

Wythenshawe Culture Hub

Design and Access Statement

Former Co-operative Department Store and above vacant office units, Wythenshawe Civic Centre, The Birtles, M22 5RF (ref PP: 13670193); Change of Use application from Use Class E(g)(iii) to F1.

Executive Summary

This Design and Access Statement has been developed by Architectural Emporium Ltd on behalf of Kier Construction and Manchester City Council in support of an application to create a multifunctional cultural hub in a former department store in Wythenshawe Civic Centre. Throughout the document we will demonstrate that there is a strong need for a facility of this type, that design concepts, layout and appearance are appropriate and that all aspects of access to / from and within the building have been fully considered. This statement should be read in conjunction with the documents listed below:

Planning Application Covering Letter
Completed forms and notifications;
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal produced by TEP;
Economic Impact Statement by LSH;
Transport Note and Servicing Note prepared by Mode;
Noise Impact Assessment prepared by MZA Acoustics;
Waste Management Strategy and Proforma
Crime Impact Assessment prepared by GMP;

Contents

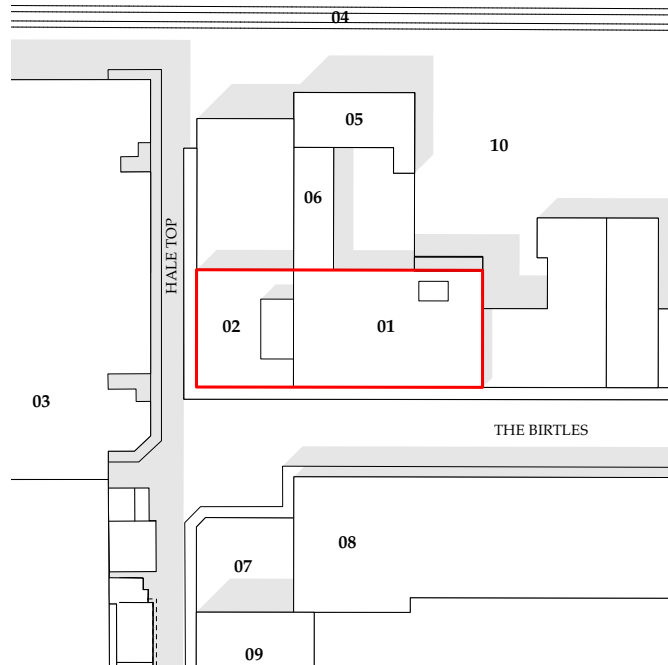
01 Site Context
02 Existing Building
03 Development Need
04 Design - Layout
05 Design - Key Elevations
06 Design Intent - Key Spaces
07 Access

01 Site Context

Location and Existing Context

Wythenshawe Culture Hub is located in the former Co-op department store in Wythenshawe Civic Centre.

Fig.1
Site Location plan



- 01 Existing Co-op Building
- 02 Existing Extension to Co-op Building
- 03 Multi Storey Car Park
- 04 Wythenshawe Town Centre Tram Stop
- 05 Hale Top House
- 06 Existing Apartments (derelict)
- 07 Existing Peacocks Building Extension
- 08 Alderman Downward Building
- 09 Alderman Gately Building
- 10 Car Park / Delivery area

Constraints

Access

Visitors arrive to Wythenshawe Civic on foot from the surrounding residential areas, via the tram from stations to Manchester, by bus from an extensive network and by car. The main access to the building itself is on foot via either Hale Top and the tram stop, The Birtles from the North or from the various car parks above and around ASDA.

Deliveries

All vehicular access is via Ainley Road to the North which eventually leads into the rear yard with limited parking but mainly deliveries access. The rear of the building is accessed via a small external staircase or a delivery vehicle can make use of the dock level, leading directly to the internal goods lift.

Shops

Most of the accommodation sits on the first and second floor directly above a row of occupied shops. We have been informed by the client that these shops must not be disturbed both during construction and in its final use, therefore all works must take place above the separating slab.

Other Neighbours

Whilst the flats to the West and former offices to the North

are currently unoccupied consideration should be made for both fire and acoustic separation to protect future uses.

Noise

An acoustic engineer has been appointed to assess both the noise ingress and egress from the building. Whilst the main roads are a reasonable distance away and residential units, in close proximity are not currently occupied, it is important that the performance and rehearsal spaces in particular are located and treated to ensure noise in either direction does not effect the activities that are planned. The other external noise consideration is Manchester Airport. Whilst the flight path is not directly over the Civic Centre it is close by when landing from the North East and it does at times contribute to the noise pollution in the area.

Masterplan Context

Muse have now been appointed as the partner to progress the overall Wythenshawe Town Centre Masterplan. The Design Team have been in regular stakeholder meetings with Muse and the client to ensure that everything we decide on this scheme aligns with the aspirations of the overall plan for the area.

01 Site Context

Historic Context



01 1963 - Original (Hale Top) street frontages, Co-op building construction, with apartments adjacent

02 1963 - As above looking onto original public square (Peacocks shop location)

03 1960's - Original covered walkway connection across The Birtles

04 1965 - View from The Birtles towards The Co-op (modern-day car park location)

05 1963 - Original Co-op shopfront/glazing + flower beds in front to break hard landscaping.

06 1970's - View up The Birtles with the Co-op to the left hand side. Significant vegetation along the street.

01 Site Context

Planning Context

Extract taken from LSH 'covering Letter'

Wythenshawe Civic Centre is the recipient of £20m of Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) funding, providing an opportunity to transform the 1960's shopping centre. This funding is being complemented by other significant capital investment by MCC and its joint venture partner, Muse Places, who also being invested into the town centre which is likely to leverage over £500m of investment over the next 10 years.

The regeneration plans include a new public square on the Birtles/ Hale Top, refreshed contemporary shops and net zero carbon commercial units, new community, and cultural spaces. This will be framed around 2,000 new homes that will be built across the town centre, offering a mix of tenures and typologies that will offer residents high quality new housing and allow the town centre to grow and reinvent itself. The new homes will be delivered over a ten year period.

The building, along with the

wider Civic shopping centre were acquired by Manchester City Council in 2022.

Whilst the change of use will apply to the first and second floor of the building, along with some elevation changes, the ground floor comprises a retail unit and this use is being retained; the ground floor is therefore not included within this change of use application.

Proposed change of use

This application is to amend the current use class of the vacant office space (E(g)(iii)) to a 'culture hub' (F1) which will also include the ground floor retail unit (current retail use to be retained).

The culture hub will include the following elements:

- Atrium and Foyer (first floor)
- 2x 'Community Rooms' i.e. for flexible use;
- Open Plan Creative Studios
- Communal Workshop
- Meeting rooms;
- Management Office;
- Faith room;
- Kitchen/ dining room;
- Cycle store;
- WCs.
- Flexible Performance Space with tiered seating (Second floor);
- Large rehearsal room / teaching space;
- Back of house facilities for the performance space (second floor)

02 Existing Building

Existing Fabric

The building is made up of two distinct parts. The original 3 storey Co-op department store and the later 2 storey extension which leads on to Hale Top. The original building is a concrete encased steel frame with concrete plank floor. The extension is also thought to be steel encased concrete but with a beam and block floor. The building has largely been stripped out of all finishes.

Fig.1
View from
adjacent car park



Fig.2
View from public
square



Fig.3
Corner of
proposed F&B on
to public square



Fig.4
Rear access



Fig.5
Ground floor
(former Select
store)



Fig.6
First floor



Fig.7
Second Floor



Fig.8
Second Floor
roof plant



03 Development Need

Previous Studies

Cultural consultancy Counterculture and Architectural Emporium were employed to undertake a RIBA Stage 2 design alongside a short and long term business plan to ensure the financial sustainability of the proposed facility. The study also identified a clear lack of provision for the uses identified and a desire for cultural uses to act as a catalyst for the ongoing ambitions in the town centre. The report was issued on 11th July 2024.

Stakeholder Engagement

As part of that study comprehensive stakeholder engagement was undertaken with both the public and many artistic institutions throughout Greater Manchester. Through one to one interviews, group workshops/ round tables and online surveys, the engagement sessions can be summarised as follow:

1. Embrace local pride and be embedded into the hearts of local communities.
2. Avoid gentrification or 'parachuting in' of culture; rather, it should embrace, enhance and celebrate existing local culture.
3. Give local communities a sense of ownership and involvement in its operation, with appropriate support.
4. Enable and encourage local people to create culture, to make work.
5. Support young people's ambitions and creativity, with opportunities for them to grow creatively.
6. Also serve the needs of older residents, who want to be creative and will spend money on accessible, affordable activities.
7. Help to address unmet demand for Creative and Cultural space (especially from artists, makers and performers).
8. Be a multi-functional, multi-use, versatile space with the right equipment and with staff who know how to use it.
9. Be a hub of connectivity, knowledge and information.
10. Encourage local entrepreneurship, helping grow the daytime and night-time economies of Wythenshawe.
11. Be informed by, and emulate, other exemplars of multi-use, flexible, community-based Creative and Cultural spaces in Greater Manchester and further afield.

04 Design Layout

Spatial Design Concepts and Facilities Overview

Fig.1
Exploded
axonometric
showing
the spatial
relationships and
overall layout of
the proposed
design.

Entrance: The main entrance is located on Hale Top. It is double height space to ensure good connections with the upper floors and to have an increased street presence.

Food and Beverage: This elements is located on the corner of the new public square so that it contributes to the vision for that area.

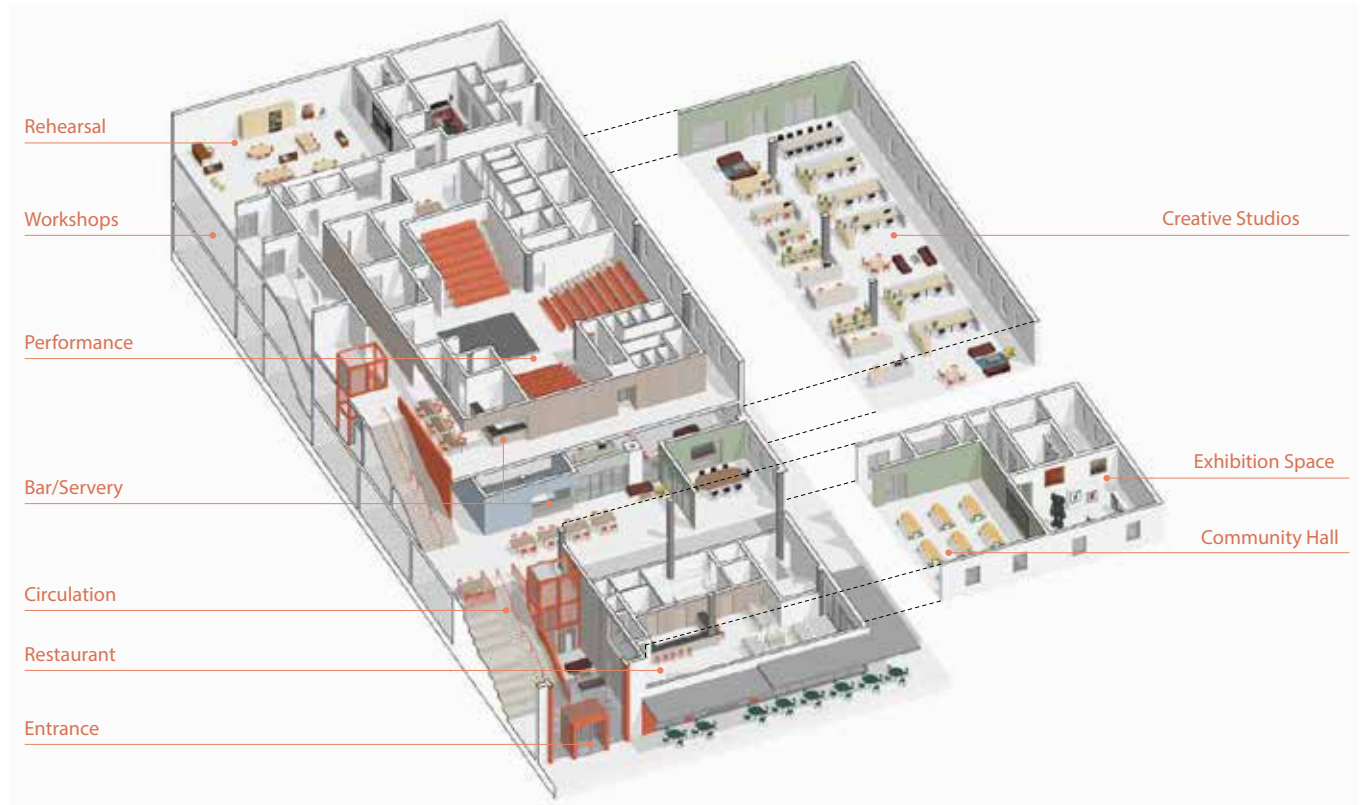
'Community Rooms': Situated on the first floor close to the main entrance. Rooms for hire and or exhibition, easily accessible by the public.

Creative Studios: Also on the first floor. A large open plan area divided by half height walls to create individual studio / workspaces. All facilities then sit in a 'service core' behind.

Workshops: Flexible workshops for hand tools etc. located to the rear of the first floor.

Performance Space: 200+ seated 3 sided auditorium situated on the top floor

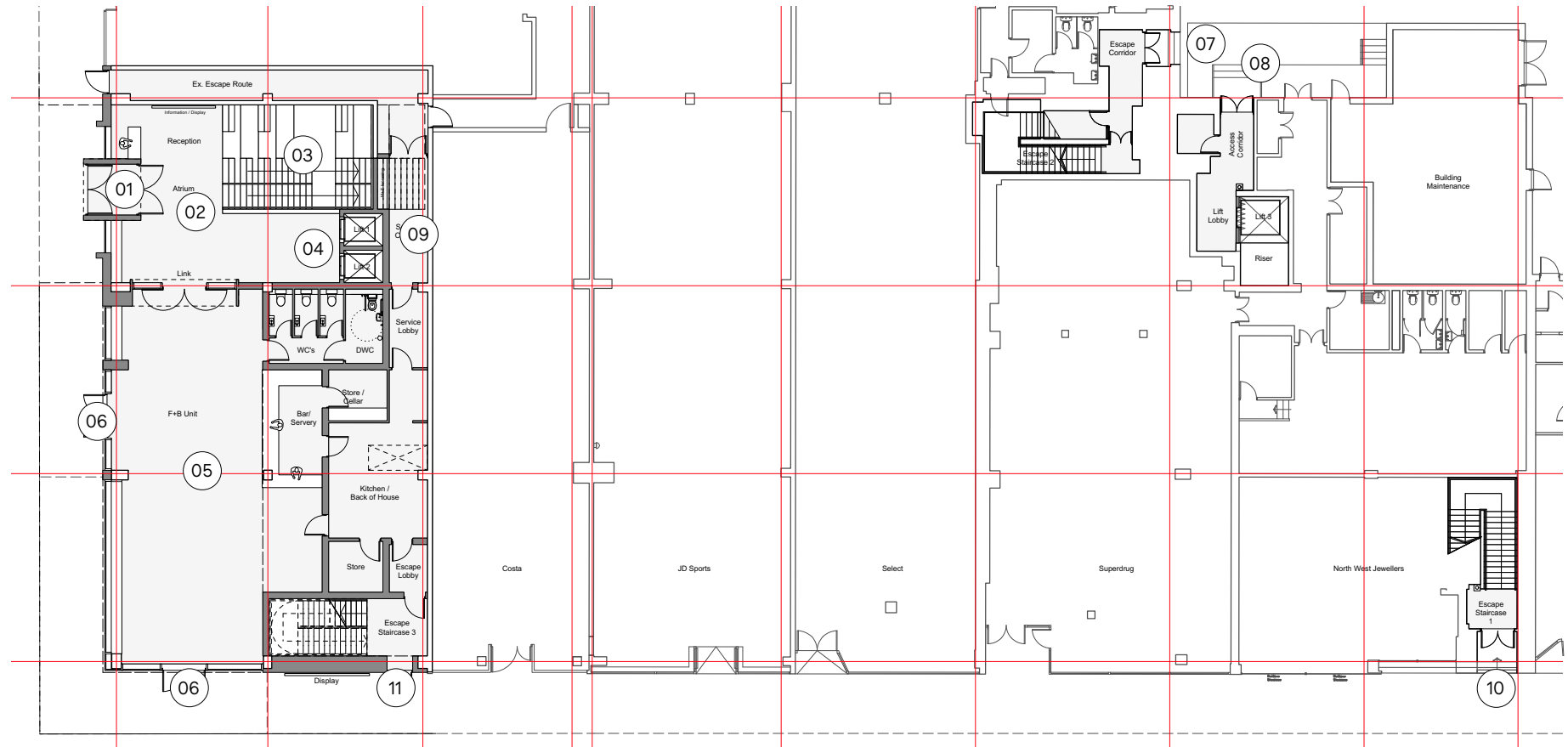
Rehearsal Space: Large flexible rehearsal room situated to the rear of the building on the top floor.



04 Design Layout

Ground Floor

Fig.1
Ground Floor
Plan



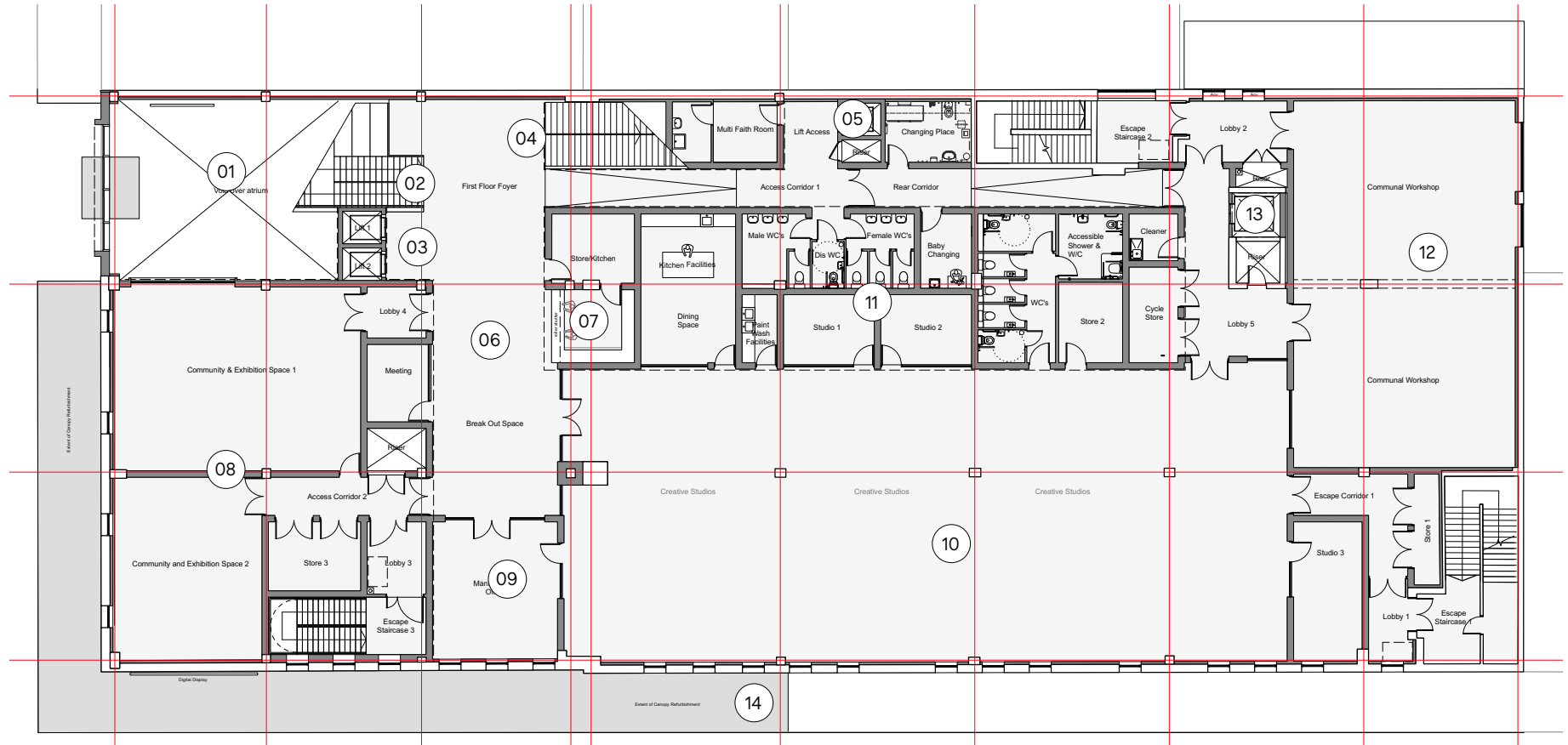
- 01 Lobby with double automatic entrance
- 02 Double height entrance and reception area
- 03 Main access stair to first floor with adjacent hellerup stair
- 04 2No. lifts to first floor
- 05 Main F&B space with approximately 90 covers

- 06 'Spill out' access to Hale Top and new public square
- 07 Rear access to staircase
- 08 Rear access to goods/passenger lift via external stair and 'dock level'
- 09 Service corridor for F&B facility
- 10 Final escape from staircase 1
- 11 Final escape from staircase 3

04 Design Layout

First Floor

Fig.1
First Floor Plan



- 01 Double height entrance atrium
- 02 Main access stair to ground floor with adjacent hellerup stair
- 03 2No. lifts to ground floor
- 04 Staircase to Performance Space
- 05 Platform lift to Performance Space

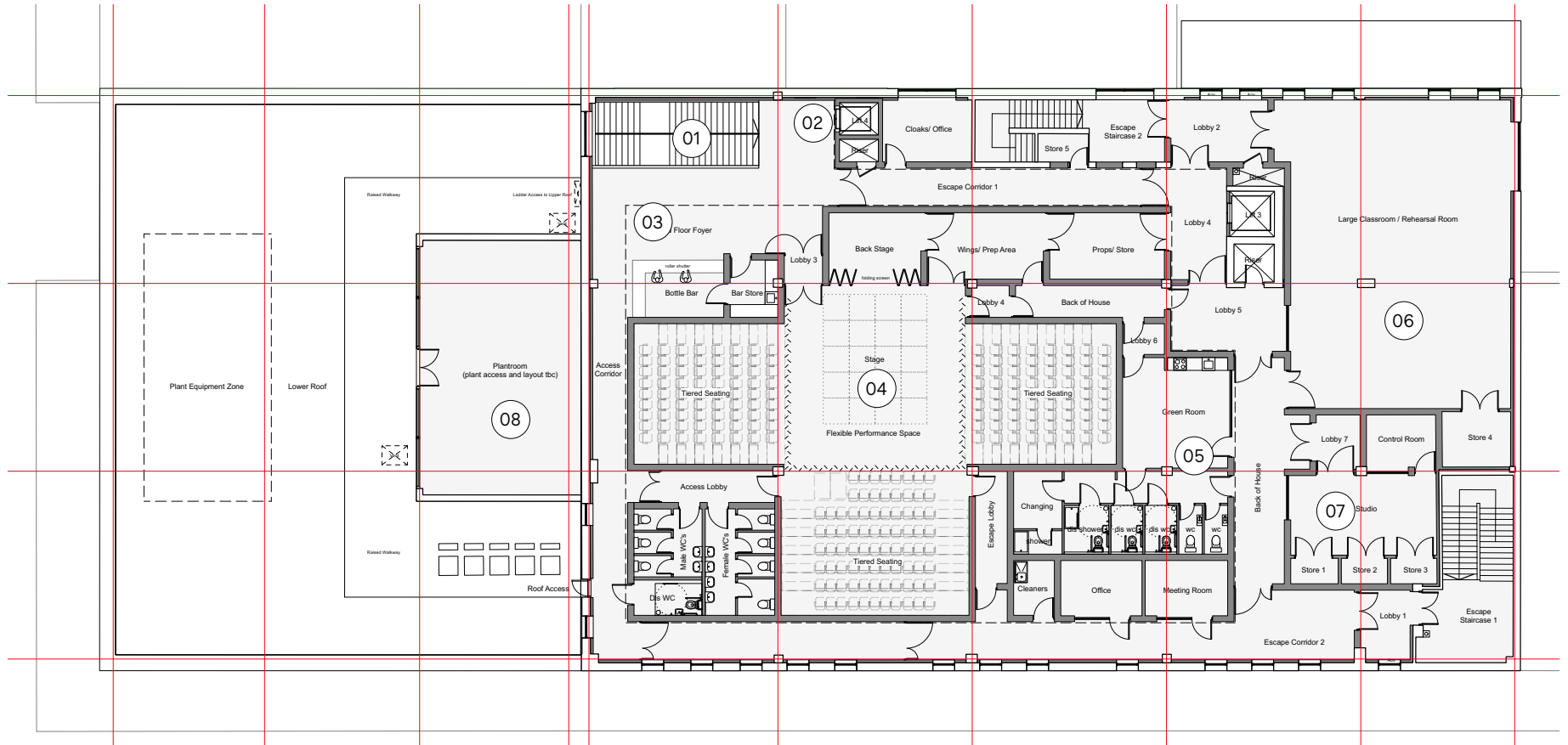
- 06 First floor corridor and seating area
- 07 First floor bar / servery
- 08 Community rooms 'for hire'
- 09 Proposed operator office
- 10 Open plan creative studios. Potential for 30+ studio spaces

- 11 Service core with kitchen, toilets, meeting rooms, storage and paint wash facilities
- 12 Communal Workshop
- 13 Goods / Passenger Lift to GF and SF
- 14 Extent of Canopy Refurbishment. Canopy continues after this point but at a lower level

04 Design Layout

Second Floor

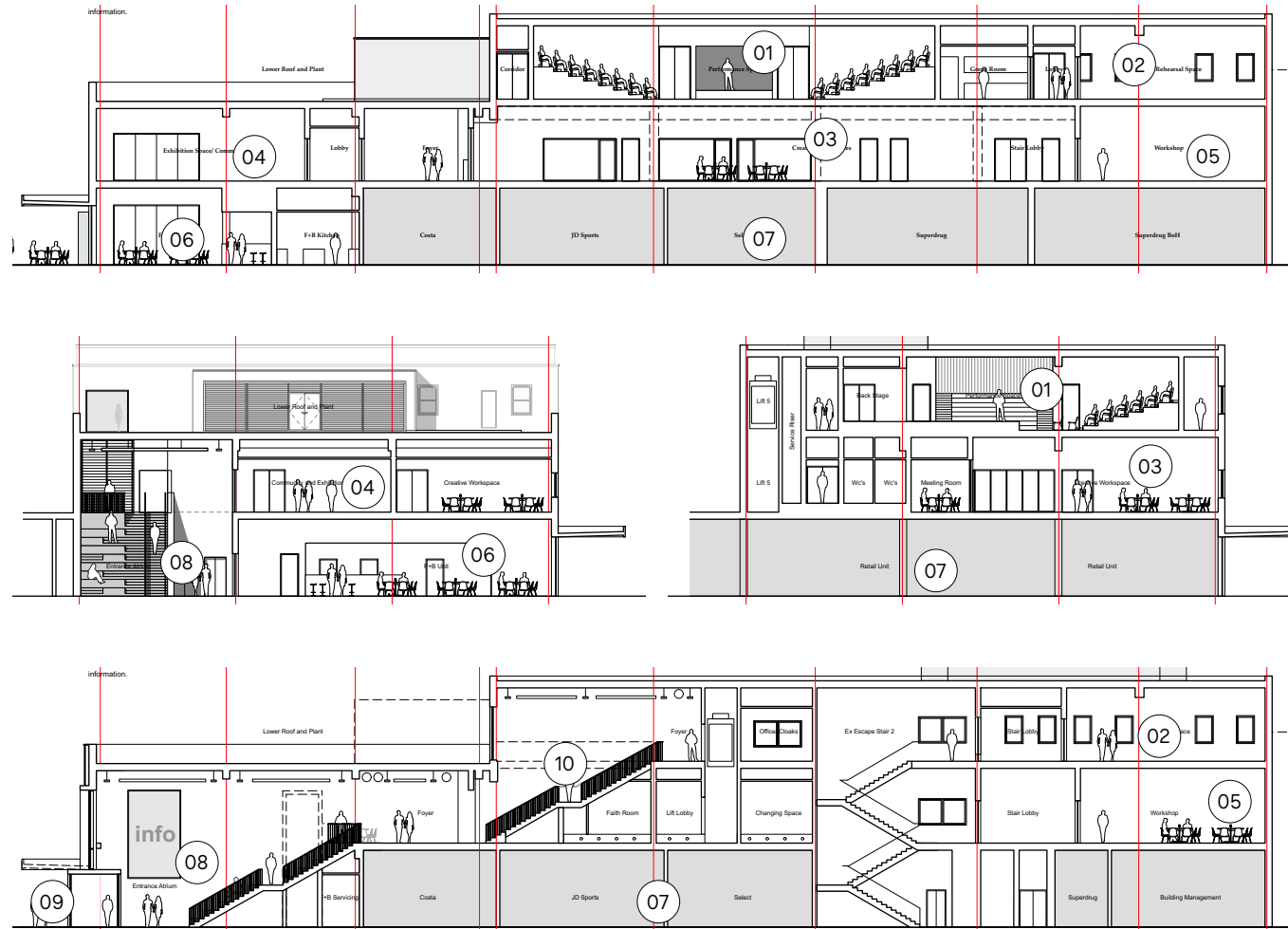
Fig.1
Second Floor
Plan



- 01 Staircase to first floor
- 02 Platform lift to first floor
- 03 Second floor bar / servery and seating area
- 04 c.230 seat performance space with tiered seating
- 05 Back of house facilities including Green Room, toilets and shower
- 06 Flexible rehearsal room / classroom
- 07 Studio
- 08 Roof top plant room

04 Design Layout

General Sections



- 01 Performance Space
- 02 Rehearsal / Classroom
- 03 Studio Spaces
- 04 Community Spaces
- 05 Workshop
- 06 Cafe / Restaurant
- 07 Shops (not in site demise)
- 08 Main entrance from Hale Top
- 09 Double height entrance atrium and circulation to first floor
- 10 Staircase to second floor performance space

05 Design

Key Elevations



- 01 Two storey Curtain Wall glazed entrance with aluminium framed canopy/ lobby around entrance door.
- 02 Existing canopy removed to entrance location to highlight entry
- 03 Two storey aluminium rain screen cladding to frame glazed entrance
- 04 Single storey curtain wall glazing to F+B
- 05 F+B Glazed Entrance Doors

- 06 Existing tiled facade. Existing services fixed to external face to be removed/ tidied up.
- 07 Existing windows to be replaced.
- 08 New roof finish and aluminium fascia to canopy with painted soffit.
- 09 Signage fixed to aluminium canopy.
- 10 Existing brickwork to main building. Banding to top of brickwork overlaid

- with aluminium capping.
- 11 Louvred facade to plant space.
- 12 Aluminium rainscreen cladding to ground floor area with new glazed curtain walling
- 13 Extent of canopy to be refurbished
- 14 Proposed perimeter hand rail for health and safety / maintenance

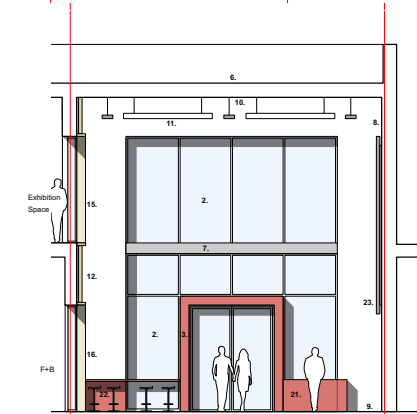
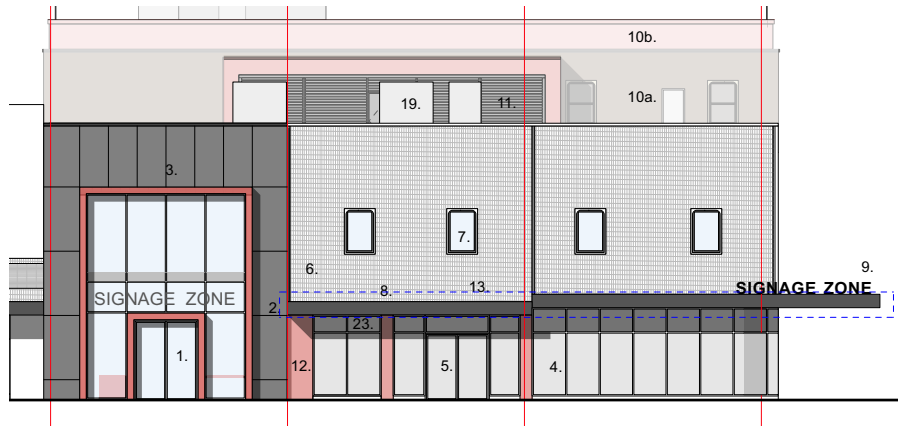
- 15 Painted finish to escape door surround.
- 16 Potential Digital advertising/ information screen
- 17 Potential position for projection screen
- 18 Existing surface mounted cables to be tidied
- 19 Rooftop plant equipment.

06 Design Intent Key Spaces

Entrance and Atrium

The new entrance will integrate the new cultural uses into the town centre. The culture hub does not have a large ground floor footprint so the entrance must be designed to be as inviting as possible and draw people in from Hale Top. To achieve this the canopy will be removed and a new

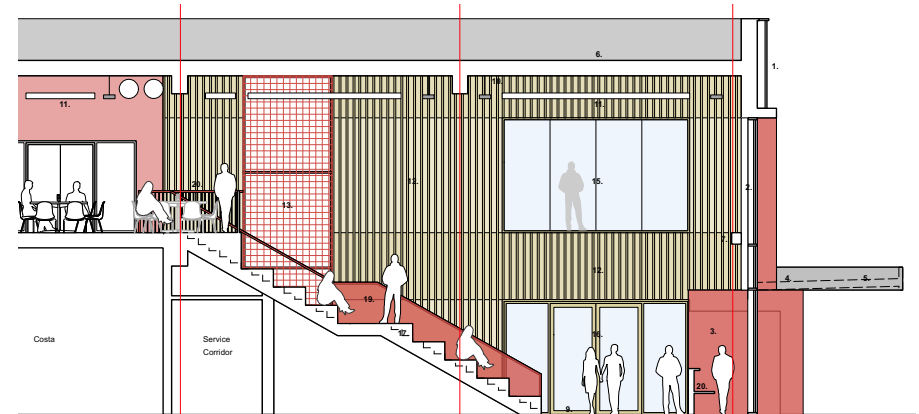
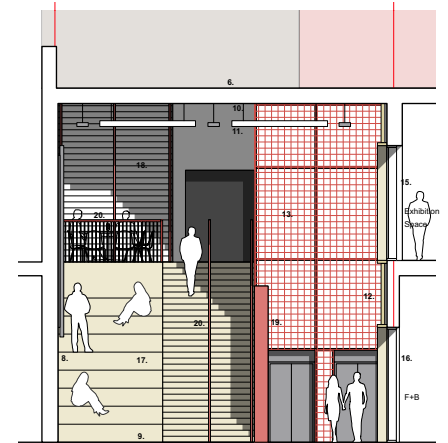
double height opening formed. The glazing is then surrounded with new rain screen cladding and a protruding detail to further highlight the opening. The draft lobby with automated doors then sits within the glazing at low level. The diagram on the left shows the view from inside the atrium looking out towards Hale Top. One of the



main aspirations of the initial brief was to create an inviting entrance lobby where visitors can sit and enjoy the space in an environment that feels connected to the rest of the civic centre. The increased glazing in this area will contribute to this.

Once inside the entrance / atrium you will be greeted with a discrete reception / information desk to the left and an inviting staircase

and hellerup stair directly in front to encourage transition to the first floor. This 'inhabited stair' serves two purposes; firstly it is a wide open area to draw your eye to the first floor and activities beyond ensuring there are the least possible barriers stopping you from feeling like you can venture up. However, as importantly, it also provides a space to meet, socialise and dwell. The detailed design should continue to develop the sense that this area of the building in particular is a transitional space from the street



to the culture hub and equally belongs to both. Visitors should feel as comfortable being in the space itself as they do travelling through. Large glazed internal openings are also designed to make easy connections to the F&B offer and the 'community rooms

above.

06 Design Intent

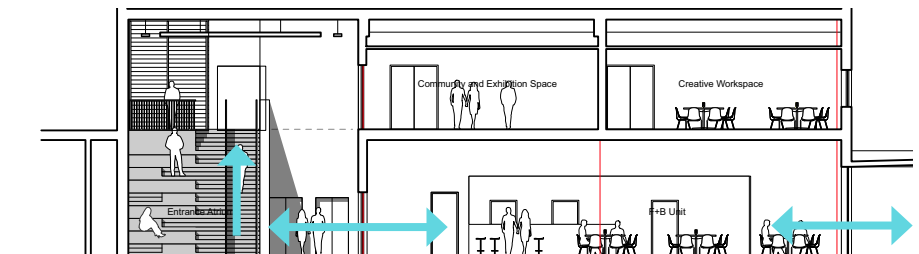
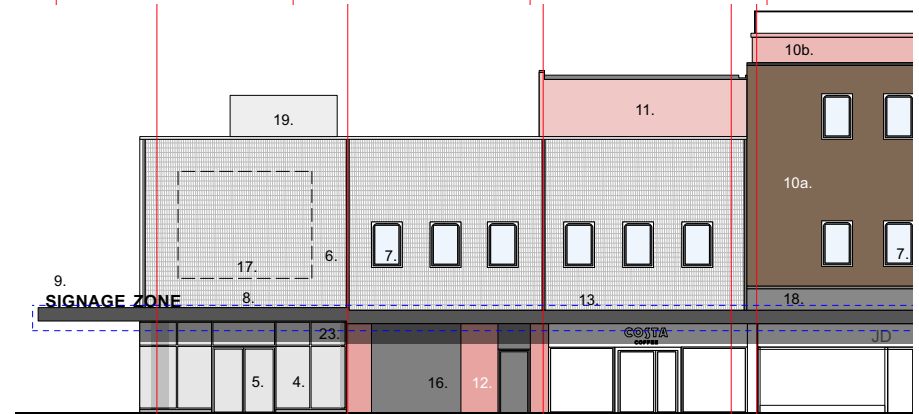
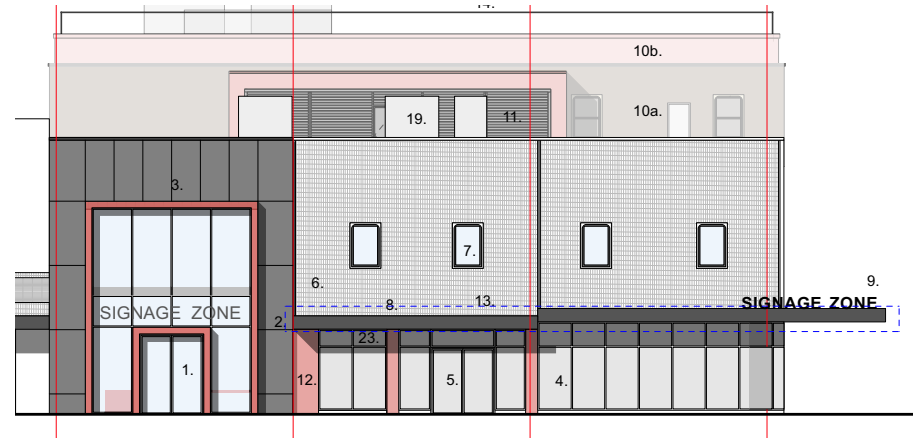
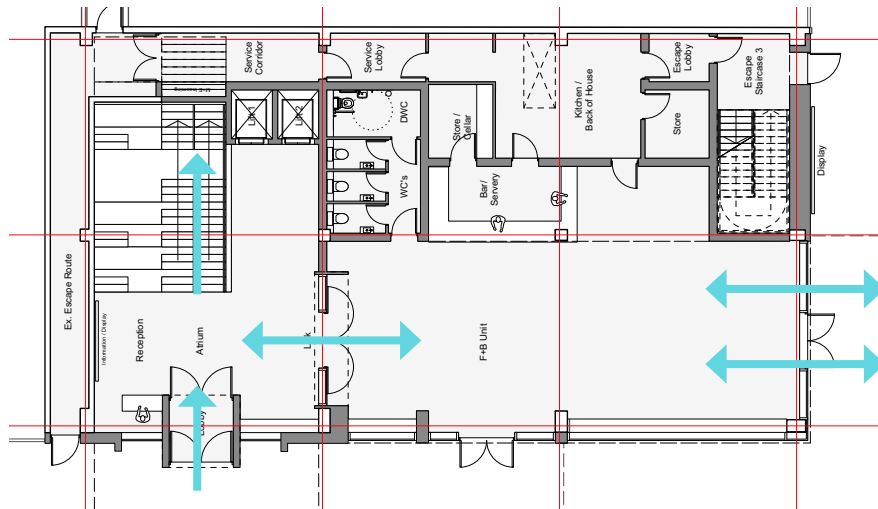
Key Spaces

Ground Floor Cafe/Bar/Restaurant

Early feasibility studies identified that the success of the F&B offer is vital for the Culture Hub in attracting visitors to the building but also in contributing financially to its revenue generation.

The masterplan for the area has also identified that the new public square at the junction of Hale Top and The Birtles should be surrounded by food and beverage establishments to ensure it is animated at all times. Therefore the decision was made early in the process to locate it on the corner looking over the square with spill out seating under the canopy. However it is also vital that

the restaurant / cafe has a strong connection to the hub. Like the entrance atrium itself, it should also act as a mediator between the town and the culture hub. The aspiration for the ground floor F&B unit is to act as the draw for the hub by inviting people into a familiar space from which they can explore the rest of the space in their own time, to break down the barriers that can often exist when these types of facilities are first launched. To achieve this, there is a large opening between the entrance and the restaurant so the whole area feels like one space. There are approximately 90 covers within the F&B, with the potential to expand into the atrium so the two areas feel further connected.



06 Design Intent

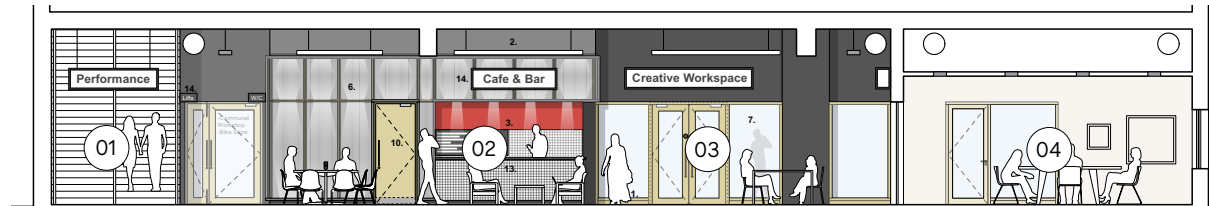
Key Spaces

First Floor Bar and Foyer

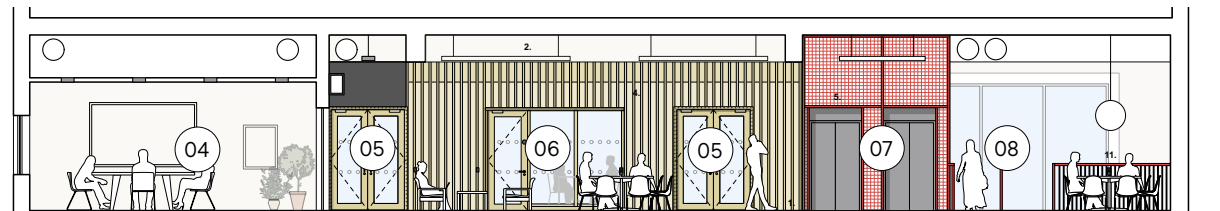
The first floor foyer provides a secondary gathering space for the culture hub where it will be possible to spend time before or after a performance and when visiting the community spaces. It also acts as a further meeting area for the artist residents using the studios. This area will be vital in creating 'a buzz' in the area and ensuring it is maintained as a fully animated space. The activity and subsequent noise generated in this area will be beneficial in ensuring that anyone entering on the ground floor is immediately drawn up to the first floor and engages with the culture hub itself.

The first floor foyer will also be used for pre show / interval drinks and potentially a box office for the performance space. Having the opportunity to serve drinks and potentially food across both floors provides the greatest flexibility in use.

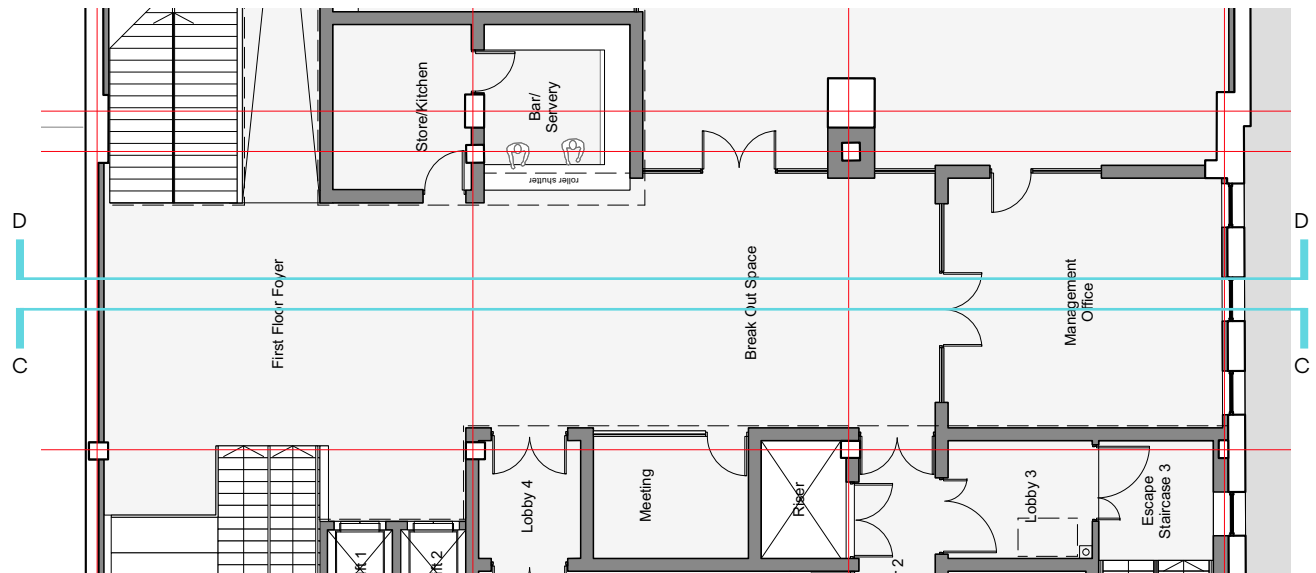
- 01 Staircase to Performance Space
- 02 First Floor cafe / bar
- 03 Entrance to Co Working Studio Spaces
- 04 Potential operator office
- 05 Access to community spaces for hire
- 06 Meeting room
- 07 Lifts to Ground Floor
- 08 Stairs to Ground Floor



Level 01: First Floor Lobby/ Bar Area - Elevation D



Level 01: 1st Floor Lobby Area - Elevation C



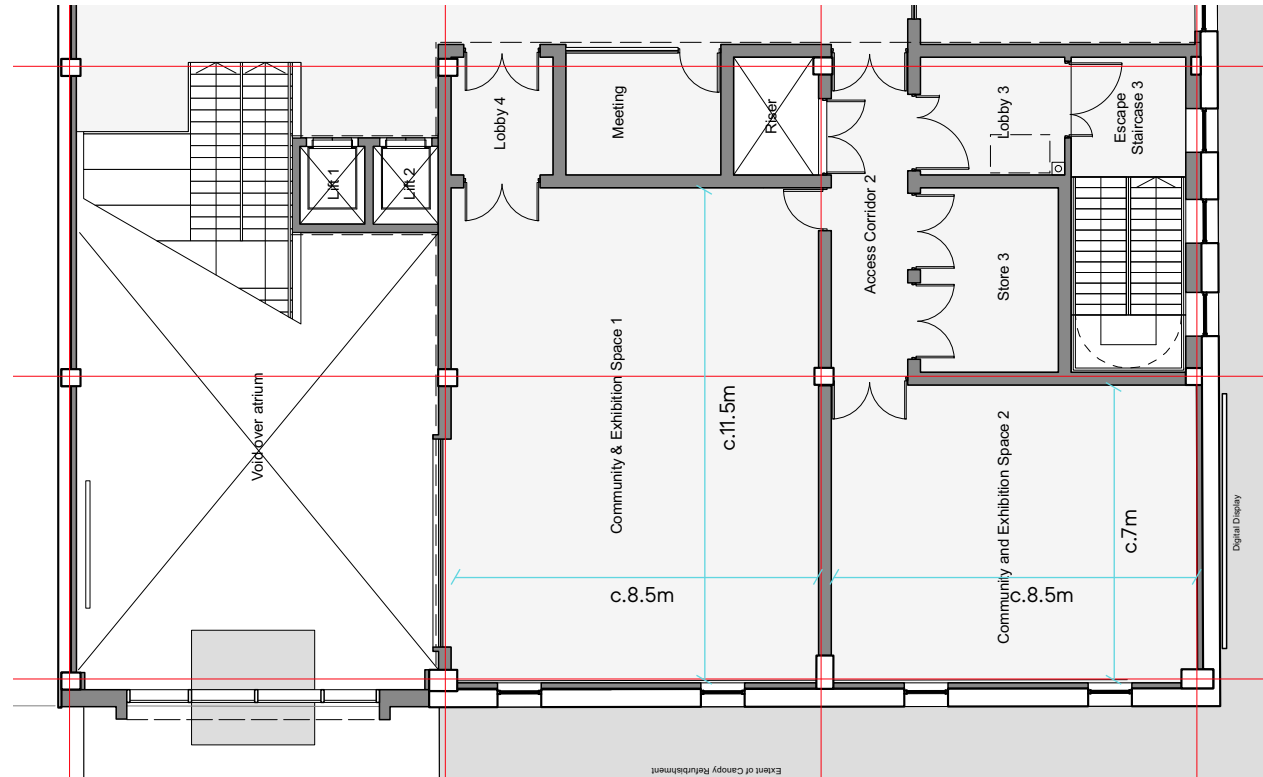
06 Design Intent

Key Spaces

Community Spaces

The 'community spaces' have been designed to be as flexible as possible and are varying sizes to be capable of being used for many different activities. The original briefing exercise and subsequent stakeholder meetings clearly identified the need for areas within the hub that were available for hire and easily accessible to ensure the hub belongs to the Wythenshawe as a whole as well as the artistic community.

Both rooms are lobbied and have some acoustic separation to allow for the control of noise between them and the first floor corridor. Space 1 also has a large window over looking the entrance. It is hoped the activities taking place in this room are then seen from the entrance atrium to once again animate the space and encourage visitors to the first floor.



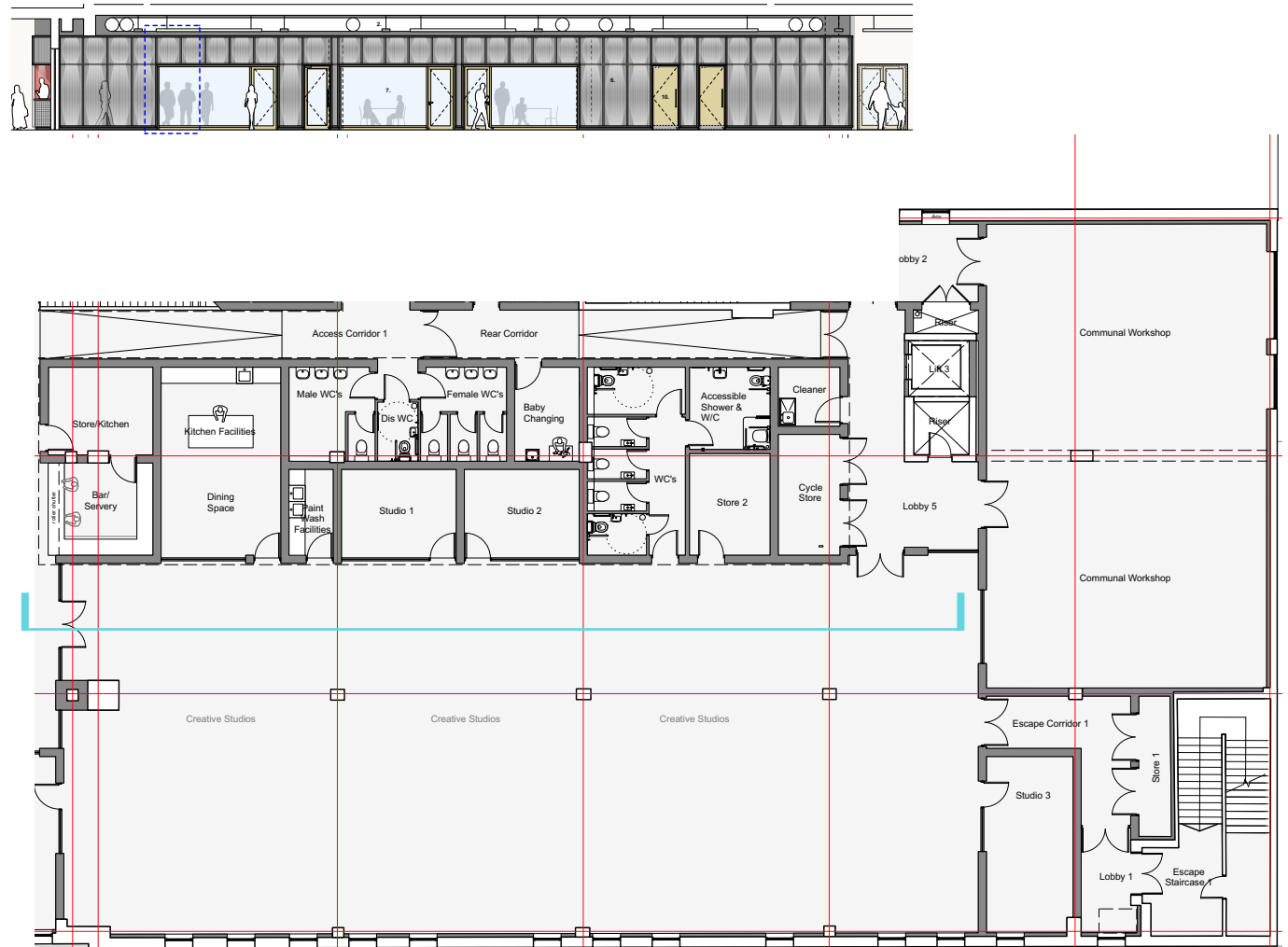
06 Design Intent

Key Spaces

Creative Studios and Workshop

The artist studios have been largely designed as an open plan creative space, which will be for private use of the occupants unless for specific events. All ancillary facilities including a kitchen, meeting room, toilets, showers, paint wash facilities and a cycle store are located within a service core block in the middle of the plan. It is envisaged that the main space will be designed to be flexible whilst providing a level of separation and privacy that creates a vibrant and dynamic working environment. They can be positioned in a way that suits the residents and potentially be made movable. There is the potential for 20 - 30 individual studios depending on the arrangement.

The workshop is accessed directly from the studio or via the rear staircase meaning it could be notionally split in two if required - subject to the fire strategy. It is currently envisaged to be for the use of hand tools and relatively 'lightweight' machinery.



06 Design Intent

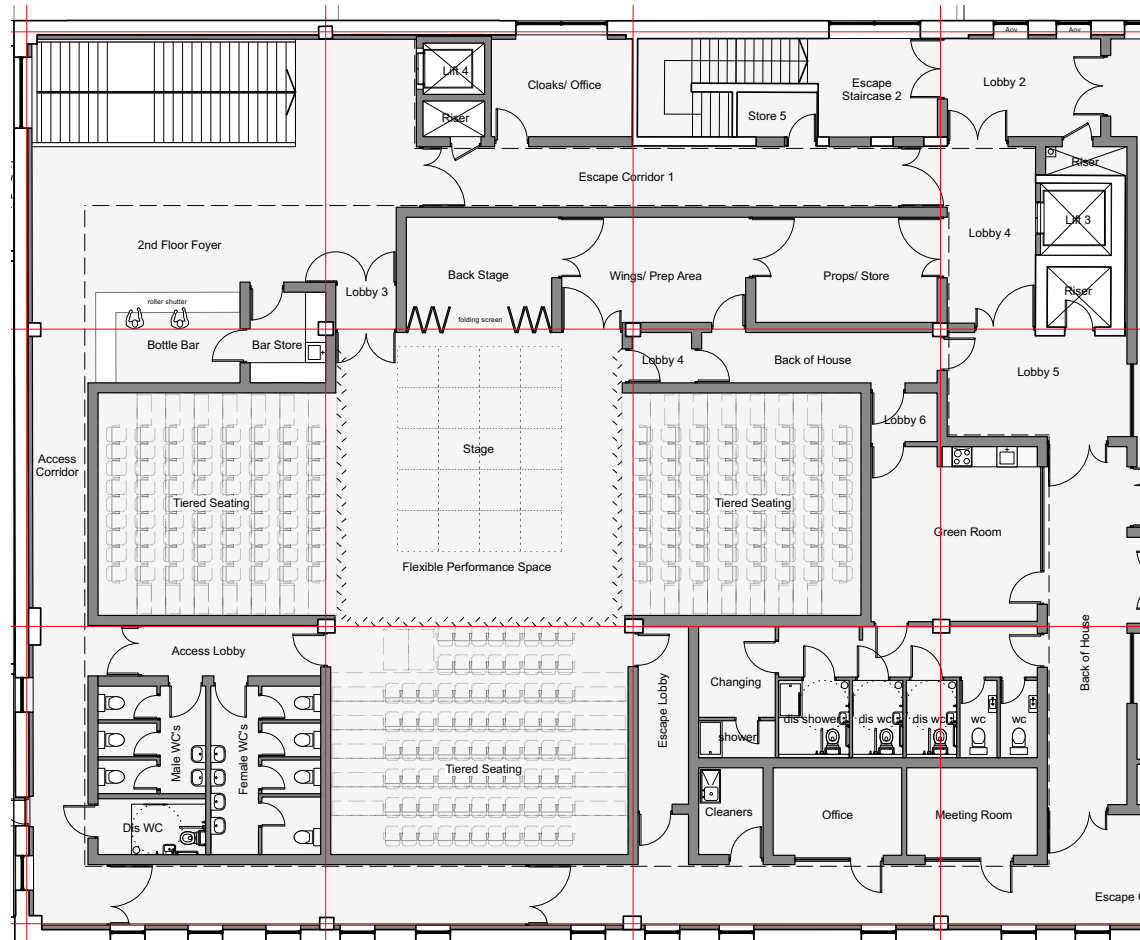
Key Spaces

Performance Space

The performance space is located on the top floor to allow for the necessary structural strengthening from beneath. It is accessed via a feature stair from the first floor that can be seen all the way from the entrance to encourage natural way finding. There is also a lift provided for those that are unable to use the stairs.

On arrival visitors are greeted with a public bar area with potential for seating with the main entrance to the auditorium situated directly adjacent. Seating is arranged in 3 parts designed to maximise capacities around the substantial columns that cannot be removed.

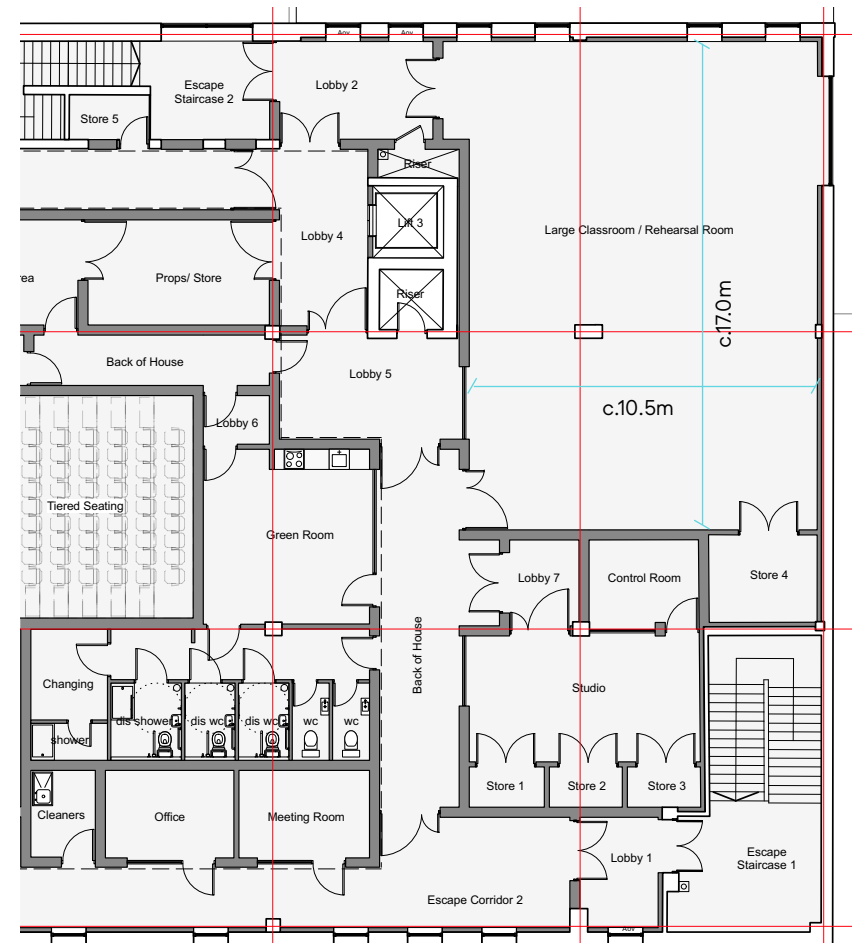
There are also green room facilities and all back of house areas.



06 Design Intent Key Spaces

Rehearsal / Classroom Space

To the rear of the second floor there will be a large rehearsal space and or teaching area. It can be accessed from both the back of house area and the second floor lobby to the rear stair. Whilst it is labelled mainly as a rehearsal studio, it is located close to the goods lift and is flexible enough to be used for other activities such as teaching and an extended workshop / paint/set making studio which may complement the uses in the performance space. A further studio sits adjacent to the rehearsal room which adds to the variety and size of spaces.



07 Access

Deliveries Strategy

All deliveries will continue to be from the rear. There is an area directly outside the rear of the building where vehicles can reverse up to a raised dock level and unload with access direct to the goods lift. The end user / operator will be responsible for coordinating deliveries so that no more than two/three small vans or one larger truck deliver in that position at the same time to ensure all neighbouring buildings are never blocked.

Parking Strategy

There is no parking directly on site however there is extensive parking close by in the multi-storey car park above ASDA. There is lift access to and from that car park with dedicated accessible parking bays.

Cycling Strategy

Cycling will be encouraged throughout the masterplan with external stands provided in the new public realm scheme. Secure internal bike storage will also be provided on the first floor of the culture hub with access via the goods lift, however no electric bikes can be stored there due to them being a potential fire hazard. Showers facilities are also provided on first and second floors and space can be made for lockers should they be required.

Inclusive Design Strategy

Above all it is vital that this new public facility is accessible and as inclusive as it can be. Whilst there are still details such as ironmongery, threshold treatments along side contrast strips and appropriate colour schemes to be developed in the next stage there are a number of key interventions that we have proposed and listed here:

Key Items included in Stage 3 Design

- Lift access across all floors with the potential for a second back up lift should one be out of service
- Changing Places room on the first floor with lift access to it from other floors
- Easy access to an accessible WC across all areas of the building

Key Items to be considered further in RIBA Stage 4 Design

- Appropriate hearing loop system across all public space and reception area
- Dedicated wheelchair spaces within the performance space
- Appropriate threshold material changes
- Appropriate colour scheme to promote natural way finding
- Contrasting materials around

doorways and thresholds

- Appropriate ironmongery for easy access
- Potential automatic opening doors in key areas

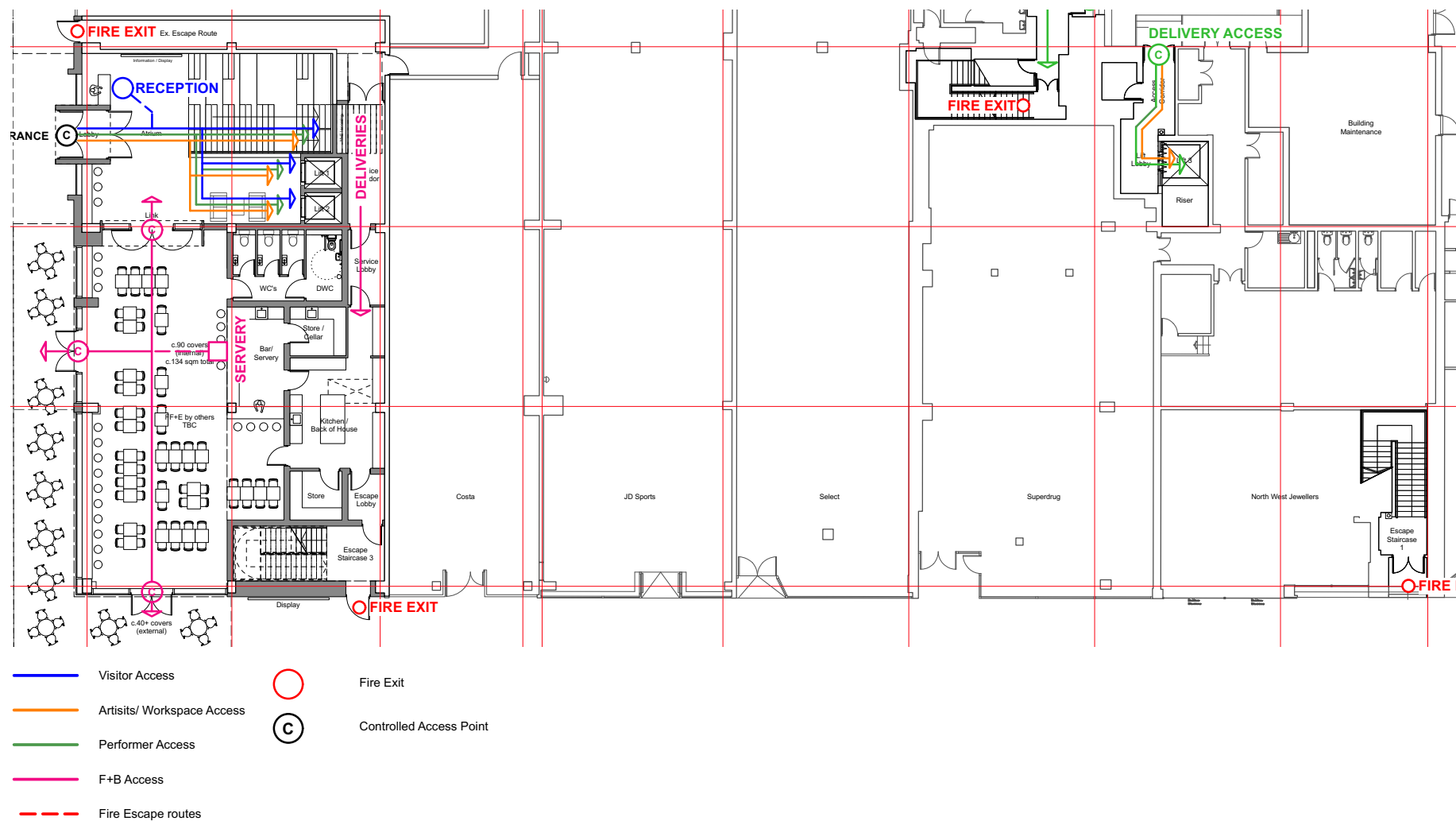
Internal Access, Movement and Security

Internal Access, Movement and Security Strategies are highlighted on the diagrams on the following pages.

07 Access

Internal Access Movement and Security Strategy

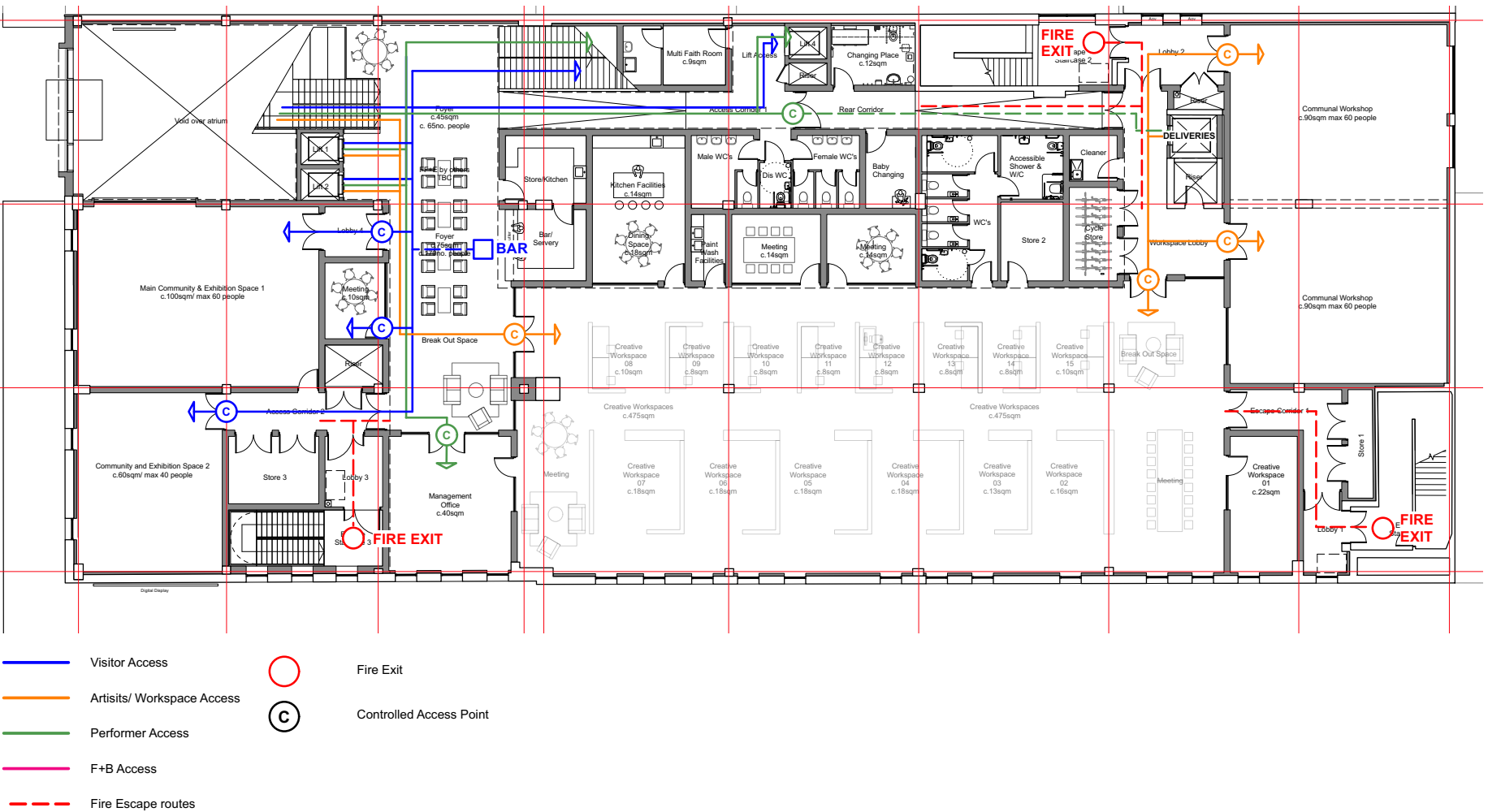
Ground Floor



07

Internal Access Movement and Security Strategy

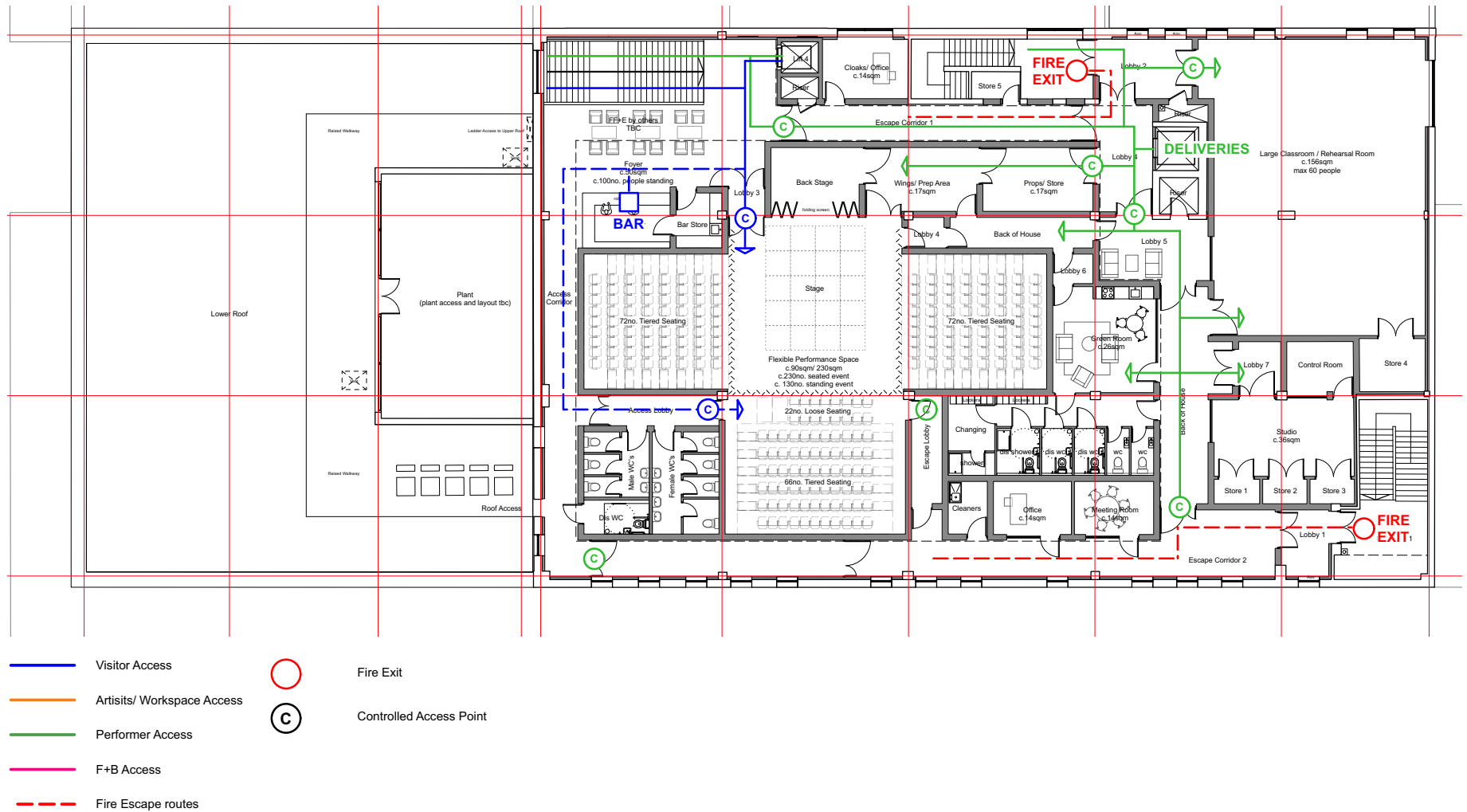
First Floor



07

Internal Access Movement and Security Strategy

Second Floor



07 Access

Lift Strategy

Due to the nature of the building and the fact that all levels do not stack on top of the main entrance, the lift strategy is more complicated. The key below describes the current proposed arrangement.

Key



2 No. Lifts between GF and FF

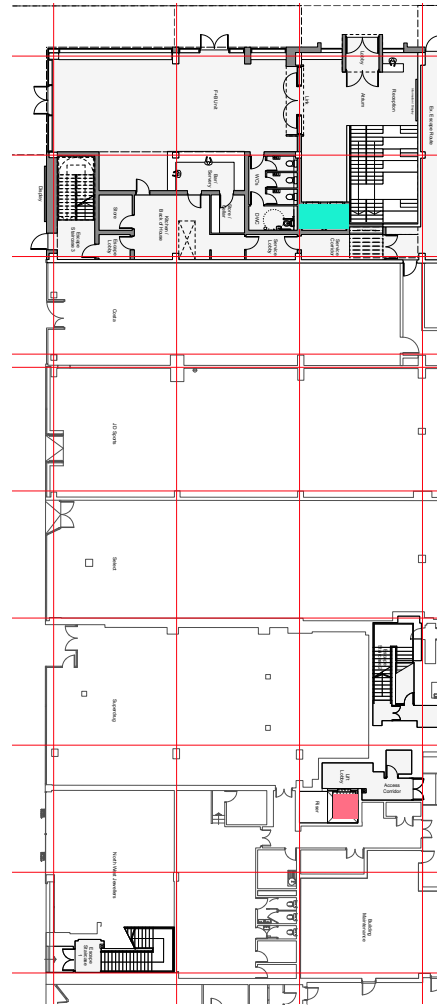


1 No. Lift between FF and SF

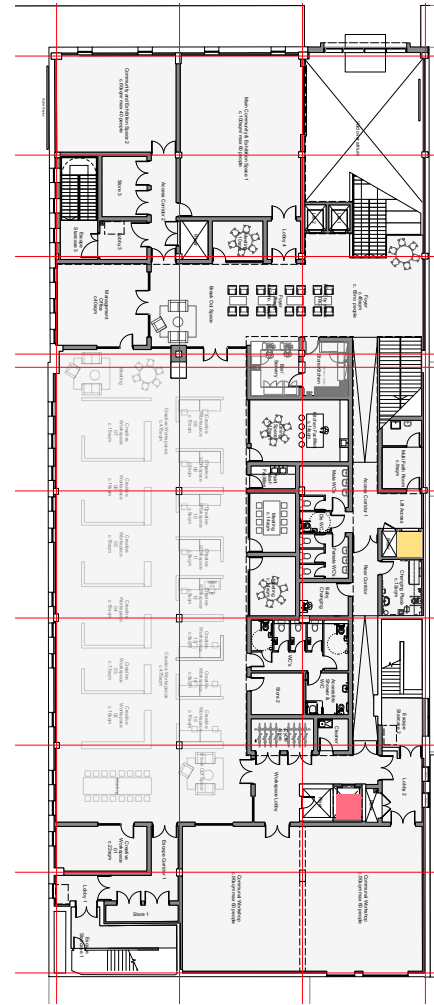


1 No. Passenger and Goods Lift Between GF and SF (stepped access to GF at this point)

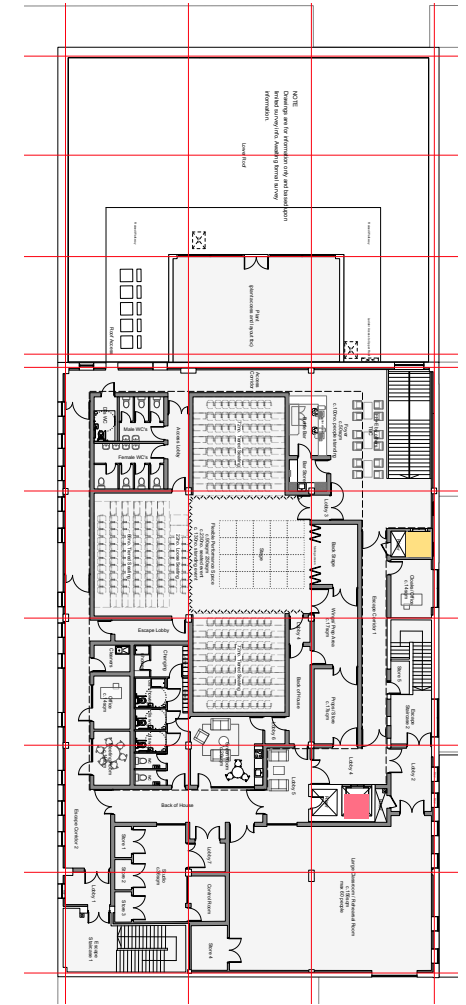
Ground Floor



First Floor



Second Floor



07 Access

Waste Strategy

It has been confirmed with MCC that all waste will continue to be deposited at the rear of the building. As part of the masterplan the current bin store will be improved so that it can house extended facilities should they be required.

The estate management company, who look after the area on behalf of MCC, have confirmed that:

Each unit is responsible for the management, access and collection of their waste. Therefore the operator will be required to take out a private commercial waste contract.

There is also a compactor service, where businesses can leave general waste within the compound to be compacted. The compacted waste is typically removed from this area monthly (or more often as required). The F&B and Culture Hub can send general waste here. However, it cannot cater for large amounts of waste within the compactor compound, so prior agreement on quantities will be required. Any waste over and above the amount agreed will be stored in the Bin store and taken away with the commercial waste contract.

There is also a communal collection of cardboard within the rear car park. This waste is collected up to twice a day and removed from the site by others. The operator can make use of this facility.

Dry recycling and special waste (artist materials) collection will be the responsibility of the Culture Hub and F&B unit. The operator will deal with this through their private commercial waste / recycling contract.

Amount of Bins Required

The following table and calculation has been undertaken in line with the guidance given in BS 5906

For the sake of this scheme we have used the following assumptions:

Restaurant - (to cover the ground floor restaurant unit and the two bar areas on first and second floors)

Office- (to cover the open plan creative studio areas)

Entertainment Complex / Leisure Centre - (to cover the remaining areas)

As the facility is not fully covered by these definitions and will not generate the same amount of waste as a full entertainment complex, we believe a sensible compromise considering the use of the existing compactor and cardboard collection would be 10 1100l bins which will be placed in the proposed extended existing bin store. We propose arrangements for how that is divided in terms of recycling and general waste is conditioned until the end operator is on board.

Building Type	Equation for weekly waste arising (litres)	Weekly waste arising (litres)	1100 litre bin
Office	50 litres per employee (approx. 35)	1700l	1.54
Restaurant	75 litres per number of covers (approx. 118 across 3 floors)	8850l	8.05
Entertainment/Leisure	5l litres per m2 of floor area (882sqm across community rooms workshop, performance venue and rehearsal room)	4410l	4.01

Reduction due to compactor and existing cardboard recycling arrangement

13.6
Total Proposed 10

Calculation using guidance in BS5906

Liverpool

Kempston Street Works
87 Kempston Street

T 0151 363 0000

Architectural Emporium Ltd

mail@architectural-emporium.co.uk
www.architectural-emporium.co.uk

UK Company
No.6915075