

ROCK GROUNDS  
FEASIBILITY & OPTIONS APPRAISAL  
JANUARY 2023





# SECTION 0.1

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

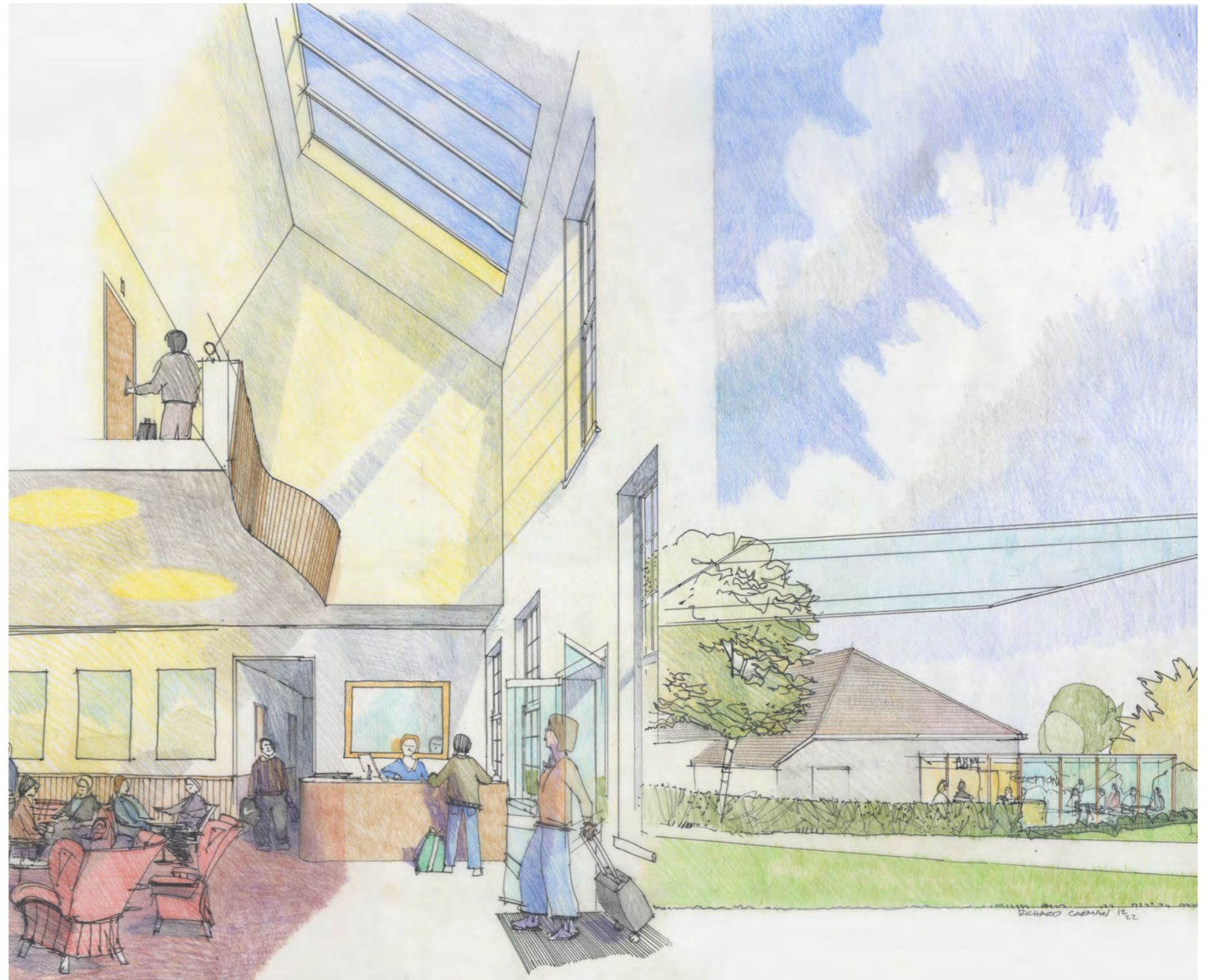
Purcell were engaged by Rhondda Cynon Taf to undertake an options appraisal for the re-development of the Rock Ground site in Aberdare town centre.

This report includes a heritage statement that provides a history of the site and the significance of the building parts. This will inform the design process and where interventions are appropriate in and around the existing structures. The site's opportunities and constraints are then analysed.

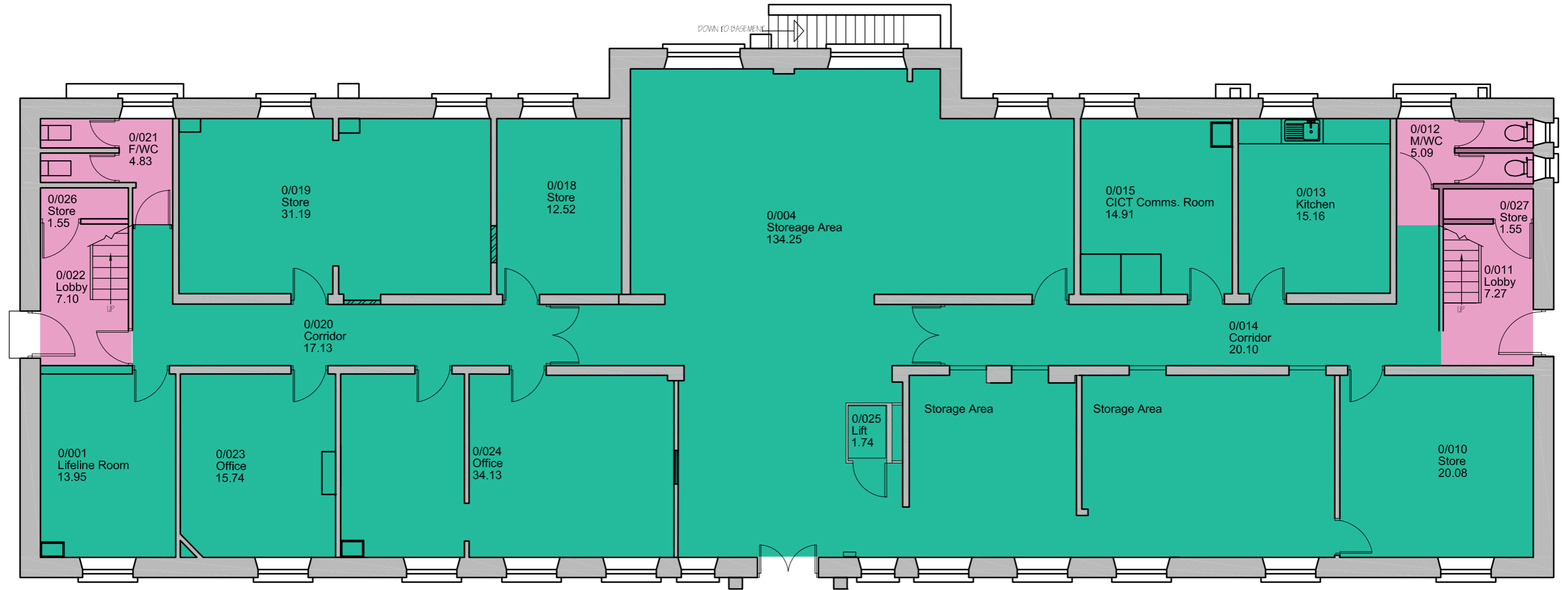
This report then assesses a number of options for potential development of Rock Grounds, Aberdare. Following consultation with the council these options were developed into two preferred options which retained the existing buildings on the site. These options are both hospitality uses with Option 1 being a Mid-Range Hotel and Option 2 being a High-End Hotel. These options have been summarised below, along with their associated cost analysis.

OPTION	DESCRIPTION
<p data-bbox="92 919 195 947">Option 1</p> 	<p data-bbox="537 919 967 1125"><b>Mid-Range Hotel:</b> Building 01 is to be converted to mid-size rooms, with a reception and restaurant/café. Building 02 is to be converted to provide further rooms, with a small side extension creating a new entrance.</p>
<p data-bbox="92 1251 195 1278">Option 2</p> 	<p data-bbox="537 1251 967 1493"><b>High-End Hotel:</b> Building 01 is to be converted to larger rooms, with a reception, restaurant/café. Building 02 is to be converted to a spa facility including treatment rooms and saunas. A small side extension creating an entrance and bar/seating.</p>

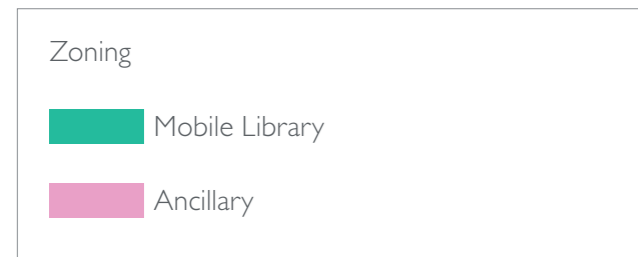
Following this report, we would recommend that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council engage a business development or hospitality consultant to further review the schemes proposed and to test the scheme against the current local market.



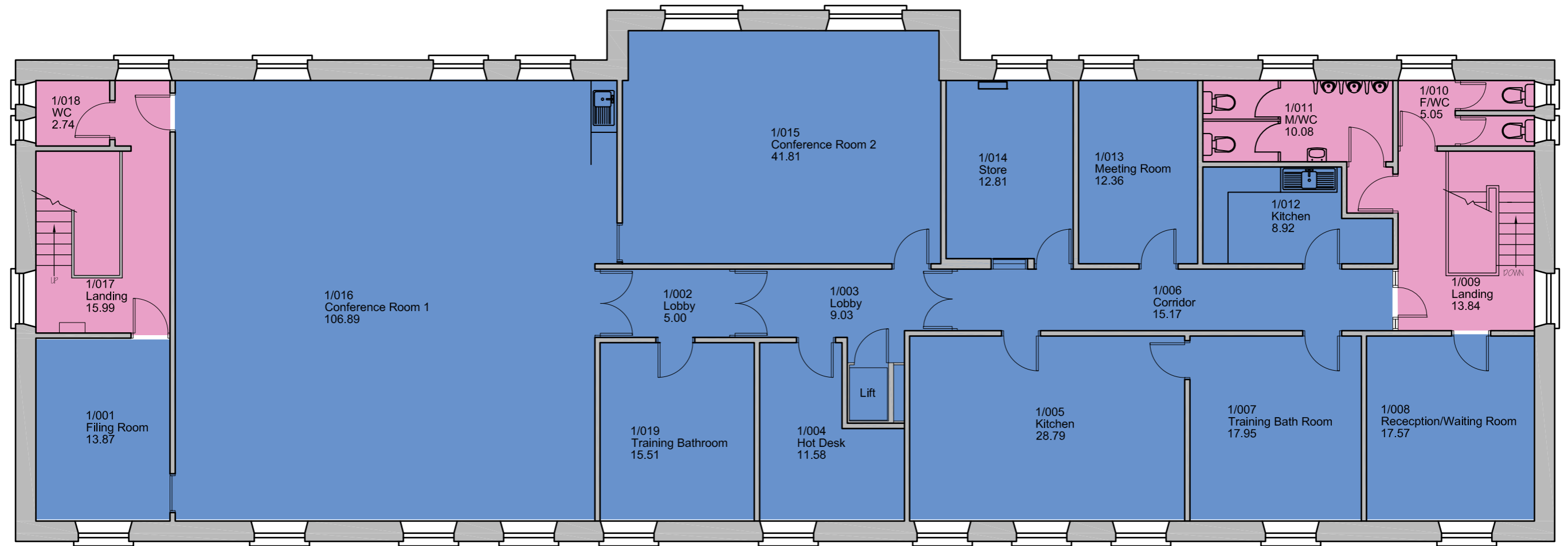
SECTION I.5  
EXISTING BUILDINGS



BUILDING 01 - GROUND FLOOR



# EXISTING BUILDINGS



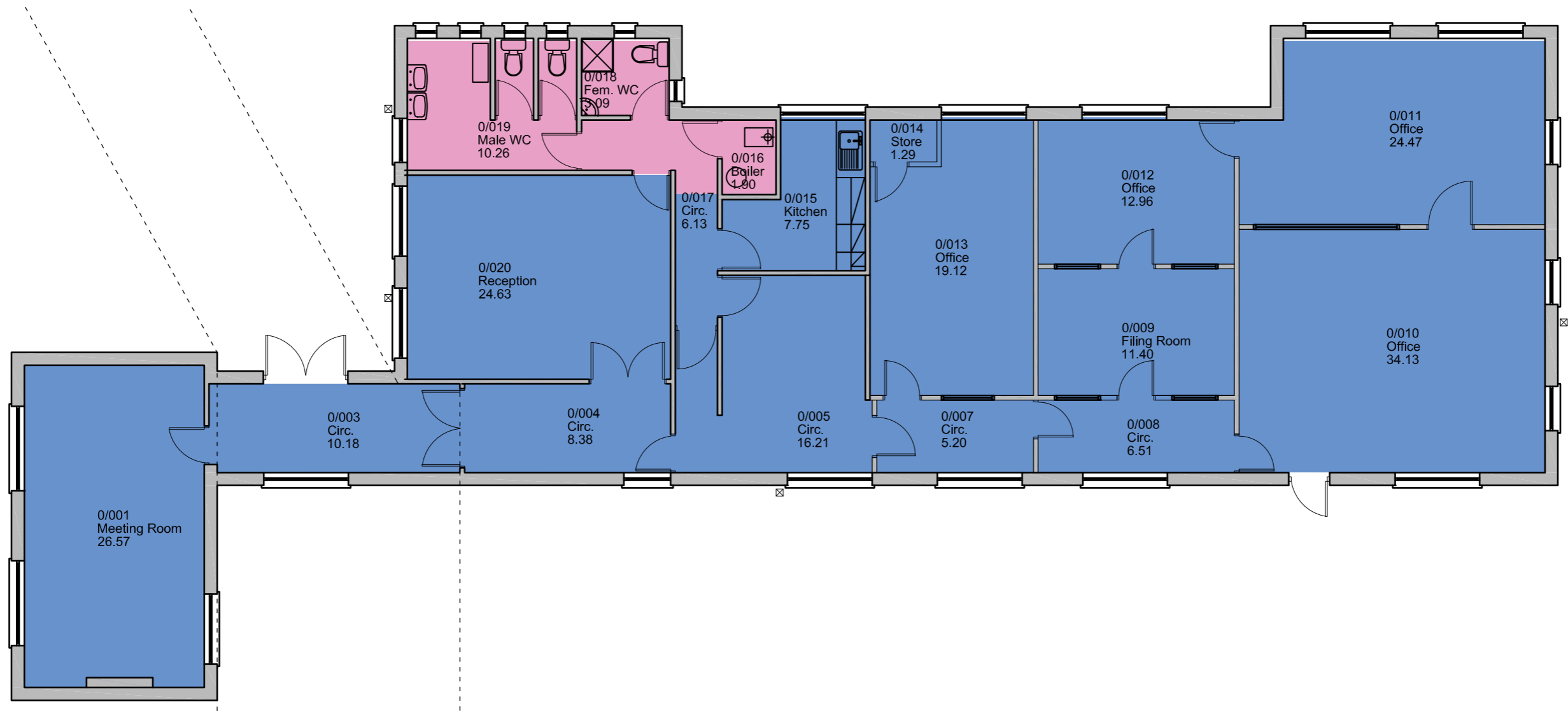
## BUILDING 01 - FIRST FLOOR

### Zoning

- Council Training Facilities
- Ancillary



# EXISTING BUILDINGS



## BUILDING 02 - GROUND FLOOR

Zoning

- Council Training Facilities
- Ancillary

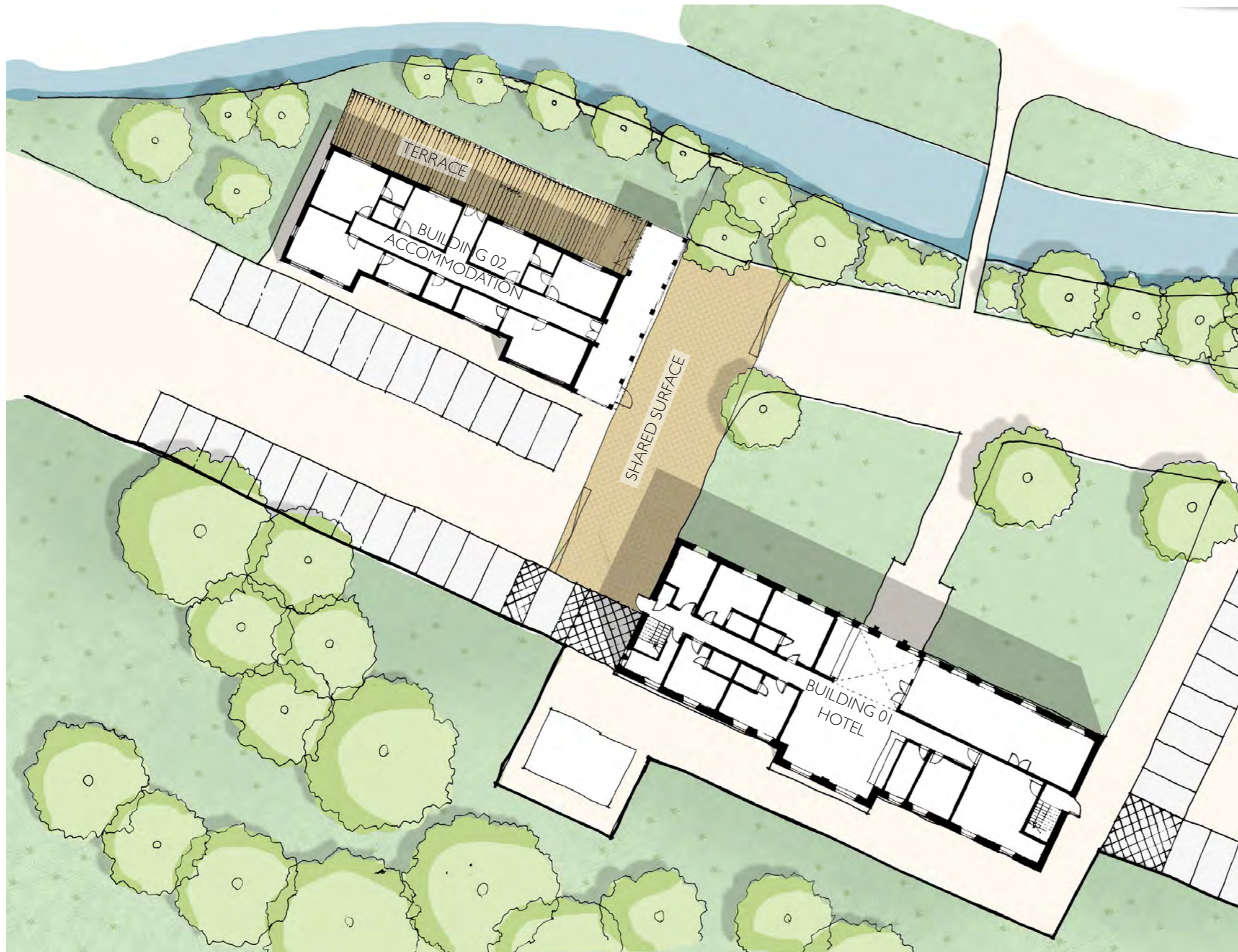


## SECTION 2.3

### PREFERRED OPTION DEVELOPMENT - OPTION 1 MID-RANGE HOTEL



Following our presentation to representatives of Rhondda Cynon Taf stakeholders on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2022 to go through the options for re-use of the existing buildings we received direction that the preferred option should be developed to looking at the retention of the existing buildings and their reuse as either a mid-range hotel or a high- end hotel. This section looks at in more detail how the existing buildings and the site may be developed to accommodate these use and the amount of accommodation they may provide. In both of the options, the amount of car parking spaces and provision remains as existing.



#### OPTION 1 - MID-RANGE HOTEL

Option 1 proposes to convert Building 01 into mid-range hotel rooms, with a reception area and restaurant space. Building 02 is proposed to be additional accommodation rooms, which could be let as individual rooms or offered for larger groups. The two buildings are linked via a footpath across the car parking area.

#### SHARED SURFACE

The existing car park configuration causes a division between both buildings and limits pedestrian access. As the road bisects between both buildings, there is no safe pedestrian walkway. Implementing a shared surface is a solution to create a strong link between the new proposals using landscape. This will improve pedestrian movement and comfort by enabling all users to share the space, reducing the dominance of vehicles and shift the priority from the existing conventional design towards accessibility. An example of this design is taken from Amsterdam, using a continuous footpath and level change to create a simple but clear boundary for the hierarchy of users.

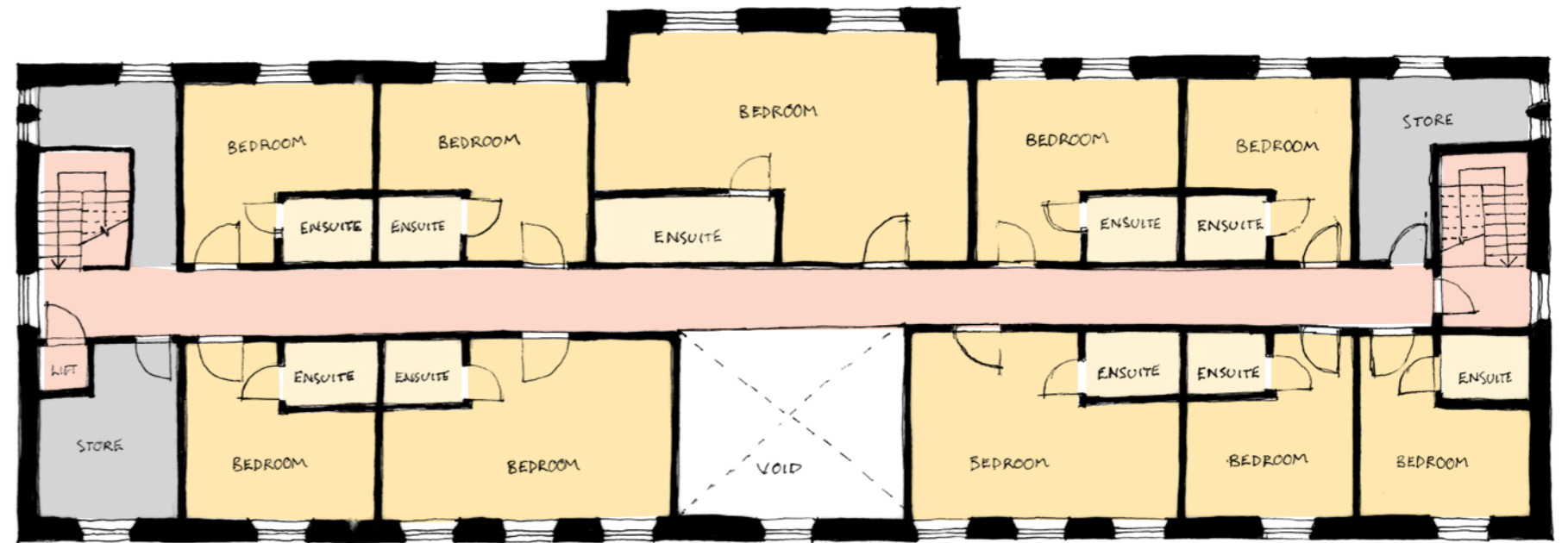


# PREFERRED OPTION DEVELOPMENT - OPTION 1 MID-RANGE HOTEL

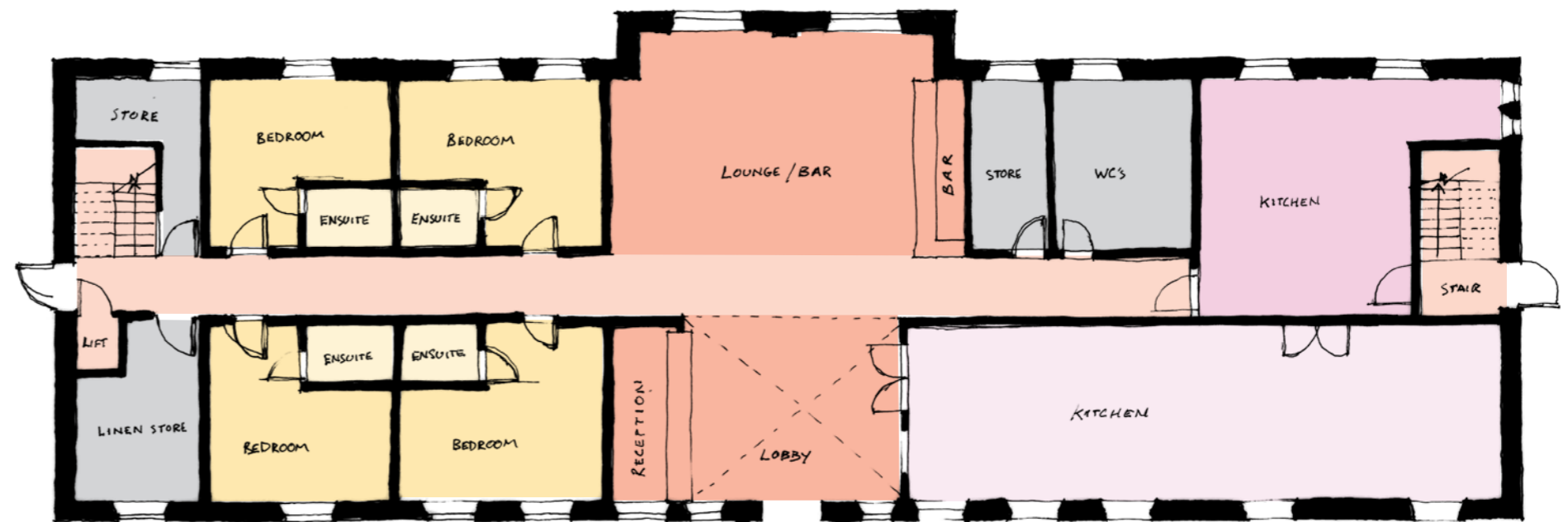
## BUILDING 01 MID RANGE HOTEL

- A new double height entrance to present a sense of grandeur upon arrival. Alternative option to replace with additional bedroom.
- 14 (15 Option 2) double bedrooms with en suite. Larger rooms have capacity for convertible sofa beds.
- A kitchen and restaurant with views over existing landscaped garden.

TYPE	QUANTITY	AREA
Bedrooms	14	306m <sup>2</sup>
Reception	1	31m <sup>2</sup>
Restaurant	1	66m <sup>2</sup>
Bar	1	48m <sup>2</sup>
Kitchen	1	34m <sup>2</sup>
BOH	5	63m <sup>2</sup>
WC	1	15m <sup>2</sup>
Circulation	1	114m <sup>2</sup>



FIRST FLOOR



ENTRANCE

GROUND FLOOR

- Restaurant
- Bedrooms
- Kitchen
- New double height lobby with bar
- Circulation
- Back of house



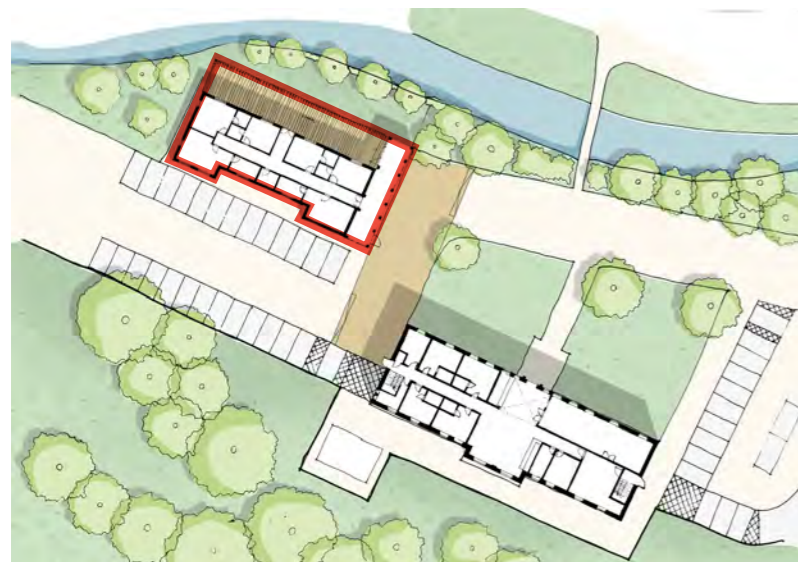
# PREFERRED OPTION DEVELOPMENT - OPTION 1 MID-RANGE HOTEL

## BUILDING 02 ADDITIONAL ACCOMMODATION

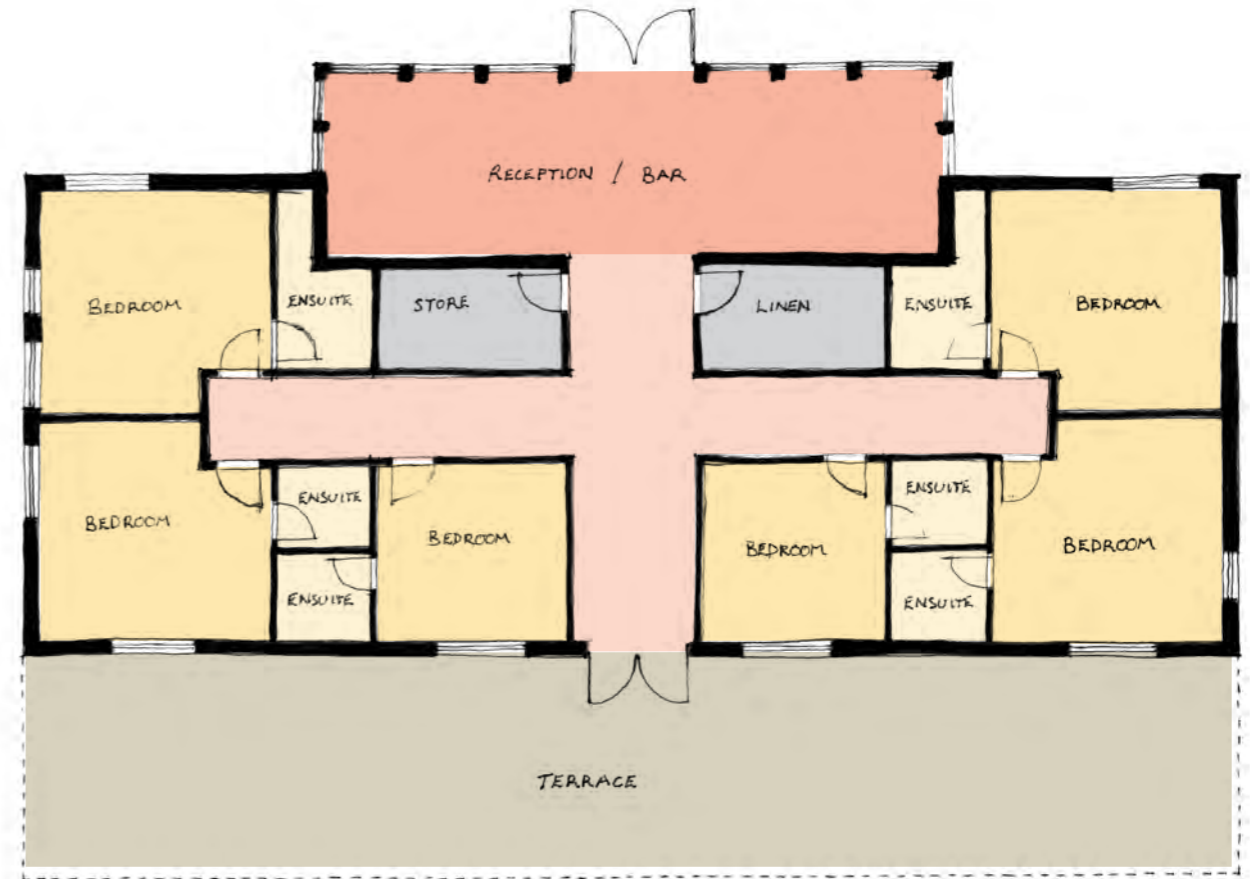
Option 1 proposes an extension out of the South side of the building and demolition of the Eastern. However, upon further development this has been deemed less desirable as it encroaches on the parking spaces and does not present a sense of arrival.

Option 2 proposes a demolition of the Eastern extension and replaced with a new entrance and lounge area for occupants. This is the more desirable option as the entrance creates a relationship between the landscape and Building 01.

TYPE	QUANTITY	AREA
Bedrooms	6	147m <sup>2</sup>
Entrance Lounge	1	43m <sup>2</sup>
BOH	1	5m <sup>2</sup>
Circulation	1	37m <sup>2</sup>
Terrace	1	110m <sup>2</sup>

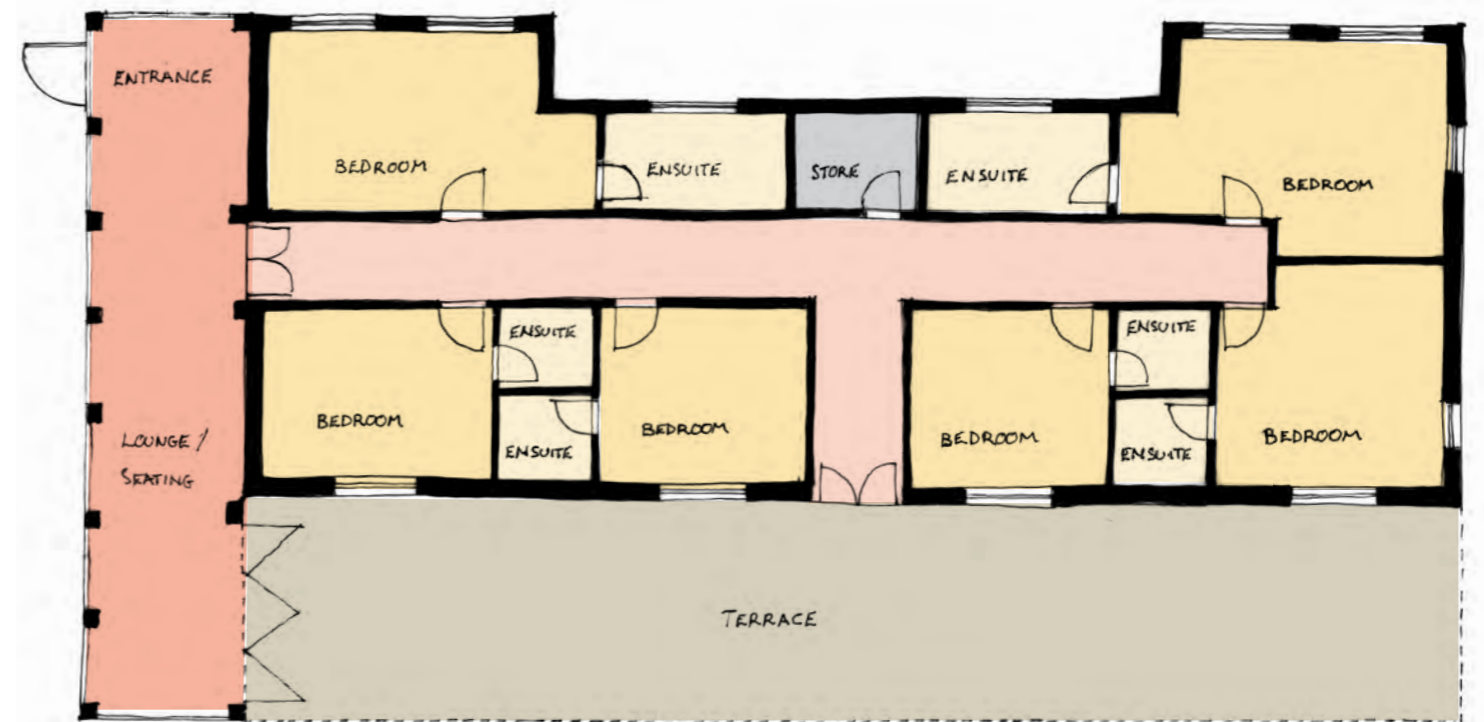


- Reception and bar
- Bedrooms
- BOH
- Circulation
- Terrace



OPTION 1

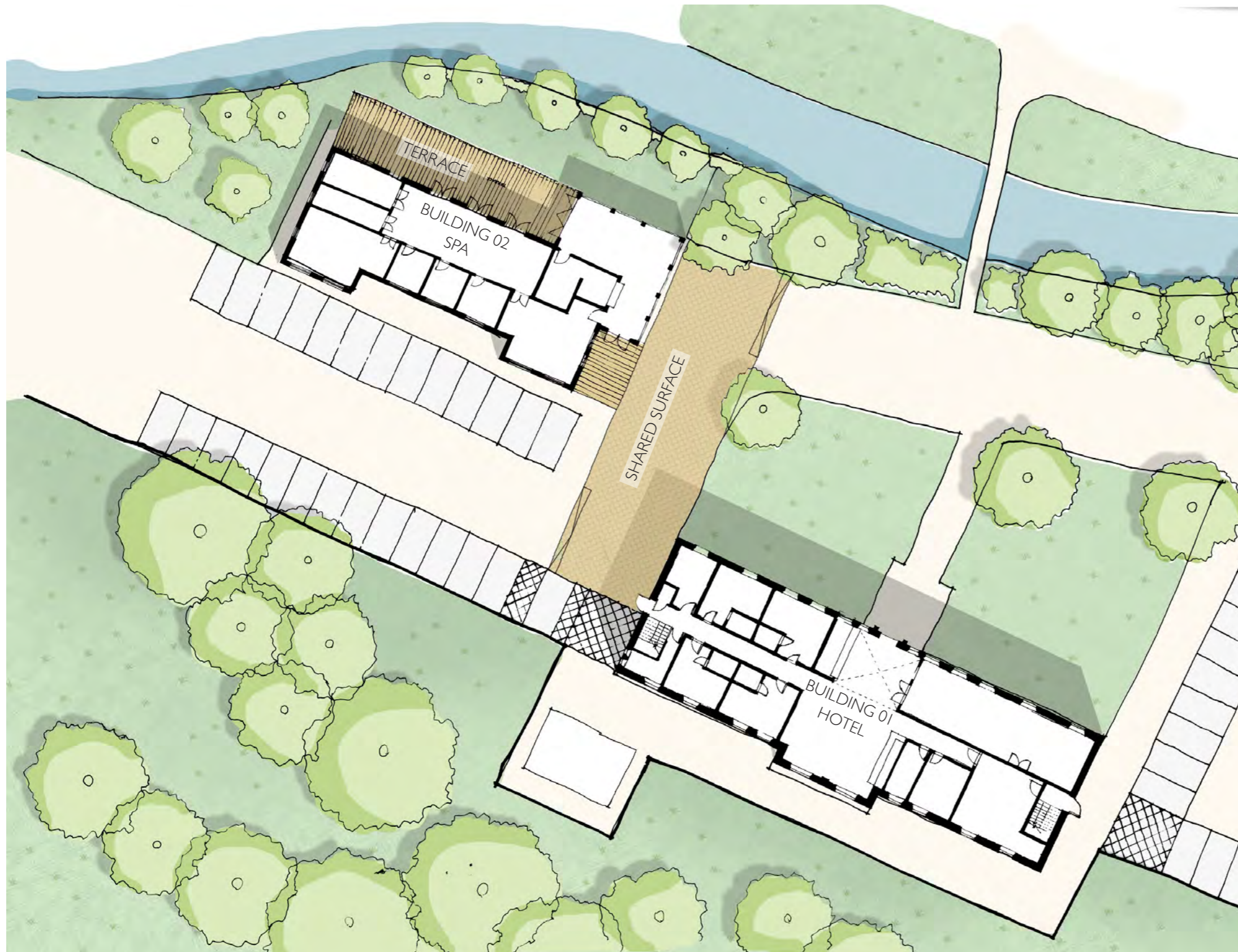
- Entrance and lounge
- Bedrooms
- BOH
- Circulation
- Terrace



OPTION 2

## SECTION 2.4

### PREFERRED OPTION DEVELOPMENT - OPTION 2 HIGH-END HOTEL



#### OPTION 2 - HIGH-END HOTEL

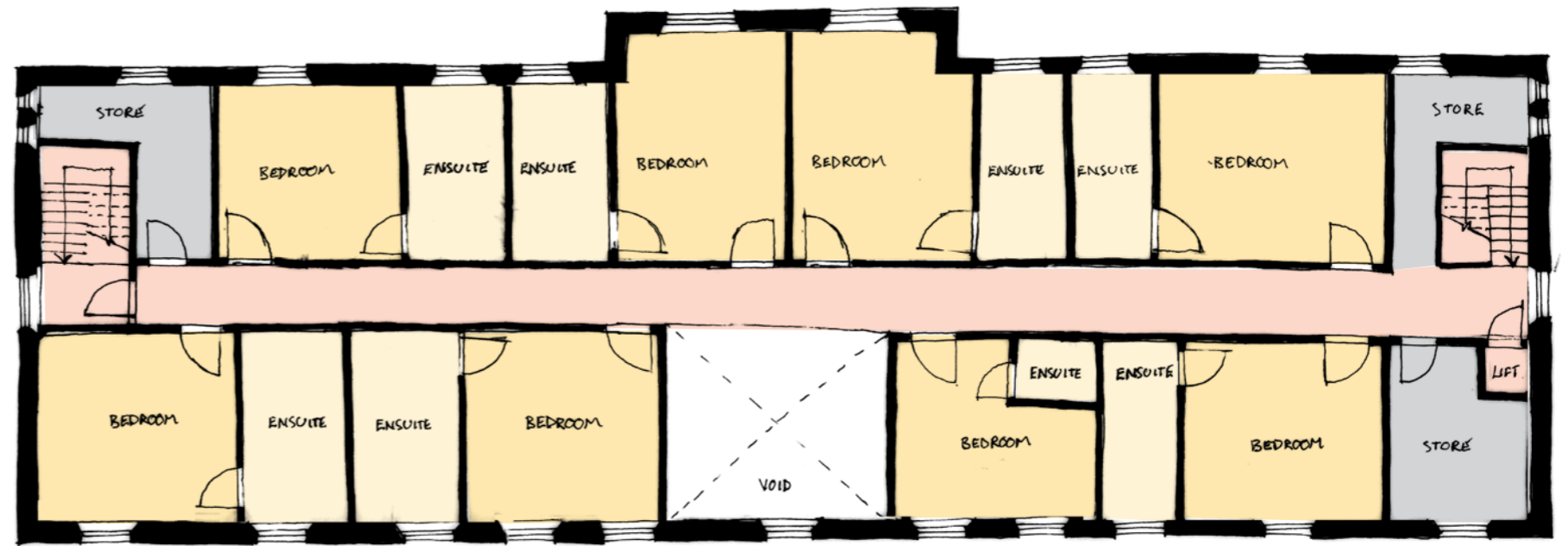
Option 2 utilises Building 01 as high-end accommodation, including a reception area and a restaurant to be used for breakfast, lunch and dinners in the evening. The restaurant could extend its offering to the public as well as hotel guests. Building 02 is proposed to be converted into a spa facility which again could be used by both public and guests alike. There is a footpath connecting Building 01 and Building 02 across the car park area.

# PREFERRED OPTION DEVELOPMENT - OPTION 2 HIGH-END HOTEL

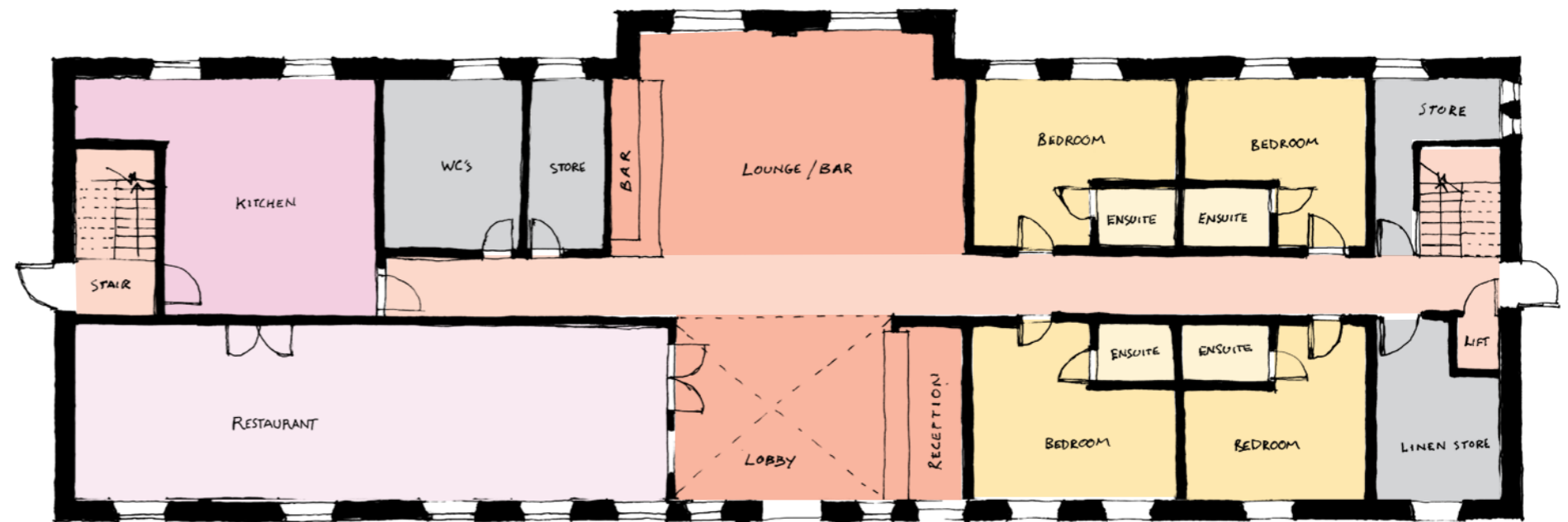
## BUILDING 01 HIGH END HOTEL

- A new double height entrance to present a sense of grandeur upon arrival.
- 12 double bedrooms with en suite. Larger rooms have capacity for convertible sofa beds.
- A kitchen and restaurant with views over existing landscaped garden.
- Orientation of the circulation allows the first floor closer access to the spa in Building 02.

TYPE	QUANTITY	AREA
Bedrooms	12	313m <sup>2</sup>
Reception	1	31m <sup>2</sup>
Restaurant	1	66m <sup>2</sup>
Bar	1	48m <sup>2</sup>
Kitchen	1	34m <sup>2</sup>
BOH	5	63m <sup>2</sup>
WC	1	15m <sup>2</sup>
Circulation	1	114m <sup>2</sup>



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

- Restaurant
- Bedrooms
- Kitchen
- New double height lobby with bar
- Circulation
- Back of house



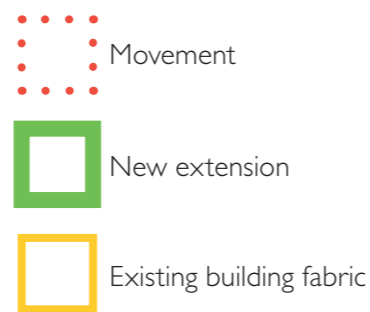
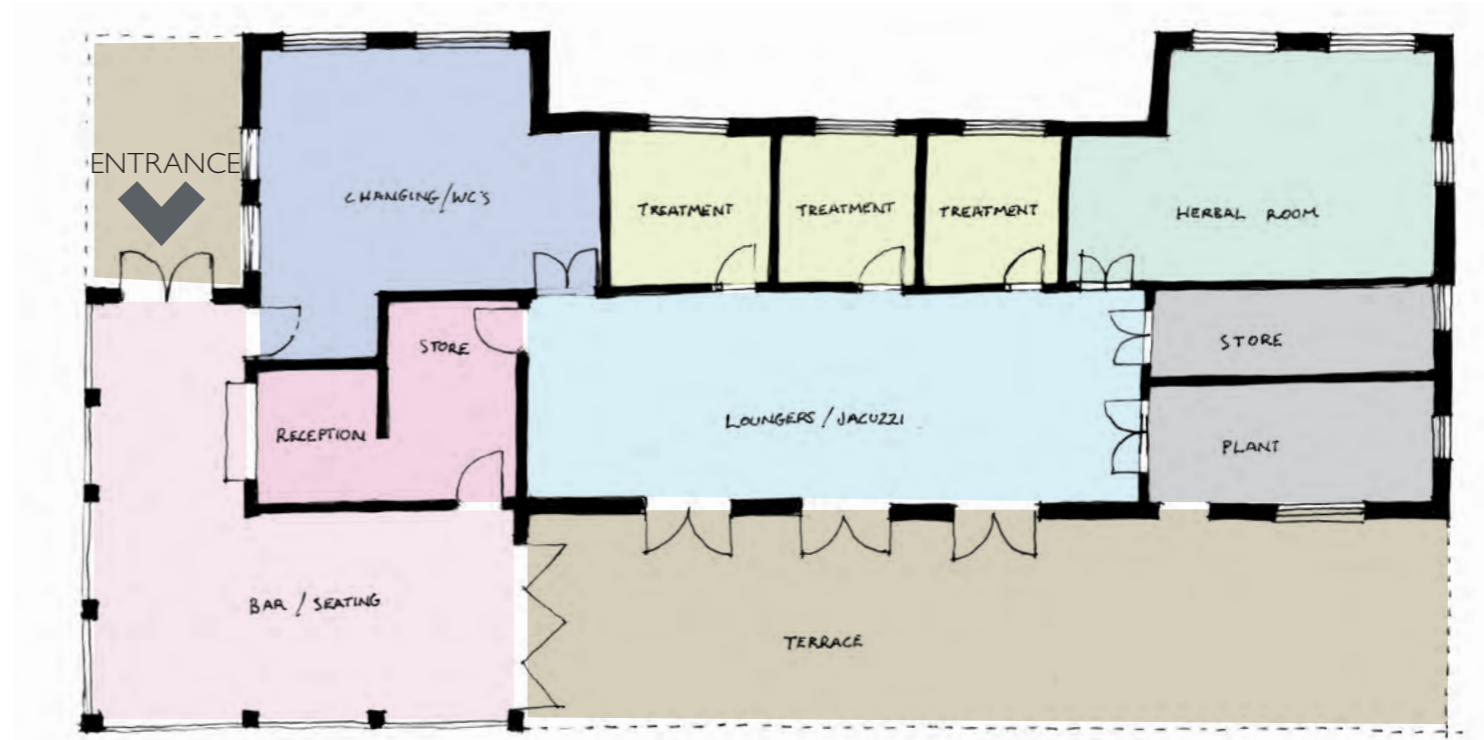
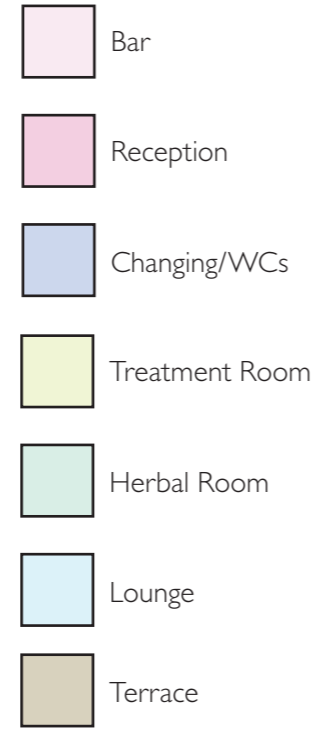
# PREFERRED OPTION DEVELOPMENT - OPTION 2 HIGH-END HOTEL

## BUILDING 02 SPA

• Building 02 will have the Eastern extension demolished and replaced with a contemporary intervention. This will act as a new welcoming entrance with reception and bar, leading through to an external terrace with waterfront views.

• The Spa contains 3 treatment spaces, allocated room for a herbal spa, and a lounging area with jacuzzi which opens to the external covered terrace.

TYPE	QUANTITY	AREA
Seating/Bar	1	50m <sup>2</sup>
Reception/Staff	1	18m <sup>2</sup>
Changing/WC	1	36m <sup>2</sup>
Treatment	3	28m <sup>2</sup>
Herbal Spa	1	33m <sup>2</sup>
BOH	2	25m <sup>2</sup>
Lounge/Jacuzzi	1	56m <sup>2</sup>
Terrace	1	85m <sup>2</sup>





## SECTION 2.5

### VISUALISATIONS



An aerial view looking over Rock Grounds from the main site entrance.

We have completed a series of visualisations to illustrate the potential scheme on Rock Grounds. These illustrations show the high-end hotel option with Building 01 being hotel accommodation with a bar and restaurant facility and Building 02 being a spa and sauna. An extension has been proposed to Building 02 to create private external courtyard area adjacent to the river side. The main entrance into Building 01 has been denoted by a new canopy and a glazed skylight internally. Landscaping works have been proposed between the 2 buildings to create a shared surface crossing the car park and creating a stronger link to the pedestrian bridge to access the town centre.

The second visualisation on the following page shows the main entrance into the hotel building. A double height space opens up the lobby to create a grander entrance into the hotel reception. This area is shared with the check-in counter, restaurant and bar lounge, that can be shared between guests and the public. The double height space allows for views up to the first floor where some of the hotel rooms are accessed. A rooflight has been proposed in here to bring in more natural daylight into the lobby space.

The final image shows the approach into the site and a view over to Building 2 which houses the spa facility. The proposed extension here creates a formal entrance into this facility as well as giving a stronger link back towards Building 01. The extension has indicatively been shown as a glazed box to create a welcoming reception area.



Cut through section showing the main lobby entrance space to the hotel, with a visual connection back to the spa building.



A view along the main entrance to the site, showing the proposed extension to the spa building.