

# ENERGY CENTRAL INSTITUTE, BLYTH

## SITE ANALYSIS - RELATIONSHIP TO MARKET SQUARE

### WELCOME!

THE CONSULTATION EVENT PROVIDES AN UPDATE ON THE PROPOSALS FOR A NEW ENERGY CENTRAL INSTITUTE, PART OF THE ENERGY CENTRAL CAMPUS ON THE FORMER KEEL ROW SITE IN BLYTH TOWN CENTRE.

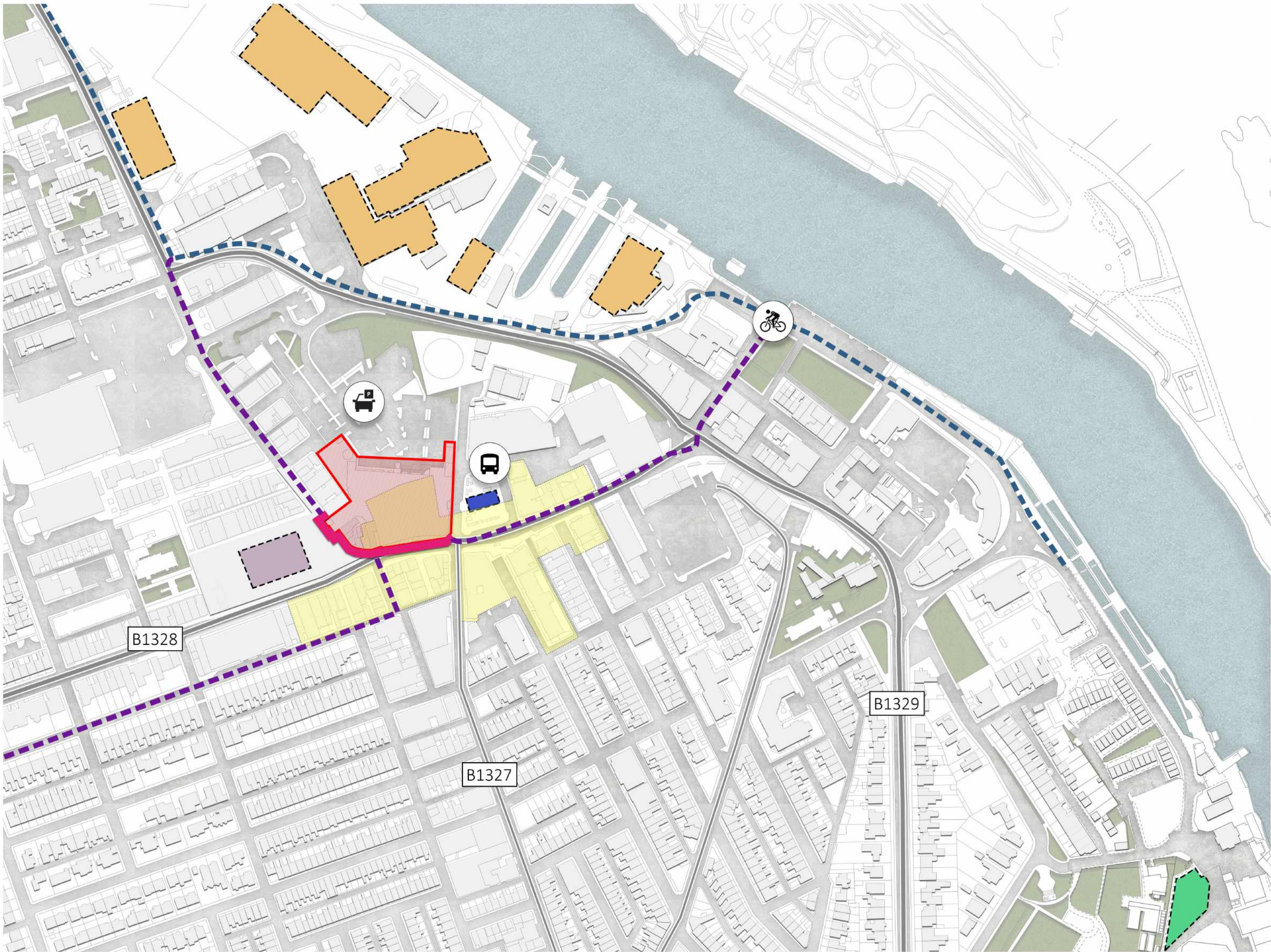
THE PROJECT IS PART OF THE ENERGISING BLYTH PROGRAMME TO GROW, RENEW AND CONNECT THE TOWN. IT IS BEING DELIVERED BY NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ENERGY CENTRAL CAMPUS LTD FUNDED BY UK GOVERNMENT, NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL AND NORTH EAST COMBINED AUTHORITY.

As the second phase of Energy Central Campus (ECC) alongside the first Phase Learning Hub on the Quayside, the ECI builds on ECC's aspiration to create a clear progression route for young people in STEM fields, from early education through to degrees and PhDs. This pathway is vital as it nurtures future talent for the energy sector.

Designed as a centre for energy sector research, innovation, and higher-level skills development, the ECI will foster collaboration between businesses, innovation organisations, and universities. The institute will support the development of a highly skilled workforce, boost footfall and spending, enhance local pride, enliven the town centre, and ensure that Blyth remains at the forefront of growth in the energy sector.

Energy Central Institute (ECI) project is currently at RIBA design stage 3, with Town Deal and Future High Street funding secured to bring this innovative facility to life. Integrated into Blyth's urban fabric, the project includes renewable energy strategies, sustainability measures, and the creation of new public spaces. Ongoing engagement with stakeholders continues to shape the design as it moves towards the next stage of development.

- Site
- Market Pavilion
- Catapult Offshore Renewable Energy
- Energy Central Learning Hub
- Conservation Area
- Bus Station
- National Cycle Route
- New Cycle Route
- Active frontage to Market Pavilion and Market Place



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# ENERGY CENTRAL INSTITUTE, BLYTH

## CONTEXT AND MATERIALITY



ST MARY'S CHURCH



FORMER LLOYD'S BANK



HARBOUR OFFICE



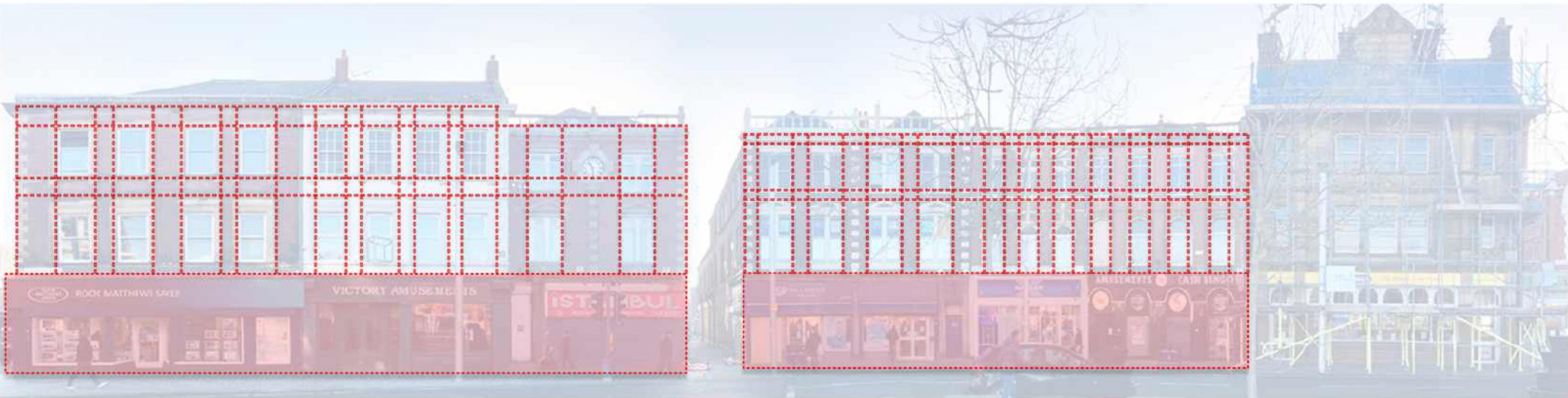
TROTTER STREET - THEATRE ROYAL



TROTTER STREET - 1912



WETHERSPOON & FORMER WALLAW CINEMA



### VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL RHYTHM

The rhythm and order of the elevations of the Energy Central Institute considers that of the surrounding buildings along Market Place and within the conservation area. The architectural language of locally listed buildings has been referenced within the design development process to inform the composition of the external façade.

### MATERIAL ANALYSIS

The ECI is to have its own unique identity whilst still complementing the location and surroundings in which it resides. The proposed facade has a sense of openness which activates the building externally and creates a connection to the surrounding area, inclusive of the Market Pavilion. There is also a nod to the strong presence of brick and natural materials used within the town centre.



BRIDGE STREET



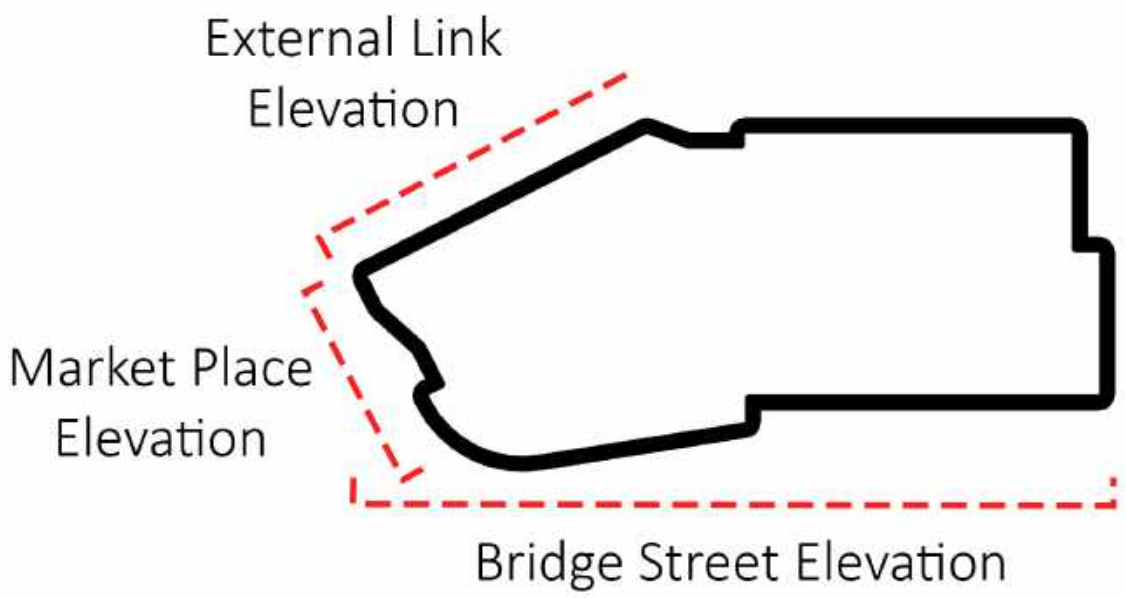
REGENT STREET



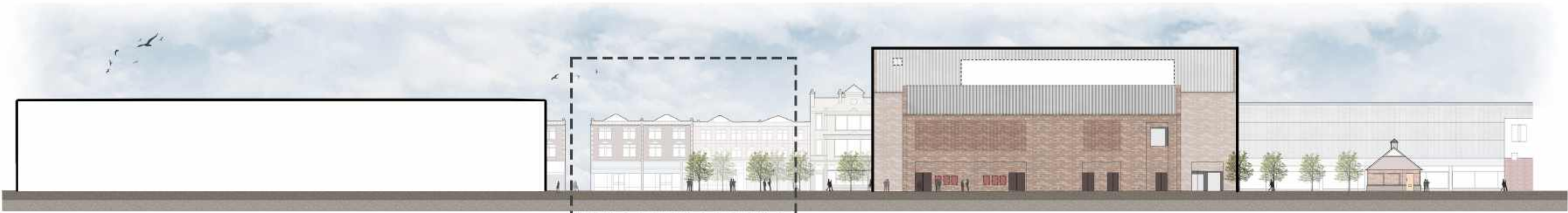
MARKET PAVILION



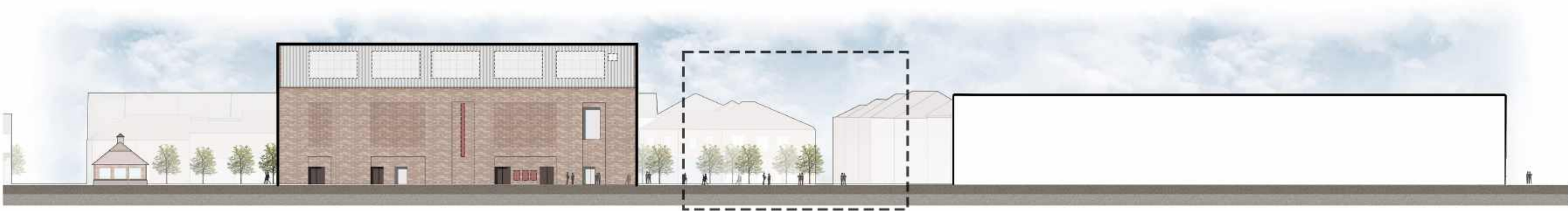
MARKET PLACE



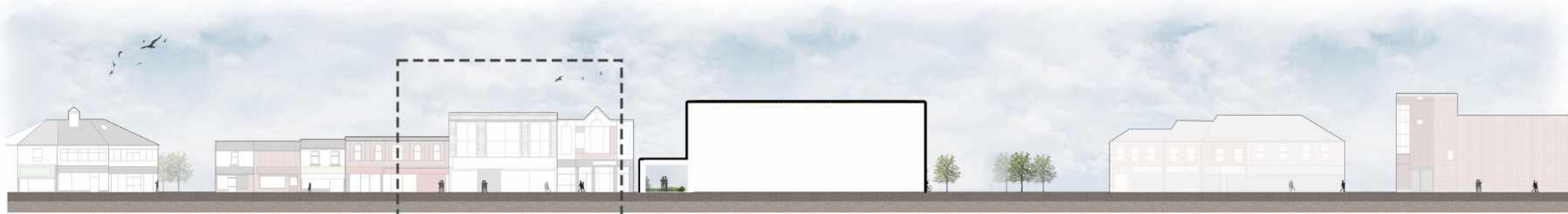
KEY PLAN



EXTERNAL LINK ELEVATION



BRIDGE STREET ELEVATION



MARKET PLACE ELEVATION

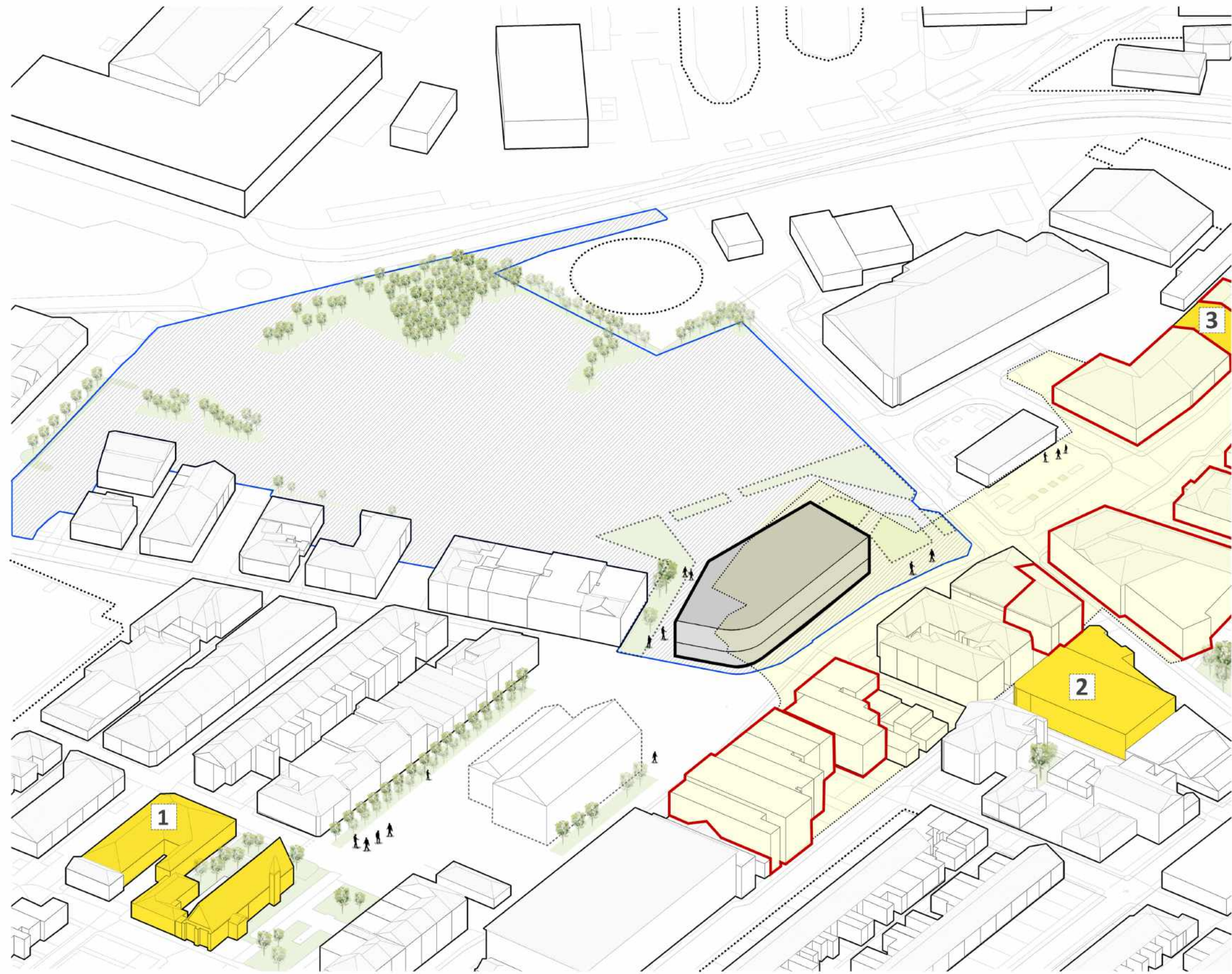
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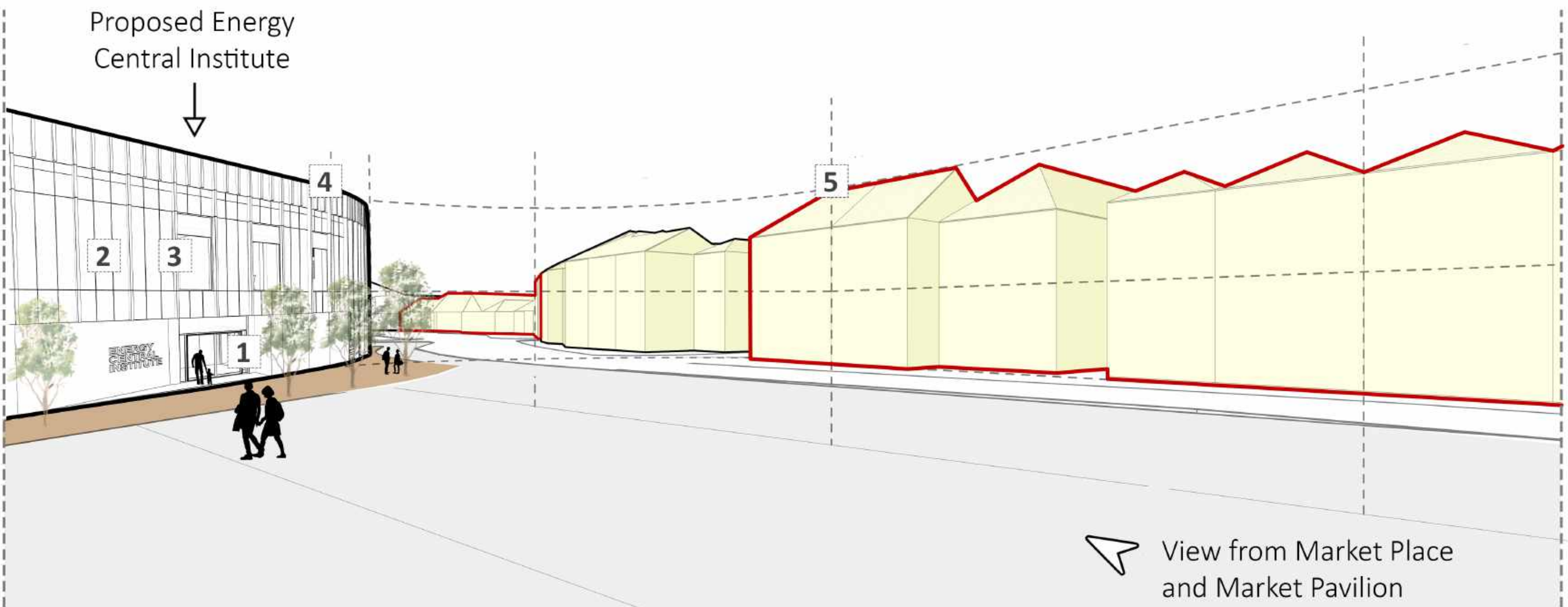


# ENERGY CENTRAL INSTITUTE, BLYTH

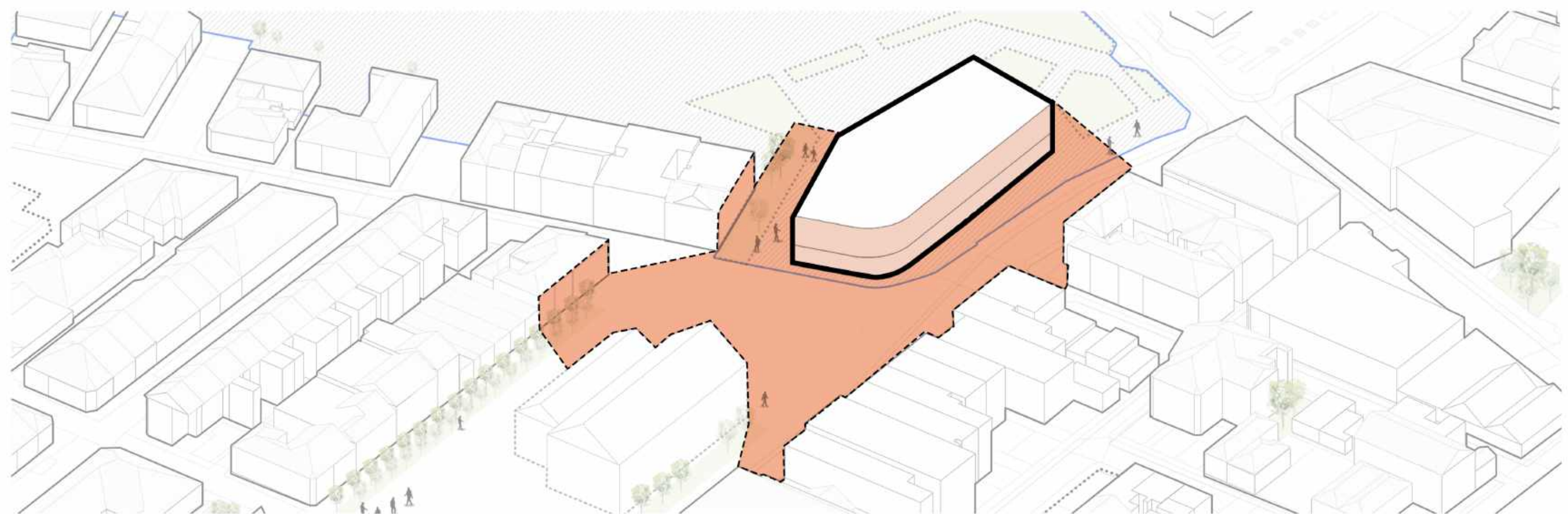
## HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION AREA



- Masterplan Boundary
  - Locally Listed Buildings
  - Grade II Listed Building
  - Conservation Area
- 1 St. Mary's Church
  - 2 Wetherspoon & Former Wallaw Cinema
  - 3 Former Lloyds Bank



- 1 Activate glazed frontage.
- 2 Articulate frontage through materiality and vocabulary of details to tie into grain and wider street scene in a contemporary way.
- 3 Voids and infill along the elevation create added interest and subtle way to aid navigation breaks in the street scene visually help tie in the proposed development.
- 4 Curved, active frontage to mimic the historic grain of previous Market Place facades whilst also creating a greater visual connection to Market Place and Market Pavilion.
- 5 Scale and massing respond to conservation area and properties along Bridge Street.

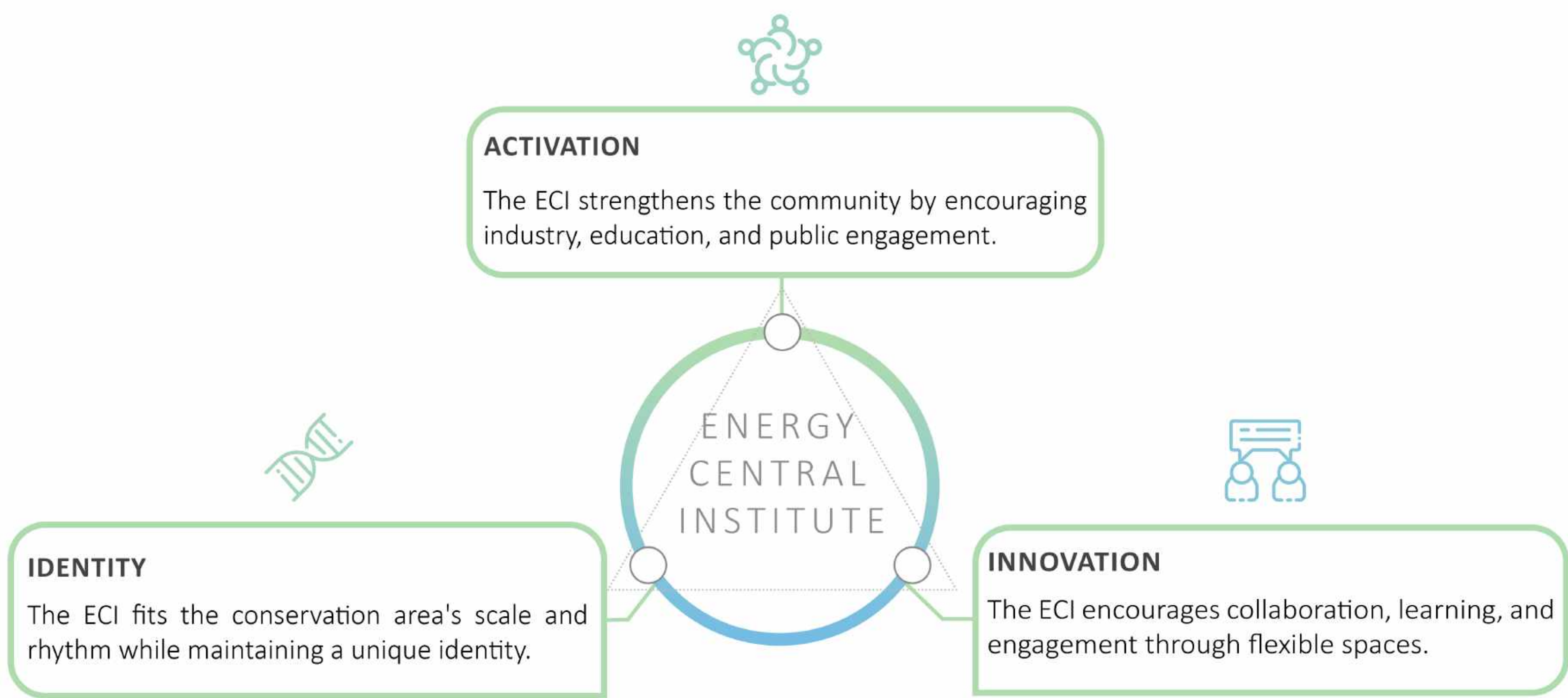


Key Views



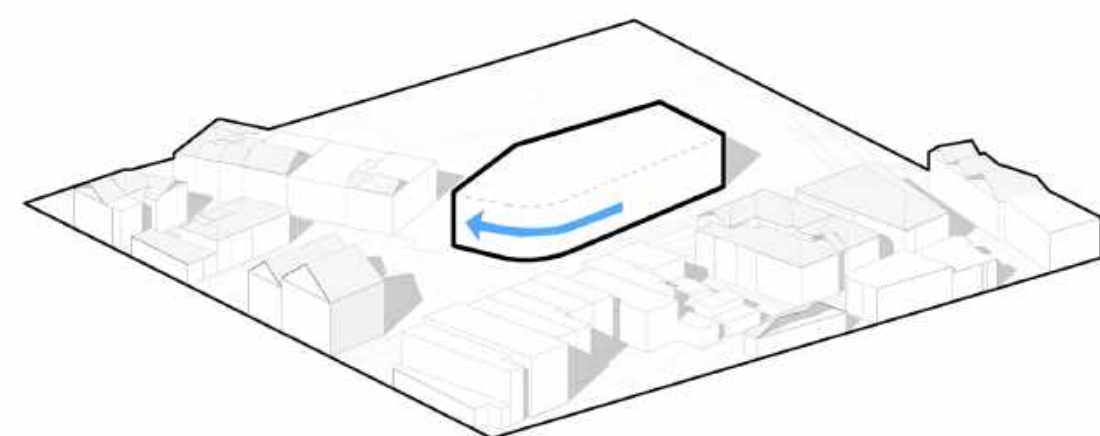
# ENERGY CENTRAL INSTITUTE, BLYTH

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AND KEY PRINCIPLES



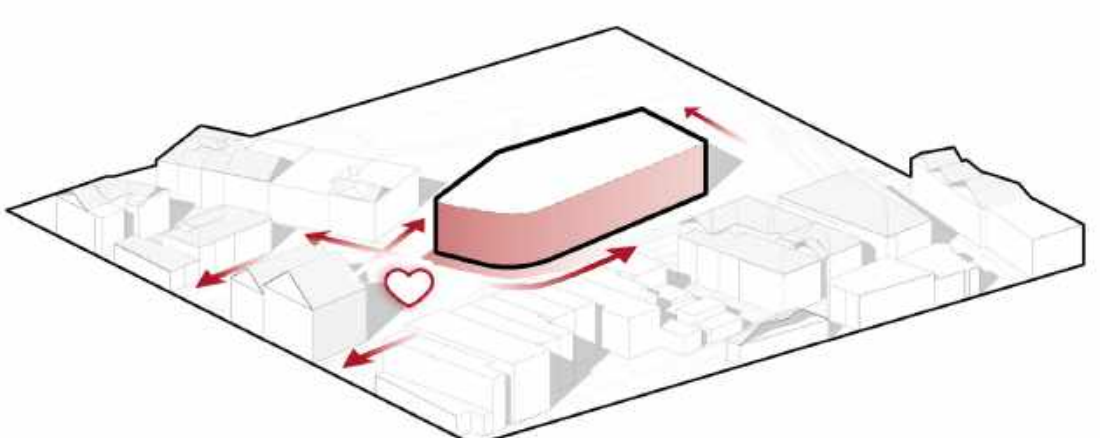
### URBAN GRAIN AND SCALE

The design should fit with the existing layout of the area, ensuring the building's size, shape, and arrangement match the character of the surroundings. It is important to consider the site's historical context and ensure the new development blends well with the wider town.



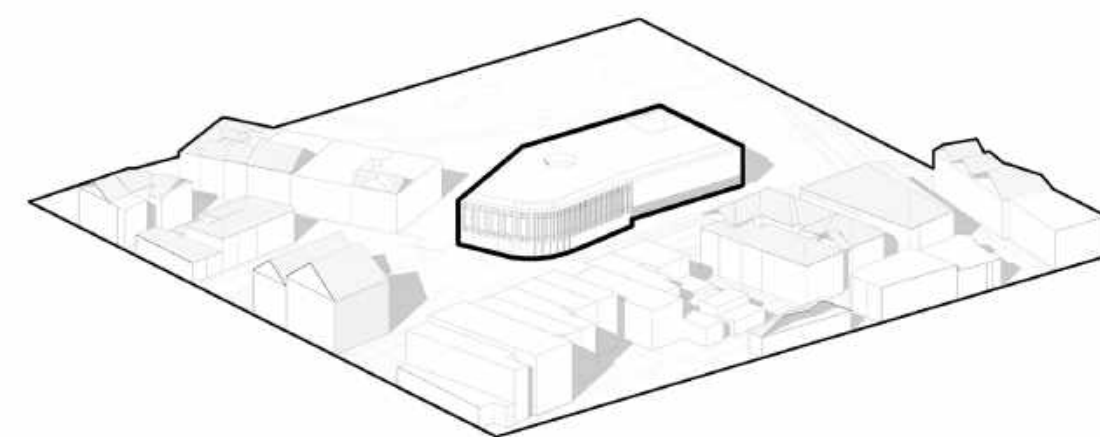
### CONNECTIVITY AND FRONTAGE

A key aim is to create strong links between the Keel Row site, Market Place, and Market Pavilion. This includes designing a clear and welcoming frontage that connects with public spaces, making it easier for people to move around and encouraging more social and pedestrian activity.



### FORM AND IDENTITY

The design aims to create a distinctive architectural identity that reflects the vertical and horizontal rhythms of surrounding façades, balancing modern elements with historical features to maintain visual harmony and the building's unique identity.



### INTERNAL PERSPECTIVE VIEW FROM PRIMARY ENTRANCE

Aligned with ECC's brand guidelines, the interior design scheme incorporates the campus's primary signage colours and visual identity, ensuring brand consistency across all public areas and creating a professional atmosphere.

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# ENERGY CENTRAL INSTITUTE, BLYTH

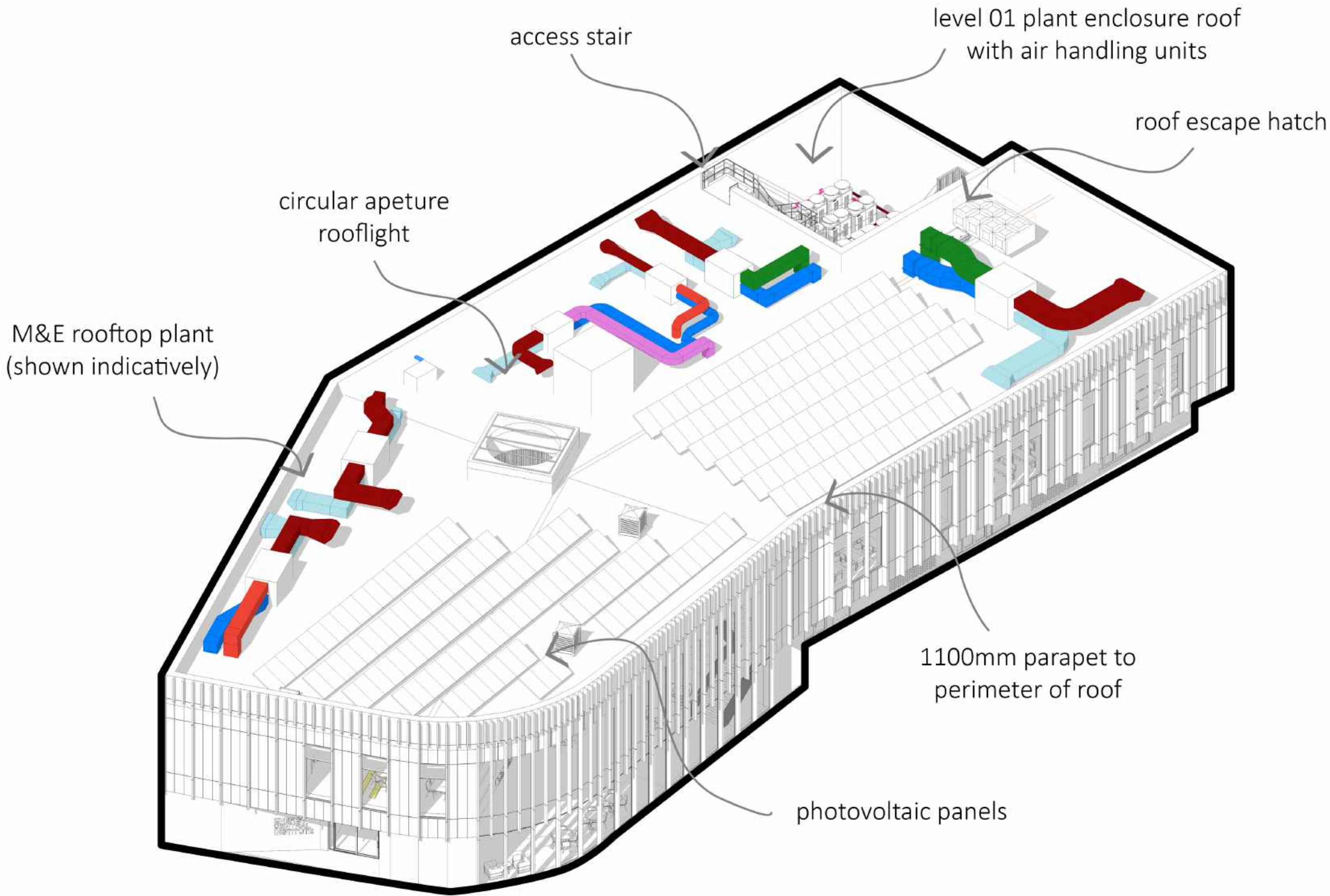
## DESIGN RESPONSE



- |                       |  |                                    |
|-----------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| ■ Masterplan Boundary | 3 Roof Plant                           | 7 Existing Car Park to be Retained |
| ■ Frontage            | 4 Landscaping                          | 8 Trotter Street Link              |
| 1 External Link       | 5 ECI Services Access                  | 9 Future Development Site          |
| 2 Atrium              | 6 Existing Service Yard to be Retained | 10 Existing Woodland               |

### FUTURE MASTERPLAN STRATEGY

The future masterplan strategy activates the site's frontage, establishing a robust foundation for phased development. It prioritises strategic adjacencies to optimise building flow, fostering seamless integration with the broader site context. Internally, a central atrium forms a dynamic link to the reinstated Trotter Street, thoughtfully bridging the former Keel Row parking area to wider Blyth. This key internal connection is further enhanced by a network of external pathways and landscaping features, creating intuitive, inviting routes that extend to the nearby bus station. The design not only maximises accessibility and flow but also sets a cohesive foundation for future growth and connectivity.



### ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY

The environmental strategy for the Energy Central Institute has been developed through a sustainability workshop and an options appraisal that led to the decision to align with the net zero carbon operational use target. This strategy emphasizes reducing operational carbon, aiming for high energy efficiency, airtightness, and renewable energy integration, including air source heat pumps and PV panels.

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# ENERGY CENTRAL INSTITUTE, BLYTH

## SCALE AND APPEARANCE



### EXTERNAL APPEARANCE – FAÇADE STUDY A TERRACOTTA BEIGE PANELS WITH RED BLEND BRICKWORK

As part of the design development, the external material palette was assessed for visual appeal, sustainability, and contextual harmony. Traditional masonry, particularly red brick, is proposed for the ground floor façade, reflecting the materiality of the surrounding context and conservation area. The materiality of the building’s upper section has two options: **Option A** – Stone Look Terracotta and **Option B** – Naturally Weathered Timber.

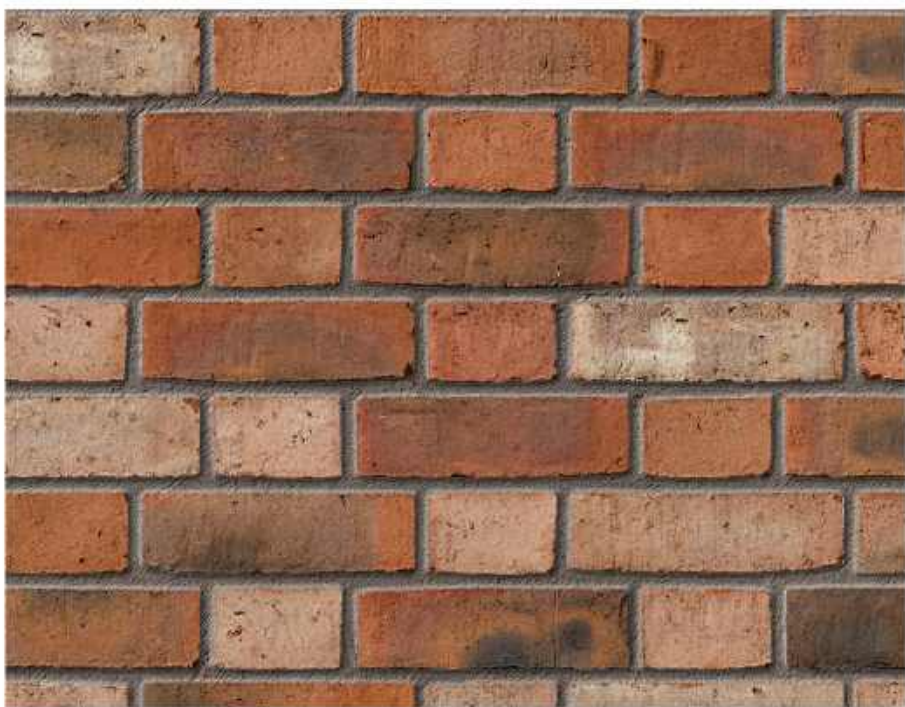
The above artist’s impression illustrates the Stone Look Terracotta option which is proposed for its suitability to Blyth’s coastal environment, low maintenance and contextual suitability. Timber is considered for its strong sustainable attributes and can be seen on the façade study board.

The dimensions of the cladding panels and fins offer a contemporary interpretation of the vertical rhythm of neighbouring buildings. The primary glazing at the entrance mirrors the vertical lines of shopfronts along Regent Street, creating a welcoming atrium that connects to Market Place and activates Bridge Street.

TERRACOTTA BEIGE FINIS



RED BLEND BRICKWORK



METAL FRAMES



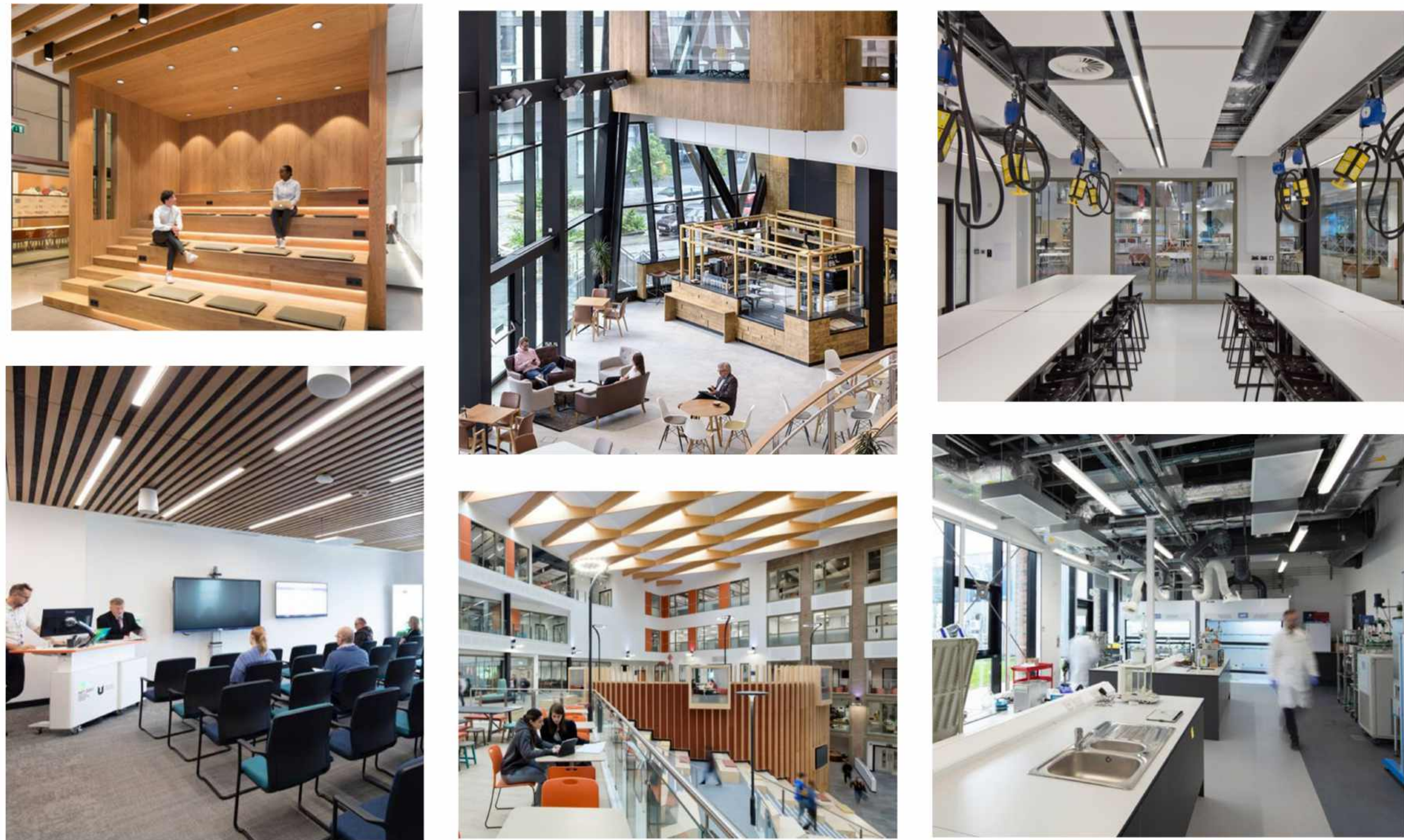
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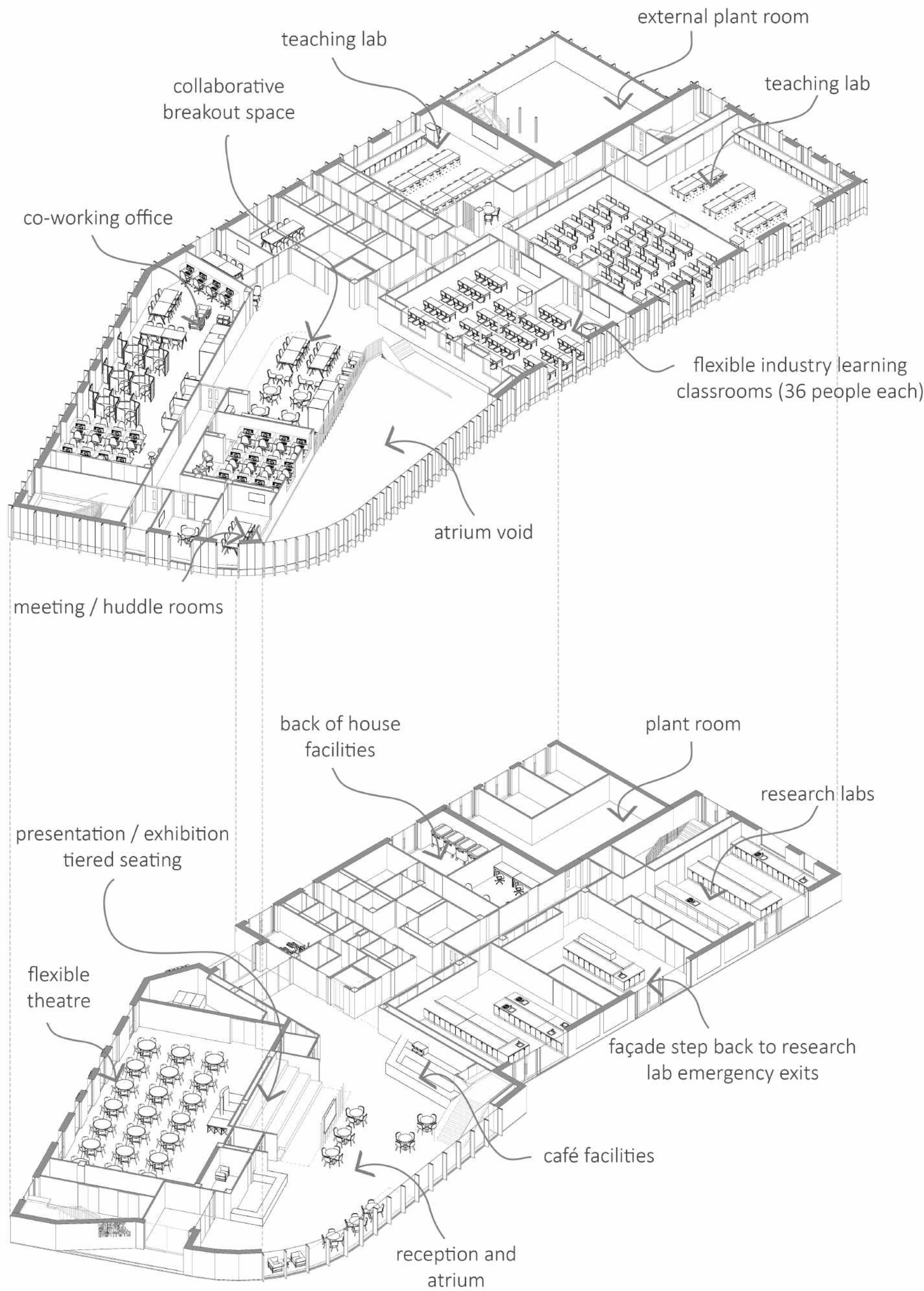
# ENERGY CENTRAL INSTITUTE, BLYTH

## BUILDING USE AND INTERNAL FINISHES



### BUILDING USE AND PURPOSE

The Energy Central Institute (ECI) is designed to foster collaboration between the energy sector and academia, providing higher-level skills and access to world-class research and innovation services. Its atrium connects Market Place to the Keel Row site and includes a public-facing café and tiered seating for informal presentations. The theatre, seating over 100 people, offers a versatile space for lectures and events, while co-working offices encourage interaction between regional businesses and research teams. The institute also features flexible research labs, secured through access control, and teaching labs equipped for energy research. With industry learning classrooms and collaborative spaces, the ECI promotes engagement between students and professionals, driving energy sector growth.



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# ENERGY CENTRAL INSTITUTE, BLYTH

## LANDSCAPE STRATEGY



### A POSITIVE ENHANCEMENT OF BLYTH TOWN CENTRE

Due to its central location with the wider town centre the ECI will create a welcoming, green environment for all to enjoy, encouraging residents and visitors to Blyth into the site with interpretive and interactive elements that promote understanding of the role that the ECI has and its educational speciality. The public gardens will include direct, easy to navigate routes connecting to all aspects of the town centre and developed to be safe and accessible to all.

### PARKING FACILITIES ON-SITE

The existing Keel Row parking will be retained, with the addition of electric vehicle charging bays and accessible parking spaces. An internal secure bike store, along with back-of-house facilities will also be provided to support sustainable and active travel.

### CREATION OF A SOPHISTICATED CAMPUS FOR LEARNING THAT IS ALSO ENGAGING AND INCLUSIVE

As a key interface between an innovative institute in the clean energy sector and an animated cultural centre, the overall design of the public realm surrounding the ECI aims to stimulate synergy among technology, local business, culture and people in the town centre.

The spatial arrangement and design concept would stimulate collaboration among skilled workers, students, local business and all members of the general public, making each stakeholder feel valued and integral to the project. A series of public gardens will include seating and interactive elements inspired by clean energy, innovation and its technology providing an educational and attractive resource for future generations. Seamless connectivity between Catapult, Market Pavilion and ECI would be achieved through open spaces allowing workers, students, visitors and residents to intersect.



### PROJECT TIMESCALES

Planning Submission	Autumn 2024
Construction Starts	Summer 2025
Opening	Winter 2027

### LINK TO THE SURVEY

<https://nland.uk/eci>



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## MATERIAL ANALYSIS

The below elevations illustrate the visual and contextual suitability of the different facade materials, as well as their environmental impact and resilience against local weather conditions.

### FAÇADE STUDY A - TERRACOTTA BEIGE PANELS WITH RED BLEND BRICKWORK

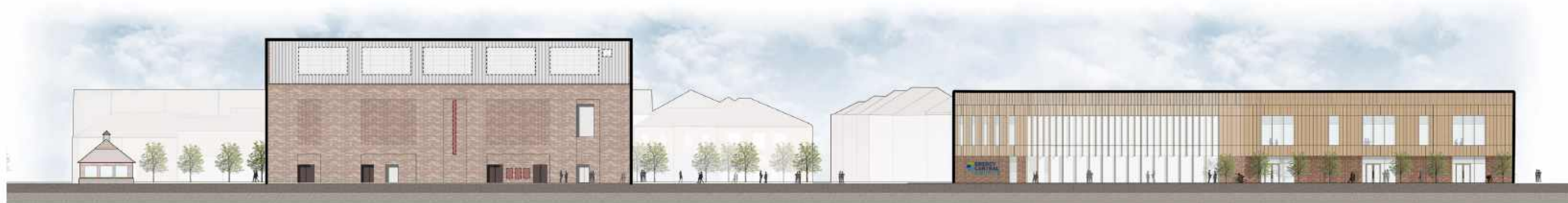
Facade Study A explores the integration of stone-look terracotta cladding with red blend brickwork. While terracotta may have lower sustainability credentials than timber alternatives, it remains a more sustainable option compared to the more common metal cladding seen in modern buildings. Terracotta provides a durable, low-maintenance exterior that is particularly well-suited for Blyth’s coastal environment. Its colour remains consistent over time, and it exhibits excellent resistance to sunlight, ensuring enduring aesthetic appeal. Additionally, the tones and overall feel of the building are designed to reflect the character of the conservation area and central Blyth.



CAR PARK ELEVATION

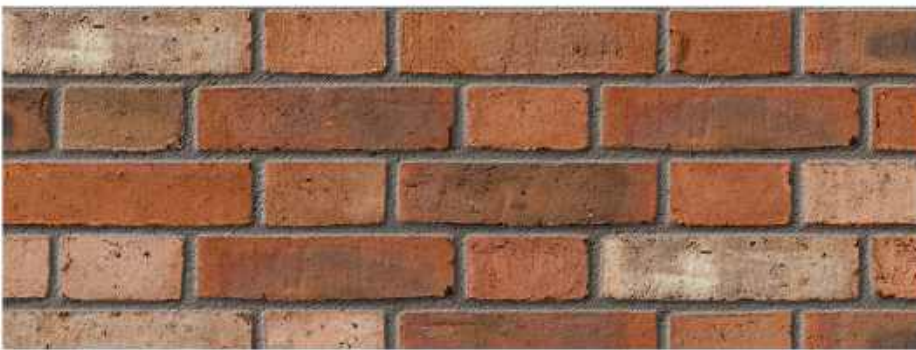


MARKET PLACE ELEVATION



BRIDGE STREET ELEVATION

RED BLEND BRICKWORK



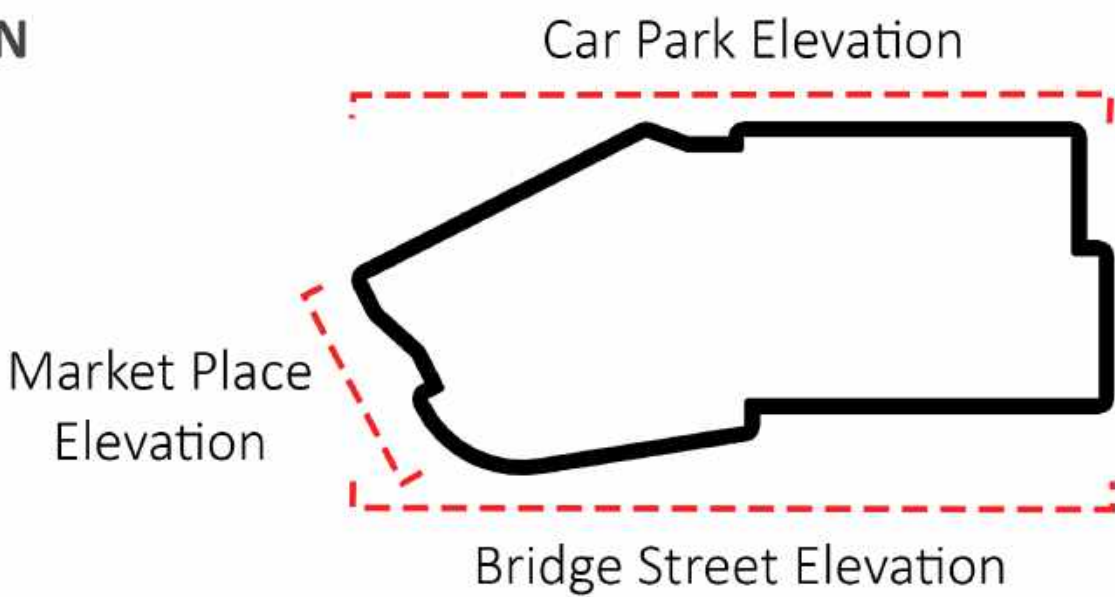
TERRACOTTA BEIGE FINS



METAL FRAMES



### KEY PLAN



### FAÇADE STUDY B – NATURALLY WEATHERED TIMBER WITH RED BLEND BRICKWORK

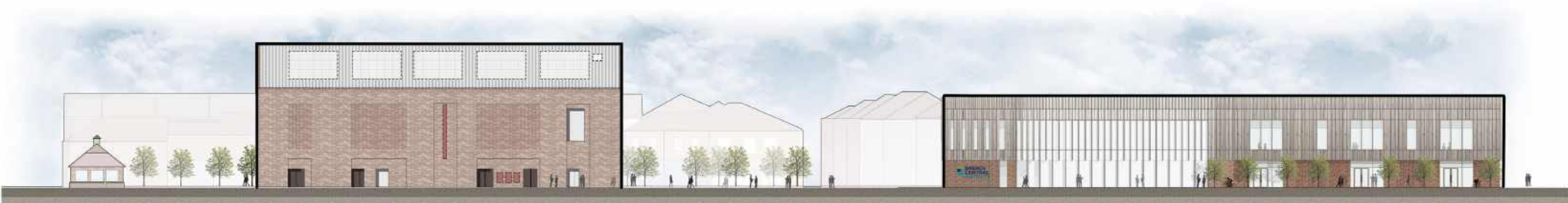
Façade Study B examines the use of naturally weathered timber alongside red blend brickwork. Timber has been explored for its lower carbon impact and strong renewability characteristics. However, to enhance its longevity, the timber requires protective coatings to maintain its appearance and achieve an even grey finish. Additionally, bespoke cutting and fire-retardant treatments will be necessary. The visual appearance of the timber offers a contrasting style compared to the conservation area and its wider surroundings.



CAR PARK ELEVATION



MARKET PLACE ELEVATION



BRIDGE STREET ELEVATION

RED BLEND BRICKWORK



NATURALLY WEATHERED TIMBER



METAL FRAMES



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