

6. LANDSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM

Boulders
The 'boulders' will be the spaces that people occupy in the landscape and public realm for lunch, socialising, relaxing and people watching.

The movements of people flow around the 'boulders', so these are spaces to stop, linger and settle in the landscape and public realm.

“The street is the river of life.”
William H. Whyte



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6.1 LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

6.1.5 Scale

Comparisons of the scale of the public space have been taken with similar, linear pedestrian spaces in recent schemes, such as the examples shown on the right.

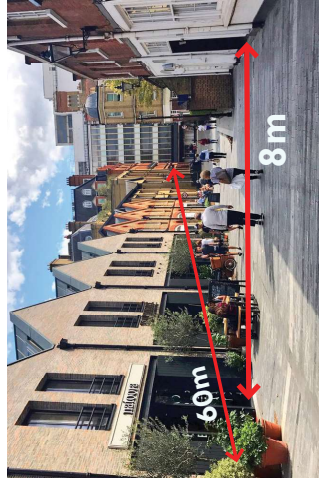
Key for the spatial composition of the main open space within the proposed development, Friars Walk, is to take advantage of the distinct geometry of the linear space resulting from the positioning of the buildings. This structures the predominantly linear space into alternating wider and narrower areas, which allows the creation of a sequence of distinct spaces for different uses and with diverse qualities.

The staggered layout of these spaces offers a new quality to the network of the traditionally very narrow South-North alleyways in Reading's city centre.

Friars Walk is designed to receive sufficient sunlight and to create a visual connection between the public realm and the first floor amenity terraces, therefore creating a safe and sociable environment and future-proofing the development for successive development of the site north of Garrard Street.



Station Hill



Pavilion Road, Knightsbridge



Central St. Martins, London



Fitzroy Place, London



6.2 LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

6.2.1. Landscape Master Plan

The design of the public realm has been developed to meet the following key objectives:

- making the development an integral part of the city under consideration of the local context.
- improving connections into and through the development.
- defining a strong, identifiable residential address and a new retail destination that complement the existing city centre's offer.
- creating a place to belong where residents, workers, neighbours and visitors can mix.
- offering high quality shared amenities that foster a strong sense of community and allow residents to feel home.
- building in flexibility and for future development surrounding the site in a changing part of the city without compromising the current scheme.
- providing a safe and secure community at the heart of the city
- a beautiful, sustainable landscape to be enjoyed by all.

The following pages describe the main areas of the landscape master plan in detail:

- Friars Walk
- Garrard Street
- Residents' amenity courtyards and terraces



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6.2 LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

6.2.2 Friars Walk

While predominantly a hard-surfaced podium landscape, Friars Walk has been designed to become an integral part of the city centre's urban fabric. Key elements in this are the provision of soft landscape areas at grade along the southeastern site boundary, and the feature tree in the centre of the site.

The staggered layout of the wings of building E naturally creates protected areas that are adaptable for cafe and retail spill out, and planters with directional banding are strategically placed to define an organic pedestrian flow inspired by the overarching river concept.

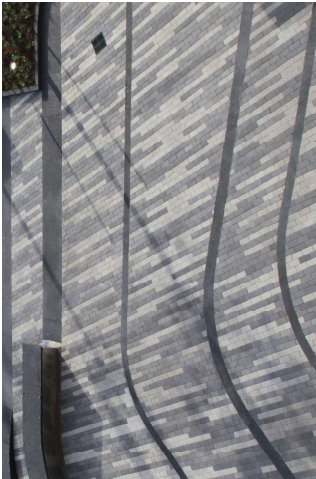
The aspiration for the north end of the site is to eventually connect to phase 2 of the development area whilst maintaining a functionality and identity in the interim phase.

A unifying surface patternation inspired by the river theme encourages a more meandering pedestrian flow, providing opportunities for social interactions and to slow down and enjoy the public realm.



- 1 Spill out area
- 2 Planting 'boulder' with seating and planting
- 3 Planters with 'garden room', planting and seating integrated act as buffer to area in front of residential entrances
- 4 Feature tree to Friars Walk with a light canopy, Liquidambar
- 5 Planter with integrated play and two tiered seating edge.
- 6 Paving patternation and banding inspired by river theme and pedestrian movement. Quality public realm materials that are durable and hard wearing.
- 7 Spill out area under colonnade
- 8 Existing paving and replaced/added trees to Friar Street.
- 9 Street tree framing the entrance of the site and creating a welcome plaza
- 10 Defensible Space to residential units

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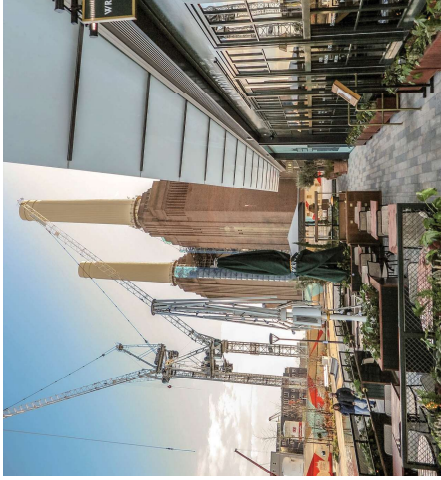
Directional banding



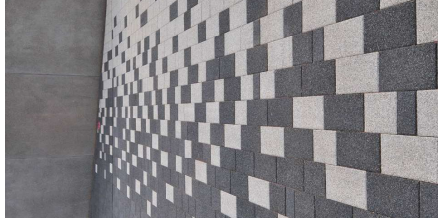
Perimeter planting screening adjacent building wall



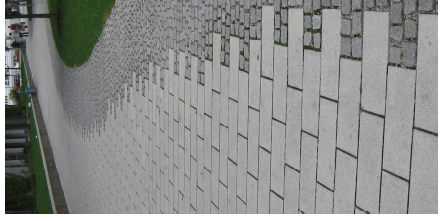
Tiered benches and planting boulder islands



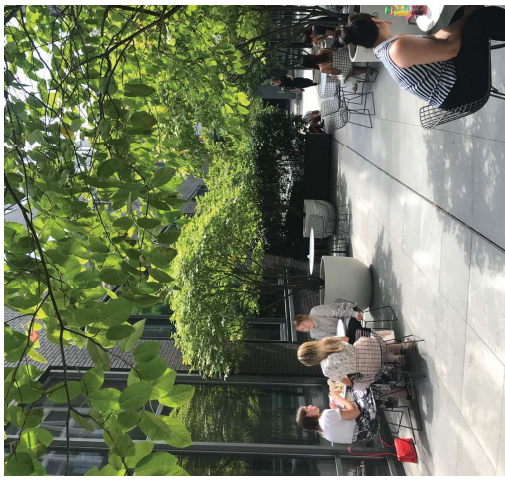
Movable seating to f+b.



Paving transitions inspired by river sediment



Paving transitions inspired by river sediment



Spill out seating and movable planters

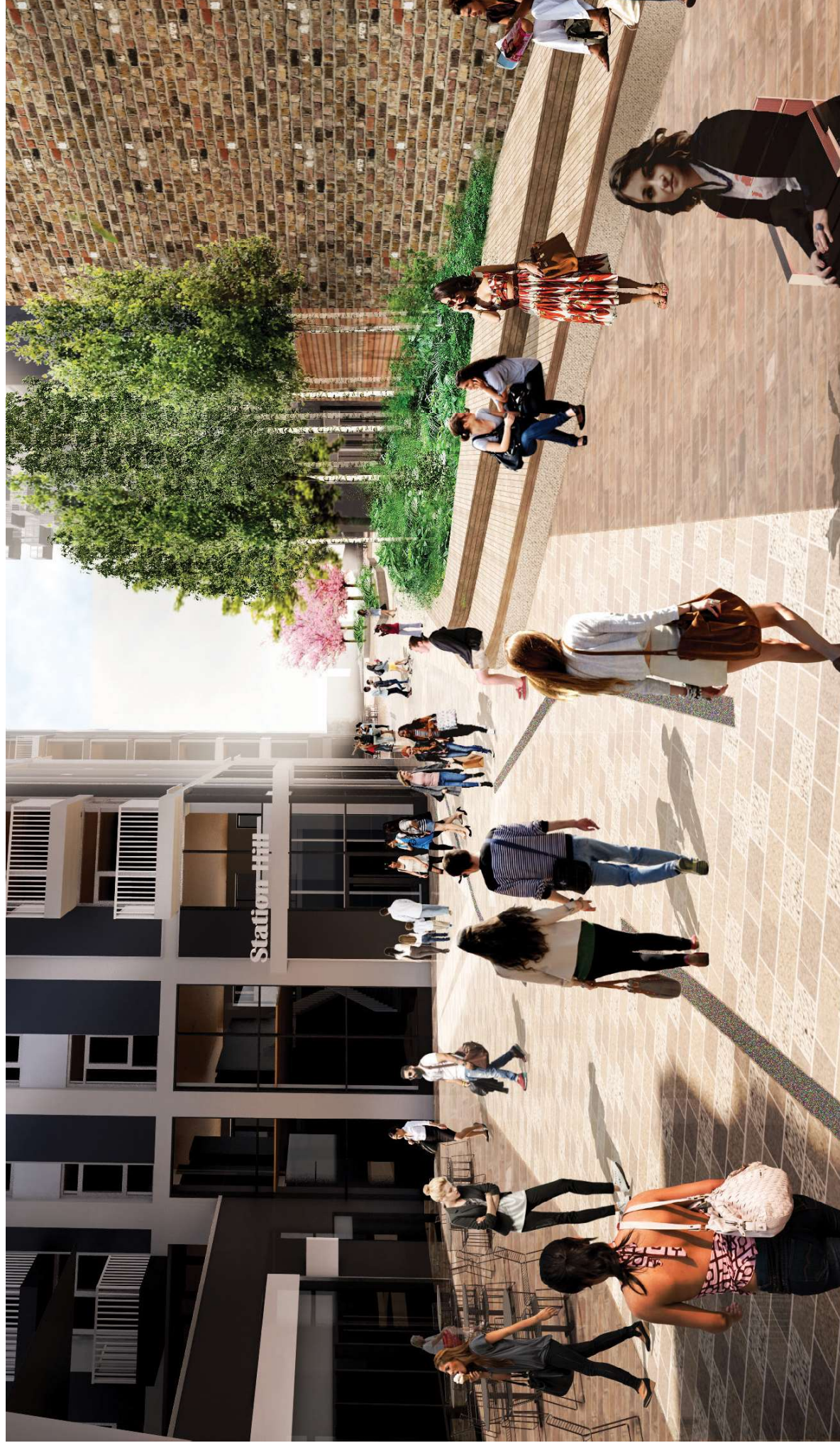


Feature tree with light canopy (Liquidambar)

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Section through Friars Walk looking East



View of Friars Walk looking North

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6.2 LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

6.2.2.1 Friars Walk Defensible Space

The arrangement of the planters on Friar's Walk pushes the main pedestrian route away from the residential façades. The change in paving and smaller access routes provide an intimate approach to the residential entrances and the defensible planting along the facade gives privacy.

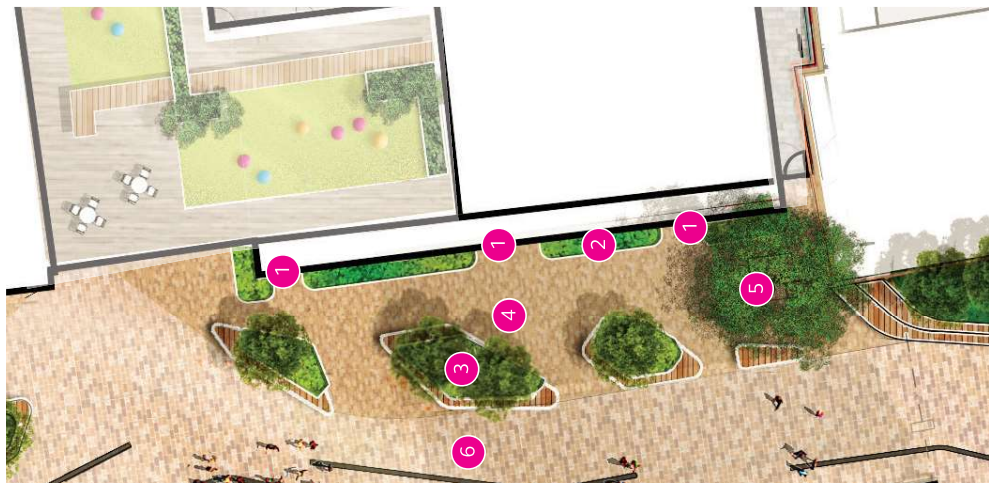


Trafalgar Way Precedent Image



Defensible Space Precedent Image

- 1 Residential entrances
- 2 Defensive planting
- 3 Planters with seating
- 4 Smaller paving modules marking change in space
- 5 Feature tree
- 6 Main pedestrian route



Defensible Space Precedent Image



View of Friars Walk defensible space

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View of Friars Walk defensible space