

1 share the space drop your pace



Kensal Town Towpath Public Consultation



London's greatest park, the historic canals and rivers, provide a cherished haven for people and wildlife. They are free for everyone to use and provide a welcome relief from busy city streets.

We'd like your feedback on proposed towpath improvements between Great Western Road and Gasworks Dock, near the Sainsbury's store at Kensal Rise.

You can give us your comments between

Friday 21st December 2012 & Friday 8th February 2013

Via

web: www.canalrivertrust.co.uk/consultation

email: dick.vincent@canalrivertrust.org.uk

post: Dick Vincent, London Towpath Ranger, The Toll House, Delamere Terrace, Little Venice, London, W2 6ND

Or fill out our online survey at www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/consultation for a chance to win one of three £50 Sainsbury's shopping vouchers.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Why are we asking you about this?

Canal & River Trust towpaths are becoming more popular and, at peak times, areas like Kensal Town can get very busy and begin to lose their attraction.

The factors below are among those placing additional pressure on the canal towpath and we would like your ideas on how to improve your local towpath.

- There is limited public open space in the Kensal Town area.
- Walking and cycling are becoming more popular as a means of commuting in London.
- There are a lack of safe and attractive alternative routes for cyclists on nearby roads.
- The canal towpath is a popular, multi-functional space for leisure walkers, dog walkers, families and boaters.
- There have been reported incidents of conflict between user groups and anti-social behaviour.

What we are already doing..

As more people rediscover walking and cycling, towpaths have grown in popularity and, like other places, can struggle to cope with demand at peak times. This is why we run the 'Share the Space, Drop your Pace' campaign, which promotes considerate shared use and pedestrian priority on towpath greenways.

In addition to this, we do other things in partnership with Transport for London and other London boroughs, including:

- A wide range of towpath improvements including signage, speed bumps, chicanes, better surfacing, widening, managing vegetation and more subtle design features to improve the experience for all visitors.
- On the Regent's Canal where peak time congestion is especially high the Trust employs Rosie Tharp as strategic cycle routes coordinator. She is responsible for the Alternative Routes project, which is working for a better deal for cyclists on roads whilst lessening the burden on the towpath.
- Some of our work is supported by volunteers including Towpath Rangers and Lock Keepers while at our regular Towpath Taskforce events you can just turn up and join others giving a little time to help.

YOU COULD WIN £50



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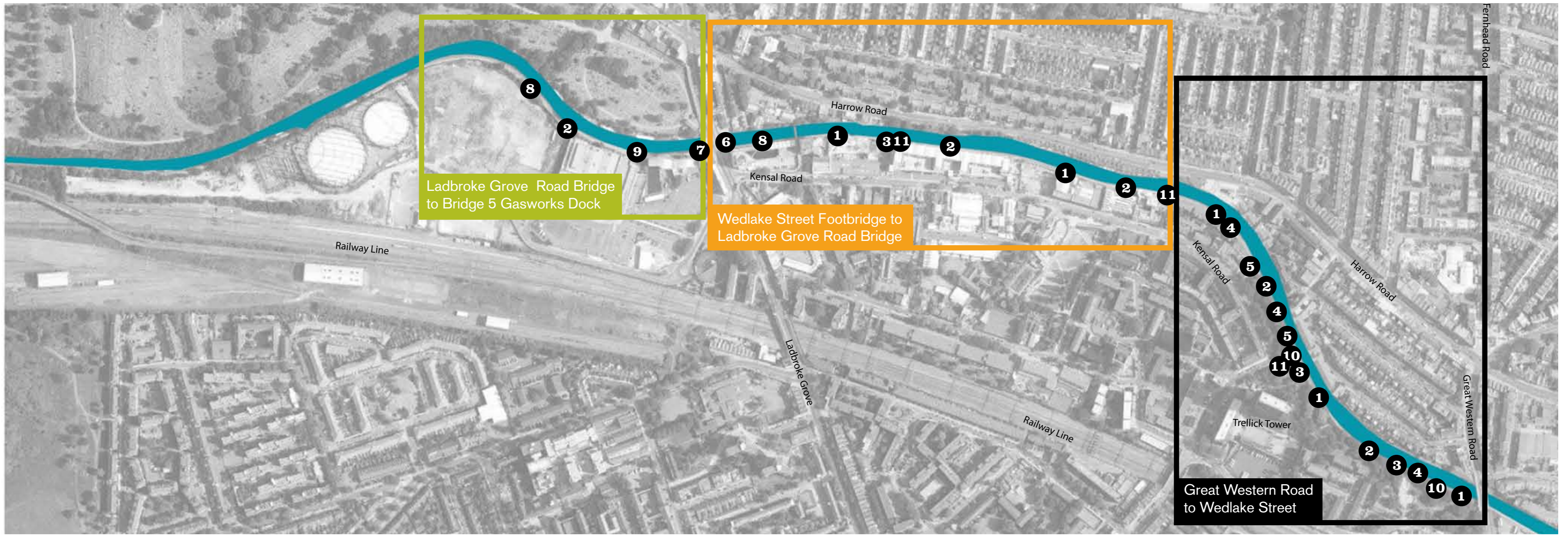


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Issues & Analysis



1 Narrow towpath allows limited space for cyclists and pedestrians to pass safely.



2 Long, straight, un-interrupted sections of path that allow cyclists to build up high speeds.



3 Inconsistent surfacing that causes visitors to change direction erratically.



4 Trip hazards caused by worn areas in the grass verges.



5 Uneven surfacing that sometimes slopes towards the canal or offside.



6 Hazardous pinch points



7 Blind spots at access points and bridge holes



8 Steep gradients on hump back bridges



9 Opportunity for a welcoming visitor hub adjacent to Sainsbury's store.



10 Poor visibility and access to the towpath from the Meanwhile Gardens Park



11 Lack of wayfinding signage at entrances



12 Opportunities for better commuter cycling routes around the canal.



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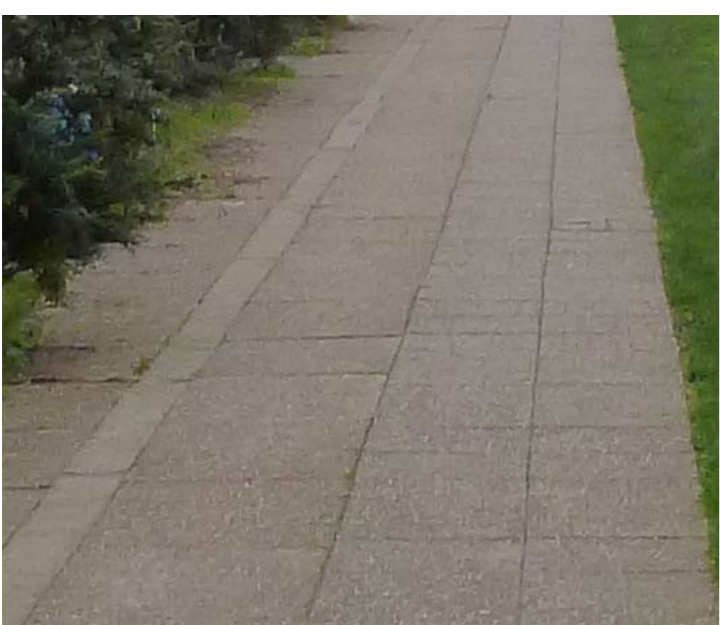
Opportunities



1 Consider signs at entrances showing a choice of alternative routes for cyclists.



2 Make a difference by starting a Towpath Adoption.



3 Widen the towpath where appropriate to improve shared use experience.



4 Use traditional materials to define spaces and make access points more visible.



5 Greening walls with climbing plants to reduce vandalism, soften areas and provide additional wildlife habitat.



6 Create spaces for events to connect with the Canalside Cavalcade at Little Venice – London's biggest boating event – or other local events.



7 Make the towpath more pedestrian friendly.



8 Sites for community art projects.



9 Encourage adjoining businesses to create more attractive canal frontages.



10 Improve entrances to open up views of the canal.

Strategy

- A surfacing strategy to provide visual cues to make the towpath safer. This will include physical calming measures in some places.
- Improve safety, visibility and connections to the towpath at entrance points, including, using distinct materials along the route to define access points.
- Improve signage at strategic points to inform and encourage the option to use alternative routes for cycling on nearby roads.

Draft proposals are based on using materials in keeping with existing materials on site that are cost effective and robust. Materials have been chosen to create a strong sense of identity along the full stretch of the route.



Tumbled Yorkstone setts



Granite setts



Repair/replace copings and add mooring rings



Tar Spary Chip

Slowing Things Down

Three-leaf chicanes reduce cycle speeds by acting as a visual reminder to slow down as cyclists take a curved path as they travel. Chicanes will be designed so that cyclists can do this safely and wheelchair users or those with prams can pass through easily too. We only consider these in areas where speeds are especially high or where there are safety concerns.



Using traditional surface materials such as bands of riven granite setts or cobbles don't just look great, they also provide a tactile reminder for cyclists to slow down. Properly located and maintained they pose no additional hazard to cyclists.

Low profile speed humps are pram and wheelchair friendly, but uncomfortable when taken at speed by cyclists, reinforcing the need to slow down and ensure priority for pedestrians who are most vulnerable.



Planted areas remind cyclists that they are on a greenway, not a highway and should slow down and enjoy the ride, at all times considering their impact on others.

Constraints

Pedestrian priority

Towpaths are shared use routes where pedestrians are the most vulnerable and have priority at all times. Considerate and responsible cycling is welcomed, although we encourage cyclists in a hurry to consider using faster alternative routes along nearby roads.

Utilities

The towpath contains a large number of buried services such as National Grid cables and there are services that cross the canal, enclosed in pipes or within bridges, which may limit what can be changed.

Funding

The aim is to secure funding support from Transport for London under programmes such as Greenways, as well as developer (section 106) and borough funds contributions.

Heritage & Environment

We always consider the environment and conservation of heritage when planning works on the canal, including using appropriate materials.

Maintenance

Proposals will aim to minimise future maintenance needs.

Land ownership

The Canal & River Trust owns the towpath in this area, but adjoining land is owned by others. Agreement will need to be reached with other parties where their land is affected.

Consents

The Canal & River Trust has some permitted development powers to carry out works on the canal, although we will consult the planning authority on any proposals that may fall outside our powers and where consent may be required.

Adjoining Uses

What other landowners and tenants do on their land adjoining the canal towpath has a major influence on the canal environment, so we want to hear your ideas on what our neighbours can do to improve the area.



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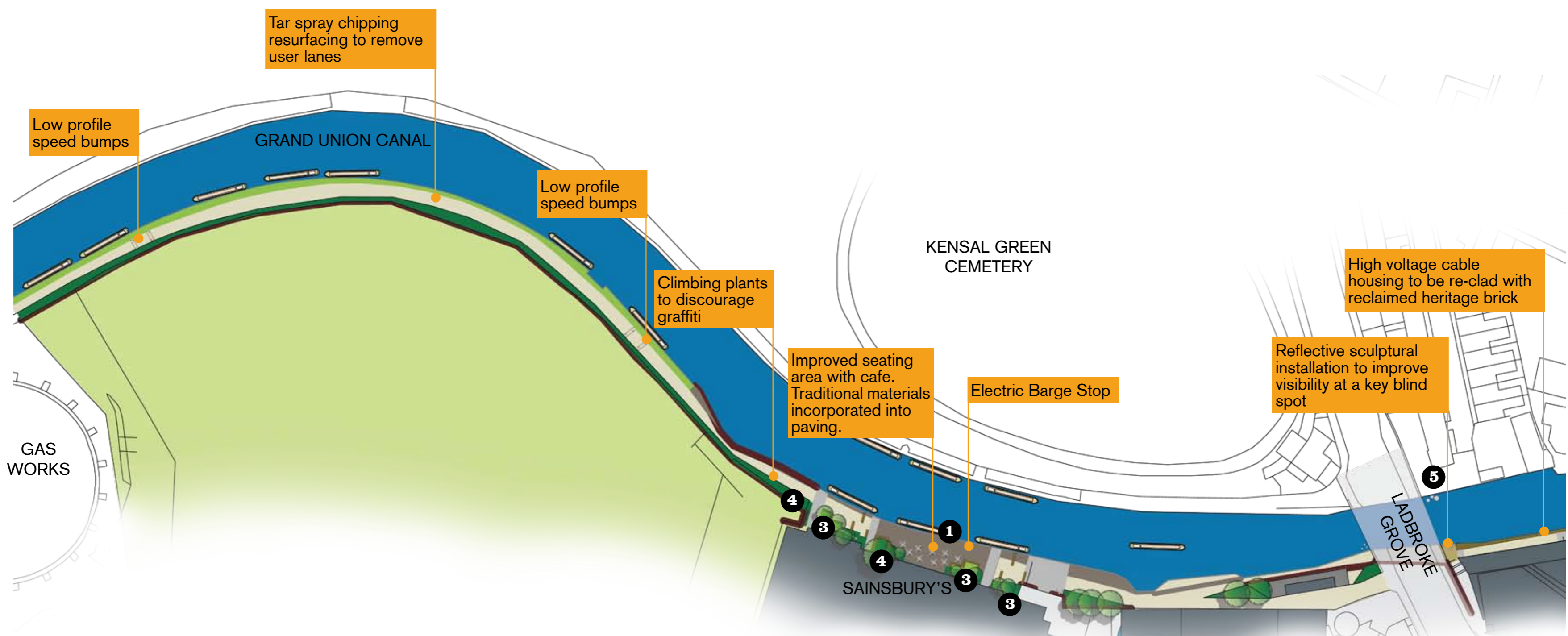


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Ideas: Gasworks Dock to Ladbroke Grove Road Bridge



The priority for this section of towpath is to create a sense of place near the Sainsbury's store and Gasworks Dock moorings where people naturally visit or pass through. We want to build upon the character of the canal here, including planting to encourage wildlife and considering flexible spaces to enable events or commercial activity. Climbing plants against walls can discourage graffiti too.

Steep gradients over hump back bridges in this area can increase cycle speeds. Therefore the proposals

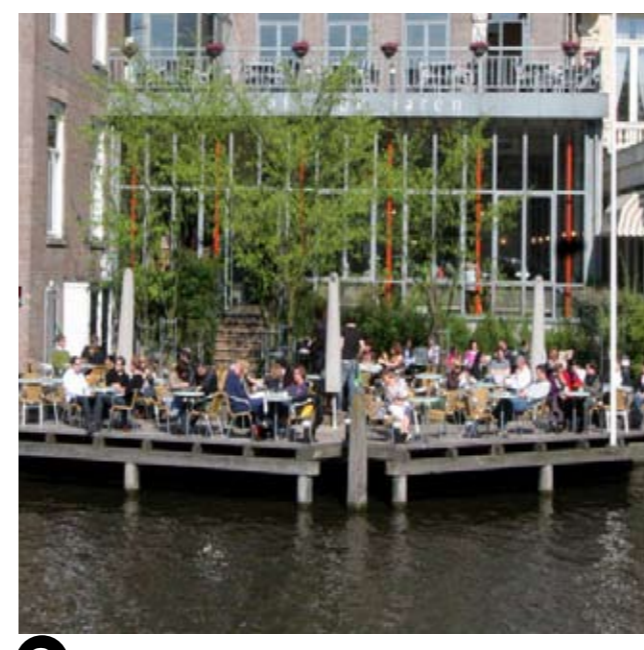
include changes in surface material and incorporating features such as low profile bumps and chicanes in appropriate places to discourage this.

Community and trip boats such as the Electric Barge which is currently moored near Sheldon Square in Paddington could also moor in this area as a boarding and disembarking point for activities such as school or private bookings.

- Improved landscaping to the boundary with the Sainsbury's store incorporating a cafe, cycle parking, new seating and planting.
- Climbers planted against walls
- Reflective sculptural balustrade to increase visibility at Ladbroke Grove Bridge
- Introduction of low profile speed bumps and chicanes
- Path resurfacing to incorporate traditional materials



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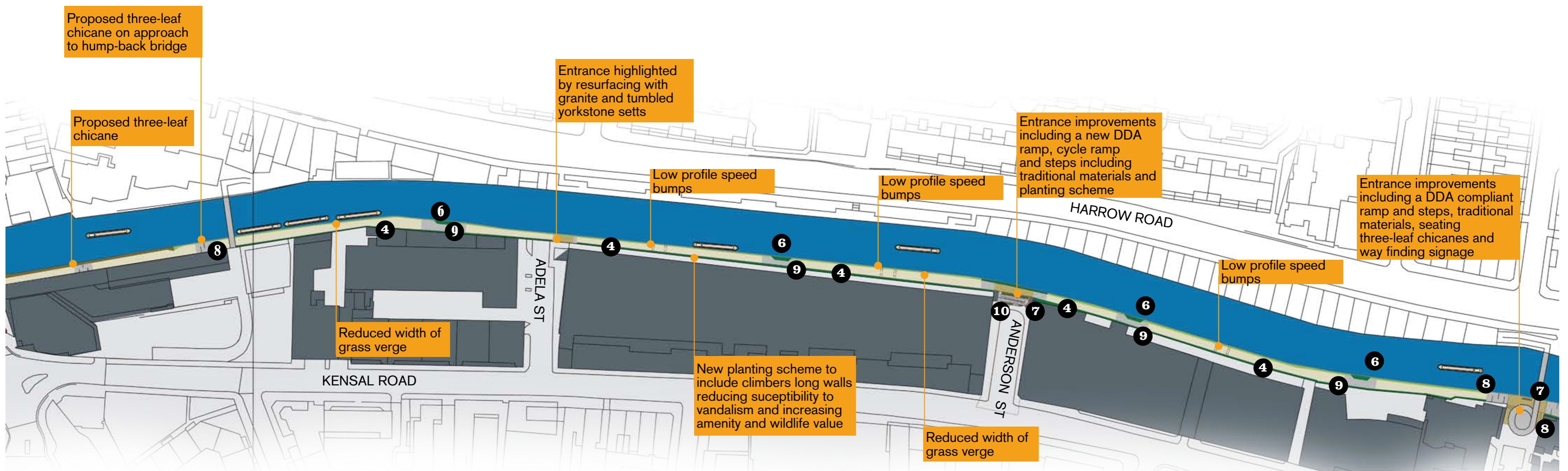


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Ideas: Ladbroke Grove Road Bridge to Wedlake Street Footbridge

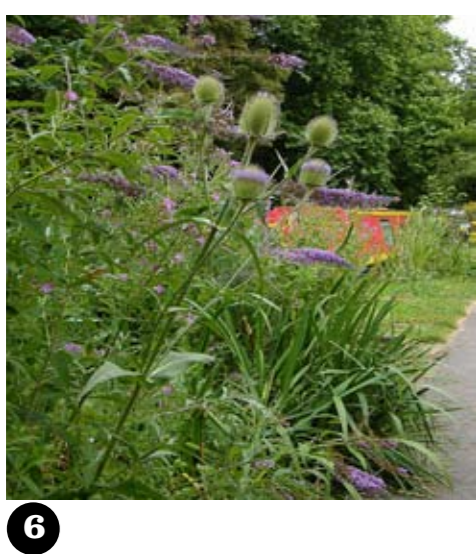


- Improved landscaping to Alderson Street and Wedlake Street entrances
- Path widening
- Path resurfacing to incorporate traditional materials
- Introduction of speed humps and chicanes

This is a long and straight section of the towpath where cyclists can build up speed, causing concern and occasionally conflict with pedestrians who are more vulnerable. The towpath is narrow in places and entrances are sometimes hidden, making joining and leaving the towpath potentially hazardous.

An objective for this area is to increase the width of the towpath by modestly reducing the grass verge where appropriate. The introduction of chicanes, and low profile speed humps will increase pedestrian safety. The addition of signs and changes in surfacing will help highlight entrances.

We can also improve this section of towpath with planting and changes to entrances. Climbing plants are proposed along walls vulnerable to vandalism. Ideas include potential improvements to the ramp at Alderson Street including the removal of railings and addition of planting, seating and steps to increase amenity in this area. The entrance at Wedlake Street could also be improved by replacing the existing ramp with steps and providing a new DDA compliant ramp. New Legible London signage is recommended to provide information of alternative routes for cyclists.



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Ideas: Great Western Road to Wedlake Street

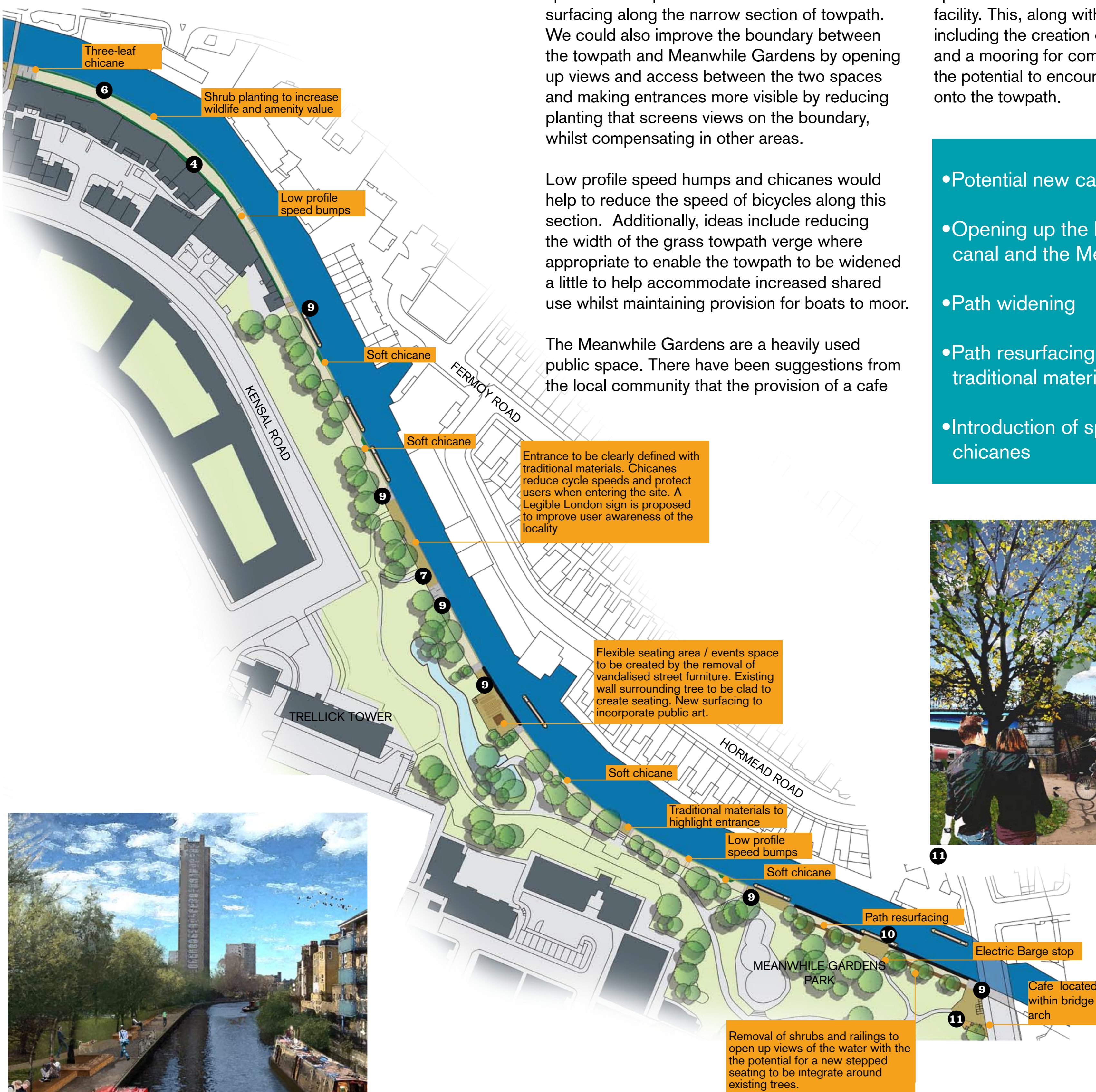


A solution is required here to reduce cycle speeds and improve the uneven and eroded surfacing along the narrow section of towpath. We could also improve the boundary between the towpath and Meanwhile Gardens by opening up views and access between the two spaces and making entrances more visible by reducing planting that screens views on the boundary, whilst compensating in other areas.

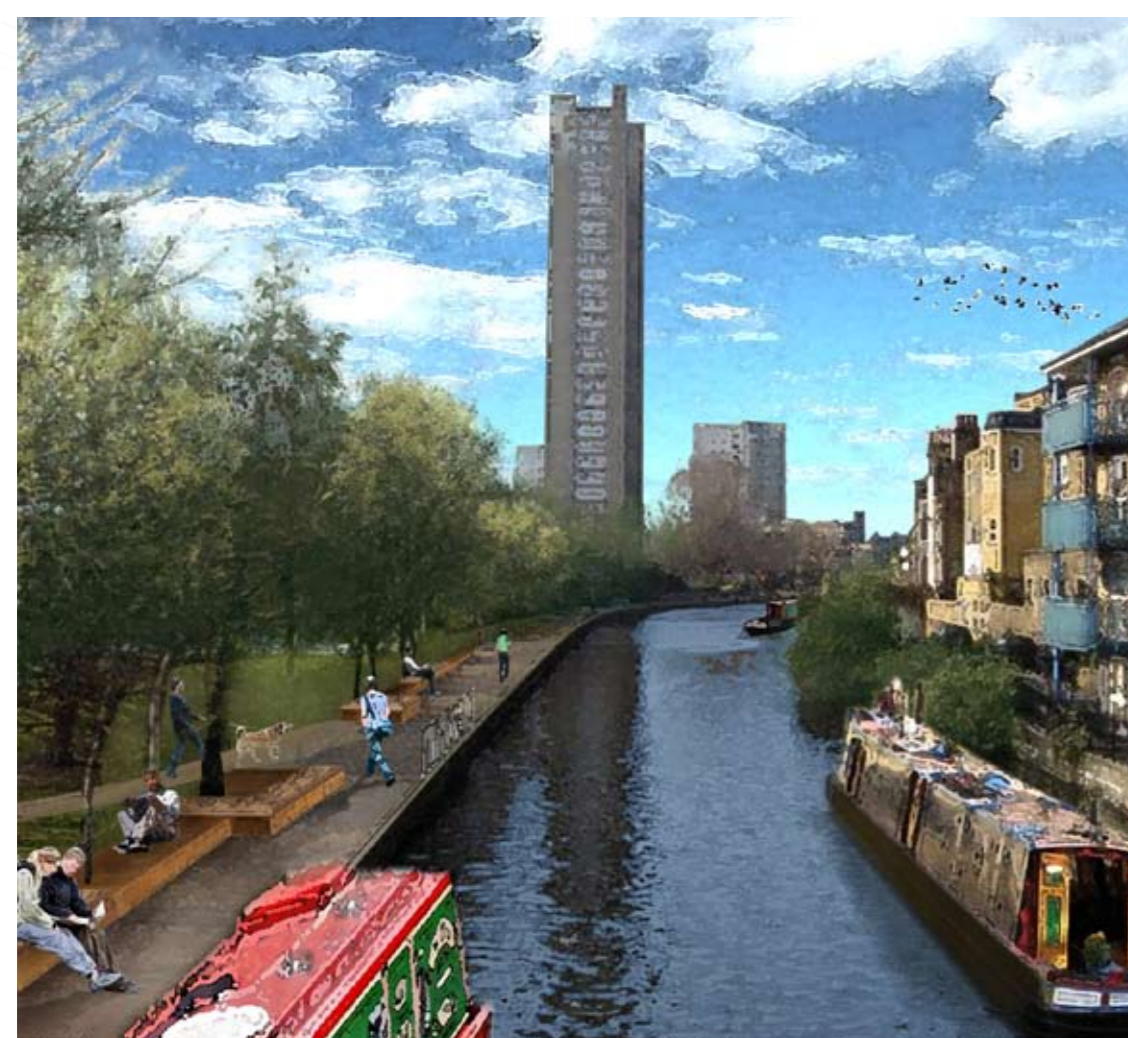
Low profile speed humps and chicanes would help to reduce the speed of bicycles along this section. Additionally, ideas include reducing the width of the grass towpath verge where appropriate to enable the towpath to be widened a little to help accommodate increased shared use whilst maintaining provision for boats to moor.

The Meanwhile Gardens are a heavily used public space. There have been suggestions from the local community that the provision of a cafe

located within the bridge arch adjacent to the spiral staircase would provide a much needed facility. This, along with improved landscaping including the creation of a canal side seating area and a mooring for community or trip boats has the potential to encourage more pedestrians back onto the towpath.



- Potential new cafe site
- Opening up the boundary between the canal and the Meanwhile Gardens Park
- Path widening
- Path resurfacing to incorporate traditional materials
- Introduction of speed humps and chicanes



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