



The Oakwood Centre, Headley Road, Woodley, Berkshire, RG5 4JZ
www.woodley.gov.uk

To: **Members of the Leisure Services Committee**

Councillors: D. Bragg (Chairman); N. Al-Sanjari; K. Gilder; A. Heap; R. Horskins;
V. Lewis; B. Rowland; D. Smith; A. Swaddle.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an Extraordinary Meeting of the Leisure Services Committee is to be held at the Oakwood Centre at 8:00pm on Thursday 7 October 2021, at which your attendance is requested.

Kevin Murray
Deputy Town Clerk

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive any declarations of interest from Members on agenda items.
3. **WOODLEY TOWN CENTRE TREE GARDEN**
To consider **Report LS 17/21.**

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TOWN CENTRE TREE GARDEN

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

Purpose of Report

To ask Members to consider the revised planting scheme for the tree garden in Woodley Town Centre and to allocate funding from the available Section 106 monies to deliver the project.

Background

The Leisure Services Committee approved a planting scheme and the allocation of £4,500 from the available Section 106 monies to complete the planting of the tree garden in the Town Centre in November 2020. The intention at that point was for the Town Council's grounds team to carry out the planting and to manage the delivery of the project.

Current situation

There is currently a significant capacity issue within the Council's grounds team, which means the delivery of the project cannot be delivered in house.

Officers have received a quote for the planting work from a local contractor, and also taken the opportunity to revisit the planting scheme originally agreed, to ensure its success, taking into account the challenges of the site in terms of soil depth, drainage, shade, water supply and access to underground services.

Proposal

A revised planting scheme has been provided by a landscape architect (**APPENDIX A**). There was no cost to the Town Council for this design work. This scheme takes into account the consultation previously carried out and provides for year round interest with evergreen shrubs and seasonal colour. The planting mix provides ground cover and height/movement through the inclusion of ornamental grasses, with bulbs for summer and autumn colour. The cost of plants in this scheme is estimated at £6,000 but may be scaled down slightly to facilitate maintenance/weeding etc.

Delivery

A quote has been received from the local contractor who would be able to deliver the project in Autumn 2021. Works would take approximately 5 days with a cost of £4,000 and would be carried out in October.

Water supply

The planting scheme will require a watering regime to keep it healthy through the summer months. Thames Water have provided a quote for a standpipe water supply at a cost of £2,540. Watering could be carried out by the grounds team or volunteers.

Maintenance

The planting scheme is designed to require minimal maintenance which would be delivered by the Council's grounds team as part of the regular work programme. Volunteers could also be involved in the routine maintenance.

Plants & materials	£6,000
Labour	£4,000
Mains water supply	£2,540
Total	£12,540

Funding

The Full Council meeting on 21 July 2020 (Minute No. 18) resolved to allocate funding to the project from Section 106 monies received, following consultation with residents, WTCMI and traders. The Council currently has £28,000 Section 106 funding available which can only be used for capital projects. It is proposed that Members allocate £15,000 from the available Section 106 monies to deliver the planting scheme and water supply. Any allocated monies left over will remain available for future phases of the project such as the provision of seating and changes to the lighting.

Impact assessments/considerations

Equality

There are potential equality impacts in respect of any seating that may be considered as a future phase of the project. Seating should be inclusive and selected following consultation with appropriate local groups.

The planting scheme provides for some sensory elements in terms of movement, height and colour.

Opportunities for community involvement can be explored in terms of on-going maintenance of the garden.

Environment

The planting scheme will provide habitat for insects and pollinators through the selection of appropriate plants. Although the project includes provision of a water supply in order for the planting to thrive, the plant selection should mean the requirement is as minimal as possible. This water use can be offset by rainwater harvesting from Council buildings.

Resources

The Full Council meeting on 21 July 2020 (Minute No. 18) resolved to allocate funding to the project from Section 106 monies received, following consultation with residents, WTCMI and traders. The Council currently has £28,000 Section 106 funding available.

Recommendations

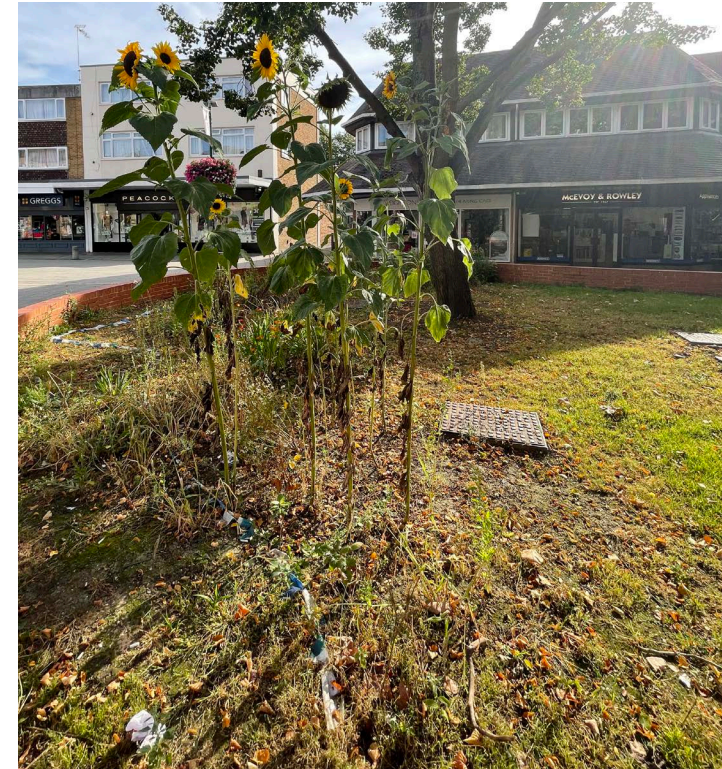
- ◆ **That Members note the contents of the report.**
- ◆ **That Members approve the planting scheme presented in the report along with the allocation of £15,000 funding from the available Section 106 monies, and approve Officers to engage the contractor to deliver the planting project and water supply as detailed in the report.**



WOODLEY TOWN CENTRE | HIGH STREET PLANTING PROJECT

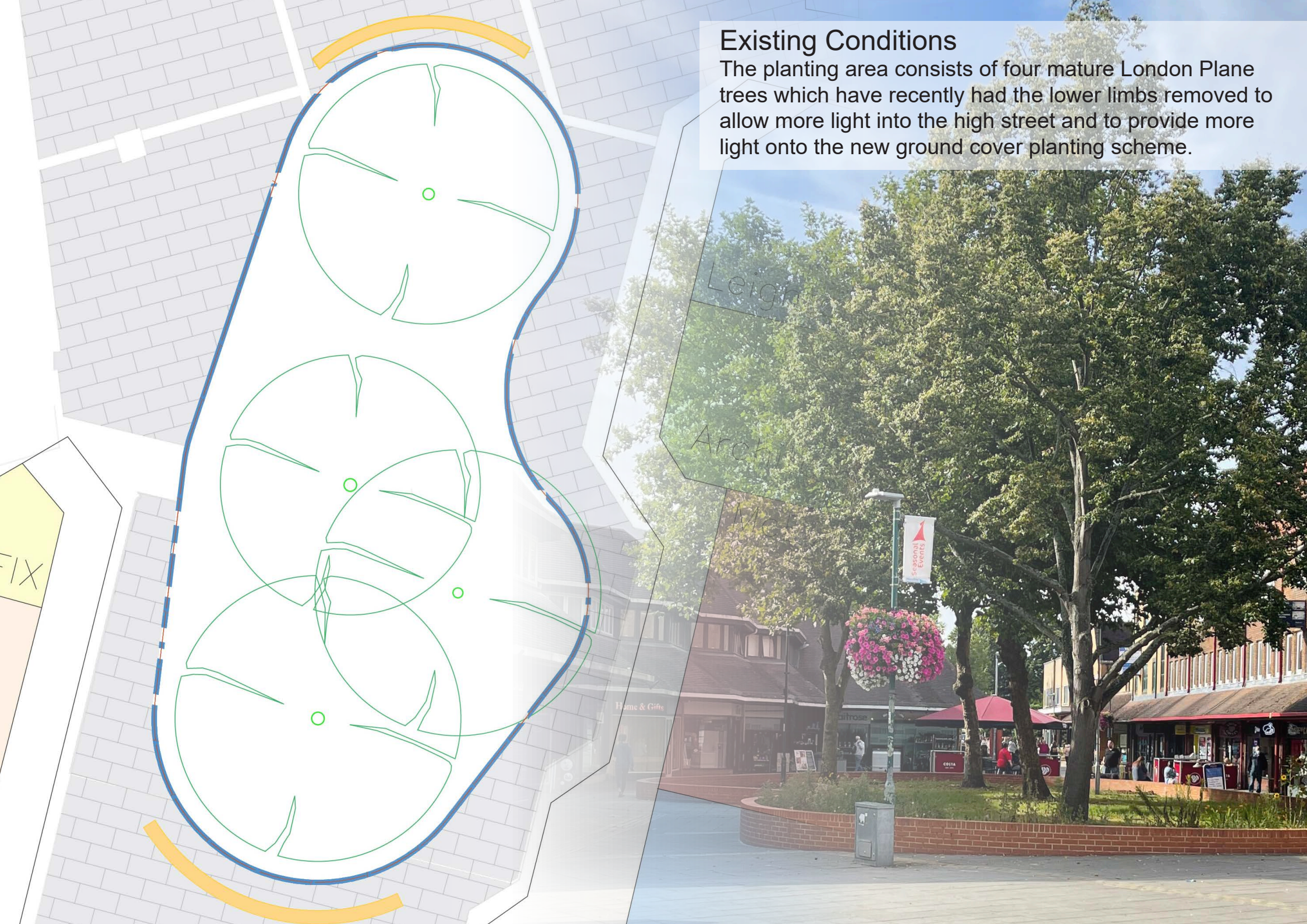
September 2021 v1

Existing Conditions



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The planting area consists of four mature London Plane trees which have recently had the lower limbs removed to allow more light into the high street and to provide more light onto the new ground cover planting scheme.



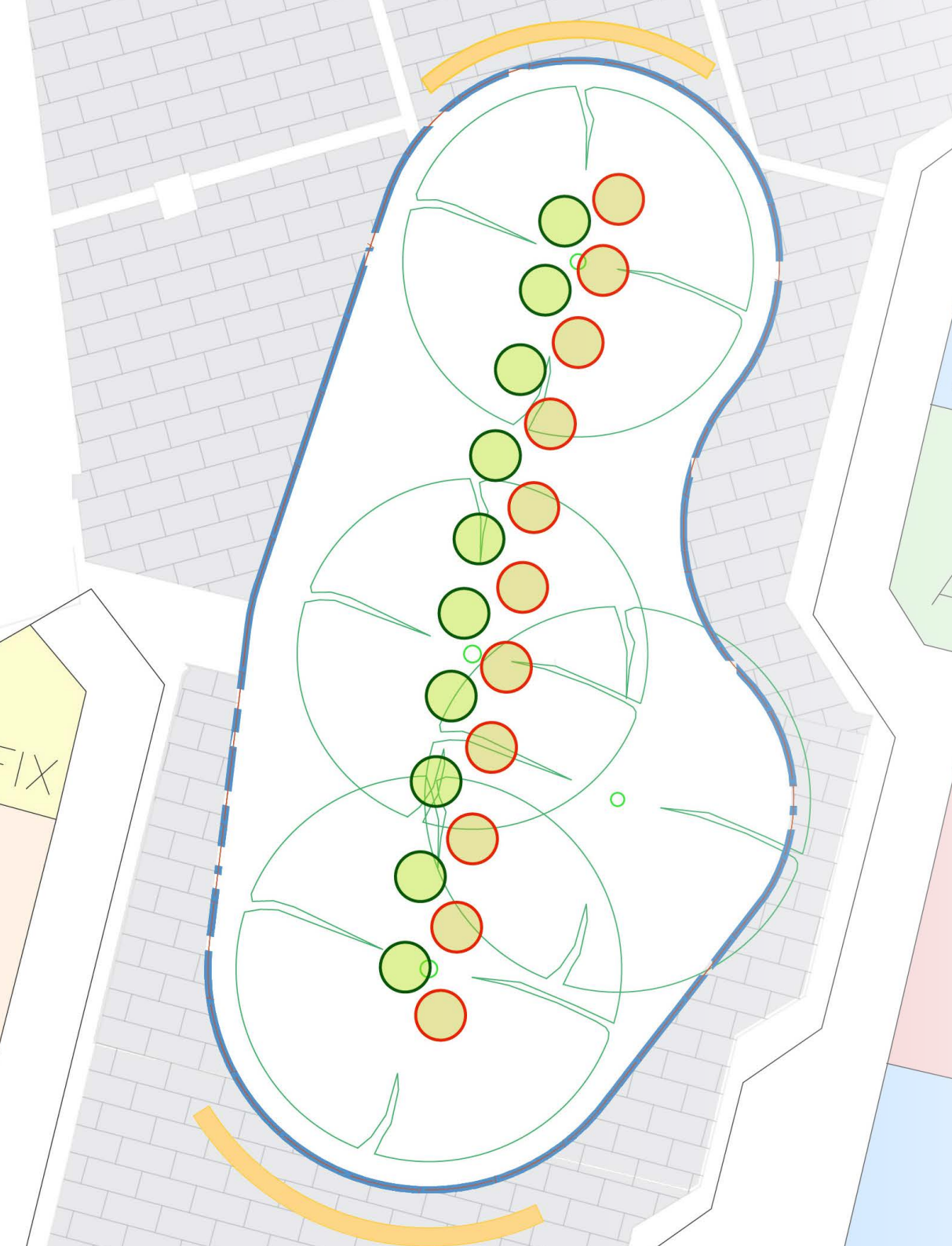
Planting Proposal - Structural Groundcover

A central spine of Cornus 'Dogwood' planting will reinforce the directional nature of the high street providing a striking and colourful visuals for passers-by.

During the summer months, the Dogwood will provide a leafy full coverage.



In the autumn and winter months, the striking effects will be revealed as the neon green stems of one variety intertwines with the bright red stems of the 'mid winter fire' variety.

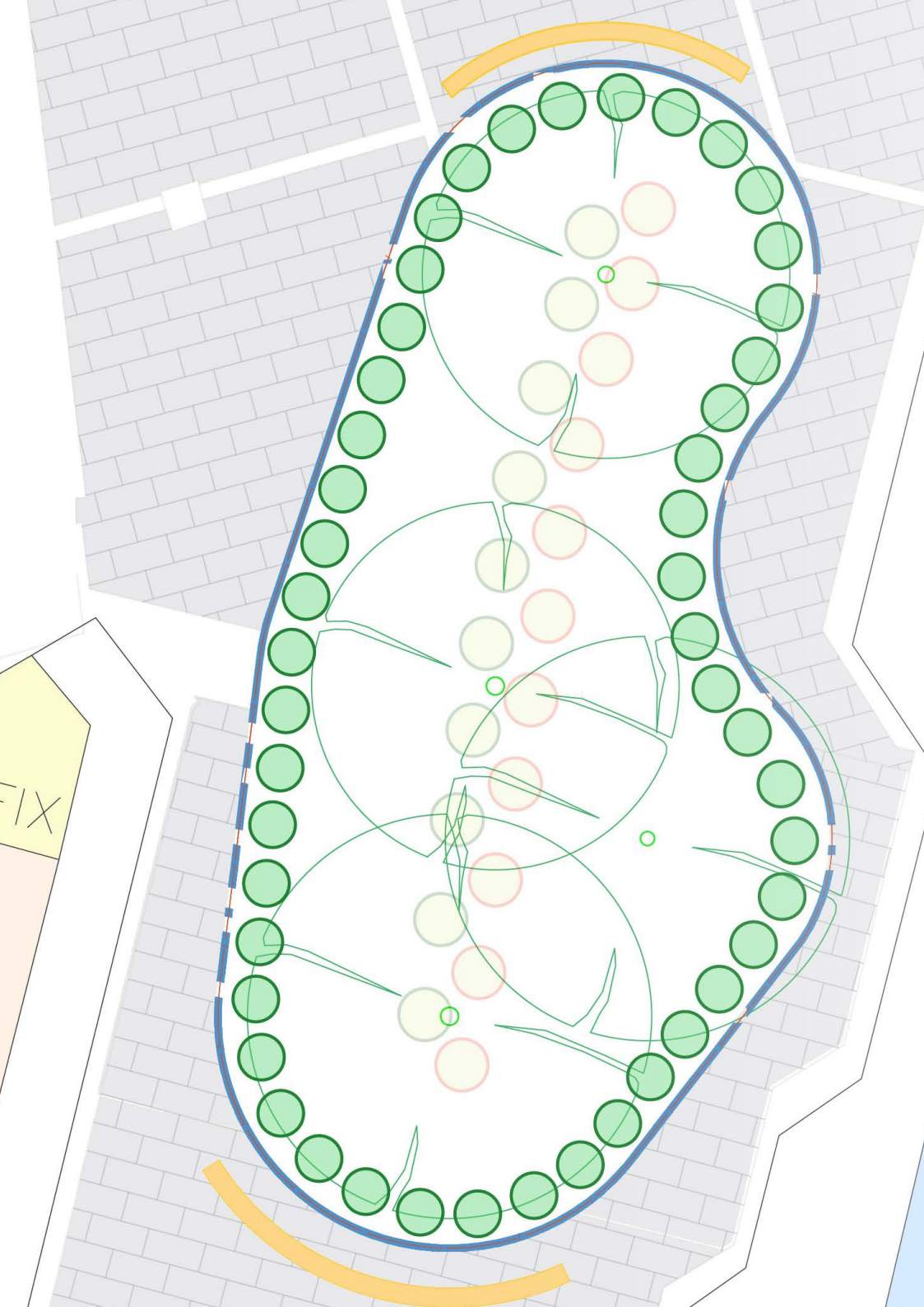
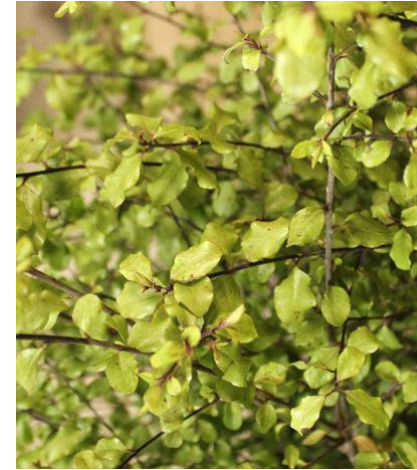


Planting Proposal - Structural Groundcover

A structure band of Pittosporum will define the planting bed, providing evergreen coverage.

The black stems and interesting leaf of the Pittosporum, will accentuate a modern high-street vibe.

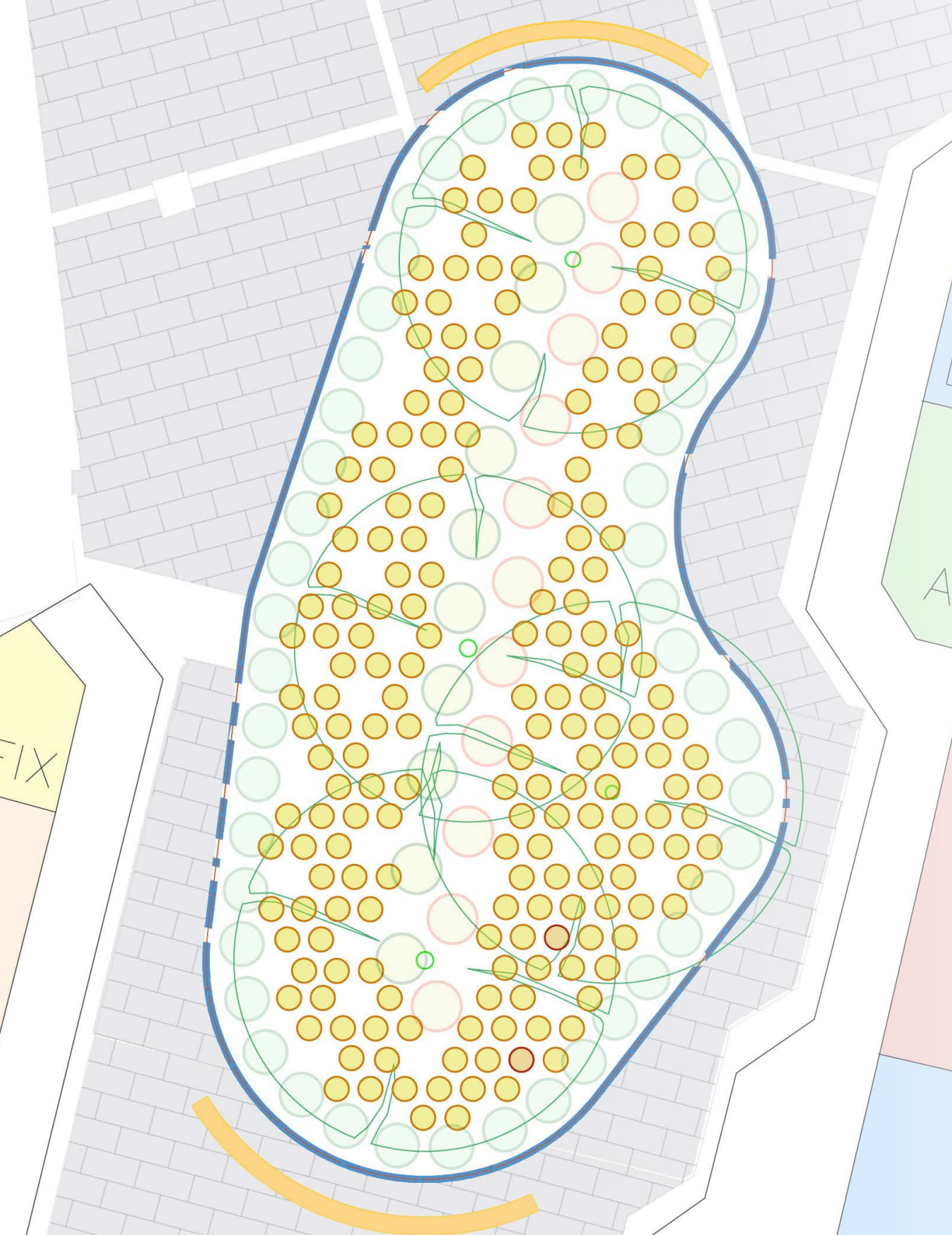
Pittosporum is fast growing and can be cut annually to match the height of the wall and further reinforce the perimeter band.



Planting Proposal - Ornamental Grasses

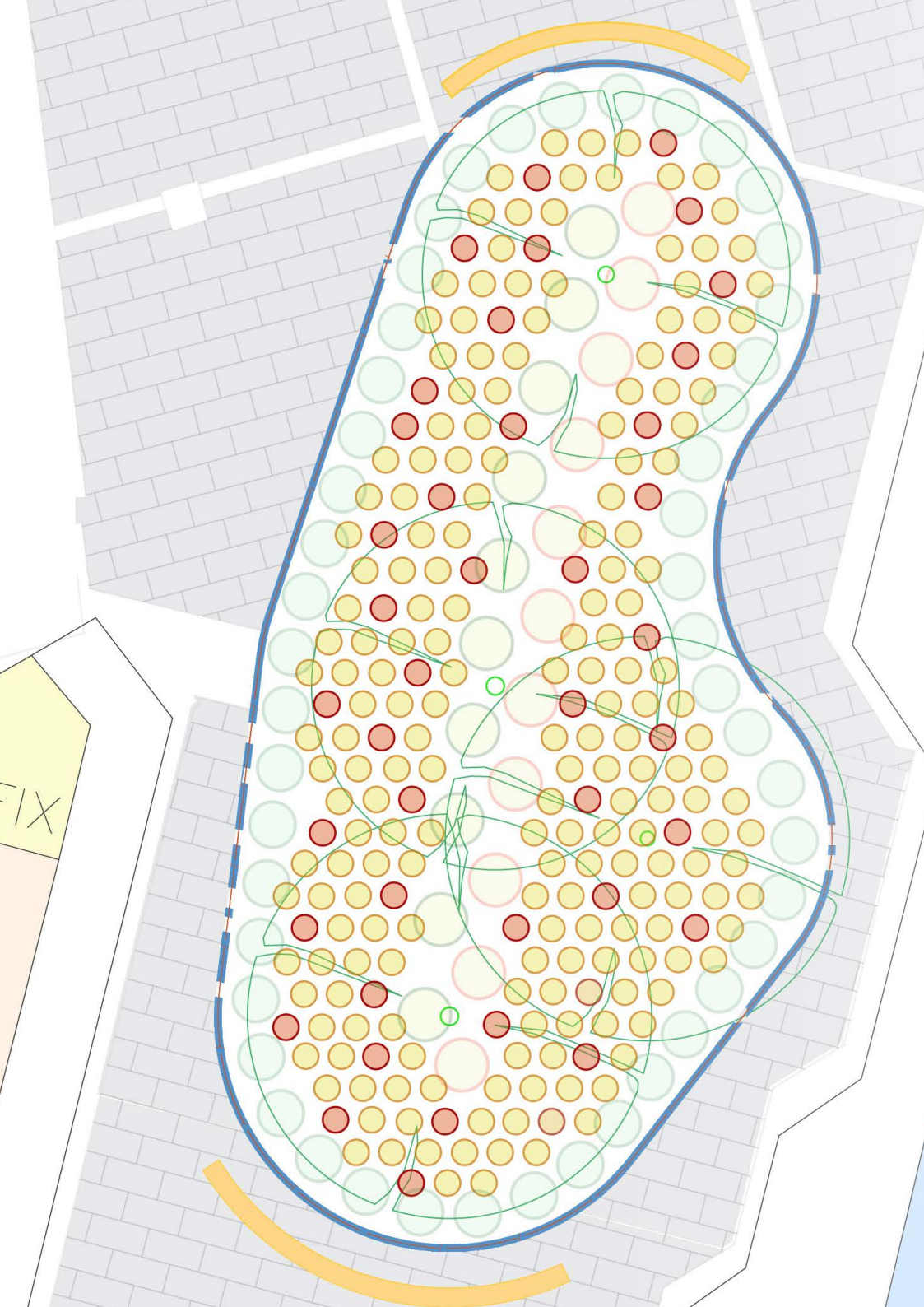
A fill of 'Mexican feather grass' will give maximum coverage and planted in mass will give a striking sea of fluffy grass. The light soft grass will catch the wind through the high street, a fitting tribute to the directional flow of passers by.

Feather grass while ornamental in look, is hardy and robust needing only an annual cut after the last frost.



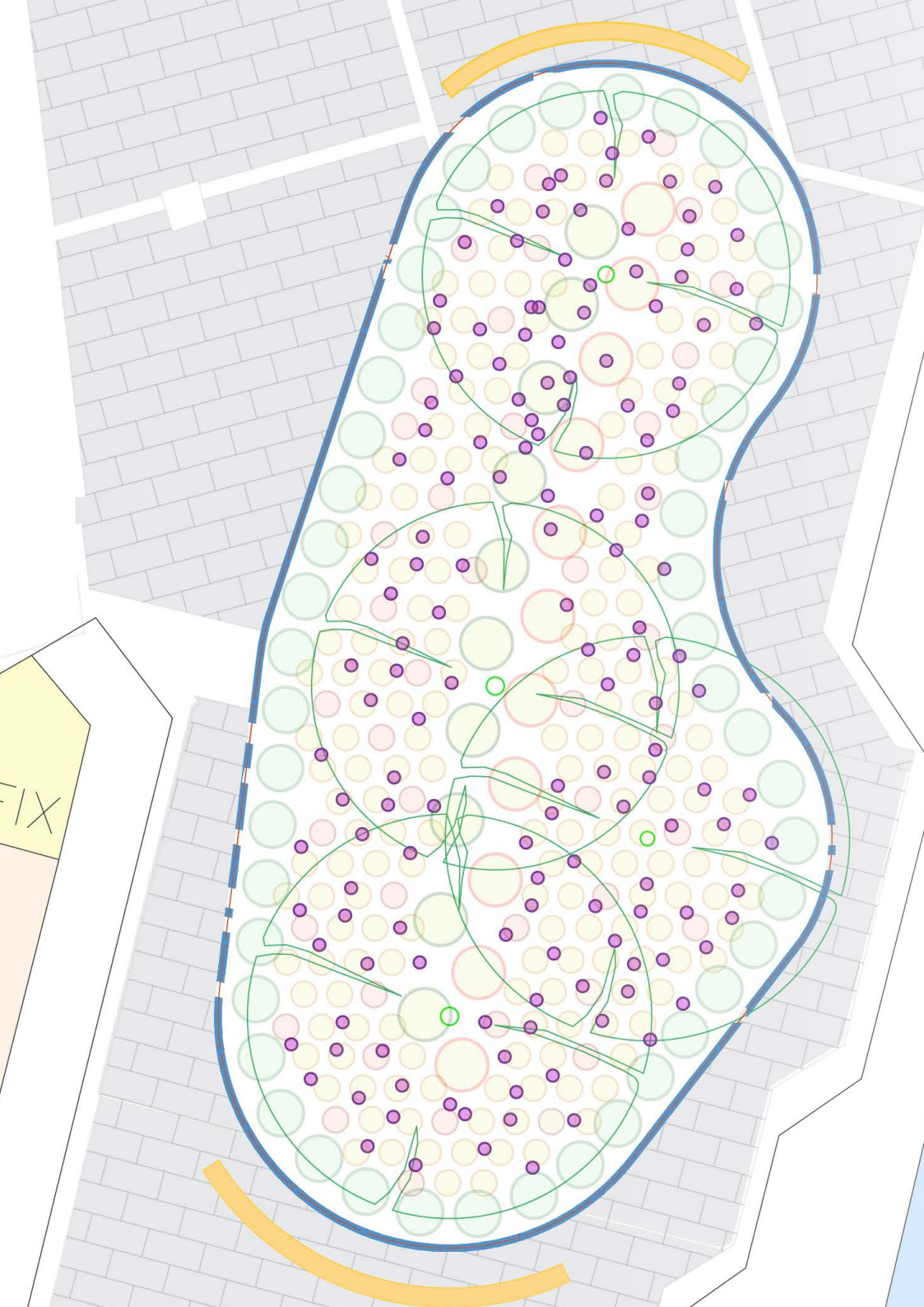
Planting Proposal - Ornamental Grasses

An infill of pennisetum rubrum grasses will give diversity and interest to the grass plane and throughout summer into autumn will provide a seasonal colour change.



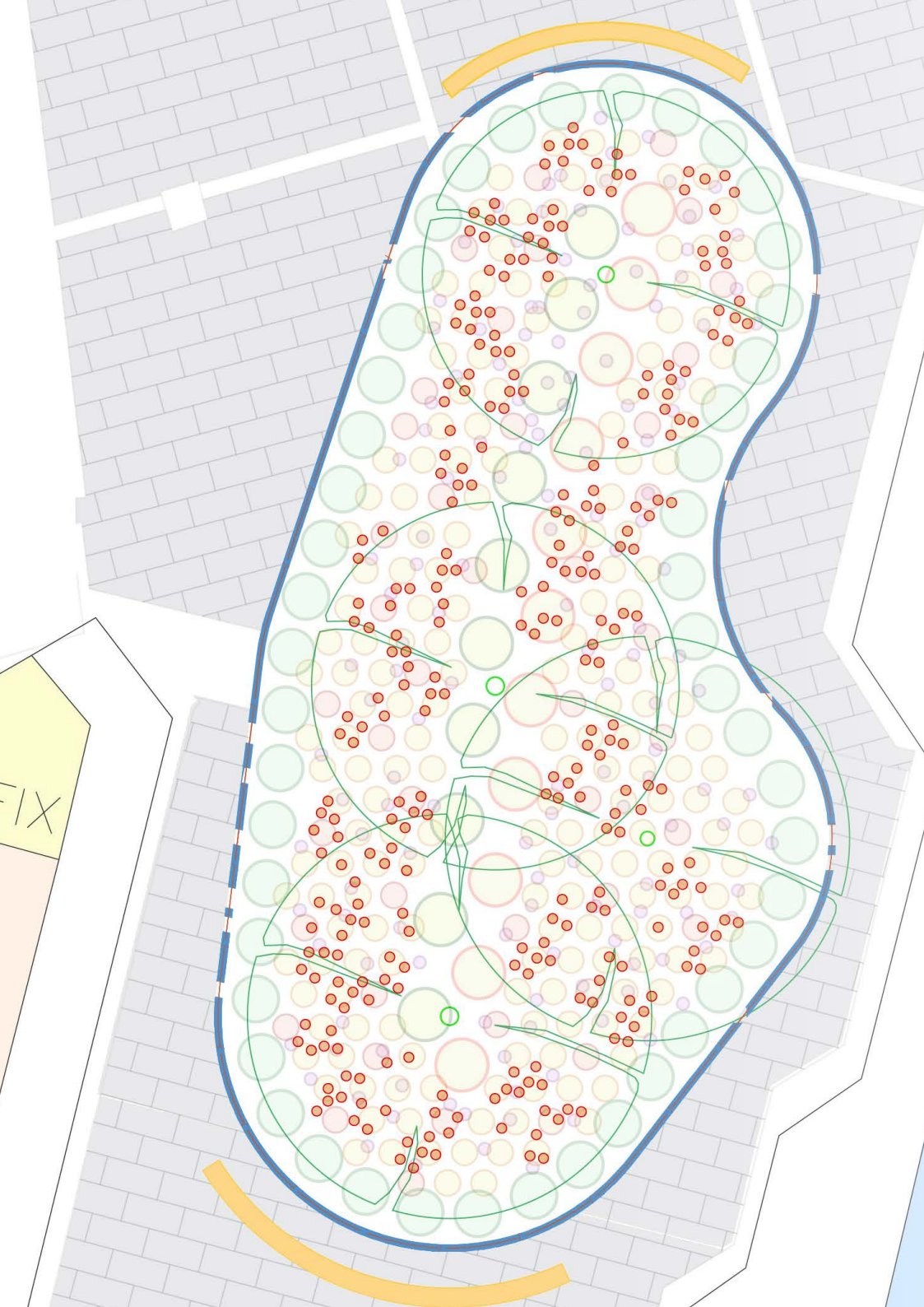
Planting Proposal - Bulbs

To mark the arrival of summer, a barrage of alliums will emerge from the grasses. The large purple orbs will appear floating on the wavy grasses and will be a true spectacle for the high street.



Planting Proposal - Bulbs

Autumn will be marked with the arrival of a sea of red Crocosmia. As the leaves on the mature plane trees thin, the planting bed below will see its final splash of colour for the year.



Planting Proposal - Maintenance

This simple planting palette of grasses, ground cover plants and bulbs while simple, gives all year round interest. The selection of plans allows for easier annual maintenance ensuring old foliage is cut back to make way for the new seasons growth.

