

**The Flour Mill Masterplan**

Design Proposal and Architects' Vision

# THE FLOUR MILL

**Grafton Architects + Dublin Port Company**

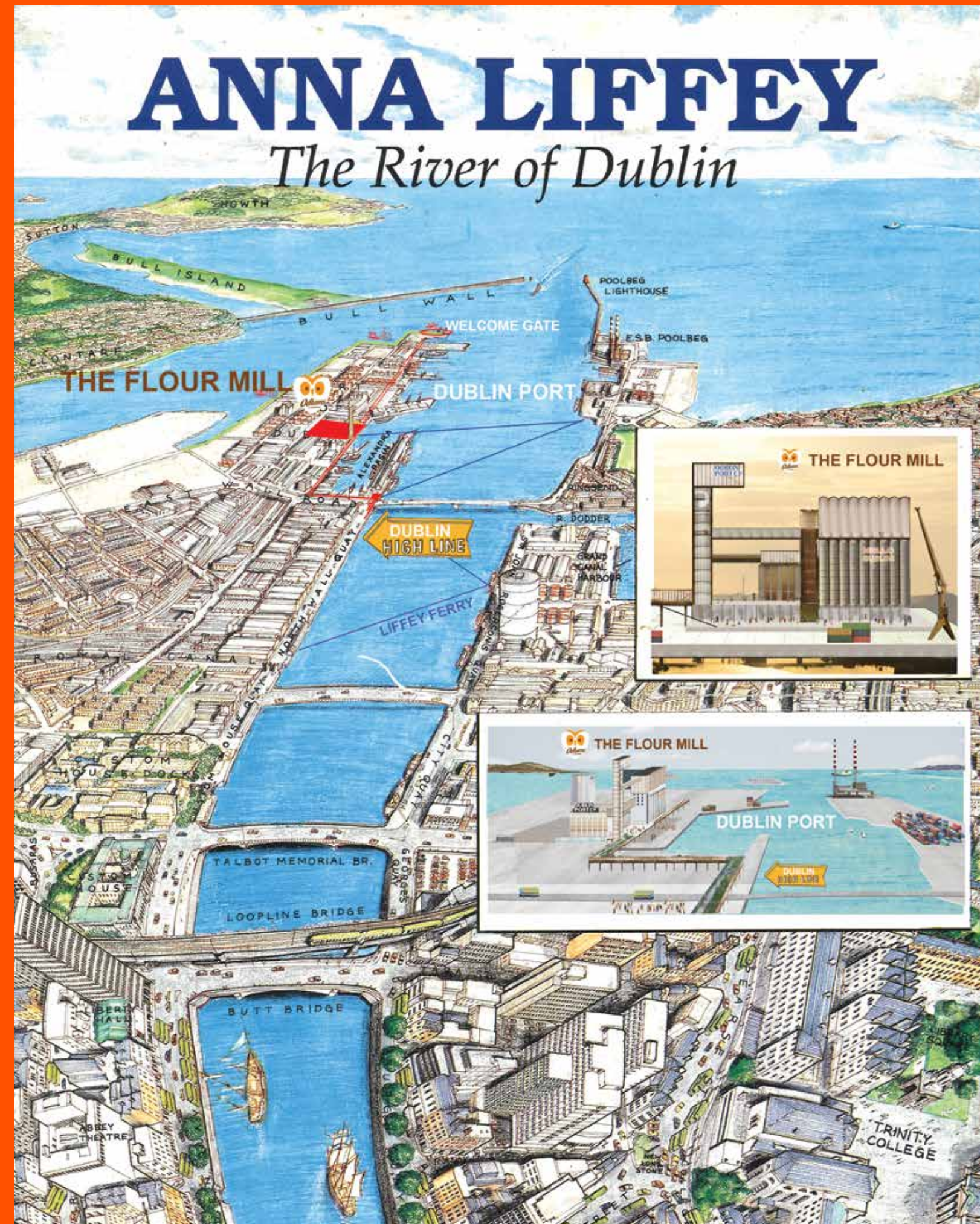
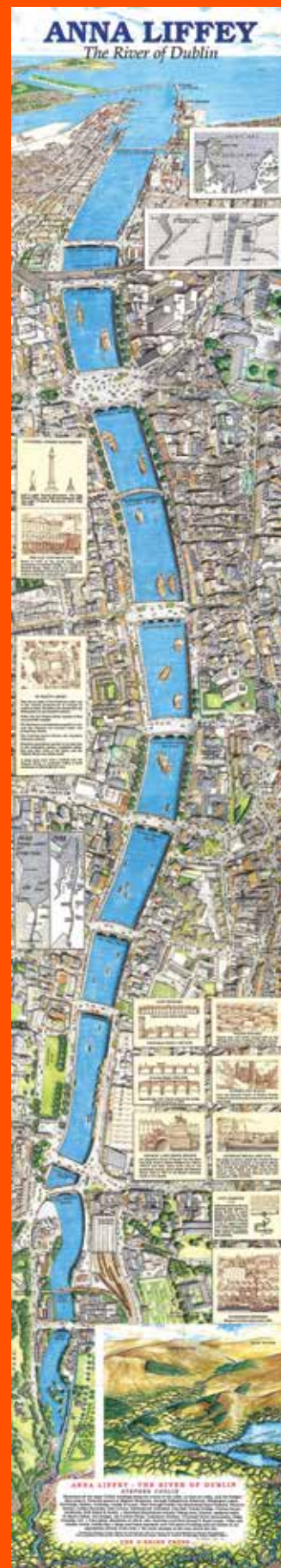
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# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Setting the Scene</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Connectivity</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Dublin Port Re-imagined</b>	<b>42</b>



This page

# Introduction

**Imagine a time when the life of Dublin City and its citizens, and the life of Dublin Port are again inextricably linked, physically, socially and culturally. The City, and indeed the country, are already inextricably linked with the Port by virtue of the dependency on the quantity of goods imported on a daily basis. The Port activities are colourful, theatrical, vibrant and for the most part invisible and inaccessible. The disused heroic industrial buildings present an extraordinary ensemble of spaces and structures waiting to be inhabited again. The City is crying out for spaces to be appropriated for cultural and many other uses not catered for in current commercial developments.**

Dublin Port Company has developed a vision, using culture as a key catalyst, for the adaptive re-use of these buildings, which would be made available and affordable to the citizens of Dublin. This agenda is rare, but essential in ensuring the survival of the rich urban life of any city. The Flour Mill is the first step in transforming Dublin Port into a key destination. By making the Port more visible and easily accessible, by providing new unique vantage points from which the City will be re-imagined and re-discovered, new spaces for archives, for exhibition, for workshops, for studios, for markets, and by combining this with the extraordinary drama of the current working port, that vibrant social connection that historically existed between the life of the Port and the life of the City will be re-instated.

In the brief for the Flour Mill Masterplan, Dublin Port Company have set out an ambitious vision and goals for the project:

## Goal 1

Use the opportunities offered by the location of heritage structures to help tell the story of Dublin's river and Port.

## Goal 2

Repurpose original industrial buildings through innovative and high-quality design interventions, in keeping with the Davos Declaration on Baukultur.

### Goal 3

Create **museum** and **archive facilities** that provide appropriate climatic conditions for collections, while serving as models for sustainable reuse and energy regeneration.

## Goal 4

Creating a world class museum,  
visitor centre and archive,  
which contributes to the country's  
education, culture, leisure  
and economy through inspiration,  
learning and enjoyment.

## Goal 5

Provide a **nationally-designated** place of deposit for the storage of archive materials drawn from appropriate organisations across the island of Ireland.

## Goal 6

Use client-led design to produce innovative and **stimulating visitor experiences** that act as an exemplar for the communication of maritime heritage.

## Goal 7

Fulfil the larger Dublin Port mission of **reintegrating the Port with the City**, in part by the provision of recreational amenities and creative business development opportunities.

# Grafton Architects

## The Flour Mill Masterplan

### Setting the Scene

**In response to the seven goals stated in the vision for The Flour Mill Masterplan, we have explored the following strategies based on two headings: Setting the Scene and The Port Re-Imagined.**

#### **Setting the Scene**

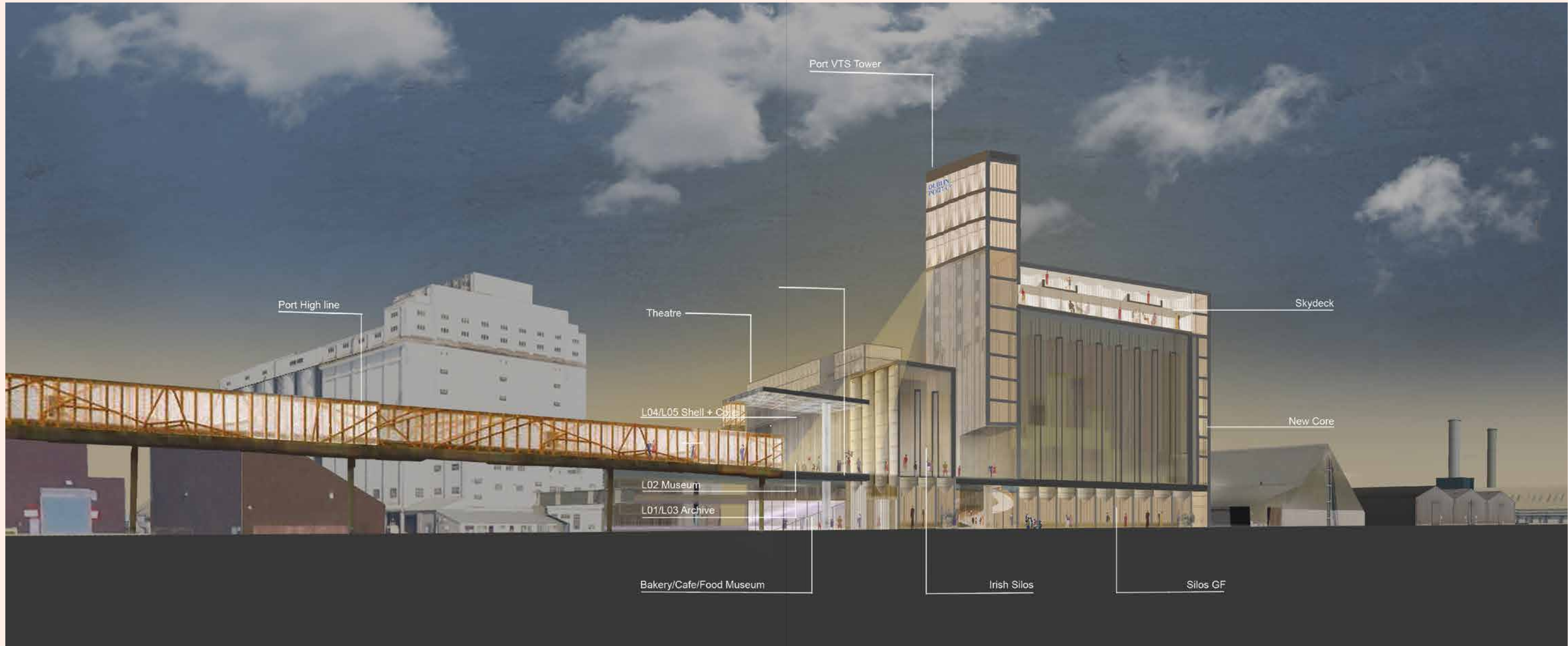
We see the potential of bringing the drama, animation, scale, colour, ebb and flow of the Port back into the consciousness and perception of the City, as was the case when the Port activities animated the River Liffey right up to Custom House Quay.

#### **Research**

Since the tender competition stage, we have had significant input from Dublin Port Company. A day-long comprehensive briefing presentation was organised, which was extremely stimulating.

This included presentations by the Dublin Port Company CEO, the Port Heritage & Communications Group, and the Programme Management Office, and covered topics concerning Port history & archive, Port City Integration and tangible soft values projects, as well as Port capacity building and new infrastructure projects. The Harbour Master gave a very insightful presentation on the navigation of Dublin Bay and managing the operations of the Port. This was augmented by a presentation on the richness of archives by Catriona Crowe and followed by a presentation from a representative from the AIVP, the Worldwide network of Port Cities.

During this briefing and throughout the course of subsequent numerous site visits, meetings with Dublin Port Company personnel and advisors, meeting our extended team of specialist consultants, with community groups, the rich story of the Port, both from the past and from the present, was revealed.



Left: Perspective Section through the Portline Arrival Belevdere, Silos and Skydeck.

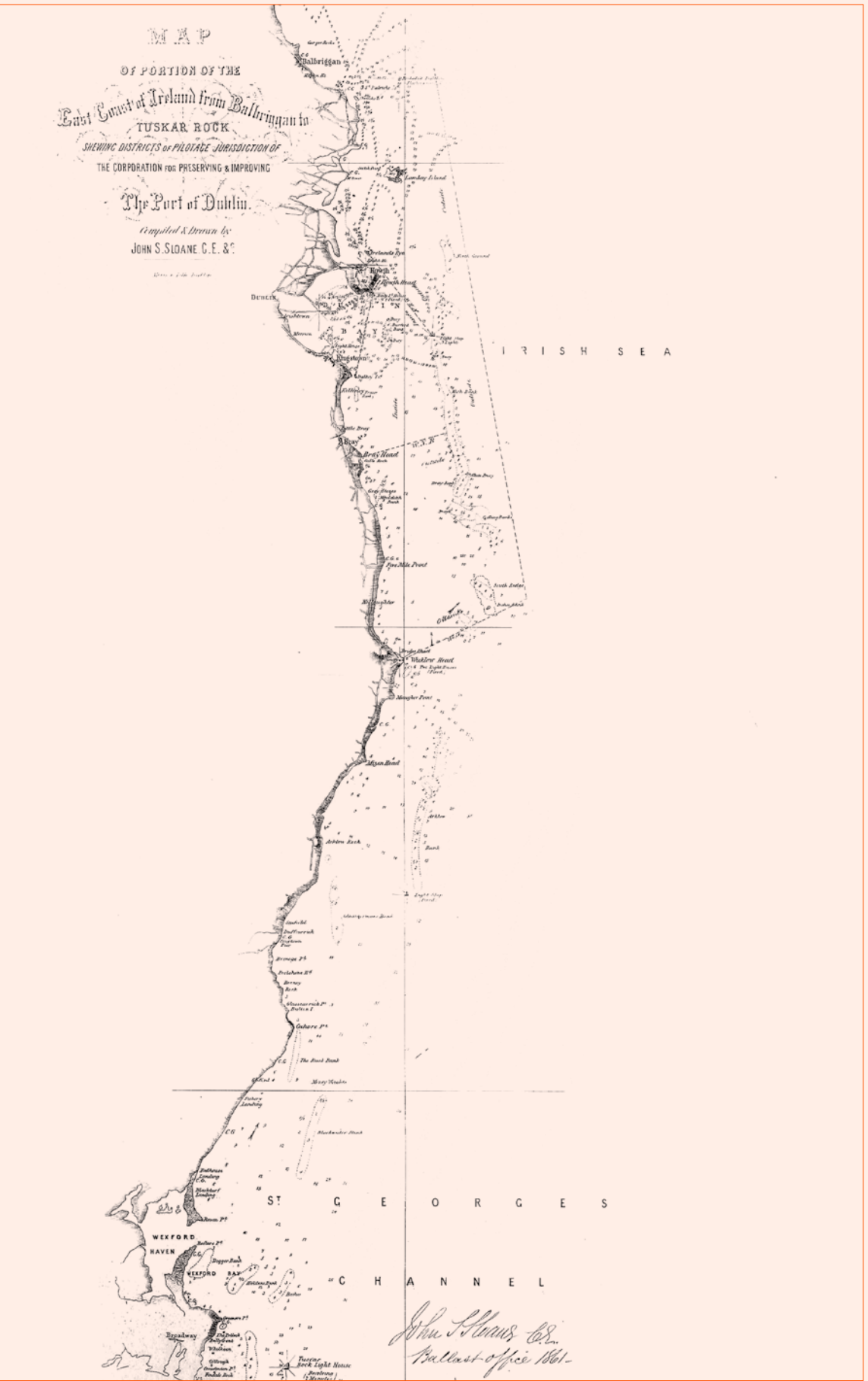


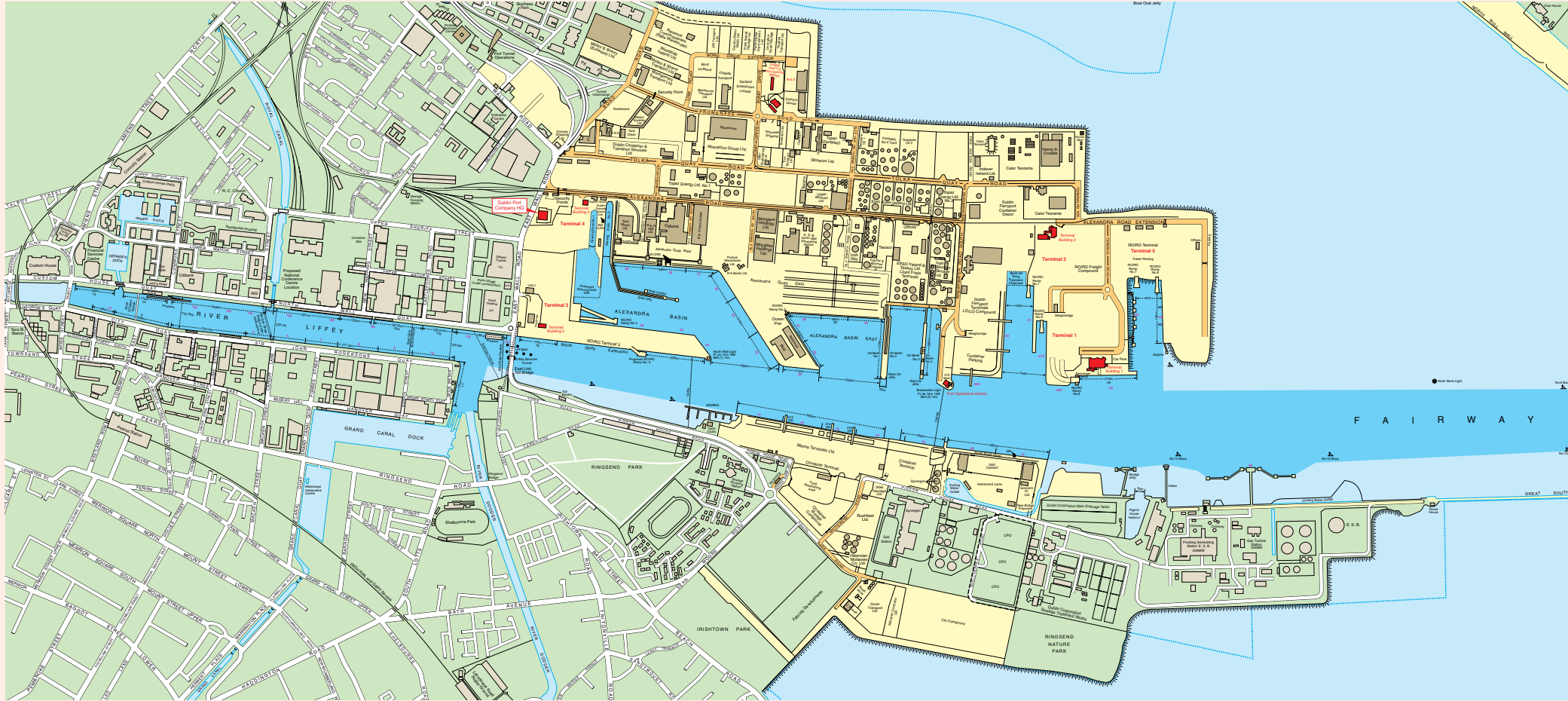
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Top left: The Great South Wall.  
 Bottom left: Colour and Scale of Dublin Port  
 Gantry Cranes animate the shoreline.  
 Right: 1861 Map of East Coast of Ireland  
 Balbriggan to Tuskar Rock – John Sloane.

[Opposite page](#)

Overview of the proposals for the  
 Flour Mill viewed from the City.





[This page](#)

Top: The Dublin Port Litho map.

Bottom: Indicative layout of channel and berths of Dublin Port by 2040.

[Opposite page](#)

Top: Dublin Port, The Flour Mill, Alexandra Basin.

Bottom left: Contemporary View of Dublin Port.

Bottom right: Aerial View of the Port from Dublin Bay.

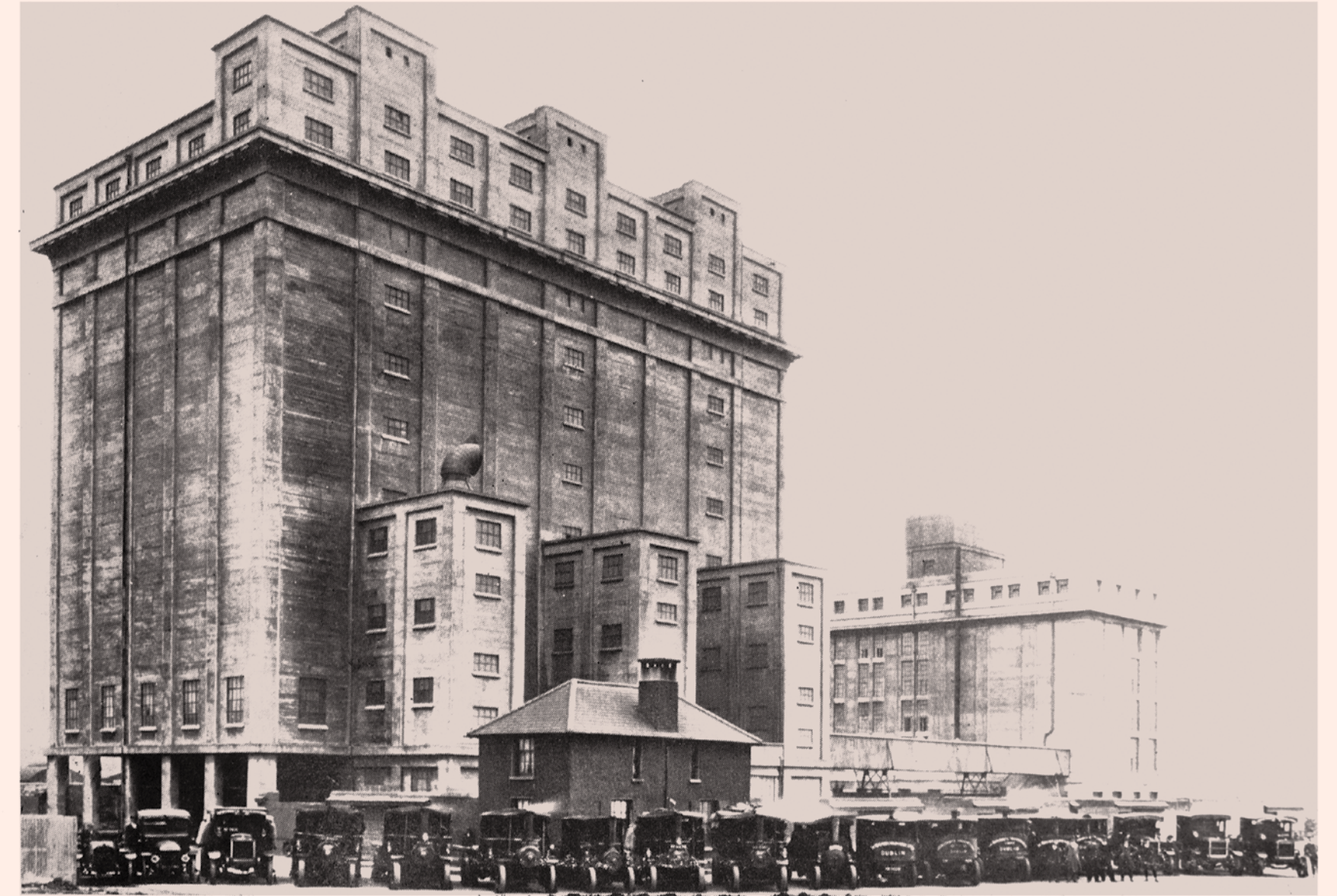




This page  
Top and bottom left: Dublin Port Alexandra Basin.  
Top and bottom right: View from Poolbeg towards the Flour Mill.  
Opposite page  
Left and right: Historical Photographs of R&H Halls Grain Silo and The Flour Mill.



Figure 1 Builder's advertisement showing the current R&H Halls grain silo (c. 1915-20) by Bachelor & Hicks (left), and the Flour Mill (c. 1924), on the site by Frederick Hicks and Charles Ashworth.



GRAIN SILO OF THE MERCHANTS' WAREHOUSING COMPANY ON THE DEEP-WATER QUAY AT THE ALEXANDRA BASIN, DUBLIN.  
The Silo is equipped with pneumatic plant for clearing and loading vessels, weighing, etc. The building of the Dublin Port Milling Co., Ltd., is seen upon the right.



[This page](#)

Top and bottom: The Port activities animated the River Liffey right up to Custom House Quay and beyond.

[Opposite page](#)

Top and bottom: Ebb and flow of the Port and former Docks along the River Liffey.



## Discovery

The numerous site visits involved climbing to the top of the structures, getting inside the structures, moving in the cracks of space between monumental structures, standing under the funnels at the base of the silos, peering down into the silos in the Bagging Tower, moving in the big floorplates of the Mill Building, examining the steel trusses of the warehouse structures, experiencing the cubic concrete space of the Provender Mill, enjoying the extraordinary vantage points from which to survey our City. We mapped the capacity of weighty spaces, the fragility of the lightweight spaces, the elements we should not touch, the hidden elements we should reveal, and all of this has led to an extraordinarily rich collection of experiences.

This ensemble of spaces and structures, their function, their past life, their construction and materiality, their unique cinematic industrial scale and quality, are in themselves artefacts to be exhibited and enjoyed by the people of Dublin and beyond, as part of this new development of The Flour Mill.



## Opposite page

Cargo is loaded on the Quayside.

## Port Operations

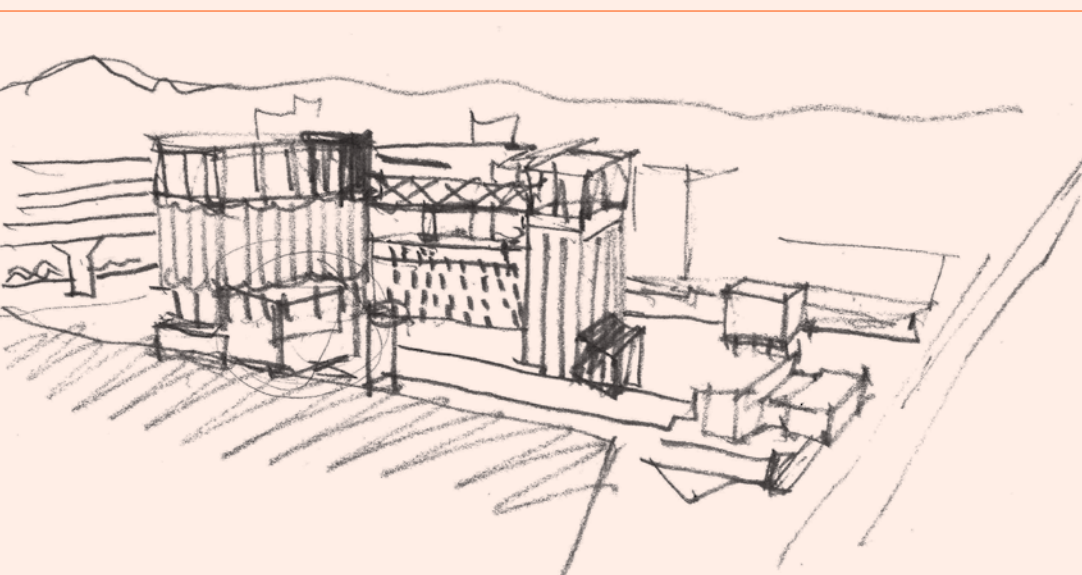
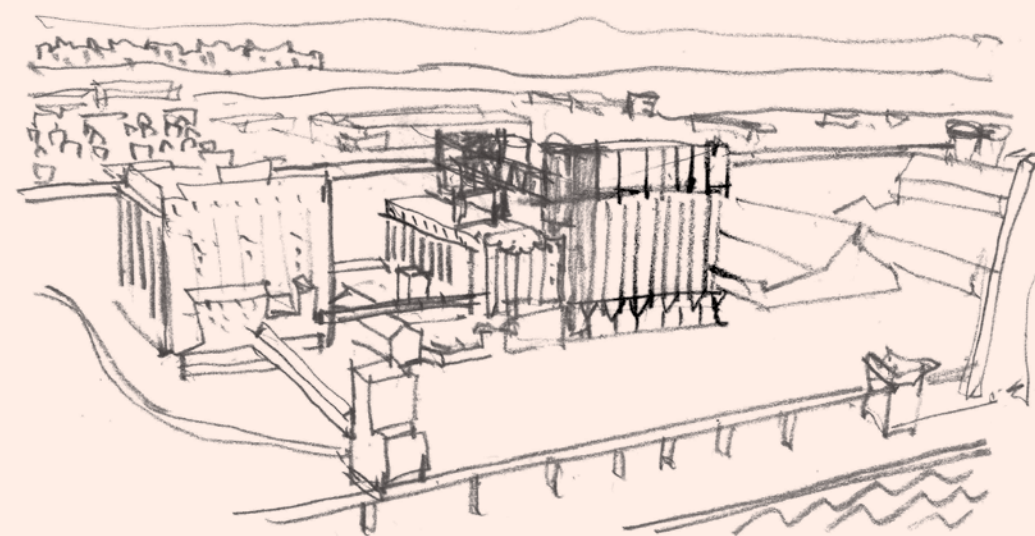
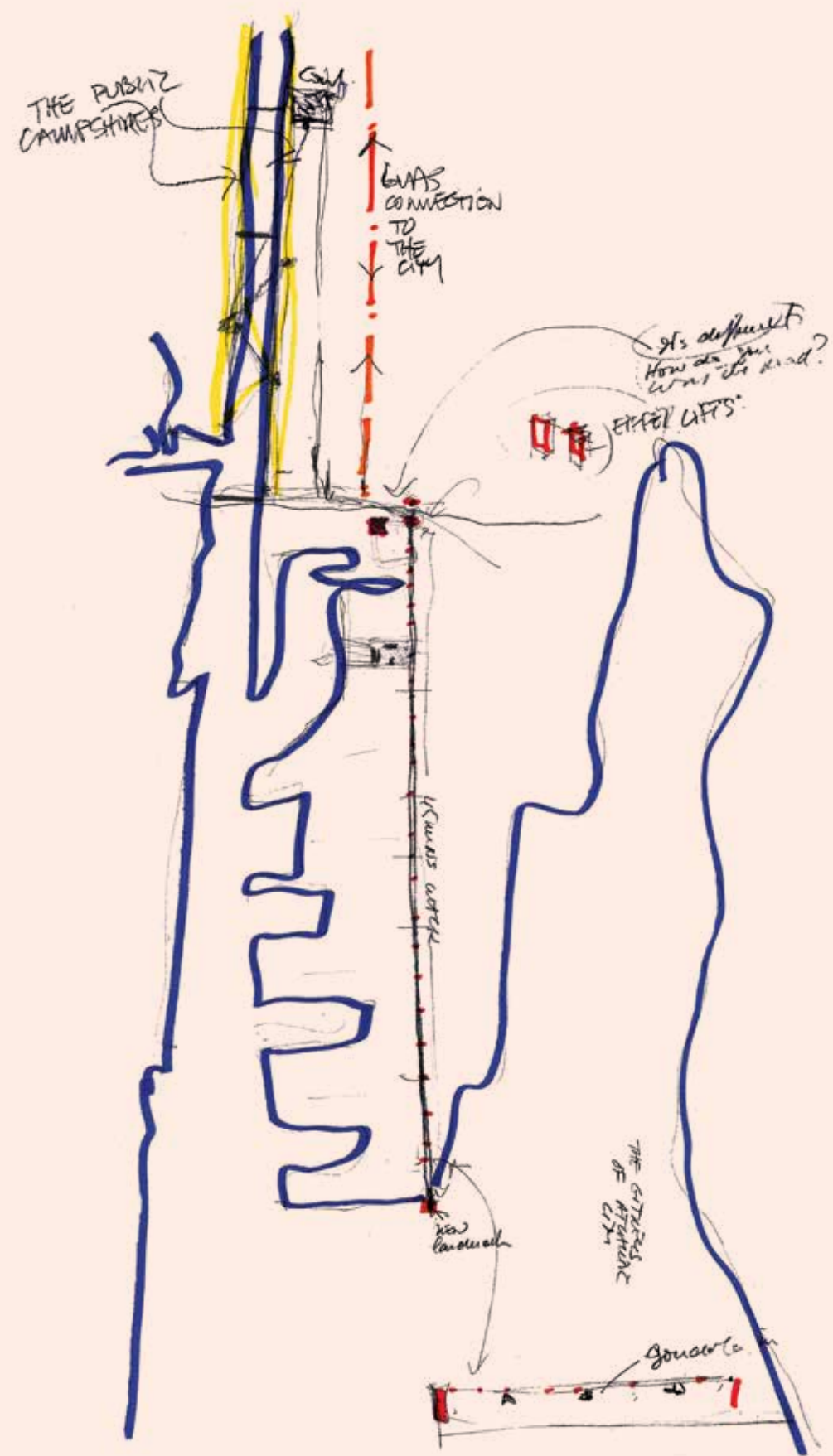
The presentations made by the Port Operations personnel, describing the complexity and choreography of the port operations, the precision of the timing and programming of these overlapping intensive activities of loading and unloading, of managing new works in an active port, were all extremely impressive.

The Harbour Master held our full attention when he explained the daily complexity of managing the inward and outward port traffic, container ships, cruise ships, tug boats, the science of managing currents, storms, weighty ships, time needed for a boat to turn, to correct itself when needed.

Any citizen of Dublin or any visitor would, in our view, be enthralled by such a presentation, which changes the perception of what appears to be the quiet slow-moving pace of the port traffic and activities.

We witnessed the skill of the personnel directing the unloading of the ferry, the lifting and moving of containers, the co-ordination of land operations, the integration of stakeholders' activities (such as those of Boliden Tara Mines), all done with what appears to be seamless precision, but obviously requiring enormous levels of organisation.

We are excited by the prospect of this active world being made accessible to the people of Dublin and to the public at large.



#### Opposite page

Left: Plan of Dublin Bay meeting the Port and City.

Top and bottom right: Studies and explorations of the site and potential developments.

### Soft Values, Soft Uses

The ethos and ambition of this brief, i.e., to place cultural and social values to the forefront, is both unique and necessary in the contemporary city.

All the interventions made here have been tested and developed so as to deliver an active, open, vibrant place of production, of discovery, of entertainment and enjoyment. This new Flour Mill is designed to be a public place, a civic space, accessible to a vast variety of users. The centre-piece of the development is an extensive Port Archive and Port Museum. This will be an enormously important resource for research, for education, for sheer enjoyment of the collection of artefacts, machinery, documents, all of which will set the scene for the re-inhabiting of this site and for its re-connection to the City. A café and bakery will reflect the historic production of Odlums flour on this site and create a social hub for all the users.

The cluster of uses gathered around the archive and museum will cater for other facilities currently lacking in the City due to commercial and other forces. The creation of artists' studios, experimental theatre spaces, rehearsal spaces, workshops, co-working spaces, conference and meeting spaces, will add another layer of invigorating activity on the site.

The Flour Mill is an ideal venue to re-house The Dublin Market, which up until recently occupied Newmarket but is now, sadly, closed. This was a popular thriving market space, which had its last event at the Point Square as a Christmas market and drew circa 73,000 visitors.

The proposed skydeck, elevated at approximately 35 metres over the Port area, will draw visitors from far and near to witness a panoramic view of Dublin Bay, the mountains, the Liffey, and the City itself. The proposed cruise ship berthing space, together with the new Portline, will give the visitor a new access promenade and a new perspective on the City. It will also provide a new place for the pleasure and enjoyment of citizens.

#### Overleaf

The City and Port connected – view towards the city campshires and the Port.



# Grafton Architects

## The Flour Mill Masterplan

### Connectivity

## Scale

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## Comparisons

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## Walking

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## Distance

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## Time

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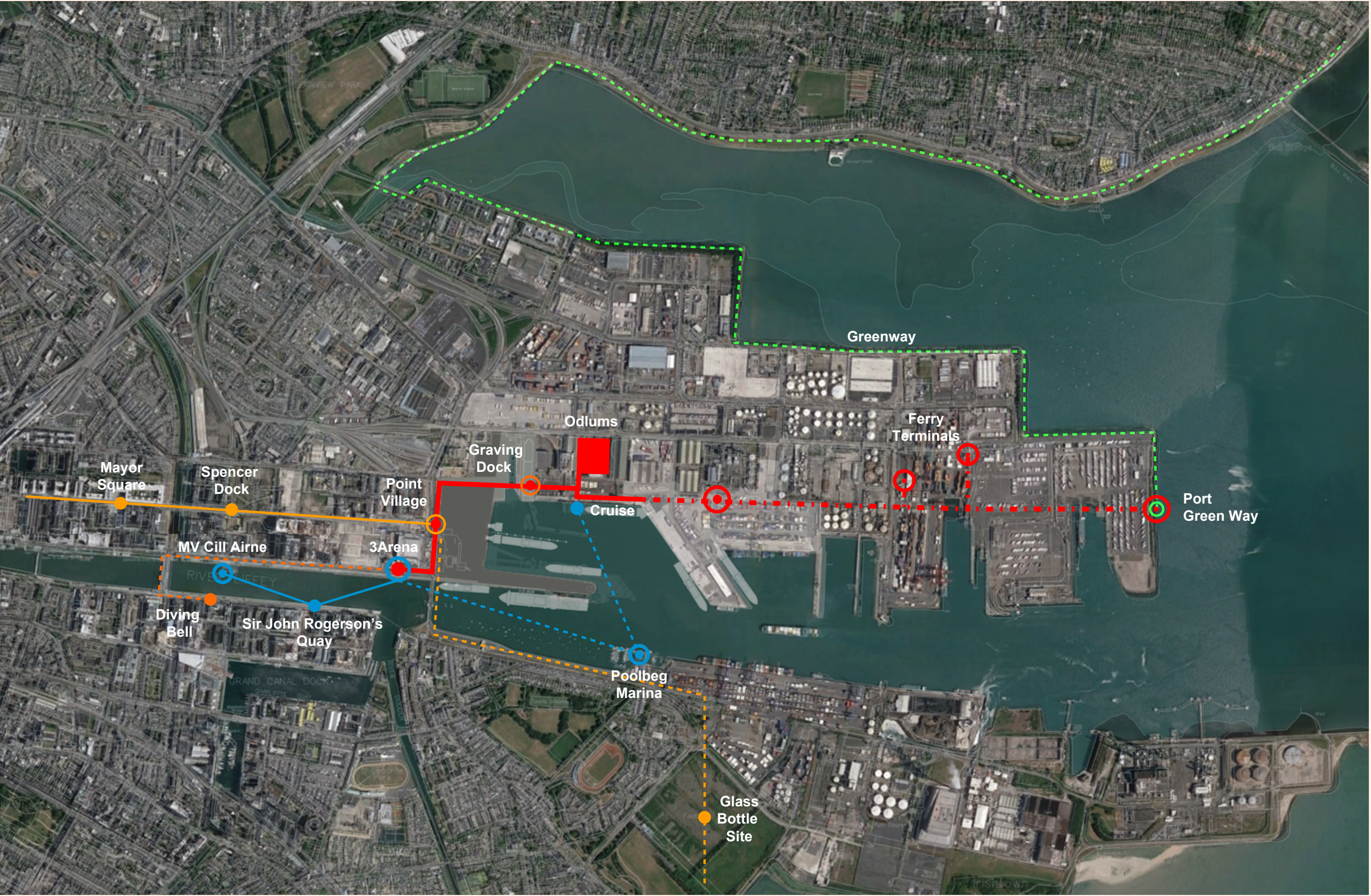
**Our proposals follow an analysis of the relationship of the Port with the existing City. Given that the vision expressed by Dublin Port Company is to connect the life of the City with the life of the Port, visual and physical connectivity was our key focus in order to bring these two currently separate worlds together.**

### **The Portline**

Our first move was to find a way of bridging the busy East Wall Road, so that the City can connect with the Port. As an extension of the very successful campshire on North Wall Quay, we have proposed a type of elevated campshire, a 'highline' for pedestrians and cyclists. The intention is that the workings of the Port can be continued and viewed by the visitor without in any way compromising flexibility, health and safety or security requirements.

Vertical lift and stair access to the Port Highline is placed west of the East Link Bridge and opposite the Point Theatre (3 Arena). This access can be controlled and a riverside café could also be located here as part of the 'gateway' design.

The citizens of the City would have a visual connection with the river's edge and would enjoy the animation and drama of the Port activities. This new 12-minute walk would be a unique attraction in itself and would work at the practical level of connecting the City to the Flour Mill Site, as well as providing a new amenity on the Liffey.



Connecting the Port and the City

- High Line
- Green Line
- Heritage Trail
- Liffey Ferry
- Liffey Ferry Extension?
- Luas Line
- Luas Line Extension?

Opposite page  
Connecting the Port and the City.”

The Riverfront

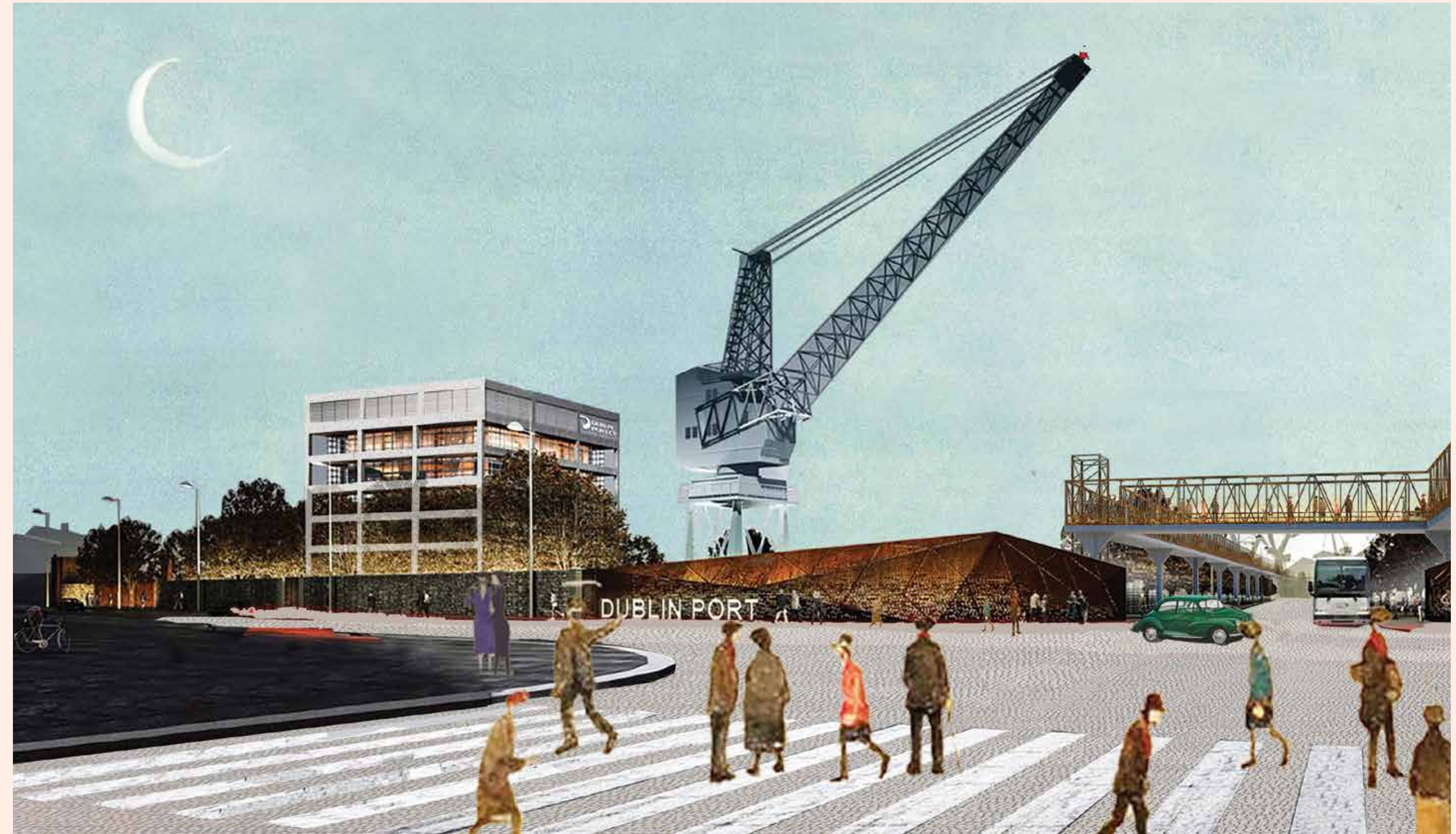
The **riverfront** is the key connector from our point of view, even though the activity of the Port is to remain unhindered. We have proposed a strategy which allows the citizen controlled access to this river frontage, without compromising the workings of the Port. Connectivity is achieved in the following ways:

Physical connector ... The Portline

Cultural connector ... New uses, new community and city facilities, new cultural spaces.

Visual connector ... New Riverfront Belvedere and Civic Spaces.

We have developed a number of elements which form an ensemble and cluster of activities that will bring The Flour Mill to life. The uses which we have identified and tested are matched with the nature, scale and condition of the existing structures and spaces. Demolition has been minimised, allowing for the maximum re-use of existing buildings, which have all been evaluated from a historic and conservation perspective. A number of uses proposed in the initial feasibility study have been omitted for reasons of viability or cost, i.e., the hotel, the aquarium.



This page  
Arriving from Sheriff Street.  
Opposite page  
Proposed view from the City of the new Flour Mill.



# 1000m

## Vasari Corridor, Florence, Italy

The 16th Century elevated Vasari Corridor in Florence, 1000m long, is one of the most fascinating elevated urban walkways. It connects the Palazzo Vecchio, the Uffizi Gallery, across the Arno River via the Ponte Vecchio, reaching the Palazzo Pitti, bracketed to a tower and a church along the way, it snakes its way over rows of houses, to reach its destination. It was built by the Medici in order to make a secure connection for the Grand Duke to move between his residence and the government palace.

1000 metres long and takes 12 minutes

# 2300m

## High Line, New York

The High Line is a public park built on a historic freight rail line elevated above the streets on Manhattan's West Side

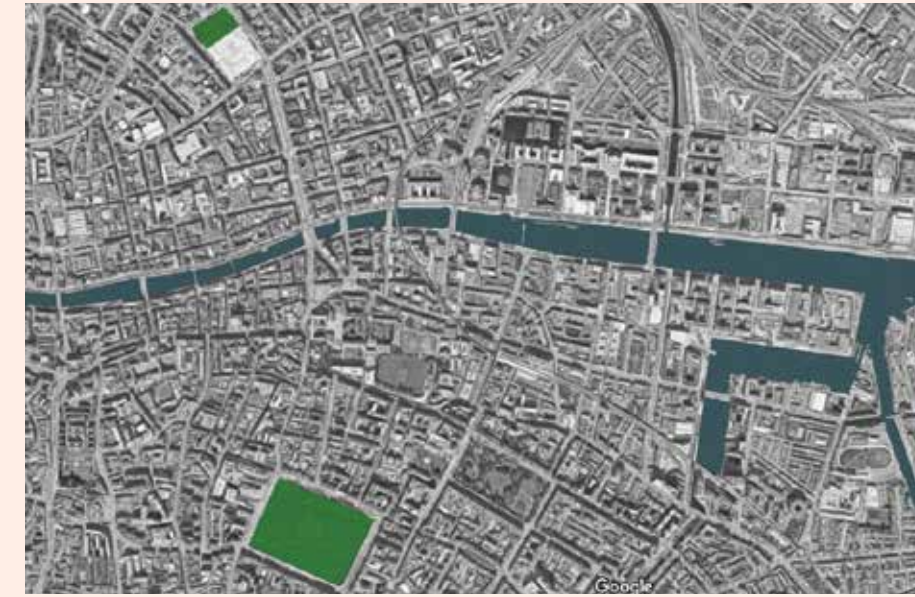
2300 metres long and takes 29 minutes

# 1900m

## Great South Wall, Dublin

Sea wall extends from the tip of the Poolbeg peninsula to Dublin Bay

1900 metres long and takes 23 minutes



# 1800m

## Stephen's Green to Parnell Square

A walk through the city from South to North via O'Connell bridge.

1800 metres long and takes 22minutes.



# 1200m

## Dublin Port Highline

The proposed Port Highline imagines a public pedestrian route connecting the City to the Flour Mill Site and Dublin Bay.

1200 metres long and takes 15 minutes

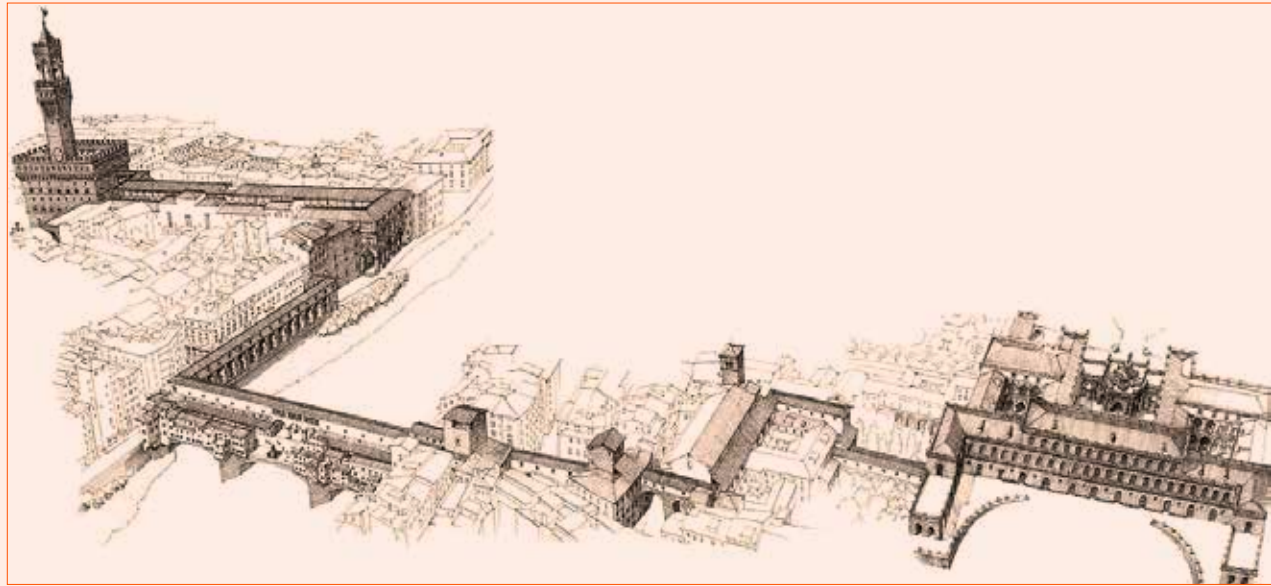


# 325m

## Rendentore Bridge , Venice

Demountable modular floating crossing, installed annually on the recurrence of the fest of the Redentore, between "Zattere" and isle of Giudecca.

325 metres long and takes 4 minutes



#### Opposite page

Top left: Vasari Corridor, Florence.

Bottom left: Katarina Lift, Stockholm.

Top right: Promenade Plantee, Paris.

Bottom right: High Line, New York.

Below: Santa Justa Elevator, Lisbon.

### The Portline precedents

There is a sense of enchantment about the use of elevated walkways or external elevators in cities. Often used to negotiate steep slopes or level changes which separate one part of a city from its neighbour, like the ***Katarina Elevator*** and café bridge in Stockholm or the ***Santa Justa elevator*** and bridge in Lisbon, the latter of which was designed by Eiffel, these manmade mechanical connectors suddenly make the City feel like a 'big room' to be surveyed from a new and liberating vantage point. Elevated walkways can take the citizen on a journey not always possible on the ground.

The 16th Century elevated ***Vasari Corridor in Florence***, 1000 metres long, is one of the most fascinating elevated urban walkways in the world. It connects the Palazzo Vecchio, the Uffizi Gallery, across the Arno River via the Ponte Vecchio, reaching the Palazzo Pitti, bracketed to a tower and a church

along the way; it snakes its way over rows of houses to reach its destination. It was built by the Medici in order to make a secure connection for the Grand Duke to move between his residence and the government palace.

The ***Promenade Privee in Paris***, 4000 metres long, re-uses a disused railway line and converts it into an elevated sinuous park, which weaves its way from the Peripherique to Place Bastille.

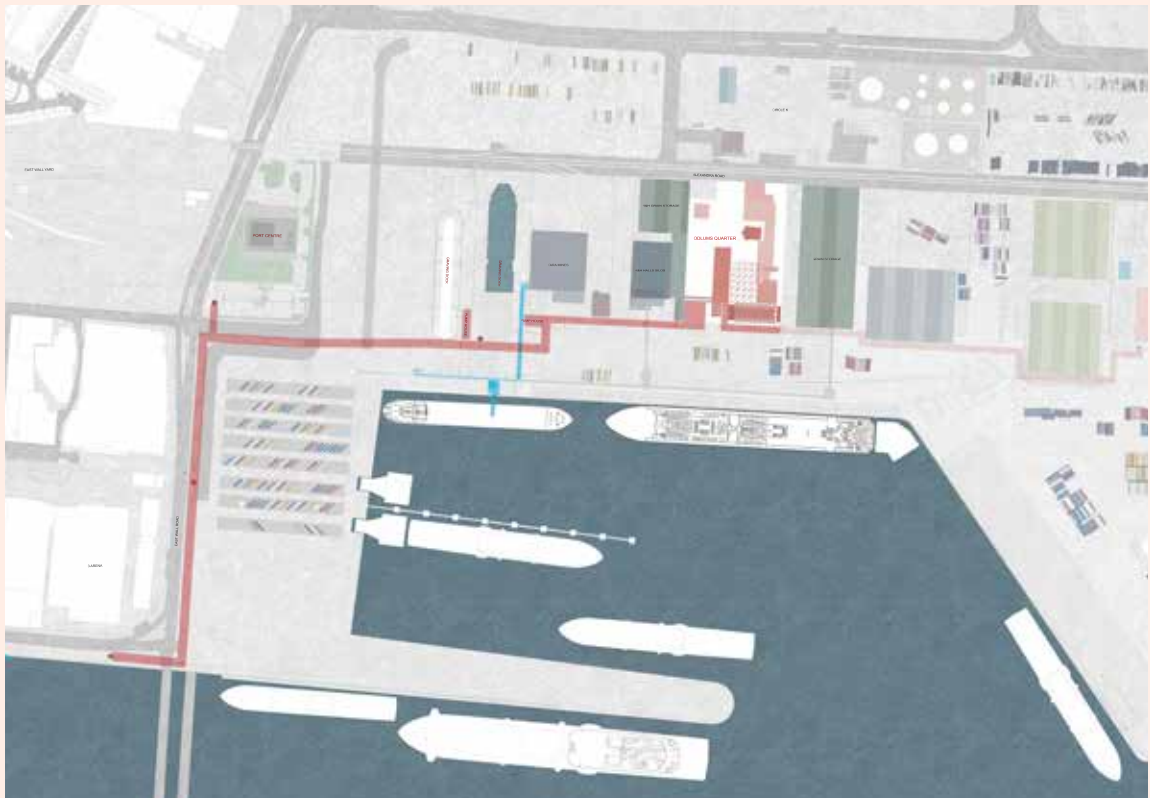
Similarly, the ***High Line in New York***, 2300 metres long, saw a converted abandoned railway line in the Meatpacking District made into a landscaped civic space for leisure, performance, exercise, sport, etc.

These interventions, in addition to facilitating the convenient, secure and pleasurable movement of pedestrians and cyclists, transform the perception of the city to the inhabitants in a new and unfamiliar way. The experience of moving at a different level, at a different pace, free of cars, trucks and motorcycles, where

it is calm, quiet, conducive to conversation, adds an invaluable resource to any city.

Here in Dublin, the City is currently disconnected from the Port, physically and socially. The highly trafficked East Wall Road creates a barrier, discouraging the citizen from travelling any further East into the area of the working Docks.

The activities of the Docks are exciting, theatrical and vibrant, and so we have explored the viability of making a secure elevated walkway as close to these activities as is viable.



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Top and bottom: Accessibility, the Port Highline route.

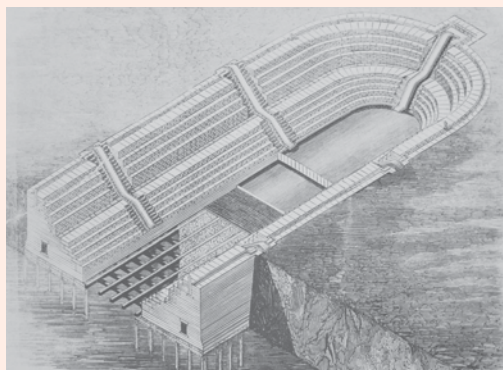
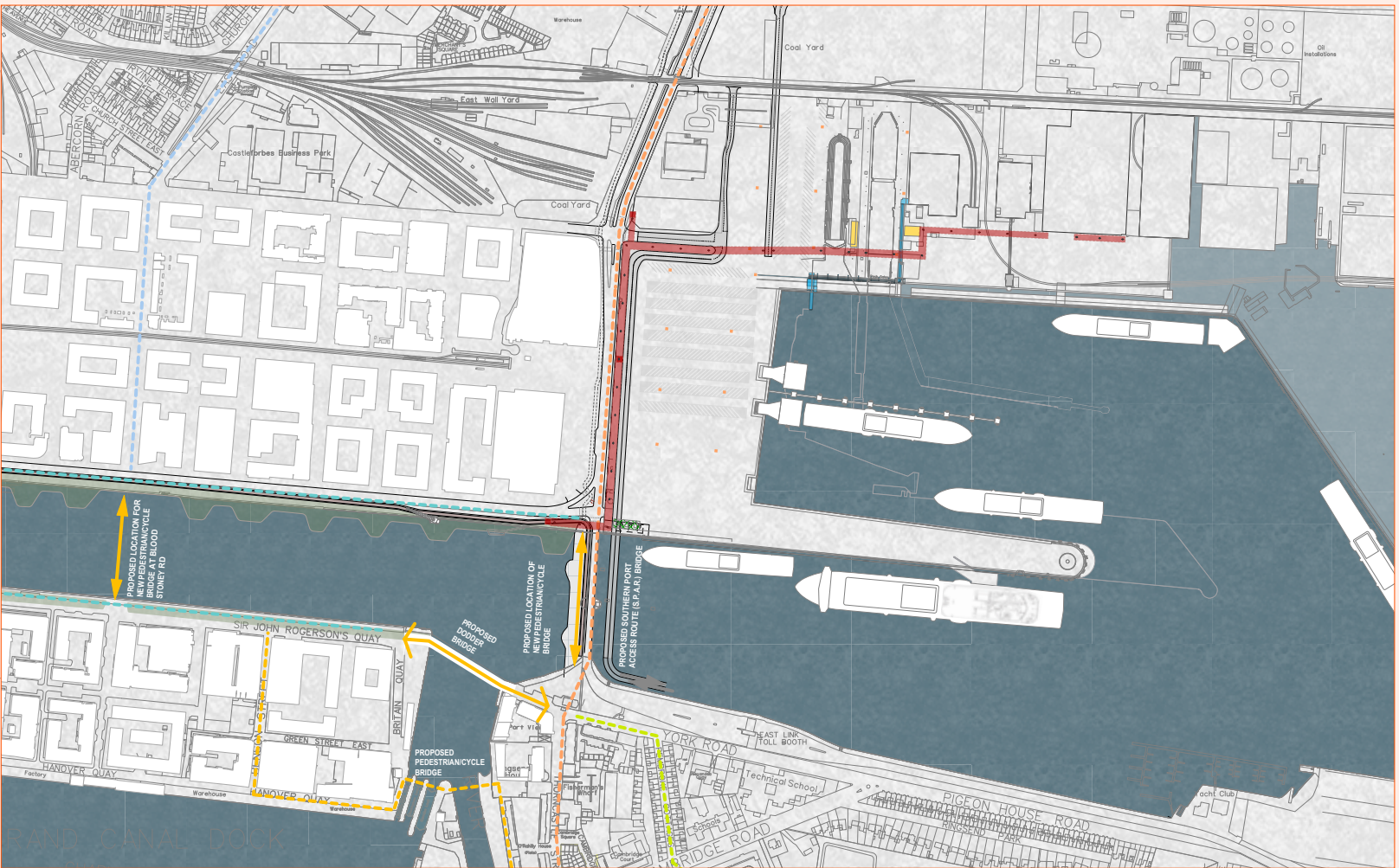
[Opposite page](#)

Top: Accessibility, the Port Highline route to the wider city.

Bottom left: Dublin Port Diving Bell.

Bottom middle: Graving Dock, Alexandra Basin.

Bottom right: Historic Crane marks the arrival to Dublin Port.



## The preferred Portline route

A number of alternative routes have been examined, discussed with stakeholders within the Port and an acceptable route has been agreed in principle. This route essentially runs north/south along the East Wall stone boundary wall, connects into the Port Centre site and then runs east/west towards the Flour Mill Site. The Portline is elevated 9 metres above the ground to avoid any interference with the Port's operations, and in plan, it is set back from the river's edge avoiding the working port area of Ro-Ro activities. The Portline passes under the sloped connection between the new elevated conveyor belt and Boliden Tara Mines, passes close to the historic pump house and sets back further north from Boliden Tara Mines to the Flour Mill Site.

## Portline arrival platform at the Flour Mill Site

Arriving at a 9-metre height above ground, an elevated platform is created forward of the Mill Building. A glazed canopy is formed over this platform, announcing entry to The Flour Mill , and making a new civic space overlooking the River Liffey. Below this platform, a new entrance forecourt is formed for the intermittent arrivals by cruise ship. The Portline continues to the eastern boundary of the Flour Mill Site.

There may also be a possibility in the future to continue the elevated Port highline right down to the end of the Port, generating an exciting new vantage look-out point from which the City and the sea can be viewed, and adding to the current extremely popular amenities of the South Wall and the North Wall. This would also connect up with the cycle route on the Clontarf side of the Port, as contained in the Port Masterplan.



This page  
 Top: The Portline arrival space facing south and overlooking the river.  
 Bottom left: A new Civic Space.  
 Bottom middle: Location Map.  
 Bottom right: Scenography and Spectacle – The Port Line and Arrival Space.



## Bridging the Portline from North Wall Quay across East Wall Road

The primary Portline bridge connection is between North Wall Quay across East Wall Road, across the existing stone wall and into the Port lands. This connection to 9 metres above ground is achieved by lifts and staircases, similar to the Stockholm and Lisbon precedents referred to above. The structure which houses this vertical connection is on axis with the north campshire and forms a prominent gateway to the Port. It is envisaged that a further bridge connection would be formed at the end of Sheriff Street, thus connecting the Port with the Luas.

## Structure of the Portline

The structure of the Portline is designed to achieve a 30-metre span between support columns. The width of the Portline is 9 metres to allow comfortable movement for pedestrians and cyclists and to allow for some planting. The columns and the deck are constructed of concrete, supported by a steel truss spanning 30-metres. The columns have an elegant shape and the steel structure is reminiscent of the steel lattice crane structures. The Portline is open to the sky, with balustrade railings set back from the steel trusses.

**Arriving by Cruise Ship**

On further investigation of the workings of the various activities along the river frontage, we saw the opportunity of connecting the Port Highline to the Cruise Ship landing area on the berth in front of The Flour Mill. It seems feasible that all visitors, both from the City and from the ships, would arrive at the same destination point. This allows the tourist the opportunity to conveniently visit the Port Museum, the Port Archive and other facilities, before making their trips further afield.

**Arriving from Sheriff Street and Mayor Street**

As part of this connectivity strategy, we have explored the potential to make a pedestrian crossing as proposed by DCC, connecting Sheriff Street with the Portline. This would also facilitate easy use of the Gibson multi-storey carpark for access to the Flour Mill Site.

This pedestrian bridge would connect with the new street / access point proposed in the current Port Masterplan.

Pedestrians arriving at the Luas Stop at the junction of Mayor Street with East Wall Road would then have two possible elevated connection points to the Port Highline.

**Arriving from the River Liffey**

We imagine that the re-instated ferry connection between Spencer Dock and Point Theatre (3 Arena) could be extended to the Flour Mill Site.

**Arriving from Alexandra Road**

Pedestrian access and bicycle access is predominantly from the Portline. Cars, buses, and taxi access is provided from Alexandra Road.

Opposite page  
The scale and character of the new arrival space marks The Flour Mill as a focus and destination point.





41

# Grafton Architects

## The Flour Mill Masterplan

### Dublin Port Re-imagined

**The Flour Mill creates a lively social and cultural hub which brings the life of the City in direct contact with the life of the Port. The proximity of these two worlds, operating in parallel, side by side, in an uncompromising way, creates a unique and distinct new urban quarter. The scheme allows for phasing, for growth and change over time, so each of the elements has been costed separately. This allows the client body, the staff, the port stakeholders, the statutory authorities, the cultural institutions, to collaborate and to prioritise the sequencing of the various components of the development.**

#### **Minimising Demolition**

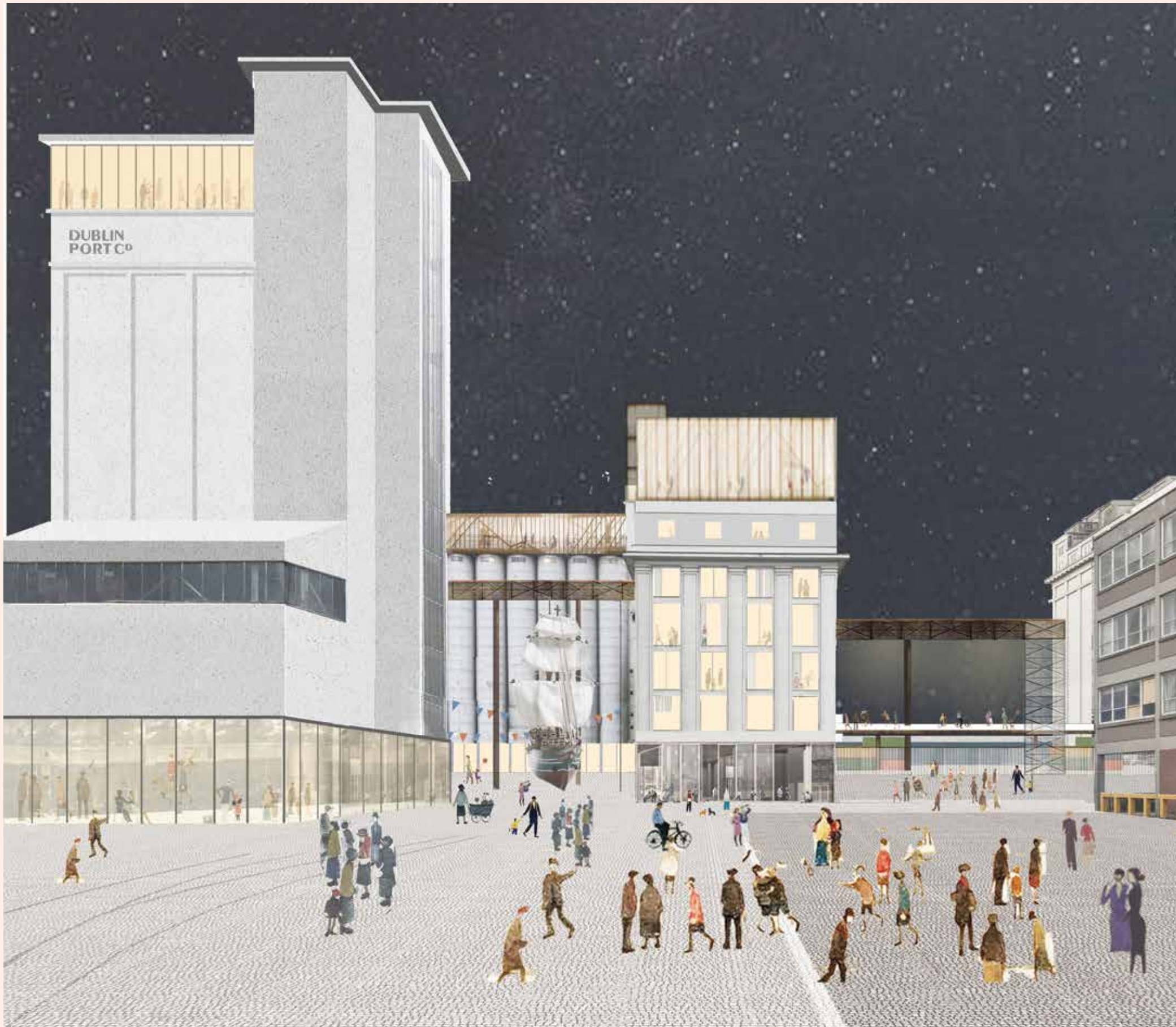
The Flour Mill contains a variety of building types from a number of periods, all connected with the original use of the site as a centre for grain storage, flour milling and bagging. Each of these processes were housed in different forms of construction and built infrastructure, some of which are important from an industrial heritage perspective. Structures vary from the very complex, specifically related to industrial processes, to other, more mundane structures supported to these activities in the form of storage sheds, loading depots and the like. We asked ourselves, how much can be retained, how little should be demolished, how much should we intervene; in other words, what is the minimum we need to do?

#### **Valuing the existing**

Surveys and inspections of the various structures reveal unique qualities in individual buildings worthy of integration into any new proposals. At the grander scale, the components of the site combine together to create a singular environment, a unique place which is full of character and atmosphere. The relationship between different structures on the site, while reflecting a very pragmatic response to an industrial process, contributes to this special character.



Left: Proposal for The Flour Mill entrance from Alexandra Road.



This page  
A new civic space at the arrival from Alexandra Road acts as a connector between all the various uses on the site.

### Capturing embodied energy

The Masterplan approach seeks to value each structure on its own terms. The intention is that as little of the existing is removed and that any alteration or intervention takes due cognisance of the embodied energy of each structure. In practice, this exploration seeks to utilise as much of the existing floor space and accommodation as possible. This approach of opening the site to new uses will result in a richer experience for visitors and users. Existing conditions are amplified, valued and celebrated, as they integrate with new situations and new possibilities.

### Time – sequencing

Adopting an incremental approach, pacing interventions and realising new lives for each of the existing structures over a longer time span allows the Masterplan to be adaptable, implementable, and capable of adjusting to new situations in the short to medium term. The approach is to open up, as opposed to close down, possibilities and opportunities latent within the existing site, allowing scope for work to happen in stages.

### Embedding culture in the Port

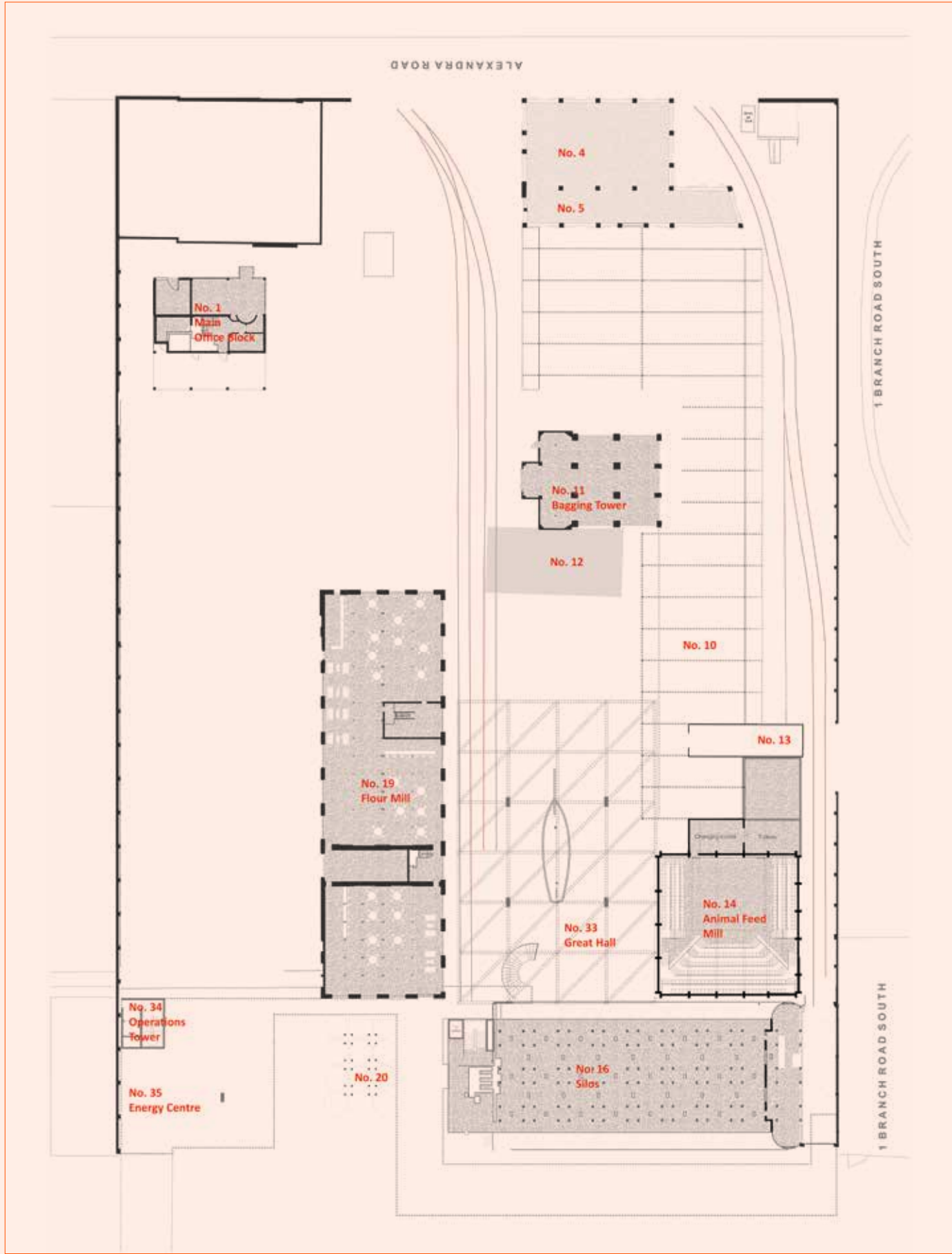
The first step is to communicate the value of the site, connect it to the City and to imprint it as a destination in the public imagination. At present the site is remote, hidden deep within the operations of the Port. The Port is, and will remain, a working place; the juxtaposition of cultural spaces overlapping with the working facilities will give the quarter a unique character. This exciting mix will add to the curiosity and richness of the visitor experience. Visitors will be exposed to the processes at work in the Port at a safe distance through controlled means of access.

### Re-Use – matching uses with existing structures

With the aim of Dublin Port Company's Design Brief to retain as much of the existing fabric as possible, opportunities have been identified for appropriate uses, accommodated in the various buildings and structures through a process of re-use, modification, and intervention. In addition, proposals are made for the yards and open spaces, considering these as public/civic spaces, available for markets, exhibitions, gatherings and festivals.

### Overlap and interplay

A combination of uses will be proposed which will attract visitors for longer stays. The range of uses considered offer complementary experiences, and the unique qualities of the site contribute a major component of this experience. Visitors will be allowed free range within the site, moving through a series of internal and external spaces, creating a type of interconnected campus. Each building can support and supplement related uses to those in adjacent structures, inviting visitors to move around and explore the site. Facilities can be shared or used in tandem, functions in one building supported in part by facilities in another. The relationship between inside and outside will remain blurred. Canopies, bridges, loggias and walkways encourage visitors to move freely between inside and outside.



This page  
Key Drawing of The Flour Mill buildings.

### Legacy and conservation

Each building has been recorded for historical and conservation purposes through a process of researching material, and a significant number of site visits conducted during this phase. We have made discoveries through this research which has informed the Masterplan strategy.

The proposals are a conclusion as to the potential that may be realised on the site, given what is known, while remaining open to further possibilities as time progresses or conditions change, or where more information becomes available.

### Adjacent context

The current proposals work with the site in its current state, understanding the limitations placed by other activity around the periphery of the site. Strategies take account of the impact of these existing constraints in the first stages of the Masterplan. It is expected that these perimeter uses will also change, adapt or move away over time, allowing the cultural content within the site to adapt and grow as time moves on.

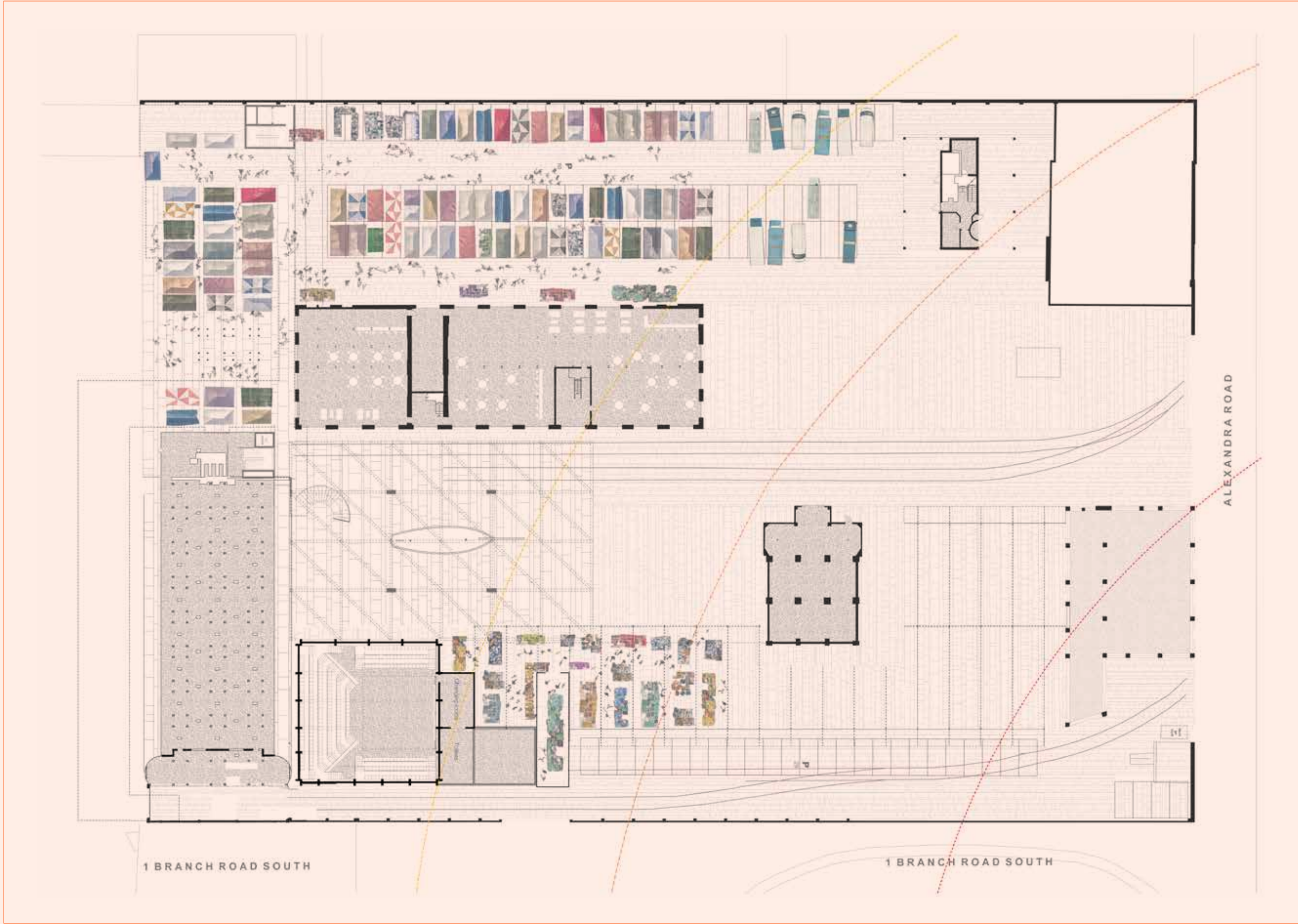
### Economy of means

Extravagance and indulgence are avoided in the approach to the repair and re-use of all of the buildings. The rudimentary lean quality of these industrial artefacts is preserved, so as not to lose the very uniqueness of this built legacy. We have minimised interventions so as to achieve safety, comfort, security and longevity for fitness of purpose.

### Adaptive re-use

The process of re-using an existing building for a purpose other than which it was originally built or designed offers a freedom of interpretation, a freedom to imagine a new life which these buildings might assume. There is a sense of latent potential, a sense of a place in transition, of provisional use, a place which could grow and change and be continually adapted and interpreted in many different ways, without damage to the integrity of the place.

This non-prescriptive quality leads to active participation, to a sense of ownership and engagement, to imaginative experimental use, bringing new life into these extraordinary spaces.



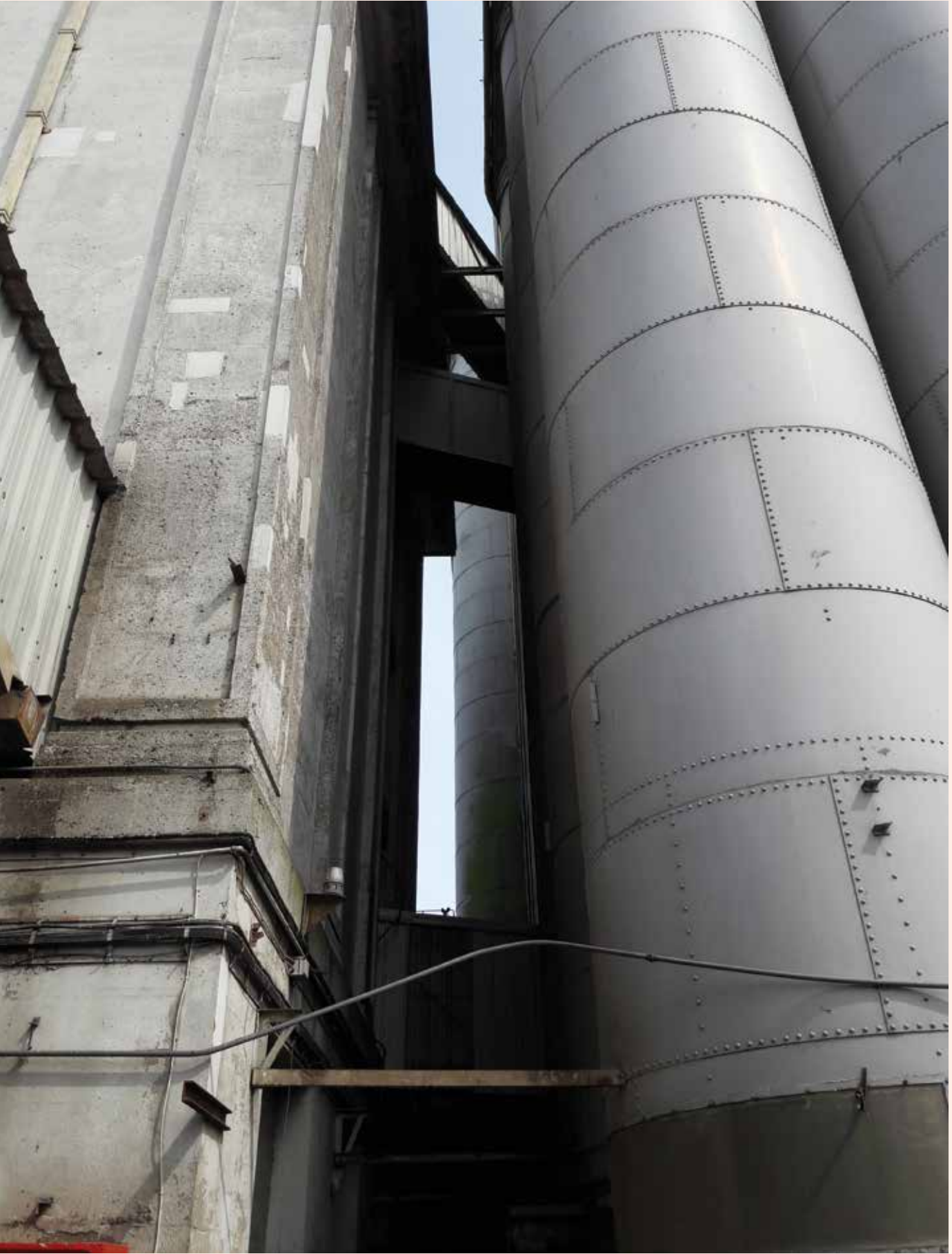
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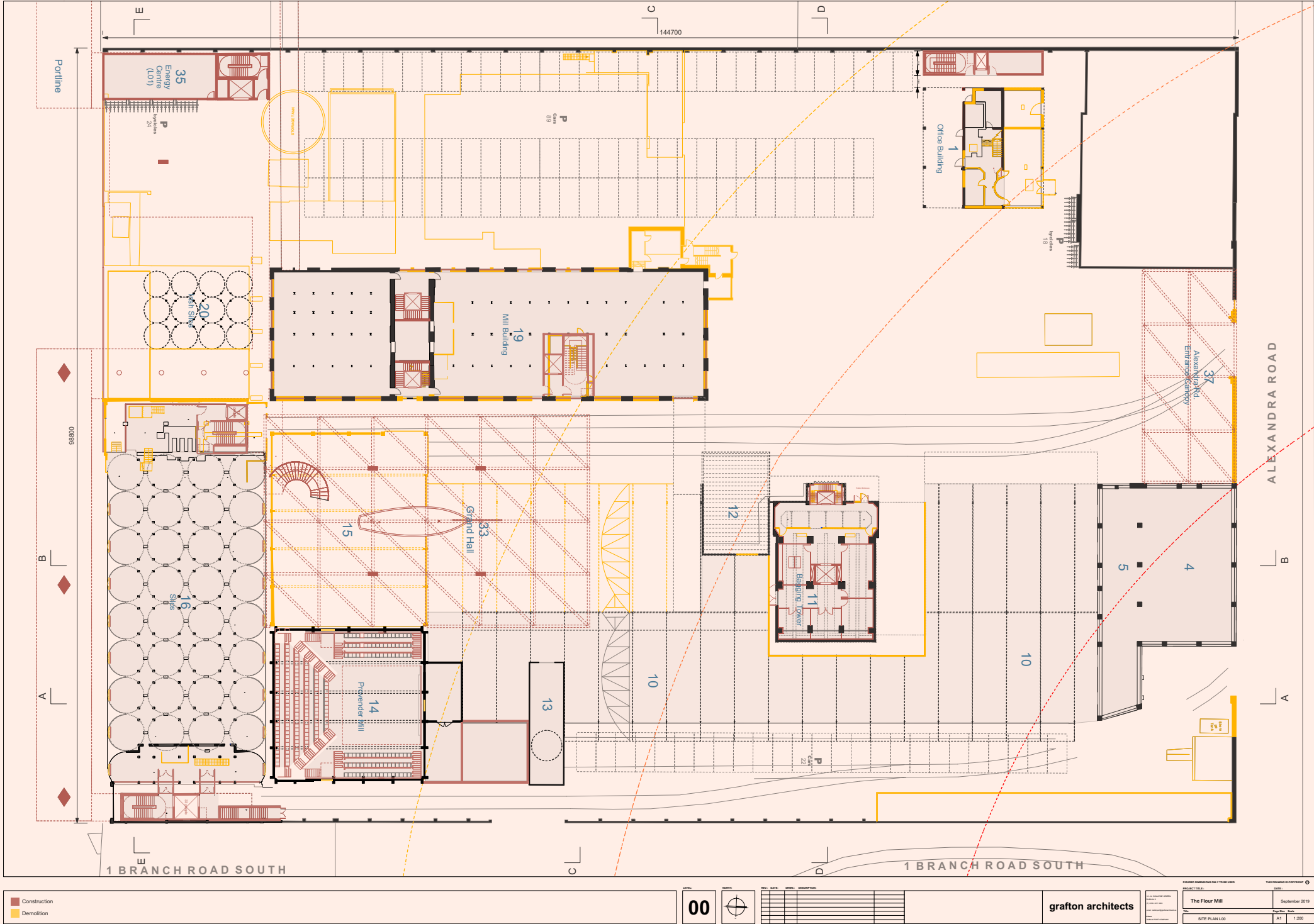
Left: Reference Project Beijing Art Zone – reuse of former industrial buildings.

Right: The Flour Mill – Cinematic Quality of Existing Industrial Buildings .

[Opposite page](#)

A new market place for the City of Dublin – Site Plan.



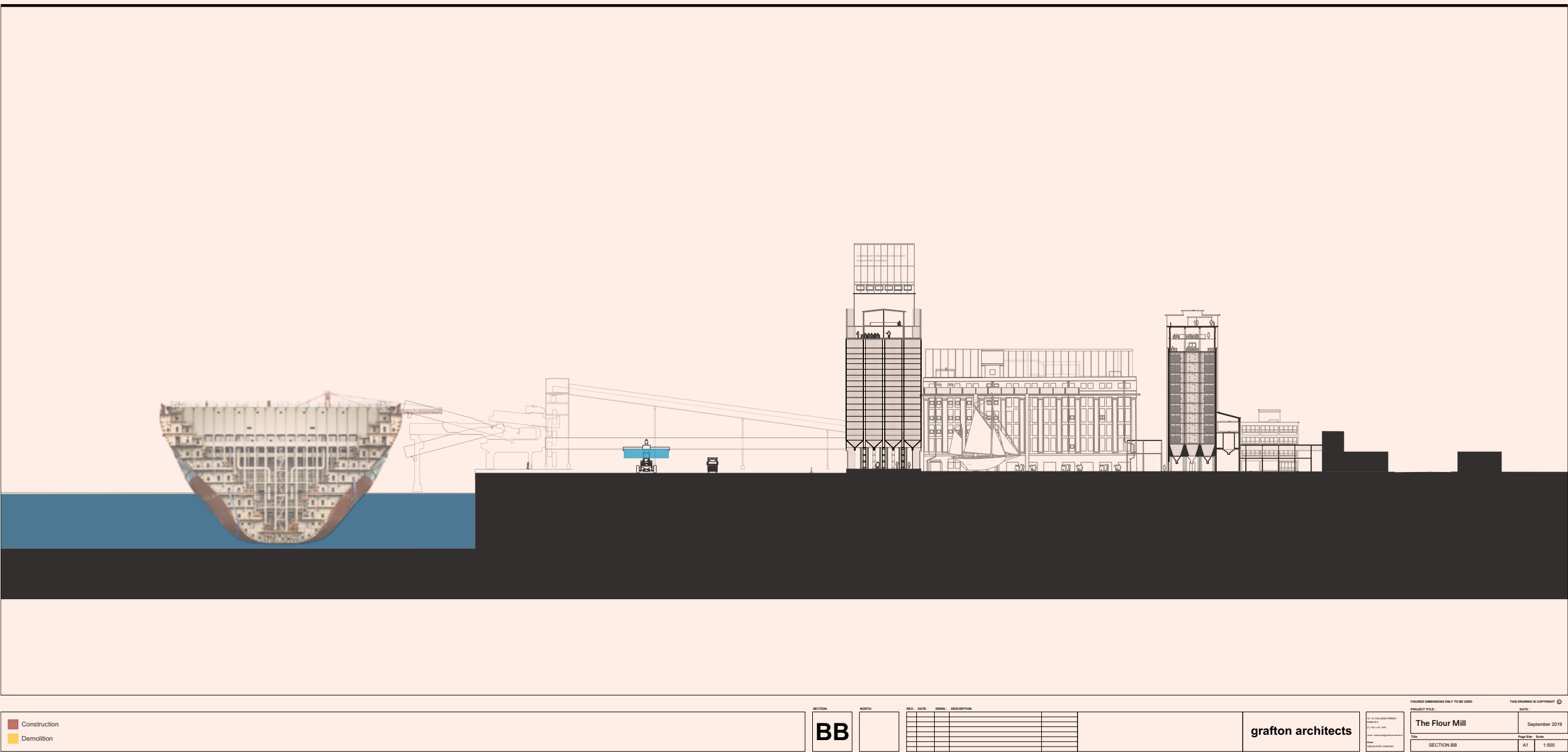


This page

Technical Site Plan Drawing – documenting the structure of each building.

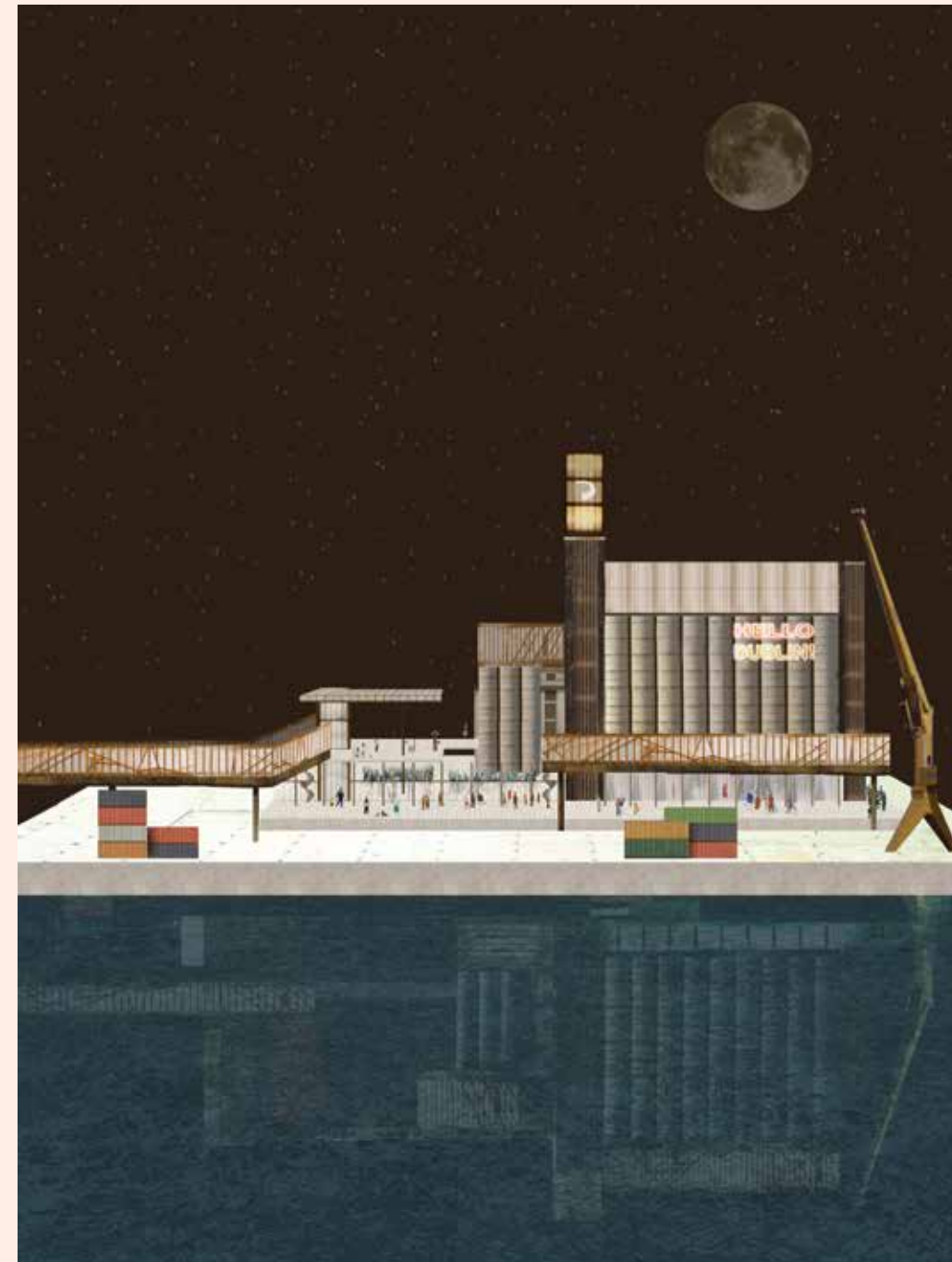
Opposite page

Technical Site Section Drawing – documenting the structure of each building.





[This page](#)  
 Top: Market place – view towards Alexandra Basin.  
 Bottom left: A place of welcome.  
 Bottom right: Arrival Space.  
[Opposite page](#)  
 View of the Port Belvedere from Alexandra Basin.



## Occupying the Existing – Proposed new uses

The following section outlines the strategies for proposed uses within each of the site's structures.

### Civic Space 1 The Port Belvedere

In addition to the transformation and occupation of the existing buildings we have made two new memorable spaces at the scale of the City.

### Scenography and spectacle

The first Civic Space is the Port Highline arrival space, facing south, overlooking the river. The scale of the new elevated space has a theatrical character, generated by the overlap of social spaces with the life of the Port. The confluence of moving machinery, changes of scene as the boats come and go, as containers are loaded and unloaded, as people disembark from ships and boats and ferries, offers a uniquely rich urban experience in the life of the City. Its scale marks the Flour Mill Site as a focus and destination point.

### A place of comings and goings

Acting as an arrival space from Dublin Bay and an arrival space from the City, it is a space which can welcome the citizen, the tourist, the worker and the visitor. As a destination point, it can have a day-to-day function in the routine of the City, as well as accommodating special events and spectacles related to Port and City life. This theatrical life is celebrated in the *Starboard Home* film and in the song *Steel Ballet*, by Paul Noonan (Bell X1).

### Connecting to the Port ground

We have imagined possibilities for occasional, intermittent events which could be hosted at ground level in the 80-metre × 100-metre apron of space. These events connect the Flour Mill Site with the Liffey from the level of the Port Belvedere, suspended 9 metres above ground. The value of hosting events of varying scales would be in consolidating the connection between the cultural life of the City and the Flour Mill. We acknowledge this apron of space is a multifunctional and extremely busy space for Port Operations.

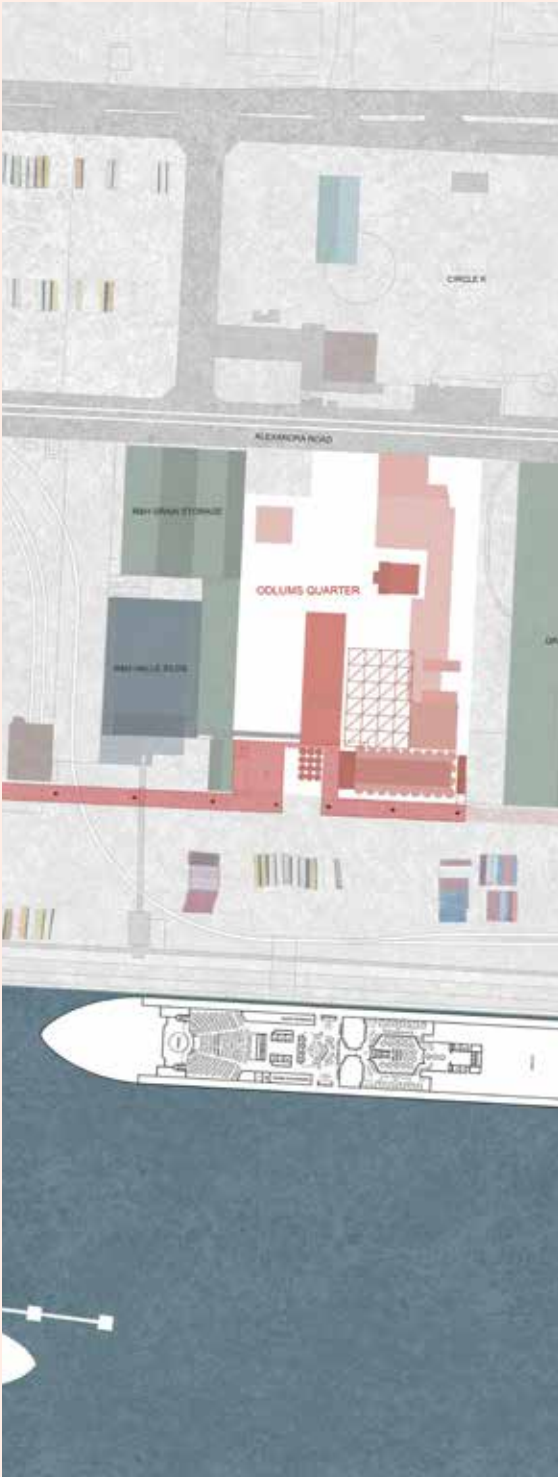
### A place to get one's bearings

The Port Belvedere provides vertical and horizontal access to all the uses on the site. Set at the same level as the Port Highline, it is large enough to function as an initial orientation space for visitors on arrival, where they can plan the sequence of their visit, before moving further into the site. Visitors are be offered the opportunity to move directly to ground level via lift and stairs, or alternatively access the Mill Building, with its offering of a Port Museum, Archive, new roof top conference/theatre space and garden conservatory. The silo complex is also directly accessible from this level, allowing visitors scope to move directly to the Sky Deck.

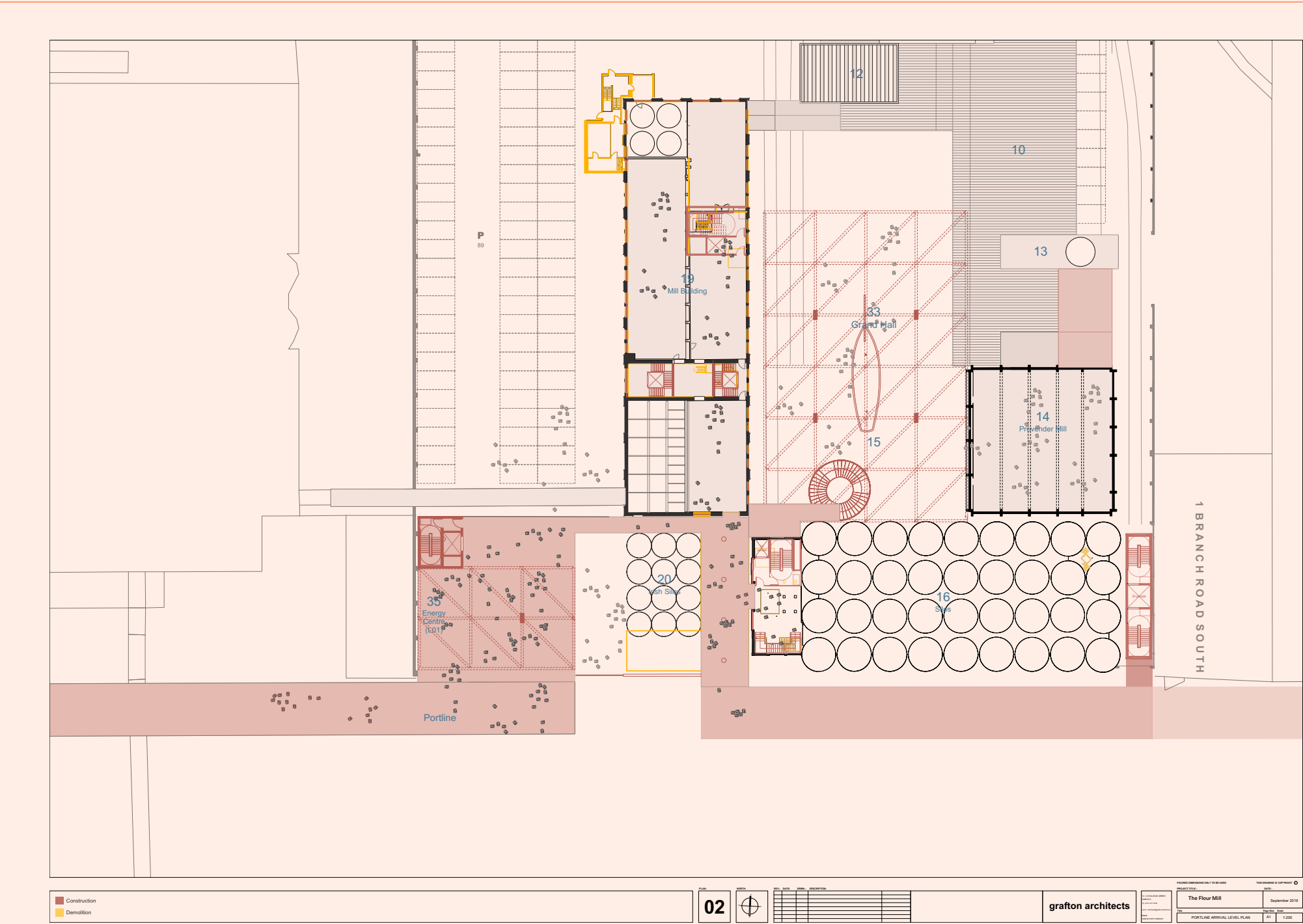
The space will be large enough to create a sense of arrival, sheltered and protected by a large, light-filled canopy roof, a place to peer at the comings and goings of cruise ships, the general working activities of the Port, along with views to the distance towards the City and the Wicklow Mountains. Its southerly aspect will make it an attractive place to linger, park bicycles, collect tickets or simply stop to enjoy the view.

### A place of welcome

It is a place where visitors from cruise ships will be welcomed to the City. Having arrived at ground level directly from their ships, visitors will be offered the option to be taken by bus to distant sight-seeing locations or alternatively a choice to cycle or walk towards the City via the Port Highline. While acting on the one hand as a welcome point or a point of departure, cruise tourists will be encouraged to spend time visiting the site, availing of the many attractions on the immediate doorstep of their arrival.



[This page](#)  
Technical Drawing – Portline Arrival Space at The Flour Mill.  
[Opposite page](#)  
Location Map – Arrival Space at The Flour Mill.





This page  
Section Drawing through the Great Hall.

## Civic Space 2 Where Port ground and civic ground meet

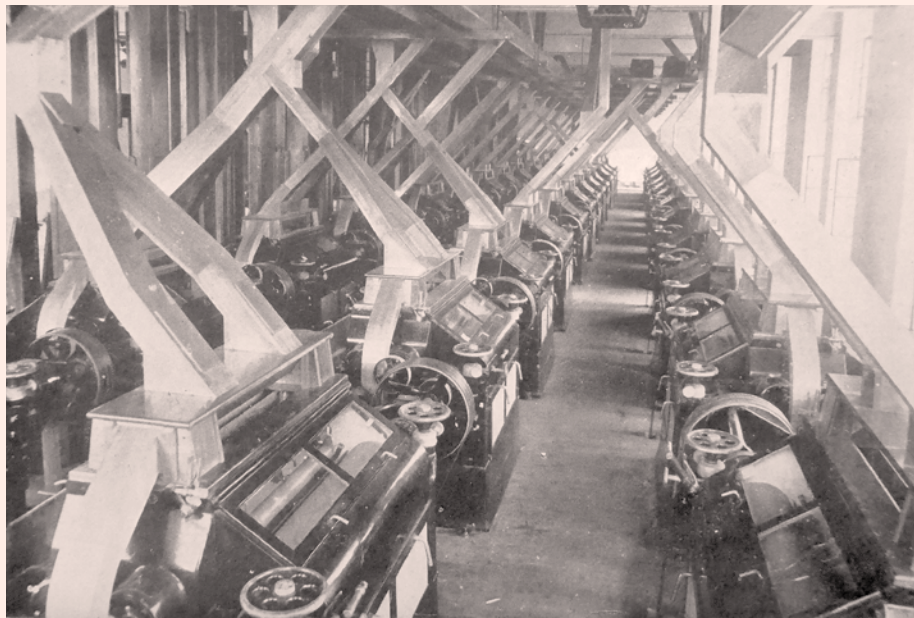
The second Civic Space creates an arrival piazza from Alexandra Road, at ground level.

This Civic Space is treated as a vast carpet, connecting and supporting all of the facilities provided in this re-invented site. The micro climate areas casually established by the proximity of buildings, the surface markings inscribed by previous uses and the infrastructure of the Port, such as rail lines and loading bays that describe this public floor, are embraced and integrated into the design.

As a Civic Space, it has a grand scale. Given its location to the north, facing Alexandra Road, its presence is announced by means of a large canopy, signalling the point of entry, the main arrival area for the visitor.

The ground surface is open generally and extends into the Grand Hall, blurring the distinction between inside and outside. We imagine this space offering opportunities for open-air activities such as markets, festivals of various types, entertainment, concerts and other attractions. Activities outdoors are supported by the many open sheds, retained as part of the strategy, given they open directly on to the space.

Staff parking is proposed along the eastern boundary. Some casual parking has been indicated where ground is not required for events. Coaches can use part of the space to collect cruise passengers for sight-seeing trips, as adequate space is provided for arrival, departure and turn-around.



This page

Above left: Interior of the Flour Mill.

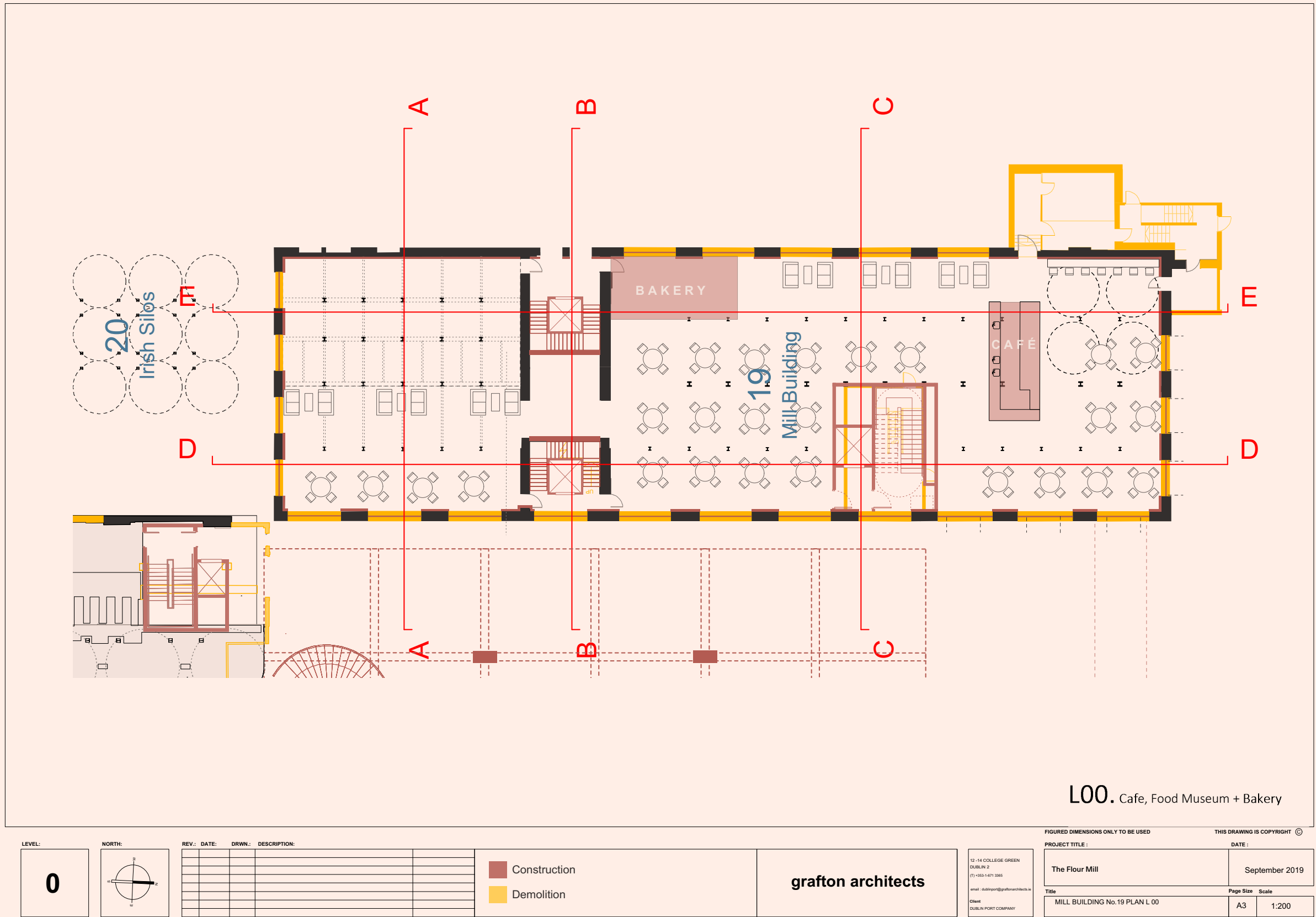
Above right: The Flour Mill Facade.

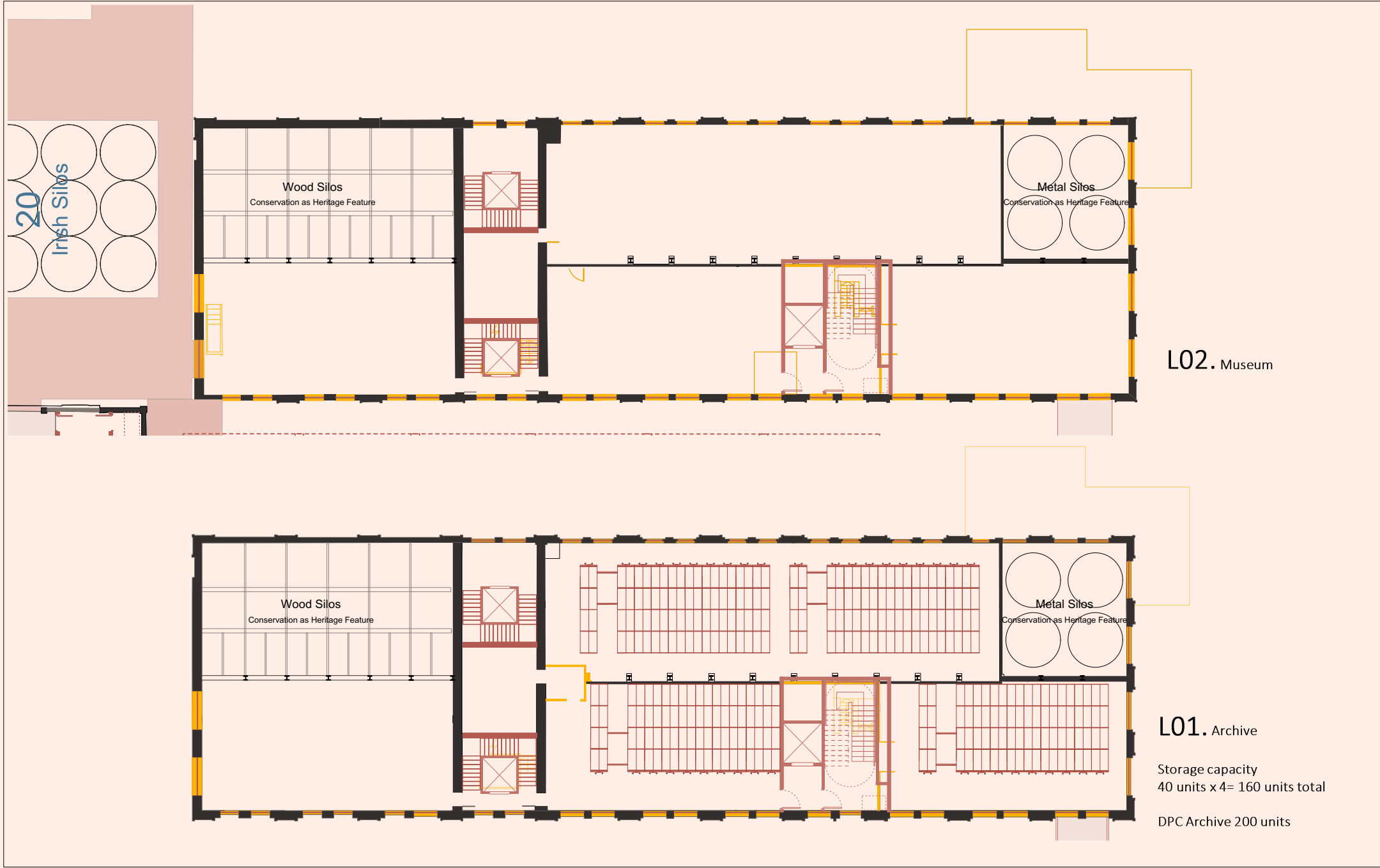
Right: Historic Photograph of the Flour Mill.

Far right: Historic Photograph of the Flour Mill.

Opposite page

Technical Drawing – The Flour Mill Ground Floor Plan.





LEVEL:  
**1-2**

NORTH:

REV.: DATE: DRWN.: DESCRIPTION:  

REV.	DATE	DRWN.	DESCRIPTION

Construction

Demolition

**grafon architects**

12-14 COLLEGE GREEN  
DUBLIN 2  
(T) +353 1 471 1881  
email: admin@grafonarchitects.ie  
Client: DUBLIN PORT COMPANY

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PROJECT TITLE:

DATE:

The Flour Mill

September 2019

Title:

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MILL BUILDING No.19 PLAN L 01 - 02  
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This page  
Technical Drawing – The Flour Mill  
Ground Floor Plan.

Opposite page  
Technical Drawing – The Flour Mill  
First / Second Floor Plan.

SECTION:  
**7**

NORTH:

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REV.	DATE	DRWN.	DESCRIPTION

Construction

Demolition

**grafon architects**

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(T) +353 1 471 1881  
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Client: DUBLIN PORT COMPANY

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PROJECT TITLE:

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The Flour Mill

September 2019

Title:

Page Size: Scale:

MILL BUILDING No.19 PLAN L 07  
[OPTION: THEATRE]

A3 1:200

Design Proposal and Architects' Vision

63



Opposite page  
Left: The Flour Mill Conservatory Garden.  
Right: 100 Flowers to Bloom Drawing.



## The Mill Building – mixing work and culture

Dating from the 1920s, the Mill Building is a substantial structure of great character, one of the more easily identifiable and adaptable structures on the site, due to its simple form and structure. The building is set out over six levels, providing approximately 5,630 square metres of floor space. We are very excited by the proposal to house a Port Museum on this site and have tested the potential of housing this within the Mill Building. Running perpendicular to Alexandra Basin, the Port Museum is combined with a new, partially enclosed ground floor exhibition space, the Great Hall.

## Ground floor – Food Hall

The ground floor will be dedicated to food related activities, a café and bakery, connecting the site with its former use as a flour milling building. The food offering spills out both sides, to the west towards the civic-market space, and to the east connecting to the Great Hall with its grand, semi-open exhibition space.

## First Floor – The Flour Mill Archive, Irish Lights Archive and Dublin Dockers Archive

The first floor is proposed to accommodate the external archives, an archive dedicated to Dublin Dockers and Irish Lights, an extension of the Port Archive located in the Bagging Tower. It is also proposed to house the Flour Mill Archive, forming a rich collection of material. A physical link in the form of an enclosed bridge connects the Mill Building Archive with the Bagging Tower, the new Port Archive. The connection allows for future flexibility as storage requirements for archive

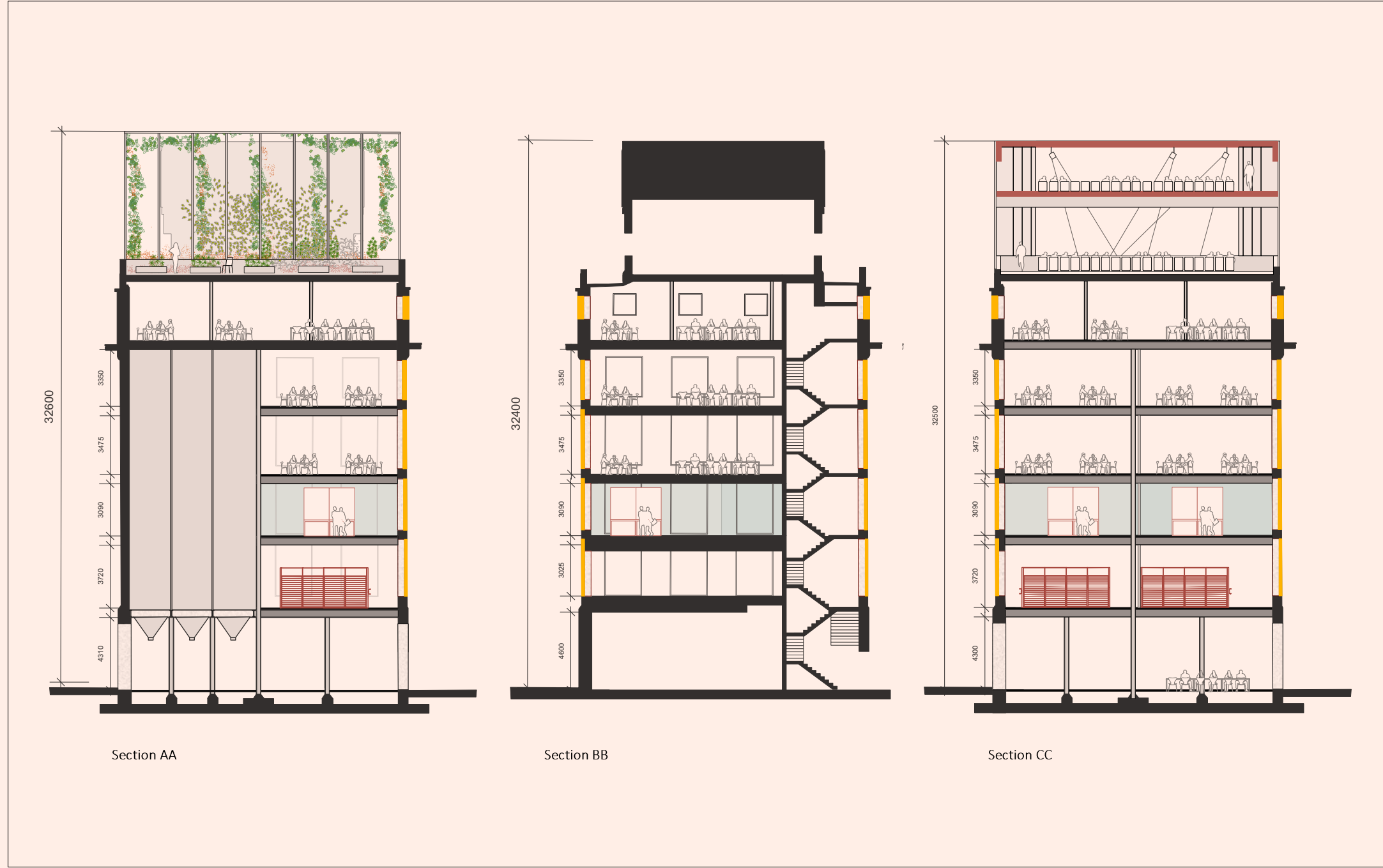
material may grow. The structural format and layout of the Mill Building easily allows for future change; archive activities can expand to upper levels in response to demand for additional space.

## Second Floor – Port Museum

The second floor accommodates the Port Museum. The museum will have two entrances, one at the Port Highline level, connecting directly with the City, and a second at civic ground level, leading from the Great Hall. The Great Hall is intended as an adjunct space to the museum, the second floor windows of the museum allowing visitors an opportunity to overlook exhibits in the Hall from a greater height. We imagined that the proposal for a world class Port Museum could be extended to incorporate a City Museum, thus becoming known as the Dublin Port and City Museum. There have been many discussions within Dublin City Council, citing the need and the desire to have a City Museum in Dublin.

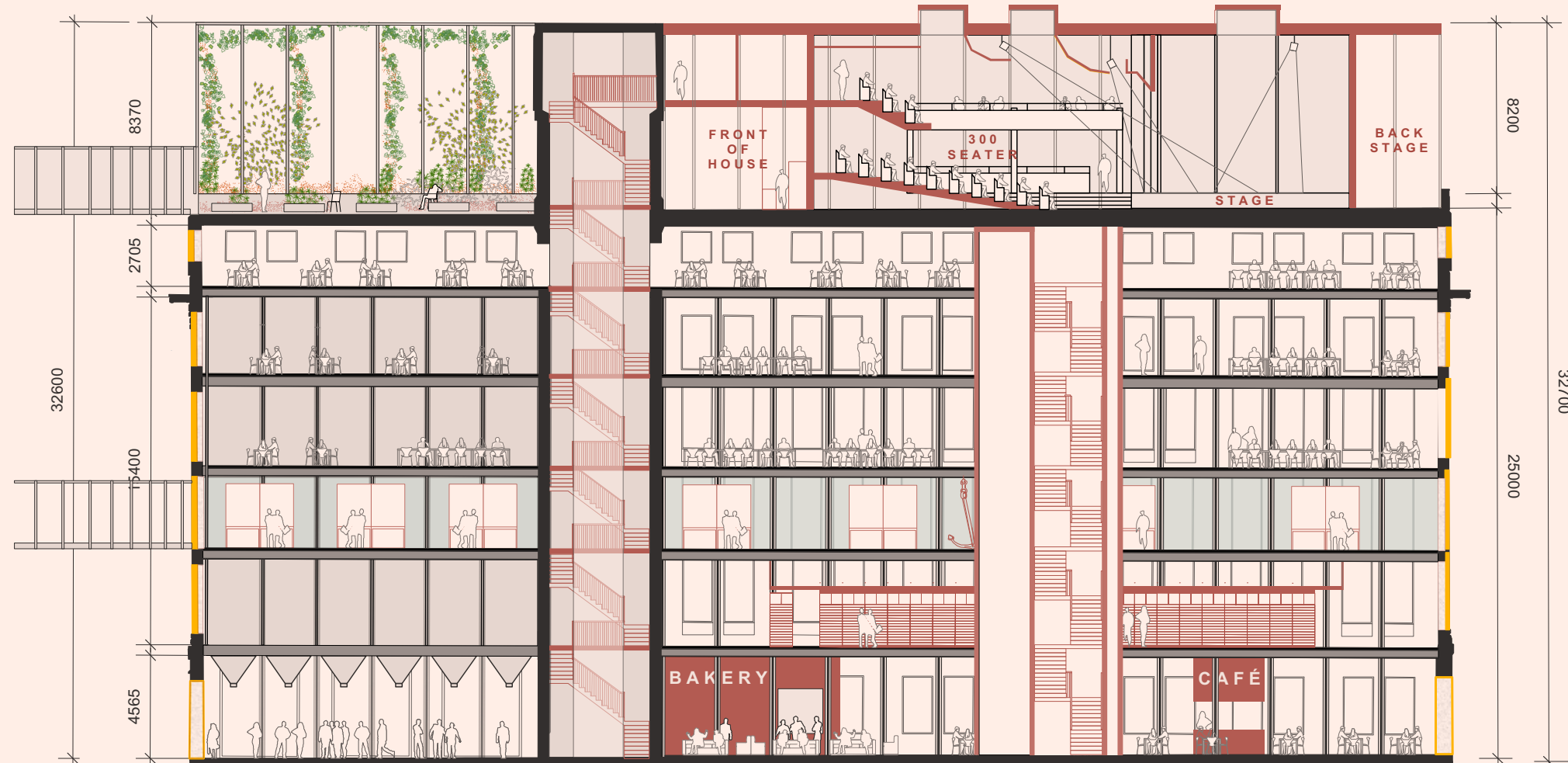
## Upper levels – Studios and co-working spaces

The third, fourth and fifth floors can provide potential artist studio spaces and adaptable co-working spaces, introducing a vibrant community of artists and creative businesses to the site. These activities will nurture a community dimension, another component with ambitions not entirely related directly to the museum or archive, sustaining the site with alternative offerings, uses and attractions. These other uses, although unpredictable in nature, will capture a range of different audiences, and attract them to the site.



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				12-14 COLLEGE GREEN DUBLIN 2 (T) +353 1 471 2855 email: od@graftonarchitects.ie Client: DUBLIN PORT COMPANY	Page Size: A3 Scale: 1:200
				Construction	
				Demolition	
				grafton architects	

This page  
Technical Drawing – The Flour Mill  
Cross Section Drawings.  
Opposite page  
Technical Drawing – The Flour Mill  
Long Section Drawing



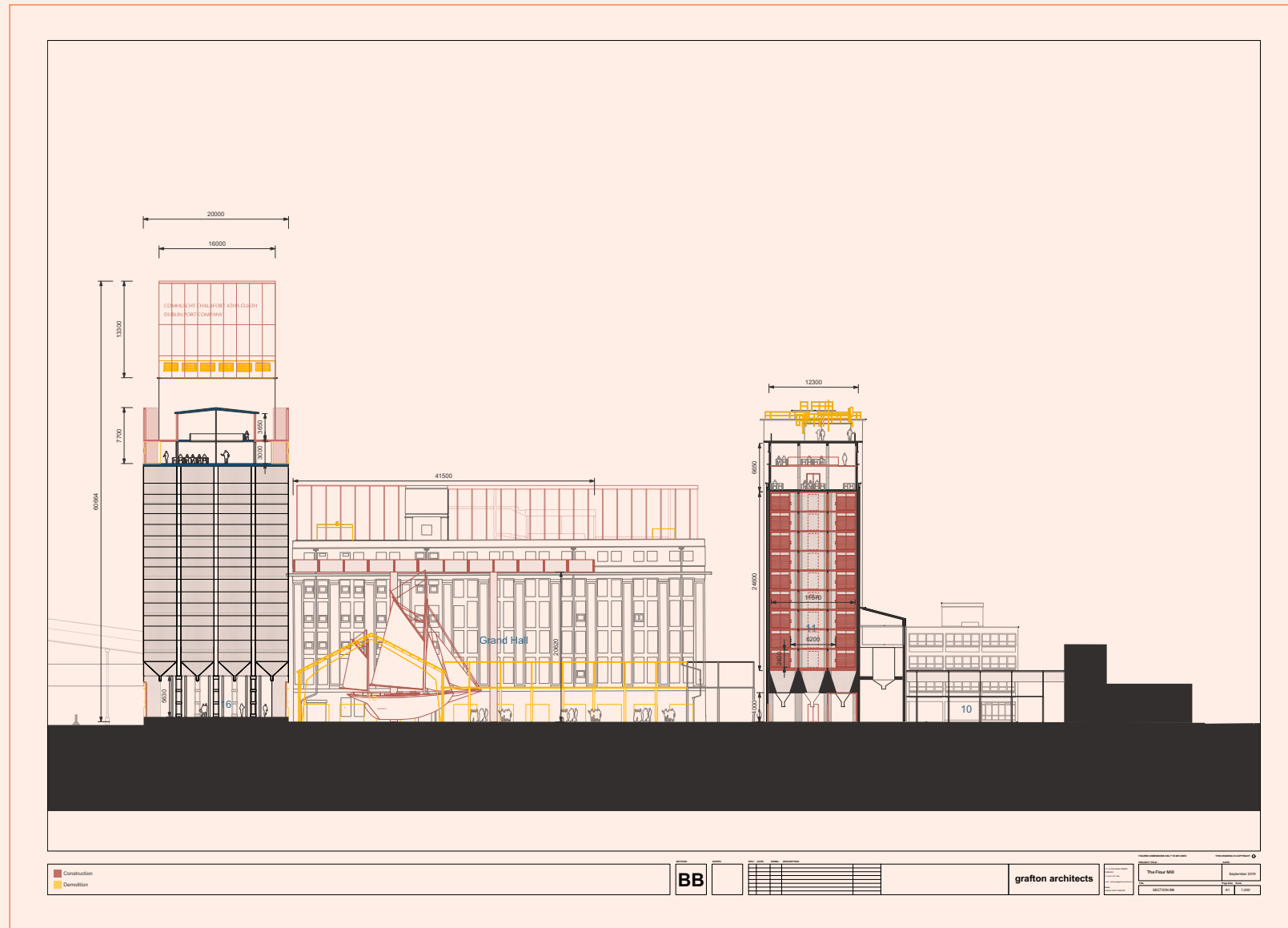
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DD				PROJECT TITLE: The Flour Mill	DATE: September 2019
				12-14 COLLEGE GREEN DUBLIN 2 (T) +353 1 471 2855 email: od@graftonarchitects.ie Client: DUBLIN PORT COMPANY	Page Size: A3 Scale: 1:200
				Construction	
				Demolition	
				grafton architects	

## Rooftop theatre and conference centre

The height of the Mill Building is extended upwards by two levels, to house an event space which can be used for lectures, conferences, theatre and film events. These new floors are included as part of an expanded vision for theatre and perhaps conference facilities supported by other uses on the site. The double height theatre space will be adaptable; seating will be retractable to allow uses to be improvised and accommodate conference type activities on demand. This will also be an important attraction in the City, supported by the Skydeck atop the Silos.

## 100 Flowers to Bloom

Audiences and conference attendees perched on top of the Mill Building can avail of the panorama of the Port and the City. These facilities are linked to a conservatory garden located at the same level, where plants grown from seed from the 100 Flowers collection will be permanently on display, inspired by the stories of various seeds that were unwittingly brought into Dublin by ships over the centuries. Some food production may also take place to support the café/bakery on the ground floor.



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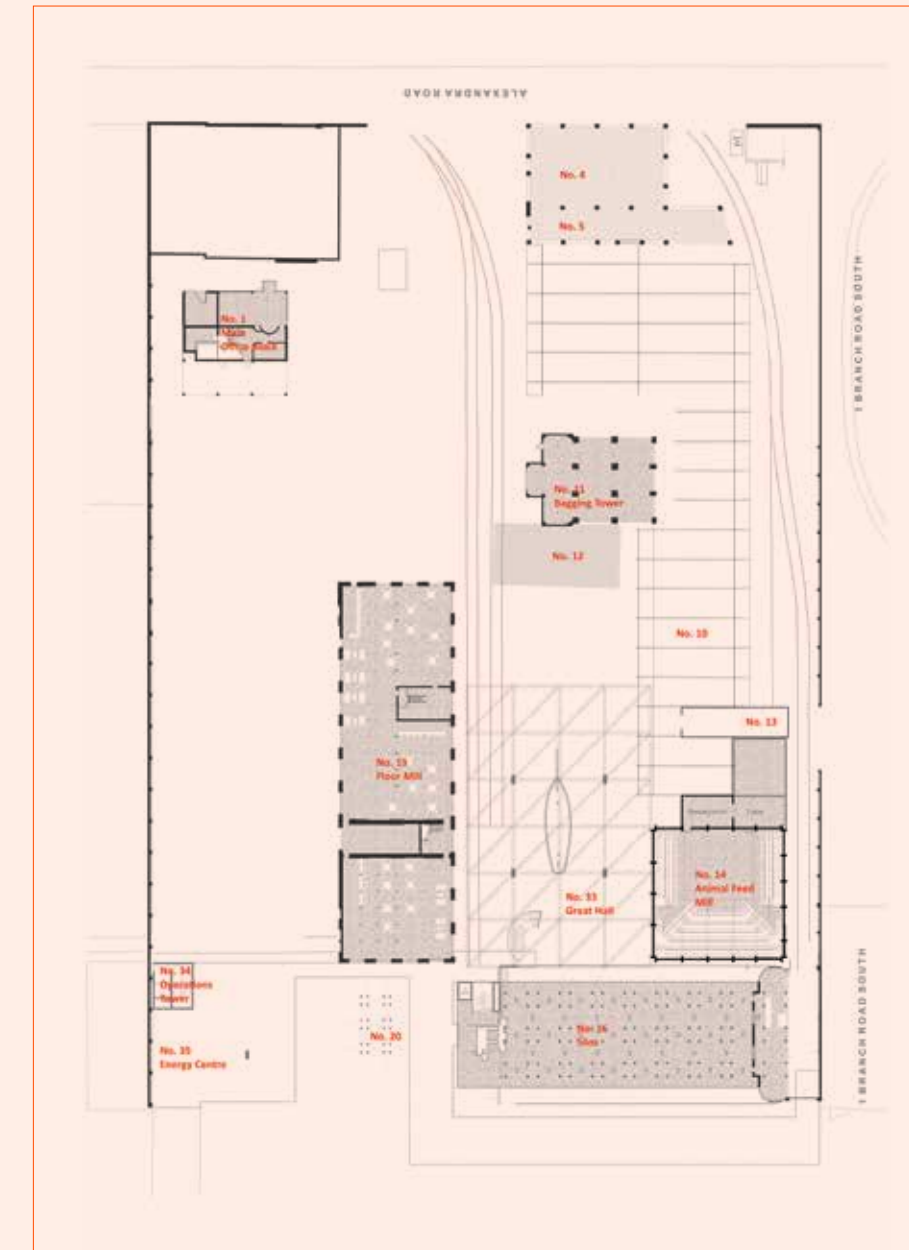
Top: Technical Drawing – Site Section through The Great Hall.

Bottom: Site Section drawing in context.

Opposite page

Top: Plan Drawing of The Great Hall in context.

Bottom: View from Inside The Great Hall



## The Great Hall – a place of welcome and overlap

We have proposed a large industrial type Hall or exhibition space, with glazed canopy, 42-metres x 28-metres formed on three sides by the Silo, the Mill Building and the Provender Mill.

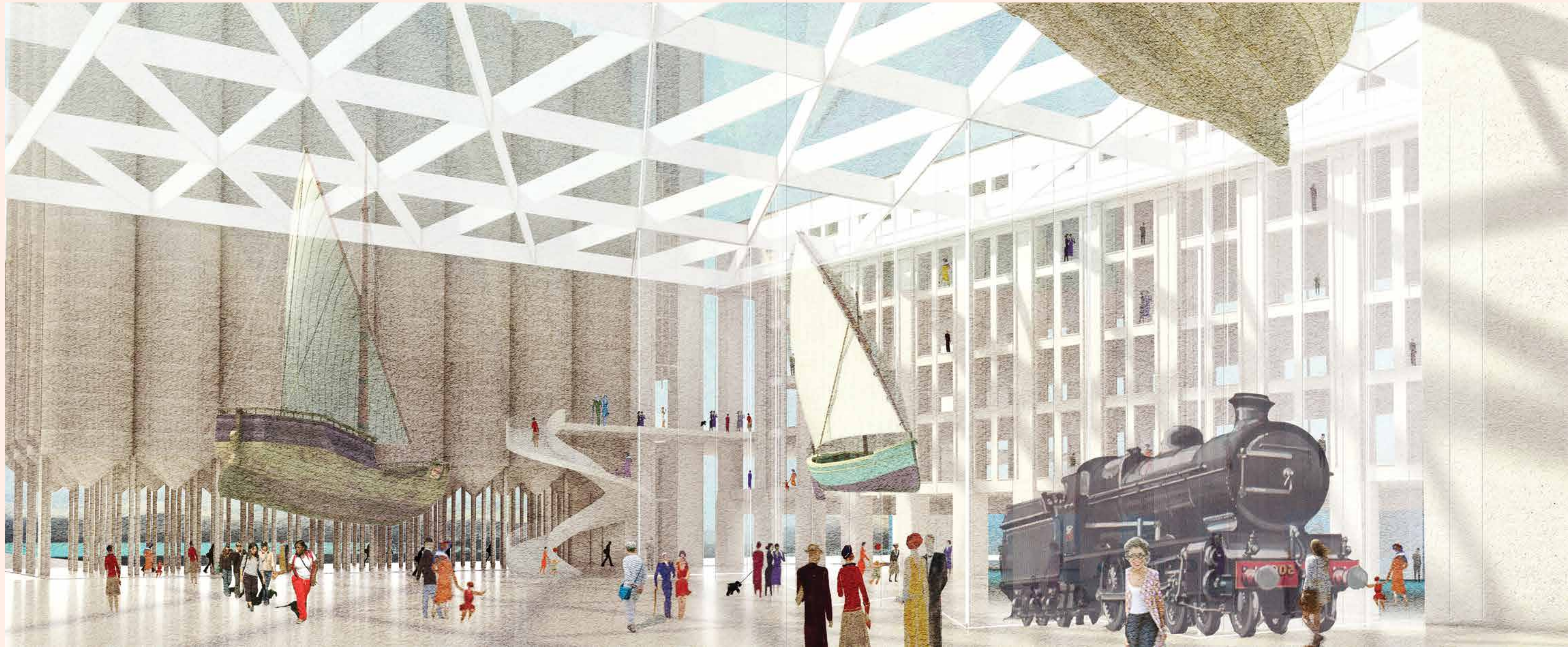
The Great Hall acts as a main anchor space, connecting uses housed in the surrounding buildings. Open to the air, protected by a canopy, this ground floor exhibition space will house larger artefacts, displayed either suspended from the ceiling or in other ways about the interior. Visitors can meander freely through this space, viewing the exhibits or simply moving from one building to the other. Functioning as a sheltered connector space, a grand stair from a mezzanine at second floor level of the Mill Building links the upper entrance of the Port Museum and the arrival space of the Port Highline opens directly into this space.

The ground floor of the Main Silo Building opens directly from this Hall, affording views to the south and the port activities of Alexandra Basin, establishing a link between the suspended sea vessels in the Great Hall and those at the water's edge.

The scale of the glazed roof creates a sense of arrival, gathering and orientation, leading to the museum, the bakery and café, the lift and stair hall to the elevated start-up workshops, the theatre, the Provender experimental theatre space and the Port Belvedere.

The Provender Mill opens directly off the Great Hall. It is possible that certain temporary exhibitions in the Great Hall can expand the into the Provender Mill as the occasion arises. At other times, the Great Hall has the potential to become a temporary foyer to the Provender Mill.





Left: View from inside The Great Hall – a place of welcome and overlap



#### This page

Top: Reference Project – The Military Archives.

Bottom: The Bagging Tower, Port Archive.

#### Opposite page

Top left: The Bagging Tower, Port Archive.

Top right: View from inside the Bagging Tower.

Bottom (left to right): 1. Reference Project – Sitterwerk Switzerland Reuse of Former Industrial Buildings.

2. Sitterwerk Exhibition Space. 3. Reference Project – Sitterwerk Switzerland Art Library and Material Archive.

4. Sitterwerk Exhibition Space.

### Bagging Tower – The Port Archive

The Bagging Tower occupies a symbolic position in the overall arrangement of buildings on the site, its tall elegant form is remarkable. Given its central location, it anchors the entire site as a particular landmark with a strong character. For these reasons, it is seen as an appropriate location to house the Archive dedicated to the Port, given its formal, iconic presence. The structure of the tower is ideal for the Port Archive. Its cellular nature and form of construction makes it capable of supporting heavy loads and offers excellent fire resistant properties.

The tower capacity has been tested to prove that it can accommodate the Port Archive comfortably over nine new levels within its solid concrete body. The base of the tower will house an arrivals hall and ancillary support spaces necessary for the archive to function, such as conservation lab and delivery spaces. A reading room is situated at the uppermost level. This bright lofty space enjoys a 360-degree panoramic prospect over the Port, the City and the landscape beyond.

An enclosed bridge at the first floor connects to the archive level in the Mill Building, allowing archivists to move freely between both locations, forming the National Maritime Archive. The bridge allows for future adaptability in a case where the Archive needs to grow beyond the capacity of the Bagging Tower.





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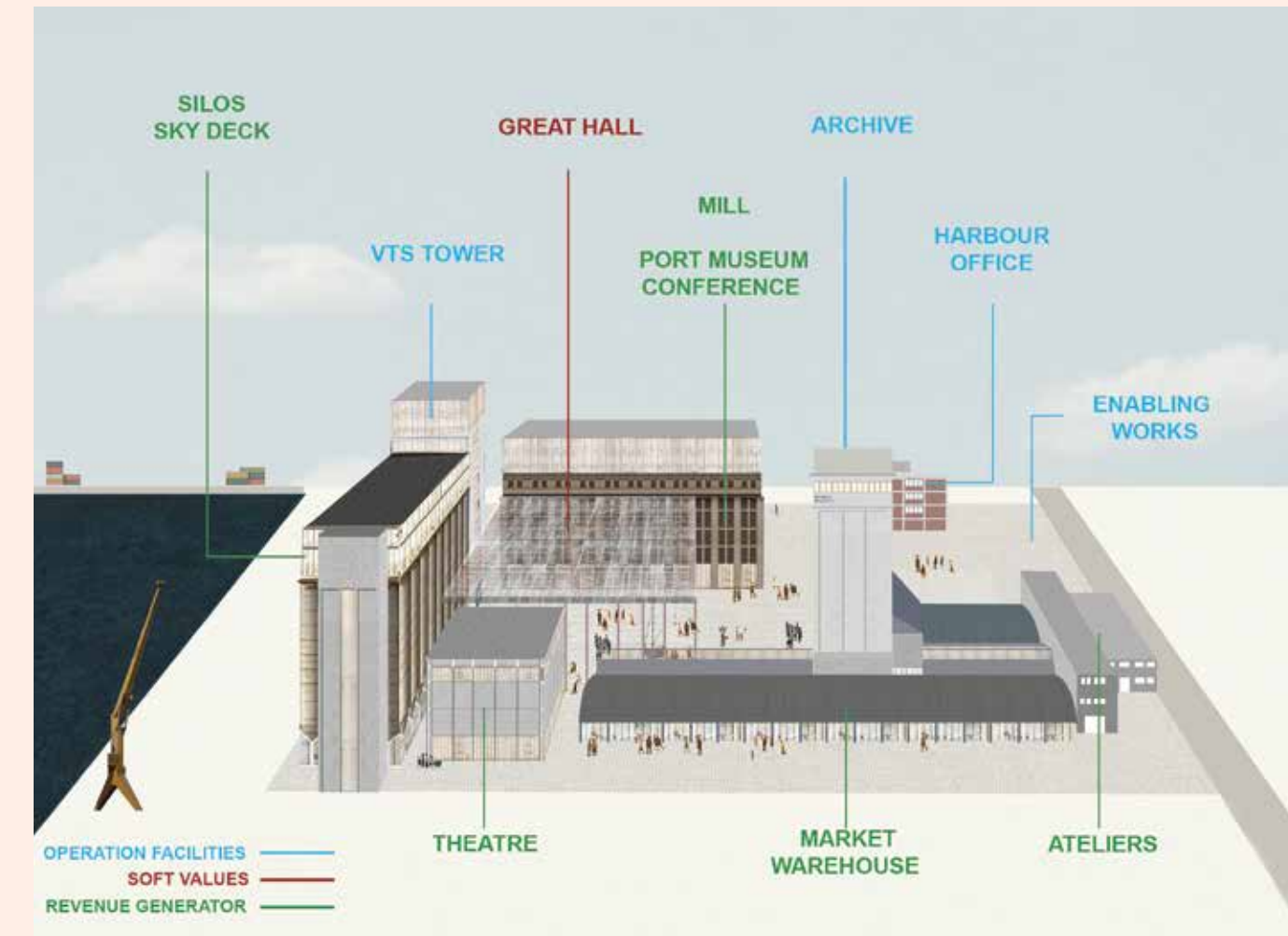
Technical Drawing – The Bagging Tower Archive  
Section Drawing Archive Research Library on the top  
Floor Level.

Opposite page

Top: Bird's Eye View of the Flour Mill.

Bottom left: The Silo Building Section.

Bottom right: Interior View of the Silo.



## Silo Complexes and Skydeck

## The Silos

Two types of silo structures remain on the site, absorbed into the overall strategy in different ways related to their condition and the opportunities they present for conversion or adaptability to other uses.

## The Dublin Silos

The smaller of the two silo complexes is also the oldest, with connections to Ireland's industrial heritage. The nature and historic value of these existing silos, facing the waterfront of Alexandra Basin, demands that they remain as they are, but protected from deterioration and weather ingress. They will become passive as opposed to active participants in terms of their future use, preserved to anchor the waterfront elevation facing the Basin, along with their larger and more dominant neighbour.

## Silos and Skydeck

The Skydeck occupies the top level and is independently accessible to all visitors. This will be one of the key destinations in the City, offering marvellous 360-degree views to Dublin Bay and back to the City.

The large silo complex, formerly a grain store, is one of the most visible and significant landmarks visible from a range of City and Port locations. It functions as a marker which clearly identifies the site and its prominent position overlooking the Basin makes it the most appropriate to adapt as one of the main anchors of the complex.

This complex consists of a composition of 36 grain steel storage vessels, topped with a double height access gallery space, accessed via a circulation core in a vertical concrete framed structure running alongside. The ground floor of the complex, previously used to empty the steel vessels suspended overhead, is a noteworthy space, with closely spaced structural elements supporting the grain storage canisters overhead.

### Ground Floor

The ground floor of the silo building is opened up, transforming it into a more porous space, revealing the attraction of the quayside from within the Great Hall.

Sitting on a concrete plinth approximately one metre above the quay level, it is a unique space, offering views over the Basin and the activities of the Port. It is intended that the ground floor be cleaned and opened to the public with few interventions, possibly a space for exhibitions, adjacent to the large open space of the Great Hall immediately to its north, possibly an extension of the welcome point for cruise passengers located nearby.

### Options

Options were explored to intervene in the Silo vessels themselves, and while this remains possible, concerns were raised about the viability of such an intervention or indeed the likely scale of an intervention, because of the structural capacity of steel fabricated construction. While precedents exist for carving into concrete silos and we have explored relevant examples in a number of ports, few exemplars offer any proof that this type of radical intervention is possible with

the type of steel vessels in the Silo.

Another option examined proposes the removal the inner vessels in their entirety, thereby providing a vast volume available for an appropriate use, such as a grand exhibition hall.

### Energy possibilities

The existing Silos which face south have been examined as possible sources for generating heat energy. Using the construction of the steel outer skin to best advantage, heated air generated internally can be availed of as part of the energy and sustainable strategy.

### Skydeck

The attic storey of the Silos is partially contained in an extension of the curved outer leaves of the extended perimeter storage canisters and a mezzanine level above to a series of perimeter and crossing galleries, affording extensive views in all directions over the immediate context, as well as broad-ranging views to the long distance. This double height space possesses some of the character of a ship's interior. Elegant lightweight steel structural elements support floors and galleries of solid wood. Historically, this double height lofty space was used to access and fill the storage vessels and now offers opportunities to function as a panoramic public space, a Skydeck almost akin to an ocean liner with polished decks. The exciting vistas offered to the Port and the City from the interior and from the terraces, which could occupy part of the roof, cannot be underestimated. It is intended that this space would be open to the public for events to complement other activities housed on the site.

Opposite page

Top: Interior View of the Proposed Sky Deck.

Bottom left: Existing View of the Silo Gallery Level.

Bottom middle: Existing View of the Silo, Intermediate Floor Level.

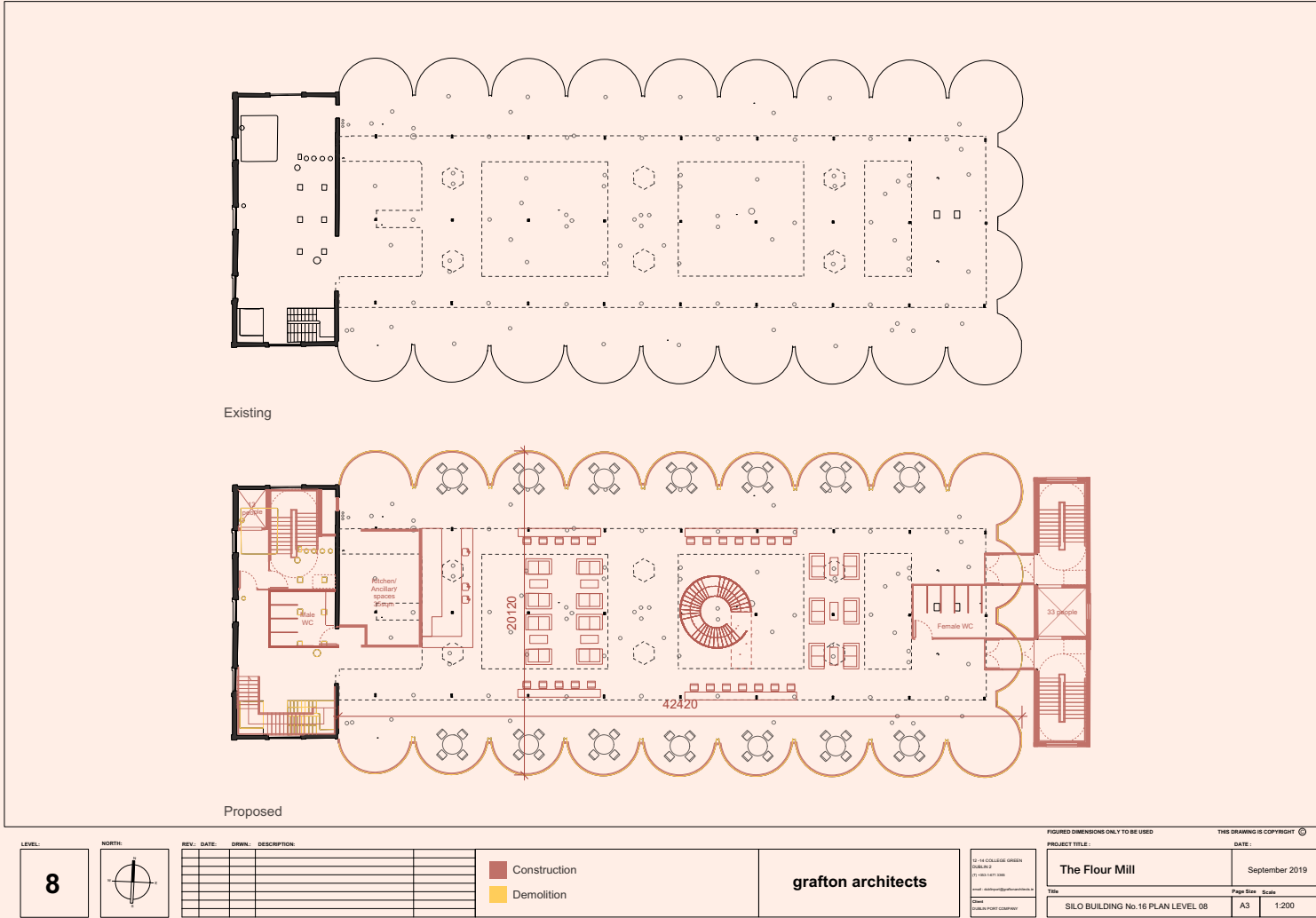
Bottom right: Existing View of Silo Facade, Sky Deck Level.



Accessing the Skydeck

Access to this panoramic space will be provided through the existing concrete core running vertically up the western gable. This shaft has the capacity to accommodate lifts, fire stairs and an open public stairway. Means of escape capacity will need to be increased to cope with increased numbers of visitors. It is proposed that this space is supported by another circulation shaft to be positioned on the eastern elevation. This shaft will combine its role as a fire fighting shaft with egress provided at ground floor within the site boundary.

It is important to note that the interventions considered have provided for the retention of as much of the existing Silo structures as possible, along with their mechanical systems, incorporating these elements into the future proposals.

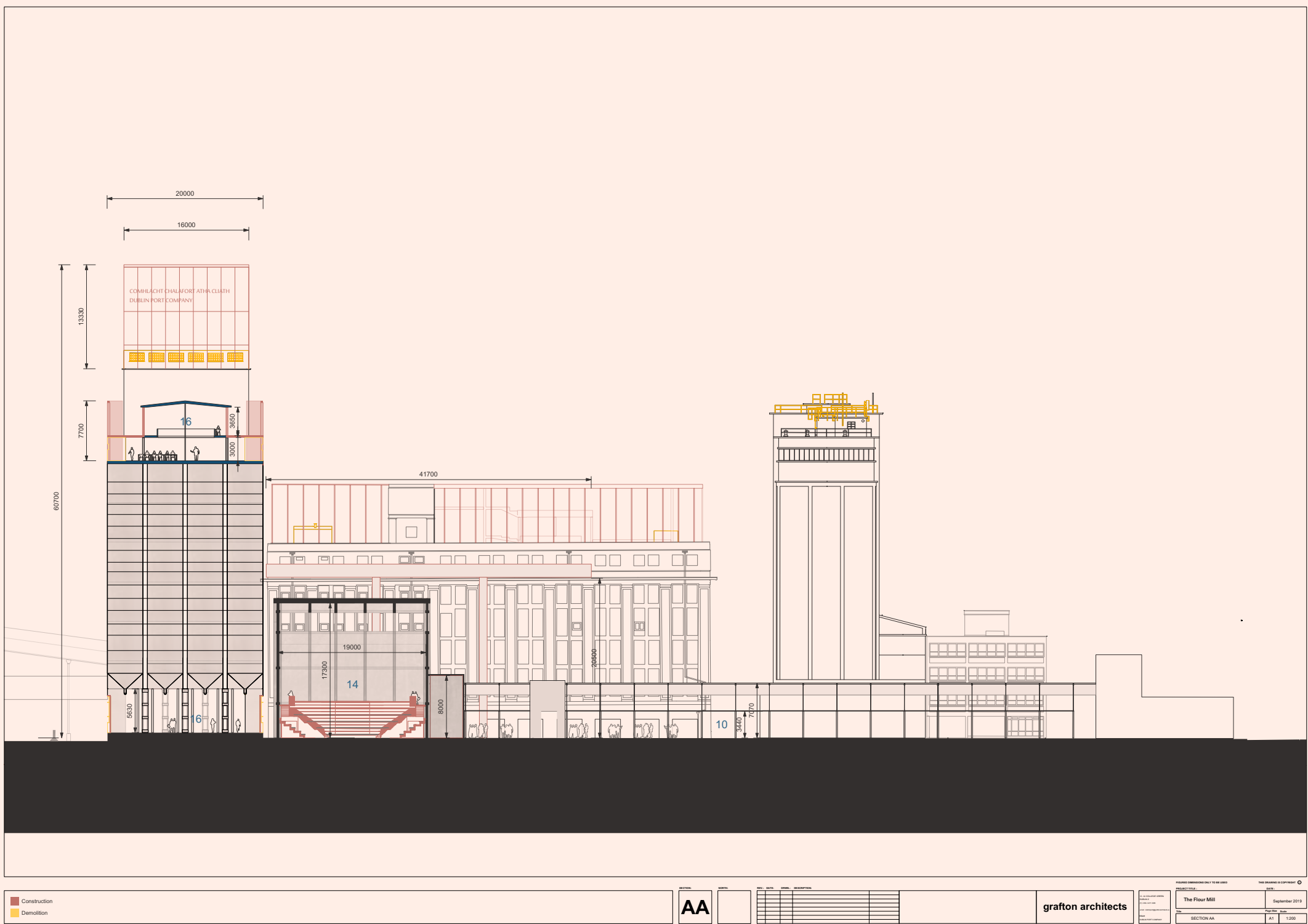


This page

Technical Drawing – The Silo Building Sky Deck Floor Plan.

Opposite page

Technical Drawing – Section through Silo Building in Context.



Atelier

The Atelier Building fronts onto Alexandra Road, running parallel with the northern boundary of the site. We have proposed maintaining this two-storey building for future re-use as artists' studios or additional start-up workspaces. We envisage this refurbishment occurring at a later stage in the Masterplan.

Alexandra Road Entrance Canopy

The Atelier building, together with the existing stone boundary walls running along Alexandra Road, are integrated into the new entrance canopy and gateway.

Taxis, cars, buses and bicycles would arrive at this point. The canopy height allows for coach drop-off and there is adequate space for in and out movement of buses. This gateway also allows for a goods entrance to the east.

Existing train tracks could, we imagine, be intermittently used to deliver visitors to the Great Hall.

Energy Centre – capturing energy from the water

An Energy Centre is proposed for the site as part of the overall sustainability strategy. Located underneath the Port Belvedere where the Port Highline lands on site, this 200 square metre facility will take advantage of its port-side location, drawing on the vast water body of Alexandra Basin to provide energy by means of a water source heat pump. Such a facility has proven successful on other sites located near rivers or large water bodies. The facility is situated at first floor level, above potential future high water levels which may result from flooding due to climate change. The ground floor beneath will function as a covered bicycle parking facility.

Opposite page  
Perspective elevation along Alexandra Road showing the entrance canopy and arrival area.

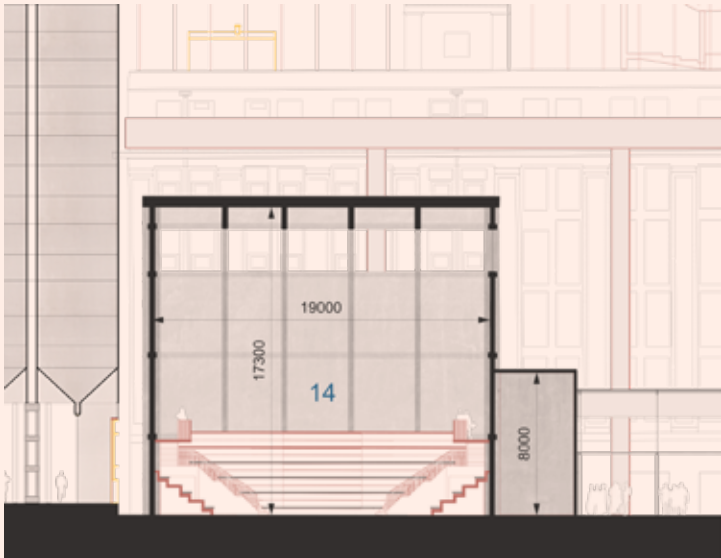
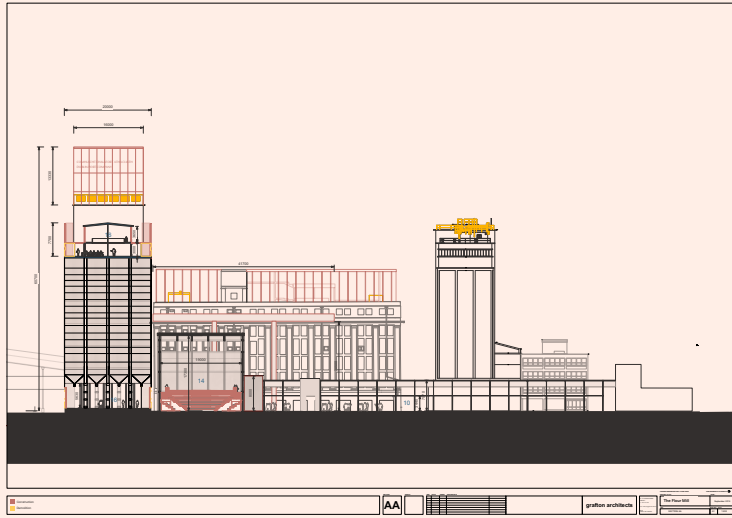


Provender Mill – an experimental space

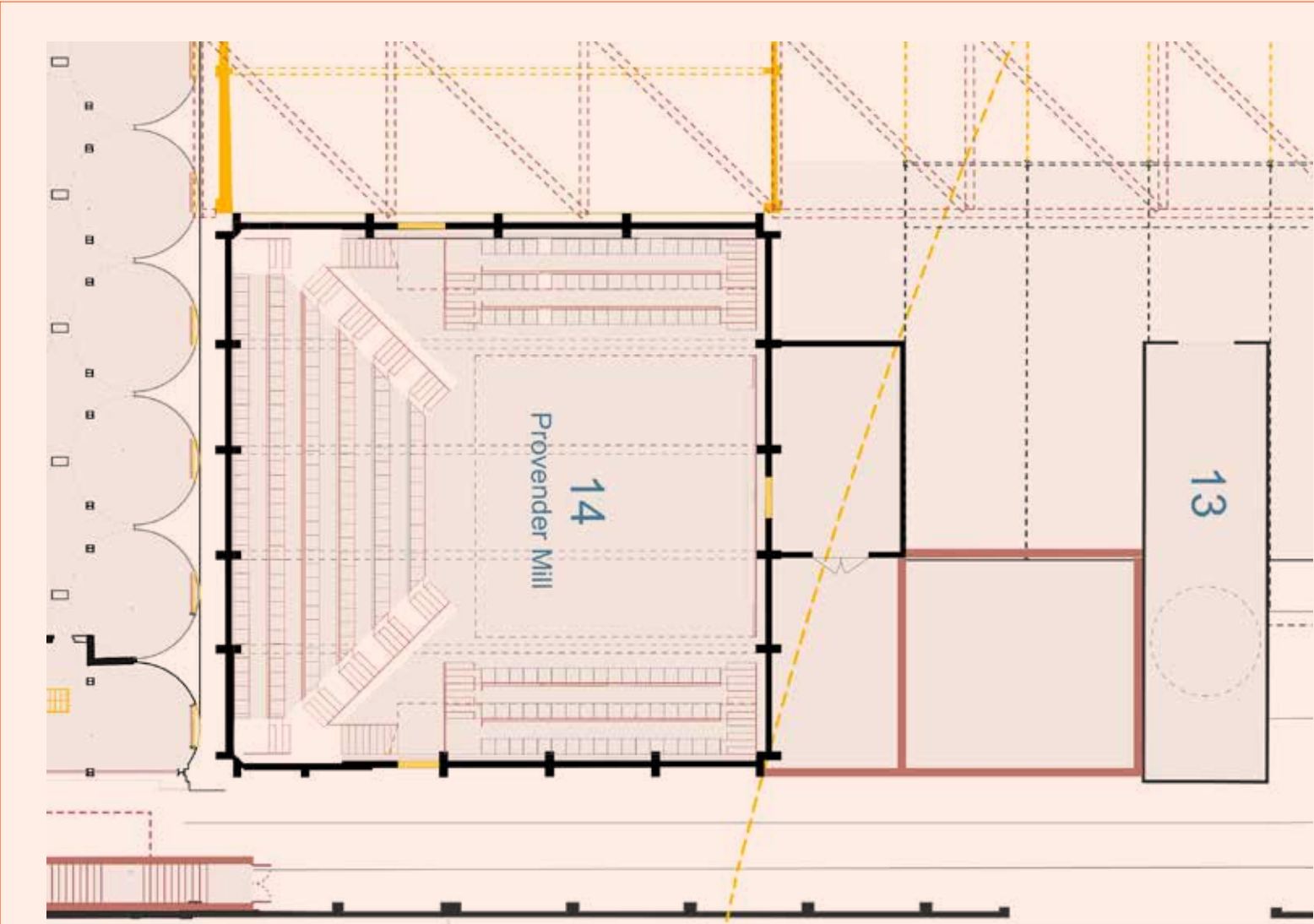
Located adjacent to, and immediately north of, the Silos, the Provender Mill is an enormous cublic volume constructed in framed concrete. Approximately 400 square metres in area, we imagine the Mill re-used as an experimental space, a free agent, one that can accommodate a range of activities, be they theatre, filming events, fashion shows, dance, gatherings, and many other types of activities, some of which can potentially be connected with the Great Hall.

The space should always remain neutral so to speak, giving it the capacity to be adaptable. Seating, therefore, would be fully retractable, allowing the space to be used opportunistically and in improvised ways. Support facilities can be located adjacent or nearby, which encourages overlap with other activities and uses.

The space can be supported as an entertainment venue by the Skydeck on top of the Silos and the café on the ground floor of the Mill Building.



This page  
Below left: Provender Mill Existing Interior Volume.  
Below middle: Technical Drawing – Provender Mill Section in context.  
Below right: Technical Drawing – Provender Mill Section  
Opposite page  
Top and bottom left: Provender Mill Proposed Interior View.  
Right: Provender Mill Event Space Plan Drawing.

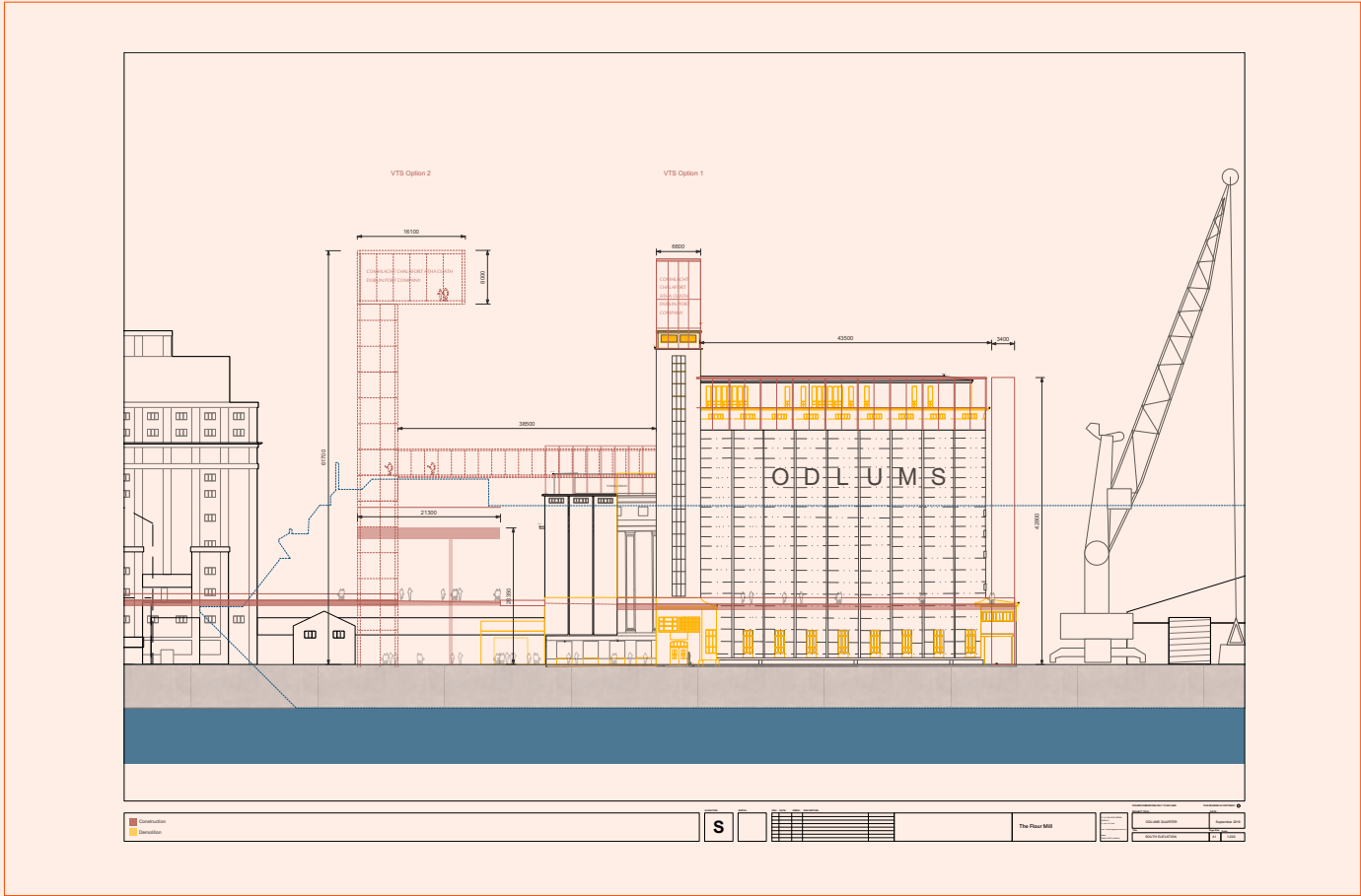
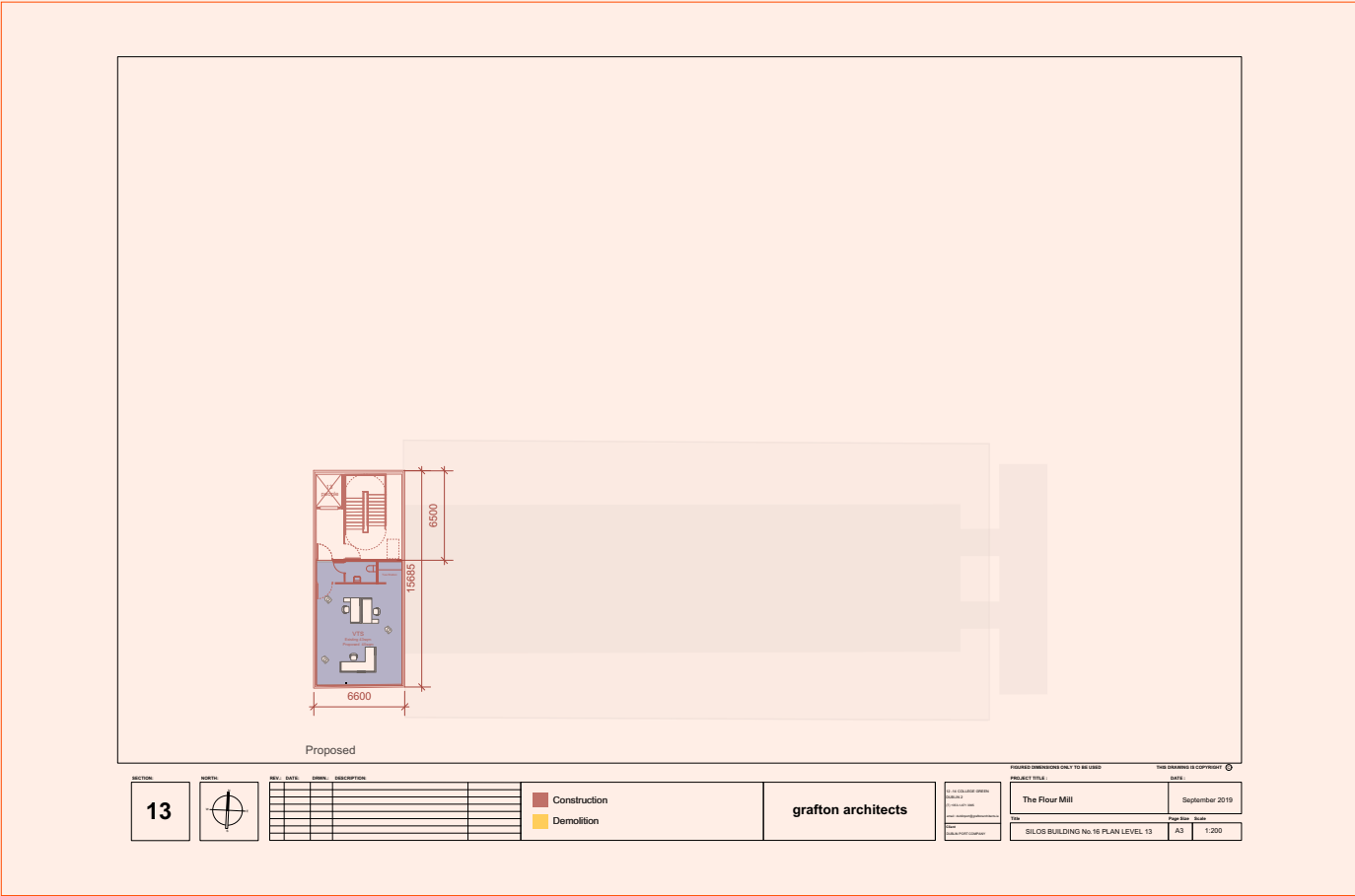


VTS – Vessel Tracking Service

The Vessel Tracking Service is one of the most important facilities in the Port, monitoring and tracking port traffic. A good vantage point is important, preferably from a height. We propose to celebrate this important aspect by placing it at a very visible place, on top of the existing circulation core, which sits alongside the Main Silo Building.

The office will act as a beacon perched high over the port. The new VTS room will act as a marker, an anchor point for the Port when viewed from the City. We imagine at some point in the future it will join its neighbours, the chimneys at Poolbeg, to become part of the family of infrastructures which mark the skyline of Dublin.

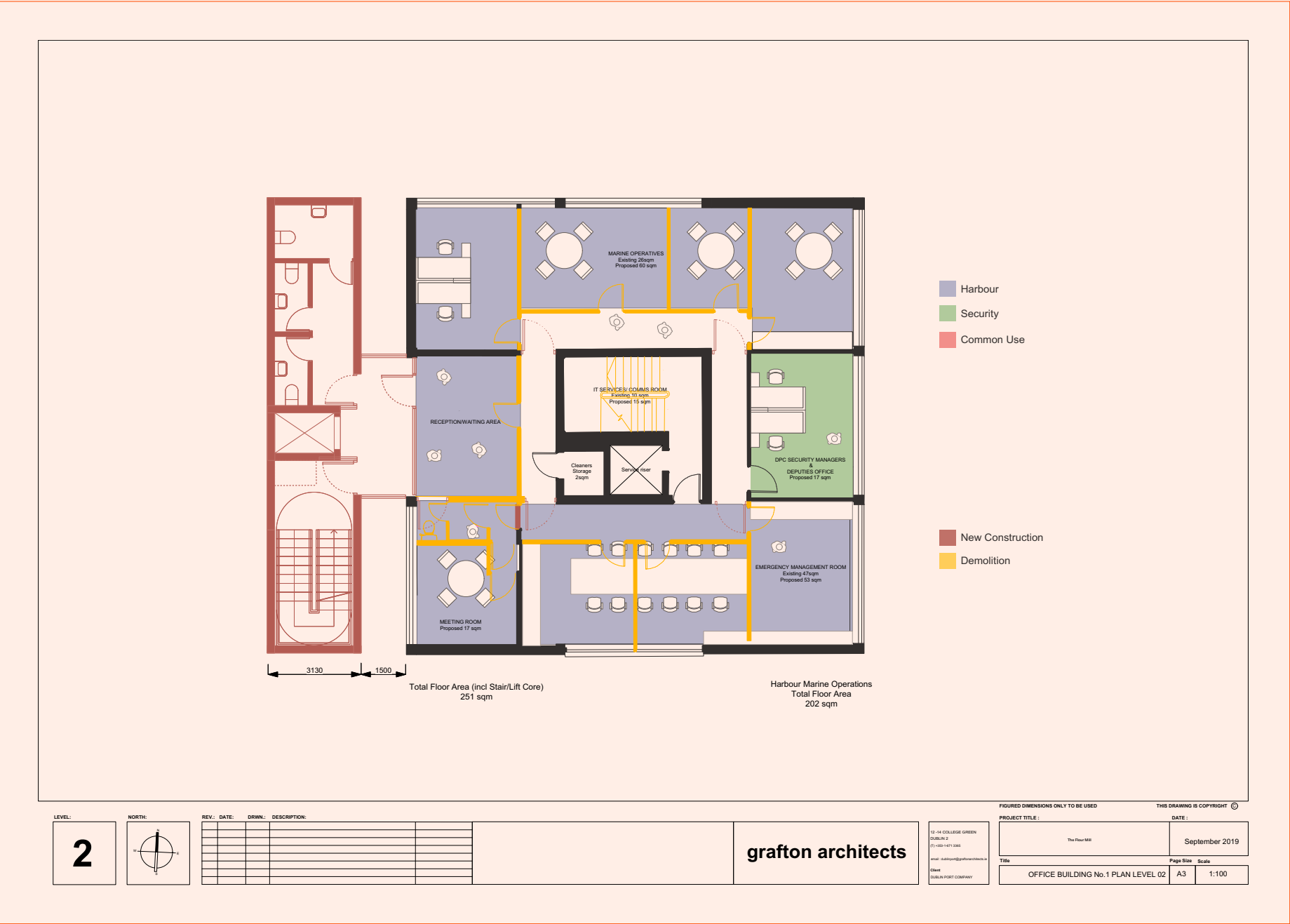
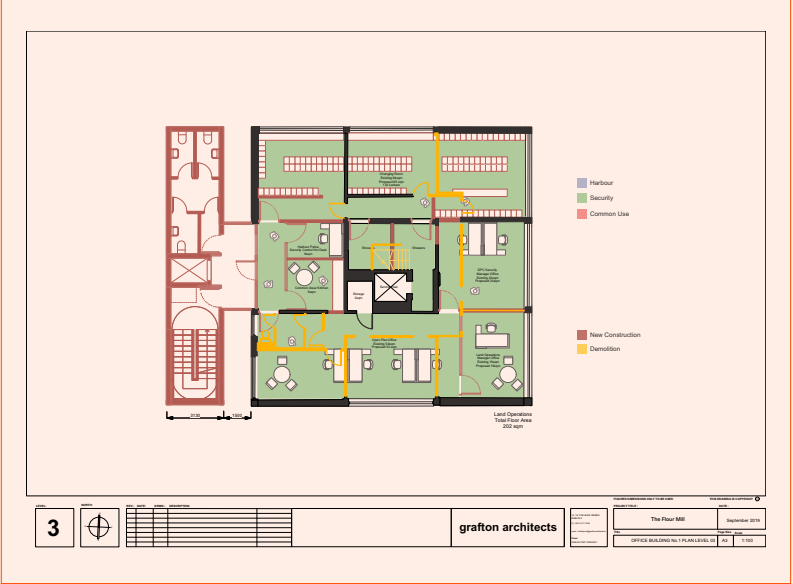
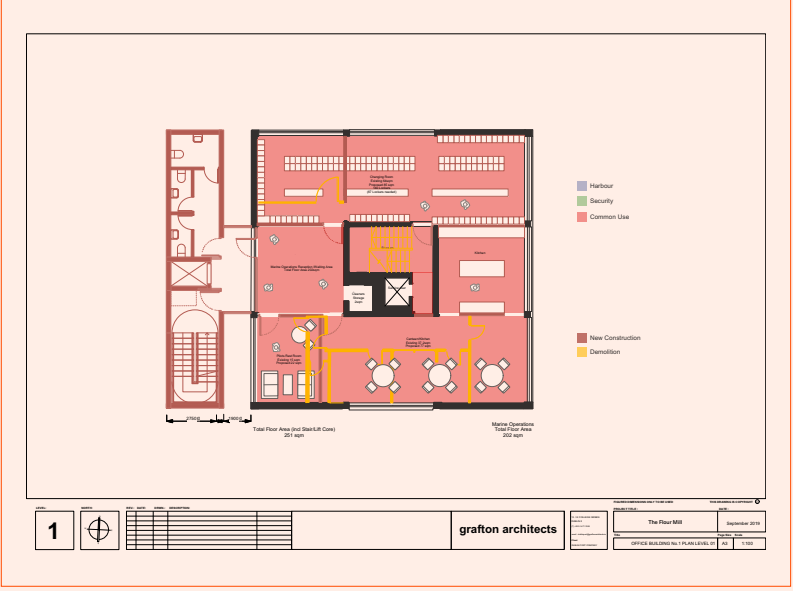
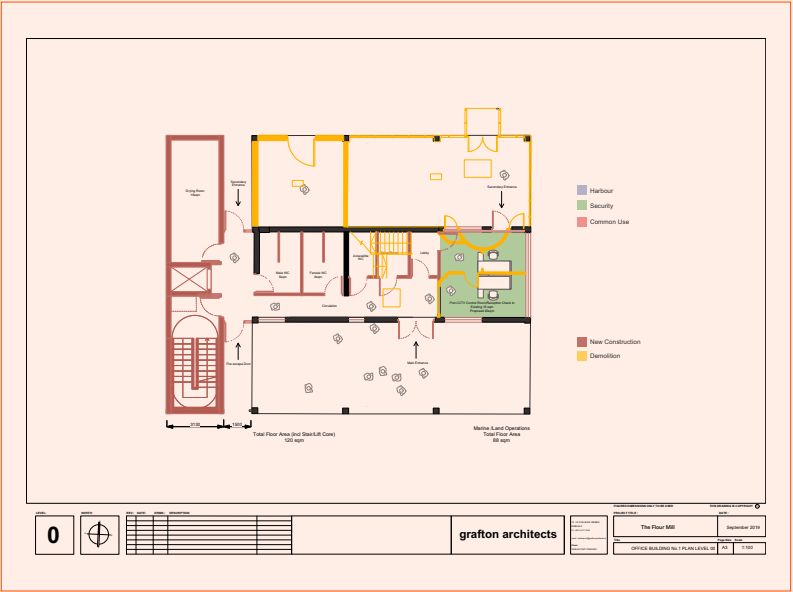
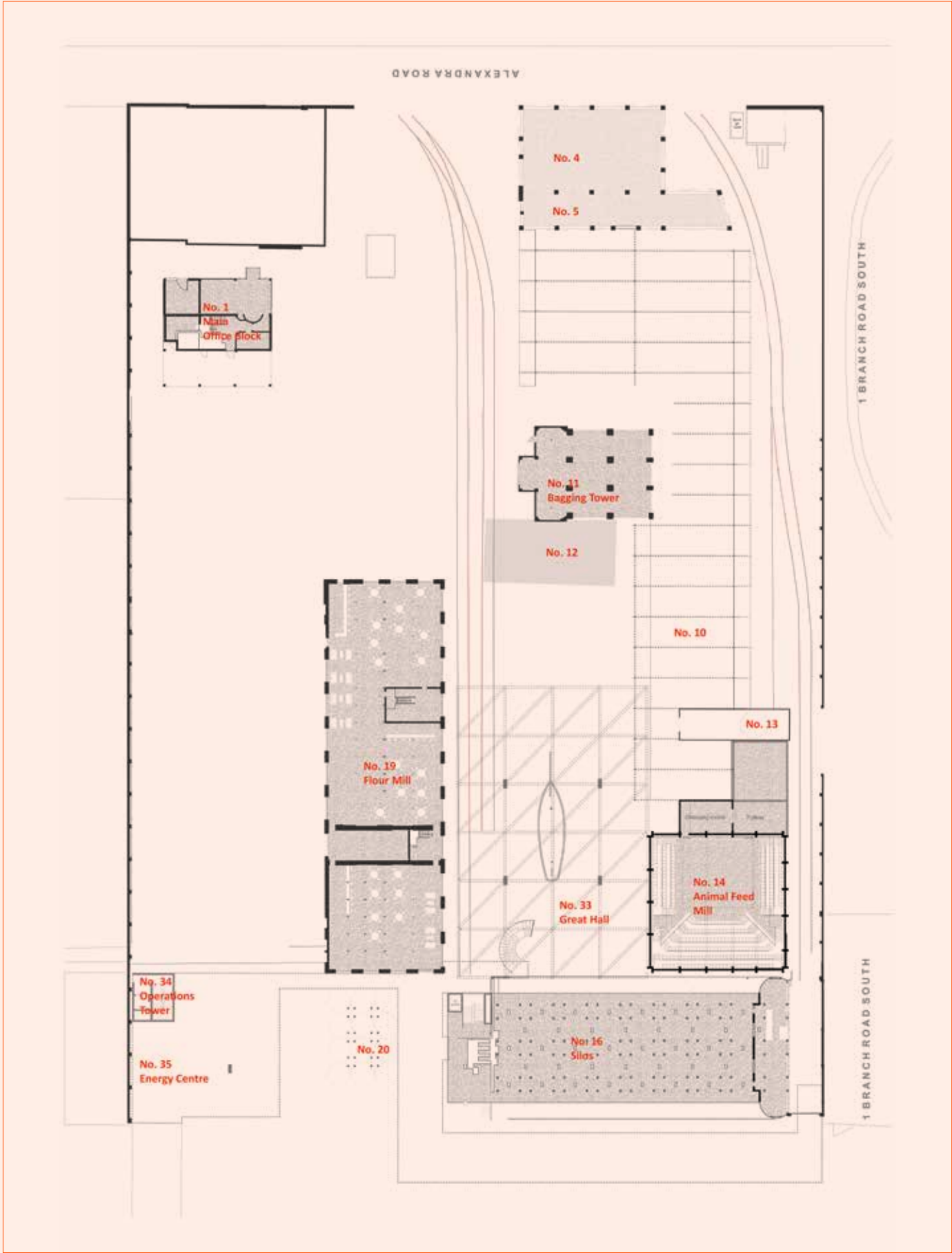
This page  
 Below left: Technical Drawing – Vessel Tracking Service Floor Plan.  
 Below right: Technical Drawing – Vessel Tracking Service Elevation.  
 Opposite page  
 Vessel Tracking Service Beacon perched high over Dublin Port.



Port Operations Office

A small three-storey office building of approximately 738 square metres stands apart in the north-east corner of the site. A simple concrete framed structure with brick and glazed infill elevations, and a central circulation core dating from the 1960s, the Masterplan proposes to integrate this building into Port Operations. This existing office building will house the Land Operations and Harbour Operations facilities. Possible layouts and proposals for internal configurations have been tested to prove the viability of this structure to accommodate the necessary uses desired to relocate accommodation.

By integrating part of the Port Operations which are non-hazardous in terms of their activities with the other cultural activities on site, it offers the visitor the sense of being a participant in a place that is part of a working, vibrant environment.

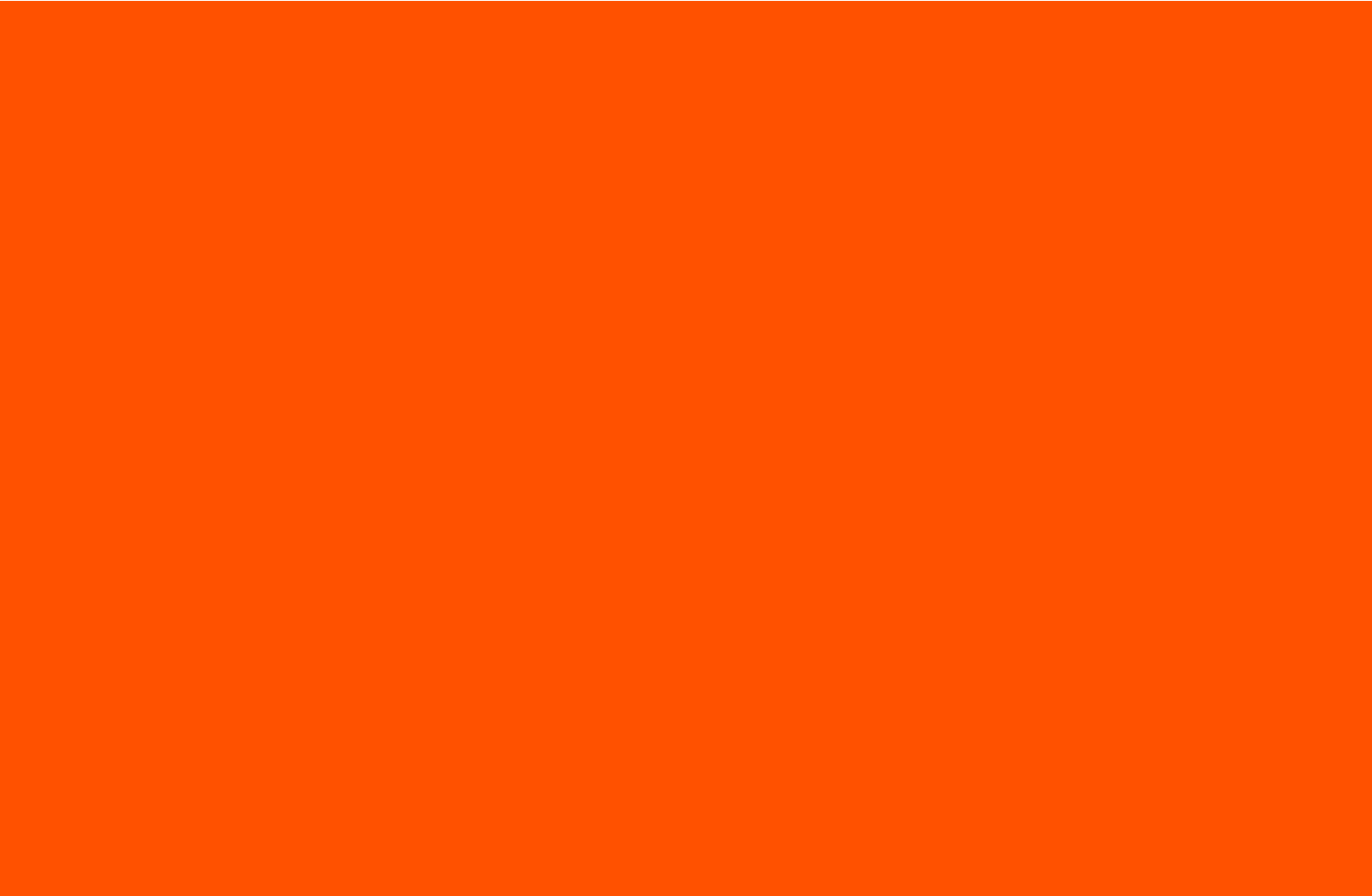


This page

Top left: Port Operations Office Ground Floor Plan.  
Middle left: Port Operations Office First Floor Plan.  
Bottom left: Port Operations Office Third Floor Plan.  
Above: Port Operations Office Typical Floor Plan.

Opposite page

Left: Existing Office Building.  
Right: Existing Office Building Site Location Plan.





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