

THE LANDSCAPE PRACTICE GROUP

- parks and open spaces
- play areas, games courts and teenage facilities
- nature conservation
- city centre and local centre enhancements
- planning and regeneration
- housing area refurbishment and redevelopment
- school campus improvements
- highways and transportation
- community consultation



Regenerating
Local Communities

The Landscape Practice Group is the sole provider of Landscape Architectural Services for Birmingham City Council.

We provide a wide range of landscape design services from the initial consultation with our Clients through to the completion of the project.

Our Services Include

- Environmental Survey and Assessments
- Landscape Planning and Evaluation Studies
- Production of Environmental Design Guides
- Landscape Masterplan production
- Detailed hard and soft landscape design and specification
- Urban Design
- Contract and Tender Documentation
- Landscape Clerk of Works Service
- Project Management and Control
- Landscape Management and after care specification
- Advice on the conservation and restoration of historic landscapes
- CDM Co-ordinator role

Our Experience includes

- Large Scale Civic Design and Pedestrianisation
- Restoration of the City's Historic Parks and Gardens
- New Urban Parks
- Public/Private Sector Housing- New and Rehabilitation Projects
- All-weather sports pitches
- Children's Play Areas
- Skateboard and BMX facilities
- Country Parks works
- Statigic Cycle Routes
- Village Greens and Local Centres
- Public Art and Sculptural Projects
- School Grounds and Sports Facilities
- Transportation Projects including highways, bus routes and cycle routes
- New Cemeteries and Burial Ground Refurbishments
- Section 106 negotiations
- Heritage Lottery and other external funding applications.

- Landscape and open space strategies

Current and recently completed schemes that are part of citywide programme of environmental improvements include:

- Raymond Road Park
- Aston Park Restoration
- Woodview Pocket Park
- New International standard BMX Track for Birmingham
- Olympics training and infrastructure facilities



The Landscape Practice Group (LPG) is a registered practice of the Landscape Institute and currently employs around 15 staff including chartered landscape architects, a landscape clerk of works, landscape development officers, technical support staff and business support officers. We have a wide range of active projects between the stages of inception and completion.

Our Landscape Development Officers represent the Directorate's interests by contributing in particular to the completion of Legal Agreements entered into by the City Council under Section 106 of The Town and Country Planning Act to secure planning obligations. They also provide a monitoring service for the implementation of Section 106 funded works, either carried out internally by LPG or by external developers.

Amongst other sources of funding, LPG's designers are commissioned to design and implement Section 106 works on City Council land. In 2011/2012, £1.64m worth of works were delivered to Parks and Open Space schemes across the city from S106 contributions.

The finance raised from these agreements helps to fulfil the policies in the City's Unitary Development Plan for Public Open Space and Play Facilities.

Our Consultation Service

Our Chartered Landscape Architects have substantial experience in carrying out public consultations and developing material that can help to involve the general public, including stakeholders and user groups in design issues for their locality.

We work in close liaison with Parks Managers and other clients including community, youth, play and sport development colleagues.

Our service can include holding evening meetings and exhibitions, taking user groups on visits to existing schemes and encouraging their input to improve facilities.

We can also arrange 'leaflet drops' and 'door knocking' exercises to gauge user interest and preferences.



Celebrating 25 years of Landscape Design in Birmingham



Aston Hall (built 1618-1635) is a magnificent Grade 1 Listed Jacobean Mansion sitting in a Grade II Listed Park. It is a nationally significant site and a remarkable survivor located in the heart of inner city Birmingham and owned by Birmingham City Council. A gradual decline of the site over the last thirty years meant it required major capital investment to secure its future as a major cultural heritage, and a high quality resource for the local, culturally diverse community.

The project comprised the following major elements:

- The park and gardens - restoration and improvement including new railings and boundary walls, lighting, CCTV, replanting the historic gardens, improved vehicular access and car parking, new pathways, play area and planting, and the exposure and interpretation of archaeological remains.
- New sports facilities – a sports pavilion, artificial pitch, three grass pitches plus a cricket pitch.
- Redevelopment of the Stables and conservation and refurbishment of Aston Hall itself.

Client: Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery
Project Value: £10m
Main Contractor: Wates Construction
Contract length: 36 months
Date completed: July 2009
Lead Designer: Lynne Stirling



North Courtyard and Stable Block



New sports pavilion and pitches



South Garden rill and fountain



South Garden

Five Ways Community Park

parks and open spaces

The Five Ways Estate in Ladywood is composed of mostly two and three bedroom flats making it a place with lots of families. Unfortunately it has always had a shortage of green space and children's play facilities that has been made worse because it is separated from existing parks and public open space in the surrounding area by busy roads.

Working with the residents and Optima Community Association who carried out the consultation, the challenge was to find an area large enough that is directly accessible to the estate that could fulfil the role of an urban green space. Residents wanted a space directly accessible from the estate with a place to play in more natural setting using natural materials with space for informal games and sitting as well as screening the road and making it safe for children.

The design approach was therefore to terrace the site providing change in levels that would provide interest and a natural space for play further away from the backs of the properties.

A mixture of inclusive more traditional play equipment such as slides, rope climbers and slides have been incorporated along with more natural items such as boulders and timber logs which can be used for climbing or sitting. The boulders help add to the character of space fitting in with the existing pine trees retained along the back of the site.

Client: Birmingham City Council in Partnership with
Optima Community Association
Project Value: £448,298
Contractor: Thomas Vale Construction/ Jack Moody Ltd
Contract length: 5 months
Date completed: 30th March 2011
Lead Designer: Landscape Practice Group
Partners: Optima Community Association



Woodview Pocket Park

parks and open spaces

The Woodview Estate in Edgbaston, has in the past five years largely been rebuilt. Much of the estate was remodelled and any existing play and children's recreation facilities lost.

It was always a priority to work with the existing community to ensure that a replacement was provided and, at the heart of the estate next to the local school, a site previously occupied by tower blocks and maisonettes was chosen as the best position for this space.

Although relatively small in area the idea was to not just to create a play space but a small public park for all ages to enjoy with a greener, more naturalistic and softer feel that took advantage of the impact of the existing trees. This has been achieved through an exciting compact design and layout with activity, especially play being maximised and spread throughout the site.

Working with the local school and community, the site's history was explored and some historical features such as the outline of one of the former tower blocks was preserved in the form of a brick patterned paved seating area that can be used by the local residents for small community events. The central ball court is the noisy core of the site, but activity here also provides visual interest for other park users so is viewable on all sides from paths and seating.

Client: Birmingham City Council in partnership with Optima Community Association
Project Value: £461,596
Contractor: Thomas Vale Construction/ Jack Moody Ltd
Contract length: 5 months
Date completed: 11th March 2011
Lead Designer: Landscape Practice Group
Partners: Optima Community Association



Longmeadow Park

parks and open spaces

Longmeadow park is a brand new neighbourhood facility created within a former school playing field site in Shard End in 2009.

The project was funded through a S106 Agreement as a result of the adjacent housing development to the site. A MUGA, play area, footpath network and perimeter railings were installed in phase 1.

The master plan for the new park was developed following extensive consultation with the surrounding residents, groups, police and key parties.

Phase 2, completed in 2011, included the installation of adult fitness equipment, tree planting, a central seating area and entrance works. The final phase successfully completed the master plan.

The project has completely transformed this once redundant open grassland, and provides a unique and much needed recreational facility for all members of the surrounding community.



Client: Birmingham City Council
Project Value: £456,720 (P1), £135,000 (P2)
Contractor: G.F. Tomlinson (P1), Jack Moody Ltd (P2)
Date completed: 2009 (P1), 2011 (P2)
Lead Designer: Amy Middlemist / James O'Sullivan

In October 2011 Cabinet approved an allocation of £7million from Corporate Resources for a Local Improvement Budget which had to be expended by the end of March 2012.

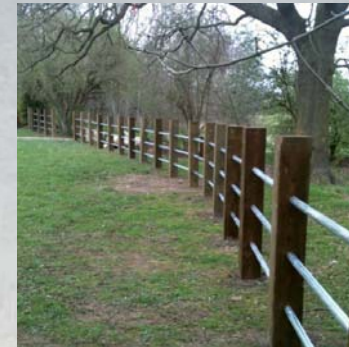
As part of this programme a sum of just over £2.67 million was allocated to carry out improvements to Parks across 10 constituencies in Birmingham. Landscape works were carried out to parks including new paths, perimeter fencing/security works, new play facilities, multi-use games areas, skateboard facilities and ornamental garden improvements for which specific capital resources were not previously available.

Working closely with Constituency Parks Managers, local stakeholders and approved Landscape Term Contractors in a concentrated three month period between January and March 2012, LPG managed to successfully complete and deliver over 90% of the planned schemes on time and within budget which was greatly welcomed by local residents and park users.

A selection of schemes are featured on this page.

(left to right from top left)

New stone steps at **Rookery Park**; new skate facility at **Senneleys Park**; new pedestrian bridge at **Chinn Brook Meadows**; new entrance features and signage at **Shire Country Park**; new pathways and seating areas in **Calthorpe Park**; new climbing rock stacks and play equipment in **Woodlands Park**; the opening of a new skate facility at **Wyndley Leisure Centre**; new perimeter fencing at **Senneleys Park** and new decorative paving in the ornamental garden at **Rookery Park**.



Aston Park - All Weather Pitch

play areas, games courts and
teenage facilities

Background

Aston Park is a Grade II Historic Park surrounding a Grade 1 Listed Jacobean mansion situated in the heart of the Aston Ward Community, Birmingham.

Aston Park is a multi million pound restoration project which has identified the need for sports facilities in the area.

Objective of proposal

To deliver a high quality, floodlit all weather sports pitch for football and hockey that compliments and supports the wider sports pitch strategy for the park.

New pitch to be constructed to standards set by England Hockey and Football Association.

Programme and Procurement

The Landscape Practice Group to undertake the design work with the construction of the pitch to commence in Sept 2006 and be completed in January 2007. The works are to be procured through Thomas Vale Construction Limited (one of the Birmingham Construction Partnership Contractors)

Capital cost and funding

Total cost for the scheme (works and fees) £715,000 funded by Barclays 'Spaces 4 Sport', Section 106 Agreement, and Birmingham City Council Capital Allocation for Sport and recreational facilities.

Specification

100m x 64.2m pitch in Stadia Turf SD 18mm pile height face weight 1700gr/m2 as laid by Sub Contractor McArdle Sport-Tec Ltd. Facility to provide one football and hockey pitch and divided to create three five a side pitches.



Farnborough Fields Community Play Space

play areas, games courts
and teenage facilities

The Landscape Practice Group worked in close conjunction with Castle Vale Neighbourhood Partnership to design and construct a new play area on the fields in front of Vale Stadium on Farnborough Road in Castle Vale.

The location and vast space available together with our recent successes with natural play through the Playbuilder programme led the design away from a more traditional play area to that of a much more open and inspirational play space.

Farnborough Fields Community Play Space features a series of new pathways around a large climbing net which towers above the site, providing a new local landmark and central focus for the scheme. A mixture of exciting and dynamic play equipment together with inclusive pieces and an outdoor gym facility provide activities for all ages from toddlers to senior citizens.

A double spiral labyrinth provides a game for children to race to the central finger post, which points to famous cities around the world. A new car park, seating, welcome signs and a picnic area complete the scheme and help to encourage families to make this a destination park and a fun day out for all.

Client: BCC Parks & Nature Conservation
Project Value: £164,000
Contractor: BJ Leisure Ltd
Contract length: 12 weeks
Date completed: August 2012
Lead Designer: Johnathan Stephen
Partners: Castle Vale Neighbourhood Partnership



Attwood Green - Multi Use Games Court

play areas, games courts and
teenage facilities

Background

Park Central, Attwood Green, Birmingham was a large amorphous green space which lacked any definite definition,. The adjacent housing stock was subject to major refurbishment and redevelopment which created a new park as the central focus for the community.

Objective of proposal

To deliver a high quality scheme with robust detailing and sports facilities to compliment the park and form the centre of a flourishing neighbourhood. Facilities to be accessible to different ages ranges and reflect the needs and wishes of the local community

Programme and Procurement

The Landscape Practice Group carried out the design work with the construction of the multi use games court to be part of the overall project. Project commenced in March 2005 and was completed in July 2007. The works were procured through English Landscapes.

Capital cost and funding

Total cost for the scheme (works and fees) £2.4 million of which the games court totalled £91,000.
Facility supplied by Sutcliffe Play.



Laurel Road Playing Fields - All Weather Pitch

play areas, games courts and
teenage facilities

Background

Laurel Road Playing Fields, Handsworth Ward, Birmingham, was identified to be refurbished by Birmingham City Council to improve the sports facilities in the area.

Objective of proposals

To deliver a high quality, floodlit, all weather sports pitch for football, which is constructed to Sport England Standard.

Programme and Procurement

The Landscape Practice Group worked with Thomas Vale Construction Limited (one of the Birmingham Construction Partnership Contractors) on the design and construction of the sports facilities and pavilion.

The construction works started on April 2005 and was completed on 4 November 2005.

Capital Cost and Funding

£300,000 (works and fees) Single Regeneration Board Area 4 funding was available for the artificial pitch and associated works such as drainage and floodlighting.

Specification

3rd Generation rubber crumb artificial turf pitch with shockpad as supplied by Thornton Sports Limited. Facility size is 83m x 34m comprising 2no under 7/8 small sided football pitches.



Playbuilder Phase 1

play areas, games courts
and teenage facilities

Playbuilder – the first year

For the first year of the Playbuilder Project (2009-2010), Environment and Culture's Community and Play team led by Phil Ware joined forces with a Landscape Practice Group team headed up by Bob Churn and Lynne Stirling. Through consultation with local young people and parents, local Councillors and Parks and Play officers, 10 play spaces have been upgraded throughout the City and 1 completely new play area has been created using match funding. Every Constituency has benefited through year 1 Playbuilder.

You can visit these exciting new play spaces at: Senneleys Park, Larches Green, Ward End Park, 'The Base', Kingston Hill Recreation Ground, Shannon Road, Sandwell Recreation Ground, Hazelwell Park, Berryfields, Golden Hillock Sports, Berkeley Road and Warren Farm Conker Island.

The Playbuilder project was facilitated by Play England Development Officers who have encouraged us to push the boundaries with natural features, risk-taking and approaches to involving local children in play space development.

Lynne Stirling, who co-ordinated the design team, said 'the diverse range of play areas were constructed within the budget and on time, in spite of the extreme weather conditions, and is a credit to everyone in the team who worked on the project. The support and co-operation of contractors EMR Ltd and Haystoun Construction Ltd contributed considerably towards achieving this goal'.



Playbuilder Phase 2

play areas, games courts
and teenage facilities

Playbuilder – Phase 2

For the second year of the Playbuilder Project (2010-2011), Environment and Culture's Community and Play team led by Phil Ware once again joined forces with The Landscape Practice Group headed up by Bob Churn and Lynne Stirling. Through consultation with local young people and parents, local Councillors and Parks and Play officers, 10 play spaces were upgraded or newly created throughout the City to compliment those constructed in the previous year.

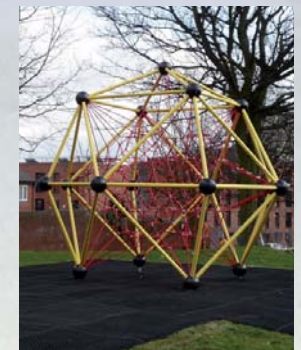
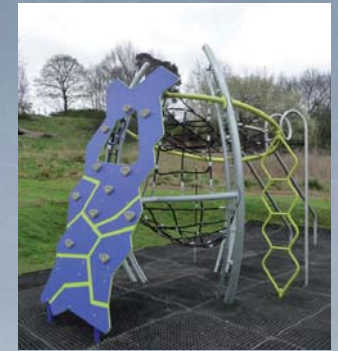
The newly upgraded play areas are at:

Cannon Hill Park, Comet park, Digby Park*, Farm Park, Highbury Park, Masefield Square*, Selly Oak Park, Turnberry Road, Walkers Heath and Yellow Park.

*completion scheduled for September 2011 due to Big Lottery Funds.

The Playbuilder project ethos encouraged us to build on last years playbuilder experience and compliment play with natural features, risk-taking design and low maintenance practicality as well as continuing to involve and engage local children in the play space's development.

Lynne Stirling, who co-ordinated the design team said despite the Government Grant being suspended in July (pending the New Government spending review) and a reduced grant announced in October 2010, all the schemes were completed on schedule.



Sunset & Moonlit Parks - Attwood Green

housing area refurbishment
and redevelopment

'Sunset' and 'Moonlit' Parks have been created to be at the heart of the 25ha Park Central mixed-use regeneration project. The two parks, which are to be linked by a publicly accessible central piazza, were designed in conjunction with lead developer Crest Nicholson, joint landowners Optima Community Association and local residents.

'Moonlit' Park contains a neighbourhood play area for children from 3 to 12 years, multi use games area and youth shelter for teenagers. It also contains concrete finished pillars and a stainless steel pergola that help to divide off the play facilities from the more naturalistic softer areas such as a wildflower meadow, grass, trees, shrubs and a scented garden with seats.

'Sunset' Park has been designed with an outdoor events space for use by the local community with a series of grass and stone terraces overlooking a Sky Mirror centrepiece created by artist Nayan Kulkarni.

This is a mix of stainless steel sculpture, play and water feature with an associated space that can be drained and used as an outdoor stage when events are taking place. The park exploits some significant changes in level to lead through a series of spaces planted with trees, shrubs, colourful herbaceous and prairie style planting.

Client: Crest Nicholson, Optima Community Association & Birmingham City Council
Project Value: £2.4m
Contractor: English Landscapes
Contract length: 2 years
Date completed: July 2007
Lead Designer: Jonathan Webster



Ley Hill Park and Village Green

housing area refurbishment
and redevelopment

Work began in September 2008 to create the new Village Green as part of the overall regeneration of the estate at Ley Hill. The scheme has now transformed an area of derelict land which was previously cleared of housing. The new Village Green includes footpaths, seating, tree planting, railings and entrances.

The new Village Green provides grand views over the surrounding areas and a new link to the public footpath to Bartley Reservoir. The overall project also included work on the main park improving the existing play facilities, re-surfacing the existing car park and also extension of the car park at Holloway Hall. The construction was carried out through the Birmingham Construction Partnership and was funded by housing capital receipts and Section 106 agreements from the adjoining new development sites.

A local woodcarver was commissioned to design and create six unique wood sculptures in conjunction with children at a local Play scheme. The sculptures were carved into standing tree trunks in the northern wooded area of the park.

The final phase of works will include a new network of footpaths, entrance and boundary improvements as well as works to create a wetland conservation area.

Client: BCC Housing Development

Project Value: £1.2m

Main Contractor: Thomas Vale Construction

Contract length: 6 months

Date completed: April 2009

Lead Designer: Jonathan Webster



Brandwood Estate Redevelopment

housing area refurbishment
and redevelopment

At the outset of this successful regeneration project The Landscape Practice Group contributed to the master planning exercise through the preparation of a feasibility study to illustrate a street scene concept, the treatment of curtilage, public and communal open spaces.

Through a close partnership between the design team, client and the Brandwood End Estate Development Group, residents were able to visit a number of case studies to guide their choice of development and having visited the Bournville Garden Village, close to home chose this as the inspiration for their own estate.

The client recognised the critical role Landscape should play in a redeveloped Brandwood to evoke a sense of place and community. LPG undertook further research into the landscape treatments at Bournville and reinterpreted these through the design of open space, semi-private communal areas, enclosed private space as well as the public realm.

All trees, hedge planting, shrubs and grassed areas were specified in terms of sustainability and to compliment the physical environment. The true impact of this is best seen by visiting the site.

Black metal stock fencing forms a structure through which beech hedges at the boundaries of all frontages will grow. Fruit trees have been planted continuing the tradition of the Bournville Village.

Additional environmental benefits included rainwater harvesting to supply the local allotment site with a sustainable source of water taken from the roofs of the surrounding properties.

Client: Housing Development & Joint Ventures
Contractor: Avebury (Phase 1)
Contract length: 18 months (Phase 1)
Date completed: 2003 - Phase 4 (still ongoing)
Lead Designer: Bob Churn
Partners: Waterloo Housing Association
& Axis Design Collective



Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT)

housing area refurbishment
and redevelopment

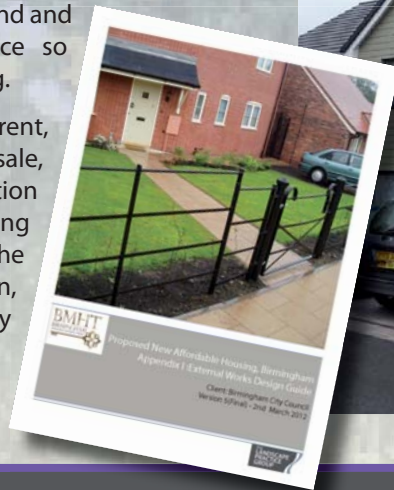
The Landscape Practice Group (LPG) are continuing to work with Housing and the private sector on the Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT) programme, the first phase of which won the "Grand Prix and the best use of Housing" Award, run by the Regeneration and Renewal magazine in September 2011.

The BMHT project also went on to win both the "Outstanding Achievement in Housing (England)" and the "Winner of winners" awards in the 2011 UK Housing Awards in November

LPG have provided advice to Housing and the private sector on how to achieve a high quality hard and soft external environment for new housing. This quality has been a vital factor in ensuring that the new rental and for sale units have been extremely popular.

LPG produced an 'External Works Design Guide' shown below for developers and consultants to use when designing the schemes, determining the quality materials, detailing and practices that would be required externally to avoid a bland and uninviting municipal appearance so often common with new housing.

To date, 230 homes for social rent, alongside 63 homes for private sale, have been completed. Construction work is ongoing, with homes being built on sites in Newtown, the Ingoldsby estate, Saltley, Sheldon, Pype Hayes, Handsworth, Bartley Green and Longbridge.



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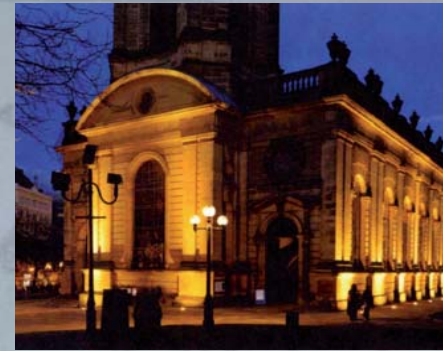
St Philip's Cathedral Square

city centre and local
centre enhancements

The Landscape Practice Group were commissioned by Birmingham City Council's Planning Department and the Diocese of Birmingham to restore St Philip's Cathedral churchyard based upon its original 19th century landscape design as well as the pedestrianisation of the adjacent Temple Row.

The project included the installation of historically sensitive cast iron railings and entrance features, new lampposts, restoration of monuments and new pathways using high quality York stone paving. The planting of semi mature trees recreated the original boulevard walks around the churchyard and floodlighting was included to highlight the cathedral's striking architecture.

The scheme has won a number of awards including the 2003 Local Government News Street Design Award as well as finalist in the 2003 Lottery Monitor Awards for Excellence.



Client: BCC Planning

Project Value: £3.3m

Contractor: Kennedy Construction

Contract length: 18 months

Date completed: 2001

Lead Designer: Lynne Stirling

Partners: Birmingham Cathedral

Victoria Square

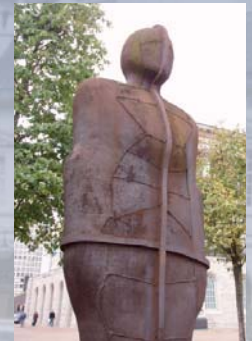
city centre and local
centre enhancements

The Landscape Practice Group was commissioned to replace a noisy and congested traffic junction with a new public square of the highest quality. An international design competition was launched, resulting in the creation of a large fountain and sculpture affectionately referred to as “the floozie in the jacuzzi”, one of Birmingham’s most recognised landmarks, which takes centre stage of the design and makes full use of the changes in level.

The design of the square intended to create a welcoming place to linger and yet provide for a strong diagonal pedestrian throughfare from Broad Street to New Street.

Public art, access for people with disabilities, use for civic events and lighting had to be taken into account. Hard and soft landscaping elements were both required, specifically to include potential for floral display and seasonal interest.

Victoria Square now hosts a number of regular high profile events and exhibitions, most famously the Frankfurt German Christmas Market which transforms the square into a festive wonderland each November/December.



Client: BCC Planning

Project Value: £3.7m

Contractor: Impresa Castelli UK Ltd

Contract length: 24 months

Date completed: 1993

Lead Designer: Lynne Stirling

Partners: various

New Street & Corporation Street

city centre and local
centre enhancements

Pedestrianisation and Improvement Works

The Highbury Initiative in Birmingham resulted in a total rethink of the City road framework and new opportunities for pedestrian movement and growth within the City Core.

Work was needed to alleviate the “concrete collar” of the Inner Ring Road and remove the unsafe and disorientating subways which crossed it. An east-west pedestrian spine link was established from New Street Station to the ICC.

LPG carried out the detailed design and led on the implementation of New Street pedestrianisation, where distinct and striking paving, semi-mature trees and removeable street furniture were installed. Corporation Street has similarly benefited from increased pedestrian priority in terms of wider pavements, landscaping and more limited vehicular access, now restricted to Buses and Taxis only.

This has improved the quality and safety of the pedestrian environment and has thereby helped to stimulate new activities and promoted the renaissance of the City Centre.

Client: BCC Planning

Project Value: £2m

Contractor: Impresa Castelli UK Ltd

Contract length: 18 months

Date completed: 1990

Lead Designer: Lynne Stirling



Continuing Birmingham's Green Legacy

The Landscape Practice Group have extensive expertise in street tree planting along with associated short term and long term maintenance issues.

We have been involved in most major tree planting schemes across the city, including Masshouse, Cathedral Square, Snow Hill Station, Victoria Square and New Street. These schemes have transformed areas of the city centre helping to break and soften Birmingham's "concrete collar".

LPG has provided a full service including detail design of tree pits, supervision of planting, anchoring, watering and drainage solutions as well as tree maintenance and aftercare.

These schemes required a close working relationship with Transportation and other City Council Departments, the Statutory Authorities together with UK and European landscape suppliers to achieve successful establishment of a new urban treescape.



Schools and Nature Education

school campus
improvements



New Hall Valley to Penns Lane Cycle Route

highways and
transportation

New Hall Valley to Penns Lane Cycle Route is part of The North Birmingham Cycling and Walking route. The overall route consists of an 11 mile circuit of largely off-road route in the Erdington and Sutton Coldfield constituencies. The route was funded by the Big Lottery Fund and Birmingham City Council.

The scheme involved the construction of a 1.8m -2.5m wide pathway along Plants Brook from New Hall Valley Country Park to Penns Lane. Fencing, planting and ground modelling were incorporated into the scheme. Signage and a vehicular crossing point were also implemented.

The Landscape Practice Group worked closely with all key stakeholders including Sustrans and the Connect2 Steering Group to produce a cycle route that was not only functional but addressed significant issues relating to the site such as land ownership, biodiversity and aesthetics.

One of the final sections of the route through Pype Hayes Park alongside Plants Brook is hoped to start in 2011.

Client: BCC Transportation Strategy
Project Value: £288,000
Main Contractor: G.F. Tomlinson
Contract length: 5 months
Date completed: May 2010
Lead Designer: Richard Lawrence



CENTRAL PLAZA • PARK CENTRAL

BIRMINGHAM



Scheme details:

Client and Project team:

Client, Project management and Contract Administrator– Crest Nicholson Regeneration
Landscape Architects- The Landscape Practice Group
Architects – Gardiner Stewart Architects
Structural Engineers – Reuby Stagg
Services Engineers- Couch Perry Wilkes
Green Roof specialists – Axter Ltd
Artist – Jo Naden

Site : The Central Plaza apartment complex is located at the heart of the Park Central development situated off Lee Bank Middleway less than a mile from Birmingham City Centre. Park Central was developed as a large residential-led mixed use scheme of great significance in Birmingham, in partnership between Crest Nicholson Regeneration, Birmingham City Council and Optima Community Association. It has transformed the former Lee Bank area – which was once a notorious hot spot for crime and poor social behavior into a desirable place for city centre living. More than a decade since construction began, there are now more than 1,100 people living at the 61 acre development. The Central Plaza buildings are situated between the two parks created to be at the very heart of the development and completed in 2007 and have stunning views over the development and city beyond.

Size of site: 2657sqm

Date of practical completion for scheme: March 2014

Date of end of defects for scheme: March 2015

Brief: In accordance with the original site masterplan for the development the two parks already created as separate entities needed to be linked by a publicly accessible walkway. The Central Plaza buildings needed to be integrated into their surroundings in such a way that the surrounding park flowed between the buildings and over an underground car park which would run under the entire development. The park link had to be physically accessible despite a steeply sloping site and be constructed from lightweight materials to minimise the loading on the under-croft car park below. The client also wanted secure communal gardens for the tenants that were not connected to the parkland or park link. These needed to be designed so as to minimise future maintenance liabilities but also to provide a safe and secure area for residents to socialise. The client also wanted the publicly accessible park link to be capable of being closed off outside of parks opening times.

Budget: £300,000

Contract programme: External works were started on site in September 2013 and completed in March 2014.

1. Purpose: describe the project requirements, scope, context, philosophy and intent.

The response to the demanding brief and constraints as described above was to create a publicly accessible 'green roof' park link which could be read as a continuation of the adjacent park and flow sinuously between the buildings. A series of high quality, raised granite planters planted with a spectacular array of ornamental grasses and herbaceous perennials and under-planted with bulbs have been constructed at the podium level to provide a year round display that would help draw people through the space towards the parks beyond. Standing at the entrance of the new park link is a 2.7 metre sculpture that was created by local artist, Jo Naden. The artwork was commissioned by Crest Nicholson when construction began in 2003 to signify the innovative partnership between the house-builder, Birmingham City Council and Optima Community Association. Raised above the park link two tiered, hard paved terraces form private communal gardens for residents complete with artificial grass mounds and raised planters – These provide an opportunity to continue the lines of trees and shrubs which begins in adjacent park and also provides communal areas for residents which are designed as extensions to the private patio areas.

2. Role of the Landscape Architect: Describe the precise role and responsibility of the LI professional member and the role of all other significant participants including owner or client.

Landscape Practice Group (LPG) was part of the larger design team led by the Architect and client Crest Nicholson who acted as project Manager and Contract administrator. LPG were responsible for designing and specifying the main hard landscape elements and planting scheme. This was done in close collaboration with the other design team members in particular the architects and structural engineers.

3. Significance: Explain the project's relevance to the client, the profession, the public and the environment. Describe how the project meets the criteria for judging in the appropriate category and why it is worthy of an award.

The design has been acclaimed by all parties involved from the developers, keen to see a high quality environment that will sell their housing, to the residents who have been actively involved over a longer period of time. The scheme as a whole is viewed as a success for the landscape profession and has been awarded a number of other accolades in regeneration terms and recognised as being truly exceptional by organisations such as CABE. The Green roof planting medium is composed largely of green waste compost and recycled materials and the planting has been designed to be both drought tolerant and low maintenance reducing the need for watering.

4. Innovation: explain how the scheme is unique or special, together with any unusual or demanding problems which were solved:

Designed to allow a park to run through the centre of the development and over the under-croft car park, the scheme is an innovative three dimensional response to a steeply sloping site. A restriction on the structural loading of the concrete slab and the need to allow ventilation to the car parking below were solved with close collaboration with the design team allowing major planting and timber louvres to be introduced to help soften the large structural forms. As one of the last pieces in the Park Central development 'jigsaw' this scheme also had to resolve complex public versus private space issues and also integrate two sizeable apartment blocks into established parkland allowing public access from one end of the development to the other. The result is unique in green roof terms both in the choice of planting and its accessibility to the general public

5. Why this scheme deserves to win an award

In housing landscape context the scheme is unique and demonstrates to clients that a high quality landscape solution sells apartments. It also demonstrates that landscape architects working in close collaboration with other professionals can achieve impressive results despite the challenging site constraints involved. The robust materials specified should ensure the long term longevity of the design and is in keeping with character of the rest of the Park Central development. The stunning planting scheme has established and matured successfully and is both admired and respected by local residents. It is innovative in green roof and public realm terms offering an ever-changing, year round display more often found within more protected garden contexts whilst offering sustainability and environmental sensitivity through the use of water retaining drainage solutions and drought-tolerant planting specifications.

Should you win an Award the winning scheme will be featured promotional material and publicised by our press office. **Please provide a complete list of all contractors and partners whom you would like to be credited in publicity material in the space below.** Please note that space is limited so restrict your credits to the MAIN contributors only and please do not give individual names for each team involved.

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The original site masterplan and previous phases created two separate parks, known as Moonlit and Sunset Parks. The required for the development the two parks already created as separate entities needed to be linked by a publicly accessible walkway.

The Central Plaza buildings needed to be integrated into their surroundings in such a way that the surrounding park flowed between the buildings and over an underground car park which would run under the entire development.

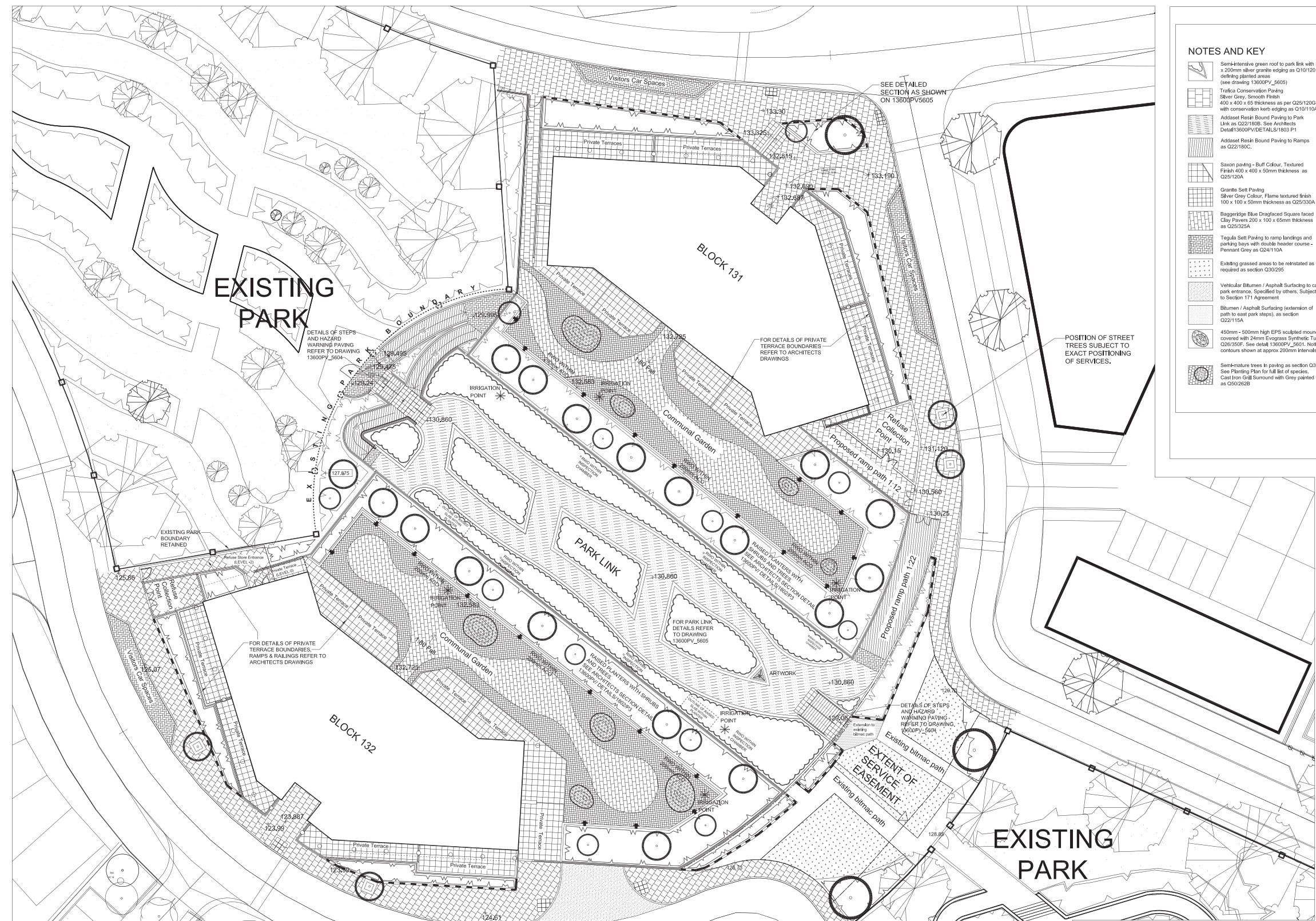
The park link had to be physically accessible despite a steeply sloping site and be constructed from lightweight materials to minimise the loading on the under-croft car park below.

The client also wanted secure communal gardens for the tenants that were not connected to the parkland or park link. These needed to be designed so as to minimise future maintenance liabilities but also to provide a safe and secure area for residents to socialise.

CHALLENGES & BRIEF

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NOTES AND KEY

- Semi-intensive green roof to park link with 300 x 200mm silver granite edging as Q10/120 defining planted areas (see drawing 13600PV_5605)
- Traffic Conservation Paving Silver Grey, Smooth Finish 400 x 400 x 55 thickness as per Q25/120G with conservation kerb edging as Q10/110A
- Adhesive Resin Bound Paving to Park Link as Q22/160G. See Architects Detail 13600PV/DETAIL.S/1603.P1
- Adhesive Resin Bound Paving to Ramps as Q22/180C.
- Saxon paving - Buff Colour, Textured Finish 400 x 400 x 50mm thickness as Q25/120A
- Granite Set Paving Silver Grey Colour, Flame textured finish 100 x 100 x 50mm thickness as Q25/330A
- Baggeridge Blue Dragfaced Square faced Clay Pavers 200 x 100 x 65mm thickness as Q25/25A
- Tegula Set Paving to ramp landings and parking bays with double header course - Permanent Grey as Q24/110A
- Existing grassed areas to be reinstated as required as section Q30/295
- Vehicular Bitumen / Asphalt Surfacing to car park entrance. Specified by others. Subject to Section 171 Agreement
- Bitumen / Asphalt Surfacing (extension of path to east park steps), as section Q22/115A
- 450mm - 500mm high EPS sculpted mounds covered with 24mm Evogress Synthetic Turf Q25/350F. See detail 13600PV_5601. Notional contours shown at approx 200mm intervals
- Semi-mature trees in paving as section Q36 See Planting Plan for full list of species. Cast Iron Grill Surround with Grey painted finish as Q30/252B

- Semi-mature tree planting as section Q36. See Planting Plan for full list of species.
- New shrub & bulb planted areas as section Q31. See Planting Plan for full list of species.
- 1.1m high privacy screens on brick plinths to residents gardens as per Architects details.
- 450mm high galv-nised metal trip rail as per Q40/420 with Baggeridge Blue Square Faced laid brick on edge as mowing strip
- 1.8m high privacy screens and gates to refuse collection areas as per Architects details.
- Indicative lighting to Residents' Communal Gardens. Refer to CPW external lighting layout for details.
- Steps to Park Link and to North of Block 131 See drawing 13600PV_5604
- Proposed Irrigation Point locations Refer to CPW drawings
- Proposed location for artwork/sculpture as Q30/345A
- Tactile paving as Q25/120C

For details of external lighting see CPW external lighting layout.

For details of podium drainage see podium drainage /RWO strategy and other Consultant's details.

For details of railings, gates, ramp walls and balustrades refer to Architects drawings

- 17/02/12 3 Layout revised in line with scheme changes. Further detail added.
- 23/01/12 2 Communal garden boundaries updated. Proposed mounds revised
- 06/01/12 1 Proposed locations of Irrigation Points added to drawing. Artwork position added. Planting beds amended to suit.



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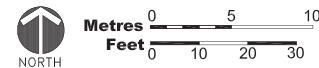
Client: **CREST NICHOLSON (REGENERATION)**

Project: **ZONE 13 PARK CENTRAL BIRMINGHAM**

Title: **HARD LANDSCAPE LAYOUT**

Drawing Number: **13600PV/5100/P** Revision: **3**

Scale: **A1 1:200** Date: **15/02/12** Status: **FOR TENDER**



THE PROPOSAL

This sheet demonstrates the landscape proposal developed in conjunction with the client and architect

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Ornamental Grasses

planted in groups and drifts provide rhythmic patterns and textures

Spring Drama

large spring bulbs such as alliums bring bold forms and drama

Tall Grasses

provide a strong screen along the park link

Bold Shrubs

Such as perovskia and euphorbias provide excellent height, structure and colour all year round

Planting Strategy

Largely based on the planting palette of Park Central's existing shrub and raised planter beds, the strategy is to create an **evergreen, ever-changing, low maintenance** landscape filled with **striking ornamental grasses** of various shapes, sizes and colours, interspersed with **drought tolerant herbaceous perennials** and underplanted with **spring flowering bulbs**.

Drought Tolerant Ground Cover

Sedums, heucheras and bergenias tolerate dry conditions, suppress weeds and add interesting foliage shapes which complement the grasses

Summer Colour

Herbaceous perennials such as geraniums and kniphofia add warmth and vibrance



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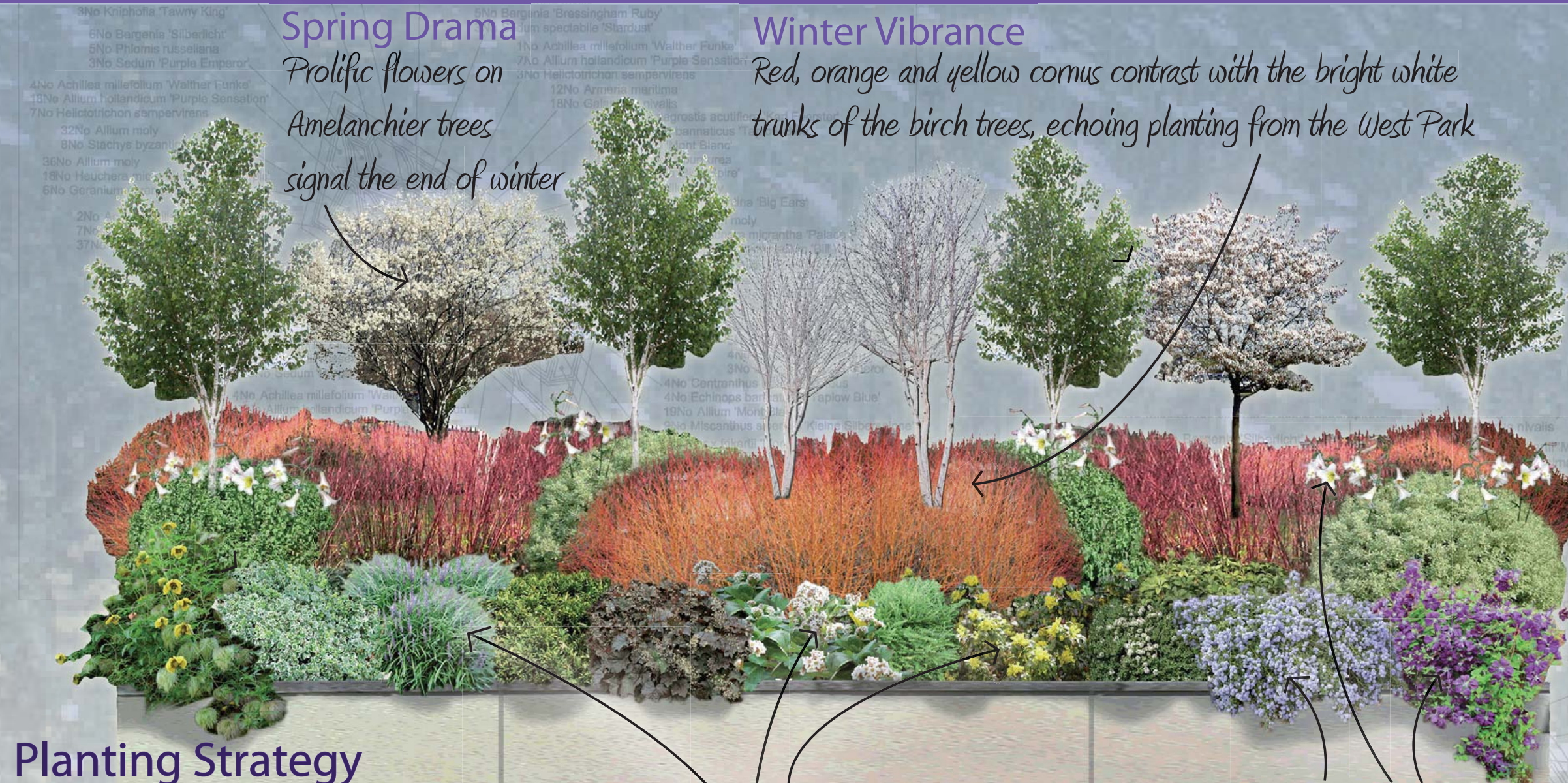
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Spring Drama

Prolific flowers on Amelanchier trees signal the end of winter

Winter Vibrance

Red, orange and yellow cornus contrast with the bright white trunks of the birch trees, echoing planting from the West Park



Planting Strategy

Largely based on the planting palette of Park Central's existing shrub beds in Sunset Park, the strategy is to create a '**layered living screen**' which changes throughout the year, bringing with it regular interest and delight. A central spine of cornus species mingle with single and multi-stemmed varieties of Birch and Amelanchier Trees. These are edged with various evergreen drought-tolerant ground cover plants and are complemented with climbers and creepers which help soften the planter walls.

Evergreen ground cover

plants help keep the planters looking at their best all year round and reduce maintenance requirements. Many species flower at different periods adding increased seasonal interest.

Summer Colour

Tall Lilies poke through the cornus, ceanothus and clematis spill over the planter walls adding summer colour and interest at all levels.



RESIDENTS COMMUNAL GARDENS

CONCEPT PROPOSALS

This sheet demonstrates the planting proposals for the residents communal gardens which were prepared for the client at design development stage

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Vibrant living screens

Brilliant white stems of birch trees and spring flowering amelanchier trees are underplanted with dogwoods, creating a vibrant living screen between residential and park link areas.

Evergreen ground cover

plants help keep the raised planters looking good all year round and reduce maintenance requirements. Species flowering at different periods add increased seasonal interest and colour.

Artificial turf mounds

break up hard paving expanses in the communal gardens with soft tactile elements. Not only will these provide visual sculptural interest, they can be used by residents for informal seating and relaxing.

RESIDENTS COMMUNAL GARDENS CONCEPT PROPOSALS

This sheet demonstrates the concept proposals for the residents communal gardens which were prepared for the client at design development stage

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RESIDENTS COMMUNAL GARDENS

Playful artificial grass mounds act as informal seating and complement the 'zen garden' style paving design within the communal garden areas. The terraces are surrounded by private patio areas as well as raised landscape planters which have enabled large semi-mature trees and shrub planting to provide a degree of privacy to the spaces from the publically accessible park link below.

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COMPLETED SCHEME

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AN EVER CHANGING LANDSCAPE

SPRING DRAMA

A succession of snowdrops, daffodils and alliums are the first bulbs which bring welcome colour and put on a spectacular show from January through to May within the park link.

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AN EVER CHANGING LANDSCAPE
SUMMER COLOUR

In summer a host of perennials burst into flower - the colours and displays are constantly changing and the space can appear completely different even on a weekly basis

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AN EVER CHANGING LANDSCAPE

AUTUMN SEED HEADS

In contrast to the vibrant colours of spring and summer, the planting palette turns much more muted in Autumn, dominated by a vast array of grass seed heads in golden yellow tones and dancing in the breeze. These seed heads are complemented by late flower perennials such as Asters, Achilleas and Sedums.

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View from above showing how the existing Park is connected to the park link. The continuation of the raised planters and trees from the park onto the park link adds balance and cohesiveness to the scheme.



Eastern entrance to the park link from Moonlit Park. The sculpture adds additional interest leading and drawing visitors through the space



Western entrance to the park link from Sunset Park. The new gates provide delineation between public and private space

CONNECTING GREEN SPACES

The response to the demanding brief and constraints was to create a publicly accessible 'green roof' park link which could be read as a continuation of the adjacent park and flow sinuously between the buildings.

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Working with children and improving school grounds

The Landscape Practice Group is the sole provider of Landscape Architectural Services for Birmingham City Council.

Whether your project is large or small, we can offer a wide range of landscape design services from initial consultation and design through to procurement and implementation.

Together, we can help make a difference and transform local communities!

Our Services Include:

- Environmental Survey and Assessments
- Landscape Planning and Evaluation Studies
- Production of Environmental Design Guides
- Landscape Masterplan production
- Detailed hard and soft landscape design and specification
- Urban Design
- Contract and Tender Documentation
- Landscape Clerk of Works Service
- Project Management and Control
- Landscape Management and after care specification
- Advice on the conservation and restoration of historic landscapes
- CDM Co-ordinator role



The Radleys Woodland Play Space

The Landscape Practice Group (LPG) organised a community planting event involving local children from Sheldon Community Youth Club.

The children undertook a surveying exercise and planted native woodland bulbs with the assistance of a landscape contractor. LPG are keen to engage children and staff in all our projects and the input and feedback we receive helps to form the basis of our design approach.

Chad Vale School MUGA

At Chad Vale School in Edgbaston, LPG were commissioned to design and construct a new Multi-Use Games Area on part of an existing playing field within the school grounds.

Significant drainage improvements and ground remodelling works enabled a large ball court to be constructed on an asphalt concrete surface with markings for 5-a-side football, Tennis and Basketball.

New footpaths were constructed to allow clean access from the School building and planting was used to soften the scheme and add seasonal interest. The scheme has produced an attractive, year-round sports facility that is an invaluable asset for the school and those who share it.



Paget Primary School & Paget Green

The Landscape Practice Group worked with Paget Primary School and Focus Neighbourhood Community Centre in Erdington to design and landscape the shared grounds, car park and adjacent public park.

The scheme also included a Multi Use Games Court with laser cut sculptures, a pedestrianised forecourt, vibrantly coloured street furniture, a new play area and new tree and ornamental shrub planting.

Designing Play and Learning Spaces

The Landscape Practice Group has worked in a number of schools over the years designing educational play spaces. From raised bed vegetable plots to pond dipping and sensory gardens, LPG can work with your school to design an inspirational space tailored to your specific needs.



Natural Play Spaces

We have considerable experience in designing natural play spaces that are inspiring, challenging and bespoke. We aim to compliment play with natural features, risk-taking design and low maintenance practicality.



Artificial Sports Pitches

We have designed a number of Artificial Sports Pitches for schools and parks across Birmingham. We can tailor the project to any required specification, whether it is for a simple Multi Use Games Area to a 3G rubber crumb artificial turf pitch with shockpads and drainage. We can also incorporate any fencing, lighting and planting requirements to complete the scheme.



An inclusive play area near Calthorpe Special School

Significant expanses of hard standing visually dominated the eastern area of Highgate Park. These were converted to grass as part of the project, which considerably improved the environment, drainage and function of the site and provided attractive informal areas for public enjoyment.

The play area was designed to be accessible to a wide range of children from the surrounding areas of diverse ethnic and social backgrounds.

The inclusive equipment specified aimed to ensure that people with disabilities could easily access and use the facility - this was of particular importance due to the proximity of Calthorpe Special School to Highgate Park.



Regenerating Local Communities