



Design and Access Statement for North Bridge House Senior School



COGNITA

elliswilliams
ARCHITECTS

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Executive Summary

This report is for the submission to London Borough of Camden on behalf of North Bridge House Senior School and Cognita for the proposed new main entrance and improved compliant external escape stair. This document has been prepared by Ellis Williams Architects to accompany the full planning application outlining the key principles and underlying the proposed design.

Schools Academic and Social Priorities

North Bridge House School is an independent school located in London. The school currently has five different locations for various age groups. The North Bridge House Senior School site is situated on Vane Close just off Rosslyn Hill, Hampstead. The site lies within Camden Council and the Fitzjohns / Netherhall conservation area. None of the school buildings are listed. The school is part of the Cognita family of schools and offers places for pupils from the age of 11 to 16, Years 7 to 11.

The project is based on a thorough understanding of the future needs and aspirations of the school in terms of facilities and functions, and a comprehensive appraisal of the campus’ existing opportunities and constraints.

The principle aims and objectives of the school and Cognita are to provide a welcoming and inspiring main entrance and improve internal vertical circulation. The architectural language adopted for the redesign will be modern and contemporary, incorporating facilities that will accommodate the latest teaching and learning techniques and state of the art technology. Above all, the new facilities seek to promote educational excellence, architecture and spaces of the highest quality, a building that performs well and reflects the vision and aspirations of the School and Cognita.

Consultation

Ellis Williams Architects have worked very closely with the School, Cognita and the design team. Numerous meetings, presentations and workshops have been held to establish the Schools aims, objectives, wishes, expectations and requirements. A Pre-Planning application was submitted to Camden Council in October 2018 and advice received in January 2019.

Site Address:
North Bridge House Senior School
65 Rosslyn Hill
Hampstead
London NW3 5UD

Existing Site Area:
4,613m2 / 0.4613hectares / 1.14acres

Existing Gross Internal Floor Area:
Main Entrance Building: 3,438m²
Sports Hall Building: 513m²

Existing Parking Numbers:
6, including 1 disabled bay



2.0 / Existing Site Analysis / School Overview

North Bridge House Schools

North Bridge House School (NBH) is an independent school located in London. The school currently has five different locations for different age groups. The Nursery School is located in Hampstead on Fitzjohn's Avenue. The Pre-Preparatory School is just around the corner on Netherhall Gardens and is for 5 - 7 year olds. The Preparatory School is situated on Gloucester Avenue near Regent's Park and is for 7 - 13 year olds. North Bridge House has two Senior School campuses, one in Hampstead for 11- to 16-year-olds and one in Canonbury, Islington for 13 - 18 year olds.

North Bridge House Senior School, originally located on Gloucester Avenue with the Prep School, merged with The Royal School, Hampstead on Rosslyn Hill in 2012 after Cognita invested to open a dedicated senior school campus for NBH. The investments funded a refurbishment of the entire school including the creation of additional subject specialist teaching facilities. A new Sports Hall was completed in 2014.



The fifth North Bridge House campus, NBH Senior School & Sixth Form Canonbury opened in September 2014 and prepares students for university entry.

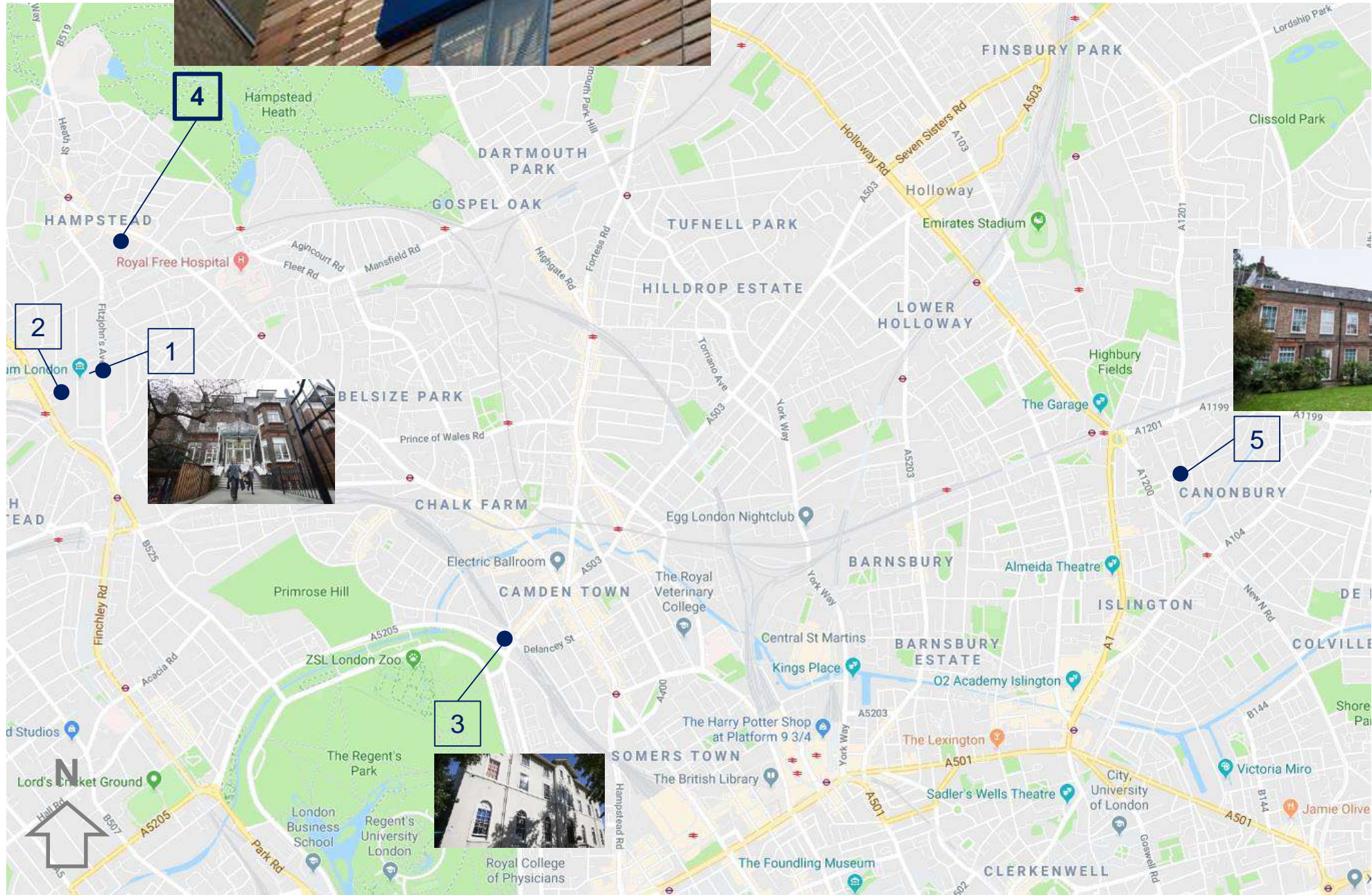
Cognita

Cognita is a worldwide group of independent schools, which owns and operates schools throughout the United Kingdom, Singapore, Spain, Thailand, Vietnam, Brazil and Chile. Cognita was launched in 2004 and currently has a portfolio of some 70 schools in 8 countries, employing some 5,000 teachers and educating over 30,000 children.



North Bridge House School London Sites

- 1 - Nursery School Hampstead
- 2 - Pre-Preparatory School Hampstead
- 3 – Preparatory School Regents Park
- 4 – Senior School Hampstead**
- 5 – Senior School & Sixth Form Canonbury



North Bridge House School Site Location Plan



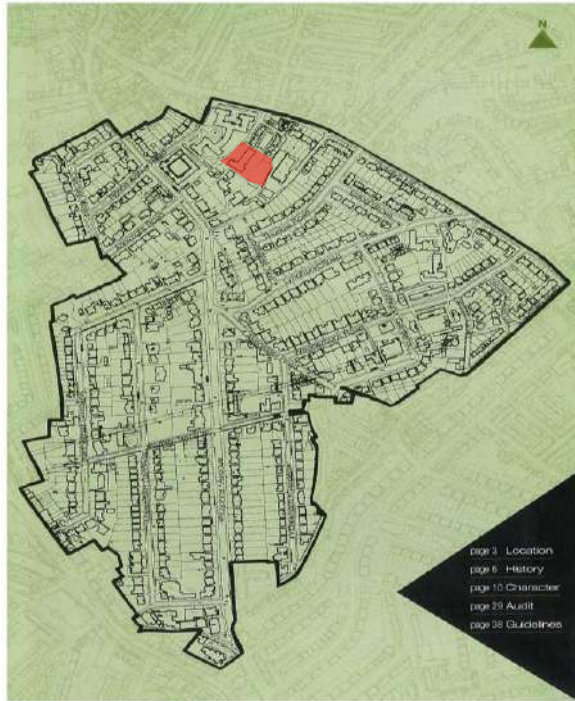
2.0 / Existing Site Analysis / Aerial View

North Bridge House Senior School, Hampstead

The Senior School site is situated on Vane Close just off Rosslyn Hill, Hampstead. Vane Close was built in the 1970s on the site of Vane House. North Bridge House School lies within the Fitzjohns / Netherhall conservation area. The conservation area sits on the southern slopes of Hampstead between Rosslyn Hill and Finchley Road. None of the school buildings are listed and currently the six storey building is noted as not contributing to the character of the Conservation Area.

The school site is rectangular and bounded on all four sides by predominantly residential housing to the North and West, a Royal Mail Sorting Office to the East and Fitzjohn's Primary School to the South.

To the north west is the large Greenhill five storey block of flats which date from the 1930s. The fifth storey is in the form of a mansard roof on the Greenhill side. The block extends up Prince Arthur Road with a number of rectangular elements, lowering to four storeys. Vane close has two residential terraces, one of three storeys plus mansard roof and the other two storey plus mansard.



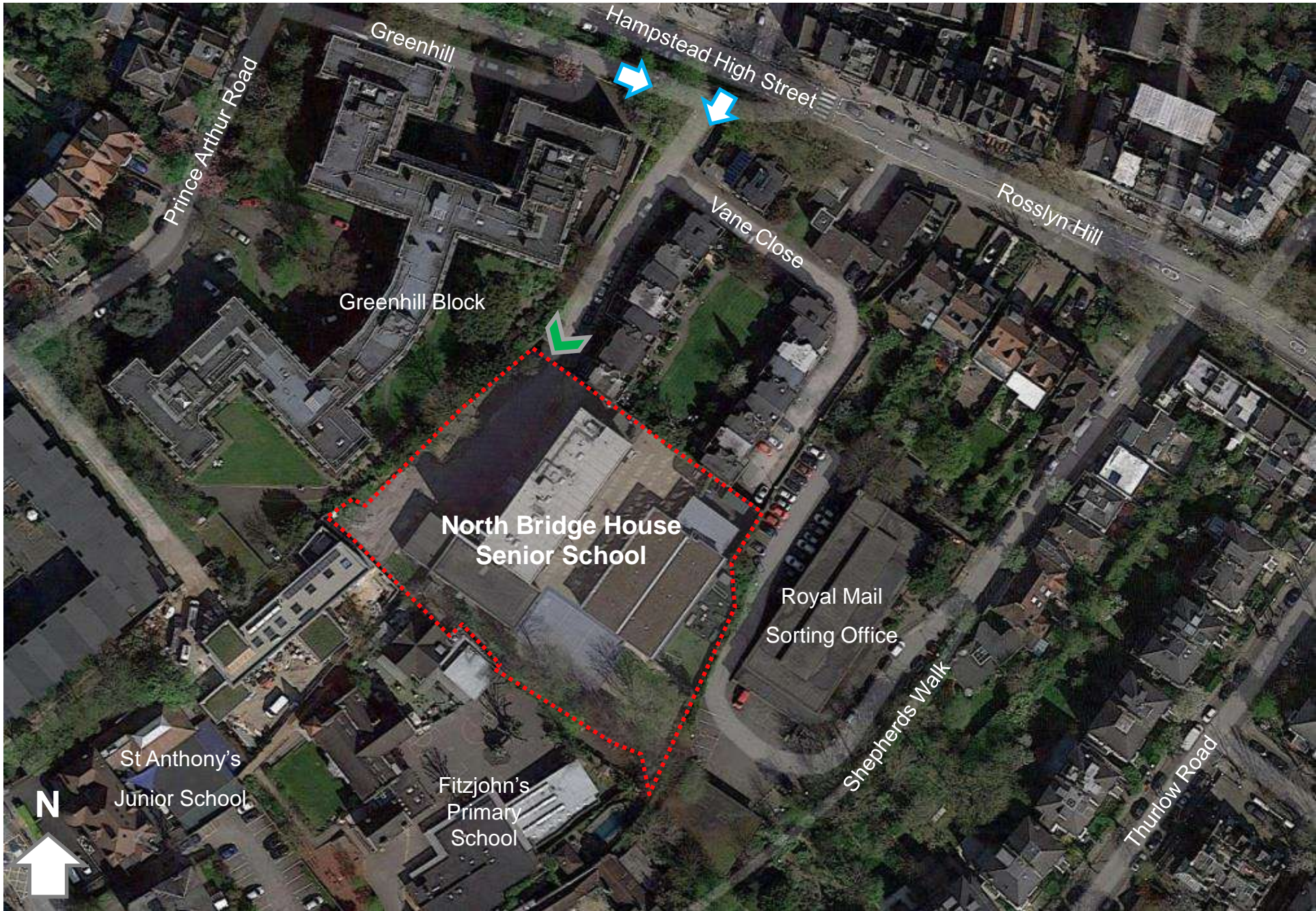
Fitzjohns / Netherhall conservation area



Greenhill , Vane Close and Rosslyn Hill Junction



Vane Close – School Main Entrance



Aerial View



2.0 / Existing Site Analysis / Location Plan

The school site has a single and secure vehicle and pedestrian entrance off Vane Close on the north west corner with a vehicle drop off and pick up area at the front of the main entrance building to the west with six parking bays including one disabled bay positioned on the south west corner boundary.

The site falls approx 3m from West to East and has numerous well established trees located on the southern boundary providing natural screening of Fitzjohn's Primary School.

The two existing school buildings are located centrally on the site with a rectangular playground and hard court sports pitch positioned between them. The main school and entrance building (circa 1975) is L-shaped with a rectangular six storey block running north to south and a two storey block to the south running east to west. The six storey building in brick and glass is far taller than the other buildings in the area but sited away from public roads.

The six storey building accommodates the school main entrance, general and specialist teaching, dining and library. The two storey block houses the Assembly Hall, administration facilities, DT classroom and plantroom. The school has currently only one existing stair to accommodate the pupils, which is narrow and creates issues and bottlenecks at start and finish of the day as well as break times.

A two storey three court Sports Hall building built in 2014 is located on the eastern boundary overlooking the Post Office Sorting Office. The buildings entrance is at playground level with the Sports Hall courts positioned 2.5m below at lower ground level, which addresses the natural fall of the site on the eastern boundary. Changing rooms were located at the back of the site in the summer of 2019.



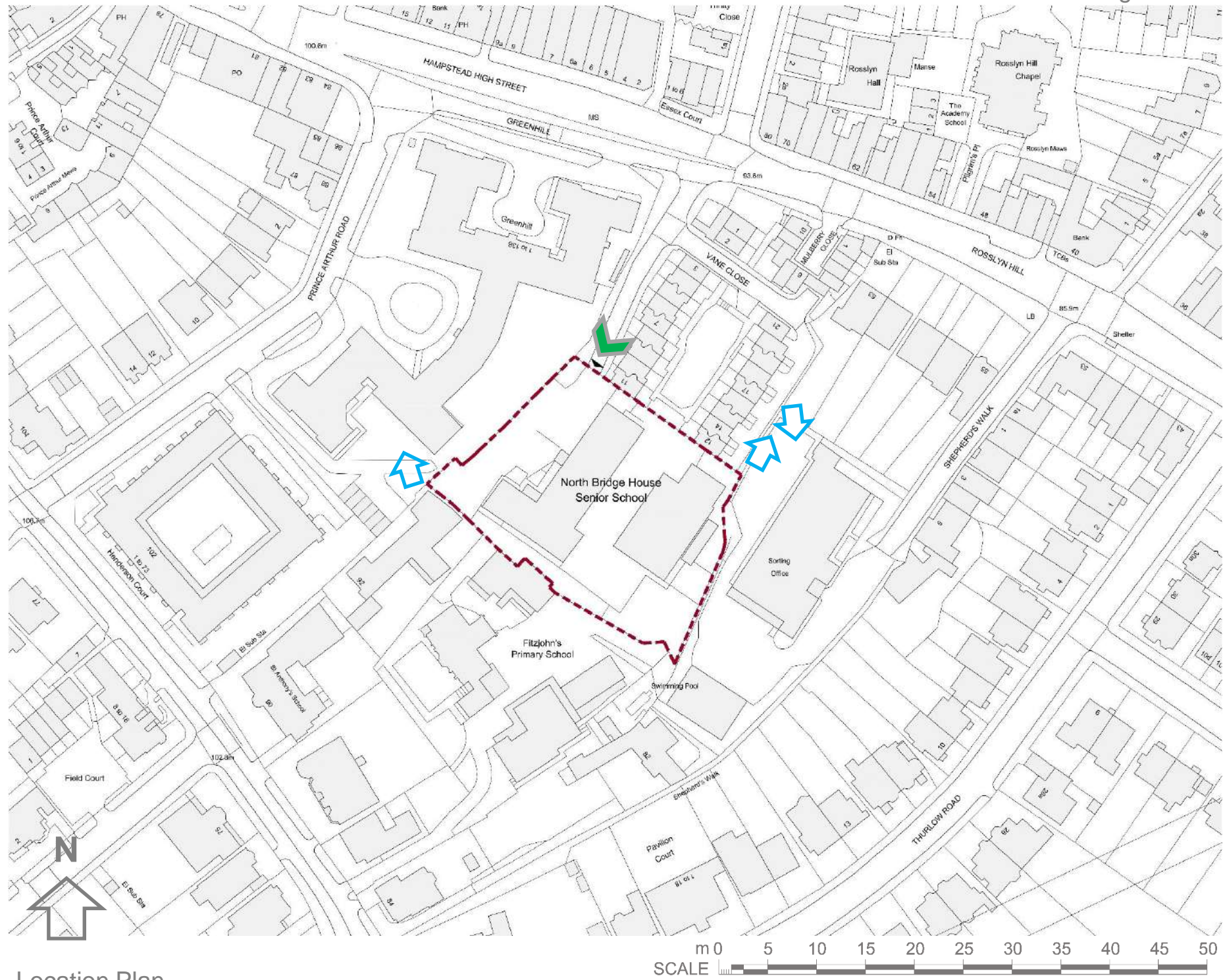
Greenhill Block



Vane Close Terraces



Post Office Sorting Office

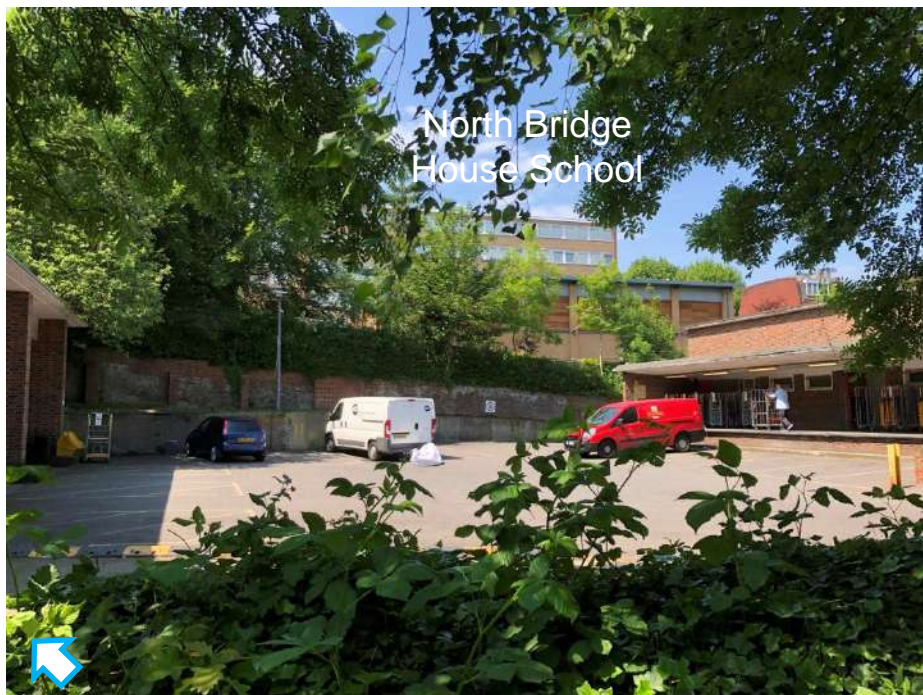
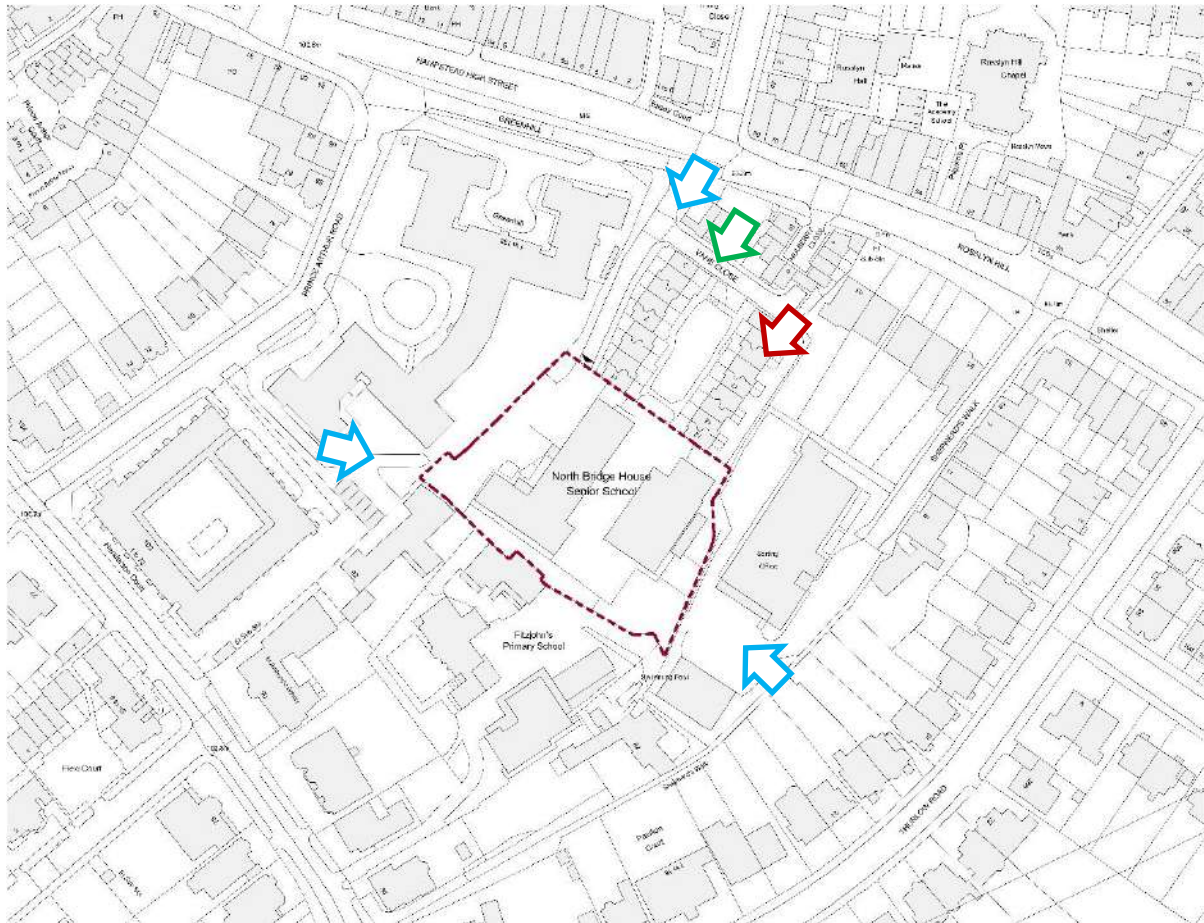


Location Plan





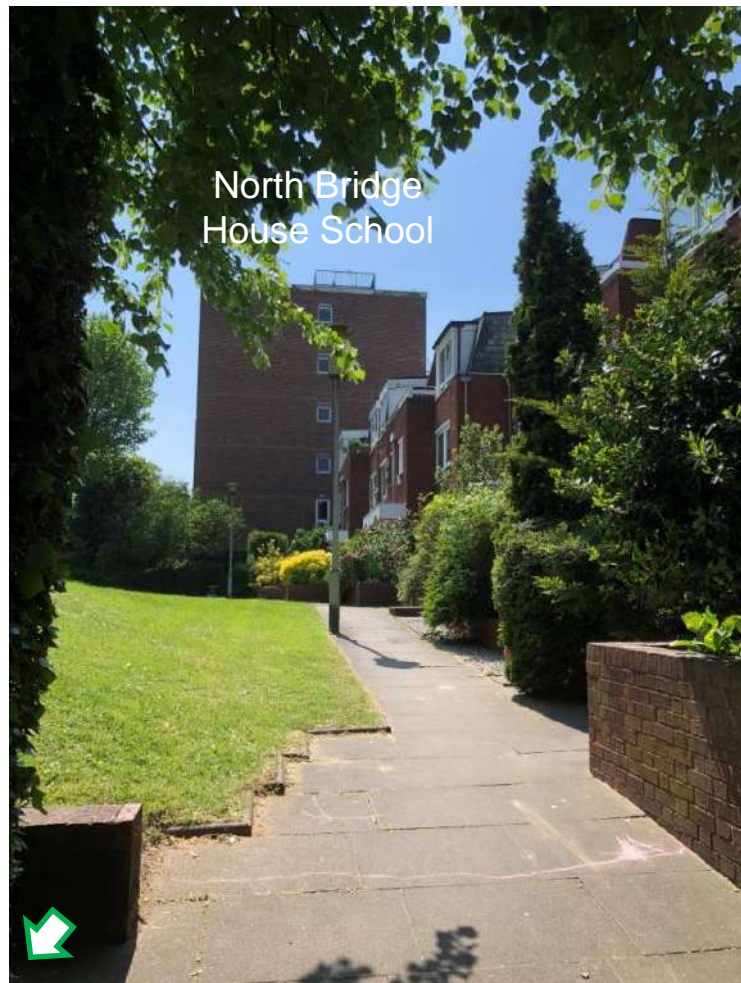
View looking East from the Greenhill Block



View from Shepherd's Walk via Sorting Office



View from Vane Close outside No 17



View from Vane Close



View from Van Close looking South towards the school entrance



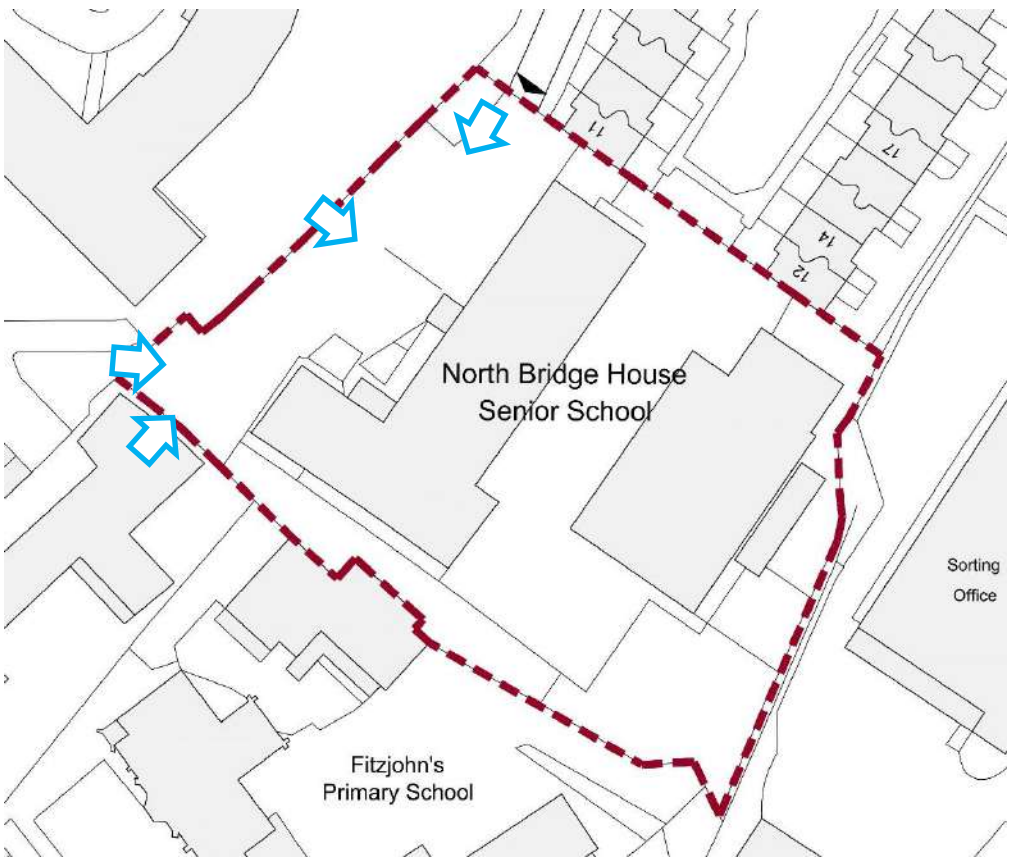
Main Entrance / Vehicle Access



Main Entrance Building / South West corner



View looking North towards the site entrance



Main Entrance Building – West Elevation



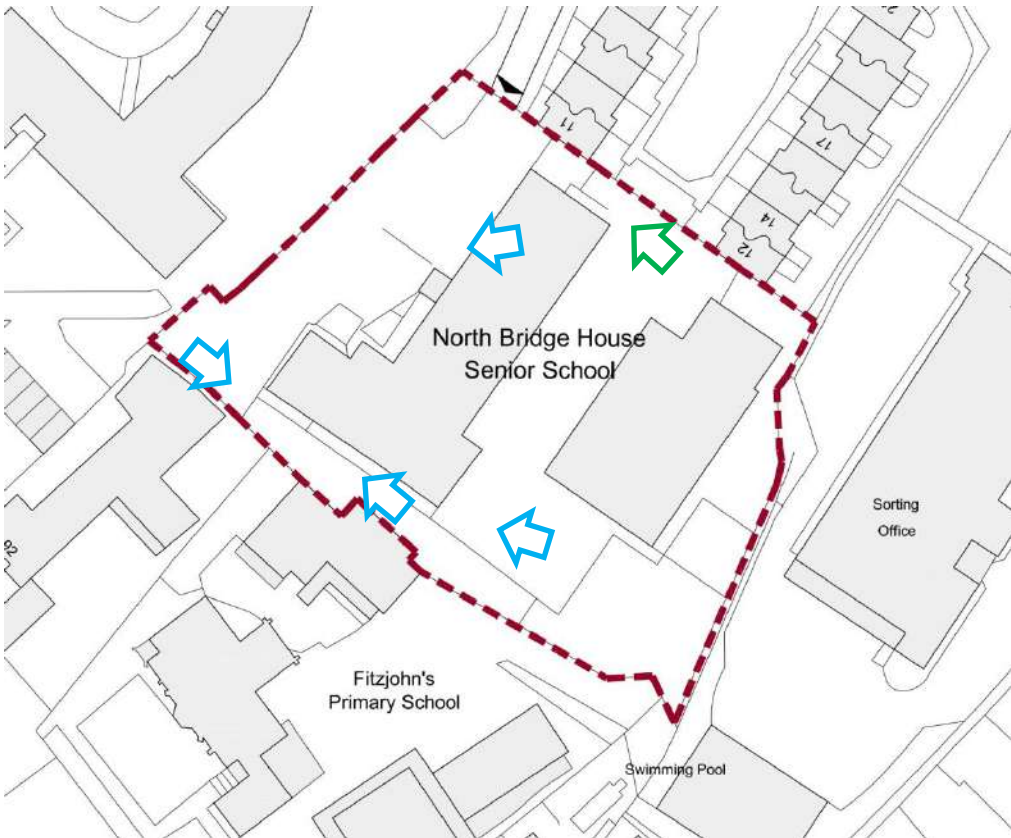
Admin Block / Southern Boundary



Exercise Equipment / Hard Court / Assembly Hall building



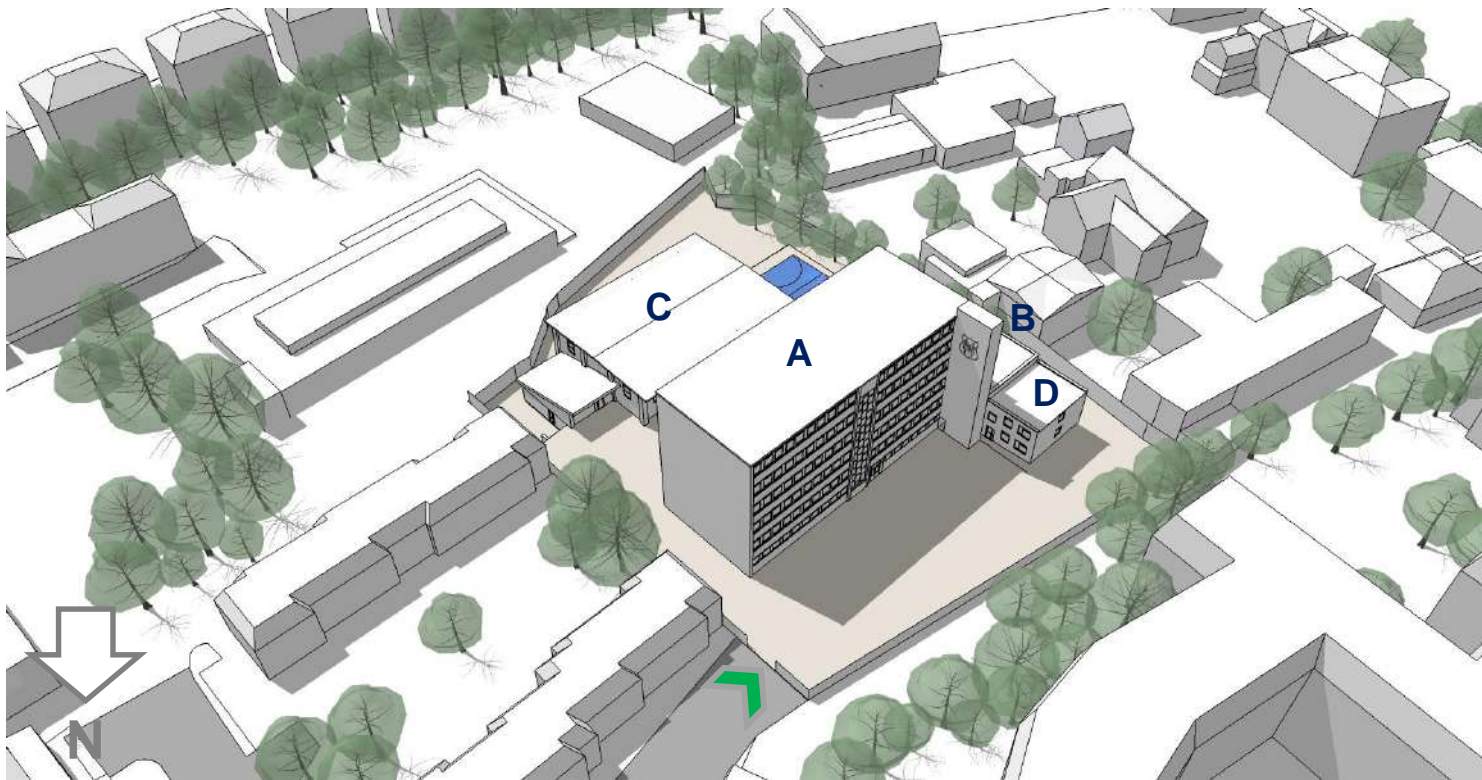
Eastern Boundary / Assembly Hall escape stair



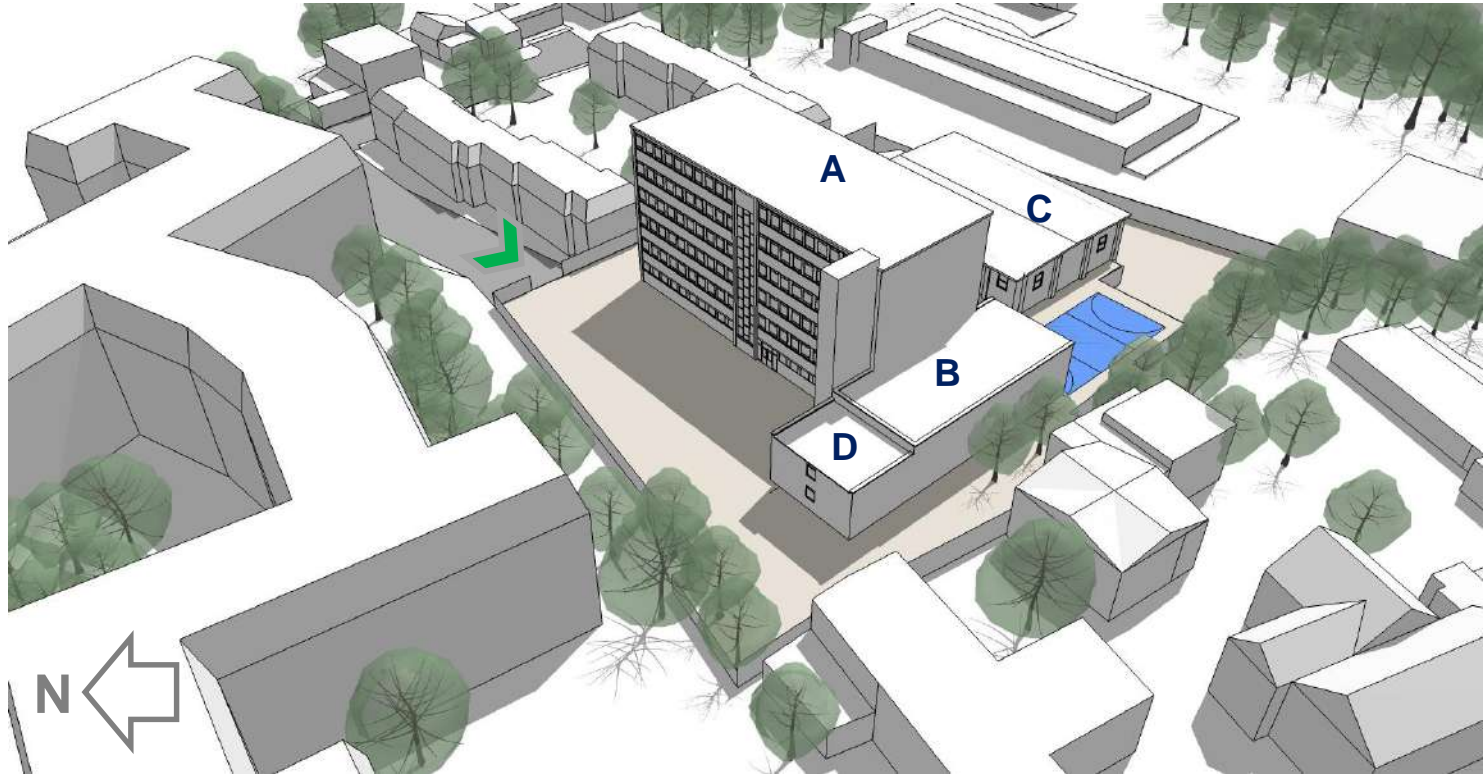
Aerial View of South West boundary / Parking



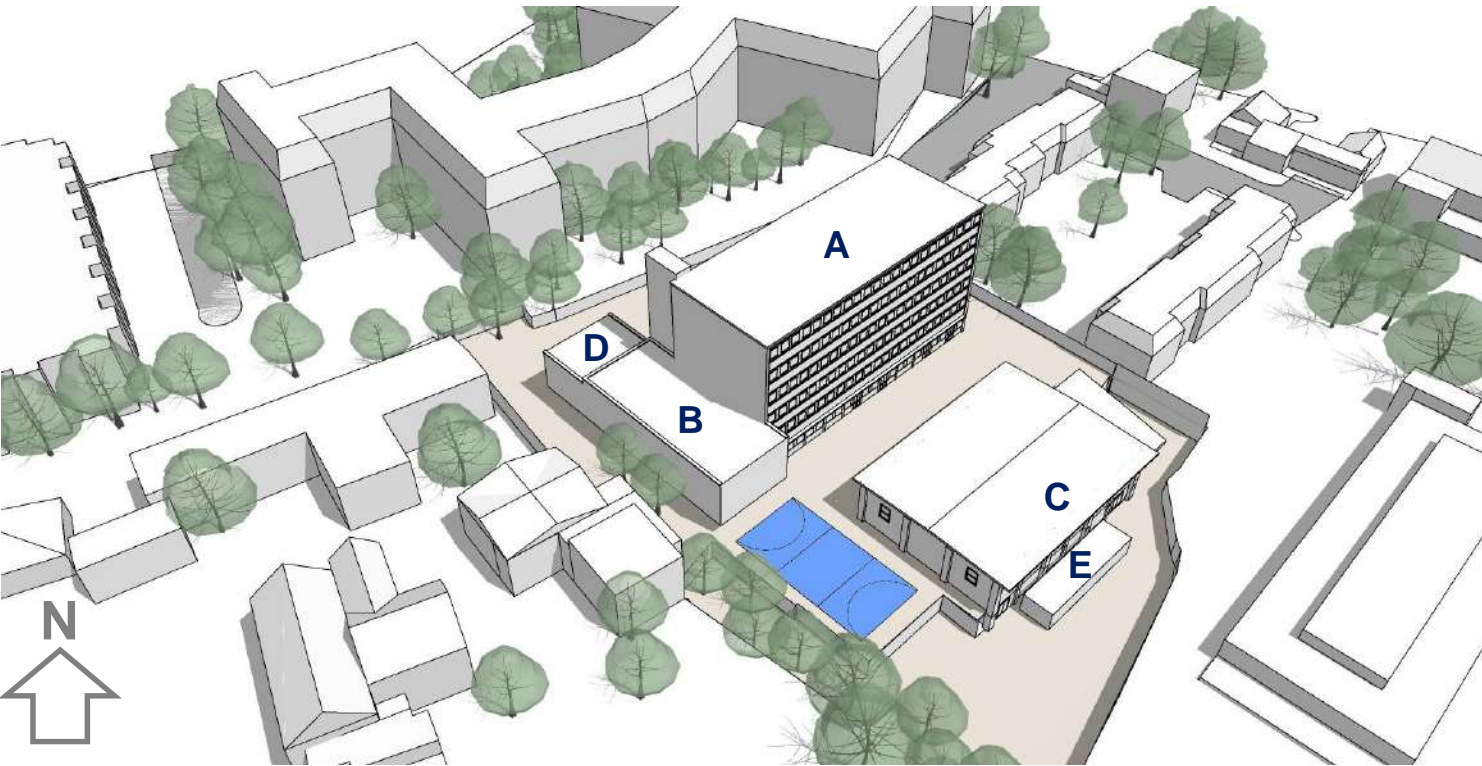
North Boundary / Fire Tender Access



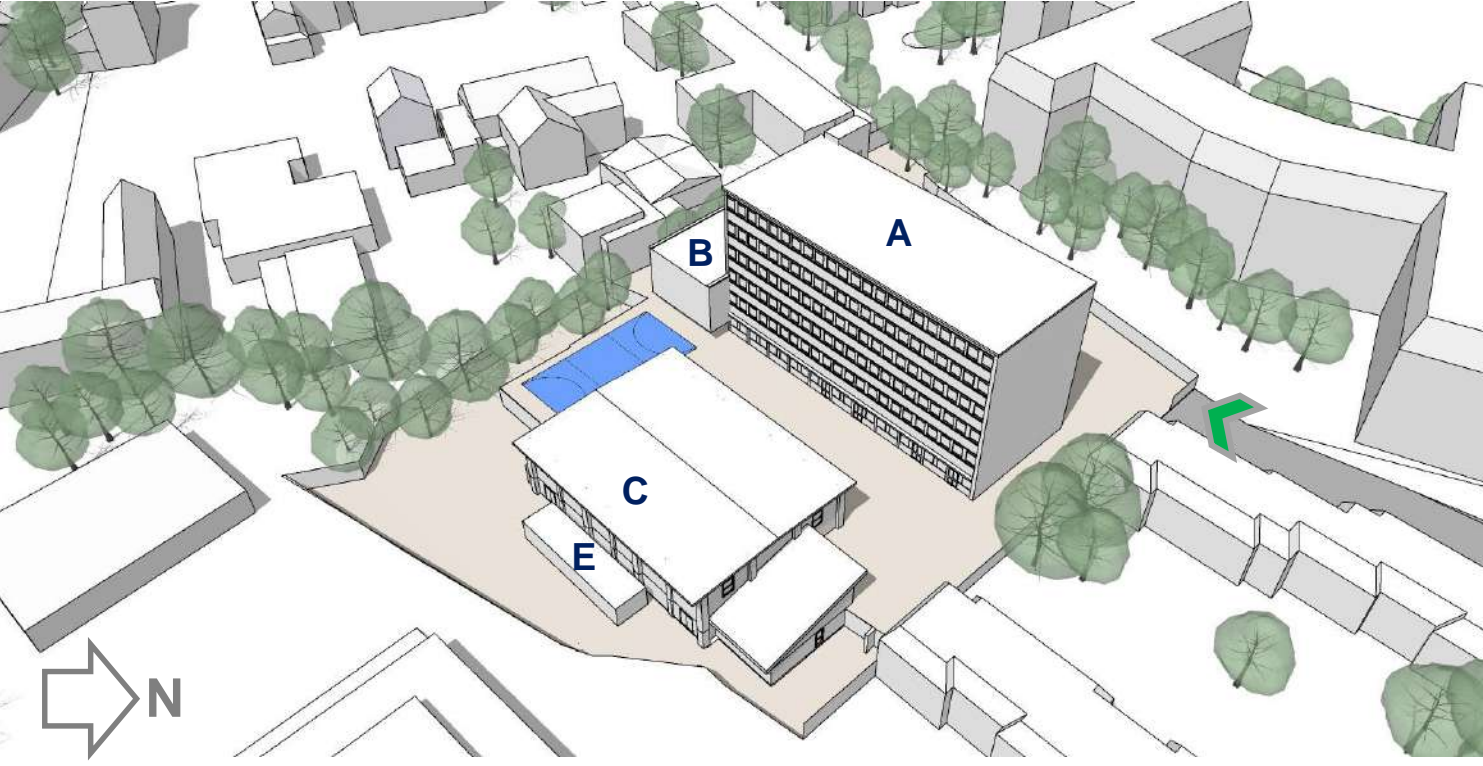
Aerial view looking south



Aerial view looking east



Aerial view looking north



Aerial view looking west

Key: **A** – Six storey Main Entrance Building / **B** – Two storey Assembly Hall Block / **C** – Two storey Sports Hall Building / **D** – Two storey Admin Block / **E** – Changing Rooms



2.0 / Existing Site Analysis / Main Building

– **Uninspiring main entrance, not visible from Vane Close.**

The existing glazed canopy was installed in 2012 and has served the school well, but does not protect visitors, parents or pupils attending the school from the elements. In addition, the existing reception area is too small, given the current safeguarding requirement, and there is need to accommodate all pupils in a safe and secure area when arriving at school and going through to registration.

– **External fire escape stair positioned in significant location.**

The existing external stair tower was clad in 2012 and the existing wood cladding has not been as effective as hoped. There is still wind and rain ingress, which limits its use and effectiveness to escape only and poses a health and safety risk to pupils. The existing stair is not compliant as it is 1 meter wide with 190mm risers and 250mm goings.

- **Two storey Admin Block is detached from the existing school with no internal or level access.** The block is of poor quality and occupies an extremely significant position on the site as it is the first building viewed from Vane Close. A light blue paint was applied to the original brickwork north and west façades of the block. The pupils currently utilise the tarmac area in front of the school as playground, but the space lacks the provision of protected areas with external lockers.

- **The existing Assembly Hall’s** concrete external emergency escape stair and external doors are not compliant as not wide enough to accommodate the school’s desired occupancy of the Hall.



Uninspiring Main Entrance



Two storey Admin Block, West and South Elevations



Wood clad external emergency escape stair /
Two storey Admin Block, North Elevation



Assembly Hall external emergency escape stair



2.0 / Existing Site Analysis / Existing Plans – Main Building

Initial observations

- 1 – Uninspiring approach and main entrance. Entrance not visible from Vane Close
- 2 – External level change and emergency stair escape route currently resolved by unattractive and cluttered ramps, steps and planters
- 3 – External fire escape stair not compliant and positioned in significant location. Ease internal vertical movement by enclosing
- 4 – Two storey Admin Block is detached from the existing school with no internal or level access. Block is of poor quality and occupies an extremely significant position on the site. Block is the first building viewed from Vane Close.



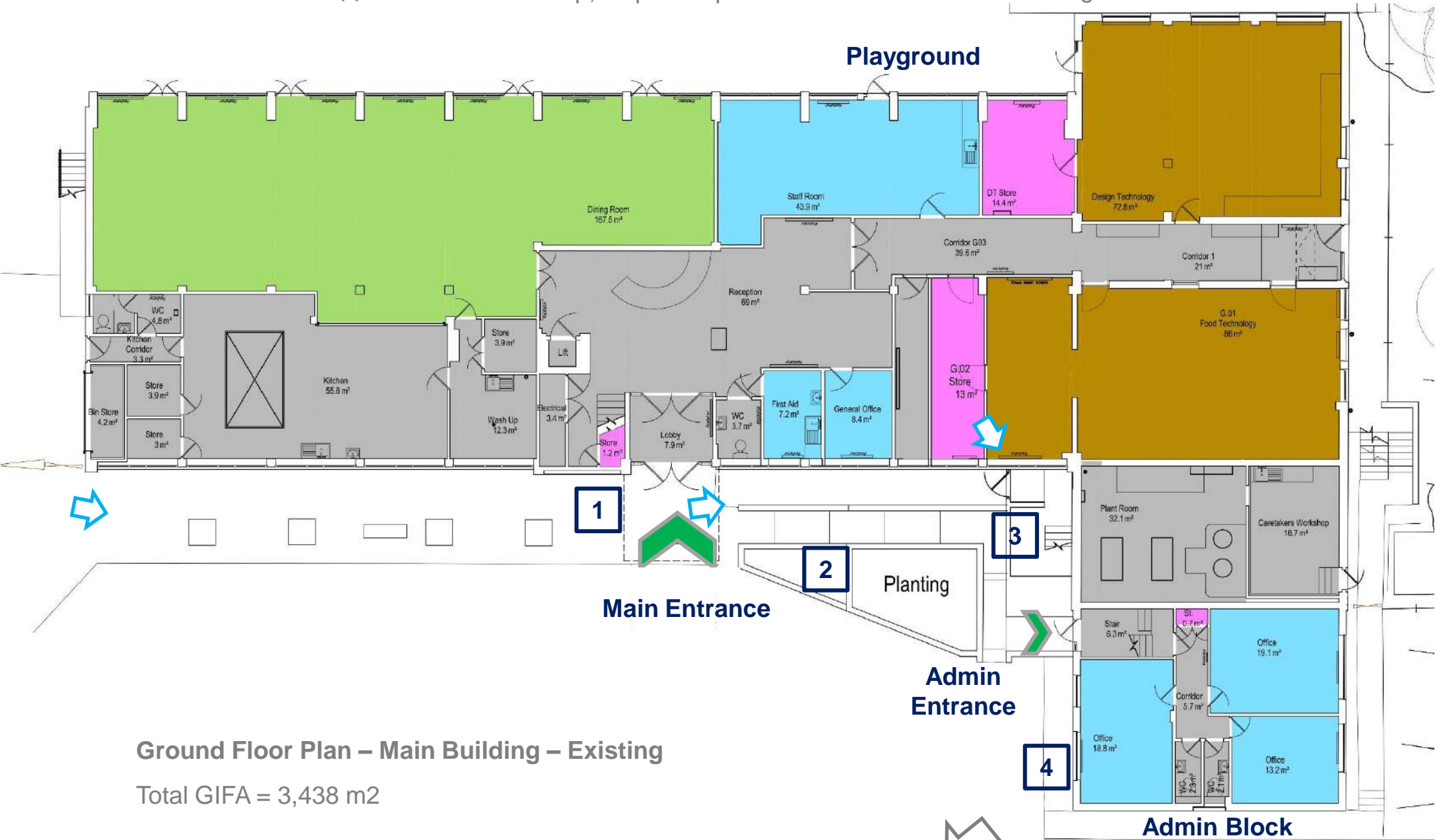
Main entrance approach



Ramp, steps and planters

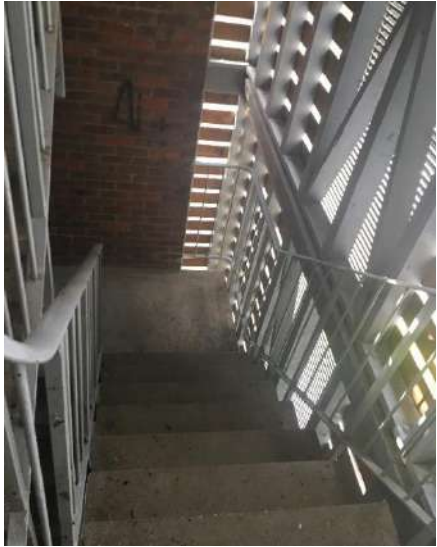


Wood cladding



Initial observations

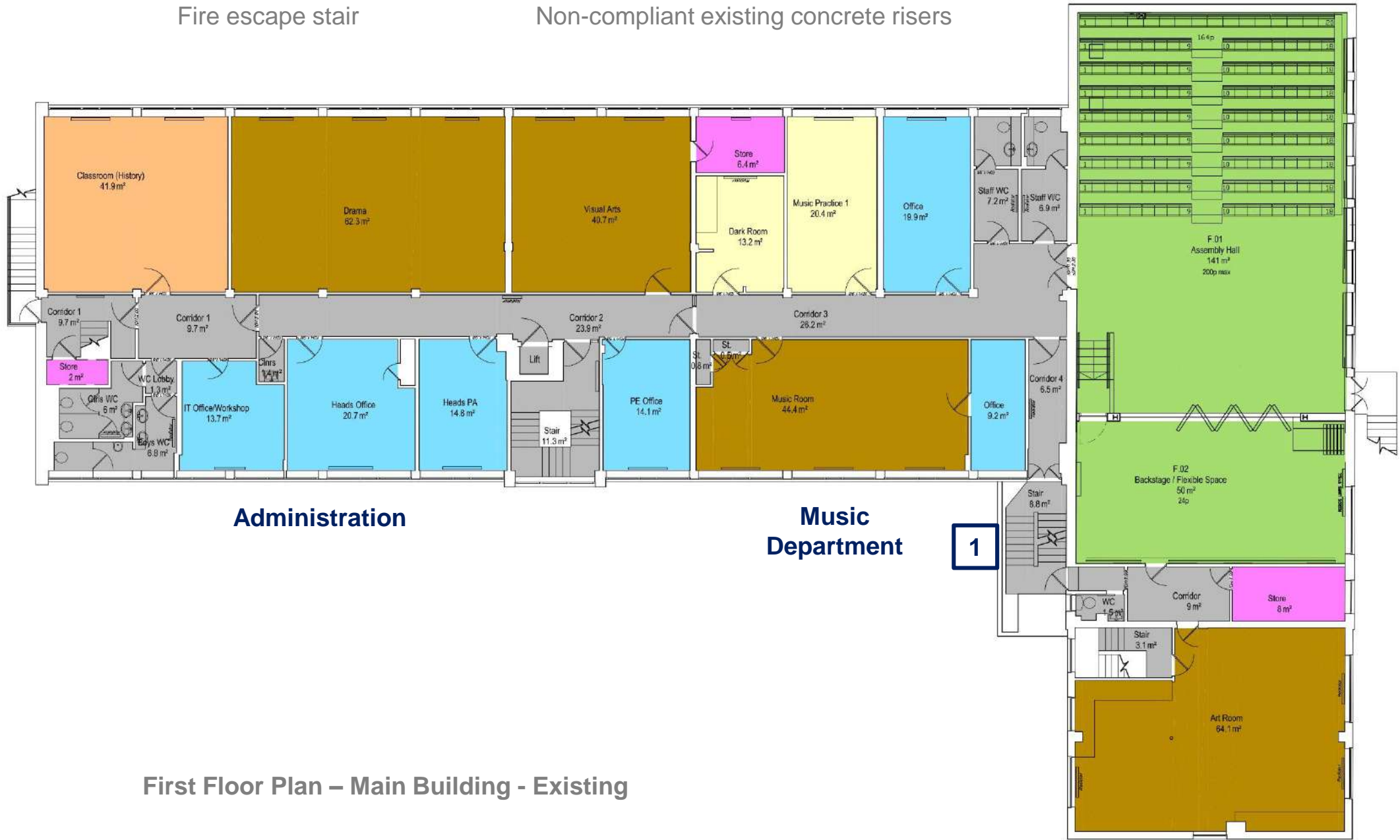
1 – External fire escape stair not compliant



Fire escape stair



Non-compliant existing concrete risers



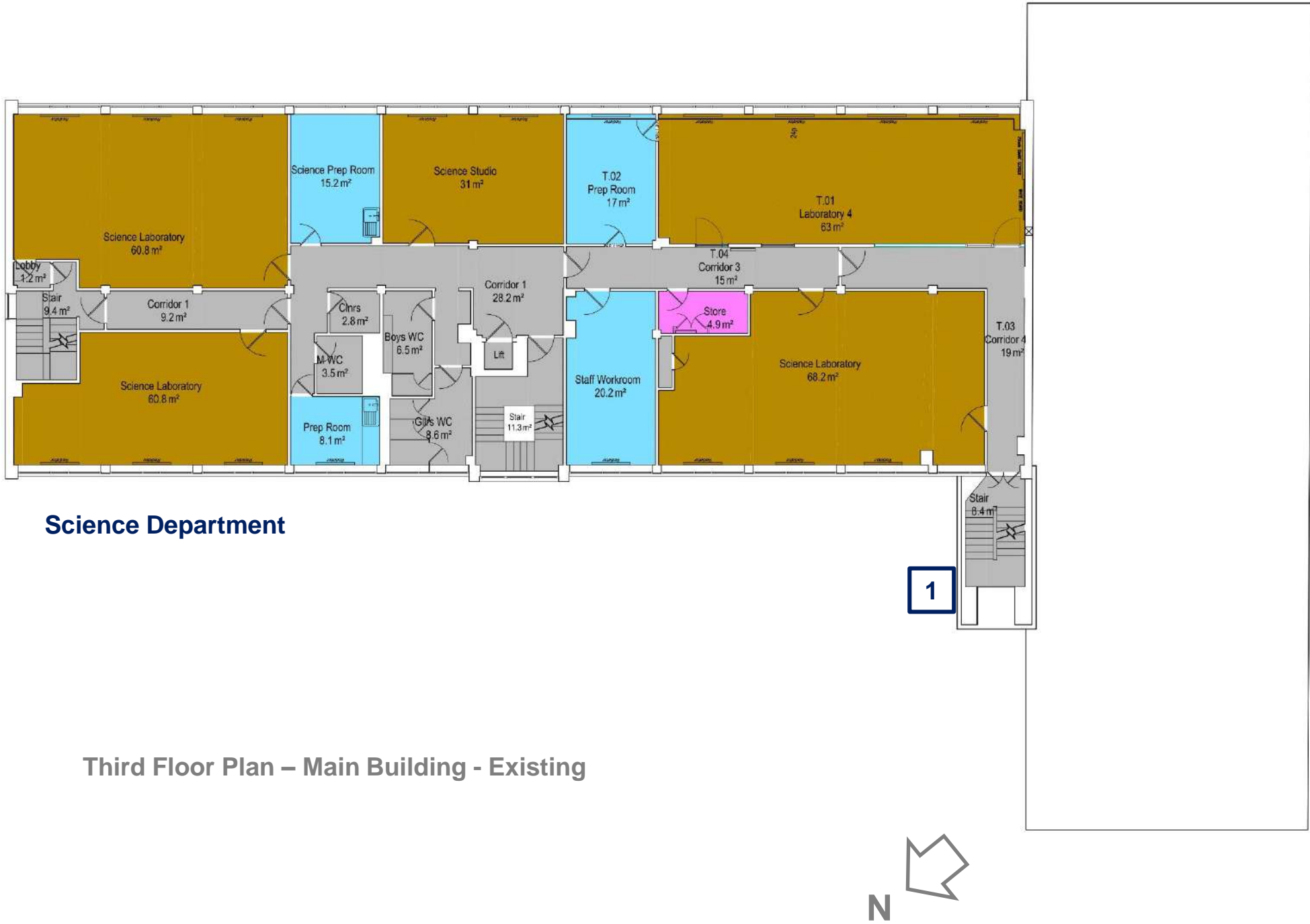
Initial observations

1 – External fire escape stair not compliant



Initial observations

1 – External fire escape stair not compliant



Initial observations

1 – External fire escape stair not compliant



Access to external fire escape stair

General Teaching



- KEY \
- Basic Teaching
 - Specialist Teaching
 - Large Spaces: Halls, studios and dining
 - Learning Resources Areas
 - Staff and Administration
 - Storage
 - Non Net

Fourth Floor Plan – Main Building - Existing



Initial observations

1 – External fire escape stair not compliant



Access to external escape stair

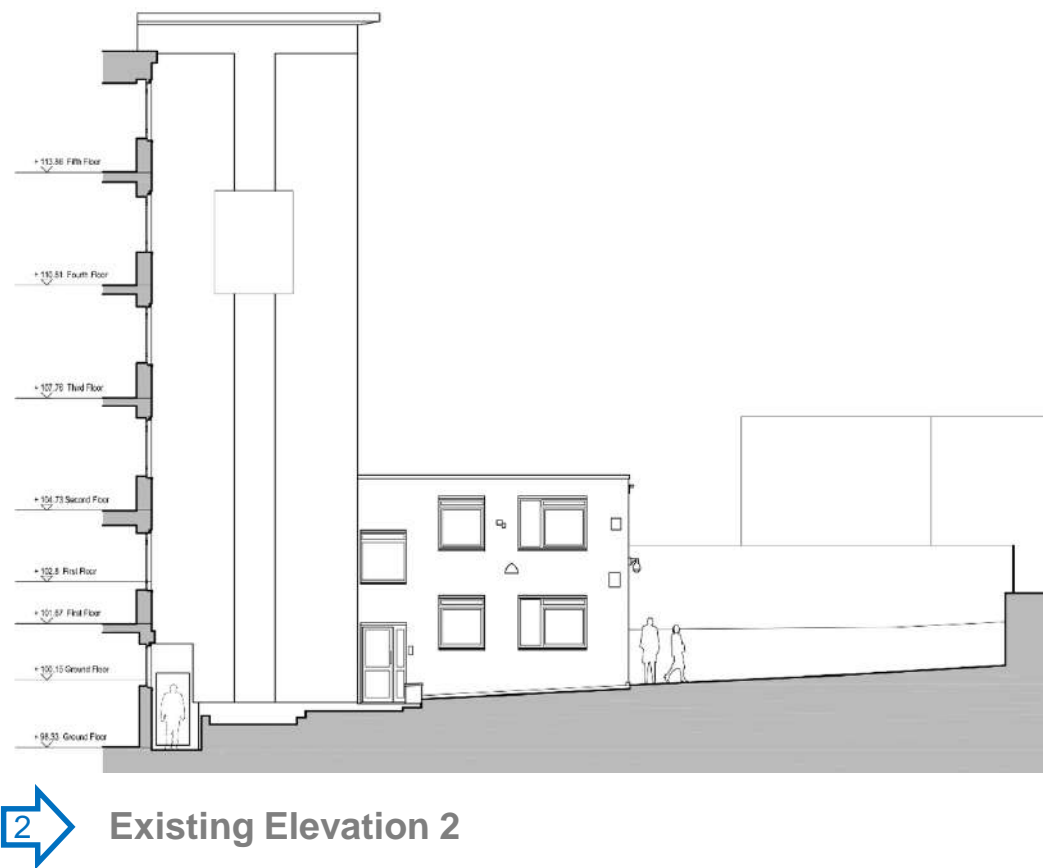
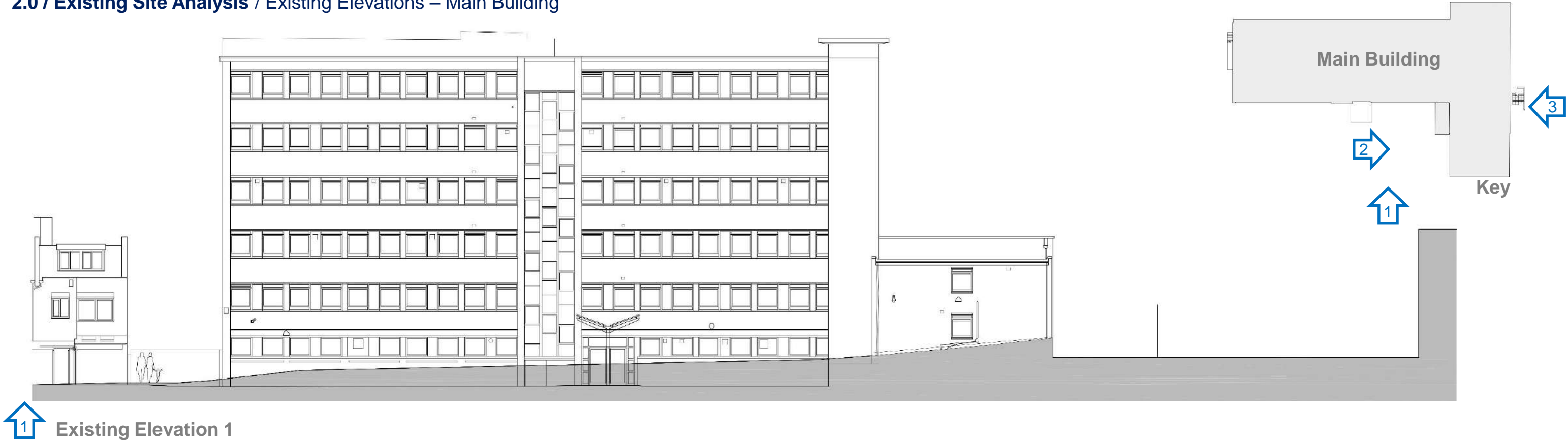
General Teaching

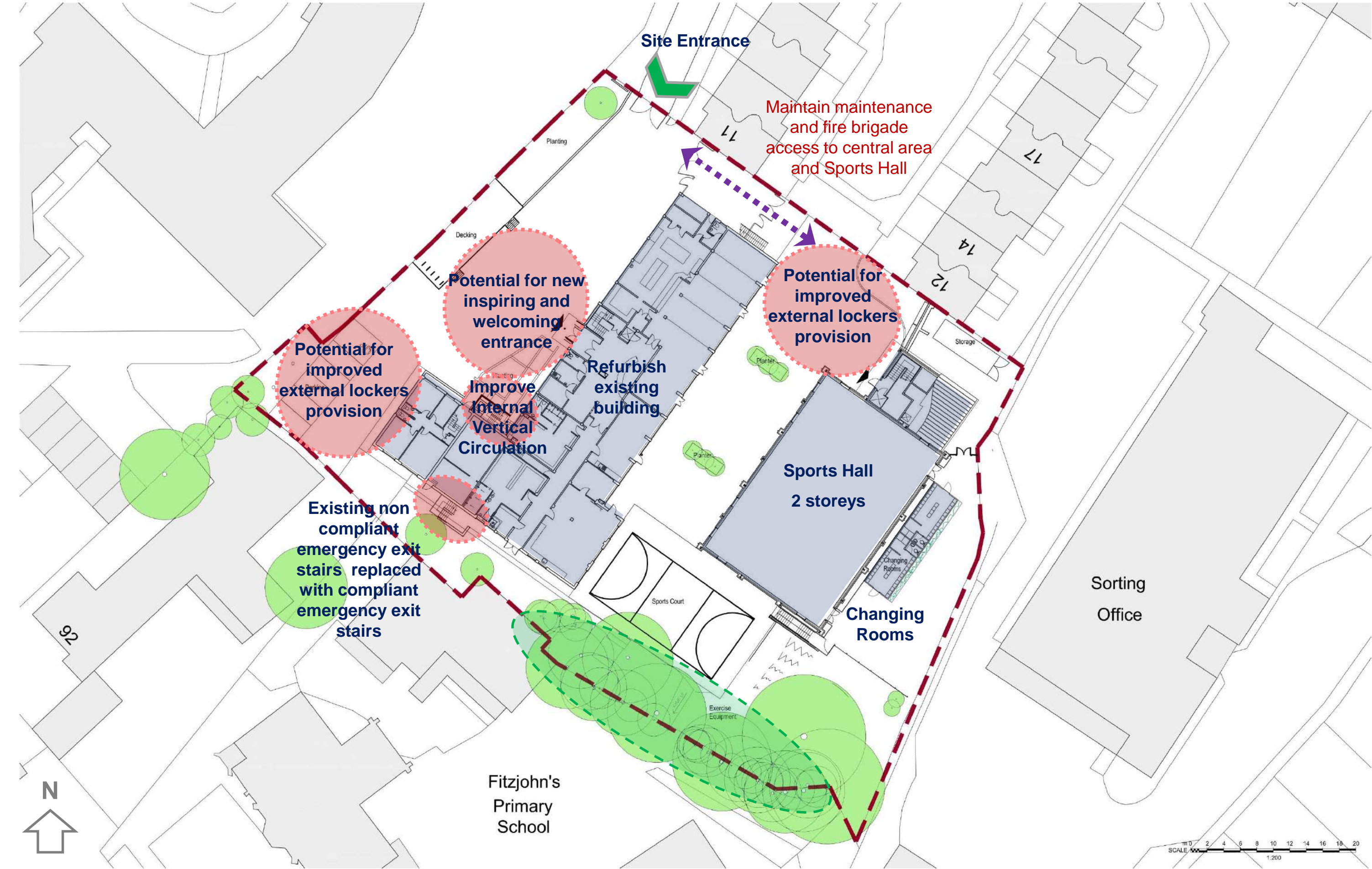


- KEY \
- Basic Teaching
 - Specialist Teaching
 - Large Spaces: Halls, studios and dining
 - Learning Resources Areas
 - Staff and Administration
 - Storage
 - Non Net

Fifth Floor Plan – Main Building - Existing







Site Plan



3.0 / Design Proposal / Design Overview

Following numerous meetings, discussions, presentations and option reviews the School and Cognita selected their **Preferred Option** due to its positive design attributes, clear and imaginative response to the brief and site constraints.

The main features of the design are as follows:

- Construct a new two storey clear, contemporary, inspiring and welcoming Main Entrance, Foyer and Reception extension, visible from Rosslyn Hill with a sedum roof. New entrance and reception set at the same ground floor level as the existing Main Entrance building in order to aid accessibility (**A**)
- Demolish existing external emergency escape stair. Construct six storey enclosed replacement stair tower aiding internal vertical circulation (**B**)
- Remove existing paint from existing north and west elevations of two storey Administration Block (**C**) and create new covered external plastic lockers areas along the west elevation and in proximity to the existing Sports Hall (**D**)
- Create improved compliant external replacement escape stair from existing Assembly Hall (**E**)

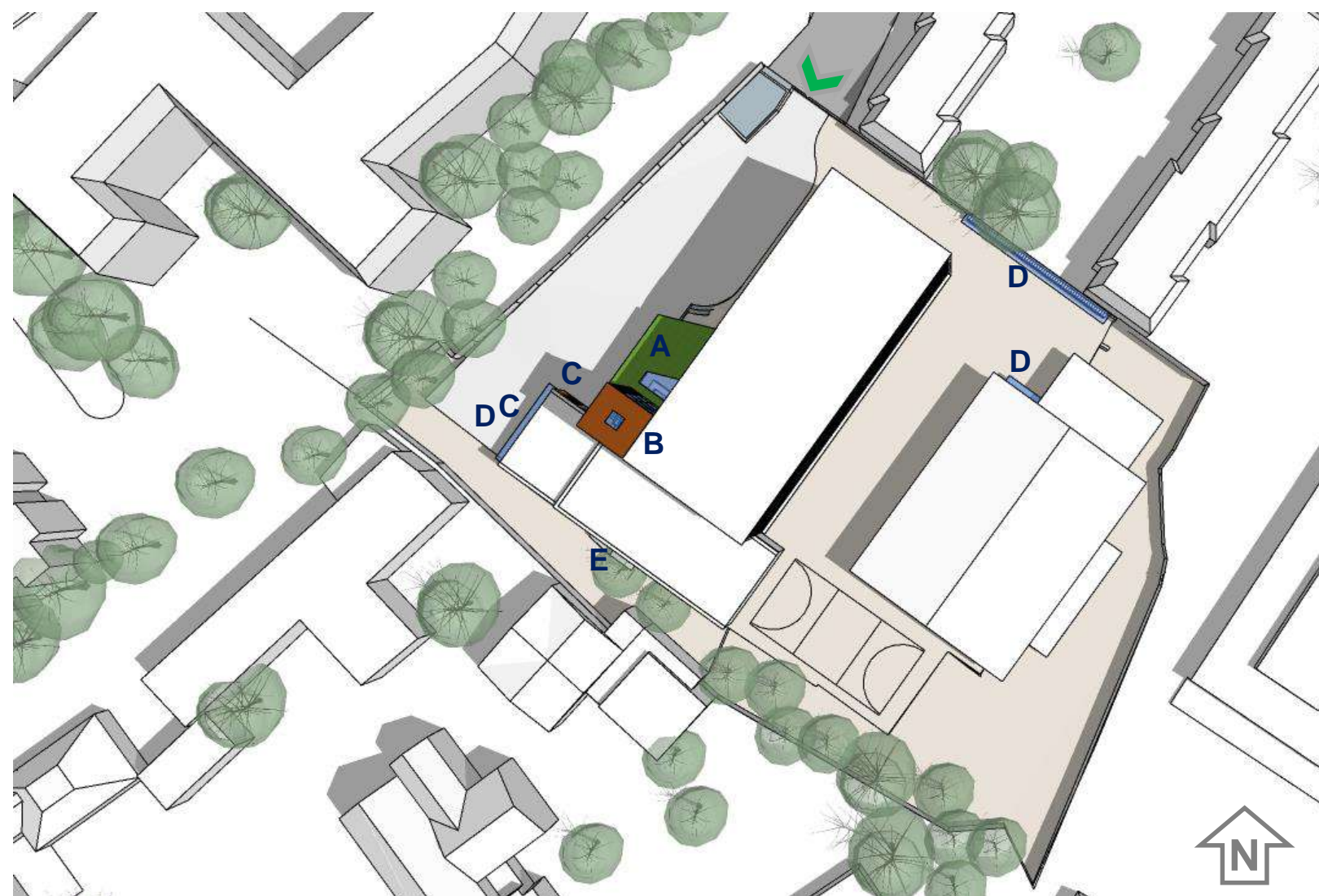
The position, scale and massing of the proposal has been carefully considered in order to minimise the impact on neighbours and disruption to the school. The new feature entrance extension and enclosed replacement stair tower will become the new heart of the school, providing a spectacular and welcoming frontage to the public and improve accessibility between the existing Main Entrance building and Admin Block.

Rebuilding the stair tower with rainscreen and glass facade will provide a safe and permanent solution for pupils and allow them to utilise the different floors of the building. The school is conscious of limiting light spill to residents, and so would propose limiting lighting in the stair tower in winter. This enlarged area will provide for a safe, attractive and welcoming entrance. The glass frontage proposed will form an attractive and safe frontage to the school.

The new sedum roof will aid biodiversity and deliver an interesting view when viewed from the upper levels of the existing building. It will also extend the expanse of sedum roof on the site, matching the existing Sports Hall's sedum roof design.

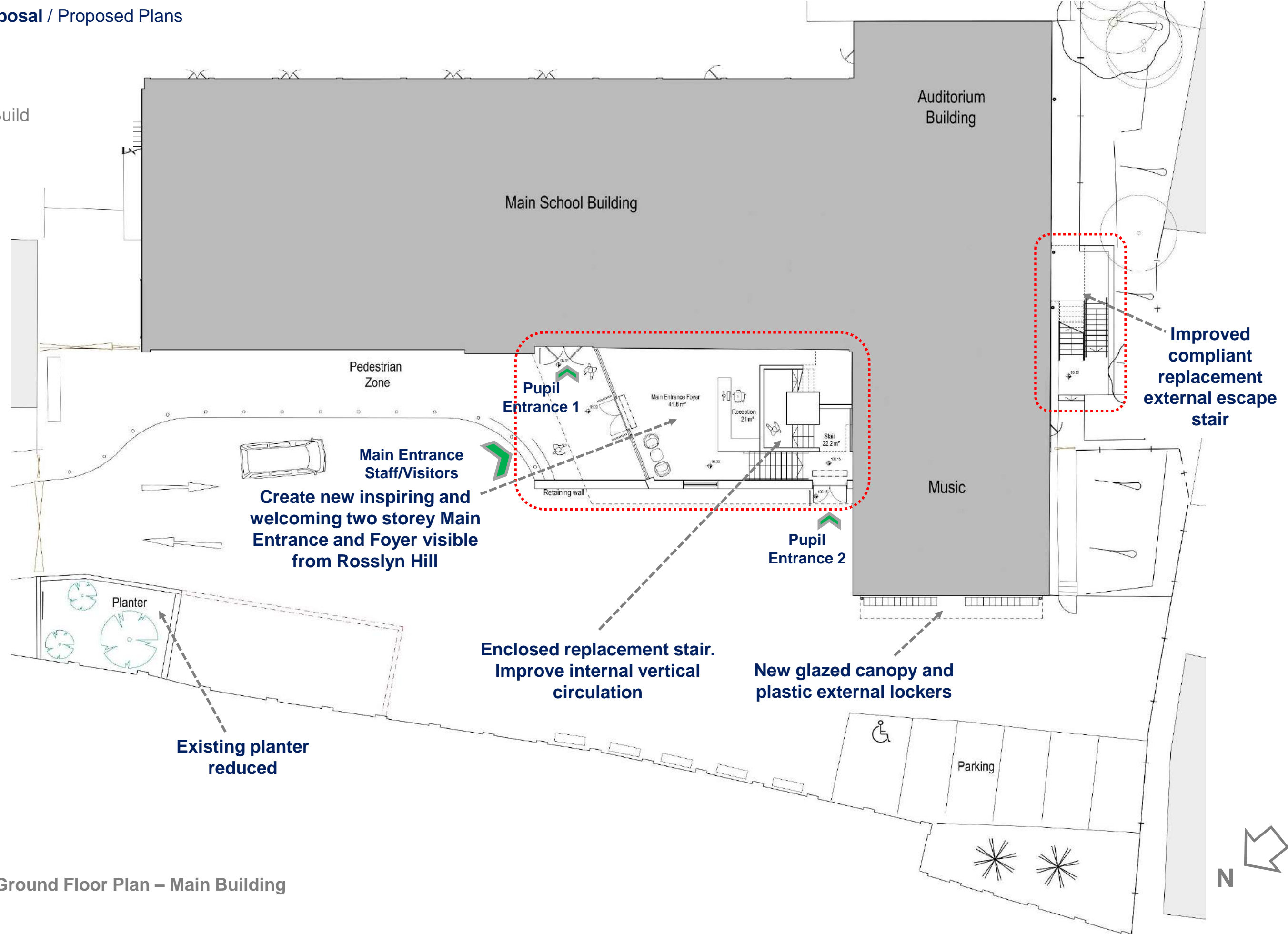
It is also proposed to return the existing Administration Block to its original red brickwork façade by removing the blue paint that was applied on the North and West elevations. In addition, some plastic external lockers for the use of pupils and glazed canopies are proposed along the West elevation and in proximity to the Sports Hall.

The proposal is also to form an additional external escape door, design and width to match existing and replace the existing non-compliant external escape stair with a new 1250mm wide external stair. These works will also include associated landscaping around the existing external escape stair area.



Aerial View

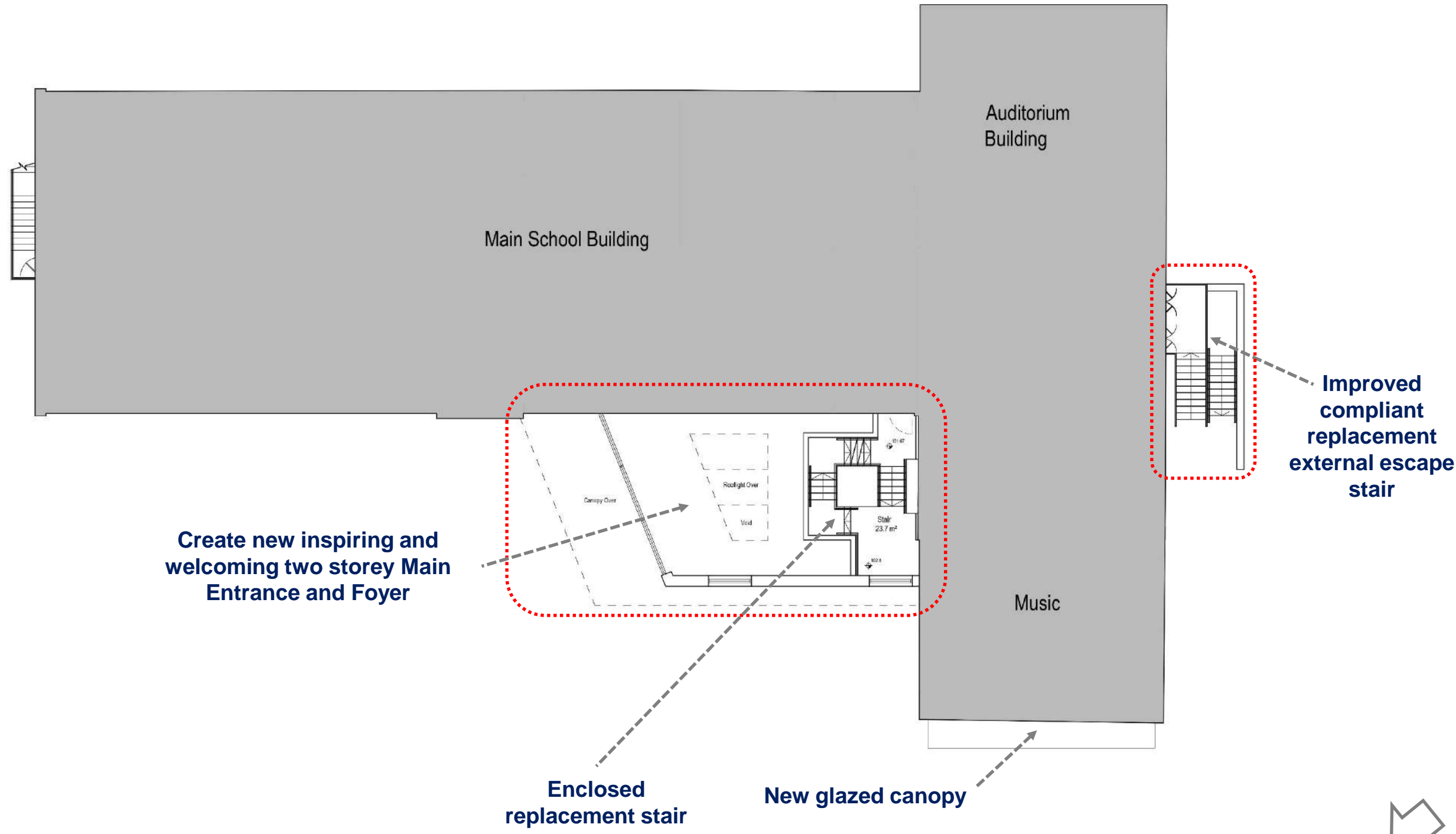
Key: **A** – 2 storey new main entrance / **B** – Enclosed replacement stair tower / **C** – New brickwork elevations / **D** - External lockers area / **E** – Improved compliant replacement stair



Ground Floor Plan – Main Building

Key

New Build

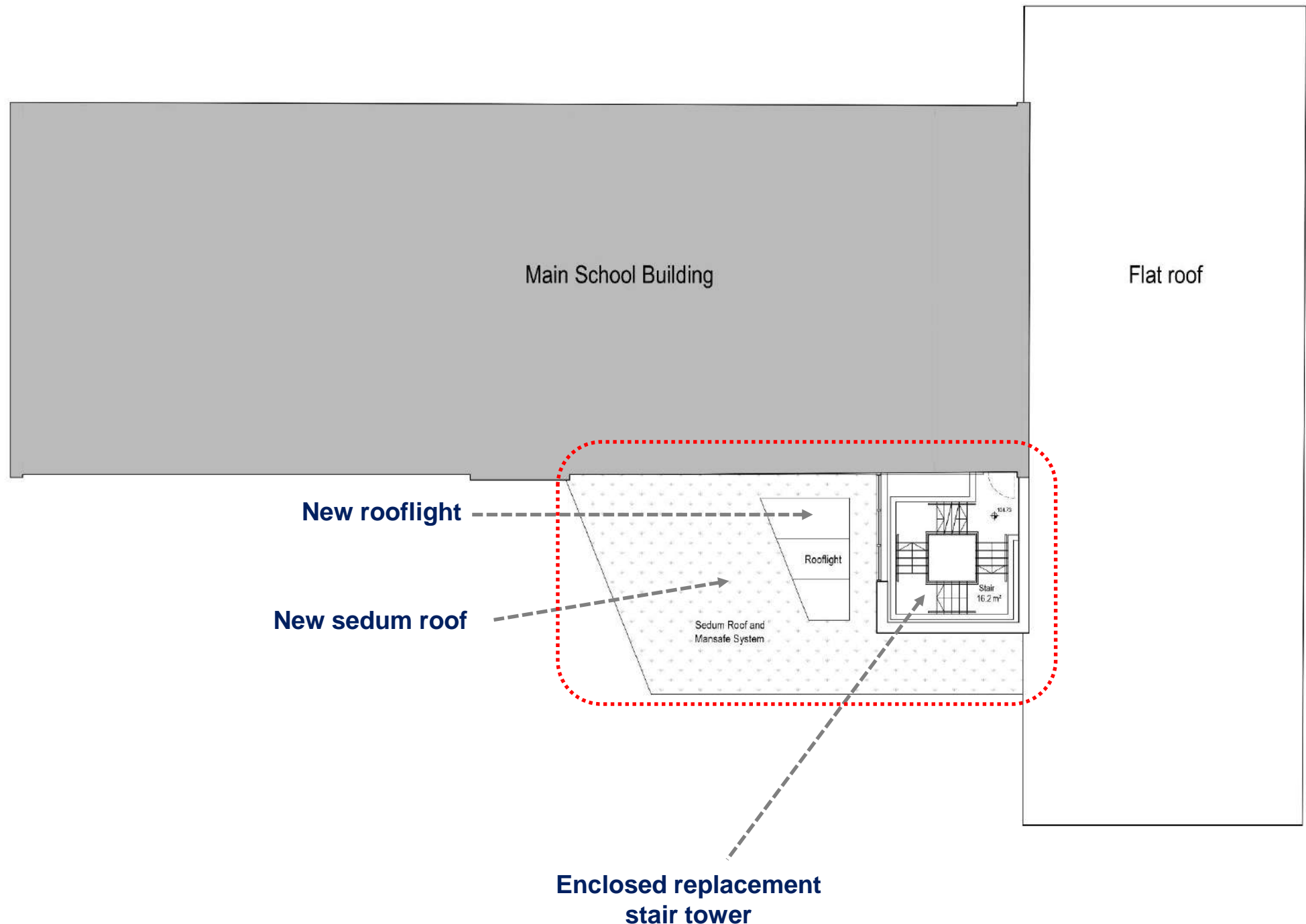


First Floor Plan – Main Building



Key

New Build

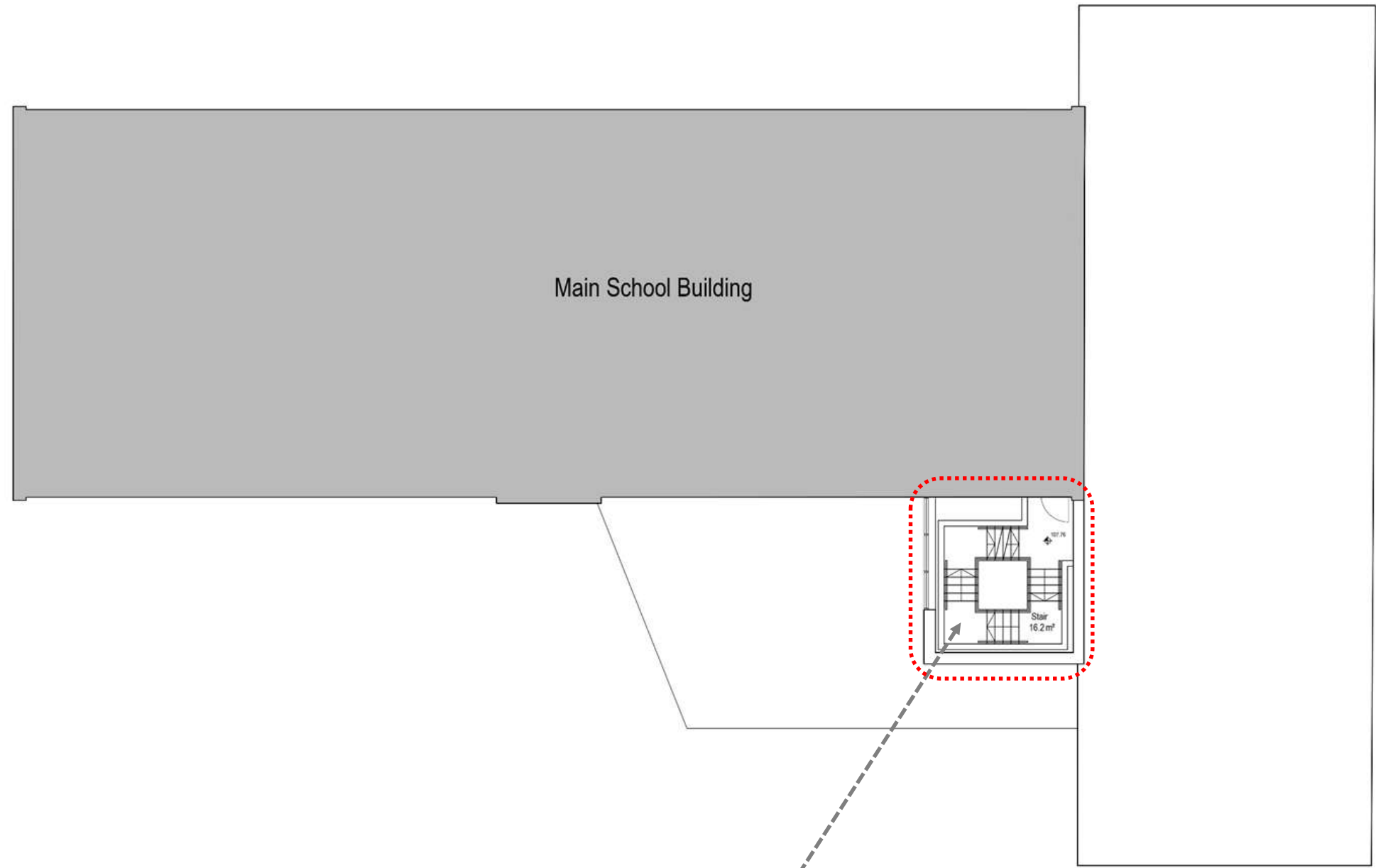


Second Floor Plan – Main Building



Key

New Build



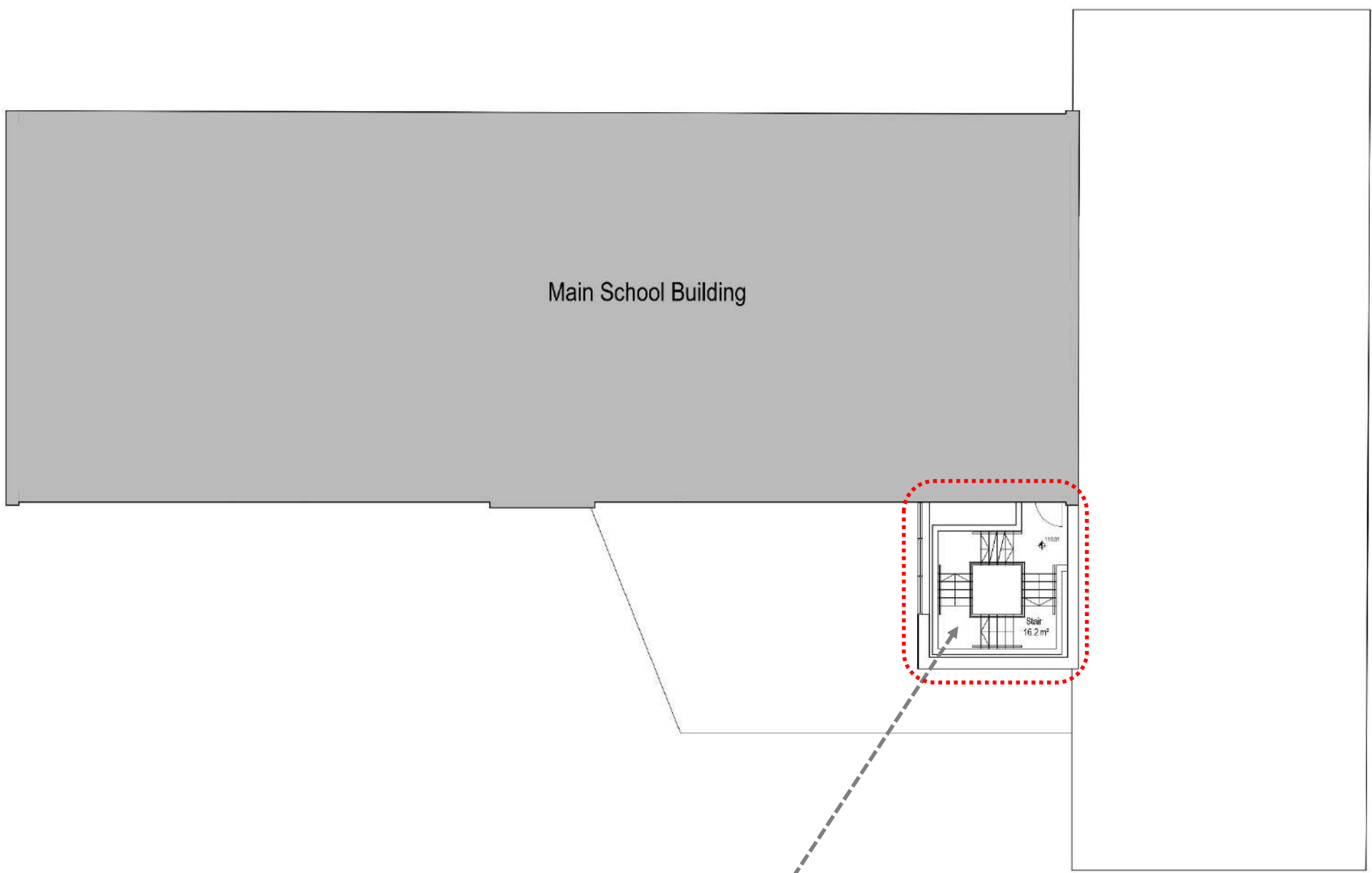
Enclosed replacement stair tower

Third Floor Plan – Main Building



Key

New Build



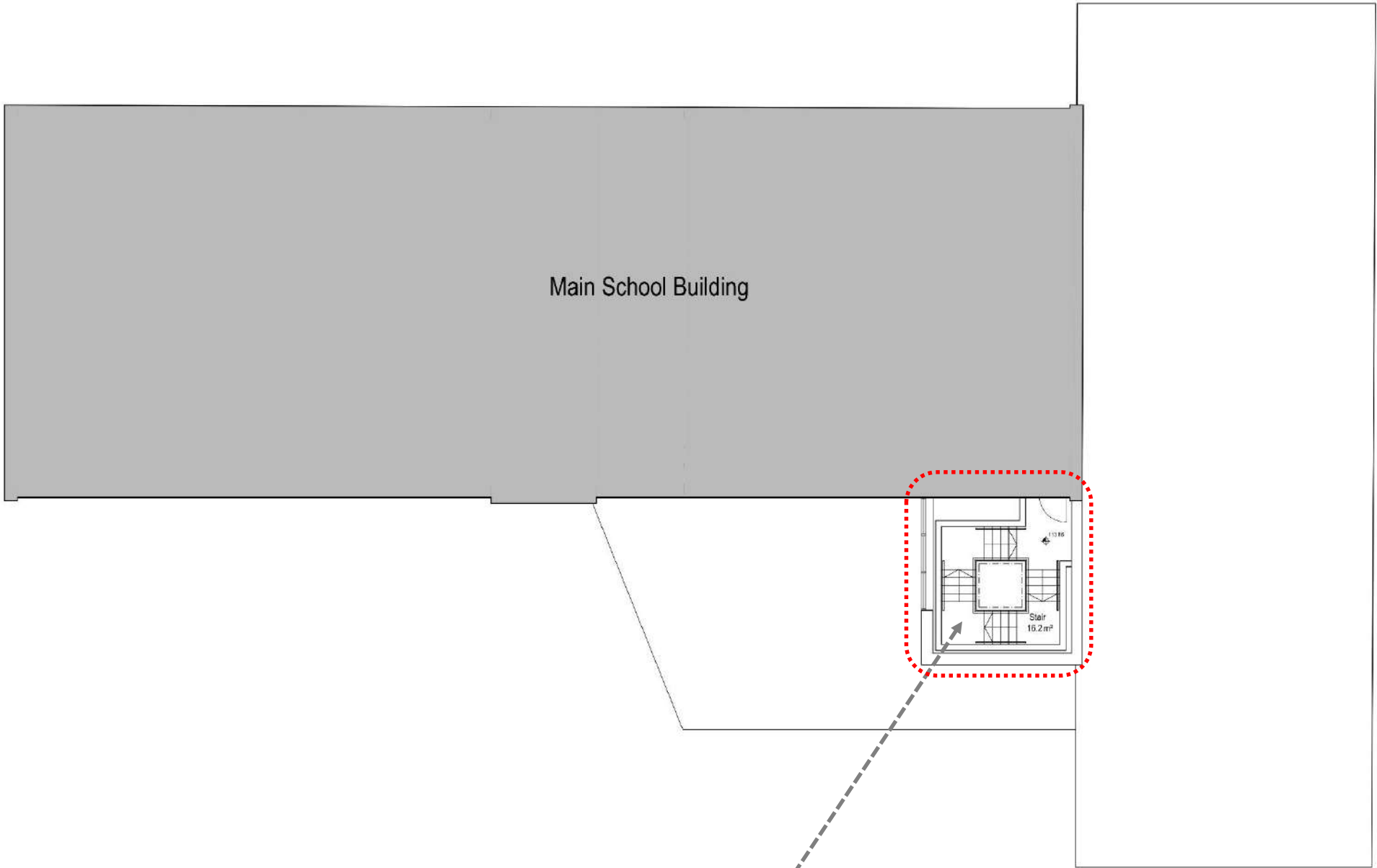
Enclosed replacement stair tower

Fourth Floor Plan – Main Building



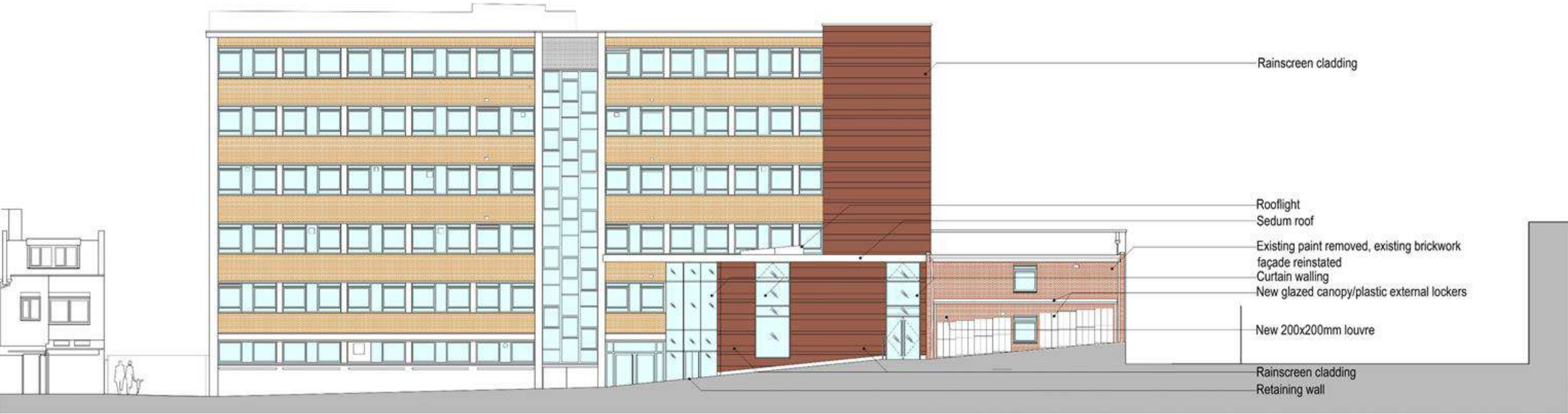
Key

New Build

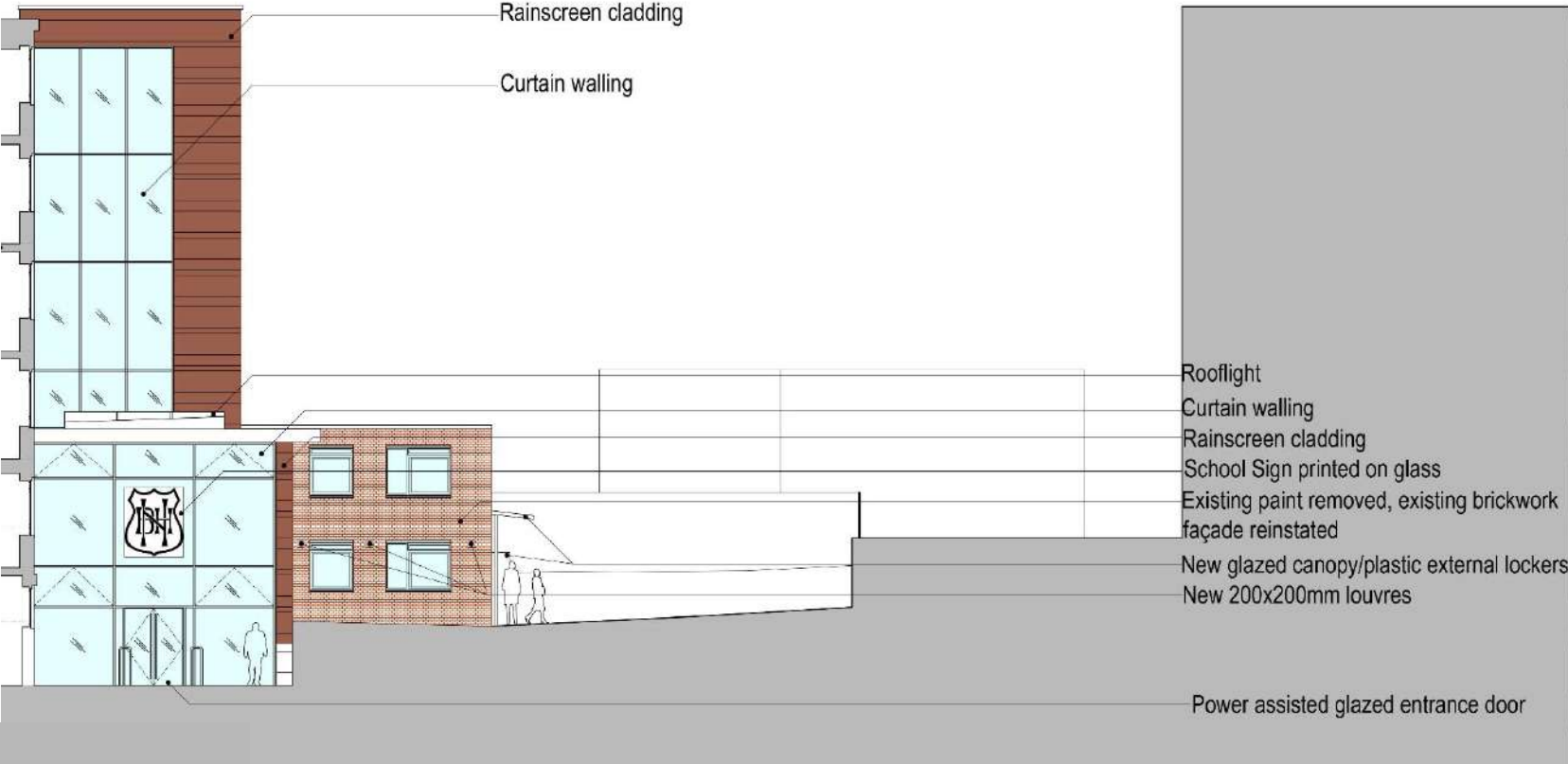


Fifth Floor Plan – Main Building

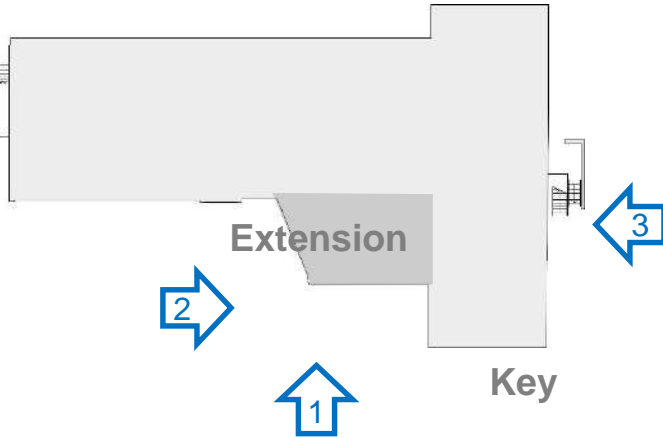




1 Proposed Elevation 1

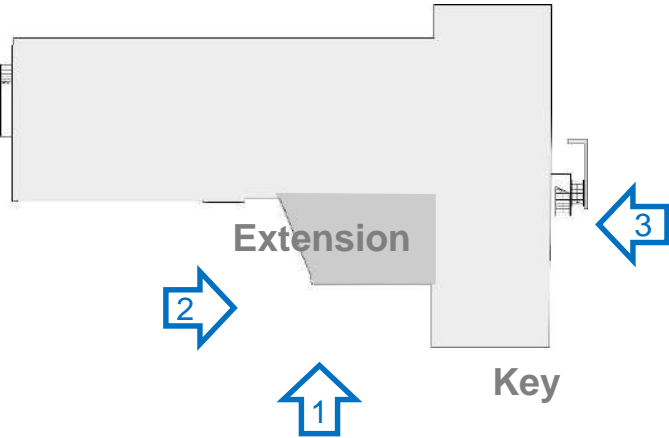


2 Proposed Elevation 2





← 3 Proposed Elevation 3



Accessibility

The proposed development works will improve accessibility, circulation, way finding and orientation throughout the Senior School site and will provide clear routes connecting the existing internal spaces.

Vehicular and service access to the School sites will remain as existing on completion of the works.

There is an existing lift located in the heart of the main building. The lift is not wide enough for wheelchairs users and therefore the school currently manages DDA access across the school’s ground floor.

The new escape/accommodation stair serving the main building will be 1200mm wide with risers of maximum 170mm and 280mm goings, as per Approved Document M.

The new additional external escape door from the Assembly Hall and the new 1250mm wide improved external replacement stair will provide a compliant means of escape from the main building.

Refer to proposed floor plans opposite

Legend

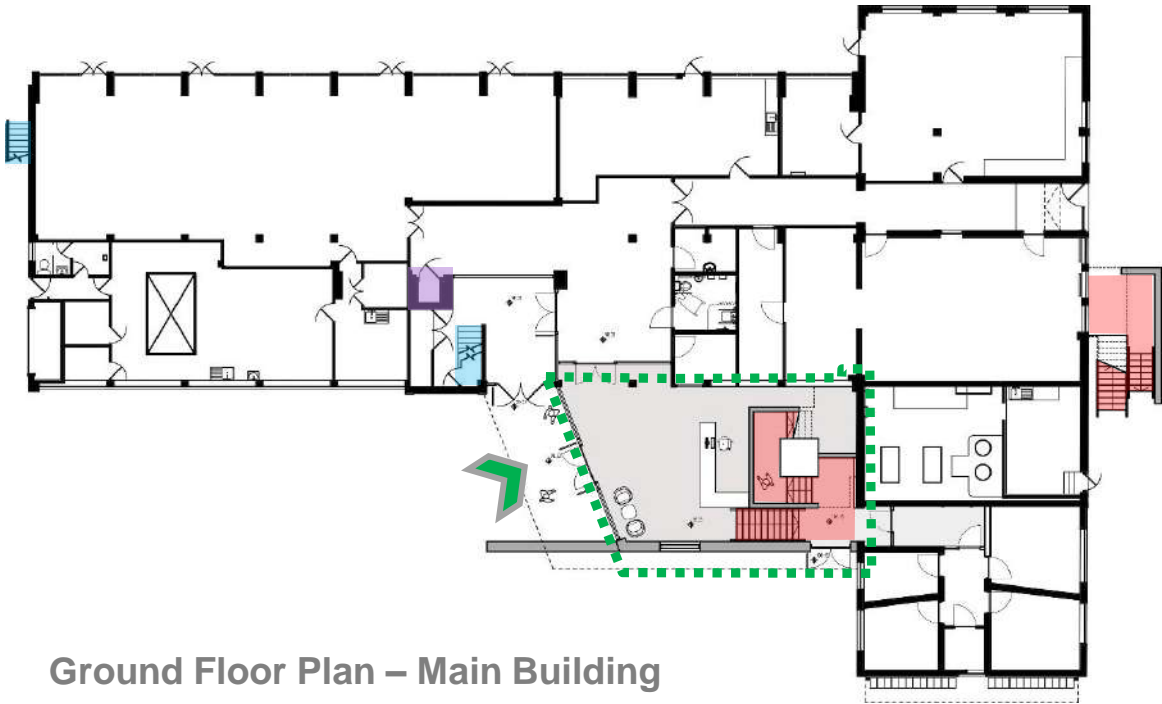
Existing Lift

Existing Stairs

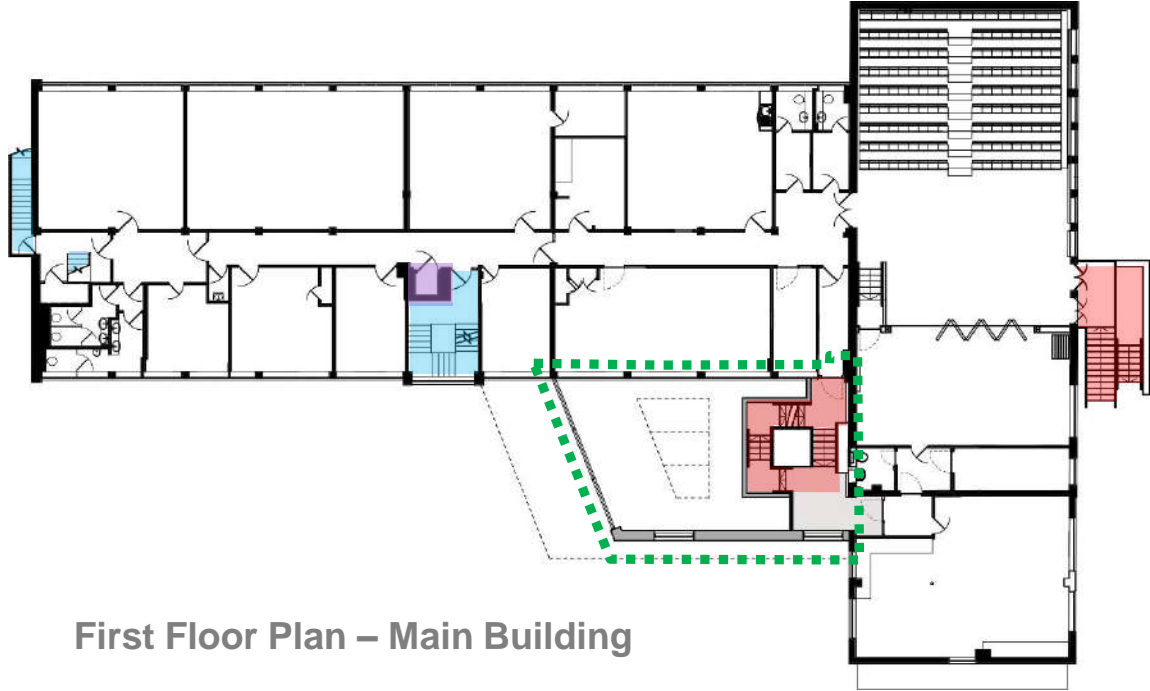
New Stairs

Main entrance

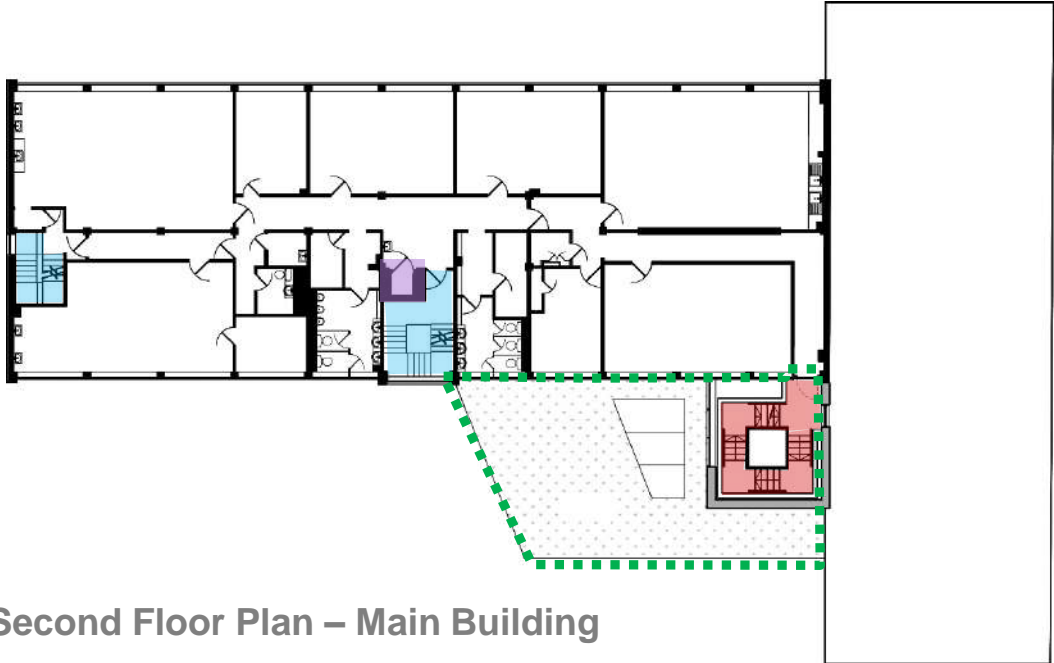
New Extension



Ground Floor Plan – Main Building



First Floor Plan – Main Building



Second Floor Plan – Main Building

3.0 / Design Proposal / Precedents

The following points outline the overall design concept of the proposals.

- Complement, preserve and enhance the existing building with a high quality design and materials palette
- Enhance the existing building original features by reinstating the original brickwork façade



Natural daylight / Interesting rooflights



Plastic external lockers and glazed canopy



Contemporary stair tower



Clear, welcoming and inspiring entrance



Transparency and reflections



Bright and open double height entrance space





PPC aluminium oxidised coating rainscreen cladding

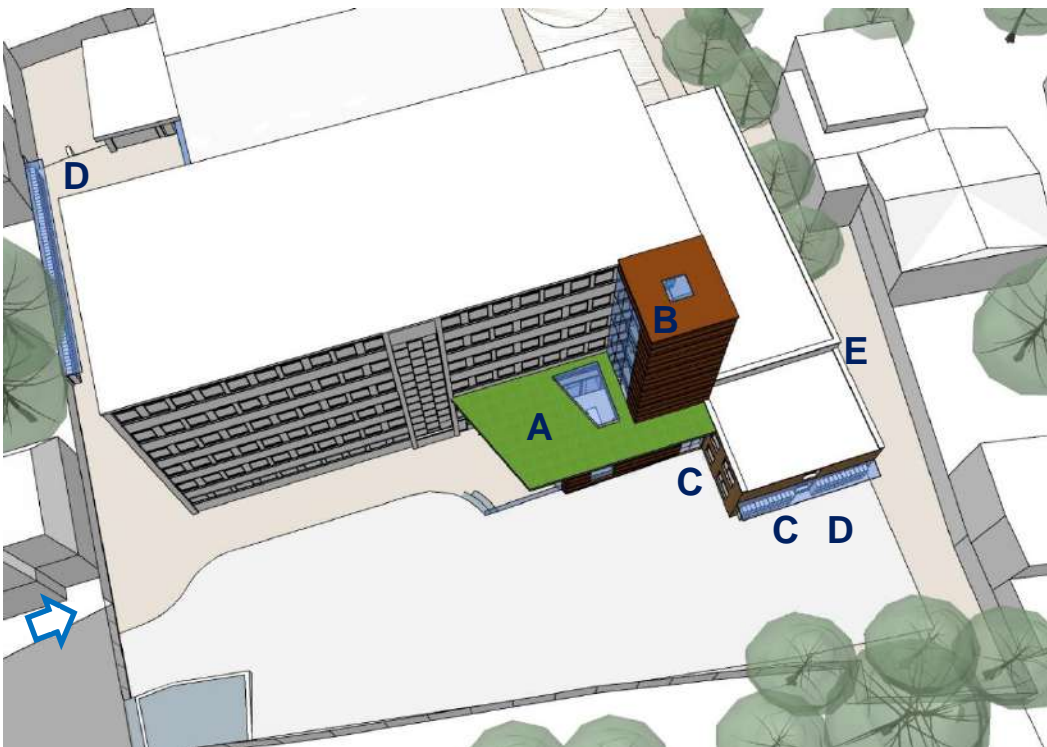


High quality curtain walling





➡ View of new Main Entrance from Vane Close



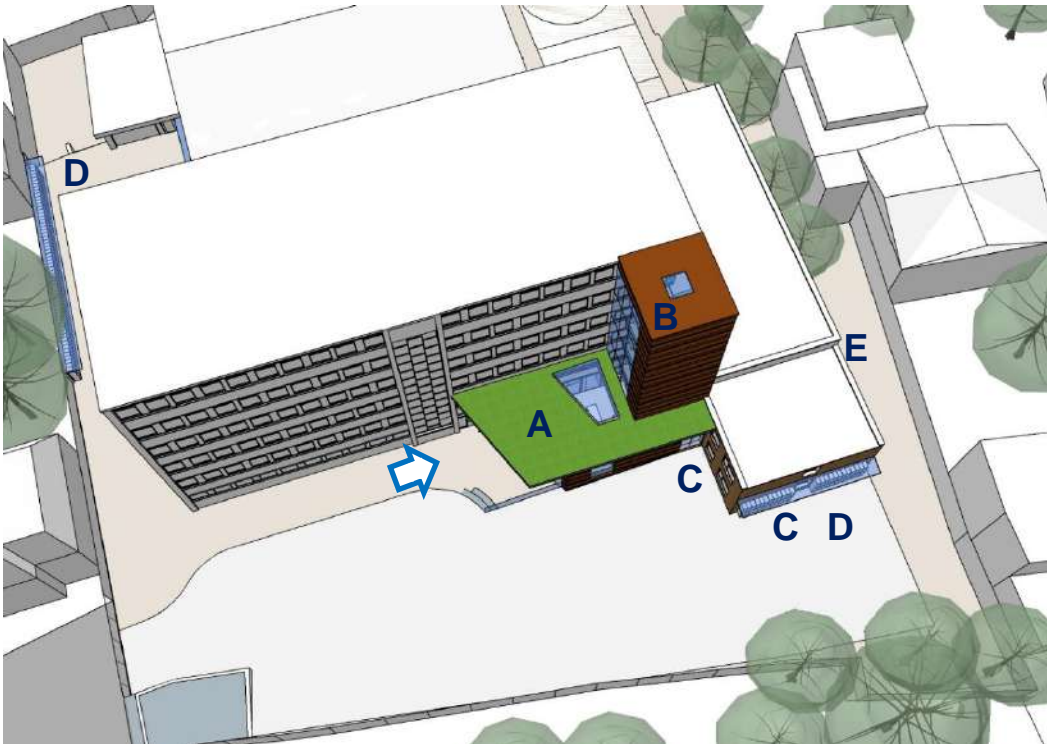
Aerial View

Key: **A** – 2 storey new main entrance / **B** – Enclosed replacement stair tower / **C** – New brickwork elevations / **D** - External lockers area / **E** – Improved compliant replacement stair





➡ New Main Entrance



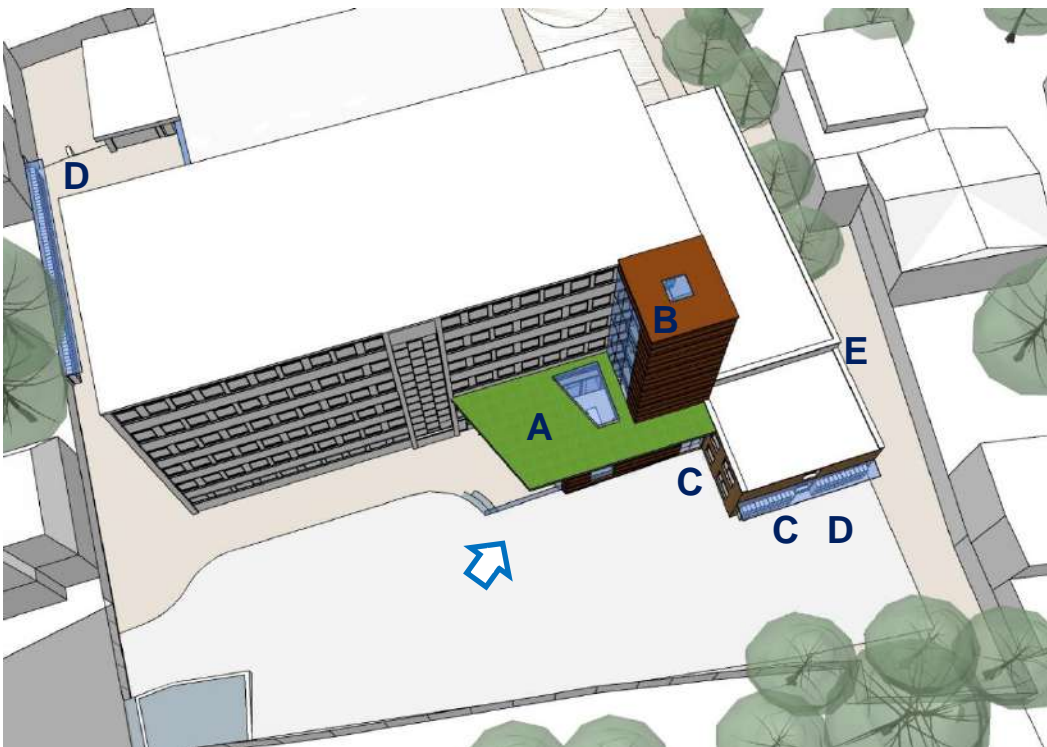
Aerial View

Key: **A** – 2 storey new main entrance / **B** – Enclosed replacement stair tower / **C** – New brickwork elevations / **D** - External lockers area / **E** – Improved compliant replacement stair





 New Main Entrance and Administration Block



Aerial View

Key: **A** – 2 storey new main entrance / **B** – Enclosed replacement stair tower / **C** – New brickwork elevations / **D** - External lockers area / **E** – Improved compliant replacement stair

