

Galway City Council

Woodquay Park Enhancement

Landscape Report

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Prepared by LUC





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Project
Woodquay Park Enhancement, Galway

Client
Galway City Council

LUC Project Number
12357

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Date
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Chapter 01:Introduction

The Project

Woodquay Park is a small, public park located to the north west of Galway City Centre. Despite its proximity to the city centre it lies in a quite residential neighbourhood and benefits from its adjacency to the tranquil Corrib.

The park is much-loved by local residents, however over recent years it has become subject to anti-social behaviour. This has stirred the residents to explore opportunities to redevelop the park to attract other users into the park and provide more 'eyes on the street'.

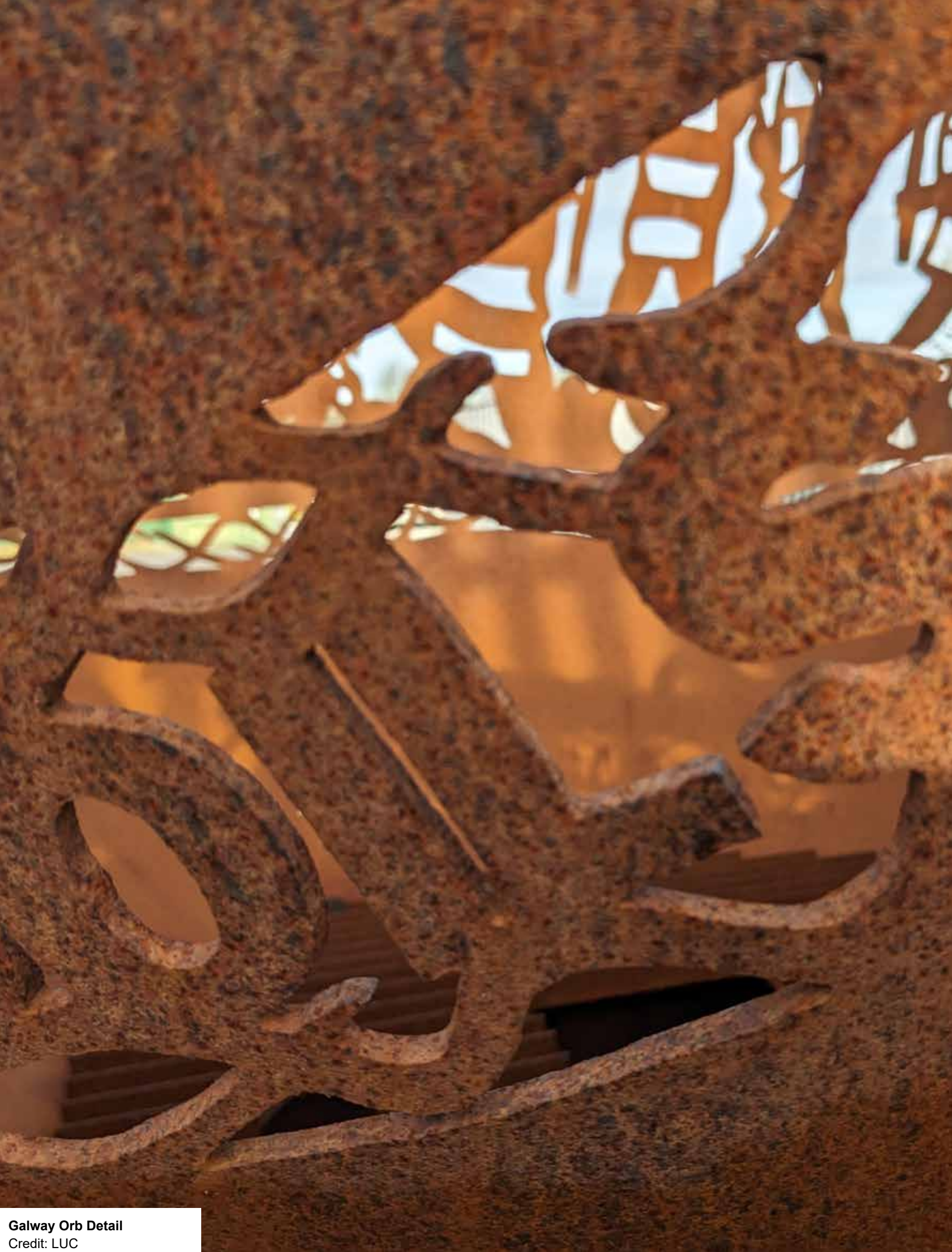
More recently, planning proposals submitted for Headford Road will see it transformed into a public transport and attract travel corridor as part of the BusConnects Cross City Bus Link project. This has great synergy with other recent improvements to active travel in the area and aspirations for the Connemara Greenway to be brought into the city, over the former Clifden Railway Bridge and landing close to Woodquay Park.

Other recent initiatives such as the Galway Public Realm Strategy envisage the renaissance of the public realm to increase footfall through the vibrant city centre. Key projects in the city seek improvements to waterside access and the transformation of Woodquay Square, immediately opposite the site, with the extension of the park to meet it.

Sustainable design is a key element of the proposals, which have been designed to anticipate future challenges to climate and biodiversity, incorporating Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS) and pollinator species.

Galway City Council have developed comprehensive enhancement proposals for Woodquay Park to support its strategic role within the city centre and ensure that this much-loved greenspace can cater for the needs of existing residents and the future city demographic. Funding has been approved through the Fáilte Ireland Urban Animation Capital Investment Scheme, This supports sustainable tourism development through public realm and urban animation projects that have the potential to transform and re-imagine urban centres for visitors and communities.

This Landscape Statement summarises the background to the project, the key constraints and opportunities of the site and the design development undertaken by the design team, led by LUC (Land Use Consultants). Further detail is provided on the developed design proposals including outline specifications for hard and soft landscaping.



Chapter 01: Introduction

Project Timeline

Woodquay Resident's Association, 2017-2020

The project was initiated by the Woodquay Resident's Association in 2017 as a response to recurrent episodes of anti-social behaviour within the Park, including the congregation of large groups, outdoor drinking, noise and littering. The high hedges and low, overhanging trees, whilst creating a serene, green oasis, were identified as creating a shelter space for such activities and hampering surveillance through the Park.

The group decided to 'reclaim' Woodquay Park at the heart of the vibrant community and seek to beautify and open out the public spaces, creating more 'eyes on the street'. Advice was sought from local councillors and those with local experience of parks restoration. This led to the appointment of landscape gardener, Mary Reynolds, to design a new layout for the Park. The design was envisaged to practically reconnect the river to the park and to open up the wonderful views, with the concept inspired by the ancient mythology of the River Corrib.

Galway City Council, 2019-ongoing

In 2019 the Resident's Association approached Galway City Council to seek funding for the proposals and assist with project development. In 2021 Galway City Council was awarded funding for the redevelopment of Woodquay Park under the Fáilte Ireland's Urban Animation Capital Investment Scheme. The scheme is aimed at supporting sustainable tourism development through public realm and urban animation projects that have the potential to transform and re-imagine urban centres for visitors and communities.

Appointment of LUC, 2023

Galway City Council identified that the appointment of a design team, led by a landscape architect was necessary to bring the project from concept through planning, detailed design, tender and construction stages. This was the subject of an open public tender in late 2022, with a consortium led by LUC (Land Use Consultants) appointed in early 2023.

Design Development, 2023-ongoing

Galway City Council and the design team led by LUC have been working together since Spring 2023 to develop the concept design to the scheme that is now the subject of this Part 10 Planning Application. Further detail of the design process is provided within this Landscape Statement.



Woodquay Park

Chapter 01: Introduction

Site Context

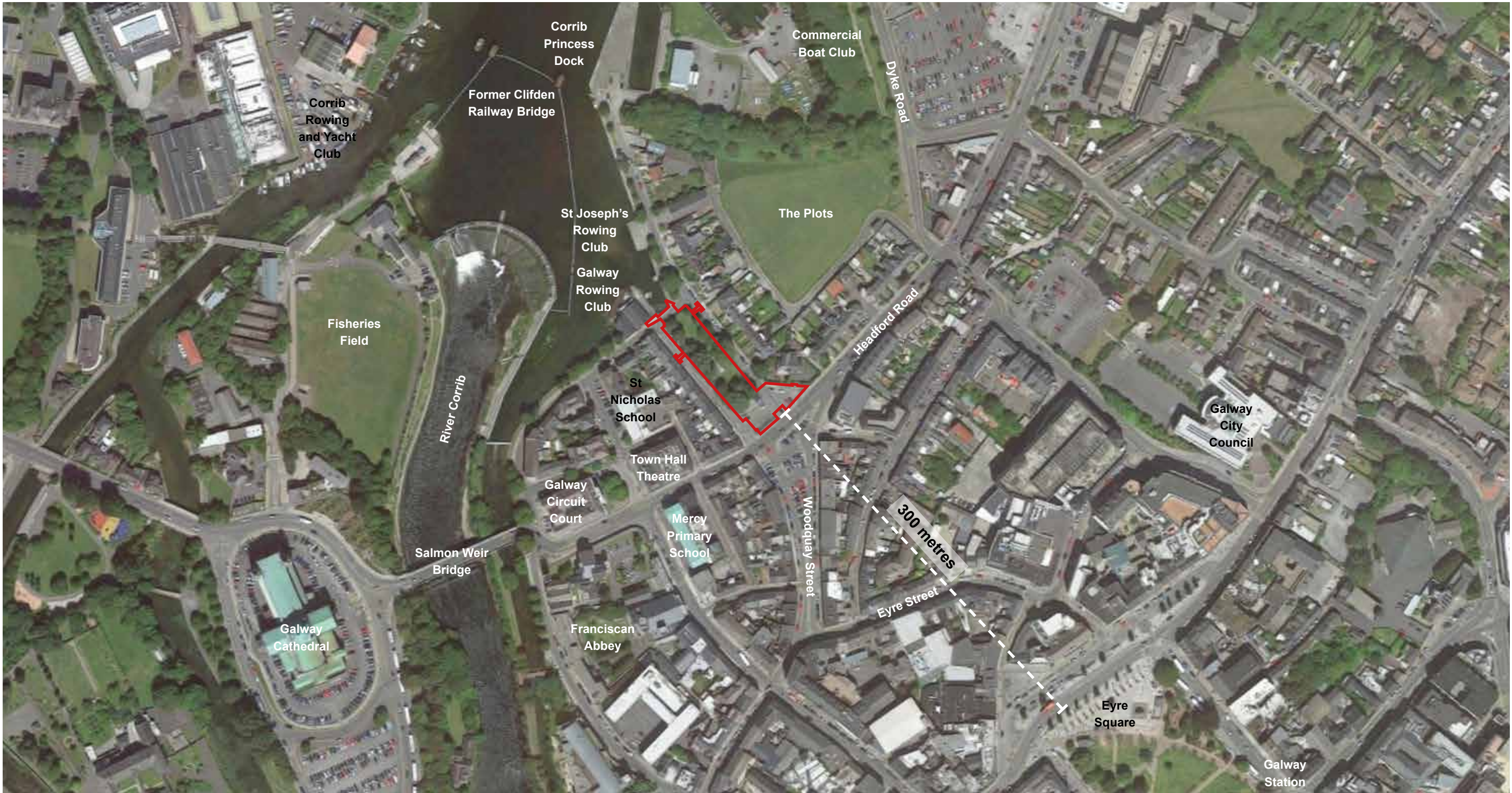
Woodquay Park lies approximately 300m to the north west of Galway City Centre (Eyre Square) in a quiet residential neighbourhood that lies between Woodquay Square and the River Corrib.

The site is bounded by Headford Road to the south east, Riverside to the east, Corrib Terrace to the west and Waterside to the north west. The existing park (0.15 hectares) is separated from Headford Road by a small area of hard standing. This incorporates accessible and standard car parking spaces and cycle hire stands. It is proposed that this area becomes part of the new Woodquay Park, so that the total area of the new park would be 0.19 hectares. In addition, enhancement works will include a triangular area of hardstanding to the north of Riverside currently occupied by electric vehicle charging spaces and motorcycle parking spaces. Access is also required through this area to a residential property No.8 Riverside.

On street parking lines both Corrib Terrace and Riverside. To reach the gated entries on either side of the park pedestrians currently have to cross through the parking spaces. Entry gates are connected by a paved path, with two benches set back slightly from this route. The remainder of the park is laid to grass, with a hedge and boundary railings and 27 mature trees. Three further benches have been installed at the Waterside end of the park, facing the Corrib. Local residents regularly prune the intervening hedgerow so that views are maintained out to the water. Close to Headford Road there is a small stone memorial for the Irish Countrywomen's Association.

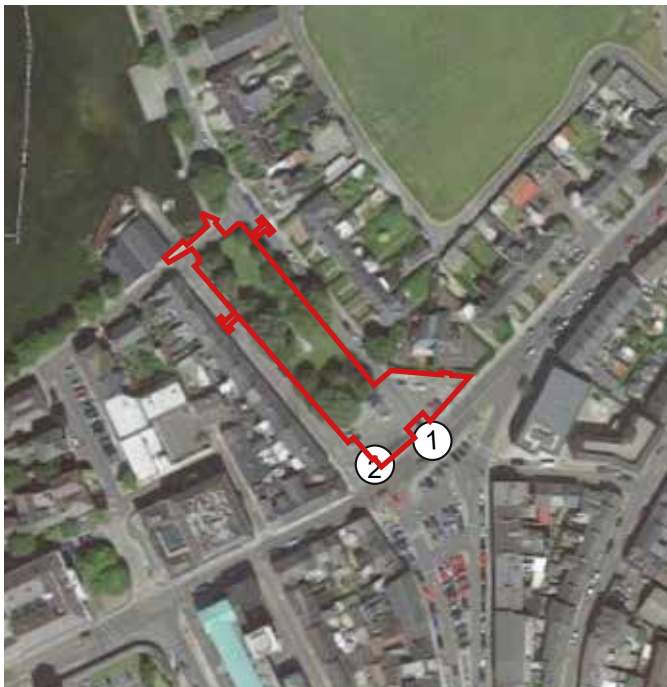
The following pages provide further detail of the site context, along with site photographs taken in April 2023.

Chapter 01:Introduction
Site Context



Aerial view showing the site and context within Galway City

Chapter 01: Introduction
Site Context



1 - Looking west at the Corrib Terrace/St. Vincents Avenue intersection.



2 - Looking north and east on Corrib Terrace.

Chapter 01:Introduction
Site Context



3 - Looking north through Woodquay Park towards the Corrib



4 - Looking south through Woodquay Park, towards Headford Road

Chapter 01: Introduction

Site Context

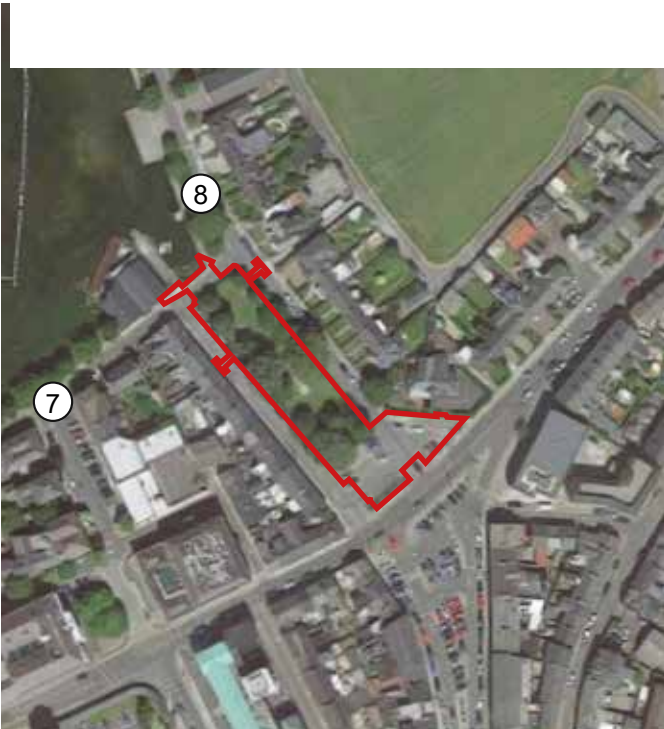


5 - Looking west towards Corrib Terrace



6 - Looking south along Corrib Terrace

Chapter 01:Introduction
Site Context

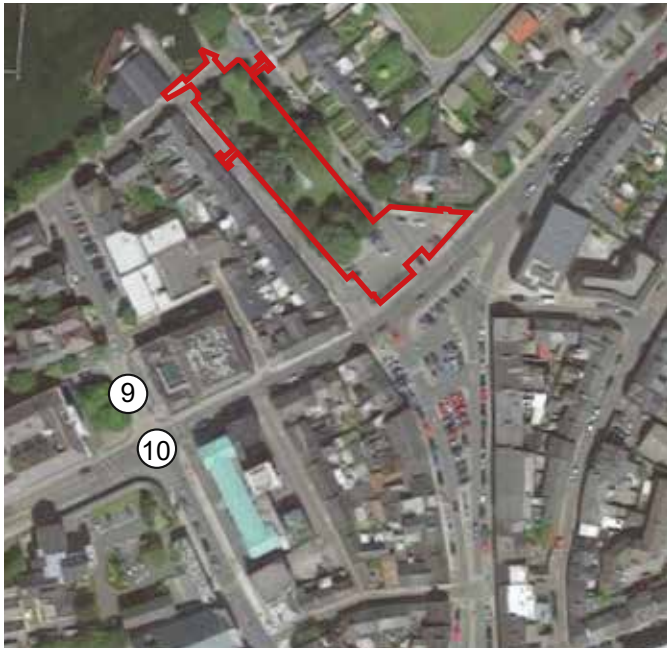


7 - Looking north-eastwards along Waterside



8 - Looking south towards the Galway Rowing Club/Woodquay Park

Chapter 01:Introduction
Site Context

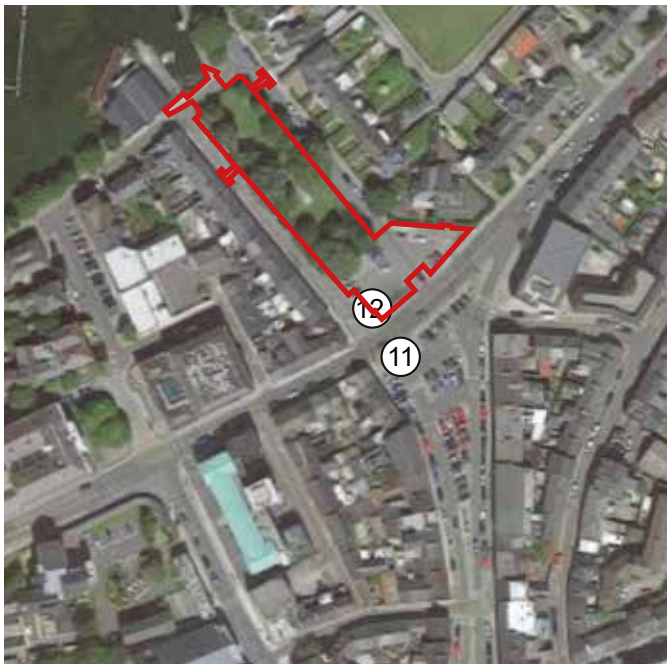


9 - Looking north across the Courthouse Square, featuring Galway Circuit Court (left) and the Town Hall Theatre (right)



10 - Panoramic view, opposite Mercy Primary School.

Chapter 01:Introduction
Site Context



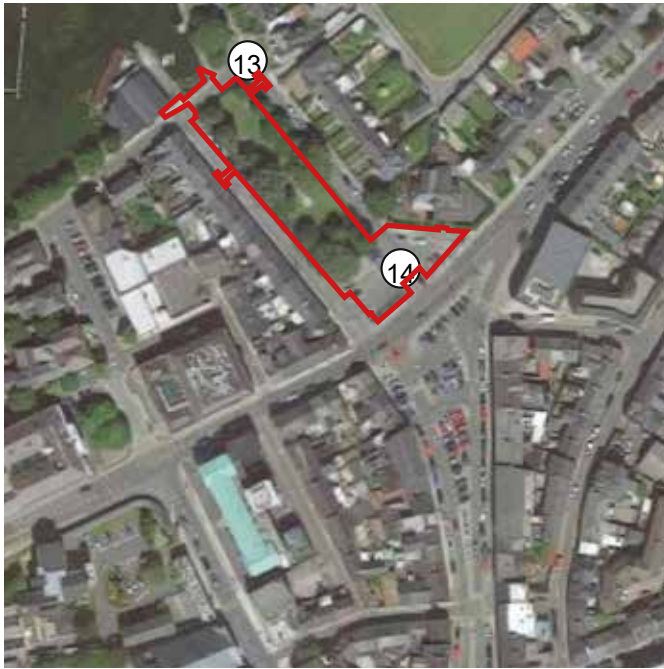
11 - Looking east across Woodquay Street



12 - Looking south across Headford Road.

Chapter 01: Introduction

Site Context



13 - Looking south along Riverside



14 - Looking north along Riverside and south to Woodquay Street.



Chapter 02: The Site

Site History

Historic mapping

Mapping sources indicate that the Woodquay area was formed between two islands; St Stephen's Island and Horse Island. An inlet of the River Corrib remained between these two islands and extended towards the developing city centre. As land was gradually reclaimed in the eighteenth century through the Corrib Drainage Scheme, the inlet was reduced in length and became developed as the site for the commercial docks (turf, wood, and timber). A 150 feet wooden quay ran the length of Woodquay, with a Potato Market developed at the point where it met St Vincent's Avenue. In the mid-twentieth century further infill of the Corrib inlet was undertaken and land at Woodquay was reclaimed to make a play ground.

Heritage and Archaeology

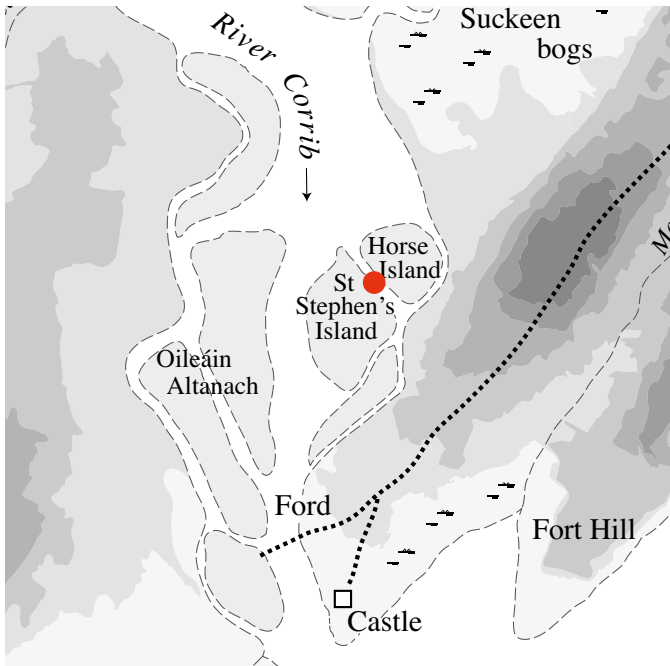
An Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by ACP. The assessment notes that the site is not a protected structure and there are none in the immediate vicinity of the park. There is a small memorial plaque for the Irish Countrywomen's Association, 1910-1985. The remaining quay beside the Galway rowing club is scheduled for inclusion of the next revision of the RMP. (GA094-100059.) The site is also bisected by a Zone of Archaeological Potential.

An Archaeological Impact Assessment has been prepared by Tobar Archaeological Services. The report notes that the site is partially located within the Zone of Notification for the historic town of Galway (GA094-100), however no element of Galway's town defences are located on or in the immediate vicinity of the site. A review of excavation notes only one entry in vicinity of Woodquay, with no material being uncovered.

The proposed site largely comprises reclaimed ground and a culverted river channel, and these works may have disturbed earlier archaeological deposits from the medieval period. However, as there is potential for sub-surface deposits, a number of mitigation measures have been recommended:

- Archaeological monitoring, under licence from the NMS, of all geotechnical Site Investigations within the Proposed Development site. Report to be submitted to relevant authorities.
- Construction Stage archaeological monitoring of all topsoil removal and other relevant ground works by a suitably qualified archaeologist under licence from the NMS. Report to be submitted to the relevant authorities.
- Should archaeological finds or features be uncovered during the course of the monitoring the NMS shall be informed of such findings and preservation in situ or preservation by record (excavation) may be required.

Chapter 02:The Site Site History



Site of Galway

(Map 25, valuation, 1855, in Jacinta Prunty and Paul Walsh, Irish Historic Towns Atlas, no. 28). Galway/Gaillimh, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, 2016



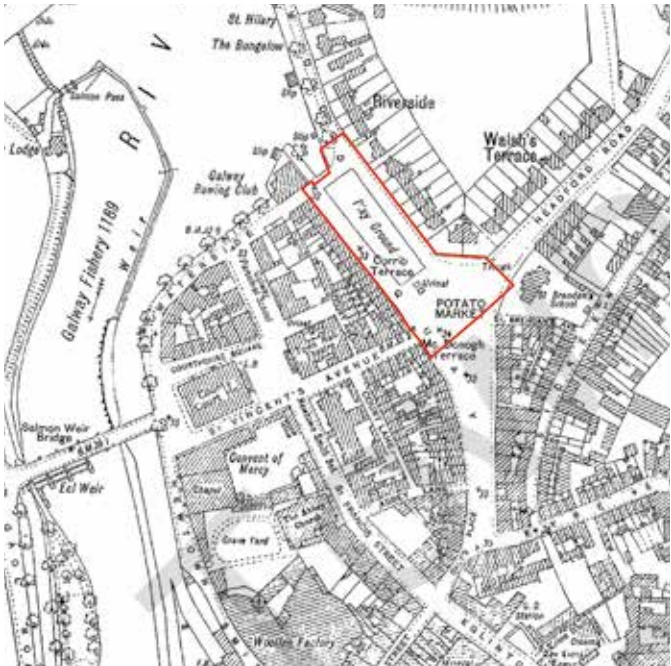
1200-c.1900

(Map 5, Galway, c. 1200 to c. 1900, in Jacinta Prunty and Paul Walsh, Irish Historic Towns Atlas, no.28). Galway/Gaillimh, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, 2016



Growth of Galway to 1895.

(Map 28, Galway, to 1895, in Jacinta Prunty and Paul Walsh, Irish Historic Towns Atlas, no. 28). Galway/Gaillimh, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, 2016



1944.

(Irish Townland and Historical Map Viewer). Galway/Gaillimh, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, 2016



Woodquay (Date unknown, mid twentieth century)

(Source: Galway Advertiser Oct 28th, 2010.)



Woodquay, Weighing Scales, 1935. Photo by Kevin Danaher.

(Source: Galway Advertiser Nov 9th, 2017.)



Woodquay, Galway Market (Date unknown). Photo by Caoimhín Ó Danachair.

(Source: The Photographic Collection, C050.01.0003.Image and data © National Folklore Collection, UCD).

Chapter 02:The Site

Site Use

Local Residents

The existing park provides a central, green focus for local residents on Corrib Terrace and Riverside. It should be noted that Corrib Terrace properties do not have any outdoor garden space and the park functions as a ‘front garden’ to the properties. Residents use the park for casual and informal use, sitting on the benches or grass, experiencing views of the Corrib, enjoying proximity to nature.

Residents’ priorities for the park include the following:

- Opening of the park for multiple users
- A community space with viewing area towards the river
- Accessible paths for wheelchairs and buggies
- More seating, including seating with backs, to allow sitting and eating in numerous places
- Waste bin
- Natural play facilities for children (low-key and informal)
- Reflect the history of the area and the Corrib

Local Schools

Consultation was undertaken with Mercy Primary School and SALI childcare in June 2023. This identified the following activities taking place in the park:

- outdoor adventure trails for PE in summer
- picnics
- orienteering
- brain / mindfulness / sensory breaks
- Experiencing the seasons and nature
- End of year teddy bears picnic

Priorities for the park included:

- Retention of nature and greenery
- Be more ‘usable’
- Views to the waterside
- Formal play not required as they use the Millenium Park

Other Users

Park use by others tends to be more sporadic with informal groups gathering in fine weather, particularly during festival periods or the summer months. Unfortunately some of these gatherings creates nuisance for adjacent residents due to noise levels and general anti-social behaviour.



Photos of the Site
Credit: LUC

Chapter 02:The Site
Public Realm Context

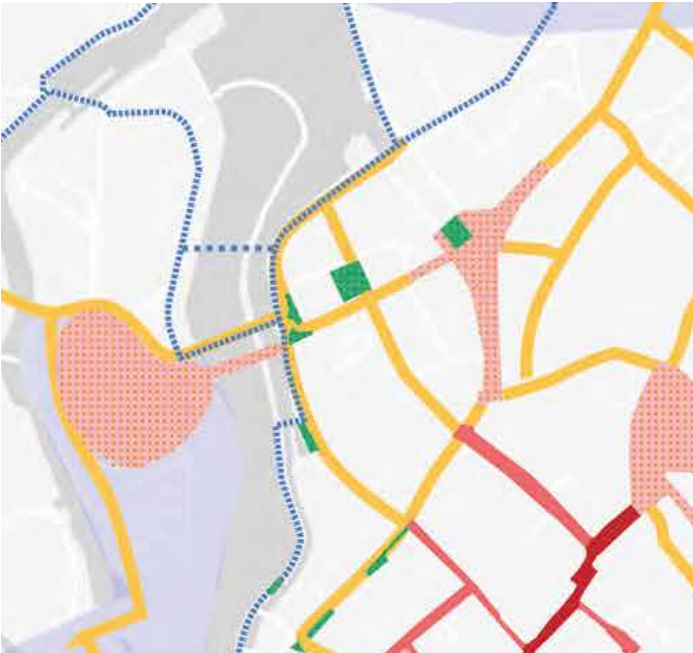
Galway Public Realm Strategy

This outlines a series of project proposals of different scales that will improve Galway’s streets and public spaces over a period of time that will coincide with the ambition of the National Planning Framework to realise Galway’s role as Regional City.

To the south of the Park, Woodquay Square, is identified as a ‘Key Public Realm Space’. An illustrative plan (P119) shows the potential improvements to the space. Priorities include removing car parking and aligning the carriageway to the east of the Square, freeing up a large areas of public realm for markets or events. A raised table crossing / shared surface is suggested to assist pedestrian crossing of Headford Road/St Vincent’s Avenue to Corrib Terrace. The area of parking immediately to the south of the Park is identified as a ‘Microspace’, designed as an extension to Woodquay Park, incorporating an element of play. The list of improvements also suggests the inclusion of artwork at the southern end of Woodquay Square to create a marker when approaching from Mary Street.

Streetscape improvements within the area include a ‘General Upgrade’ to Headford Road, St Vincent’s Avenue, Court Avenue and Waterside. In these areas, the focus is on achieving consistency to some key elements, such as kerbs and pavement widths, rebalancing space for pedestrians and cyclists and designing for accessibility. .

Waterside is also identified for ‘Canal / River Walkway’ improvements, forming part of a consistent route to the edge of the Corrib between the Salmon Weir Bridge and Dyke Road. .

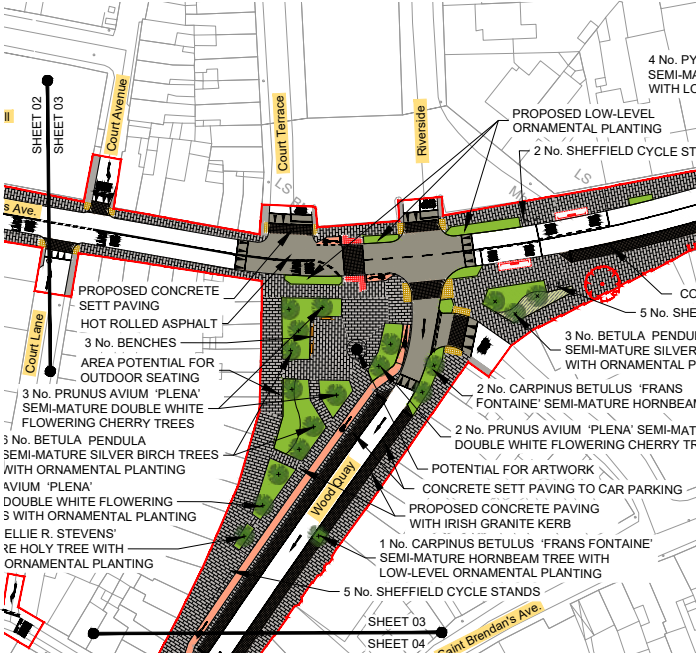


Top: Typologies of street and spaces
Bottom: Extract from Woodquay Square proposals
Credit: Galway City Council / Allies and Morrison

BusConnects Galway Cross-City Bus Link

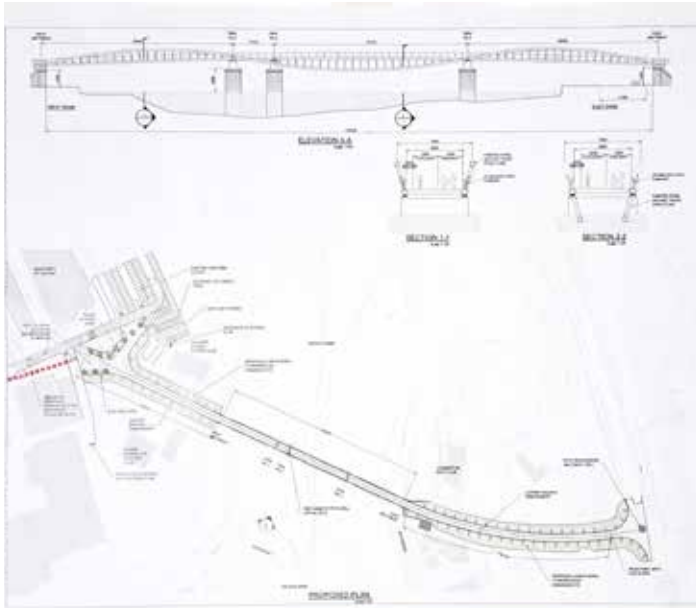
The project aim is to provide improved walking, cycling and bus infrastructure on this key access corridor in Galway City, which will enable and deliver efficient, safe, and integrated sustainable transport movement along the corridor. Headford Road will form a central route for public transport, cyclists and better connect places of interest for pedestrians.

A raised shared surface is shown linking Woodquay Square to the small area of parking to the south of Woodquay Park. New cycle parking stands are introduced to the Headford Road corridor, with ornamental planting beds to the carriageway edges and planting of street tree providing additional greenery. These include smaller growing species such as Silver Birch, Hornbeam ‘Frans Fontaine’ and Holly ‘Nellie Stevens’.



Clifden Railway Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge

These proposals seek to re-use the surviving pillars of the old Clifden Railway Bridge to create a new pedestrian / cycling bridge over the River Corrib, as part of the Galway to Clifden Greenway. This will provide a direct connection between the University of Galway and the Woodquay area.



Top: BusConnects proposals
Credit: Galway City Council / Arup
Bottom: Clifden Bridge proposals
Credit: Galway City Council / AECOM

Chapter 02: The Site
Access and Movement

Pedestrian access to the site is via gated entrances half way down each side of the park, between aisles of parking. There are no dedicated crossing points. Signage on the gates state that the park is open between 9am and 6pm, but this is not actively managed.

The school cycle bus passes the northern end of the park, on its way from The Plots to St Nicholas Parochial School and Mercy Primary School. A cycle hire station comprising 20 stands is located to the south of the park.

Corrib Terrace and Riverside function as two way roads, however their functional width is restricted to 2.6-4.3m due to the inclusion of in line parking bays along the side of the road, effectively reducing them to one way streets for much of their length.

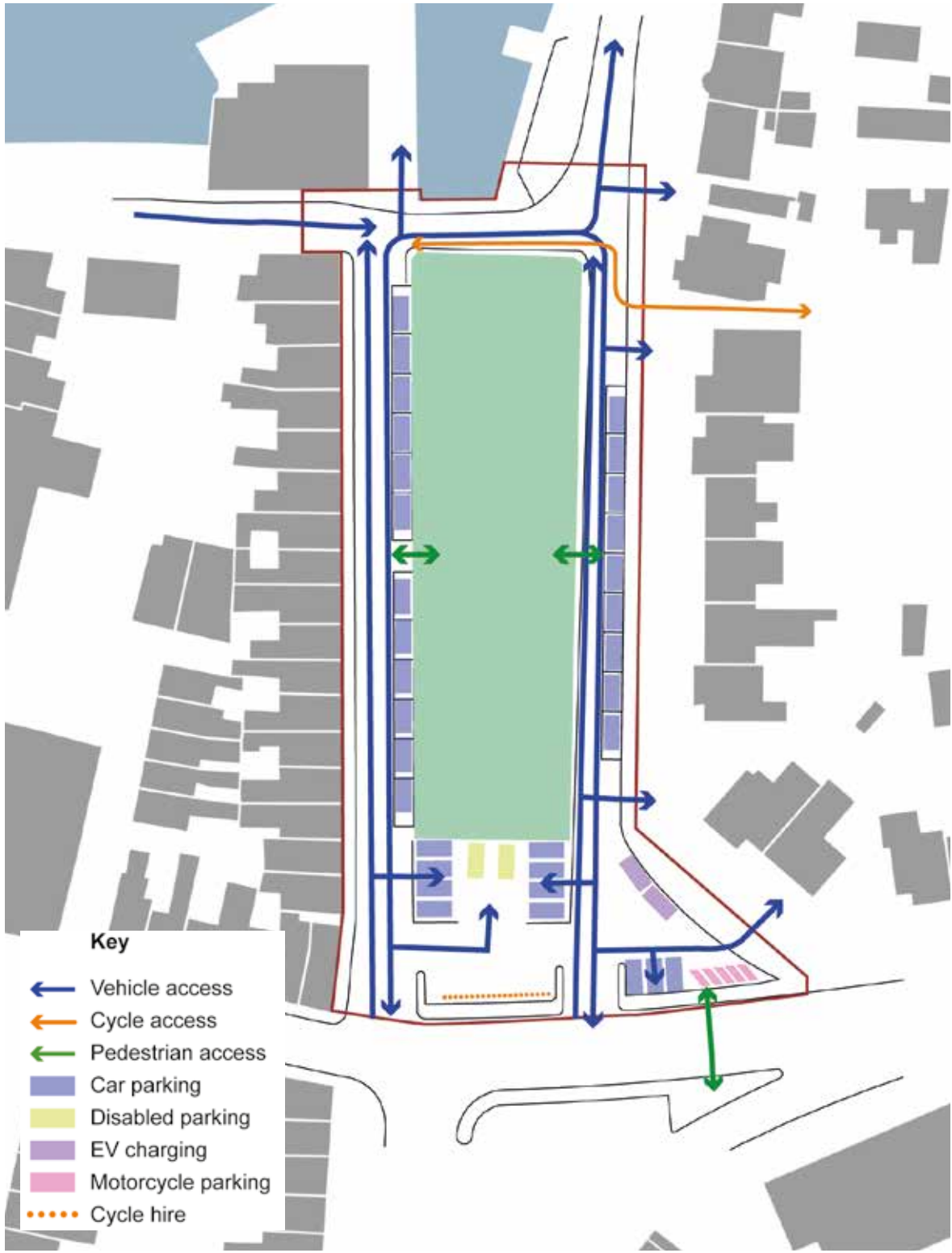
Coach operators for the Corrib Princess use Riverside as both entry and exit route from the dock at Steamer's Quay.

12 parking spaces are demarcated to the east of Corrib Terrace and 9 to Riverside. These are metered spaces that can be used by anyone, however residents can obtain a permit. Galway City Council Traffic Warden supervisor has confirmed that 43 permits have been issued for Zone 8 including Corrib Terrace, Waterside and Riverside.

35 Park and Stride permits have been issued to parents/carers, allowing them to park free of charge in local car parks for school drop off and collection. This includes Woodquay.

Driveway access is required at three locations on Riverside. Waterside is a one way street up to the northern end of the park, then changes to two way as it passes the Corrib. Coach access is required to the Corrib Princess dock. It is envisaged that this is accessed via Waterside and exits via Riverside. Access is also required to Galway Rowing Club on Waterside and The Bish Rowing Club on Riverside.

Hard standing areas to the south of the park have been laid out for parking. 8 standard spaces and 2 accessible spaces are provided immediately to the south of the park. The triangular area to the end of Riverside accommodates 2 standard spaces, 2 spaces for electric vehicle charging and 4 motorbike spaces.



Chapter 02: The Site Trees

A Tree Survey to BS5837:2012 was undertaken in July 2023 to identify the quality and value of the trees, categorise them in respect of the suitability for retention and to inform future design layouts.

There are eighteen trees within the existing park extents, eight additional trees outside the park boundary but in proximity to the surrounding highways were also surveyed.

Within the park, most of the trees have been planted in two evenly spaced rows and help provide definition to the space. A single Grey Alder, T09, has been planted between the two rows and interrupts views to the riverside.

The predominant species is Large leaved Lime. Other species include White Willow, Common Alder, London Plane, Swedish Whitebeam, Rowan, Purple Beech, Sycamore, Silver Birch, Grey Alder and Liquidambar.

The two White Willows are categorised as Grade A trees. Ongoing pruning is recommended, if allowed to grow unchecked they would become too large for the space.

Four trees within the park are categorised as Grade C trees. This include T05, a Rowan that has been planted in between two Lime trees and has been suppressed by their mature growth. T15, a Liquidambar has been planted to infill a gap in the treeline adjacent Corrib Terrace. Trees T18 (Silver Birch) and T19 (Swedish Whitebeam) are planted to the northwest of the park, the Whitebeam growing adjacent to the park railings.

All other trees within the park are categorised as Grade B, with no significant defects.



Chapter 02: Site Analysis

Ecology

A desk-based assessment ecological field survey conducted in July 2023 has informed the design.

The site is located approximately 2.3m south from the Lough Corrib SAC and 7.45m north from the Inner Galway SPA and Galway Bay Complex SAC.

The site is located within an area of high groundwater vulnerability within the same hydrological sub-catchment as Lough Corrib SAC, the Corrib sub-catchment and Corrib catchment.

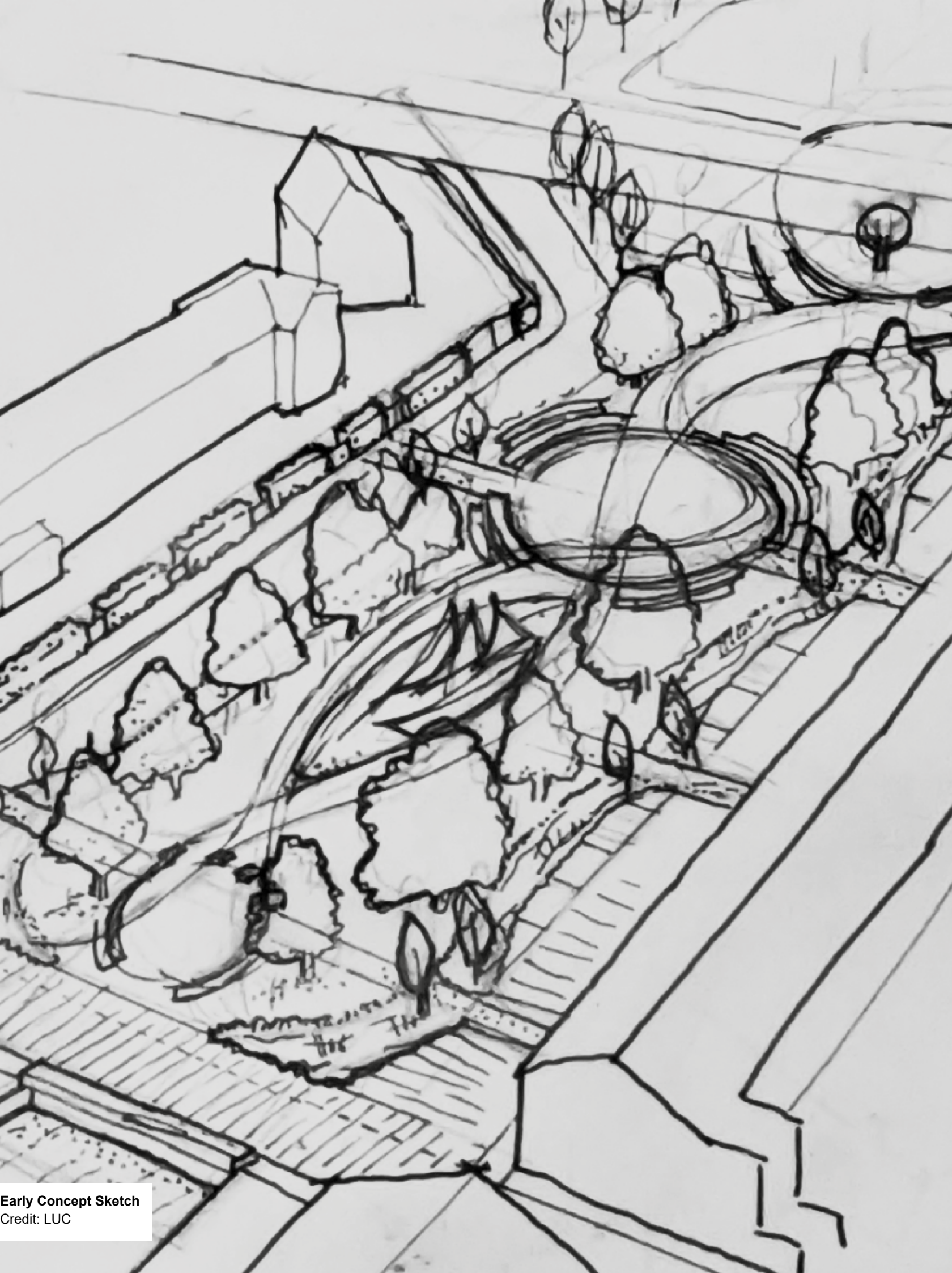
There are no habitats listed under Annex 1 of the EU Habitats Directive. No invasive species were identified. Habitats within the site include Amenity Grassland (Improved), Treeline and Hedgerow. The grassland is intensively managed with low biodiversity. Hedgerows are located to the north, east and west margins of the site, comprising Ivy, Bramble, Hawthorn, Montbretia, Sycamore and other species.

Trees to the east and west margins of the park were identified as having low to moderate roosting potential for bats as a result of Ivy cover and holes present on the tree. A subsequent bat survey identified that trees in the Park did not provide suitable roosting habitat for local bat populations but that the local bat population did utilise existing trees to commute and forage.

No evidence of other protected fauna such as Otter or Badger was identified.

Dedicated bird surveys are not required as the site does not provide supporting habitat of significance for species associated with the Inner Galway SPA or Lough Corrib SPA.





Early Concept Sketch
Credit: LUC

Chapter 04: Design Evolution

Initial Proposals

Woodquay Resident's Association worked with landscape gardener, Mary Reynolds, to design the initial proposals for the Park. The design was envisaged to practically reconnect the river to the park and to open up the wonderful views, with the concept inspired by the ancient mythology of the River Corrib. Key elements of the design included:

- Creation of 'Eyes on the Street'
- An open community space
- Discrete performance areas
- Visual reference to the Corrib and its islands
- Weaving paths
- Diversified planting
- Seating edges
- Playable landscapes
- Incorporation of water through the space

The layout of the park was based on three circles, linked by a swirling path network. Adjacent Headford Road, the park entrance was defined by a set of standing stones, set within a mist fountain. Within the centre of the park, a 'doughnut' landform provided a low-key natural play feature. At Waterside, the park entrance was defined by a semi-circular amphitheatre and feature Irish Knot paving.

Why change the proposals?

Galway City Council undertook an initial review of the proposals when first approached by the Resident's Association. Issues raised at this stage included:

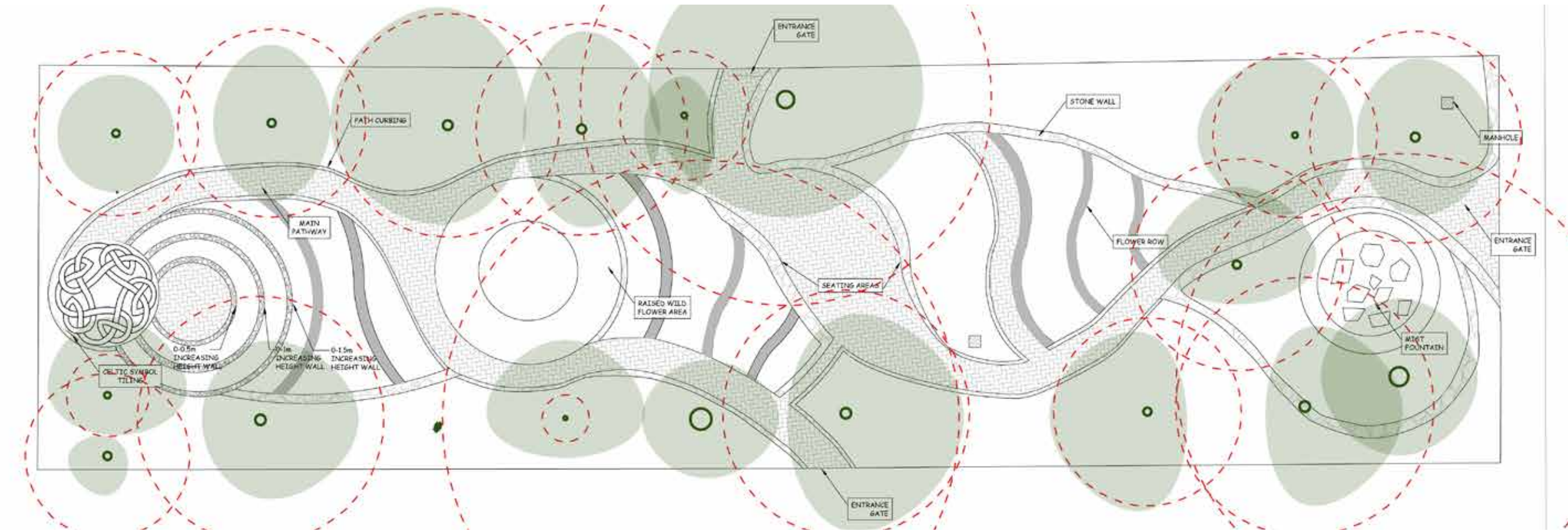
- Safety for public areas
- Opening up the park rather than narrowing it up by planting hedges around the trees
- Planting for pollinators and colour
- Drainage from all the new paved areas
- Ensuring the new paved areas do not damage the tree roots during construction
- An opportunity to respond to other initiatives in the local area, i.e. Galway Public Realm Strategy and extend the public realm works to the surrounding streets.

LUC undertook a more detailed review following their appointment and the commission of detailed surveys. This raised the following considerations:

- How do others use the park? what might they want from the space?
- Could the design references to the Corrib be woven through the park as a repeating design language, rather than the creation of three separate spaces
- How can the park respond to the climate and biodiversity crisis?
- Meeting funding requirements.
- Alignment with future maintenance regimes and budgets.

Chapter 04: Design Evolution

Initial Proposals



Top: Woodquay Resident's Association Proposals. (Tree constraints plan has overlaid for review purposes).

Bottom left and right: 3D model of the proposals

Credit: Woodquay Resident's Association / Galway City Council

Chapter 04: Design Evolution

Design Development

Following the design review, LUC developed three concept design options for the park. These sought to retain key themes from the initial residents design:

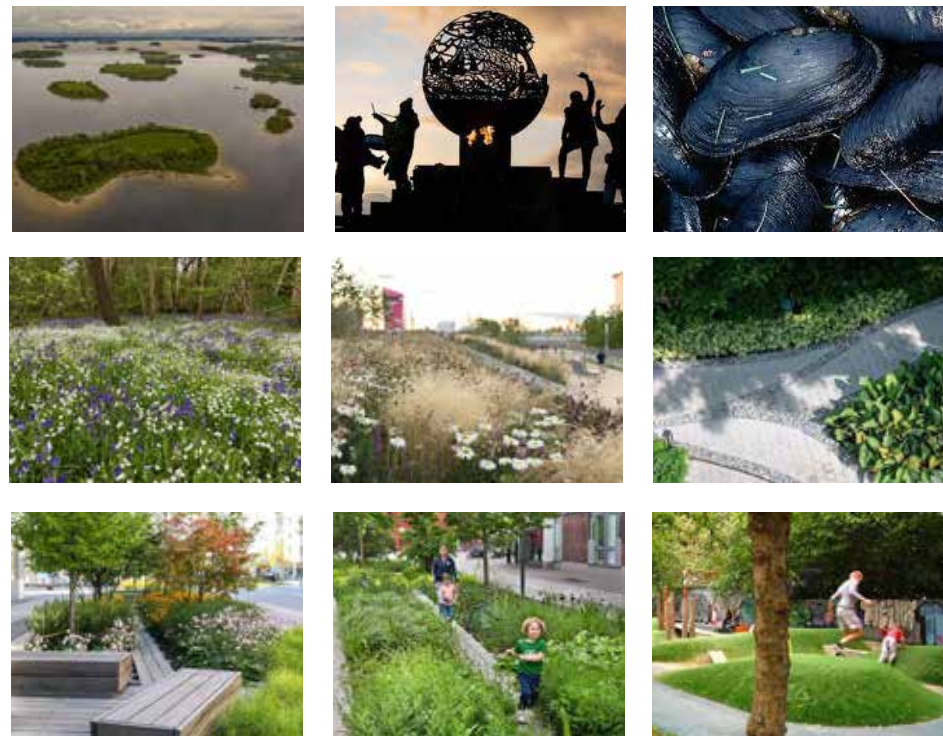
- An open community space
- Discrete performance areas
- Visual reference to the Corrib and its islands
- Weaving paths
- Diversified planting
- Seating edges
- Playable landscapes
- Incorporation of water through the space

Further research was undertaken on the Corrib, it's myths, ecology and landscape forms and the origins of Woodquay itself, to inform the design options. Each was accompanied by a series of 'Look and Feel' images, selected to convey the feel of the spaces and design language proposed for the park.

The three design options comprised:

- **Concept 1: 'Islands'.** A series of flowing paths through the park, referencing naturalistic inlets of the Corrib, with forms of planting beds and features, echoing the shapes of the islands found within Lough Corrib. The forms also reference the freshwater mussels, a qualifying interest of the Special Area of Conservation.
- **Concept 2: 'Rivers'.** A similar flowing path layout, this time defined by ribbons and rivulets of planting, with criss-crossing bridges and pathways breaking through the beds and open water rills set within the paving.
- **Concept 3: 'Boardwalk'.** A rectilinear design, referencing the timber quay edge previously existing on the site. Sunken planting areas form part of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS).

Galway City Council reviewed the three concept designs and the 'Islands' concept was selected for further development. The inclusion of some of the elements from the 'Rivers' concept was requested, such as the rain gardens and rills weaving through the park.



'Look and Feel' images



Concept 1: 'Islands'



Concept 2: 'Rivers'



Concept 3: 'Boardwalk'

Chapter 04: Design Evolution

Design Development

The ‘Islands’ concept was further developed, as represented on the adjacent plans, which were presented at a public consultation event in February 2024.

The project scope was increased to encompass the surrounding streets at Waterside, Riverside and Corrib Terrace. These highways proposals included turning Corrib Terrace into a one-way street and creating a ‘home zone’, setting parking spaces within a paved street, interspersed by planting beds, with raised crossings leading into the park. This ‘shared surface’ approach is extended to Waterside, whilst Riverside is maintained for two-way vehicular access.

The park design uses a series of island forms to create seating niches, rain gardens and landforms within the park, with paving weaving to either side of them. A rill sweeps from side to side across the park, the intention is that this would represent a change in surface to create an open channel that could convey rainwater through the park, creating both a visual feature and learning resource.

Wide areas of paving are shown at Waterside and Headford Road, with accessible, EV charging and motorcycle spaces moved to the triangular area to the north of Riverside.

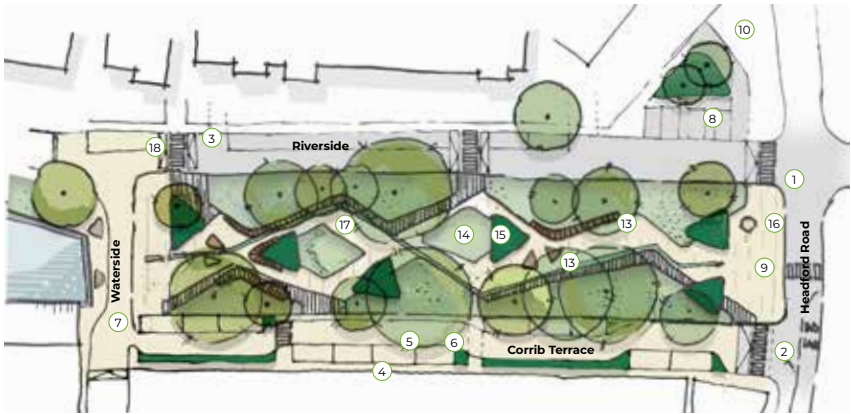
Feedback received during the in-person event and subsequent online consultation was varied with some complementary feedback received and with others opposed to the re-design.

A summary of the main feedback:

- It’s not the original design!
- Parking to Corrib Terrace should be kept where it is, not be moved closer to houses (concern over views/light).
- There is too much paving and not enough grass / soft space.
- The design needs to be more flowing, less obvious routes.
- Loss of original features (mounds, large lawn, fountain, amphitheatre)
- Design is too angular, curves are preferred.
- Don’t like the rill through the park.
- Don’t like the amphitheatre.
- A boundary to the park is needed.
- Concerns about cycle access from The Plots.
- Concerns over loss of trees.
- Concerns over planting of too many trees (over-shading)
- Concerns over impacts to wildlife.



Developed Concept Design



Woodquay Park

Proposed changes

- 1 Two way access would be maintained to Riverside.
- 2 One way access would be created to Corrib Terrace.
- 3 9 metered parking spaces would be maintained on Riverside.
- 4 12 metered parking spaces would be maintained on Corrib Terrace.
- 5 Corrib Terrace would be designed as a 'Home Zone'; this prioritises pedestrian movement and will promote life on the streets.
- 6 Parking spaces on Corrib Terrace would be interspersed with areas of planting and both the footpath and road surface would be paved.
- 7 Paving would continue to the end of the park at Waterside, to improve physical and visual connection to the Corrib.
- 8 2 disabled space, 2 spaces for EV charging and 5 motorcycle spaces would be retained within a reconfigured area on Riverside.
- 9 10 parking spaces would be lost adjacent Headford Road, which becomes part of the park.
- 10 Cycle hire station to be relocated to this area.
- 11 3 trees would be removed. One Grey Alder would be removed from the centre of the park, to open up views to the river. One Swedish Whitebeam and one Silver Birch would be removed from the Waterside end of the park. The Birch is near the end of its lifespan and the Whitebeam is growing within the hedge.
- 12 12 new trees will be planted.
- 13 Seating would be provided to the edges of the park and in clusters within the park, catering to a range of users.
- 14 Mounded landform would be created, to reference the islands in the Corrib. These could be used for play.
- 15 Rain gardens would be introduced to provide sustainable drainage. These would include biodiverse planting and informal pathways.
- 16 The Galway Orb would be installed adjacent Headford Road, to create a focal point to draw people into the park. A rill feature within the paving would meander from the Orb and through the park, leading people to the riverside.
- 17 Paved areas would be located away from mature trees to minimise disturbance to their roots.
- 18 Additional crossing points into the park will be created to increase permeability.

Artist's Impression



Concept Design displayed at public consultation, February 2024.



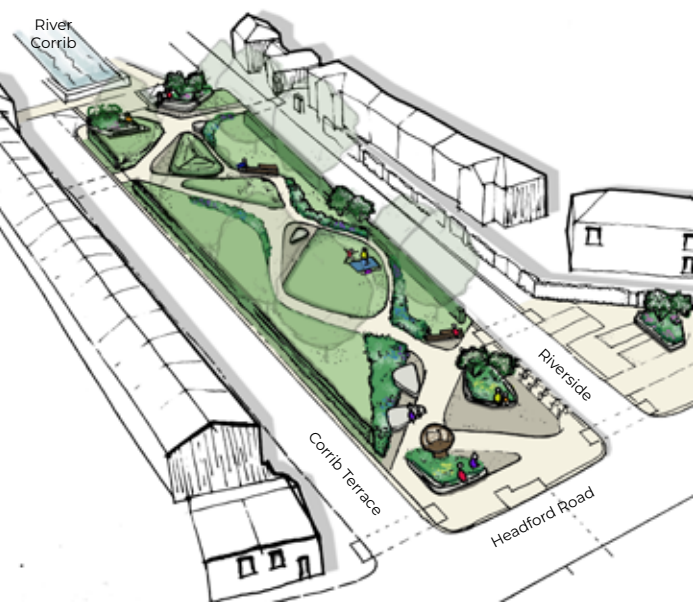
Chapter 04: Design Evolution

Emerging Design Concept

Following receipt of the consultation feedback a number of changes were made to the proposals:

- Parking is retained to the north side of Corrib Terrace. This retains an open outlook to residential properties and glimpsed views to the park. In doing so, the opportunity to break up the road with planting beds and raised crossings becomes more problematic. Therefore the decision was taken to maintain Corrib Terrace as a two-way street and explore other opportunities to improve accessibility for pedestrians.
- Courtesy crossings are introduced to Corrib Terrace and Riverside, whilst maintaining the current parking bay provision. These specifically improve accessibility between the park and triangular parking area, The Plots and schools to the south of the park.
- The extension of the park to Waterside is seen as an important design principle to retain, a raised courtesy crossing allows for pedestrian priority of movement.
- At Headford Road, the Galway Orb is incorporated within the edge of the public realm, providing a visual focus when travelling north-south through the park and Woodquay Square. The layout of the space reflects the spatial arrangement developed for the BusConnects Cross City Link.
- The extent of hard surfacing within the park is reduced to maintain the overall area of greenspace within the park, whilst providing the meandering paths the original design included. Paths are designed to be fully accessible suitable for wheelchairs and buggies.
- A less angular and more organic design has been produced, with flowing curves to routes and spaces and meandering pathways
- The extent of hard landscape works within tree root protection areas is reduced in general. Seating and features are located to areas outside the canopy and root spread of existing trees.
- The rill feature is omitted due to concerns raised by residents about open water features.
- Play mounds, the tiered seating adjacent the Corrib, large lawn area and wildflower areas are retained within the design.
- A hedged boundary to the park is provided.
- Four trees removed (2 category 'C', two category 'B').

Chapter 04: Design Evolution
Emerging Design Concept



Revised Concept Design



Woodquay Park

Proposed changes

- 1 Two way access maintained to Riverside.
- 2 One way access created to Corrib Terrace.
- 3 8 metered parking spaces provided on Riverside, which will be re-lined to the locations shown.
- 4 13 metered parking spaces provided on Corrib Terrace, adjacent the Park. These will be re-lined to the locations shown.
- 5 New pedestrian crossings provided to enhance access into and links through the park to other city destinations.
- 6 Two EV charging points maintained on Riverside.
- 7 Two extended accessible parking bays provided, allowing rear ramp access.
- 8 Vehicle access maintained to 7 Riverside.
- 9 5 motorcycle spaces provided.
- 10 10 cycle hire stands re-located.
- 11 10 parking spaces within existing parking area to be removed. Headford Road perimeter top be upgraded by others as part of Cross City Bus Link.
- 12 Level crossing provided to extend park to the edge of the Corrib.
- 13 4 trees would be removed. One Grey Alder would be removed from the centre of the park, to open up views to the river. Two Swedish Whitebeam and one Silver Birch would be removed from the Waterside end of the park. The Birch is near the end of its lifespan and the Whitebeam is growing within the hedge. 8 new trees will be planted.
- 14 Galway Orb installed as light feature at edge of Headford Road.
- 15 Scale of paths and hard surfacing reduced to maintain green character of Park. Paved areas would be located away from mature trees to minimise disturbance to their roots.
- 16 Informal 'Island' seating is interspersed throughout the Park. Bench seating is also set within wildflower planting along the edges of the space.
- 17 Large lawn maintained within sunnier area of Park.
- 18 Climbing mound provides opportunities for natural play.
- 19 Smaller lawn with Spring-flowering bulbs.

'Eyes on the Street'



The Corrib



Animation



Design Themes

Revised Concept developed for resident's consultation, Summer 2024.



Chapter 04: Design Detail

Landscape Masterplan

Overview

The final masterplan largely retains the pathway network, series of spaces and features that were identified in the previous sketch proposals. Subsequent to the second resident's consultation, further feedback was received on the design, the design was also subject to a Road Safety Audit and further comments were received from the client team. The following changes have resulted:

- The retention of Trees T01 (Swedish Whitebeam) and T18 (Silver Birch). The retention of the trees (and their associated Root Protection Areas) led to a redesign of the Waterside entrance.
- The relocation of the mound landform to the central lawn. This was replaced by a second rain garden.
- The movement of the cycle hire station and the motorcycle parking to the triangular space to the north of Riverside, keeping the central park free of parking infrastructure, which may create obstacles to movement.
- The relocation of the electric vehicle charging spaces to Corrib Terrace and reduction of standard parking bays to 10No. These were undertaken as a result of swept path and visibility analysis, following the Road Safety Audit.
- Adjustments to the alignment of the access to No.8 Riverside and the accessible parking bays. These were undertaken as a result of swept path and visibility analysis, following the Road Safety Audit.
- Adjustments to the design and location of park entrances as a result of swept path and visibility analysis, following the Road Safety Audit.
- Introduction of seating edges to planters to provide further resting and spectating places and within the park.

The completion of additional survey work, such as the Site Investigation and Ecological Assessment has further informed the proposals, with measures incorporated to ensure that bat foraging routes are preserved and the loss of any trees or locally valuable habitats are mitigated. The incorporation of large rain gardens is seen as a significant enhancement to the local area, through minimising run off to the Special Area of Conservation, responding to the biodiversity crisis and helping the city's adaption to climate change.

Hard landscape treatments seek to echo the palette outlined within the Galway Public Realm Strategy and those proposed for the BusConnects Cross City link. These will seamlessly knit the park with its surroundings, creating a high quality and cohesive north-south public realm link from the city centre to the riverside.

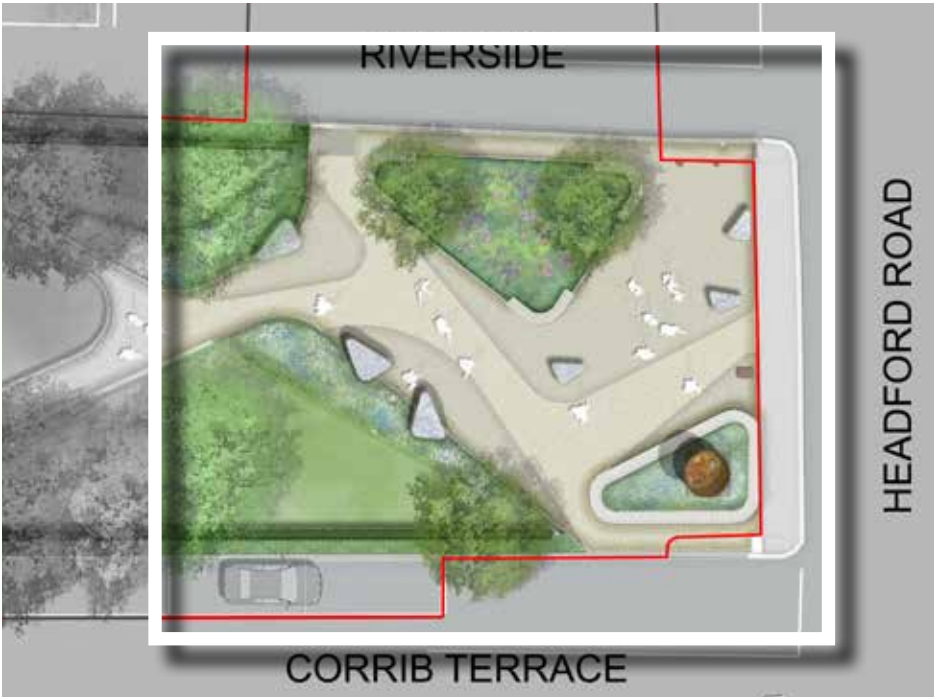
Chapter 04: Design Detail
Landscape Masterplan



Chapter 04: Design Detail

Park Areas in Focus

The following pages provide further detail on the series of spaces and features created within the park.



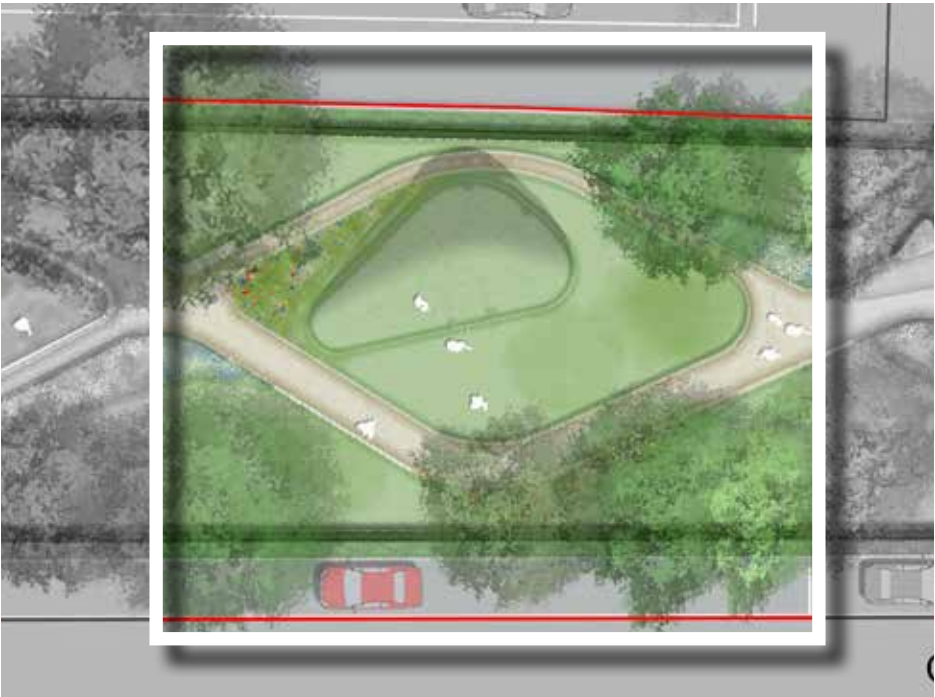
Headford Road Entrance

The park will be extended to meet Headford Road. BusConnects proposals include a wide pedestrian crossing Headford Road at this point and the approach to the park aligns with their proposals to create a welcoming entrance.

The inclusion of the Galway Orb within a raised planting bed will act as a landmark, gathering point and waymarker on the north west / south east axis between the city centre and the Corrib. At night time an uplighter will illuminate the inside of the Orb, animating the immediate surroundings.

A larger proportion of the space is given over to hardstanding in order that the space can be used as an extension of the adjacent Woodquay Square, with plentiful seating and a flexible area that could be used for small gatherings or events.

Green fingers extend from the park into the space, with swathes of perennials and grasses providing seasonal interest and colour. A large rain garden forms part of the park’s sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS). Three new trees will be planted to extend the line of trees up to Headford Road and mitigate the two tree removals within the park.



Lawn with Mounded Landform

Internal spaces within the park have been carefully sited to make best use of the micro-climate. A large lawn is located within a natural opening within the tree canopy, providing a focus for the residential community and informal space for recreation.

The central landform will be gently mounded,echoing the design language elsewhere within the park which references the island forms of the Corrib and freshwater mussels found within. Reinforcement will be provided to the grass surface so that it can be used for natural play.

A bold swathe of Spring bulbs will be planted to the edge of the lawn to provide a seasonal splash of colour. This will be echoed to the south of the lawn, where tree roots prevent extensive new planting.

Chapter 04: Design Detail

Park Areas in Focus



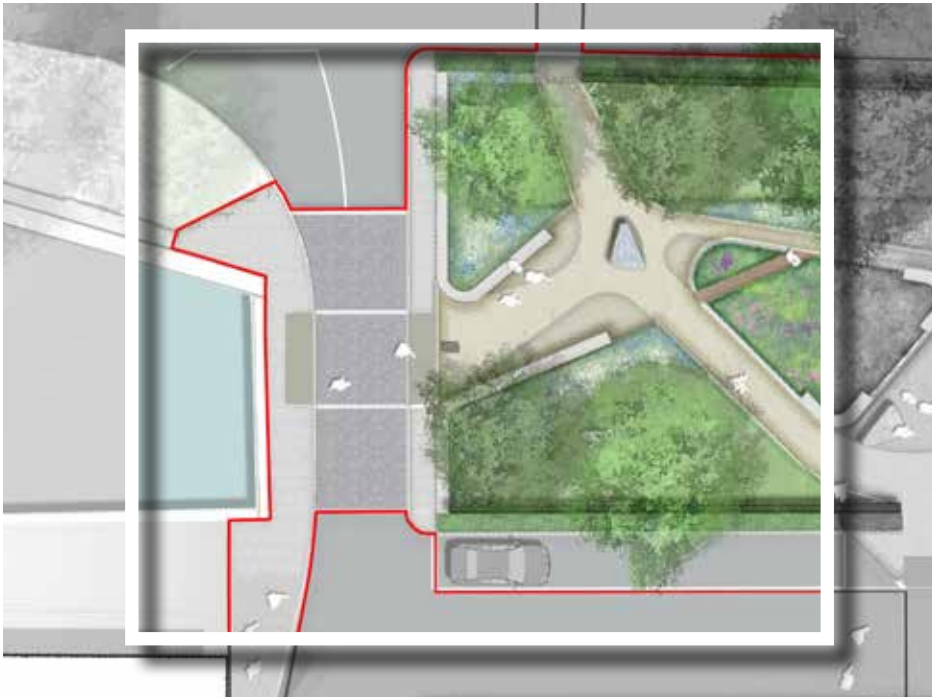
Lawn and Rain Garden

A new entrance to the park will be created from Corrib Terrace, with a small paving build out providing a refuge for pedestrians, allowing them to both see and be seen by vehicles when crossing the road. This will enhance access for park users, particularly children from local schools using the park.

At the Corrib Terrace entrance, the meandering paths criss cross, creating an intimate meeting space with opportunities for seating. The opening in the tree canopies at this point creates the ideal location for a smaller grass lawn, and a large rain garden acts as a counterpoint to the west of the central link path.

The rain gardens are set lower than the level of the paths, in order to capture overland drainage flow. The gardens will be fully planted with a range of species suitable for both rainwater inundation and periods of drought, including flowering perennials, ornamental grasses, ferns and bulbs. A timber boardwalk provides an opportunity to cross through the rain garden and experience the planting at close hand.

Swathes of planting wrap the space to the north and south, providing seasonal amenity. The planting takes its reference from the 'Molinia Meadows' which are a Qualifying Interest of the Lough Corrib Special Area of Conservation. Planting includes both native species and ornamental varieties to provide a visual nod to the habitat with enhanced seasonal diversity, texture and colour.



Waterside Entrance

The changes at Waterside seek to improve both visibility and access to the Corrib and align with other improvements to access and active travel delivered beyond the park boundaries.

In lie with the recommendations of the Galway Public Realm Strategy, the footpath immediately adjacent the Corrib will be widened from 1.2m to 2m to improve access and recreational enjoyment of the waterside. Existing natural stone paving will be continued from the footpath across the carriageway, up to the edge of the path. A wide and level courtesy crossing will be created to facilitate movement between the park and the waterside, reinforcing pedestrian priority of movement.

A new entrance to the park from Riverside will be created, with a courtesy crossing aligning directly with the existing route leading from The Plots. A central junction is formed between this access, the new access from Corrib Terrace and the waterside entrance, creating a natural meeting point and visual focus. Paths will widen on approaching this junction, allowing for meeting, spontaneous activity or very small-scale events. Seating edges are splayed to the edges of the space, providing casual seating for spectators. These also wrap to the edge of waterside, allowing views over the Corrib.



Riverside Triangle

This area is currently occupied by the electric vehicle charging points and motorcycle parking, with an access point to No. 8 Riverside.

Priorities for this area are to create a meaningful area of public realm, rather than an area dominated by parking. The introduction of new paving will be used to unify the space with the adjacent BusConnects works and the enhancements to Woodquay Square beyond. Accessible parking, motorcycle parking and cycle hire stands are sensitively incorporated within the public realm, with elements of street furniture positioned to avoid the use of bollards and other barriers to maintain an obstacle-free environment, wherever possible.

The access to No.8 Riverside is maintained, surfaced in small unit paving to maintain the quality of the public realm. Flush kerbs will be installed to the edge to emphasis priority of pedestrian movement, with the use of hazard warning paving at key crossing points.

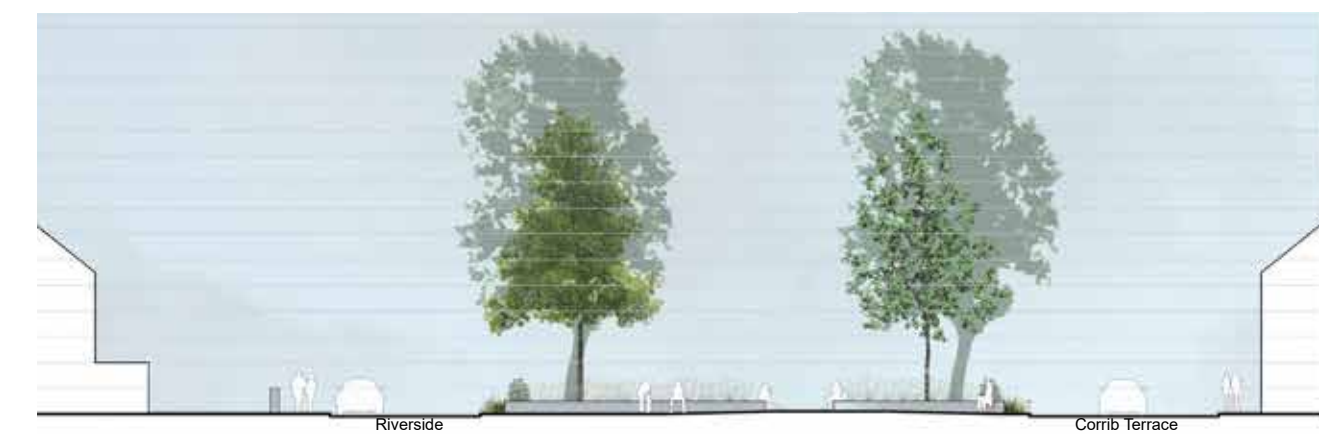
A small rain garden will be introduced to capture surface water runoff within the space. New tree planting will act as a focal point, and the inclusion of a seating edge beneath providing a resting point, close to accessible parking.

Chapter 04: Design Detail
Landscape Sections



The site sections (overleaf) have been prepared to further describe the proposed changes to the park, within the context of the immediate residential neighbourhood.

Chapter 04: Design Detail
Landscape Sections



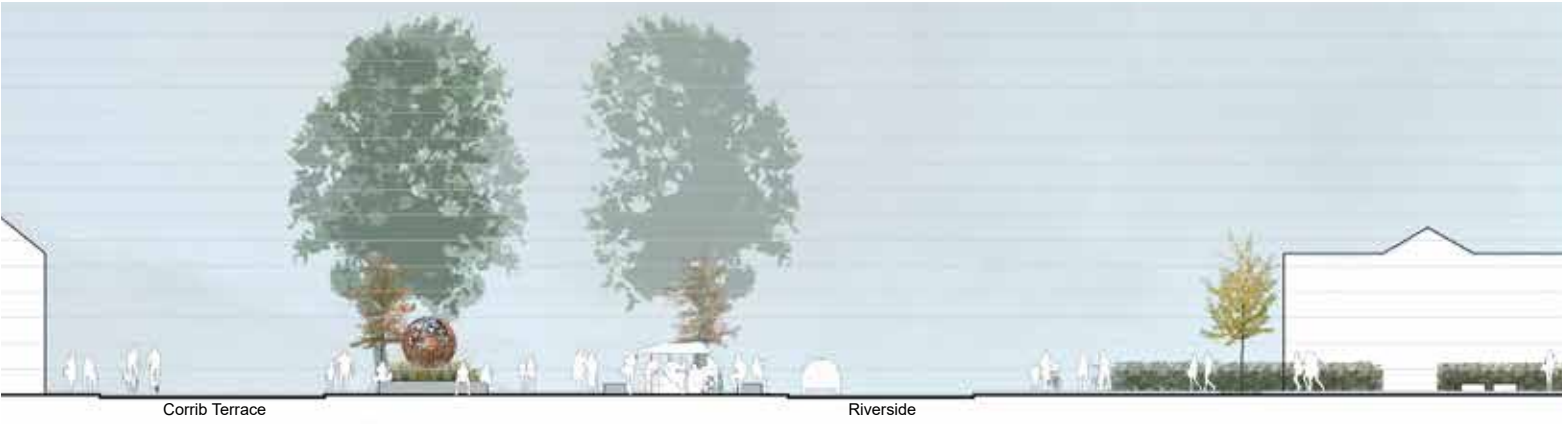
Section AA'



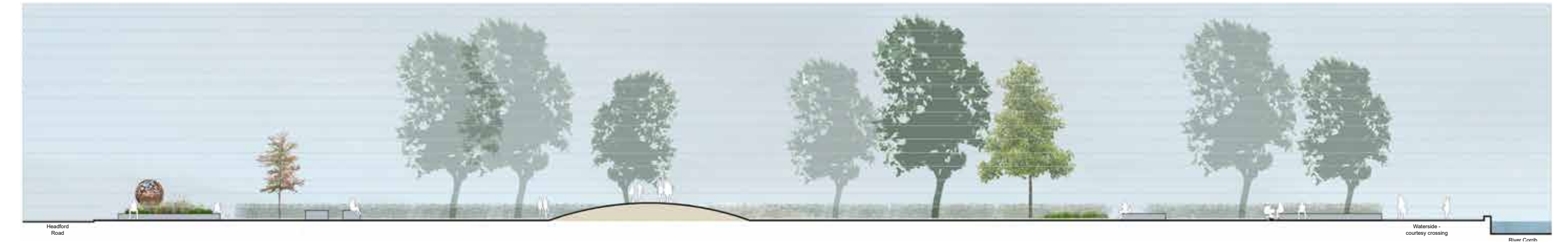
Section BB'



Section CC'



Section DD'



Section EE'



Chapter 04: Design Detail

Access & Movement

One of the main aims of the proposals is to improve access to and within the park, in order to enhance the experience for users of all ages. Recent improvements to cycle access through The Plots and at the Salmon Weir Bridge, along with forthcoming projects such as BusConnects and the re-opening of the Clifden Railway Bridge as an Active Travel route will complement and support these aims. The proposed changes to access and movement around and within the site can be summarised as follows;

Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian crossing into the park from Riverside and Corrib Terrace will be improved through the construction of courtesy crossings with dropped kerbs and tactile paving. Visibility between drivers and pedestrians have been subject to a Road Safety Audit, with build-outs created and planting adjusted, where necessary. The entrance into the Park from Headford Road aligns with a new super crossing proposed as part of the forthcoming BusConnects project. From here, pedestrians can follow a series of paths through the Park to reach Waterside. The main path is 2m wide with bollard lighting providing illumination at dusk and dawn. A secondary 1.2m wide path provides an alternative route that meanders through the Park. At Waterside a 4m wide courtesy crossing will enhance pedestrian movement to the edge of the Corrib. The existing footpath to Waterside will be widened to 2m, in line with the the Galway Public Realm Strategy, which identifies it for enhancement.

Cycle Access

Cycle access through the park is not intended and will be discouraged. The relocation of the cycle hire stands to the north of Riverside will place them directly adjacent the Bus Connects corridor, in close proximity to new cycle paths and additional (non-hire) cycle parking.

Vehicle Access

The existing patterns of movement along Waterside, Riverside and Corrib Terrace will be maintained. Safety will be improved through the introduction of new 'Stop' signs, as identified within the Road Safety Audit for the project.

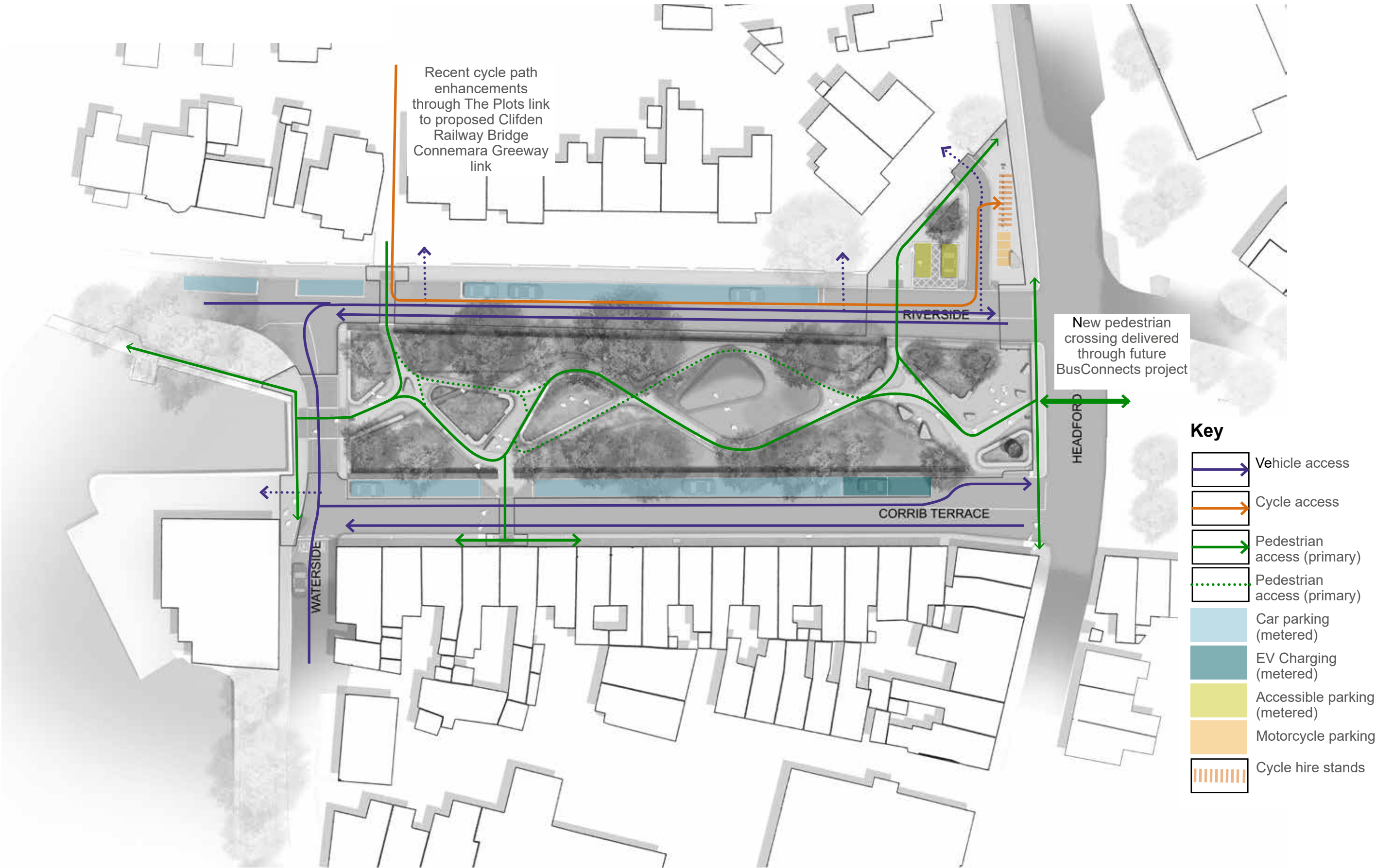
Parking Provision

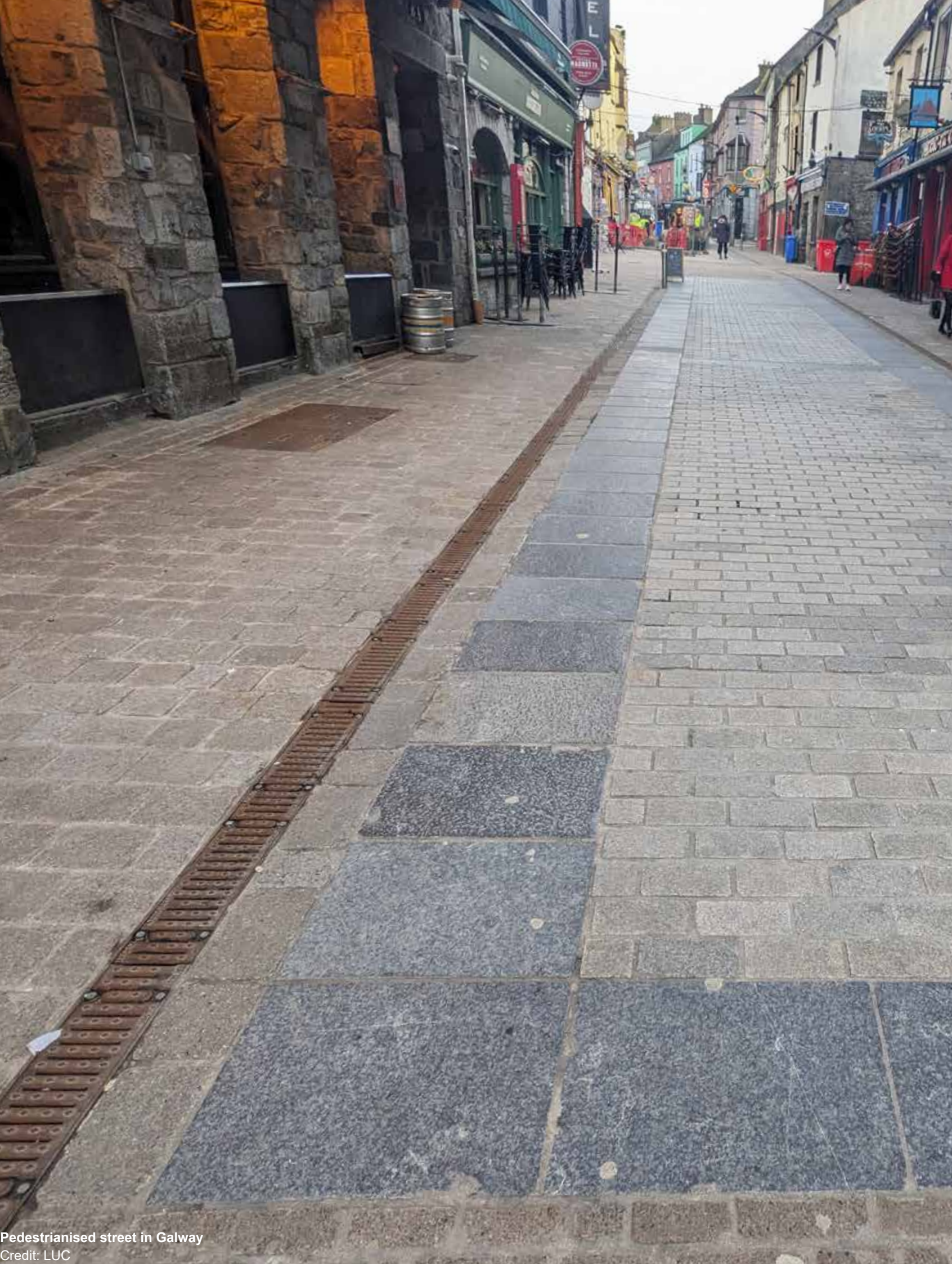
Existing metered parking provision along Riverside will remain unchanged. The cross hatched area below the exit from The Plots will be maintained to allow free passage of pedestrians and cyclists to Riverside, Waterside and the Park.

Existing metered parking provision to Corrib Terrace will be reduced from 12 spaces to 10. This will also the creation of a safe pedestrian crossing point to the Park, with suitable visibility splays and a build-out to further enhance awareness for pedestrian and drivers. Two electric vehicle charging bays will be relocated from Riverside to the end of the line of parking bays.

Existing parking provision adjacent Headford Road will be removed to facilitate extension of the Park to meet Woodquay Square. Accessible parking within this area will be relocated to the other side of Riverside, along with cycle hire provision, which will be reduced from 20 to 10 spaces. Motorcycle parking provision will be retained in this area.

Chapter 04: Design Detail
Access & Movement





Pedestrianised street in Galway
Credit: LUC

Chapter 04: Design Detail

Hard Landscape Strategy: Materials

The key requirements of the materials can be summarised as follows;

- Use of materials that are in keeping with the area
- Alignment with the requirements of the Galway Public Realm Strategy and recent projects delivered, such as the Salmon Weir Bridge
- Alignment with the requirements of future projects being delivered, such as BusConnects Cross Citylink.
- Use of robust materials, that have been tried and tested elsewhere and will withstand anticipated park usage and Galway City Council's maintenance regime.
- Use of materials that are sympathetic to site conditions i.e. suitable for use within tree Root Protection Areas, changes in trafficking

Three different material types are proposed within the project area, as identified on the plan overleaf;

- Use of natural stone paving. This is used to a discrete area at the Waterside entrance. Natural stone is already laid in this area, extending between the Salmon Weir Bridge and Steamer's Quay. The use of natural stone will maintain continuity of surfacing and emphasise the significance of the Corrib.
- Use of high quality concrete paving. This is used to the triangular area of land to the north of Riverside. Use of concrete paving aligns with the recommendations of the Galway Public Realm Strategy and it is indicated on the proposals for the BusConnects Cross City Link. Use of a high quality product will provide a visual uplift to this area and assist the creation of a 'shared surface' space with priority for pedestrian movement.
- Use of resin bound gravel. This is used as a deliberate contrast to the formal character of natural stone or concrete paving. Use of a more flexible material is well-suited to the flowing nature of the paths within the park and use of natural aggregates reinforces the design references to the River Corrib and the inlet which previously flowed through the city at this point.

Chapter 04: Design Detail
Hard Landscape Strategy: Materials



Chapter 04: Design Detail

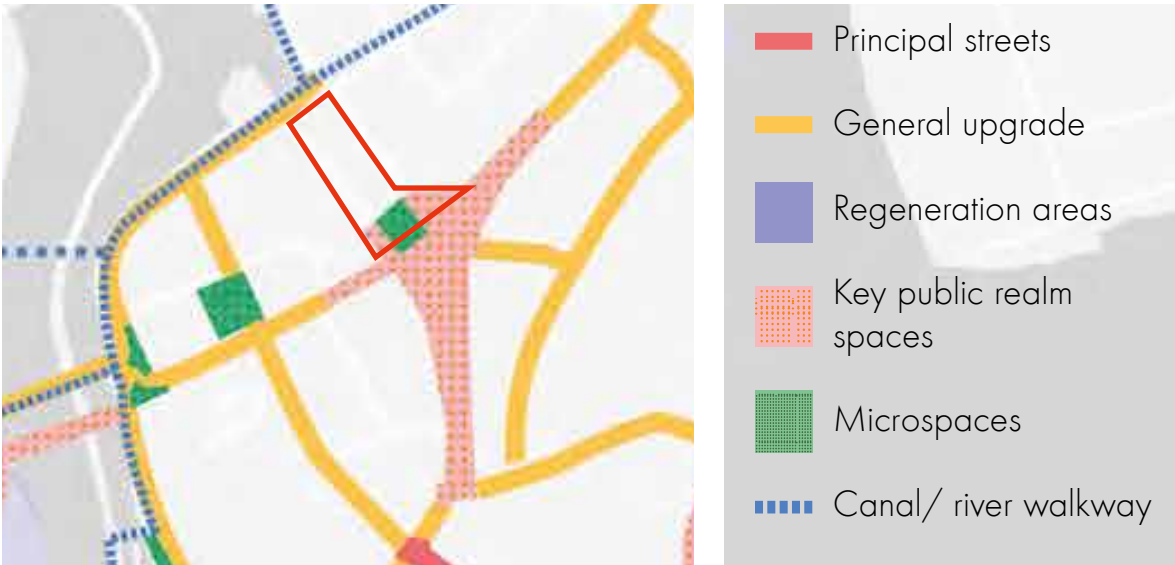
Hard Landscape: Materials

Material Palette 1: Natural Stone Paving with Natural Stone Kerbs

The Galway Public Realm Strategy provides detailed guidance on paving materials specification within the city. Whilst Waterside is not identified as a Principal Street, the natural stone paving specification proposed for this area will align with the materials identified for these streets to maintain continuity across the city.

The outline paving specification is identified overleaf. Further work is required at detailed design stage to ensure unit sizes align with the existing natural stone paving and that paving depths and build-ups are suitable for trafficking requirements.

150mm wide natural stone kerbs will be used throughout all natural stone and concrete paving areas to maintain continuity throughout the scheme.



Typologies of street and spaces. Site boundary shown in red.

Principal Streets

Pedestrian lanes
Pedestrian priority streets

Irish Limestone Slab



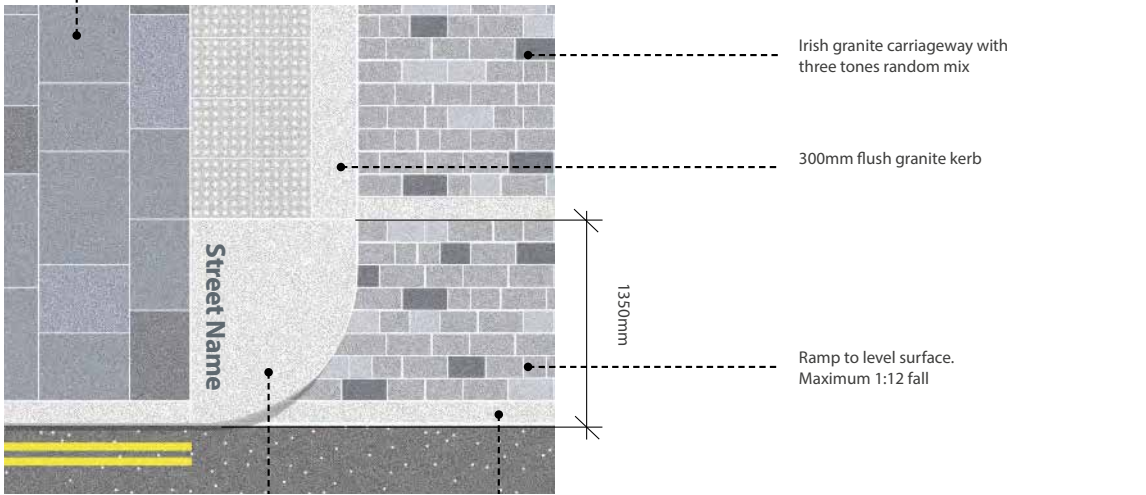
Colour: Blue Grey
Size: 600 x 450-900mm random lengths
Joints: 5-7mm
Finish: Picked
Bond: 1/3 running

Irish Granite Setts



Colour: Three tones random mixed
Size: 150 x150-300mm random lengths
Joints: 7-9mm joint
Finish: Sawn top, picked finish, split sides

Materials identified for Principal Streets



Extracts from Galway Public Realm Strategy
Credit: Galway City Council / Allies and Morrison

Chapter 04: Design Detail

Hard Landscape: Materials



Material Palette 2: Concrete Paving with Natural Stone Kerbs

The Galway Public Realm Strategy provides detailed guidance on paving materials specification within the city. The triangular area to the north of Riverside falls within the Woodquay Square project area, with Headford Road identified as an area of ‘General Upgrade’.

The outline paving specification is identified below. Further work is required at detailed design stage to ensure unit sizes and colours align with those specified for the BusConnects Cross City link project and that paving depths and build-ups are suitable for trafficking requirements.

150mm wide natural stone kerbs will be used throughout all natural stone and concrete paving areas to maintain continuity throughout the scheme.

Public Realm Upgrades

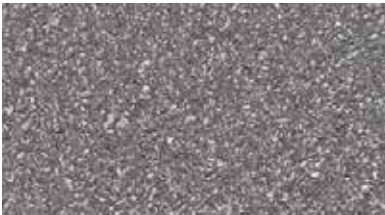
1 & 2 lane streets
Integrated cycle lanes

Concrete Paviours



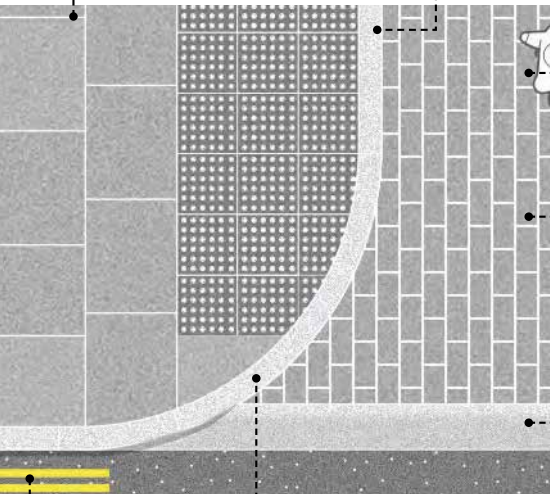
Colour: Grey
Finish: Exposed aggregate
Size: 600 x 450/600/750mm
Bond: 1/3 running

Bitmac to IS EN 13108-4



Bitmac with 6-10 mm limestone chipping surface course
225mm wide mastic asphalt channel beside kerb

Materials identified for General Upgrade



Concrete setts (or similar) to match footway paving tone and material. Depth, size and sub-base to be designed for vehicle overrun

Paving material orientated to match adjacent footway paving

300mm chamfered granite kerb

Extracts from Galway Public Realm Strategy
Credit: Galway City Council / Allies and Morrison

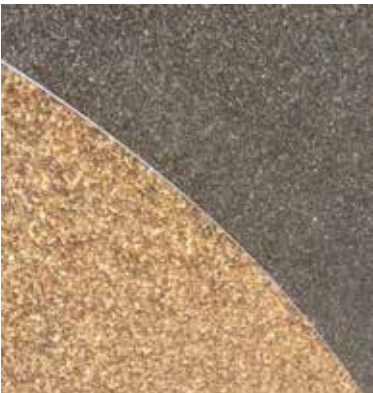


Material Palette 3: Resin Bound Gravel with Metal Edging

Resin bound gravel is used as a deliberate contrast to the formal character of natural stone or concrete paving. Use of a more flexible material is well-suited to the flowing nature of the paths within the park and use of natural aggregates reinforces the design references to the River Corrib and the inlet which previously flowed through the city at this point.

The materials specification stipulates use of a permeable system, suitable for use within tree root protection areas. A ‘no dig’ construction will be used, whereby the paving is constructed above existing ground levels to prevent damage to the root system below. Wherever possible, local aggregates will be used to ensure surfacing is in keeping with the local townscape character.

The use of inset covers to utility access points has been identified to ensure a homogenous surface is maintained within the public realm areas.



Top left: Use of resin bound gravel for flowing curves (Credit: Addagrip)
Top centre: Golden aggregate finish (Credit: Addagrip)
Top right: Neutral/grey aggregate finish (Credit: Addagrip)
Bottom left: Example of ‘No Dig’ construction (Credit: Stratec-Geo)
Bottom centre: Steel edging example (Credit: The One Stop Resin Shop)
Bottom right: Utilities access cover allowing integration of surface materials (Credit: Greenwood Resin)



Chapter 04: Design Detail

Hard Landscape: Street Furniture

The key requirements of the street furniture can be summarised as follows;

- Materials that are in keeping with the area
- Alignment with the requirements of the Galway Public Realm Strategy and recent projects delivered, such as the Salmon Weir Bridge
- Alignment with the requirements of future projects being delivered, such as BusConnects
- Use of robust materials, that have been tried and tested elsewhere and will withstand park usages, potential vandalism and a future maintenance regime
- Minimisation of clutter within the landscape, which could otherwise create physical obstacles and visual distraction
- Provision of an accessible, universal public realm that encourages use by all members of society

The street furniture proposals for the Park deliberately use a limited palette of materials and types to create a simple landscape. Where possible, multi-functional solutions have been utilised, for example the use of informal boulder seats to restrict vehicle entry, rather than a line of multiple bollards. Seating edges have been incorporated to the edge of planters, allowing users to experience close proximity to sensory planting. Parking infrastructure and lighting is located to the back of footpaths in order to maintain clear pedestrian routes through the park and its associated public realm spaces.

Chapter 04: Design Detail

Hard Landscape: Street Furniture



Chapter 04: Design Detail

Hard Landscape: Street Furniture

Bollards

The use of bollards within the public realm has been minimised wherever possible. Their use has been confined to the restriction of vehicle access, in areas where there is insufficient room for the use of other features e.g. seating, planting.

Bollards will be installed at Waterside to restrict vehicle access onto the footpaths and provide additional guarding to the water’s edge beside the Corrib.

Two drop bollards will also be installed at the Riverside / Headford Road corner of the park. These will allow occasional vehicle access onto the end of the park for Council maintenance vehicles and low key pop-up events.

The specification of bollards will be in line with the recommendations of the Galway Public Realm Strategy. All bollards will be installed with a reflective strip to their top, to provide visual contrast to pedestrians and identification to motorists during hours of darkness.

Litter Bins

At present there are no bins within the park or immediate environs and there is a recurrent problem due to littering by groups using the park in summer months.

Elsewhere within the city, the use of solar compactor bins is prevalent, due to their ability to cope with large volumes of litter and Smart capabilities.

The Galway Public Realm Strategy identifies the use of smaller bins in areas where there are narrow streets <9m width. Due to their small size they will require more frequent emptying by the Council. For this reason, bins have been located at either end of the park, directly adjoining Waterside and Headford Road.

The surface finish of the bins and use of logos will align with the recommendations of the Galway Public Realm Strategy to ensure commonality of finish with other street furniture.

Seating

The placement of seating within the park has considered the proximity to natural gathering and meeting spaces, the need to provide regular resting points, the microclimate and surrounding landscape features or views, and the known bat foraging routes along the boundary treeline.

The proposals include the use of two different seating elements. A raised concrete or cast stone modular unit will be used to form a seating edge to areas of soft landscape or raised planters. The incorporation of timber back and arm rests will ensure the seating is fully accessible and encourage longer dwell times to enjoy the landscape setting. For this reason they are located away from the mature trees, which function as a bat foraging route.

Seating edges have been introduced in the following locations:

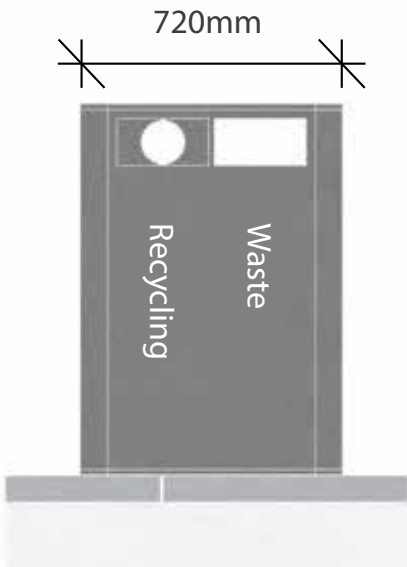
- Within the triangular public realm areas to the north of Riverside. Seating provides a resting place for users of accessible parking bays. It also provides an informal barrier to vehicles and protection to the rain garden and tree planting beyond.

- At Waterside a long and continuous seating edge wraps the north western boundary of the park, allowing for small group performances and experiencing views of the Corrib. It also provides a functional role as an informal barrier to vehicles.
- At Headford Road, a continuous seating edge wraps the base of the Galway Orb, creating a natural meeting point and visual focus. Additional seating modules form the edge to the rain garden.

The use of rounded stone or cast stone boulders will provide informal resting and perching points within the park and natural play features for young children. These will also reference the islands and natural standing stones found within the Corrib. These elements are dispersed throughout the park, close to the intersections of paths, where people may wish to stop and chat or watch children playing.



Proposed bollards - from Galway Public Realm Strategy
Credit: Galway City Council / Allies and Morrison



Proposed bins - from Galway Public Realm Strategy
Credit: Galway City Council / Allies and Morrison



Proposed seating edge to planters. Back and arm supports will be included to ensure it is fully accessible.
Credit: Hardscape



Proposed informal boulder seating
Credit: One Artisan

Chapter 04: Design Detail
Hard Landscape: Animation

Galway Orb

To celebrate Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture a fire parade was held across seven towns, using decorative Orbs.

Each Orb reflected the celebrations and memories of the towns with silhouettes of landscape and people. Every town has a river and each sphere illustrates the river along its base. These orbs were designed with the intention of being used as permanent art installations in their respective towns. Ballinasloe has recently installed its orb in a permanent setting within the town and a similar installations is proposed in Clifden.

At Woodquay Park the intention is for the Orb to act as a focal point along Headford Road, to raise awareness of the park and it's intrinsic link to the Corrib. The Orb will be set within a raised planter, surrounded by planting, which will allow it to act as a natural meeting point within the city.

During the Capital of Culture ceremony, fires were set in the base of the Orbs. It is the intention to install uplighting to the base of the Orb to provide subtle illumination of the artwork and poetry inscribed on its surface.

Filleadh ar an gCathair

Anocht ag filleadh dom
blaisim allas na cathrach faram.
Deas liom a taiseacht.

Preabann an Aimsir Láithreach
gan aire ó gach balla
i mbrothall an tráthnóna.

Admhaím go músclaíonn
gás sceite
sceitimíní ionam.

Is fíor nach gcítear
luí na gréine
i bhfairsing' spéire:

cacann an oíche
idir fhoirgnimh arda
gan rabhadh;

ach lasann soilse neon
cúinní coimhthíocha mo chroí.

Faoiseamh a gheobhadsa
ar mo ghrianán gealaí,
mo chluas le hamhrán tráchta.

Lines from the poem Filleadh ar an gCathair by Ailbhe Ní Ghearbhuighare are inscribed on the Galway Orb

Credit: Ailbhe Ní Ghearbhuigh

Citybound

Returning tonight
I can taste the city's sweat
around me.
I like its sweetness.

The Present Tense bounces
recklessly off walls
in the heat of the afternoon.

I admit toxic fumes
intoxicate me.

Although you don't see
the setting sun here
in the vast expanse of sky

night plunges
between tall buildings
without warning.

but neon lights light up
the foreign corners of my heart.

Faoiseamh a gheobhadsa
on a moonlit ledge
my ear tuned to traffic's song.

Lighting

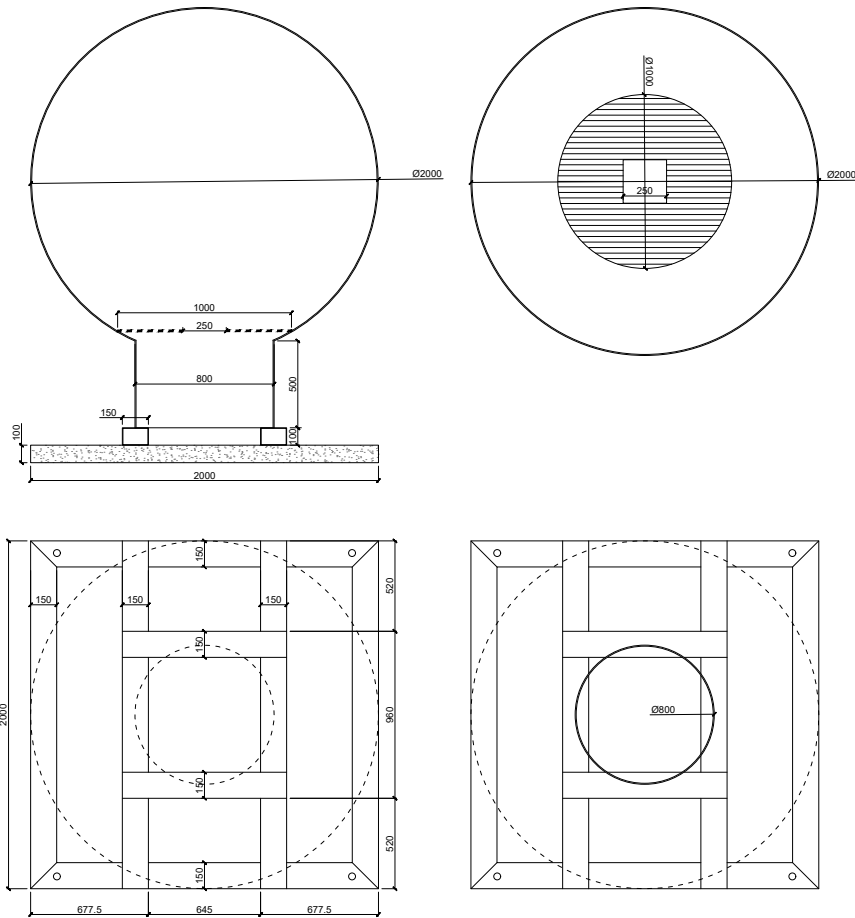
Ecological surveys have identified the use of mature trees within the park as a foraging and commuting route for bats. This will places a constraint on lighting levels and lighting temperature within the park.

The use of lighting bollards is proposed in order to reduce light spill within the park and disturbance to bats. Bollards will be placed along the main pedestrian route, providing intimate lighting to the route, in keeping with a quiet residential neighbourhood. Controls to the lighting will be provided to restrict levels outside of dusk and dawn hours and an asymmetric fitting will ensure that light is directly only over the pathway. Light fittings with specific colour temperature suitable for bats will be used.



Proposed bollard lighting to internal pathways within the Park

Credit: Urbis Schreder



Top left and right: Galway Orb awaiting re-use
Credit: LUC

Below: Measured drawing of the Orb (side elevation, top and details of supporting frame. This would be hidden below ground within the surrounding planter).



Chapter 04: Design Detail

Soft Landscape Strategy

The key requirements of the soft landscape can be summarised as follows;

- Mitigation for the loss of any trees, hedgerows and other valued habitats within the site
- Introduction of seasonal colour, diversity and sensory interest
- Use of species that are in keeping with the area, and locally native
- Use of species that are suitable to the site location, microclimate and ground conditions
- Use of species that enhance biodiversity and contribute to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan
- Use of species suitable for key site features, such as the rain gardens
- Use of species that reflect qualifying habitats within the Special Area of Conservation, creating a potential earning resource for schools

Trees

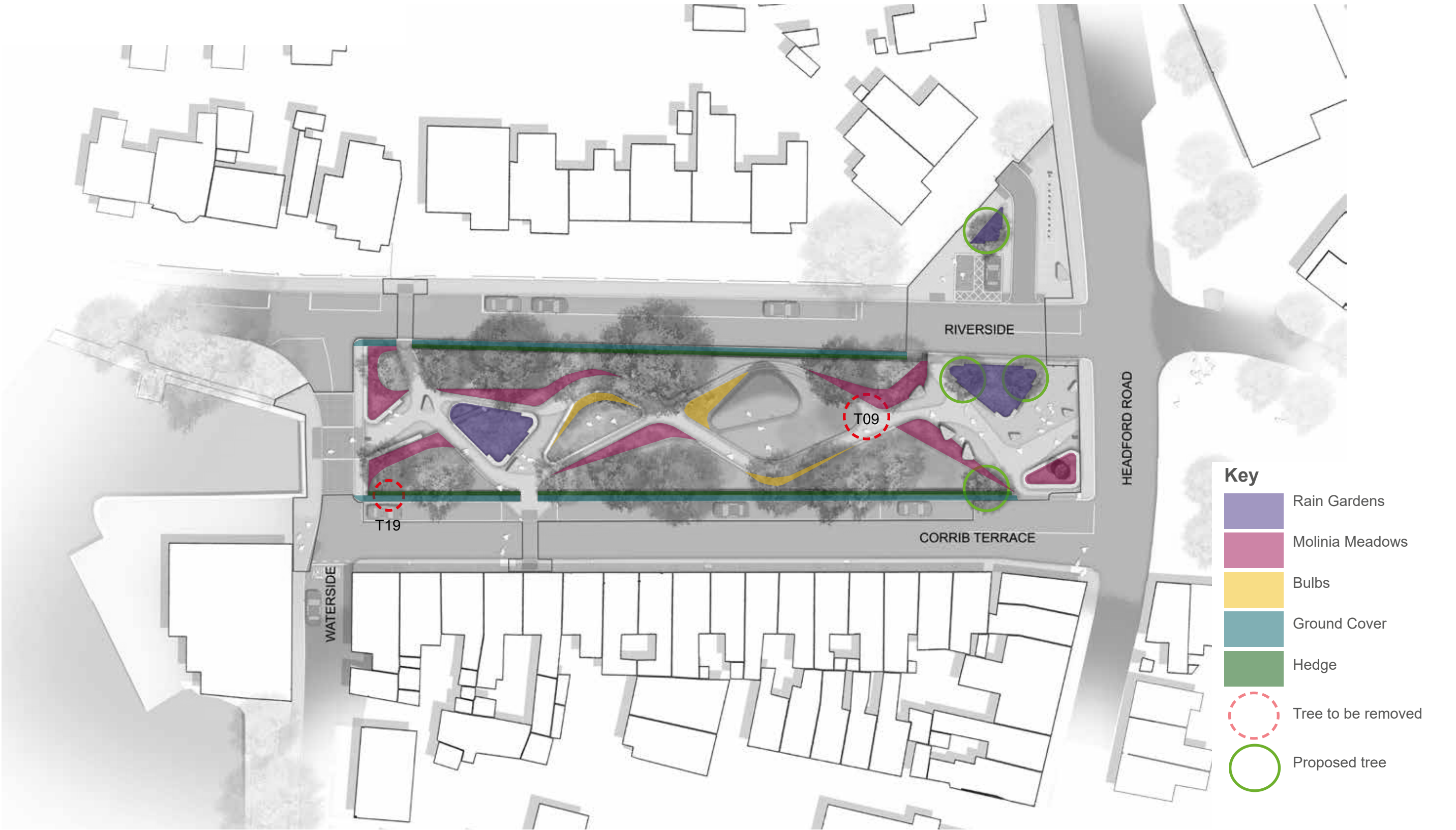
Development of the park as shown will require the removal of two existing trees; T19 is a Grade C Swedish Whitebeam, growing from within the hedge near the junction of Corrib Terrace and Waterside and T09 is a Grade B Grey Alder growing within the middle of the park. The removal of T019 is required to redevelop the park boundary and the removal of T09 will open up sightlines through the park and allow the construction of the internal path network.

Trees T04, T05, T07 and T012 will require minor crown-lifting in order to achieve suitable head clearance along the park footpaths.

All other trees will be retained. Due to the extensive root protection areas around the trees, which occupy a significant area of the park 'No Dig' construction techniques will be used for the park footpaths. To avoid excavation within the rootzone and potential severance of roots, path levels will be constructed above the existing ground level, with use of cellular confinement systems to spread the load. Use of a permeable resin bound gravel surface will allow passage of air and water to tree routes.

The two tree losses within the park will be mitigated through the planting of four new trees. These will be concentrated to the Headford Road end of the park, to prevent further overshadowing of the park provide solar shading to the small gathering and add greenery to the streetscene. To provided suitable below-ground root volumes and ensure the best chance of establishment, all tree planting will take place within areas of soft landscape and rain gardens. Golden Alder (*Alnus incana* 'Aurea') is considered an appropriate species for these conditions (inundation and occasional drought) and is a plant recognised for its associations with the waterside. It will also provide winter interest as the bark and branches of this small tree give an orangey-golden glow during winter, which contrasts with the bright cerise pink catkins which form in late summer and continue to develop as the winter progresses.

Chapter 04: Design Detail
Soft Landscape Strategy



Chapter 04: Design Detail

Soft Landscape Strategy



Rain Gardens

The Rain Gardens are an essential component of the park, providing sustainable urban drainage for the park. Whilst a functional part of the landscape, they will also contribute to biodiversity, through the inclusion of pollinator species and those with features of interest to wildlife. Species will also be selected for their aesthetic characteristics, such as flower or leaf colour. Fundamentally, all plants used must be capable of withstanding periods of inundation and drought.

Species proposed:

- Achillea ‘Terracotta’
- Ajuga reptans ‘Atropurpurea’
- Allium ‘Purple Sensation’
- Allium cristophii
- Astrantia major ‘Sunningdale Variegated’
- Bergenia ‘Bressingham White’
- Cornus stolonifera ‘Kelsey’
- Dryopteris dilatata ‘Crispa Whiteside’
- Dryopteris filix-mas
- Helenium ‘Moerheim Beauty’
- Iris sibirica ‘Perry’s Blue’
- Osmunda regalis
- Persicaria bistorta ‘Superba’
- Persicaria bistorta ‘Superba’
- Rudbeckia hirta
- Verbena bonariensis
- Viburnum opulus ‘Compactum’



Chapter 04: Design Detail

Soft Landscape Strategy



Molinia Meadows

The Molinia Meadows planting type pays reference to the Molinia Meadows Qualifying Habitat, found within the Lough Corrib Special Area of Conservation. This habitat typically comprises species such as *Achillea ptarmica*, various species of *Carex* and *Juncus*, *Filipendula ulmaria*, *Galium palsutre*, *Succisa pratensis* and *Molinia caerulea*.

This planting type is not proposed to be an exact recreation of the Qualifying Habitat, but provide a visual suggestion that is in keeping with the site location adjacent the Corrib. The planting mix will include positive indicator species identified in bold below, as well as ornamental varieties of *Carex* and *Molinia*, along with other ornamental grass and perennial species that maintain an overall naturalistic look to the swathes of planting.

Species proposed:

Achillea ptarmica

Carex elata ‘Aurea’

Carex flacca

Carex morrowii ‘Ice Dance’

Carex oshimensis ‘Evergold’

Deschampsia flexuosa ‘Tatra Gold’

Filipendula ulmaria

Geranium pratense

Luzula nivea

Miscanthus sinensis ‘Kleine Fontane’

Molinia caerulea arundinacea ‘Karl Foerster’

Molinia caerulea arundinacea ‘Transparent’

Succisa pratensis



Chapter 04: Design Detail

Soft Landscape Strategy



Ground Cover

Ground cover planting is proposed to the park verges along Corrib Terrace and Riverside. These enhance amenity of the park boundaries and seasonal changes in colour. They will also contribute to biodiversity, through the inclusion of pollinator species and those with features of interest to wildlife. Species will also be selected for their aesthetic characteristics, such as flower or leaf colour and their ability to establish successfully and provide a good coverage to the area.

Species proposed:

- Blechnum spicant
- Cornus stolonifera ‘Kelseyi’
- Dryopteris dilatata ‘Crispa Whiteside’
- Epimedium x youngianum ‘Niveum’
- Geranium ‘Johnson’s Blue’
- Pulmonaria officinalis ‘Sissinghurst White’
- Thymus ‘Hartington Silver’
- Vinca minor



Chapter 04: Design Detail

Soft Landscape Strategy

Hedge

A mixed species native hedge is proposed to the park boundaries to replace and mitigate the loss of the existing gappy, species-poor hedge. The hedge will be inset from the existing park boundary, thus enhancing sightlines to road users and pedestrians. Locally native species will be used which can demonstrate tolerance to the underlying ground conditions.

Species proposed:

- Cornus sanguinea
- Corylus avellana
- Crataegus monogyna
- Ilex aquifolium
- Malus sylvestris
- Prunus spinosa
- Viburnum opulus

Bulbs

Native, spring flowering bulbs will be sown in naturalistic drifts to provide early colour and a source of nectar for pollinators.

Species proposed:

- Eranthis hyemalis
- Galanthus nivalis

