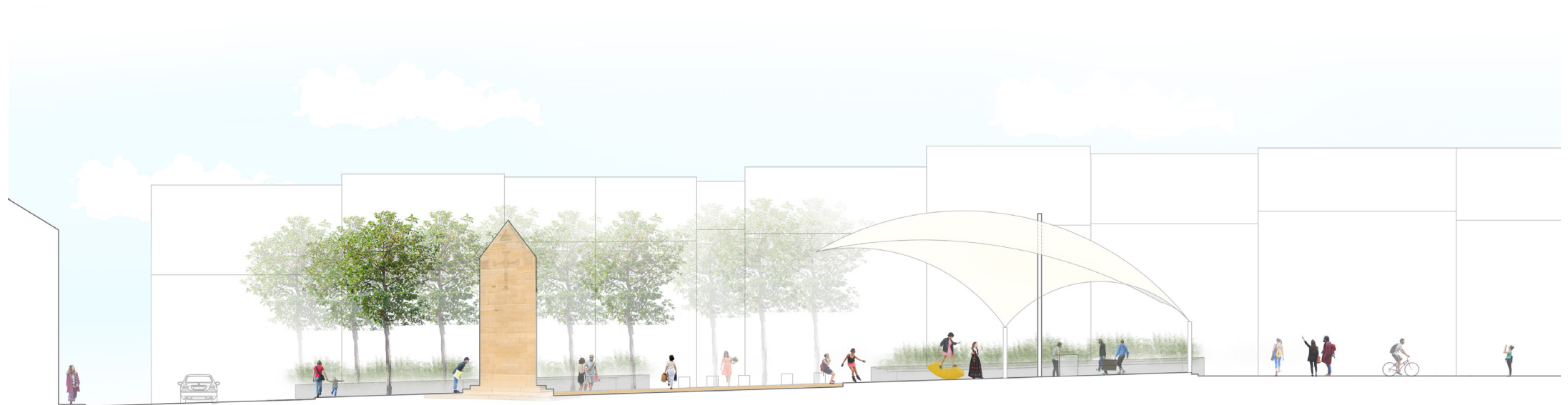


THE DIAMOND, DONEGAL TOWN
PART 8 REPORT DOCUMENT



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1.0- INTRODUCTION

The objective of this report, in line with the requirements of the Planning and Development Regulations, is to describe the nature and extent of the proposed works to be carried out at the Diamond in Donegal Town.

The proposal includes resurfacing of the Diamond, installation of new public lighting and street furniture, planting of semi mature trees and installation of a PTFE tensile structure/ canopy.

This report should be read in conjunction with the Conservation Report, Archaeology Report & the Environmental Screening Report

It should also be read in conjunction with the following drawings:

- PL.001- Site Location Map & Existing Site Layout
- PL.002- Proposed Site Layout & Birdseye Images
- PL.003- Presentation
- PL.101- Proposed Elevations
- PL.201- Proposed Sections



Figure 1- Map locating Donegal Town within it's context on the north-west coast of Ireland.



Figure 2- Map showing the layout of the centre of Donegal Town. The Diamond is outlined by a dashed red line.

2.0- PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT

The planning policy for the area is outlined in the following regional and national documents:

Document Title	Publication Date
National Spatial Strategy 2002	2002
National Planning Framework 2018	2018
Donegal County Development Plan 2018- 2024	2018
Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy Northwest Region 2020- 2024	2020
Corporate Plan 2020- 2024	2020
Our Rural Future 2021- 2025	2021
Town Centre First A Policy Approach for Irish Towns	2022

LOCAL AREA PLAN

The following policies and accompanying map are taken from chapter 9 (Donegal Town) of the Seven Strategic Towns Local Area Plan (2018-2024)

POLICIES FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

Policy DT- EH-2

It is a policy of the Council to protect and enhance the character and integrity of the 'Area of Townscape Character' (Map 6 refers), including the promotion of a higher quality built environment and to carefully consider all elements, which make this up including lighting, benches, paving, bins, signage, parking, wirescape as examples. The following principles shall guide the consideration of proposals for development within the 'Area of Townscape Character':

- (i) Buildings identified within the 'Area of Townscape Character' shall be reused/refurbished as a preference to demolition.
- (ii) Traditional railings, stone kerbing, steps, gates and boundary condition shall be retained.
- (iii) Use of appropriate heritage range colours will be encouraged. Bright neon colours shall not be permitted.
- (iv) New proposals shall respect the context and setting of key existing buildings that contribute to the character of the area. Key existing buildings are those referred to on the Record of Protected Structures and on any survey/data on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.
- (v) Existing building lines shall be retained.
- (vi) Buildings included on any National Inventory of Architectural Heritage listing are to be reused/refurbished as a preference over demolition.
- (vii) New proposals reflect the proportion, scale and massing of the existing streetscape.
- (viii) The protection of amenity and open space associated with buildings and groups of buildings.
- (ix) Traditional shop fronts shall be retained where they exist.

POLICIES FOR TOURISM, MARINE AND RECREATION Policy DT- TMR-1

It is a policy of the Council to facilitate appropriate development proposals that will support the development of new recreational infrastructure and extensions to existing recreational infrastructure as well as the tourism product, subject to compliance with all relevant objectives and policies of this LAP and in the context of environmental considerations.

Policy DT- TMR-3

It is a policy of the Council to require that development proposals within the 'Areas of Townscape Character' are appropriate in scale, massing, grain, finishing, detail and colour so as to enhance and integrate effectively in the townscape and shall otherwise comply with objective DT-EH-2 and policy DTD-EH-2 of this LAP.

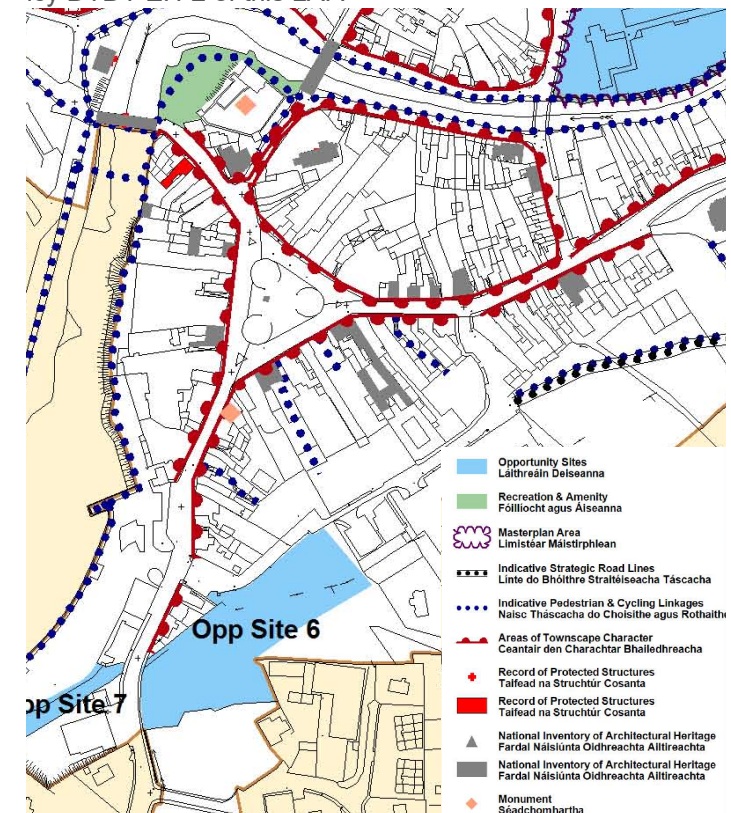


Figure 3- Section of Map 6 from the Seven Strategic Towns Local Area Plan 2018- 2024 (Donegal Town)

3.0- SITE ASSESSMENT

The proposed site is located in the centre of Donegal Town. The focal point of the town is the Diamond. It is surrounded by a range of shops, bars, and restaurants, and acts as a natural meeting point and socialising area for people of all ages. It is only a short walk from the Diamond to the Pier, and the two are linked by a footpath.

Donegal Town has been designated as a Historic Town by the Department of the Environment due to the high number of protected structures. It has also been identified as a 'Zone of Archaeological Potential' due to the high number of artifacts in the area. As well as this, in the Local Area Plan it has been identified as an 'Area of Townscape Character' due to its historic buildings, structures and streets.

Up until 1999 three roads around the Diamond with the primary traffic access roads for all traffic travelling to the south, west, and north of the south of County Donegal. The primary function was a two-lane roundabout.

In 1999 a bypass was constructed around Donegal town which created a new and greatly improved vehicle traffic route and therefore had a fundamental impact on traffic volumes around the Diamond.

Current traffic is primarily local, commercial including servicing and public transportation. The Diamond is used as a collection and pick up point by bus and taxi services.

The Bus Eireann bus stop which is also used by public & private bus operators is located outside the Abbey Hotel on the west face of the Diamond and this area is used for approximately 90 -100 bus movements per day.

This fundamental change created by the opening of N15 ByPass has enabled the Diamond to function as a cultural, civic, recreational and tourist friendly space.



Figure 4- Photo of the Diamond being used as a market place circa 1890. (Lawrence Collection)



Figure 5- Postcard from 1973 showing the Diamond being used as a car park.

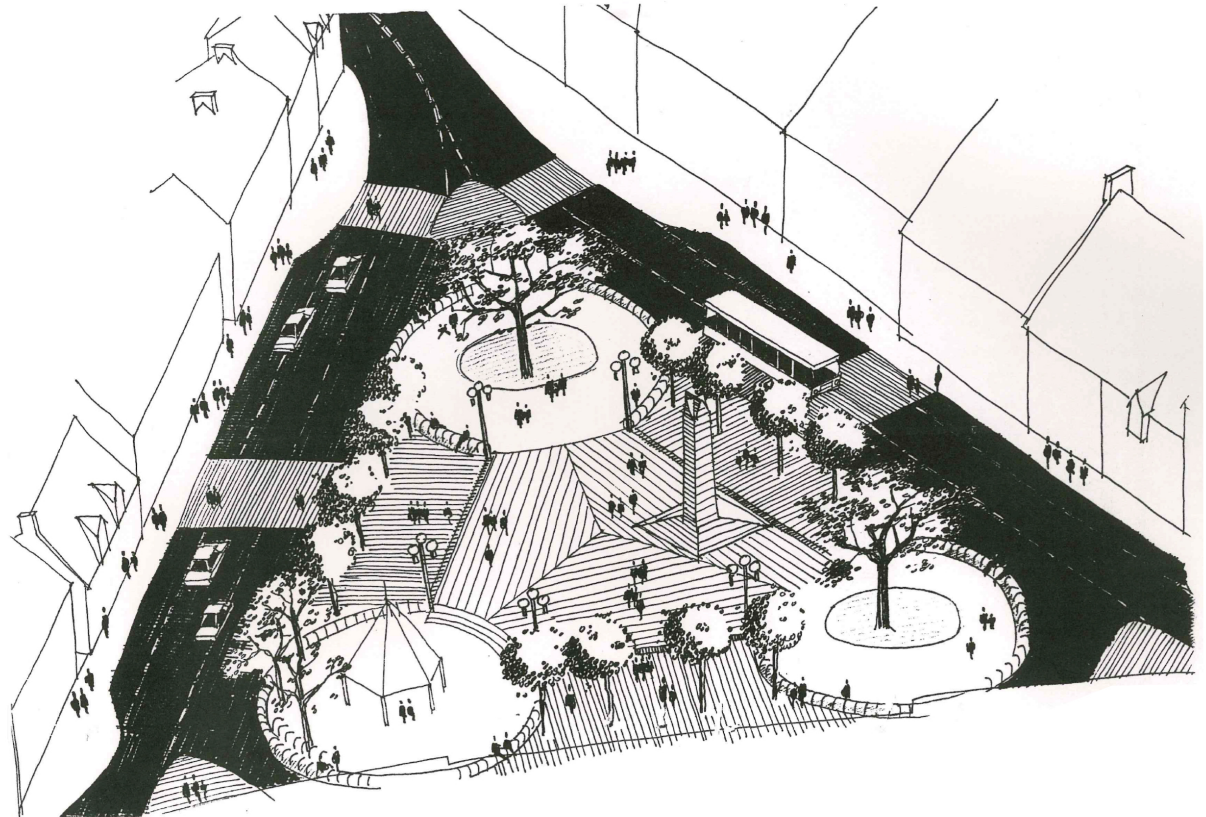


Figure 6- 1990 Design for Diamond - Michael Swanton FRIAI County Architect.

Parking is available on the inner side of the outer footpaths adjoining the buildings on the three faces of the Diamond.

In 2010 - 2014 pedestrian courtesy crossings were placed in three locations linking the footpaths on the outer edge of the Diamond to the protected diamond pedestrian area.

The courtesy crossings are level with the road and are finished in red coloured Tarmac, which is the only defining feature of the crossing.

Placement of these crossing points has improved pedestrian safety somewhat.

The Diamond functions as a civic space and is used by the community in times of celebration and occasionally collective empathy.

The Diamond has always been a powerful feature in our Urban realm and proposals here serve only to evolve, freshen, soften and make more accommodating this vital Public space.

Much can be achieved in improving the circulation experience and the materials /features that residents and visitors alike will experience as they move through the Diamond. Quality landscaping, hard wearing natural (local) materials and surfaces as well as characterful works of Art and play can enhance the experience for all.



Figure 7- Existing view of the Diamond taken from The Abbey Hotel.

4.0- THE DIAMOND PROPOSAL

The image on the right shows the proposed interventions to the Diamond outlined in this Part 8 report.

The surface interventions are predominantly hard landscaped using local materials. Safety, accessibility and durability are key concerns with regards to this proposal, and this is reflected through the use of naturally hard wearing, anti-slip/anti-skid, and low maintenance materials.

The two remaining trees (of the three original) are in very poor health due to poor soil conditions and insufficient soil depth when originally planted. These will be replaced by numerous semi-mature trees around the perimeter of the Diamond.

The existing paving in the three rings of the Diamond is of good quality and as a result will not have to be replaced.

Public realm lighting will be provided in the Diamond which will enhance the nighttime economy of Donegal Town and also give a greater sense of safety and security to residents and visitors at night.

A large, permanent PTFE tensile structure will create a sheltered area which will be of benefit in terms of events and performances, as well as socialising.

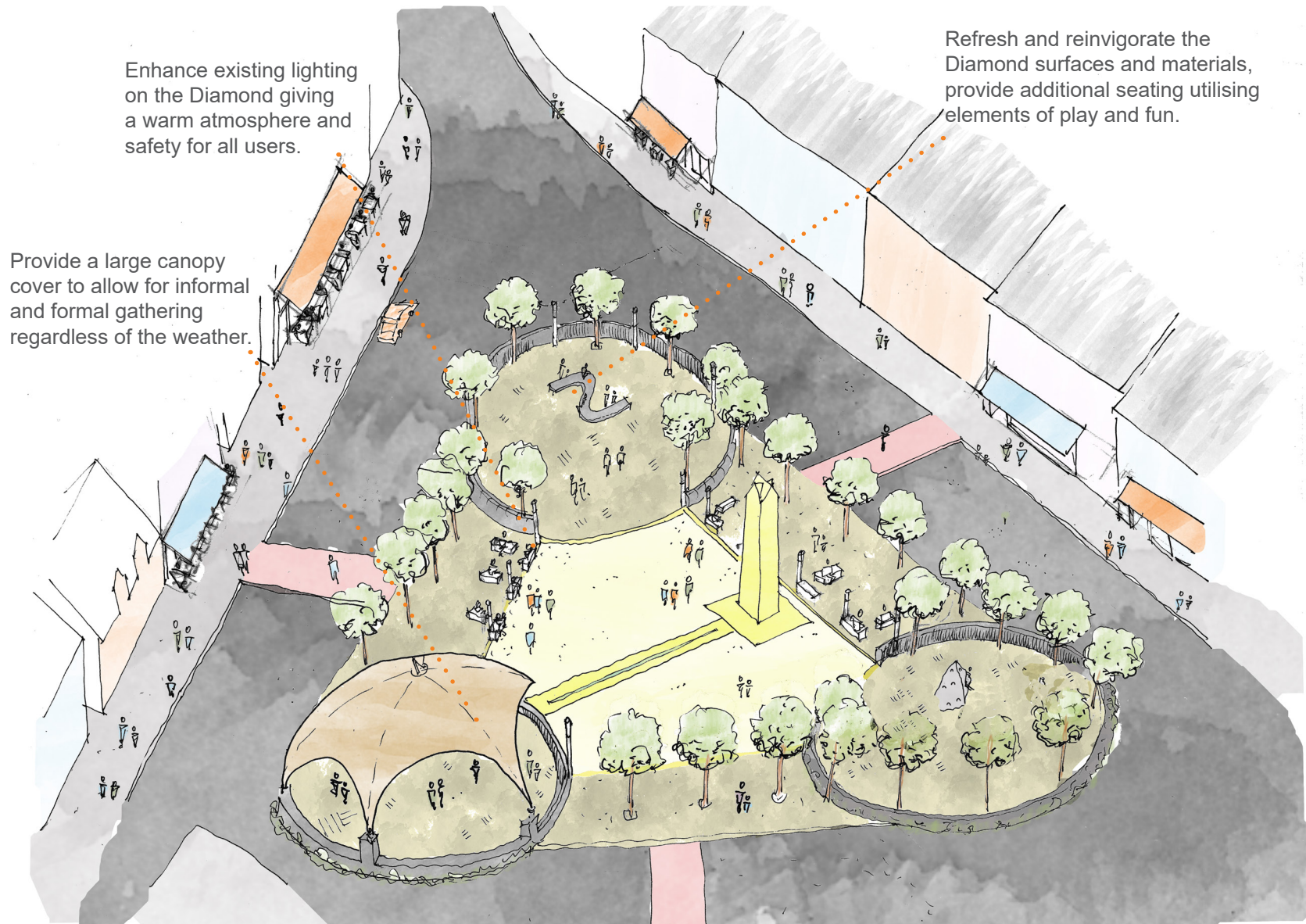


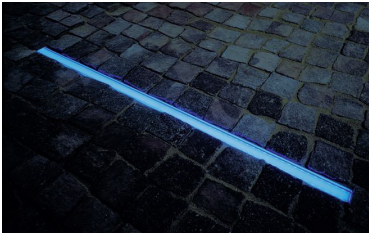
Figure 10- Summary of proposed interventions to the Diamond

4.1-MATERIALS



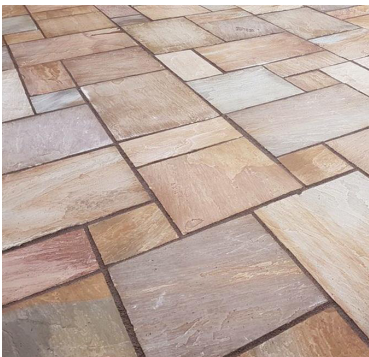
Resin Bound Gravel

To replace the hard existing stone surface with a lighter, softer, permeable resin bound gravel



Obelisk Lighting Channel

Illuminating the centre of the Diamond and emphasising the focus on to the obelisk



Sandstone Paving

Creating a more solid base supporting floor light, enclosed by Ballylusk Gravel reflecting the stone of the Four Masters Memorial Obelisk

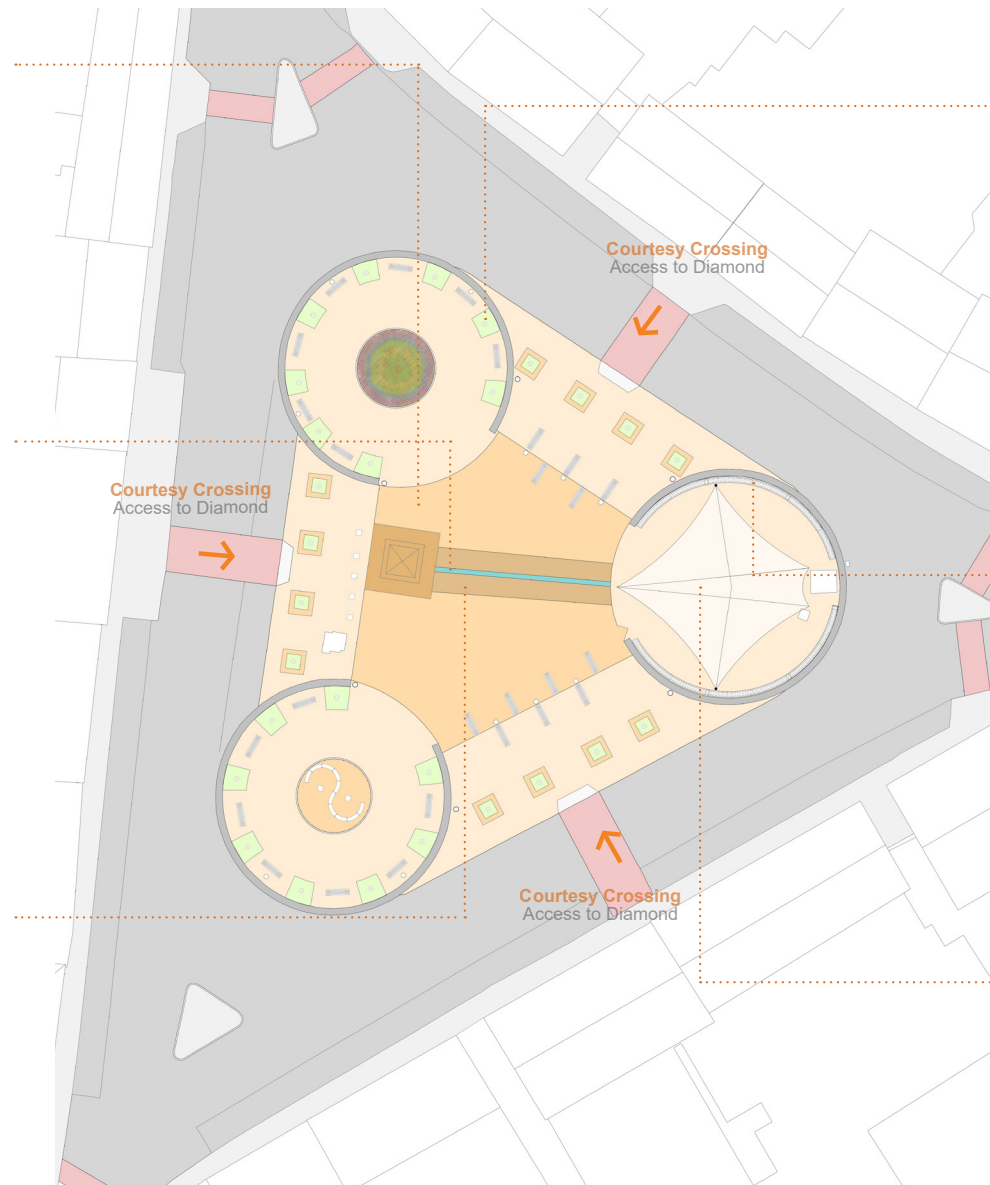


Figure 11- Plan showing different materials utilised in the proposed works to the Diamond



Inner Ring of Pleached Trees

Base of Foliage at 3m, enclosing the inner rings, adding protection and privacy



Recessed Wall Lighting

Lighting the inside of the rings of the diamond, as well lighting the road on the outside



Weatherproofing the Diamond

A permanent tensile structure (surface area 340m²) supported by columns with artificial lights allows for weatherproof events and informal use within the Diamond

4.2- PUBLIC REALM LIGHTING

Lighting is an essential Public Realm component to make it easier, more enjoyable for people to move around after dark, safely. Lighting enhances the atmosphere of the environment, creating a feeling of warmth and fun.

Good quality lighting will support increased sense of safety and well-being, identifying routes and potential hazards - such as changes in level, making the spaces safer for pedestrians and those in vehicles. A creative approach enhances the Architectural/Cultural environment, and will enhance the experience of those who enter the site.

Our aim is to provide the functional lighting required while enhancing each space, by:

- Providing sufficient lighting levels and the correct quality of light
- Assisting with orientation and circulation through out
- Avoid light pollution through careful specification of output and positioning.
- Giving good colour rendering to surfaces and visually enhance each space.
- Utilising efficient light sources, luminaires and control to reduce energy consumption
- Utilising fixtures and fittings that can be easily and economically maintained.
- Enliven landmark destinations, for the nighttime economy.



Figure 12- Thorn Alumet Control Direct post top mounted lighting column

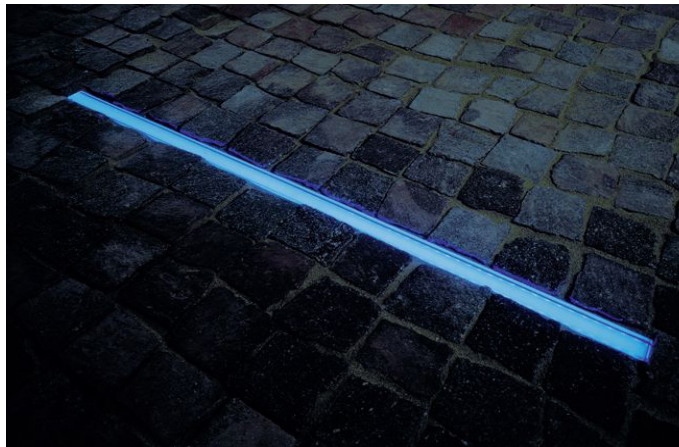


Figure 13- Thorn VistaLRx L12 300-RGBW IP67 recessed ground linear marker luminaire

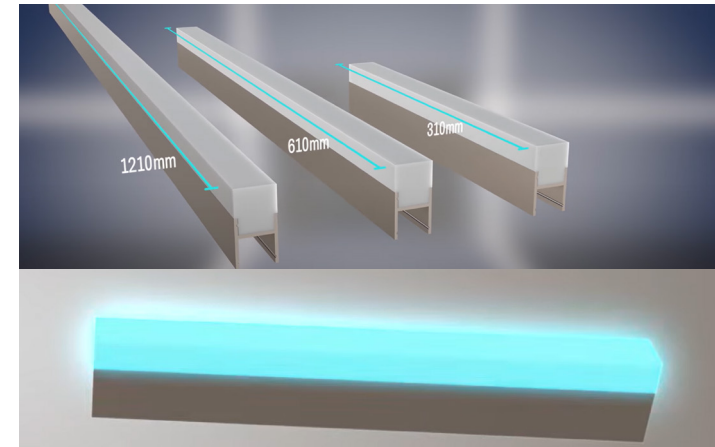


Figure 14- Thorn Fino Flex L6 10000-930 U IP67 flexible surface mount linear luminaire



4.3- CONCRETE SEATING

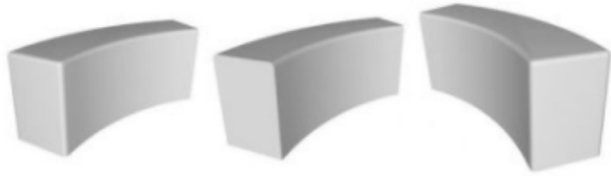


Figure 15- Pendlebury Modular Curved Concrete bench (Broxap)



Figure 17- Harpurhey Concrete Cube Seat (Broxap)



Figure 19- Bredbury Concrete Bench (Broxap)

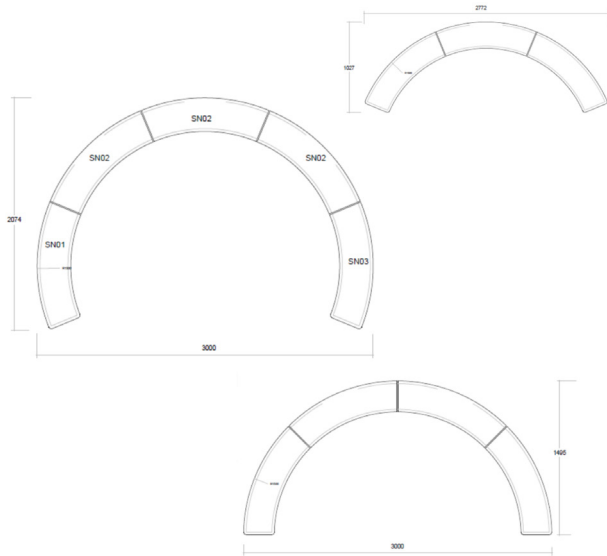


Figure 16- Dimensions of Pendlebury Modular Bench



Figure 18- Burnage Concrete Cube Seat (Broxap)



Figure 20- Concrete colours and finishes available from Broxap

4.4- OTHER FURNITURE



Figure 21- Harpurhey Picnic Table (Broxap) to be modified with chess board



Figure 23- Option A, Box Bin Extra Slim with rain cover (Streetlife)



Figure 25- Rough&Ready Curved benches for underneath canopy (Streetlife)



Figure 22- Wayfinding sign bearing Donegal branding



Figure 24- Option B, Box Bin with small opening to restrict larger items (Streetlife)

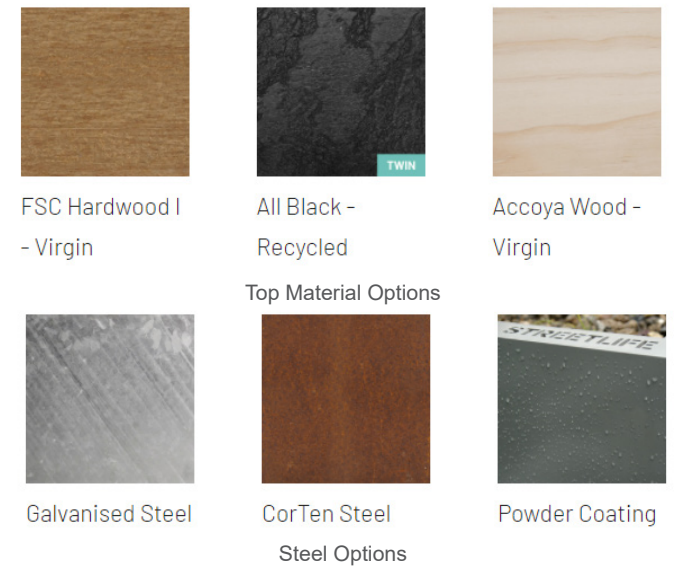


Figure 26- Timber and steel finishes available from (Streetlife)

4.5- TREE PLANTING



Figure 27- Resin bound gravel is a flexible, permeable material, making it well suited for infill of tree pits.



Figure 28- Carpinus Betulus (Hornbeam) is a hardy tree that does well in harsh conditions as well as urban environments.



Figure 29- Resin bound gravel filled tree pit with bark mulch fill around collar and irrigation system embedded.



Figure 30- Due to its dense foliage Carpinus Betulus is well suited to pleaching. It also retains some of its dead leaves with a rich orange/brown colour during the winter.

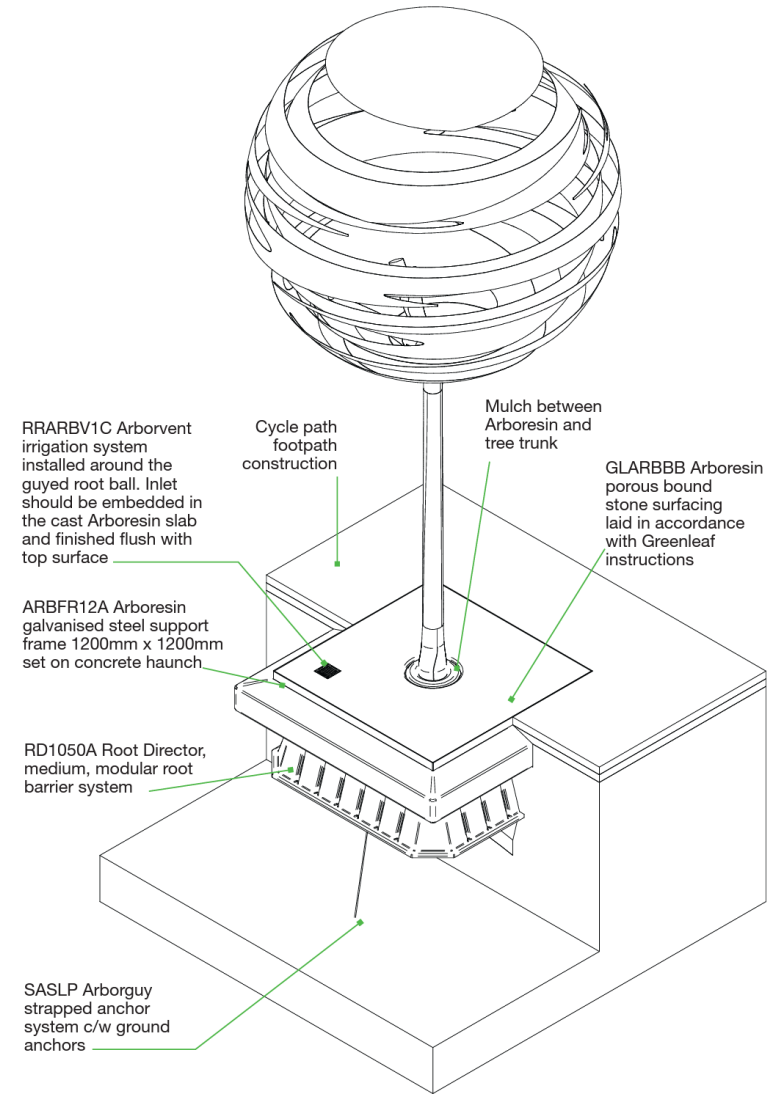


Figure 31- Axonometric section of a typical tree pit filled with resin bound gravel.

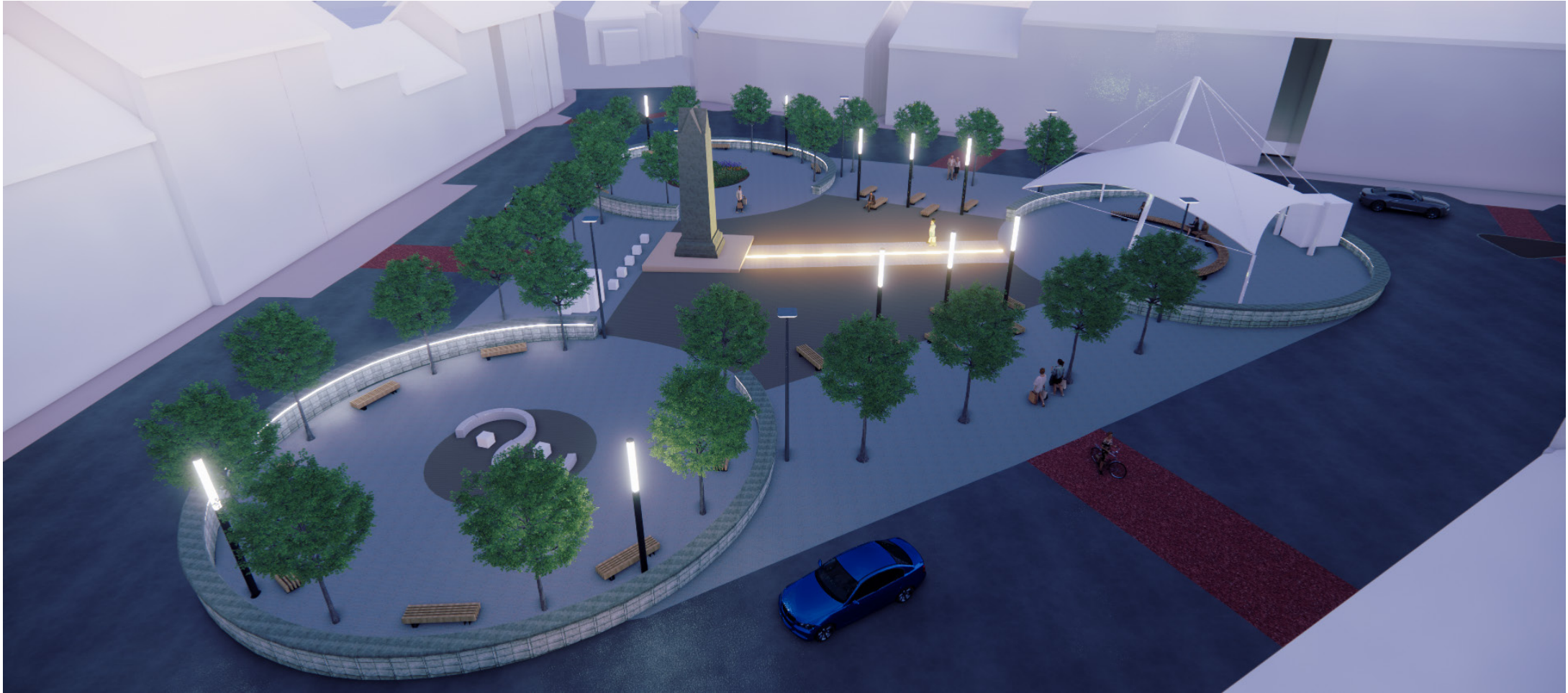


Figure 32- The Diamond by night