

Western Way Development

Design Statement

Issue Number 01 | July 2019





PICK
EVERARD

Visualisation – Western Way frontage

Project and Consultation Aims and Objectives

Proposals to deliver a multi-million development at Western Way, Bury St Edmunds could bring new state of the art leisure facilities and a nationally ground breaking way to deliver integrated public services for our communities, as part of a network of existing and planned 'hub' projects in West Suffolk.

Building on the 2016 masterplan for the site, an outline business case was approved in 2018 which endorsed the principle of bringing together new leisure facilities, health, education and other public services with new offices for the commercial sector on one site. Working alongside Pick Everard, West Suffolk Council and its partners are now preparing a final business case which will be considered in September 2019.

The project is part of a long term vision for the area and would also attract investment and bring new jobs, potentially opening within the next five years.

The outline business case suggested the plans would give the opportunity for radical regeneration, transform how services work and produce better outcomes for residents. At the same time, the new development aims to reduce costs to the public purse and free up other assets in the area.

It was also agreed in principle that the steel frame and concrete slab of the depot on Olding Road should be re-used for the new Public Service building (see diagram overleaf). This will save time, money and natural resources as well as creating a flexible space that can be built in a phased way and link to the public services already being provided on the site at West Suffolk House.

The proposals will only go ahead if that final business case shows that there is a workable highways plan, the finances stack up and the project breaks even for the Council as developer.

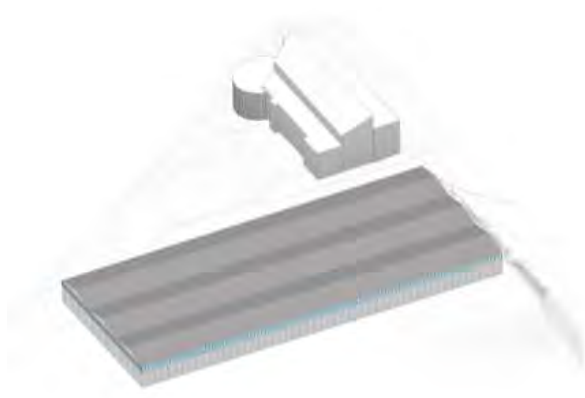
The project also means that the current leisure centre and pool, which needs millions of pounds of improvements before having to be rebuilt anyway, could be moved within the site to integrate with health services, providing extra parking and new facilities.

As well as offering significant amounts of new employment space, the new site would create opportunities for multiple other partners to join the councils and West Suffolk CCG at the site, in the first or later phases. To date, work on exploring the business case has involved central government, all parts of the NHS, the County Council, the Police, Abbeycroft Leisure, West Suffolk College and several other partners under the auspices of the Government's One Public Estate Programme. Which partners will be part of the first phase of development will be clarified later in 2019.

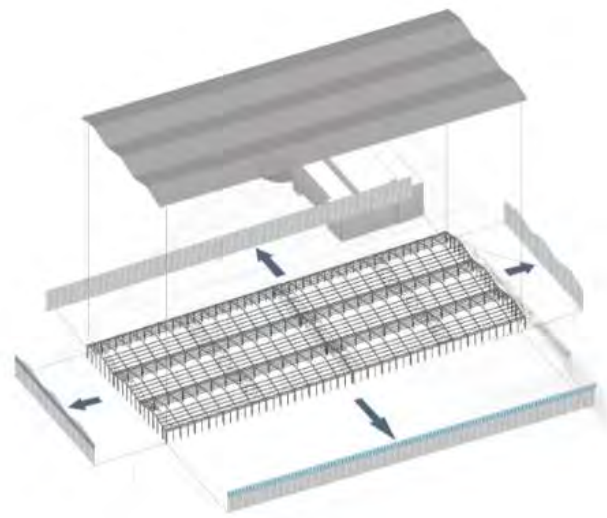
At this stage, the design of the scheme is very much in development but, to assist the business case and, if that is approved, a planning application, an informal public consultation is now being held to seek people's views on the scheme.

This consultation will close at midnight on Tuesday 10 September 2019. Details on how to take part can be found at www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/WWD

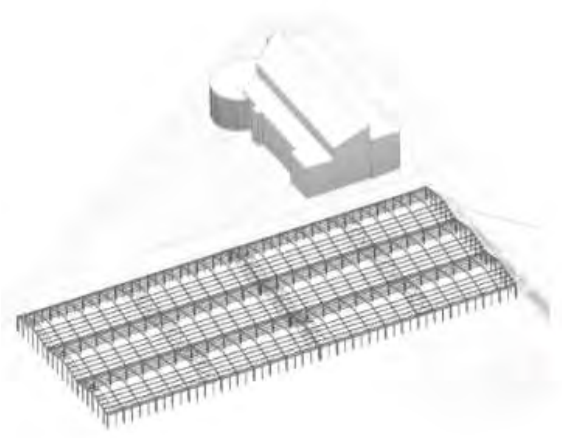
Concept Development



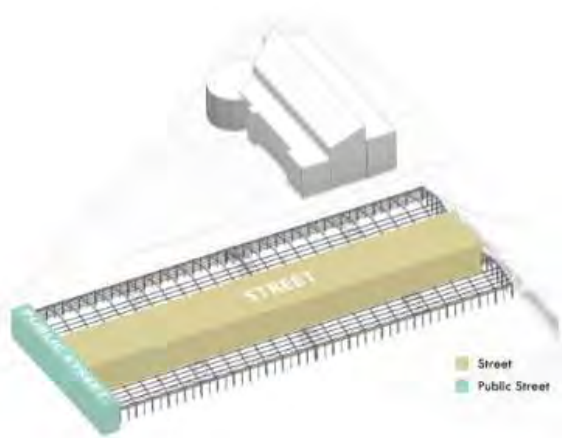
Existing depot building



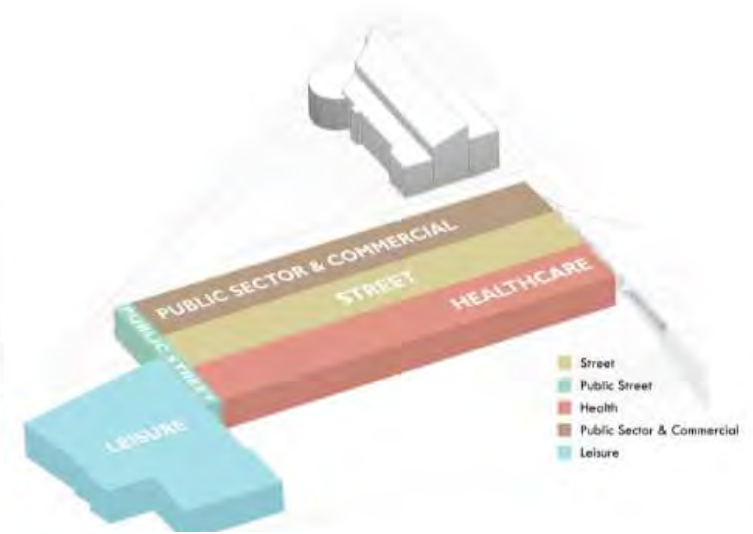
Existing cladding stripped off



Existing structural frame & slab retained



Insertion of a central street and a public street which serves as a shared space between the hub and the leisure centre



Public sector, healthcare and leisure added

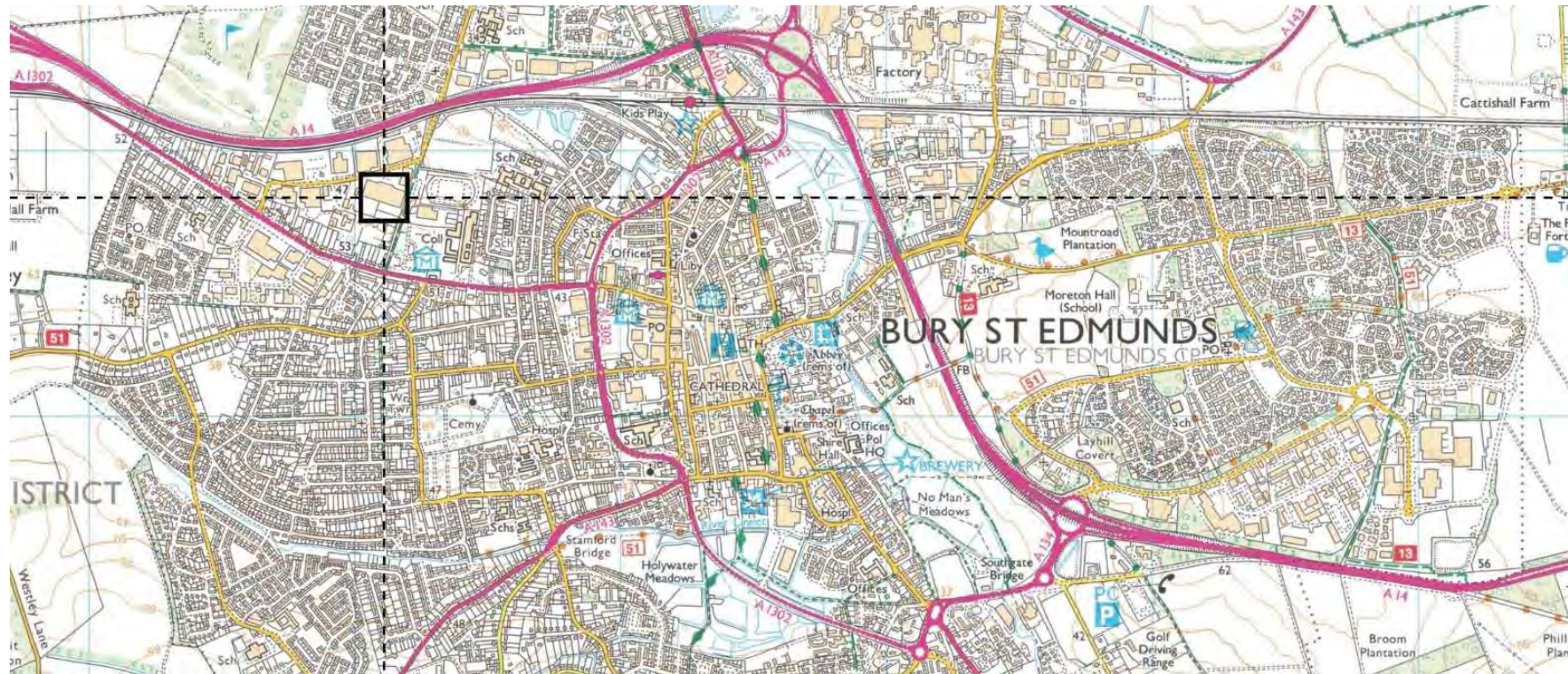
Site Location and Context

The site is situated on the western side of Bury St. Edmunds, within an industrial and retail area - between the existing leisure centre to the east and ASDA to the west. West Suffolk College also lies on the eastern boundary of the site, with the residential properties of Newmarket Road backing onto the wooded area of the southern boundary.

All existing vehicular access is via Western Way, Beetons Way and Olding Road with pedestrian access from Western Way and steps down from Beetons Way to Olding Road car park.

The existing leisure centre is a well-used facility but is not visible from the surrounding main roads and lacks street presence.

The orientation of the existing depot building provides two long elevations which predominantly face north and south. While this provides north light which works well for office accommodation, the south light will potentially create overheating issues and will require solar gain prevention measures.



Site Location and Context



Site Proposals

The increased scope of the 2016 masterplan maximises the potential of the Western Way site, incorporating, re-generating and connecting existing buildings, while introducing new constructions to improve the offer of public facilities.

The existing depot warehouse becomes the key building for the site, adapted and re-used as a public hub and freeing up the west of the site to accommodate a new leisure centre and public plaza. Taking advantage of a key view and desire line from the ASDA roundabout, the proposed location of the new leisure centre provides a much stronger, public presence within the town while integration into the new public hub further strengthens this presence and champions collaboration.

A dedicated energy centre will form a key part to the energy and sustainability strategy for the proposed development. The energy centre will house combined heat and power systems and battery storage for power generated by on site solar panels. As a result of this facility, the new hub and leisure building aim to be the most efficient and sustainable public building in West Suffolk.

To the north, West Suffolk House will continue to accommodate West Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council, with some public services and facilities to remain. However, a link bridge connects the building to the new hub and encourages movement through the site and use of shared facilities. Behind West Suffolk House, off Beetons Way, a new nursery and pre-school is proposed for 0-5 year olds and will incorporate play spaces, kitchen, library and a secure external play space. The east of the site sees the demolition of the existing Leisure Centre and external works carried out to provide a new bus/coach drop-off and car park to serve the hub and leisure buildings. Student accommodation is proposed within the West Suffolk College campus,

while a new athletics pavilion and storage provision is proposed for the athletics track – in mitigation for the loss of existing support facilities in the current leisure centre.

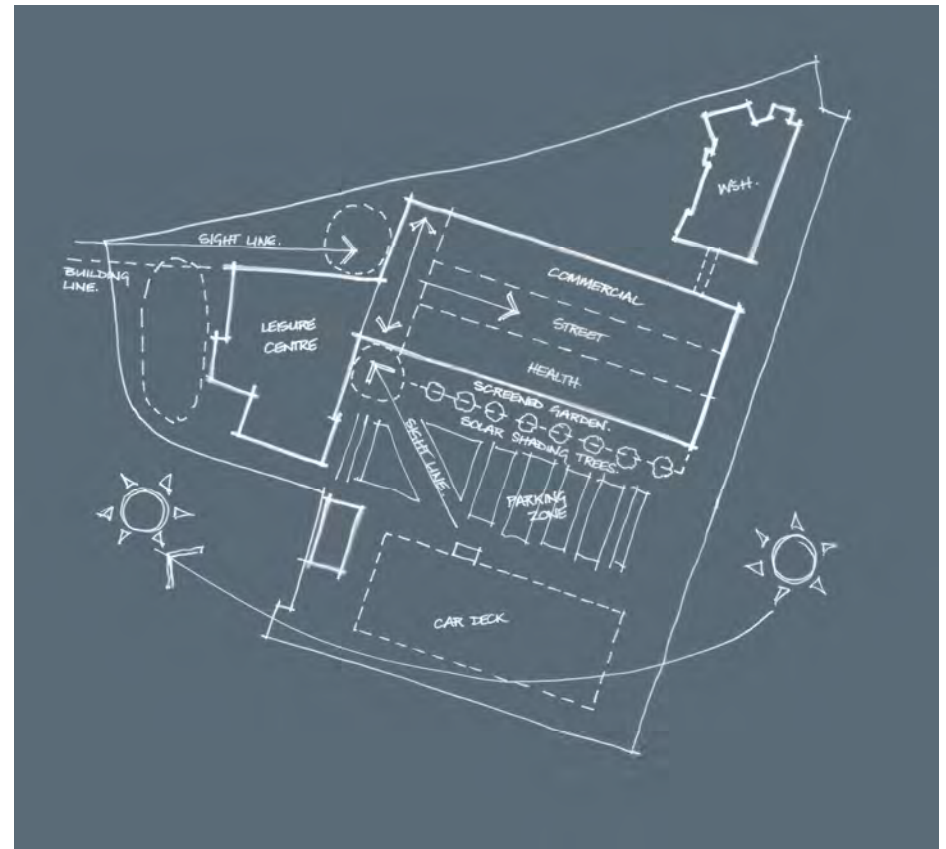
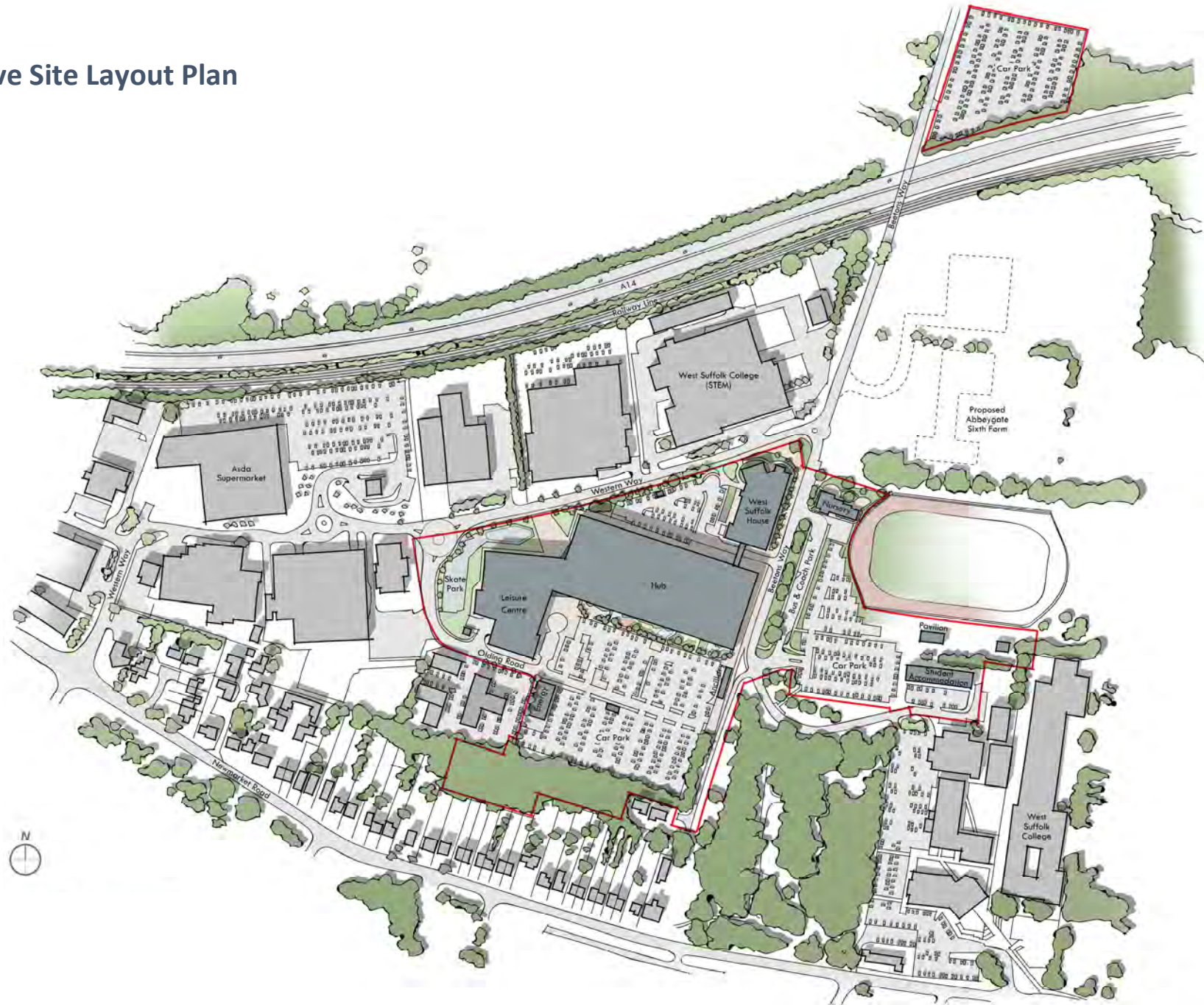


Image of the initial concept for the site layout

Indicative Site Layout Plan



Skate Park

It is proposed that the existing skate park be retained and celebrated as a key feature within the landscape scheme of the new development. Necessary highway improvements to the Western Way/Olding Road junction have led to proposals for the relocation of the skate bowl - creating a newly adapted and improved skate park, with a wider range of features. Starting with the existing street course, the proposed park will wrap around the north west corner of the new leisure centre - benefiting from new lighting, outside toilet facilities and complementing the public plaza, hub and leisure building of the PSV. The proposed skate park will be approximately 250m² (20%) larger than the existing facility in terms of activity space, and the Bury Skate Park Experience will lead its design, just as they did with the existing park.



Leisure Centre Proposals

A completely new Leisure Centre is proposed for the Western Way site, forming an extension to the south west corner of the hub building. The designs for this purpose-built facility have been developed following consultation with users and residents and will offer a wide range of activities.

The centre's reception will provide good connectivity to the public café and hub building, ensuring a welcoming and accessible facility.

The key feature will be a large pool hall providing improved swimming experiences. The main pool will be a 10-lane 25m swimming pool which will usually be configured to offer a separate learners pool with moveable floor and a main pool separated by a boom which can be removed and enables the use of the full ten lanes. In addition, in response to the headline demand from an earlier consultation, a destination leisure zone will be provided which includes a beach pool for toddlers, a splash park with slides, jets, water cannons and water slides.

Looking across the new pool hall and public plaza is the leisure café. Nearby, the multi-level soft play will entertain the children whilst adults relax in the café served seating area – an attached party room will offer private hire.

On the first floor, an extensive Health and Fitness suite will accommodate a broad range of fitness equipment, with up to 150 stations with fantastic views across the external plaza as well as down into both the pool hall and 'South Street'.

Four flexible studios will accommodate fitness classes and other activities while three treatment/consultation rooms will offer a range of services and create opportunities for integration and collaboration with the adjacent health organisations.

A four-court sports hall will cater for a range of indoor sports and activities while providing flexibility and accessibility for public events. Ample wet change, dry change, shower and toilet facilities will be provided on both floors and spectator seating on the first floor will offer fantastic views over the pool hall. If the town's needs change in the future, it will be possible to extend the sports hall within the site.

Leisure Centre Proposals



Image of the new pool hall

Public Hub Proposals

Hub: Indicative Ground Floor

The proposed Hub building is a radical approach to regeneration and sharing of public estates. The existing structural frame of the depot building will be retained and, once refurbished, will accommodate council facilities, health services, an advice centre, commercial space and shared, flexible spaces.

A key feature of the hub building would be the proposed Health Centre. If the NHS joins the project (which will be subject to its own consultations and business cases), this is designed to bring together some of the town's community health services, encouraging collaborative working and taking advantage of occupying one, shared facility. Service providers will occupy both clinical and administrative space, dividing the centre into distinct shared areas, themed around different user groups (e.g. children) but also allowing strong integration with the leisure and advice centres to build on the successful social prescribing model.

Associated, external, landscaped spaces will provide further benefit for patients. Provision for mobile medical vehicles will also be included on site. The precise range of services that can be co-located at the site, and the final internal detail of the health centre, will be confirmed by the NHS if the FBC is approved. At this stage, the priority is offering a flexible space for community health services that can evolve with the community's needs.

The services and facilities on offer will provide many reasons for people to visit the new hub but the quality, public spaces and a welcoming sense of place will embolden the visitor to stay and experience – a building that promotes an inclusive, collaborative and sociable environment, and can be whatever the community or the building's tenants need it to be.



Image of the western way entrance

Two main entrances will provide good access to the Hub and Leisure building. A northern pedestrian entrance addresses the building's presence off Western Way and will integrate with the extended skate park. A southern entrance accommodates staff and visitors who have arrived by car, bus or walked in from the town centre. The hub design has developed around the idea of a 'Street' occupying the central bay - providing access and support facilities to public services and offices occupying the north and south bays. An additional 'South Street' connects the north and south entrances - creating a full height, voided space that combines with the main foyer to form a singular, coherent and welcoming entrance space.

Public Hub Proposals

The main foyer is the first of four, full height, atrium spaces along Main Street. Expressing the building's three storeys - this open space reveals views down both streets. Main Street's linear space stretches almost the length of the hub and encourages movement, activity and interaction - connecting the different functions and levels of the building.

Along the street, the atriums draw natural light into the building's deep plan, providing open areas for flexible use – animated overhead by wood clad meeting pods cantilevering into the space, creating interest and warmth and celebrating the heritage of the building.



Image of the south street and public cafe

As you enter the public foyer, the café and all public services are visible; the building's main reception can be clearly seen from both entrances, anchoring the space and enabling visitors to confidently navigate the building.

The public café takes pride of place on the corner of Main and South street, a fantastic meeting place for all building users with views out to the public plaza and into the pool hall and Hub. Journeying into the second full-height space, the street evolves into a transitional space, hosting public and private events, exhibitions and 'Pop-Up' activities – providing infinite ancillary retail, service and vocational educational opportunities.



Image of the main street cafe

The third space, a 'central atrium', provides a café and seating area where, during the working day, tenants and commercial visitors will be able to eat, drink or work in this informal and generous space. Out of hours, this will also be a space available for the community to use in a range of different ways. Flanked by two stairs leading you up to the breakout balconies above, a central core draws your eye to the skylights above, encouraging light down to ground floor as it reflects off the white walls – a surface doubling up as a screen for special events or presentations.

Public Hub Proposals

Punctuating the final quarter of the street is a welcoming, oversized piece of street furniture – large, timber, tiered seating cascades down through the rear atrium and invites individuals to sit and observe ongoing events, join their colleagues for an informal meeting or eat their lunch.

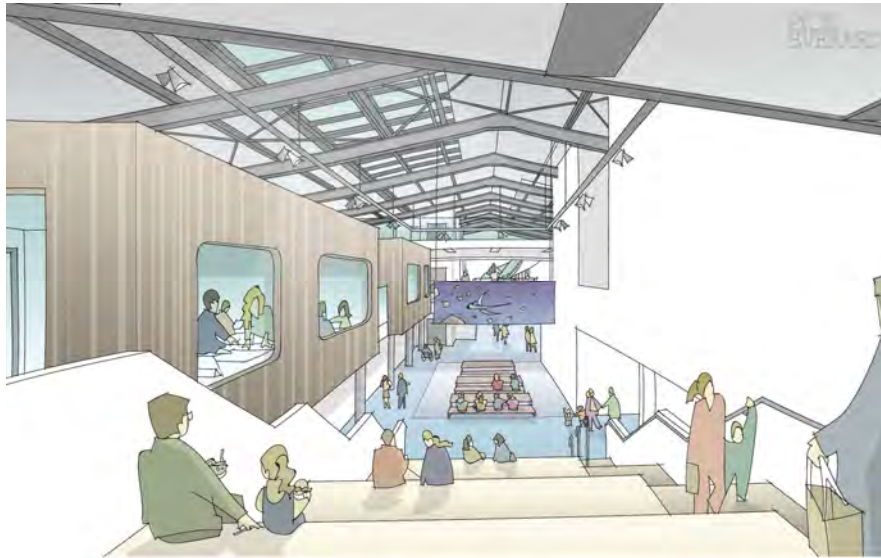


Image of the main street tiered seating

Out of hours, this will become a programmable space for anything the community wishes – markets, performances, exhibitions, dances or sporting events. Within this element are stairs which connect the street and first floor break-out spaces, providing fluidity between floors.

Throughout the length of the street, stairs ascend through the atriums - encouraging first and second floor tenants down to the communal eating and social areas of the street.



Image of the south street entrance

Public Hub Proposals

Hub: Indicative First and Second Floors

Looking down into the plaza and main foyer of the north entrance, the conference suite and public gallery form a flexible public facility in a prime location on the first floor.



Image of the public main street

The majority of first floor accommodation consists of commercial and public sector office space where all offices have access to an innovative, first-floor breakout space made up of semi-private working areas and meeting rooms.

All tenants (where appropriate) are encouraged to work in this less formal environment, creating the potential for integration amongst building users and an environment that encourages community.

Four 'bridge like' breakout areas span across the atriums, arranged with formal and less formal seating and furniture. These unique areas will be places where one can set up informal meetings, work individually for a few hours or all day.

With inspiring views down 'Main Street' from both first-floor breakout and second floor mezzanine - the private user is included within the community of the building as a whole.



Image of the office spaces

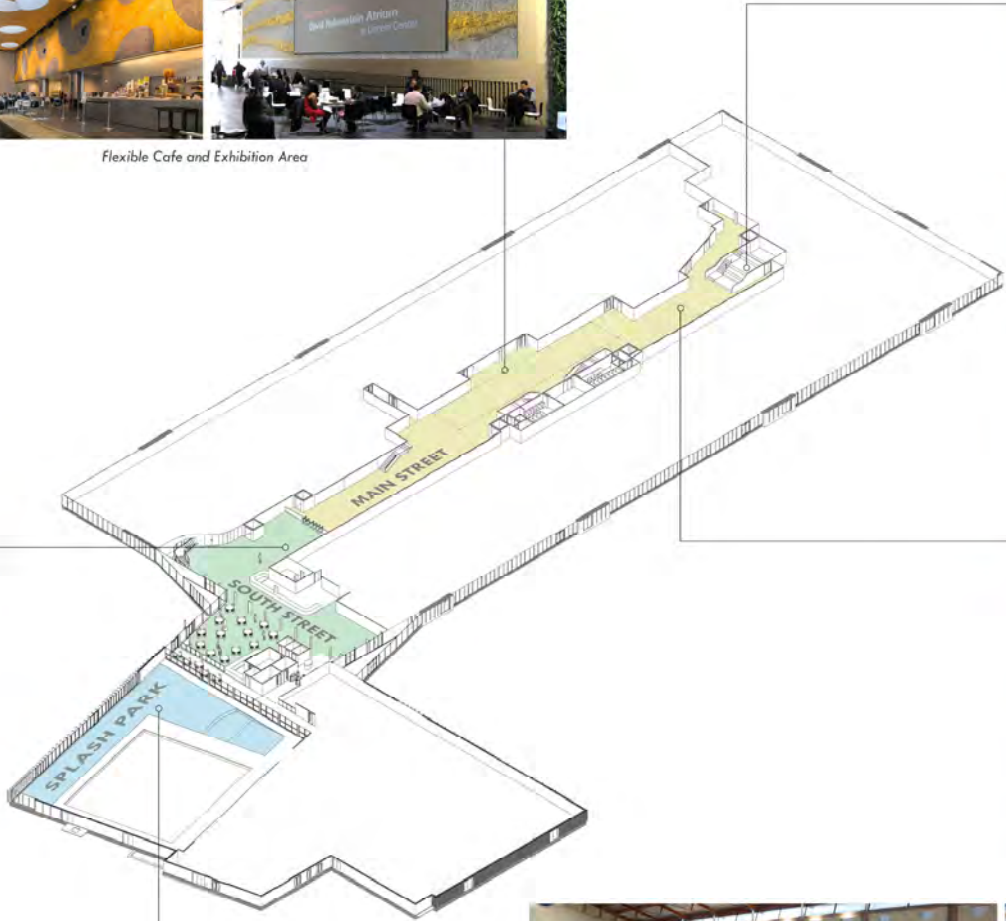
Street Activity



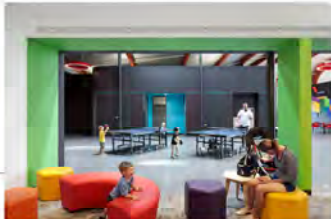
Flexible Cafe and Exhibition Area



Pop-up Activities



Podium Seating



Flexible Play / Breakout Area



Indicative Indoor Splash Park and Slides

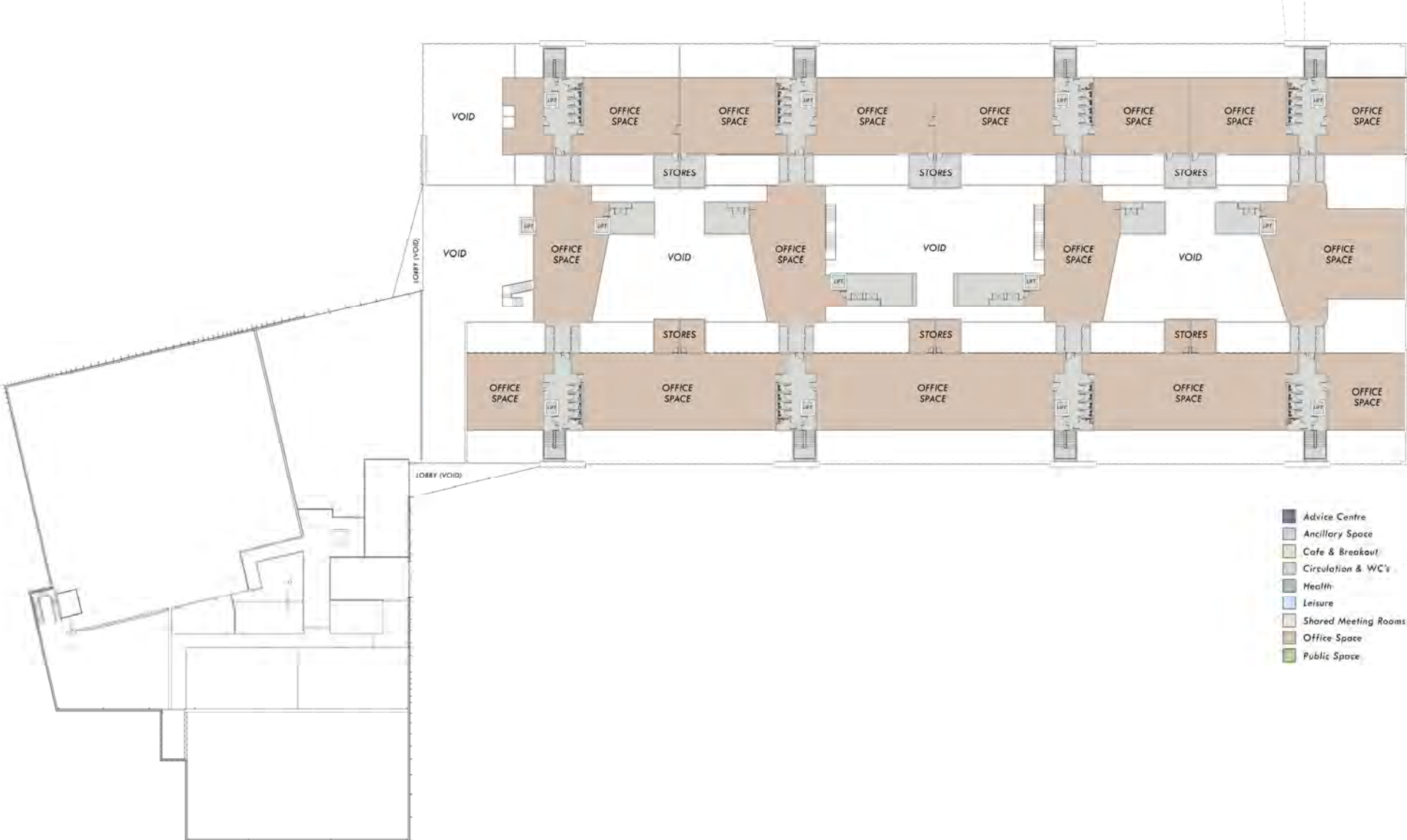
Hub and Leisure Centre – Indicative Ground Floor Plan



Hub and Leisure Centre – Indicative First Floor Plan



Hub and Leisure Centre – Indicative Second Floor Plan



Indicative Hub & Leisure Centre Elevations



NORTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION - LEISURE CENTRE



EAST ELEVATION - HUB



SOUTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

Transport and highways

The development will increase traffic in the local area but proposed junction and road improvements will offer an overall improvement in comparison to queues and delays that would be expected in the future with no redevelopment and the continued, estimated growth of general background traffic.

There are proposed improvements to Beetons Way junction, Olding Road junction, ASDA Roundabout and Newmarket Road junction. Lane widening and increased numbers of lanes at these junctions will increase capacity, while converting to roundabouts or signal control will ensure improved traffic flow and an overall decrease in journey delay times.

We will consult neighbouring landowners on how proposed junction arrangements may affect them. Pedestrian routes, cycle lane and bus stop facilities will be maintained throughout with maintained or additional, controlled and uncontrolled formal crossing points where appropriate.

An ambitious Travel Plan for the whole site will be prepared to reduce the impact of traffic even further. This will seek to encourage cycling, walking and public transport use via improved routes, to include bus stops by the development and increased frequency of bus services serving to a wider area.

The Travel Plan will be developed alongside partners and we will look at staggering hours of operation for services, flexible working policies, car-sharing and the use of surplus car parking in the town centre in order to reduce the potential impact of traffic generated by the development, particularly at the busiest peak times.

To help us prepare a new highways scheme, traffic surveys were carried out using the standard method during term-time in February 2019.

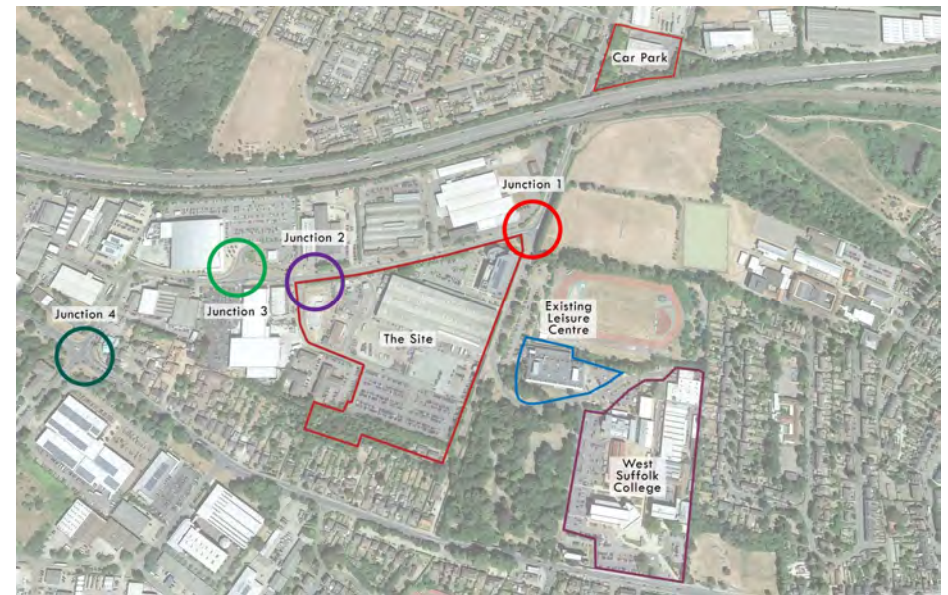


Image highlighting the road junctions that will be improved

This established the current situation at the four junctions at peak times in terms of queues, delays and capacity.

Using accepted methodologies to predict expected future growth of local existing background traffic, this additional traffic was loaded into each junction model to identify what the traffic situation would be like in the future if no development and no junction improvements were carried out. This showed that the current situation at each of the junctions is likely to worsen significantly in the coming decade.

Transport and highways

The expected number of additional peak hour arrival and departure trips that would be generated by the Western Way development was then calculated using accepted methodologies relating to the types of use of the facilities that are proposed to be built on the site. The future year models were adapted to include this additional traffic, and that data was then tested against different new designs for the junctions to identify the best option in each instance in relation to capacity, queues and delays. The results of these models indicated that an overall improvement in the traffic situation could be expected compared to what would occur if no development and no junction improvements were carried out.

A summary of the consultation proposals for each junction have been drafted, and it should be stressed that these are only indicative designs and yet to be signed off with the Highways Authority.

Junction 1 Improvements

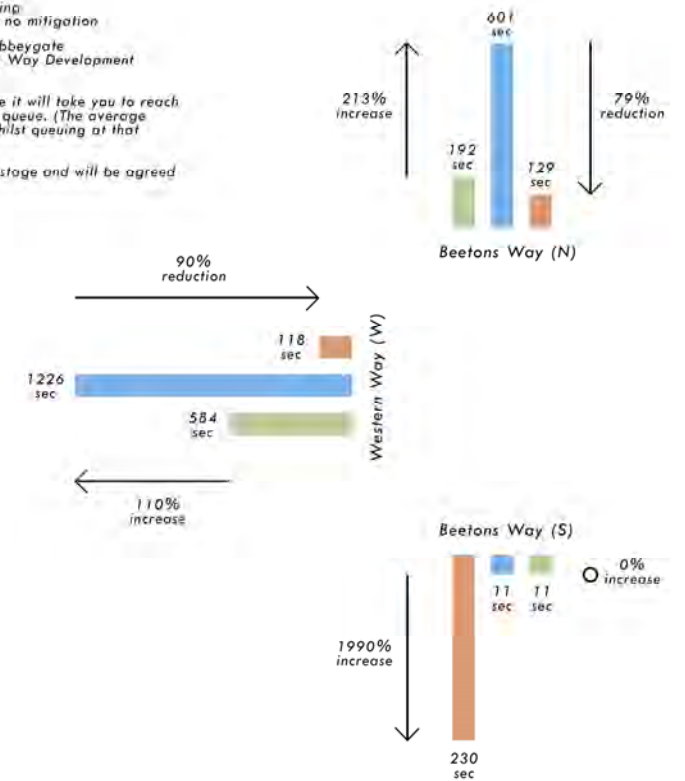
Western Way / Beetons Way



- Existing 2019 traffic
- 2030 background traffic excluding Abbeygate Sixth Form College - no mitigation
- 2030 background traffic with Abbeygate Sixth Form College and Western Way Development

*Delay shown in seconds relates to the time it will take you to reach the junction if you were the last car in the queue. (The average maximum delay experience by a vehicle whilst queuing at that junction during peak hours).

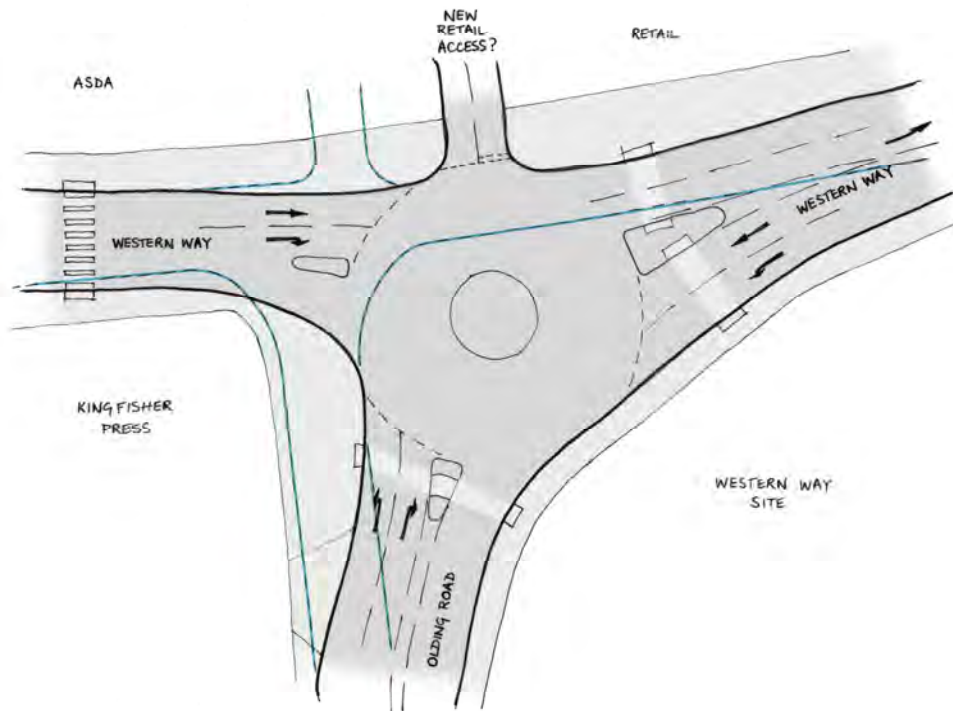
Junction proposals are preliminary at this stage and will be agreed with the Highways Authority..



Blue line indicates existing road layout

Junction 2 Improvements

Western Way /Olding Road

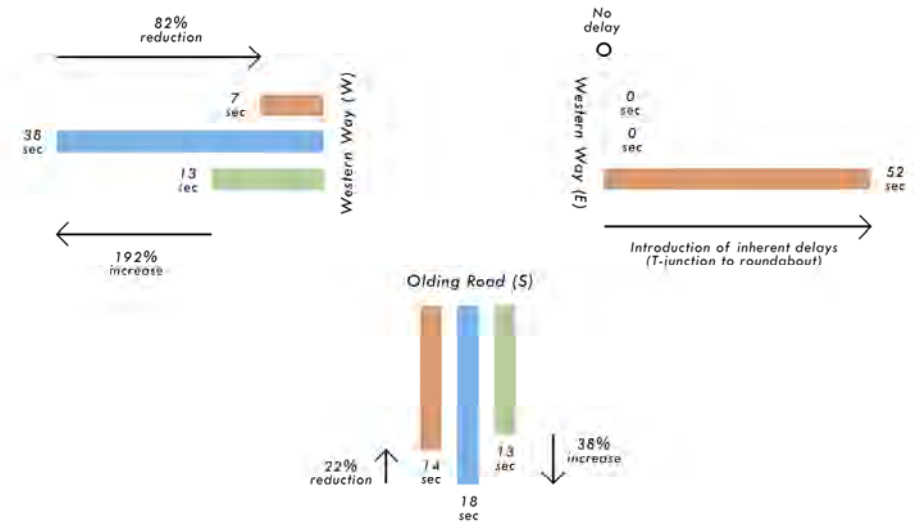


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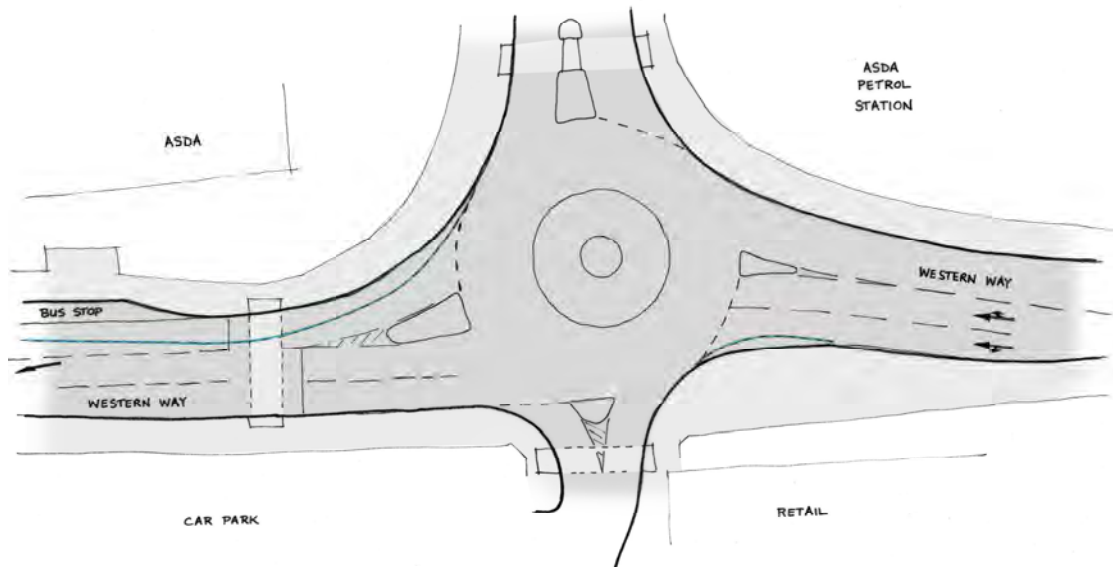
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Junction 3 Improvements

Western Way / Asda

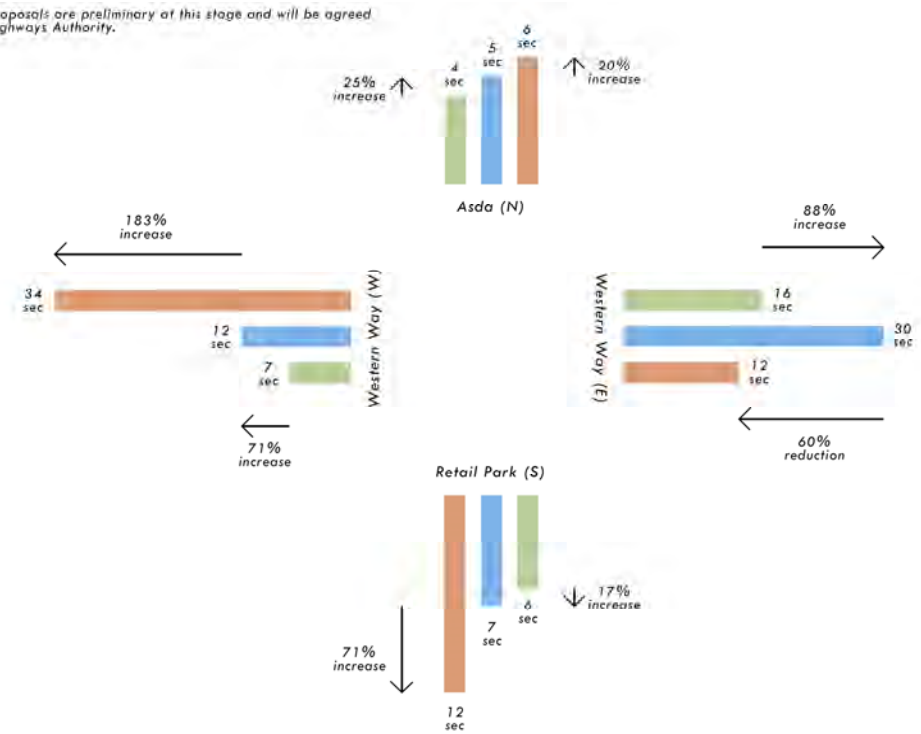


Blue line indicates existing road layout

- Existing 2019 traffic
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- 2030 background traffic with Abbeygate Sixth Form College and Western Way Development

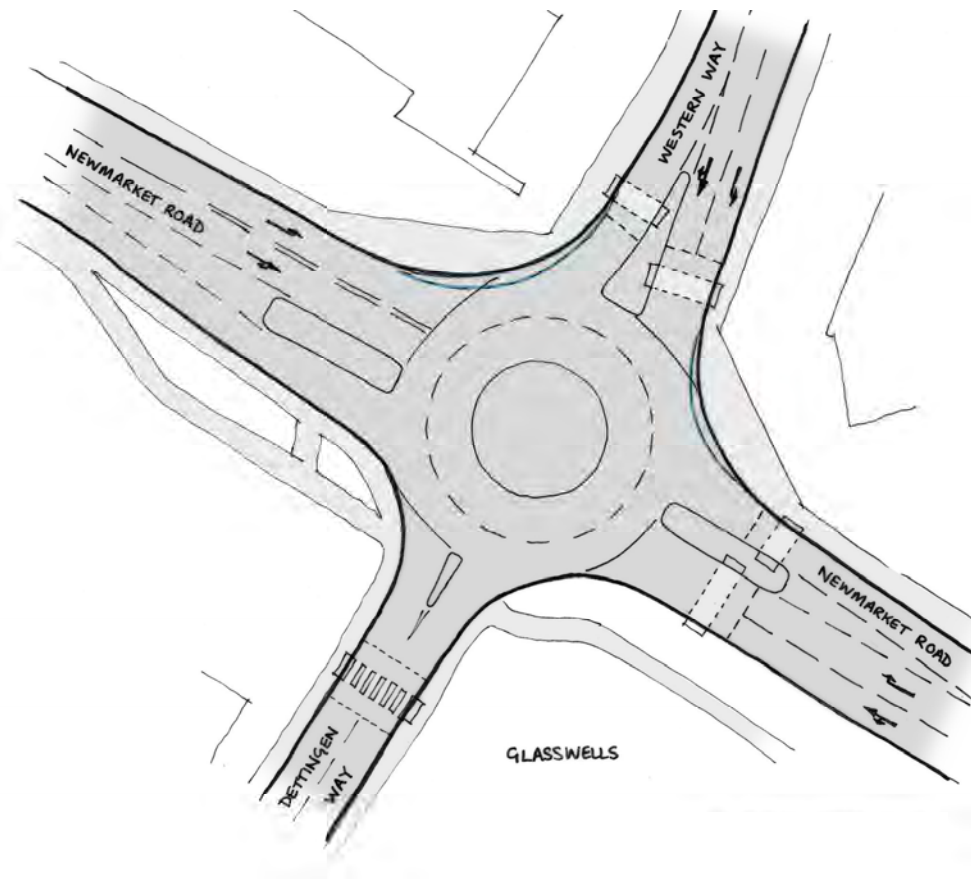
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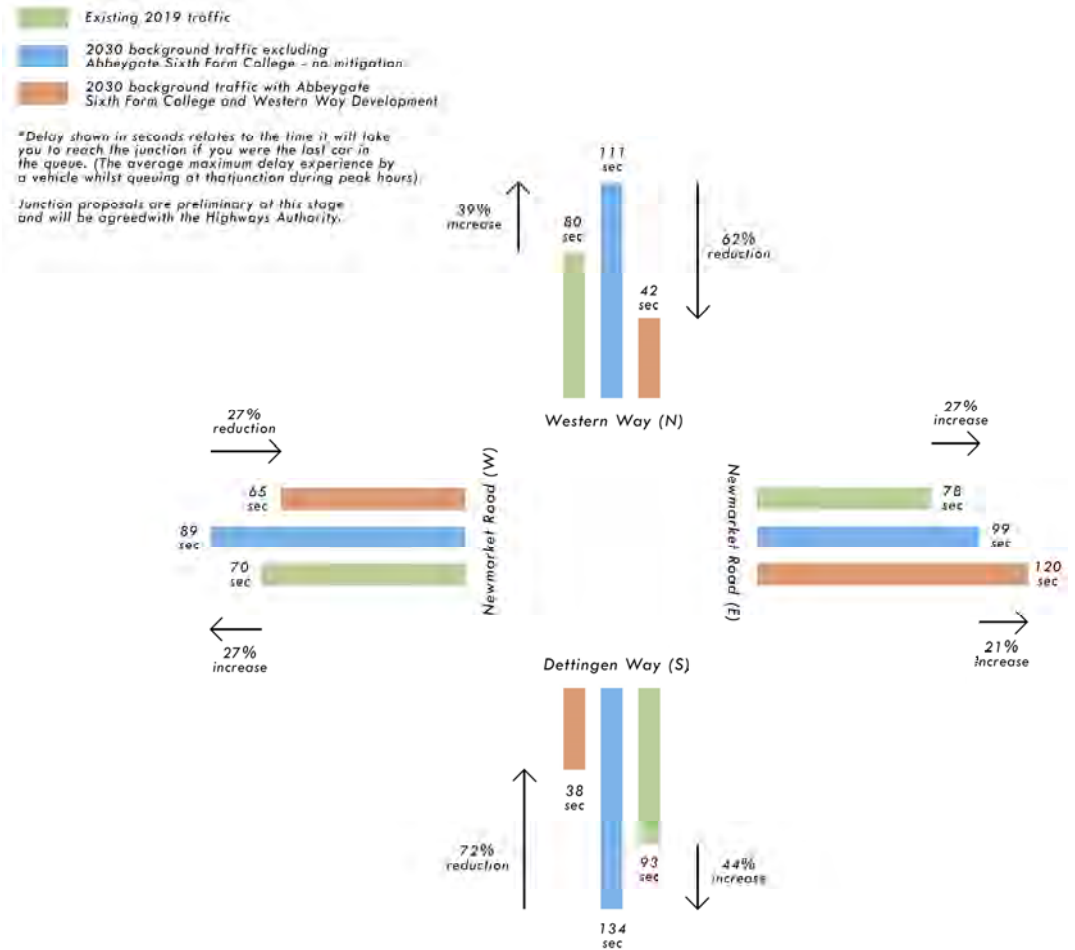


Junction 4 Improvements

Western Way / Newmarket Road



Blue line indicates existing road layout



Inclusive Access

The design of all buildings within the masterplan have been developed with access design at the fore. It is important that building users of all abilities can enter and experience the building in the same way with facilities that accommodate and cater for all individuals. It is also important that the building reflects the DDA and Equality Act policies of the client.

All entrances are provided at level access with automatic or assisted opening doors.

Lift access is available to all public and private floors, all within a manageable travel distance where possible.

Ability appropriate toilet and change facilities are provided throughout the facility, located within a manageable travel distance.

1.5 metre wide accessible routes are designed-in throughout the building with access to all appropriate parts of the building. 2 metre wide accessible routes are designed-in for routes likely to be taken by sports wheelchairs.

Pool hoist facilities are provided for the main pool and dedicated wheelchair parking and wheelchair viewing areas have been provided throughout the new leisure centre.

An assistant dog rest area has been integrated into the design, located and overseen by the main reception. Reception seating and suitable waiting areas have also been developed.

Vehicle Access and Parking

Vehicle access will be retained to the west of the site via Olding Road. Here, hard surface car parking will be increased to include the current depot yard area with additional car decks over the existing footprint of Olding Road car park. A new vehicle access will be provided from the east, to the proposed deck car park via Beetons Way.

Additional surface parking, coach and bus drop off will be provided on the existing leisure centre car park and, once demolished, on the site of the existing leisure centre building.

The existing West Suffolk House car park will retain access from Beetons Way and will be adapted to form a secure vehicle compound – adequate visitor and disabled parking spaces will be provided within good access to West Suffolk House.

A small amount of off-site parking, a short walk from the site, will provide additional staff parking facilities further north, off Beetons Way. This new, surface car park will take the place of the old Warehouse Clearance Superstore on Anglian Lane.

Overall, around 1450 parking bays will be provided across the development, inclusive of a proportionate number of electric car charging points for staff and visitors to utilise. This accords with the adopted parking standards for Suffolk.

Cycling

The majority of access by cyclists will be from the Town Centre, via the retained Beetons Way cycle path or through the college site. Extensive cycle parking is proposed along the northern edge of the proposed hub with level access from the existing cycle path and easy access to the main, north entrance. Located along the active frontage of occupied office space and covered by CCTV, this provides a secure and welcoming cycle parking facility.

Pedestrians

Principal pedestrian access to the new development is encouraged via Beetons Way and the West Suffolk College site – providing the most efficient route to and from the town centre. The south entrance to the hub and leisure building will be prominent to those arriving via these routes, with stepped and accessible access taking you down from Beetons Way. Alternative pedestrian access is provided along Western Way, where a large, open, public plaza welcomes visitors to the north entrance. Existing and additional, controlled crossings will provide a safe approach to the new development.

Abbotsgate House

Hollow Road

Bury St Edmunds

Suffolk

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