

Welcome

Welcome to our first community engagement session. This exhibition is to inform you about our vision and plans to transform the current Hastings Castle site on West Hill. You can find out more about our initial vision for the site on these boards.

We will be speaking to local residents and businesses on this important project over the next few months with further engagement sessions this year. This will allow us to share how our proposals are developing, whilst also hearing your thoughts about the project.

Our plans are still at a very early stage and we would very much like to know what you think. Your ideas and perspectives are essential to make this development work for the local community, and we would love to hear your thoughts on our proposals. You can leave us your comments on the noteboards provided or send us your comments via email.

We would be grateful if you could leave your email or sign up to our newsletter using the QR code opposite, so we can keep you up to date on proposals, report on feedback and provide announcements about further community engagement events like this. You can opt out at anytime.

You can contact the team with any questions on:

| | |
|-----------|--|
| email | hello@westhillproject.com |
| instagram | @the_west_hill_project |
| website | westhillproject.com |



Please scan our QR code to sign up to our mailing list so we can keep you up to date with the project and announcements for future planned engagement days



Hastings
Town Deal



Funded by
UK Government



The Site

Connecting People through
Landscape



Heritage & Story



Community & Usability



The Vision

Troika Projects and our hand-picked consortium are pleased to have been announced as lead partner for the West Hill Café site and Castle project. We and our partners are uniquely placed to undertake the design, planning, build and management of the West Hill development and Castle, creating a catalyst for regeneration around Hastings.

Working alongside Hastings Borough Council, our ambitious regeneration vision will transform Hastings Castle into a vibrant, dynamic and inclusive cultural destination of national significance. In the following spreads, we will outline how we will deliver this by bringing together three key themes that are to be explored through our community engagement:

Connecting people through Landscape

Sustainability will be a recurring theme throughout the development, bringing together the restaurant operation, visitor centre and surrounding landscape. The restaurant will aim to exclusively use local suppliers, highlighting East Sussex’s produce and will also benefit from a kitchen garden within its grounds. As a community centre, we are also proposing innovative educational workshops around nature, food and culture, tying in with the historical narrative of the Castle. Employing a landscape first strategy, we will work to achieve a harmonious design response to this historic site, increasing biodiversity and creating links to the wider townscape.

Heritage & Story

Our proposed development will be informed by a detailed understanding of the site’s historical context, understanding the topography and identifying the most important views to help shape the evolving scheme. The design process would be collaborative, and heritage led, ensuring compliance and best practice. A new interpretation centre and additional interpretation points within the castle and surrounding landscape will help to tell the story of the Castle in a way that engages new and existing audiences, incorporating the latest in digital technologies to enhance the visitor experience.

Community & Usability

The development at the West Hill site is all about connecting the history and landscape with the community. From concept and build to completion and operation we will continue to involve the local community and monitor the social value created. We will work with a broad spectrum of local organisations to engage harder to reach local demographics, creating an innovative educational centre that tackles issues of accessibility.

Our Vision for community engagement

Troika Projects values the opinion of all those that live, work, worship, study and volunteer in our Hastings. We know that our people are our greatest assets and we place consultation and engagement with our whole borough at the centre of everything that we do.

We believe that everyone has an equal and valuable voice, and we work with our communities to ensure that everyone is well-informed about decision making, can have their say and are listened to. Our approach to consultation and engagement ensures that we build and support the growth of our town working hand-in-hand with everyone in our community.

Our Objectives for community engagement

We will ensure that our engagement reflects the diversity of people who live and work in the borough as this is critical to understanding the needs and aspirations of everyone to deliver a better service and will be one of the ways we are able to deliver a number of key council commitments such as regeneration for all, and placing people at the heart of our decision making.

Relationship building lies at the core of delivering the above and our team will work closely with community organisations to create and nurture these relationships.

Proposed Opportunities



Our Core Team

Troika Projects Lead Partner & Operator

The team at Troika Projects have a complete track record of design, build, finance for hospitality alongside multi-site operation, with much of their knowledge and experience gained from local schemes.

Heading up kitchen design, menu development and supplier relations is Joshua Levy. Joshua left his position as Sous Chef at Tom Kerridge’s Michelin starred London restaurant in 2020 to help long-time business associate Phil Cameron reopen the Eight Bells in Jevington before becoming executive chef at Headland Ventures based in Eastbourne. Working alongside Phil, the team turned the Eight Bells from a quiet rural pub, improving design, concept and operations to win numerous accolades including ‘Best pub in Sussex 2024’. In 2023 Headland formed a relationship with Eastbourne Borough Council, working closely with councillors to improve revenue, margins, training and offer for the council owned Stage Door pub before taking on the complete operation of the café and restaurant in the Towner Art Gallery.

Tad heads up operations at Troika Projects. For the past three years, Tad has been operations manager for St Leonards’ restaurant, Farmyard and Heist Market. Joining the team at Heist shortly after its opening, Tad helped to implement structure, systems and processes to effectively manage labour, drive revenue and profit opportunities and shape offer.

Prior to relocating to Hastings, Tad spent over a decade in the London restaurant scene, working in front of house management for high volume, multi-site operations including Caravan and Flat Iron. Whilst at all-day dining specialist, Caravan, Tad opened two of their flagship sites, Bankside and Fitzrovia and was responsible for hiring and training their front of house team. Post opening, he worked to refine and manage the high performing team, monitor KPI’s and drive the sites success.

Celia uses her design and entrepreneurial background to lead strategy and marketing. Celia trained and worked within design and trend forecasting before moving into hospitality in 2015 to found her quick service restaurant concept. During 2017 and 2018 Celia headed up the selection, funding, build and subsequent operation of two central London sites, achieving a 7 figure revenue. Working within the City of London, Celia formed relationships with local offices, creating a strong events and catering business alongside a busy lunchtime trade.



Our Core Team

Poroban Architects

Poroban are Architects specialising in low carbon design and material re-use, promoting sustainable construction techniques that are focused in demountable structures, timber construction and other biobased materials.

An important component of our work is on participation and upskilling of local communities through accessibility of our design and construction work.

Prior to establishing Poroban, Director, Armeet Panesar worked with renowned Architects, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, during which time he led the design and delivery of a number of new build schools, including Hastings Academy, plus major cultural and residential developments within London. He has also gained heritage experience with renowned Architects, Gray Marshall and Associates, working on award winning community and cultural projects.



LDA Landscape Designers

LDA Design are an independent, 100% employee-owned consultancy of urban designers, landscape architects and planners. They take a holistic approach which recognises the close links between climate, biodiversity and ecosystem decline, health and wellbeing, and social and economic inequality.

Climate breakdown and catastrophic nature loss are the biggest challenges of our times, and the need for collective action has never been greater. We believe landscape is key to managing these crises. We take a holistic approach which recognises the close links between climate, biodiversity and ecosystem decline, health and wellbeing, and social and economic inequality. We champion new approaches and seek to influence policy which results in more climate-conscious design, sharing our learning with clients and partners. We are committed to our own operations being carbon neutral by 2025.



Our Core Team

Real Studios Interpretation Design

With over 25 years’ experience, the Real Studios team has carved a unique niche by specialising in both exhibition and interior design. A host of award-winning projects pays testimony to this winning combination of theatrical place-making plus narrative context.

We take pride in our ability to interpret and stay true to the client’s vision, from start to finish. Creativity, ingenuity, and the forging of close and harmonious client relationships, yield outstanding results every time.

We creatively manipulate spaces, materials, light, sound, imagery and artefacts to push the boundaries of communication, both visually and intellectually. We deliver immersive storytelling experiences that visitors ‘feel’ as well as understand within the most appropriate context: varying according to the brief and ranging from overt to barely perceivable; immersive to simply presentational.

We work hard to get this balance right and to make every facet work together to deliver a design that is tailored to the narrative, the audience and the ambitions of the organisation.



Purcell Heritage Consultants

Purcell are an award-winning team of architects, heritage consultants, building surveyors and masterplanners. As the world’s largest team of heritage specialists, they create opportunities to sustain and enhance historic places with a holistic approach that brings together conservation excellence and innovative design.

Understanding place forms the foundation of everything we do. By understanding why a place is important, our heritage consultants enable clients to unlock the potential of their heritage sites. Reshaping and reusing our built heritage is vital to creating a more sustainable future and contributing to healthy, beautiful places.

The team are working on several high-profile cultural regeneration projects which will become a driving force in the economic and cultural revitalisation of the South Coast, including delivering the ambitious scheme for the restoration of Brighton’s Madeira Terrace. They also have particular experience on working on coastal castle sites, including Dover Castle.

Other relevant projects includes Gunnersbury Park and the construction of a new cafe within multiple heritage sites and Christ Church Visitor Center with the team completing two major extensions on the thatched barn and the building, now home to a ticketing office, shop, an interpretation space, seminar space and visitor facilities.



Exploring Themes with the Community

Please help yourself to a sticky note and let us know your thoughts!
We would like to take this on board for the next stage of the design process.

Connecting People through Landscape

What do you feel is important for landscape or nature?

- eg.
- Links to other gardens / walks / nature trails
- Other Natural habitats that you're aware of or would like the facility to link into
- Exploring the grounds through kitchen garden workshops
- Do you have any favourite views?
- What improvements could be made to the current landscape that would improve accessibility and connections through?
- Community involvement in maintaining new and existing green spaces



Heritage & Story

What do you feel is important in the site's Heritage and are there specific site stories that should be told?

- eg.
- Relevance to families and younger audiences
- Diversity of experiences
- Castles and Normans are relevant but also what are the impacts on modern society?
- Family connections / important histories relevant to your life and local history
- Exhibition ideas and working with local creatives
- How does landscape history inform our availability of food, resources, trade and prosperity?
- Links to other assets eg Battle Abbey, Hastings Museum, Hastings History House etc.



Community & Usability

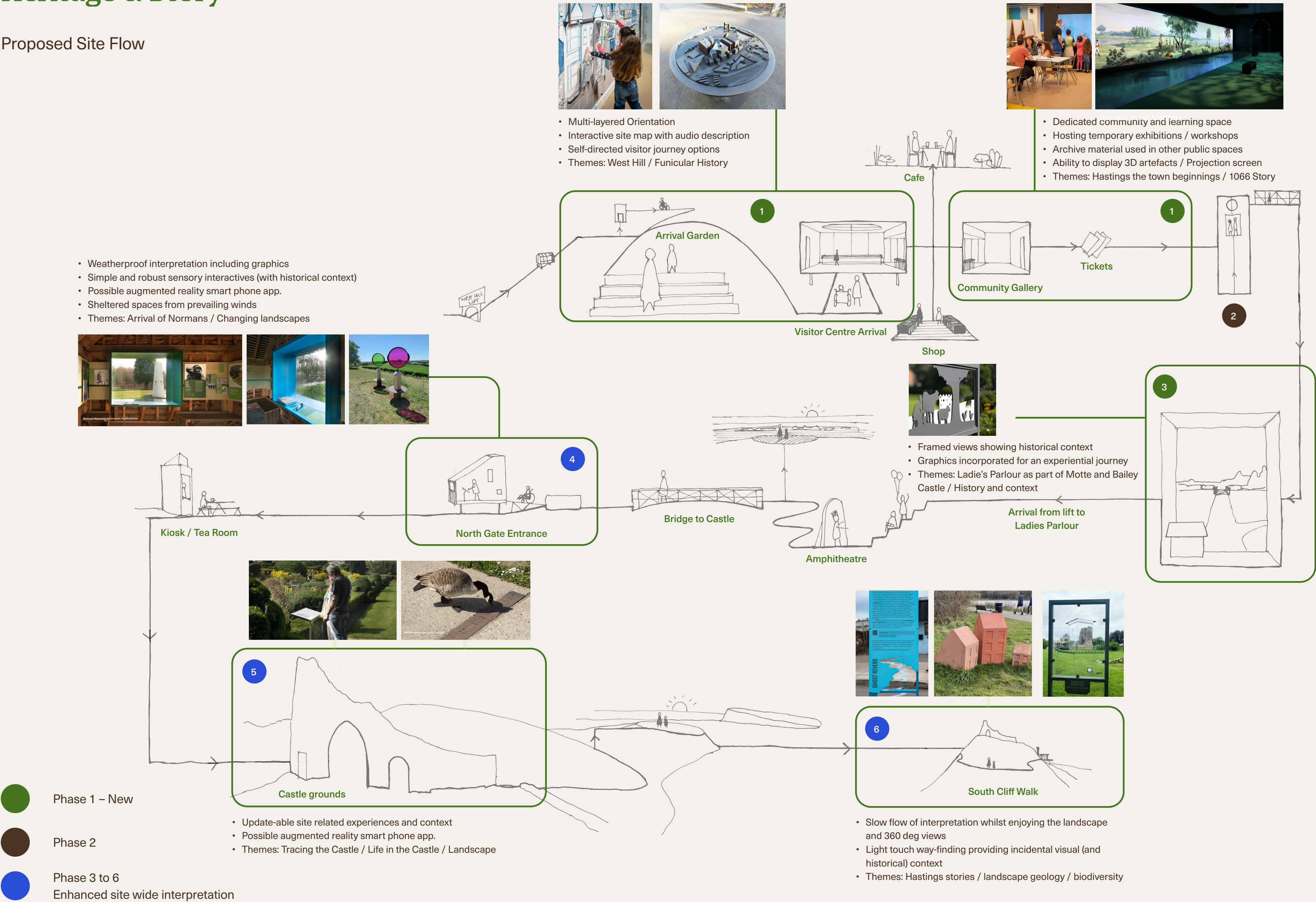
What do you feel is important in strengthening community and improving accessibility?

- eg.
- Transport and parking
- Workshops with school children / tours / events
- Offer of the new facility
- Young and senior communities
- Audible features / easy wayfinding / wheelchair accessibility across the site
- Innovations in interpretation - latest in projection / flexible space to screen across entire walls but also offer takedown for other exhibits and events
- Partnering with local groupsb / institutions for events, workshops and talks



Heritage & Story

Proposed Site Flow



Heritage & Story

Suggested concept flow of interpretation to be developed with community and Hastings Borough Council



Community and Usability



Outdoor theatre and music set in the landscape



Slow flow of interpretation whilst enjoying the landscape and views



Activities a diverse range of groups



High quality Restaurant / Cafe / Retail with a local connection



360 degree views around Hastings



Collaborations with Arts Festivals on West Hill

Community and Usability

Our ambitions for the West Hill Castle and Visitor Centre focuses on maximising flexibility. We hope to provide a gallery/community hub within our design that can provide space for learning, workshops and group visits during normal opening hours without impacting day to day operations.

We want the West Hill Castle and Visitor Centre to become a space to benefit the community as a whole. With proximity to the playground and a residential location, it should be a space for families and children, and we will run groups specifically aimed at supporting this demographic.

Sustainability is at the core of our business values, influencing all decision making. We want to help empower people to make better food and life choices through experiences and community.

Working with our suppliers and chefs we would like to run classes and events that help promote locally produced, low-environmental impact food and cooking that benefits us all.

We are passionate about inspiring young people to choose hospitality as a career, training and job progression is a key part of this. Working with experienced chefs and restaurant managers will allow for plenty of opportunity to train and upskill our staff.

We will partner with local colleges within Hastings and the surrounding area to establish apprenticeship pathways for both kitchen and front of house staff. Our senior team has decades of hospitality experience and are well placed to provide mentorship to those entering the industry.



Engaging Enviroment



School & Group Visits



Community Based Learning

Connecting People through Landscape

Meadow style graded paths enhancing accessibility

Elevated experiences – the building as a beacon within

Articulated follies / interpretation points set in the landscape



Kitchen / wellness garden within courtyard

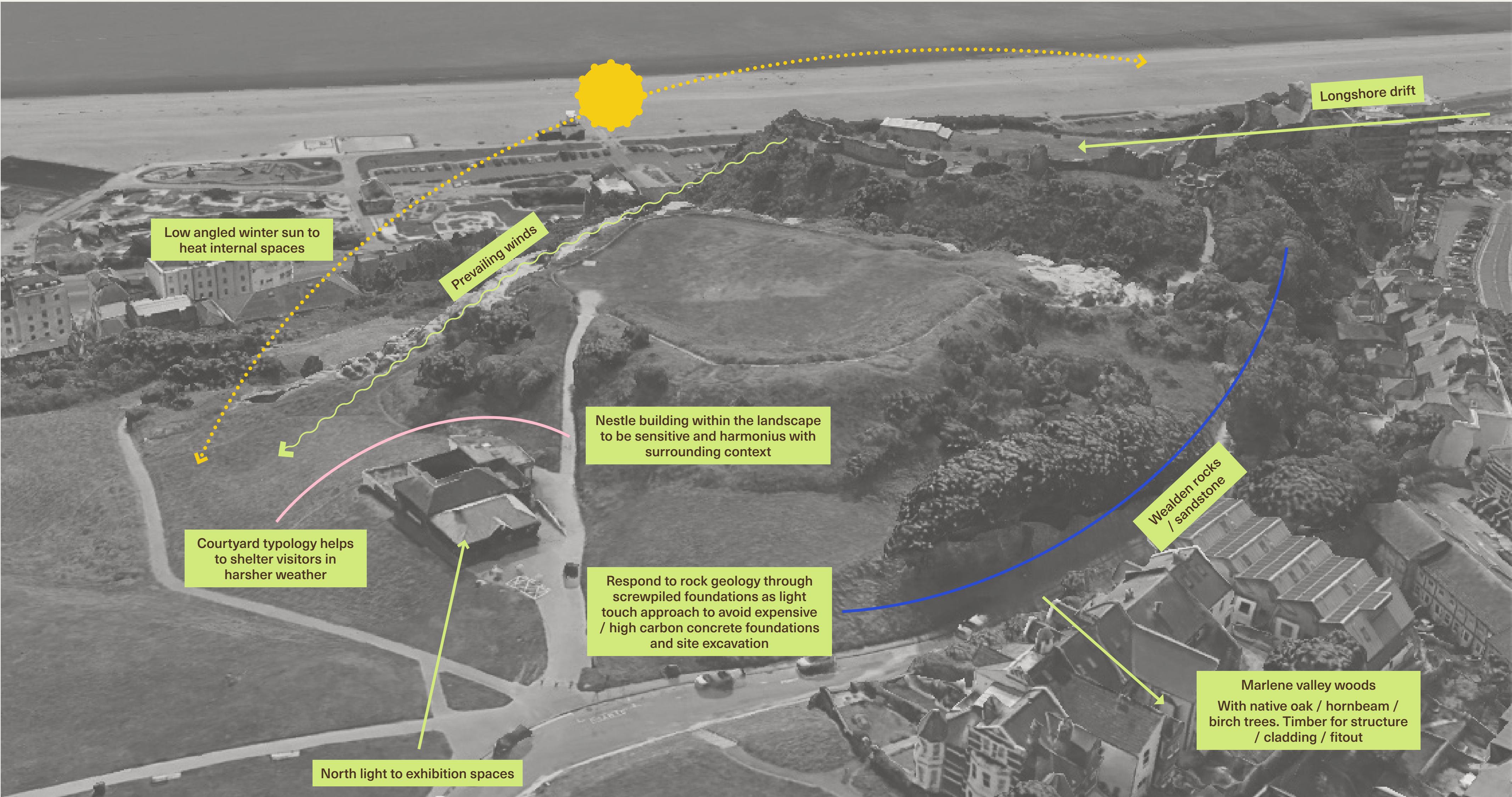
Biodiverse arrival bloom creating connection to public realm

Nature garden pockets
Educational workshops

Biodiverse super blooms to meadow landscape - enhancing the castle within landscape

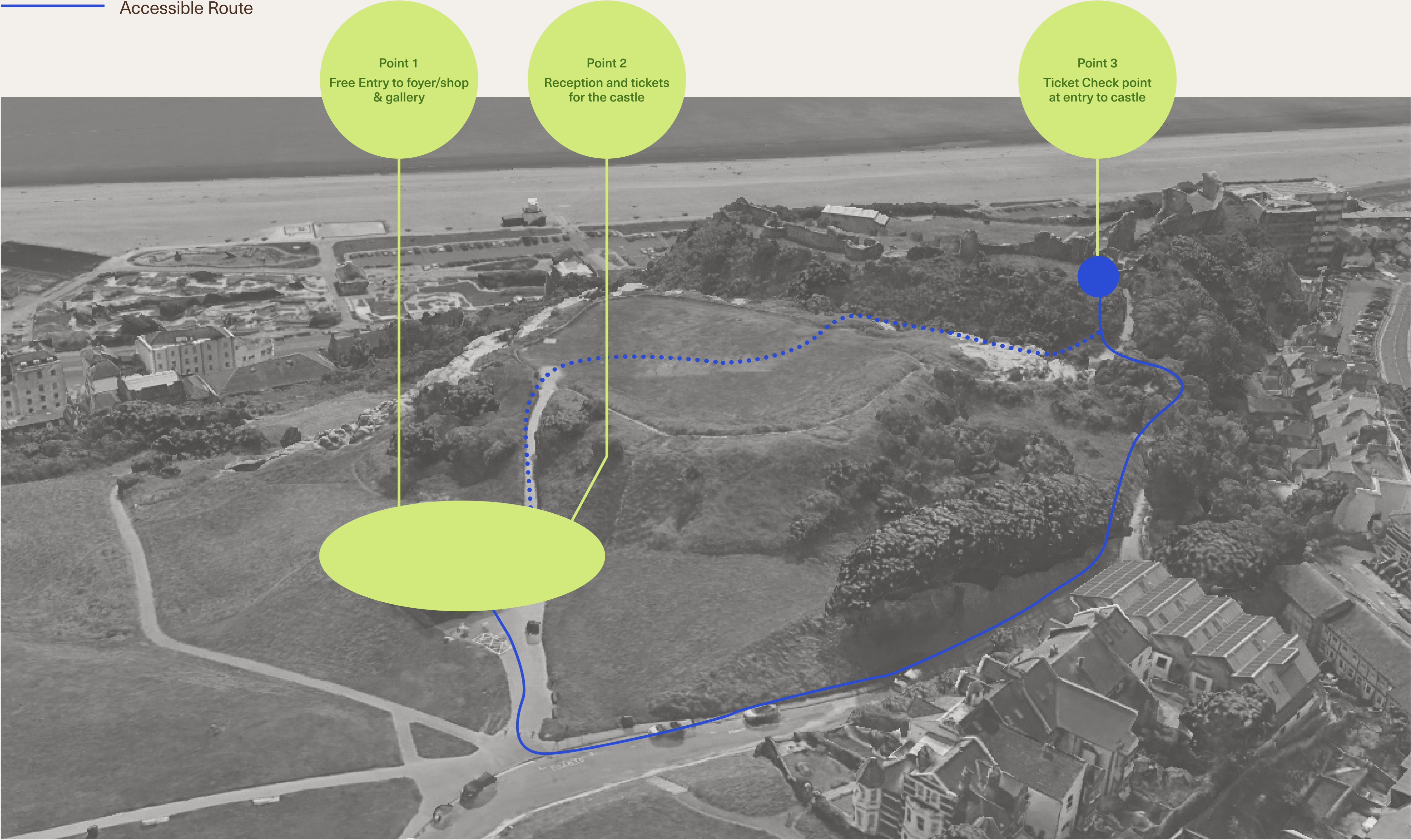
Connecting People through Landscape

Initial response to environmental constraints



Managing the Site – Phase 1

- Existing Walking route
- Accessible Route



Next Steps

Thank you for taking the time to look at our initial ideas.

Your views are important to us and we will carefully consider them as we progress our plans for the site.

The deadline for your comments and feedback is 31/03/25.

Once we have taken on board your feedback we will submit our initial concepts in for a pre-planning application to Hastings Borough Council. We will then hold another consultation event to share our plans before submitting a full planning application this year.

