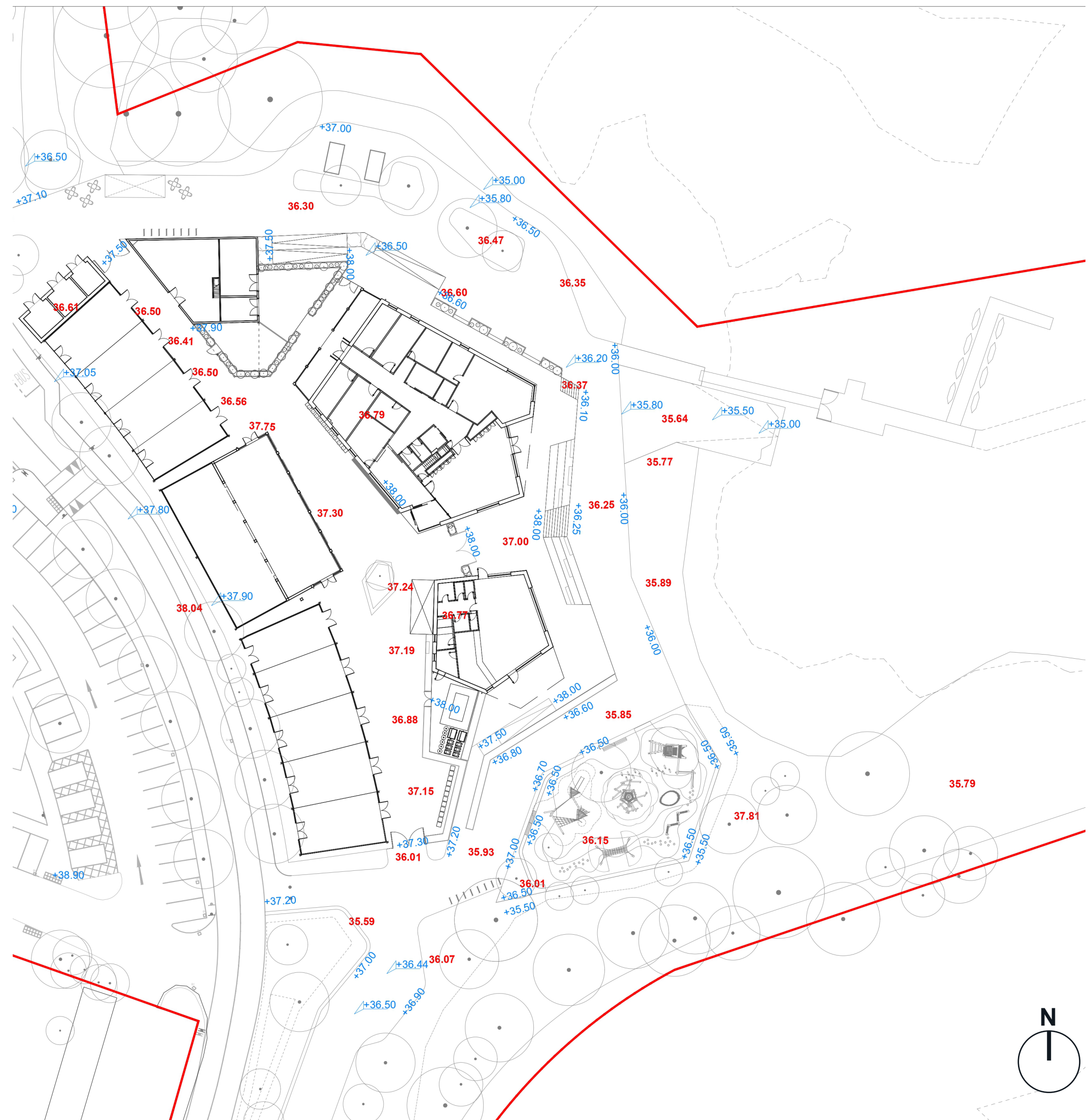
Landscaping + Engineering Strategy

The landscape and engineering strategy is closely integrated with the flood strategy. As the Hodson Bay Water Sports Facility is located within a flood zone, the ground levels around the water sports building and café have been raised to +38.00. From this level, the ground gently slopes down along the northern and southern perimeters.

The perimeter planting and raised beds also function as flood defence measures, helping to contain and manage flood risk around the plaza.

 Proposed Level

Existing Level



03 Site Response / Design Approach

Sustainability Strategy / Nature Based Solutions

The proposal concentrates development within the existing disturbed site.

- 1

Ecological Protection
Existing ecological features and vegetation are retained. Development is focused on previously disturbed and hardstanding areas to minimise impact.
- 2

SUDs
Rainwater pipes direct water into integrated planters for natural drainage and attenuation.
- 3

Renewable Energy
PV Panels on the roofs generate energy with renewable electricity. Low energy appliances and fittings reduce overall demand.
- 4

Energy Demand Reduction/All Electric Systems
ASHPs provide heating and cooling. Natural ventilation is provided in most occupiable areas.
- 5

Waste + Recycling
A screened waste compound provides segregated recycling, general waste and compost, site management prevents waste from entering the lake.
- 6

Responsible Material Sourcing
Local materials will be used where possible to increase durability and minimise the carbon footprint.
- 7

Flood Resilience
Building FFL and terrace level of +38.00 to mitigate flood risk.
- 8

Adaptive Plaza and Public Realm
The plaza and public realm are gently sloped, safely accommodating periodic high-water events.
- 9

Biodiversity
Pollinator-friendly species are integrated throughout the planters and planting zones, improving biodiversity.



03 Site Response / Design Approach

Sustainability Strategy / Nature Based Solutions

Climate Resilience and Long-Term Adaptation

The design of the Hodson Bay Water Sports Facility proactively responds to the challenges of climate change and extreme weather. Located on the shores of Lough Ree, the scheme is engineered for long-term resilience against shifting climate patterns, rising lake levels, and increased precipitation.

To prevent regional inequalities and promote a sustainable, low-carbon transition, this project has been developed in alignment with the EU Just Transition Fund (JTF) principles. It delivers an inclusive, climate-resilient community and tourism asset that balances socio-economic development with rigorous environmental protection.

Site Re-Use, Infrastructure and Minimal Intervention

A core principle of the sustainability strategy is the reuse of previously developed land. By concentrating the proposed development entirely within the footprint of the existing disturbed site and made ground (brownfield footprint), the design minimises site-wide intervention.

Services and Utilities

The design actively works with existing site infrastructure, tying into existing utility networks to avoid unnecessary excavation, ground disruption, or resource consumption. Site foul sewer designs are optimised for efficiency and are subject to formal approval by Uisce Éireann.

Ecological Protection

Restricting construction to existing hardstanding areas prevents encroachment into the sensitive, adjacent Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) ecosystems, preserving the natural shoreline profile.

Flood Resilience and Adaptive Public Realm

The architectural and landscape strategies are designed to coexist with both natural water cycles and extreme climate events.

Finished Floor Levels

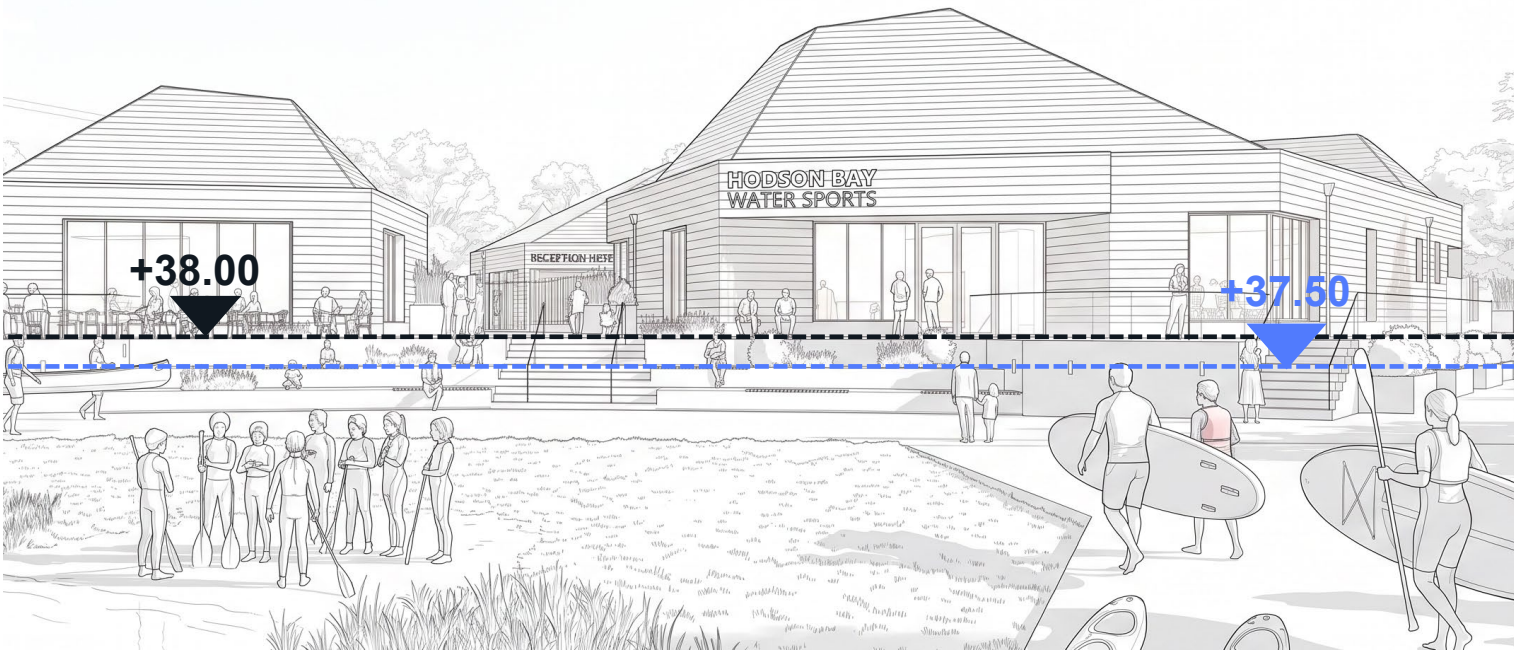
To safeguard the buildings against extreme flood events, The Finished Floor and ground levels of the Water Sports Building, Café, and terrace have been set to +38.00, 0.5m above the extreme flood level of 37.5m. This mitigates flood risk to the buildings and surrounding area, increasing the resilience and longevity of the entire proposal. The introduction of planters and planting in and around the terrace also mitigates flood risk.

Adaptive Public Realm

The wider public realm and plaza are engineered to gently slope from the +38.00m FFL down to existing ground levels. The public spaces, low-lying pathways, and perimeter planting are designed to safely accommodate periodic high-water events without damaging the underlying infrastructure or interrupting the site's ecological drainage.



Sketch plan view noting the new proposal's (outlined in red) relationship with the existing site.



Sketch view from Lough Ree looking at the front of the water sports pavilion development.

03 Site Response / Design Approach

Sustainability Strategy / Nature Based Solutions

Landscape Integration, SuDs and Biodiversity

The architectural proposal is closely integrated with a green infrastructure strategy that enhances local biodiversity.

Sustainable Drainage (SuDs)

The scheme employs nature-based Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs). Rainwater is directed into integrated, deep-soil planters for natural filtration and attenuation via rainwater pipes.

Biodiversity

Landscaping and perimeter planting will utilise native, pollinator-friendly species. These plant beds act as natural flood-mitigation buffers while creating new ecological niches, enhancing biodiversity and reinforcing the visual buffer of the greenbelt.

Sustainable Materiality, Durability and Circular Economy

Material selection focuses on longevity, low embodied carbon, and circular economy principles.

Material Rationale

The main façades and roofs are clad in durable concrete terracotta-coloured tiles, complemented by high-performance façade panels, metal reveals and windows. This robust palette is highly resistant to weathering, lakeside humidity, and heavy public use, reducing long-term maintenance cycles and operational expenditure. Opportunities for material re-use during the construction phase will be explored, contributing to the circular economy.

Responsible Sourcing

New materials will be responsibly and locally sourced where possible, reducing transport-related carbon emissions and supporting local supply chains in line with the socio-economic objectives of the EU Just Transition Fund.

Low-Carbon Design and Energy Strategy

The buildings employ highly efficient, low-carbon design principles, meeting NZEB (Nearly Zero Energy Building) standards, aiming for Net Zero operational energy requirements.

All-Electric Systems

Air source heat pumps (ASHPs) provide heating and cooling, eliminating on-site fossil fuel combustion.

Renewable Energy

PV solar panels located on the roofs of the Café and Water Sports buildings generate clean, on-site electricity.

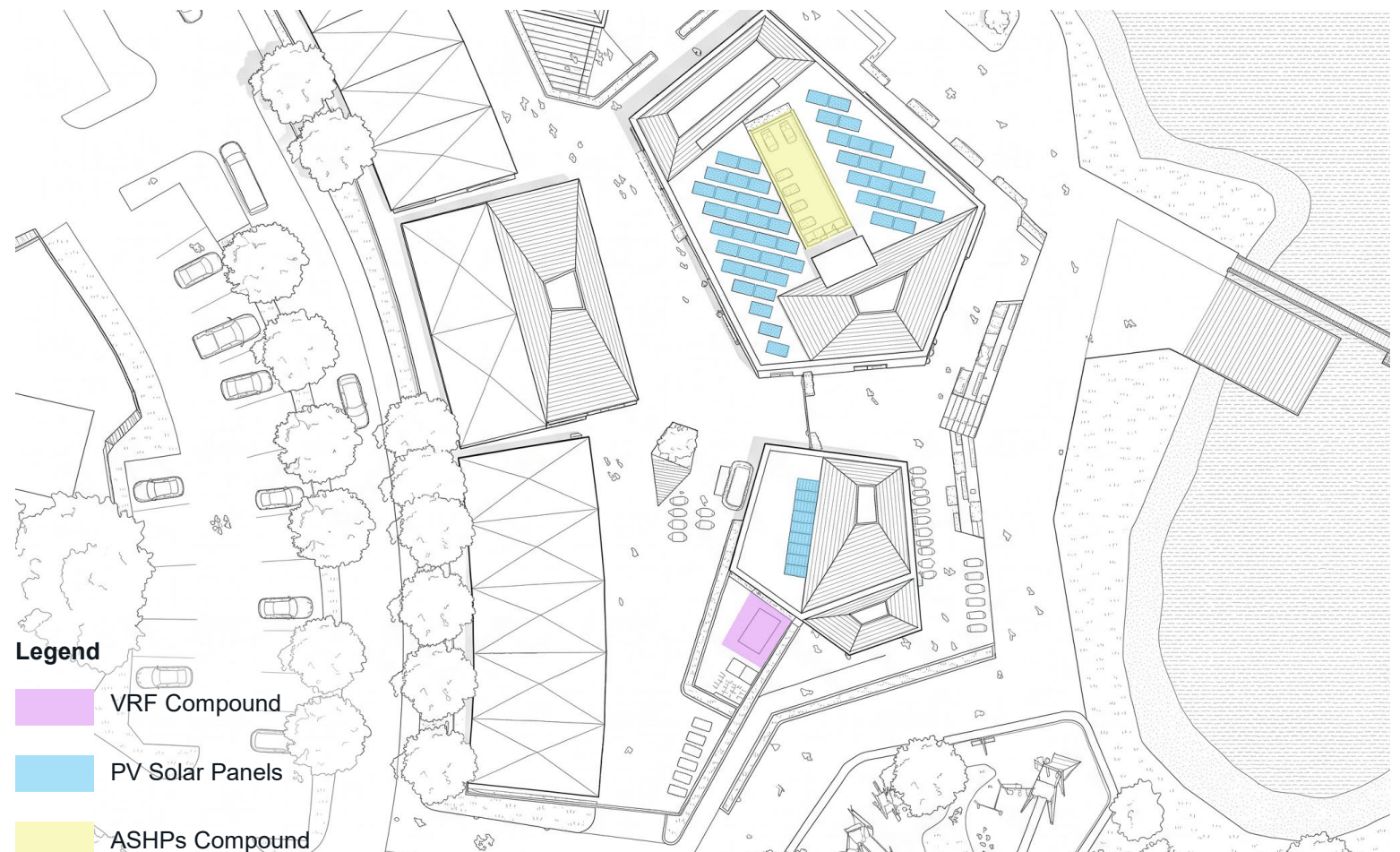
Energy Demand Reduction

In most occupiable areas, internal spaces rely on natural ventilation where possible. Artificial lighting will utilise low-energy LED technology.

Refer to Civic's accompanying Energy Statement for more information.



Sketch Aerial view looking west noting green spaces within the proposal.



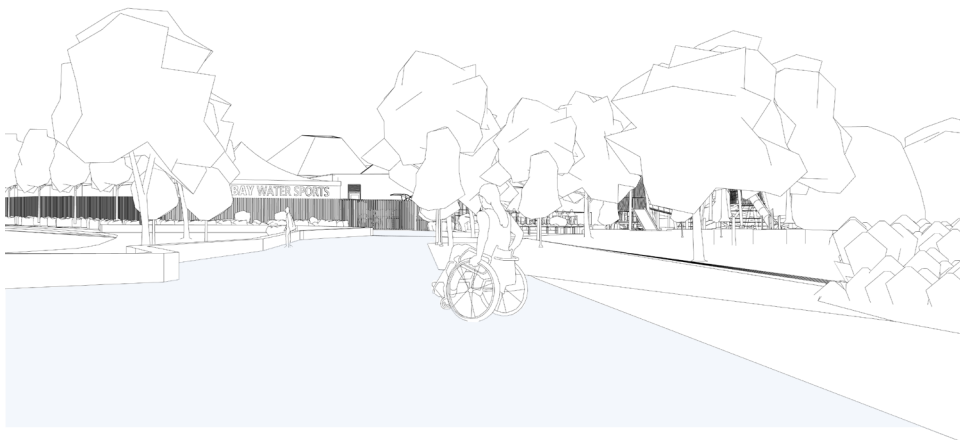
Sketch plan view noting the renewable energy sources within the proposal.

03 Site Response / Design Approach

Universal Design Principles

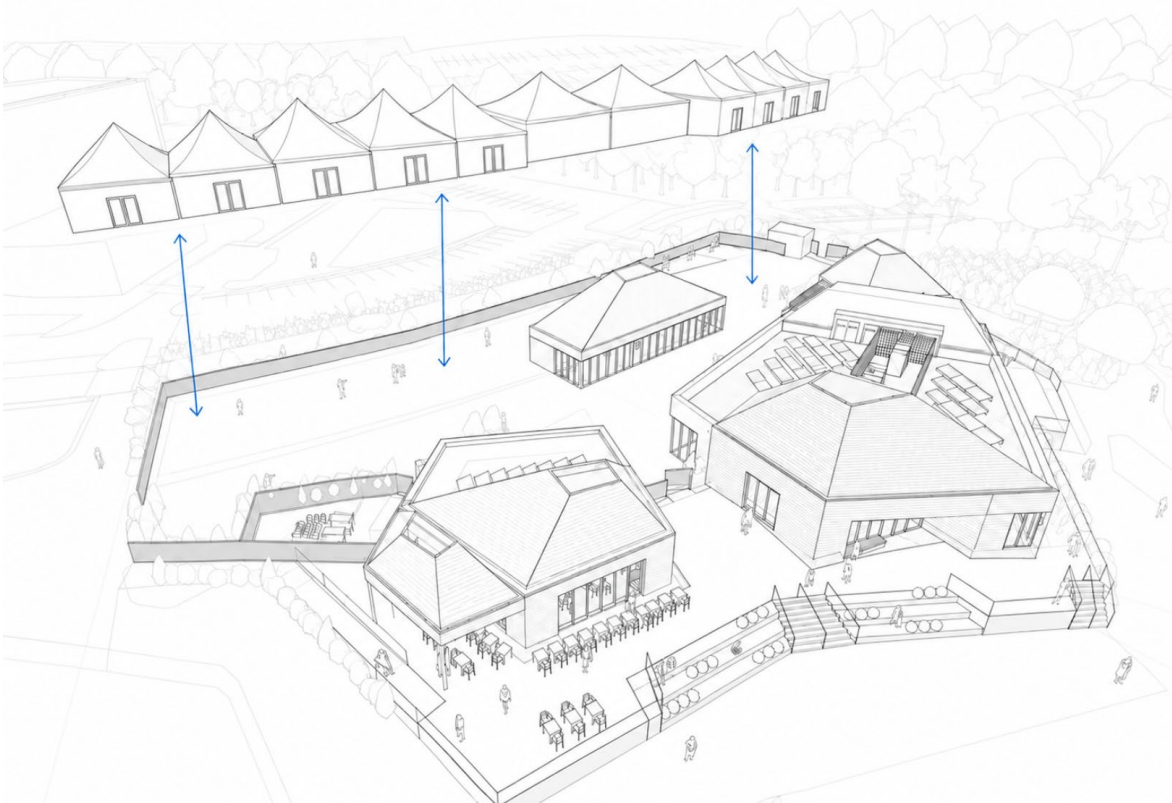
1. Equitable Use

All facilities, including the promenade, boardwalks, pontoons, and viewpoints, will feature level finishes and wide, suitable pathways. This allows easy access for everyone, including wheelchair users, families with strollers, and those with mobility aids from the moment they arrive.



2. Flexibility in Use

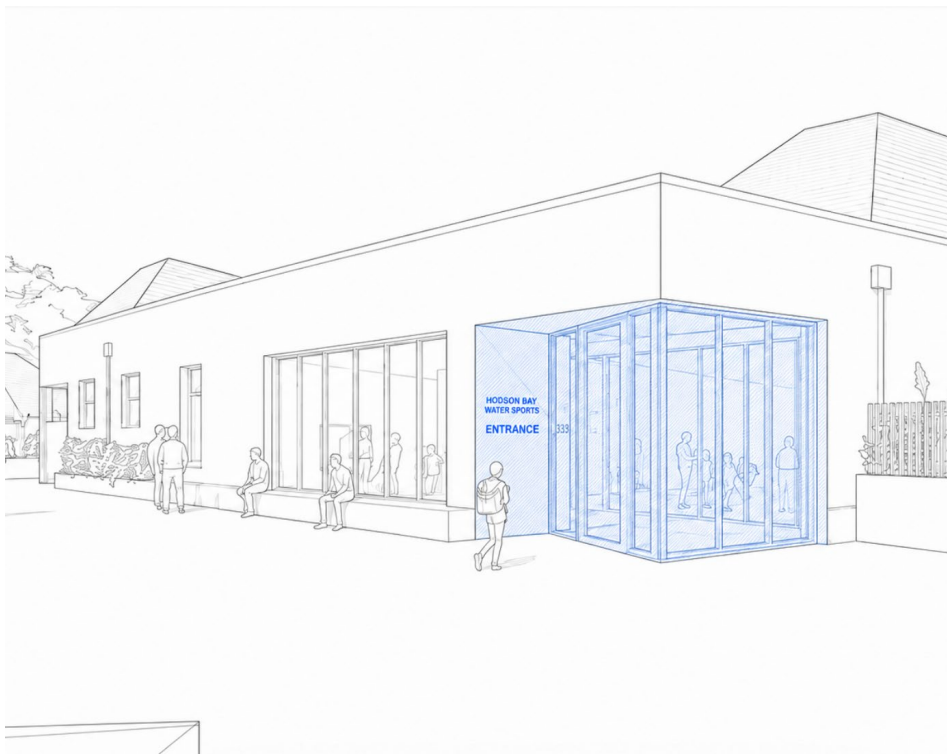
The design adapts to different groups, and physical abilities. The water sports facility will offer various entry points and adaptable equipment for different skill levels. Architecturally, the spaces are designed to be highly flexible, allowing the layout to easily adjust to different seasonal uses and activities over time.



3. Simple and Intuitive Use

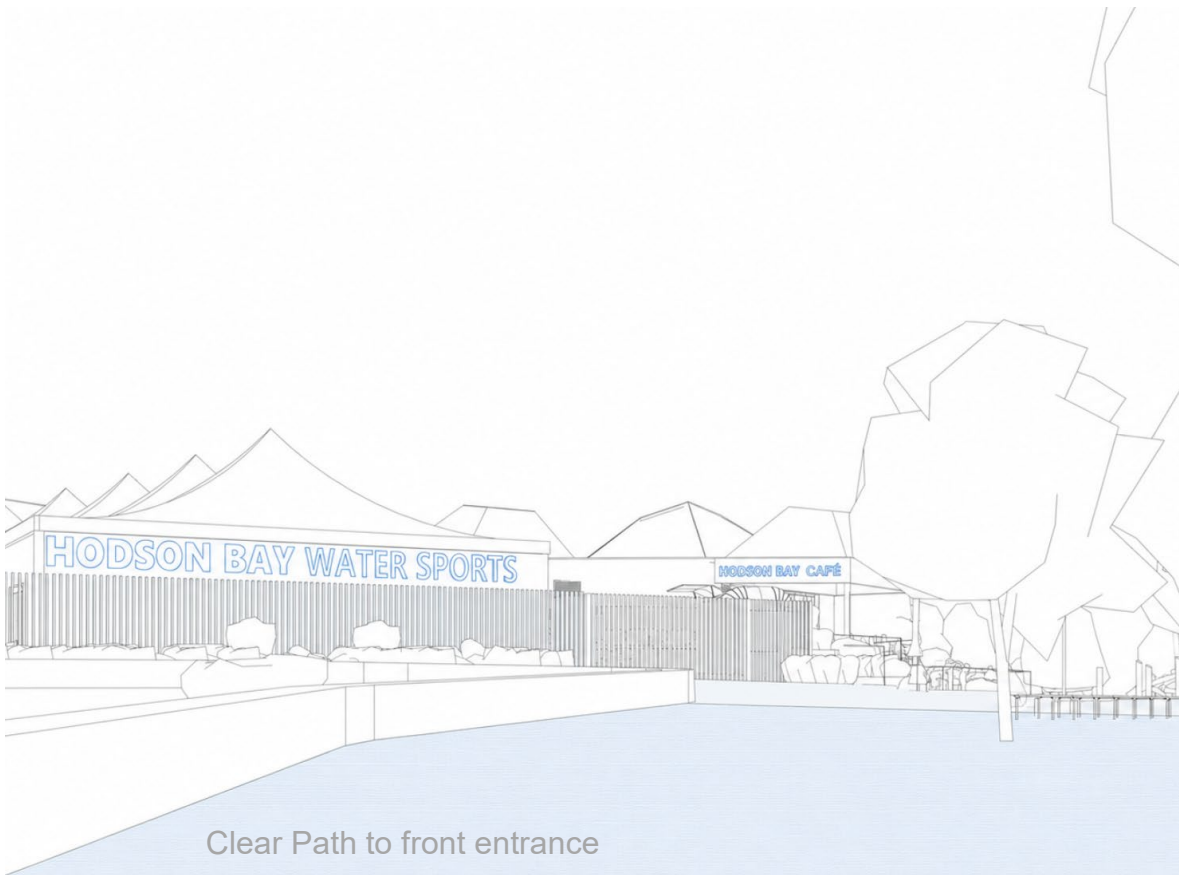
The waterfront layout is easy to navigate. A consistent and legible visual aesthetic, will ensure simple and intuitive navigation around the spaces.

There will be clear signage and connections to the various transport modes, both public and private. Active modes of transport and walking will be encouraged.



4. Perceptible Information

Information will be shared in multiple ways to suit everyone. The waterfront experience will combine clear visual displays, tactile maps, and audible instructions, ensuring the site is easy to navigate for visitors with different sensory abilities.

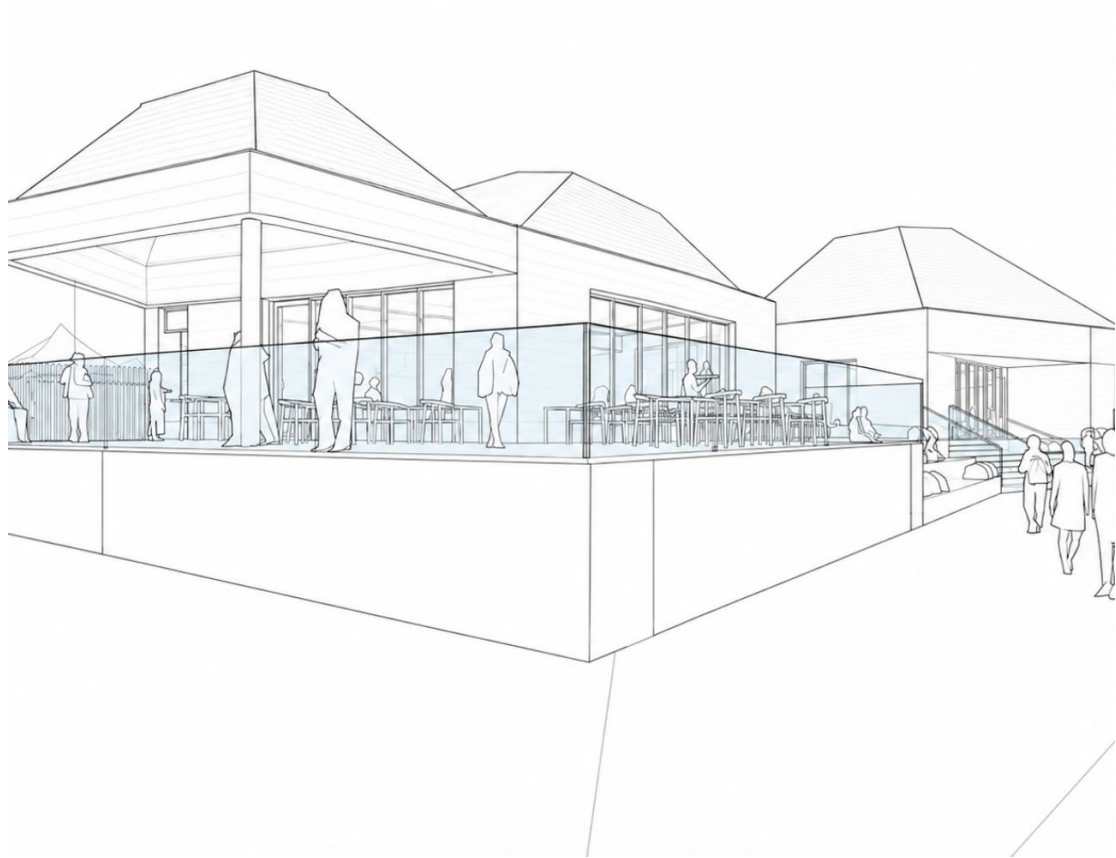


03 Site Response / Design Approach

Universal Design Principles

5. Tolerance for Error

To prevent accidents, the design uses slip-resistant paths, secure railings, and clear lighting to mark walkways. By avoiding sharp corners and deep drops, the fluid layout creates a safe, forgiving environment for all visitors.



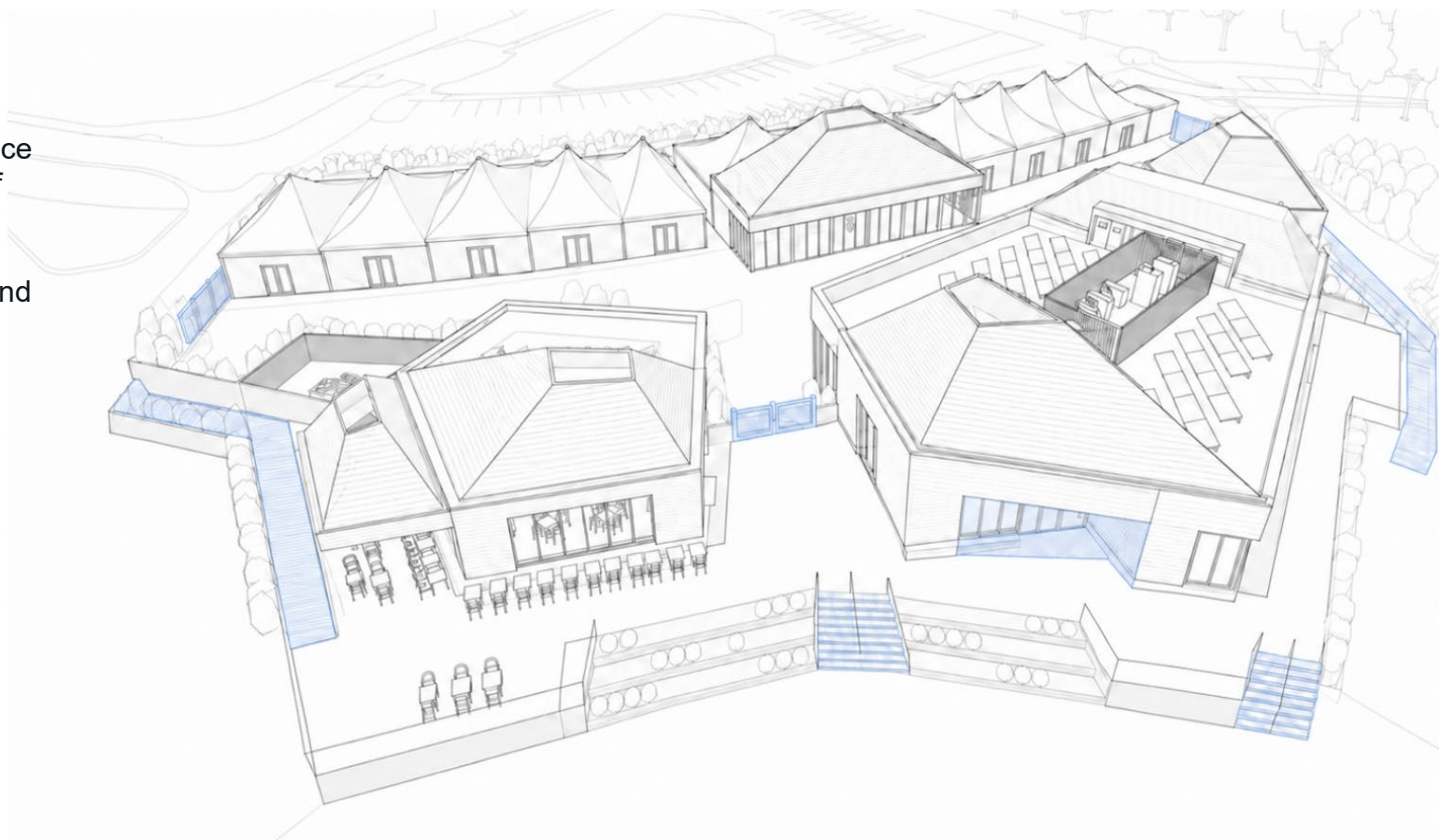
6. Low Physical Effort

Facilities will be designed for efficient and comfortable use with minimal fatigue. Automatic doors, gentle ramps, and strategically placed resting areas will ensure that all visitors, including those with limited strength or endurance, can navigate the park comfortably.



7 .Size and Space for Approach and Use

The design provides generous, comfortable space for everyone, regardless of mobility or body size. Accessibility features and facilities will be designed and provided for all activities.



Section 04

Detail Design Proposal

04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Material Design Intent



View from Lough Ree looking at the front of the water sports development.

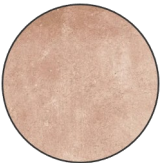
04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Material Design Intent



1. Concrete Terracotta Tile
Façade + Roof

Specified for its exceptional durability in harsh lakeside environments, with little maintenance required over its long-life cycle, terracotta-coloured concrete tiles wrap the façades and roofs of the main buildings. This creates a unified pavilion with an earthy tone.



2. Coloured Concrete
Base + Benches

Buildings sit on a light reddish pigmented concrete plinth. This creates a base, visually lifts the terracotta tile cladding.



3. Coloured Metal
Windows + Reveals

Windows and reveals are finished in reddish terracotta metal, slightly darker than the tile cladding. This defines the openings while keeping the palette consistent.



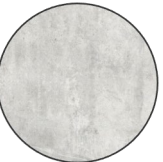
4. Timber Panels
Marquee Walls

Sourced from certified, sustainably managed forests to provide a low-embodied-carbon with the intent to compliment the terracotta using natural tones that integrate with the landscape.



5. Coloured Tensile fabric
Marquee Roof

The intent is to compliment the terracotta colour with natural tones and match the timber panels.



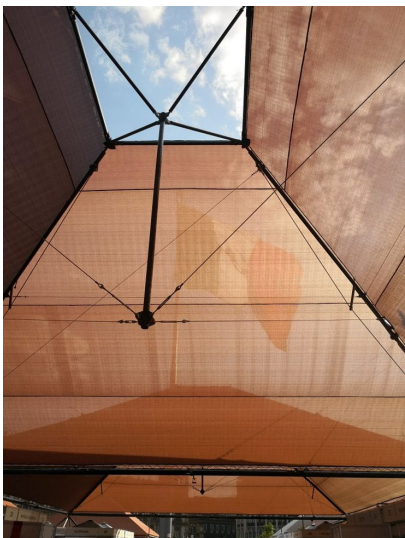
6. Concrete
Podium

Create a contrast between the structures and ground materiality.



7. Glass
Balustrade

A protective glass Balustrade will wrap around the eastern section of the elevated podium for protection.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development : Summer Mode

Aerial view looking southeast at the water sports development and water activities during the summer season



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development : Winter Mode

Aerial view looking southeast at the water sports development during the winter season



Activities Indicative of Potential Use

04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development : Summer Mode

Aerial view looking northeast at the water sports development and water activities during summer season



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Winter Mode

Aerial view looking northeast at the water sports development during the winter season



Activities Indicative of Potential Use

04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Summer Mode

Aerial view looking west towards the front of the water sports development during the summer season.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Summer Mode

Aerial view looking west towards the front of the water sports development during the summer season.

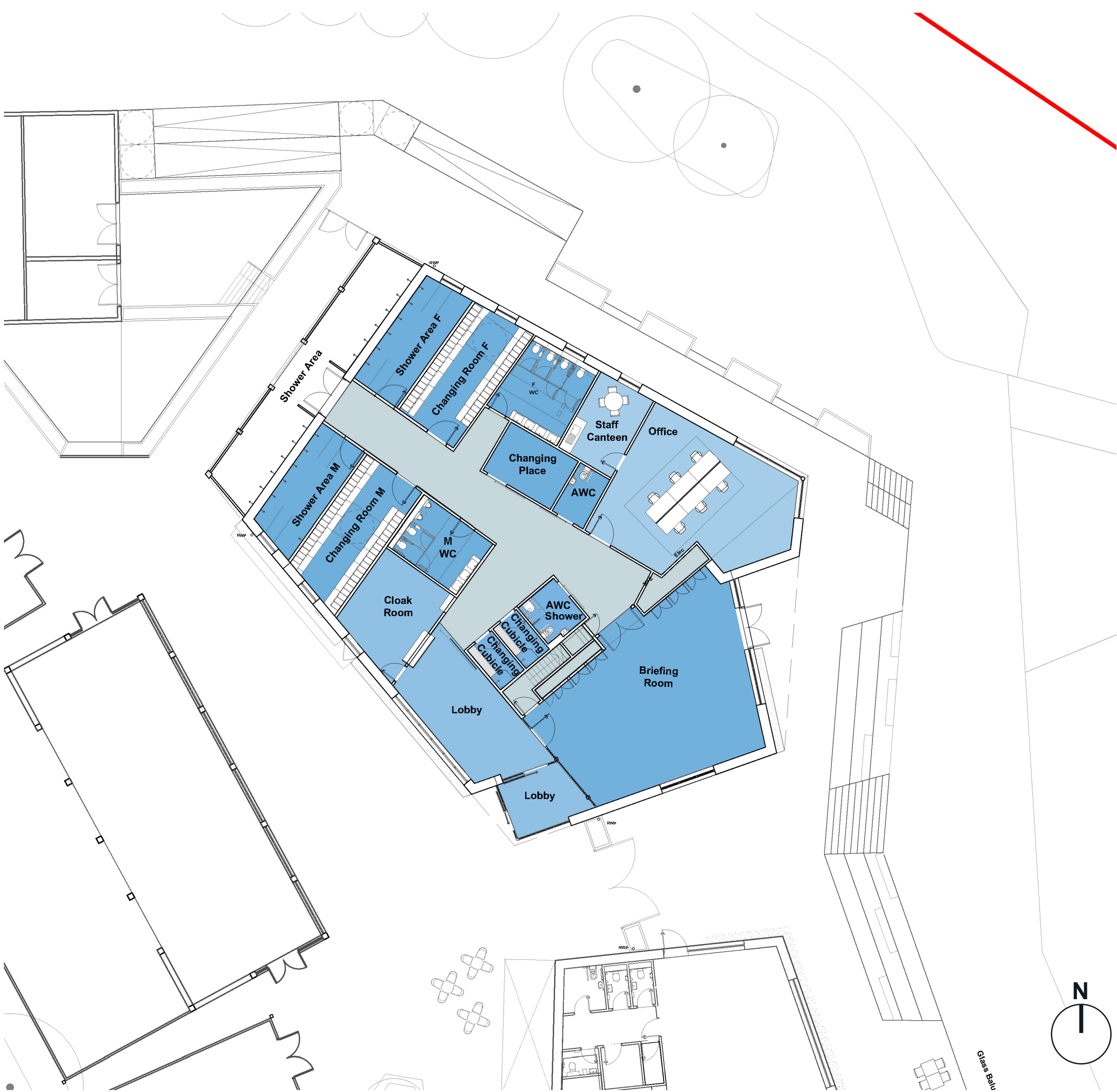


Activities Indicative of Potential Use

04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development

Water Sports Pavilion



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Water Sports Pavilion

Elevated view above the slip looking at the front of the water sports development.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Water Sports Pavilion

Elevated view above the pontoon looking at the front of the water sports development.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Water Sports Pavilion

View from inside the plaza looking at the back water sport pavilion entrance.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Water Sports Pavilion

View from the briefing room looking out towards Lough Ree.



04 Detail Design Proposal

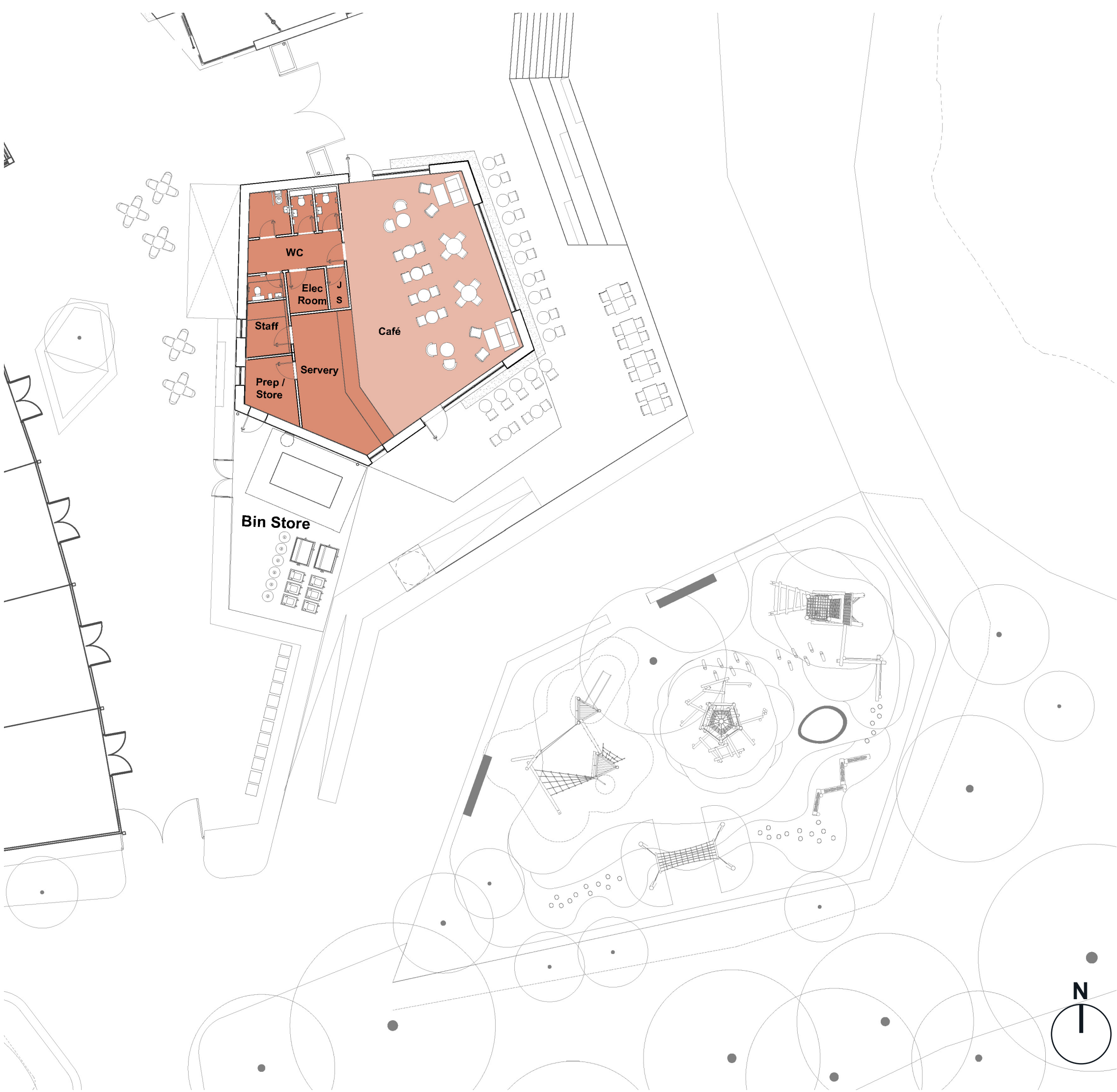
Water Sports Pavilion Development: Water Sports Pavilion

View from the lobby room looking into the plaza.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Café



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Café

View from the front of front of the terrace looking at the front façade of the café



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Café

View from the terrace looking to the front façade of the café and water sports pavilion.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Café

View looking at the base of the ramp leading up to the café terrace.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Café

View from the inside the café looking towards the playground and external terrace.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Café

View from the inside the café looking towards the Water Sports facility.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Café

View from the inside the café looking towards the external terrace and Lough Ree.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Café

View from the inside the café looking towards the servery.





04 Detail Design Proposal

04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Permanent Canopy Summer Mode

View from inside the plaza looking towards the permanent canopy (reception wetsuit collection) during the summer season.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Permanent Canopy Winter Mode

View from inside the plaza looking towards the permanent canopy during the winter season.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Permanent Canopy Summer Mode

Summer view from the southern section of the plaza looking towards the façade of the marquees and permanent canopy.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development : Permanent Canopy Winter Mode

Winter view from the southern section of the plaza looking towards the permanent canopy and activities.



Activities Indicative of Potential Use

04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Permanent Canopy Summer Mode

View from inside the permanent canopy during summer looking South



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Permanent Canopy Winter Mode

View from inside the permanent canopy during winter looking South



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Permanent Canopy Summer Mode

View from inside the permanent canopy during summer looking west towards the wet suit collection.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Permanent Canopy Winter Mode

View from inside the permanent canopy during winter looking West towards the road.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Permanent Canopy Summer Mode

View from inside the permanent canopy during summer looking South



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Permanent Canopy Winter Mode

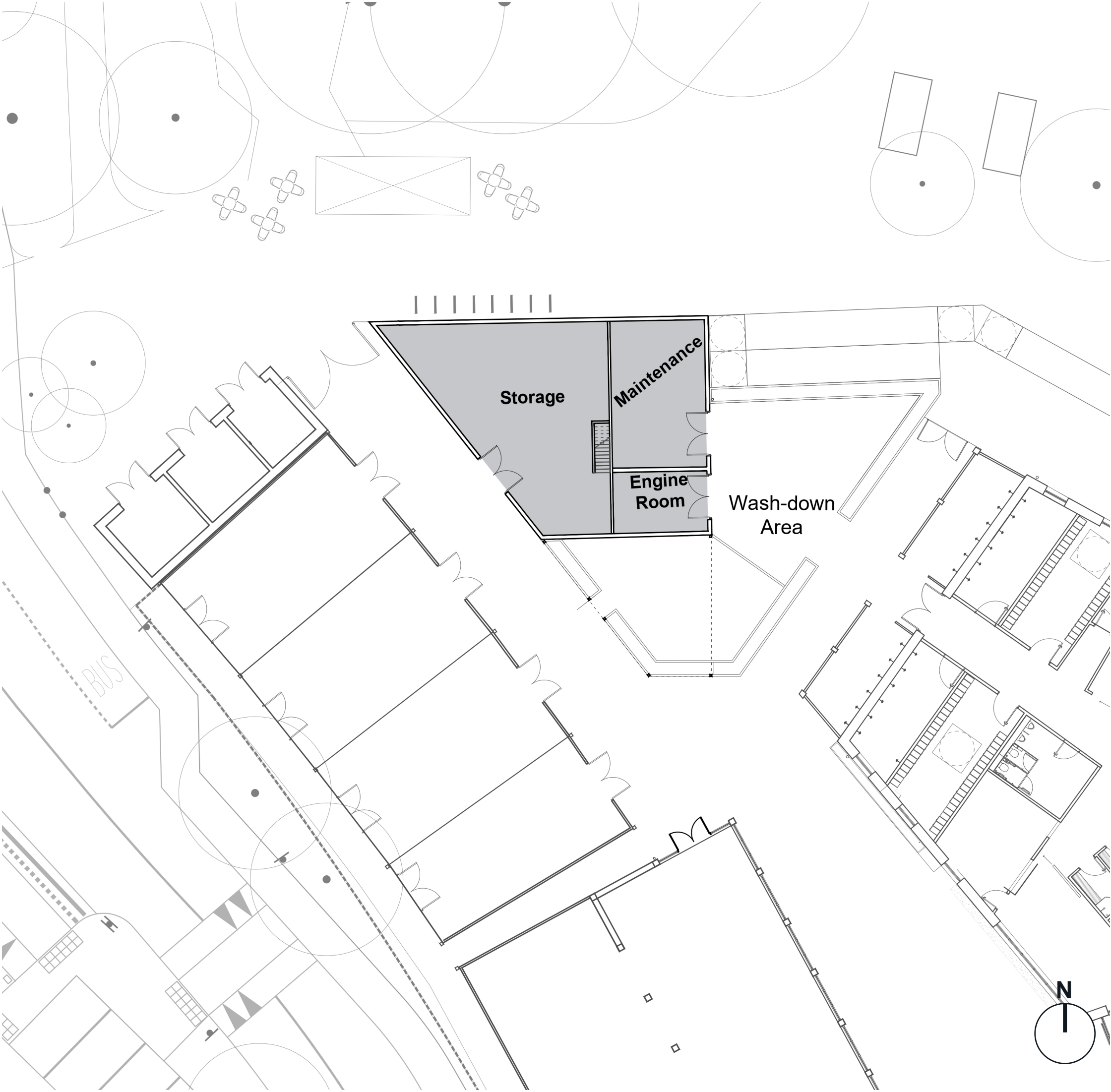
View from inside the permanent canopy during winter looking South



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development:

Maintenance Storage Building



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Maintenance Storage Building

View from the centre of the plaza looking north towards the maintenance building.

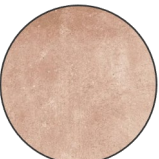


04 Detail Design Proposal

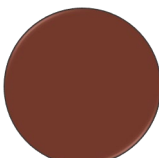
Marina Building



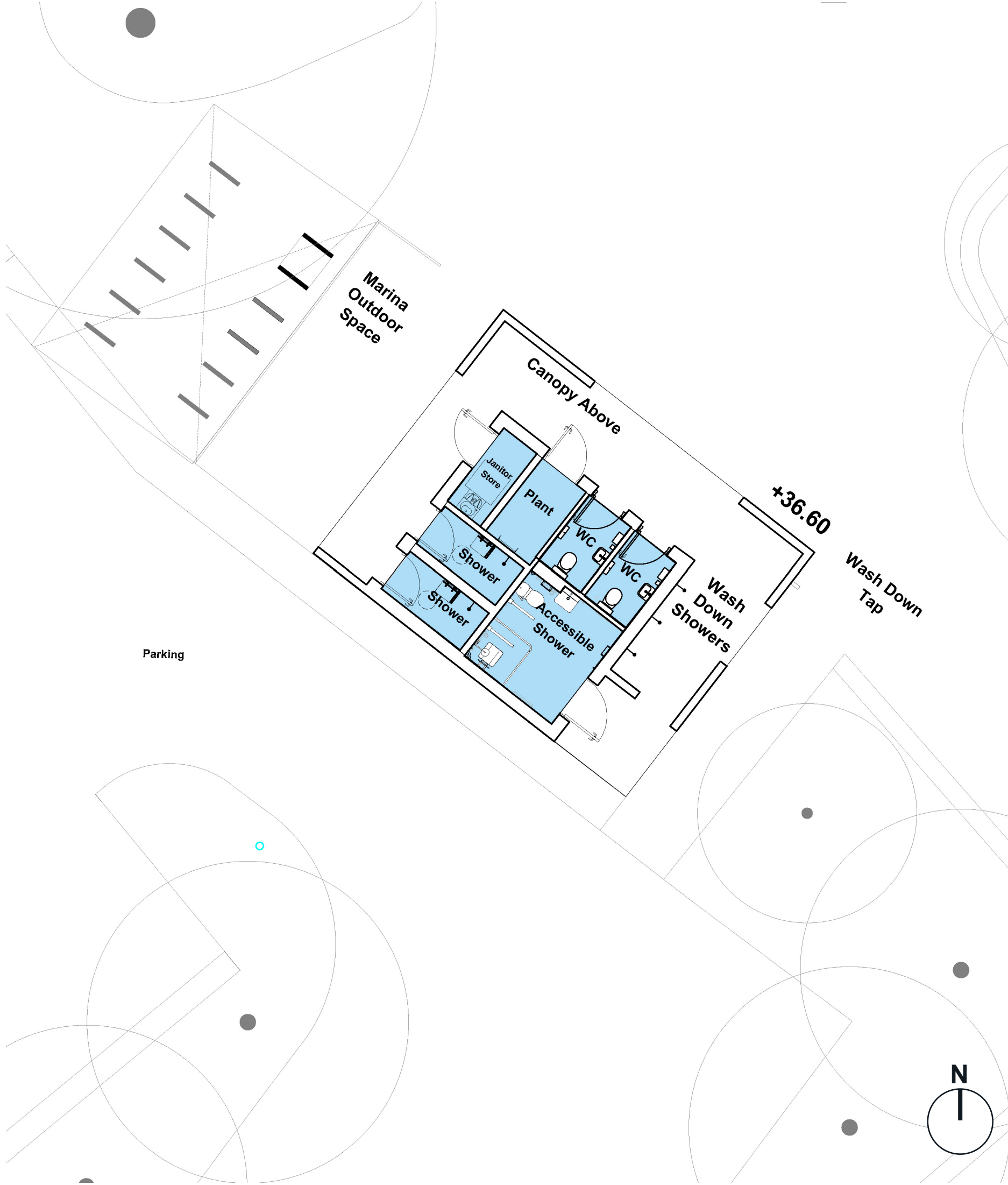
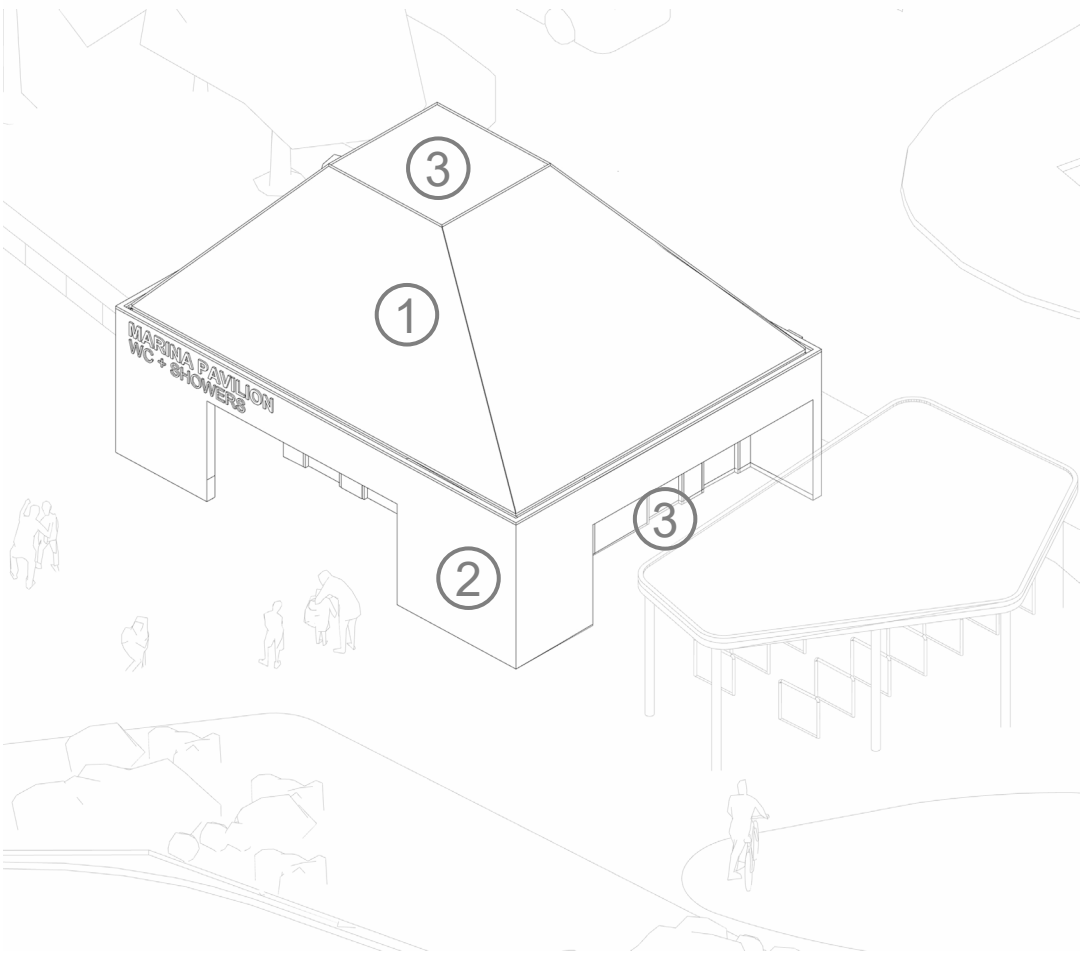
1. Concrete Terracotta Tile
Roof



2. Coloured Render
Base + Benches



3. Coloured Metal
Doors +Roof



04 Detail Design Proposal

Marina Building

Aerial view looking south towards the marina building and car park.



04 Detail Design Proposal

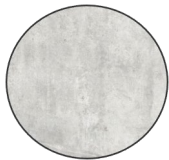
Marina Building

View looking south towards the marina building and bike parking.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Changing Pavilion



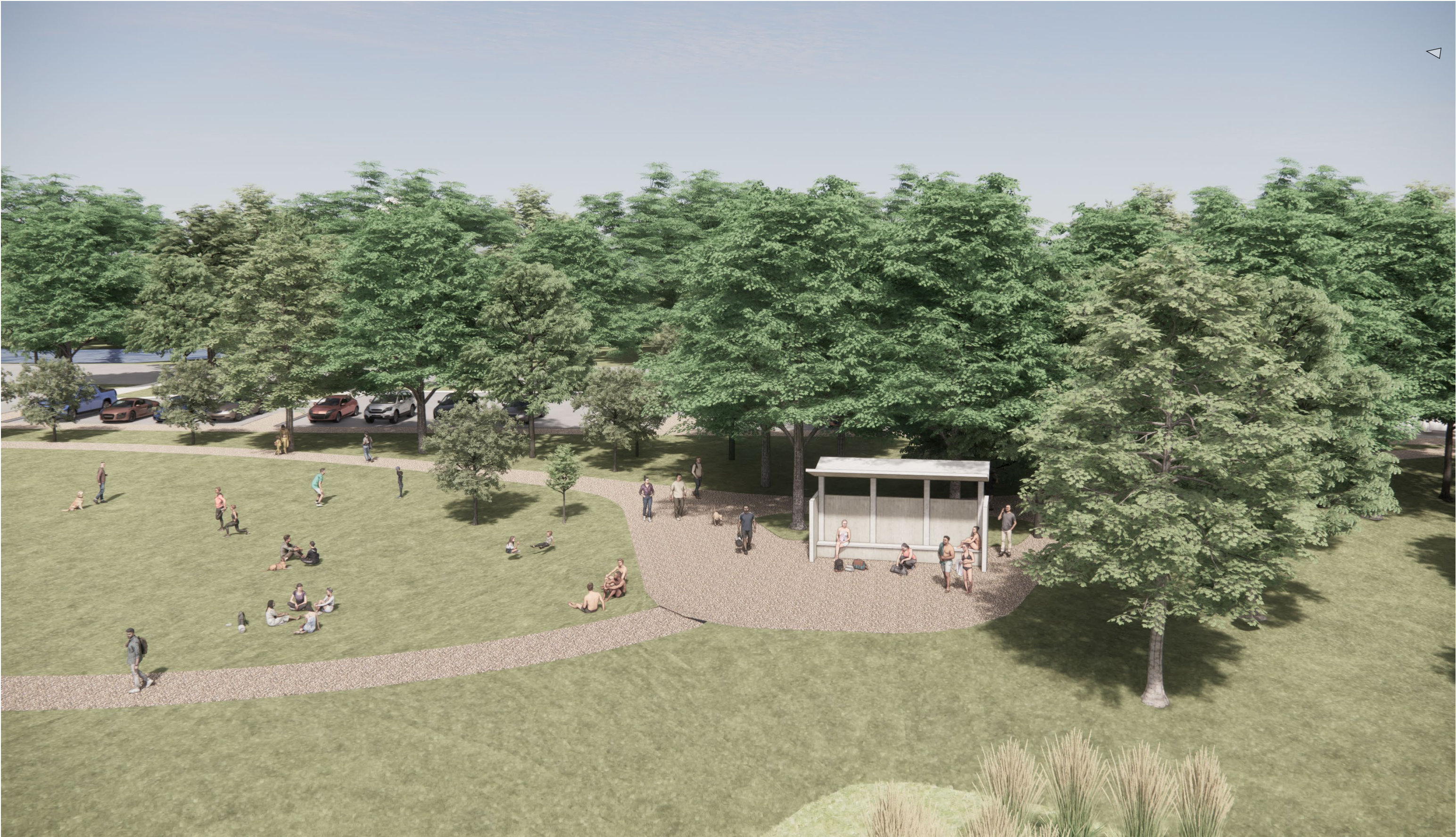
1. Concrete Podium
The changing pavilion will be entirely made of concrete



04 Detail Design Proposal

Changing Canopy

Aerial view looking west looking towards the changing canopy.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Changing Canopy

View along the promenade looking north towards the changing canopy.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Sauna

View looking south next to the saunas looking out at the water sports activities.



04 Detail Design Proposal

Water Sports Pavilion Development: Café

Elevated view looking towards the back of the café towards the lake.

