





Design and Access Statement

Pontardawe Arts Centre

This document has been prepared by Childs Sulzmann Architects to support the planning application for the reconfiguration, refurbishment and extension to the Pontardawe Arts Centre to improve the current internal layout and provide a new dedicated cinema.

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Revision C

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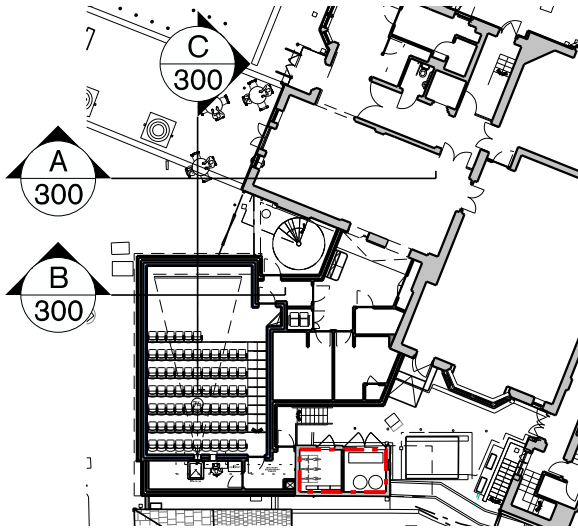
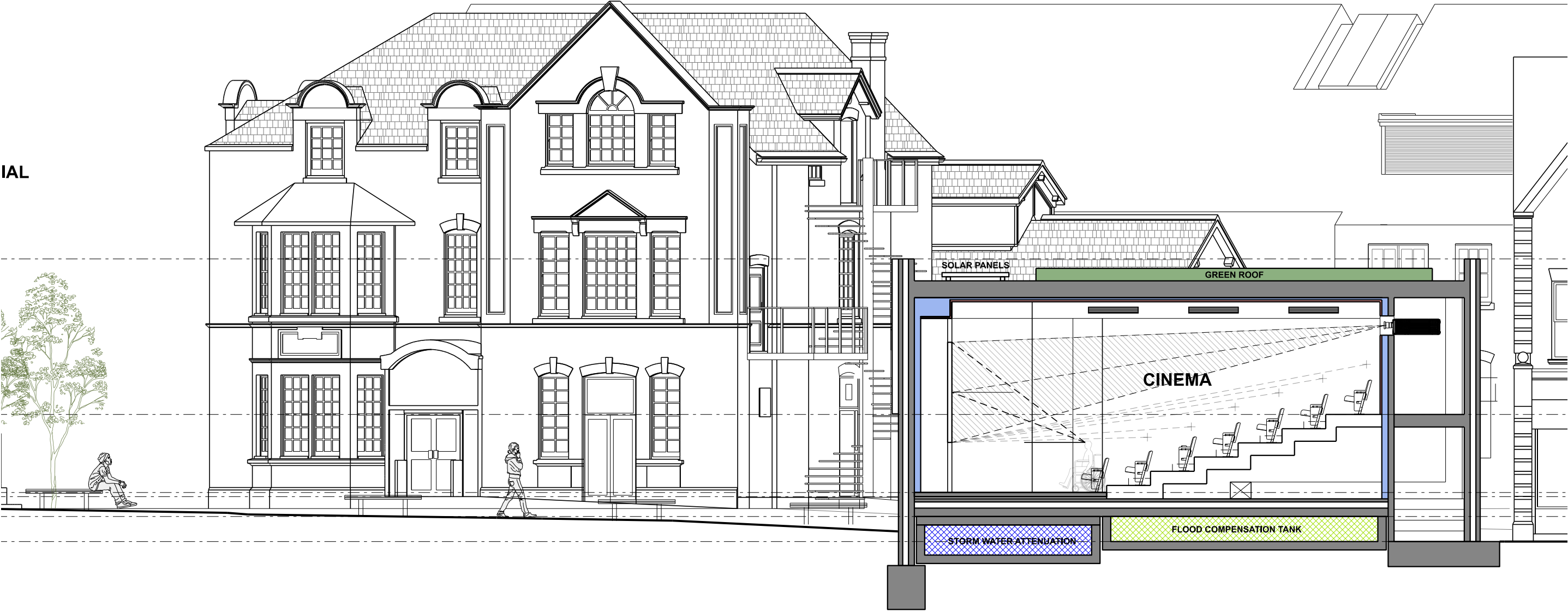
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4.10 The Proposal

Section C



4.11 The Proposal

East-West Elevation



4.12 The Proposal

North West - South East Elevation



4.13 The Proposal

Appearance

The need to maintain one entrance for all users of the building, the drivers behind the layout and scale, has meant that the biggest design challenge will be how to deal with the appearance of the new cinema extension and one of the key factors we are looking to discuss as part of this pre-application enquiry.

We have been asked to consider some options about the appearance and materiality of the building to begin a dialogue with the planning team and develop an approach to the design that all parties can support.

The options presented here look at some initial ideas, drawing on some of the local palette of materials and colours but looking to enhance these with new materials that seek to balance the lack of windows and create interest and activate the blank facades.

The materials considered include:

- Brick/blockwork plinth / lower walls with decorative detailing
- Decorative cladding with integrated signage and lighting

Artist Involvement

As part of the requirements set by Arts Council Wales as a condition for the funding of the project it has been necessary to work with an artist on the project. A competitive bid process was carried out to select an artist that would be suitable for the project.

The 2 principal elevations viewed from the street were selected as the focus of the artistic involvement as this is the most public facing element of the new cinema and therefore has the greatest potential for public benefit.

The brief for the bid was based upon this and a number of artists were interviewed. The chosen artist, is the Welsh artist Jessica Lloyd-Jones who has experience working with Arts Council Wales.

The initial design proposals provided by the artist are shown on this page. This initial design has been further refined and developed and are discussed further in this section.



View from Square at Day

Initial artist's design proposals



View from Square at Night

Initial artist's design proposals

4.14 The Proposal

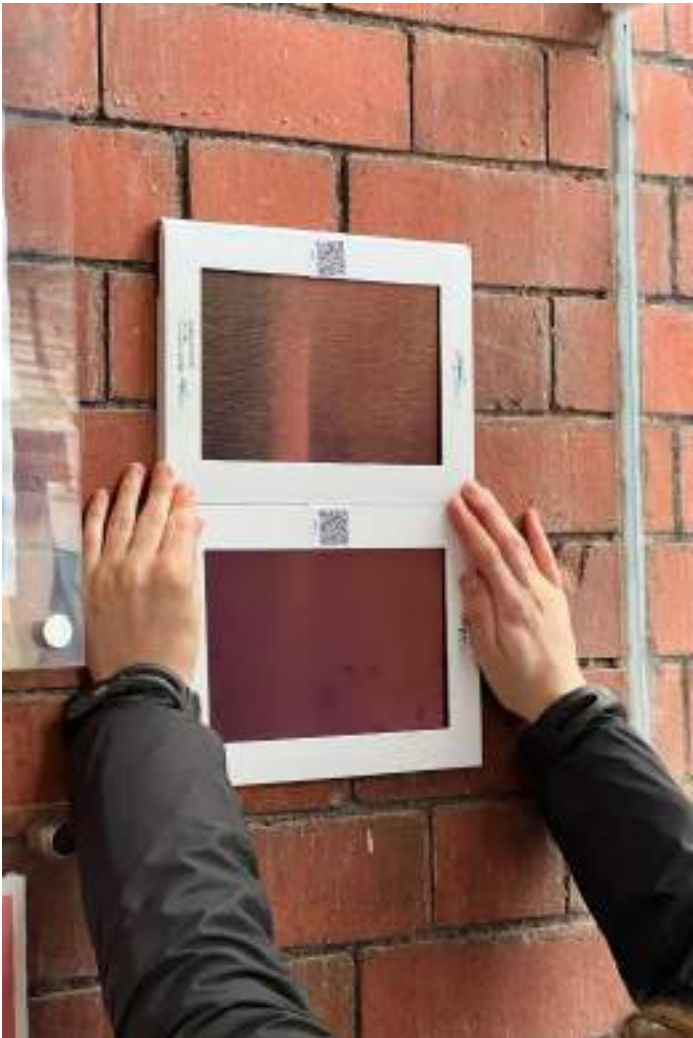
Materiality

Part of Jessica's intrest as an artist is the use of iridescent materials such as 'dichroic' metal which have been used on a number of her projects. The effect produced by this type of metal finish is that the colour of the surface changes when viewed from different angles. This has the effect of making the visual appearance change as the viewer moves around an object using it.

This surface finish has been explored for use on this project because when selected carefully it can be used to pick up on the colours of the local street context but in a more contemporary way than traditional materials such as brick. It also creates a more engaging finish to the facade, encouraging interaction from the public.

The facade will change depending on where it is viewed from but will always pick up on the earthy tones of the brickwork it references.

The following images are taken from the artist's exploration of the material on site, compared with the actual brickwork of the arts centre.



Comparison of steel finishes against brick in dry conditions.



Varying the viewing angle of the dichroic stainless steel reveals different colours, as shown against the Arts Centre brick.



Forticrete linear blockwork for the facade base



Comparison of different steel finishes in rain.



Comparison of steel finishes against external brick in wet conditions.

4.15 The Proposal

Flexbrick

When considering appropriate systems for integrating the dichroic metal the following system was put forward as a unique and interesting system that suspends ceramic brick tiles like a veil over the face of the underlying masonry wall.

The system provided by Flexbrick allows brick tiles to be removed and a mix of metal tiles to be incorporated in any configuration to create a dynamic facade effect. The following images are examples of the system in use on the Opportunity Pavilion in Dubai and demonstrates the effect that the artist is creating.

The system uses ceramic brick tiles which have a natural red hue to them, picking up on the red brick colour of the arts centre and neighbouring Lloyds Pharmacy building.

The manufacturer is also able to incorporate the dichroic metal in to the system allowing a mix of the brick and metal tiles to be incorporated into the facade within the same system.



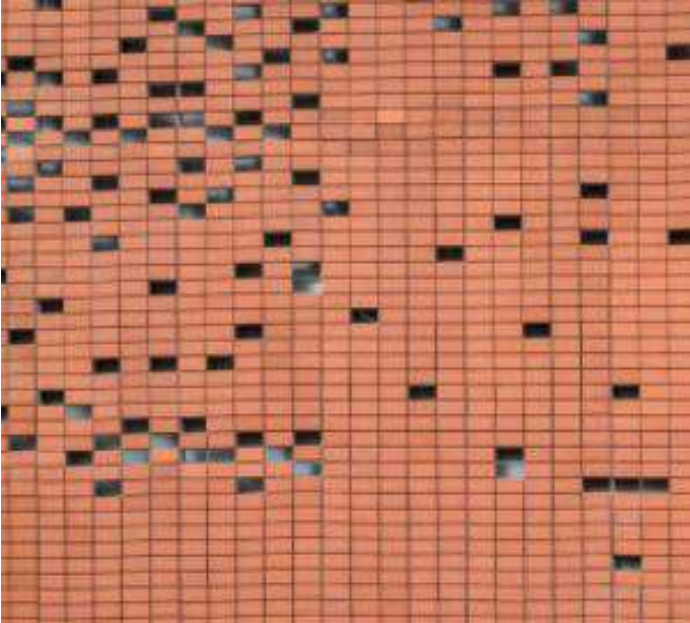
Opportunity Pavillion, Dubai



Opportunity Pavillion, Dubai. Perforations reveal light from behind.



Flexbrick units within wire mesh system.



Variation of perforations with possibility of using other materials.

4.16 The Proposal

Forticrete Linear Blocks

Forticrete linear blocks have been selected for the base external material for the cinema extension.

A dark toned block has been chosen as a robust solution to accentuate the colours of the artwork above, as well as referencing the colours of the local material palette.

The product is affordable and robust whilst the linearity of the elongated blocks brings additional interest to the facade.



4.17 The Proposal

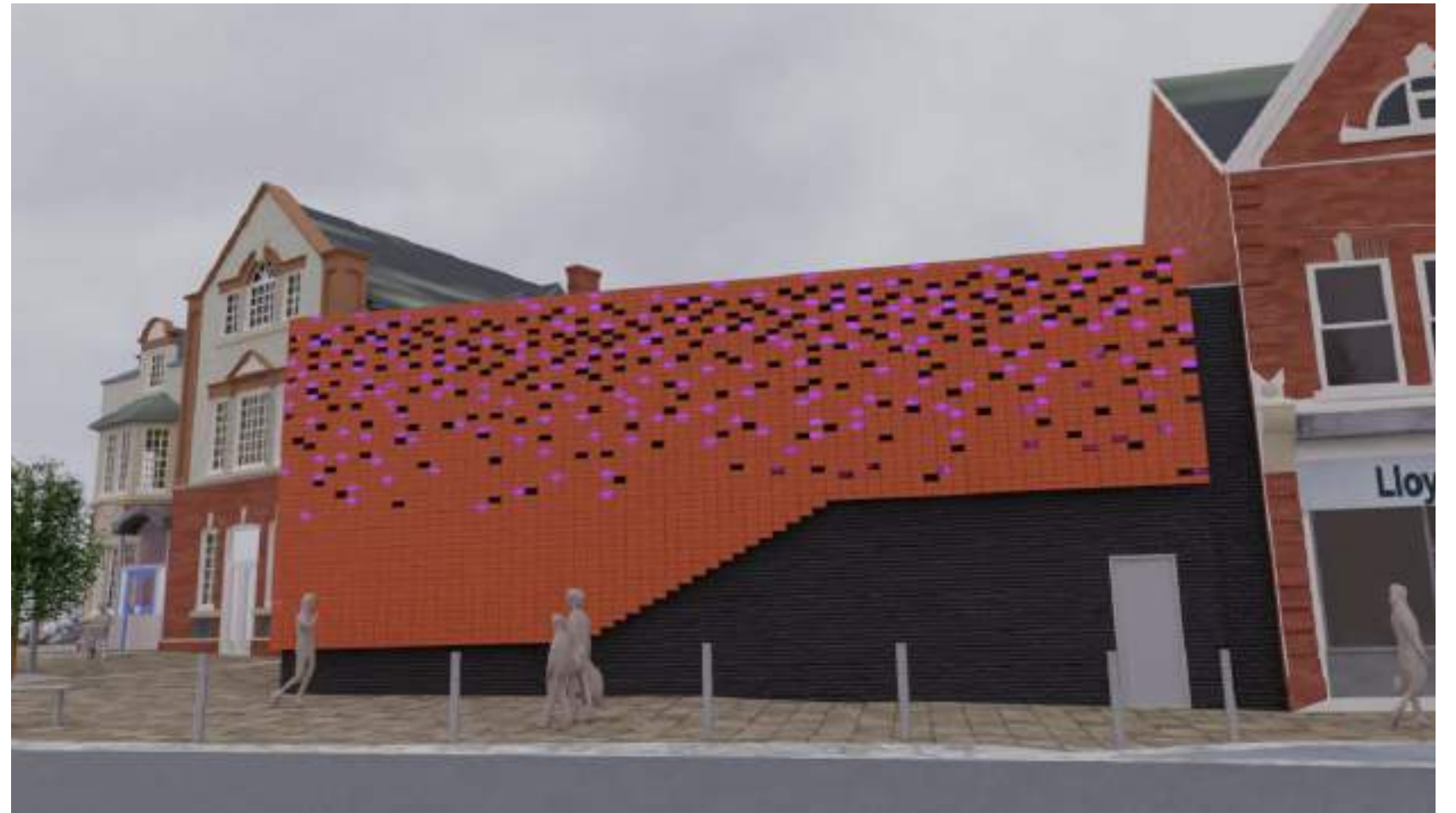
Artist's Visuals

The artist has generated the following visuals based upon the use of the Flexbrick system to incorporate both the ceramic brick tiles and metal tiles to create a patchwork effect that helps to break up the expanse of facade and create a dynamic changing facade that shifts in visual appearance throughout the day into night.

During the day the facade will shimmer as the reflective metal tiles change in colour as people move around the building as well as with the changing of lighting and weather conditions.

At night the back of the facade will be lit from the top to create a downwash of light which will highlight the perforations in the facade as well as the texture of the underlying linear block facade.

View during day



View at night



5.0 Access

Equal Access, Parking, Cycling, Public Transport

Equal Access

One of the most important parts of the brief has been to make all the facilities fully accessible through the main entrance from Herbert Street. The existing entrance is fully accessible to all users, and this will be retained as the main entrance. The floor level in the new extension has been set as close to the existing building as possible with only a small increase of 75mm to comply with the flood compensation requirements. The floor will gradually slope up into the extension to ensure there is full accessibility between.

There are currently two accessible toilets within Pontardawe Arts Centre, and our proposal includes a new accessible toilet that will be adjacent to the cinema. An additional accessible toilet will be created at first floor in the existing building to improve access for the staff offices and also the rehearsal space located at this level.

The closest disabled parking bays are located either in the public car park in Herbert Street or Paradise Car Park. There are also two disabled bays on the street located between the auditorium and library.

Parking

There is no dedicated parking at Pontardawe Arts Centre and these proposals do not include the provision of any parking. The closest public car parks are either Herbert Street car park or Paradise nightclub car park. There is also on street parking around the building.

Cycling

The building currently has no dedicated staff or visitor cycle parking, however there are three Sheffield stands adjacent to the bus stop on Holly Street near the main entrance. The proposals include the provision of 2 x secure and covered staff cycle spaces within the plant room courtyard to the rear of the new extension. Internally the existing shower and changing area will be refurbished for use by the staff and new lockers provided at first floor.

Public Transport

The nearest train station to the building is located in Neath approximately 6 miles away. Pontardawe is serviced by direct routes from either Neath or Swansea and the closest bus stop to the building is located on Holly Street near to the main entrance



6.0 Proposed Visuals

Photomatch in Context



View of Square



View from High Street

6.1 Proposed Visuals

External Visuals



6.2 Proposed Visuals

External Visuals



View of Cafe Entrance and Cinema Extension



View of Cafe Entrance and Wider Arts Centre

6.3 Proposed Visuals

External Visuals

View of Cafe Seating and North-West Elevation of Cinema Extension



View of South-West Elevation from High Street



6.4 Proposed Visuals

External Visuals

View of Cafe Seating and North-West Elevation of Cinema Extension



View of South-West Elevation from High Street



7.0 Summary

Justification

The proposed cinema extension delivers on the client's need to enhance the facilities at Pontardawe Arts Centre and to improve on the visitor experience. The biggest challenge to resolve is how to accommodate this new extension so that it makes a positive contribution to the public realm, and we hope that this pre-application enquiry will facilitate the necessary discussions around the design and architecture to enable the project to be a success.



