

The story so far



In September 2023, we began a new phase of public engagement around the redevelopment of Baltic Wharf – the site currently owned and occupied by Travis Perkins.

This public engagement followed earlier engagement, in 2020 and 2021, around initial proposals, that were ultimately refused by Westminster City Council in 2022.

The latest phase of consultation has been focused on listening to stakeholders' views and considering how a new proposal can respond to the reasons for refusal identified in 2022.

We launched this phase of engagement with an engagement forum in September 2023. This was followed by a number of targeted meetings with close neighbours and a series of design workshops.

Taking all views and factors into account, we now want to show you our emerging proposals for the site and to hear your views on these.



Our brief for the site

Travis Perkins has owned and operated a builders merchants on the Baltic Wharf site for over 50 years. This builders merchants is very successful, but the facilities that it is operating from are no longer fit for purpose and Travis Perkins has spent a number of years considering redevelopment options – which maximise the potential represented by this prominent site, located within the Paddington Opportunity Area, and ensure a continued and improved builders merchants at Baltic Wharf.

In 2019, Travis Perkins actively marketed the site as a joint venture development opportunity. Over 25 potential development partners submitted proposals, including residential and commercial developers, hotel developers and others.

Following an extensive review, Travis Perkins identified that the only viable option for mixed use development on the site, retaining and improving the builders merchants at ground level, was to partner with Unite Students to provide student accommodation and associated facilities on the upper floors.

The initial proposals promoted by Travis Perkins and Unite Students proposed 854 student bedrooms above the builders merchants.

The current emerging proposals are based on around 600 student bedrooms – a c.30% reduction. This is the minimum number of bedrooms that can be viably delivered, while still allowing the scheme to provide a new builders merchants and extensive on and off-site public benefits.

The majority of the student bedrooms would be occupied under an agreement with Westminster-based King's College London.

Vision



Modernised facility that meets Travis Perkins future operational needs



World class student accommodation



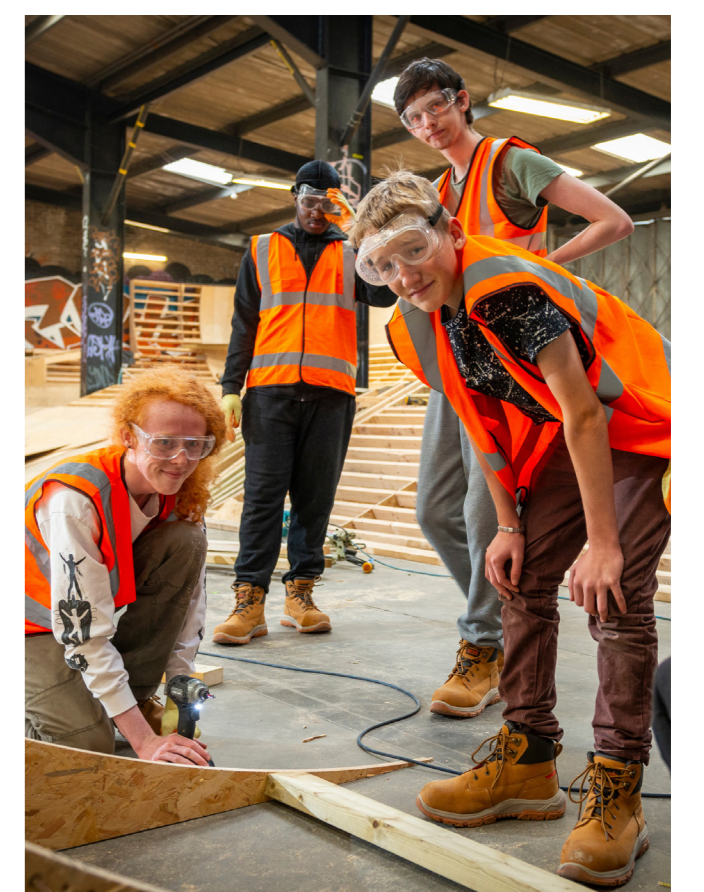
Celebrate the sites industrial canal side heritage



Enhanced public realm, including new canal side path



Highly sustainable development



Community benefits including a new community space run by local organisation

What you've told us



Over the past few months, we have listened carefully to local stakeholders, to try to understand what you didn't like about our initial proposals – and more importantly, what we might be able to do to bring forward new proposals that, where possible, address your concerns.

Over the past few months, we have listened carefully to local stakeholders. Your key message to us has been that, while there is general acknowledgement that the Baltic Wharf site should be redeveloped, this redevelopment must not be undertaken at the expense of the local community.

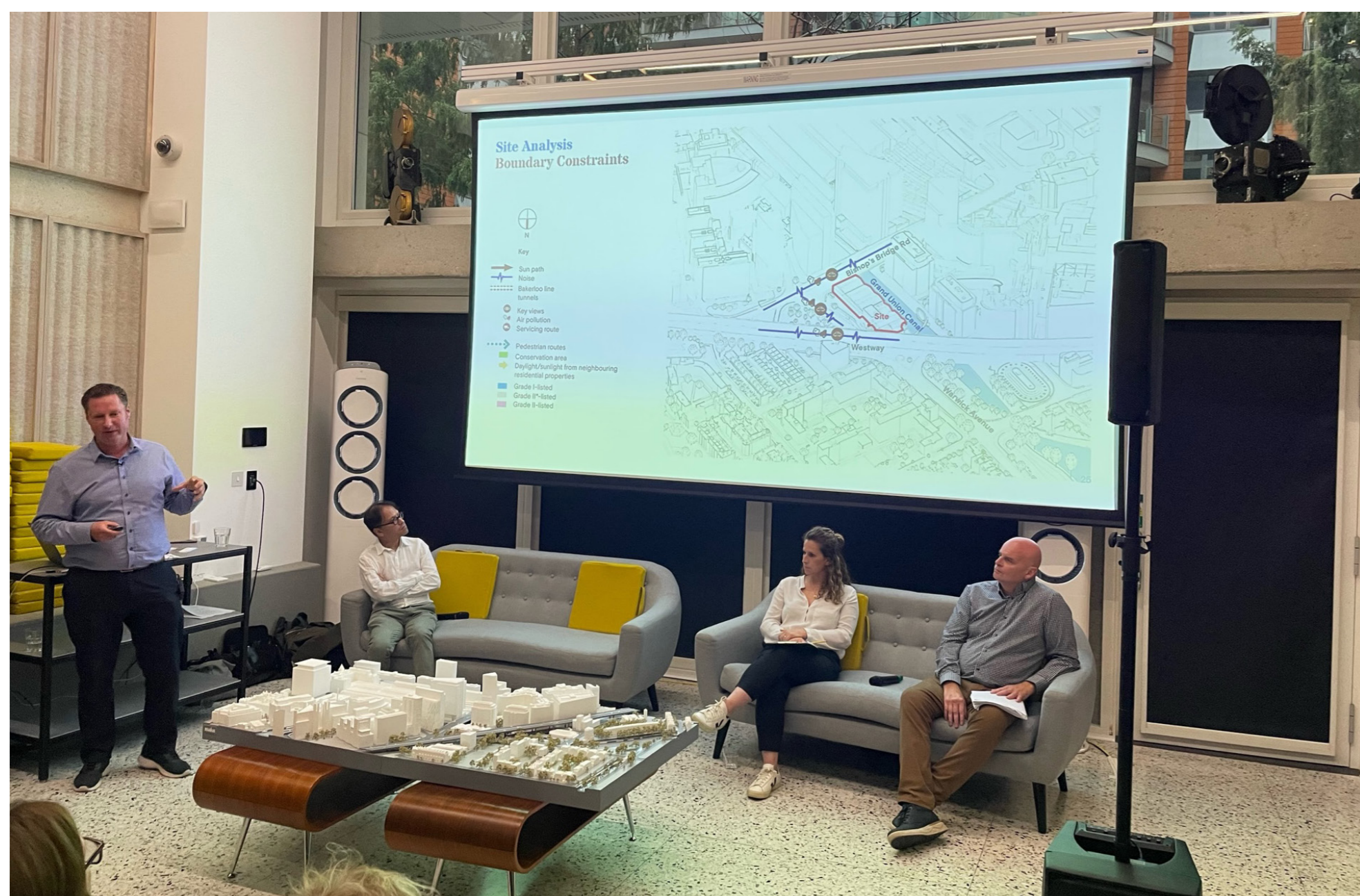
This means that, in addition to addressing the specific reasons for refusal of the initial proposals, any scheme must demonstrate that the views of the community have been considered.

In summary, the initial reasons for refusal were:

- The daylight and sunlight impacts on Sheldon Square and Dudley House were unacceptable and the proposals created a significant sense of enclosure
- The height and mass would cause harm to the setting of nearby listed buildings and conservation area
- The proposed servicing arrangements were unacceptable



Our consultation hub



The Engagement Forum

Our invitation for the community to visit existing Unite Students halls, remains open! Please ask to arrange a visit.

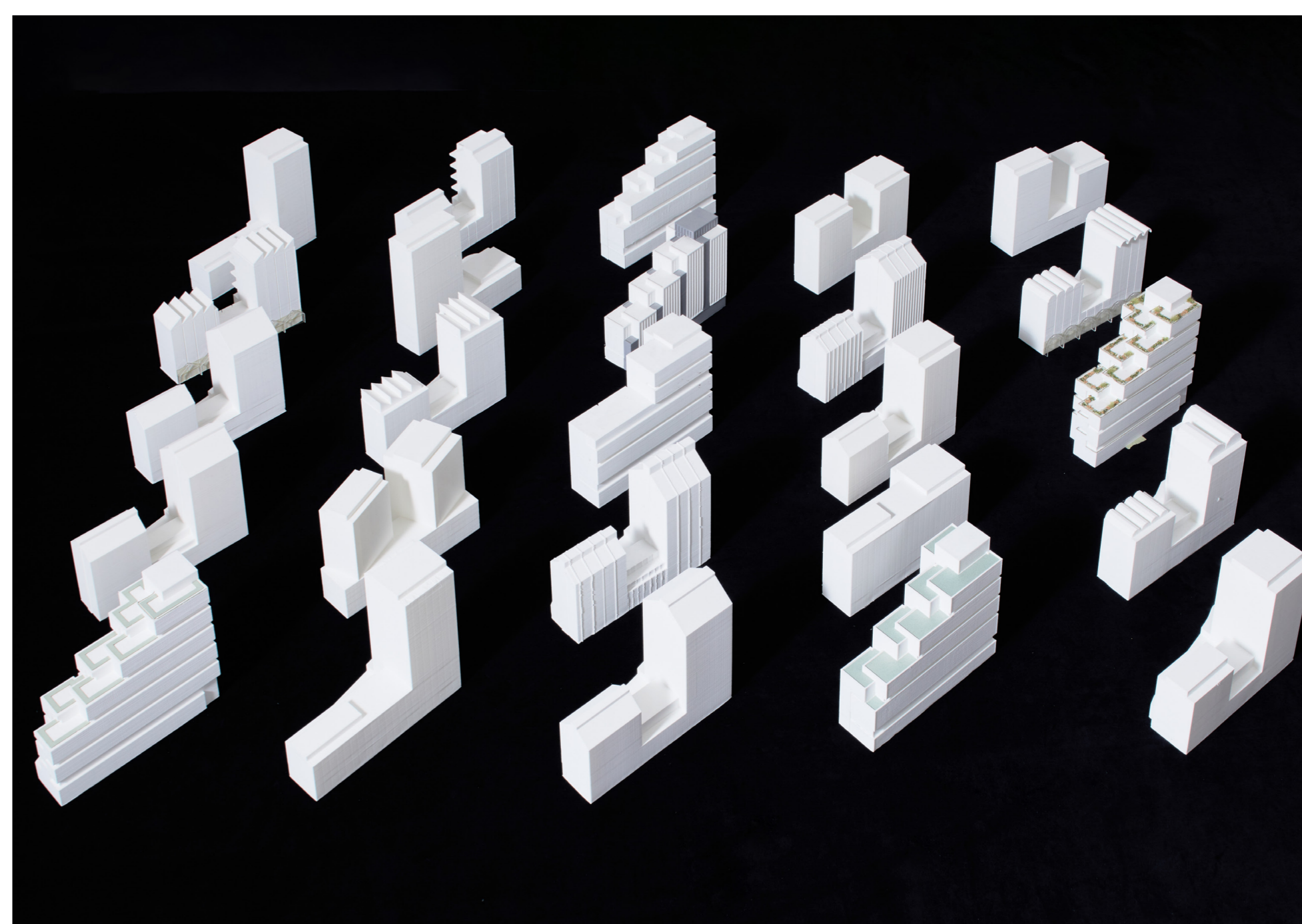
Through our engagement process, and specifically through a series of detailed design workshops held in late 2023, we have identified a design approach.

More information on this design approach – and how our emerging proposals address the initial reasons for refusal – is provided on the following boards.

Above all, any new proposals need to demonstrate that they deliver significant public benefit, to the immediate community and the wider community in Westminster.

Student accommodation was not identified as a reason for refusal for the initial proposals. However, given what you have said to us, we acknowledge that we need to work hard to reassure the community that student use is appropriate for the site.

We have undertaken detailed research into what students look for in new purpose built accommodation, why they choose a specific area in which to live and what the experience has been of communities living next door to student halls, and this research is detailed in this exhibition.



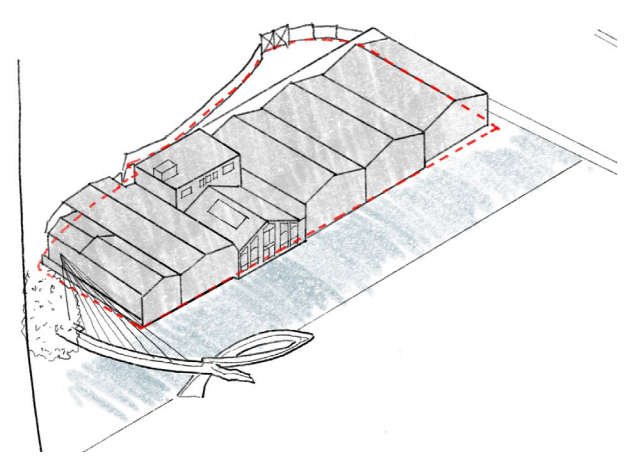
We have looked at many different design options for the site

Our response – the proposed design

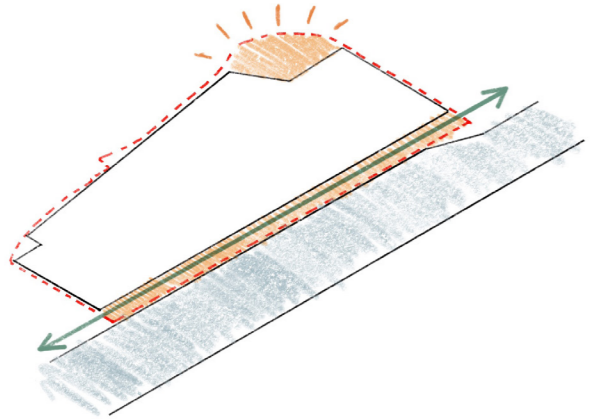


GIVE YOUR
VIEWS HERE

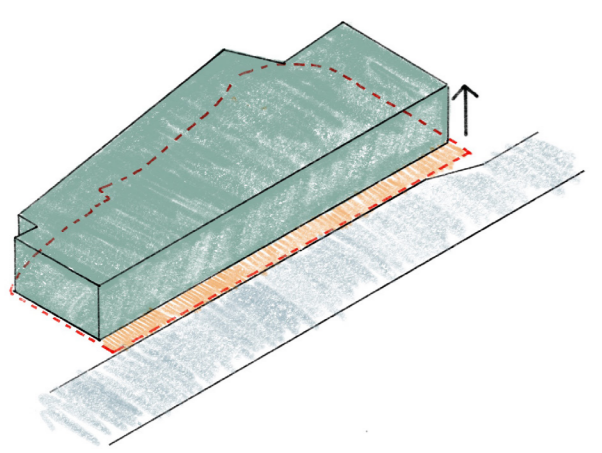
Following the design workshops we held at the end of last year, we have identified an approach based on splitting the mass of the scheme over two buildings with a significant gap in the middle as the most appropriate for the site.



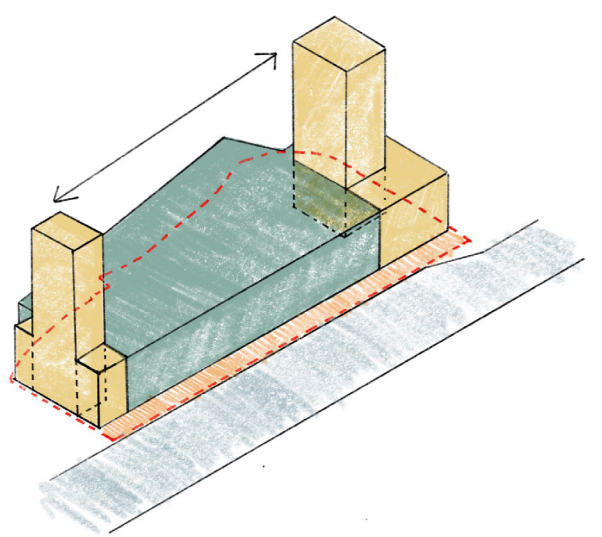
01 Existing Site



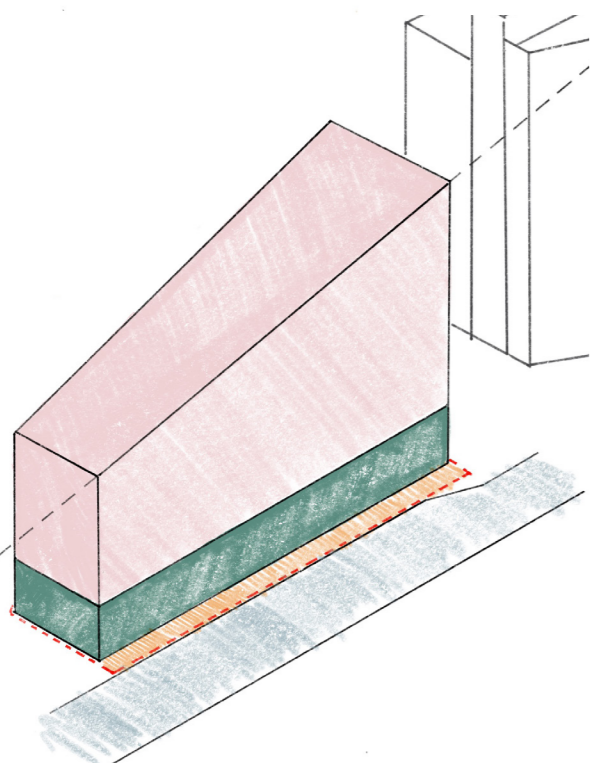
02 Provide public realm improvements:
- New 4.5m canal-side path
- New public realm at Harrow Road junction.



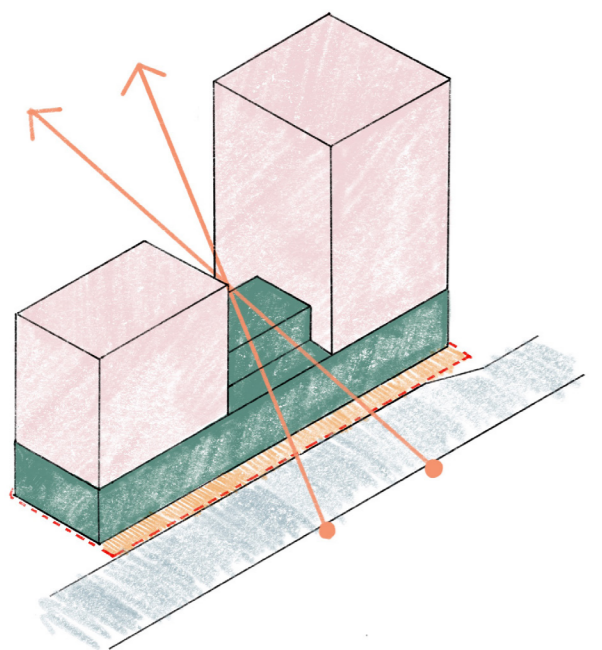
03 Re-provide modernised double height Travis Perkins box setback from the canal.



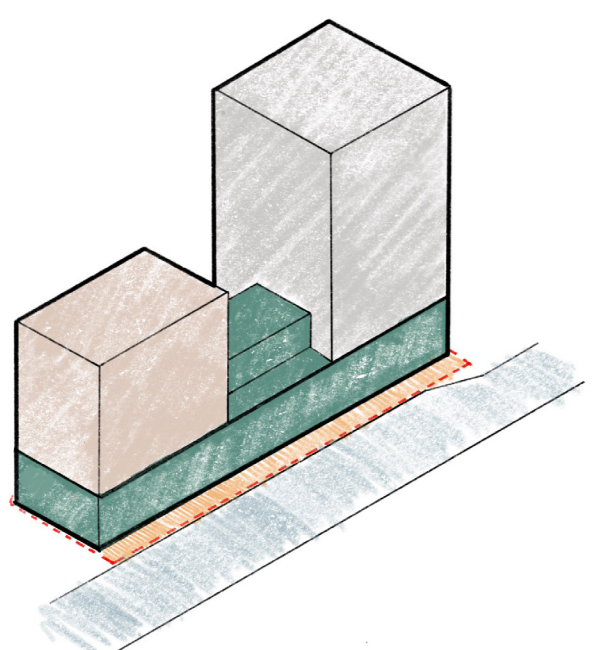
04 Unite Students stairs and lifts located to north and south ends of the site to minimise impact on Travis Perkins operations.



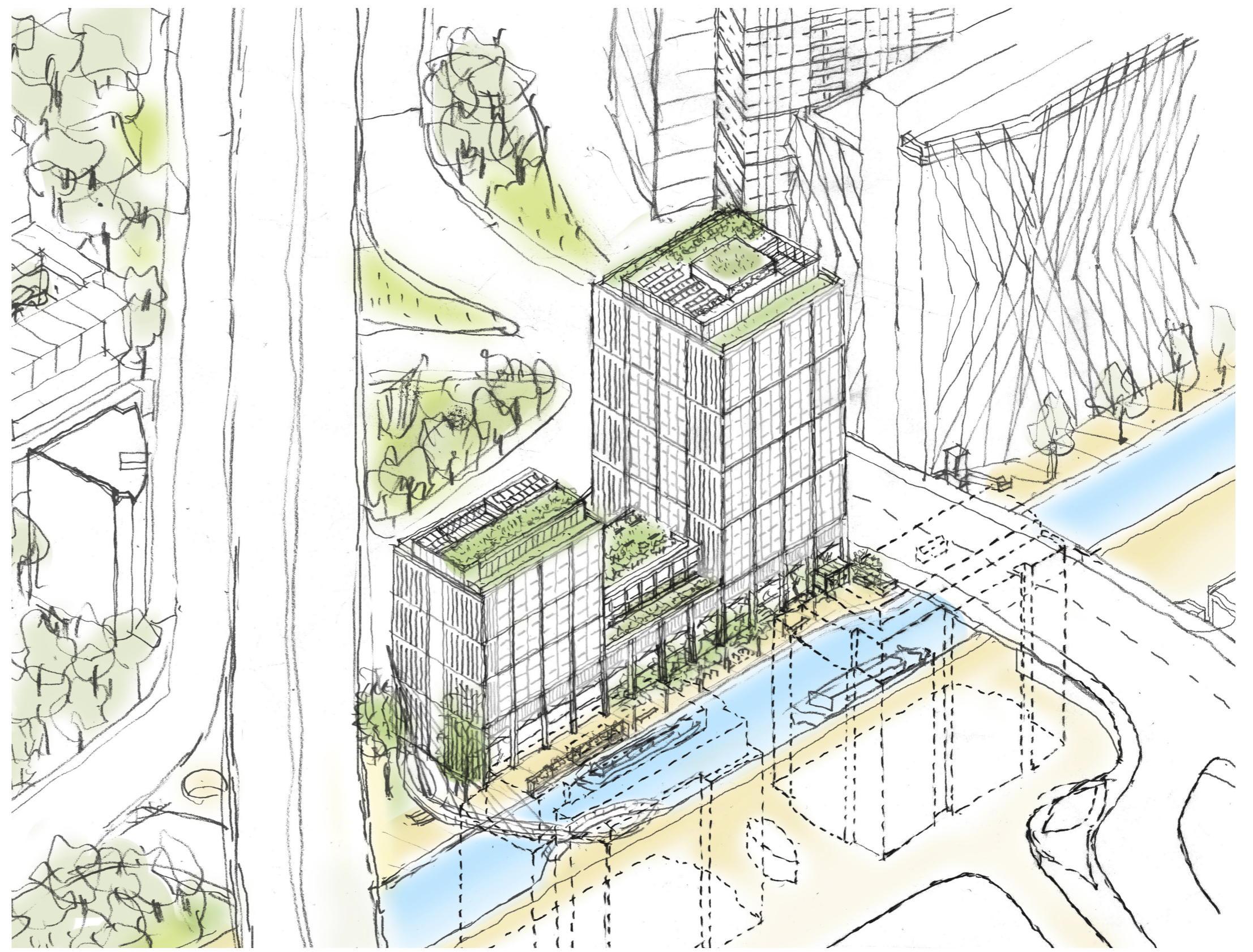
05 Student accommodation located above, with a massing envelope that responds to the tall buildings in the Paddington Opportunity Area and reduces towards the residential neighbourhood in the north.



06 Split the mass into two volumes creating a clear gap between that allows sky view and daylight between.



07 Create an individual character to each of the buildings, taking reference from historical canal-side architecture.



Overview sketch



Canal elevation



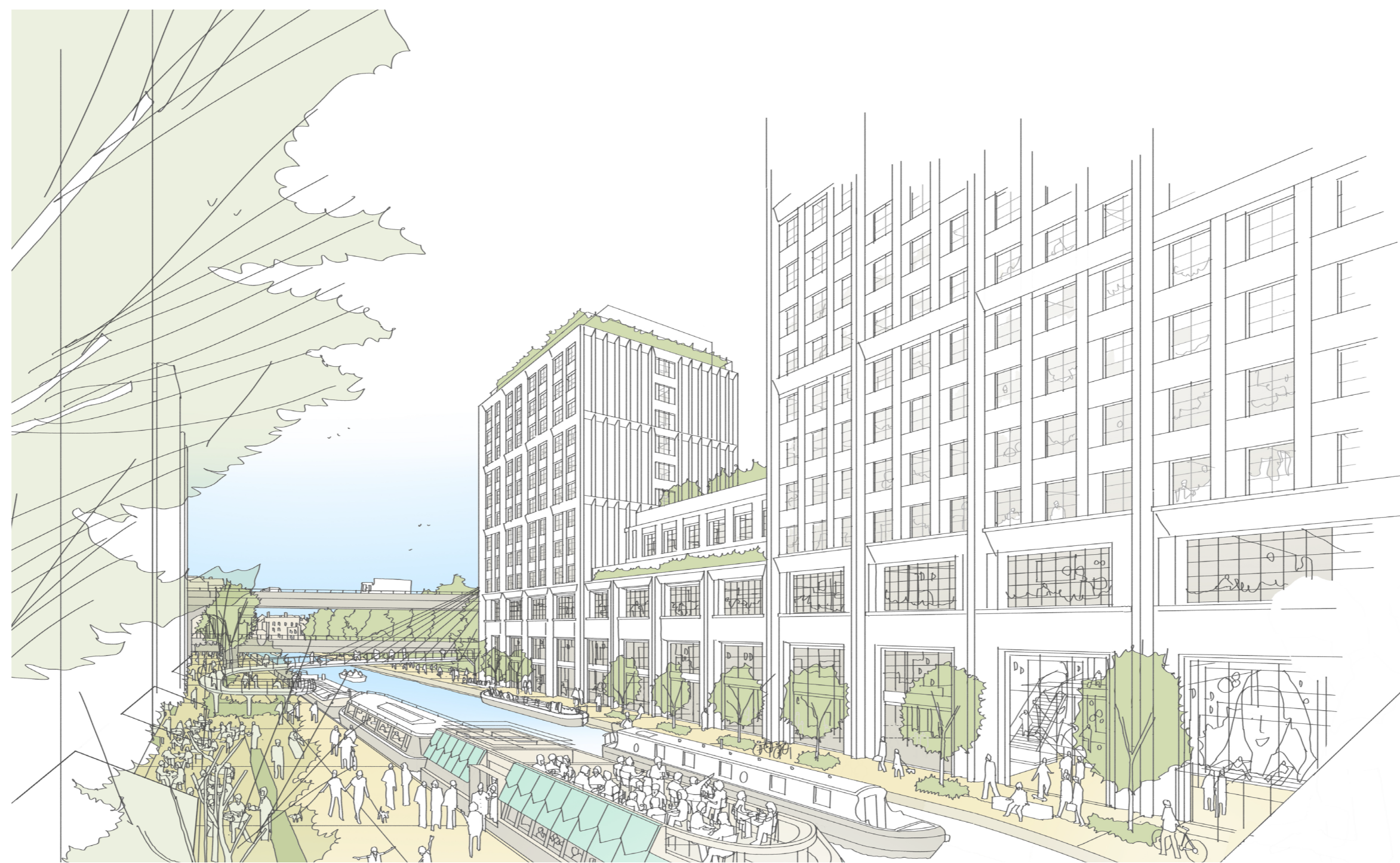
Harrow Road elevation

Sketches of the proposed scheme



GIVE YOUR
VIEWS HERE

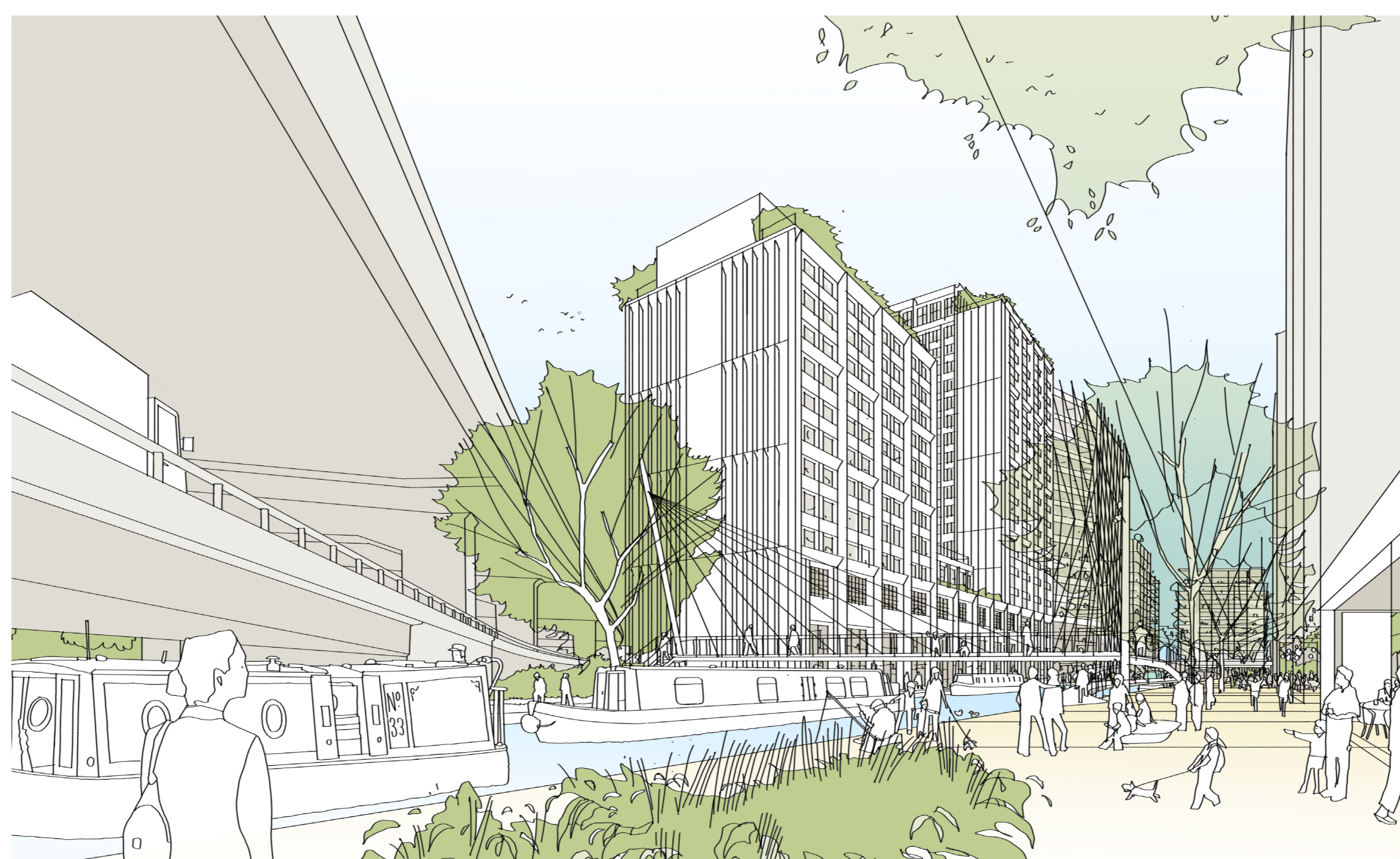
When designing the scheme, we have focused on how the building will look from various angles. The sketches below give a sense of how the scheme will fit into its context.



Proposed illustrative view looking north from Bishop's Bridge



Proposed illustrative view looking west from Harrow Road



Proposed illustrative view looking south east from under the Westway

Respecting our neighbours



GIVE YOUR VIEWS HERE

Redevelopment of the Baltic Wharf site for anything more than a low level building, will inevitably have an impact on neighbouring properties, particularly in terms of views and the amount of light received by nearby windows.

A low level redevelopment is not appropriate for this site, given its central London, urban location, within the Paddington Opportunity Area.

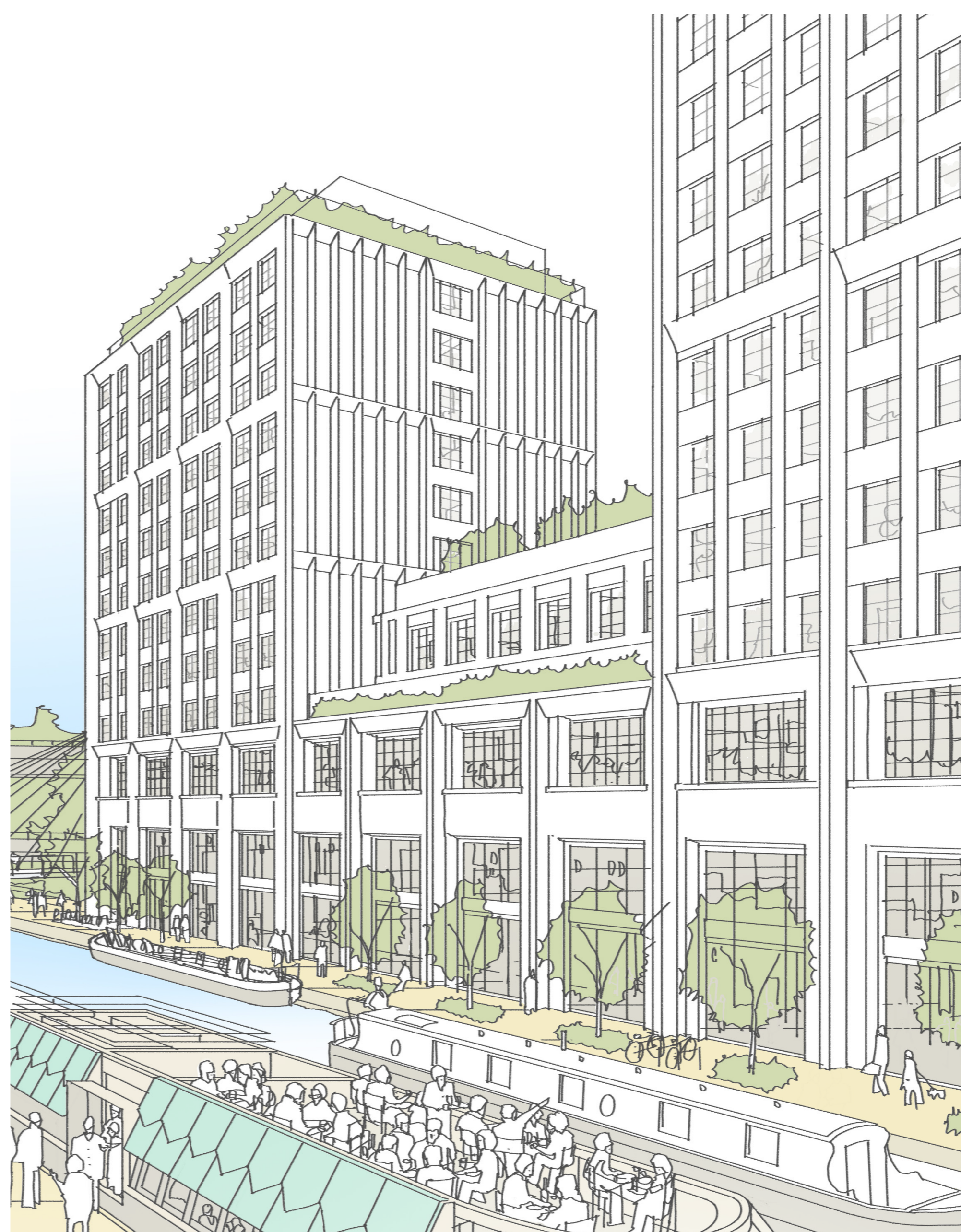
Achieving a scheme which minimises impact on our neighbours has been the key focus of the project team over recent months.

The proposed new design of the building, with a significant gap in the middle, has been carefully modelled to reduce any sense of enclosure and to improve light and outlook levels to neighbouring properties. Detailed initial studies have identified that, against all criteria, the new design building performs better than the initial proposals, is appropriate within its urban context and minimises local impacts.

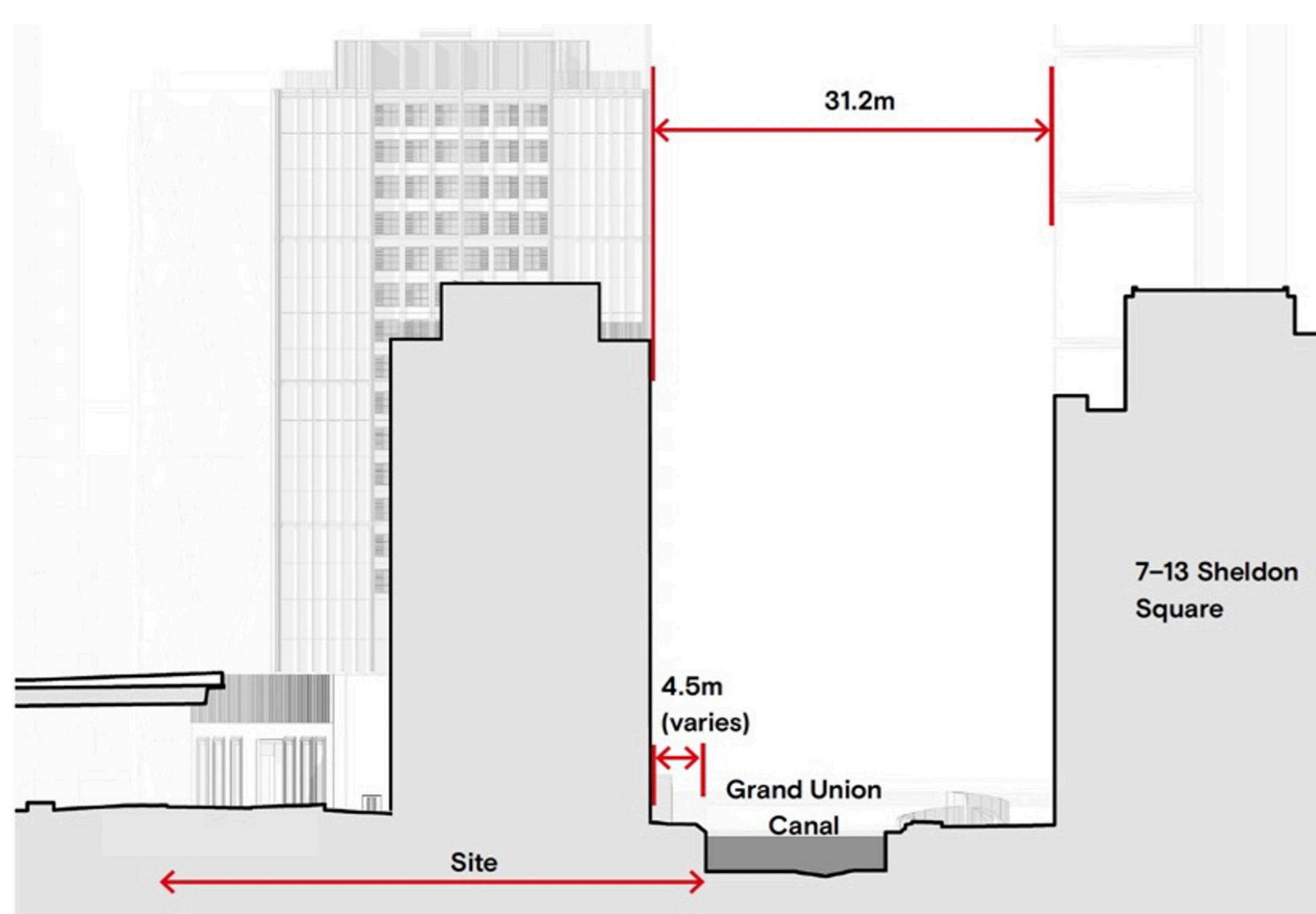
We are also reviewing design options, such as the use of light coloured bricks on the Sheldon Square façade, to further improve the position.

Additionally, under the new design, there are around 40% fewer student windows on the Sheldon Square facing façade. We are also proposing to change the internal layout of the student bedrooms, to position the bed, rather than the desk, under the windows.

The façade to façade separation distance is around 31.2m. This is a wholly appropriate separation distance for an urban location and, to put this in context, is wider than the distance between buildings on Oxford and Regent Streets.



The new design is for two buildings with a gap in the middle



The separation distance to Sheldon Square



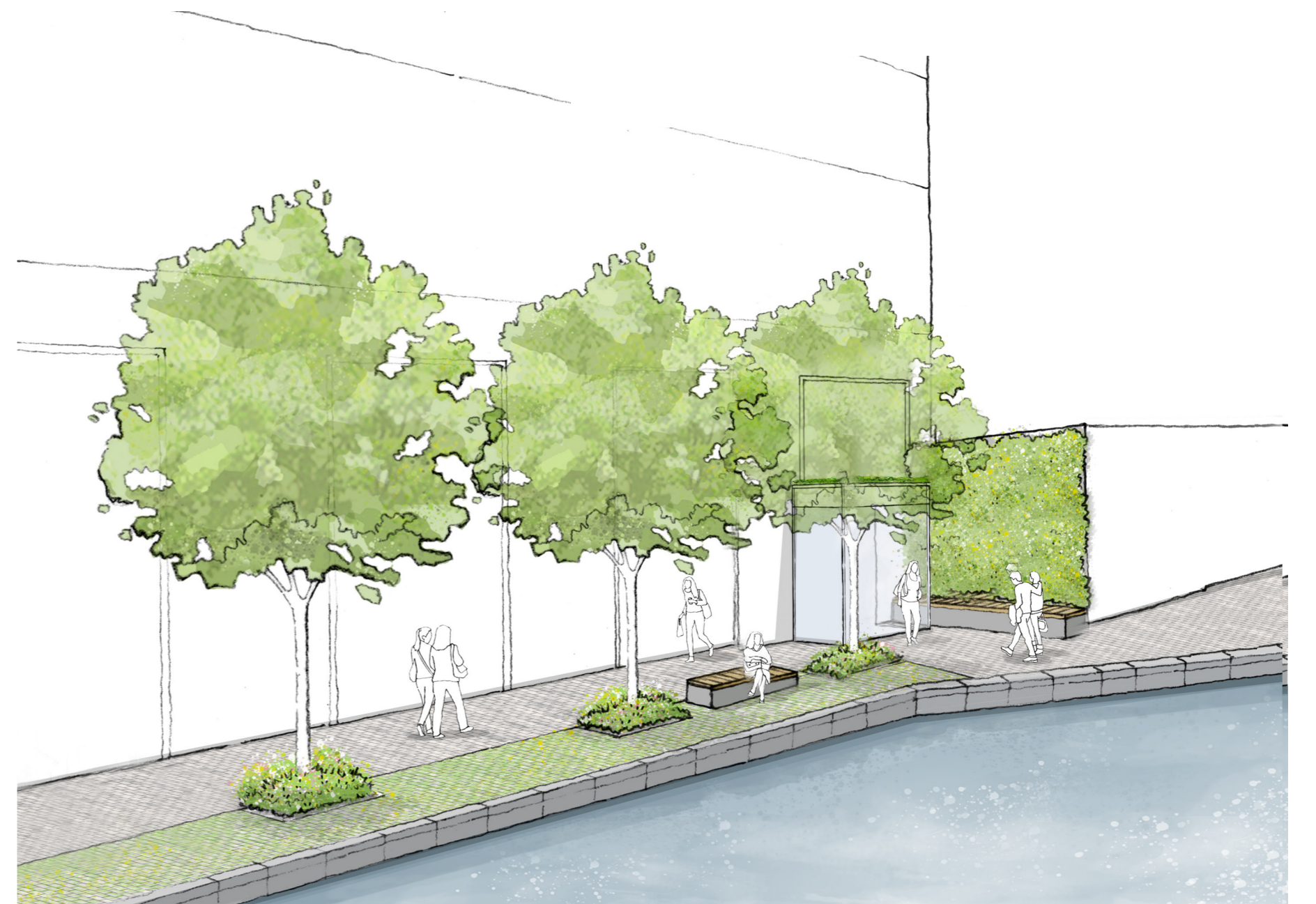
The separation distance across the canal is wider than the distance between buildings across Oxford Street

Improving the immediate area



A key element of the scheme is improving the area around the site which is currently unattractive and difficult to navigate. Central to this is opening a new canal side footpath, providing a continuous scenic route along the Grand Union Canal for the first time in the site's history.

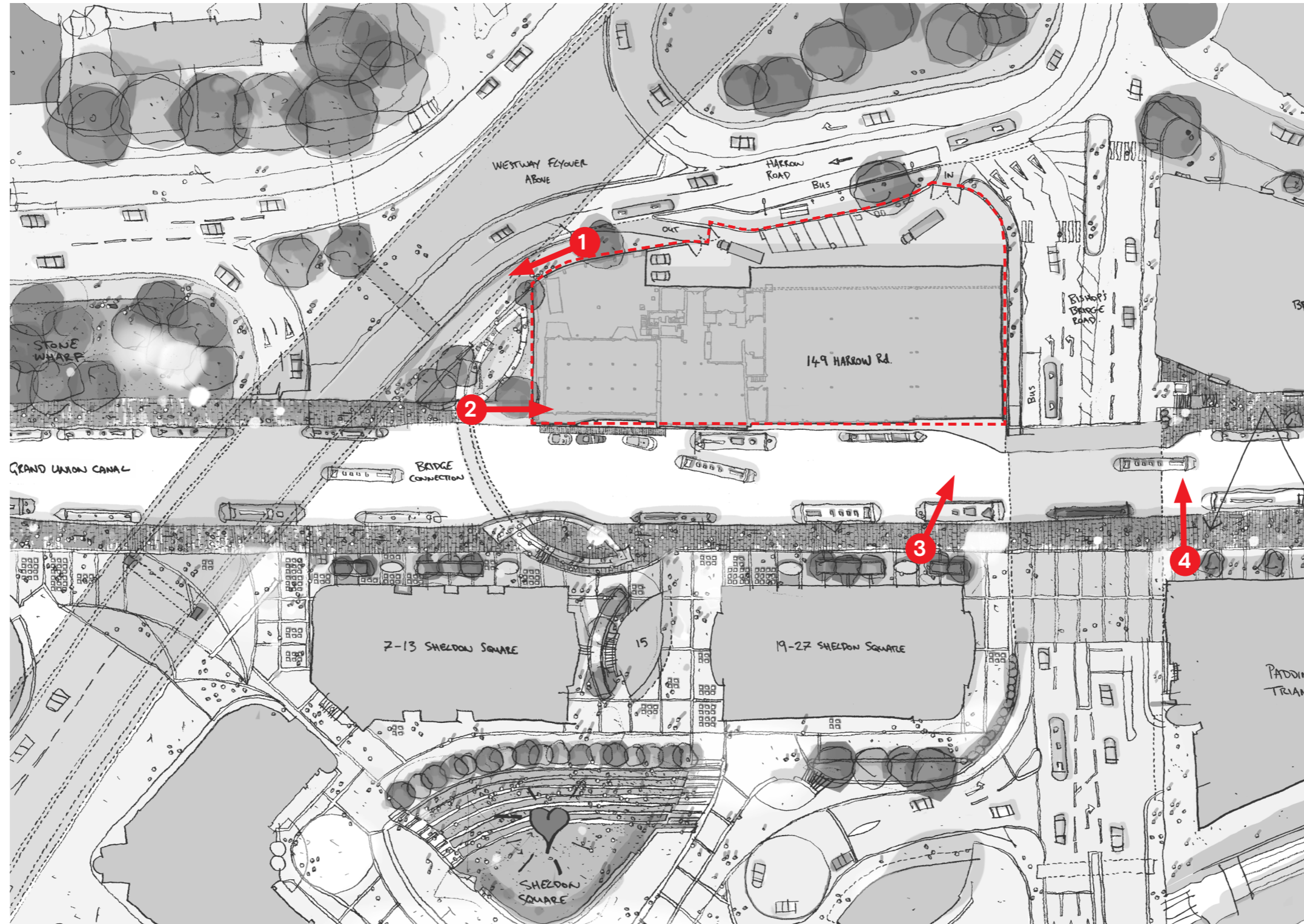
The proposals aim to enhance the experience for pedestrians by introducing comfortable seating areas where people can relax and enjoy the canal. Additionally, tree planting will be incorporated to provide shade, improve air quality and contribute to the visual quality of the area.



Existing



View 01



View 03

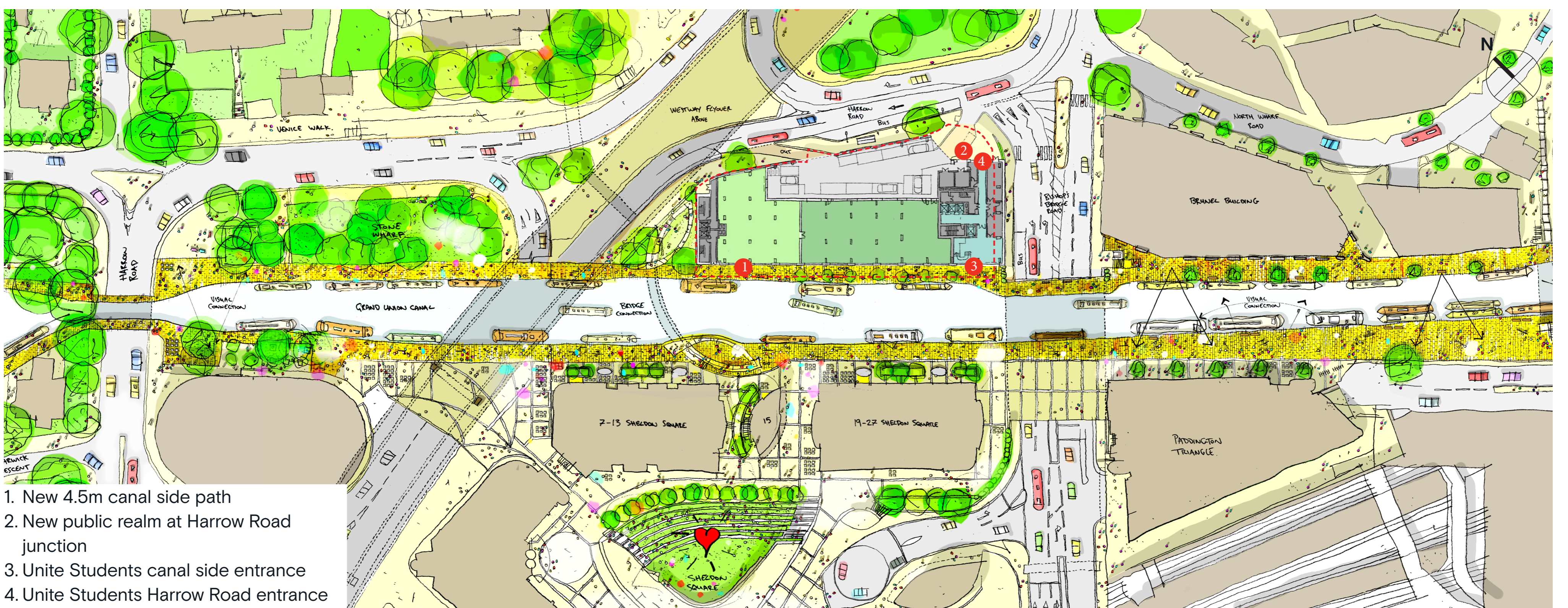


View 02



View 04

New canal side path



1. New 4.5m canal side path
2. New public realm at Harrow Road junction
3. Unite Students canal side entrance
4. Unite Students Harrow Road entrance

Access and servicing strategy



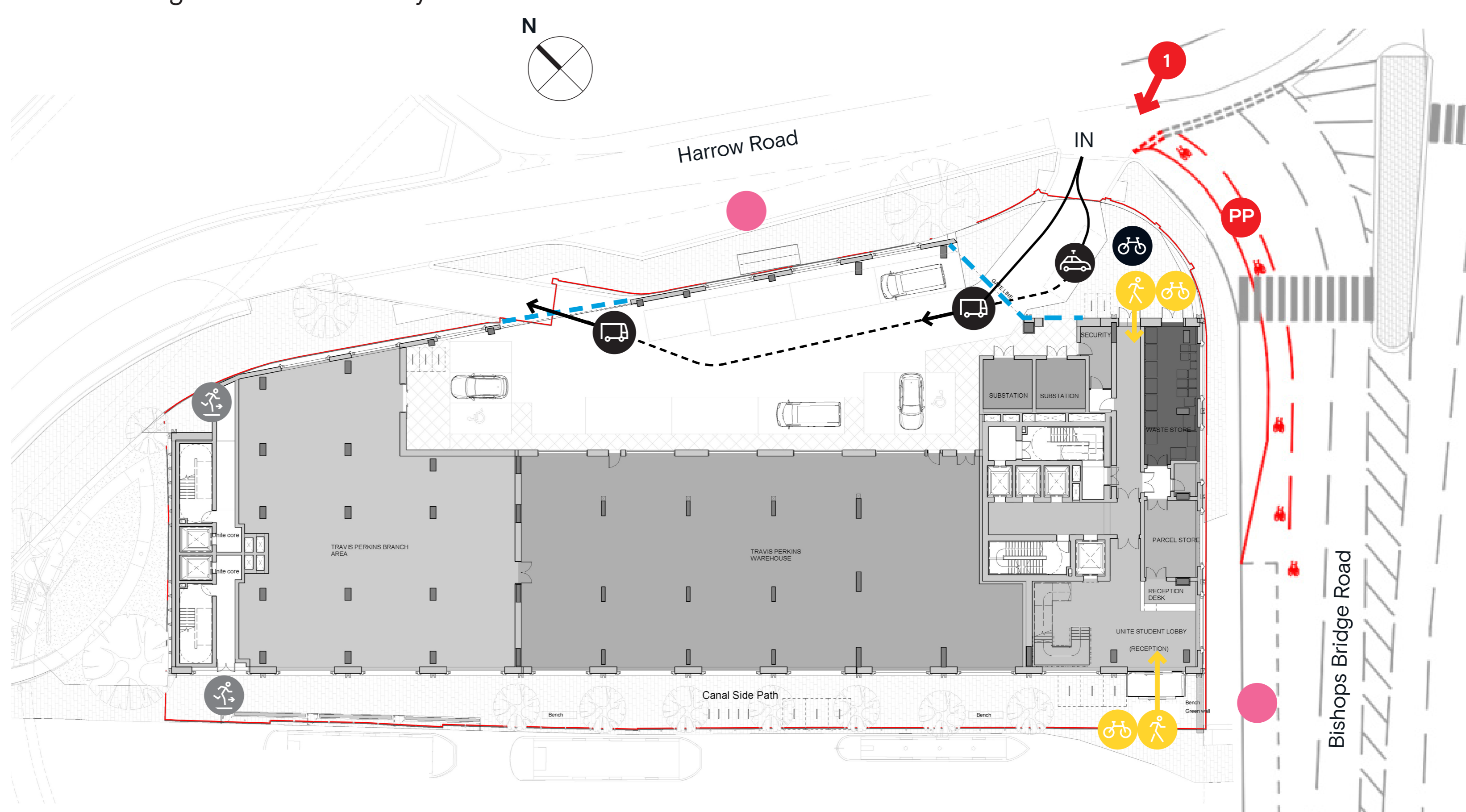
GIVE YOUR VIEWS HERE

As one of the stated reasons for the previous application being refused, we have given a lot of focus to developing a servicing solution which allows all deliveries to be dealt with on site.

- The student entrance lobby would be located on the new canal side walkway, accommodating arrivals on foot and cycle. A secondary building entrance would be located on Harrow Road to increase accessibility choice on foot/cycle
- Student, staff and visitors would be served with London Plan compliant levels of secure cycle parking provision
- London buses immediately service the site with services 18, N18 and N46 located on Harrow Road and Bishop's Bridge Road. The existing bus stop on Harrow Road will be retained
- Taxis would access the lay-by at the yards access point and then travel through the yard to exit
- Student taxi occupants would board/alight from the building's student entrance side, without entering the Travis Perkins yard
- The new layout allows for taxi pick up and drop offs and food couriers on site
- Outside Travis Perkins business hours the yard would facilitate the students move in/out strategy
- The strategy enables all deliveries to be contained on site with all Travis Perkins deliveries contained within the yard
- Couriers (food deliveries) would access/egress the new delivery space adjacent to the building's delivery entrance and would not enter the Travis Perkins yard beyond the gate line
- Non-perishable deliveries for the PBSA would be consolidated off site with three deliveries made per day within the Travis Perkins yard

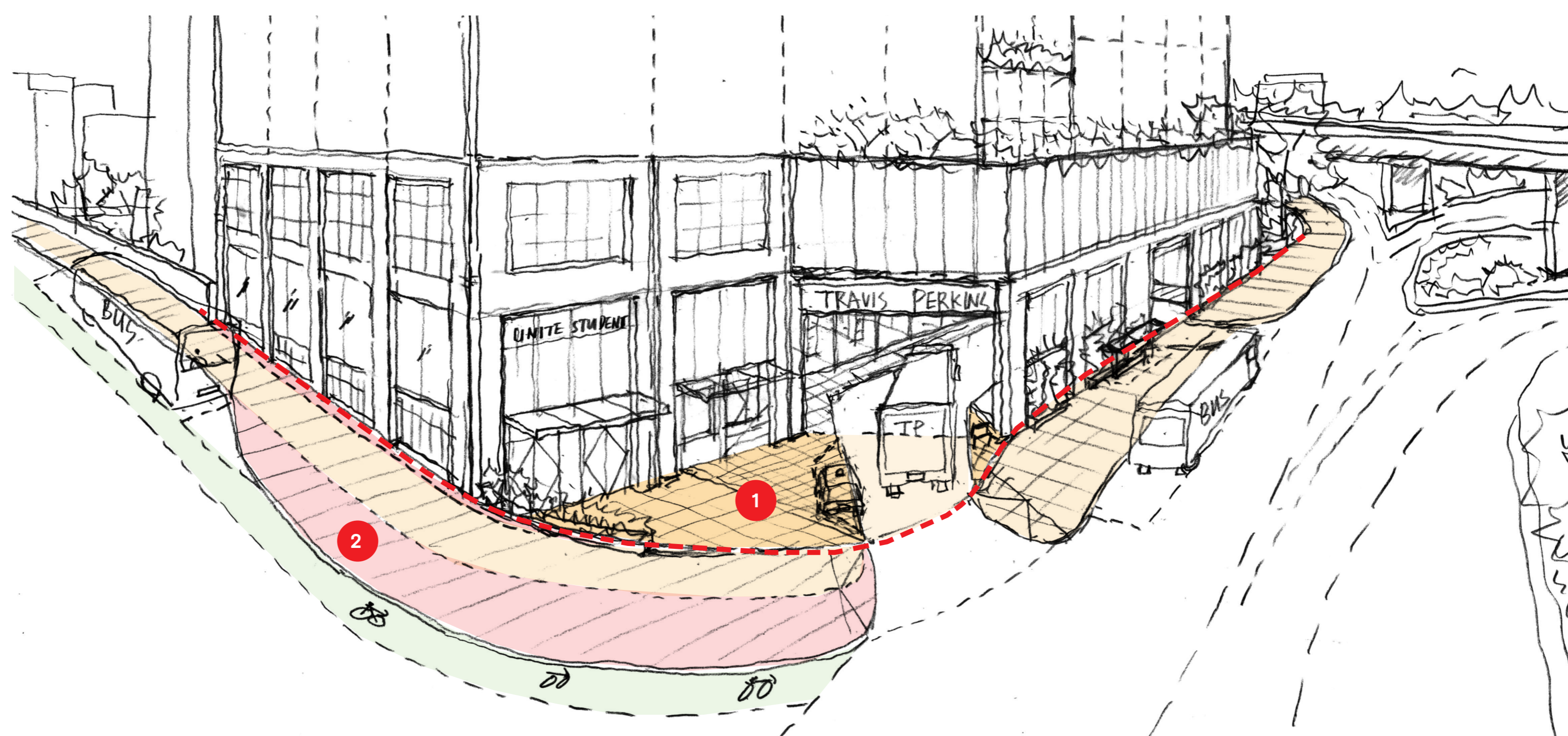
Ground floor plan key:

- On site student taxi pick up/drop off point (taxis exit via the TP yard)
- Travis Perkins yard entrance and exit
- On site delivery point for food deliveries
- Student entrance
- Cyclists entrance
- Fire escape route
- Paddington Places cycle lane overlay
- Cycle Parking
- Bus Stop
- Travis Perkins gate line
- Site Boundary



Concept sketch 1 key:

1. 92m² of new public realm within site boundary
2. Potential pavement widening and cycle route delivered as part of Paddington Places proposal results in an additional 85m² public realm gained



Why students?



Near the start of the project, it was determined that due to the constraints of the site and the requirements of an operational Travis Perkins on the ground floor, student housing was the only appropriate use for the site. These two uses already operate successfully together at St Pancras Way in Camden.

The site has excellent public transport links and is conveniently located for KCL and other central London universities. There is a demonstrable demand for more purpose-built student accommodation in London and KCL have made clear they require a pipeline of new accommodation over the next few years.

The experience of living near students in London today is far from some stereotype from years gone by. Our research clearly shows that students in general, but especially those who live in Unite Students accommodation and attend prestigious universities like KCL, are highly focused on their studies, go out drinking infrequently if at all and respect the communities and environments in which they live.

Students spend much of their social time in the ample amenity space provided within Unite Students buildings, or if they do choose to drink, at student union bars in other parts of London. It is worth noting that Pergola nightclub in Paddington has now permanently closed.

Living in managed student accommodation means that there are clear rules for acceptable behaviour that all Unite Students' residents must agree to and stick to, or face being removed.



"We don't have complaints about student behaviour or noise and most of our residents aren't even aware that they live so close by"
Resident Liaison, Webber and Quentin TMO

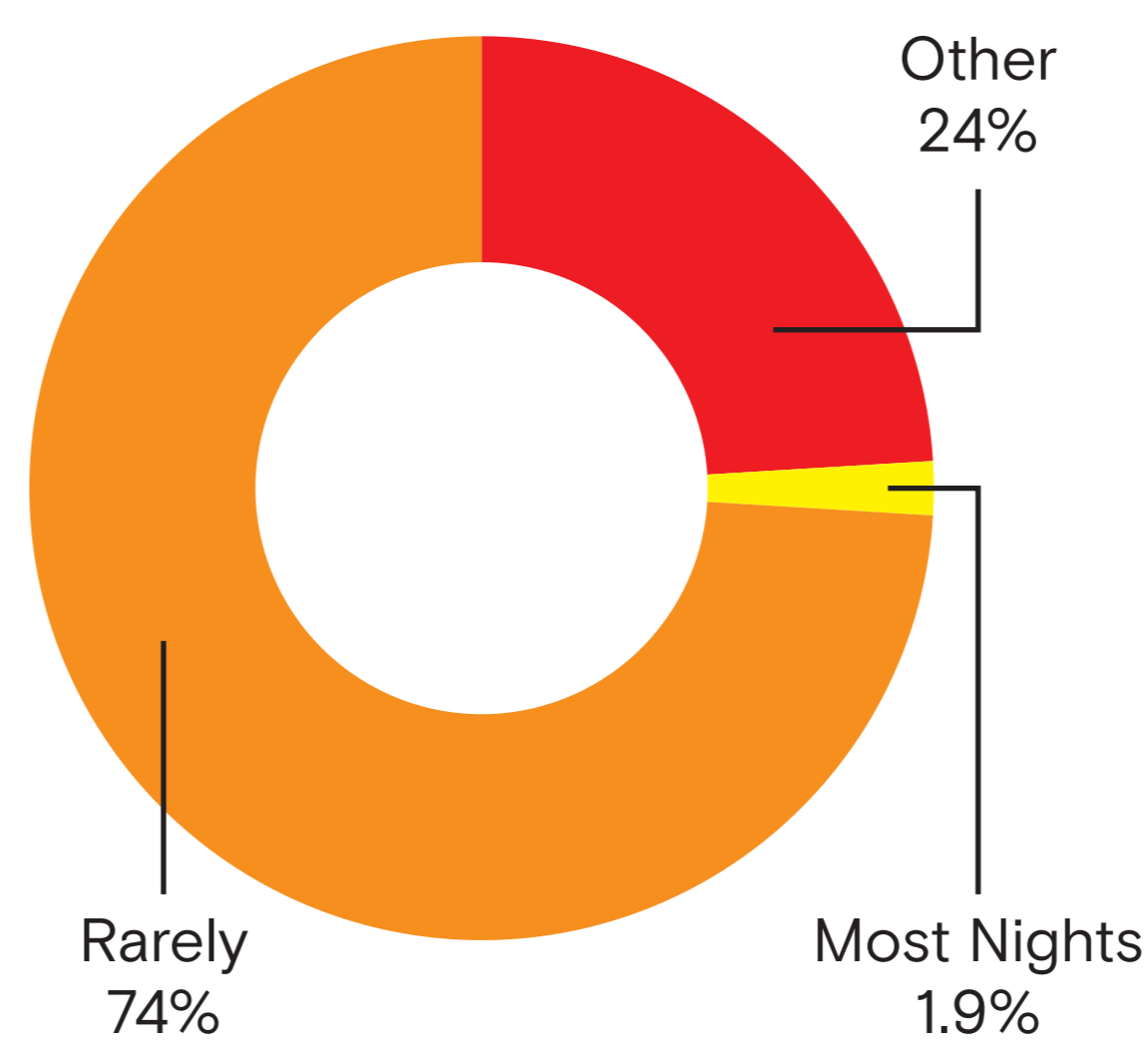
"We are not aware of any problems created by the students from Emily Bowes Court and North Lodge buildings."
Chair of Ferry Lane Action Group

"Students aren't really an issue in the area, and we've never had problems from the students at St Pancras Way"
Officer at Camden Town Unlimited

"Students do not cause any problems in Vauxhall. They are well behaved and respectful, and we honestly hardly notice they are here most of the time."
Chair of Vauxhall One BID

74%
OF STUDENTS

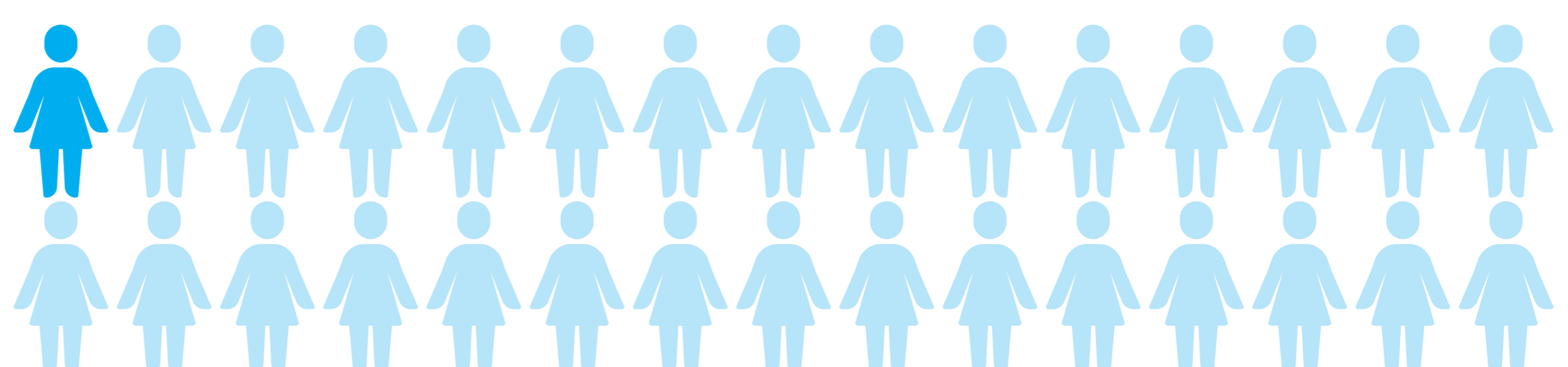
REPORT GOING OUT LESS THAN ONCE A WEEK



ONLY 2% OF STUDENTS SAID THEY CHOSE WHERE TO LIVE BASED ON PROXIMITY TO NIGHTLIFE VENUES

ONLY 1 IN 30

REPORT GOING OUT MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK



What we'll be giving back



Unite Students and Travis Perkins are committed to delivering significant public and environmental benefits at Baltic Wharf, which will have a positive impact on the local area.







These include a new community space, to be provided at a peppercorn rent, and targeted at a local charity or organisation that can demonstrate a track record in delivering real local change.

The landscaped canal side path will open-up the north side of the canal to pedestrians for the first time, significantly improving local access. Lighting, CCTV and an on-site security team will ensure that this canal side path, and improved pedestrian routes on Bishops Bridge Road and Harrow Road, are both safe and attractive.

We are currently considering options for incorporating public art into the proposals. Multiple initiatives will also be developed to support community volunteering and the transition from school to university, for example.

Additionally, the project will support the local economy, both through student expenditure and the retention of Travis Perkins, in a new fit for purpose facility.

The benefits identified below are a 'starting point' and will be extended as the project progresses. We would also welcome your thoughts.

COMMUNITY 	SUSTAINABILITY & GREENING 	SKILLS & TRAINING 	LOCAL ECONOMY 	CONNECTIVITY & PERMEABILITY 	HISTORY & HERITAGE 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of a new onsite community space to support social impact in the area. - Building a new public path along the canal with public realm amenities for locals to use. - Provision of additional security enhancements to the area (including CCTV, 24-hour on-site security presence and lighting on active street frontages). - Exploring options to open the building to provide study space for local students and community open days. - Developing a joint approach with other landowners to address any wider management/ASB issues. - Public arts strategy is being developed for the site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased biodiversity through greening the public realm throughout the site. - Introduction of landscaped terraces, green roofs and ground level planting, providing an increase in local biodiversity. - Delivery of an energy-efficient, sustainable development, including a commitment to achieve a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating and utilise 100% renewable energy. - Ambition to be Unite Students and Travis Perkins first net-zero carbon building in construction and operation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volunteer It Yourself partnership with TP to help young people learn vocational trade skills and help renovate local community premises. - Apprenticeship/higher education mentoring with local schools and Unite Student's Leapskill programme endorsed by the Department for Education (DfE). - Travis Perkins' Maddie Rose scheme spreading awareness about employment in construction at schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The delivery of a modern future proofed facility for Travis Perkins along the canal. - Investment in the local economy as a result of significant student spending and gross value added, including for businesses along Praed Street and at Church Street. - Maximised local recruitment during construction and on completion of the development, including apprentices and training opportunities. - 35% of the units will be offered at affordable rents, targeted at those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opening up of the canal side path; creating an important connection in this part of Paddington from the north of the site. - Public realm improvements at the junction of Harrow Road and Bishop's Bridge Road, where a new public space is proposed to improve pedestrian experience. - A cycle-friendly scheme; with cycle parking throughout the development to encourage sustainable travel. - Improved signage and wayfinding to improve user experience around the site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A public arts strategy which responds to the heritage of the site is being developed. - Retention of Travis Perkins, an industrial use on the ground floor of the scheme, which reflects the heritage of the canal as a working canal to transport goods. - Retention of heritage assets on the site are being explored. - Exploring ways of using the canal for both construction and operation.



Design input and next steps

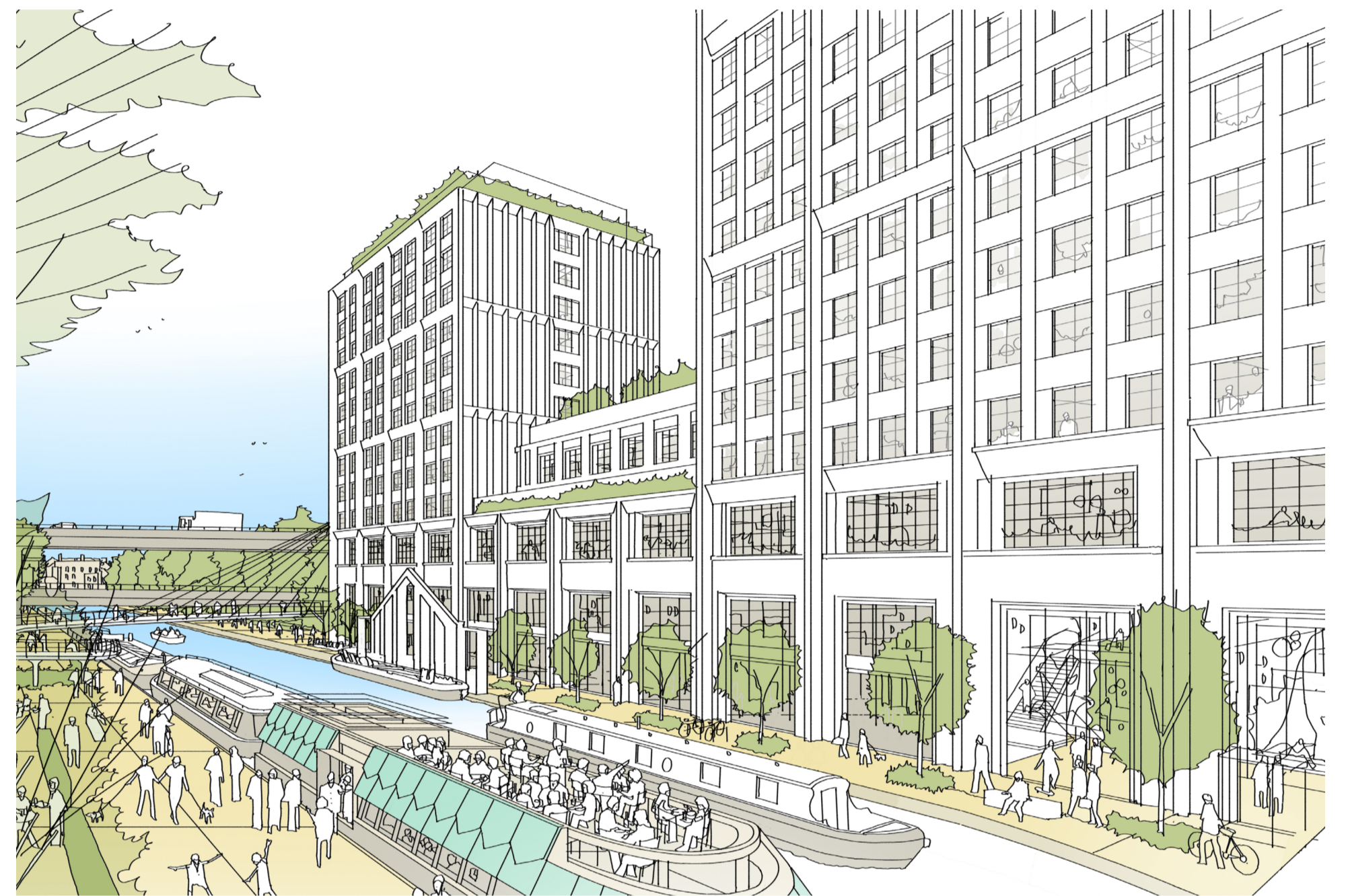


There are still design decisions to be made and we want to hear your views on some of the ideas we are considering. Below you will see an idea for retaining the existing gable wall, the last remaining element of the traditional warehouse buildings that lined the canal side. Additionally, we are doing extensive studies on facade treatments and materials.

Existing gable wall



Gable in current arrangement



How the retained gable could look

Please submit your comments on what you have seen today using the feedback forms provided, or comment through our website balticwharfpaddington.com.

You can also contact us by email info@balticwharfpaddington.co.uk or phone 0800 319 6185.

