

New Greens Community Hub and Changing Rooms

Purpose of consultation and what is being consulted on

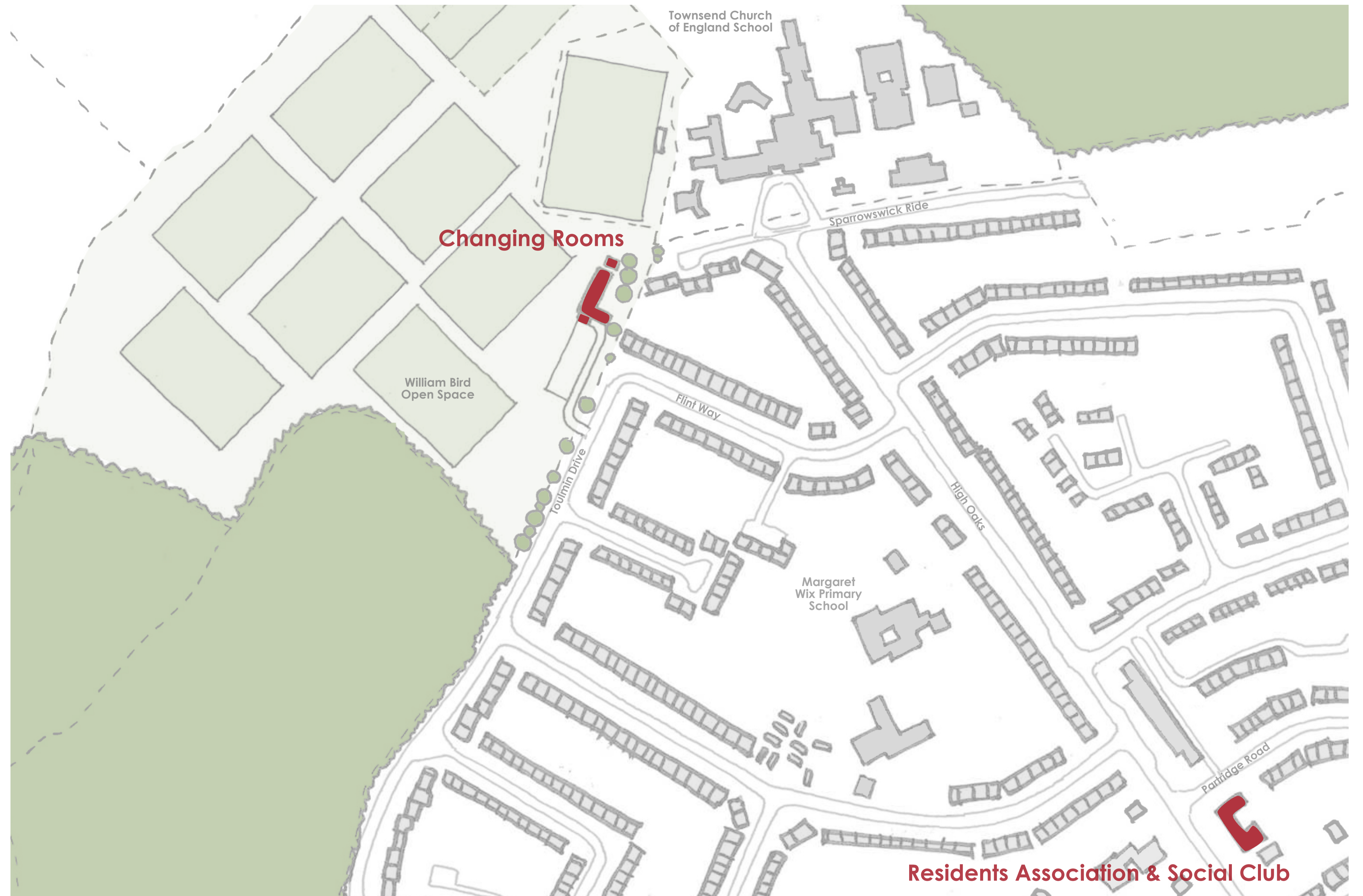
St Albans City & District Council are seeking views from stakeholders to inform the detailed design of proposals for a new community hub and sports changing rooms in New Greens at the junction of Flint Way and Toulmin Drive.

The site at William Bird Open Space has been identified in the emerging local plan (Site allocation OS2 - Toulmin Drive / Highelms) for new facilities and the existing social club site a location for new residential uses

(Site allocation UC28 - New Greens Residents Association).

The building would bring together the facilities offered by the residential association social club on High Oaks and the current changing rooms at the William Bird Open Space.

This consultation focuses on the new community hub and sports changing rooms at the William Bird Open Space.



Map of New Greens



View from Toulmin Drive



View from Sparrowswick Ride



View from Flint Way

What has happened to date

A survey of the William Bird changing rooms, which closed in 2022, was undertaken identifying RAAC concrete which requires demolition of the building, with costs borne by the local authority.

A survey at the social club has revealed the need for a high-level expenditure to address fabric repairs and update heating systems, with costs borne by the leaseholders.

An aspiration to bring both facilities on to a single site has been discussed at high level with the user groups, with a commitment to inform them on how the proposed project would progress and their opportunities for involvement.

The following consultants have been engaged by the local authority to support the development of concept proposals:

- Internal project manager
- Architect
- Planning consultant
- Quantity Surveyor
- Transportation consultant
- Civil and structural engineer
- Building Services and sustainability consultant
- Ecologist



Photographs of existing changing rooms



Photographs of existing social club

What has happened to date

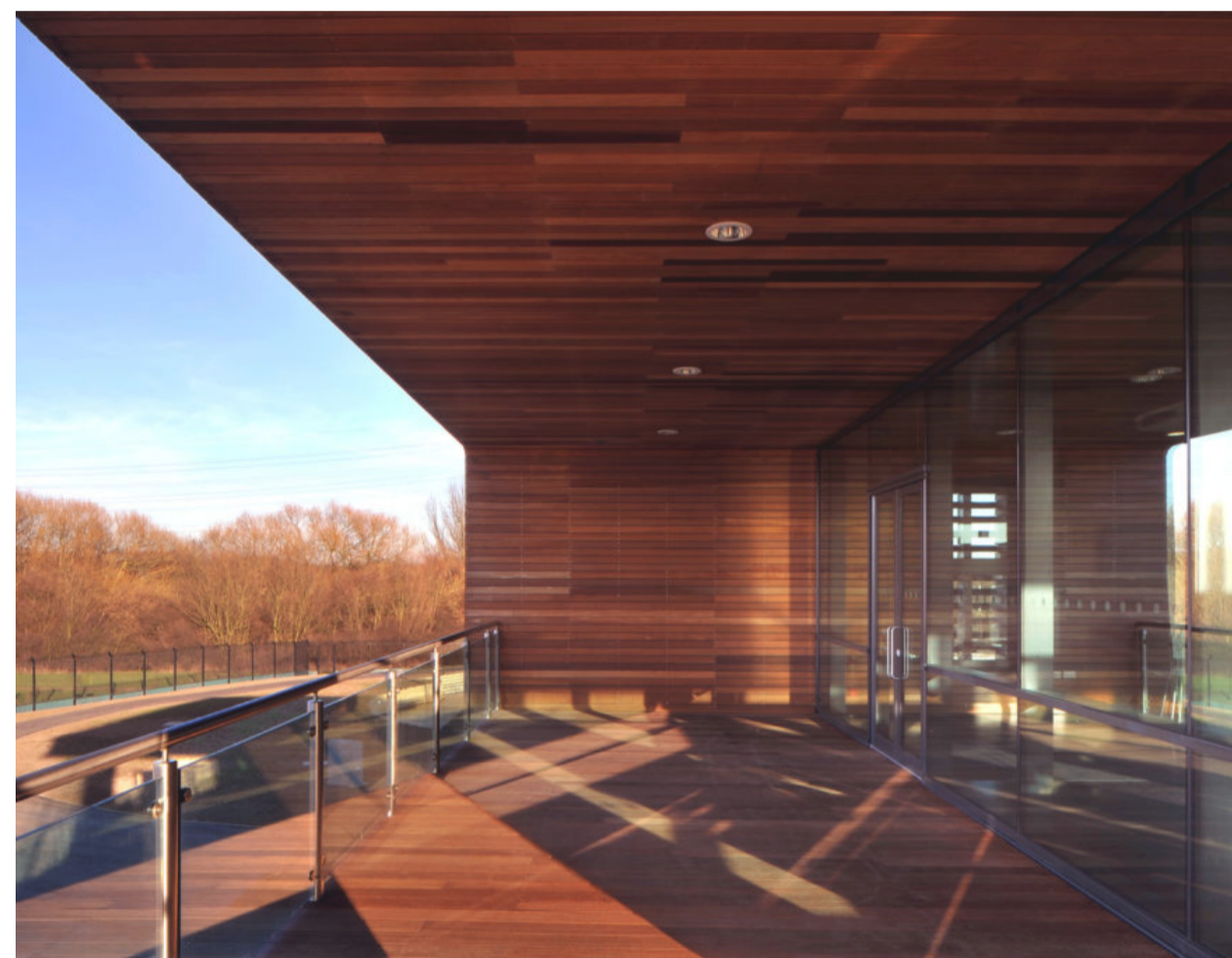
To support the design development process the site and surrounding context has been analysed, and the constraints and opportunities mapped out. Successful precedent buildings have also been studied to inform the design.

Outline proposals have been prepared based on initial briefing with the user groups and a high level cost plan developed by the Quantity Surveyor which has been reviewed by officers at the local authority.

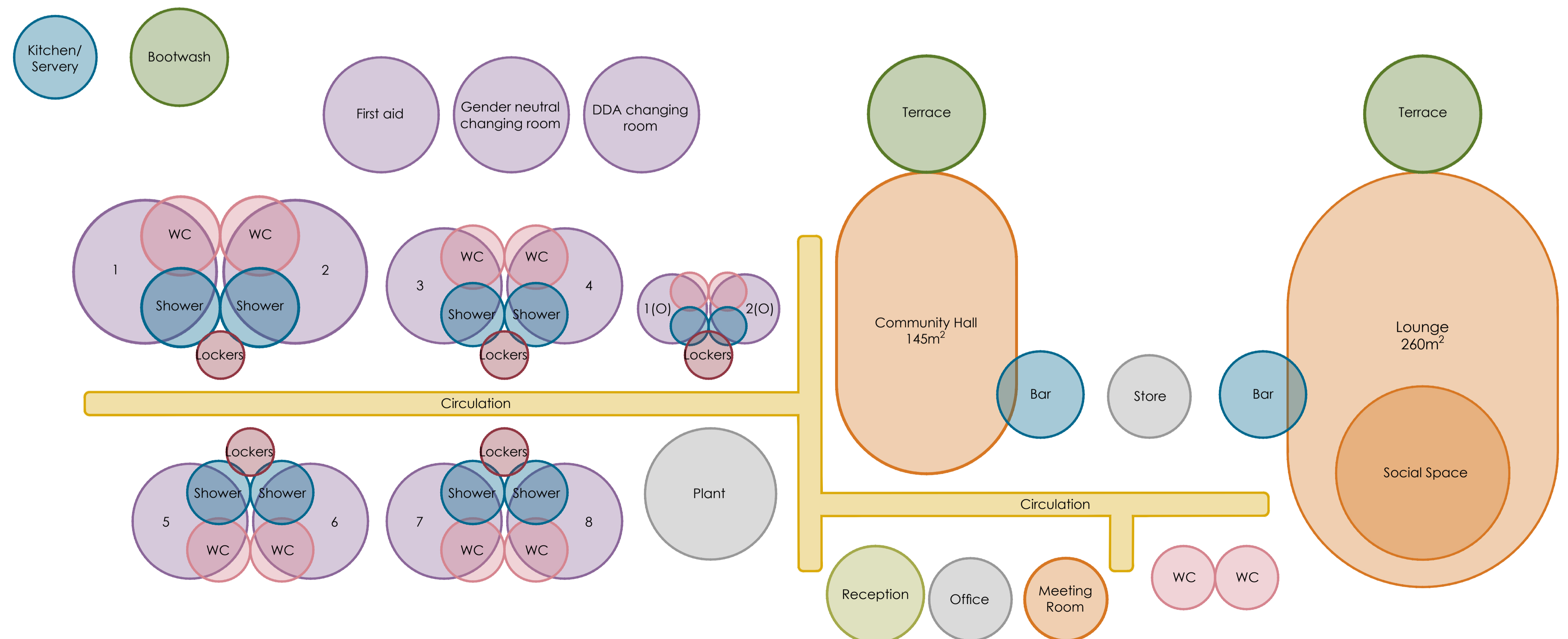
Consultation has been undertaken with Planning Officers, Hertfordshire Constabulary and relevant sports bodies.

To limit the amount of land within the grey belt that is occupied by the building, it is proposed to reduce the number of changing rooms on the ground floor but offer enhanced facilities and instigate staggered start times for matches.

An in principle agreement to the proposals has been received with a need to provide further information on the use of the grey-belt land, sporting operation of the facilities and the detailed design of the building and surrounding landscape as the scheme evolves.



Successful sports, community and changing room precedent buildings



Rationalised changing rooms / rationalised community facilities

Proposals

The outline scheme brings together the uses at the existing changing rooms and the facilities provided at the current residents' association social club into a single building.

Community uses are placed at first floor and occupy a similar footprint to the changing rooms.

The building is positioned in approximately the same location as the current changing rooms. It is intended to be visible from the surrounding streets to aid navigation and enhance security, but not to block views out into the greenbelt.

The siting is set away from adjacent houses to maintain privacy and avoid overshadowing gardens, and positioned to avoid existing mature trees around the perimeter of the site.

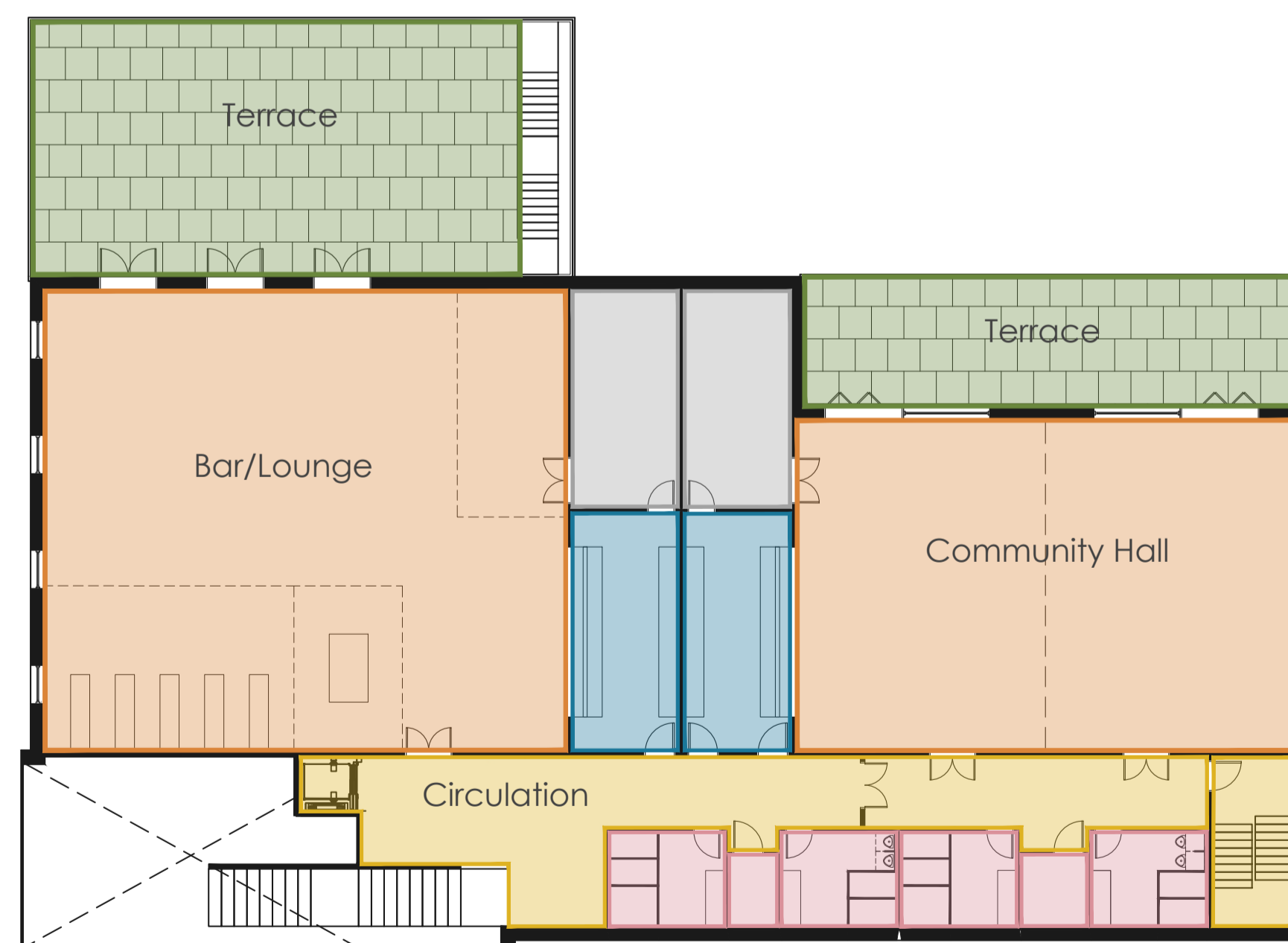
Locating the building to the north-east of the site allows the existing car park and entrance to be retained.

Car parking demand has been assessed by a transportation consultant to determine a suitable quantum of permanent parking to be delivered on site with an extended overflow car park to be laid out to the south-west of the site to address demand at peak times.

Electric vehicle charging points will also be proposed as part of the development.



Ground floor plan



First floor plan



Site plan

Proposals

To enable stakeholders to understand the proposals, a three-dimensional model has been prepared.

Working around the image the following design responses have been identified that will hopefully stimulate a discussion from the stakeholders and allow the design team to evolve the proposals in anticipation of submitting a planning application in spring 2026 following public consultation.

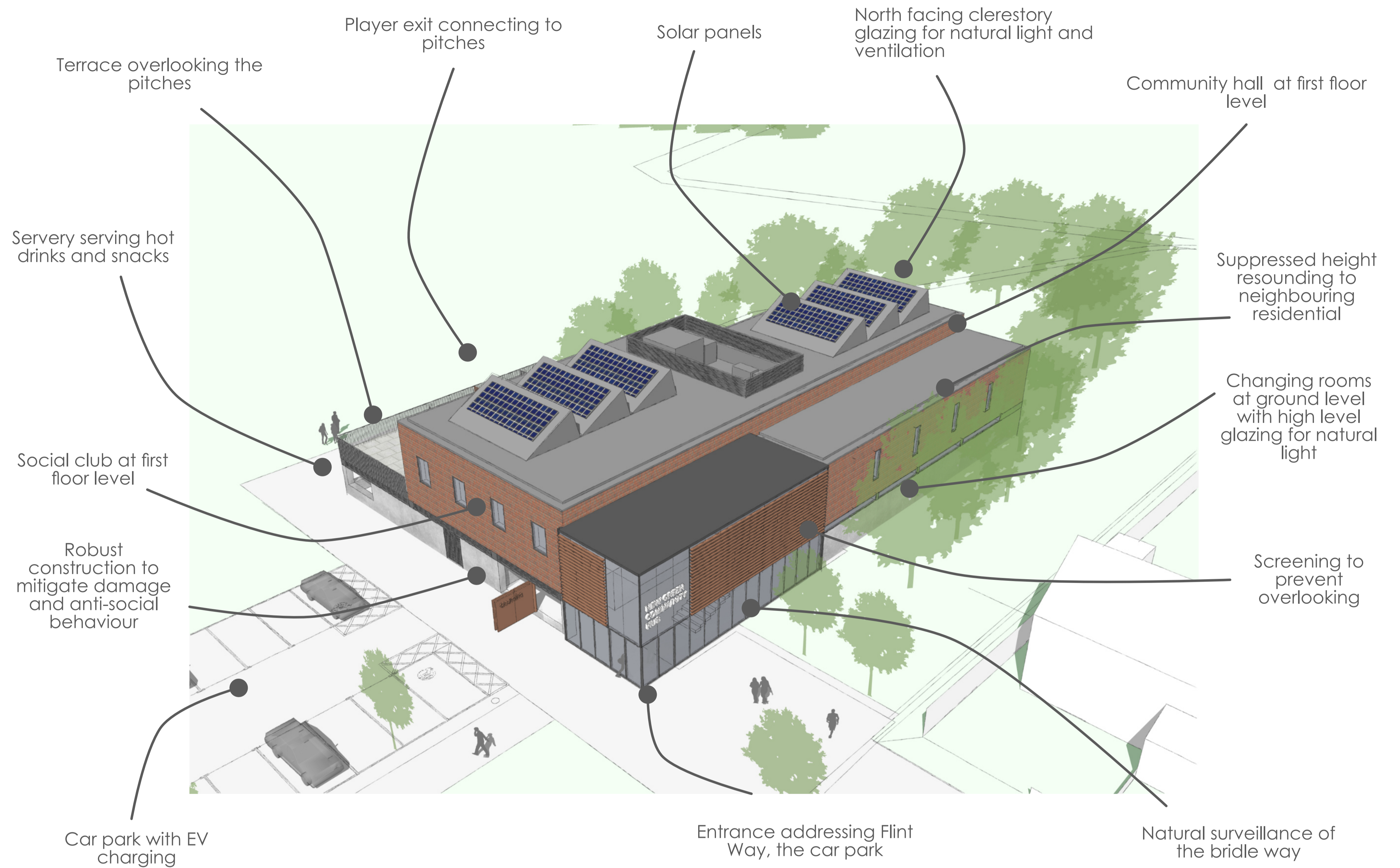
The planning application process itself will enable final consultation with all stakeholders and allow planning officers to make informed decisions on the proposals.

The proposals have been presented to the local authority and have the support of elected members. In response to the pre-application report issued by the planning authority further studies are being commissioned to assess the following:

- Archaeology
- Biodiversity
- Parking and sustainable transport
- Acoustics
- Drainage and flood risk

Feedback

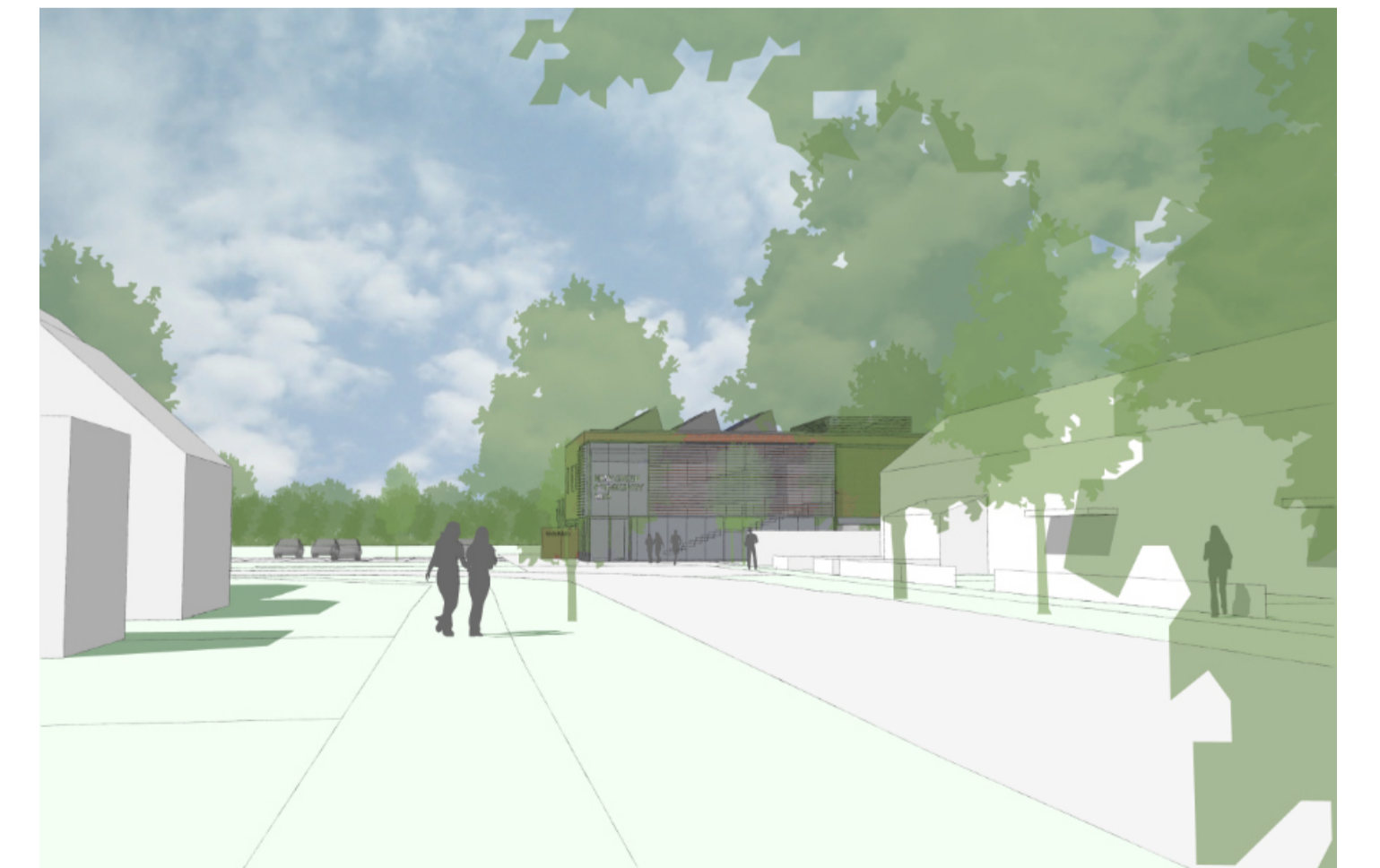
Feedback can be sent to the Project Team at the following email address
capitalprojects@stalbans.gov.uk



View from Toulmin Drive



View from Sparrowswick Ride



View from Flint Way