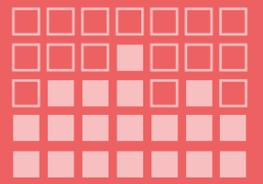


Milton Keynes Placemaking project

ANALYSIS



The Big Questions?

Q. Is there a lack of a genuinely public space in centre of Milton Keynes?



My first visit quickly established a **lack of quality public space** in the centre of MK, with the two shopping centres becoming the de-facto public gathering spots. This view was reinforced by the **Festival of Creative Urban Living**, an event put on by Ramblour which saw a series of temporary installations intended to provoke debate on what could become of Milton Keynes' public space. [to see a video walkthrough.](#)

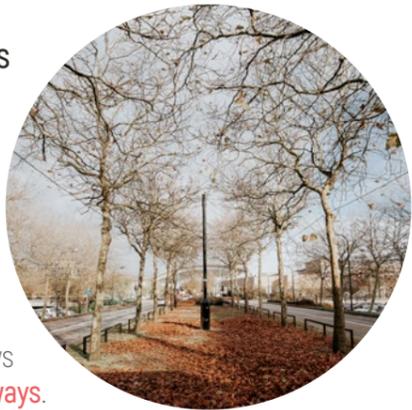
Q. Whatever happened to the City Club and the other planned spaces in the centre of Milton Keynes?



Further research uncovered the plans for a **utopic public space** called the City Club that fell away in a changing political climate of the 70s. Even the shopping centre originally had a public realm function as **an open sided public right of way**, usable by people day or night. Using **timelapse photography** I sought to show how little there was to make people stop within the study site and how the site needed a new space. [to see timelapse movement study.](#)

Q. What are the special qualities or features we can work with?

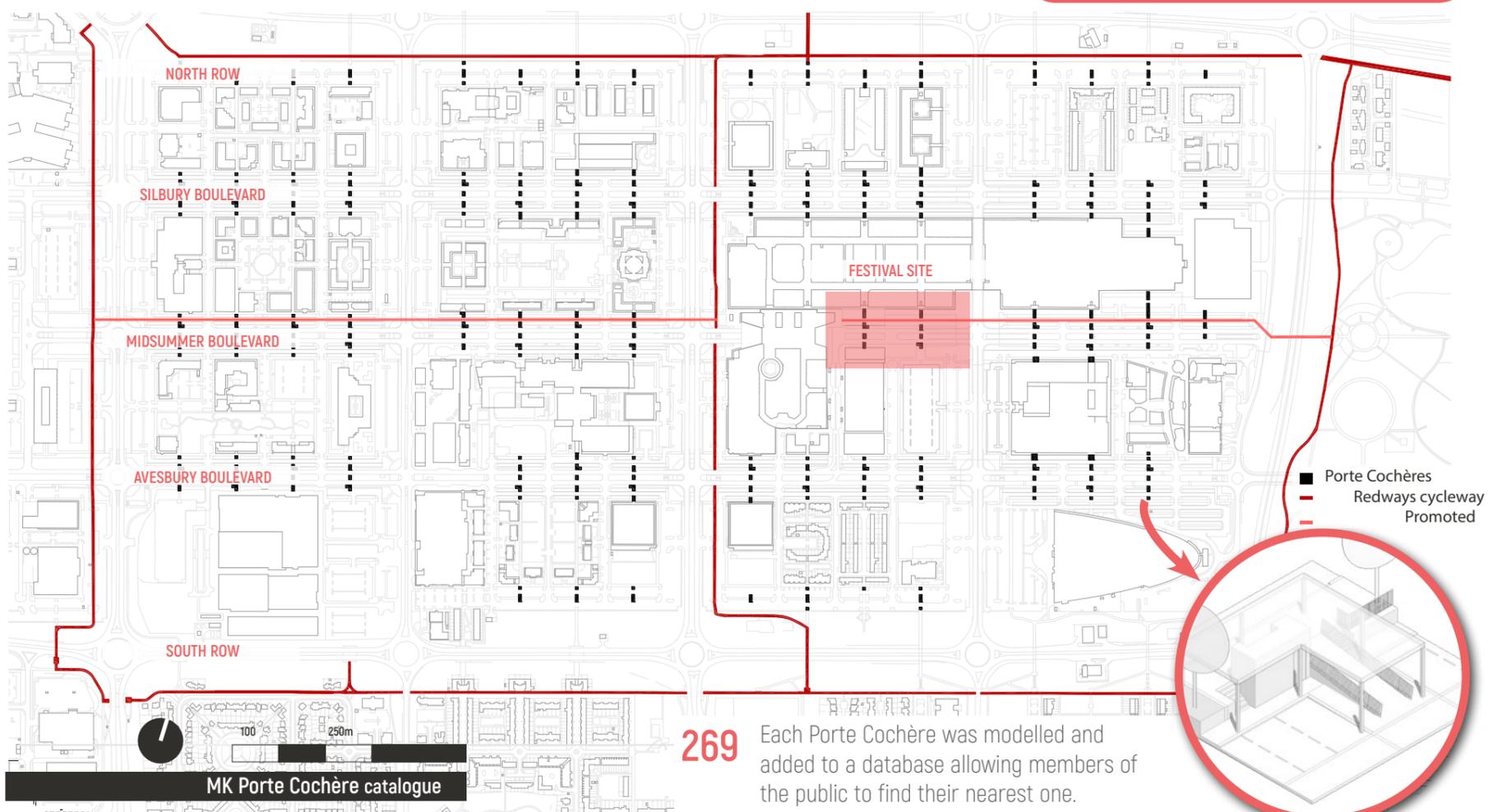
The planners and developers behind Milton Keynes had the vision to have **wide tree-lined boulevards** which have now reached near maturity, sheltered crossing points called **porte cochères** and a network of cycle ways given their own unique term called **redways**.



The Urban Catalogue

The project set out to establish a detailed map of the quality of **what is there at the moment** & to find out **whether this could be re-purposed** rather than ignoring the existing character.

Click on the map to see the full online catalogue

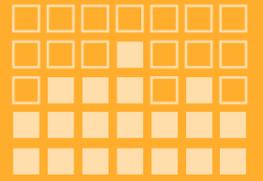


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Each Porte Cochère was modelled and added to a database allowing members of the public to find their nearest one.

Milton Keynes Placemaking project

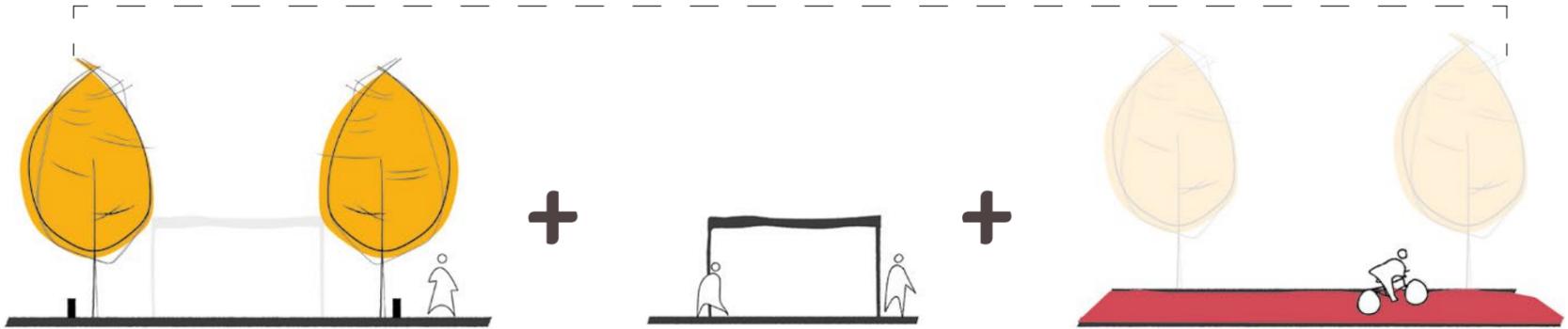
A NEW VISION



The Big Idea!

Work with the existing

Using elements such as the avenues of mature trees, porte cochères and redways



To create a series of spaces, rooted in local character

Which can be temporary or permanent, can be accessed by cycling but above all are unique to Milton Keynes



Guiding Principles



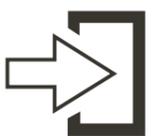
PERFORM

Enliven & animate the streets and shelters



PLAY

Awaken curiosity & promote Playfulness



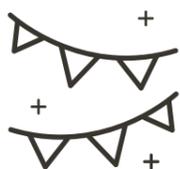
OCCUPY

Take over & inhabit the porte cochères



EXCHANGE

Foster creativity, craftsmanship & Exchange



CELEBRATE

Celebrate reclaiming the streets for the people

Starting with the temporary

BLOCK PARTY.

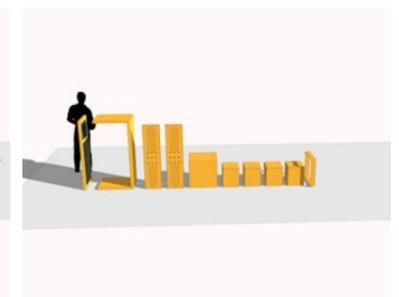
TRANSPORT



UNLOAD



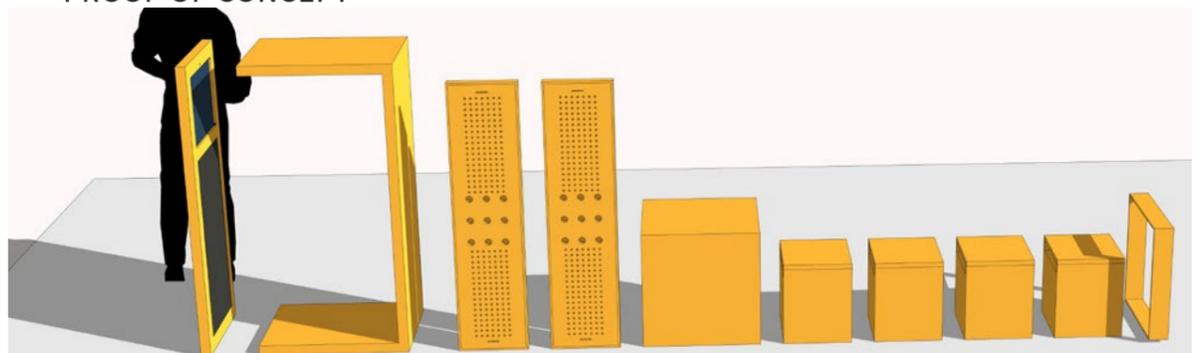
UNBOX



The idea of the Block Party was borne out of the grid-like, blocky nature of Milton Keynes and the blocky, stackable elements of the **Kits of Parks** that could be manufactured to allow people to start to take over the public spaces. This idea builds on case studies of temporary spaces from

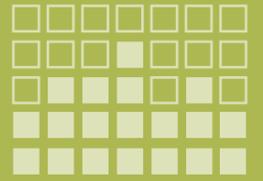
across the world and would allow the citizens of MK to **test ideas, locations and take ownership** of their public space. The online catalogue developed during the analysis stage could be used to book out a Porte cochère close to them, they could pick up a kit and cycle it to their location for unboxing.

PROOF OF CONCEPT



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CONSULTATION & DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

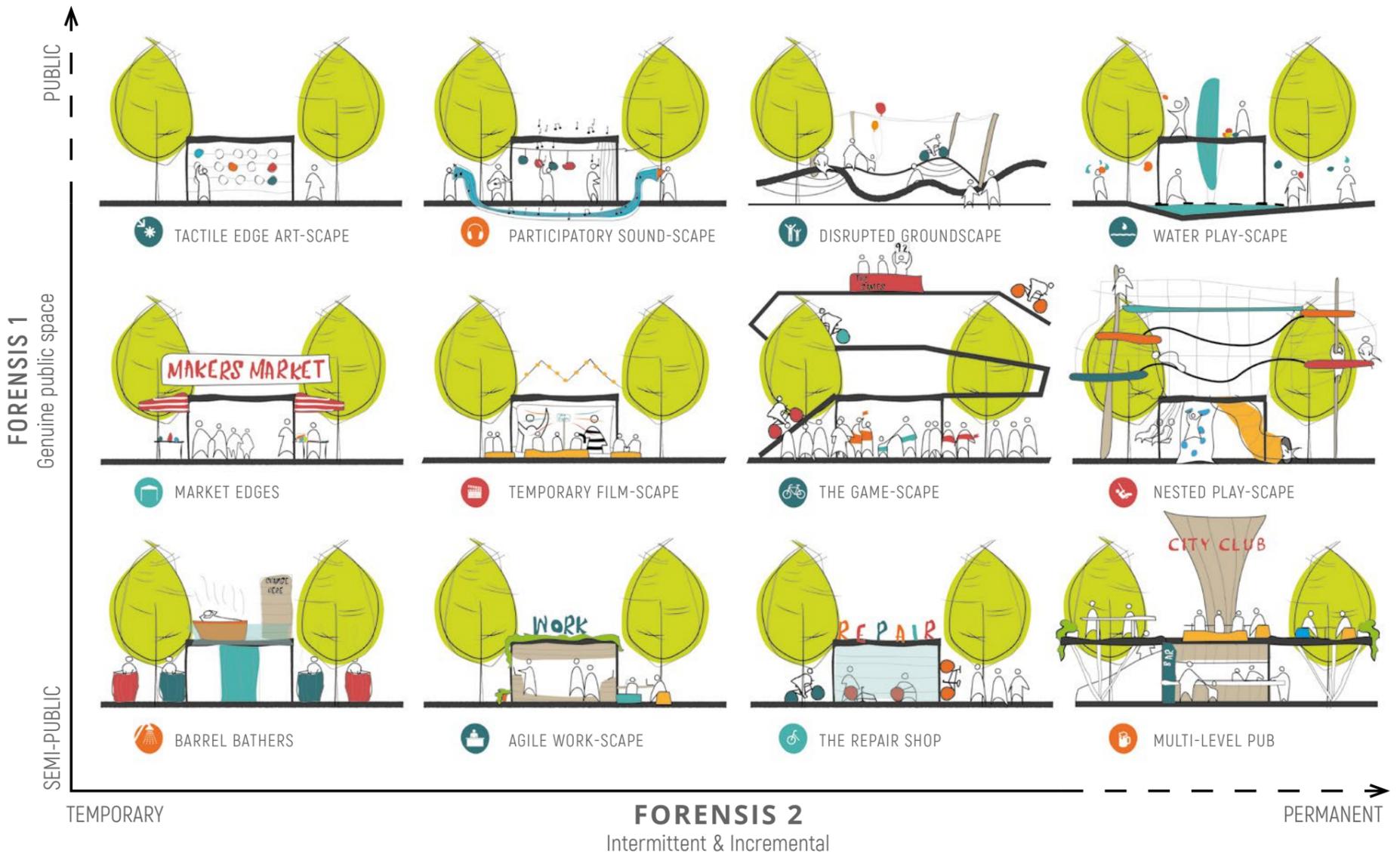


Testing & Voting

To establish **what the people of MK would actually like**, a series of sketch options were drawn up. The intention was to hold a small physical consultation event in the

Centre of Milton Keynes but given the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, a smaller, online version was drawn up where people could vote.

Click here to see the online consultation drawn up for voters



Building to a permanent park

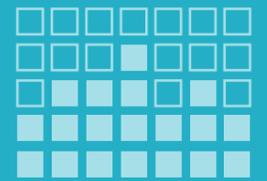
Using the (limited) consultation responses, The ideas were developed into the **first phase of the urban intervention** which would see the roads on Midsummer Boulevard **closed to cars** to allow easier access for a temporary festival site. The goal of this phase is to **slow people down** by creating an area where they would

dwell for a little while longer and allow them to feel the benefits of a public space in central MK. By blocking the direct movement through the Porte Cochères, people can either engage with them playfully by climbing through the assembled webs or they can filter through the trees and discover the food trucks.



Milton Keynes Placemaking project

DESIGN DELIVERY



A multi-tiered, permanent Urban Park

The final proposal saw the transformation of the Porte cochères **from passive objects into active objects**, part of a joined up superstructure that has become a multi-tiered public space. I also promoted

the idea of bringing the Redways up this structure allowing **bike users to ramp up into and through buildings** so that they could cycle directly to cycle stores immediately adjacent to their workplaces. This

final proposal was intended to excite the citizens of Milton Keynes but through a slower, more incremental approach it is hoped that the final design would be **shaped by the people themselves**.



Axo View of joined up superstructure

1:250 @ A3

