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Written Scheme of Investigation

Pontardawe Arts Centre

This document is in support of the planning application to Pontardawe Arts Centre, outlining the scope and methodology for historic building recording work to be carried out.

Date: 15th December 2023
Revision A

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project and Planning Background

1.1.1. Childs Sulzmann Architects has been commissioned on behalf of Pontardawe Arts Centre (hereafter, 'the Client'), to produce a written scheme of investigation (WSI) for historic building recording of Pontardawe Arts Centre, 60 Herbert Street, Pontardawe, SA8 4ED centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SN7230303976 (*Figure 1*). The building is not statutorily listed or situated within a conservation area.

1.1.2. Pontardawe Arts Centre was constructed in 1908 as a Public Hall and Institute (which first opened its doors in 1909 by the opera singer Adelina Patti). Pontardawe Hall and Institute occupied the building until 1994, with the building first opening as Pontardawe Arts Centre in 1996.

1.1.3. Planning permission (ref: P2022/0956) has been conditionally granted by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council for works to build a new cinema extension to Pontardawe Arts Centre, as well as works to reconfigure the ground floor bar and cafe spaces to improve the operation of the centre. Due to the buildings reputation as an important cultural centre in South Wales, pre-commencement Condition 03 of the Planning Submission states:

No works to which this consent relates shall commence until an appropriate programme of historic building recording and analysis (a minimum Level 2 survey) has been secured and implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

*Reason:
As the building is of architectural and cultural significance the specified records are required to mitigate impact.*

1.2 Scope of Document

1.2.1. This WSI sets out the aims of the historic building recording and the methods and standards that will be employed. In format and content, it conforms to current best practice, as well as to the guidance set out by Historic England in *Understanding Historic Buildings A Guide to Good Recording Practice HEAG099* (Historic England 2016).

1.3 Site Location and Brief Description

1.3.1 Pontardawe Art Centre is located along the main high street, Herbert Street, in Pontardawe, Swansea, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SN7230303976 (Easting: 272358, Northing: 203985).

1.3.2 The building measures approximately 37m in length along its east-west cross section and 30m in width at its widest extent on the north-south cross section.

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BritishNationalGrid.uk

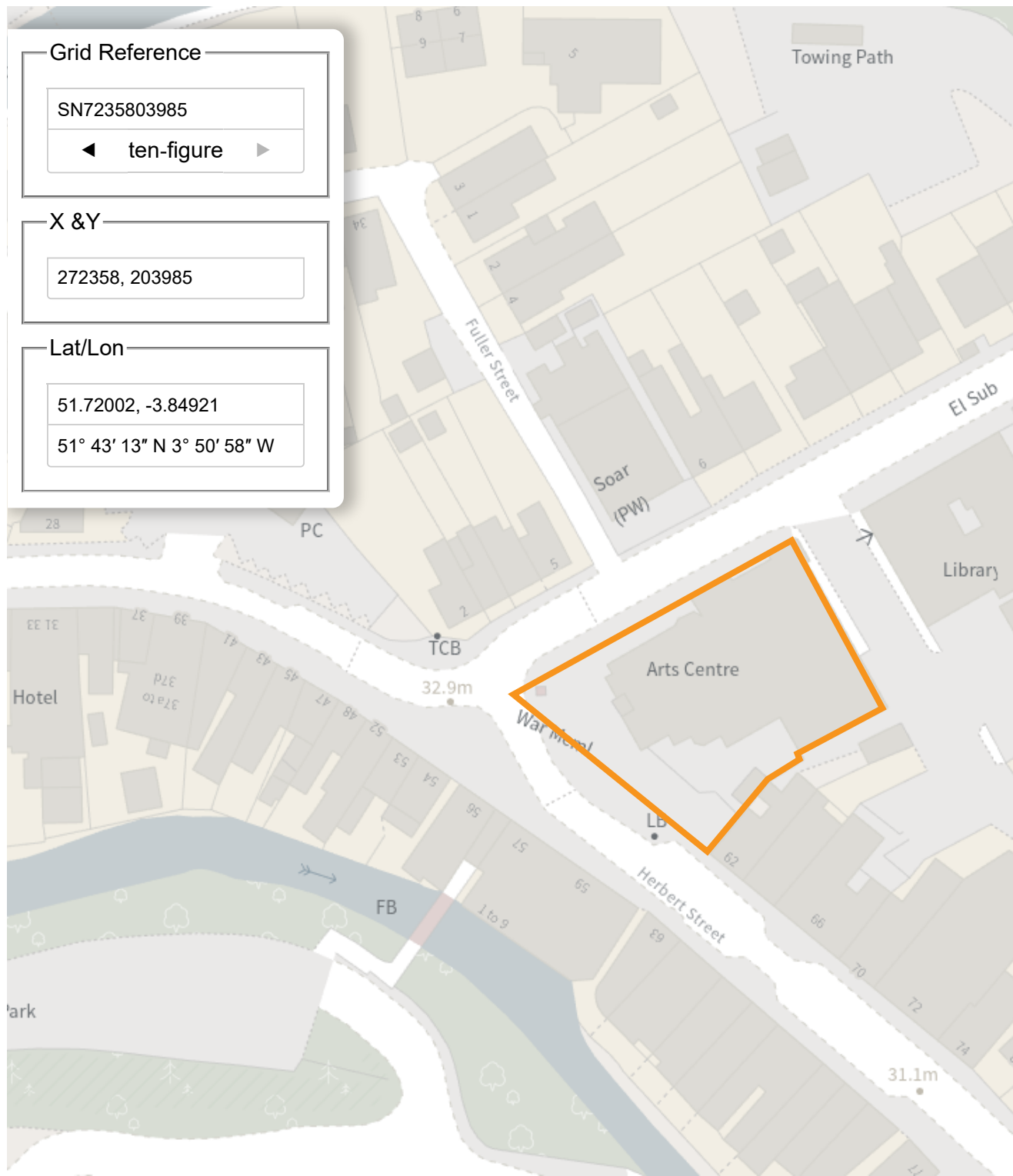


Figure 1 - Site National Grid Reference

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2.0 Legislative Guidance on Historic Building Recording

2.1 Legislative Guidance

2.1.1 This Historic Building Recording document will be produced in accordance with the Welsh Government's 'Planning Policy Wales' Edition 10, dated December 2018, paragraph 6.1.27, which states:

"If the planning authority is minded to approve an application and where archaeological remains are affected by proposals that alter or destroy them, the planning authority must be satisfied that the developer has secured appropriate and satisfactory provision for their recording and investigation, followed by the analysis and publication of the results and the deposition of the resulting archive in an approved repository".

2.1.2 The Welsh Government Historic Environment Service (Cadw)'s May 2017 document 'Managing Change to Listed Buildings in Wales' states:

*"4.11 Documenting and Recording:
It is important to document and learn from the decisions that are taken when changes are made to a listed building. When part or even all of a historic building is to be lost or altered, it is good practice to take the opportunity to record, investigate and analyse the features of the building that are to be removed or altered. It is also good practice to record features revealed during the course of any work. Advice on the appropriate level and standard of recording may be obtained from your local planning authority, the Welsh archaeological trusts, or the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMS)."*

2.1.3 In 1996, the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments identified a four-levelled approach to recording historic buildings, entitled 'Recording Historic Buildings'. It set out four levels of detail and analysis which is usually dependent upon both the nature of the building and the purpose for which the record is intended. They are:

- Level 1 is termed 'Visual Record'
- Level 2 is termed 'Descriptive Record';
- Level 3 is termed 'Analytical Record';
- Level 4 is termed 'Comprehensive Analytical Record'

2.1.4 Amongst the most helpful guides to what is required for Historic Building Recordings is Historic England's guidelines 'Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice (2016)', which has been used, in this document, as the basis for defining levels of recording and what is expected. As stated, the Historic Building Record for this project will be undertaken to Level 2.

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3.0 Historical Background

3.1 Origins, design and ownership 1908 - Present

3.1.1 Pontardawe Arts Centre was designed by W. Beddoe of Cardiff and constructed by Raford and Greaves of Derby in 1908.

3.1.2 The original building, Pontardawe Public Hall and Institute opened in 1909, containing a Reading Room, Billiards Room, and Club Rooms. The Public Hall originally had a capacity of 1,500 people. The building was maintained by a management committee comprised of representatives from local chapels and trade unions.

3.1.3 The building was designed as three separate architectural volumes, which are still externally distinguishable today. The first volume, original institute, housed the administrative spaces and a library. The middle one storey section was the Billiards Hall. The largest volume, was the original Public Hall, which is used today as the main auditorium.

3.1.4 Pontardawe Public Hall and Institute remained open until 1994 when the committee transferred ownership to the then Lliw Valley Borough Council, superseded nowadays by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council. Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council secured the building seeking to improve the cultural offerings of the town.

3.1.5 The new art centre opened in 1996 and contained a new box office, the Oriel Lliw Art Gallery, a dance studio, meetings rooms, the restored snooker hall, a theatre bar, and grand auditorium.

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4.0 Aims + Objectives

4.1 Aims

4.1.1 The aims or purpose of the historic building record, in line with Historic England's *Understanding Historic Buildings A Guide to Good Recording Practice* HEAG099 (Historic England 2016), are to:

- Establish the character, history, dating, form and development of a specific building or structure

4.2 Objectives

4.2.1 The aims of the historic building record will be achieved by making a record of the Pontardawe Arts Centre building, in order to:

- Provide a better understanding of the building structure (where possible within the confines of the works), compile a lasting record, analyse the findings / record and then disseminate the results.

4.2.2 The recorded data from the building record will be made publicly available via the resulting report.

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5.0 Methodology

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Prior to the commencement of the development works, a Level 2 (descriptive) record will be made of the Pontardawe Arts Centre building. The specific methods that will be used to achieve the requirements are outlined below.

5.2 Research

5.2.1 The historical background for the site has been previously researched from existing sources in order to inform this document. No further background research will be undertaken by Childs Sulzmann Architects as part of this phase of works.

5.3 Survey + Drawn Record

5.3.1 The drawn record of the Pontardawe Arts Centre comprises:

- Site location plan
- Floor Plans
- Elevations
- Site Plan

5.3.2 The internal floor plans are based upon dwg drawings provided by the client, the accuracy of which cannot be guaranteed. Childs Sulzmann architects have taken check dimensions using a laser measurer in order to confirm the accuracy of the drawings provided but these checks were not exhaustive so inaccuracies may be present. Scaled floor plan drawings are attached in the appendix of this report.

5.3.3 A measured topographical and external elevation survey has been undertaken by Midland Survey, providing an accurate record of the building site plan and elevations. These drawings are also included within the appendix.

5.3.4 The drawn record includes a scale bar with metric units for reference and are presented at an appropriate scale

5.4 Written Record

5.4.1 A written record will be made of the Pontardawe Arts Centre building and will comprise:

- The building's precise location as an NGR and by address;
- The date the record was made, and the name(s) or the recorder(s);
- A table of contents;
- An introduction, setting out the circumstances in which the record was made, its objectives, methods, scope and limitations, any constraints which limited the achievement of objectives;
- The history of the building as provided in this document;
- A summary of the building's form, function, date and sequence of development. Details of the architects, builders, patrons or owners will be provided if known;

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5.1 Methodology

5.5 Photographic Record

5.5.1 In accordance with Historic England's Guidance, *Understanding Historic Buildings A Guide to Good Recording Practice HEAG099* (Historic England 2016), the photographic record will be compiled to satisfy the following Level 2 survey requirements outlined in section 4.4.8:

1. A general view or views of the building (in its wider setting or landscape if 2 (below) is also adopted
2. The building's external appearance. Typically a series of oblique views will show all external elevations of the building, and give an overall impression of its size and shape. Where individual elevations include complex historical information it may also be appropriate to take views at right angles to the plane of elevation.
4. The overall appearance of the principle rooms and circulation areas. The approach will be similar to that outlined in 2.

5.5.2 Under Historic England's Guidance for a Level 2 survey, a scale rod is not required to be used to form the photographic record, however a scale may be used where appropriate or feasible.

5.5.3 Additional information included within the photographic is outlined below:

- Structural or decorative details relevant to the building's design, development and use – for example memorials, stained glass windows and religious furnishings such as the altar, font, lectern and pulpit;
- Evidence of removed machinery, fixtures or fittings (where noted);
- Details of dates, signage and marks that contribute to an understanding of the building, such as date stones, maker's marks or graffiti (where noted). The location of photographic views will be referenced within the drawn record. Accompanying photographic registers will record, as a minimum, a brief description of the subject and location.

5.5.4 The full photographic record, together with photographic registers will form part of the project archive. Selected images from the photographic record will be used to illustrate the report. The report figures will include plans showing the location of photographic plates used in the report.

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6.0 Reporting

6.1 General

6.1.1 Following the completion of the historic building recording, a draft report will be submitted to the Client and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council for comment. Following approval, a final version of the report will be issued.

6.1.2 The report will include the following elements;

- A non-technical summary
- Site location (including plan) and NGR;
- The date(s) of the survey;
- The aims, and methods used for the historic building record;
- A description of the building, commensurate with the requirements as set out in section 5.4;
- Building floor plans annotated with photographic views (showing the location of plates use to illustrate the report)
- Selected plates from the photographic record

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7.0 National Monuments Record (NMRW)

7.1 Archiving to NMRW

7.1.1 The Historic Building Recording Document will be compiled to adhere to *RCAHMW Guidelines for Digital Archives* (Gareth Edwards, 2015).

6.1.2 Maintained by the Royal Commission, the National Monuments Record of Wales (NMRW) is a national collection of information and archives collecting both digital and hard copy records of the historic environment of Wales to the present day.

6.1.3 The Historic Building Recording Document to be compiled, is intended to be digitally archived in the NMRW, so that the information gathered can be made available to the public for study or research purposes.

7.2 Format of Archive Material

7.2.1 In accordance with *RCAHMW Guidelines for Digital Archives* (Gareth Edwards, 2015), the content forming the Historic Building Record will satisfy the following criteria:

- All texts and supporting images that may comprise a final report or publication must form the core of the deposit;
- Any supporting graphics that are embedded into a final report but which are also available in higher resolution or uncropped must be included as separate items;
- All raw (unprocessed) data relating to various specialist survey activities should be included where possible;
- If unprocessed data is not available in digital form, and provision cannot be made to scan it electronically, it can be supplied to NMRW as hardcopy. Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF/A-1a or PDF/A-1b) files are accepted. However, any constituents that go to make up the PDF file (e.g. *TIFF Files, Microsoft Word document*) should be documented and supplied as well.

7.2.2 In relation to this guidance outlined above, it is intended that the Historic Record submitted to the NMRW, will be submitted at full quality to preserve the resolution of all photographs and drawings forming the photographic and drawn record.

7.3 Media Format

7.3.1 An uncompressed file of the Historic Building Record will be transferred to the NMRW via a secure web-based file sharing application such as OneDrive or Wetransfer.

7.3.2 Files to be submitted to the NMRW will be appropriately named so that the information is easily understood by those outside of the project.

7.3.3 The following naming guidance set out in the *RCAHMW Guidelines for Digital Archives* will be adhered to:

- The period character (".") is not used in directory names, and is reserved for separating file extensions from the name;
- The space character should not be used in file or directory names (and will be replaced with the underscore character instead);
- Directory and file names may be upper, lower or mixed case;
- Filenames should be logical, unique, and be kept as short as reasonably possible.

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8.0 Historic Environmental Record (HER)

8.1 Archiving to HER

8.1.1 The document will be prepared in accordance with the Guidance for the *Submission of Data to the Welsh Historic Environment Records (HERs)*, The Welsh Archaeological Trusts 2022, which requires the following information to be included within the Historic Building Record:

- An event number (Event PRN) for the project work which is supplied by HER staff on request;
- Bilingual summaries and site names;
- The report author(s) and company/ organisation details where appropriate;
- The date of completion of the report;
- Start and end date of event;
- An accurate NGR centred on the project location (to a minimum of 6 figures).
- A six-figure grid coordinate relating to the Easting or x coordinate;
- A six-figure grid coordinate relating to the Northing or y coordinate;
- A description containing the following: what the site is; where it is; details of construction / fabric; any significant notes, e.g. architect; importance; statement of condition; statement of discovery; any interpretations; references for information included, in the format '*Author, Year*';
- The period to which the historic asset belongs to in accordance with <https://heritagedata.org/live/schemes/11.html>;
- Any references cited in the description

8.2 Bilingual Summary

8.2.1 The bilingual event summary will be included within the executive summary section of the Historic Building Record, outlining the following information:

- Who undertook the work?;
- Who was it commissioned by? (no personal names);
- When was the work undertaken?;
- Where was the work carried out?;
- Why was it undertaken?;
- What work was undertaken?;
- What were the results of the work?;
- What were the conclusions? (if any)

8.3 Photographs

8.3.1 Photographs will be taken in accordance with recognised standards. Where possible TIFF or JPEG image file format will be used, with software that processes the images ensuring that the original image quality is maintained.

8.4 Event Polygon(s)

8.4.1 Where the drawn record has used GIS or CAD drawing software to graphically depict the project coverage area, or specific elements that form part of the project, these will be shared with the relevant HER.

8.4.2 Where possible, these files should be provided in a common GIS or CAD format.

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9.0 Bibliography

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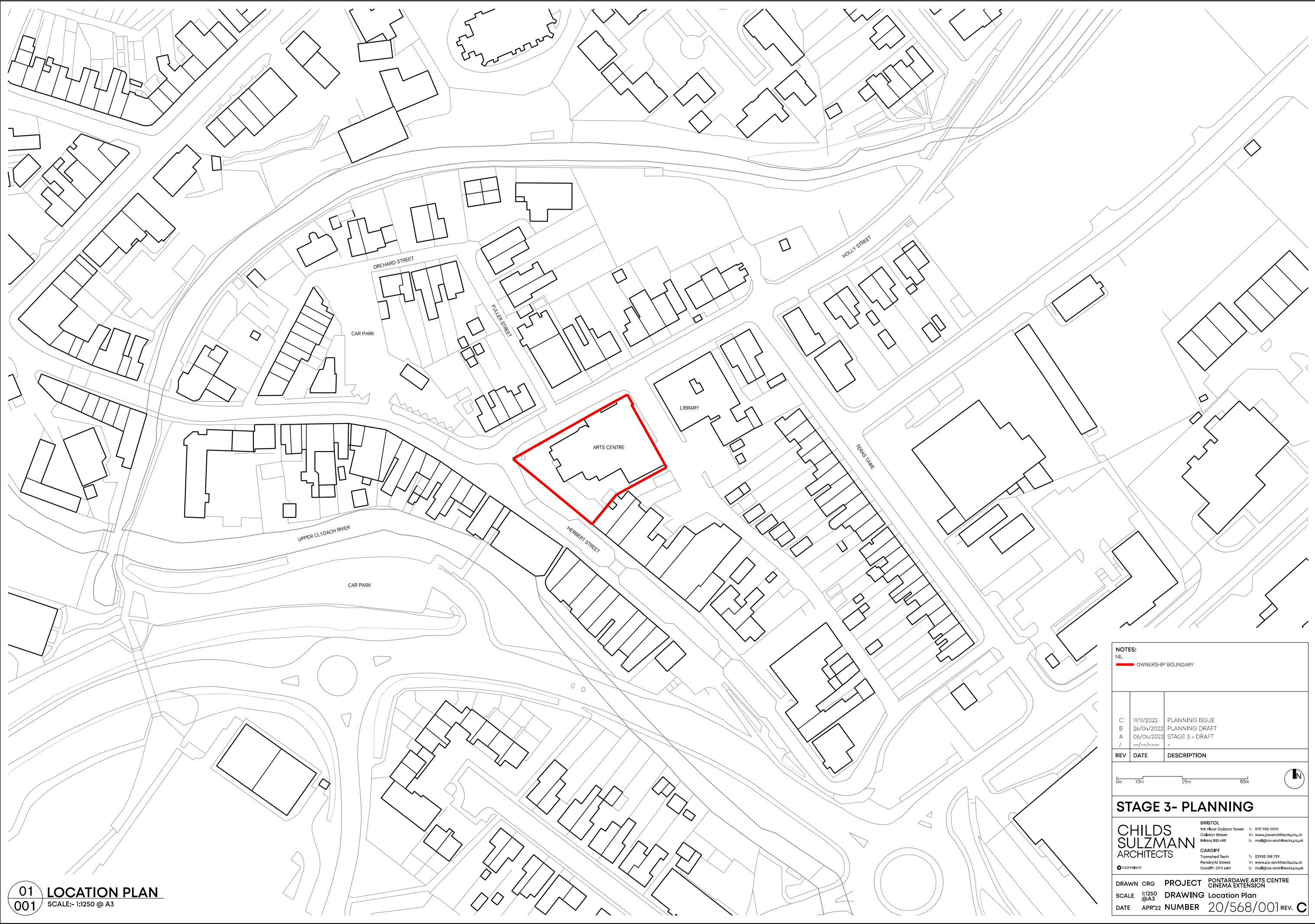
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NOTES:
NIL
— OWNERSHIP BOUNDARY

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A	06/04/2022	STAGE 3 - DRAFT
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REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION

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STAGE 3- PLANNING

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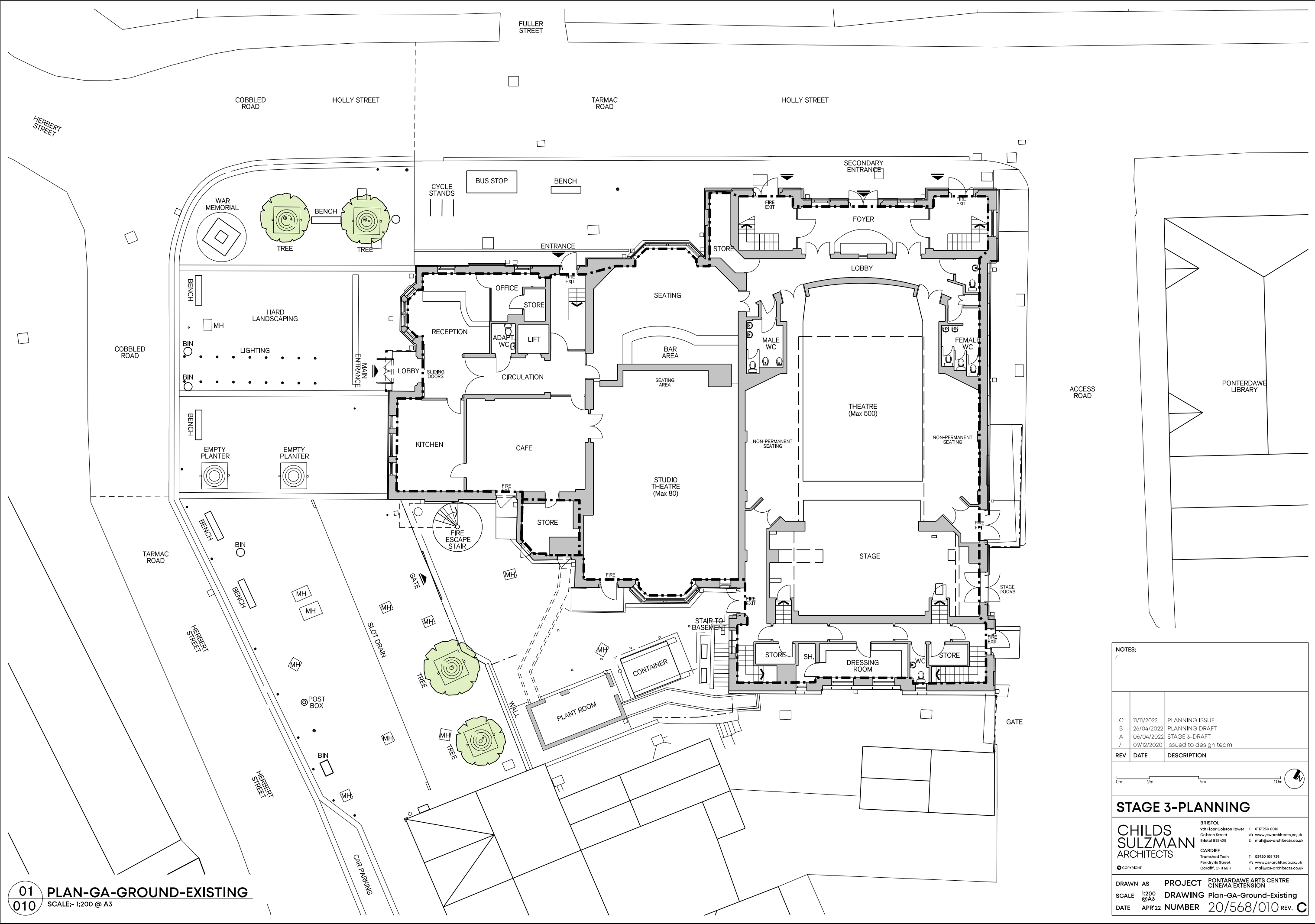
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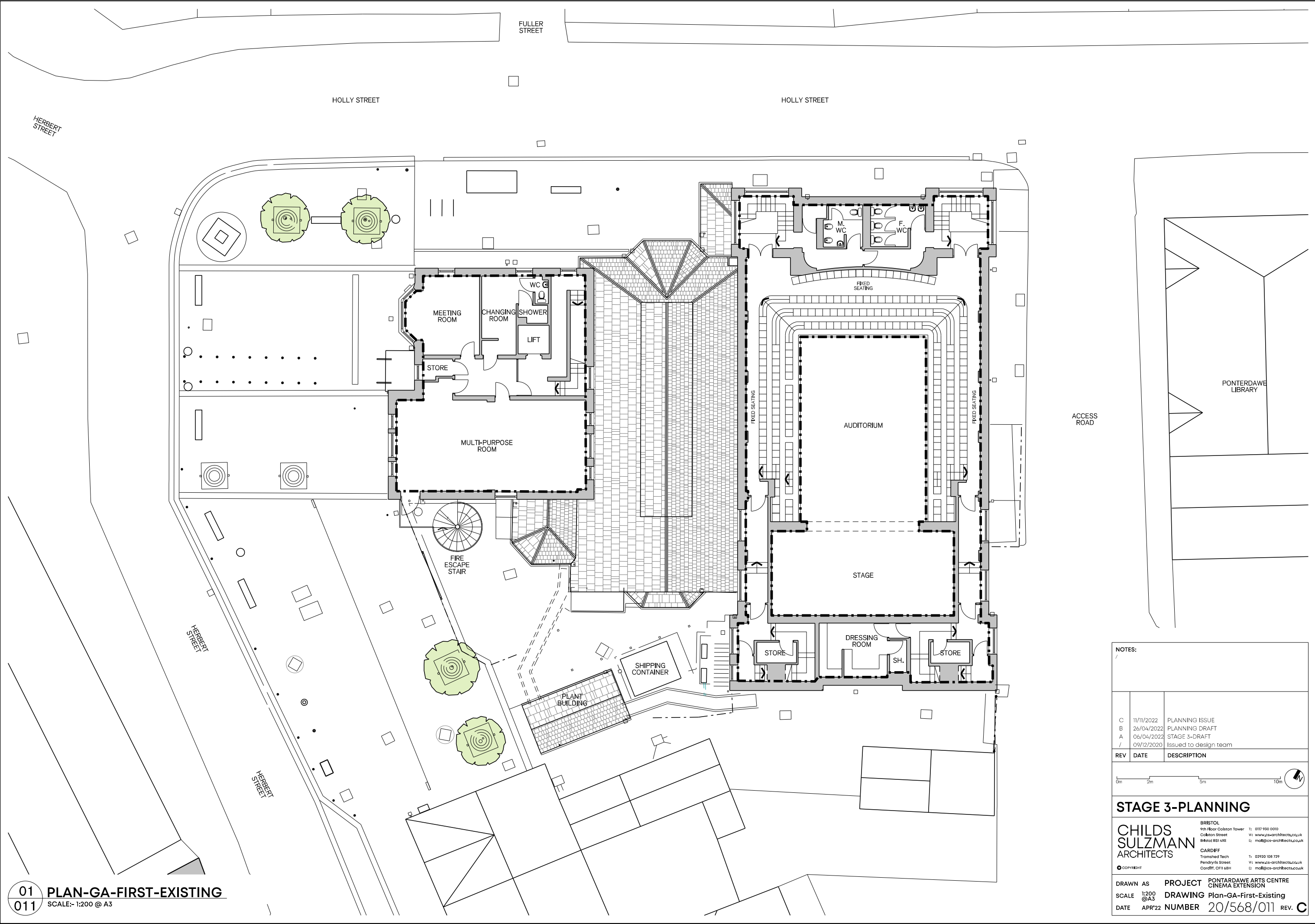
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A	06/04/2022	STAGE 3-DRAFT
/	09/12/2020	Issued to design team

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STAGE 3-PLANNING

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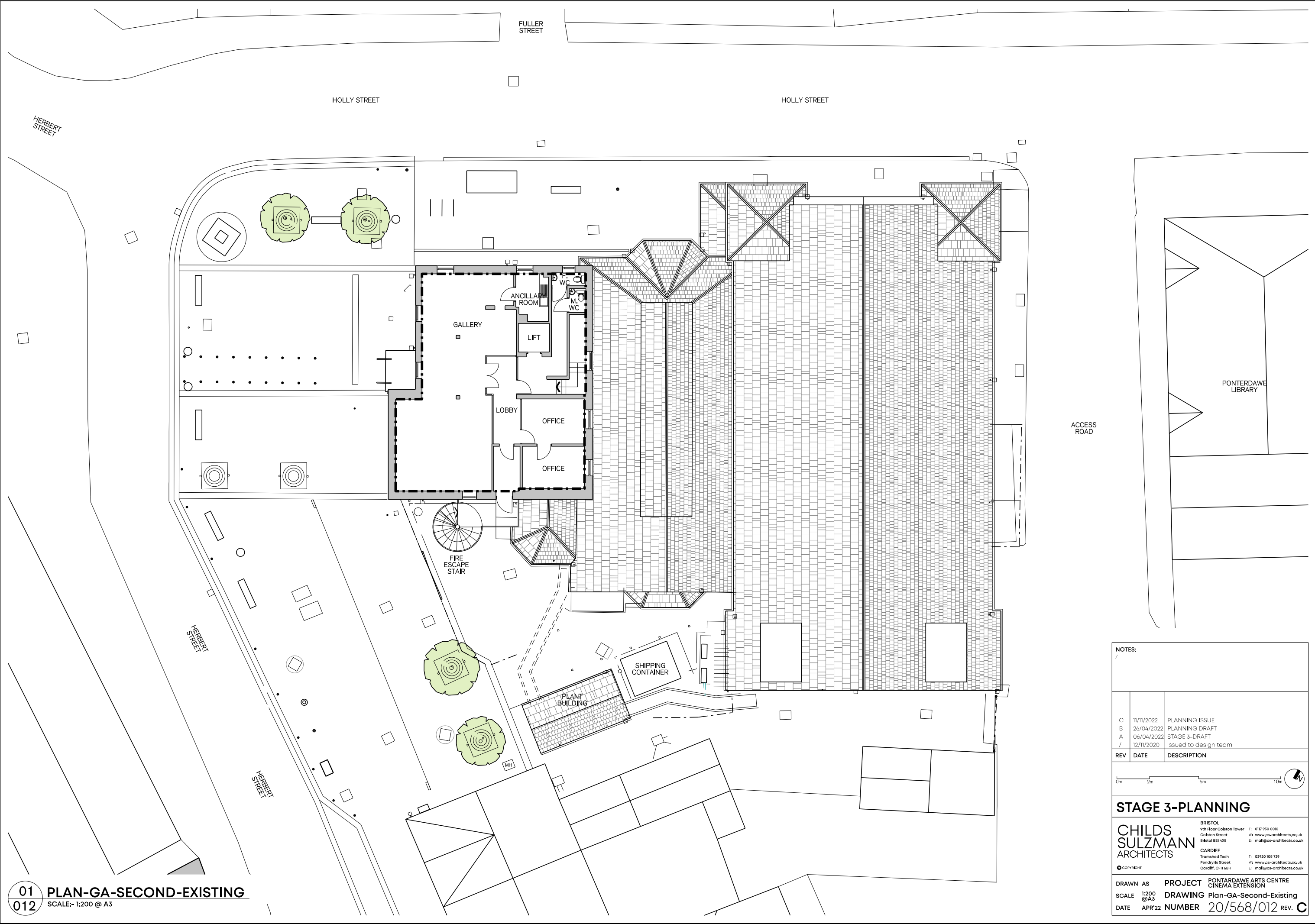
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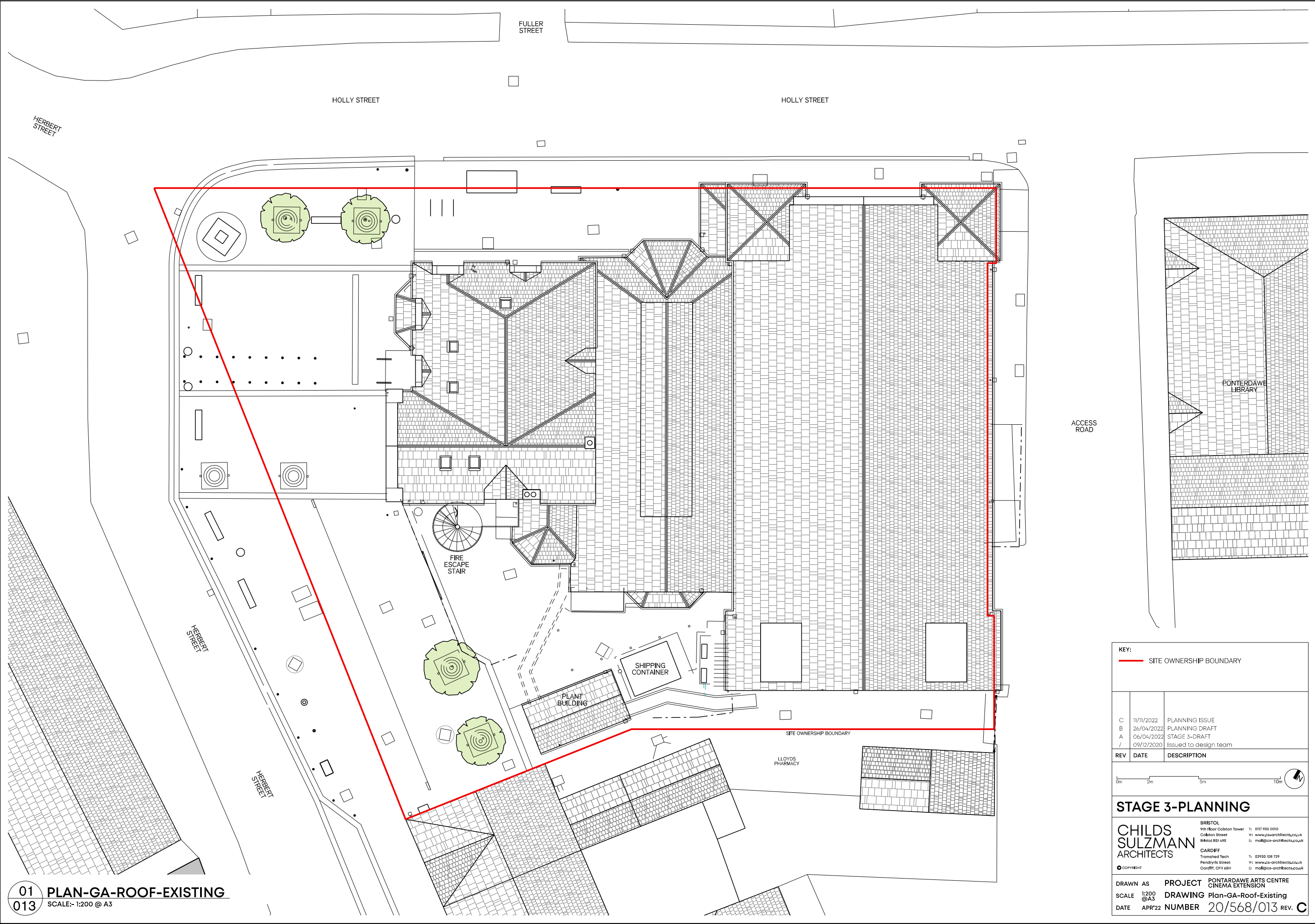
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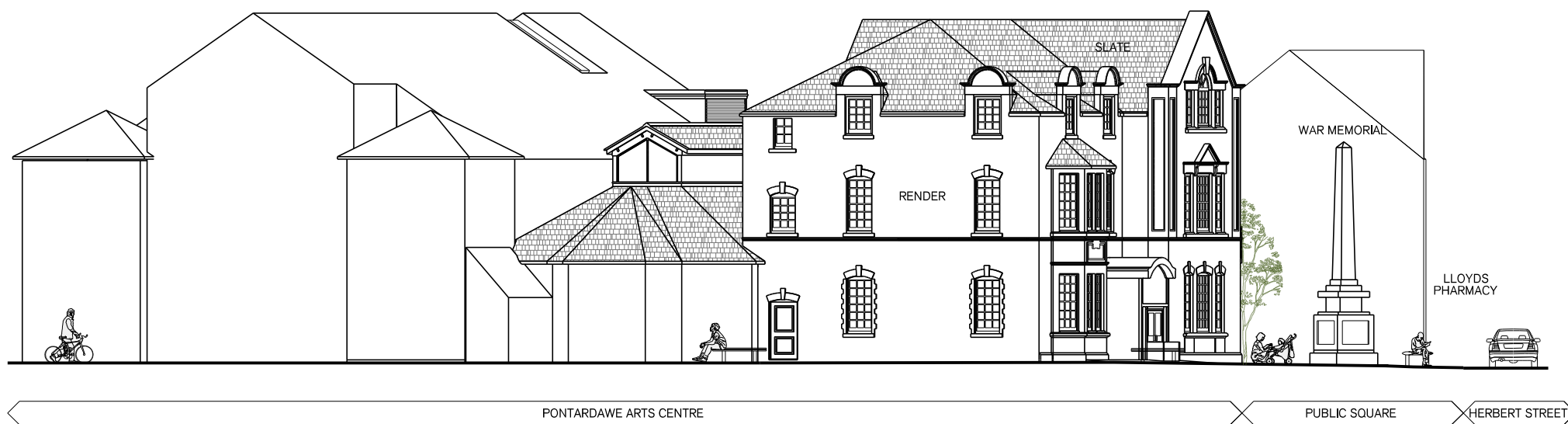
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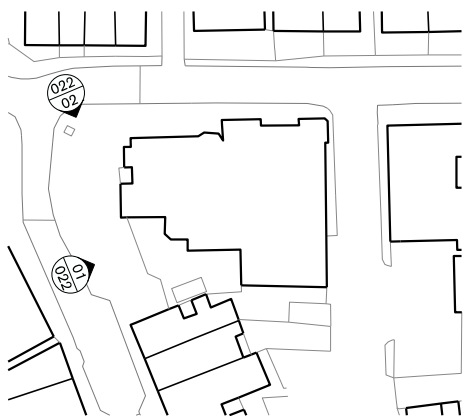


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02
022 ELEVATION-EAST WEST-EXISTING
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01
022 EXISTING ELEVATIONS
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STAGE 3-PLANNING

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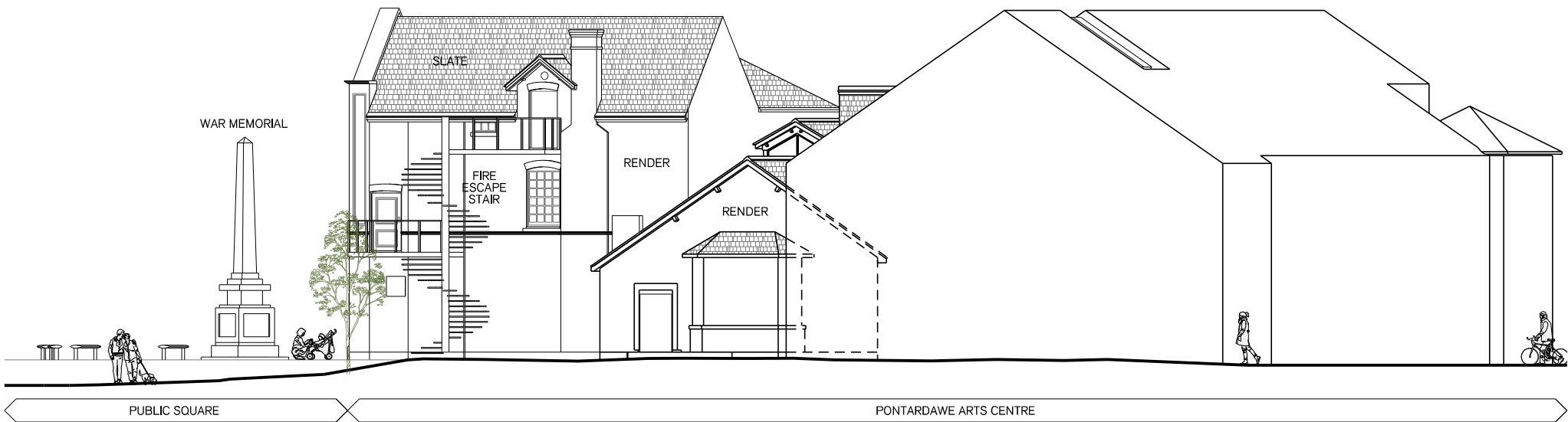
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01 ELEVATION-WEST EAST-EXISITING
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