



Great British Railways National Headquarters Competition

Expression of Interest

March 2022

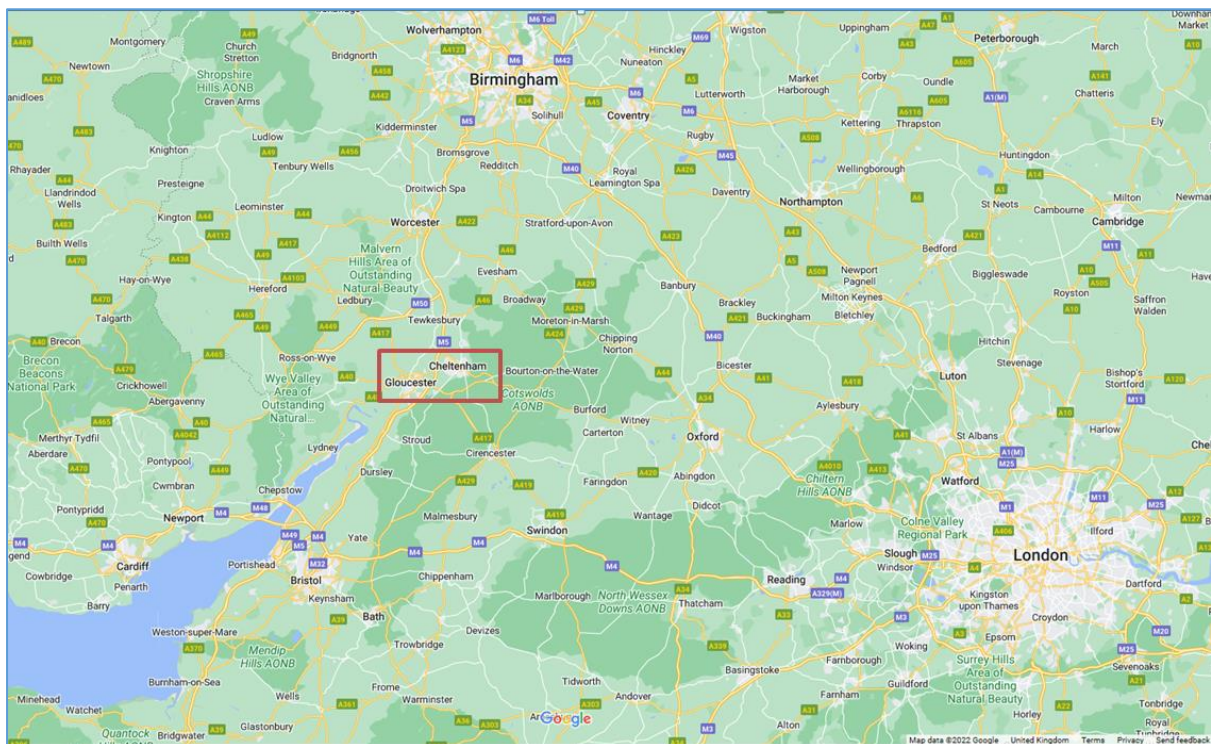
Context

1. Describe the location of your application and your proposed headquarters site

a. Describe the geographical area covered by the application and why it should be considered for hosting the headquarters?

Gloucester is ideally positioned between Bristol, Cardiff and Birmingham. As a city it benefits from good connectivity to local, regional and national transport networks. Gloucester is an historic city with a long history of nationally important institutions being based within the area. But, it is not just about history, the city has a vibrant wealth of cultural festivals throughout the year.

- A regional powerhouse with great aspiration for future growth, with a young, mobile and highly educated workforce
- Significant growth in digital/cyber industries, focussed around GCHQ and the significant established cyber cluster
- Vibrant work life balance, living in a city whilst surrounded by countryside, at affordable levels
- Access to 20 universities and 11,000 students within 75 minutes drive of the city
- Unparalleled access to skills and talent - the area's young and fast growing population will create an enviable talent pool.



Who else is involved in developing and supporting your application?

Gloucester City Council, GFirst LEP, Reef Group and Richard Graham MP for Gloucester

b. Describe the proposed site(s) for the national headquarters

In March 2021, Gloucester City Council agreed to invest fully in the transformation of King's Quarter, located at the heart of the city centre and a very short walking distance away from Gloucester Station. The City Council is driving forward a significant regeneration scheme that will enhance the profile of the city as a place for high growth organisations to locate, and create business, investment and job opportunities for many years to come. Keir construction has been recently appointed as the main construction contractor by the Council, and its development partner the Reef Group. Based in the city centre the site is highly connected to rail, bus, e-travel, bikes and road transport networks making it a fully accessible location.

The proposed opportunities for the national headquarters to be part of the Kings Quarter scheme are outlined below:

The Forum Gloucester – Reef Group (forumdigital.co.uk)

- 400,000 sq ft mixed use campus comprising 135,000 sq ft of workspace, a 4* hotel, gym, conferencing facilities, restaurants, a 398 space car park and 43 residential apartments and over an acre of new public realm.
- A new office complex that is highly connected and accessible, and within the heart of a vibrant city centre with endless amenities.
- Visible, prominent gateway opportunity that will be delivered to the highest specification in terms of design, environmental sustainability and smart infrastructure.
- Planning consented and construction commenced, with delivery in early 2024.

The website includes an animated flythrough of the scheme which helps provide more context and detail.



One Cathedral View <https://www.flipsnack.com/reefgroup/forum-office-brochure-2805.html>

- 109,558 sq ft GIA / 86,000 sq ft NIA arranged across seven floors.
- Highly connected to road, rail, bikes, e-travel and bus. True city centre accessible location.

- Net zero carbon in operation with passive design principles and annual carbon offsetting. BREEAM Excellent.
- 50% operational costs saving due to natural ventilation, smart building technologies and rooftop PV electricity generation.
- Digitally enabled, digitally secure and trusted. Wirescore Platinum.
- 9,000 sq ft state of the art gym and wellness centre within the building.
- Shared conferencing facilities within the 4* hotel.
- Infinitely flexible across each floor and individual floor plates responding to changing occupational habits.
- A community ecosystem uniquely connected at ground via public realm and upper levels by a viewing platform sky bridge



The Forge

- The Forge is flexible workspace operated by Digital Reef, which will sit within the campus in One Cathedral View.
- High quality and enabled with the latest digital infrastructure, the Forge provides workspace and digital infrastructure as a service – pay as you use and flexible to meet the needs of growing organisations
- Digital Infrastructure includes high performance computers delivering secure, outstanding computing capability, digital labs and AR/ VR studios.

What benefits do you expect your town/city will gain from accommodating the headquarters?

c. What do you think makes your town/city best suited as the location for Great British Railways' national headquarters?

Gloucester is located at a crossroads of national connectivity. It benefits from excellent transport links, where north (Birmingham) south (Bristol) meet east (London & Swindon) west (Cardiff and Swansea) which enables and supports union connectivity. The proposed site is around 5/10 minute walk from Gloucester rail station and transport hub (bus/coach), both of which have received investment and undergone enhancements.

Gloucester has a strong track record in collaboration and partnership working and has been successful in a coordination of a number of bids, drawing in considerable investment aligned to the delivery of local, regional and national economic and regeneration strategies, emphasising a can-do culture to deliver projects.

Levelling Up

2. Describe how your application will align with and demonstrate Levelling Up

a. What is your vision for levelling up your local area? What is currently underway to deliver this?

Following on from the success of the former Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company activities, the city has continued to focus its priority and effort via its local economic and regeneration strategies, with bringing forward delivery of a number of key brownfield sites for development as the journey of transformation continues.

In terms of engagement and support with local communities around this agenda, there are 12 areas of Gloucestershire in the most deprived 10% nationally, which account for 19,415 people (3.1% of the county population). 9 of these areas fall in the Gloucester district. There has been a lot of focus and collaboration by the public sector, in supporting those local communities, with investment and interventions to support with social and economic and skills enhancement programmes.

Gloucester is the most deprived district in Gloucestershire, the 138th most deprived district in England^[1] and has been identified as one of the places deemed in most need of investment through the Levelling Up Fund. At the same time, the population in Gloucester is younger than the county average and a high proportion of the workforce has low qualifications

Gloucester was designated as a local authority priority 1 category, as part of the Government's recent Levelling Up White Paper and Levelling Up Fund. Gloucester City Council was successful in its bid in the first round of the Levelling Up Fund, and secured £20 million, to bring forward three key regeneration projects in the city centre. These are briefly outlined below:-

Levelling Up Fund Project 1: New City Centre campus for the University of Gloucestershire

The iconic Debenhams building will become a new city centre campus for teaching, learning and community partnerships, having been purchased this year by the University of Gloucestershire.



^[1] https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2095686/iodfact2019_glos.pdf



Levelling Up Fund Project 2: The Forge digital business centre

Levelling up funding will also go to The Forge, a new digital business centre, cyber proofed as an incubator for tech and digital start ups and enterprises. The Forge will form a central element of The Forum development.

Levelling Up Fund Project 3: Cathedral Quarter

The Cathedral Quarter includes some of Gloucester's richest heritage properties, including The Fleece Hotel and other beautiful, historic properties dating back to the 15th century along Westgate Street and roads adjoining.



Other examples of the ongoing investment and regeneration of Gloucester include:

Barbican Phase 2

The development of 295 units for student accommodation between Longsmith Street and Barbican Way is progressing well, with phase 1, made up of 190 rooms, having been completed in 2019. Construction of the remainder in phase 2 is now well underway and the developer still aims to complete project in September 2022.



Gloucester Railway Station

The redevelopment of Gloucester Railway Station has reached a key milestone with the completion of major junction improvement works.

Funding for the £6m project will improve access between the city centre and the railway station and includes the improvement of the pedestrian underpass.



Former Gloucester Prison

Planning permission was secured in 2018 by owner, City and Country, to redevelop the 3.6 acre site for 202 residential



Gloucester Cathedral

Project Pilgrim is an ambitious ten-year programme of capital development, regeneration and community engagement.

Phase 1 was completed in 2019.

Pilgrim Phase 2 will develop and link three key locations:

- The WESTERN QUARTER, breathing life into the grade one listed Parliament Rooms.
- The GREAT CLOISTER, which has the first and best example of fan vaulting in the world.
- The CHAPTER HOUSE will be refurbished to meet modern audiences' needs.

b. What levelling up opportunities do you believe could be created for your town/city that are linked to the headquarters?

The development opportunities outlined above demonstrate the confidence, interest and planned investment shown by the public and private sector in bringing forward exciting future growth and new opportunities for the city. This will have direct benefit to the plans for the proposed GBR HQ site, as clearly will provide some high quality property options to consider, and would be a major anchor tenant and catalyst.

- Employment opportunities in the long-term as the workforce organically grows or turns over
- Confidence in the market for further inward investment
- Opportunity to develop local supply chains and provide contract opportunities for local firms
- Become an anchor institution and support the county's overall ambitions

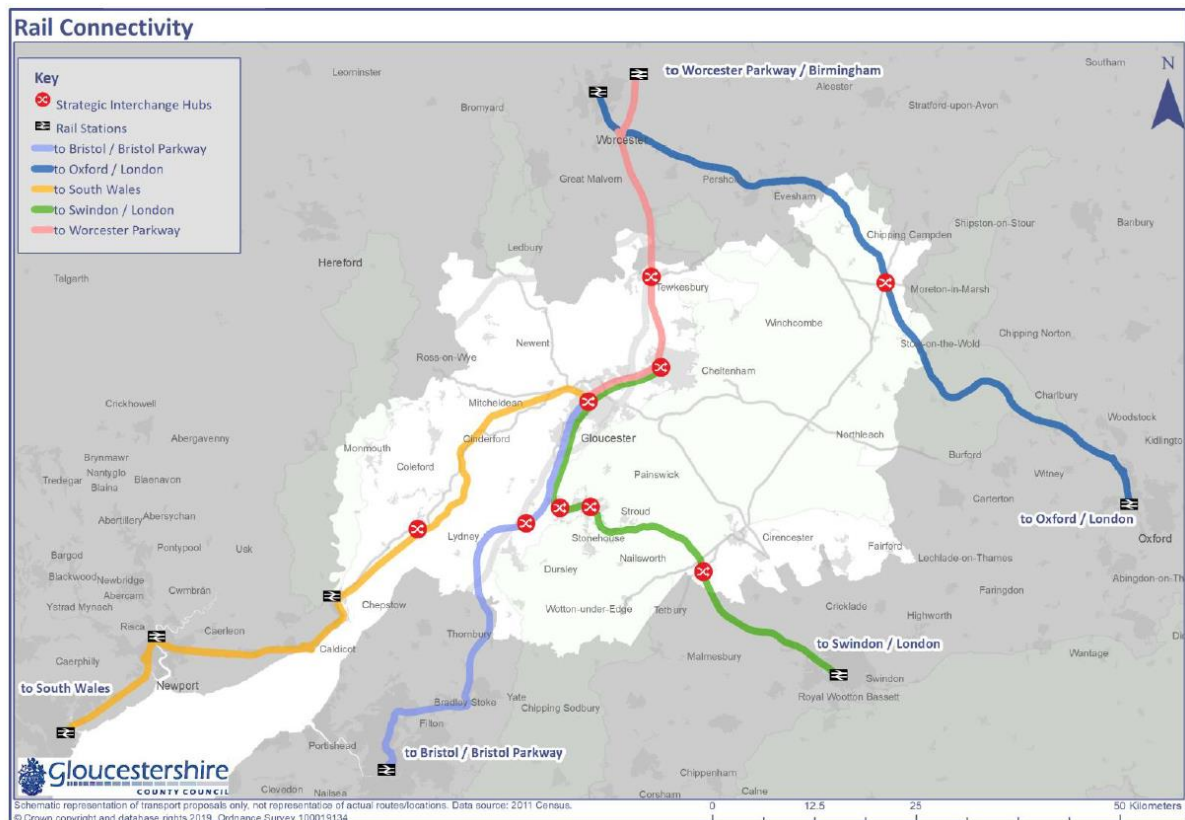
Connected and easy to get to

3. Describe how your location is well connected to the rest of Great Britain and how people will access your site

a. How would employees and visitors be able to access the National Headquarters, via rail routes and other sustainable modes?

Gloucester is ideally placed on the national rail network with excellent connectivity to all parts of the UK.

- Two services an hour to Cardiff (Transport for Wales/Cross Country)
- Hourly direct service to London via Swindon (GWR)
- Hourly service to Bristol (GWR)
- Hourly direct service to Birmingham (Cross Country)
- Regular services to Cheltenham with onward connections to Cross Country services to the north east and Scotland (T4W/Cross Country/GWR)



Gloucester's rail station is located in the city centre, less than a ten minute walk from the proposed site. The recently completed Gloucester transport hub (bus station) is less than a five minute walk from the proposed HQ. This is well served by local buses and is on the National Express network.

b. How connected is your location to and from other nations and regions of Great Britain?

Gloucester has excellent rail connections to the rest of Great Britain as outlined above with Cardiff, Birmingham and Bristol reached within an hour, London less than two hours.

Bristol and Cheltenham offer regular connections to the south west and north respectively.

c. How will your suggested sites be equally accessible to all members of society, in line with Public Sector Equality Duties?

The new building will comply with all current accessibility legislation and be fully accessible by all members of society.

- Open public realm for all to use
- Amenity space for all with restaurants, entertainment and quality design
- Job and up-skilling opportunities for local people

d. Demonstrate how your location has supported successful collaboration between local authorities, business and other organisations across the UK to further social, economic and transport objectives.

Gloucester City Council and partners has successfully bid for a range of funding in recent years supporting several regeneration initiatives including significant improvements to the train station, delivering a city centre university campus and a transport hub.

One of the most substantial regeneration initiatives in recent times has been the transformation of the derelict docks into a thriving retail and leisure destination.

The Local Authorities in the county are partners in the Western Gateway Partnership the economic powerhouse, which covers the northern part of the South West England and South Wales, to drive further social and economic growth and investment across the region. This includes collaboration on activities including seeking investment to bring forward key transport and infrastructure to bring forward development to foster economic and residential growth. One recent example is the collaboration of key partners under the WG banner, to bid into the UKAEA STEP fusion siting process, for Severn Edge, for use of the former Oldbury and Berkeley Power Stations sites that would a significant catalyst and bring major economic and social benefits and opportunities to the south west and south wales region.

The County Council has ambitions for a mass transit scheme for the County linking the counties core urban centres, and is currently working on a feasibility study to consider various corridors to support future growth and sustainable transport with local and DFT funding.

Opportunities for Great British Railways

4. Showcase the opportunities your location offers Great British Railways

a. How will your location enable Great British Railways to engage with customers, the private sector and wider transport industry?

Gloucester has excellent rail connections to all parts of Great Britain. It is on the National Express coach network. It is also well placed on the national road network. Planned improvements to rail infrastructure at the station will increase capacity for additional services going forward.

b. What opportunities does your location offer for working with the rail supply chain, manufacturing hubs and institutes?

- Gloucester has a strong tradition of engineering and manufacturing firms that service a range of industries, including the advancement of the railway sector. Local firms are able to collaborate at the early feasibility stage of product design, working with innovative materials and seeking ways to provide added-value. The expertise developed for the aerospace sector such as advances in light-weighting can be adopted for the rail sector.
- LEP sector groups – Gfirst has some established 10 business groups, made up of members in the private and public sector, which reflect the key priority sectors of the county's economy.
They are the 'engine room' with experts in their fields who advise on business and economic growth and opportunities, to help the county to improve its skills, increase innovation, and reach its economic potential
- Key economic partners including the LEP, FSB, Business West, Chambers and Academia regularly host events and networking opportunities to foster economic growth and trade opportunities for businesses.
- An emerging Local Skills Improvement Plan through Business West with a focus on Advanced Engineering
- Growing links with the Midlands as well as access to the supply chains across the south west
- The county has good links with the regional and national centres of R & D excellence, including the Government Catapult Centres such as the NCC in Bristol.
- The presence of GBR will provide a range of supply chain opportunities. This will include via the construction phase as well as throughout the operational phase. We can support in the promotion of tendering opportunities with experienced local construction contractors and also through a range of service companies, including SMEs as well as corporates.

c. What opportunities exist for collaboration with the retail, economic and environmental sectors? How could Great British Railways benefit from these links?

- LEP sector groups – Gfirst has some established 10 business groups, made up of members in the private and public sector that reflect the key priority sectors of the county's economy. Of particular interest might be the Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing, Business & Professional, Energy (Sustainable Energy and Environment & climate change), Retail and High Street, and Visitor Economy and Tourism
- There is a strong focus on social value, with development of Social Policy across the Local Authorities and other key partners

- There is a major strategic drive and developing priorities for zero carbon growth across the whole of the county – by both public and private sector with the county having signed up to be carbon neutral by 2045.
- There are many firms in the area that are pioneering advanced sustainable practices. We would be able to link GBR into their supply chains of some of our world leading experts such as Spirax Sarco.

d. What opportunities does/do the site(s)/building(s) itself offer Great British Railways to develop as an organisation?

- Networking opportunities through engagement with LEP and other key regional players through the Western Gateway
- Involvement with the county employment and skills hub which is continually developing local talent
- Evidence of strong R&D investment compared to regional and national average and high generation of new goods and services

Railway heritage & links to the network

5. Demonstrate the location's railway heritage and current network links

a. Demonstrate your railway heritage and the benefits it offers to Great British Railways.

Gloucester has a rich railway legacy which continues to this day. The city was home to the Gloucester Railway Wagon and Carriage Company from 1860 to 1986. The company made a wide range of wagons, carriages and trains that were exported all round the world. The station has the longest continuous platform in Great Britain. And was the meeting point of the standard and Great Western gauges resulting in the complex layout present today. Therefore Gloucester is located where north – south meets east – west emphasising Gloucester's key union connectivity which the Romans realised and continues to this day.

b. What links are there with existing rail employment, innovation and sector bodies, such as regional or local offices?

Swindon, Bristol, Birmingham, Cardiff and London all have rail industry offices that are easily reached by direct services from Gloucester. The recently opened CAF factory near Newport is building trains for Transport for Wales and is less than an hour away by train. The new trains will run on the Cardiff to Cheltenham service.

c. How could you use the headquarters to preserve and enhance your railway heritage?

The HQ would provide a focus and springboard to market the railway heritage of Gloucester which hasn't really been explored previously. This could be linked in with the Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership who are developing rail based tourism around themes such as food and walking trails across the county.

Value for Money

6. Describe how your location will offer Great British Railways good value for money

a. How will your location offer financial efficiency to Great British Railways?

- The location options for the HQ will be new build, with most up to date construction methods and offer energy efficiency, and therefore lower prices for the ongoing building operation and costs.
- As a new development, being driven by the public sector, with a private sector development partner, there are opportunities to negotiate advantageous financial rates for early occupancy as a key anchor tenant.

b. How does the proposed site allow Great British Railways to make good use of public money and keep costs down?

- As above

c. How does your location generate public value including economic, social and environmental impacts?

- All Local Authorities are committed to the climate emergency agenda and pledged to become carbon neutral
- There are Social value ambitions at City and County level – with strategies, policy and priorities across economy, opportunity and accessibility as well as environmental targets

Public Support

7. Demonstrate how the national headquarters will be welcomed by the local public

a. Demonstrate the importance of the railways to the local community and your region.

Local residents in the city remain very engaged and interested in the ongoing regeneration plans and delivery of any new investment in the city, which has been welcomed to date. Local community Groups, organisations and residents have often been actively engaged in planning and public consultation processes at an early stage of regeneration and investment plans, in particular around the direct benefits and opportunities that these plans will bring in terms of public realm enhancements and social, environmental and economic benefits. In particular, hosting the national HQ would clearly provide some local employment and skills opportunities, as well as be an important contributor to supporting the local economy, as a key prestigious employer in the city.

b. How do your intentions for the national headquarters tie in with the needs of your local communities, your identity and values?

The City Council Plan sets out the vision for the Council, its partners and residents to build a greener, fairer, better Gloucester. It establishes what collectively will be doing, and how will direct resources, to achieve the ambitions as all work towards improving the lives of everyone who lives in, works in and visits Gloucester.

The National HQ would help support these priorities:

- Building greener, healthier, and more inclusive communities
- Building a sustainable city of diverse culture and opportunity

c. Demonstrate the importance of the railways to the local community and your region

Prior to the Covid 19 pandemic, rail usage figures across the county were steadily increasing and in 2019/20 topped six million.

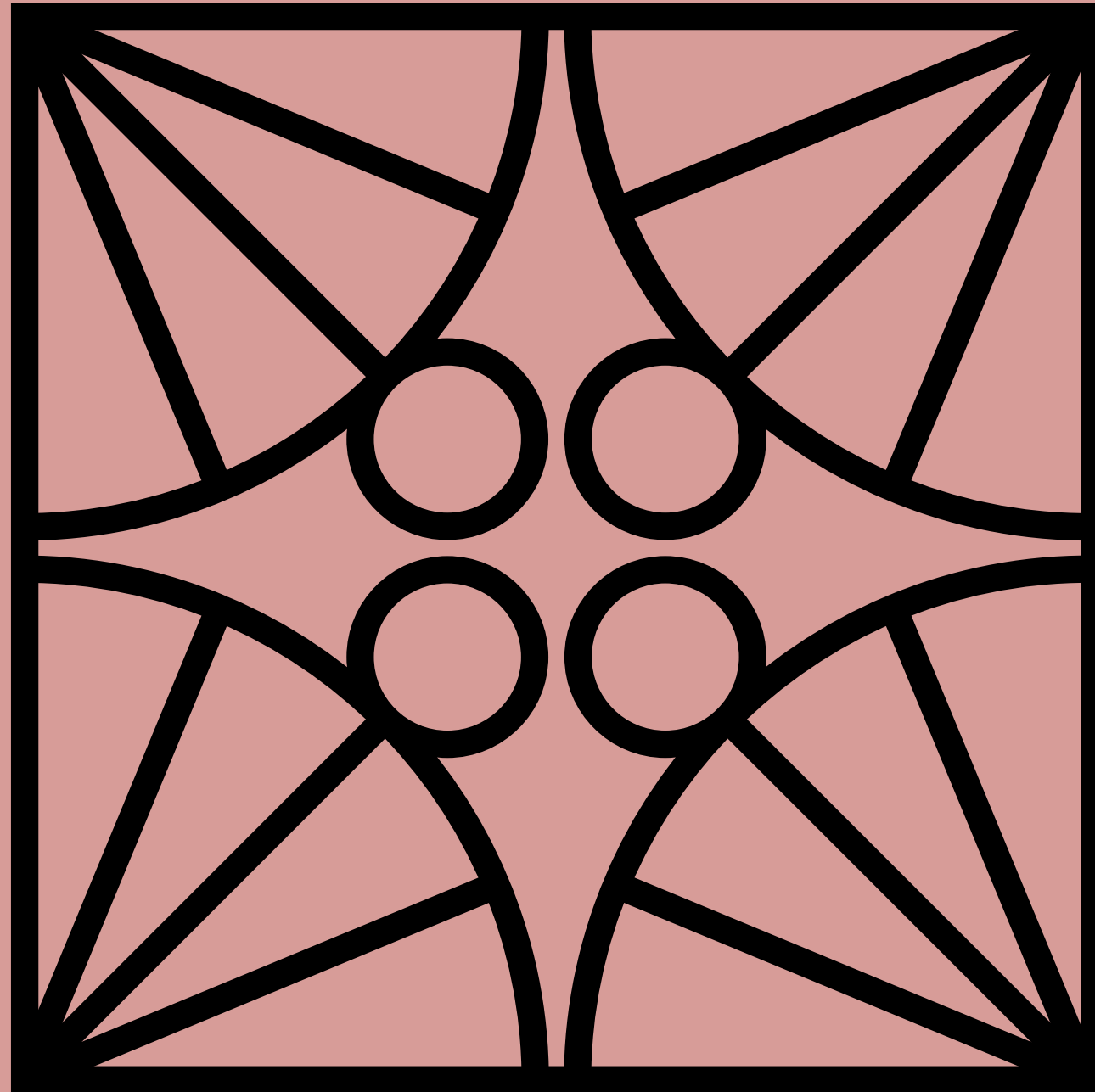
The adopted Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 2020 – 2041 recognises the key role that rail plays in reducing congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. Accordingly, the policies seek to work with a number of partners to improve rail infrastructure, services and stations to encourage greater patronage. The Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership was formed in 2021 and enjoys active and strong support from a wide range of community based organisations as well as the rail industry. It aims to increase rail use across the county by working with community groups and improving access to stations by sustainable means.

d. How do your intentions for the national headquarters tie in with the needs of your local communities, your identity and values?

Having the HQ in the city of Gloucester would be of significant benefit for the city and its residents, and align closely with the local regeneration and economic plans in terms of the attraction of high quality inward investors, that can provide local job opportunities and skills as well as a contributor to supporting the local economy.

ONE Cathedral View

City of Gloucester

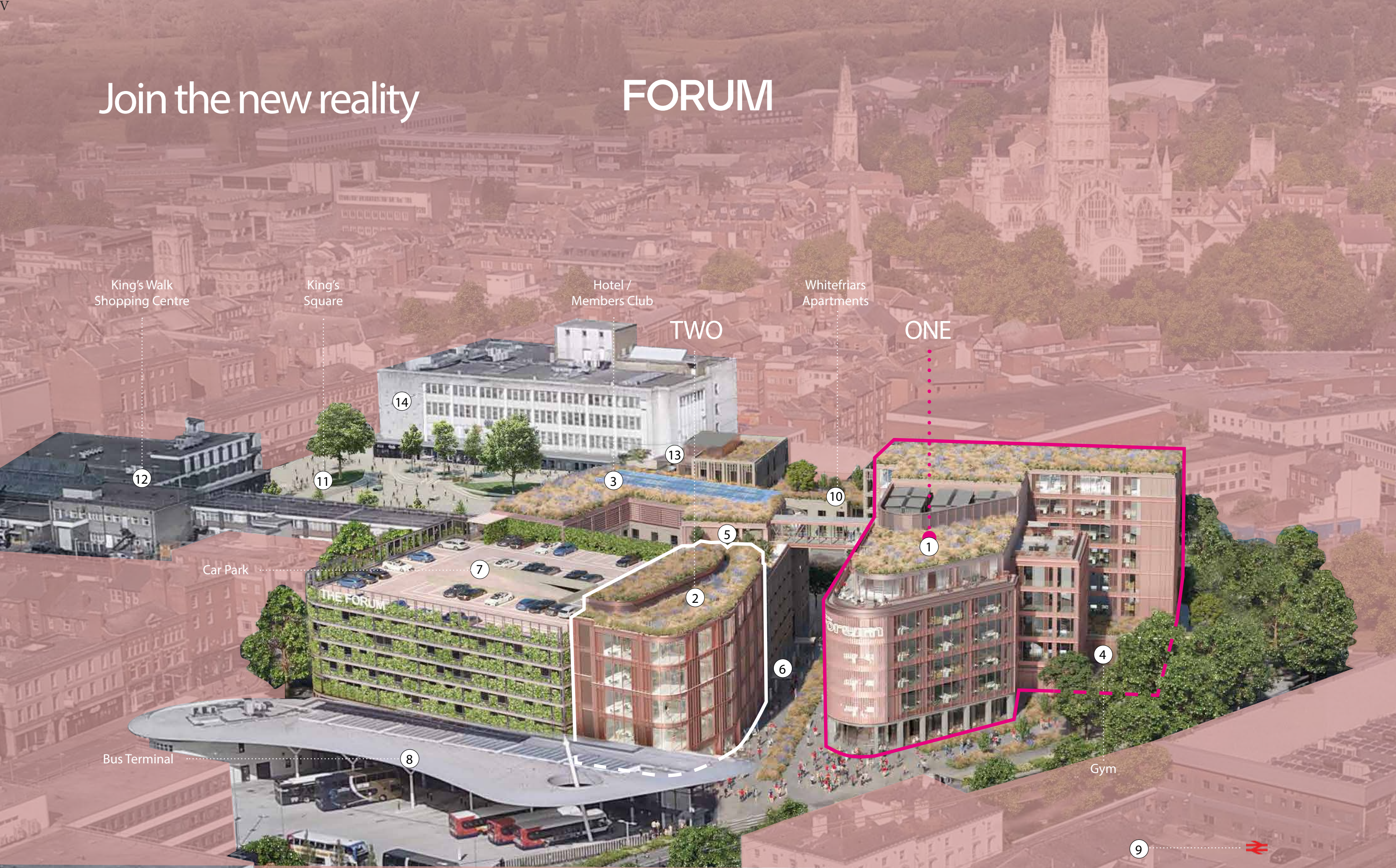


FORUM

www.forumdigital.co.uk

Join the new reality

FORUM



1. ONE Cathedral View - 7 floors, 85,121 sq ft (NIA)
2. TWO Cathedral View - 18,220 sq ft (NIA)
3. 4* Hotel - Pre-let 131 rooms with private courtyard.
4. Gym - Pre-let. 9,300 sq ft (NIA) (Ground floor office).
5. Club - 3,323 sq ft (NIA) / 300 capacity (5th floor office).

6. Retail - (Ground floor hotel) 2,336 sq ft (NIA).
7. Car Park - 398 spaces. 10% electric charging.
8. Transport Hub - £6.4m new bus station.
9. Train Station - £3m refurbishment.
10. Apartments - Whitefriars 43 x 1, 2 and 3 beds.

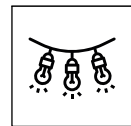
11. King's Square - £5m renovation.
12. King's Walk Shopping Centre - £19m refurbishment.
13. Creative Hub - New 15,000 sq ft arts centre.
14. University of Gloucestershire - New 200,000 sq ft (GIA) healthcare and education department. 4,700 students.

ONE Cathedral View

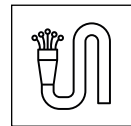
Gateway building

To accommodate the new normal of a hybrid home/office workplace, the Forum offers maximum flexibility within the floor plates.

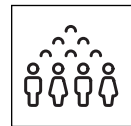
Office Building



Exposed soffits and services.



Fibre data cabling to comms cupboard on all floors.



Occupancy 1:8.



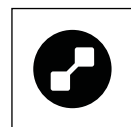
Fire Occupancy 1:6.



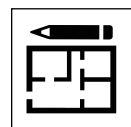
Efficient, sustainable building performance and BREEAM excellent rating.



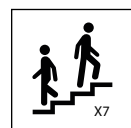
Cathedral, countryside and city square views.



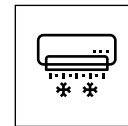
Connected to building TWO, hotel and car park.



3,000 – 15,000 sq ft (NIA) flexible floorplates.



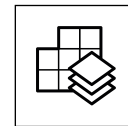
7 floors.



Mixed mode ventilation system with occupier control.



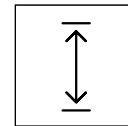
Lift access 1.6m/sec.



150mm raised access floor.



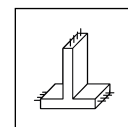
Floor to underside of suspended LED lights 3.0m.



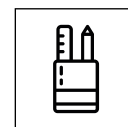
Finished floor to soffit 3.8m.



BCO compliant showers and WC - 1/8m occupancy.



Exposed concrete structure.

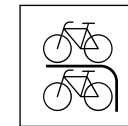


85,121 sq ft (NIA) office.

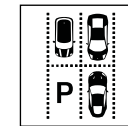


WiredScore platinum enabled.

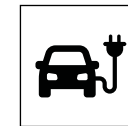
Office Facilities



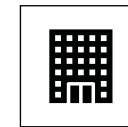
Bike parking, showers and changing facilities.



398 spaces.



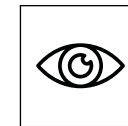
10% electric charging points and 100% future enabled.



116 room hotel.



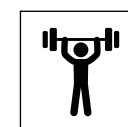
Conference.



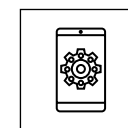
Cathedral and city views.



Cafe.

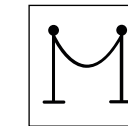


9,300 sq ft (NIA) gym.



Connected app.

Access the Forum community



Access to Forge members club.



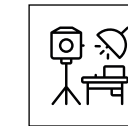
Edge cloud.



Networks.



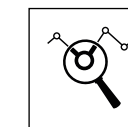
Access to flexible co-working space at the Forge.



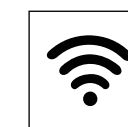
Creative studios.



Training.



Data labs.



5G connectivity.



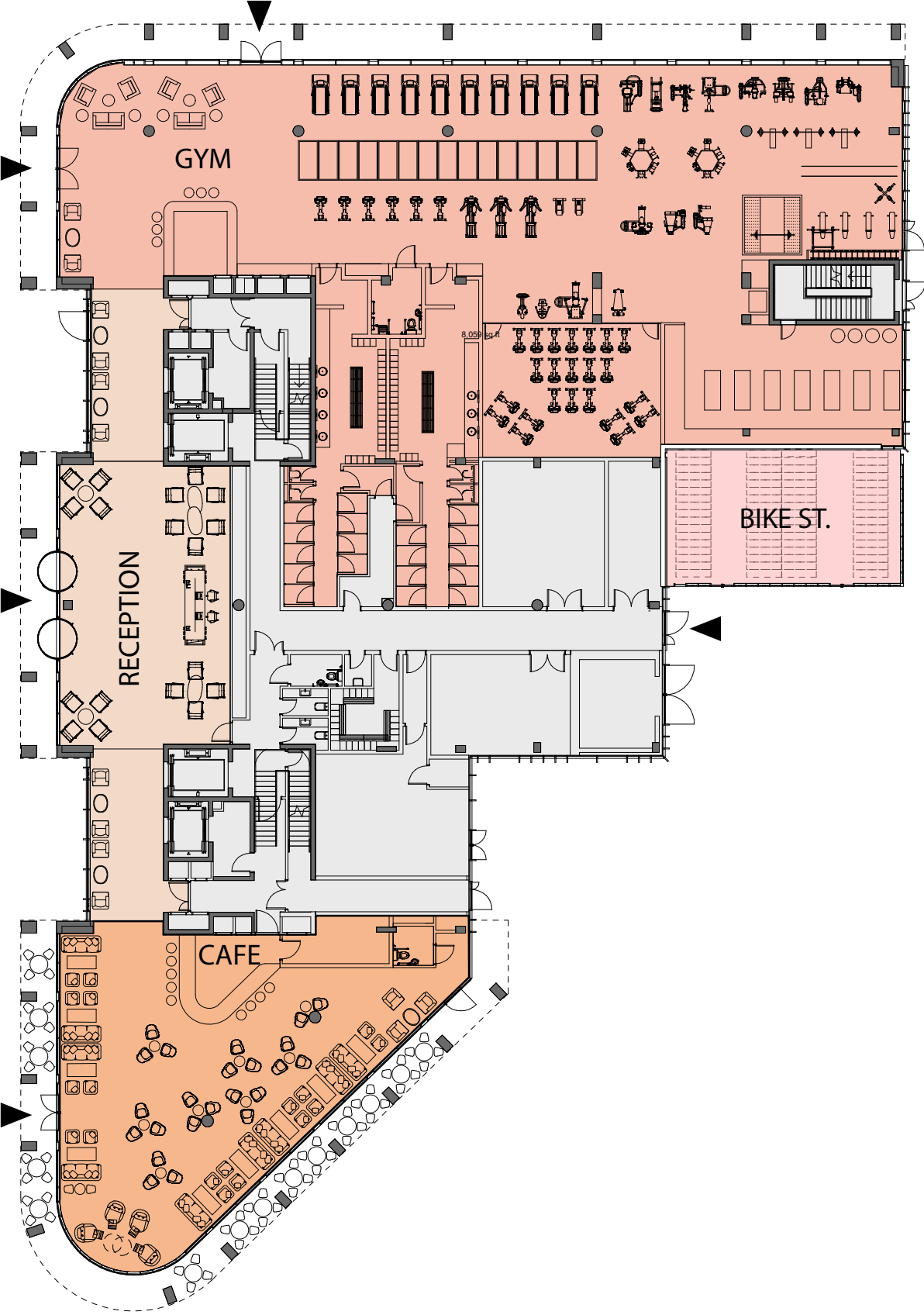
Restaurant and club.



ONE Cathedral View

G/F Use Diagram

Dedicated Bike Parking Spaces
Dedicated lockers changing rooms



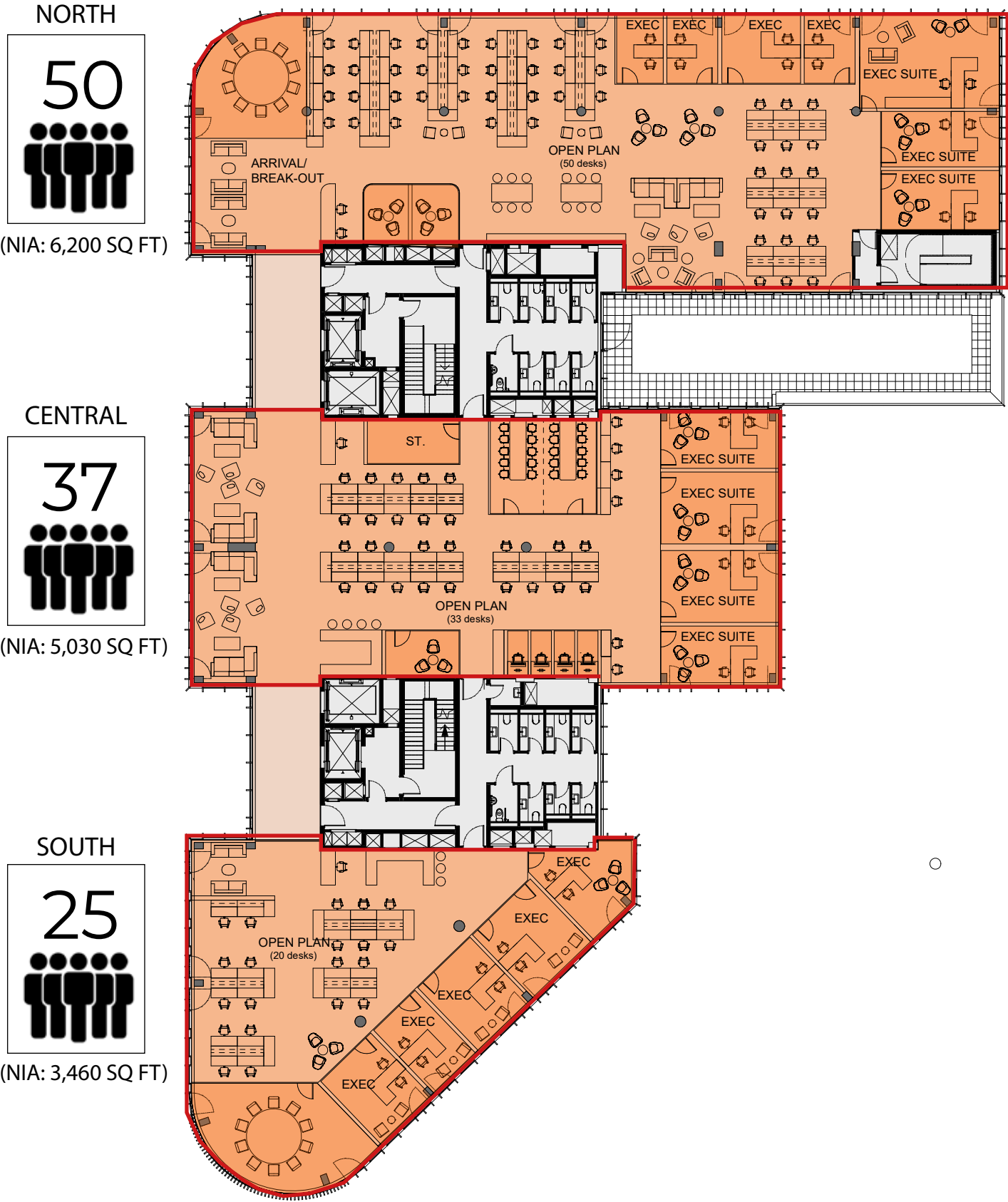
ONE Cathedral View

Typical Level Sample Layouts

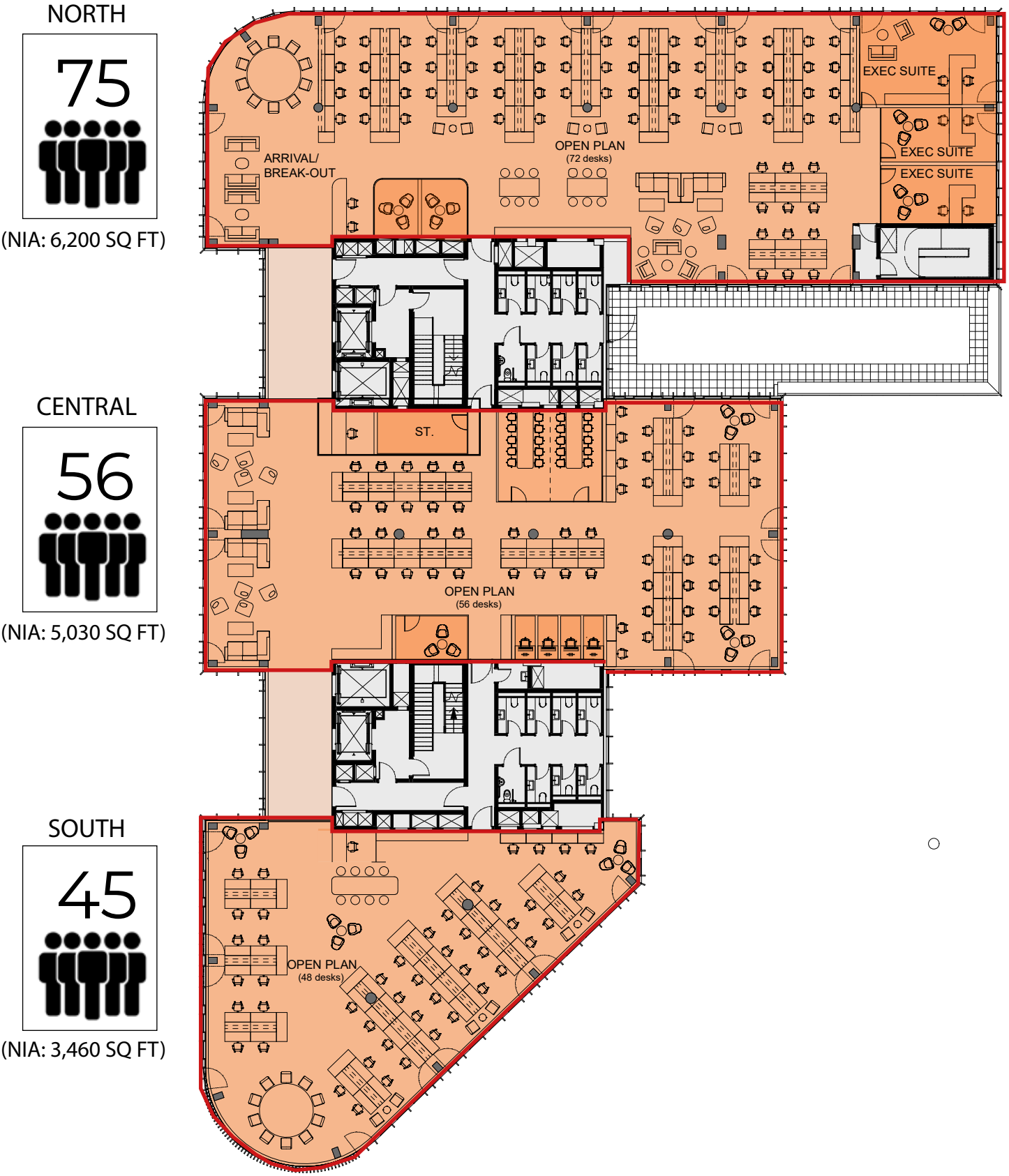


ONE Cathedral View

Typical Level Plan - Single Compartment Tenancy



TYPICAL LEVEL PLAN - LOW DENSITY ARRANGEMENT



TYPICAL LEVEL PLAN - HIGH DENSITY ARRANGEMENT



SMART

ONE Cathedral View

Typical Level Plan - Multiple Compartment Tenancy

TOTAL

131

NORTH

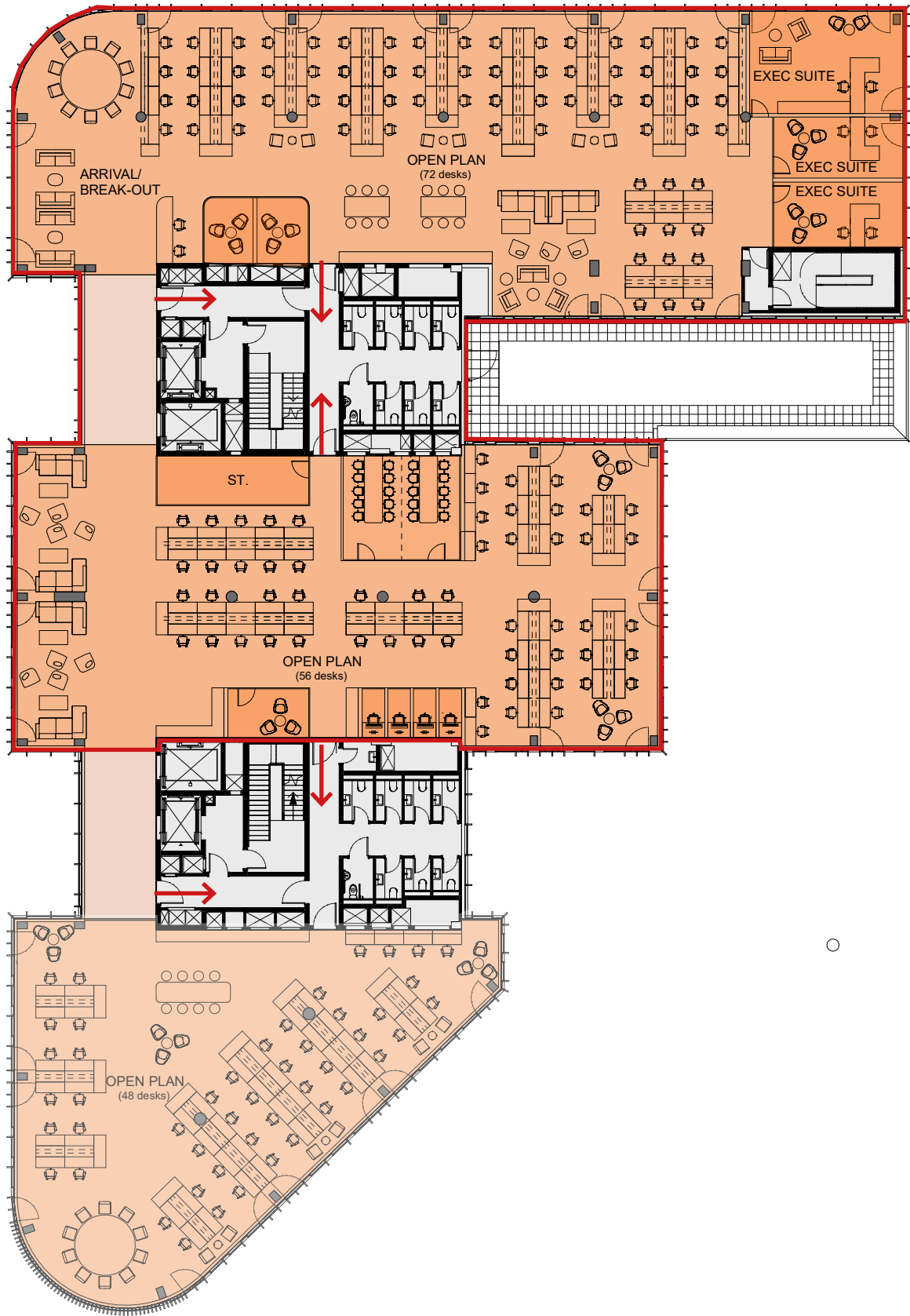
75

(NIA: 6,200 SQ FT)

CENTRAL

56

(NIA: 5,030 SQ FT)



TYPICAL LEVEL PLAN - NORTHERN AND CENTRAL ZONES

CENTRAL

37

(NIA: 5,030 SQ FT)

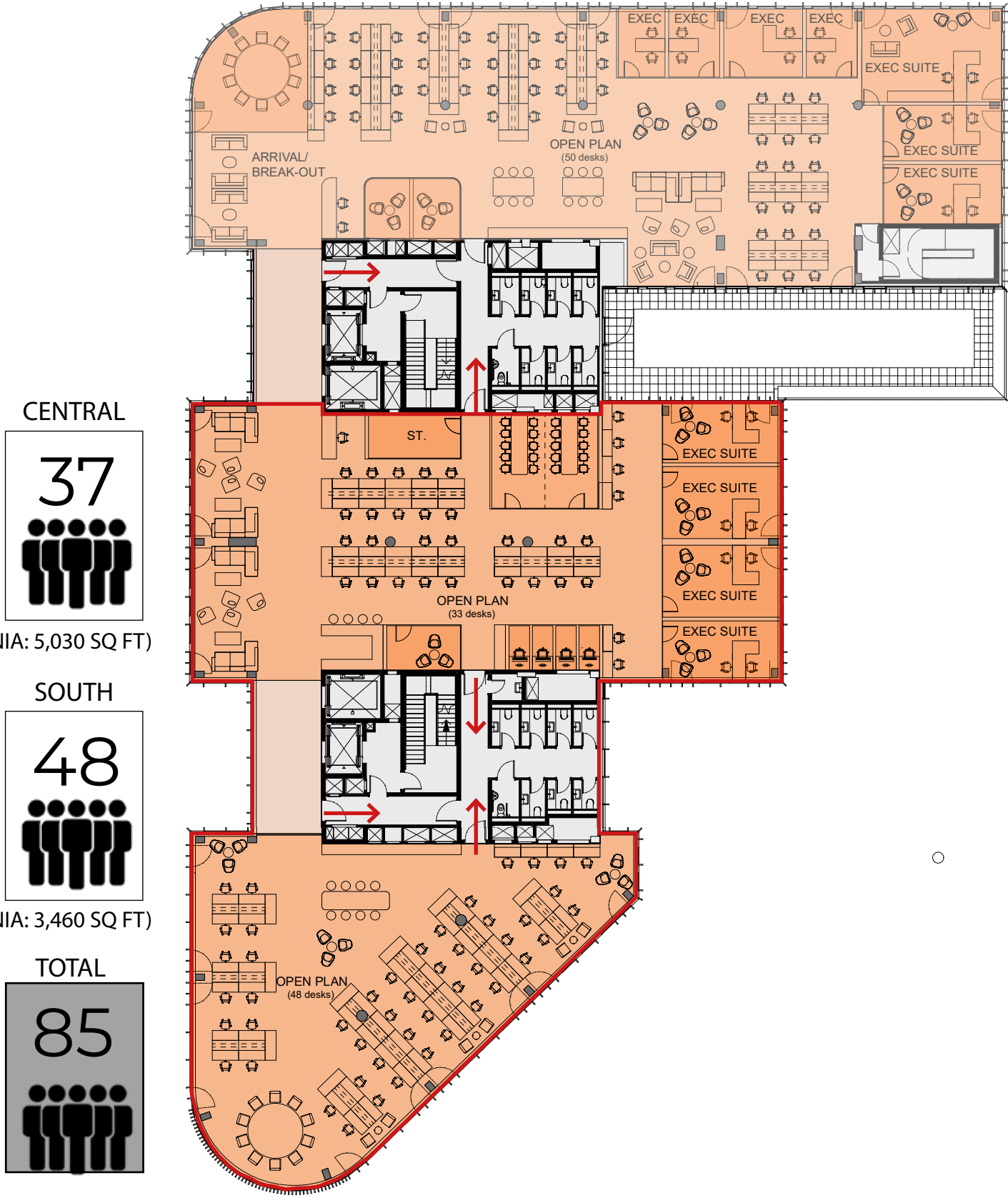
SOUTH

48

(NIA: 3,460 SQ FT)

TOTAL

85



TYPICAL LEVEL PLAN - SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL ZONE




ONE Cathedral View

Typical Level Plan - Single Storey Tenancy

NORTH


75



(NIA: 6,200 SQ FT)

CENTRAL


56



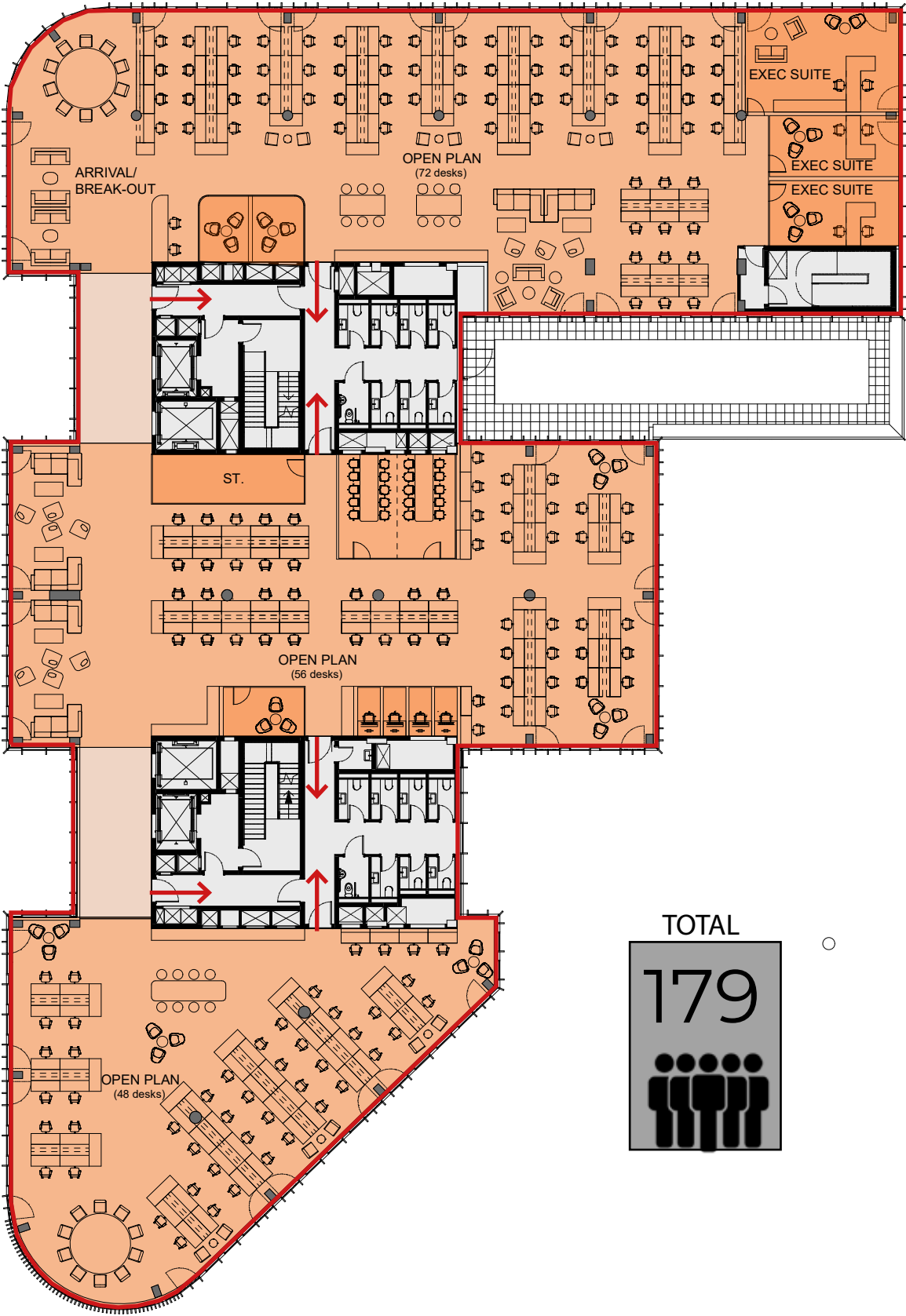
(NIA: 5,030 SQ FT)

SOUTH

48




(NIA: 3,460 SQ FT)



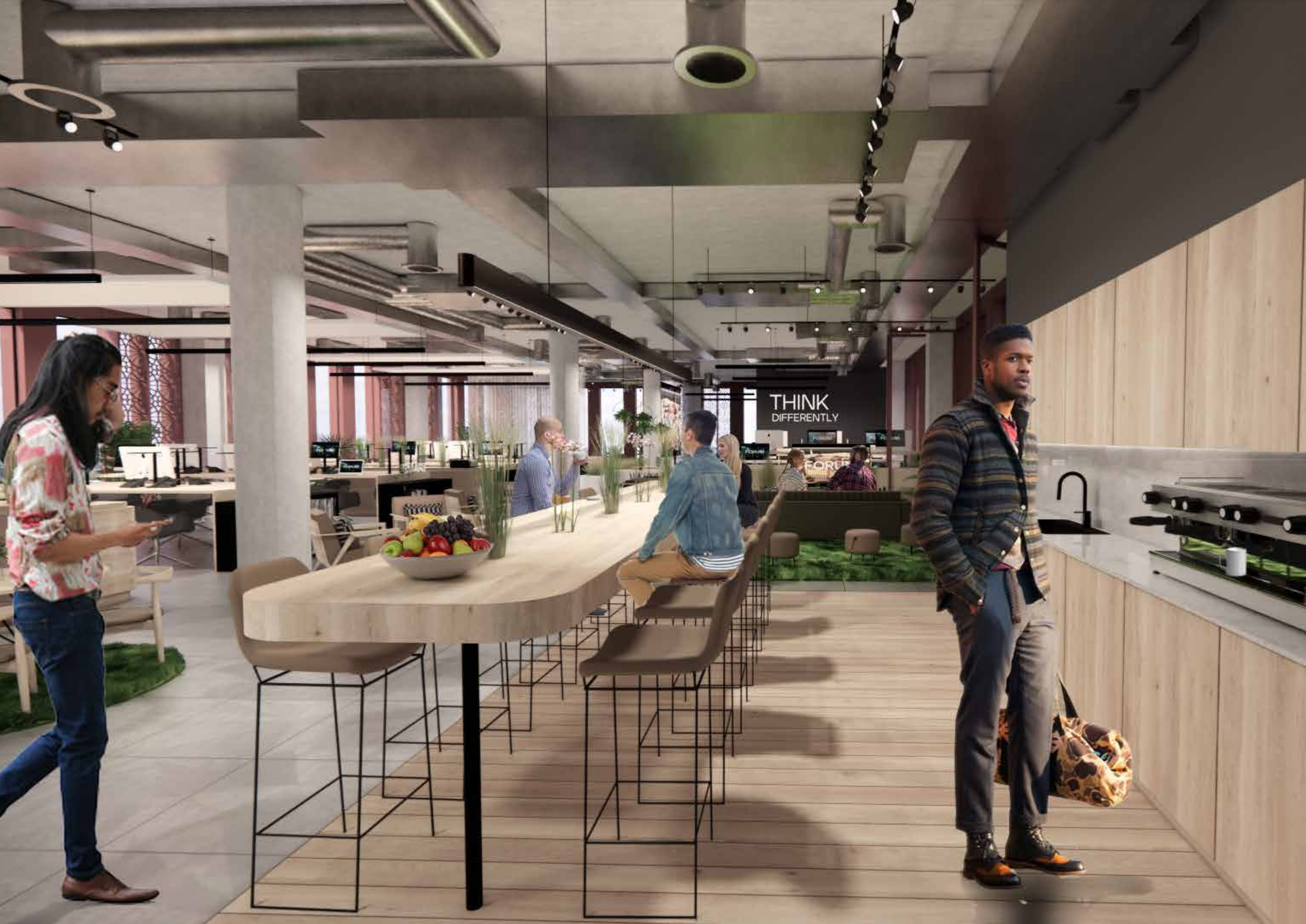
TOTAL

179



TYPICAL LEVEL PLAN - WHOLE FLOOR OCCUPANCY





THINK
DIFFERENTLY

FORUM



A development by



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