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Sutton Library
Thornton
Science Park

Using library
spaces to
engage science
and
engineering
students

1. History of Thornton site
2. Design and build of the library 2013-14
3. How it's worked out since then

Thornton - history

- Shell – 1940-2013
- Fuel and lubricants research driven by demands of Second World War
- Research facility for neighbouring Stanlow refinery



Thornton - history

- Aero fuels development – Concorde
- Materials engineering
- Storage technologies
- Libraries onsite





Thornton Science Park today

- **66 acre site** gifted to the UoC by Shell UK. Formerly Shell Technology Centre, Thornton - a major R&D campus.
- Home of the University's **new** Faculty of Science and Engineering
 - **Existing** Computer Science and Mathematics departments
 - **New programmes** in Mechanical, Electrical, Chemical Engineering, physics, chemistry & biotechnology
- Also a base for **SMEs** working in engineering and related industries.

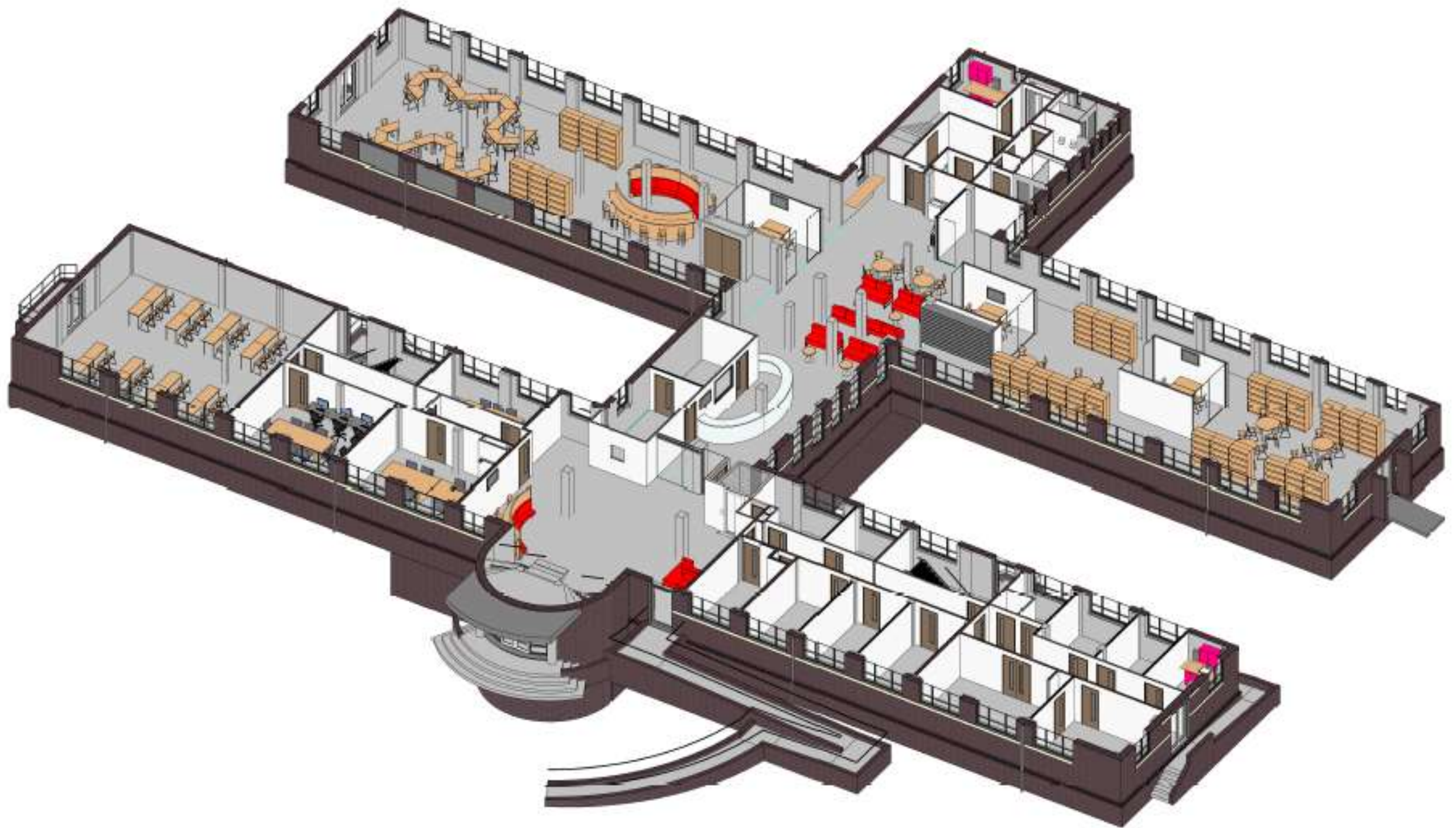
The starting point

- 1940 built headquarters building to be refurbished as a library and teaching space
- Initial architects design presented Autumn 2013
- Building project due to commence March 2014
- A configuration of space presented but was that what students really wanted / needed?



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The importance of feedback

- Years 1 and 2 Maths/Computing undergraduate students moving to Thornton
- Student body some of the least engaged with the library - risk of perception that library wasn't "for them"
- Important to find out not just what they wanted for the future but also what wasn't working now

Student feedback

- 20 students drawn from **staff student liaison committees**
 - Students attended to discuss library design
- Discussion concluded by sharing answers to 3 key questions:
 - What is the **most useful** aspect of the Chester library?
 - What is the **least useful** aspect of the Chester library?
 - What **one thing** could improve your experience of using the library?
- Same questions asked to seminar groups of 1st year students during library teaching sessions.

Student feedback - key themes



Incorporating staff feedback

- Monthly planning meeting with Dean of Faculty / Department Heads
- Focus on ensuring resources / collections fit for purpose:
 - Implementation of pro-active ebook only ordering policy to maximise accessibility
 - Aimed to design custom textbooks to give to new engineering students as a study incentive