

Burley Beck Park

A new Vision for Burley Village Green

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Sammie Strickland & Rebecca Wren*



LS4

Contents

Introduction

1.0 Site Survey And Analysis

- 1.1 Current Function
- 1.2 Site History
- 1.3 Site Hydrology
- 1.4 Wildlife Observations

2.0 Community Engagement

- 2.1 Online Survey
- 2.2 Activities
- 2.3 More Activities

3.0 Individual Design Response

- 3.1 Design Concept
- 3.2 Sarah Evans
- 3.3 Rhian Jones
- 3.4 Melanie Nicholson
- 3.5 Sammie Strickland
- 3.6 Rebecca Wren
- 3.7 James Bridgman

4.0 Group Design Response

- 4.1 Masterplan
- 4.2

Perspectives

Model Pictures

Sketches

Construction Detailing

5.0 References (REBECCA)

Introduction

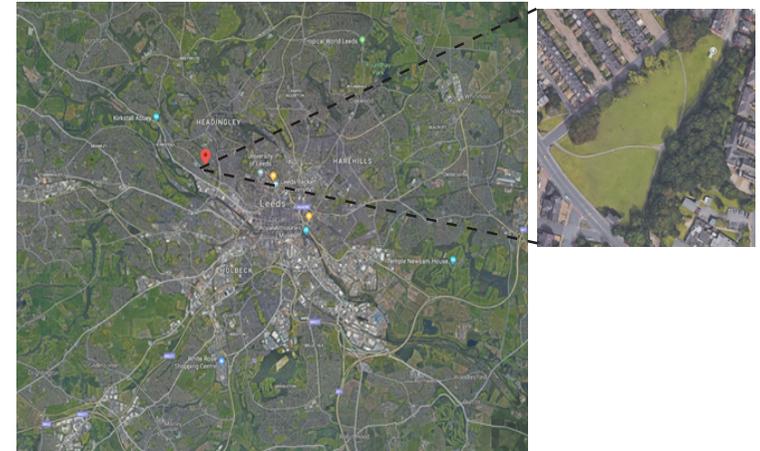
We are final year Landscape Architecture students at Leeds Beckett University; this portfolio displays our research, design process and responses to a community led project providing a new vision for Burley Village Green.



1.0 Site Survey and Analysis

Burley Village Green is a small area of land in the suburb of Burley, towards West Leeds. It has no specific purpose and in recent years has not been well maintained. This document will present and analyse the historical, social and geological aspects of the site.

The site is within close proximity to Burley Park, a larger and more locally recognised recreational greenspace. These images show the high quality of trees in the park as well as the lower end quality of the existing play space.



Function Plan



-  Crossing
-  Main Walking Routes
-  Main Entrances
-  Vehicle Access
-  Lighting
-  Seating
-  Main Gathering Areas
-  Daffodil Patch
-  Goal Posts
-  Bins

The function plan shows the main crossing routes people take when walking through the site. A total of 72 people walked into the park. Only 10 of these people sat down in the park (for a maximum of 10 minutes).

After sitting and people watching for a couple of hours we found the routes/pathways that are currently there are rarely used, and people prefer to go straight through the site to areas at the North and South.

It also shows main gathering areas, these are mainly around seating areas (the ones which haven't collapsed), we people watched on a day with good weather and we were surprised how little amount of people sat and enjoyed the large grass field. One of the chosen walking paths taken was straight through the site to the crossing on Burley Road. Lack of lighting is apparent, lightposts stand sparsely across the site.

About 3/6 benches are actually safe to sit on.

Lacks planting, daffodils appear in

History

Burley has existed as a settlement for at least 3 centuries.

The green space that now exists as the village green was once the location of the entirety of the burley settlement, comprised mainly of slum housing. It remained a small community until the beginning of the 19th century, when an increase in more established private housing occurred.

The village of Burley grew very rapidly towards the end of the industrial revolution, in order to meet the growing demand of housing from the influx of city workers. Most of the houses were built at the end of the 19th century in the typical back-to-back red brick terracing of the time. Parts of the original village can be seen at the junction of Burley Road and Haddon Road.

The area remained working class for many decades until a growth in University of Leeds and Leeds Metropolitan (Beckett) University towards the end of the 20th century created a demand for affordable student housing. Although the student population brings an economic benefit to local business and a creative vibrancy, the temporary nature of their residence often means they aren't as invested in the overall wellbeing of the communities around them.

1890



1900

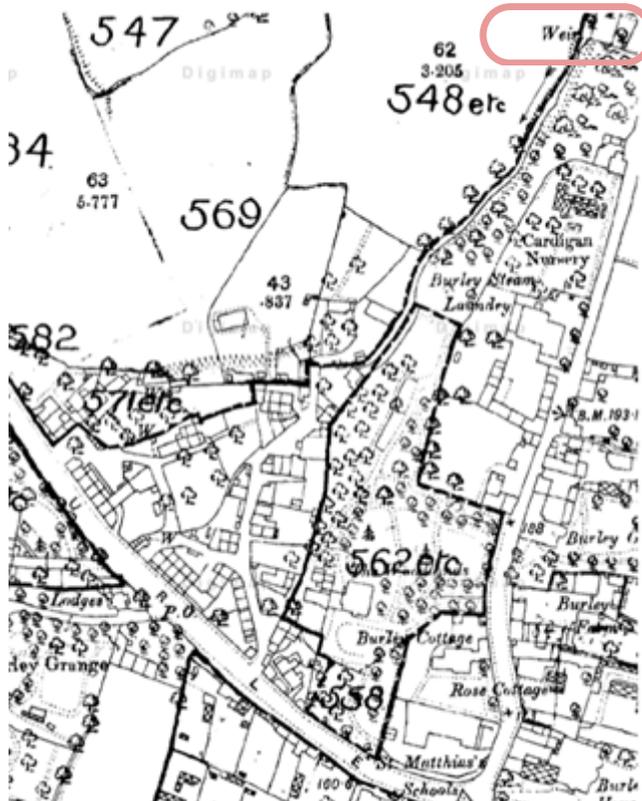


1950



Contemporary





Mudstones are deposited from river channels, showing that a water body may have existed through the site. Other statements to support this include:

- The landform and topography of Burley Green prove that a valley has been carved out of the middle.
- This historical map (from 1890) of the surroundings show a weir just North of the site
- The aspect and the general flow of this water, leads to the River Aire, South of the site.

Statements to prove this water has been culverted into an underground channel include:

- 11 drains run through the middle trough of the site where the sound of flowing water was present a day after it had rained.
- Residents have expressed that this water rises to the surface in winter and floods the pathway junction in the park.
- The Leeds Improvement Act of 1842 gave the council power to construct drainage works. The later historical maps show that the river is no longer present. This gives evidence of the river becoming heavily polluted during the industrial revolution. During this period people started living next to this river in Burley so it had to be covered. Trees by the river were removed for the houses and furthermore contributed to the poor quality of this water.
- Many becks and tributaries flow through Leeds and as the city has grown many of them have been culverted.

Wildlife

Observations

Soil

The soil quality seems to vary across the site

The presence of thriving mature beech trees suggest that the soil is wet / clay although dry and infertile patches are visible

Air and climate

The air felt fresh despite the network of roads surrounding the site

No yellow lichens were visible (sign of air pollution) on the bark of trees suggesting that the area has a better quality of air than areas closer to Leeds city centre, although the site is definitely not entirely pollutant free

Noise

The site is beneath a flight path and so subject to regular noise pollution.

Burley Road is situated through the site so the sound of cars is present throughout the day.



Species found on a visit

Thriving bird species

magpies

blackbirds

There was a time when woodpeckers were at the site but the final nest was recently

Insects

wasps

ladybirds

Small White Butterfly (common)

Their caterpillar food plants include:

Wild Cabbage, Charlock, Hedge

Mustard, Hoary Cress and Wild

Mignonette.

Issues regarding wildlife

There is not much undergrowth available for birds to nest in and there is nowhere for foxes to make a den. The site may lack a variety of wildlife because it is isolated - surrounded by houses and roads, making it harder for animals to reach it. The area also has a large number of people walking through it, causing disturbance which many species do not like. Many animals use the site as a part of their territory but not to live in as there are larger green spaces near by. To increase wildlife populations within the site, Burley Green must become a part of a wider network of green spaces that are connected together opposed to the current fragmentation.

2.0 Community Engagement

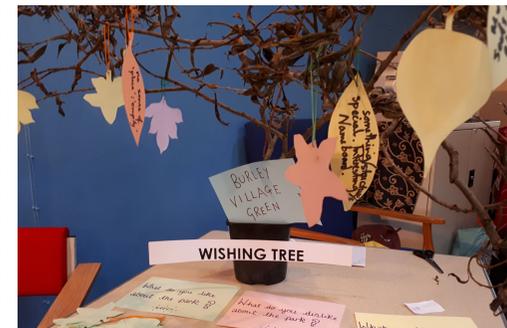


WE WANT YOUR OPINION!
 Leeds Beckett Landscape & Planning Students are seeking feedback from the Community/users of Burley Village Green & Kinross Valley. Feel free to COME IN!

We approached the people of Burley with 4 different ways to understand the needs of the community and park users.

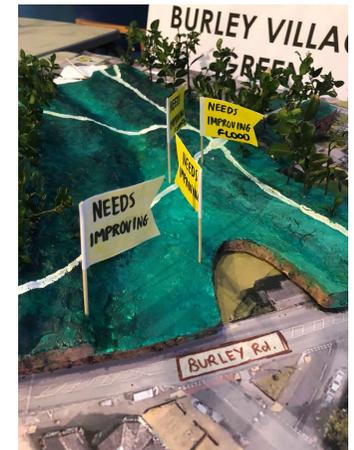


1. ONLINE SURVEY
 Our online survey was about the general green space in Leeds, followed by the associations of Burley Village Green



2. "WISHING TREE"
 The wishing tree created some open questions for people of all ages to answer and hang on the tree

3. "PIN POINT PLAN"
 We made a rough model of the Village Green and asked people if they wanted to place anything spatially with flags or pin in their own buzzwords. This was aimed at the more common users



4. "FACES IN PLACES"
 What do you want for Burley? Our individual research topics were presented on a canvas where people could express possible design ideas



What do you think would help put Burley on the map?

“Something to benefit the Burley village community whether old or young... rich or poor EVERY BURLEY- BODIES to get involved”

“Food festival” “Green spaces” “Early historical info of Burley” “Some sort of feature, sculpture or sign maybe”

“More relaxing spaces with trees and ornamental/ wildlife gardens”

“having something to visit” “Nice functional community spaces. Places were the kids can learn from their surroundings whilst also making it a nice play for adults to be. If Burley Green had a fabulous wild-flower meadow along the Burley Road end of the greenspace, it would certainly be noticed!”

“I'm interested in the early history of Burley. A Burley festival would be a good idea. Folk music and dancing. “An art trail around the village green and main Burley Park would draw people in” “A social centre place where things take place”



**Burley Road
Burley Old Village**

What do you personally associate with burley village green?

5 generations of family history, pokemon, old village, walking, history, sledging, daffodils, sunshine, rubbish and dog poo, empty space, travellers, nothing, no loos, little purpose

Which Green Spaces do you regularly visit in Leeds?

Kirkstall Abbey(16)

Burley Park(12) Golden Acre Park(9)

Roundhay Park(8) Meanwood Park(7)

Hawthorn Woods(5)

Burley Village Green(5) Beckett's Park(4)

Woodhouse Moor(4) Rodley Nature Reserve(1)

ONLINE SURVEY

29 RESPONSES COLLECTED

How Often do you interact with Burley Village Green?

Rarely (13) Weekly (9)

Daily (4) Monthly (2)

What attracts you to those green spaces?

Connection to Nature (21)

Scenic Appeal (20)

Opportunities for Sports/Leisure (8) Other (9)

[events, history, relaxation, proximity] Play Facilities (6) Dog Walking (1)



Kirkstall Abbey Park

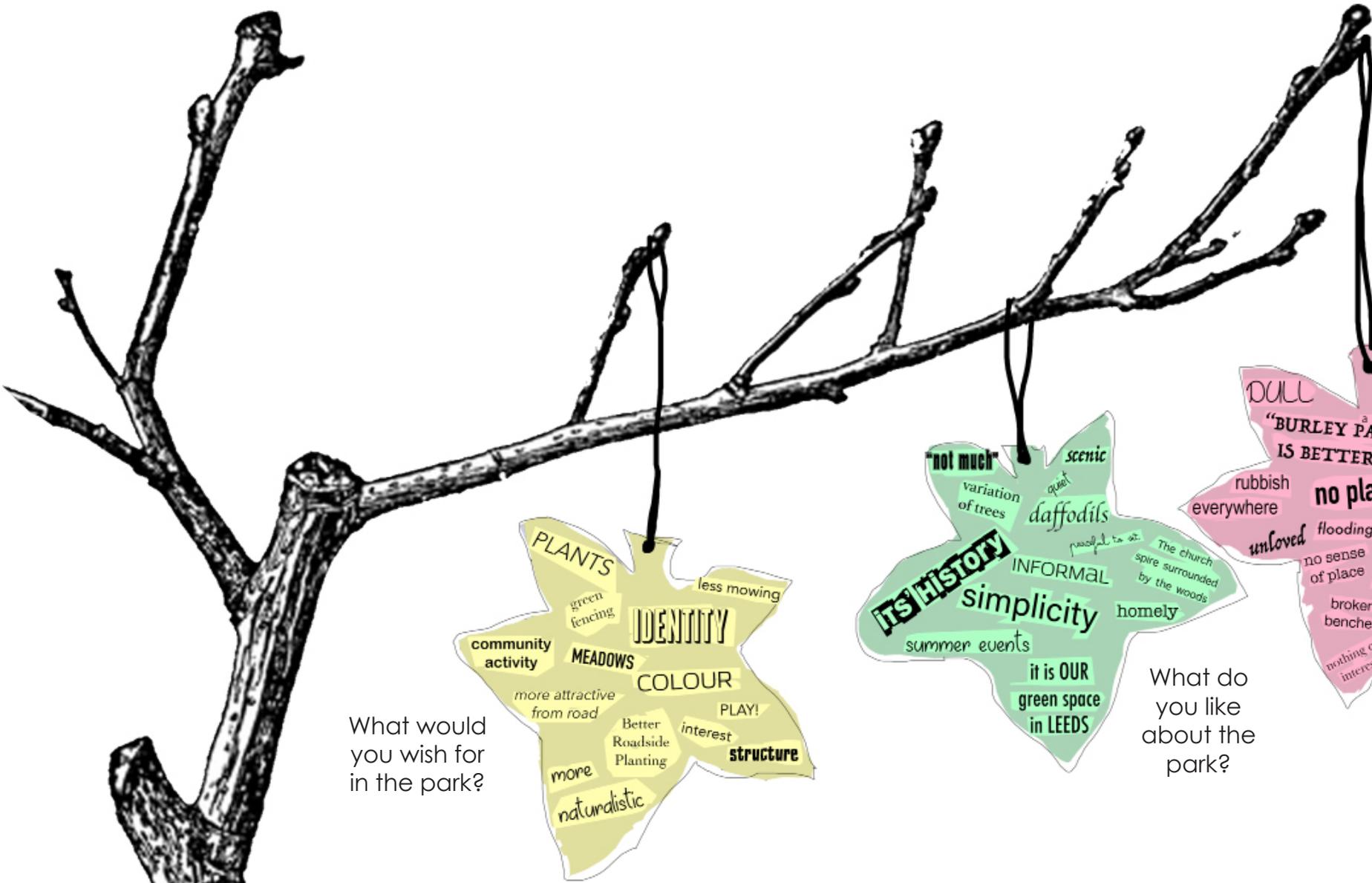
What would you change?

planting, include historical information, picnic areas, Safer divide between green and road, more interesting visuals, benches, paths, distinct signage, wild flower meadow, edible beds, sculpture, community hub

What is missing?

- Lack of **historical** context, lack of play facilities, communal seating, lack of flower beds, not enough bins, more **benches** would be good, a kind of pathway through the **trees** would allow areas of **exploration**, bat & owl boxes, It needs a nice **cafe- big enough to accommodate buggies and prams. It can only develop positively especially if our local students are involved!** A website advertising reasons to visit, Something to attract people, Something for the local kids to do, it needs a bit of love and care! Community cohesion! Community activities / classes / things going on, community spirit. Beauty, the sense of 'special place'.

WISHING TREE



What would you wish for in the park?

PLANTS
green fencing
less mowing
IDENTITY
community activity
MEADOWS
more attractive from road
COLOUR
PLAY!
Better Roadside Planting
interest
structure
more
naturalistic

What do you dislike about the park?

"not much"
variation of trees
scenic
quiet
daffodils
peaceful to sit
The church spire surrounded by the woods
homely
INFORMAL
simplicity
summer events
it is OUR green space in LEEDS

DULL
abused
EMPTY
"BURLEY PARK IS BETTER"
lacking events
rubbish everywhere
no planting!
unloved
flooding!
NO FOCUS
PLAIN
no sense of place
semi-derelict.
football goals on the slopes
broken benches
nothing of interest
too messy

What do you like about the park?

PIN POINT PLAN

“Needs Improving”
By the roadside -
something is missing
here.

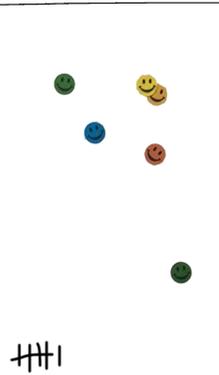
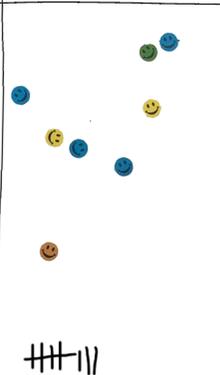
“Needs Improving”
The goal posts are
on the slope!



“Flooding Here!”
At the pathway
junction- the
most used space
currently.

“Needs Improving”
There is no footpath
here by the road.

FACES IN PLACES

 play area	 events	 orchard	 outdoor gym	 farmers market	 sculpture	 veg patch	 rain garden
							
###	###	###	###	###	###	###	###

3.0 Individual Design Responses

As a group we analysed the community engagement feedback and came up with a set of aims and an overall vision.

The feedback from the community was really useful and we discovered many new things about the site that could not have been found during desktop research.

Approaching people with conversation and emailing the survey was a successful way of collecting thoughts and opinions from the local community.

Additionally, we found active social media pages of 2 community groups in Burley which merged last year - Burley Top Community + Burley Village Community Association - this provided us with a realistic representation of the community who we are designing for, and their aims for community cohesion as well as resolving the issues which they face in the neighbourhood (voluntary litter pickers for the litter problem on the green).

With all of this in mind we created 3 aims, which reflected the needs of the community, giving us direction for the design stage of the process.

VISION

To respond to what the community feel most passionate about

AIMS

- 1 Rediscover the identity of Burley through the re-establishment of the historical Burley Beck
- 2 Create a destination for connecting with nature as well as the surrounding community
- 3 To improve the streetscape by lessening the impact of traffic on pedestrians
- 4 Kick-start a sustainable food production project in the heart of Burley
- 5 Encourage sustainability by ensuring all proposed aspects of the scheme will be overall carbon neutral

We have decided to all produce 1 feasible design each with some ambitious and idealistic features.

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Moodboard



Agreed Design Concept

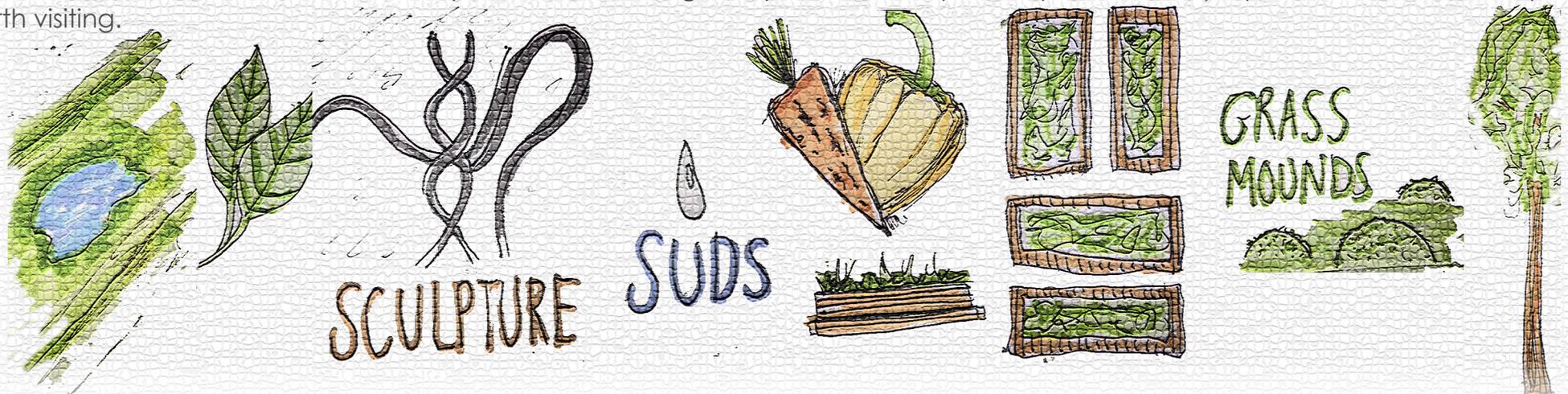
Following the consultation, we decided on 3 specific themes to drive our design responses.

Daylighting the hidden stream is a bold action that will display Burley's historic past and establish the Village Green a contemporary destination which is both stimulating and dynamic for all its users. It gives the park an educational purpose (river ecology & Burley's history) for all ages, particularly the local schools. This concept also links with Leeds FAS2 because its presence will reduce flash flooding in the Kirkstall area.

Keeping the park **naturalistic** plays an important role in sustaining the biodiversity in the area (along with the uncovered river creating a green corridor) and will add to the aesthetic quality for users who enjoy seasonal colour and simplicity.

Welcome sculptures offer visual stimulation as well as a sense of local identity. Public art can inspire, motivate and educate. There is opportunity to reflect Burley's 'Old Zoo' history through this.

We felt that these themes would be really fun and interesting to explore, more importantly, make Burley a place of interest and a place worth visiting.





With a cafe/ social hub at its heart, this new masterplan for the village green includes a resurfaced beck, sculptural walkways and dynamic naturalistic planting.

Boardwalks flow through the key areas of the sites in two circular shapes. Easy underfoot and contemporary in look, the grey boardwalk is an eye-catching feature.

The beck provides movement to the scheme as well as reuniting the community with their historic waterway.

This scheme would secure Burley Village green as a destination for relaxation and connection with nature.





Scale 1:1000
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 m



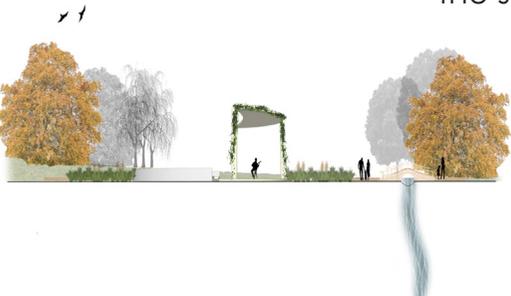
A new community cafe would bring new life to the site by refurbishing the current building and placing communal seating upon a deck overlooking the beck.

Via the process of daylighting, the beck below ground will be brought to the surface, providing huge benefits to local animal and insect species.

Extensive water edge planting would support the various animals and insects within the site, encouraging species to use Burley Village Green as their home and not just a part of their territory.



A small amphitheatre can be placed near the centre of the site, providing a central meeting place for an array of cultural activities. A mosaic bear situated on the floor of the amphitheatre alludes to the bear pit at Leeds Old Zoo, providing the site with historical context.



Melanie Nicholson



'To restore the Village Green as a destination park offering a vibrant hub for the local community through the provision of enjoyable and affordable activities including regular pop-up events such as music festivals and farmers markets.'



- Lake
- Trees
- Grass
- Children's play area
- Seating
- Wooden stepping stones
- Crocus
- Snowdrops

R e c y c l e d M a t e r i a l
The aim is to incorporate as much recycled material as possible into the scheme. Using fallen branches and old tires for sculpture, seating and play items such as swings. Donations of bulbs such as crocus, daffodils or snowdrops, and re-using soil and turf dug from the lake.

Sammie Strickland



BACK BURLEY HILL



ST. ANN'S AVENUE

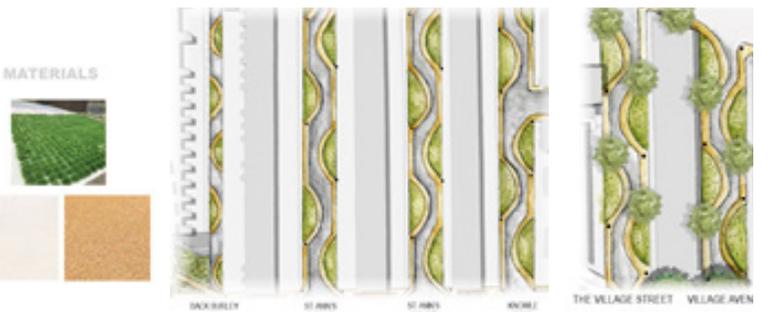


Burley has many green spaces but lacks connection between them. With each site seeming lost, creating the Burley Green Way aims to connect Burley Park, Burley Village green and surrounding green sites by implementing exciting streetscapes and vibrant planting to bring Burley back to life.

Burley Road was one of the biggest issues with the site due to how busy it is. Adding in treethrough the middle of the road helps slow traffic and create a better atmosphere within a car and within the site. Planting trees such as Acer platanoides 'Columnare' provide hardiness and require near to no pruning, and are great at dealing with pollution.



Converting the current shop into a Burley Hub, a place for the community to come and enjoy events, workspace, cafe etc. (Similar to the Heart in Headingly)



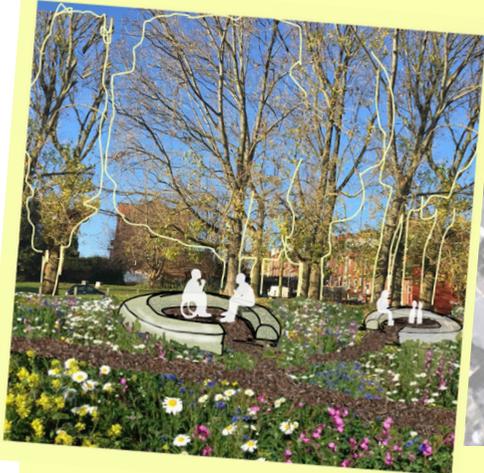
MATERIALS



- WILD FLOWER MEADOW**
Plants such as Oxeye daisy, Clusters of bellflower, Cowslip, Agrimony, Common spotted orchid, Bird's-foot trefoil, Field scabious. All to add colour and attract wildlife to the site.
- LIGHT COLOURED ASPHALT**
Light coloured walkways to brighten up the space.
- TIMBER DECKING AREA**
Provide seating for users of the Hub and also available for the general public to use.
- MODERN SEATING**
Modern seating placed in the coves of the wild flower meadows, creating small rooms for privacy.
- MODERN LIGHTING**
Modern lighting to light up the site and bring a touch of simplicity.

Using both grasscrete and coloured asphalt, the aim of the design is to connect up all of the green spaces within the area in order to reduce fragmentation, as well as improving the visual impact of the surrounding streets. The streets are full of back to back housing and tall trees, meaning the area tends to be quite dark, using lighter colours for the floorscape will lighten up the area and make it more appealing. The roads are used for on street parking, so using grasscrete means this won't be effected.

Rebecca Wren



My idea for Burley Beck Park is to give Burley an identity through rediscovering the stream by opening up pools of running water along the natural watercourse and also celebrating Burley through contextual sculptural elements. I have also provided the community with their own social spaces and followed a naturalistic theme.



Burley Pocket Park

- New Identity for Burley
- Sculptures
- Seating
- Flower beds
- Entry Points
- New footpath
- Exclusive to local area



- Road narrowing (to 5-6 m) and corresponding pavement area expansion
- Traffic calming measures (speed cushions)
- 20 mph speed restrictions
- A new shared road surface, incorporating coloured block paving and extensive planting
- Home Zone signing at all entry points to the zone to make non local drivers aware of the changed environment
- New road surface
- Gateways
- Speed Cushions
- Planters

Pocket Park

- Small park accessible to the general public
- Mostly built on a small pieces of land

- Provides greenery, a place to sit and sometimes a child play area
- Can be created around a monument, historic marker or art project

Case Study The Methleys Home Zone



Case Study

The Kerb Garden, Stockwell, London



4.0 Group Feedback, Resolutions and Funding



In a consultation, we realised we would have to achieve our theme of water through a different way. There was a lack of information about the culvert (the type of flow and amount of water flowing) which may have been too hazardous, costly, and requiring lots of engineering. We thought of various design solutions to replicate the culvert and finally decided to 'reimagine' the stream through establishing a rill. This will continue to bring the same benefits to area, and additionally make it more feasible for the community to actually connect with the wildlife and interact with the water.

We decided to name this the
'Burley Beck'
and agreed on the name
'Burley Beck Park'

We also decided it would be a better idea to design more structured planting instead of wildflowers, particularly along the roadside, because they are difficult to establish in the public realm and have a short flowering period. Ornamental grasses, shrubs, plug planting, and trees, will have colour throughout the year, as well as riparian planting along the rill.

Community research

"You're people led, strengths based and connected"

We are a not-for-profit voluntary group of interested local students which makes it possible for us to apply for a National Lottery grant between £300 and £10,000 to bring our project to life - to improve the Village Green for the Burley community. National Lottery Awards for All has 3 funding priorities which we have incorporated into our process.

We have an **environmental policy** to keep the project carbon neutral which will educate the locals about the importance of green space in Leeds and biodiversity.

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As a group, the client responses to the individual designs were assessed and a new masterplan was developed. Using the strongest aspects from each individual design to create an exciting vision for Burley Village Green that had aesthetic flow and rhythm. We gathered the common features which everyone had implemented into their designs (e.g. daylighting the culvert, sculptural elements portraying identity, naturalistic planting, bringing the park outwards into Burley Village) and we used the most relevant example of each of these components.

1 We are **bringing people together** by creating a destination for social cohesion and connection with nature in an urban setting, which is appropriate for all users and where the use of water can enhance the senses in children and people with disabilities. The new hub and vehicle accessibility encourage informal meetings and events.

2 Our design **improves the places and spaces which matter** to the Burley community. The Village Green is meaningful, in the heart of Burley, and at the center of a historical past, which needs to be thriving with something exciting and creative! We have been researching a number of topics which will encourage the regeneration of the Burley community and we want to work with the locals to find out what they like the most!

3 At an early stage before the design process, **we became involved with the community** through a consultation where the locals could identify issues referring to the Village Green, as well as express their personal aspirations of the park- in order for them to shape the project. We were able to build upon the features which they thought were working well in the park and then enhance these components in the final design. We then designed the park in response to their feedback and presented this to let everyone know that we listened to them, made progress, and addressed their issues. The community could then lead the development and delivery throughout. Everyone was welcome at these stages and we even took a visit to The Cardigan Arms which is where many of the locals socialise. We also understand the existing communities in the area and we want the new park and hub to help them thrive.

Masterplan

4.1



We have followed our aims to produce the final masterplan.

We have reimagined the 'Burley Beck' by establishing a rill through the site which is one of the main features. This enhances the user experience of the Village Green, rediscovers the historical context in the site and gives Burley identity.

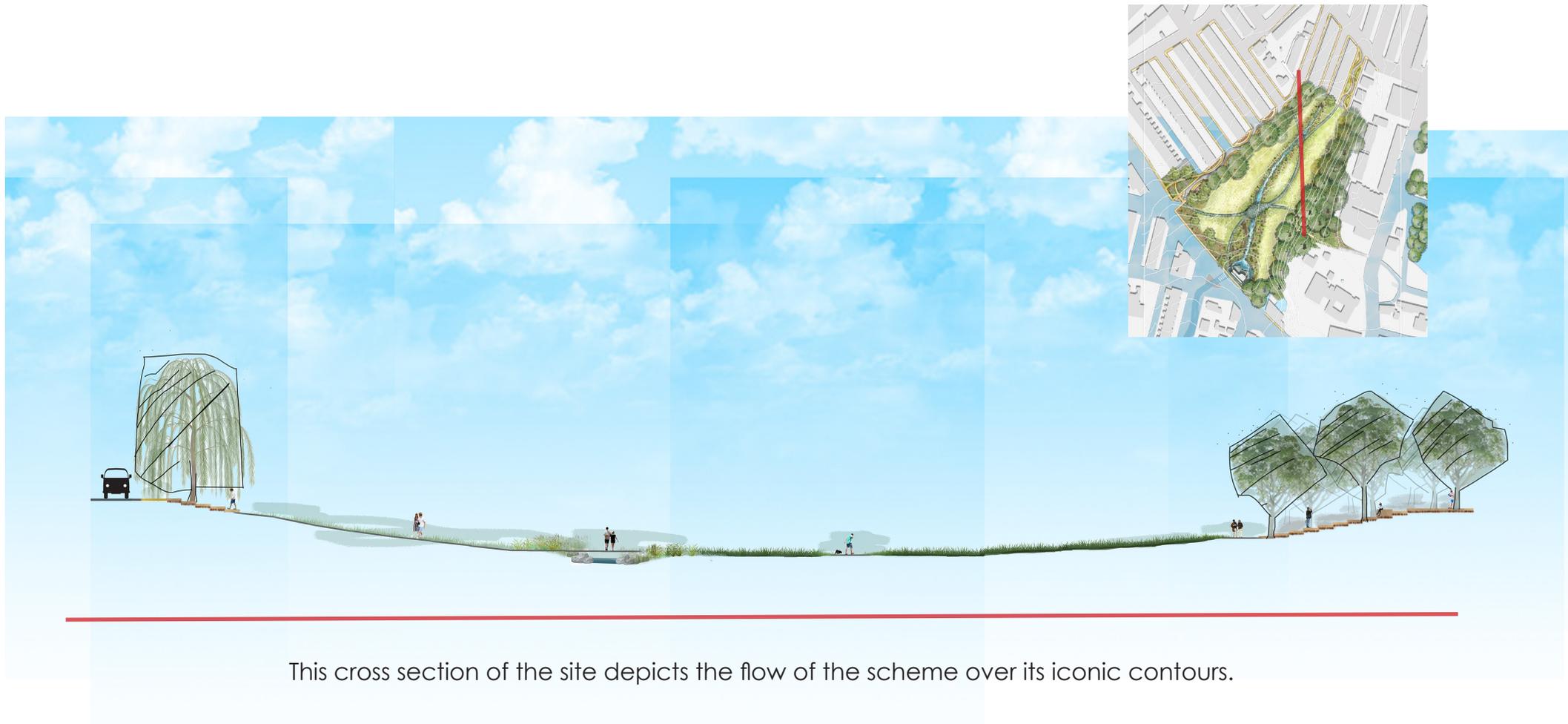
The **naturalistic planting** creates warmth and reflects the ecology of the site while reinforcing a personal connection with nature.

The **Community Cafe** is a social hub and extended space which can be used for events and bringing everyone together.

The **Speed Cushions** slow traffic and prioritise pedestrians.

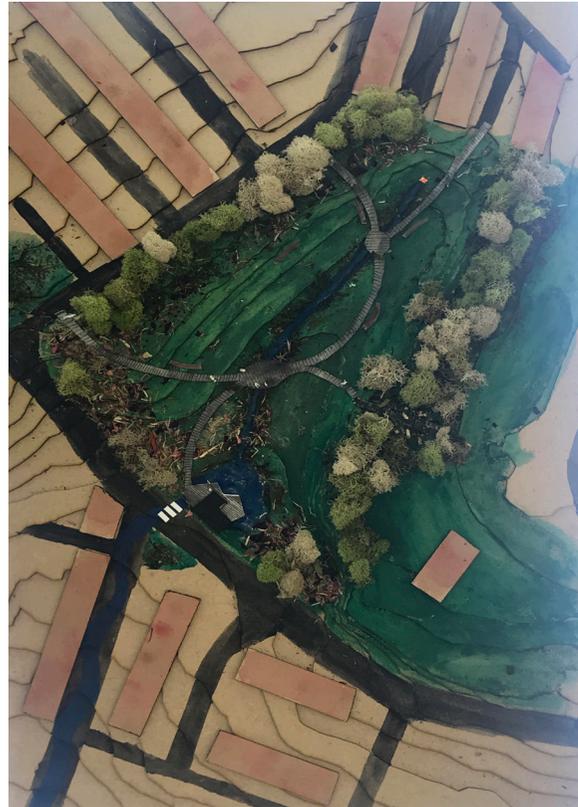
We are encouraging the community to come together by installing **Edible Planters** for those who live in back to back terraced housing.

Cross Section



This cross section of the site depicts the flow of the scheme over its iconic contours.

Working Model



Welcome Platform



A spacious platform acts as a meeting point and main entrance to the park. A fluid space that could be used for music festivals, farmers markets and community events. A cafe is proposed in the renovated building, acting as a social hub and financial aid to the park.

Boardwalks

The boardwalks will be experiential pathways through the park; showcasing the high quality green space and its wildlife. Visitors will be guided seamlessly through woodland, over the bubbling beck and wild grassy planting.

The composite material of the boardwalks provides an easy surface for visitors to walk, cycle or push prams safely.



Bespoke Rill



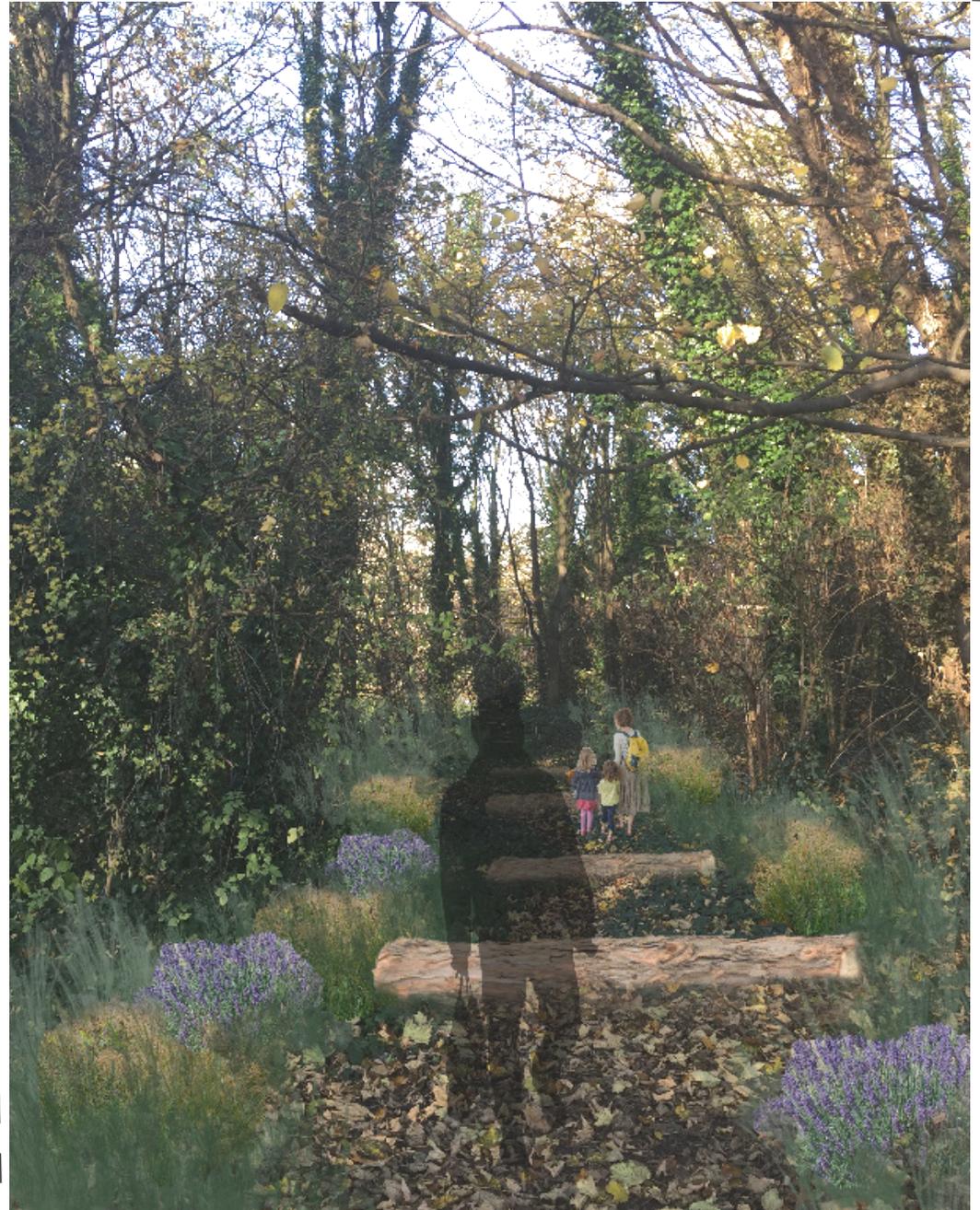
The beck itself is an engineered rill constructed with a rocky bed and naturalistic planting to as closely represent the original waterway as possible.

The source of the water will be covered by a bespoke corten steel plate engraved with a locally inspired design. As well as the functional use, it represents the proud identity of Burley.

Woodland Log Walk

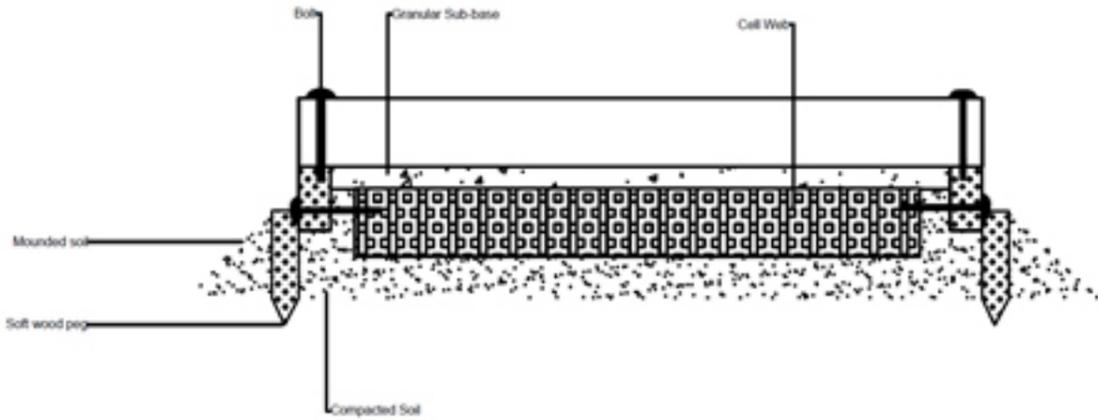
The informal woodland log path invites visitors to get close to nature and reignite the explorative instincts.

Logs firm up the woodland ground as well as providing opportunity for creative play.

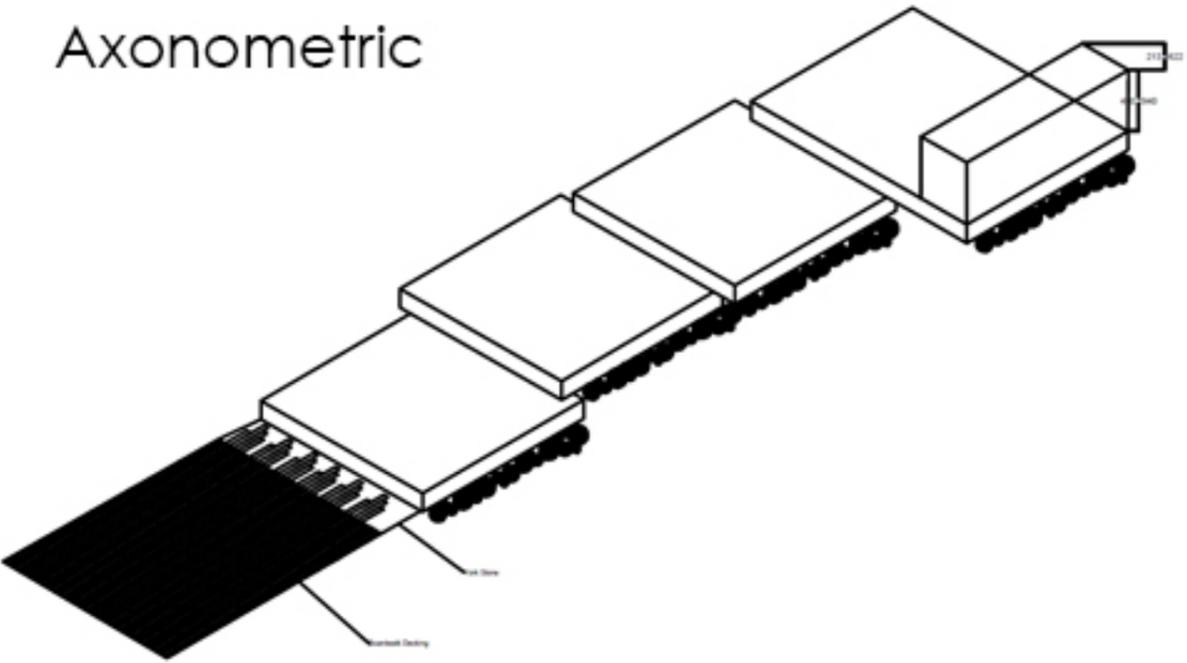


Construction Details

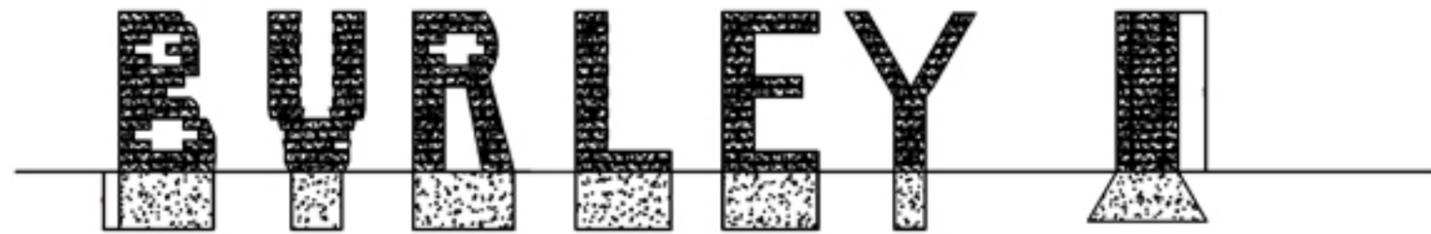
Steps Cross Sectional View



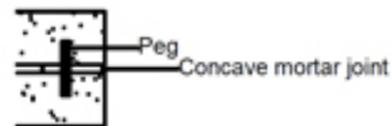
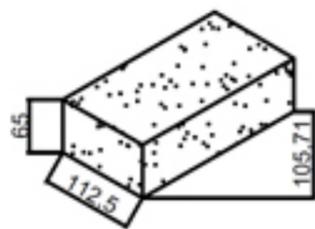
Axonometric



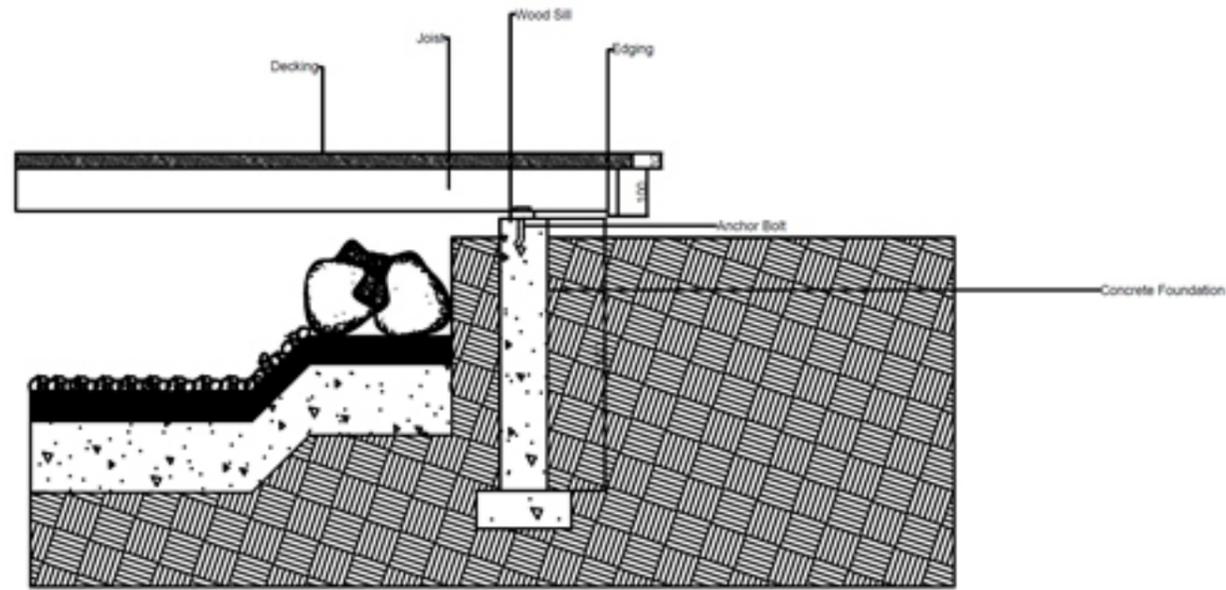
Burley Welcome Sign Cross Sectional View



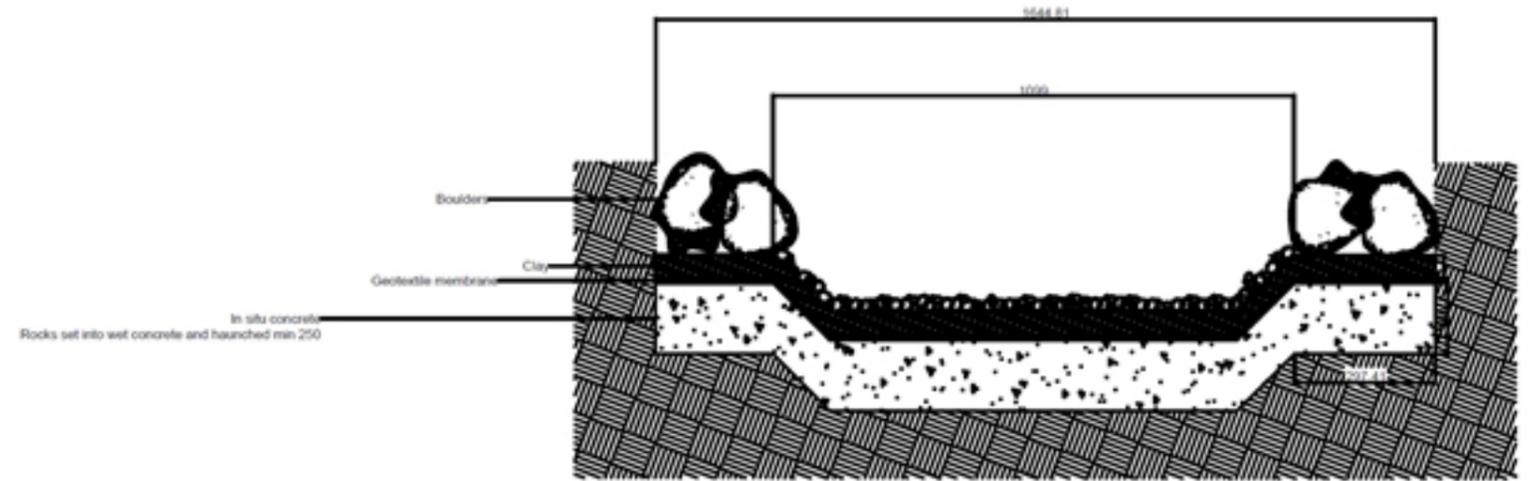
Brick Details



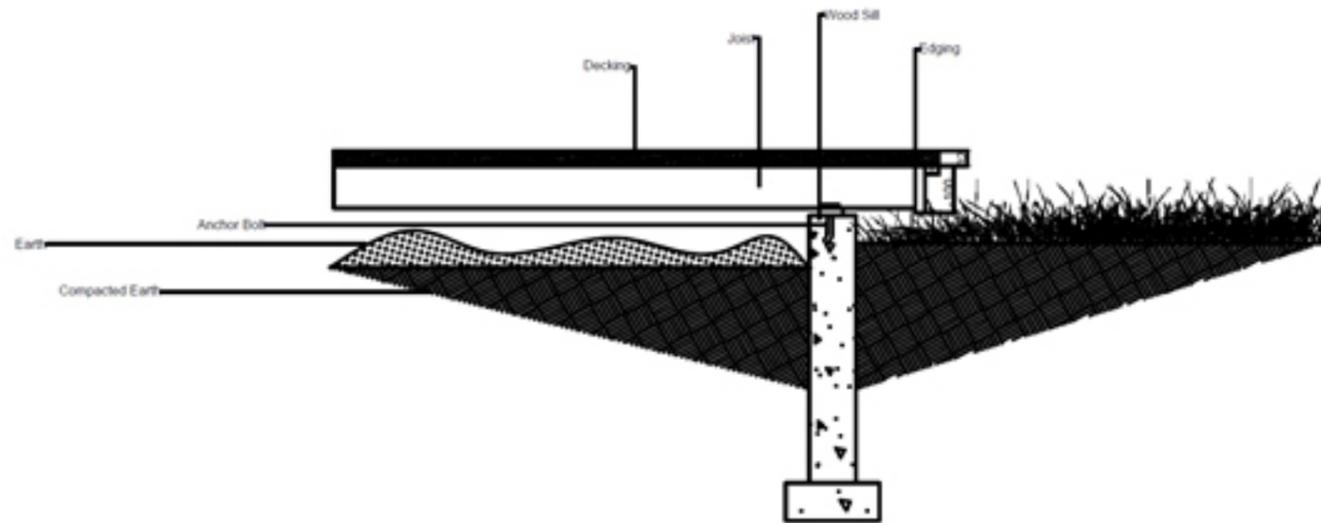
Decking Over Rill



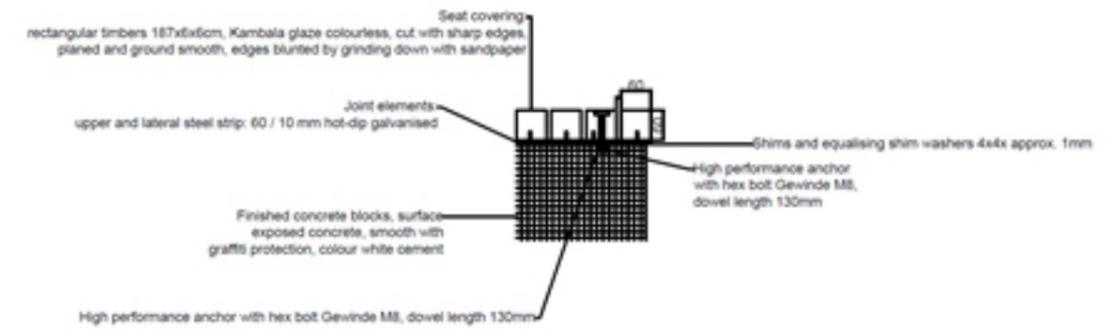
Rill Cross Sectional View



Decking



Bench Aerial View



Cross sectional View

