

FINANCE HOUSE - Proposed change of use and redevelopment

Public Exhibition 2

of 10 Orchard Brae for residential and student accommodation

Proposal

Introduction

Proposed conversion and redevelopment of 10 Orchard Brae for residential and student accommodation use.

- The site extends over approximately 0.845 hectares and comprises an existing currently unoccupied eight storey office building constructed in the 1960s (Finance House) fronting Orchard Brae, with a large five storey extension added in the 1970s to the rear.
- The proposals are for the change of use and alteration of the eight storey block and the demolition of the five storey 1970s extension to make way for the erection of a stepped residential development comprising a mix of flats and duplexes with main door access. The development will be formed by 65 residential flats as well as a student accommodation building with 301 rooms and will comply with all necessary policy, and aims to provide in excess of minimum standards of cycle storage space, high quality communal and private amenity space, as well as dedicated co-working space.
- The existing 1960s building directly faces Orchard Brae, which is one of the main arteries that connects Edinburgh city centre with Ferry Road and the North side of the city. The rear side of the site, mainly occupied by the 1970s extension, forms a dead end on both edges with Learmonth Crescent on the north-west and Learmonth Gardens on the south-east.
- The site sits approximately 1 mile from the West End of Princes Street, within walking distance of all city centre retail and leisure amenities at approximately 20 minutes walk. The site also benefits from excellent transport connections with a bus stop right in front of the site on Orchard Brae.



Refurbished Building



New Build Blocks

New public North-South Connection



Proposed Site Plan



New Public East-West Connection



New Orchard Brae Frontage



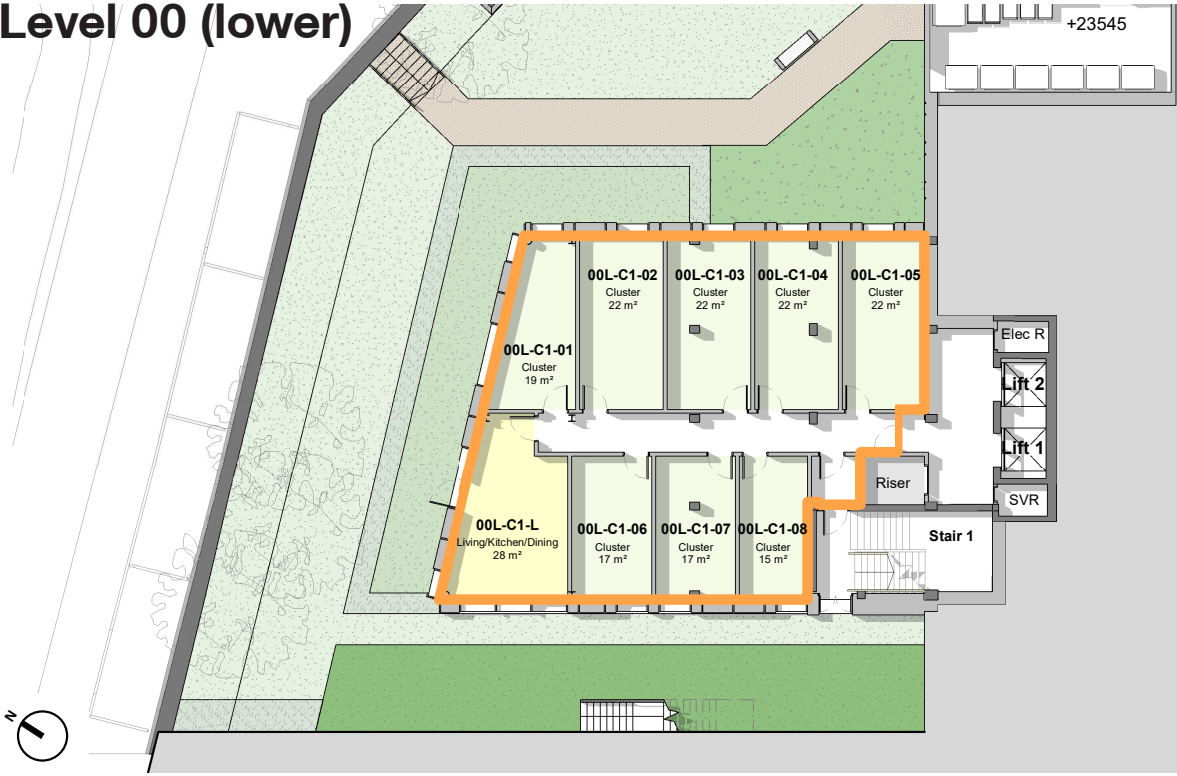
Refurbished Building

The proposed student accommodation will provide:

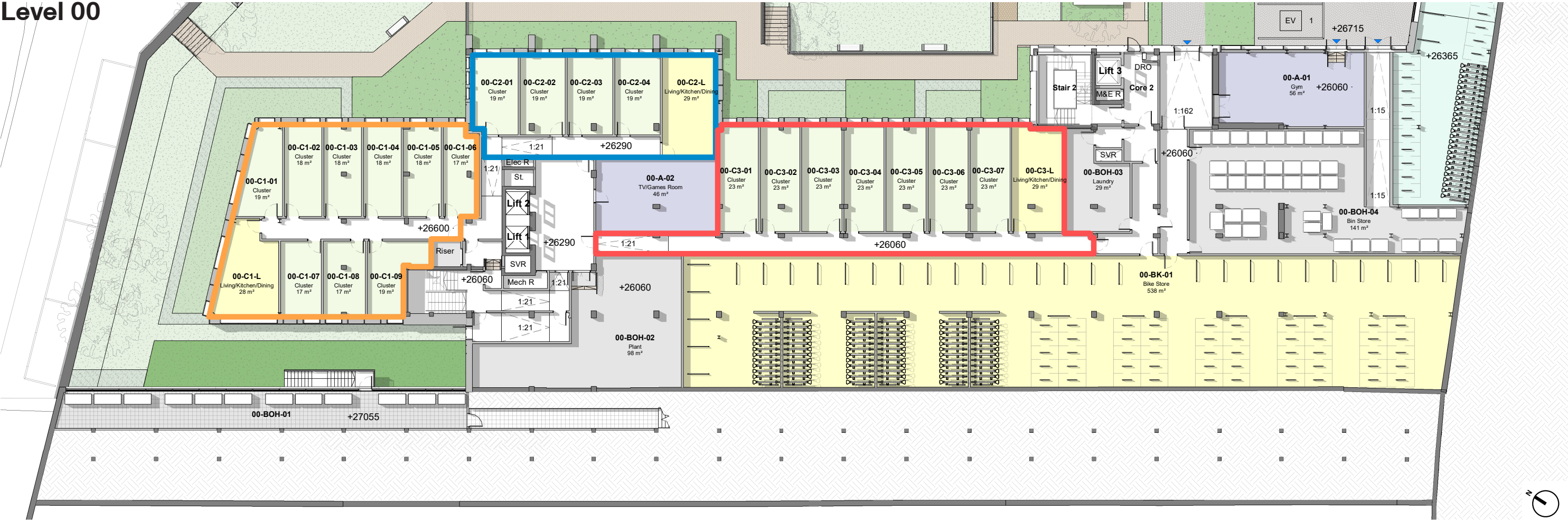
- 301 individual rooms delivering a policy compliant mix of clusters and studios.
- Internal communal amenity areas such as a gym, quiet study/lounges or TV/game rooms.
- Private and communal terraces.
- Secured bike store with 308 spaces including 20% oversized spaces for non-standard bikes.
- Independent residential bike store with 148 spaces including 20% oversized spaces for non-standard bikes.
- Flexible working space with capability to be used by external public.
- Internal dedicated bin store. Collection of waste will be managed by a factor who will take the bins in and out as required.



Level 00 (lower)



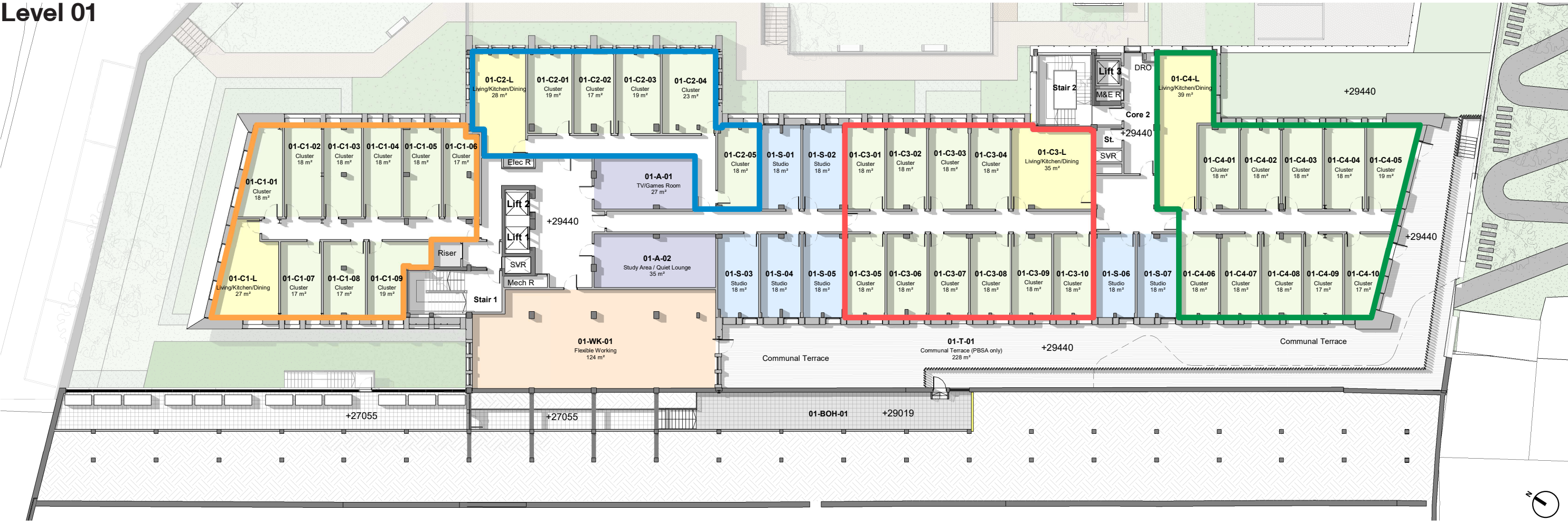
Level 00



Refurbished building and public spaces



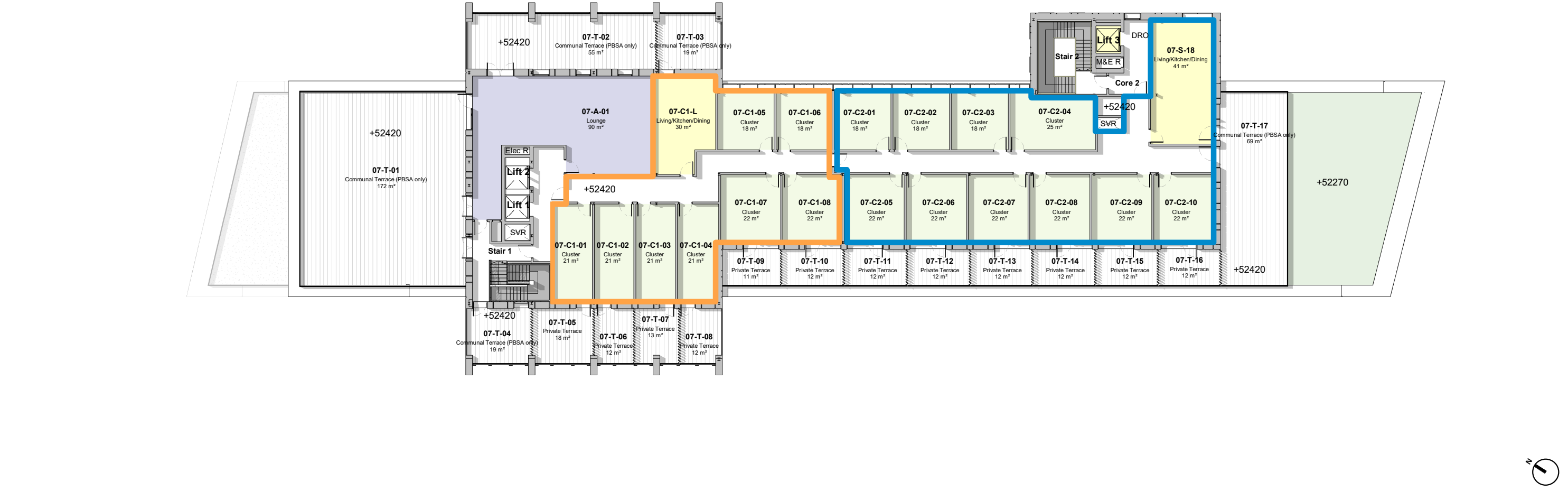
Level 01



Level 02



Level 07



New Build

West Elevation



The proposed residential buildings are split into 5no blocks and remain as consented. In total they will provide:

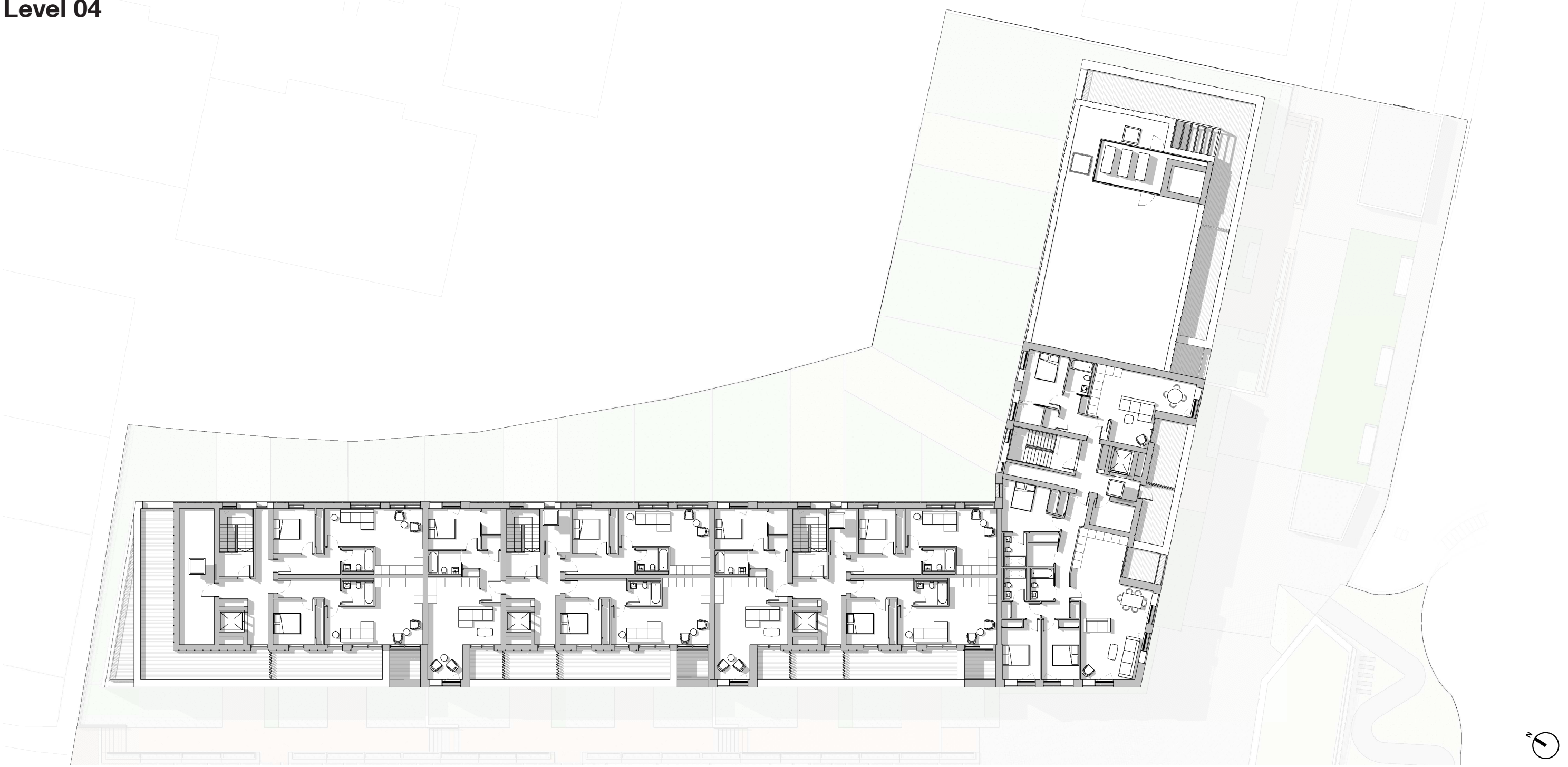
- 65 units with a range of 1 to 3 bedroom flats, studios and duplexes.
- 35% of the total units will be dedicated to affordable housing.
- Private and communal gardens.
- Main door entrance for ground floor units.
- Internal and secured bike stores hosted within the refurbished building and a stand alone building integrated into the landscape design - a total of 148no spaces will be provided.
- Each block will have a dedicated internal bin store located either in the refurbished building or in stand alone buildings integrated into the landscape. Collection of waste will be managed by a factor who will take the bins in and out as required.



New Build and access from Learmonth Gardens



New Build and proposed public spaces



Parking

Edinburgh City Council is promoting car free developments in favour of sustainable means of transport such as walking, cycling and use of public transport.

To achieve the above target, the development focuses on delivering policy compliant cycle storage for the new residential blocks and PBSA building as well as opening up the site to the neighbourhood to provide an easier access to Orchard Brae and its transport links. 3no external carpark spaces are currently proposed on south end of the development. At this stage, these are being assessed to determine their main purpose (private, maintenance only, car club, etc).

- The extant scheme has 151 residential flats. As part of the consent, the Council noted that as the development is located in the extended Controlled Parking Zone, they will be eligible for one residential parking permit per property in accordance with the Transport and Environment Committee decision of 4 June 2013.
- Edinburgh City Council's residents' permit information and guidance notes that student accommodation developments and their future occupiers would not be eligible for Parking Permits.
- On that basis, only private residential residents would have the possibility to apply for an application for parking permit, which would be assessed by the Council on a case by case basis.
- In comparison to the extant planning permission which provided only 32 spaces for 151 flats, the inclusion of PBSA development would on balance reduce the potential demand for parking permits.

Site Connectivity

The table below indicates estimated travel times to the several University and College Campuses. The commuting times indicate that the proposed location is within easy reach for many of these.

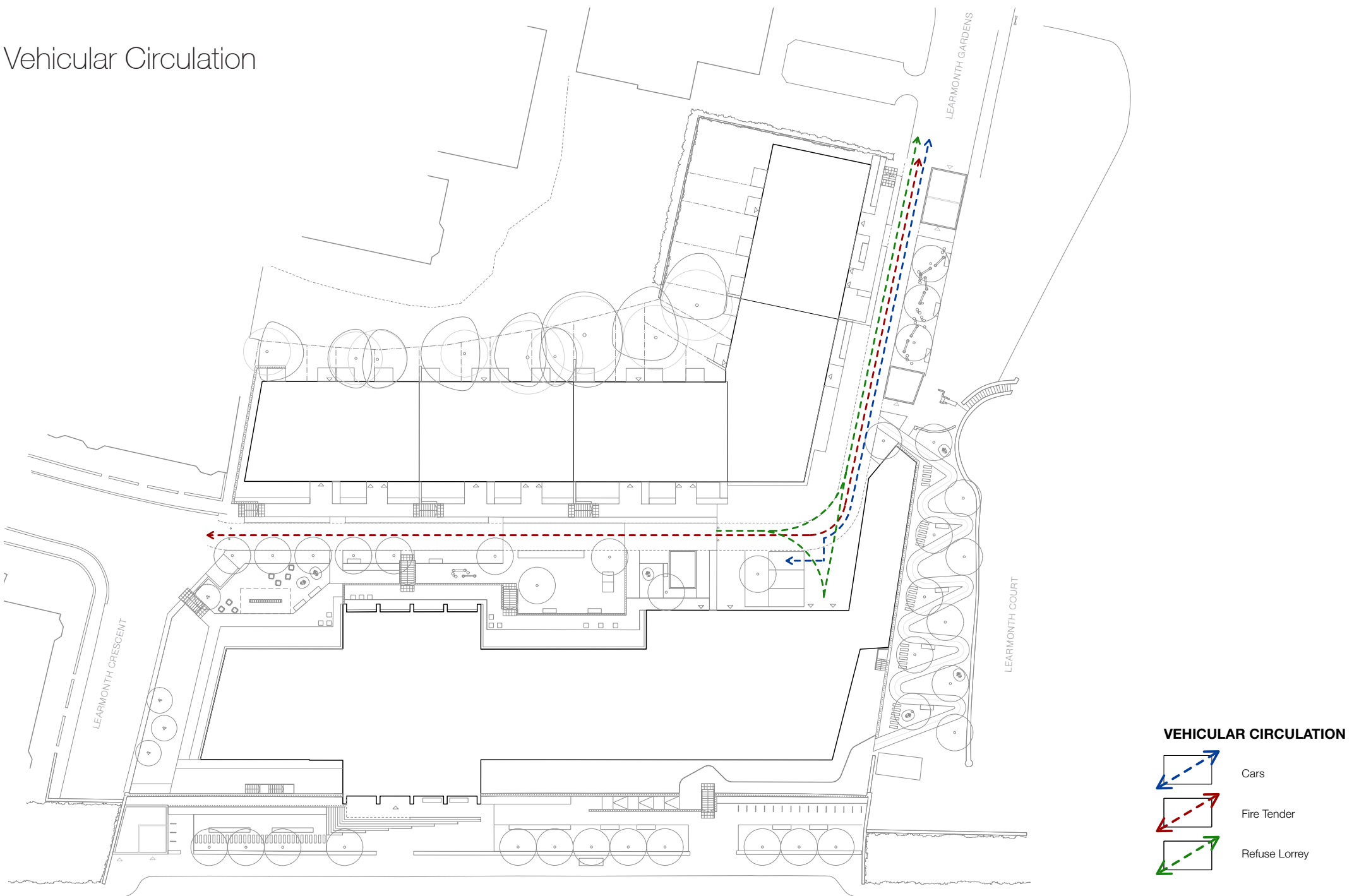
Travel Times			
University / College	Campus	Cycling	Public Transport
University of Edinburgh	Old College	14 minutes	18 minutes
	George Square	14 minutes	20 minutes
	College of Art	12 minutes	20 minutes
	Kings Building	24 minutes	35 minutes
Edinburgh Napier University	Merchiston	17 minutes	25 minutes
	Craiglockhart	28 minutes	38 minutes
	Sighthill	28 minutes	35 minutes
Herriot Watt University	Edinburgh	36 minutes	45 minutes
Queen Margaret University	Musselburgh	43 minutes	36 minutes
Edinburgh College	Granton	12 minutes	20 minutes
	Milton Road	34 minutes	38 minutes
	Sighthill	28 minutes	35 minutes
	Midlothian	-	47 minutes

Bus Stop in front of refurbished building



Proposed Site Circulation Diagrams

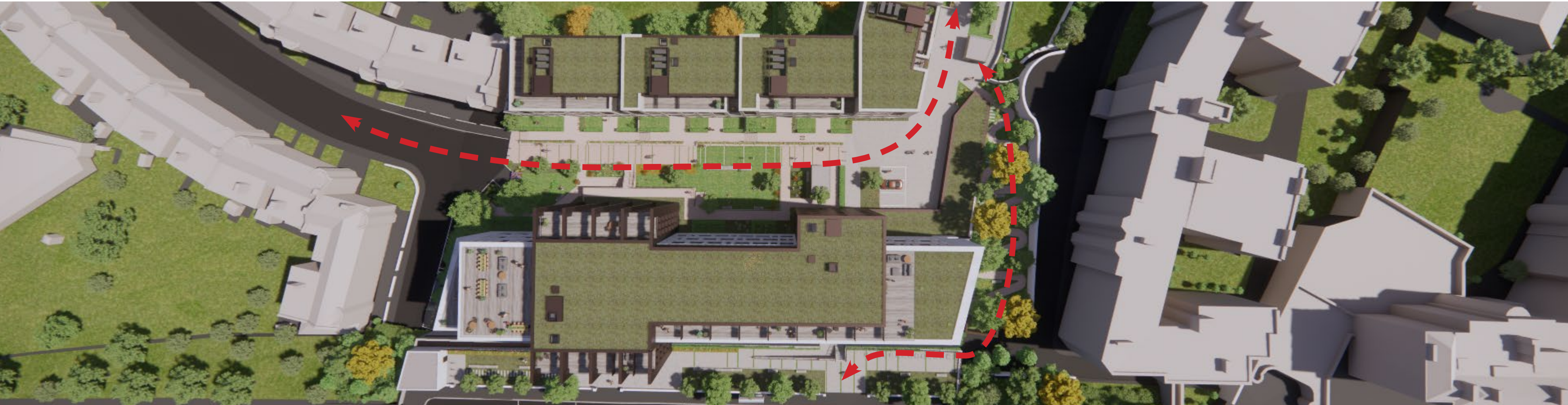
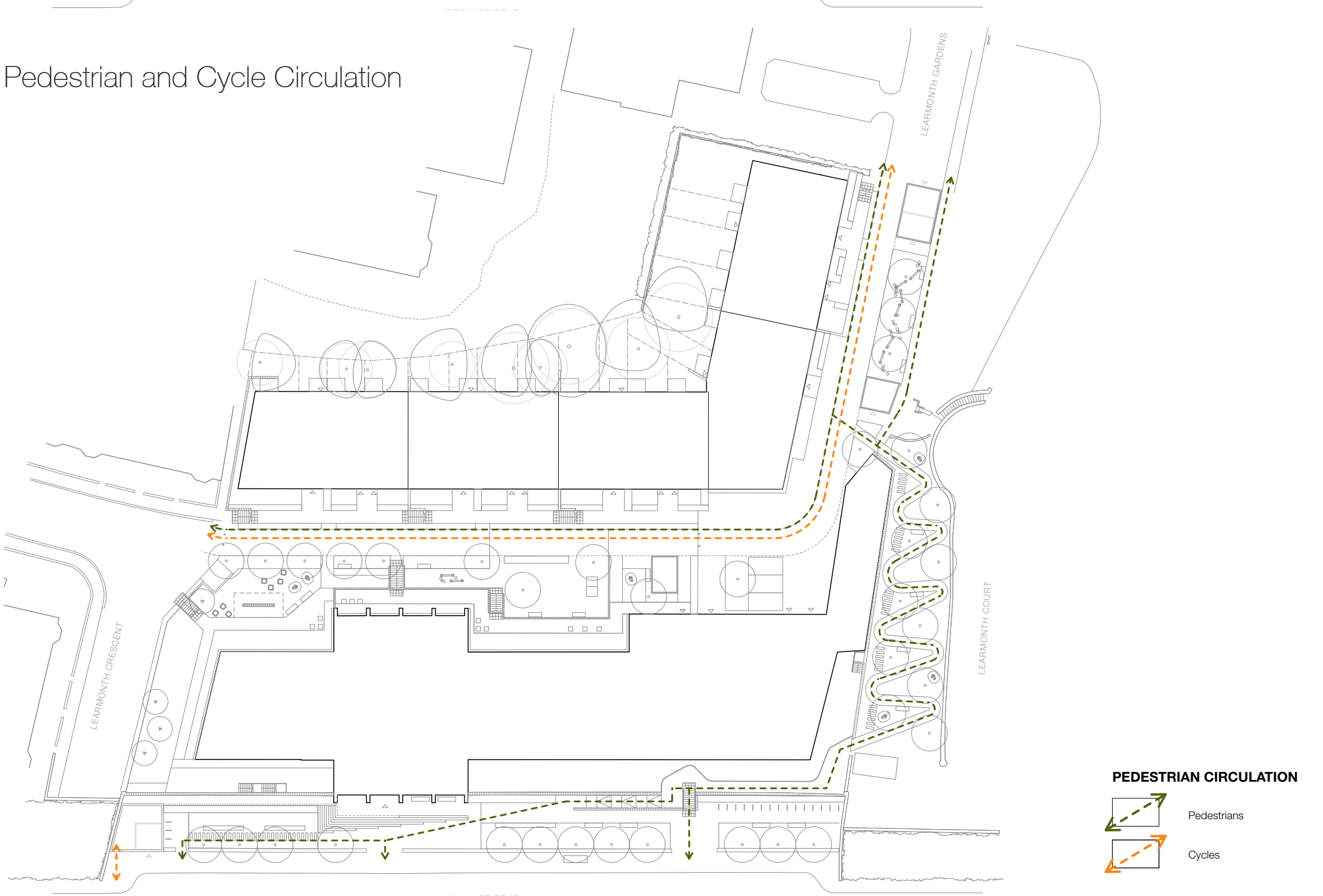
Vehicular Circulation



Spatial Strategy



Pedestrian and Cycle Circulation





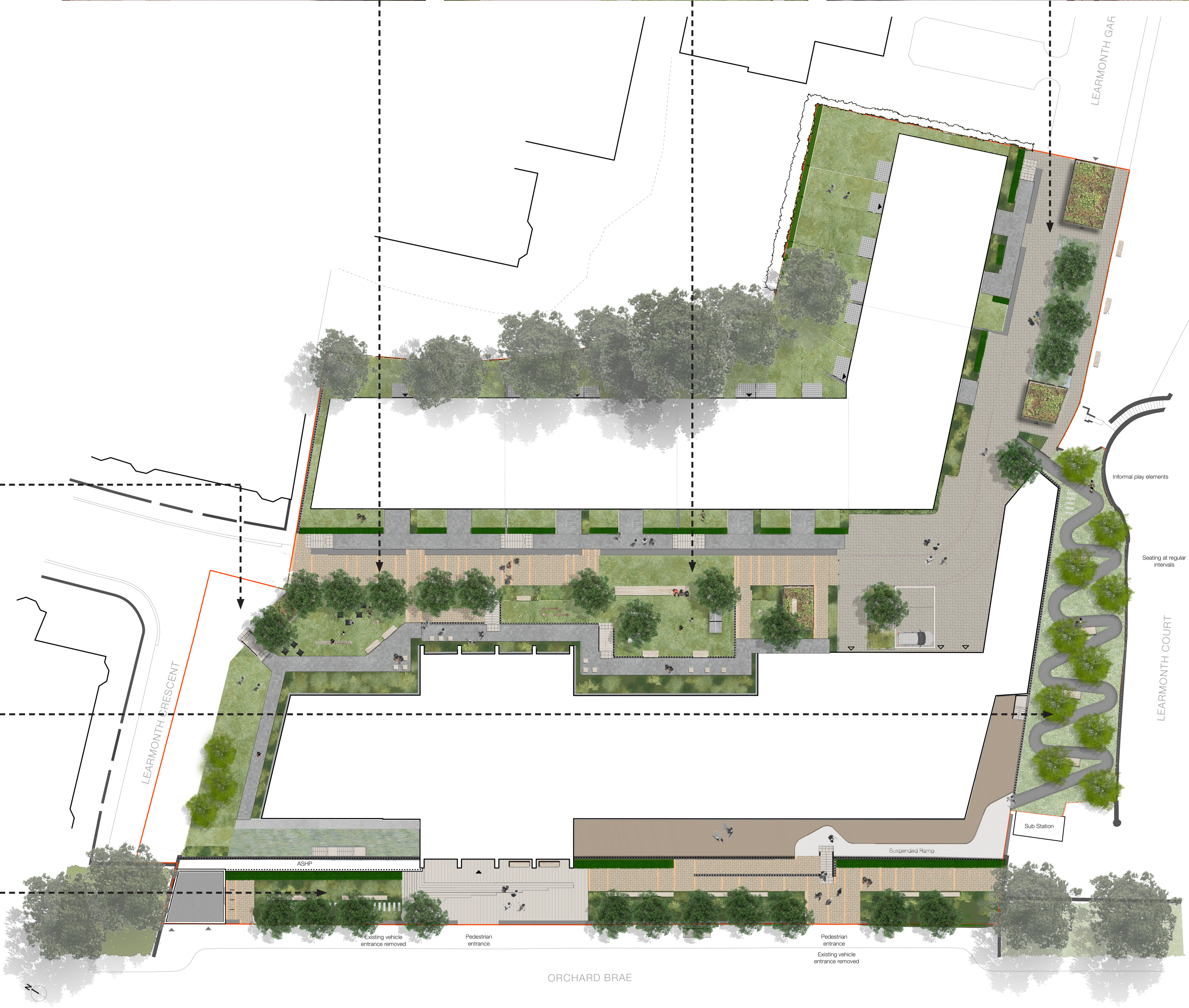
Accessible landscaped path towards Orchard Brae looking at the New Build

Landscaping Proposal

The landscape proposal tries to maximise the new east-west and north-south connections by offering meaningful open spaces for the residents and the neighbourhood.

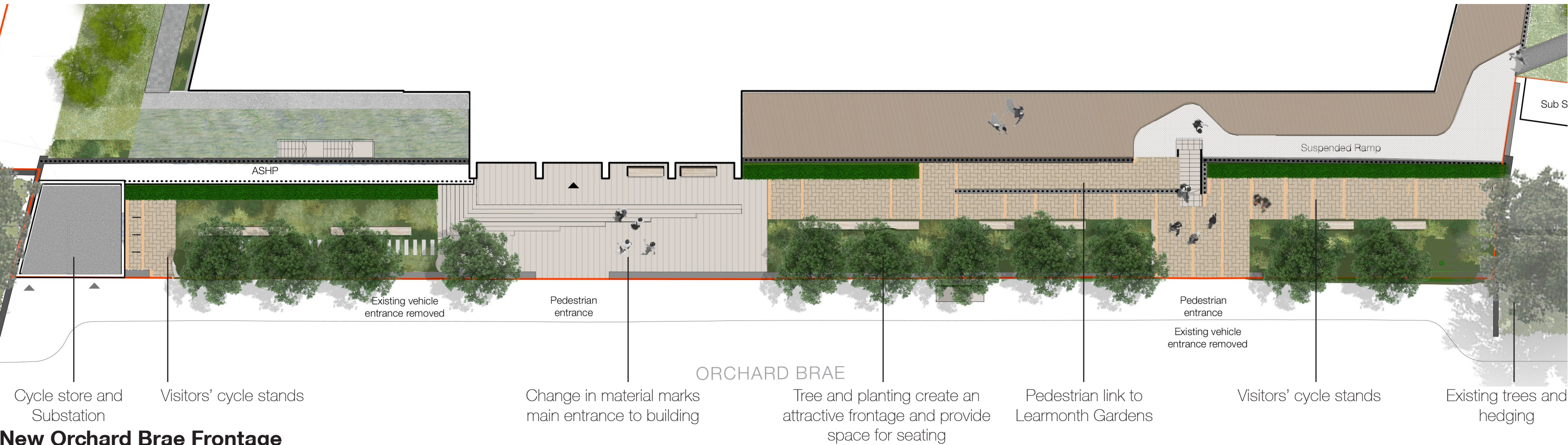
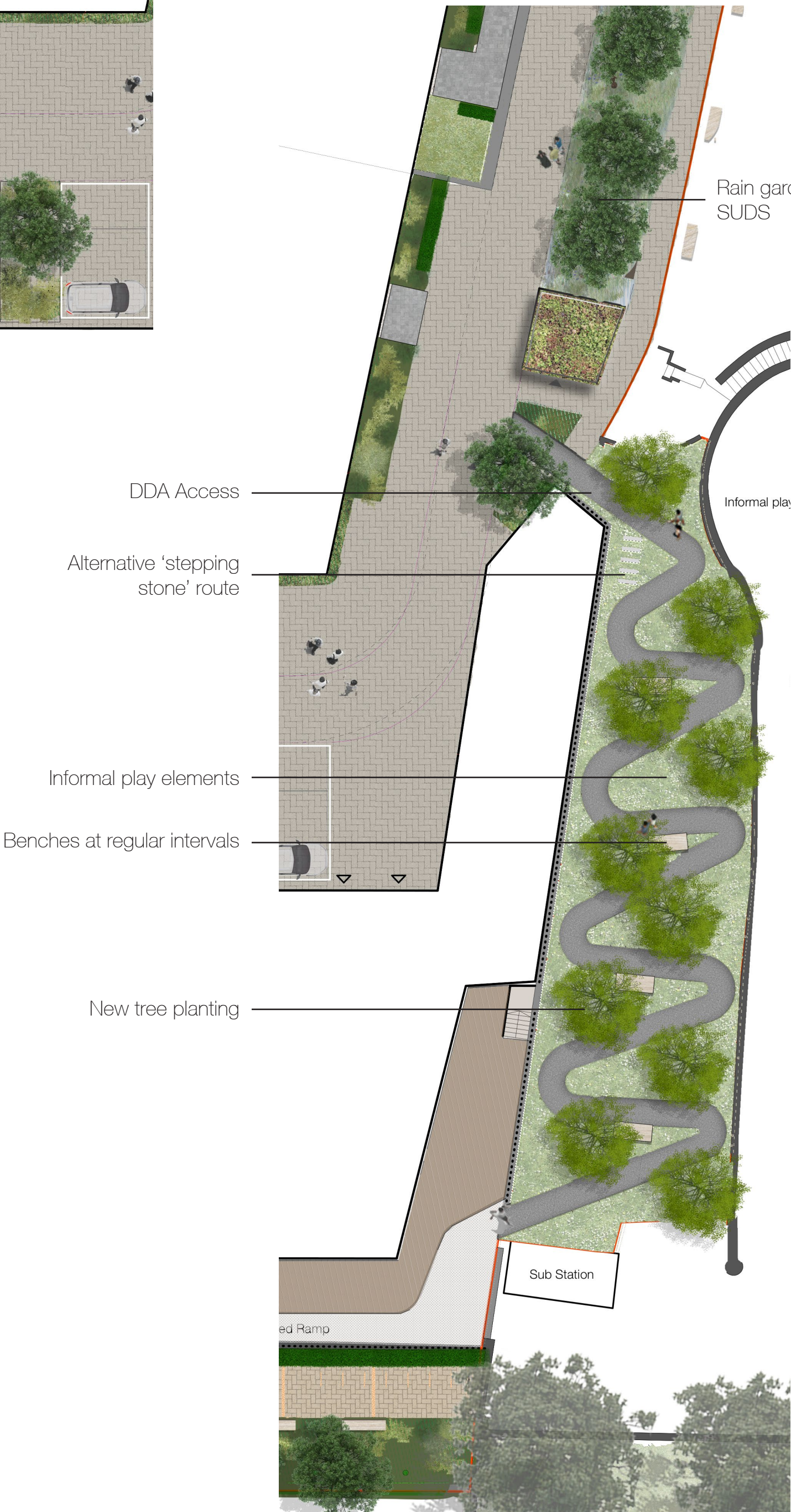
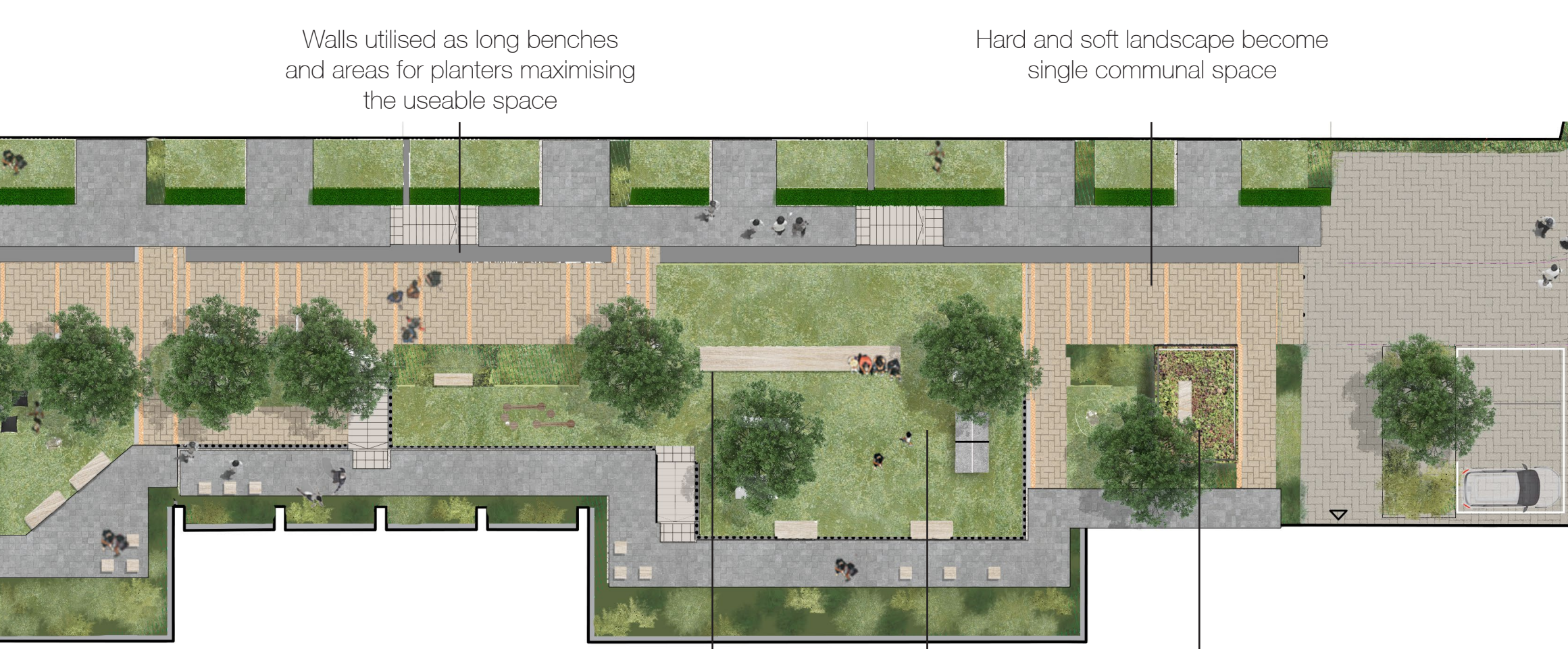
There is an important mix of private and public spaces. Main door entries combined with common access are being provided for the residential blocks at ground level. There is a substantial level difference across the site, which will be used to the landscape's advantage to promote a great variety of gardens, seating and play areas.

Vehicular traffic will be restricted to the south end of the development, which will provide a car free space in the shared areas between the refurbished building and the new build. This space will have retractable bollards on each end for the exclusive use of fire engines in case of emergency. The east-west connection to Orchard Brae will provide an accessible DDA landscaped path equipped with seating, play areas, new trees and gardens.





Walk through new connection from Learmonth Crescent to Learmonth Gardens



Design Precedents



Sustainability

Air Source Heat Pumps via communal centralised plant will be utilised to provide heating and domestic hot water.

The City of Edinburgh has pledged to achieve net zero carbon by 2030, this is in advance of the National Scotland target to achieve this in 2045. The proposed design standards will future proof the development in assisting to achieve this target.

As the proposed design removes the requirement for fossil fuels and provides a highly efficient heating solution using electricity, it will allow the development to decarbonise alongside the electrical grid. When the grid reaches net zero, and all electricity is produced via renewables, the development will also then achieve net zero in regard to operational carbon.

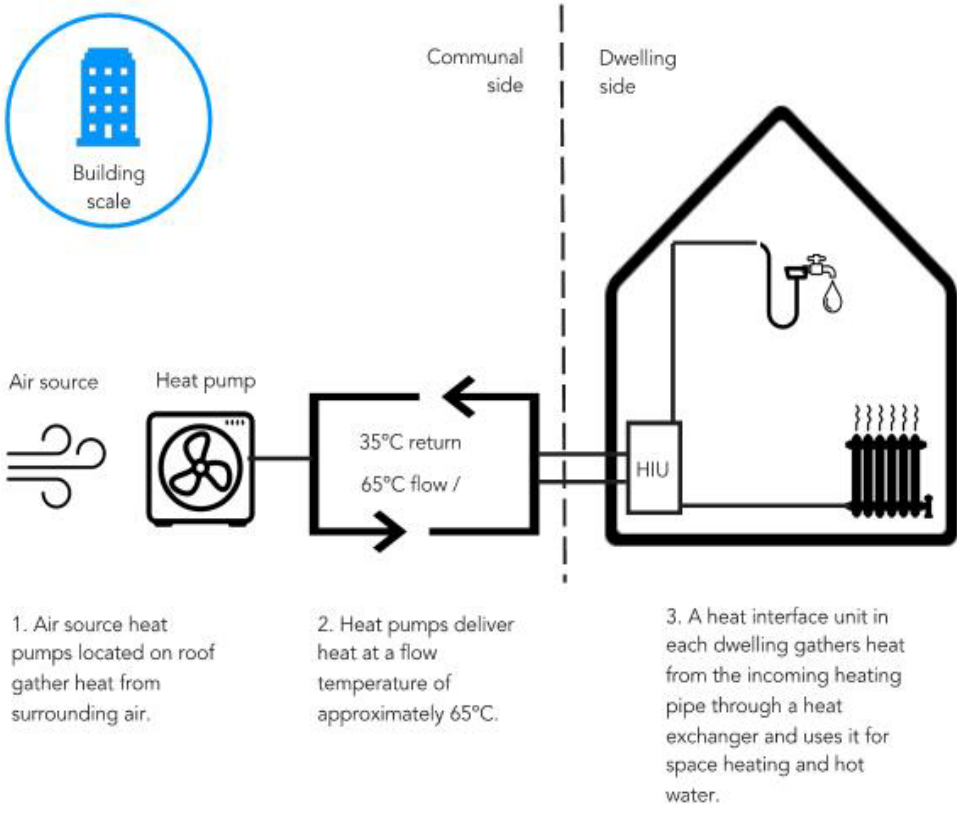
This new standard promotes reduction in heating demand and the installation of a low carbon heating solution.

The Energy Strategy has calculated that, the proposed development is predicted to achieve an aggregate reduction in CO2 emissions substantially lower than a baseline compliant development through the use of:

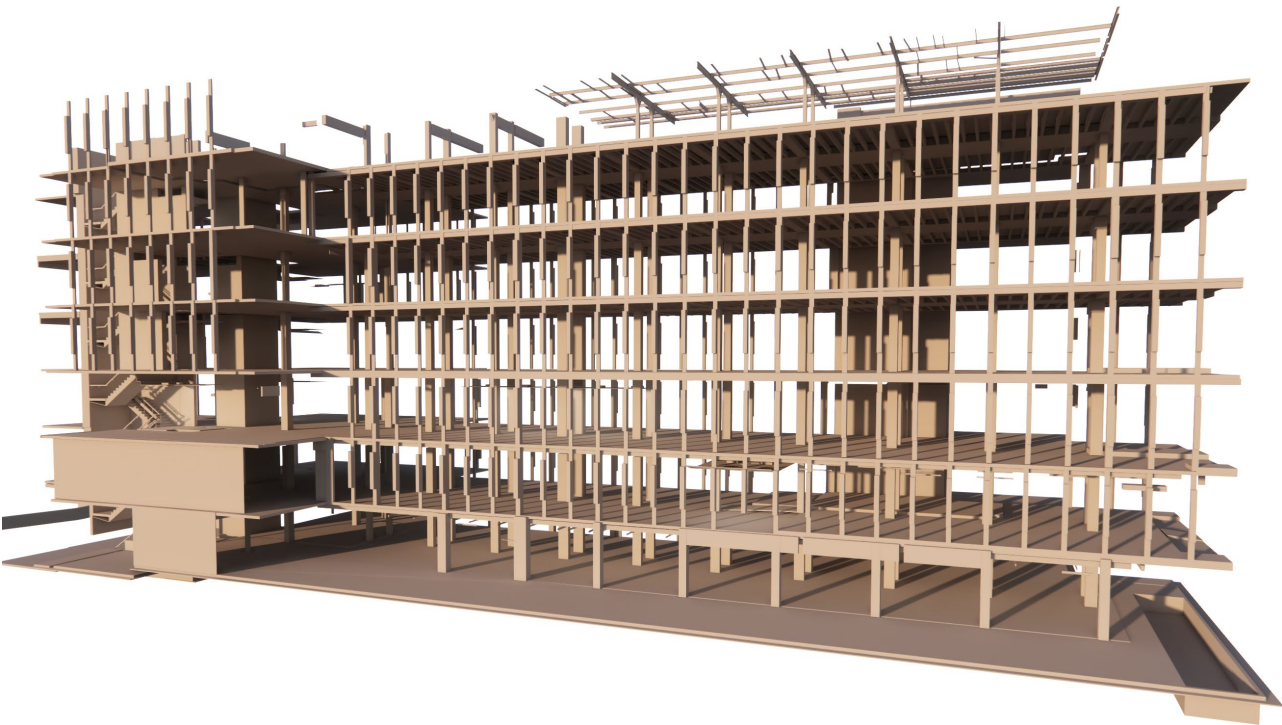
- Optimised levels of fabric insulation.
- Reduced levels of air permeability in order to minimise uncontrolled heat gains or losses.
- Incorporation of heat recovery on ventilation systems.
- The use of low energy variable speed drives and motors.
- The installation of automated controls to limit plant and lighting operation where practical.
- Installation of low energy lighting schemes throughout.
- Fossil Fuel Free development.

To further contribute to the reduction of carbon emission, additional measurements are being used as part of the design strategy:

- The development is proposing to re-use a currently vacant site and supports the retention of the existing reinforced concrete frame of the main 1960s Finance House building on Orchard Brae.
- Thermal envelope design requirements to allow for a more efficient and thermally sustainable building which require lower running costs and energy usage.
- Promotion of cycle over car. Over 450 cycle parking spaces will be provided (combining residential and student accommodation).
- Electric car charging points to meet the requirements of the Council.
- Enhanced biodiversity created through the retention of existing mature trees and hedges, and the inclusion of new trees, green roofs and flowering species.
- Use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) that provide an alternative to the direct channelling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers to nearby watercourses.



Simplified diagram of the system
Air source heat pumps used as low carbon energy solution



Re-use of existing concrete frame



- Private decked terraces
- Communal decked terraces
- Green roofs



Aerial view looking South



Aerial view looking East

Technical Update / Summary

Transport:

Transport Statement is ongoing but assessment to date shows that the site is within a sustainable location for attending university and college campuses.

Noise:

The Noise Impact Assessment is being updated; however, it is noted that the extant development was acceptable to CEC Environmental Protection. The proposed use of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) is currently seeking to following the same design as approved. Any changes would be thoroughly assessed.

Air Quality:

An updated Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) is being prepared. It is noted that the extant planning permission was assessed to improve air quality through the reduction of car movement on site. Given the proposed car free nature of the site, the scheme is likely to result in further benefit.

Daylight / Sunlight:

An updated assessment is ongoing. It is noted from initial results that the proposed development would comply with the requirements of Edinburgh Design Guidance 2020.

Biodiversity:

Updated biodiversity surveys and assessments are being commissioned.

Trees:

An updated tree survey is commissioned to take account of the latest condition of the trees on the site. No additional trees are proposed to be lost in comparison to the approved development.

Flood Risk and Drainage:

An updated assessment of flood risk and the drainage proposals will be completed and will support the planning application.

The Applicant has been engaging proactively with the Council through the pre-application advice process. The above technical matters will be subject to further discussion with Officers.

Next Steps

The following indicative timescale is sought:

- Planning Submission: March 2024
- Committee Date: Late Summer 2024
- Amended Legal Agreement: Autumn/Winter 2024
- Discharge of Conditions: Winter/Spring 2025
- Commence on Site: Spring/Summer 2025.
- Occupation of site: Summer 2028