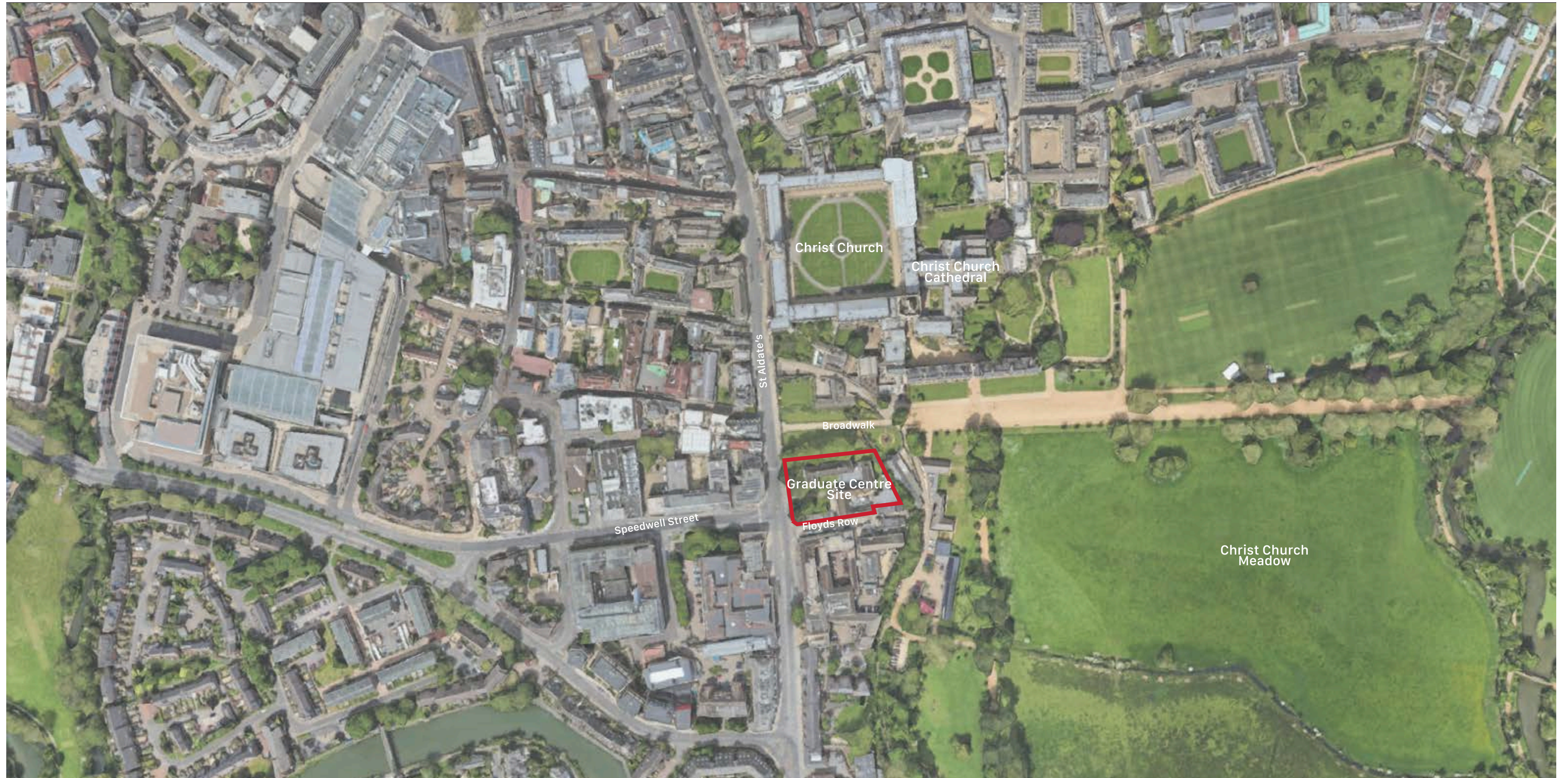


1 Introduction

A Vision for the Christ Church Graduate Centre

Christ Church is committed to enhancing the experience of its graduate students by providing more, much-needed graduate accommodation in central Oxford alongside shared spaces for social and intellectual exchange. The proposed Christ Church Graduate Centre aims to create a high-quality, sustainable, and well-integrated residential environment that seeks to meet the needs of the College's graduate community. Situated adjacent to the main site, this development offers an opportunity for members of the graduate community to spend more time in College, fostering a greater sense of academic and social engagement.



Context Map



The Need for Graduate Accommodation

Christ Church has long recognised the pressing need for more dedicated graduate housing in Oxford. This development seeks to:

- Provide more College-managed accommodation, ensuring that more students have access to stable, fairly-priced housing without the financial uncertainty of the private rental market;
- Encourage more students to engage fully in academic and social life, supporting research, collaboration, and community-building;
- Prioritise environmentally responsible design, incorporating energy-efficient solutions and well-considered outdoor spaces that promote wellbeing.

The proposed scheme has been carefully designed to respect the historic character of the area, responding sensitively to the surrounding context while delivering modern, functional, and high-quality living spaces.

Through ongoing engagement with Oxford City Council, local stakeholders, and the wider community, Christ Church is committed to ensuring that the development positively contributes to the city and its students.



1. Botley, Cripsey and Abbey Roads



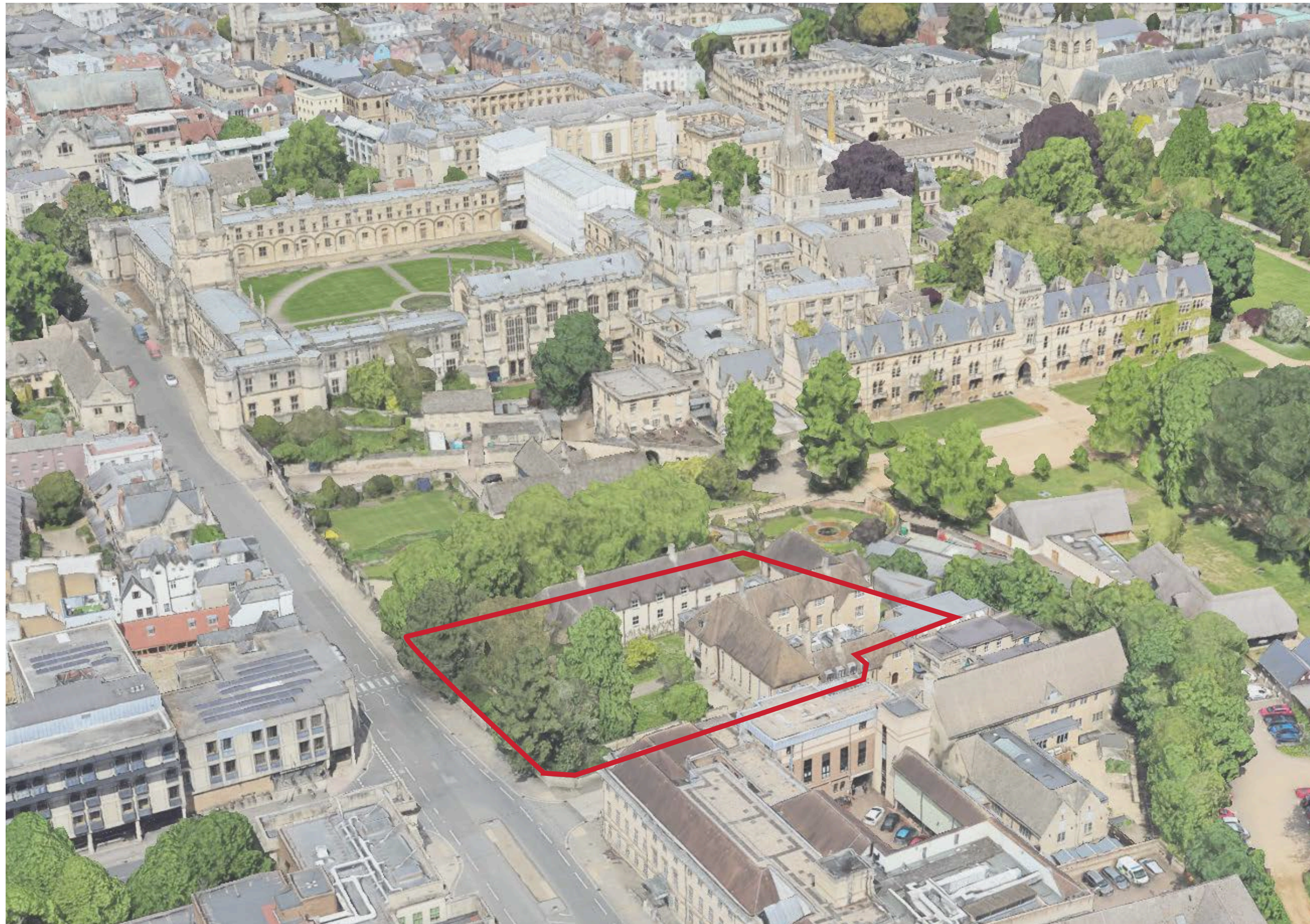
2. Liddell Building



3. St Aldate's



2 Site Context and Planning Policy



V1. Speedwell Street looking east to the site



V2. St Aldate's looking to south west corner of the site



V3. Corner of St Aldate's and Floyds Row looking east



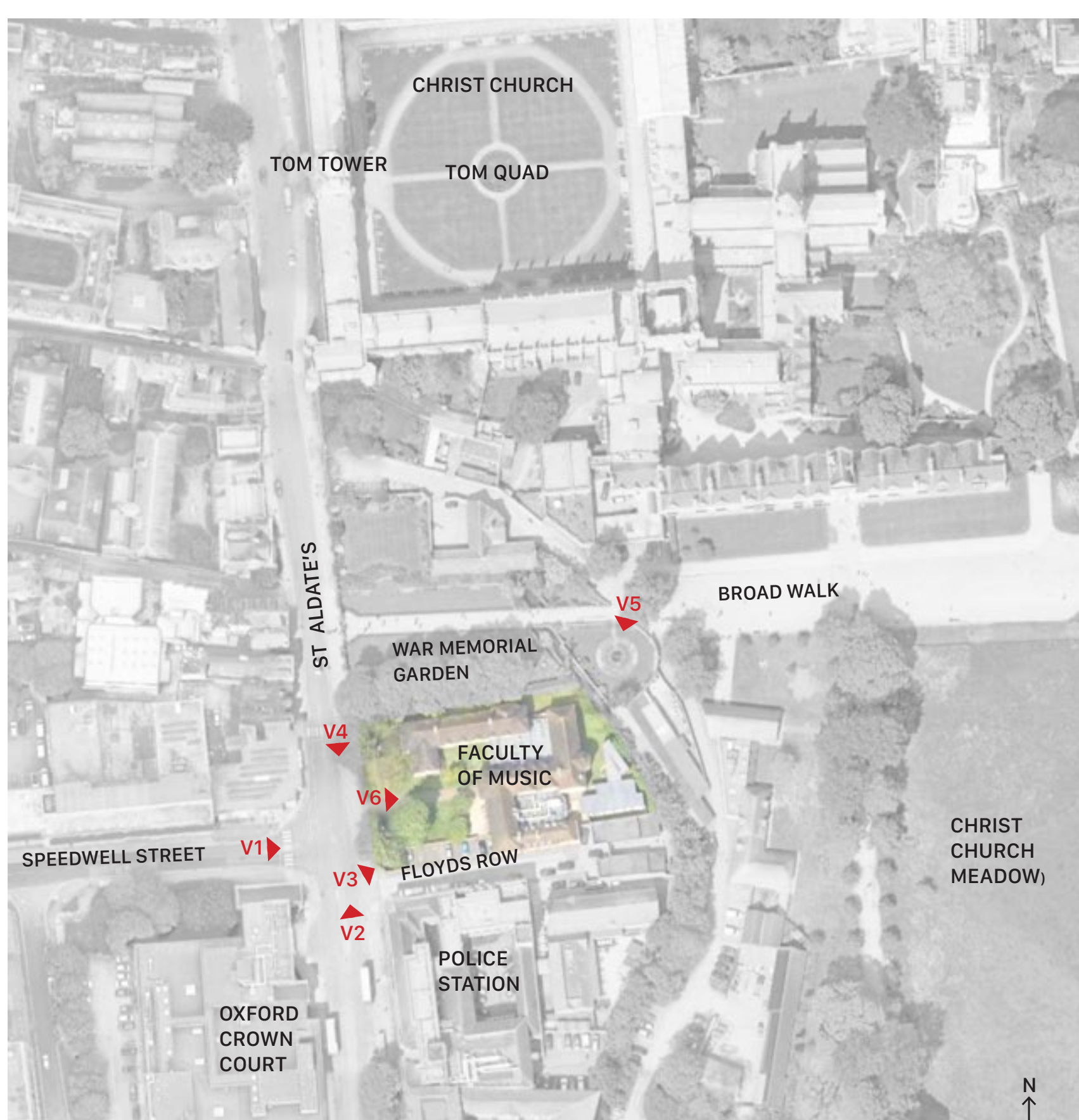
V6. Site entry looking east within the site



V5. Looking to north east corner of the site



V4. St Aldate's looking to the south



The building was used previously as student accommodation for St Catherine's and Linacre Colleges and then in the 1980s, it became the home of the University Music Faculty.

The Site has the following principal planning policy designations and points of interest:

- i) Located in the Central (City and University) Conservation Area. It is not listed.
- ii) In the Conservation Area Appraisal, the building is a positive contributor to the conservation area and is therefore a non-designated heritage asset.
- iii) Located within the setting of Christ Church Park and Garden, Grade I listed.
- iv) The property (building and associated garden area) is located 0.4km south of Carfax Tower.
- v) The Trill Mill stream forms the eastern boundary, separating the site from Christ Church Meadow. There are several mature trees within the site.

The site is currently allocated in the Oxford Local Plan 2036 for development as part of Policy SP36: Faculty of Music, St. Aldate's. The policy states:

"Planning permission will be granted for academic uses, residential development including employer linked affordable housing and student accommodation at the Faculty of Music. The minimum number of homes to be delivered is 40. Other complementary uses will be considered on their merits."



3 Key Site Opportunities and Constraints



Silver Lime



False Acacia



Black Pine



Weeping Willow



Watercourse on the eastern boundary



The Faculty of Music



Site Plan

 Category A Trees	- High quality and value with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years.
 Category B Trees	- Moderate quality and value with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years.
 Category C Trees	- Low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years.
 Root Protection Area	
 Veteran Tree	- A veteran tree has features associated with advanced age (for its species), and has features which increase its value as habitat for wildlife (dead wood, cavities etc.) irrespective of its chronological age.
 Veteran Tree Buffer Zone	
 Watercourse Metric 10m Riparian Zone	- Riparian zone refers to any land within 10 metres on either side of a watercourse. The "Watercourse Metric," assesses the ecological value of rivers, streams, and ditches, including their riparian zones, to support mandatory biodiversity net gain (BNG) when developments fall within 10 metres of a watercourse.

History

The Faculty of Music is not a 'listed building' but it is in the Central (City and University) Conservation Area. It was designed by an architect called Hubert Worthington in 1936; Worthington was quite well-known in his day for designing well-thought-out buildings in a neo-vernacular style. The buildings underwent a number of quite minor, and some more major alterations, from the later 1930s-1970s, and have been occupied by the University's Faculty of Music since 1981. Considerable thought was put into the layout and floor plan, materials and design, and the internal fittings and furnishings of the building. The site has heritage sensitivities, is located in close proximity to important listed buildings and open spaces, and benefits from mature trees. Key issues include:

- The need to maintain a sense of openness to the west, so that the main entrance of the Worthington building can still be seen from St Aldate's;
- The need to respect prevailing heights across the site;
- The need to respect the architecture, character and appearance of the conservation area, and particularly the architecture and materials of the 1930s building within the site;
- The opportunity to infill between the 1970s blocks and to the side, and to sensitively extend to the west;
- The need to respect the trees which contribute to the conservation area;
- The opportunity to build on the current car parking area to the south, albeit in a way that respects views of the 1930s building.

Trees & Ecology

A series of technical reviews has been undertaken to inform the design, including tree surveys and ecological assessments. These studies have identified ecological features, which have been carefully integrated into the design approach.

- Several critical trees significantly constrain potential development.
- The watercourse at the rear of the site is sensitive to change and requires a 10m buffer zone.
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements make building within the watercourse buffer zone and gardens challenging.
- The existing Music Practice Rooms must be retained hence removing the opportunity to increase soft landscaping and biodiversity.

The above drawing provides a summary of these constraints and their implications for the development.



4 Adaptive Re-Use and Functional Brief

The project aims to retain as much of the existing building as possible, minimising demolition and making the best use of the current structure. The design team has undertaken an analysis of the existing building to determine the most efficient layout for its adaptive re-use as graduate accommodation. Several key factors were considered during this process:

Window Module Limitations

The existing window sizes and placements constrain room dimensions, particularly for bedrooms, requiring a layout that maximises natural light and ventilation while respecting the building's structural pattern and alignment of openings.

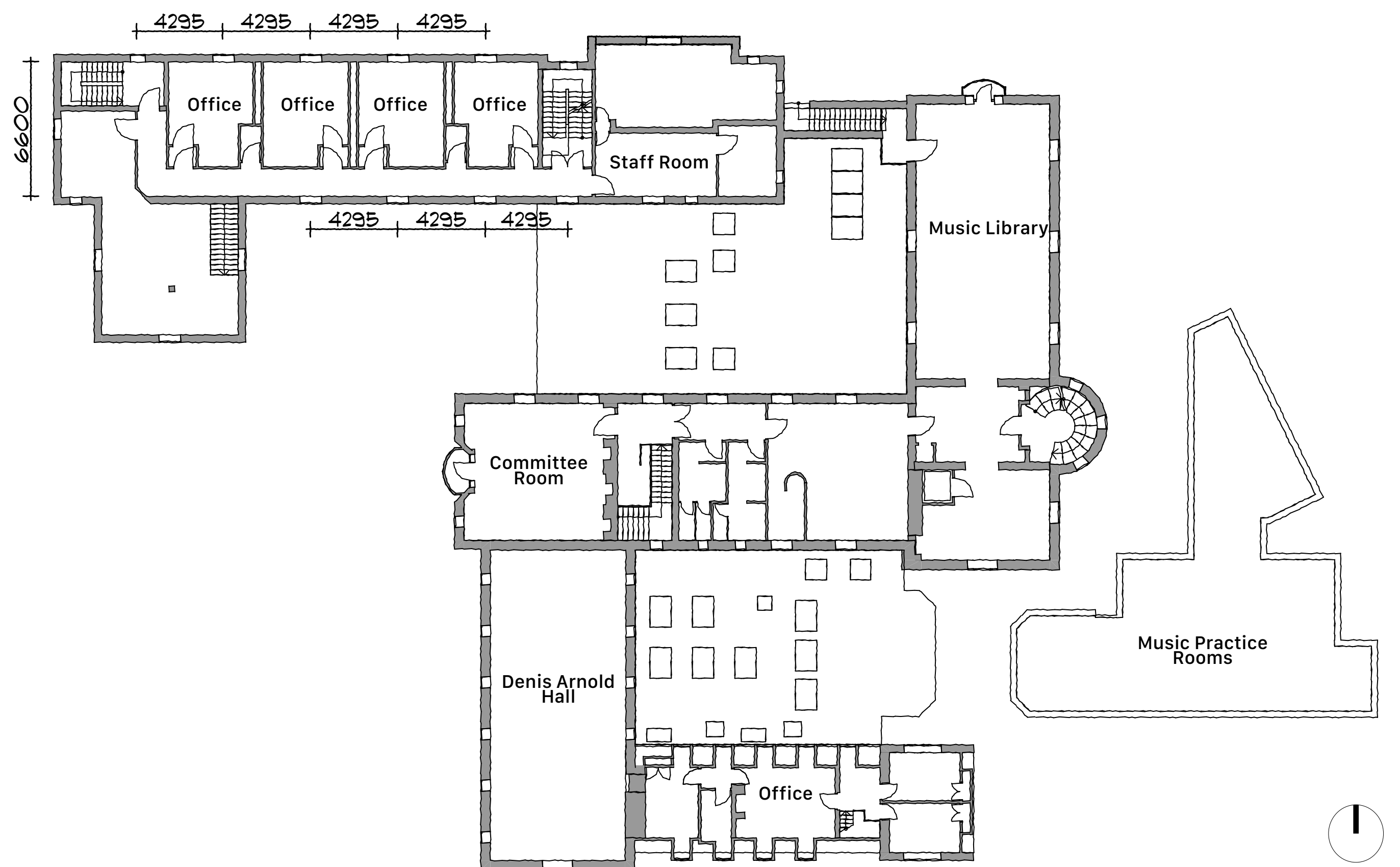
Location of Vertical Circulation

Existing staircases and access points have been assessed to ensure efficient circulation, optimising flow while minimising structural alterations.

Width of the Building

The building's width has informed the internal layout, allowing room sizes, corridors, and communal spaces to be carefully configured to function effectively while making the most of the existing dimensions.

This approach seeks to balance the practical needs of student accommodation with the architectural limitation of the existing building, ensuring a sensitive and efficient adaptive re-use.



First Floor Plan of the existing Faculty of Music



Existing office



Existing office



Existing Denis Arnold Hall



Committee Room

Studio Module

The proposed self-contained studios provide high-quality, private living spaces for Christ Church graduate students, and maximise the number of units within the existing building. Studio sizes range from 18m² to 20m², reflecting Christ Church's commitment to quality graduate accommodation.

In addition, communal facilities will be provided for cooking, dining, and social interaction, fostering a balanced and vibrant graduate community while maintaining a focus on independent living.



Typical Studio



5 Architectural Concept - Massing and Access

Massing Design Approach

The proposed massing has been carefully developed to respect the existing architectural character while enhancing functionality and connectivity across the site.

South wings

Two-storey south wings are designed with smaller scaled hipped roofs, maintaining a sensitive relationship with the surrounding context.

Glass Stair Connections

Transparent glass staircases are introduced between the new south wings and the existing Hall, ensuring visual permeability and reinforcing the Hall's prominence.

North Wing

The new north wing adopts a hipped roof form, creating a consistent architectural expression while accommodating additional studio spaces.

Courtyard Creation

The removal of the two existing first-floor podiums establishes two new courtyards to the rear of the Hall and to the northeast, enhancing outdoor space and circulation.

Link Building

A flat-roofed link building is proposed to preserve the legibility of the existing roofscape and maintain distant views of the east wing, ensuring a respectful integration of new and old.

This approach balances heritage sensitivity with modern interventions, creating a cohesive and well-scaled architectural composition.

Building Setting & Conservation Area

The design respects the garden setting and conservation area, ensuring new interventions preserve the building's presence within its landscaped surroundings while enhancing its integration.

Adaptive re-use

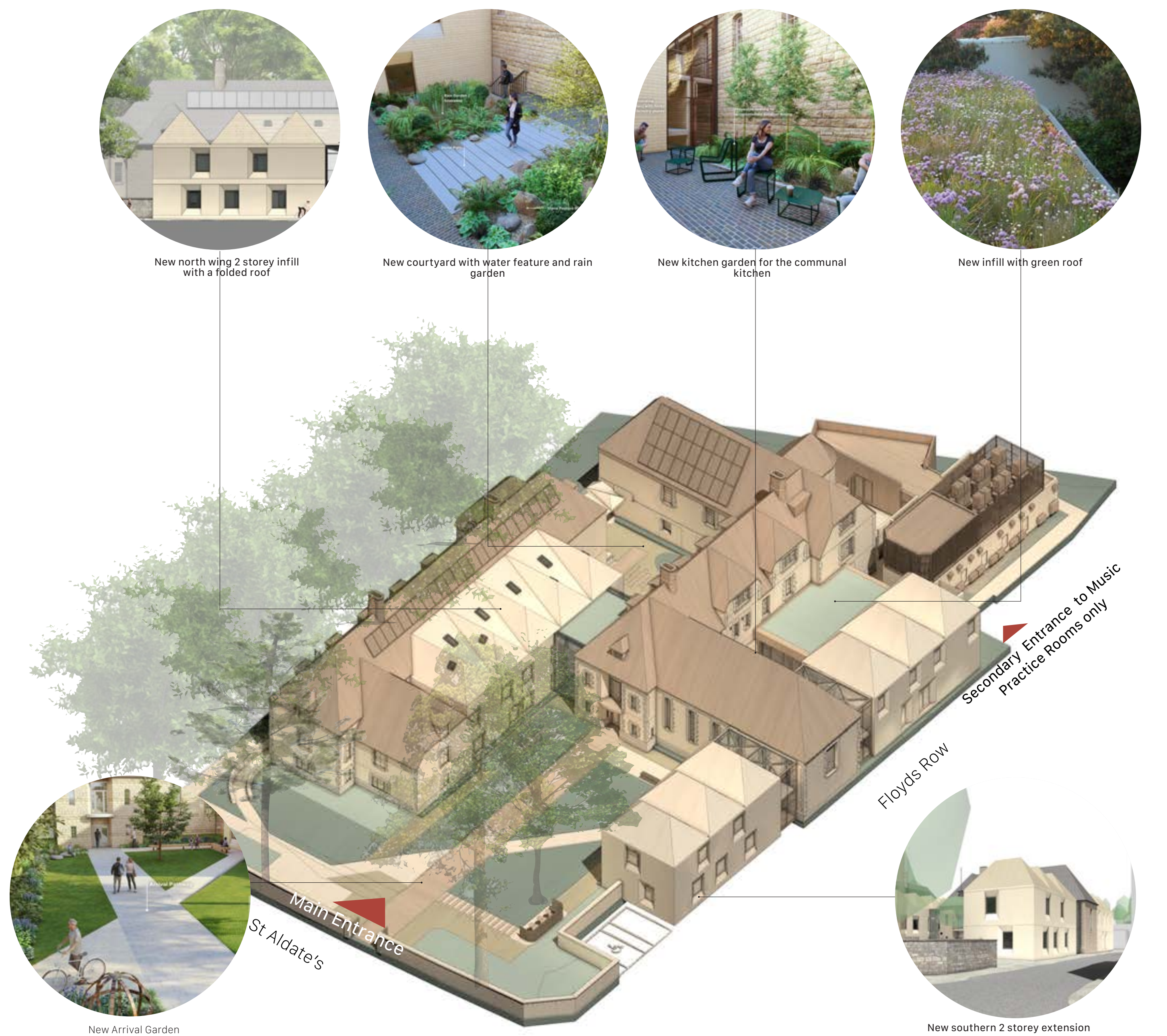
A detailed assessment has identified opportunities for maximum reuse, balancing preservation with sensitive adaptations for modern functionality, while allowing for sympathetic new additions.

New Build Extension

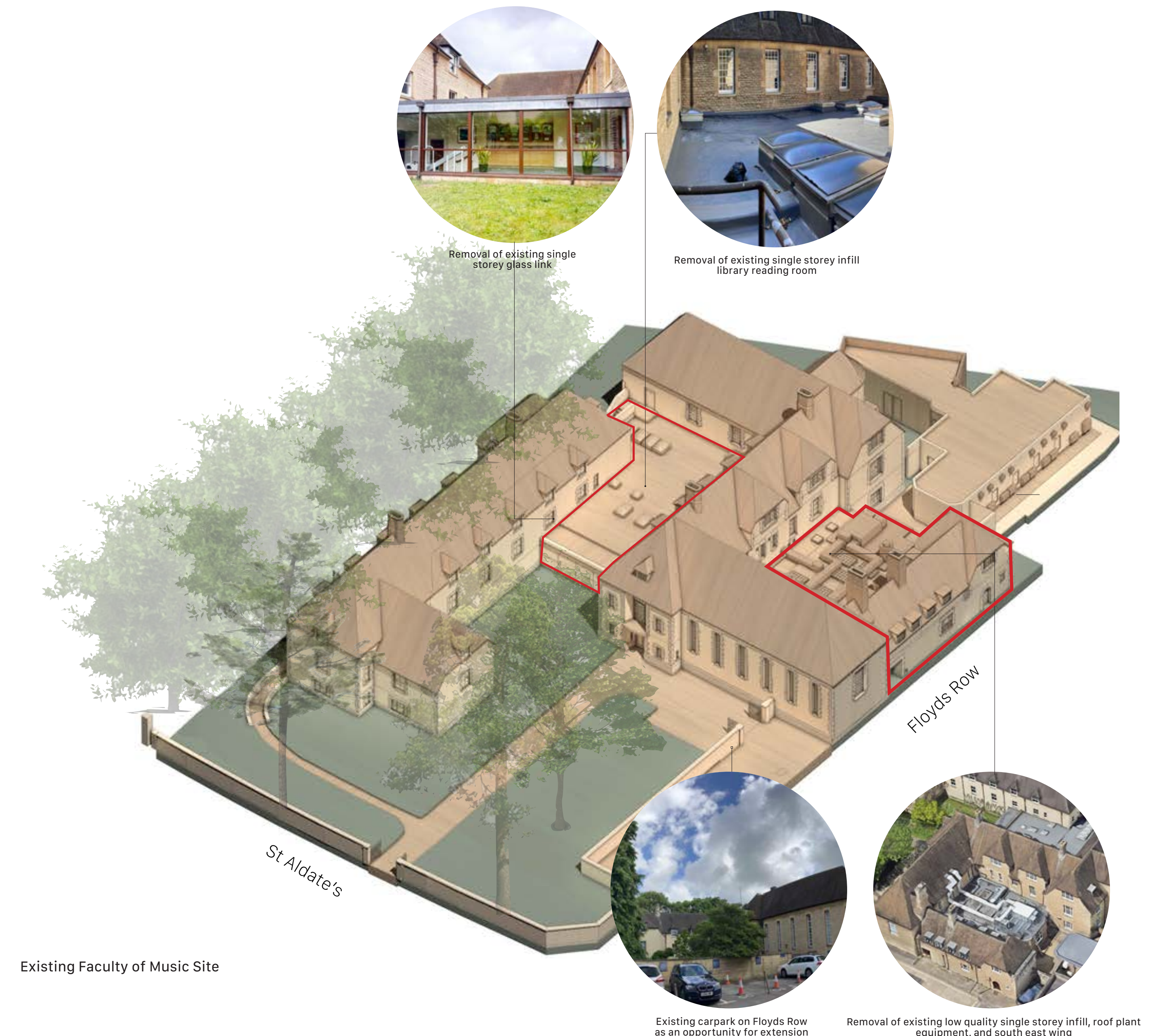
To maximise accommodation, the new extension has been carefully positioned and scaled to complement the existing building and garden setting, respecting local views and surroundings.

Outdoor Amenities for Well-being

The proposal prioritises high-quality landscaped courtyards to enhance graduate well-being, providing communal outdoor spaces for relaxation, social interaction, and study.



Proposed Massing for the Christ Church Graduate Centre



Existing Faculty of Music Site



6 Architectural Concept - Layout

The proposed design provides the following functional spaces:

Ground Floor

- 18 self-contained ensuite studios
- 2 self-contained ensuite accessible studios
- Denis Arnold Hall
- Communal kitchen / dining room
- Communal space / lounge
- Communal laundry
- WC
- Refurbished Music Practice Rooms including new accessible WC

First Floor

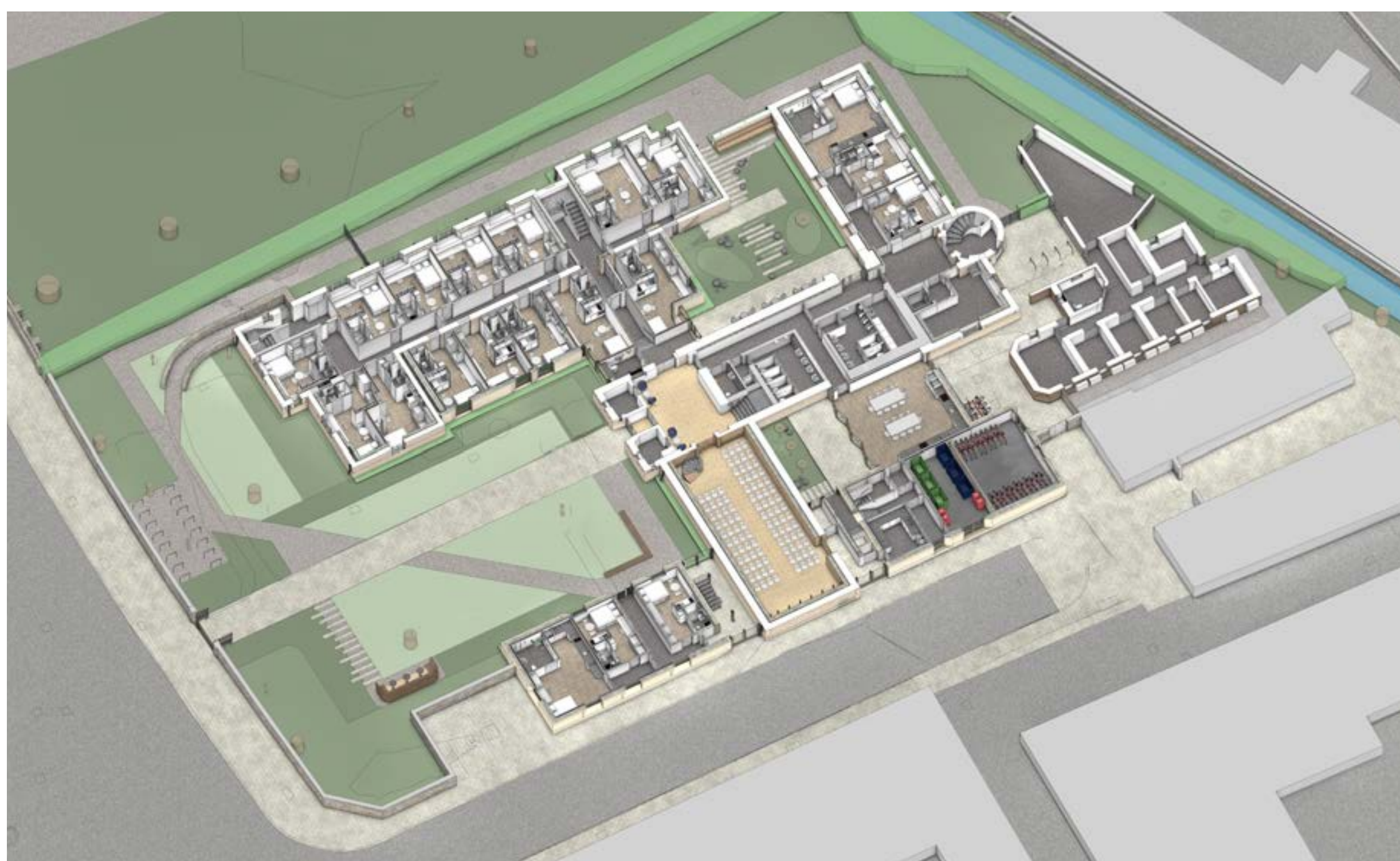
- 28 self-contained ensuite studios
- 1 self-contained ensuite studio that can be adapted into an accessible studio
- Graduate lounge/ communal space
- Accessible WC
- Mezzanine communal space (Denis Arnold Hall)

Second Floor

- 13 self-contained ensuite studios
- Communal space / lounge

Other

- New accessible lift



7 Architectural Concept - Materiality

The approach to the choice of materials for the new accommodation buildings has been carefully developed in response to their prominent location within the Central (City and University) Conservation Area and the existing architecture of the historic buildings on site. The existing built fabric predominantly features Clipsham stone facades and dark slate roofing, contributing to the cohesive character of the site and its surroundings.

The proposed design and materiality balance the relationship between new and existing architecture, respecting context while allowing for contemporary expression.

Proposed use of masonry such as brick and clay with similar tone to the existing stone across both the facade and roof creates a unified yet understated presence, ensuring the extension remains subservient to the historic buildings while subtly distinguishing the hall's roof line, a key feature of the setting. Both brick and clay offer natural warmth, durability, and texture, reinforcing a refined architectural language that responds sensitively with the garden setting.

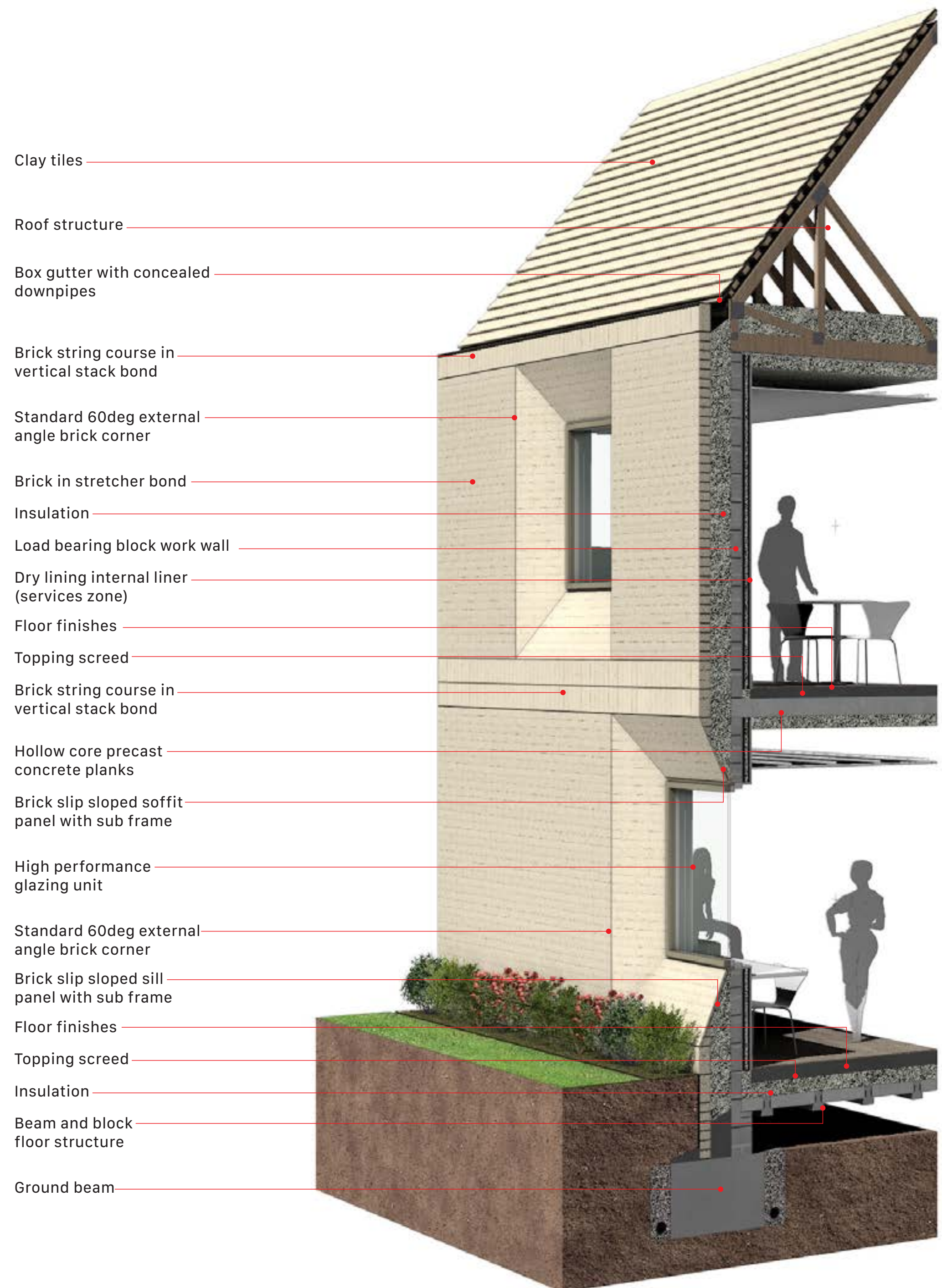
With natural tonal variation, the proposed masonry complements the Clipsham stone of the existing structures, maintaining visual continuity within the Central Conservation Area. Its recyclability and low-carbon processing support sustainable construction, while its fine detailing and modular nature enable precise craftsmanship, ensuring the extension blends seamlessly with its historic and natural surroundings while preserving the distinct roofscape and character of the site.



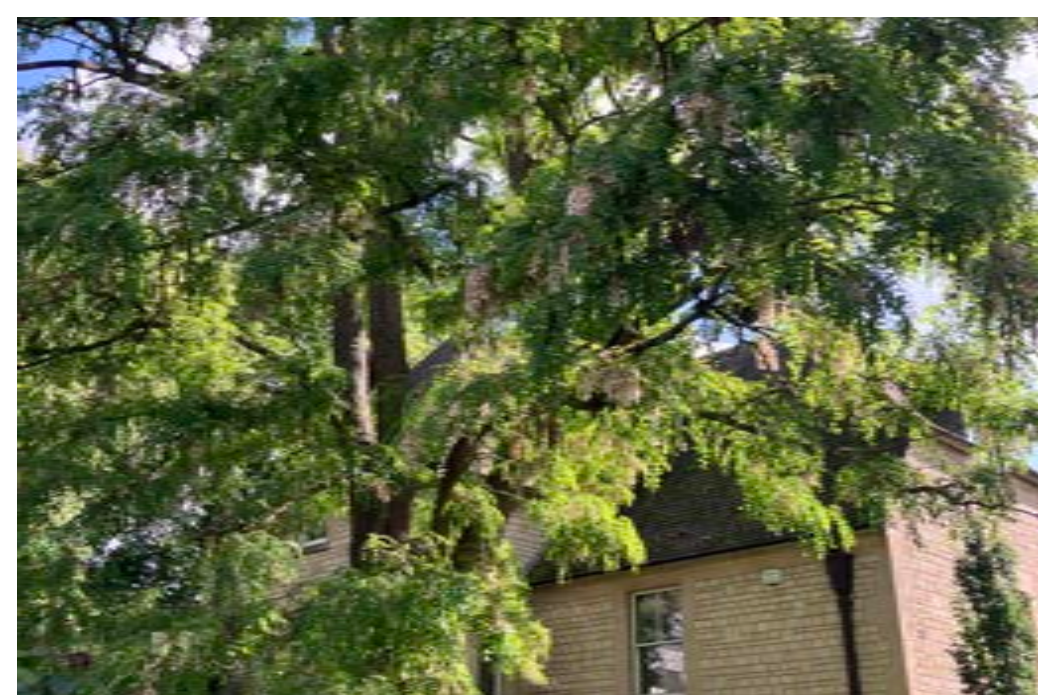
West elevation of the new south wing



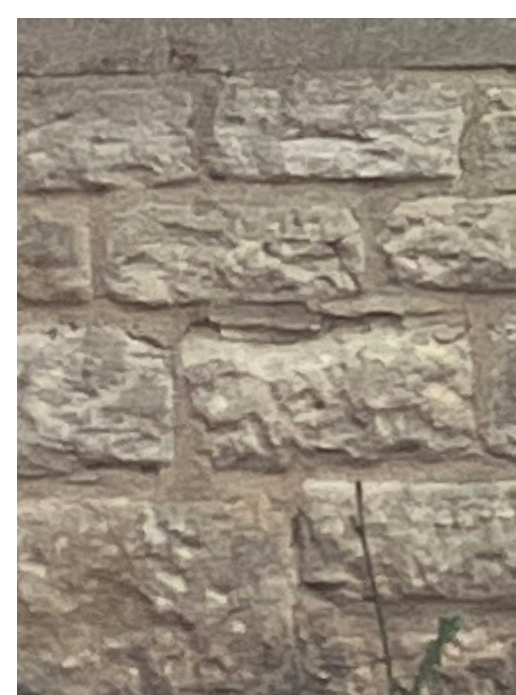
South elevation of the new south wings



Typical Facade Sectional Perspective



Existing Tree



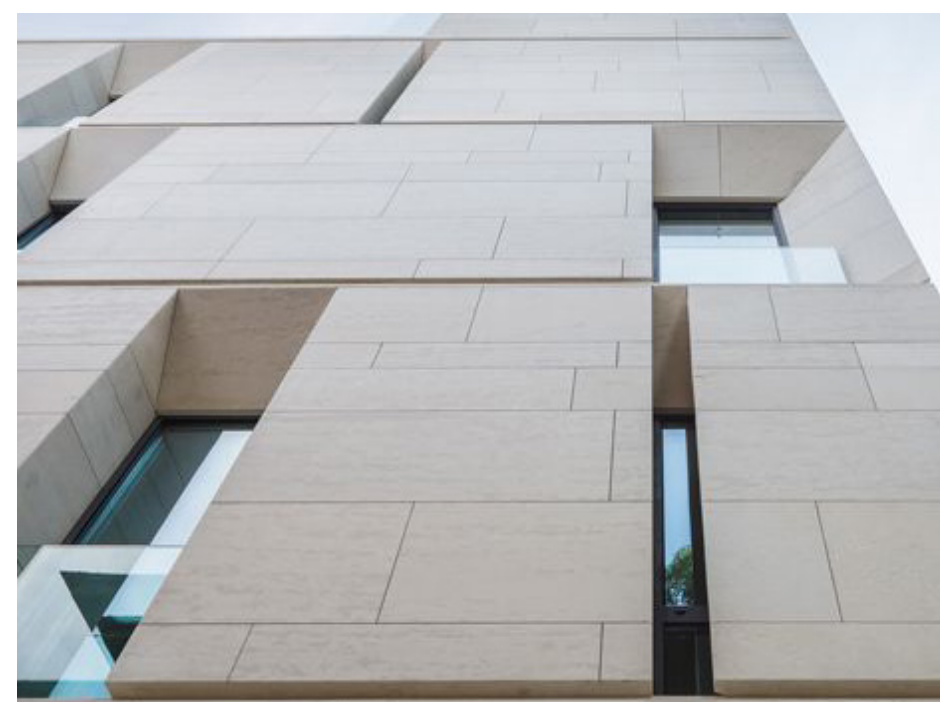
Existing Stonework



Existing Metalwork



Existing Roof Tiles



Masonry Reveal



Brick Reveal



Existing Window



Brick Facade



Clay Tiles



8 Architectural Concept



Proposed design view from St Aldate's



Proposed design view from the entrance arrival garden



9 Architectural Concept



Proposed design view from the Watercourse adjacent to the Memorial Garden



Proposed design view from the north east



10 Landscape Design

As the building transforms into a Graduate Centre, the academic grounds will also be re-imagined as landscaped gardens, where our graduates can enjoy valuable garden space in the heart of the City.

The development recognises the value that outdoor space can provide for health and well-being and considers the connection of indoors and outdoors throughout, with particularly strong connections created through the two internal courtyard spaces bringing light and greenery into the heart of the building.

The early concept and arrangement looks to the historic Christ Church quads for inspiration, and considers how this might change to accommodate a smaller residential scale and a more relaxed environment.

As the high-level design framework of the gardens develops a hierarchy of spaces emerges, creating a wide variety of opportunities from social gatherings, games and activities, to quiet reflection and study space.



1. Arrival Garden. 2. Garden Courtyard. 3. Kitchen Courtyard. 4. Garden Walk. 5. Stream Embankment



The Arrival Garden, retaining existing trees that hold a strong presence on St Aldate's



The Garden Courtyard, with flexible seating, rain garden, water feature and a rich planting palette



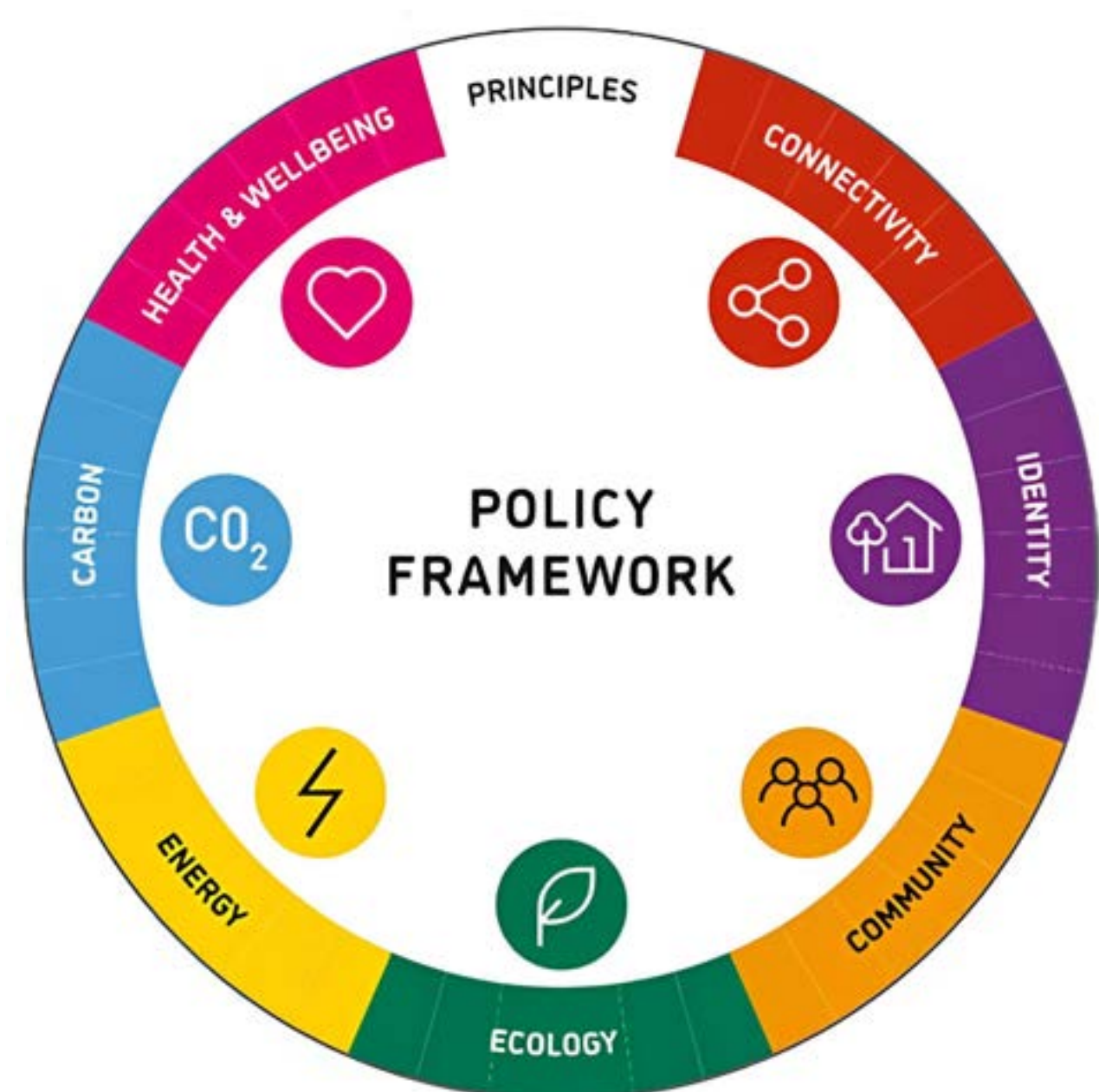
The Kitchen Courtyard, with flexible seating, rain garden, water feature and a rich planting palette

11 Sustainability and ROPP

Sustainability and Responsible Ownership Policy for Property (ROPP)

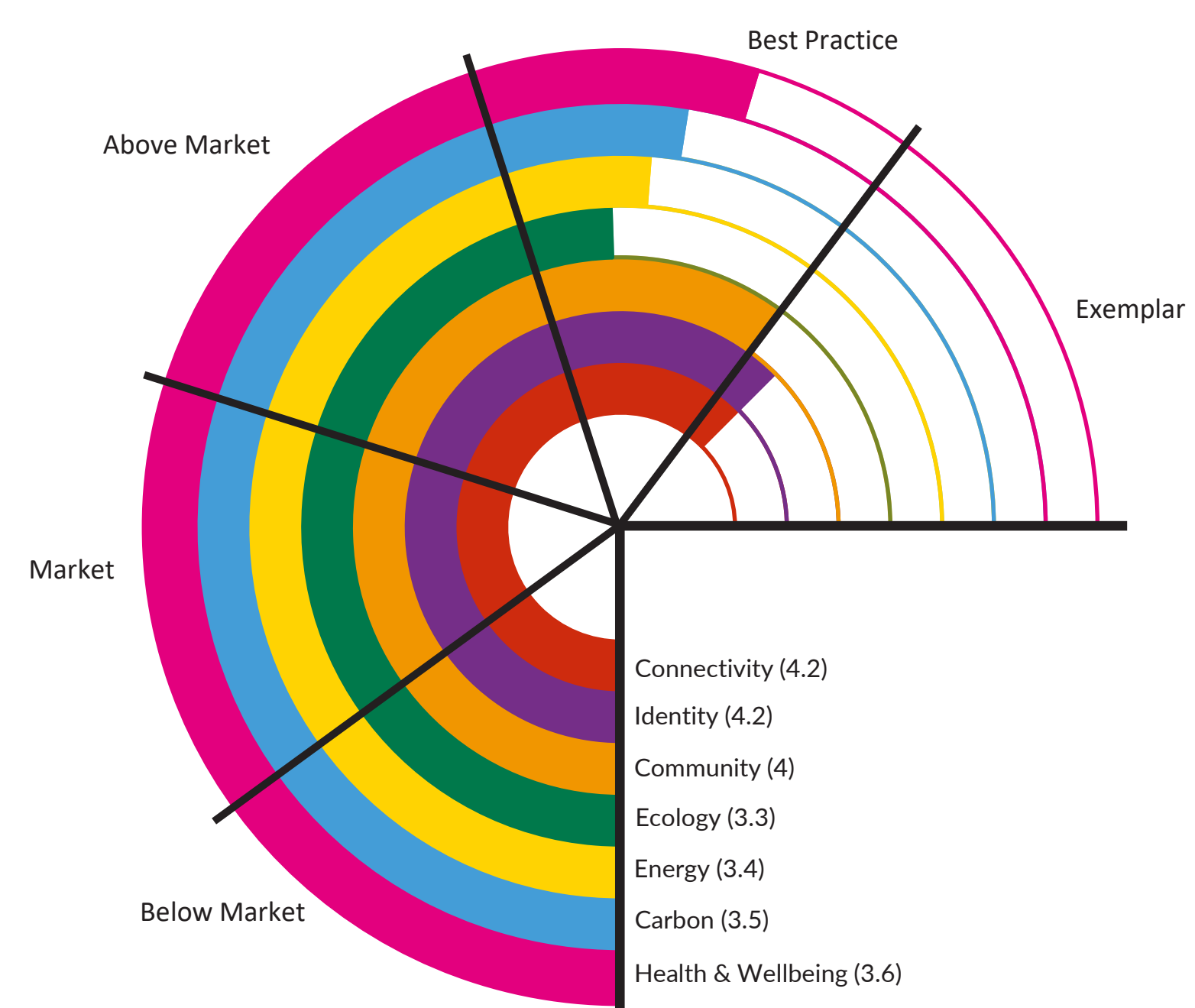
Christ Church has developed and implemented a Responsible Ownership Policy for Property (ROPP). As long-term investor, Christ Church has a particular interest in addressing their environmental and social responsibilities.

The ROPP guide provides a framework for responsible decision-making according to seven principles:



The ROPP does not prescribe mandatory achievement of particular performance targets or mandatory adoption of specific industry standards. Instead, it acts as a prompt to ensure Christ Church's seven principles are considered and adopted in the project. When applied to a property project the ROPP process records responses that the professional team considers particularly noteworthy and which demonstrates how they aim to embed Christ Church's principles in the process, design, construction and operation of the facility.

The below ROPP response scoring illustrates the Graduate Centre project's performance against the ROPP principles:



Sustainability Aspirations



12 Transport and Site Logistics

Car and Cycle Parking

Cycle parking will be integrated into the development to support those using the Graduate Centre, the Denis Arnold Hall, and the retained Music Practice Rooms. Provision currently includes:

- 44 covered, secure spaces for graduate accommodation (including 4 with electric charging and 2 accessible spaces), accessed from Floyds Row;
- 8 visitor spaces for the Music Practice Rooms, accessed from Floyds Row;
- 32 secure visitor spaces from St Aldate's, with potential for future covering subject to tree impact.

Car parking on site will be reduced from 9 to 2 spaces: one blue badge space and one for deliveries and operations. Existing on-street blue badge parking on Floyds Row will remain unaffected, though temporary disruption may occur during construction.

Servicing and Fire Access

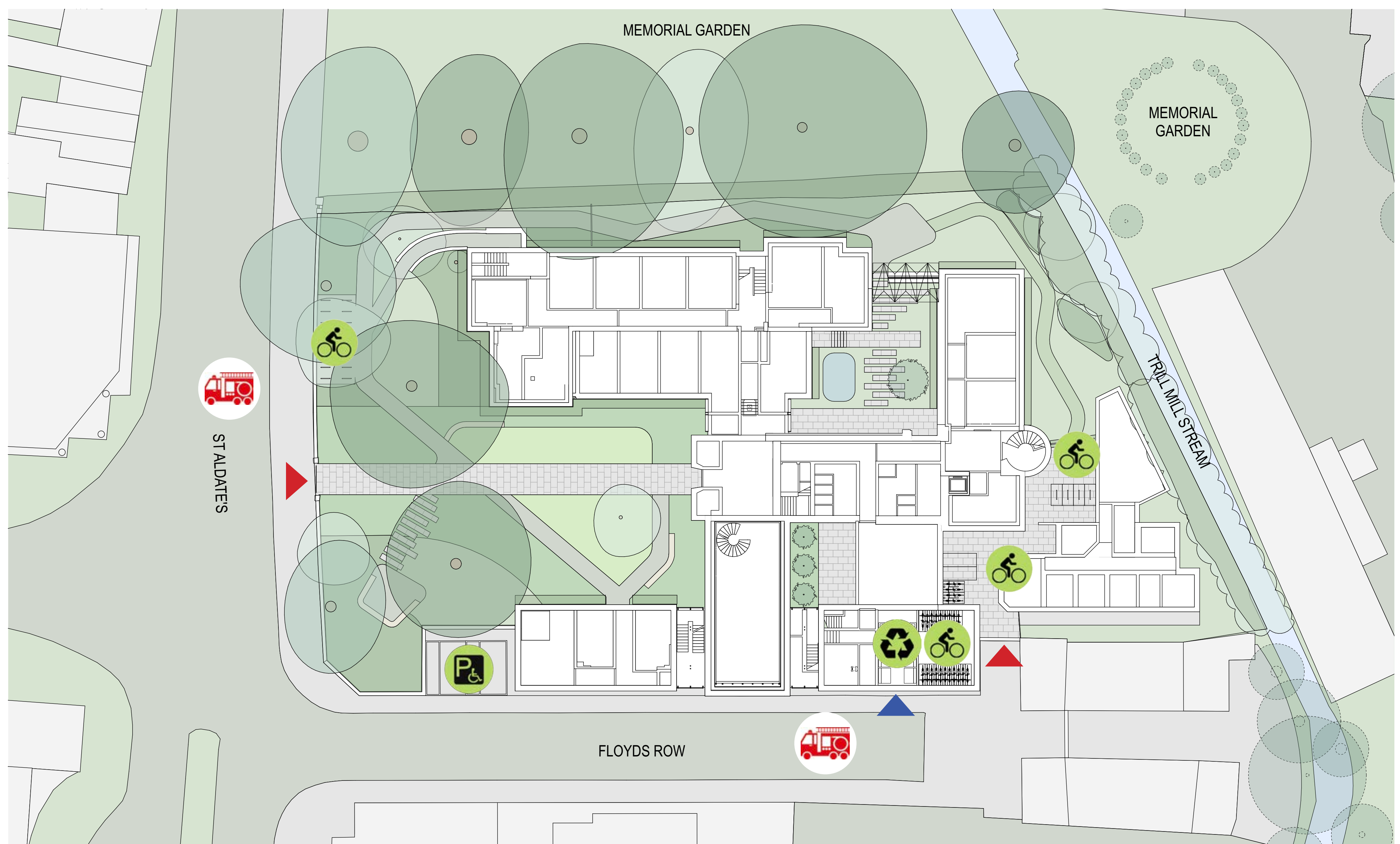
Servicing will be provided from Floyds Row where a van parking space will be provided. Refuse and recycling collection will be from the street (Floyds Row) as currently. Fire access by fire tenders will be from St Aldate's and Floyds Row.

Construction

Construction of the development will be the subject of a Construction Traffic and Environmental Management Plan which will be agreed with Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council. This will set out how, amongst other things, the following will be controlled:

- Permitted working times;
- Service vehicle movements – timing, routing and management at and within immediate vicinity of the site;
- Dust management during demolition and construction;
- Noise and vibration management and control;
- Requirements for wheel/vehicle washing if required;
- Provision of site facilities including access points, hoarding, welfare, materials storage including hazardous materials, appropriate signage etc;
- Management of and transport initiatives for construction worker travel.

A draft Construction Traffic and Environmental Management Plan will be submitted with the planning application, but this will be subject to further development with an appointed contractor.



Site Plan



13 Timeline and Feedback



Feedback and Questions



Please remember to supply your feedback on either paper or online forms. Once you have reviewed the proposals, we would value your feedback. You can respond to us in several ways including:

By visiting the website at: <https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/college/graduate/graduate-centre>

By emailing your views to: consultation@carterjonas.co.uk

By posting your views to:

**The Music Faculty Consultation,
Carter Jonas,
Mayfield House,
256 Banbury Road,
Oxford, OX2 7DE**

Thank you for visiting.



14 Project Team

Accessibility



Acoustic Engineering



Arboriculture



Archaeology



Architecture



Conservation

Donald Insall Associates

Cost Planning



Ecology



Fire Engineering



Landscape Architecture

Gillespies

MEP and Sustainability



Project Management



Structure and Civil



Planning Consultant

Carter Jonas

Transport



Vertical Transport



Visualisation Consultant



In consultation with:

Oxford City Council



Christ Church Graduate Centre