

Shaping places that
make a positive impact
for local communities



Fourteen Locks Visitor Centre

Design and
Access Statement

FLVC-AHR-XX-XX-RP-A-08700

Newport City Council
February 2025

This Design and Access Statement sets out the design process and principles we have used when we have designed the “Fourteen Locks Visitor Centre”

Newport City Council commissioned the team for the design and construction of an innovative ecological visitor centre to replace the previously utilised Fourteen Locks Canal Centre.

Newport City Council are expecting a high-quality visitor facility providing information, volunteering and recreation opportunities for both residents and visitors to the region within a building of architectural merit. A vibrant mixed-use development, which compliments and enhances the surrounding area, and the adjacent canal.

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Project Context & Brief

This project has involved the design of an innovative, ecological visitor centre where we have aimed to achieve a balance between a building with architectural merit, environmental impact and visitor engagement, all through a net-zero impact approach.

1.1 Project Introduction

Newport City Council have commissioned the design and construction of a innovative ecological visitor centre to replace the previously utilised Fourteen Locks Canal Centre.

Newport City Council are expecting a high-quality visitor facility providing information, volunteering and recreation opportunities for both residents and visitors to the region within a building of architectural merit. A vibrant mixed-use development, which compliments and enhances the surrounding area, and the adjacent canal.

Key Objectives

- Deliver a project of architectural merit, with net zero principles and a design which improves the appearance of the site and compliments its surroundings.
- Deliver an active public space which is attractive to the market, creates an environment which benefit of the local community and visitors to the region.
- Deliver a community/visitor Hub, a public infrastructure which meet the Council's requirements and delivery timetable:
 - Visitor Information Centre
 - Commercial Space/Museum
 - Café
 - Flexible Community/Meeting Space
 - Site Manager Office
 - Accessible toilets
 - Secure Storage facilities

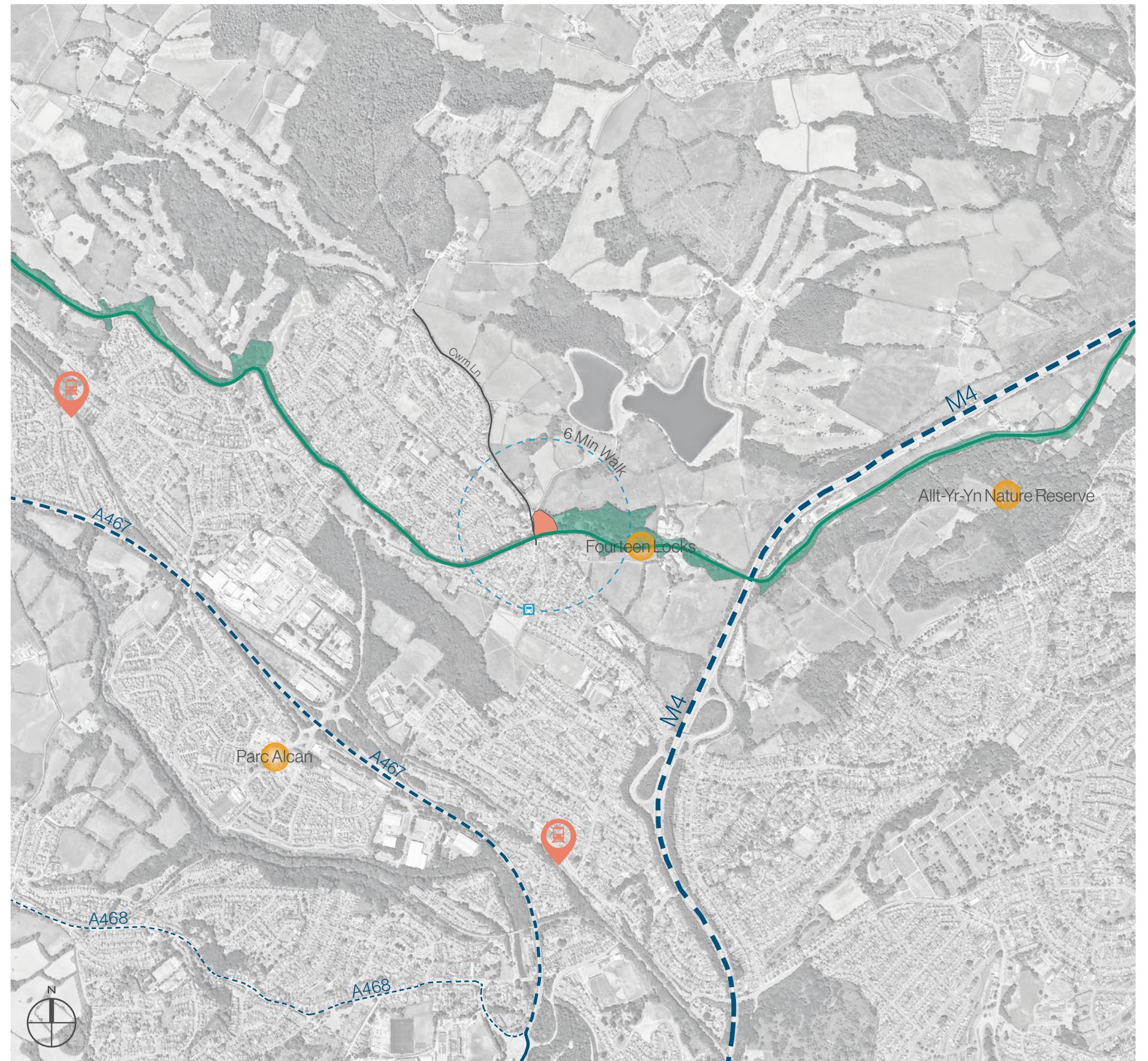
1.2 Site Context - Wider Area

The site can be found off Cwm Lane, Rogerstone NP10 9GN.

Situated within Newport, Wales, the Fourteen Locks Canal Centre site stands at the crossroads of A467 and A468, strategically positioned to serve as a pivotal entry point to this captivating locale. Its prime location along these major roadways facilitates seamless accessibility, ensuring a smooth transition for visitors arriving from adjacent regions. The proximate M4 motorway further enhances connectivity, establishing the Canal Centre as a focal point within Newport's comprehensive transportation network.

The site is intricately linked to various modes of transportation, boasting well-connected bus routes and proximity to a nearby railway network.

-  Site
-  Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal
-  Conservation Area - Policy number CE7
-  Landmarks
-  Cwm Ln
-  Major Road
-  Bus Transportation
-  Train



Heritage

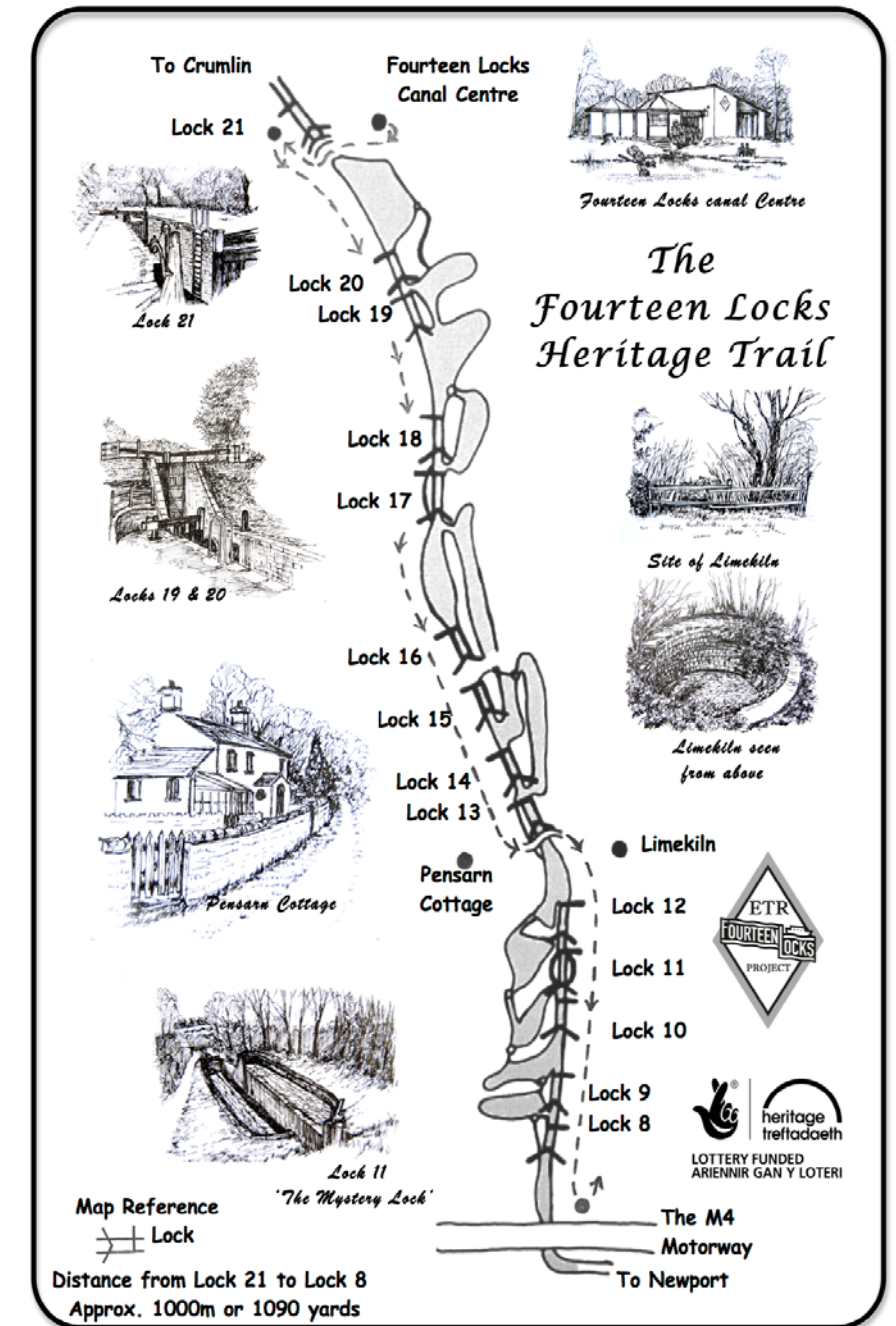
2.1 Heritage Preservation

Newport, Wales, is renowned for its unwavering commitment to heritage preservation, a dedication that is notably evident in the meticulous conservation of its historical landmarks, cultural institutions, and particularly, its canal locks.

Beyond specific landmarks, Newport's commitment extends to the conservation of historic neighbourhoods and sites. The community actively participates in maintaining the authenticity of these areas, fostering a collective sense of pride and connection to Newport's unique character.

In conclusion, Newport, Wales, stands as an exemplar of a city that upholds its heritage with diligence and precision. Through the vigilant preservation of architectural treasures, educational initiatives, and the protection of vital features such as canal locks, Newport ensures that its rich history remains a vital and enduring aspect of its present and future.

The Fourteen Locks are very much part of this heritage.



2.2 Heritage - Scheduled Ancient Monument

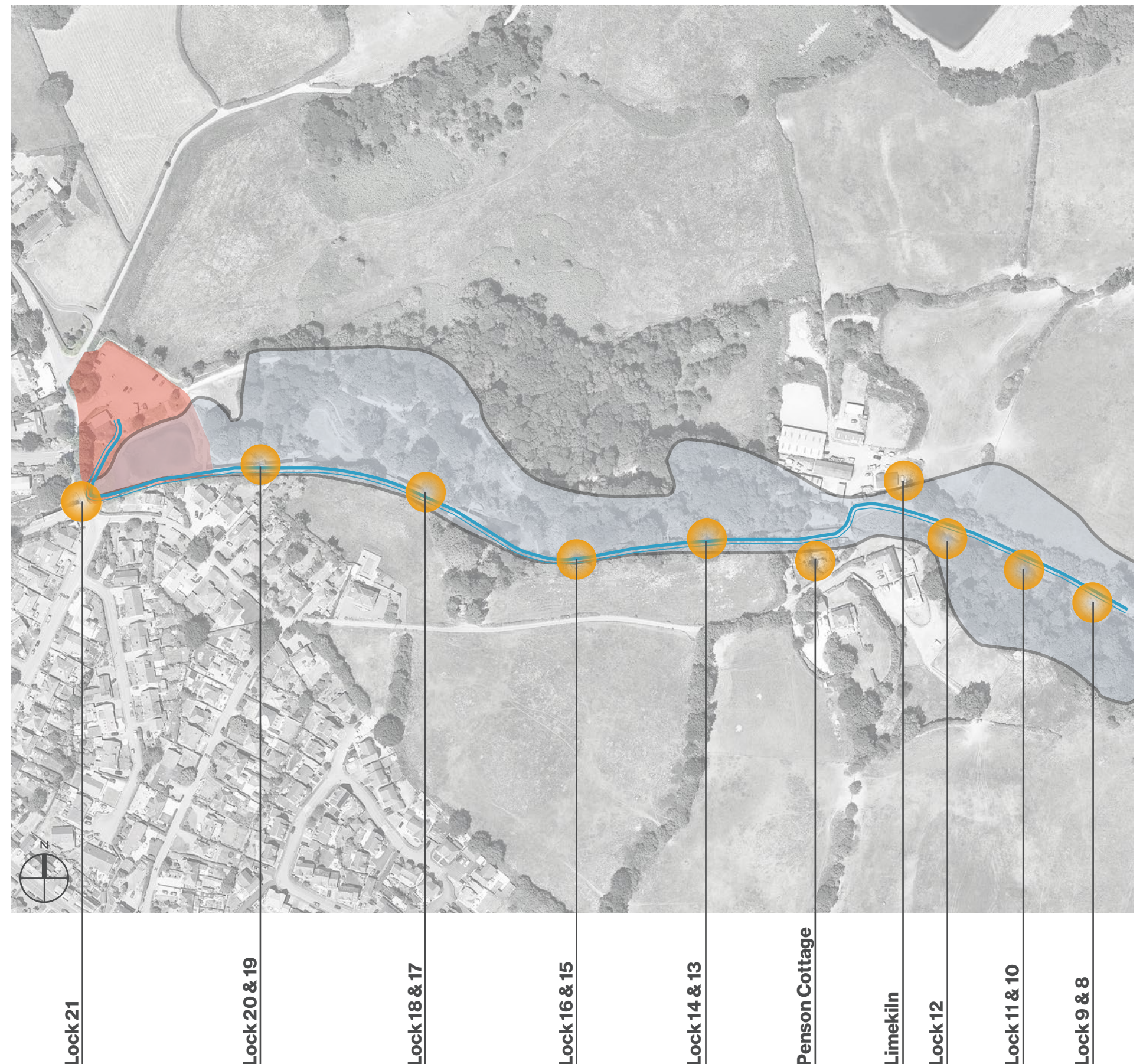
The Fourteen Locks Heritage Trail is a scheduled ancient monument located in Newport, Wales. This historic canal site features a flight of locks on the Crumlin Arm of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal.

The historical locks are no longer actively used for their industrial and modern purposes.

The trail offers a picturesque walk along the canal, showcasing the impressive engineering of the locks, which were essential for transporting goods during the Industrial Revolution. Visitors can explore the heritage centre, learn about the canal's history, and enjoy the scenic surroundings. The site provides insights into the region's industrial past and is a popular destination for both history enthusiasts and nature lovers.

"An idyllic place where time stands still, and history overwhelms!"

- Site
- Heritage Trail
- Historical Landmark
- Scheduled Ancient Monument, No: MM184



2.3 Heritage - Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal

Integral to Newport's heritage landscape are the canal locks. These locks, meticulously maintained, were pivotal in facilitating the transportation of goods during the industrial era. The preservation of these intricate mechanisms underscores the city's commitment to safeguarding not only individual structures but also the broader historical infrastructure that shaped Newport's economic and social development.

The Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal which passes through the site is generally considered partially navigable (Approx 36 miles). The canal has undergone significant restoration and maintenance efforts to ensure its continued usability for recreational purposes. However, specific conditions and navigability may vary at different points along the canal.

-  Site
-  Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal
-  Conservation Area - Policy number CE7



Site Analysis



3.1 Site Analysis - Constraints

The primary pedestrian access point is not evidently clear due to worn-out and lacking wayfinding signage, and the visibility of the canal centre only becomes apparent when approached from the designated on-site parking area, where signage is prominently displayed.

The site's numerous large trees demand careful planning to protect their extensive root systems, crucial for site development. The buildings position must consider tree locations and root structures to harmonise development goals with vegetation preservation.

Respecting the privacy of adjacent residents across the pond is a paramount constraint in the development process. Careful consideration in architectural design, landscaping, and spatial planning is necessary to mitigate intrusions and meet privacy expectations.

- Site Boundary Line
- - - Primary Pedestrian Route
- Primary Pedestrian Access point
- - - Primary Vehicle Route
- Primary Vehicle Access point
- Existing Greenery
- Significant Tree
- On Site Parking Facility
- Existing Boat Ramp
- ||||| Adjacent Residential



3.2 Site Analysis - Surveys

Due to the rural nature of the site numerous surveys were commissioned to understand all the site conditions, before further work commenced on the design of the building and its services .

These surveys have included but not limited to:

- Topographical survey
- Full utility survey
- Geoenvironmental and Geotechnical report
- Arboricultural
- Drainage CCTV survey
- Transport , parking survey
- Preliminary Ecology Appraisal

Shown here is the Arboricultural survey we received highlighting the tree species and condition.

The location of the trees has had a huge impact on the building position, and the buildings location and size has been designed to avoid all trees and roots.





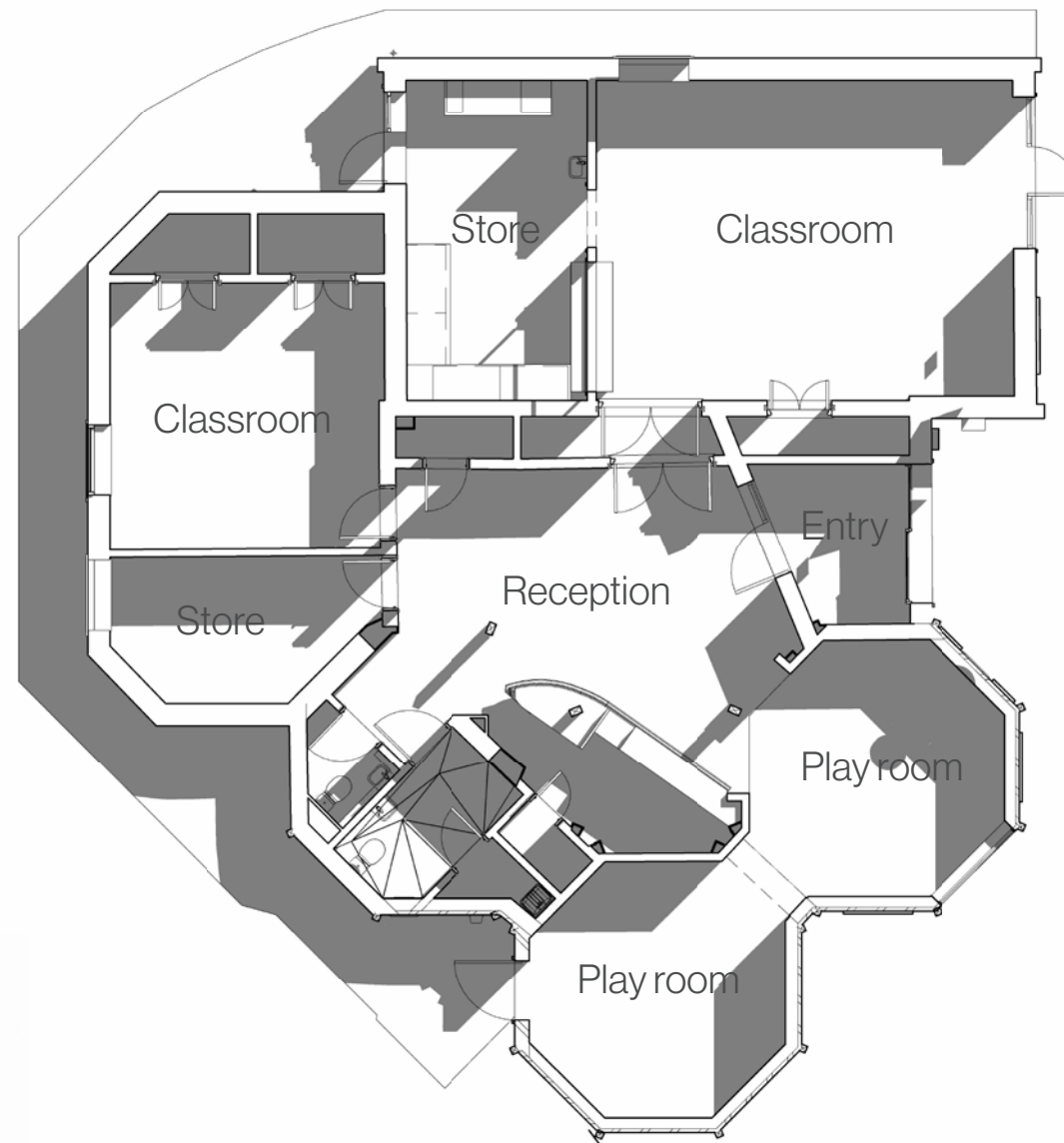
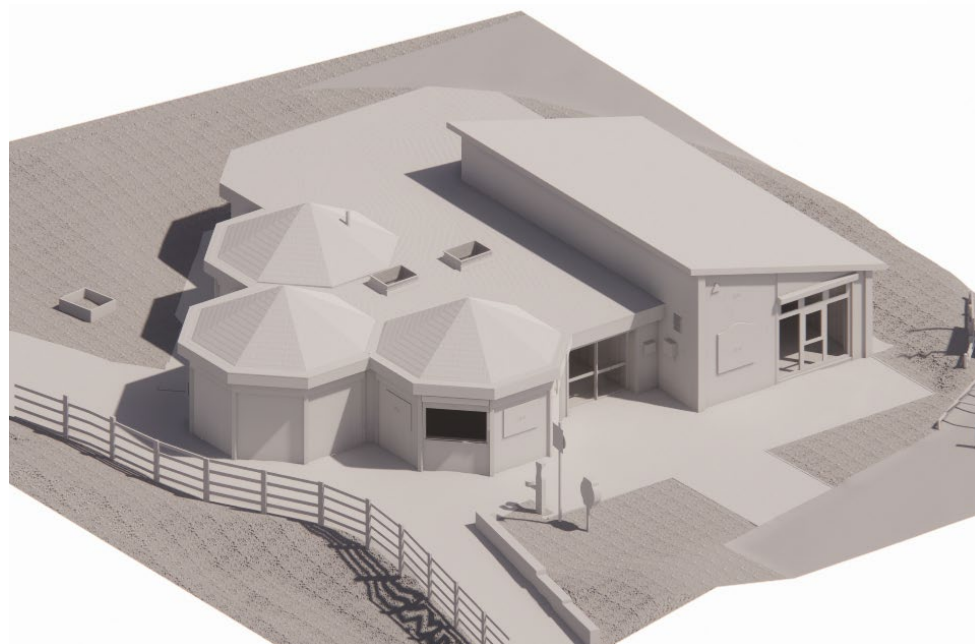
3.3 Site Analysis - Existing Building

The visitor centre is leased and operated by the Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust (MBACT). The Fourteen Locks Canal Centre, Shop, Museum and Dadford Tea Room is open 7 days a week 10am to 4pm

The existing visitor centre is suffering high maintenance costs and high running costs.

To support NCC de-carbonisation intent, the design team investigated re-development of the existing centre to reduce embodied carbon, however there is significant design limitation as to how the existing building can be utilised.

By demolishing the existing building, it provides opportunity to create a new visitor centre that is flexible in use, implements sustainability where proven to be cost effective, and reduce the long term cost of operating and maintaining the building.



3.4 Site Analysis - Opportunities

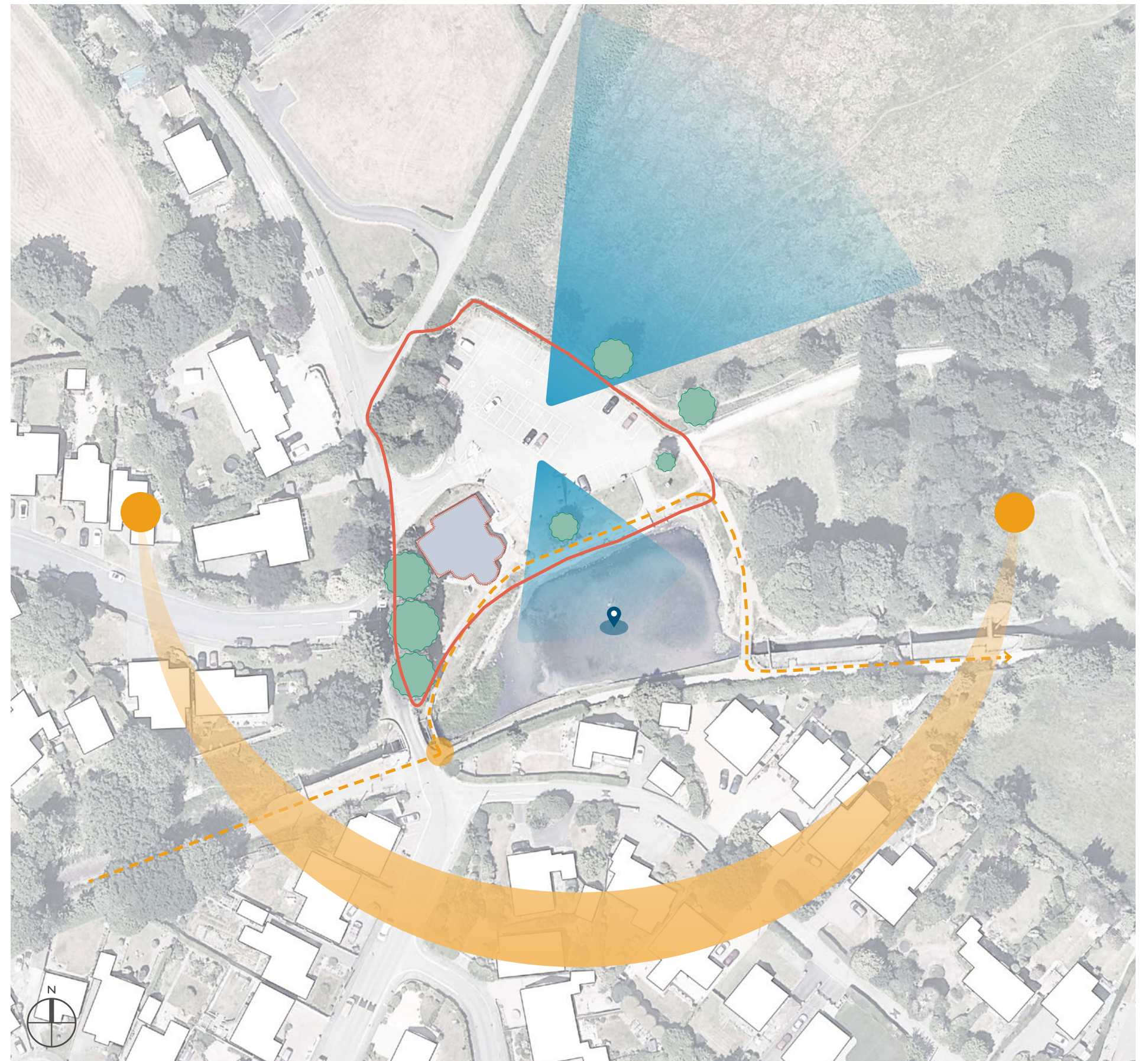
The site presents breathtaking views that should be leveraged to their full potential. To the south, a pond is seamlessly connected to The Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal system, while the northern east side unfolds an expansive downward sloping country field.

The existing canal centre suffers from high maintenance costs and physical limitations. There are opportunities to demolish and replace with a modern visitor centre that aims to utilise net zero principles, with a design that elevate and preserve the natural beauty of existing site.

Clear and visible signage is essential for ensuring effective guidance and reducing potential confusion.

Replacing the existing visitor centre presents opportunities to maximise the use of natural light to enhance the environment and energy efficiency of the space, creating a well-lit and inviting atmosphere.

- Site Boundary Line
- ▶ Key Views
- 📍 Points of Interest
- - - Key Pedestrian Route
- Key Pedestrian Access point
- Significant Tree
- ⬭ Fourteen Locks Canal Centre Demolished



Design Development

