

**WEST BAR**///

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT



# S5

## Public Realm









# 5.1 Public Realm Principles



In which we describe the objectives for the public realm and the way that the masterplan achieves these objectives.

**T**he Public Realm at West Bar comprises the streets and squares which will provide the setting for a new place to live, work and relax in Sheffield city centre. People movement and activity will be encouraged within a legible network of comfortable walking routes. The streets and squares within West Bar are where people will meet, transact, move, chat, sit, walk, stand, listen, watch... they are where people will connect with each other. The public realm has been designed according to the following 5 basic principles:

- The Public Realm makes connections movement and access for all
- The Public Realm is a social place
- The Public Realm should reinforce the character of West Bar
- The Public Realm must be simple and uncluttered
- The Public Realm must be manageable

## SITE ANALYSIS

West Bar is situated to the north of the city centre. The district is partly within the floodplain of the river Don, and at its southern end connects with the steeply sloping edge of the city centre core. Public Realm Character.

The West Bar district currently comprises two character areas :

- to the south, the dominant buildings of the Crown Court and Family court, which front onto the wide, open and sloping landscape of the main West Bar road to the south.
- to the north, the district comprises workshops and warehouses arranged alongside narrow streets, interspersed with clearance sites, and demolition sites associated with recent road and infrastructure works.

West Bar is currently indistinct, particularly in relation to the surrounding areas.

Kelham Island, a coarse and fragmented network of streets and courtyards associated with some of the earliest industrial development in Sheffield, is now a historic quarter, and is located to the north of West Bar, across the Inner Ring Road. The Cathedral quarter is situated to the south of West Bar. Typically, it comprises narrow winding streets which open out onto distinctive spaces such as Paradise Square, and the Cathedral Yard. Both of these districts are attractive pedestrian environments, and West Bar can be seen as a “missing link” between these important parts of central Sheffield.

The character of the public realm at West Bar will form a legible and coherent transition from the small scale street network to the south, to the more open block formation of Kelham Island.

## DESIGN ETHOS

The Public Realm design has developed from the early principles established in the competition submission, and has evolved through close collaboration between the Masterplanners, Public Realm Designers, Engineers and Plot Architects. The Public Realm plan sets out to establish the following :

**Distinctiveness:** The conceptual development of the public realm network for West Bar has been driven by the concept of “the citadel”, as a dense built form, cut open to form streets and a primary central space, and marked with gateways at entrance points. In this context, streets and public spaces are deliberately sized to emphasise the sense of containment and intensity. Tall towers will form “gateways” marking the three corners of the West Bar district. Associated with

each tower is a distinctive public place, marking the transition from outside to inside West Bar.

**Connections:** West Bar has historically been somewhat cut-off from the city core of Sheffield; the name West Bar comes

from the “Bar” which marked the edge of the city centre, and the topography of the area reflects the transition from the high city around the Cathedral to the south, to the level river floodplain of the Don to the north. West Bar

has historically been a point of arrival in Sheffield, and as a result roads combine with the river corridor to make a relatively fragmented streetscape network in the surrounding area. The public realm network therefore establishes new street connections to surrounding districts, in particular to the River Don Walk, Kelham Island, and the city centre.

**Comfort:** Making places which are sheltered and orientated to provide human comfort. The buildings, streets and spaces have been modelled with regard to environmental comfort; heights have been carefully adjusted to assist sunlight penetration and light materials have been used as façade materials. The landscape materials, particularly the tree planting, has been integrated into the scheme to reduce wind turbulence.

**A place to linger:** Creating the conditions for visitors to linger longer within the external environment, through the careful provision of places for standing, sitting, with lighting where appropriate, avoiding walls, excessive level changes and unnecessary street clutter.

**Safety:** Make a public realm which feels safe, in which the principles of passive surveillance can be introduced through minimising obstructions and maximising street use, and through careful lighting design.

**Robustness:** Establish the perception of a robust, high quality public realm through the careful use of long lasting, sustainable, predominantly natural materials, which can be easily cared for.

**Pedestrian friendly:** Manage vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic through careful design of shared routes and surfaces.

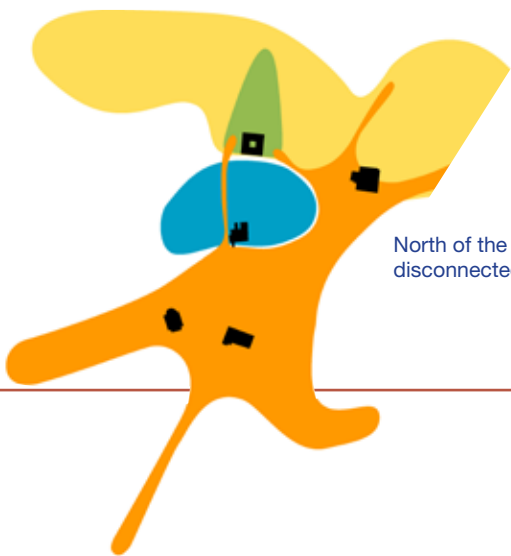
**Inclusiveness:** Make a range of inclusive public space, accessible to all, and which are clearly connected by direct, straight streets, and by line of sight, so that pedestrians see clearly the next stage of their journey.

**Biodiversity:** The proposals support biodiversity through the selection of some tree species, and the presence of foliage and trees as cover and roosting opportunities for wildlife

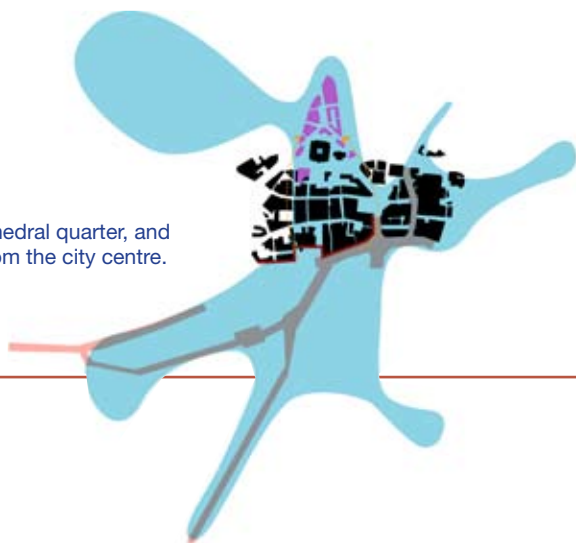
The streets and squares within West Bar are where people will meet, transact, move, chat, sit, walk, stand, listen, watch... they are where people will connect with each other







North of the cathedral quarter, and disconnected from the city centre.





# 5.2 Public Realm Plan Development



In which we describe the development of the public realm plan from the competition masterplan to outline planning submission.

**T**he Public Realm at West Bar is organised in a network of interconnected streets and spaces. The street network links West Bar and Snig Hill in the south, with Kelham Island in the north, with side streets linking to adjacent sites. Overlaid on these routes are a series of new public spaces at West Bar, Central Square and Kelham Square. The public realm also includes the perimeter street frontage, overlooking West Bar, Corporation Street and Bridge Street as well as a series of courtyards and atria within and around buildings.

## STREET NETWORK

The street network is organised in a clear hierarchy. People “read” cities and plan their journeys according to visual information such as street width and alignment, line of sight and interconnectedness. The easier this information is for users to read (ie it is more “legible”), the more likely they are to use the street. The principles of legibility underpin the design of the streetscape network for West Bar. The street hierarchy comprises the following street types :

- Boulevards
- Main Streets
- Side Streets
- Lanes

The street hierarchy at West Bar establishes a “spine” of primary streets which connect directly with the city centre and Kelham Island. The distance from end to end of West Bar is approximately 400m, which equates to a five minute walk. Side streets and Lanes connect with the main street spine, linking surrounding districts and frontages to the core of the district. Many of these streets are aligned on historic routes such as Love Lane and Plum Lane. The western frontage is planned as a boulevard - type street, which will comprise frequent tree planting at a large, urban scale. Walking in cities should be enjoyable. At West Bar, the streetscape network and the enclosure of the surrounding buildings are planned to combine to make a lively and richly stimulating environment for walkers. Streets are direct and uncluttered, and have frequent active frontages. The pedestrian experience will be of narrow, tall streets alternating with larger urban squares and places. In this way, the sense of walking as a sequential experience will be heightened.

People “read” cities and plan their journeys according to visual information such as street width and alignment, line of sight and interconnectedness



## PUBLIC PLACES

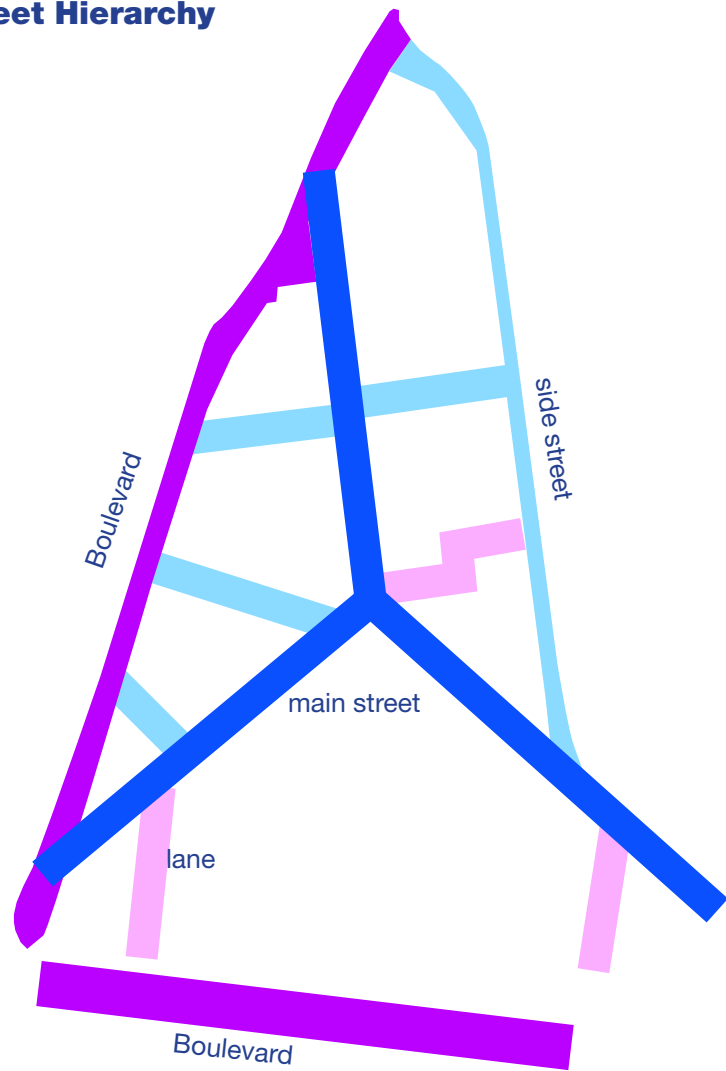
The network of streets connects to carefully located public places. These places are enclosed urban spaces, such as squares and courtyards, which provide room for people to relax, linger longer, and use the outside for sitting, talking and people watching.

Each place is designed to be unique, responding to the particular circumstances of its locality, context or history. the spaces are as follows:

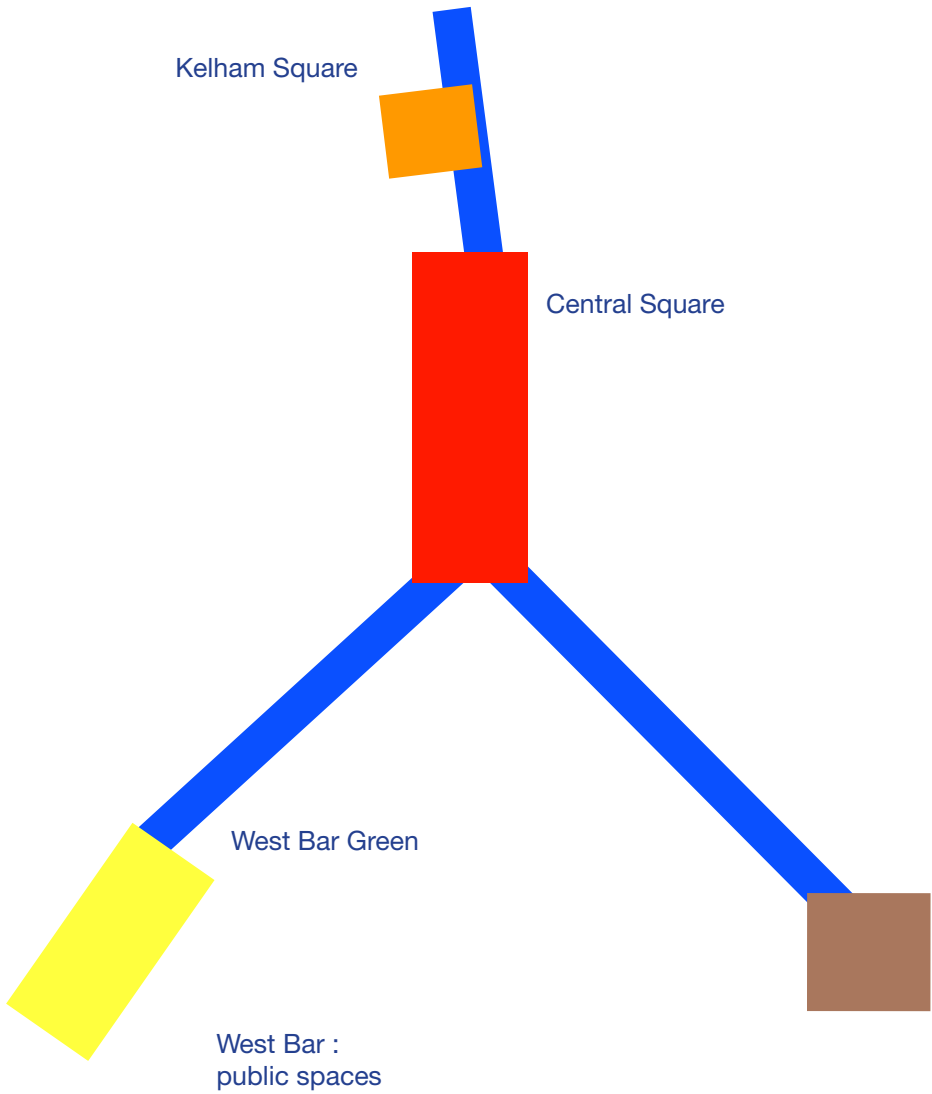
- **West Bar Green:** the former bar at the edge of the city, this space is overlooked by the Firestation and Block 10, and forms the end of the West Bar Boulevard, and the connection between West Bar and the Cathedral Quarter. (note, this urban space is outside the application boundary, and will be implemented by others.)
- **Snig Hill:** this sloping terraced landscape forms a transition from the city to West Bar, and takes its character from the typical features of the Don Valley : lush planting over stone terraces.
- **Kelham Square:** this space is a threshold marking the transition from West Bar to Kelham Island; it will be marked by the dramatic tower over the entrance to Block 1.
- **West Bar Square:** the central focal space within the new West Bar district, this square will be the heart of the district. It is carefully orientated north-south to maximise daytime sunlight. It is rectangular in plan, some 75 m long, and is deliberately limited in width to 20 - 23 m, so that the spacing between facades encourages intensity and activity.



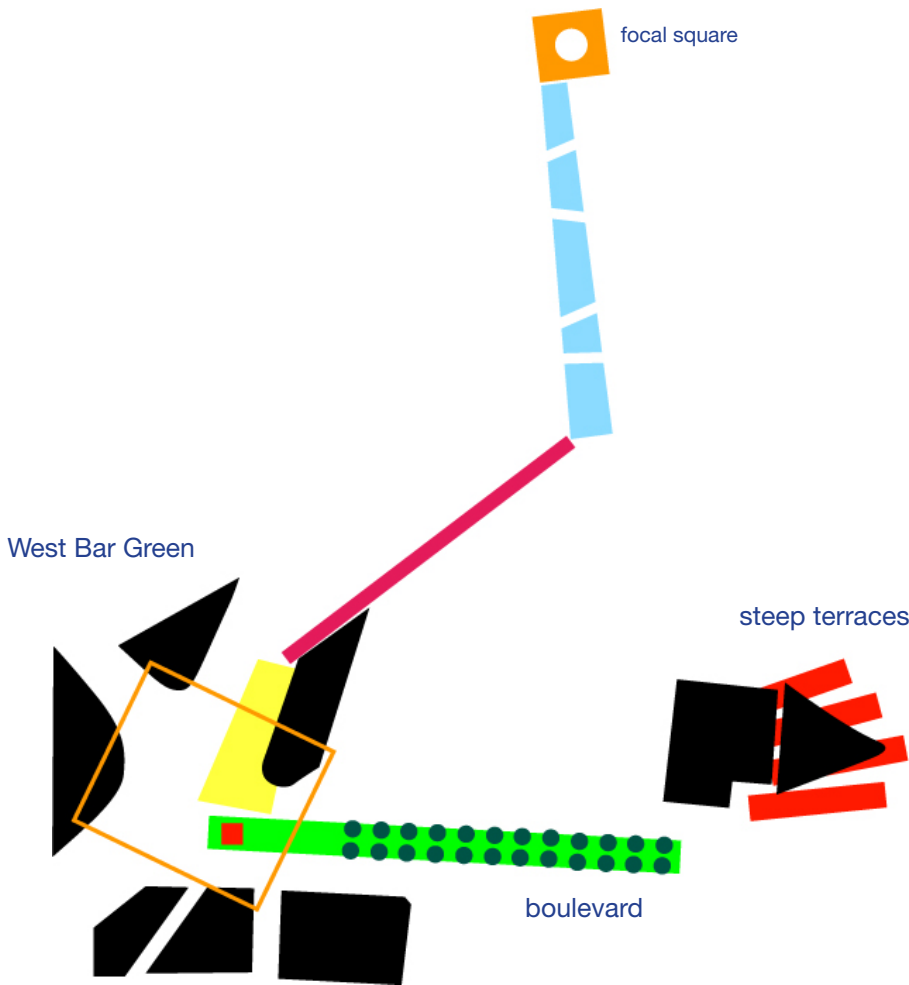
Street Hierarchy



Public Spaces



Public Spaces Character



West Bar :  
Early diagram showing types of spaces

Proposed Streets





## 5.3 Access to the site



In which we describe the way that the masterplan reconnects this part of Sheffield and the provision for vehicle access, parking and pedestrian routes.

**C**onnections between West Bar and the city centre are limited. This is partly due to the topography of the area and the dominant presence of the Courts and their surrounding walls. The situation is not helped by the lack of crossings over the IRR and the location of the pedestrian bridge over the River Don.

These barriers combine to restrict access for pedestrians, and limit visibility into the district. The public realm plan for West Bar is therefore designed to try and make these barriers disappear for people walking through the area. We can't move the courts or even the positions of crossings on the ring road. However we can create a series of routes that feel natural and pleasant to use that link the primary points of access on either side of the Courts to the pedestrian crossing to Kelham Island and the link to the bridge over the river. These routes have been orientated to provide clear "lines of sight" into the heart of the district, continuous active frontage and a clear and legible layout.



### VEHICULAR ACCESS

Access by vehicle into the district is limited, due to:

- the Inner Ring Road, which limits turn-ins due to extensive junction layout.
- level changes, particularly at the southern end of the district
- one-way movements.

The principle of the masterplan is that the routes through the site will be pedestrianised. However there is a need for service access to the active uses on site. There is also a requirement for access for vans bringing the accused to the western gate to the court (The court require two alternative routes to this gate). Access is also required to the eastern gate of the courts for staff parking and crane access is required to a major set of manholes within the grounds of the court to access underground services. The strategy as described on the plan to the right is to bring access into the site from Corporation Street and to feed it through the site in a one-way route to Bridge Street:

- **Access A:** This is the main access to the courts for prison vans as well as the egress to the car park beneath Blocks 4 and 5. It will therefore be an in and out access.
- **Access B:** This is the gate into the courts for Prison Vans.
- **Access C:** This is the staff access to the courts, which has a basement car park. The route between this access and Access D will therefore be two-way.
- **Access D:** This will provide an access to service vehicles circulating through the site as well as access to the courts car park.

- **Access E:** This provides the main service route into the site as well as the access into the car park under Blocks 4 and 5.

- **Access F:** This is the main egress for service routes through the site.

- **Access G:** This is the access to the multi-storey car park. North of this point Bridge Street will become one way with the completion of the IRR.

- **Access H:** This is proposed as drop off for Blocks 1 and 2.

- **Access I:** The access to the multi-storey car park (Block 12)

Car parking is provided in three main areas; Block 3 is a multi-storey car park with 562 spaces, Block 12 provides a second Multi-storey car park with 372 spaces and there is a basement car park under Blocks 4 and 5 with a total of 107 spaces. This means that there is a total of 1,041 in the scheme.

### PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

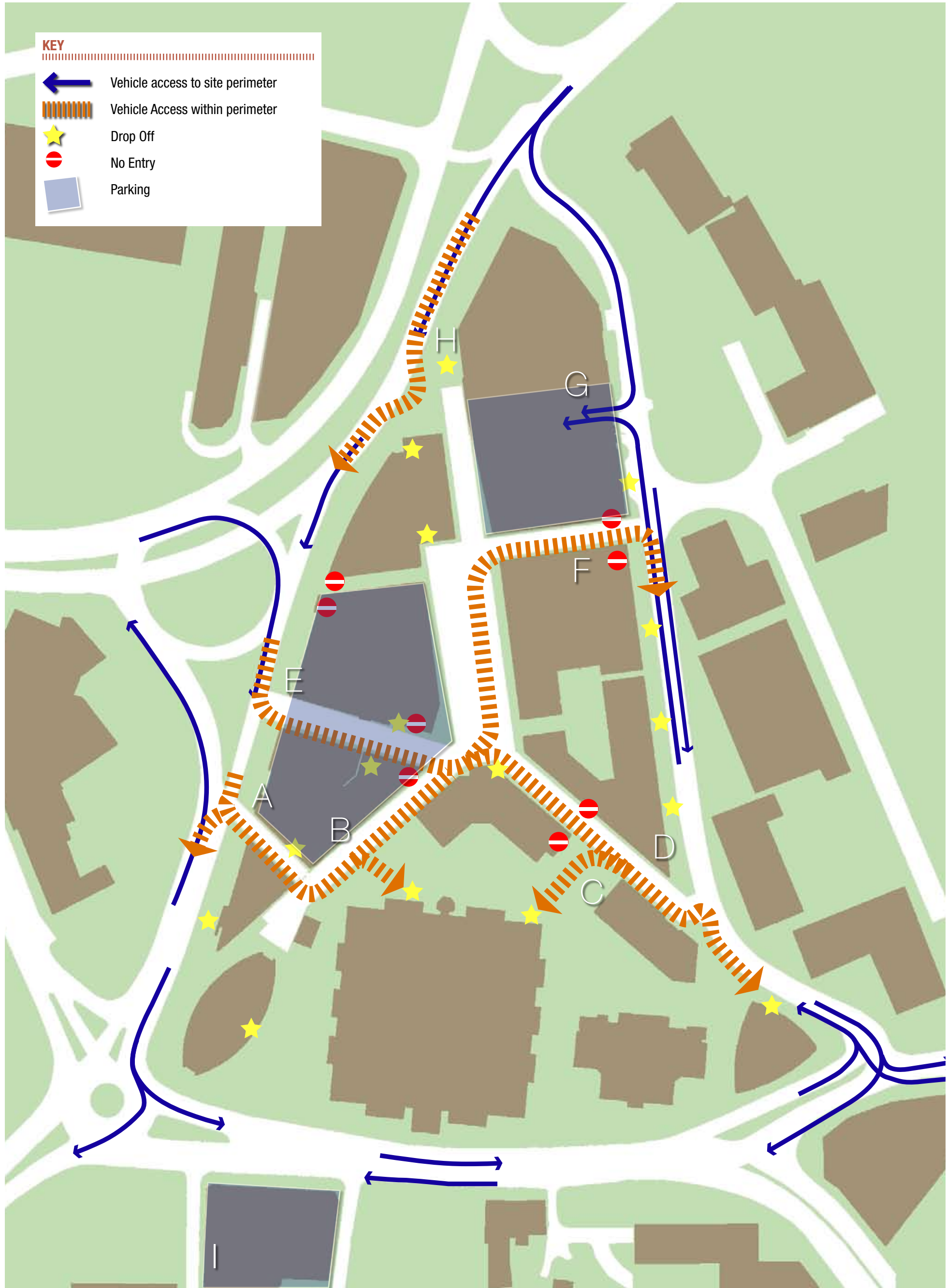
Pedestrian movement in West Bar is catered for by the extensive and permeable network of streets. The streetscape network connects directly with adjacent and offsite pedestrian movement generators. The streets are designed as shared surfaces, in which the design of the street layout signifies to drivers that they must drive defensively, at low speed, and that pedestrians have priority. This follows the latest guidance as set out in the "Design Manual for Streets" published in 2007 by DfT.

**Disabled Access:** All areas of the scheme will be fully accessible to all people. In the south west corner of the site the existing streets are steeper than current disabled access guidance allows. The main street will include steps at this point and a lift is provided for disabled access to the east of the Block 10 tower. This will be managed as part of the café in the tower.

The principle of the masterplan is that the routes through the site will be pedestrianised. However there is a need for service access to the active uses on site









## 5.4 Streets



In which we describe the design of the streets within the scheme and the way that they link to the surrounding environment.

**A**s described in the massing section, the proposed streets widths at West Bar vary from 8 to 12m. These streets are tighter than streets elsewhere in Sheffield and are an integral part of the Citadel concept. The design of these streets has therefore been carefully considered to ensure that they provide an attractive environment for pedestrians. The streets will comprise footway and carriageway which will be set flush throughout the development to emphasise pedestrian priority. Vehicle access will be limited to morning delivery hours. Primary streets will be surfaced in high quality natural materials including York-stone slabs with granite setts and kerbs.

As described in Section 5.5 the material specifications on the streets will be based on the importance of the route. The primary streets into the site are never more than 60m long and 10-12m wide. These will be constructed of natural stone materials. The minor streets will be constructed with high quality concrete materials.

The streetscape network is connected to the wider network of Sheffield streets in the following ways:

- **South Western connection to West Bar:** There is a level change of 5m between West Bar (54.9m) and the level of the development (49.3m). Access is via a flight of steps to either side of Block 10, together with public lift that will provide for disabled people.
- **South Eastern connection to Snig Hill:** There is a level change of 2.5m between West Bar (51.7m) and the development (49.3m). Access is achieved via a flight of steps incorporating a ramp, adjacent Block 9.
- **Eastern connections to Bridge Street:** Level access is provided to Bridge Street in two locations, which are located to link into the routes to the River Don crossing, and the city centre areas to the South East.
- **Northern Connection to Kelham Island:** Level access is provided from the development to the crossing over the Inner Ring Road, providing a link to Kelham Island.
- **Western Connection to Corporation Street:** level access is provided for the development onto Corporation Street in three locations, which are located to provide convenient pedestrian and vehicular access.

The sectional proportions of streets are shown on the accompanying diagram. Proportions vary between 1:0.25 on some short, narrower streets, to as broad as 1:1 on the Central Square. This proportional variety support the development of a distinctive identity for West Bar as a dense, vibrant, active district.

The streets are tighter than streets elsewhere in Sheffield as part of the Citadel concept. These streets have been carefully designed to provide an attractive environment for pedestrians.

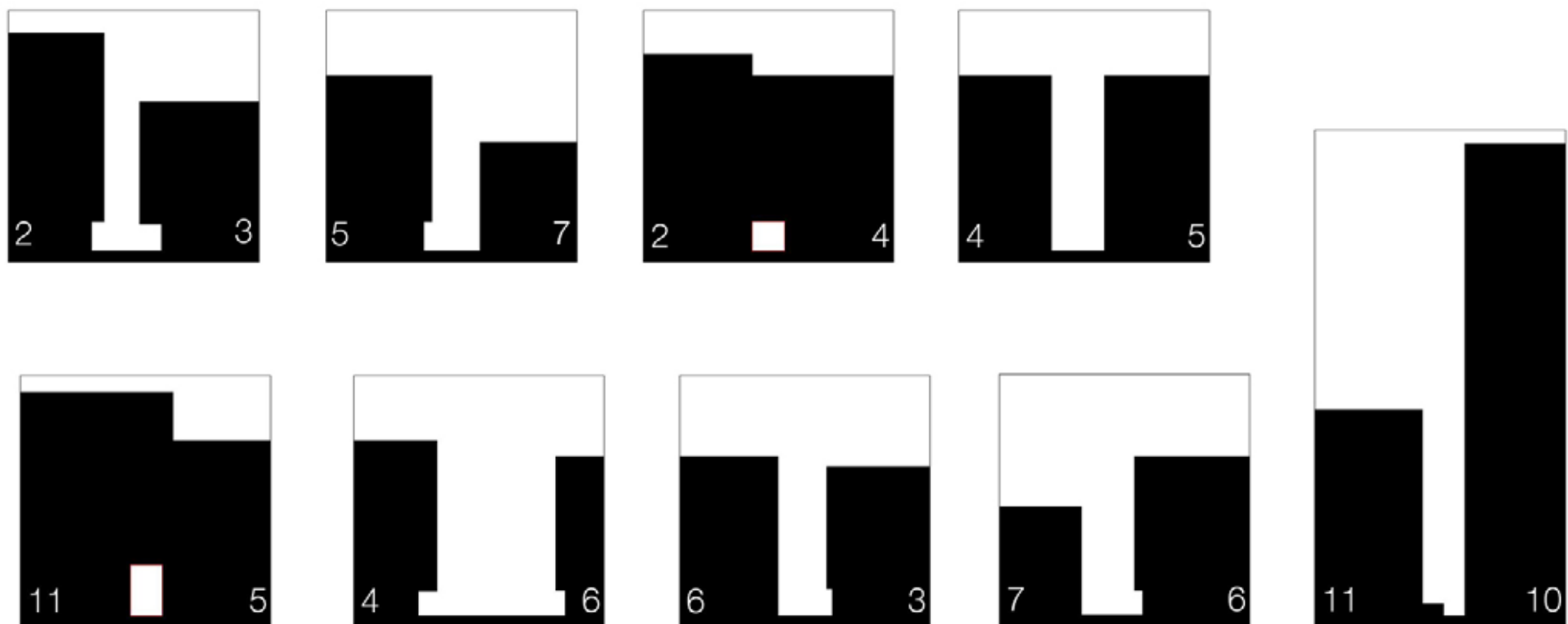
### PERIMETER STREET FRONTAGE

The street frontage proposals to Corporation Street and the Inner Ring Road are designed to present a grand, large scale frontage to the fast moving traffic on these streets. The buildings are generally set back 8m from the kerb, providing a verge and a location for tree planting which will soften the pedestrian experience. The widths and materials for this frontage follows guidance set out in the Sheffield Urban Design Compendium.

The street frontage to Bridge Street is designed to provide the feeling of a “green side street” with frequent tree planting which will visually link with planting on the adjacent development site. Layby parking will provide convenient places for access to proposed ground floor live-work units. Street materials have been chosen for their robustness, and their suitability for adoption by SCC.







Sections of streets and squares between blocks





# 5.5 Spaces and Places



In which we describe the network of spaces that have been incorporated into the masterplan to create a variety of experiences as people pass through the scheme.

**W**est Bar will introduce four new public places into the urban framework of Sheffield City Centre. These have been designed to create a variety of types of area as described below:

## CENTRAL SQUARE

A new Public Square is proposed in the central area, defined by surrounding buildings, and with openings onto the adjacent streets. The central square is between 23 - 27m wide at ground level, and some 78m long, and is carefully proportioned to maximise the intensity of facing active façades, while providing visual expansiveness in the long dimension. This continues a long tradition in the north of Europe of providing public

spaces, such as market places and bastards, which are long, and narrower than traditional squares in southern Europe. The square provides a sheltered external place for strolling, sitting, eating and drinking generated by groundfloor activities within the building A3 units. Tree planting will soften the space and reduce wind turbulence generated by the presence of the adjacent buildings. The square will include the following: A striking patterned surface in bands of natural stone, incorporating artwork, tree planting, lighting, signage and seating.

The central square is carefully proportioned to maximise the intensity of facing active facades, while providing visual expansiveness in the long dimension

## WEST BAR GREEN

The proposals show transformation of the space at the west end of West Bar into a new public plaza. It will be a place which will connect the development to the city, and form a termination to the boulevard which is proposed by others along West Bar outside the Law Courts and Family Courts. The place will be characterised by the distinctive and dramatic tower of block 10, and the curved geometry of the building will be reflected in planting areas, walls and hard paving in the surfaces around. The space will be softened

through careful tree planting, and through the use of consistent surface materials to unify the streetscape. The same materials will be used to extend into the streetscape network, which will continue the visual connection through the site.

## KELHAM SQUARE

The proposals show the establishment of a new space at the northern end of the development, on the route to Kelham Island. The new space, defined by the adjacent buildings, opens onto the Inner Ring Road, and will be marked by the Campanile feature on Block 1.

## SNIGG HILL TERRACE

This space will provide a setting for the tower plot 9, by negotiating the level change between Snigg Hill and Bridge Street. A flight of terraced steps will incorporate a ramp and level landings to create a

dramatic descending landscape, planted with hedging and overarching evergreen trees.

## COURTYARD

A public courtyard will be provided within the central space of Block 6, as part of the pedestrian link between the Central Square and Bridge Street. It will form a focal point within the development, and a sheltered, green place for restaurants to open onto.







Courtyard : St Annes Church Manchester



Courtyard Paris



Terraces : Tower Bridge House, London



Square : St Anne's Manchester



Square : Dukes 92, Castlefield, Manchester



Temple Bar, Dublin



# 5.6 Materials and Management



In which we describe the proposed materials to be used throughout the scheme and outline the management and maintenance strategy.

**M**aterials to be used in the public realm at West Bar are carefully selected to create a high-quality, pedestrian friendly environment that assists movement, legibility and creates a distinctive identity for West Bar. This will create a groundscape which unifies and links the building forms. It will also reflect the robust character of Sheffield's urban streetscape and the palette of materials designated in the Sheffield Design Compendium. In addition to this the materials are designed to:

- Demarcate building construction zones and create definition of terraces and aprons related to adjacent buildings.
- Assist ease of movement for all users, including disabled and abled pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- Provide a robust long-lasting and sustainable surface, using water-recycling (SUDS) techniques where appropriate.
- Demarcate level changes through tactile pavings and contrasting tones.
- Provide an attractive all-year-round environment.

The outline proposals show streetscape materials used in genres or palettes, according to their location within the district:

## STREET PALETTES

**Primary Street Network (spine) palette:** Materials are chosen to form a continuous surface, with a rich, light, robust colouration to enhance the "close-up" experience of pedestrians.

*Footway Surface:* Flush natural stone slab pavers and steps

*Kerbs:* granite kerbs

*Carriageway Surface:* flush natural stone setts and channels

**Side Streets palette:** These streets are generally short and materials are chosen to form a transition from perimeter streets

with light surfaces and robust colouration.  
*Surface:* Flush natural aggregate concrete slab pavers and steps.  
*Kerbs:* Granite kerbs.  
*Carriageway Surface:* flush natural aggregate concrete setts and channels

**Perimeter Street Palette:** Materials are selected in line with the requirements of the Sheffield Urban Design Compendium and the IRR design guide.  
*Surface:* Flush natural aggregate concrete slab pavers and steps.  
*Kerbs:* Granite kerbs.  
*Carriageway crossovers:* flush natural aggregate concrete setts and channels

Materials are chosen to form a continuous surface, with a rich, light, robust colouration to enhance the "close-up" experience of pedestrians

**Public Space Palette:** Central Square / West Bar Green / Kelham Square / Snigg Hill: These spaces are planned to be distinctive locations within West Bar, and will be designed individually; the intention is to develop the scheme designs as a collaboration between artists and landscape architects. Materials will be of a high quality and typically include :  
*Footway Surface:* Flush natural stone slab pavers and steps  
*Surface:* flush natural stone pavers  
*Kerbs :* granite kerbs

## NETWORK ELEMENTS:

The perception of the public realm as a unifying and continuous network will be enhanced through the careful selection of repetitive elements within the streetscape.

**Street Trees:** Street trees will be selected for their distinctive shape and foliage, and also for their ability to assist in microcli-

mate control. Species will be selected from the following :

- Liriodendron tulipifera
- Platanus hispanica
- Quercus ilex
- Acer platanoides

**Street Lighting:** Street Lighting will be located on building frontages where possible. Lighting levels will be the minimum required to fulfil the requirements of safe pedestrian movement through the district, and will use, where possible, building façade lighting to increase the distinctive character and atmosphere of West Bar.



**Street Furniture:** Street furniture will be kept to the minimum; all bins, benches and seating will only be located within the public spaces, keeping streets clear and uncluttered; the design of the street furniture will complement the character of the district.

## MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

The development at West Bar will be the result of close collaboration between the joint venture partners, Sheffield City Council and Castlemore Securities Ltd. It is envisaged that this partnership will continue into the future, with each party continuing to take a role in management and maintenance of public spaces.

## Robust, sustainable public realm:

The public realm has been planned and designed to be robust and long lasting. Materials will be specified for heavy foot traffic and vehicular loadings where appropriate. Materials will be chosen which are sourced from sustainable locations, where replacement elements will be easily obtainable.

**Easy to maintain:** The public realm has been planned with a clear demarcation of public areas usually defined by building frontages which overlook adjacent streets. Surfaces will be specified, designed and laid to be easily maintained through the use of commonplace operations and equipment.

## Management responsibility:

The West Bar district will be managed by a combination of Public Sector and Private Sector input, the latter via a Management Company, which will be financed by charges to tenants and occupiers. At this stage the precise demarcation of responsibilities between Sheffield City Council, and the proposed Management Company is not defined. In

principal, however, the responsibility will be shared as follows:

- Perimeter Streets will be maintained as adopted highways by the Local Authority.
- The street network, and public spaces within the development will be managed by a private management company, with day - to - day responsibility for all aspects of cleaning, security and repair.







# 5.7 Public Art Strategy



In which we describe the proposed strategy for the development of a public art commissioning as part of the scheme.

Sheffield has a long and respected history of arts commissioning. Through its commitment to *Percent for Art*, the valuable contribution that artists can make within the ongoing redevelopment of the city and its environs has been clearly demonstrated. The recent redevelopment of the train station includes the public art work; “Cutting Edge”, which represents the final commitment outlined in its public art strategy.

The West Bar scheme seeks accord with the public art strategy for Sheffield, to this end InSite Arts has been appointed as a member of the team to co-ordinate a public arts commissioning for the scheme. A commitment has been made to put public arts at the heart of the scheme and InSite have been working with the masterplanning team to identifying opportunities for art and to develop a strategy for commissioning. This will achieve the following benefits:

- Enhance sense of place.
- Raise the quality and interest in the public realm
- Provide identity and market differentiation.
- Promote Community cohesion through active participation of communities.
- Investigate and defining cultural, social and historical values.
- Contribute to social and economic regeneration.
- Enhance the quality of the physical environment. Contributing to social health and wellbeing.
- Contribute to economic value through inward investment. Fostering civic pride and confidence.

Artists involved in the scheme will be invited to engage with the context of the site, opportunities to use water, link-ages to the wider city, active spaces and sensory experiences. Whilst a significant amount of design work has already been carried out by Landscape Projects (as detailed in the prior section) scope exists for an artist to work with Landscape Projects to consider certain public realm elements in detail. This artist will act as a contextualising artist with responsibility for envisaging the entire scheme, but the scheme will still have key sites for specific works to be commissioned to other artists to ensure that the spaces in West Bar are of the highest quality, vibrant and exciting. Key sites are as follows:

A commitment has been made to put public arts at the heart of the scheme by identifying opportunities for art and developing a strategy for commissioning

## KELHAM SQUARE

One side will be trafficked and the work will therefore need to consider carefully its audience, both pedestrian and road user, anticipating how this will effect decision about scale, and therefore how the work is animated and viewed.

## WEST BAR GREEN

At the end of the site adjacent to the Law Courts, is a tight and very active area with a dynamic mix of users and city activity / sounds. The very real challenges of integrating work into the public realm are paramount here and the research and development time offered to the contextualising artist will allow InSiteArts, Landscape Projects and the artists to assess opportunities for artistic intervention here. An critical link exists here with the law courts wall further along the link road from Tower 10 to the Main Square.

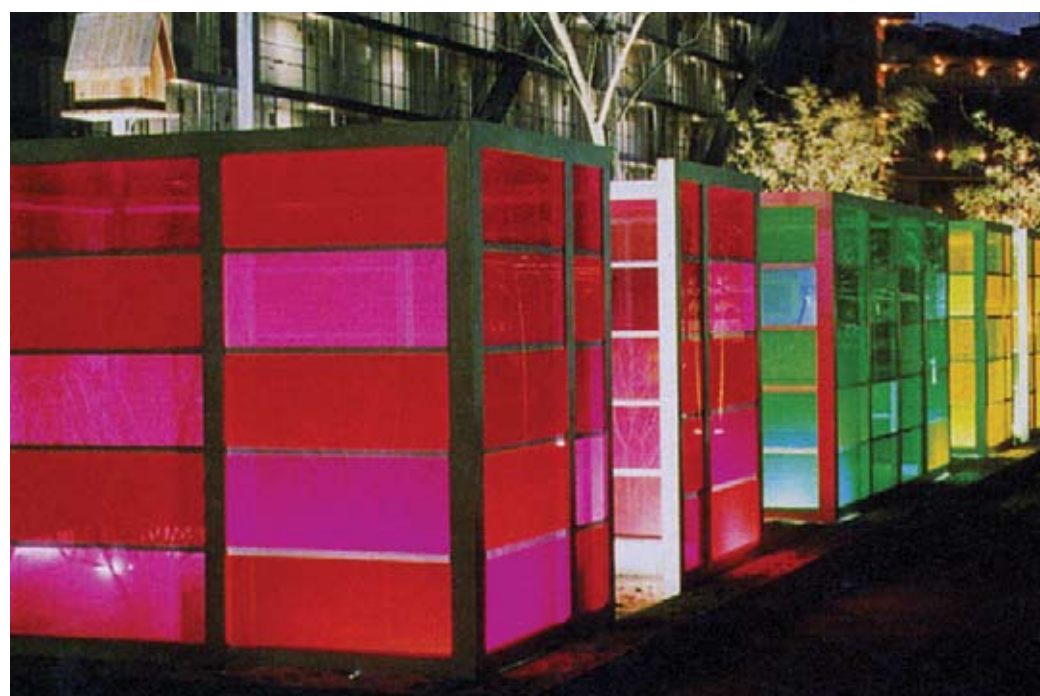
## BLOCK 9

Here there is real potential for work that is animated which could respond to the active day and night usage of the area, - taking into consideration that the upper floors of tower 9 are residential and at lower level there are bars and restaurants.

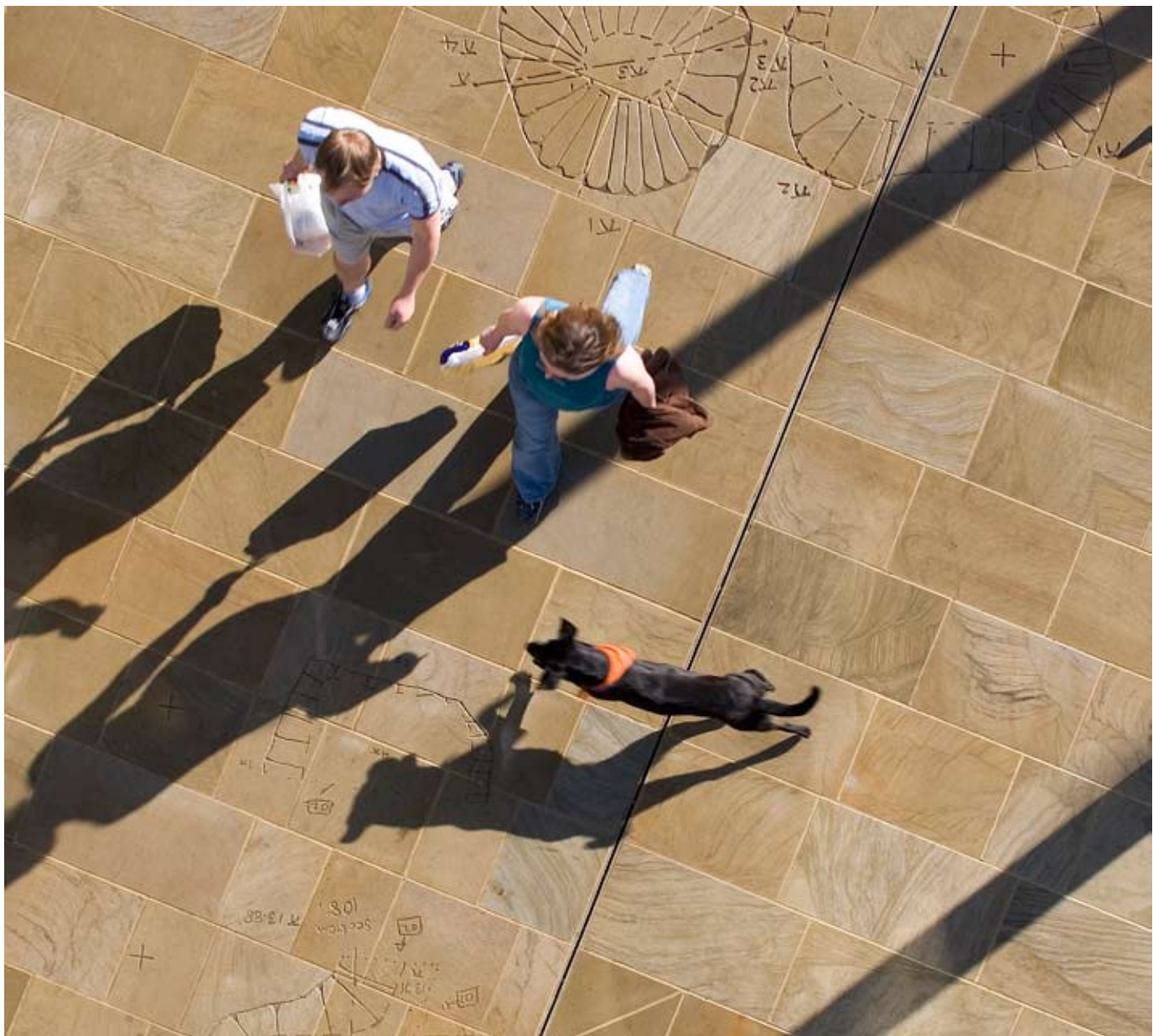
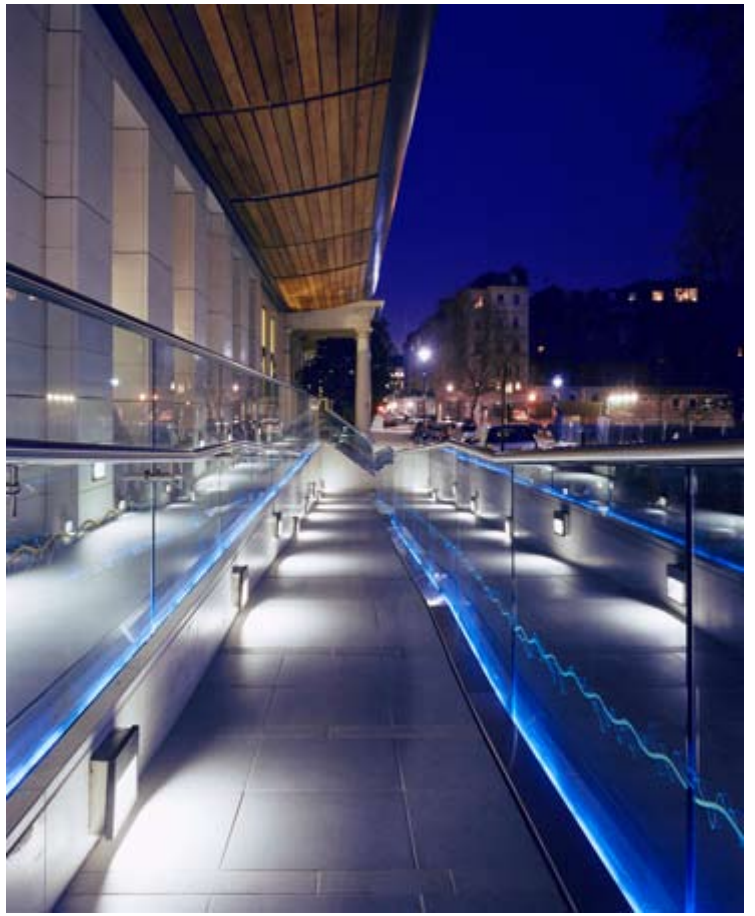
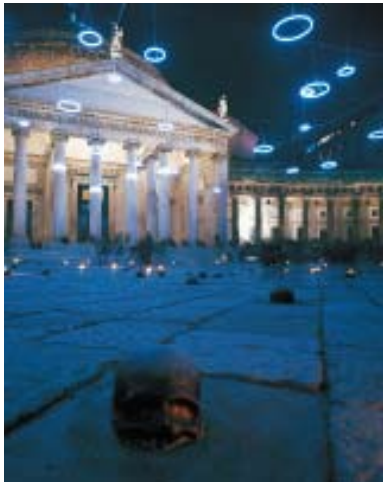
## THE LAW COURTS WALL

A potentially high profile commission - to be developed in partnership with the project team, Castlemore, with representatives of the Law Courts and in consultation with representatives of the Lord Chancellor.

The process of appointing the artist and developing this commission will be managed quite publicly helping to build a relationship with the developments' neighbours. InSiteArts will set up a series of presentation and discussions to raise aspirations for what could be achieved by an artist in the animation of this large scale elevation. At all stages in commissioning and appointment the team would seek input from all relevant stakeholders and Sheffield City Council representatives. Alongside these fixed commitments InsiteArts will also explore the potential for temporary works to raise awareness of the development, enhance relations with the surrounding community and celebrate the value and enjoyment of art in Sheffield. This strategy will be worked up in more detail beyond the outline planning stage.







A number of precedent schemes showing how art can enliven public space. The commissions for West Bar would be specific and unique works so may be different in nature from these shown. All involved are committed to highest quality work and should reflect the aspiration of the images shown.