

THE *NEW* LGBT CENTRE



ABOUT THE PROUD TRUST

The Proud Trust (formerly LGBT Youth North West) runs several groups for young people, including Lesbian and Gay Youth Manchester (LGYM), and Afternoon TEA (which stands for Trans Education and Action). They also run Fusion, a group targeted at LGBT+ Black and Asian Minoritised Ethnic (BAME) young people, the Young Women's Project which aims to improve the health and wellbeing of lesbian and bisexual women, and a number of other LGBT youth groups throughout Greater Manchester. New projects and events are being developed all the time.

The Proud Trust's Charitable Objectives are for the benefit of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children and young people in the North West of England:

- (1) To preserve and protect the physical and mental health of such people, in particular but not exclusively through the provision of information, guidance, emotional support and social meeting spaces.
- (2) The promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit by:
 - (a) the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.
 - (b) advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity.

Their key beneficiaries are young LGBT people aged 8 – 25.

Their secondary beneficiaries are:

- Family, friends and allies of LGBT young people
- Professionals who work with children and young people
- Young people who need to know more about sexuality and gender diversity
- Adult members of the LGBT community

The organisation is head-quartered at The Joyce Layland LGBT Centre, Sidney Street. The Centre has been operating for 27 years. Staff and volunteers have been involved in the management and governance of the centre since it opened.



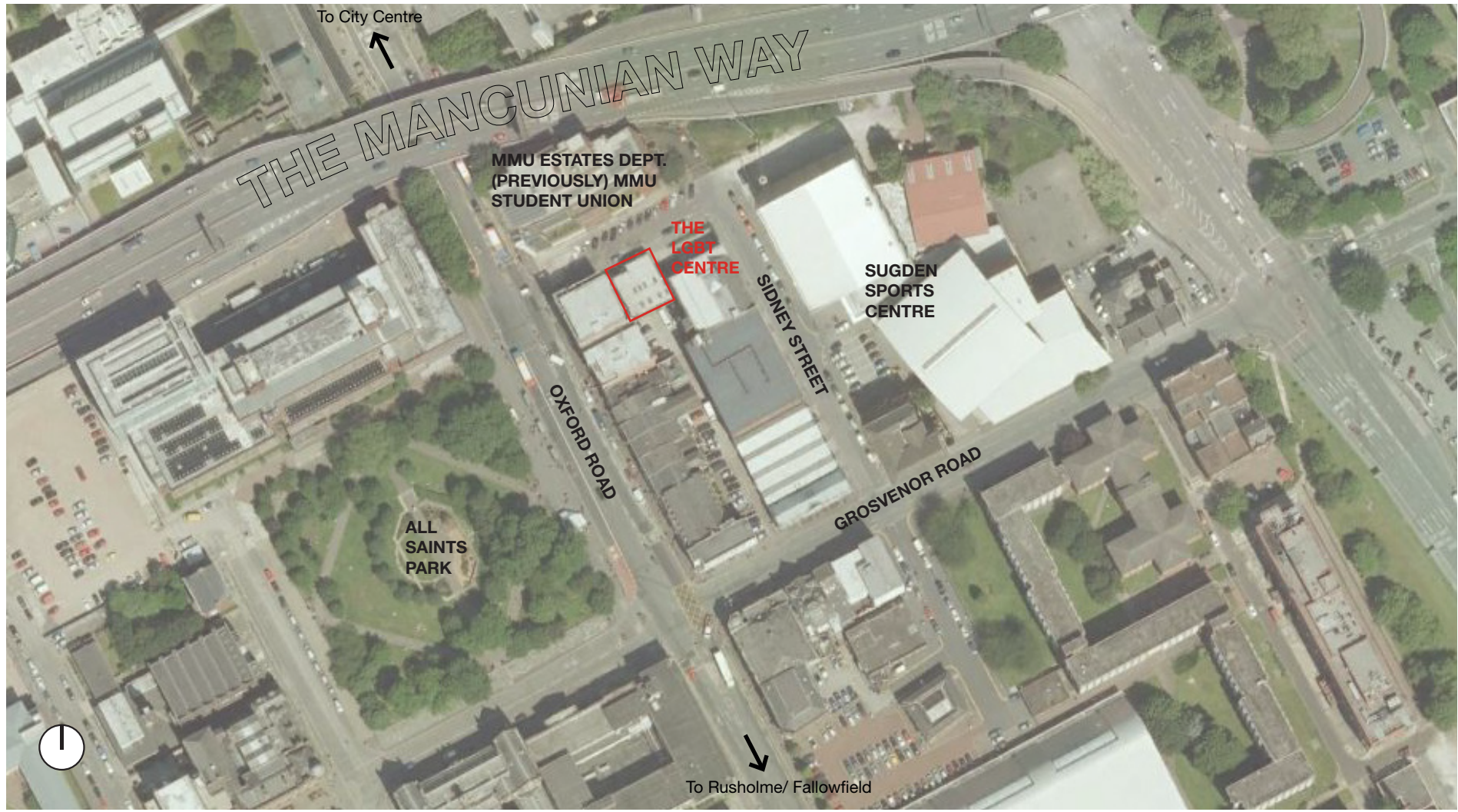
INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

The LGBT Centre is located on Sidney Street, just off Oxford Road which is 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 located in the heart of Manchester's Oxford Road Corridor, ideally placed close to all city centre transport routes. It has 15 regular user groups that meet on the premises and is in use for 70 hours per week.

"The LGBT Centre is a space for young people and adults that doesn't exist anywhere else, for people who feel they don't fit in elsewhere - they can be welcome here. It's accessible and ideal for organisations who have limited budget. The outreach work we do is very important and it provides a hub for that. It's outside of the village for groups who want to be away from there, but not a million miles away, so not isolated. It's a dry space and a safe space for LGBTIQ young people. Having the café gives us a new level of accessibility and a pathway for 'soft contact' to the services and provisions we provide without turning up 'cold' to a new group, they can begin to feel comfortable in the space before some make the transition to service user."

The Proud Trust's Current Building Use Statement

SURROUNDING AREA



THE PROCESS (SO FAR)

From 2013 to 2015 LGBT Youth North West (now The Proud Trust) were awarded feasibility funding by The DCLG. This funding was awarded to look at negotiating a long-term lease with the Council along with getting a better understanding of the existing building and the potential of refurbishing or extending the building in order for the organisation to continue to offer services to a range of community groups. The group commissioned an architect, a structural engineer and a quantity surveyor, to assist with these feasibility studies.

Currently the building comprises of two large multi-use spaces, a community kitchen which trades as Sidney St Cafe, four small shared office spaces and a community resource library. It is 'land-locked' on all four sides, and is built up on the front elevation to the back of pavement. Adjacent buildings are much taller at 4 and 6 storeys.

Through site investigations and trial pits the Structural Engineer reported on the existing structure of the building. Critically he reported that the design and depth of the existing foundations meant that it would not be possible to accommodate additional storeys to extend the existing building. This means, in order to create additional space, that The Proud Trust requires the existing building demolished, and a new building designed and built to replace it.

In an initial workshop, users and staff expressed an interest in the building accommodating a wide variety of services, including an alternative education provision, emergency accommodation for homeless young people, community meeting space, a community cafe etc. We worked hard to understand the implications of each of these uses and have created a proposal which we feel best meets the needs of the Centre's existing users, and which looks forward to ensure it will meet the needs of future users.

It was clear that the brief needed to be shared by staff, volunteers and users alike. To inform this brief we undertook the following pieces of work: a user survey, building visits, a walking tour was created looking back at the Centre's rich development history, wider engagement and several workshops were also carried out, along with technical studies and work by professional consultants.

The Centre has successfully negotiated a longer term lease which will enable the Centre to apply for capital funding to build the new Centre.



THE BRIEF

A four-storey building, comprising two storeys for a community centre including a community café, offices and group meeting spaces. The upper two storeys will provide residential accommodation.

Community Centre Meeting Spaces & Offices

The Centre will continue to offer meeting space and offices for different groups and organisations. There will be two community meeting spaces, one on the ground floor and one on the first floor. This will provide more flexibility and enable two groups to meet at the same time. The upstairs rooms will be available for conferences and events in the day, which will help bring in revenue for the organisation. There are 4 offices which will provide work space for various organisations, cafe staff and youth group workers and volunteers.

Sidney Street Cafe

The Sidney Street Cafe will continue to form a key part of the building. We intend to create a bigger commercial-style kitchen with an additional prep kitchen for the outside catering business, and a larger servery area. This will allow the cafe to continue opening up to 7 days a week with the support of volunteers, and enable the group to further develop their outside catering offer.

Residential Accommodation

The Proud Trust have recognised a need for accommodation for LGBT young people in Manchester. At least 136,000 young people approached their local authorities for help with homelessness last year, and only 1 in 8 of them were classed as "statutorily homeless". A recent report (by Albert Kennedy Trust) states that 24% of the youth homeless population identify as LGBT and many have faced familial rejection, abuse and violence. It is these 'non-priority' LGBT young homeless people who we will accommodate. We intend to build two 4-bedroom shared flats where people can live for up to 2 years. In this time they will be offered holistic support to help improve their lives and The Proud Trust will be working with a registered social landlord to support the young people's 'move on' opportunities.

Community Centre Spaces

Lobby/ Entrance space with hatch to office.
Larger Kitchen with separate prep room and servery.
Large Kitchen store and bin store.
2 x Large community activity spaces (with ability to reduce to smaller spaces).
Library with books and computers.
Storage for Furniture/ Youth Group/ User Groups.
4 x smaller offices to accommodate 2-3 people each.
Accessible, unisex toilets on every floor in separate rooms.
Outdoor space/ Roof Garden.

Residential Accommodation Spaces

2 x self contained apartments, 1 per floor
3-4 en-suite bedrooms, per floor
Shared kitchen, dining and living room per floor
External Amenity Space (balcony) per floor

Intangible Brief

Welcoming.
Inclusive.
Comfortable.
Light.
Robust and Durable.
Acoustic separation for offices and meeting rooms.
Larger spaces to feel spacious.
Smaller rooms to feel snug, private and cosy.
Allow natural light in, but still be secure.
Low maintenance costs.

This brief has helped us develop the proposal on these boards. We are aiming to put in a planning application for the building in January 2016 and need your support. Please fill in a questionnaire in to let us have any feedback on the design.

THE LGBT CENTRE'S HISTORY

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

The first Gay Centre, in Manchester was in a dingy basement on Oxford Road in the 1970s, when various activist groups campaigning for gay rights were given the space 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.

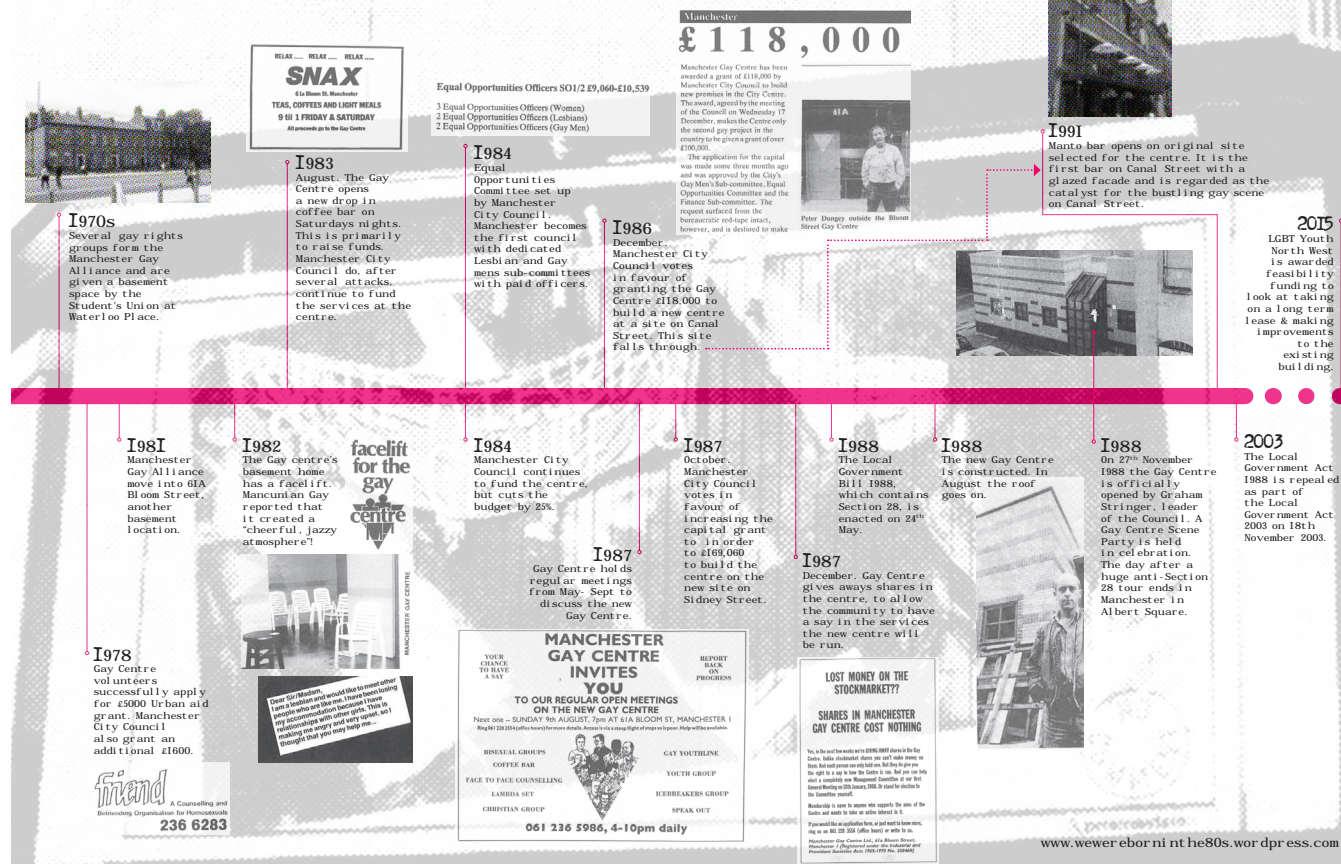
In 1978 an Urban Aid grant application was made to the city council for £5,000 (that's £36,630 in today's money) by one of the group's volunteers, and in 1981 the groups moved into another basement on Bloom Street, parallel with Canal Street. From 1981 – 1988 it accommodated a huge host of services including 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 to be built sometime in Summer 1988.

The Centre held an opening party on November 27th 1988 and has been open, offering services such as youth groups and community group meeting space, ever since.

Gay Centre time line



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SITE CONSTRAINTS

Site is "land-locked" on 3 sides.

Existing access and car park spaces constrain access at rear.

Existing Lamp Post.

The ground level slopes up from Sidney Street at the front to the car park at the rear.

The plan to the left shows the main site constraints. The proposed building must take these into account in the design. The map below shows the public transport links close to the building.

One of the challenges faced by the existing site is the adjacent residential windows on the 8th Day block. These windows have a right to light. We have to ensure the proposal does not overshadow these windows. There are also overlooking issues which the design must deal with as well.

EXISTING CENTRE

EXISTING CENTRE & ANGLE FOR DAYLIGHT

PROPOSED CENTRE

PROPOSED CENTRE & ANGLE FOR DAYLIGHT

INSPIRATIONAL IMAGES

Throughout the design process we have asked users, staff and volunteers to select images which they like, and look like the kind of place the new Centre should be like. Here is a selection of these images to give you an idea of how the interior of could feel like, and some of the external materials we are proposing to use.

INTERNAL SPACES

GROUND FLOOR: SIDNEY STREET CAFE

ROOF GARDEN

FIRST FLOOR COMMUNITY MEETING SPACE: VARIOUS CONFIGURATIONS

ANY SUGGESTIONS? USE THIS SPACE TO ADD YOUR THOUGHTS...

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EXTERNAL VISUALISATIONS

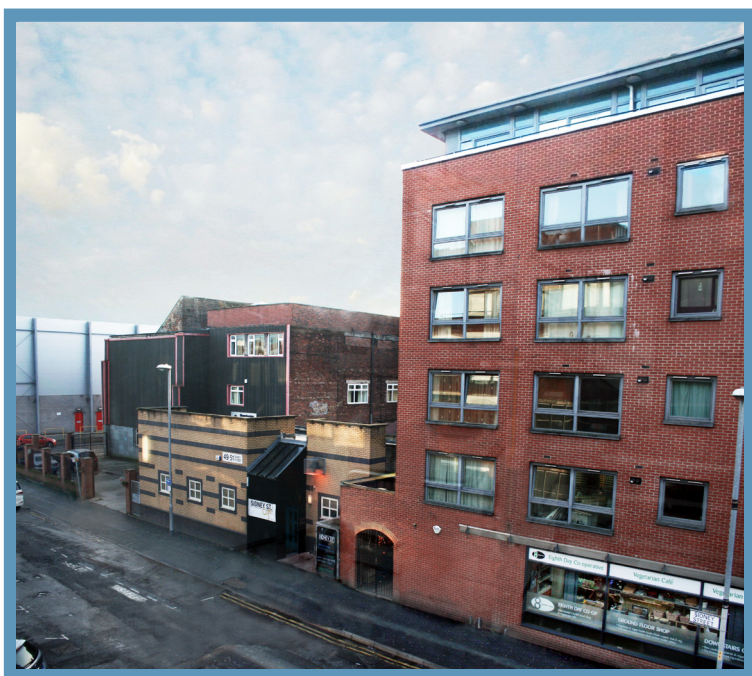
ANY SUGGESTIONS?
USE THIS SPACE TO ADD YOUR THOUGHTS...



VIEW FROM MANCUNIAN WAY



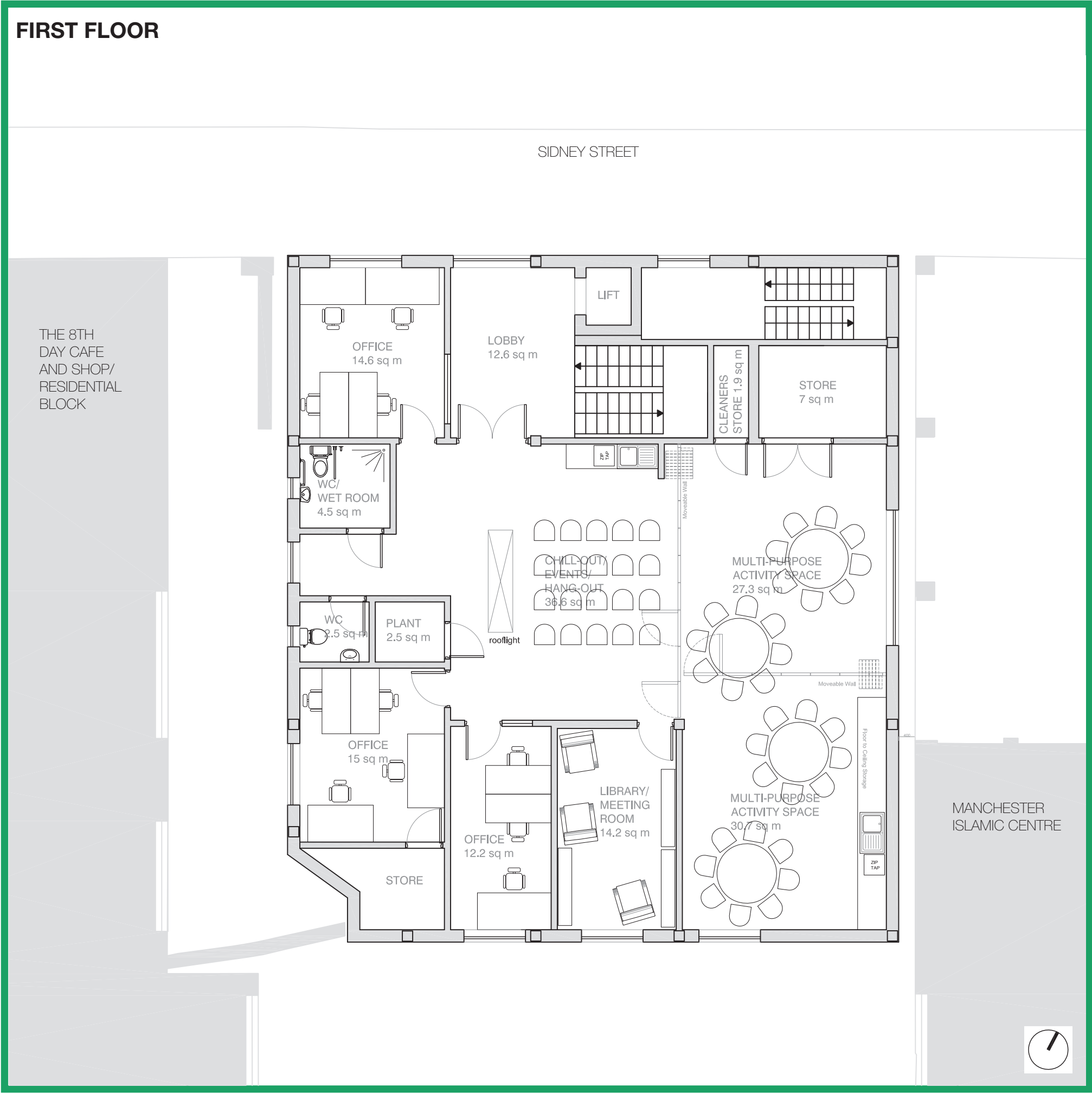
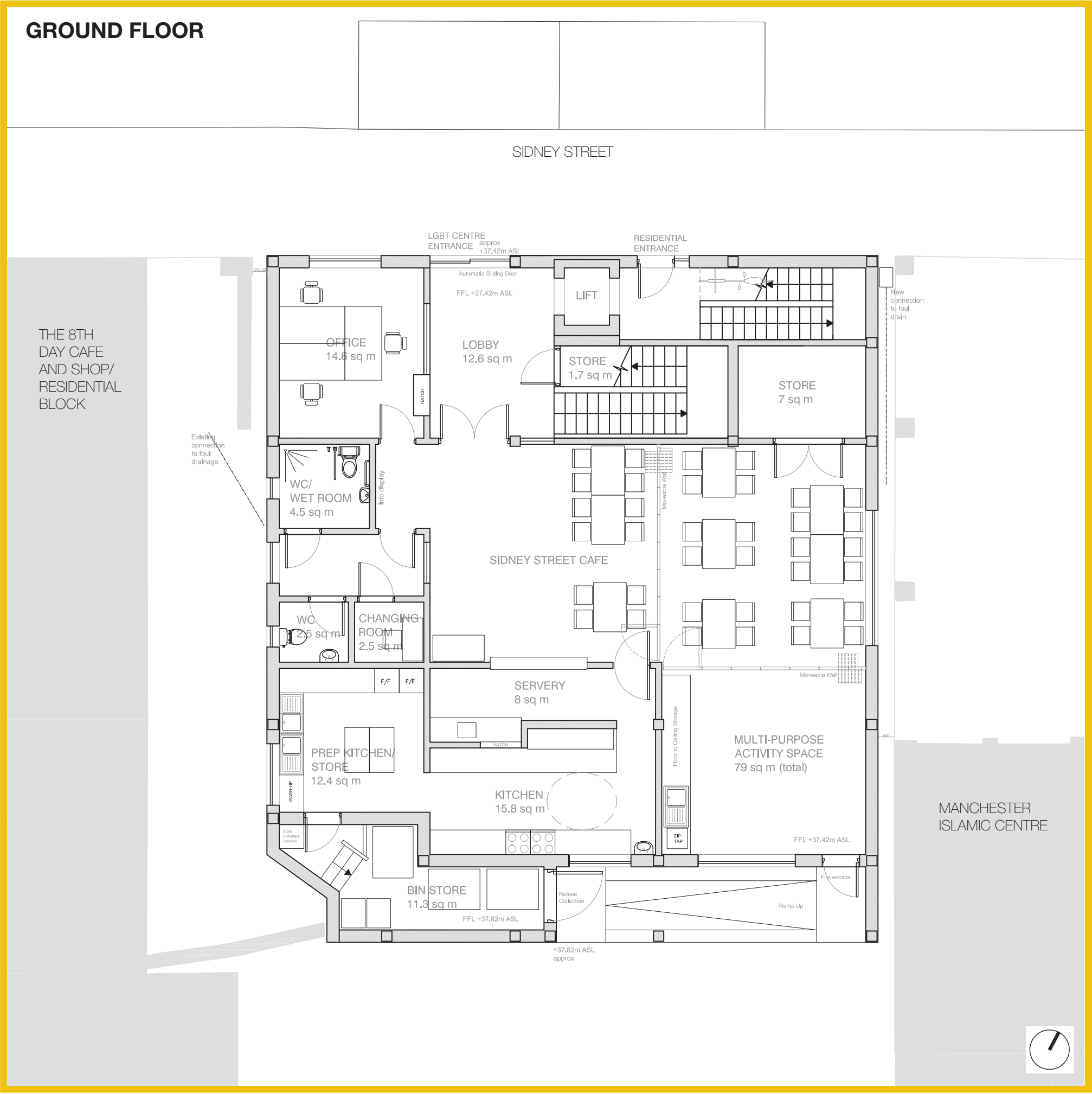
VIEW FROM OXFORD ROAD



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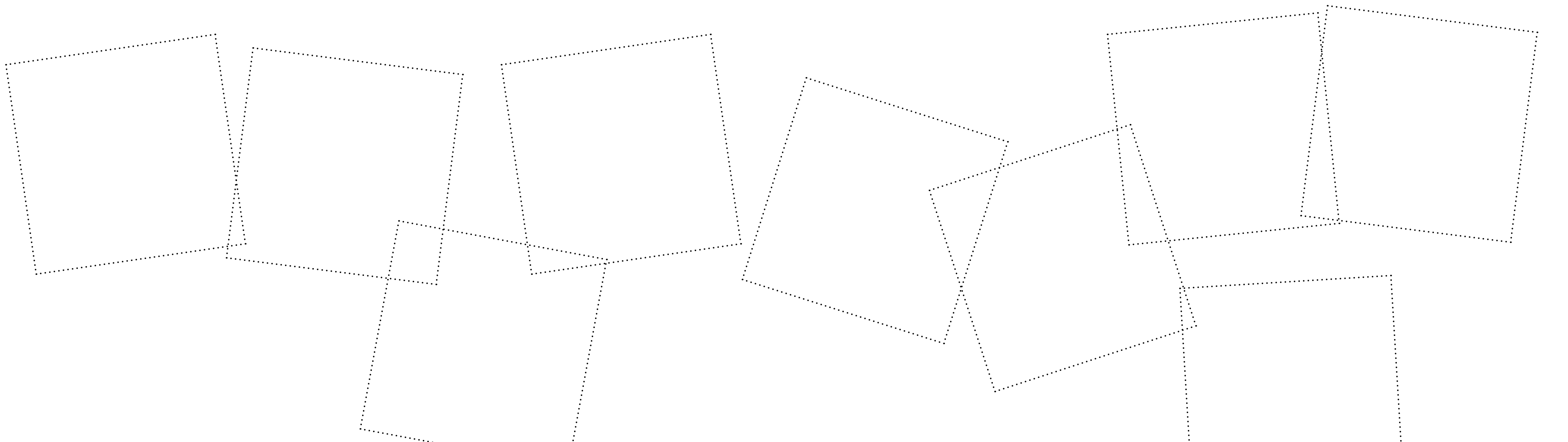
PROPOSED PLANS: COMMUNITY CENTRE



PROPOSED PLANS: RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION



ANY SUGGESTIONS? USE THIS SPACE TO ADD YOUR THOUGHTS...



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PROPOSED ELEVATIONS: COMMUNITY CENTRE



1. Timber cladding
2. Render in various colours - colours to be agreed
3. Factory finished high performance composite aluminium/ timber windows
4. Timber batons fixed in front of render
5. Entrance to community centre
6. Entrance to residential accommodation
7. Roof Garden
8. Residential Balconies
9. Glazed Balcony Privacy screens
10. Glazed Door to Roof Garden