

Urban Trees Research Conference  
Trees, People and the  
Built Environment

*The Urban Forest:  
Integrating Approaches*

John Letherland  
FARRELLS  
02 April 2014

---

# THE FARRELL REVIEW

of Architecture  
+ the Built  
Environment

---



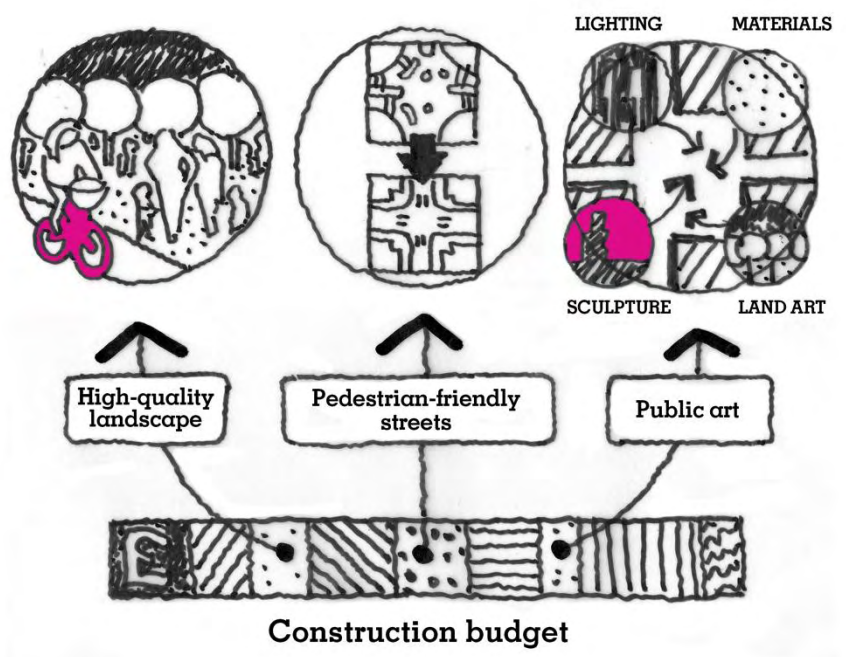
## Key recommendations:

1. Teaching about how we shape our physical environment to **be included in all schools**
2. Every town and city should have **an “urban room”**
3. Key decision makers should be **trained in design principles**
4. **Democratise** “elitist” architectural training
5. Make the planning process **proactive**
6. All major infrastructure **decision-making panels** should include **design professionals**
7. Architecture and **design leaders needs to connect** to reduce gap between “the everyday and the elite”
8. Local authorities should demand funding for **landscape** and **public art** from developers
9. London’s status as **the world capital of architecture** to be enhanced
10. Government to appoint a **chief architect**

Published this week, explore it online and download it at [www.farrellreview.co.uk](http://www.farrellreview.co.uk)

# PLANNING ARCHITECTURE CONSERVATION LANDSCAPE ENGINEERING PLACE

Strengthen the role of public realm in making great places



The key objective is to create joined up thinking in the Built Environment (RTPI, LI, RIBA, EH, ICE)

The review publishes 34 conclusions, many of them recognise:-

- the need for more joined up thinking
- more proactive planning
- more engagement
- more outreach to the public and
- a reformed education system.

# Landscape Architecture and Urban Design Workshop August 2013



“There must be a focus on ‘liveability’ when discussing cities...”

*Sue Illman*

*President of the Landscape Institute*

**THE  
FARRELL  
REVIEW**  
*of Architecture  
+ the Built  
Environment*

“Nowhere else in the world understands ecosystems the way that we do in the UK. Birmingham is the first city in the country to map its ecosystems and the impact that is having on the economy. It fundamentally shifts your view of the city and it also shifts your view of what needs to be changed.”

*Nick Grayson*

*Climate Change & Sustainability Manager,  
Birmingham City Council*

The Farrell Review workshop on Urban Design & Landscape Architecture hosted by Capita Symonds. Clockwise from bottom left:

*Paul Lincoln; Colin Goodrum; Paul Reynolds; Brian Webb (hidden); Chris Brown; Nick Grayson; Andrew Whitaker; Sue James (hidden); Martin Kelly (Chair); Sue Illman; Robert Huxford; Peter Jones; Kelvin Campbell; Peter Frackiewicz; Lucy Musgrave; Peter Karpinski; Johanna Gibbons; Max Farrell*

# The Farrell Review: Summary and Conclusions

*“Having worked on major landscape projects like the Thames Gateway, it has become clear to me that the design and stewardship of the streets and pavements that are most highly valued by the public and are most important to the majority of people...these priorities are often completely the reverse for the development community and built environment professionals...”*

## Farrells Thames Gateway Study 2008




**THE FARRELL REVIEW**  
of Architecture  
+ the Built  
Environment

*“Landscape architecture and urban design are often the most valued by the public yet contradictorily the least valued in terms of fees and are frequently where the first savings are made on any given project. Something has to be done about this, and we as an industry must make landscape and urban design much bigger priorities”*

Sir Terry Farrell

# The Growth of Cities



“Place is actually more important to the world’s economy than ever before”

*Professor Richard Florida,  
University of Toronto*

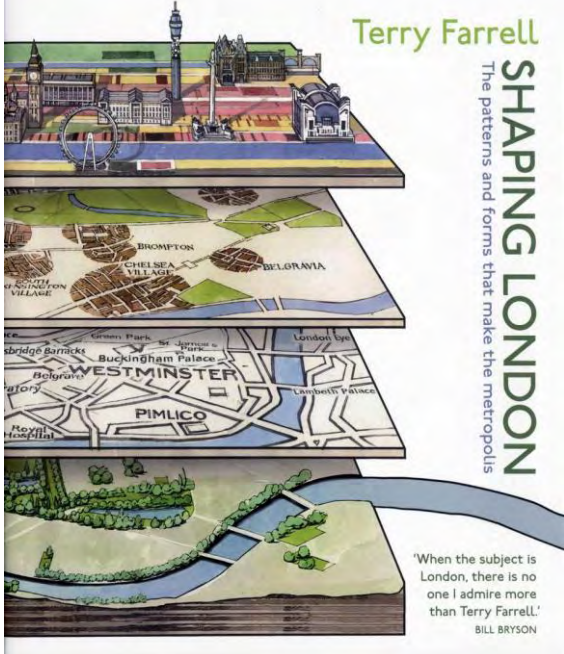
80% of Britain’s population live in our towns and cities

Globally we have recently transformed from a rural to an urban species

By 2050, there will be 9 billion humans & over 60% of those living in cities

**= 5.4 billion urban dwellers**

# BIG PICTURE VISIONING: SHIFT PERCEPTIONS AND THINK 'SPACE POSITIVE'



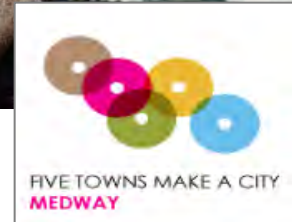
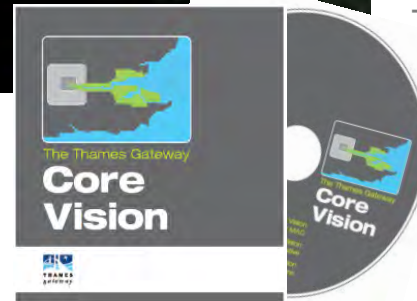
Central London's unappreciated world-class public realm



2008 – Thames Gateway Study: a world-class landscape as the first investment



2004 - Euston Road/ Marylebone Road Study -a major place not a through road



# Replanning & regenerating in the post-industrial era

*CURRENT WORK*  
*June 2013*



*Master plan for Earls Court*



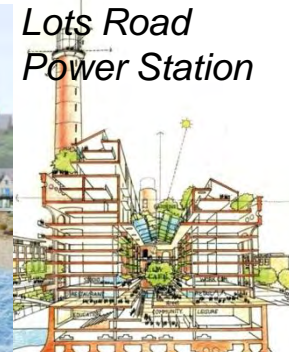
*Master plan for Nine Elms*



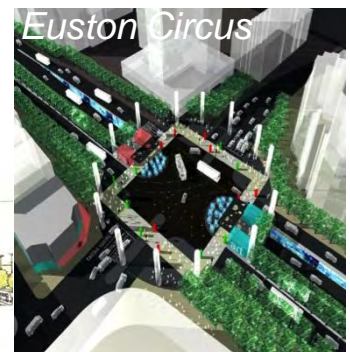
*Master plan for Royal Docks*



*Folkestone Seafront*



*Lots Road Power Station*



*Euston Circus*



*Master plan for Convoys Wharf*



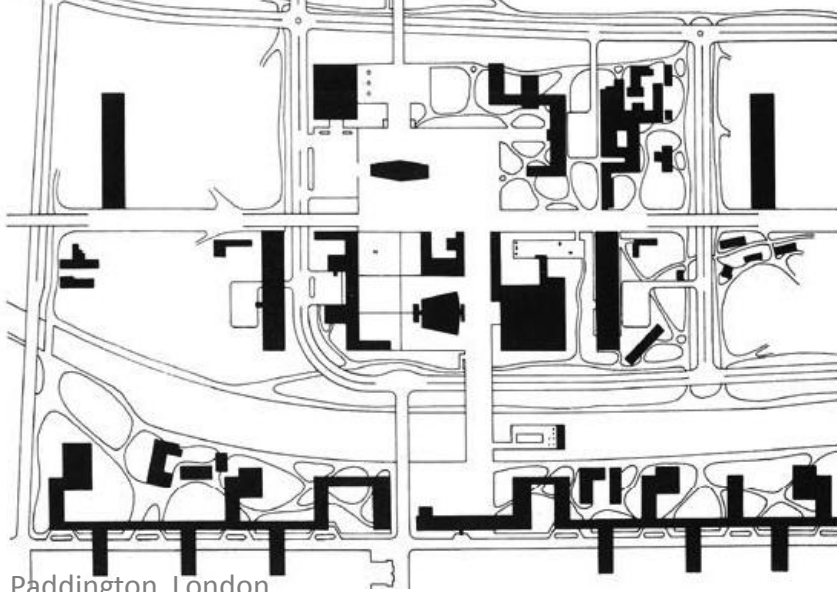
*Vauxhall Town Centre*

**Quality of thinking is paramount  
...we think like planners not architects.**



# The 'Designed City' (Object Fixation) vs. The 'Natural City' (Space Positive)

Le Corbusier, Project for Saint-Die, France



Paddington, London



Parma, Italy as depicted in Collage City



Bologna



Planning without Planners. Architecture without Architects

THE DEATH  
AND LIFE  
OF GREAT  
AMERICAN  
CITIES

JANE JACOBS

"Perhaps the most influential single work in  
the history of town planning... a work of literature."  
— *The New York Times Book Review*

**“Organised  
complexity”**

**- Jane Jacobs**

*“I like complexity and contradiction in architecture... I like elements which are hybrid rather than “pure,” compromising rather than “clean,” distorted rather than “straightforward,” ambiguous rather than “articulated,” perverse as well as impersonal, boring as well as “interesting,” conventional rather than “designed,” inconsistent and equivocal rather than direct and clear. I am for messy vitality over obvious unity.”*

**- Robert Venturi**



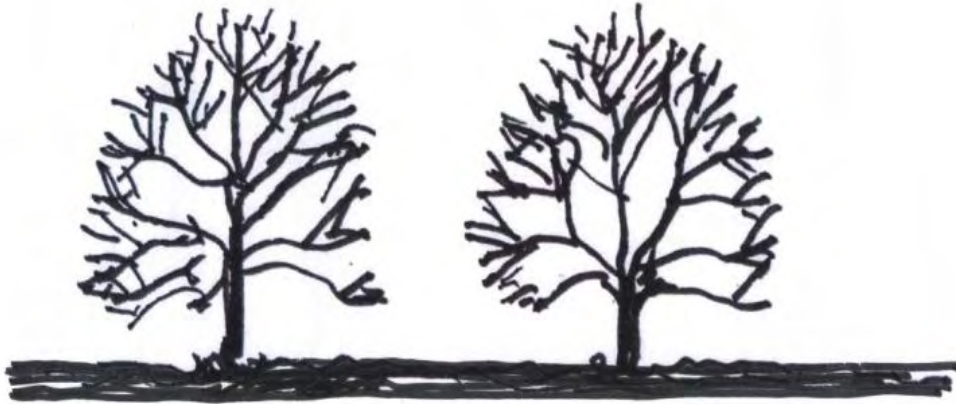
*It is interesting to contemplate a tangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth,*

***and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent on each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us...***

***...There is grandeur in this view of life,***

*with its several powers, having been originally breathed into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved.*

**Charles Darwin**



**Single trees in grassland**



**Self-ordering collective; a woodland**

*“It is scarcely surprising that, since the major preoccupation of urban planners is with the DESIGN of cities, they have generally attempted to analyse city forms in terms of their own efforts. That is to say, theories of urban planning have tended to focus on cities in whose form the guiding hand of human design is clearly discernible.*

*The trouble is, hardly any cities are like that. **In spite of the efforts of planners to impose simplistic order, most large cities present an apparently disordered, irregular scatter of developed space ... mixed haphazardly.** By focusing on regions where planning has created some regularity..... urban theorists have often ignored the fact that a city grows organically, not through the dictates of planners.”*

**The Self-Made Tapestry: Pattern Formation in Nature - Philip Ball**



# Putting down roots

Planting a tree that will almost certainly outlive you is a humbling experience – especially if it's a native oak

Last summer, on a still, bright day in August, the quiet was broken by a thundering crack, followed by a thud which shook the ground. It was one of those rare moments when time moves in slow motion, and as we glanced up from the vegetable garden to the source of the sound we saw an enormous branch crash out of the oak tree on the hill. This particular tree is a stand-alone veteran from another era, with character in its limbs and wide-reaching branches. We walked up there later in the evening when the shadows were long to find a limb the size of a tree lying on the ground.

Oaks are said to take 300 years to grow, another 300 to stand in their maturity and then the same again to die, so I felt curiously privileged to witness such change in the life of this tree. It would have been standing on the hill way before any of the houses currently dotting the valley and it will probably see them out, too. The event and the change set me thinking about the legacy of being the custodian of our land and of the glance in time that will mark our own moment.

I like the idea of planting for longevity and find myself increasingly drawn to the idea of planting for the future. A tree will map decades if not centuries in its branches, and though we have no control over what might happen to that tree in years to come, the feeling associated with steering



High and mighty: an oak can live for 900 years. Below, from left: mulberries; rings of age; and a fallen acorn

it in the right direction is nothing but wholesome. With this in mind I have planted three oaks this winter, two either side of a gate into the field below the veteran. The third has been inserted in a gap in the hedge high on our land in the hope that one day we will be able to sit under its branches and take in the view.

Though you might think of oaks as being slow, this is far from the case, and in 30 years' time these trees will be easily as many feet tall. If you are planting for longevity though – and this, I might add, should be the case in choosing any tree – it is important

to think about their ultimate size. Not all trees that live to a great age are space hungry with it. If I wanted the character of an oak in a small garden, it would be a black mulberry every time. Where an oak might win on points with the amount of wildlife it would attract, a *Morus nigra* would win hands down in terms of its fruit. Acorns are good for pigs. Mulberries are very definitely the choice of humans.

Another long-lasting tree and another of my favourite natives is the field maple, *Acer campestre*. This is a modestly sized tree happy to grow in almost any condition, be it coastal, wasteland or in a prime position in your garden. Well behaved, slowly attaining a height and ultimate spread of 25-30ft, it can also be coppiced should you require it and, come autumn, the leaves colour a delightful russet orange. I have collected keys (seeds) from another veteran in the valley and plan to give them to clients so that they live on for future generations. ■

## Get growing

As a rule, bare-root trees are best planted in the first half of winter. Try to get any in by the end of March and move on to pot-grown material as soon as you see plants coming into leaf

■ ■ ■  
Email Dan at dan.pearson@observer.co.uk or visit theguardian.com/profile/danpearson for all his columns in one place



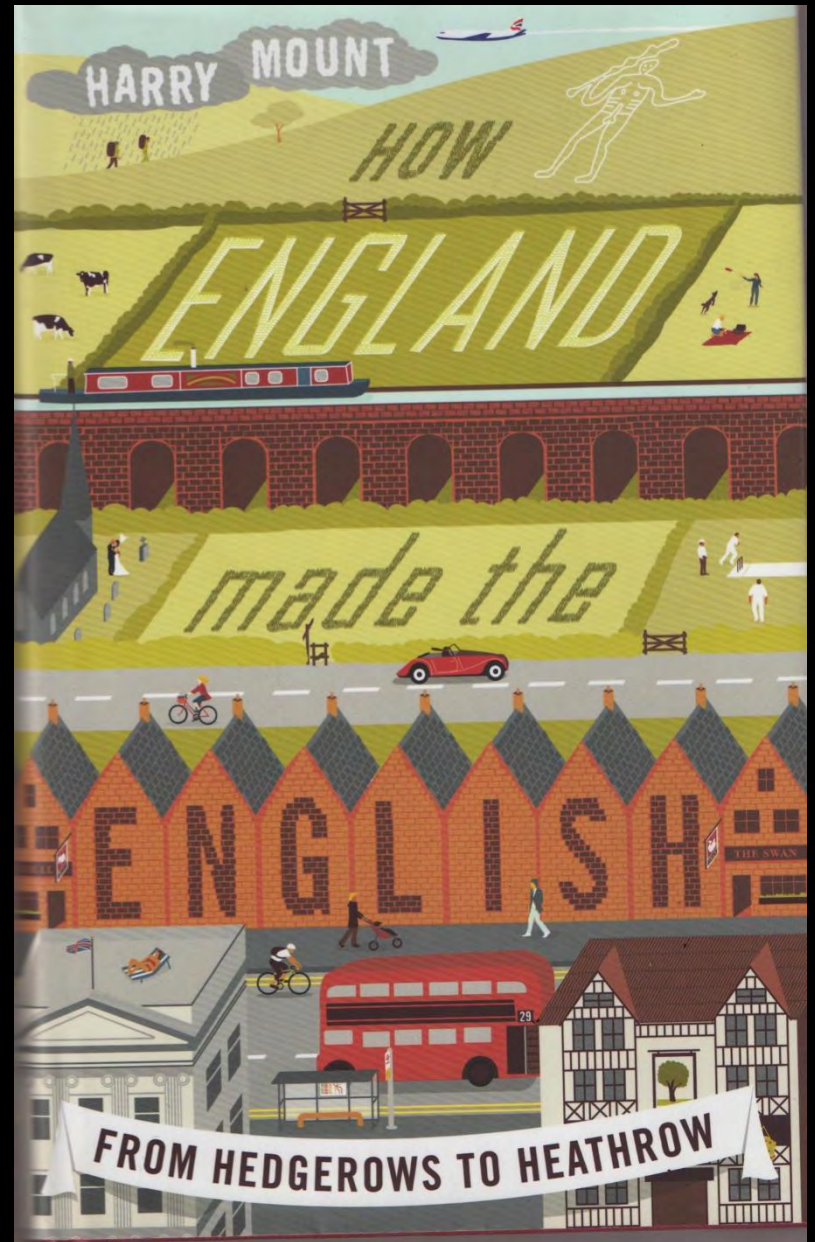
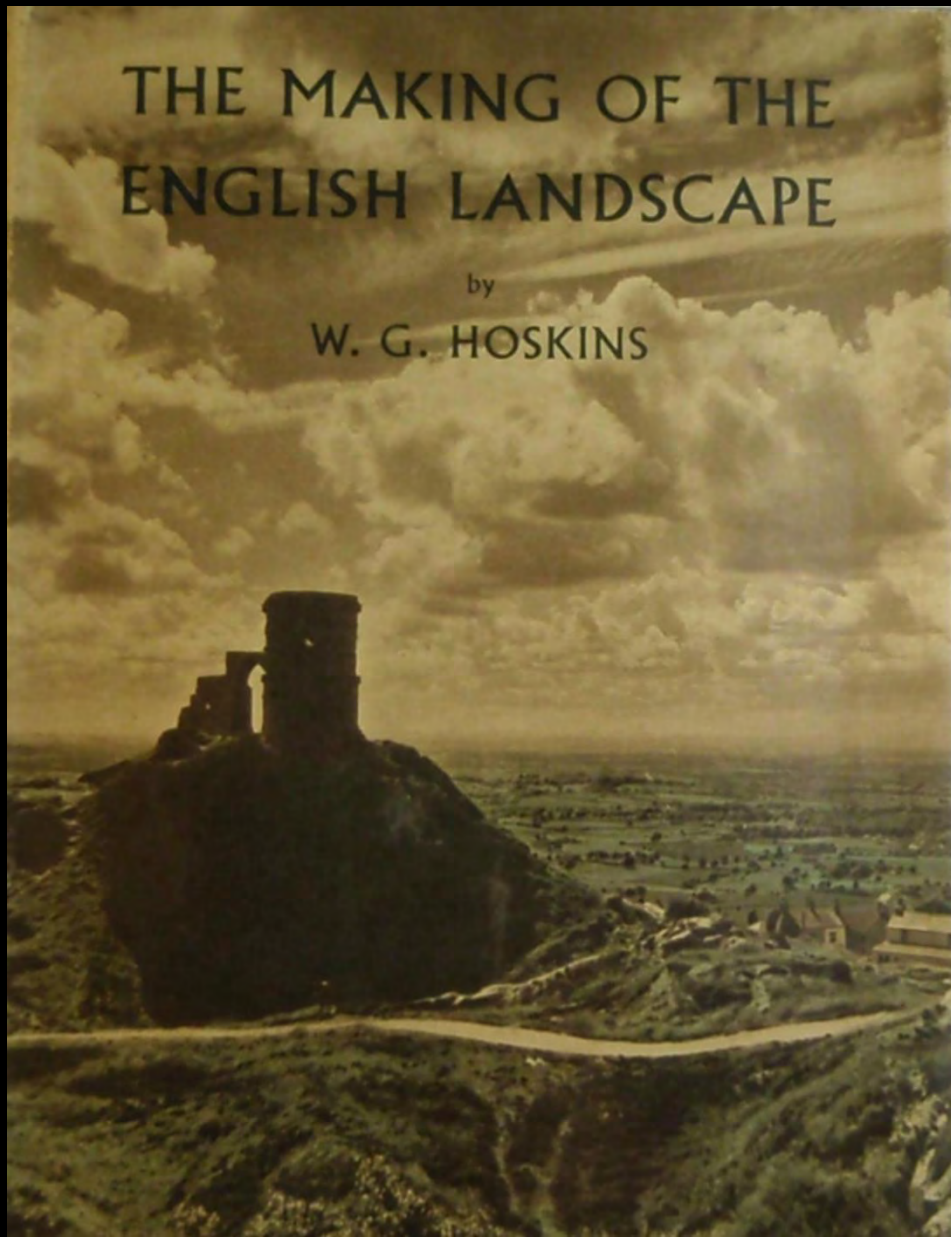
ANTHONY BRADSHAW; MADRID THORNHILL; DEREK CRITCHER/ALAMY

# “Putting down roots”

“I like the idea of planting for longevity and find myself increasingly drawn to the idea of planting for the future”

Dan Pearson

“...planning for longevity, planning for the future...” - exactly the same principles apply to master planning...



"In an island made of coal and surrounded by fish, you're never going to get cold or starve."

*Harry Mount*

# The importance of landscape in 'place-making'



The Royal Oak of Charles II  
Boscobel Park, Shropshire



The latter-day 'Seven Oaks'

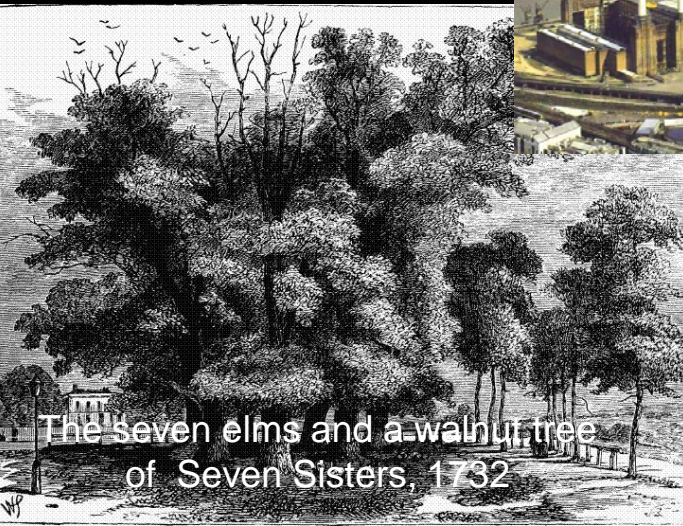
*Sevenoaks. The "Seven Oaks".*



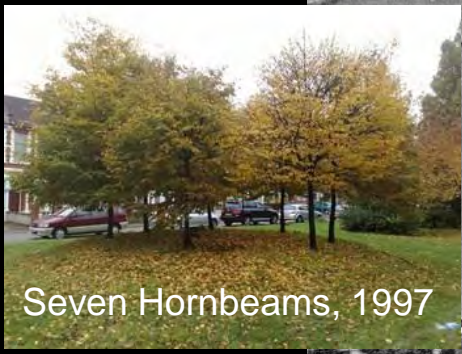
Sevenoaks pre-1987



Nine Elms today  
The name originates from 1645



The seven elms and a walnut tree  
of Seven Sisters, 1732



Seven Hornbeams, 1997



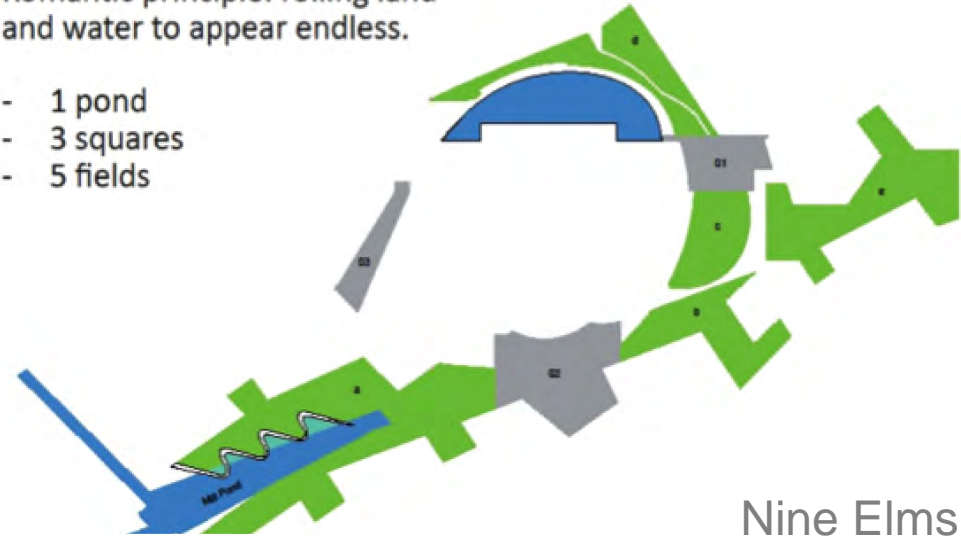
Sevenoaks 1987

# Nine Elms: positive space and place making



Romantic principle: rolling land and water to appear endless.

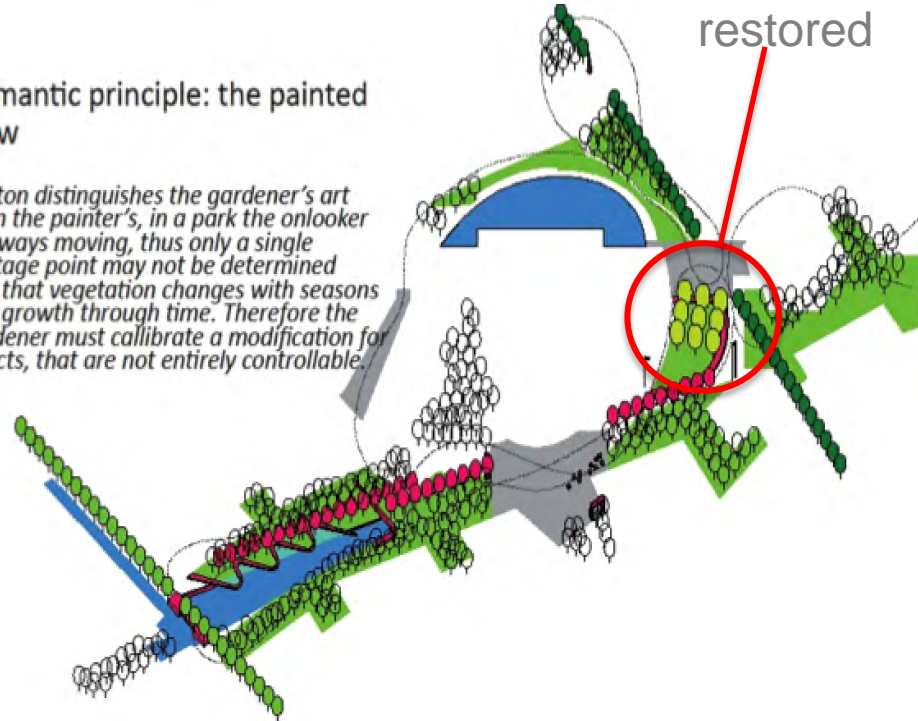
- 1 pond
- 3 squares
- 5 fields



Nine Elms restored

Romantic principle: the painted view

*Repton distinguishes the gardener's art from the painter's, in a park the onlooker is always moving, thus only a single vantage point may not be determined and that vegetation changes with seasons and growth through time. Therefore the gardener must calibrate a modification for effects, that are not entirely controllable.*





# The Royal Parks: London's 'trapped countryside'



*Regent's Park*

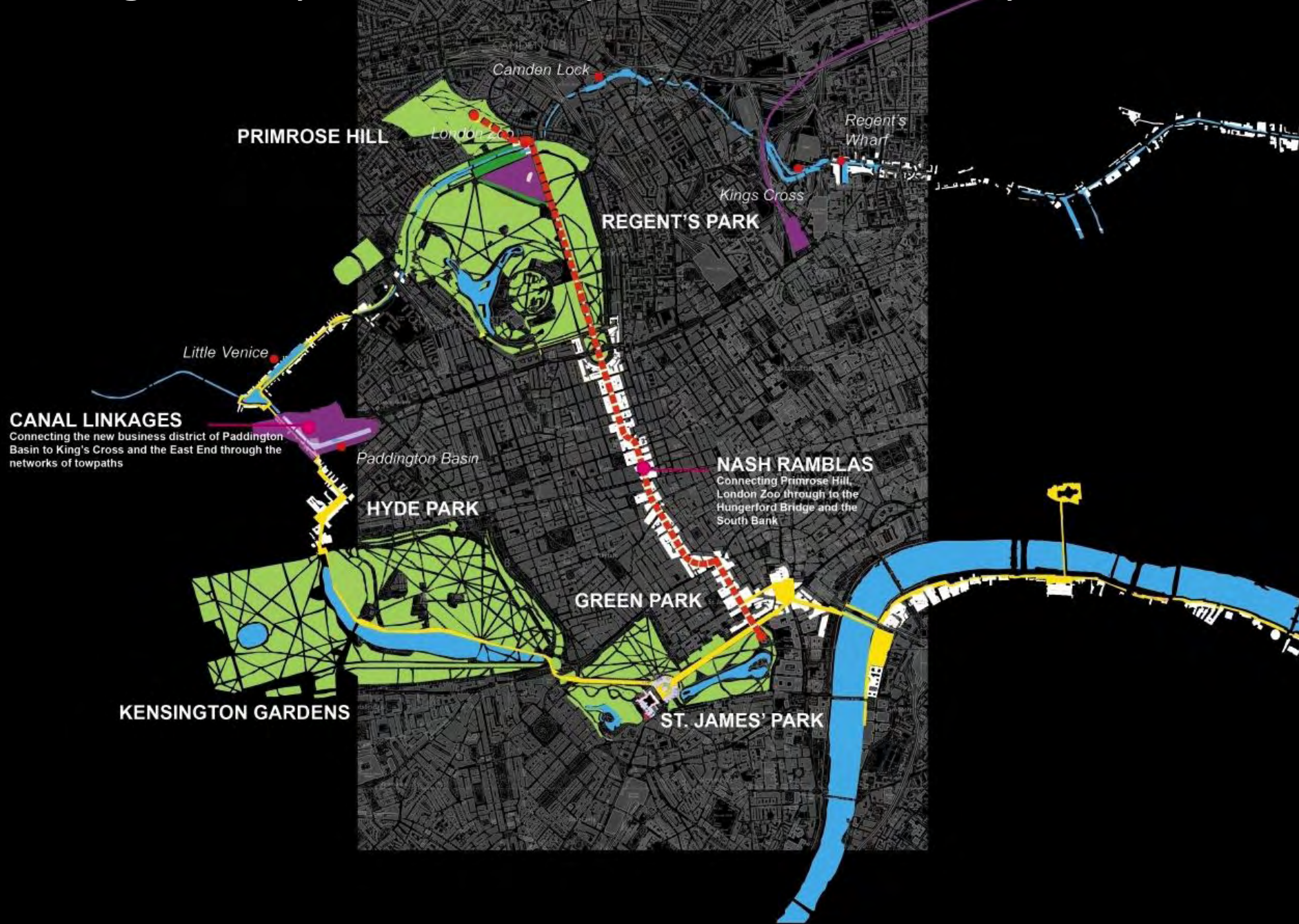


*Kensington Gardens*



*Greenwich Park*

# Linking the Royal Parks: Terry Farrell 1974 - Today



PRIMROSE HILL

Camden Lock

London Zoo

Regent's Wharf

Kings Cross

REGENT'S PARK

## CANAL LINKAGES

Connecting the new business district of Paddington Basin to King's Cross and the East End through the networks of towpaths

Little Venice

Paddington Basin

HYDE PARK

## NASH RAMBLAS

Connecting Primrose Hill, London Zoo through to the Hungerford Bridge and the South Bank

GREEN PARK

KENSINGTON GARDENS

ST. JAMES' PARK

### London Zoo

A new masterplan will move the entrance to 'New Square', sited on the Broadwalk. New Square will not only give direct access to the zoo from the Nash Rambles, but also will eliminate the current need to walk around the zoo from Primrose Hill.



### Park Crescent Park Square

Create a new pedestrian route through Park Crescent and Park Square and across the Euston Road to form a new entrance to Regent's Park, and to directly connect the Park tube station, Euston Road and Portland Place.



### Upper Regent Street

Investment in the public realm by the local stakeholders, including the BBC, the University of Westminster and the Langham Hotel together with public sector initiatives on wayfinding and public art will transform this section of the Nash Rambles.



### Lower Regent Street

Public realm improvements arising from a partnership of the Crown Estate and the City of Westminster will produce a stepchange in the quality of the environment.



### Waterloo Place

The Crown Estates and English Heritage have put forward detail plans to restore the grandeur and pedestrian friendly environment of this fine public thoroughfare.



10

8

6

4

2

9

7

5

3

1

### Regent's Park

Reinforce the strength and significance of Nash's masterplan, by improving links to the north and to the south. Cyclists are to share part of the route - the road crossings and facilities should also be transformed.



### Portland Place

Create a new pedestrian walk down the centre of Portland Place, with small cafes, trees, and an arts and lighting programme. Rescue the vision of Robert Adam and Nash Portland Place could once again become one of the West End's grandest and loveliest avenues.



### Oxford Circus

Through the Oxford, Regent and Bond Street (ORB) Action Plan, a partnership of Transport for London, the City of Westminster and the New West End Commission, Oxford Circus is to be made a pedestrian friendly environment, possibly with diagonal crossings on an all red traffic light phase.



### Piccadilly Circus

Studies are in progress to turn this cherished London landmark and meeting point into a real place for people.



### Nash Map / Monument

In celebration of John Nash, plans exist to provide a 3-D model of the original Nash plan and buildings, as an accessible guide to Nash's great set piece.



# The Nash "Rambles" The 10 Projects

# MARYLEBONE EUSTON ROAD – PLACE AS CLIENT

## Planner As Traffic Choreographer



Placemaking and the ring road



Euston Circus under construction





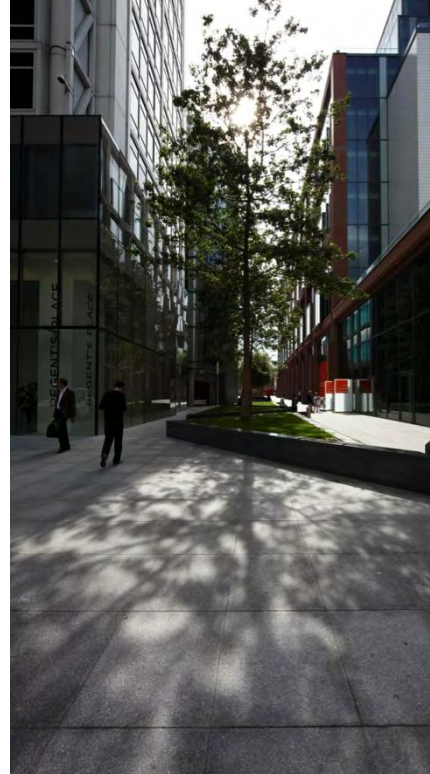
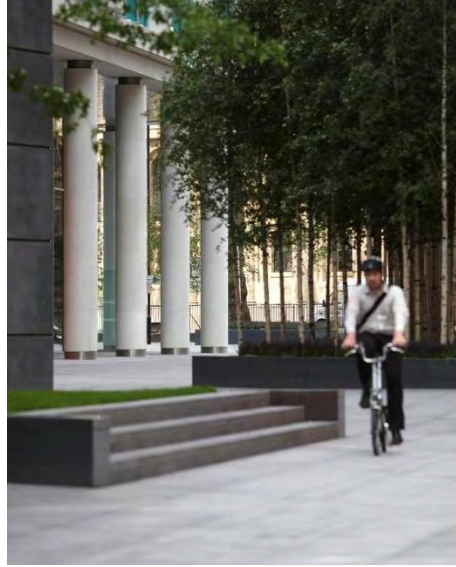
Regent's Place – before



Regent's Place – proposed

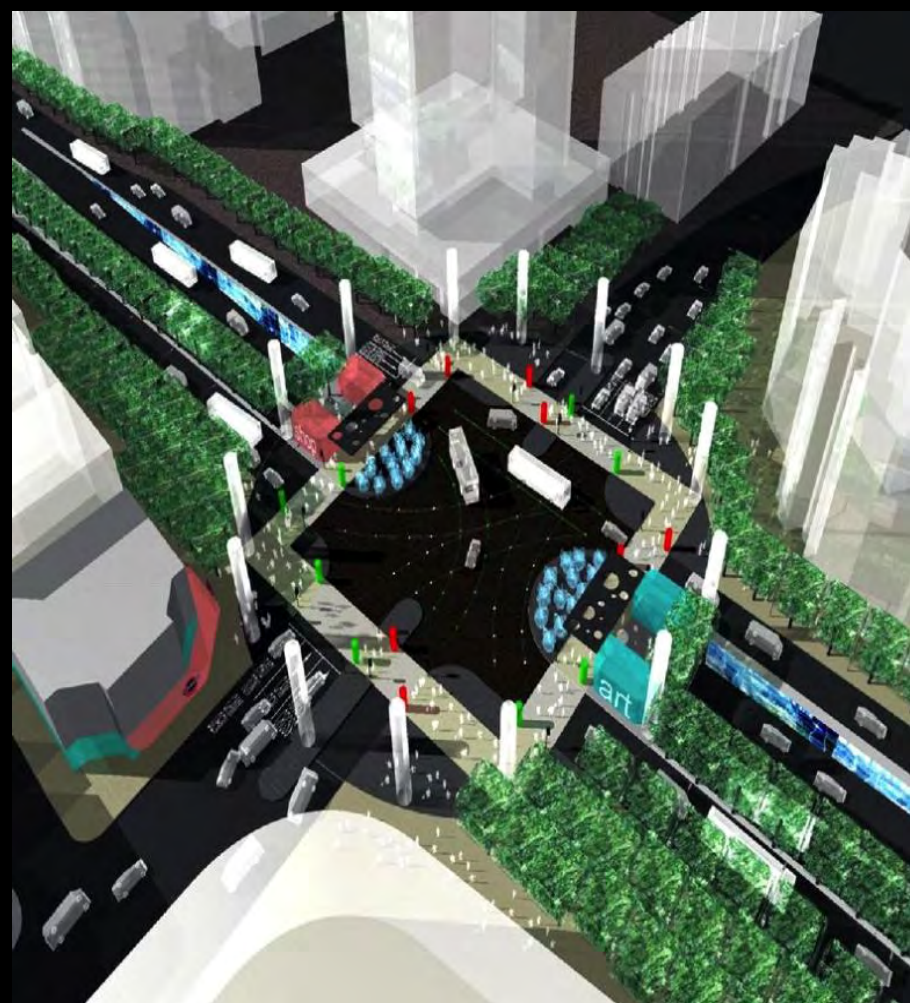
## Placemaking & Regent's Place first steps

# REGENTS' PLACE: LONG TERM STEWARDSHIP AND INCLUSIVENESS





Euston Circus - present



Euston Circus - proposed

## Placemaking & Regent's Place first steps