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In 2015, Karakusevic Carson architects were appointed by the LLDC alongside a range of key landowners, to lead a multi-disciplinary team to develop masterplan and public realm proposals for this site in Bromley-by-Bow.

The proposed designs take the form of a masterplan aimed at supporting LLDC planning policy relating to this area. The proposals give detailed Supplementary Planning Guidance to support LLDC policies and assist the planning process for forthcoming applications around a shared strategic vision and objectives for the future of the site.

East architecture, landscape urban design worked within this team to support the urban design and public realm proposals, and have produced this public realm guidance, aimed at supporting the SPG process alongside the masterplan proposals.

The public realm and masterplan proposals have been tested and reviewed through a series of LLDC Quality Review Panel presentations and follow a rigorous process of design refinement and dialogue with the LLDC planning department.

In developing proposals for the site, the client and design team for Bromley-by-Bow have engaged closely with TfL to understand and co-ordinate with their emerging proposals for improvements to the A12.
0.1 Using the guide

Although this document is presented in a stand alone format, it should be read in conjunction with all other SPG documentation for the site. Key documents that should be viewed in conjunction with this guidance are as follows:

- The Bromley by Bow Supplementary Planning Document
- Appendix 1: The Bromley by Bow Landowner Masterplan
- The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

As planning applications come forward, it is intended for this document to be used to assist detailed conversations about wider vision for the area, strategic objectives, and also materials, spaces, and uses. It enables wider objectives to be kept in view, even if applications come forward at different times, for different areas.

Each phase is intended to work individually as well as part of the whole project in terms of local landscape, amenity and play facilities for children of all ages. The design development of all areas will need to address the requirements set out in the associated Environmental Impact Assessment guidance.

Whilst there are quite specific proposals for each part of the public realm in terms of material, spatial definition and geometry, it should be understood that this is illustrative guidance showing how the stated objectives and design principles could be achieved.

The guidance allows public realm proposals to be developed in subsequent design stages, with the provison that built outcomes deliver strategic objectives at all scales. In this way, the wider, longer term future of the area can become well-integrated, and feel properly engaged with this part of London.
0.2 Document structure

The document introduces the place, and then sets the scene for the broader vision and objectives for not just delivering change within the site itself, but also making real connections at all sides, north, south, east and west. The public realm is intended to be distinctive and well integrated to some of the defining characteristics of the existing context, such as the river edges, the historic qualities at Three Mills, the station and streets at Bromley-by-Bow, and also the neighbourhood centre that engages with the emerging development at Strand East.

The site itself has an illustrative overview plan, and a site plan. These drawings are used to support an area by area study for each key section of the proposals. These are structured around key east west routes, as well as the A12 edge, and the river park edge.

Each of these areas are presented using applicable descriptions for materials, with relevant sections, visualisations, plans, and precedent example images.
1. Site introduction

1.1 Wider context

The site at Bromley-by-Bow is located within the broader historic environment of the Lea Valley; a place of ecological and social diversity, shaped by a linear network of rivers, canals, road and rail infrastructure, and communities.

A recent study for the Leaway, ‘Lea River Park Primer’, was commissioned by the LLDC and carried out by 5th studio, with JCLA and ABA. The document highlights the nature and connectivity of the territory and context of Bromley-by-Bow, and presents the opportunity for change within the terms of a well meshed urban infrastructure.
1.2 Portrait of the place

This amazing site has for many years seemed invisible. Screened by trees at the historic waterways of the river at the western edges, severed by the snaking and raised infrastructure of the A12 to the west, and blocked in by the railway to the south.

The site has therefore suffered for many years in terms of poor accessibility and poor quality of public realm. For many, the primary experience of the site has been driving into Tesco's car park.

But the site sits at the heart of the Lea Valley, close to historic environments, long standing communities, and emerging neighbourhood developments. By opening this site up to new uses and visitors, benefits will be achieved not only at the site, but across the wider area, able to be revitalised through new connections and co-existing uses.

Furthermore, with careful planning, it is possible to make use of the positive and distinctive constraints of the site, towards encompassing them as assets. The proximity to the river offers play and amenity uses, and an extraordinary visual spectacle. The railway presents the kind of constraint that can benefit compatible uses in terms of workspaces and yards. And even the A12 itself offers a kind of spatial curving generosity that can be designed alongside, and engaged with.
1. Aerial view on the site from the Southwestern corner

2. Existing Tesco parking lot looking towards the canalside with existing soft landscape.
3. View on A12 from the Southwestern corner of the development site

4. View from the existing bridge towards the historic Three Mills
2. Strategy and overview

2.1 Stitching into the city

The masterplan, and the public realm, have been designed around a vision to deliver Bromley-by-Bow as an integral extended part of the wider city fabric, linking in with Bromley-by-Bow station and communities to the west, and Strand East and Three Mills to the east.

The whole masterplan for new development has been designed around a primary urban strategy using new streets to provide east west routes through the site.

The distribution of uses, massing and arrangement of buildings, and the arrangement of routes and public spaces establish a new neighbourhood centre that clusters a range of social uses and spaces towards the north east with Strand East. This arrangement avoids a ‘self-centred’ and inward outcome, and instead enables the site to encompass and engage the river, green spaces and new developments at Strand East.
2.2 New routes

New routes are designed to provide good streets, and to connect with surrounding places as follows:

Northern route:

This route will connect across the A12 with an improved pedestrian crossing leading through to Bromley-by-Bow. The route then provides bus, pedestrian and cycle access to the northern section of the river edge park spaces, and then over a new bridge that provides access to Strand East.

The route serves a cycle route and localised vehicular and servicing access.

Central route:

This new route brings a substantially improved signalled junction at the A12, with new pedestrian and cycle crossings, into the new development. The east west route runs through the site, past commercial, retail and school frontages, up to the river edge and park spaces. It has a feel of a London high street - it is a bus route and it is walkable 24 hours a day. It continues through into the historic street spaces within Three Mills, which contain clusters of creative and community uses.

Southern route:

This new route is provided by enhancing the connection at the A12 underpass and Bromley-by-Bow tube station, and bringing a linear public space through the development right down to the river edge.

Whilst vehicles can access this route, and park, the spaces are designed to prioritise pedestrian, cycle and play uses.
2.3 Special places

The east west routes are primary new streets running through the site. These are supplemented by a series of important other kinds of spaces, as follows:

A12:
The western edge of the development abounds the A12. The idea is to substantially improve the crossing points and to humanise the street frontage by improving the width of the footways, adding a cycle lane, providing generous quantities of street trees, and adding low areas of planting to provide a good degree of separation between cars, pedestrians and cyclists.

Riverside Park edge:
At the eastern edges of the development, a new linear park is provided which incorporates substantial grass, plants and trees, and amenity and play uses. This extensive green space manages the various sloped, terraced and stepped landscape required to address the difference in levels across the site, and turns these into positive qualities. The linear Park contains specific places within it, along it’s length, and these are highlighted in more detail under each section in ‘Key Areas’.

Station entrance park:
This space forms the northern section of the Southern Route, and enables the space adjacent to the underpass linking to Bromley-by-Bow station to become a positive, playful environment which uses trees and other planting to mitigate the adjacency to the road, and to accommodate cycle parking.

Public Square:
A new civic square is provided at the north end of the Southern Route. This substantial civic space is designed to complement the taller buildings surrounding, and to act as a social and playful destination. It is designed to meet the A12 end in a way that is positive and definite, and uses subtle level changes to create a calm and pleasant atmosphere within vibrant surrounds.

The intention for all routes and spaces is to deliver the guidance set out in the environment assessment report that should be read in conjunction with this document. This includes aspects of the design that should support arboriculture and ecology guidance.
Equipped playground for 0-5 year-olds

Equipped play, 5-11 year-olds

School playground and MUGA

Play area for younger children. The residential park would be designated for equipped play.

The public square is an opportunity for children of all age groups to mingle. It is a predominantly informal play area with some play equipment.

A playful pocket park for 5-11 and social space for older children

A pocket park for additional doorstep play

The stepped school front is an opportunity for older children’s social space. It is a skateable and informal area facing the river just outside the school.

The canalside opens up opportunities for equipped and unequipped natural play for younger children and social space for older children. Areas include skatebale surfaces.

Doorstep play 0-5 year-olds

5-11 year-olds

12+ year olds
2.4 Play strategy

The area offers a range of play opportunities that responds to their specific sites and have a high capacity for public enjoyment. Some of them, such as the residential park, offers opportunities for designated play areas for younger children, whereas others, such as the canalside, is suitable for an enhanced experience for all age groups and can be spread out across the canal park. The sloped section on the canal that negotiates the lower towpath and upper tertiary road is provided using grass embankments that could be embedded with seats, platforms, and mats to invite sitting, playing, viewing and movement for a wide range of ages. Play equipment should be positioned at a safe distance from the canal edge and not be fenced off.

The public square to the west will support sports and leisure activities that benefit from a semi-bound gravel surfaced space suitable to meeting, sitting, informal plat and cycle riding. The space is flexible for temporary activities, events and exhibitions. A sculptured granite staircase will offer spatial variety and opportunities for play engagement while giving a strong image of civic uses and amenity for the square.

Doorstep play is provided within each block. These areas are enhanced by introducing informal doorstep play opportunities at key designated locations.

Additional play provision for youth is accessible in the nearby Talwin Street MUGA, Bromley Recreation Ground and in the Three Mills Green across the canal.
2.5 Illustrative overview

This arial view illustrates a detailed scenario for the public realm as a whole, across the site and beyond.
2.6 Site plan

This site plan shows how footways, planting bays, tree planting, and green spaces are arranged in terms of spatial and material extents. A key indicates how materials could be arranged to deliver the public realm as required in the written key principles.
2.7 Material palette

The hard and soft landscaping materials are kept to a simple palette throughout the area. At the canalside materials relate to the existing towpath and park landscape as well as the historic industrial site of Three Mills. Proposals should use robust and accessible materials aimed at enhancing pedestrian and cycle access across the site. Streets with buses in the town centre, including Three Mills Lane, the new bridge to Sugar Lane and the street connecting them, will be adoptable.

The granite paving in the historic Three Mills is extended at Three Mills Lane to directly tie in with the existing spaces characterised by natural stone surfaces. Within the background of granite sett paving, extra wide granite kerbs with SUDS planting strips mirror the wide lumpy granite tracks in Three Mills.

On the southern route bound and semi-bound gravel surfaces interspersed with plants and informal and formal play areas indicate a transition between hard landscaped areas near the A12 to the west and soft landscaped areas near the canal to the east.

Along the A12 a continuous line of large mature London Plane trees is planted to improve the roadside conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. Big London Plane trees will shape the natural canopy framing the Public Square to the West. The canalside is a mix of retained existing high quality trees and the planting of new informal tree clusters. Varied soft landscape treatments and a mix of tree species creates a biodiverse park spaces to be engaged with throughout the year.
3. Key areas

3.1 Central route

The Central Route is a new street designed to accommodate buses and cyclists and to engage with and reflect the materially rich historic character of Three Mills. It will function as the neighbourhood commercial spine, and connect to Bow via new pedestrian and cycle crossings. The street should be welcoming and safe for pedestrians and cyclists.

Key guidance is set out as follows:

* Generous width of footways throughout
* Kerbs located throughout to provide smooth flowing continuous alignments, including at junctions with A12 crossing and Three Mills bridge.
* New high quality kerbing. For example 300mm wide granite kerbs with 125mm kerb face. Detailed dimensions subject to further detailed design stages.
* Parking bays in high quality surfacing; for example 200 x 100mm granite setts.
* New kerb side ‘street gardens’, with street trees and other suitable planting, with ground treatments incorporating sustainable drainage where possible. The street garden surfaces could incorporate re-used materials laid in linear arrangements.
* New trees
* Trees planted at and around new crossing point with A12.
* New footways in granite setts or other suitable material able to relate successfully to Three Mills Lane granite historic setts and carriage channels.

White and yellow lining avoided or minimized.

* Seating and other street furniture carefully located to avoid cluttered environment.
* Lighting fixed to buildings wherever possible.
street section

4200 2000 6500 2000 4200

±18000

large tree

mid-sized tree

granite setts

the wide kerbs are greened and provide space for street furniture - benches, bike stands.
New footways in granite setts or other suitable material able to relate successfully to Three Mills Lane granite historic setts and carriage channels
The Southern Route is a new residential street designed to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists, alongside local vehicle access and servicing. The street is green along the whole of its length in ways specific to each location. The street will help to shape the way in which building frontages address the public spaces in terms of new entrances, front gardens, and amenity and play spaces. Workspace and other non-residential entrances also engage directly with this street.

At the northernmost section, at the junction of the underpass, a new informal pocket park is located, to contain trees, illuminated access to the underpass, steps, and cycle parking. Just to south of that, is a new public square surrounded with trees, and edged with seating and some informal play equipment.

At the southern end of the street, the route widens, and opens up to the river edge Park. Informal play facilities are located within a green space surrounded by footways and carriageway surfaces designed to be visually recessive, enabling all surfaces to be inviting to those on foot and cycle, whilst retaining slow moving vehicular access as required.

Key guidance is set out as follows:

**General areas:**
* Generous provision of footways throughout
* Kerbs located throughout to provide smooth flowing continuous alignments
  * New high quality kerbing. For example 300mm wide granite kerbs. with 60/30mm kerb faces. Detailed dimensions subject to further detailed design stages.
* Changes in kerb directions to be radiussed not mitred
* Parking bays in high quality surfacing; for example 200 x 100mm granite setts
  * New ‘garden spaces’, with street trees and other suitable planting, with ground treatments incorporating sustainable drainage where possible.
* Incorporate re-used materials as part of the detailed design where possible and desirable
* New trees
* New footways in natural stone flags or other suitable material able to provide a residential street atmosphere
  * White and yellow lining avoided or minimised
* Seating and other street furniture carefully located to avoid cluttered environment
* Lighting fixed to buildings wherever possible
trees of different sizes and maturity
informal planting done by the residents
Pocket park section

- Green pockets with bike parking and play elements
- Permeable pavement
- Flags
Site surface/underpass entrance square

This space is designed to upgrade the currently poor quality underpass and provide a new attractive and playful informal green space.

Key guidance is set out as follows:

* Enhance underpass using clear wayfinding. Ideas for this could include reflective stainless steel cladding, clear signage and well considered lighting.
* Provide new staircase and stepped area as a generous sculptural piece of public realm infrastructure, able to be used as an informal play structure, ‘performance’ and planting area.
* Provide bike parking for the Bromley By Bow station embedded in the design of the staircase and around.
* Plant trees and plants in informal way, in conjunction with seating and Sheffield stands for cycle parking.
Public square section

large trees, e.g. London Planes, to form a canopy around the sunken area of the public square
This is a substantial high quality green square, with large trees coupled with open space, designed to act as a strong companion to the taller buildings surrounding it, and to provide capacity and pleasant atmosphere for the people who will live, work, play and visit here.

* Provide slightly sunken semi-bound gravel, and/or grassed surface for play and positive environment
* Surround the area with high quality mature trees
* Light space
* Provide new staircase and stepped area as a sculptural piece of public realm infrastructure at the end adjoining the A12, able to be used as an informal play structure, and ‘performance’ space
* Enable vehicular access around the space, whilst enhancing the design of surfaces to provide a more pedestrian and urban park-like feel.

Summer St, Boston  Barking Town Square
3.3 Northern route

This route acts as a key east west connection to Bow at the West, and provides a local vehicular and access route. The route places emphasis on pedestrian and cycle access to the river edge, and provides a new bus route connecting to Strand East, via a new bridge.

Key guidance is set out as follows:

* Generous footways throughout
* Kerbs located throughout to provide smooth flowing continuous alignments
* New high quality kerbing. For example 300mm wide granite kerbs, with 125mm kerb faces. Detailed dimensions subject to further detailed design stages.
* Parking bays in high quality surfacing; for example 200 x 100mm granite setts
* New footways in natural stone flags or other suitable material able to provide a local street atmosphere
* White and yellow lining and other highway signage avoided or minimised
* Seating and other street furniture carefully located to avoid cluttered environment
* Lighting fixed to buildings wherever possible
KEY

- Asphalt, black
- Granite kerbs
- Flags, natural stone
- Setts, granite on Three Mills Lane
- Setts, clay
- Gravel, bound
- Gravel, vehicular surface
- Gravel, semi-bound
- Playsurface
- Low planting
- New big tree, planted semi-mature / mature
- New tree
- Existing tree
3.4 Riverside Park

The new riverside park is a place specific, highly distinctive substantial green space for public use. It adjoins a wide range of riverside building uses, and acts as an extension to the natural biodiverse, green and spatially rich qualities of the river.

The riverside Park is made accessible for all, using gentle gradients, terraced platform, steps, and sloped areas of grass and tree filled grassy areas. Where public uses meet the Park, areas of accessible hardstanding terraces will be provided.

Towpath cycle access will be provided, in particular at the north section of the park, enabling cyclists to cross the Three Mills Bridge and continue south.

Where possible existing trees should be retained in the new development. New trees should be specified to address and reflect the local context, and be suitable in terms of biodiversity and ecological concerns. The Park will contain a range of informal play facilities, and use recycled materials as appropriate.

Key guidance is set out as follows:

* New trees throughout and trees retained where possible
* Accessible surfaces provided at public and semi-public building frontages
* New ramps and footways to provide accessible routes throughout, using poured materials or similar to provide informal park feel
* Footway edging against grassy edges to be designed to minimal thickness.
* Distinctiveness and special identity should be made visible in the delivered outcome. Generic materials and arrangements should be avoided.
KEY

Asphalt, black
Granite kerbs
Flags, natural stone
Setts, granite on Three Mills Lane
Setts, clay
Gravel, bound
Gravel, vehicular surface
Gravel, semi-bound
Playsurface
Low planting
New big tree, planted semi-mature / mature
New tree
Existing tree
3.5 A12 edge

The new A12 roadside is intended to become a positive well lit and legible environment, using generous widths for footways and cycle access, and providing mature trees, and lower levels of planting to help pedestrians and cyclists feel protected and buffered from the road.

New well positioned pedestrian and cycle crossing points will be designed integrally with the A12 roadside footway and cycleways.

* Generous footway and cycle
* Kerbs located throughout to provide smooth flowing continuous alignments
* New high quality kerbing. For example 300mm wide granite kerbs, with 125mm kerb faces. Detailed dimensions subject to further detailed design stages.
* New footways in natural stone flags or other suitable material able to provide a street character
* Seating and other street furniture carefully located to avoid cluttered environment
* Lighting fixed to buildings wherever possible
* Mature trees provided in dense clumps to signify the positive environment being created at this edge, and to mark the ways into the site and towards the river
Waterloo, London

Blaak, Rotterdam, the Netherlands