



Our scheme aims to improve the legibility of the sacred landscape, to enhance the setting of the Cathedral and its environs, and to increase the sense of wonder and drama in moving through and between the setting's sequence of ritual and non-ritual spaces.

Our scheme reflects our interest in the concept of boundary and its use to reinforce the relationship between ritual and non-ritual space, or between the Cathedral's sacred precincts and the outside world; it also seeks to underscore the importance of the concept of pilgrimage as it is defined by two important aspects of the human experience - the idea of a journey, and the significance ascribed to place.

The scheme has two design objectives:

- To reconstruct the missing section of the boundary wall in the Southern Precincts (between the International Study Centre and Cathedral House) and to create new gates within it.
- To simplify and soften the landscape setting of the Cathedral itself.

Our scheme aims on a purely practical level to achieve the following:

- To preserve Christ Church Gate as the principal entrance to the sacred Precincts;
- To banish all motor vehicles from parking anywhere in the precincts except in the designated car park in the south east corner during the hours that the Cathedral is open to the public;
- To increase the area of soft landscaping within the Precincts;
- To enhance views within the Precincts to and from the Cathedral.



view of the new wall



view from Christ Church Gate



view to the south close

The new 'wall' is proposed to be formed from translucent concrete. The movement of people, landscape elements as well as changing light conditions result in a unique and inspiring effect whilst at the same time producing a calm and dignified atmosphere. The pixelated effect of the light filtering through the translucent wall complements the flint and Kentish rag stone in the existing walls of the Precincts.

The paths will be finished with a resin bonded gravel system that gives the appearance of gravel without the associated problem of stones and dust breaking away and carrying in to buildings.

The new gardens will be paved with materials reclaimed from elsewhere in the precinct.

Everywhere except in the case of the wall - the hard division - the principle is to soften. To soften the lines of the paths, to soften the grass to a rich meadow, to soften the adjacent spaces with additional planting of fruit trees.

The simple and elemental nature of the design makes for a proposal that is extremely flexible both in terms of cost and construction programming.



view to the exit

wildflower meadow

translucent concrete



view east across the precinct