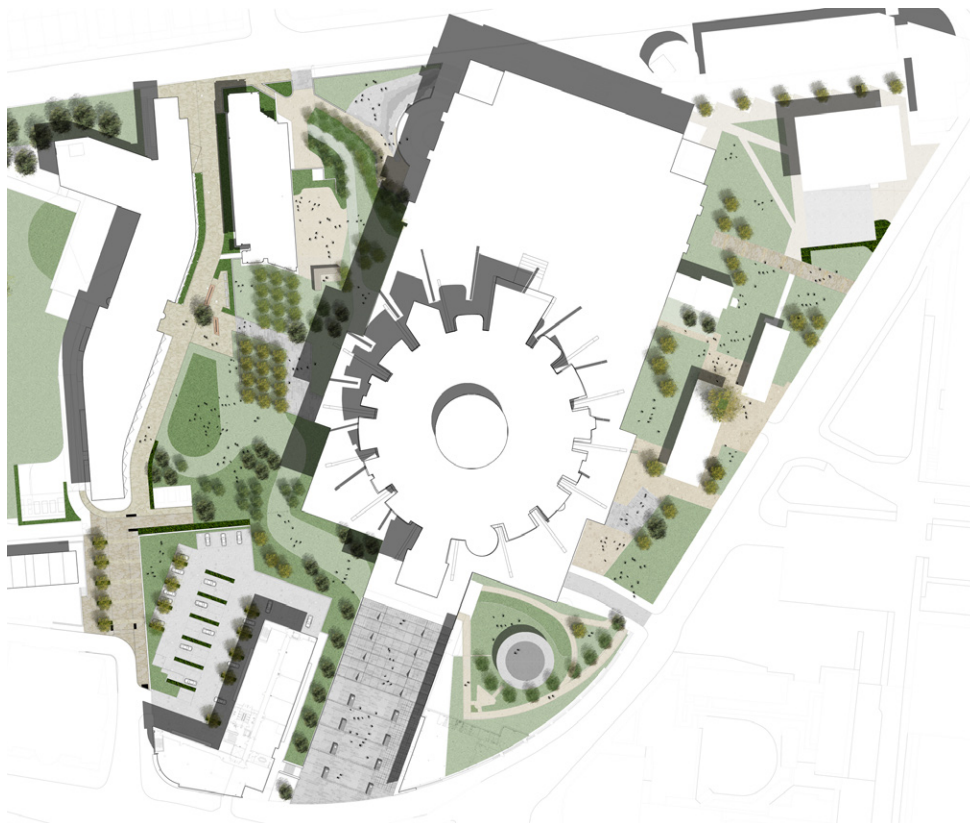


Liverpool Cathedral Square and Steps



Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral is an iconic landmark on the city's skyline, yet it stood distant from the surrounding cityscape, behind a steep grassy slope. Landscape Projects designed a new public square which has completely transformed the frontage of the Cathedral

Taking advantage of plans to clear a clutter of buildings in front of the Cathedral, Landscape Projects took Frederick Gibberds (the architect of the 1960's listed cathedral) ideas for a shallow stepped ramp and evolved them into a monumental flight of steps, dramatising the iconic architecture and entrance to the cathedral. This freed up space to introduce a new square at street level, overlooked by the adjacent visitor centre and café, and carefully scaled to frame the activities of meeting, collecting and walking, individually and in procession, into the cathedral. The roof garden over the visitor centre has become an intimate contemplative garden in contrast to the grand, monumental scale of the square below. The garden provides a route for level access to the cathedral, and has been enhanced by the addition of sculpture by the internationally renowned artist, Susanna Heron.

Landscape Projects was commissioned to plan the landscape of the Cathedral precinct, identify places for public activity which would be safe and connected to the surrounding city, and where

development would be possible which would respect views to the listed building, and contribute to the setting of the city, university and wider "Knowledge Quarter", including the emerging "Hope Street Quarter"

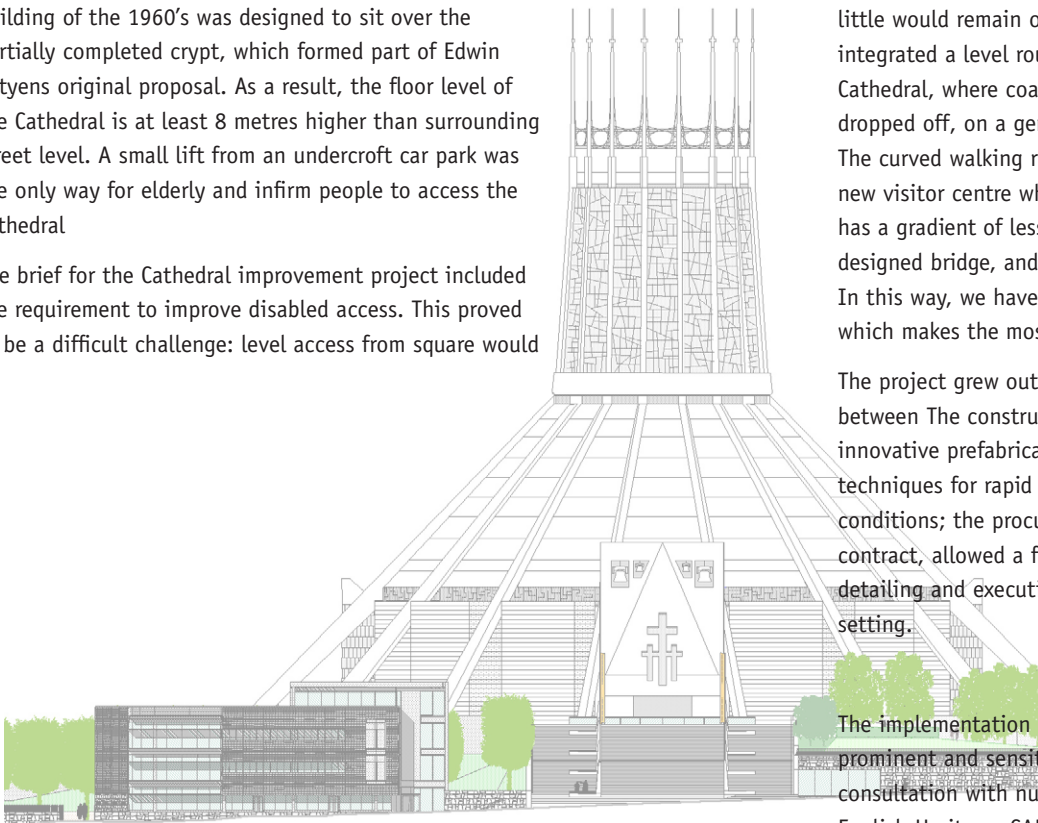
Tehnnically the project was challenging; the Cathedral building of the 1960's was designed to sit over the partially completed crypt, which formed part of Edwin Lutyens original proposal. As a result, the floor level of the Cathedral is at least 8 metres higher than surrounding street level. A small lift from an undercroft car park was the only way for elderly and infirm people to access the cathedral

The brief for the Cathedral improvement project included the requirement to improve disabled access. This proved to be a difficult challenge: level access from square would

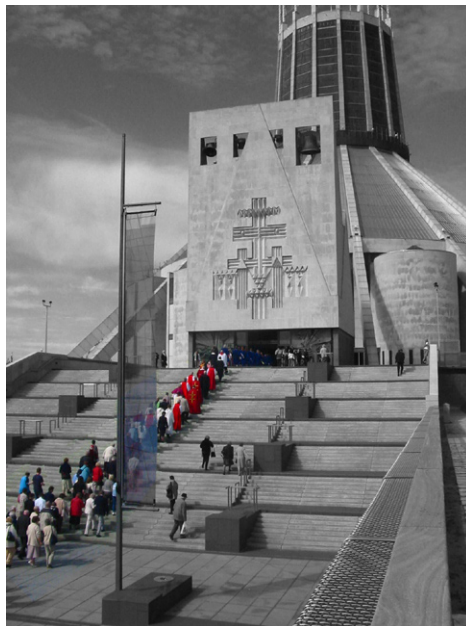
have resulted in such a long and convoluted ramp that little would remain of the square itself. Instead, we integrated a level route from the eastern side of the Cathedral, where coaches arrive and disabled people are dropped off, on a gentle rise to the Cathedral entrance. The curved walking route is supported by the roof of the new visitor centre which fronts onto the square below. It has a gradient of less than 1:21 and traverses a specially designed bridge, and incorporates special seating places. In this way, we have made a pleasant, accessible route which makes the most of the garden space.

The project grew out of a partnering arrangement between The construction of the public realm developed innovative prefabrication and offsite manufacturing techniques for rapid onsite work in constrained conditions; the procurement, via design and build contract, allowed a fast-track programme, and excellent detailing and execution appropriate to such a prestigious setting.

The implementation of the new public realm in such a prominent and sensitive setting involved considerable consultation with numerous stakeholders, including English Heritage, CABE, local civic and design panels, the 20th Century Society and the Historic Churches Commission.



Visitor Centre overlooks square



Cathedral steps during Easter pilgrimage



Garden with artwork installation



precast concrete steps with granite infill

The new public realm has transformed the relationship between the cathedral and Liverpool; the steps are a well-loved venue for outdoor events and photos against the dramatic architecture of the cathedral. The project has won prestigious several awards.

The Cathedral project demonstrates the Landscape Projects experience and abilities in creating dramatic and memorable public space in a prominent and sensitive setting, using modern construction methods to make a place which "feels like it has always been there"

Project Name : Cathedral Square and Steps, Liverpool

Project Description: Prestigious and innovative Public Realm Renewal in conservation area, adjacent to Grade 2 listed building (Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral)

Client : Neptune Developments / Archdiocese

Client Contact : Steven Parry, Chief Executive Neptune

Client contact tel : 0151 293 1010

Client email : info@neptunedevelopments.co.uk

Project dates : 2002-2006

Project value : Overall £3.6m

Project Team : Landscape Projects

FalconerChesterHall

Bingham Consulting Engineers

Susanna Heron (Artists)
