A substantial part of the University Campus is likely to change over the next twenty years. These soft areas have been defined as the basis for the masterplan.

3:10 - Hard and Soft Plan

The starting point for the preparation of a masterplan is an understanding of what elements are fixed or 'hard', and where significant change may be expected during the lifetime of the plan. Based on a series of conversations with the University together with analysis and site surveys of building use, quality and condition we have agreed the 'hard and soft' shown on the opposite page. This shows the scope for change in the University over the next 20 years. Clearly this means that many of the buildings shown as soft, are not due for redevelopment in the short or even medium term. However, in considering the future form of the campus it is important to understand the full scope for change.

Hard – Areas of Repair

Areas marked as 'hard' on the plan indicate buildings of sufficient quality in terms of townscape, condition and expected longevity (that the building is expected to have a long term future). These include some of the finest buildings on the campus that should be celebrated as part of the plan. They also include some buildings that do not necessarily contribute to the campus but because of their age and functional importance their future is not in question. In these areas the role of the masterplan will be to repair, as far as possible, the impact of these buildings. The main areas of fix on the masterplan are:

The northern historic core of the University and former Infirmary including the Waterhouse buildings and the surrounding early 20th century laboratories and libraries, many of which are of significant architectural and townscape quality. This core also includes the School of Tropical Medicine, the Proudman Laboratories and the Medical and Engineering facilities on Ashton Street. Maxwell's Fry's Mechanical Engineering building is under refurbishment, along with the 1960s block on Brownlow Hill. The Bio-Science block has been the subject of heavy investment and is also considered fixed for the long-term.

In the otherwise 'soft centre', the Mathematics block, Guild complex, Architecture building and Lasdun's audacious and recently extended sports centre are all fixes along Ashton Street. The brutalist concrete Lecture Theatre is considered one of the best late 20th century buildings on the Campus and is in good repair. The laboratories along Grove Street are the target of investment in the Estate Strategy and are therefore considered 'hard', although it would be desirable if they could offer a better face of the University to this high profile route.

The southern third of the campus contains another core of fixed blocks around Abercromby Square and the retained historic buildings on Oxford Street and Bedford Street South. The restored shell of the Welsh Calvanist Methodist Chapel on Chatham Street is in excellent condition. Some of the University's best late 20th century architecture is also in this area. The earliest is the simple Civic Design building. The later Senate House, Sydney Jones Library, and in particular the Law Buildings, are recognised as good local examples of modernism, and most have enjoyed recent investment. The Management School is a disappointing building but must be considered 'hard' given its recent construction. The student blocks along Grove Street have a reasonable frontage and are part of the Estate Strategy refurbishment plans.

Soft – Areas of Reinvention

These parts of the campus have the potential for significant restructuring over the twenty year plan period. Some buildings will reach the end of their sustainable design life while others are considered as 'soft' because they undermine the campus environment. Often both factors apply.

The largest soft area in the northern third of the campus is along Crown Street, where the layout of open surface parking sites and low density development damage the public environment and present a security problem for the University. The western edge along Great Newton Street is underused, and has buildings coming to the end of their efficient design life. For this reason, and the desire to present a better face to the neighbouring community it has been identified as an area of change.

A majority of the central third of the campus is defined as 'soft'. This is the area of the campus with greatest unfulfilled potential. It has some of the most tired and degraded buildings and spaces, but can offer the advantages of its central position and views to the cathedral and Victoria Building.

On the south side, the eastern and southern edges are soft, consisting mostly of surface parking and remaindered verges. The Rigby and Eleanor Rathbone buildings are considered unsustainable over the life-time of the Framework. Redeveloping the latter will allow transformation of the interface between the campus and community to the south, reinforcing the Myrtle Street local centre. Bedford House is likely to be redeveloped, opening an opportunity for high quality new architecture to enhance the Georgian surroundings and better complement the modernist Sport Centre.

We have shown the Royal Hospital area adjacent to the University as soft because of its important relationship to campus. This is subject to redevelopment proposals at the present time and the University Masterplan needs to coordinate with and influence the emerging hospital plan.

Hard and Soft Plan

PART 4:

A Masterplan for the University

4:1 - What Sort of Campus?

We need to learn from traditional urban universities if we are to understand the nature of the ‘Civic University’ envisaged by Holford

The starting point for the masterplanning exercise is to understand what sort of campus we are creating. The Holford Plan eloquently describes a vision for a Civic University embedded within the city but the plan also draws heavily upon design, the thinking of the time that made this integration very difficult. As part of this masterplan we want to re-examine Holford’s notion of a Civic University in order to consider how the campus might develop in the future.

The idea of a University after the Second World War was very different to the models that had come before. The programme of universities developed in the 1950s and 60s were built as campuses, often in rural surroundings. Examples such as Essex, Keele, Lancaster, Warwick and York drew on US models to create wonderful green campuses, often with very fine buildings in a rural setting. In many respects these campuses were the high point of modernism and are far more successful than modernist attempts to redevelop town centres or build housing estates.

The modernist campus is based on the idea of high-quality buildings sitting within a landscape setting. This requires space and therefore tends to work best on greenfield campuses outside the centre of cities or in parkland settings within the city such as Nottingham University. The problem is that the design of these universities has tended to influence all universities, even those on tight urban sites. These urban universities have commissioned high quality buildings but they have tended to be conceived as objects in space rather than part of an integrated urban area. The problem has been that in urban universities there is less space and it tends to be occupied by parking. As a result urban universities such as Sheffield, Bradford, Salford and Liverpool have become something of a jumble of buildings competing for attention in an environment that is confusing and dominated by cars.

There are, however, older urban universities that could provide an alternative model for the ‘Civic University’. The best examples in the UK are Oxford and Cambridge as well as University College in London and indeed many European Universities. These are part of the fabric of the city and, in terms of their form, are based on quadrangles and courtyards – spaces enclosed by buildings rather than buildings surrounded by space.

The Holford Plan is actually something of a hybrid between these typologies. The form of the plan is based on a series of quads but this is within a modernist language, surrounded by landscape, something that was never going to be possible within the city. It is, however, possible to build on the structure that Holford created for the University to create a new model for an Urban/ Civic University.

The University of York

1. Self-Contained Rural Campus

Originating in the United States, British examples of this model include York, Warwick, East Anglia and Keele. These universities enjoy spacious, purpose-built estates on greenfield sites, quite separate from their nominal host towns. Their physical form consists of pavilion buildings set within extensive landscaping. They are often self-contained, with students living and studying on site.

The University of Essex

Bradford University Campus

2. Semi-Isolated Urban Campus

Many urban campuses have tried to graft the form of the rural model into an urban environment. The vision of ‘buildings in space’ central to the greenfield campus becomes ‘buildings in a car-park’. Activity and use is dominated by the University and is barely existent ‘out of hours’. Interaction between ‘town and gown’ is limited. Examples of this type include Bradford, Salford, Sheffield and Manchester as well as much of Liverpool’s campus.

Oxford University

3. Integrated Urban Campus

In this model, university buildings are integral parts of the urban fabric, sitting side by side with many other uses, and not disruptive to the wider flow of movement and exchange. They are still clustered to the extent they form a distinctive University Campus (in contrast, for example, to institutions like John Moores University, whose estate is scattered across many sites).

Examples include the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and University College London, where the academic institution defines but does not dominate the life of its setting.

Historic plan of Cambridge University

Google Earth images of Liverpool and Oxford Universities at the same scale

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4:2 - Restructuring the Campus

The masterplan has been built up in a series of layers using the original street network of the area to develop a series of super blocks within which a network of quads are created.

The masterplan seeks to create a Quadrangle based urban structure for the University organised around the original Georgian street grid of the area. Plan 1 above shows the area with all of the potentially soft buildings removed. Using this as a starting point the masterplan has been built up in the following layers:

Original Streets

The starting point for the masterplan was to understand the original urban structure of the area. The original movement and building pattern based on the Georgian street grid has been erased in some places and dismantled entirely in others (e.g. Crown Street, Bedford Street South and latterly Cambridge Street). However the overall structure of connected routes survives within the University and the masterplan seeks to reinforce this street grid (Plan 2) by identifying a series of key streets to be rediscovered through the campus as a way of knitting it into the rest of the city.

Superblocks

The retention of the most important of the original streets has been used to develop a series of 'superblocks' (Plan 3). It is intended that the routes between these blocks should be retained as public streets through the campus. These will be well-defined, safe and memorable living streets that connect the University seamlessly to the life of the surrounding city. The reverse side of this is that access into the superblocks is controlled by the University with gates to create a secure environment. In this way the University will become a distinctive quarter of the city rather than a separated campus. The vehicle barriers recently erected do not help in this respect. Ideally these should be replaced over time by rising bollards so that the streets feel open and accessible.

Squares and car parks

The public realm of the University is made up of a series of streets, pedestrian routes and squares (Plan 4). This will require the removal of most of the surface parking within the University to three multi-storey car parks serving each part of the campus.

5. Infill Development

It is important that the streets through the campus are enclosed by buildings. The plan therefore proposes the redevelopment of the 'soft' buildings identified on the previous page to create a much stronger urban structure for the University (Plan 5) and particularly a strong edge to each of the super blocks.

Quads and Routes

The superblocks would be opened up with a series of pedestrian routes and quads - a contemporary interpretation of the classic university quad (plan 6). The overall intention of the plan is to replace large areas of poorly used open space with more intimate spaces distributed throughout the campus. During the day these routes and quads will provide attractive routes through the campus while at night there will be the possibility of gating the routes through the superblocks so that only students and staff have access. Overall the quads should mean that there is no reduction in the amount of open space on campus.

Redevelopment

Overtime the buildings shown as soft on the plan on the previous page will be redeveloped. The framework will provide guidance for these buildings so that the contribute to realising the whole masterplan on the opposite page. The plan has been designed so that it can be developed gradually and yet will be coherent at each stage of its development as described on the following pages.

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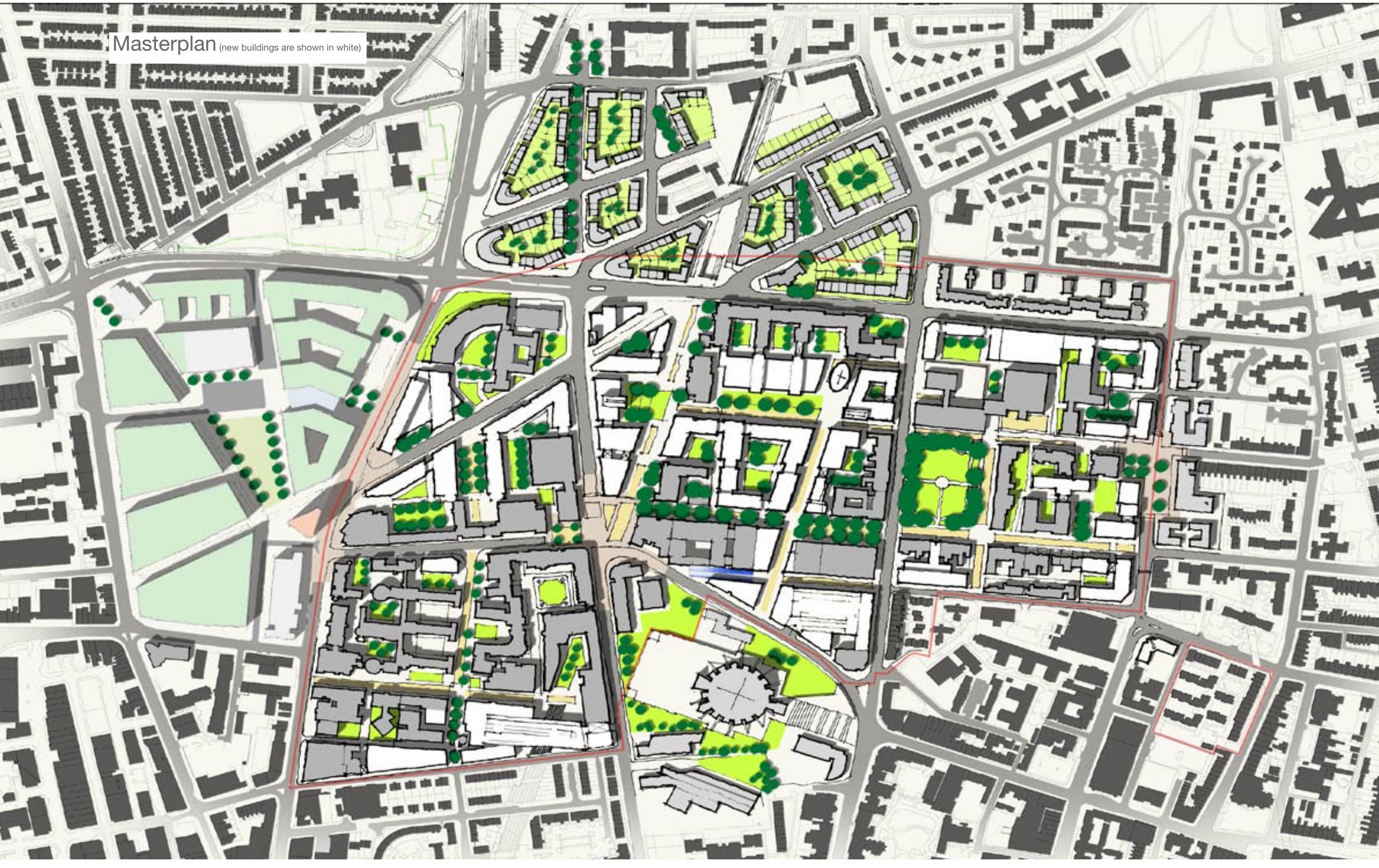
Masterplan (new buildings are shown in white)



4:3 - A ‘Civic University’

The masterplan restructures the University, focusing on the central section and strengthening the interface with surrounding communities.

The Urban Design Framework for the University of Liverpool Campus sets a twenty-year vision for change around the University. This is intended to guide the University’s estate strategy so that over time all of the works done can contribute to realising the vision. A core principle is revival of the role of a ‘Civic University’, integrated with and influencing the life of Liverpool as an international knowledge capital – “bringing the city to the University, and the University to the city”.

The outcome will be a distinctive University quarter of international renown. The estate will combine the classical proportions and human scale of its Georgian antecedent with the vitality generated by thousands of students and staff, its street-life extended year-round thanks to a wider mix of uses, attractive new architecture, and inviting streets and spaces.

The biggest area of change is around the underdeveloped central section of the campus, between Oxford Street and Brownlow Hill, and along Crown Street. The Metropolitan Cathedral has been used to give focus to this area by creating a new diagonal axis terminating on the cathedral. This axis runs parallel to the route of the railway cutting to the north. These two diagonal public spaces, one focused on the Victoria clock tower and the other on the cathedral, will bring drama and a stronger sense of place to the central section of the University, encouraging visitors from Hope Street, Brownlow Hill and Mount Pleasant to enjoy walking circuits round the University’s tranquil traffic-calmed heart.

Crown Street will also be transformed into a strong green route to the new Hospital and Medical School hub at its junction with West Derby Street, restoring something of its historic importance. It is hoped that the powerful pedestrian and cycle ‘desire line’ routes from Smithdown Lane and Princes Park can be better defined and established over time.

The masterplan also seeks to strengthen the edges of the University to create a strong interface with the city centre and neighbouring communities. The eastern face of the campus will be turned outwards to offer a strong relationship to the busy Grove Street through-route as it leads to the proposed Hall Lane by-pass. The southern edge of the campus will create a strong frontage onto the important local centre at Myrtle Street. This will be reinforced as a lively parade of shops and cafes, providing facilities shared by students and the various city centre communities. Similarly the Great Newton Street and Paddington edges to the campus have been reconfigured to interact with residential areas alongside.

The plan shows the outline plot of the new hospital building currently in planning, which will occupy a distinctive triangular site on West Derby Street. It also outlines the adjacent Apex Project University Medical School, proposed for the south side of the same street. This is the interface between the intimately co-related medical and teaching activities of the hospital and University. As such it is one of the most important place making opportunities in the entire Knowledge Quarter, and will be a focus in the immediate future.

Within the campus, a clear spatial hierarchy is established, from lively public squares to intimate semi-private quadrangle gardens. This network of routes and spaces is the final organising principle of the Framework. Blocks of academic buildings will be permeated by a sequence of intimate green quadrangle and courtyard spaces, connected by pleasant walkways and sheltered colonnades. These spaces would be controlled by the University, with public access encouraged or otherwise as deemed appropriate.

Outside of these blocks the public realm is made up of a network of lively streets and spaces. Pedestrianised green routes will traverse the campus, with some controlled low speed vehicular access (5mph max) for servicing and parking.

Important through routes traversing the campus to the city centre will be configured as pedestrian priority traffic-calmed ‘high streets’ (20mph or below), sharing civic and commercial functions as well as academic ones. The width of streets like Brownlow Hill and West Derby Street means generous pavements and street tree planting can combine with easy on-street parking and wide super-crossing facilities, without restricting public transport access.

Higher speed (30mph) strategic traffic is excluded from the campus core, banished to the edge along Grove Street and the proposed Hall Lane by-pass. The city needs to protect the campus and Knowledge Quarter from severance and traffic blight; the University needs to make more of its high profile gateway location.

Aerial view from the east

4:1 - Phase 1 Projects

Based upon the Estate Strategy and associated Urban Design framework, the following projects are likely to advance to completion over the next five years (2008 - 2013).

Alsop Arcade (1)

The amenities based here are poorly configured in buildings that seriously detract from the image of the University on the high profile Brownlow Hill route. Completion of the adjacent University Square and Victoria Gallery and Museum will elevate this central hub to an important civic space for the city. The Urban Design Framework recommends early intervention to secure a new built form of appropriate quality on this site.

Apex Project (2)

As the Royal Liverpool University Hospital is redeveloped in the coming years, teaching facilities will move from the existing complex to a new facility at the intersection of Crown Street and West Derby Street, currently a degraded surface car park. The triangular site and the large massing of surrounding buildings will support a development that can act as a distinctive city landmark.

Bedford House Project (3)

Administrative activities are being moved to the new Foundation Building, leaving scope for redevelopment of this prominent site fronting Oxford Street. With the vacation of Number 5 Abercromby Square and the former Gallery, we see scope for an exciting project that links the Georgian buildings with a piece of contemporary architectural design adjacent. An ideal use would be a quality hotel and conference centre - this would bring animation to the Square and south campus during evenings and weekends, and provide a valuable facility that would complement the University's activities, hosting events, and allowing visitors to stay on campus.

Campus Enhancement Project (4)

A public realm upgrade along the spine route between the Sydney Jones and Harold Cohen Libraries is near completion. The project includes investment to create a new University Square, to improve the setting of the restored Victoria Building and the Guild of Students.

Chatham Street Student Homes (5)

New student accommodation is proposed on the surface car park east of Chatham Street. We would like this to create a strong sense of arrival at the campus along Grove Street and Myrtle Street, by re-establishing well proportioned street frontages along these busy routes. Ground floors should contain as many active and accessible uses as possible, particularly on street and block corners. We propose a series of tranquil internal courtyard 'quadrangle' spaces within the blocks.

Combined Heat and Power System (6)

The University is replacing its entire CHP generating plant and distribution network with a new system, which will yield substantial energy saving and carbon reduction benefits across the campus.

Laboratories (7)

The University has an aspiration to create a new integrated science laboratory facility, to consolidate accommodation that is currently somewhat scattered across the estate. The Urban Design Framework envisages these being developed on a site east of Chatham Street, with the existing Chadwick Laboratories retained until the second phase. The new building would define a further series of quadrangle spaces that interface with the Robinson Laboratories.

Great Newton Street (8)

The Urban Design Framework proposes new development fronting this street, to reanimate the moribund western interface of the campus, and present a more friendly frontage to the adjacent community.

Mulberry Court (9)

The Framework proposes a major redevelopment of the student residential and commercial buildings on this substantial gateway site. It is envisaged that the project will include a large multi-storey car park, hidden behind new accommodation. This will help replace surface parking lost on Chatham Street and Crown Street. This development will be configured to help frame the proposed 'Diagonale' Axis focused on the Metropolitan Cathedral.

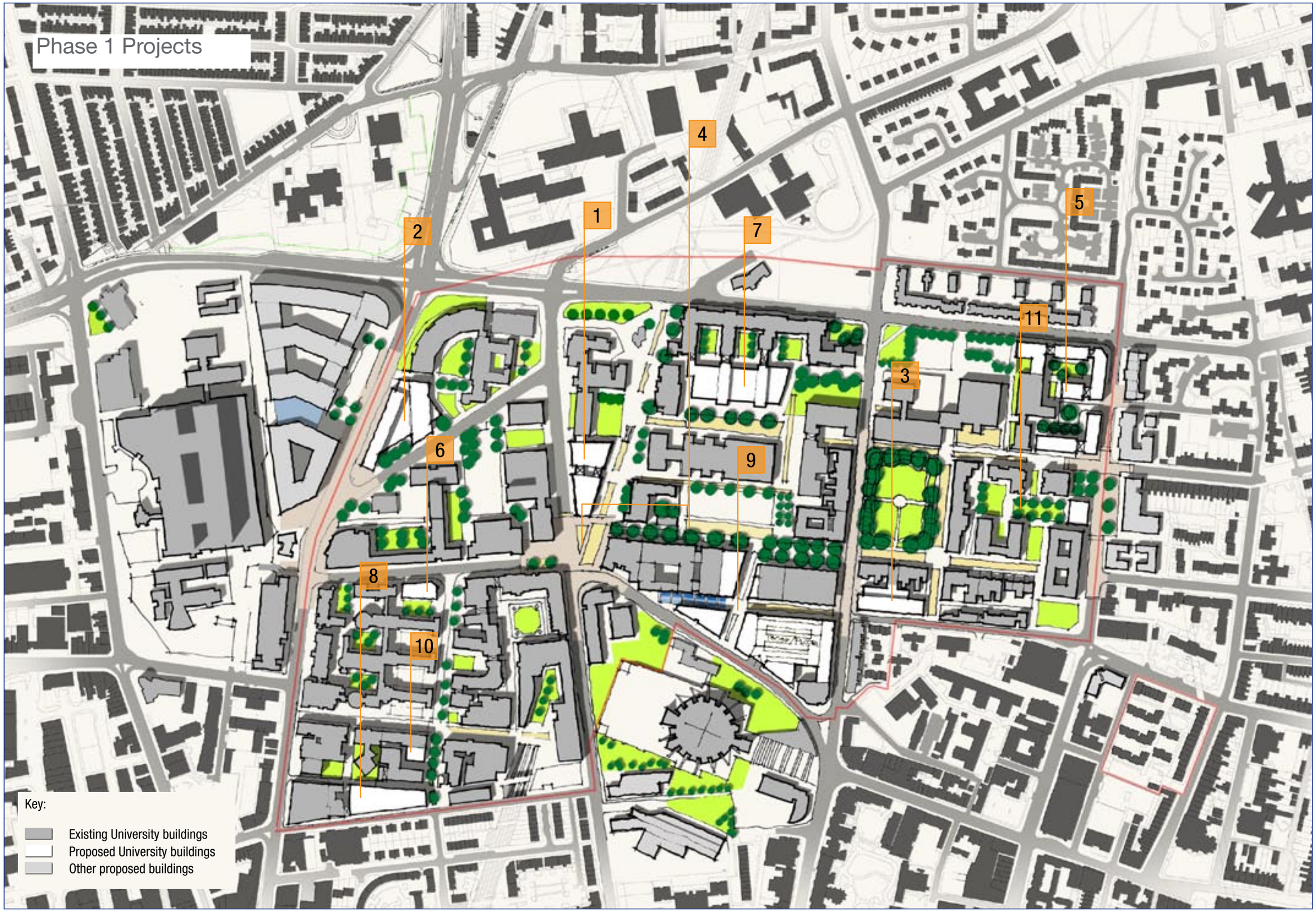
Proudman Laboratory Extension (10)

An extension to the west is proposed to accommodate functions currently housed off campus in nearby Islington. This will be designed to frame and animate the new pedestrian route to Lime Street Station along Dansie Street and Dover Street.

Roxby Building (11)

This concrete tower affords splendid views across the city from its top floor but is becoming uneconomical to maintain and heat. It may need to be replaced in the fairly short term, opening an opportunity to refine the tranquil green spaces around it and improve linkages to Myrtle Street.

Phase 1 Projects



4:5 - Phase 2 Projects

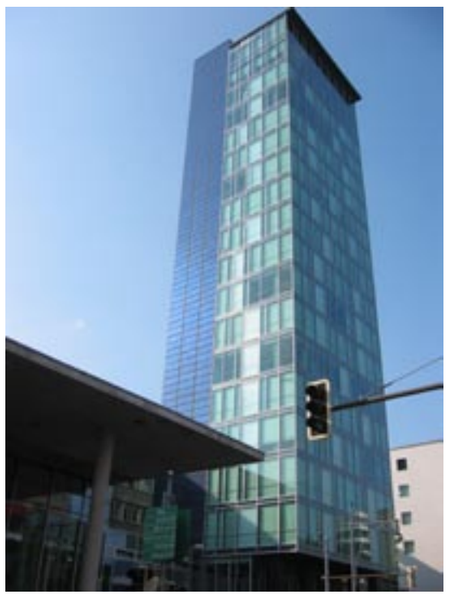
The following projects are envisaged in the second 5 year Phase of the Framework (2013 - 2018).

Bedford Street North (12)

This central pedestrian spine route suffers from a lack of definition, activity and enclosure, having had its Georgian building frontage removed in the 1970s and replaced by extensive surface car parking each side.

The Urban Design Framework proposes reinstatement of this street, with future development on the site south of the Mathematics building.

This could be for a mix of academic and residential use. The layout would be configured to help define the proposed 'Diagonale' cross-cutting axis, framing the magnificent views to the Metropolitan Cathedral.



Germany, Freiburg: Solar tower

The Framework shows the blocks linking with those along central Chatham Street to enclose a collection of intimate quadrangle courtyards.

Bedford Street South-Myrtle Street (13)

As the Eleanor Rathbone building approaches the end of its design life the opportunity will arise to repair the Bedford Street south link to the local centre at Myrtle Street and the regenerating Georgian neighbourhood of Canning.

The Urban Design Framework proposes two new blocks either side of the historic route, framing a new 'gateway' directly onto the central pedestrian spine of the University.

Ground floor uses could include some retail to reinforce the local centre. Core uses could be a mix of academic accommodation and residential, either student or open market as required.

This project should be considered as a priority, offering as it does a high profile opportunity for the reintegration of the campus into the city centre and Knowledge Quarter.

Central Chatham Street (14)

The development of replacement laboratories as proposed in phase 1 will allow redevelopment of the ageing Chadwick buildings. These should be replaced with built form that provides more enclosure and animation to the Chatham Street secondary spine route.

The Framework sees Chatham Street as a safe pedestrian and cycle link stretching between the new hospital, Abercromby Square and Falkner Square.

As with the adjacent Bedford Street North blocks, this could be for a mix of academic and residential use. The layout would again be configured to help define the proposed 'Diagonale' cross-cutting axis, framing the magnificent views to the Metropolitan Cathedral, and creating internal quadrangle spaces.

Crown Street (15)

The Framework proposes new buildings on the south side of this important public transport route to mark the junction with West Derby Street opposite the new Apex site Medical School and Royal Hospital.

The substantial height and massing of these adjacent buildings, and the nearby Biology and Bio-Sciences buildings mean this development can be of considerable size and height.

'Diagonale' Tower (16)

A landmark building is proposed to punctuate and close the vista along the proposed 'Diagonale' space into the campus from Mount Pleasant.

There is a precedent for a taller building here set by the tower at the south end of the Chadwick laboratories.

Great Newton Street - Brownlow Street (17)

A small but prominent corner site at this important gateway to the campus invites a building of suitable distinction. It will have to relate to the reconfigured engineering building now nearing completion, and the collection of important buildings on the south side of Brownlow Hill - the Metropolitan Cathedral and its Lutyens Crypt, the second phase Science Park facility and John Moores University's new Art and Design Academy.

Grove Street (18)

The eastern edge of the campus and the Oxford Street gateway would have a stronger identity and better relationship with the adjacent Edge Hill neighbourhood if this site were appropriately developed.

A residential block for student accommodation is suggested on the corner site, enclosing internal courtyards.

The block behind the Sydney Jones library may be considered for a second multi-storey car park to replace a proportion of the surface parking lost to development.

Oxford Street (19)

The bridge from Senate House and the buildings on the north side of Oxford Street may reach the end of their efficient life during this time period. A grade level pedestrian crossing linking Chatham Street should be pursued well in advance of this as part of the public realm network improvements.

The Framework shows a new block designed to continue the massing and rhythm of Abercromby Square's classical frontage on its south side, and define the proposed new 'Diagonale' axis on its north. It will contain a small internal courtyard space.

Paddington Project (20)

Archbishop Blanch School is likely to be relocated under the Building Schools for the Future programme. It may be that the site is reserved for educational or similar community use, or it may be that disposal for residential use is pursued.

In either scenario, it is important for the Campus Framework and wider Knowledge Quarter that the desire line from Brownlow Hill be reinstated as a clear pedestrian and cycle route, to link the Brownlow Hill and Mount Pleasant Science Park facilities with the 'grow on space' at Liverpool Digital.

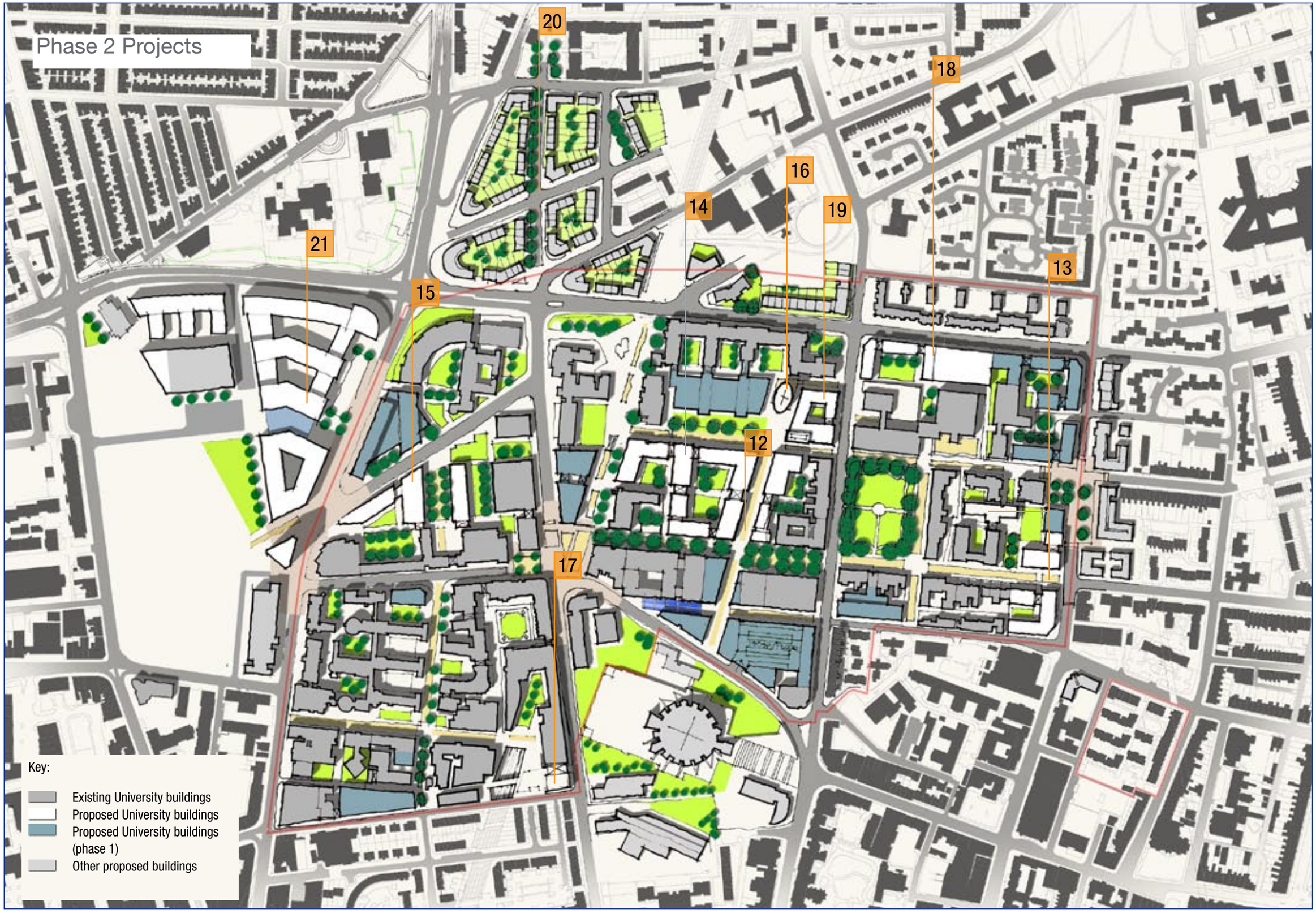
Opening up the Paddington link creates a highly legible route via Edge Hill and Gladstone Street, punctuated by the landmark buildings of St. Mary's Church and the Littlewoods building tower.

Royal Liverpool University Hospital (21)

The new hospital building is likely to be completed during this phase of the campus redevelopment, and the existing main block cleared.

West Derby Street will be a vital interface between the hospital and Apex site Medical School on campus.

Phase 2 Projects



4:6 - Phase 3 Projects

The end-state vision for the University creates a goal towards which the University can work over the long term.

The Netherlands, Groningen: inner-city residential development with active non-residential uses at ground floor level

Great Newton Street – Brownlow Hill corner (22)

A small site remains undeveloped at the prominent gateway to the campus from the city centre along Brownlow Hill. With investment in the Science Park extension and the LJMU Art and Design Academy, as well as anticipated improvement to the Lutyens Cathedral crypt visitor access and associated 'wilderness' green route, the profile of this site will be raised further in the coming years.

The corner site remains somewhat constrained by the adjacent deep rail cutting. North of the gap is another potential redevelopment site fronting Great Newton Street. The framework suggests a radical scheme, which provides quality accommodation in a strong corner block, linked with a lightweight steel multi-deck car park that bridges over the rail cutting and then presents an active ground floor use to the north south link.

This bold solution allows a substantial amount of new parking capacity to be configured in an unobtrusive and efficient way, with provision convenient for the University to share and develop jointly with other Knowledge Quarter institutions.

Clearly, such an ambitious project is a longer term aspiration and would be subject to numerous delivery challenges. It may be that separate development of the sites is the more feasible solution.

Crown Street-Brownlow Hill redefinition (23, 24)

As the Veterinary Science and Computer Services buildings reach the end of their economic life during the plan's time period, a golden opportunity is presented to rediscover Crown Street's strong diagonal desire line.

South of Brownlow Hill this would not be a traffic route but a pedestrian-cycle green link, allowing movement along the gentle contour at the foot of Edge Hill towards Parliament Street and Smithdown. This is a strategic aspiration of the Knowledge Quarter Framework.

Respecting the triangular pattern of sites generated by the angles of the junction with Brownlow Hill will generate a memorable 'star junction' gateway to the Campus from the proposed Hall Lane approach, enclosed by a set of distinctive individual buildings.

Our framework shows an indicative configuration of building plots that will give strong definition to both the junction and the revived street form either side and along Brownlow Hill.

Prescot Street (25)

Following the completion of the new hospital it is proposed that the site of the current hospital be redeveloped. This is outside the scope of the University Masterplan. Therefore a block plan is shown to indicative key routes and development plots.

Crown Street/Smithdown Lane (26)

Similarly outside the scope of this plan the masterplan shows the final phase of housing development on the school site with the Paddington, Crown Street and Smithdown Lane desire line routes re-instated.

Phase 3 Projects

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Key:

- Existing University buildings
- Proposed University buildings
- Proposed University buildings (phases 1&2)
- Other proposed buildings

4:7 - Public Realm

A comfortable and attractive public realm is central to the Urban Design Framework, which is structured around a clear hierarchy of distinctive spaces.

Main Traffic Routes

During the first phase of the Estate Strategy, it is anticipated that the City Council will proceed with the Hall Lane by-pass, which has been on the drawing board in various forms for many years. The 'shatter zone', which covers the eastern context of the campus is the result of planning blight from this highway scheme, so it is welcome that work is now close to commencement.

Grove Street and Mount Vernon will feed directly into this north south by-pass, which addresses traffic circulation problems exacerbated by the severance of Crown Street, and will act as a conduit for traffic generated by the proposed widening of Edge Lane, should that go ahead. These routes are ones where vehicular traffic will be heavily concentrated, although it is important that pedestrian access along and across the highways is not compromised, given the proximity of adjacent high density inner city neighbourhoods whose residents require better access to the city centre and campus. Ideally, such highways are designed as generous 'boulevards', lined by substantial developments and landscaping that relate to and identify the roads as main civic approach routes.

Urban Streets

The Urban Design Framework encourages a reconfiguration of main roads through the campus as streets, given their city centre location and the desire to prioritise comfortable pedestrian and cycle access to and through the University and Knowledge Quarter. This will be achieved over time by traffic management and public realm remodelling to slow average traffic speeds whilst maintaining steady movement flows.

Specific measures could include shared surface treatments that allow free access by car but emphasise the primacy of sustainable modes by limiting speeds to 20mph or less. Street tree planting, pavement widening and street furniture designed for people on foot rather than drivers can reinforce this change of priority. Reduction of the clutter of highways related infrastructure should be a guiding principle - too much of the city is disfigured by ugly guard rails and signage. Allowing more on-street parking, including free bays for short-stay stops, enables drivers to benefit from the new situation too, and supports local business development by facilitating the capture of passing trade.

Pedestrian-Cycle Areas

These parts of the campus would be reserved for pedestrians and cyclists only, except to allow access for servicing, disabled drivers and some on-street parking. As appropriate, these precincts could be landscaped in quality soft or hard materials, forming a network of pleasant, near traffic free green routes and spaces.

They should be designed to encourage people to linger and interact in comfort - this means giving design attention to seating, shelter, lighting, artworks and signage. Integrating cyclists with pedestrians is straightforward providing consideration is given to both users.

Urban Squares

Three additional focal spaces are proposed to complement the existing set-piece space of Abercromby Square. These are located at key interfaces between the University Campus and other civic nodal points. It is envisaged that traffic will be slowed to further prioritise pedestrian safety and comfort at these points, using raised surfaces, shared materials and other street furniture.

Pembroke Place-West Derby Street: Situated at the north end of the Ashton Street spine route, this is the key crossing point between the campus and the Royal Liverpool University Hospital complex. Bleak and uninviting at present, the area will be transformed by the proposed new Royal Hospital and Apex Project Medical School, which will reinstate strong street frontages and focus intense levels of activity here. The unusual confluence of diagonal and lateral routes on and around this point opens opportunities for distinctive architecture and landmark building design here. The effect will be enhanced by a high quality civic setting to emphasise the importance of the neighbouring institutions to the life and economy of the city and its strategic Knowledge Quarter.

University Square: Resurfacing of the junction of Brownlow Hill and Bedford Street/Ashton Street is underway as part of the Campus Enhancement Project. The intention is to create a memorable civic space that acts as a hub for the campus and visitors, enhancing the setting of the new Victoria Museum and Gallery, and the Guild of Students. Also key is to reinforce the spine route by allowing safe crossing of the busy Brownlow Hill and Mount Pleasant traffic routes.

Myrtle Street-Chatham Street: We propose a new space at the interface of the southern campus and the Myrtle Street local centre, which is well used by both University members and the established residential communities of Canning, Toxteth. This would make sense of the set-back of the building line on the south side, remaindered for a now redundant road widening project.

Quadrangles

Although much of the thrust of the Urban Design Framework is towards revisioning the campus as a more animated city quarter, we are conscious of the need within a University for places of quiet reflection and tranquility. The ancient universities provided these in the form of regular quadrangles, peaceful green cloisters and courtyards, where students can read and relax. The campus contains some examples of spaces with great potential to play the same role, notably the classic quad behind the Victoria building, and the green courts south of Abercromby Square around the Law Library. These would benefit from some relandscaping but their basic configuration is strong.

Other areas also have potential to act as 'quads' even though not designed as such. The spaces between the wings of the Robert Robinson laboratories are an example. The Urban Design Framework integrates the location and footprint of proposed new buildings with the opportunity to configure new and improved tranquil spaces.

Pedestrian Circulation within Blocks

It is envisaged that the quads around the campus will enjoy some form of public access and circulation during the day, with the spaces being secured during the evenings. This is based on the principle of encouraging interaction between the University and city communities, and also to facilitate comfortable movement to and through the campus. Buildings themselves would be secured at their points of access.

The Overall Public Realm Network

The overall result is a network of public and semi-private spaces across the campus, large and small in size, hard and soft in landscape treatment, lively and tranquil as appropriate. We hope the campus will become a place of fascination and inspiration for those who study, work or simply visit here.

Public Realm

4:8 - Myrtle Street Gateway

Myrtle Street will be transformed from a bleak edge of the campus to a lively local high street.

The difference in scale and quality between the classical townscape and its 1960s replacement is stark here at the Chatham Street junction. Generous planting of street trees masks the worst visual impacts, but cannot disguise the lack of animation and activity.

Myrtle Street is at the interface of the campus and the Canning neighbourhood to the south. The local centre contains amenities used by local residents and members of the University.

At present the pedestrian connections from the campus to the local centre are very poor. The most direct route, along Bedford Street South, has been severed by the Eleanor Rathbone Building.

Other routes, along Mulberry Street, Chatham Street and Myrtle Street itself, suffer from being poorly defined, with a lack of lively built frontage alongside.

The problems are a legacy of comprehensive post war development plans, which included a major road widening project that never transpired.

Buildings were set back from the proposed road line, and now offer little sense of enclosure or animation to the street.

The most positive character is found in the retained block of shops at the west end of the street. Their height (three storeys) is in good proportion to the street width, and the building line and active ground floor uses support a safe, lively street scene. They are currently occupied by popular cafes and convenience stores that serve the University and residential communities.

Our framework proposes re-establishing the building line along the north side of Myrtle Street (on the left of the picture opposite) and extending the line of the remaining historic frontage on the south side, keeping a consistent height.

The frontage could then be set back on the south side to form a public space at the junction with Chatham Street, and potentially re-established again to the east with redevelopment of the Vine Street depot site.

Residential uses could be reintroduced to Myrtle Street, with student accommodation on the north side, and a concentration of private housing to the south.

The more pleasant aspects of the existing public realm, particularly street trees and the fragments of remaining Yorkstone paving, offer suggestions for the future landscape treatment of the local centre.

The Myrtle Street local centre is popular with University members and local residents, but lost most of its shop frontages to an abortive 1960s road widening project. The indicative illustration to the right shows what the street could look like if the historic building line and heights were re-established in contemporary form. Below: Myrtle Street today


FOOD STORE
Kimor

This picture, taken from the plinth on which the Metropolitan Cathedral sits, shows the existing interface of the campus with the city centre along Mount Pleasant. The environment here is dominated by surface car parking. There is little or no relation between buildings and the streets or public spaces, and the identity of the University is very weak here.

Looking west from within the Campus to the Metropolitan Cathedral, the fine vista is worthy of a better frame than parked cars.

The major new element introduced in the masterplan is a diagonal pedestrian street running eastwards from the cathedral.

4:9 - The University ‘Diagonale’

Mount Pleasant is a busy route between the central and southern part of the campus and the city centre. It contains buildings of architectural importance, most notably the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, and has historic Georgian and Victorian character.

It will be an important connector between the key Hope Street Cultural Quarter and the University’s new museum and gallery in the restored Victoria Building.

The Guild of Students attracts people from a wide area to concerts and events.

At present, the setting of all these important academic and civic assets is spoiled by the weak edge of the campus along its east side of Mount Pleasant, where the urban form and building line breaks down into poorly defined spaces and large areas of surface car-parking.

These open car parks extend deep into the campus.

The problems are a legacy of comprehensive post war development.

The buildings of Mulberry Court, the Guild and the Sports Centre do not provide active frontages to public areas, and Bedford Street North is also unenclosed by buildings, only parking.

A positive aspect of the open, unenclosed urban form here is the fine vista of the cathedral afforded from points within the campus. At present, this feels incidental, and is not ‘framed’ by buildings or presented from spaces which encourage people to linger and enjoy the dramatic architecture.

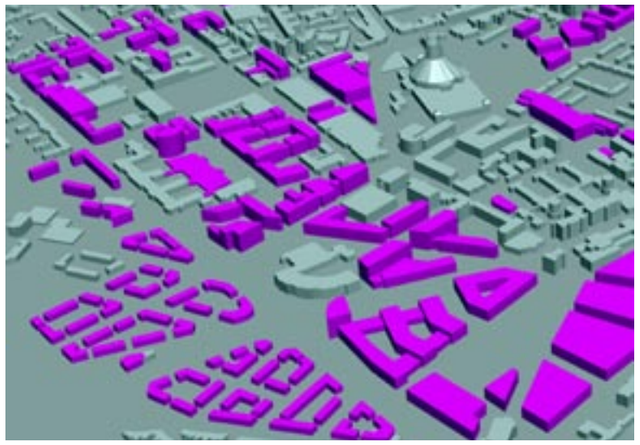
Our framework proposes a new diagonal axis focused on the cathedral, framed by new development.

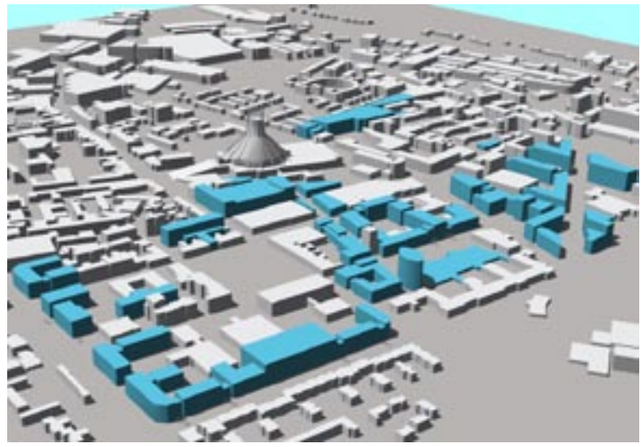
This pedestrianised space will reinforce the ‘sense of place’ within the campus, by making much more of the existing visual connections to such a distinctive Liverpool landmark.

It will also establish a far stronger interface between the campus and the city centre, with a friendly, lively destination space leading to the heart of the University.

The parking lost would be reprovided in a multi-storey hidden behind new development on the site of Mulberry Court.

The heights strategy for the University is based on respect for the surrounding Georgian context with a series of taller feature buildings





4:10 - Building Heights

The plan on the facing page shows suggested heights for proposed new development as part of the masterplan allowing them to be appreciated in the context of the retained buildings. The plan suggests a number of storeys suggested indicatively for each building although this would of course be subject to detailed design and planning considerations as proposals come forward.

As a broad principle we have allowed new blocks to achieve a substantial urban scale of a least four storeys. This rises slightly on the major traffic routes through and across the Campus to emphasise the civic status of these streets and the campus.

These through streets - Crown Street, Brownlow Hill, Oxford Street, Myrtle Street, Mount Pleasant and the proposed Hall Lane are wide enough to require a particularly strong sense of continuity and enclosure. These streets have been damaged in the past by buildings that are of a suburban scale or set-back too far from the building line. The masterplan therefore seeks to create strong frontages along these movement corridors.

Particularly important are corner blocks that have the potential to create local landmarks. Buildings are proposed to repair high profile gap sites on Myrtle Street, Great Newton Street and Oxford Street and these are shown at five storeys, to indicate their gateway role.

In addition to this predominant building height several landmark building projects are proposed:

- Replacement of the Alsop Arcade would allow an iconic development on the triangular site overlooking the University Square.

- Redefinition of Crown Street offers a series of prominent junction sites where heights can be more assertive.

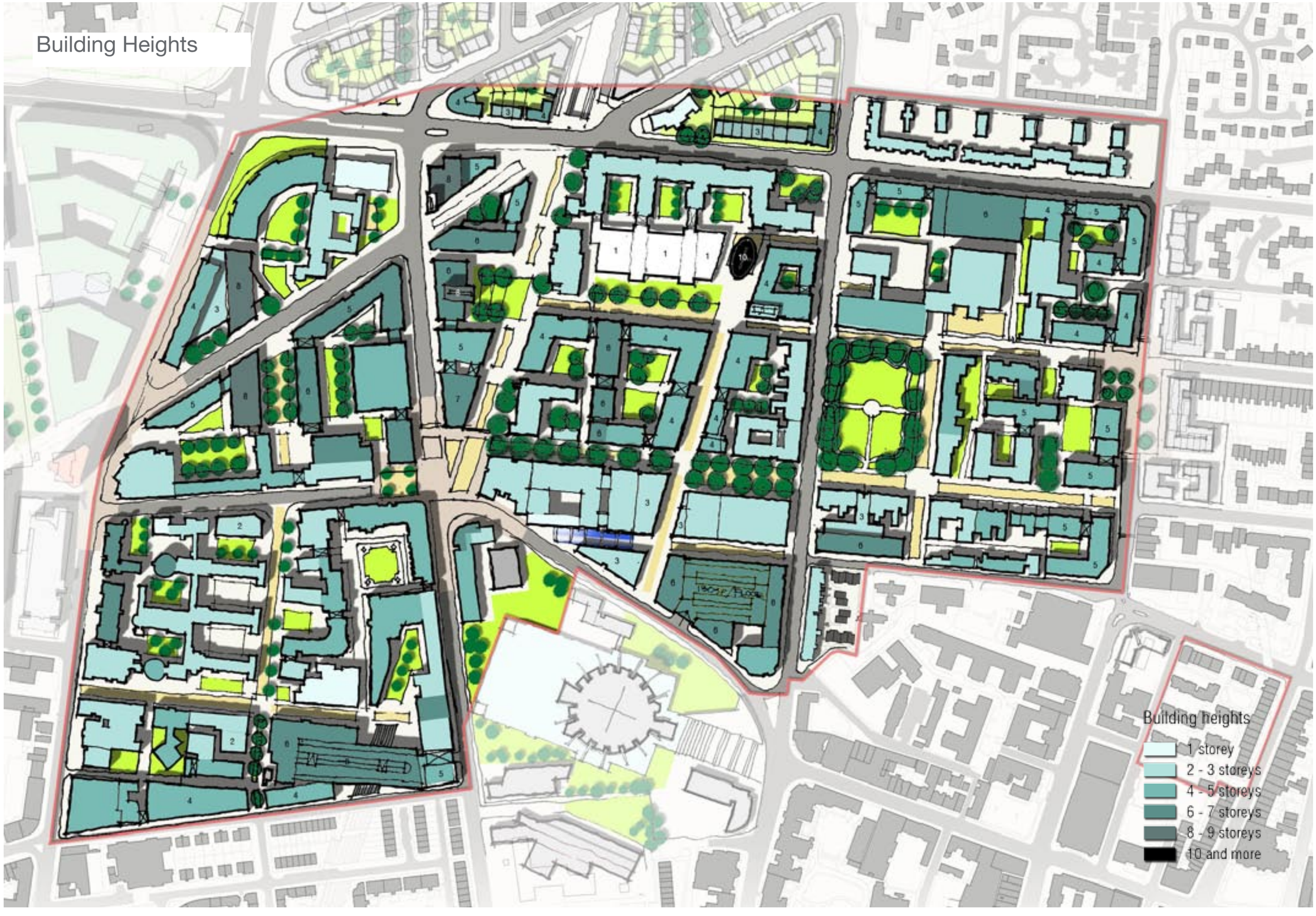
- The new University Diagonale invites a focal building at its west end to punctuate views into the Campus.

- The massing of Mulberry Court is substantial and can be replicated in its redevelopment.

Further in from the edges of the Campus, heights around the central core would respond to the typology of the Georgian precedent, the tall three/four storey scale of the classical townhouses that once made up most of the urban fabric.

The new laboratory block is a specialist building requiring wide floor areas lit from above; it is shown at one storey.

Building Heights



4:11 Land Use

The masterplan aims to introduce a wider range of uses into the campus, particularly to activate the ground floors of buildings

A pattern of land use is proposed that will reinforce the success of the campus as a place of research and learning, and unlock its potential as a vibrant quarter of an international city.

As set out academic uses will take up the majority of new floor space at both ground floor and upper levels.

As part of the plan to diversify uses across the campus and introduce more destinations with appeal beyond the academic community, space is allocated for a range of uses.

Ground floor uses

The light yellow shadings show those parts of the campus which the Urban Design Framework aims to make more 'vital and vibrant', with publicly accessible uses at ground floor level relating directly to the adjacent streets and spaces.

Hence some retail/commercial uses are suggested at specific points - improved and perhaps expanded accommodation in the Alsop Arcade and Oxford Street parades, and some new units to reinforce the Myrtle Street local centre. The relocation of the hospital closer to the campus edge offers scope to support new retail and commercial activity around West Derby Street.

Two new buildings are given over to 'leisure use' altogether i.e. the suggested Guild 'atrium' on Mount Pleasant, and the potential hotel development on the Bedford House site. A small cafe extension to the Sports Centre (to animate the proposed 'Diagonale' space) is also proposed.

Similarly, there is scope to reintroduce more residential accommodation within the campus, to make it a truly living quarter of the city, and help secure University property out of teaching hours. This should be a balance of student and market housing, not a predominance of one or other housing type.

We have differentiated potential student/market residential sites on the plan opposite, but these are to an extent interchangeable, depending on evolution of the University's Student Housing strategy. We have also differentiated the key medical uses for clarity. It should be noted that there is a cross over between the University and Hospital Trust, with each institution's buildings hosting activities managed by the other. The Apex project Medical School will be a University building with a direct medical role.

Three potential locations for multi-storey car parks are shown. Only one of these, the Mulberry Court site, has been subject to detailed feasibility study, the others are shown as suggested locations for providing capacity lost through redevelopment.

Upper floor uses

Academic uses will take up the majority of new floor space above ground floor level, as expressed by the extent of space coloured dark blue in the facing plan. Other uses are proposed to diversify the amenities and character of the campus.

Ground floor uses