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## Monksland Public Realm (Community Park)

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### Design and Planning Statement

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### Note:

This report should be read in conjunction with the BDP Drawings and other Part VIII documents.

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# 1. Design Statement

## 1.1 Introduction

BDP were appointed by Roscommon County Council in 2023 as an integrated multidisciplinary practice to lead and deliver the Monksland Park project.

The project involves the development of a new “heart/centre” for Monksland, Co. Roscommon for Roscommon County Council which includes the provision of a new public park within the initial phase, as well as the creation of a new pedestrian outdoor space for year-round events in the area.

To facilitate the re-generation of the area, a cutting-edge, multi-purpose community hub for creative, education and recreational purposes will be designed and delivered as part of a later phase.

The design and development of a new linear park connecting the community hub will create linkages with existing retail and hospitality areas and provide a green corridor in a community with very little existing green space facilitating a new shared space / “district centre approach” more attractive to residents, visitors and recreational users.

The first part of the project involves the design and delivery for the public park. The part 8 and the planning statement included in this report refers to the first phase public realm works only.

## 1.2 The site and context

The project is located in Monksland, in Roscommon County, Ireland. The part 8 application relates to the conversion of a brownfield site into a public park with amenities of approximately 7,275m<sup>2</sup>. The site boundary borders the Monksland business park to the south and east, Ceathru Na Gloch (residential street) to the north and an old quarry site to the west.



Figure 1.1 Site location



Figure 1.2 Existing site images

### 1.3 The scheme objectives

The objective of the project is to create recreational activities for the growing young population as well as the older community of Monksland. It is envisaged that the land surrounding this park would be developed as mixed-use/residential and the creation of a public park will serve the community and its surrounding areas.

The proposed developments of a Community Park in Monksland will include the following;

- A public amenity area with car parking.
- Shared surface and walking pathways.
- Play areas to include playground apparatus, micro skate park and multipurpose play areas.
- Outdoor performance area with tiered seating.
- Public lighting and park furniture to include shaded seating rest areas, picnic tables, seating, benches, cycle stands, signage and site boundary fencing.
- Soft and hard landscaping to include topsoiling, grass seeding along with shrub, hedge and tree planting.
- All other ancillary site works.



Figure 1.3 Landscape Masterplan

## 1.4 Specialist Consultant's reports

BDP have engaged specialist consultants to provide their advice and expertise on the public realm proposals for the Part VIII. The documents prepared by specialist consultants include the following:

- Archaeology Impact Assessment Report by IAC Archaeology
- Appropriate Assessment (AA) by BDP
- Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report (EIAR) by BDP

The Part VIII report of the respective consultants are not included in this document but are available within the Part VIII application.

BDP will review the mitigations measures and recommendations provided in these reports during the Detail Design Stage.

In addition to these reports, BDP have commissioned on behalf of RCCC, a specialist to undertake trial pits and laboratory testing to the existing ground and to provide geotechnical reports.

The results will enable us to understand the type of soil and if the ground contains contaminated materials. Following the results, BDP will review the design in line with standard practice and refine the design to suit.



BDP have also reviewed the existing below ground utilities, and currently no apparent constraints are identified.

## 2. Approach

### 2.1 Public Amenity Area and Car Parking

- **Entrances and car parking**

The scheme aspiration is to ensure that the park is well connected to serve to the community. For this reason, two entrances have been designed to create a link between the north and the south.

The main park entrance will be located to the south-east side. The desire is to create a welcoming entrance that encourage pedestrian and cycle connectivity into and through the park. This entrance will have new metal gate and fence and will benefit from signage and art features to create a welcoming entrance. Emergency and restricted vehicular access will be managed from the main southern entrance.

The north-east entrance will connect the residential development to the park. This is viewed as an informal access with a pedestrian gate.

In addition, a third entrance along the eastern boundary will create links to the business park.

It is envisaged that the access through this entrance will be maintained by a secure gate.

The elements related to the security aspect and access into the park will be detailed in the next stage, this will ensure that the proposal put forward is practically achievable and maintained.

For access by car, 6 new car parking spaces are provided directly adjacent to the west of the main entrance. Visitors will be able to access the park from the footpath and into the main entrance.



Figure 1.4 Precedents of park entrance signage and art features

- **Boundary treatment**

The eastern boundary of the park is separated from the business park by a new timber and wire fence with additional hedge planting. This will create a permanent park boundary that is both aesthetically pleasing and creates valuable hedgerow habitats that contributes to the biodiversity of the site.

The western boundary will have temporary chestnut pale fence that will be removed once the next phase of the project is completed.



Timber & Wire fence with Hedge



Chestnut Pale fence (Temporary)

## 2.2 Shared Surface and Walking pathways

The aim of creating a public park is to encourage walking and cycling. For this reason, different types of paths are proposed with varied width, materials and look to support different uses and functions.

The rationalisation of the path hierarchical system is as follows:

- **Main Path**

The main path will provide an arterial route to connect the residential development (Ceathru Na Gloch), to the main entrance of the park.

The path is strategically located in this position and forms a gentle arc that separates the amenity's areas from the parkland area.

This is a shared path that is 3 m wide and will be used by pedestrians and cyclists.

The path will have a gradient of 1:40 which is accessible for all types of users. Then there is the option to follow a secondary path or take the stairs.

There is approximately a 3.3-metre level change on the northern side of the path to meet the existing levels.

It's worth noting that the main path will be used for emergency and fire access but is restricted to other vehicles.

- **Secondary path**

A secondary, informal path of 1.2 m wide is proposed sitewide. The path has an organic form to compliment the park setting.

The secondary path creates a loop around the park to take the public on a quiet and recreational route.

In addition, the path connects the play and amenities areas together by providing a link to the main path.

- **Tertiary path**

Smaller path of 800 mm wide is proposed in localised areas.

The purpose of the smaller paths is to provide informal access routes such as a link to the biodiversity garden. Another informal path connects to the side gate leading into the business park.



Primary Paths



Informal Paths

## 2.3 Play areas and others.

Different types of recreational facilities and play areas are proposed to cater for users of all ages and abilities.

These areas encourage physical activities in a natural setting and promote wellbeing of the park users. The play areas are mainly located on the right of the main entrance and forms a trail of adventures from south to north with organised play equipment and informal play elements.

The recreational areas such as the skate park, flexible games area and tennis table are consolidated and forms a hub for recreational activities. These spaces branch out of the main path and are surrounded by planting and seating benches.

The following amenity and play spaces are provided:

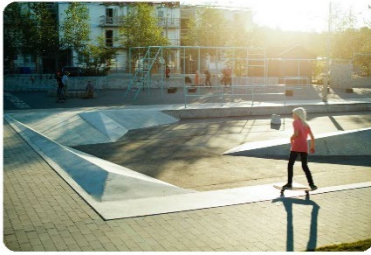
- **Micro skate park**

The skatepark will provide sports facilities and a fun community space that is for all users not just for skateboarders. This will be of a micro scale, an approximate area of 95 sqm and will cater for limited style of skateboarding.

This type of skatepark is intended to have 1 to 5 users at any one time.

Typical features will include a minimal number of small ramps, bowls or street obstacles to skate, dependent on design and requirements. The surface will mainly be made of concrete with some steel elements in it. The details and execution of this will require a specialist input which will be developed in the next stage.





Anna Petrus Park - Uppsala - Sweden



Anna Petrus Park - Uppsala - Sweden



Lordship Recreation Ground - Tottenham - London



Weaver Park - Liberties - Dublin

- **Flexible game areas**

The flexible games area is an open area with asphalt hard surface and line marking. It's not designed for a particular organised sport but rather it is intended to be a flexible space that can accommodate a range of activities and perhaps events. The games area will have a basketball hoop with fencing around it, in addition to concrete benches without back rests that could be used to sit facing the play area or facing the park.



Lower Pepys Park - Lewisham - London



Seattle Center Artists at Play - Seattle - USA

- **Table tennis**

Table tennis with asphalt hardstanding is proposed adjacent to the flexible game area. This will be used by the public of all ages and abilities.

- **Resting spot**

Resting spot with pergola at the north provide shade and a space to socialise and dwell. Picnic tables, chairs and benches will be proposed around this for a more relaxed space away from the main activity areas.



- **Formal play**

Formal play equipment is provided in the park to cater for toddlers and school children.

The variety of play elements proposed provide opportunities to create different types of play embedded into the natural environment.

The play equipment encourages children to jump, climb, swing, balance and see saw.

The play equipment has been carefully selected to ensure the maximum play value is provided within the space and to maintain children's interest.

For example, the nest swing facilitates inclusive play and is popular with children of all ages.

The hut combination is composed of platform huts, slide, swing, and a bridge. This offers plenty of space for role-playing, but also encourages children to play and hide.

The balance beam is for children to practice their physical abilities and promotes body awareness and sense of balance, especially for smaller children.

The climbing stack attracts attention from a distance. It has different levels and can accommodate many children playing.

- **Informal and nature play elements.**

Complimentary to the play equipment, some natural elements such as teepee and reclaimed timber logs.

Stepping logs are placed strategically around the park to offer further play benefits and encourage kids to explore and get creative with play.



1 Balance Beam - All Children



2 Branch Hut - Young Children



3 Climbing Stack - Older Children



4 Hut Combination - Older Children



5 Tree Stumps & Logs - All Children



6 Nest Swing - Accessible Play

## 2.4 Amphitheatre

To the north of the park, there is a proposal to use the level changes to create tiered seating which connects to the secondary park entrance. The seating will be facing an outdoor performance space similar to an amphitheatre which will support flexible use for the community and park users. The steps and stage will have concrete finish which is a neutral and durable material that can support different functions and activities.

## 2.5 Hard surfacing

The hard surfacing materials have been chosen to reflect the type of activity and usage.

Asphalt surface is proposed to the main path for durability and longevity, while self-binding surface is proposed to the secondary and tertiary paths to create a natural feel to the park.

To ensure there is continuity and robustness of materials in the scheme, the flexible game area and the resting spot also have asphalt surfacing.

The skatepark area has concrete surfacing which is appropriate to the type of activity.

The amphitheatre and steps will also be made of concrete. This will tie into the rest of the material palette whilst creating an urban feel within this parkland.

## 2.6 Vegetation

Currently the space is a brownfield site, with hardly any trees and vegetation of ecological interest.

The scheme aspiration is to increase the available green areas and introduce new tree planting.

A variety of vegetation species is proposed throughout the park to achieve a balance between biodiversity and recreation and to create a natural parkland setting. The proposed soft landscape typologies will support a different range of wildlife and habitats.

Hedge planting, preferable of native species, will create a boundary perimeter against the eastern fence.



Shrub planting mixes are proposed in informal and organic shapes to create areas of visual interest and support the park usages around the park perimeter. Shrub planting also will be used to naturally segregate the activity and recreational areas. The shrub mixes will contain planting for all year-round interest with evergreen structural plants to provide a green backdrop to the winter months.

The different grassland types are located to respond on the intended use of those areas.

Areas of grass are located in between amenity spaces to support informal gathering and movement in addition to a central open lawn space to encourage flexible recreational activities and provide a parkland feeling.

Unmown grass areas will be located along the western edge. These areas will have a relaxed maintenance regime that could also be supplemented with bulb planting to increase biodiversity value.

The typical example of a maintenance and moving regime will be detail in the phases of the project.

The proposed tree planting is carefully located, and their positions consider the future extension of the park and later stages. The trees are also positioned in a way to keep clear visibility to the park and ensure the new community hub view is not obstructed particularly from the main entrance.

In addition to the parkland planting, the biodiversity park aims to have areas of high biodiversity interest such wildflowers areas, high pollinators plants, insects and bug hotels and others. The planting palette will be developed in more detail in the next stage.

Biodiversity will also be achieved in developing a maintenance regime that is geared towards creating biodiverse areas with mix grasslands.

The new soft landscape approach will increase biodiversity and provide ecological and environmental benefits. The trees and plant species will be selected from a list of appropriate native and naturalised species.

Maintenance is a key requirement for the soft landscape, which will inform the choice and the selection of the trees and plants.





## 2.7 Street Furniture

The furniture has been selected to ensure a common and coordinated language of elements is maintained across the park. An overall holistic approach will be adopted for the street furniture in the park. Park furniture must be robust whilst also creating a sense of place through its design language.

It is the proposed design intention that all park furniture will be from a standard palette and be neutral in design. The choice of materials, such as timber with steel footing will ensure robust functionality. This is in addition to a small number of concrete elements.

The future palette includes elements such as picnic tables, timber benches, concrete benches.

In addition to bike stands, bollards and side wide fencing.

A variety of seating options have been incorporated, including benches with armrests and backrests.

Bins will be located at key areas and spaced at regular intervals along the park path. They will be neutral in design and part of a coordinated park furniture palette.

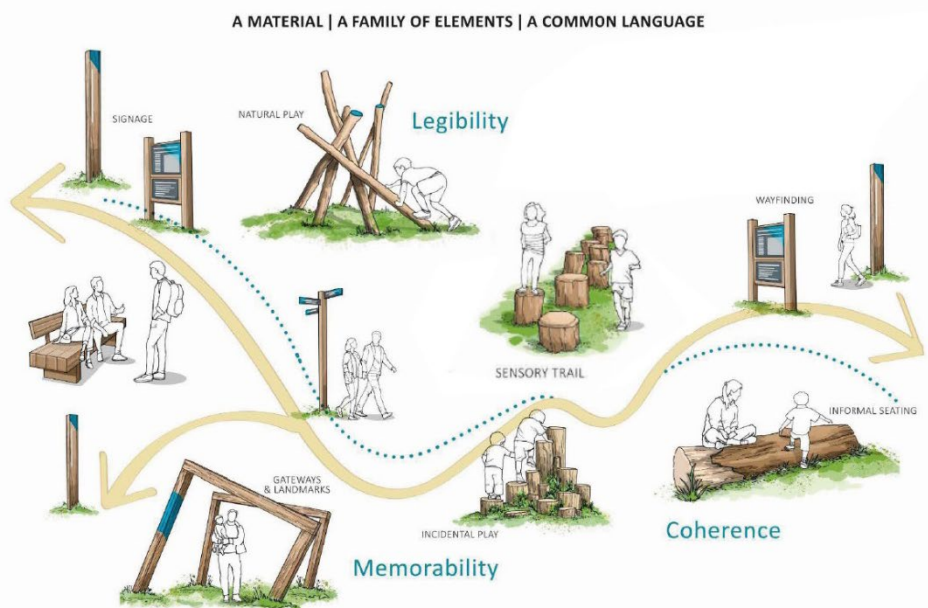
Cycle stands will be located inside the park close to the entrance in visible locations, not impeding circulation.

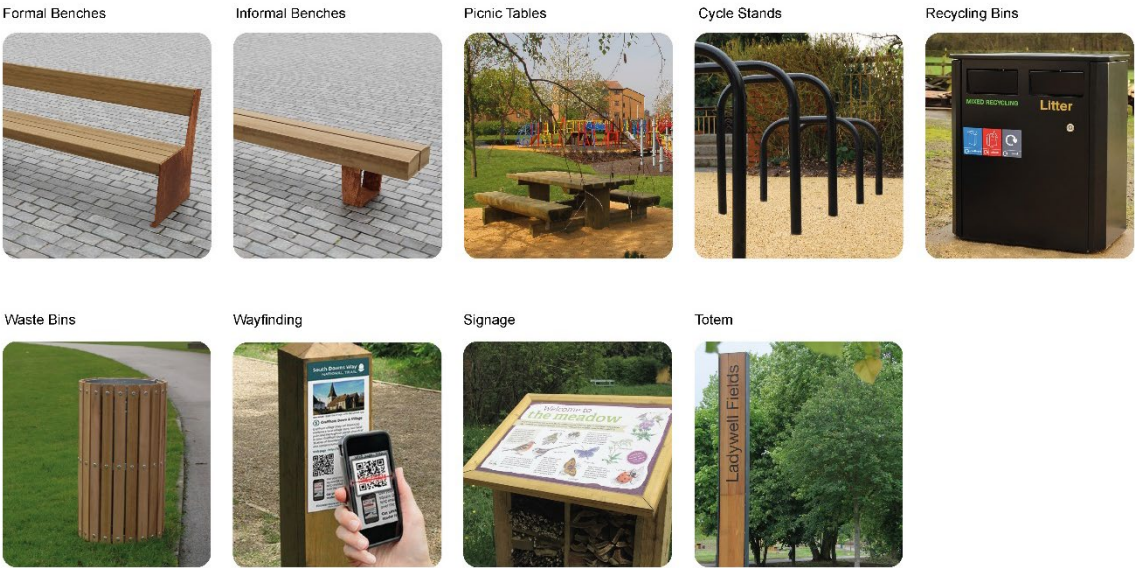
To complete the parkwide furniture, feature elements are proposed to create a sense of place and identity to the park.

Elements such as a timber pergola with seating will provide shelter to the multi-generational area and space to socialise.

Totem signage and wayfinding will be proposed at the main park entrance and developed in the later design stage.

### DESIGN CONCEPT FAMILY OF ELEMENTS





2.8 Lighting

Lighting is proposed to the main path that links the north to the south entrance. The proposed lighting will be mounted on 4 m high columns and equally spaced to create uniformity and to provide a safe access route for users during darker hours. The luminaire will be suitable and of a LED type. The lighting specification has been reviewed by a specialist lighting consultant and would need to be developed in the next stage.

3. Design components

The design components provide a description on the look and feel of the proposal, with further detail and development to be required at the next stage. The table below indicates the main design elements as is to be read in conjunction with the following BDP plans:

- 2669-BDP-00-XX-DR-L-0001 – Site discovery plan and site notice plan
- 2669-BDP-00-XX-DR-L-0002 – Landscape Masterplan

### 3.1 Hard Landscape and edging

Key	Description
AS1	<b>Asphalt surfacing</b> Surface course with binder course suitable for vehicular build up. To flexible games area, multi-generational area, and table tennis area. Base and subbase subject to site investigations and testing at detail design stage.
AS2	<b>Asphalt surfacing</b> Surface course with binder course suitable for vehicular build up. To carpark at southern entrance to site. Base and subbase subject site investigations and testing at detail design stage.
CS1	<b>Concrete surfacing &amp; ramps</b> Brushed concrete surface to new skatepark in addition to associated skate park requirements.
CS2	<b>Exposed aggregate concrete surfacing</b> Exposed aggregate concrete with 20 mm chipping to stage area.
P1	<b>Asphalt path</b> Surface course with binder course suitable for vehicular build up. Maintain 3000 mm width from southern entrance to northern entrance of park.
P2	<b>Self-binding path</b> Hoggin or similar approved surfacing with 0 -10 mm aggregate on a pedestrian buildup. For path of 1,200 mm and 800 mm wide.
RK	<b>Raised concrete kerb</b> Precast concrete raised kerb on concrete foundation. Natural finish. Butt joint standard dimensions with 10 mm radius to all edges.
AL	<b>Aluminium edging</b> 3 mm (W) x 150 mm (H) to all asphalt surfacing – Exception to car park where concrete kerb is used.
ST	<b>Concrete steps</b> Steps, handrail and tactile paving to north south access ramp (5x3No.steps) including 1 ramp. 15 steps at 3 m wide. 150 mm (H) x 300 mm (D). These elements will be developed at the detailed design stage.
CW	<b>Concrete wall</b> Smooth concrete wall to create amphitheatre tiered seating. 600 mm (D) x 450 mm (H) wall, lengths vary.
TC	<b>Tactile paving</b> Buff tactile paving to uncontrolled crossing. 1200 mm made up of 400 x 400 mm standard tactile units.

### 3.2 Furniture

PT	<b>Picnic table</b> 3 x Picnic set bench with table and two benches. Seats and tabletop to be made of timber slats. Frames to have powder coated galvanized steel for surface mounting. Standard dimensions product.
TB	<b>Timber bench with and without backrest.</b> 8 x Timber bench seat surface in natural and sustainable wood. Bench to have powder coated galvanized steel frame for root fixing. Indicative dimensions W2000 mm x D400 mm x H450 mm (above ground level).
CB	<b>Concrete bench</b> 3 x Concrete benches without back rest providing seating to path and flexible games area. Size: W2000 mm x D500 mm x H450 mm (above ground level).
F1	<b>Fence Type 1</b> Timber post and wire 1.2 m high.

<b>F2</b>	<b>Fence type 2</b> Chestnut Pale Temporary Fence. 1.5 m high. Temporary fencing along western and southern boundary. To be removed with future development.
<b>F3</b>	<b>Metal entry fence</b> Bespoke entry fencing and signage totem. Finish to be confirmed at detail design stages.
<b>F4</b>	<b>Mesh fence 1.23-2.43 m high</b> Metal mesh panel fencing 8 linear metres fencing behind hoop. Height: Two heights are to be installed: 1230 mm high and 2430 mm around the basketball hoop.
<b>GT</b>	<b>Metal gate</b> Metal gate to match metal entry fence. Double Entry Gate with vehicular access width to the main southern entrance. Minimum 3 m wide Pedestrian and lockable gate to secondary entrance, approximately 1.2 m wide.
<b>PG1</b>	<b>Pergola and custom seat (timber post &amp; wire)</b> Bespoke hardwood timber pergola structure. Pergola height to be 2,400 mm with 140 x 140 mm beams. The pergola to have in ground fixing with steel plates. Tension wire to be incorporated to support climbing plants. Allow for a bespoke curved timber seat following the radius of the pergola.
<b>TP</b>	<b>Timber posts</b> Bespoke feature timber posts – 150 mm x 150 mm timber posts in concrete footing. Heights vary - Max height 2800 mm.
<b>BL</b>	<b>Removable bollard</b> Black metal bollard with reflector. Located at entrance gates to restrict vehicular access. Height above ground: 800 mm. Method of fixing: Root, 300 mm below ground, set in concrete base. Flap to be flush with the surrounding ground level when closed.
<b>BS</b>	<b>Bike stands</b> 5 x Tubular standard Sheffield bike stands. Stainless steel finish. Each bike stands allowed for 2 cycle parking with recommended spacing of 800 mm. Bike stands to be fixed into the ground.
<b>TT</b>	<b>Table tennis</b> Standard size table tennis suitable for public use in an outdoor environment. Preferably the tennis table to be shock resistant, fire resistant and graffiti resistant.

### 3.3 Play Equipment

<b>01</b>	<b>Balance beam</b> Rotating wooden balance beam – suitable for all ages. Indicative length 3000mm and height 380mm.
<b>02</b>	<b>Branch hut</b> 2 x Wigwam dens: Reclaimed timber logs. Size: Nominally 80-120mm diameter and 3000-5000mm height. Secured at the top and ends buried in the ground. Bespoke item, manufactured on site.
<b>03</b>	<b>Climbing stack</b> Wooden climbing structure with hardwood beams at different height and connected with cable ropes. All parts used for anchoring to the ground are made of hot-dip galvanised steel or stainless steel.
<b>04</b>	<b>Hut combination</b> Hut combination or similar for kindergarten children and schoolchildren to include slide and climbing frame and swings. Equipment made of hardwood with steel feet. All parts used for anchoring to the ground are made of hot-dip galvanised steel or stainless steel. Safety distance are to be allowed depending on the critical fall height of the equipment,
<b>05</b>	<b>Tree stumps and logs</b> Timber log arrangements. Reclaimed timber including step up and down logs.



	<p>Playful and natural feature timber logs within grass &amp; play areas.</p> <p>Logs to have varied height between 600 mm to 300 mm from ground levels.</p> <p>Diameter of logs to be between 200 mm and 400 mm.</p> <p>Logs to be made of natural reclaimed wood and pressure treated with no loose finish.</p> <p>Logs to be securely fixed into the ground.</p>
<b>06</b>	<p><b>Nest swing - accessible play element</b></p> <p>1 x Cradle nest swing provides accessible play that can be used by children of all ages.</p>
<b>3.4 Soft Landscape</b>	
<b>GR</b>	<p><b>New grass area</b></p> <p>Amenity lawn area to support creational activities.</p>
<b>UG</b>	<p><b>Un-mown grass area</b></p> <p>Amenity lawn area with relaxed mowing regime to support wildlife.</p>
<b>SP</b>	<p><b>Shrub planting beds</b></p> <p>Mix of native and evergreen herbaceous planting to ensure year-round interests.</p> <p>Planting to have a 50 mm mulch layer and 150 mm of topsoil.</p> <p>Planting species to be carefully considered from native and naturalised species.</p>
<b>HG</b>	<p><b>Hedge</b></p> <p>Double staggered native hedge along eastern edge of park.</p>
<b>Proposed Trees</b>	<p><b>Proposed trees</b></p> <p>A combination of feature trees, semi mature trees and multi-stem trees are proposed.</p> <p>Trees to have foliage or flower interest. Trees species will be selected from a list of appropriate native and naturalised species and will increase local biodiversity.</p> <p>Allow for 50 mm thick of mulch and 1500 mm diameter around trees.</p> <p>Allow for tree backfilling materials including topsoil.</p> <p>Trees to have underground anchors and guying.</p>
<b>3.5 Lighting</b>	
<b>LC</b>	<p><b>Proposed lighting columns</b></p> <p>6 x Lighting columns are proposed to the main path at 4m height. Location of lighting columns to be placed as indicated on the drawings and to be offset at 750mm from the path.</p>