

3.6.9 Landscape Concept

This area of landscape comprises River Thames frontage, movement routes and the Cafe Terrace. This seeks to maximise usable public open space using terracing and slopes whilst accommodating a gently sloping shared cycle footway that meanders through the scheme.

Thames View Terraces



Focus on native species of planting boosting biodiversity



Clearly legible routes via steps and ramps

River Thames Corridor



Native riparian species along the river edge, using well spaced fastigate trees



Soft planting along grass banks running from the buildings down to the towpath



Cafe Terrace

The new bridged connection provides direct access to Christchurch Meadows, fulfilling the aspirations of Readings Core Strategy.

The space provides a safe footway / cycle environment that meanders from the bridge level into the site. The meandering route allows front door access from all proposed buildings to ensure the route is animated.

The route weaves through pockets of grass slopes and terraces that provide resting points and small areas of informal recreation.

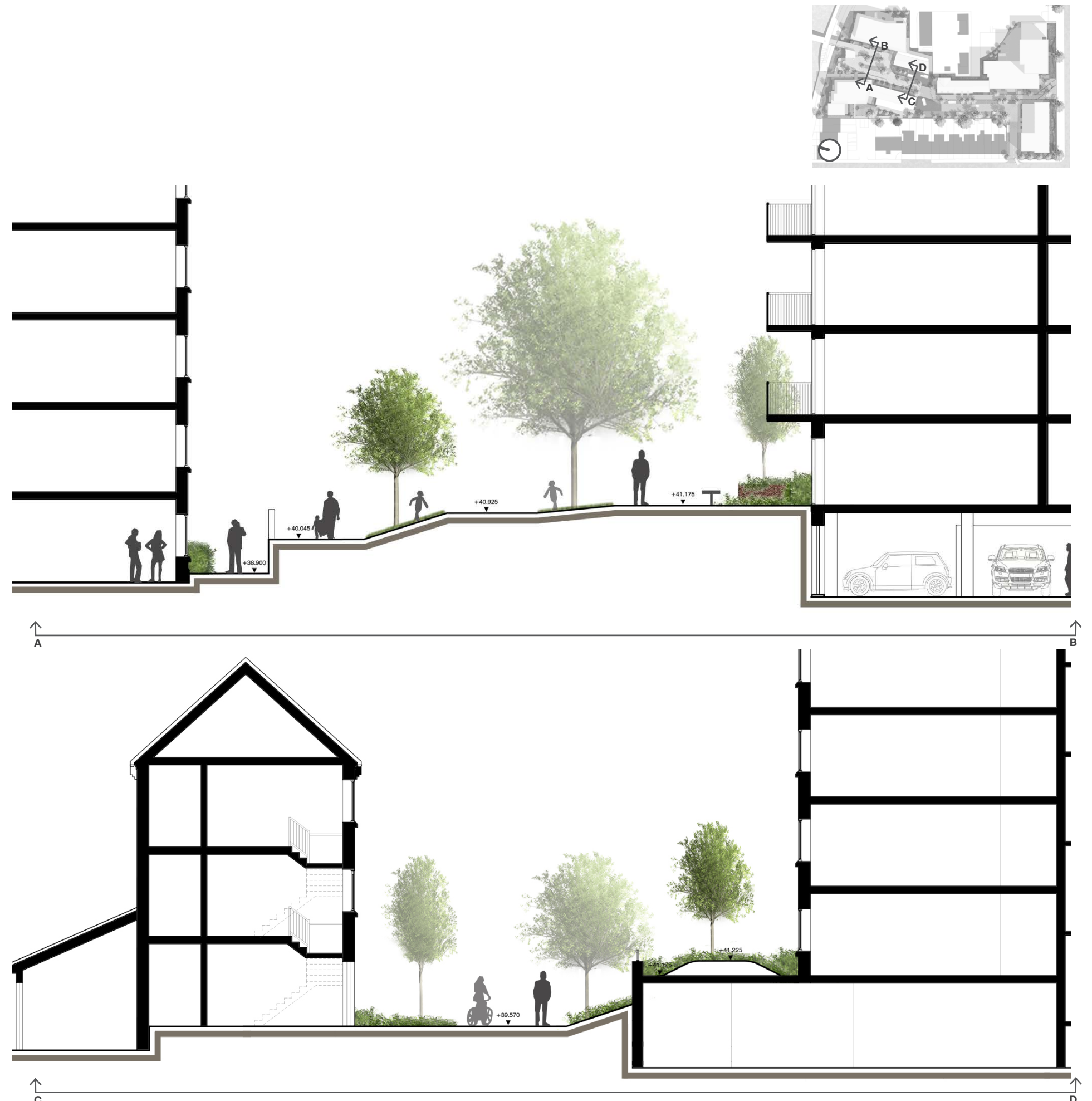
River Bank

This area within the 8m EA buffer, and is an open space policy requirement. By removing an existing brick wall, the design provides a landscaped slope between the proposed built form and the tow path. This slope will be planted with native riparian species, providing an ecotone of grassland, shrub and tree planting.

Providing areas of mown grass along this edge, as well as incidental pieces of street furniture, allow this edge to be used by the public to rest along the river edge.

Key Design Principles

- Publicly accessible open scape along River Thames corridor
- Cafe terrace with views across the River Thames
- Towpath directly accessible from the new scheme via an accessible ramped route
- Functional pockets of open space
- Native planting within the 8m EA River Thames buffer zone.

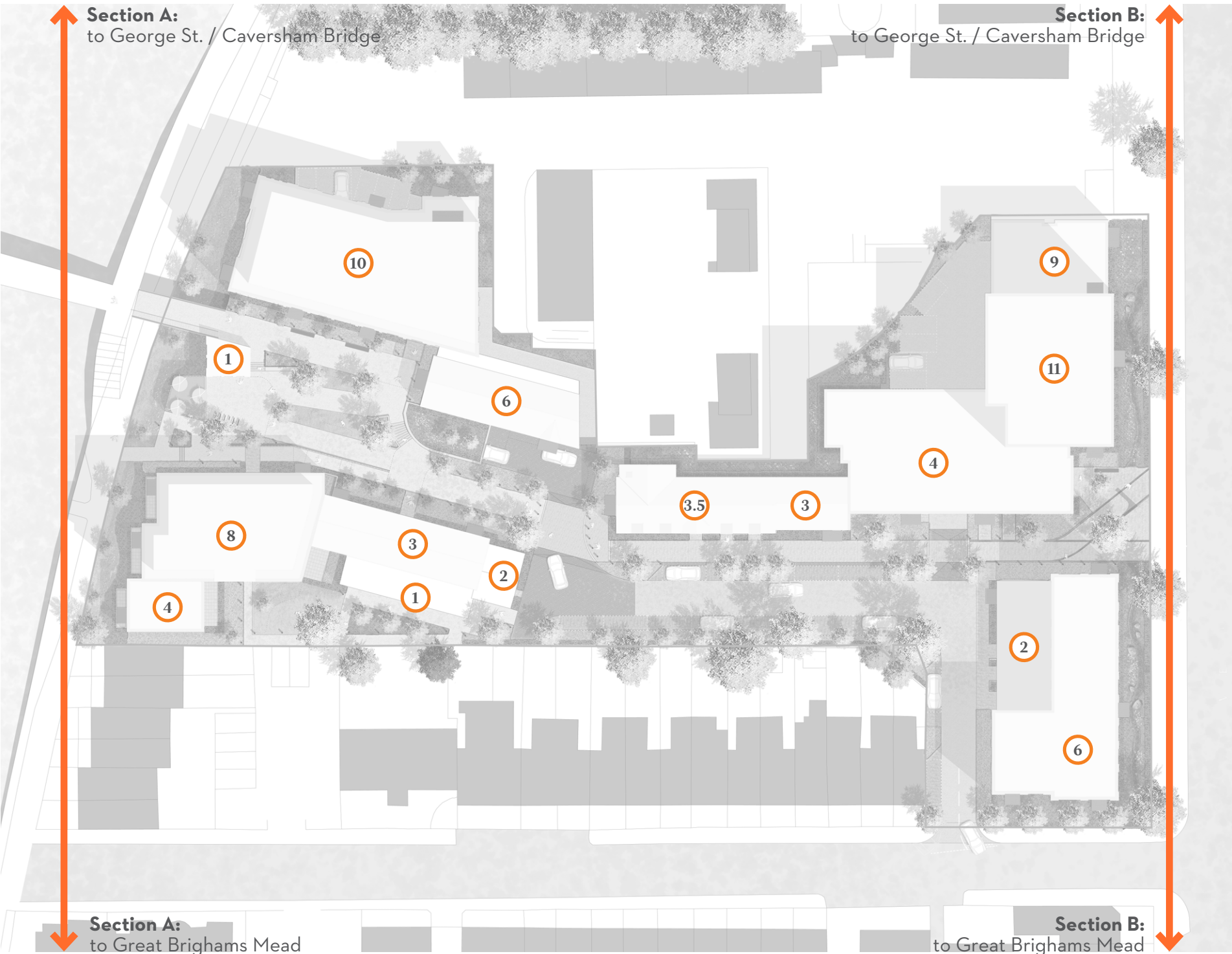




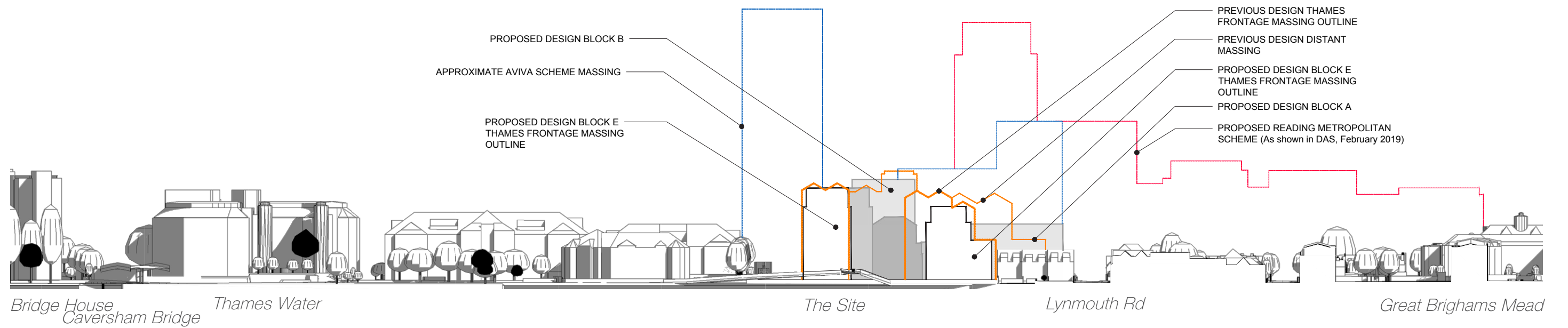


3.7 Scale

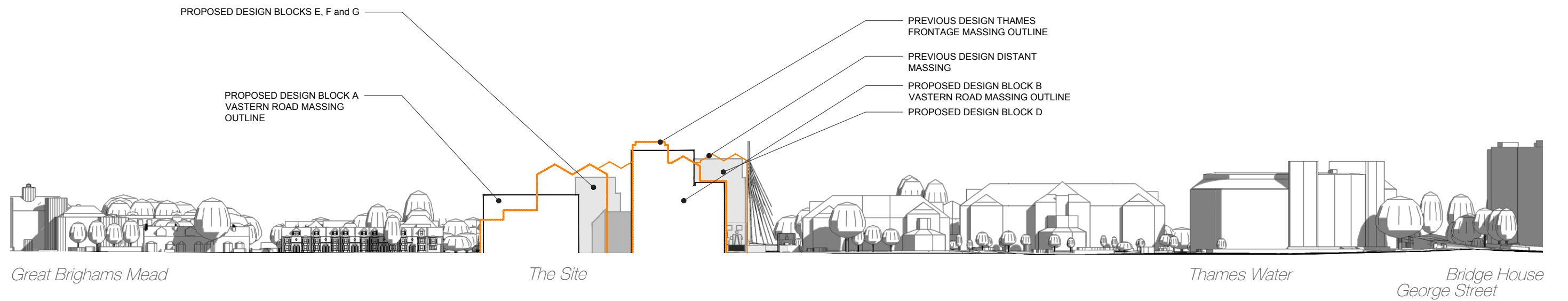
The massing has been assessed in relation to the surrounding context, and schemes discussed in previous pre-application meetings.



Proposed Section Key & Number of Storeys
NTS @ A3



Section A (North):
River Thames Massing Context



Section B (South):
Vastern Road Massing Context

3.8 Access & Movement

3.8.1 Access & Movement Strategy

Through the central part of the site sits a dedicated 3m wide foot and cycleway, flanked by landscaped elements and tree planting. This route connects the town centre from Vastern Road, through to the Thames Towpath and Christchurch Bridge to the north.

With the changes in level between the site, towpath and Christchurch Bridge, gentle deviations are introduced to the routes to maintain a DDA-compliant route at 1:21 or less throughout the site. This is supplemented through the introduction of shorter, stepped pedestrian routes.

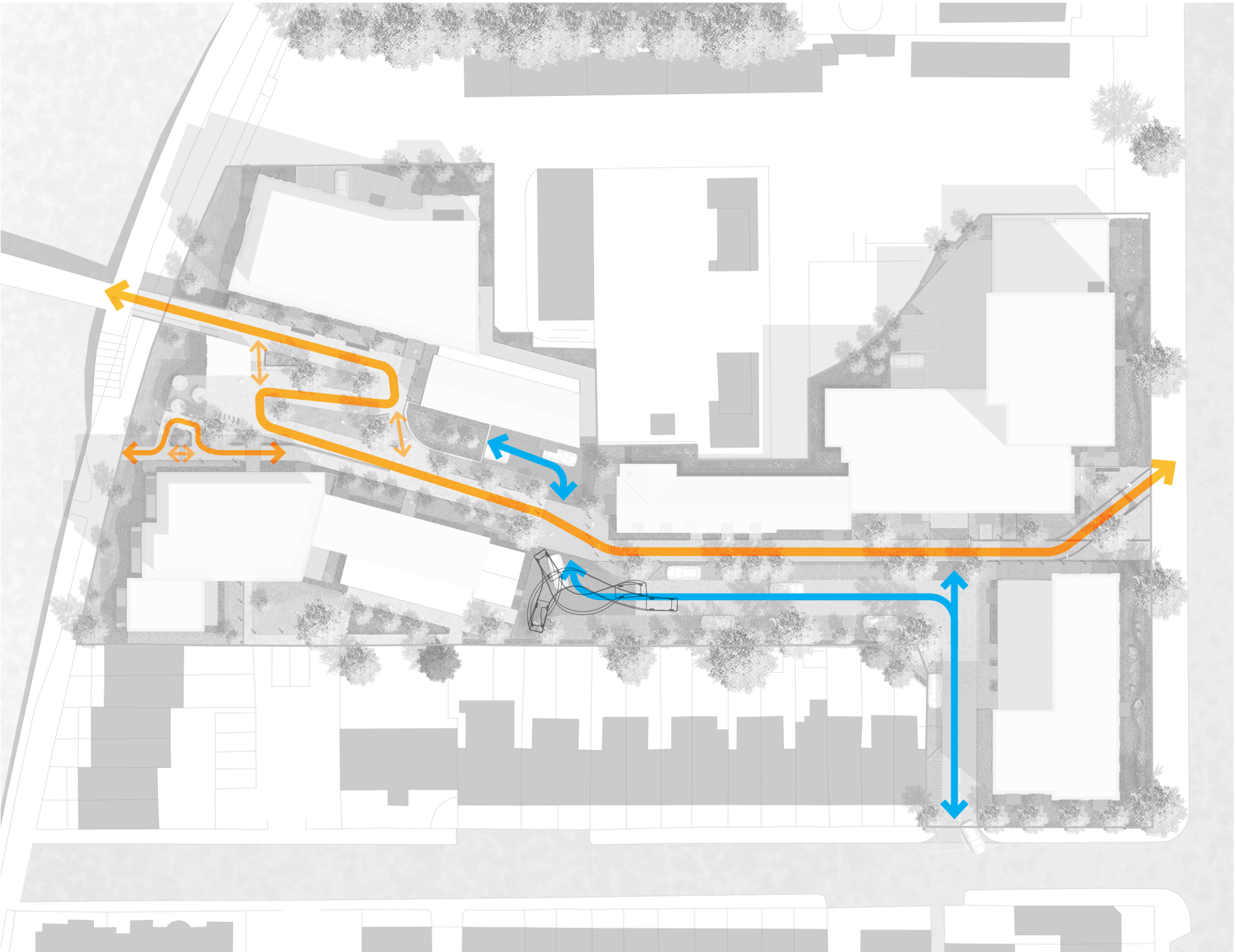
As the dedicated foot cycleway runs through the centre of the scheme, we have introduced a switchback as a speed calming measure for cyclists. The switchbacks themselves widen to 4m to provide safe manouvering space for all users.

Vehicles access the site through Lynmouth Road.

3.8.2 Vehicle Tracking and Visibility

A reorientation of the road position through the scheme, plus the changes to the building footprints through the pre-app process, allow for vehicles to turn within the carriageway without the requirement to cross the dedicated foot/cycleway.

- ➡ 3m wide Foot / Cycleway to / from Christchurch Bridge
- ➡ Foot / Cycleway to / from the Thames Towpath
- ➡ Additional stepped routes
- ➡ Vehicular Route



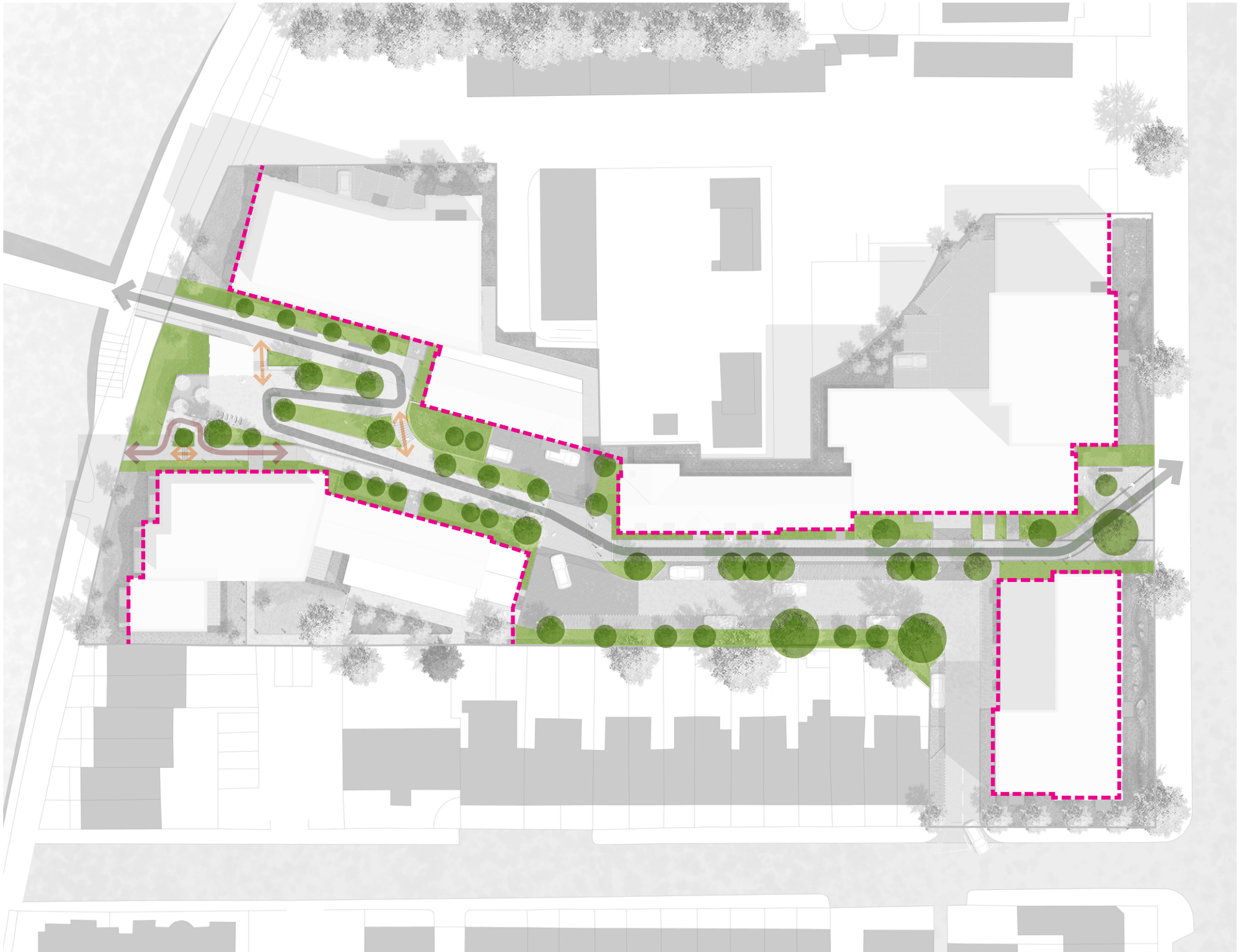
3.8.3 Providing a Landscape Route to the River

The proposals deliver a landscaped, tree-lined route through the site, connecting Christchurch Meadow and Thames to the north, through to the Town to the south.

3.8.4 Definition of Public and Private Space

Through continuous building frontages and enclosures, the definition of public and private spaces is clearly defined, preventing access to maintenance strips against the boundaries to the SSE equipment, as well as preventing unacceptable cut-throughs to and from the Thames Towpath alongside Lynmouth Court.

- ➡ Key pedestrian and cycle route
- Public realm soft landscaped spaces
- Public realm tree planting
- - - Extent of public / private space
- ➡ Additional stepped routes



3.8.5 A Dedicated 3m Foot/Cycleway

The layout provides a dedicated foot and cycleway connecting Vastern Road and the centre of Reading through to Christchurch Bridge to the north. This will be at least 3m wide along the whole length.

In addition, since the last pre-app meeting, and through the reduction in building footprints, the changes in direction along the route closest to the River Thames have been significantly reduced to allow an easier transition for cyclists transitioning between the level of the bridge and the site.

The route is maintained at a gradient of less than 1:21 and is supplemented with stepped access connecting each intermediate landing so provide alternative routes for pedestrians.

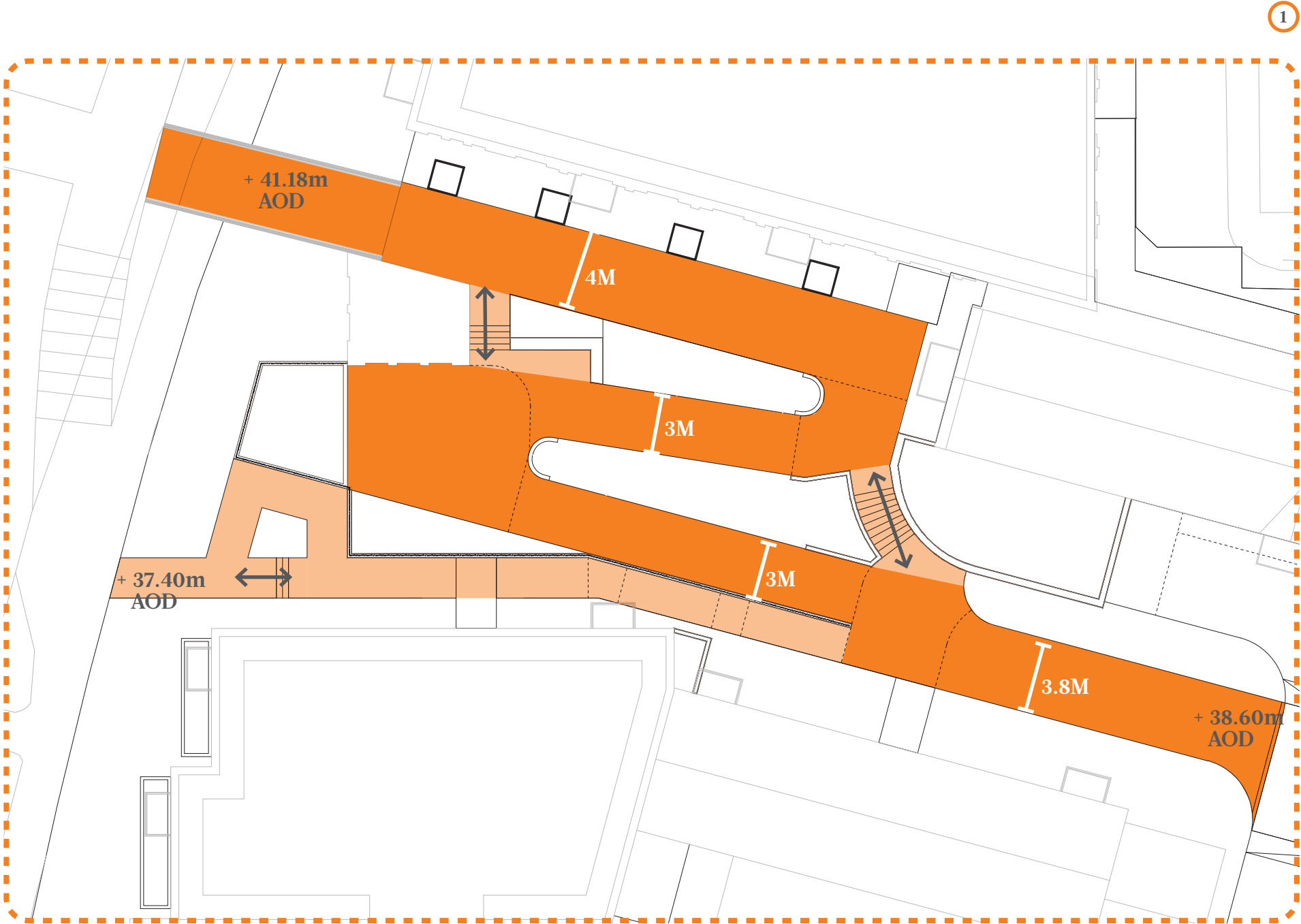
A separate ramped foot and cycleway has been introduced connecting the scheme to the Thames Towpath.

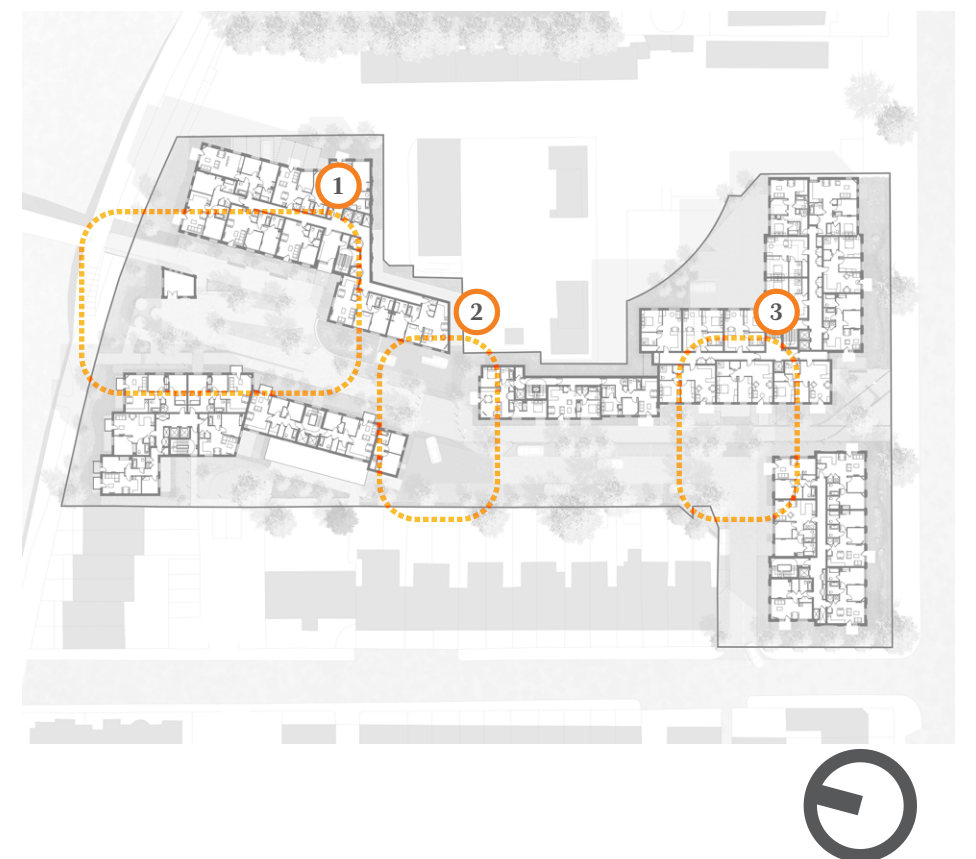
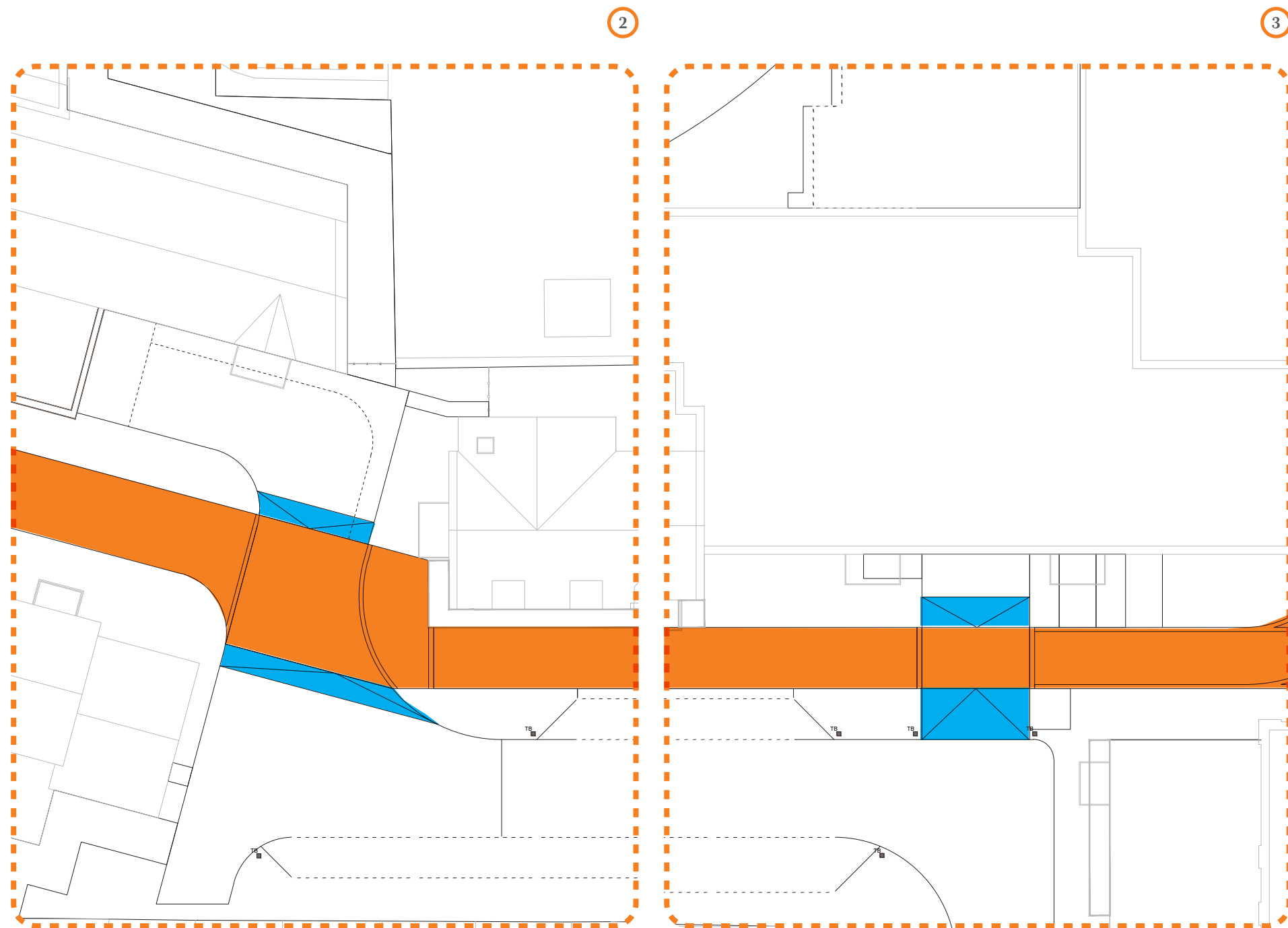
3.8.6 Separation of Vehicles and Pedestrians / Cyclists

Through the reduction in building footprints through the pre-app process, and the change to the orientation of parking spaces along this route, landscaped strips of at least 2.5m wide with tree planting have been introduced to create separation between the vehicular route and the dedicated foot/cycleway.

Changes in surface materials, coupled with localised changes in levels through the introduction of raised tables, give priority to the foot/cycleway and signal to vehicles this change.

- 3m Dedicated Foot / Cycleway to Bridge
- Secondary Foot / Cycleway to Towpath
- Raised table
- Stepped routes





3.8.7 Route from the Reading Town Centre



3.8.8 View from Vastern Road (1)

The approach is identified through the taller building to the right of the site entrance, with the link through to the River introduced through the setting back of smaller scale buildings.



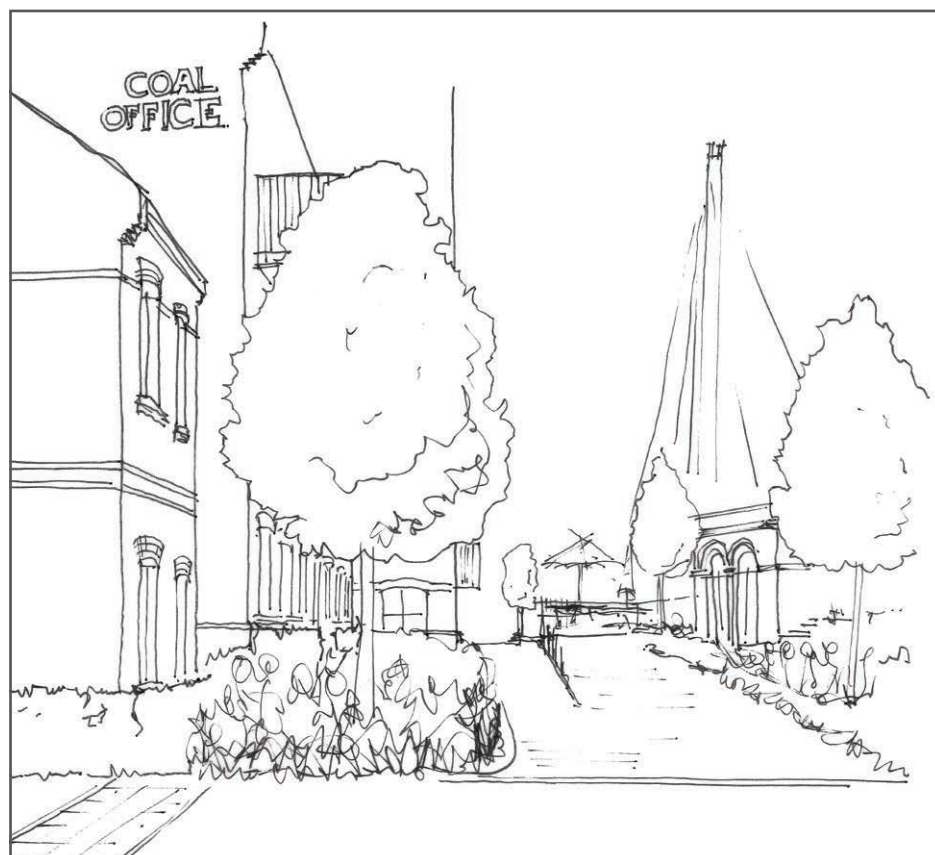
3.8.9 Vastern Gateway (2)

At the entrance to the site, inset tracks nod back to the railway heritage along Vastern Road and draw pedestrians and cyclists in to the scheme.



3.8.10 The Central Street (3)

The route is defined with tree and shrub planting to either side of the 3m wide foot/cycleway. The scale and angle of buildings further in to the scheme suggest the route leads to the river and bridge.



3.8.11 View of Christchurch Bridge (4)

At the mid point of the site, where the geometry of the scheme changes, views are opened up to the mast of the bridge, and a quaint cafe building signifying the junction.



3.8.12 View from the Cafe across the River Thames (5)

Finally, on the last approach to the bridge is the terrace overlooking the River Thames and Christchurch Meadow beyond, offering a place to stop and enjoy a drink from the Cafe.



3.8.13 Route from Christchurch Meadow



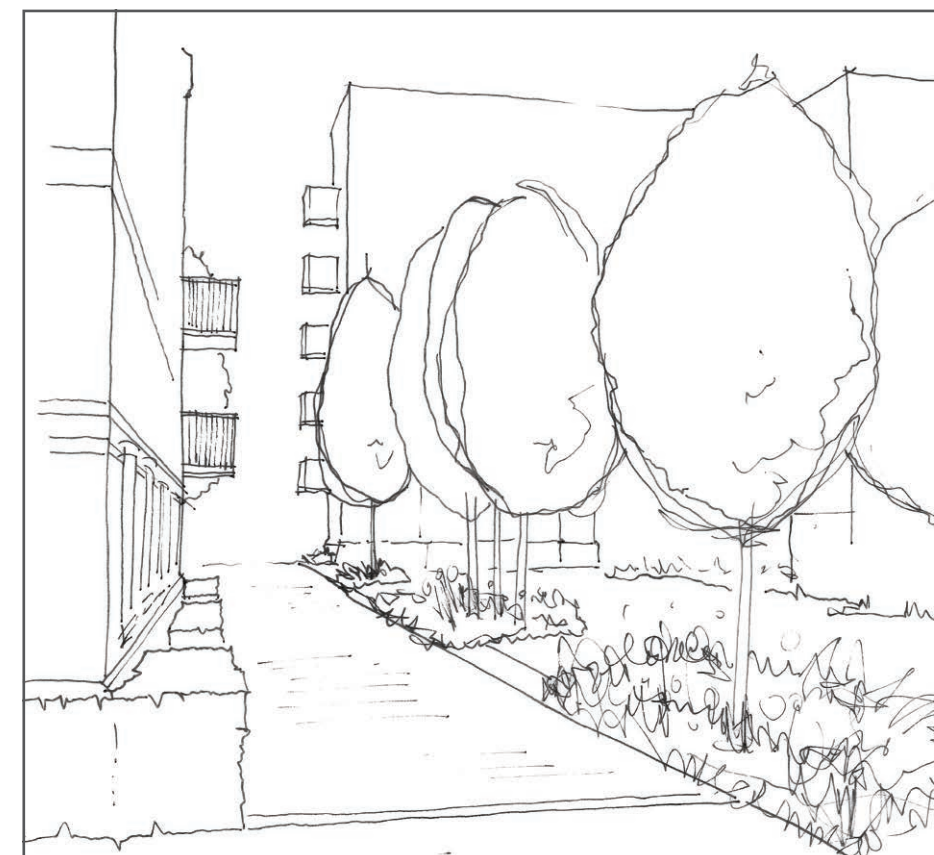
3.8.14 View from Christchurch Bridge (1)

The approach is identified through the taller building to the right of the site entrance, with the link through to the River introduced through the setting back of smaller scale buildings.



3.8.15 Vastern Gateway (2)

The angle of the buildings, and stepped reduction in scale bring people through the scheme, with tree planting beyond hinting at the route in to Town.



3.8.16 The Central Street (3)

The route is defined with tree and shrub planting to either side of the 3m wide foot/cycleway. The route is framed with trees and buildings, directing pedestrians and cyclists through towards the Town Centre.



3.8.17 View towards Vastern Road and the Town Centre (4)

As people approach Vastern Road, the scale of buildings increase to form a gateway to the Town, with the introduction of railway track features formalising the site entrance.

