

5.17 Kitchen garden

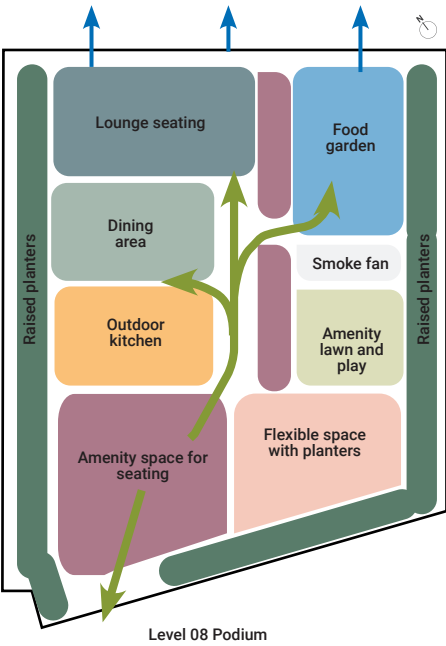
Located on Level 08, the kitchen garden is a continuation of the internal amenity space. The terrace is designed to be a communal space for residents to meet and socialise whilst celebrating the exceptional tranquil views over the river setting and surrounding high-quality landscape.

The terrace includes a flexible space for activities such as yoga, a food garden with raised beds, and an outdoor kitchen equipped with an cooking facilities and a dining table. A lounge space along the northern edge of the terrace offers panoramic views, and a dedicated play area for young children further activates the space, creating an inclusive environment for all ages.

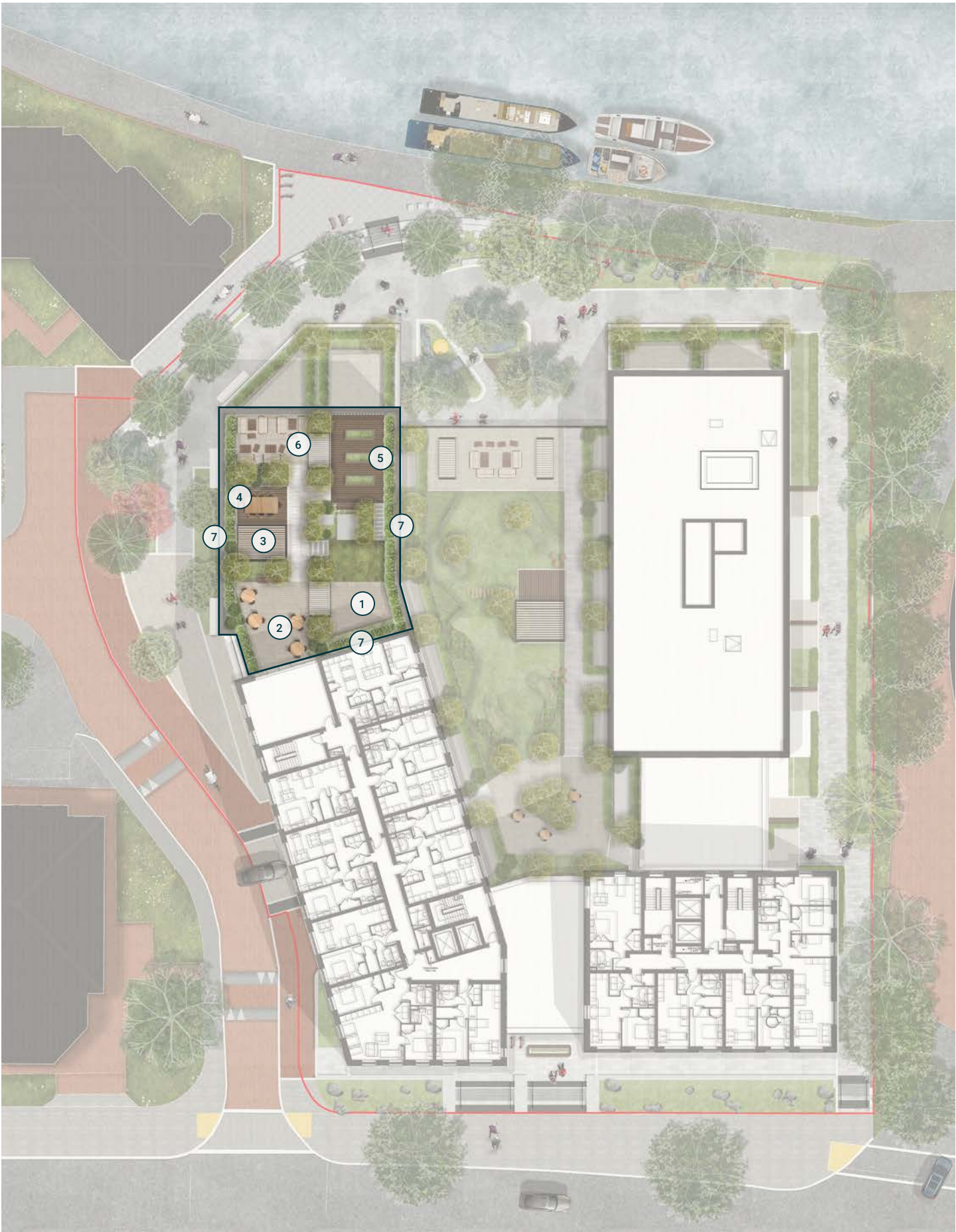
Each feature is enclosed with raised planters, which are planted with small to medium trees and a biodiverse rich planting palette beneath the canopies helps create an immersive experience between people and nature.

The trees, surrounding parapet, and strategically placed pergola structures help improve the terrace's micro-climate, encouraging active usage during cooler months and evenings.

Kitchen Garden spatial arrangement



- Key:
- ① Flexible space for passive use such as yoga, meditation and prayer
 - ② Flexible space linked to amenity area suitable for games tables, small scale resident gatherings
 - ③ Outdoor kitchen area
 - ④ Dining table
 - ⑤ Food growing
 - ⑥ Lounge area
 - ⑦ Raised planting beds and defensible planting to dwelling



Illustrative masterplan of the residential amenity terrace on Level 08



High-quality lounge space with views



Outdoor dining and kitchen area



Integrated food growing in raised beds



Flexible area for games table

Artists impression - Kitchen garden (Level 08)



Key plan



Artist impression looking over the Kitchen Garden (Level 08) from a bird's eye perspective

5.18 Roof plan (non accessible roofs)

In collaboration with the ecologist, the landscape proposals have been designed to optimise ecological and sustainability features on the roofs. These include:

- **Photovoltaics**
- **Biodiverse green roofs** - These roofs create natural habitats that support a variety of plants, birds, animals, and invertebrates. They contain a broad mix of British wildflowers, improve sustainable drainage capacity, reduce surface water runoff, require low maintenance, meet Biodiversity Action Plan objectives, and provide highly attractive roofscapes.
- **Brown roofs** - Similar to biodiverse green roofs in terms of providing habitat functions, brown roofs allow vegetation to naturally colonise, whereas biodiverse roofs include introduced vegetation

These roofs are specifically designed for wildlife, and therefore access is restricted to maintenance personnel for the green roofs and mechanical plant and equipment.

Key:



Biodiverse green roofs (113 sq m)



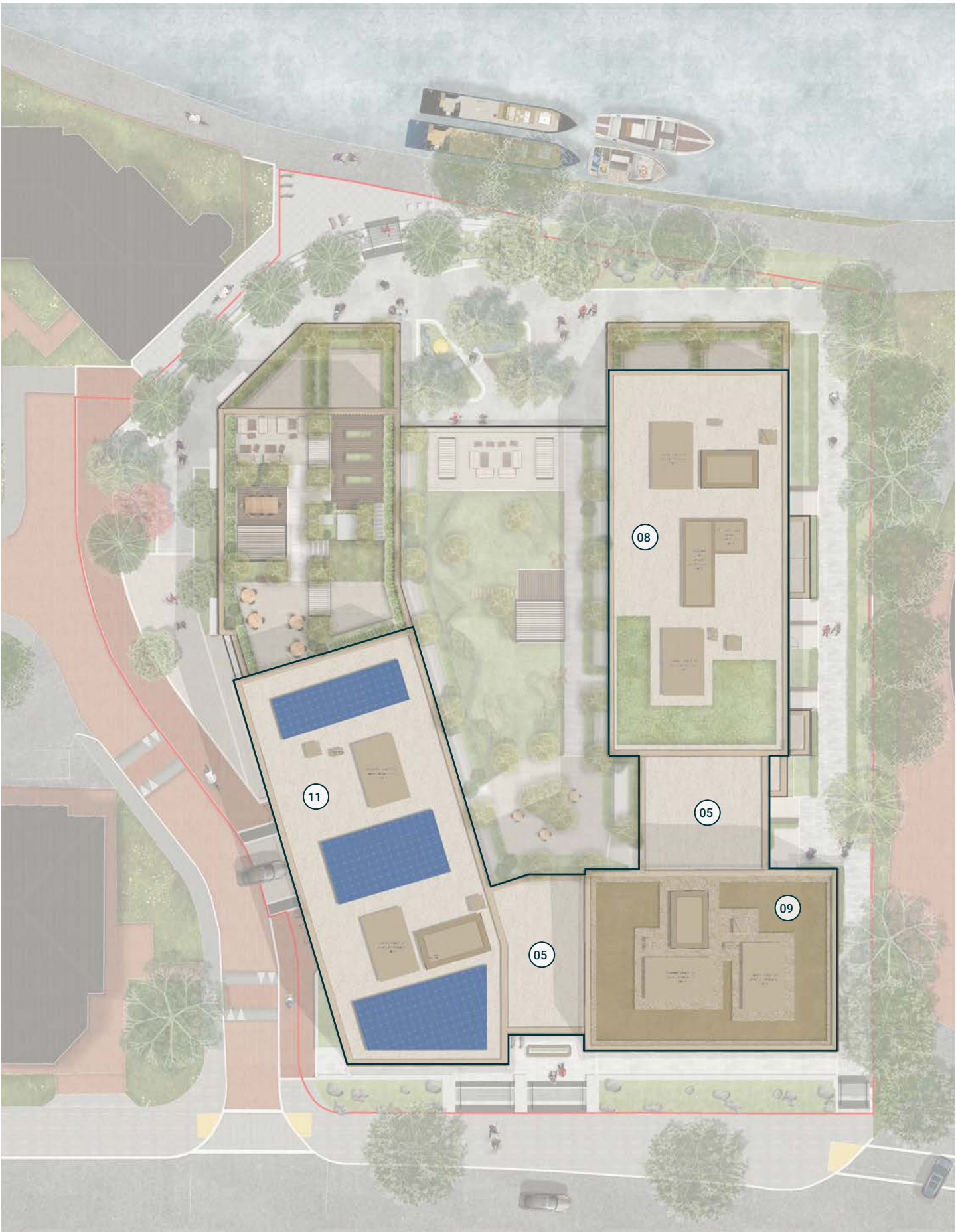
Brown roof (188 sq m)



Photovoltaics



Roof level



Illustrative masterplan for the residential amenity terrace on Level 08



Biosolar green roof systems



Brown roofs with habitat features



Brown roofs with habitat features



Sedum green roof

5.19 Play & open space

NPPF

The NPPF gives weight to providing new developments with access to a network of high-quality open spaces and encourages opportunities for physical activity and play for health and wellbeing of communities.

Reading Local Plan and open space strategy

Policy EN9: Provision of open space requires sites with 50 dwellings or more new provision of open space will be sought. *‘Development must ensure satisfactory provision of children’s play areas and neighbourhood parks’.*

Open spaces in Reading play a vital role for residents of all ages, who enjoy spending time outdoors. These areas are particularly popular in the summer, with people often spending several hours there. A mix of natural environments and recreational activities makes these spaces favourite destinations for visitors.

The “Fields in Trust: Beyond the Six Acre Standard” is nationally accepted guidance for determining open-space provision. This guidance offers advice on acceptable walking distances to various types of open spaces and on the amount of open space that should be included in new developments. Additionally, it provides recommendations on play provision.

The guidelines recommend that at least some open space for children to play, whether publicly accessible or private, be available within 100-200m of every home

Existing play provision

The proposed development has an advantage in terms of location and is situated with excellent access to high-quality landscapes. Within a 400-metre radius, there is a diverse array of publicly accessible open spaces offering a wide range of recreational activities. These include equipped playgrounds for children under 12, playing fields, tennis courts, a lido, and nature trails. Additionally, the Thames Path offers a well-connected route for walking, jogging, and cycling.

A variety of programmed events such as Winter Wonderland, music festivals, sports events and community gatherings also take place in open spaces such as Christchurch Meadows.

The adjacent diagram maps the location of existing open spaces and the variety of recreational activities within them.

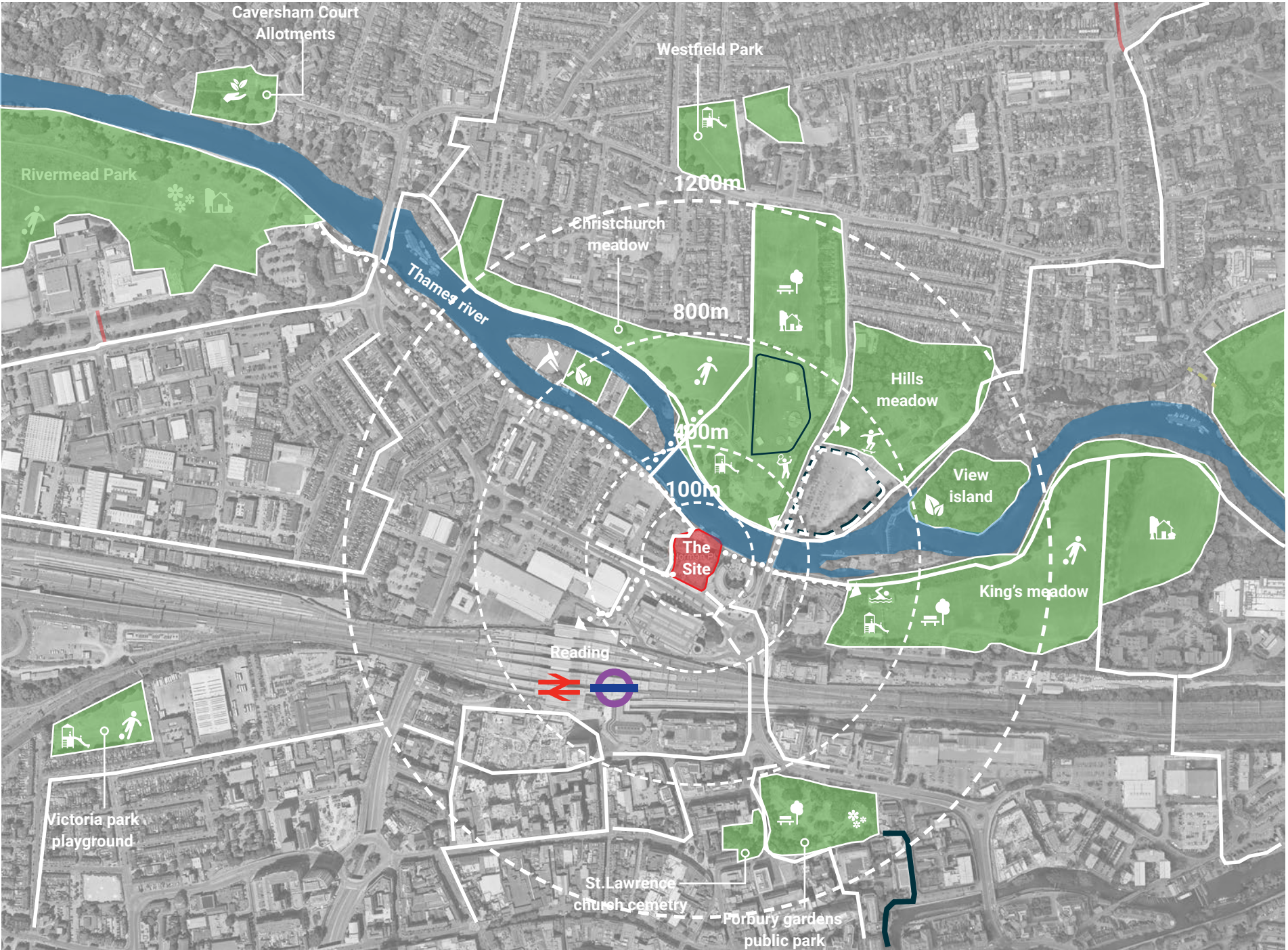
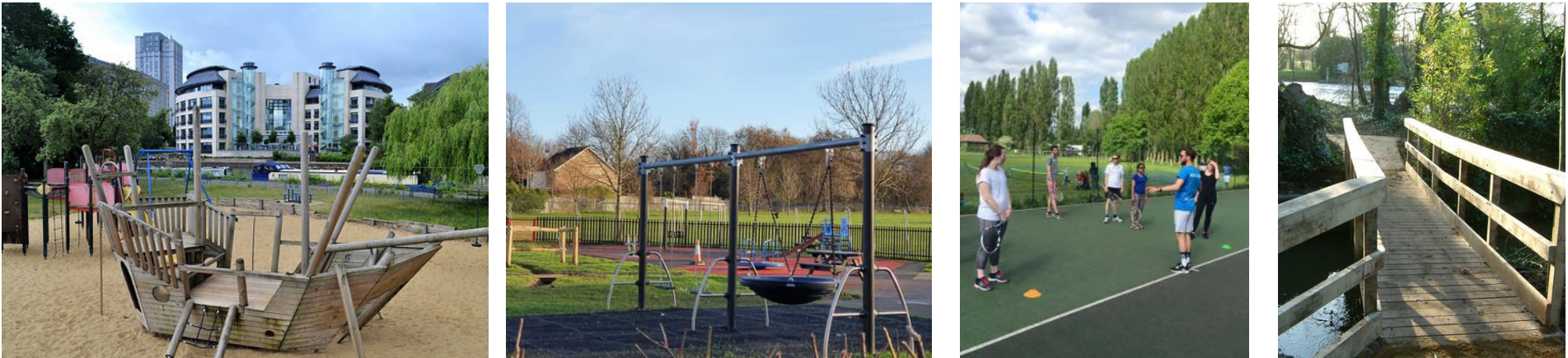


Diagram identifying the existing amenities and facilities surrounding the site



Photographs from local play spaces

5.20 Open space strategy

Policy H10 of the Local Plan seeks to secure private and communal outdoor amenity areas on all residential developments. The Plan does not provide any detailed metrics for the provision of communal open space.

Publicly accessible open space is provided on all four aspects of the ground floor, the space includes a variety of uses such as a public square, café spill out and a variety of seating spaces including the seating terraces nearest the river. An attractive planting palette of existing and proposed trees with low level planting is proposed across the public realm, responding to the tranquil character of the River Thames whilst providing benefits to wildlife and connecting people with nature.

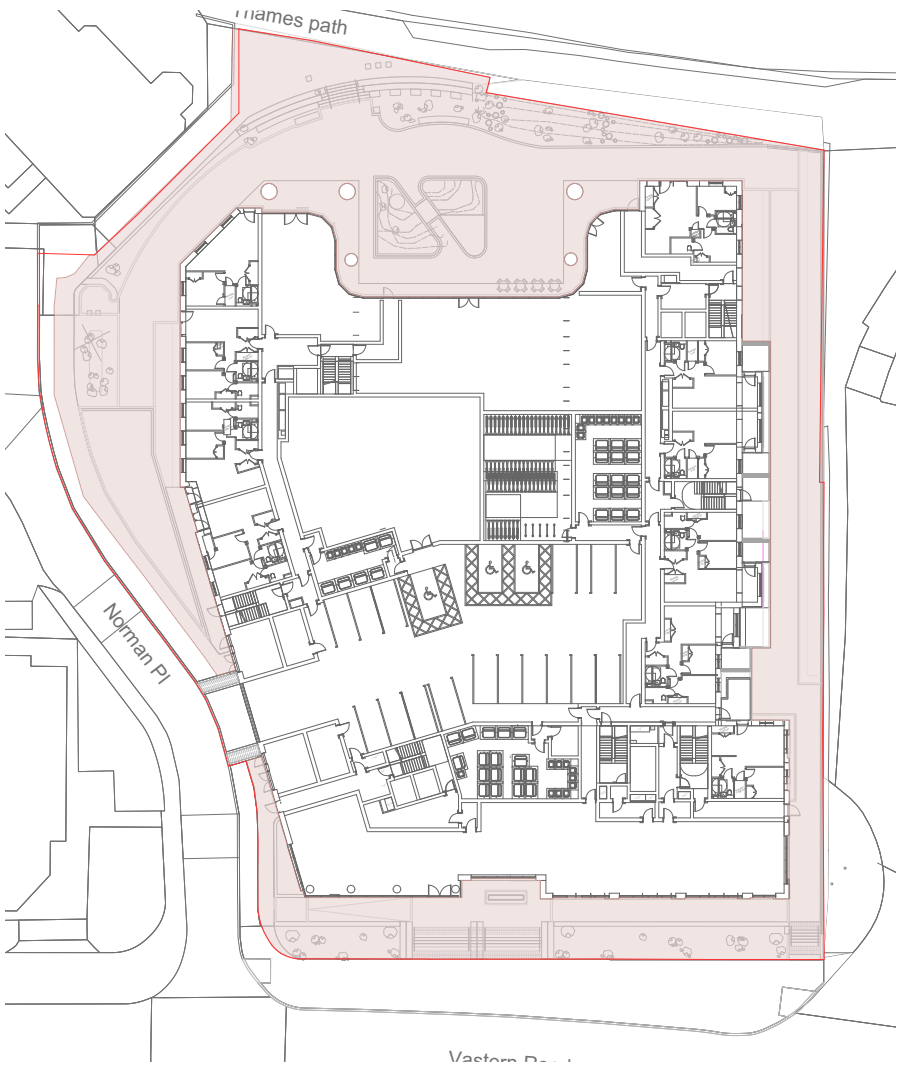
Private balconies are provided to the podium level dwellings located on Level 01. These dwellings are also provided with defensible planting to provide privacy between the private balconies and the podium garden.

There are two communal resident gardens, the podium garden (level 01) and the kitchen garden (Level 08). These spaces provide a variety of amenity uses which are spatially sited in response to aspect, sunlight and overshadowing, and with consideration to neighbouring residents. Podium garden for example is a passive terrace with quiet spaces for individuals or small groups.

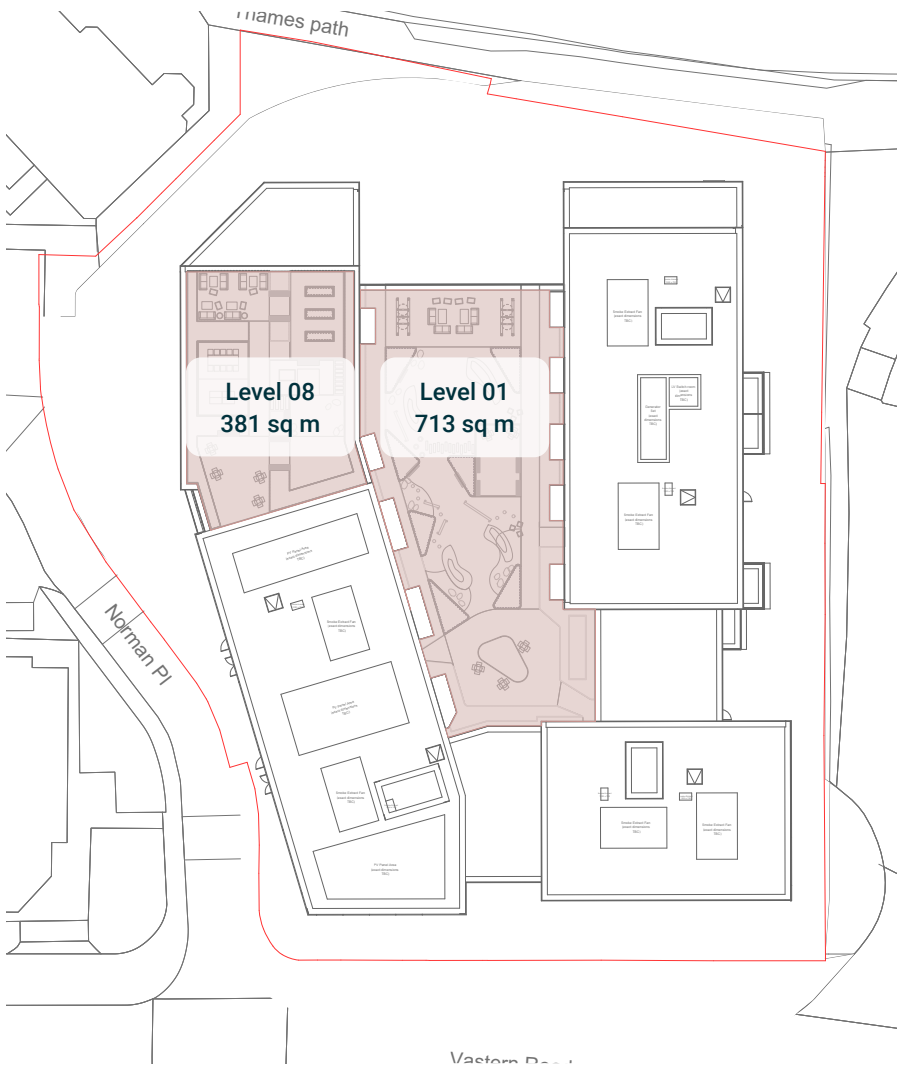
The kitchen garden is designed to be an active space which is well lit and celebrates views over the Thames. The terrace includes a kitchen garden and raised beds for food growing, outdoor lounge, and dining space and flexible areas for residential gatherings and focussed events.

Integrated door step play for young children (0-5) is also included on both communal terraces. Further detail is provided on the following page.

Open space provision	Area
Publicly accessible open space	2,052 sq m
Communal resident terraces	1,094 sq m
Total 3,146	



Proposed publicly accessible amenity at ground floor



Proposed residents amenity

5.21 Proposed play strategy

In addition to the existing variety of open spaces with play facilities within a 1,200m catchment area (a 15-minute walk) of the site, new play spaces for young children are proposed on-site to accommodate the child yield increase due to the development and to reduce the demand on existing open spaces.

Play space is integrated within the public realm in the form of a nature based play trail (incidental play space) below the existing tree canopy, and doorstep play for young children (0-5) is located within the private communal gardens.

The Field's in Trust: Beyond the Six Acre Standard recommends a 'Local Area of Play' is provided for developments with less than 500 dwellings. The benchmark standard is 0.01ha (100 sq m).

The proposals provide a total of 0.032ha (320 sq m) of playable area for young children, well above the recommended guidance.



- Key:
- ① Ground floor: 81 sq m (Publicly accessible play trail)
 - ② Play area Level 01 - 217 sq m (Doorstep play for young children 0 - 5)
 - ③ Play area Level 08 - 22 sq m (Doorstep play for young children 0 - 5)



Artist impression of nature based play trail with timber logs, boulders and seating nets



Precedent images of nature based play features

5.22 Hard landscape concept

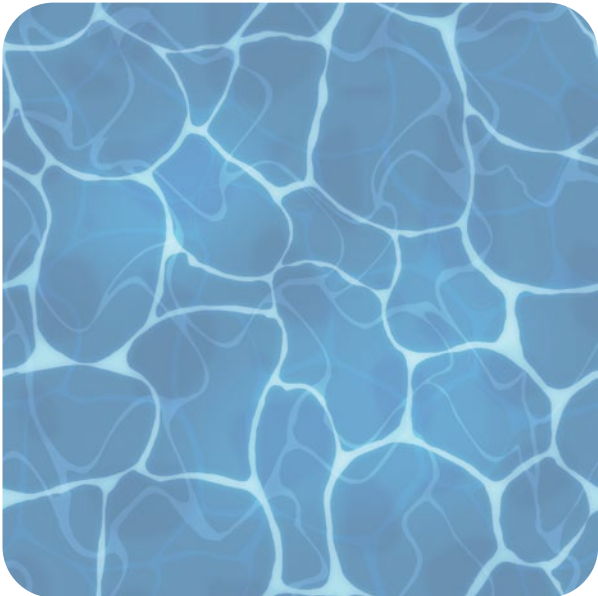
Hard landscape materials, including pavings and site fixtures, are among the most visible elements of the public realm. Selecting high-quality, robust materials ensures the hard landscape functions effectively contribute to the areas character.

A unique paving concept has been developed for Waterfront Square, inspired by the ripples of water from the River Thames.

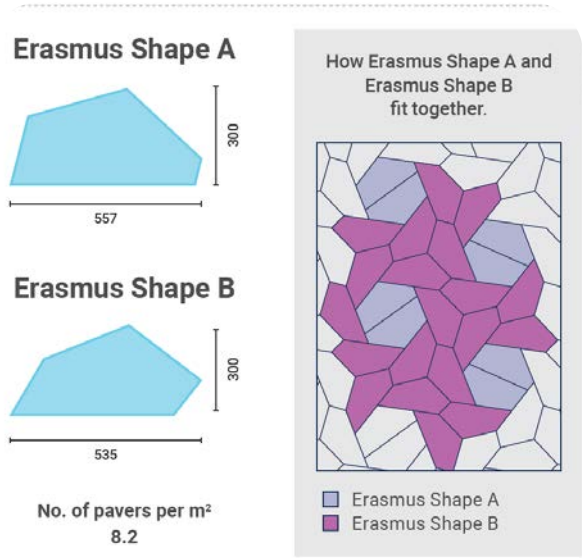
Proposed materials include a concrete paver which features a top layer of carefully selected stone aggregates which help create subtle tonal variations which help manipulate the water ripples within the hardscape.



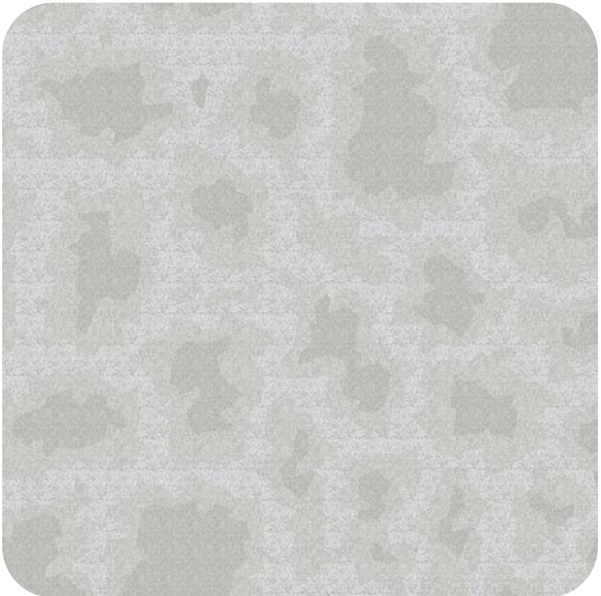
Key plan



Pattern inspiration reflecting river water



Hardscape special paving shapes



Paving pattern designed using the swatch below



Hardscape paving swatches

5.23 Hard landscape strategy

A range of materials will be used across the site to define a legible hierarchy of spaces and transition of uses across the public realm and residential garden.

Please refer to the following drawings for the General Arrangement Plan.

- A4012E-ASA-XX-00-DR-L-0200-P1
- A4012E-ASA-XX-01-DR-L-0210-P1

The key principles include;

- Character, function a sense of identity
- High-quality materials
- Slip resistant materials
- Contrasting and hazard warning paving to crossing points, and steps
- Permeable paving where appropriate
- Paving laid to falls to naturally drain to softscape areas
- Natural tones and colours that compliment architectural detailing

Materials will be selected with regards to the optimum performance for density, strength, aesthetics and will be used in a contemporary manner to provide a robust and functional landscape treatment.
The hard landscape strategy is expressed in the following material types and the adjacent images illustrating the intended materiality types and unit sizes.

Access & inclusivity

Levels and hard landscape treatment will be selected to provide comfortable finishes for wheelchair users and pushchairs across the site creating an inclusive environment for all.

Contrasting hazard warning paving is also proposed to steps and the car park entrance where pedestrians need to be aware of vehicle movement.

The use of steps is limited to one location in the gardens, and a 1:24 slope also integrated to provide wheelchair access to the lower level in the gardens.

Loading capabilities

All finishes will be capable of supporting the appropriate level of necessary loading ranging from light (pedestrian) traffic, cleaning equipment, service vehicles and emergency fire vehicles. These finishes will also be of light maintenance.



Paving to Waterfront Square



Paving to Norman Place and Vastern Road



Smooth grey setts to the MEWS Street



Light grey paving setts to amenity gardens



Light grey paving setts to private terraces

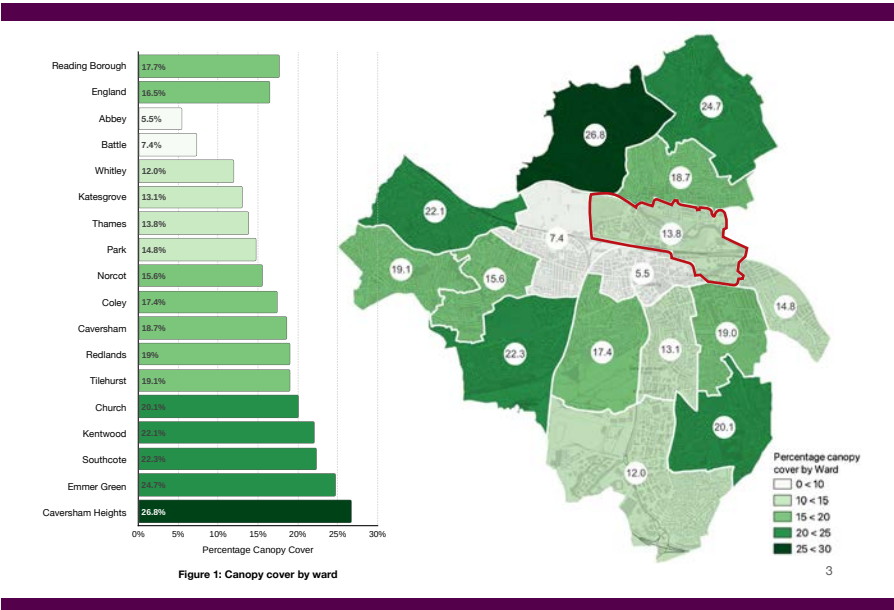
5.24 Proposed tree strategy

In response to the climate emergency, there is increasing pressure on our cities to take action to reverse and mitigate the impacts of a warming world. Our cities play a crucial role in this effort and increasing tree canopy cover is a key component in achieving this goal.

Reading Borough Local Authority has clear vision and strategy for increasing tree cover across the Borough with over 12,500 specimen trees owned and managed by the Local Authority itself. Since 2010, around 2,000 new trees have been planted on Local Authority owned land.

The Local Authority's Tree Strategy (2021) document sets a number of objectives to increase tree cover with a goal to increase overall canopy cover to 25% by 2030 - currently the canopy cover across the Borough is 18%.

Reading's Tree Canopy Cover Assessment (2022) goes into further detail by providing an assessment of canopy cover by ward. The development site is located with the Thames Ward, outlined in red below, and the canopy cover for this ward is 13.8% based on the most recent assessment and therefore the ward is falling short of the target.



Extract from Reading's Tree Canopy Cover Assessment (2022)

In response to the study an assessment of existing and proposed tree cover was undertaken to evaluate how the emerging scheme is contributing to the Borough's vision.

5.24.1 Tree Diversity

Reading Borough Local Authority sets a target ratio of 30:10:10 (family:genus:species) ratio for tree specimens.

A detailed schedule is appended to demonstrate our compliance with the guidance. In summary:

- Family - does not exceed the target of 30%
- Genus - does not exceed the target of 20%
- Species - equal to or marginally exceed the recommended ration of 10%

Existing tree canopy cover

The existing canopy cover is 11% within the application boundary, this is equivalent to 622 sq m. The canopy cover was calculated from the tree survey prepared by the arboriculture consultant.



Diagram illustrating extent of existing tree canopy within application boundary

Proposed tree canopy cover

The proposed canopy cover is 21% within the application boundary. This is equivalent to 1,133 sq m. The canopy cover is assessed based on predicted mature canopy spread.

In total the proposals include 61 new trees.



Diagram illustrating extent of retained and proposed tree canopy within application boundary

5.25 Tree strategy

A total of 21 trees are proposed within the public realm which are mostly located within in softscape areas with the exception of 3 trees which are planted within hardstanding areas. 2 of these trees are located along Vastern Road and fall outside the application boundary, but are proposed to form part of S278 works and secured by legal agreement. All trees will be planted within suitable design tree pits to ensure tree longevity and plant health.

The trees include a variety of both native and non-native specimens. The following criteria were considered when selecting trees species in the public realm and podium gardens:

- Aspect
- Suitability of scale and location
- Character
- Aesthetic
- Seasonality
- Biodiversity and habitat
- Climate resilience
- Plant biosecurity
- Scent, flora, form, structure, colour and edibility
- Size, weight and loading

Botanical	Common	Native	Aspect
Ground floor tree species			
 Acer rubrum	Red Maple (Multi-stem)	N	 
 Acer campestre	Field Maple	N	  
 Alnus x spaethii	Field Maple Elegant	N	
 Alnus glutinosa 'Imperialis'	Alder 'imperialis'	N	
 Betula pendula	Common Silver Birch	Y	 
 Carpinus betulus 'Frans Fontaine'	Hornbeam 'Frans Fontaine'	N	 
 Platanus x hispanica	London Plane		
 Pinus sylvestris	Scots Pine	Y	
 Populus alba	White Poplar	Y	
 Sorbus aucuparia	Mountain Ash	Y	 
 Sorbus torminalis	Wild Service Tree	Y	  



Key plan illustrating the location of proposed trees by species

5.26 Tree removal, retention & proposed tree planting

This submission is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement prepared by Cheshire Woodlands. The adjacent diagram and supporting text below provides a summary of this assessment.

To facilitate development the felling of 18no of trees is required. The removal of low quality shrubs is also proposed along Vastern Road to facilitate development.

There are 15 Category C trees proposed for removal and 3 Category B trees.

To mitigate the loss of trees and to satisfy the trading rules for lost habitat the proposed landscape scheme provides a substantial uplift in tree cover and species across the scheme, as set out in the following pages.

The selected specimens will significantly improve tree diversity and habitat opportunities for flora and fauna to further enhance the tree corridor along the River Thames.

Works to existing trees must accord with BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction.

Proposed tree planting will accord with BS 8545:2014 Trees: From nursery to independence in the landscape recommendations, and Trees in Hard Landscape: A Guide for Delivery.

Species selection is subject to availability and guidance and regulation placed by DeFRA regarding regarding Pest and Disease.

5.26.1 Bio-security & climate resilience

Bio-security and a changing climate is an emerging threat to ecosystem resilience, with new regulations and guidelines continuously being developed in response to pests, pathogens and climate change.

Native species are still vitally important in developments, but the current threat means some of our native species are being exposed to hotter, warmer summers as well as prolonged periods of drought and wet; species that are unable to adapt are being lost.

These variable conditions, however, present an opportunity to consider alternative species that are adaptable to the changing British climate. This may include native species, but also non-invasive species from the continent or further abroad.

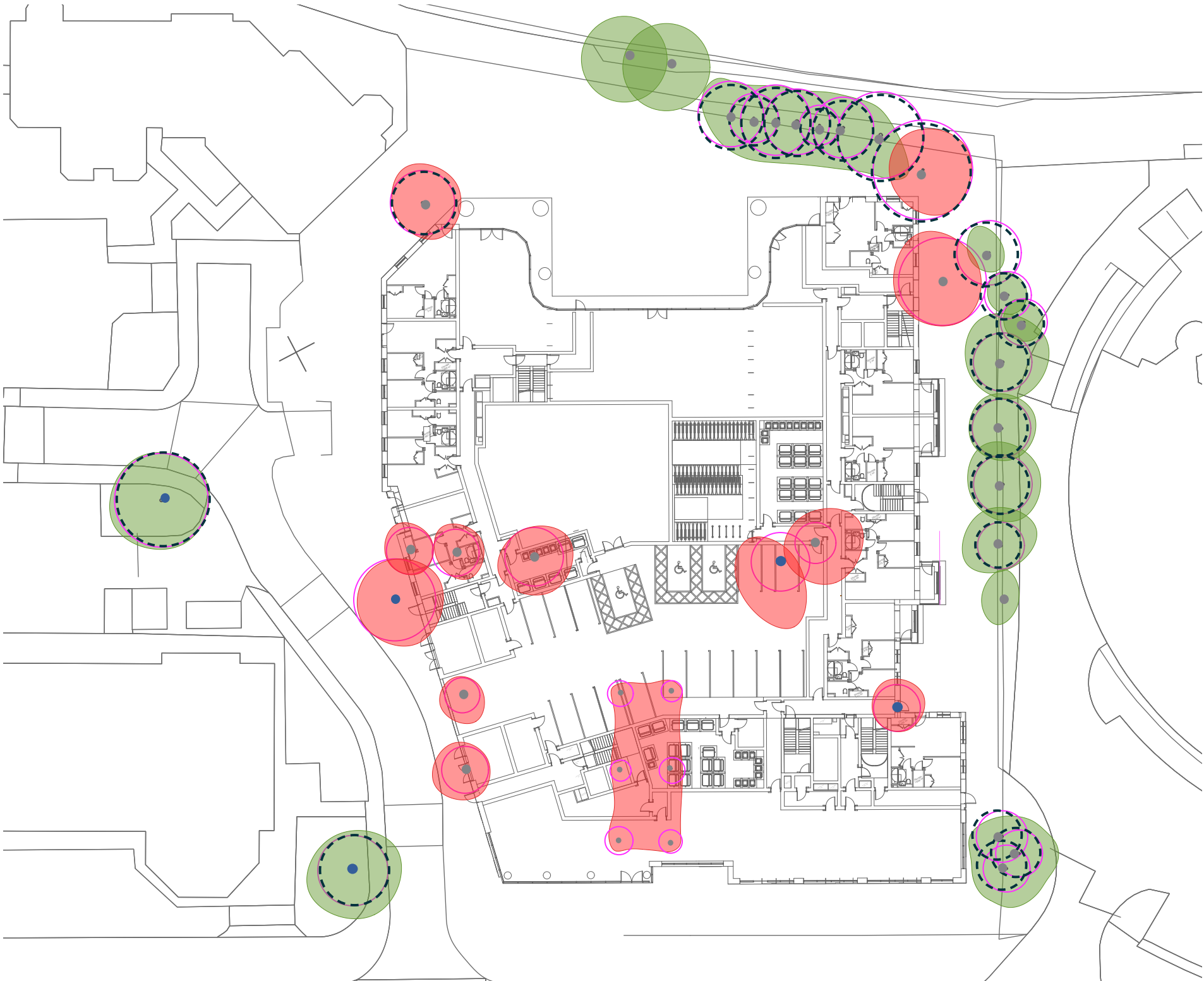


Diagram illustrating the tree retention and removal strategy

- Key
- Trees retained
 - Trees removed
 - RPA
 - Category C Trees (x 15 no.)
 - Category B Trees (x 3 no.)

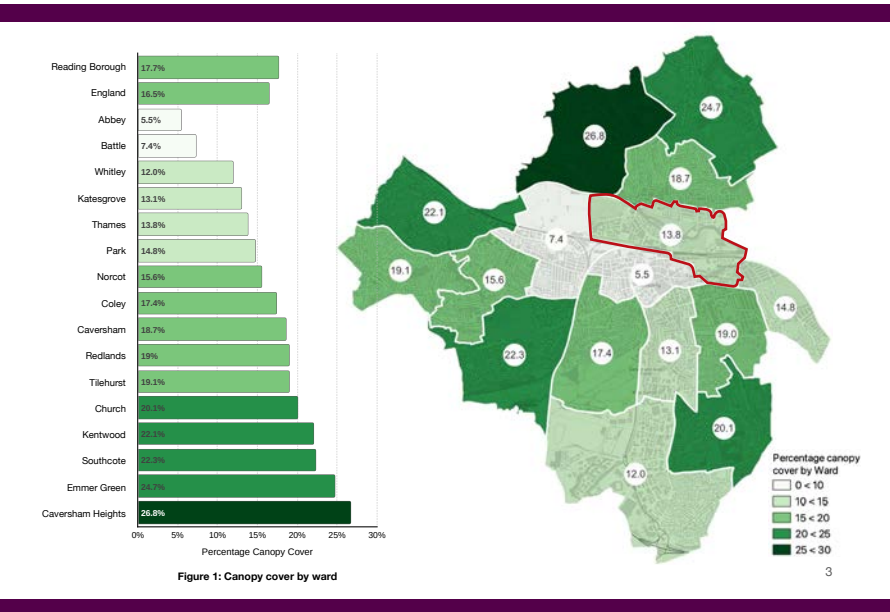
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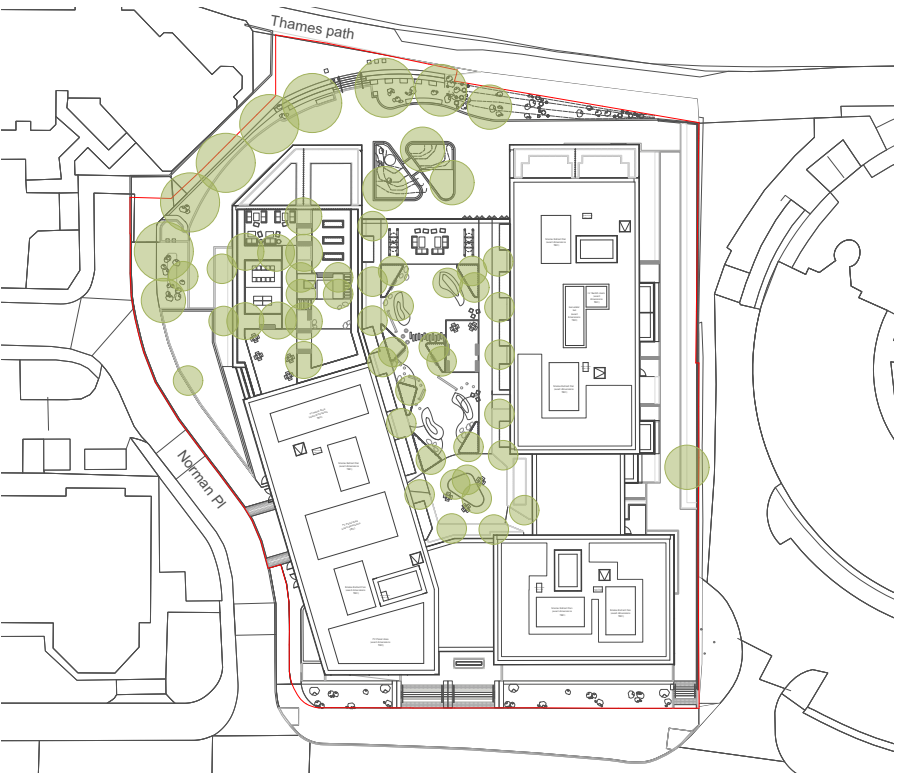


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 Populus alba	White Poplar	Y	
 Sorbus aucuparia	Mountain Ash	Y	 
 Sorbus torminalis	Wild Service Tree	Y	  



Key plan illustrating the location of proposed trees by species

5.28.1 Tree schedule - proposed species



Acer rubrum / Red Maple (Multi-stem)



Acer campestre 'Elegant' / Field Maple 'Elegant' (4m Dia)



Alnus x spaethii / Alder



Alnus glutinosa 'Imperialis' / Alder 'imperialis' (4-6 Dia)



Betula pendula / Silver birch (Multi-stem)



Carpinus betulus 'Frans Fontaine' (4m Dia)



Platanus x hispanica - London Plane - (20m Dia)



Pinus sylvestris / Scotts Pine (6-10m Dia)



Populus alba / White poplar (15m Dia)



Sorbus aucuparia / Mountain Ash (7m Dia)

Tree specimens are subject to availability at time of order and subject to current legislation regarding plant bio-security.