

## UCL hubs

key strategies  
resource + amenities

The Masterplan audit and consultations revealed a requirement for a significant increase in the amount of openly accessible student/academic work space. The Masterplan proposes a range of 'hubs' across the campus which:

- provide a variety of good quality spaces suitable for student and academic study, individually or in groups, and meetings
- are supported by appropriate services, such as catering facilities, resource and ICT, including technicians
- encourage inter-disciplinary working
- offer an administrative interface where appropriate
- create local 'hearts' within the campus

The hubs vary in size and provide a differing range of facilities and services. The hubs are distributed across the Campus and where possible located on the lower floor levels (see space principles).



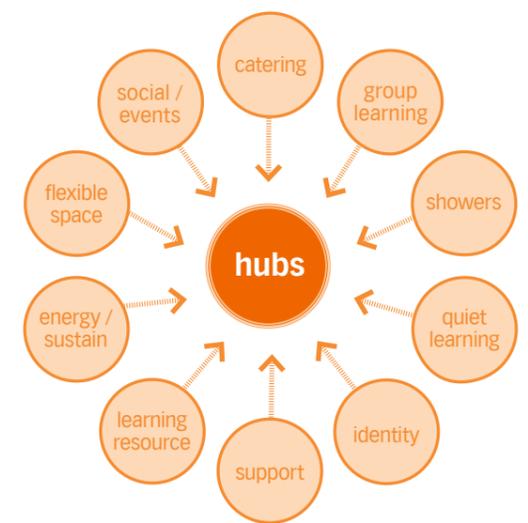
above (top to bottom): DMS Watson; Glasgow Caledonian University Saltire Centre © Scottish Libraries and Information Council (flickr)

"students were generally very keen for a space where you could eat, chat, work, discuss essays, discuss yesterday's night out, use laptops etc."

UCLU Market Research, Redbrick Evidence

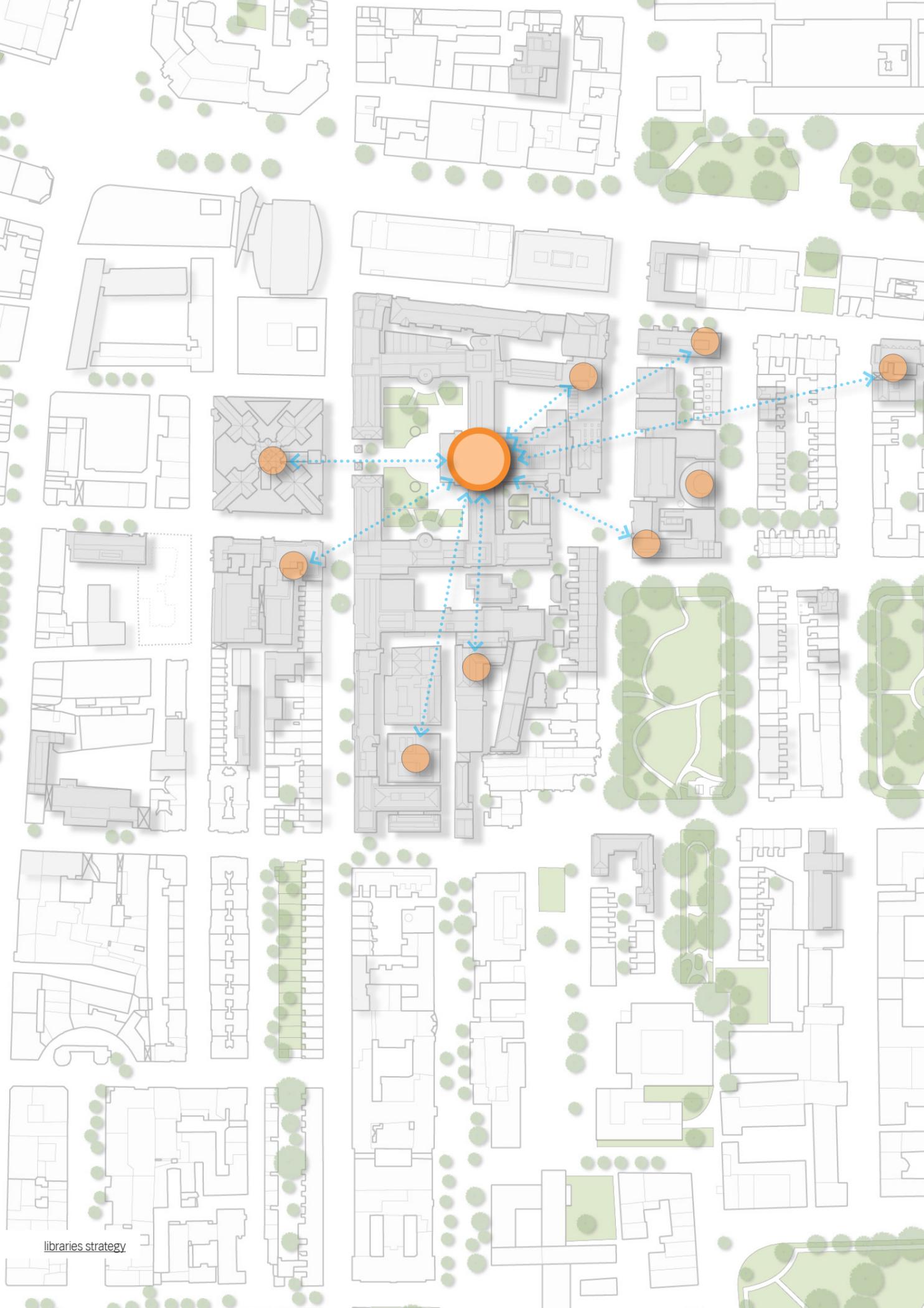


indicative hub locations



 small hubs

 large hub facilities



libraries strategy

## Central library

key strategies  
resource + amenities

During Stage II the Masterplan team tabled a proposal for the consolidation of the central and science libraries into a single library.

By releasing, re-configuring space within the Wilkins Building basement and extending areas of the existing library accommodation, the Science Library could be consolidated into an improved and expanded central library located within the symbolic heart of UCL.

The proposal provides:

- a single central library located within the Wilkins Building
- a variety of study spaces, including project learning, group and quiet study space
- an extension of the existing library accommodation
- the potential for a link to the social/project learning spaces located within the hubs around the Campus, including an e-library resource



above (top to bottom): the Wilkins Building; the Donaldson Reading Room; Vitra furniture [www.vitra.com](http://www.vitra.com)

*“UCL Library Services aspires to provide all its users with high quality services, delivered through better integrated electronic systems and libraries designed to optimise access to collections and study space”*

**Paul Ayris, Director of Library Services**

- satellite libraries
- central library facility

## Collections

UCL boasts a range of internationally recognised collections in a range of spaces across the core campus, as well as on sites away from Bloomsbury.

The Masterplan recommends that the collections are relocated and/or re-curated within new display spaces to encourage greater participation by UCL and encouraging more external interest.

The Masterplan proposes the collections are located in destination buildings on the perimeter of the campus (as the Grant and Archeology collections are at present) to enhance their identity and to encourage public accessibility.

An introduction to the UCL assets is to be located in the heart of the Wilkins Building to indicate the quality and content of the collections and to provide directions to each.

**Petrie Collection:** relocated from existing Egyptology building into the top floor exhibition space and adjacent spaces within the Warburg Institute on Woburn Place

**Grant Museum:** retained in its new space within the Rockefeller (the Thomas Lewis room); integrated and co-located with medical collections

**Archaeology:** retained in its current location but reconfigured to ensure visibility from Gordon Square and integrated into a new hub space.

**UCL Art Collections:** co-located with the public interface of special collections in the Housman Room, providing research and teaching facilities and enhanced public gallery space



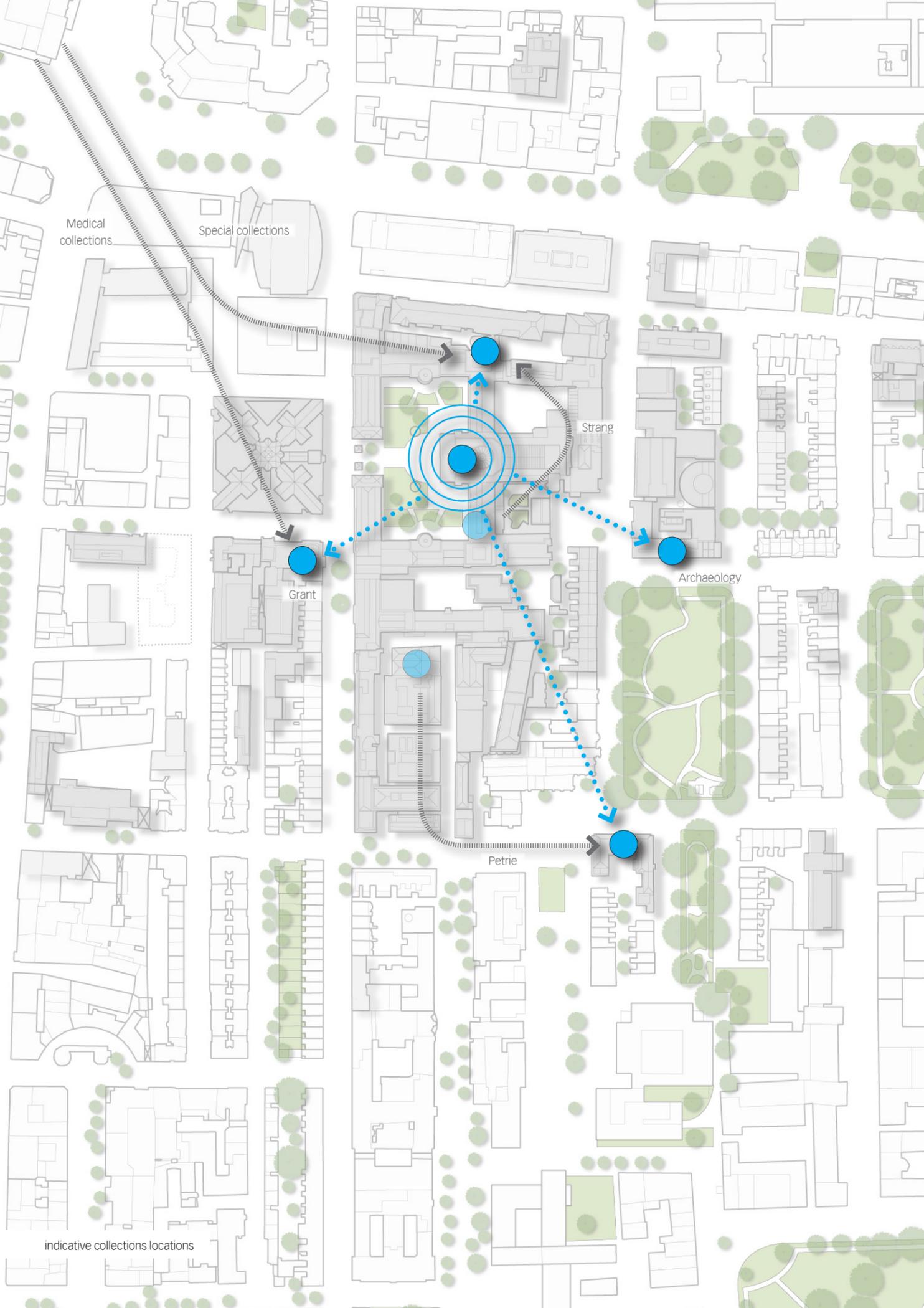
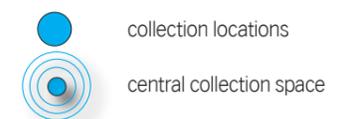
above (top to bottom): object learning at UCL; teaching space within the Petrie Museum; Collection space, Great North Museum: Hancock © Graeme Peacock

*"The collections as a whole represent an outstanding resource for teaching and research"*

### UCL Art Collections HEFCE Bid

- 43,961 annual on-site users
- 10,397 annual primary and secondary school students in on-site and outreach activities
- 120,150 annual conglomerated users

UCL Museums and collections Annual Report 2008 - 2009



## Student experience

key strategies  
resource + amenities

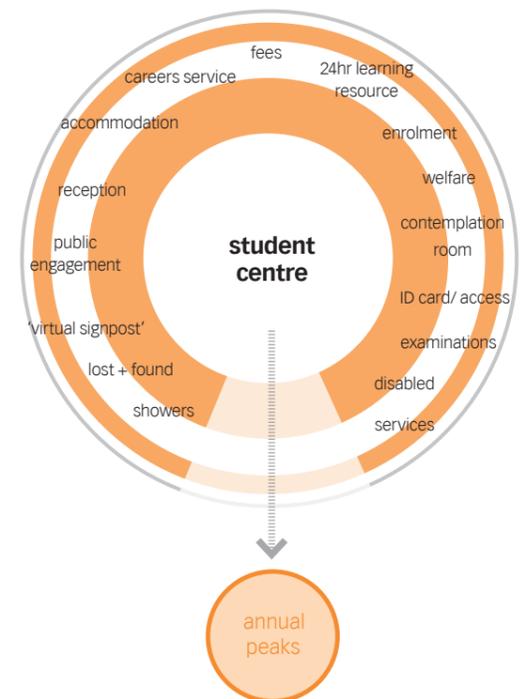
To attract the best new students to UCL, it is important that the 'student experience' is enhanced. Top Russell Group universities and international competitors take this issue very seriously. The Masterplan has identified a need for a dedicated student centre to house the currently fragmented student interfaces under a single roof.

The student centre is designed to:

- improve the student experience
- provide a 'one-stop-shop' for all UCL students and a public interface to student services
- provide a place with 24/7 access, to both out of hours staff and study space
- provide flexible space suited to the Union
- create activity space for non-departmental functions and events

In addition to the Student Centre, the creation of hubs around the campus will provide social learning space for students which is currently lacking. There will also be improvements in IT provision, teaching spaces and teaching labs, catering and the general environment which will be of benefit of our students.

During annual peaks, such as enrolment, facilities may still need to be temporarily extended to the larger event spaces elsewhere, such as those in the Wilkins Building.



above (top to bottom): new student centre on Gordon Street; BK city, Delft © The Why Factory Tribune at Delft University of Technology, Faculty of Architecture; students in the Quadrangle

"Student expectations of their university experience are rising. It is important that UCL should respond to them..."

The UCL White Paper, 2007 - 2012

"(UCL shall pursue) investment in libraries, lecture theatres, seminar rooms, common rooms and other learning environments. Here are opportunities for complete transformation"

The UCL White Paper, 2007 - 2012

- existing student facilities
- new student centre

## Staff experience

Staff experience will be enhanced by planned investment in up-to-date facilities, a more coherent approach to location of academic areas, the creation of the hubs, improved spaces for events and conferences and attention to circulation routes.

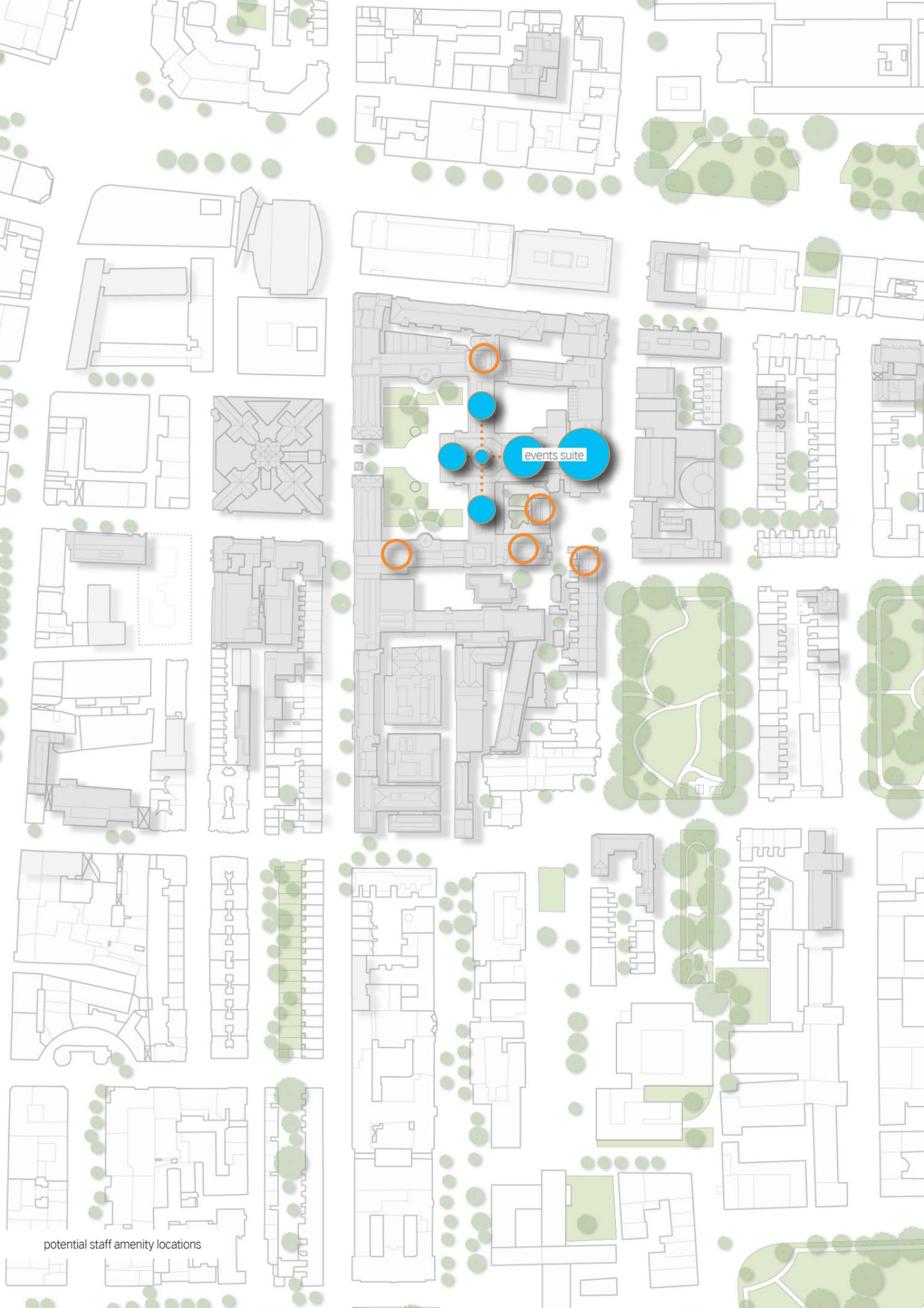
The Masterplan proposes a series of flexible meeting and social spaces in the Wilkins Building and South Wing. These multi-functional spaces will also be used as part of the library and create new conference and event spaces of various sizes.

Enhanced amenities and better catering facilities support these spaces across the campus.

In addition to the campus-wide facilities the Masterplan highlights a number of opportunities to provide a central staff space supported by smaller meeting/social spaces in the Gordon Street houses. These spaces would provide an opportunity for a new centrally-located open-plan meeting space while the houses create an opportunity for a dedicated, well-situated staff amenity which could accommodate open and bookable meeting rooms, dining rooms, office and possibly sleeping accommodation.



above (top to bottom): Housman room existing; Executive Vitra furniture Vitra [www.vitra.com](http://www.vitra.com); Vitra Basel collectors lounge (pop up exhibition lounge) © Vitra [www.vitra.com](http://www.vitra.com)



potential staff amenity locations

- potential locations for staff centric facilities
- events space

## Catering

The masterplan vision is that catering should enhance the experience of UCL for all members of the University community, as well as for visitors. Our catering facilities should also promote interdisciplinarity and collaborative working and support our commitment to sustainability. Busy lifestyles mean that many of us will want access to “grab-and-go” facilities rather than traditional refectory-style provision, and so a range of small outlets around the campus are suggested, ensuring that the hubs are supported by catering. At the same time, a range of facilities with different kinds of offerings - for meetings, entertaining visitors, conferences - are proposed. The Beach Site provides a major opportunity for new catering facilities fronting Gordon Street.

The Masterplan suggests external café/pavilions on primary through-routes and proposes that UCL establishes a relationship with smaller niche traders to provide mobile catering offers at peak times.

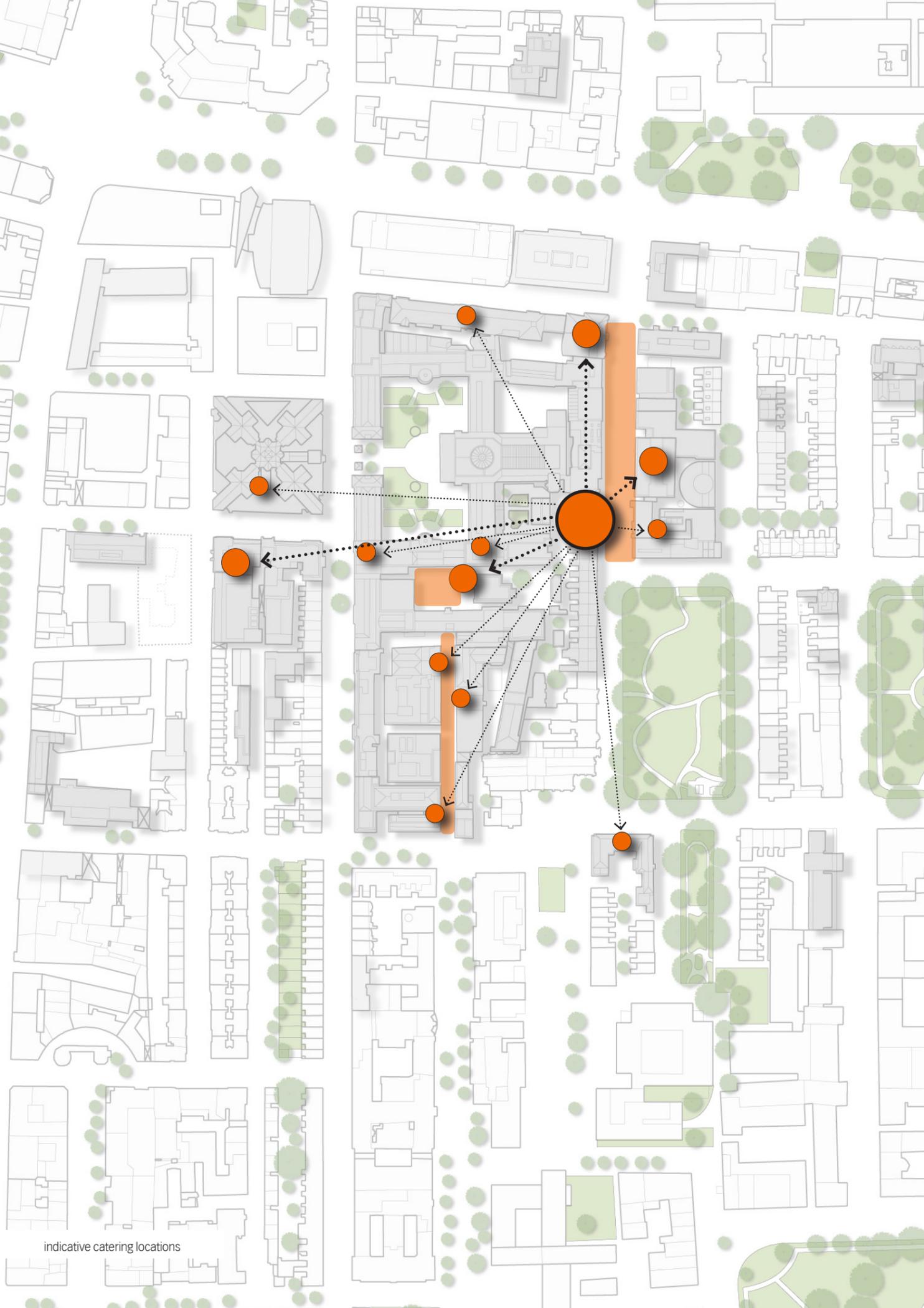
The objectives can be summarised as follows:

- to provide a wide variety of smaller ‘grab and go’ catering facilities throughout the Bloomsbury campus
- to create a new, central, catering facility on the Beach site to provide an active street frontage on Gordon Street
- to allow project learning spaces to be supported by catering facilities
- to allow local businesses to provide services around the campus
- to use catering to activate Malet Place and Gordon Street and support desire lines and destinations



above (top to bottom): UCL Print Room Cafe; mobile catering unit © Copenhagenize; Loughborough University Library cafe © Loughborough University Library

● catering offering



indicative catering locations



external environments

## External environment

key strategies  
resource + amenities

### Landscape considerations

While the core UCL site is densely developed, one third of its area is open space. Unlike the internal areas of accommodation which relate to specific academic groups, the external spaces are accessible to the wider academic community and provide important connections to the surrounding neighbourhood. These spaces are heavily used; the level of foot traffic along key spaces at the start of the day and at lunch is similar to a Saturday afternoon in a local high street. However, the treatment of these spaces is largely utilitarian; there are few opportunities to enjoy the spaces and little encouragement to linger. These external spaces represent a valuable resource which justifies appropriate commitment and investment.

The objectives for the open space include:

- engendering a sense of Community
- establishing a Sense of Place
- establishing a clear identity
- celebrating creativity and encouraging public art
- reflecting academic activity
- stimulating dialogue and debate

The following strategies have been identified:

- improved connectivity between internal and external space. Currently there is little relationship between the internal environments of the academic buildings and the adjoining external spaces. The aim should be to establish active frontages and erode the thresholds between interior and external environments.
- rationalised servicing, storage and plant which currently occupy a significant proportion of the incidental external space.
- increased opportunities for enjoying external space with better seating, tables, recreational furniture.
- establish a strong visual aesthetic in terms of materiality and detailing. External furniture, seats, bins which have a major impact on the spatial quality and character. The choice of these can help reinforce the identity of the University and what it stands for.
- bike racking is already a major visual feature across campus and is likely to increase.

Cycle use should be encouraged through adequate provision without it dominating the environment.

- celebrate the qualities, characteristics and idiosyncrasies of the existing site; this is a strongly urban campus in the heart of the city.
- encourage use by the group as well as the individual, the design of external spaces can provide better opportunities to meet and to support social interaction.
- expand the learning environment in to the external spaces.
- curate permanent and temporary public art in the public spaces on the site.
- express a sustainable agenda, green technologies forming part of the campus aesthetic, provide a model for sustainable urban learning.

Delivery of an enhanced environment can occur at a number of levels. Improvements at Gordon Square and the pedestrianisation of Gordon Street represent significant opportunities to increase the quantum of external space across campus. However, these aspirational proposals will require significant levels of funding together with the support of a wide range of stakeholders both within the University and the wider community, the design and use of these spaces needing to accommodate the needs of a much wider audience.

The University therefore needs to realise the full potential of the network of spaces that run through the existing campus and which are likely to offer more fertile ground for immediate improvement. A programme of small interventions executed in a coherent manner across campus would, over a relatively short period establish a collective aesthetic with as much impact as the larger strategic projects.

*"There is widespread support [amongst UCL users] for pedestrianising as much of the surrounding area as possible, for enhancing and preserving green spaces and for creating more landscaped and open space throughout the campus where staff and students can socialise"*

The Provost's Green Paper: Summary of responses received, 2004

 external environment