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The overview

The new and improved World's End Place was officially opened by the Leader of Kensington and Chelsea Council, Cllr Merrick Cockell on Friday 22 June 2007.

The project was carried out as part of the West Chelsea Initiative, designed to transform World's End Place, on the King's Road, London, into a stunning open space that people would be able to use and enjoy.

This square, in front of the World's End Estate, had been uninviting for some time and a consultation was carried out in 2006 to see what local people would like improved.

In line with the Council's streetscape policies, the lighting and street furniture was upgraded to give the area an uncluttered feel. The Council believed that these lighting improvements will lower the opportunities for crime.

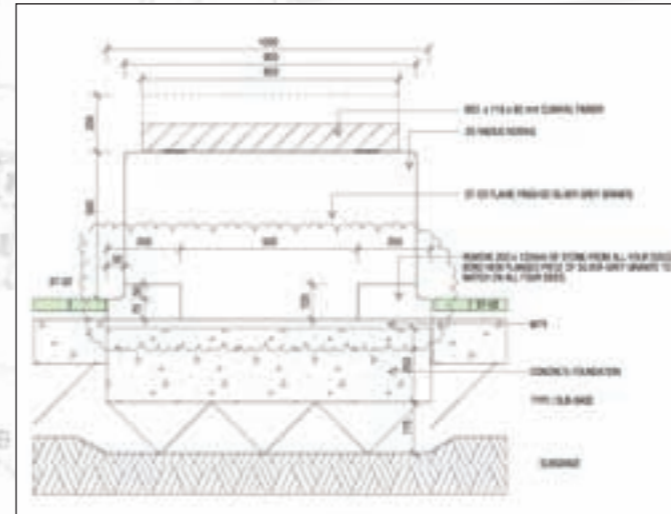
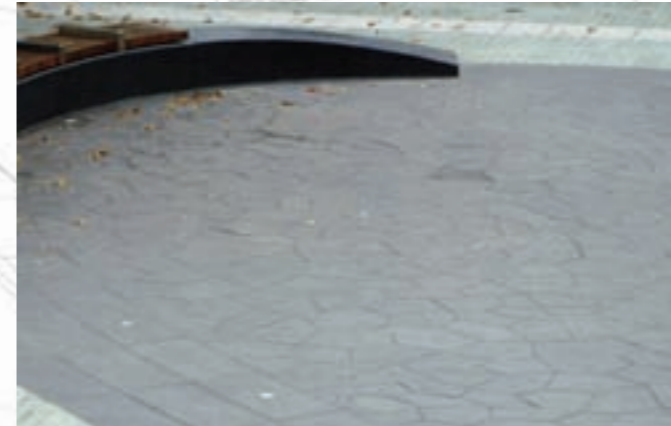
The overhead walkway was removed to open up sightlines and a new ellipse-shaped piazza created in natural stone to give the area a central focus and provide potential for community use.



Quote from Cllr Cockell "The World's End Place scheme is one component of the Council's renewing the legacy aim. Kensington and Chelsea has an outstanding built inheritance and it is the Council's responsibility to ensure that its legacy is of no less a standard and that it embraces the challenges facing city life in the future. I hope that residents of the World's End Estate will take real pride in the improved open space."

The Council renewed the dull and worn bricks and concrete surfaces with high quality natural stone paving which introduce colour and contrast into the area. Lampposts, benches and litter bins also were repositioned.

Hardscape supplied all the natural stone materials including Kobra Green bush hammered granite kerbs, radius', 'tactiles and 'crazy' paving, Pacific Black flamed granite elipsed steps, Royal White flamed granite seating and banding on the steps..



The detail

Because of the confines put on the contractors by the client, RBKC, in maintaining access at all times to pedestrian and vehicular traffic into and through the estate the Contractor was forced to construct the scheme on a hit or miss basis basically meaning that they had to build the project in a sequence to allow access through the middle of the site. They did not have any space for storage and asked Hardscape to store the material at their Southern depot to enable them to call off as per their construction programme. We were able to respond and arrange delivery to site within 36 hours, we also supplied them with updated information showing exactly which material was delivered, what was available in store and what material we were still waiting for from our supplier.

The two main features of the scheme was the 300m² Ellipse and Bench. In keeping with our strong design ethic we were able to help the client by taking their original concept, which was a major stumbling block not only in cost but also in programme requirements and we were able to offer in conjunction with our masonry design team the ability to produce CAD design and individual working drawings that aided the contractor at the tender stage to bring the scheme to the client within a more realistic budget and construction programme. The design which was to be produced in Crystal Black flamed granite was "crazy paving" the original of which called for 340 individual pieces of stone cut to fit within the Elliptical shape, but the designer, Eric Hallquist of John McAslan and Partners, decided that it needed to be more complex and decided to increase that to 1400 individual pieces. We produced the individual cutting lists for approval so keeping the designer and client involved within the design and manufacturing process and also produced an overall plan showing the exact position and orientation of each piece within the design. In fact the design process was so efficient that the contractor was able to lay the material within without having to re cut any pieces to make them fit. We were also able to further enhance the material used on the Ellipse by adding a natural enhancer and sealant the application of which was twofold, one to bring out the natural hue of the granite which can lighten after flaming and two making it easier to maintain and keep clean. The bench which was also manufactured in Pacific Black Flamed, was also a design challenge in that it had to follow the curve of the Ellipse seamlessly and also appear to rise out of the ground. Once more we were able to take the design concept and produce working CAD drawings for approval and manufacture.