

10.0 Accessibility
Site & Building Layout

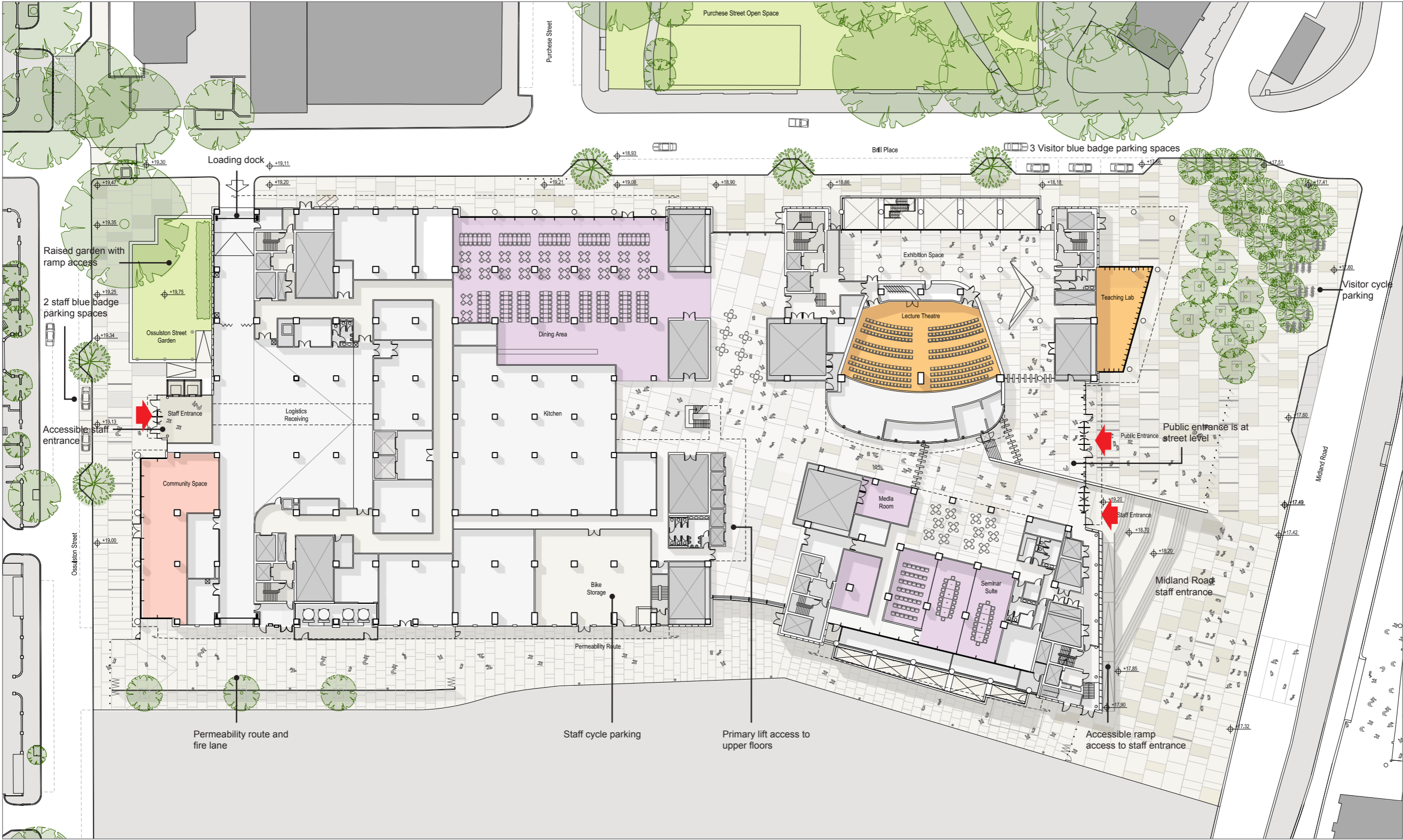


Fig 10-2. Site plan

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10. 5

External Areas, Entrances and Inclusivity

The building is enclosed by public highways on three sides. Public transport buses run along Midland Road on the east and Euston Road to the south. Railway and London Underground stations are located immediately to the east of the site, opposite the Institute. The site lies adjacent to the London cycle network and a cycle-hire scheme docking station is some 2-3 minutes walk to the north up Midland Road/Pancras Way. The building includes secure internal cycle parking for staff and additional external cycle parking for visitors. Pedestrian routes run north-south along Midland Road and east-west along both Euston Road and Brill Place/Phoenix Road with an additional permeability route to be provided along the southern boundary of the site with the British Library. Full details are set out in the Transport Assessment and Planning Statement.

10. 6

Emergency access has also been considered with access to all four sides of the building. The southern permeability route has specifically been designed for this purpose with the ability to cater for both arriving emergency vehicles and escaping occupants. Security features around the site have been minimised as much as possible and restricted only to those areas where specifically required. This ensures that the whole building is within the stipulated carry distance for emergency service personnel.

10. 7

There is a rise across the site from a low point on the southeast (+17.3m AOD) to a high point on the northwest (+19.4m AOD). The public entrance to the building is on the east facade and level with the adjoining paving. This provides safe and level access for all. A separate staff entrance, also on the east facade, will be at a raised level and approached via steps with an adjacent ramp, which will be designed to the British Building Regulations Approved Documents. Although this staff entrance is stepped, to address the impact of the change in levels across the site, the area of steps has been kept to a minimum and the ramp has been designed so to not separate users from the main entry route. An additional staff entrance is provided to the west on Ossulston Street, which is level with the adjoining paving and fully accessible.

10. 8

A landscaped public realm will be created to the east with both public and staff entrances to the building clearly visible. The visitors' and staff entrances will be separated by a feature wall segregating the change in levels between the two internal floor levels.

10. 9

Changes in level will be clearly distinguished using textures and will be adequately lit without causing glare or creating pools of light or darkness. Street furniture and planting will be carefully positioned so as not to be obstructive or hazardous. The public realm may be enjoyed by staff, visitors and the public.

10. 10

The main glazed entrance facade will incorporate sets of revolving doors with adjacent automated single-leaf swing doors, with security controls on the staff entrance. A secondary secure staff entrance is provided on the west facade where revolving doors with adjoining single leaf swing doors lead into an enclosed secure lift lobby.

10. 11

All the single-leaf swing doors adjacent to the entrance revolving doors will be automated and security controlled with the recommended clear opening width. Thresholds will be level with the internal floor surfaces and external pavement. Weather protection such as a canopy or overhang will be provided over the entrances.

10. 12

Blue Badge parking for disabled members of staff and visitors will be provided. Ensuring that these spaces fulfil the exacting requirements of the London Plan policy has been a particular challenge, especially in ensuring that they provide full integration with access to the wider public realm, without segregating the facilities or creating barriers between the different sections of the community. Two Blue Badge parking spaces for staff will be located on Ossulston Street adjacent to the staff entrance. An additional three Blue Badge parking spaces for visitors will be provided on Brill Place near the main east entrance. These spaces will be within 50 metres of the main building entrances and offer both choice of entry point and full inclusivity for staff and other visitors.

10. 13

Internal Circulation and inclusivity

The glazed entrance doors and screens will have clear manifestation at the prescribed heights, contrasting visually with the backgrounds on both sides. The reception desk will be clearly visible from the main entrance and be well lit with plenty of circulation space around it. Routes to visitors' waiting areas, toilets, exhibition space, teaching laboratory and the auditorium will be clearly defined.

10. 14

Stairs and lifts for access to and from the upper level of the back of the auditorium will be provided. Steps and a platform lift will be located adjacent to the reception desk for access for invited visitors to the seminar suite and support facilities off the main foyer.

10. 15

The entrance foyer and the accommodation immediately off it, are for the use of staff and visitors. The foyer is separated from the remainder of the accommodation by a security screen.

10. 16

Lifts are provided in the concourse area beyond the security screen. The staff restaurant, coffee shop and administrative offices with support facilities are located off this concourse. Circulation routes will meet Building Regulations Approved Documents and will allow wheelchairs to pass and manoeuvre. Door widths and suitable ironmongery will also meet Building Regulations Approved Documents where applicable.

10. 17

Lift access is provided to all floors. Lifts with associated stairs are located at key circulation points in the building. All stairways and lifts will meet Building Regulations Approved Documents where applicable.

10. 18

Facilities and Finishes

All toilet facilities for visitors and staff will include wheelchair accessible WCs and WCs for ambulant disabled people, designed to best practice recommendations and the requirements of Building Regulations Approved Documents where applicable.

10. 19

On all typical laboratory floors the travel distance from the south east block to the staff wheelchair accessible WC is more than the recommended 40 metres but all doors across the circulation routes will be on hold-open devices to compensate for the increased travel distance. It should be noted that the recommended travel distance is based on custom and practice and not on any research, so when a route is unobstructed a greater travel distance is acceptable.

10. 20

The layout and seating of the meeting spaces will be installed in accordance with regulations and guidance documents. Reception desks and service counters will be set at heights suitable for seated or standing users with low and high sections. Speech enhancement systems such as induction loops will be installed at reception desks / counters and in the auditorium. Meeting rooms will also be provided with such fixed systems or portable systems as appropriate.

10. 21

Surfaces and finishes will be carefully selected. Hard shiny finishes, particularly for floors, will be avoided to reduce problems of glare and reflection of sound. However, where hard surfaces are functionally or aesthetically desirable the potential problems of glare and sound will be addressed by lighting and absorbent finishes to walls and ceilings. Surface textures will be used to warn of hazards such as change in level. Colour, tonal and luminance contrast will be used to distinguish boundaries of floors, walls, doors, ceilings and approaches to changes in floor level.

10. 22

Lighting systems will be used to accentuate interior colour, tone and texture. Light fittings will be positioned where they will not cause glare, reflection or shadows and also identify potential hazards such as stairs or changes in floor level along a route. Audible alarms will be supplemented by visual alarms for people with impaired hearing.

10. 23

A clear wayfinding strategy will be developed with appropriate signage for the whole site. Wayfinding systems will be simple with universal symbols and colours used to signal features such as circulation cores and toilet facilities. Signage will be positioned so as not to be obstructive. Signs will be clear, simple and short using typefaces, colour and graphics with pictorial symbols as appropriate. Tactile signs will only be provided where they can be easily reached such as lift controls.

