






PCAD Urban Design Framework

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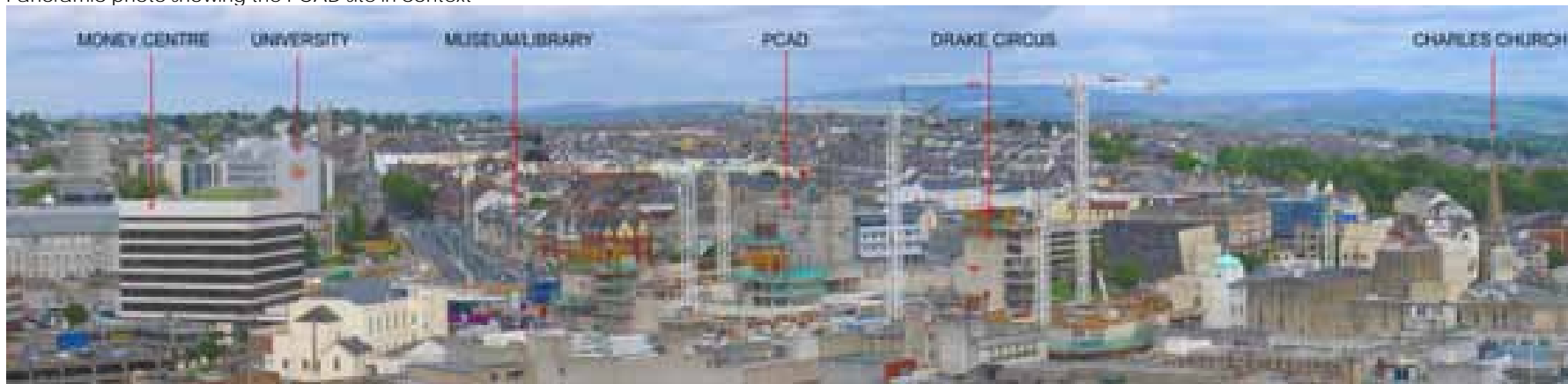
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5. Summary



1. Purpose of this document

<p>Plymouth City Council Design Team has been instructed to prepare an Urban Design Framework for the proposed redevelopment of the Plymouth College of Art and Design (PCAD) site and its surrounding area in central Plymouth.</p> <p>This document analyses PCAD's townscape context and identifies planning and urban design issues and opportunities. Ultimately, the document seeks to establish positive guidelines for the site's enhancement and redevelopment.</p> <p>Whilst the focus of the report is to provide guidelines for the PCAD site, it also offers guidelines about neighbouring sites in order to achieve a comprehensive framework for the area.</p>	<p>The framework establishes a vision for a high-quality, responsive urban environment that reflects PCAD's role and aspirations - a vibrant, inviting educational arts focus within the Cultural Quarter. The goal is an integrated mixture of complimentary uses - maximising the use of the PCAD site, whilst positively addressing the adjacent streets and spaces around it.</p> <p>The vision for the site has been established to provide a foundation for the development of architectural solutions. It has been prepared by marrying together practical, economic, development, ownership and legal constraints with the goal of good place making.</p> <p>Ultimately, this document will feed into the City Centre Area Action Plan - a key part of Plymouth's Local Development Framework.</p>	 <p>Many people's first impression of the site - PCAD buildings viewed from Charles Cross.</p>  <p>View west to PCAD from Regent Street</p>	 <p>View to PCAD looking east from Cobourg Street</p>  <p>PCAD site viewed from Drake Circus</p>
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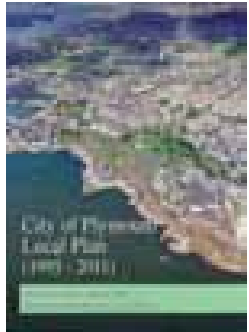
Panoramic photo showing the PCAD site in context



2. Policy Background

Particular attention has been paid to the established design objectives for the study area as set out in:

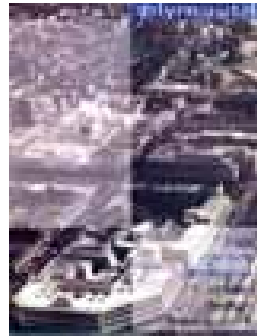
City of Plymouth Local Plan (1995-2011) First Deposit (FDLP)



The FDLP is soon to be superseded by the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF). Nevertheless, some of the principles set out in Policy 55 of the FDLP are still relevant. These include:

- Enhancing the area as a focus for arts and culture.
- The need to integrate more closely with the city centre and surrounding communities.
- The quality and availability of public access through the area.

City Centre Precinct Urban Design Framework (CCPUDF)



This document broadly considered urban design issues and opportunities for the area. The environment has changed radically since this document was completed - with radical changes to the highways layout as a result of the P&O shopping mall development. Plymouth University have commenced construction of a new arts faculty / centre for visual arts building between Rowe Street and North Hill. This building is intended to contain a publicly accessible arts cinema, café and galleries. Another fundamental improvement to the area involved the replacement of the Drake Circus subway network (identified as a poor and threatening pedestrian environment in the CCPUDF) with surface level crossings.

Many of the key urban design issues identified within the document are still important. These include the opportunity to "green" Charles Street with strong structural tree planting,

The CCPUDF concept opportunities plan recognises that the existing PCAD building form and siting creates a poor street scene. The area to the immediate west of PCAD, south of Tavistock Place, is identified as an opportunity to create a new well-defined area of public open space in conjunction with development.

Opportunities illustration from CCPUDF



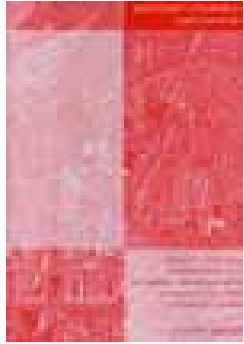
The document follows this analysis with illustrative plans exploring opportunities for the area. These illustrate the potential "greening" of Charles Street to create a more attractive pedestrian environment. The plans suggest concept layouts for the PCAD, Police Station and Regent Street car park sites. An enhanced north/south pedestrian street is indicated to the east of PCAD, as is a public piazza to the west.

CCPUDF Plan illustrating opportunities for the area



2. Policy Background (cont'd)

Interim Planning Statement 10 (IPS 10): Strategic Development Principles for the University Area



Plymouth City Council developed this document in partnership with the University of Plymouth. It was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in October 2003. The aim was to establish an agreed set of principles that would guide the development of a master-plan for the area.

The following eight goals were identified:

A Vibrant Area: Establish the university as a vibrant distinctive and diverse area of central Plymouth.

Breaking Down Barriers: Improve the quality of the environment between the university and the city centre, and improve connections to other neighbouring areas.

Better Streets and Public Spaces: Create a hierarchy of high quality

Pedestrians First: Create an environment where pedestrians and cyclists have priority.

A Cultural Quarter: Create a distinctive "Cultural Quarter" centred on North Hill.

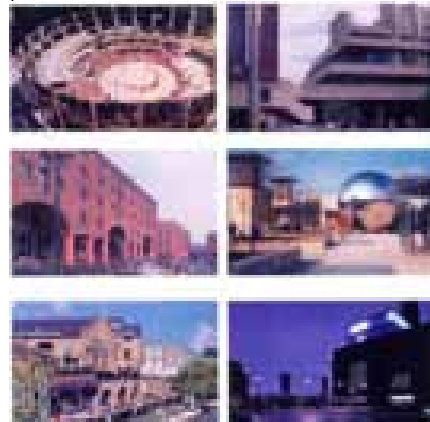
Quality Buildings: Conserve the best historic buildings and introduce new high quality architecture.

Better Gateways: Establish positive gateways between the university and surrounding areas.

Improved Skyline: Create a distinctive skyline for central Plymouth.

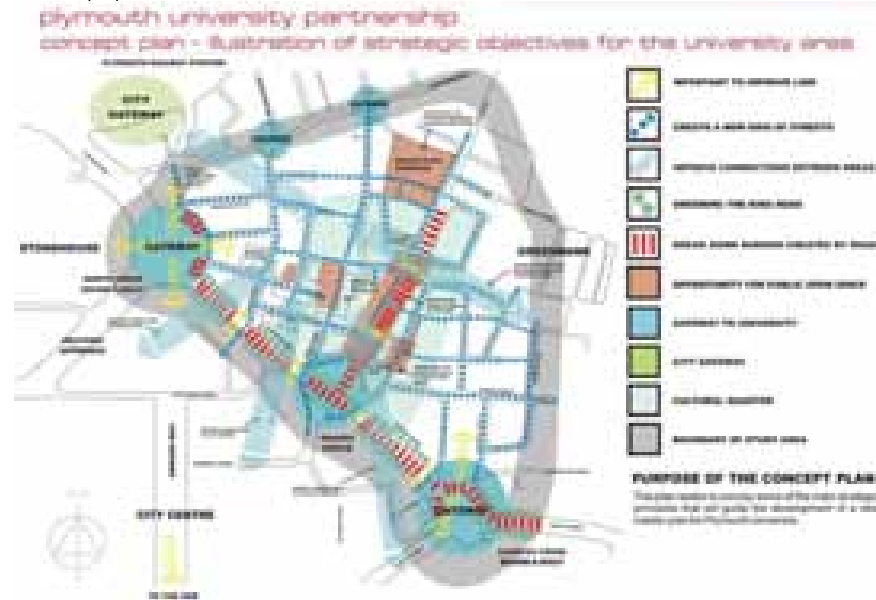
Although it was not examined in any detail here, the PCAD site was included in the document's study area boundary and the strategic objectives identified are entirely relevant.

IPS10 references - cultural spaces and places

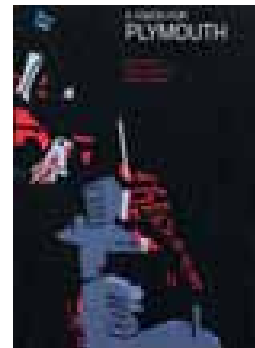


The document culminated in a concept plan that sought to

Concept plan from IPS 10



Interim Planning Statement: MBM Vision for Plymouth



The "Mackay Vision", as this document has come to be known, establishes a set of urban design principles for the study area rather than outlining any specific proposals for the PCAD site. The notion of turning Charles Street and North Hill into tree-lined avenues is suggested.

The focus is, again, on addressing the severance issues generated by busy roads and improving / prioritising pedestrian movement. Fundamentally, the document promotes a greater mix of uses in the area, to increase its vibrancy, and to get people living back in the city centre.

Excerpt from the Vision for Plymouth



2. Policy Background (cont'd)

Rothschild Boulevard, Tel Aviv – urban green route reference from MBM Vision document



Plymouth Cultural Quarter Feasibility Study: Phase 1 (COFS)



This report was commissioned by Plymouth University on behalf of the Plymouth Cultural Quarter Steering Group. It focuses on:

- Production, innovation, new enterprise and economic development of the creative industries.

- Engagement with the surrounding community organisations as stakeholders in the development of a Cultural Quarter.
- Developing a model of university expansion aimed at integration into the city centre, the surrounding neighbourhoods and kick starting regeneration of the city and sub-region.

The document highlights the importance of PCAD's role in the Cultural Quarter "ladder of learning" – potentially providing a wide ranging art and design curriculum from school through to business incubation. It stresses the significance of achieving effective linkages with other cultural facilities, including Plymouth Arts Centre, art-space and crafts workshops.

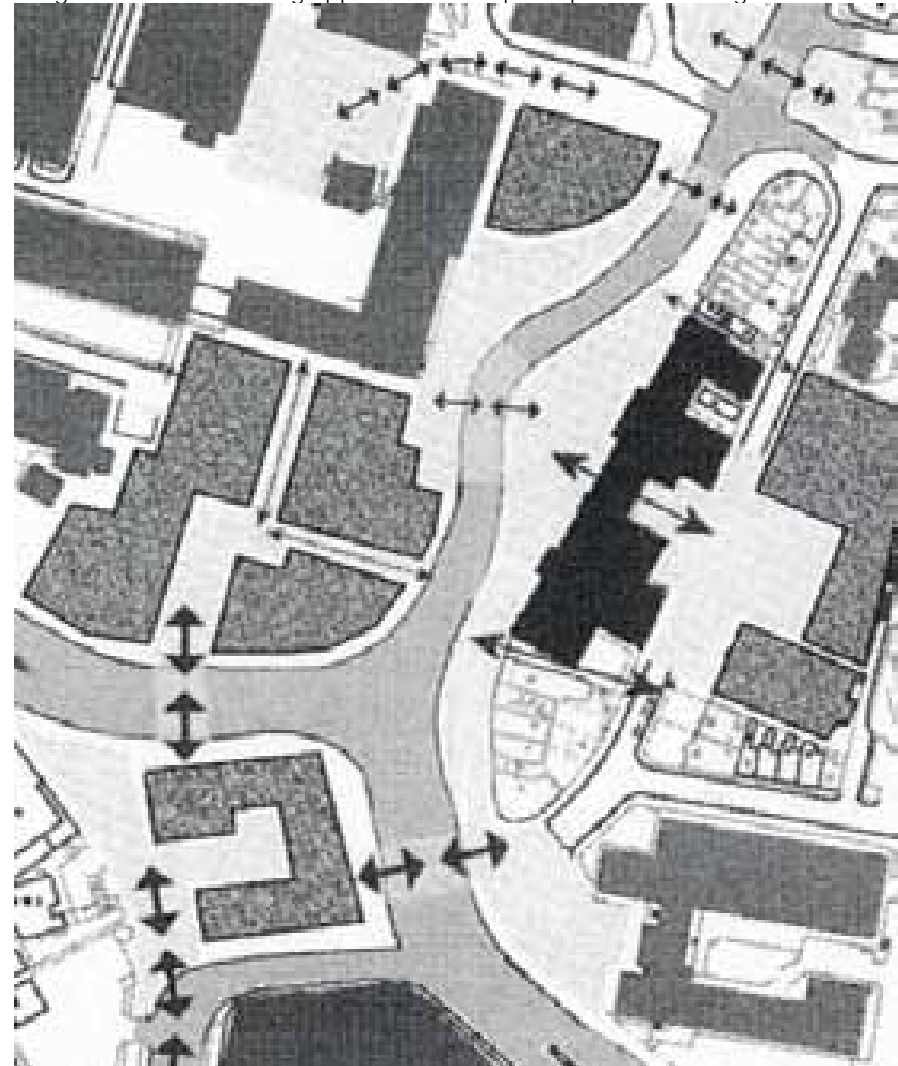
The opportunity to re-configure and enhance PCAD's entrance is identified, as is the need to integrate pedestrian areas as key linkages between the art-space, workspace, museum and art gallery.

The document recommends that more land should be built on, in smaller, higher density forms. It suggests a network of smaller, interlinked public squares and spaces be created throughout the Cultural Quarter.

Residential, student, live/work, key-worker accommodation is suggested for the upper levels of as many buildings as possible with the aim of bringing more life and vibrancy to the area.

The document suggests the creation of a new city library on the Drake Circus former roundabout site. This, it says, would enable the expansion of the museum into the present library space.

Image from COFS illustrating opportunities to improve pedestrian linkages



3. Urban Design Issues



PCAD Urban Design Framework

- Light yellow square
- Grey square
- Dark green square
- Brown square
- Dark green square

3. Urban Design Issues

3a. Location / Study Area

PCAD is conveniently situated next to the city centre precinct and near major public transport interchanges - including the train and bus stations. It is located in Plymouth's "Cultural Quarter" near the city museum, library, university and proposed art centre. There is a large amount of student accommodation close to the campus.

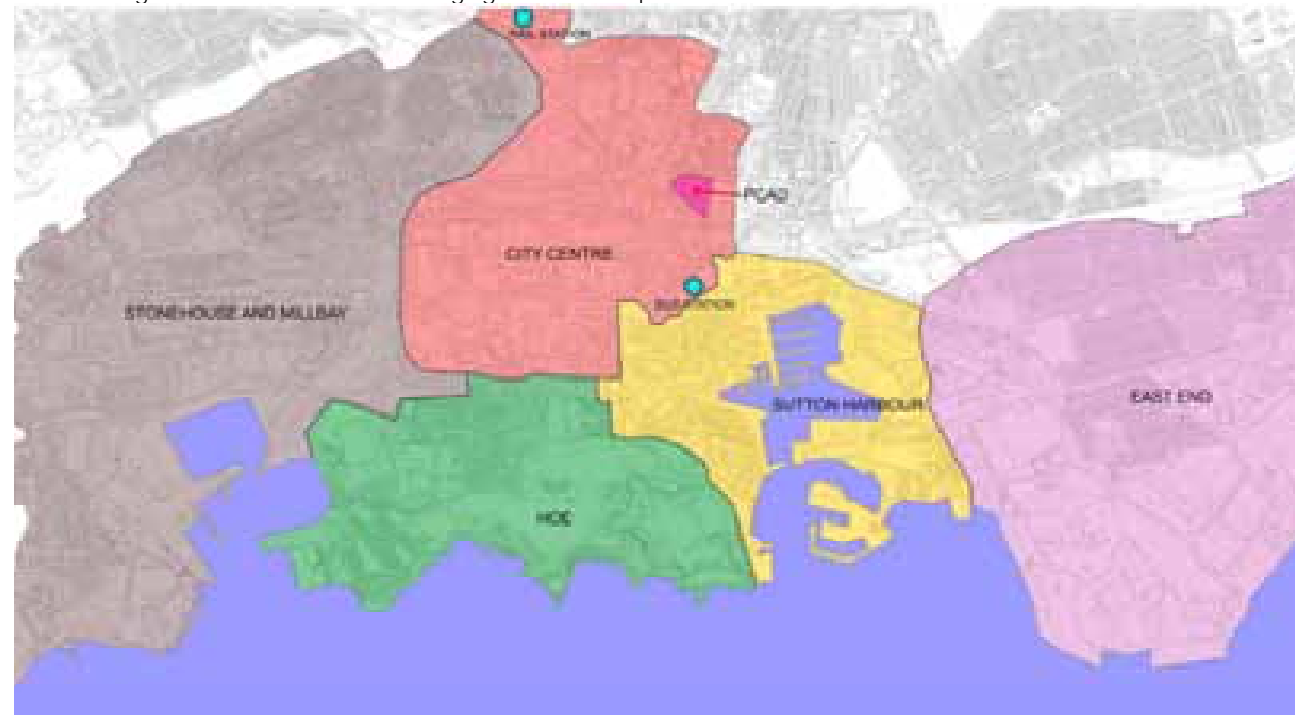
The site is difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to reach from the city centre. The busy ring road at Charles Street and Drake Circus is a harsh environment that forms a major barrier. Pedestrian crossings lack convenience and walkers are forced to take indirect detours to reach their desired locations.

PCAD has an exciting gallery displaying student work. Unfortunately, many people are unaware that this is open to the general public.

Aerial views of main PCAD site



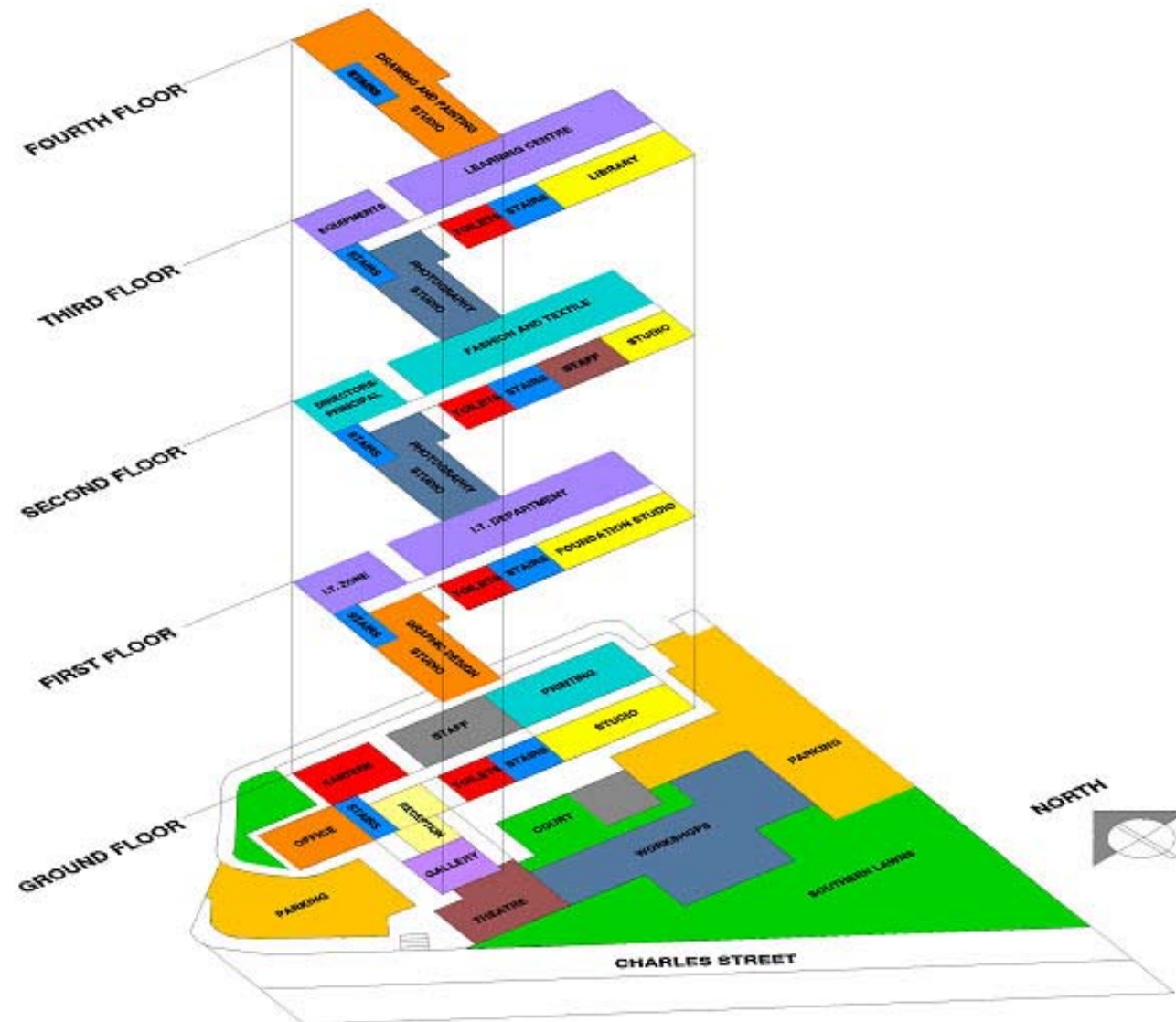
Plan showing PCAD site in relation to emerging Local Development Framework Area Action Plans



3b. Development Objectives

- PCAD wants to enhance public access to its site.
- PCAD seeks to improve awareness of its facilities in general, and public gallery in particular.
- PCAD's student population is currently 2000.
- There is currently 8500 sq m of accommodation. An extra 4000 sq m is required in the next five years.
- PCAD is interested in providing on-site live/work artist's accommodation and "incubator" start-up units for creative industries.
- PCAD is keen to minimise on site car parking and encourage walking, cycling and public transport.
- PCAD is willing to share, combine and amalgamate facilities with present and proposed operations in the Cultural Quarter and beyond.
- Any redevelopment option must be sensitive to PCAD's ongoing operational requirements and be designed, phased and implemented to minimise disruption.

Illustration showing functions within main PCAD buildings



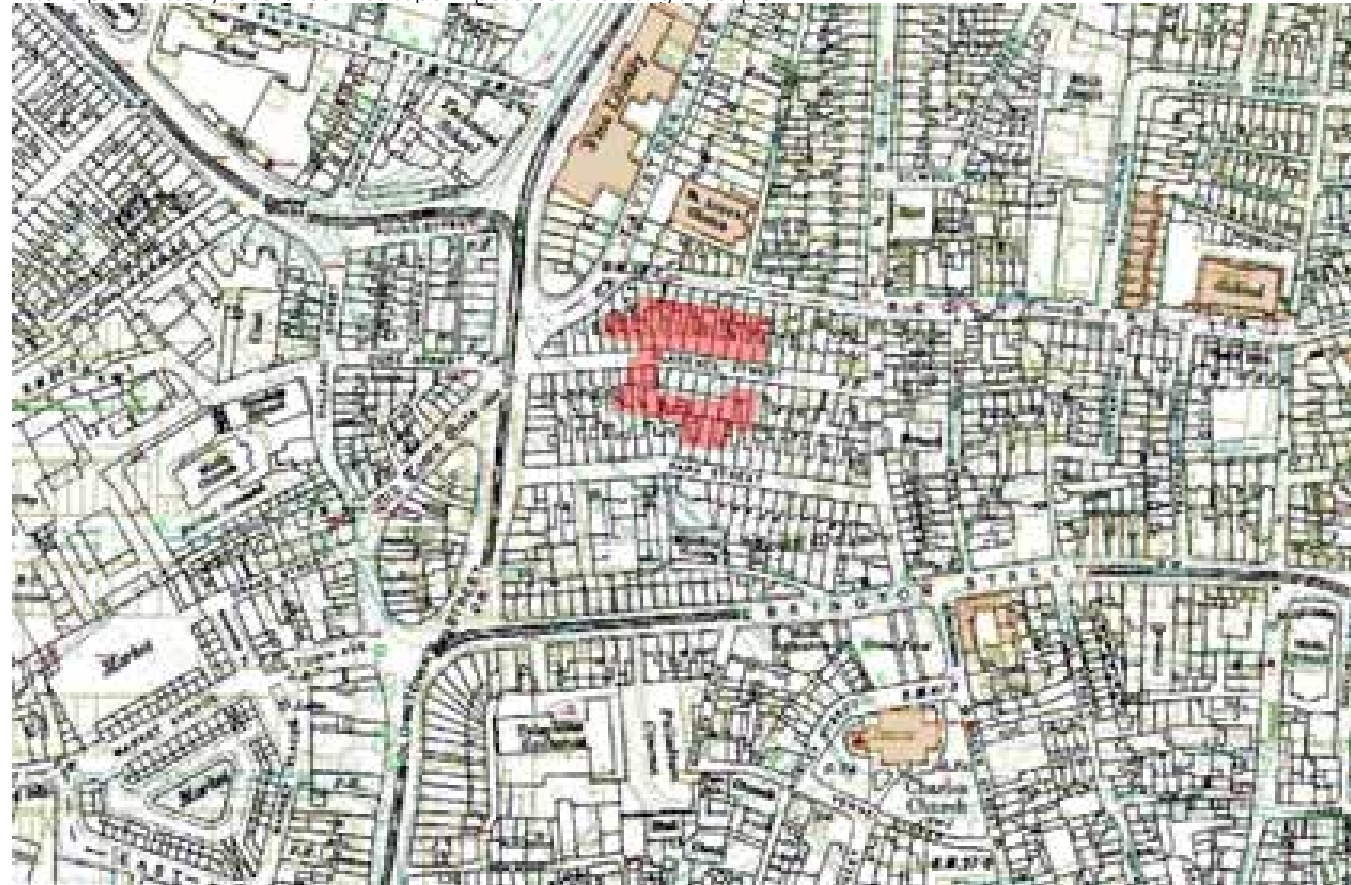
3c. Historic Context

Before World War II, the study area was characterised by a distinctive Victorian townscape of residential terraces running east/west across the site. The area appears very well connected to surrounding street networks. Building frontages address, define and enclose the streets. The plan indicates an intimate, human scale townscape. The fine grain of ownerships would have generated strong vertical plot rhythms, and therefore much variety, in the streetscape.

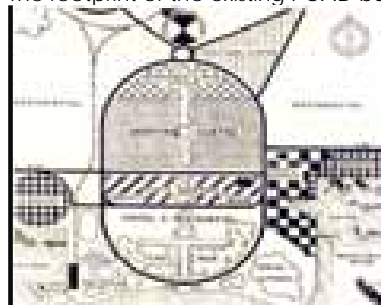
The Blitz, Abercrombie's Plan for Plymouth (1943) and post-war redevelopment have conspired to generate a radically different townscape today. The east/west routes, Clarence Street and Park Street, have disappeared. The south leg of Gibbon's Street no longer exists. However, The street plan to the north of Regent Street is still recognisable, particularly around Tavistock Place - where the Library, St Luke's Church buildings have thankfully survived and are now Listed. To the south, east and west of Regent Street, the street pattern has changed, almost beyond recognition, from the pre-war plan.

Attempting to reintroduce the pre-war plan would be very problematic here. However, important lessons can be

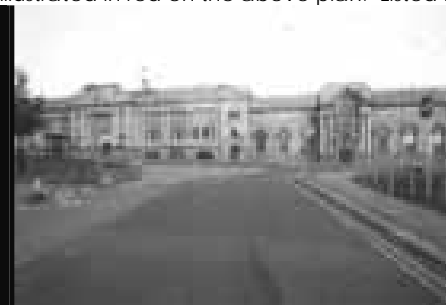
Historic plan of study area circa 1933 superimposed over existing street plan.



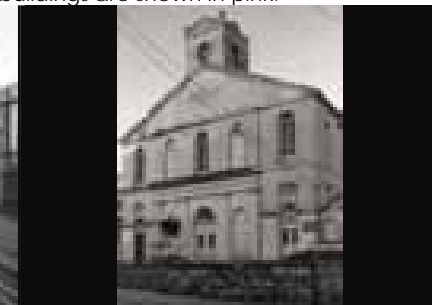
The footprint of the existing PCAD buildings is illustrated in red on the above plan. Listed buildings are shown in pink.



The Abercrombie Plan (1943) proposed the "zoning" (separation) of land-uses throughout Plymouth City Centre. History has taught us that finer grain mixtures of integrated uses (e.g. flats over offices over shops) tend to create more vibrant, active, sustainable cities.



The City Museum and Library (1907) was restored after the Blitz, and is now Grade II Listed. It is a key historic building in the Cultural Quarter and an imposing example of classical civic architecture.



Church of St Luke, Tavistock Place (1828) - also Grade II Listed. Currently used as a storage annex for the Library, an opportunity exists for this historic structure to play a more exciting role in the Cultural Quarter.

3d. Site Layout

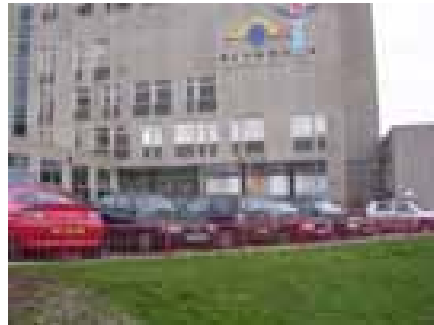
The existing buildings are aligned with Regent Street, but not Charles Street. This has resulted in a triangle of left over green space at the southeast corner of the site. This area has a poor relationship with Charles Street and is of limited physical and visual amenity.



With the exception of the west elevation entrance foyer, the building's ground floors are unresponsive to the street - they have little in the way of openings or frontages that generate street level interest or vibrancy.



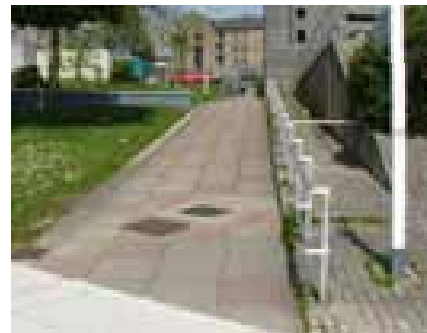
An area of surface level car parking mars the entrance foyer's relationship with the public realm. Much of the east of the site is also given over to surface level parking.



Pedestrian accessibility from the north is good. However, the location of ring road crossings means that pedestrians are currently forced to take indirect and convoluted routes from the city centre to the site.



Pedestrian permeability through the site is currently via a public walkway running north south from Regent Street to Charles Street. The walkway is of a poor quality and suffers from a lack of natural surveillance.



The impact of the proposed P&O Drake Circus mall on PCAD, and its relationship with the city centre needs to be carefully considered. The mall presents a number of challenges in terms of pedestrian permeability to and from the city centre, and responsiveness to Charles Street.

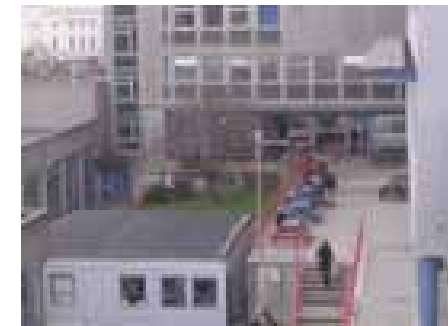


During the mall's opening hours, pedestrians from PCAD will be able to proceed to the city centre via its Charles Street entrance.

PCAD also has a car "body shop" fronting North Street on another site to the east.



PCAD principle external amenity space is the courtyard terrace area enclosed by the existing buildings. The space is an important hub for social interaction.



3e. Massing

The massing of the more recent PCAD building in relation to the width of Regent Street could be considered to create appropriate proportions – although this is probably near the maximum of what could be considered acceptable.

PCAD Regent Street frontage.



The 1960s slab block has a more brutal relationship with the predominantly domestic scale of Regent Street.

The massing of the rest of PCAD has a poor relationship with the streets and spaces around it. There is consequently a lack of street definition and enclosure.

Opportunities exist for significant additional massing to positively address PCAD's frontages, particularly on Charles Street. This would be consistent with the MBM Vision's aspiration to maximise city centre densities.

Existing site massing - southwest perspective



Existing site massing - northeast perspective



Existing site massing - southeast perspective



Existing site massing - northwest perspective



3f. Levels

This image illustrates the challenging topography of the site. It slopes down significantly from north to south and also from west to east. The existing buildings do not step



3g. Architectural Quality

PCAD's 1960s concrete brutalist building responds poorly to its townscape context and the public realm. Organisations such as the 20th Century Society, promote conservation of the best examples of brutalism. Certainly, many key examples are now Listed (the work of architects Denis Lasdun (National Theatre) or Chamberlin, Powell and Bon (Barbican Arts Centre, London), for example). However, it is unlikely that this building would be considered to be an exemplar. Many would agree that it does not project a positive or inviting image of the college. Indeed, in its assessment of the architectural quality of buildings in the city centre, the CCPUDF identified the structure as being of "limited architectural or historical significance" (as the image to the right illustrates). Unfortunately, removal of this structure is not currently a viable option for PCAD. However, many of the urban design problems the building generates are not insurmountable. There would be merit in retaining, adapting, extending or refurbishing the building. This would ultimately be a more sustainable option.

Two further examples of 1960s brutalism, the Charles Cross police station and Regent Street multi-storey car park (both with

The CCPUDF assessment of architectural quality in Plymouth City Centre



PCAD - Brutalist architecture

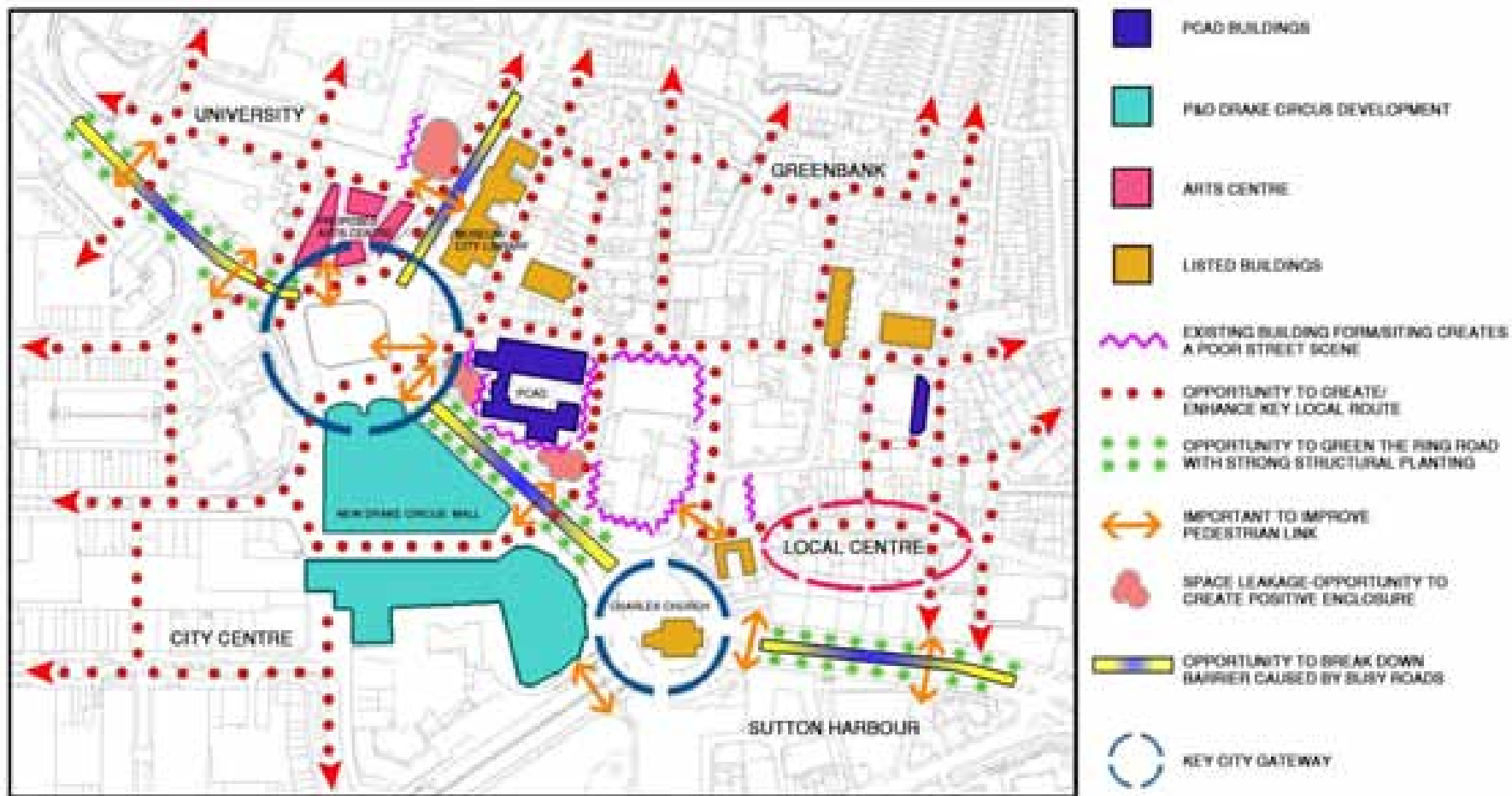


Charles Cross Police Station building to the east of PCAD site



3h. Site Opportunities and Constraints

Opportunities and Constrains plan



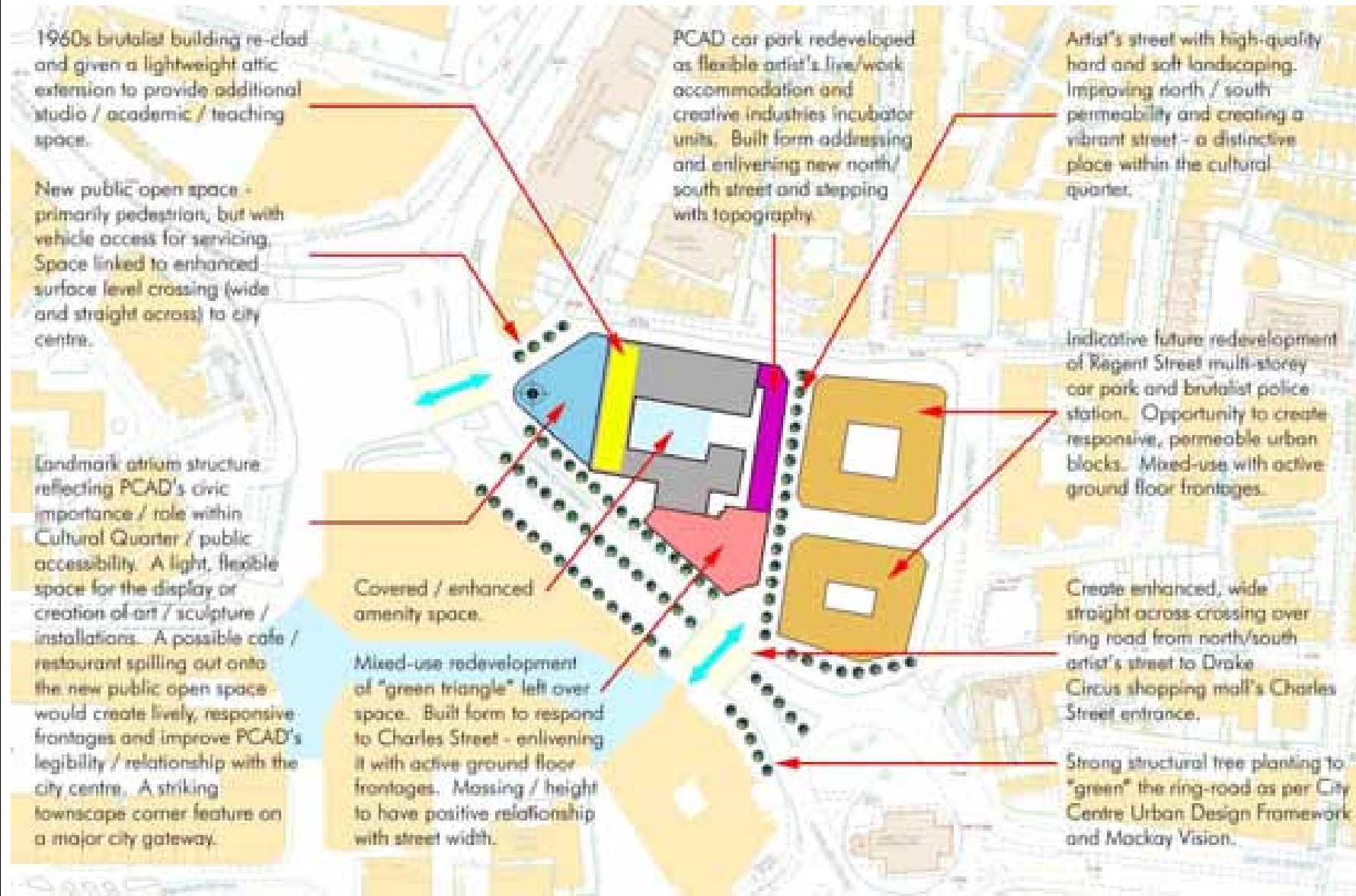
4. Site Options



PCAD Urban Design Framework

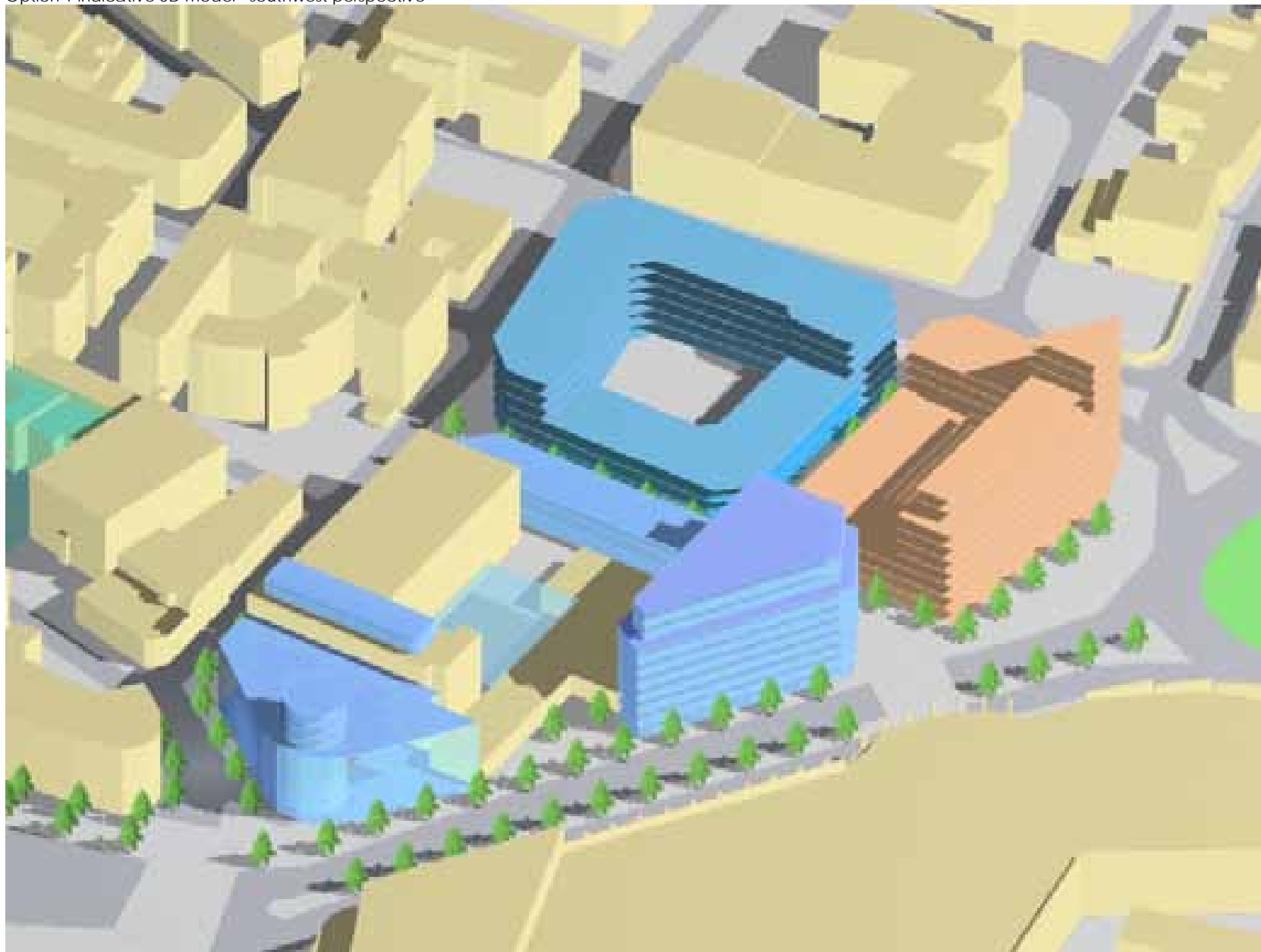
- Light yellow square
- Dark grey square
- Dark green square
- Light yellow square
- Red square
- Dark green square

4a. i. Option 1: Conceptual Layout



4a. ii. Option 1: 3D Framework

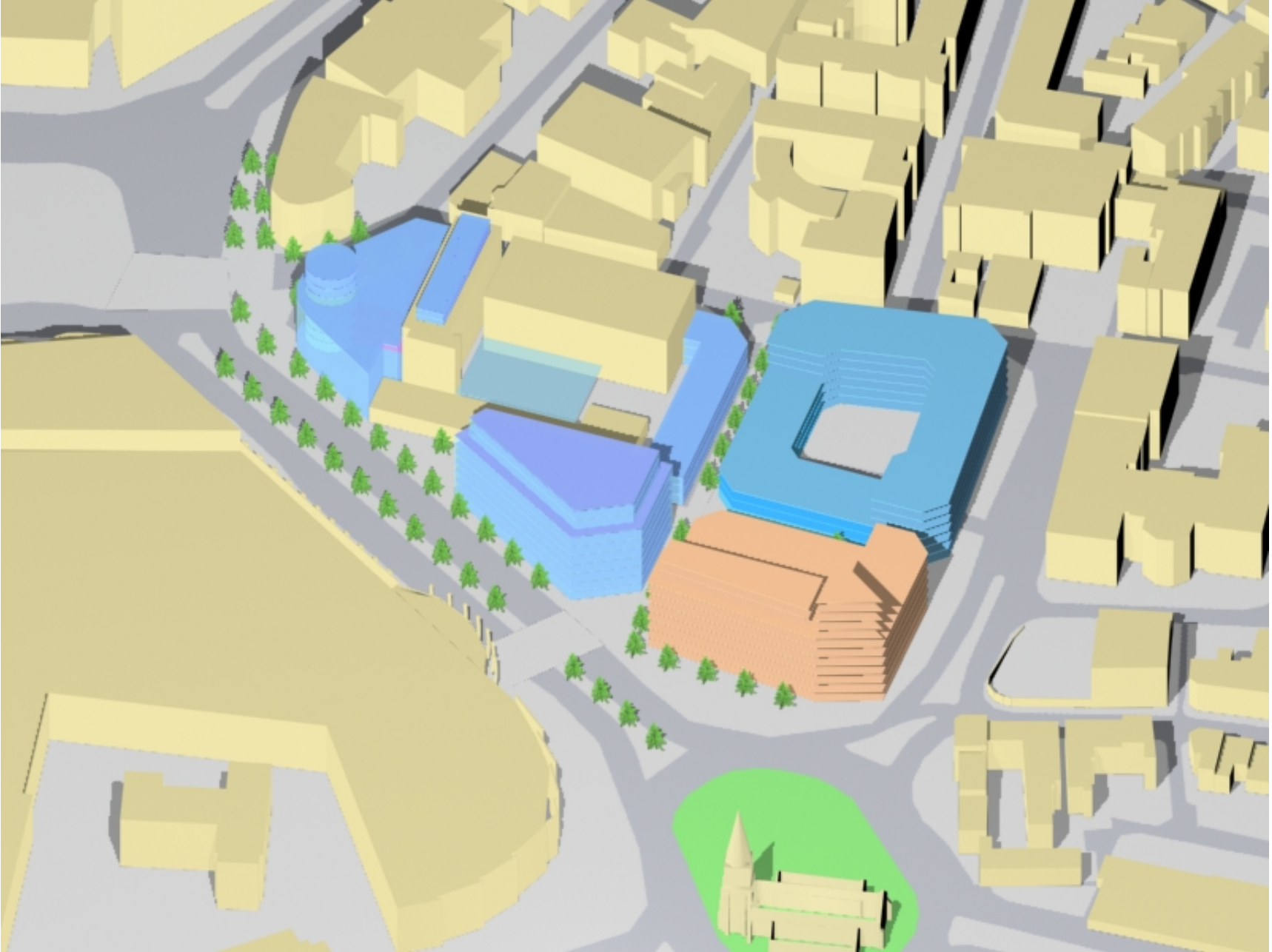
Option 1 indicative 3D model - southwest perspective



PCAD Urban Design Framework

4a. ii. Option 1: 3D Framework

Option 1 indicative 3D model - southeast perspective



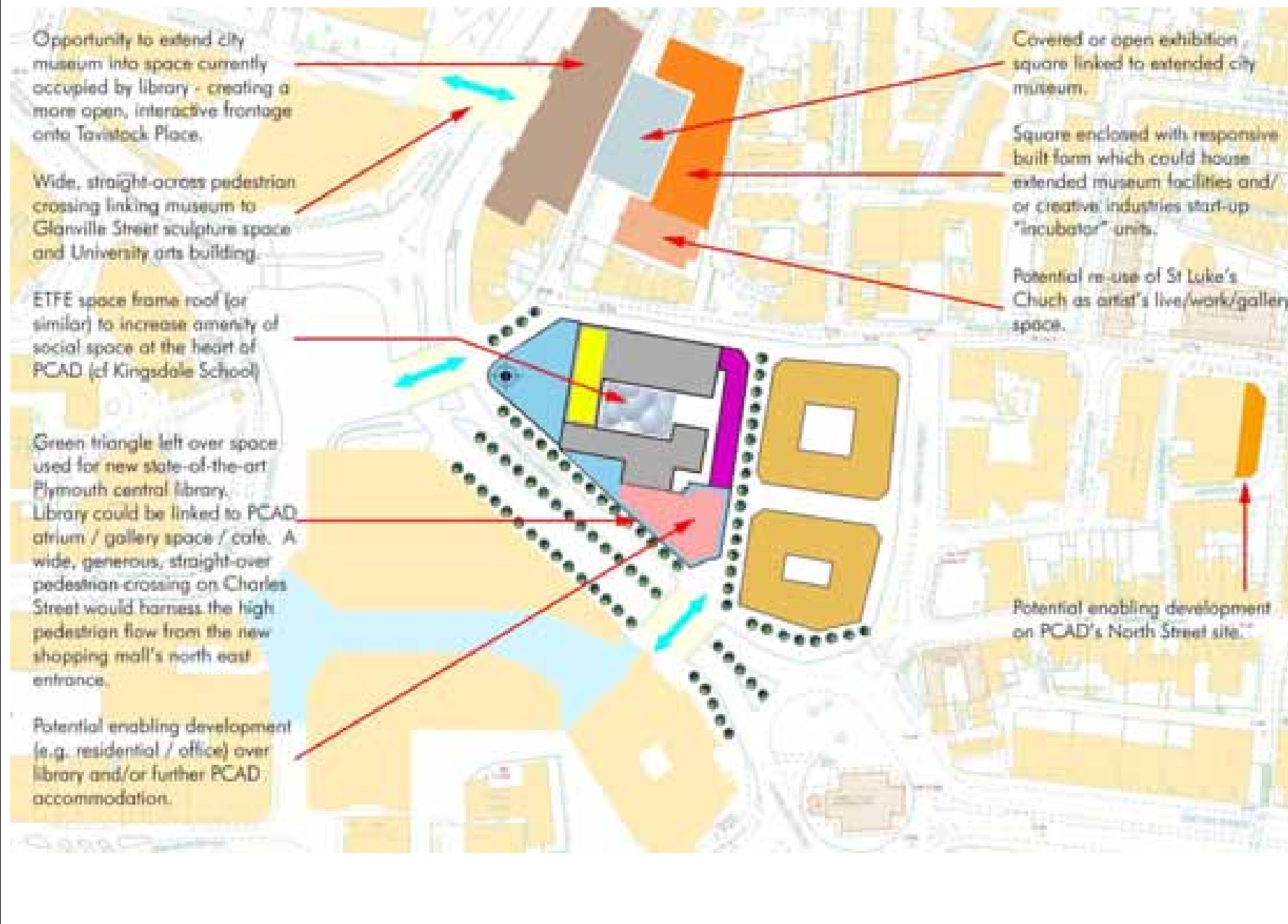
PCAD Urban Design Framework

A vertical legend for the PCAD Urban Design Framework. It consists of a green vertical bar with several colored squares and corresponding text labels. From top to bottom, the elements are: a light green square, a grey square, a dark green square, the text 'PCAD Urban Design Framework', a light yellow square, a brown square, and a dark brown square.

4a. iii. Option 1: Development Product (on existing PCAD site)

Area	G.Floor sq mt	Floor 1 sq mt	Floor 2 sq mt	Floor 3 sq mt	Floor 4 sq mt	Floor 5 sq mt	Floor 6 sq mt	Floor 7 sq mt	Floor 8 sq mt	Total sq mt
Enabling Development	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	1100	780	780	9260
Artists' Live/Work Space	615	615	615							1845
Atrium	895									895
Attic extension						210	210			420
Atrium Gallery Spaces		100	100	100	100					400
Total										12820

4b. i. Option 2: Conceptual Layout



4b. ii. Option 2: 3D Framework

Option 2 indicative 3D model - southeast perspective

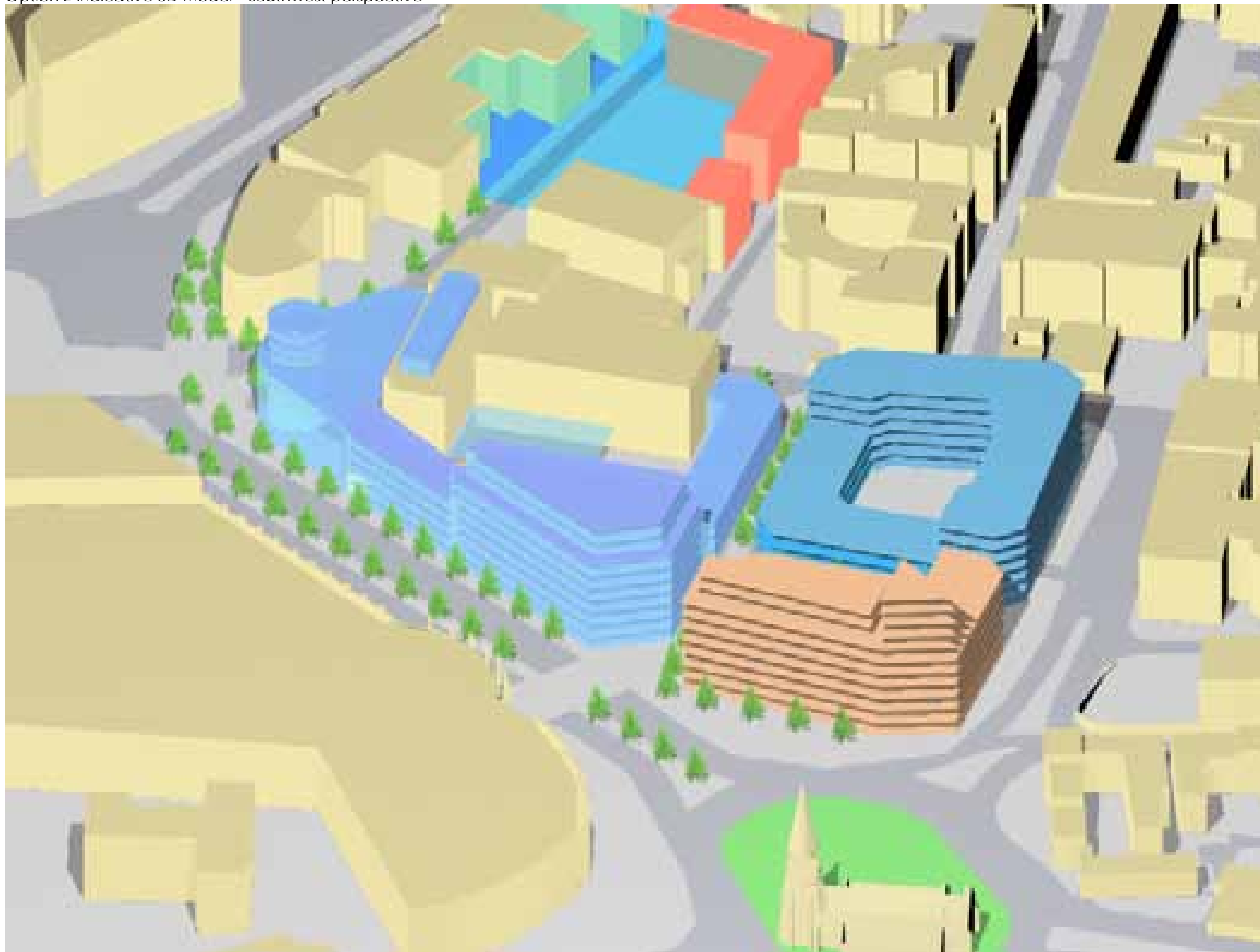


PCAD Urban Design Framework

A vertical legend bar with a green background. It contains the text "PCAD Urban Design Framework" in white. Below the text are five color swatches: a light yellow square, a grey square, a dark green square, a brown square, and a dark blue square.

4b. ii. Option 2: 3D Framework

Option 2 indicative 3D model – southwest perspective

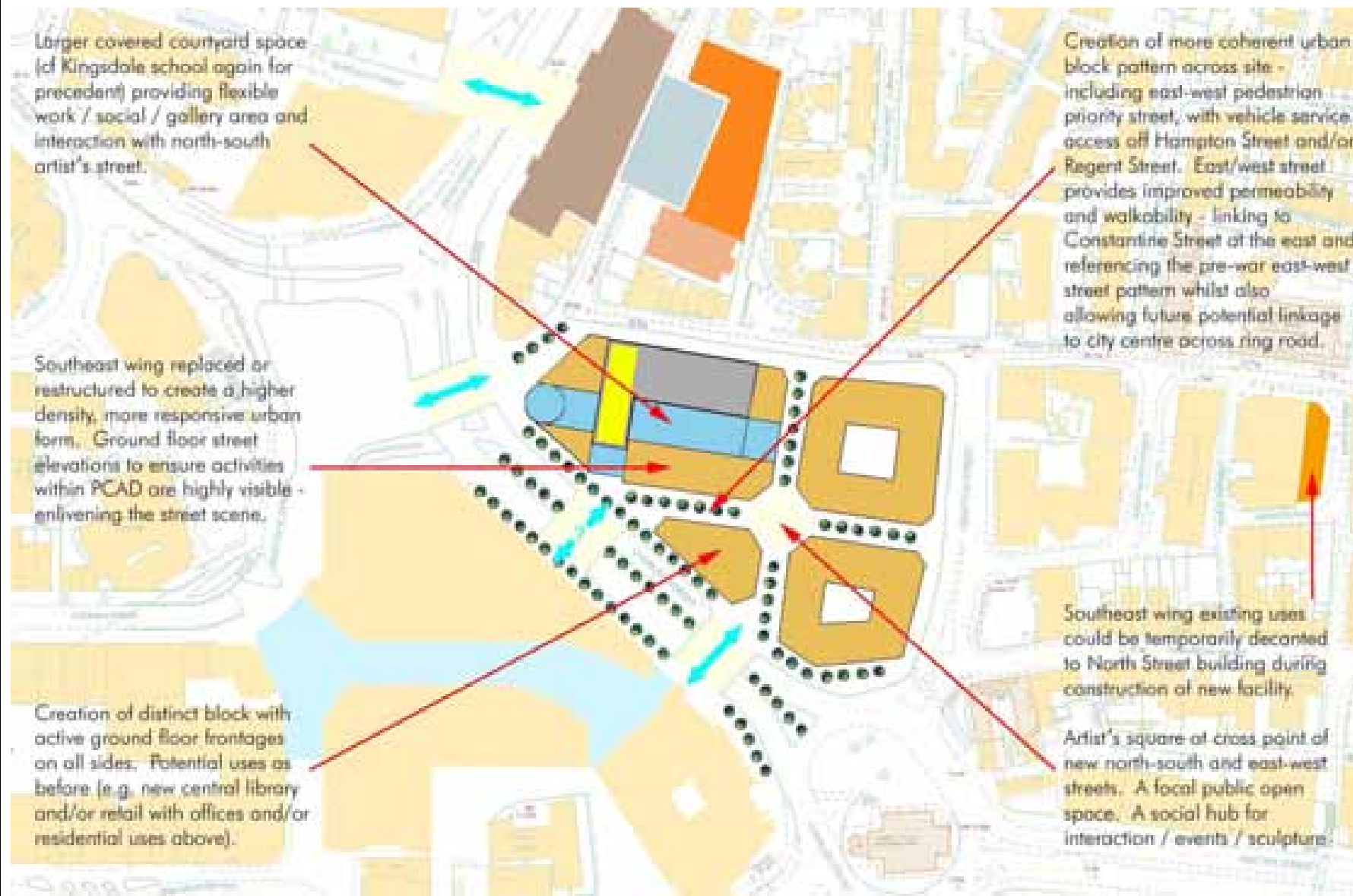


4a. iii. Option 2: Development Product

Area	G.Floor sq mt	Floor 1 sq mt	Floor 2 sq mt	Floor 3 sq mt	Floor 4 sq mt	Floor 5 sq mt	Floor 6 sq mt	Floor 7 sq mt	Floor 8 sq mt	Total sq mt
Enabling Development	1457	1457	1457	1457	1457	1100	1100	780	780	11045
Artists' Live/Work Space	615	615	615							1845
Atrium	895									895
Attic extension						210	210			420
Atrium Gallery Spaces		100	100	100	100					400
Total										14605

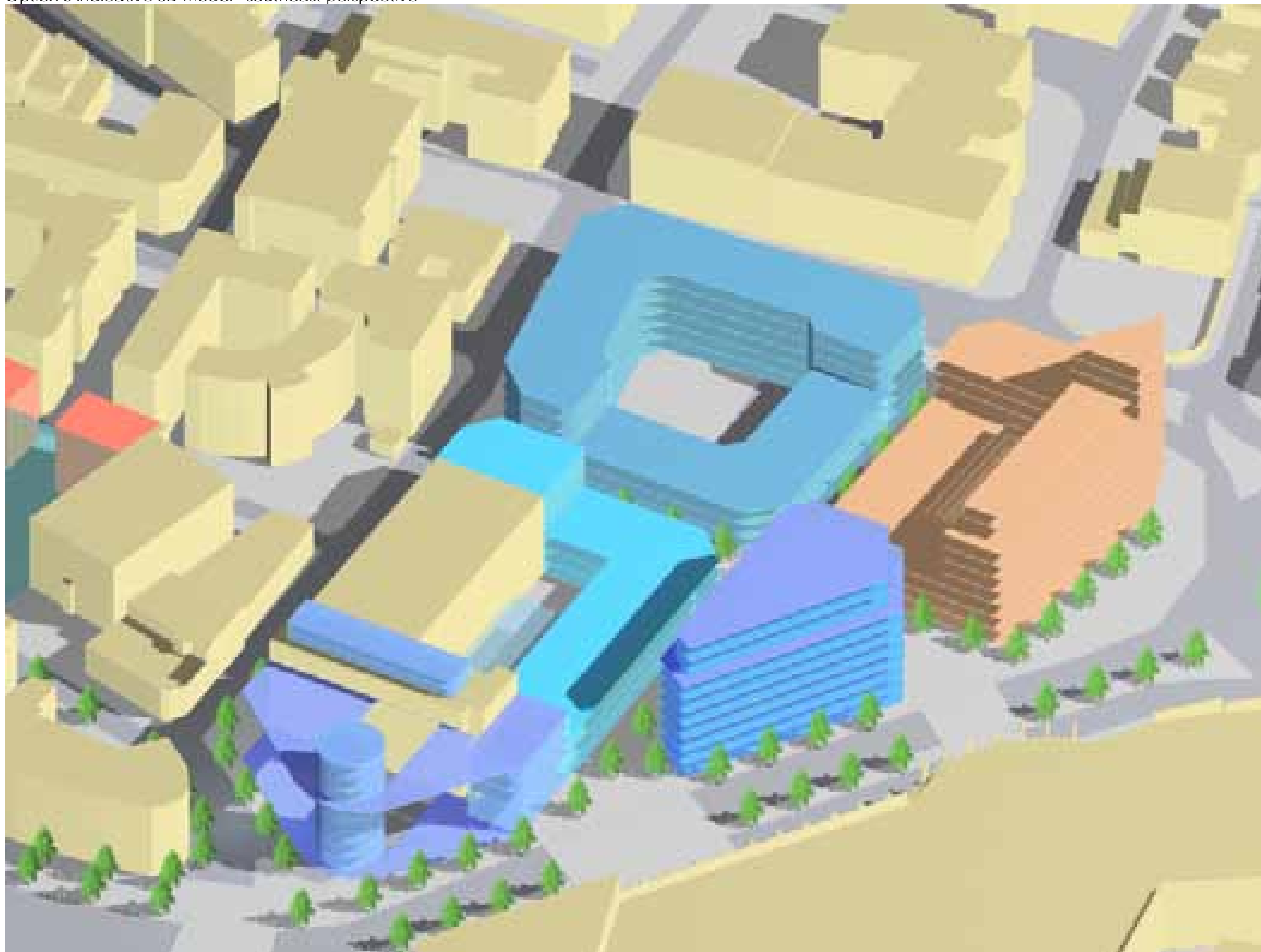


4b. i. Option 3 Conceptual Layout



4c. ii. Option 3: 3D Framework

Option 3 indicative 3D model - southeast perspective



Legend for PCAD Urban Design Framework:

- Light yellow square
- Dark grey square
- Dark green square
- Light green square

PCAD Urban Design Framework

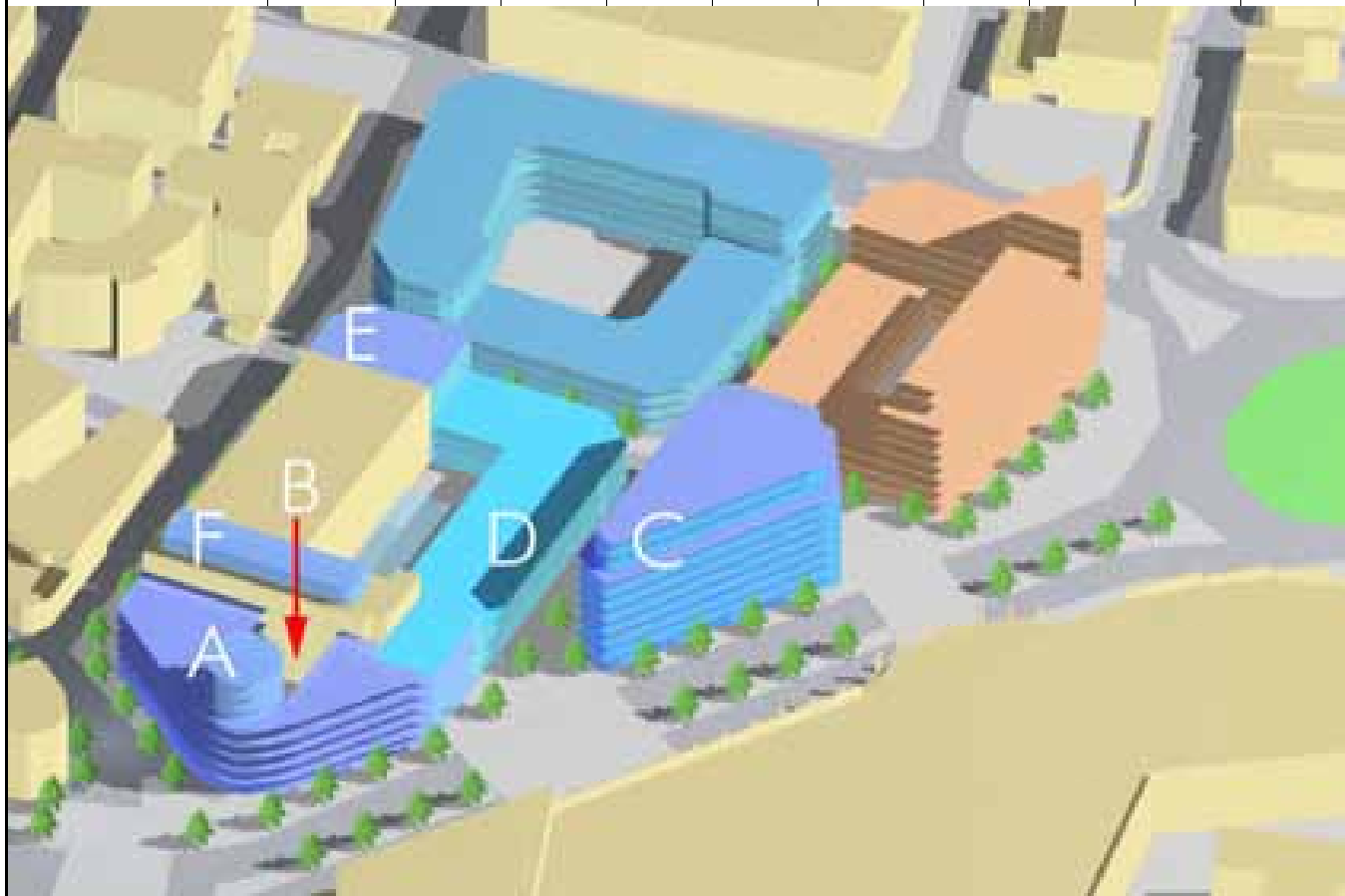
4c. ii. Option 3: 3D Framework

Option 3 indicative 3D model - southwest perspective

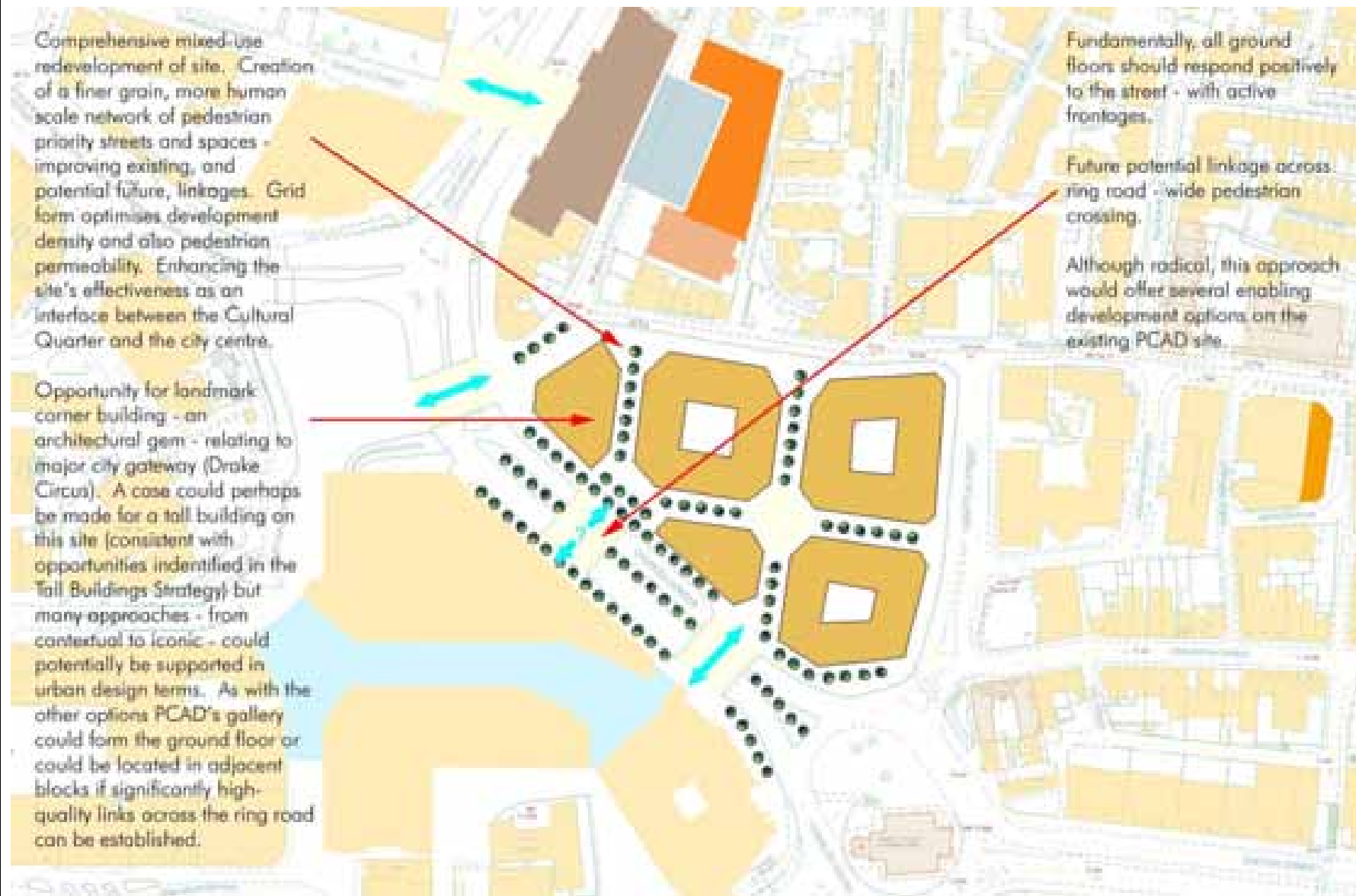


4b. iii. Option 3: Development Product

OPTION 3										
Approximate Gross Internal Areas (assumptions will need to be made about size of communal areas / efficiency)										
Note: Covered flexible / social space at centre of PCAD not included										
Building / Zone	G.Floor	Floor 1	Floor 2	Floor 3	Floor 4	Floor 5	Floor 6	Floor 7	Floor 8	Total
	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m
A	846	846	846	846	846					4230
B - atrium / gallery	212									212
C	1083	1083	1083	1083	1083	1083	1083	772	772	9125
D	1256	1459	1459							4174
E	314	314	314	314	314					1570
F - attic extension						239	239			478
Total										19789

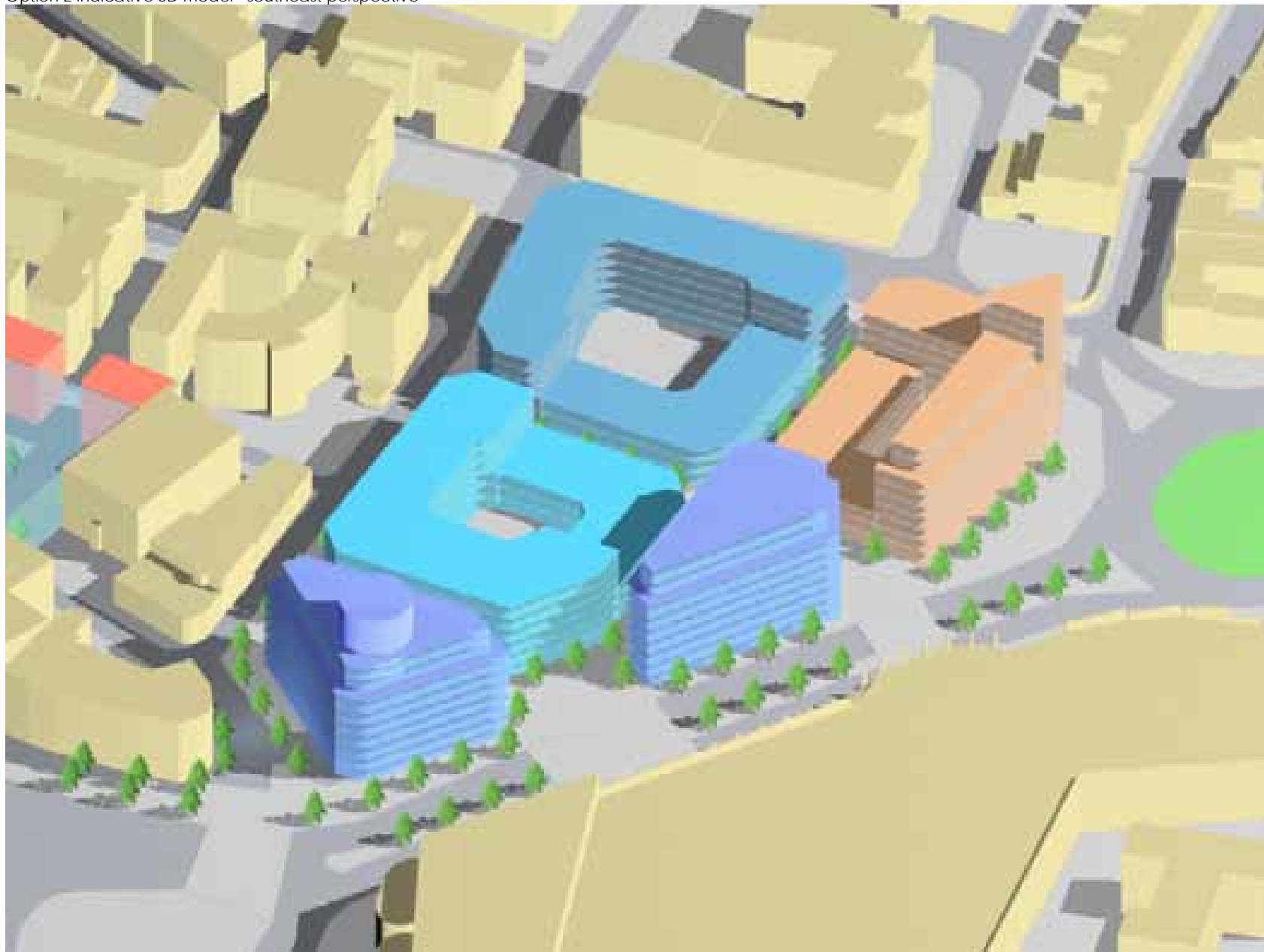


4d. i. Option 4: Conceptual Layout



4d. ii. Option 4: 3D Framework

Option 2 indicative 3D model - southeast perspective



4d. ii. Option 4: 3D Framework

Option 2 indicative 3D model - southeast perspective



4d. iii. Option 4: Development Product

OPTION 4	Approximate Gross Internal Areas (assumptions will need to be made about size of communal areas / efficiency)									
Building	G.Floor	Floor 1	Floor 2	Floor 3	Floor 4	Floor 5	Floor 6	Floor 7	Floor 8	Total
	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m	sq m
Block A	1089	1089	1089	1089	1089	1089	1089	734	734	9091
Block B	2687	2687	2687	1755	1755	1755				13326
Block C	1083	1083	1083	1083	1083	1083	1083	772	772	9125
Total										31542



