

A Proposed Vision for Thatcham Community Hub

In 2023 West Berkshire Council commissioned the Thatcham Town Centre Strategy. This strategy set out to guide future growth and change in the town centre, identifying needs as well as potential projects.

One of the longstanding needs identified was for an improved Community Hub to provide for community events, the arts, health, sport and recreation. Local people indicated they wanted this to be consolidated into one hub with access to the town centre rather than in a number of buildings throughout the town.

The strategy recognised Brownsfield Road and Memorial Field as an important place for cultural, sports and recreation facilities to be improved.

Over the last 12 months West Berkshire Council and partners have worked to identify what a new Community Hub at this site could look like, and now we need input from local people to improve these plans, which are at a very early stage.

Timeline

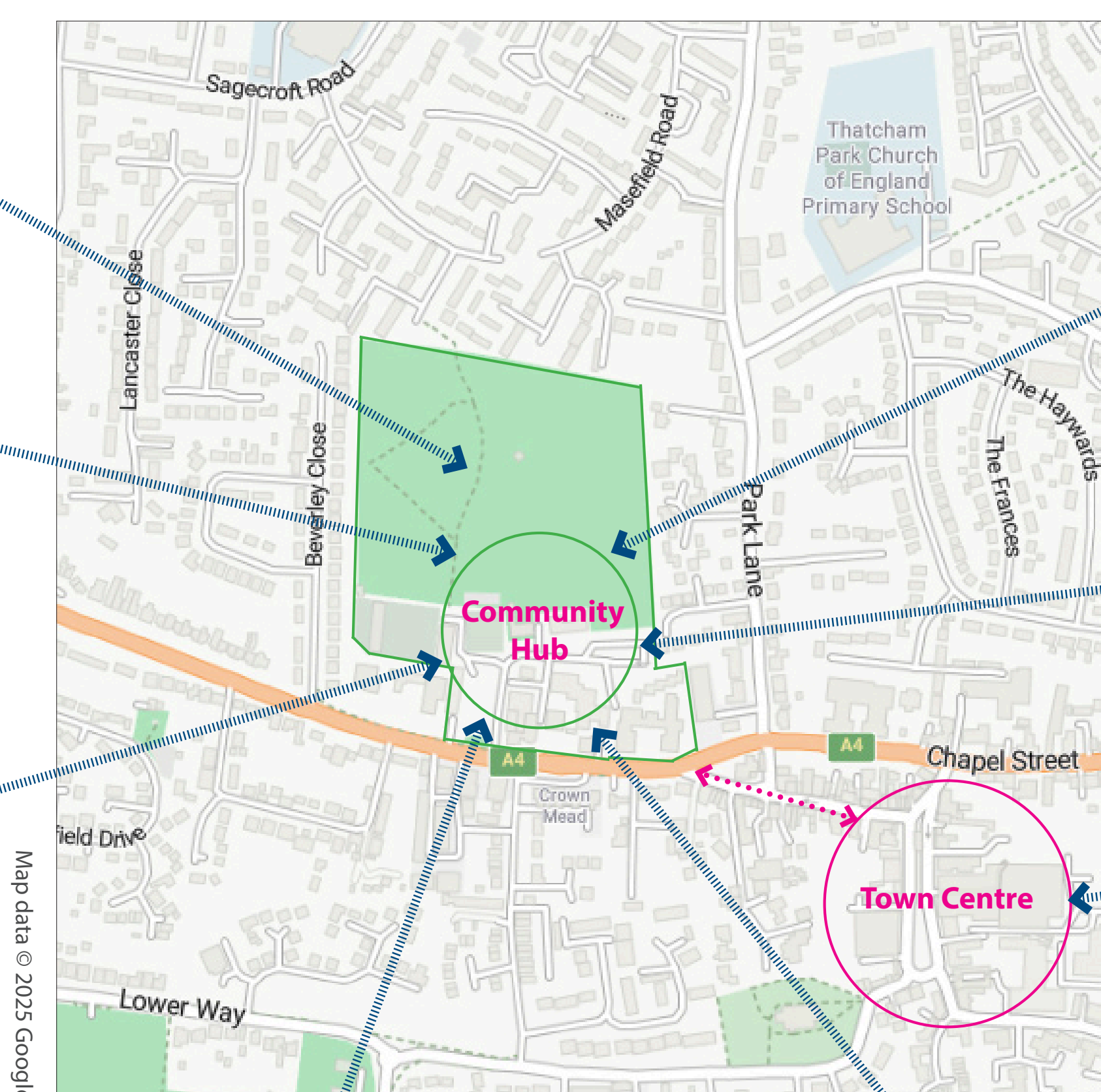


Vision

A more diverse use of the Playing Fields

Create a coherent sense of place, where residents feel they belong

Create a concentrated hub of activity - civic, community, leisure, sports, youth & cultural including a new library and an improved health and well-being offer



Reinforce the locally valued 'village' character of Thatcham, even as it develops in scale

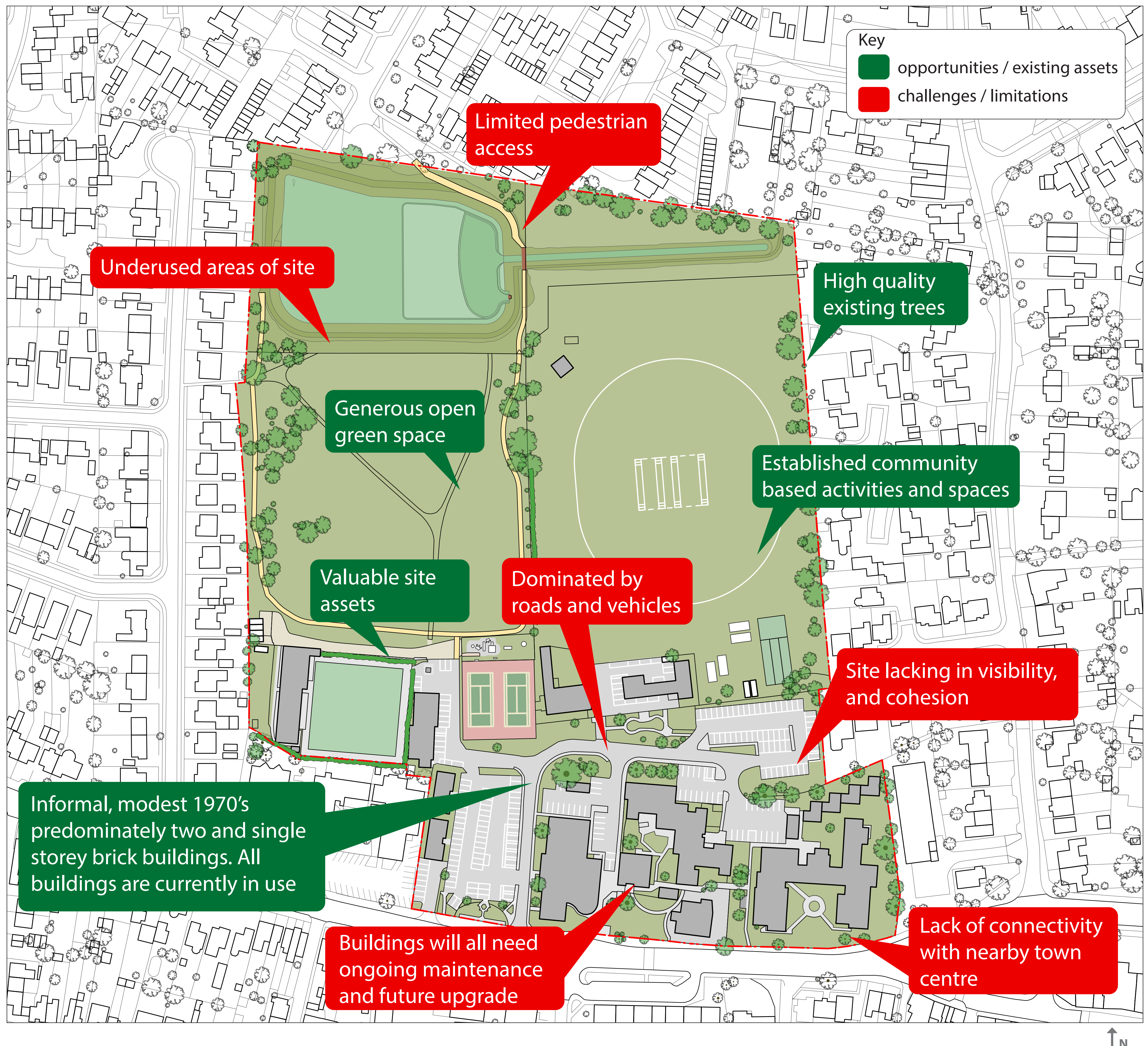
Improve the visibility of Community Hub, and improve site accessibility

Unlock a legible walking route between the town centre, nearby green space and community hub

Rationalise car parking and estate management

Signal arrival in the town centre

Opportunities & Challenges



Site dominated by roads and vehicles



Site lacking in cohesion and a clear identity



Local people and organisations have identified the need for:

Better, more diverse, flexible and fit-for-purpose spaces for the community to use.

A new modern building to service outdoors sports and with indoor facilities.

Meeting current and future demand for cricket, football and tennis as well as new sports opportunities.

More activities and spaces for all ages and sections of the community, but especially young people.

Safe and welcoming spaces with better public realm and lighting, that encourages more people to use the sites.

Better quality open spaces with better pedestrian and cycle access from residential areas.

Better co-ordinated management across the site, supporting existing tenants, users and new facilities.

Improving access links to and from the town centre.

Strengthening the town cultural offer through providing space for events, exhibitions and performance.

Meeting the growing need for improved civic facilities and community spaces including a new library.

Development Principles

- A Community Hub that is part of Thatcham Town Centre, and which provides vital community, sports and cultural infrastructure for all of Thatcham's growing population, now and into the future.
- A greater range of sports, available to a wider range of people, on more days of the year.
- A better laid out, more accessible and coherent site – with individual projects and developments being delivered over time to a masterplan vision for the site, linked to Thatcham Town Centre.

Three Core Priorities

GREEN SPACE

Higher quality, more varied and accessible green space and sports facilities, served by a café and toilets.

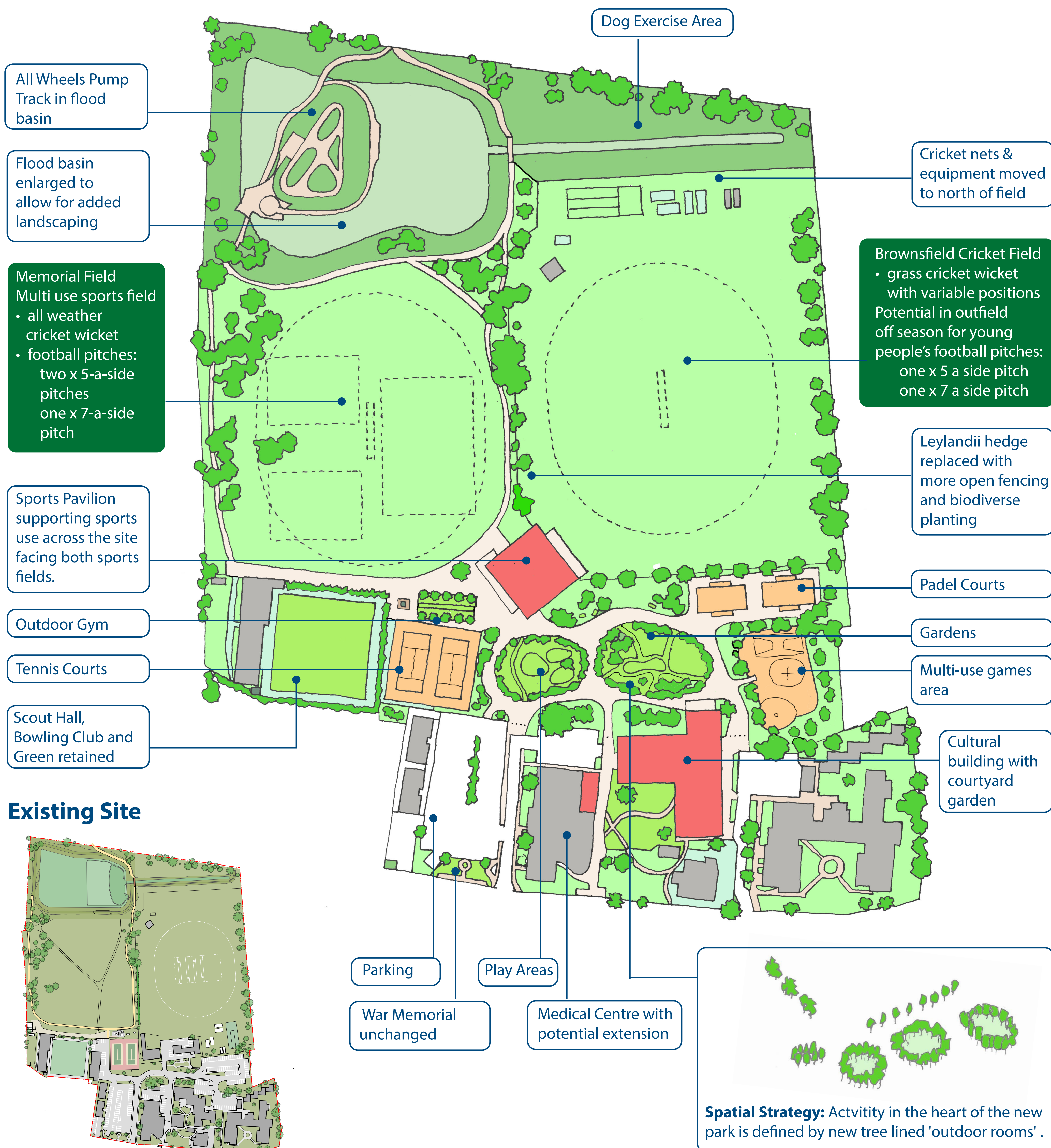
SPORTS

An integrated Sports Pavilion – serving organised sports and providing social activity and community use.

CULTURE

A new Cultural Building with a library, workspaces, event and performance spaces, town council offices, community rooms, and a café.

What might this look like?



Existing Site



Sports

An opportunity to both improve existing uses and introduce new provision.



Football



Tennis



Cricket



Padel



Bowling



Outdoor Exercise



Table Tennis



Pump Track

All wheels pump track located within currently underused flood basin: with space for different levels of skill. Use of flood basins for play and amenity is common.

Young People

Multi-Use Games Area – a welcoming, open play space for all ages, featuring sheltered areas, seating, ball games, climbing equipment and other activities designed to encourage active, social play.

Play space provided across the site for all ages.



Natural Play



Play for all ages

Parkland for all



Landscape features - including an avenue framing the existing clock tower, gardens, welcoming signage and gates visible from Bath Road

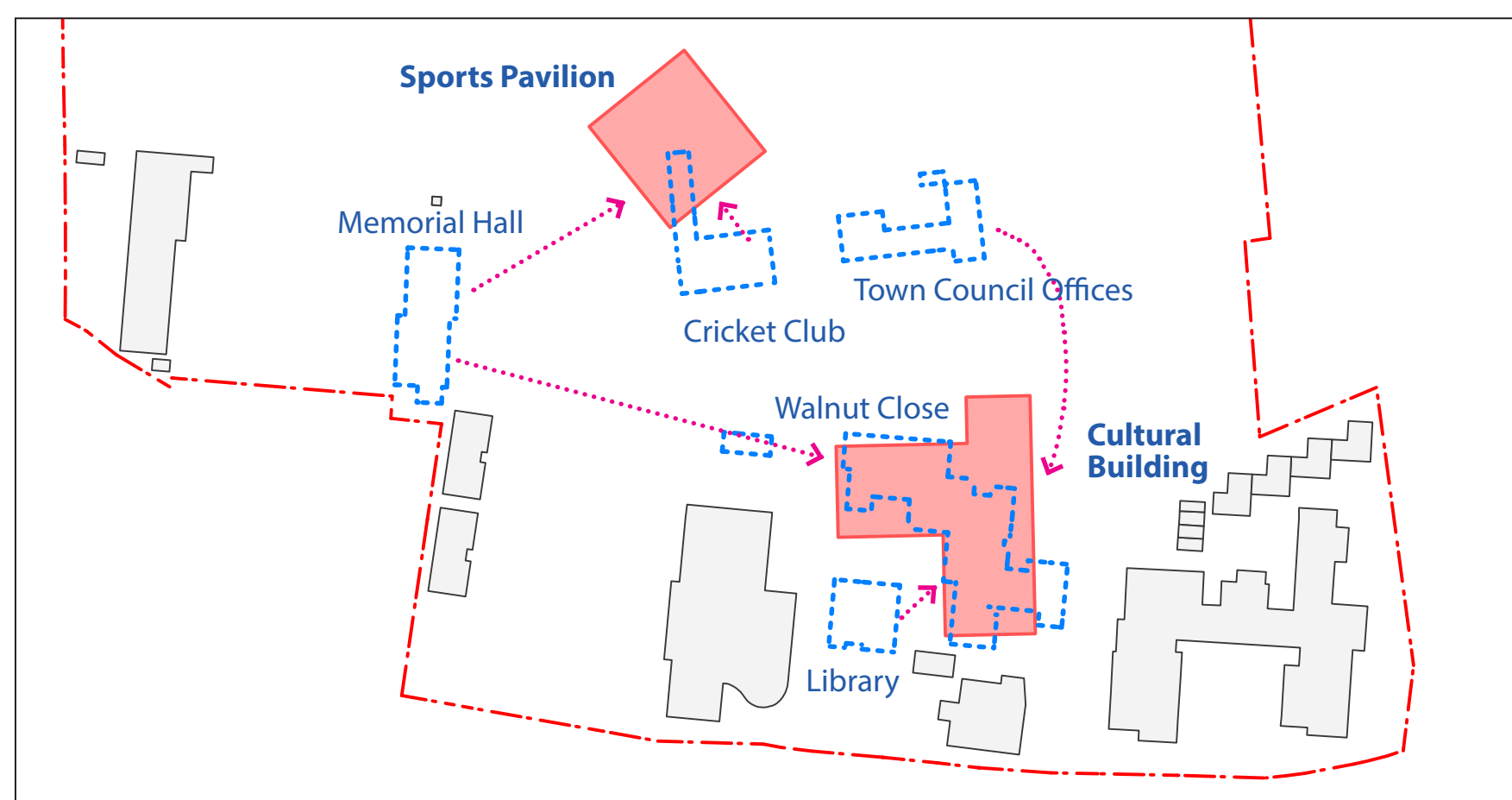


Gardens extending the existing Jubilee Sensory Garden



Places to sit and enjoy nature

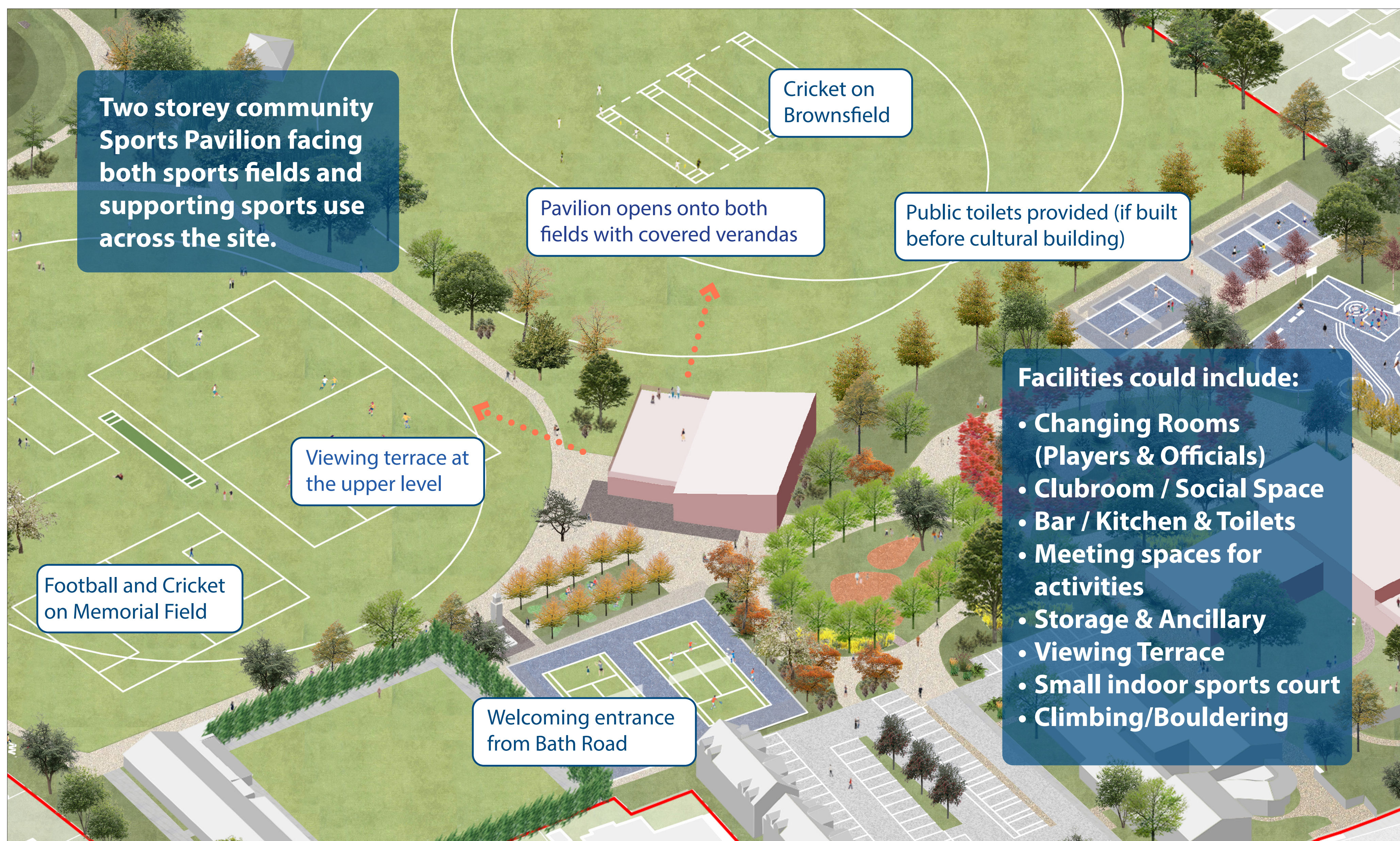
Consolidation of Existing Buildings



Two Buildings Proposed



New Sports Pavilion



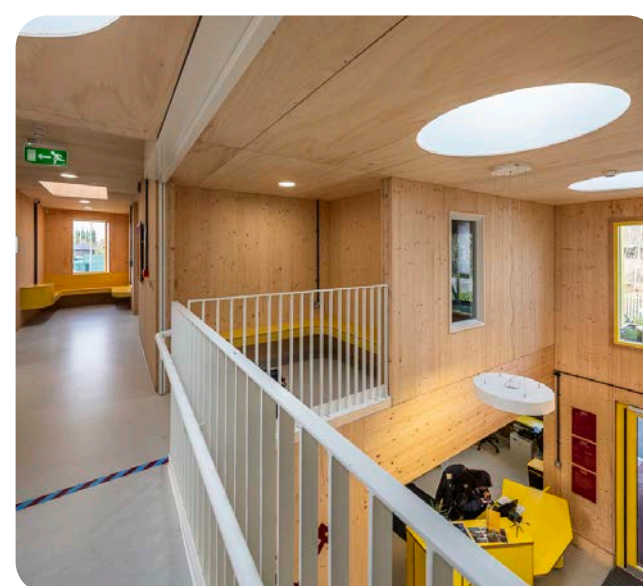
Examples: What might it be like?



Farington Cricket Club,, Lancs (BDP, 2025) - dual facing sports pavilion



The Foundry, West Ham Foundation (Adams & Sutherland 2025) sports and youth building: two storey interior, changing rooms & spaces overlooking the sports field

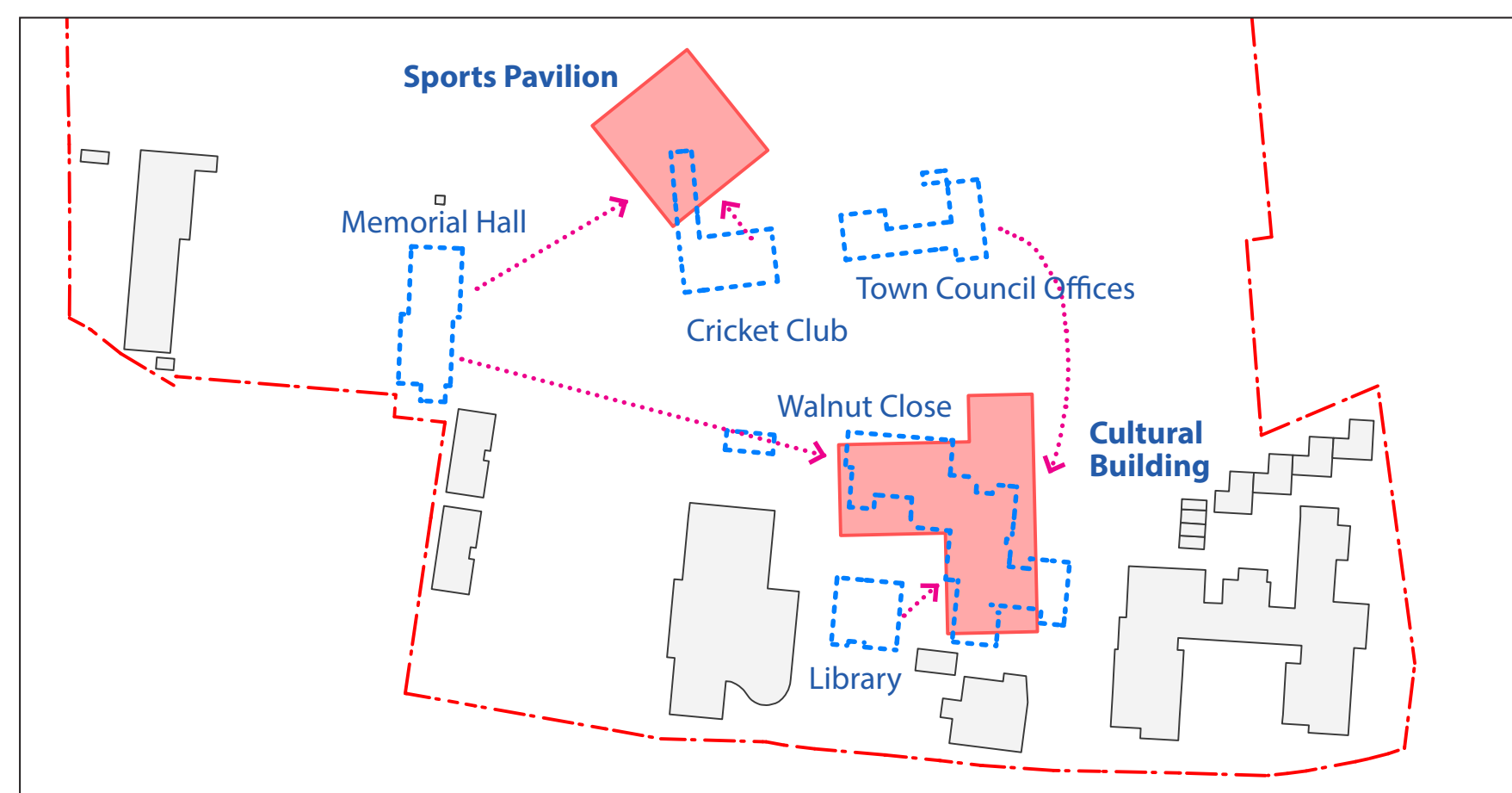


THATCHAM COMMUNITY HUB

Transforming Brownsfield
Road and Memorial Field

Cultural Building 7

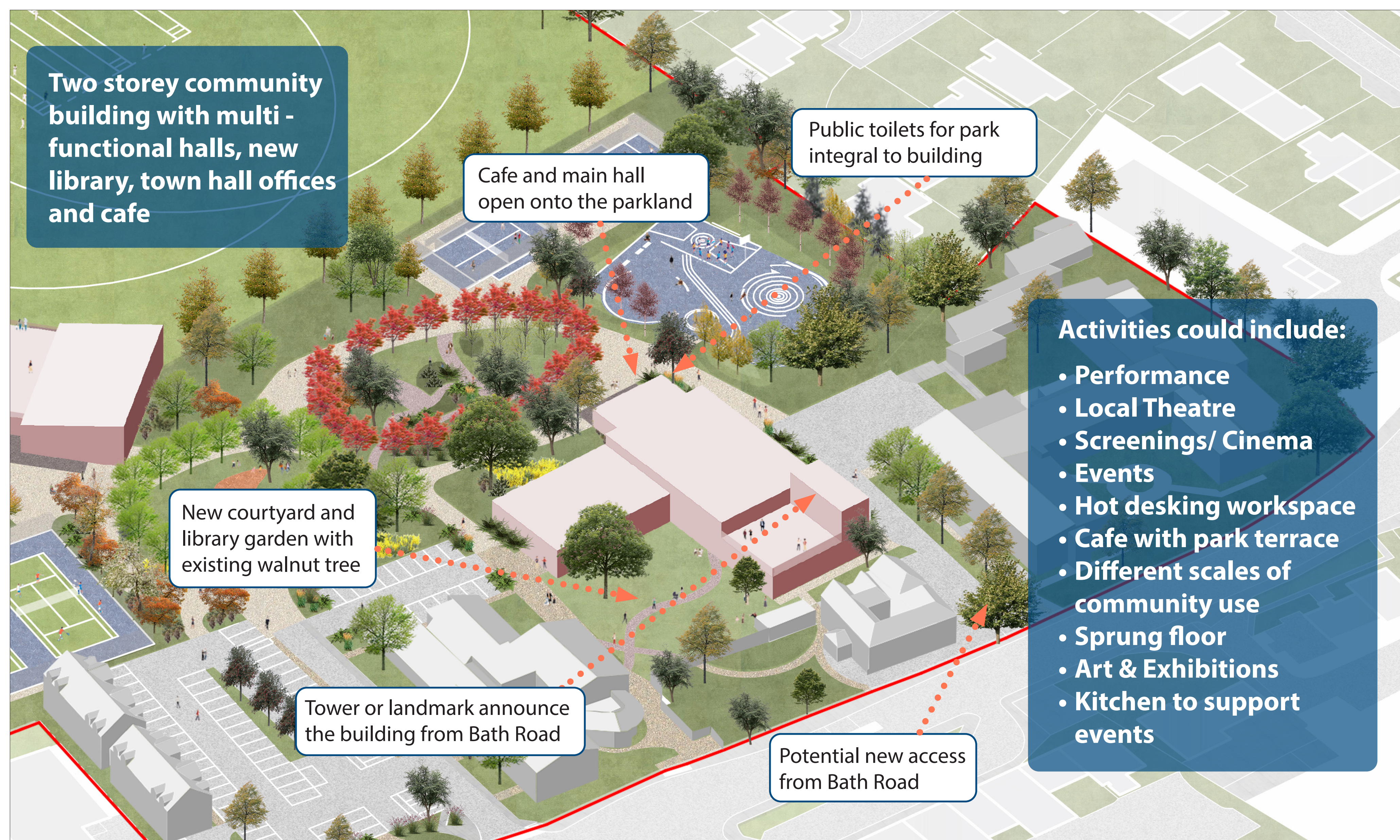
Consolidation of Existing Buildings



Two Buildings Proposed



New Cultural Building



Examples: Places & Activities



Performance Space in use - Cornerhouse Arts, Surbiton



Library, School Green Centre, Shinfield, Berks. (AOC) 2022



Hall, Youth Centre, Roskilde (Cornelius Voge)



Meeting & work, MFC Doelum, Renkum (studio Nuy v. Noort)



Cafe, Arc House, Hounslow (Adams & Sutherland) 2016



SCAN ME



Your Say

Feedback comments
by questionnaire or
scan the QR link.

Funding & Delivery

Given the scale of the proposals the project will likely be delivered in phases over a number of years. This approach could allow the project to progress in a challenging financial environment and will allow for service continuity during development. Progress is also subject to agreed governance and securing the required funding.

There are a range of funding sources which will be explored including government bodies, trusts and foundations, and local sources including development contributions.

A governance model will be designed to maximise funding opportunities and financial efficiencies and ensure clear and consistent day-to-day management and maintenance arrangements in future.

Next Steps

- Following input from local people, the plans will be improved and updated.
- Further work will be undertaken to assess potential costs and funding sources.
- An implementation plan, including a funding strategy and options for governance will be developed later in 2026.