

2.11 Existing Access and Site Opportunities

Due to the site constraints of the adjacent compound, car park and existing landscaping, the opportunity to extend is within the service yard to the east of the Central Kitchen building. There is also an opportunity to refurbish some internal areas of the Polly Vacher building to be used by the School of Art although these are not discussed within this document.

The site can be accessed by public transport and cars as well as on foot and by bicycle. The main entrance to the existing building is from the car park. There are a couple of other points of access for deliveries and maintenance shown on the diagram.

2.12 Scale

The School of Art will be accommodated in the Central Kitchen building with a single-storey extension over the redundant service yard.

The proportion and alignment of the extension is to be based around the existing building.

2.13 Local Provision

The School of Art holds exhibitions to showcase the student achievements and to attract prospective students. These events happen throughout the year and are open to the wider public. This will take place within the new School of Art building.

KEY

-  Opportunity for extension
-  Opportunity for Refurbishment
-  Pedestrian Entrance
-  Designated Footpath
-  Pedestrian Route (along road or across car park)
-  Vehicle Access
-  Through route for occasional use
-  Cycle storage



Existing Access and Site Opportunities

2.14 Planning Policy

A detailed assessment of relevant planning policies is provided within the Planning Statement however the key national and local planning policies relevant to these proposals are summarised below.

The development proposals have been created within the context of the planning policy framework. At a national level, relevant policy and guidance is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework ('the NPPF') initially published in 2012 and most recently revised in July 2021 making key reforms to the planning system. The relevant sections of the NPPF are set out below.

Achieving Sustainable Development

Paragraph 11 sets a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

Paragraph 110 emphasises that in assessing applications for development, it should be ensured that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be taken up, safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users and any significant impacts from the development on the transport network or highway safety can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.

Making effective use of land

Paragraph 119 states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or brownfield land.

Achieving well-designed places

Paragraph 126 states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 130 supports developments that function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and sympathetic to the local character and history. In addition, developments should be provided with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

Paragraph 152 states that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help shape places to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings;

and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Paragraph 174 emphasises that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, including by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity or geological value and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

Turning to local Policy, Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019) is the document that contains the policies for how Reading will develop up to 2036. It identifies the amount of development that will take place, the areas and sites where development is expected to be accommodated, and where it will be restricted, and sets out policies for how planning applications will be decided. The relevant policies are presented below.

The proposed site lies within the University of Reading's Whiteknights Campus. Policy ER2 (Whiteknights Campus, University of Reading) states that the University of Reading will continue to adapt and expand through the plan period and such development may include infrastructure and services. This Policy further states that access to and within the site will be improved where necessary and advises that development will accord with the following criteria:

Area of wildlife significance and current or potential green links will be retained or enhanced, and not detrimentally affected by development, including through light effects;

The safety of those using the campus will be maintained or enhanced;

There will be no significant detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential properties; and

The loss of undeveloped areas on the site will be weighed against the benefits of development to the wider community.

Policy CC1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) supports a positive approach to considering development proposals that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. This Policy further states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the development plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) advises that proposals for new development will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.

Policy CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change) requires all

developments to demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change either through design or provision of landscaping.

Policy CC5 (Waste Minimisation and Storage) advises that development should demonstrate measures to minimise the generation of waste in the construction, use and life of buildings, as well as promoting more sustainable approaches to waste management.

Policy CC6 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development) requires the scale and density of development to be related to its level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities.

Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) supports high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. In addition, developments should respond positively to their local context, create safe and accessible environments, are accessible and are visually attractive.

Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) requires the Green Network, which includes Green Links and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas to be maintained, protected, extended and enhanced. Development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity, and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible. Furthermore, Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands) says that individual trees and groups of trees will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance. New development shall therefore make provision for tree retention and planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage or off-site in appropriate locations.

Policy EN18 (Flooding and Drainage) advises that smaller schemes are encouraged to incorporate SuDS, where possible. In addition, SuDS provision should where possible maximise ecological benefits, link into the existing Green Network, incorporate tree planting and landscaping.

Policy TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) states that development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport. In addition, electrical vehicle charging points should be provided within communal car parks.

The local planning policy for Reading Borough Council comprises several Supplementary Planning Documents. In this instance, the Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011); the Sustainable Design and Construction (2019) are of relevance.

The Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011) provides guidance on the levels of parking required as part of

new developments. The SPD sets out the parking standards based on several zones within Reading and the application site is located within Zone 3. The SPD addresses both vehicle parking and cycle parking and, for a higher education use, the number of spaces are calculated based on the number of staff and students.

The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019) has been prepared to help guiding developers and decision-makers on the implementation of key sustainability policies set out in the Reading Local Plan, namely CC2, CC3, CC5 and EN18. The SPD provides practical advice on forms of sustainable design and construction, as well as waste minimisation that will meet these policy requirements. It also details how policies will be applied. For non-residential minor development the SPD sets out that the proposed building should achieve a BREEAM 'Very Good' standards.

3.0

Brief and Design Evolution

3.1	Brief.....	28
3.2	Design Development-Design Layout.....	30
3.3	Design Evolution	32
3.4	Internal Relationships.....	40
3.5	Structural Design Evolution	42
3.6	Built Footprint	43
3.7	Planting Enhancement	43

3.0 Brief and Design Evolution

3.1 Brief

The current Art department is relocating as the current building has been selected as a site for another development. The current facilities comprise of a number of studio spaces, workshop areas, digital facilities and staff offices.

The original requirements from the University of Reading included the assessment of viability of the conversion of the Central Kitchen building to studio space, the extension for the remaining specialist spaces and the use of the Polly Vacher building for office and non specialist spaces.

The original requirements are summarised below:

Must have:

- Functional space that can support the end of year show.
- Ability to accommodate workshop and specialist equipment with associated power and LEV requirements.
- Practicable solution for materials delivery, handling and storage.

Should have:

- Space that can function as gallery and exhibition space through the year.
- Co-located workshop, studio and stores.
- Direct access to workshop and storage for delivery of materials.

Could have:

- Achieving suitable environmental performance rating.
- Flexible runs of studio space.
- Optimum workflow around materials handling.

Would like:

- High environmental performance.
- Exemplar building supporting recruitment to target quality.
- Double height studio space.
- Opportunity to support public exhibitions and community engagement activities.
- Discrete workshops for high and low risk activities.
- Loading bay access to building for materials handling.
- To contribute to the University ambition of targeting Net Zero carbon in operation by 2030.



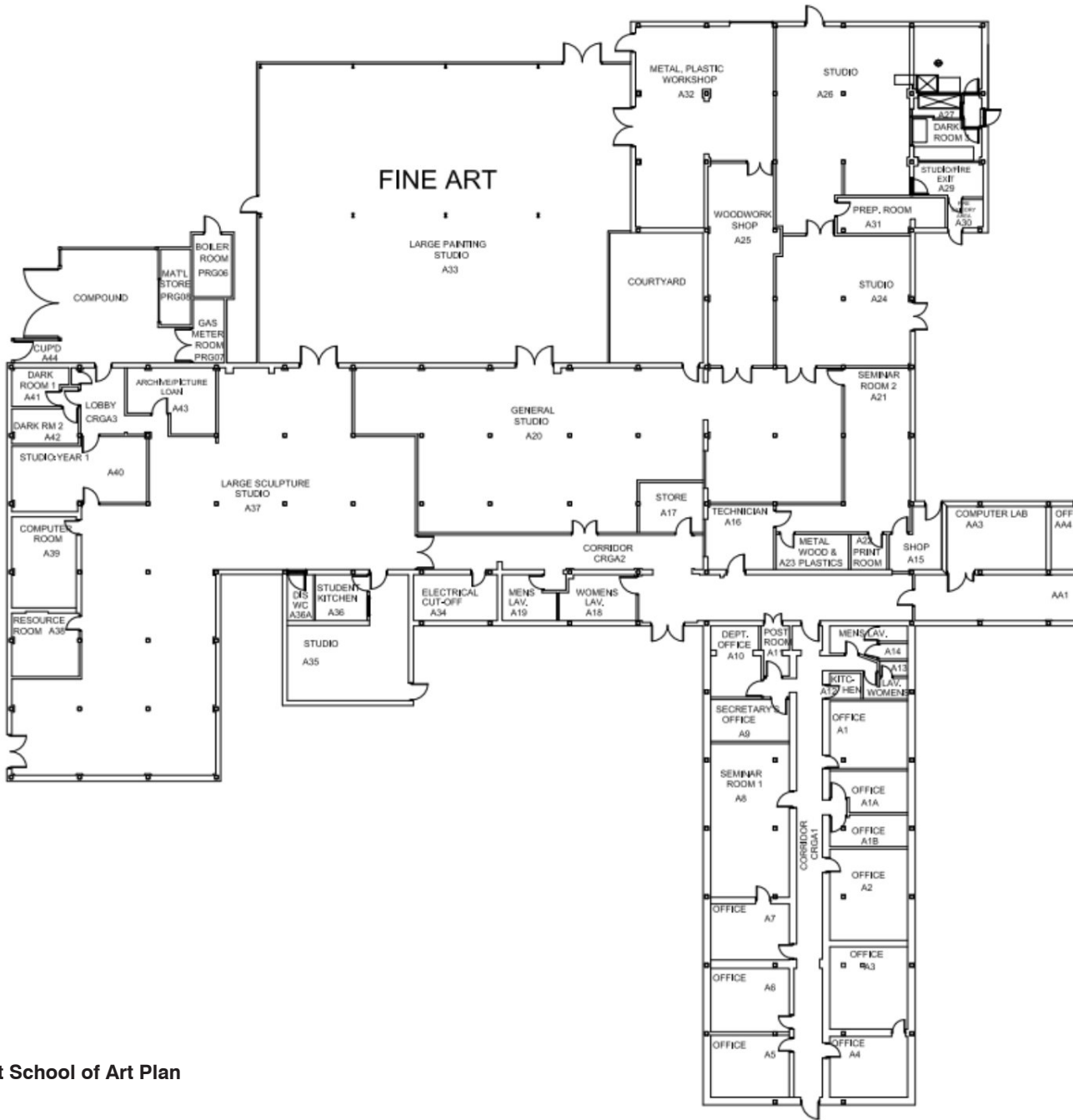
Current School of Art



Current School of Art



Current School of Art



Current School of Art Plan

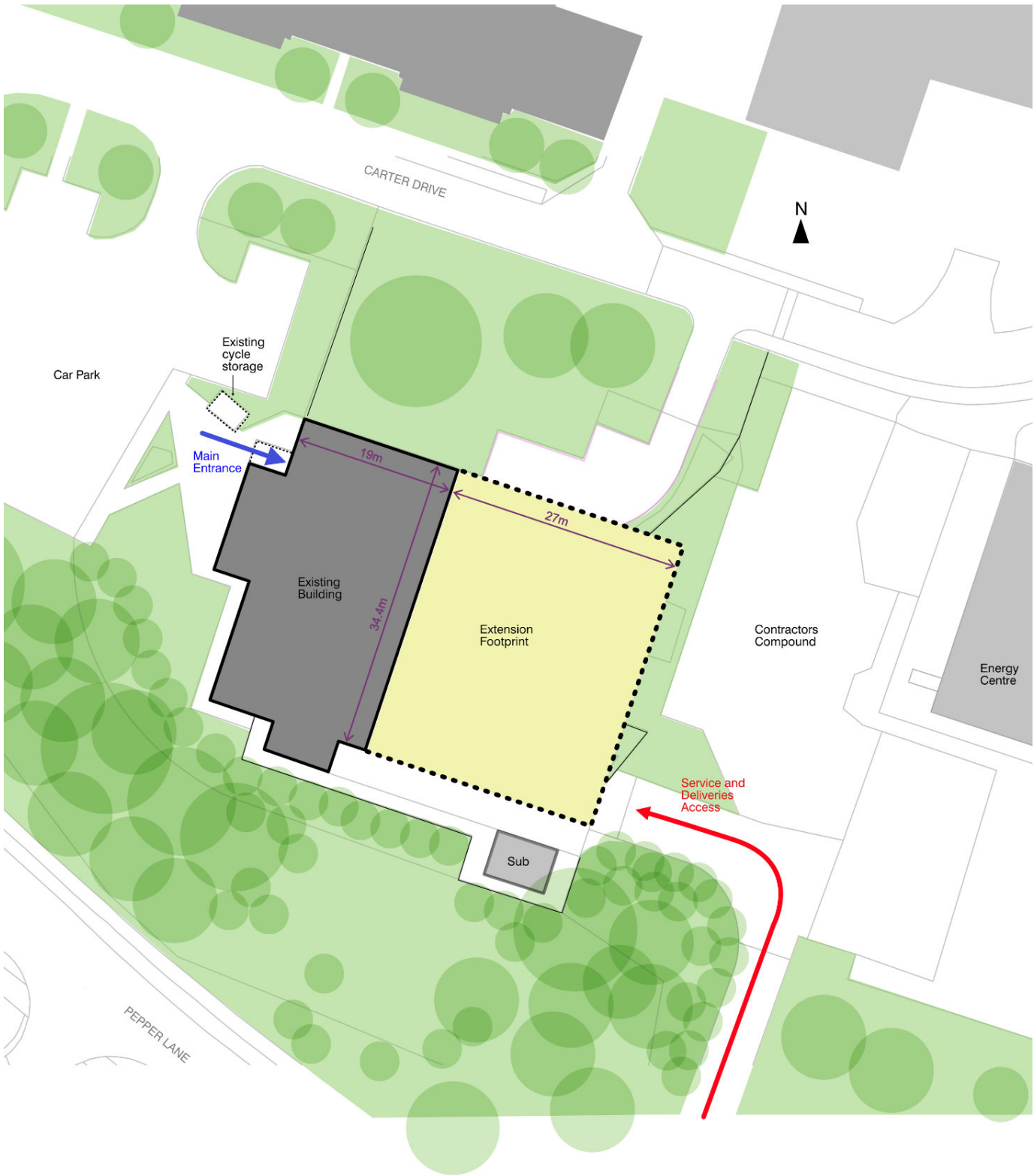
Department of Art - Steady State @ 60UG Intake	Space Type	Area Required (m2)	Notes
	Studio and Related	900	All specialist space wrapped up into 4.55m2 / student FTE norm. Exact split can be as required in consultation.
	Briefing Space	80	Space for briefing studio groups.
	Workshop	195	Some equipment requires local exhaust ventilation (LEV).
	Digital Suite	140	AV and other technologies.
	Stores	60	Materials and logistics. Not for 'output'
	Academic Office (16)	112	Shared office setting
	Meeting Space	50	Single meeting space and two 1-2-1 spaces
	Support Office	50	Shared office setting. Allow for 10 desks to accommodate growth / flexibility / fractional posts
	PDRA/Visitors	11	Single space
	Welfare/Kitchen	30	Staff welfare facilities. Student welfare spaces included in studio allowance (although needs to be separate space).
	TOTAL NIA	1,628	
	Balance @ 30%	488	To be developed. 30% is average. The UoR would expect an improvement of the 30% allowance made given the types of spaces required. The current ration on TOB1 is 80:20.
	TOTAL GIA	2,117	

Space Requirements

The spatial requirements above show the brief given by the University. In order to reduce the amount of new build and due to budget constraints some of the required spaces are to be located within Polly Vacher. This includes the Academic offices, digital studio spaces and Fabrication Laboratory.



Stage 2 Design Development Sketches

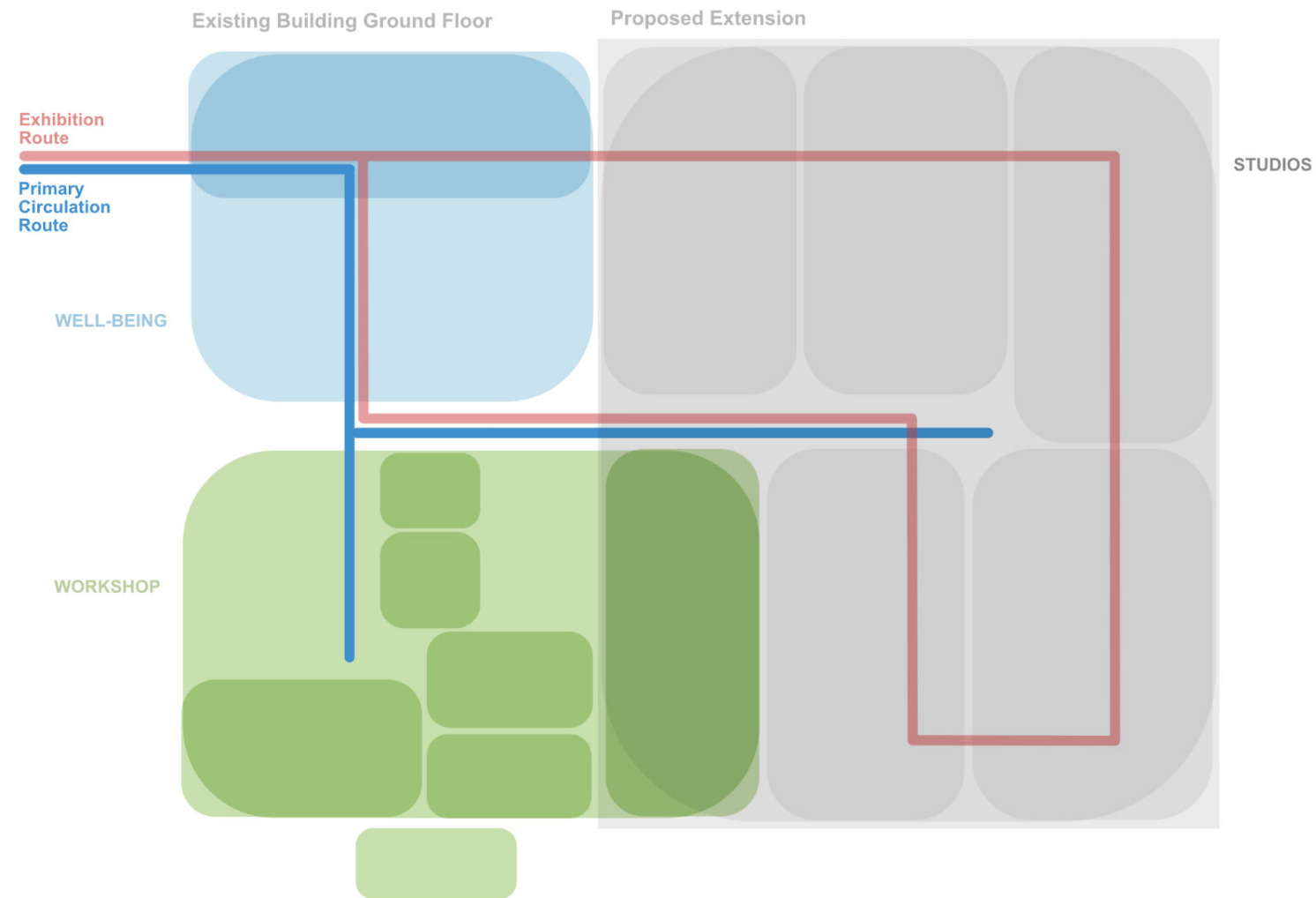


Extension Footprint

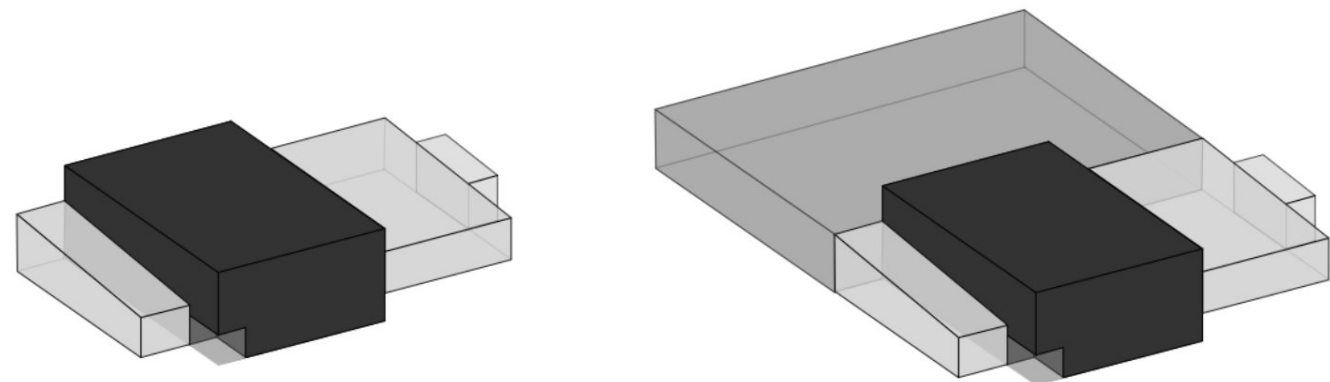
3.2 Design Development - Design Layout

The initial idea for the design layout is for the studio spaces to be placed in the new extension to get the most natural light and the workshop spaces to be incorporated into the existing building. The entrance will be opened up to create a large arrival space which can be used as a gallery space. The well-being and other support spaces will also be located in the existing building. Circulation around the building has been designed to allow a circular flow through the studios for an exhibition scenario as well as an efficient route for primary building use.

The mass of the extension will follow the height of the single storey part of the existing building as shown in the diagram and will take a cuboid form. The extension roof will need to be designed to allow North light into the studio spaces to create an optimal environment for art. Some alterations will need to be made to the existing building to enhance the quality of spaces.

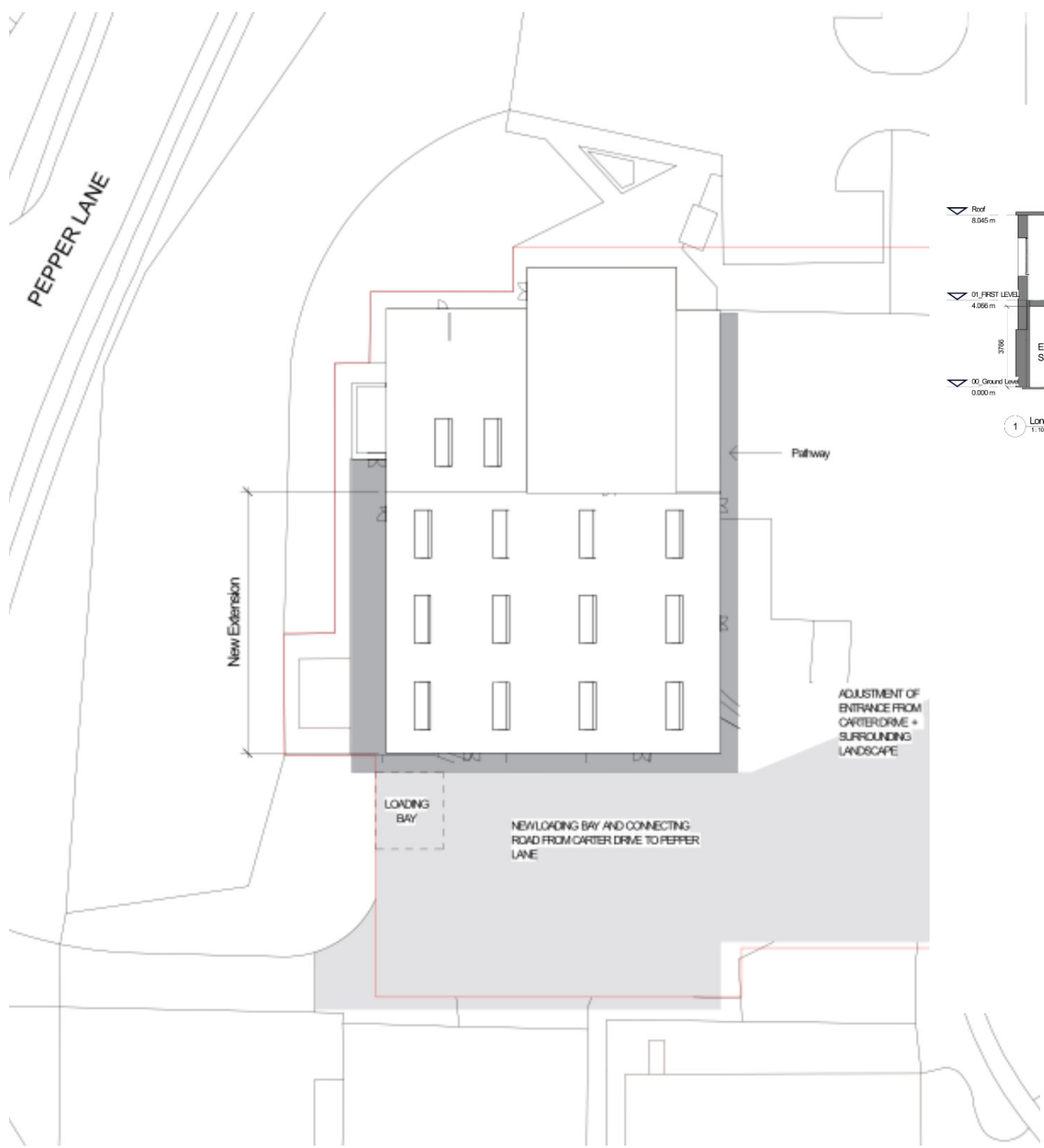


Design Development - Stage 2 Initial Design Concept Diagram

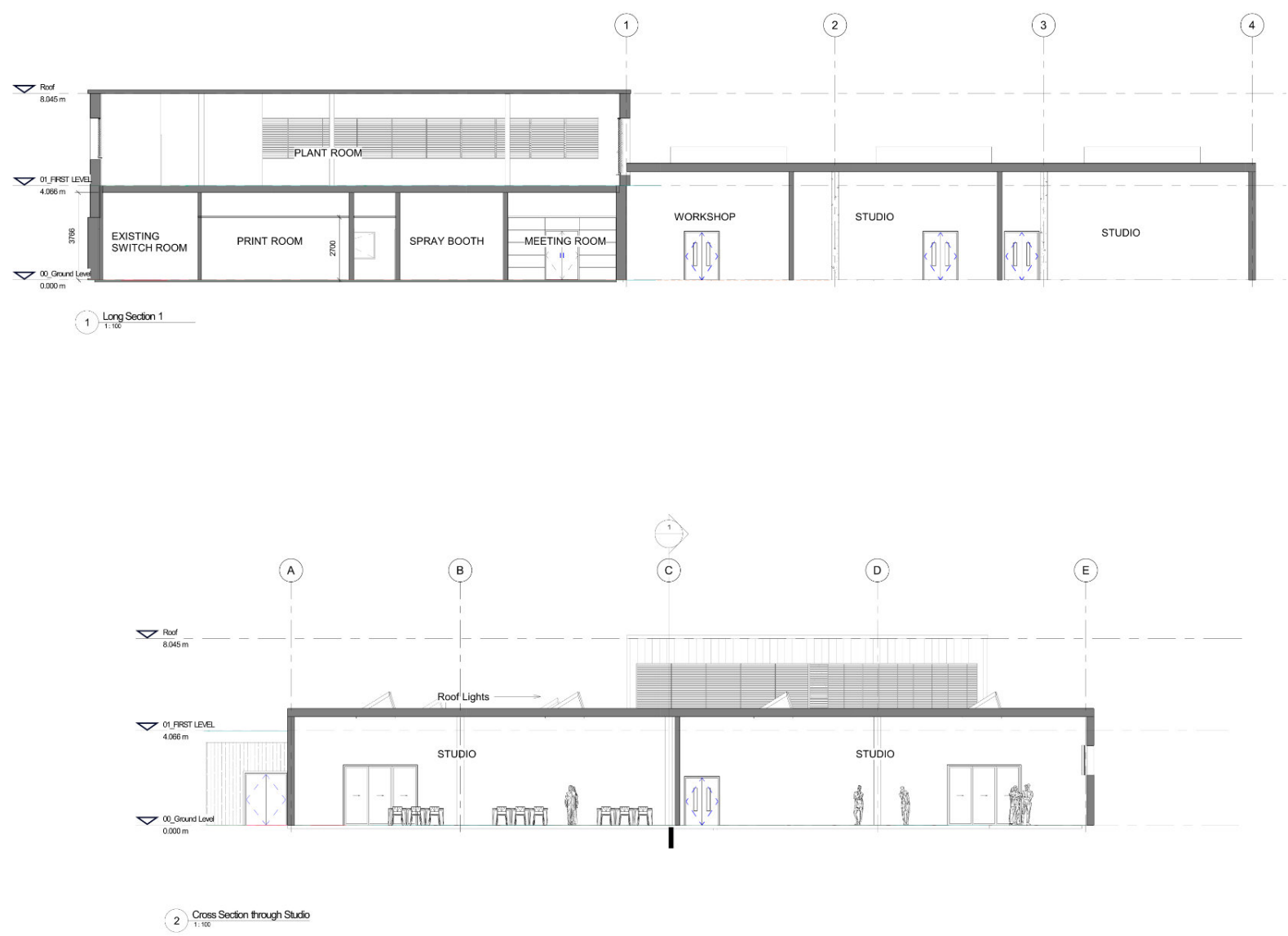


Design Development - Existing Building Diagram

Design Development - Extension Massing Diagram



Design Development - Stage 1 Initial Roof Plan



Design Development - Stage 1 Initial Sections

3.3 Design Evolution

The design has undergone iterations through RIBA Stages 1-4 and at each stage has undergone stakeholder engagement to ensure the design suits the end users and University requirements. Due to budget constraints the area had to be reduced and office accommodation and digital facilities are to be located in the opposite building, Polly Vacher.

The roof design was developed to improve the internal environment by allowing more natural light into the space and by increasing the volume of space inside. Northlights have been integrated across the extension roof and a parapet built up around the edge to maintain the simplicity of form from the outside and for safe roof access. The south facing slopes provide the opportunity for installations of solar panels.

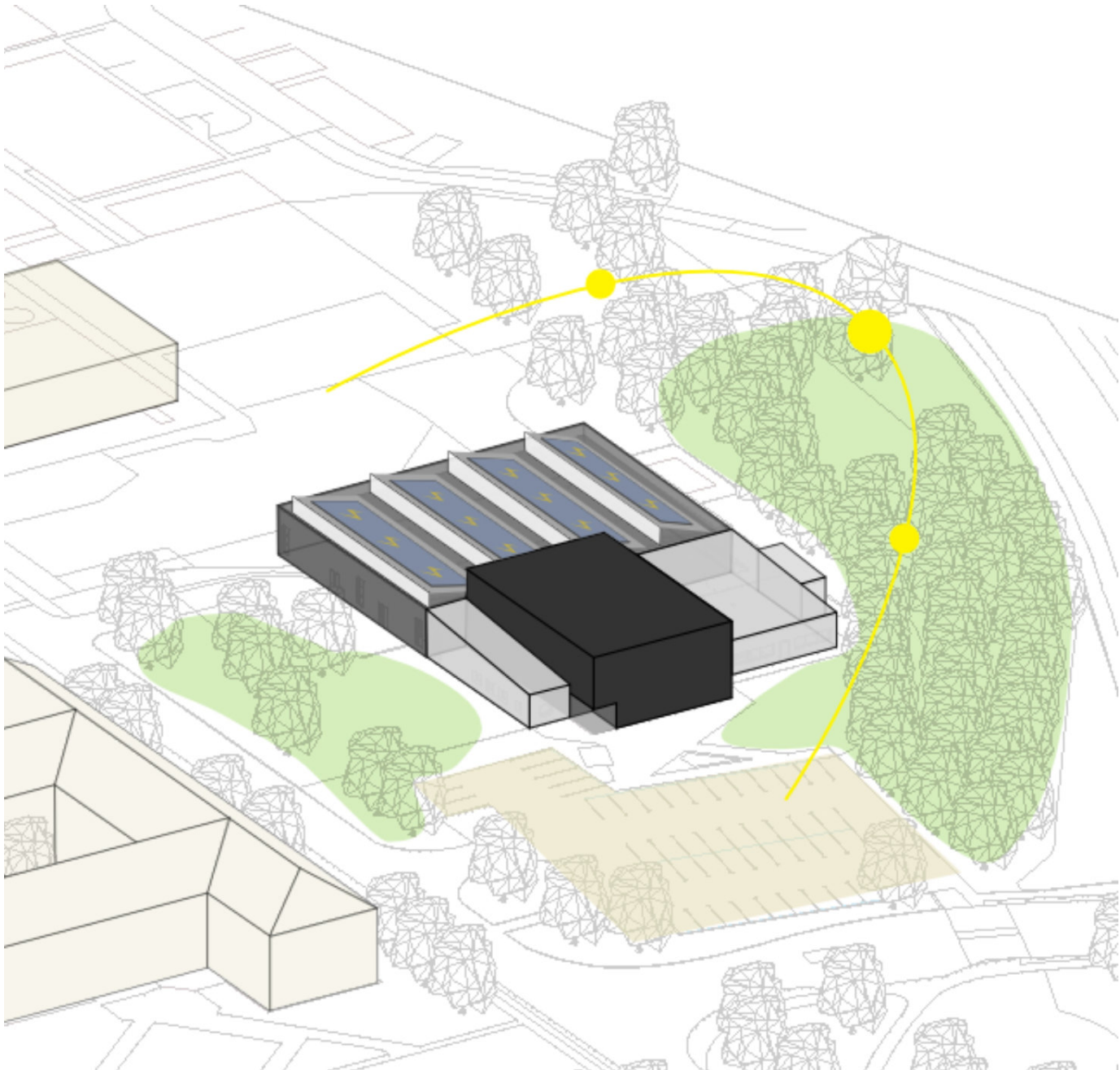
The layout has been developed in response to technical workshops and stakeholder engagement sessions. Further research and discussions have also been conducted to get a clear understanding of the activities happening in each space and the management of the facilities.



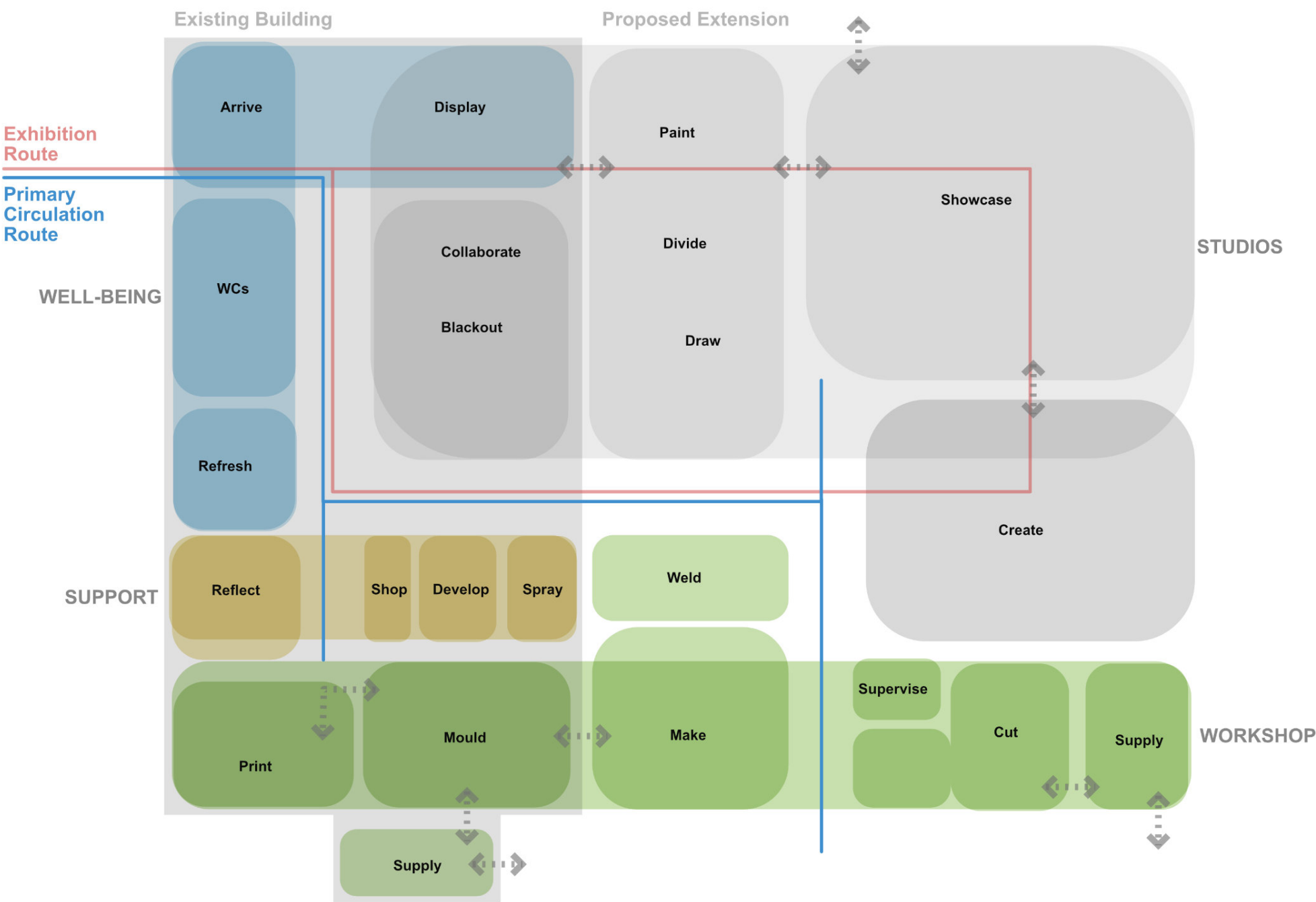
Reference Image - Bedales School, designed by FCB



Reference Image - Modular Skylights in Atelier Zimmerlistrasse Office



Design Development - Site Massing



Reference Image - Blackhorse Workshop, designed by Assemble Studios



Reference Image - Blackhorse Workshop, designed by Assemble Studios

Design Development - Concept Layout Diagram

Considering the use of the building and the relationship between each of the spaces required, the concept diagram consider the building in two different uses; the first is the primary function of supporting academic teaching and the second the exhibition routes for end of year shows and exhibitions.

Pre - application Presentation

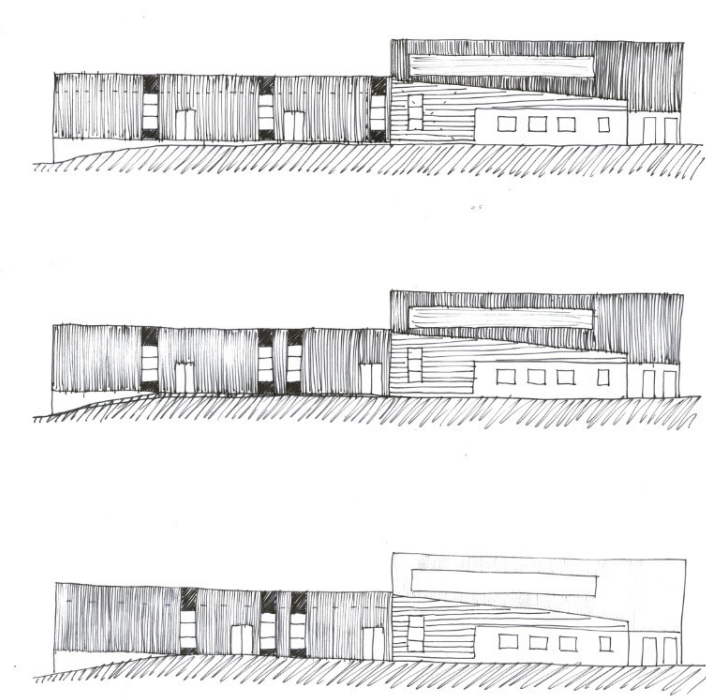
A pre-application meeting was conducted via video conferencing on 16th December with Reading Borough Council. We received a written application response from the Council, dated 14th January 2022.

At the pre-application meeting the facade opposite was presented. During the design process, the facade was considered in order to maximise the amount of existing fabric that could be retained in order to reduce the amount of materials, waste and carbon.

During the pre-app discussion it was highlighted that the current entrance space and cladding could be improved, this feedback has been taken on board and responded to in the following pages.



Design Development - North Facade



Design Development - Facade Sketches



Pre-app External Visual

Pre - application Presentation Response

The following key comments highlighted from the pre-application process and how they have been addressed.

Comments from the Pre-application	Design Response
Limited windows to the proposal	The School of Art have requested that there are limited low level windows in the facade, they have stated that having low level windows impacts on the useable academic teaching space. The end user preference would be to only have high level north lights, however the low level windows are required for natural ventilation in these spaces. The position of the windows has been developed to allow for the greatest expanse of wall space by placing at the corners of each of the studio spaces.
Further articulation of the elevations	The primary facade to the north has been developed to incorporate further articulation. Windows are recessed with a change in facade material to break up the elevation, door surrounds have been added. Further images can be seen on the following pages.
Careful material selection	The comment was highlighted with particular reference to the existing white horizontal profile cladding that was commented to not have fared well. In response to this the design team has developed the design of the entrance space further to remove the existing white cladding in this location and replace with new vertical profile grey cladding and black panels to create a consistency along the elevation and create a welcoming entrance.
Design relates to the School of Art	The building design is practical and functional, it is to be a paired back and simple design to allow the Art to be the focus. The glazed entrance allows for the flexible space and gallery to be inviting to students and visitors. The University is committed to include public art as part of this scheme, this is aimed to celebrate the history of School of Art within Reading University.
Inclusion of a evident and welcoming marked entrance	In response to this comment, the design has developed to create a new accessible and welcoming entrance to the building. An entrance canopy will highlight the building entrance and glazing will provide a link to the internal use of the space and gallery.
Scheme enhances the coverage of the adjacent wooded belt	Planting will be added to the adjacent wooded belt to provide further screening of the campus.



External Visual following Pre-app



University of Reading, The Hopkins Building



Additional Concept Development Precedent Images



External Visual - North Facade



External Visual - North Facade from Carter Drive



External Visual - North-West Corner, Main Entrance