

An aerial photograph of a street scene in central London. On the left, a large, classical building with columns and arches is visible, identified by a sign as 'SOMERSET HOUSE'. The street below is filled with red double-decker buses, white vans, and other vehicles. Pedestrians are walking along the sidewalks. A large green tree stands on the right side of the frame.

THE STRAND | ALDWYCH

RIBA STAGE 2

LDĀ DESIGN

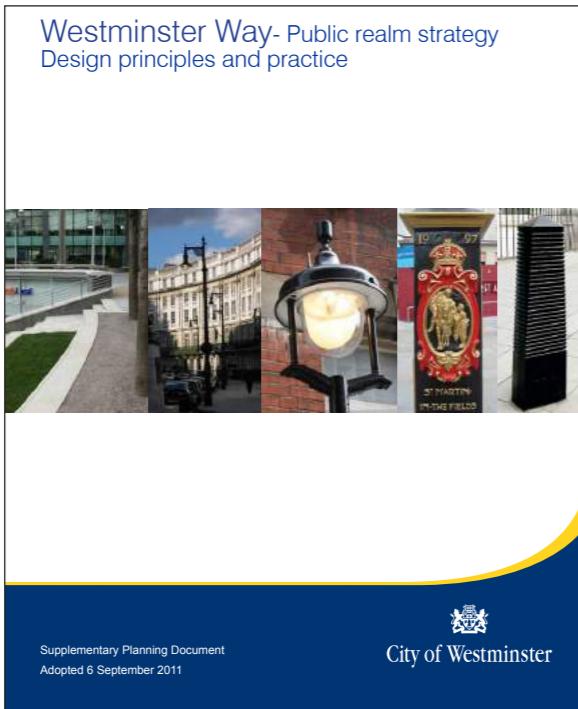
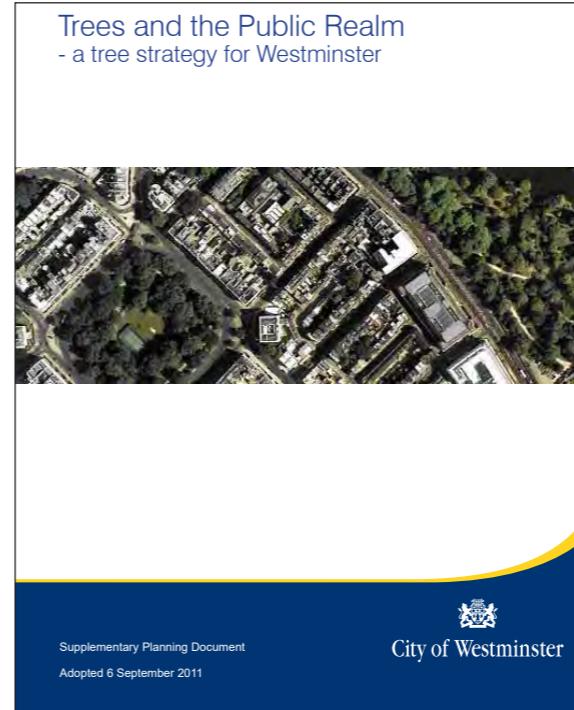
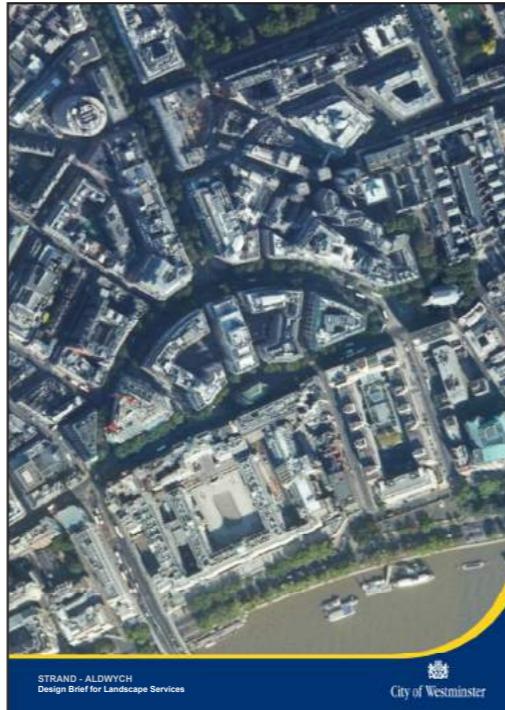
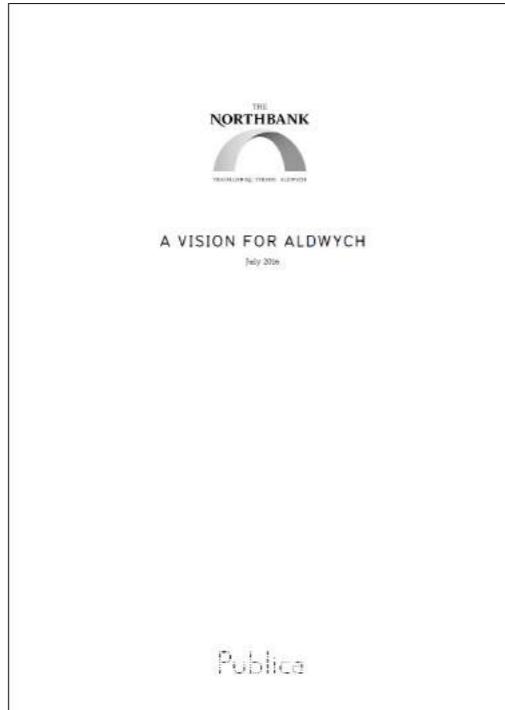


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Version date: 06 September 2018
Comment Final

This document has been prepared and checked
in accordance with ISO 9001:2000.



1.0 Vision and Background

The contents of this document represent work carried out since 15 February 2018 following the appointment of LDA Design by Westminster Council. The work here builds on the efforts of others represented by the documents on the page opposite to transform the Strand between Waterloo Bridge and Arundel Street into a public space for people rather than a space dominated by vehicles. It is envisioned that traffic on the Aldwych would be converted to two way traffic, rather than the current one way gyratory system.

This is an extraordinary moment for the Strand/Aldwych to create a truly democratic public space that prioritises people over automobiles and recognises the historic importance of the Strand and the collection of listed buildings. The public space will deliver an exemplar space that is at the forefront of design excellence and cultural vitality in the form of research and development installations, local creative curation and performance based art. Could it be a place where art is made not displayed; where performances are rehearsed not performed, where knowledge is shared not stored away? Crucially, it will be a space for the everyday, creating moments of calm, reflection, delight and surprise in a new sanctuary for city dwellers. The Grade I* listed St. Mary Le Strand church is central to the project and its relationship with the public space will contribute to the character, function and atmosphere of the place.

In parallel with the richness of the cultural establishments and the pursuits of the educational institutions, this incredibly generous public space will establish a global culture and education district and one of a kind public offering for London.



1896: The Strand from St. Mary Le Strand Church looking west

2018: The Strand from St. Mary Le Strand Church looking west



2.0 History and City as Palimpsest

palimpsest

'palim(p)sest

noun

something reused or altered but still bearing visible traces of its earlier form.

The Strand has been an important east to west route since AD 190. It has served as a ceremonial route from Westminster Abbey to St. Pauls and ajoins many of London's greatest cultural and intellectual institutions.

The Aldwych is a relatively young contribution to London, conceived in the 1900's as a space tantamount to the generous Parisian streets and boulevards. This wide, grand gesture changed the urban grain of this part of London, as well as the character, function and mobility of the area.

The following pages illustrate the key moments that make this part of London what it is today.

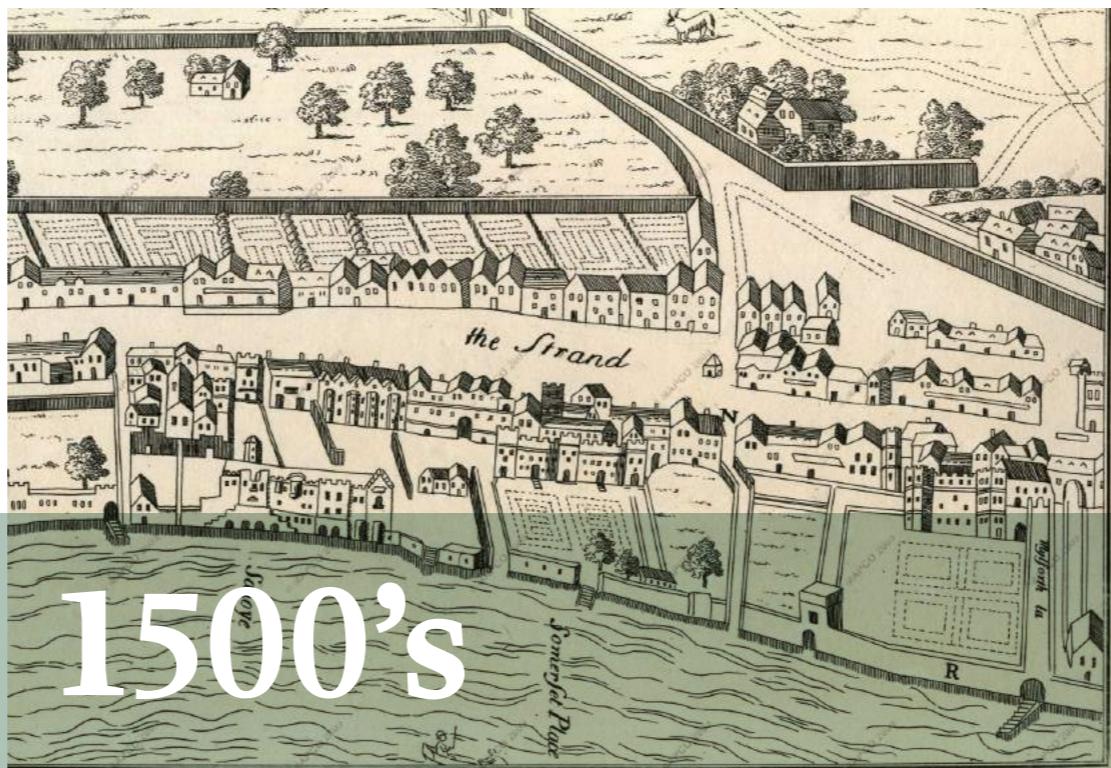
History as Palimpsest

1593



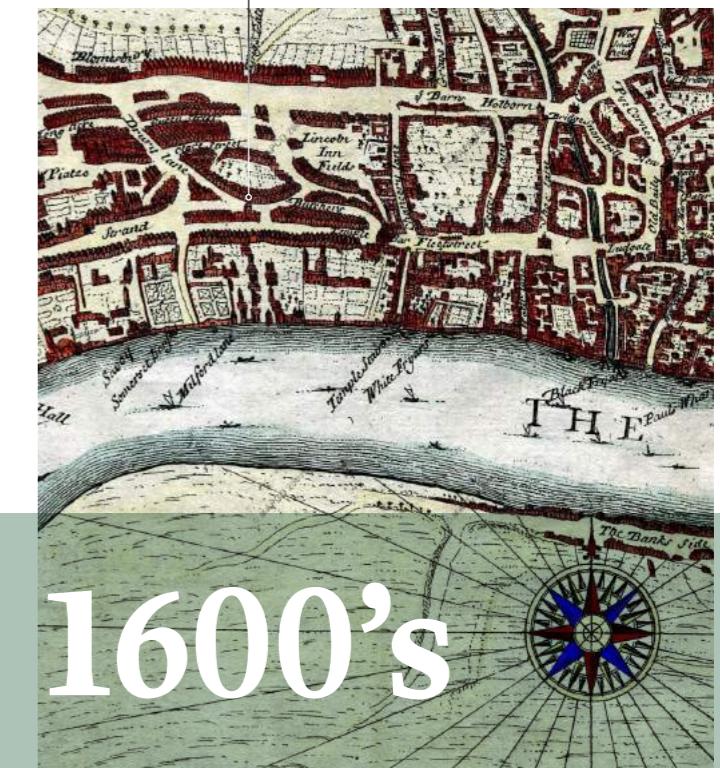
190
A D

1578 The Strand in during the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1

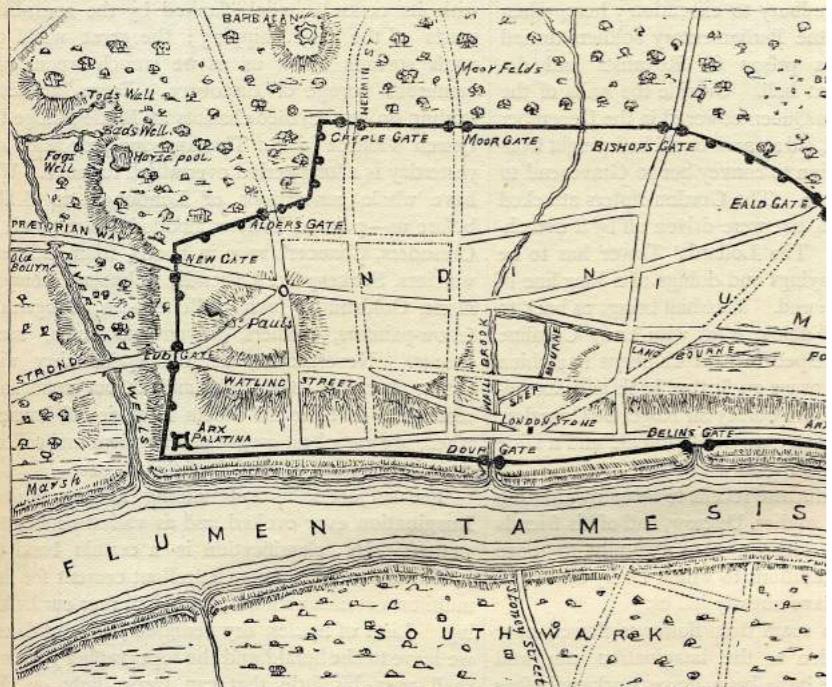


St. Clement Danes Church completed 1682 by Sir Christopher Wren

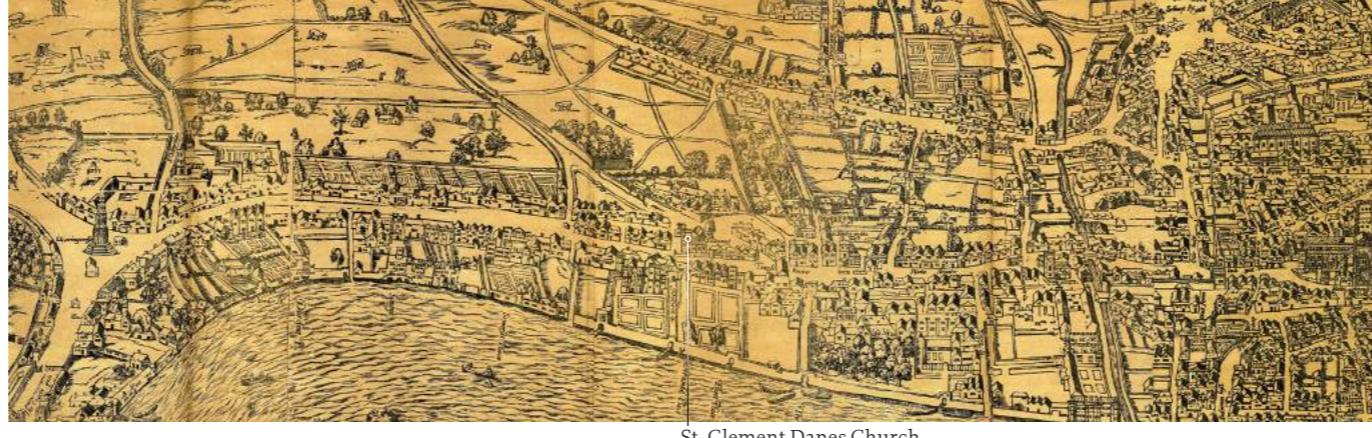
St. Clement Danes Church



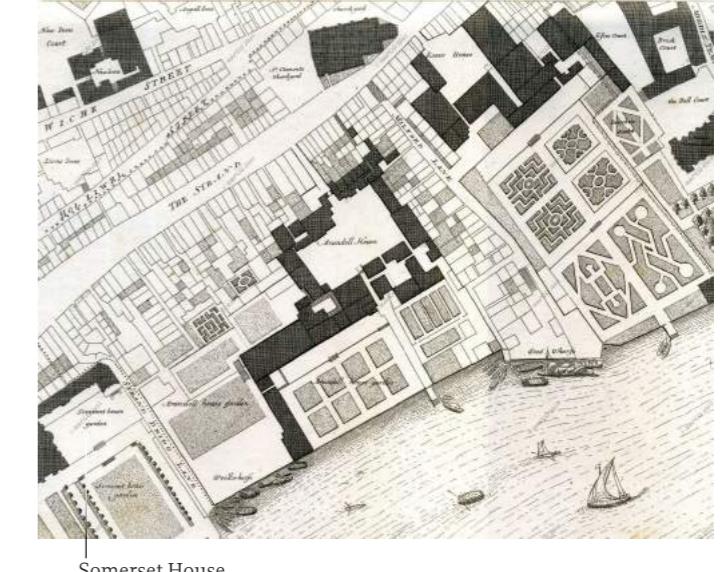
1600's



AD 190 Roman London and the 'Strond'
meaning 'the edge of the river'.



1560: Strand Linking Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral. 1552, Duke of Somerset House is Executed and palace is passed to the Crown



1677 Illustrating the historic mansions of Essex House, Arundel House, Somerset House, Savoy Palace, Durham House and Cecil House. 1693 Catherine of Braganza leaves Denmark House (Somerset House). She is the last royal to live in the palace.

1720 St Mary Le Strand under construction, due for completion on 1723. Denmark House (Somerset House) is used as grace and favour apartments, offices and storage stables.



1700's



1750 Canaletto's painting of the River Thames from the Terrace of Somerset House

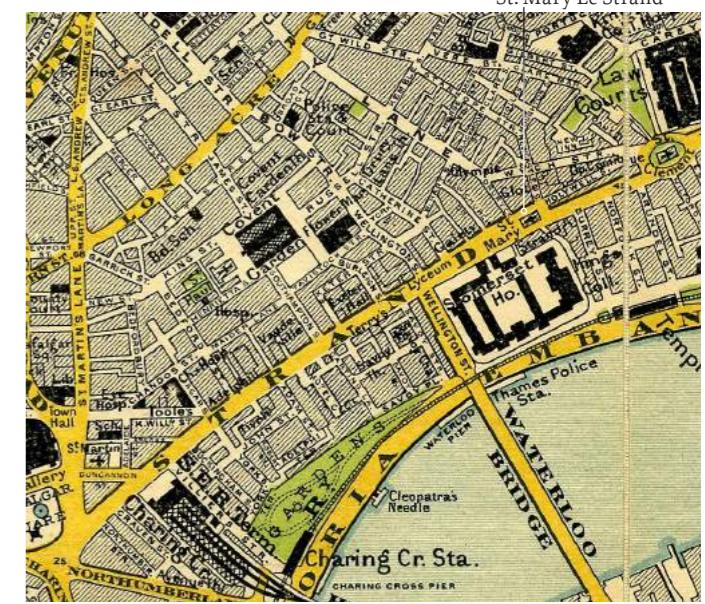
1775 finer grain streets forming in place of the mansion houses as aristocracy moved to the West End. Blackfriars Bridge completes 1769. 1775 The original Somerset House is demolished and the Architect William Chambers starts work on its replacement. 1779 Royal Academy of Arts becomes the first resident in what's now known as the North Wing.



1844 Map: Trafalgar Square Completed. 1817 Waterloo Bridge completed as a toll bridge. 1835 Kings College opens after 6 years of construction.



1897 Map. 1882, The Royal Courts of Justice is opened by Queen Victoria. Parliament paid £1,453,000 for the 6 acre site, which required 450 dwellings to be demolished.



1800's



1801 The new Somerset House is deemed complete. Its 26 year construction costs totals £462,323.



The strand with St Mary-le-stand Church, looking east. Note that no trees sit within the courtyard, but the pillars and gates are visible.

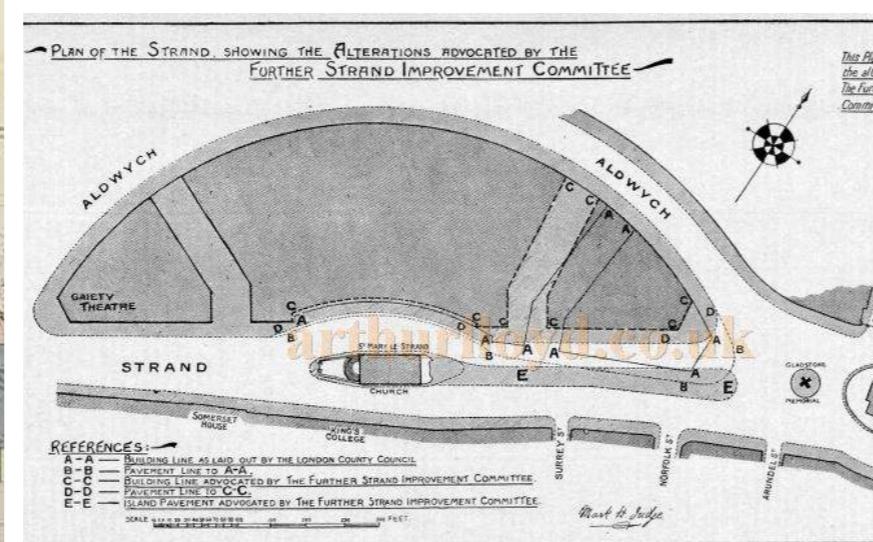


The royal carriage passing Somerset House and St Mary-le-Strand on the right for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee

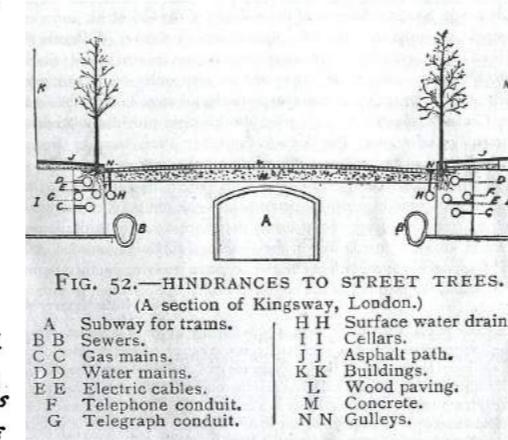
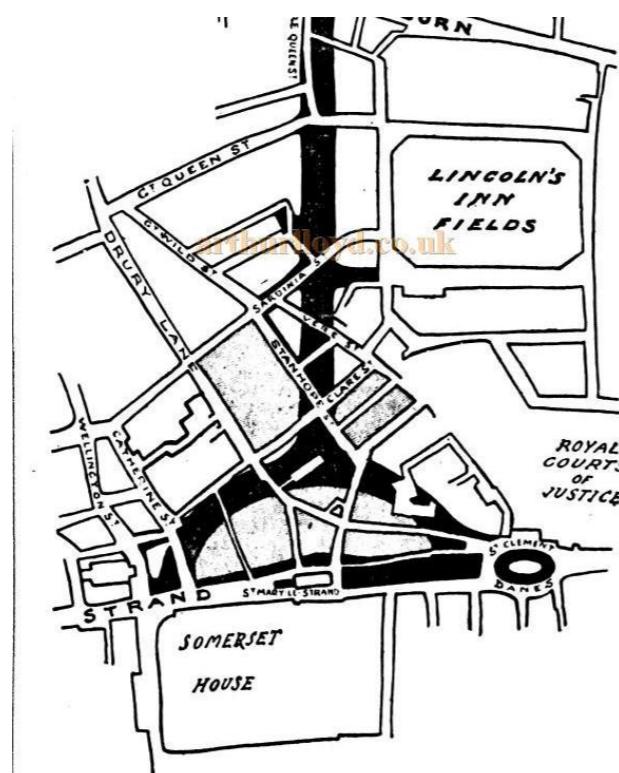
1900 From the Daily News, 17 August 1900. London County Council Plans for Aldwych and Kingsway. 1902, the LSE moves to its current location. Total cost for land acquisition £4,442,400.



1900's



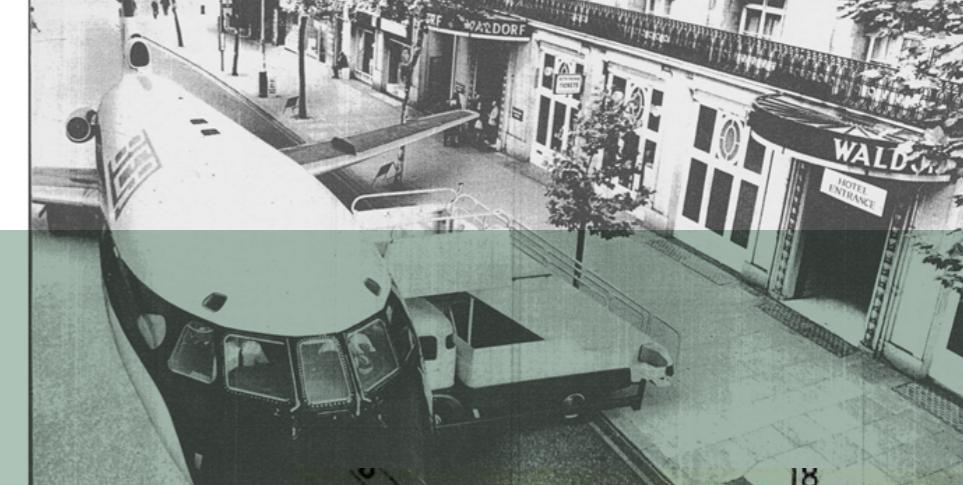
1905 From the Daily News, 17 August 1900. 1903 the Gaiety Theatre opens in new prominent location



1910 from the Gardener's Chronicle showing cross section of Kingsway road showing the position of the new Trees and Subway. The Road was paved with timber.



Grand opening of the Waldorf Astoria



"The mere abnormal widening of the street at that point would not, in our opinion, have been worth the cost, and therefore we have not supported it. If, however, a garden strip in the centre were included in the scheme, as shown on the plan, this would no doubt be a great public street improvement, but it must be remembered that it means a pecuniary loss to the Council, and eventually to the ratepayers, of considerably over 300,000L. Apart from that, we should be very glad to see it carried out in this form, i.e., with a centre space planted with trees."



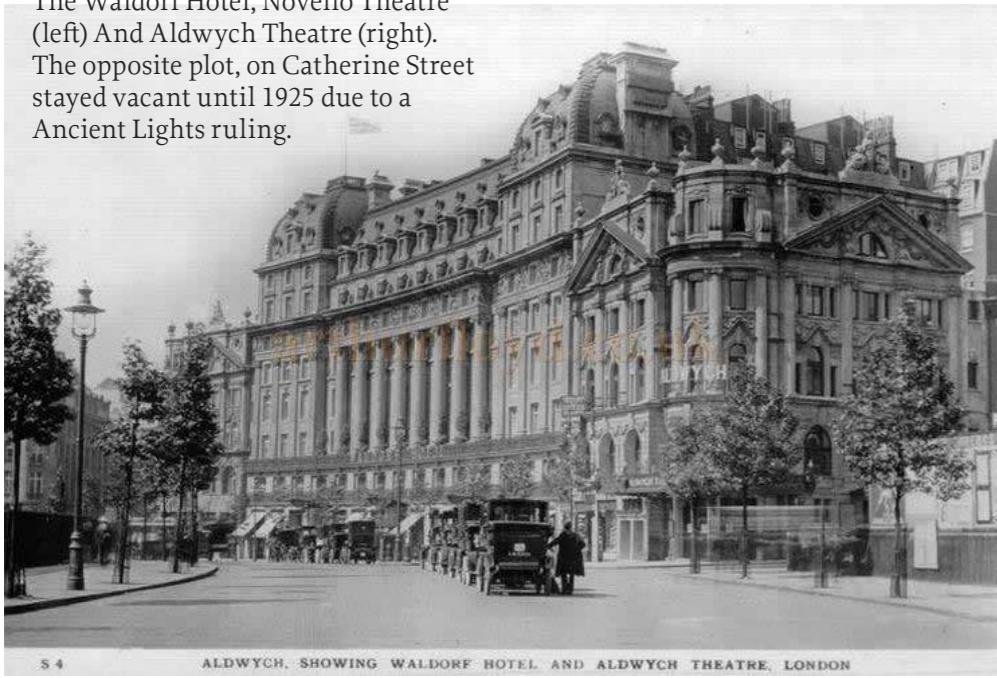
1908 Map showing the new Aldwych Gyratory within the urban fabric. Waldorf Astoria completed.



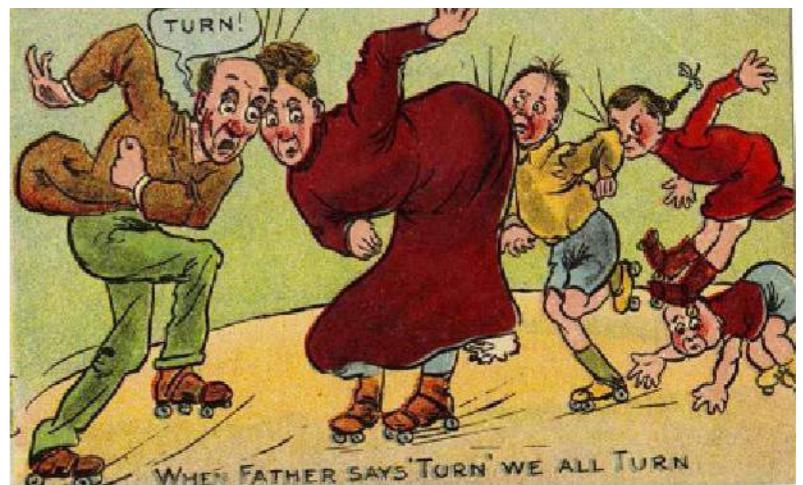
The Aldwych Theatre, Waldorf Hotel, and the Waldorf Theatre in 1912
- From a period postcard.

The Aldwych Theatre was part of a vast new building consisting of the Aldwych Theatre itself, the Waldorf Hotel in the center, and at the far end, the Waldorf Theatre, now the Novello Theatre. Both Theatres were designed by W. G. R. Sprague and given identical exteriors.

The Waldorf Hotel, Novello Theatre (left) And Aldwych Theatre (right). The opposite plot, on Catherine Street stayed vacant until 1925 due to a Ancient Lights ruling.

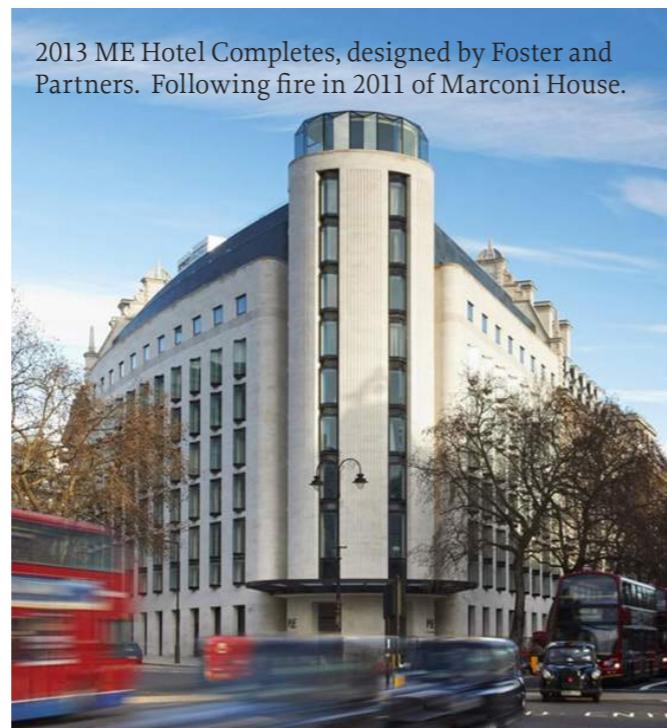


The newly built Aldwych in the early 1900s showing the Gaiety Theatre on the right, and on the far left, the Waldorf Theatre, now Novello, the Waldorf Hotel and the Aldwych Theatre.



<p>ALDWYCH CORNER RESTAURANT (Lunched) </p> <p>Open Daily 12-2 P.M. 5.30-8.30 P.M.</p> <p>EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT PAPER DANCE (7 to 11) 6/-</p> <p>EDWARD BOLGER & his vocal group</p> <p>WHITEHORN'S COOKS</p> <p>NEW YORK MEAT CO. </p> <p>HUNTER & PARKER</p> <p>BED TOWER LAGER</p> <p>Ask for Gordon's at the bars</p> <p>SWOWAT'S TEA</p> <p>APOLLO "LADIES FAIR" 10.30 A.M. to 6 P.M. COSTUME PARADE For details see ALDWYCH CORNER</p> <p>GLOBE "THE PENTHOUSE ROSETTE?" 10.30 A.M. to 6 P.M.</p> <p>HAYMARKET "LITTLE LADY" "THE DOCTOR'S DISMISESS" Theatre Royal</p> <p>DUCHESS "ELIZABETH'S SECRET" ELIZABETH'S SECRET</p> <p>PHOENIX "THE INDEPENDENCE OF BEING EARNEST" GUTHRIE FINCH "THE HOUSE OF COMMONS" Theatre Royal</p> <p>A HONEST IN THE COMMUNE by Tolstoy</p>	<p>STOLL THEATRE George Stoll, Manager, Princelet Street</p> <p>THE OLD COMPTON STREET 10.30 A.M. to 6 P.M.</p> <p>EMILY LITTLE</p> <p>EDWARD BOLGER</p> <p>CINDERELLA REMY & KNOX, TAY CUMMING, INDUCTION & GOLD, EASY DAY</p> <p>COLISEUM CHICAGO "THE FRENCH GIRL" "THE FRENCH GIRL"</p> <p>G "THE FRENCH GIRL"</p> <p>FRANCIS LATHAM National Comedy Performer</p> <p>MOTHER GOOSE</p> <p>Ask for BOOTH'S DRY The Musical GO</p> <p>"Presto!" MINERAL WATERS</p> <p>TRY THEM AT THE MARKET</p> <p>Send to SWOWAT'S TEA, 60, Newgate St., E.C. 1.</p>	<p>ALDWYCH THEATRE General Manager: JOHN STOLL Stage Manager: JOHN STOLL Box Office: ALDWYCH THEATRE, 10.30 A.M. to 6 P.M.</p> <p>Mr. G. V. Tammey etc.</p> <p>WATCH ON THE RHINE By Lillian Hellman "The Little Foxes" - "The Children's Hour"</p> <p>PROGRAMME</p> <p>THE MANAGER'S APPOINTMENT "The Man Who Came to Dinner" by S. S. Van Dine Directed by CHARLES BOYD</p> <p>GENERAL PARADE  10.30 A.M. to 6 P.M. Stage Manager: JOHN STOLL Box Office: GENERAL PARADE, 10.30 A.M. to 6 P.M. For Mr. G. V. Tammey etc.</p> <p>OPENING NIGHT  10.30 A.M. to 6 P.M. Stage Manager: JOHN STOLL Box Office: OPEN NIGHT, 10.30 A.M. to 6 P.M. For Mr. G. V. Tammey etc.</p> <p>NO ORDERS</p> <p>ADMISSIONS  10.30 A.M. to 6 P.M. Stage Manager: JOHN STOLL Box Office: ADMISSIONS, 10.30 A.M. to 6 P.M. For Mr. G. V. Tammey etc.</p> <p>The Waldorf Hotel Address: ALDWYCH THEATRE</p> <p>TAKE AFTERNOON TEA IN THE PALM COURT (With the famous London Laps)</p> <p>LUNCH AND DINE IN COMFORT </p> <p>AT THE PALM 10.30 A.M. to 6 P.M.</p> <p>for Schweppes SODA WATER LIME JUICE CHILLED COFFEE</p> <p>ROSY BELL LADY BIRD LADY MARIE MARGA MARTIN</p>
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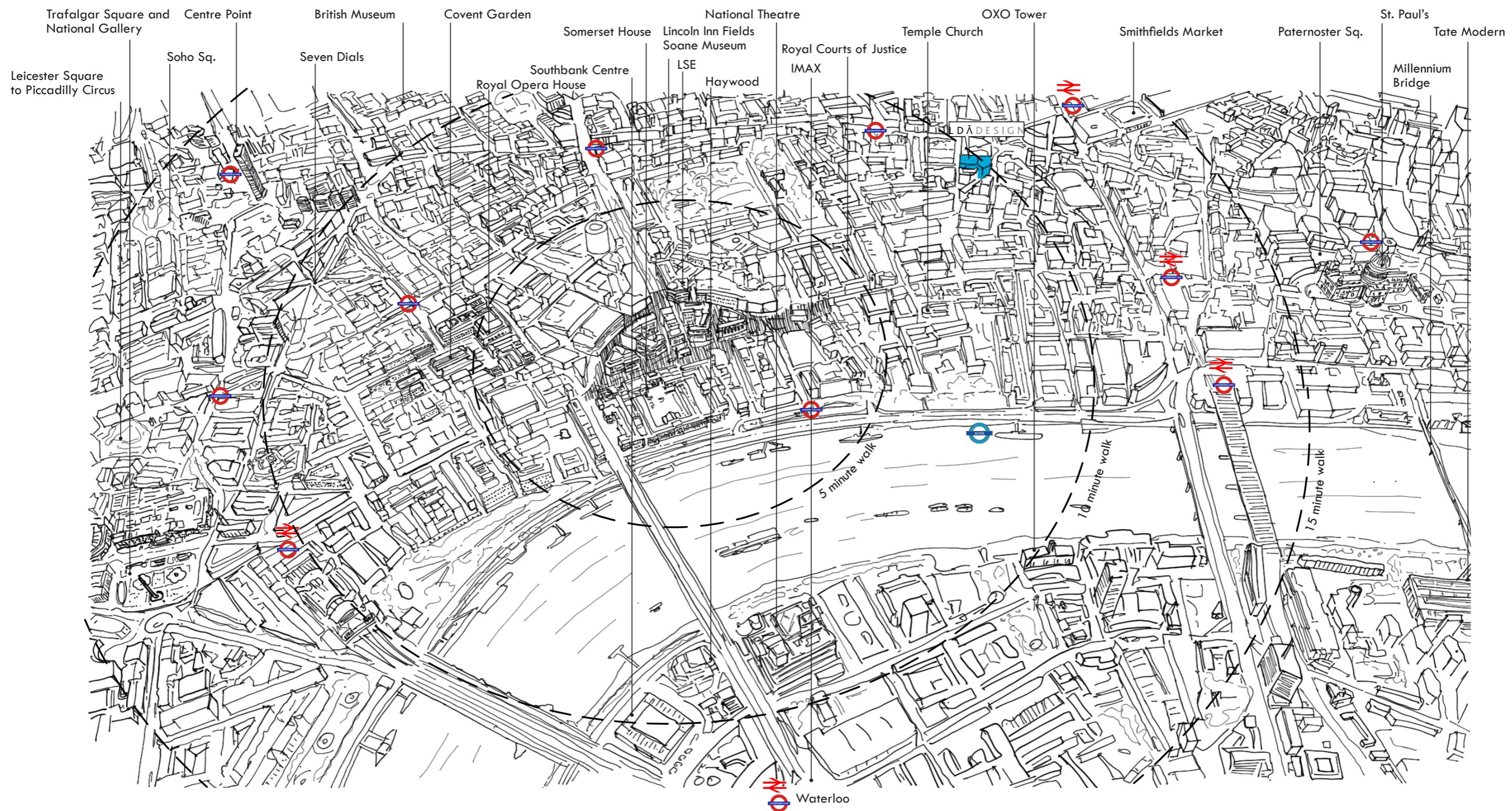
The old skating rink on the Aldwych, was situated on the Eastern side of the 'D'. The rink was made into a clearing house for refugees during the First World War. This watercolour shows it after it was hit during a raid on 13th October 1915. St Clement Danes can be seen behind.



2000's







3.0 Contextual and Site Analysis

The Strand/Aldwych occupies a central location with in the Capital and the historic geographic centre of the City of London sits to the west of the site at St. Martins-In-The-Fields overlooking Trafalgar Square.

The centrality of the site makes is a critical thoroughfare for a multitude of user groups including students, commuters, people that work in and around the area, tourists, theatre goers and visitors to Somerset House and the Courtauld Galleries. Additionally, the proximity to the Embankment and the Thames, the British Library and Covent Garden and the buzz of the Southbank crystallises how close the site is to some of London's key landmarks and destinations.

Wider Contextual Analysis

Legend

- Green Spaces
- Key Public Realm Spaces
- Cycle Routes
- Walking Routes
- Landmark Buildings

Connecting To The Context

The team at Westminster identified two critical north/south routes through the site: The Educational Route and the Cultural Route. These north/south links reinforce the necessity to consider the site as a piece of the city and not a space to be looked at in isolation.

Links from Surrey Street and Arundel Street to Temple Station are important strategic consideration for this project and the future connectivity of the area.

The Character Of The Area

There is an unrivaled richness to the immediate context of the site. From the quieter leafy areas of Embankment Gardens and Lincoln's Inn Fields to the energetic areas of Covent Garden and Somerset House, and the hidden areas of Temple Gardens, there is a diversity of both uses and types of spaces. The page opposite illustrates the variety and character of the surrounding context and how people use these spaces.

This prompts the question about what type of space Strand/Aldwych should be? Can it strike a balance between expressive, energetic moments and quieter, moments of reflection?



STRAND ALDWYCH / LDA DESIGN



Understanding the Immediate Context

The immediate context includes two of London's premier educational institutions--Kings College London and the London School of Economics.

Somerset House, the Courtauld Gallery and 180 The Strand (Store Studios) are major cultural destinations with extensive programmes and events that take place within each institution.

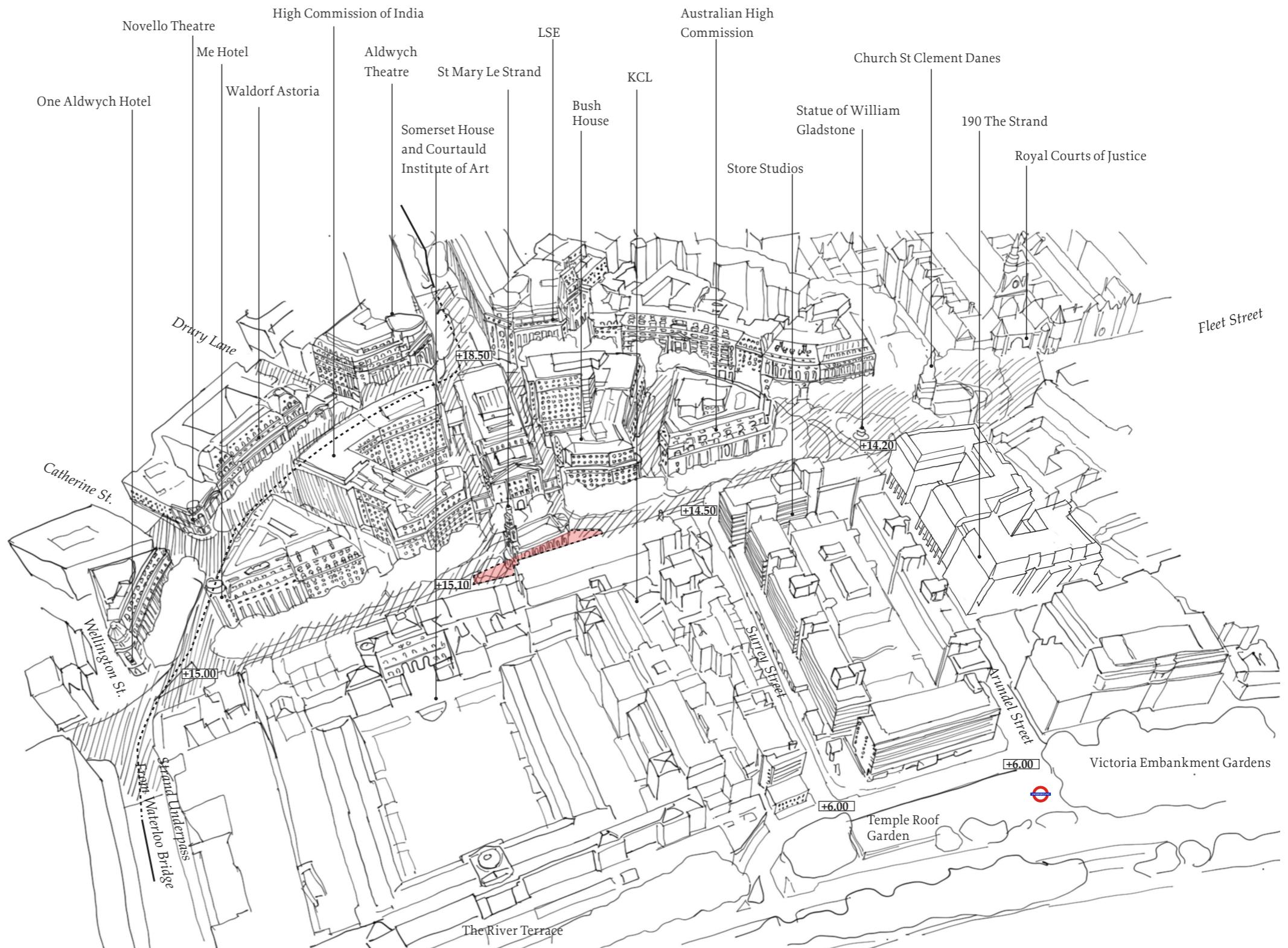
There are two embassies: The India High Commission and the Australian High Commission.

Bush House sits to the north of the site and is currently occupied by Kings College London.

In addition to these large institutions and cultural bodies, there are a number of theatres bringing evening activity to the site. Shared work space--WeWork--and local shops front the street.

The ME Hotel and One Aldwych Hotel anchor the western edge of the site and the residential development at 190 the Strand brings new residents to the area. There are also residential properties within the ME Hotel buildings, with resident's car parking in the basement of the ME Hotel. St Clements Danes Church forms the eastern boundary of the study area.

This diagram illustrates the circa 12m level change towards the River Thames from Aldwych (+18.5AOD) to Temple Station at circa (+6mAOD).



Routes and Connections

Currently the site is dominated by one way traffic around the Aldwych Gyrority. The site does benefit from generous width footways, but the pollution, traffic noise and overall stress levels limit the usability of the public realm that does exist.

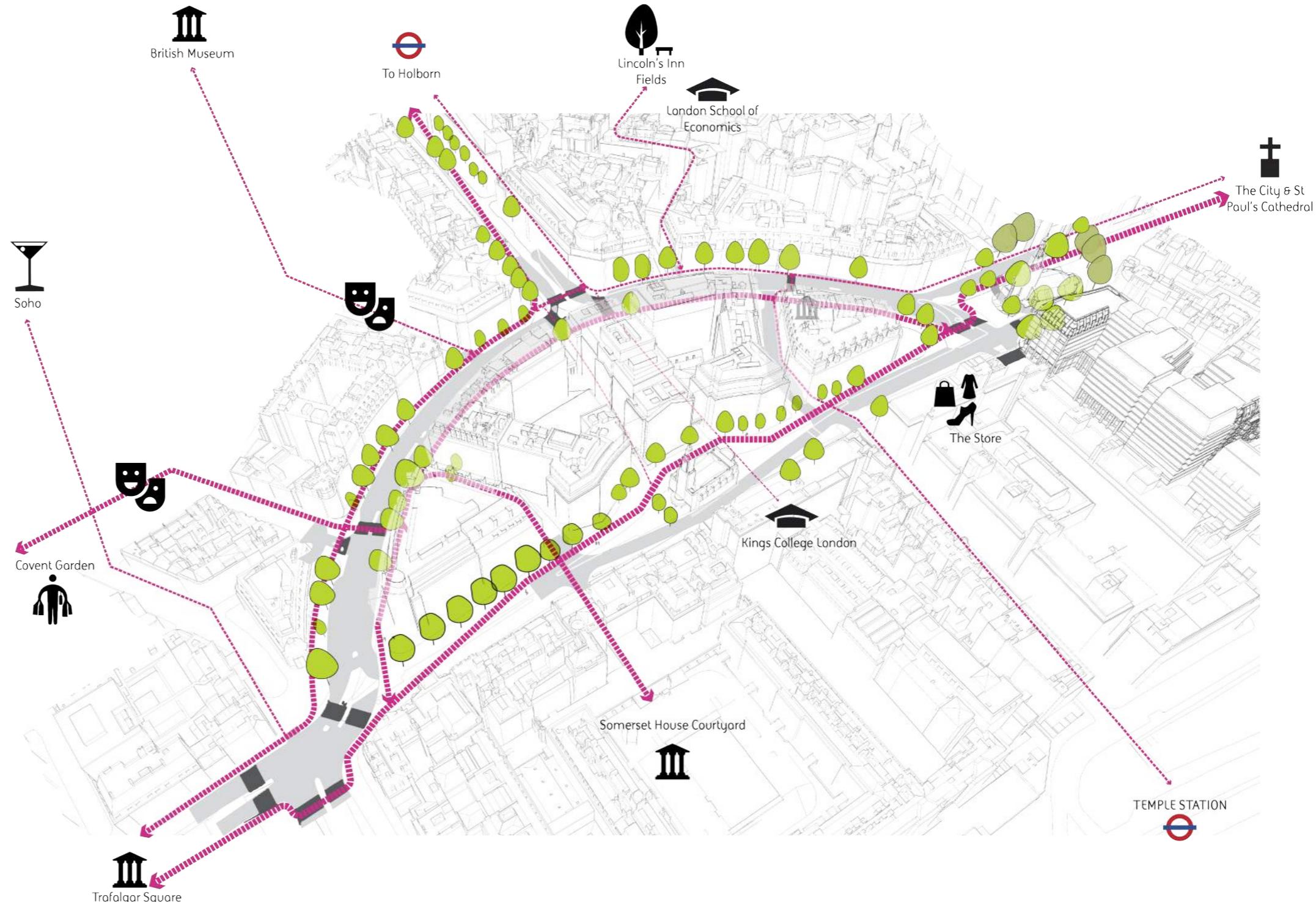
There are clear east/west pedestrian routes through the site and along the northern side of the D, lined with mature London Plane trees. Pedestrians can walk from Trafalgar Square to St Paul's with decent footways.

Additionally, there is a new piece of public realm being constructed at present leading from the Aldwych through the LSE hub towards Lincoln's Inn Fields. This will extend high quality, pedestrian friendly public space further afield, and enhance connections to other parts of the surrounding area. It will also enable stronger routes between KCL & LSE to create an 'educational district'.

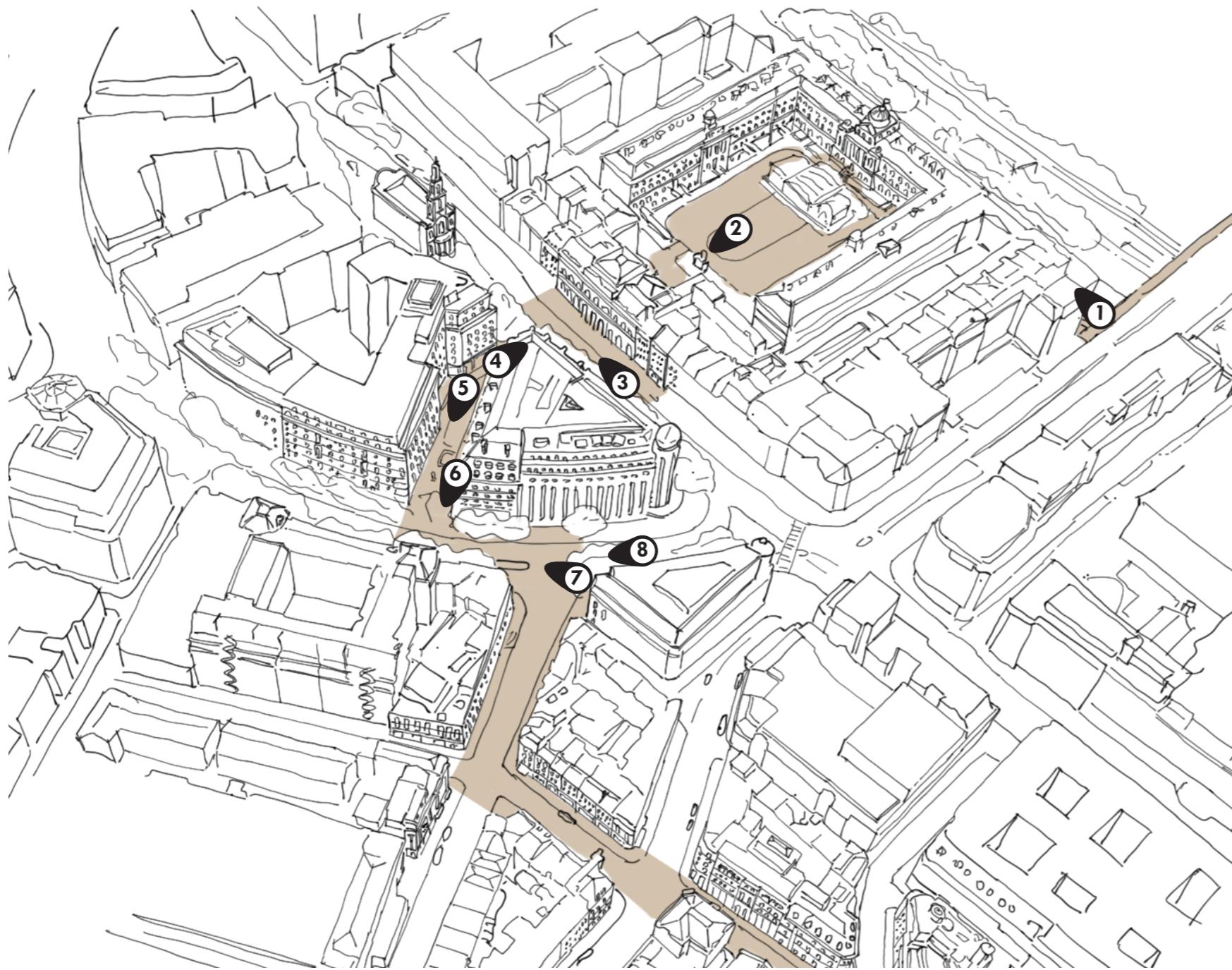
There are two critical north/south linkages connecting the River Thames to Holborn and Covent Garden. From North to South, these are:

- India Place/Montreal Place leading through Somerset House to the River Terrace and across Waterloo Bridge. Travelling north, India Place leads to Catherine Street and Drury Lane towards Covent Garden.
- Melbourne Place leading to Surrey Street towards Temple Station and the River Thames. Travelling north this route crosses Aldwych and leads to the LSE and Lincoln's Inn Fields.

The Following page illustrates these two routes in more detail, building on the work Publica carried out in 2014/15.



Waterloo Station to Covent Garden via Somerset House, India Place and Catherine Street



1. River Terrace Links

Connecting visitors and commuters to Aldwych via Waterloo Bridge and Somerset House, via the River Terrace and through the Fountain Plaza



3. The Strand

Striking viewpoint to St. Mary Le Strand should be celebrated in the public realm. Could be a central public space with seating and planting; a place to linger. Lamp post is listed.



5. Melbourne Pl.

Lack of active frontage, basement parking requirements and servicing. Could carriageway be narrowed, kerbs removed and stand-alone activation added?



7. Aldwych

TFL bus stops, Big Bus Tour stops, flowing traffic and parked taxis make it difficult to cross Aldwych. An eye catcher wayfinding piece could pull people to India Place.



2. Somerset House

Potential to improve link from Somerset House to the Strand with an eye-catcher and wayfinding element. Need to create unified 'inside-outside' paving



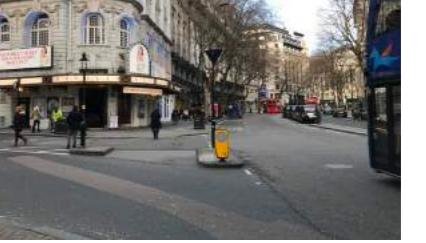
4. Montreal Place

Iconic view of Somerset House, opportunity to continue materials across the Strand and into the Somerset House archways.



6. India Place

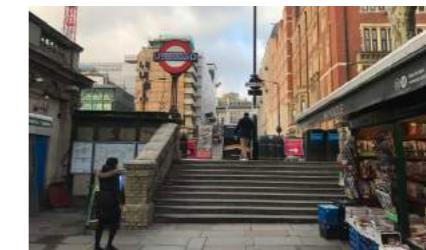
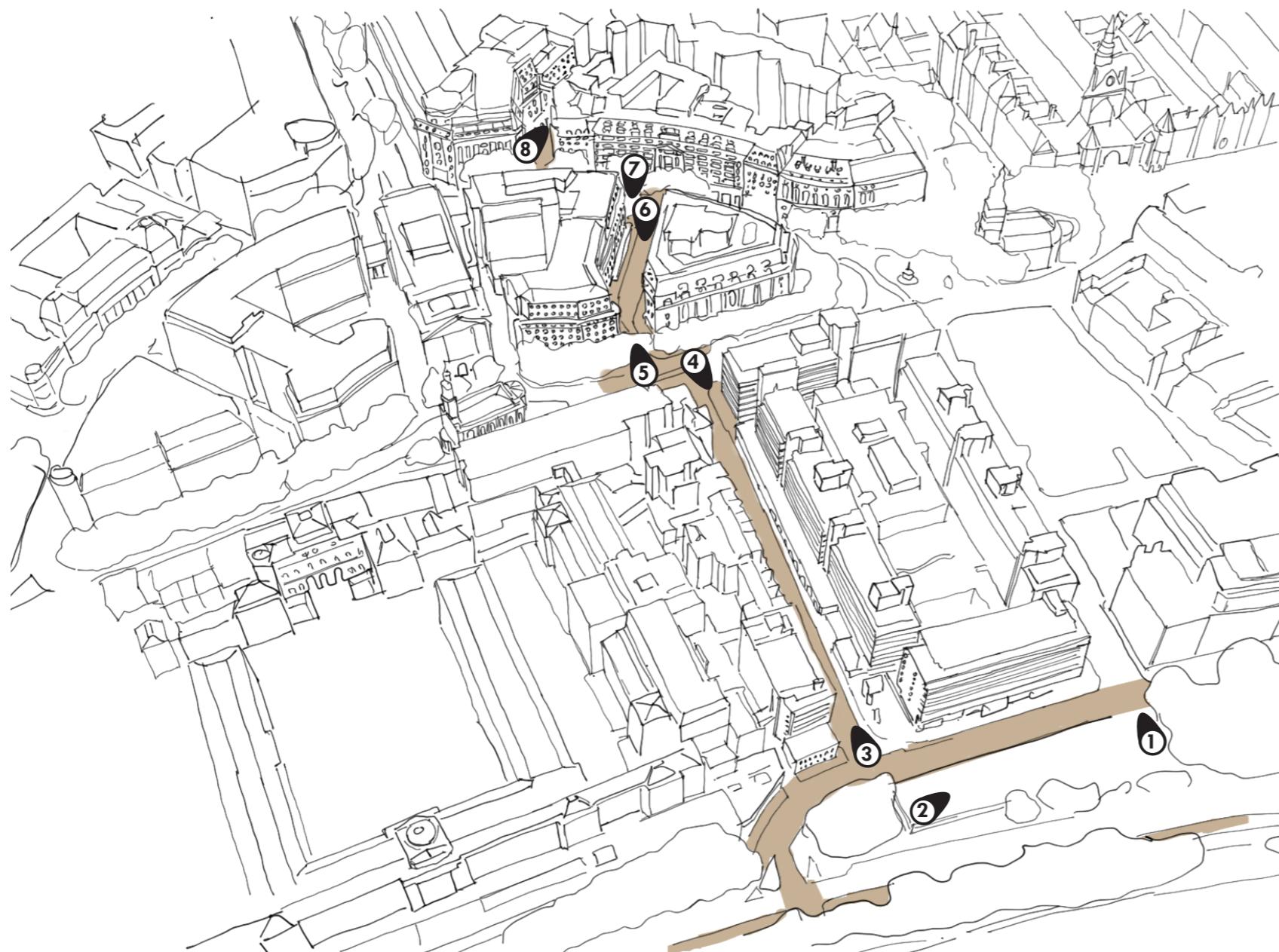
Level change between India Place and Aldwych could seating steps with planting to encourage people to linger. Graded routes would improve accessibility.



8. Houghton St. to LSE

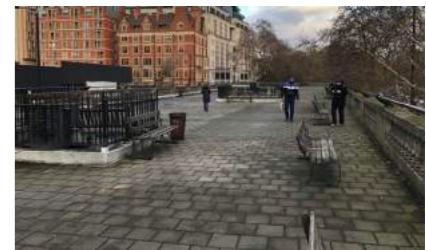
Catherine St. is the gateway to Covent Garden from Aldwych. Improving circulation, unifying the paving and increasing spill out to the theatres is important here.

Temple Station to LSE via Temple Place, Surrey Street, Melbourne Place and Aldwych



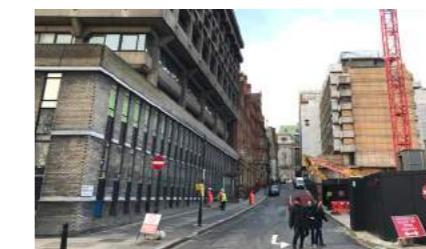
1. Temple Stations

Issues of accessibility at Temple Station, opportunity for better legibility and wayfinding



2. Temple Roof Gardens

Temple roof garden provides open space. Opportunity for more planting.



3. Surrey St. (lower)

KCLSU as a destination, variety of architecture, opportunity quiet the street and make more human scale



4. Surrey St. (upper)

Open, elevated vistas to Embankment and the Southbank. Opportunity to remove on-street parking.



5. Melbourne Pl.

Lack of connection across Strand to Melbourne Pl. Opportunity for pedestrian crossing and wayfinding.



6. Melbourne Pl.

No active frontage, opportunity to explore secure by design possibilities, stand alone kiosks for activation?



7. Houghton St/Aldwych

Clear sight lines to KCL. Street framed by mature trees. Opportunity to pedestrianise street and have a central zone for activation?



8. Houghton St. to LSE

Lack of active frontage, good serial sight lines, opportunity to unify ground plane with the wider Aldwych public realm.

Surrounding Listed Buildings

Legend

	Grade 1 Listed
	Grade 2 Listed

Listed Buildings

The listed buildings within the site are some of the grandest in London; heroic in scale and presence with a noteworthy elegance. How the Strand and Aldwych create a setting for these buildings and structures will determine the overall perception of the space and the success of its transformation from a through route for cars to a major cultural and educational destination for people of all walks of life.

The Grade I* listed St. Mary Le Strand church sits centrally in the site and is a visible landmark from the western end of the Strand. It has been traffic-locked for many years and the congregation has dwindled significantly. The exterior needs cleaning to bring the church back to its former glory. Heritage Lottery Funding could be applied for support the restoration of the church.

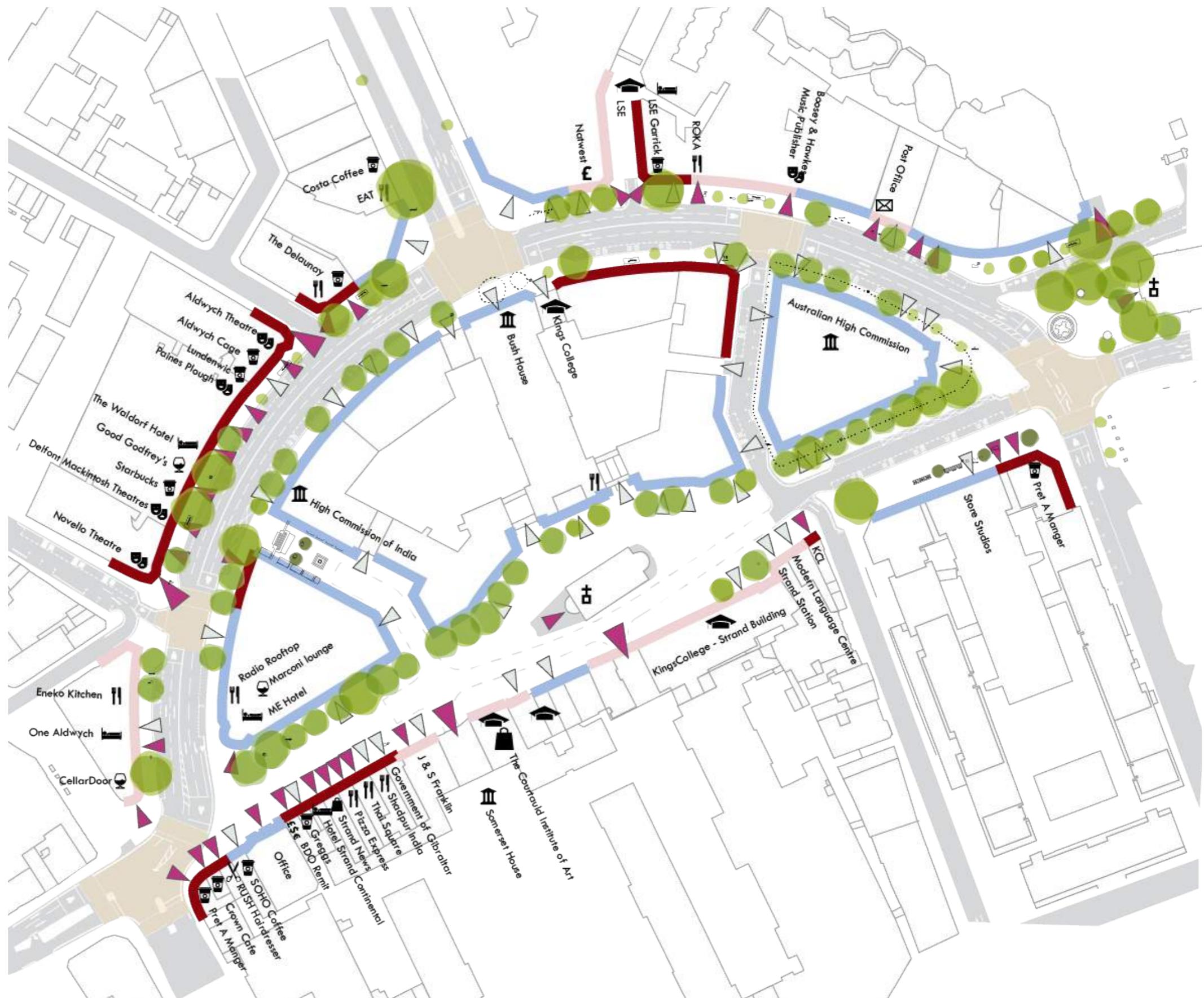


Active and Passive Frontages**Legend**

- Active
- Passive
- Blank but with accessibility
- Public Entrance
- Private Entrance
- X Hairdressers
- H Hotel
- S Shop
- E Education
- £ Bank
- B Bar
- C Cafe
- R Restaurant
- Ch Church
- Th Theatre
- PO Post Office
- III Cultural or Government Institution

Frontages

How the groundfloor interfaces with the public realm is important. The current situation includes a number of blank/dead frontages, which do very little to enliven the public realm.



Road Edge Conditions**Legend**

- Bus Stop
- Bus Stand
- Private Parking
- Taxi Rank

This diagram describes the future vehicular infrastructure situated in and around the public realm. The reorganisation of bus stops, stands, parking and taxi ranks changes pedestrian use of the Aldwych particularly. The proposed two-way traffic around the Aldwych brings additional uses to the inner edge, with new bus stops. This change will bring more people to the inner/southern edge, activating the pavements.



Pedestrian Comfort Levels**Legend**

	Sunniest
	Medium Shade
	Full Shade

Sun Exposure

The grand scale of the streets and the relative low level of the buildings affords the space a surprising amount of full sunlight.

Additionally, because the site is oriented to the northwest, no part of the site is in full shade and the north frontage of Somerset House enjoys good afternoon sunlight in the summer months.

The following page illustrates the sun/shade study in greater detail.



Quarterly Shadow Study

MARCH



JUNE



SEPTEMBER



DECEMBER



8 am

12 pm

4 pm



Analysis: On The Ground

The images opposite illustrate a few of the issues within the site in its current configuration. There are areas where the wide footpaths are cluttered and would benefit from a rationalisation of the layout, which we will address during RIBA Stage 3.



Inactive frontages



Cycle Parking, Utilities, HMV Measures



Bus stops, Big Bus Tour Stops, taxi parking, car and pedestrian conflicts



Mature trees adjacent to roads-growth, maintenance and impact on public realm over time needs to be considered



Existing Docking stations and services



Street Clutter and highway requirements



Multiple user groups: Students, tourists, visitors, theatre goers, workforce, commuters, residents



Working adjacent to and creating an appropriate setting for listed buildings and furniture



Existing level changes between Aldwych and India Place

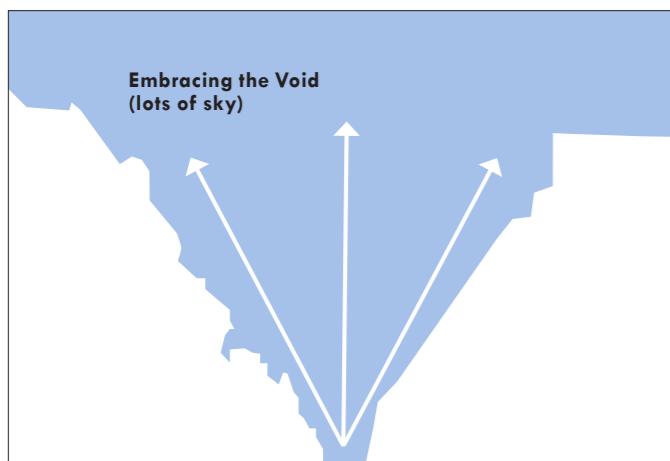


Existing statues and sculptures to the west of St. Clement Danes church

Understanding The Dimensions Of The Space

The Strand between the junction of Wellington Street and Arundel Street is 350m in length. The space is 50m from the frontage of Bush House and Kings College at the widest point where St. Mary Le Strand sits centrally in the space. The width of the space otherwise is between 30m and 35m.

The grand width of the space and the relative low building heights creates a sense of openness and expanse particularly when looking skyward.



People and Incidental Car Movement

There are approximately 51 residential car parking spaces beneath the ME Hotel, which will require 24 hour access.

The car movement numbers will be low and the design will appear as a single pedestrian surface, albeit with residential access when required.

The diagram opposite shows where the predominant public areas will be with the car circulation factored in.

It is important to note that this vehicular route will not look or feel like a road, but rather as a continuous piece of public realm that can accommodate occasional car traffic.



Servicing and Deliveries

Legend

- Service Access point
- Service Vehicle Access
- Vehicular & Service Acess

In addition to the ME Hotel residential car park access, the institutions and businesses that sit adjacent to the space each have servicing and delivery requirements.

The vehicular movements will be factored into the design to ensure that the day to day operations of the buildings is not impacted by the public space and that the public space is still comfortable and substantial with these servicing requirements.



Character Areas**Legend**
 Wider'D' The Aldwych

 The Strand

The public realm can be split into two character areas, which are explored throughout the rest of the document.

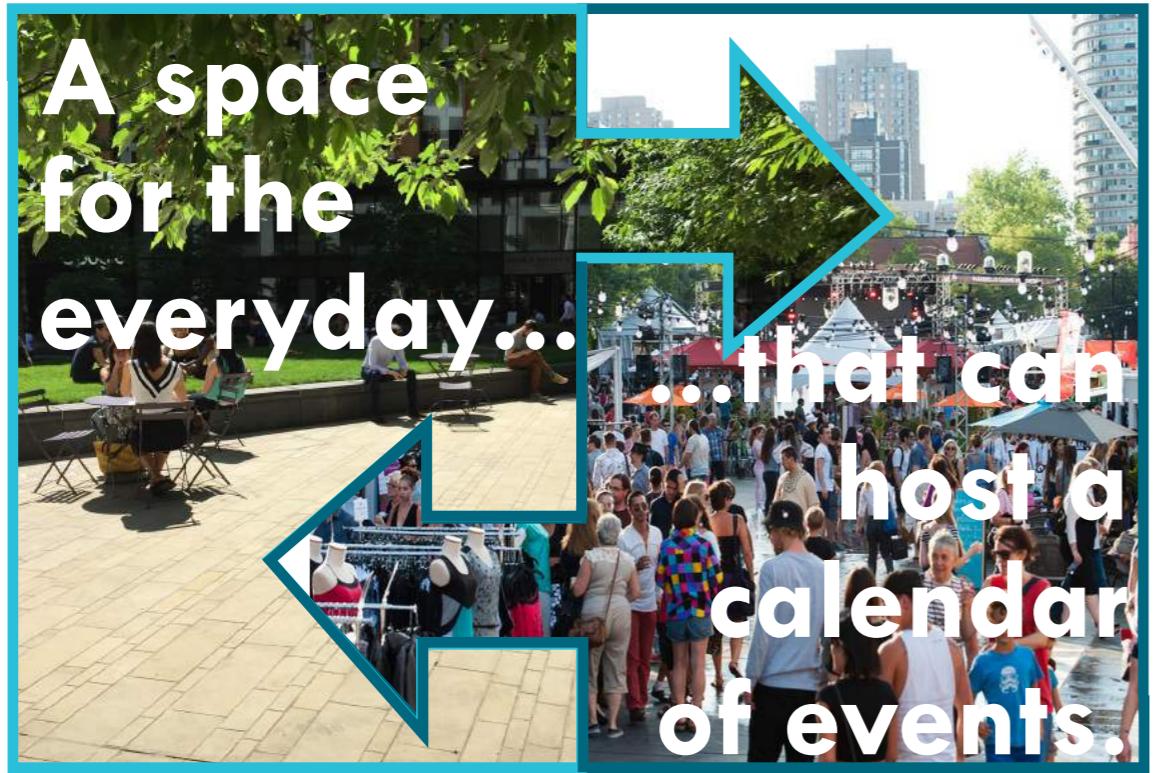
Firstly, the Strand which will be transformed into largely pedestrian piece of pubic realm, with St Mary Le Strand Church at it's heart. This area will be transformed from a busy, polluted street to a usable public space, the design of which is the primary piece of work in this document.

The Aldwych will remain fairly similar in character to it's current condition, albeit the traffic will travel in both directions instead of the clockwise one way system that currently exists.

Design interventions within this area will be significantly more minimal than the Strand, but they will help to unify the district, create and enhance wider urban links and enable the pedestrianisation of the Strand to be a success.

Whilst these are different study areas, the space should feel as one, with high quality paving materials stitching the site together.





4.0 Design Principles

From buses, to bells, bird song & bees...

The impact that the removal of traffic from this section of the Strand will have will be significant. The space is currently dominated by traffic and the air pollution makes the Strand one of the worst in London for air quality. The aspiration is for the sound of bells, birdsong and bees to fill the space once traffic noise is taken away and the richness of the buildings can be appreciated.

The images opposite illustrate the aspiration for the site to cater for multiple audiences and atmospheres and to strike a balance between the two binaries.

Guiding Principles

The following 5 principles have been established based on the vision for the project. They tie together key themes which have come from the initial brief and the various stakeholder engagement sessions held throughout this stage of the project.

Day to Day Comfort & Delight:

In order to achieve this the permanent design is integral. Everyday users of the space require certain features in order for the space to be successful. This means balancing the day-to-day needs such as plenty of areas to sit, shelter and gather as well as delight through the design of planting and bespoke pieces. The design should also allow for the uniqueness and identity of the site to stand out. The church and the space around it will form a sanctuary in the city.

Celebrate the Context & The History:

With a rich and complex history, the Strand particularly has been a constant vein within the city of London. The wider context has developed like a patchwork and some of these layers can be seen within the architecture and the different urban grains that connect to the site. It's important the design acknowledges and celebrates this.

Installations, Research and Development and Making the Creative Process Visible:

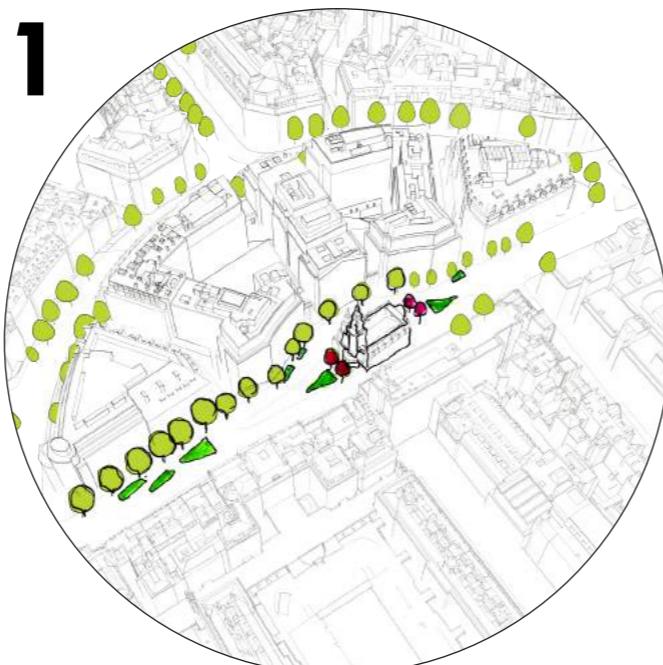
Early on in the project the opportunity was recognised that the space could, in part, become a platform for cultural programme and events. The site's context, tying together a wider cultural and educational district, lends itself to become a canvas and platform to showcase initiatives already happening in the area. Could this be a place where art is made not displayed, where performances are rehearsed not performed? The aim is not to create just another space where anything can, and will happen, it needs to be special and unique.

Transformed by Night:

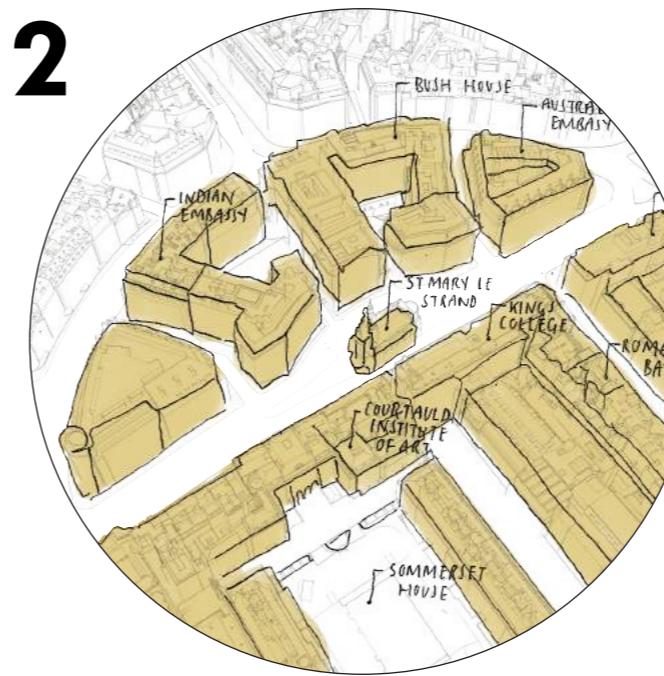
Currently, the area lacks a consistent lighting strategy, and the existing lighting is designed as a highway corridor. Future spatial lighting will ensure it is safe, attractive and beautiful. Considered architectural lighting will also allow buildings such as St Mary-le-Stand to take centre stage in the space. See the lighting designers documentation for more on the lighting proposals.

Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) & Safety in Public Space:

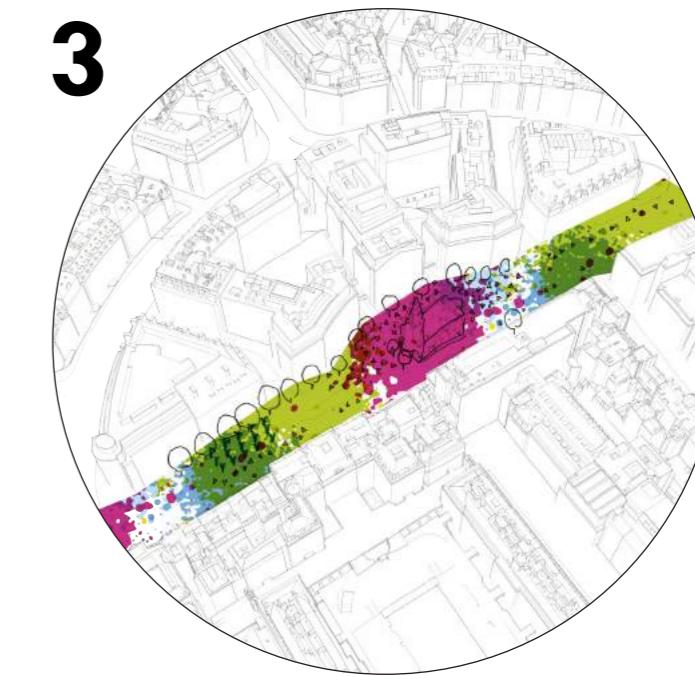
Any public space, especially with such centrality within the city, must consider safety for all users. Starting with this in mind at the beginning of a project allows a seamless elegant & integrated HVM approach.



Day To Day Comfort & Delight



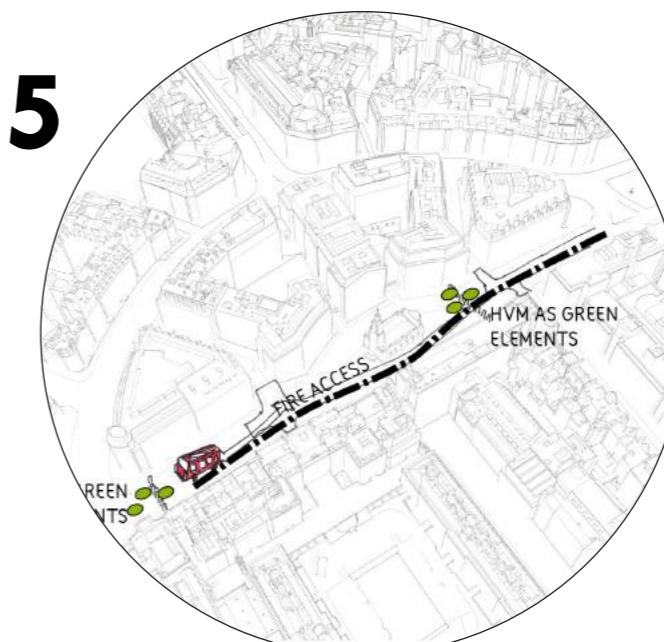
Celebrate the Context & History



Installations & Research and Development, and Making the Creative Process Visible



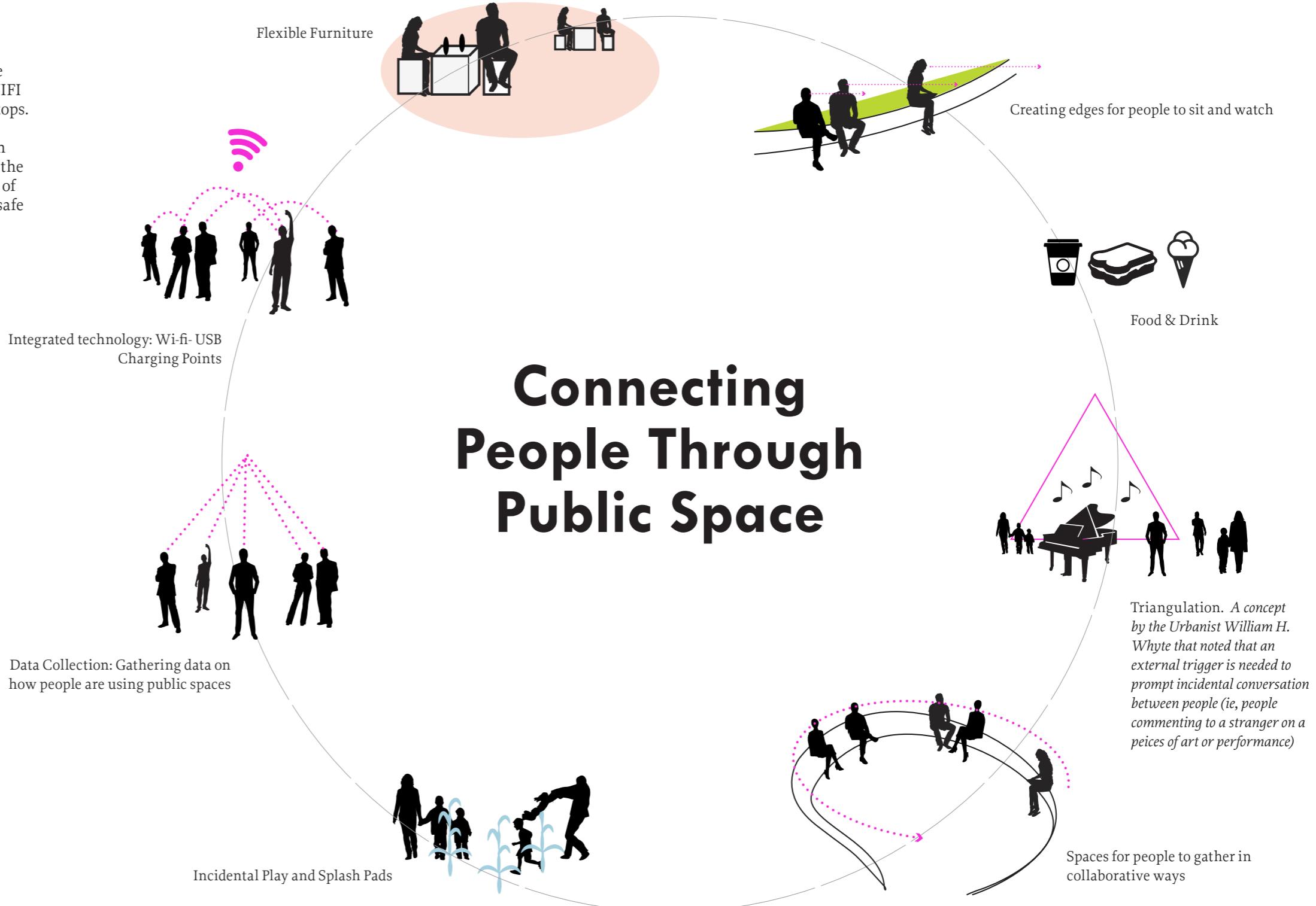
Transforming by Night



HVM & Safety in Public Space

With the removal of the traffic, people will encounter the space and each other in an entirely new way. It is important that the space encourages people to linger and take in the surroundings. Additionally, the space must be technologically fit-for-purpose, providing WIFI connections, power points to plug in phones and laptops.

The diagrams opposite illustrate ways that the design approach has considered how people will connect in the public space, both digitally and socially. The success of the space will be measured by how comfortable and safe people feel.



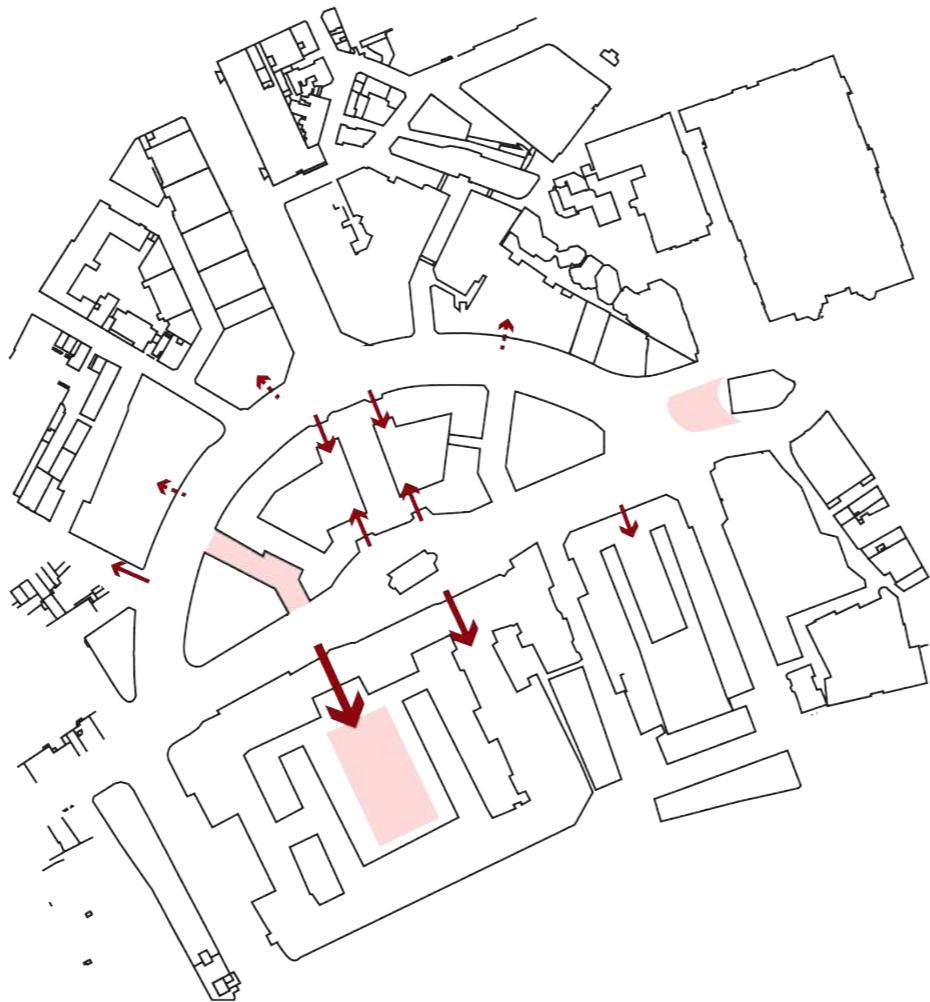
Moving from Insular Institutions to Shared Interactions

The domination of the traffic forces people to seek refuge inside their respective colleges and places of work. The result of this is a context that is inward looking, stealing the potential for incidental interaction from the public realm.

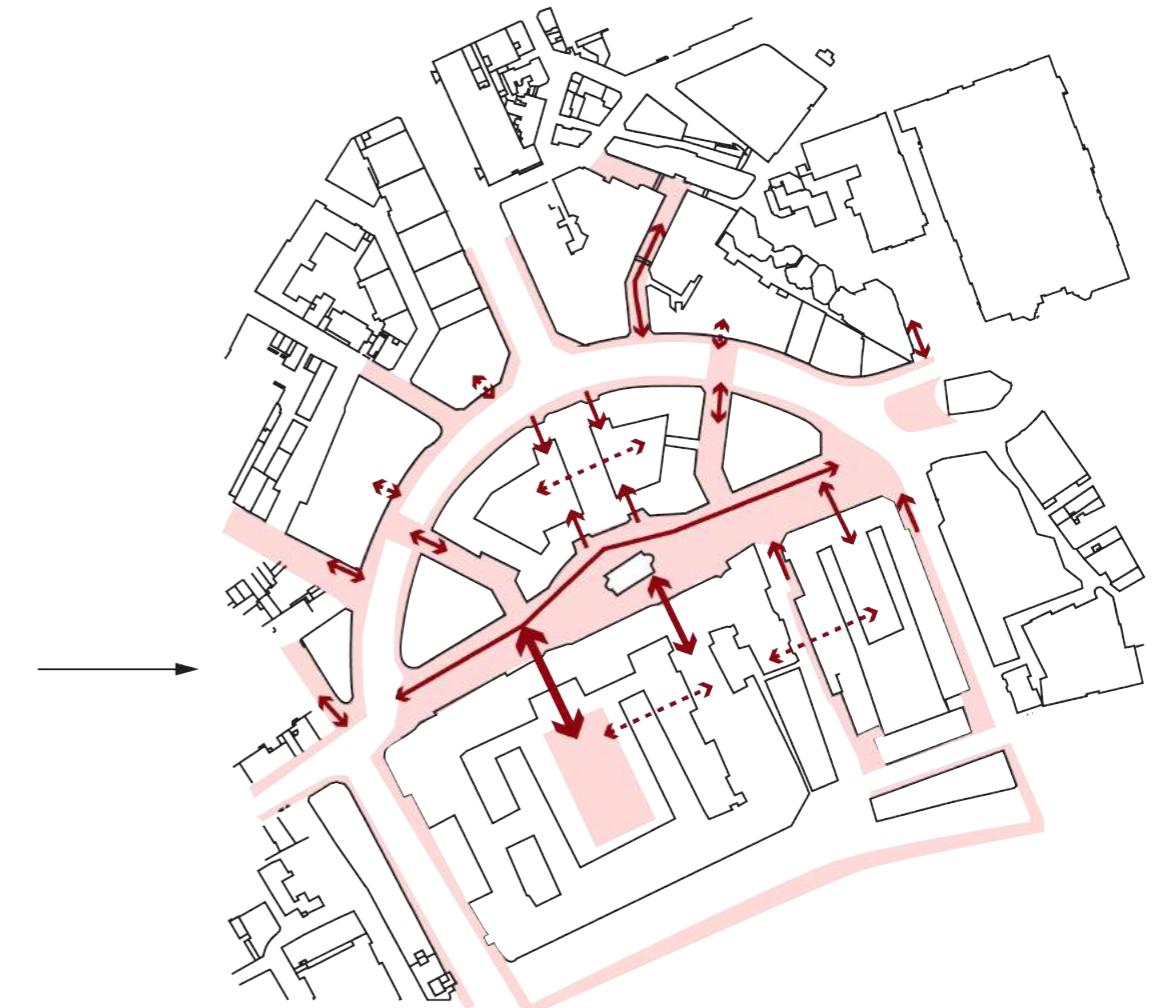
For the first time, perhaps in the history of the Strand, the car will not be king. People will be able to stroll, aimlessly through the space without concern of negotiating oncoming buses or taxis. Almost instantly, people will begin to intermingle, ideas will be shared, conversations will continue from the confines of internal classrooms and cubicles to an expansive and inspired public space.

There will be a new register of the sounds in the space, no longer overpowered by the din of buses, instead bells, bird song and bees will resound through the space.

Existing: Internalised Buildings that people want to get into as fast as possible to avoid the traffic noise, air pollution and increased stress levels.



Potential: The public realm will be a place of exchange and interaction, where people are invited to linger, create, and coexist outside of their respective cohorts.





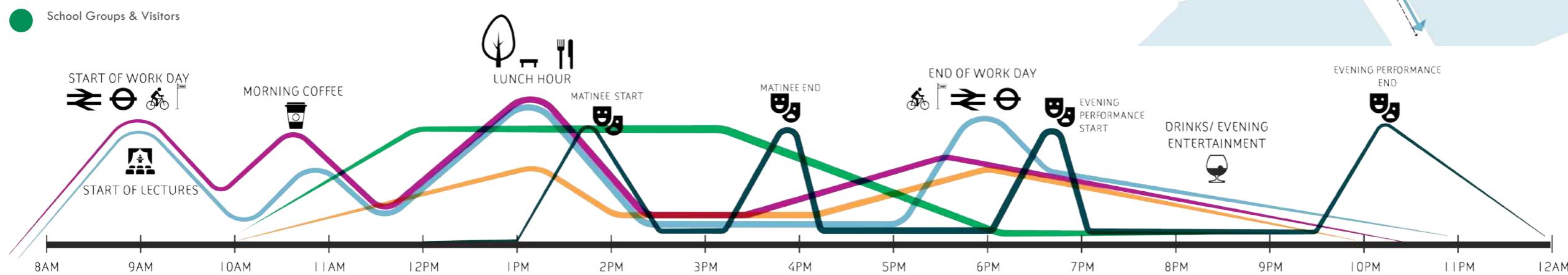
Demographics and Movement

Multiple and varied users inherently bring potential for the space to be a rich and interesting place to be, to stop and people watch and to see creative installations and performances.

The Strand/Aldwych will be both a destination, but also a place that people are coursing through on their way to another destination, place of work or landmark on a tourist itinerary. As a result, its important that the space provides places that are comfortable for longer periods of idle observation and also quick pause moments before moving onto the next place.

What is happening in the space should also be the trigger that stop people in their stride, if only briefly, to take in something that identifies with the cultural currency of the area.

- Students
- Workers
- Tourists
- Theatre Goers
- School Groups & Visitors



Linear Processional Route and Episodic Moments

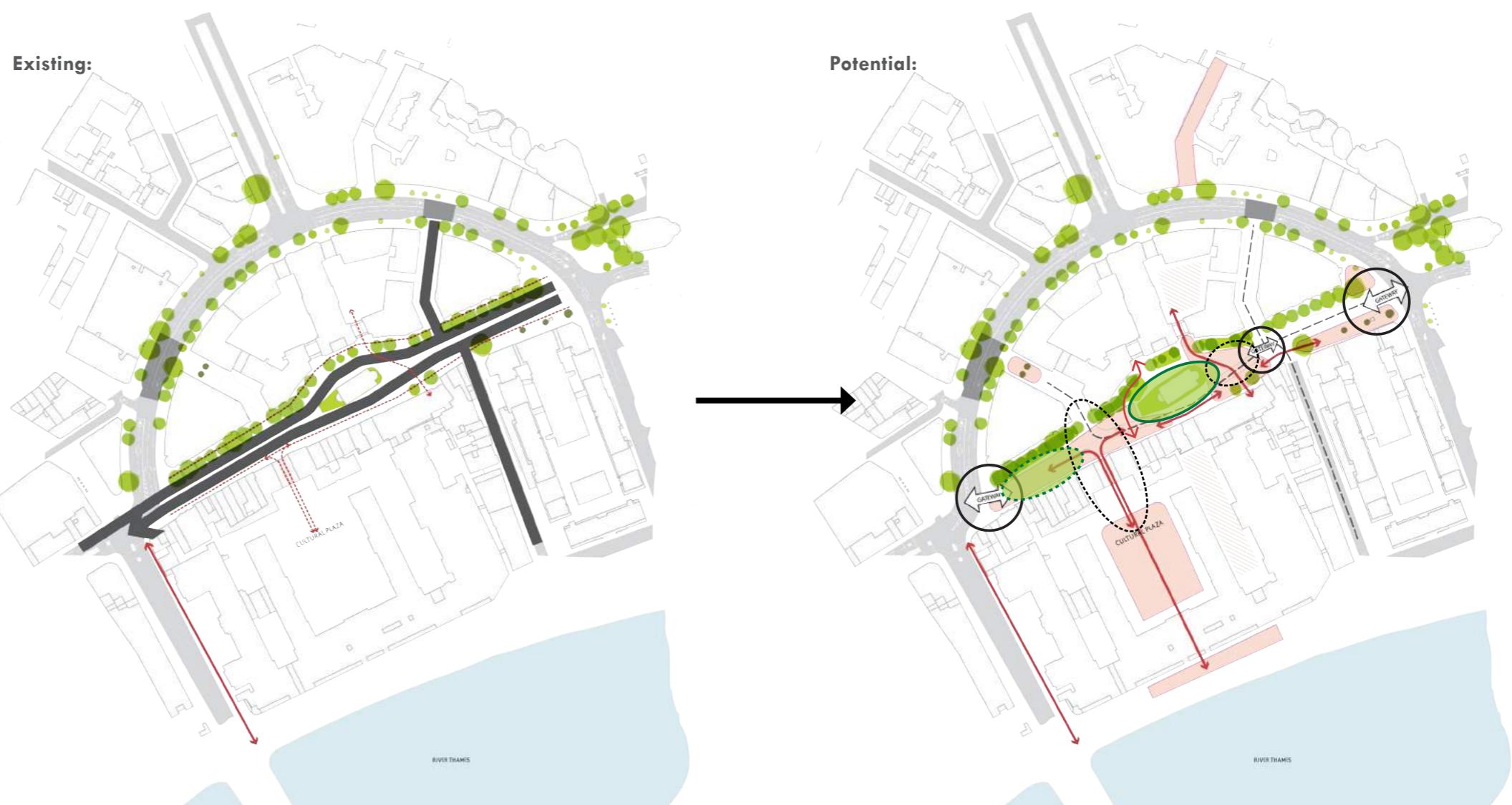
Once the vehicular traffic is largely removed a 350m long public space is created. Historically, the Strand has always been an important east/west route connecting Westminster Abbey to St. Paul's and has been used as a processional route for ceremonies such as Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. It is no longer used as a formal processional route, however, the design needs to acknowledge and safeguard the eventuality that this use will once again feature in the space.

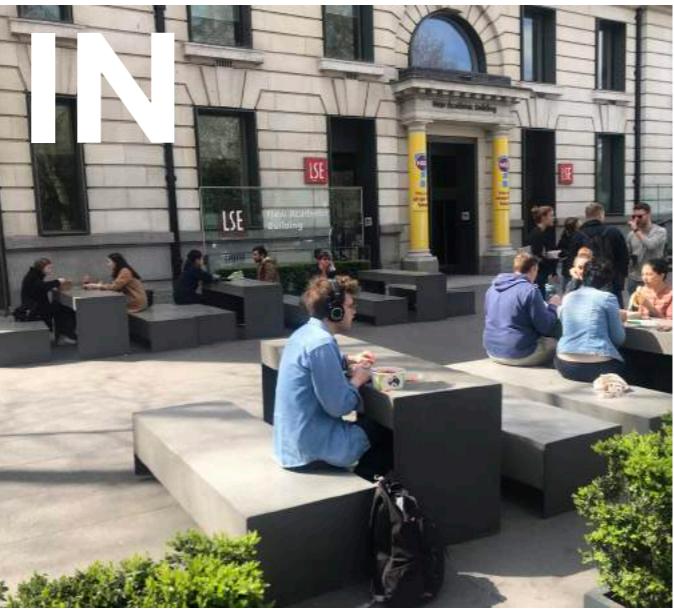
The activities happening within the adjacencies of the site and the north to south cross flows of pedestrian traffic in many ways begins to establish a more episodic condition for the site.

The initial vision for the site is for a varied experience when moving linearly from west to east. This will include contrasting spaces that are soft, green and quiet and spaces that are open, hard and activated. The diagram on the far right illustrates this rhythm. From west to east:

- Reduced down gateways into the site to limit the amount of physical HVM needed such as bollards or engineered solutions;
- Gardens, lawns and tree planting to buffer the noise from the Strand toward Trafalgar Square;
- Open, flexible space adjacent to the entrance to Somerset House;
- Gardens and trees surrounding St Mary Le Strand expanding on the existing external sanctuary;
- Open, flexible area for gathering and installations;
- Again, a reduced down gateway into the site to limit the extent of HVM required.

The images on the opposite page illustrate how people use public space in the area. These images act as a prompt to promote interesting and adequate seating, generous lawn areas and beautiful planting within the project.





PEOPLE
IN
PUBLIC
SPACE

London's Cultural Calendar

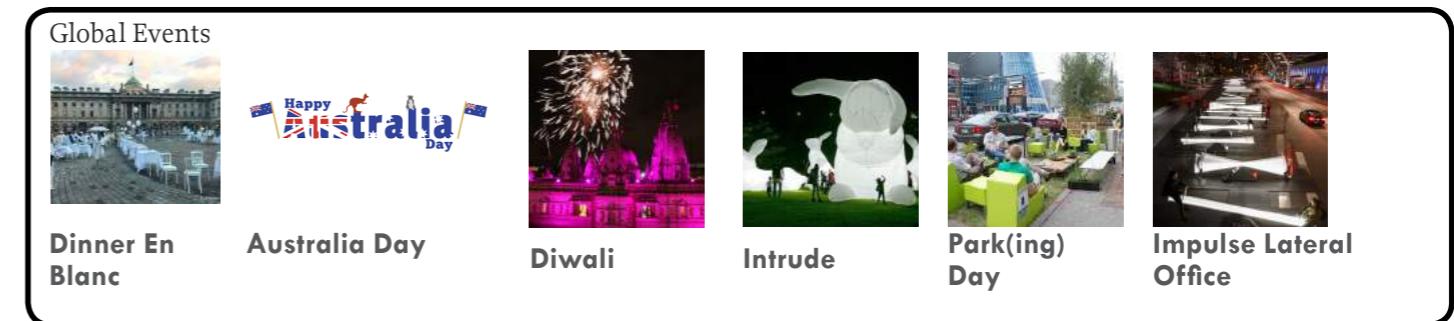
London is increasingly becoming a capital of culture with significant events increasing each year. The calendar here illustrates the major events that are taking place in London and identifies the cultural currency of this area for all of London, which is largely driven by the successful curation by the Somerset House team.

We have also identified events that could happen in this space once it becomes a public space that are already happening elsewhere in London, such as the Lumiere lighting festival. There are also global events that could take place here, which are highlighted below.

Through the stage 2 design development it has become increasingly clear that this needs to be a place that brings a unique and site specific slant to curatorial efforts. There is a great deal of knowledge and creativity within the surrounding educational and cultural institutions that should be the engine behind the events, installations and performances that take place in the public realm at the Strand/Aldwych.



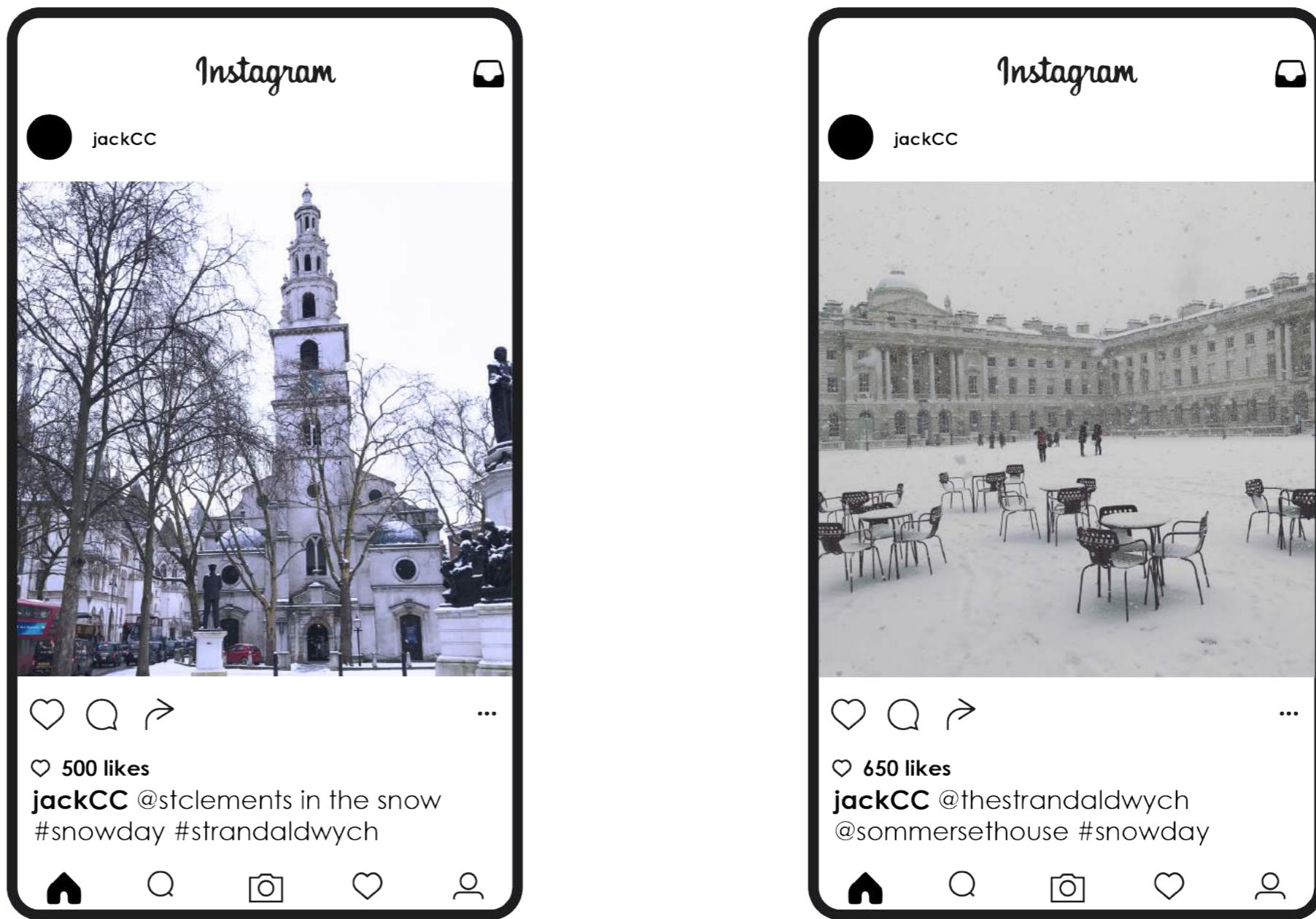
- Events already taking place on/around the site
- Events which could take place on the site in the future



#Socialmediapresence and the #Successinthevirtualworld

Social media is impacting both the ways that people use public space, but also how spaces are being designed. How will the new public realm become identified, will it be branded/named as a new quarter within the city, or will it remain as a series of separate institutions and buildings like it is at present?

The digital identity of the Strand/Aldwych will be an important factor in the life of the space and should be considered throughout the design process.



Understanding the Scale

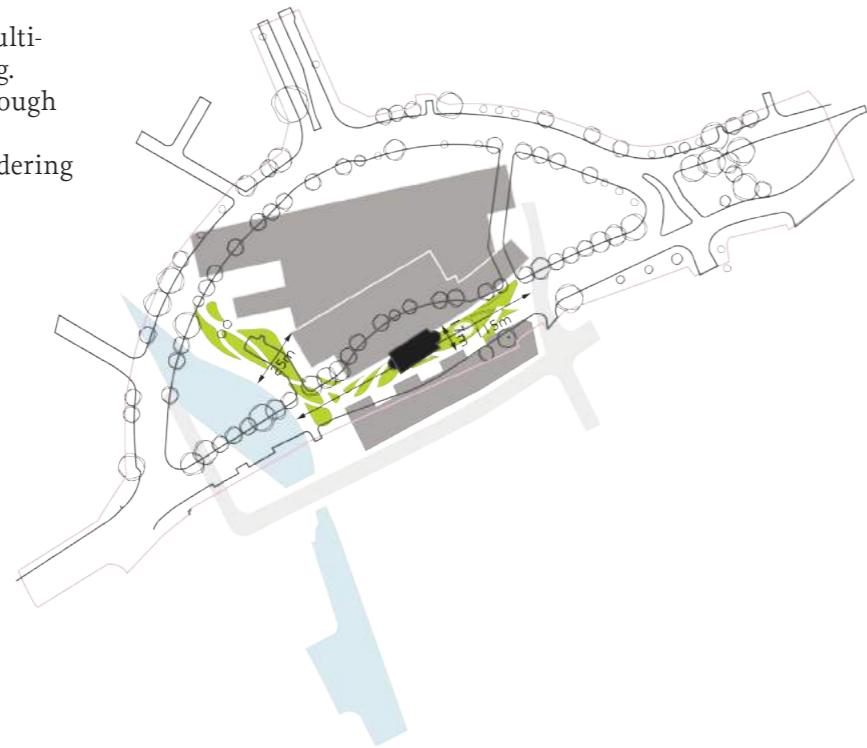
The following pages illustrate the scale of the space with the types of uses that may take place there.

The diagrams below and opposite show the Strand/Aldwych overlaid on comparable spaces with images below of the precedent project.

Handyside Gardens, Kings Cross London

Designer: Dan Person Studios

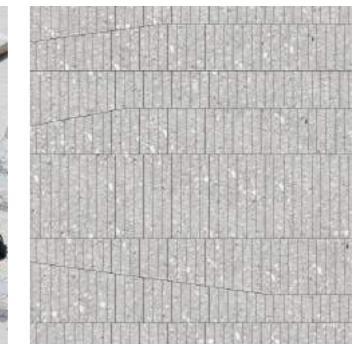
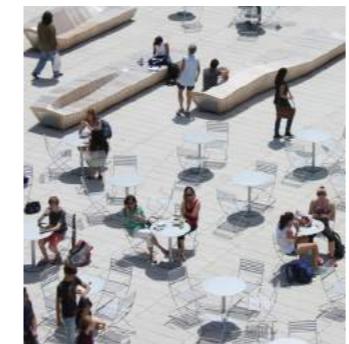
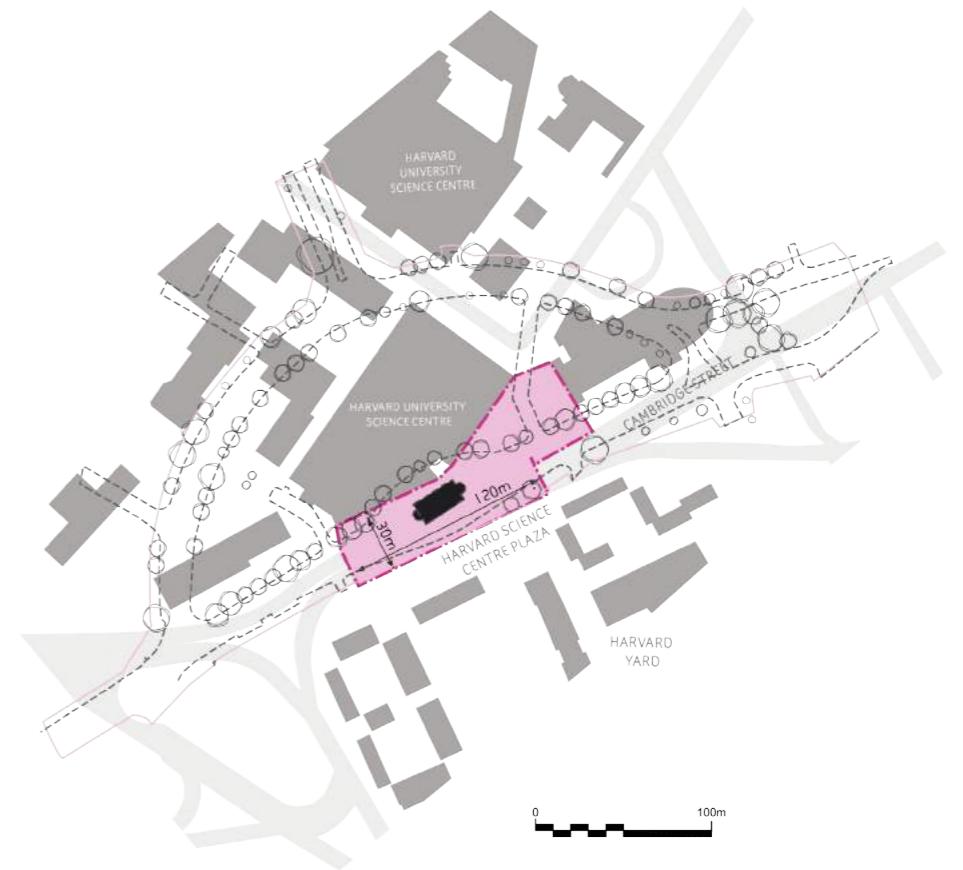
- * Canalside gardens with multi-use raised lawns for seating.
- * Primary pathways and through routes maintained with secondary routes for meandering



Harvard Science Plaza

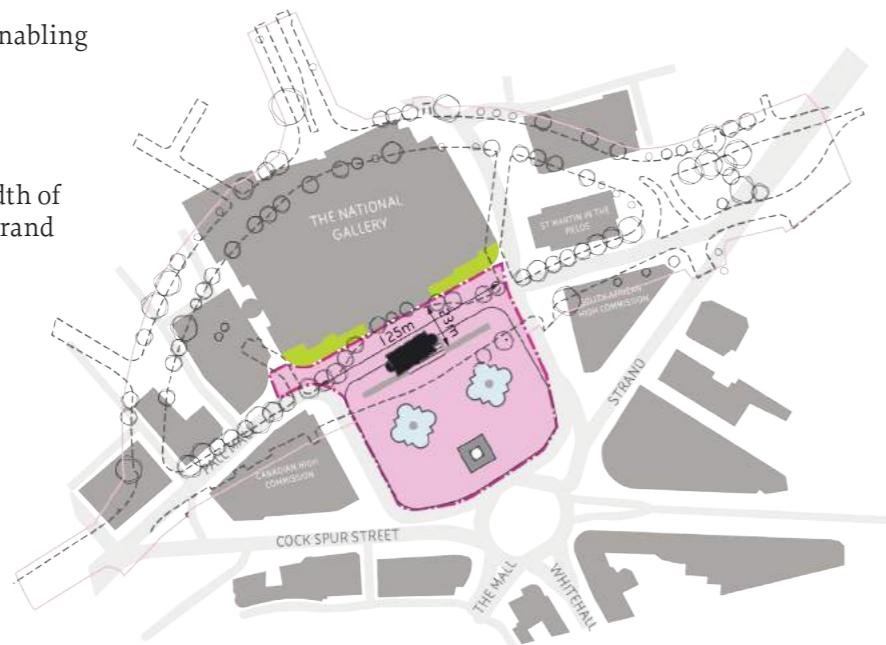
Designer: Stoss LU

- * University plaza built for maximum flexibility
- * Small space is working hard to enable pop ups, events and programmed overlays.
- * Balance of well designed 'permanent' pieces such as benches and multifunctional

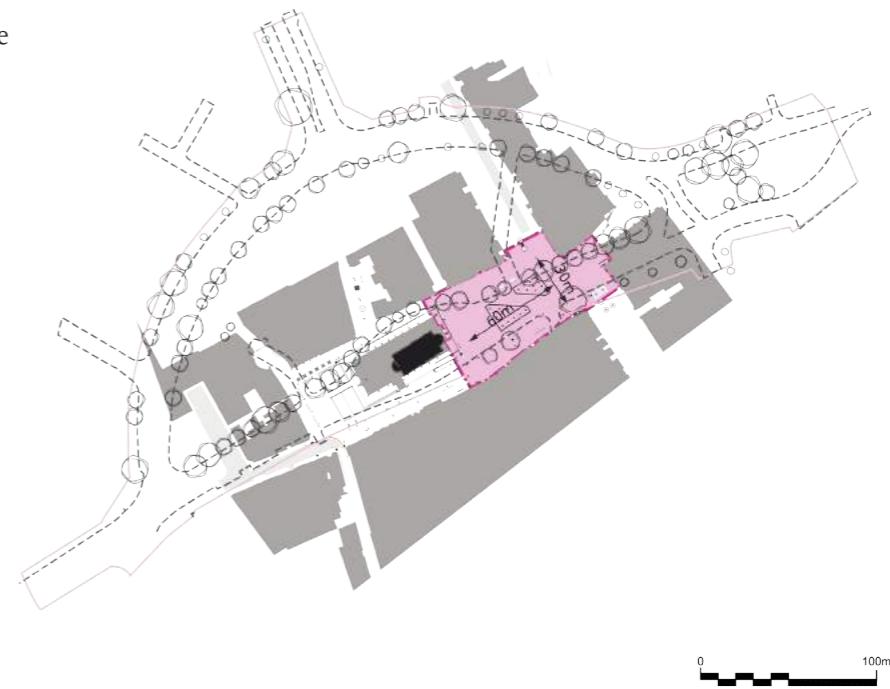


North Terrace of Trafalgar Square, London**Designer:** Foster and Partners

- * Flexible hard landscape enabling street art, performances and sculptures etc.
- * Suitable for large gatherings of people.
- * Width is similar to width of pedestrian space at the Strand

**Cathedral Square, Peterborough****Designer:** LDA Design

- * Re-imagined cathedral square introducing water fountains and usable lawn spaces
- * Hard space used for community gatherings.
- * Cathedral architecture is re-introduced in a contemporary setting



S. HOUSE.
Vincent 853

CONNECTIONS

BEST ASPECTS OF PUBLIC SPACES

OPEN
TO
EVERYONE

DEMOCRATIC

LACK OF
COMMERCIAL
ASSISTANCE

WELL-LIKE
QUALITIES IN
OF BEING JUST
A PAPER

FAMIL
L'OMMIE
WDER 18,

BREATH

QUIET-
PARK.?

100

३०८

TRUST.

"GIVEN
SOMETHING
BACK TO
YOU AS A
PEDESTRIAN"

SENSE
OF
SEASONS

100

FAMILY
FRIENDS

JOY

卷之三

ALVANICH -
SOTHEBYS

GRAD
THICK
CENTRE

CENTRAL
POST.
4945 367
CENTRE DE LOURD

WHAT

5.0 Engagement & Workshop Sessions

The stakeholder engagement for Strand Aldwych has been a unique process. There have been six engagement sessions with different stakeholder groups as an integral part of the design process and two days of workshops with artists organised by Somerset House. Additionally, Kings College has facilitated a session to generate ideas. Following each session, LDA Design took away the points that participants raised and spent time considering each point and how the emerging design concept could be shaped and influenced by these comments.

The engagement sessions have had a significant impact on the emerging design, both in the look and feel, as well as the anticipated use and curation of the space. Workshop outcomes were tabulated and helped inform the basis of design.

The following pages tell the story of how the sessions were organised and some of the feedback from the workshops.

Stakeholder Engagement Session

21st March 2018

The first day of workshops was broken down into two groups; Local Stakeholder and Programming & Operation.

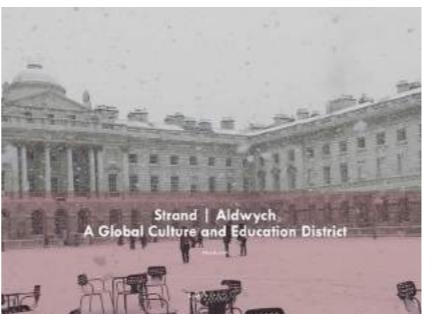
One of the groups represented stakeholders & partners from local businesses and institutions located around the Strand Aldwych. This group is key in addressing practical aspects of the design and its implications to the respective estates. Crucial to the success of the design, they will inform the project, commenting on proposed and existing uses, access needs, movement and bringing to our attention any potential conflict with the day to day workings of their estates.

The programming and operations group influenced the cultural strategy for the space, engaging with the practicalities of management.

Within the design process, this group will influence the cultural strategy for this space and engage with the practicalities of management. They will represent the ambitions for the space and provide guidance on the potential art strategy and integration of art within the design of the space alongside its development as a genuinely public, inclusive and high quality arena. This group will engage with the designers and explore ways to integrate the cultural offer in the area within the public realm at Aldwych.

The images opposite show the stakeholder engagement packs that we distributed to participants to capture their thoughts and ideas.

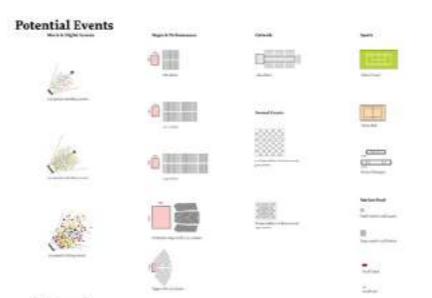
¹ The handouts from the artists engagement sessions in which all attendees were asked to fill out and return.



Name:	<hr/>
Stakeholder interest:	<hr/>



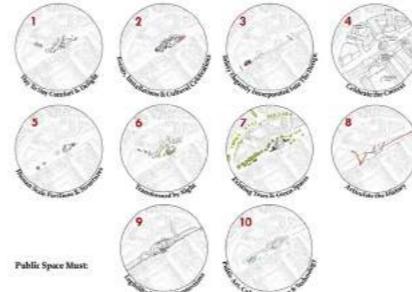
 **Ideas / Comments**



Ideas



What events have we missed?



Top 3 public realm 'musts'

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



#whatisthespace # _____
#name? # _____
#socialmediabranding # _____



Thoughts/Ideas/Comments:





Ideas





Ideas / Comments

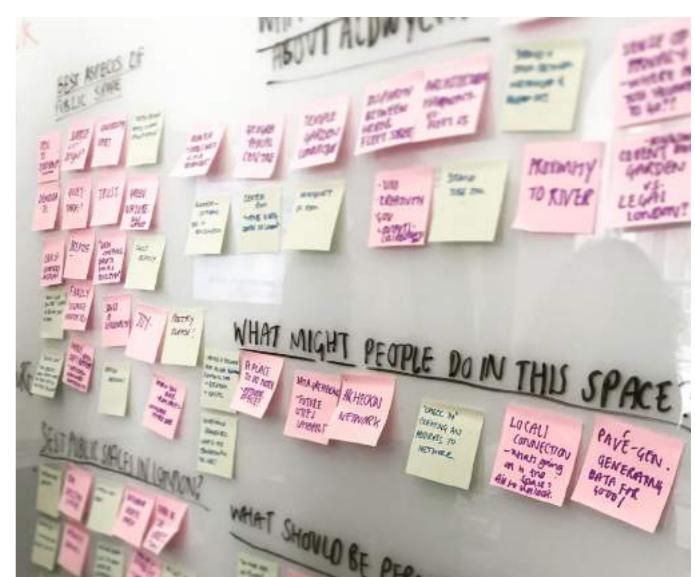
Artist's Workshop

17th & 19th April 2018

The workshops were attended by artists, creatives, curators, programme managers and academics. The focus for the workshop was based around use, culture and integration of art into the life of the space, which contributed to the guiding principles to create a point of differentiation for Stand Aldwych.

In order to keep the workshops as creative, yet focused as possible, LDA gave a brief presentation on some initial thoughts on the design and programme of the space. A series of questions was then put to the group, and the discussion was based around these:

1. *What are the best aspects of public space?*
 2. *Which public spaces in London work for you and why?*
 3. *What is unique about Aldwych?*
 4. *What might people do in this space?*
 5. *What should be permanent, and what should be temporary?*



Key themes and outcomes

Who is the space for?

- * Balance the needs of students, local residents, workers (existing users) and visitors
- * Consult existing users (students)
- * A democratic space for everyone, without the feeling of exclusivity or 'people watching over you'. Different than Private Owned Public Space (POPS)
- * Local and international

Spatial Experience

- * A space for the day-to-day comfort, delight and informality whilst balancing the need for an overlay of programme
- * Events shouldn't take-over the space
- * A space for people to connect, mingle, relax and play all at the same time
- * Establish stronger connections to the surrounding areas
- * Different from surrounding public spaces offering something unique to the area
- * A sense of 'sanctuary' within the energy and bustle of the urban environment

Best aspects of public spaces

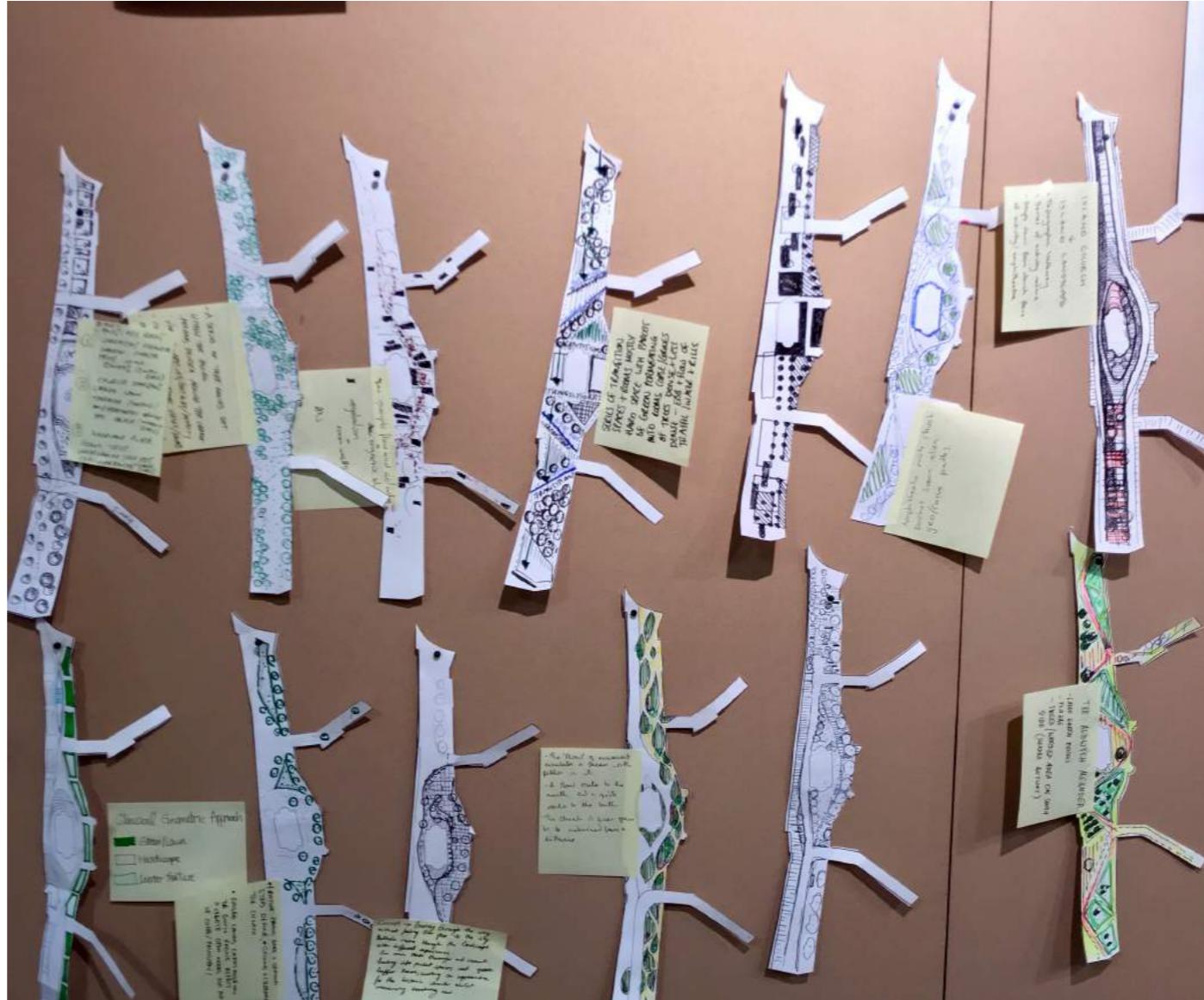
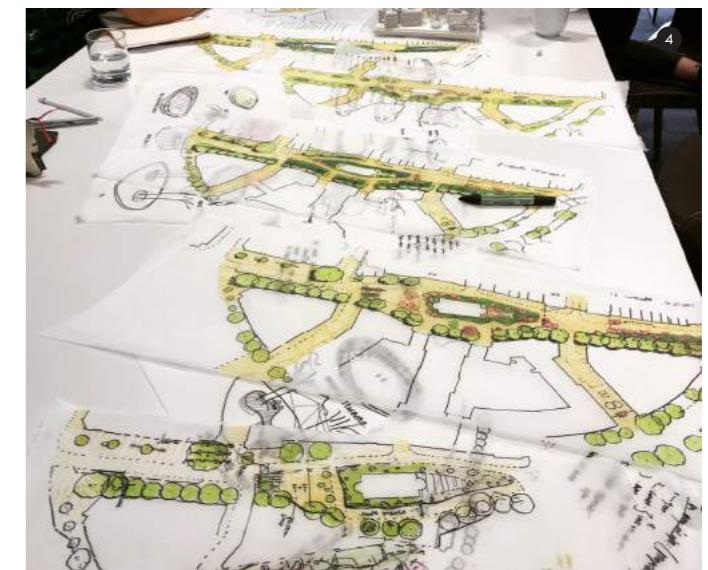
- * A sense of seasonality
- * Feeling safe and welcome
- * Lack of commercialisation
- * Balance of hard and soft
- * A space to linger, watch, contemplate, have a sandwich etc.
- * Sound and senses, how will the space sound when the traffic noise is gone?
- * A place of discovery, generosity of spirit, a sense that the public are being given something back. Be transparent (eg if we use data to track who uses the spaces, we should be explicit about this)

Key Themes:

- * Research & Development, into public realm/urban life, testing ideas
- * Allowing maximum flexibility with inbuilt infrastructure
- * Historic context of the space, how is this communicated to people?
- * Wi-fi, Li-fi, digital connections, USB, charging points to allow people to create outdoor workspaces
- * Sustainable design & lighting
- * Cultural thinking centre
- * Public seminars/academia, speakers corner
- * Hostile design
- * Playable cities

Concept Design

Following the stakeholder engagements and artist day and to kick-start the design process, the wider design team at LDA Design was invited to develop an idea for the spaces on cut-outs that could be inserted into a 3d physical model. The 13 options are shown below.





6.0 Optioneering

Following the stakeholder engagement sessions and the artist's workshops, LDA Design reviewed the comments and ideas generated in the workshop to develop three options for the Strand between Wellington Street and Arundel Street, taking into account north to south movement between the River Thames, LSE and Lincoln's Inn Fields.

The three options explore the look and feel of the space, the ratio of hard to soft, permanence and temporary and ways in which the space could be used and occupied by people visiting the area.

The three options were presented to the Stakeholders, Cultural Advisory Group and the Programming and Operations Group on 26 April.

Option 1 - Charm Bracelet

Option 1: Charm Bracelet

The Charm Bracelet Option utilises the south-facing edge of the space beneath the existing London Plane Trees as a place for people to pause and linger in the space.

A series of 'charms' or different experiences transition the space from a linear east to west space to a more episodic and varied space. The thumbnail images on the following page suggest the types of activities that the 'charms' could provide.

With all three options the aspiration is to amplify the notion of the sanctuary that St Mary Le Strand could provide. The church already has a small courtyard-inner sanctuary- to the western frontage and the aspiration is to maintain this and increase the amount of planting outside the railing of the courtyard and around the church, effectively creating an 'outer sanctuary'.

The western threshold of the site is reduced down to buffer against the traffic on the strand going towards Trafalgar Square and also as a method to reduced engineered HVM and use landscape features to mitigate against hostile vehicles.

"Breaking up architecture with creative, pop up moments"

"Space curated by the creative talent already adjacent to the space"

"Provision for flexibility in the future"

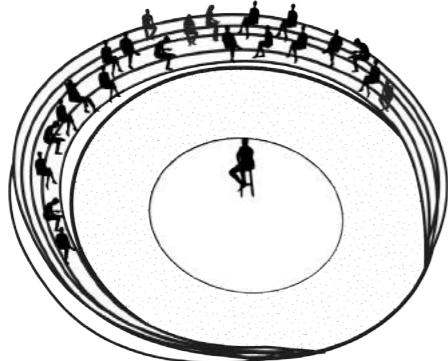
"Unlimited opportunity to linger with intimate moments"

"Flexible furniture"

"Canvas for culture"



Charms or 'moments' within the design



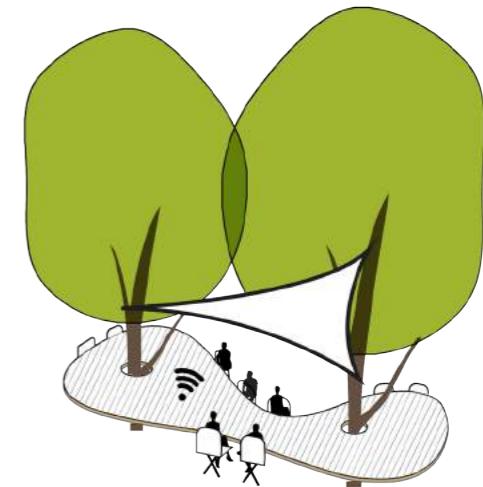
Outdoor Seminar Space/ Group Gathering Area



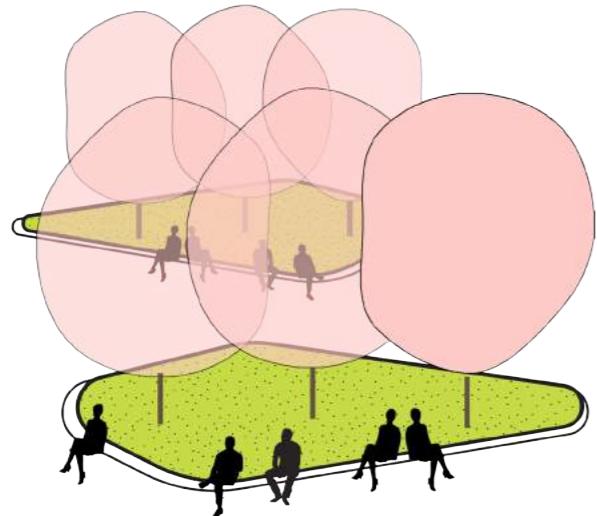
Cafe/Pavilion



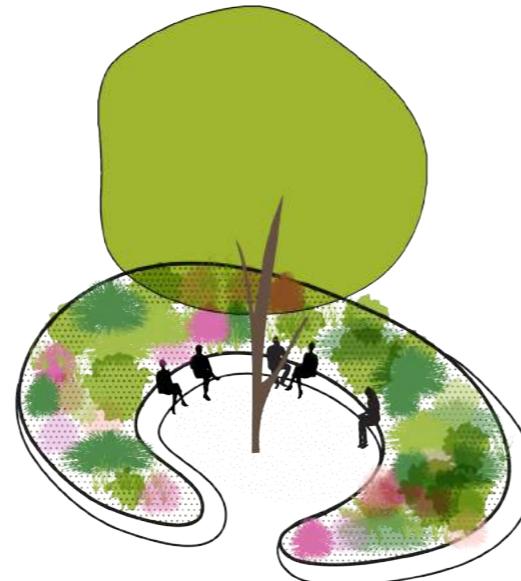
Art Installation



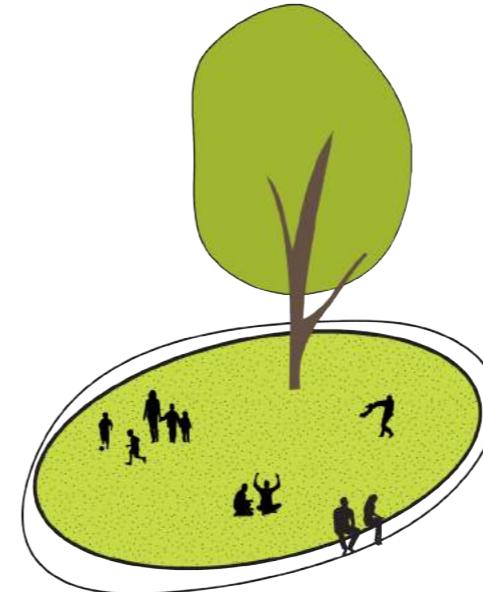
Co-working, Connection Space with power and USB plug in



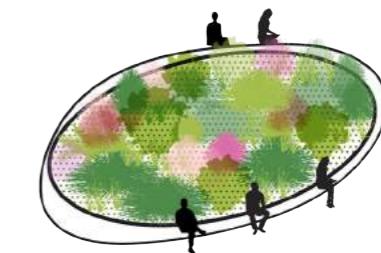
Grove of trees with seating edge



Enclosed seating space



Lawn with perching edge



Planting bed



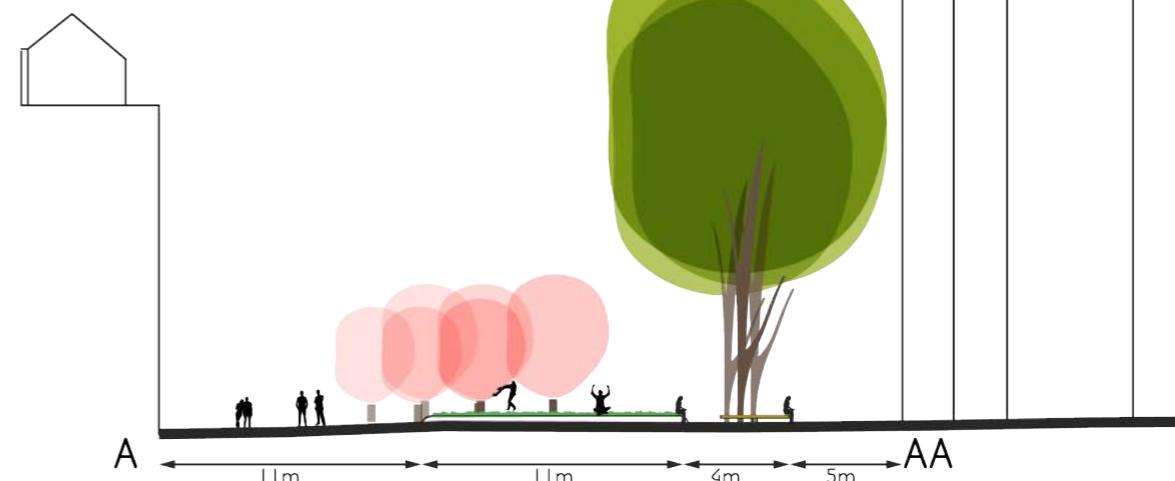
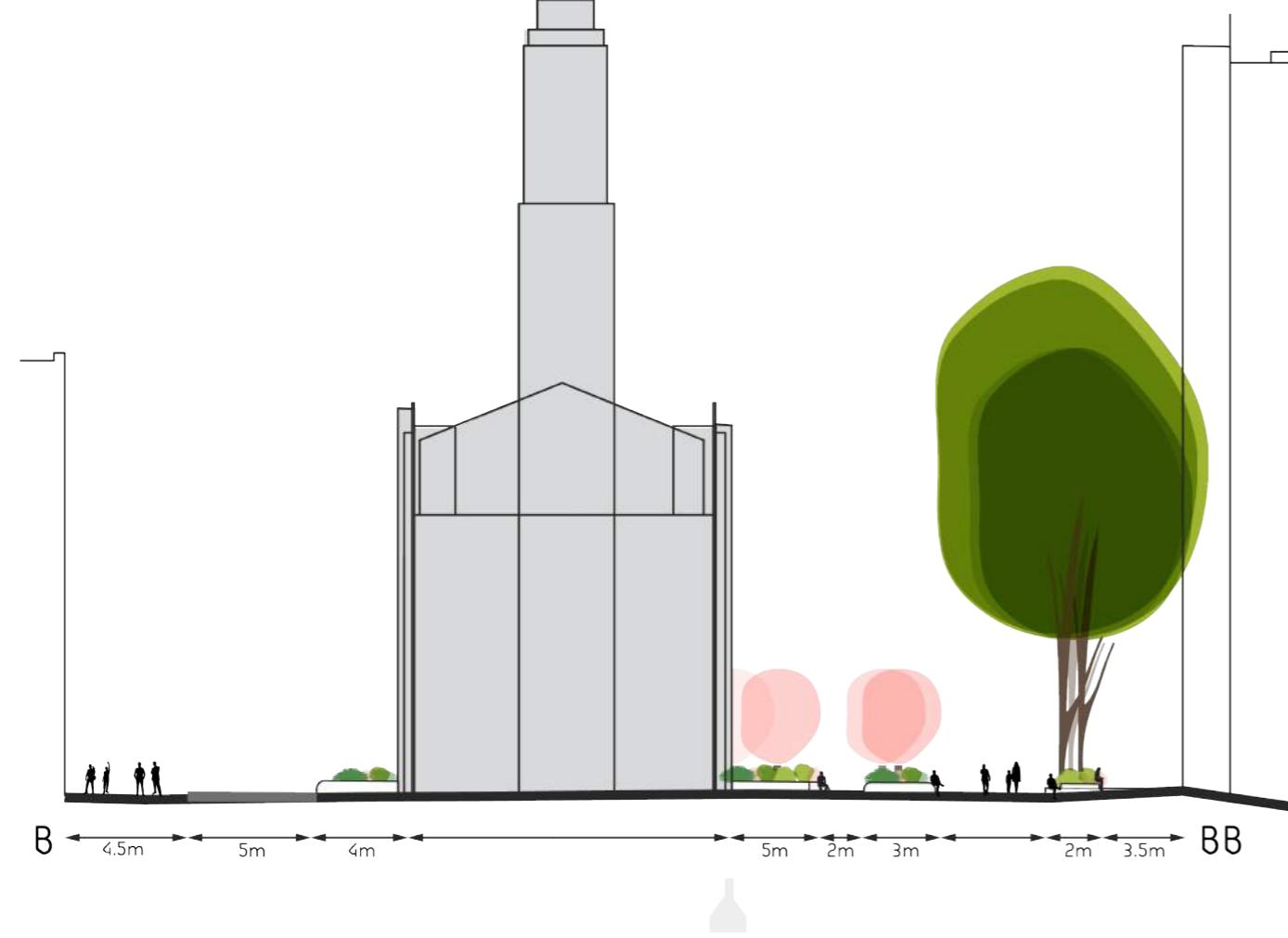
View looking west towards St Mary Le Strand church



View looking east towards St Mary Le Strand church

The diagram opposite illustrates how key north to south desire lines have been maintained within the design and the open flexible areas that can be used for temporary uses, such as events, installations and performances.







Option 2 - Linear Park

Option 2: Linear Park

Option 2 stitches the entire length of the site together with one big gesture-a linear green space. Within this armature, lawns, footpaths and gardens create variety and different scales of space.

The different grain of the architecture on the southern side of the site, as shown below, is pulled into the public realm to influence the edge of the green space.

The frontage of Somerset House is celebrated by an open, unobstructed open area that is required for vehicular access and servicing, whilst also providing a flexible area for events, performances and installations.



“Creating a sanctuary”

“Parklike qualities without being a park”

“Connecting to nature”

“Strand, Aldwych as a historic connection between Westminster and the City.”

“Canvas for culture”

“Enhance the soothing sounds of nature instead of traffic”

“Strong, simple idea”



View looking west towards St Mary Le Strand church

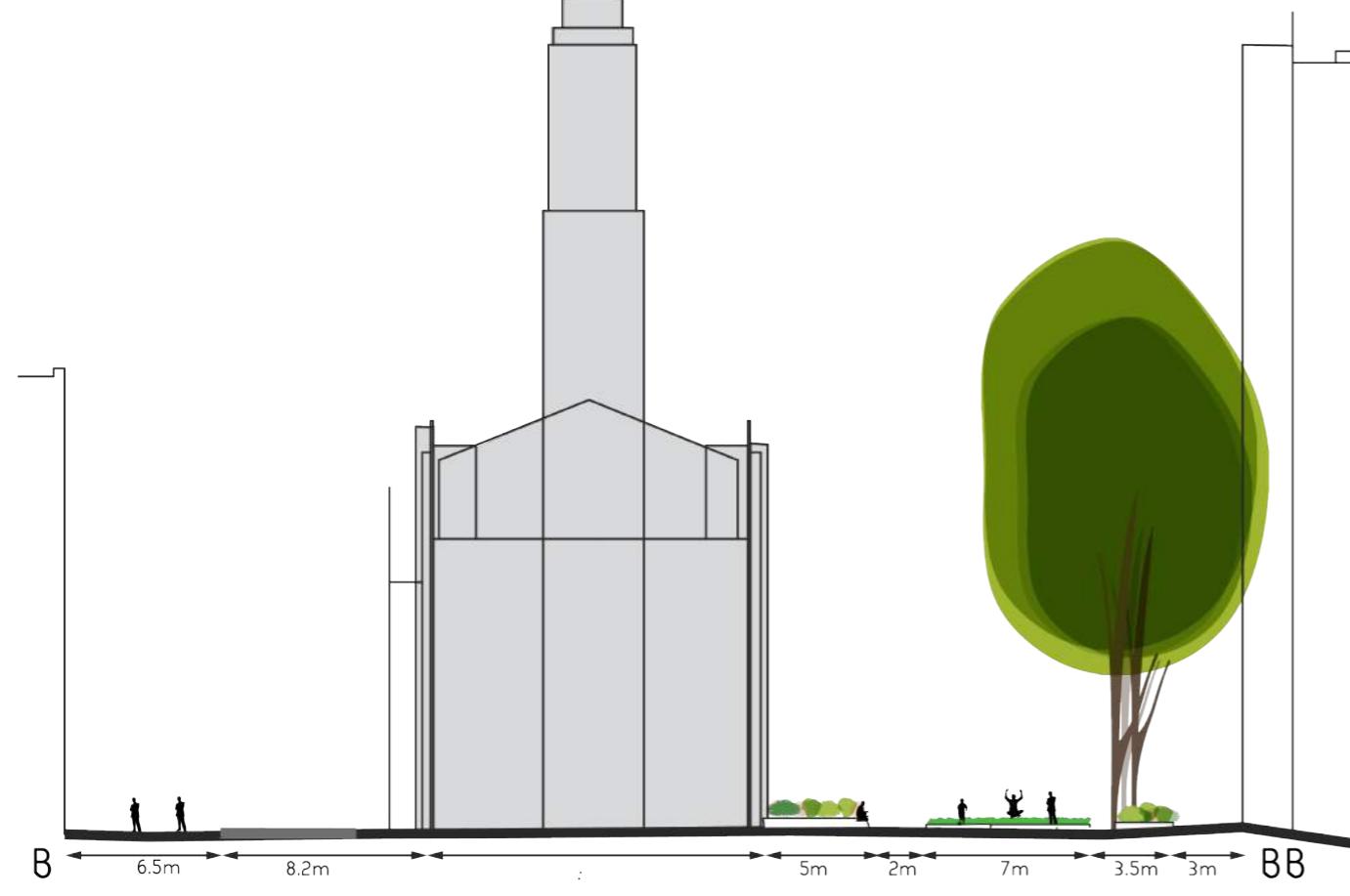
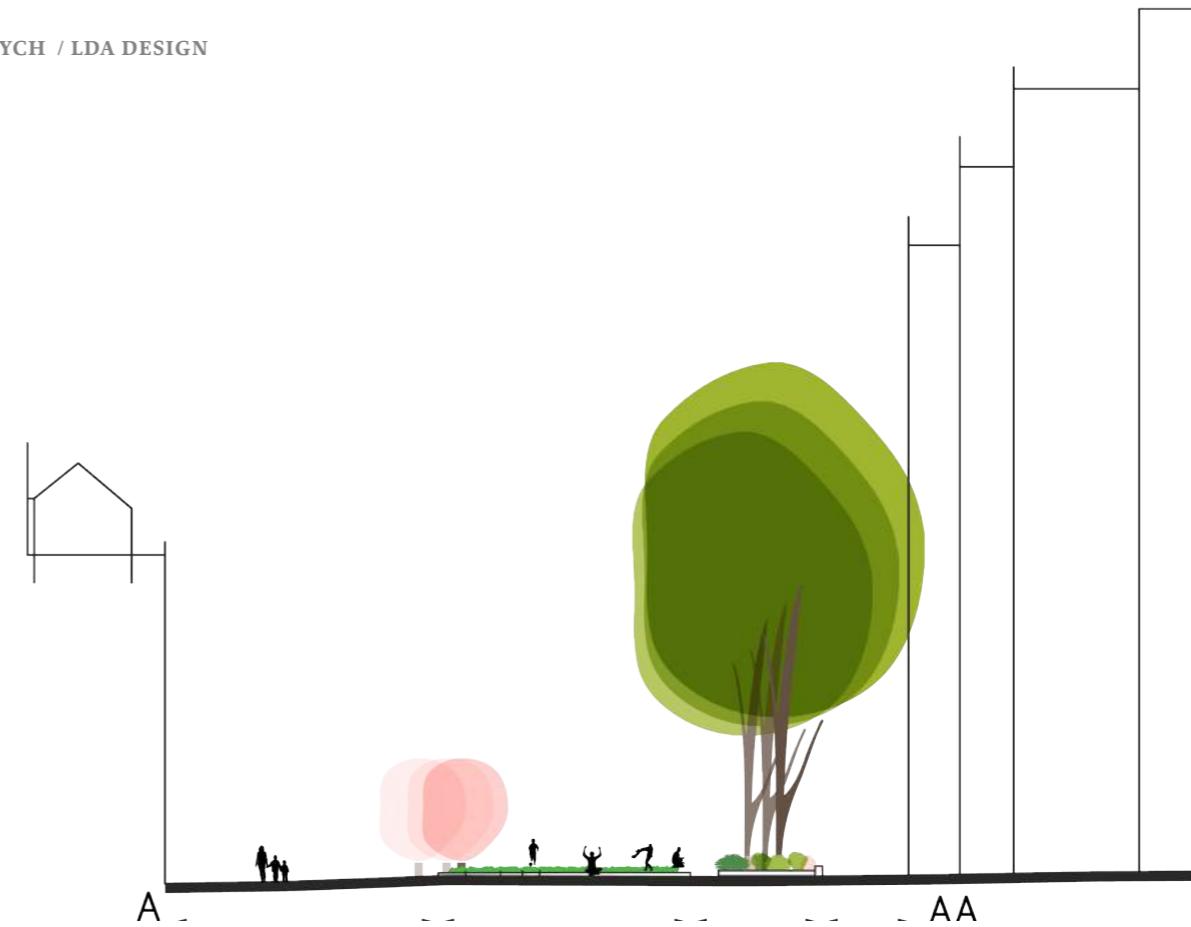


View looking east towards St Mary Le Strand church

Linear Park Option Diagram

The diagram opposite illustrates how key north to south desire lines have been maintained within the design and the open flexible areas that can be used for temporary uses, such as events, installations and performances.







Option 3 - Garden Option

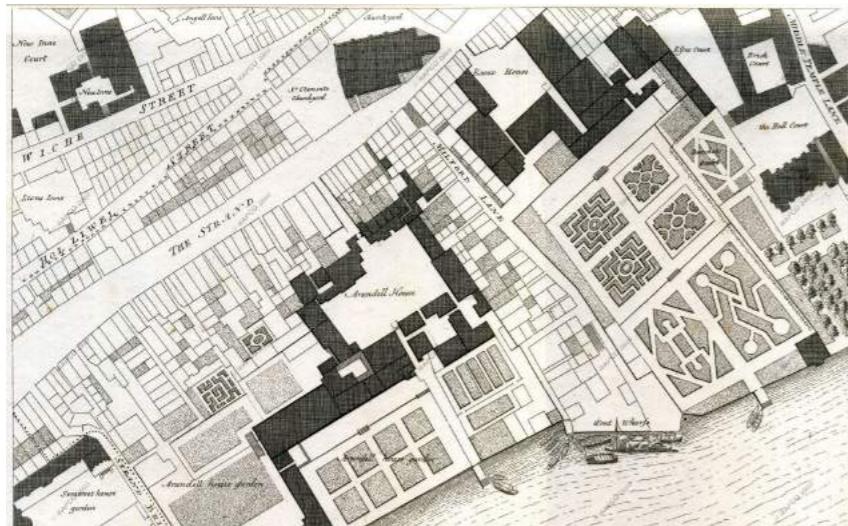
Option 3: Strand Garden

Option 3 puts green space and horticulture at the centre of the design, inspired by the historic estate gardens that once lined the River Thames before the Embankment was constructed.

The centrality of St. Mary Le Strand is celebrated with expansive gardens and open lawn areas with footpaths weaving through the green spaces.

An open, flexible space celebrates the Somerset House frontage and provide space for installations, events and performances.

- “Creating a sanctuary”
- “Connect to people around you”
- “Celebrate the church and the centrality of it”
- “Access to Nature”
- “Events happening on lawns not just plazas.”
- “Creating a sense of place as a destination and a place to pass through.”
- “A place for lunch and to get together after work.”



1677 Illustrating the historic mansions of Essex House, Arundel House, Somerset House, Savoy Palace, Durham House and Cecil House. 1693 Catherine of Braganza leaves Denmark House (Somerset House). She is the last royal to live in the palace.



View looking west towards St Mary Le Strand church

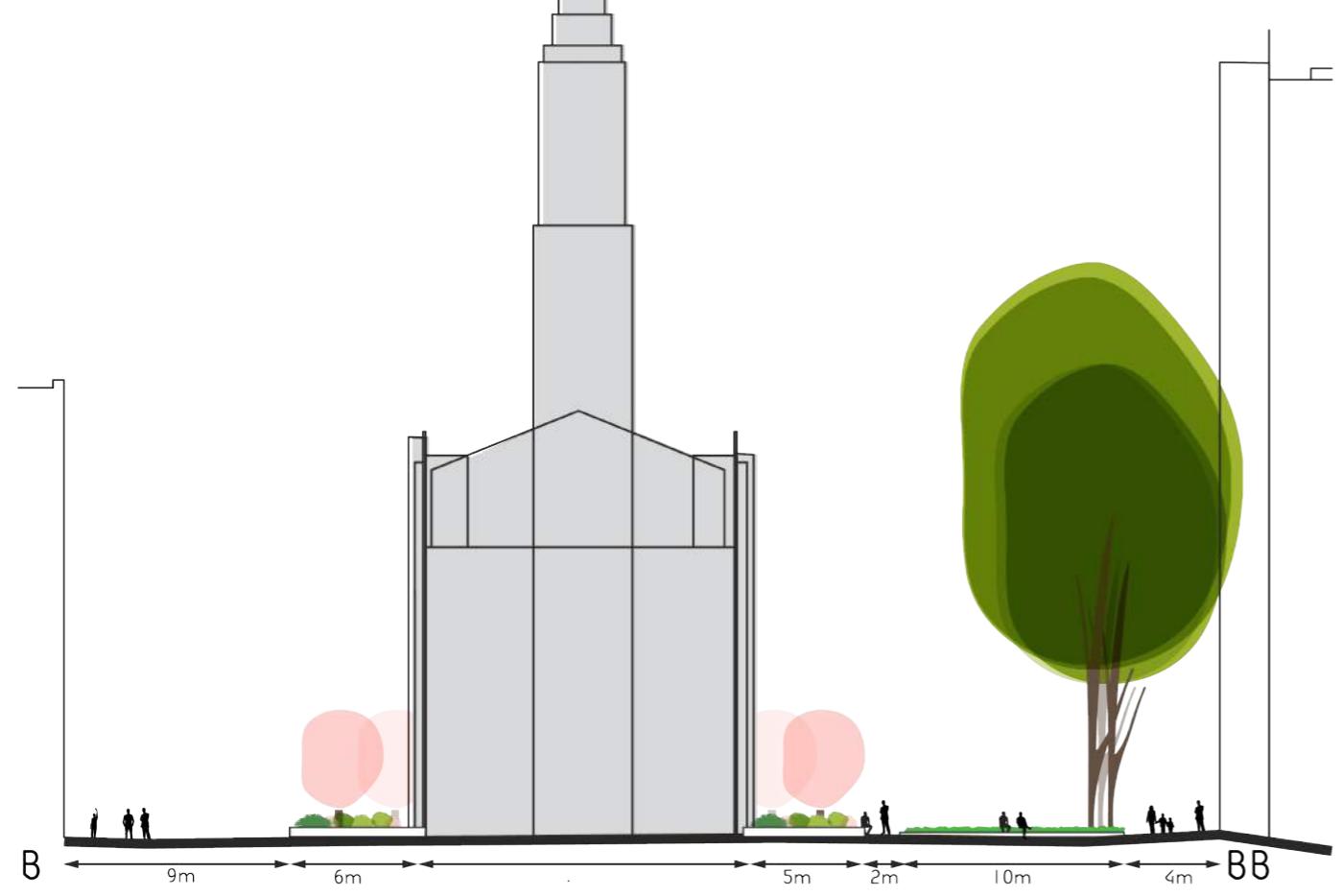
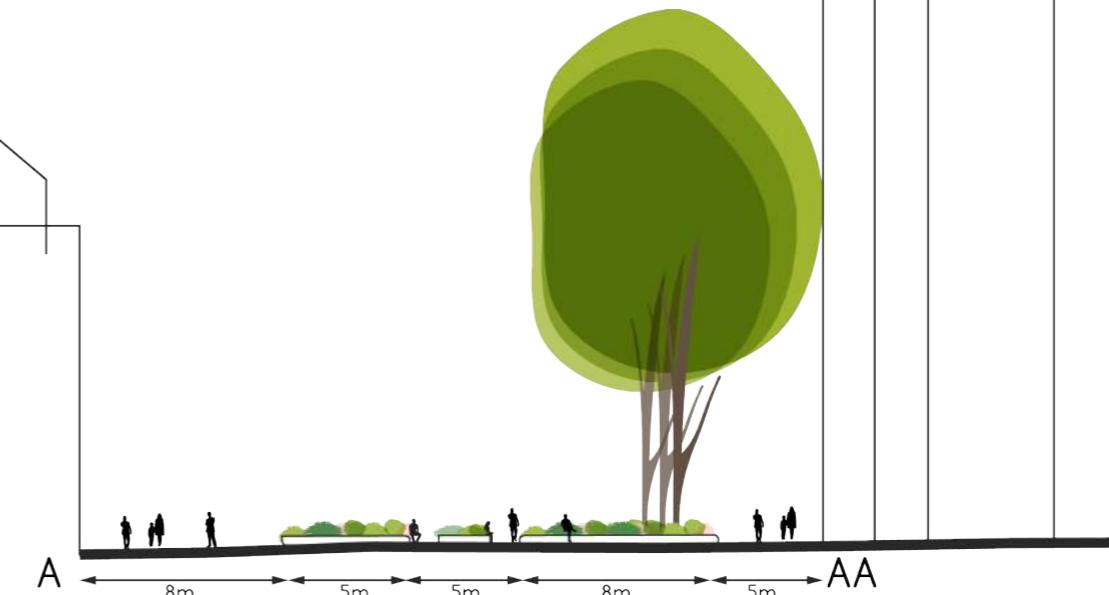


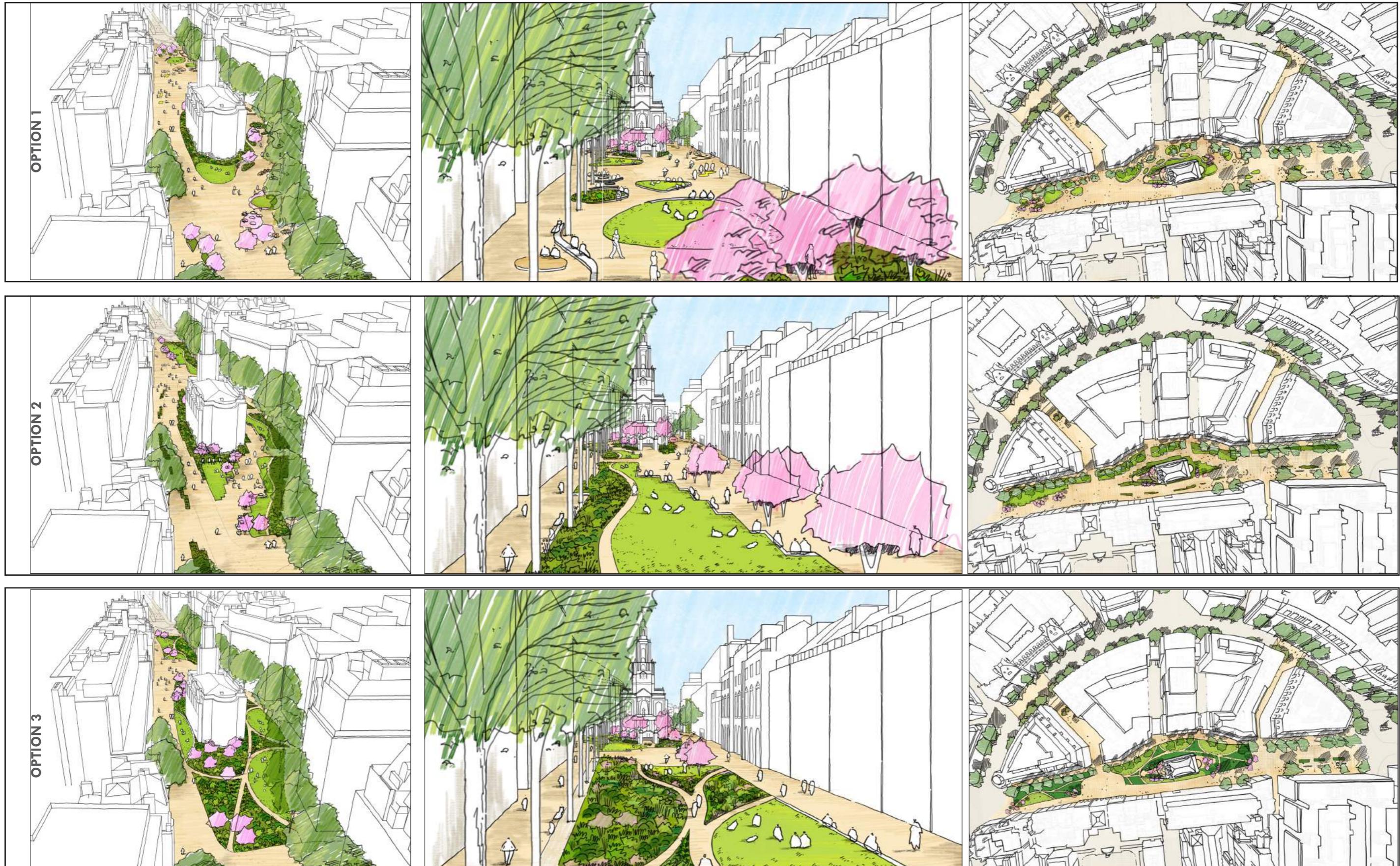
View looking east towards St Mary Le Strand church

Strand Gardens Option Diagram

The diagram opposite illustrates how key north to south desire lines have been maintained within the design and the open flexible areas that can be used for temporary uses, such as events, installations and performances.





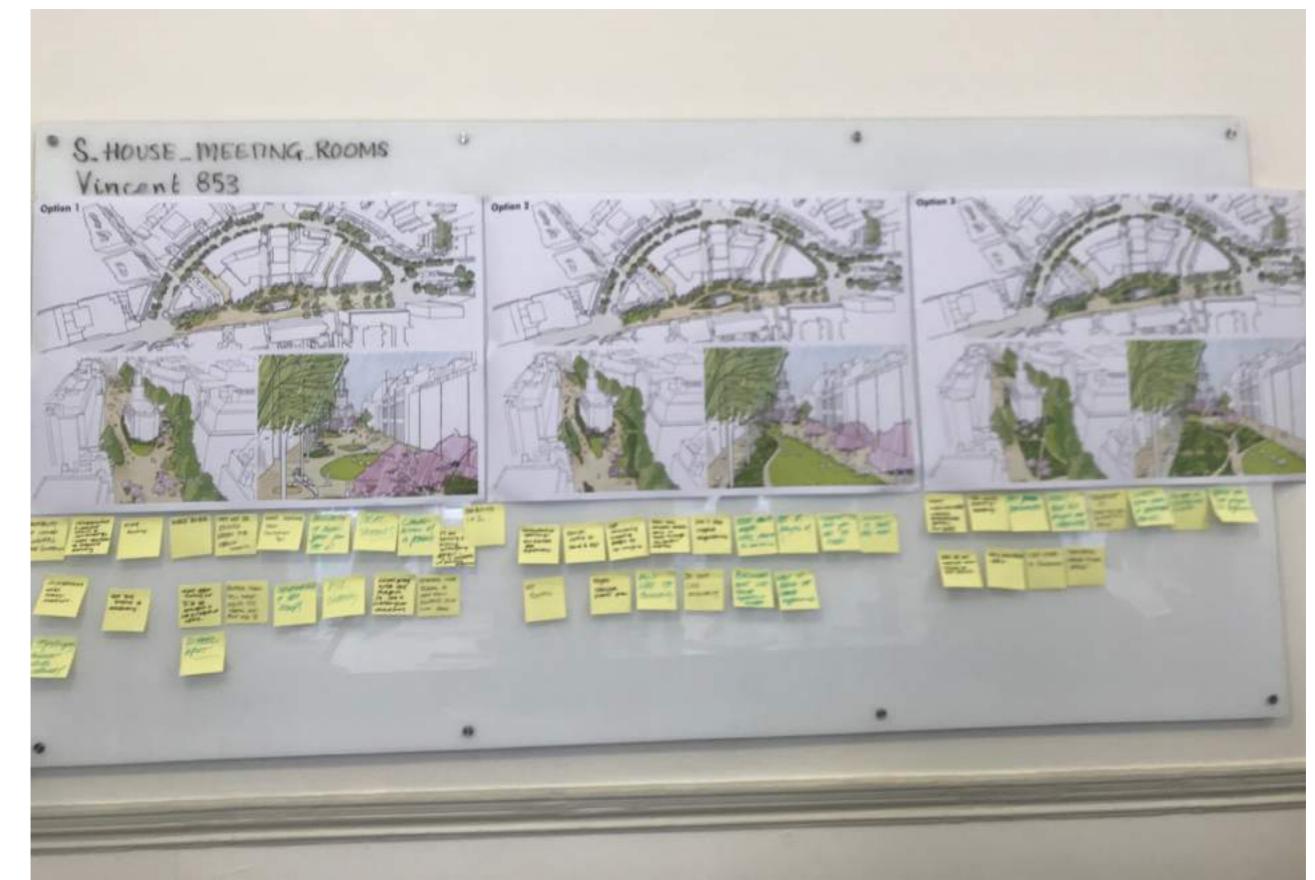
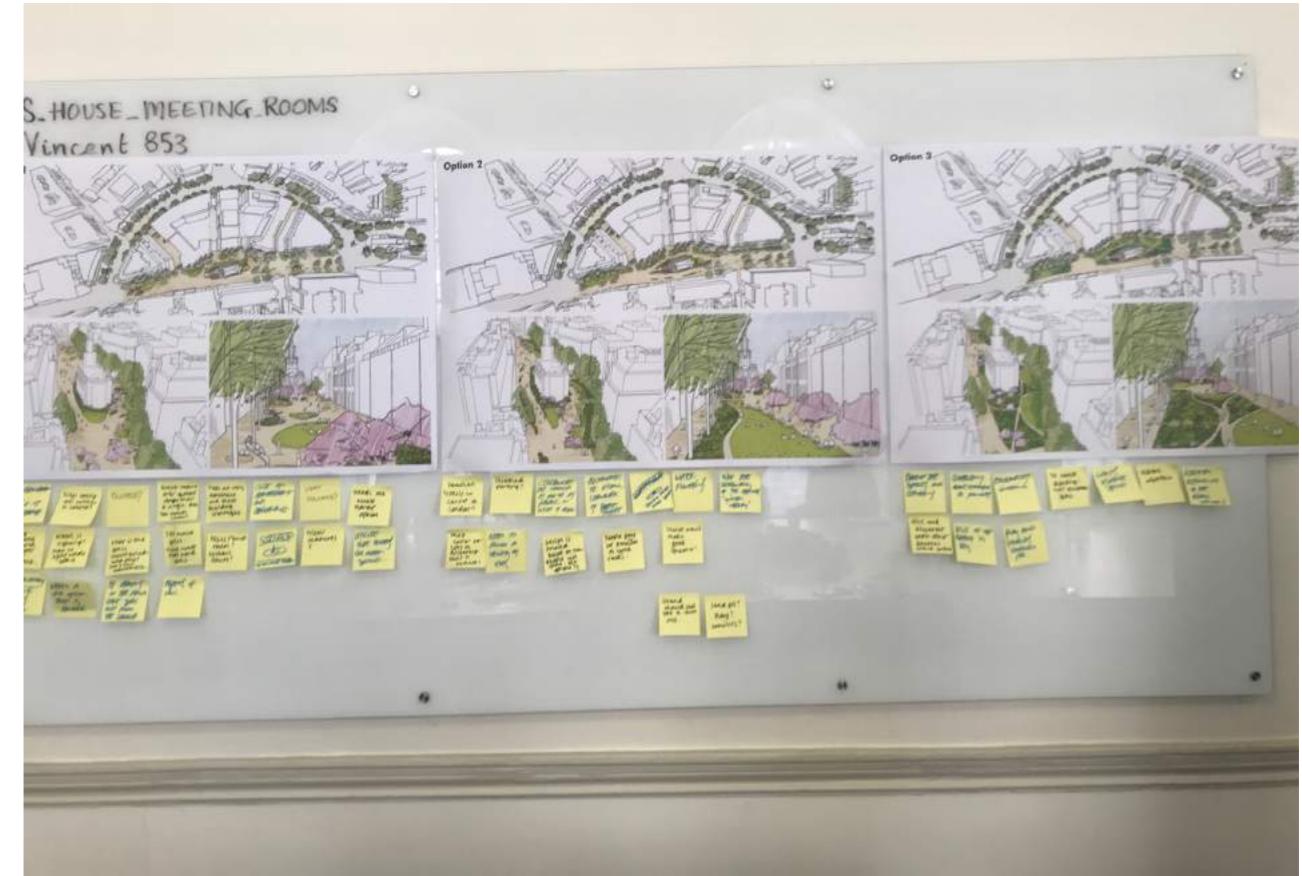


7.0 Preferred Design Concept

Following the Stakeholder, Cultural Advisory Group and the Programming and Operations Group sessions on 26 April, LDA Design developed and presented a hybrid option on 17 May, which incorporated comments received during the 26 April engagement sessions reflecting a majority consensus that elements of option 1 and option 2 were preferred. This hybrid concept is the preferred design and will form the base of the work going forward to RIBA Stage 3.

The three options were presented to the Stakeholders, Cultural Advisory Group and Programming and Operations Group and feedback, comments and ideas were captured across the three separate engagements sessions as illustrated below.

The three options were also printed and inserted into a physical 3d model to help visualise how the space would feel.





3d printed models of the site at 1:500 (foreground) and 1:1000 in the background

Below are the two options that emerged as the preferred approach to the space. Although neither option had universal approval, there were aspects of both options that the stakeholders felt should be developed.

1



2



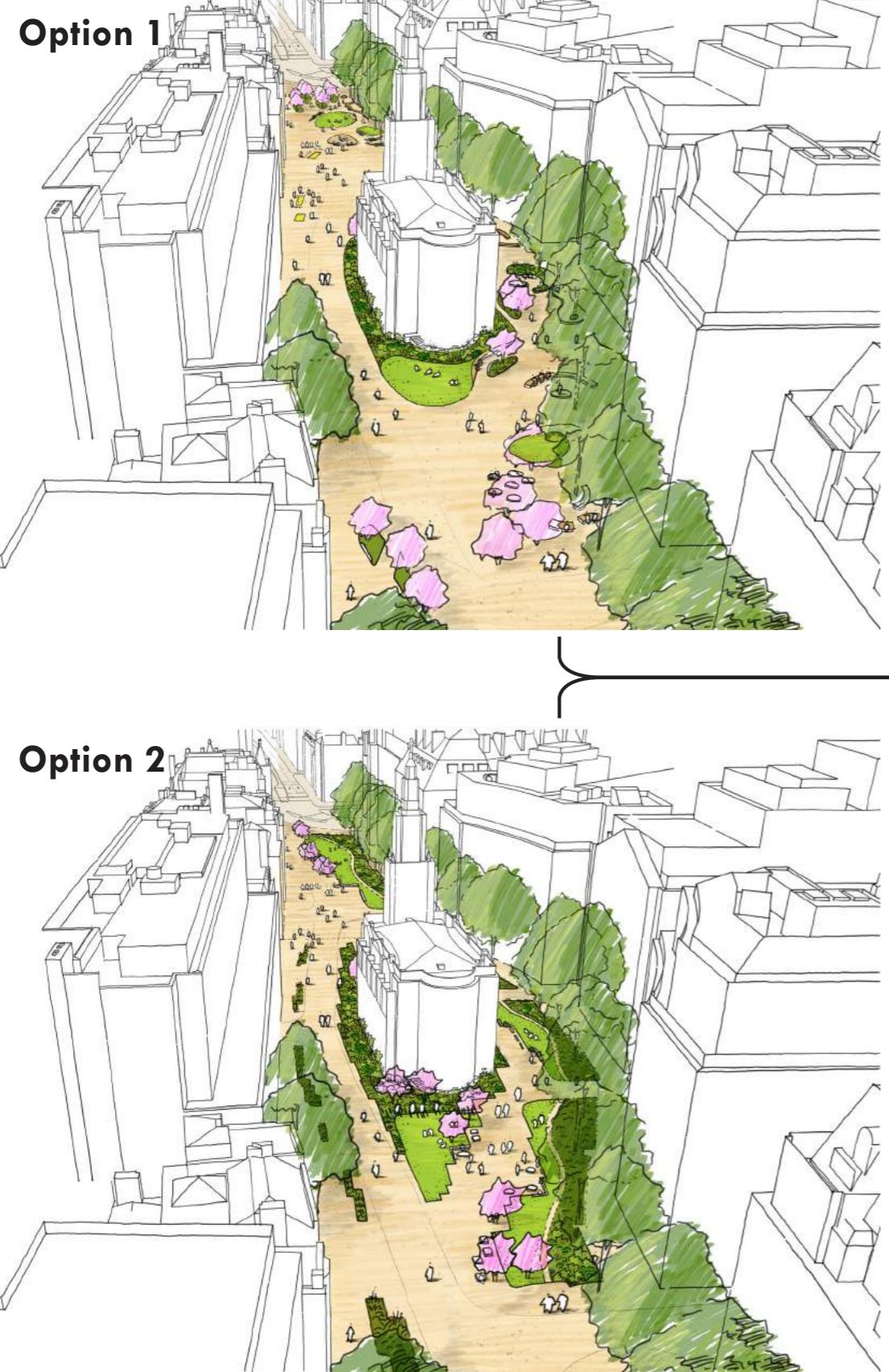
Hybrid of option 1 & 2

Positives of the Option:

- * Episodic & varied spaces
- * Rich and varied spaces reflect the culture of the area
- * Appropriate ratio of hard to soft
- * Flexibility of uses for many audiences
- * Fits the overarching vision for the site

Positives of the Options:

- * Legible and strong single idea
- * Gives the church a strong setting
- * Unifies the extent of the site
- * Retains the linearity of the street and sense of processional route
- * Strong edge overlooking the space



Preferred Concept Design



- * The social lawn, shown in the foreground, provides an open area for relaxing at lunch time. It can also be used for events or gatherings by the academic or student community. The Reading Room is surrounded by a beautiful garden to create a place to sit away from the more lively areas of the site.
- * The north to south link between Kings College is maintained and strengthened.
- * A clear route for servicing and delivery access is provided between the Social Lawn and the Reading Room
- * The smaller, spring flowering trees, will stitch the site together but not obscure views to St Mary Le Strand church

Option 1**Option 2****Preferred Concept Design**

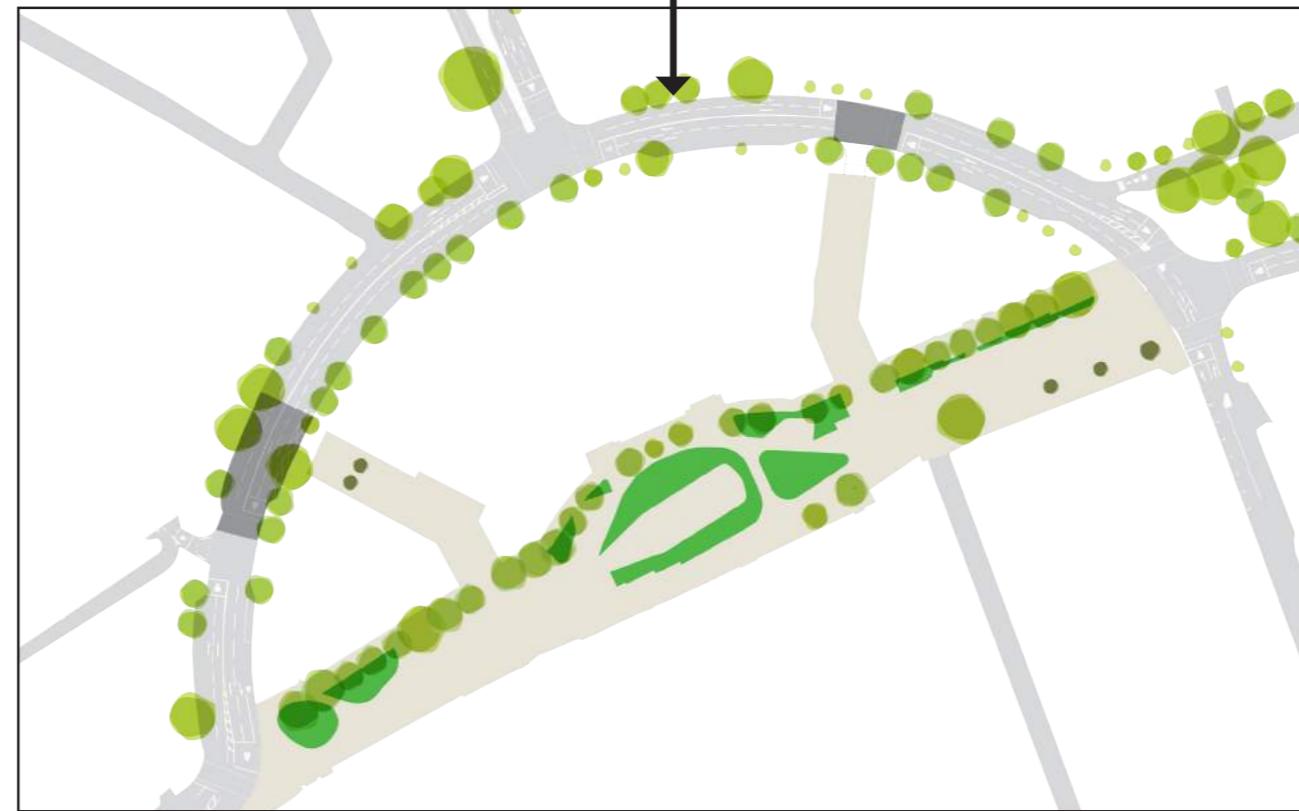
- * Open flexible area for events and installations on the southern edge of the Strand
- * On the northern edge of the Strand, a series of 'charms' are created to take advantage of the south facing aspect and sun exposure. Shown in the foreground of this image is the edge of the garden room, the spectator lawn and seating edge, the collective dining room and the sanctuary around St. Mary Le Strand in the distance.
- * Human scale trees stitching the full length of the Strand together

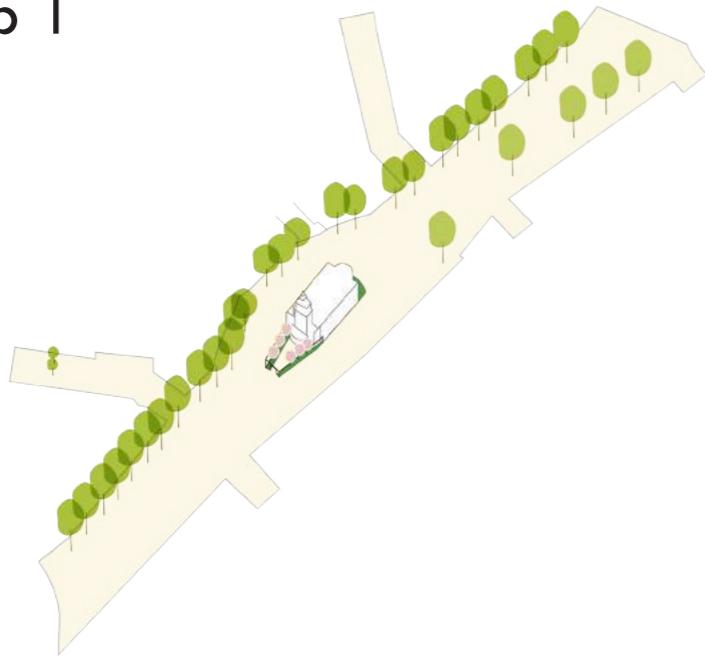


Ration of Hard to Soft

One of the key points of discussion during the engagement sessions was the ratio of hard paved areas to soft, planted areas. A few stakeholders felt that there was too much green space in option 1 and 2.

The preferred concept design provides a careful balance between the softer areas that creates a more comfortable day-to-day experience and the hard paved areas that provide flexibility and programmable spaces.

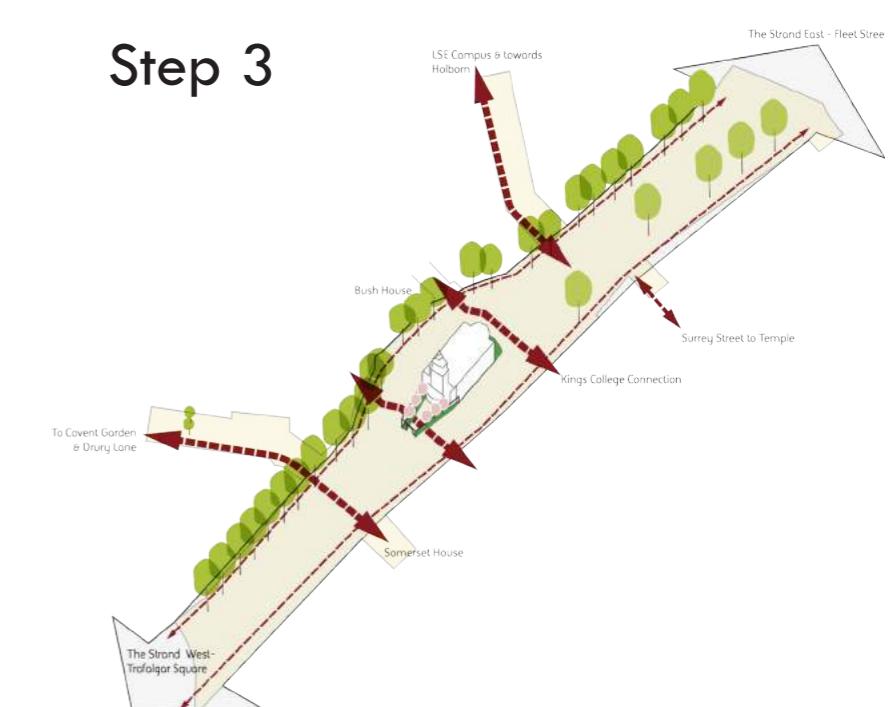


Design Steps**Step 1**

With the removal of the traffic, the pedestrian experience will be dramatically improved and the richness of the architecture will be able to be appreciated.

Step 2

The east to west movement is maintained and the processional route is acknowledged

Step 3

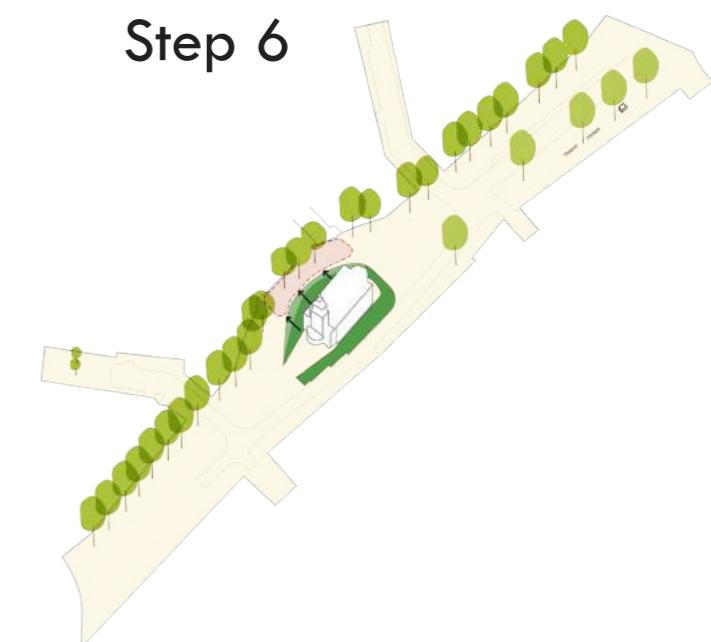
Key north to south routes stitch the site into the wider context. The two routes between KCL & LSE and Somerset House & Covent Garden are important desire lines

Step 4

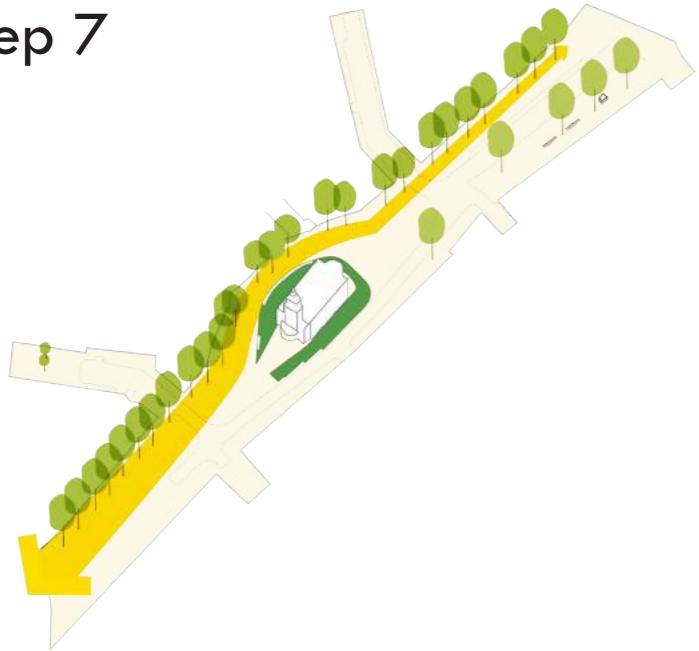
Free movement and circulation through the space is considered to ensure that the design of the public realm does not impact movement

Step 5

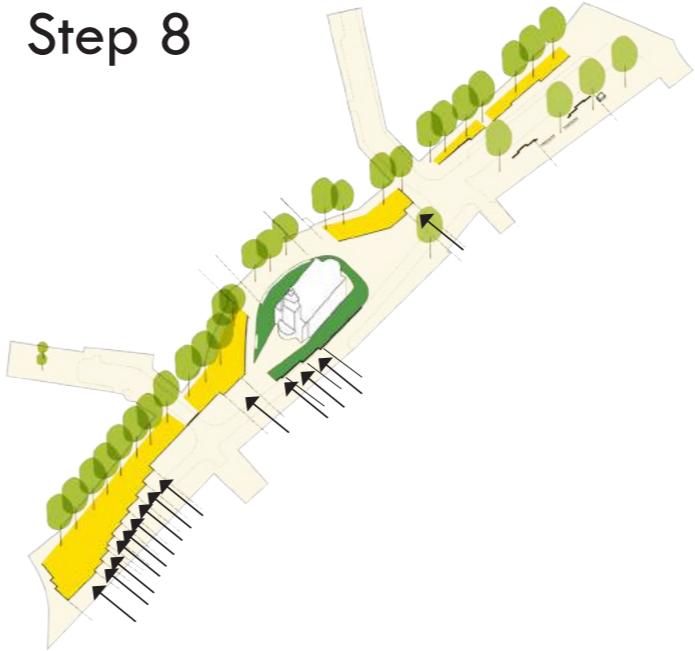
Vehicular access to the ME Hotel residential car park, servicing and delivery points are integrated into the public realm

Step 6

A flexible space is provided outside of the main Kings College London southern entrance to Bush House and the outer sanctuary surrounding St. Mary Le Strand church is pulled further north to increase the garden

Step 7

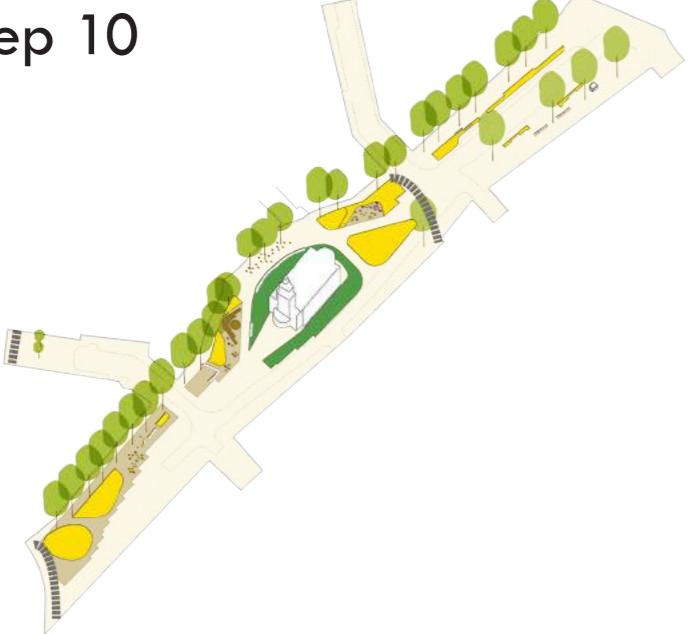
The south facing, sun-filled edge of the space is identified as the optimum location where people will want to gather, benefitting from a strong edge condition under the dappled shade of the London Plane trees.

Step 8

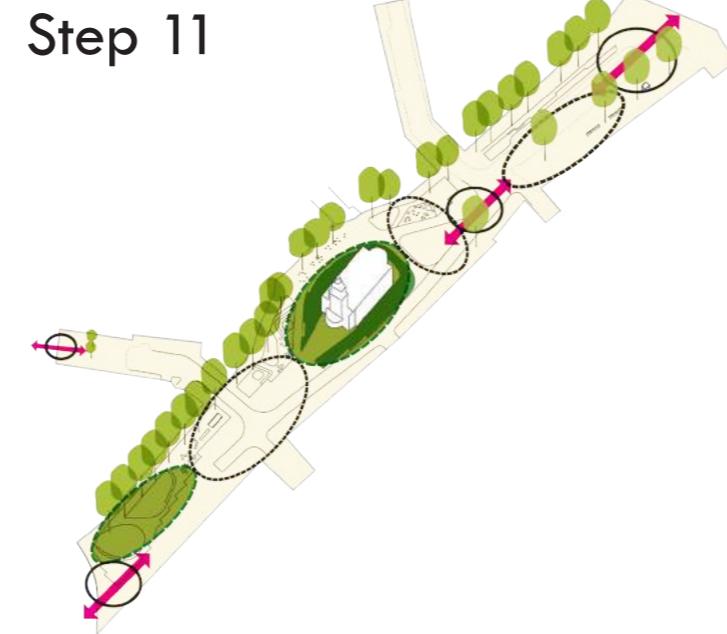
Drawing the grain of the adjacent architecture to the south of the space into the public realm is subtly articulated in the paving design and sets up an organisational structure for the 'charms' or zones to sit within. This paving structure gives clarity to the design of the active zones.

Step 9

Building from the ideas of the 'charms' in option 1, a series of moments are imagined within the organisational structure that will encourage people to enjoy the space in a multitude of ways.

Step 10

Creating a safe and comfortable space is of paramount concern. The Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) strategy will be integrated into the design of the public space so these elements don't look like an unsightly afterthought.

Step 11

The design of the public space, by the nature of the adjacencies, naturally forms an episodic experience, contrasting between soft spaces and moments of calm to open hard paved areas with activity and energy.

Step 12

The design provides adequate, open-ended and flexible areas for a myriad of creative endeavours, such as dance rehearsals, the making of art or the sharing of knowledge. The largest open flexible space has been pulled away from the main entrance to Somerset House so it can be used regardless of the servicing requirements of Somerset House.



Stitching it all together

The diagram on the opposite page illustrates the composite of the 12 moves to arrive at the preferred concept design. The result is an attractive space that offers a variety of uses and ways in which the various demographics can use the space.

The concept provides day-to-day spaces that people will find comfort in and use, whether they are students, professionals or visitors. The 'charms' bring interest and variety into the space at a more intimate scale. Generous areas of the design will enable the space to be used as a platform for overlay uses, installations, performances and cultural celebrations.

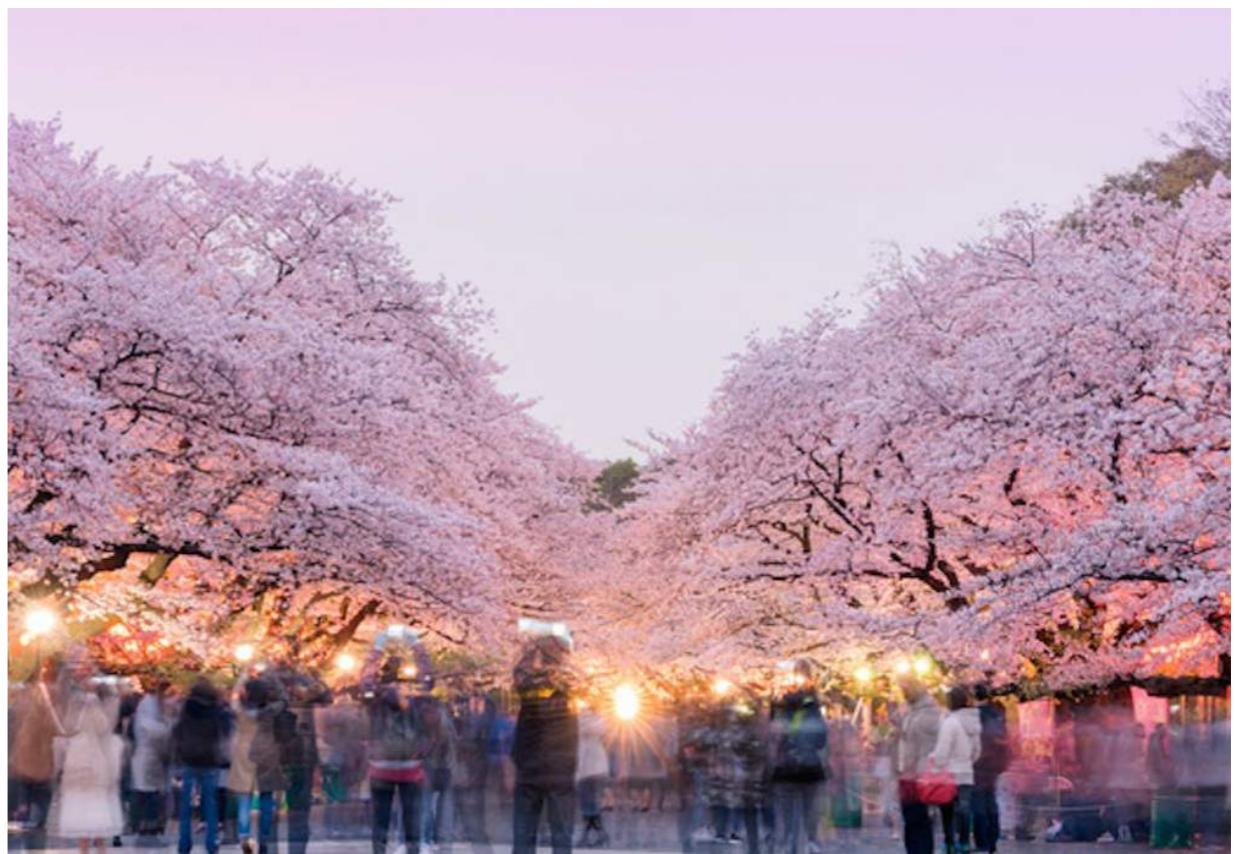
To stitch the entire space together and provide an awe-inspiring moment for London, the aspiration is to weave a single tree species with a spectacular 'moment' in the year, e.g cherry trees (either spring or winter flowering) throughout. The scale of the tree is important so as not to obscure the important views to St. Mary Le Strand. This scale of tree also complements the setting of the church with the existing smaller magnolias. When the blossoms fade, the space will benefit from smaller, multi-stem human scale trees with cluster seating areas beneath their shade.

Many people associate the cherry tree with Japan. However, London benefits from a number of cherry trees. In Winterbrook Road in Herne Hill, a single species of cherry has been planted, which dramatically transforms the street with blossom before any other trees are out in leaf. As a result, it has become an annual community event.

As with the cherry blossoms in Washington DC, could the flowering of the cherries become a seasonal, cultural attraction for the Strand, where people gather for this natural phenomenon? It would be London's own Hanami and yet another reason for people to be drawn to the strand.

Alternative species for smaller, human scale trees that won't obstruct views to St. Mary Le Strand include:

- *Amelanchier lamarckii*
- *Cercis canadensis*
- *Magnolia*
- *Styrax japonicus*





Giving Identity to the Charms

Along the south facing sun-filled edge of the space, we have identified a number of moments that are placed within a strong landscape framework of high-quality paving.

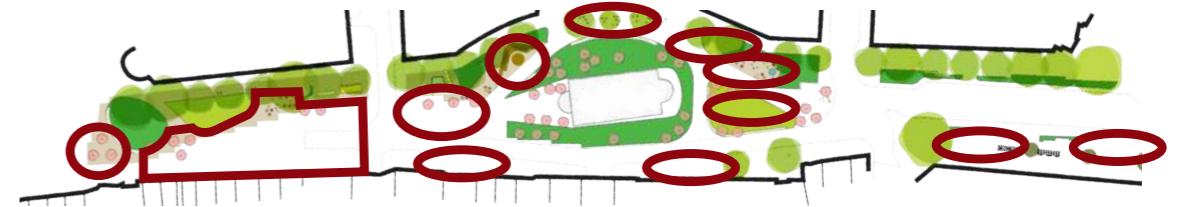
Each of these are spaces in their own right, whilst also coming together to create a rich, interesting place that respond to the user groups of the immediate area.

From east to west, the rooms include:

- **The Garden Room**-a space to be surrounded by nature
- **Lawn and Seating Edge**-a soft place to have lunch
- Collective Dining-Bringing people together over a meal
- **Knowledge Share**-opportunities for outdoor classrooms
- **Bush House Welcome Space**-a flexible area with moveable tables and chairs
- **Reading Space**-interesting and varied furniture enveloped with a beautiful garden
- **Social Lawn**-an open lawn area for gathering and socialising that could also be used for events

A beautiful and intimate garden space will create an outer sanctuary for St. Mary Le Strand church, enhancing the character and feel of the existing inner sanctuary courtyard to the west of the church.





Space for Experimentation and R&D

As a result of the engagement sessions, an emerging theme that emerged was that this space is differentiated from any other space in London through the activities that take place within the space. Rather than this important new piece of public realm being another space where anything and everything could happen--floating Yoda, street buskers, chalk artists--this needs to be a space that exemplifies the creative energy that is already taking place within the adjacent buildings.

It is envisioned that this could be a space where performances are rehearsed, not performed; where art is made, not displayed; where knowledge is shared not stored away. It is a maker space where the creative process is made visible. The performance is the act of making or creating.

The Architecture Association does this at Bedford Square, the Harvard Graduate School of Design does this on the footpath on Quincy Street, and recently the V&A commissioned the architect Achim Menges and his team to build a shade structure with robotics, where visitors could witness the structure being made. Inherently, the space also needs to be a place of exhibition and performance, as well as the usual seasonal events such as Christmas lights.





The main flexible open space sits to the west of the Somerset House entrance and is comparable in scale to the Piazza at Covent Garden. This location ensures that the servicing and deliveries to Somerset House are not interrupted by events.



Throughout the space there are numerous opportunities of varying scales where performances, installations and events could take place. Flexibility is a central design tenet of the concept, future proofing the space for emerging trends and nascent demands on the public space.



The largest open space is large enough that it could accommodate a pavilion for the London Festival of Architecture, for instance. Shown above is the 2013 Sui Fujimoto Serpentine Pavilion for scale.



The space is also large enough that a catwalk could be erected for London Fashion Week. Store Studios (180 Strand) has not participated in any of the engagement sessions to date.

Anticipated Desire Lines

The removal of the domination of the east to west vehicular traffic will open up the space for cross circulation and free movement.

The diagram opposite illustrates a careful examination of the desire lines across and through the space to key entrances and frontages adjacent to the public space and demonstrates how the design responds to those anticipated routes.

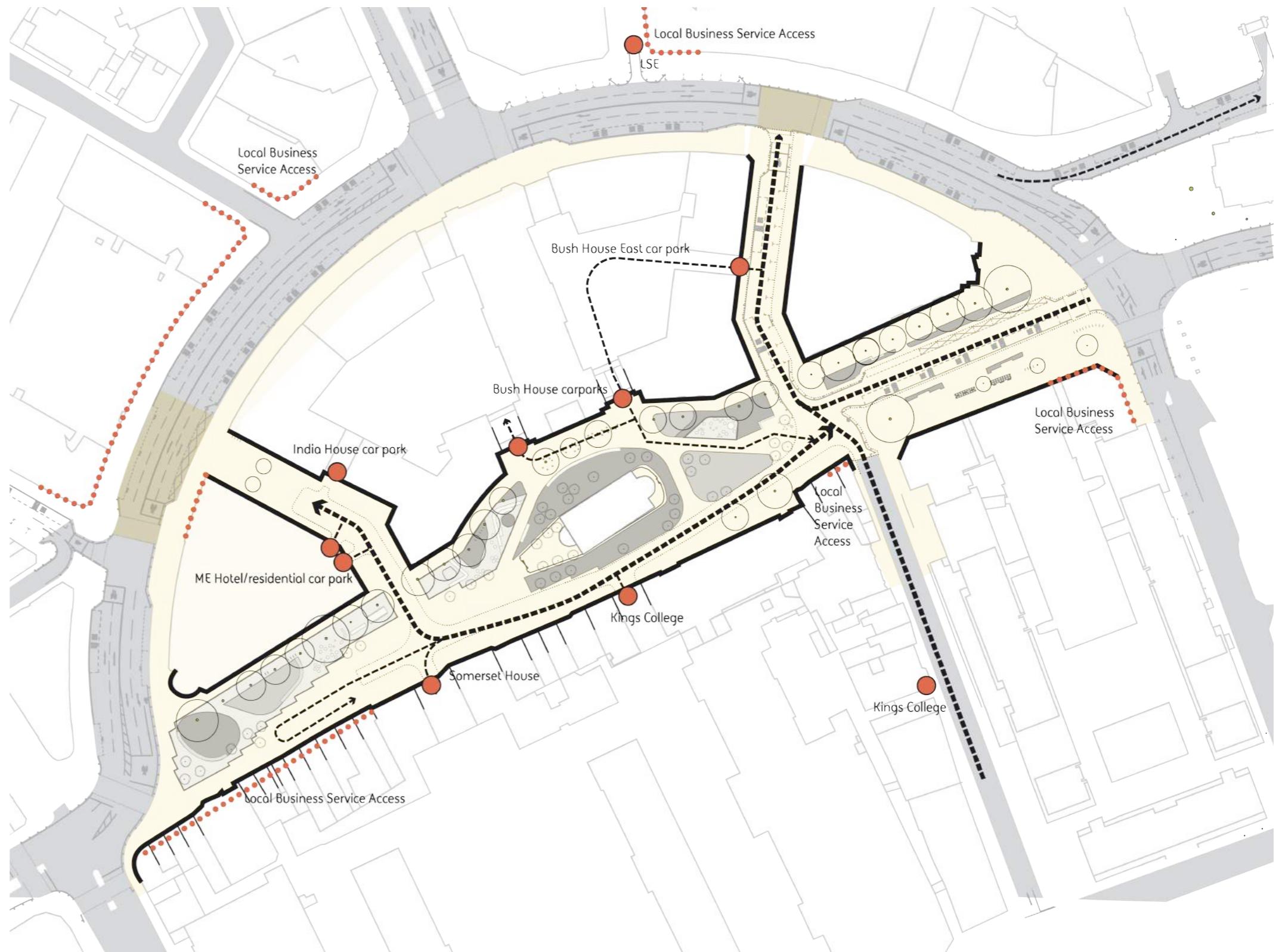
The Council should consider commissioning a mobility study to confirm this initial study that the design team has carried out. Space Syntax or a similar group would be best placed to carry out this study with a more calculated and scientific approach.



Safeguarding the Day-to-Day Operations

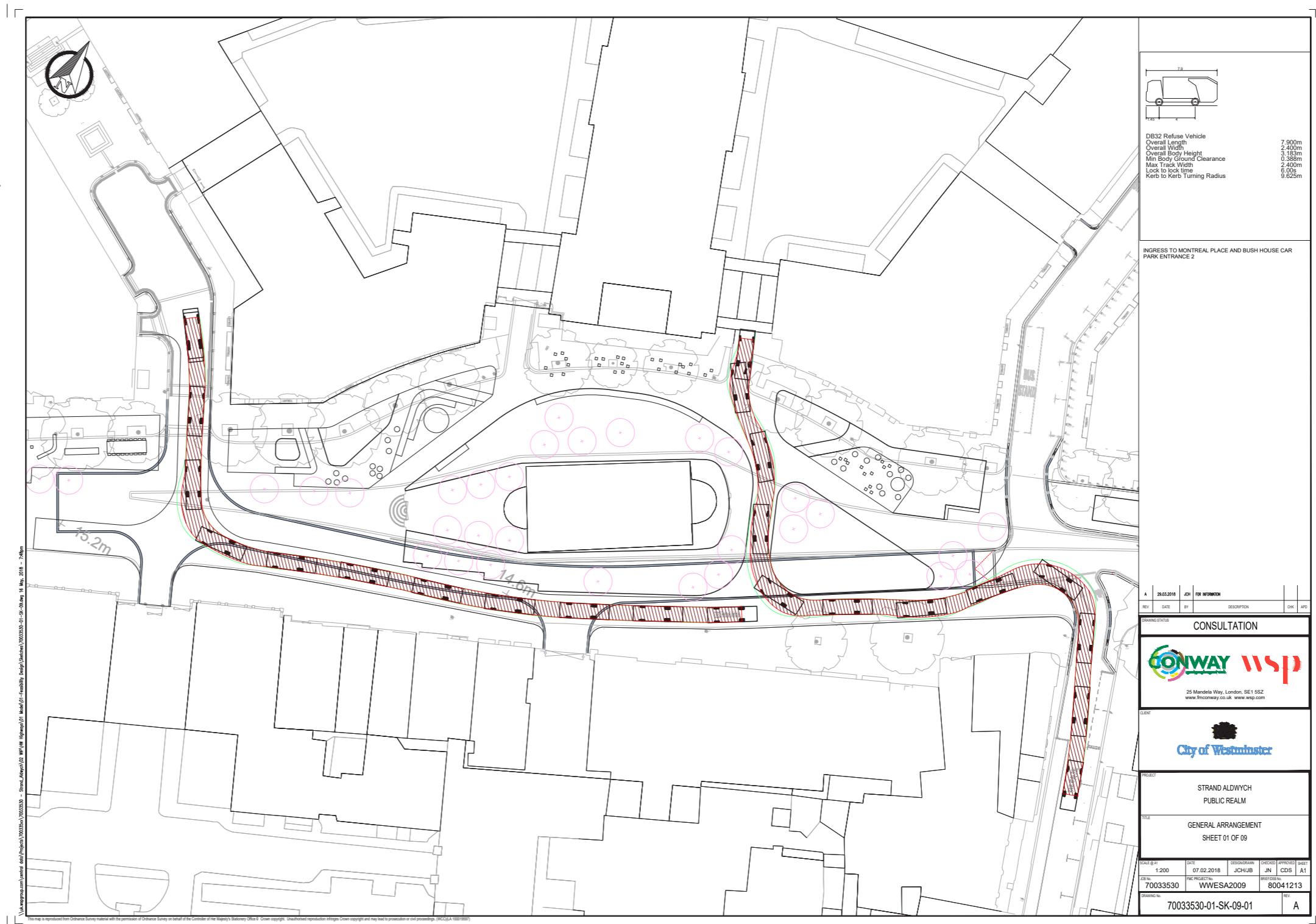
The preferred concept design ensures that all services, deliveries and operational movement can take place throughout the space, whilst creating adequately scaled public spaces that people can occupy and feel comfortable in.

The diagram opposite illustrates how the design responds to the servicing and delivery requirements.



Service Vehicle Tracking

Initial tracking studies from the team of civil engineers indicates that the current design can accommodate large delivery and servicing vehicles to Bush House and India Place. The access to Somerset House remains unchanged.





8.0 Wider ‘D’, The Aldwych Design Intention

Throughout this chapter we explore the wider site, The Aldwych itself and the connecting streets. The main design change for The Aldwych will be the reconfiguration of traffic, however the future condition of this area is fundamental to the success of the new piece of public realm at the Strand. The following pages assess the wider public spaces, pavements, side streets and pocket squares in which elements of design can be implemented.

Sections through proposed new layout of the Aldwych

The pages that follow illustrate the different typologies and ratios of pavement to carriageway within the proposed new layout for the Aldwych. A series of key sections through the site show the existing condition and opportunities.

This exercise allows us to assess what kind of design interventions may be suitable within different areas around the Aldwych.

The utilitarian functionality at the edge of the carriage way, such as bus stops, stands, taxi ranks, private parking and loading bays must be kept clear from obstruction.

Large, mature London plane trees line the pavements around the Aldwych, and these must be maintained and embraced as a signature feature of the site. The trees provide a grand, and elegant structure, so any added designs implemented must complement these rather than try to compete against them.



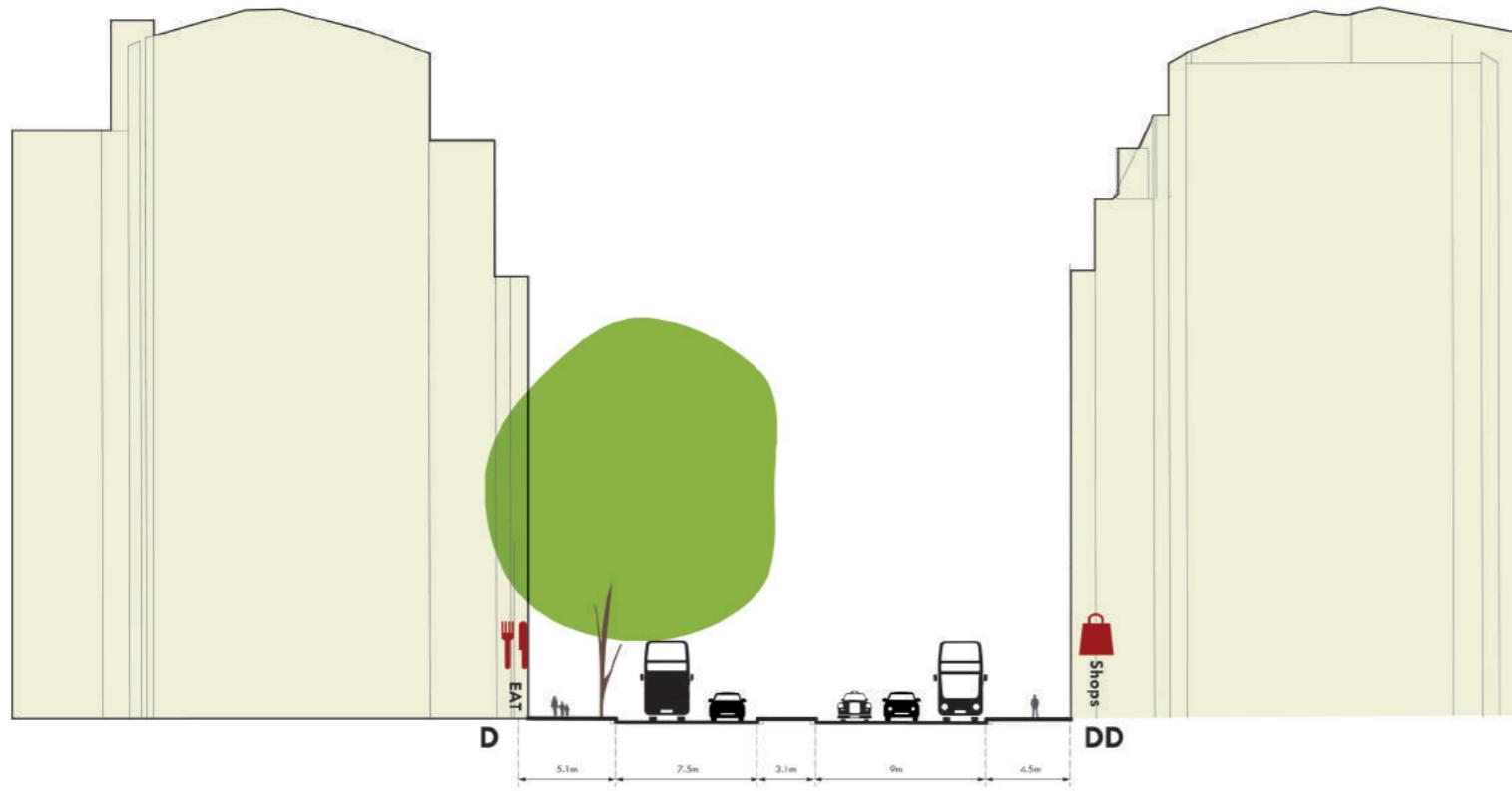
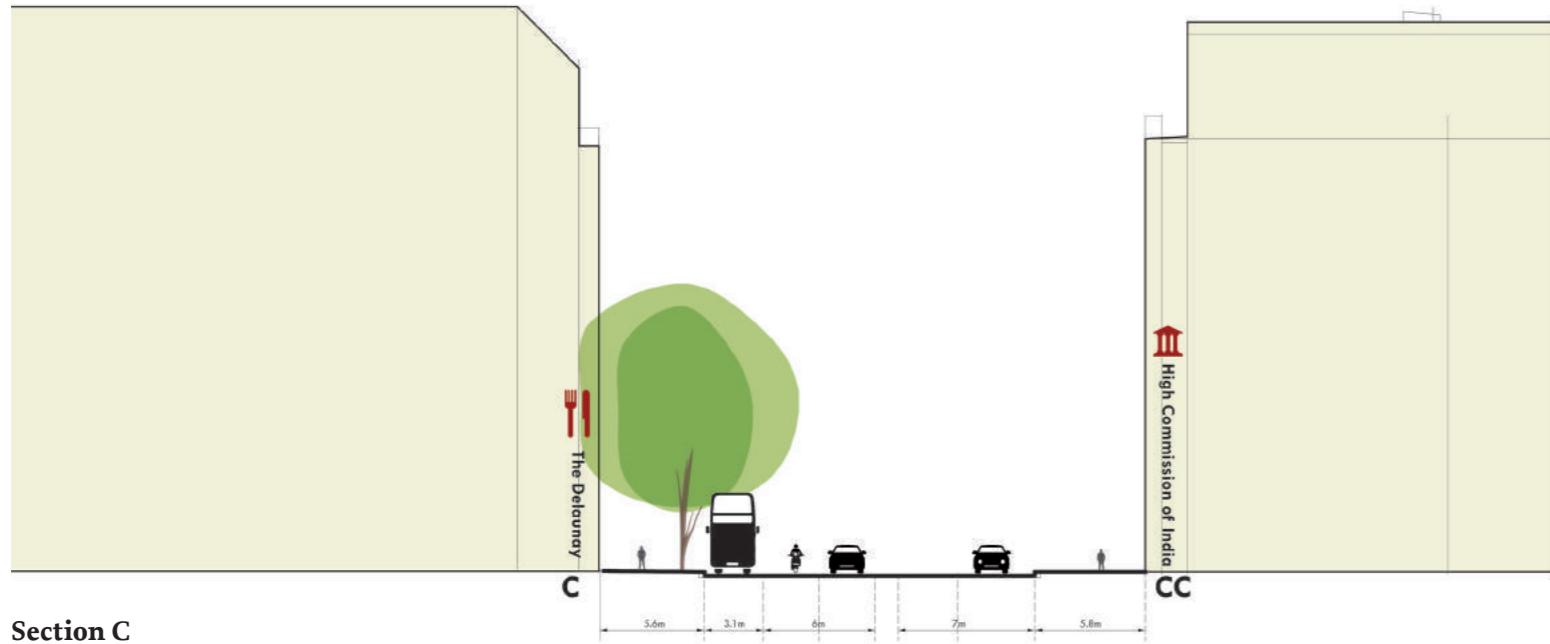


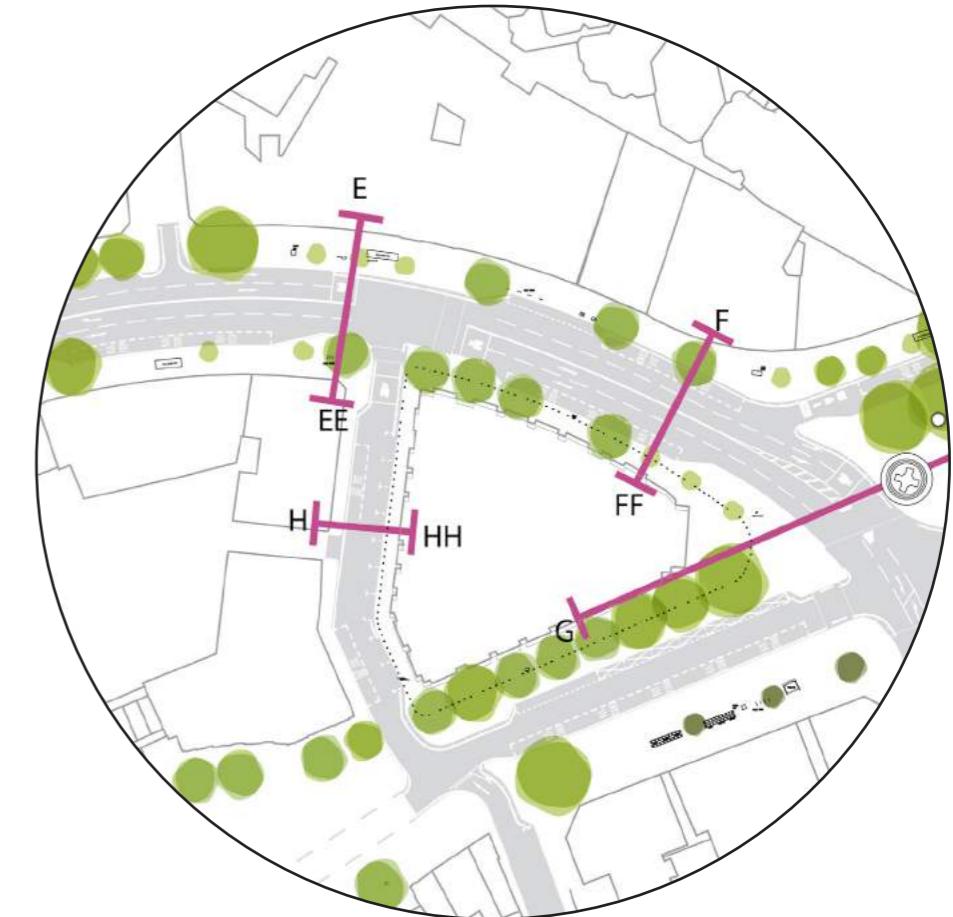
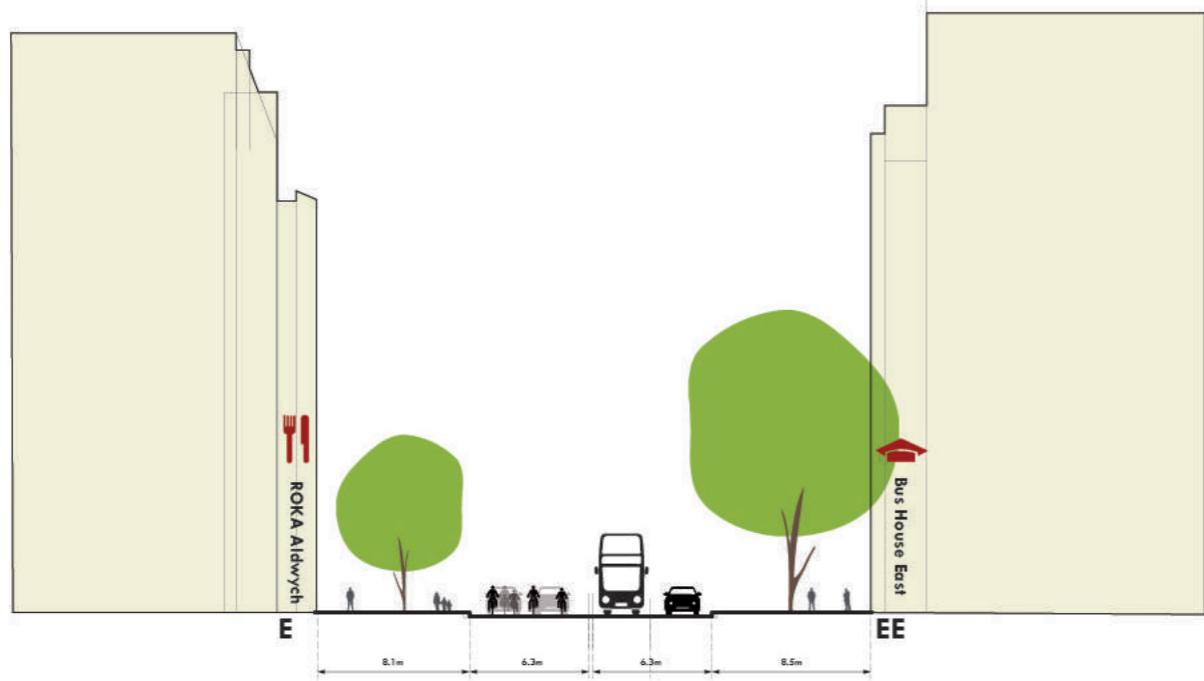
Section A



Section B

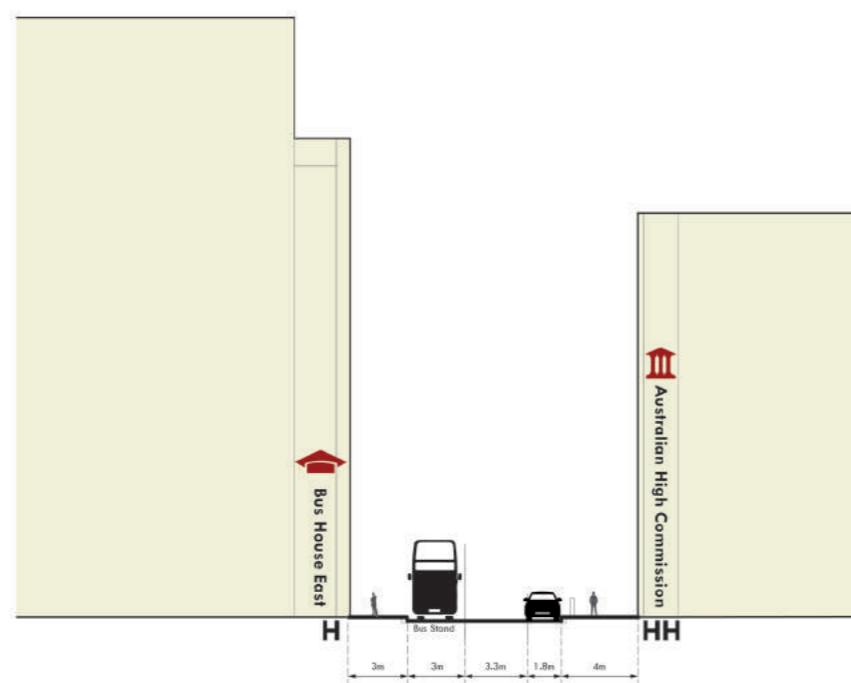








Section G



Section H



Design Steps

Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



Assess proposed highway layout and ensure the public realm strategy is working cohesively with the future layout in terms of crossings, bus waiting areas and anything else which may effect the location of additional design interventions.

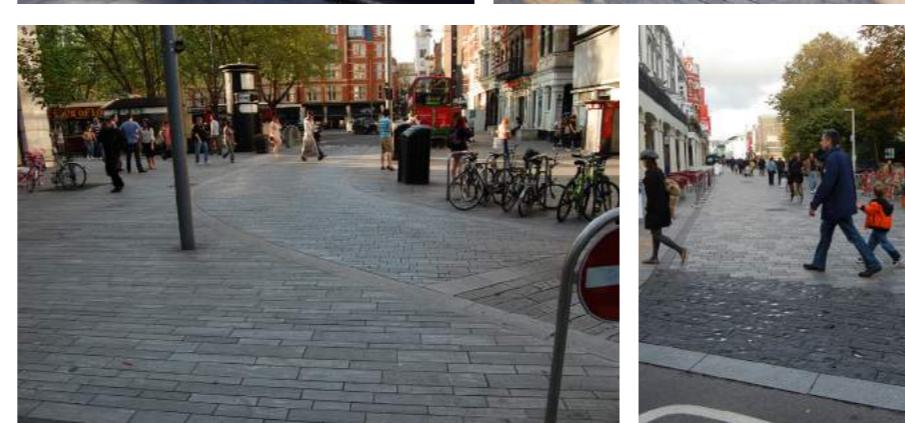
Enhance existing pedestrian circulation. This is about ensuring pedestrians have a high quality, legible and easy to navigate pavement. This can be achieved by removing clutter and introducing high quality materials that link the Aldwych to the Strand. Once the space is working functionally elements of surprise, and interest can be overlaid.

Increase legibility of crossings. Imperative to the success of the future design of the space are the location of pedestrian crossing points over the Aldwych. These must work in order to achieve the overall network of public realm the project aspires too, linking to the wider urban grain and beyond, enabling people to move across the area with ease.

Step 4



Introduce raised tables. The advantage of raised tables is that they create a more seamless public realm, in terms of legibility and materiality. They also give priority to the pedestrian, overcoming the need to navigate a level change or feel subservient to the car.

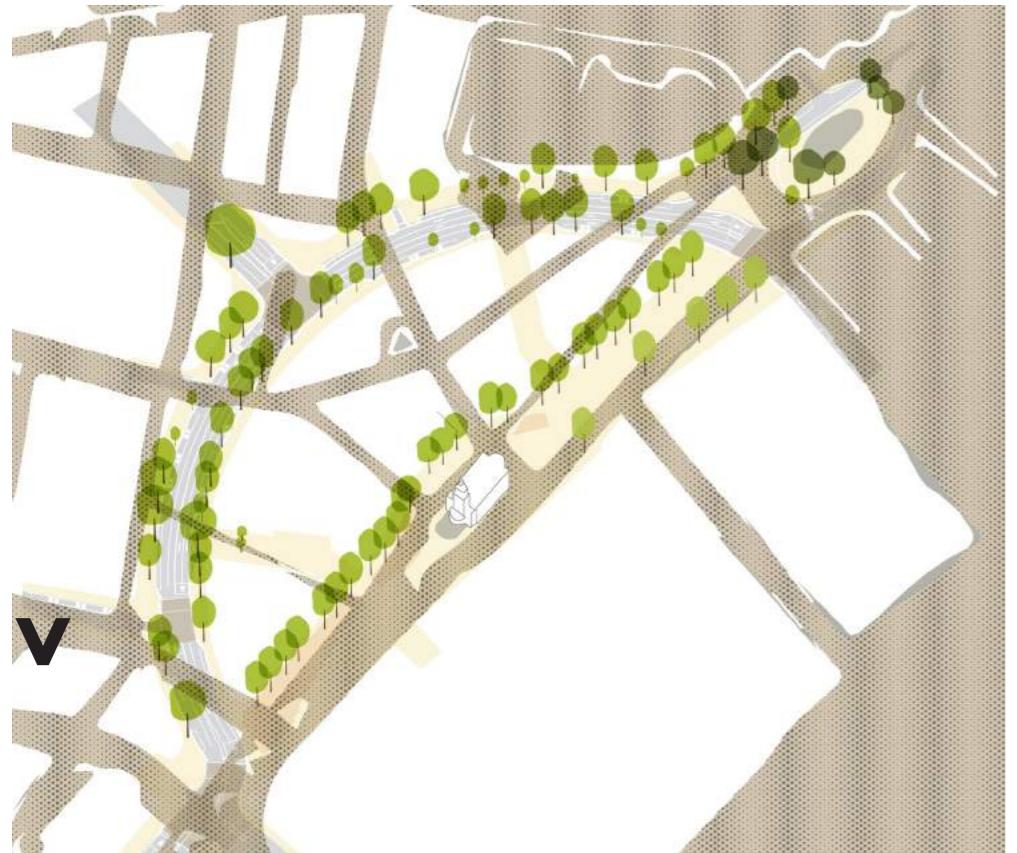


Step 5



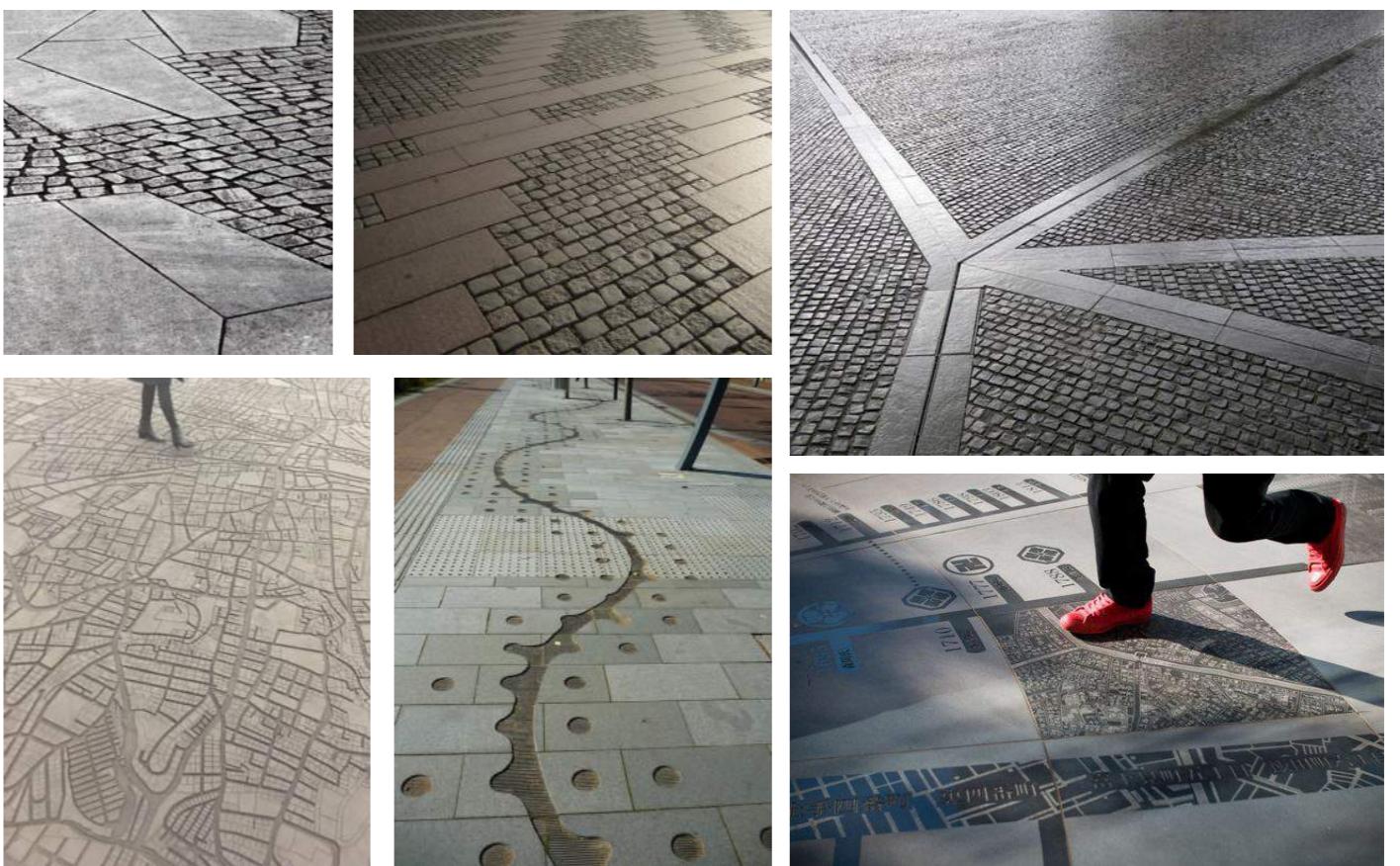
Celebrate the gateways into the site. It may not be necessary to make a large statement in the gateways at the entrances to the new public realm, however subtle interventions such as transitional materials and lighting could help to introduce the space as people arrive from other surrounding areas. These can also be described as thresholds.

Step 6



Acknowledge and articulate the history of the site. The richness of history in this part of London is largely unknown. The Aldwych gyratory is a relatively new piece of city compared to much of the rest of London and the finer grain streets that were removed to complete the Aldwych have been erased from the memory of the city. The complexity, scale and stories of the original street structure are very interesting, and through a change in paving, surfacing and historic narratives set within the public realm, the story of the site can be re-told.

The image above and opposite shows the pre-1900s urban grain in brown and black overlaid on the current Aldwych layout shown in white.



Holistic Public Realm

When all the layers of design are implemented the area will be transformed into a strong, and holistic public space. New crossings will enable stronger connections to the wider area, whilst enabling the public space to be easily accessible people in surrounding areas. Melbourne Place and India Place become important North/South corridors, linking the Strand to The Aldwych.





The Aldwych Design Interventions

Legend

- █ Theatre Gathering Area
- █ Bus Stop Waiting Area
- █ Potential Location for Street Furniture
- █ Pocket Square
- Gateway
- Alfresco Dining Area

The diagram to the left highlights various zones in which design interventions could happen. Functionally, there are some areas around the pavement which require as much free space as possible for gathering crowds, bus stops, taxi ranks and crossing points.

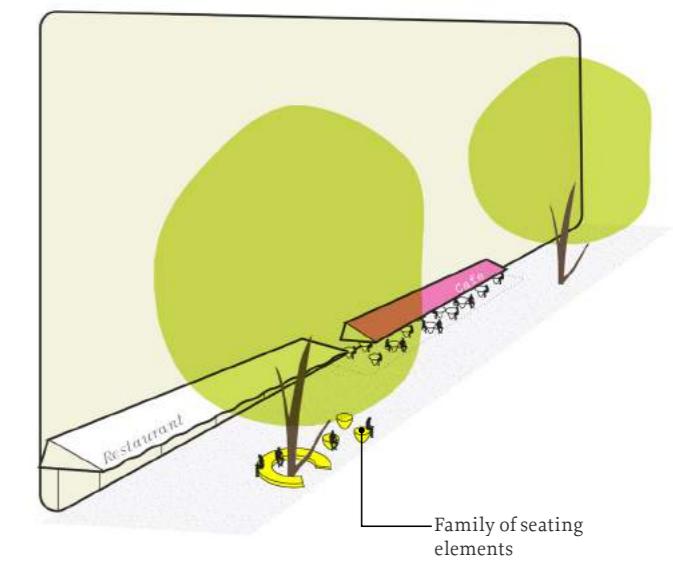
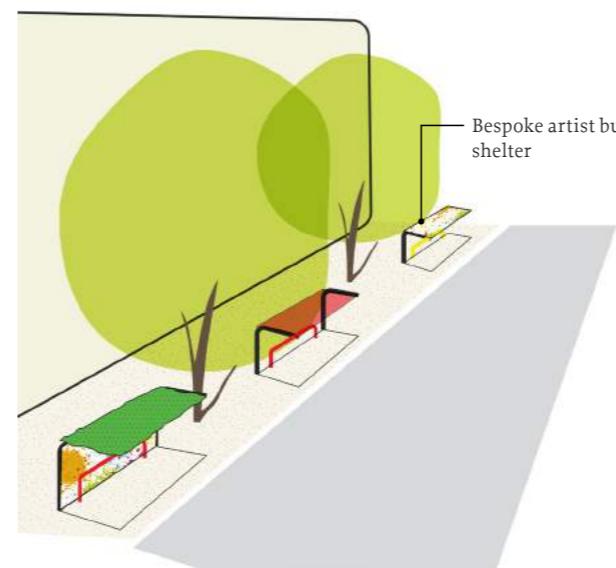
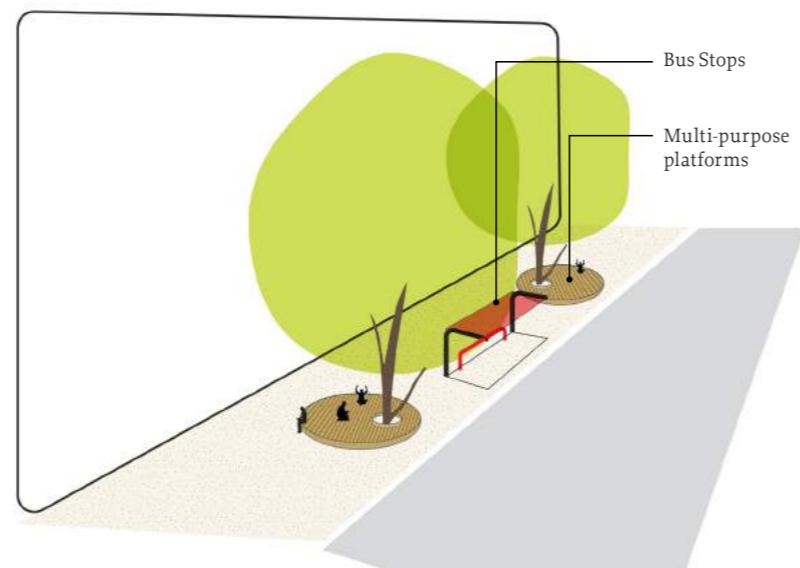
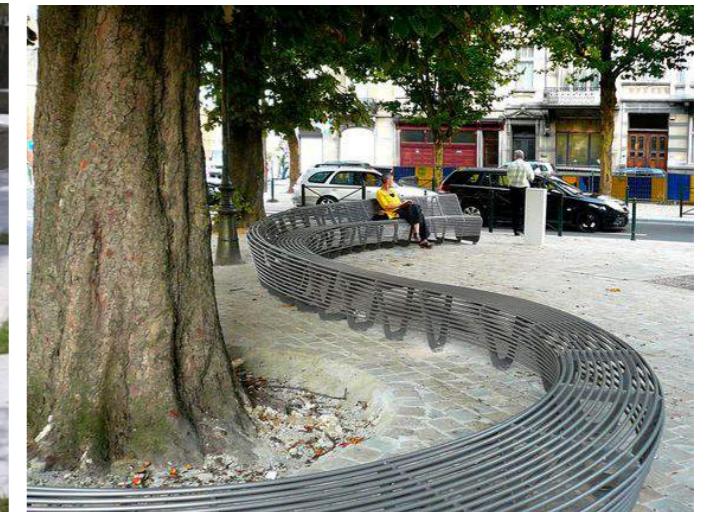
Pink areas highlight spaces which are most suitable for more permanent pieces of furniture or small structures. The rest of the pavement areas require minimal obstructions to ensure pedestrian movement is not hindered. Within these areas it is envisioned that materiality, lighting and the kerb locations will be the only design changes.

Design Interventions

These show pieces of furniture, which could be implemented within the pavement around The Aldwych. Drawing from the language of some of the pieces proposed within the Strand design, we envision this space will read as part of the new public realm.

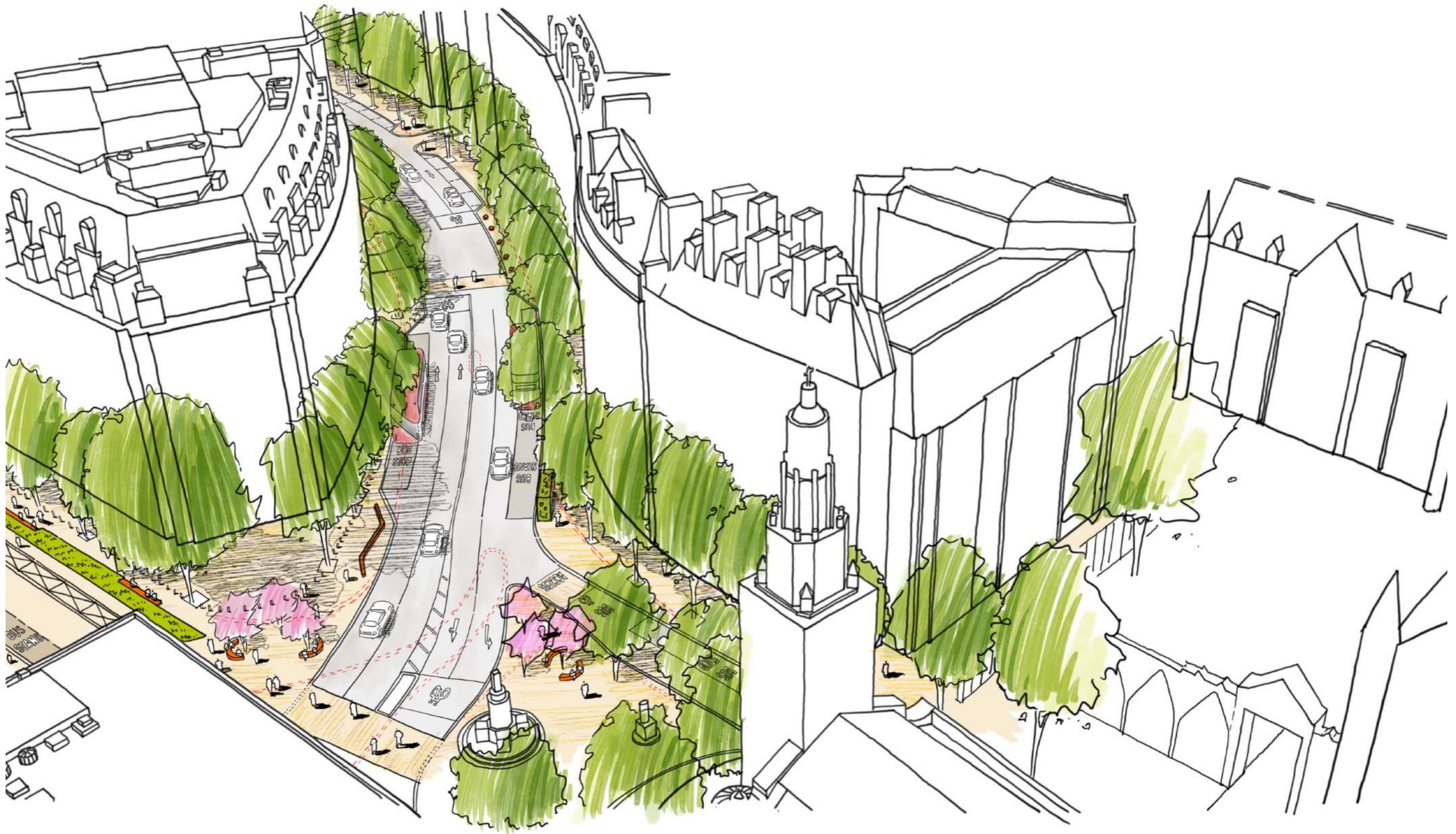
Existing London Plane trees marching around the Aldwyh create a fantastic green asset. It is envisioned that further planting is not suitable within this area, therefore in order to celebrate the trees, and allow people to enjoy them to their full potential we propose a series of small timber platforms, which will revolve around the trunks. These platforms can vary in size, could provide Wi-fi hubs, charging points.

Other ideas include having smaller pieces of funiture which tie in with some of the design intent within the Strand. These could form benches, wrapping between trees or seats in between bus stops.





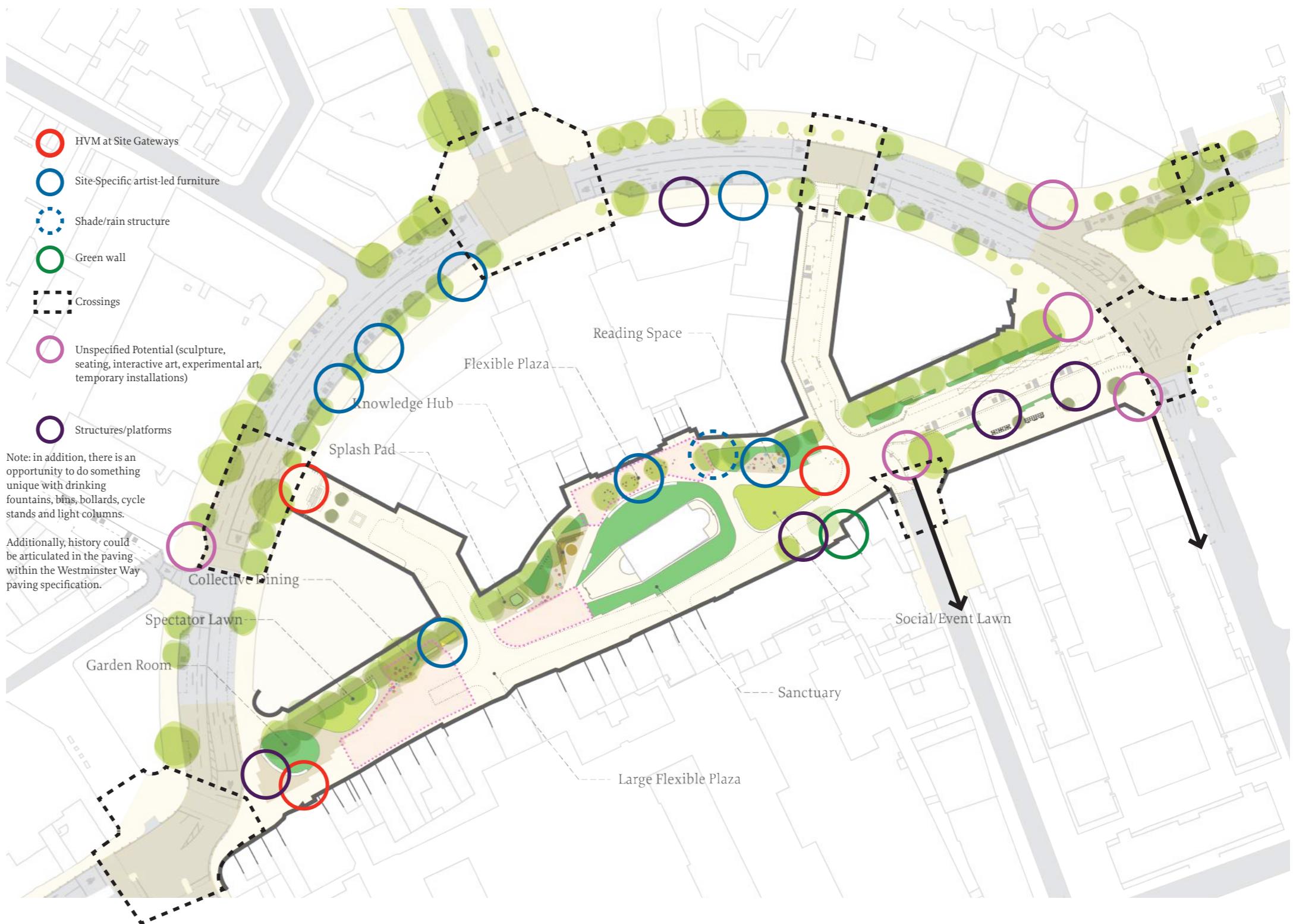
View of Aldwych looking east



View of Aldwych looking west over St. Clement Danes Church

Potential for Artist Involvement with physical interventions:

The diagram opposite identifies a number of opportunities for physical interventions by an artist or team of artists. It is important that an artistic ideas are rooted in the place, inspired by the history or responsive to the culture of the area.



Potential for Artist Involvement with Activation and Curation:

In addition to physical interventions, there are numerous opportunities for ephemeral installations to happen on a temporary basis. Temporary installations have a powerful draw because people know that the event will only last for a short period of time. This approach to the activation of public spaces in gaining momentum and the Strand is an ideal opportunity to reflect the artistic and temporal culture of the area.





9.0

Next steps: From RIBA Stage 2 to RIBA Stage 3

This document concludes the RIBA Stage 2 work on the project. There are a number of outstanding actions that LDA Design feel are important to address before progressing with the RIBA Stage 3 work.

This includes:

- Meet and discuss the vision with statutory Consultees such as Historic England and TFL.
- Engage with the local primary schools
- Meet with other key stakeholders on a one-one basis including Store Studios
- WCC to initiate discussions with the utility companies to explore the feasibility of the concept design with known utility corridors
- Meet with WCC tree officer for advise on working around the existing London Plane trees
- Consider involving an artist on the design team, engaging with the Stakeholders and Cultural Advisory Group to explore the most appropriate type of artist--established or emerging--and identify a scope and brief for the artist
- Public consultation based on the Stage 2 preferred concept design
- WCC to consider commissioning 1 no. high quality visualisation

