

7.3 THE BEACH BALLROOM



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INTRODUCTION

The Aberdeen Beach Ballroom, affectionately known as the finest dance hall in Scotland, adopts a prominent position along the City's beachfront esplanade. Opened in the 1929, this important Art Deco entertainment venue has experienced much change, not least the major development of the 1970s Star Ballroom which provided additional function space on the eastern side overlooking the coastline.

The building boasts a wealth of cultural history, having hosted many of Scotland's leading bands over the decades and is held in high esteem amongst Aberdonians who share fond memories of their time at the venue.

The Ballroom is to be considered as a primary focal point in the new Masterplan development, due to its central position but also because of its cultural significance.

Over the years, the Ballroom has made attempts to adapt to new cultural and business trends, which has led to areas of inefficiencies within the interior fabric and planning of the building. This, combined with poor maintenance of the building envelope, the harsh coastal environment, cultural changes and underfunding for refurbishment, has led to a Ballroom in need of a holistic strategy for renewal.

This report aims to identify opportunities for development, from interventions such as upgrades to internal fitouts to high level re-imaginings of current and proposed revenue generating spaces.

It is accepted that any opportunity for redevelopment must and will respect the heritage and memories defined by the Beach Ballroom to ensure it can continue to contribute to the lives of those who visit it.



Proposed Development Plan, 1923



Main Entrance Approach

EXISTING GA PLAN - LOWER GROUND (LG)

Below the main entrance esplanade level, the lower ground floor of the existing Beach Ballroom features the main Ballroom dance floor with its maple sprung floor and Art Deco styled carpet surround. The Ballroom itself follows the octagon geometry of the overall building with the main stage located at the northeast corner and the main bar to the north.

An almost continuous circulation route runs around the Ballroom behind the primary structure supporting the viewing gallery above. This also acts as a service route for catered events using temporary satellite stations remote from the main kitchen; staff use these stations to plate up and serve food and beverage to catered guests.

Various level changes occur within this floor and can also be experienced between the peripheral circulation route and the Ballroom floor itself; a number of ramped transitions occur on the eastern and southern vertices.

The main stage has undergone a remodelling since the original curve on which it was founded; the stage is supported by a high level lighting rig, draped curtain and a back stage circulation area leading to various dressing room space. The dressing rooms and cellar stores are located within a northern extension to the original building.

The main bar accommodates 1 vertex of the octagon with the bar surface itself spanning between pillars. A false wall offset from the original structure provides a narrow services route for plumbing equipment.

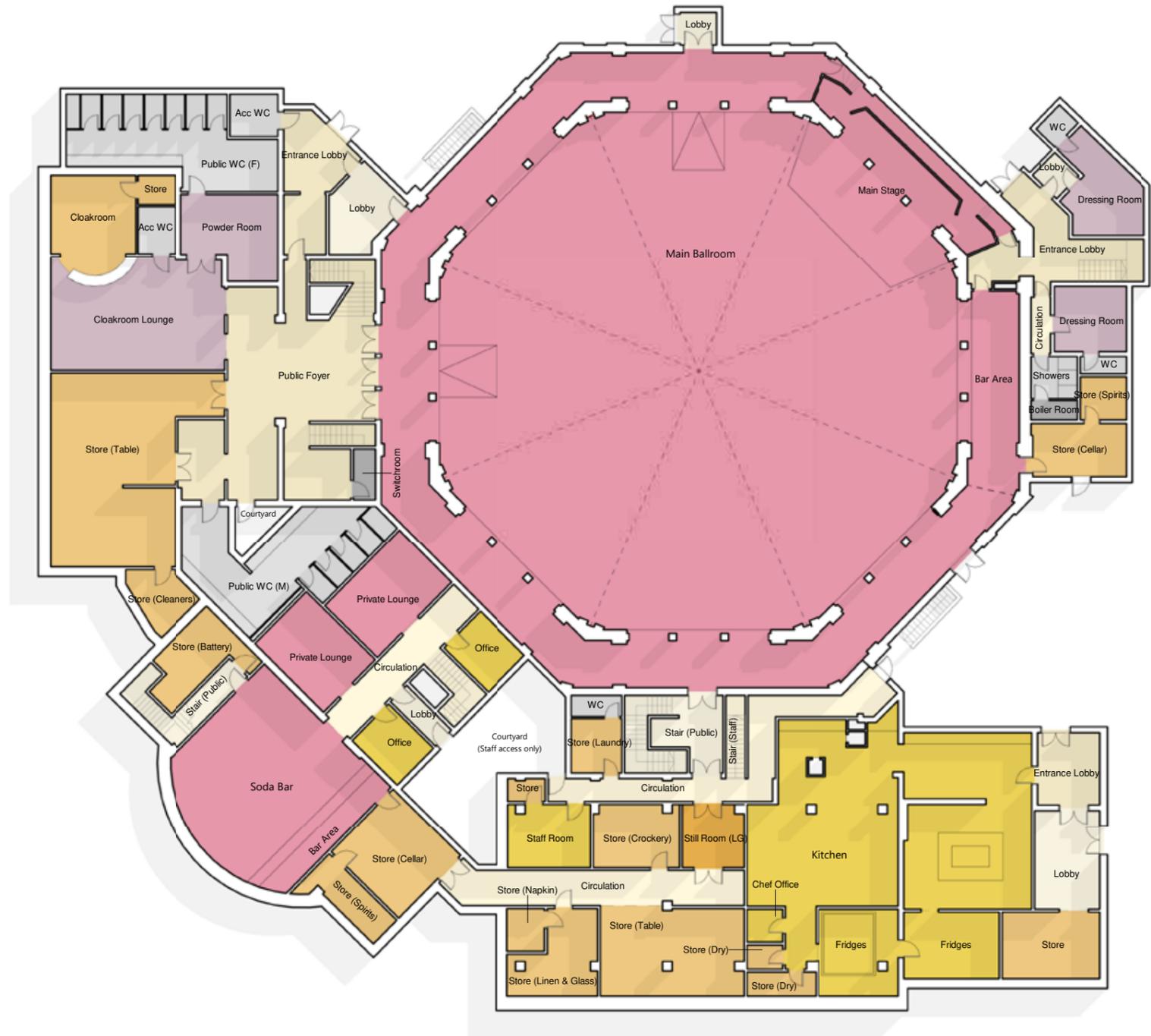
A large public foyer to the south provides some breakout space away from the Ballroom floor. Here, the public can access the main toilet areas and a large cloakroom and lounge area. A separate powder room is available adjacent to the female toilets.

Catering is served from the western vertex passing through a main staircase to the Ballroom floor. The kitchen is serviced externally from the rear parking area. Numerous store area serve the kitchen ranging from open plan to cellular cupboards which house crockery, glassware, food, liquids, linen and laundry.

A large table store is used to serve the range of functions which are provided.

The more intimate Soda Bar is located on the southeast vertex which acts to serve as a smaller function space or breakout area for buffets etc; the retrofit interior reflects the Art Deco style. Separate access is provided via an independent staircase leading to Esplanade level.

Two external courtyard spaces extend down to this level providing some modest staff breakout space and roof maintenance access. Access to two basement boiler rooms are granted using the external steps provided around the Ballroom perimeter.



Existing GA Plan: LG Lower Ground

EXISTING GA PLAN - ESPLANADE LEVEL (L0)

The main public entrance to the Beach Ballroom is located at Esplanade level (or ground level) from the south facade opposite the nearby arterial road and roundabout. The original drop off area with landscape buffer has been removed.

Upon entering, the entrance foyer acts as an ante room to the main public foyer and feature staircases beyond. A small reception desk is joined to the main admin/office space. A medium sized manager's office is located opposite as well as a small bridal suite called the Silver City Suite. This acts as a private lounge with sanitary facilities away from the main function spaces to the east of the building.

The main Ballroom gallery level is accessed beyond the public foyer and provides additional high level seating for the public. The wraps continuously up to the main stage area which is served with a back stage corridor. Timber balustrading completes the theatre style environment. Dressing room spaces are also provided at L0 as well as a direct physical connection to the adjacent Leisure Centre; however this connection is no longer utilised by public or staff.

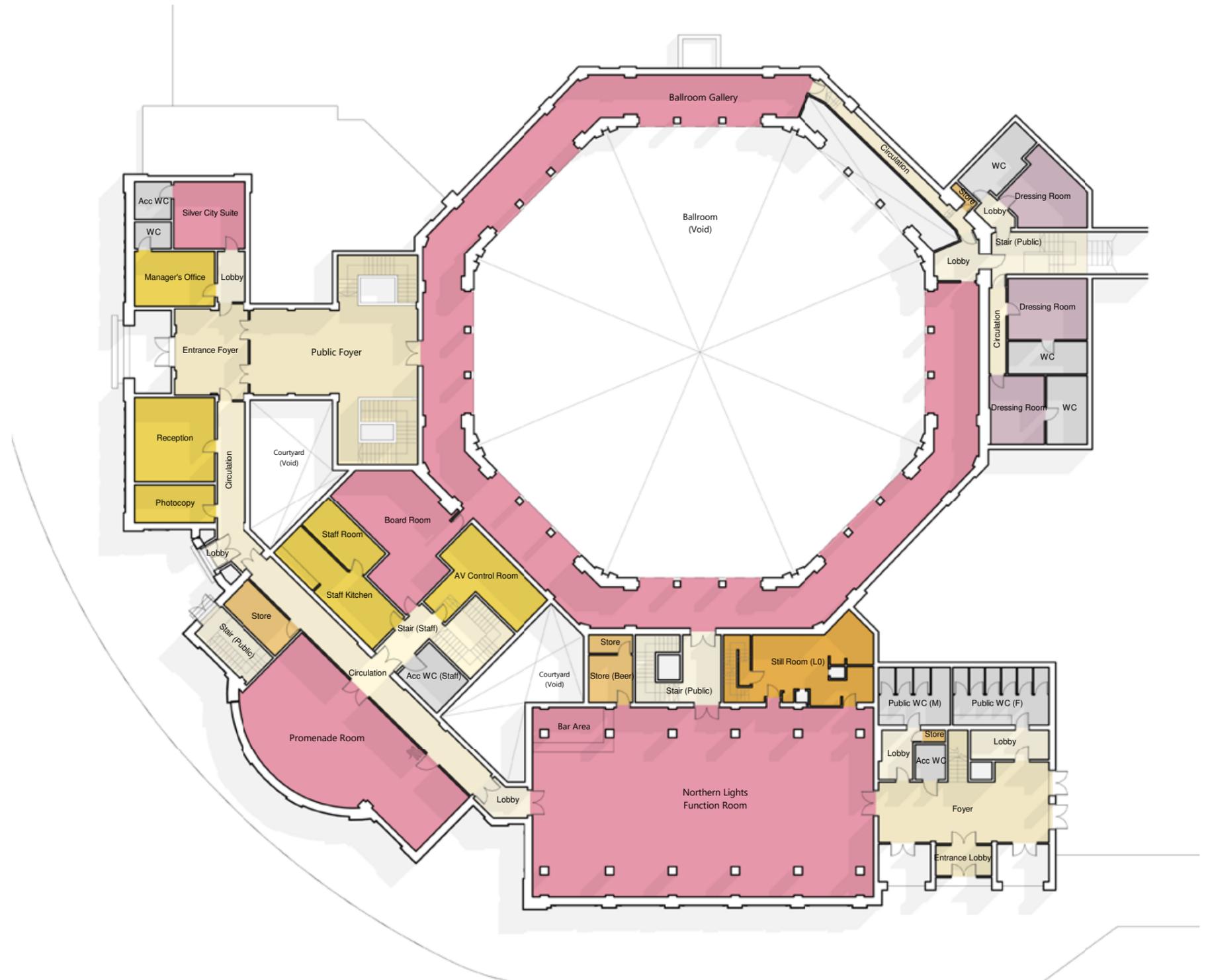
On the southeast diagonal, an existing AV control room provides space for a technician to manage all sound and lighting for Ballroom events. This is accessed via a series of steps to manage changes in level. Nearby, a series of staff breakout and toilet spaces are available as well as a medium sized 'internal' meeting room which forms part of the lettable offering for public events.

The two courtyards continue beyond this level, providing daylight into some cellular rooms, one of which increases in size from the level below.

The Promenade Room, a medium sized function space, follows the curvature of the Art Deco facade and is used for meetings and small functions; it can also be subdivided using curtains.

At the end of main circulation corridor is the Northern Light function room. This large open plan rectangular room serves as the main events space aside from the Ballroom itself. It has undergone internal refurbishment over the years, not least due to the inclusion of the Star Ballroom above and now accommodates a 1970s bar area and Art Deco influenced interior finishes. Originally the primary columns were equally space across the width of the room but are now offset to the perimeter to maximise flexibility and aid servicing. A small back of house still room connects the Northern Lights room with the main kitchen below.

This large function space can be independently accessed via the dedicated entrance to the north east, along with public toilet areas, a foyer and lobby area. Originally, external door were used to connect to the Leisure Centre, however these are now concealed with curtain and furnishings.



Existing GA Plan: L0 Esplanade Level

EXISTING GA PLAN - FIRST FLOOR (L1)

During the 1970s, the Star Ballroom was added at first floor level providing additional function / events space. Constructed primarily from a glazed curtain wall facade, the extension provides panoramic 270degrees views looking eastwards towards the North Sea. This steel framed structure sits above the Northern Lights Ballroom below.

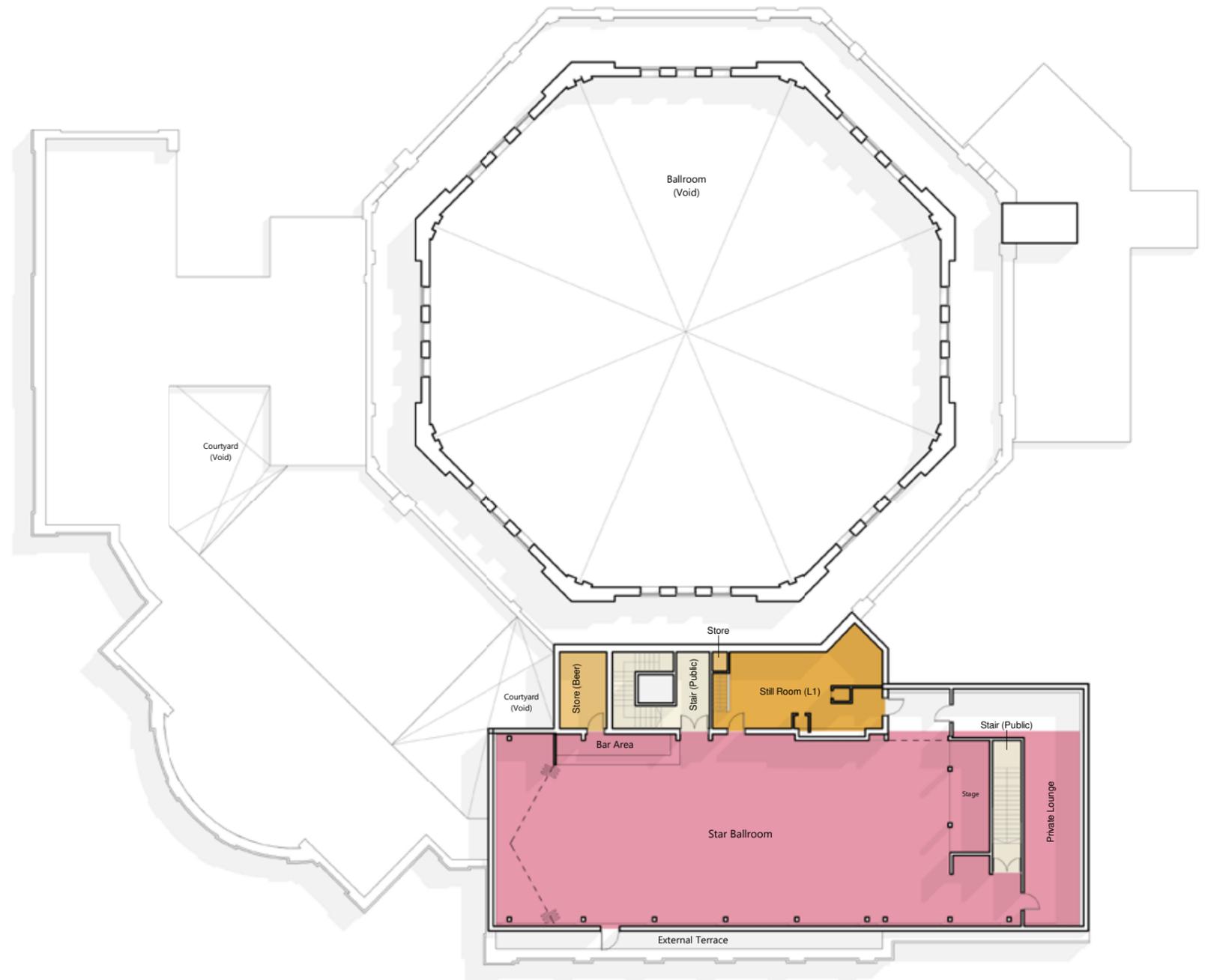
The interior space and ceiling geometry is represented in part by the dynamic roof form. At present, the main Ballroom is subdivided at either end by partitions and curtains to provide informal storage spaces for furniture and equipment (noted adjacent as a 'private lounge'). A small stage area backs onto the main public stair and is offset slightly within the rectangular space.

Back of house areas including a beer store and still room act as a servicing spine between the extension and the Ballroom void.

There is provision for public access to an external terrace overlooking the sea, however the level change and low perimeter parapet makes this space redundant and is therefore not currently used.

Similarly, on all floors there are two dumb waiters, however one of these is no longer in use.

There is no access to the main L1 roof from the Star Ballroom, however there is a vertical cat ladder within one of the external courtyards, providing maintenance access only. Low level parapets runs around the perimeter of the L1 roof, however there are significant areas of flat roof with no edge protection.



Existing GA Plan: L1 First Floor

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING SERVICING AND ACCESS

- 01 Kitchen deliveries
- 02 Ballroom / Leisure Centre link (unused)
- 03 Raised loading bay door (unused)
- 04 Ballroom fire escape
- 05 Staff entrance / exit
- 06 Accessible public entrance
- 07 Main entrance to car park / service route
- 08 Cat ladder access to flat roof
- 09 Shared waste storage area / bins
- 10 Service vehicle area
- 11 Stage BOH entrance
- 12 Accessible parking bays
- 13 Step access to basement boiler room
- 14 Muster point for all occupants
- 15 Shared substation

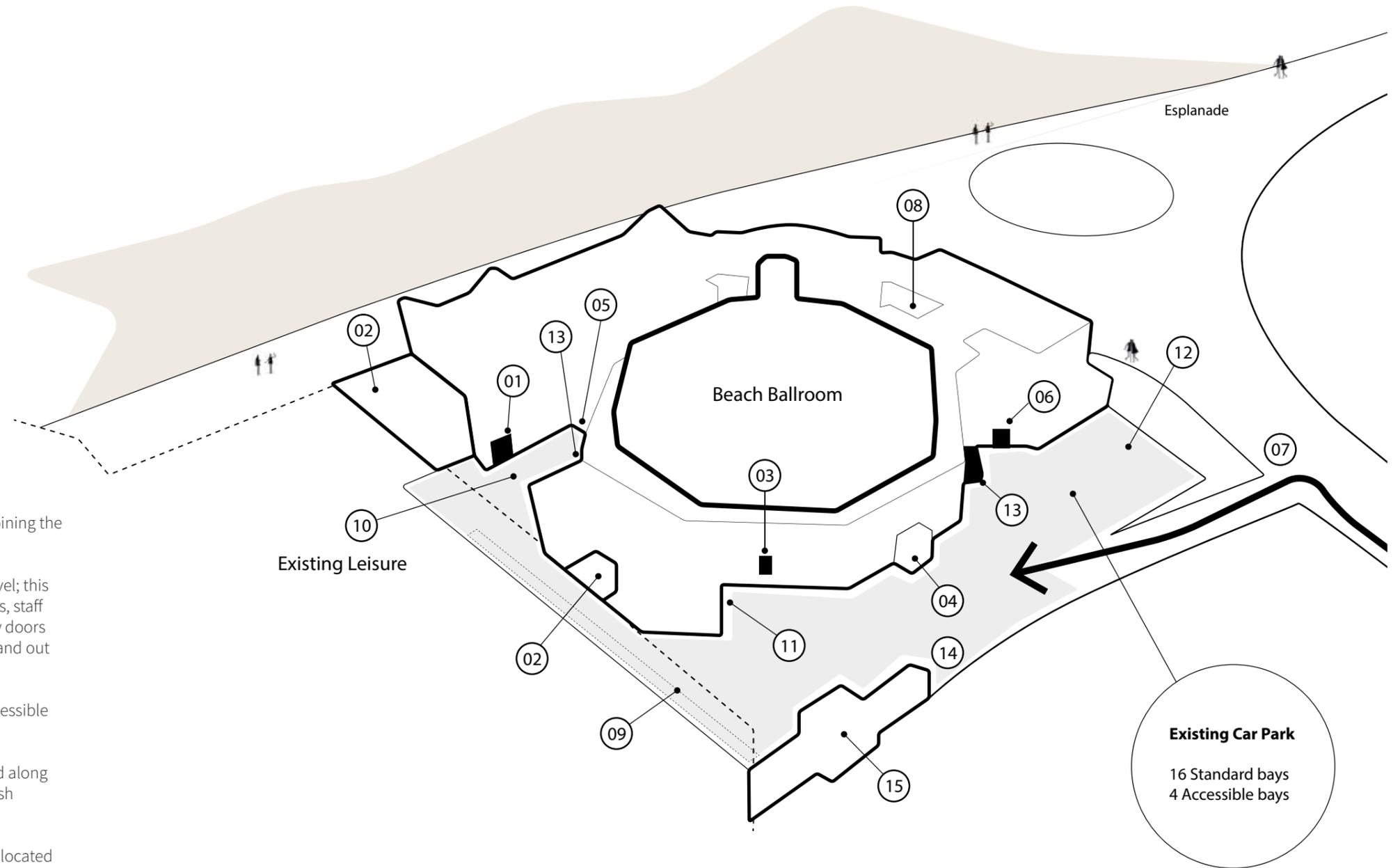
The beach Ballroom is currently serviced primarily from the rear car park adjoining the Leisure Centre.

The main car park entrance is approximately 3m lower than the esplanade level; this is the only vehicular entrance and exit to the site. As such, servicing, deliveries, staff and the public all share this space. In addition, the Leisure Centre loading bay doors are accessed from this area, further exacerbating the management of flow in and out of the site.

For members of the public who are unable to access on foot, a secondary accessible entrance is provided at 06.

There is no dedicated waste compound, therefore bins and recycling are lined along the rear wall of the Leisure Centre. This includes empty kegs, palettes and crash barriers.

Vertical CAT ladder roof access is achieved using the small external courtyard located centrally within the building at LG level. This provides insufficient maintenance accessibility and does not meet escape / health and safety requirements. Any proposed developed moving forward will need to consider improved/compliant maintenance access as well as sufficient barrier protection.



Analysis of Existing Building Servicing: L1 (View from Rear)

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING EVENTS STRATEGY

The Beach Ballroom currently markets six key function and event spaces, each of which caters for a variety of party sizes; these are summarised as follows;

The Boardroom:	10 Guests
The Promenade Room:	40 Guests
The Soda Bar:	53/106 Guests (Seated / Standing)
The Northern Lights Room:	100 Guests
The Star Ballroom:	120 Guests
The Main Ballroom:	400 Guests

The adjacent diagrams outline a series of varying scenarios to identify how the existing spaces are used to choreograph the sequence of events and specialist requirements therein.

At present the building does not easily lend itself to catering for concurrent events due to the facilities available and the current internal planning and flow between spaces. For example, to host one wedding the facility typically offer up three key function rooms plus the additional Silver City Suite adjacent to the main entrance. This is done to manage the sequence of events throughout the day and allow for turnaround between daytime and evening events. As such, this means that the ground and first floor levels cannot be used for other functions.

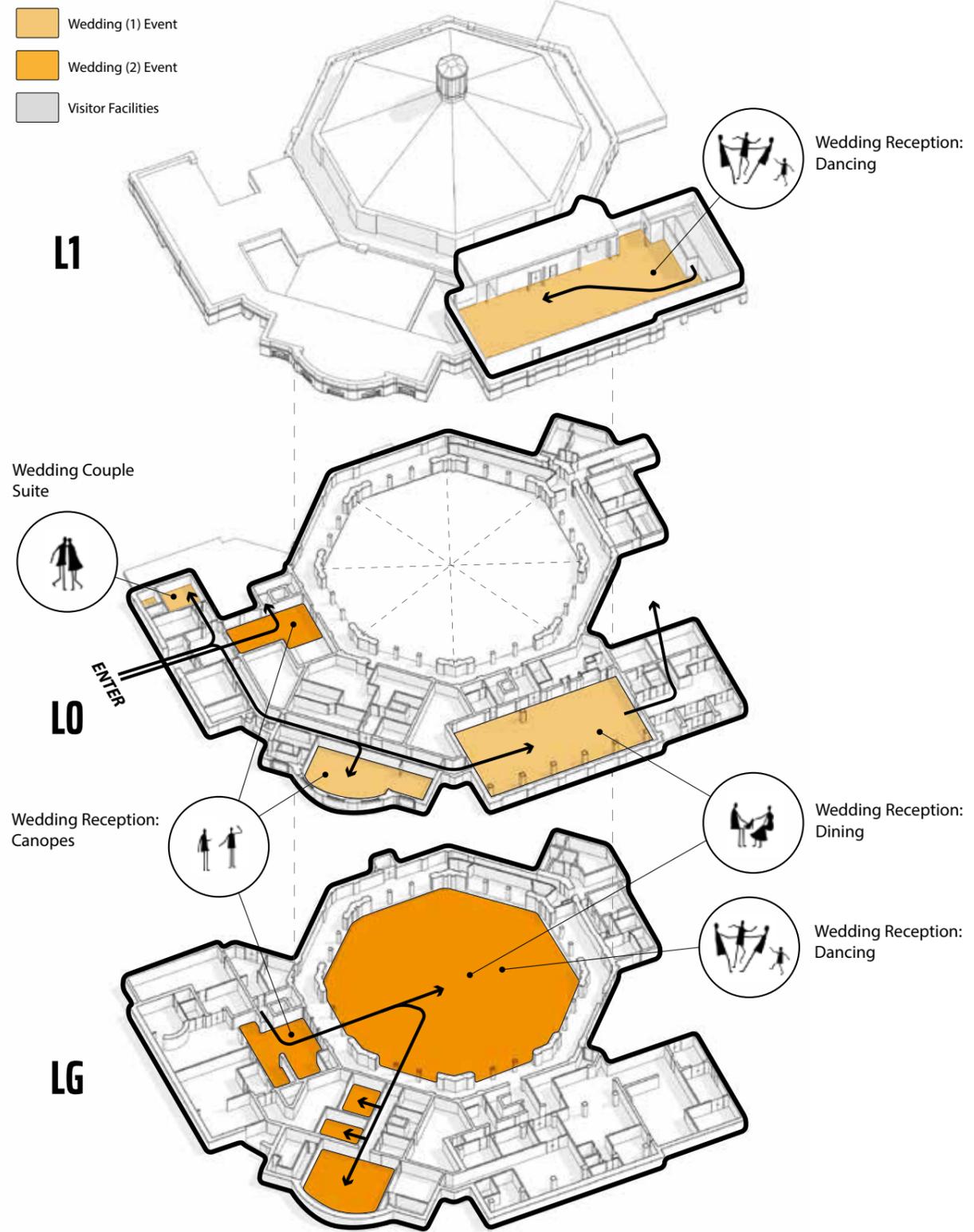
In theory, a second wedding could take place by using the main Ballroom, gallery space and the Soda Bar at the LG level. However, there would be some degree of crossover between guests and staff. Indeed, it is unclear as to whether the existing kitchen has the capacity and staffing levels to cope with two concurrent large events.

The building has the potential to host events concurrently in each of the six key spaces save for the inadequate provision of level access, vertical transportation between levels, lack of storage space and management of visitor flow / entrances.

In particular, storage is a key problem in part due to the lack of physical space but also due to the poor arrangement of internal planning and proximity to key function spaces. At present over 1000 standard chairs are stored throughout the building in sometimes physically restricted areas. This has given cause for some key lettable spaces such as the Star Ballroom, to be underutilised as storage space.

Provision of external function space or breakout areas are also not catered for, due to the lack of public realm space at the main building entrance or to the rear of the building.

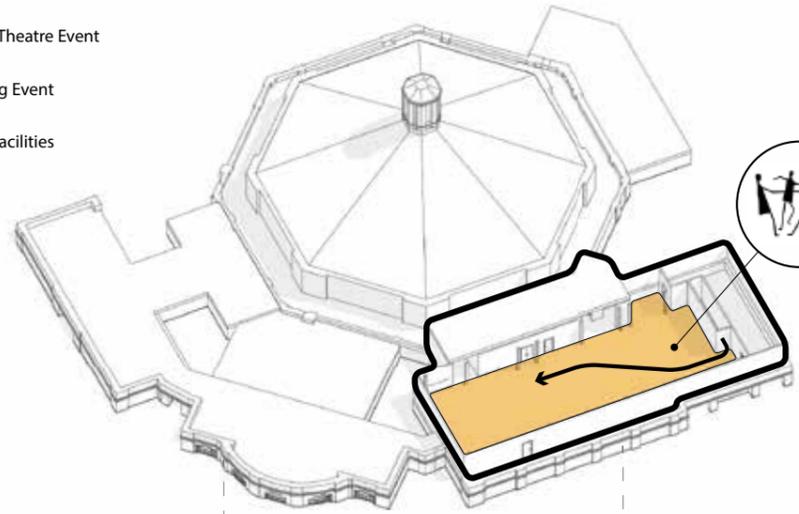
Optioneering studies have sought to improve flexibility and ensure a variety of events can be better serviced. These also look to orchestrate a more efficient flow between spaces with a view to allowing parts of the building to function in isolation e.g. in the event of a wedding. Improved flexibility, flow and efficiency will seek to improve revenue and commercial opportunities.



Concurrent Event Scenario 1 (Existing)

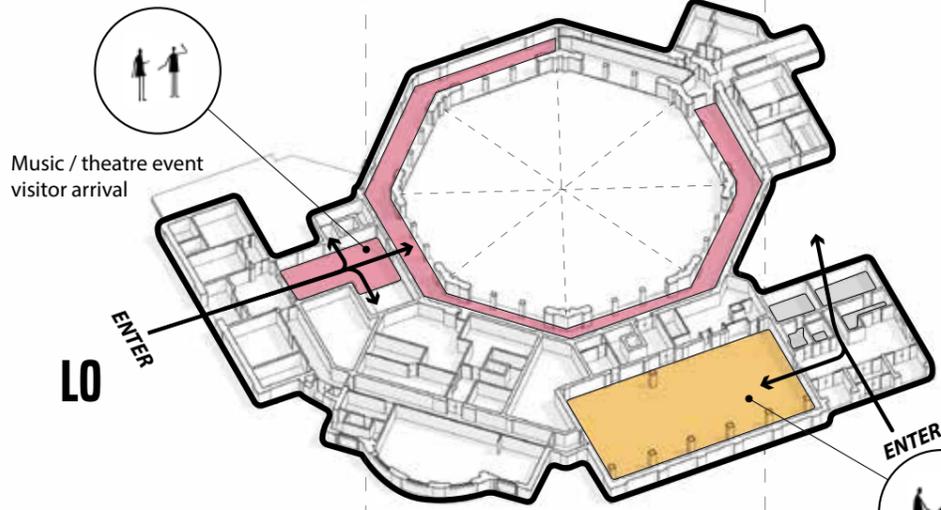
- Music / Theatre Event
- Wedding Event
- Visitor Facilities

L1



Wedding Reception:
Dancing

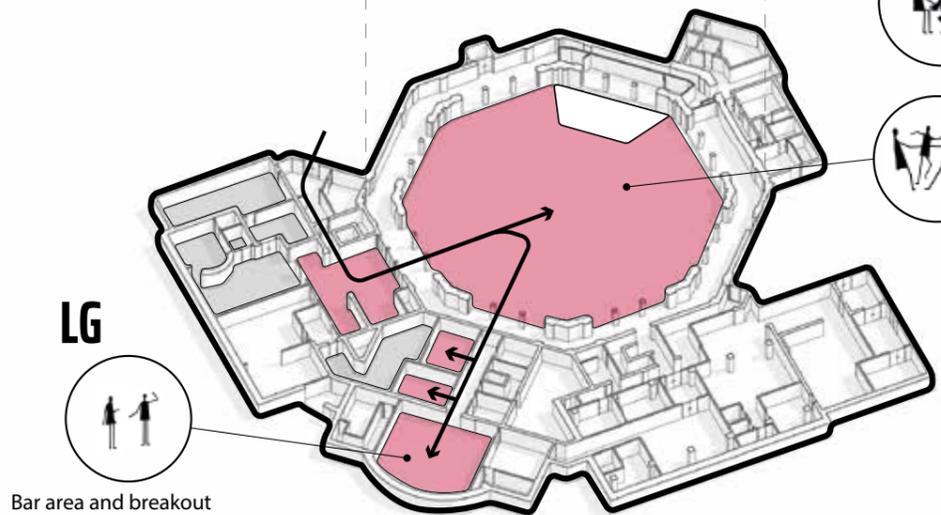
L0



Music / theatre event
visitor arrival

Wedding Reception:
Dining

LG

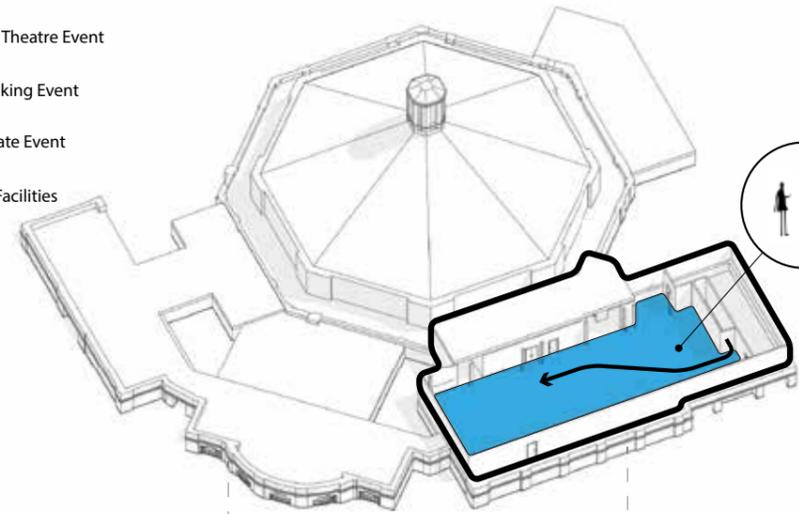


Bar area and breakout

Music / theatre event

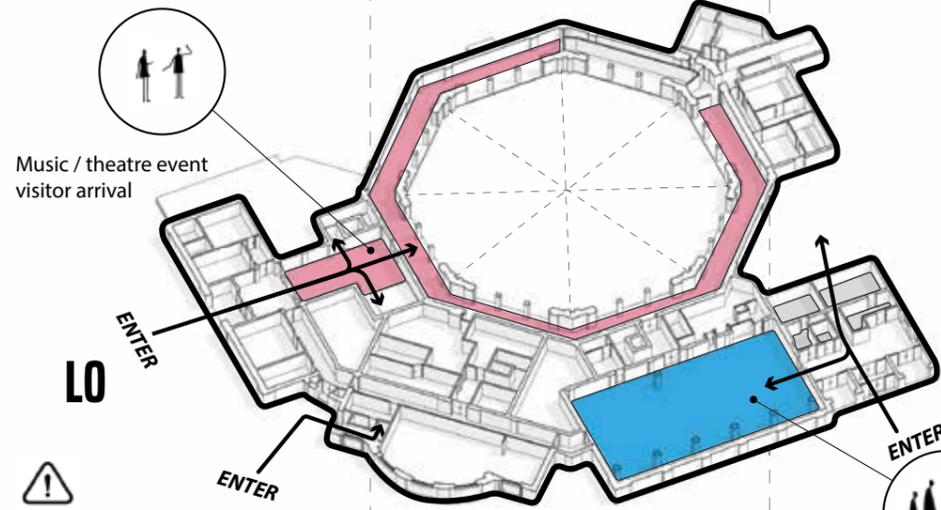
- Music / Theatre Event
- Networking Event
- Corporate Event
- Visitor Facilities

L1



Private corporate
drinks event

L0

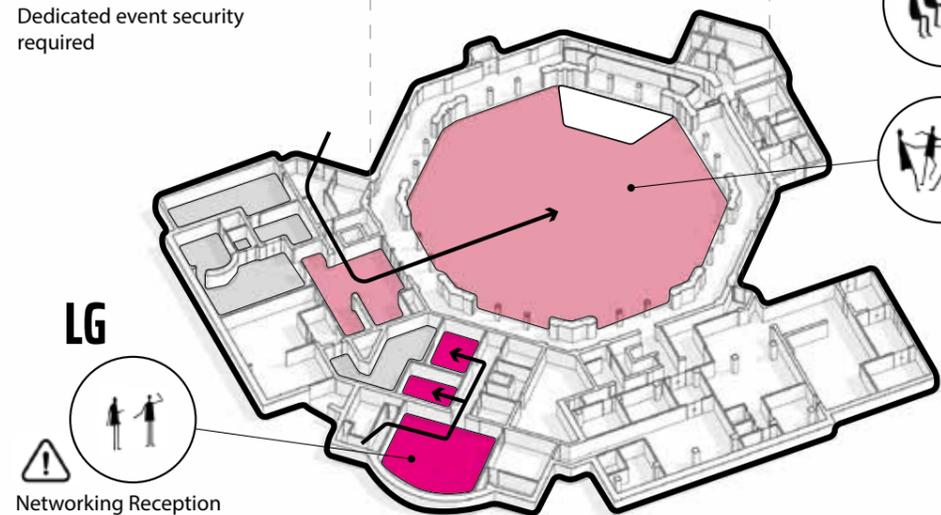


Music / theatre event
visitor arrival

Medium size
conference /
corporate meeting

⚠️
Dedicated event security
required

LG



⚠️
Networking Reception
(Shared use of public facilities required)

Music / theatre event

Concurrent Event Scenario 2-3 (Existing)

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CIRCULATION

Throughout the building there are various means of vertical access for members of the public and staff. In general, visitors enter from the main entrance to the south at Esplanade level and staff enter at lower ground level adjacent to the service yard / kitchen delivery bay.

Clarity of visitor movement is not sufficiently defined, nor is it sufficiently separated from back of house area in some areas. Due to various changes in level at L0, there is no provision for accessibility; instead wheelchair users etc are required to enter at lower ground level.

However, despite this there is no lift at any level to allow those users to access all floors. This means that a proportion of visitors are restricted to the Ballroom floor only. This is a significant failing of the current layout.

Furthermore, there are no clearly defined protected lobbies to separate means of vertical escape from the main function areas of the building. Any future development must define an improved and compliant fire strategy within the constraints of the existing building to ensure adequate means of egress.

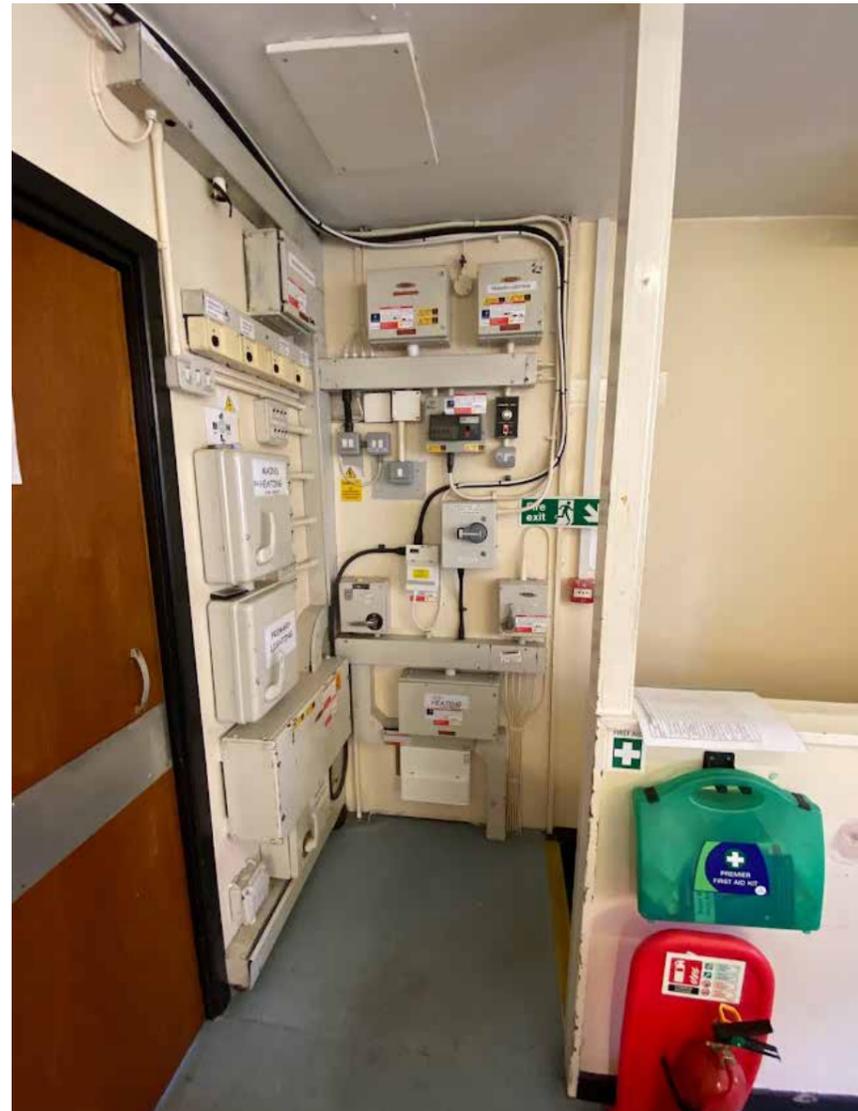
At lower ground level there is not a clear separated clean and dirty flow between food entering and leaving the kitchen. Indeed, the only direct route for food/waste to leave/enter the kitchen towards the Ballroom is through the shared public/staff staircore (see 04). At present, this creates an unprotected crossflow within a main escape route that may be required as a safe means of primary/secondary escape.

Of significant concern is the lack of separation between staff stair 05 which connects the LG main kitchen and the still rooms at all levels. Consideration as to the fire protection of the redundant and is-use dumb waiters should be given. The adjacent image illustrates the open stair configuration. There are also instances of door providing escape without require fire seals and areas where storage of flammable materials are not separated from circulation / escape routes.

There are a number of unused connections to the Leisure Centre and a loading bay at lower ground level servicing the stage; now boarded up. As mentioned previously, two dumb waiters exist, with only one in use.

An porch type extension has been added to the lower ground serving the Ballroom, assumed to be a secondary means of escape. However, it is unclear if the currently lobby / corridors and doors satisfy required minimum clear escape widths. This should be reviewed in further detail moving forward as part of the development proposals.

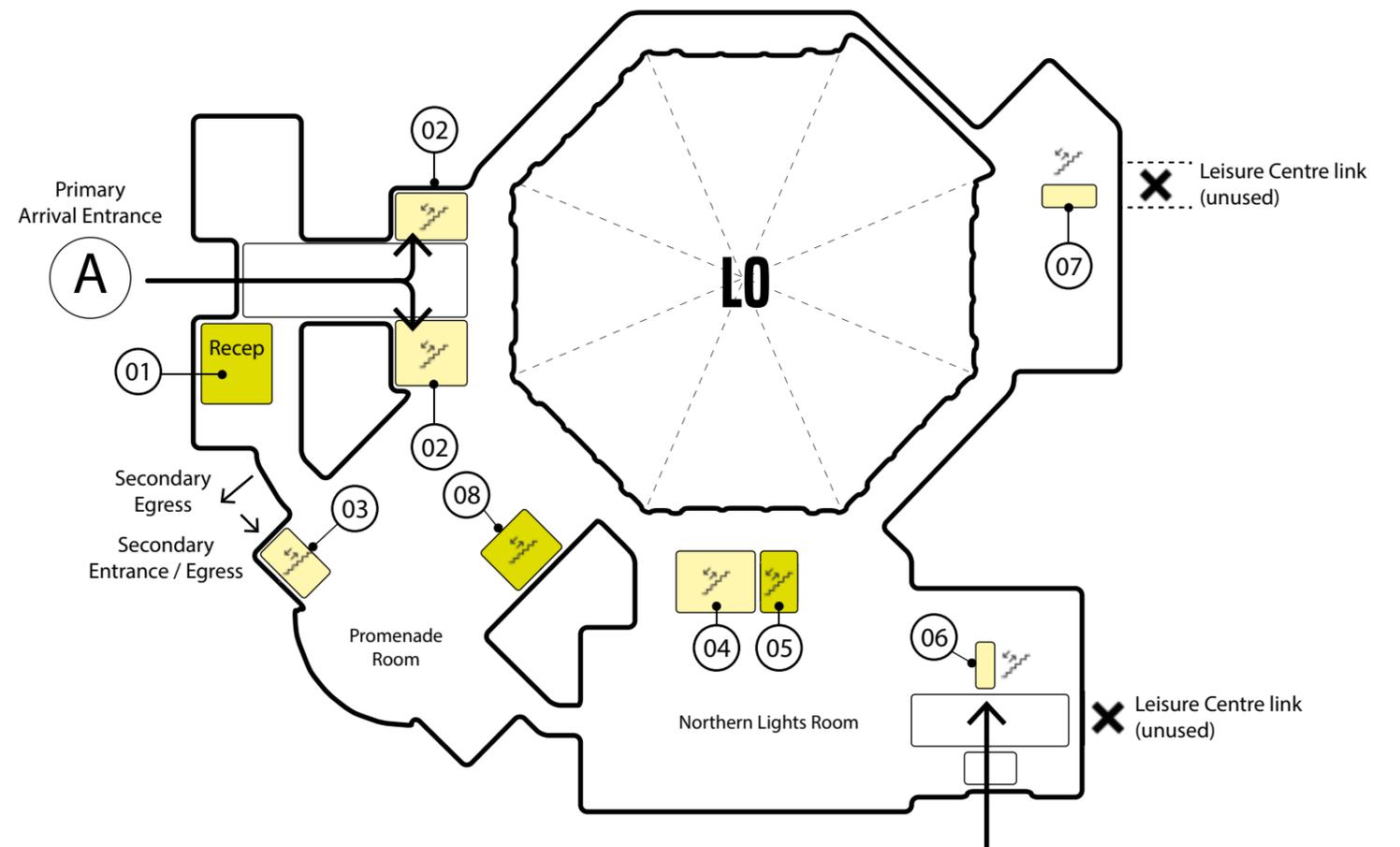
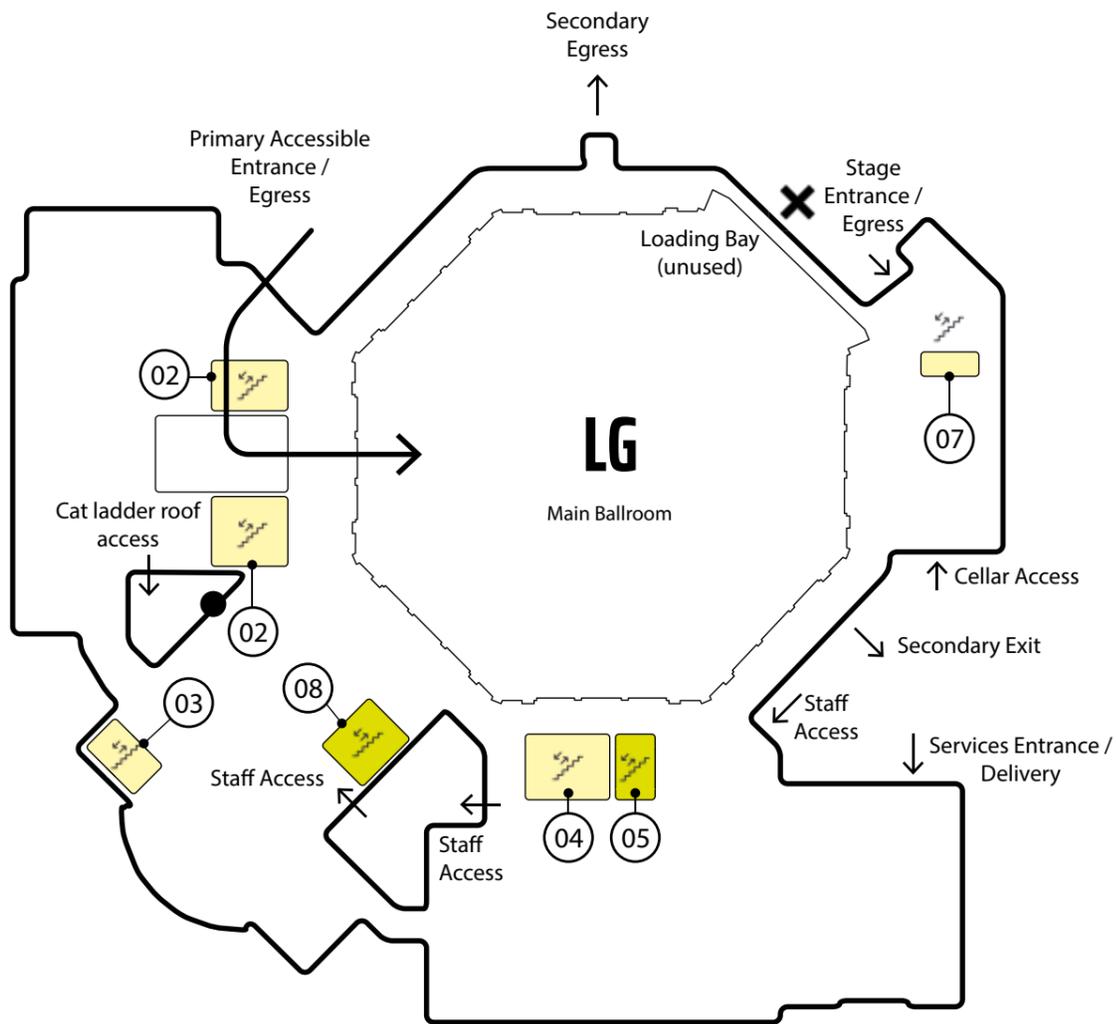
Although there are numerous secondary public entrances serving key function spaces, these are not all supported by dedicated reception points or individual security measures; this restricts flexibility of use and commercial opportunities.



Unprotected escape staircase and exposed services

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CIRCULATION

- 01 Main public reception
- 02 Main public staircases providing access to Ballroom floor, wcs and cloakroom (LG-L0)
- 03 Independent public staircase providing access to Soda Bar (LG-L0)
- 04 Shared public/staff staircase providing access to northern lights, main Ballroom and star Ballroom (LG-L1)
- 05 Staff staircase providing access to northern lights, main Ballroom and star Ballroom (LG-L1)
- 06 Public staircase providing access to star Ballroom (L0-L1)
- 07 General staircase providing access to BOH stage area / dressing rooms (LG-L0)
- 08 Staff staircase providing access to Soda Bar and BOH staff support (LG-L0)



Existing Vertical Circulation (LG and L0)

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING BUILDING - CONSTRAINTS (LG)

To inform the optioneering studies within this report, it is necessary to evaluate the existing condition of the current building, facilities and interior spaces. The following diagrams identify key internal areas ranging from low level interventions and refurbishment to high level redesign.

The interior condition of much of the building is the result of decades worth of adapting to changing needs. This has resulted in varying levels of quality, furnishings, servicing, fitout and decoration without the benefit of a holistic planning and refurbishment strategy.

To establish the Beach Ballroom as a destination once again and to future proof the business case, it is recommended that the analysis and studies herein are considered as a whole.



Existing Soda Bar Interior

- 01 It is acknowledged that the public toilets as highlighted, have been upgraded recently, however the quality of finishes should be enhanced for a building of this importance and setting
- 02 Existing courtyard is extremely restrictive and serves no purpose other than to provide roof maintenance access which is noted as being inadequate and unsafe.
- 03 The cloakroom, foyer and store area does not maximise the space available and is inefficient in terms of planning and storage space. Interior fitout is cluttered, generally dated and inconsistent with the overall building.
- 04 The accessible entrance lobby provides a convoluted route to the main Ballroom by passing beneath the feature staircase. The interior is cluttered and there is no means of controlling / managing access.
- 05 External stair access to basement boiler rooms is restrictive and has a negative visual impact on the public approach to the entrance foyer. Within the basements, there is significant lengths of redundant plant and the space itself is of limited height.
- 06 Soda Bar staircase consists of low quality interior finishes which do compliment the grandeur of the Art Deco style. Refurbish existing dedicated Soda Bar staircase; upgrade finishes, lighting etc.
- 07 Ramps within the Ballroom manage the changes in level but are a retrofit solution and not considered holistically; they also present a trip hazard.
- 08 This small porch extension provides a secondary exit from the Ballroom but is unlikely to satisfy regulations relating to maximum occupancy, escape widths etc in the event of escape. Externally, it does not compliment the original architecture.

Future development should consider demolition of this extension in support of the overall Masterplan
- 09 Current dressing room extension block is generally poorly utilised and in need to complete upgrade. The extension itself is not in keeping or of the same quality as the main Art Deco Ballroom building; it is also detached from all areas of the building.

Future development should consider demolition of this extension in support of the overall Masterplan
- 10 Current dressing room extension block is generally poorly utilised and in need to complete refurbishment. The extension itself is not in keeping or of the same quality as the main Art Deco Ballroom building; it is also detached from all areas of the building.

Proposals should consider demolition of this extension in support of the overall Masterplan

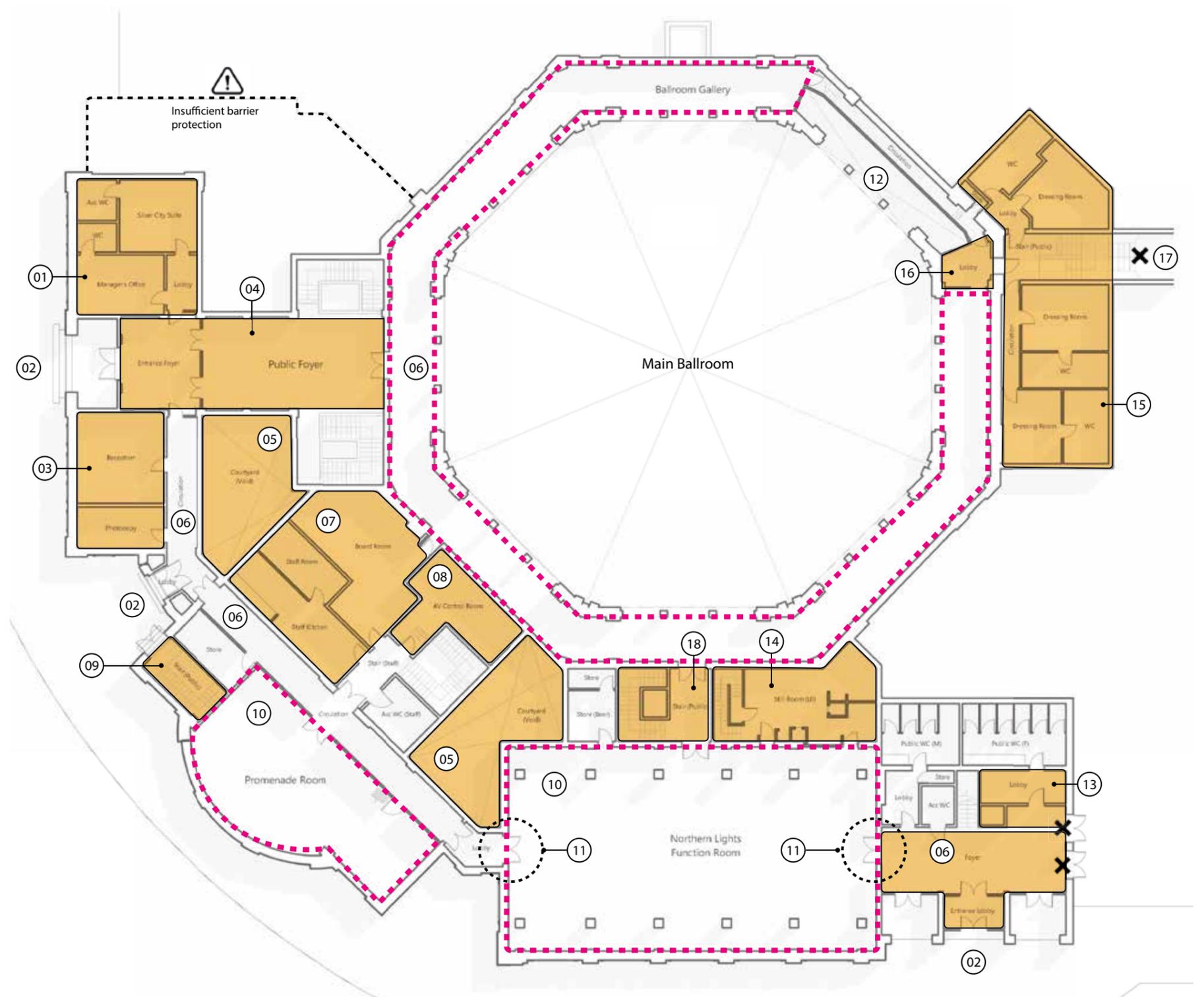
ANALYSIS OF EXISTING BUILDING - CONSTRAINTS (LO)



Existing Promenade Room Interior

- 01 Potential for lettable space at prime location from esplanade. Current usage not maximised and some areas assigned as general storage. Silver City suite would be better relocated adjacent to function rooms to improve flexibility
- 02 Level access not achieved at this level - site levels to be redefined at all access / egress points to ensure access for all.
- 03 Admin/reception space is in need of refurbishment. Reception hatch does not compliment the Art Deco style or importance as a focal point of the building. Adjacent photocopy room is outdated and filled with redundant services - opportunity to accommodate more desk space; consider removal/upgrade of existing services in photocopy room
- 04 The standard of interior fitout and finishes within the public foyer needs to be enhanced; removal of outdated cabinetry, furnishings etc. Establish a new satellite reception and information desk.
- 05 Courtyard spaces are underutilised, difficult to purpose and insufficient escape / access requirements. Potential infill to acquire additional internal space
- 06 General upgrade of internal finishes within circulation / gallery areas required; paint, artwork, wall linings, carpets, skirtings, lighting, fittings etc
- 07 Current staff areas and board room of low quality re. finishes, useable space etc. Potential to replan and relocate admin / office space to free up lettable area.
- 08 Existing AV room is full of redundant equipment / fittings. Refit required in conjunction with new audio / visual requirements. Improve level change.
- 09 Soda Bar staircase consists of low quality interior finishes which do not compliment the grandeur of the Art Deco style. Refurbish existing dedicated Soda Bar staircase; upgrade finishes, lighting etc.
- 10 The Northern Lights interior fitout is dated and of low quality finishes e.g. plastic chandeliers. The 1970 bar extension and overall colour scheme should be replaced with a contemporary design which is flexible for variety of uses. Consider removal of retrofit bar areas in favour of flexible movable bars.
- 11 Some internal doors do not provide sufficient fire seals etc; consider full review of internal and external doors to ensure compliance with building regulations where possible.
- 12 The stage and supporting apparatus should be reviewed to ensure it is fit for a variety of uses and is future proofed in terms of equipment and technology; general upgrade of stage lighting, fittings, servicing, curtains. Consider demountable stage.

- 13 Underutilised space; re-plan lobby space to meet poor storage requirements. Integration of satellite reception to improve security strategy and also public experience.
 - 14 All stairs must be reviewed to ensure compliance with building regulations where possible e.g. incorporate protected lobby to staff stair and re-plan still rooms to improve flexibility / storage.
 - 15 Current dressing room extension block is generally poorly utilised and in need to complete upgrade. The extension itself is not in keeping or of the same quality as the main Art Deco Ballroom building; it is also detached from all areas of the building.
 - 16 Future development should consider demolition of this extension in support of the overall Masterplan
 - 17 Removal of lobby area in support of point 15
- The existing L1 bridge link to the current Leisure Centre is cordoned off and access is restricted. Consider demolition of link in conjunction with new proposed Stadium and Leisure Centre development



Analysis of Existing Building: L0

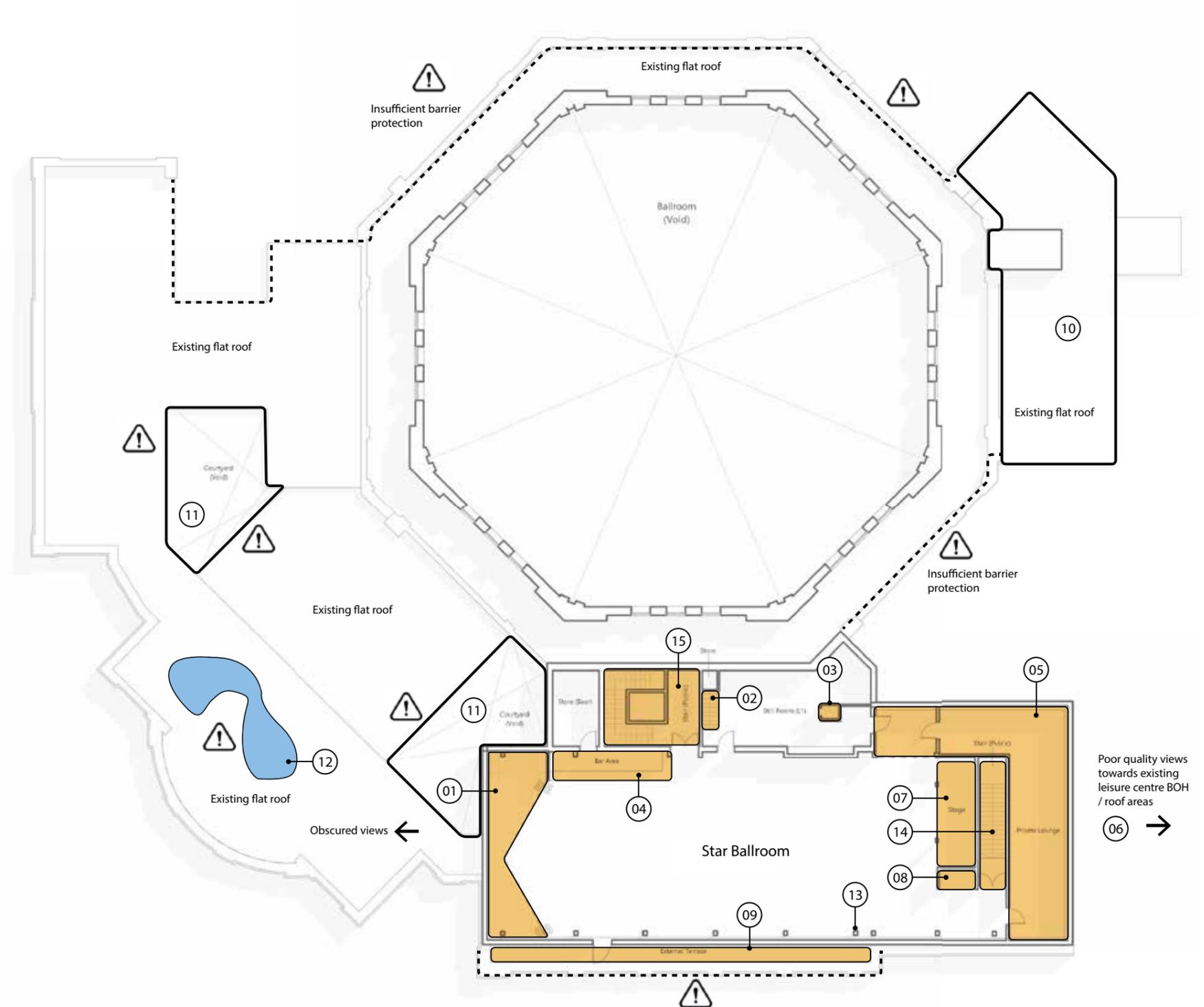
ANALYSIS OF EXISTING BUILDING - CONSTRAINTS (L1)



Existing Star Ballroom Interior

- 01 South end of Ballroom is cordoned off with curtain screening which reduces usable space and does not maximise opportunities for views towards the beach
- 02 Staff stair access does not provide sufficient fire separation / escape route from food prep / still room
- 03 Location of dumb waiter encroaches on useable space within still room
- 04 Bar area encroaches on useable space of Ballroom and negatively impacts on flexibility of lettable space
- 05 Private lounge space currently used as furniture / general store area, screened from the main Ballroom with curtains to obscure current use. Inefficient and uneconomical use of space
- 06 Poor quality of views to the north overlooking the rear of the existing leisure centre
- 07 Poor quality of stage / performance space with columns obscuring view of entertainment. Stage offset from centre of Ballroom which may affect acoustic quality
- 08 Seating recess used but provides no privacy from main Ballroom area
- 09 External terrace does not provide accessible level access or suitable barrier protection at perimeter; currently unused.
- 10 Dressing room north extension is under utilised and physically distant / separated from main building functions including BOH. Character of this extension is not in keeping or of a comparable quality of that of the original Art Deco development. The accommodation does not facilitate a suitable back stage loading strategy
- 11 Restricted courtyards provide little benefit in terms of quality of daylight, exterior space or functionality. No roof parapet or barrier protection at roof level - considerable safety risk
- 12 Existing flat roof over Esplanade level is showing signs of water ponding and general poor quality construction in parts as well as no edge protection.
- 13 Existing facade envelope is showing signs of corrosion due to the marine environment and general poor upkeep / maintenance. Weathering of materials likely to worsen over time. Single glazed curtain walling will continue to contribute to poor EPC rating (G-).

- 14 Existing public stair is narrow and not sufficiently fire separated from other areas of the building. Enclosure contains non fire rated glazed panelling and no protected lobbies.
- 15 No protected lobby to separate escape stair from adjacent spaces; all levels.



Analysis of Existing Building: L1

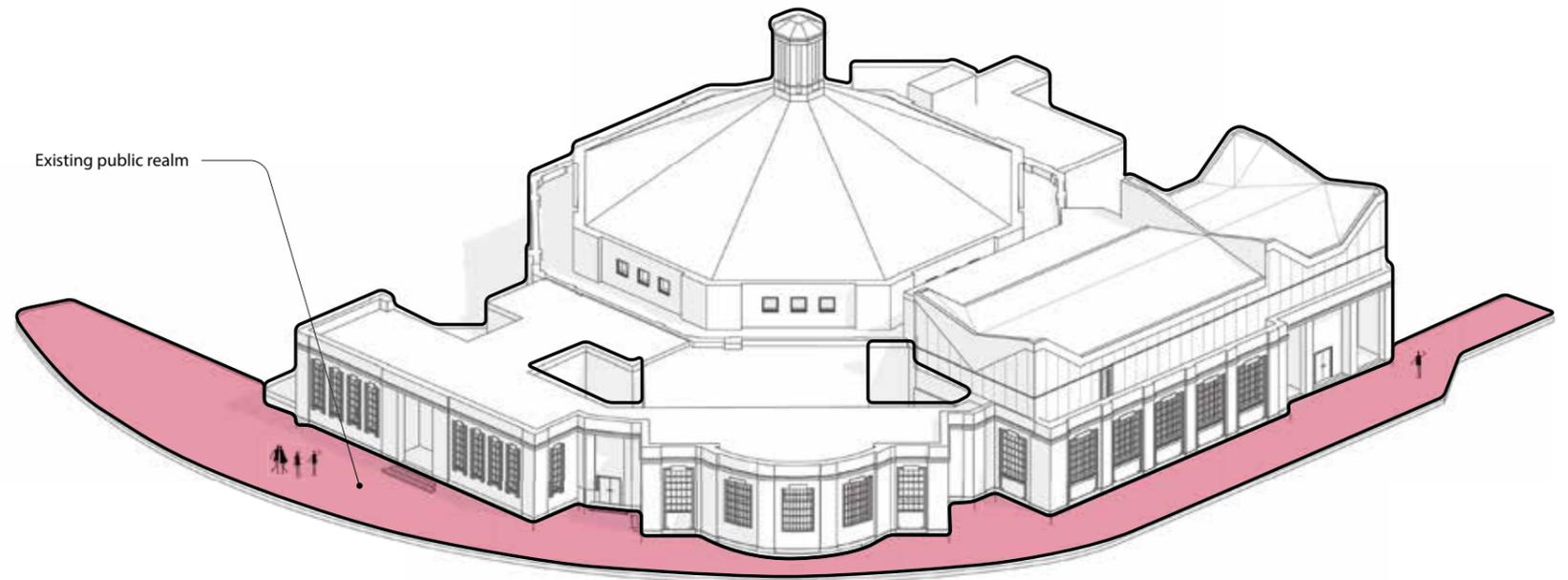
ANALYSIS OF EXISTING BUILDING - OVERALL CONSTRAINTS

A number of key constraints are identified which have significant impact on the functionality of the building, the quality of interior space and the overall building mass. These include but are not limited to;

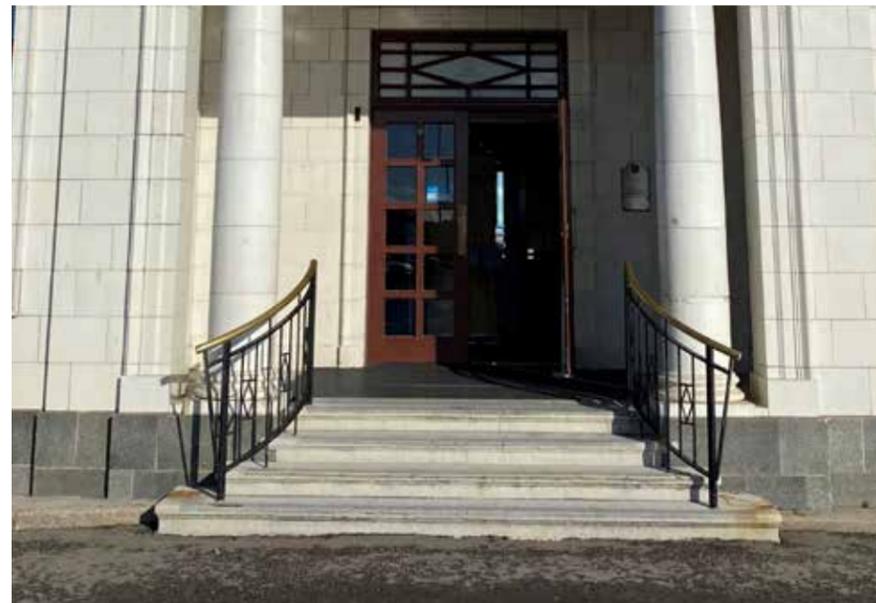
- External public realm and public accessibility
- External courtyards
- L1 roof finish
- The Star Ballroom at L1
- The north extension

By addressing each of these within any future development, it will establish positive moves towards re-imagining the Beach Ballroom as a destination venue in a way which can reignite the authenticity of the original building. Positive impacts include;

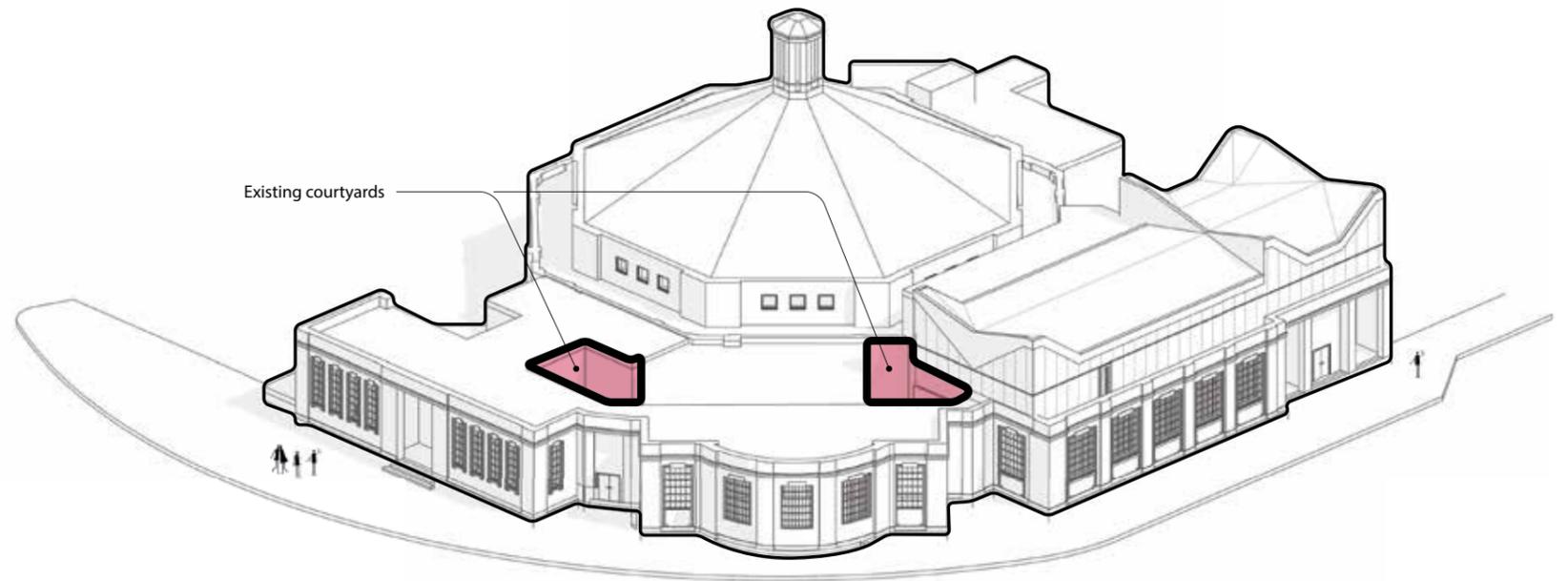
- Ensuring access for all visitors and staff
- Integration of the Ballroom within the overall Masterplan
- Connectivity with new stadium / leisure centre development
- Clarity of main entrance
- Opportunities to maximise floor space and release area for commercial opportunities
- Reduced ongoing maintenance costs
- Enhanced safety measures
- Enhanced aesthetic from ground level and above
- Opportunities to exploit toplight within new interior spaces
- Enhanced external roof terrace space for commercial benefit
- Redefined building mass and internal volume / spaces
- Enhanced quality of interior finishes and fittings
- Compliance with current regulations
- Enhanced energy efficiency, reduced carbon footprint
- Celebration of original building mass / concept



Existing Public Realm Area



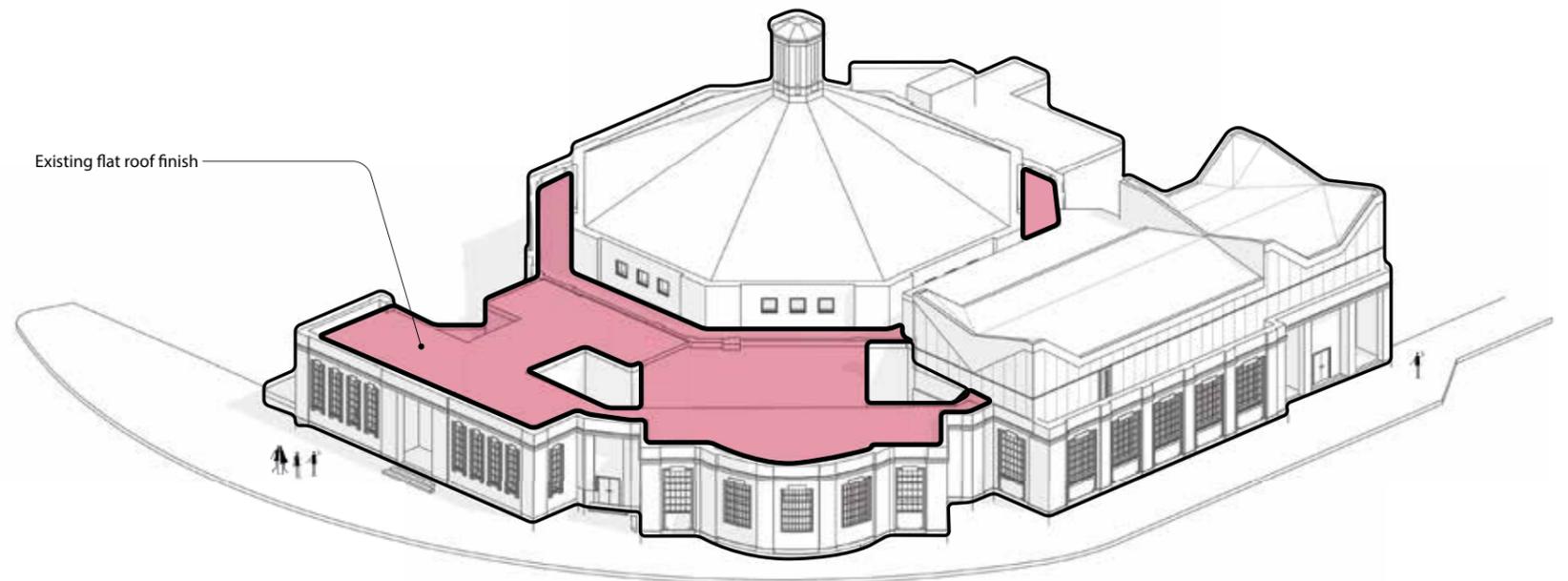
Inaccessible Entrance for Wheelchair Users (left), Constrained and Underutilised Courtyards (centre, right)



Existing Courtyards



Ponding on L1 roof (left)

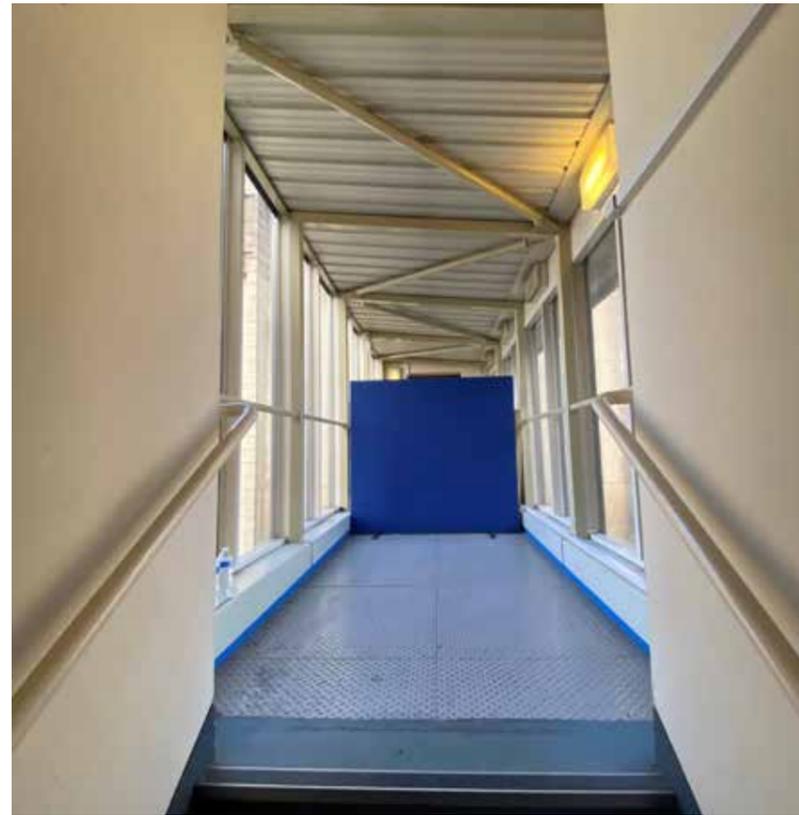


Existing L1 Flat Roof Finish

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING BUILDING - OVERALL CONSTRAINTS



Poor quality extension to original building



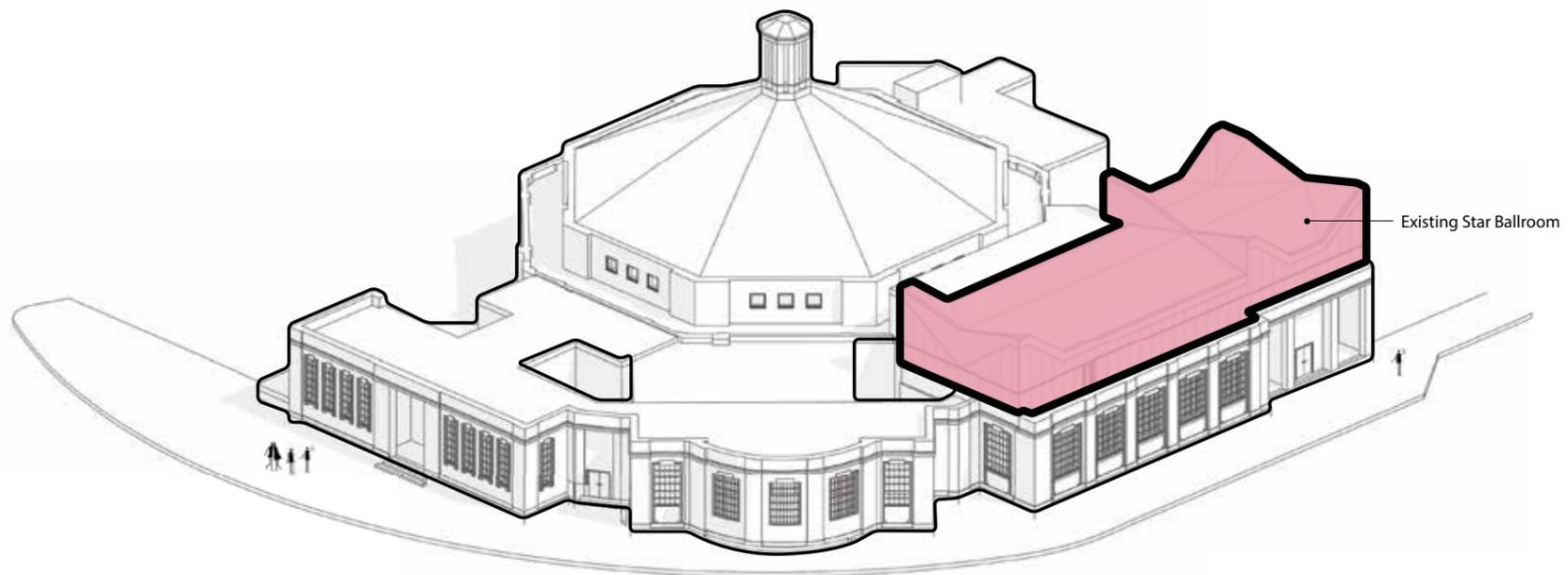
Unused Leisure Centre connection (left), dated and poor quality furnishings (upper left), cluttered circulation areas (upper right), low function room ceilings (bottom)



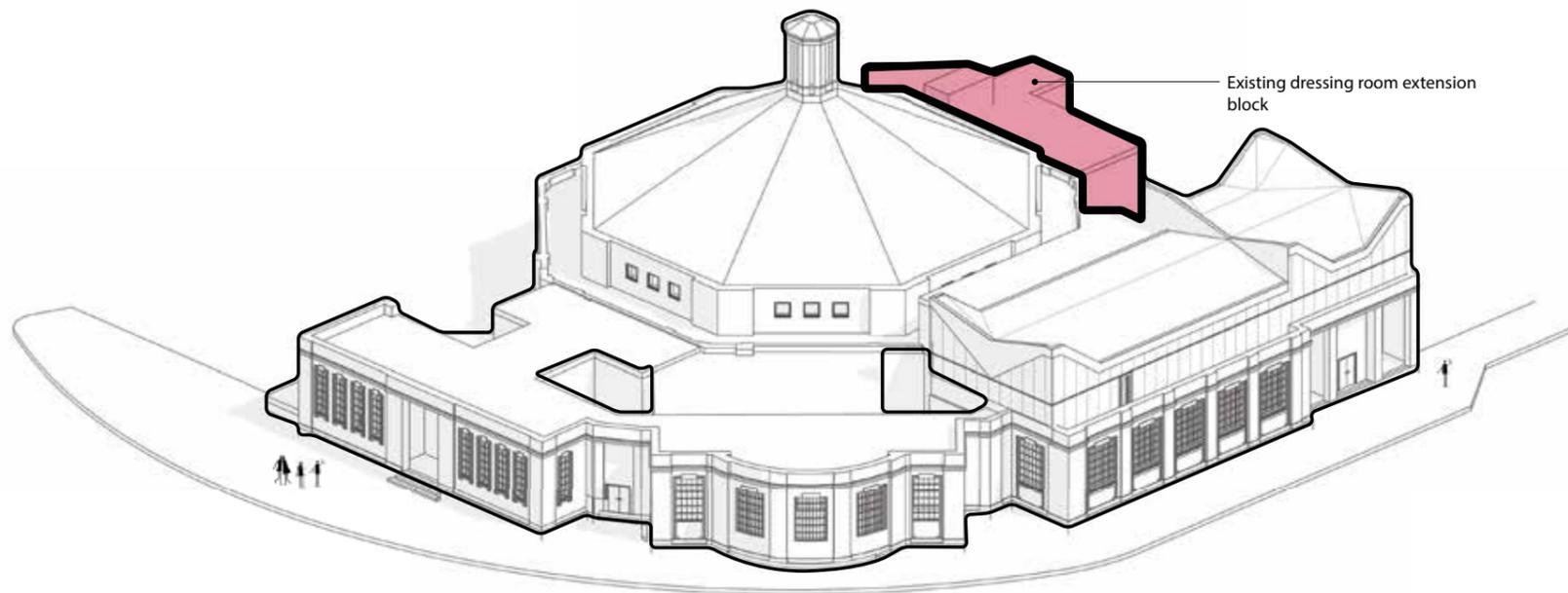
Dated, low quality furnishings and fittings



Cluttered function area (left, centre left, right), inaccessible terrace area (centre right)



Existing Ballroom extension



Existing north extension block

OPPORTUNITIES - LOWER GROUND (STUDY 1)

The following studies identify opportunities for future development including demolition, refurbishment and redesign ranging from light touch to wholesale interventions. These are presented as a combination of architectural moves which can be grouped, subdivided or arranged according to the brief requirement and future planning for the building.

For all studies it is assumed that all front of house circulation spaces will be refurbished. Refurbishment of key function spaces are shown dotted pink.

Study 1 considers a series of major architectural moves so as to integrate with the wider Masterplan. In doing so, a major new external secret garden space is created to the west of the site, doubling up as a breakout events space adjacent to the main Ballroom.

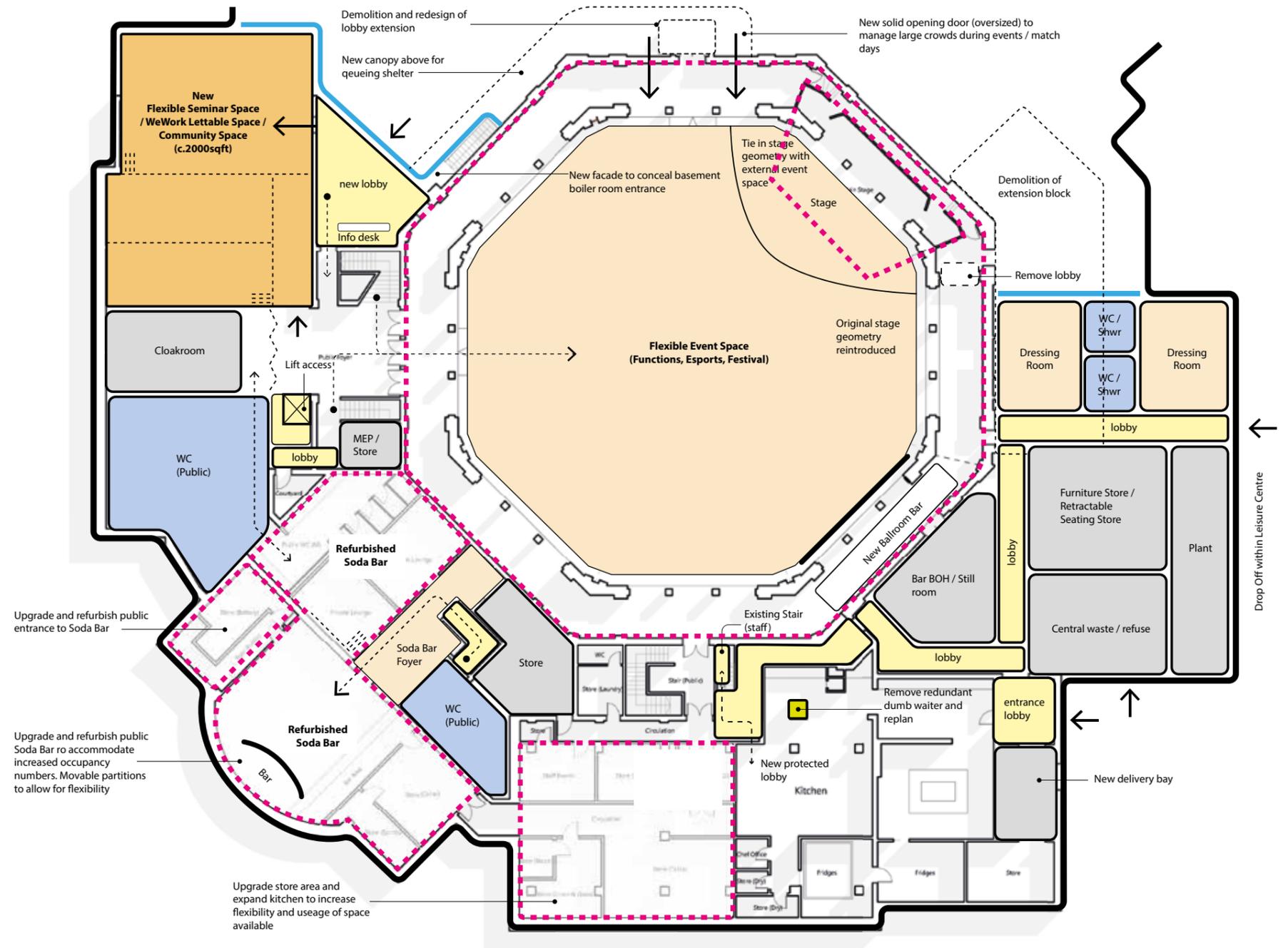
Alongside this a new extension of the current footprint allows for additional lettable commercial space on the south wing as well as new proposed accommodation on the east wing connecting with the new leisure centre development. Here, important areas of storage is incorporated alongside new dressing room spaces, a new Ballroom bar and BOH support as well as dedicated plant space and boiler room replacement. Deliveries and servicing are all managed using the Leisure Centre infrastructure so as to free up public realm space at the east end of the site.

A new lower ground entrance with dedicated reception is proposed to compliment the LG extension; a lightweight canopy provides shelter in the event of queuing.

New public toilet facilities and a rationalised cloakroom space allows for the replanning and refurbishment of the Soda Bar. All areas of kitchen storage are re-planned to maximise storage space and improve separation from circulation routes.

Key moves are noted as follows;

- Integrate LG layout with new proposed sunken secret garden area
- New LG extension on south wing to increase lettable area
- New LG entrance (incl facade and canopy) and reception area to allow south wing to operate independently from rest of building
- Demolition of western lobby - integrate external door access in keeping with original facade
- Refurbishment and expansion of Soda bar and dedicated staircore entrance
- New vertical lift to south wing
- Re-planned kitchen stores
- Refurbished ball interior including dance floor, stage and domed ceiling
- New cloakroom and public toilet spaces
- Redesigned Ballroom bar and BOH support
- LG extension connecting to Leisure Centre with storage, dressing rooms, plant space, waste / refuse space, delivery bay and entrance lobby - extension to include dedicated Ballroom services loading bay and parking



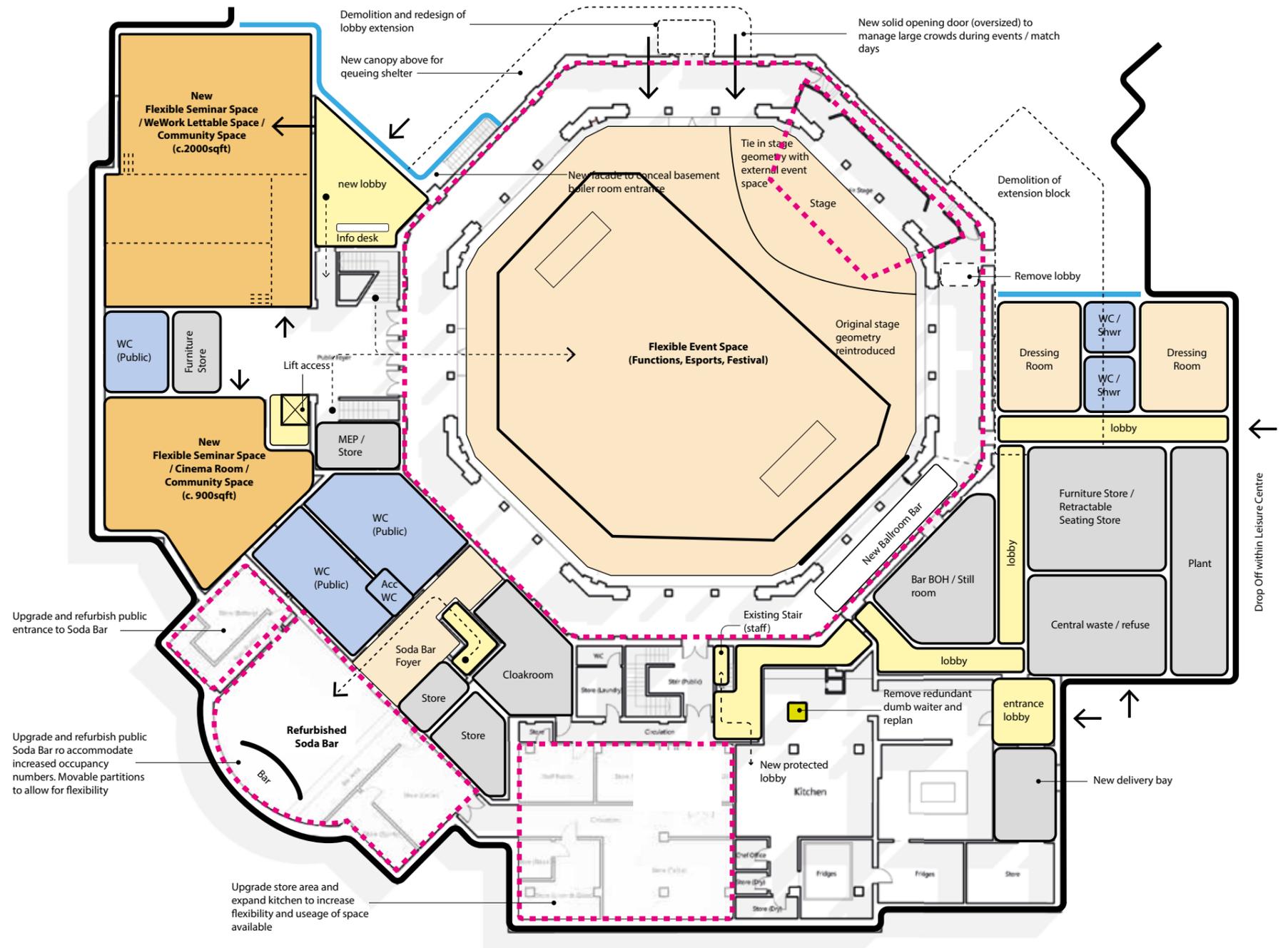
Study 1 (LG)

OPPORTUNITIES - LOWER GROUND (STUDY 2)

Study 2 follows the principles established in Study 1; here an additional c. 900sqft commercial / lettable offering is incorporated. Potential use could include boutique cinema space, community workshop or meeting spaces.

Key moves are noted as follows;

- Integrate LG layout with new proposed sunken secret garden area
- New LG extension on south wing to increase lettable area
- New LG entrance (incl facade and canopy) and reception area to allow south wing to operate independently from rest of building
- Demolition of western lobby - integrate external door access in keeping with original facade
- Refurbished Soda bar and dedicated staircore entrance
- New vertical lift to south wing
- Re-planned kitchen stores
- Refurbished ball interior including dance floor, stage and domed ceiling
- New cloakroom and public toilet spaces
- Redesigned Ballroom bar and BOH support
- LG extension connecting to Leisure Centre with storage, dressing rooms, plant space, waste / refuse space, delivery bay and entrance lobby - extension to include dedicated Ballroom services loading bay and parking
- Additional c. 900sqft commercial / lettable space



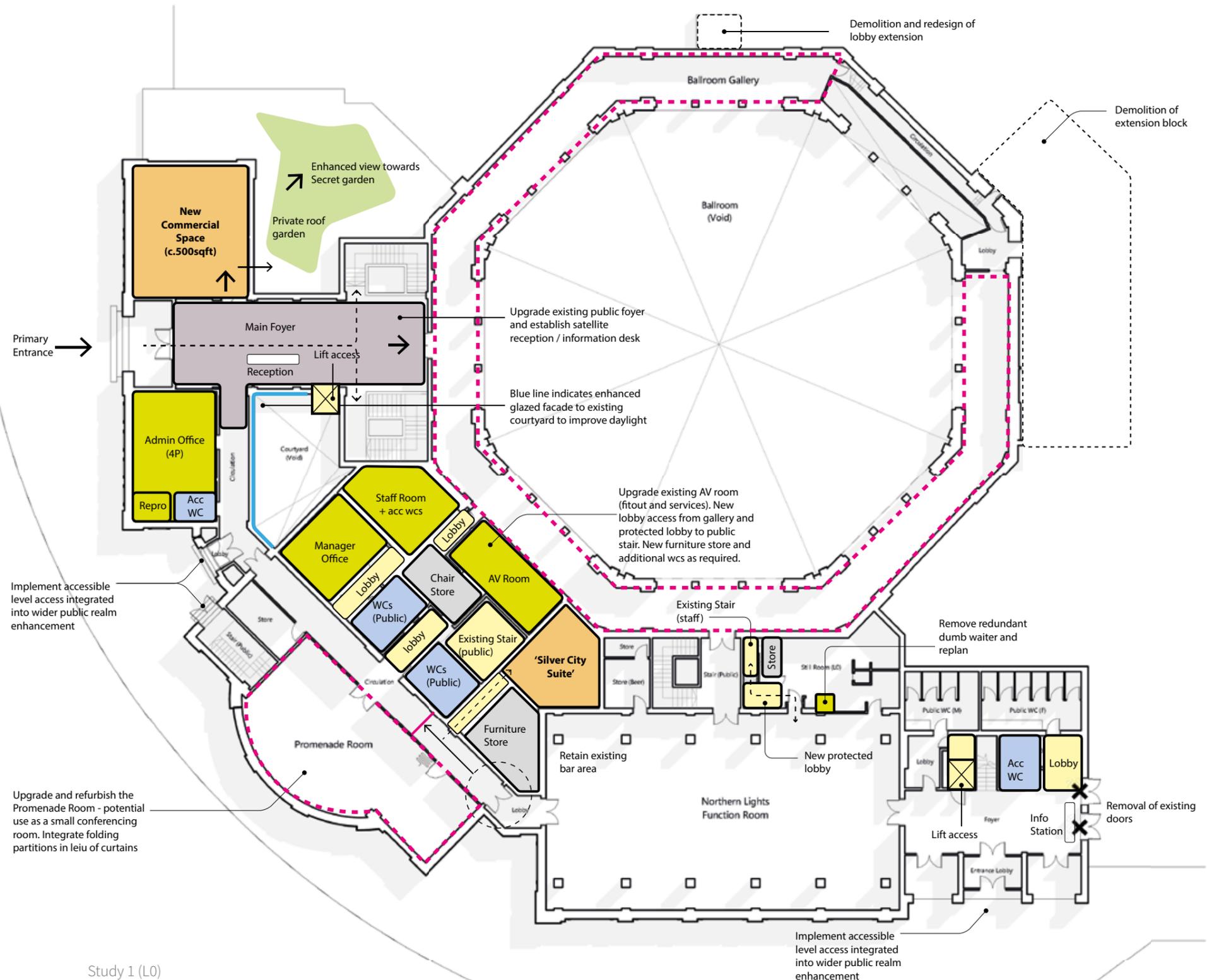
Study 1 (LG)

OPPORTUNITIES - GROUND (STUDY 1)

Study 1 considers refurbishment of interior spaces at L0 within the constraints of the existing building fabric as well as localised demolition of deteriorating extensions to the west and north of the site.

Key moves are noted as follows;

- Establish main reception as focal point
- Establish new commercial offering with external roof garden
- Support accommodation grouped into central area of plan with increased storage for gallery chairs
- Infill of one external courtyard
- Additional public WCs to serve function spaces
- Relocation of Silver City Suite closer to Northern Light function room to allow wedding events to be concentrated at one end of the building
- Glazed facade to existing courtyard to enhanced interior environment
- Addition of two lifts serving either side of the building
- Establish secondary reception / info desk



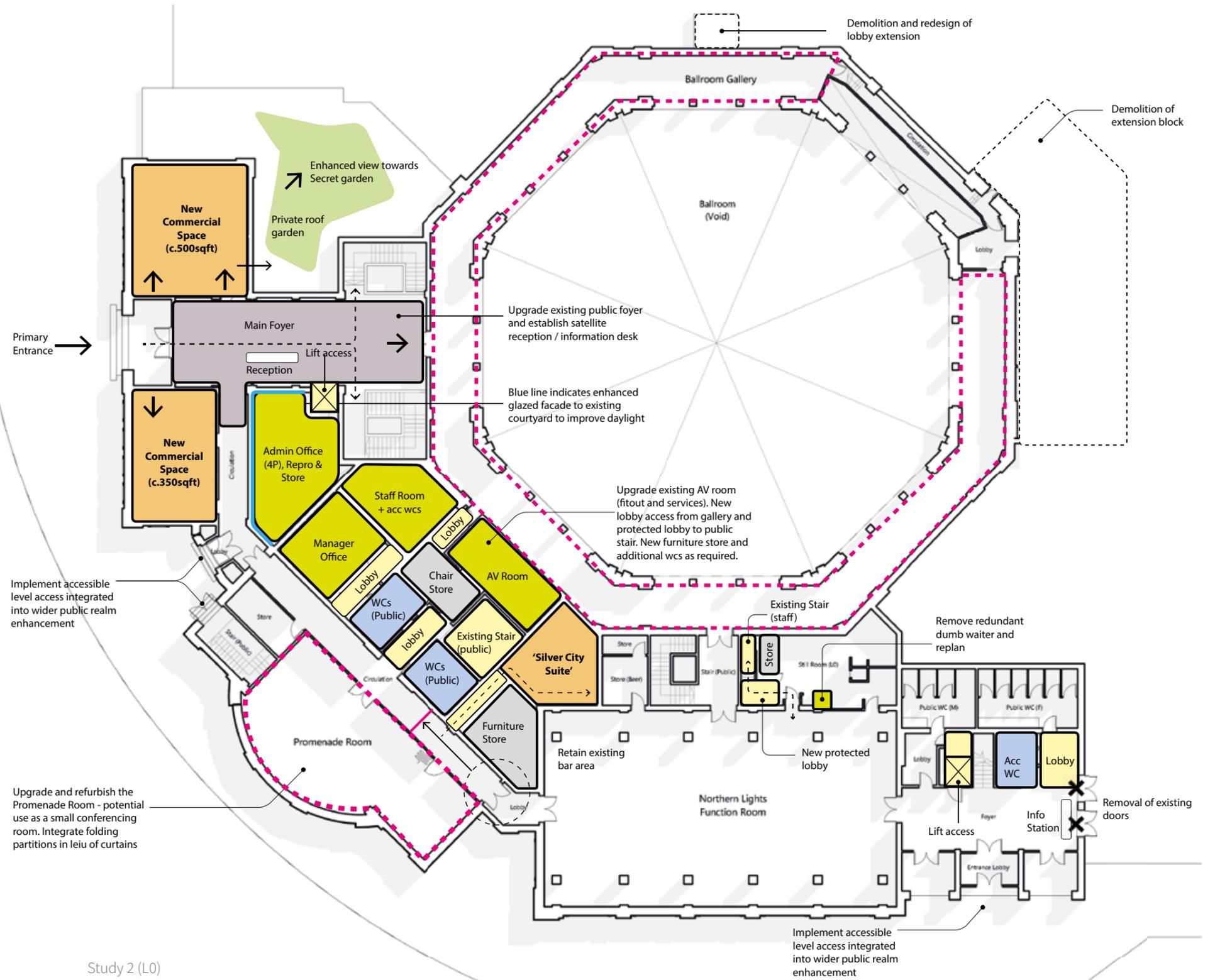
OPPORTUNITIES - GROUND (STUDY 2)

Study 2 follows the principles established in Study 1 with the added intervention of infilling the second external courtyard to create new commercial space at the main entrance to the building.

The two new commercial spaces can benefit from enhanced footfall due to their prominent location. Potential uses could include food and beverage / restaurant offering and independent retail units.

Key moves are noted as follows;

- Establish main reception as focal point
- Establish two new commercial offerings with external roof garden
- Staff and support accommodation grouped into central area of plan with increased storage for gallery chairs
- Infill of both external courtyards
- Additional public WCs to serve function spaces
- Relocation of Silver City Suite closer to Northern Light function room to allow wedding events to be concentrated at one end of the building
- Addition of two lifts serving either side of the building
- Establish secondary reception / info desk



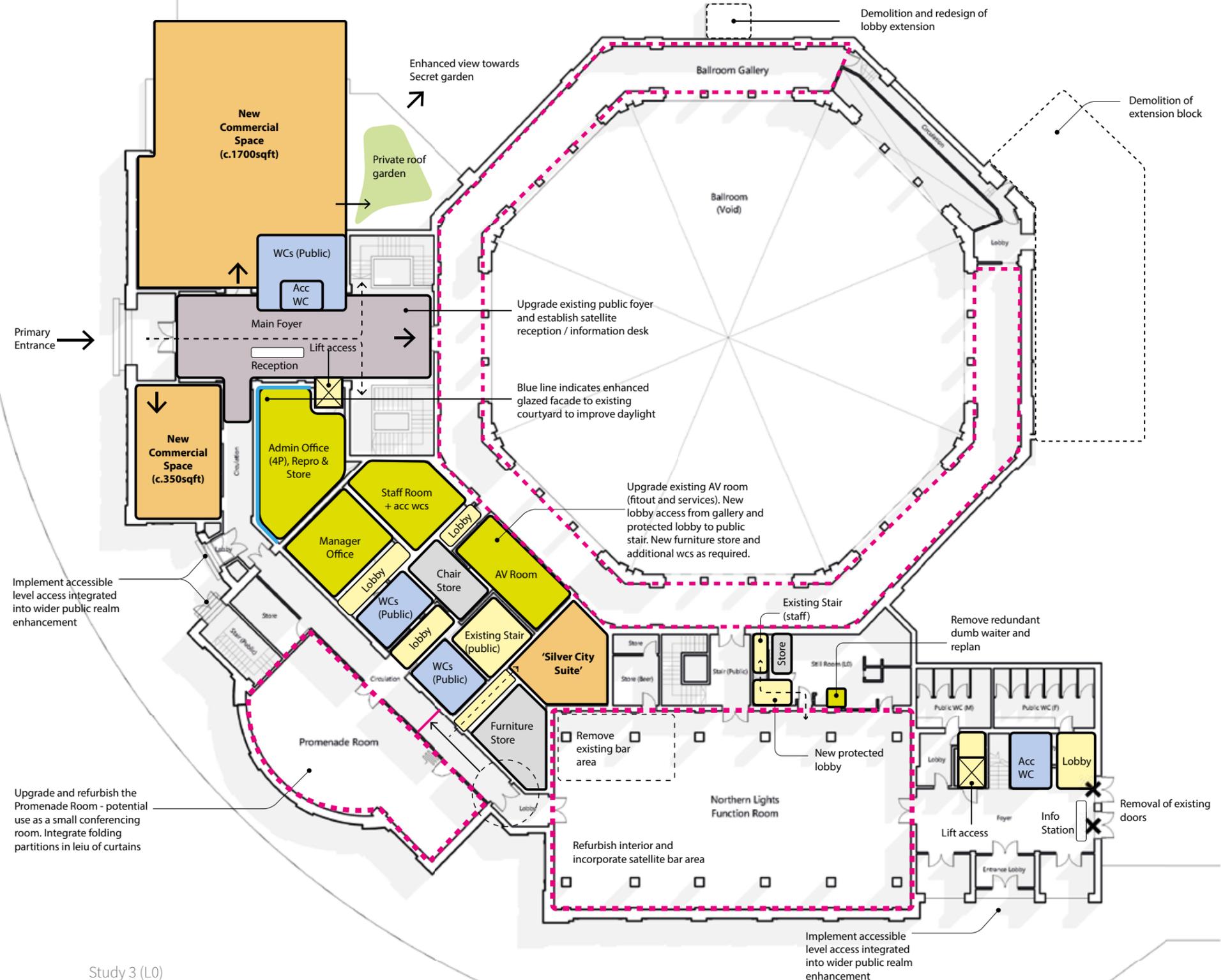
OPPORTUNITIES - GROUND (STUDY 3)

Study 3 follows the principles established in Study 1-2; here a new build extension is considered adjacent to the main entrance in order to create a large commercial unit with lettable space.

This increase in nett area is limited in length so as to match the eastern block and in doing so, balance the overall mass and establish a symmetry around the Ballroom octagon.

Key moves are noted as follows;

- Establish main reception as focal point
- Establish two new commercial offerings with external roof garden
- Maximise commercial offering by extending building mass westwards
- Staff and support accommodation grouped into central area of plan with increased storage for gallery chairs
- Infill of both external courtyards
- Additional public WCs to serve function spaces
- Relocation of Silver City Suite closer to Northern Light function room to allow wedding events to be concentrated at one end of the building
- Addition of two lifts serving either side of the building
- Establish secondary reception / info desk



Study 3 (L0)

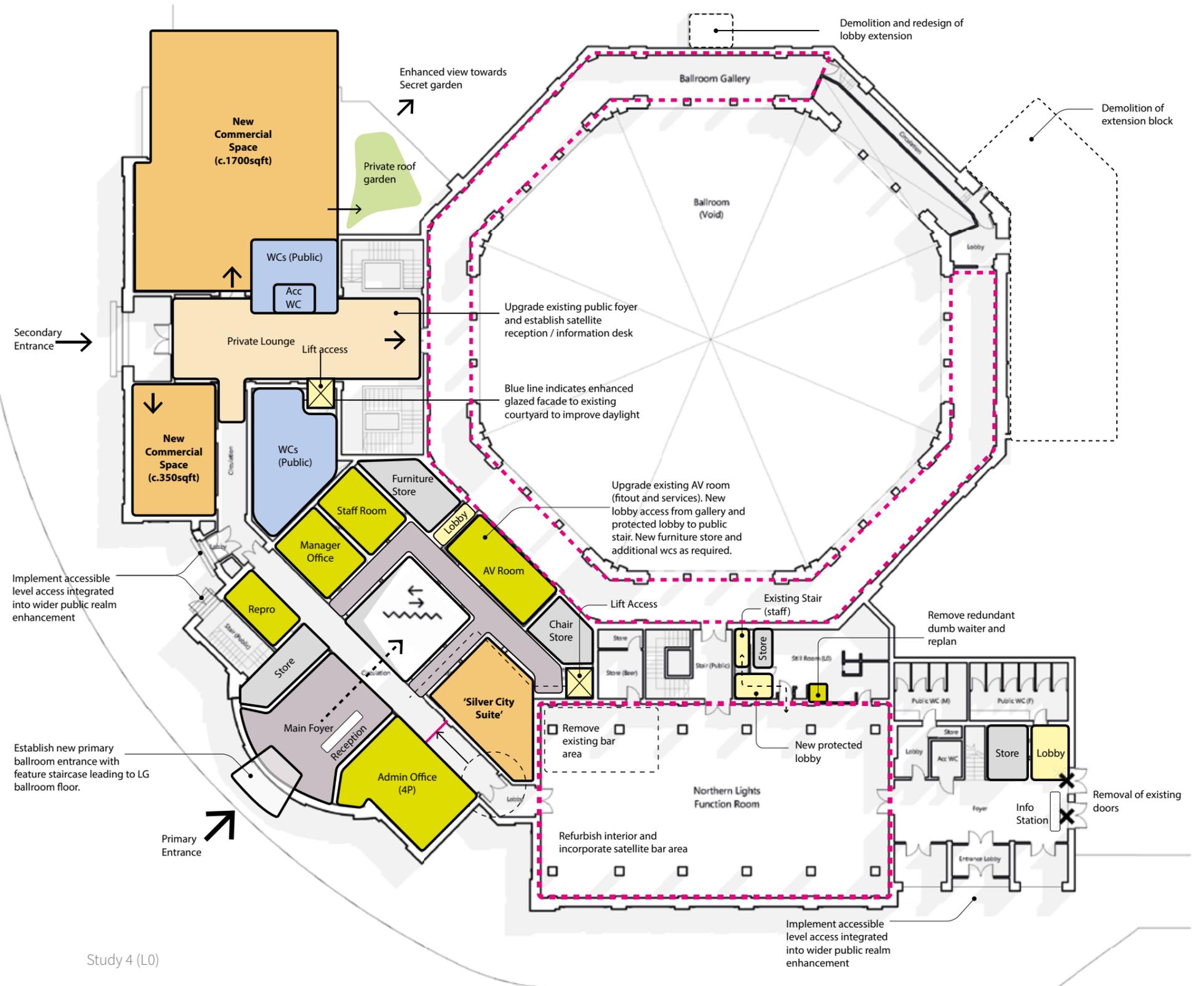
OPPORTUNITIES - GROUND (STUDY 4)

Study 4 follows the principles established in Study 1-3; here the main building reception is relocated and re-imagined, accessed from a new entrance on the curved facade aligned to the angle of the Ballroom stage.

Upon entering the reception, a new grand staircase is formed leading directly down to lower ground level to create a new sense of arrival and theatre. Staff support accommodation is located nearby as is a new lift connecting all levels.

Key moves are noted as follows;

- Establish a new main reception central to the building as focal point aligned to the Ballroom octagon
- Establish two new commercial offerings with external roof garden
- Maximise commercial offering by extending building mass westwards
- Establish private lounge area as part of new commercial offering
- Staff and support accommodation grouped into central area of plan with increased storage for gallery chairs
- Infill of both external courtyards
- Additional public WCs to serve function spaces
- Relocation of Silver City Suite closer to Northern Light function room to allow wedding events to be concentrated at one end of the building
- Addition of two lifts serving either side of the building
- Establish secondary reception / info desk



Study 4 (L0)

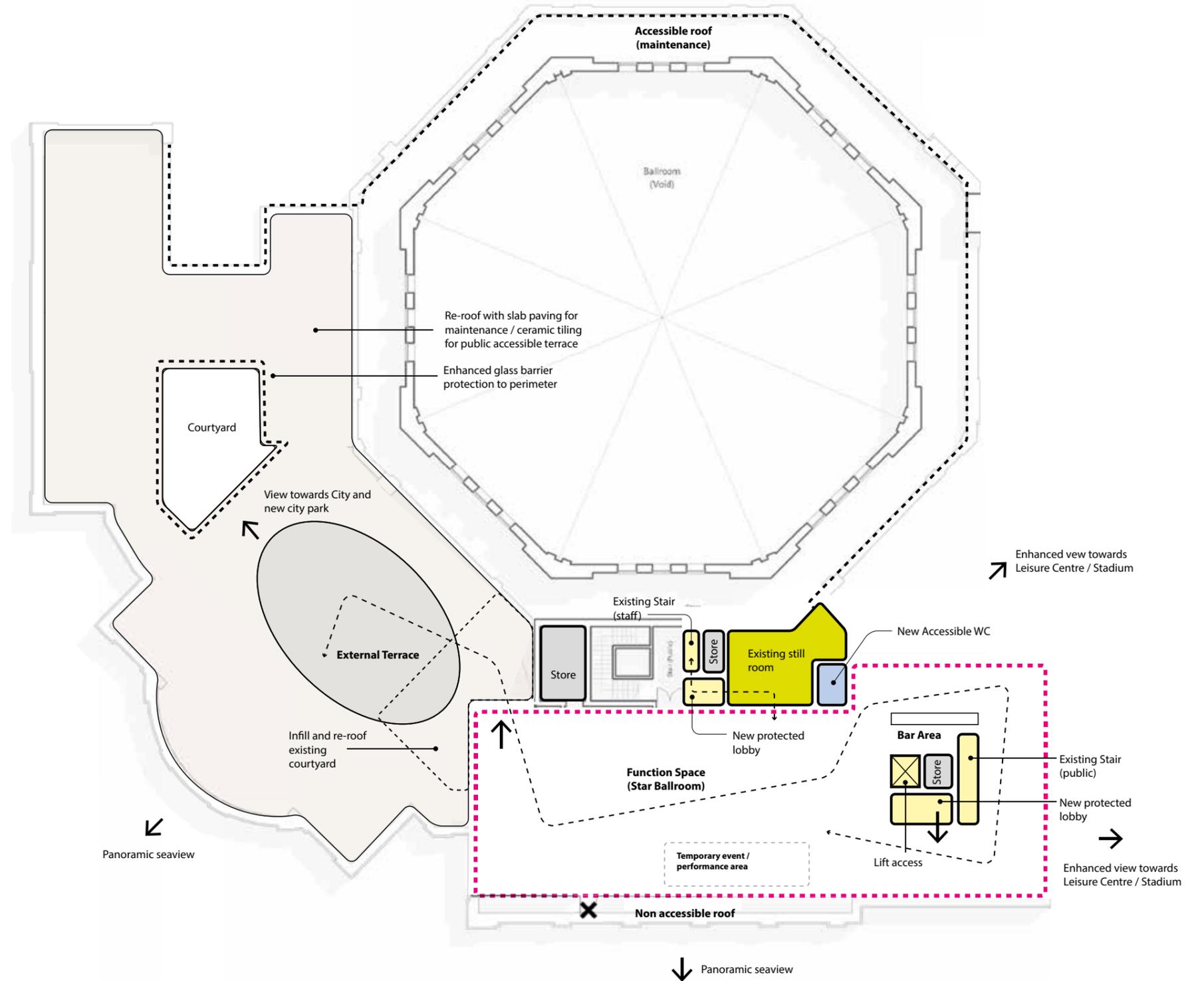
OPPORTUNITIES - LEVEL 1 (STUDY 1)

Study 1 considers refurbishment of exterior and interior spaces at L1 within the constraints of the existing building fabric as well as the infill of one courtyard to allow for external terrace access for public use. It is suggested that the L1 roof be re surfaced with a higher quality finish such as pavers and ceramic tiling appropriate for public use.

Internally, the existing bar area is relocated to a centralised zone adjacent to the existing public stair in order to clear the events area and maximise usable public area. Additional storage, a new lift and a protected lobby complete the self contained service zone. The existing beer store is converted to a general furniture store to allow for permanent storage at this level.

Key moves are noted as follows;

- Establish an external public terrace and resurface flat roof area
- Infill one external courtyard space
- Relocate bar area to centralised service zone
- Add protected lobby to public stair
- Add vertical lift access
- Refurbish existing Ballroom interior and facade
- Add accessible wc facility



Study 1 (L1)

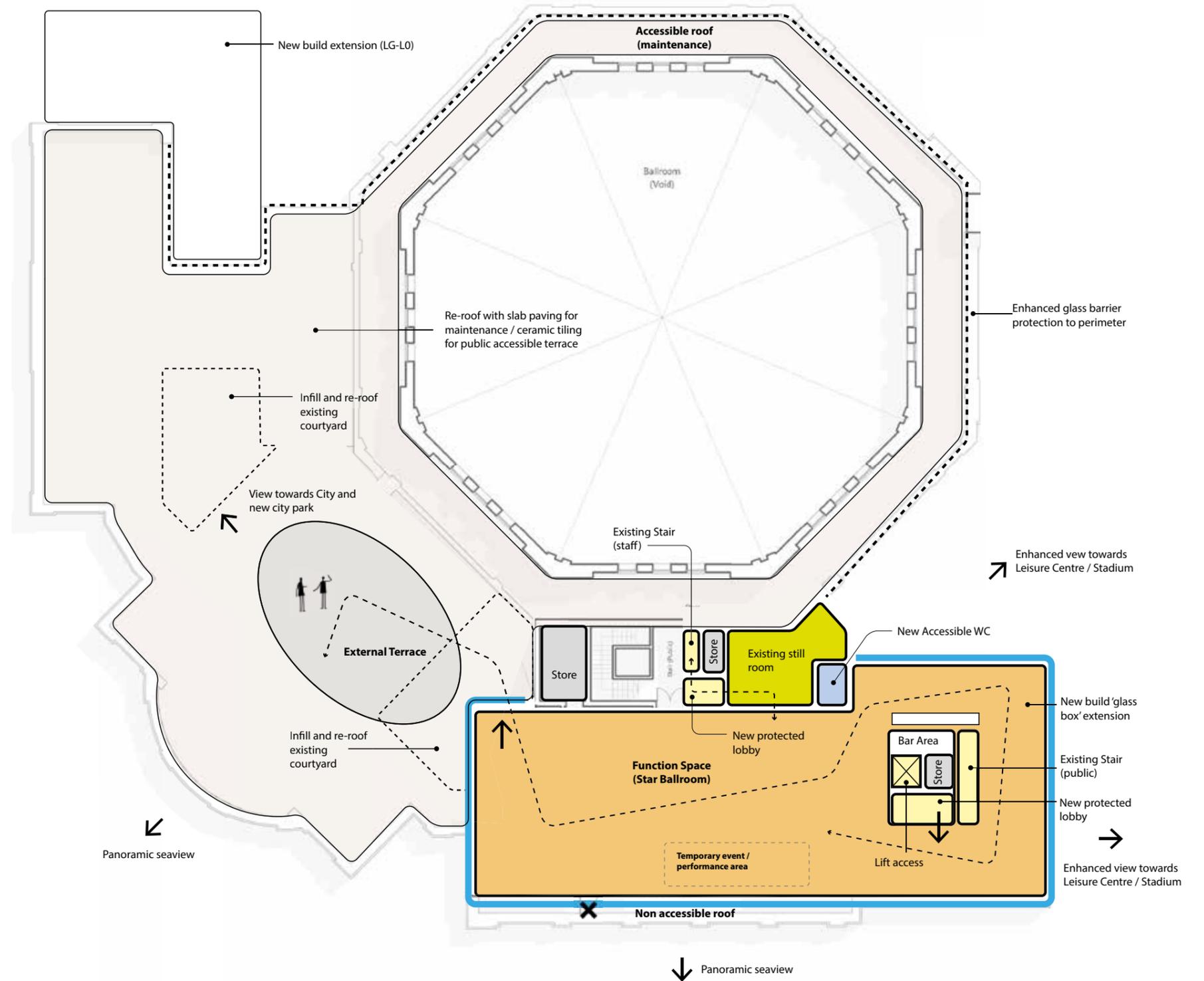
OPPORTUNITIES - LEVEL 1 (STUDY 2)

Study 2 follows the principles established in Study 1; here the Star Ballroom extension is remodelled (demolished) and replaced with a contemporary transparent 'glass box' form to improve quality of structure, aesthetic and to enhance the original Art Deco building in a complimentary way.

Both external courtyards are infilled to allow full resurfacing of the L1 flat roof so that the overall appearance of the Ballroom is enhanced from higher vantage points such as Broadhill.

Key moves are noted as follows;

- Establish an external public terrace and resurface flat roof area
- Infill two external courtyard spaces
- Relocate bar area to centralised service zone
- Add protected lobby to public stair
- Add vertical lift access
- Refurbish existing Ballroom interior and facade
- Add accessible wc facility
- Remodel and replace Star Ballroom facade



Study 2 (L1)

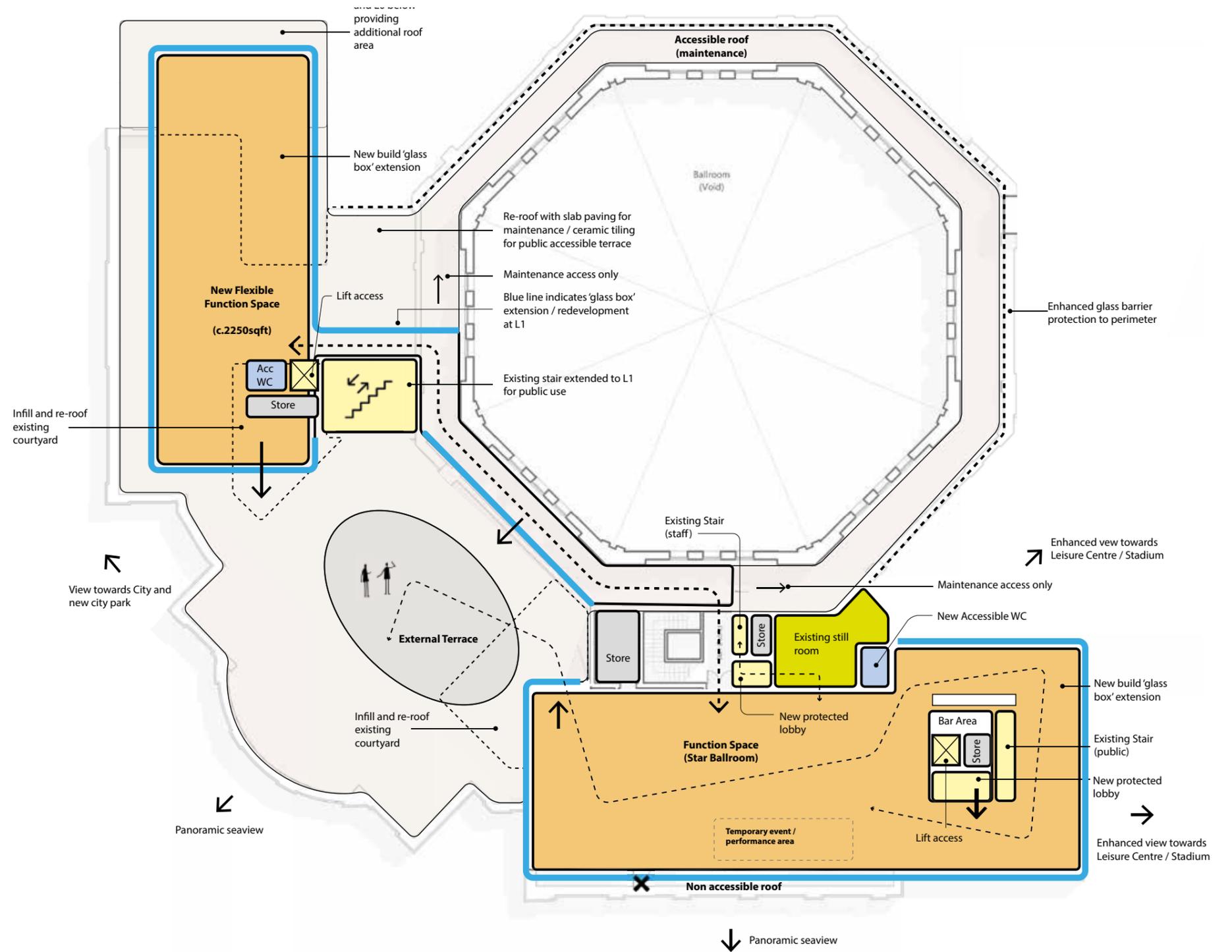
OPPORTUNITIES - LEVEL 1 (STUDY 3)

Study 3 follows the principles established in Study 1-2; here a second contemporary transparent 'glass box' extension is added to the south wing so as to maximise commercial / lettable area and balance the symmetry of the whole building.

To facilitate the second extension, the existing feature stair is extended up to L1 and a new lift is added to facilitate access at all levels. The addition of a second lifts ensures that the building wings can function independently. Both rooftop extensions benefit from use of the shared external roof terrace area and are linked by an enclosed glass walkway which follows the octagon geometry of the Ballroom.

Key moves are noted as follows;

- Establish a shared external public terrace and resurface flat roof area
- Infill two external courtyard spaces
- Relocate bar area to centralised service zone
- Add protected lobby to public stair
- Add two vertical lifts
- Refurbish existing Ballroom interior and facade
- Add accessible wc facility
- Remodel and replace Star Ballroom facade
- Add second rooftop extension / commercial unit
- Extend L0 feature staircase up to L1
- Add glass walkway connection with external door access to terrace



Study 3 (L1)

REVENUE GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES

Each of the studies contained herein identify new opportunities for increasing the area and functionality of revenue generating spaces to support the business case for the redevelopment of the Beach Ballroom.

As such, a series of small, medium and large uses can be accommodated, dependant on the scope of redevelopment; this includes private, semi private and public uses. A range of appropriate uses are noted below.

- Multi purpose events space
- Live entertainment / concerts
- Pre-match hospitality
- Retail
- Food & Beverage
- Fanzone / family entertainment
- Boutique cinema
- E-sports events space
- Creative industry workspaces
- Teaching space
- Community forum / meetings
- Theatre rehearsal space
- WeWork space
- Small-medium sized conventions
- TedTalk lecture venue
- Gallery / exhibitions
- Pop temporary markets



Revenue Generating Examples

THE BALLROOM - ADAPTABILITY

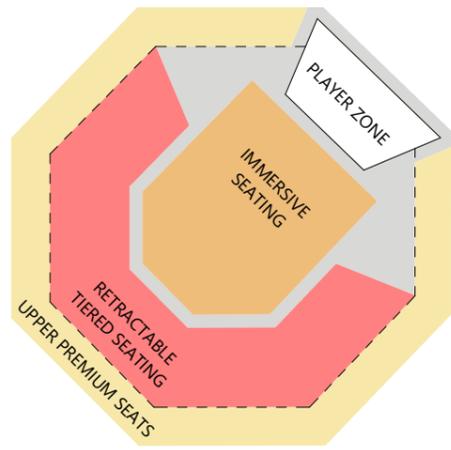
The following diagrams explore a variety of event scenarios to consider how to embrace flexibility and adaptability within the existing octagon geometry of the Ballroom.

It is considered important that the Ballroom adapt to serve events during stadium match days such as Fan Zones but also E-sport gatherings as well weddings, corporate dinners and live music.

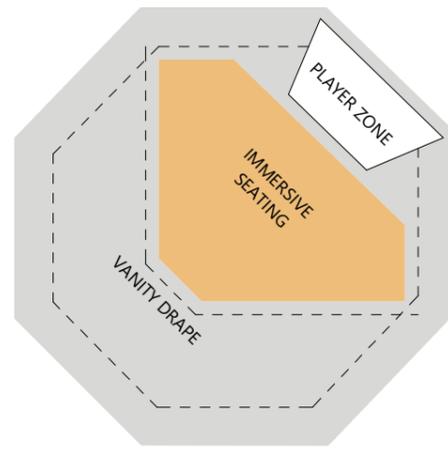
These storage and servicing requirements of these events have been considered within the proposed lower ground floor extension and allocation of additional storage spaces.



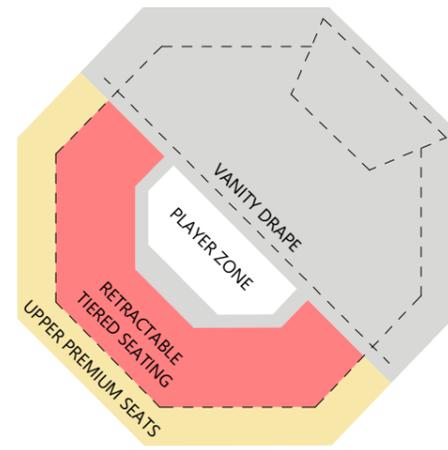
Snooker event (bottom left), E-sports event (bottom right), Fan zone setup (top)



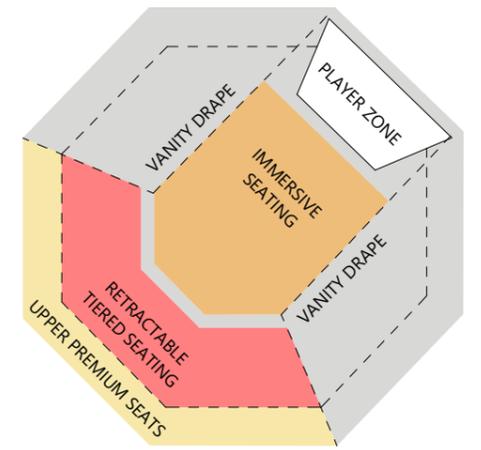
ESPORTS Option 1



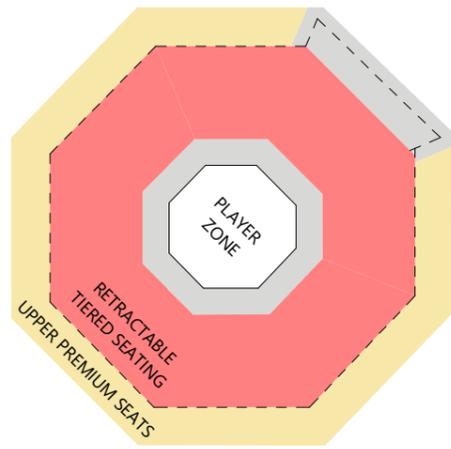
ESPORTS Option 2



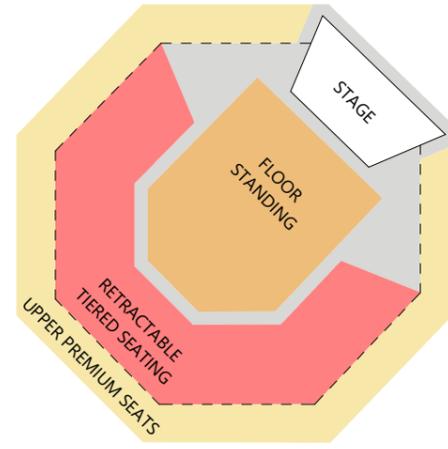
ESPORTS Option 3



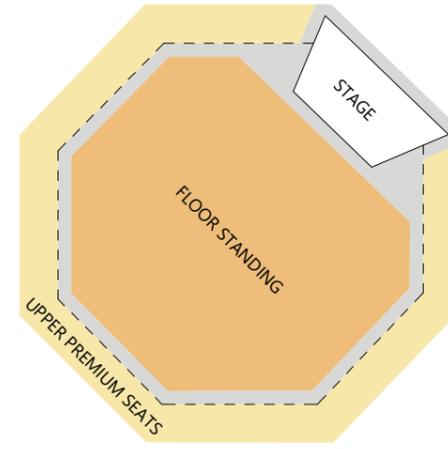
ESPORTS Option 4



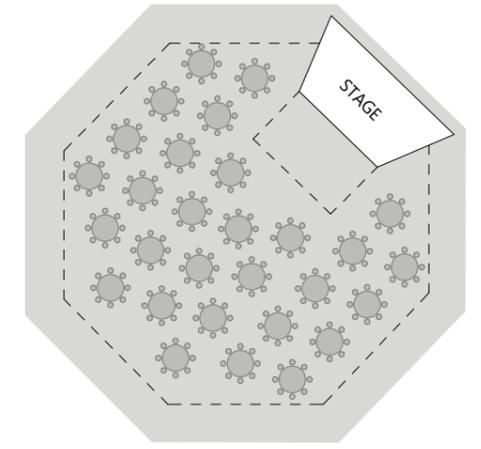
ESPORTS Option 5



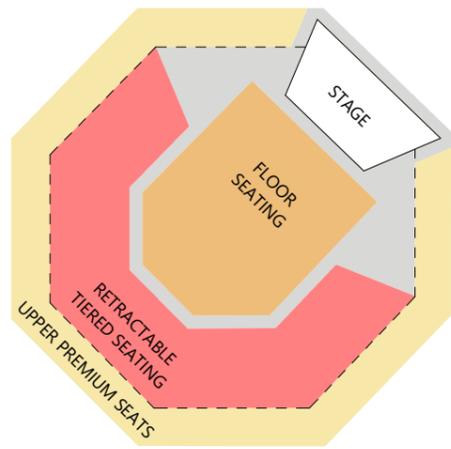
Live event standing + seating



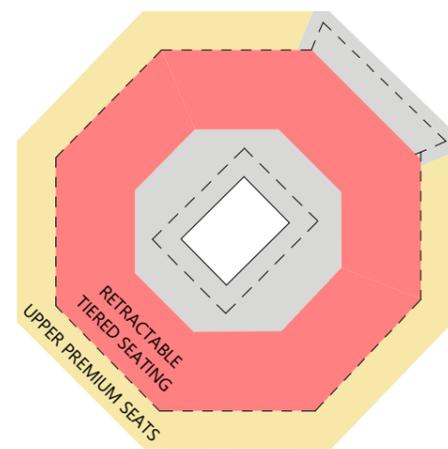
Live event full standing



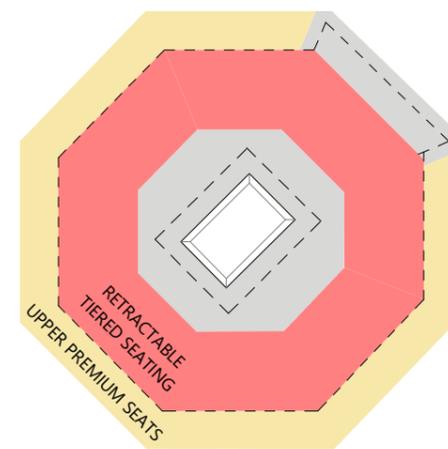
Banquet dinner



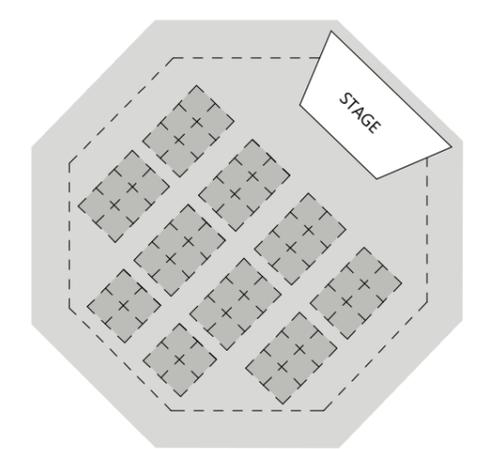
Live event full seating



Snooker



Boxing

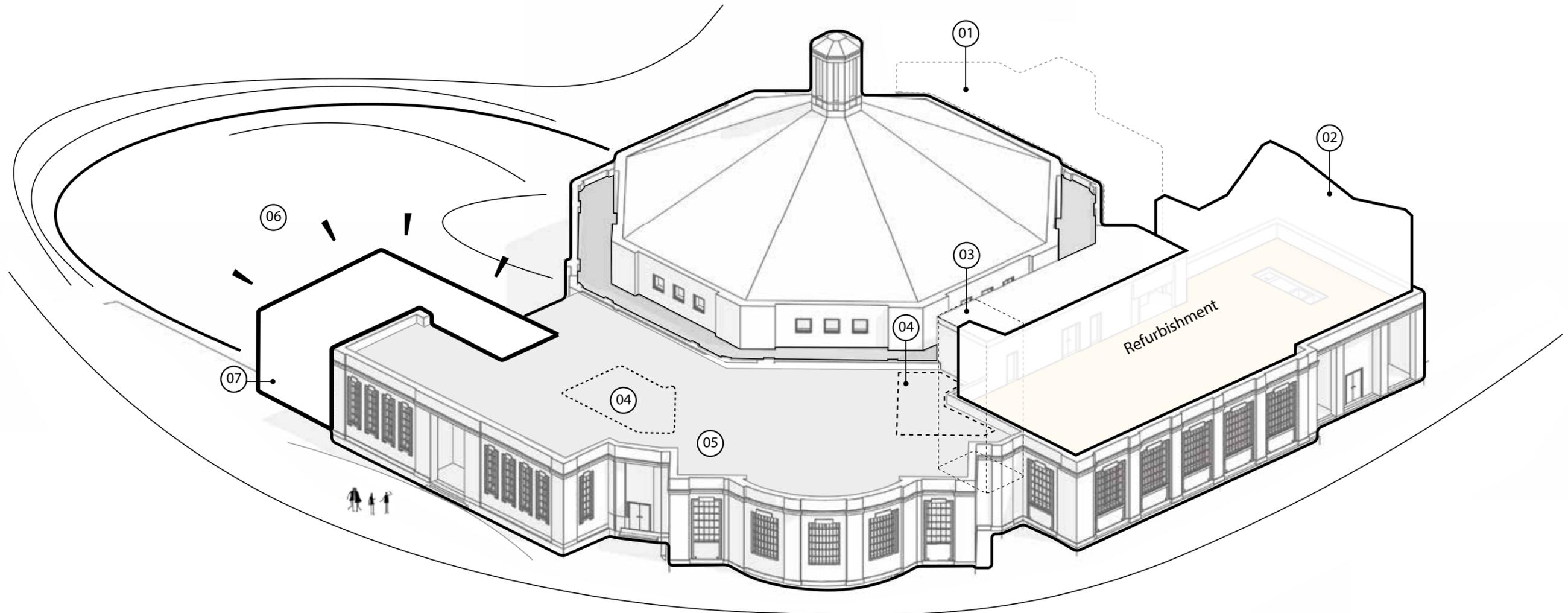


Exhibition

REIMAGINING THE BALLROOM - STUDY 1

The following studies seek to explore a series of key architectural moves with a view to re-imagining the Beach Ballroom within its setting. These are not defined as particular options but reflect a grouping of architectural suggestions to visualise how varying levels of intervention can suggest a new future for this important historical venue.

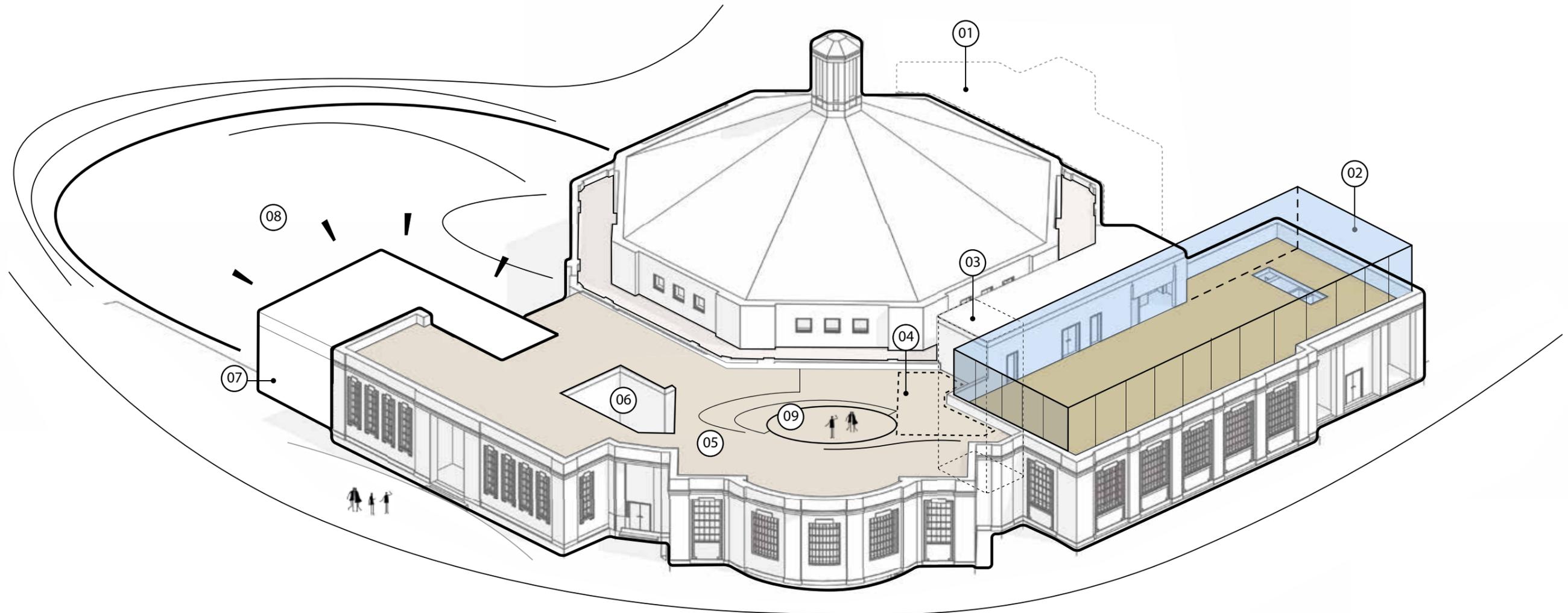
- 01 Demolition of existing northern extension; refurbishment of concealed facade to match art deco features of the existing Ballroom octagon
- 02 Existing Star Ballroom extension to undergo internal refurbishment and replanning to maximise flexibility.
- 03 New lift to provide accessible circulation between all floors; location indicative.
- 04 Infill of existing courtyard and continuation of roof to provide accessible route to external terrace
- 05 Roof finish as existing; review of edge protection to be considered
- 06 Sunken secret garden area integrated with the Ballroom development to provide area for public use
- 07 New extension at LG-L0 providing additional lettable space to suit events and building generated revenue. Extension to benefit from views out towards the sunken secret garden



Re-imagined Ballroom massing study 1

REIMAGINING THE BALLROOM - STUDY 2

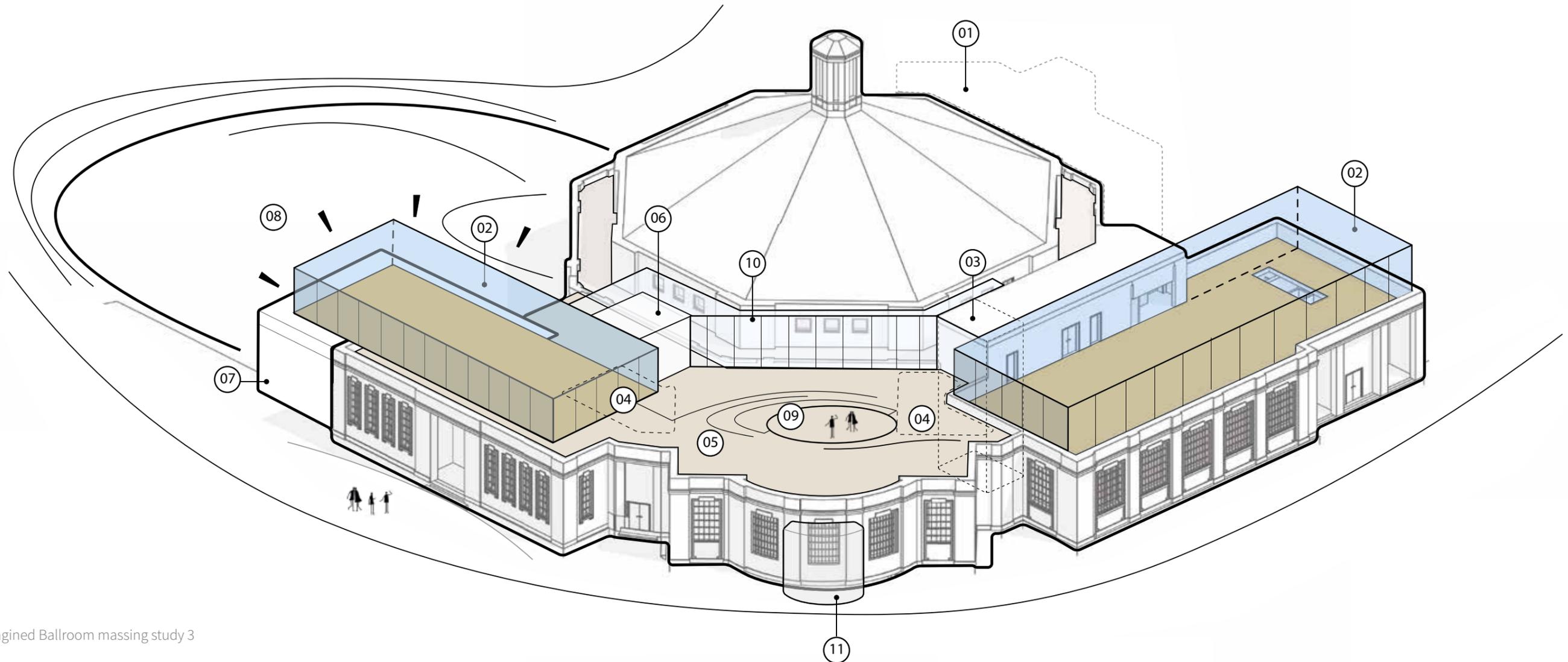
- 01 Demolition of existing northern extension; refurbishment of concealed facade to match art deco features of the existing Ballroom octagon
- 02 New re-imagined 'glass box' extension to provide flexible function space of contemporary design
- 03 New lift to provide accessible circulation between all floors; location indicative.
- 04 Infill of existing courtyard and continuation of roof to provide accessible route to external terrace
- 05 Resurfacing of existing roof to suit public use i.e. paved area / tiles etc
- 06 Existing courtyard maintained as required to suit optioneering
- 07 New extension at LG-L0 providing additional lettable space to suit events and building generated revenue. Extension to benefit from views out towards the sunken secret garden
- 08 Sunken secret garden area integrated with the Ballroom development to provide area for public use
- 09 New established external roof terrace for public / private use as part of a marketable commercial offering



Re-imagined Ballroom massing study 2

REIMAGINING THE BALLROOM - STUDY 3

- 01 Demolition of existing northern extension; refurbishment of concealed facade to match art deco features of the existing Ballroom octagon
- 02 New re-imagined 'glass box' extension to provide flexible function space of contemporary design
- 03 New lift to provide accessible circulation between all floors; location indicative.
- 04 Infill of existing courtyard and continuation of roof to provide accessible route to external terrace
- 05 Resurfacing of existing roof to suit public use i.e. paved area / tiles etc
- 06 Existing stair extended up to L1 extension
- 07 New extension at LG-L0 providing additional lettable space to suit events and building generated revenue. Extension to benefit from views out towards the sunken secret garden
- 08 Sunken secret garden area integrated with the Ballroom development to provide area for public use
- 09 New established external roof terrace for public / private use as part of a marketable commercial offering
- 10 New glass link connecting south and east L1 extensions; glazed doors to provide independent access to external terrace
- 11 New 'glass portal' entrance to the Beach Ballroom



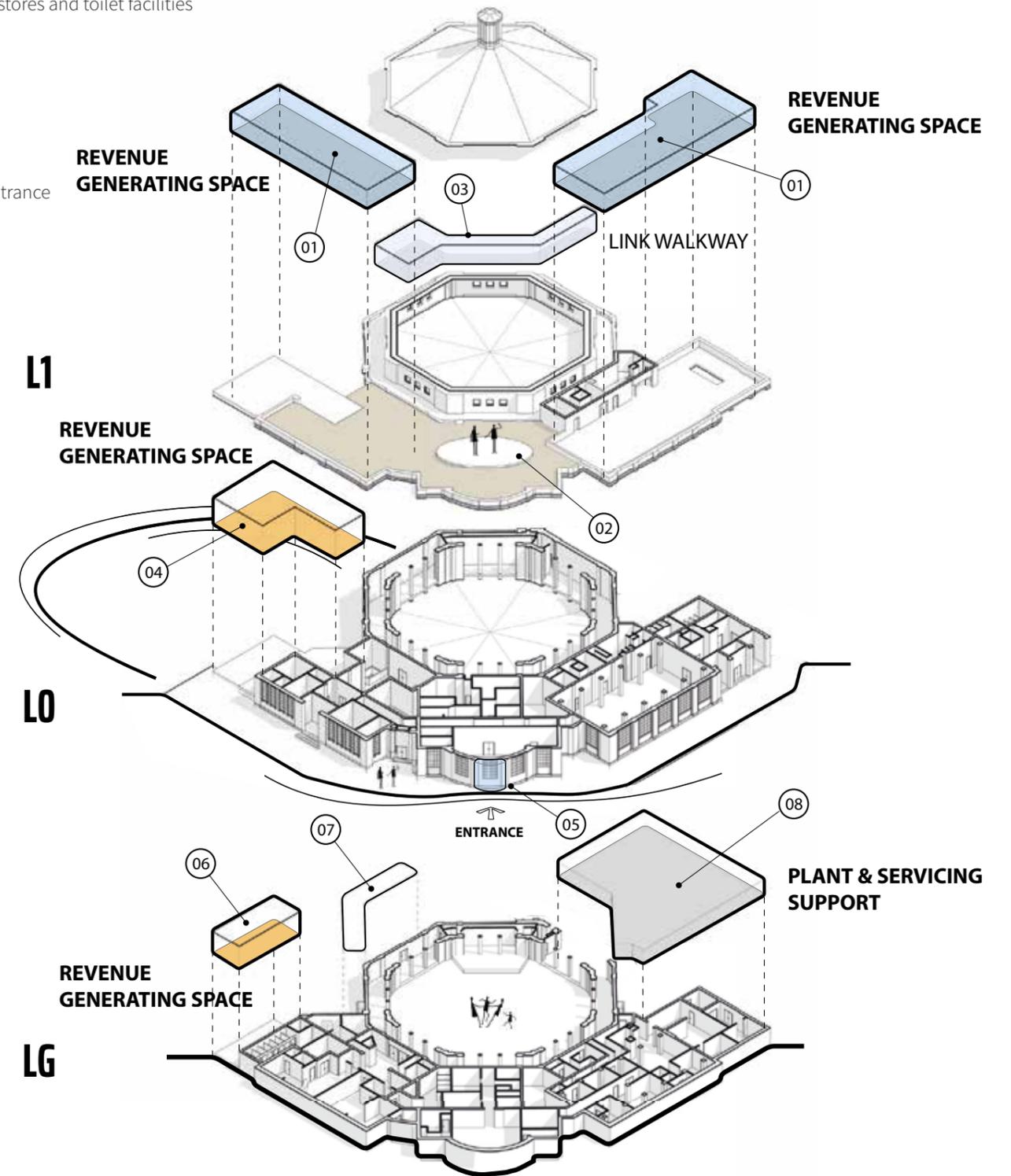
Re-imagined Ballroom massing study 3

EXTENDING THE BALLROOM - COMPONENTS



Architecture and materiality precedents

- 01 'Glass Box' extension with lift access, dedicated stores and toilet facilities
- 02 Shared external terrace / events space
- 03 Glass connecting walkway
- 04 Extension to existing south wing (L0)
- 05 Ramped accessible entrance to 'glass portal' entrance
- 06 Extension to existing south wing (LG)
- 07 Lightweight cantilevered canopy structure
- 08 Connecting support accommodation (LG)



New revenue generating components

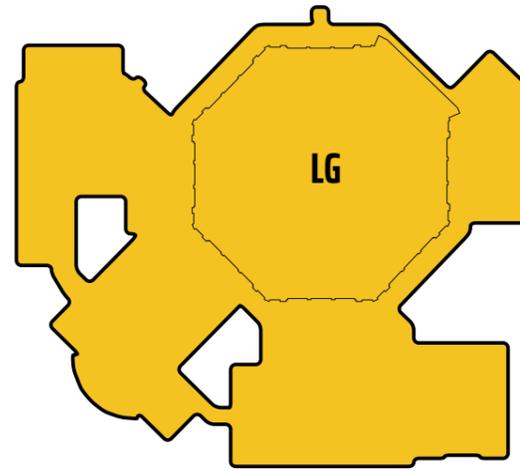
REVENUE GENERATING AREA

The importance of identifying all possible options of revenue generating areas is acknowledged and has been considered at all stages of this report. The studies presented herein illustrate varying levels of lettable area; the adjacent diagrams however, consider the current baseline net area total and compare this with the most optimised study.

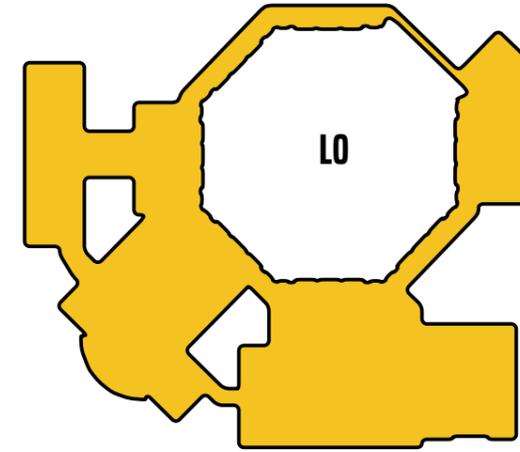
This indicates that revenue generating area can be increased by 64% if the following studies are combined;

Level LG: Study 2
 Level L0: Study 4
 Level L1: Study 3

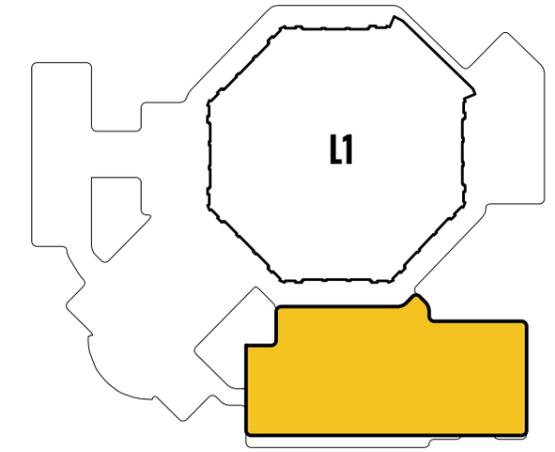
The areas quoted within this report are indicative only at this stage until a full building survey has been conducted and are therefore subject to ongoing review and design development.



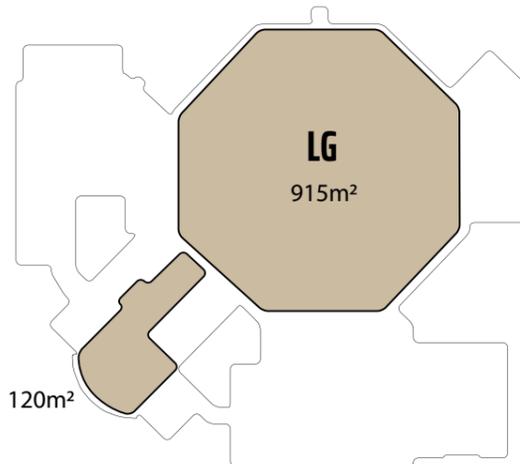
GIFA (Level LG): 2,112m²
 Total GIFA: 3,859m²



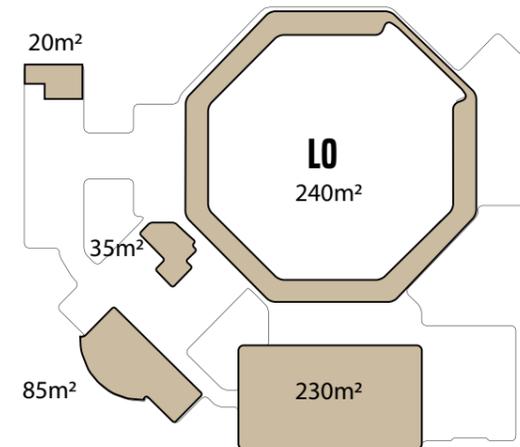
GIFA (Level L0): 1,327m²



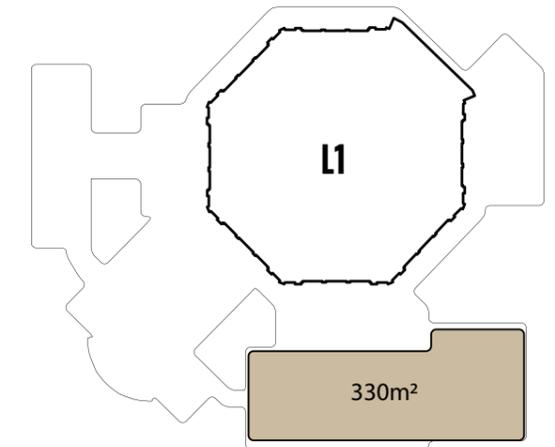
GIFA (Level L1): 420m²



NIFA (Level LG): 1,035m²
 Total NIFA: 1,975m²



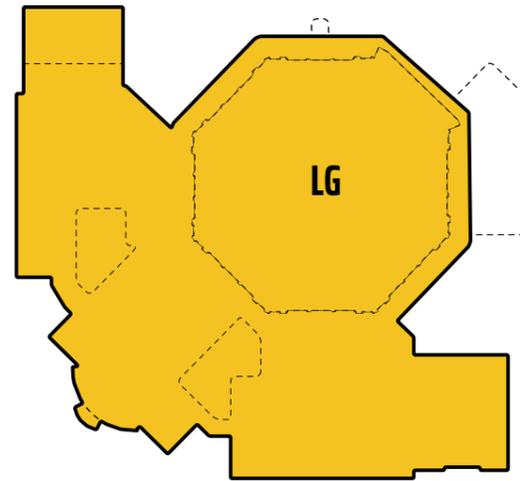
NIFA (Level L0): 610m²



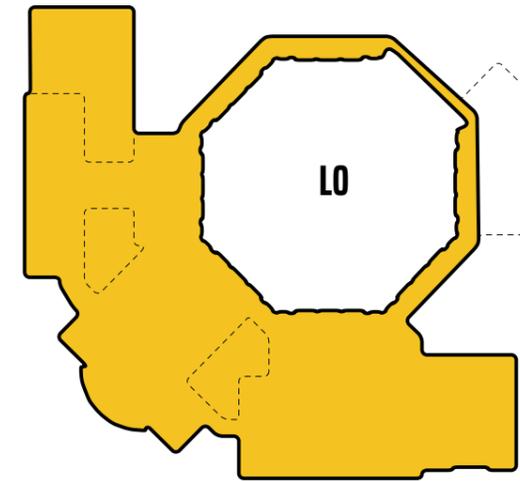
NIFA (Level L1): 330m²

GIFA / NIFA areas as existing

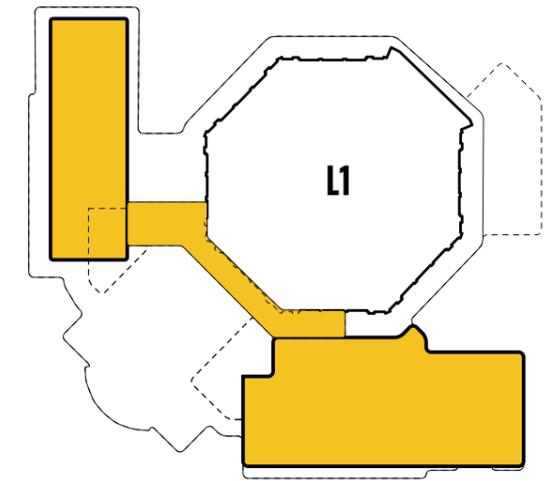
REVENUE GENERATING AREA



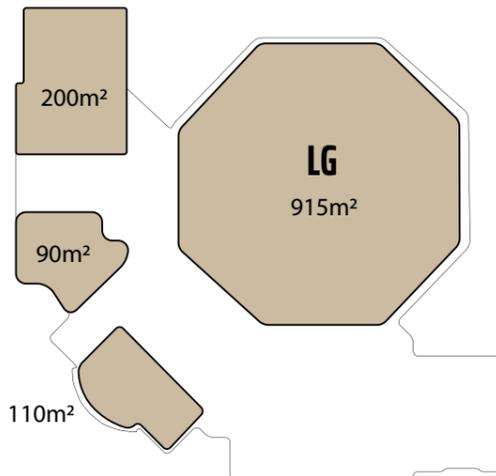
GIFA (Level LG): 2,580m²
Total GIFA: 4,825m²



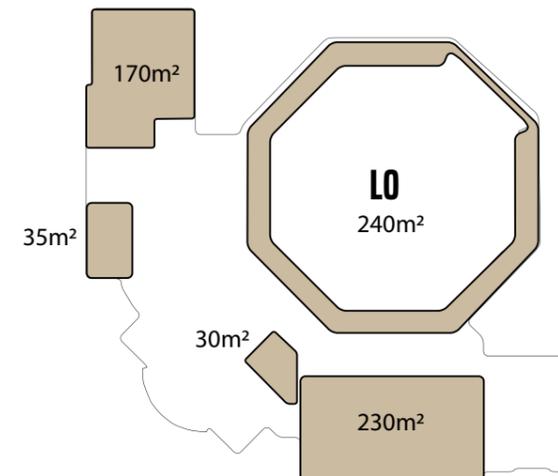
GIFA (Level L0): 1,470m²



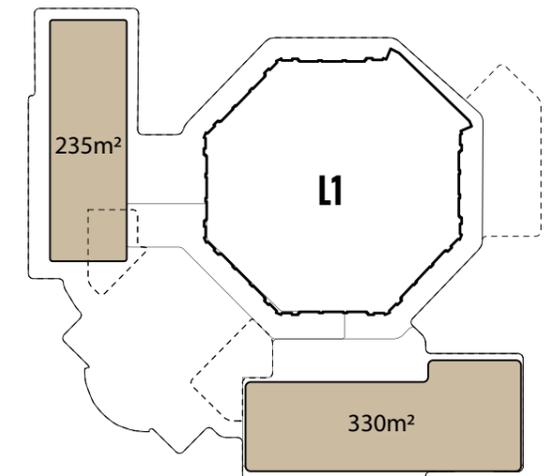
GIFA (Level L1): 775m²



NIFA (Level LG): 1,315m²
Total NIFA: 3,245m²



NIFA (Level L0): 705m²



NIFA (Level L1): 565m²

64%
increase

GIFA / NIFA areas as proposed (max study)

INTERIOR RESTORATION - SPANISH CITY

When considering the future of the Aberdeen Beach Ballroom, much inspiration has been taken from another similar building type, south of the border in Whitley Bay; Spanish City.

It is a particularly relevant precedent from which to draw inspiration from due to a number of striking similarities, some of which are noted below;

- Both were constructed during the Art Deco Period (1910, 1929 respectively)
- In both cases, the central dome ceiling was concealed from view (until restoration)
- Both adopt a seaside location
- Both accommodate similar commercial events
- Both are held in high esteem within local community
- Both have/had accessibility issues
- Both are Grade B/II listed
- Both suffered poor maintenance and consecutive changes to the building fabric

The restoration architects are quoted as saying,

“The restoration has transformed the seafront and Whitley Bay, and sent ripples across the North East. Over 16,000 visitors attended the opening weekend in July 2018, and the local Chamber of Trade has grown from single figures to well over 200. Most importantly, the restoration has returned a much-loved landmark to the people of the North East – and secured it for future generations.”

As such Spanish City is considered to reflect the opportunities ahead in relation to the Beach Ballroom development and suggests a high level of interior finish commensurate with its importance to the community. Accordingly, Spanish City is used as a benchmark for ongoing cost analysis, refer to cost consultants report for further detail.



Images (top to bottom, left to right): Spanish City Central Dome, Spanish City External View, Spanish City Restaurant, Spanish City Restaurant / Lounge

THE BALLROOM - RESTORATION

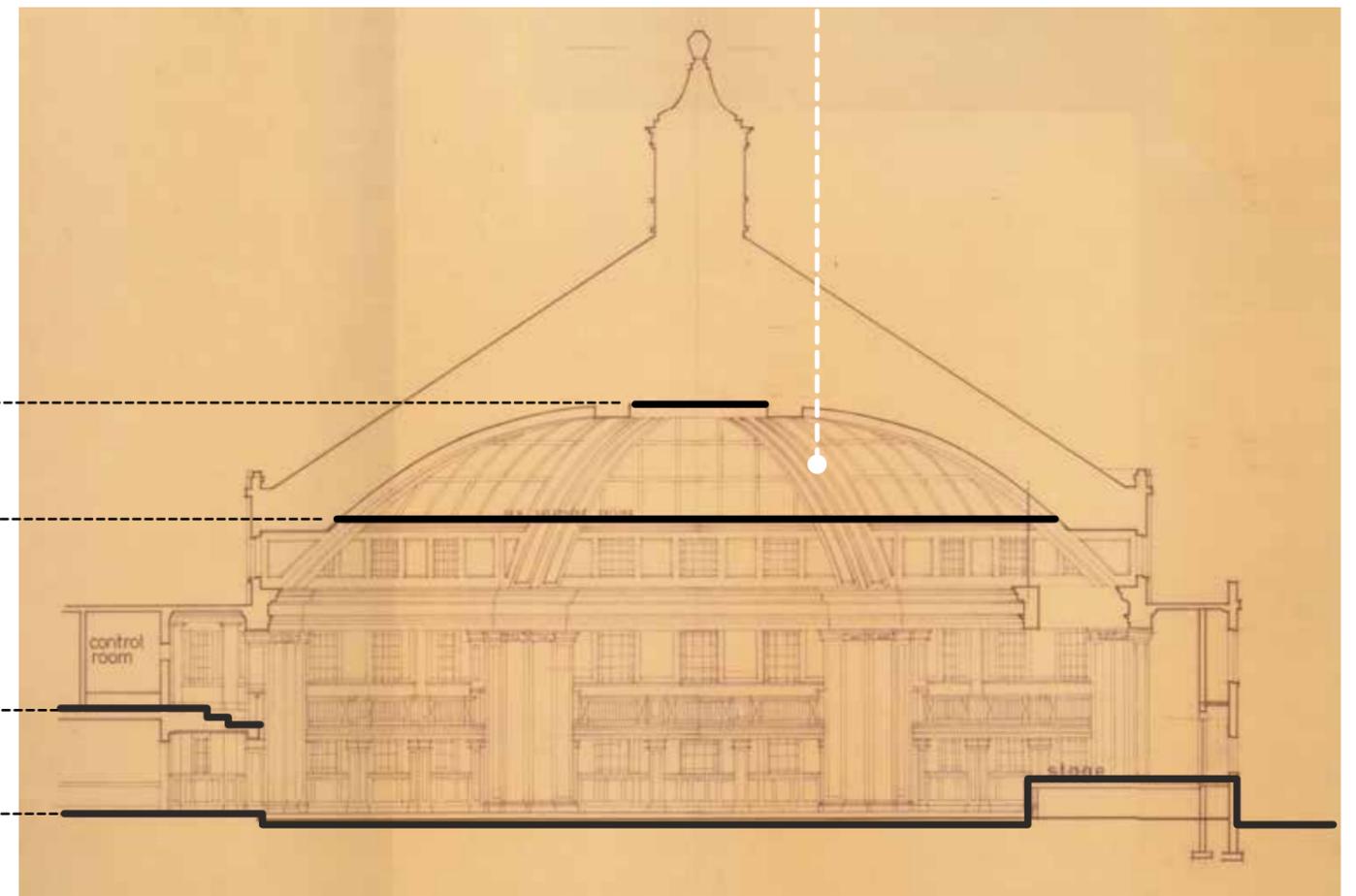
Of significant consideration, is the restoration of the original domed ceiling, currently concealed by the addition of a suspended grid ceiling. By revealing the dome ceiling this will immediately rejuvenate the interior space and maximise the interior volume. A 3d point cloud survey proposal has been obtained, with a view that survey work can commence in order to inform any new refurbishment proposals.

In support of restoring the high volume interior, a new adaptable lightweight audio/visual lighting rig (see 05) could be added to cater for live events, theatre productions, sports events and corporate functions.

At floor level, consideration can be given to refurbishment of the timber sprung dance floor including removal of carpeted areas to suit a more demanding occupancy / variety of events.



Original exposed dome ceiling and feature lighting

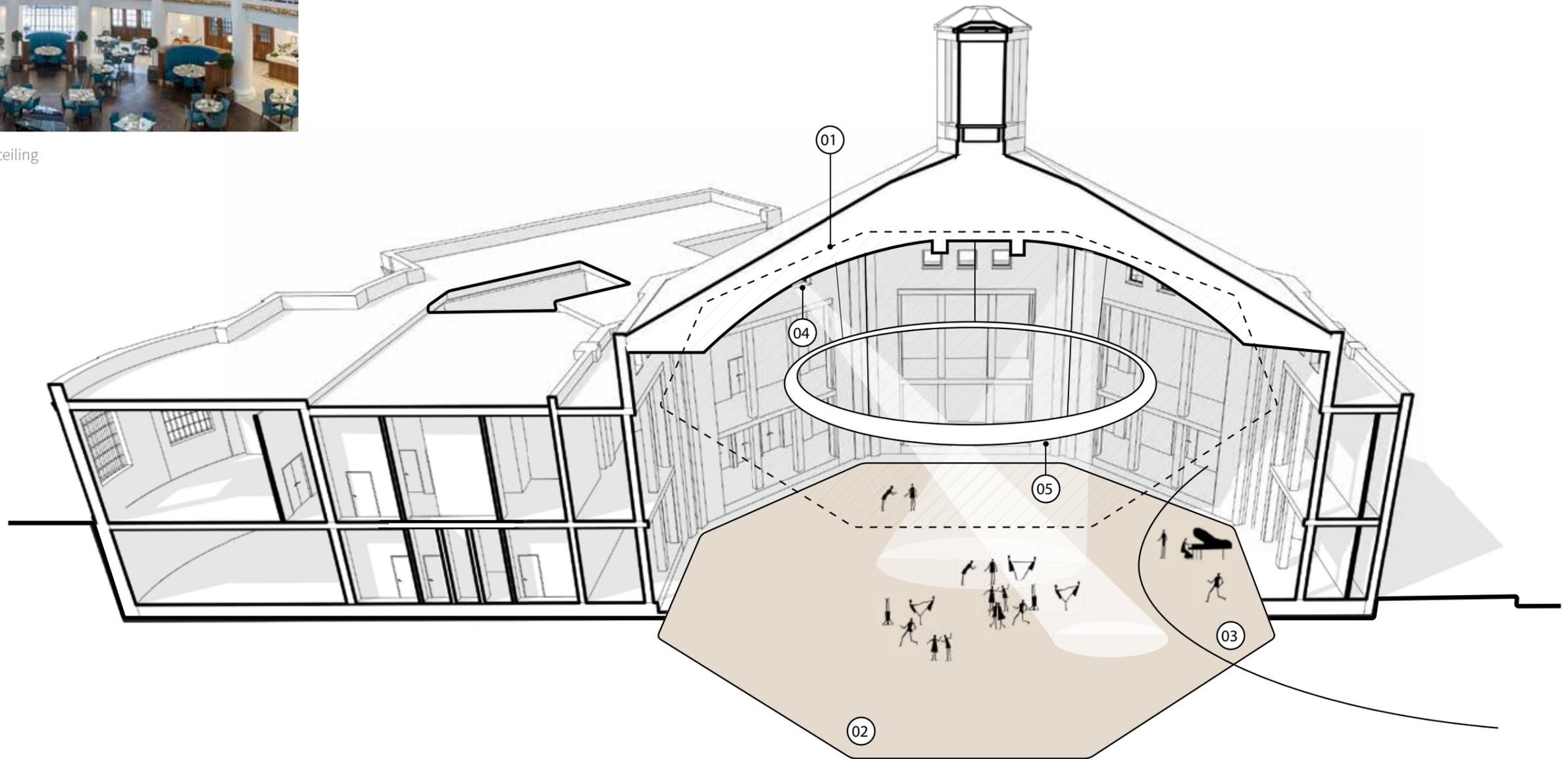


Historical section through Ballroom c.1970 (bottom), concealed dome ceiling void space (top)



Spanish City restored ornate ceiling

- 01 Removal of existing suspended tile ceiling to expose original dome ceiling and light fittings.
- 02 Refurbishment of full Ballroom floor to future proof and meet flexibility requirements for varying uses.
- 03 Reinstatement of original stage geometry and integration with wider Masterplan geometry / sunken secret garden
- 04 Upgrade original lighting features within dome ceiling
- 05 New lightweight lighting / sound rig suspended from dome ceiling



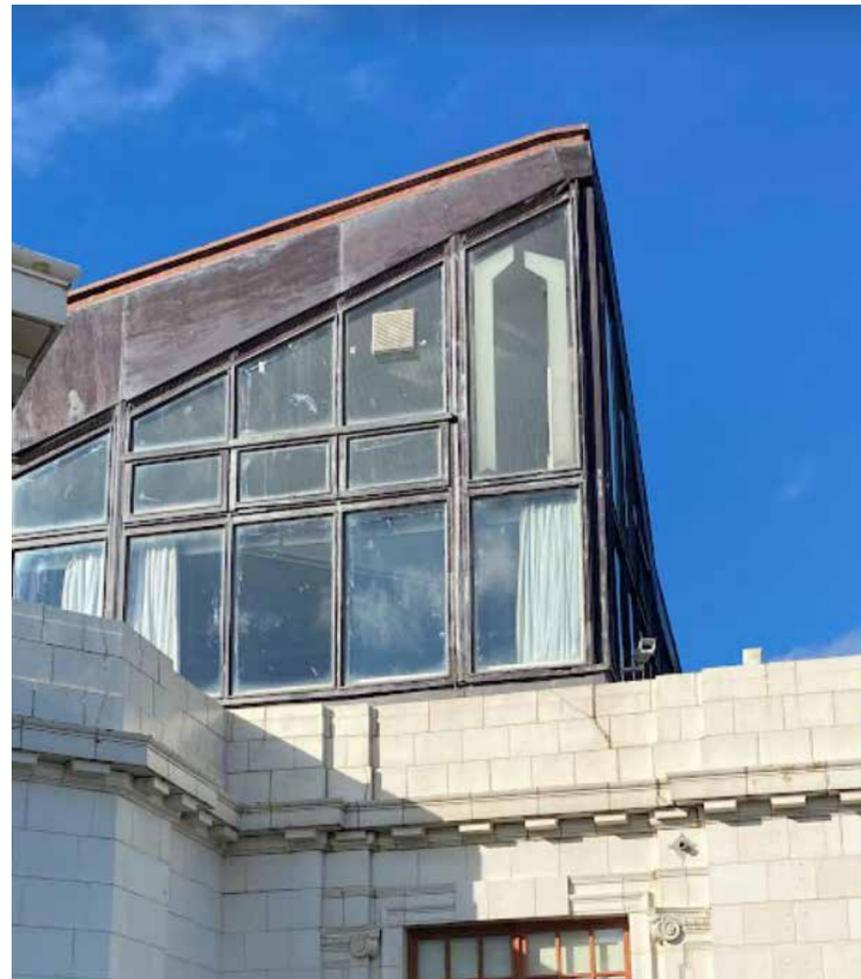
Re-imagined Ballroom interior study

EXTERIOR FACADE - RESTORATION

Although the west, south and east elevations of the original Ballroom building are in generally good condition, there are immediate and visible areas of deterioration in some areas most notably the Star Ballroom extension and the north elevation to the rear. The images below indicate some of these areas of concern.

The Star Ballroom extension is typical of 1970 design; the curtain walling and metal cladding has suffered from close proximity to the marine environment. Corrosion of the cladding portrays a distressed / weathered look to the building.

In particular, the north elevation of the octagon is in poor condition, suffering from staining, damp and general poor upkeep. The tiled south facade would benefit from some intervention to repair broken ceramic tiling and remove staining.



Successful Keppie Restoration: Vinicombe Street, Glasgow

Presently, the northern facade of the Ballroom is generally concealed from public view, however with the demolition of the Leisure Centre and implementation of the Masterplan, the Beach Ballroom will exist 'in the round' with no 'back elevation'. As such, it is recommended that the entire octagon envelope be restored to provide a continuous high standard of finish.

Consideration must be given to improving the roof drainage strategy so as to reduce the number of exposed rainwater downpipes around the building where possible.

Replacement of the existing Star Ballroom would tackle a number of significant failings such as level access, energy performance, visual appearance, functionality and ongoing maintenance issues.



Inspiration for the restoration of similar Art Deco buildings can be sought from Spanish City and also The Reel House in Glasgow. Both use feature architectural lighting to enhance the overall appearance and intricate detailing of the Art Deco style.



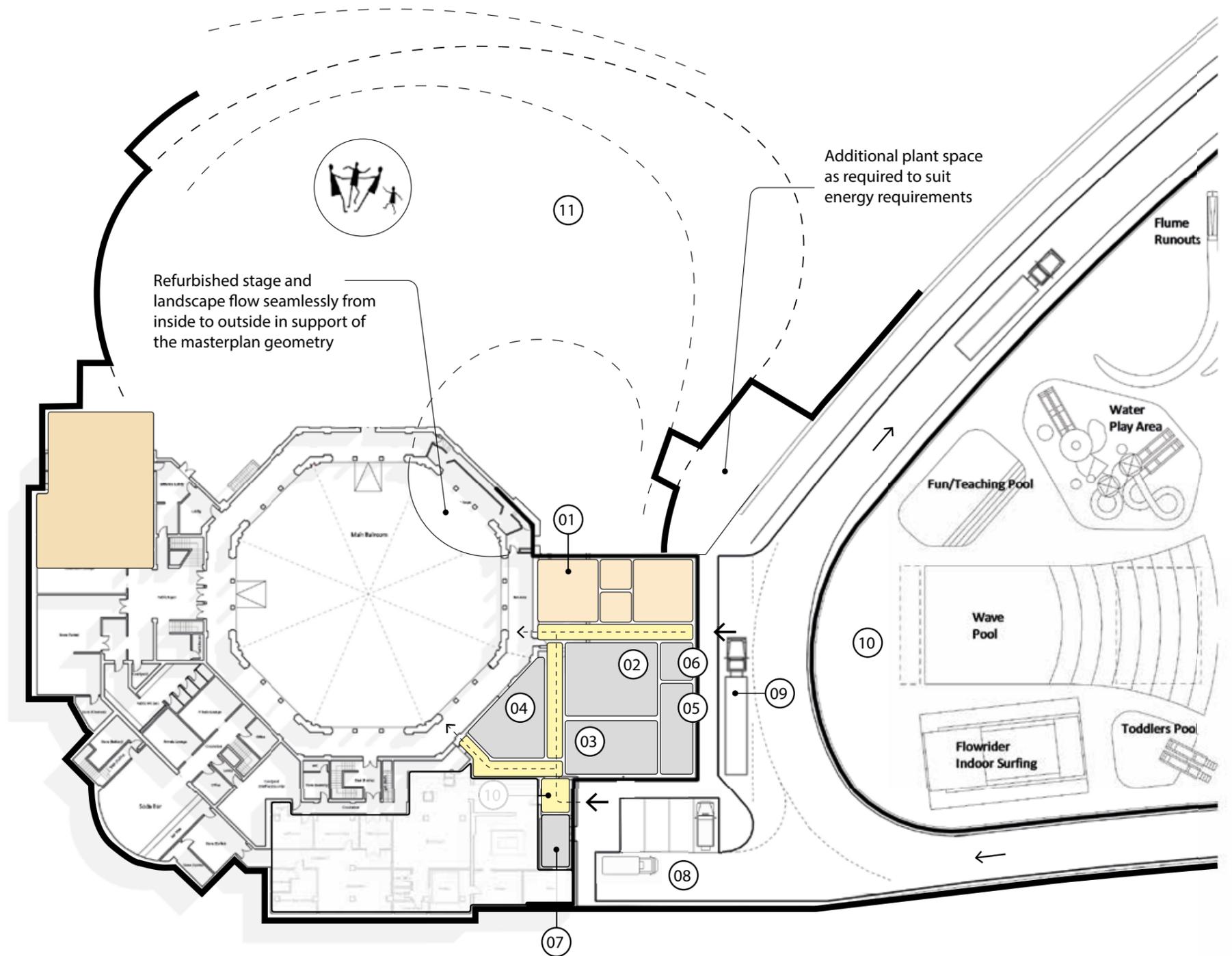
INTEGRATION WITH NEW LEISURE CENTRE

CENTRE

The change in level between the main esplanade podium and the east side of the Ballroom can be manipulated to have a positive impact on the building as well as providing additional revenue generating spaces.

As part of the overall Masterplan, a new sunken secret garden space is created with direct routes to the leisure centre, stadium and Broadhill. This will provide significant opportunities for external space for use by the Ballroom and as a pre match venue / fan zone.

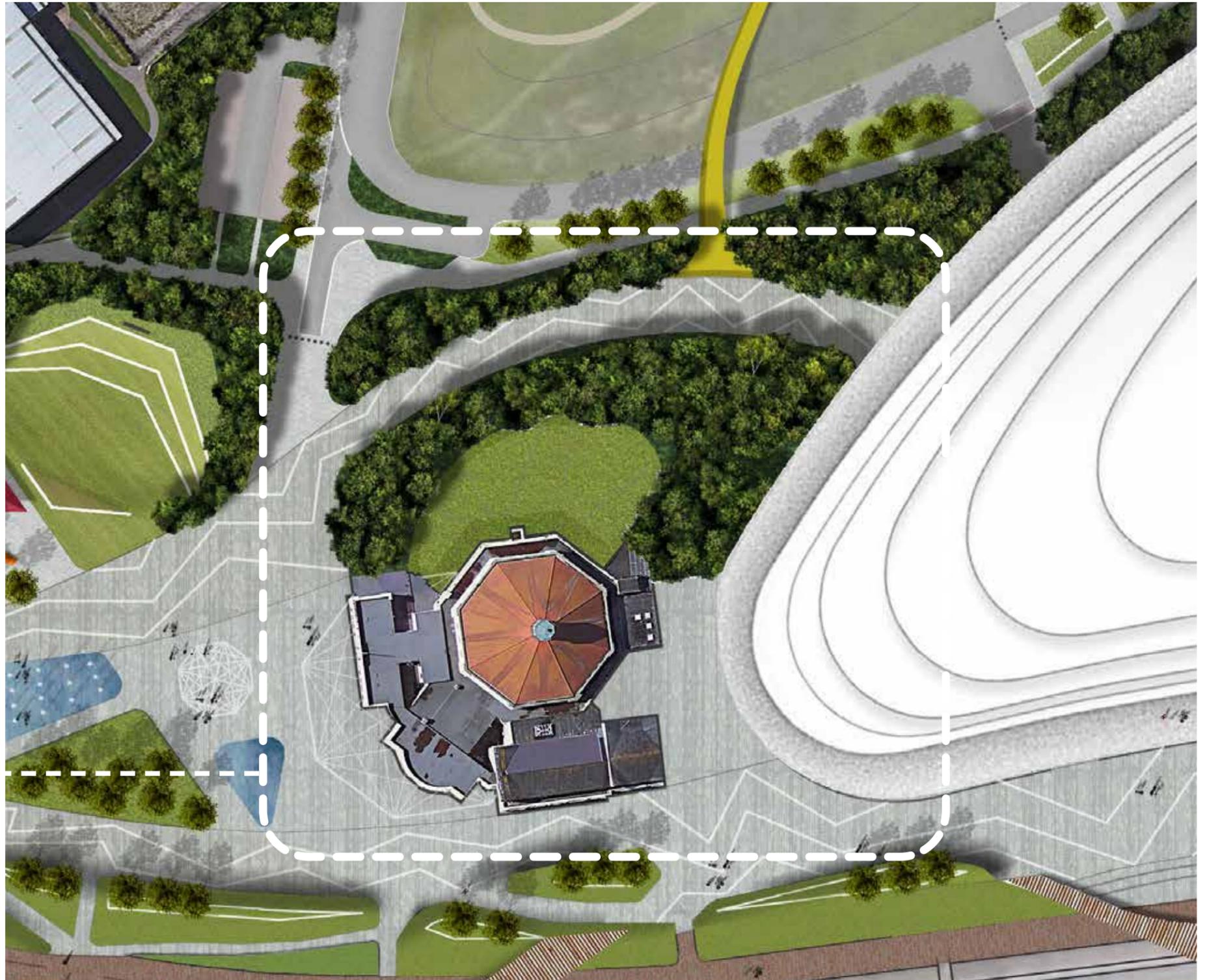
- 01 New dressing room suites with daylight and views out towards the sunken garden. Close relationship with exterior space will provide opportunities for outside rehearsal, breakout and privacy
- 02 New large furniture store to meet the demands of increased occupancy and variety of events being catered for; space to be utilised for storage of demountable / retractable seating. Close proximity to Ballroom floor and stage e.g. for storage of props etc
- 03 New central waste / refuse space with direct relationship to loading dock / service yard.
- 04 New Ballroom bar relocated as shown with back of house servicing and dedicated cellar storage
- 05 New boiler room / plant space relocated as shown (from basement) and sized to suit new footprint / energy demand; subject to engineer design development and review.
- 06 New substation / plant space as shown (to replace demolished external compound) and sized to suit new footprint / energy demand; subject to engineer design development and review.
- 07 New delivery space within existing footprint to replace current underutilised lobby area
- 08 Dedicated delivery yard with parking bays for services; layout indicative and subject to further design development, vehicle tracking and review
- 09 Dedicated articulated truck / large van drop off area; layout indicative and subject to further design development, vehicle tracking and review
- 10 New Leisure Centre development (refer to AFL Architects layouts)
- 11 New proposed external Secret Garden events space established as a continuation of the landscape geometry with direct connection to new dressing rooms



Interface with Leisure Centre development (LG)



Overall Masterplan



Masterplan extract, Secret Garden

A NEW SECRET GARDEN

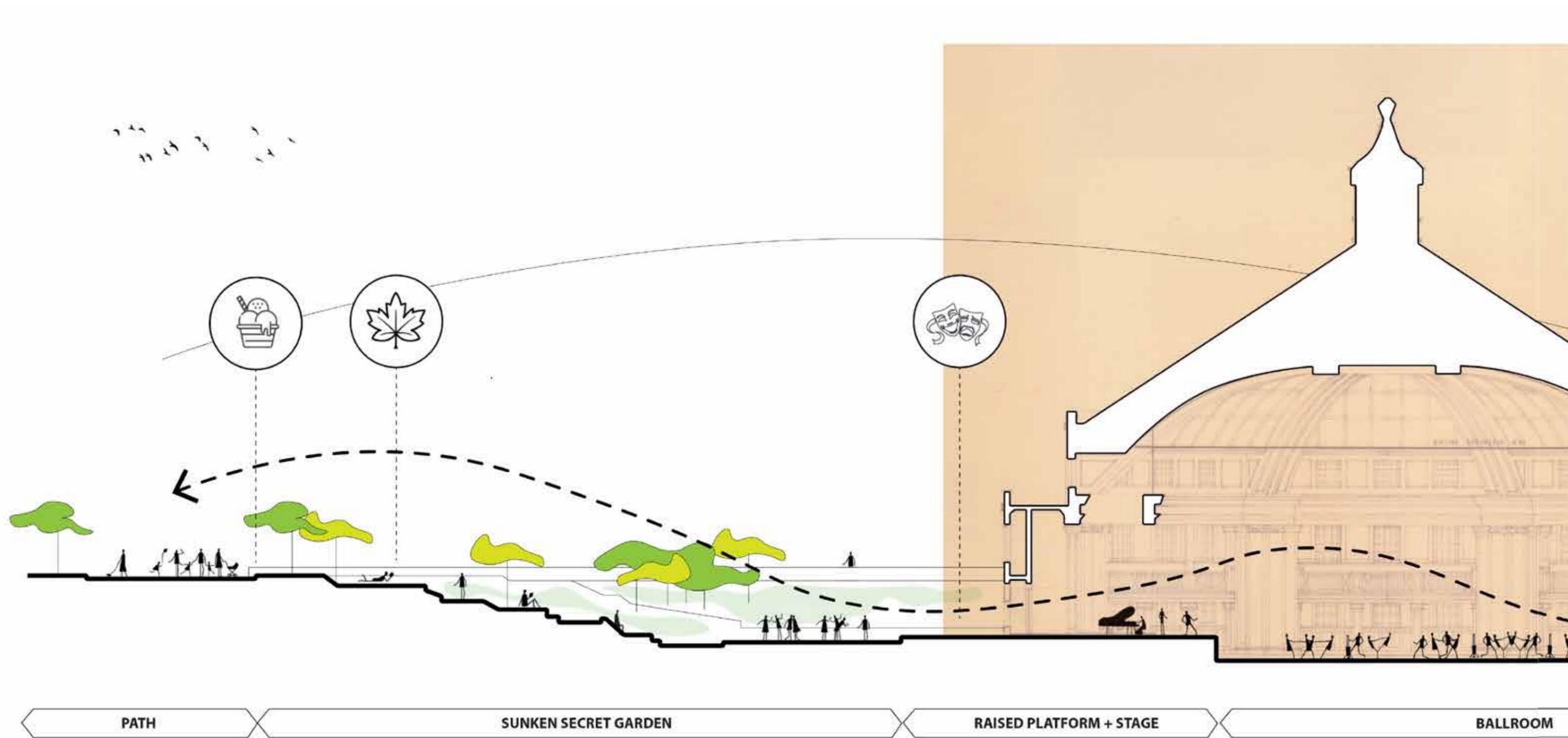
It is proposed that the secret garden will exploit the level differences and embrace the sinuous geometry of the ropes concept to ensure the Ballroom is fully integrated into the Masterplan. The sinuous nature of the landscape will assist in providing accessible routes down to the rear of the Ballroom.

Here, it is imagined that the stage geometry and internal / external events space can merge to maximise public space and double capacity.

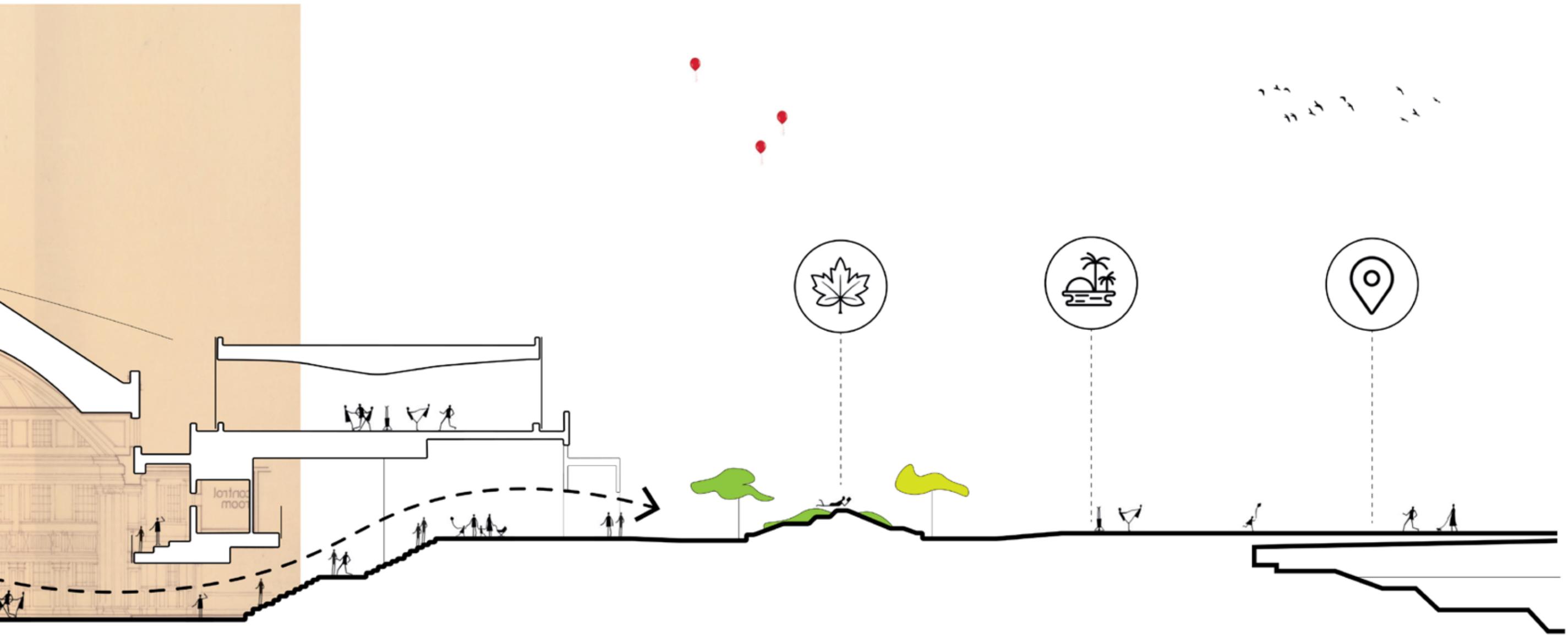
The landscape itself will knit together with the materiality and colour strategies of the overall Masterplan, to create a sense of drama and arrival.



Sinuous landscape formations (various precedents)



Concept section through the Beach Ballroom and Masterplan



ENTRANCE FOYER + GRAND STAIRCASE

GREEN DUNE LANDSCAPING AND ROUTES

BOARDWALK / PIER LANDMARK



ABERDEEN

BEACH HALLROOM

ABERDEEN