

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.

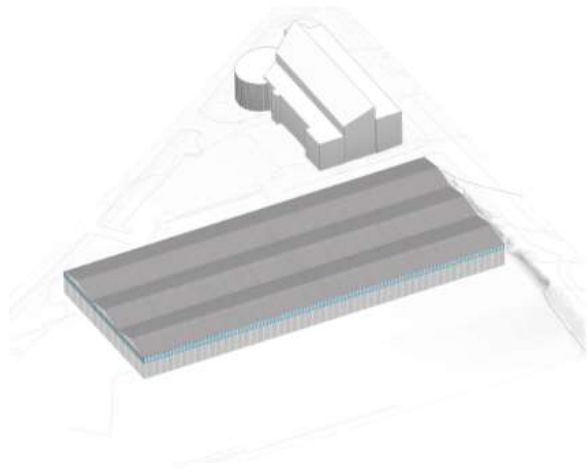
The project also means that the current leisure centre and pool, which needs millions of pounds of improvements before having to be rebuilt anyway, could be moved within the site to integrate with health services, providing extra parking and new facilities.

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.

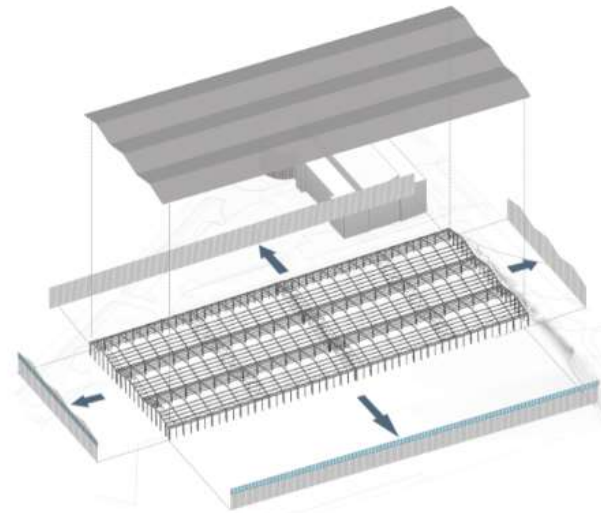
At this stage, the design of the scheme is very much in development but, to assist the business case and, if that is approved, a planning application, an informal public consultation is now being held to seek people's views on the scheme.

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

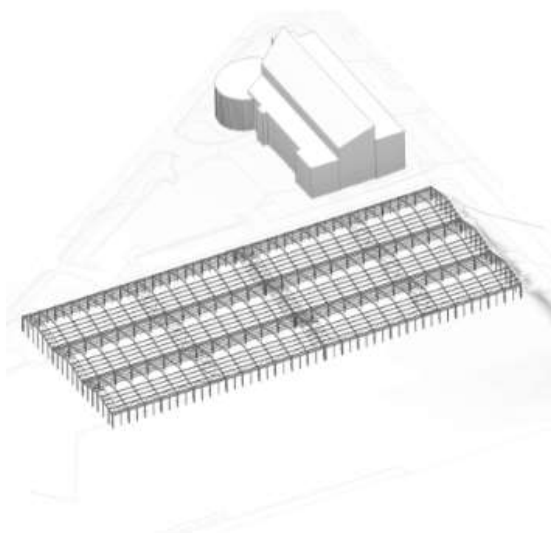
Concept Development



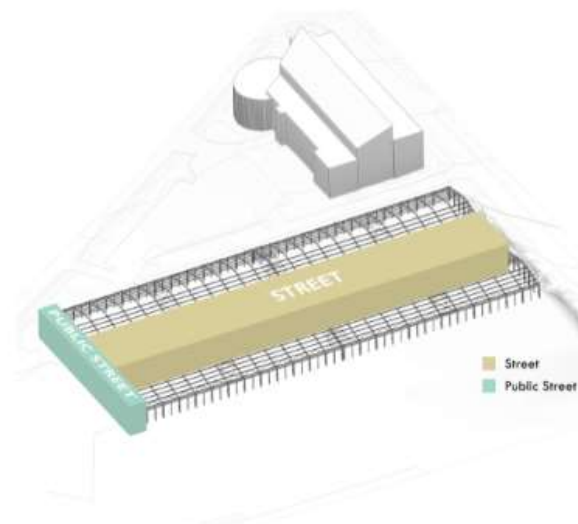
Existing depot building



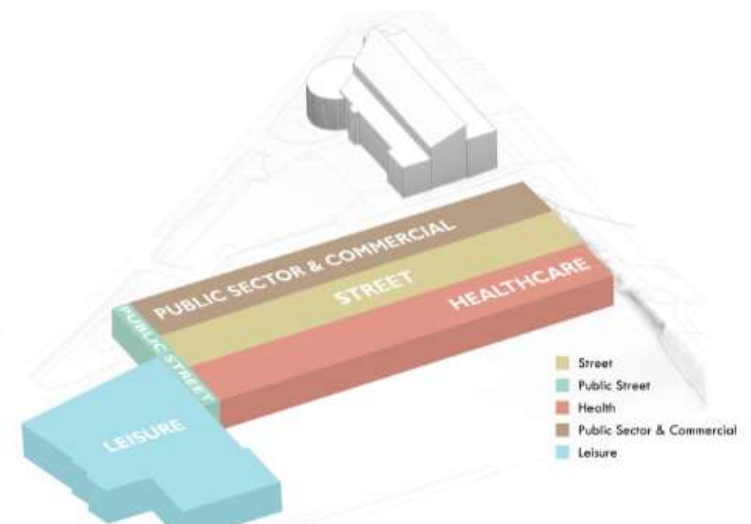
Existing cladding stripped off



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

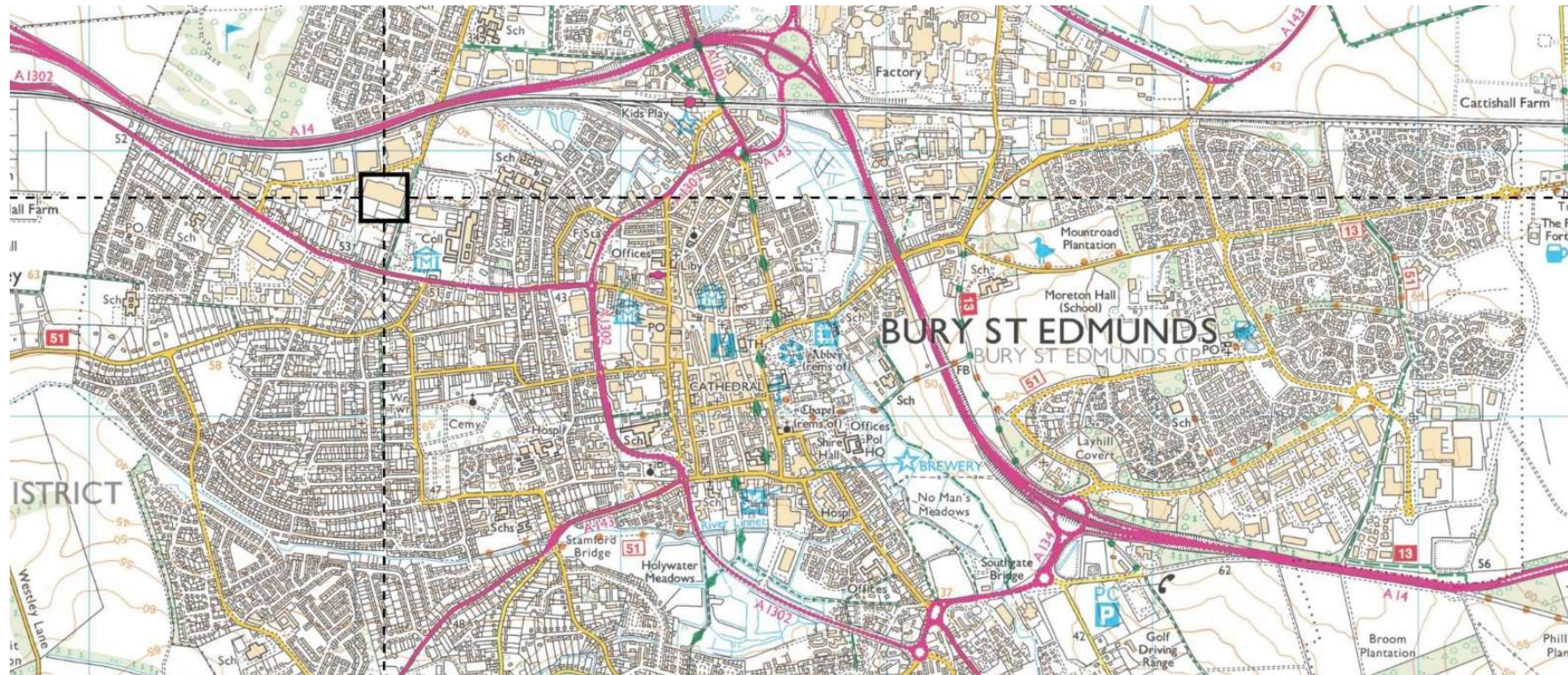
Site Location and Context

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.

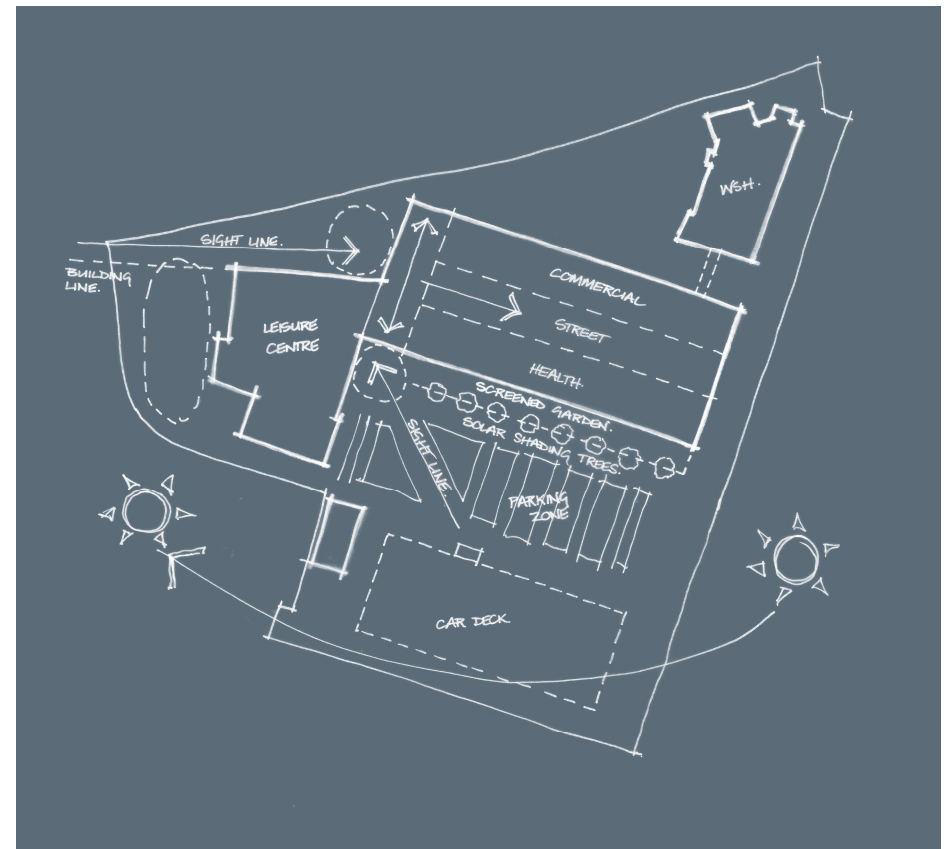
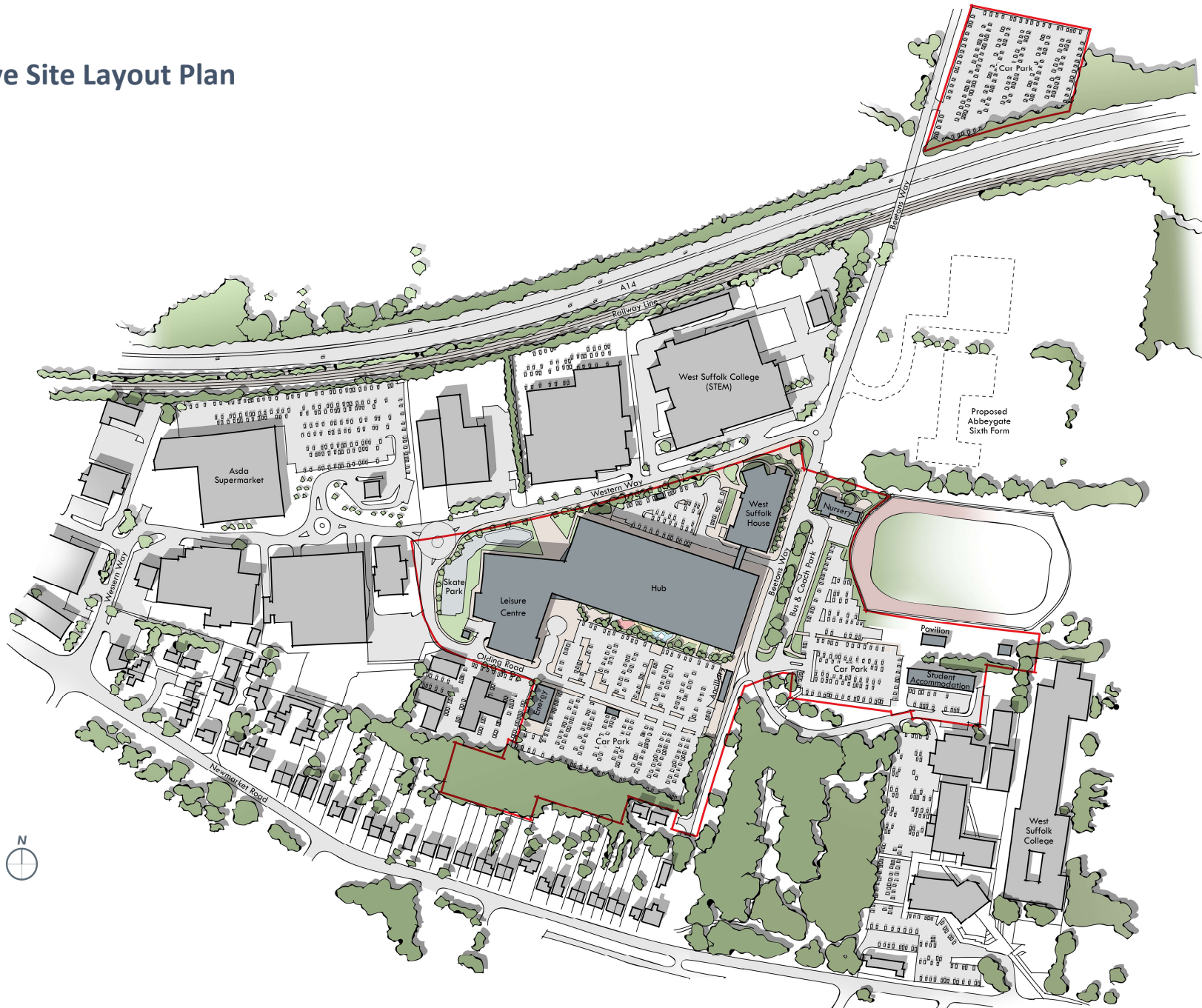


Image of the initial concept for the site layout

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

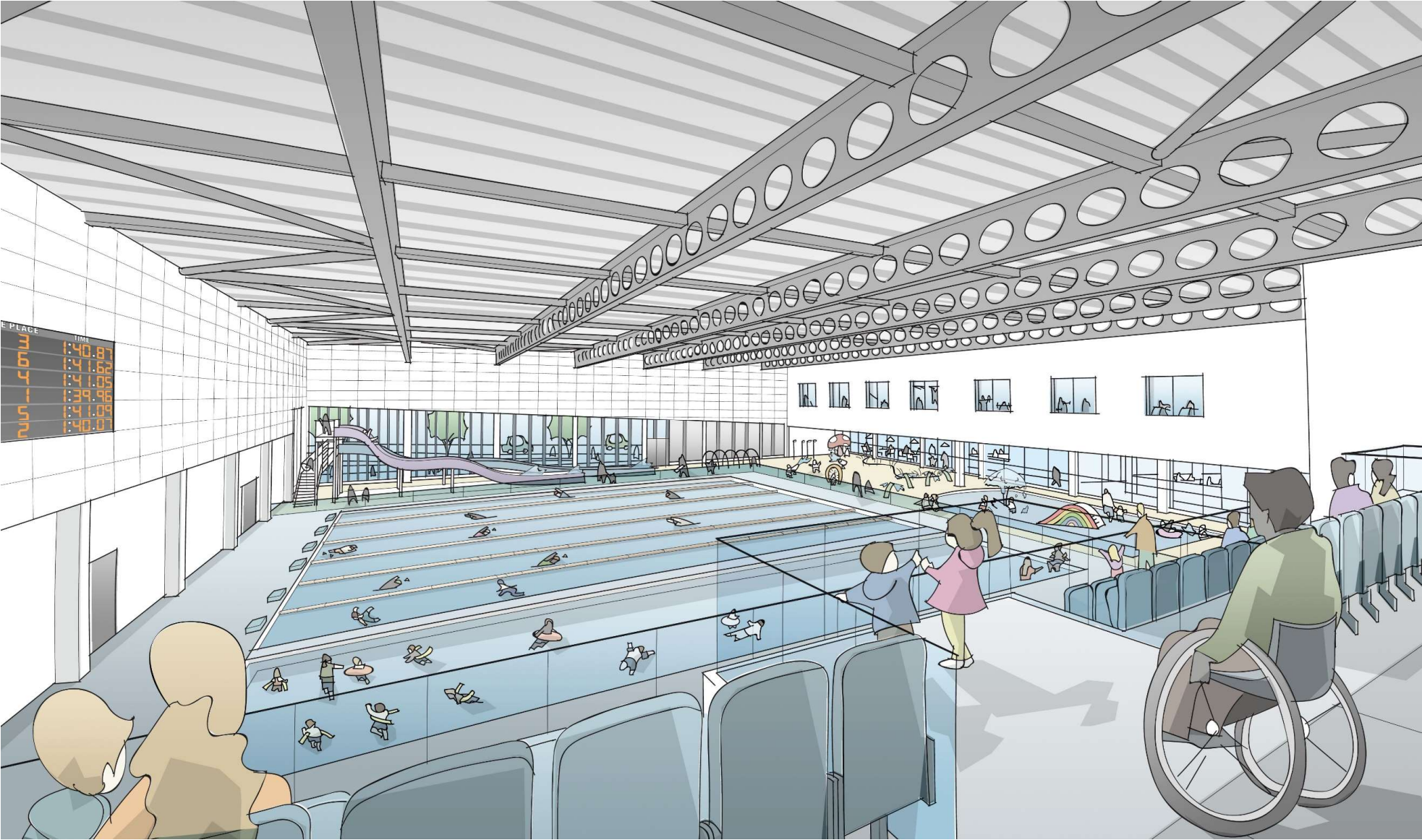


Image of the new pool hall