



# Blackfriars UTS

## Stage 1 DA

### Public Domain Report

ISSUE C 10th November 2015

University of Technology Sydney



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# Executive Summary

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The Blackfriars campus is located in the heart of Chippendale in close proximity to George Street, UTS's Broadway Campus, the Carlton United Brewery redevelopment (CUB), and Broadway Shopping Centre. The improvements to UTS Blackfriars campus will further enhance this mixed use precinct .

Building on the developing character and intensity of the area, UTS seek to provide an active new building which supports their vision to be at the forefront of innovation.

Engaging with the street and built around a revitalised central courtyard, the Innovation Hub aims to encourage the collegiate spirit of collaboration while contributing to the local community through an improved streetscape and inviting public space.

The following Public Domain report seizes on the opportunity to create a highly textured, contemporary cloistered courtyard with a diversity of spaces responding to solar access, programmatic requirements and opportunities to celebrate heritage.

The development will observe the following **Mitigation Strategies;**

## **1/ Improve Buckland street by;**

\_Providing a new building that is built to the site boundary and addresses the street with an engaging and active frontage.

\_Replacing trees and planting additional street trees to provide a avenue of planting consistent with the City of Sydney's Street Tree Master Plan.

\_Creating one clear and accessible entry to the courtyard using high quality paving, interpretive inlays and feature planting .

\_Recognising the heritage of the site through the integration of interpretive elements and the retention and restoration of the heritage gate to the south of the new entry.

## **2/ Create a contemporary cloistered courtyard by;**

\_Designing a series of high quality spaces around a central court framed by heritage and contemporary buildings.

\_Ensuring that external spaces allow areas for a variety of uses from small events and meetings to lunch spots and individual contemplation.

\_Providing timed loading zones within the sites boundary.

\_Celebrating heritage buildings by providing appropriate curtilage and inviting better interaction.

\_Harnessing interpretive opportunities to reveal the sites layers of history





# 1. Analysis

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An Inner city protected courtyard

A green respite

# 1. Analysis

## 1.1 Context

Blackfriars UTS site is located approximately 800m from Central Station and only less than 400m to Broadway shopping center. It is adjacent to the new One Central Park precinct.

It's immediate vicinity comprises of finer grain retail and residential properties and for a major part of the area being occupied by educational facilities. Blackfriars existing building and structures are of heritage significance dating back to 1883.

Key

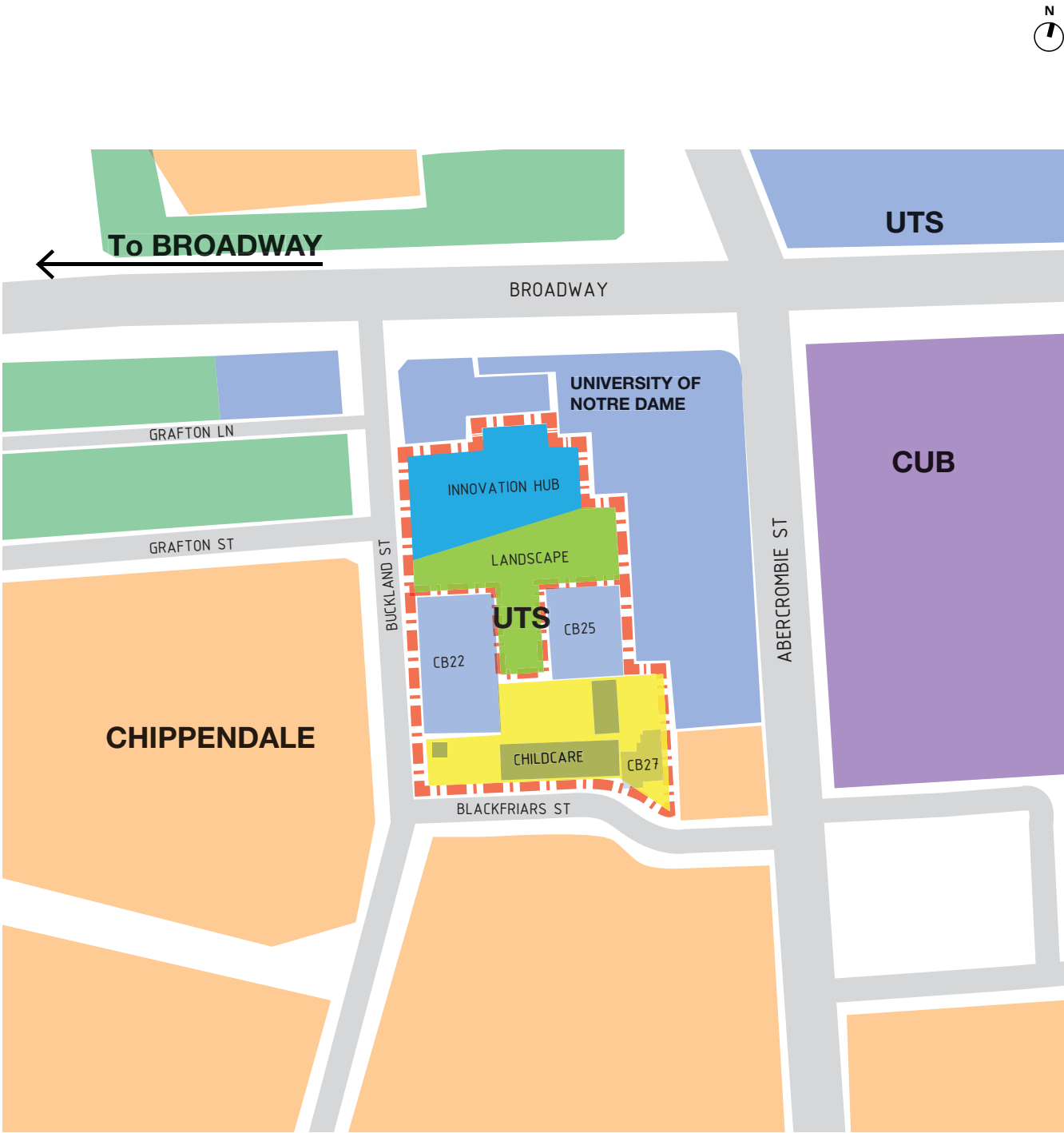
Site boundary extents

Residential

Retail

Educational

Mixed-Use





# 1. Analysis

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## 1.2 Streetscape

The Blackfriars site is framed by Buckland Street and Blackfriars Street with an additional lane way (Blackfriars Place) that currently provides access to neighbouring residents. Existing trees with mulch tree pits are planted along Buckland St. Several trees to the northern end of Buckland Street are in poor condition and warrant replacing. Both streets are paved with asphalt with brick paving only occurring at the corner of Buckland & Blackfriars Street. Provision for on-street parking occurs on both sides of the street. There is a one-way access onto Abercrombie Street.



1. Buckland Street - existing Blackfriars childcare entrance



2. Buckland Street - onlooking Building 2 CB22



3. Corner of Buckland & Blackfriars Street



4. Blackfriars Place

# 1. Analysis

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## 1.3 Courtyards

The Blackfriars site is comprised of two main open spaces. A 560 square metre rectilinear courtyard located on the southern end of the Blackfriars site which is turf and asphalt. Shared access to the courtyard is off Blackfriars Street and parking is available to the open car parking area adjacent. Limited fixed tables and seating benches populate the turf. Most of this area will be re purposed as outdoor space for the relocated childcare centre.

The second space, to the north, reaches from Buckland Street to the eastern perimeter and includes fenced outdoor play spaces for the current childcare centre.

The space has undefined edges and it is difficult to ascertain what is private and what is public space.

The high brick wall separating St Benedict's from the site has some heritage value and presents an interesting and textured backdrop to the western most space.

Existing Olive trees are poorly located in close proximity to the Former Boys School.

The space has a unique landscape character with opportunities for finer grain.



1. Existing courtyard on the south of Blackfriars site



2. Existing fixed tables and chairs



3. Existing green spaces on the eastern retaining wall next to Building 5 CB255



4. Existing green spaces for Blackfriars childcare



# 1. Analysis

## 1.4 Heritage

Prior to colonisation water from Blackwattle Creek naturally pooled in Blackwattle Swamp ( located to the south west of the site) before proceeding towards the harbour. The availability of fresh water, which was later dammed became a substantial catalyst the location of the Colonies second distillery.

Built by William S Cooper and later purchased by CSR, the distillery operated between 1825-1878 and it is thought evidence of the many buildings may be found in archaeological material contained beneath the existing ground level to the north of the site.

In 1881 the Department of Education resumed the land and built two sand stock brick buildings; the Infant and Girls School (Building 2 CB22) and the Boys Public School (Building 5 CB25). The buildings, designed by G. Mansfield in the Ecclesiastical Gothic Style, are still in use by UTS today and will continue to help define the internal courtyard space.

The former Headmaster's Residence (Building 7 CB27) to the south east forms part of the relocated Blackfriars Childcare Centre (City of Sydney D/2012/1398)

Palisade fences with sandstone gate posts and low retaining walls line much of Buckland Street; a small portion of which will be removed to allow the Innovation Hub to built to the street edge.



1. Heritage sandstone gates along Buckland Street



2. Former Infant & Girls School (Building 2 CB22)



3. Former Boys Public School (Building 5 CB25)



4. Former Headmaster's Residence (Building 7 CB27)

# 1. Analysis

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## 1.5 Existing Materials Palette

The precinct has an 'institutional' feel with the heritage buildings constructed from sandstock brick and sandstone, while the paving appears haphazard and includes asphalt, brick and concrete unit pavers.



1. Brick and concrete paving across Blackfriars site



2. Concrete pavers for entry to Building 7 CB27



3. Primary use of brick and sandstone for heritage buildings



4. Existing brick retaining wall with reinforced steel structures



# 1. Analysis

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## 1.6 Site Panoramas



1. Corner of Buckland & Blackfriars Street



2. Buckland Street

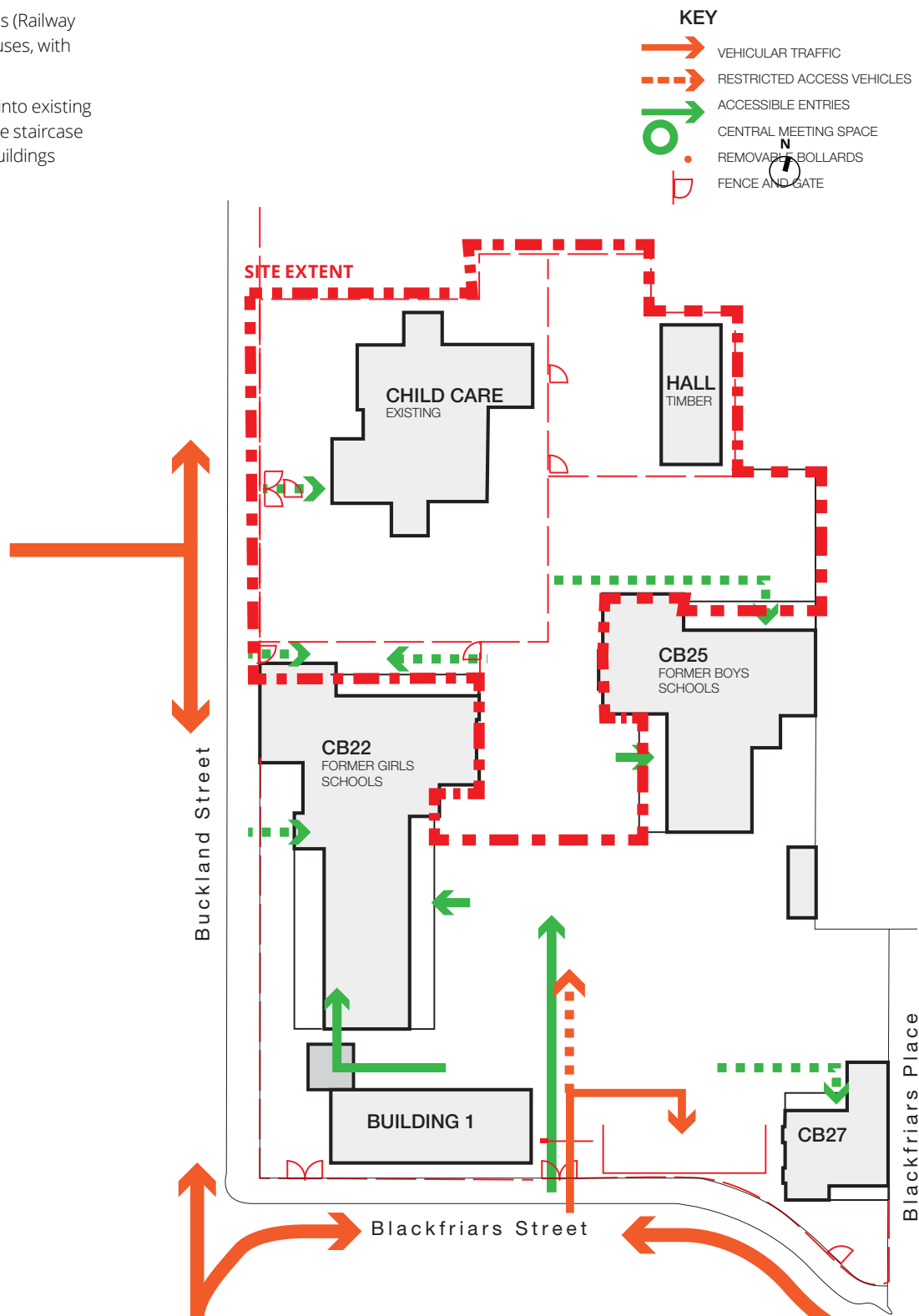
# 1. Analysis

## 1.7 Existing Access

Primary vehicular and pedestrian entry is located on the southern end of the Blackfriars site via Blackfriars Street. Limited car spaces are available on site. Extents of vehicular access within the Blackfriars site can be unclear and mostly inhibited by unclear boundaries and undefined open spaces.

The site is serviced by both Sydney Trains (Railway Square & Central Station) and Sydney Buses, with stops on Parramatta Road.

Accessible ramps have been retrofitted into existing heritage buildings together with separate staircase entries make legibility and access into buildings unclear.





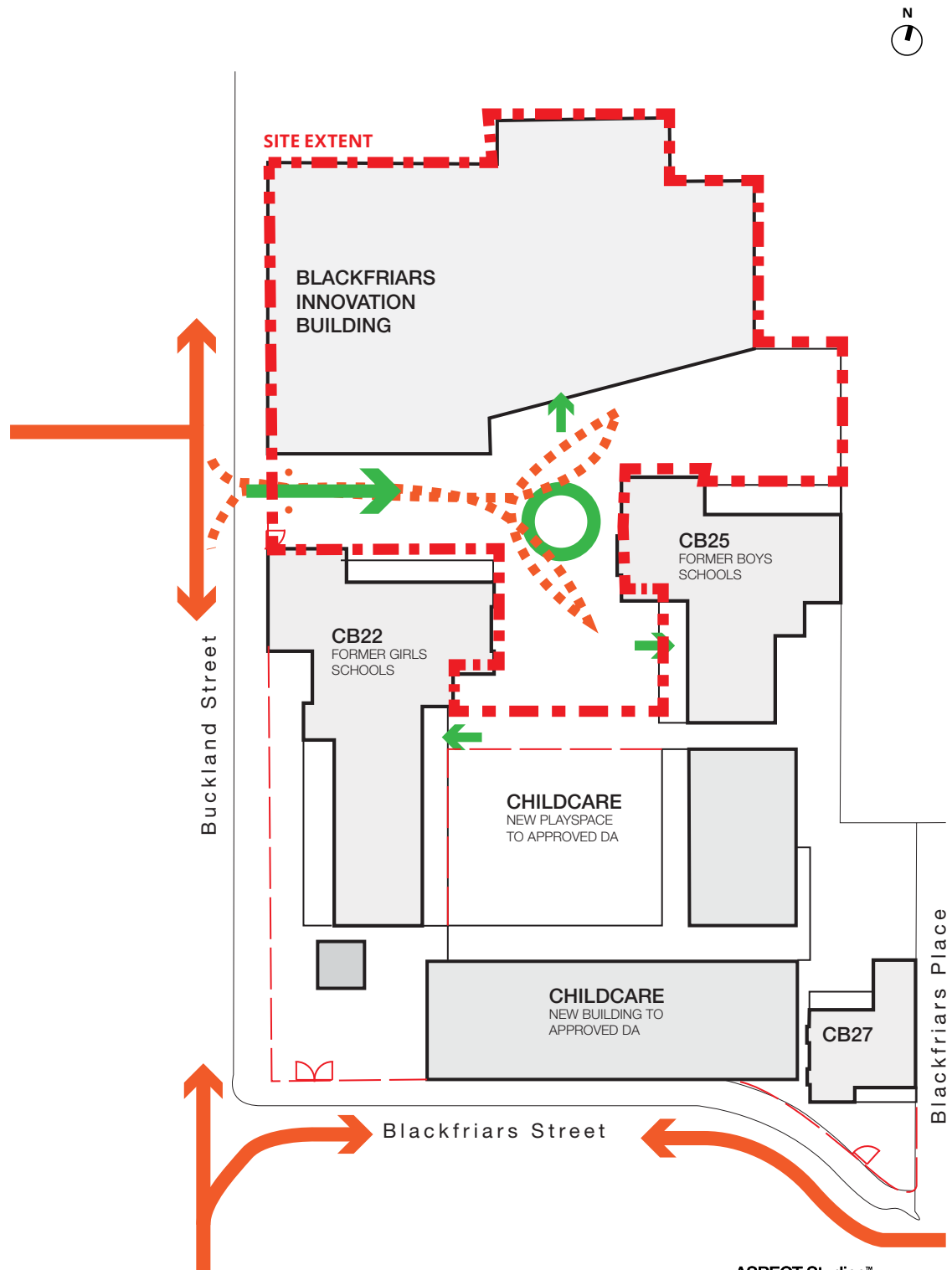
# 1. Analysis

## 1.7 Proposed Access

The concept plan proposes the main entry to the campus be relocated to the western end of the Blackfriars site via Buckland Street.

The main entry will have a generous width to allow clearance for the entry and exit of a service loading truck up to 9.88m in length. This shared zone will be comprised of high quality pavers that integrate with the overall paving design of the court to form a continuous ground plane within the Blackfriars site.

Timed access will be managed with retractable bollards.



# 1. Analysis

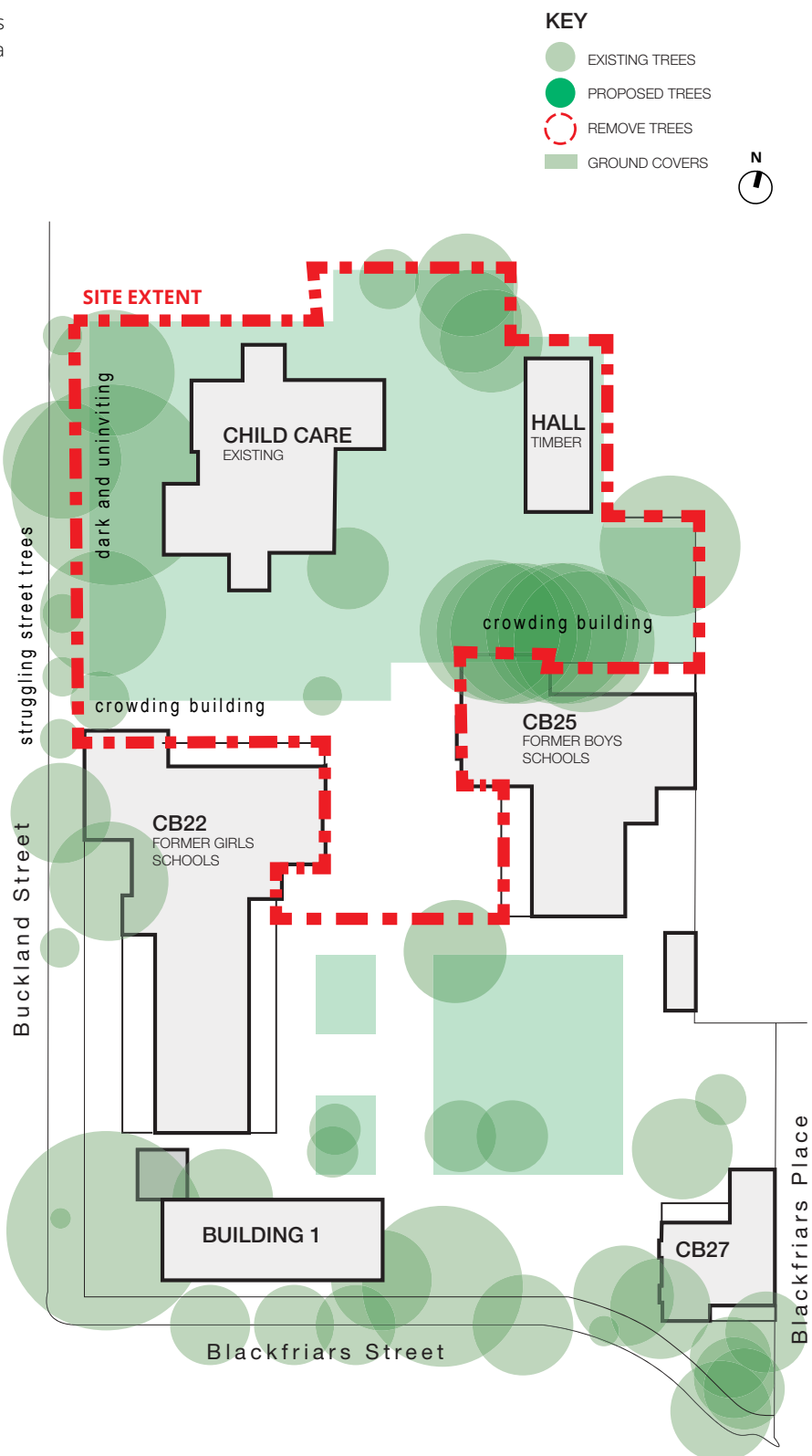
## 1.8 Existing Planting

Street Trees vary along Buckland Street. The larger of which are *Lophostemon contortus* (Brush Box) interspersed with smaller *Tristania laurina* (Water Gum) with the occasional *Liriodendron tulipifera* (Tulip Tree) and a small *Fraxinus excelsior* (Common Ash)

The front garden of the existing child care centre has some large trees including *Cinnamomum camphora* (Camphor Laurel), *Jacaranda mimosifolia* and a *Casurina cunninghamiana*, but overall presents as dark and un-inviting.

A cluster of African Olive trees are planted in close proximity to Building 5 and appear to be overcrowding the building.

Refer to arborists report for species,



Refer to Arborist report for detailed tree schedule and locations.



# 1. Analysis

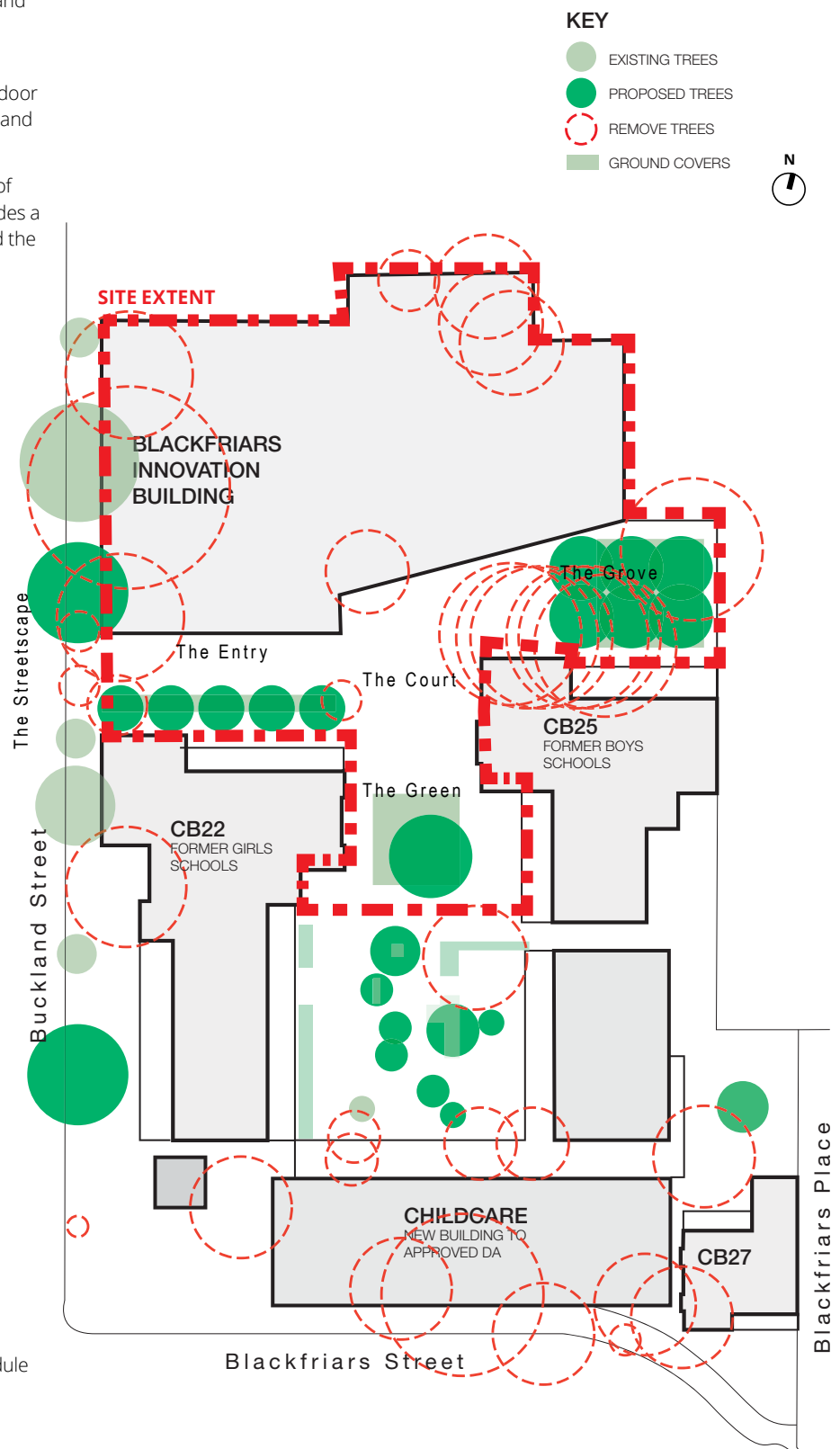
## 1.8 Proposed Planting

The Fraxinus will be removed to allow for the new entry however 2 new Blackbutts will be planted along Buckland Street reinforcing the street tree grid.

Adjacent the entry, a row of new small trees of columnar form frames the view into the court and compliments a new seating edge.

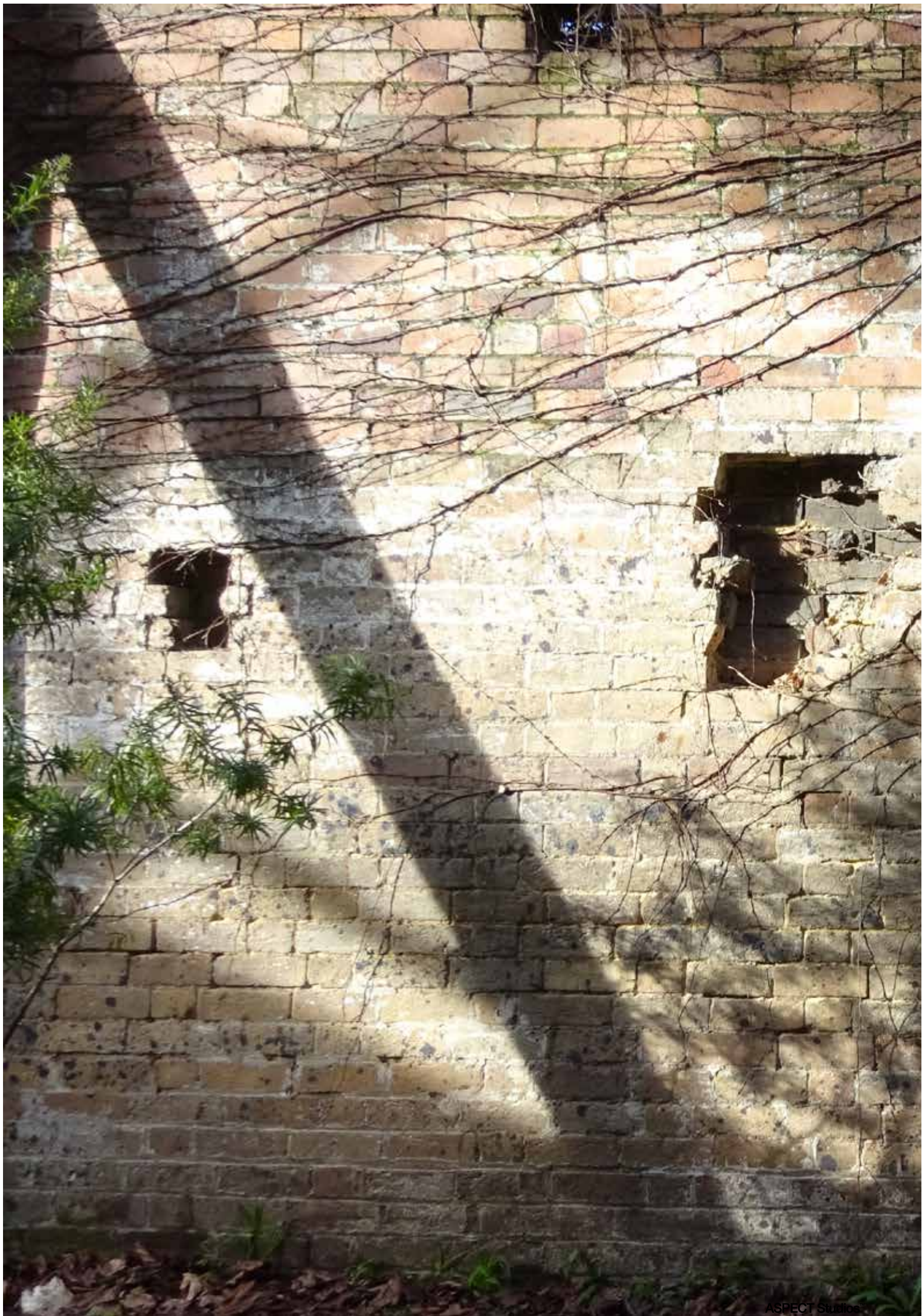
To the north of Building 5 a grove of deciduous trees and will be introduced providing new outdoor spaces for casual meeting, lunchtime activities and relaxation.

A large native tree will be planted to the south of The Green. A feature in the space, it also provides a green division between the innovation hub and the childcare centre.



Refer to Arborist report for detailed tree schedule and locations.







## 2. Opportunities & Constraints

Retrofitted accessible ramps create unclear pedestrian circulation paths with cars sharing the ground plane for most of the southern end of the site.

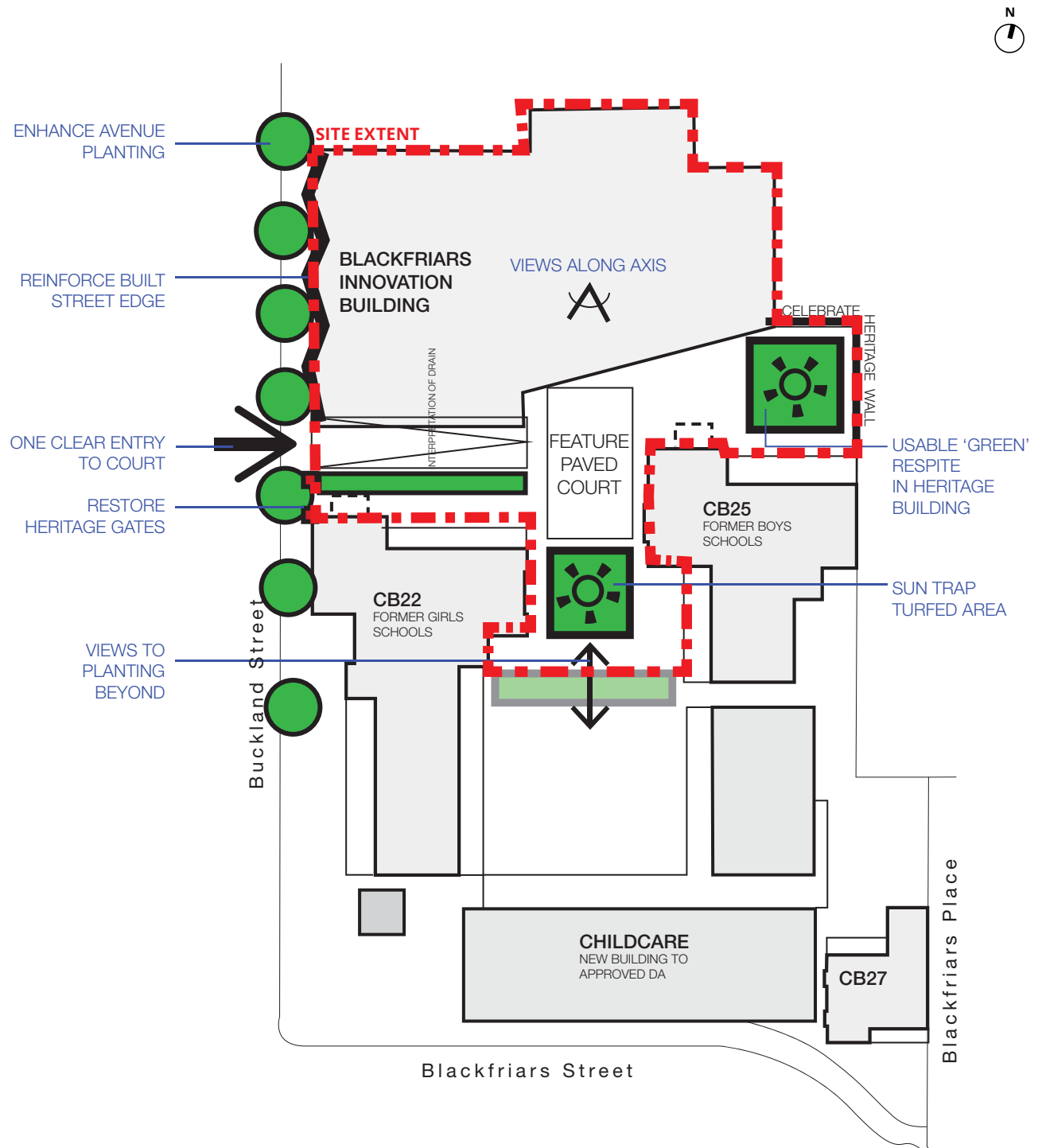


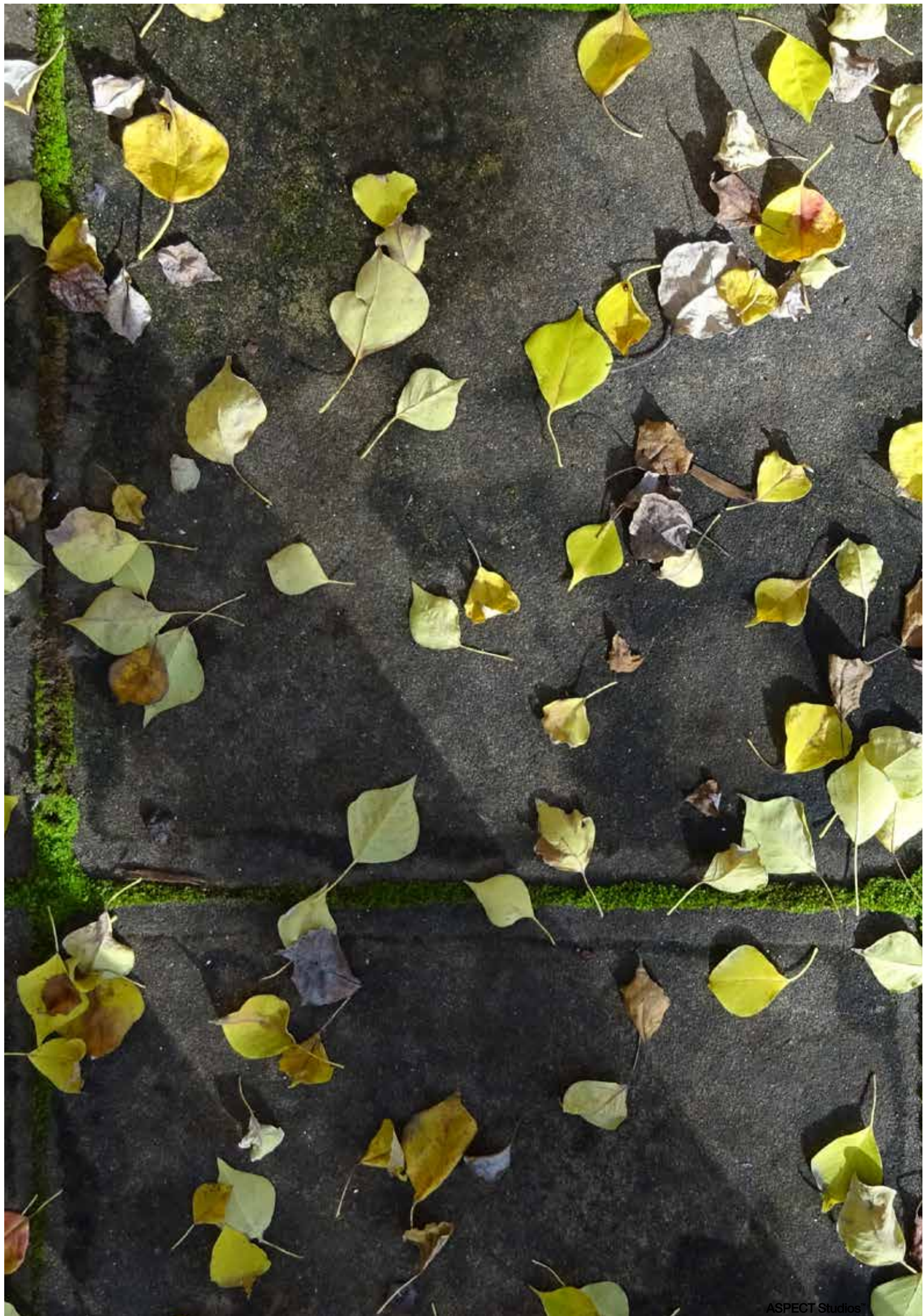


## 2. Opportunities + Constraints

### 2.2 Opportunities

The proposed concept plan creates an opportunity to strengthen the rhythm of trees along Buckland Street. The new entry off Buckland Street presents a formal face to the street and draws people into the common meeting space of the court. The brick retaining wall east of Building 5 frames a desirable open space for casual lunch, meeting and relaxation. South of the court offers good solar access allowing opportunities for a sun-filled turf area.







### 3. Concept Landscape Plan



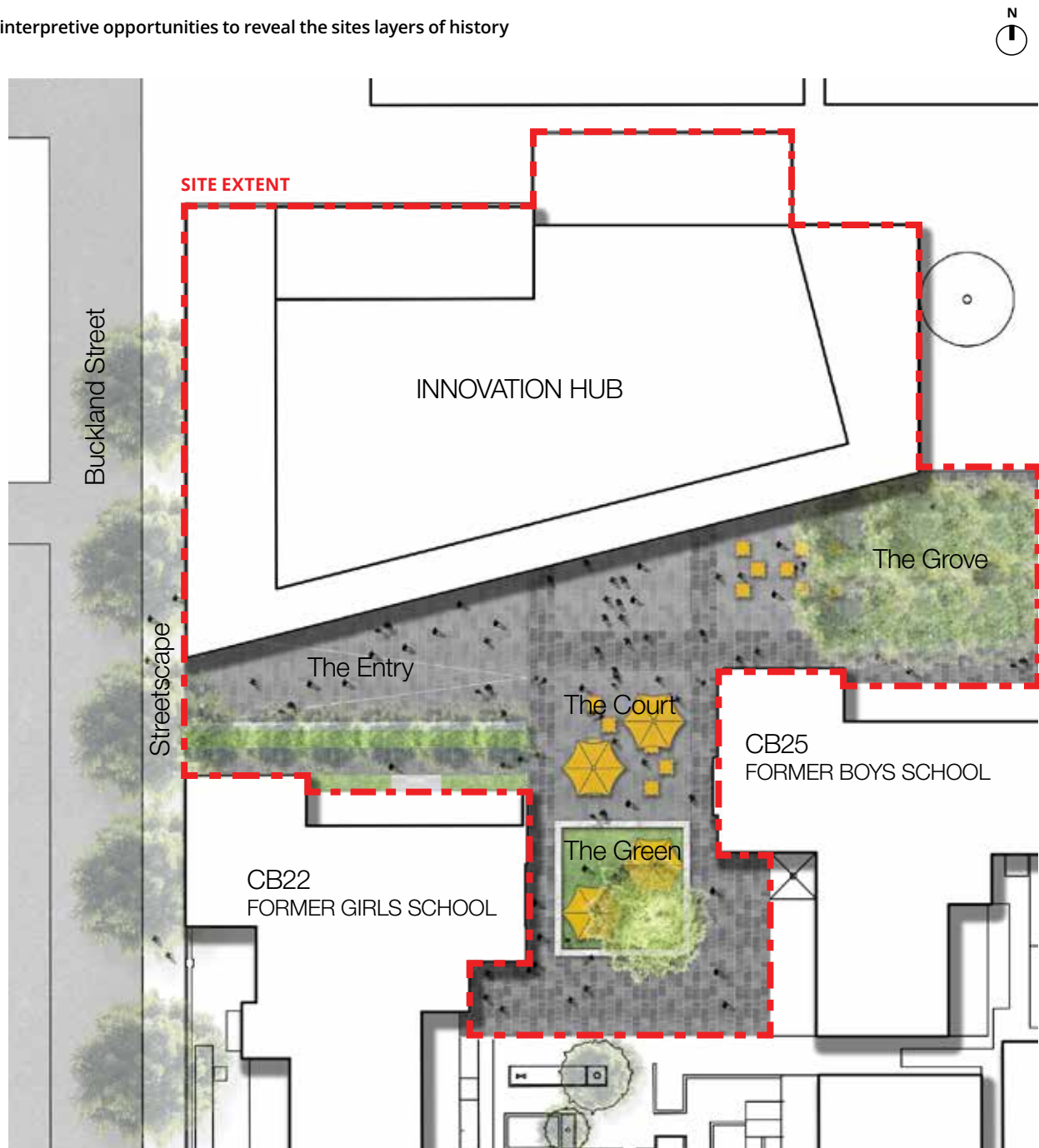
### 3. Concept Landscape Plan

#### 3.1 Key Moves

This concept plan has responds to one proposed building form that fits within the envelop.

##### Key public domain moves

- \_Re-establish a built edge to Buckland Street
- \_Improve streetscape through new street tree planting and paving upgrade.
- \_Create one clear and accessible entry to the courtyard
- \_Consolidate and contain the central square to form a contemporary cloistered courtyard.
- \_Provide an inviting external space, highly usable and with views to planting
- \_Support heritage and contemporary architecture to create an inspiring precinct
- \_Harness interpretive opportunities to reveal the sites layers of history



### 3. Concept Landscape Plan

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#### 3.2 Streetscape

Buckland Street will be the main formal entry into the Blackfriars site. Generous widths and high quality pavement are proposed to establish clear and direct access into and out of the site.

A strong rhythm of planting and street tree strategy which references the CoS Street Tree Master Plan will be proposed to strengthen the streetscape of Buckland Street and to improve hierarchy of pedestrian and vehicular circulation and increasing permeability and encouraging activation.



1. Compliment the existing Canopy with new street tree planting



2. Remove Fraxinus and add trees to compliment the streetscape



### 3. Concept Landscape Plan

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#### 3.3 The Entry

The Entry marks the formal point of access into the blackfriars site. It has the important duty of setting the tone and influence on the character for much of the public domain spaces.

The landscape concept plan celebrates the rich industrial heritage of the site through the use of brick, stone and concrete as its primary palette.

To reinforce a sense of open and public invitation, a new seating edge shaded by a new row of trees provides a place to site.

The entry path gently slopes up (1:21) to meet the courts existing ground level.

Feature lighting could accent the journey.



1. An opportunity for lighting



2. A contemporary cobble

### 3. Concept Landscape Plan

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#### 3.4 The Court

The Court plays a vital role that connects the separate heritage buildings, the Innovation Building, and the childcare as one unified site.

The court is defined by heritage and contemporary buildings. A clean paved zone used for occasional loading (timed). It presents an opportunity for moveable seating and could be well used for events.

This is a formal space with great flexibility of use.



1. Moveable furniture and a green backdrop



2. Carefully placed furniture and planting



### 3. Concept Landscape Plan

#### 3.5 The Grove

Edged by the heritage, Blackfriars Grove is contains a grove of deciduous trees with permeable paving under. A combination of fixed and flexible seating arrangements provide respite for visitors. To establish a strong link to the court the trees extend into the hardscape paving offering further opportunities for external meeting and breakout spaces, relaxation and gatherings.

This space should feel cool and immersive as you sit in dappled shade surrounded by character filled heritage walls. A discovered space within the broader city.



1. Shade & Feature trees for casual meetings & lunchtime activities



2. Planting & furniture to create new meeting spots



3. Views out from neighbouring buildings

### 3. Concept Landscape Plan

#### 3.6 The Green

The Green is located between the existing heritage Buildings 2 & Building 5 to the south of the court. Borrowing views of the planting that edges the childcare play space it offers a significant sun filled space for lunch and passive retreat.

The green is defined by an elevated turf platform, establishing a flexible green heart which can support a range of activities and relaxation. Provision for seating is integrated along the edge of the platform provide opportunities for further breakout spaces.

A large native tree (planted to the south) is a vertical feature of The Green creating a counterpoint to the buildings and providing some shade and privacy to the childcare centre beyond.

This is a more public green retreat, a place to see and be seen while basking in the sun.



1. Open green spaces for passive recreation and retreat



3. Opportunities for deep soil planting



3. Flexible work and seating spaces



### 3. Concept Landscape Plan

#### 3.7 Additional Overlays

##### Heritage Interpretation

The proposed concept designs builds off the rich industrial history of the Blackfriars site with opportunities for heritage interpretation throughout the site which work together to formulate a meaningful and education narrative of the site.

##### A Curated Space

Opportunities exist for the court to become a real focal point of the precinct. It is envisioned as an active space adaptable for Informal uses like a staff / student BBQs and also serving well as a mingling or pre-function gathering space. The creative use of lighting, movable furniture, temporary staging and art could transform this space throughout the year.



1. Provision for Interpretive overlays highlighting ecology and heritage



2. Temporary table & seating furniture



3. Bespoke Interpretative elements



4. Art and lighting used to transform a contained space

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