

# RURAL DESIGN

---

**Portree and Braes Community Trust**

Reimagining Camanachd Square

Options Appraisal and Masterplan

Stage 1 Report

April 2022

# Introduction

## Re-imagining Camanachd Square

A team led by Rural Design was appointed in early 2022 to prepare an Options Appraisal of Camanachd Square in Portree and to assist Portree and Braes Community Trust (PBCT) in identifying potential development opportunities for the site that could benefit the wider community.

The two principal assets within the site are the Community Centre Building and the King George V Playing Field.

Both of these key amenities have suffered from considerable neglect in recent years. The Community Centre Building has fallen into disrepair and the outdoor spaces have been affected by a lack of maintenance.

The word “re-imagining” is very fitting, as a fresh look at the functions required of the Community Hall will be essential. The needs of the community have evolved since the hall was first built, whilst the growth of community-led development has dramatically changed the way community buildings are delivered and managed. This project represents an excellent opportunity for a community driven project to create a lively new hub space for the residents of Portree and Skye as well as the many visitors the island receives.

This report summaries the first stages of the study - Site Analysis, Data Gathering and the initial Community Engagement, and then outlines proposals and options for a Strategic Masterplan for Camanachd Square based on this research.



# Contents

<b>1.0 Context</b>	05	<b>2.0 The Site</b>	20	<b>3.0 The Community Centre</b>	34
1.1 Local Context	06	2.1 Boundary	21	3.1 Overview	35
1.2 Historical Context	07	2.2 Outdoor Spaces	22	3.2 Key Plan	36
1.3 Location and Access	08	2.3 Access	23	3.3 Sequence of Construction	37
1.4 Character	09	2.4 Ownership	24	3.4 Current Use	38
1.5 Amenities	10	2.5 Appraisal	29	3.5 Appraisal	39
1.6 Greenspace	11				
1.7 Topography	12				
1.8 Sun Path	13				
1.9 Planning Context	14				
1.10 Previous Consultations	15				
1.11 Population	16				
1.12 Economy	18				

# Contents

<b>4.0 Community Consultation</b>	44	<b>5.0 Outline Proposals</b>	49
4.1 Engagement	45	5.1 Options	50
4.2 Summary - existing buildings	46	5.2 A New Public Square	51
4.3 Summary - outdoor spaces	47	5.3 Current Condition	52
		5.4 Masterplan Strategy	53
		5.5 A Renewed Community Centre	54
		5.6 A New Public Square	55
		5.7 Community Centre - strategy	56
		5.8 Community Square - uses	59
		5.9 King George V park - events/ sports	64
		5.10 King George V park - everyday use	65
		5.11 Masterplan - strategy	66
		5.12 King George V park - layout studies	69

1.0 Context

1

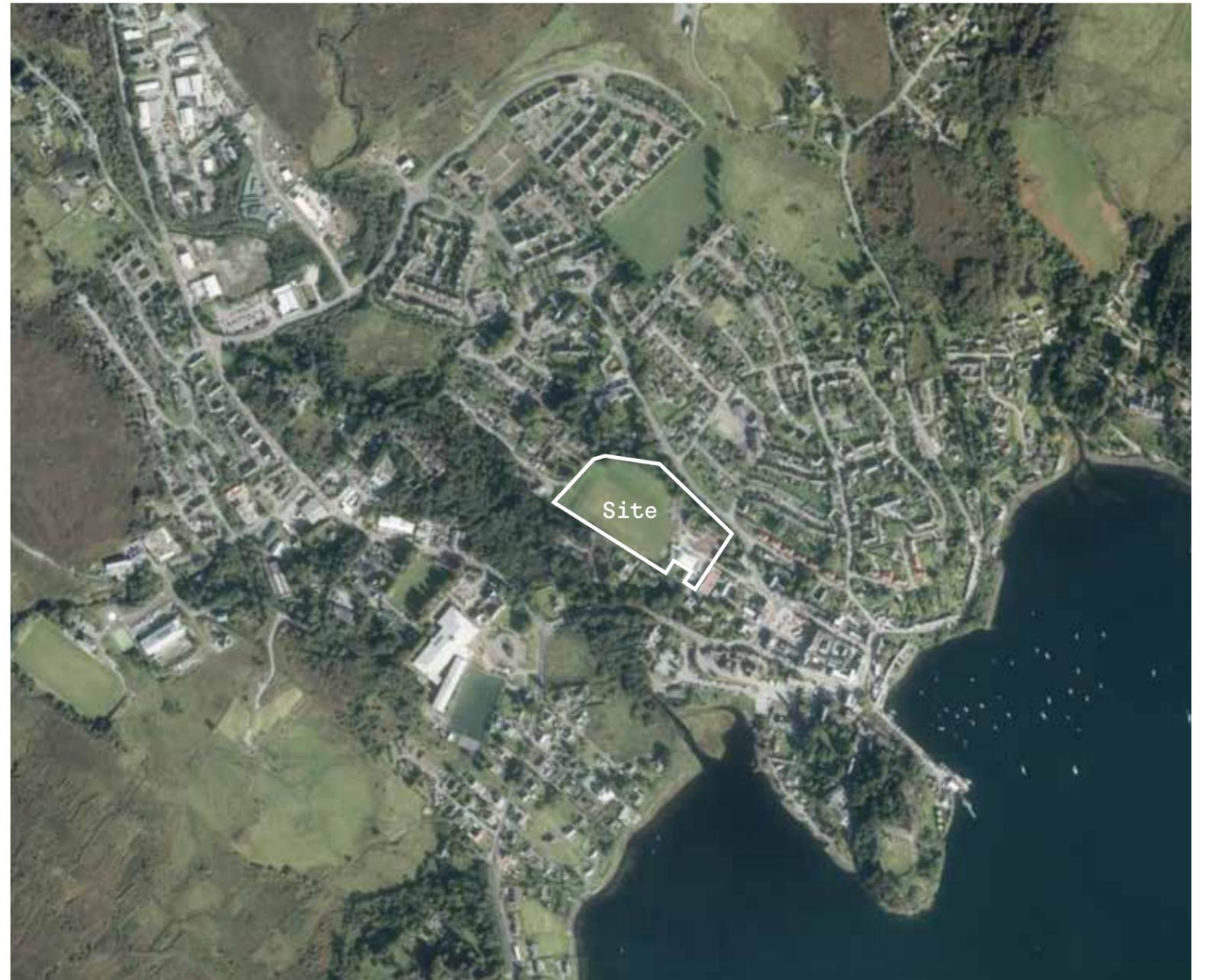
# 1.0 Context

## 1.1 Local Context

The Camanachd Square site is located near the centre of Portree only a few minutes walk from Somerled Square, the main public space in the town.

The site contains the King George V playing fields, The Community Centre and its car park, The Portree Nursery, a multi-use games pitch (known as the Red Pitch) and a small children's play area.

The site also includes the footprint of a Swimming Pool building which was demolished in 2012.



# 1.0 Context

## 1.2 Historical Context

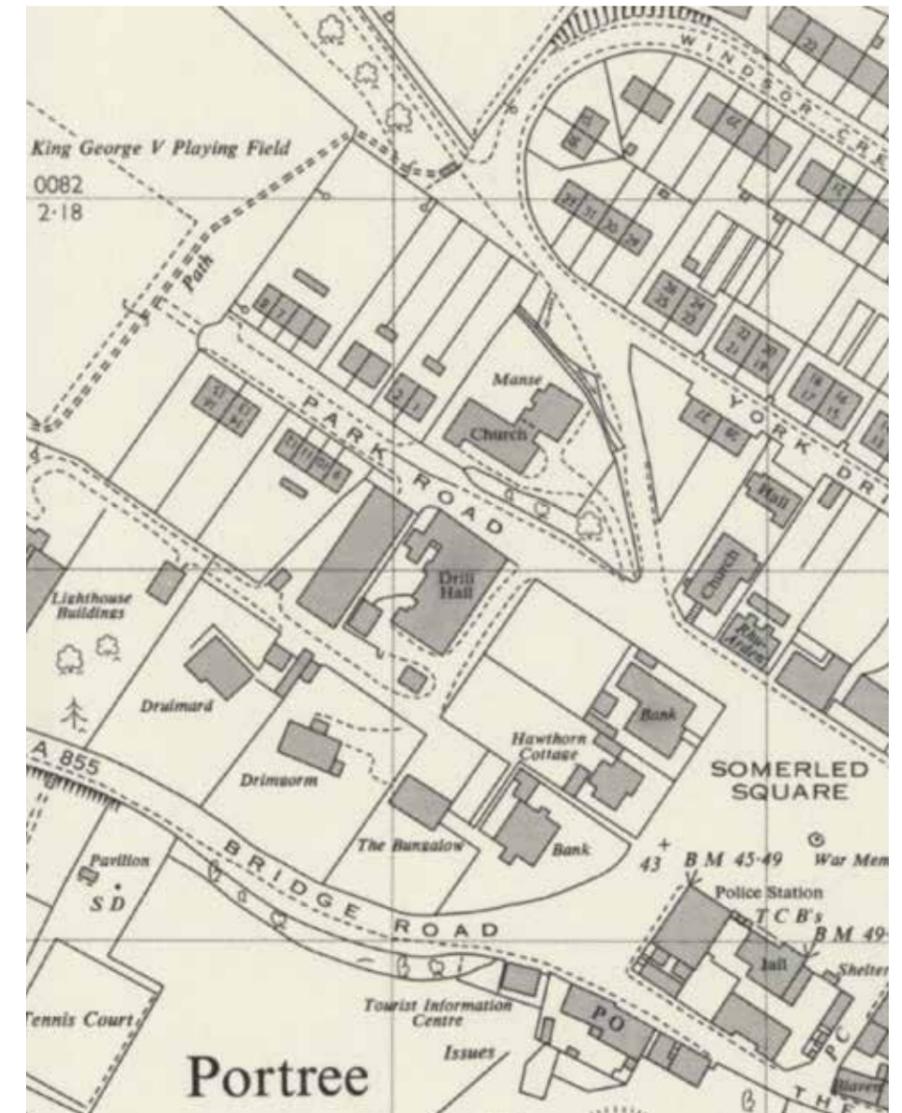
This part of the town has been used for recreation for over a century as the map from 1901 shows.

The King George V Playfield was subsequently formed on this area after the Second World War and is currently leased to the Council on 99 year lease from Whitsun 1949 for use only as playing fields and recreation.

The area between the park and Somerled Square was a gravel pit in 1901 but was developed for council housing by 1965 and Park Road formed.



1901



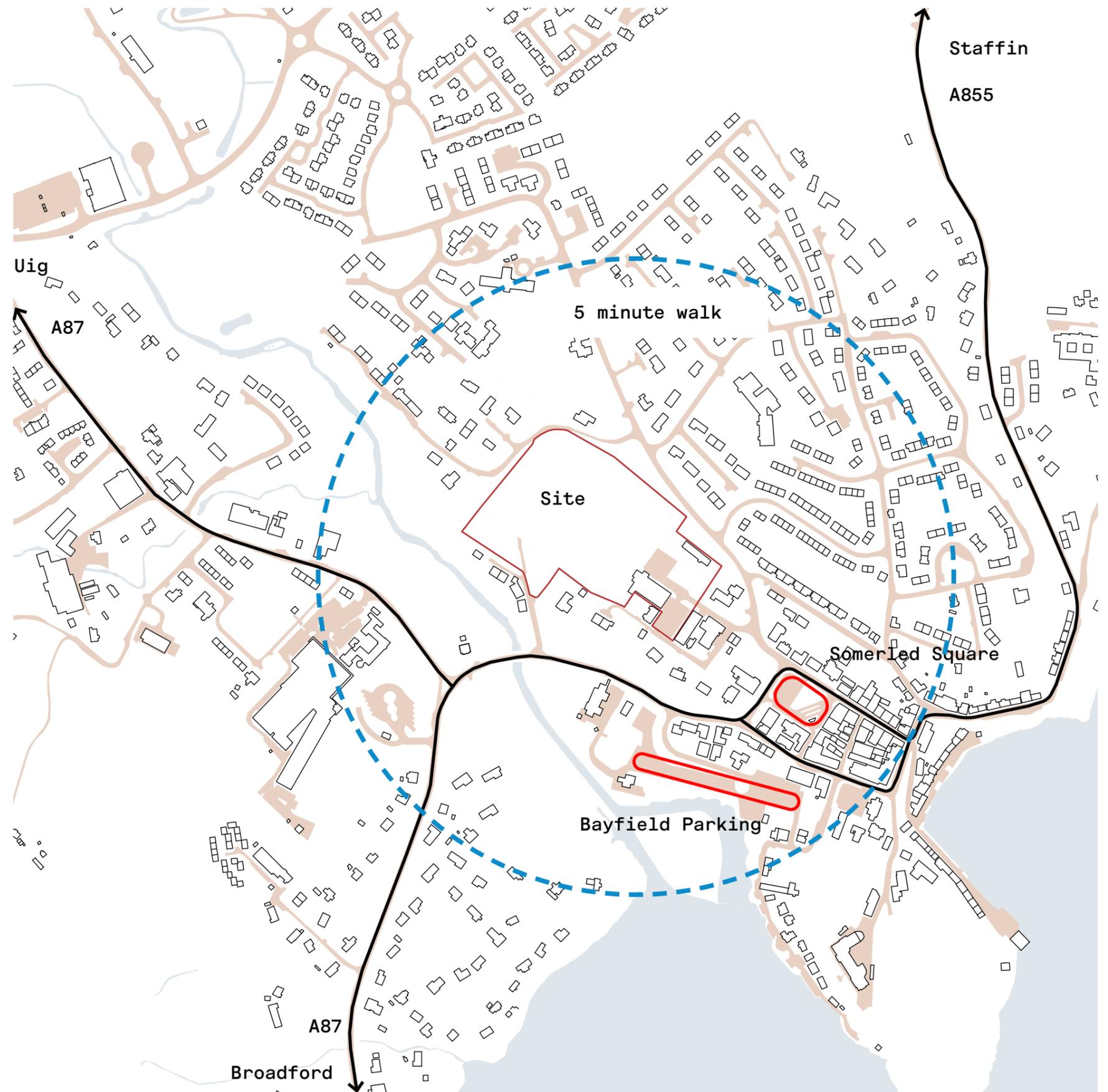
1965

# 1.0 Context

## 1.3 Location & Access

The Camanachd Square site is close to the main vehicle routes within Portree and so is easily accessible both from within the town and further afield.

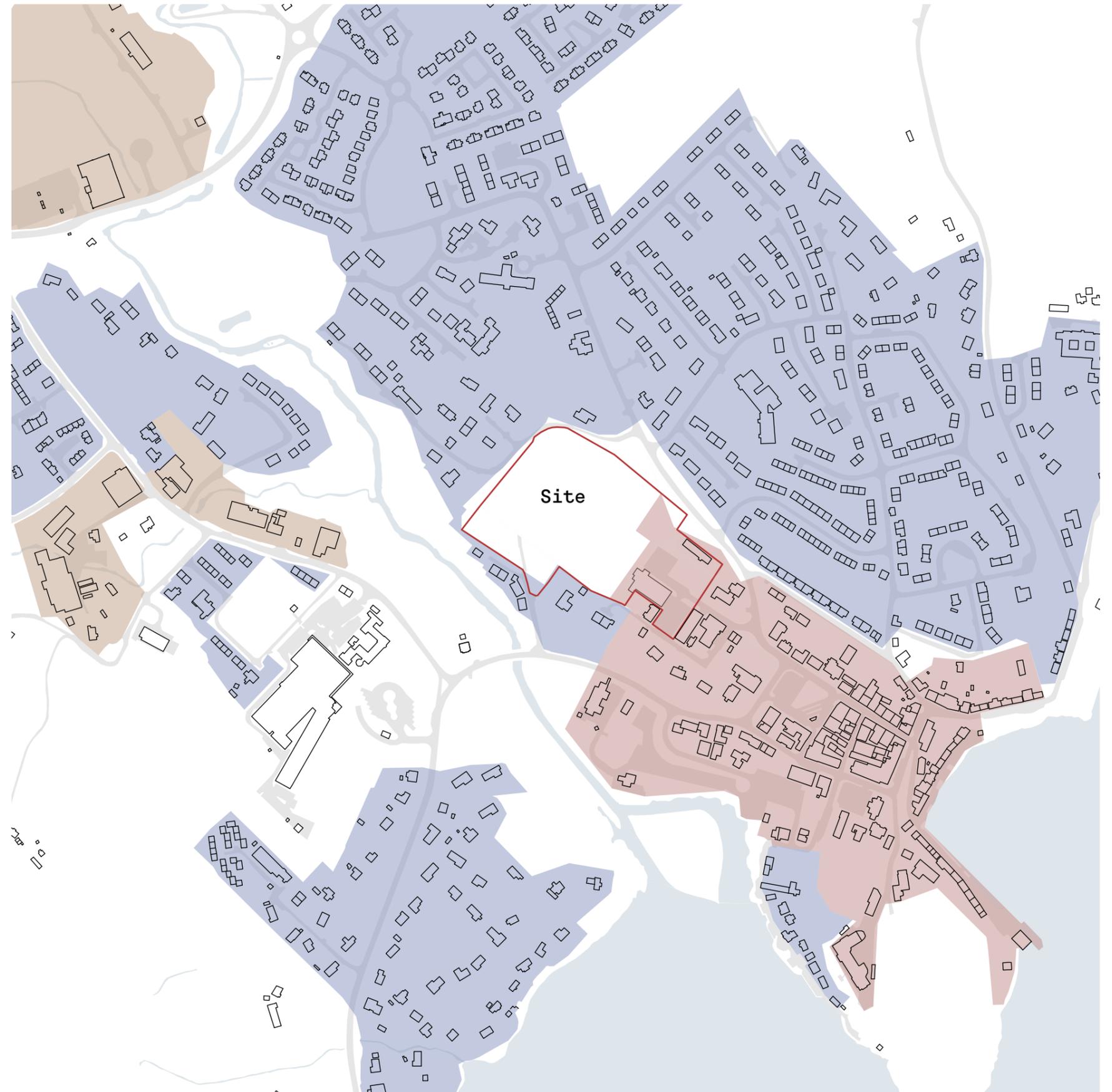
The two main public car parks in the town - Somerled Square and the Bayfield Parking area - are only a short distance away and within a few minutes walk of the site.



# 1.0 Context

## 1.4 Character

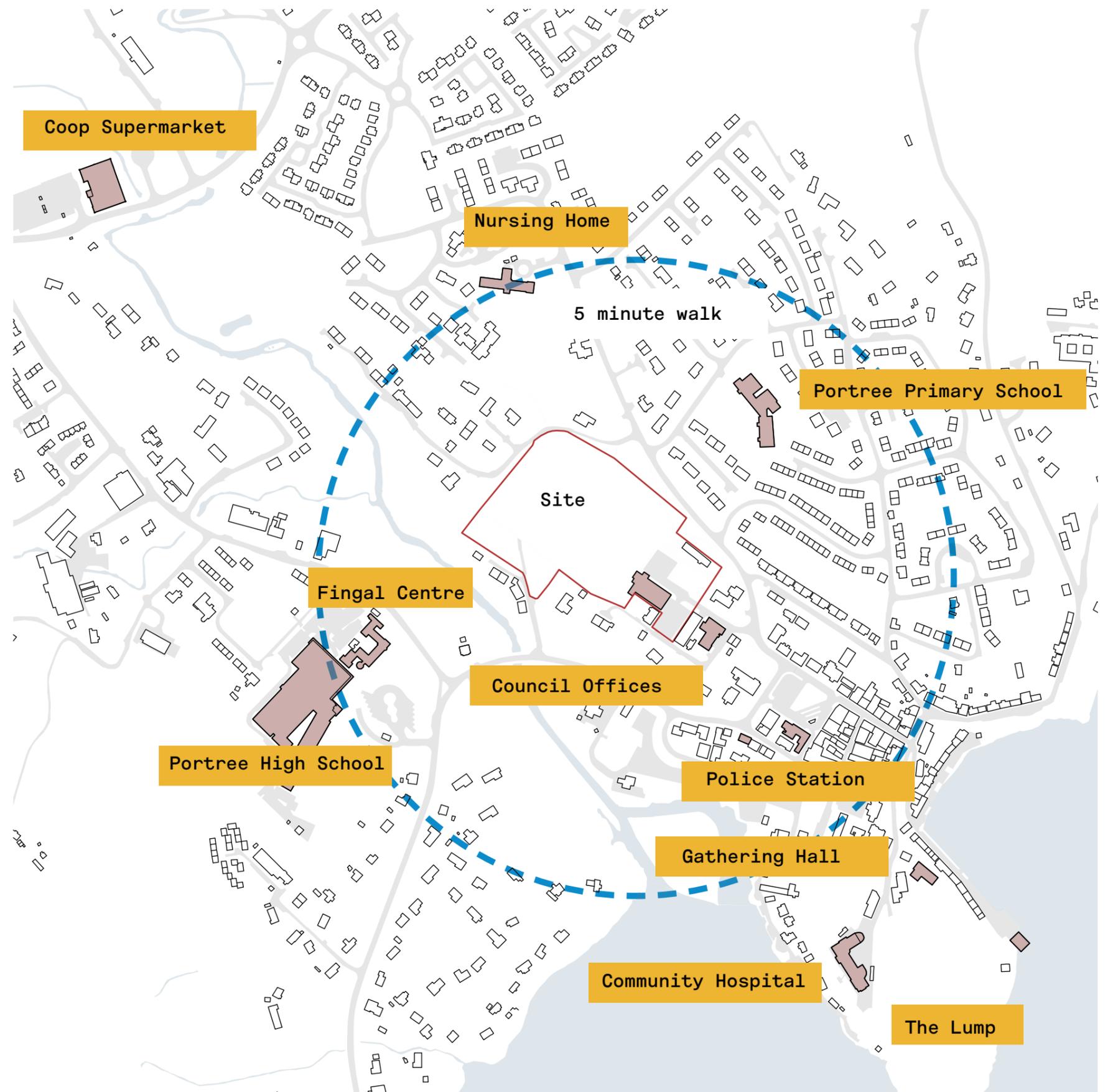
The expansion of Portree in the second half of the 20th century generally took place to the north of the Camanachd Square site. Today the King George V park is enclosed by residential development to the north and east with the centre of the town to the immediate south-east.



# 1.0 Context

## 1.5 Amenities

Most of the town's key amenities are only a short distance away from the site. The site is a walk-able distance from the both Portree Primary and High Schools, and is only a few minutes walk from the centre of the town.



# 1.0 Context

## 1.6 Greenspace

The site contains one of the two open green spaces suitable for outdoor events within Portree, the other being the open space at the Lump on the south edge of the town.

The King George V park is bordered to the north and west by areas of Woodland that provide a degree of shelter and enclosure.

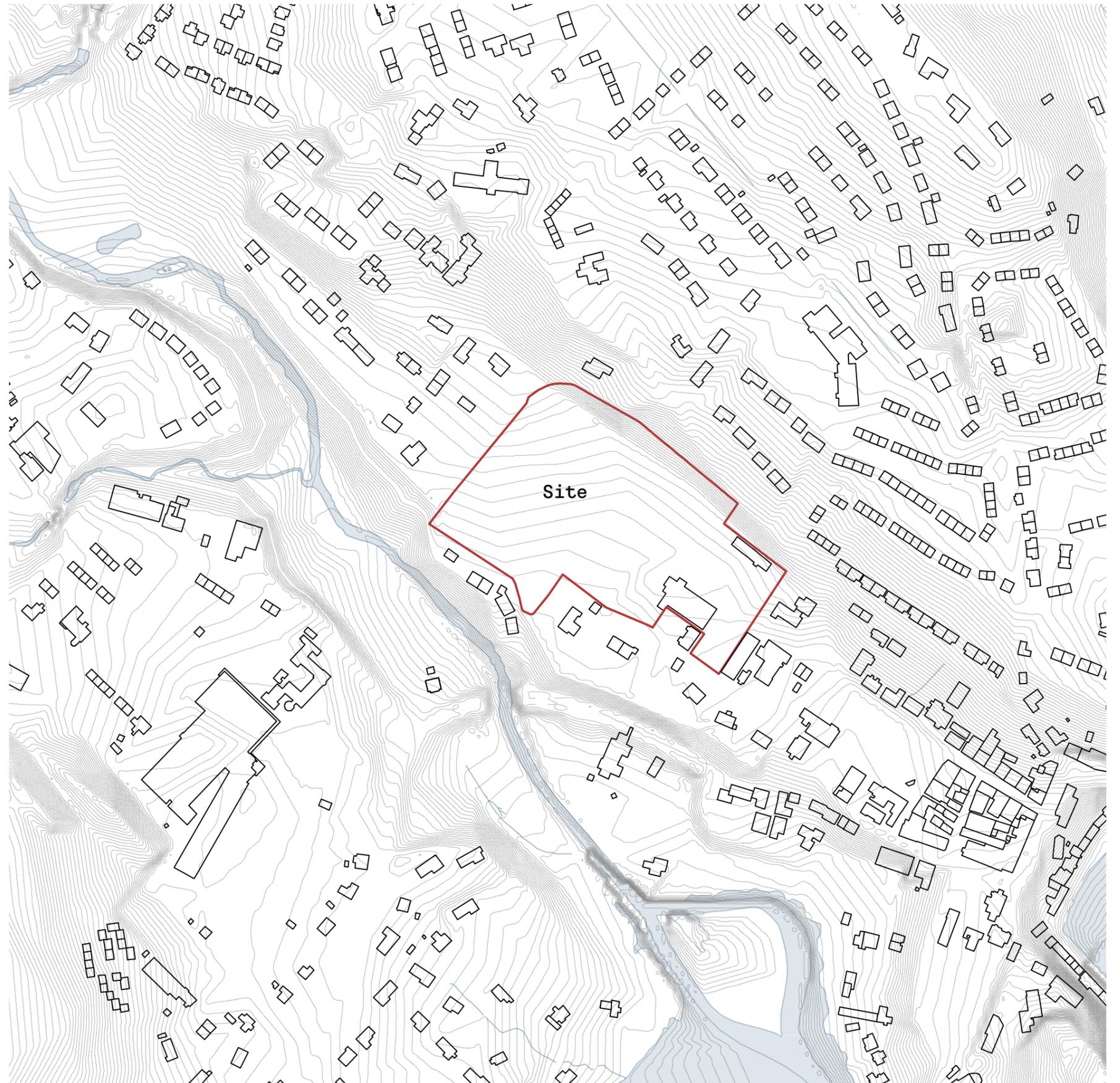


# 1.0 Context

## 1.7 Topography

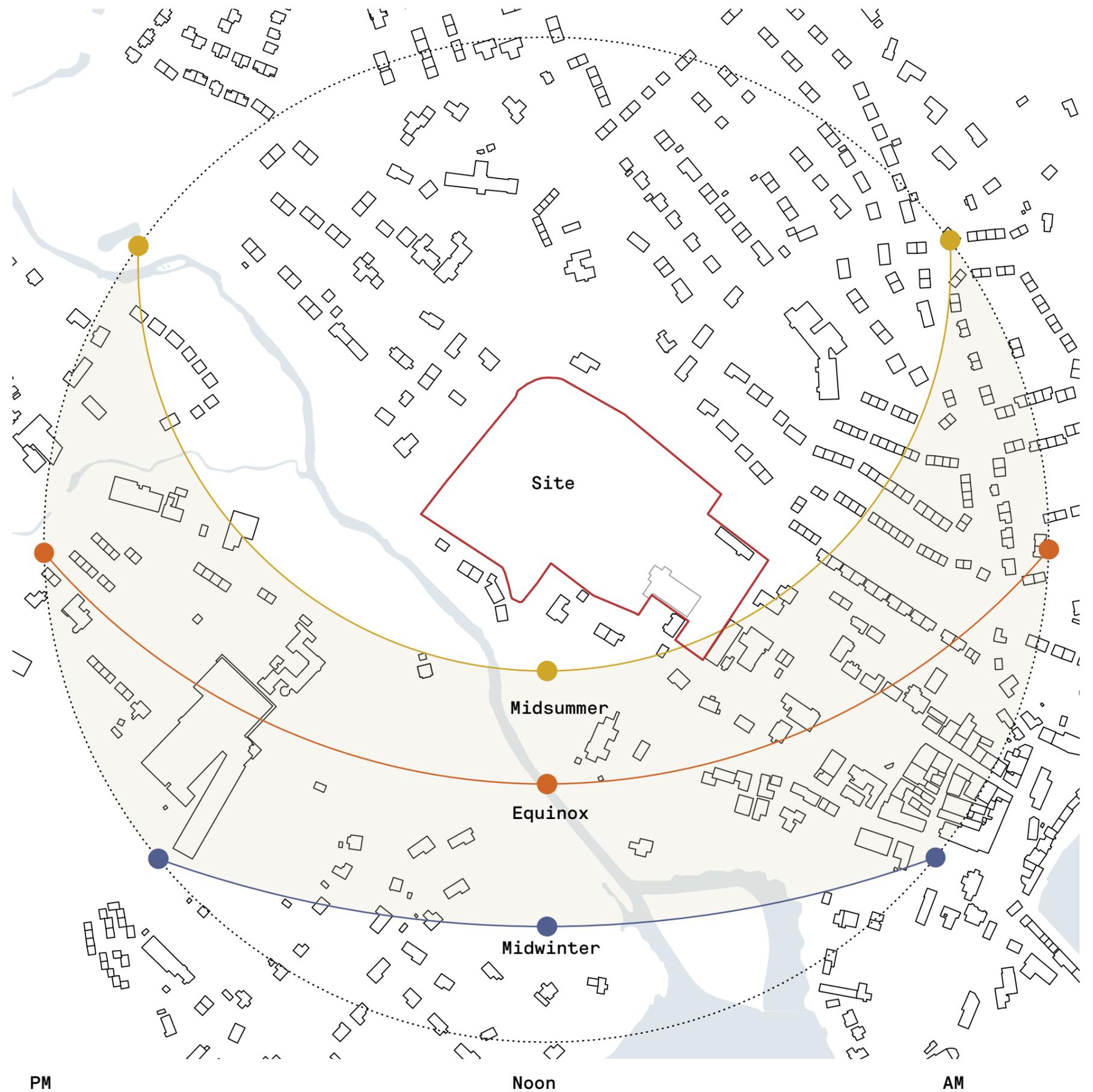
There is a steep embankment to the north of the site edged by Home Farm Road. Most of this embankment is covered in mature trees providing screening from the road.

The remainder of the site is relatively flat though there is a gradual fall across the site from north to south.



# 1.0 Context

## 1.8 Sun path



# 1.0 Context

## 1.9 Planning Context

The West Highland and Island Local Development Plan or WestPlan, was adopted in September 2019.

The plan identifies the King George V playing field as “cherished green space”. The area of the site containing the community centre building, the nursery, red pitch and car parking is identified as Development Site PT11 within the plan. -

*Use: Mixed Use*

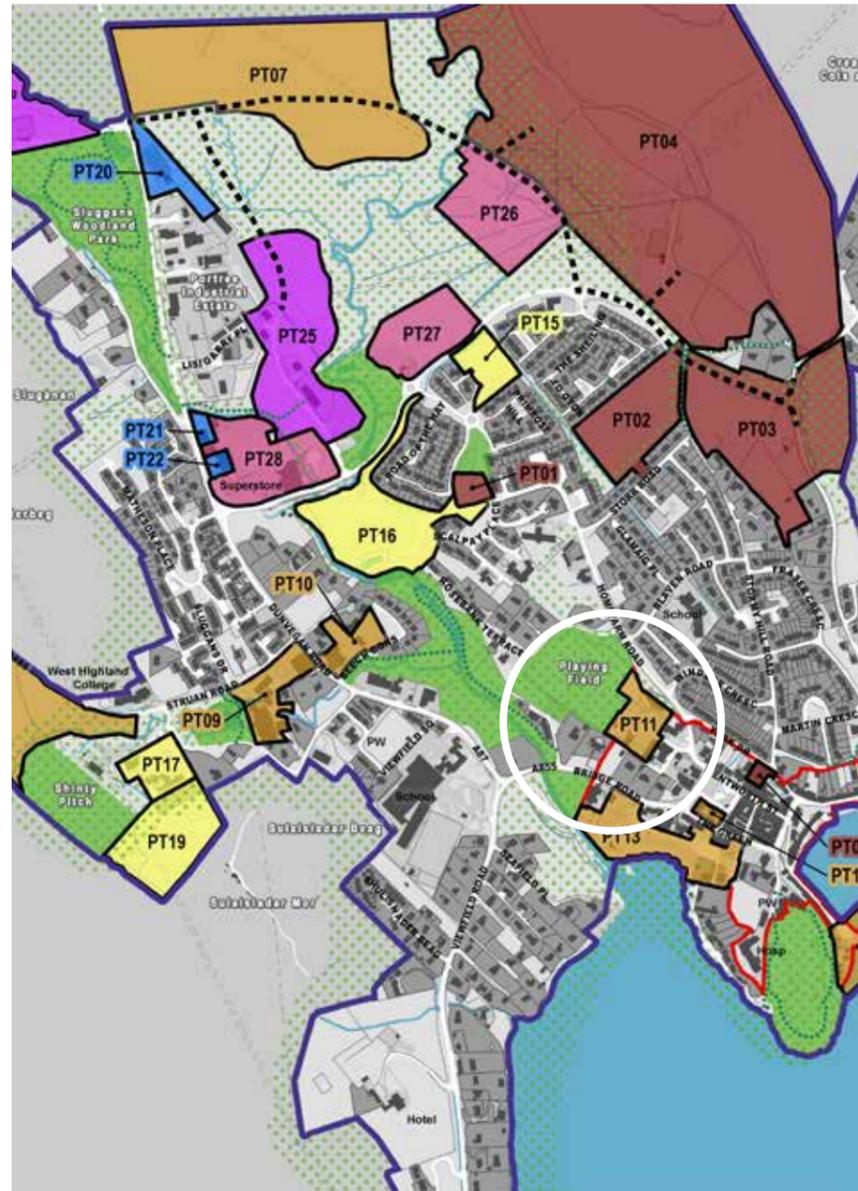
*(Housing, Community, Area (ha): 1.0 Indicative Housing Capacity: 30, Business/Tourism)*

*Developer Requirements: Consolidate and enhance where possible active travel links to the town centre; Site history and possible Land Contamination Site Investigation may be required;*

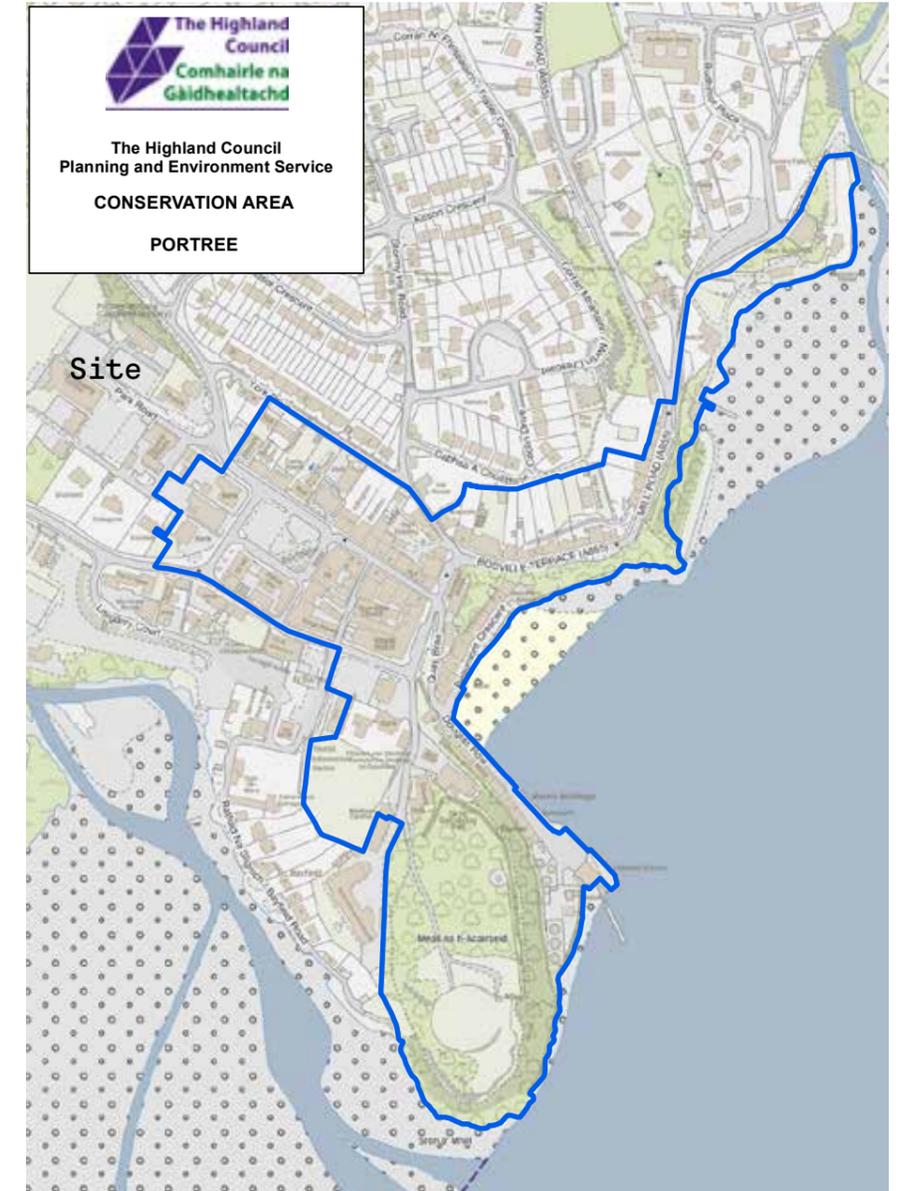
*Siting and design should complement the setting of the nearby Listed Building and Conservation Area.*

The site sits to the west of the Portree Conservation Area.

The Park Road Episcopal Church to the immediate West of the site is category C Listed.



Extract from the WestPlan 2019



Portree Conservation Area

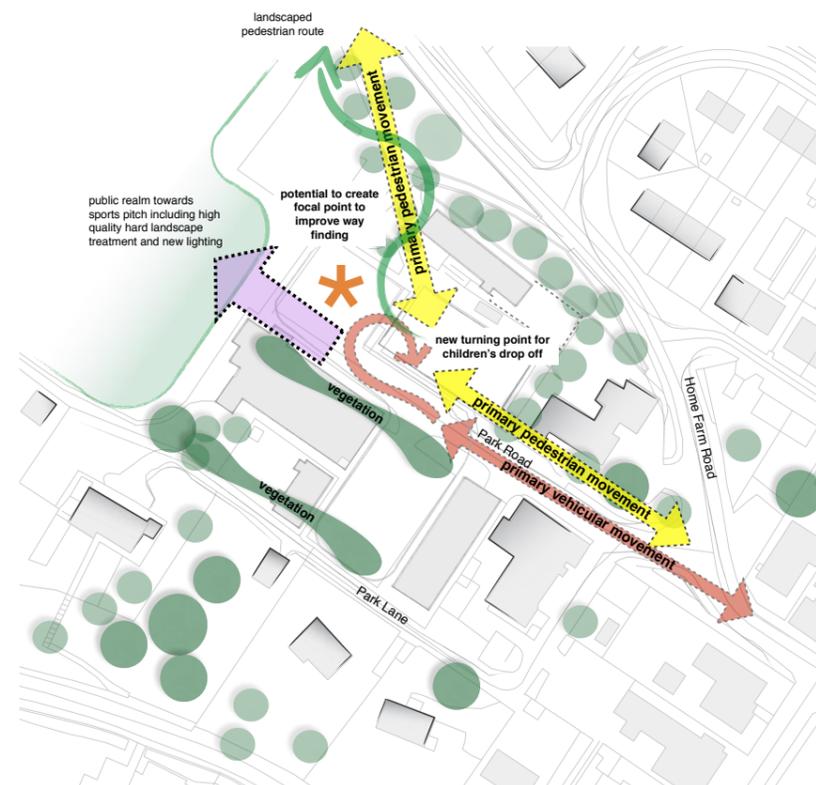
# 1.0 Context

## 1.10 Previous Consultations

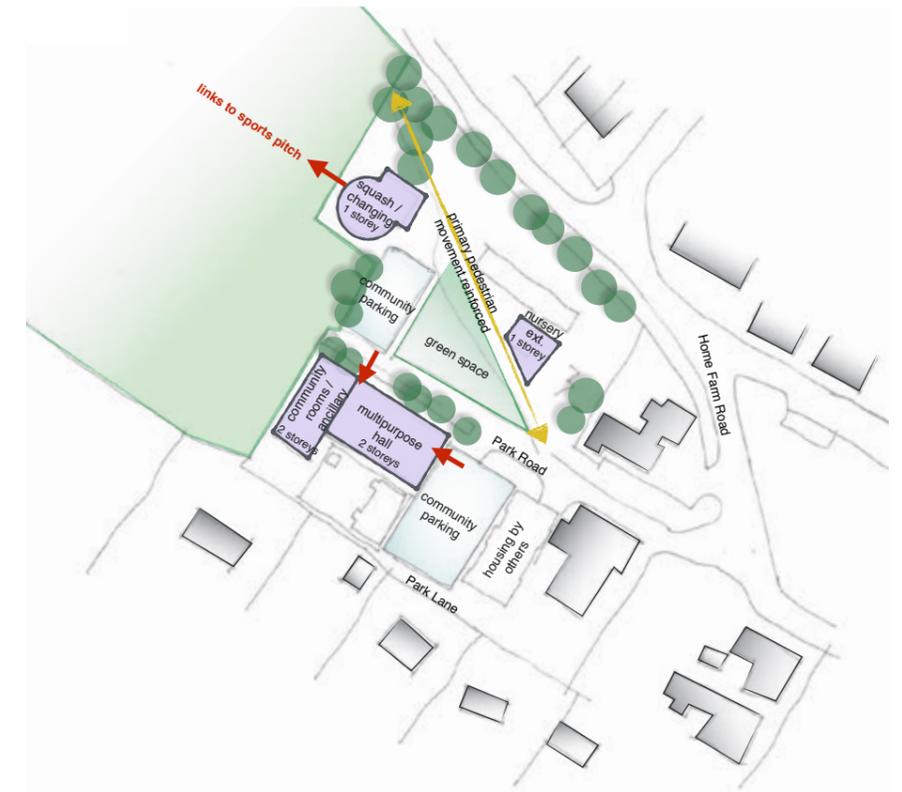
There have been several studies and consultation exercises undertaken in recent years which are relevant to the current study.

In 2016 Rural Design completed the Portree Development Ideas study that considered the entire town. Camanachd Square was identified as an area for redevelopment and improvement for Community Use. Key suggestions were to create a useful public space within the site and to strengthen the connection between a remade Community Centre and the King George V park.

Also in 2016, Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations undertook a community led research project entitled the “Portree and Braes Community Conversations Project” which consulted widely on the existing Community facilities within the town. Both the Community Centre and the King George V park were identified as assets that needed investment and considerable improvement in order to be more useful to the wider community.



Site Analysis



Outline Proposals

Extracts from 2016 Portree Development Ideas Study

# 1.0 Context

## 1.11 Population

Portree and Braes Community Trust covers the area represented by the Portree Community Council which includes Portree, Drummuie, Torvaig, Achachork, Glenmore, Penifiler, Camastianavaig, Acnahanaid & Braes.

The population of this area in 2011 was 2724, an increase of 272 (11.1%) from the 2001 census figure of 2452 (see Table 1). The population of Portree village alone was 2,318, an increase of 401 (20.9%) from the 1,917 recorded in 2001. In contrast the population of the rural periphery of the area fell from 535 to 406, a fall of 24.1%. There is therefore a very marked population trend out of the crofting townships and into Portree.

	2001	2021	Change	% Change
<b>Portree</b>	1,917	2,318	+401	+20.9
<b>Portree and Braes</b>	2,452	2,724	+272	+11.1

Table 1 - Portree and Braes Population Change 2001 - 2011

In addition to serving the local area the site of the Camanachd Square study incorporating the community centre and KGV pitch is used by people from a much wider area. It attracts people from across Skye and beyond, particularly for larger events.

The population of Skye in the 2011 census was 10013, an increase of 762 (8.2%) from the 2001 population of 9251 (Table 2). This is significantly higher than the Scottish growth rate over the same period but somewhat lower than that of Highland region, where Inverness and its hinterland is a key driver of population growth.

	2001	2021	Change	% Change
<b>Skye</b>	9,251	10,013	+762	+8.2
<b>Highland</b>	208,914	232,132	+23,218	+11.1

Table 2 - Comparison of Skye, Highland and Scotland Population Change

# 1.0 Context

## 1.11 Population

A comparison of census data from 2001 to 2011 shows that the Portree and Braes area became a younger population with the percentage share of all groups under 45 increasing and those over 45 decreasing (Table 3). This is in contrast to the rest of Skye where the situation was reversed. This may reflect the large amounts of housebuilding in and around Portree during that period, enabling more younger families to have a permanent home.

The growth in population of Portree has continued since 2011, particularly with developments on the former Home Farm area. It can be expected to continue with further developments to come. The population of Skye and Lochalsh is expected to grow from 13,136 in 2016 to 14,529 in 2036, an increase of 10.6%.<sup>1</sup> The roll of Portree High School is predicted to rise from 498 in 2021/22 to 584 (17.2%) in 2036/37 and that of the two primary schools to rise from 301 to 350 (16.3%)<sup>2</sup>.

The anticipated faster rate of growth of school attendance compared to the overall population suggests that the demographic trend towards a younger population in the Portree area will continue. It will be important to keep this in mind when making decisions on future potential uses of the Camanachd Square site.

Location	Year	Age Group						
		0-4 (%)	5-15 (%)	16-29 (%)	30-44 (%)	45-59 (%)	60-74 (%)	75+ (%)
Portree & Braes	2011	5.8	12.8	14.9	18.0	24.1	15.1	9.3
	2001	4.8	13.5	8.6	15.6	26.0	18.9	12.7
Skye	2011	4.9	11.6	12.5	16.6	25.8	20.4	8.2
	2001		19.4	13.1	21.1	23.1	14.5	8.8
Highland	2011	5.5	12.4	15.0	18.7	22.7	17.6	9.5
	2001	5.4	14.2	14.7	22.0	21.4	15.0	7.3
Scotland	2011	5.5	11.8	18.5	20.0	21.1	15.5	7.7
	2001	5.5	13.7	17.5	23.0	19.3	14.0	7.1

Table 3: Comparison of Demographic Profiles

1 Skye And Lochalsh-PopulationAndDemography.pdf (scot.nhs.uk)

2 Source: Highland Council School Roll Forecast School roll | (highland.gov.uk)

# 1.0 Context

## 1.12 Economy

The relatively younger demographic profile of the Portree & Braes area is reflected in the locally economy. There are more people economically active (73.5%) than in Highland (71.5%) or Scotland (69.0%) (Table 4). There are also fewer retired people (13.6%) than Highland (16.0%) or Scotland (14.9%). The structure of employment is also different with significantly fewer people in full-time employment and significantly more in part-time employment and self-employed.

	<b>Economically Active</b>	<b>Full time Employed</b>	<b>Part time Employed</b>	<b>Self Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Retired</b>
<b>Portree &amp; Braes</b>	73.5	35.0	17.4	13.5	5.8	13.6
<b>Highland</b>	71.5	39.5	15.2	11.0	4.0	16.0
<b>Scotland</b>	69.0	39.6	13.3	7.5	4.8	14.9

Table 4: Comparison of Economic Activity Rates

# 1.0 Context

## 1.12 Economy

The three most important employment sectors in 2011 locally were: Wholesale, retail, and motor repair (212 jobs); Health & Social work (200 jobs); and Accommodation and Food Services (192 jobs). The next three most significant sectors are: Education; Construction; and Public Administration. For each category the percentage of people employed are within one to two percentage points of those in the Highland & Scottish economies with the exception of Accommodation & Food Service which employs 14.9% of people in Portree & Braes, compared to 9.1% in Highland and only 6.3% in Scotland (Table 5).

By way of contrast, agriculture, forestry and fishing which were the traditional baseline of the local economy accounted for only 3.9% of employment in 2011. While this was modest in comparison with other sectors it still accounted for more than twice the employment at the national level (1.7%), showing the relative importance that the sector retains.

Sector	Location		
	Portree & Braes (%)	Highland (%)	Scotland (%)
<b>Wholesale, retail, motor repair</b>	16.5	14.9	15.0
<b>Health &amp; Social Work</b>	15.6	15.2	15.0
<b>Accommodation &amp; Food Service</b>	14.9	9.1	6.3
<b>Education</b>	9.1	7.6	8.4
<b>Construction</b>	8.2	9.8	8.0
<b>Public Administration</b>	6.1	6.6	7.0
<b>Agriculture, Forestry &amp; Fishing</b>	3.9	3.7	1.7

Table 5: Comparison of Employment by Sector

## 2.0 The Site

2

## 2.0 The Site

### 2.1 Boundary

The Camanachd Square site covers an area of 3.01 ha in the centre of Portree. The site is edged to the north-east by Home Farm Road, and Springfield Road to the north.

The site is close to Somerled Square to the east.

The principal access road to Portree - the A855 - is a short distance to the south.

The site currently contains two buildings - the single storey nursery building that sits to the north east and the larger Community Centre building.



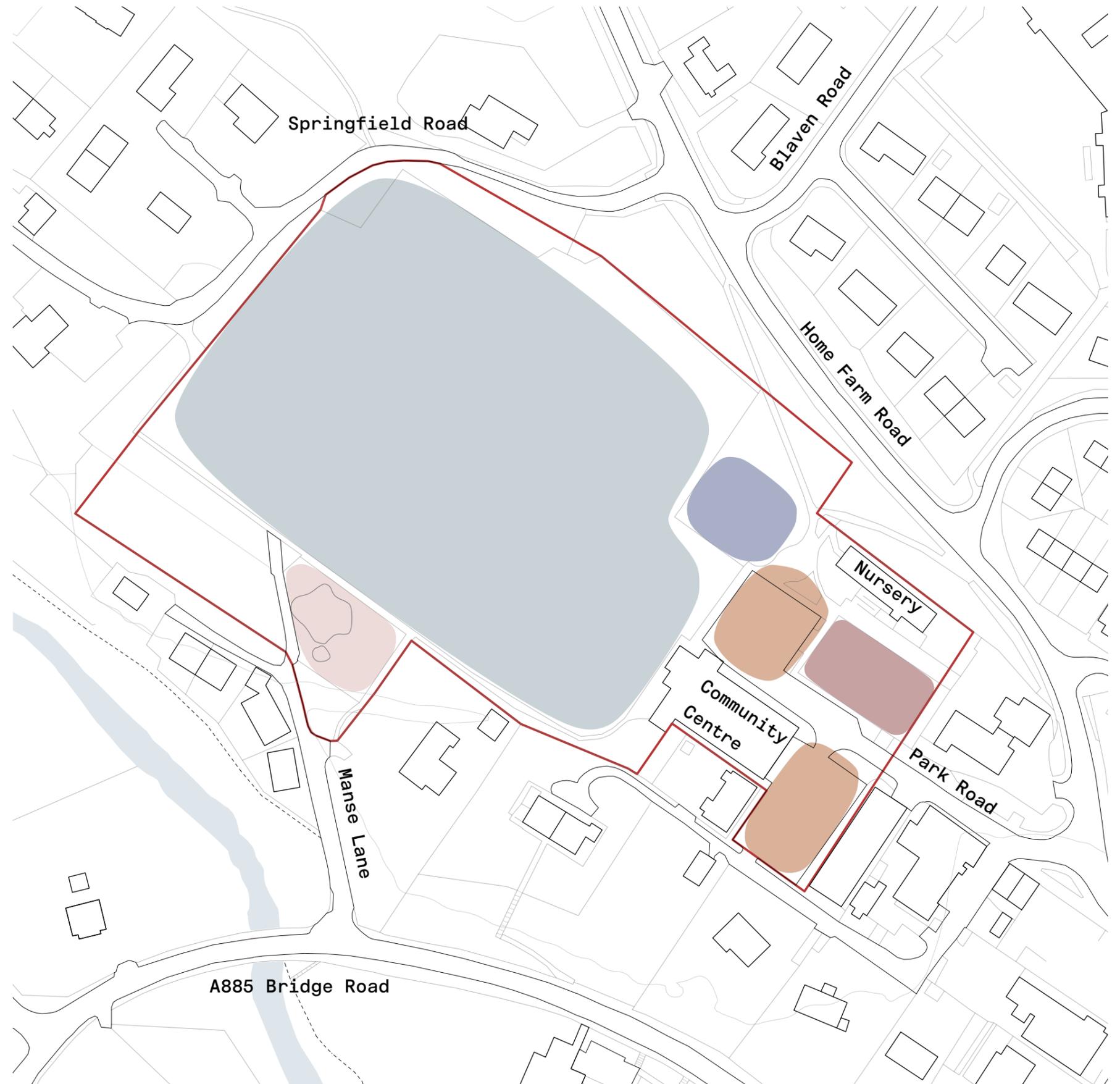
## 2.0 The Site

### 2.2 Outdoor spaces

The site contains a series of outdoor spaces. The King George V park is a large open green space with a gentle slope falling from the north east to the south-west edge. There is a children's play area on the southern edge of the park tucked into the trees.

There is also a semi-enclosed outdoor sports area - the "Red Pitch" adjacent to the nursery building which is currently used as a skate park.

The site also contained a Swimming Pool building that was demolished in 2012. This area was recently used as a temporary car park during the construction of the flatted development to the immediate south-east of the site for Skye and Lochalsh Housing Association.

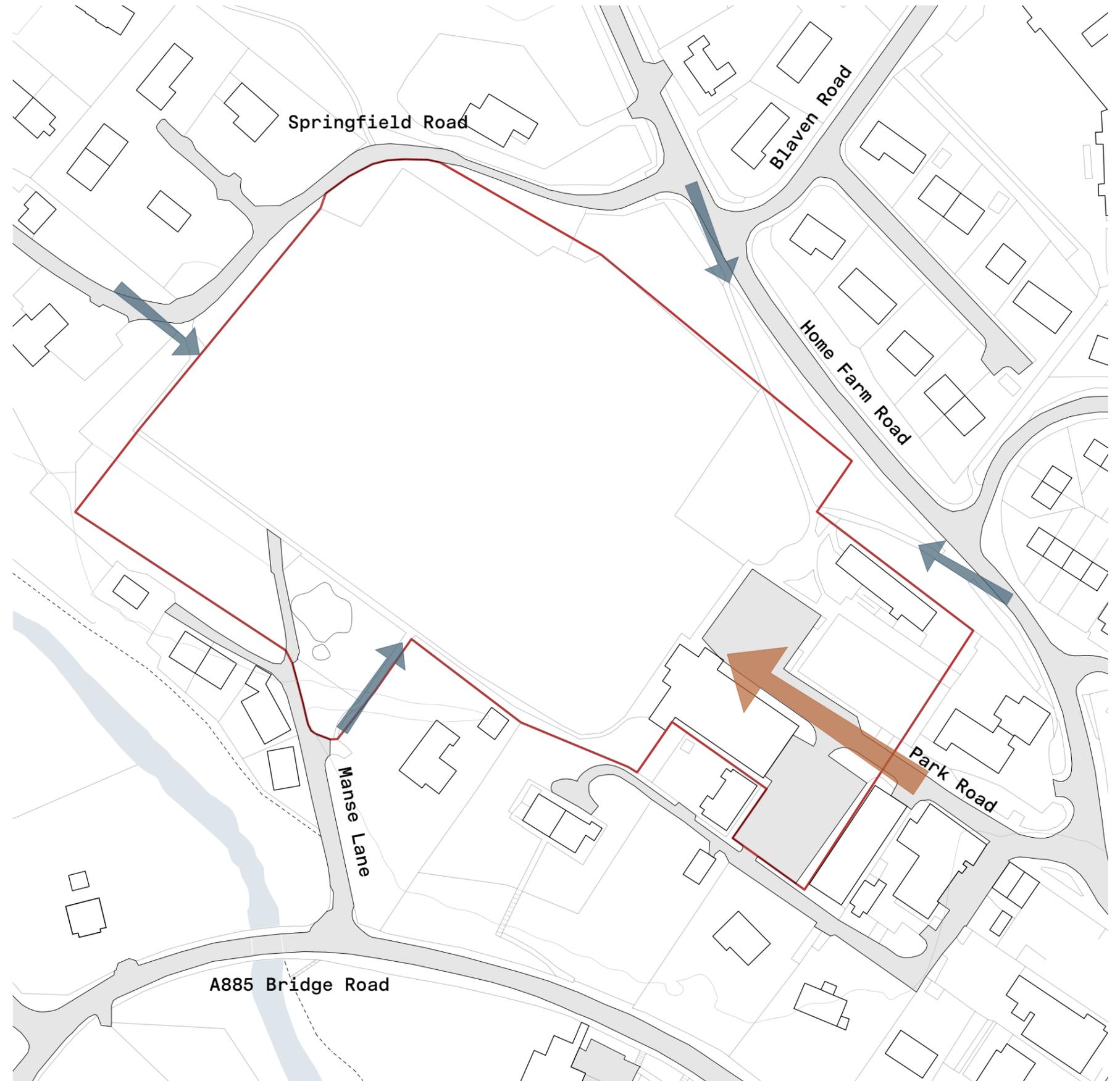


## 2.0 The Site

### 2.3 Access

The principal vehicular access to the site is from Park Road to the west. The site contains two areas of car parking serving the Community Centre and the Nursery building.

There are footpaths giving pedestrian access to and across the site from Manse Lane and Home Farm Road. The northern edge of the park is accessible from Springfield Road.



## 2.0 The Site

### 2.4 Ownership

Fearann Eilean Iarmain own the King George V playing field and peripheral land.

The changing rooms and toilets within the Community Centre building sit within this ownership.



## 2.0 The Site

### 2.4 Ownership

It is understood that The Highland Council own the Red Pitch, the Portree Nursery site and car park and the area of former Swimming Pool. The Red Pitch is managed by High-Life Highland and used by PBCT as a community skate park.

The Highland Council also own the site of the Community Centre Building. The Community Centre building itself is owned by Portree Community Centre Association.

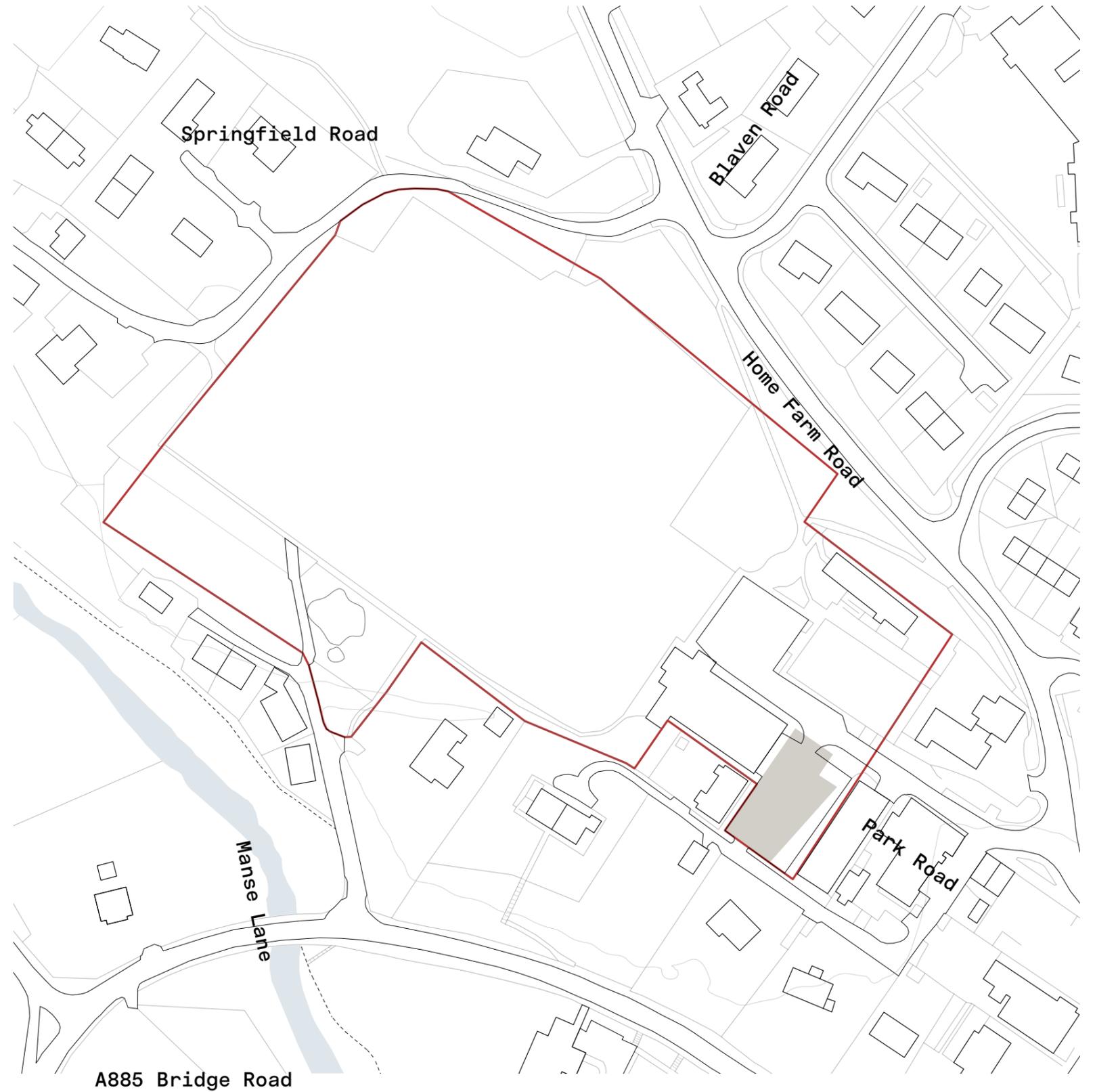


-  Fearann Eilean Iarmain
-  The Highland Council
-  Portree Community Centre Association
-  Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association

## 2.0 The Site

### 2.4 Ownership

Portree Community Centre Association own the Community Centre building and the car park to the immediate south of the building.

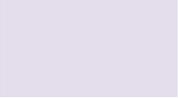


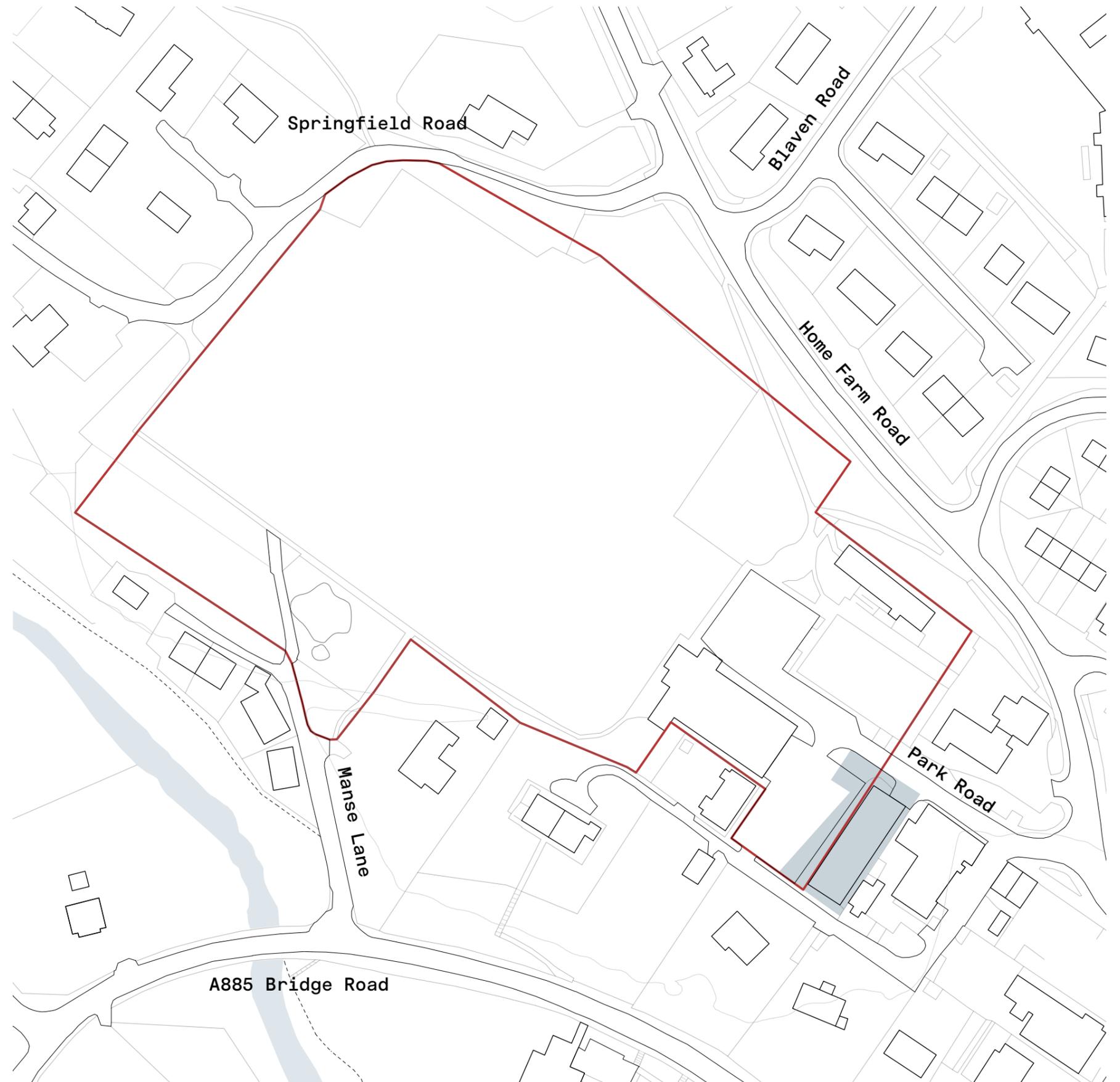
-  Fearann Eilean Iarmain
-  The Highland Council
-  Portree Community Centre Association
-  Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association

## 2.0 The Site

### 2.4 Ownership

Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association own the site of the residential building to the south of the Camanachd Square site and a small area of the car park.

-  Fearann Eilean Iarmain
-  The Highland Council
-  Portree Community Centre Association
-  Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association



# 2.0 The Site

## 2.4 Ownership

-  Fearann Eilean Iarmain
-  The Highland Council
-  Portree Community Centre Association
-  Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association



## 2.0 The Site

### 2.5 Appraisal

This aerial view of the site shows the existing layout of the site.

The external spaces around the Community Centre and Nursery are dominated by car parking and the public realm is of a low quality. The entrance to the Community Centre is poorly located relative to the approach from the town centre on foot.

The King George V Park is largely fenced off from this area.

The external space around the Nursery is dominated by the Red Pitch which is currently used as a skate park.

The Play-park is remote from the Nursery and the Community Centre building.



Key plan



Aerial view of the site from north

# 2.0 The Site

## 2.5 Appraisal

The site is slightly hidden when viewed from Somerled Square.

The listed Park Road Episcopal Church holds the corner between Park Road and Home Farm Road. Council offices are located on the opposite side of Park Road.

Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association recently completed a residential building to the south of the Camanachd Square site. The building has no external space and looks directly onto the car park and blank east gable of the Community Centre.



Key plan



Park Road Episcopal Church



Park Road from Somerled Square and Council Offices



Park Road Housing

# 2.0 The Site

## 2.5 Appraisal

The existing Play-park sits on the south edge of the park partly amongst mature trees. The area is enclosed by a low metal fence.

The site of the former swimming pool was recently used as a temporary car park during the construction of the housing building to the east.

The approach to the Nursery and the surrounding outdoor spaces are generally overgrown and in need of maintenance and improvement.



Playpark



Former Swimming Pool site



Key plan



Footpath from Home Farm Road



Access to Nursery

# 2.0 The Site

## 2.5 Appraisal

The Nursery building overlooks the Red Pitch - an outdoor sports pitch that is currently used as a skate park.

The external spaces around the Nursery are in need of maintenance and improvement and the view from these spaces is dominated by the largely blank elevation of the Community Centre building and the car parking areas.



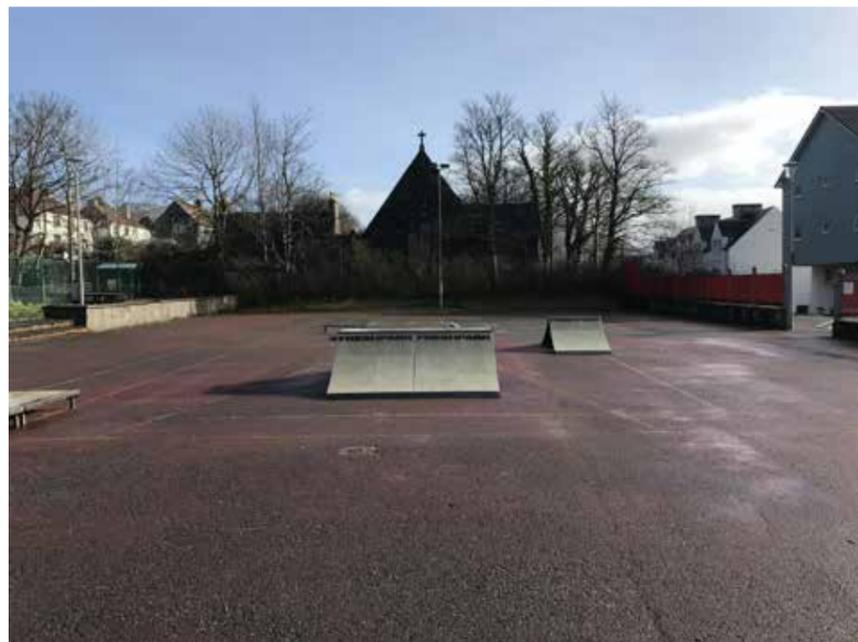
Key plan



Nursery



Nursery seating area



The Red Pitch



The Nursery

# 2.0 The Site

## 2.5 Appraisal

The King George V park is surrounded around by a perimeter fence that prevents people crossing the park or using it in a casual way. The path along the southern edge sits between the fence and the rear gardens of neighbouring residential properties. There is some lighting on this narrow pedestrian route.



Boundary Fence



Boundary Fence



Key plan



View to the Community Centre from the King George V park

## 3.0 The Community Centre

# 3.0 The Community Centre

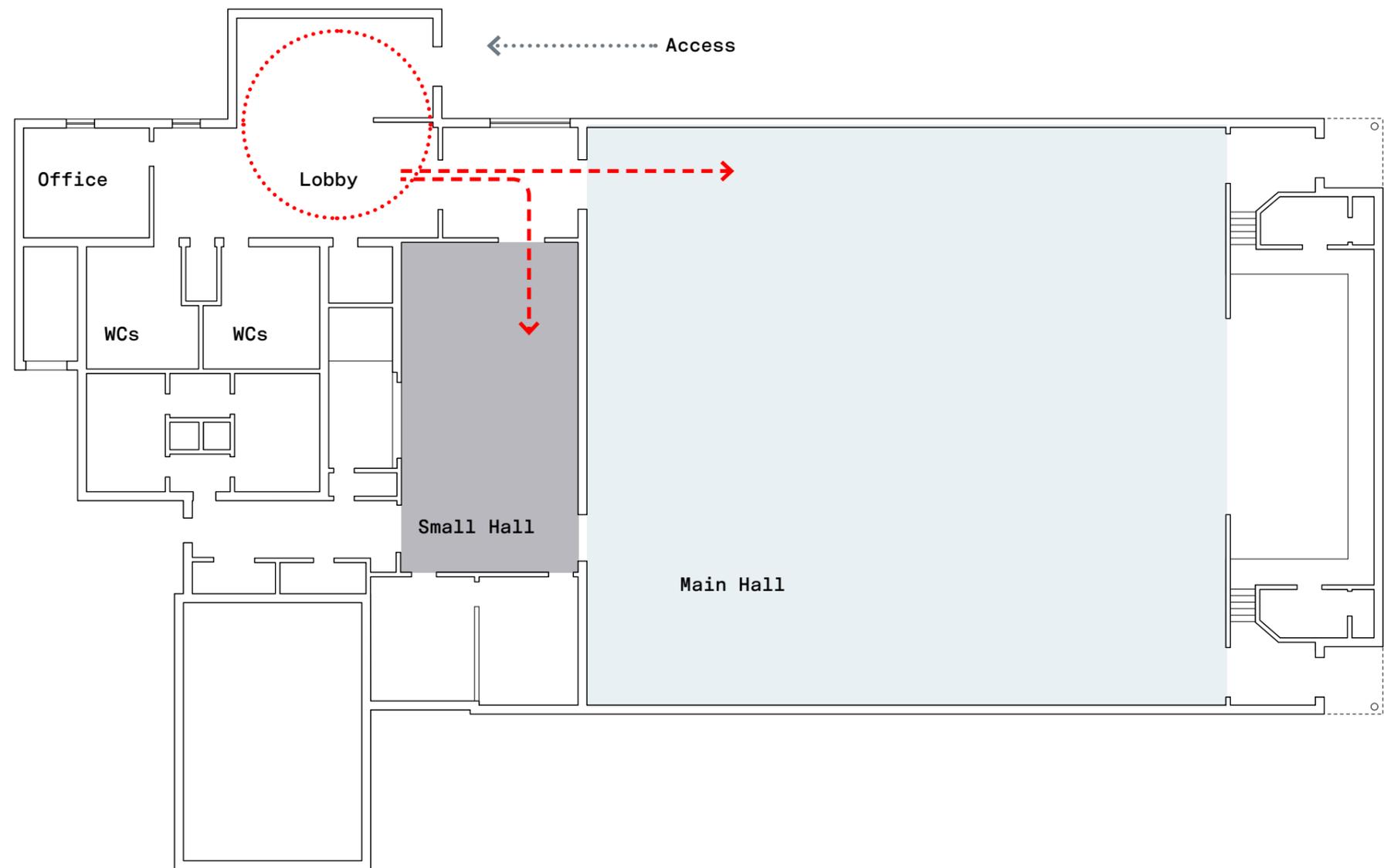
## 3.1 Overview

The Portree Community Centre building is a substantial public building and was opened in 1995 as the main community facility in the town.

The principal space in the building is the main hall which has a floor area of approximately 420m<sup>2</sup>. The hall can accommodate audiences of a maximum of 600 people and is one of the largest performance venues in the Highlands. The hall has a raised stage at the south end with dressing rooms and access doors to the car park for loading. Light enters the hall from two rows of triangular dormer windows at high level.

The hall is served by a second public room - a cafe/bar space which has a small servery to one side. This space has a floor area of approximately 66m<sup>2</sup> and has been used as a venue in its own right for smaller events.

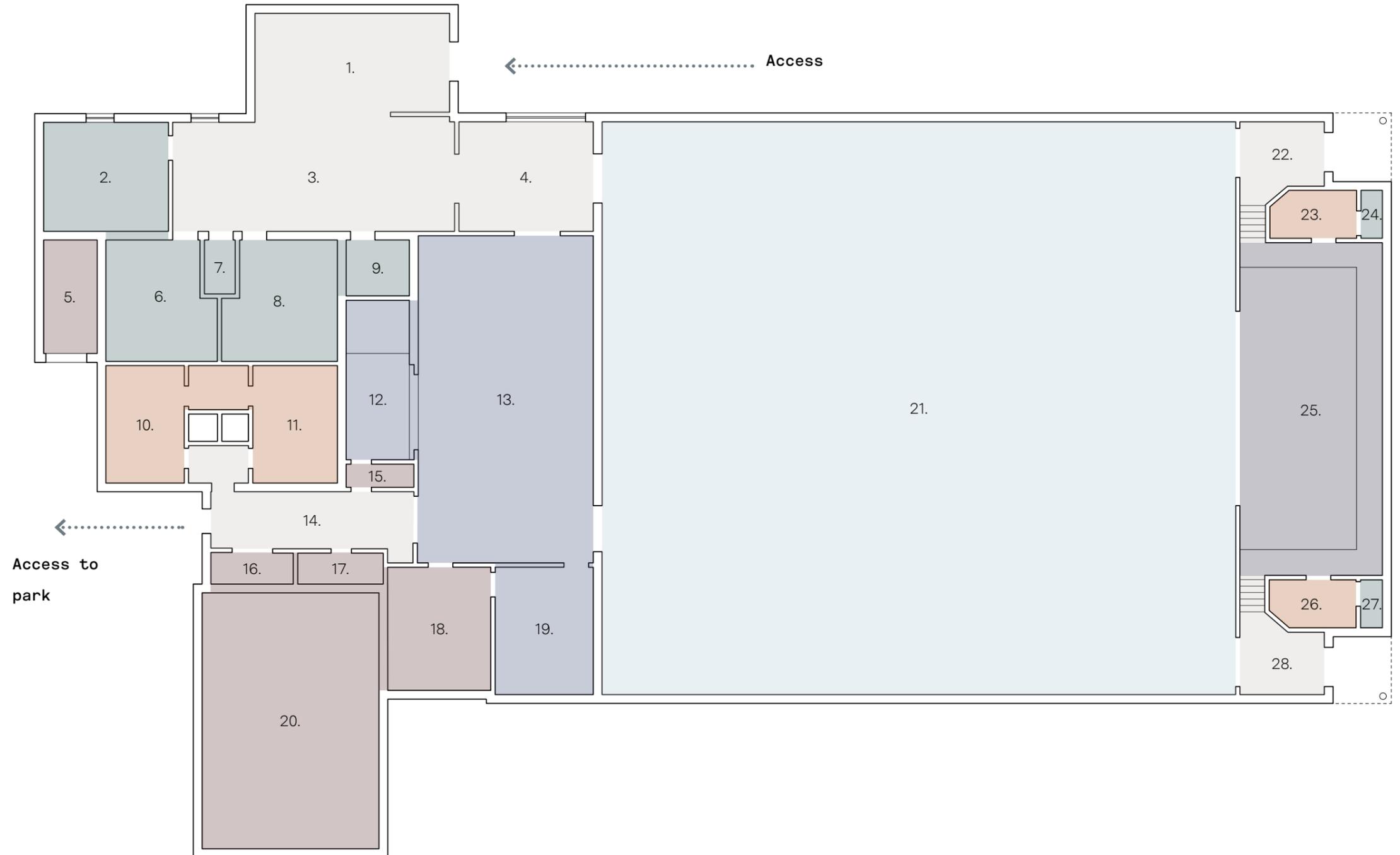
Access to both of these spaces is by means of a vestibule space adjacent to the entrance/ reception lobby. This entrance area gives access to toilets and was overlooked by a small office space.



# 3.0 The Community Centre

## 3.2 Key Plan

- 1 Reception
- 2 Office - Barber shop
- 3 Lobby
- 4 Vestibule
- 5 External store
- 6 WC
- 7 WC
- 8 WC
- 9 Electrical switch gear
- 10 Changing room
- 11 Changing room
- 12 Servery
- 13 Cafe/ Bar
- 14 Access to pitches
- 15 Store
- 16 Electrical
- 17 Store
- 18 Office - SEALL
- 19 Office - SEALL
- 20 Garages/ lock-ups
- 21 Main hall
- 22 Lobby
- 23 Changing Room
- 24 WC
- 25 Stage
- 26 Changing Room
- 27 WC
- 28 Lobby

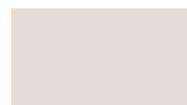
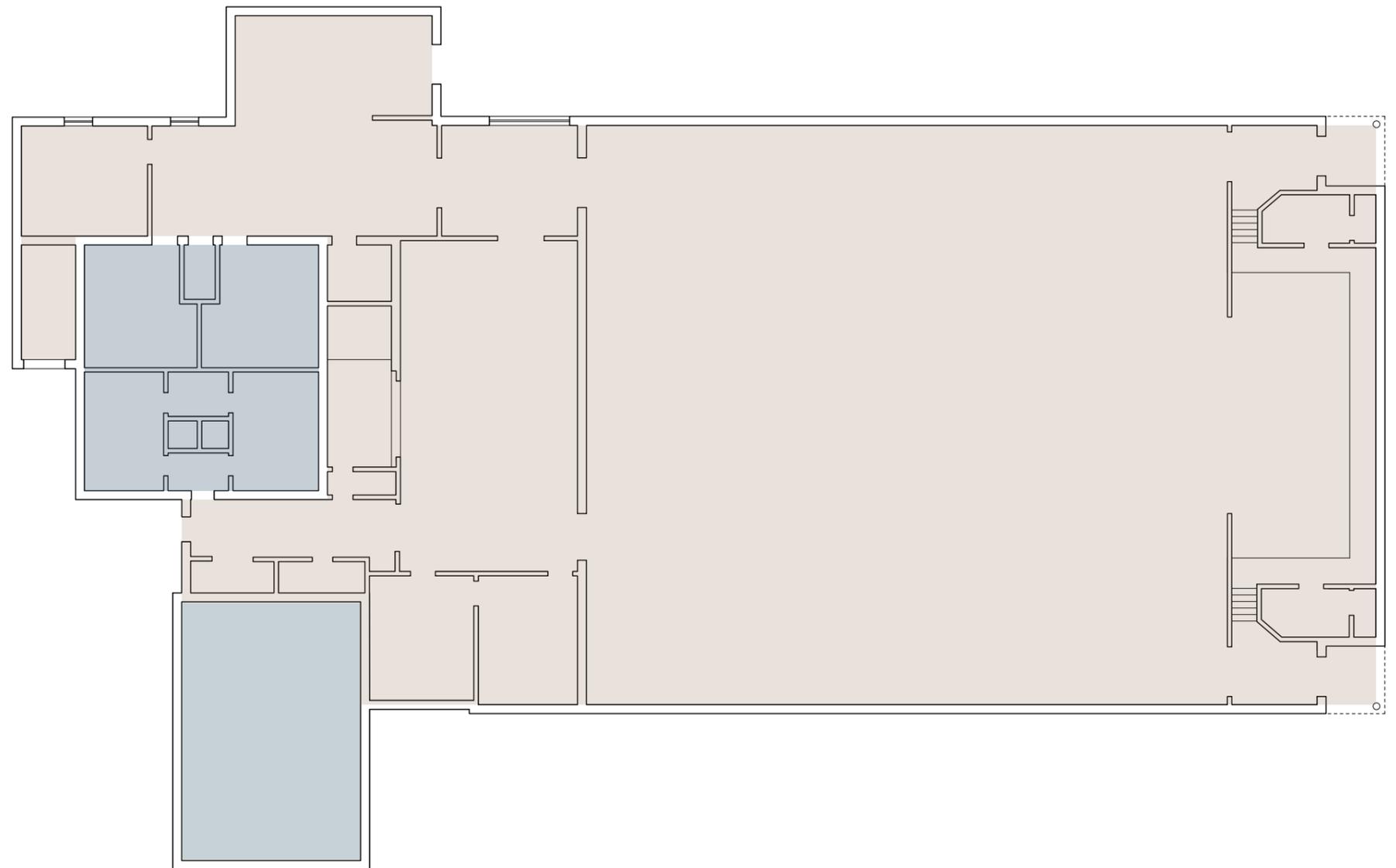


# 3.0 The Community Centre

## 3.3 Sequence of construction

Prior to the construction of the Community Centre there was a standalone building on the site containing public toilets and changing rooms that served the adjacent King George V park and a double garage unit that was used for storage. These earlier buildings were incorporated within the Community Centre.

The junction of the roofs between these buildings of different ages is complex and poorly detailed. As a result this area has been a source of water ingress due to failures and general lack of maintenance over the years.



Community Centre building



Earlier toilet/ changing block/  
garage

# 3.0 The Community Centre

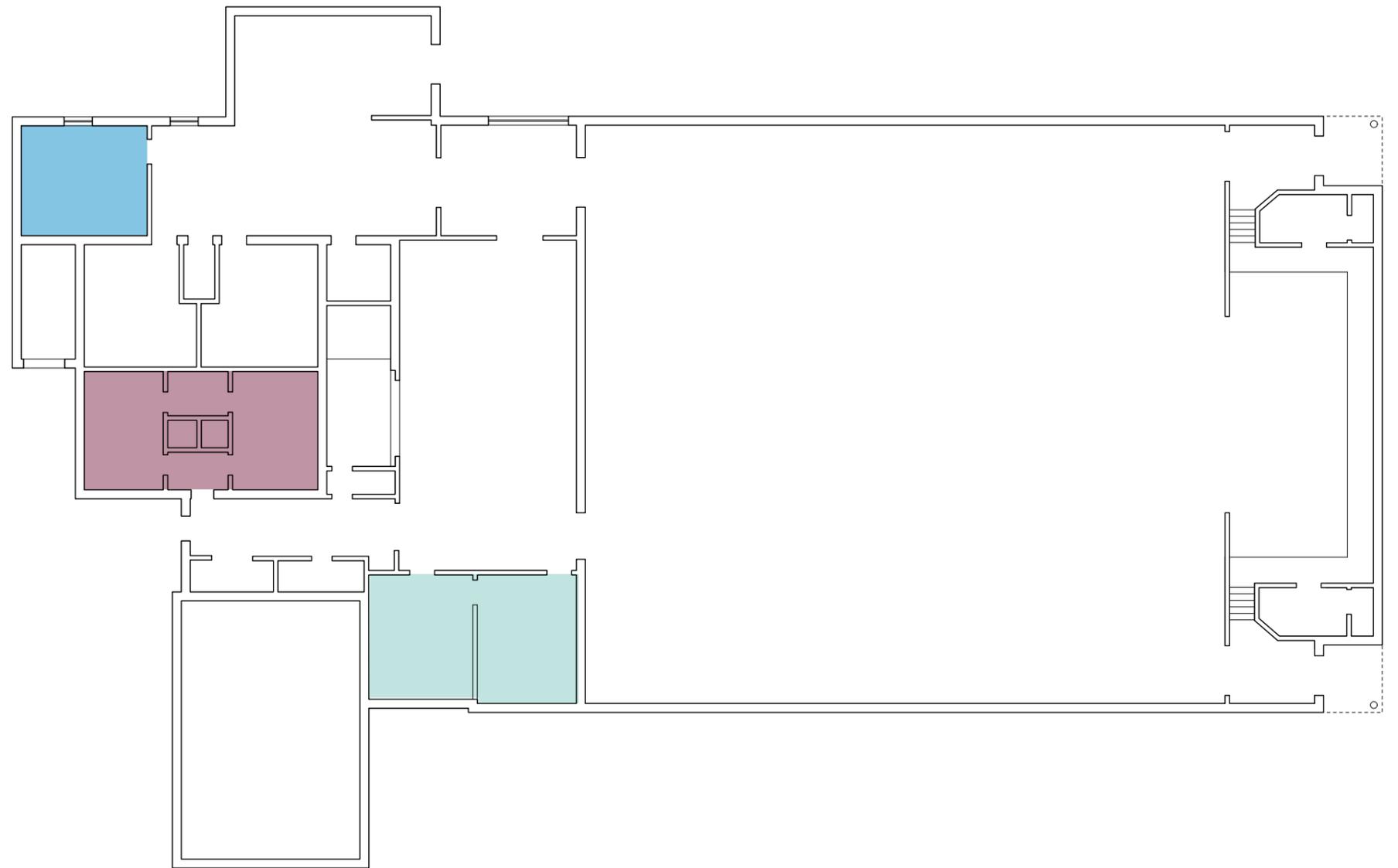
## 3.4 Current use

Though the Community Centre is current largely unused by the public, parts of the building are occupied by three different users.

Phil Stewart operates a small barbering business in the office area by the building reception.

Portree FC use the changing rooms accessed from the King George V park. They are currently maintaining and upgrading the changing rooms.

The SEALL organisation who promote performing arts on Skye and Raasay are using an area adjacent to the main hall and the disused cafe/bar space as an office and storage space. This space was formerly a store and kitchen area serving the cafe bar area. An internal wall has been removed to create a new single office space.



**SEALL**



**Portree FC changing rooms**



**Phil Stewart Barber**

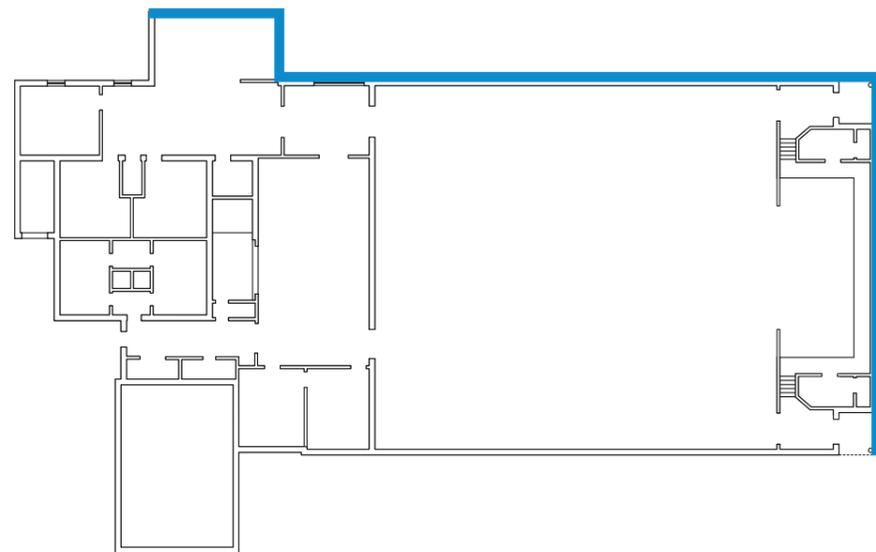
# 3.0 The Community Centre

## 3.5 Appraisal

The existing Community centre building is clad in fair faced concrete block work from ground to eaves level. The roof and cladding to the upper sections of gables are clad in polyester coated profile metal sheeting.

The roof is in obvious need of maintenance. The gutters and rainwater goods are in poor condition or missing in some places causing damage to other areas of the building fabric. There is also damage to the entrance lobby cladding likely caused by a vehicle impact.

The entrance lobby gives access to the two main public spaces in the building and the toilets. The office space is currently being used as a Barber Shop.



Key plan



West elevation and car park



Rooflights on North elevation



View west along Park Road



Entrance lobby - note damage to eaves

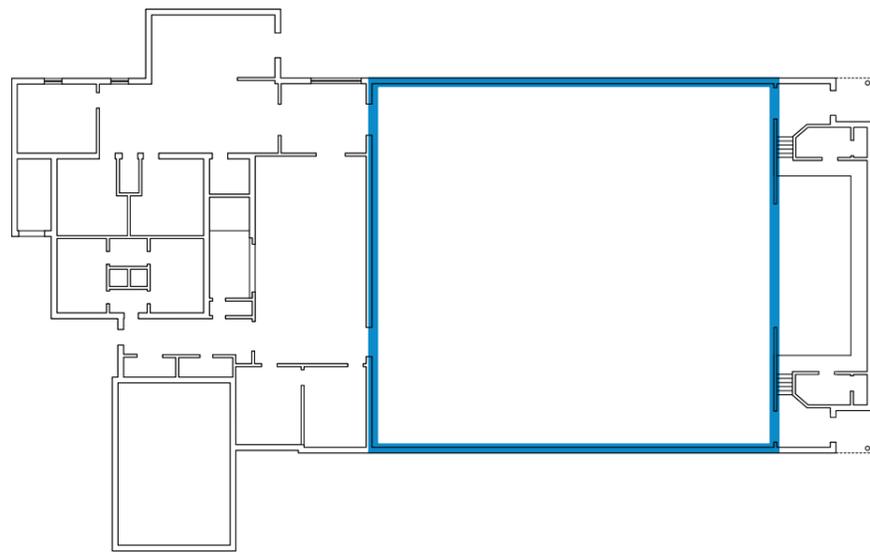
# 3.0 The Community Centre

## 3.5 Appraisal

The main hall has a floor area of approximately 420m<sup>2</sup> and a potential capacity of 600 people. There is an elevated stage to the east end of the hall with storage space underneath.

Natural light is provided by six dormers at high level. There is no provision for closing off these windows.

Sound insulation boards have been mounted on the internal west elevation of the hall. However these are in poor condition and insufficient in terms of reducing sound reverberation in the hall for performances. The timber floor covering has become damaged likely due to the lack of heating in the hall. Sections of the floor are currently under repair.



Key plan



Internal north elevation



View from the stage



Stage with storage under

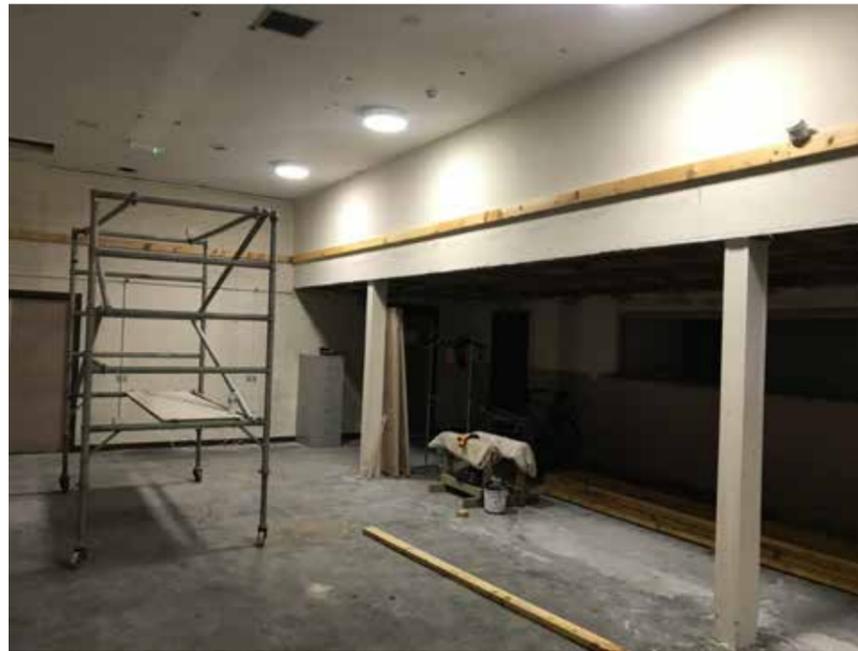


Acoustic insulation

# 3.0 The Community Centre

## 3.5 Appraisal

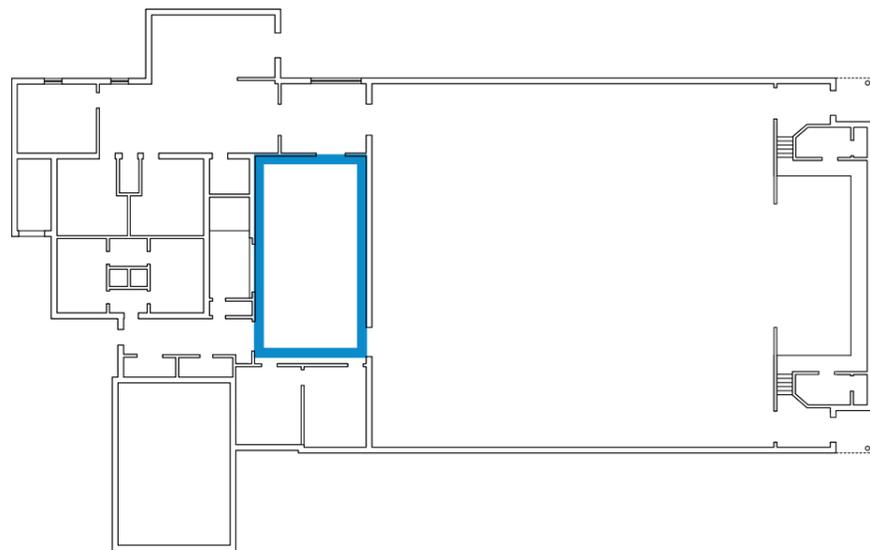
The small hall sits in the middle of the plan and works both as a useful venue space and as a support space for events in the main hall. Currently this space is undergoing renovation work related to damaged caused by water ingress from the roof and a blocked internal downpipe.



Small hall and servery area



Exposed ceiling structure.



Key plan

# 3.0 The Community Centre

## 3.5 Appraisal

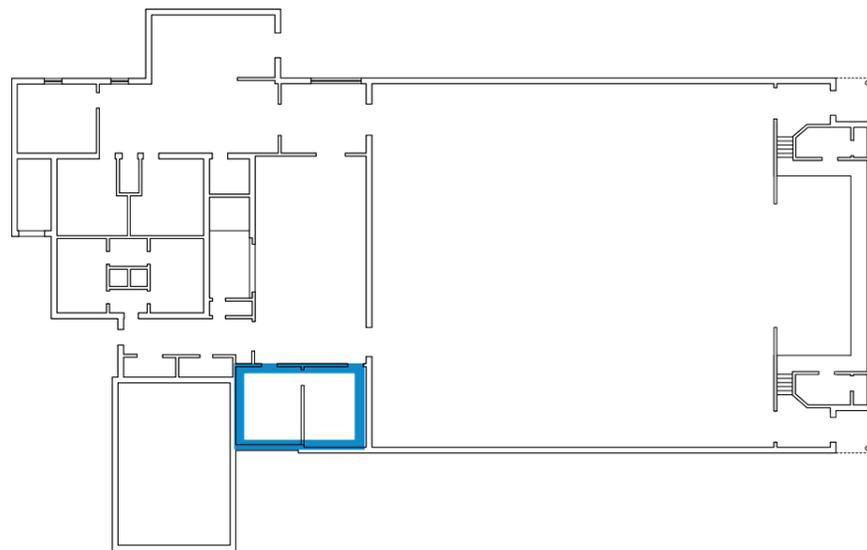
Two rooms on the south of the small hall have been recently combined and renovated to create office space for the SEALL organisation.



Office space



Office space

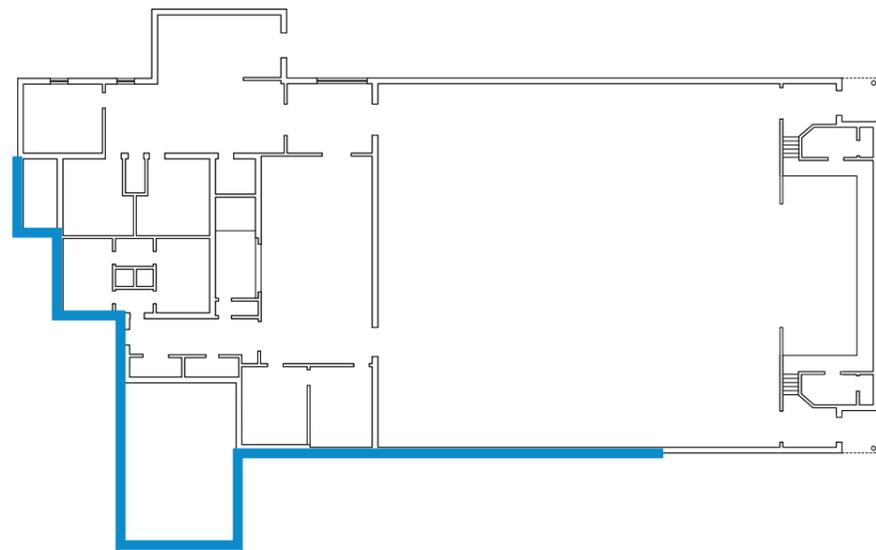


Key plan

# 3.0 The Community Centre

## 3.5 Appraisal

The changing rooms and storage garage on the west side of the buildings pre-date the construction of the main Community Centre building. These earlier buildings are in poor repair, with some areas of gutters missing and evidence of rot to barge boards.



Key plan



Access to changing rooms and stores



Waste storage



South elevation



Rear of garage - note missing gutters

# Community Consultation

4

# 4.0 Community Consultation

## 4.1 Engagement

To ensure that the initial ideas in this report reflect the needs of local organisations and complement existing indoor and outdoor spaces in the town, we contacted existing organisations on the site, existing and potential users, and other organisations who provide community space in the town. Those approaches included:



- Aros
- Atlas Arts
- Bowling Club [now ceased]
- Feisean nan Gaidheal
- Fields in Trust
- Highland Council (Ward Manager and local Councillors)
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- High Life Highland / Fingal Centre
- Isle of Skye Highland Games
- Light up Portree Community Events Group
- Pantomime
- Phil the barber
- Portree and Braes Community Trust
- Portree Community Centre Association
- Portree Community Council
- Portree Football Club
- Portree High School
- Portree Nursery
- Portree Primary School
- Portree Gaelic School
- Portree Tennis & Squash Club
- Portree Youth Club
- Scottish Futures Trust
- SEALL
- Skye Agriculture Show
- Skye and Lochalsh CVO
- Skye and Lochalsh Running & Athletics Club
- Skye Camanachd
- Skye Connect
- Skye Dance
- Skye Events
- Skye Gathering Hall
- Skye Gym
- Skye Tri[athlon] Club
- West Highland College

# 4.0 Community Consultation

## 4.2 Summary - existing buildings



- The size and scale of the main hall is useful - the only space of its scale outside Inverness. Potential uses for the whole hall include pantomime, dances, music, indoor sports / children's events. Others are interested in using part of the space if it could be divided off (e.g. fitness classes). Heating and acoustics would need to be addressed.
- The smaller hall is popular for smaller classes and events.
- The Youth Club is keen to move into the Community Centre and increase its activity; doesn't need a dedicated room but would like some facilities that could be left out (e.g. sofas, pool table) and would need storage.
- Soft play may no longer be part of the Aros offer - which will be a loss for the community.
- Ancillary facilities need to be up to scratch - secure storage

for sports and arts organisations, toilets, reception area etc.

- The building should offer indoor facilities (toilets etc) and possibly indoor space for events on the pitch to use (eg evening dance after the agricultural show, indoor space if weather is poor).
- Scope for arts spaces and public sector relocation.
- Gym facilities are already provided elsewhere.
- People want to work collectively and understand they'll need to share space.

## 4.0 Community Consultation

### 4.3 Summary - outdoor spaces



- Pitch is poorly drained, soggy and uneven in parts.
- Area as a whole is poorly maintained: dog dirt on the pitch, dirty play equipment.
- The area needs to work for a number of uses: football training and matches, community events (including the agricultural show), informal green space, play, and ideally a running/cycling track.
- A running track would be very useful for running and cycling groups (measured flat distances with a good surface, somewhere safe for kids to learn how to ride bikes, potentially also a vehicular access route for event setup).
- A vehicular access route onto the park for event setup would avoid damage to the grass and drainage.
- The livestock area has to be kept fenced off for 4 weeks after the Agricultural show for infection control.
- The best area for a music stage with the existing layout is said to be around where the swimming pool used to be - in terms of acoustic, ground condition, access and setup.
- Toilets and changing facilities would be useful for football, sports, running etc. and general family use.
- Lighting to areas of the park would be useful.
- Shelter from inclement weather would be useful - e.g. a simple roofed structure or access to the community centre.
- Informal outdoor green space for people to meet and relax would be good (picnic benches etc.).
- Events use is really important - the events group wants to do more, the agricultural show think
- Red pitch is seen as an important resource for young people, but in poor condition and needn't stay where it is.
- Play park is tired and range of equipment does not appeal to all age groups.
- Widespread desire for Camanachd Square not simply to be more car parking - it's seen as a focus for community activity, indoor and outdoor.

## 5.0 Outline Proposals

# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.1 Options

Three basic potential strategies for redeveloping the site and the Community Centre building have emerged -

1. Repair and renovate the existing building and implement modest upgrades and repairs to the existing external environment.
2. Demolish the existing Community Centre and redevelop this part of the site with an entirely new building.
3. Carefully assess and consider what works with the existing building - retain what works and remove what does not and add new elements where needed. Review and reorganise the external spaces around the Community Centre to make them more useful and to allow them to facilitate different uses and events.

The condition survey report carried out by Glyn Young Associates identifies numerous issues and failings relating to the areas of the building at the west end - primarily where the roof forms are complicated and there are junctions with the earlier buildings that were incorporated within the fabric of the later Community Centre.

The following pages outline a strategy where the existing main hall structure and much of the envelope is retained and enhanced, the poor quality sections of the building are removed and replaced with new spaces. These new pieces can allow the Community Centre to address the external spaces - a new public square and the existing park - and so better facilitate the many needs and potential uses identified in the Community Consultation exercise.



# 5.0 Outline Proposals

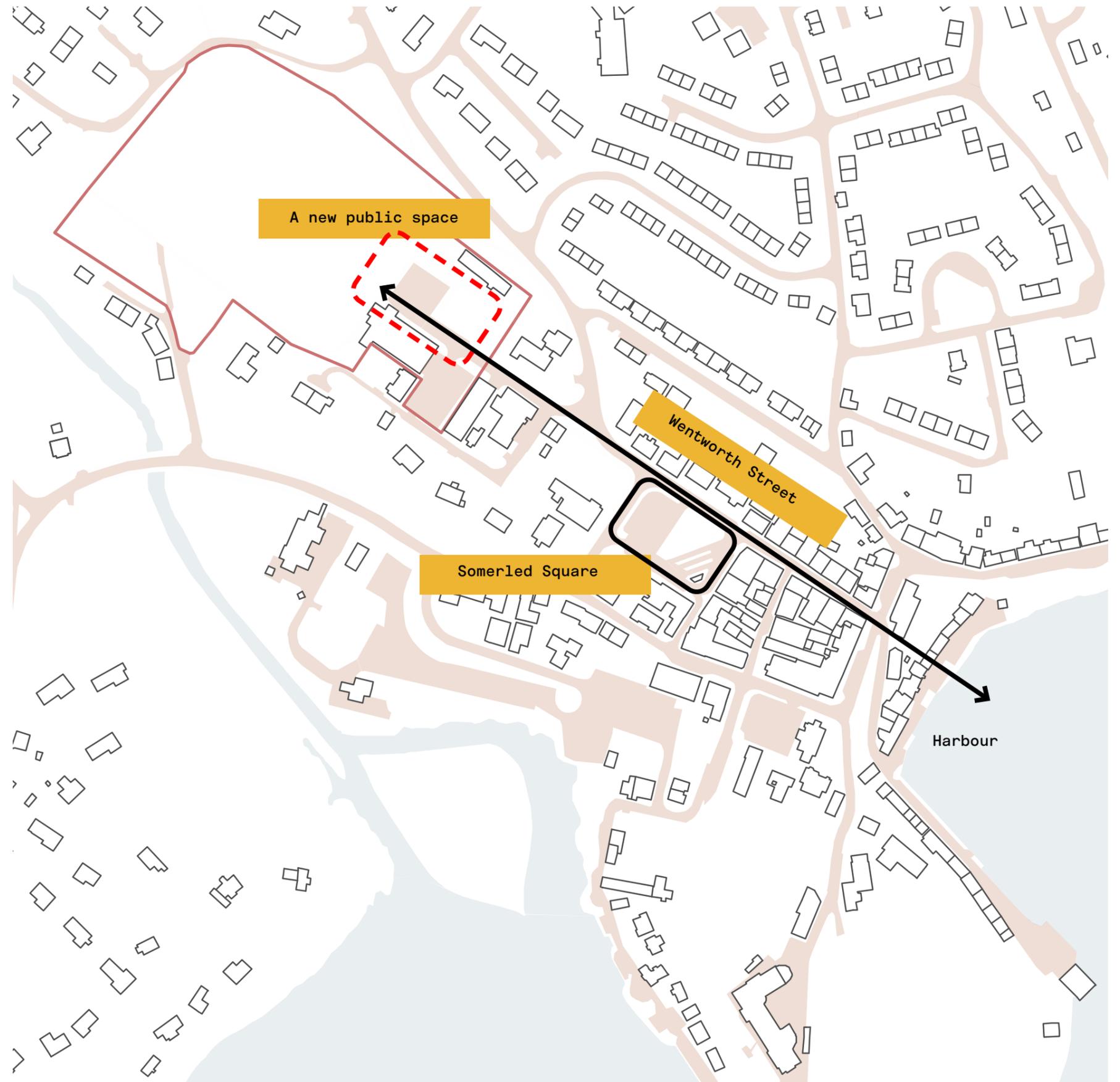
## 5.2 A New Public Space

The project offers the opportunity to new *civic* place for the town - a new *community* square.

For visitors Somerled Square can be seen as the *arrival* space and the public face of the town, whereas a new Camanachd Square could be something more for the people that live in and around Portree.

Camanachd Square would be a gathering place that a reinvigorated Community Centre and the existing nursery would overlook and activate. In time other uses and buildings might address this new public space.

This new public space and Community Centre would also better facilitate activities on the King George V park.



## 5.0 Outline Proposals

### 5.3 Current Condition

- Currently the area around the Community Centre and Nursery is dominated by inefficiently set out car parking.
- The Community Centre building presents largely blank elevations to the north and south-east. The entrance and arrival is unclear.
- The Red Pitch is currently used as a bike/ skate park by young people. While successful in terms of giving younger people somewhere to meet the location of this area next to the nursery is less than ideal.
- The Play-park is remote from the nursery building and is not overlooked.
- The changing facilities for the football club are in poor condition and located within the Community Centre.



# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.4 Masterplan Strategy

The indicative plan opposite gives an overview of a series of proposals that could create a flexible public space for the town and better facilitate use of the King George V park.

- A new public square is created by relocating the Red Pitch and rationalising the existing car parking.
- A new floodlit all weather pitch is located on the King George V park that allows sports training in winter months.
- A dedicated skate park is created for young people.
- A new changing pavilion facilitates sporting activities on the park and gives cover to spectators.
- A running /cycle track around the perimeter of the field allows different uses and marks out the area as an area for sporting activity. This track could also facilitate maintenance and other events that occur on the field, creating a path for visitors and vehicles that does not damage the grass and drainage.
- The Play-park is relocated to relate both to the Nursery building, the new square and the Community Centre building.
- The Community Centre building is reconfigured to create spaces that address both the new square and the King George V park - allowing it to be used to support activities and events in both areas.

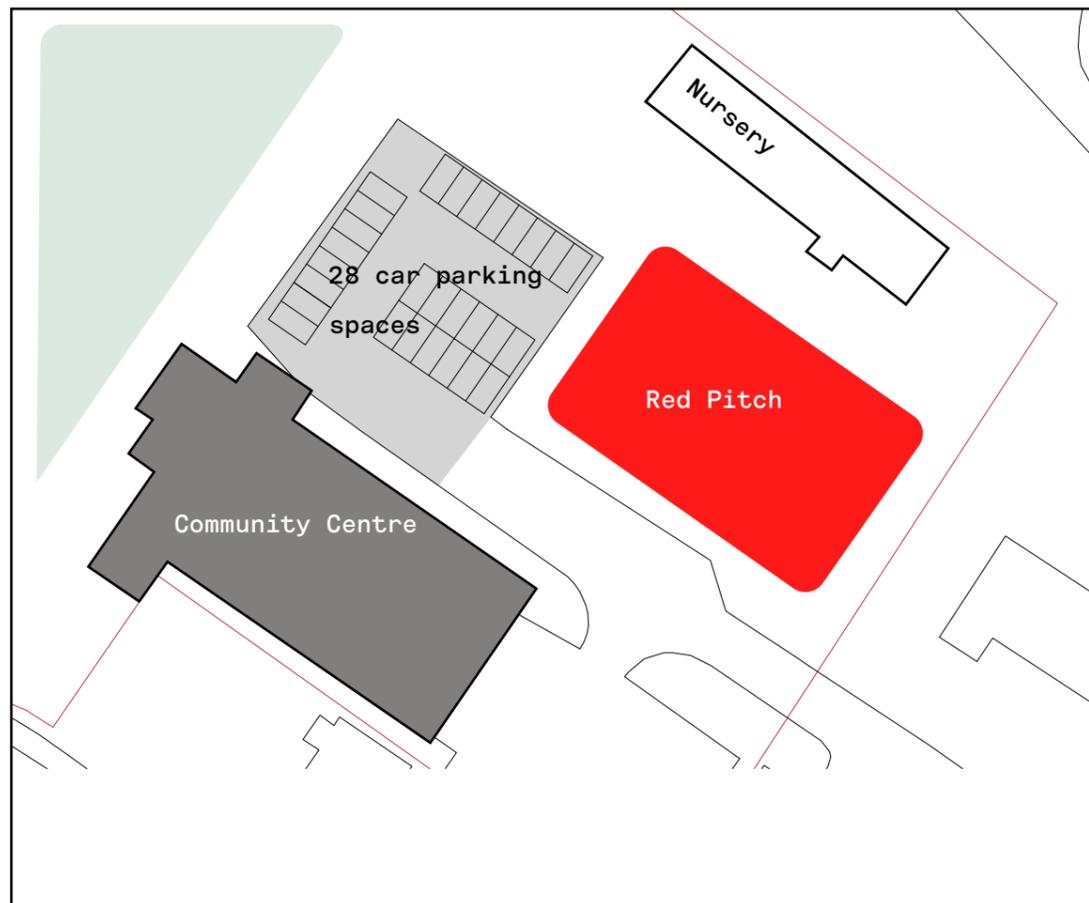


# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.4 Masterplan Strategy

The existing car park to the north of the Community Centre currently accommodates approximately 28 cars. If the Red Pitch is relocated elsewhere this area could be used to rationalise the car parking and create the new public square.

Initial studies suggest that the level of parking could be maintained or exceeded. The new square could also potentially be used as an occasional “overspill” car park for popular events



Existing car park



Indicative proposed layout

# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.5 A Renewed Community Centre



Soft Play



Skill learning



Ceilidh/ Weddings



Art workshops



Music venues



Pantomime

# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.6 A New Public Space



Food Festival



Outdoor Cinema



Outdoor Performances



Farmers' Market



Community Events



Nature-based Play Areas

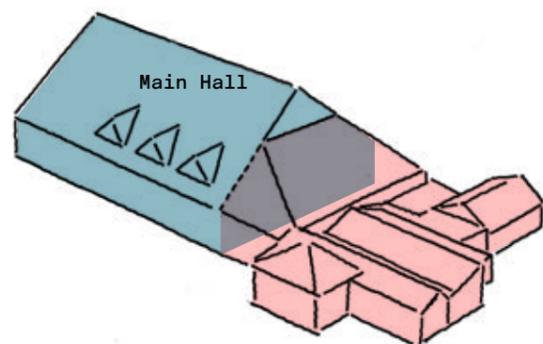
# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.7 Community Centre - strategy

A Condition Report prepared by Glyn Young in 2020 reveals the structure of the existing main hall is considered to be in generally good condition though improvements to the roof and the thermal performance of the envelope are required.

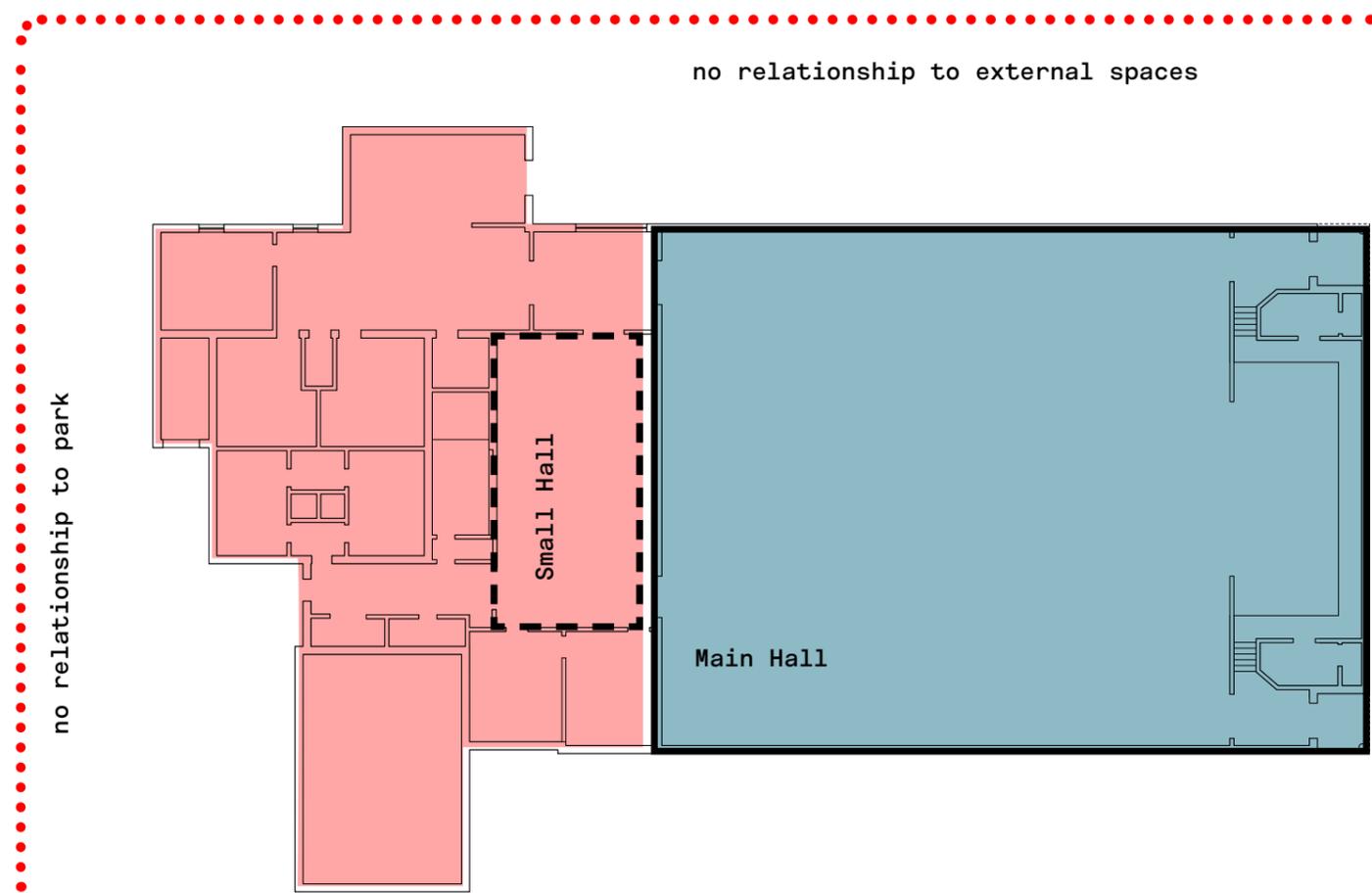
The Community Consultation exercise suggested that there is great demand for a space of this size within Portree and in this part of the Highlands, and that the main hall is a useful asset worth preserving and enhancing. However the remainder of the building - the ancillary spaces, changing spaces and small hall area - are considered to be in poor condition.

A space the size of the current small hall/ servery area was noted as potentially useful by several of the stakeholders and consultees for smaller events and gathering. However this existing space is dark and has no connection to the outside.



The existing hall currently has a licence for 600 people however by current regulations the WC provision is inadequate.

A potential strategy is to remove the existing ancillary areas but retain and improve the structure of the main hall. This could allow new useful spaces to be created around the hall that can open out to the park and a new public square.

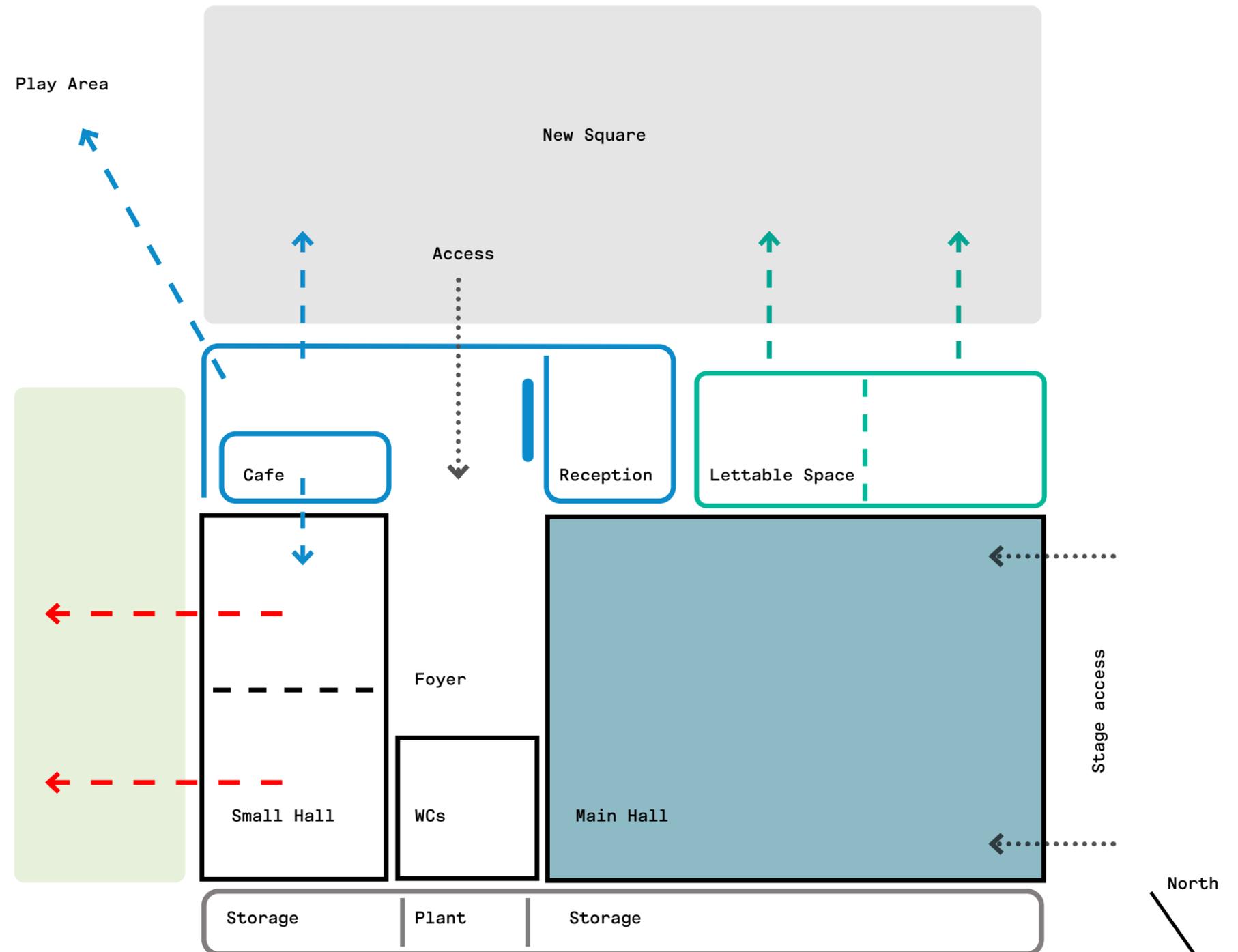
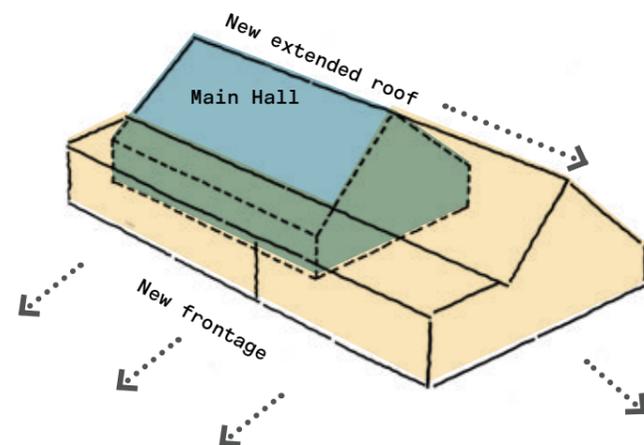


# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.7 Community Centre - strategy

The diagram opposites indicates how a remade Community Centre might work.

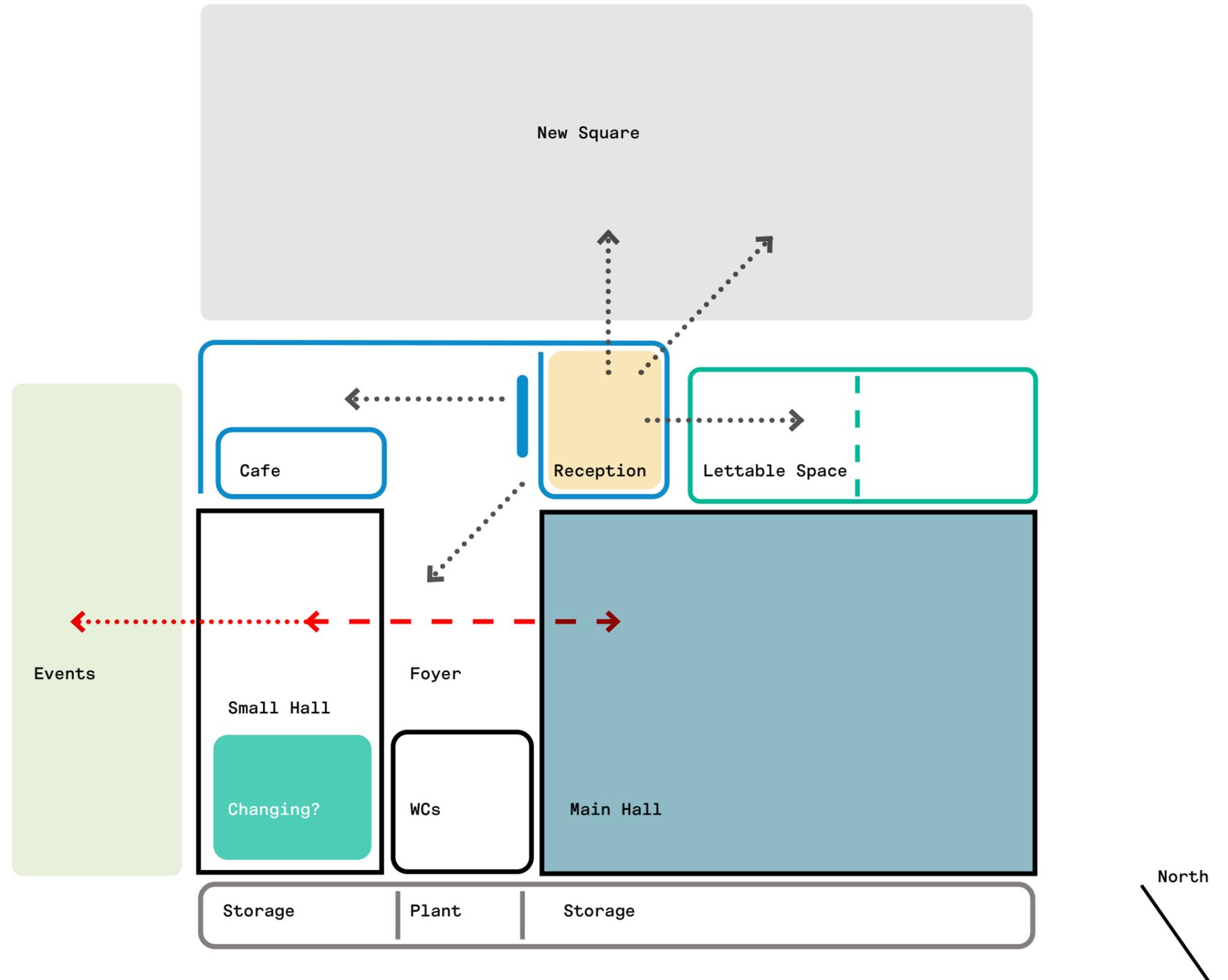
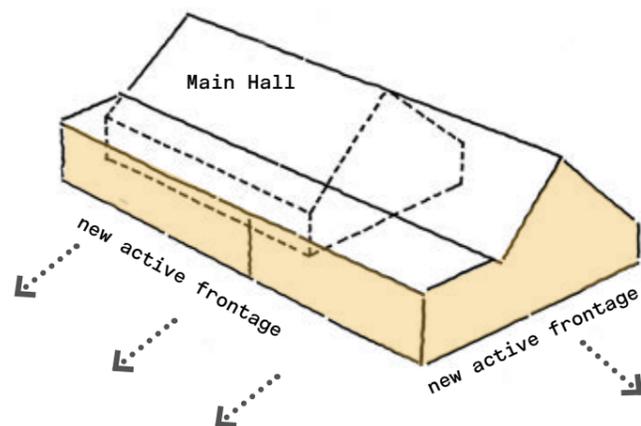
- The existing main hall is retained but “wrapped” in new accommodation creating frontage to the new square and allowing spaces to open out to the King George V park. These spaces could replicate the size of the existing small hall but be flexible and accommodate a wide variety of activities throughout the day.
- New spaces onto the square could contain office space for local arts organisations who would essentially become anchor tenants and also help promote the building as an arts and community hub. The PBCT could also base itself in the building.
- A cafe space near the entrance could facilitate activity and events within the building, the square and the park.
- The new building could have a simple robust form.



# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.7 Community Centre - strategy

- The reception would be located to allow the core of the building and the public space to be supervised and overlooked. This reception space would also be close to the lettable spaces overlooking the new square.
- The new flexible Small Hall could facilitate a number of different uses - youth club, soft play, smaller gigs or temporary gallery. This space could also work as a temporary bar / catering or support space for events in taking place in the King George V park.
- The Small Hall could also work as a support space for events in the Main Hall.
- Storage and plant space can be arranged on the south edge of the building. Changing spaces could also potentially be created ahead if a separate sporting pavilion is not developed.
- The south facing side of the roof can potentially accommodate PV panels.

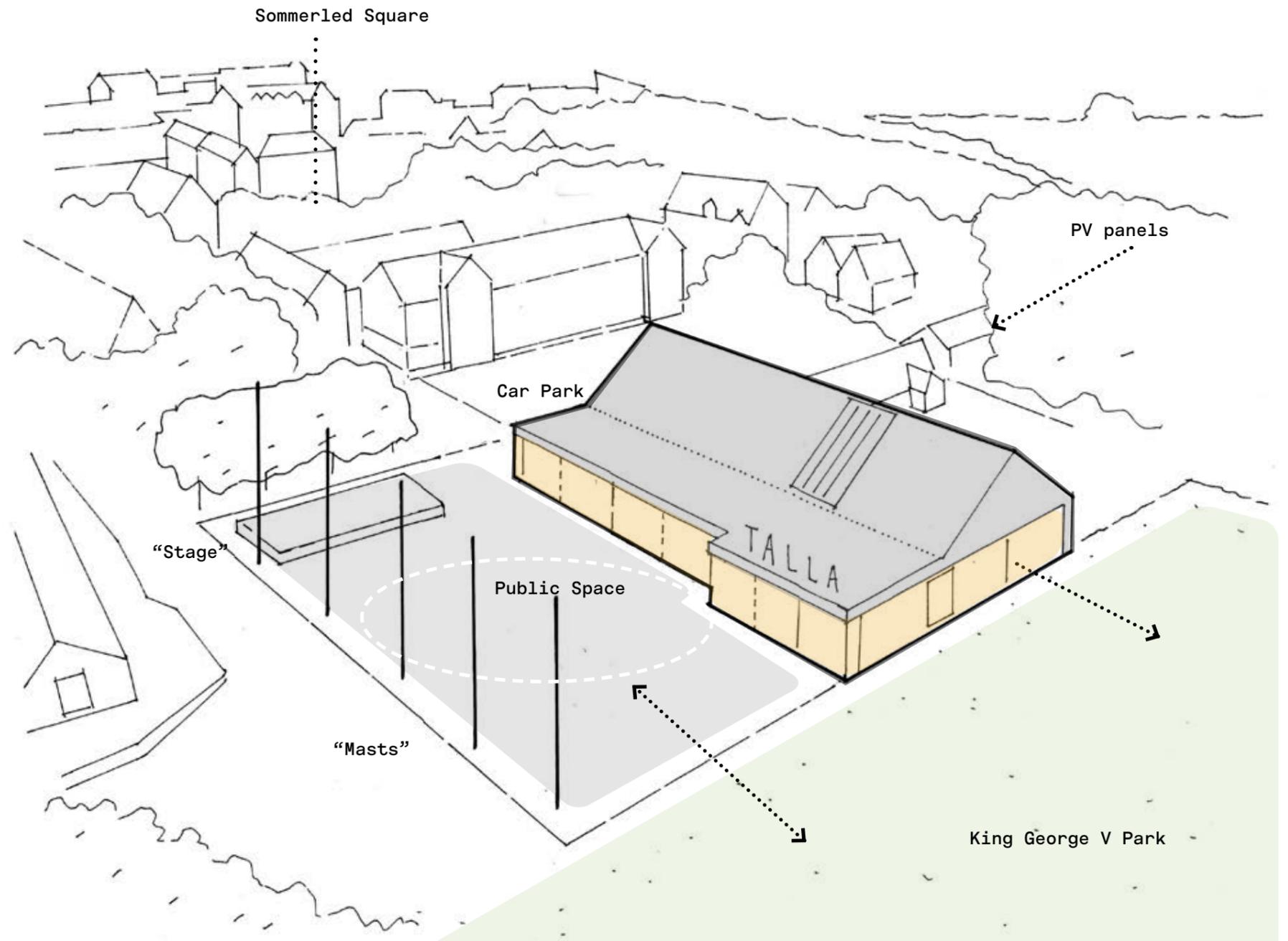


# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.8 Community Square - uses

The space in front of the Community Centre could become a new Community Square - a hard-working, flexible space for the community. There is the potential to create infrastructure to this new space to allow it to facilitate different events and to make a new place within the town and community -

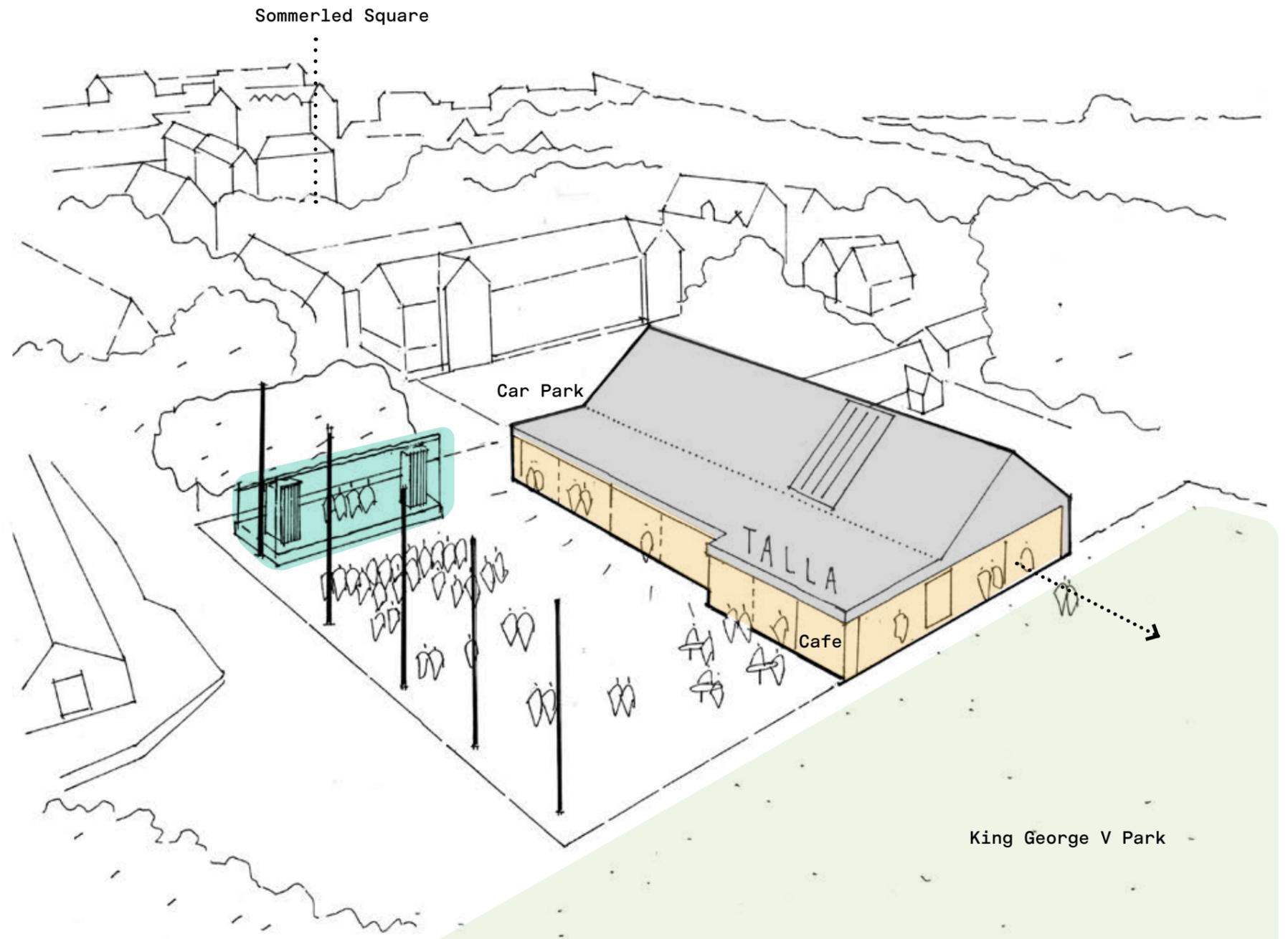
- A raised area that can be used as a stage
- “Masts” to mark the place - these could have lighting mounted on them and also provide a framework structure for awnings, screens, flags and banners.
- The parking is rationalised and possibly screened by new trees. Alternatively the new public square could be used as an overspill car park for larger events.
- The square could facilitate food vans in the warmer weather as an alternative or complement to a cafe within the Community Centre
- The square becomes a staging area for activity and events on the King George V park.
- The Community Centre could support and facilitate events and activity on the new square and the King George V park.



# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.8 Community Square - uses

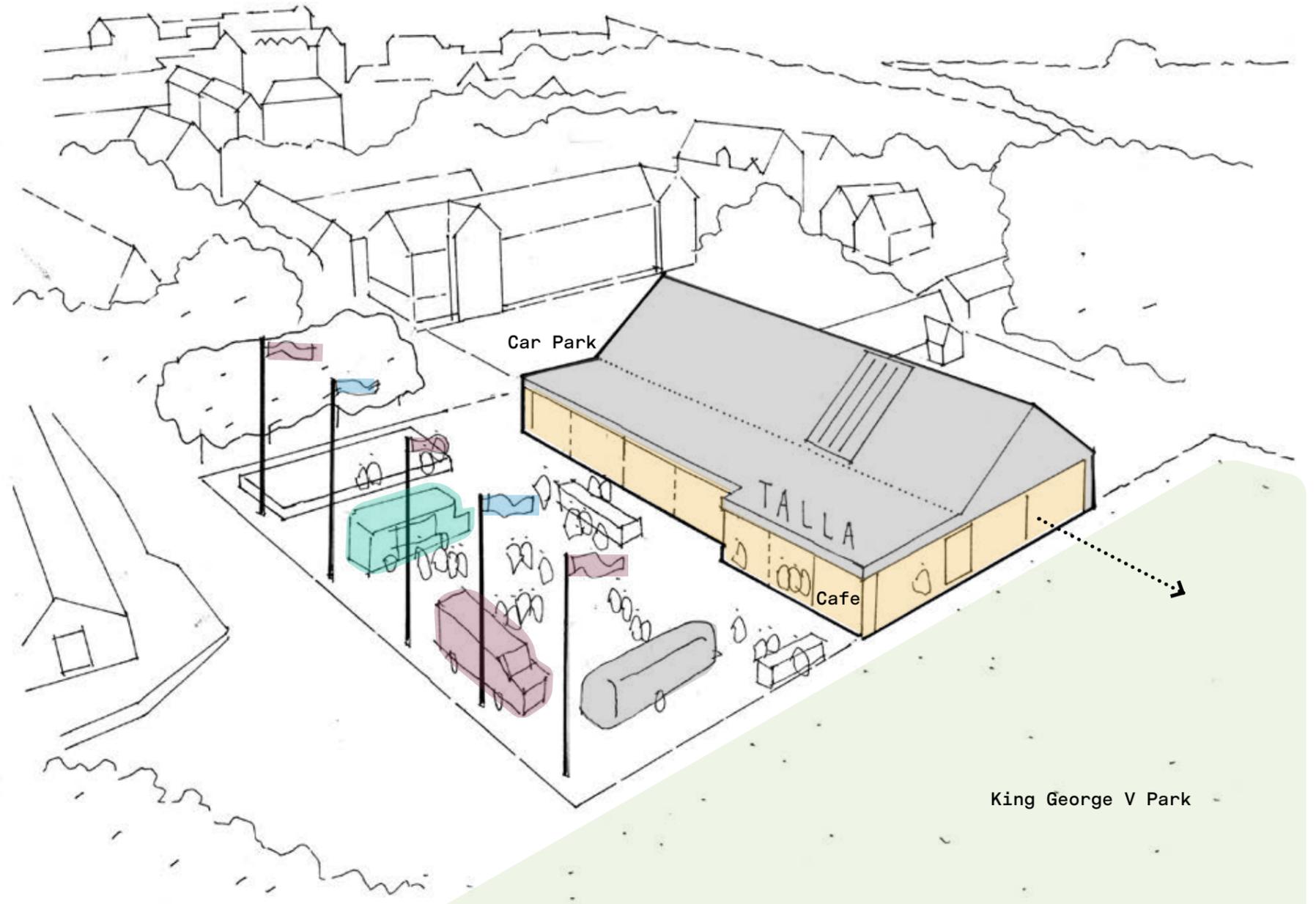
Outdoor Performance Space



# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.8 Community Square - uses

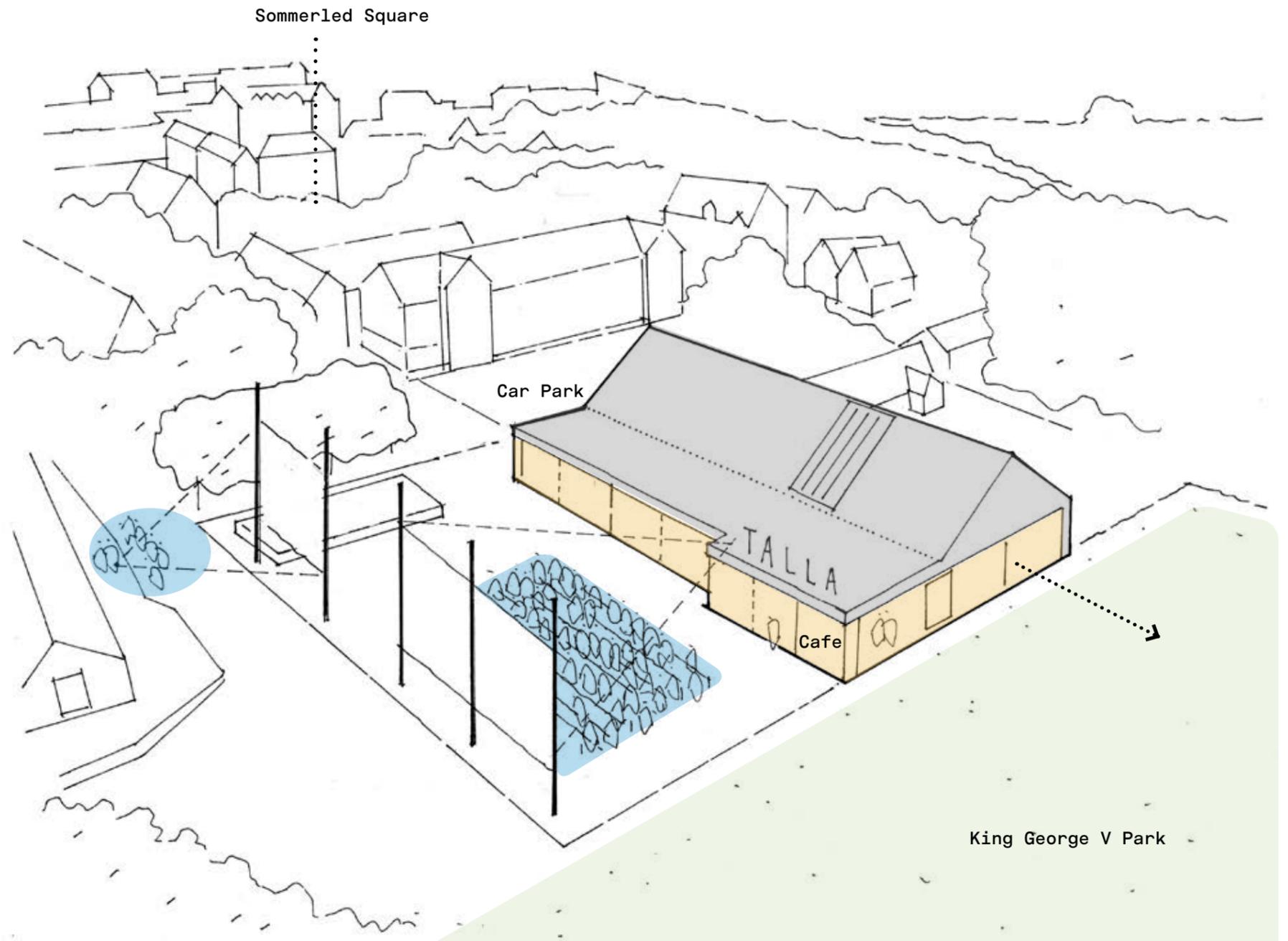
Farmer's Market/ Food Festival



# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.8 Community Square - uses

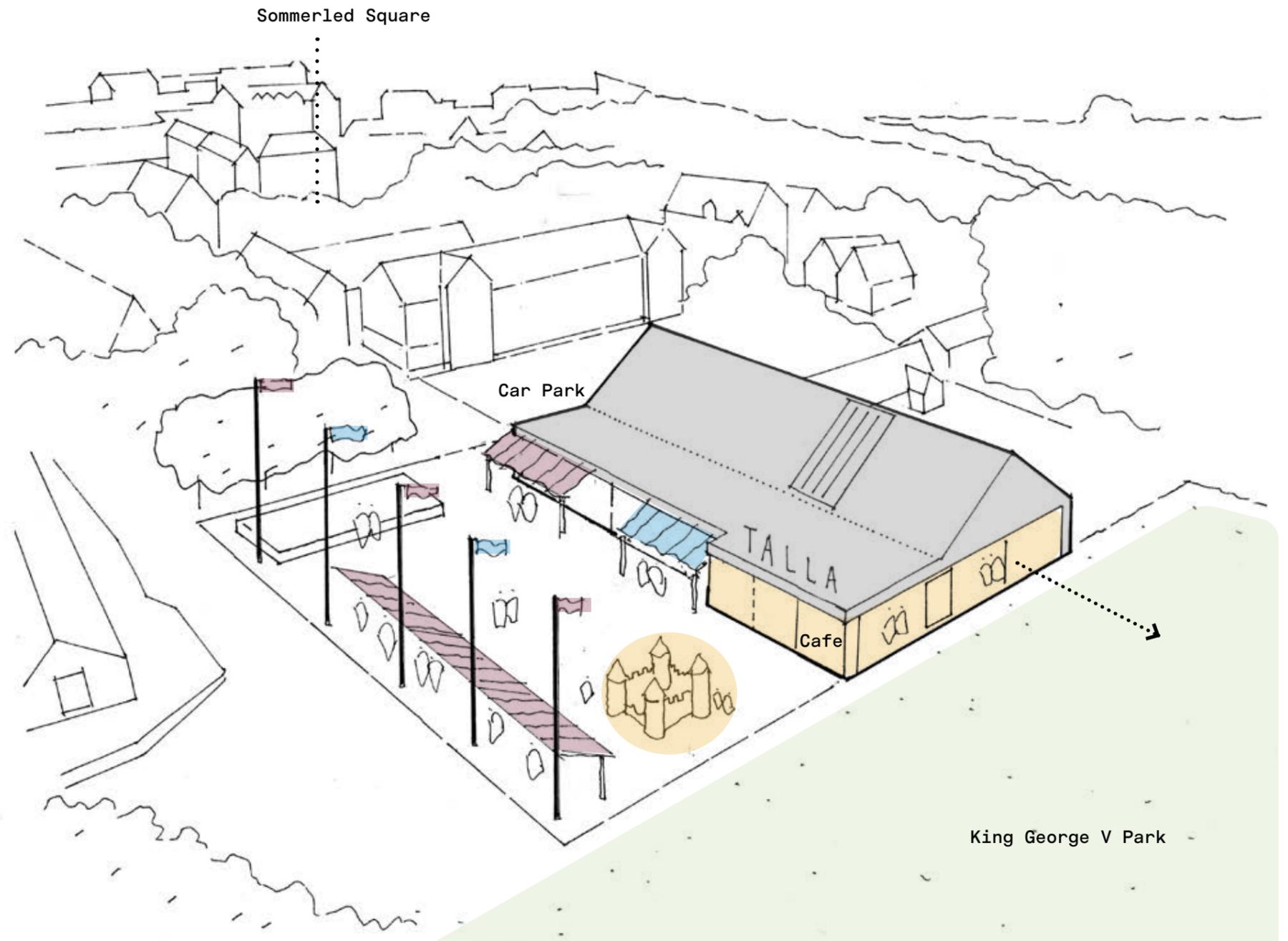
Outdoor "silent" cinema



# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.8 Community Square - uses

Gala Day/ Community Events



# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.9 King George V park - events/ sports



Community Events



Agricultural Show



Sports under floodlights



Skate/ Bike park



Boot Camp exercise



Football

# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.10 King George V park - everyday use



Picnic



A Family Space



Walking



Dog Walking



Informal Kickabout



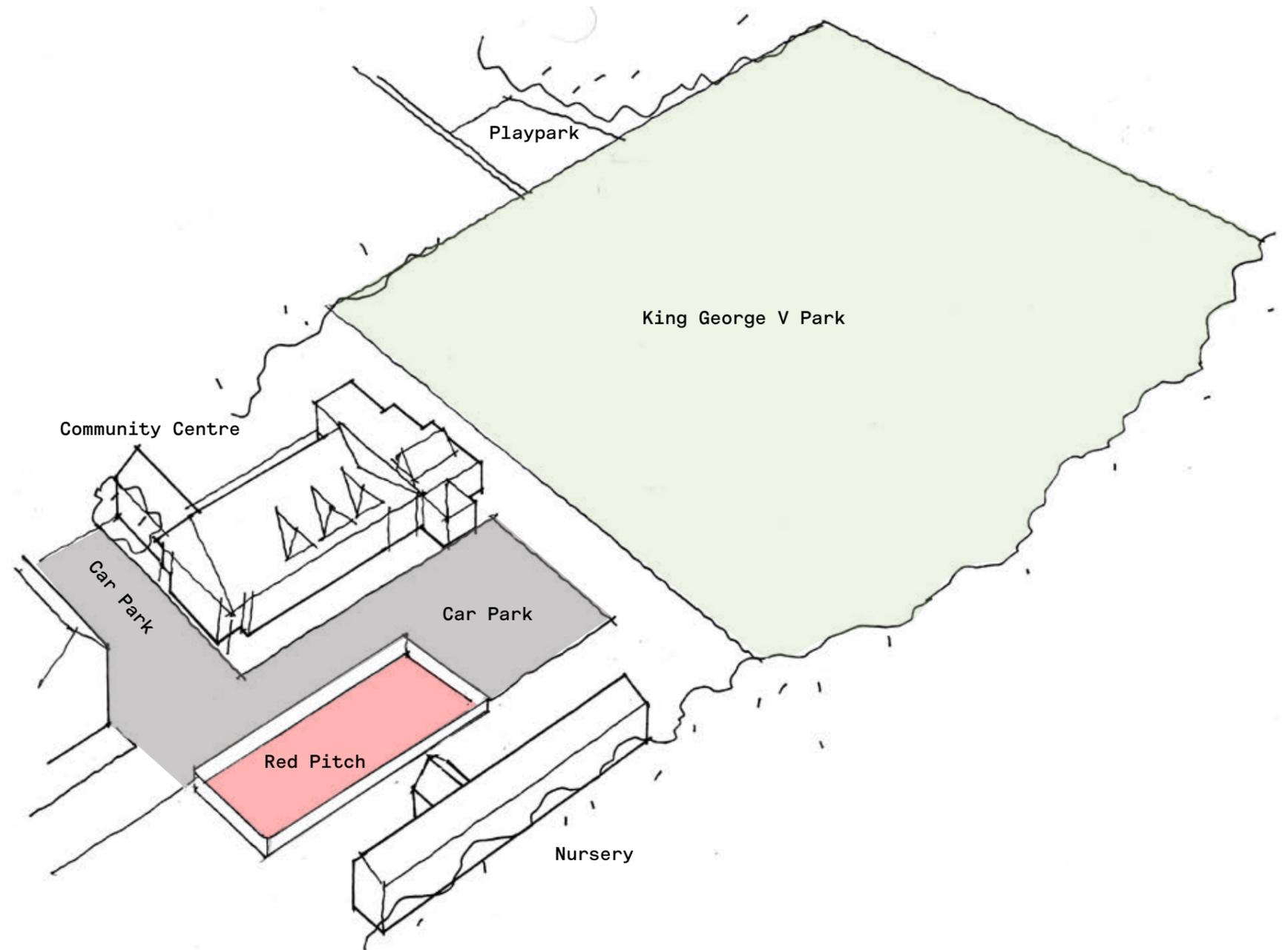
Park Benches

# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.11 Masterplan - strategy

The sketch opposite shows various existing buildings and spaces on the site.

- The existing car parking dominates the external spaces.
- There is no sense of arrival or place
- The Community Centre has no active frontage or connection to outside spaces.
- The use of the Red pitch by young people is incompatible with the nursery.
- The Play-park is remote from the Nursery, is unwelcoming and facilitates anti-social behaviour.
- The King George V Park is poorly connected to the town centre

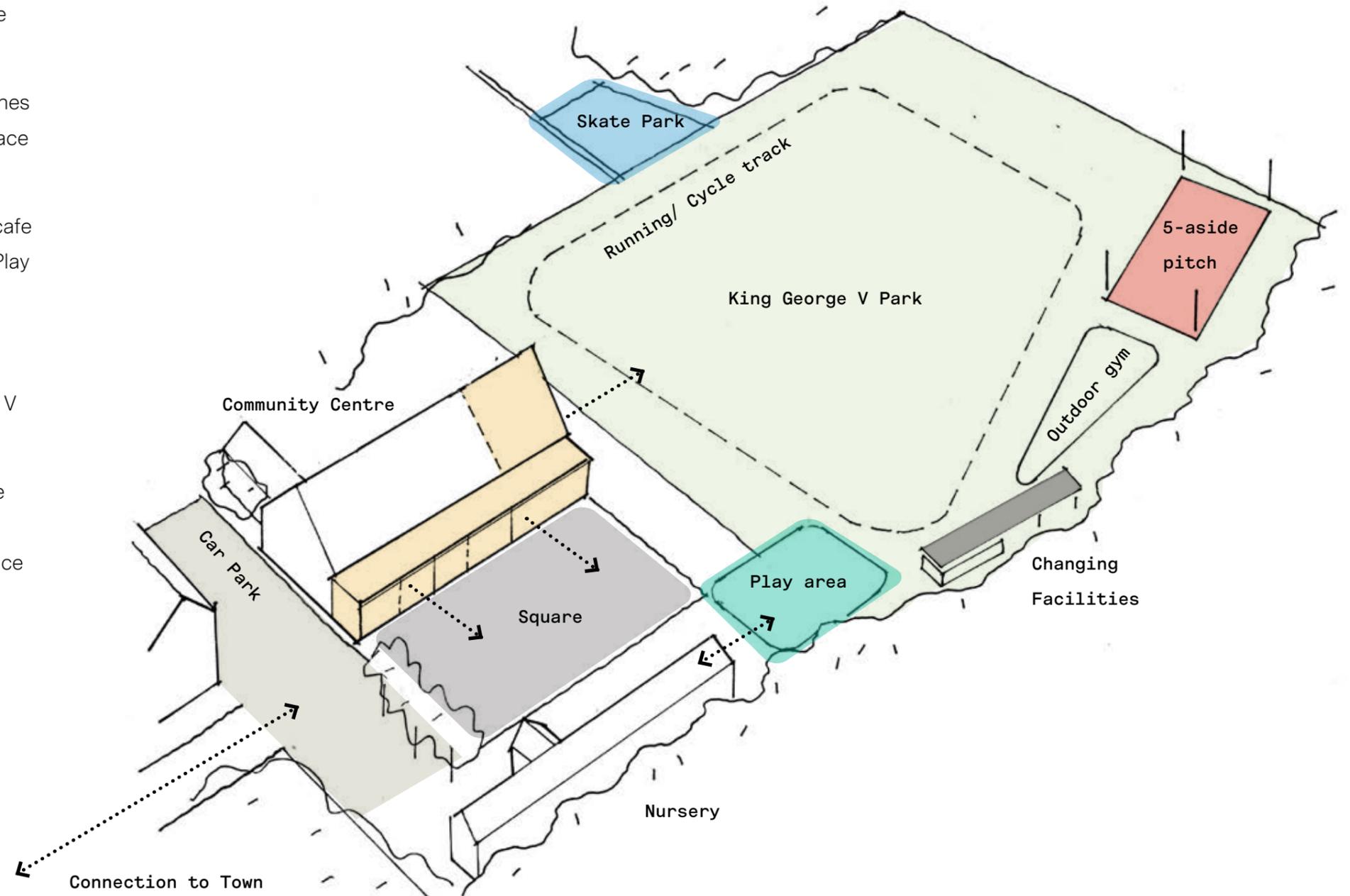


# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.11 Masterplan - strategy

The indicative diagram opposite shows how relocating the existing functions and uses within the Camanachd Square site might improve how they are used.

- The King George V park is organised to create different zones of activity to allow different activities and events to take place at the same time and encourage use of the park generally.
- A new Play park is formed adjacent to nursery and a new cafe space within the Community Hall. The opportunity for the Play park to
- Car parking is rationalised to create a new public space.
- A new floodlit Red Pitch is moved onto of the King George V park to complement the main football pitch.
- Relocate the changing spaces from the Community Centre into a new pavilion building that acts as a shelter for spectators. This new building can also contain storage space and facilitates use of the relocated all-weather Red Pitch.
- A Skate park for older children is created - perhaps in the space where the Play park is currently located.

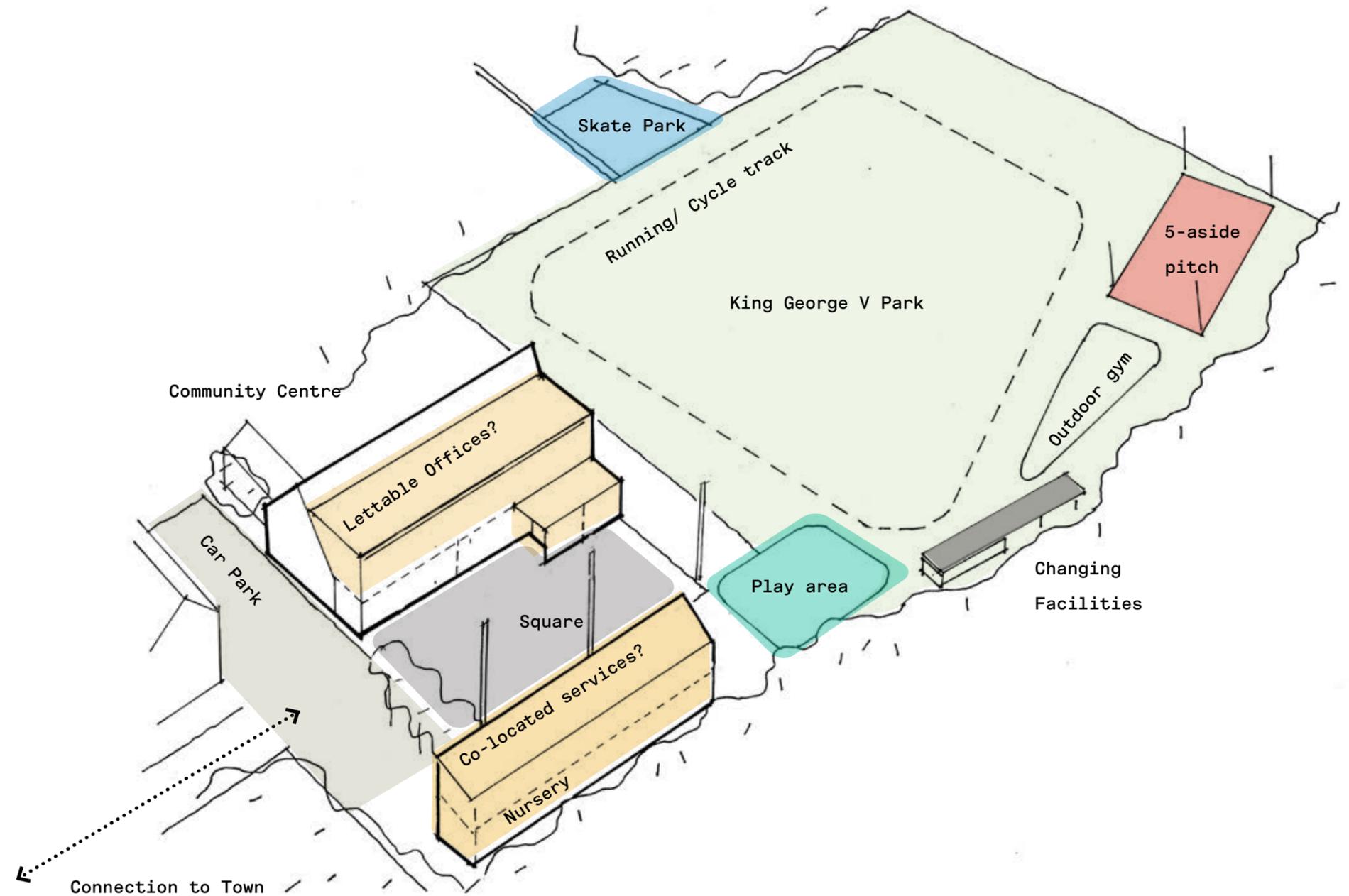


# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.11 Masterplan - strategy

The new square creates a framework for potential future development over time -

- A new office building could replace/ absorb the nursery
- The Community Centre could be expanded further - an additional storey could be added to create lettable office space for business start-ups for example.

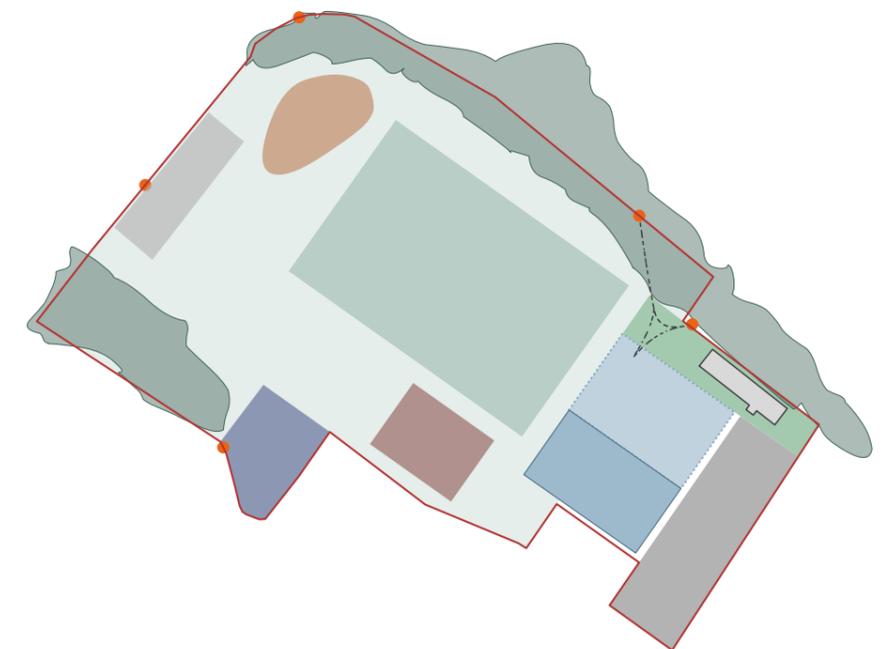
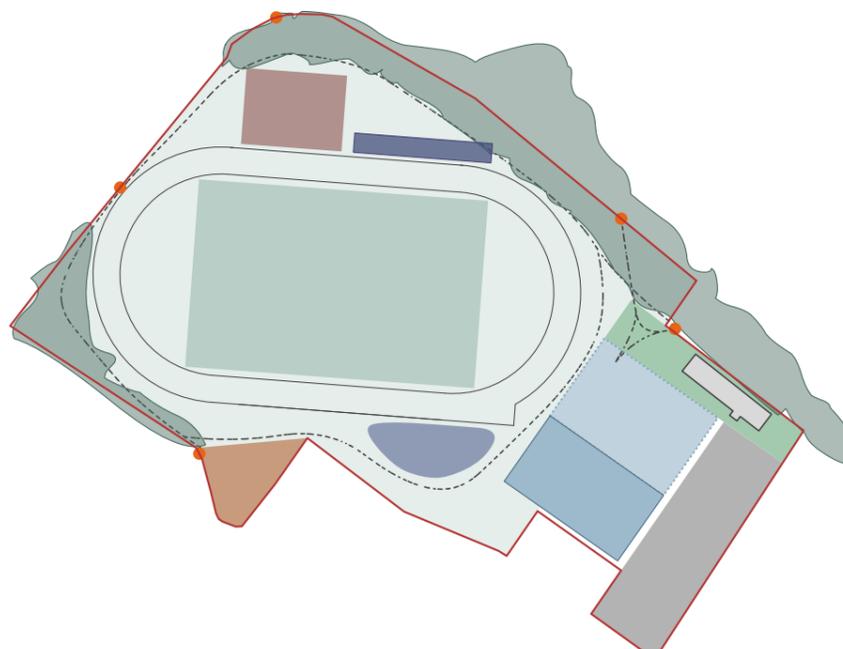
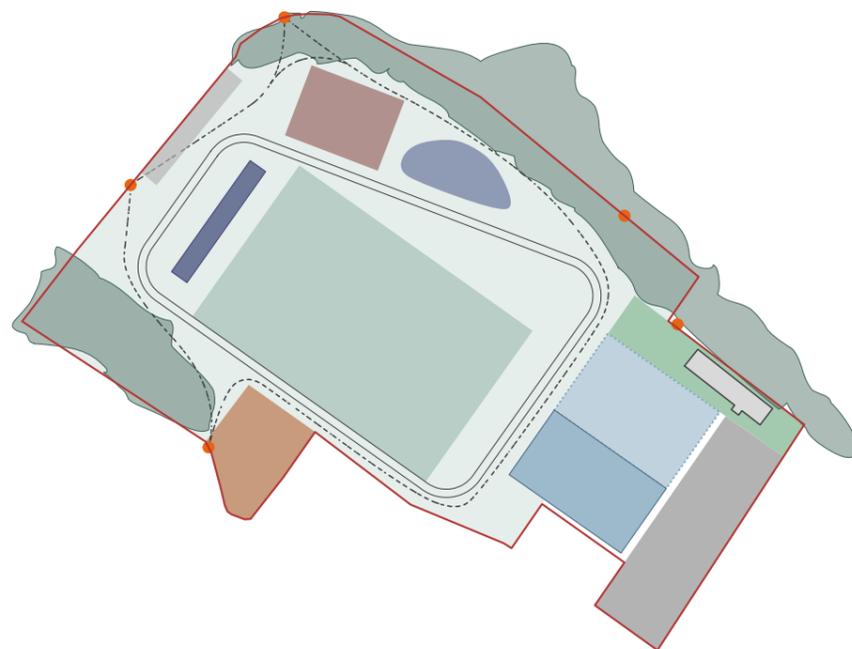
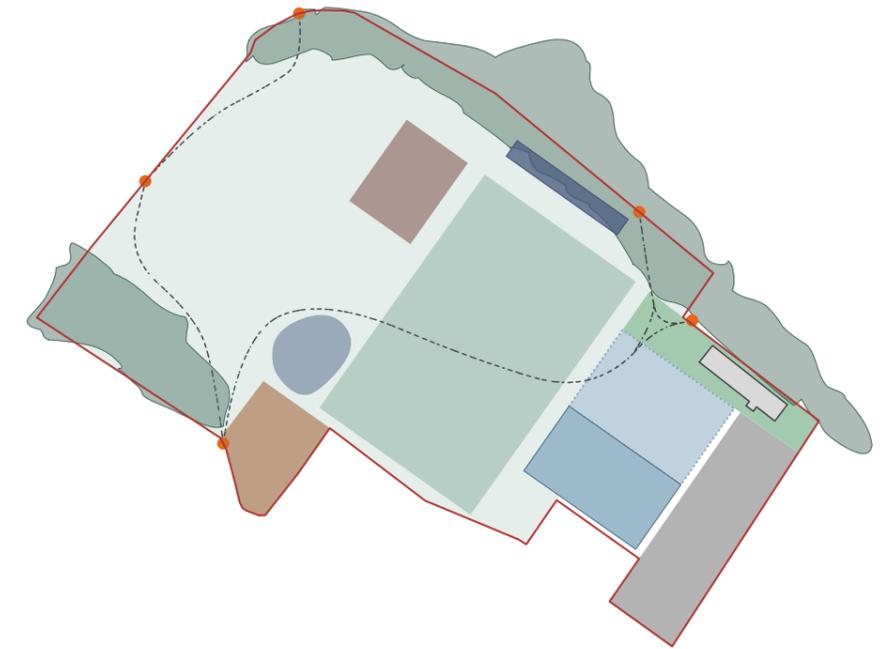
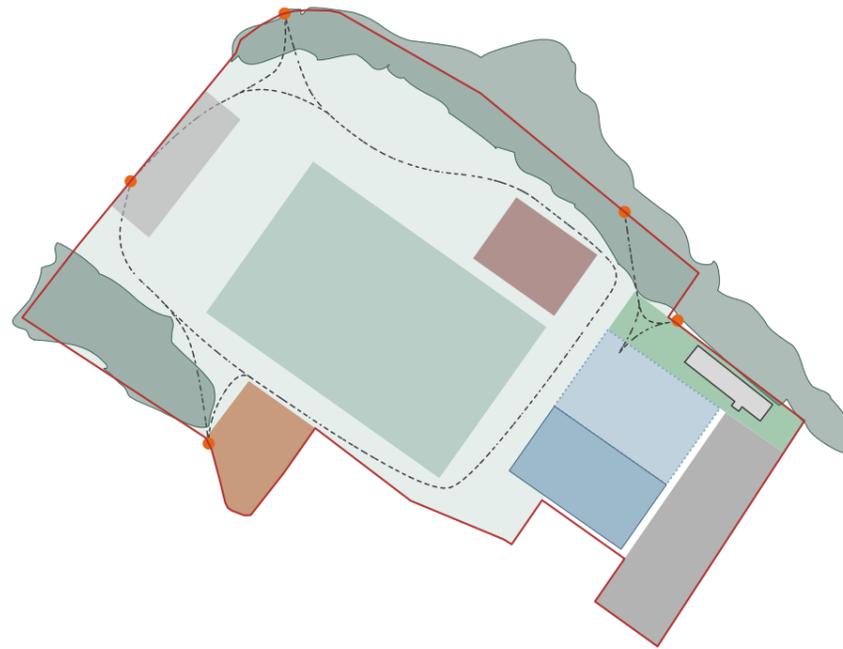


# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.12 King George V - layout studies

The following pages show initial studies into how areas for different activities on the King George V might be arranged to better facilitate and encourage use of the park.

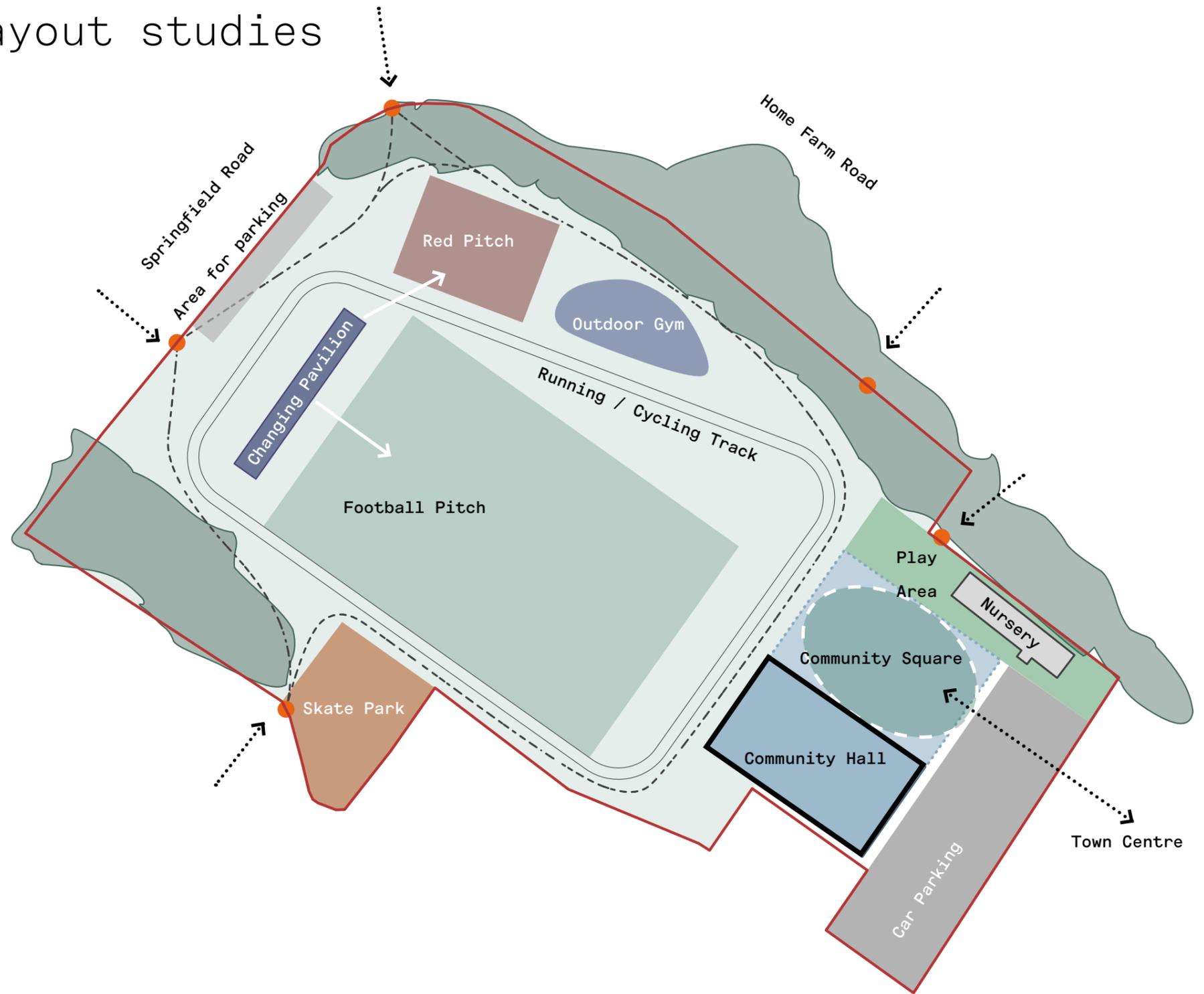
In some options the idea of a separate changing pavilion building for sporting events on the Park is explored. This building would require new service connections and infrastructure, but could also contain showers for visiting tourists and so generate further income.



# 5.0 Outline Proposals

## 5.12 King George V - layout studies

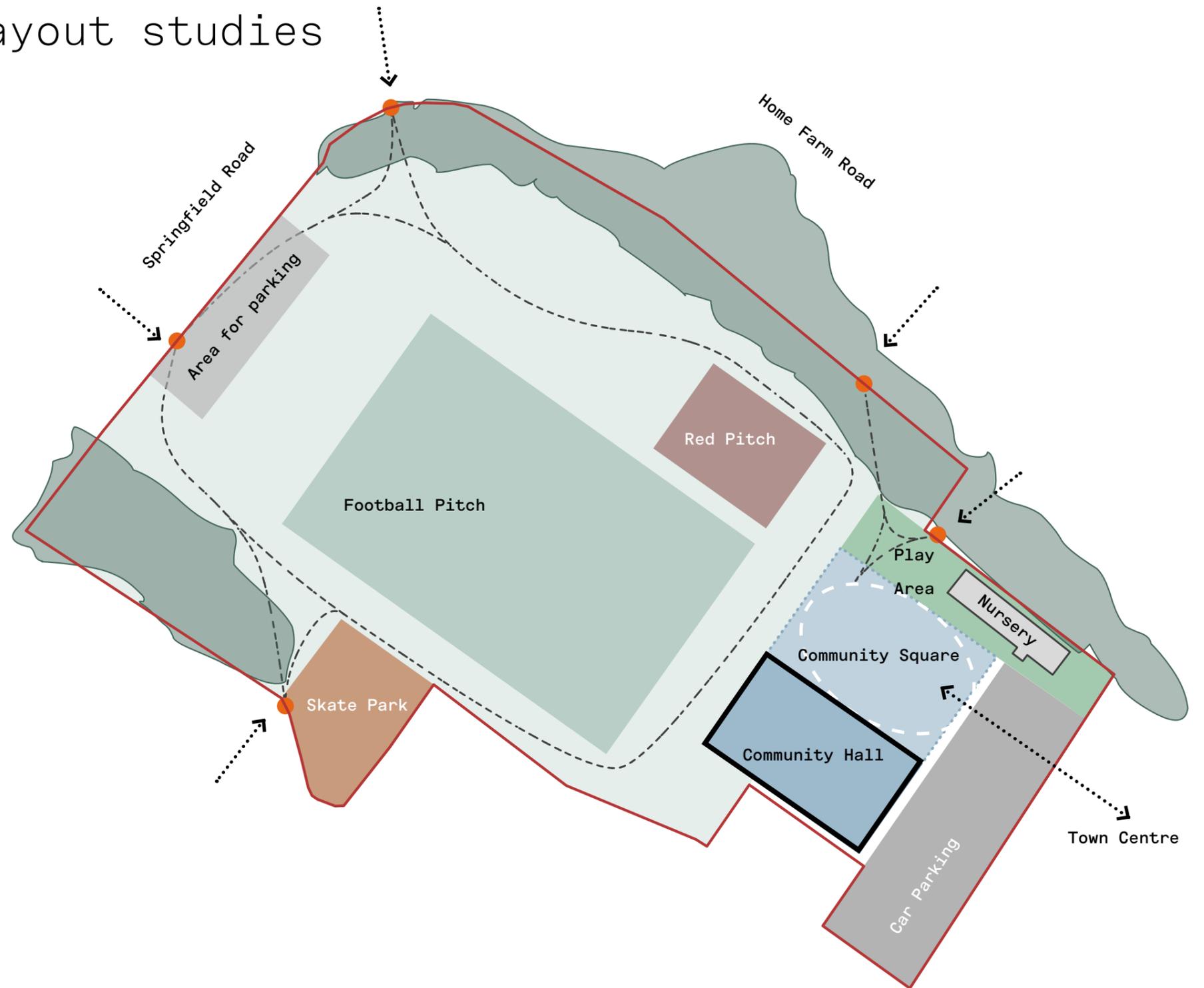
- A new separate Changing Pavilion Building is located on the western edge of the Park. This location allows it to serve both the Football Pitch and the relocated Red Pitch.
- A small Outdoor Gym area is located on the north side of the Park.
- The Football Pitch is enclosed by an informal Running/ Cycling Track that can also act as a path for vehicles when access is needed to the park - for the Agricultural Show for example. This could help limit damage to the existing grass and drainage etc
- A new Skate Park is located on the site of the current Play park amongst the trees.
- An area for occasional additional parking for events in the Park is located off Springfield Road.



## 5.0 Outline Proposals

### 5.12 King George V - layout studies

- The Red Pitch is relocated in the park close to the Community Centre. Changing facilities for the Football and Red Pitch would be retained within the Community Hall building.
- A new Skate Park is located on the site of the current Play park amongst the trees.
- An area for occasional additional parking for events in the Park is located off Springfield Road.

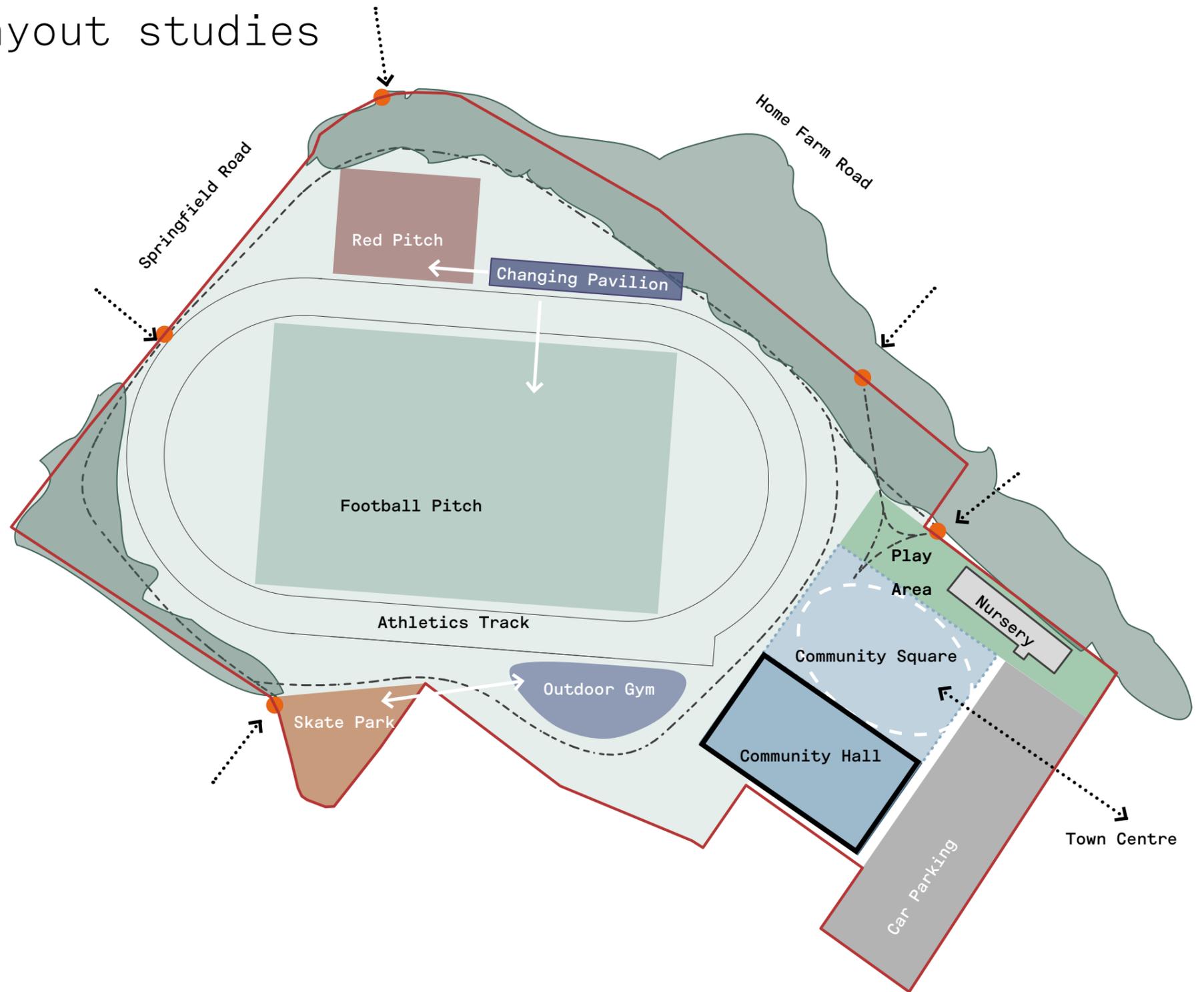


2

## 5.0 Outline Proposals

### 5.12 King George V - layout studies

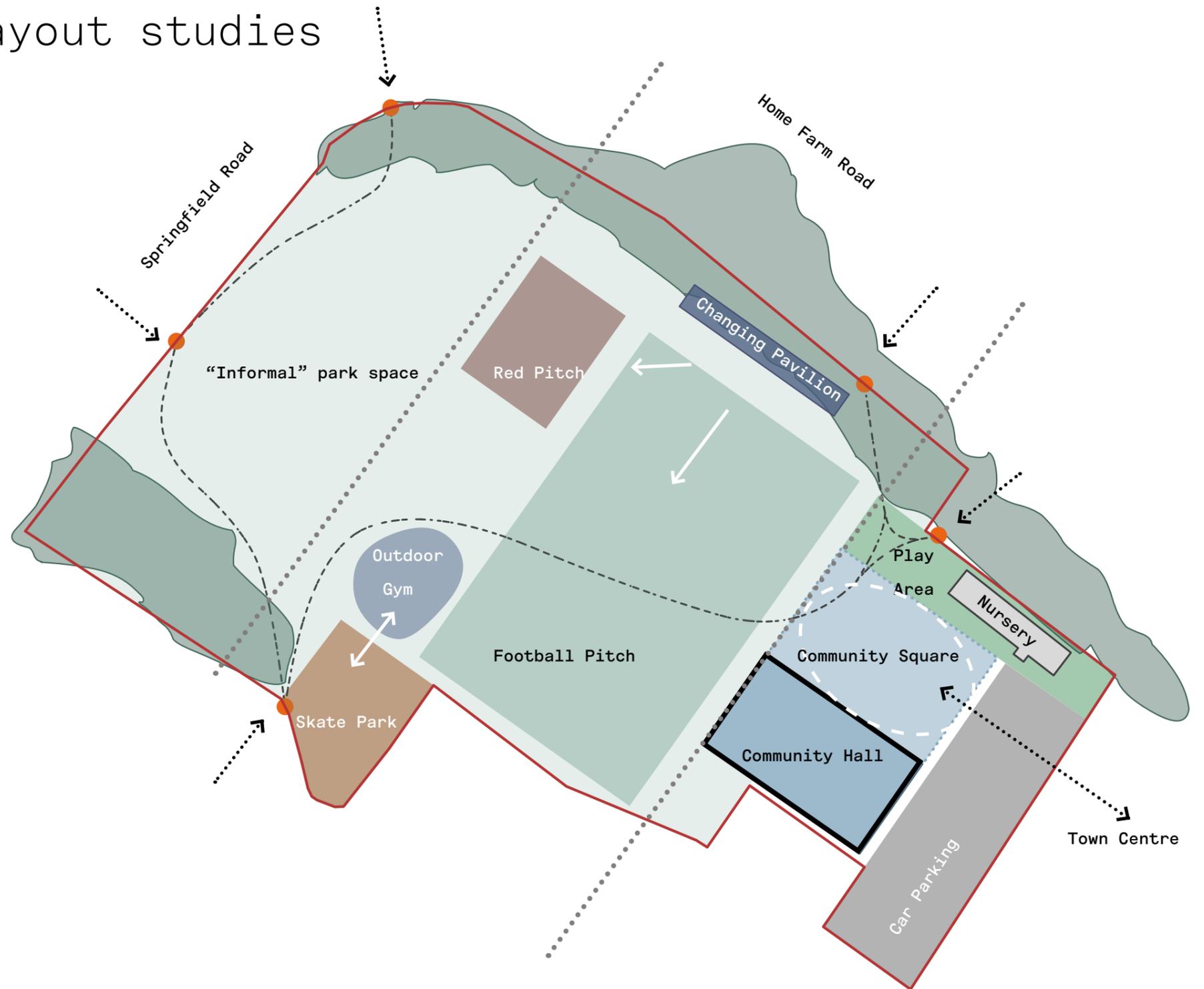
- This Option tests the viability of a full Athletic Track around the Football pitch. Further investigation is needed particularly in relation to the levels across the Park. The size of the track potentially dominates the Park and potentially discourages other more informal/ casual uses.
- A new separate Changing Pavilion Building is located on the northern edge of the Park. This location allows it to serve both the Football Pitch and the relocated Red Pitch.
- A small Outdoor Gym area is located on the south-east corner of the park, adjacent to the new proposed Skate Park - these uses may be complementary and used by young people.



## 5.0 Outline Proposals

### 5.12 King George V - layout studies

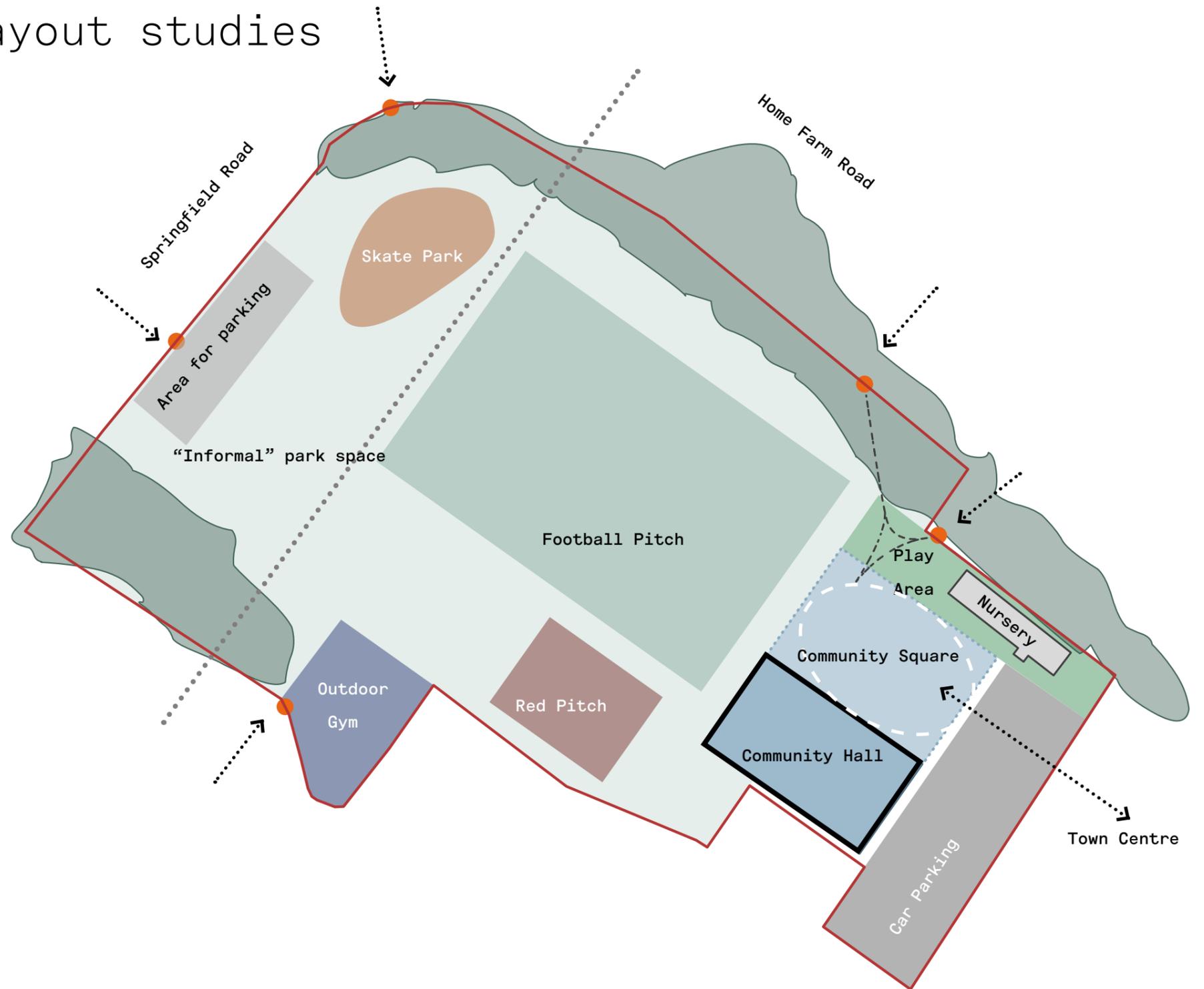
- The Football Pitch runs generally north to south and sits on the eastern edge of the Park. There is limited space around the Pitch in this location for movement and circulation.
- A new separate Changing Pavilion Building is located on the northern edge of the Park. This location allows it to serve both the Football Pitch and the relocated Red Pitch.
- A small Outdoor Gym area is located on the south-east corner of the Park, adjacent to the new proposed Skate Park - these uses may be complementary and used by young people.
- The western edge of the Park is given over to more informal/casual uses.



## 5.0 Outline Proposals

### 5.12 King George V - layout studies

- The Football Pitch runs generally east to west and sits on the eastern edge of the Park. There is limited space around the Pitch in this location for movement and circulation.
- Changing facilities would remain within the Community Centre
- The Skate Park is located on the north-west corner of the site with an Outdoor Gym area located in the location of the current Play park.
- The western edge of the Park is given over to more informal/casual uses.
- An area for occasional additional parking for events in the Park is located off Springfield Road.



# RURAL DESIGN

---

## Rural Design

Mill Studio

Struan Road

Portree

Isle of Skye

IV51 9EG

+44 (0)1478 613379

[www.ruraldesign.co.uk](http://www.ruraldesign.co.uk)