
From
Vision
to
Venue
WE ARE POLKEYCOLLINS

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Imps Territory

Lincoln City Football Club, 2026

From matchday asset to year-round destination

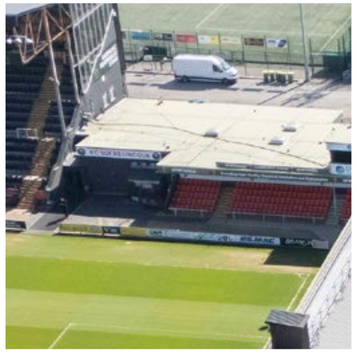
Every great project starts with a need, but the most meaningful ones begin with a vision.

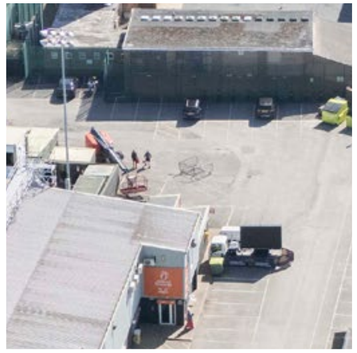
When Lincoln City FC approached us with aspirations for a new covered fanzone, we looked beyond the initial requirement. By exploring the club's business case and strategy, we identified how a more ambitious approach could create lasting value.

Together, we challenged the brief and tested options against the club's commercial constraints, shaping a vision that balanced ambition with operational reality.

The result is **Imps Territory**, completed for the start of the 2026 / 2027 season. More than a standalone fan engagement space, it is a destination designed to elevate the supporter experience, unlock new commercial opportunities, and strengthen the stadium's connection with the wider city - extending its impact from matchday asset to year-round destination.





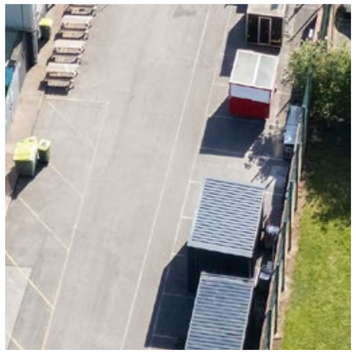












Original Brief

Our challenge was not simply to accommodate a temporary fan gathering space, but to identify how investment in new facilities could create long-term value and help future-proof the stadium.

The initial requirement focused on:

- **A dedicated covered fanzone facility**
- **Enhanced supporter amenities across the site, including a new community café**
- **Improved operational infrastructure**
- **Required Championship upgrades**

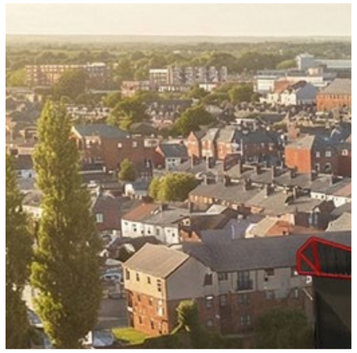
While these objectives were important,

they represented only part of the potential opportunity...

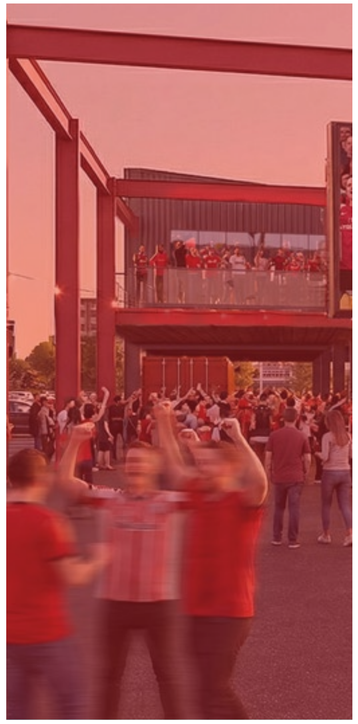


Imagery produced by Chris Vaughan Photography

Our Vision



















From the outset, POLKEYCOLLINS recognised an opportunity beyond a covered fanzone: a connected destination that could enhance the supporter experience and expand the Club's commercial offer.

Delivering this vision within an existing, operational stadium demanded careful coordination and a responsive approach. Unknown site conditions, existing structures and legacy infrastructure required the design to evolve while remaining aligned with the agreed scope, budget and programme. The deadline was fixed: ready for the new season.

Working with the Club, contractor, planning consultant and wider team, we coordinated design decisions, planning requirements and delivery priorities to keep the project moving.

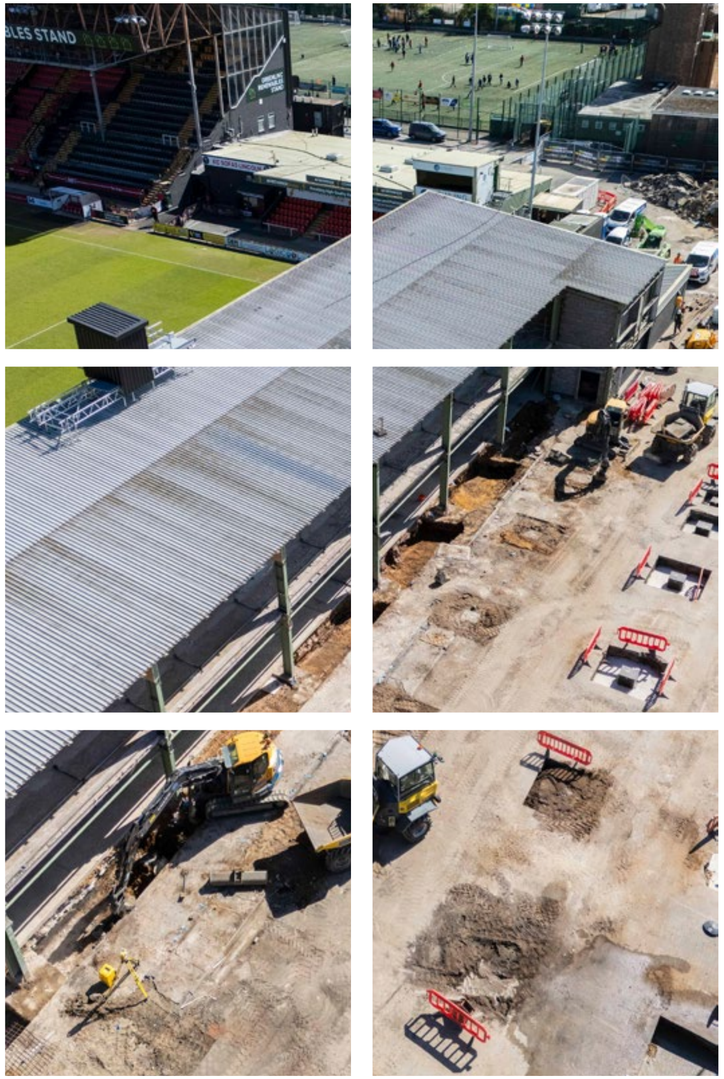
Architectural quality and commercial purpose informed every stage. Each intervention brought together supporter needs, operational practicality and opportunities for hospitality and events beyond matchday, supporting the Club's long-term ambitions.

Understanding The Challenges

Successful projects begin with a clear understanding of the challenges between ambition and delivery. More than a stadium extension, this transformation required careful coordination of multiple projects, stakeholders and interfaces, while allowing the Club to remain operational throughout construction.

Commercial value was equally important. Every design decision balanced the supporter experience with opportunities to generate revenue and support the Club's long-term growth, while remaining practical to deliver and operate.

By addressing these challenges early, we developed a strategy that reduced risk, maintained momentum and turned existing constraints into opportunities, creating a destination with lasting value for the Club and its supporters.



- Accelerated Delivery Programme
- Complex Project Coordination
- Live Stadium Operations
- Existing Site Constraints & Unknown Conditions
- Planning & Compliance
- Commercial Performance & Return on Investment
- Integration with Existing Infrastructure
- Future-Proofing for Long-Term Growth

By understanding these challenges early, we developed a strategy that mitigated risk, maintained programme certainty and transformed complexity into opportunity.



Visualisation produced by POLKEYCOLLINS



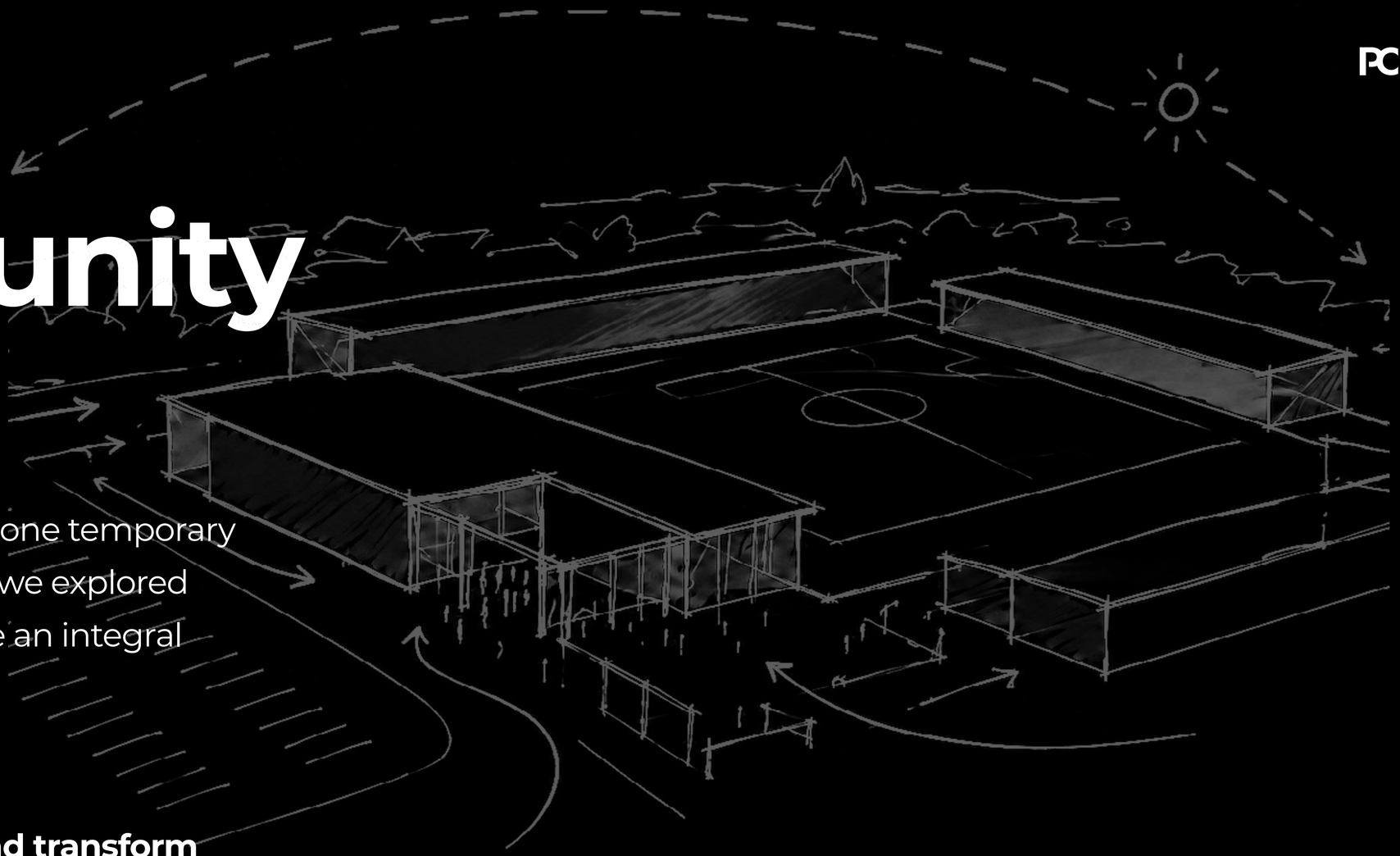
Visualisation produced by POLKEYCOLLINS

The Opportunity

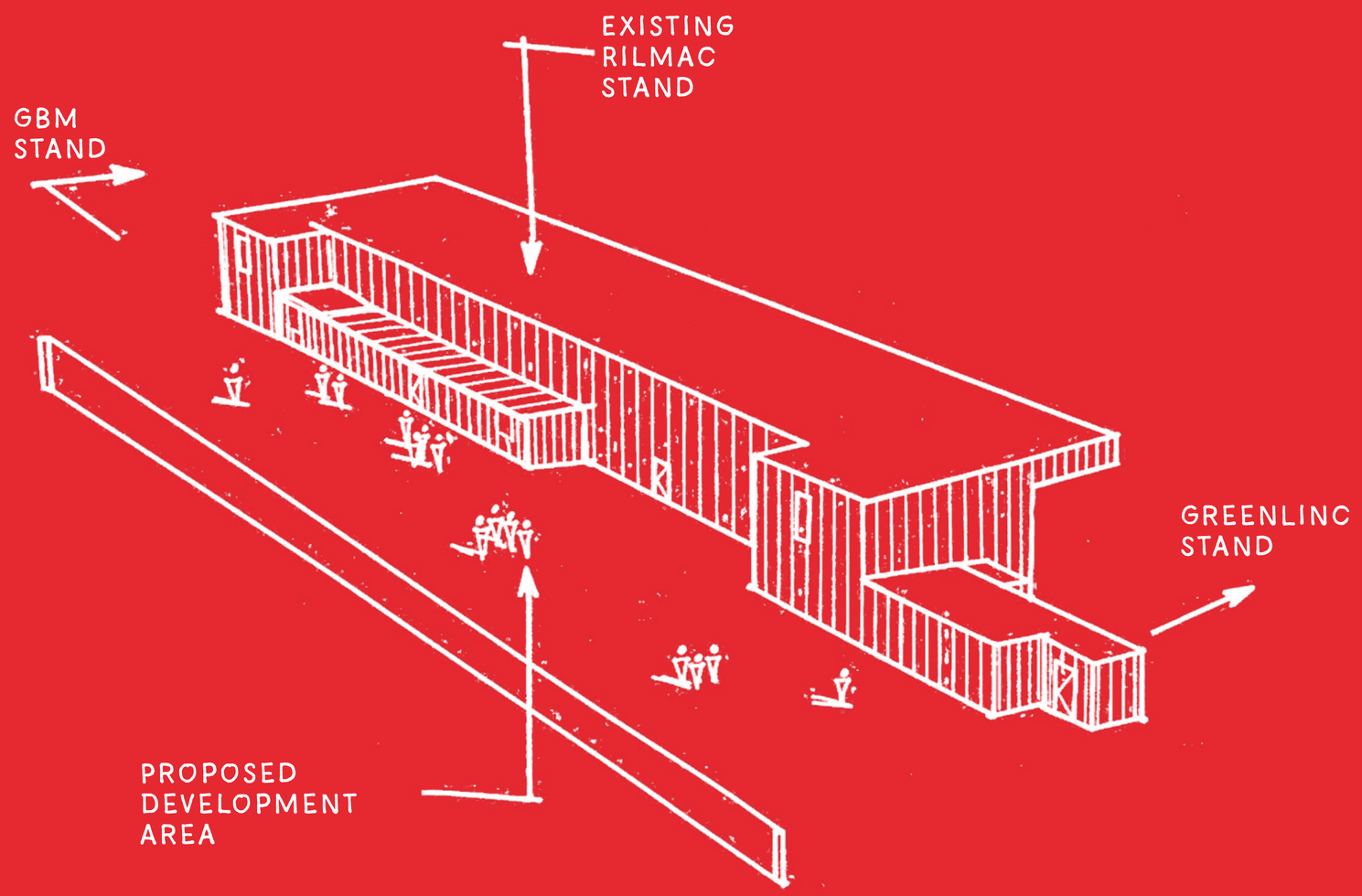
Looking Beyond Matchday

Rather than creating a standalone temporary or semi-permanent structure, we explored how the project could become an integral part of the stadium's future.

The answer was to extend and transform the existing Rilmac Stand. But how?



EXISTING

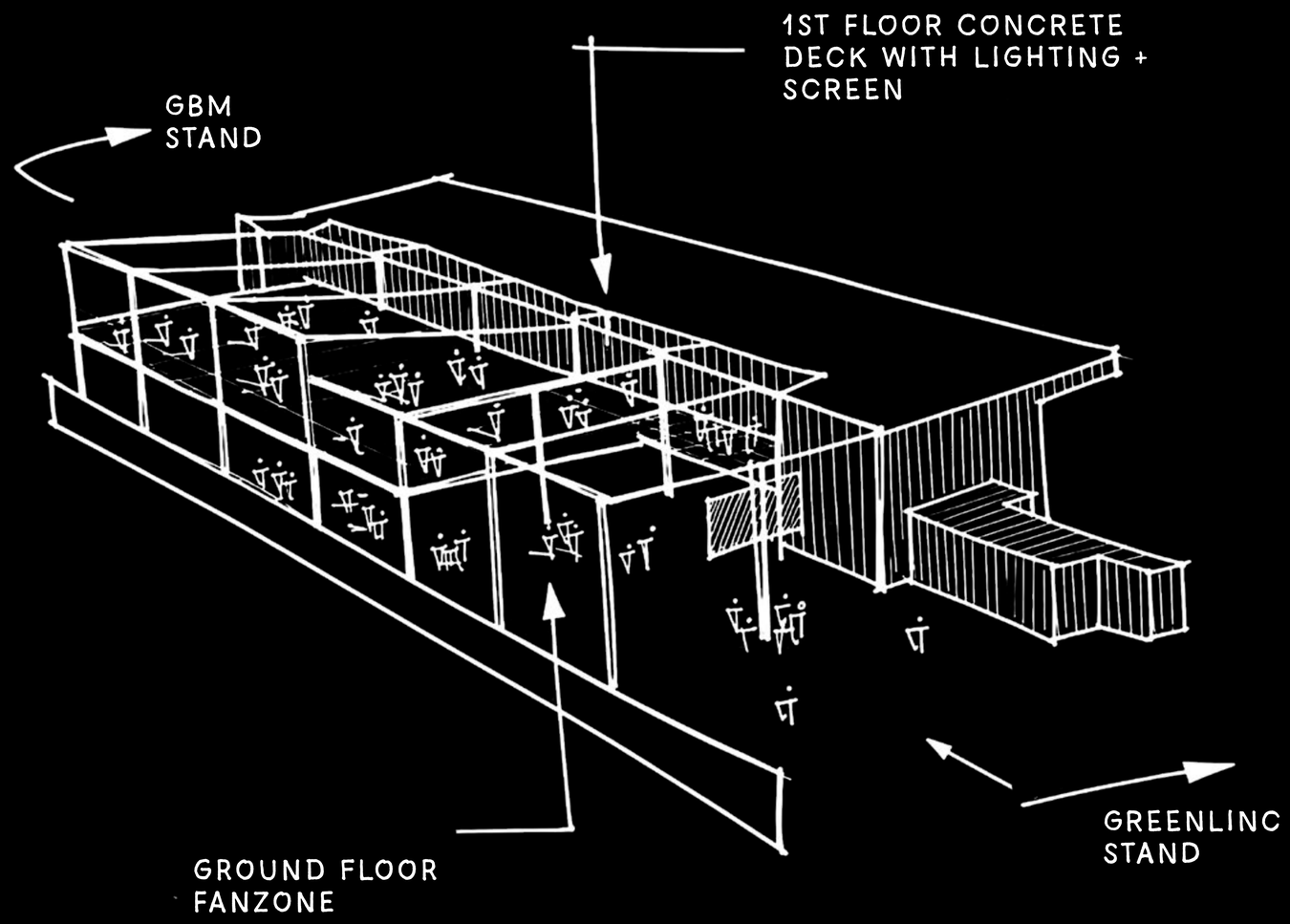


The early concept was explored through three progressive phases, each testing how the existing space could be transformed, expanded and better connected to the stadium experience.

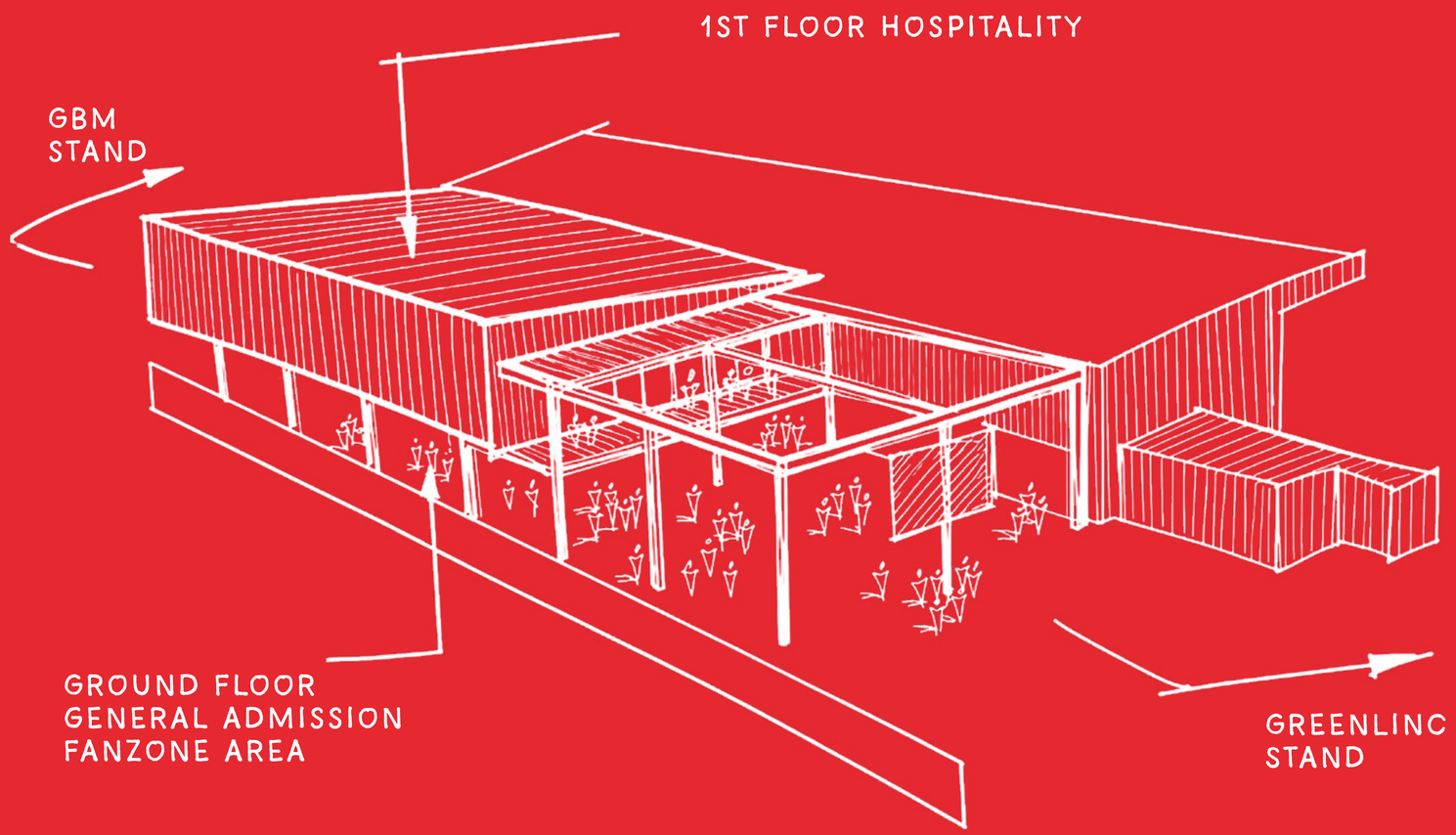
What began as a covered fan zone evolved into a bold vision for a multi-level hospitality destination with premium seating and a stronger connection to the bowl.

PHASE 1

The first phase explored the creation of a covered fan zone, introducing a **new steel structure and concrete deck** while completely refreshing the ground-floor offer. **More than an upgrade**, this established the physical platform for everything that followed - creating a **flexible new destination** for supporters and unlocking the potential of the levels above.



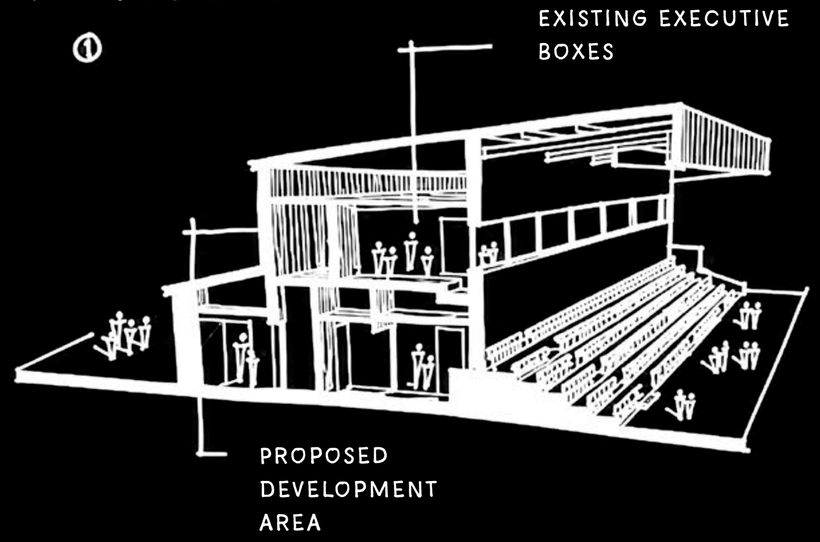
PHASE 2

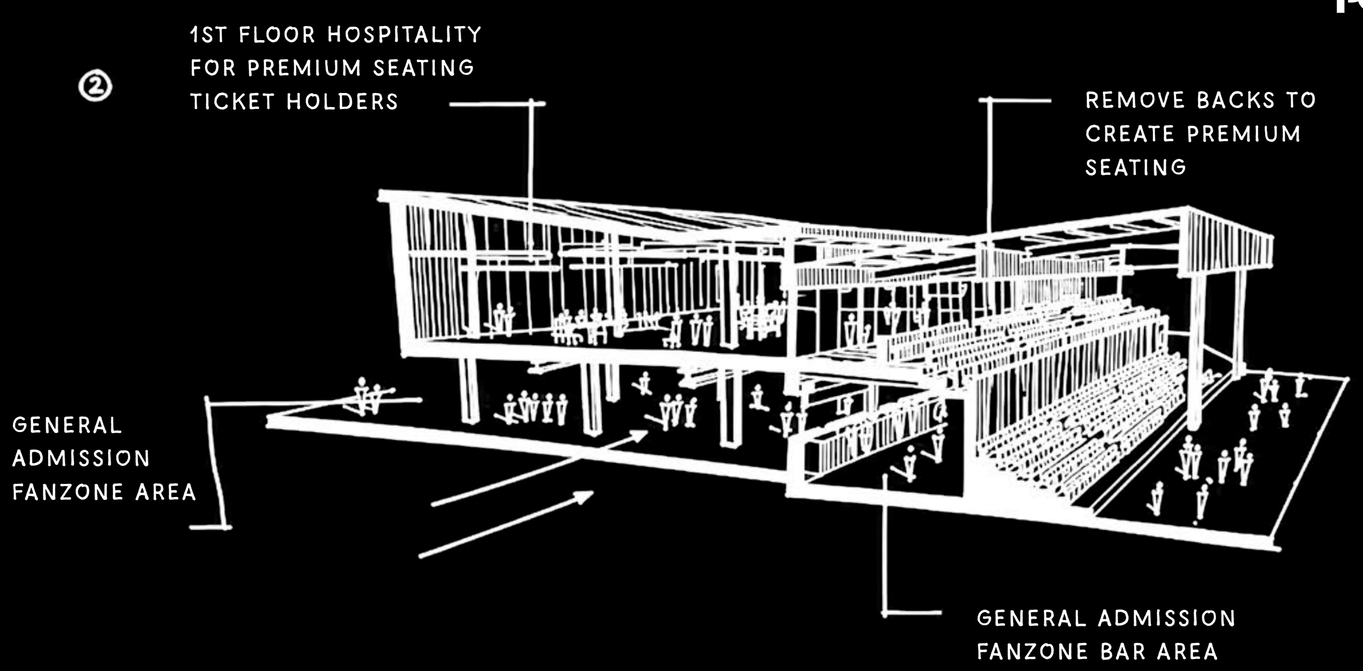


The second phase took the concept further, enclosing the first-floor space to create a dedicated **300-person conference and hospitality venue.**

Designed to perform on both match and non-match days, the space expanded the stadium's hospitality offer while creating a **new commercially active destination** beyond the traditional matchday experience.

PHASE 3





The third phase brought the concept directly into the stadium bowl. Existing executive boxes were removed, and the proposals developed through the earlier phases were aligned with the existing structure to create four additional tiers of premium seating. This brought the earlier phases together under a single strategy, making effective use of the existing structure.

The transformation also restored views towards the cathedral, reconnecting spectators with “one of the best views in football” and creating a seamless relationship between the hospitality venue and the in-bowl experience.

Three phases.
One evolving vision.
Transforming an underutilised area into a connected, premium destination for matchday and beyond.



From Fanzone To Destination







Covered Fanzone

The first phase enables a covered fanzone area, with an enhanced food and beverage offering, improved welfare facilities for all and a new audio visual system.

Benefiting from new food and beverage offerings enabled us to create a enhanced commercial kitchen to serve matchday food as well as hospitality events. In addition, a large bar area enables the club to serve drinks efficiently and to respond to matchday expectations. The covered area provides an appropriate flow around the venue and spills into an open area that benefits from the large back-to-back screens with expanded F&B offerings outside of the immediate covered area.



Imagery produced by Chris Vaughan Photography

Events And Hospitality

The Second phase was planned to follow on and utilise the platform created by the Phase 1 structure. However, we took the bold step to merge these phases, maximise the return and capitalise on the momentum of being promoted to the Championship.

The first-floor space features bar facilities and enhanced audiovisual systems, improving the guest experienWce and introducing a new premium facility at the stadium. In addition, the venue provides a conference and hospitality space not widely available in the city at present.









Imagery produced by Chris Vaughan Photography

Upper Tier Seating

The third phase involved removing the outdated executive boxes. Building on the strategy established in the first two phases, the existing concrete level was utilised and connected to the new finished floor level to create four even tiers of seating and unlocking the premium view. This created an opportunity to connect the new seating with the hospitality area.

Alongside the three fanzone phases, upgrades across the site were undertaken in preparation for the start of the 2026/27 season. Delivering these works together required careful phasing within a condensed design and delivery programme to maintain the expected standards. Working closely with the contractor, the team delivered this ambitious project from a vision in January 2026 to a functioning venue in August 2026.









Imagery produced by Chris Vaughan Photography



More Than A Building

From Arrival To The Final Whistle

The project takes a stadium-wide approach to improving the experience for supporters, visitors and staff. From arrival to the final whistle, each intervention enhances accessibility, comfort, circulation and the venue's operation.

New welfare facilities, a commercial kitchen, community café and passenger lifts create a more inclusive, welcoming environment, supporting busy matchdays and a broader range of events throughout the year.

Upgraded access routes, resurfacing and public realm improvements enhance movement and first impressions. Branding, wayfinding, LED advertising, upgraded floodlighting and a new PA system complete the transformation, creating a cohesive stadium environment with lasting value for the Club and its supporters.







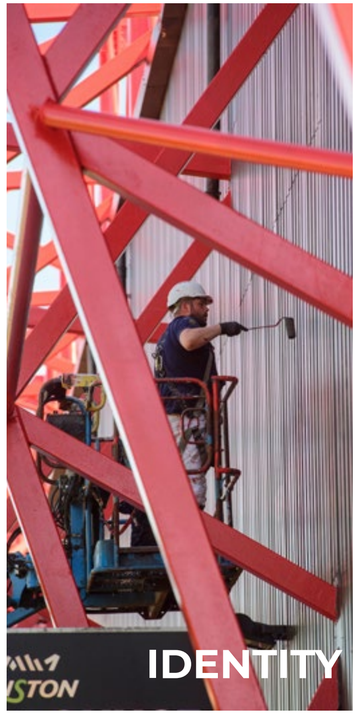






Stadium + Fan Experience









01 PITCH LIGHTING

A new stadium-wide lighting strategy has improved pitch illumination, performance and consistency and also provides event animation.Part of the wider infrastructure upgrade, the system supports both the matchday experience and the stadium's evolving operational needs.

02 STADIUM-WIDE REPAINTING

An anthracite and red palette has replaced the previous mismatched green exterior finishes, bringing the stadium in line with the Club's brand strategy. The result is a stronger, more consistent identity across the ground, with the Club's red highlighting key architectural elements.

03 NEW DIGITAL SCREENS

Three new large-format screens have been installed: two in the fan zone and one pitchside, improving the fan experience and engagement and driving commercial activation and incremental revenues.

04 SITE-WIDE RESURFACING

A co-ordinated resurfacing programme has upgraded key supporter routes inside and outside the ground. Fans now enjoy a smoother, more consistent journey from the stadium approach right through to the bowl.



Imagery produced by Chris Vaughan Photography



The Club House

Previously occupied by underused offices and storage areas, the space has been reimagined as a vibrant community and supporter hub, giving a new purpose to an existing part of the stadium.

The interior takes its cues from the character of the ground, combining an industrial aesthetic with a fresh, contemporary finish. Exposed ceilings and services are complemented by suspended mesh ceiling panels, contemporary servery counters, new furniture and flexible seating. A carefully considered palette of materials and colour connects the space back to the club's wider identity.

contemporary servery counters, new furniture and flexible seating. A carefully considered palette of materials and colour connects the space back to the club's wider identity.A key design decision was the reuse of cladding from the Rilmac Stand. Rather than losing this piece of the stadium during its transformation, the material was brought into the café to give a histroical connection.

Set against the new finishes, it introduces texture and character while retaining a tangible connection to the stadium's past — **carrying a piece of its history into the next chapter.**





The Club House Café brings football fans and the wider community together - a welcoming space for everyone, on matchdays and beyond.

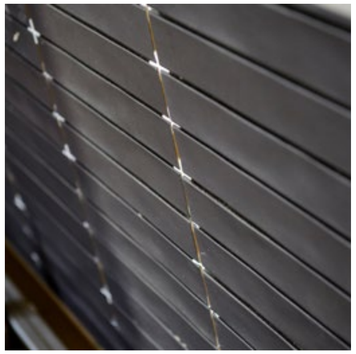
The Club House is an investment in the people who bring the Club to life, giving something back to supporters and strengthening connections with the wider community.

Transforming underused space into a welcoming café, it provides a place to meet, socialise and enjoy the stadium throughout the week. It extends the venue's role beyond the 90 minutes, creating a destination for matchdays and everyday visits.

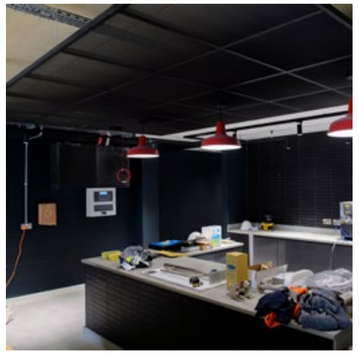
It reflects a wider ambition to make the stadium more accessible, engaging and connected to its supporters: a place that belongs to the fans as much as it does to the game.



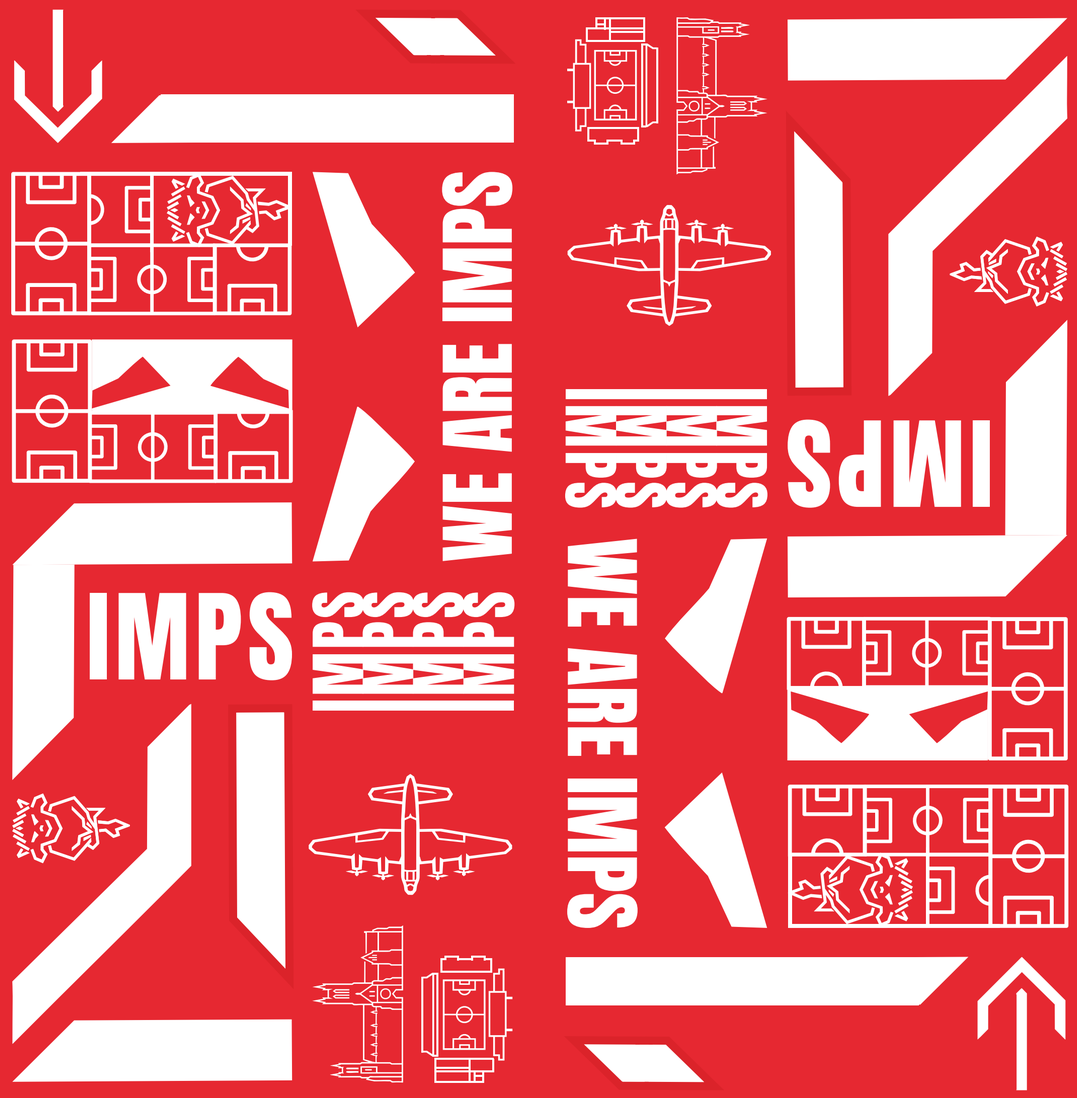












The Imps Identity

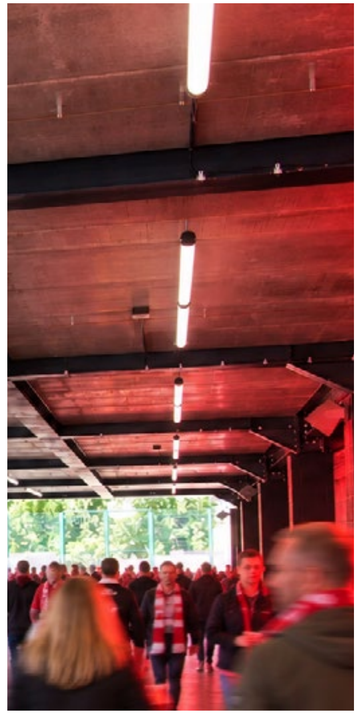
Rather than viewing branding as a standalone exercise, we explored how the Imps identity could be embedded throughout the supporter journey.

The answer was a site-wide branding strategy, centred around the club's distinctive red, which provides a consistent visual thread across buildings, circulation routes, key arrival and wayfinding.



Imps Identity Mockup imagery, produced by POLKEYCOLLINS











Way Finding

The Imps' distinctive red became a key part of the architectural language, highlighting structures, connecting spaces and guiding supporters throughout the stadium. From circulation routes to key destinations, colour creates a recognisable visual thread that brings the experience together.

Integrated lighting reinforces these routes and draws supporters towards key areas. Together, light and colour provide intuitive wayfinding while adding energy and atmosphere. Large-scale graphics, bold signage and dedicated photo opportunities create memorable focal points: places to pause, interact and share the experience.

This approach makes the Imps identity part of the supporter journey, shaping how people arrive, move through and engage with the stadium.

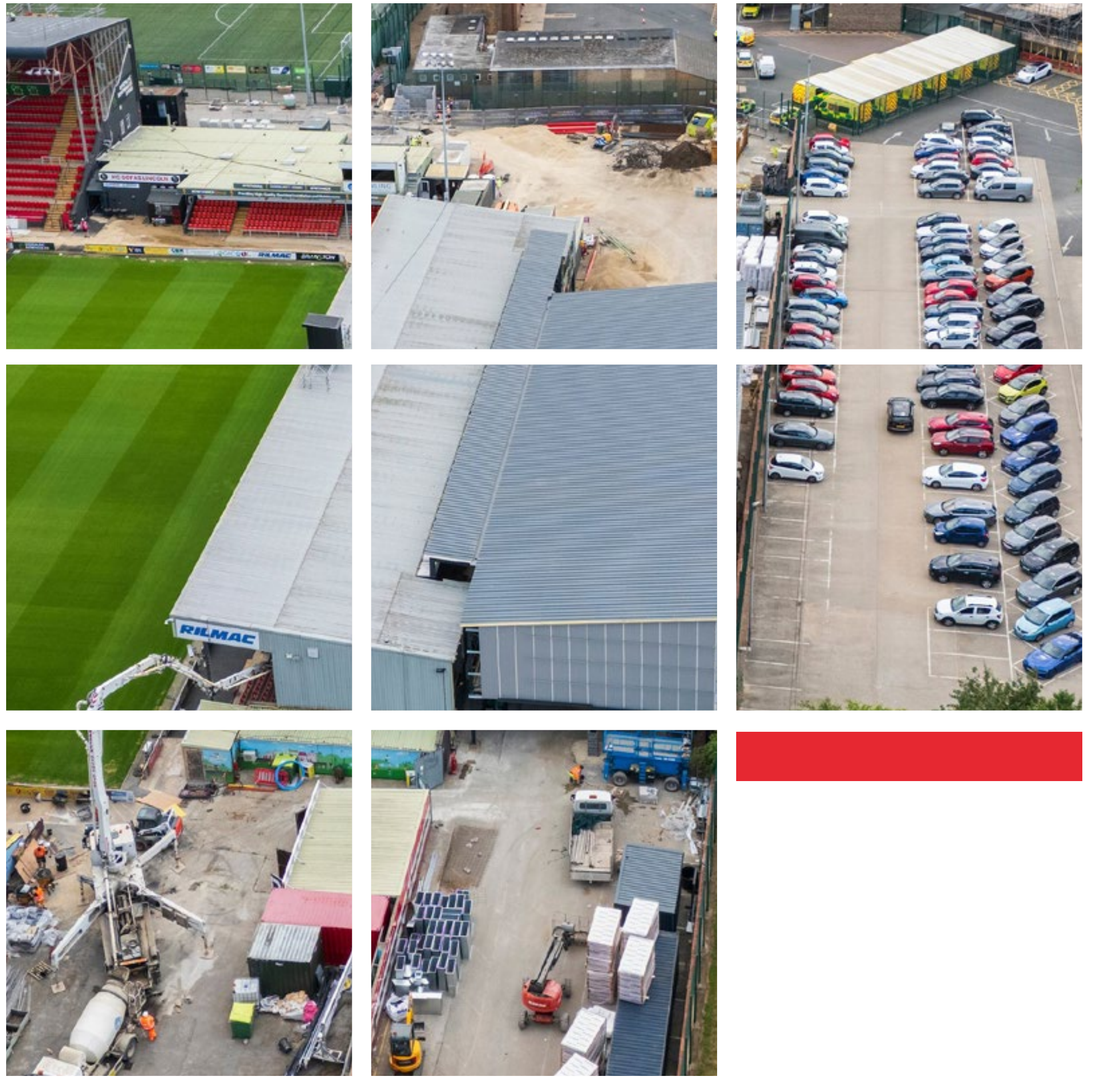
Building Beyond The Game

Sustainability formed an important part of the planning and design process, with the energy demands of the new development required to be offset through renewable energy generation.

Working alongside a specialist energy consultant, the team developed an energy strategy and supporting statement to assess the building's anticipated energy consumption and establish how this could be balanced through on-site renewable technologies.

The strategy led to the installation of photovoltaic panels across two existing stadium stands, maximising the potential of the stadium's available roof space. This is complimented by battery storage, allowing generated energy to be captured and used more effectively across the site.

Together, these interventions demonstrate a wider approach to the project - looking beyond the immediate building works to consider how the stadium's existing infrastructure could contribute towards a more efficient and resilient energy future for the club.





The Construction Journey

Imagery produced by Chris Vaughan Photography

A shared vision.
A co-ordinated team.

Lincoln City Football Club

Architects
Principal designer
Project management

Planning consultant

Principal contractor

Structural and ivil engineers

Audiovisual solutions

Supported by

Halliday Lighting
Anyplace Media
Global Vision
OVG
Sport 5

Delivering the Vision

September, 2025

Business Case Analysis

Initial business case analysis was undertaken to explore the viability of the project, reviewing the emerging proposals against the club's operational, commercial and long-term objectives. This established the foundations for the project and helped define the opportunity for the next stage of development.



Brief

With the initial brief already established, the design team was brought on board to challenge the existing thinking and explore the wider opportunities for the project. This process tested the original requirements, identified areas of additional potential and helped shape a more ambitious direction for the scheme.

December, 2025

Early January, 2026

Revised Briefing & Vision

Following the initial exploration, the project brief was refined and expanded to reflect the opportunities identified. A clearer vision emerged, balancing the club's immediate requirements with a more ambitious approach to fan experience, hospitality and long-term enterprise value.





End of January, 2026

Early Contractor Engagement

Early engagement with the contractor allowed the emerging proposals to be tested against buildability, programme and cost. This collaborative approach helped identify key constraints and opportunities at an early stage, ensuring the developing design remained both ambitious and deliverable.

Delivering the Vision



Board Sign-off

Following the development and testing of the proposals, the project was presented to the Board for formal approval. Board sign-off marked a key milestone, confirming support for the vision and enabling the project to progress into the next stage of design and delivery.

Planning Submission

The developed scheme was submitted to the Local Planning Authority in February 2026, seeking approval for the proposed redevelopment and associated works.

February, 2026

Long-Lead Orders Placed

Orders for key long-lead items were placed ahead of the main construction works, securing critical materials and components early to support the project programme and anticipated delivery dates.

March 2026

April 25th, 2026

Last Home Game

The final home fixture of the season marked the point at which the site could be released for the main construction works, allowing the programme to progress immediately following the conclusion of matchday operations.





April 27th, 2026

Start On Site

Construction commenced immediately following the final home fixture. The site was handed over to the contractor, allowing site establishment, enabling works and initial demolition to begin ahead of the main construction activities. The programme was carefully co-ordinated around the club's operations and the limited close-season construction window.

August 21st - 22nd, 2026

Handover

Following completion of the main construction works, the project was formally handed back to the Club. Final commissioning, testing and completion activities were undertaken to ensure the new facilities were operational and ready to welcome supporters ahead of the new season.

First Game Of The Season

Just one day after handover, the completed facilities welcomed supporters for the first home game of the new season. This marked the transition from construction to operation, with the new spaces experienced by fans for the first time on a live matchday.

Preparing for construction

Early preparation.
A responsive approach to existing conditions.

With the main construction works planned between the final home fixture and the new season, early contractor involvement was essential. Testing buildability, coordinating work packages and securing long-lead items helped establish a practical programme before work began on site.

Opening up the existing building revealed challenges that could not be fully understood at the outset. Existing construction and services, including gas pipework, required careful investigation and coordination to establish how the new works could proceed safely.

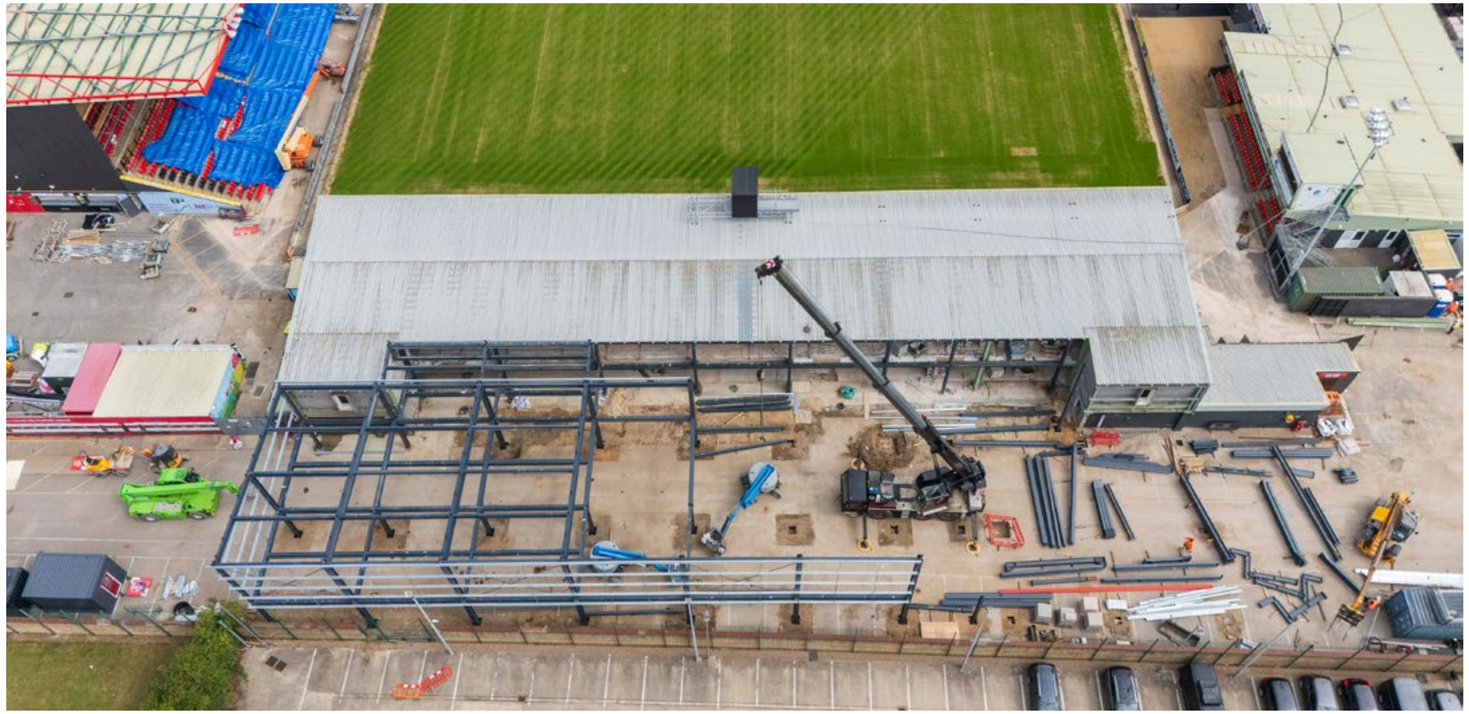
Working closely with the contractor and specialist teams, we responded to these findings as they emerged, adapting details and sequencing while keeping the wider design intent in focus. This collaborative approach helped maintain progress within the limited construction window.

















Connecting new and existing

Establishing the foundations. Connecting the frame.

This stage saw extensive new foundations installed and the steel frame begin to rise, defining the spaces that would become the covered fanzone and first-floor hospitality venue.

Opening up the southern side of the existing building exposed the original steelwork, allowing its position and relationship with the proposed structure to be checked. This was a critical step in aligning the new frame with the existing stand and coordinating the connections between them.

Close collaboration between the contractor, structural engineers and architectural team brought the foundations, new steelwork and existing structure together. As the frame took shape, the ambition became tangible: a connected development that built on the stadium's existing fabric and created space for an expanded supporter and hospitality offer.

Bringing the venue together

Shaping the spaces.
Bringing the vision to life.

With the frame in place, work progressed to enclosing the building and fitting out the spaces within. Cladding, glazing and internal finishes began to define the venue, while kitchens, bars and M&E services provided the infrastructure for its day-to-day operation.

Across the wider stadium, repainting, lighting and improvements to supporter facilities progressed alongside the main development. Careful coordination and sequencing were essential as multiple trades worked across connected areas within the close-season programme.

The architectural and brand strategy brought these interventions together. The club's distinctive red, co-ordinated materials and integrated lighting created continuity between new and existing spaces. Each element supported the wider ambition: a welcoming venue equipped for busy matchdays, premium hospitality and events throughout the year.









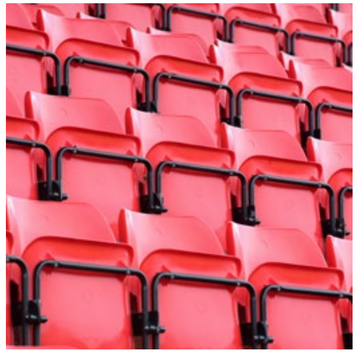
Ready for Supporters















Before

After





Imagery produced by Chris Vaughan Photography

One Project. A Wider Impact.

The project at a glance.

300

Event guest capacity

From matchday to a year-round destination.

4

Premium seating tiers

Views towards the cathedral provide the best view in English football.

3

Large-format screens

Fan experience and revenue generation

4

Existing stands

Bringing old and new together for the fans. Giving back to supporters.

Financial Impact

5 year ROI

20% / 30%

(Base) (stretch)

Payback years

5.1 / 3.2

(Base) (stretch)

EBITDA margins

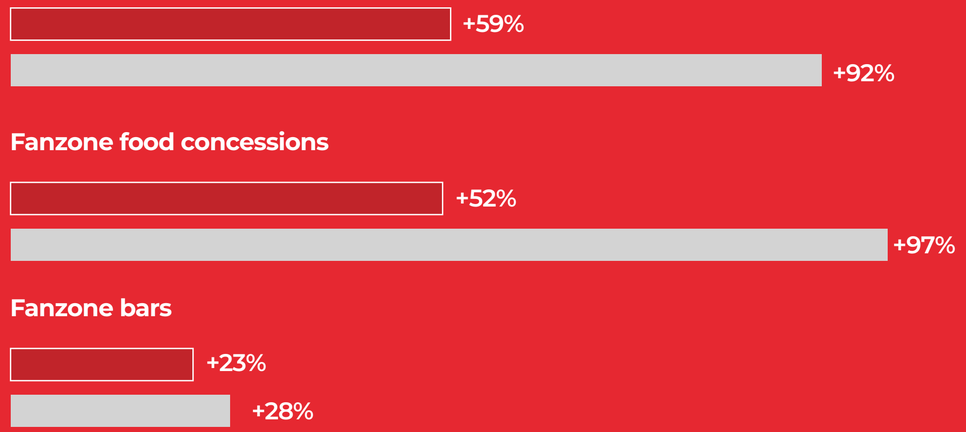
52% / 58%

(Base) (stretch)

Year 1 uplift vs today

Base case

Stretch case



51% of incremental revenue from non-matchday events

10 Revenue streams created or enhanced by the scheme

From Vision To Value

The value lies in how the spaces work together.

A connected venue can serve supporters on matchday, welcome guests to events and strengthen the club's relationship with its community.

For supporters

A covered gathering space, improved amenities and a stronger sense of arrival

For the club

A broader hospitality and events offer, designed to support activity beyond fixtures, drving incremental revenue and profitabiltiy.

For the community

A welcoming café and a stadium with more reasons to visit throughout the week.

For the future

Existing structures, re-purposed materials and on-site energy provision contribute to a more adaptable venue.



Imagery produced by Chris Vaughan Photography

What could your venue become?

Start with a vision.
Explore the opportunity.
Create a place with commercial viability.

Talk to **POLKEYCOLLINS** about your next project.

Get in touch by email, phone or socials.

Info@polkeycollins.co.uk 01522 306456

WE ARE POLKEYCOLLINS

