



**FORMER JOHN LEWIS DEPOT, LETCOMBE STREET, READING
(ALSO KNOWN AS JLP MILL LANE)**

**LANDSCAPE STRATEGY
AUGUST 2024**

Camlin

DATE	ISSUE	NOTES
21/03/2024	01	Draft Planning Issue
19/04/2024	02	Draft Planning Issue
26/04/2024	03	Planning Issue
13/05/2024	04	Document updated to feedback
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Every effort has been made to acknowledge the source of photographs and illustrations; we apologise for any errors or omissions.

01 Design Narrative

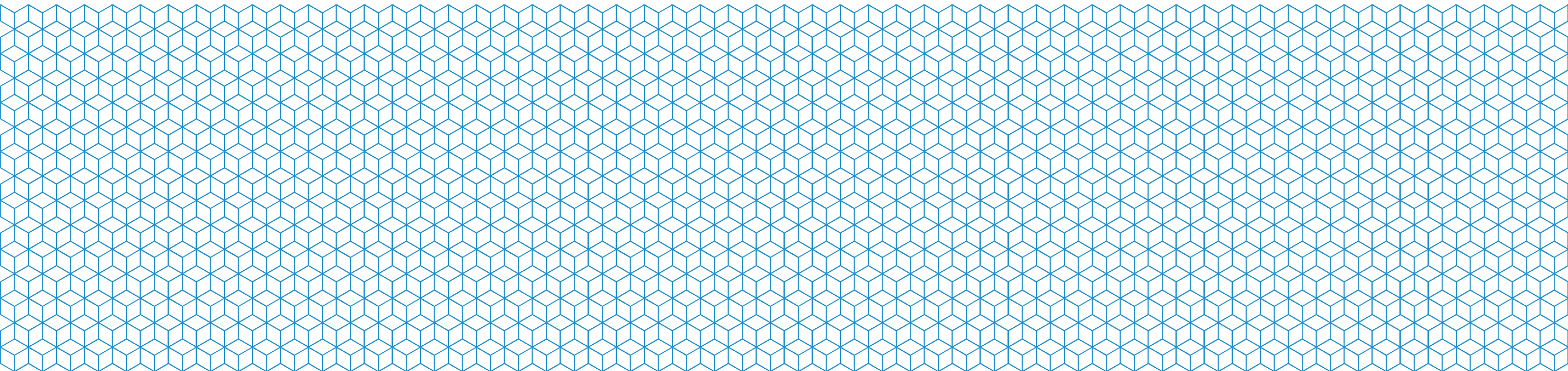
02 Landscape Proposals

03 Hard Materials, Gradients and Boundary Treatments

04 Planting Strategy

05 Landscape Maintenance

06 Public Consultation



Application Key Details

Site Address: John Lewis, Letcombe Street, Reading, RG1 2HN

Applicant Name: The John Lewis Partnership BTR Ltd

Planning Application Boundary Site Area: 0.44ha

Description of Development: Demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site comprising erection of a new building for up to 215 build to rent residential dwellings (Use Class C3) together with flexible commercial / community space (Use Class E/F1/F2), residents' facilities, landscaping, public realm, amenity space, cycle parking and disabled car parking.

Planning Policy

The following national and local policies have been considered in the landscape design.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023)

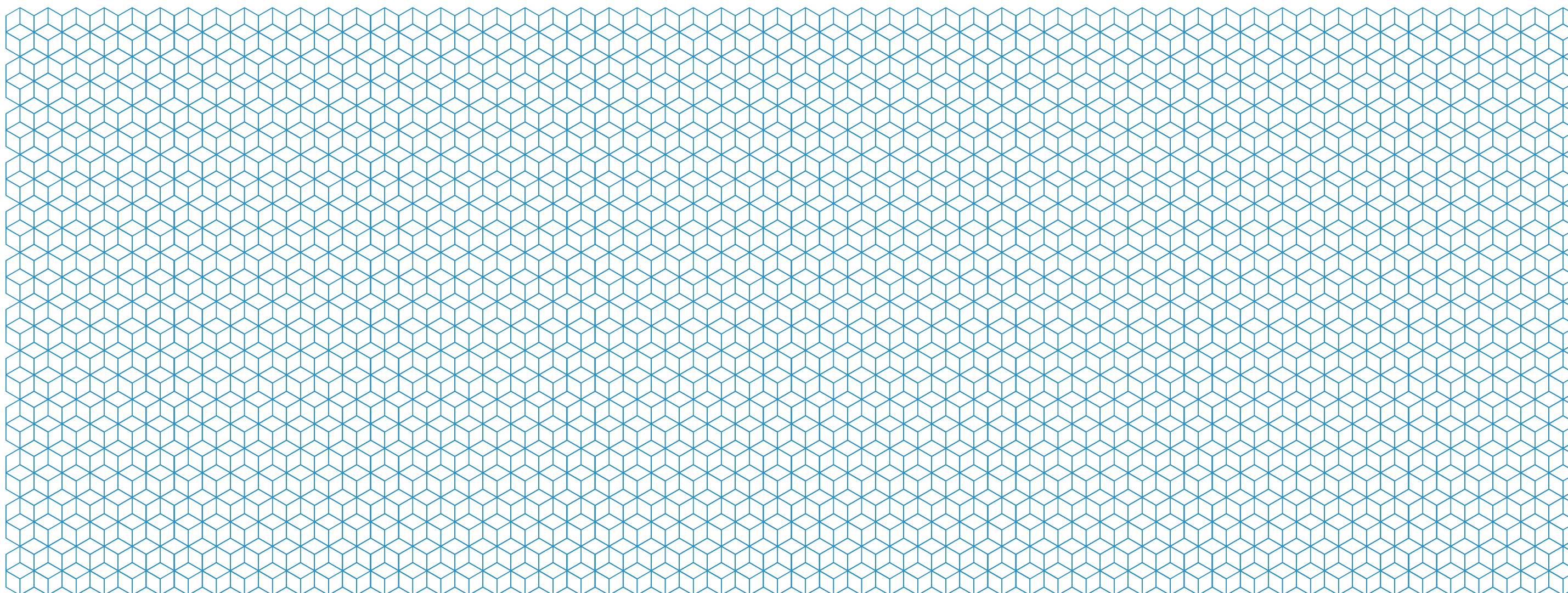
- Section 2: Achieving sustainable development
- Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 12: Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted November 2019)

- Policy CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change)
- Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
- Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network)
- Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland)
- Policy CR2 (Design in Central Reading)
- Policy CR3 (Public Realm in Central Reading)

01

Design Narrative



The John Lewis Partnership puts biophilic design at the heart of its ambition for residential development. This is a common thread that runs through all parts of the design process, with landscape architecture as a prominent aspect. The biophilic advisory team work across all projects to inform and assist.

Biophilic design promotes wellbeing, in a very wide sense. At Letcombe Street, Reading, it will benefit residents of course, but also the local community, Reading town centre and the wider environment. The many advantages are increasingly well understood and quantifiable.

In terms of design approach, at Letcombe Street, Reading this guides us towards a landscape language that is complementary to the orthogonal layouts arising from the characteristic post industrial urban grid and rational construction. This includes:

- Layouts with naturalistic or irregular lines
- Soft green landscape as default
- Planting to blur engineered lines
- Natural materiality
- Diversity in scale, rhythm, texture and colour
- Features to engage the widest range of people
- Biodiversity as an end in itself

1.3 GREEN THREAD OF WELLBEING

CREATING NATURE TOUCHPOINTS

- Ensuring there is a cohesive narrative throughout the project & occupant experience.
- Collaborating across project team to ensure alignment through the interior and exterior realms.
- Safeguarding JLPs biophilic POD.
- Cultivating a sense of community and belonging.



1.1 CORE PRINCIPLES OF BIOPHILIC DESIGN



DIRECT CONNECTIONS TO NATURE



INDIRECT NATURE CONNECTIONS

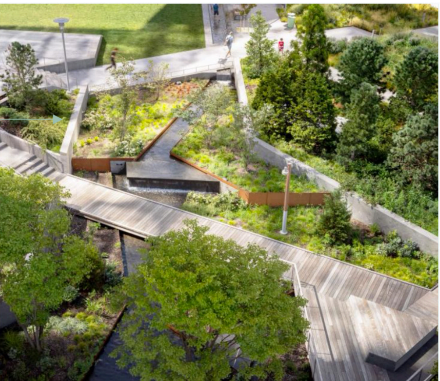


EXPERIENCE OF SPACE AND PLACE

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2.1 CASE STUDY, VARIOUS

DIVERSITY OF PLANTING, MATERIALS WHICH EVOKE NATURE, ORGANIC GEOMETRIES, AND NATURAL FEATURES. SAVANNAH THEORY, BLUE SPACE THEORY



REFUGE THROUGH FURNISHINGS AND PLANTING, WHILE FACILITATING VIEWS. SENSORY COMFORT THRESHOLDS



INTUITIVE SEATING THROUGH NATURAL FEATURES SUCH AS BOULDERS SAVANNAH THEORY

Zone 1 'Public Realm'



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Landscape Narrative

Sense of Place - Genus Loci

In finding a landscape language for these spaces at Letcombe Street we seek inspiration from the parent landscape, shaping a narrative derived from it. This gives a rationale to how we bring natural forms into the centre of Reading, rooting the proposals in the place. These landscape elements might be recognisable or subliminal.



River Kennet

The historical mills of this site were powered by the adjacent River Kennet, which flows into the Thames 1.5km from this site. It is a chalk stream that is noted for its clear waters and diverse aquatic ecosystems. This provides a powerful link between Letcombe Street and the natural world generally and specifically to the landscape hinterland, social history and ancient activity around Reading.

Downs

The River Kennet arises in the downlands of Wiltshire and flows through the north of the Wessex Downs. This is a landscape characterised by open, rolling hills, beech hangers and a huge number of important prehistoric sites.

Chalk

The downlands consist most typically of chalk, which is made up of the shells of microscopic marine algae – coccolithophores. In forming chalk, they absorbed carbon dioxide, playing a role in regulating atmospheric CO2 levels. They are sensitive indicators of environmental change and now important in the study of climate change.

Ammonite Fossils

Chalk is well known for containing flint, fossilised sponges, but also ammonites. These fascinating objects combine beautiful organic form with rigorous geometry, which we can use as an underlying pattern to structure the courtyard gardens.