

SITE 4: POLLARD STREET - DENSITY, WALKABILITY AND INCLUSIVITY

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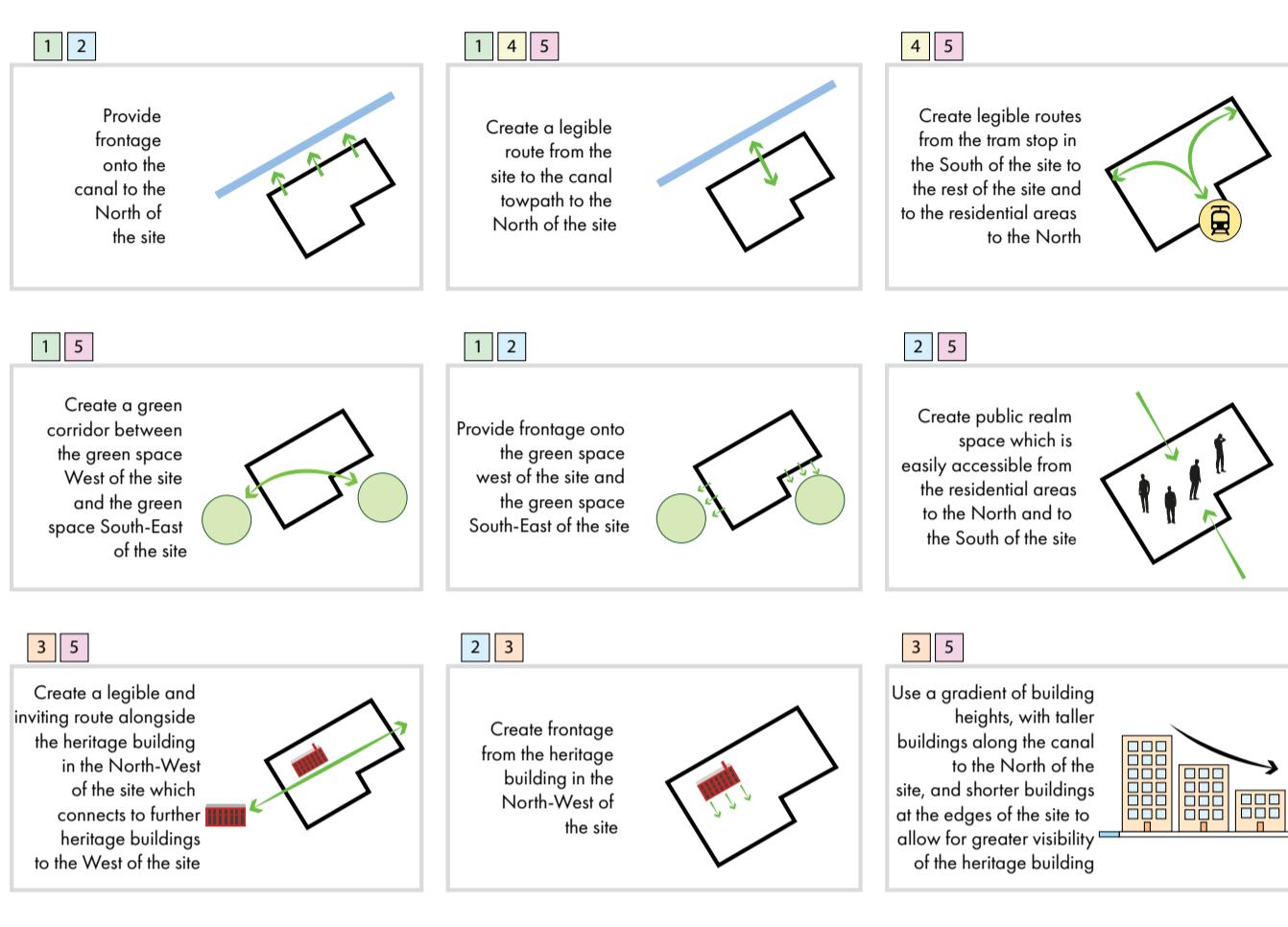
INTRODUCTION

This design aims to improve the density, walkability and inclusivity of the area directly surrounding Pollard Street. This is an underdeveloped area filled with poorly maintained buildings and warehouses. It's in the East of Manchester, a historically underfunded area, and sits between New Islington, a newly developed mixed-use neighbourhood on the canal, and Etihad Campus, a huge sports complex which is home to Manchester City FC. These three aims are interconnected in the sense that higher density means more amenities are within a shorter distance, increasing walkability (Sim, D. 2019). Walkable areas are inclusive as there is no financial burden on getting around, meaning anyone can access amenities without the need to buy a car (Speck, J. 2018). Those who are unable to drive, such as the elderly, are also able to get around safely (Speck, J. 2018). Access to a tram stop next to the site means a dense mixed-use neighbourhood can be created and the residents can all access quick and efficient public transport into the centre without the need for cars and car parks. This kind of neighbourhood will greatly increase safety and inclusivity both within the site boundaries, and directly surrounding it.

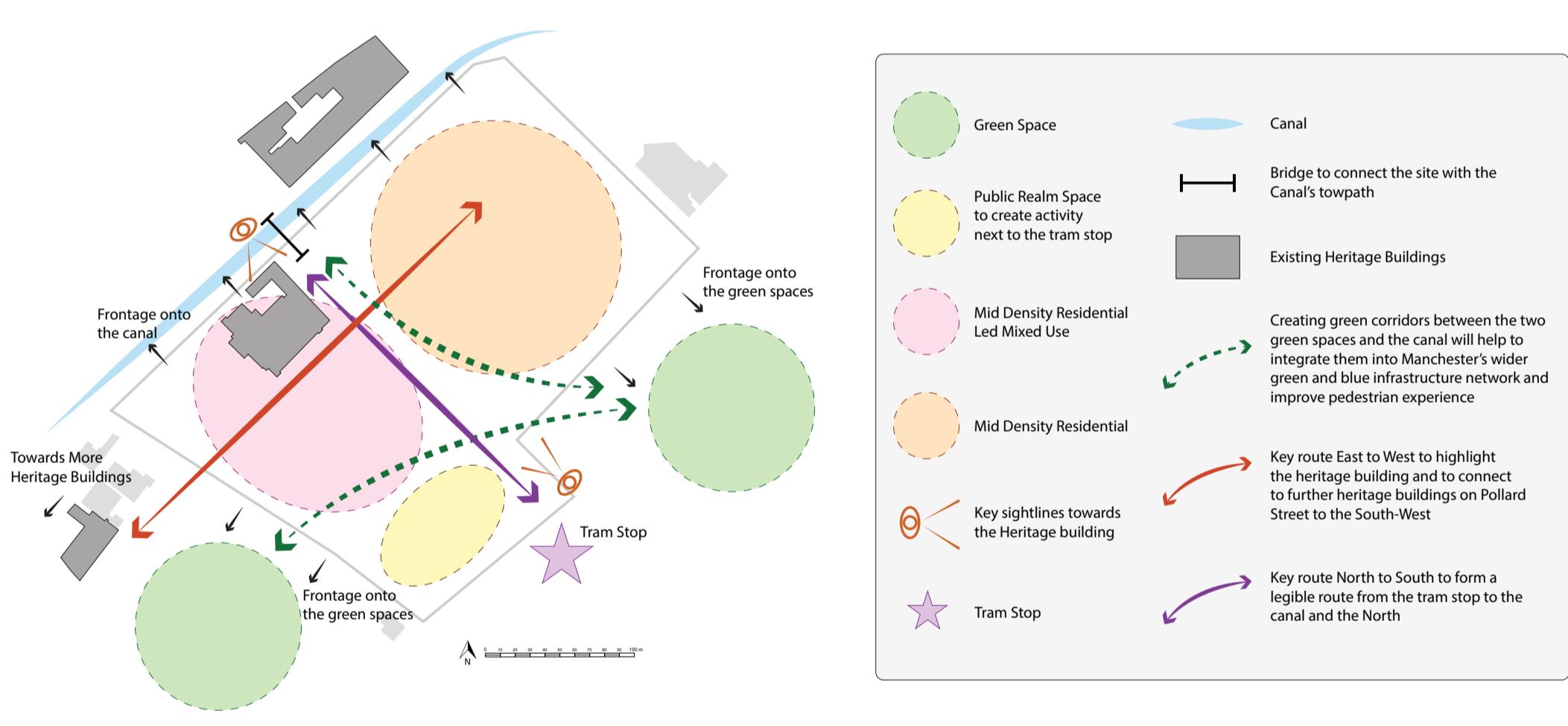
OBJECTIVES

- 1 Connect into the wider blue and green infrastructure network
- 2 Increase the feeling of safety in the area
- 3 Improve and highlight the area's heritage and character
- 4 Promote public transport and active transport options
- 5 Create a piece of urban fabric that connects the surrounding areas

ACTIONS

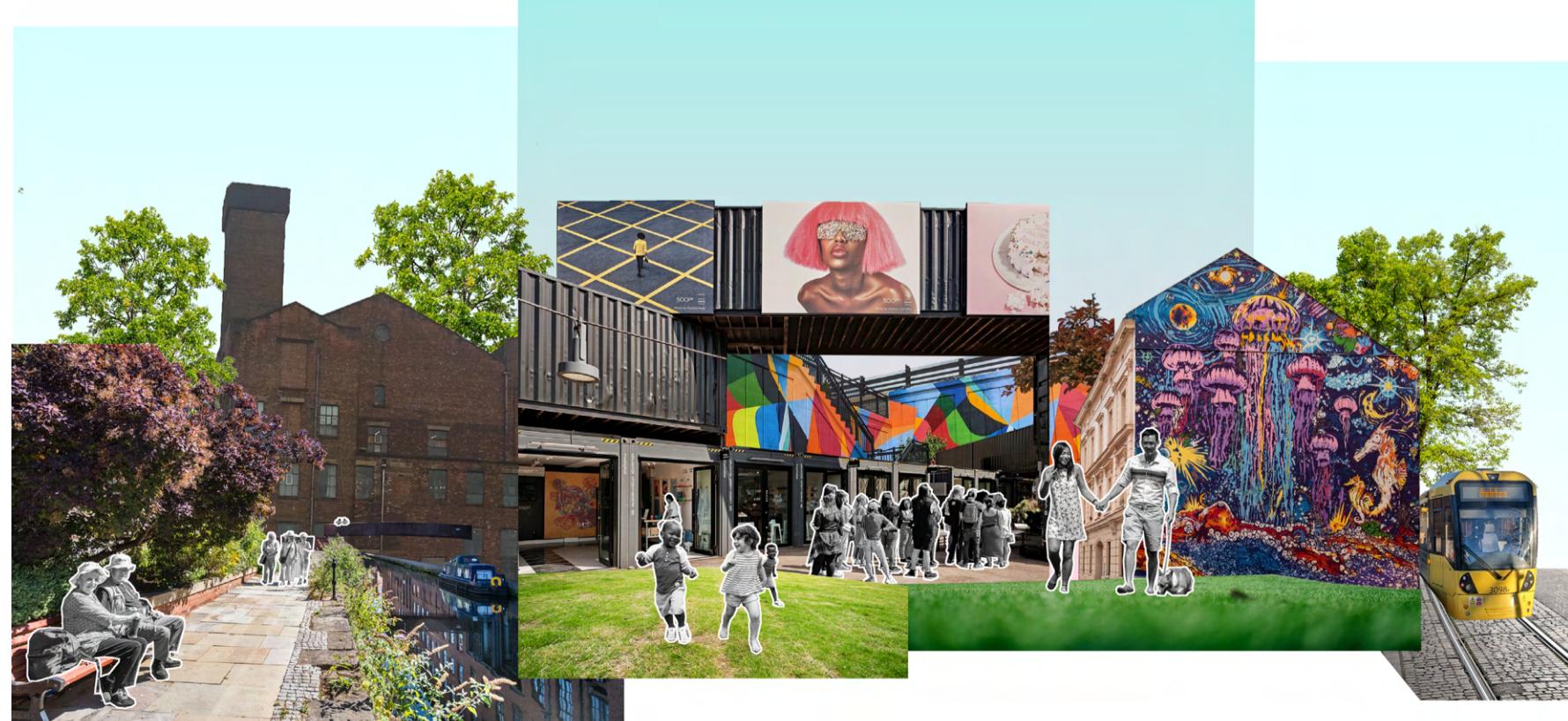


DESIGN CONCEPT



VISION

The aim of the design is to create a vibrant artistic quarter within Manchester that prioritises walkability, community, and connecting people with nature. The focus will be on taking the important aspects of the area and enhancing them while also providing safe and welcoming public realm space for everyone to enjoy. Local artists will be asked to paint certain surfaces within the site, such as Wellington Mill and the retaining wall next to the tram stop. This will enhance the image of the site as an artistic hub, while also involving existing community members with the regeneration.



OPTION 1



3 designs were considered to fulfil the brief. The first focused on density. This would have been good to maximise the amount of housing on the site, however, the design wasn't doing much else. The blocks on the East side of the site were far too big. The public realm space in the middle was too inward focussed, not interfacing with the edges at all. The design idea that has been brought forward is the balconies overlooking the canal. These provide plenty of eyes on the canal, making it feel safer. While this design greatly improved density, it ultimately felt soulless and ignored the local community.

OPTION 2



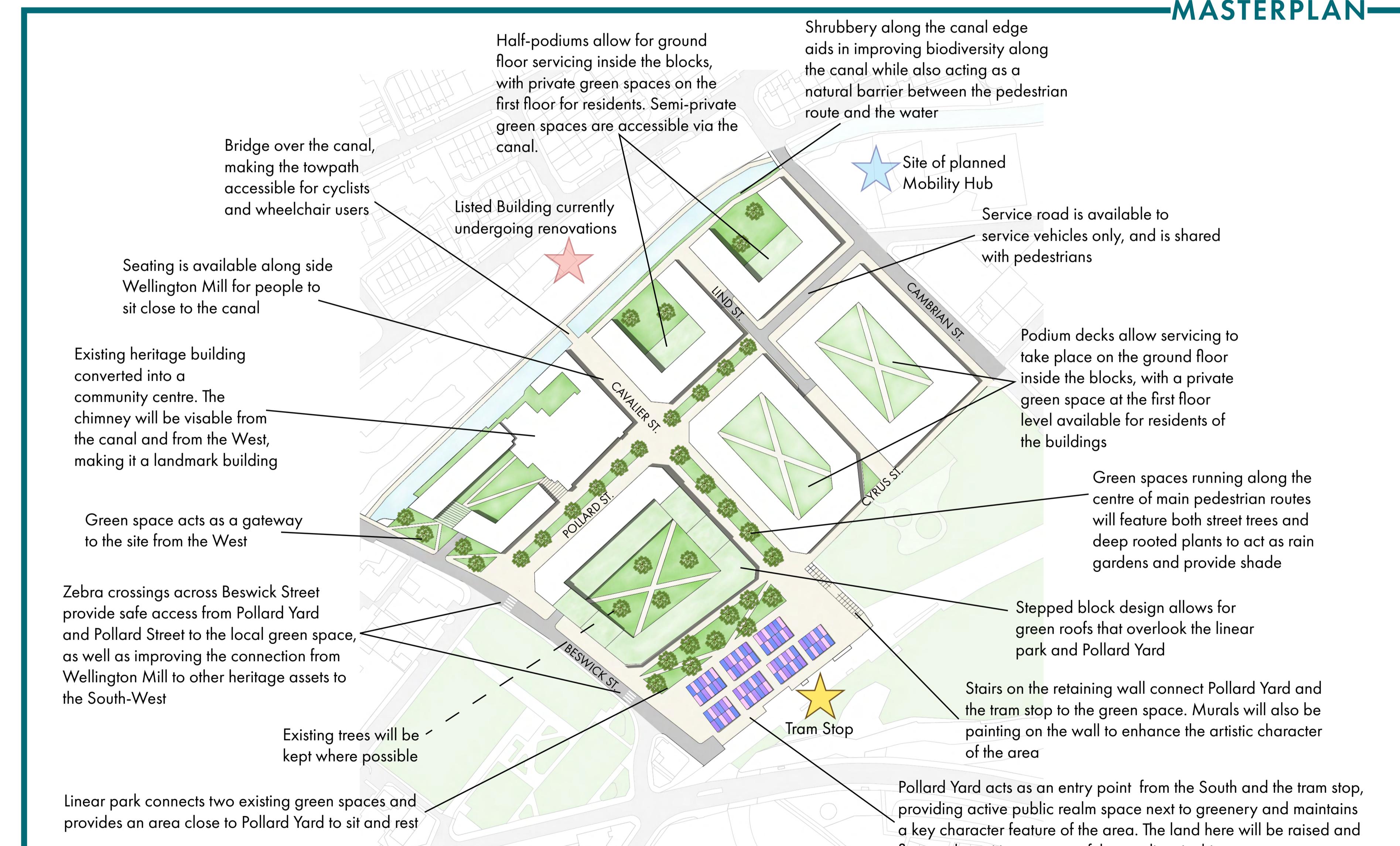
The second design kept Pollard Yard where it currently resides. The idea was to create an active public realm space along the canal and to maximise visibility of the mills. This, however, got in the way of having balconies overlooking the canal and the connection between the green spaces was not a major priority. A lot of space is also given over to Pollard Yard, reducing the capacity for density. Its relatively secluded location also wouldn't have helped to improve inclusivity, with only those "in the know" being able to access the space. The clear solution was to reduce its size and move it.

OPTION 3

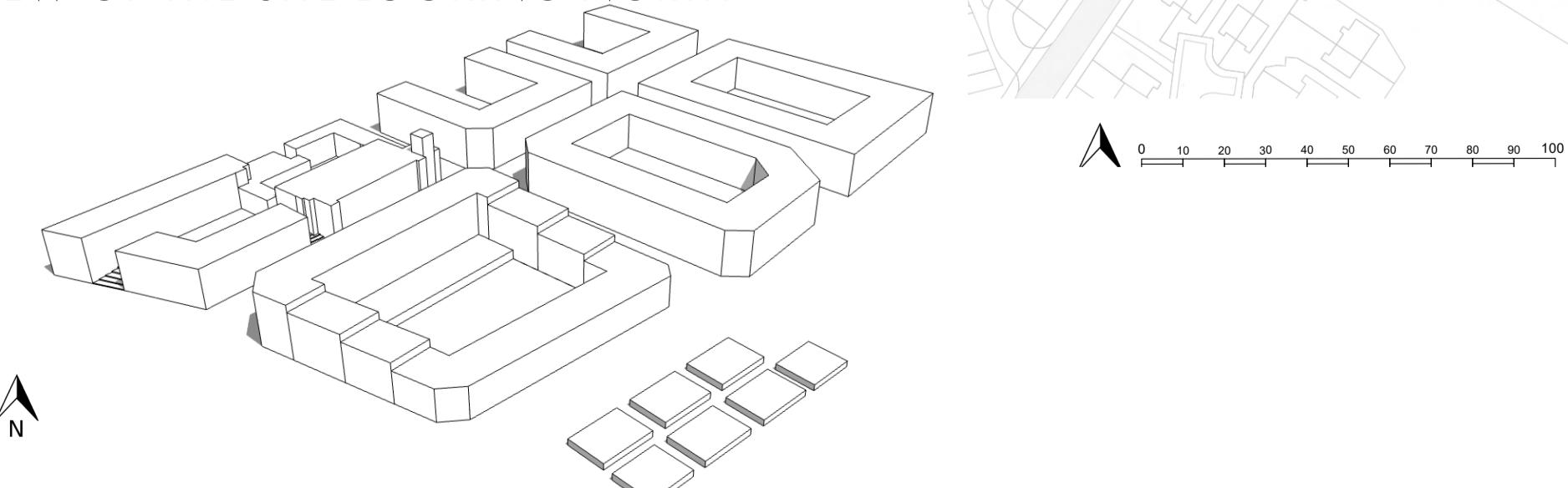


The third option was ultimately the design that was carried forward, with some changes. Pollard Yard being next to the tram stop acts as a gateway into the site. People pass by the road to the south on the way to Etihad Campus, so they are likely to see and go through Pollard Yard on the way. Having Pollard Yard next to the tram stop means it's easily accessible from further afield, and allows those who have difficulty walking long distances to use it. One issue that needed to be changed was that the building in the North of the site was very long and narrow, so it was cut into two horseshoe shaped buildings to create green spaces that interface with the canal. A small green space was also added to act as a gateway from the West.

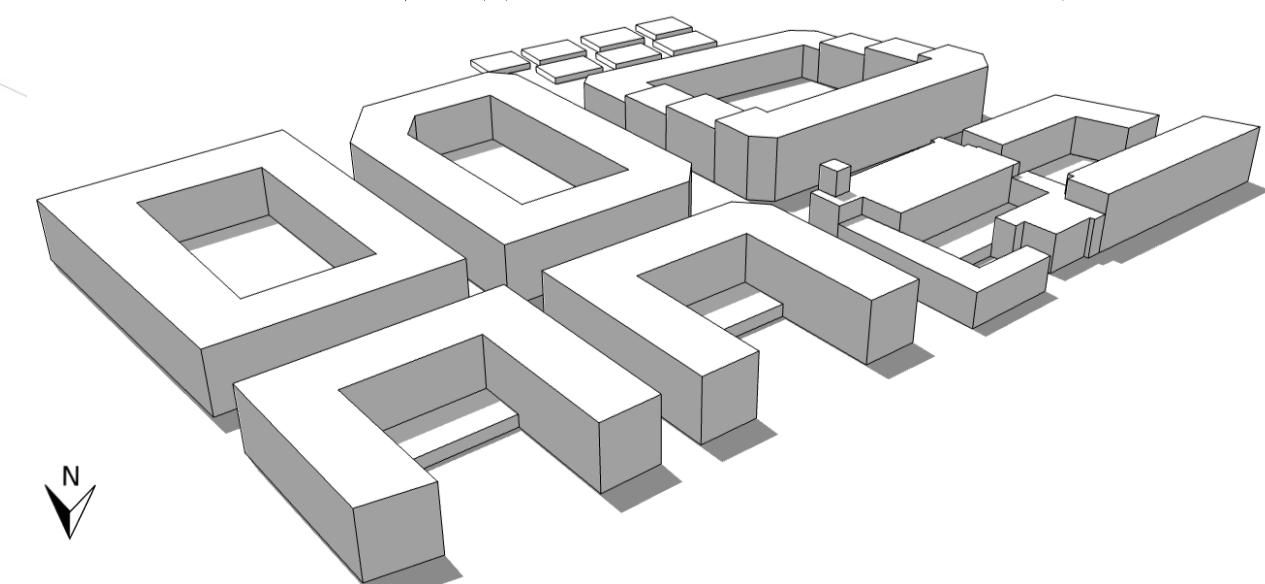
MASTERPLAN



3D VIEW OF THE SITE LOOKING NORTH

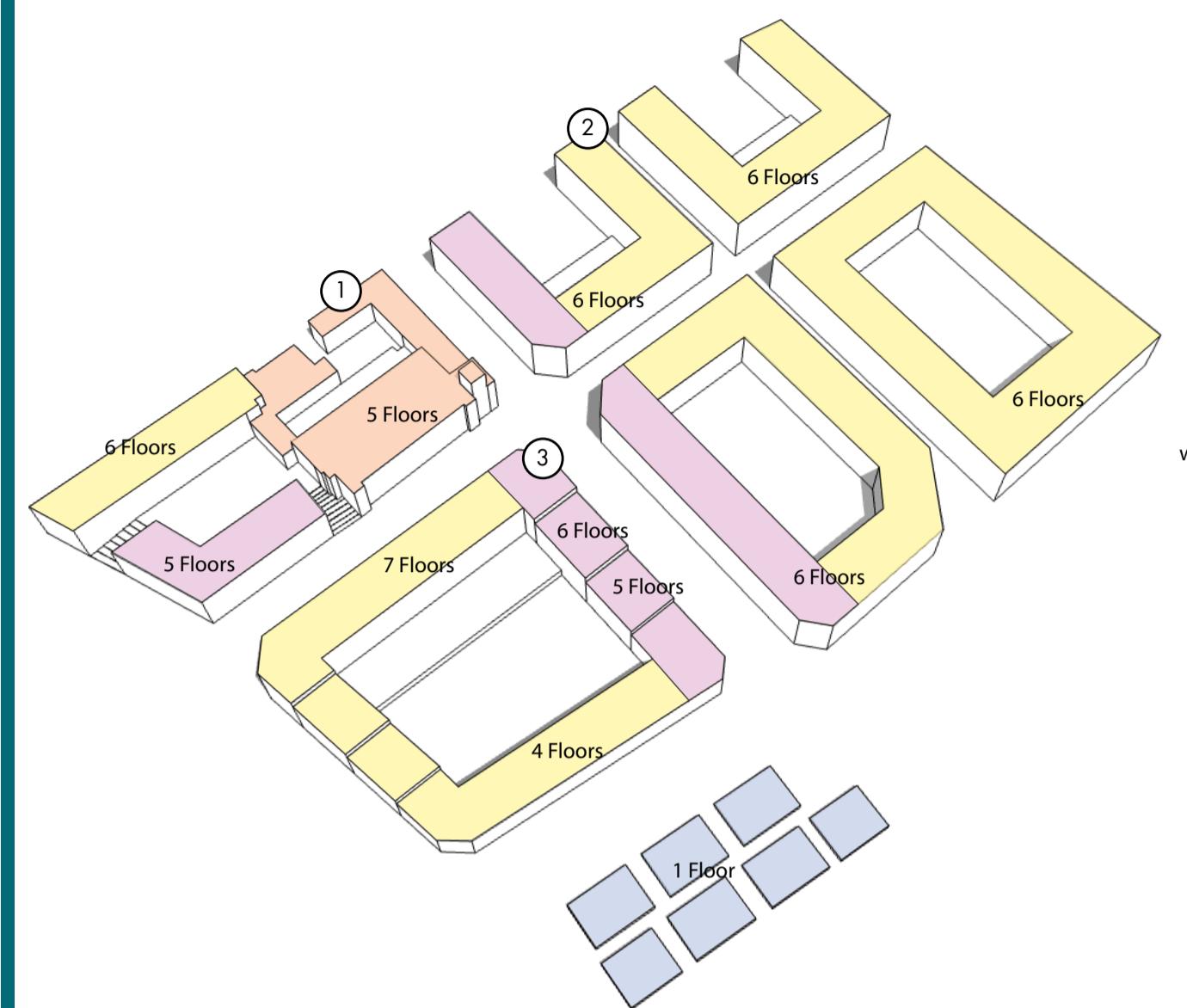


3D VIEW OF THE SITE LOOKING SOUTH



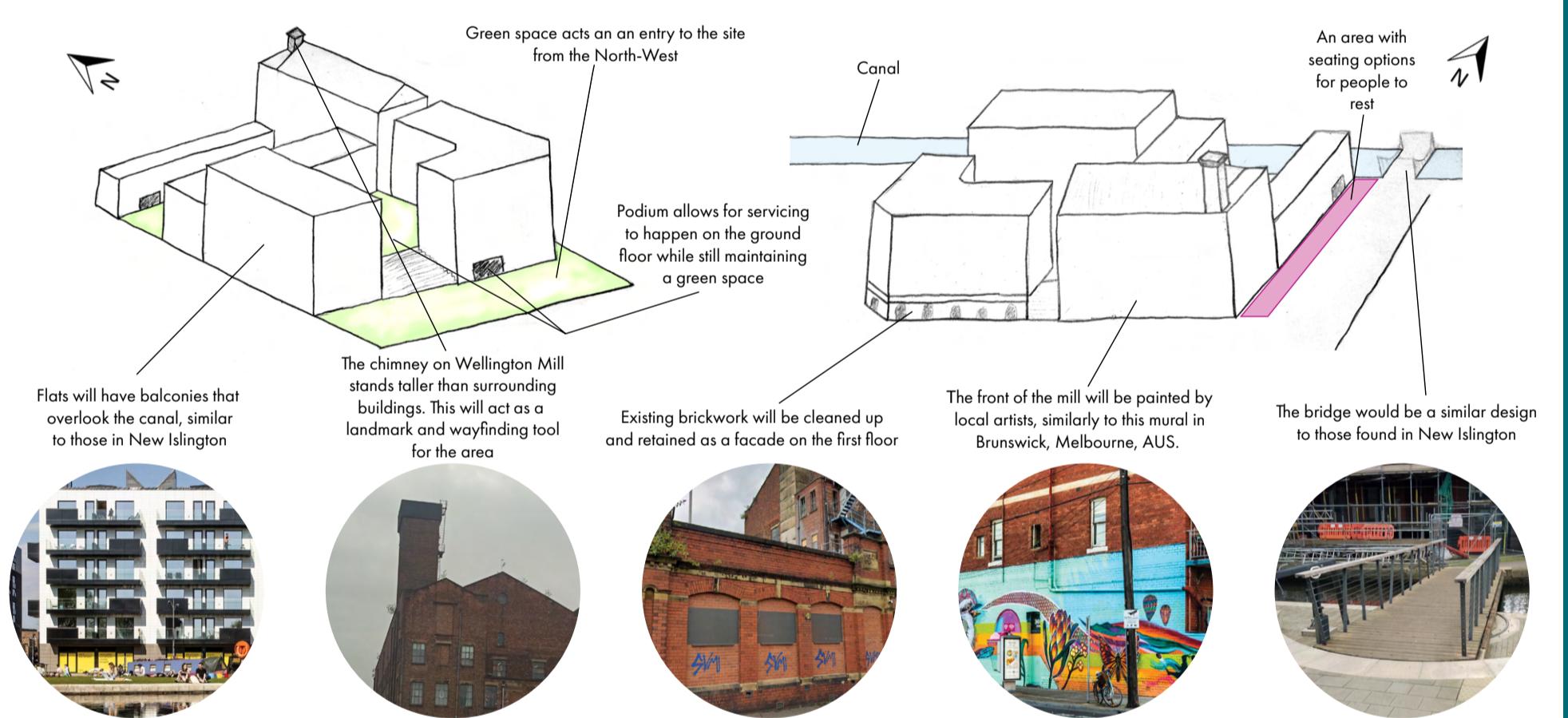
STRUCTURES

BUILDING USE

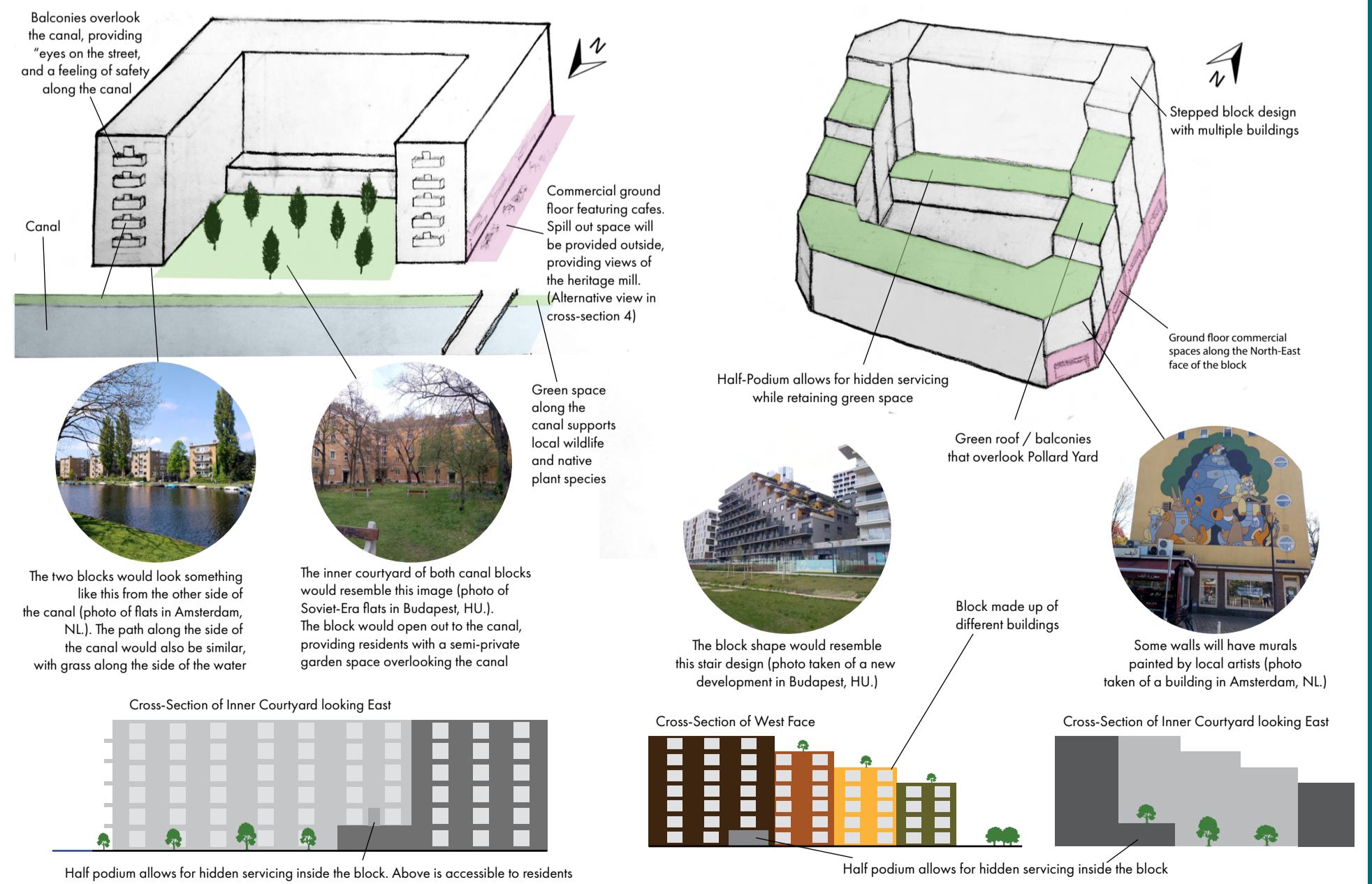


The site consists primarily of residential flats. A corridor of ground floor commercial space can be found along Cavalier Street, which runs from the canal to the tram stop. At the canal side of this street is also Wellington Mill, which will function as a community hub, with spaces for local artists to share their work. Parts of the outside of the mill will be painted. The corner building of this block will also have commercial ground floor space, since this is a prominent gateway into the site from the city centre. Pollard yard in the South acts as the only single-function commercial area on the site. Building heights sit at an average of 6 floors. This is in order to maximise density while not overshadowing the heritage mills in the area.

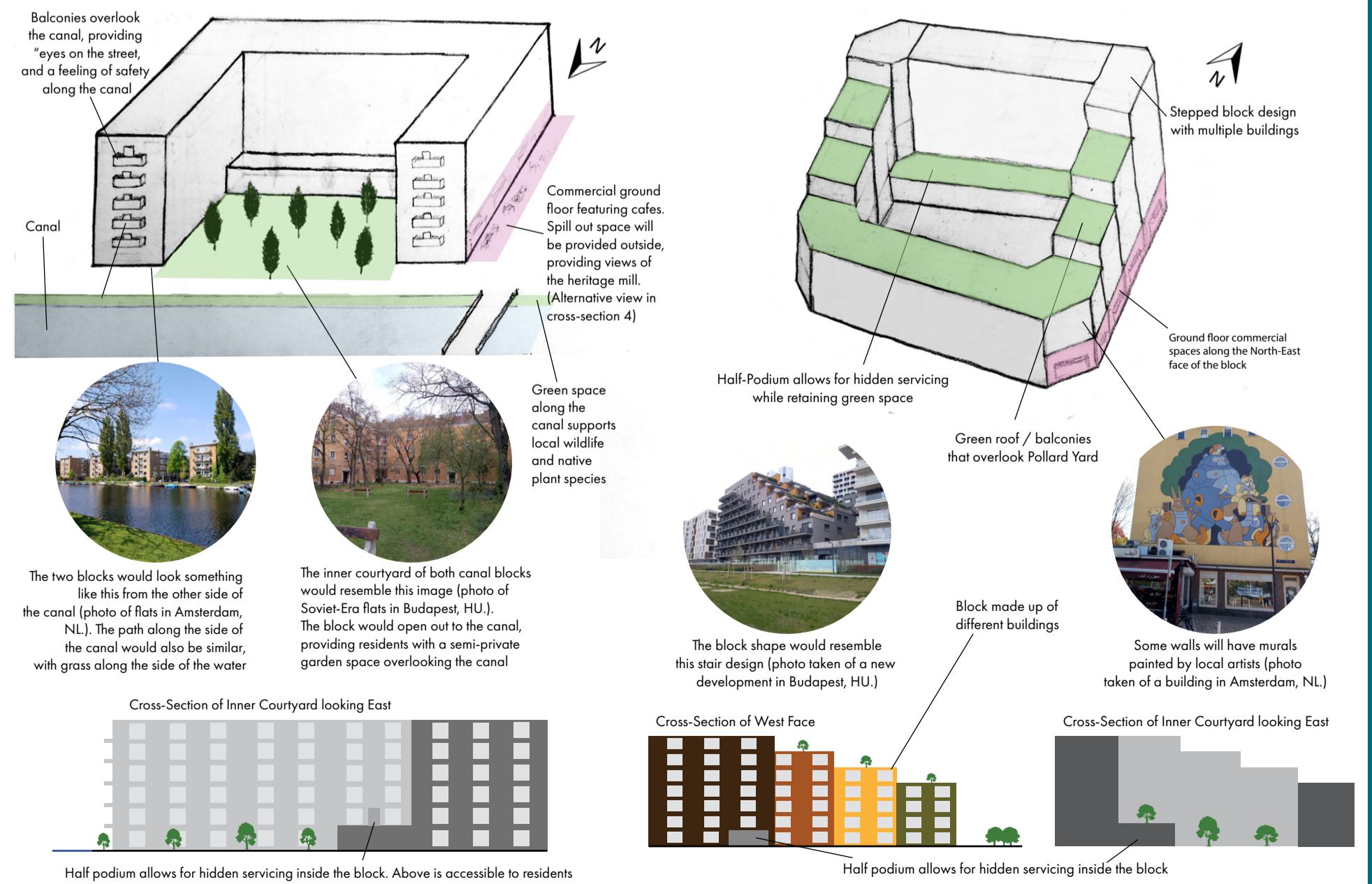
BLOCK 1



BLOCK 2

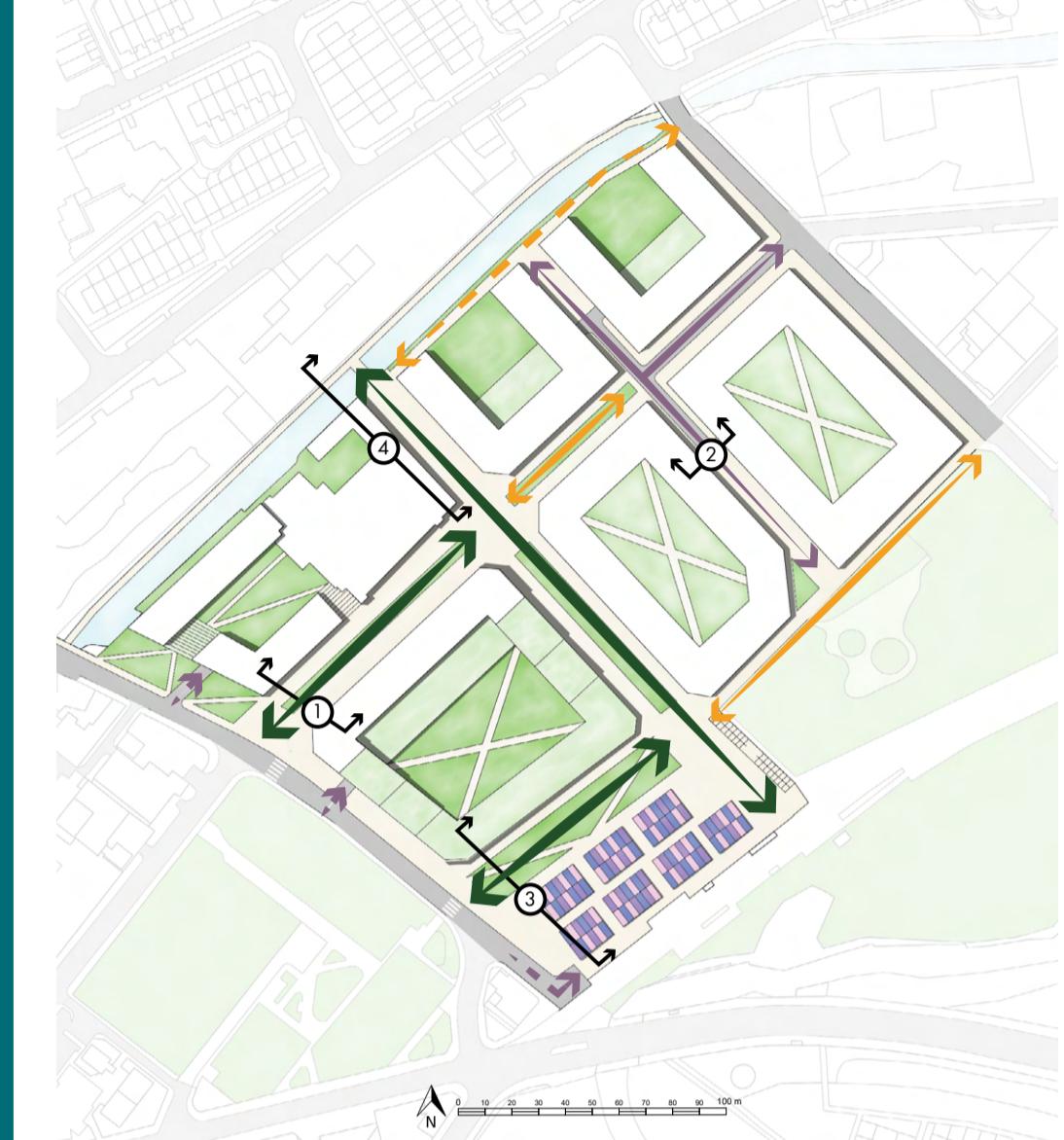


BLOCK 3



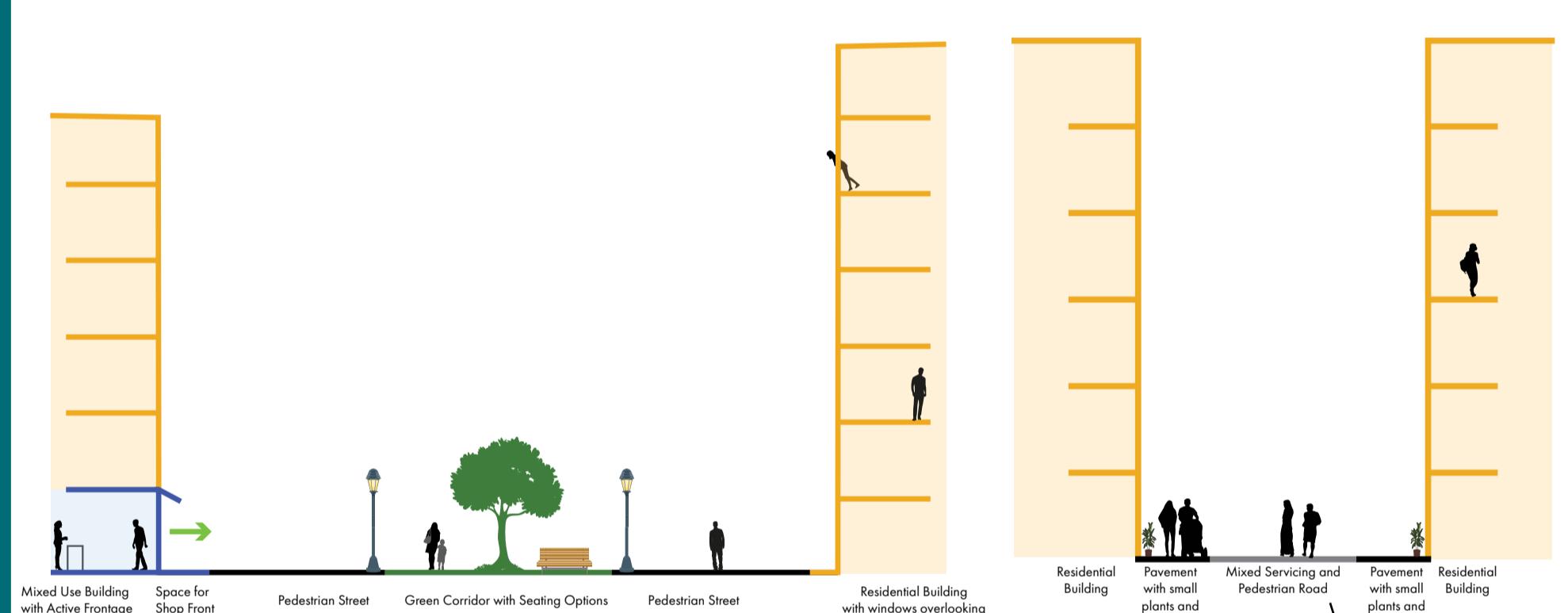
STREETS

ROUTE HIERARCHY

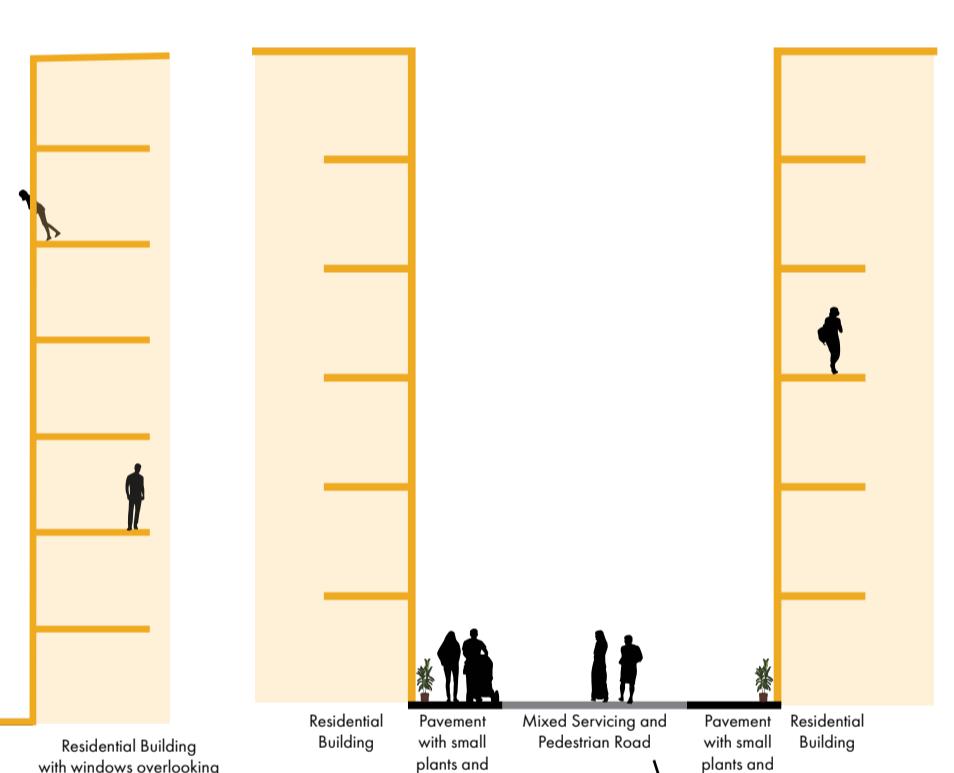


The site can be thought of in two sections, the "busy" area to the South-West and the "residential" area to the North-East. Routes in the busy area are wider to facilitate the movement of more people and to give the spaces a more open feeling. The residential area has narrower streets, giving the area a sense of enclosure and visibility more like a space for locals. This side is also located closer to the planned mobility hub, which is just across the road to the North-East. This places residents closer to the hub, allowing them access to cars since the site has no parking spaces in order to maximise walkability and pedestrian space. The differences in feeling and scale between these two sections can be seen in the cross-sections below. The linear park along side Pollard Yard and the adjoining zebra crossing play a key role in aiding connectivity between the existing green spaces. Access to green spaces is important for people's physical and mental wellbeing, so making this access as simple and safe as possible is important for equitable and inclusive goals (Jackson, L. 2003).

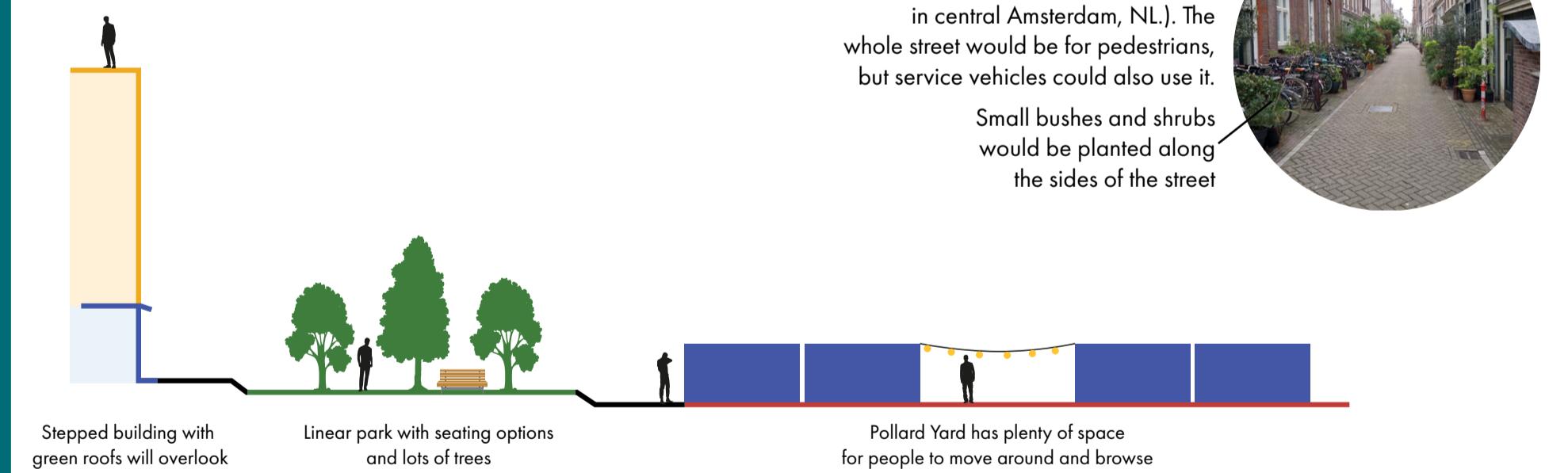
CROSS-SECTION 1



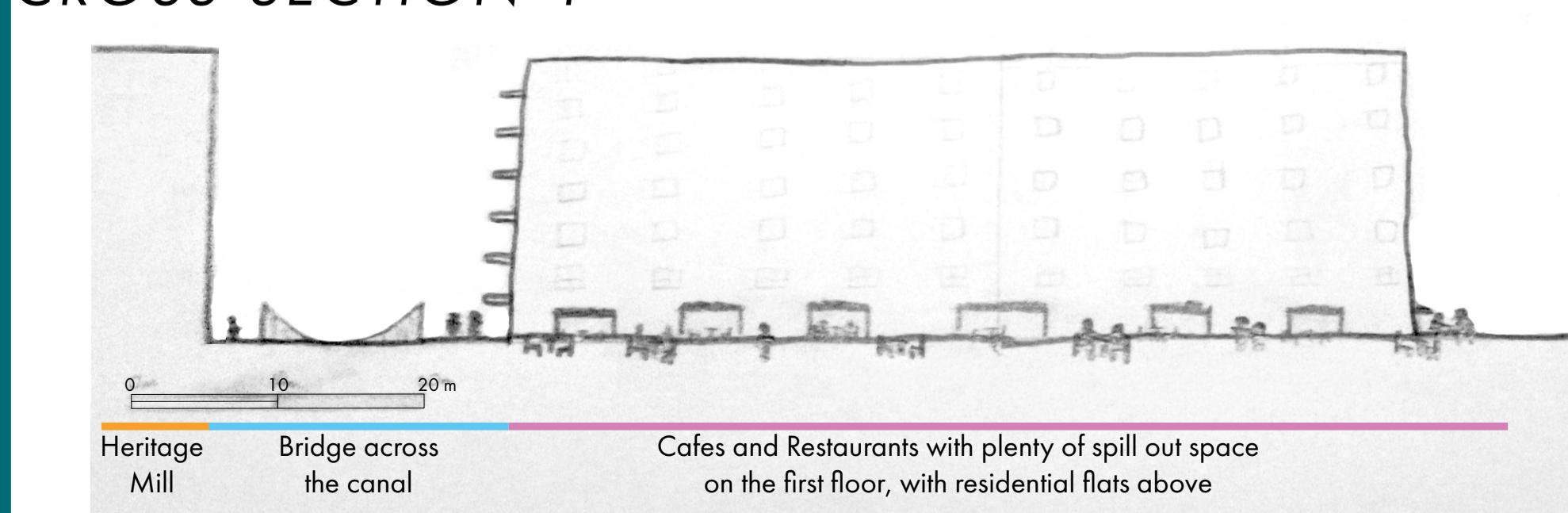
CROSS-SECTION 2



CROSS-SECTION 3



CROSS-SECTION 4



SPACES

GI AND PUBLIC REALM

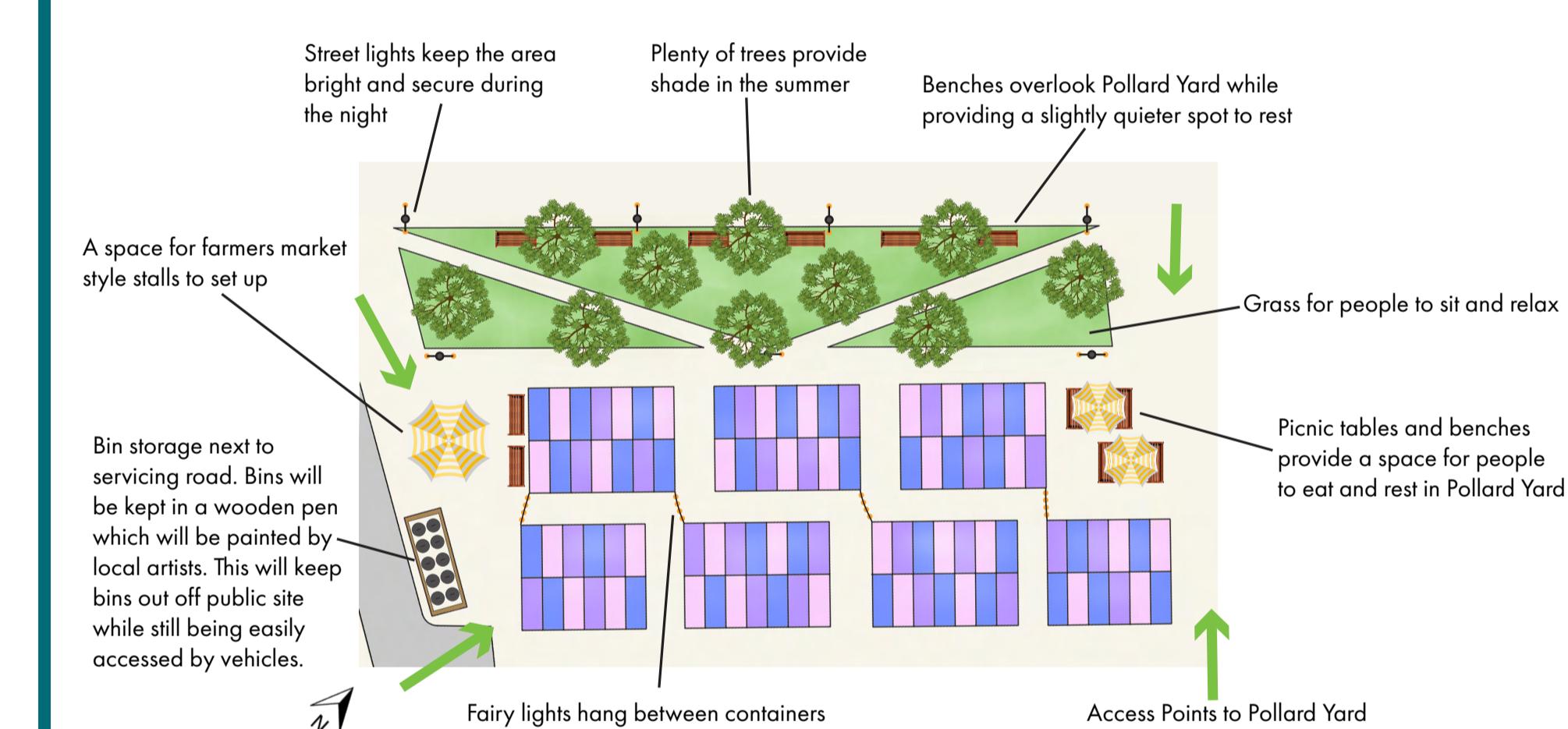


The site is flanked by two major green spaces which currently get little use, and a flood plane which is used by dog walkers, all to the South.

The idea behind putting a market place between these green spaces is to increase connectivity and visibility between the spaces and to provide an overall sense of safety. Concerns of safety are important for making all types of people feel welcome and secure, particularly for women (Azevedo, V. et al. 2021). Improving the feeling of safety of the surroundings, then, is necessary for improving the inclusivity of the area. The semi-private green spaces along the canal also improve the safety of the surrounding area. Giving people a quiet place to rest and enjoy nature means more people will be using the space along the canal. This creates activity, and makes the tow path on the other side of the water feel safer and more open.

The commercial pedestrian street creates a clear route between the canal and Pollard Yard, improving walkability to the market from the city centre along the canal path.

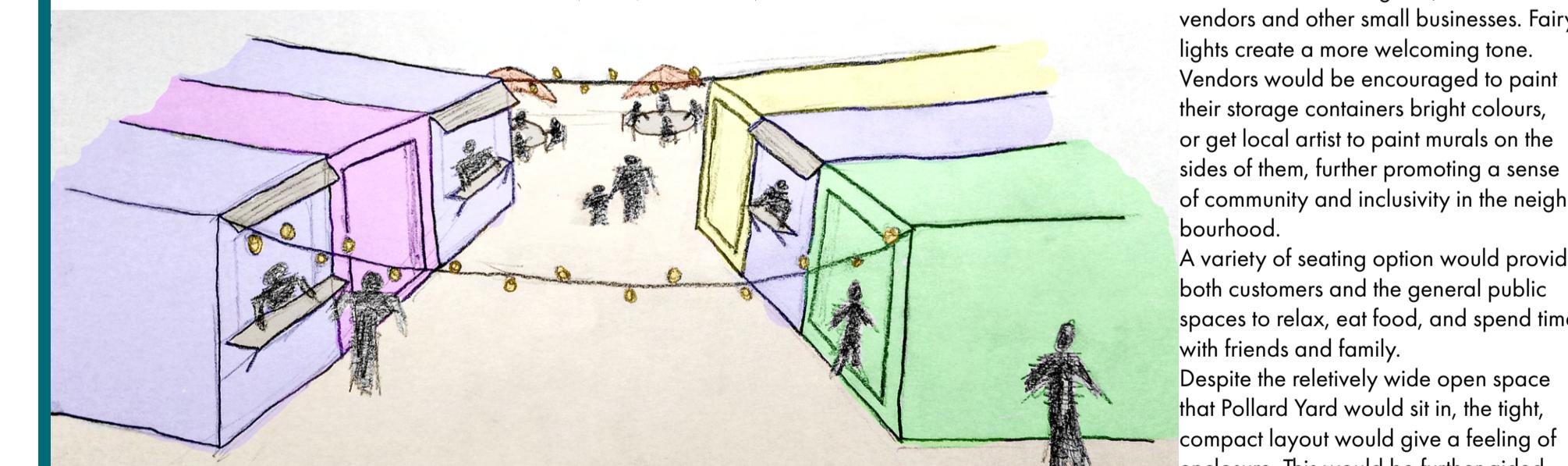
POLLARD YARD: A CLOSER LOOK



This sketch aims to give a sense of the human scale feel of Pollard Yard. The market would have a bustling feel, filled with food vendors and other small businesses. Fairy lights create a more welcoming tone. Vendors would be encouraged to paint their storage containers bright colours, or get local artist to paint murals on the sides of them, further promoting a sense of community and inclusivity in the neighbourhood.

A variety of seating option would provide both customers and the general public spaces to relax, eat food, and spend time with friends and family. Despite the relatively wide open space that Pollard Yard would sit in, the tight, compact layout would give a feeling of enclosure. This would be further aided by the closest building, as illustrated by cross-section 3.

A PLACE FOR COMMUNITY



BEST PRACTICE: STACKT MARKET

