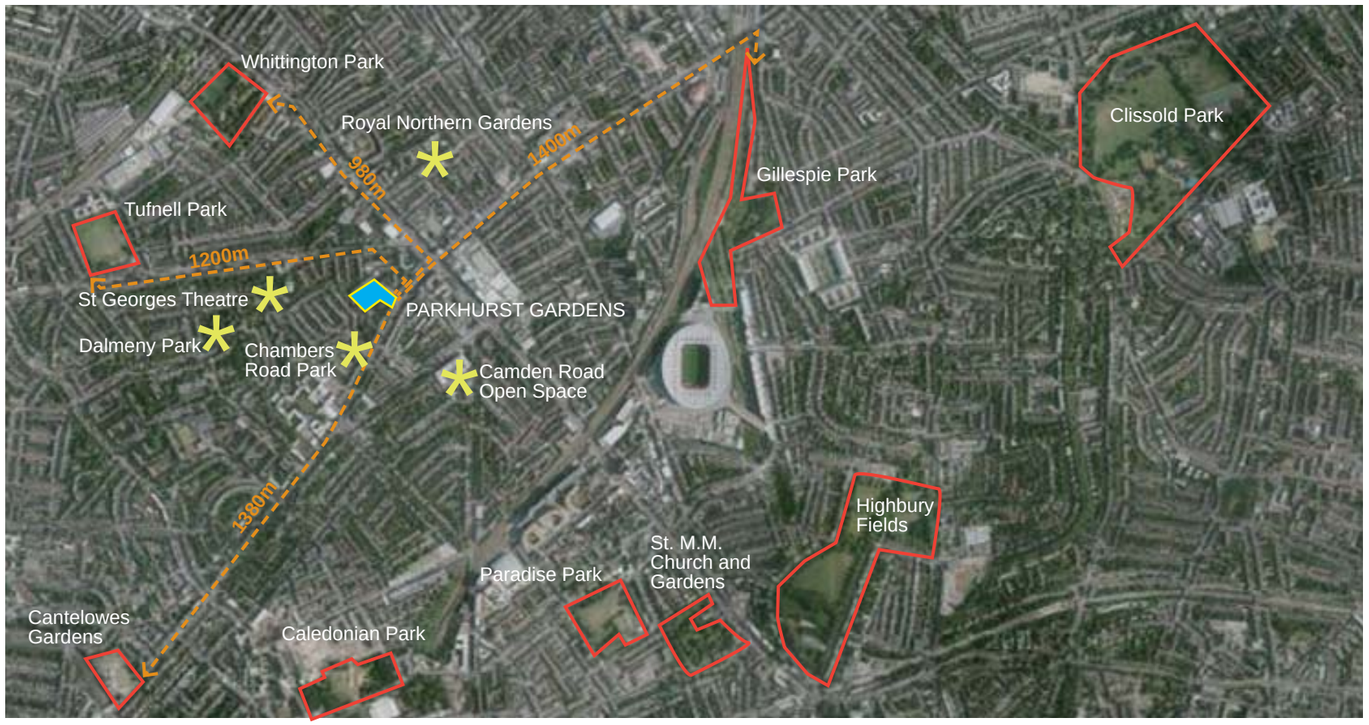
6.0 Landscape
6.1 Open Space



Islington and context map showing site location/ local parks and green space and travel distances from site

Introduction

The proposed landscape scheme aims to transform a vacant and under utilised site into a vibrant residential development where all residents will benefit from easy access to high quality usable external space in a variety of forms. The proposed landscape masterplan is described in detail in section 6.2.

Open Space

In evaluating the needs of residents the character and proximity of existing green spaces has been considered. Travel distances to local parks and green spaces are shown on the adjacent plan.

Large scale public open space is available within walking distance of the site with some of these also being easily accessible by public transport close to the site. Local parks and green spaces offer a variety of uses varying from the expansive parkland character of Highbury Fields and Finsbury Park, a range of community, sports and play facilities at Whittington Park and the urban nature reserve of Gillespie Park.

Further to this, a range of convenient small scale public green spaces exist within closer reach of the site.

The landscape scheme seeks to build on the existing availability of public amenity space and create a soft and inviting garden atmosphere that relates to spaces that lie outside the application boundary and integrates with its surroundings.

6.0 Landscape

6.2 Play Space Assessment

Assessing child occupancy and play space requirements

Size of your development:

Number of FLATS

	Studio	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	Total
Social rented/affordable	0	0	4	7	11	0	22
Intermediate	0	5	4	0	0	0	9
Market	0	60	47	12	0	0	119
Total	0	65	55	19	11	0	150

Number of HOUSES

		1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	Total
Social rented/affordable		0	0	0	0	0	0
Intermediate		0	0	0	0	0	0
Market		0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		0	0	0	0	0	0

Proportion of children

	Number of children	%
Under 5	17	27%
5 to 11	26	40%
12+	21	33%
Total	64	100%

Play space requirements

GLA benchmark (sqm)*	Alternative local benchmark (sqm)**	Total (sq m play space) required
10		639.9
	5	320.0

* GLA benchmark standard=minimum of 10sqm of dedicated play space per child
** Borough's local benchmark

Child Yield for the development
[Greater London Authority calculator]

The landscape scheme has developed with due regard to policy requirements for play space, the key documents being:

• Shaping Neighbourhoods: Play and Informal Recreation - Supplementary Planning Guidance, September 2012 - Greater London Authority

• Inclusive Landscape Design - Supplementary Planning Document, January 2010 - London Borough of Islington

• Development Management Policies, section DM3.6 - Islington Council, 2013

Child yield for the development, using the GLA calculator, based on an overall total of 150 new dwellings is shown adjacent. This gives rise to an overall requirement of 639.9m2 [based on a provision of 10m2 per child].

The confined nature of the site has lead to a strategy, in accordance with policy, where provision of play facilities for young children [under 5] is accommodated on site, with older age groups catered for by assessment of local provision. The strategy for off-site provision is described in the following section.

6.0 Landscape

6.2 Off-Site Play Provision

Proximity of off-site playspace

Chambers Road Park and MUGA

There are a diverse range of play spaces in the immediate area accessible to children who will occupy the new dwellings, some of which have recently been upgraded. These existing local facilities are available to children within the recommended travel distances. The maximum travel distances permitted being:

5-11 years	400m
12+ years	800m

The area provision required by policy for each age group, as shown on the previous page is:

5-11 years	250m2
12+ years	210m2

The most accessible space from the development is Chambers Road Park which includes facilities for all age groups, the travel distance [from centre of the development] is approximately 260 metres, therefore falling within the required distance criteria. This park is an equipped playspace with a small multi-use games area and traditional play in the form of slides, climbing structure, swings and balance beams.

Travel distances to play areas in Holbrooke Court and at Hollins/ McCall House are 250 metres and 540 metres respectively. The scheme has been designed to allow for future connection through to the north which, if implemented, would be of great benefit, reducing the travel distance to Hollins/McCall House facilities down to approximately 100m.

Future accessibility to Holbrooke Court is uncertain due to the recent installation of secure gates around the estate.

6.0 Landscape

6.3 Surrounding Play Spaces

Existing playspace provision within courtyards to the north of the site

Recently installed MUGA adjacent Hollins and McCall House

Toddler play area at Holbrooke Court

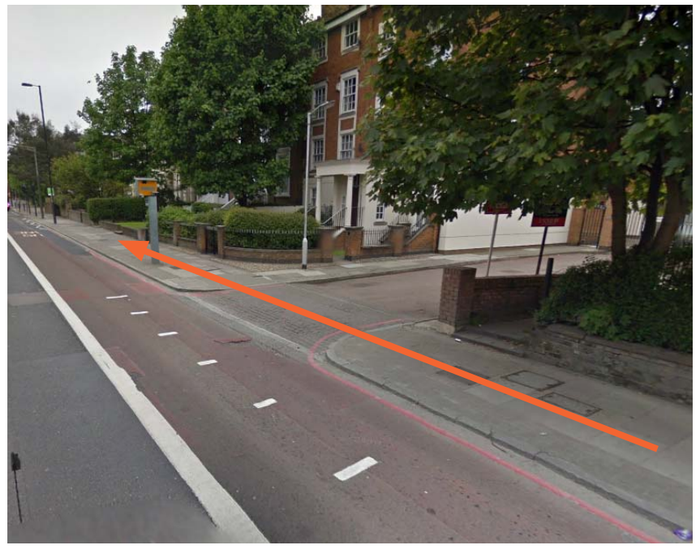
The application site lies within the St Georges Ward which benefits from the third highest level of play provision [of sixteen] within the borough. Recent investment is evident in some of the surrounding spaces with new MUGA facilities and equipped play spaces at Hollins/McCall House. Islington's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment from 2009 also states that the ward is expected to have a surplus of play space relative to the GLA standard by 2025.

At the time of the assessment the ward scored poorly in relation to quality of provision, however recent investment in the area will have started to address these quality issues. The proposed development will provide natural play in the form of a 'Doorstep Playable Space', this type of play space will provide contrast and complement with other nearby spaces which are focused towards traditional equipment based play.

6.0 Landscape

6.3 Accessibility of Off-Site Play Provision

1. Exit from development onto Parkhurst Road onto pavement of generous width



2. Route along Parkhurst Road requires one road crossing [with low frequency of vehicle movements] into Moriarty Close

3. Pedestrian route from Parkhurst Road turns into Chambers Road

4. Right turn from footway leads directly into Chambers Road Park

Route analysis for pedestrian route to Chambers Road Park

The route from the development to any off-site provision should be assessed in terms of accessibility for children and disabled users, also accounting for specific problems that may be encountered by carers with prams.

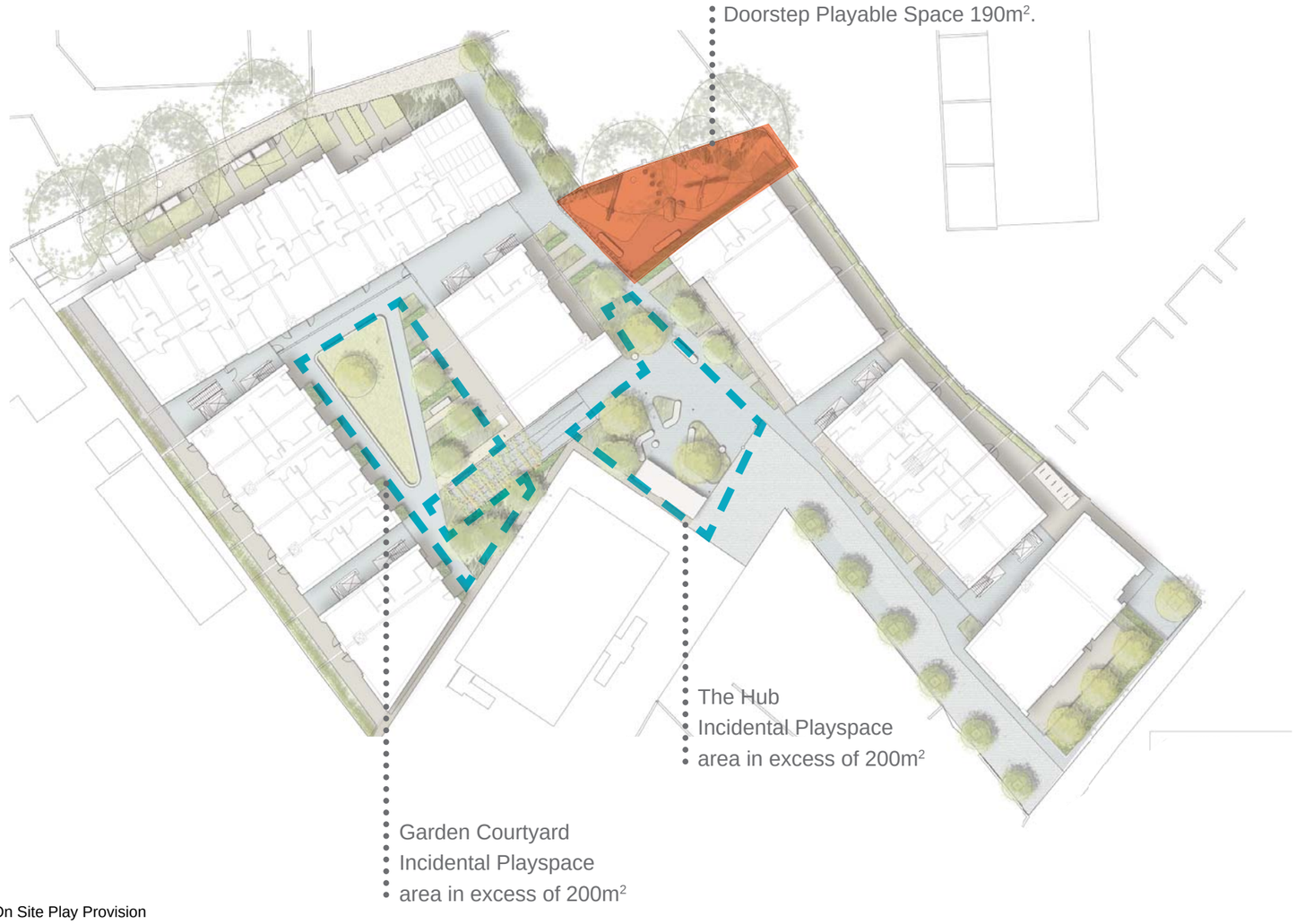
The photographs shown trace the route from the entrance to the development to the nearest off-site play space. This highlights that no major obstacles exist as no significant changes in level are encountered, pavement widths are generally generous, no major road crossings are required and the entire route benefits from good levels of passive surveillance.

The factors that are of some negative influence on this route are the business of Parkhurst Road as a traffic route and one minor road crossing where traffic turns into the small residential cul-de-sac of Moriarty Close. However, none of the influences are considered to be unacceptable in an inner London location such as this.

As described previously, the proposed scheme leaves provision for future connection through to Hollins/McCall House. If this connection is established then play facilities in these locations would become the most easily accessible to resident's of the proposed development. The route would allow an entirely traffic free connection although a change in level between plots would need to be negotiated by construction of a DDA compliant ramp.

6.0 Landscape

6.3 On-Site Play Space Provision



On Site Play Provision

The policy requirements for the under 5 age group are met entirely by on-site provision as shown adjacent.

The GLA requirement is satisfied by provision of the Doorstep Play Area measuring 190m2. Private gardens and balconies also provide additional outdoor play space for the 0-5's.

The formal provision of Doorstep Playable Space will be supplemented by informal play opportunities within the Garden Courtyard and the Hub. The courtyard has an area of lawn, garden rooms and planting to engage the interest of children, stimulate gentle and sensory play and provide seating for carers. The hub space has a contrasting character and is envisaged as an incidental playspace in the form of a playable street. As a multifunction space the area will allow for social interaction and a degree of physical stimulation through provision of playable street furniture elements and hard surface. The hub therefore allows some an opportunity for older age groups, reducing the need for these children to make journeys off-site.

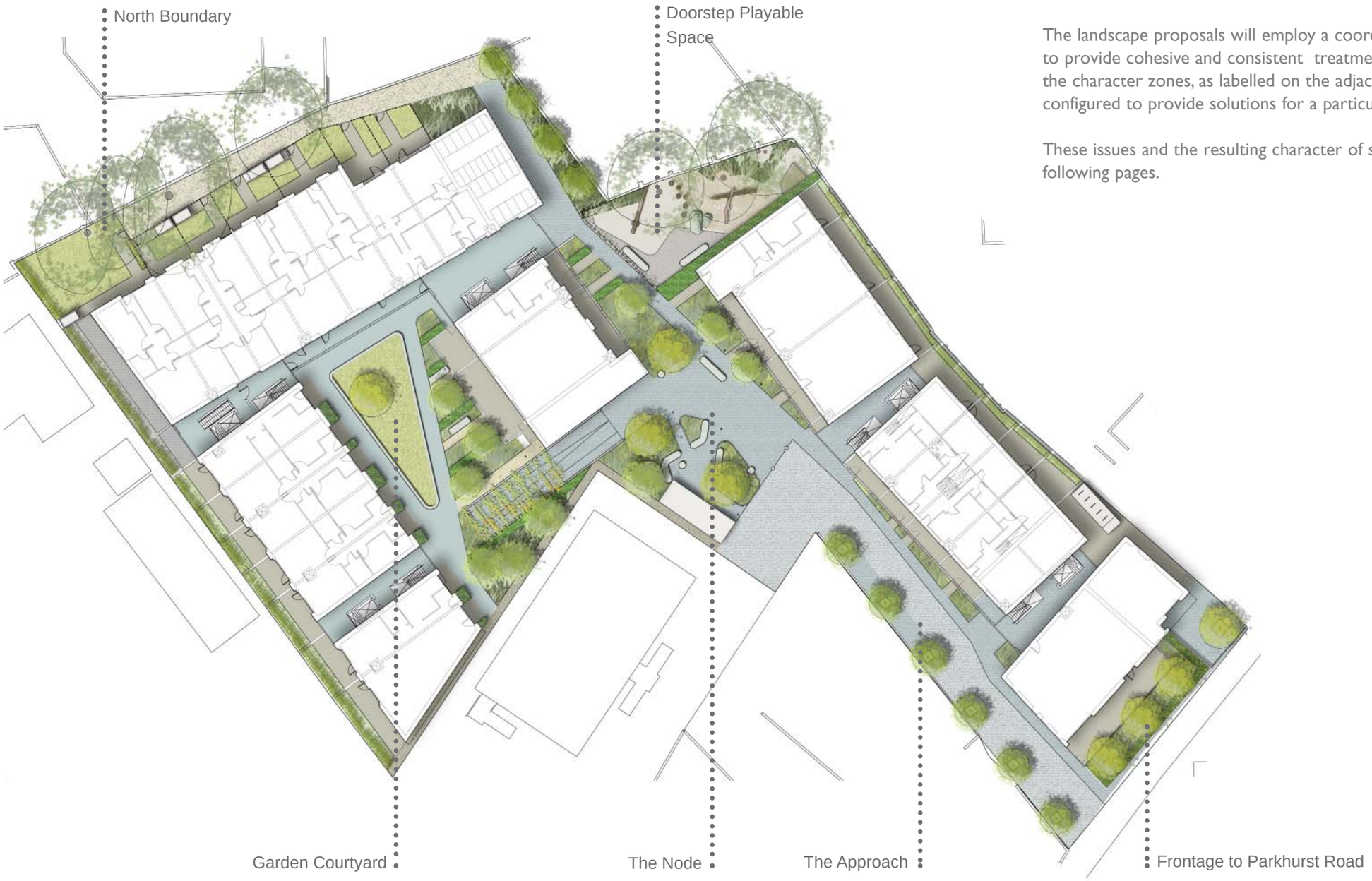
The characteristics and play value of the Doorstep Playable Space as well as the Garden Courtyard and Hub are described in the following section.

6.0 Landscape

6.3 Landscape Layout

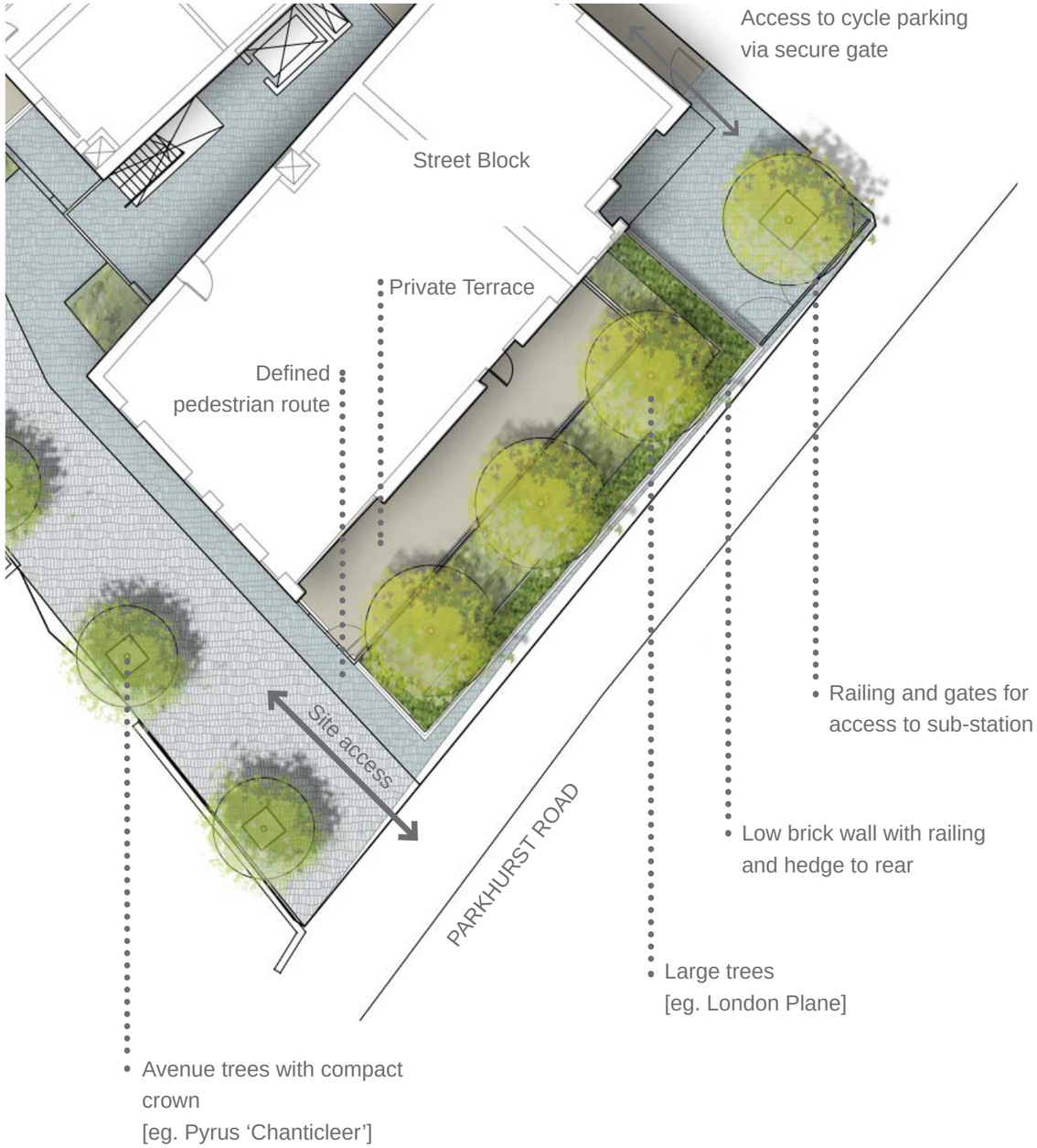
The landscape proposals will employ a coordinated range of materials and detailing to provide cohesive and consistent treatment across the site. However, each of the character zones, as labelled on the adjacent landscape layout plan, has been configured to provide solutions for a particular range of functions.

These issues and the resulting character of spaces are described individually on the following pages.



6.0 Landscape

6.3 Frontage to Parkhurst Road

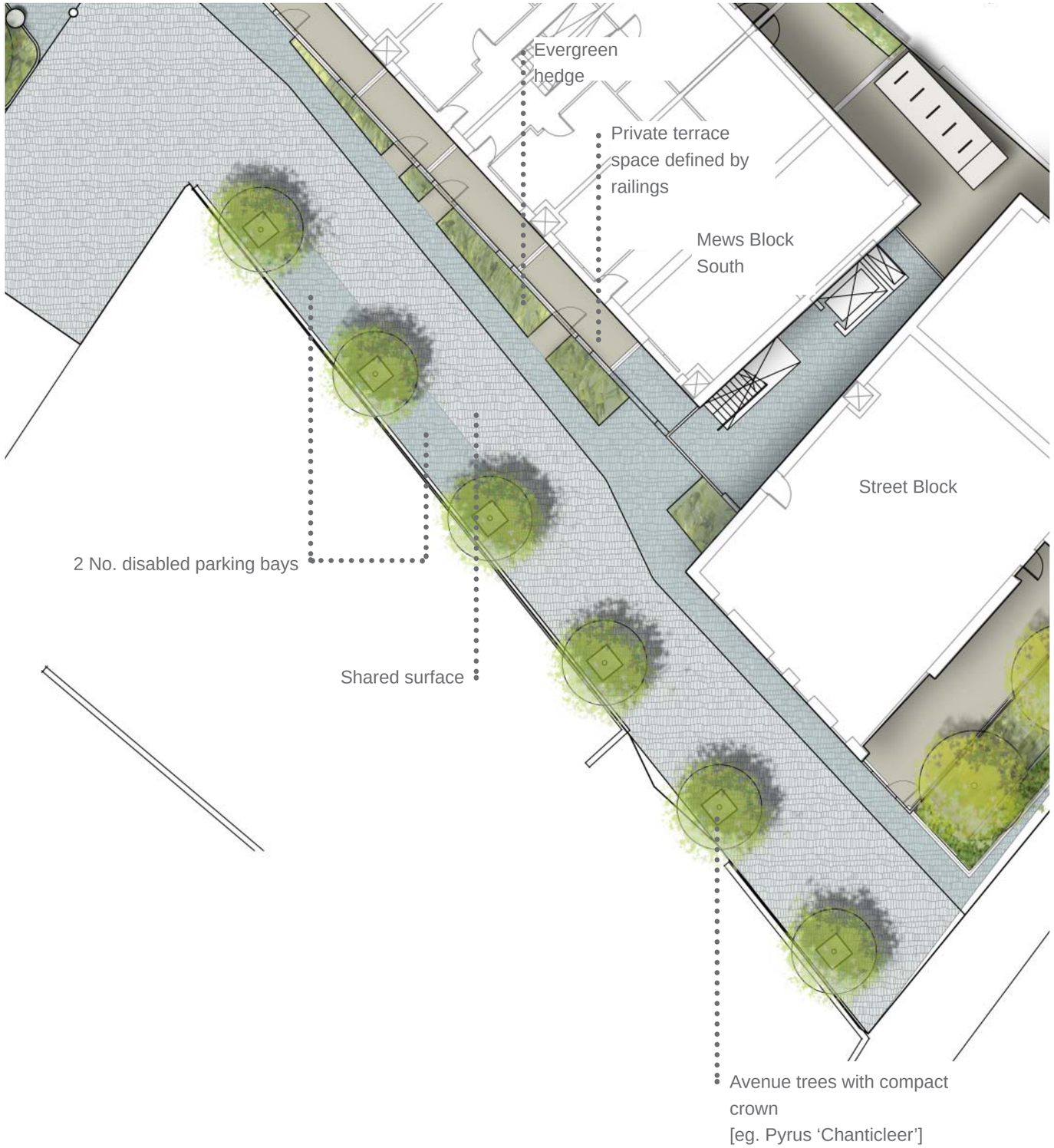


The building facing onto Parkhurst Road is set back 7.3m from the rear of the adopted pavement leaving a generous zone for trees and planting, softening the visual impact of the new block whilst providing a linear continuation of the trees found within the gardens of adjacent villas of the conservation area. The continuation of this rhythm promotes integration with the surrounding urban fabric. This sense of connection is continued into the hard landscape detailing where low walls with vertical railings will enclose the planting in common with the prevailing character of garden frontages along Parkhurst Road.

Large trees (e.g. London Plane) will be equally spaced along the frontage and be underplanted with evergreen hedges (e.g Ilex aquifolium or Quercus ilex) at the perimeter, with low shrubs and ground cover as infill. The belt of planting is a minimum of 3.3m wide as a means of providing privacy and security to residents at ground floor of the street facing block. The planting will favour low maintenance species and be maintained as part of the site wide management arrangements.

To the east of the planted enclosure there is a zone of hard surface allowing access to the electrical sub-station and side gate for cycle parking. To the west side is the principal entrance to the site for both pedestrians and vehicles. A band of quality paving [concrete block with natural aggregate face mix] with a blend of colours and textures creates a threshold to the development and signals to motorists that they should enter the site at low speed. A defined pedestrian route in material to match the road surface but with contrasting colour and unit sizes flanks the building edge and creates a clear invitation into the site.

6.0 Landscape
6.3 The Approach

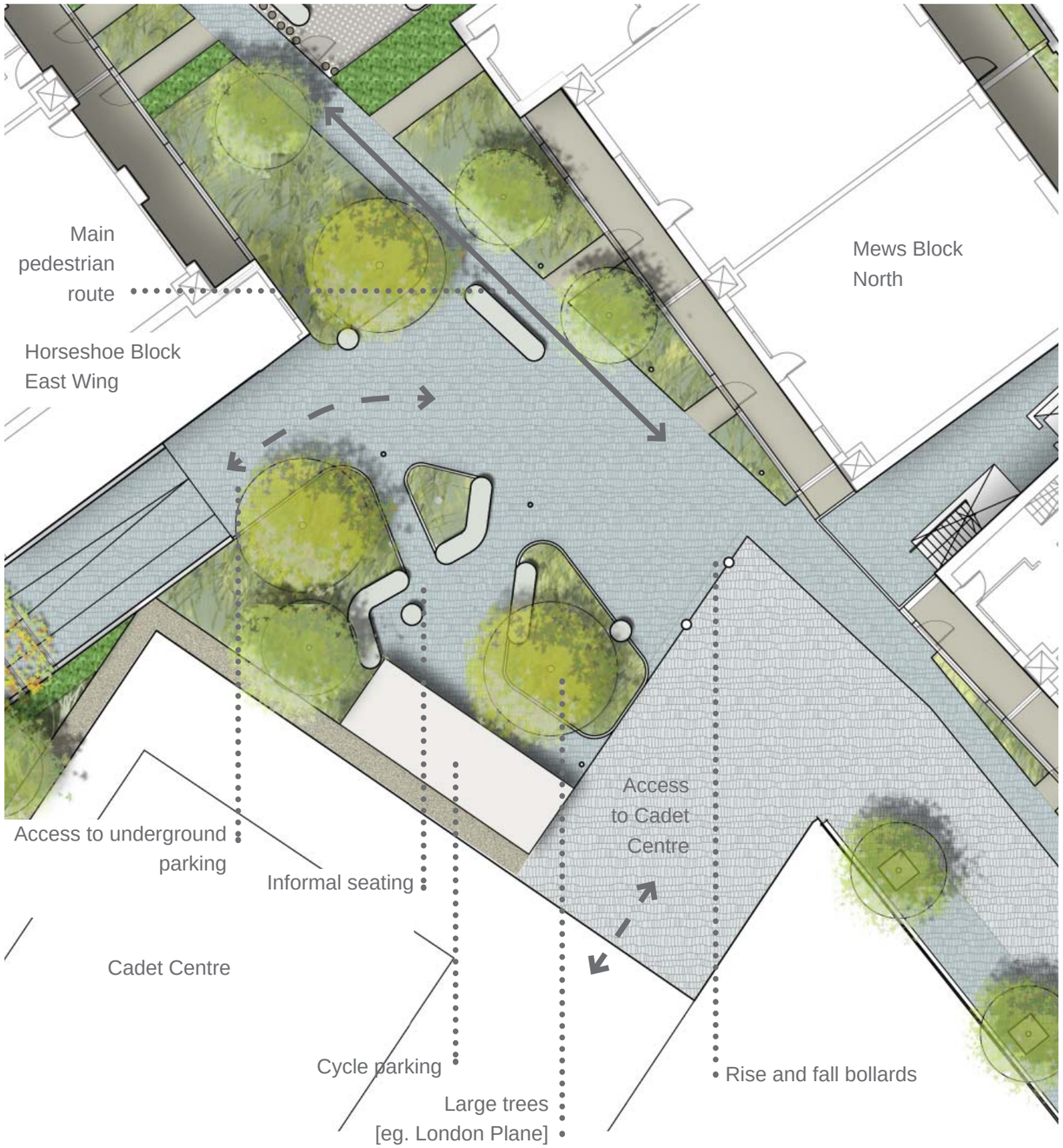


A line of six trees leads into the site along its west flank; this avenue provides spatial definition, a pleasant outlook for ground floor dwellings facing onto the space and a means of demarcating two disabled parking bays. Pyrus calleryana 'Chanticleer' is proposed as it is upright and narrow in form, highly ornamental yet suitably robust for an urban setting. Private amenity space at ground level is protected by strips of evergreen hedge planting and a block of planting is used to direct pedestrians emerging from the first core in order to maintain safe sight lines.

A shared surface strategy has been adopted in order to promote use of the paved surface as usable and multifunction space where pedestrians share equal priority with car movements. Measures such as maintaining a narrow carriageway, restricting forward visibility, as well as the pattern and texture of paving and planting will encourage low vehicle speed. This in combination with the low frequency of vehicle movements in and out of the site [refer to transport report] will allow use of the space for other functions to be maximised. Lighting will be mounted on columns, to allow safe levels of light and high uniformity for the security and well-being of residents; this treatment will continue through to the north boundary of the site where there is scope for future linkage of a pedestrian route through to Hollins and McCall House.

A distinct route delineated along the east edge of the surface by a low kerb [25-50mm upstand] will provide additional pedestrian security and confidence for all users but most notably users such as the blind, partially sighted or non-ambulant disabled.

6.0 Landscape
6.3 The Node



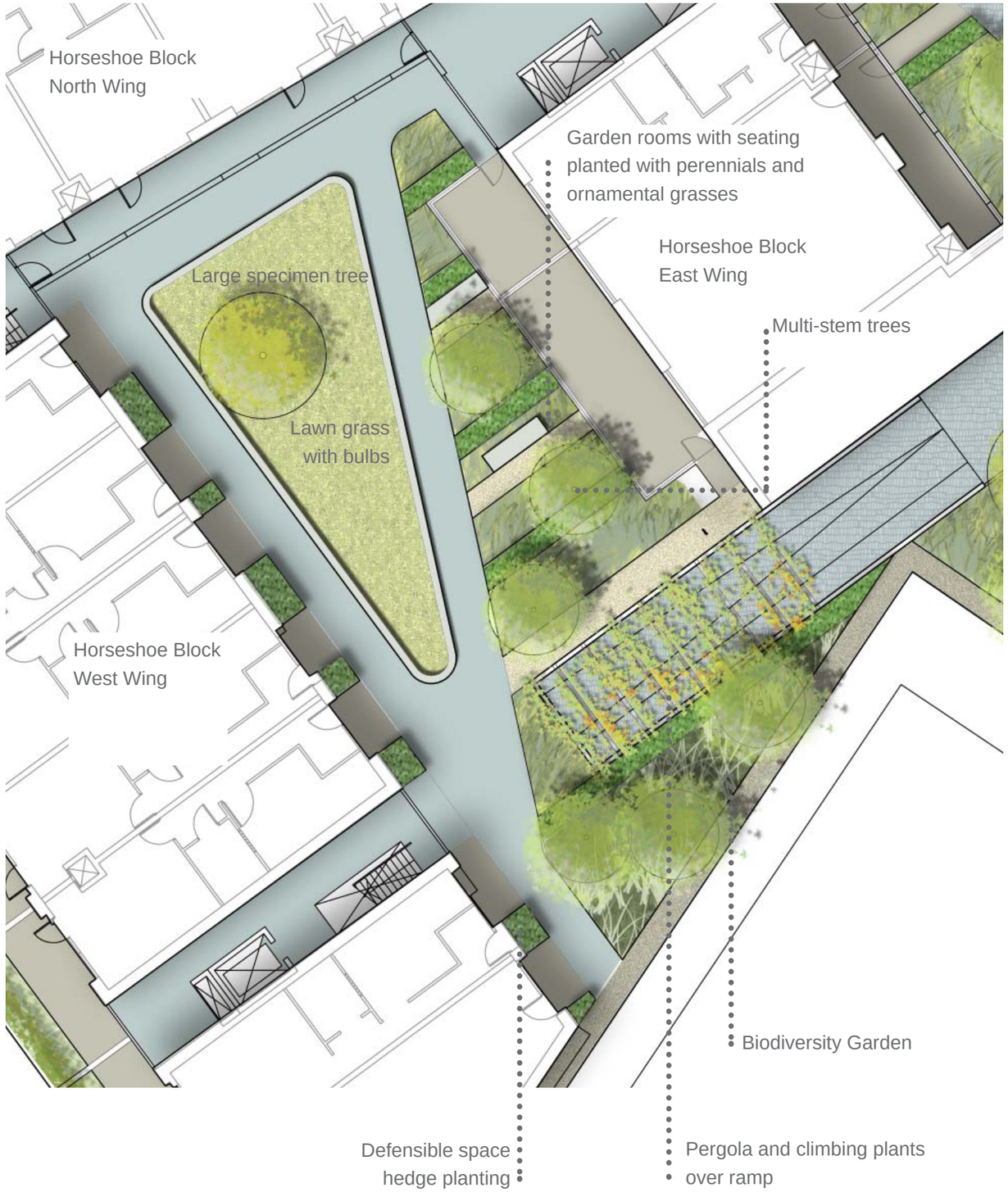
At the end of the approach section the space emerges into a wider area that facilitates vehicle turning and drop off and addresses the second core for resident access into the Mews Block and the access into the future Cadet Centre. From this point the character of space becomes increasingly relaxed, with naturalistic distribution of trees, distinctive paving, mounded areas with planting, imaginative street furniture and playable objects. This node space is a focal point for the whole development, providing a point of orientation within the scheme and generating a sense of fun and urban activity.

A loose triangle composed of three large stately trees (e.g. London Plane) is proposed to create a feeling of semi-enclosure within The Node, as well as connection with other parts of the scheme (frontage to Parkhurst Road and The Garden Courtyard). Large London Planes are a well-known feature of many London garden squares and courtyards, but here they are used in an informal layout set amongst playfully detailed landscape elements, giving a relaxed and contemporary feel. Other smaller ornamental trees chosen for their attractive form and seasonal impact (e.g. Amelanchier spp., Sorbus aucuparia) add variety of texture, colour and scale to the structural planting. Trees are underplanted with robust but attractive ground cover perennials and grasses, such as Anemone x hybida, Geranium spp., Epimidium spp., Luzula, Liriope, Verbena bonariensis etc.

Rise and fall bollards ensure that vehicles cannot stray into this zone unless the driver has authorised access to the underground parking or is providing a service function such as refuse collection. In this way children and adults alike can enjoy the versatile quality of the space; an ideal meeting point for visitors to the site or an informal play space for older children.

If not lingering in the space the journey will continue directly on the footpath that leads to the entrance for the Horseshoe Block as well as the potential pedestrian link to the north. Alternatively, cyclists will make use of the cycle parking that is found on two edges of the space or [along with disabled motorists] descend the ramp by turning left leading directly into the underground parking area.

6.0 Landscape
6.3 Garden Courtyard



In contrast to the animated character of The Node, The Garden Courtyard allows residents to enjoy the restful urban oasis feeling of a lushly planted courtyard that allows almost all of its area to see at least 2 hours of sunlight on March 21st, demonstrating that the space will feel very well sunlit during the summer months.

The courtyard is diagonally dissected by a footpath that provides the direct route to the south core of the west horseshoe block. To the west side of this route a lawn area will allow for spreading out and enjoyment of the sun as well as providing informal play opportunities for younger children with a large London Plane offering shade, and drifts of spring bulb planting bringing seasonal interest.

The eastern side features small-scale garden rooms; in these areas residents can sit comfortably on wooden benches in relative seclusion, enjoying the fragrance of sun-loving perennials and the swaying of ornamental grasses in the breeze, chosen from a planting palate including species such as Alchemilla mollis, Anemone x hybrida, Brunera spp., Euphorbia spp., Geranium spp., Libertia, Nepeta spp., Stipa spp., Perovskia 'Blue Spire', Verbena bonariensis etc.

The garden rooms also serve as a buffer to the ground floor gardens of the east horseshoe block, protecting the privacy of residents. To the edge of the west block a simple strip of hedge planting (e.g. clipped evergreen Quercus ilex) fulfils a similar function, creating defensible space for residents, with their private amenity space being on the opposite side of the block against the western boundary.

The south edge is defined by a pergola with climbing plants (e.g. flowering evergreen hydrangea relative Pileostegia viburnoides or glossy evergreen flowering Clematis armandii) spanning over the basement ramp. As well as enhancing the view into the courtyard from dwellings overlooking the garden at high level above, the pergola, in combination with trees to the south of the ramp provides screening to the Cadet Centre building to reinforce the sense that this is a secluded and peaceful space.

The triangular zone between the ramp and the Cadet Centre boundary will be planted as a biodiversity garden, providing habitat for invertebrates by inclusion of diverse native planting [including trees] and hibernacula. Species to be chosen for their attractiveness to birds and wildlife and include some crossover species from the Garden Courtyard to create a visual connection with the wider scheme to avoid this area being seen as an isolated or left-over space.

6.0 Landscape
6.3 Doorstep Playable Space

An area of doorstep play for children aged 0-5 is situated at the north-east corner of the site, partly under the canopy of existing trees to be retained. Children of this age benefit from small scale equipment that encourages balancing, spinning and clambering with convenient provision of comfortable seating for supervising carers.

Taking account of Play England's publication 'Introducing Design for Play: Ten Design Principles', the design will enhance the site as a whole and exploit the character of the existing trees to create a natural play space.

Predominately timber and natural stone elements will be combined with planting to provide a variety of non-prescriptive play opportunities. The boundary facing onto the existing children's play space will be used to introduce additional play function whether this is achieved by inclusion of climbing holds for traversing or sensory elements to engage children through sound and movement.

Planting here will be designed to be shade tolerant, robust, tactile and non-toxic, featuring plants such as Geranium maccorhizum, Bergenia spp., Luzula sylvatica etc.

Due to close proximity of the north elevation of the mews block the layout includes a planted buffer strip and there will be no overlooking into the play space at ground floor level. However, the position of apartments in the east horseshoe block opposite will ensure that the space is well overlooked to provide passive surveillance of the space.

Retention of the existing trees will provide extensive canopy cover and this will create an area with a distinct and intimate atmosphere. There will be some sunlight penetration into the space during summer, particularly in the south-western corner where seating for carers has been located. There will also be sunlight entering the playspace during the early morning.

Equipment in the space should enhance the existing character of the space and reliance on standard play products minimised in favour of natural elements such as logs and natural stone boulders and custom made elements configured specifically for the site.

6.0 Landscape
6.3 North Boundary

A continuous route connects the west and east edges of the site along the north boundary; this is a pleasant pedestrian connection of generous width that benefits from integration of existing trees and provides a means of access to ground floor dwellings in the north block of the horseshoe arrangement. This footpath allows potential for the future opening up of access to McCall House/Hollins House and associated amenity space.

Openness is maintained along this edge to allow passive surveillance and pedestrian safety. With front doors facing the route there is a sense of animation and interest along the route whilst boundary treatment of garden fences will be timber fencing that allow views through to the space beyond. A new steel railing along part of the north boundary will also offer prospect into the neighbouring estate's communal amenity space and growing area. The route will be well lit and the footpath surface will be zero-dig construction to protect the roots of existing trees. The new trees that line the eastern approach from the heart of the scheme to be Pyrus 'Chanticleer' to match those lining the approach from Parkhurst Road.

6.0 Landscape
6.3 Private Gardens

Gardens as an extension to interior space

Planting to soften garden edges

Each dwelling at ground floor has access to its own private space. A strip of smooth paving along the dwelling edge will be a minimum of 1.5m deep, sufficient to place a small table and chair and enjoy sitting in the outdoors.

Private outdoor space for each dwelling will be provided to meet the requirements of London Borough of Islington's Development Management Policy DM3.5 by combination of private garden space and balcony provision.

Gardens will function as outdoor rooms and along east and west boundaries of the site will include a strip of planting at the far end of the space. Depending on the length of the garden this area will be planted with climbers to inhabit wall space and include a specimen shrub and ground cover planting where space allows.

6.0 Landscape
6.3 Planting


Perennial planting combined with clipped hedges


Climbers to inhabit vertical surfaces


Biodiversity planting [shade tolerant plants]


Blocks of hedge planting used to define defensible space

The planting design offers an opportunity to choose new trees and plants which will help define and enhance the special character of each of the new spaces created by the development. The planting is designed to compliment and contrast with the new architecture and materials; to create drama or a sense of calm; to bring a variety of natural sensory experiences into this urban setting. Plants have also been chosen for their attractiveness throughout the year, as well as their habitat value. An overriding consideration is maintenance, and plants will be chosen which have been proven to be robust in urban conditions, and require limited maintenance.

• Planting will reinforce the landscape strategy as a whole by developing shifts in character from formal to naturalistic, imbuing each space with a distinct atmosphere

• Plants and trees provide both physical and psychological relief from hard urban surroundings, improving microclimate by acting as a windbreak and offering shade in summer. The changing impression of planting through the seasons provides visual interest and an important connection to the natural world.

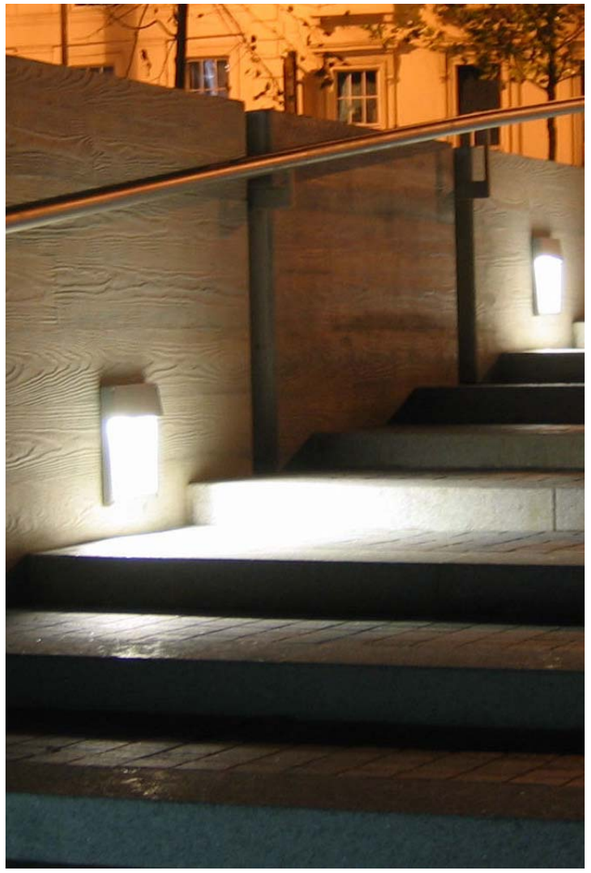
• Planting will be designed with careful attention to sight lines and security issues and will be vetted as part of the Secure by Design process.

• Drought tolerant species will be favoured in order to minimize the need for piped irrigation systems.

• Consideration will be given to the need to replace ageing tree stock over time and new tree planting will be designed to harmonise with existing trees.

• A Maintenance Plan will be produced and any trees or plants found to be dead or dying within a three year period post practical completion will be replaced.

6.0 Landscape
6.3 Lighting



Recessed low level lighting

LED column lighting along main pedestrian routes

Effective external lighting is necessary to allow for safe use and movement in external areas during periods of darkness and low light. The proposed strategy makes optimum use of existing and proposed features such as wall to mount low level fittings and provide a wash of light across paving surfaces. Use of light columns has been avoided to prevent accumulation of lighting clutter and also problems of intrusive light spill into neighbouring properties. Prior to construction the lighting strategy will be worked up in detail with light level calculations to ensure that lighting meets the required levels of security and safety.

Lighting bollards will be used within the garden courtyard to provide low-level lighting to pedestrian routes whilst avoiding problems of light spill into properties.

The general aims of the lighting strategy are to:

• Provide safe movement routes through external areas during the hours of darkness.

• Provide areas of subtle, low-level lighting that will enhance enjoyment and appreciation of external space.

• To highlight specific features of interest.

• To enhance security and safety and facilitate effective way-finding whilst avoiding over-lit treatment that would be uncomfortable for residents.

• To favour low-energy fittings that provide 'white' light with high levels of efficacy and effective colour rendering.

• Light spill will be minimised to avoid negative impacts on bats.

• To be robust and low maintenance.

6.0 Landscape
6.3 Materials


'Face mix' concrete block in blend of colours


'linear format block paving


Resin bound gravel surface


Smooth concrete slabs with tumbled concrete cobbles

The landscape surfaces are intended to flow through the site and a restricted pallet of materials is proposed to achieve a sense of unity.

The primary hard surface used in public areas will be a will be concrete block with natural granite aggregate face-mix that is available in a wide range of dimensions and colours. This material will be used across the frontage, throughout the shared surface area, footpaths and within the garden courtyard. Human scale and a softness of appearance will be achieved by using blends of material. Larger unit sizes will be employed in the wider open space areas and reduced block sizes will convey the transition from public to semi-private. The colour range will be selected to complement the selected brick for the proposed buildings.

The defensible space for individual private areas will be a smooth concrete slab with natural aggregate finish. This low maintenance surface is ideal for positioning tables and chairs and the contrast in finish to the primary surface material described above will signal the change from public to private.

Along the North boundary of the site resin bound gravel will be used to indicate an increasingly informal character. A further benefit of this material being its permeability and shallow construction depth, making it ideal for laying within the root protection area of existing trees.

6.0 Landscape
6.3 Biodiversity and Existing Trees


Biodiversity green roof


Existing trees to be retained on north boundary

The landscape strategy encompasses a drive towards improved biodiversity.

The site is currently dominated by an expanse of hard standing with the main feature of ecological significance being the existing mature trees. The existing trees are to be protected during construction and retained as part of the final scheme. New planting and ecological features will be integrated with the retained trees and create diverse habitats. Measures to be included within the scheme include the following:

• Biodiverse roofs to upper levels of the proposed buildings, these will meet the criteria stated in Islington's Environmental Design SPD. Substrate will vary in depth and be no less than 80mm depth, planting will include a wide range of native species

• Areas of planting at ground level will include plant mixes that include a high proportion of native plants or plants known to provide ecological benefit

• Invertebrate hibernacula, bird boxes and bat boxes will be included at appropriate locations within the site

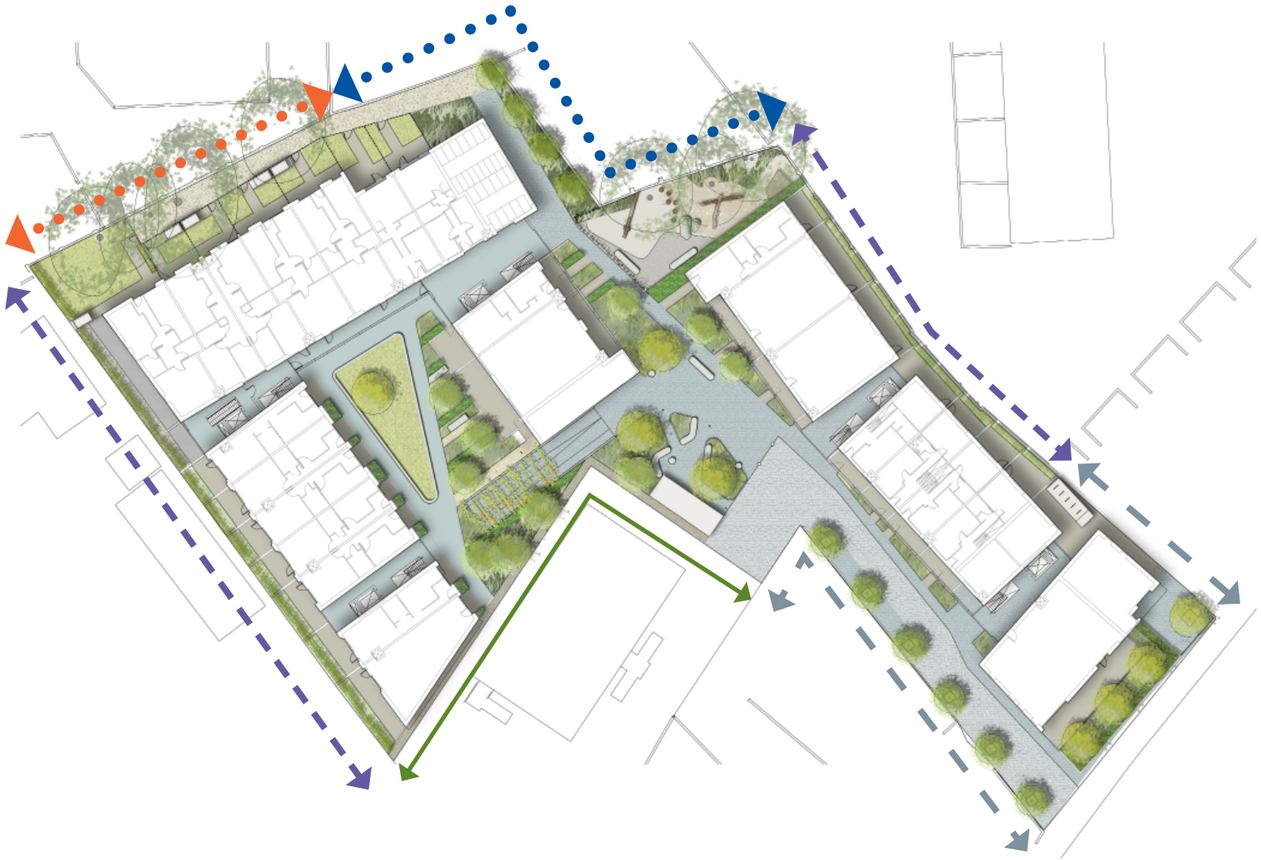
• Planting that encourages wildlife will be planted within the Doorstep Playable Space to provide the possibility of educational as well as environmental benefit

• A site wide landscape management plan will be formulated that includes sustainability aims and the measures required to build biodiversity in the long term

Further detail in relation to ecology and the existing trees will be provided in the Ecological and Arboricultural reports.

6.0 Landscape

6.3 Boundary Treatments



Use of steel railings to provide improved visual connectivity

Existing wall with timber screen/trellis up to 1.8m
[subject to consent from adjoining owners]

Brick wall with palisade fence security fence

Existing boundary walls retained
[subject to agreement with adjoining owners]

Palisade fence removed from top of existing wall and
height of wall increased

The application site's former use as a Territorial Army centre has lead to a hard edged boundary treatment that allows very little visual link from the interior of the site to its surroundings. Brick walls generally over 1 metre high predominate with steel palisade fencing mounted on top. This level of security is not required or desirable in the proposed development.

Treatment of boundaries around the site edges will vary in order to provide a balance between the privacy of residents [and neighbours] whilst allowing an improved relationship with surrounding housing and open spaces.

Within private gardens along east and west flanks of the site the existing brick walls will be retained. Subject to agreement with adjoining owners the security fence will be removed and timber screens will be erected in their place up to a height of approximately 1.8m. The use of natural materials will present a softer character to the garden spaces and also allow the vertical surfaces to be inhabited by climbing plants.

Along the north boundary a greater sense of connectivity to the neighbouring amenity spaces will be encouraged. Vertical steel railings set in low walls will be used to maximise transparency. Security will be improved by the overlooking from within the site.

Further opportunities will be taken to enhance the boundary in the play area by the attachment of sensory play elements or the potential addition of climbing holds to allow boundaries to become interactive and playable surfaces.

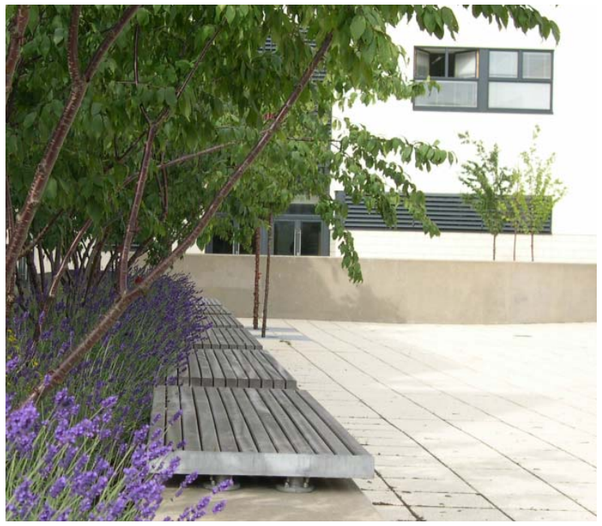
The future Cadet Centre requires a secure boundary which will be a brick wall with palisade fence mounted on top. Effective screening of this edge will be provided by the planting and buildings within the site.

6.0 Landscape
6.3 Street Furniture


Benches combined with planting, as per the Node


Informal seating provision


Rise and fall bollards


Timber topped benches

Street furniture should be an integrated part of the landscape design, with attractive, robust pieces adding functionality. Appropriate furniture makes an important contribution to the legibility and comfortable enjoyment of the outdoor environment.

Throughout the scheme opportunities for seating should be numerous and flexible, taking a range of forms. In certain locations benches with hardwood timber tops will provide generous space for spreading out and enjoying the sun or shade, in other places seating can be more informal and flexible, such as within the Node space.

As an integrated street environment the widespread use of bollards has been avoided but in order to protect the pedestrian friendly environment of the Node at the centre of the site telescopic or folding bollards will be employed to allow site management to control access for emergency vehicles and servicing and deliveries.

6.0 Landscape

6.3 Management and Maintenance

The design of all elements of the landscape should ensure a safe environment and facilitate ease of maintenance. A management strategy will be put in place to ensure clear responsibilities, this will include objectives in relation to sustaining and improving biodiversity on site as well as providing an efficient, safe and tidy site.

The use of high quality materials with long design lives will be specified in order to minimise the regular replacement of design elements

All areas of planting that lie outside the extent of private amenity/garden spaces will be maintained by the developer's appointed management team

The development will be managed from a central point on-site

Safe light levels will be maintained across the site for security and continual use

The planting design will favour robust plants with low maintenance requirements

A management plan will identify the requirements of maturing plant material in the medium to long term

Existing trees as well as proposed trees to be monitored for potential health problems and structural faults