

DIY Streets Kings Heath

High Street Design Proposals: Autumn 2014

'Creating Places for People'



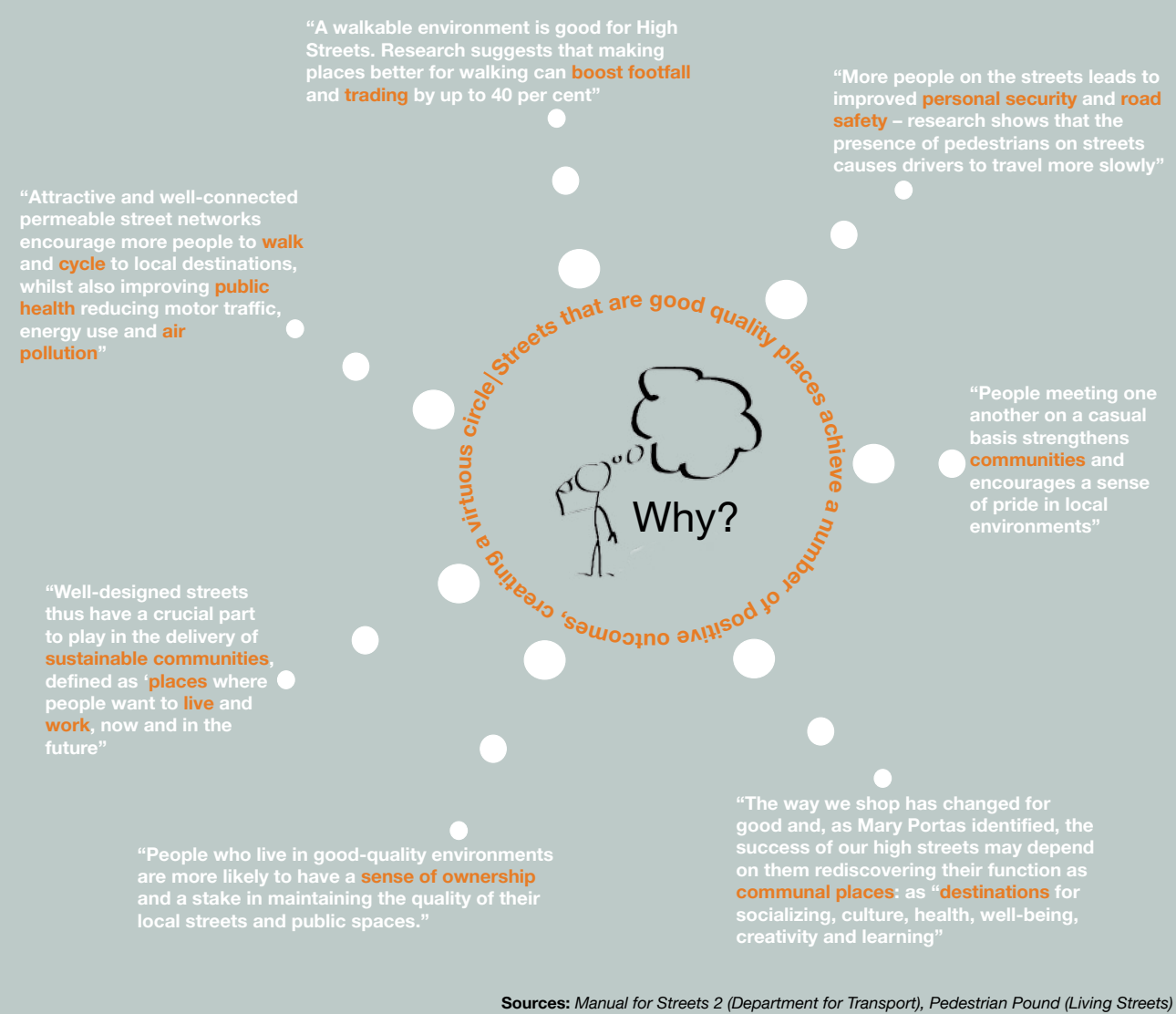
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The case for better streets.....



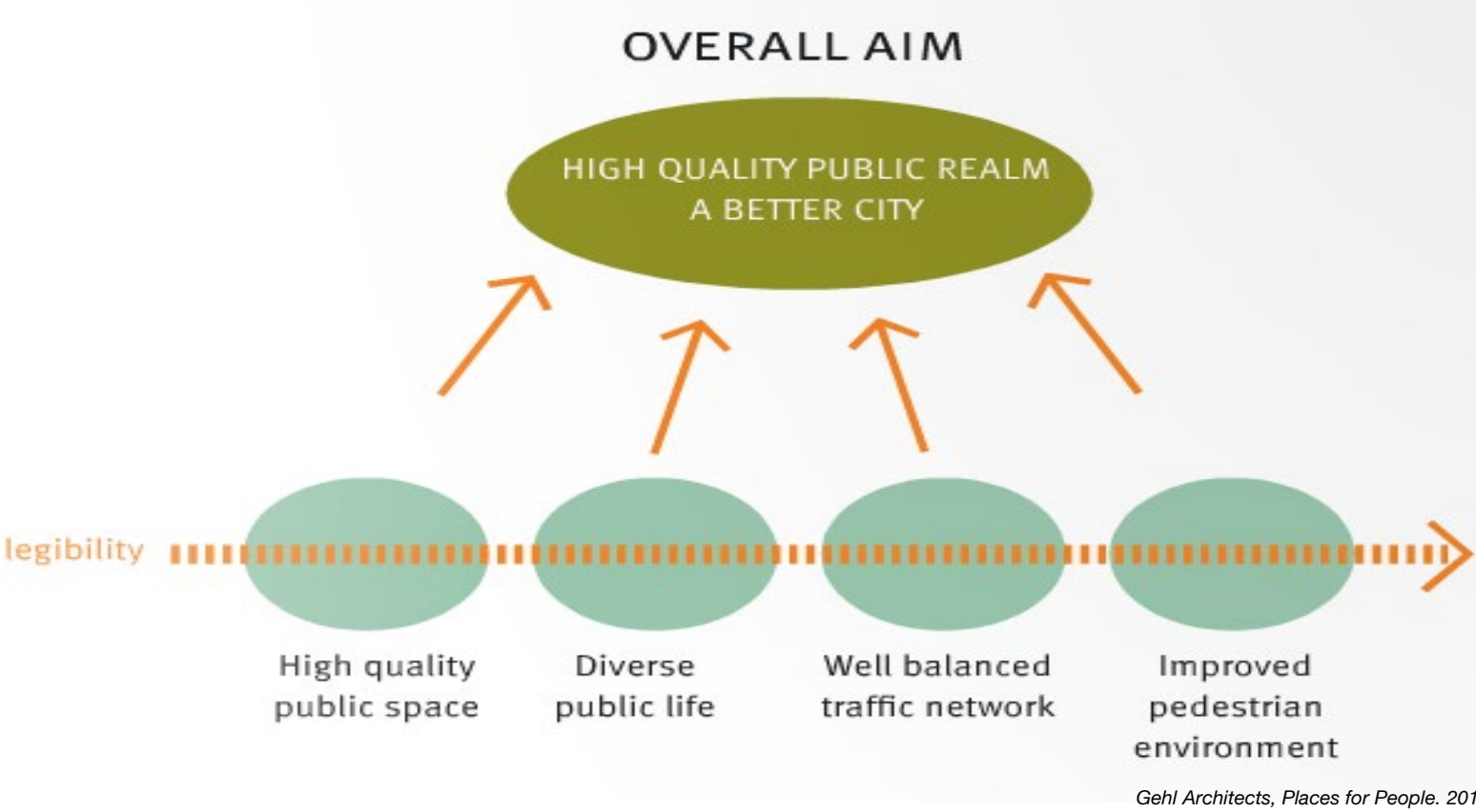
Movement Vs Place Functions of a Street....

“Streets should not be designed just to accommodate the movement of motor vehicles. It is important that designers place a high priority on meeting the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, so that growth in these modes of travel is encouraged.” (DfT, Manual for Streets 2, 2007)



Kings Heath High Street
Medium **movement**
function. Medium to high
place function.

What are we trying to achieve in the long term?



What else is going on in Kings Heath....



DIY Streets Kings Heath is following a **community-led** approach to create a long term design for the improvement of Kings Heath **High Street**. The main aim is to create more **vibrant people focussed places** that overcome barriers to **walking, cycling and social interaction**. The project is running in partnership with both the **local community** and **Birmingham City Council** in line with the Kings Heath **Road Safety Strategy** and **Birmingham Mobility Action Plan**. The DIY Streets Project specifically addresses the 'Placemaking' section of this strategy for the High Street.

We are now moving into the final stages of the project and are refining the details of the High Street proposals. We are finding out what people think and trying to reach an **overall consensus** on the designs before passing them to the Council to go through **formal consultation**. At the moment the phase 1 improvements are due to take place **on the ground next year**.

The key themes:



Which stage are we at with the design?



Making Places for People....

There is a diverse public life in Kings Heath **BUT** does the High Street reflect this?



Kings Heath festival



Cafe culture (e.g. York Road/Poplar Rd)



Niche independent shops



Street food festival



Adaptable space: Village Square



Kings Heath Farmers Market



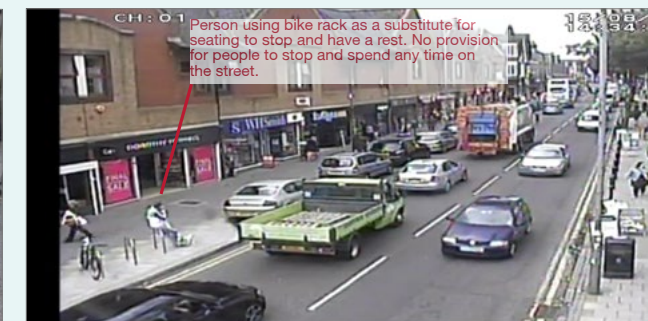
Narrow congested pavements becomes difficult to stop e.g. browse shop windows. Areas around bus stops become congested and obstructs through flow.



Large expanses of 'dead' under-utilised space which can be reclaimed to improve the street.



Features such as bike racks, seating, street trees, waymarkers etc which enhance sense of place and variety of functions limited.



Few opportunities to stop, meet, people watch on the High Street. A street with no seats.



Street does not reflect the balance of users. E.g. pedestrians, cyclists.



Uninviting spaces with little diversity in use.



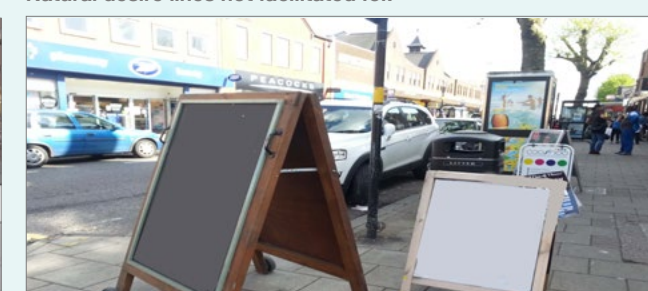
Over 10 schools nearby - High Street is a main part of the school journey.



Difficult to cross the road in between formal crossing points. Natural desire lines not facilitated for.



A street for people? There is an uneven emphasis on movement function of the street rather than as a place/ local centre. Parked cars dangerous obstacle for cyclists.



Low legibility as a visitor: difficult to know where different shops (particularly off the High Street), destinations and facilities are located. e.g. totem signage, signage to off street car parking, general waymarking.

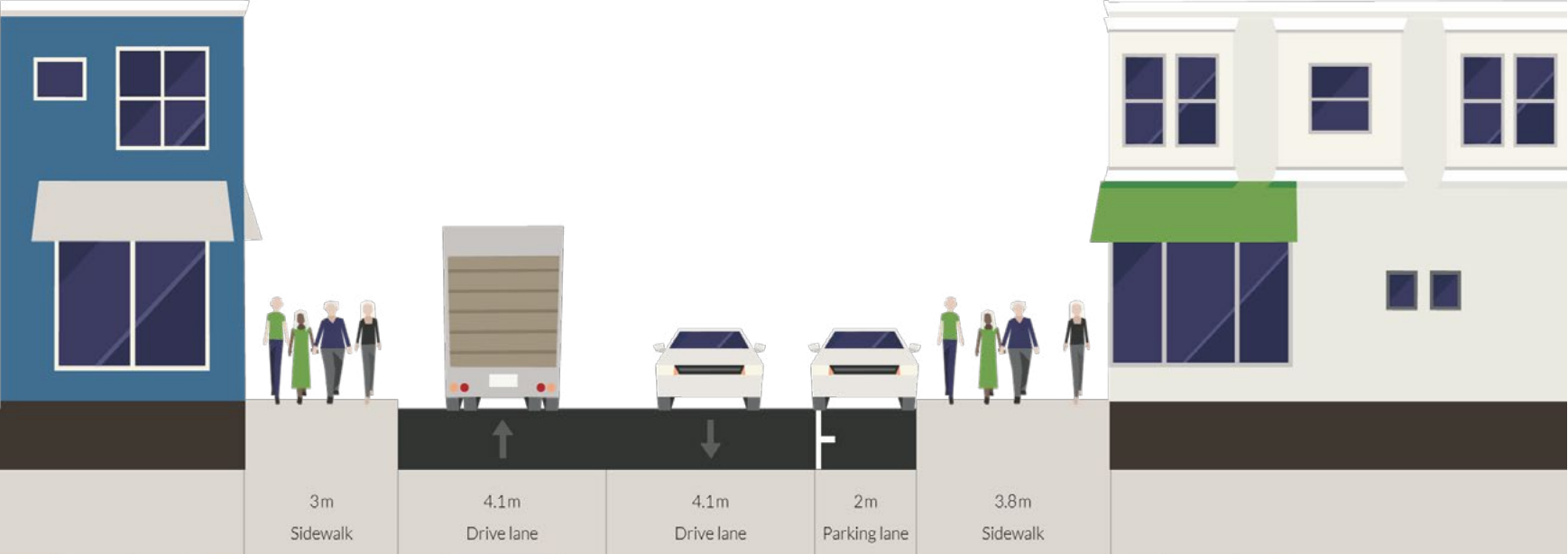
Does the High Street look or feel like a people place now?



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How is space allocated on the High Street now?

An average section through the High Street now...



Please note: sections are approximate from the narrowest section of the street where we are proposing to remove on street parking.

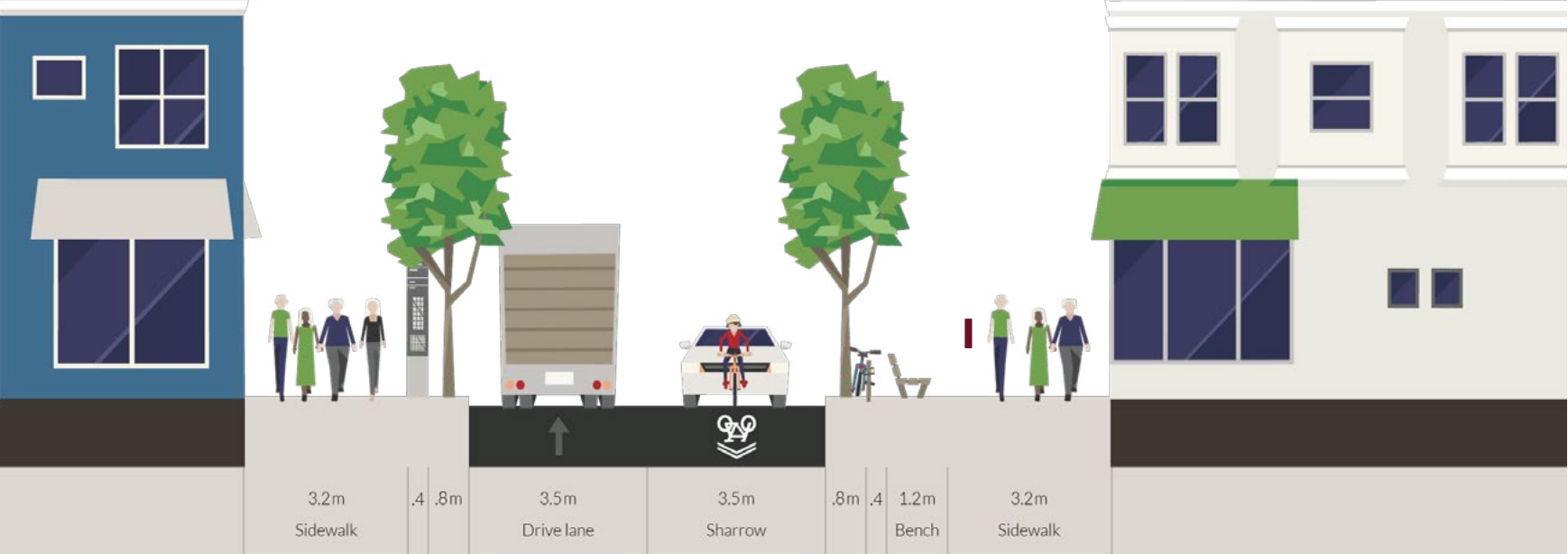


What does this look like on the ground?

- High % of space for cars
- Lower % of space for people
- Fewer places to stop
- Narrow pavements
- Poor Cycling conditions
- Difficult to cross road
- More movement than place function

How could it be re-allocated to improve the High Street?

Rebalancing space: How it could look...



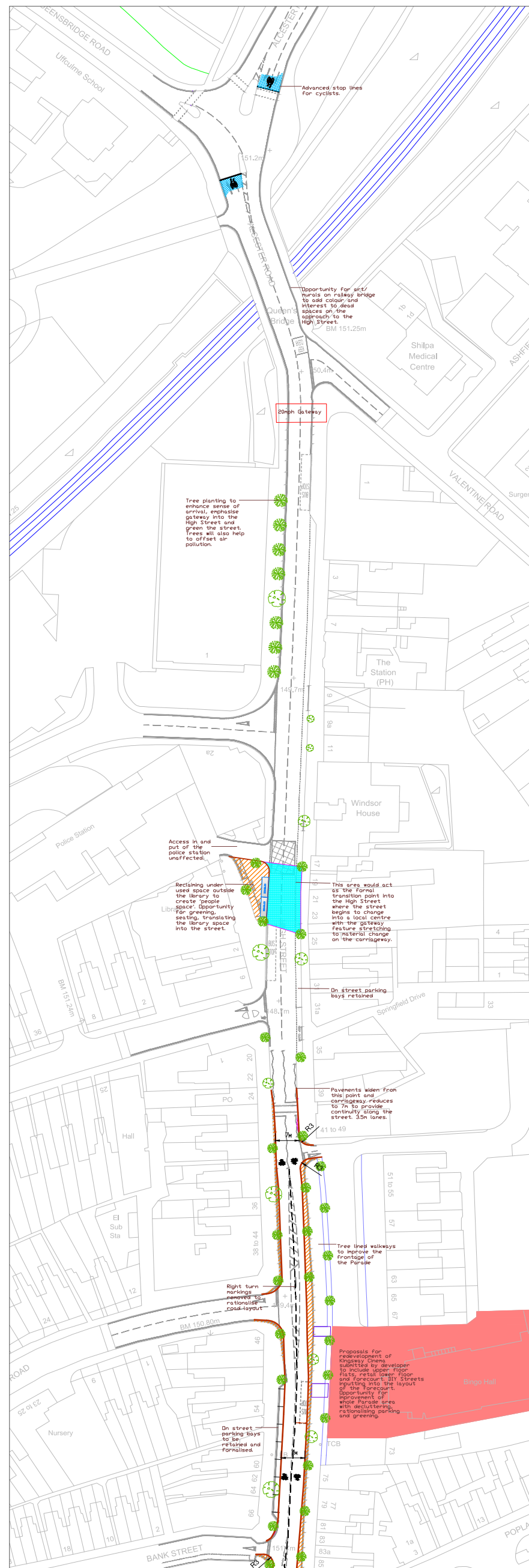
Please note: sections are approximate from the narrowest section of the street where we are proposing to remove on street parking.



What might this look like on the ground?

- More balanced space for all users
- More opportunities to stop
- Wider pavements
- Rationalised space for cycling
- Higher place function as key destination
- Shorter crossing distances





Gateways / Greening



Where else has this been done?



Walworth Road, Kensington High Street, London. Extensive tree planting to green the street and enhance sense of place.

People Places



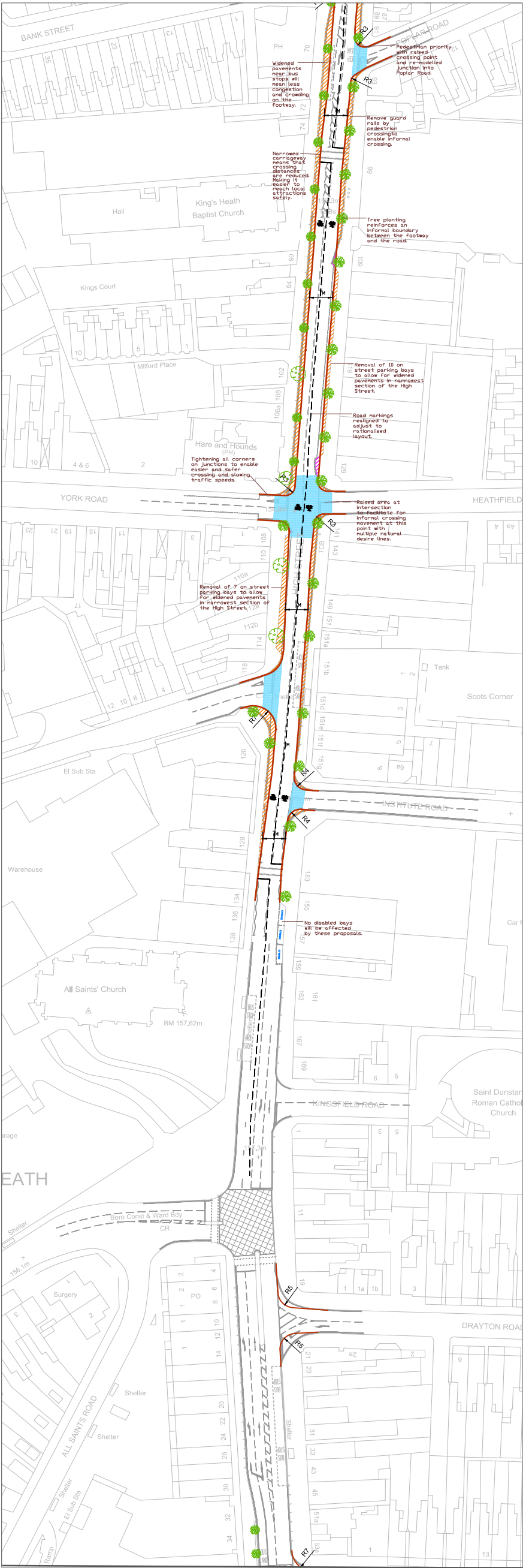
Where else has this been done?



New York City, temporary public plaza schemes to reclaim 'dead' under-used spaces.



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Crossing Points



Where else has this been done?



Walworth Road, London. Raised side street crossings. Promoting pedestrian priority.

Crossing Points/ Widening Pavements



Where else has this been done?



Colmore Row, Birmingham City Centre. Pedestrian priority, flush informal crossings to make crossing easier.

BMAP: Green Travel Districts



Source: BMAP, White Paper, 2014.

Kings Heath High Street has been identified as a Green Travel District which will enable packages of measures in specific locations to help achieve less than 50% single occupancy car mode share. The vision is for Districts with less pollution, congestion, fewer accidents, and healthier, safe and more productive communities.



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Making Places for People: *Improving public realm on the High Street*

Legibility / Visitor experience



Improving visitor experience with coordinated street signage to give people more information about nearby facilities, streets/ shops. Enhancing 'place' value and legibility of Kings Heath local centre.



Parking signage strategy to signpost visitors to nearby car parking facilities on the High Street. There are off street parking facilities but they are currently poorly signed and many people are unaware of their location such as Silver Street and Institute Road. An overall strategy to avoid cluttering is important and address the areas where cluttering is an issue at the moment.

Enhancing the Streetscape



Planting, particularly street trees, helps to soften the street scene while creating visual interest, improving microclimate, increases quality of the public realm, provides continuity, and provides a softer boundary between the pavement and the road as well as providing a habitat in the urban area for wildlife.



Seating is necessary to provide rest points for pedestrians, particularly those with mobility or visual impairments, and extra seating should be considered where people congregate, such as shops, key points along the High Street.



All key destinations on the High Street should be served by adequate cycle parking provision that can accommodate employees,customers, residents and visitors.



Increasing diversity of kerbside activity that can take place and variety of public life to enhance the place value of the High Street.



Greened walkways with integrated seating opportunities improves user experience as well as providing elements of sustainable urban drainage. E.g. Parade/ Kingsway frontage.



Coordinated street furniture that encourages human activity can also contribute to a sense of place, but should not create clutter or affect pedestrian movement along/ across the street.



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For more information about the project or this stage of the emerging High Street Design please contact:

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