



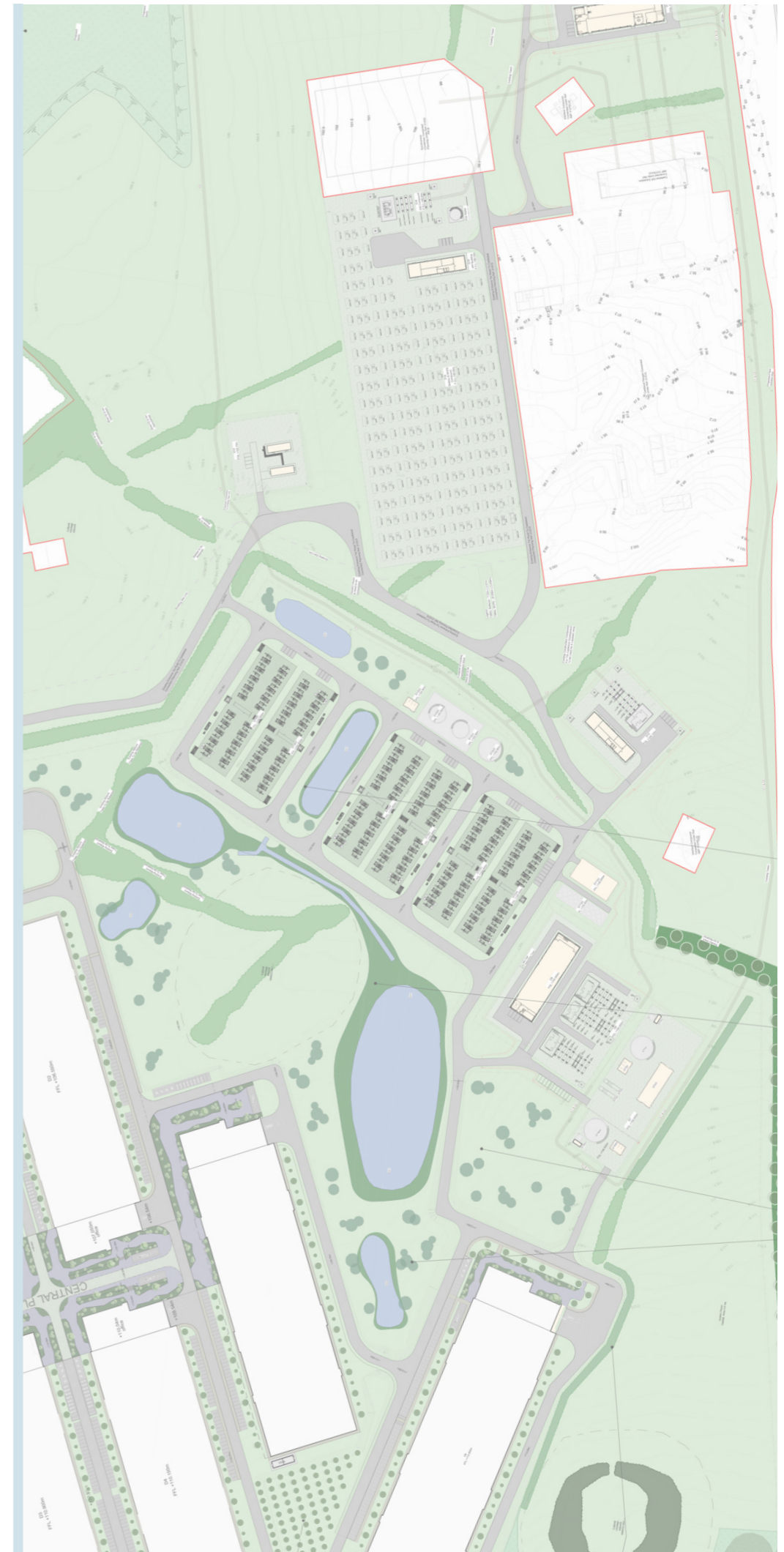
## **APPENDIX 12.6**



# PROJECT ADMIRAL ROCHFORTBRIDGE, CO. WESTMEATH

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN STATEMENT

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# 1.0 EXISTING LANDSCAPE

## 1.1 OVERVIEW

The proposal site is situated to the west of the settlement of Rochfortbridge in County Westmeath, which represents the most notable settlement in terms of proximity to the site. Tyrrellspass, of a similar scale, is situated approximately 2.7 km to the west. The N52 National Secondary Route extends north from the M6 motorway corridor in the western extent of the study area and is some 2 km west of the site at its nearest point. The R400 regional road links the M6 with Rochfortbridge and is located along the eastern extent of study area. Whilst the R446 is one of the nearest road corridors to the proposed development, several local roads also occur along the sites boundary. The predominant land use within the study area is agricultural farmland, comprising medium- to large-sized geometric fields that are often bounded by dense, mature, tree-lined hedgerows. The existing 220kV Castlelost substation development is also contained within the southern extent of the site to the north of the M6 motorway.



## 1.2 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The site is located within a relatively flat and robust rural landscape characterised by pastoral farmland, conifer forest plantations and a well-established network of hedgerows. Existing boundary vegetation and intervening hedgerows provide a strong sense of enclosure and contribute to a layered landscape structure, limiting wider visibility and reinforcing the contained nature of the site.

The landscape context is influenced by established infrastructure elements, including the M6 motorway corridor and the recently operational Flexgen development, which introduce a degree of contemporary infrastructure character into the receiving environment. Notwithstanding this, the area retains a predominantly rural identity, defined by agricultural land use and vegetation patterns.

Settlement within the wider landscape is dispersed and linear in form, with individual dwellings and small clusters typically arranged along the regional and local road network. This pattern of development, combined with agricultural land management and structural vegetation, defines the site as part of a settled but distinctly rural working landscape with an established infrastructural influence.



## 1.3 EXISTING TREES AND VEGETATION

The site is defined by a network of established hedgerow field boundaries that contribute to the contained and structured character of the landscape. These hedgerows provide both visual enclosure and ecological connectivity, reinforcing the layered vegetation pattern evident throughout the immediate surroundings. Intervening hedgerows and boundary planting limit wider visibility and integrate the site within the prevailing agricultural landscape framework. Mature trees are present along many of the internal hedgerows, adding vertical structure and strengthening the sense of enclosure across the site. A small cluster of trees located at the western extent of the site denotes a local heritage feature.



## 2.0 LANDSCAPE PROPOSAL

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### 2.1 GENERAL AIMS

The overarching aim of the landscape design is to protect, strengthen and enhance the existing landscape framework, while ensuring the proposed development is appropriately integrated into its rural setting.

A key objective is its retention and protection of established hedgerows and treelines, insofar as practicable, recognising their importance in defining landscape structure, providing visual containment and supporting ecological connectivity. These features will form the basis of the landscape strategy and will be safeguarded during construction and incorporated into the long-term design.

The design also seeks to bolster existing vegetation through supplementary planting to enhance visual screening and reinforce the site's ecological value. Additional planting will be carefully integrated with the existing field pattern to maintain landscape coherence and continuity.

Native species will be used throughout the scheme to reflect the character of the local landscape and to maximise biodiversity benefits. The establishment of new areas of woodland and native vegetation will serve to screen and soften the proposed built infrastructure, assimilate the development into the prevailing rural landscape character, and provide long-term ecological enhancement.

Overall, the landscape proposals aim to ensure that the development is sensitively integrated, visually contained and ecologically strengthened within its receiving environment.

### 2.2 PROPOSED MITIGATION PLANTING

The landscape proposals have been developed in tandem with the architectural amendments to ensure a cohesive and integrated design response. The reorientation of the Data Halls to form a centralised plaza space provides the organising structure for the landscape strategy. This plaza will be defined by a series of geometric raised and stepped planters that reflect and compliment the angular form of the proposed metal veil that is proposed along the regional road facing facades of the proposed Data Halls. The terraced arrangement responds to the change in levels between the proposed buildings and the central access road, integrating the development sensitively into the existing topography while reducing abrupt transitions. The stepped planters transform the level change into a layered landscape feature that enhances visual interest, usability and overall spatial quality.

Planting within the plaza will comprise a mix of native and pollinator-friendly trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials, selected to provide seasonal variation and a sequential flowering period from early spring through to late autumn. The planting design has been informed by the objectives of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, ensuring the delivery of meaningful biodiversity enhancement alongside visual amenity benefits. Native shrub and perennial planting within the geometric borders will soften the interface between the built form and the road corridor, introduce texture and depth, and reinforce the integration of the development within its receiving environment.

Beyond the plaza, proposed native tree corridors will be incorporated throughout the site to strengthen ecological connectivity and reinforce landscape structure. These corridors, together with additional tree planting, will help to visually soften the built form, break up massing and diminish the overall scale and extent of the development. In the more open areas of the site, native parkland-style tree planting will establish a parkland aesthetic, contributing to a sense of visual amenity within the site. Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) features will be planted with native wetland species to create naturalistic landscape elements that enhance biodiversity, support ecological function and further assimilate the development into the prevailing rural landscape character.

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN



**PROPOSED SCREENING BERMS**  
 New earthen berms proposed along the sites boundary and planted with a native woodland. Planted berms to provide screening of the development from the nearest residential receptors along the regional road to the north of the site.

**NATIVE TREE PLANTING**  
 Corridors of native trees planted internal to the site to further bolster the sites biodiversity levels and anchor the site into this landscape setting. Corridors of native tree planting to be selected in line with the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and will visual soften internal views of the proposed development.

**EXISTING BOUNDARY HEDGEROW RETAINED**  
 Existing boundary hedgerow along the sites northern boundary to be retained and protected. Boundary hedgerow to be bolstered with a native whip planting mix and advanced nursery stock as necessary and managed at a height of 3-4m

**PROPOSED PLAZA**  
 Proposed plaza at the intersection of the data hall buildings, featuring terraced planters to soften level changes and planted with native trees and a shrub and perennial mix in accordance with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

**NATIVE WOODLAND PLANTING**  
 Sawtooths of native woodland planting along new earthen berms along the northern boundary of the site to visually screen and soften the proposed development from the nearest receptors to the north. Woodland to comprise mix of advanced nursery stock and native whips with areas of grassland

**PROPOSED NATIVE WOODLAND**  
 Proposed native woodland planting along the northeast corner of the site. Native woodland planting to comprise a mix of advanced nursery stock and native whip planting

**PROPOSED ORCHARD**  
 Proposed pollinator friendly tree orchard comprising a mix of native apple and pear trees

**PROPOSED WOODLAND & BERM**  
 Excess soils used to creating berms along the western part of the site and to be planted with a native woodland planting mix comprising whips and advanced nursery stock.

**EXISTING HEDGEROWS RETAINED AND BOLSTERED**  
 Existing hedgerow retained, protected and bolstered as necessary as per hedgerow Type 1. Retention of hedgerows retains the existing landscape structures and the green corridors throughout the site.

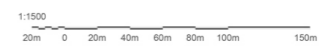
**EXISTING VEGETATION RETAINED**  
 Existing vegetation at ring fort retained and protected

**NEW NATIVE HEDGEROW**  
 New native hedgerow located to the south of the proposed data halls to contextually separate and diminish impacts on the visual setting of the the heritage asset further to the south

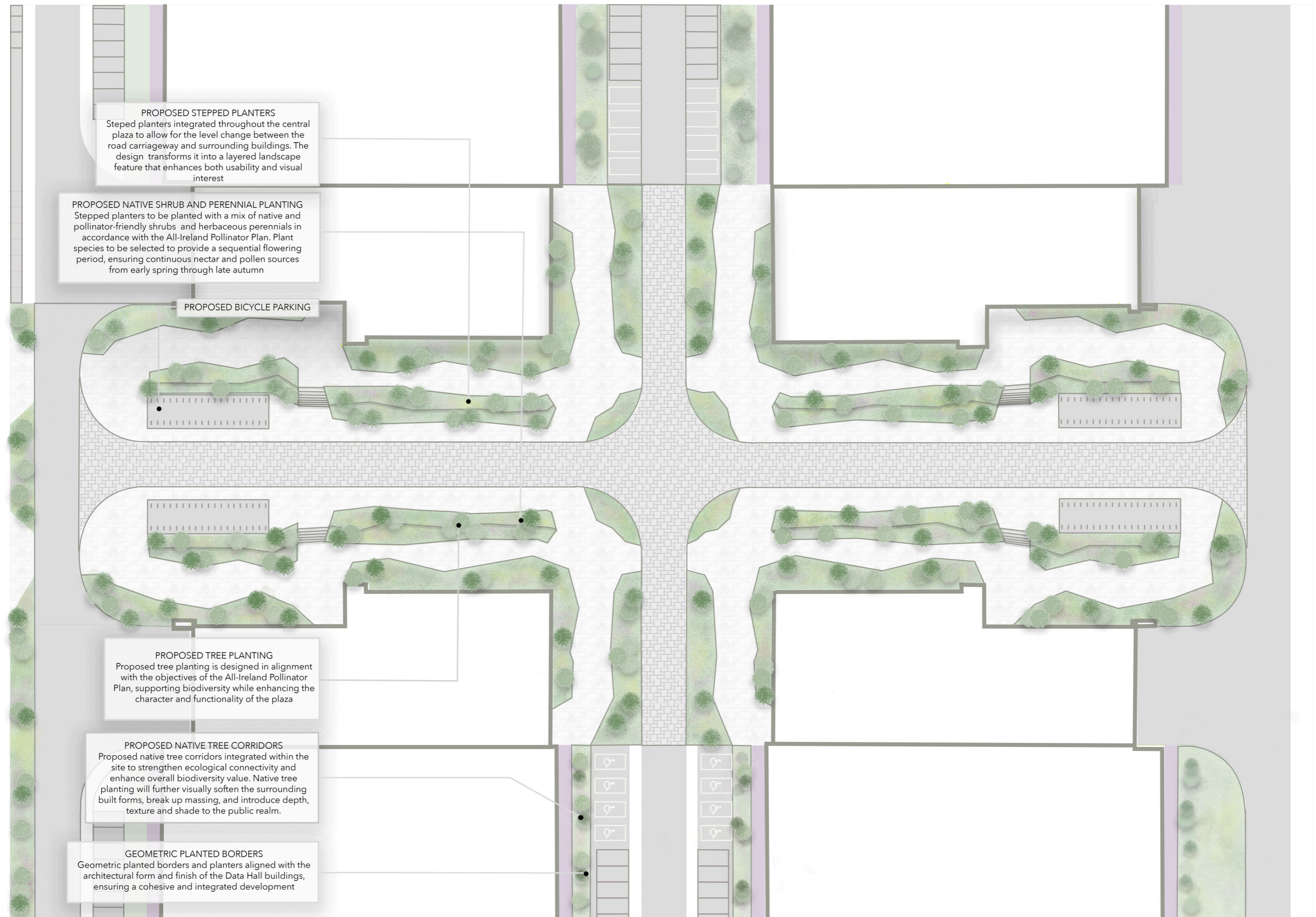
**SOUTHERN BOUNDARY TREATMENT**  
 Slaggered corridor of native Oak trees planted along the southern boundary of the site and under-planted with native scrub plantings

**NATIVE WETLAND PLANTING**  
 Areas of native wetland plantings to be provided around the full perimeter of the proposed attenuation pond and internal streams. Native trees provide around the surrounding area with native Salix species provided in the immediate vicinity of the attenuation pond

**PROPOSED NATIVE PARKLAND TREE PLANTING**  
 Native parkland trees planted throughout areas of species rich grassland to generate a parkland like aesthetic within the site and enhance local biodiversity levels



## 4.0 DETAILED PLAZA PLAN

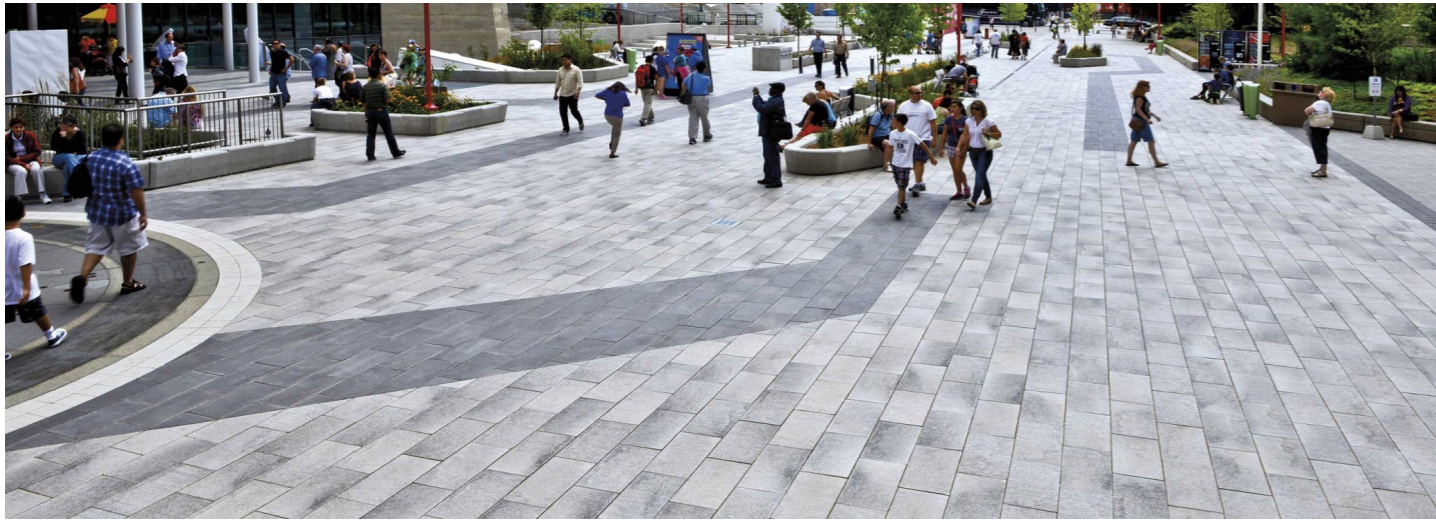


## 5.0 CENTRAL PLAZA VISUALISATIONS

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## 6.0 HARD LANDSCAPE STRATEGY



Concrete pavers



Seating integrated within steps



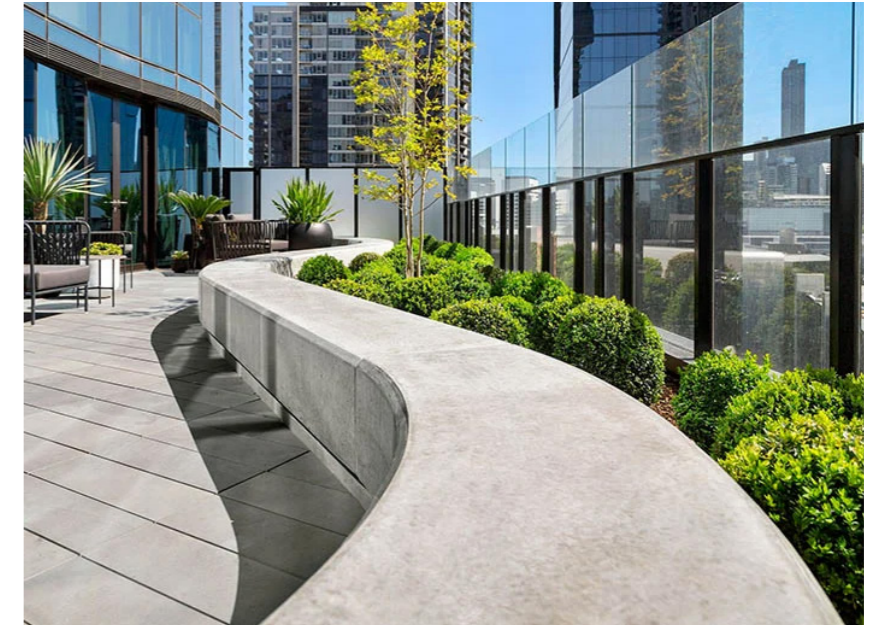
Seat with back and arm rests



Tiered planters



Tiered planters



Concrete seating



Concrete planters



Bike racks



Alternate paving for main plaza

# 7.0 SOFT LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

## 7.1 NATIVE WOODLAND/ SCREEN PLANTING MIX SPECIES:

### High Canopy:

Quercus Robur  
Pinus sylvestris

### Low Canopy:

Alnus glutinosa  
Betula pubescens  
Prunus avium

### Understory and fringe (higher shrubs):

Prunus Padus  
Corylus avellana  
Ilex aquifolium  
Crataegus monogyna

### Understory and edge (lower shrubs):

Prunus spinosa  
Rosa-canina  
Euonymus europaeus

## 7.2 WETLAND MIX:

Glyceria maxima  
Carex riparia  
Typha latifolia  
Typha angustifolia  
Iris pseudacorus and other similar marginal species

## 7.3 NATIVE HEDGEROW SPECIES (TYPE 1 & 2):

### Primary structure:

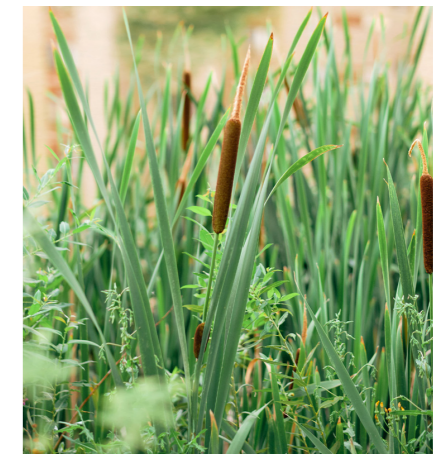
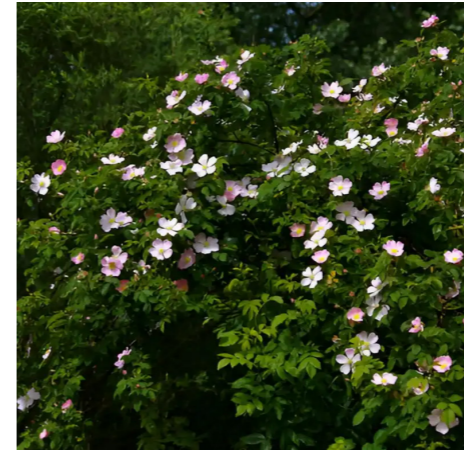
Crataegus monogyna

### Secondary structure:

Prunus spinosa  
Ilex aquifolium

### Shrub species structure:

Rubus fruticosus  
Corylus avellana  
Rosa canina  
Euonymus europaeus



# SOFT LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

## 7.4 TREE PLANTING (PLAZA):

- Amelanchier x grandiflora "Robin Hill"
- Betula pubescens
- Betula pendula
- Pinus sylvestris
- Malus tschonoskii
- Sorbus aucuparia varieties



## 7.5 SHRUB AND PERENIAL PLANTING MIX:

- Allium species
- Aster species
- Begonia species
- Carex pendula
- Cotoneaster conspicuus
- Cornys sanguinea
- Dyopteris felix-mas
- Helleborus foetidus
- Iris pseudocorus
- Mischanthis sinensis
- Panicum virgatum
- Perovskia atriplicifolia
- Rudbeckia species
- Rosmarinus officinalis
- Salvia species
- Viburnum opulus



## 7.6 NATIVE TREE PLANTING (PARKLAND):

- Alnus glutinosa
- Betula pubescens
- Betula pendula
- Crataegus monogyna 'stricta'
- Pinus sylvestris
- Prunus avium
- Sorbus aucuparia
- Quercus Patraea
- Quercus Robur



# SOFT LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

## 7.7 GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT/POLLINATOR FRIENDLY WILDFLOWER SEEDING:

- Birdsfoot Trefoil
- Black Meddick
- Cowslip
- Devil's Bit Scabious
- Meadow Buttercup
- Field Scabious
- Hemp Agrimony
- Kidney Vetch
- Lady's Bedstraw
- Lady's Ann lace
- Lesser Knapweed
- Meadowsweet
- Mullein
- Ox-eye Daisy
- Purple Loosestrife
- Red Campion
- Red Clover
- Ribwort Plantain
- Rough Hawksbit
- Sorrel
- St Johnswort
- Wild Angelica
- Wild Carrot
- Yarrow
- Yellow Agrimony
- Yellow Rattle
- Teasel

Also includes 35% annuals: Corn Marigold, Corn Poppy, Corncockle, Cornflower, Scented Mayweed.

