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Glasgow City Council

Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration
City Policy Committee

Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director of
Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability

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Item 8

14th November 2023

GLASGOW AVENUES
George Square and Block-C Avenues (Phase 1) – Progress Update

Purpose of Report:

To provide an update on progress achieved during RIBA Stage 3 design of the George Square and Phase 1 Block-C Avenues, and to outline the process for the final technical design.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members:

- (i). Consider the outcomes of recent stakeholder consultations, and resulting design amendments for the RIBA Stage 3;
- (ii). Consider the completion of RIBA Stage 3, and note that the next phase will be RIBA Stage 4 Detail and Technical Design which should conclude around April 2024;
- (iii). Note that all activity outlined in this report is subject to ongoing cost, budget and wider Avenues programme monitoring and analysis.

Ward No(s): 10

Citywide:

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

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PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Members will recall the most recent biannual report on George Square which was submitted to the Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration City Policy Committee on 7 March 2023. This report can be found [here](#). It outlined the outcome of the public and key stakeholder engagement that resulted in the evolution of key design principles and the resultant concept design. It also confirmed that regular updates would be submitted to this committee with developing RIBA-Stages of design due to the significance of George Square as the city's premier civic space
- 1.2 This new report provides an update on progress of the design of George Square and Phase 1 Block C Avenues (see **Appendix A Phasing Map**) RIBA Stage 3. The report also provides an overview of the developed design drawings that are a result of extensive stages of public engagement and stakeholder consultations.
- 1.3 Members should note that the RIBA Stage 4 of the design process for George Square and the adjacent Avenues that form Phase 1 of Block C design works will be subject to:
 - i. Further detailed consultations and design co-ordination exercise with key stakeholders, local business, and other major future developments aligned to George Square and Block C Avenues
 - ii. Further engagement with GCC NRS internal services which include but are not limited to Sustainability, Roads, Maintenance, Lighting, Parks and Greenspace, Events, Technical Services, Planning and Heritage, and Active travel teams
 - iii. Findings of a detailed costing and budget exercise for the current phase of design
 - iv. Budget and cost evaluation of the overarching Avenues programme based on the current costings derived from recent construction tender returns
 - v. Coordination and alignment with emerging Transport and Active travel policies and plans (locally and nationally)
- 1.4 It should also be noted that the emerging design includes some features that will be investigated in detail during the subsequent design stages. These features include:
 - i. Water feature
 - ii. Informal 'play' areas
 - iii. Repositioning of statues
 - iv. High quality stone throughout the Square
 - v. Bespoke sheltered seating
 - vi. Raised lawns platform
 - vii. Feature lighting

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2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will be aware that the Glasgow City Region City Deal is investing approximately £115 million within Glasgow city centre to deliver the Enabling Infrastructure - Integrated Public Realm (EIIPR) programme – also known as the Avenues programme. This has also been supplemented by an additional £23 million from Sustrans. The Avenues programme is essentially a quality place-making scheme that will transform key streets in Glasgow's city centre. This investment will introduce a network of pedestrian and cycle priority routes across Glasgow city centre that will incorporate green/blue infrastructure, increased pedestrian and cycle space, and improved connectivity.
- 2.2 John McAslan and Partners were awarded the Block C design commission, and this includes producing RIBA Stages 0-4 designs for George Square, John Street, St Vincent Street and Place, West George Street and George Street, Hanover and Miller Street, North Hanover Street, Dundas Street and Dundas Lane, Cochrane Street.
- 2.3 The Block C project is jointly funded by the Glasgow City Region City Deal and GCC capital budget. St Vincent Street, Cochrane Street, North Hanover Street, George Street and John Street will be funded by City Deal. George Square, Hanover and Miller Streets, and Dundas Street and Lane will be funded by GCC. The design has been split in two phases – see **Appendix A**.

3 PHASE 1 DESIGN PROPOSALS

Design Stage Overview

- 3.1 During RIBA stage 3 the appointed team of consultants led by JMP progressed the stage-2 concept designs into more developed stage-3 designs which will be further detailed with technical information during the forthcoming RIBA stage 4. The developed design is defined by the outcomes and analysis of the data gathered from the comments received on the Concept design from public and stakeholders. In person stakeholder consultation sessions and online public engagement was carried out in April 2023. Subsequent meetings with projects adjacent to the Avenues have been ongoing. Comments and feedback received have helped shape the current design.
- 3.2 A RIBA stage 3 developed design proposal for the Avenues was prepared in line with the overarching programme ethos of reducing road capacity for private vehicles whilst providing enhanced walking and cycling facilities and green infrastructure and can be explored in **Appendixes E to P George Square Design Statements Overview**
- 3.3 The RIBA Stage-3 public and stakeholder engagement exercise for the Phase 1 Design area took place in April 2023. The concept design was presented to stakeholders during these in-person and online engagement and consultation events and have subsequently been developed and enhanced in response to the feedback received. The Political Oversight Group (POG) were also briefed in September 2023 and will continue to be updated at key milestones.

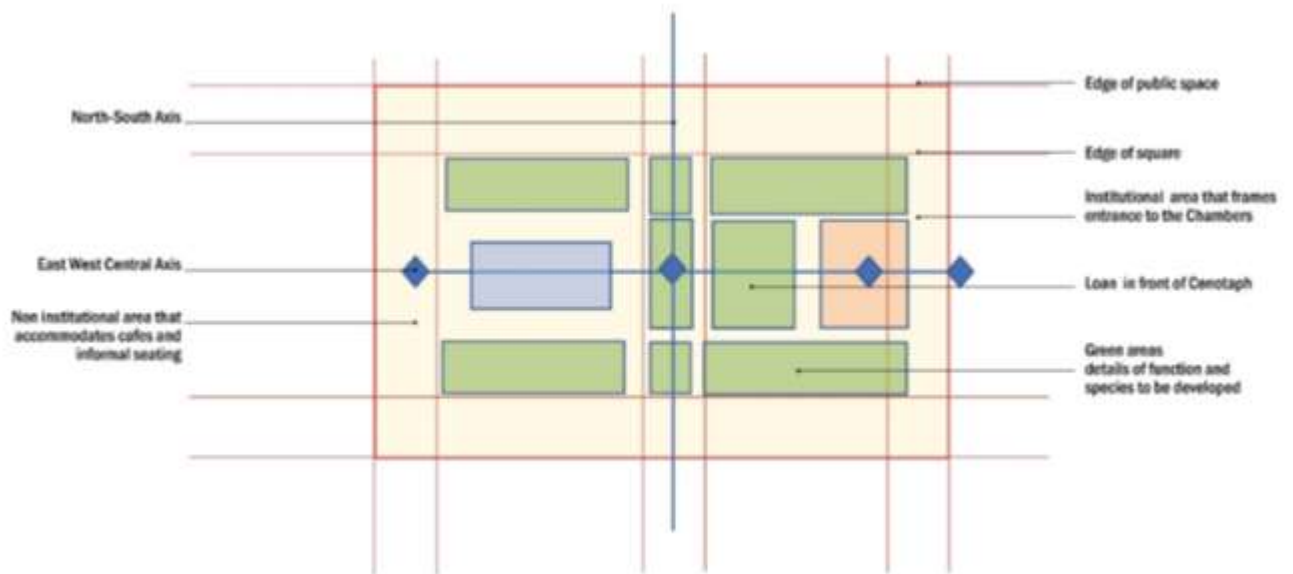
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3.4 The current proposals continues to develop the key underpinning design statements for George Square (see Figure 1), which will be developed into detailed technical designs, and propose that the final design will:

- i. Respect vistas, whilst enhancing the views towards key architectural features
- ii. Enhance North-South axis
- iii. Protect and extend greenery
- iv. Recognise that the edge of the public space is defined by the line of the buildings surrounding the Square
- v. Recognise that the edge of the Square is defined by the east-west corridors (West George Street and St Vincent Street)
- vi. Respond to the institutional character of the eastern area of the Square in front of the City Chambers
- vii. Respond to the non-institutional character of the western area of the Square
- viii. Respect the central east west axis in the Square (City Chambers, Cenotaph, Sir Walter Scott)

Figure 1: Design Statements developed during RIBA Stage 2 and approved at Avenues Board on 10/11/22



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George Square Developed Design Proposal Overview

- 3.5 The developed design proposal (see **Figure 2**) continues to respond to the design statements through a formal approach, with lines of greenery enhancing the east/west axis as well as the north/south axis around the Sir Walter Scott monument in the centre of the Square. A good proportion of the green areas will be designed as rain gardens to enhance the capability of the Square to deal with containment of rain water drainage in situ.
- 3.6 The design for the eastern part of the Square responds to the formality of the City Chambers and of the Cenotaph; a further raised green area has been proposed in front of the Cenotaph.
- 3.7 The design for the western part of the Square introduces an area for cafes to spill out, as well as a generous paved area for events (which may include a water feature).
- 3.8 A palette of materials and options has been developed for design elements such as water features, informal play areas, planting and greenery, surface finishes, bespoke seating areas, raised lawn platform and feature lighting. This palette and options will be continued to be refined in further detail in the concluding design RIBA stage-4.
- 3.9 As a part of the developed design stage, it has been identified that the restoration, repair, reinterpretation, and reinstallation of the statues in George Square will require an independent project management team. As a result the Avenues team have teamed up with GCCs Project Consultancy Team to develop a brief, scope, methodology and outline budget costs for this exercise. This initial exercise is underway and a paper will be prepared for corporate consideration in due course outlining the project scope and required funding for the 'Statues Restoration Project'. The intent is to co-ordinate this with the wider George Square and Block-C construction programme so that the statues are restored and reinstalled during the same period before the redesigned square is opened to public.
- 3.10 As a part of the current stage, the design for George Square alone will be submitted for a full planning consent to GCC and listed buildings consent to HES. It is intended that through this planning application the public and stakeholders will be provided with one more opportunity to reflect upon and comment on the design of George Square; Glasgow's most important civic space. Comments and feedback received will be analysed and incorporated into the detail and technical design where relevant.
- 3.11 The emerging design proposes sheltered and unsheltered seating areas across the Square, and
 - i. Integrates areas for children to play in sensory gardens in the eastern area;
 - ii. Repositions existing statues in the formal eastern area of the Square.

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Figure 2: Developed Design Proposal



4 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	There are no financial implications as a result of this report.
<i>Legal:</i>	The report raises no new legal issues.
<i>Personnel:</i>	No direct personnel issues.
<i>Procurement:</i>	Works will be procured according to Council Standing Orders.

Council Strategic Plan:

<i>Specify which Grand Challenge (s) and Mission (s) the proposal supports. Where appropriate the relevant Commitment can also be listed.</i>	The project supports the following items: GRAND CHALLENGE ONE – Reduce poverty and inequality in our communities MISSION 3: Improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities <i>Commitments: 2</i> GRAND CHALLENGE TWO – Increase opportunity and prosperity for all our citizens MISSION 1: Support Glasgow residents into sustainable and fair work <i>Commitments: 1,5</i>
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GRAND CHALLENGE THREE – Fight the climate emergency in a just transition to a net zero Glasgow

MISSION 1: Deliver sustainable transport and travel aligned with the city region

Commitments: 3,4,10,11,16,26

MISSION 2: Become a net zero carbon city by 2030

Commitments: 9,14,15

GRAND CHALLENGE FOUR – Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities

MISSION 1: Create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods

Commitments: 18,19

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify. Yes. The delivery of Avenues Block C will contribute to achieving Outcome 1 by leading to the provision of more employment opportunities for a diverse workforce and Outcome 6 by helping to create a more vibrant and attractive city centre with more opportunities for social interaction.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report? Positive - The Avenues programme will encourage, employment opportunities and opportunities for all city centre residents and beyond by improving connectivity and accessibility.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage. The proposal will enhance accessibility and promote a socially inclusive environment and encourage skills development and business development more generally by improving access to jobs and areas of prosperity.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify: Yes. When delivered, the public realm developed as part of the Avenues Block C will enhance the opportunities for active travel, biodiversity and climate mitigation, as well as traffic reduction and support citizen's behavioral change/modal shift. Supports Climate Plan Actions: 1, 2, 36,37,38, 51,56

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal? Positive. The potential impacts are on carbon reduction, increases in active travel, connected green and open spaces, support for circularity, public realm that promotes well-being and empowers local communities and community wealth building.

Will the proposal contribute to Yes. Delivering new attractive public realm and active travel infrastructure will mean less reliance on carbon emitting modes of transport. The project will also enhance

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Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

biodiversity in the city centre as well as introduce climate mitigations measures (trees, rain gardens).

Privacy and Data Protection impacts:

There are no immediate data protection impacts. These will be assessed as the action plan is developed, and DPIA's will be completed as required.

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report Y/N

5 Recommendations

5.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i). Consider the outcomes of recent stakeholder consultations, and resulting design amendments for the RIBA Stage 3;
- (ii). Consider the completion of RIBA Stage 3, and note that the next phase will be RIBA Stage 4 Detail and Technical Design which should conclude around April 2024;
- (iii). Note that all activity outlined in this report is subject to ongoing cost, budget and wider Avenues programme monitoring and analysis.

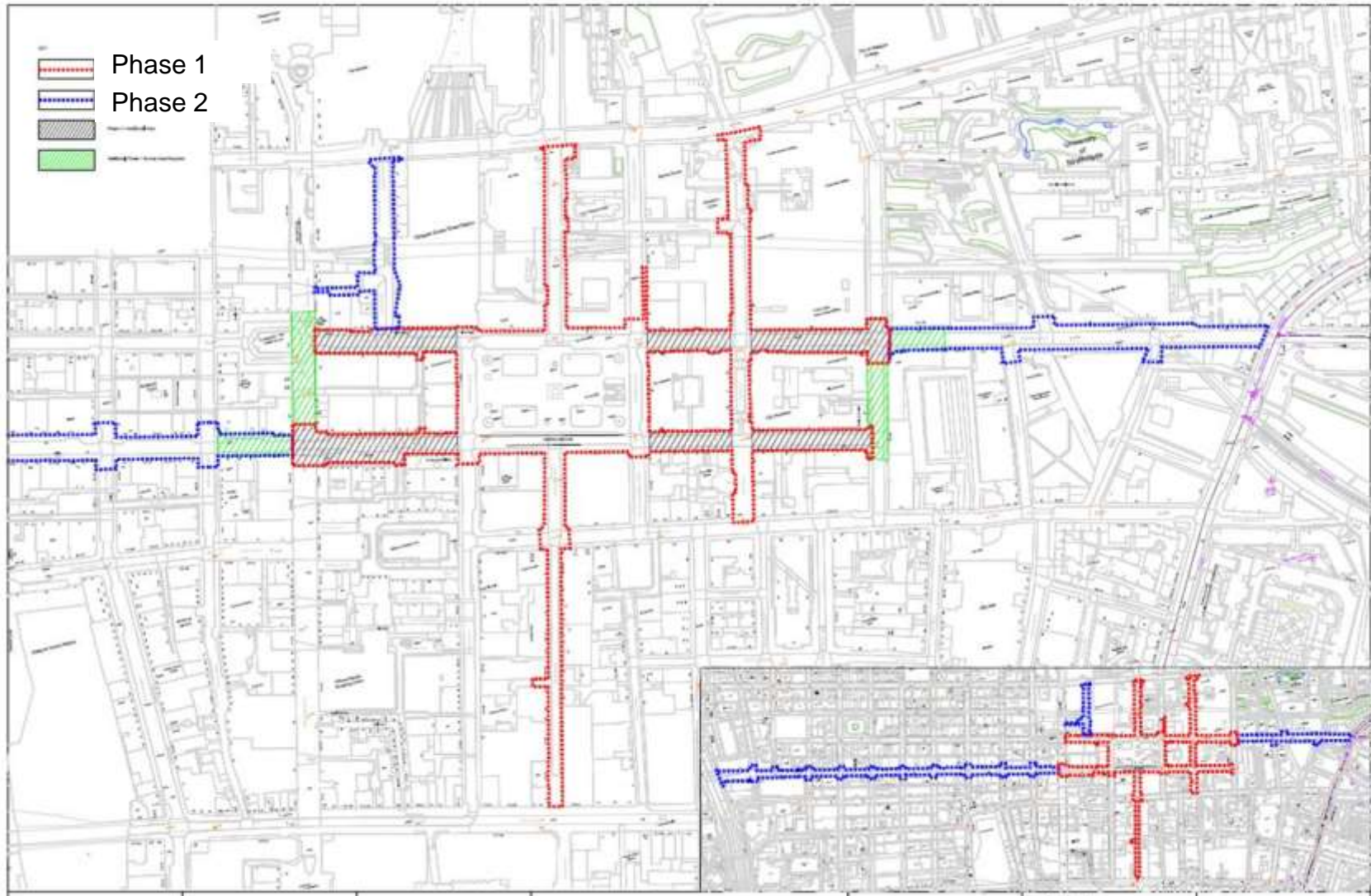
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6. Enclosures

- Appendix A: George Square and Block-C Design Phasing Plan
- Appendix B: George Square Proposed Developed Plan
- Appendix C: George Square Proposed 3D View
- Appendix D: John Street North Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View
- Appendix E: John Street North Proposed 3D View looking south
- Appendix F: John Street North Proposed Axonometric View
- Appendix G: John Street South Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View
- Appendix H: John Street South Proposed 3D View looking south
- Appendix I: John Street South Proposed Axonometric View
- Appendix J: West George Street Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View
- Appendix K: West George Street Proposed 3D View looking West
- Appendix L: W-George Street Proposed Axonometric View
- Appendix M: George Street Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View
- Appendix N: George Street Proposed 3D View looking East
- Appendix O: George Street Proposed Axonometric View
- Appendix P: Cochrane Street Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View
- Appendix Q: Cochrane Street Proposed 3D View looking East
- Appendix R: Cochrane Street Proposed Axonometric View
- Appendix S: North Hanover Street Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View
- Appendix T: North Hanover Street 3D View looking North
- Appendix U: North Hanover Street Proposed Axonometric View
- Appendix V: Hanover Street Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View
- Appendix W: Hanover Street 3D View looking North
- Appendix X: Hanover Street Proposed Axonometric View
- Appendix Y: Miller Street Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View
- Appendix Z: Miller Street 3D View looking North
- Appendix ZA: Miller Street Proposed Axonometric View

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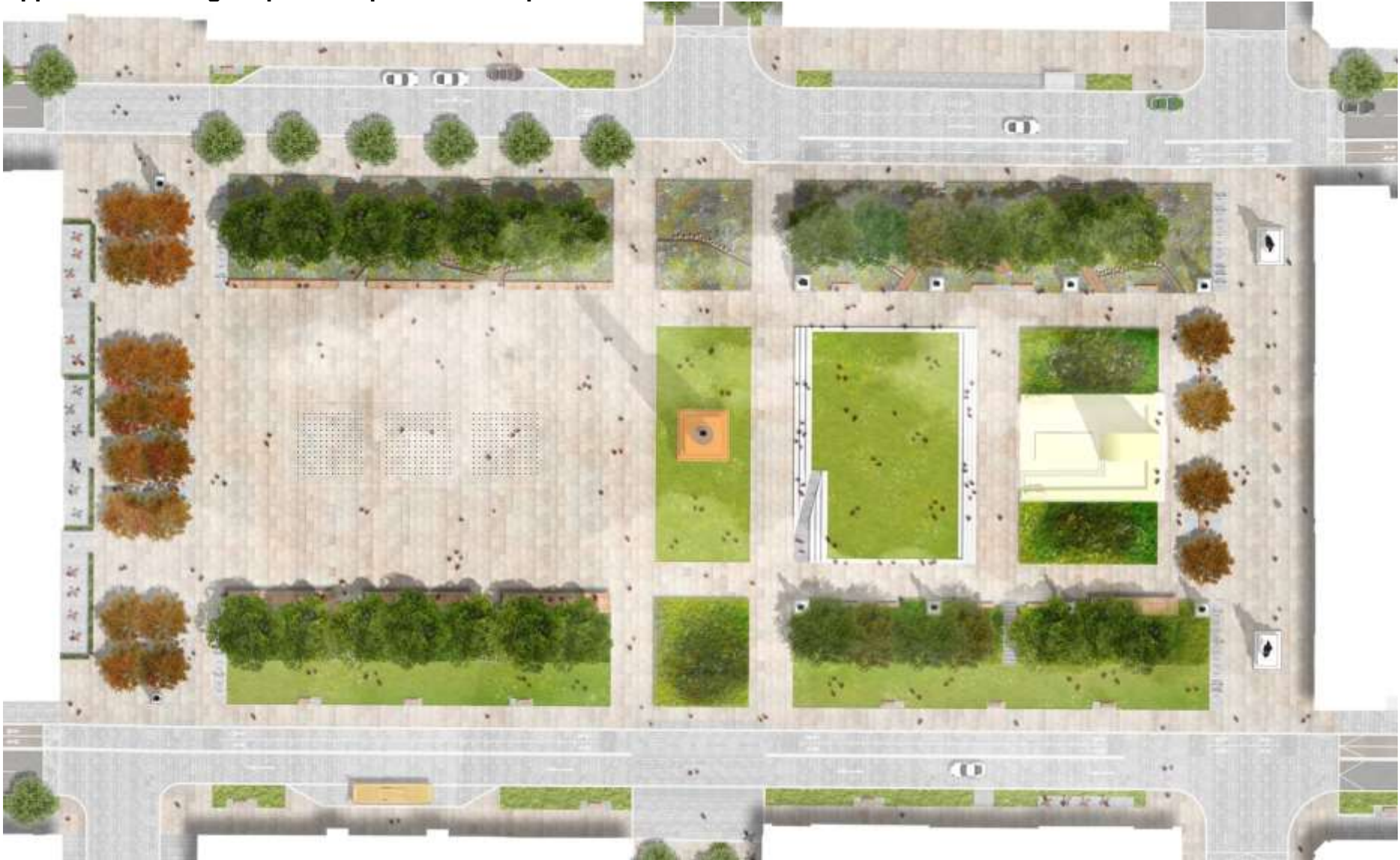
Appendix A: George Square and Block-C Design Phasing Plan



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Appendix B: George Square Proposed Developed Plan



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Appendix C: George Square Proposed 3D View



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Appendix D: John Street North Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View



Key design interventions:

- Dedicated one-way cycle lane
- One way traffic with on street cycling
- Introduction of new planting areas and trees
- New pocket seating areas
- Improved pedestrian crossings with tactile surface
- Cycle parking



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Appendix E: John Street North Proposed 3D View looking south

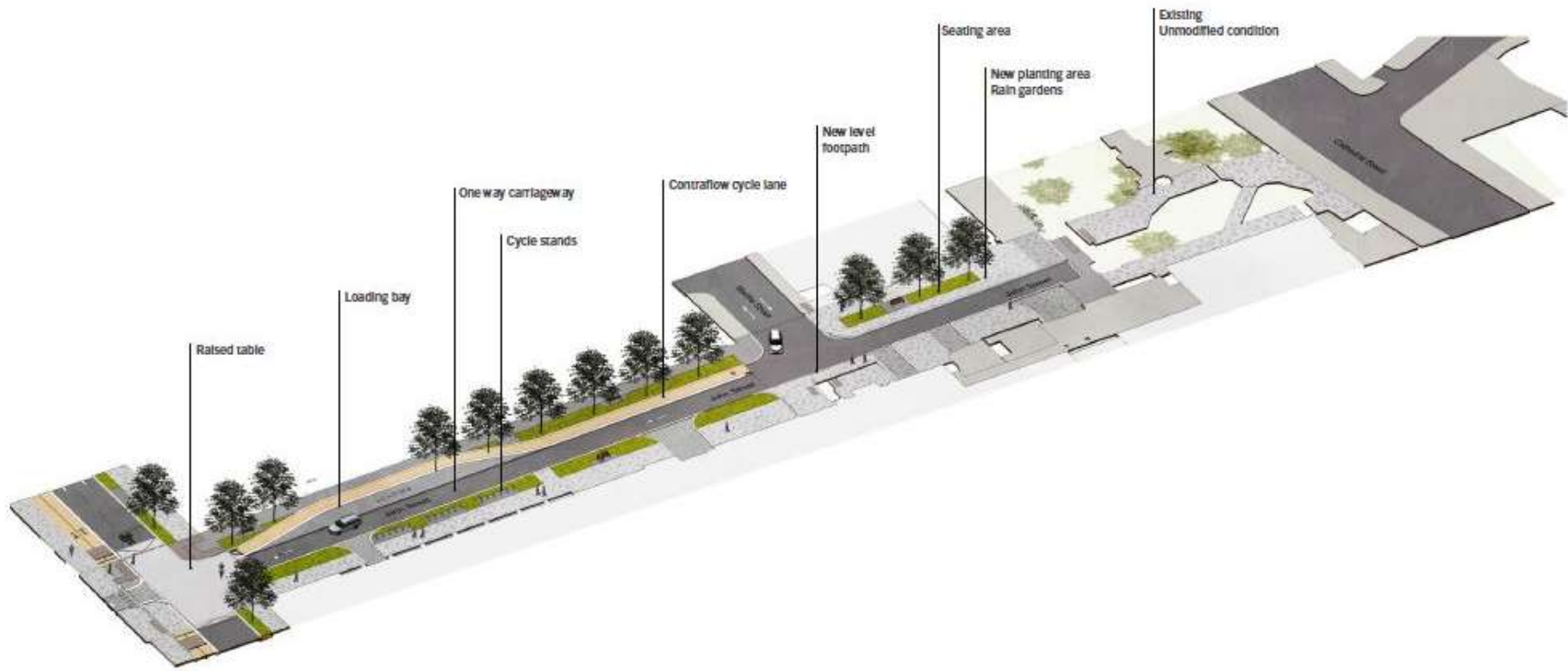


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Appendix F: John Street North Proposed Axonometric View

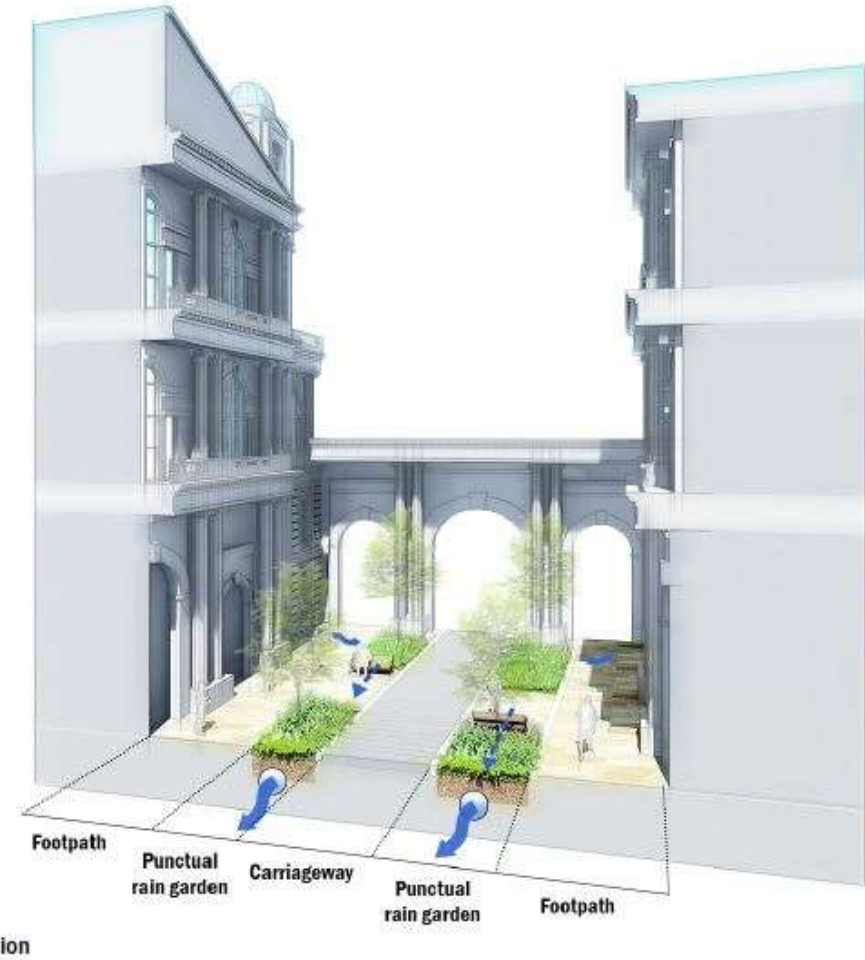


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Appendix G: John Street South Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View

Key design interventions:

- Introduction of new planting areas and trees
- New pocket seating areas
- Improved pedestrian crossings with tactile surface
- Remove car parking spaces to give place to planting and seating
- Enhanced surface



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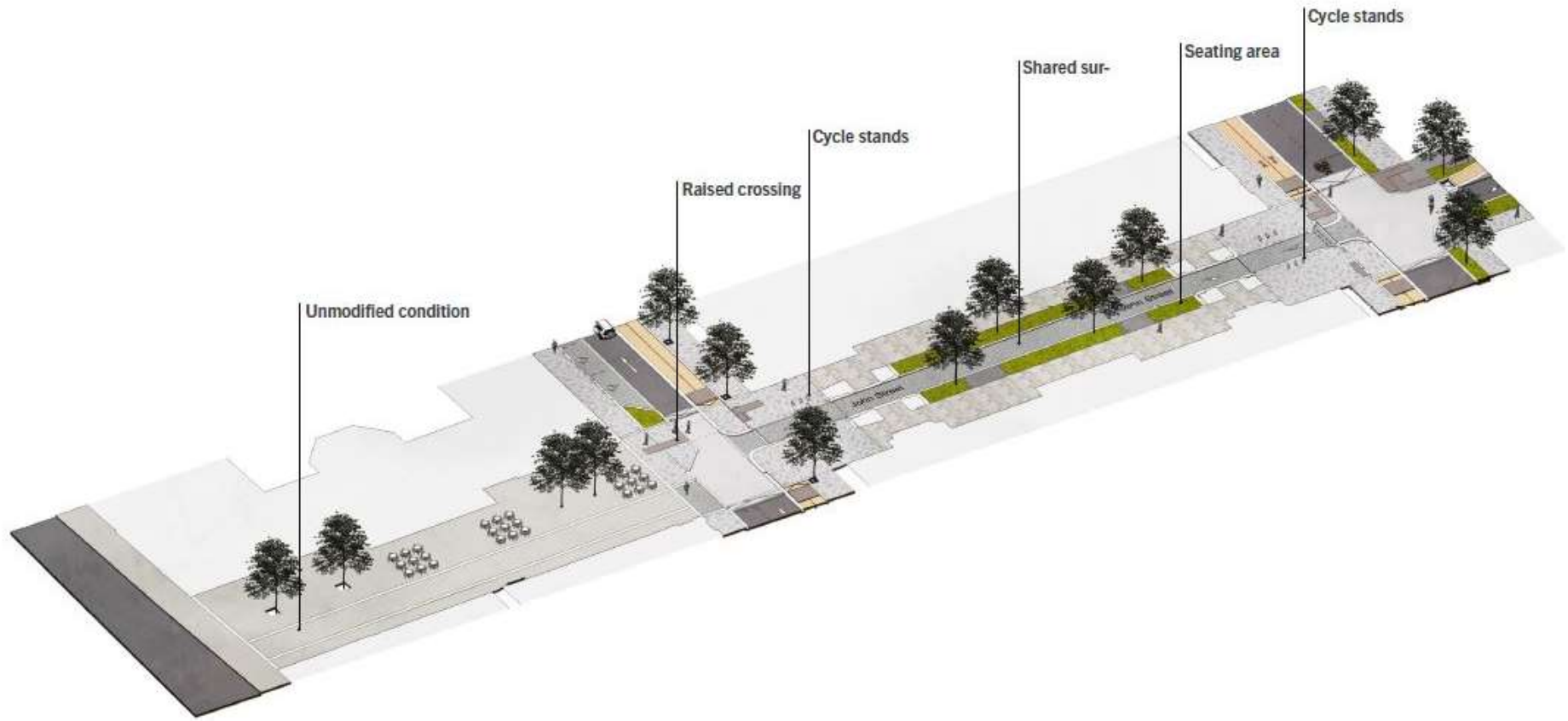
Appendix H: John Street South Proposed 3D View looking south



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Appendix I: John Street South Proposed Axonometric View

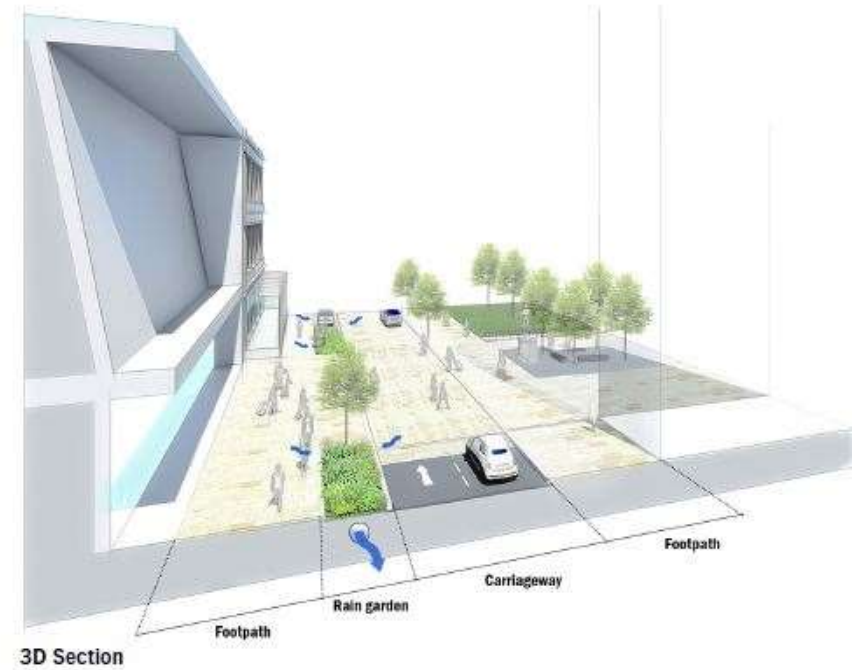


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Appendix J: West George Street Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View

Key design interventions:

- Dedicated two-way cycle lane
- Introduction of new planting areas and street trees
- New pocket seating areas
- Retained taxi rank
- Enhanced bus stop area
- Improved pedestrian crossings with tactile surface



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Appendix K: West George Street Proposed 3D View looking West

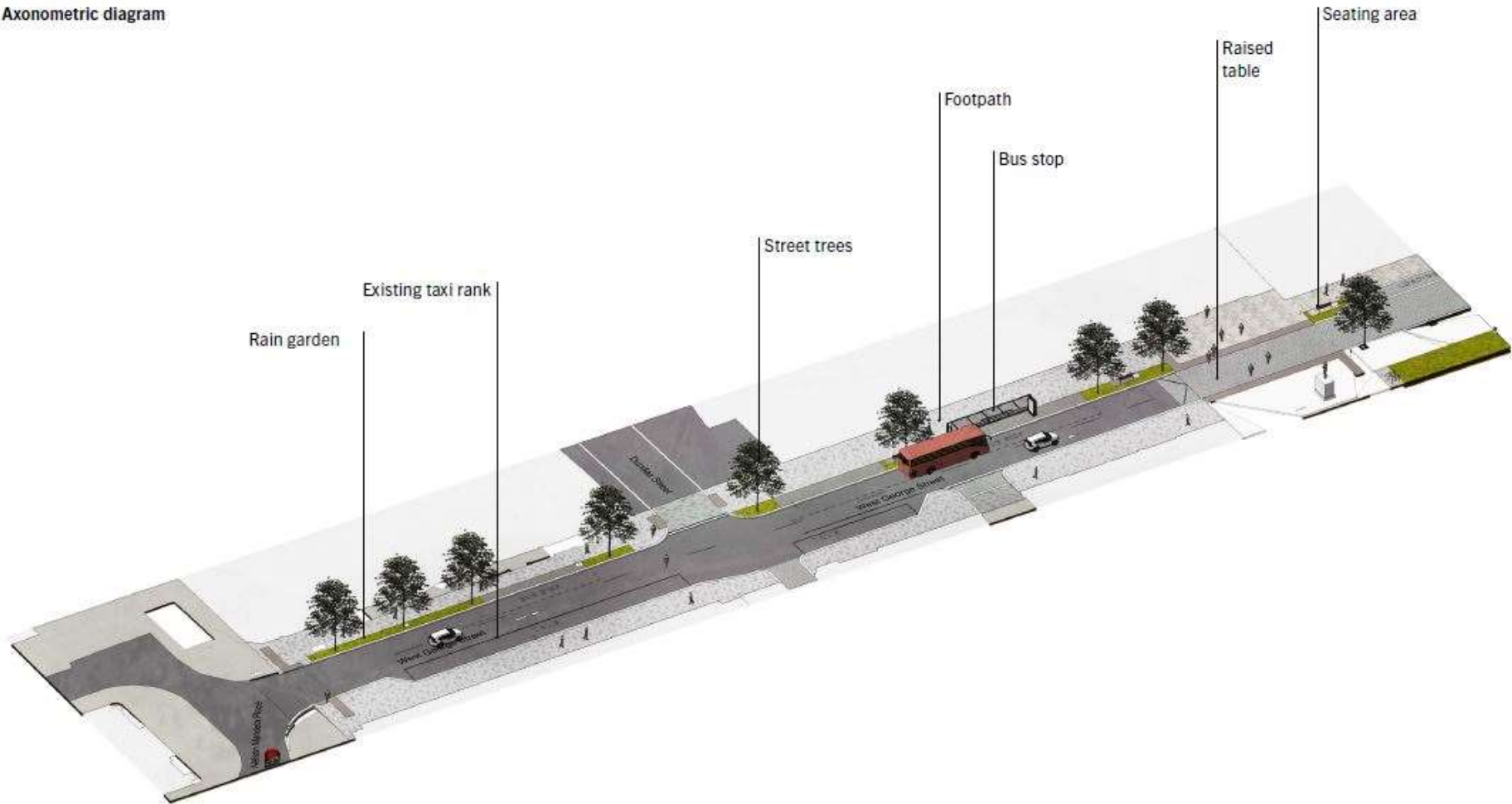


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Appendix L: W-George Street Proposed Axonometric View

Axonometric diagram



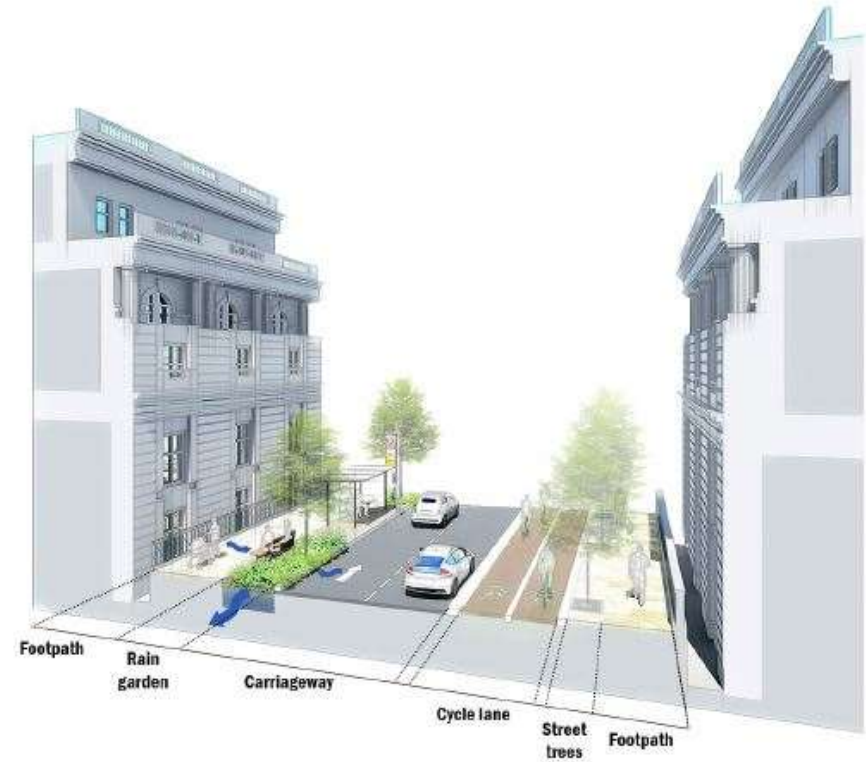
Appendix M: George Street Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View

Key design interventions:

- Dedicated two-way cycle lane
- Introduction of new planting areas and street trees
- New pocket seating areas
- Enhanced bus stop area
- Improved pedestrian crossings with tactile surface



Plan



3D Section

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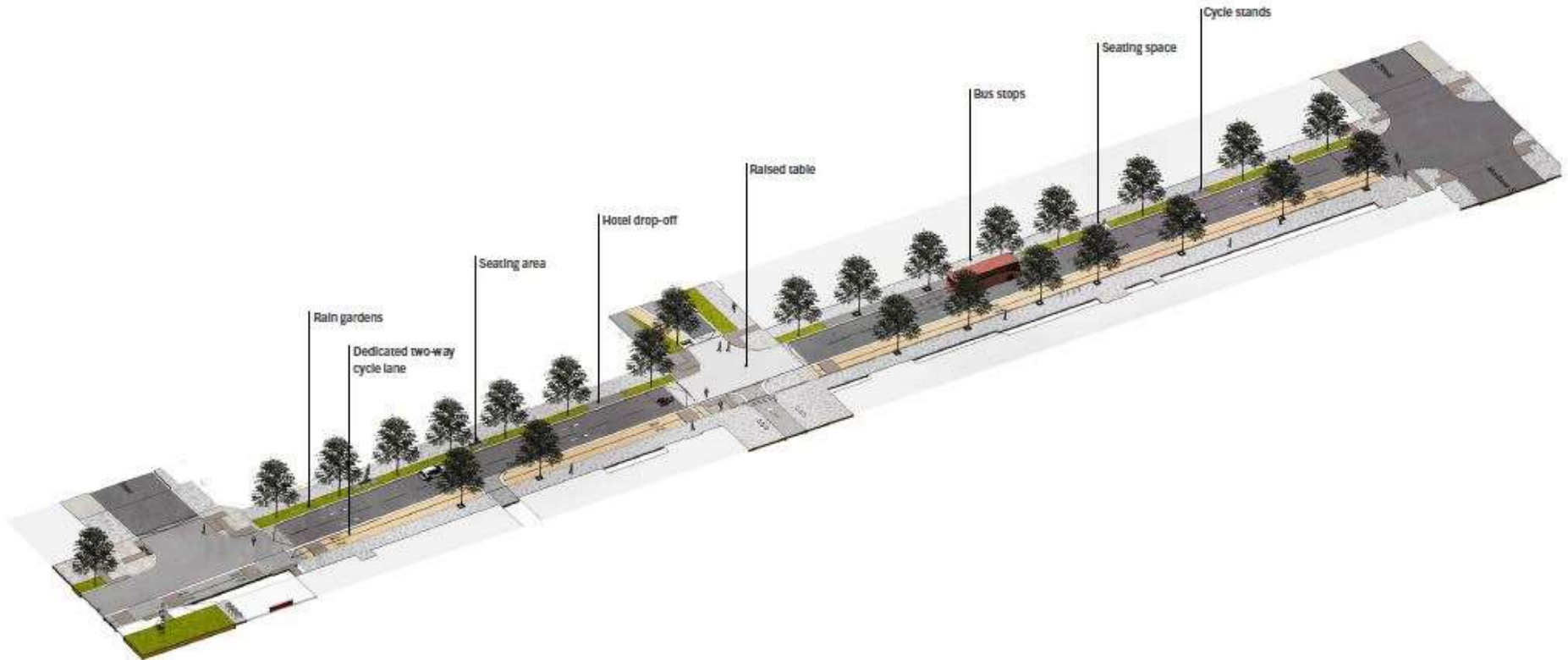
Appendix N: George Street Proposed 3D View looking East



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Appendix O: George Street Proposed Axonometric View

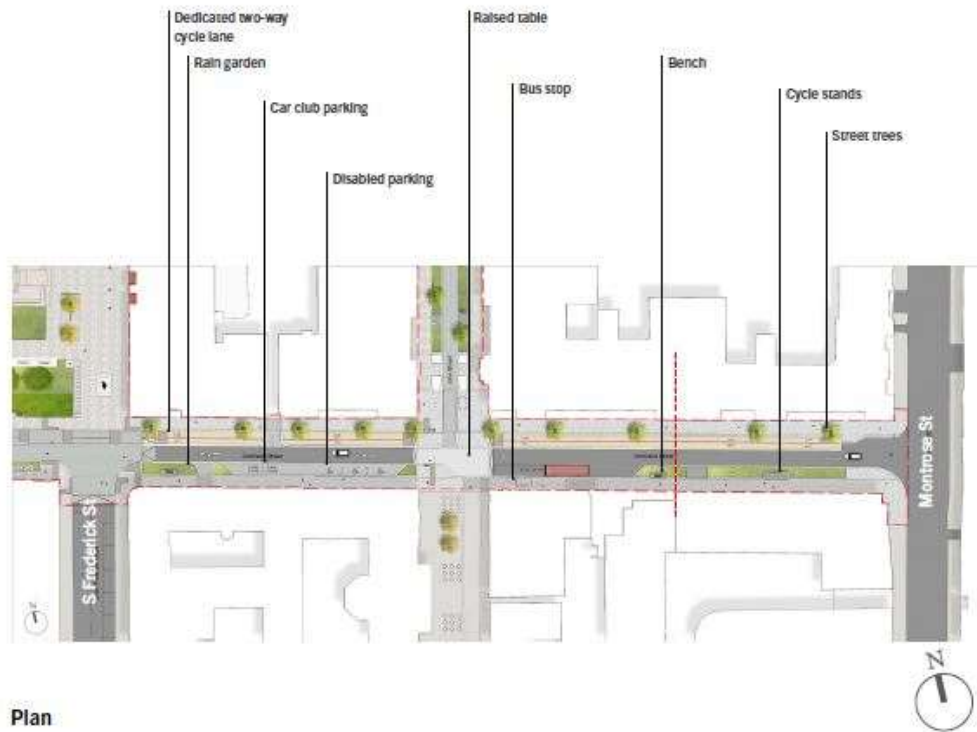


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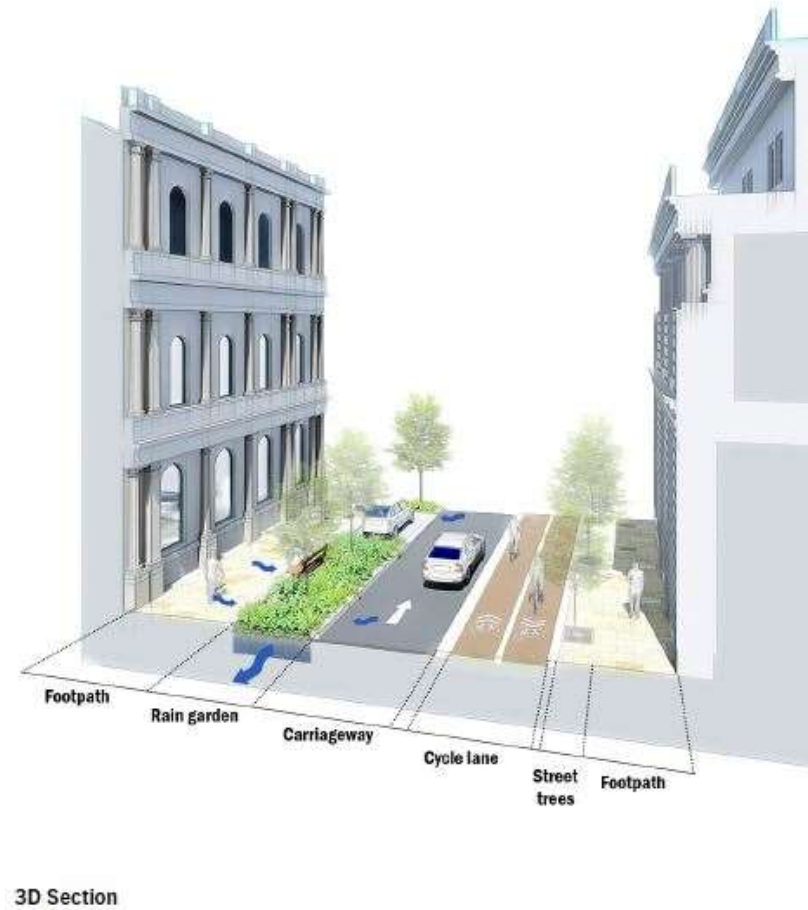
Appendix P: Cochrane Street Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View

Key design interventions:

- Dedicated two-way cycle lane
- Introduction of new planting areas and street trees
- New pocket seating areas
- Reduced carriageway
- Retained disabled parking and reserved car club parking area
- Improved pedestrian crossings with tactile surface



Plan



3D Section

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Appendix Q: Cochrane Street Proposed 3D View looking East

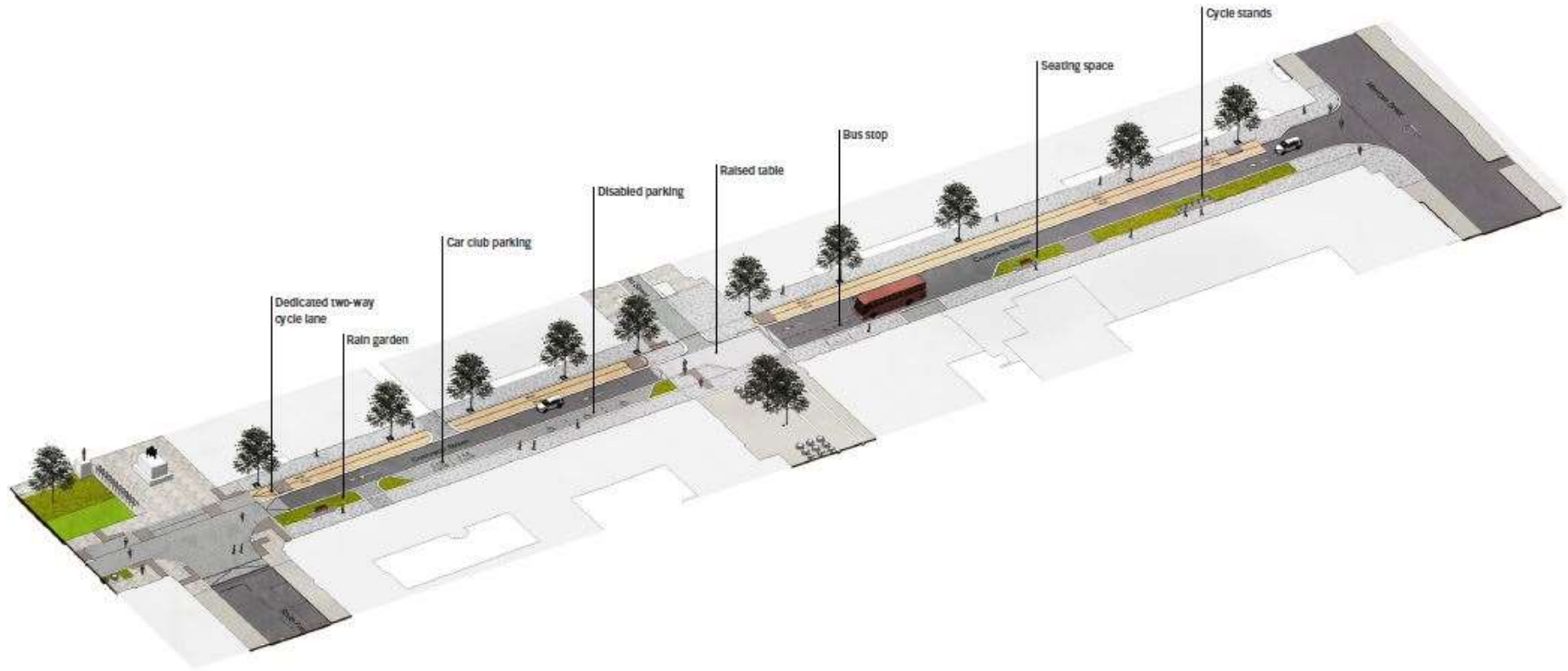


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Appendix R: Cochrane Street Proposed Axonometric View

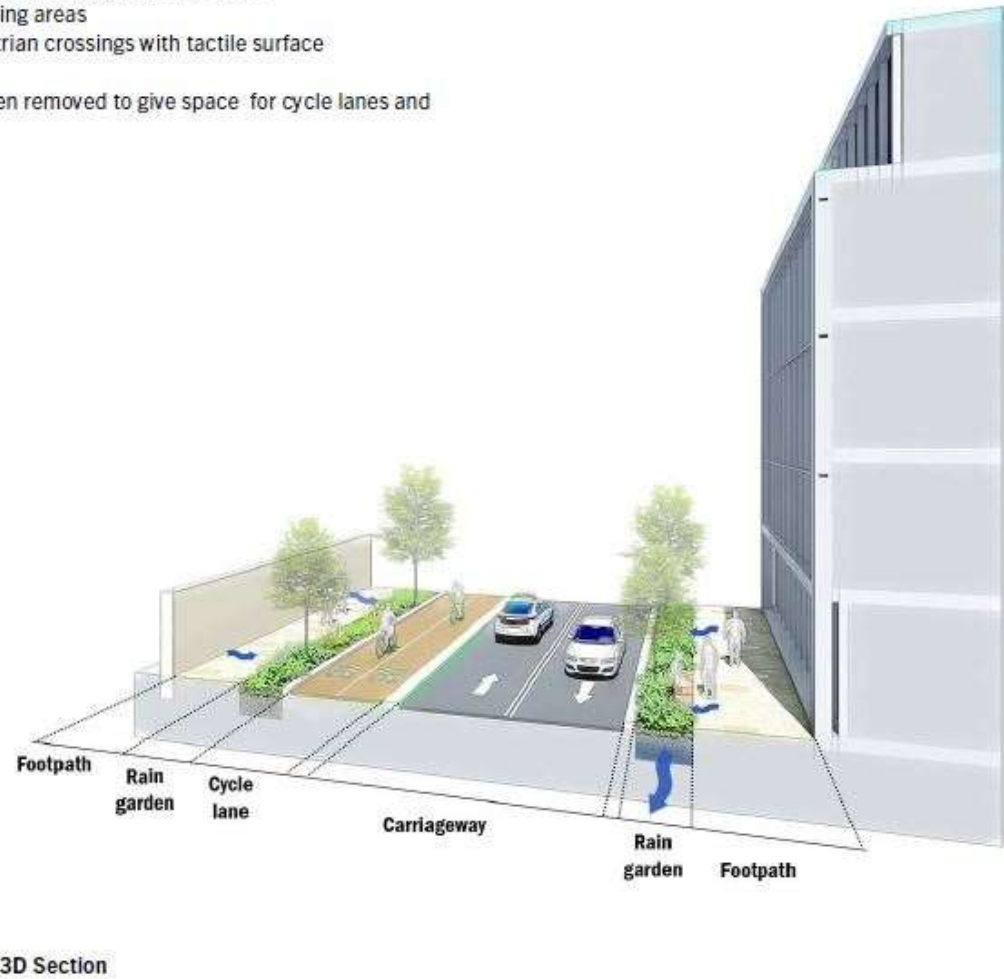


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Appendix S: North Hanover Street Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View



- Key design interventions:
- Dedicated Bi-directional cycle lane
 - Introduction of new planting areas and trees
 - New pocket seating areas
 - Improved pedestrian crossings with tactile surface
 - Cycle parking
 - Taxi rank has been removed to give space for cycle lanes and planting



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Appendix T: North Hanover Street 3D View looking North



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Appendix U: North Hanover Street Proposed Axonometric View

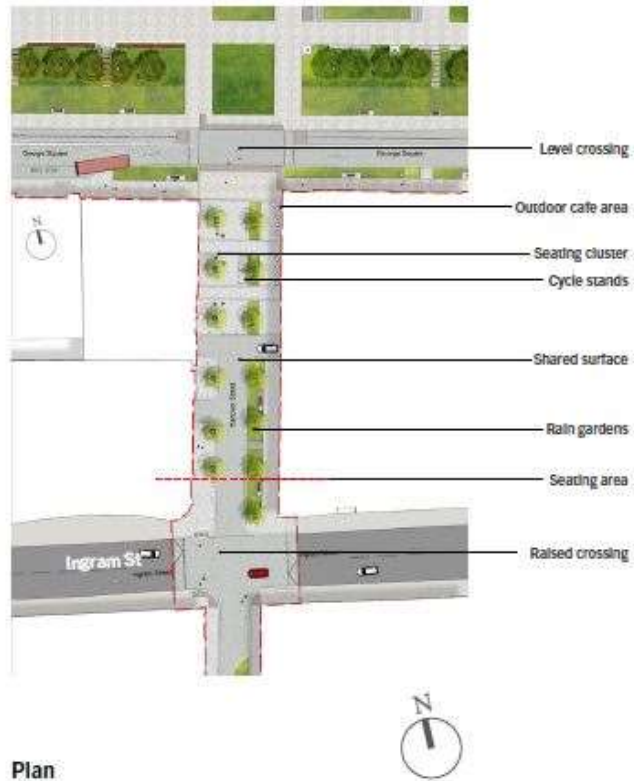


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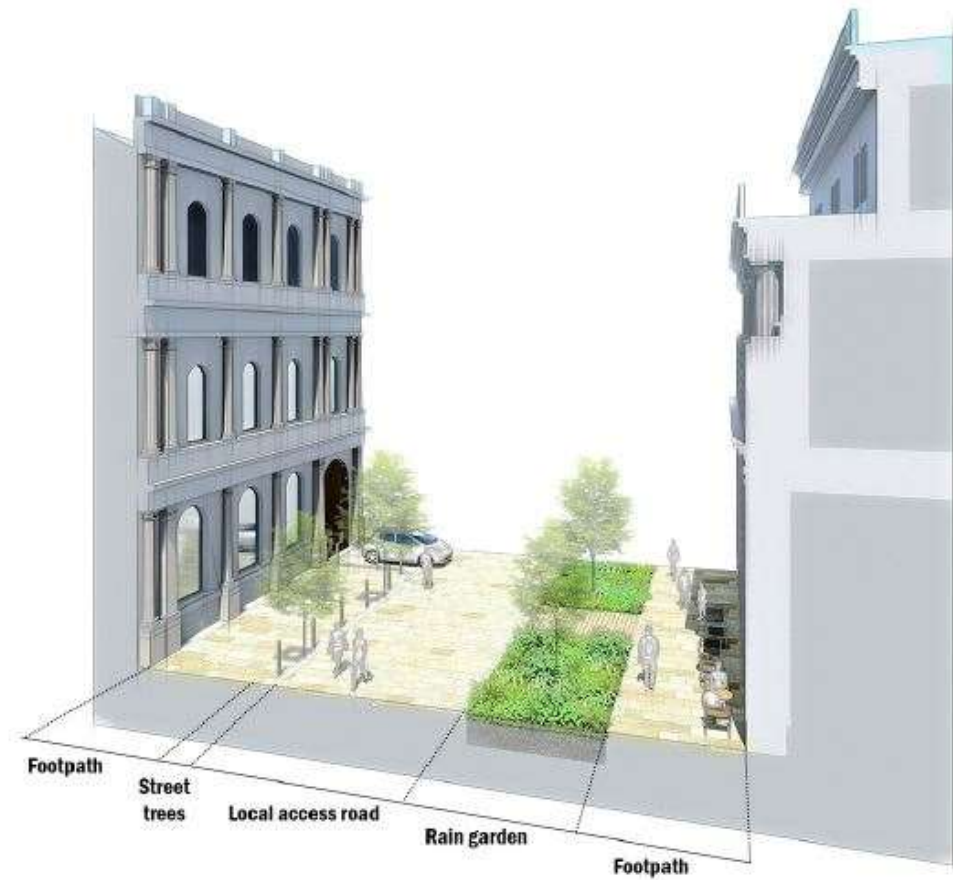
Appendix V: Hanover Street Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View

Key design interventions:

- Pedestrianised area
- Dedicated cafe breakout area
- New planting and trees alignment
- Cluster seating
- Cycle parking and scooter parking



Plan



3D Section

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Appendix W: Hanover Street 3D View looking North

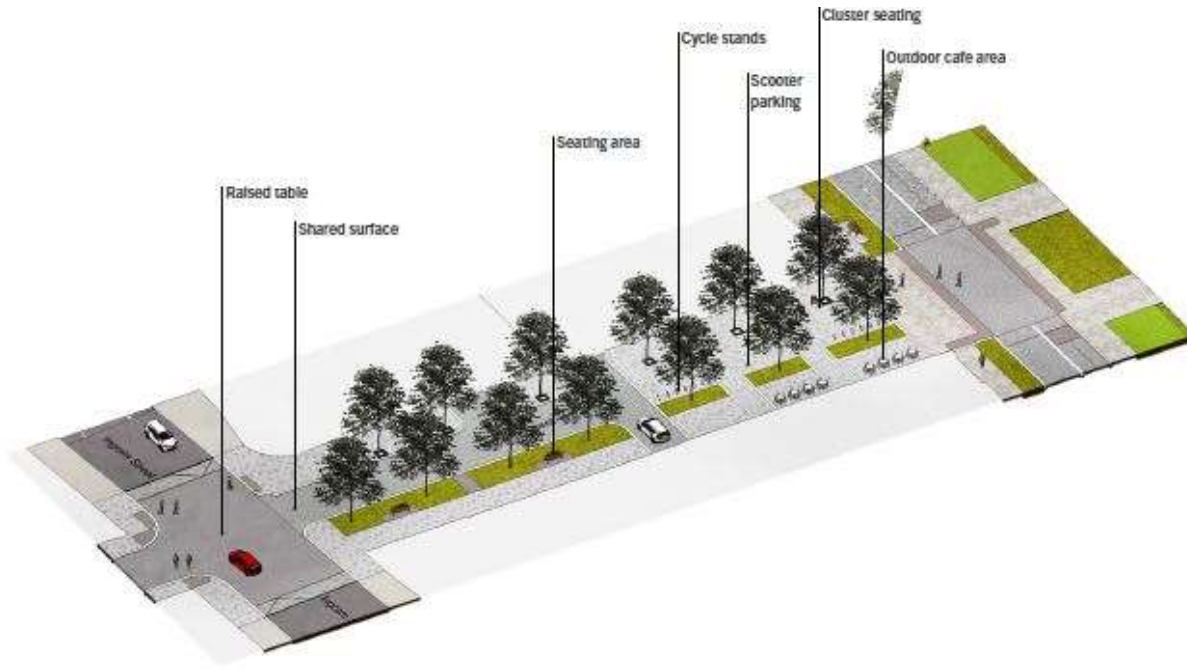


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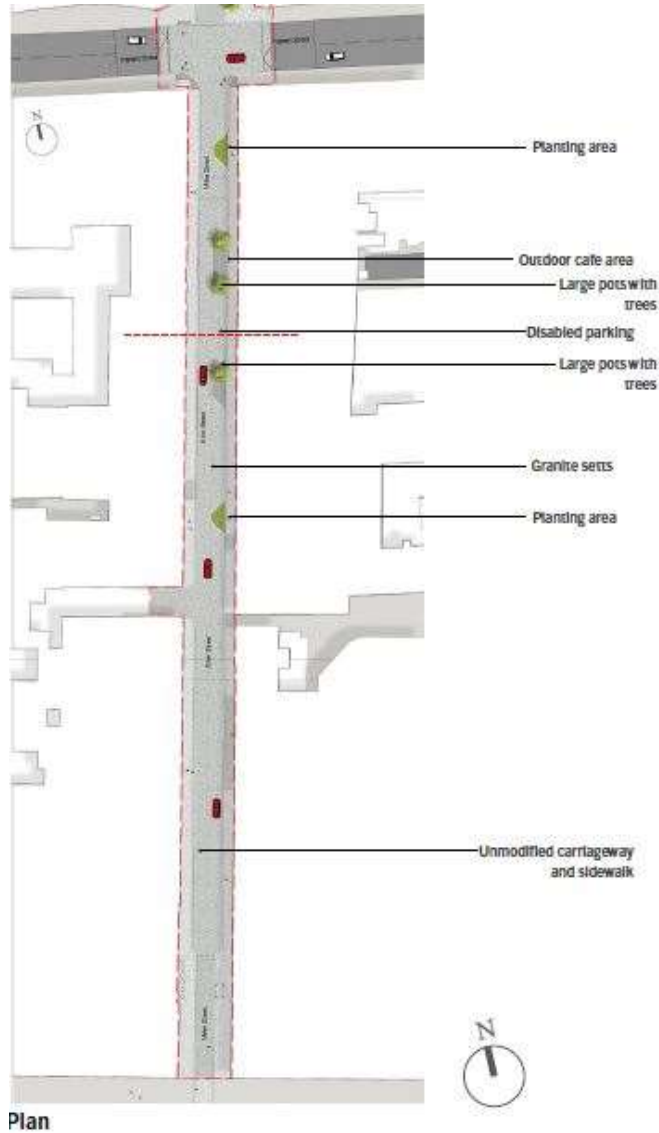
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Appendix X: Hanover Street Proposed Axonometric View



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Appendix Y: Miller Street Proposed Developed Plan and 3D View



Key design interventions:

- Retain existing footpaths
- Relocated disabled parking spaces from Hanover Street
- Introduction of pocket planting and potentially repurpose large scale pots from George Square, with planting and small trees.
- New dedicated cafe breakout area
- Enhanced carriageway surface



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Appendix Z: Miller Street 3D View looking North

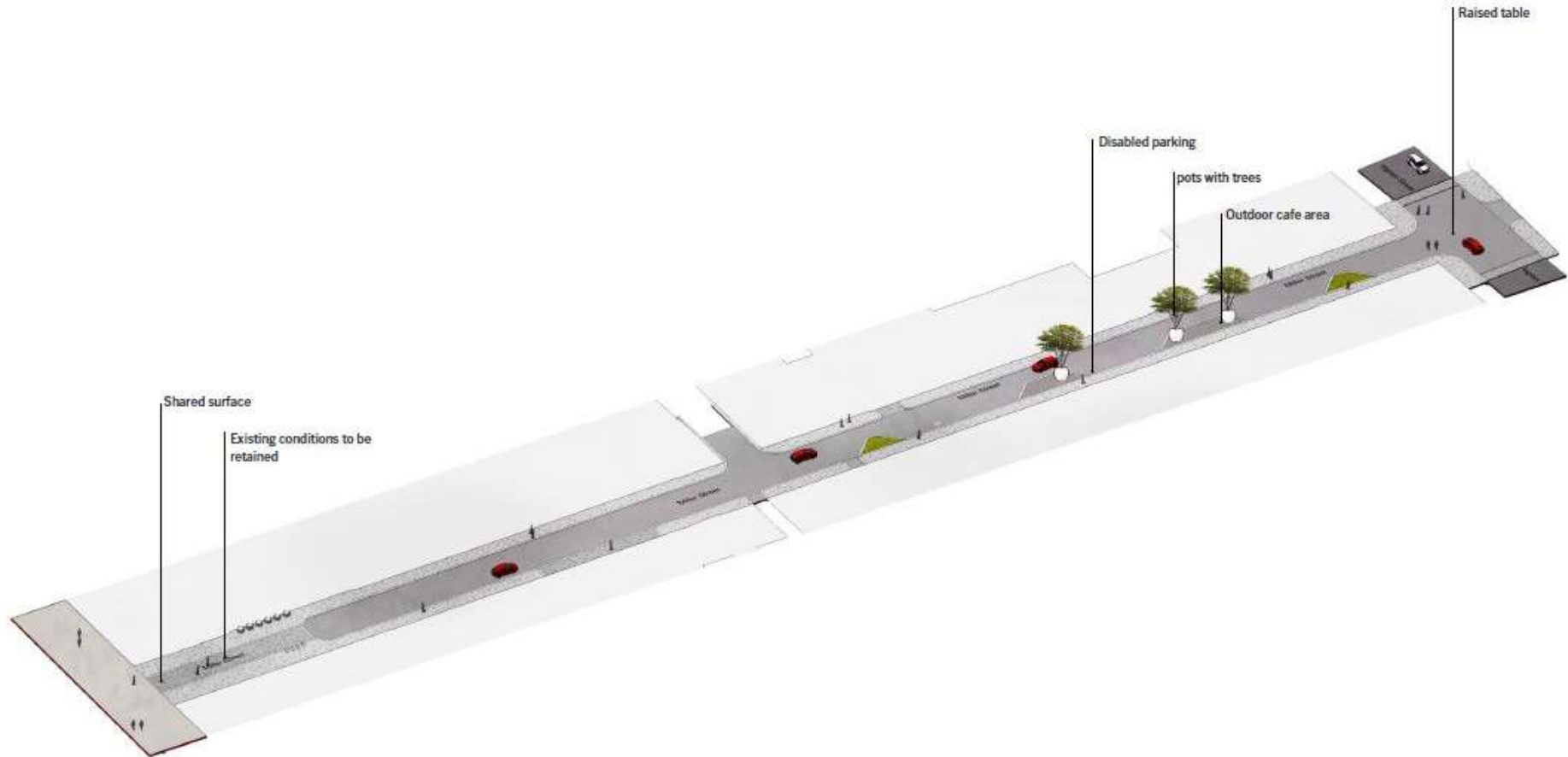


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Appendix ZA: Miller Street Proposed Axonometric View



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