



Hounslow Community Streets

Vision Report July 2010

Layton Road, Brentford





sustrans

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Purpose of report

This vision report has been prepared by Sustrans on behalf of the London Borough of Hounslow as part of the Community Streets project. The project aims to work with five communities to re-design their streets.

This report is focussed on Layton Road in Brentford.

Its main purpose is to develop design principles to inform the design proposals for the next phase of work.

It introduces the study area and outlines an initial appraisal of the study area. It summarises relevant baseline information and highlights the outcomes of a community consultation event held in the street. It draws this information together to develop the design principles.

The study area

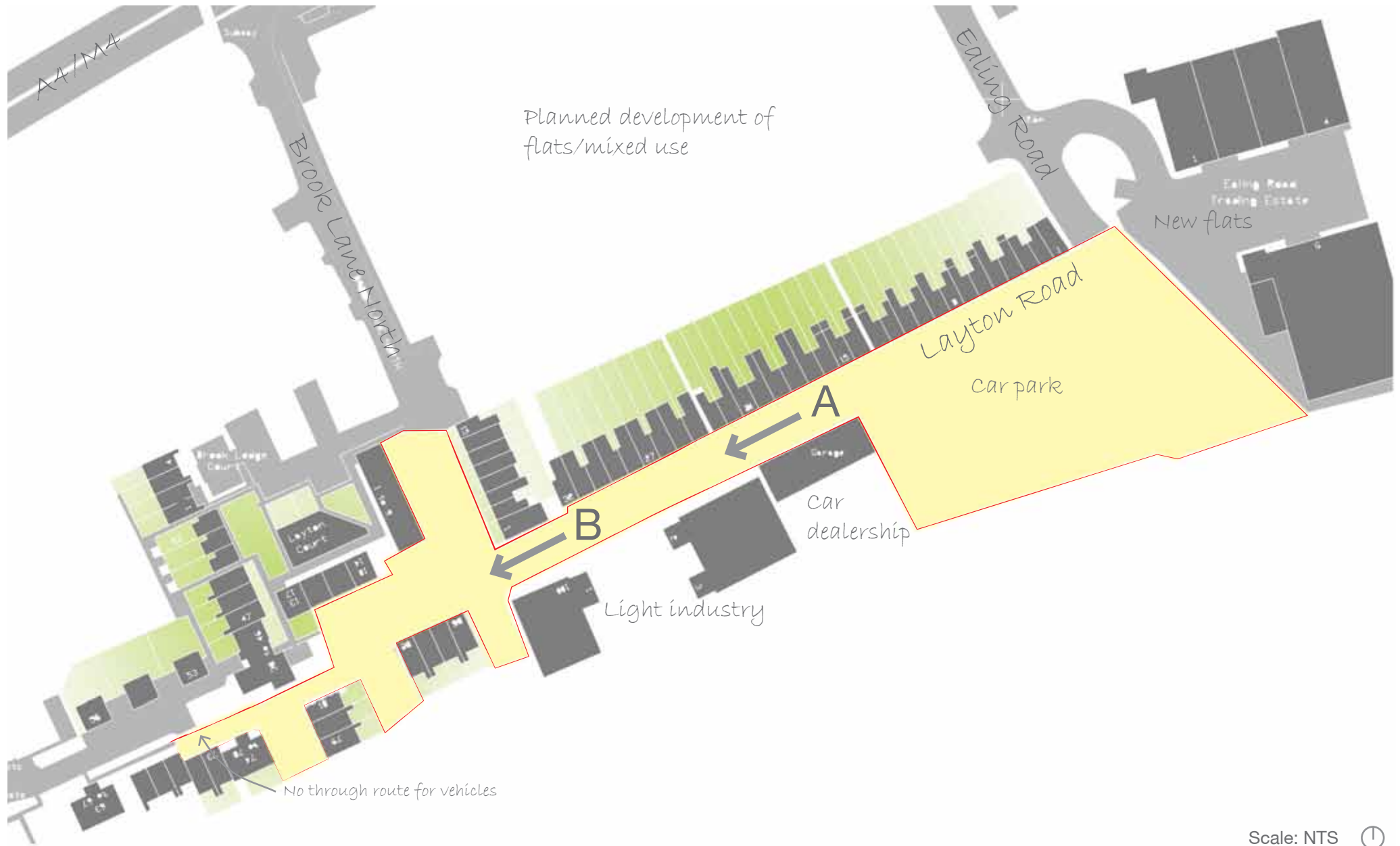
The study area comprises Layton Road, its car park and its junctions with the adjoining streets of Brook Lane North and Ealing Road. The area is located north of the Hounslow Loop line and south of the busy M4/A4 just east of Brentford Station.

Located just to the north of Brentford football club, the street attracts a lot of match day parking. The recent development of flats on land to the east of Ealing Road has altered the street and the issues are expected to be exacerbated with proposed development underway to the north between Layton Road and the M4/A4. Due to the streets proximity to the M4/A4 it is used as a rat run to avoid queuing at the traffic lighted junction off Ealing Road.

The north side of the street is Victorian terraced housing with a café on the corner with Brook Lane North, while the southern side of the street consists of more recent light industrial units, a car dealership and a council car park (see A). This separation of use is seen as a divide on the street with each party understanding the needs of others but not experiencing a joined up approach to unify the individual needs. Towards the western end of Layton Road the situation is again different with 70's and 80's council housing (see B). A Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) was introduced between the hours of 9.30 and 5.30 on weekdays which has improved the parking situation for residents but following the development to the east, additional competition has been created for the spaces particularly in the evenings and at weekends.



Figure 1 - The study area



Accident data

An assessment was undertaken into recorded accidents in the last five years. There were 2 slight accidents recorded within the study area, both at the junction between Layton Road and Ealing Road.

However, feedback from the community (covered in more detail later) suggested there were a number of potential safety issues which should be addressed.

Volume and speed counts

No speed or volume counts have been provided. However, it was observed that traffic speeds were an issue particularly at peak times when traffic is queuing at the lights to access the M4/A4 off Ealing Road and traffic avoids waiting by using Layton Road and Brook Lane North as a rat run. Speed is a particular issue in the centre of the two speed humps as there is a long straight stretch where vehicles can build up pace.

Parking assessment

The streets accommodate both resident's parking and parking for the car dealership and light industry, while being heavily used by rat running traffic avoiding the lights at the junction between Ealing Road and A4/M4 junction.

The area is subject to a Controlled Parking Zone for residents between 9.30am and 5.30pm Monday to Friday (see A).

Outside the car dealership and light industry there is a section of Permit Holder and Pay and Display parking with a maximum stay of 4 hours between 9.30 and 5.30 Monday to Friday.



Figure 2 - Baseline



BASELINE

Results of Community Consultation

The project was proposed by Layton Road residents. They reported issues with rat running, competition over parking spaces from residents living in the new flats, danger to children due to volumes and speed of traffic and erratic parking.

The first round of consultation was held on the street on the evening of the 24th of June with lots of residents turning out to give their opinion on what they liked and disliked about their street and their ideas for improving it. Their views were noted down on post-its and pinned on to a large scale map of the street to identify any specific features of interest. Opposite is a summary of some of the key themes that came through the discussion, a comprehensive list of comments is provided in the appendix.

Respondents were mainly local residents that had been invited to the event but we did receive comments from a few people passing through on foot from Brentford Station or parking on the street to visit people in the new flats.



traffic..

speed bumps not effective, not enough
hump
speed of traffic - scooters
20mph
remove hump - wrong angle
chicane would help
paint reflective red squares on the road to
slow traffic
don't close exit to A4/M4

Play

Traffic too fast for kids in the
street
somewhere for children to ride
scooters
signage - kids playing
corners of car park entrance - play
puzzle items on fencing
swings

Environment, Trees + Planting

landscape the area
Good community
adjoining the road and car park
seat near play at Layton Road/Ealing Road
junction
gateway - drive carefully at Layton Road
Ealing Road junction
green things to make the place look nicer -
front gardens
maintain car park planting
Hanging baskets
work with residents to improve front
gardens
More lively
Make it look loved

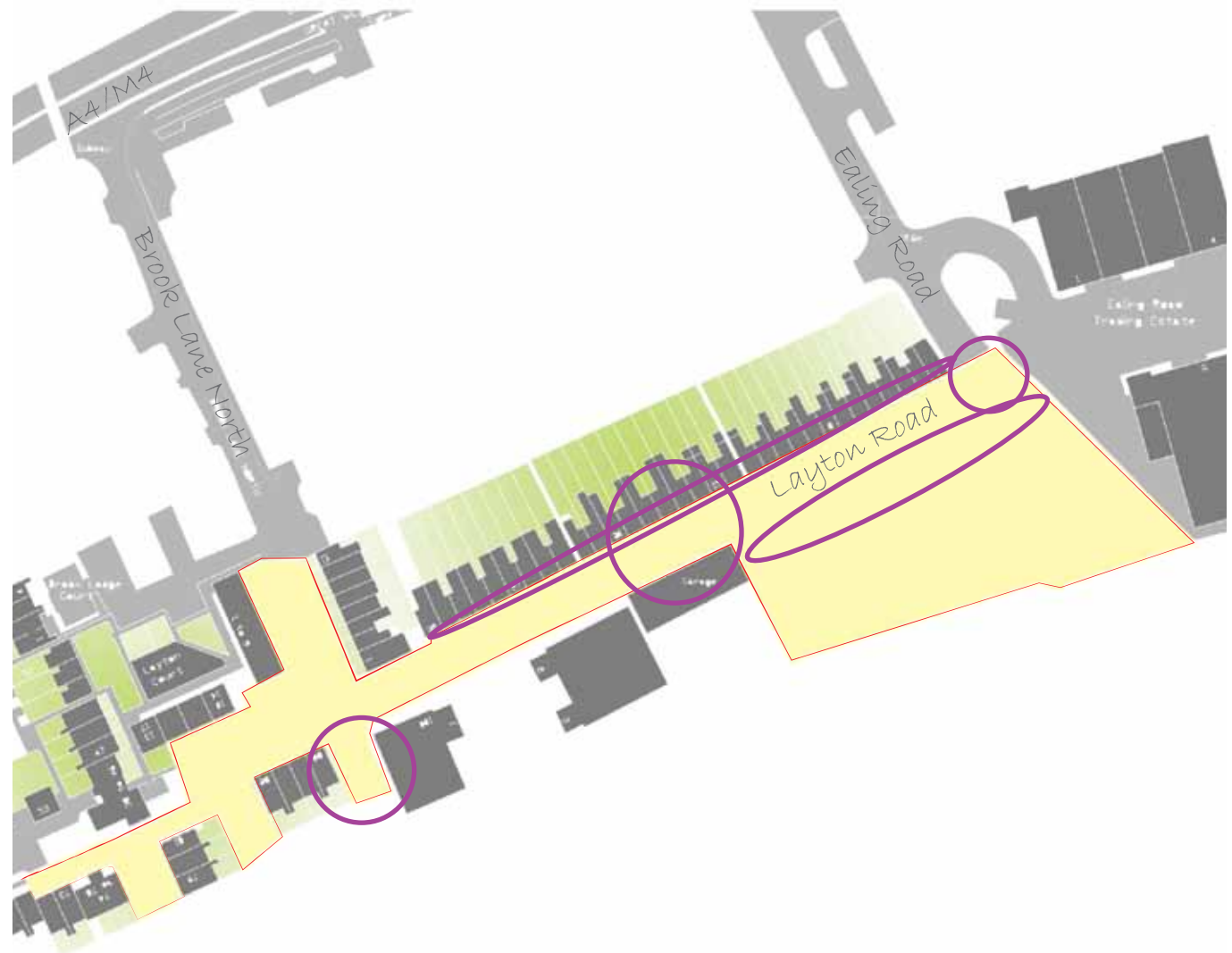


Opportunities

Figure 3 - Opportunities

The study area has a number of opportunities from which to draw inspiration:

- **Character.** A mix of strong characters exist on the street - the row of Victorian terraces, light industry and commerce and the 80's houses. The environment could be enhanced through stringing together these characters and thus hopefully uniting the different communities.
- **Focal Points.** There is currently no focal point within the area. A natural meeting place can build connections within the community.
- **Cycle parking and cycle logos.** The consultation identified a need and desire for cycle parking to be provided on the street in order to free up space in residential front gardens. Also, there were a lot of cyclists using the street which would benefit from traffic being aware of their presence - this could be achieved through the addition of cycle logos which can also be used as wayfinding.



Scale: NTS 

Constraints

There are a number of constraints relating to the study area:

- Safety. It was identified from the consultation that there were a number of families with small children that would like them to be able to play on the street but due to safety concerns they felt uncomfortable with allowing this to happen.
- Residents versus commercial/industrial. The divide between the needs of the residents and the industry was felt to be an issue on the street.
- Parking. This was highlighted as an issue particularly at evenings and at the weekends and for visitors to the residential dwellings.
- Anti social behaviour. The consultation highlighted issues around the bridge which currently restrict movements of residents due to intimidation.
- There are multiple utilities in the vicinity including mains gas, water/sewerage and electric. Approximate locations are shown for illustration purposes only - a comprehensive survey is provided in the appendix.

Figure 4 - Constraints



Note: Locations of constraints are for illustration purposes only and require a detailed survey to identify precise locations.

Approach to design

Drawing on the feedback from residents and an appraisal of the study area the following design principles are proposed:

- Create a gateway to define the entrance to the neighbourhood, signal arrival into a residential area, and encourage responsible behaviour by drivers.
- Break up linearity to reduce inappropriate traffic speed on straight stretches of road, thus bridging the gap between residents and light industry on opposing sides of the street.
- Engage local youths to tackle the problems with anti social behaviour and make the bridge safer for local residents.
- Provide informal play opportunities in the street to encourage more active use of the street to change the atmosphere and create opportunities for independence for the local children.
- Soften the urban nature of the street with trees and planting and encourage further use of bikes.
- Promote the cycling and walking link to Brentford station.

Underpinning the design principles is an approach which aims to unify and define the neighbourhood. Residents felt there were some competing pressures with the business community and residents from the local flats. This is manifested in competition for car parking spaces, however, there is also an issue with the behaviour of some drivers passing through the area.

It is our view that design interventions need to occur along the street to tackle the issues raised while also utilising the diversity of the neighbourhood.

Whilst there is a strong sense of community, it was also felt that there is a divide between the residents and the business community. It is also hoped that this process will engage both and thus bring the community together.

Michelle Quin will lead on the design for this scheme, with input from the other members of the design team.

Design Concept

A. Create a new community focal point which might include a change in surface treatment (which could potentially also be raised to reduce speeds), a community notice board, informal play opportunities, planting, cycle storage or other features. Create a different feel to the street with some unconventional traffic calming (painting) which will hopefully discourage traffic from using the street as a cut through and slow traffic that does use it.

B. A new gateway which will provide a visual difference and feel between Ealing Road and Layton Road. It is hoped that it will be led by the community and incorporate art, planting and potentially, play. This is hoped to reducing traffic and slow speeds.

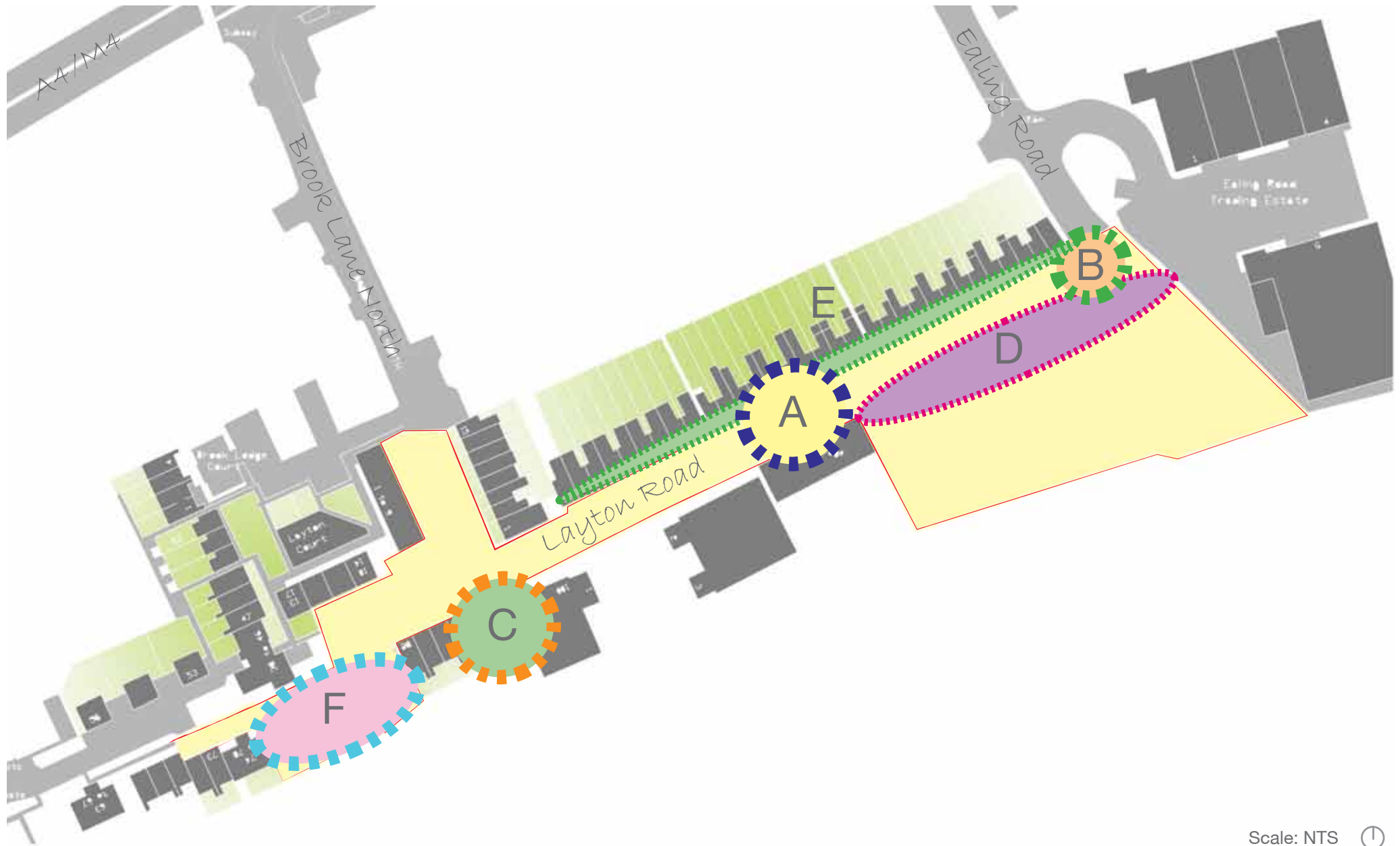
C. Engage the youth and provide them with an alternative form of recreation which is less anti social and tackle continued problems with enforcement. Create a welcoming entrance point to the bridge to encourage use by locals.

D. Retrofit play elements to the existing railings around the car park. Manage the planting on the bank and incorporate play elements - slides, climbing ropes if agreement can be obtained from the car park. Allow residents and their visitors to use the car park out of hours. Incorporate other uses - art, greenery (reinforced grass), increase biodiversity (gravel).

E. Work with the local residents to improve their front gardens, giving space back to colourful planting and greening them for everyone's enjoyment and managing overgrown vegetation to allow good access along pavements. Green the street with trees and find storage locations on the street for bikes.

F. Undertake a street audit and make good.

Figure 5 - Design Concept



DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Scale: NTS ⓘ