

## DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

### PLANNING COMMITTEE – 21<sup>st</sup> August 2018

<b>Application</b>	1
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<b>Application Number:</b>	18/01274/3FULM	<b>Application Expiry Date:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2018
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<b>Application Type:</b>	Major
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<b>Proposal Description:</b>	Erection of cultural and learning centre following partial demolition of former Girls School building.
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<b>At:</b>	Former site of Hall Cross Lower School, Chequer Road.
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<b>For:</b>	Mr Nick Stopforth - DMBC
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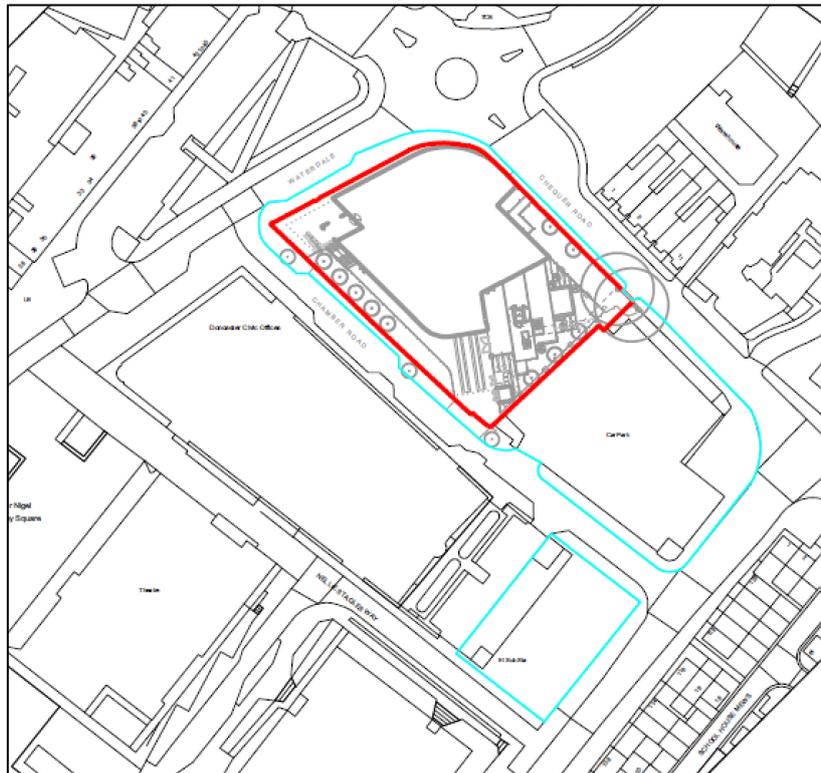
<b>Third Party Reps:</b>	2
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<b>Parish:</b>	
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<b>Ward:</b>	Town
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<b>Author of Report</b>	Mel Roberts
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<b>MAIN RECOMMENDATION:</b>	GRANT
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## **1.0 Reason for Report**

1.1 This application is being reported to planning committee because it is a major application submitted by Doncaster Council.

## **2.0 Proposal and Background**

2.1 This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a cultural and learning centre following the partial demolition of the former Girls School building (see figs 1 and 2). The proposed building will provide a number of facilities including a rail heritage centre (with space for two locomotives), a new library, museum, art gallery and conference facilities (see floor plans in figs 3 to 6). It is expected that Doncaster Central Library, Doncaster Archives in Balby, Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery and the Library Services for Schools located on Top Road in Barnby Dun will be relocated to the site. There is to be a public realm space to the rear of the building, which is intended to be used by visitors of the building and the public and will create the opportunity for gatherings, public events, informal social and exhibition areas. The intention of the project is to create a cultural hub that will become a vital part of the wider regeneration of the area.

2.2 The site was most recently occupied by Hall Cross Comprehensive School which was formerly Doncaster High School for Girls. In 1971 Doncaster High School for Girls amalgamated with Doncaster Grammar School to form Hall Cross Comprehensive School. The majority of the former Hall Cross Comprehensive School has been demolished, but part of the original Doncaster High School for Girls building remains. The proposal retains part of the former Girls school and encloses it within the new building behind a glass wall integrating the building and its features as an exhibition piece in its own right. The proposal removes the 2 wings of the former Girls school retaining the core wedge of the building including the internal staircase.

2.3 It is expected that a maximum of 19 staff members will be on site at any given time. Volunteers will also work at the site and the numbers will vary between 5 and 25 depending on the type of event taking place. The proposed development is expected to attract an average of 930 visitors per day.

2.4 Apart from the former Girls school that fronts the roundabout, there is also an overspill car park in the southern corner of the site (that ties in with the larger car park adjoining the site to the southeast). The site is located on a very important node of the town, next to the Civic Offices and in the proximity of the Cast theatre. The site is served by Chequer Road on the east side, Chamber Road on the west and Waterdale on the north. There is a difference in level of approximately 1 metre from east to west and over 2 metres from south to north.

## **3.0 Relevant Planning History**

3.1 This site forms part of the wider mixed use Civic and Cultural Quarter that was granted outline consent on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2010 under reference 08/02535/OUTA. This site was granted outline permission for a variety of uses including offices, a hotel, residential and leisure uses. The outline permission remains extant on account of the permission being implemented within the 3 year period with the building of the Civic

Offices and reserved matters can be submitted on this site until March 2020 (on account of 10 years being allowed for the submission of reserved matters).

3.2 Permission was granted for the partial demolition of the former Girls school on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2013 under reference 13/02098/DEM.

#### **4.0 Representations**

4.1 The application has been advertised in the press and on site.

4.2 Doncaster Civic Trust is very pleased to see the project coming forward. The retention of the former Girls school is welcome and enhances the character of the new building and preserves a familiar 108 year old landmark.

4.3 An additional letter has been submitted asking why the design of the building has been changed from the initial scheme which looked like an iconic building to the one now which looks like a scaled down version.

#### **5.0 Consultations**

5.1 The Urban Design Officer has responded and has raised no objections, subject to a condition requiring details of the samples of materials to be agreed.

5.2 The Conservation Officer has responded and has raised no objections.

5.3 The Ecology Officer has raised no objections, as the submitted bat surveys have found no evidence of roosting behaviour.

5.4 The Tree Officer has responded and has raised no objections as the 2 London Planes on Chequer Road are unaffected by the proposal. Although one tree on Chamber Road will require removing as a result of the rear service access to the building, this will be adequately compensated with new planting within the scheme.

5.5 South Yorkshire Archaeological Service has asked for a condition requiring further investigation of possible archaeology on the site. A Roman cemetery was excavated 85m southwest of the site in 2011, prior to construction of the Cast Theatre. Further Roman burials were excavated 140m north of the site in the 1990s. Similar archaeological remains may exist within the proposed site. Groundworks associated with these proposals may therefore destroy important archaeological remains. Some disturbance has already occurred due to the construction of the former Girls School but the submitted risk assessment makes it clear that subsequent demolition was only to slab level. Given the sensitivity of this site, consideration needs to be given to pockets of undisturbed ground which may still be present.

5.6 Highways have responded and have raised no objections subject to a condition requiring a Construction Traffic Management Plan be submitted and approved with the local planning authority.

5.7 The Contaminated Land Officer has responded and has raised no objections subject to a condition requiring a Validation Report showing how the site has been remediated. The Ground Investigation Survey indicates that the school was built in 1910 and no obviously significant contaminative land uses are recorded within the site boundaries. The report recommends a 600mm clean cover (150mm of subsoil and 450mm of topsoil) underlain by a hi-visibility geotextile separation layer be placed in the proposed landscaped areas to mitigate the risk to end users from asbestos and PAHs recorded within the made ground.

5.8 The Air Quality Officer has responded and has raised no objections. The site is in a highly accessible location and no car parking is to be provided. The traffic generated by this proposal will be offset by the closure of those facilities (including the library, archives, museum and art gallery) that it is replacing.

5.9 Yorkshire Water has raised no objections subject to a condition requiring further details of the drainage of the site.

5.10 Public Health recommends that cycle parking facilities are provided close to the site and that movement in and around the site needs to be suitable for the physically less able.

## **6.0 Relevant Policy and Strategic Context**

### National Planning Policy Framework

6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that planning law requires that applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states in paragraph 56 that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

### Doncaster Core Strategy

6.2 Policy CS8 states that key town centre uses that would enhance the vitality and viability of Doncaster Town Centre (including retail, key leisure and entertainment uses and arts, cultural and tourism uses) will be directed sequentially to the Doncaster Town Centre Primary Shopping Area.

6.3 Policy CS9 states that new developments will provide, as appropriate, transport assessments and travel plans to ensure the delivery of travel choice and sustainable opportunities for travel.

6.4 Policy CS14 relates to design and sustainable construction and states that all proposals in Doncaster must be of high quality design that contributes to local distinctiveness, reinforces the character of local landscapes and building traditions, responds positively to existing site features and integrates well with its immediate and surrounding local area.

6.5 Policy CS15 states that proposals will be supported which protect or enhance the heritage significance and setting of locally identified heritage assets such as buildings of local architectural or historic interest, locally important archaeological sites and parks and gardens of local interest.

6.6 Policy CS16 states that proposals will be supported which enhance the borough's landscape and trees by retaining and protecting appropriate trees and hedgerows and incorporating new tree and hedgerow planting.

#### Unitary Development Plan

6.7 Policy ENV25 states that the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area will be a material consideration when dealing with proposals for new development outside a conservation area which would affect its setting or views into or out of the area.

6.8 Policy TC11 designates the site as an Office Policy Area and as such, any development or redevelopment schemes, which provide an increase in office space, will generally be supported. Proposals for other uses will be treated on their merits having regard to highway safety and the relationship of the site to surrounding uses, providing that they are consistent with other policies in the plan, particularly shopping and conservation.

### **7.0 Planning Issues and Discussion**

7.1 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the starting point for consideration of this application is the development plan. All decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

#### Principle of the Development

7.2 The proposal is for a town centre use and is within the town centre as defined by policy CS8 of the Core Strategy. The site already benefits from outline consent for a variety of uses including offices, a hotel, residential and leisure and this proposed development will complement the Civic and Cultural Quarter and help to regenerate this area. The proposal also complies with policy TC11 of the Doncaster UDP which allows for alternative uses other than offices.

#### Design and impact on the character of the adjacent Conservation Area

7.3 The site lies opposite Doncaster High Street Conservation Area and as part of its appraisal (not yet adopted), the former Girls school building is recommended to be included within its modified boundary. The school building is considered to be a key unlisted building in the area as it is a local landmark. The building has already been partially demolished but its corner elements have been retained which are particularly striking.

The proposal retains the most significant elements of the former school building, namely the corner element with its curved towers which are to be incorporated into the new building. The retained elements will include the rooms behind the main façade as well as the central staircase and these are to be fully integrated into the floor plan of the new building (and will be used as a café on ground floor and an education centre on the first floor). The retained element of the old school building will be set within a 'glass box' with the existing roof line removed apart from the domes and this will create an interesting interplay between the new building and the old. A Structural Survey of the former Girls School has been submitted with the application and this shows that the building is generally in good condition, although it is still being damaged by water penetration and it is highly recommended that protection works are carried out at the earliest opportunity.

7.4 The scale of the building is appropriate for this site and will tie in well with the other buildings that form part of the CCQ including the Civic Offices, Cast Theatre and proposed Cinema and Restaurants. The use of glazing along the frontage serves to showcase the former Girls school building and this contrasts well with the more solid appearance at the rear of the building.

7.5 The external fenestration for the proposed building is driven by the internal uses with large expansions of glass serving the library areas, while the sensitive spaces like the museum and art galleries have minimal windows. Projecting fins are used to create interest and a shimmering effect depending on which angle you look at the building. The rear of the building is very solid and clad with a standing seam with some smaller natural folds/vertical fins. At the south is an elegant curve that directs visitors to the main entrance and welcomes the locomotives through some large tall doors.

7.6 To Waterdale in the north, the main entrance space is formed. This will blend to the existing materials palette on Waterdale through the use of Yorkstone and will have hostile vehicle mitigation measures in place. Concrete block paving is proposed for the circulation spaces to the east and south and relates to the existing silver concrete paving slabs that run along Chamber Road to the west. Self-binding gravel is used to the sunken social space to the south due to its more informal feel and relates to the tones of the Yorkshire paving to the north of the scheme and other materials of the locality. Concrete surfacing is proposed to the service yard space to the south of the site due to its hard wearing properties, which will be essential in order to accommodate regular deliveries. The proposed building has been designed in full compliance with the statutory and advisory standards to ensure that the building and the gardens are accessible to all.

7.7 In terms of the sustainability credentials of the building, substantial thermal insulation and stringent air tightness will be incorporated to reduce the amount of energy used. All insulation materials to be used will be sustainable, mostly glass mineral wool. The proposal also includes the provision of photovoltaic panels on the roof of the building. A BREEAM statement has also been submitted to show that the development will achieve a rating of 'very good.'

7.8 The proposed building is therefore a high quality design that will preserve and enhance the character of the adjacent conservation area and is therefore in accordance with policies CS14 and CS15 of the Core Strategy and ENV25 of the Doncaster UDP.

### Trees and landscaping

7.9 A Tree Survey has been submitted and this shows that there are 3 trees within the application site. There are 2 London Planes in the far north eastern corner of the site on the Chequer Road frontage and an Alder that forms part of the avenue of trees along Chamber Road. The 2 London Planes are unaffected by the proposal, but the Alder will need removing to facilitate access into the site. The proposed landscaping scheme will adequately compensate for the loss of this Alder and is to include a feature tree (Sweet Gum) that can reach a mature height of 20 to 30m. The soft planting to be used within the scheme will pick up on the concept of trains and railways with the use of architectural grasses, perennials and Birch trees to create a community of plants reminiscent of that found on railway sidings. The application therefore accords with policy CS16 of the Core Strategy.

### Highways

7.10 Servicing of the site with deliveries and refuse is to take place at the rear of the building with access taken from Chamber Road. A swept path analysis has been submitted and this shows that there is adequate room for refuse vehicles to turn around within the site. The scheme does not provide for any car parking, but the site is located within a very sustainable location for this not to be an issue. The existing vehicular access from Chequer Road is to be closed and the footpath reinstated to provide pedestrian access to the public realm; pedestrian access to the public realm will also be provided from Chamber Road. For school visits, coaches are expected to park within the loading bay on the south-eastern side of Waterdale.

7.11 The applicant has submitted a Draft Travel Plan. A number of bus services are available from local bus stops including services to Retford, Gainsborough and Cantley. The services provide a useful link to Doncaster Frenchgate Interchange which provides additional bus services to local destinations in the Doncaster area and also rail travel. The document states that visitors can use the cycling parking facilities at the front of the Civic Offices. Staff members who cycle to work are expected to be able to use the changing rooms and lockers provided on site, whilst staff bicycles will be stored in the bike stands provided at DMBC Civic Offices opposite. Pedestrian access to the site will be provided via the existing footway provision on Chamber Road, Waterdale and Chequer Road. The application therefore accords with policy CS9 of the Core Strategy.

### Drainage

7.12 The site falls within Flood Zone 1 and the submitted Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that the site can operate with minimal risk from flooding and will not increase flood risk elsewhere. Development of the site will take place with separate systems for foul and surface water drainage; it is proposed that the foul and surface water from the site will discharge to the public sewers in Chequer Road. Attenuation

storage will be incorporated into the site layout to ensure that water does not back up into the system at times of heavy rainfall. The majority of rainwater falling into the landscaped areas at the rear of the building will soak into the ground; any surface water runoff from the hardstanding areas would be directed to the drainage gullies located around the perimeter of the site. The adoption of a surface water management strategy for the site represents an enhancement from the current conditions, as the current surface water run-off from the site is uncontrolled, untreated, unmanaged and unmitigated.

## **8.0 Overall conclusions**

8.1 The proposal is an appropriate use for this site and will enhance the Civic and Cultural Quarter. The proposed building is iconic and retains the former Girls school and will both enhance and preserve the character of the adjacent Conservation Area. All issues such as highways, trees and drainage have been resolved.

## **9.0 Recommendation**

9.1 Planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions.

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.  
REASON  
Condition required to be imposed by Section 91(as amended) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
2. The development hereby permitted must be carried out and completed entirely in accordance with the terms of this permission and the details shown on the approved plans and specifications.  
REASON  
To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application as approved.
3. The relevant drainage works shall not be begun until details of the foul, surface water and land drainage systems and all related works necessary to drain the site have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. These works shall be carried out concurrently with the development and the drainage system shall be operating prior to the occupation of the development.  
REASON  
To ensure that the site is connected to suitable drainage systems and to ensure that full details thereof are approved by the Local Planning Authority before any works begin.
4. The approved Phase 3 remediation works shall be carried out in full, as detailed in the Remedial Strategy T161793RS1.0, 12/6/18, Tier Environmental. Upon completion of the Phase 3 works, a Phase 4 verification report shall be submitted to and approved by the LPA. The verification report shall include details of the remediation works and quality assurance certificates to show that the works have been carried out in full accordance

with the approved methodology. Details of any post-remedial sampling and analysis to show that the site has reached the required clean-up criteria shall be included in the verification report together with the necessary documentation detailing what waste materials have been removed from the site. The site shall not be brought into use until such time as all verification data has been approved by the LPA.

**REASON**

To secure the satisfactory development of the site in terms of human health and the wider environment pursuant to the National Planning Policy Framework.

**5. Part A (pre-commencement)**

No development, including any demolition and groundworks, shall take place until the applicant, or their agent or successor in title, has submitted a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that sets out a strategy for archaeological investigation and this has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The WSI shall include:

The programme and method of site investigation and recording.

The requirement to seek preservation in situ of identified features of importance.

The programme for post-investigation assessment.

The provision to be made for analysis and reporting.

The provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the results.

The provision to be made for deposition of the archive created.

Nomination of a competent person/persons or organisation to undertake the works.

The timetable for completion of all site investigation and post-investigation works.

**Part B (pre-occupation/use)**

Thereafter the development shall only take place in accordance with the approved WSI and the development shall not be brought into use until the Local Planning Authority has confirmed in writing that the requirements of the WSI have been fulfilled or alternative timescales agreed.

**REASON**

To ensure that any archaeological remains present, whether buried or part of a standing building, are investigated and a proper understanding of their nature, date, extent and significance gained, before those remains are damaged or destroyed and that knowledge gained is then disseminated.

- 6. Prior to the erection of the building above ground level, a report shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority explaining how CO2 emissions from the development will be reduced by providing at least 10 per cent of the development's energy through on-site renewable energy equipment or improvements to the fabric efficiency of the building. The carbon savings, which result from proposed measures, will be beyond what is required to comply with Part L of Building Regulations. The development shall then proceed in accordance with the approved report.**

#### REASON

In the interests of sustainability and to minimize the impact of the development on the effects of climate change. This condition requires discharging prior to commencement as the approved detail may have an impact on the design and fabric of the building during construction or the appearance of the development.

7. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority, the development shall take place in accordance with the submitted BREEAM pre-assessment (dated 04.10.17 by Yonder limited) to achieve a minimum level of BREEAM 'very good'. Prior to the occupation of the building, a post construction review shall be carried out by a licensed assessor and submitted for approval to the Local Planning Authority.

#### REASON

In the interests of sustainability and to minimise the impact of the development on the effects of climate change.

8. Prior to the construction of the building above ground level, details of the proposed external materials shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval. Sample panels of the proposed facing brickwork and upper level cladding shall be constructed on site and be made available to view by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved materials.

#### REASON

To ensure that the materials are appropriate to the area in accordance with policy CS14 of the Doncaster Core Strategy.

9. No development shall commence until a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved plan shall be adhered to throughout the construction of the development. The CTMP shall contain information relating to (but not limited to):
  - i) Volumes and types of construction vehicles.
  - ii) Identification of delivery routes.
  - iii) Identification of agreed access point.
  - iv) Contractors method for controlling construction traffic and adherence to routes.
  - v) Size, route and numbers of abnormal loads.
  - vi) Swept path analysis (as required).
  - vii) Construction Period.
  - viii) Temporary signage.
  - ix) Measures to control mud and dust being transferred to the public highway.
  - x) Timing of deliveries.

#### REASON

In the interests of highway safety.

10. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a scheme for the protection of all retained trees that complies with British Standard 5837: 2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and construction shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. Tree protection shall be implemented on site in accordance with the approved scheme before any equipment, machinery or materials have been brought on to site for the purposes of the development, and shall be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made, without the written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON

To ensure that retained trees are protected from damage during construction.

11. No development or other operation shall take place within the root protection area of the Plane trees (T1 and T2) until a detailed working Arboricultural Method Statement that complies with British Standard 5837: 2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Working Method Statement shall include full details of the working method to be employed to protect the root systems of the trees during construction of the development including removal of the existing tarmac, boundary wall and metal gate posts, installation of the new hard surfaces and fence and during any soil level alterations. The development shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved Method Statement.

REASON

To minimise damage to the root systems of trees that are shown for retention on the approved plan.

12. Notwithstanding the details shown on Planting Plan 1 of 2 (DCLC-ALA-00-XX-DR-L-0006 Rev C02) and Planting Plan 2 of 2 (DCLC-ALA-00-XX-DR-L-0007 Rev C02) no development shall take place on the site until a corrected version of the plans has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The landscape scheme shall also include a landscape establishment specification and a maintenance specification for a minimum of five years following practical completion of the landscape works. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

REASON

In the interests of environmental quality.

**The above objections, considerations and resulting recommendation have had regard to Article 8 and Article 1 of the First Protocol of the European Convention for Human Rights Act 1998. The recommendation will not interfere with the applicant's and/or objector's right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.**

# Appendix

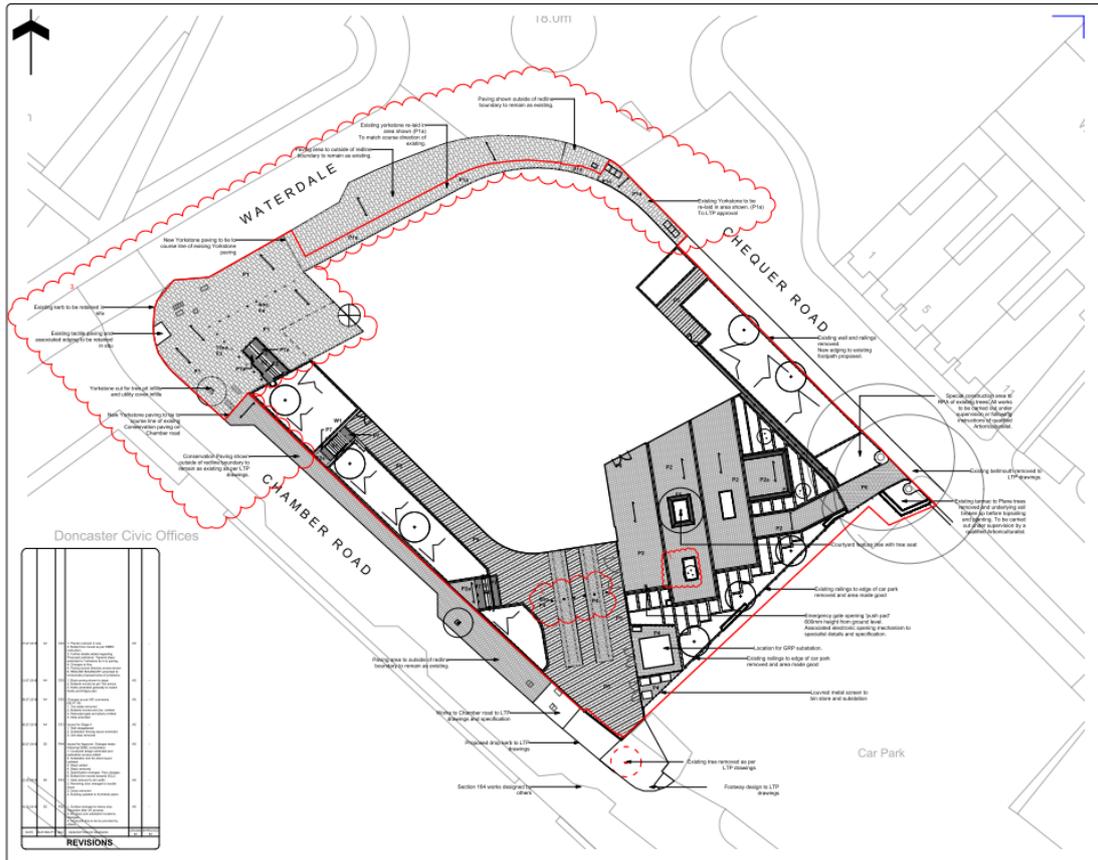


Fig 1 Proposed site plan.



Fig 2. Proposed elevations

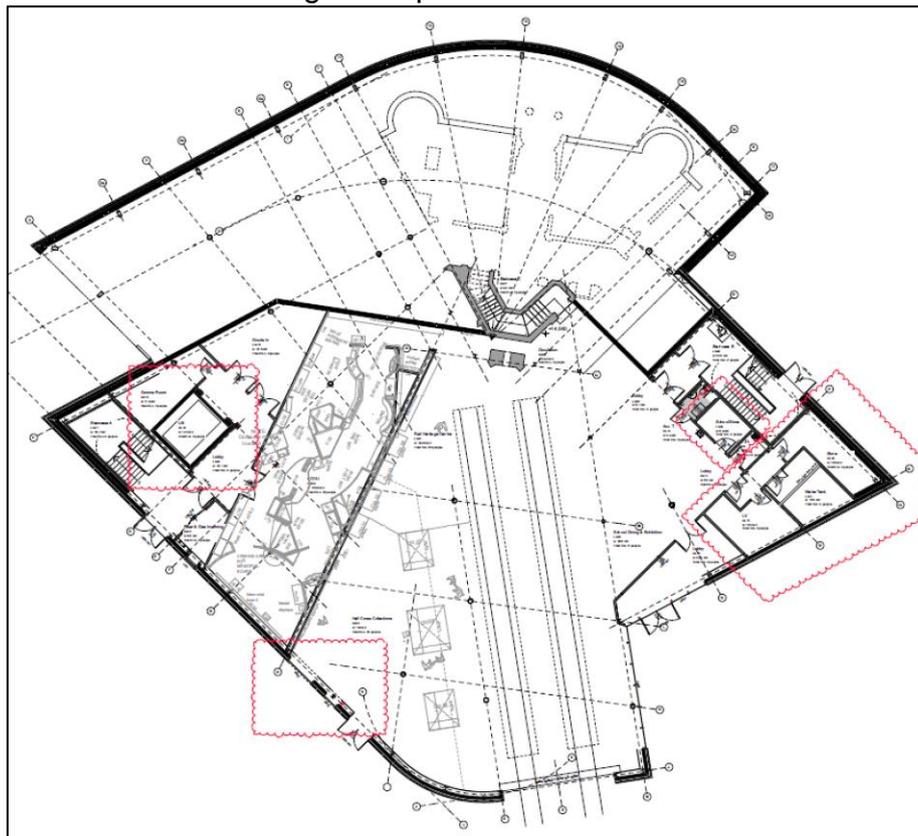


Fig 3. Proposed lower ground floor plan.

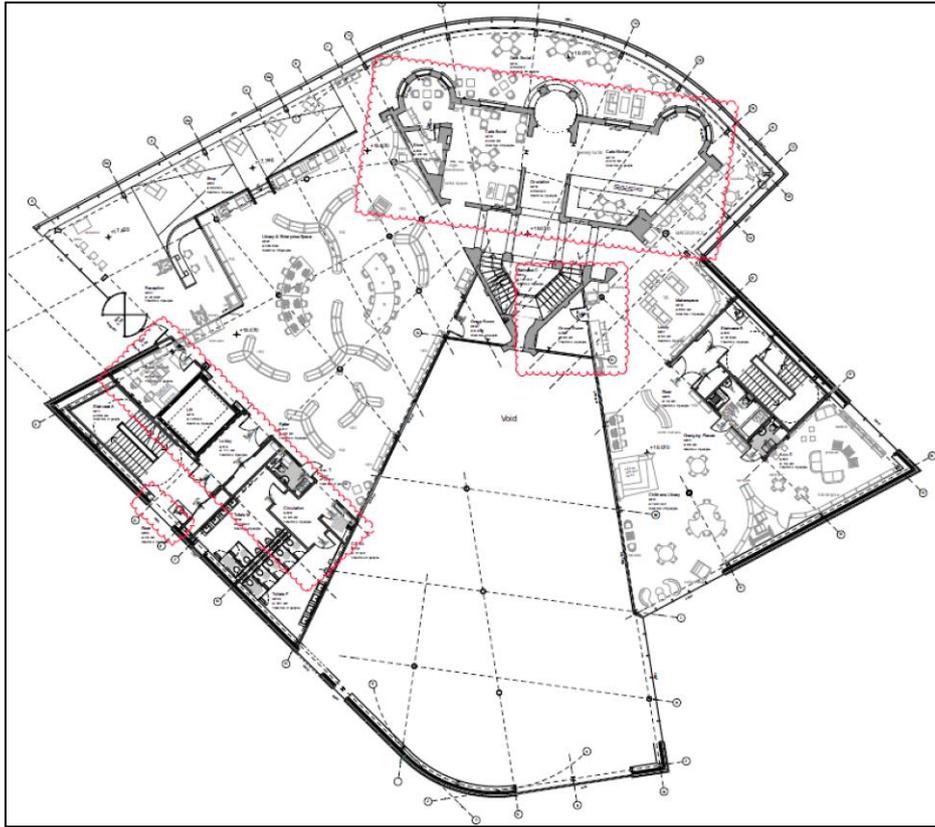


Fig 4. Proposed ground floor plan.

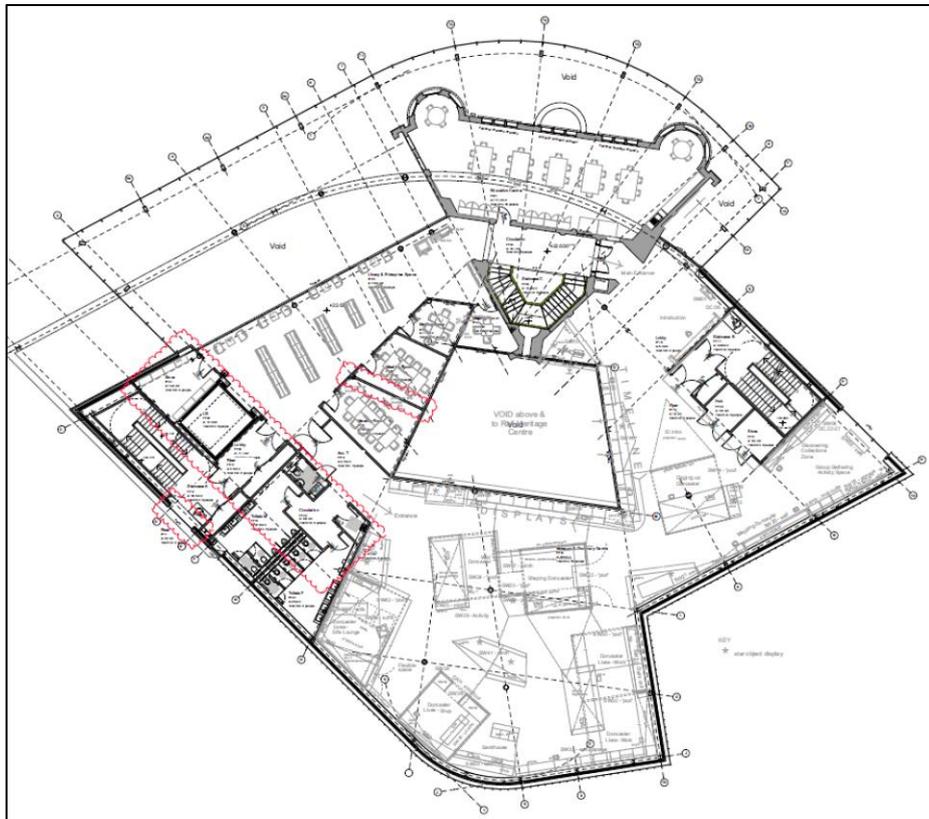


Fig 5. Proposed first floor plan.

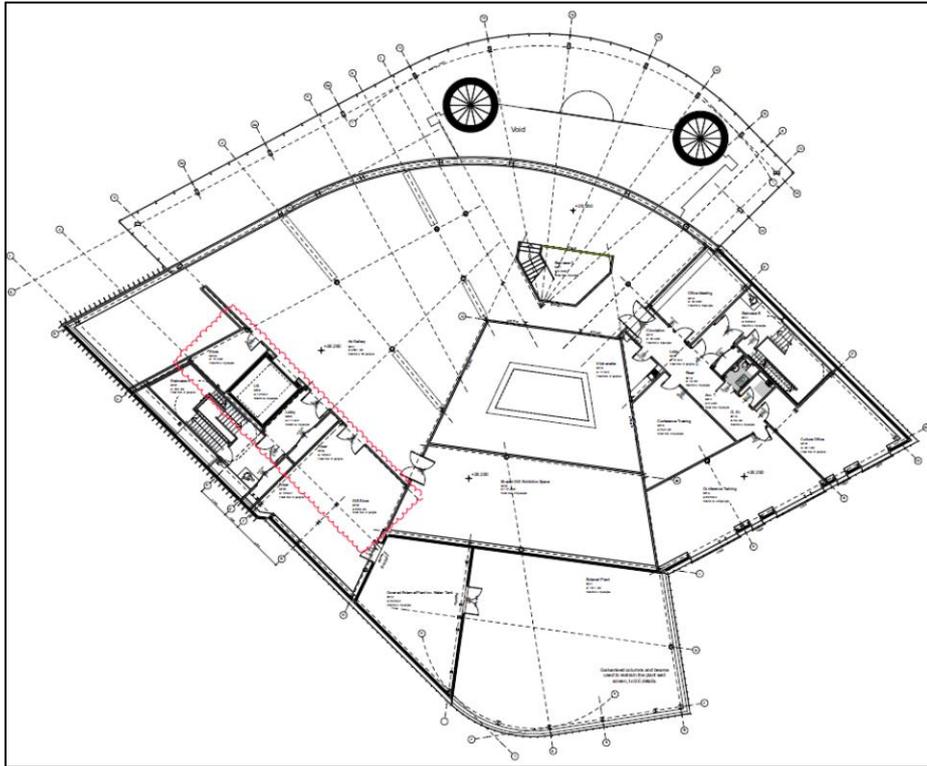


Fig 6. Proposed second floor plan.