

Concept Design: Contents

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Construction for the HS2 project has led to the loss of some local open space. In 2015, Camden secured an assurance from HS2 that it would provide funding for a new linear green space in Somers Town on Phoenix Road. After extensive community engagement, we introduced trial traffic management and green space changes, alongside permanent pedestrian improvements on Phoenix Road in 2024. This is what you can see in place at the moment.

We now want to make these changes permanent and use higher quality materials so that we can continue to ensure lower traffic flows, improved road safety and accessibility, while also delivering green and public spaces on and around Phoenix Road.

The contents list for this Concept Design pack is shown on the left, based on a number of important themes:

- **Movement** - this shows how traffic will be managed and how space will be provided for walking, wheeling and cycling.
- **Green and public space** - these pages show where new greenery and public space could be delivered, and the types of planting and activities that could take place in these spaces. This includes planting, rain gardens, trees and shrubs, and seating to name a few.
- **Play** - these pages show where 'on the way play' features could be provided. On the way play items are smaller features that allow play as we travel along a street, such as balance beams and stepping stones. There is the nearby playground on Polygon Road and so this scheme looks to provide less formal play features as an addition to the playground.
- **A unique street** - these pages explore how we create a design that is very 'Somers Town' rather than feeling like 'anywhere'. This includes new features that reference the area's history, such as railway features. It also includes thinking about local art and culture.

Concept Design: Introduction

The overall plan is shown here, with more details on the following pages. The design we are consulting on creates over 1000sqm of greenery, which will contribute to better air quality and create attractive spaces to enjoy. Many existing materials will be cleaned and re-used where possible. This is an important part of the proposal for us which both saves on costs and supports our sustainability goals.

We want to hear what you think about these ideas.

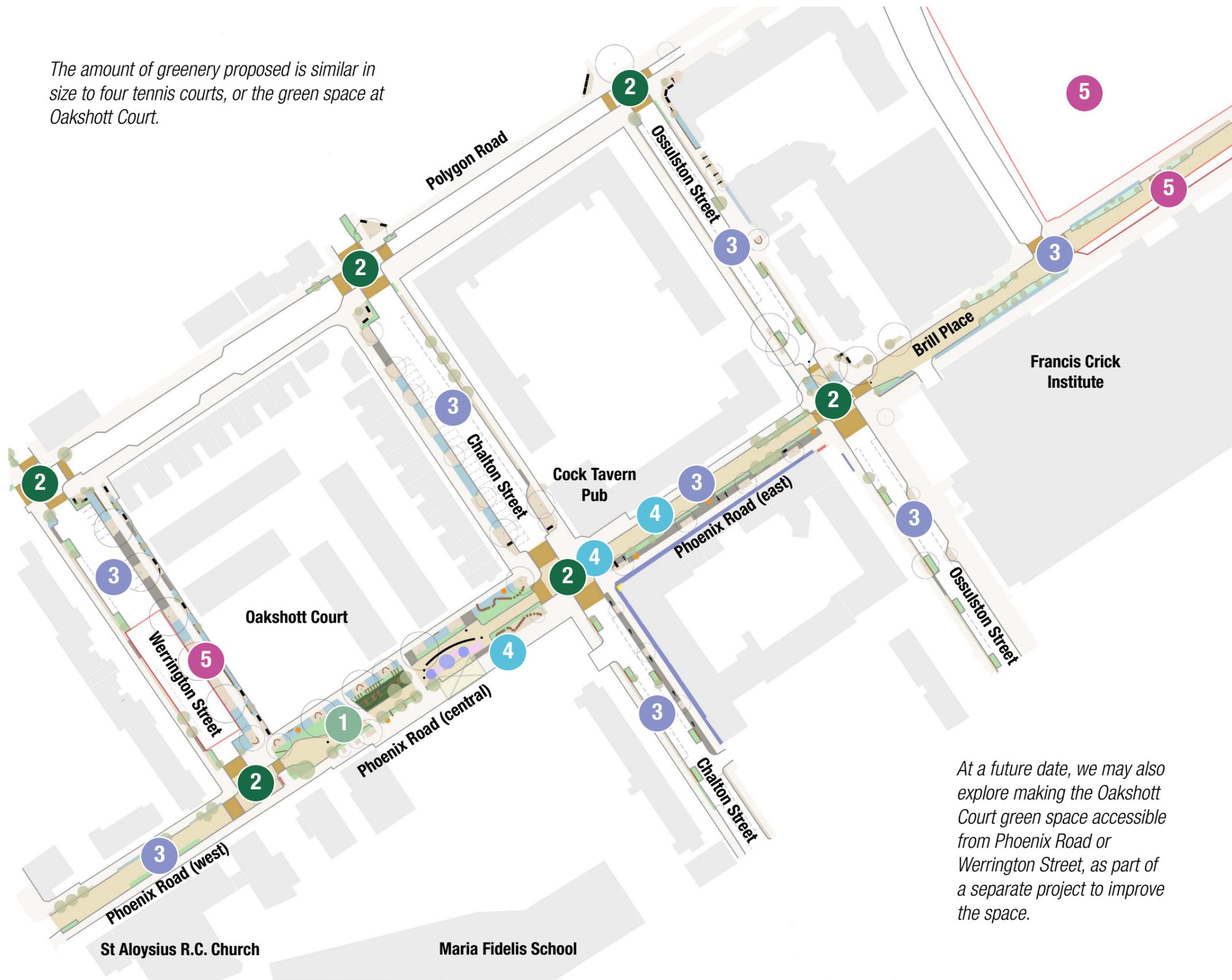
- 1 Significant new piece of public space on Phoenix Road where the existing traffic closure and trial greenery is currently
- 2 Improved junctions for pedestrian priority
- 3 New street greening
- 4 Play, heritage, art and cultural features
- 5 The areas shown as blank are schemes being delivered separately to this project. You can find out more about them here:

Werrington Street Green Mobility Hub
<https://democracy.camden.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?id=4469>

Purchase Street Open Space
<https://purchesstreetopenspace.commonplace.is/en-GB/proposals/example-new-cycle-route/step1>

Brill Place Green Mobility Hub
<https://democracy.camden.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?id=4469>

The amount of greenery proposed is similar in size to four tennis courts, or the green space at Oakshott Court.



At a future date, we may also explore making the Oakshott Court green space accessible from Phoenix Road or Werrington Street, as part of a separate project to improve the space.

Concept Design: Movement 1

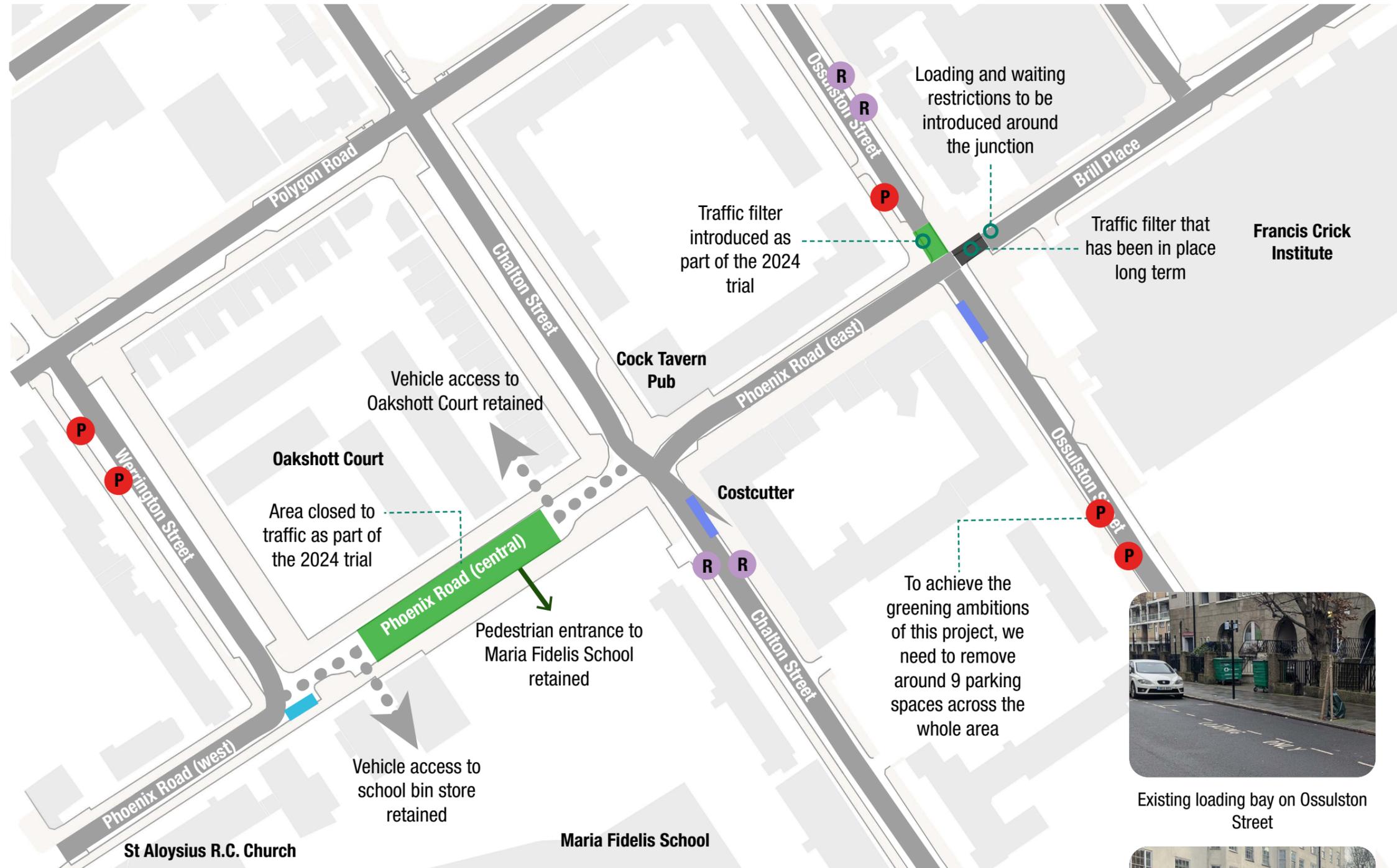
Movement zones

You said:

- Through traffic has reduced in the area overall, but remains on some streets which don't have restrictions.
- Vehicle access has become more complicated
- Conflicts between walking + cycling need addressing
- Air quality can still feel bad

We are now proposing:

- Continuing with the same traffic management approach as the trial, to avoid making any additional changes to daily journeys
- Protecting vehicle access to the Oakshott Court Car Park from Phoenix Road, and to the Maria Fidelis School bin store. As shown on the map, only the very centre of Phoenix Road is closed to vehicles (shown in green).
- The route for cycling has been changed slightly to encourage lower and safer cycling speeds through the new public space, as requested in feedback.
- A new loading bay is proposed near the junction of Werrington Street / Phoenix Road. This could be used by the foodbank.



Map Key

- Roads for two-way vehicle traffic (as existing)
- Vehicle access to Oakshott Court car park and the school bin store from Phoenix Road
- Walking/wheeling/cycling only space
- New loading bay
- Loading bays retained on Ossulston Street and Chalton Street
- Brill Place traffic filter that has been in place long-term
- P** Pay-by-phone parking bay removed to make space for greening and to better protect tree routes
- R** Resident parking bay removed to make space for greening and to better protect tree routes



Existing loading bay on Ossulston Street



Existing loading bay on Chalton Street

Concept Design: Movement 2

Phoenix Road (central)

You said:

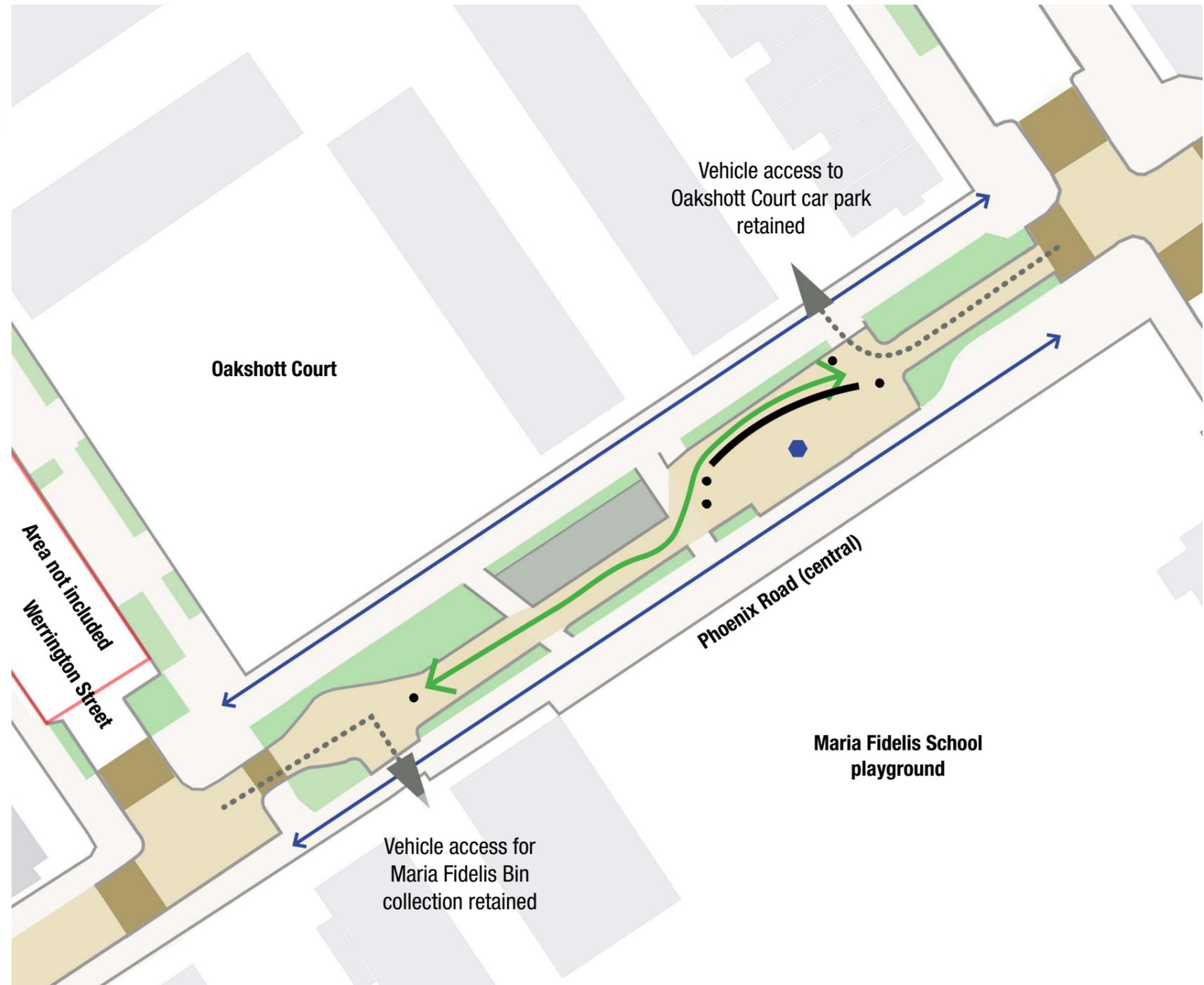
- Movements in this central section of Phoenix Road can lead to conflicts between people walking and cycling, with some cyclists going too fast through this space
- The most used pavement is the southern one
- Cycling should be moved away from the school gate so pupils can step out safely
- Vehicle access needs to be retained to Oakshott Court car park and the Maria Fidelis bin store

We are now proposing:

- To keep the trial layout overall but alter the way that cyclists will move through the space, using a curving path to slow cycle speeds
- To make the trial permanent, meaning this central section of Phoenix Road will stay as a public space rather than going back to being a through-road
- To create separation between walking and cycling in key spaces
- To protect vehicle access to Oakshott Court car park and the Maria Fidelis bin store
- To keep clear pavements on either side of the street
- Better crossings where people want to cross



A buff coloured surface is proposed for the carriageway and cycle space for the full length of phoenix road and Brill Place. This is to give it a shared identity and highlight that it is an important walking and cycling route between train stations.



Map key:

- Existing pavements + pedestrian routes retained
- Route through public space which allows cycling
- ▶ Vehicle access route to school bin store and Oakshott Court
- ⬢ Area which does not permit cycles

- Buff surface dressing to mark out Phoenix Road as a key walking and cycling route
- Bollards + boulders used to guide cycle movements and stop vehicles
- ⤿ Bench used to guide cycle movements and separate space for walking
- New crossing points

Concept Design: Movement 3

Junction of Chalton Street and Phoenix Road

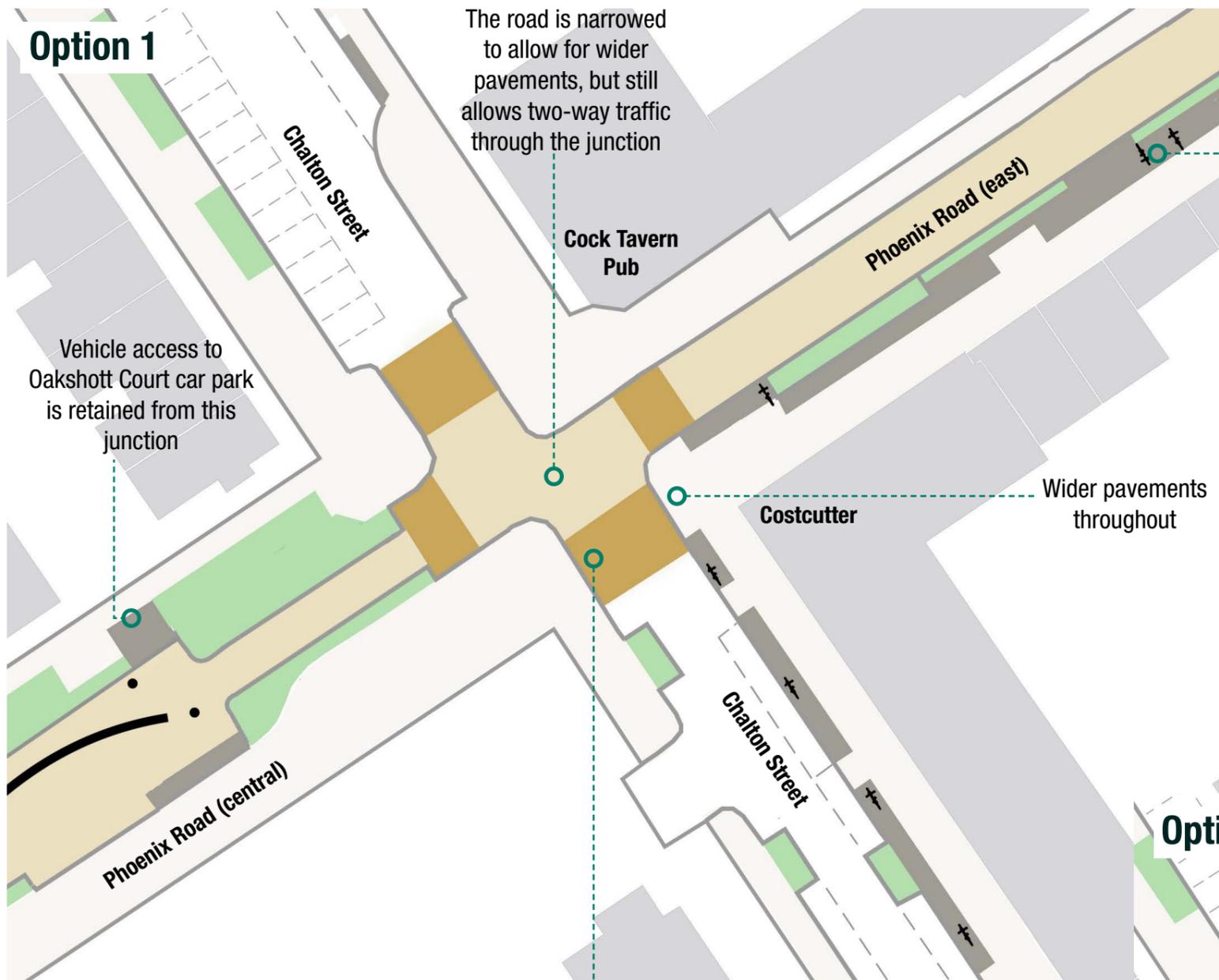
You said:

- This junction is confusing and could be more accessible and easier to navigate
- Chalton Street is not experiencing the same reduced traffic as other streets following the trial

We are now proposing:

- Making the road narrower to encourage slower driving and reduce the distances people have to cross the road
- Better crossings where people want to cross
- People can still access the Oakshott Court car park
- This space will be more hard surface than planting, as it needs to host the Somers Town Festival

Because some people feel that Chalton Street still has too much traffic, there is a second option that we are exploring. All vehicles could travel southbound through the junction (downwards on the map), but only emergency vehicles would be able to travel north. The black arrows on the map show the movements that could be made.



The traffic restrictions for option 2 would mean that only emergency vehicles and cycles could pass through the junction northbound (upwards on the map). This idea is being considered because of comments that the trial still leaves too much traffic on Chalton Street.

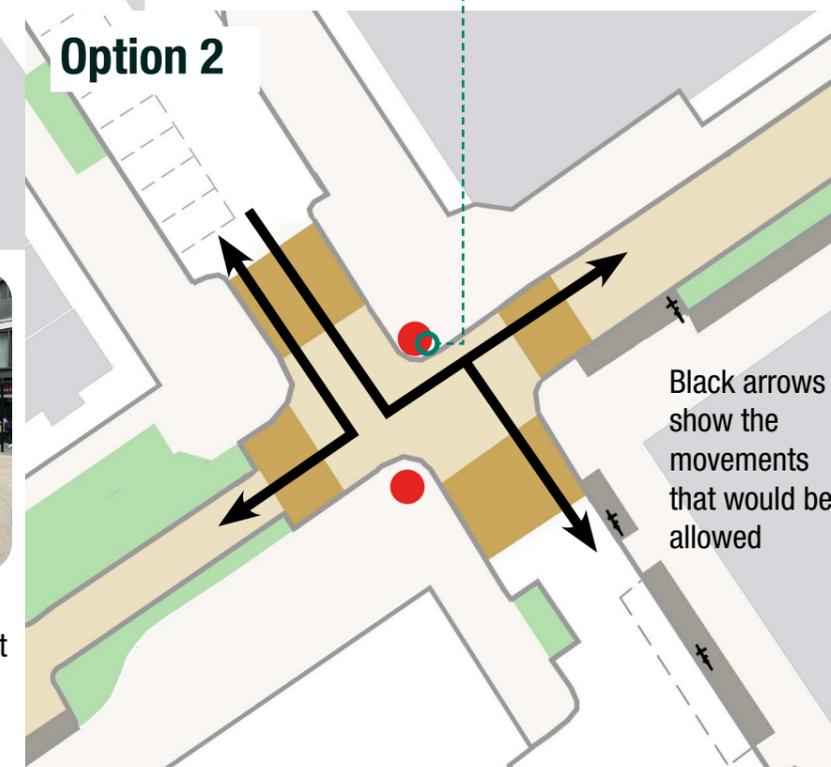
Option 2 is subject to the outcome of the consultation, alongside relevant data and policies, if we proceed with this option it would be trialled over a maximum 18 month period (see Consultation Information Sheet).



Informal crossing points or continuous crossings can be used on each side of the junction to create a continuous walking route and make it clearer that drivers need to give way



Using the buff coloured surface through the junction will highlight to drivers on Chalton Street that they are crossing an important walking and cycling route.



Concept Design: Green and public space 1

Phoenix Road (central)

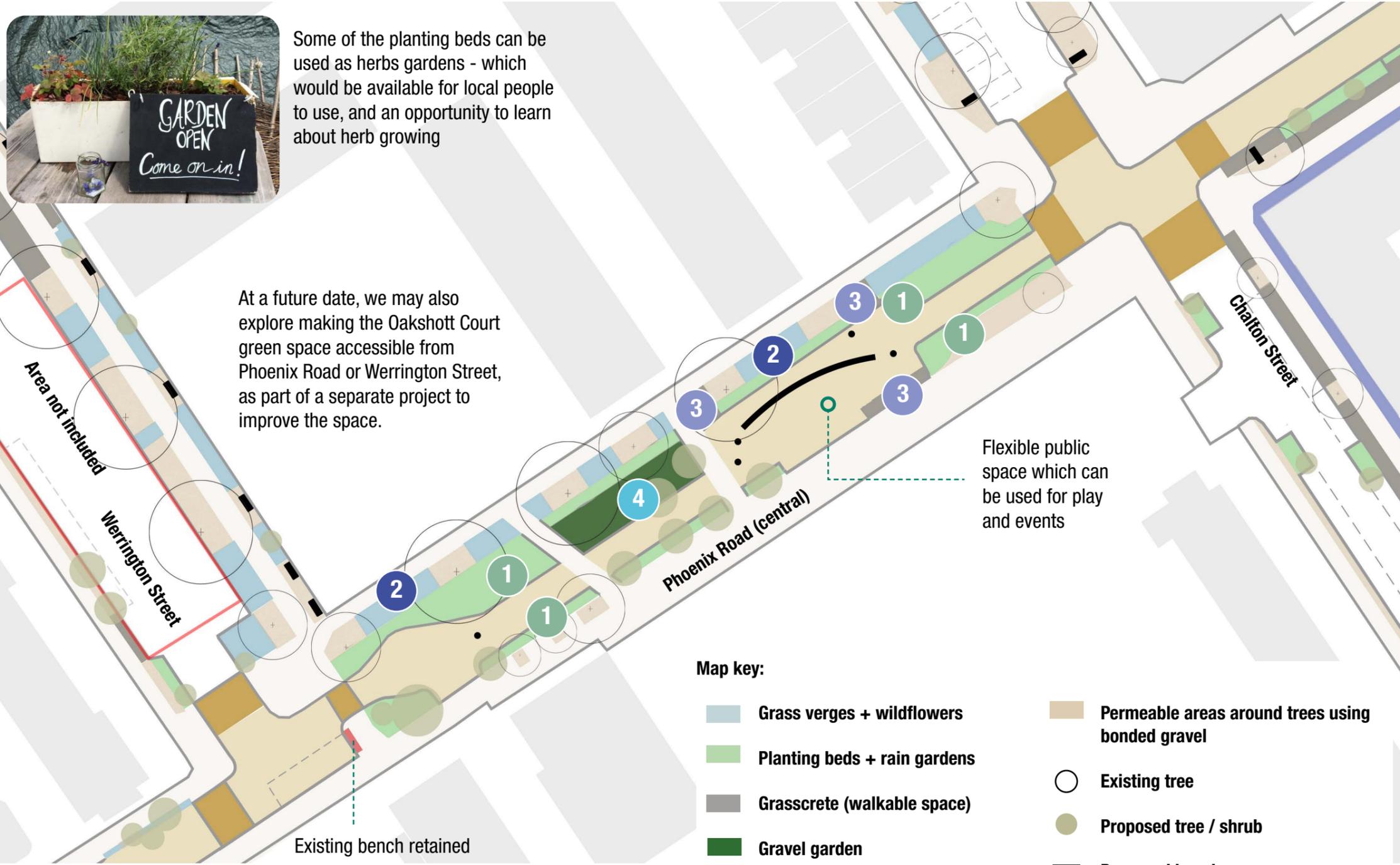
You said:

- Planting could be improved
- Herb growing could be nice for local people
- Allotments wouldn't work here - needs to look smarter/ permanent
- Accessible seating is needed
- There has been antisocial behaviour in this area during the trial, and littering

We are now proposing:

- Different types of greenery, including rain gardens, verges with wildflowers, gravel gardens, herb gardens, grasscrete and trees
- Accessible seating, but carefully placed to minimise antisocial behaviour
- To activate the space through play, discouraging negative uses
- New bins

The exact types of greenery provided would be subject to further feasibility work, but the proposal plan gives an idea of how it might look.



Some of the planting beds can be used as herbs gardens - which would be available for local people to use, and an opportunity to learn about herb growing

At a future date, we may also explore making the Oakshott Court green space accessible from Phoenix Road or Werrington Street, as part of a separate project to improve the space.

Flexible public space which can be used for play and events

Map key:

- Grass verges + wildflowers
- Planting beds + rain gardens
- Grasscrete (walkable space)
- Gravel garden
- Permeable areas around trees using bonded gravel
- Existing tree
- Proposed tree / shrub
- Proposed bench

1 Rain gardens (with or without trees)



2 Grass verges with wildflowers



3 Grasscrete used to create accessible surfaces through which grasses can grow



4 Gravel garden - plants 'break through' the hard surfacing



Concept Design: Green and public space 2

Phoenix Road (east)

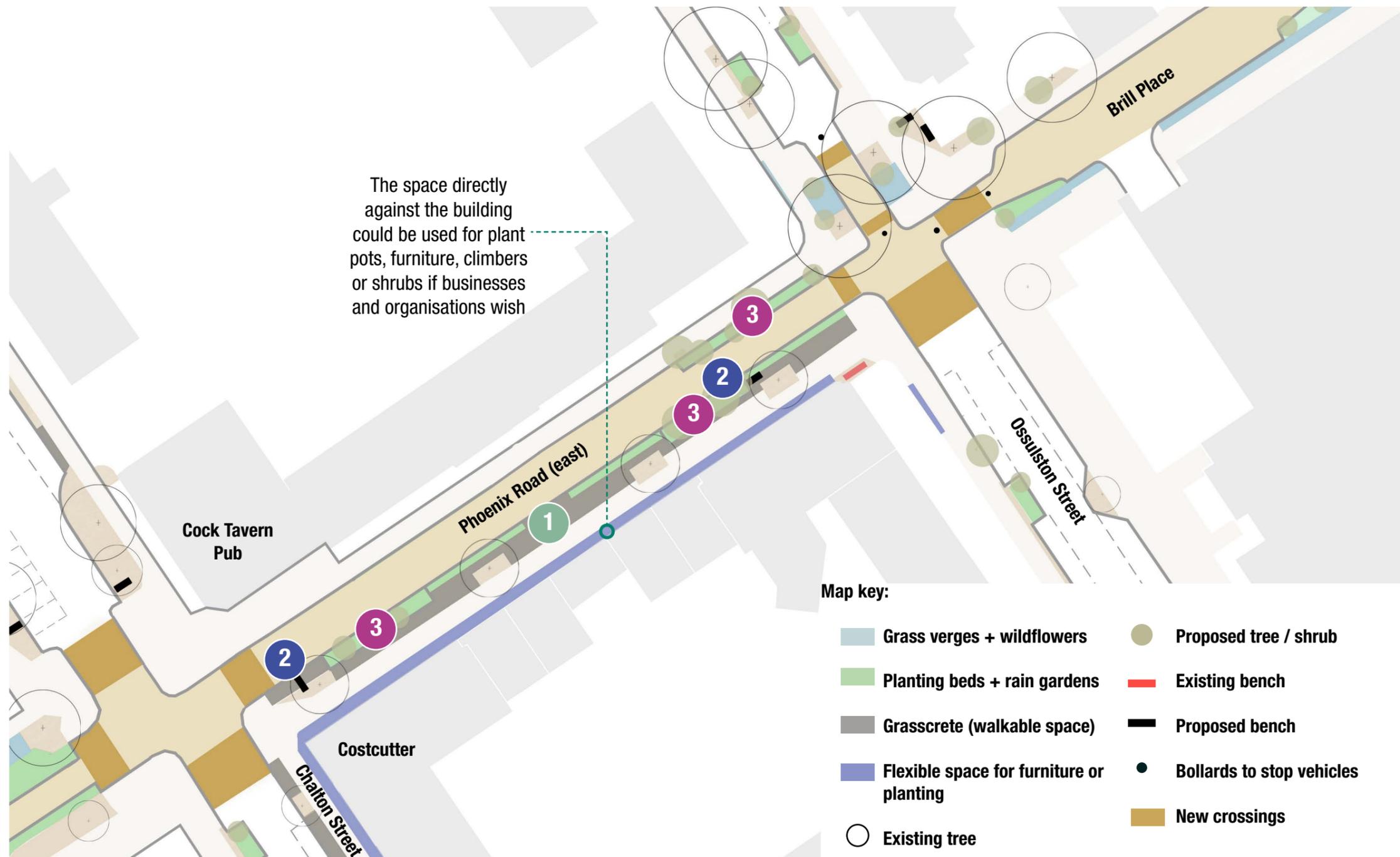
You said:

- Planting could go further than the latest trial schemes
- There are concerns around pavement parking and driving at the Ossulston Street / Phoenix Road junction
- Local businesses and organisations should be able to manage planting beds outside their premises if they wish
- Seating should be concentrated away from residential buildings

We are now proposing:

- Different types of greenery, including hard surfaces for pop-up furniture through which grasses can still grow
- Trees and shrubs
- Planting and other objects at the Ossulston Street junction to discourage drivers from mounting the pavement
- Planting beds which can be managed by local organisations if they wish
- Cycle parking
- To explore installing more lighting to improve safety

The exact types of greenery provided would be subject to further feasibility work.



1 Large area of grasscrete which can be used for street furniture or plant pots for businesses who want to install them



2 Accessible benches throughout with back and arm rests



3 A section of rain garden at the start of the street to create a gateway feature. Some of the planting beds can be used as herbs gardens - which would be available for local people to use, and an opportunity to learn about herb growing



Concept Design: Green and public space 3

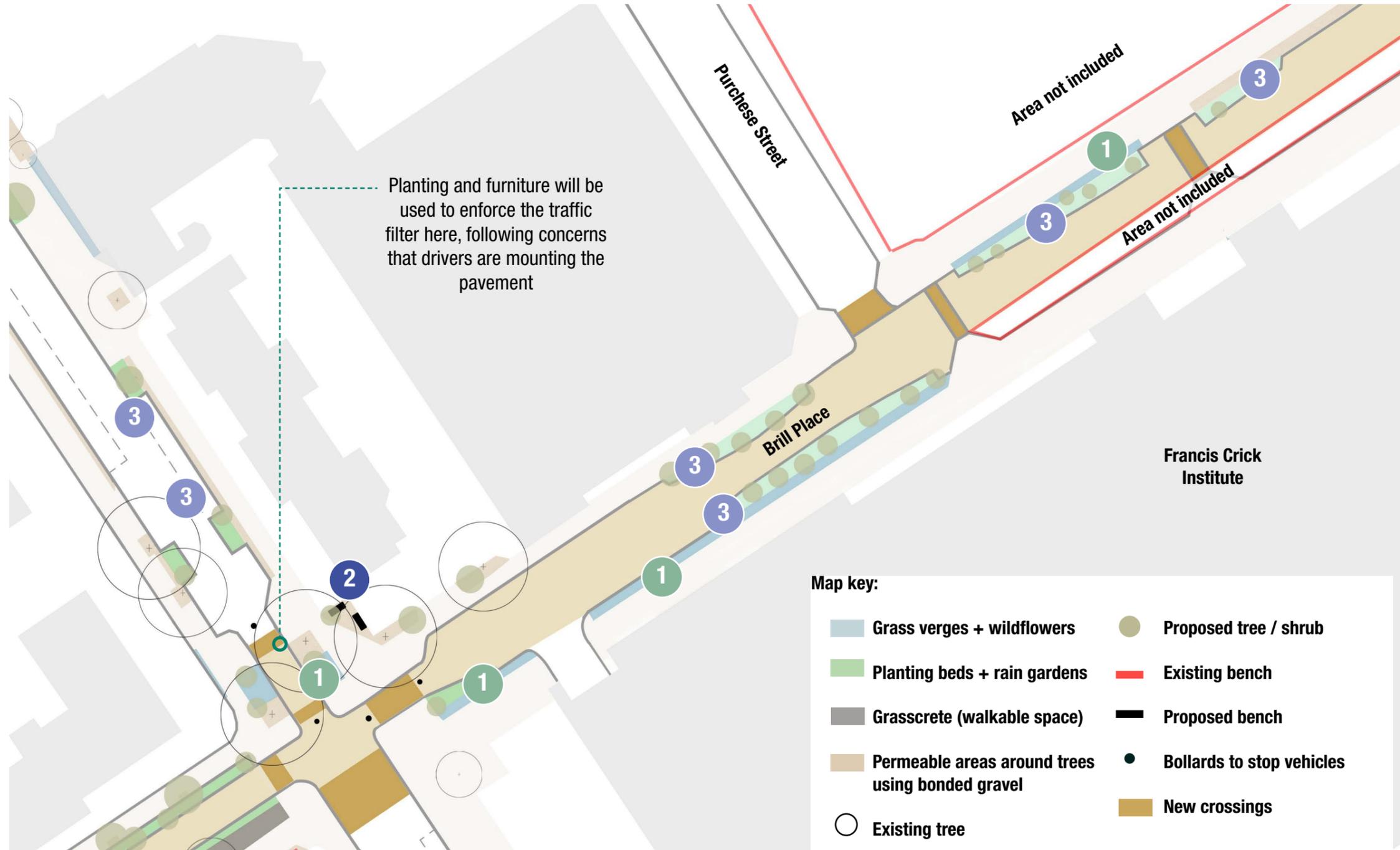
Brill Place

You said:

- Planting could go further
- There are concerns around the Ossulston Street / Phoenix Road junction being bypassed
- Local businesses should be able to manage planting beds outside their premises if they wish
- Seating should be concentrated away from residential buildings

We are now proposing:

- Different types of greenery, including rain gardens, grass verges with wildflowers, gravel gardens, herb gardens, grasscrete, trees and shrubs
- Rain gardens used to encourage slower driving speeds
- The Brill Place traffic filter, which has been here since the early 2000s, will remain in place but the public space and planting around it would be improved
- To explore installing more lighting to improve safety



The exact types of greenery provided would be subject to further feasibility work.

1 Verges which could be planted with wildflowers



2 Accessible benches throughout with back and arm rests



3 Rain gardens used to calm traffic by narrowing the road and making it less straight



Concept Design: Green and public space 4

Polygon Road junctions

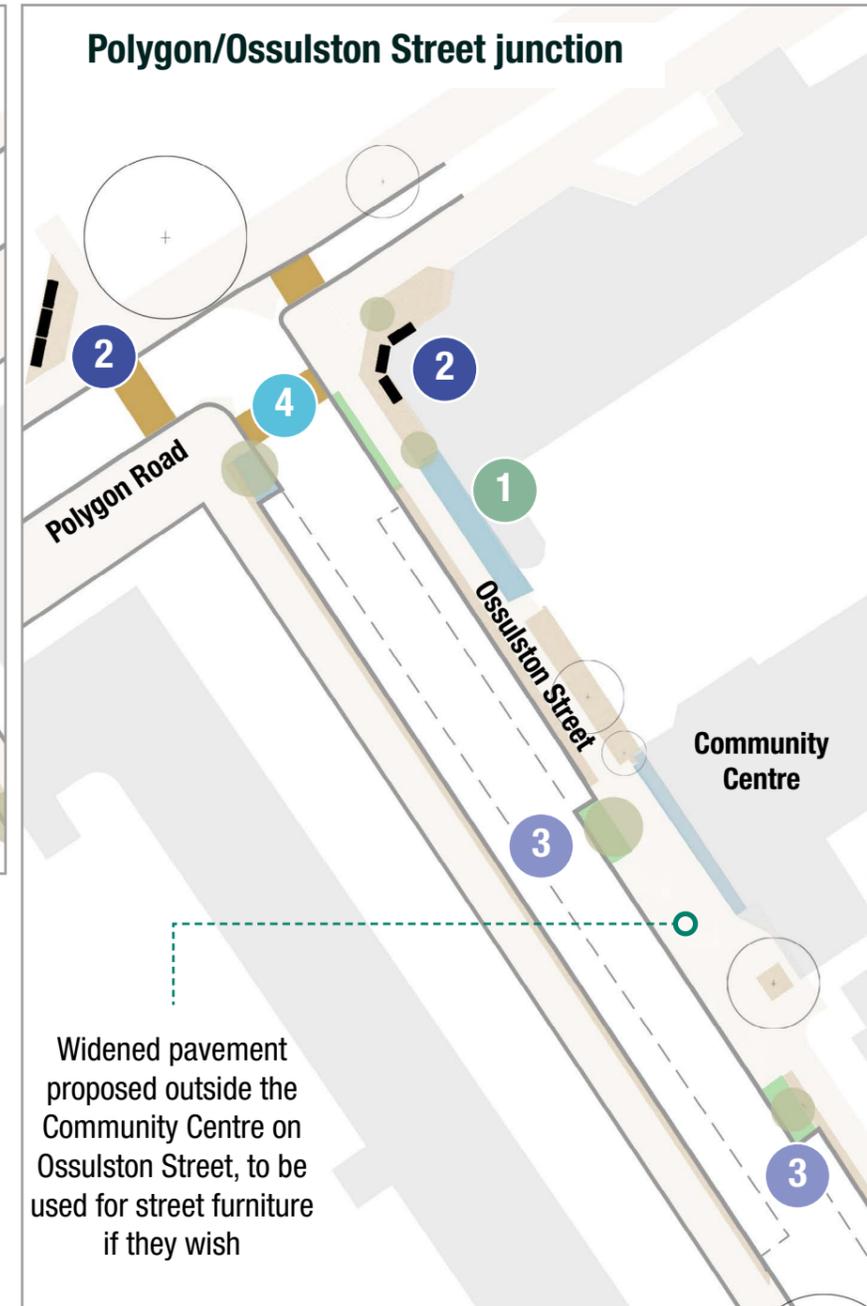
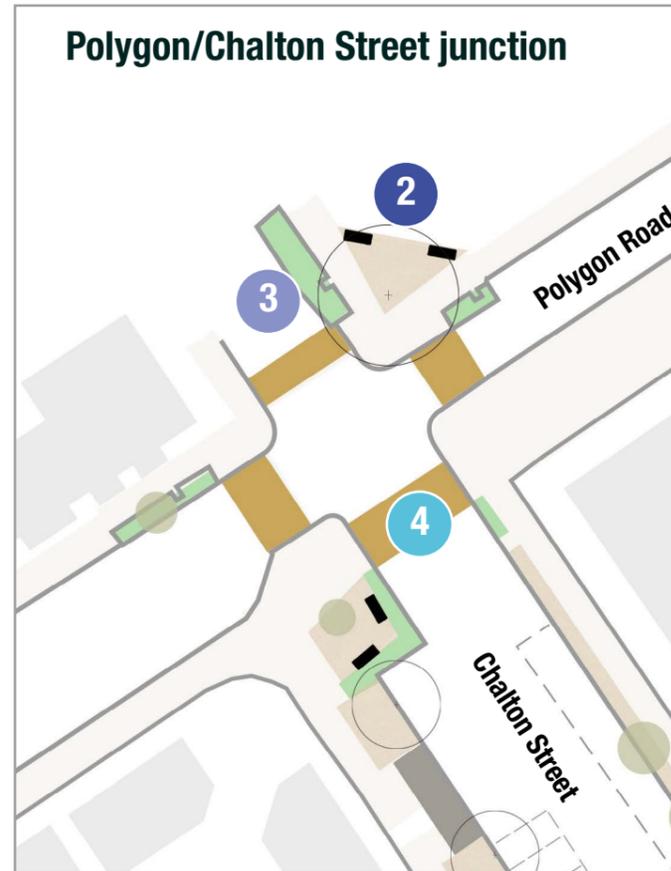
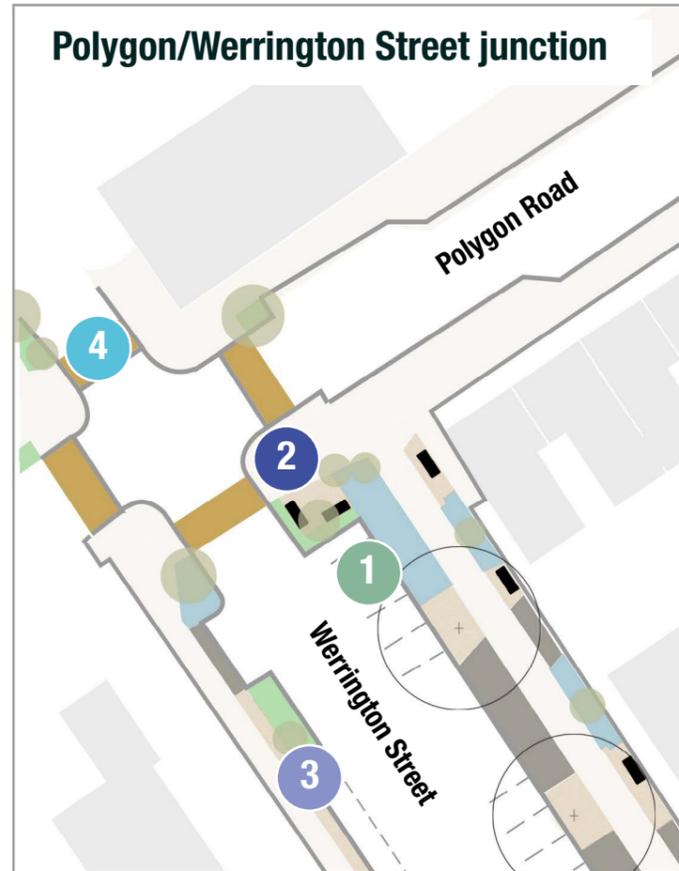
You said:

- Planting could be improved
- Herb growing could be nice for local people
- Allotments wouldn't work here - needs to look smarter/ permanent
- Accessible seating is needed
- The Community Centre could have more space for outdoor seating

We are now proposing

- Different types of greenery, including rain gardens, grass verges with wildflowers, gravel gardens, herb gardens, grasscrete, trees and shrubs
- Rain gardens used to slow down drivers
- Bonded gravel around trees to support surface water flooding management and help the trees to grow more healthily
- Better crossings where people want to cross
- Benches for resting/socialising
- Raised junctions to maximise pedestrian priority when crossing the road and to encourage slower driving speeds
- Widened pavement for the Community Centre to use

The exact types of greenery provided would be subject to further feasibility work.



Map key:

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Grass verges + wildflowers |  Existing tree |
|  Planting beds + rain gardens |  Proposed tree / shrub |
|  Grasscrete (walkable space) |  Proposed bench which can also be used for informal play |
|  Permeable areas around trees using bonded gravel | |
|  New crossing points | |

1 Verges which could be planted with wildflowers



2 Accessible benches throughout with back and arm rests



3 Rain gardens



4 Informal crossing points or continuous crossings



Concept Design: Play

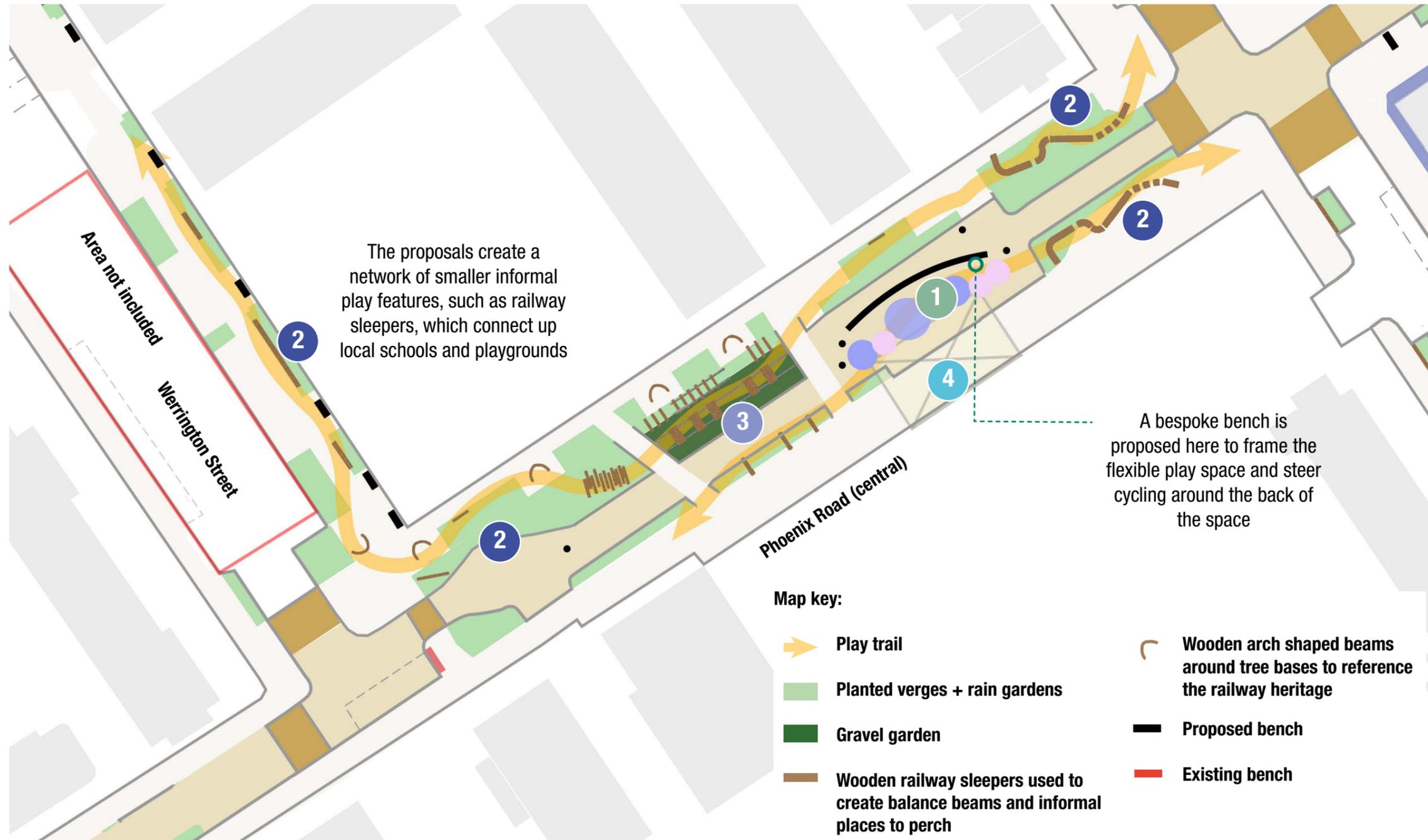
Phoenix Road (central)

You said:

- Play is one of the best activities for the space and for bringing different generations together
- There could be more play, seating and shelter from weather
- This project should complement but not repeat the play provision at Polygon Road

We are now proposing:

- Informal play features to complement the Polygon Road playground (known as 'on the way play')
- Street furniture which doubles as play features, such as benches which can be used as balance beams
- Varied facilities to meet the needs of children of different ages
- A more formalised play space directly outside Maria Fidelis, which can be designed with local pupils in the future
- A shelter structure



1 Flexible play area - this can be designed with local schools at a later stage



Image source - Global Highways

2 Balance beams, stepping stones and informal perch points created from wooden railway sleepers



3 Playful railway-style moveable seats on rails



4 The proposals could include a shelter structure at the school gate to enable this space to be used in poor weather



Concept Design: A unique street 1

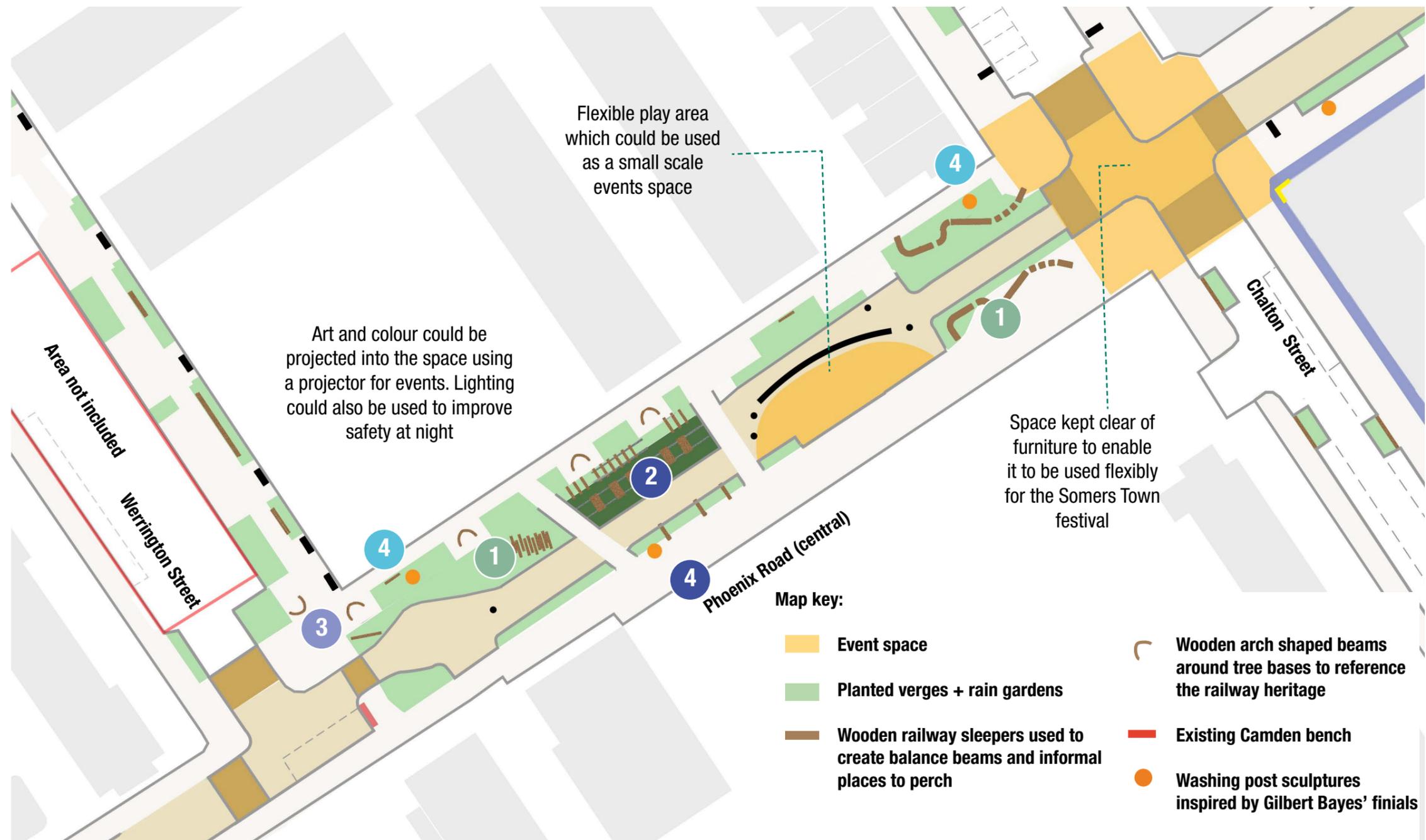
Phoenix Road (central)

You said:

- The project should respond to local culture and be 'place specific and unique'
- Businesses should benefit from the new public space, e.g., by hosting events and having spill out space
- Space for art

We are now proposing:

- Additional heritage washing post sculptures to add to the proposed Somers Town Heritage Trail which is already being installed
- Street furniture and play features inspired by the area's railway history
- Additional pavement space and traffic-free space that could be used for local events and activities, such as the Somers Town festival
- Adding interest through heritage items such as recovered railway railings, which are shown mounted on a building wall but could be used elsewhere



1 Railway sleepers used to create informal play and places to perch



2 Playful railway-style moveable seats on rails



3 Arched wooden beams used throughout to reference the former railway arches that have been lost



4 Washing-style posts which reference the historic Gilbert Bayes posts that were lost. The 'finials' on top of the posts will have modern designs. Three are already being delivered by the people's museum but more could be designed with local people



Example of how the washing posts used to look in the area

Concept Design: A unique street 2

Phoenix Road (east)

You said:

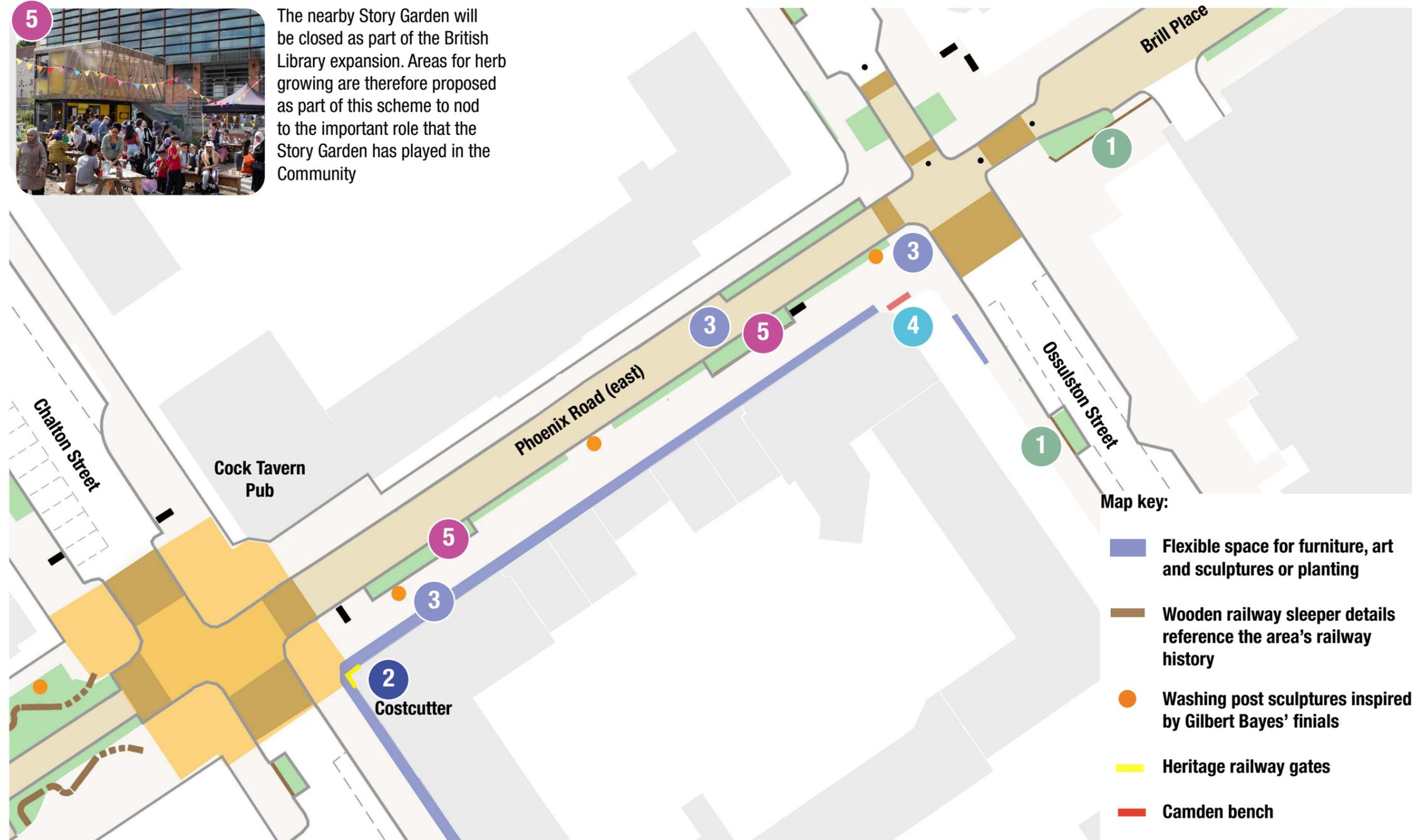
- The project should respond to local culture and be 'place specific and unique'
- Businesses should benefit from the new public space, e.g., by hosting events and having spill out space
- Space for art

We are now proposing:

- Additional heritage washing post sculptures to add to the proposed Somers Town Heritage Trail which is already being installed
- Street furniture and play features inspired by the area's railway history
- Additional pavement space and traffic-free space that could be used for local events and activities, such as the Somers Town festival
- Adding interest through heritage items such as recovered railway railings, which are shown mounted on a building wall but could be used elsewhere



The nearby Story Garden will be closed as part of the British Library expansion. Areas for herb growing are therefore proposed as part of this scheme to nod to the important role that the Story Garden has played in the Community



1 Railway sleepers used as edging on rain gardens, but can also be used as informal perch points and play



2 Heritage railway railings from the area have been kept and could be mounted to buildings, or woven into the planting areas



3 Washing-style posts which reference the historic Gilbert Bayes posts that are no longer in the area. The 'finials' on top of the posts will have modern designs. Three are already being delivered by the people's museum but more could be designed with local people



4 The existing examples of the 'Camden bench' in the area are to be retained. Local people have mixed feelings about these benches, so alternative types of seating will also be proposed.



Concept Design: Materials

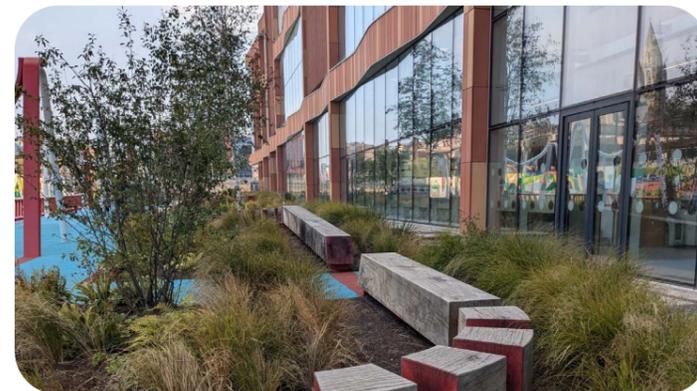
Materials + Features

A number of materials are proposed in the drawings, but these are subject to your feedback and further feasibility work. This is so we can ensure that they can be maintained in the long term.

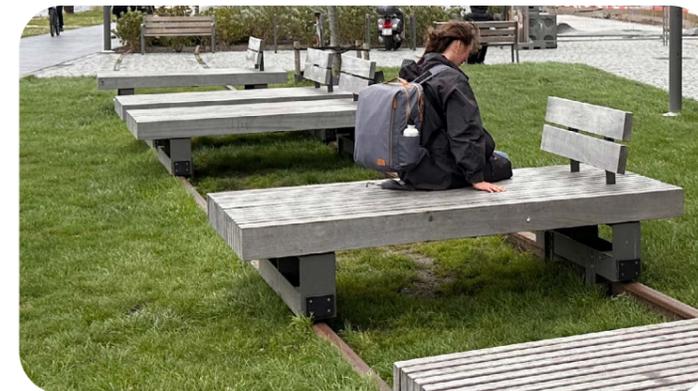
They have been proposed for their appearance and the way they reference Somers Town history, but also due to their durability and how they allow us to manage surface water. This will compliment the rain gardens being proposed.



A buff coloured surface is proposed for the road and cycle space for the full length of Phoenix Road and Brill Place. This is to give it a shared identity and highlight that it is an important walking and cycling route between train stations.



Balance beams, stepping stones and climbing structures created from wooden railway sleepers, to reference Somers Town's railway history. They also create areas of height which adds visual interest to the street.



Informal crossing points or continuous pavements would be paved slightly differently from the main pavements, using smaller paving slabs. You can see lots of examples of these around Camden.



Gravel gardens can use stone, soil or existing site materials that have been broken up. This is a great way to re-use material on site which has cost and environmental benefits. Gravel gardens create the impression of a garden 'breaking through' the surrounding hard surface. They also help to absorb storm water run off.



Grasscrete is created using paving blocks through which grasses can grow. This creates a firm and accessible surface for wheelchair users and buggies, but creates a softer feel than asphalt. It is also permeable, helping to manage storm water run off.



To support better environmental practices, the existing paving slabs on the pavements (left) will be cleaned and reused where possible for most of the project.

At gateway points (the start of the traffic free space and the Brill Place junction), york stone (right) will be used instead. There are already examples of this near the Francis Crick Institute which will be retained.

