



The LGBT+ Centre
Public Consultation
15 May 2018 3pm-6pm





01 Introduction

The Proud Trust

The Proud Trust is a life-saving and life-enhancing organisation that helps LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual & trans) young people empower themselves to make a positive change for themselves and their communities.

This is done through youth groups, peer support, managing the LGBT+ Centre for Manchester, delivering training and events, campaigns, undertaking research and creating resources.

LGBT+ people in Manchester consider the Centre a 'safe haven' and 'life-line of support'. The management of the LGBT+ Centre, under The Proud Trust, has been in place since November 2012.

The Vision

Our vision for the new LGBT+ centre is to make it a vibrant hub of LGBT+ life for Manchester, especially for those who do not access / face barriers to accessing other services in the city and the commercial 'Gay Scene'. The new building will provide office spaces, meeting and event spaces for youth and community groups as well as the wider community. The centre will be a resource for the LGBT+ communities, including a library, and skilled staff providing information and support. The heart of the new building will be Sidney St Community Café. This is a dry (alcohol free) social space for everyone to enjoy, and will provide soft contact for LGBT+ people who want to learn more about LGBT+ life, seek support, or feel a sense of belonging to the LGBT+ community.

We aim to create a safe environment for young people to improve their lives, offering volunteering and peer mentoring opportunities and preparing them for adulthood.

A History of The LGBT+ Centre

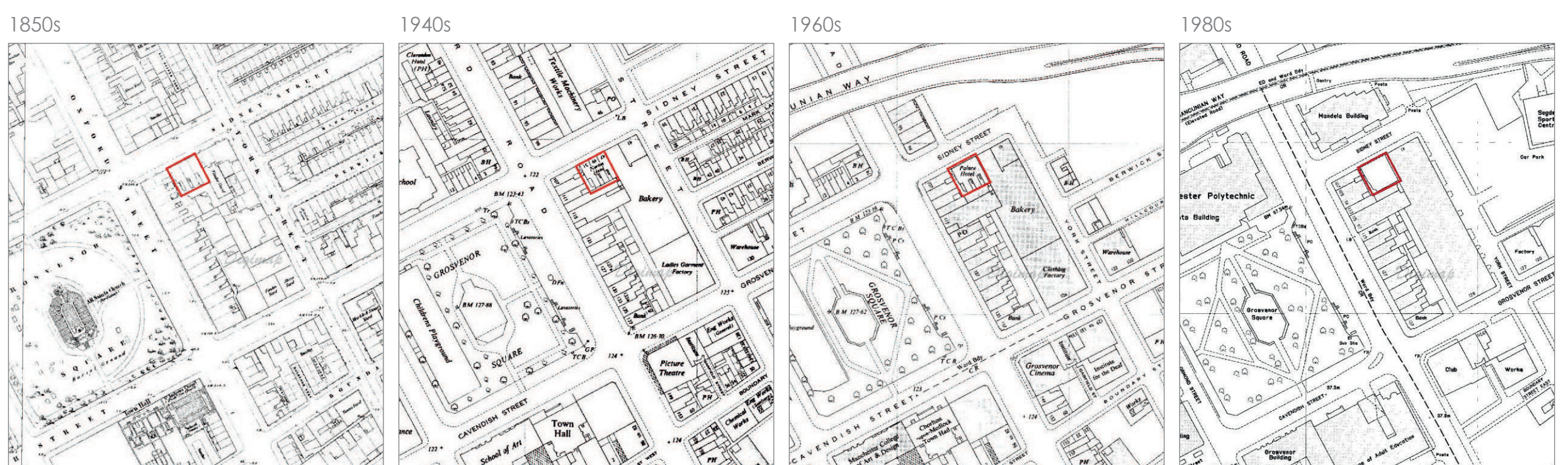
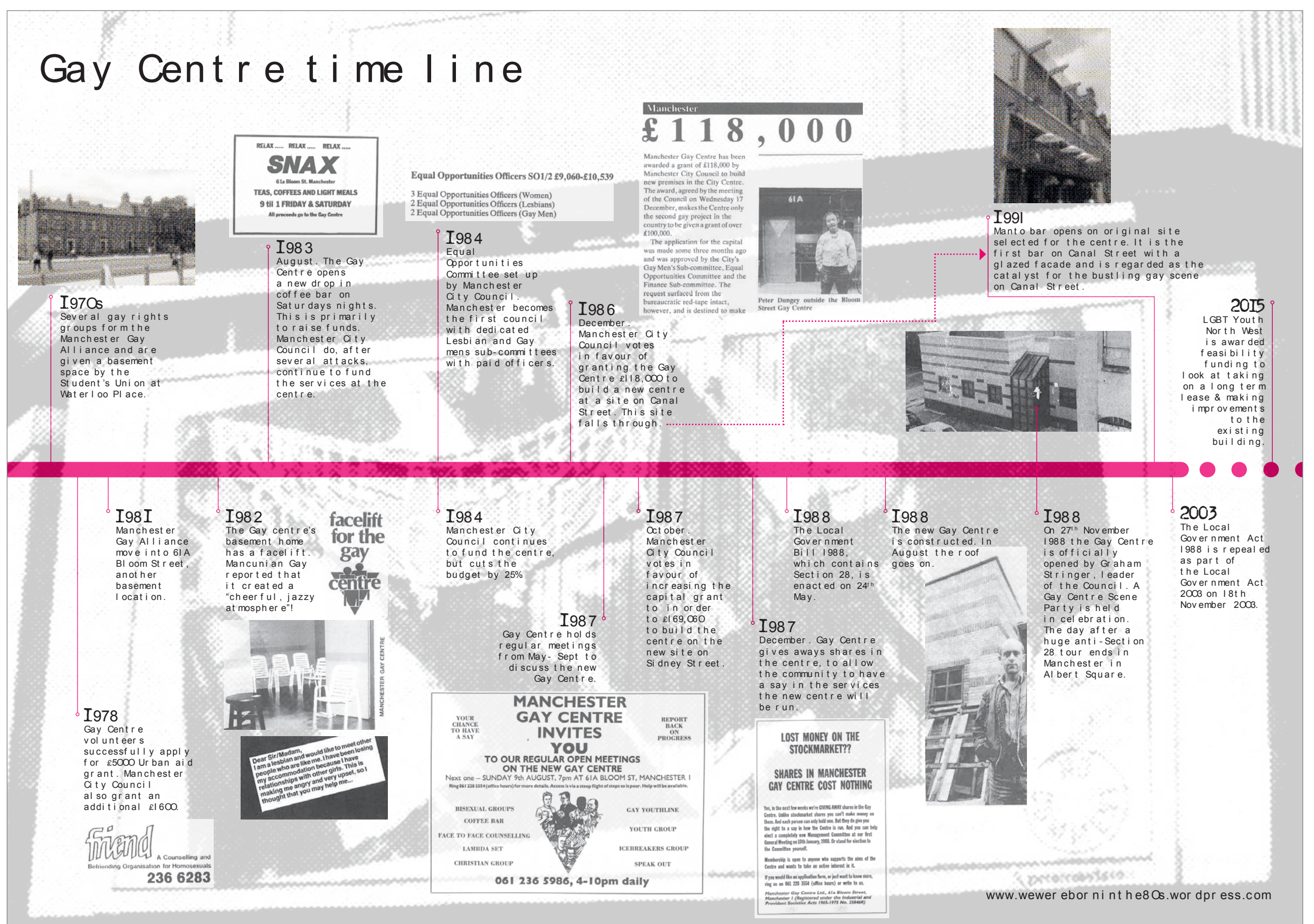
This site has been the home of what was known as the Gay Centre since 1988. This site was specially selected for a purpose-designed centre for the gay community by Manchester City Council.

The first Gay Centre in Manchester was in a dingy basement in Waterloo Place on Oxford Road in the 1970s, a space granted to various activist groups campaigning for gay rights by the Students' Union. During this period, services included counselling and information phone services run by volunteers, befriending groups for gay men and lesbians, as well as general information services.

In 1978 an Urban Aid grant application was made to the city council for £5,000, (around £36,630 in today's money) by one of the group's volunteers, and in 1981 the groups moved into another basement on Bloom Street, parallel with Canal Street. From 1981 – 1988 it accommodated a huge host of services including several phone lines such as Lesbian Link, Manchester Gay Switchboard, and "Friend" as well as having meeting rooms. It ran a youth club and launched a late night café called SNAX to bring in much needed revenue. The staff had first identified a need for a larger and more permanent home in their first annual report, and in 1986, the council granted the funding to build a Centre. Originally planned for a site on Canal Street, when this site fell through, the council looked further afield and found Sidney Street.

From May 1987, the group held open meetings to discuss the new premises. These were held at Bloom St. It is thought that the City Architect and representatives of the gay men's sub-committee would have attended these meetings, in order to understand the brief from the community members and existing users of the Centre. The City Architect then drew up plans and submitted a planning application to the Local Planning Authority. There were some objections to the planning authority launched by the Covenant Community Church, but permission was granted and the Centre started being built in Summer 1988. Following an opening party on November 27th 1988, the Centre has been offering services such as youth groups and community group meeting space, ever since.

The story of the Centre's history is offered regularly as a walking tour during various festivals throughout the year. Please see www.wewereborninthe80s.wordpress.com for more information.



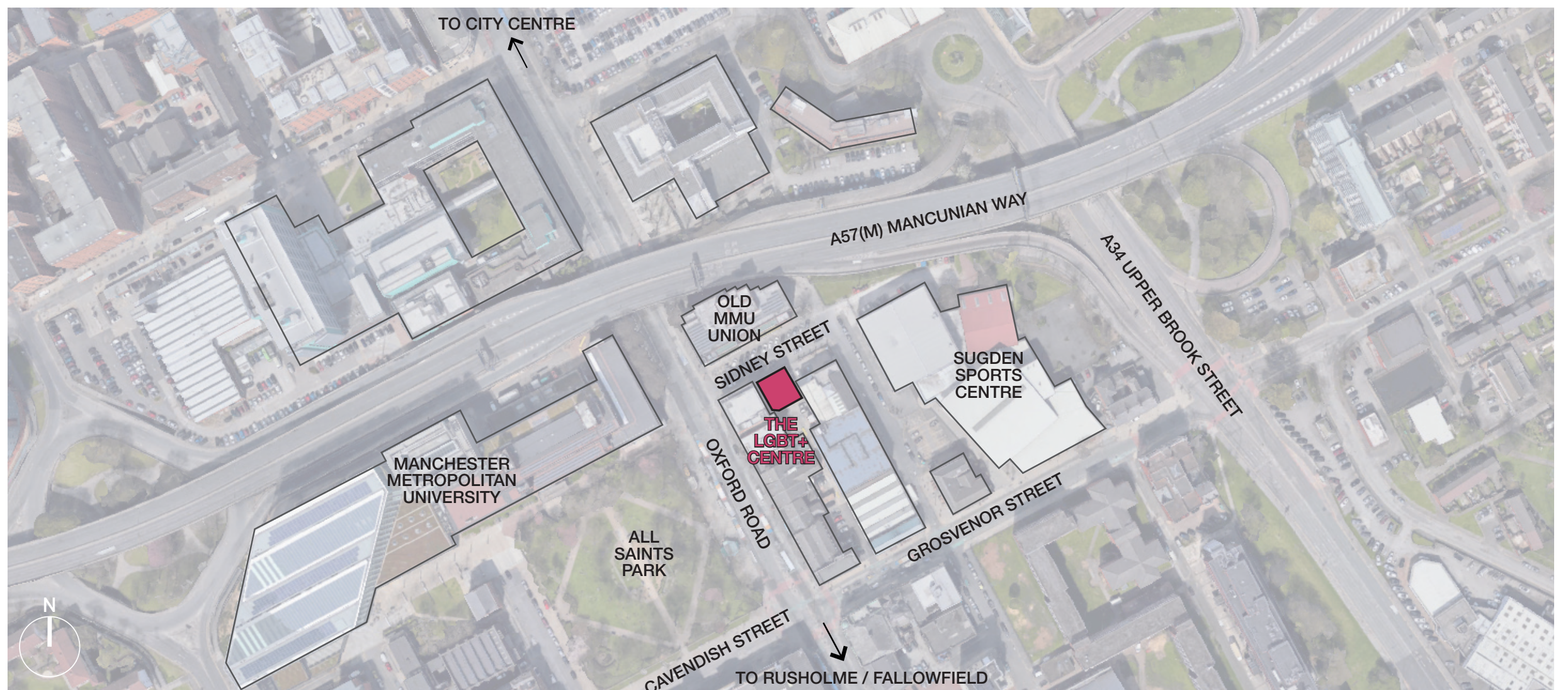


01 Introduction (continued)

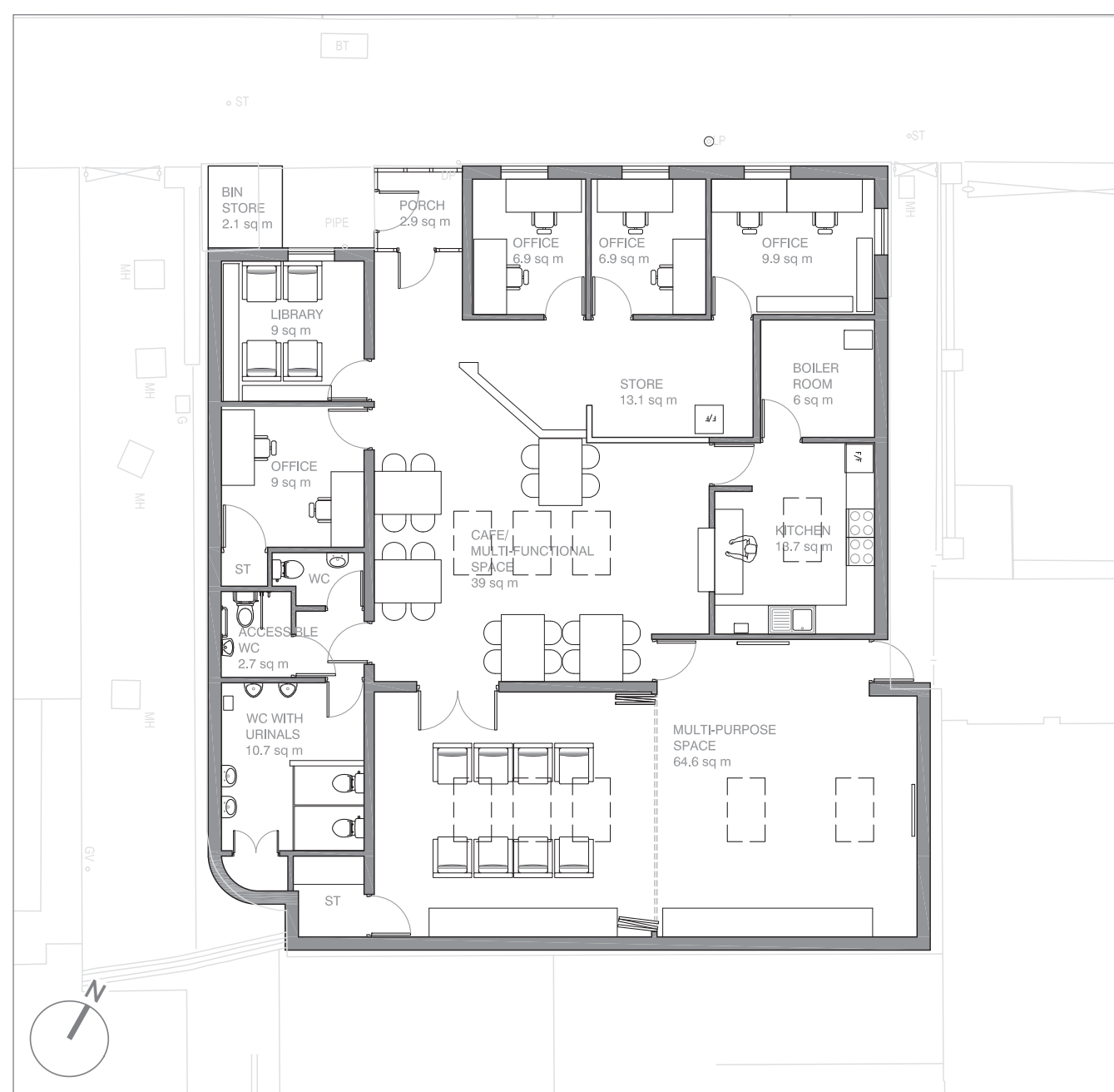
Site Location & Existing Building

The existing LGBT+ Centre is located on Sidney Street, just off Oxford Road, a major arterial route for Manchester and the setting for two of the city's universities. The single storey building was designed and built in 1988 by Manchester City Council's City Architects Department. The Centre is ideally located close to all city centre transport routes.

The existing building is mostly 'land-locked', and the front elevation is built to the back of pavement. The neighbouring buildings consist of a six storey residential block, with cafe and shop on the ground floor and basement, and the Manchester Islamic Centre which is four storeys tall. The building opposite the site previously accommodated the MMU's student union, but is now due to be demolished.



Location Plan - Image courtesy of Google Maps



Existing LGBT+ Centre ground floor plan



Sidney Street elevation



Yellow and blue brick facade



Cafe space



View from Oxford Road



Cafe kitchen



Activity space

02 Design Process

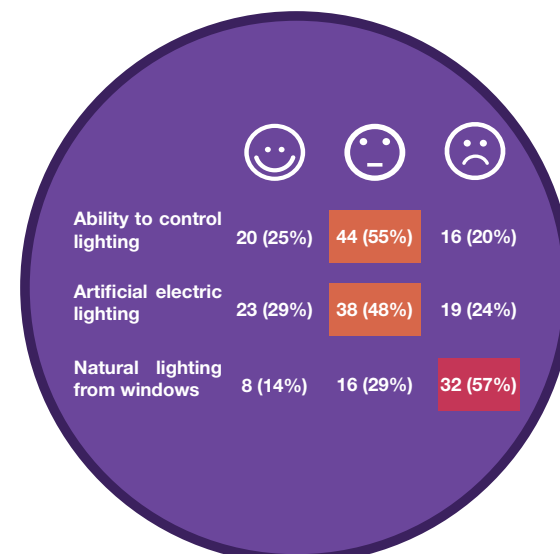
Co-Design & Consultation

User involvement in decisions about services is key in The Proud Trust's overall development, and has been critical in the development of the Proud Trust's vision, brief, and the design of the proposal for a new LGBT+ Centre.

The Proud Trust have engaged over 500 people in consultation and co-design work, ranging from young people, community members, parents of people we work with, neighbours, local businesses, faith leaders, Local Authority stakeholders and the general public.



User Workshop 01
Aug 2013
Initial 'Hopes and Fears' workshop with user group representatives.



User Survey 01
Jan 2015
How users and staff felt about the existing LGBT+ Centre building, and about possible improvements.



Client Building Visits
Jan 2015 - Dec 2016
Visits to community centres, Pupil Referral Units, cafés, and commercial kitchens, to help inform design decisions.



User Workshop 02
Mar 2015
Briefing workshop with staff & users to discuss the current building, and to discuss possibilities for a new build.



User Workshop 03
Sep 2015
Workshop with user group to discuss and develop ideas for the external appearance of the new building.



Public Consultation 01
Dec 2015
Public exhibition of initial proposals to staff, users, neighbours.



User Workshop 04
Sep 2017
Workshop with user group to discuss the revised plans and elevations, and potential materials and colours.



User Workshop 05
Apr 2018
Design workshop with kitchen staff to develop the new kitchen layout at 1:1 scale using paper templates.





03 Proposed External Views

Materials & Appearance

Following discussions at the various consultation events, a gold coloured cladding has been proposed on the upper levels. This will give the LGBT+ Centre a strong, loud, and proud presence, but with a neutrality that has been suggested by many consultation participants as more open and welcoming.

At ground floor level, a mixture of brick tones and patterns is proposed, providing a hardwearing and resilient finish next to the pavement. This will include reclaimed yellow bricks from the current building. Patterns in the arrangement of this brick will provide visual interest upon closer inspection, with raised elements and indentations creating a tactile and engaging surface.

The Sidney Street cafe will have an increased presence on Sidney Street, with a wide bifold window to the seating area. This will also increase the overlooking onto Sidney Street, helping to make it a less intimidating place to walk and to spend time.

A full height parapet at roof level provides privacy for the roof terrace, and for any events taking place there. Perforations in the cladding of the parapet will provide views and openings responding to the context of the site. A piece of writing cut into the cladding of the parapet will represent LGBT+ history in Manchester.

Scale & Massing

The proposed building is two storeys, however the full height parapet and stair and lift access at roof level will give the appearance of a three storey building. This will give the LGBT+ Centre a better presence on Sidney Street, and a more appropriate scale given the context of its neighbouring buildings and its city-centre location.

Due to the constraints of the site, the footprint of the proposed LGBT+ Centre will be up to the site boundary. However, it will step back at ground level to express the different materials, and to soften the threshold at the entrance of the building.

View from Oxford Road



View of current building

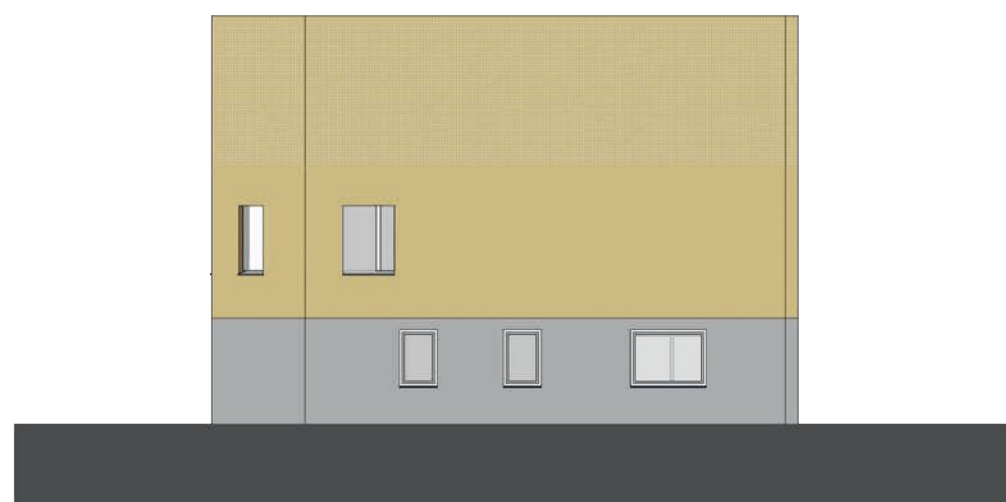


View of proposed building

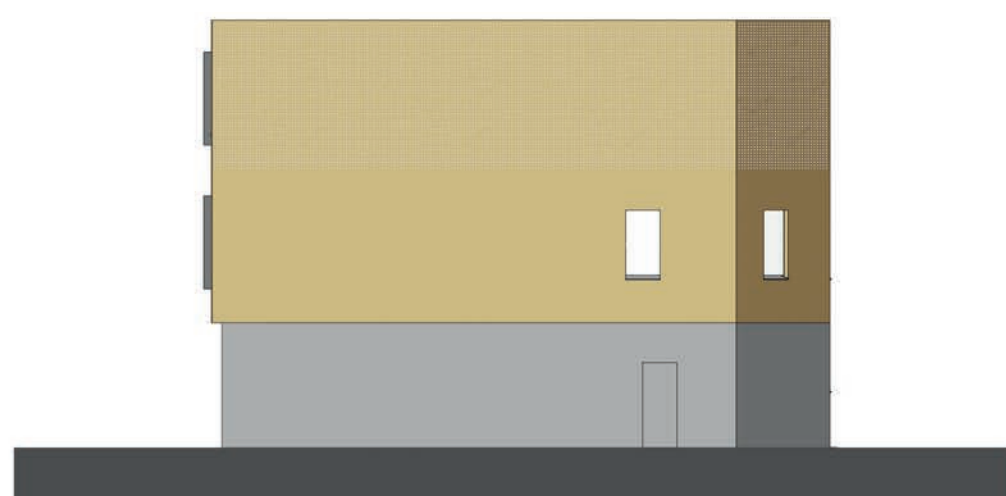
Elevations



East elevation of proposed building



South elevation of proposed building



West elevation of proposed building



North elevation of proposed building

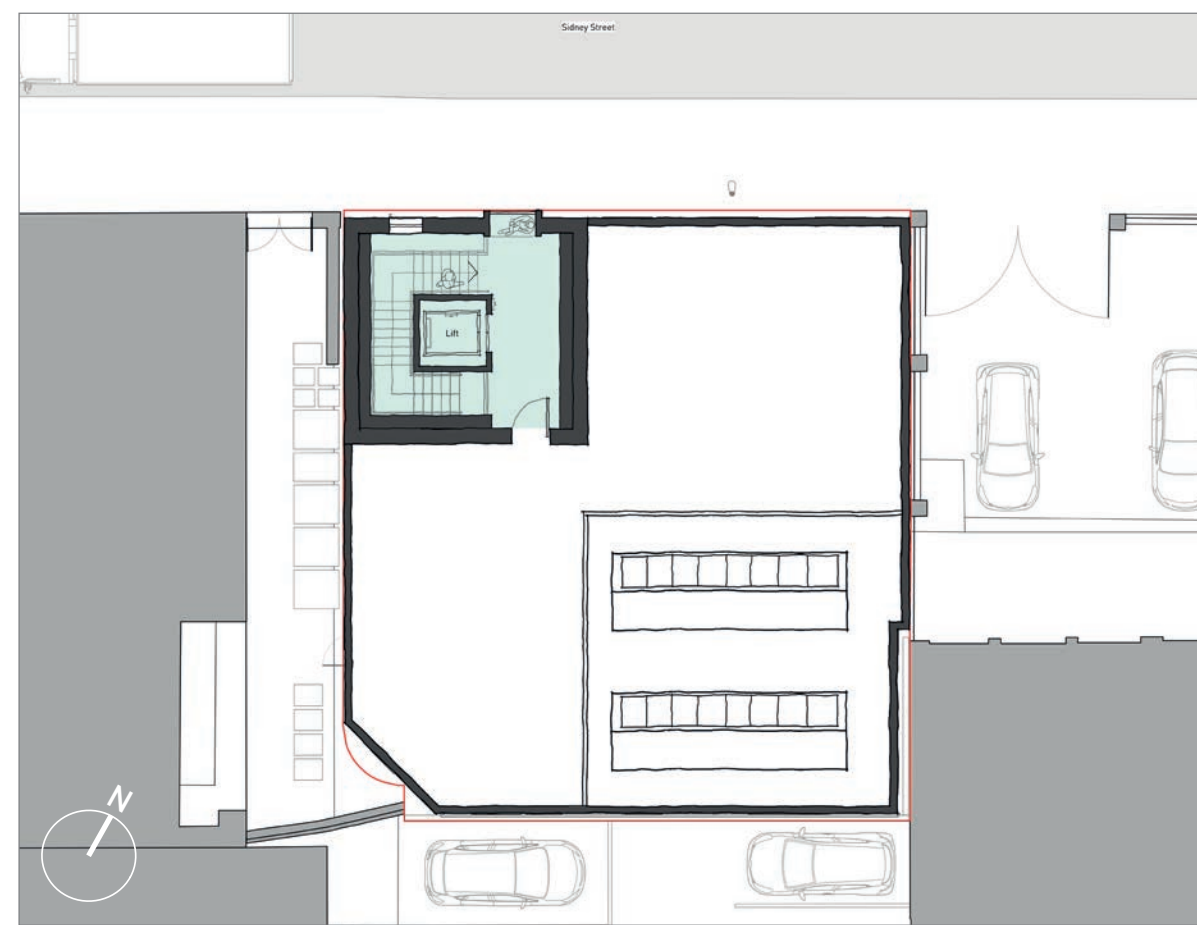




04 Proposed Plans

Roof Plan

The proposed roof level of the LGBT+ Centre will be a space to be used by staff and user groups, and will include some planting and greenery.



Key

- Circulation space
- Workspaces
- Service spaces
- Meeting and event space
- Sidney Street Cafe
- Kitchen
- Library

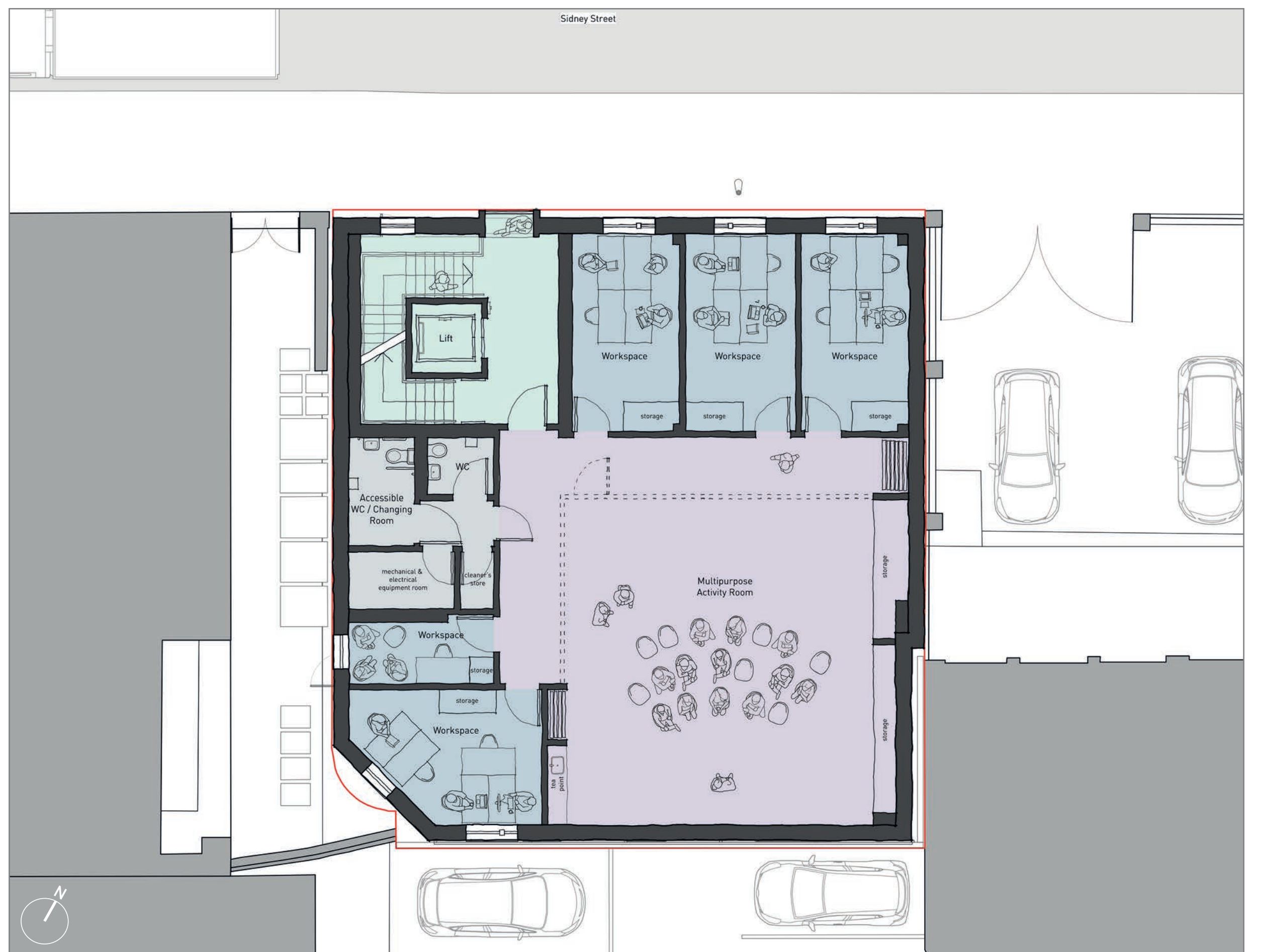
First Floor Plan

The proposed first floor of the LGBT+ Centre will accommodate charity and staff offices, toilets, and a large multipurpose activity space that can be closed off for privacy using movable walls.

The multipurpose activity space will be top lit with skylights to avoid any overlooking onto the adjacent apartments, and allowing the walls to be utilised in performances, projections, and exhibitions.

There will be large windows onto Sidney Street, providing a sense of activity to the street and to bring natural light into the workspaces. Windows onto the side elevations are limited, with the only two facing the apartments on the southwest of the building being frosted to obscure any overlooking. No windows will overlook the Manchester Islamic Centre or its car park.

There will be an accessible toilet on both the first floor and the ground floor of the LGBT+ Centre. The accessible toilet on the first floor will also provide space for changing.



Ground Floor Plan

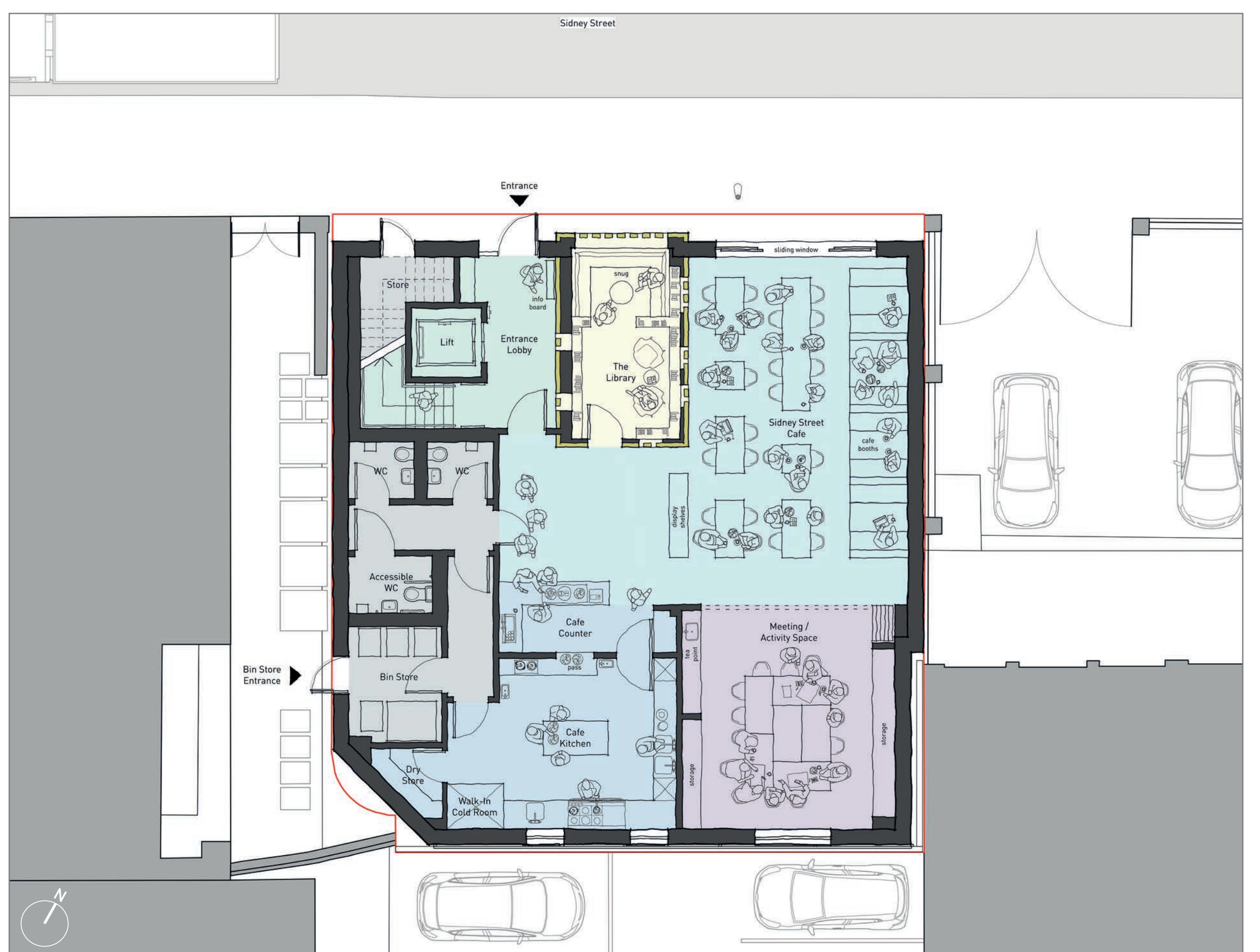
The proposed ground floor layout of the LGBT+ Centre will accommodate the Sidney Street cafe, toilets, the café kitchen, the library, and a flexible meeting / activity space that can be closed off with a movable wall or opened up to the cafe space.

The library (shown in yellow) sits at the heart of the plan, and offers a quieter space to sit, read, and reflect. This will be wrapped in the reclaimed yellow bricks from the current building as a memory of its history and its significance in the pioneering of LGBT+ rights in Manchester.

The cafe space will form part of the building's frontage onto Sidney Street, with a range of seating provided from communal tables to more private booths.

The kitchen is located to the rear of the building, with its counter opposite the main entrance. The layout has been developed as part of a staff design workshop, and includes an island worktop, dry store and a walk-in fridge.

The bin store will be accessed via the passageway alongside the west of the building, with the bins stored internally, and moved to Sidney Street for collection only.



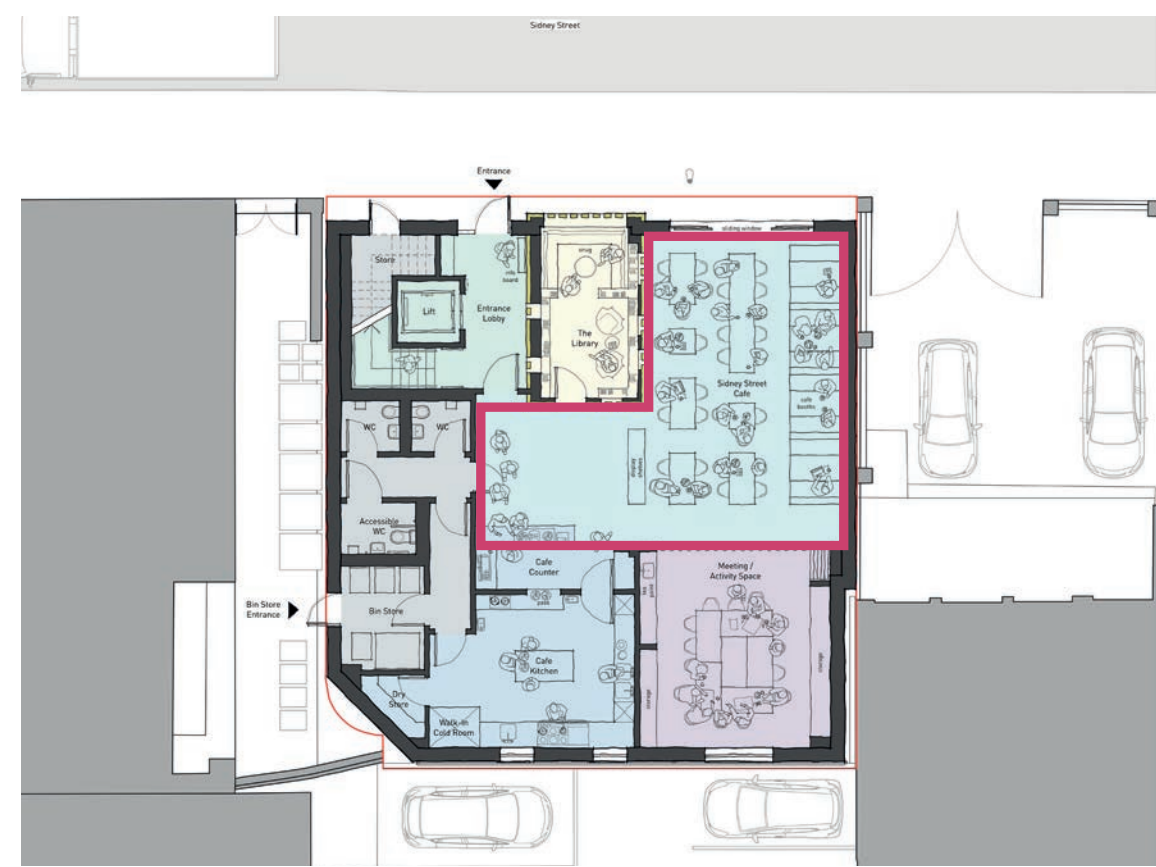
05 Proposed Internal Views

The Library

The library sits at the heart of the plan, and offers a quieter space to sit, read, and reflect. This will be wrapped in the reclaimed yellow bricks from the current building as a memory of its history and its significance in the pioneering of LGBT+ rights in Manchester.

Sidney Street Cafe

The cafe space will form part of the building's frontage onto Sidney Street, with a range of seating provided from communal tables to more private booths.



Ground floor plan



Visualisation of the Sidney Street Cafe

Multipurpose Activity Space

The multipurpose activity space will be top lit with skylights to avoid any overlooking onto the adjacent apartments, and allowing the walls to be utilised in performances, projections, and exhibitions.

Movable walls allow the space to be closed off to offer privacy from the adjacent workspaces.



Ground floor plan



Visualisations of the multipurpose activity space