RIBA STAGE 2 REPORT LEITH LINKS ACTIVITY HUB

CAtkinsRéalis





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BRIEF & PROJECT CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

This report outlines the RIBA Stage 2 Concept Design proposals for the Leith Links Activity Hub, undertaken by AtkinsRéalis and commissioned by the Thriving Greenspaces team for the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) and includes:

- An overview of the project origins and strategic context.
- Site Analysis covering the existing conditions and historical context, as well as the spatial, ecological and water management constraints and opportunities.
- A summary of how the design has been developed through engagement with the local community.
- An overview of the RIBA Stage 2 Concept Design which includes the masterplan for the site, landscape proposals developed by AtkinsRéalis and the RIBA Stage 3 skatepark proposal developed by Betongpark.

As a Concept Design, these proposals represent the initial phase of the design process and outline the broad vision for the space. As such, the designs are subject to change at later project stages.



1.2 Initial Project Brief

The brief originated from a previous masterplan undertaken by AtkinsRéalis on behalf of CEC and Thriving Greenspaces in 2021.

Consultation from this piece of work identified opportunities for the refurbishment of the disused pavilion building to the north of Leith Links and a new activity hub on the site of disused bowling greens and space immediately surrounding the building.

Leith Links Masterplan 2021

The initial brief for the site outlined the potential for a skatepark and wheeled area, a BMX track and an outdoor gym and exercise facility for all ages and abilities as well as biodiversity enhancement and consideration of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

For the building, objectives included a community space, storage facilities, a café and potentially public toilets.



Wayfinding features

PROPOSED FEATURE

Green Infrastructure features:

EXISTING FEATURE

1.3 Vision

The Leith Links Activity Hub will create a new centre for alternative outdoor activities in Leith; bringing together people of all ages, genders and abilities through sport, creative movement and play. It is envisioned as a safe and inclusive place for the local community to engage in fun and playful activities whilst also serving as a flagship location in the city as a site the sits within one of Edinburgh's key destinations parks. Leith Links has a rich history of trailblazing free access to new and emerging sports and activities; a legacy the Activity Hub will continue to sustain.

Leith Links is a much-loved greenspace within the local area of Leith as well as Edinburgh more broadly. The existing disused bowling greens and pavilion have been in disrepair for several decades creating a space that is unwelcoming and disconnected from the wider park. The Activity Hub will reanimate and re-energize this neglected corner of the park, bringing together activities that are often segregated from one another and enhancing the sense of security and belonging.

The project recognises the challenges that skateparks and MUGAs often present in inadvertently designing for men and boys often to the exclusion of others. Through a process of community engagement and codesign workshops with local stakeholders, The Activity Hub, has been designed to accommodate different users and abilities to share the space simultaneously while lessening the risk of territorialisation. This is

achieved through the integration of varied seating, planting, forms, colour and textural elements, which help to carve up otherwise large and intimidating spaces into more welcoming pockets and places to engage in the local landscape and facilities.

The Activity Hub will support a vibrant and active community in Leith, to come together through sport, play and movement, strengthening the sense of community and connection within the area. This flagship amenity will help to inspire younger generations to be more active and engage with their local parks and greenspaces creatively - whether sharing food at an extra large communal picnic table or sharing knowledge of bouldering techniques, this is a social space for everyone.

This design philosophy for the site has been developed through ongoing engagement with the local community and stakeholder groups. These design principles are reflected in the central pavilion which provides a new food and beverage offering in the park as well as a new community space. The income from this flexible and adaptable commercial space will help to support the maintenance of the new activity facilities surrounding it; ensuring the longevity and sustainability of the Activity Hub as a welcoming, clean and well-maintained local amenity.



.3 Existing Leith Link's satellite, Google Maps

1.4 National and Local Strategic Context

This project sits within a broad and multifaceted strategic context at both local and national scales, focused on health, wellbeing and physical activity as well as the climate and biodiversity crises. The project has been informed by and responds to national and city-wide strategies such as:

- More Active Scotland
- · Levelling the Playing Field
- · Sport for Life, Sport Scotland
- Edinburgh's Thriving Greenspaces 2050
- New Olympic Sports
- Edinburgh Physical and Sport Strategy
- 2050 Edinburgh City Vision
- 2030 Climate Strategy
- Edinburgh Nature Network
- Edinburgh Green Blue Network
- Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan

More Active Scotland

More Active Scotland is a national strategy framework that recognises how physical activity and sport have a transformative effect on communities, contribute to physical and mental health and provide opportunities for people to connect with their neighbourhoods and come together in shared activities which inspire and motivate. To support the role of sport and physical activity as a powerful means of addressing isolation, building community cohesion and developing confidence, the strategy focuses on the following outcomes:

- Inactive to more active: Encourage and enable the inactive to be more active.
- Stay active: Encourage and enable the active to stay active throughout their life.
- Start Active: Develop physical confidence and competence from the earliest age.
- Active people and place: Improve

- Scotland's active infrastructure.
- Wellbeing and Resilience: Support wellbeing and resilience in communities through physical activity and sport.
- Sport: Improve opportunities to participate, progress and achieve in sport.

The national vision for a more active Scotland includes objectives such as:

- Providing paths for all.
- Ensuring safe and inclusive participation in sports and helping to strengthen communities.
- Supporting projects that intentionally use the power of sport to effect positive change in local communities.
- Increasing women and girls' engagement in sport and physical activity.

Levelling the Playing Field

Levelling the Playing Field, a report published by the Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Advisory Board in 2019, outlined objectives to drive greater participation, marketing and awareness of Scottish women and girls in sport and to support every woman and girl in Scotland being given the best opportunity to participate in sport and physical activity, no matter their background. Despite the group being closed following COVID the Scottish Government highlights that the recommendations made in the report are still priorities.

Sport for life / Sport Scotland

Objectives outlined for in the Sport for Life strategy from Sport Scotland include developing inclusive, person-centred and world-class sports facilities. They envision an active Scotland where everyone benefits from sport, where people choose to be active in their leisure time with fewer barriers to be involved in sports in a way that is suited to everyone.

New Olympic Sports

Climbing, Skateboarding and BMX
Freestyle all made their debut as Olympic sports in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games (held in 2021 due to COVID). Interest and participation in these sports has increased significantly in recent years, turning these once alternative activities into more mainstream sports. Growing demand for facilities for these increasingly popular sports within Edinburgh, reflects the 2050 City Vision to be a pioneer in culture.

Thriving Greenspaces Strategy

This ambitious 30-year Strategy aims to enhance, protect, and care for the city's greenspaces. Forming part of the Thriving Greenspaces project, the strategy takes a citywide approach to deliver an outstanding greenspace service that supports Edinburgh's aspirations for placemaking, health, sustainability, and biodiversity. Greenspaces are envisioned as multi-functional assets at the heart of communities, helping make Edinburgh an outstanding city for wellbeing, quality of life, and heritage. The Strategy aligns with the Council's Business Plan priorities to make Edinburgh a fair, welcoming, pioneering, and thriving city, and seeks to establish a sustainable financial model to ensure these spaces are connected, thriving, valued, and well-resourced for future generations.

Edinburgh Physical and Sport Strategy

The latest Physical and Sport Strategy for the city of Edinburgh (draft as of June 2024), sets out a vision to create a city where everyone enjoys the benefits of an active life. The strategy aims to tackle inequality, promote inclusion and reduce health inequality. It is based on evidence and ideas from national and city sources and has been developed by the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy Partnership Group which includes representatives from the City of Edinburgh Council, Edinburgh Leisure, NHS Lothian, Sport Scotland, Scottish Student Sport and Edinburgh University. The guiding principles that underpin the implementation of actions with the strategy at every level include: inclusive, accountable, responsive, collaborative, preventative.

Edinburgh's eight strategic delivery priorities are: One Active systems, Two: Physical activity and sport for all, Three: Active travel, our: Active places and spaces, Five: Active health and social care, Six: Public engagement and awareness raising, Seven: Active places of learning, Eight: Active workplace.

2050 Edinburgh City Vision

As part of the City Vision Edinburgh citizens agreed that they want Edinburgh to be:

- A thriving city that is clean, green and sustainable.
- A welcoming city that is happy, safe, and healthy.
- A pioneering city built on data, culture, and business.
- A fair city that is inclusive, affordable, and connected.

National and Local Strategic Context

2030 Climate Strategy

The 2030 Climate Strategy outlines a plan to deliver a net zero, climate ready city by 2030 as well as a healthier, thriving and inclusive capital for people to live and work in.

Whilst it sets out a city-wide approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, it is also about creating a city which is cleaner, healthier and greener, with natural habitats helping wildlife to thrive and helping to protect the city from flooding and other climate change impacts. Parks such as Leith Links have a key role to play in delivering this vision, as they contribute to key some of the Strategy's key objectives for the city where:

- People live in neighbourhoods with easy access to greenspaces and local services reducing the need to travel.
- More people work from home or in local hubs more of the time.
- The city has a network of safe and attractive active travel routes, and an integrated world-class sustainable public transport system, which is affordable for everyone.
- The city centre is re-imagined as a place for people walking, cycling and wheeling, with excellent public transport accessibility and with the needs of the most vulnerable fully catered for.

Edinburgh Nature Network

Nature Networks are a requirement within every local authority in Scotland, as recognised by a commitment to the 2021 Programme for Government and the Scotlish Biodiversity Strategy. Nature

Networks are also embedded through Scotland's fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4).

The Edinburgh Nature Network is a longterm strategic approach to manage, restore and enhance the urban landscape of Edinburgh. It highlights opportunities to take action across the city, using natural solutions to address the threats of biodiversity loss and climate change.

The Nature Network provides benefits to people and wildlife by focusing on repairing a damaged and fragmented landscape to create a well-connected, healthy, resilient ecosystem whilst enhancing the ability of the city to adapt to climate change. At it's core, it is a project of ecological connectivity that presents a cohesive method of nature-positive activity delivered by multiple organisations who are working towards a common goal.

Edinburgh Green Blue Network

Edinburgh's innovative Green Blue
Network provides a framework to identify
opportunities to integrate nature-based
solutions in the city at a strategic and
local scale. The strategy recognises the
importance of a connected network of
healthy trees, soil, water, and ecosystems
supporting health and wellbeing to ensure
a future as a thriving and climate resilient
place. This holistic Green Blue Network
Strategy for the City of Edinburgh brings
together data from multiple sources to
consider climate change adaptation at a
strategic level and highlight opportunities for
action at a site scale.

Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan

The Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan outlines steps to be taken to achieve the vision for 2050: Edinburgh - The Natural Capital of Scotland, a city with a speciesrich nature network from the uplands of the Pentland Hills to the coastal waters of the Firth of Forth, abundant in wildlife that is enjoyed and respected by people. This plan sets out a broad range of actions across five key themes:

- Green networks
- Blue Networks
- Built environment
- Geodiversity
- Species

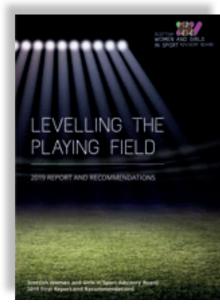
Linking Leith's Parks

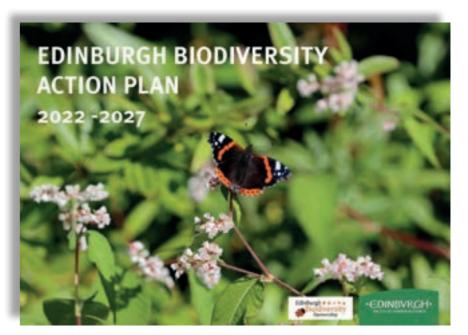
This project is a pilot for the Edinburgh Nature Network in Leith, that looks to enhance ecological connectivity through greenspace improvements in Leith. The project outlines a strategic plan for the area looking at actions to connect greenspaces in Leith for the benefit of people and wildlife, across 6 parks:

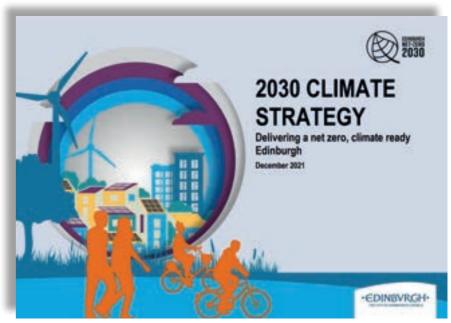
- Tolbooth Wynd
- Mill Lane Park
- Taylor Gardens
- Keddie Gardens
- North Junction Street Park
- Dalmeny Street Park

Although Leith Links is not part of this strategic project, it is the primary greenspace with Leith and therefore needs to reflects the ambitions of improving ecological connectivity across the area.





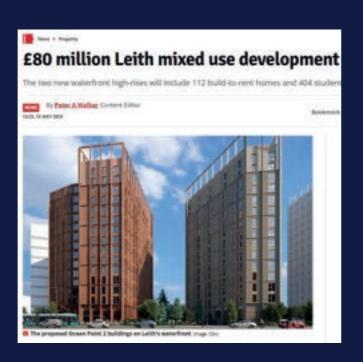


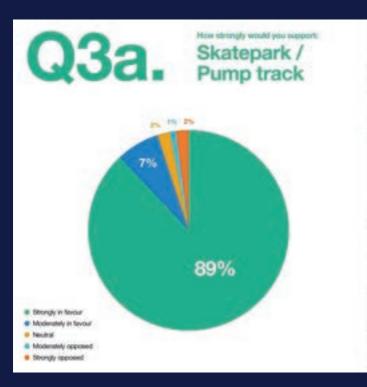


CHAPTER 1:

'Action needed to tackle antisocial behaviour at Newkirkgate'

The North Edinburgh News, 20.07.24









1.5 Local Demand

Young People

According to the 2022 Census, 16,000 people live in the Leith neighbourhood. Of this, approximately, 1,500 are age 10-19 with a further 1,800 aged 0-9. There were also 4,200 people aged 20-29.

Leith Population Growth

The residential population and visitors to Leith are set to increase with extensive new residential, student, retail and leisure developments in the pipe line along side the newly opened Newhaven tram link.

Leith Links Activity Park Group

The Leith Links Activity Park Group was set up in July 2021 by local residents to campaign for the bowling greens to be redeveloped into a new outdoor recreational facility.

This community-led campaign aimed to garner support for an open access activity park that would create exciting new sport, play and leisure facilities for the residents of Leith. The Group were keen for the space to be inclusive and be enjoyed by all of the community with opportunities for all ages to socialise and get active.

We believe that there is a lack of healthy outdoor recreational facilities. This is particularly damaging for our youngsters and can lead to anti-social and self-damaging behaviours. This issue is particularly acute for adolescents.

(Top right) Insider.co.uk '£80 million Leith mixed use development gets go-ahead article extract

(Middle) Extracted slide from presentation outlining engagement undertaken by Leith Links Activity Park Group

Fig.6 (Bottom Left) Photo of Leith Links Activity Park Group undertaking engagement on site

Fig.7 (Bottom Right) Leith Links Activity Park

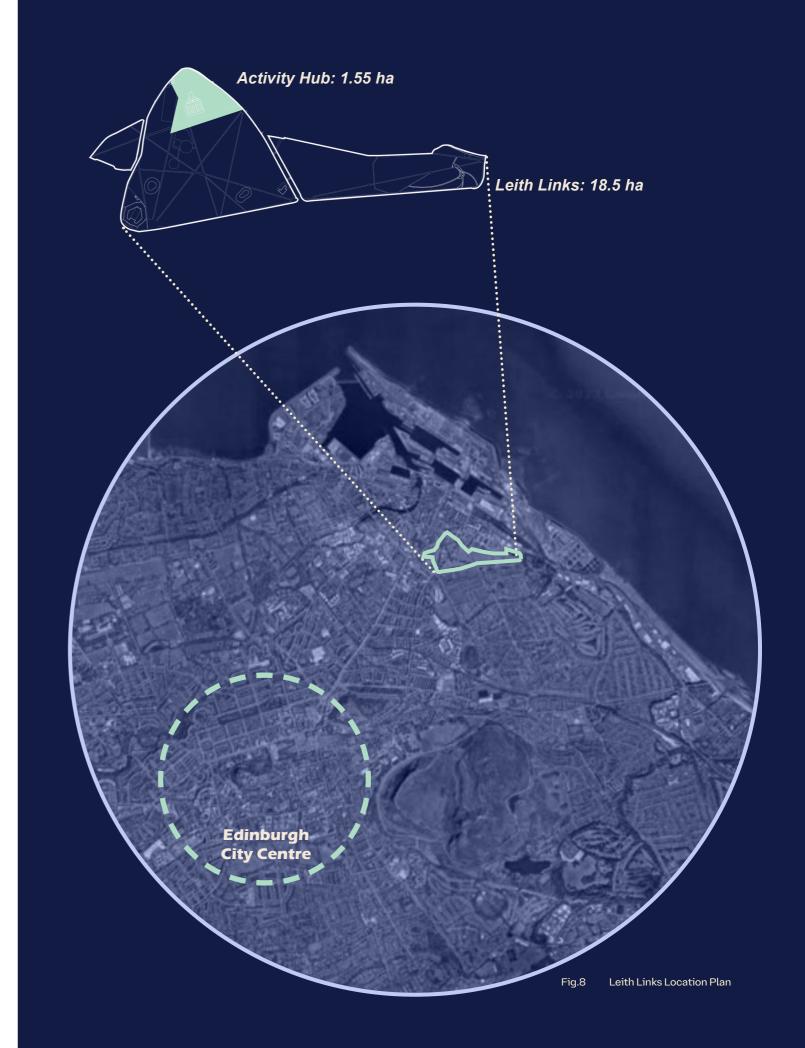
THE SITE

2.1 Site Context

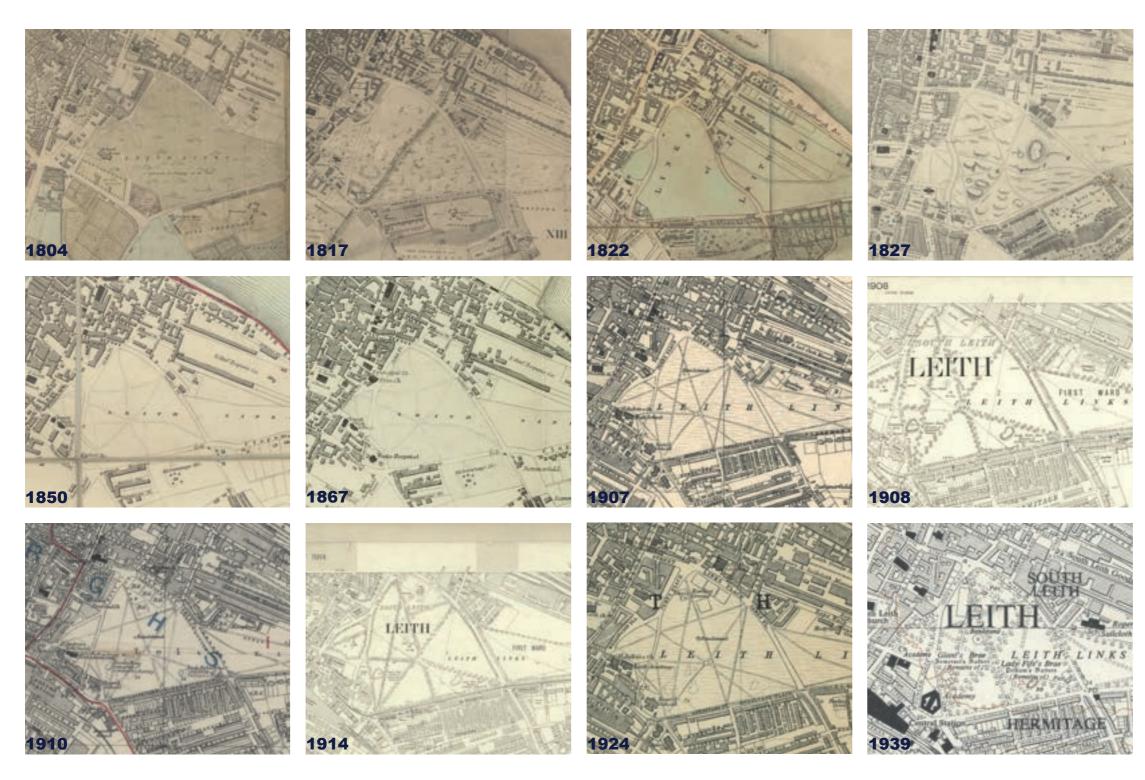
Leith Links is a key strategic park within Edinburgh, and is the primary greenspace for a growing population in Leith which is undergoing a significant amount of development.

It is the heart of the neighbourhood, in close proximity to several schools and the main high street. However, the local community have highlighted in previous consultations that there are few places for young people to spend time in the area.

The recent opening of the tram has also enhanced access to the area and will further increase the popularity of this premier park within Edinburgh.



2.2 Site History



Leith Links has a long and rich history as a site of both military use and sporting endeavours. The site was originally a rolling, sandy, dune covered landscape.

It was the site of the Siege of Leith in 1560, which ended a 12 year encampment of French troops at Leith as well as a military camp prior to the Battle of Prestonpans in 1745.

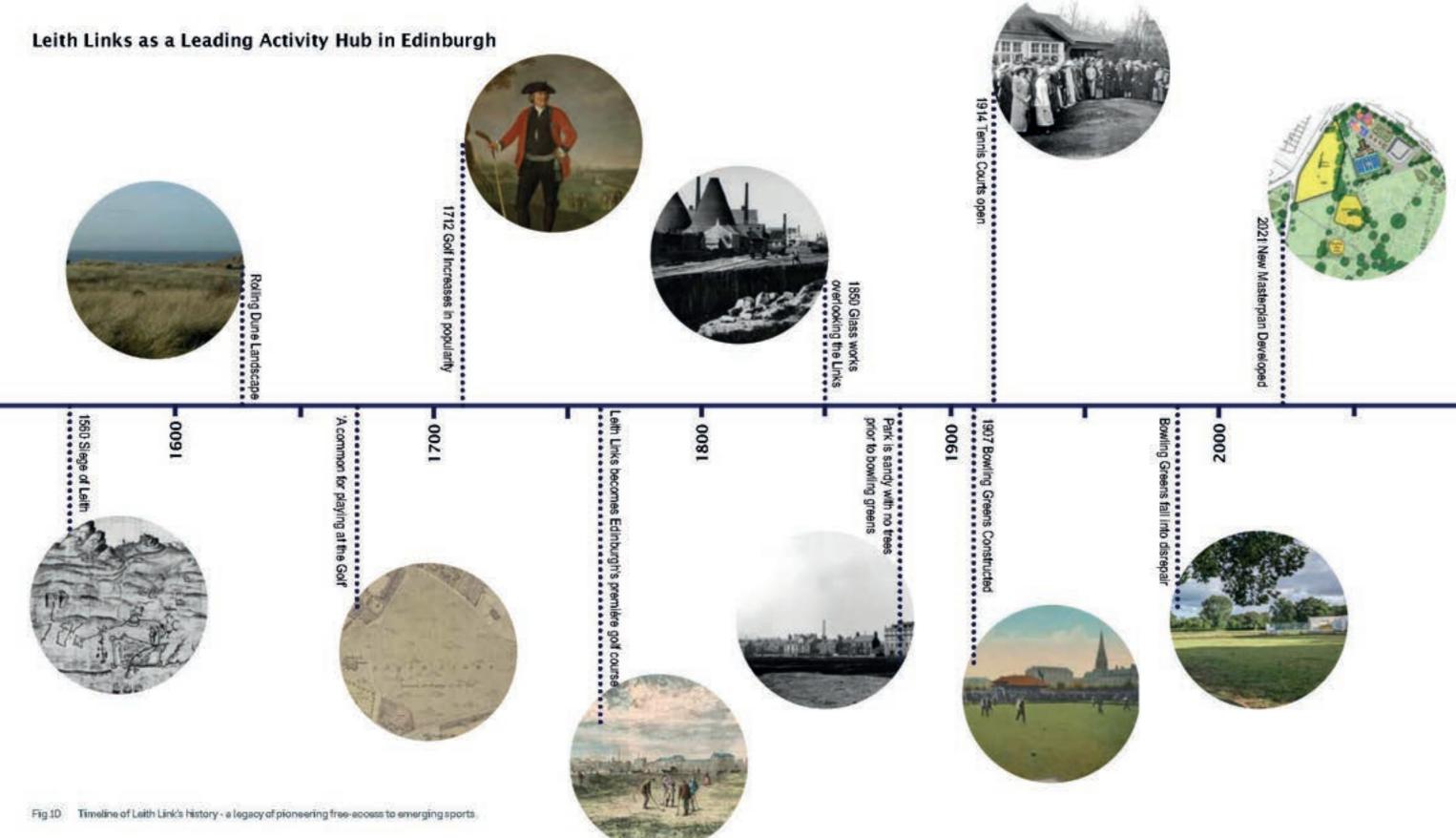
By the 17th Century, the undulating terrain was adapted to function as a 'Common for Playing at the Golf'. This 'common' is the home of the earliest recorded "Rules of Golf", the world's first golf competition rules. The park was recognised as Edinburgh's premier golf course in the 17th and 18th centuries solidifying its status as a space at the forefront of sporting activities in Scotland.

This heritage of sporting innovation and exemplary facilities is reflected in the development of Bowling Greens at the park. The Links provided a home for this increasingly popular up and coming game in 16th Century. Acquiring new land from Edinburgh to the North of the Links, Leith opened the first public greens there in 1857. The annual opening of these greens was a civic event.

They were, in the words of the Provost, "inferior, perhaps, to none in Scotland". (Threadinburgh, 2023). The bowls facilities in the park were expanded in the early 20th Century to include the four greens, three still located within the project boundary. By 1935, the activities offering was expanded further to include six tennis courts across the park. (Threadinburgh, 2023).

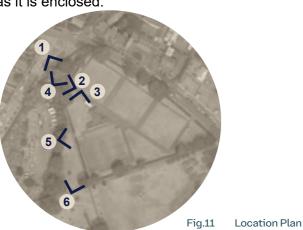
Fig.9 Historic Maps of Leith Links. Ordinance Survey. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

2.3 Sporting Heritage



2.4 Existing Site Conditions

- 1. The entrance from John's Place has a gate, is overgrown with unmaintained vegetation and is disconnected from the main park entrance next to it, giving the impression of a private and unwelcoming space.
- 2. The John's Place entrance is obscured from within the park, with low permeability and an uninviting, graffiti-covered shipping container used for sports equipment storage.
- The area behind the pavilion and temporary toilets is a sunny space that is under utilised by park users as it is inaccessible with an unappealing view of the low quality buildings.
- There is a concealed space next to the John's Place entrance. This area is shaded with high hedges which facilitates antisocial behaviour.
- 5. Dense, high hedges isolate the space from the wider park. These hedges have limited biodiversity value and conceal a degraded fence steel fence. The hedges divide the site from the wider park, disconnecting it from the existing play area.
- The entrance from the park is narrow and unwelcoming, secluding the space from the wider park and encouraging anti-social behaviour. The existing pétanque court is degraded and used as a dog training space as it is enclosed.















2.4 Existing Site Conditions

- 7. The perimeter hedge is overgrown, disconnects the site from the wider park limiting views and permeability. The 22 mature trees growing on the perimeter of the site provide high biodiversity and carbon sequestration value.
- 8. There is low visibility and no access from the south creating the impression of a private and unwelcoming space.
- 9. The degraded pavilion building is regularly covered in graffiti and is inaccessible to the community and sports clubs who might make use of it. The temporary toilets and pavilion sit centrally in the site creating a low quality aesthetic in the space.
- 10. There is limited biodiversity value found within the main core of the space due to the infertile nature of the degraded Victorian bowling greens offering little opportunity for plants to succeed.
- 11. There is an empty space next to the refurbished tennis courts that is cut off from the wider park by a high hedge and fence creating a dead end that could feel unsafe for many park users.
- 12. The space is used by visitors for dog walking and skateboarding, despite the degraded uneven paving, but it also known to be a space for anti-social behaviour.

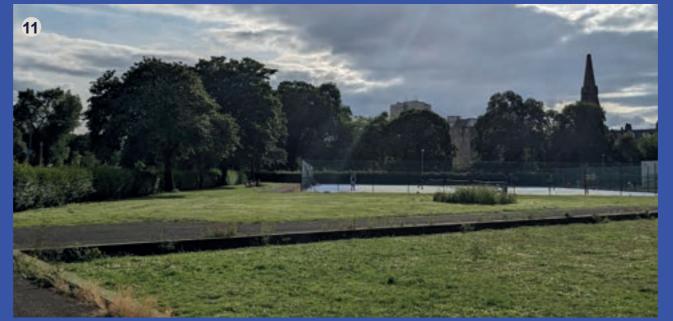














2.5 Leith Links **Circulation & Access**

The site currently has limited accessibility for park users, cyclists and vehicles as the only entrances are from the outer boundary and one from the main park. The paths within the site lead to dead ends.

The site sits along two of the main Leith Links Axes North-South and East-West, connecting residential areas to the more commercial area west of the park.

running through the site before it was enclosed by hedges and cut off from the

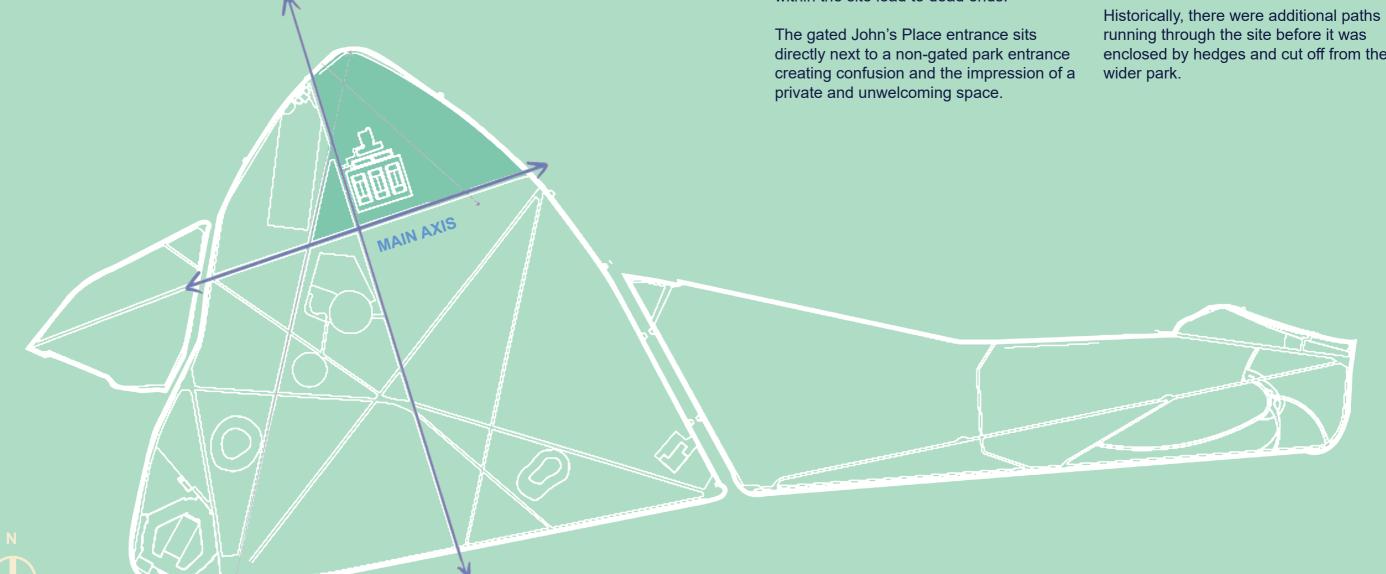


Fig.13 Existing Circulation and main axes across Leith Links

2.6 Site Circulation & Access

In 1907, this route across the wider park continued diagonally across the site and was removed with the construction of the Bowling Greens. As a key axis that connects to a Main Entrance to the park on the south side, this route across the site could be reinstated to improve access and reactivate an otherwise empty woodland corner that can make the space feel unsafe.

Similarly, the hedge around the site, blocks a connection to the wider park, which limits exit points and contributes to the space feeling enclosed and potentially unsafe due to lack of natural surveillance. Opening up this side of the site would encourage more people to make use of the proposed facilities and create a through-route adding to the potential for natural surveillance and making the space feel more welcoming and safe.

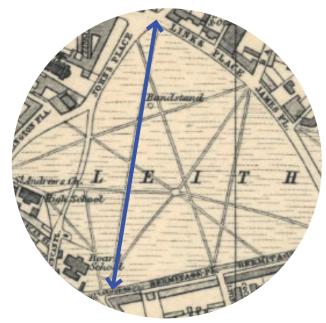
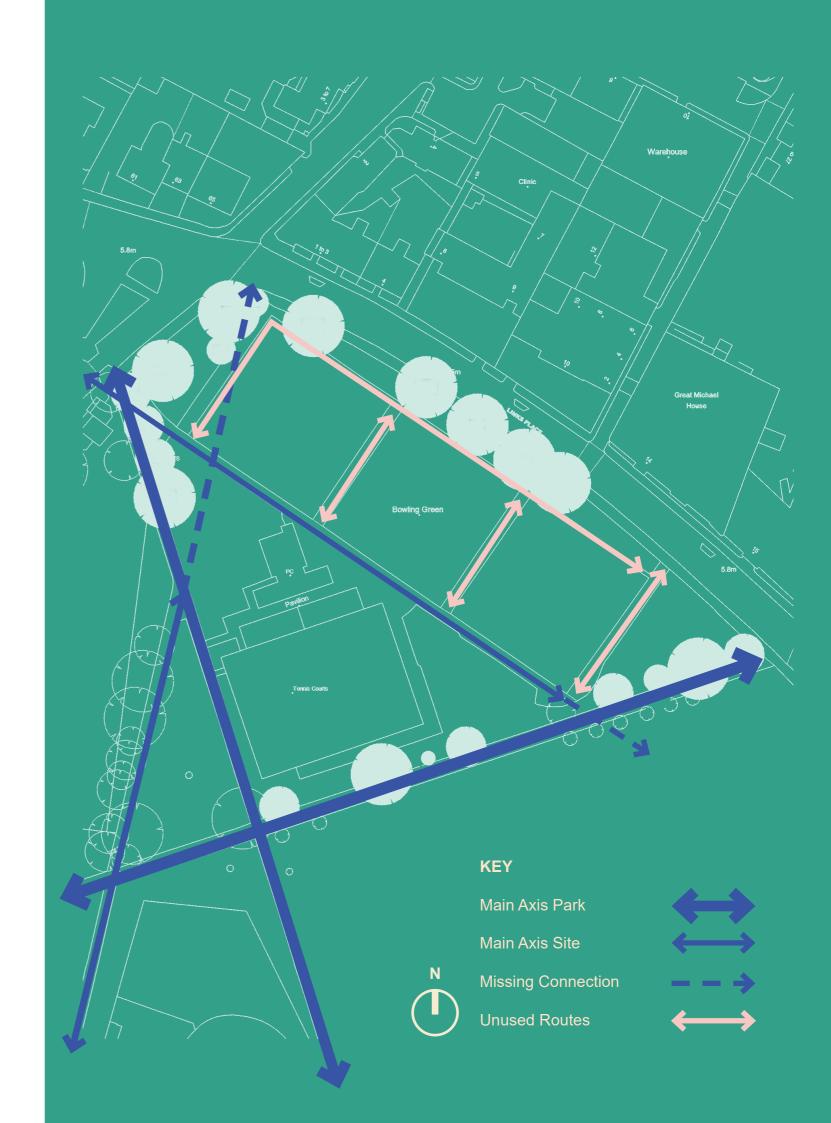


Fig.14 (Above) Historic routes across Leith Links that intersect with the site. 1907. Ordinance Survey. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

Fig.15 (Right) Existing Circulation and main axes across the site reflecting historic routes



2.7 Existing Trees and Vegetation

Leith Links is largely characterised by its 270 mature trees, 21 of which fall within the boundary of this project.

The park is noteworthy for its high concentration of mature Elms, two of which are found within the site boundary. Despite losses to Dutch Elm disease, approximately half of all the trees in the park in 2013 were Elm. Losses to disease have to some extent 476. Platanus spp. been made good by planting of diseaseresistant elm-cultivars such as *Ulmus* 'Regal'. Elms were originally preferred for planting because of their tolerance of salty sea-winds.

The site falls within the Leith Conservation Area and therefore all trees within the project area are protected. Proposals are therefore careful to limit the impact to these trees by respecting the root protection zones denoted in Figure. 16.

463. Acer platanoides

464. Acer pseudoplatanus

465. Sorbus aria

466. Acer pseudoplatanus

468. Sorbus aria

469. Sorbus aucuparia

470. Acer pseudoplatanus

471. Sorbus aria

473. Populus nigra

474. Platanus spp.

475. Platanus spp.

477. Ulmus spp

479. Tilia spp.

480. Fraxinus excelsior

481. Sorbus aria

482. Ulmus spp. 483. Ulmus spp.

484. Acer pseudoplatanus

485. Acer pseudoplatanus



Fig.16 Existing trees and root protection zones within the site.

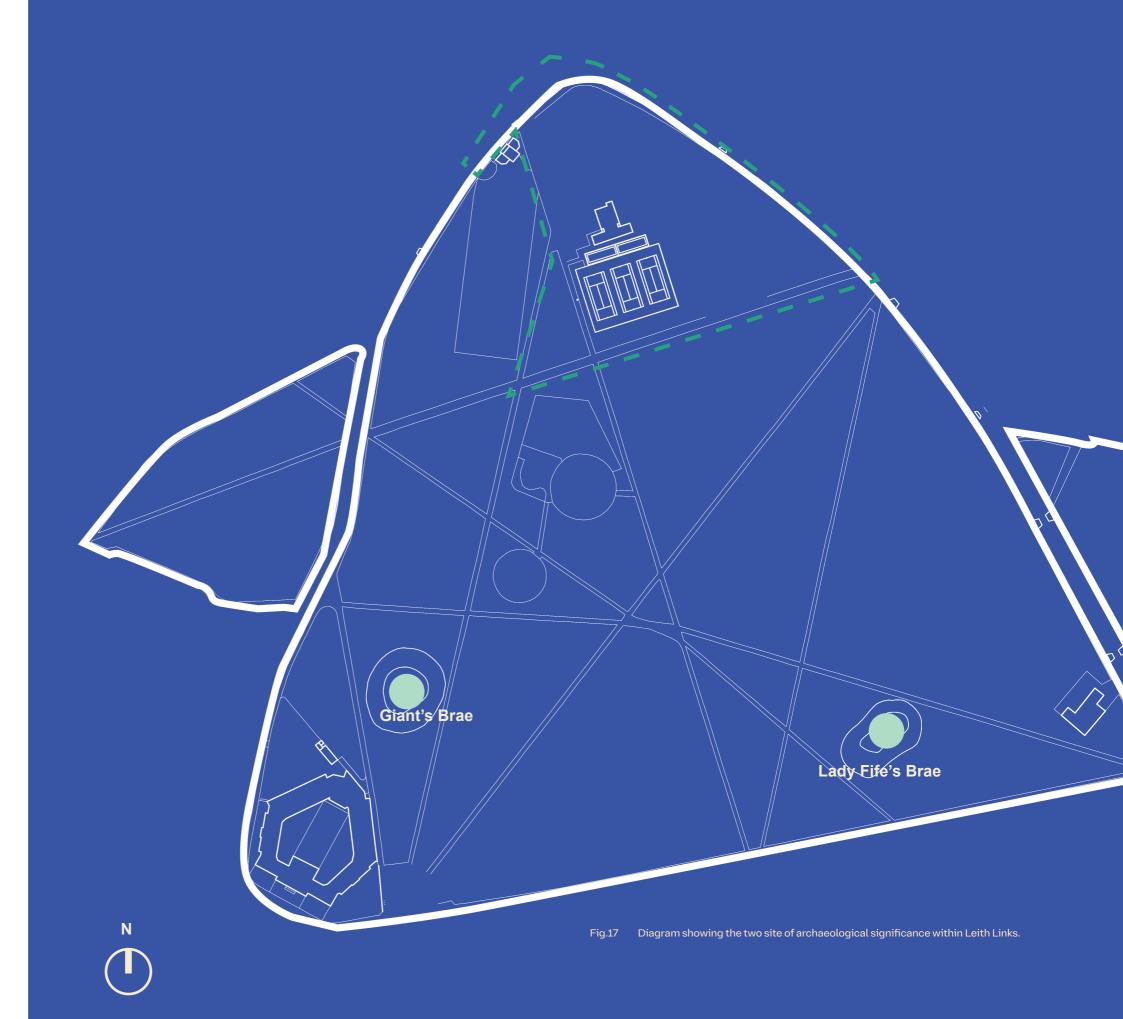
2.8 Archaeological Considerations

There are two scheduled monuments in Leith Links, both of which sit outside the boundaries of the project site. They include the sites of two artillery mounds, known as Giant's Brae and Lady Fife's Brae, which date back to the 16th Century.

The land in and around Leith Links is also known to have been used as a burial ground, which raises potential challenges in ensuring these areas are not disturbed during any development work undertaken in the area.

The Thriving Greenspaces team commissioned a preliminary archaeological dig across the project site to determine whether development of the building and the skatepark could potentially go ahead.

The results of this survey uncovered no significant archaeological findings within the dig sites. However, given the limited results of the archaeological works, further works may be required.



2.9 Green-Blue Context

Edinburgh Green Blue Network

As one of Edinburgh's premier parks, Leith Links is highlighted within the Green Blue Network (GBN) Strategy as an Area of Cultural, Scenic and Biodiversity Value.

The park sits within relatively close distance of several strategic green links and biodiversity corridors identified by the GBN Strategy. Any development in the park should therefore reflect the ambitions of the GBN Strategy to enhance ecological and leisure facilities and connections within and between greenspaces.

Flood Risk

A surface water flood risk survey was undertaken by AtkinsRéalis on behalf of CEC in 2023. This involved analysing SEPA flood maps and included a site visit to identify opportunity areas for surface water management interventions.

The survey identified some highway and park flooding predicted by SEPA flood maps (high and medium likelihood). The October 2023 site visit observations included the following:

- The park typically sits higher than the surrounding roads.
- There is a possibility to introduce rain gardens into the area of John's Place closed to traffic. This could cut-off the flow running north along John's Place towards Queen Charlotte Street and Links Place junction.
- There are opportunities within the site to deal with run-off generated within park, but these are unlikely to impact flooding in nearby streets.
- Some paths within park flood so there could be opportunities to incorporate filter drains.

These findings have been taken into consideration in the development of the proposals to help minimise flood risk on John's Place.

LEGEND Strategic Green-Blue Network Area of cultural, scenic and biodiversity value Green Space Key River Corridor Water Body Existing, Enhanced and Proposed Green Links and Biodiversity Corridors Key Opportunity Areas for Water Management SIMD 20% Most Deprived Neighbourhoods Existing Key Recreational Route Proposed Key Recreational Route City of Edinburgh Boundary



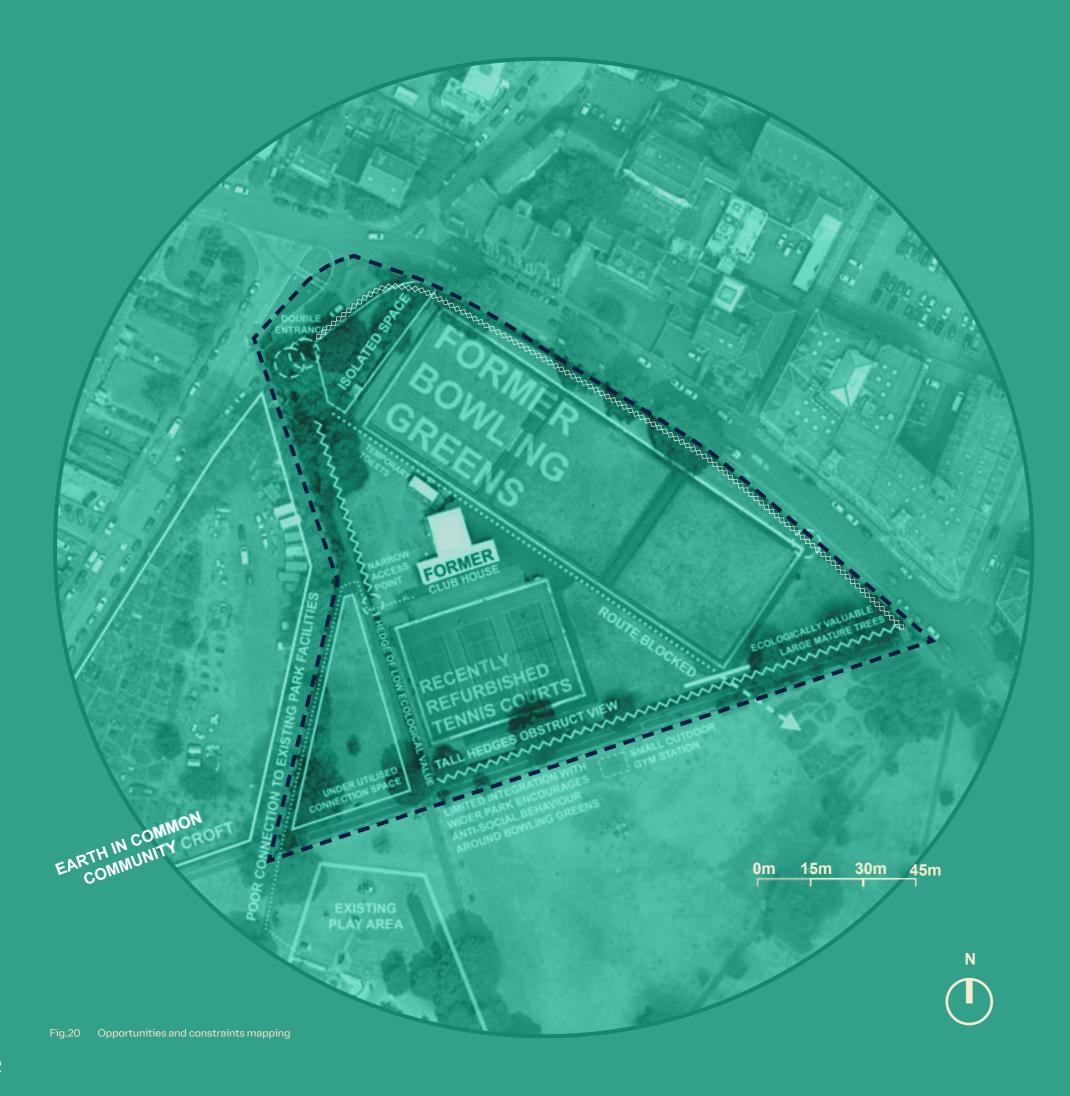
Fig.18 Diagram showing a section of the Green-Blue Network Strategy

High Likelihood of Flooding

Flood Risk Reduction Opportunity Area



Fig.19 Plan showing the SEPA Flood Risk areas 2025



2.10 Site Constraints and Opportunities

The site is segregated from the wider park by a privet hedge and fence with only one obscured entrance in from the park. Externally entrances are uninviting and give the impression of a private space. The entrance to the north is especially unwelcoming with low canopy trees making the space feel dark and overgrown with old fencing that has been abandoned on the site adjacent to a graffiti covered shipping container that is used as storage for sports clubs.

This isolation from the wider park encourages anti-social behaviour in the area as it is hidden from view. The existing bowling greens are degraded and unused. The enclosed nature of the space, unlike the openness of the rest of the park, makes it a favoured spot for dog owners.

There are a number of mature trees surrounding the perimeter giving the space a formal parkland feel typical across the park.

ENGAGEMENT & DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

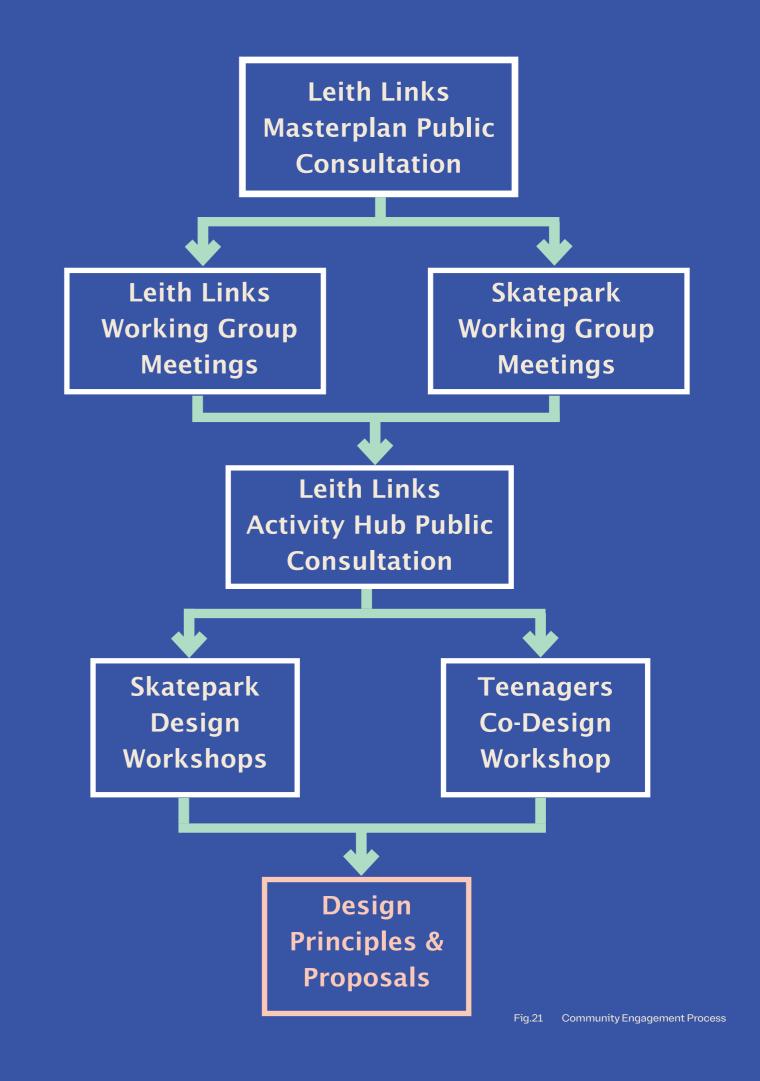
3.1 Engagement Process

The project team have undertaken a range of engagement activities with the local community in order to develop the design principles and proposals of the Activity Hub. These included:

- The Leith Links Masterplan Consultation
- Leith Links Activity Hub Concept Workshop
- Leith Links Activity Hub Consultation Event (in person and online)
- Two Skatepark Design Workshops
- Teenage Girls Engagement Workshop

The outcomes from the Leith Links
Masterplan public consultation identified
the site in the north corner of the park as
offering a key opportunity for a new Activity
Hub due to its neglected and underutilised
nature.

Initial concept ideas for the Activity Hub, were developed and presented to a local Skatepark Working Group, who have been running the Leith Links Activity Park Campaign and the Local Community Council in August 2023. Responses were positive and feedback from these sessions was used to develop the content for the public consultation event held in person at the site in September 2023.



3.2 Leith Links Masterplan Public Consultation

In 2021-2022, the Leith Links Masterplan was developed in collaboration with a local Working Group made up of council staff, representatives from the community council, council partners, other local organisations and members of the Leith community.

A final draft Masterplan was agreed by the Working Group in March 2022 which was then shared on the Consultation Hub for comments from the wider Leith community and park users to ensure it represented what people would like to see delivered to improve Leith Links over the next decade.

The consultation received 789 responses about the masterplan with nearly 70% of people stating that they lived in Leith. Overall, 90% of respondents thought that the proposals detailed in the Masterplan were positive. Regarding the features presented in the masterplan:

- 86% agreed they would enhance sense of arrival
- 87% agreed they would enhance sense of place
- 91% agreed they would increase activity
- 90% agreed that they would improve provision
- 88% agreed they would enhance Blue/ Green infrastructure

In particular, support for a skatepark/ wheeled area/plaza (including a pump track) was overwhelmingly positive with over 200 responses. The other top-ranked themes that attracted comment included:

- · Permanent provision of public toilets
- Greenspace improvements (including floral meadows and climate change mitigations)
- Improved cycling access and facilities
- Activity Park, including provision of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)
- Improved pedestrian crossing / traffic calming / road closure

The feedback and comments of this consultation were used to inform the Activity Hub Project Brief.







Fig.22 Leith Links Masterplan Community Engagement Boards and visualisation

3.3 Activity Hub Public Consultation & Event

Over 100 people attended our Activity Hub consultation day at the Leith Links bowling greens on 9th September 2023.

- 1,082 people responded to the consultation via the hub.
- 92% of responses strongly agreed or agreed with transforming the vacant pavilion into a café with community space and toilets.
- 51% of responses strongly agreed or agreed that the café should have multiple levels.
- 84% of responses supported the proposed designs for the activity hub.
- 90% of responses strongly agreed or agreed that the activity proposals should suit a range of user groups of different ages, abilities and interests.

In addition to the skatepark, which was already consulted on as part of the Leith Links Masterplan, the top 3 ranked activities for the hub were a pump track/ bike trail, bouldering rocks and roller rink, respectively.

Significant themes from feedback stressed the importance of incorporating biodiversity elements, as well as social seating, managing noise and ensuring that the space can be used for adults as well as children.

The comments have been incorporated into the design where possible and where this is not possible, the Thriving Greenspaces team will look at how other areas of the park can be adapted to accommodate some of the suggestions.

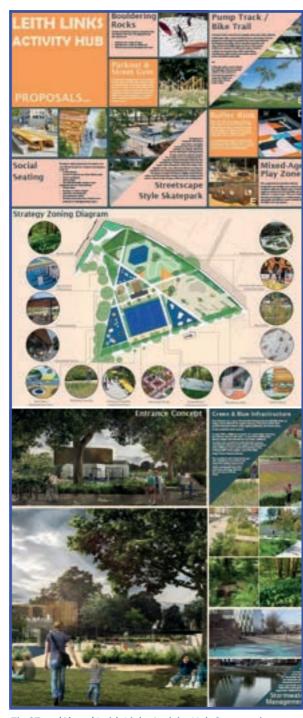


Fig.23 (Above) Leith Links Activity Hub Community **Engagement Boards**

Fig.24 (Right) Collection of photos from Leith Links Activity Hub Community Engagement Event









3.3.1 Activity Hub Public Consultation Plans



Fig.25 Leith Links Activity Hub Public Consultation Plans

3.3.2 Public Consultation View from Leith Links



Fig.26 Visualisation 1 Location Plan



Fig.27 Visualisation 1: New Entrance to the Activity Hub from Leith Links Park.

3.3.3 Public Consultation View from Entrance



Fig.28 Visualisation 2: Location Plan



Fig.29 Visualisation 2: New Entrance to the Activity Hub from John's Place

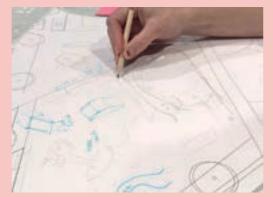
3.4 Activity Hub Strategic Vision



Following the public consultation event, the concept plan was updated to reflect comments and a strategic masterplan vision was developed to support further engagement with local stakeholders.











3.5 Skatepark Workshops

The key objective for the initial Skatepark Design Workshop was to capture ideas and input for the design from all user groups, skill-levels and genders. Participants included representatives from Skateboard Scotland, local skatepark designers, SkateBoobs (a local female, non-binary and queer skate crew), novice skateboarders and parents, a roller rink owner and users, BMX-ers alongside the local park officer and design teams from AtkinsRéalis and Betongpark and the Thriving Greenspaces team.

Initial design principles and key findings from the workshop included:

- Inclusive space for all ages, abilities, backgrounds and genders.
- Plaza Style / Streetscape
- Integrated planting and trees
- Welcoming of families and children
- Facilities for all types of wheeled sports roller-blading/skating, roller derby (flat style rink), skateboards, bikes, scooters.
- · Accessible for wheelchair users.
- Social seating spaces near to the skatepark to provide safe spaces to observe activities before getting involved.
- Features for all skill levels, beginners advanced.
- Dividing the space into areas so that one group cannot dominate but also...
- Integration across the different activity zones to avoid ghettoization.

The design team were conscious that many skateparks are designed by and for experienced skaters and make no provision for learners and less confident riders. Guidance recommends engaging with the local skateboarding community to produce a successful design, but this can privilege experienced skaters and can exclude many other potential users.

The group discussed that it would be valuable to engage directly with young women and / or teenage girls - a demographic that researchers have found often feel excluded from traditional MUGA style activity areas and skateparks. Researchers have reported feelings of judgement and stigma preventing women and girls from engaging in activities and leaving them with few places specifically designed for them.

Although female skateboarding grew by 24% in 2020 to approx. 112,000, 85% of skateboarders identified as male. This results in the vast majority of skatepark users being men and boys (Make Space for Girls, 2024). The project team therefore chose to organise further engagement to discuss the skatepark and wider Activity Hub with local teenagers and develop ideas that align to their needs and aspirations for the space.

3.5.1 Skatepark Ambitions

The objectives for the skatepark design were developed with the Skatepark Working Group, a group representing local residents involved in the skateboarding, BMX and roller-skating communities in Leith.

Initial ambitions highlighted a desire to provide a facility that was at least equal to Saughton Park, Edinburgh in scale but that catered to a broader range of users from beginners to advanced.

In addition, the group noted that the size of the site and its location within Leith Links, as a premier park in Scotland's capital, warranted a design that would become a flagship location for skateboarding and wheeled activities and become a destination that could draw visitors from across the country as well as internationally.

This approach was considered to be especially appropriate given the recent introduction of skateboarding as an Olympic sport in 2021 further reinforcing the value providing exemplary skate facilities within this project.

Leith Links Activity Hub Skatepark

2197m² + 423m² + 281m² = 2620m² 2901m²

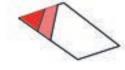




Fig.32 Initial comparison of skateparks locally and around the world shared with skatepark working group to assess the level of ambition for the skatepark.

CHAPTER 3:









3.6 Young People's Co-Design Workshop



To ensure the Activity Hub is welcoming to all genders and provides facilities that appeal to a broad spectrum of user groups, the project team engaged specifically with local teenage girls and non-binary students from the local school, Leith Academy, to help inform the design.

To run these workshops, the Project Team worked with A Place in Childhood (APiC) a local charity dedicated to helping involve young people in design projects and create better designed places and practices led by their input. Their team advised that the most meaningful outcomes would be arrived at through engaging with groups of teenagers that already knew one another, as this would help foster a more comfortable working relationship and environment. In total, 21 students from S1-3 from Leith Academy spent half a day together in early May 2024, working with A Place in Childhood, City of Edinburgh Council and the AtkinsRéalis design team.

Methods of engagement with teenage girls recommended by Make Space for Girls prioritise the exploration of tacit knowledge. This was the approach taken in developing the co-design workshop, which were using the following format:

- **1. Setting the scene** telling the story so far and undertaking a site visit to imagine the space and possibilities, and understanding the co-design brief (precisely what can change, and what can't change at this stage).
- 2. Determining Principles through emotional mapping based on the site visit and lived experience. This session examined the design principles that would ensure they feel safe and welcome in the re-imagined space?
- **3. Co-design** Zones within the site were selected where there was scope for the design to develop, adapt and change. Participants were given the opportunity to co-create ideas for features and facilities of the design using a range of craft materials, Lego and Play-doh to bring their ideas to life and share them with the project team and their peers.

To conclude the session APiC facilitated a discussion on how ideas and elements might be combined/synthesised in ways that meet their collective design principles.

3.6.1 Workshop Outcomes: Determining Design Principles

Walking around the site gave the students an opportunity to share their experiences of the site as well as their ideas and aspirations for the space. This led to a discussion centred around identifying the group's initial ideas and design principles, including:

- 1. Free public utilities and equipment hire
- Spots for phone charging
- Bike rental
- Lockers
- Equipment to rent
- Drinking water
- Public Toilets
- 2. Providing a range of spaces that are both active and calm
- · Youth-friendly activities
- Water play, Obstacle Course, Maze
- Sports (pétanque, netball, basketball, volleyball, bouldering, and football)
- Social spaces to sit near activities, so people can observe and be with friends even if they are not doing the same thing.
- Quiet spaces away from roads and activity hub
- Welcoming places to sit (social areas with benches, picnic tables etc.)
- Well cared for natural areas, with natural paths and calm spaces to sit in amongst them.
- 3. Enhanced landscaping
- More flowers and greenery
- Public art statues, focal points, places to meet

- 4. Creating comfortable, youth-friendly and safe spaces
- Youth-friendly café
- Outdoor seating with shelter
- Improved lighting
- Welcoming public toilets that are well cared for
- More bins and better management of rubbish
- Affordable food options such as a food truck or a youth-friendly café
- An accessible place to allow young people to feel welcome and be able to visit.

Research conducted for Make Space for Girls outlines several key design principles that influence women's and girl's safety, which align with the outcomes of this session:

- Providing ample exits
- Creating openness
- Enhancing visibility and avoiding high fencing
- Providing appropriate lighting
- Busyness and activation of spaces to create
- Accessibility and clear wayfinding
- Co-production of design
- Image and maintenance.

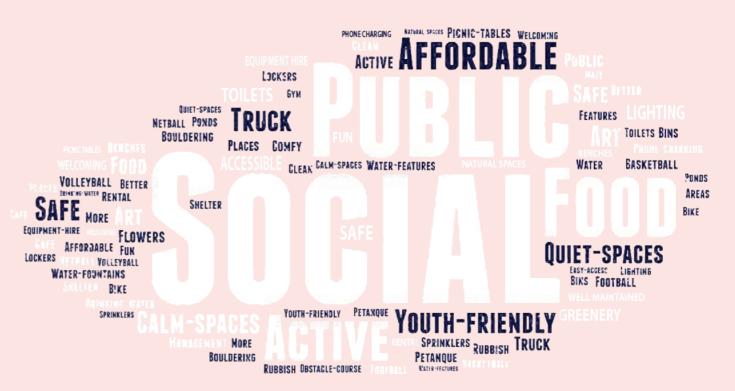


Fig.34 Word cloud highlighting key themes from the co-design workshop.



Fig.35 Photo taken by participants during the site visit

3.6.2 Workshop Outcomes: Co-design Session

A broad range of proposals were developed for the site, with key themes emerging across the different working groups, which could be taken forward within the project. These included:

Sheltered Social Seating: This idea arose in various forms across different working groups, ranging from picnic benches to a sheltered study area with skylight windows and a wind shield. An emphasis was placed on creating quieter spaces that are not adjacent to the skatepark, surrounded by 'flowers and nature'. Facilities for charging phones were also discussed within this context.

Seating near to the Activity Zones:

Benches next to the different activities such as the skatepark and parkour zones to help make non-skaters and new visitors feel more welcome.

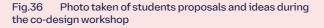
Enhanced Lighting: Lighting improvements were consistently raised across all the groups including reference to a "big arch of lighting and flowers", "fun", "funky" lighting, "we want it to be interesting, colourful, and well-lit, the lights could also be funky and colourful to create a nice evening atmosphere".

Social Play: Features that involve bouncing in groups were highlighted across several working groups, ranging from large, shared trampolines for multiple people to entire zones covered in bouncy floors. Designs for social swings were also highlighted across a number of groups including teen-sized swings, basket swings for socialising and a log swing for multiple people to use together.

In addition to these key design ideas, specific features for the skatepark were also developed by students which were integrated into the skatepark design by Betongpark.

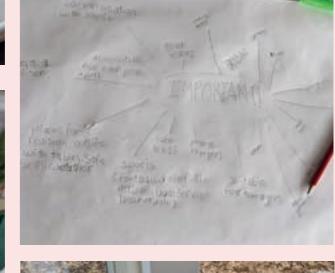
As some of the design ideas that emerged from this session sit beyond the scope of this project, they have been recorded for reference elsewhere in case other opportunities arise in the area. These included an outdoor cinema, additional sports courts such as volleyball, a maze and an obstacle course. Football was also highlighted but Leith Links already has a number of football pitches so this would not sit within the scope of this project which aims to provide a broader range of alternative activities in the park.

Many of the findings from this engagement workshop align with research undertaken for Make Space for Girl's, that has found there is greater need for 'free-to-use' spaces to hang out that are either unprogrammed ('spaces to do nothing') or offered something other than ball sports, cycling, or skateboarding. Examples given for alternative facilities often include social seating, teenage size swings and trampolines, informal play, space to relax, shelter, public toilets and affordable food nearby, all of which were highlighted here.











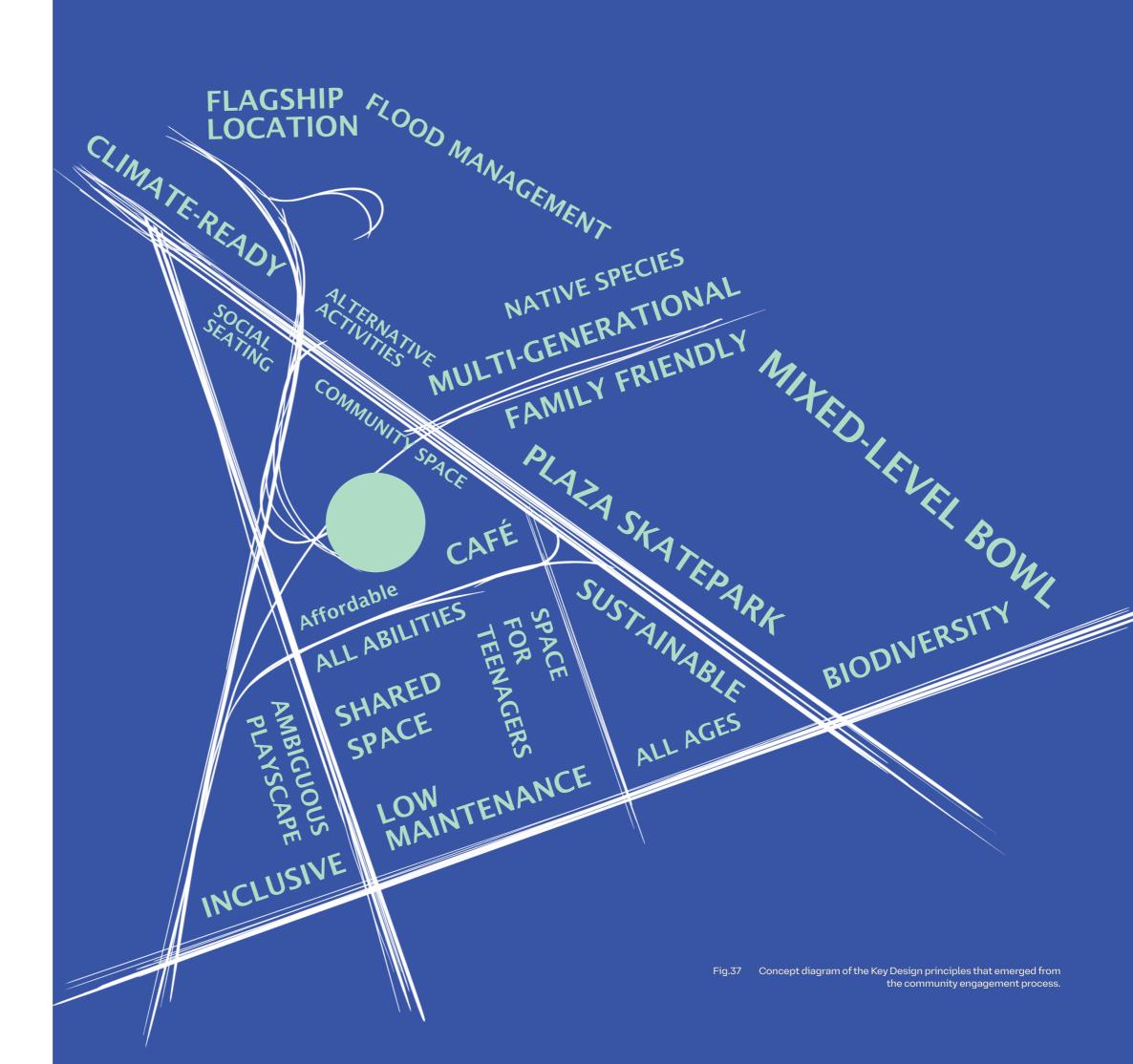


3.7 Design Principles

The engagement process has led to a set of Design Principles that inform the overall masterplan and activities included within the masterplan design.

These Design Principles include:

- Alternative sports and activities that would not be found in a typical park offering. Provision for football and basketball are commonplace in parks and facilities already exist in Leith for these more mainstream activities where as there is no provision for skateboarding nor any outdoor roller rink, parkour or bouldering facilities.
- Ambiguous playscapes that provide space for both socialising and playful movement and interactions. Spaces that are suitable for a range of ages, especially teenage girls who often feel excluded from activity parks and play areas aimed at younger children.
- Inclusive to all ages, abilities and genders. Equipment and activities should be suitable for beginners to advanced practitioners as well as feeling welcoming to families, teenagers and elderly communities.
- Sustainability, resilience and durability should be considered holistically. While some materials and approaches may require more input at the beginning they may have a longer lifespan and require less maintenance overall.
- Climate-ready: Future climate issues including both flood risk and drought should be accounted for in the design and planting scheme.



ACTIVITY HUB PROPOSAL



- 1. Leith Connections initiatives with potential for future rain gardens

- 20. Inclusive Social Play Zone &

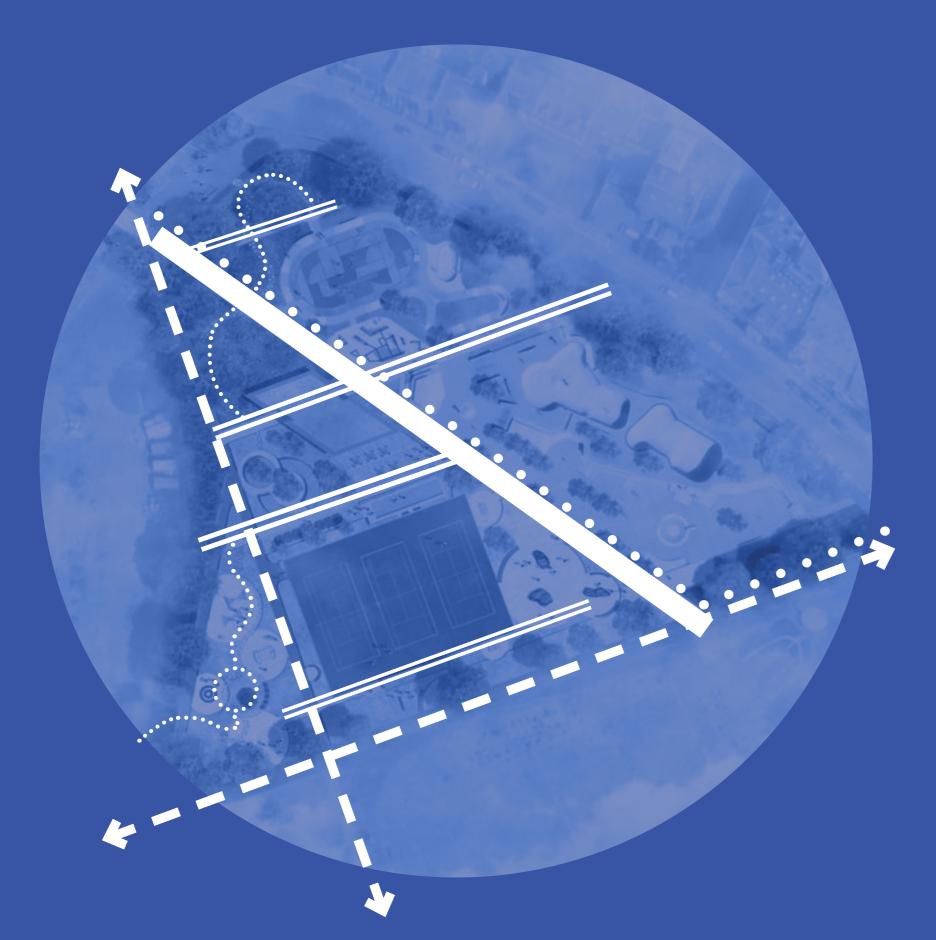
R 4: ACTIVITY HUB PROPOS

4.1.1 Leith Links Activity Hub Overview

Fig.39 Visualisation A: Overview capturing atmosphere of Leith Links Activity Hub



4.2 Circulation & Access



<u>KEY</u>



Maintenance Vehicle & **Emergency Vehicle Access**



Activity Hub Core Axis



Activity Hub Secondary Axes

Stepping Stone Trail



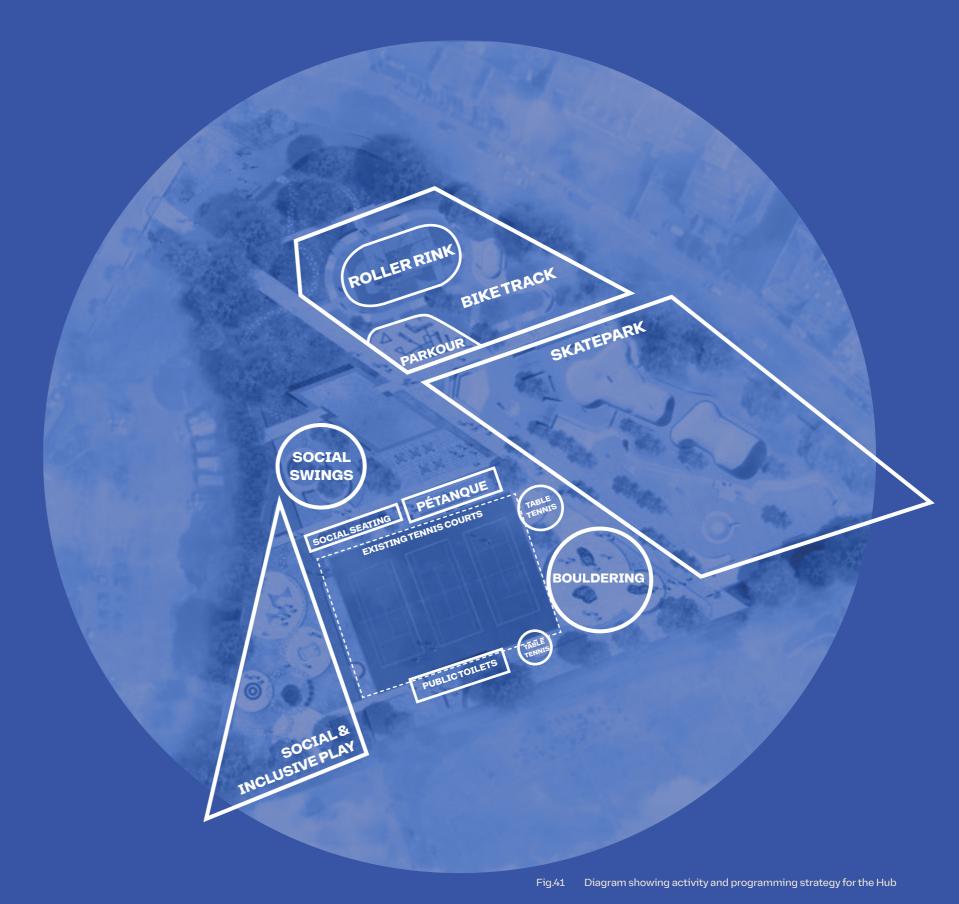
Fig.40 Diagram showing circulation and Access strategy across the site

4.3 Activity Strategy

The Activity Hub is divided into key activity zones which will allow the Masterplan to be constructed in phases if required. However, the masterplan is devised to enhance the integration and cohesion of each of these spaces to encourage different community groups to mix and collaborate.

The core activities across the Hub include:

- Skatepark
- Bike Track
- Roller Rink
- Bouldering
- Parkour
- Social & Inclusive Play
- Table Tennis
- Social Seating
- Existing Tennis Courts
- New Public Toilets (out with the scope of this project)





4.3.1 Skatepark Masterplan

The skatepark, developed by Betongpark, has been designed to RIBA Stage 3 following the engagement process and the key design principles outlined in the previous chapter.

The design includes:

- A plaza style skatepark
- Two bowls that cater to different requirements and skill levels
- Responds to the history of skating in Edinburgh
- A broad range of obstacles suitable for different types of skating and BMXing as well as varied skill-levels
- Integrated seating in and around the space
- Consideration of noise placing louder zones adjacent to office buildings and away from residential buildings. Further work will be carried out around noise at future project stages
- Resilient planting and trees that break up the space

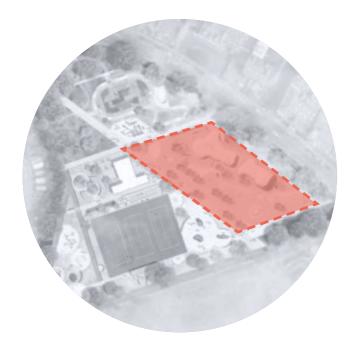


Fig.43 Location plan of skatepark

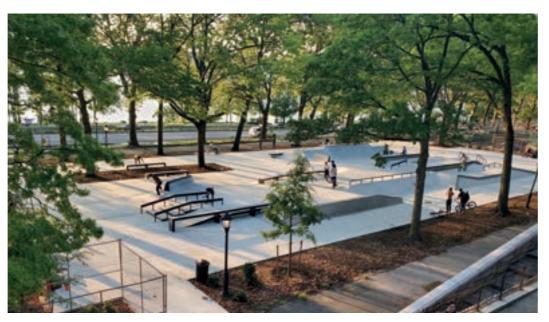








Fig.42 Precedent images of skatepark atmosphere.

4.3.1 Skatepark Design



Fig.44 Skatepark design RIBA Stage 3 Package of drawings developed by Betongpark 2025

4.3.1 Skatepark: Bowl Design



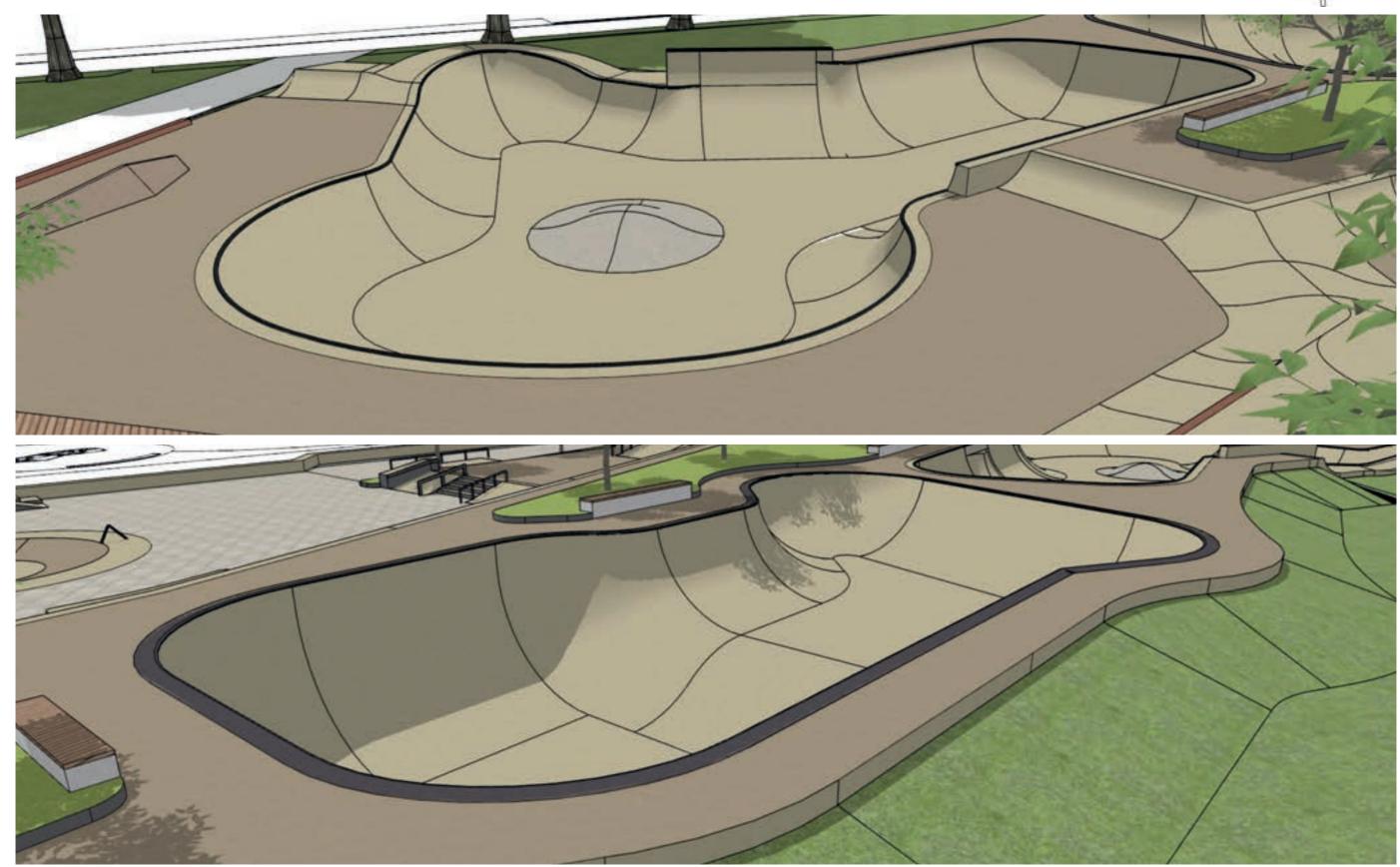


Fig.45 Visualisations developed by Betongpark showing the two different bowls designs included within the skatepark.

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4.3.1 Leith Links Activity Hub Skatepark Entrance

Fig.46 3D visualisation of the skatepark in the context of the Activity Hub developed by AtkinsRéalis using the Betongpark model.



4.3.2 Bike Track & Roller Rink



4.3.2 Bike Track

A clear demand for a bike track has been identified through public consultation and the frequent informal use of the adjacent undulating landscaped area as a bike track.

Engagement with local BMX users, skateboarders and parents with children who use scooters, identified that concrete bike tracks are the most versatile and durable option, requiring the least maintenance in comparison to asphalt surfaced pump tracks.

Such a versatile proposal will encourage different user groups, abilities and ages to share the track creating a more integrated and welcoming space for all.

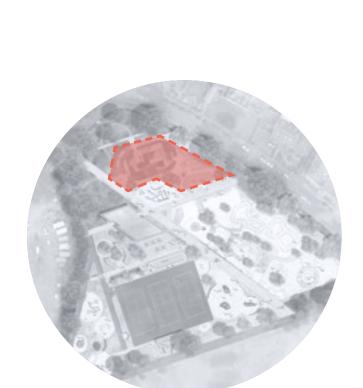


Fig.49 Bike Track Location Plan



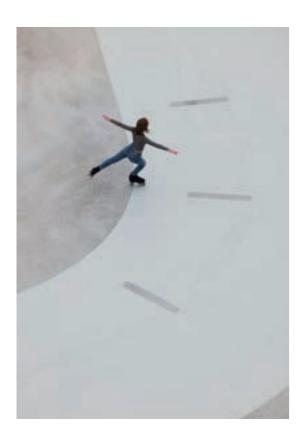






Fig.48 Precedent images showcasing the atmosphere of the bike track design.

4.3.2 Roller Rink







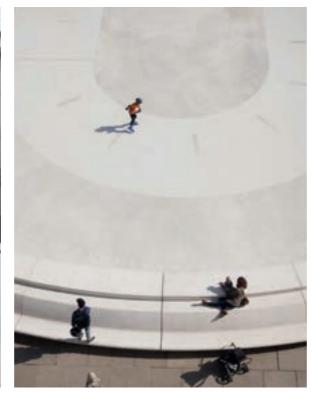


Fig.50 Precedent images showcasing the atmosphere of the bike track design.

The Roller Rink is designed to accommodate both roller derby and roller skating activities. The concrete design will create a 3m perimeter for a flat roller derby track and an artwork in the centre so the entire space can be used for all types of skating when not in use as a roller derby track.

Discussion with engagement groups identified that it would be best to avoid overlapping a range of sports in this space. Whilst it was acknowledged that multi-use flat spaces can increase options, it was noted that this can cause some spaces to become dominated by certain groups impacting on others freedom to take part in other activities.

The Skatepark Working Group were keen for some kind of artwork to be integrated into the centre of this space, which could be developed with a local artist.

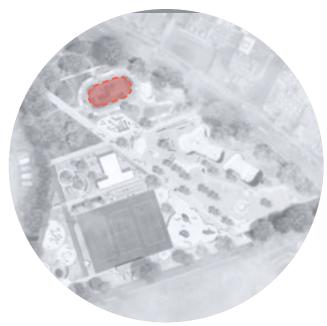


Fig.51 Roller Rink location plan

4.3.3 Bouldering Zone

The ambiguous nature of the bouldering rocks provides varied and creative routing options. Beginner, intermediate and advanced routes could be displayed nearby or on an app. This approach will reduce the need for maintenance of holds which are found on traditional climbing walls. This also reduces the risk of liability to the council if a hold was to break.

An easy route down to the ground will be highlighted nearby while new routes could be uploaded to an app. Belay loops added to the top will allow parents to belay children on ropes. A safety surface depth of 130mm rubber crumb will be necessary for the scale of these bouldering rocks. Rockworks have provided a model of three bouldering rocks designed for this space. The location of the bouldering rocks is quite flexible as they can be separated so these elements could potentially switched or integrated with the parkour zone depending on the scale of the parkour design as it develops.









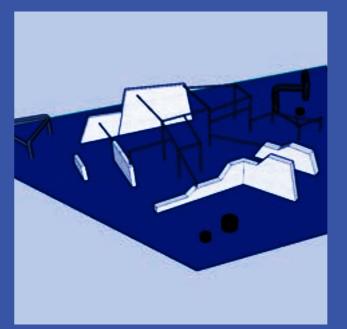




Fig.52 (Top left and middle left) Bouldering Rocks designed by Rockworks Climbing Wall

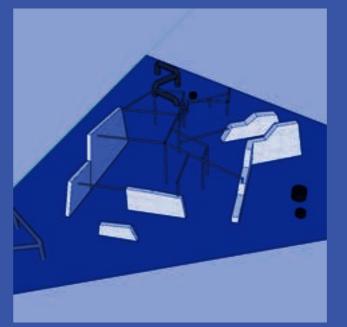






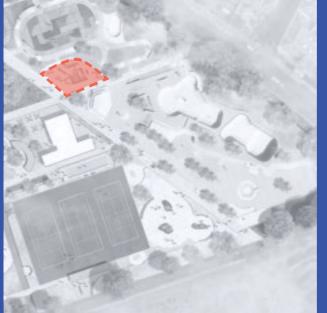












4.3.4 Parkour

This space will be developed in consultation with local free-running groups to provide a space that is suitable for all abilities and for different age groups by designing an ambiguous space that encourages creative movement. Consideration will need to be given as to how these facilities will integrate into the Activity Hub.

For now, place-holder products have been included in the proposals to demonstrate the potential scope of the parkour zone.

Fig.53 (Left) Precedent images of the atmosphere for the parkour area.

Fig.54 (Top Right) Place-holder products developed by Light Main

Fig.55 (Bottom Right) Location plan for dedicated parkour zone

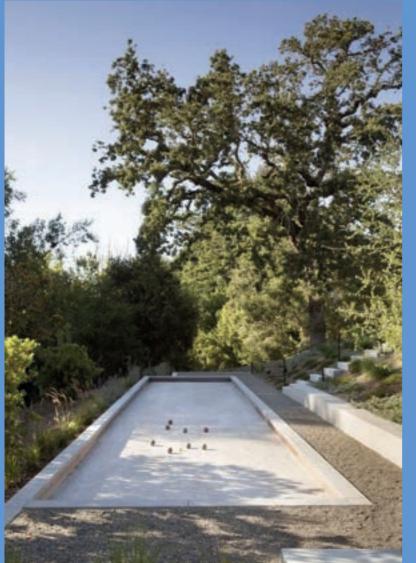








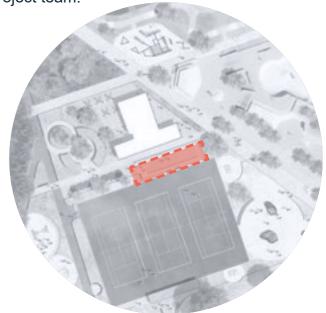


Fig.56 Precedent images showcasing the atmosphere of the pétanque coul

4.3.5 Pétanque

The existing pétanque court within the site, is in disrepair with large holes that make it unfit for use. The space is also fenced off and is therefore commonly used as a dog training ground. As a result, it is rarely used for its intended purpose and given less priority in maintenance schedules as it is perceived to have low demand. Pétanque is more commonly played by older generations in Edinburgh and was highlighted in the public consultation as an activity that local community members would like to see reinstated with improvements to facilities.

The proposal keeps the pétanque court in a similar location but enhances the space using pea gravel instead of sand and defining the edge of the space with planting and a deep dropped-kerb instead of a fence. This will keep the area open to create a flexible space that can be used for gatherings when not in use as a pétanque court and to limit its appeal as a dog training space. Interest in a dedicated space for dog exercise within Leith has been noted by the project team.



ig.57 Location Plan of the Pétanque Court

4.3.6 Social Swings

Provision has been made for social swings and a shelter to creating a playful yet restful space that was particularly requested in the Teenagers Engagement Workshop.

This more contemplative space will be surrounded by tall grasses and new tree planting to create some separation from the outdoor café space that is still passively observed.

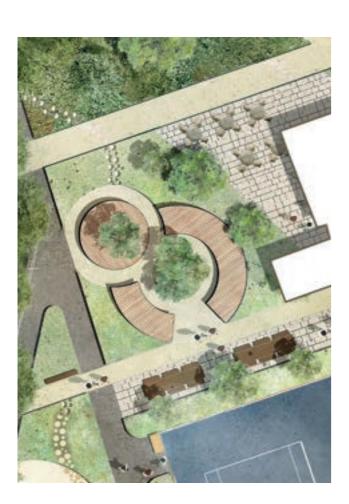


Fig.58 Extract from Activity Hub Masterplan of the Social Swings shelter









Fig.59 Precedent images showcasing the atmosphere of the social swind

4.3.7 Social Seating

Following engagement with local groups and teenagers the importance of social forms of seating was highlighted as a key priority for the park design.

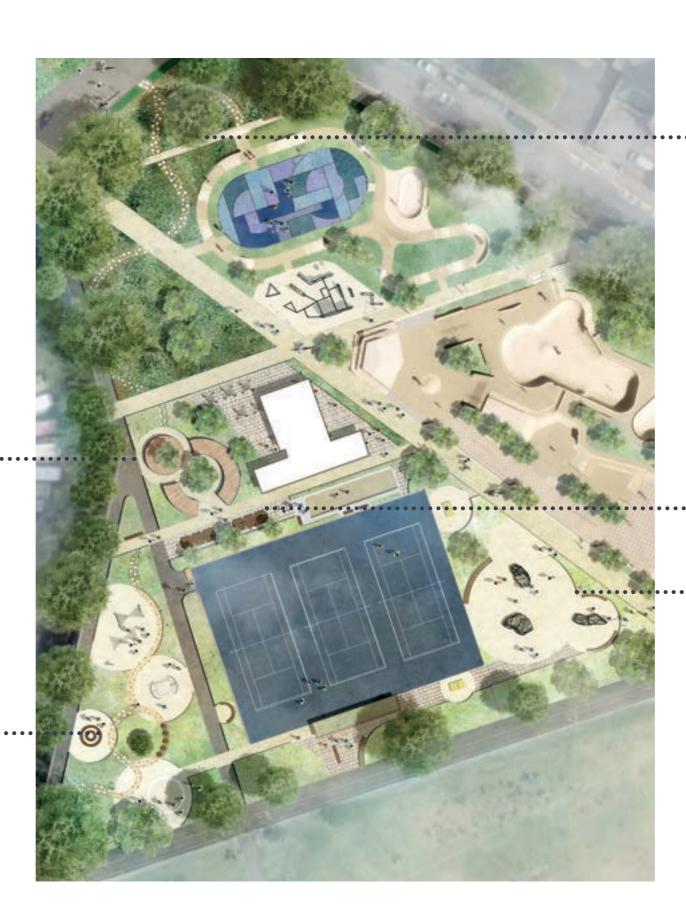
In particular, provision has been made for large, communal picnic tables located separately from the café to ensure that these can be used by everyone and do not exclude those who are not paying for food and beverages at the new pavilion café.



Round Bench and Grill for new tree protection



Two-Tier Circular Bench





Circular Bench for Existing Mature Tree



Extra Long Community
Picnic Tables





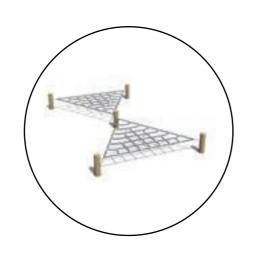
Fig.60 Extract from Activity Hub Masterplan showing the different types of social seating across the proposal.

4.3.8 Social Play

This space was highlighted by the Teenagers Engagement Workshop as a key opportunity site for a mixed-age, intergenerational and inclusive zone for creative movement, play and socialising.

Providing an alternative to the formal, young children's playground to the south and a different kind of experience to the rest of the Activity Hub.

Some elements in this space are off-theshelf products, while others may require bespoke design.





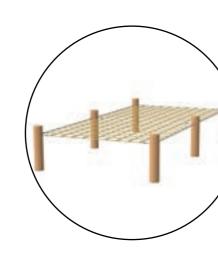


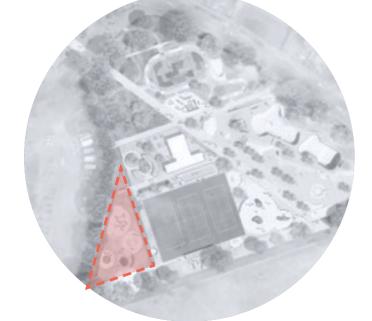














(Middle) Precedent images showcasing approach to play features and

products that could be part of the social play offering.

(Right) Activity Hub Masterplan extract



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4.3.8 Leith Links Activity Hub Social Swings and Play

Fig.64 Visualisation of ambiguous social swings and social play offering



4.3.9 Gateways

The main entrance will have a clear gateway and provide wayfinding to different activities.

Lines along the path could be used to lead people to different activities and spaces. This must be undertaken with due sensitivity to ensure compliance with best practices in accommodating neurodiversity.

Lighting these gateways is key to creating a safe and welcoming atmosphere within the park and activity hub, especially in the winter months when daylight hours are condensed.

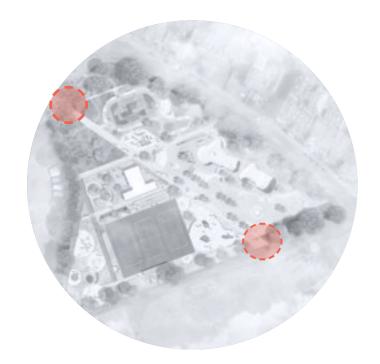


Fig.65 Location plan of primary entrances







Fig.66 Precedent images showcasing gateway features

4.4 Soft Landscaping **Strategy**

The planting palette for the site should be chosen using the following key objectives:

- Plants generally to be low maintenance / stress tolerant.
- Omission of species deemed unsuitable for a play park environment (e.g. thorny / poisonous).
- Species are predominantly native and selected to cope with the coastal environment.
- A balance of aesthetic and naturalistic amenity.
- Low to mid height plants to provide spatial definition to areas whilst permitting sight lines and passive supervision.
- Sensory Value that encourages positive interaction.
- Ecological value habitat and wildlife.
- Climate Change resilience.
- Instant impact and structure upon planting.

For each of the planting zones different species have been considered following key principles:

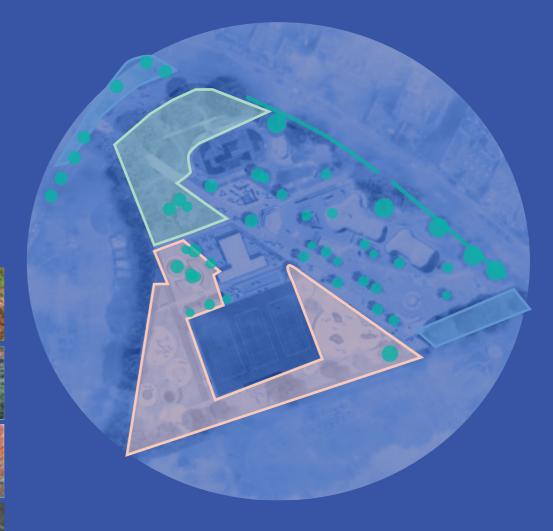
- Limited palette focussed on mass planting of ornamental grasses and hardy perennials with repeating species across different planting zones to tie the scheme together.
- Avoiding woody / shrubby species.
- Shade tolerant species for the Woodland Walk.
- Plants able to cope with both moist and waterlogged soils as well as dry conditions with rain gardens.
- Hawthorn hedging to replace existing privet hedge on the outer perimeter.
- New trees to have a clear stem and management of canopy to maintain clear sight lines across the park.
- Explore option to crown lift existing tree canopies to improve sight lines.



Semi-Ornamental







Planting Zones: Indicative Species

Woodland Walk

Ajuga reptans, Dryopteris filix-mas, Anemone nemorosa, Blechnum spicant, Allium ursinum, Viola riviniana

Rain Garden

Calamagrostis brachytricha AGM, Ajuga reptans, Deschampsia cespitosa, Miscanthus sinensis, Geranium 'Rozanne' AGM = 'Gerwat' (PBR), Cornus sanguinea

Semi-Ornamental

Deschampsia cespitosa. Miscanthus sinensis 'Kaskade', Stipa tenuissima, Luzula sylvatica 'Marginata', Carex divulsa, Verbena bonariensis, Betonica officinalis, Sanguisorba officinalis, Anemone × hybrida 'Honorine Jobert', Echinacea paradoxa New Tree Canopy & Low Hedging

Quercus petraea, Sorbus aucuparia, Sorbus aria, Betula pendula, Liriodendron tulipifera, Liquidambar styraciflua 'Worplesdon', Ginkgo biloba (male only), Crataegus monogyna

Skatepark Islands

Acer campestre, Pinus sylvestris, Prunus Iusitanica Angustifolia, Phormium 'Red Sensation', Sanguisorba officinalis, Carex testacea 'Prairie fire', Cornus sanguinea, Carex divulsa, Erigeron karvinskianus, Vinca minor, Deschampsia cespitosa

Fig.67 Diagram showing planting zones

4.4.1 Rain Gardens

Rain Gardens are a type of Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) which are being increasingly created worldwide to alleviate the negative impacts of extreme rainfall. Rain gardens intercept surface water, capture pollutants and reduce stress on the combined sewer system.

One of the many added benefits of Rain Gardens is that they also provide additional planting beds in urban settings - which brings other benefits such as a cooler micro-climate, carbon sequestration, habitat areas and pollinator-friendly planting.

Any SuDS features within the park design will be informed by wider studies and in partnership with the Flood Management Team at the Council.

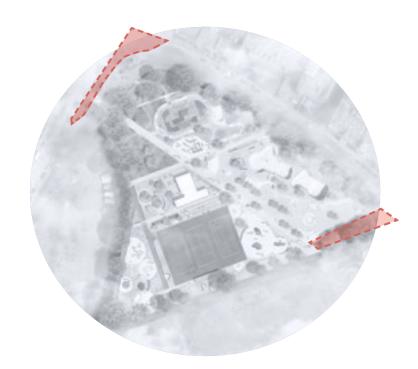


Fig.68 Location plan of rain gardens









Fig.69 Precedent images showcasing atmosphere of rain gardens

4.4.2 Semiornamental

The planting of this area will focus on texture, smell and colour. This space will compliment the park's wild flower meadows to create light and airy planted enclosures so visitors can feel immersed in a garden of plants.

Tall planting and grasses will add to an oversized feeling which will make people of all ages and sizes feel enclosed by planting in a way that mimics the feeling of a small toddler.

This approach to planting will allow a range of generations to enjoy the spaces together by creating a playful atmosphere for all.

Taller species interspersed amongst lower growing species will help create distinct pockets or rooms while ensuring that visibility is still relatively clear.

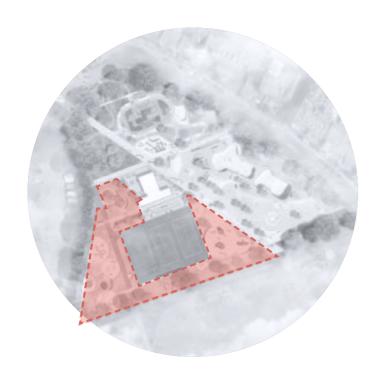


Fig.70 Location plan of sensory planting











Fig.71 Precedent images showcasing atmosphere of sensory planting

4.4.3 Woodland Walk

The Woodland Walk is intended to provide a biodiverse area of the park where the existing mature trees will be accompanied by native understory planting, hibernacula and areas of deadwood. A winding path and informal seating areas will provide visitors to the park a chance to experience a naturalistic woodland area - something which is incredibly hard to find in Edinburgh.

The planting mixes will comprise of species selected for their value to wildlife and will be based on the planting designs created by AtkinsRéalis for the Linking Leith's Parks project - part of the Edinburgh Nature Network scheme. This part of the park could also be classified as a site for the 'Wilding Wee Spaces' project - an initiative in Edinburgh whose aim is for every learning community to have a wild space that they can use for enhancing learning.

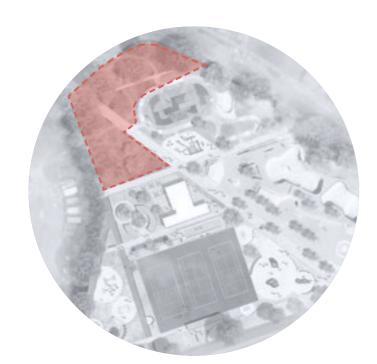
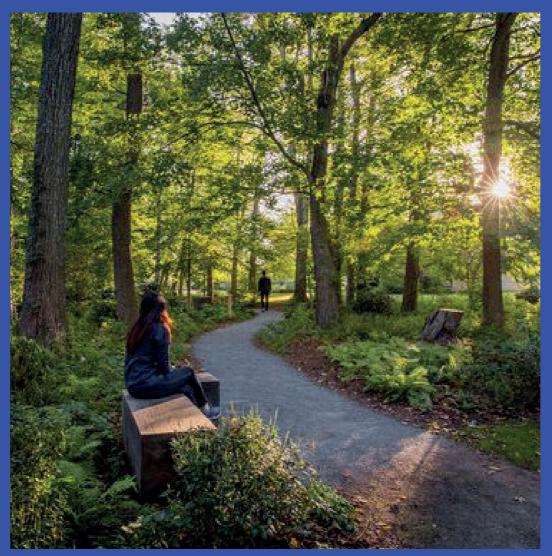


Fig.72 Location plan of woodland walk











p.73 Precedent images showcasing atmosphere of woodland plantin

4.5 Drainage Strategy

The drainage strategy for the site focuses on addressing key surface water management challenges and will be developed in partnership with the Flood Management Team at the Council.

1. Surface Water Flood Management

The existing surface water flooding identified on Queen Charlotte Street and John's Place, could be mitigated by exploring surface water management around the Leith Connections initiative at the North Entrance to the park. SuDS could capture excess rain water and also help to create a welcoming gateway space.

2. Skatepark and Roller Rink Runoff

The skatepark and roller rink will include a significant amount of impermeable concrete surfacing. They will be graded to capture run-off water into two rain gardens; one surrounding the roller rink, and one to the south of the skatepark.

3. Pétanque Court Drainage

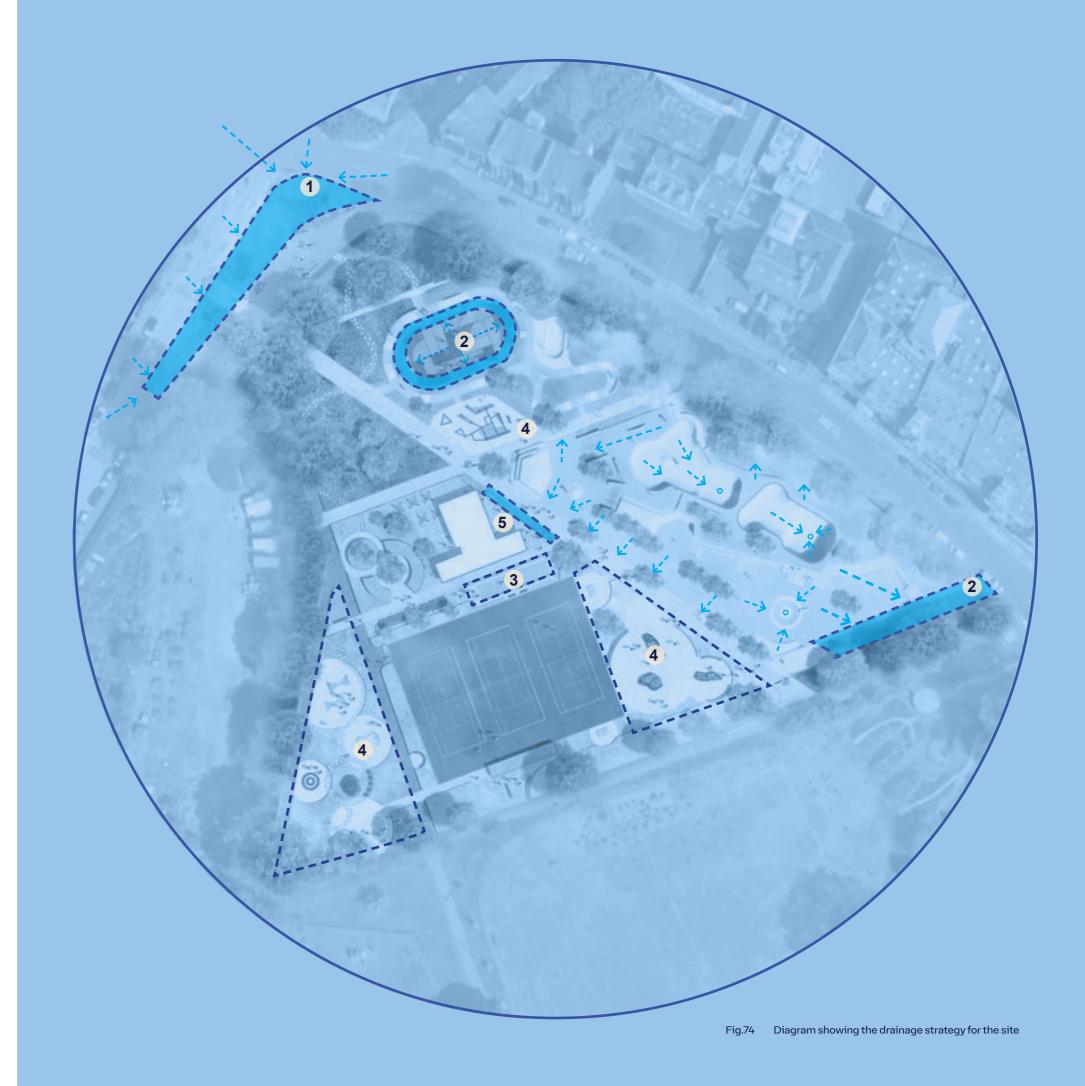
The pétanque court will include a permeable surface of pea gravel, to minimise water collecting in this space. However, as the court sits lower than the surrounding footpaths, additional drainage considerations may be required to ensure it does not flood during high rainfall events.

4. Permeable Paving

To avoid any surface water issues across the activity zones and footpaths, a permeable rubber crumb safety surface should be used to ensure adequate drainage as well as permeable paving solutions where possible, such as resin bound gravel paths.

5. Rainwater Harvesting

The pavilion is currently planned to include a green roof which will help capture most of the rainfall on this surface. However, a rain garden along the eastern perimeter of the building will help capture any further runoff.

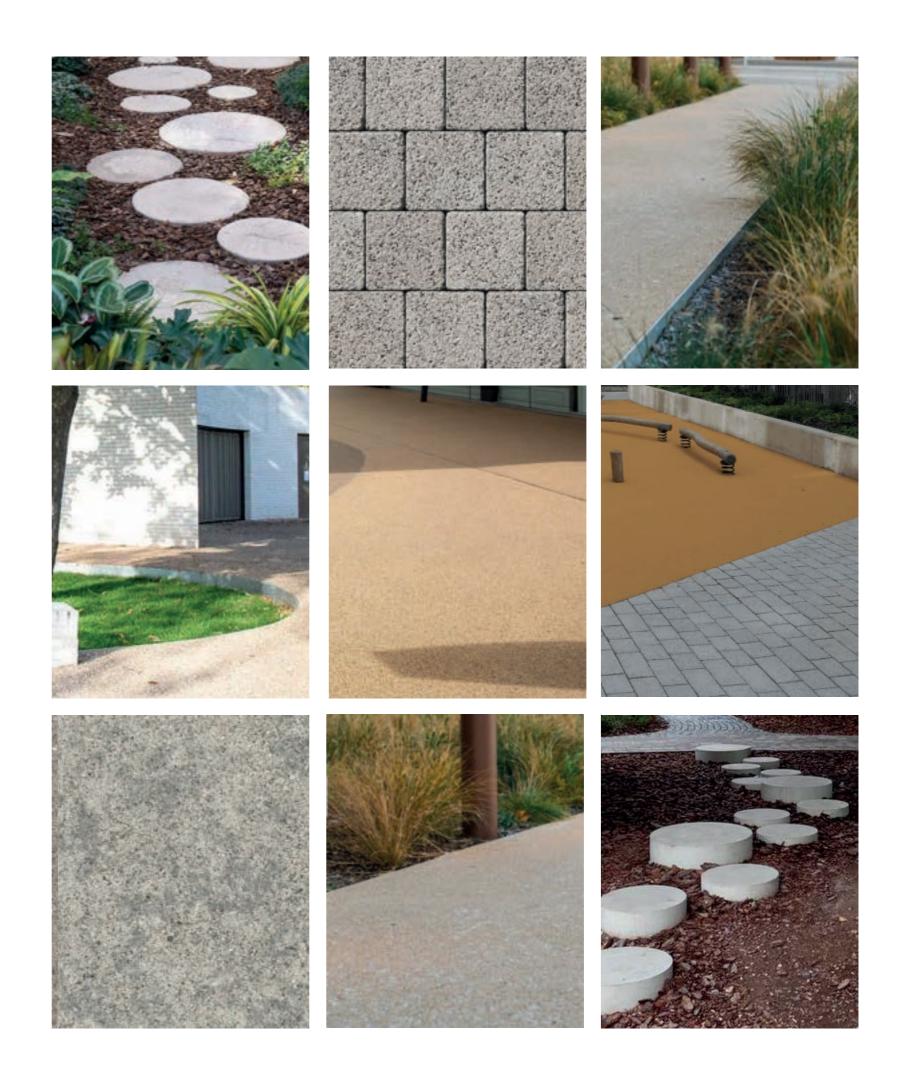


4.6 Hard Landscaping Strategy

Hard landscaping materials have been selected following key design principles:

- Aesthetic value
- Sensitivity to local architectural and industrial heritage
- Durability and minimising maintenance requirements
- Sustainability and embodied carbon
- Cost-effectiveness

A colour palette that combines both warm and cool toned materials will help to delineate spaces and activity zones.

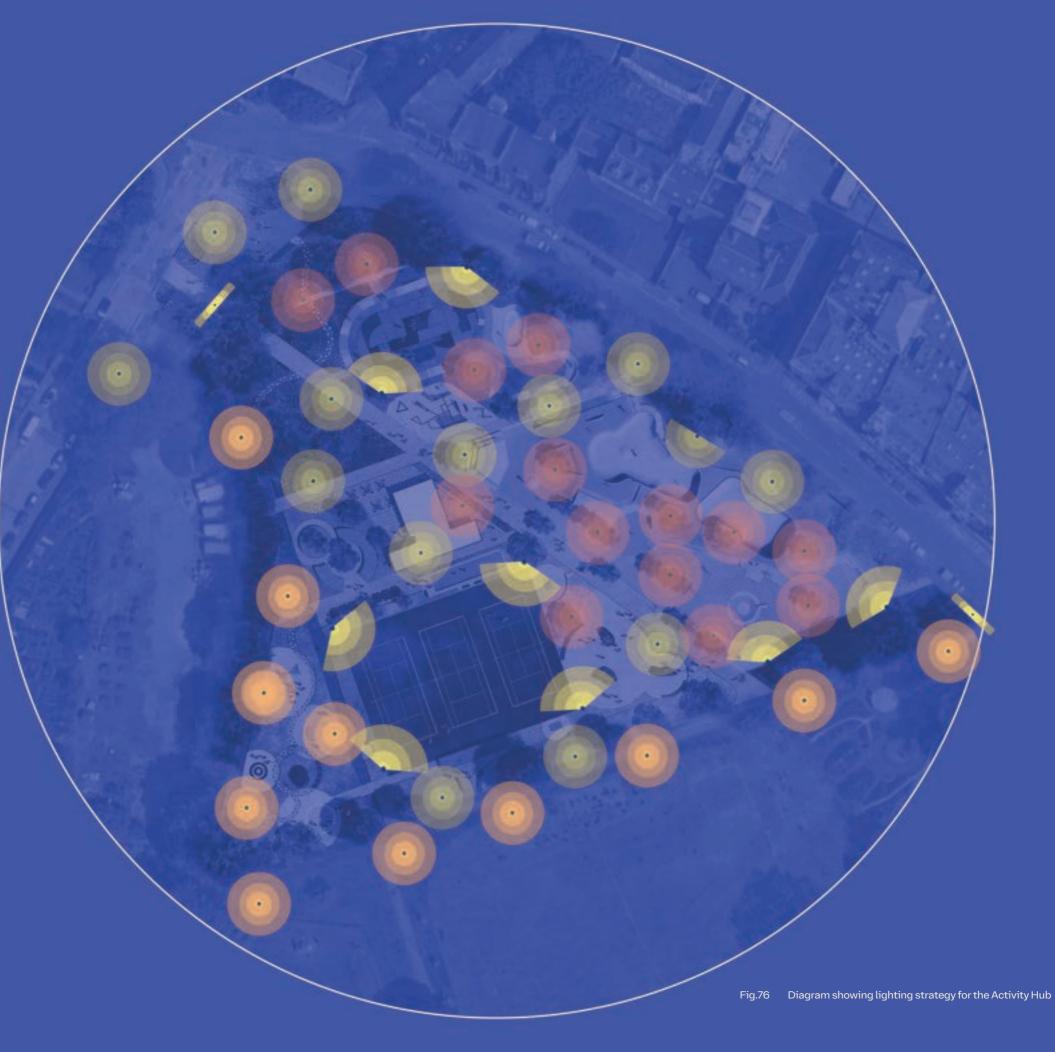


4.7 Lighting Strategy

Lighting was highlighted as a key factor in the engagement process for creating a safe space. To ensure safety within the Activity Hub at night, it is important that the activity zones are adequately lit during darker hours. The lighting strategy therefore aims to create a welcoming atmosphere with consistent lighting levels across active zones to help the area feel safer in non-daylight hours. Further work will be undertaken to assess the timings that the space will need to be lit during dark hours. This could help inform the use of timers for lighting within the site, a strategy employed in Saughton Park.

Engagement with local skatepark users highlighted the need for even lighting across the skatepark especially where changes in level might otherwise distort and obscure views through the space. This need for evenly dispersed lighting across activity zones may require a mixture of flood lighting, columns and feature lighting especially where level changes and gradients can impact the spread of light.





4.7.1 Sports Ground Flood Lights

Tennis courts, parkour, pétanque and skatepark facilities all require lighting for use in the winter after 4pm. To ensure safety, it is important that these areas are adequately lit.

The new lighting guidance for Edinburgh parks outlines that sports ground flood lighting can exceed 5m and should be chosen based on the range of sports being played and level of competition expected.

It is expected that public sports facilities within parks would be lit to Class II lighting (clubstandard) and should follow guidance from BS EN 12193 and SLL LG4 Sports Lighting.





Fig.77 Flood lighting details from DW Windsor

4.7.2 Solar-Powered **Lighting Columns**

A number of locations for additional lighting columns have identified to complement the existing lighting column network across the park.

These were selected to reflect the heritagestyle lighting found along key park routes and surrounding streets within the conservation area, but include a solar-powered luminaire to help reduce the energy required for the new lighting.

Sofia









Features & Benefits

A modern take on traditional post top luminaire with an open sided design for minimised windage

All the flexibility and performance of our fucntional streetlight ranges but in a more contemporary appearance

Offered with our Diamond+ optic range. Choose from 14 different distributions to ensure light is only placed where needed

Options

Sofia 1: (8 LEDs) for mounting at 3-5 metres

Sofia 2: (16 LEDs) for mounting at 4-6 metres

Optical Control

Diamond+ A Optic: Roads (A1 / A2 / A3 / A5 / A6)

Diamond+B Optic: Pathways (B1 / B2 / B3)

Diamond+ C Optic: Areas (C1 / C2 / C6)

Diamond+ Z Optic: Crossings (ZL / ZR / ZF)

Lifetime

100,000 hours L90 B10

Total Luminaire Lumens

Sofia 1: 700 - 3,100 lm (7 - 31W) Sofia 2: 1,378 - 6,000 lm (12 - 55W)

Luminaire Efficacy

Up to 140lm/W



Control

OLO: Constant Light Output enabled - for energy savings and dependable light throughout the lifetime of the luminaire

Switch: On/off through conventional PEC, Miniature or NEMA

Dim: Factory set dimmed / customer specified dimming

CMS: Compatible with all available CMS systems

Colours

RAL 9005 Black

RAL 7046 Mid grey

RAL 7035 Light grey

(Other RAL colours available on request)

Materials

Body: High-pressure die-cast aluminium

Glazing: Toughened glass

Seals: Silicone

Finish: Polyester powder coat

Installation & Maintenance

Supplied complete with 6m cable tail.

Includes Support Tag for easy luminaire maintenance

Surge protection: 6-8kV as standard (dependant on LED qty.) 10kV

Operational temperature range: -20°C to +40°C

Dimensions



Traditional solar-powered light columns from DW Windsor

4.7.3 Feature Lighting

Feature lighting that can be angled downwards can also be used in the Woodland Walk to help minimise impact to wildlife. The new café and public toilets will also benefit from a similar lighting treatment to accompany integrated building lighting and ensure these areas feel welcoming in the darker winter months.

Additional types of lighting that were discussed by community engagement groups for the project included catenary lighting, bollard lighting and in-ground luminaires. However, following further discussions with CEC each of these options were considered to involve significant risk and maintenance requirements and therefore have been excluded from the lighting strategy for now. The strategy therefore aims to achieve consistent lighting levels throughout the site using more standard lighting columns.

As bollard lighting and in-ground luminaires have been deemed unsuitable for this site, further lighting options that minimise impact to wildlife will need to be explored especially within the woodland area. This could involve concealing low level lighting within decorative protective grating as well as timer-based solutions.

Turn

IP66 | IK10 | CLASS I / CLASS II

eatures:

Part of the Focus by DW Windsor range

Designed by Fris & Moltke Design, Denmark

Flexible bracket allows Turn to be adjusted in any direction

Available with a range of 3 distributions;
 narrow (12*), medium (19*), and wide (38*)

Light source

Bridgelux Vero 18

Optical contro

Seem angle

Wide beam reflector 38* Medium beam reflector 19* Narrow beam 12*

L80 (B10) lifetime prediction

Min. 100,000 hours (@ T, max. 25°C)

Driver

Xitanium Full Xi FP 40W 0.3-1.0 A programmable

CLO enables

Surge protection: L/N-GND: SkV L-N: 6kV

Switching and control:

Remote switch via photocell / timeclock.

Pre-programmed Dimmable: Dali, 1-10V YX355F Corten brown (Mars 2525) RAL colours available on request

Materials:

SW302G Graphite grey

SN351F Black (Noir 900 Sablé)

MW3000 Silver grey

Body: High pressure die-cast aluminium

Clear glass with silk coating at the edge

Mounting

Clamp bracket for Ø76mm column shaft

Can be oriented in any direction









g.79

Feature lighting columns from DW Windsor

4.8 Next Steps

The completed RIBA Stage 2 Activity Hub Masterplan will be used to support the process of exploring funding opportunities. There may be a need to deliver the plans for the site in phases depending on funding availability. This may involve separating the skatepark, building and wider landscape into distinct projects for development and construction.

2021

- Leith Links Masterplan Design
- Community Consultation

2023

- Leith Links Activity Hub RIBA Stage 2 commenced
- Feasibility Study for Pavilion
- Public Consultation
- Leith Links Working Group and Skatepark Working Group Engagement

2024

- Re-design of Pavilion with new brief
- Public Consultation
- Skatepark Design Workshop
- Teenagers Co-Design Workshop
- Leith Links Activity Hub Masterplan RIBA 2 updated
- Legal Advice on Confirmation Act

2025

- Skatepark RIBA 3 Design Completed
- Activity Hub Concept Design RIBA Stage 2 Concluded
- Pavilion Design Progressed

Next Steps

- Exploring Funding Opportunities
- Design Development
- Planning Permission
- Potential Phased Delivery of Masterplan

ig.8 Project timeline

References

Dunes, North Berwick West Links. CC-by-SA 2.0 Richard Webb via Geograph

Ainslie's 1804 Town Plan, showing Leith Links as "a Common for Playing at the Golf". Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

David Allan, 1787, (Painting) William Inglis, c 1712 - 1792. Surgeon and Captain of the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers Available online, 19.04.2014 https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/2815?search=inglis&search_set_offset=9

John Dollman, 1896, "The Sabbath Breakers", John Henrie and Patrick Bogie discovered by the Minister and a Kirk Elder playing golf on Leith Links. © The Trustees of the British Museum, 1938,0617.5

RCAHMS- Notman Collection (C.1890) Edinburgh, Links Place, General View, (Photo) https://canmore.org.uk/site/153453/ edinburgh-links-place-general

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