LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
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Leeds is among the top ten universities for research in the UK, and is internationally acknowledged as a centre of excellence in a wide range of academic and professional disciplines. To complement the academic achievements of the University, its students and its staff, the aim is to become a University with a reputation for outstanding performance on sustainability; a university that challenges the status quo, is renowned for its open, welcoming campus environment and continues to be a global centre for excellence in teaching, research and innovation.

The University of Leeds campus plays a major part in the life of many thousands of people. It has the potential to create vivid memories for students, space for relaxation and social space for meeting friends. The University of Leeds landscape presents significant opportunities to enhance the identity and experience of the University for its students, staff, users and visitors.

Being a sustainable University is at the heart of the University of Leeds and the campus landscape is a core part of this. Some of the key aims of the Landscape Development plan are to re-priorise the campus for pedestrians, be an exemplar of urban biodiversity and re-enforce the campus’ sense of place and thresholds within the wider public realm.

One of the key steps to unlocking the potential of the University is to redefine the quality of the landscape and public realm within the University estate; improving under-utilised spaces, reducing areas of car parking and roads and enriching these spaces and routes with developments, such as new University squares and courts, productive gardens, rain gardens and green infrastructure. A legible and coherent public realm strategy will help to link together and reveal the physical, cultural and lifestyle aspects of the University.

This strategy involves the promotion of sustainability as a key concept throughout the campus by greening, improved water management, promotion of wildlife habitats and by bringing wider sustainability elements into the public eye, including access, well being and community engagement.

An enhanced and extended public realm and sequence of landscape spaces across the estate will create a richer canvas for University life and promote enhanced learning possibilities.

The Landscape Development plan sets out the high level principles which should be followed for the next 15 years.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT
This document sets out the design principles which will ground future planning for the campus landscape at the University of Leeds. It also identifies some key potential prospects which will enhance the environment following these principles. The designs included here are outline proposals, with the aim to stimulate discussion and the development of ideas.
The design of the Landscape Development plan has been influenced by a number of overarching principles and requirements from the University that set the tone for the character, quality and function of the proposed public realm.

**KEY DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES**

The key principles of the Landscape Development plan are to create...

...an inspirational campus environment for research, learning and innovation
Leeds is one of the top UK universities for research and impact power, over 80% of research at Leeds has a top quality rating of either “world leading” or “internationally excellent”. It is important for our campus landscape to be an inspiring place which encourages innovation,ive research, learning and discovery.

...a cohesive campus environment
The Landscape Development plan should ensure that the visitor experience, from the minute people arrive, is of a recognisable, cohesive environment, through the creation of distinctive, simple but innovative interventions.

...revitalised public spaces
Create a revitalised series of transitional and static spaces which reflect the dynamic nature of the University environment as a global centre for excellence in teaching, research and innovation. Invigorated, high-quality public spaces should form a network of hubs across the campus which encourage a diversity of activity.

...high quality settings
Set the precedent for the creation of a high quality series of public open spaces and streetscapes, through the use of carefully considered materials, street furniture and planting.

...a sustainable campus
The campus landscape will be underpinned by and promote our values of sustainability. It will be a living lab for creating sustainable solutions.

...space for people to relax and socialise
Any new or redeveloped public realm should integrate and connect with the existing fabric of the campus so to attract and encourage students, staff and visitors into the spaces to socialise, make the most of university facilities and enjoy campus life.

...legible, safe and accessible public spaces
Create high-quality gateways and arrival points for people with a safe comfortable route, improving the physical connectivity to create a more pedestrian-orientated environment.

...an ecologically diverse campus
The Landscape Development plan should allow the University to pursue its ambitions to become an exemplar of urban biodiversity, creating a biodiverse environment and provide ecological corridors within the city.

...sensitively integrated interventions
A coordinated range of materials and planting palettes should compliment the existing campus infrastructure. Where necessary, a hierarchy of materials should be used to compliment the use of the spaces appropriately.

...robust and durable landscapes
The new public realm needs to withstand intensive use over time. It must be robust and maintainable, retaining a high quality environment for the future and in a cost effective manner.

We would welcome your views and feedback on the proposals made in this publication.

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PROPOSED PROJECTS

1 CHANCELLORS COURT, THE COOLING POND and DISCOVERY WAY
2 ST GEORGES FIELD and UNIVERSITY ROAD
3 UNIVERSITY MAIN ENTRANCE
4 HILLARY PLACE GATEWAY
5 UNION EAST SIDE
6 GARSTANG COURT
7 EDWARD BOYLE STEPS and GARDENS
8 GARDENS AND SMALL SPACE IMPROVEMENTS
CHANCELLORS COURT
Chancellors Court is bordered by the Roger Stevens building, Garstang and the School of Earth and Environment. This space should become the flagship external space for the University, providing a shining example of biodiversity, sustainability and social interaction that other areas, both within the campus and throughout the region, can follow. Activities should be introduced to allow people to comfortably use the space throughout the year, whilst also providing habitat for wildlife and sustainable drainage solutions.

THE COOLING POND
The pond should be improved in terms of functionality and aesthetics, without loss of respect for the Brutalist nature of the surrounding architecture. Creating access to the water – on top or on the edge, will be important in creating a usable space in this area. Biodiversity and ecological balance can be achieved through introducing submerged aquatic planting in submerged trays. Careful selection and consideration of the planting patterns, species balance and growing considerations will allow the creation of a balanced local ecosystem that provides local environmental benefit and visual appeal. The surrounding paths and access should be improved in order to reinforce the connection between Willow Terrace Road and Chancellors Court.

1 CHANCELLORS COURT, THE COOLING POND and DISCOVERY WAY
DISCOVERY WAY – HEART OF CAMPUS
This space should become the key ‘ceremonial avenue’ and the principle pedestrian route into the campus. This avenue will create a positive first impression and a clearly legible route for visitors. Although primarily a transient space, opportunity should be provided for activity – in the form of modules which offer a range of spaces for relaxing and socialising. The avenue of trees along the route will define its character. The avenue should transition smoothly into Chancellors Court, to the west. Features in this area should complement the built architectural form, in order to give this area of the campus a solid identity.

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DISCOVERY WAY — WOODHOUSE LANE ENTRANCE
Discovery Way, the new pedestrian entrance into the University of Leeds provides an easy, accessible route through to Chancellors Court in the heart of campus.

This new entrance way will be created during late summer 2018, following the completion of Nexus, the high profile gateway to research and innovation at the University.

The entrance will comprise of a piazza area, a major new artwork, high quality landscaping, lighting and street furniture. The fully accessible route will be tree lined – and with a future phase leading to Chancellors Court, through a new accessible ramp and demolition of the pyramid steps to EC Stoner.
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ST GEORGE’S FIELD and UNIVERSITY ROAD

ST GEORGE’S FIELD

St George’s Field is a much-loved green space that lies in the north of the University of Leeds Campus. Surrounded by University buildings, it represents an opportunity for users to escape, engage with nature, and reflect.

It has inherited its distinctive atmosphere from its former use as the burial ground of the Leeds General Cemetery Company. Buildings and monuments survive, as do the remains of more than 90,000 people buried within the walls. Extensive and detailed records of these burials were transferred to the University at the time it took ownership of the Field, and our intention is to link these records to the Field once more, allowing visitors to understand better the heritage of the site.

The proposals are also intended to improve access more generally, allowing less able visitors to experience the qualities of St George’s Field, and to broaden its use without destroying the qualities for which it is valued. St George’s Field is also a valuable green space within Leeds, and this project seeks to strengthen the existing biodiversity by providing a haven on the edge of the urban core of Leeds, while improving the richness of the site and the opportunity for visitors to engage with nature.

As well as a space for nature, St George’s Field provides a fantastic space for reflection and contemplations. This will be preserved and enhanced through any future proposals.
UNIVERSITY ROAD
As part of the rationalisation of vehicular routes, both through and into campus, University Road is identified as a key road that should be pedestrianised, with vehicular access only. It is intended to continue the pedestrianisation in sympathy with the area already completed outside the Great Hall, with a new square created adjacent to the recently refurbished ‘Arts Building’, through the demolition of the old Geography East building. The creation of the square will also allow a major new accessible entrance into St George’s Field.

ST GEORGE’S FIELD
and UNIVERSITY ROAD

UNIVERSITY ROAD

AERIAL VIEW SHOWING PROXIMITY OF UNIVERSITY ROAD WITH ST GEORGE’S FIELD

FEATURE LIGHTING

WIDE PEDESTRIAN ROUTE

PLANNING TO COMPLEMENT THE RED BRICK BUILDINGS

LIVING WALLS

LIVING WALLS (VERTICAL GARDENS)
Living walls are extensively planted with a variety of species and should be introduced to large feature façades to provide a soft face to the architecture.

SCREENING (GREEN FACADES)
Wire mesh and trellis should be used to soften building façades. The design should be such as to not provide a climbing hazard.

MAINTENANCE
Green walls and areas of vertical planting should be designed to ensure that they are easily maintained.

POSITIONING
Green walls should be an asset to the campus and should be positioned in prominent positions for visitors to enjoy.

Green walls or vertical planting will soften the built environment, add an additional layer of visual interest as well as reducing the urban heat island effect. Additionally they are able to offer improved energy efficiency for buildings in winter months.

Living Lab Programme
Addition of these urban greening and biodiversity features on campus maximises the opportunities for learning, engagement and research particularly in relation to the ‘Living Lab’. Living Lab projects present an opportunity to explore, analyse and evaluate innovations and technologies in real life case studies such as benefits and opportunities presented by urban green roofs and living walls, and thereby gain mutual benefits including opportunities for teaching and learning, public engagement with research and development of more sustainable solutions to real life problems. In this sense, users and participants of Living Lab projects, become co-creators and involved stakeholders rather than ‘observed’ subjects. This approach then, allows for technical and also behavioural, socio-economic and cultural assessments of technologies, such as those associated with urban biodiversity and greening.
The Parkinson building is an icon of the University of Leeds, acting as a form of way-finding totem at the highest point on both the campus and in the city. The crisp white Portland stone face of the Parkinson Building and the imposing steps leading up to the portico entrance provides an impressive principle entrance to the campus.

Currently this gateway into the University is undermined by a combination of congestion and inappropriate street furniture, including a rather utilitarian security hut at the barrier entrance. The security hut provides the first point of contact for many visitors to the campus and sits in stark contrast to the grandeur of the Parkinson Building. The presence of a ‘meet and greet’ facility at the entrance is important in assisting wayfinding, however the current infrastructure undermines the overall experience.

The use of the main entrance by servicing vehicles further impacts on the visitor experience, with large vehicles crossing a busy pedestrian access into the campus and disrupting the flow into and out of the campus.
The design will see the creation of a plaza space in front of the University that will be distinctly different in material and design from the traffic dominated Woodhouse Lane. The space will give priority to pedestrians and will provide wide ‘safe spaces’ around a new shared surface style treatment. Traffic movement will be modified, with alterations in the taxi stand and vehicle access arrangements, to provide more usable pedestrian space. A series of seats and benches with trees set in a soft landscaped area will be placed in the centre of the redesigned space to facilitate further the ‘people watching’ activities that currently occur on the grassed roundabout. Traffic control / access measures will be simplified and automated to reduce street clutter.
The pedestrianisation of Hillary Place would dramatically change one of the most popular routes through campus, improving the student/visitor experience, and raising the profile of the University to the public. Currently, the threshold to Woodhouse Lane is very poor, and presents a low-quality face to the street and the centre of Leeds.

The Physics Deck is currently home to the School of Physics and Astronomy. The School moves during 2020 to the new Sir William Henry Bragg Building (behind the Old Mining Building and adjacent to Chemistry); this presents an opportunity to demolish the Physics Deck and allow for a major new development within an important gateway entrance area.

Hillary Place Gateway will be de-cluttered and will become a recognisable route into the campus with a signature backdrop of Trinity St David’s Church.
UNION EAST SIDE

UNION PLAZA (BESIDE THE STUDENT UNION)
Currently, the area is primarily a busy pedestrian route with a small gathering area, which provides spill-out space for the Student Union. The array of materials and position of bins in this area gives the impression of a back route reinforced by the narrow bridge over the garbage lorry access way.

This area should become a leafy spill-out space for the students union, with a structural deck of concrete and timber, mature trees, a variety of seating and entertainment options. The character should be vibrant and colourful to uplift the space, with refuse points and service access below screened from view. The structural deck will bridge over the service access route thereby screening out a visually poor area and the same time gaining much needed space in this highly used area.
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Garstang Court is currently used as a service and parking yard, enveloped by a number of major listed buildings housing the School of Geography and the Faculty of Biological Sciences (including the new Astbury Centre). The setting of the buildings can be enhanced immeasurably through the transformation of the yard into a green oasis, allowing the area to be given over to staff and students for amenity purposes.

Garstang Court will be a local, intimate open space that provides sheltered seating, soft-shade tolerant planting and gathering spaces for the students and staff of the surrounding buildings.

The Astbury Centre hosts a 950MHz nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer and two 300kv electron microscopes; these are amongst the most powerful devices of their kind globally, creating the capability of world-leading Research. A new reception area for this major facility will be enhanced by a carefully designed landscaped area externally leading directly into the new courtyard.
The location of the site, on the axis of primary pedestrian routes through the campus, makes it an important strategic space for pedestrian legibility and movement.

The distinctive stepped access, forming part of the Grade II library listing, also provides access across the site’s steep topography down to the School of Music and School of English, as well as providing informal social breakout space. The landscape proposals will define the edge of the square, creating a definite edge to the gardens on the eastern and northern boundaries. The proposals will also provide a variety of seating and gathering areas and types to create social spaces for people to gather and dwell within the gardens. The University places ecology and biodiversity at the core of regeneration works throughout the campus.

**ECOLOGY & BIODIVERSITY**

- **1 - Proposed refurbished lawn**
  - Formal amenity lawn space, provision for informal group gathering

- **2 - Proposed wildflower meadow planting**
  - Species rich wildflower planting to enhance biodiversity

- **3 - Proposed species rich herbaceous planting**
  - Bold swathes of planting compliment the built for of the library

- **4 - Proposed hedge & tree planting**
  - 1.5m beech hedge and proposed tree planting provides a defined edge to the space, screening the backs of residential

- **5 - Proposed feature tree**
  - Distinct, individual specimen tree. Provides visual marker on pedestrian approaches from Hillary Place and University Road.

- **6 - Proposed planting to embankment**
  - Bold swathes of planting compliment the built for of the library

- **7 - Refurbished steps with illuminated handrail**
  - Existing shrub planting replaced with species rich planting mix

- **8 - Proposed outdoor cafe seating area**
  - Designated outdoor space for adjacent cafe. Activates the edge of the square

- **9 - Proposed social seating**
  - Improved pedestrian link. Space for informal social gathering and spill out from Library

- **10 - Pedestrian dominated shared space**
  - Proposed seating arrangements to encourage social gathering and group interaction

- **11 - Proposed smoking shelter**
  - Pedestrian paved surface to slow service vehicles and create a pedestrian led environment

- **12 - Proposed sculptural seating clusters to top of steps**
  - Proposed seating clusters to top of steps to discourage skating whilst providing social seating opportunities

**SITE DERIVATION & PROPOSAL OPTIONS**

- **Plan View of Proposed Development**
- **Current View Showing Steps Up to the Gardens**
- **Wildflower Planting to Soften the Stairway**

**SUSTAINABILITY GARDEN**

- The Sustainability Garden - the space at the top of the stairs may be considered for this.

**MATHS LIBRARY EDWARD BOYLE SCIENCES SOCIAL SCIENCES**
EDWARD BOYLE STEPS and GARDENS

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The distinctive stepped access, forming part of the Grade II library listing, also provides access across the site’s steep topography down to the School of Music and School of English, as well as providing informal social breakout space. The landscape proposals will define the edge of the square, creating a definite edge to the gardens on the eastern and northern boundaries. The proposals will also provide a variety of seating and gathering areas and types to create social spaces for people to gather and dwell within the gardens. The University places ecology and biodiversity at the core of regeneration works throughout the campus.

7 - Proposed steps with illuminated handrail
• Existing shrub planting replaced with species rich planting mix
• Distinct, individual specimen tree. Provides visual marker on pedestrian approaches from Hillary Place and University Road.

8 - Proposed outdoor cafe seating area
• Proposed seating arrangements to encourage social gathering and group interaction

9 - Proposed smoking shelter
• Bepoke smoking shelter

10 - Pedestrian dominated shared space
• Pedestrian paved surface to slow service vehicles and create a pedestrian led environment

11 - Proposed sculptural seating clusters to discourage skating whilst providing social seating opportunities

12 - Proposed hedge & tree planting
• 1.5m beech hedge and proposed tree planting provides a defined edge to the space, screening the backs of residential properties

13 - Proposed species rich herbaceous planting
• Species rich wildflower planting to enhance biodiversity

14 - Proposed wildflower meadow planting
• Bold swathes of planting compliment the built for of the library

15 - Proposed refurbished lawn
• Formal amenity lawn space, provision for informal group gathering
• Designated outdoor space for adjacent cafe. Activates the edge of the square

16 - Existing view of Chancellors Court
• Proposed planting to embankment

17 - Refurbished steps with illuminated handrail
• 1.5m beech hedge and proposed tree planting provides a defined edge to the space, screening the backs of residential properties

18 - Proposed planting to embankment
• Distinct, individual specimen tree. Provides visual marker on pedestrian approaches from Hillary Place and University Road.

19 - Proposed hedge & tree planting
• Bold swathes of planting compliment the built for of the library

20 - Proposed wildflower meadow planting
• Bold swathes of planting compliment the built for of the library

21 - Proposed refurbished lawn
• Formal amenity lawn space, provision for informal group gathering
• Designated outdoor space for adjacent cafe. Activates the edge of the square

22 - Proposed outdoor cafe seating area
• Proposed seating arrangements to encourage social gathering and group interaction

23 - Proposed smoking shelter
• Bepoke smoking shelter

24 - Proposed steps with illuminated handrail
• Existing shrub planting replaced with species rich planting mix
• Distinct, individual specimen tree. Provides visual marker on pedestrian approaches from Hillary Place and University Road.

The distinctive stepped access, forming part of the Grade II library listing, also provides access across the site’s steep topography down to the School of Music and School of English, as well as providing informal social breakout space. The landscape proposals will define the edge of the square, creating a definite edge to the gardens on the eastern and northern boundaries. The proposals will also provide a variety of seating and gathering areas and types to create social spaces for people to gather and dwell within the gardens. The University places ecology and biodiversity at the core of regeneration works throughout the campus.

The upgraded material treatment of the re-furbished steps will meet the ambitions of the masterplan through the following;

- Key Strategies
  - Enhance Ecology & Biodiversity
  - Implement additional habitat
  - Increase green infrastructure such as trees, shrubs and green space

The introduction of wild-flower / meadow planting will increase biodiversity

Timber deck will also soften the environment, with furnishings palette of the university, with additional lighting. The underside of the handrails will be lit to match the single run along the middle of the centralised steps. Handrails will be simplified and be comprised of a single run along the middle of the centralised steps. Low level lighting on the steps themselves.

Due to the level change in this area, disabled access low level lighting on the steps themselves. The upgraded material treatment of the re-furbished steps may be considered for this.

Pending a decision regarding the location of the Sustainability Garden - the space at the top of the steps may be considered for this.

The lawn which currently exists alongside the route remains an issue, however, the disabled access low level lighting on the steps themselves. The upgraded material treatment of the re-furbished steps may be considered for this.

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The University masterplan places ecology and biodiversity at the core of regeneration works throughout the campus, makes it an important strategic space for pedestrian legibility and movement.
Many of the existing small spaces in front of the old terraces and other ‘in-between’ spaces are currently surfaced with lawn grass. This requires regular mowing in the growing seasons. Many of these spaces are too small to use anything but a small hand mower, requiring a significant amount of labour to maintain and offering very little biodiversity or support for pollinators.

The arrangement of spaces, walls and pathways is to remain unchanged unless obvious reasons are evident on a case-by-case basis. Small alterations to the arrangement of water management should be introduced where possible, to allow the infiltration of run-off and roof water to irrigate and be retained within the garden spaces in the form of SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage System) facilities. This project entails reinstatement of some of the original architectural external features (hand rails, iron railings, repaired steps) along with feature lighting.

Substantial opportunity exists in many areas to introduce a species-rich planting regime that is suited to the specific solar characteristics of the space. In areas that gain considerable direct sun, wild flower mixes can be introduced. In areas with moderate sunlight a mix of habitat shrubs and grasses can be planted, and in areas with substantial shade a mix of woodland species can be planted. Planting for these smaller spaces should be taken from the appropriate planting palette, depending on the location and character of the area being considered.
GARDENS and SMALL SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

WILDFLOWER MIXES

YEAR-ROUND COLOUR

SEASONAL VARIETY

SPECIES-RICH PLANTING