

# PROJECT RE-CAP

**2.0**



# 2.1 THE VISION

## PROJECT VISION

The Beachfront Masterplan offers a unique opportunity to create a transformational new waterfront destination for the City of Aberdeen.

This updated feasibility report captures further progress and design development of the initial Beachfront concepts explored in August 2021.

The adjacent collage of words illustrates elements of priority within the overall Vision for the Beachfront Masterplan, following a number of briefing sessions with key personnel at Aberdeen City Council.

At the heart of the Masterplan is the redevelopment of the iconic Beach Ballroom – the ‘jewel in the crown’ of the Beachfront redevelopment.

An enhanced public realm setting for the re-imagined Ballroom, integrated with a new Stadium and Leisure complex, will create a dynamic new Urban Park character area which connects back into the City Centre.

This people-focussed environment will be inclusive for all, creating a real community asset and bringing the ‘Wow’ factor back to the Beachfront.

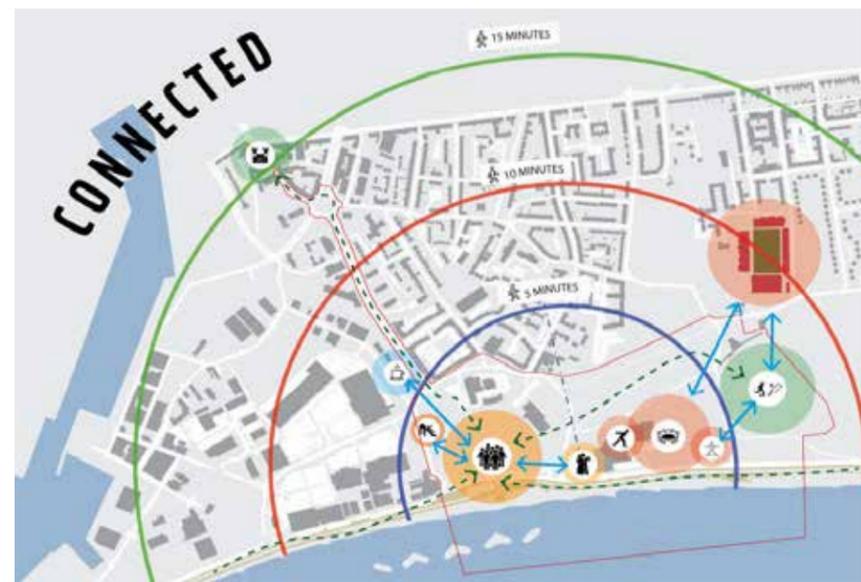
## PROJECT BRIEF

Key aspects of the initial Beachfront project Brief as identified with Aberdeen City Council include:

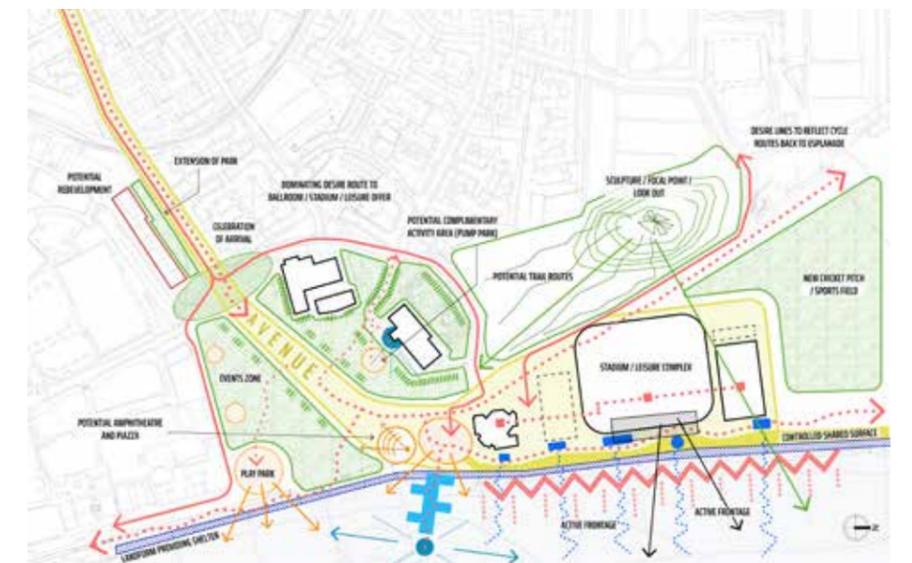
- The importance of the re-imagined Beach Ballroom, including a desire to return it to its former glory when it was known as the ‘People’s Ballroom’. This needs to recognise the buildings heritage and historic significance whilst equipping it for the future as a modern events venue.
- The potential to share/link facilities associated with the new Stadium and Leisure facilities to support joint funding with the Stadium Anchor tenant and realise economies of scale.
- A desire for a dynamic waterfront making the most of the Beach Boulevard and considering support facilities such as changing accommodation/beach huts and a potential pier structure.
- Excellent, high quality public realm.
- Reviewing previous studies by AFL/Legends on potential leisure activities and how this could be configured within the Masterplan. This should be fully inclusive and consider catering for all income groups that may visit the Beachfront.
- Access and Connectivity between the Beachfront and the City Centre
- Infrastructure, including traffic management that reduces the impact of the existing road network to promote alternative forms of travel, including cycling, whilst improving public realm.
- Co-ordination with potential flood/sea defence works planned for the area.



Beachfront Masterplan Brief & Vision Collage



A Connected Waterfront Destination



Initial Project Opportunities Diagram

## 2.2 MASTERPLAN

### MASTERPLAN OPTION STUDIES

The creation of a transformational new Beachfront destination will rely on progressive and innovative Masterplan solutions, alongside a respectful acknowledgement to the heritage of the site. As the proposed Masterplan will be centred around the iconic Beach Ballroom as the main focal point of the redevelopment, the history of the Beachfront is intrinsic to the character of the wider area.

Aberdeen was a successful and thriving destination in the early 1900s, with a range of well utilised leisure facilities and recreational activities located along the Beachfront. Capturing the nostalgia of that glorious bygone era, the celebration of what has gone before provides inspiration for the future development of the Beachfront.

Touted as 'the finest beach and most beautiful resort in Britain', Aberdeen was known as 'The Silver City by the Sea' - a popular picture-postcard holiday spot. The vision for the Masterplan is to rejuvenate the Beachfront back to its former glory as a major waterfront destination for future generations. The component parts of previous successes can be re-imagined to create a contemporary new Masterplan solution which establishes Aberdeen Beachfront as a world-class leisure destination once more.

3 initial Masterplan concepts were developed by the Design Team in August 2021:

- Rope Works
- Tram Lines
- Groynes

All three concepts draw upon the history and heritage of the Beachfront in an innovative, forward-thinking way.

Rope Works is inspired by Aberdeen's shipbuilding industry. Historically, the Rope & Sail Making Works were located on the site at the South of Queen's Links. The Rope Works concept uses the formation of the rope itself to inspire a Masterplanning design approach for the main character area of the site. The Rope Works concept takes the organic form of the rope to create a network of footpaths and desire routes, extending down from Beach Boulevard and opening up towards the Beach Ballroom at the heart of the proposed Masterplan.

Tram Lines uses the linearity of the historic tram routes to organise the central features of the Masterplan, alongside influences such as the octagonal geometry of the Beach Ballroom and Bandstand. The Tram Lines concept is centred around the existing remnant of physical tram line located at the North of Queen's Links. The historic lines would be retained and enhanced to form an organising geometry from which to build a re-imagined Urban Park.

The Groynes concept is inspired by the existing shore protection structures built perpendicular to the shoreline of the Aberdeen coast. These linear structures are an integral part of the unique Aberdeen sea-scape, creating a strong organising geometry from which the Masterplan builds. The 2 central Groynes form the basis of an overall design language for the Links character area, extending out into the sea to form a new pier structure which loops back round to create an amphitheatre-style external gathering space.



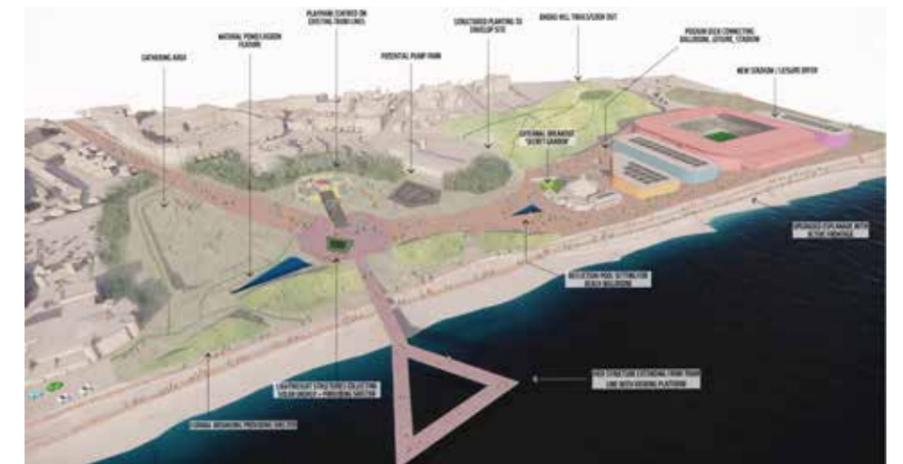
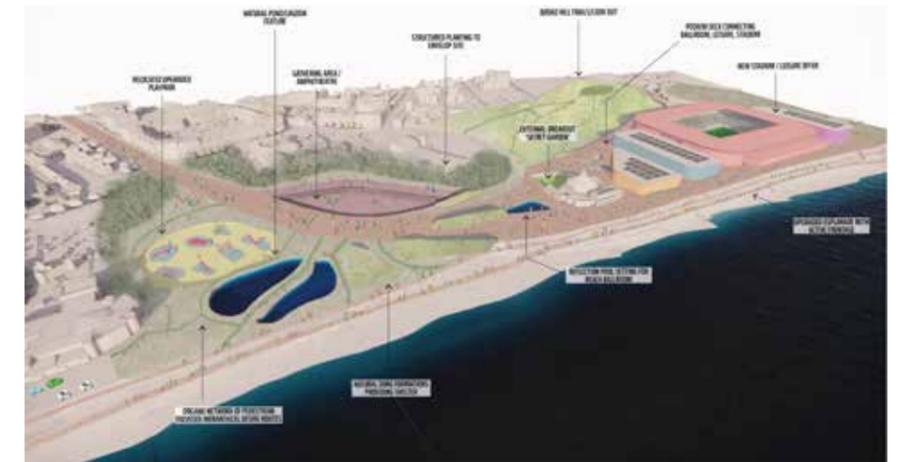
Rope Works Conceptual Masterplan



Tram Lines Conceptual Masterplan



Groynes Conceptual Masterplan



## 2.3 THE BEACH BALLROOM

### HISTORY & HERITAGE

The Beach Ballroom is a unique art deco venue located on the Promenade of Aberdeen's Beachfront. It was built in 1926 and is a Category B listed building.

The splendour and grandeur of the original interior design of the Beach Ballroom is highlighted on the adjacent historic photographs. These images showcase the unique and iconic art deco internal features of the main Dance Hall, including the impressive octagonal domed ceiling and the world-famous maple sprung dance floor.

The Ballroom was an extremely popular events venue during its early decades, hosting world-famous acts such as The Beatles, The Small Faces, The Who and Pink Floyd. Known affectionately as 'The People's Ballroom', the facility was a real community asset well-used by the people of Aberdeen.

### OPPORTUNITIES

The ambitious vision for the Beach Ballroom is to create an iconic, flexible, multi-purpose events space capable of hosting a variety of different types of events, standalone or concurrently, improving the commercial performance of the venue:

- Live entertainment/concerts
- Pre/post-match events / hospitality
- Fanzone / family entertainment
- Upgraded wedding venue
- Potential Esports overlay
- Creative industries centre with integrated teaching facilities at stadium
- Potential Fashion / Music / Drama / Film+TV / Photography courses
- High-end restaurant / Tea Rooms / Champagne Bar / Roof Terrace / Sky Bar

### SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

The Design Team suggest a number of potential improvements/study areas for the Beach Ballroom that should be explored in more detail moving forward:

- Celebration of Entrance - creating a grand setting for the building with a real sense of arrival and enhanced public realm
- Improve accessibility / wheelchair access and install lift core
- Potential for water feature / fountain / reflection pool
- Enhanced link to proposed leisure / stadium facilities
- Upgrade & restoration of external impressive art deco facade
- Dome restoration / expose and enhance original feature ceiling
- Improved viewing gallery & enhanced hospitality offer (VIP / Premium seating)
- Upgrade to state of the art AV, sound & lighting technology
- Utilise external balcony / roof areas to create bar / terrace taking advantage of spectacular views of Aberdeen Beach
- Potential for external break-out space, creating more intimate / sheltered private external space (Secret Garden)
- External feature lighting opportunities to showcase unique art deco architectural features on building façade
- Re-branding and marketing opportunities to align with 100 year anniversary (+60 years since The Beatles played)
- Potential to strip back star Ballroom extension and replace with more complementary and lighter roof form



Original Interior: Maple Sprung Dancefloor



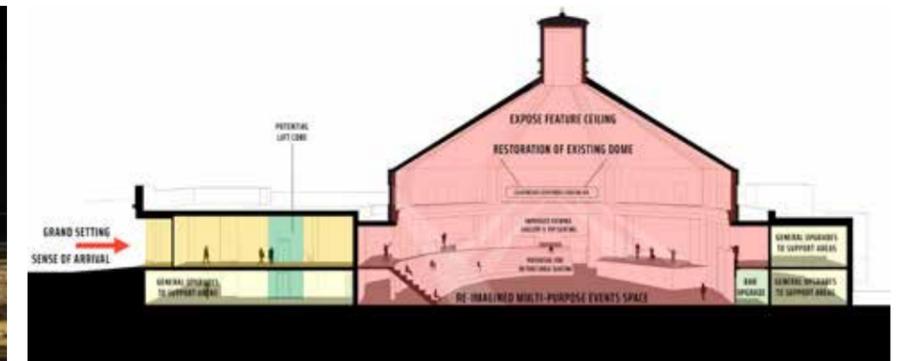
Original Interior: Octagonal Domed Feature Ceiling



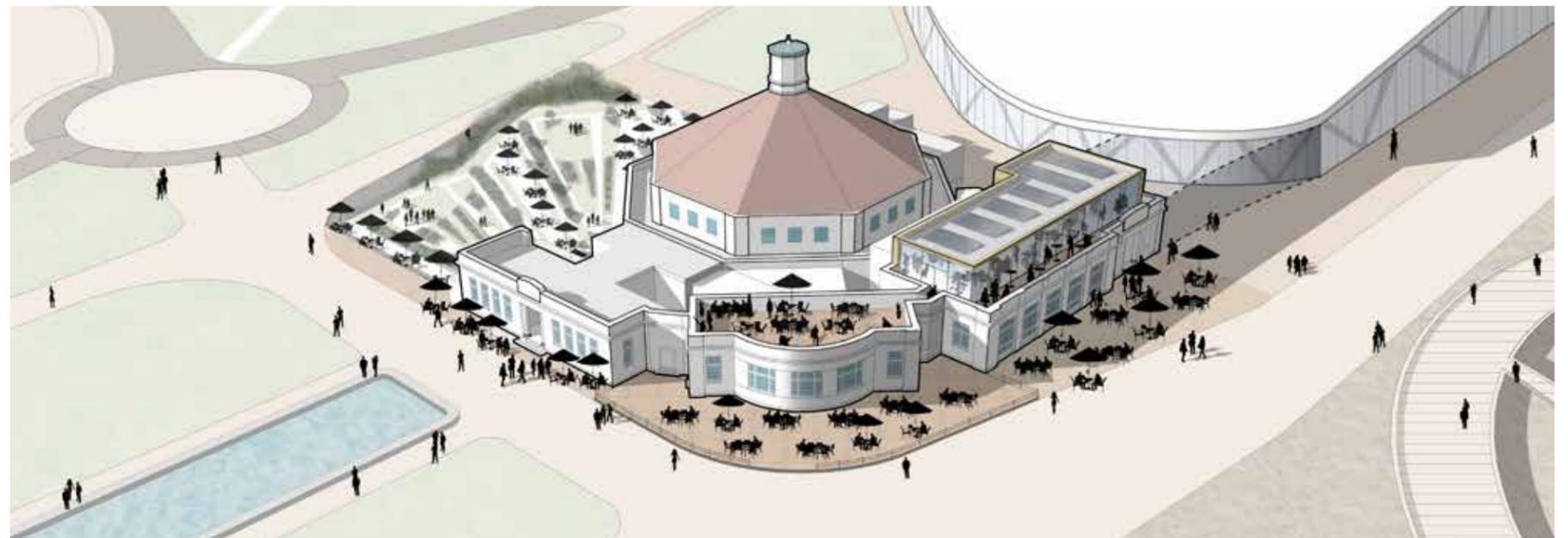
Concealed Domed Ceiling



Beach Ballroom As Existing



Section Diagram



Beach Ballroom Conceptual Massing Study

# 2.4 STADIUM & LEISURE

## INITIAL FEASIBILITY REPORT

The design team's previous work undertaken in the summer of 2021 reviewed the location of the stadium and leisure elements within the wider Masterplan, reviewed the existing leisure site and buildings, reviewed possible indoor and outdoor activities, identified the vision of creating a single destination that integrated the stadium, leisure and Beach Ballroom and reviewed the impact of the position of the stadium on the site. The work also identified three options for the stadium and leisure elements of the Masterplan. Refer to Beachfront Projects Feasibility Report - ACB-KEP-XX-XX-RP-A-852001 for full detail. Below is a summary of the diagrams:

Option 1 – retain and refurbish existing leisure centre and ice arena, new build football stadium

Option 2 – new build leisure centre and ice arena, new build football stadium

Option 3 – new leisure centre and ice arena, football stadium excluded

Further work has been undertaken by the design team on reviewing these options including their aims, objectives and outline project brief. This can be found on the following pages.



Tunnel to beach  
Step free Beach Access point

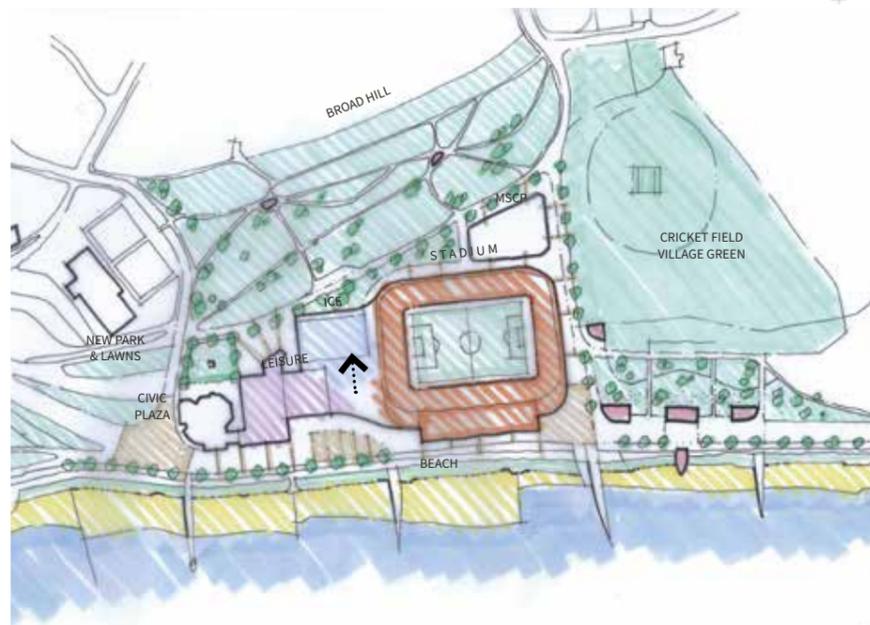


Driving Range Cricket Pitch Ice Arena & Leisure Centre Beach Ball Room Broad Hill

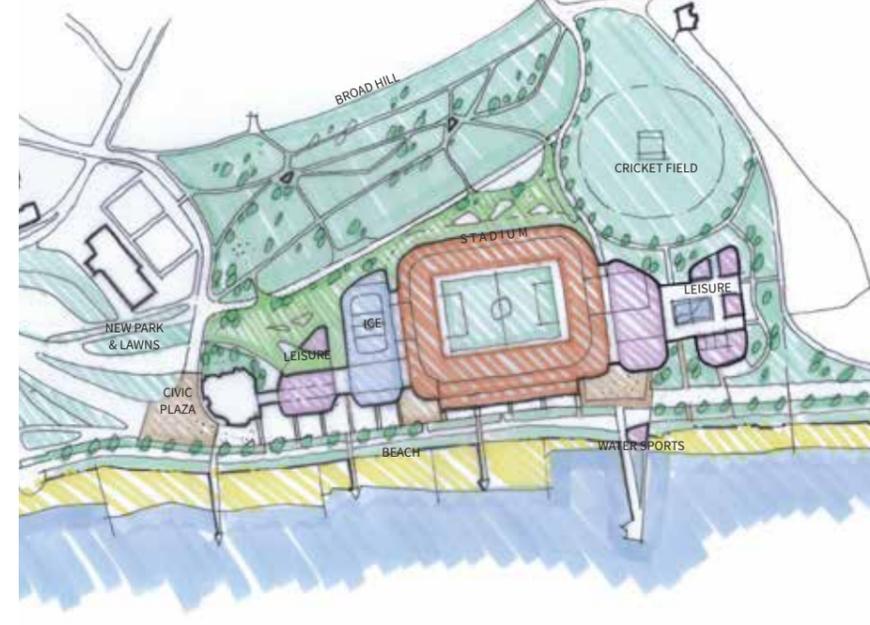


Broad Hill Ice Arena Leisure Centre Beach Ball Room Broad Hill

### OPTION 1



### OPTION 2



### OPTION 3



# DEVELOPMENT OPTION 1

## Retain and refurbish existing leisure centre, ice arena, new football stadium

Option 1 assumes that the existing leisure centre and ice arena are retained and upgraded as part of the development but does not seek to integrate the existing leisure centre and ice arena (which are already separate) or the new football stadium.

The refurbishment of the existing leisure centre is based on work already undertaken by Sport Aberdeen with the aim of improving the condition and utilisation of the facility, to increase participation, provide new revenue streams and to create a destination venue. The proposals comprise of the following:

- New double height atrium entrance, new reception, connectivity between levels
- Existing sports hall dedicated to new commercial play park with party rooms and sensory spaces. New curtain walling
- New spa with treatment rooms, changing, showers, sauna & steam rooms, jacuzzi and plunge pool on lower level
- Enlarged fitness and gym with toning, studios, spin studio, community use spaces and dedicated dry changing on upper level
- External re-working of public realm and parking

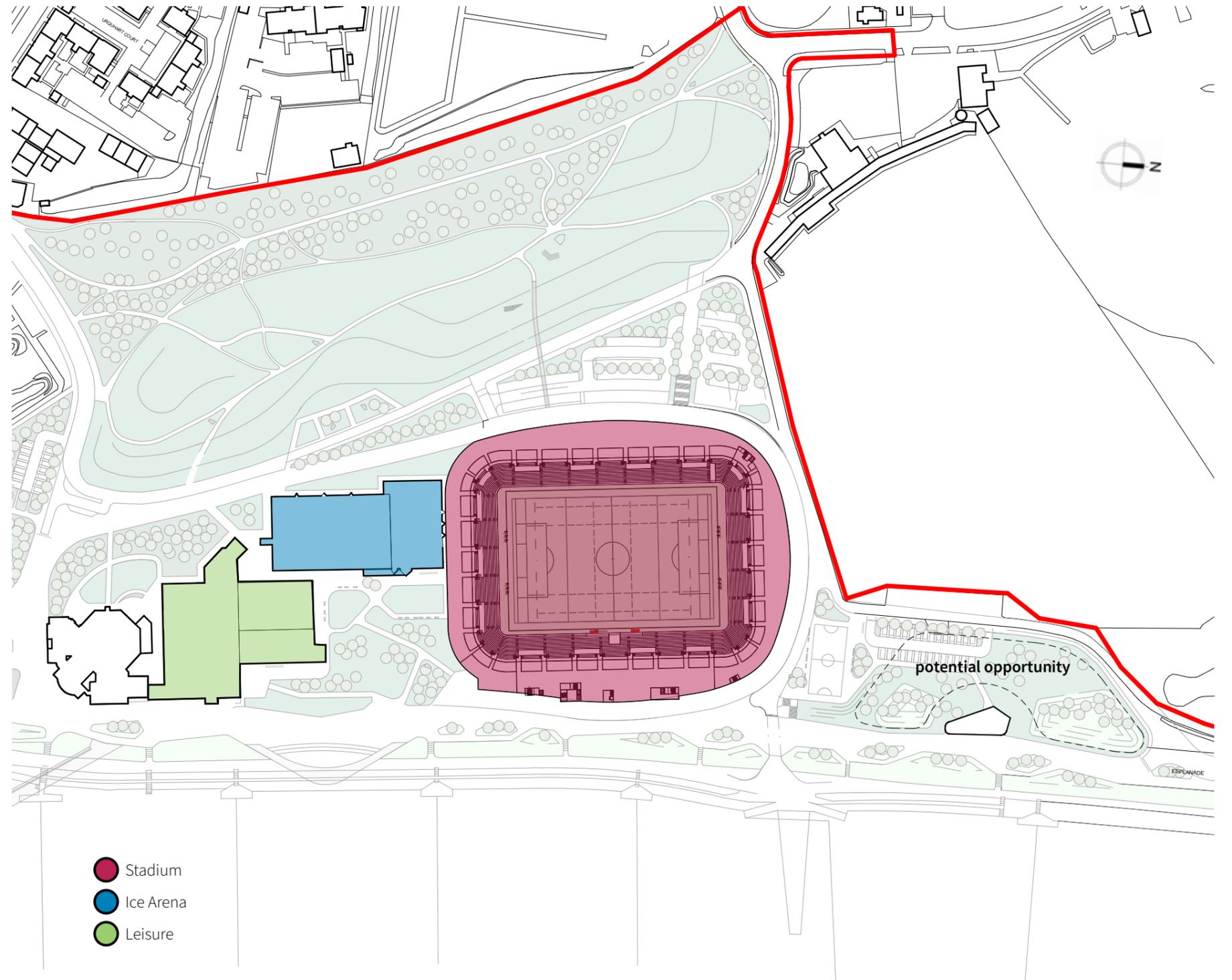
We have not developed these proposals in detail but envisage developing the project brief, design proposals, cost plan and business plan in greater detail with the Client and key stakeholders in the event that this option is pursued.

The refurbishment of the ice arena is based on a light touch refresh focusing on redecoration, replacement of seats, fixtures and fittings, and dealing with outstanding maintenance to the building fabric and building services installations. The proposals do not seek to link the existing leisure centre and ice arena to share reception, management offices and food & beverage provision.

Aberdeen FC's existing Pittodrie Stadium is near it's 'end of life' and therefore requires either major redevelopment on the existing site or the building of a new stadium at a new location. Various sites have been earmarked over the years and there is an existing planning permission to build on an out of town site. However retaining the stadium and it's footfall close to Aberdeen city centre would be an ideal outcome for all concerned.

The new football stadium will comprise of the following:

- Stadium seating bowl
- General Admission (GA) seating with contemporary concourse facilities
- Premium GA seating and concourse with upgraded F&B offer and toilets
- Various grades of hospitality seating and lounges with pitch views, some with sea views
- Sky Boxes
- State of the art UEFA compliant Players areas
- Field of play capable of hosting football and Rugby Union
- SPL and UEFA compliant Media areas with flexibility to expand depending on match coverage



- Stadium
- Ice Arena
- Leisure

# DEVELOPMENT OPTION 2

## New build leisure centre and ice arena, new build football stadium

Option 2 assumes that the existing leisure centre and ice arena are demolished and will be replaced by an integrated facility that links the new leisure centre, ice arena and football stadium as part of the development. The aim of the integration is to provide an efficient building plan and form that provides the opportunity to share facilities and operational benefits where possible.

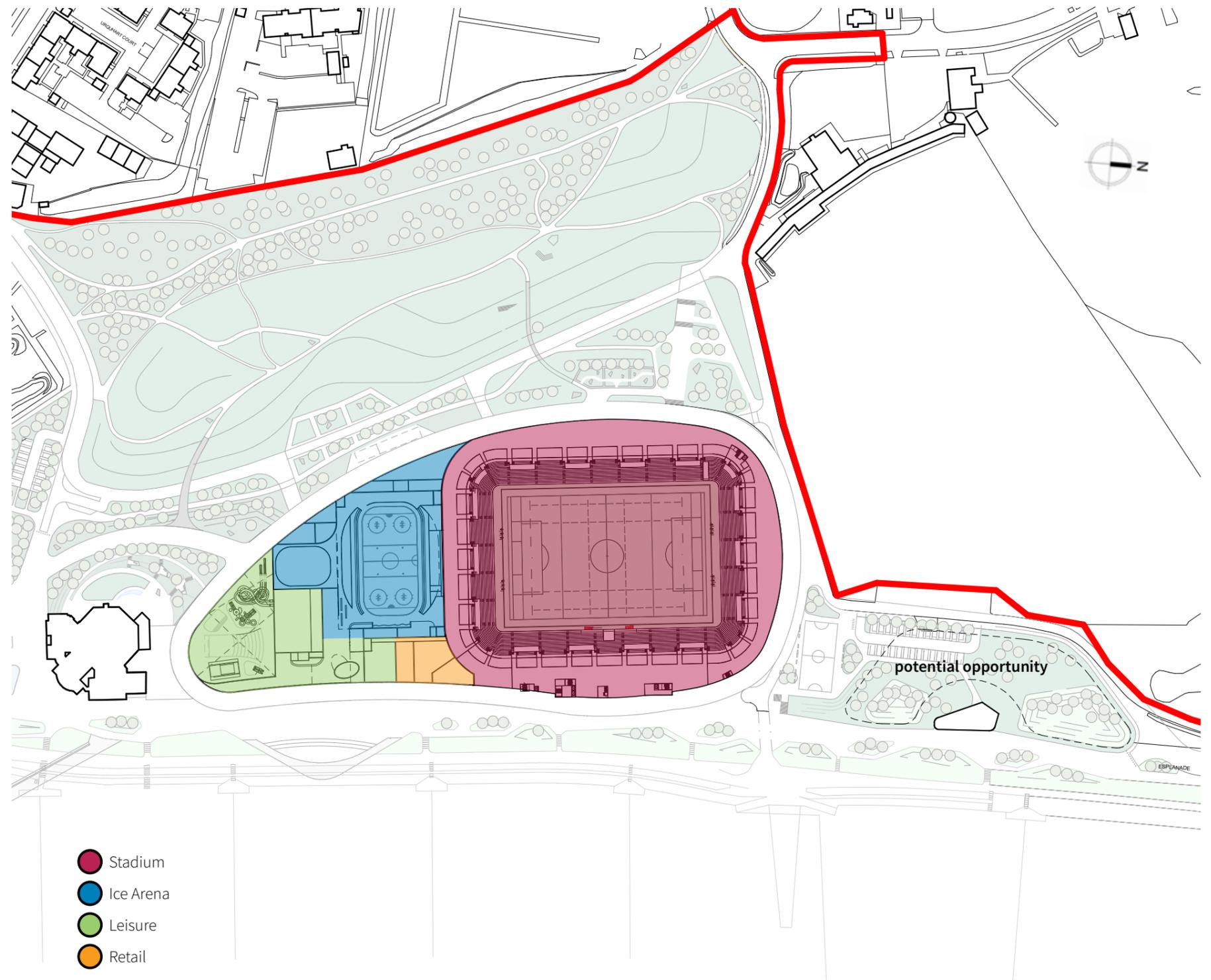
The brief and facility mix used for the new leisure centre has been derived from consultation with the Client and key stakeholders including the Beachfront Leisure Facility Concept Ideas document dated September 2021 and prepared by Sport Aberdeen. The facility mix in this document have been enhanced in line with the Client's aspiration to make the most of the beach area as an opportunity and tourism asset as well as to generate new visits and spend.

The brief and facility mix for the new ice arena has been to largely replicate the facilities in the existing ice arena but to comply with the latest version of International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) design guidance (including the size of the ice pad), allow for the increase of seating capacity beyond 1200 seats that the existing ice arena provides and incorporate an improved hospitality offer.

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# DEVELOPMENT OPTION 3

## New leisure centre and ice arena, football stadium excluded

Option 3 assumes that the existing leisure centre and ice arena are demolished and will be replaced by an integrated facility that links the new leisure centre and ice arena but that the stadium does not form part of the development and is re-provided elsewhere in the city. The aim of the integrated leisure centre and ice arena is to provide an efficient building plan and form that can be operated as a single entity and avoid the duplication of café and management spaces that occurs at the existing leisure centre and ice arena.

The brief is as per option 2 and facility mixed used for the new leisure centre has been derived from consultation with the Client and key stakeholders including the Beachfront Leisure Facility Concept Ideas document dated September 2021 and prepared by Sport Aberdeen. The facility mix in this document has been enhanced in line with the Client's aspiration to make the most of the beach area as an opportunity and tourism asset as well as to generate new visits and spend.

As for Option 2, the brief and facility mixed for the new ice arena has been to largely replicate the facilities in the existing ice arena but to comply with the latest version of International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) design guidance (including the size of the ice pad), allow for the increase of seating capacity beyond 1,200 seats that the existing ice arena provides and incorporate an improved hospitality offer.

It has been assumed that it is desirable to keep both the existing leisure centre and ice arena in operation during construction of the new facilities. This allows the leisure centre and ice arena to continue to meet local and regional demand for the facilities, continue swimming lessons, support local clubs and maintain staff at both buildings. As a result, the new leisure centre and ice arena building should avoid any overlap on plan with the existing facilities and therefore be located approximately 180m north of the Beach Ballroom with the existing leisure centre and ice arena demolished after completion of the new facilities and the area used for new public realm, parking or further recreational facilities.

