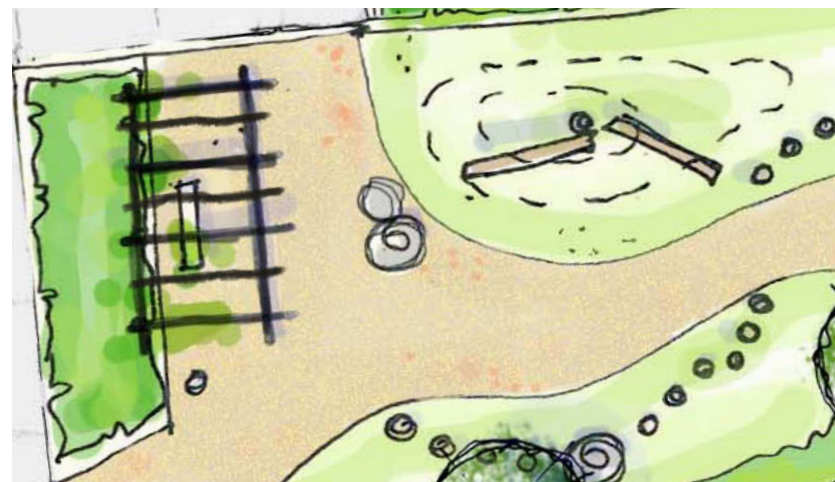


KENNET ISLAND - WHALE AVENUE ENHANCEMENTS

LANDSCAPE DESIGN REPORT

Prepared on behalf of
BERKELEY HOMES (URBAN RENAISSANCE)

February 2022



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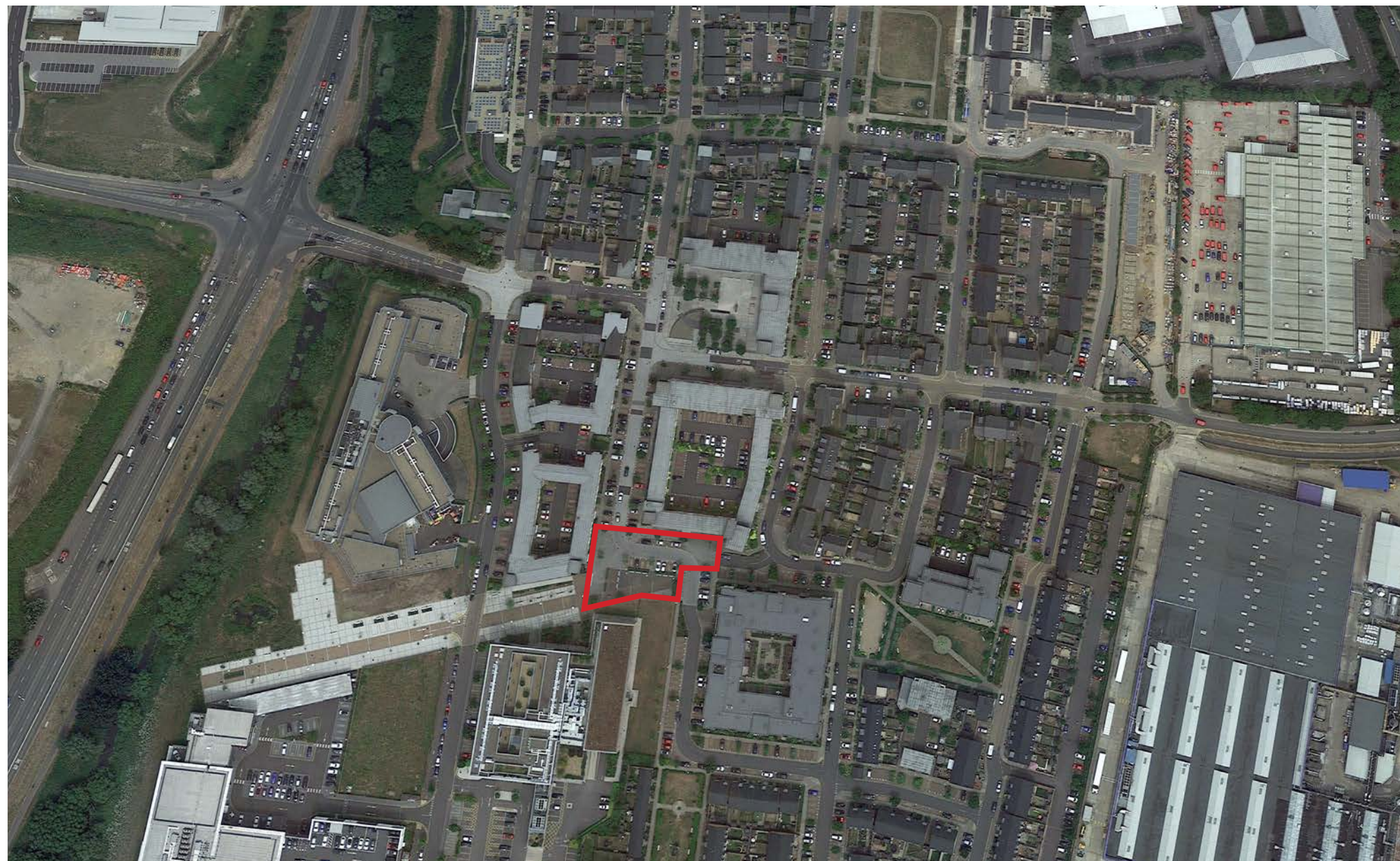
KENNET ISLAND WHALE AVENUE LANDSCAPE DESIGN STATEMENT

BERKELEY HOMES (URBAN RENAISSANCE)

2825-RE-03

Rev	Description	Date	By/Chk
P3	Reviewed and updated for 2022 submission	10/02/22	NK/NK
P4	Minor amendments	16/02/22	NK/NK

1 INTRODUCTION



Aerial photograph of Kennet Island

This report has been prepared by Allen Pyke Associates on behalf of Berkeley Homes (Urban Renaissance). It provides a description of the existing site and proposed improvement works to an area of public realm with the Kennet Island residential development in Reading.

Whale Avenue is one of the primary streets within the development and passes through the area proposed for improvement. The area has been open to the public for some years but has failed to find a purpose and is rarely used. The improvement area is overlooked by residential apartments. To the north of the site is 'The Meeting Point' a community space which can be hired out by residents. It is understood this facility is not well used. This may be partially due to its lack of active frontage which means it is not easily found and does not contribute to the streetscene in a positive way.

It is envisioned that the proposed refurbishment of the site area will create a more active and positive space in front of The Meeting Point and generate more users of the facility and the public realm as a whole.

2 EXISTING SITE

The Whale Avenue Improvement Area is located adjacent to the Circle Reading Hospital in the southwest part of Kennet Island. The space is fronted by a community building which provides facilities which maybe hired by residents for meetings, parties and so on.

The Improvement Area is comprised of two distinct parts, divided by Whale Avenue. There is parking on both sides of the road, which divides up the space and prevents visual and physical connections between the north and south.

The presence of community use means that this area could provide positive amenity value for the community and act as a spill out space for events.

The larger open space to the south, currently lacks purpose. It contains a large number of benches but has no obvious function to draw people to use it or sit there. There is a piece of public art located here but this is not positioned in a way which makes it a strong focal point.

The area uses many of the same hard landscape materials as other areas of public realm throughout the development, including the grid paving pattern and use of semi-mature trees in raised planters with low clipped hedges which provide the only soft landscape.

The main seating area is paved with blocks of a contrasting colour.



3 PHOTOGRAPHS



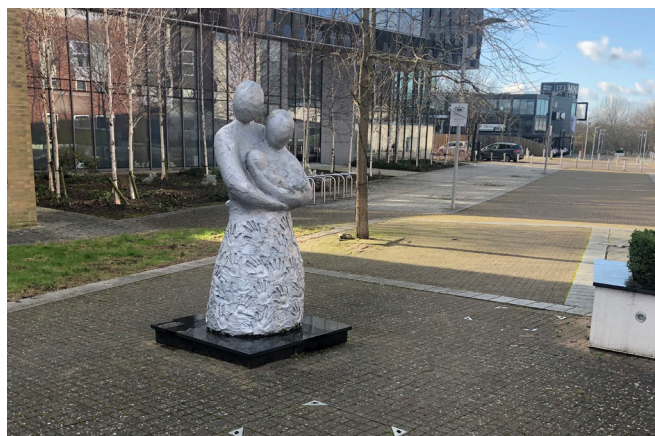
- Large open area provides opportunities for a variety of uses.
- Raised planters provide a sense of enclosure but also reduce access and connection to community facilities (left).
- Hard space has limited biodiversity value and exacerbates stormwater runoff



- Community facilities overlooking the space could benefit from additional amenity space
- Visitor parking bays screen the entrance to the community facilities and reduce movement.



- Low wall and railing and change of material divide the community facilities from the public realm



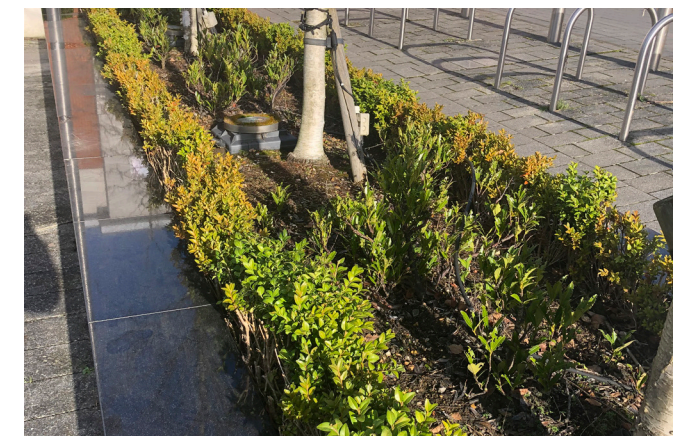
- Public art could become a focal point
- Current location lacks impact.
- Arrangement of seating is not inviting.



- Open corner gives good connection between north and south spaces
- Existing semi-mature trees



- Long vista created in front of hospital, linking to the Improvement Area
- Raised planters are static and do not add anything to the space



- Hedging has established well in places
- Limited species palette is at risk from disease and provides limited seasonal variation and wildlife value

4 EXISTING TREES

There are ten existing trees planted in hard landscape within the red line. Three further trees are planted in a raised planter. Four trees are proposed to be retained, the remainder are to be removed and replaced with new trees planted in more advantageous growing conditions, i.e. with access to greater soil volumes, than currently provided.

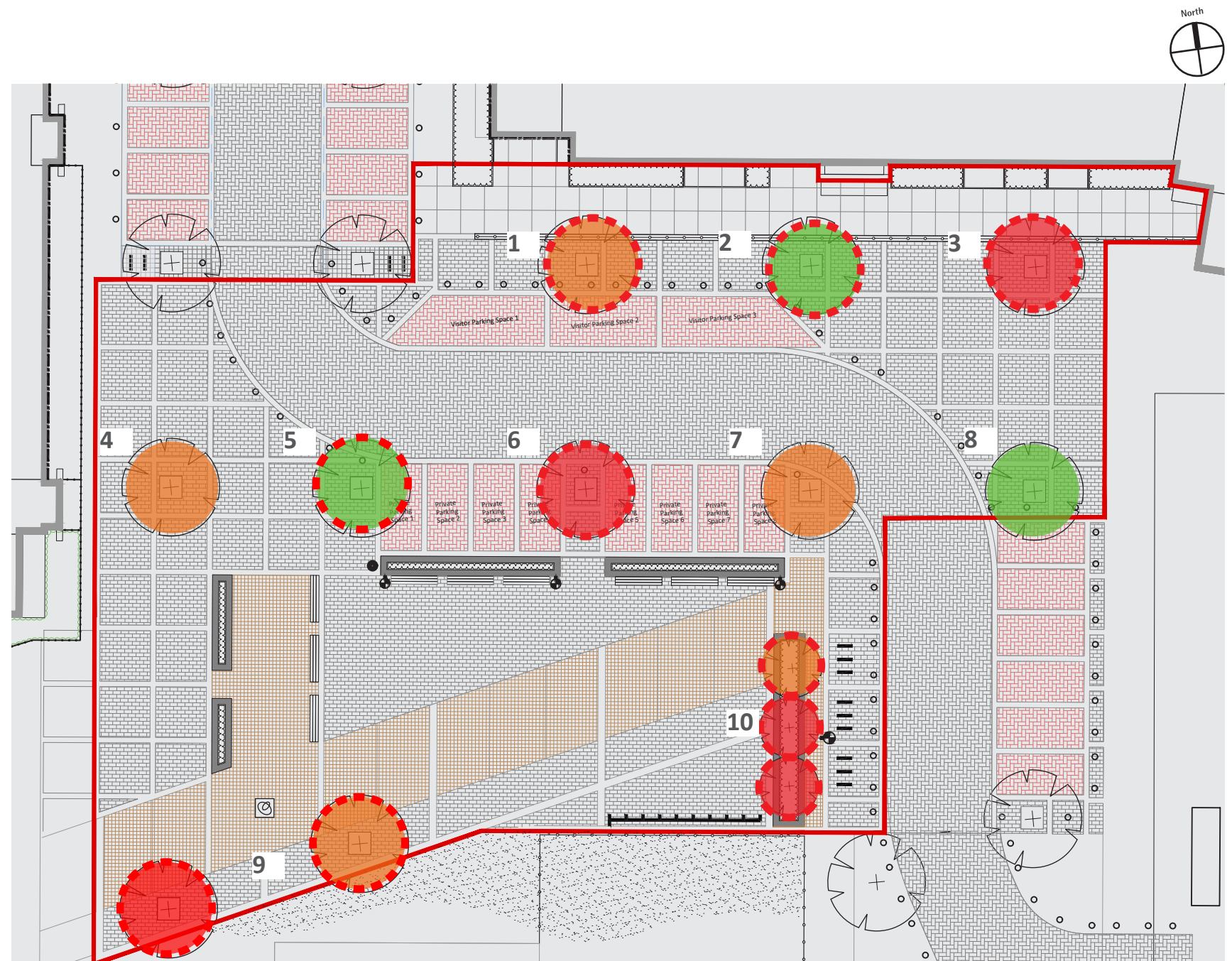
The condition of the trees have been assessed and monitored for a number of years, beginning in Autumn 2018 and mpst recently in January 2022.

None of the trees are in wholly good condiiton. Most are average with a number showing signs of dieback. This is most likely due to stress when they were first planted. Over the years the trees have struggled and have yet to establish themselves as healthy specimens that are flourishing within their environment. Where existing trees are to be retained they should be selectively pruned to balance the canopy.

LEGEND

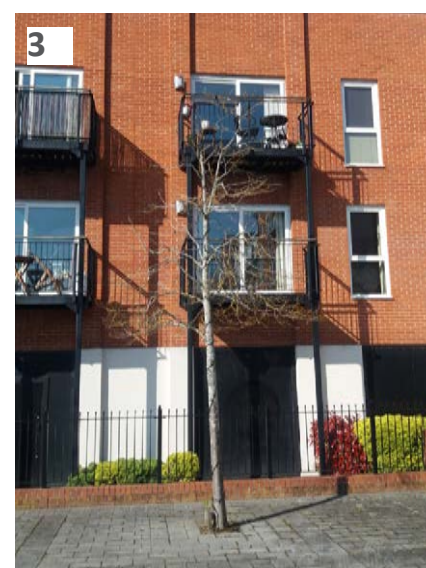
-  Tree in good - average condition
-  Tree in average condition
-  Tree in poor condition
-  Tree to be replaced as part of landscape proposals

NOTE: - selective pruning is recomedned to retained trees to promote good form.





Trees to be removed to facilitate proposals. Replacement trees are proposed within areas of soft landscape to maximise available soil volumes and longterm health.



Trees is leaning and will be removed and replaced in new location



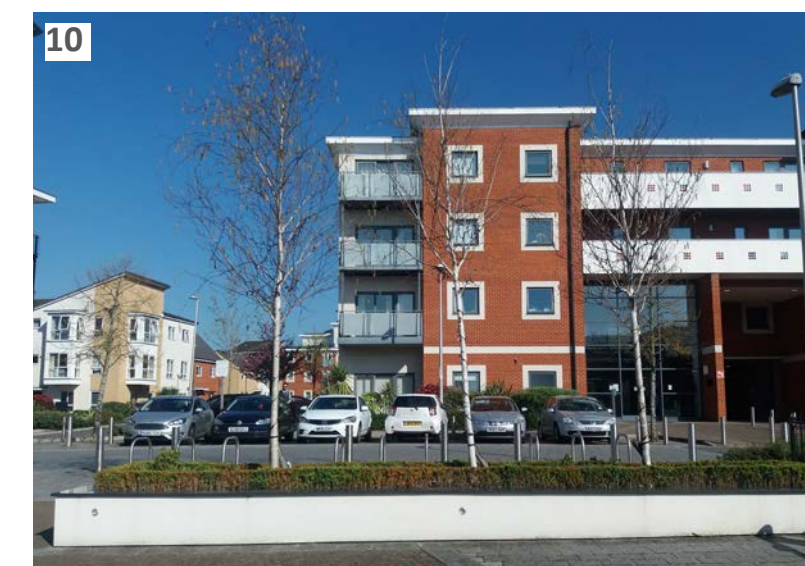
Trees are of poor form and showing dieback, these will be replaced



Trees varying from good-average and average condition will be retained but would benefit from selective canopy pruning.



Tree to be removed to facilitate proposals. Replacement tree is proposed within areas of soft landscape to maximise available soil volumes and longterm health.



Birch trees in raised planter are suffering from stress/dieback due to the restricted growing conditions. These will be replaced by smaller tree species of a more suitable size and water demand for the conditions.

5 CONCEPT

Aim: To create two separate community spaces. To the north an open terrace would be created to encourage community events to spill out into the public realm. In the south a semi-enclosed space for recreation.

The north part would be enlarged by relocating the existing visitor parking spaces to the south side of the ride. This would create a bigger and more flexible space which could be used for temporary stands or outdoor gatherings. The removal of the low wall and railing and replacement with wide steps gives further opportunity for seating and builds strong visual and physical links with the adjacent community facilities.

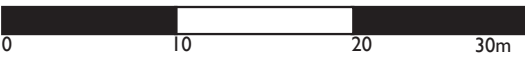
The south area would be quite separate. This space could be a destination for people of all ages to gather. It would be well overlooked and will include areas of species-rich grass, informal play and seating features and robust pergolas for shelter.

LEGEND

-  Flexible community space
-  Seating/recreation area
-  Green link
-  Key circulation routes



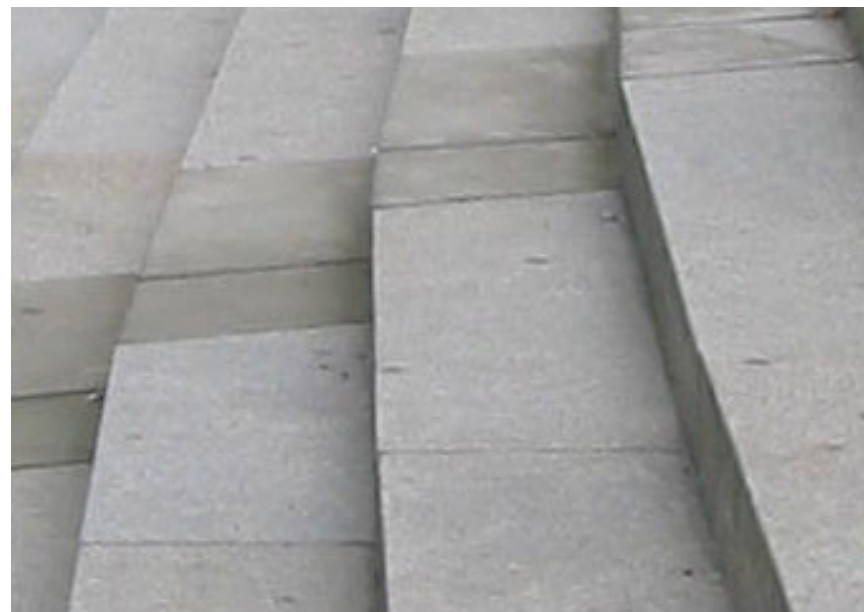
6 SKETCH LAYOUT



7 CHARACTER IMAGES



Informal Seating



Wide steps



Robust timber pergola



Informal play elements in grass



Textured planting in raised beds



Informal play elements in grass