

New Greens Community Hub and Changing Rooms

St Albans City & District Council is hosting this exhibition to share proposals for a new community hub and sports changing facilities at William Bird Open Space, located at the junction of Flint Way and Toulmin Drive.

You are invited to:

- View the proposals
- Speak with the project team
- Share your feedback

What is being proposed?

The project will bring together two existing facilities into one modern, purpose-built building:

- The William Bird Pavilion (currently closed and beyond economic repair)
- The New Greens Residents' Association (NGRA) building

Both facilities are facing significant challenges, and this project provides an opportunity to deliver a higher quality, more sustainable facility for the community.

What is the purpose of this exhibition?

This exhibition aims to:

- Present the emerging proposals
- Explain the approach taken so far
- Provide an opportunity for the community to share views and feedback

The project team will use feedback received to inform the ongoing development of the proposals.

Planning Context

The site has been identified in the emerging Local Plan for community use at William Bird Open Space.

The existing NGRA site is proposed for future residential development, which would help fund the delivery of new community facilities as an 'enabling scheme'.



Map of New Greens



View from Toulmin Drive



View from Sparrowswick Ride



View from Flint Way

Why this site?

There are currently two separate facilities serving the area:

- **William Bird Pavilion**, closed since 2022 due to structural issues (RAAC), requiring demolition
- **New Greens Residents' Association (NGRA) building**, experiencing issues such as roof concerns and presence of asbestos (contained), wider structural challenges, poor thermal performance and high energy costs, and ongoing maintenance costs with limited long-term value

Both buildings require substantial investment, which is not considered economically viable, and a different approach is needed.

A joined-up approach

Bringing facilities together into a single, modern building would provide a more efficient and flexible use of space, improve quality and accessibility, and create a more sustainable long-term solution.

Why Toulmin Drive?

William Bird Open Space (Toulmin Drive) has been identified as the most appropriate location because it:

- Is allocated for community use
- Provides a logical and deliverable location for the new combined facility
- Allows for the removal of the existing building and replacement with modern facilities
- Enables the existing car park and access arrangements to be retained
- Supports continued use of sports pitches

What happens to the NGRA site?

The NGRA facility would be relocated to the new, improved facility.

The NGRA site is proposed for residential development, which will:

- Form part of the wider Local Plan strategy
- Help enable and fund the new facility
- Follow a similar approach to other successful schemes like Cottonmill Community and Cycling Centre



Photographs of existing changing rooms



Photographs of existing social club

What has been done so far?

To develop the proposals, the project team has:

- Assessed the site and surrounding area
- Identified key constraints and opportunities
- Reviewed examples of similar successful community buildings
- Worked with a multi-disciplinary consultant team
- Engaged with a range of closely involved groups

Working with the community

This is a community-focused project, and early engagement has taken place with a range of local groups to help inform the proposals, including:

- New Greens Residents' Association (NGRA)
- Rugby club users
- Football and wider pitch users
- Other local community groups and stakeholders

These discussions have helped the project team to:

- Understand how facilities are currently used
- Identify priorities for improvement
- Shape the emerging design and layout

Developing the proposals

The emerging design has been shaped by:

- Input from local user groups
- Technical advice from specialist consultants
- A high-level cost plan

Engagement has also taken place with:

- Planning officers
- Hertfordshire Constabulary
- Relevant sport's governing bodies

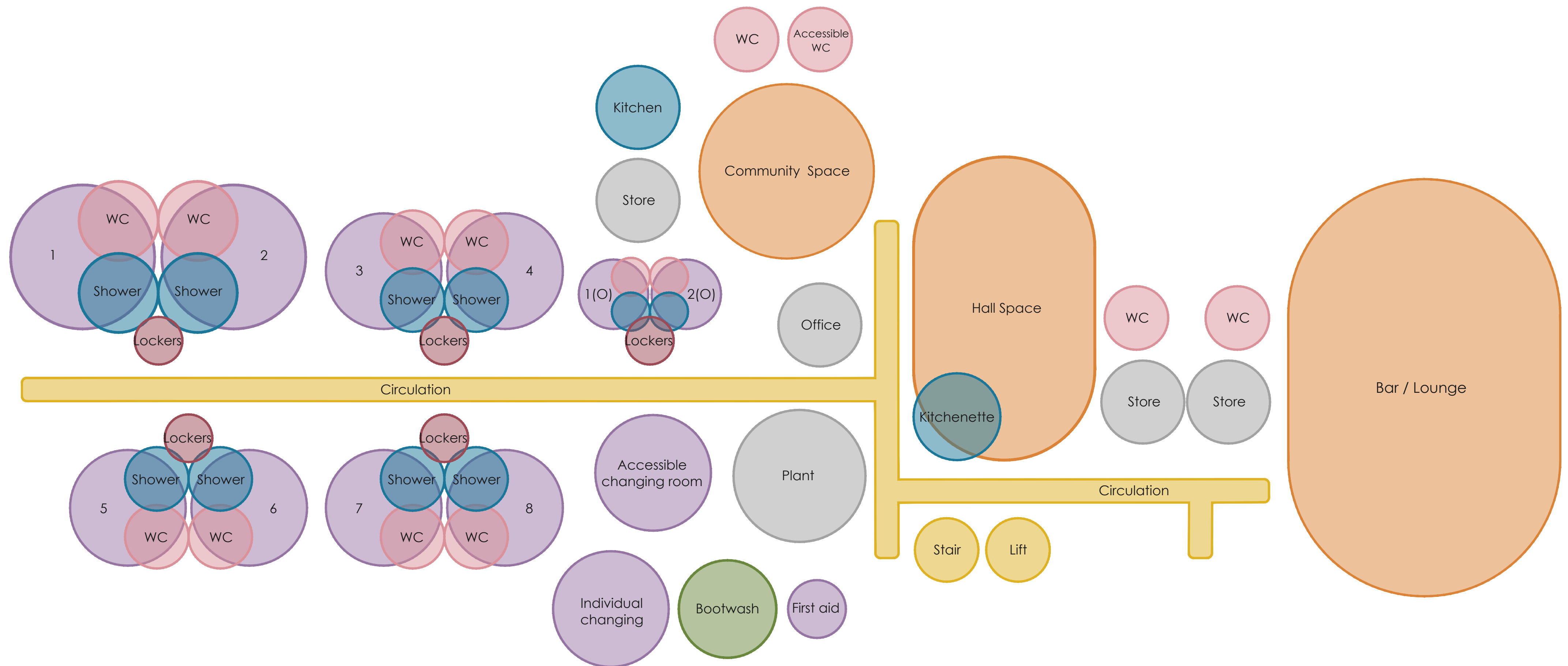
Responding to site constraints

The design approach reflects the sensitivities of the site by:

- Limiting the overall building footprint
- Reducing impact on Green Belt land
- Providing enhanced, more efficient changing facilities
- Introducing operational measures such as staggered use



Successful sports, community and changing room precedent buildings



Rationalised changing rooms / rationalised community facilities

The proposal

The scheme brings together community and sports facilities into a single, purpose-built hub at William Bird Open Space.

Building layout & facilities

The building is arranged over two floors and will provide a range of flexible spaces:

Ground floor

- Two flexible community halls for events, activities and local use
- Shared kitchen to support community use and catering
- Sports changing facilities, including team changing rooms, individual changing cubicles and officials' changing rooms
- Toilets and accessible toilet facilities

First floor

- Two additional hall / activity spaces
- A social space with bar provision
- Kitchenette to support first floor use
- Toilets and accessible toilet facilities

Location & design approach

- Located on the existing changing rooms site
- Designed to be visible, welcoming, and easy to find
- Maintains views across the open space
- Positioned to protect the privacy of neighbouring homes
- Retains existing mature trees where possible

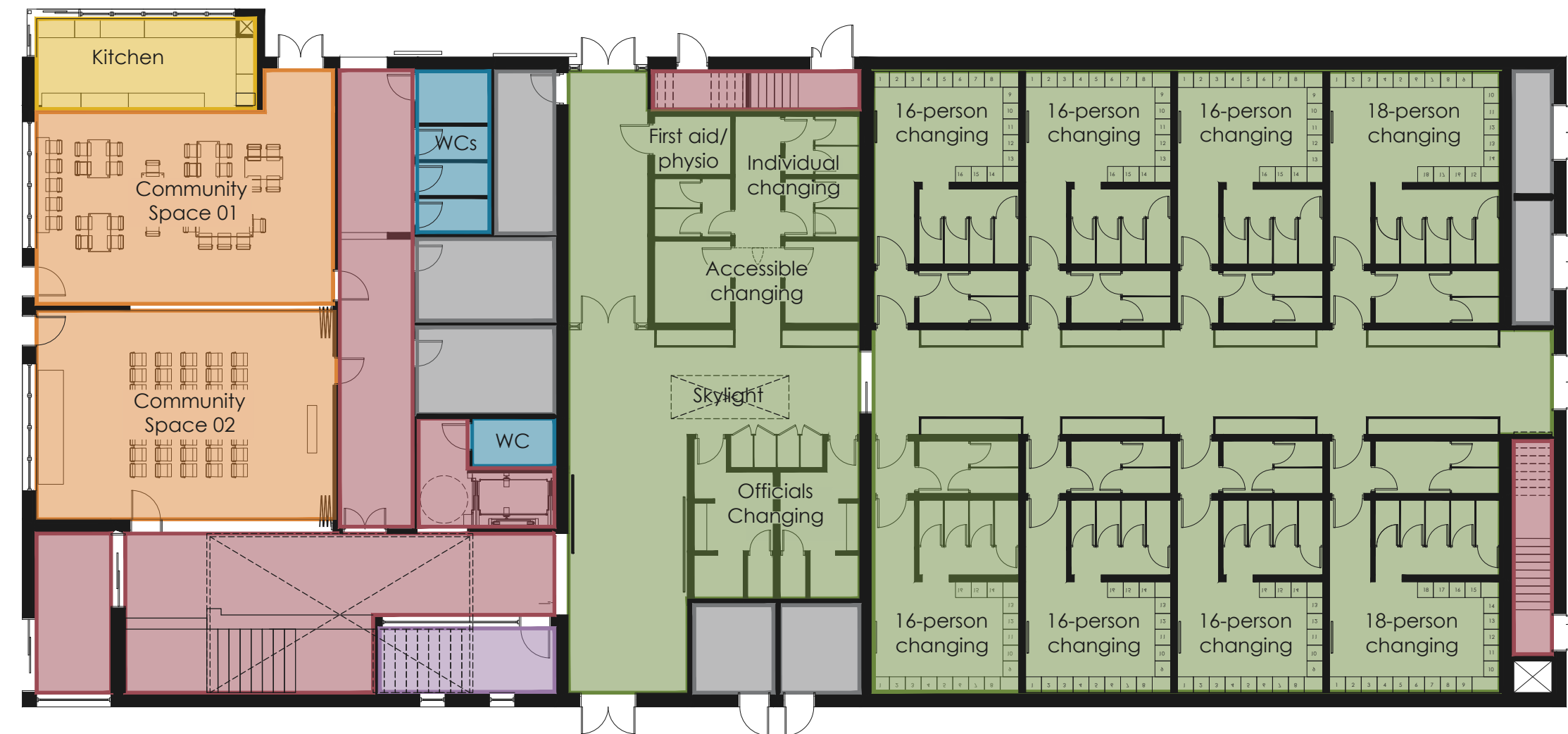
Access & parking

- Existing car park retained
- Additional overflow parking for peak use
- Parking provision informed by transport assessment
- Electric vehicle charging points included

Phasing

The new facility will be built and occupied prior to work beginning on the NGRA site, ensuring community facilities are maintained throughout.

The new facility at William Bird Open Space is expected to be completed in 2028.



Ground floor plan



First floor plan



Site plan

Next steps and feedback

The proposals will continue to be developed, supported by further technical work including:

- Ecology and biodiversity
- Transport and parking
- Drainage and flood risk
- Acoustics

Subject to progress, a planning application is anticipated in Summer 2026.

Your Feedback

We welcome your feedback on the proposals.

Exhibition materials is also available on the council's website.

www.stalbans.gov.uk/william-bird-pavilion-redevelopment-new-greens-hub

Alternatively, you can access the information by scanning the QR code below:



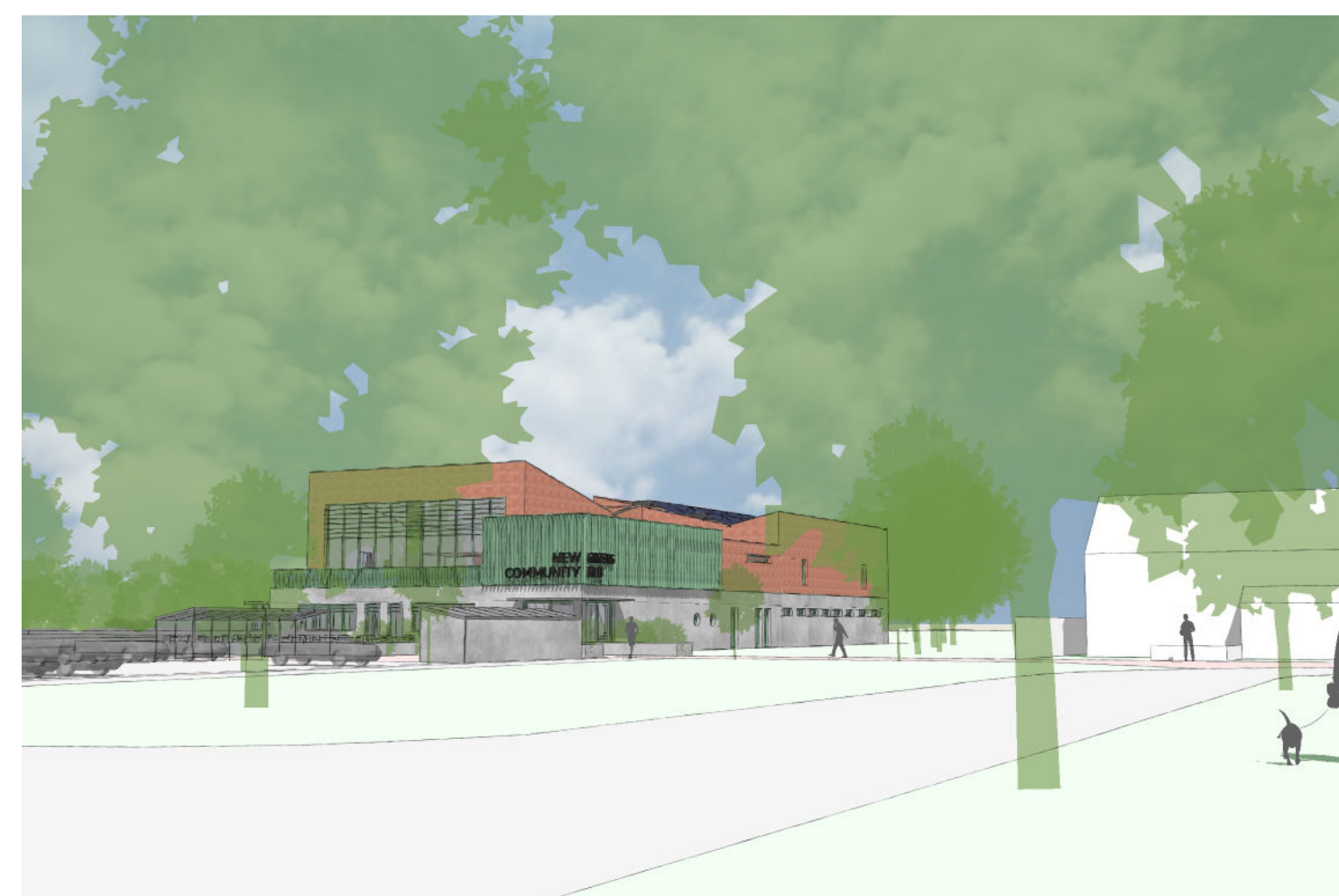
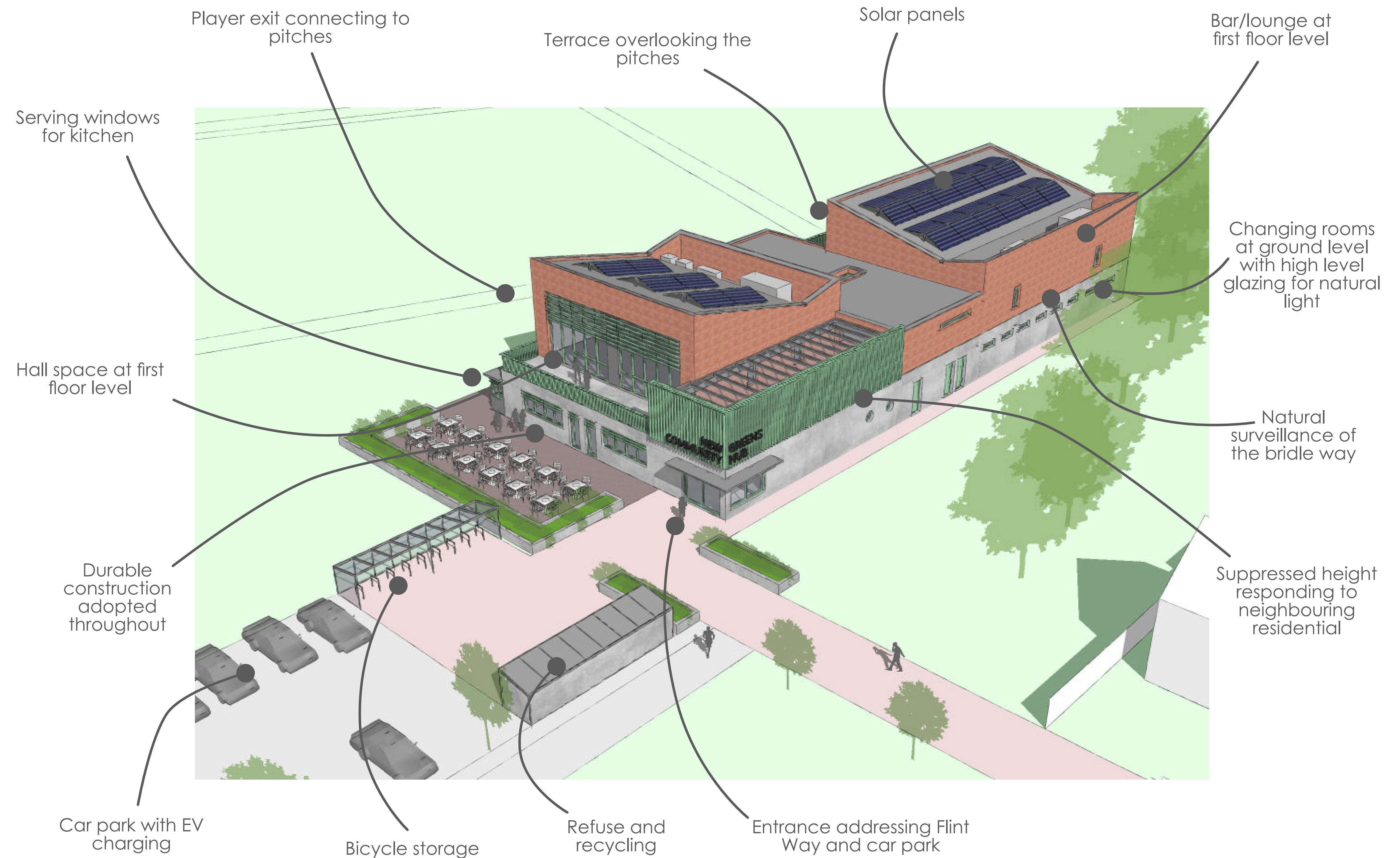
You are invited to:

- Speak to a member of the team today
- Complete a feedback form
- Email the project team with your thoughts:

capitalprojects@stalbands.gov.uk

How feedback will be used

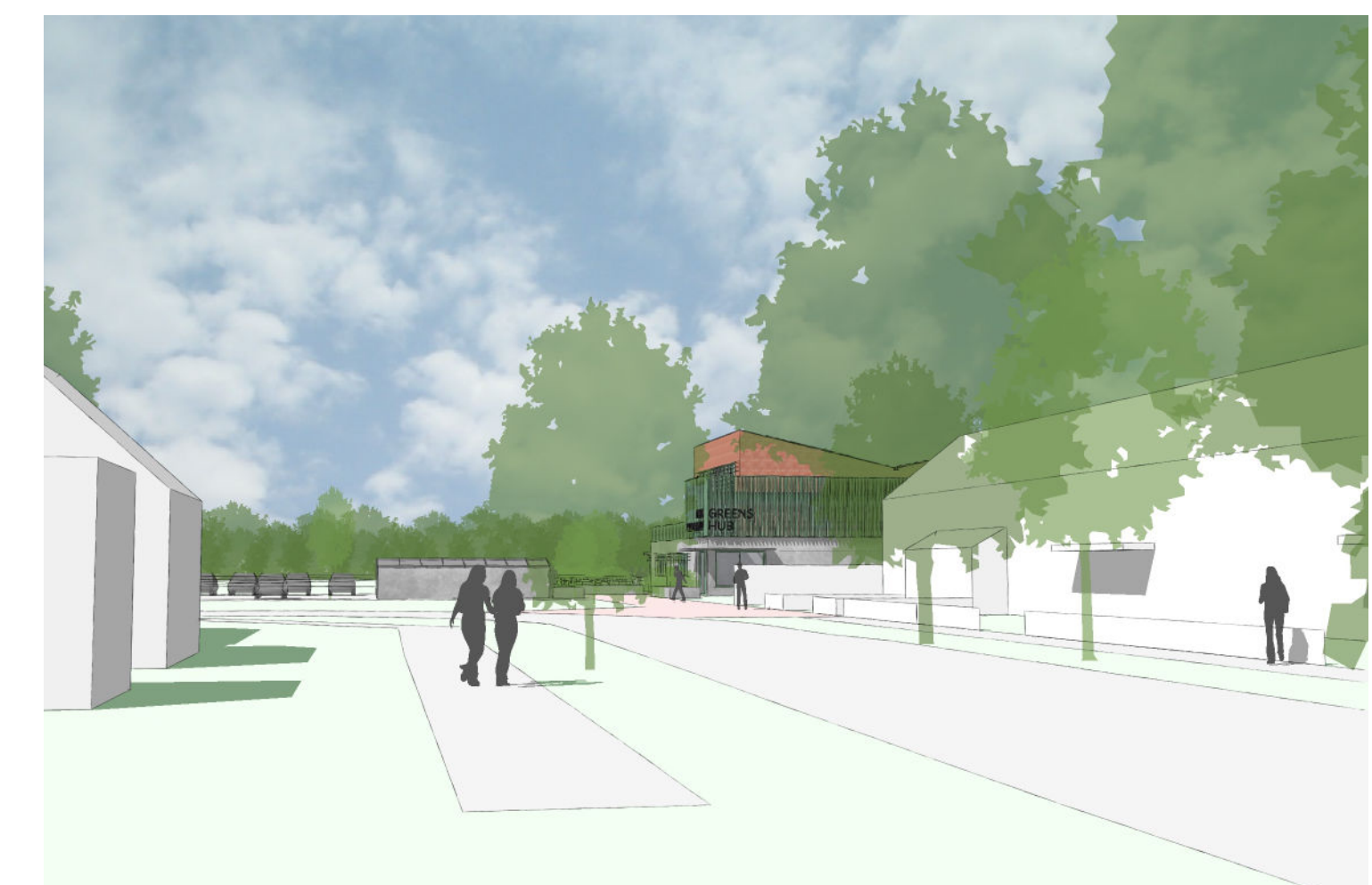
Feedback received will be reviewed by the project team and considered as the proposals continue to evolve.



View from Toulmin Drive



View from Sparrowswick Ride



View from Flint Way