



# CULTURE MILE PUBLIC REALM VISION & STRATEGY

Summary Document  
November 2024



**steer**

**AR**Urbanism

**Authentic**Futures

 **CULTURE  
MILE BID**

## Foreword from Andrew Smith, Chair of the Culture Mile BID



In the heart of the City of London, the Culture Mile area is a melting pot of old and new, where echoes of centuries past merge with the hum of modern business. Here, tranquillity and creative energy co-exist and at each turn there's something new and unexpected to enjoy. Iconic venues like the Barbican Centre and the soon-to-open London Museum share the stage with lunchtime concerts in historic churches and picnics at the foot of a Roman wall. This is the place where diverse communities converge.

As worker numbers continue to rise, the City Corporation is negotiating development proposals that will contribute to providing a projected demand of 1.2 million square metres of Grade A office space, by 2040, with hundreds of thousands of square metres already approved and under construction across the Square Mile. I am pleased to say that the Culture Mile area plays a prominent role in these growth plans, continuing to evolve as it has done for the last 2000 years. When the London Museum re-opens in West Smithfield in 2026, it will be home to immersive and interactive permanent galleries and temporary exhibitions and learning spaces, where the many diverse stories of London and its people will be shared. The City of London Corporation's Destination City programme, commitment to continued growth, and planned investments make a significant contribution to reinforcing the exemplary reputation of the Square Mile and highlight the significant opportunities to attract different audiences and demographics to the area.

This report, and the various strategies and policies it supports, recognises the importance of the public spaces and streets within the Culture Mile area which we use on a daily basis –the green pockets, the seating areas, the plazas, the courtyards, main roads and alleyways, the routes we all use to move around this unique part of the City.

The purpose of the Vision and Strategy is to add value to the extensive work that is already underway across the Culture Mile area by the City of London Corporation and the private sector. It aims to build on this work, draw out opportunities to make further potential enhancements and, crucially, identify important connecting routes and meeting points between these areas of change. Establishing key focus areas, incorporating both public space and publicly-accessible private space, we are setting a road map for the BID's efforts to maximise the opportunities presented from this exciting era of change and transformation for this part of the City. Suggested interventions are ambitious and grounded in extensive consultation with stakeholders, the public, and detailed analysis, but are simply the start of a journey. We are excited to work closely with the City of London Corporation and other key stakeholders, to explore how these priorities could deliver for the future of this unique part of the City.

The Culture Mile BID would like to thank all stakeholders who contributed information, comments and design suggestions that helped in the development of this Vision and Strategy, we look forward to turning these aspirations into exciting projects over the coming years.

## Statement From the City of London Corporation



The City of London Corporation welcomes the Culture Mile BID's Public Realm Vision and acknowledges its value in representing the ideas and priorities of the BID's businesses for the public realm. It will provide inspiration and new ideas that align with our strategies for the future, prosperity of the Square Mile, including City Plan 2040, the Transport Strategy and the Climate Action Strategy, as well as our Destination City programme and commitment to growth.

We recognise the ambition of the businesses and workers within the Culture Mile area. As this area continues to evolve with significant developments, the Vision and Strategy offers valuable ideas for enhancing the public spaces that connect and enrich this thriving environment.

Through genuine engagement with the City of London Corporation and the City's diverse stakeholders, the Culture Mile BID has demonstrated a commitment to fostering a more dynamic, inclusive, safer, cleaner, and greener public realm for residents, businesses, and visitors alike. We support the Culture Mile BID's efforts and look forward to their continued contributions to the City's growth.

# Executive Summary

## Background

The Culture Mile Public Realm Vision and Strategy, prepared by Steer, AR Urbanism, and Authentic Futures in collaboration with the City of London Corporation, provides a vision for a suite of potential improvements to streets and spaces within the Culture Mile area.

Successfully delivering any of the public realm projects set out in this strategy requires a clear and close working between the BID and delivery partners including members of the BID, the City of London Corporation, Transport for London (TfL), key organisations, businesses, landowners, developers, and local community groups. It is important to recognise that this document is a high level vision for change. The potential projects identified will require design development with these organisations and others, and involve public consultation as appropriate to the nature of the interventions.

## Understanding of Conditions & Context

An in-depth baseline report was prepared that analysed key aspects of the area. The public realm and development projects underway in the area were reviewed to understand ambition, coverage and timescale. Baseline work also included engagement, to uncover people's views and capture stakeholder insights and opportunities for change, and supplement the team's technical analysis.

## Vision & Spatial Strategy

A high-level vision was developed to guide the identification and shaping of potential opportunities for change.

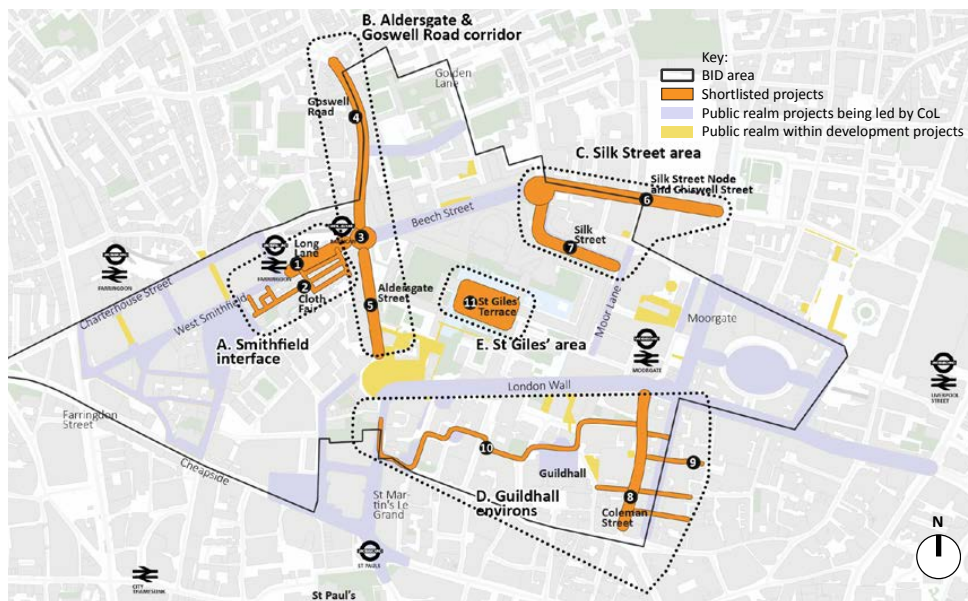
The vision is underpinned by a spatial strategy. This includes key routes and connections, and public spaces within the area that these connect or relate to, and provides a framework for potential improvement opportunities. It acknowledges and responds to public realm-related improvement work that is already underway or planned to be delivered in the area.

## Project Bank

This work informed the identification of a range of potential public realm interventions, which form the Project Bank. Each project is presented as a high level design brief, for further exploration and design development at later stages.

For selected projects a high level concept plan and sketch has been prepared to help visualise the degree of change that could be achieved, should the project be taken forward.





Project Bank – Focus Areas plan



Illustration of concept for Coleman Street

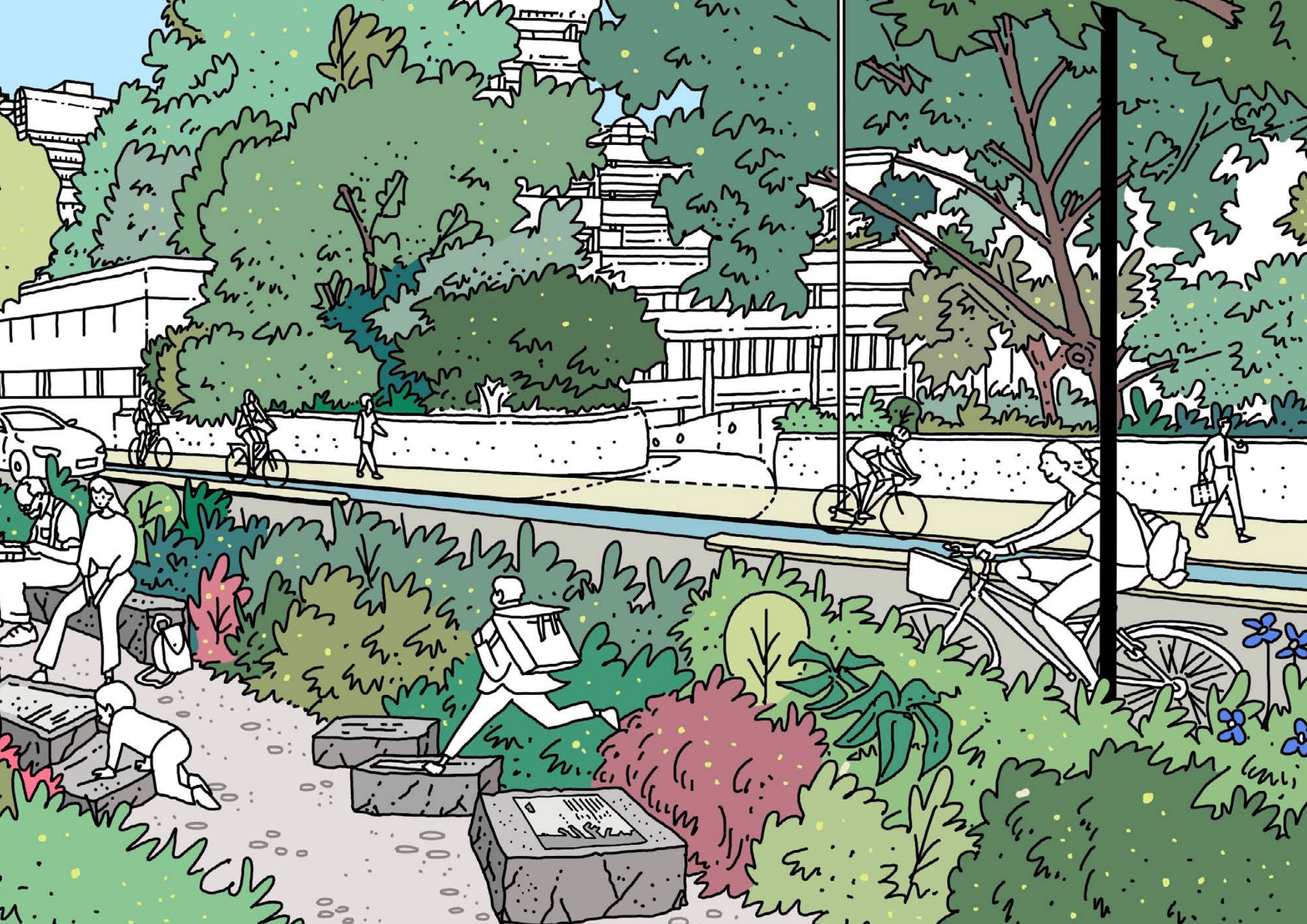


Illustration of concept for Aldersgate Street











# The Story so Far

## Preceding Work

Improvements to the Culture Mile area have been promoted by the City of London and its partners for a number of years. The Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy, prepared by Fluid Architects, was released in 2018. This crystallised an approach to promoting the area as a new home for contemporary culture in the ancient heart of London.

The desire for further improvements in the Culture Mile and nearby areas has in turn led to the formation of the Culture Mile BID.

## Inputs from Public Engagement

Stakeholder engagement was undertaken in November 2023 to gather feedback from visitors, workers, and residents about their experiences of the Culture Mile.

Current transport connections within the Culture Mile are highly valued by the respondents, which reflects the expansive transport links on offer. Cultural attractions and the architecture were the next most enjoyed aspects of the area,

particularly from respondents who were located around the Barbican, Smithfield Market and Moorgate.

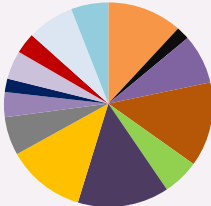
In almost all areas across the Culture Mile, respondents stated that they wanted to see more green spaces. For London Wall and Aldersgate South, this was the only element people wanted to see more of. More dining options, pedestrianised areas, and events and street markets were also popular suggestions, particularly around Smithfield Market, West Smithfield and the Barbican.

## Priorities & Partnership

The BID undertook perception analysis with businesses and residents prior to its establishment. This has provided four clear priorities that guide its work →

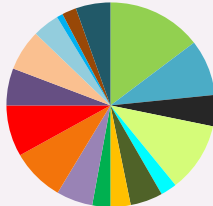
Successfully addressing these priorities requires a clear and close working between the BID and delivery partners. These delivery partners are likely to include members of the BID, the City of London, TfL, key organisations, businesses, landowners, developers, and local community groups.

## Snapshot of public engagement



What do you enjoy most about this area? Most common answers are below:

- Transport connections
- Cultural attractions
- History and heritage
- Architecture



Which of the following would you like to see more of in this area? Most common answers are below:

- Trees, plants, parks
- Events, street markets
- Seating, resting spaces
- Independent shops
- Car-free streets

## Themes from key stakeholders



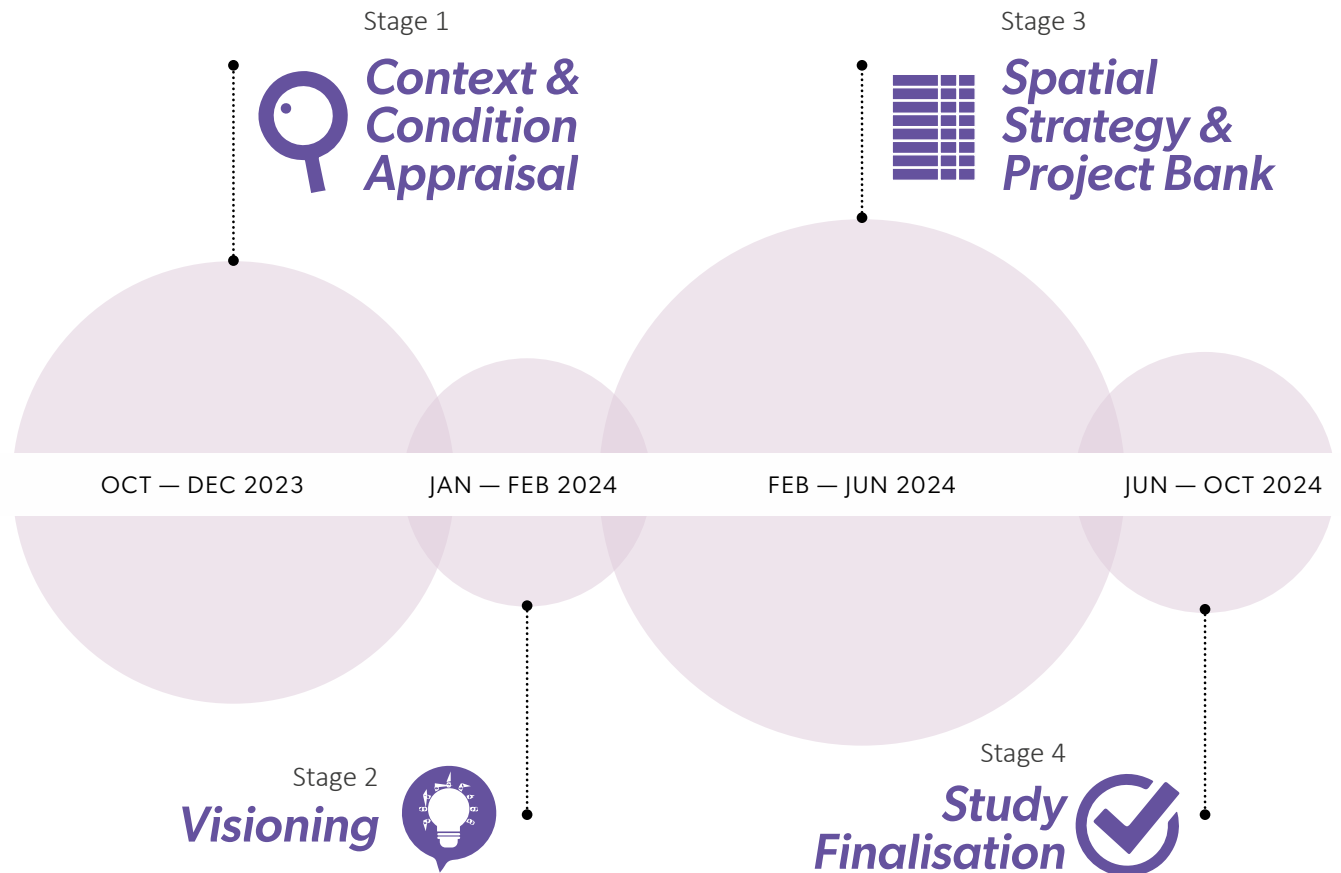


### Why a Public Realm Vision & Strategy?

Through its work, the Culture Mile BID is seeking to drive the delivery of major public realm enhancements in the BID area, working closely with the delivery partners and stakeholders to do so.

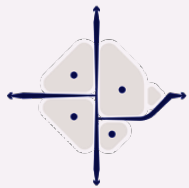
This Public Realm Vision and Strategy is to help the BID to do this, by identifying potential public realm improvements to deliver. These will enhance the area's function and attractiveness, create a strong identity as a visitor destination, retain and attract investment, and ultimately support the area's growth and vitality.

The development of the Public Realm Vision and Strategy has been undertaken in four stages →



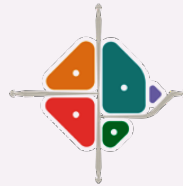
***All projects should help to reveal and celebrate the Culture Mile's multi-layered identity, respond to its rapidly changing nature, its position as a meeting point at the transport crossroads of London, and channel energy from its density of activity, including its unique cultural offer.***

The vision is proposed to be delivered via four objectives ↓



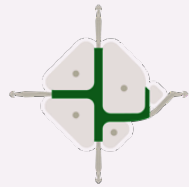
#### **Welcome to the Culture Mile**

- Feeling welcomed
- Making it a destination
- Getting between places easily
- Beyond the boundaries



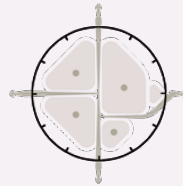
#### **Exploring the Culture Mile**

- A place with many stories
- Encouraging exploration
- A place of contrasts



#### **A place for people**

- Green and pleasant
- Maximising comfort
- Facilitating functionality
- A place to linger



#### **Going beyond the name**

- A place to support day-to-day office activity
- Friday-to-Monday vitality
- Cultural celebration

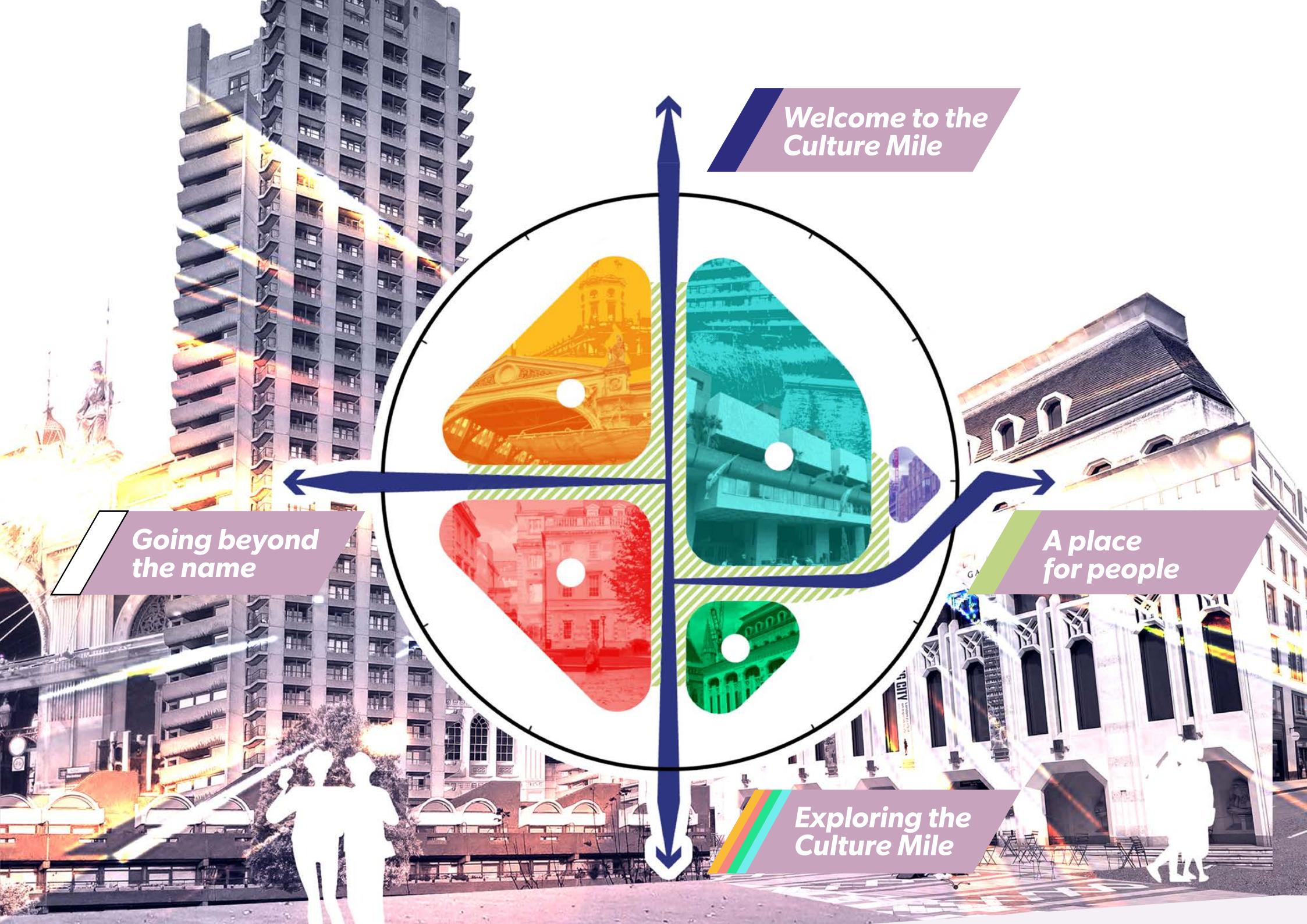
# Vision

*Welcome to the  
Culture Mile*

*Going beyond  
the name*

*A place  
for people*

*Exploring the  
Culture Mile*







# Spatial Strategy

Artist's illustration of Coleman Street showing how the street might look during a timed closure for an event, looking south from Great Bell Alley and Mason's Avenue.





## Improvement Opportunities

A variety of potential opportunities for public realm improvements have been identified that relate to the routes and connections, and the network of public spaces. These are illustrated in the plan opposite.

These opportunities have been defined to also take account of, and respond to, the significant number of public realm projects being undertaken by developers and the City of London Corporation, including those in partnership with LB Islington related to the Bunhill, Barbican & Golden Lane Healthy Neighbourhood.

The BID should play a key role in applying the principles set out in this Vision document to the street-level experience of people in this part of the City. Through this Vision and Strategy, it can engage in conversations with developers and

the City about specific projects, providing the bigger picture context, and applying principles based on the analysis work and projects proposed here, to complement and support work being delivered by others.

The following section describes the details of each of the projects within the Project Bank. Projects are organised broadly by geography, and grouped into Focus Areas, as shown on the plan to the right.

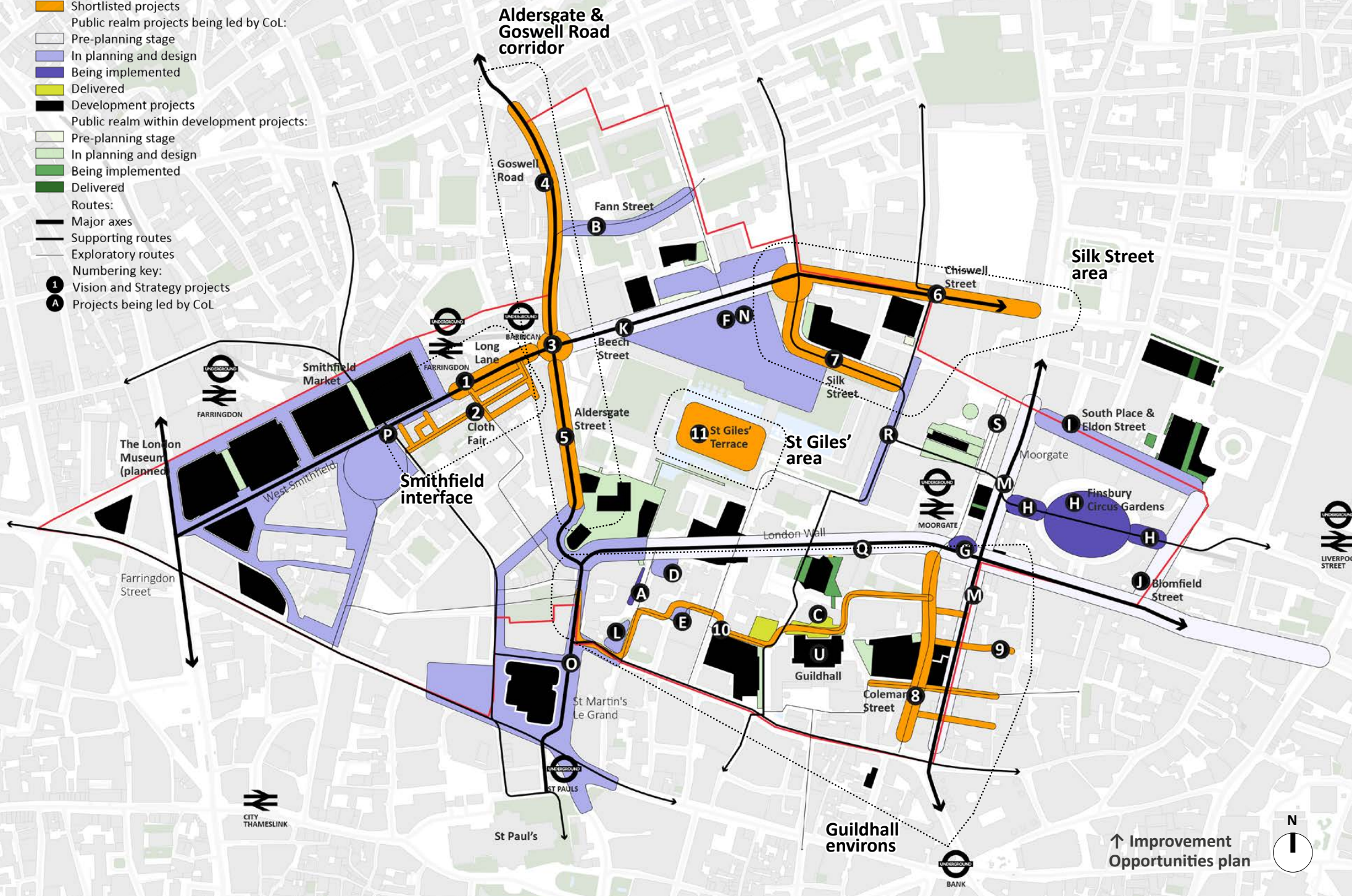
The projects incorporate the potential design elements that could be taken forward and explored in more detail by the Culture Mile BID in partnership with stakeholders, including the City of London Corporation. Delivery of projects will be subject to design development, consultation, and securing funding.

Public Realm Vision and Strategy Projects	
1	Long Lane (Lindsey Street to Aldersgate Street)
2	Cloth Fair and Nearby Streets
3	Barbican Gateway Area
4	Aldersgate Street (north) & Goswell Road
5	Aldersgate Street (south)
6	Silk Street Node & Chiswell Street
7	Silk Street
8	Coleman Street
9	Moorgate Yards and Alleys
10	Guildhall Green Route
11	St Giles-without-Cripplegate terrace

City of London Projects	
A	Noble Street – wildflower habitat
B	Fann Street – green space enhancement
C	St Mary Aldermanbury – landscape
D	St Olave Silver Street – landscape
E	St Mary Staining – landscape
F	Barbican Podium Phase 2
G	London Wall and Moorgate plaza landscape
H	Finsbury Circus and Western and Eastern Arms (LSAHSP)
I	South Place and Eldon Street – public space improvement (LSAHSP)
J	Blomfield – public space (LSAHSP)
K	Beech Street Redesign (BBGLHN)
L	Former Churchyard of St Anne and St Agnes – landscape
M	Moorgate enhancements (LSAHSP)
N	Silk Street Enhancement (Barbican Centre Masterplan)
O	St Paul's Gyratory Transformation
P	Smithfield Public Realm
Q	London Wall Corridor Study
R	Moor Lane Environmental Enhancements
S	Moorfields Improvements
U	Guildhall North Wing refurbishment

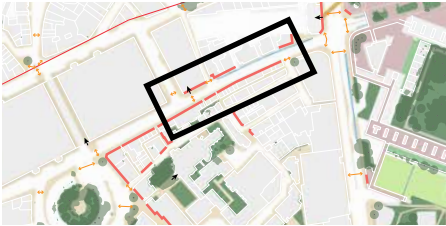


- Key:**
- BID area
  - Shortlisted projects
  - Public realm projects being led by CoL:
  - Pre-planning stage
  - In planning and design
  - Being implemented
  - Delivered
  - Development projects
  - Public realm within development projects:
  - Pre-planning stage
  - In planning and design
  - Being implemented
  - Delivered
  - Routes:
  - Major axes
  - Supporting routes
  - Exploratory routes
  - Numbering key:
  - 1 Vision and Strategy projects
  - A Projects being led by CoL





## 1. Long Lane



Improvements to the public realm to make it more attractive, safer and more comfortable for pedestrians, and aid wayfinding between Farringdon Station, the Barbican Centre and Smithfield area with future London Museum.

- Footway widening;
- Crossings to match desire lines;
- New cycle lanes and stands;
- Seating and potential planting;
- Creative wayfinding, including inside the station;
- Feature lighting in passages;
- Work with occupiers to make a more active and appealing frontage on Long Lane.



Expand, adapt Legible London signage

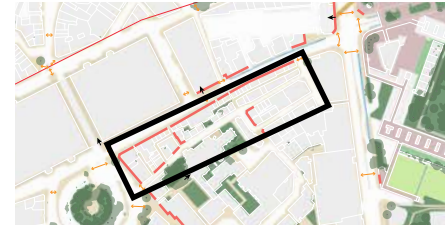


Enliven commercial frontage



Paving inserts for wayfinding

## 2. Cloth Fair and Nearby Streets



Permanent changes to the public realm to improve the streets of the Cloth Fair area, promoting pedestrian and cycle priority while articulating it's strong historical narrative.

- Dropped kerbs and flush surfacing;
- Relocation or redesign of bollards;
- Resurfacing to enhance the setting of heritage assets;
- Wayfinding and interpretative elements;
- Feature lighting;
- Work with occupiers to add window, cornice or hanging planters;
- Improved, accessible entrance to St Bartholomew Garden.



Feature lighting



Flush surfacing



Interpretation elements



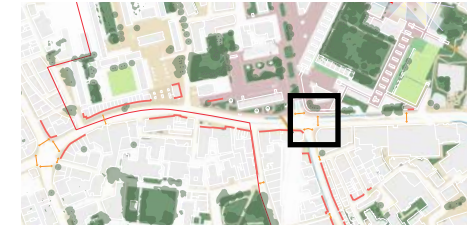
### 3. Barbican Gateway Area



Footway widening and diagonal crossing



Special paving on route



Improve the junction of Aldersgate, Long Lane, Beech Street and adjoining areas of public realm, with the aim of creating a stronger sense of arrival to the Barbican area, and enhancing the safety, comfort and amenity for pedestrians.

- Redesign junction geometry to incorporate widened crossings, corners, and diagonal crossings;
- Two-way cycle lane on Beech St;
- Barbican Centre sign on corner;
- Special paving on route to Barbican;
- Feature lighting on footbridge;
- Signage on entrance to staircase to Barbican Station;
- Subtle uplighting of the wall of the Barbican;
- Work with occupiers to activate the NW corner at street level.
- Improve signage inside station.



Feature lighting on footbridge



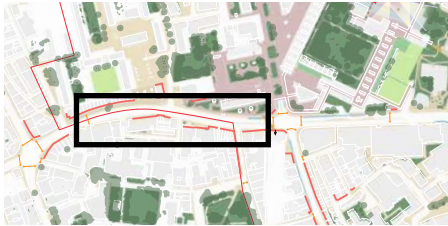
Barbican sign



Subtle uplighting



## 4. Aldersgate Street (north) & Goswell Road



### Phase 1

Temporary changes to the highways environment to reallocate road space for provision of cycle lanes and increased pedestrian space. The temporary changes would be used to test potential for longer term transformation of this road corridor, see Phase 2 →

- Reallocate road space;
- Light touch delineation of cycle lanes;
- Temporary wayfinding signage;
- Lighting elements;
- Temporary surface design elements or painting;
- Temporary seating, cycle parking and shelter;
- Wayfinding integrated into surface or furniture;
- Ensure access to water and power for events.



Example of reallocated road space

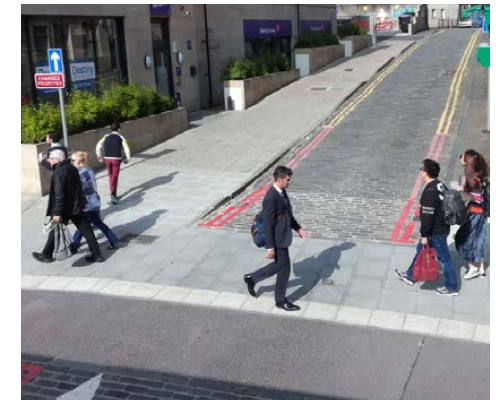
### Phase 2

Permanent enhancements to improve pedestrian, cycle, and bus priority, creating an aesthetic and amenable gateway to the Barbican area. Consolidate and formalise freight & servicing activities to improve road safety and make it more attractive to use. Facilitate level and accessible footways and crossing points on side roads and yards for residents, workers, and students to access Barbican Station.

- Narrowing lane widths;
- New pedestrian crossings;
- Continuous footways;
- Signage and wayfinding, including interpretation elements;
- Formal bay arrangements or kerb rental space for servicing;
- High-quality street greening and sustainable drainage features;
- Potential e-scooters and e-bikes parking.



Widened footways and segregated cycle lanes



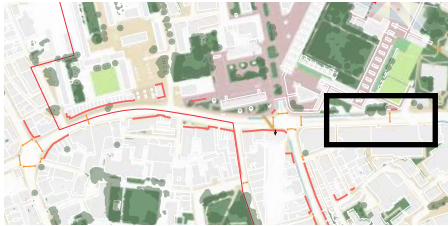
Example of a continuous footway



Street greening and raingardens



## 5. Aldersgate Street (south)



### Phase 1

Temporary changes to the highways environment to reallocate road space for provision of cycle lanes and increased pedestrian space, also allowing flexibility for use for cultural events. The temporary changes would be used to test potential for longer term transformation of this road corridor, see Phase 2 →

- Reallocate road space;
- Light touch delineation of cycle lanes;
- Temporary surface design elements or painting;
- Temporary seating, cycle parking and shelter;
- Wayfinding integrated into surface or furniture;
- Design to allow for temporary activation- events, markets etc.;
- Ensure access to water and power for events.



Road space converted to temporary cycle lanes and seating areas



Corner activity space with a marker tree

### Phase 2

Permanent changes to transform the street into an “urban forest”, with significantly increased pedestrian space, dedicated cycle lanes, alongside significant new areas of soft landscape, and flexibility for use for cultural events. This would follow on from temporary changes testing reallocation of road space (see Phase 1).

- Reduce carriageway space;
- Bold, distinctive landscape and streetscape design;



One-way cycle lane with a buffer from traffic

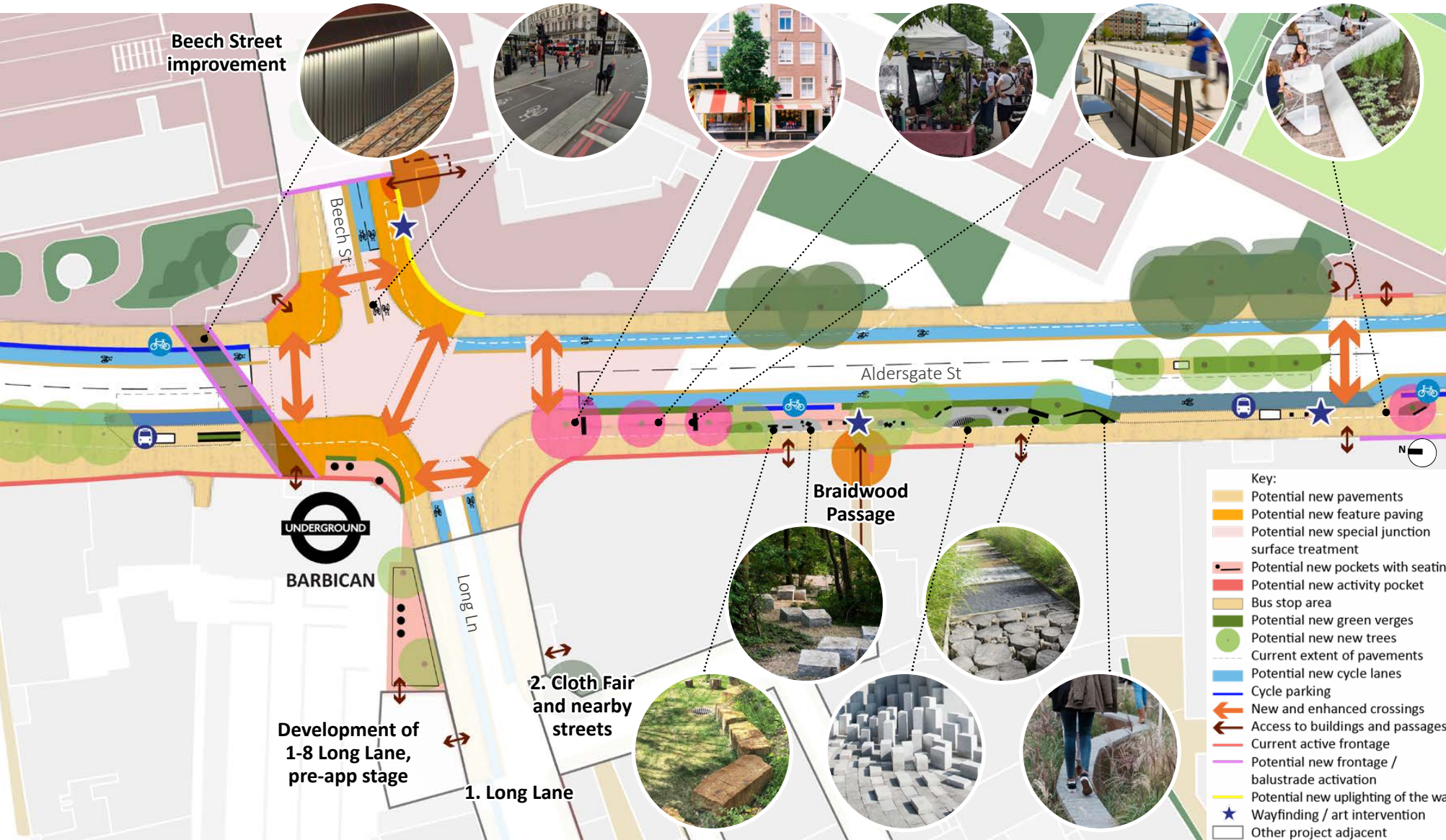


Raised path inside the green verge

- Landscaped central median strip;
- Extensive new planting, potential for raingardens;
- Segregated cycle lanes, cycle parking;
- Seating integrated into planting;
- Encourage spill-out seating;
- Work with occupiers to encourage art installations;
- Design to allow for temporary activation- events, markets etc.;
- Potential e-scooters and e-bikes parking.

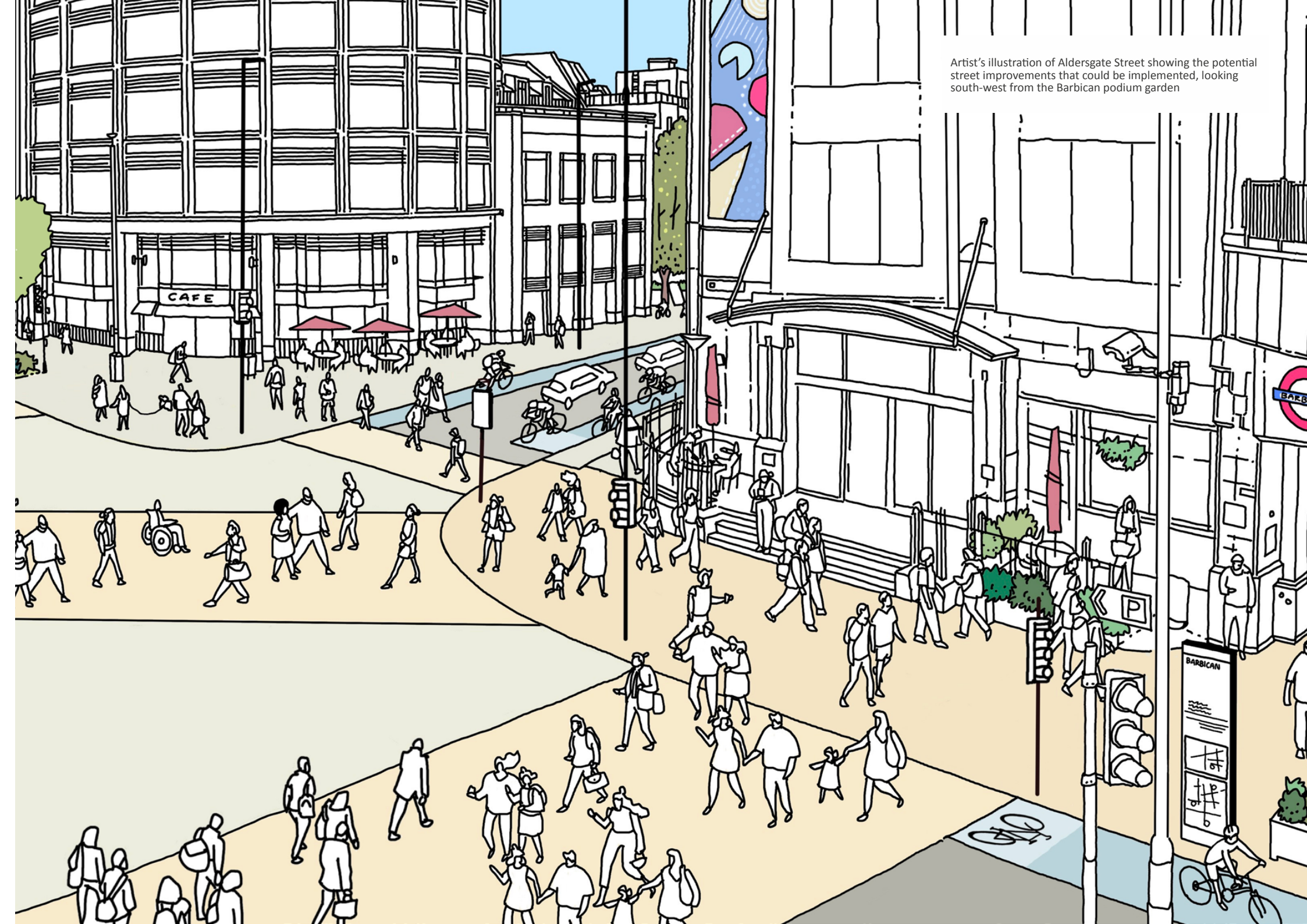


Concept Plan: Aldersgate Street, Goswell Road and Barbican Gateway



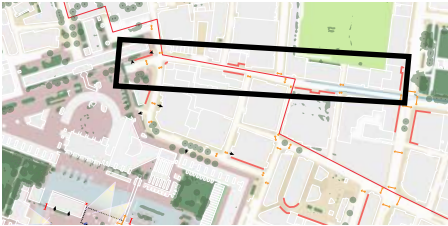


Artist's illustration of Aldersgate Street showing the potential street improvements that could be implemented, looking south-west from the Barbican podium garden





## 6. Silk Street Node & Chiswell Street



Street environment improvements that mark the node between Whitecross Street, Silk Street, Beech Street and Chiswell Street, support presence of the adjacent cinema and pub, aid wayfinding to key cultural destinations, plus support pedestrian comfort and safety along Chiswell Street and improve heritage settings.

- Tighten, raise and resurface the entire junction;
- Wayfinding feature at the corner;
- Feature lighting of the concrete ventilation shaft;
- Provide additional cycle parking;
- Repave footways and vehicle crossovers to match, provide continuous footways;
- Potential for landscaping.



Footway repaving scheme



Example of footway widening

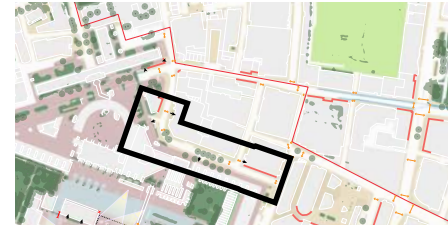


Example of a wayfinding feature element



Example of a continuous footway

## 7. Silk Street



Changes to enhance pedestrian experience on the approach to Barbican Centre and Guildhall School of Music and Drama. All improvements are to be structurally separate from the wall of Barbican.

- Special surface elements to emphasise the entrance to the Barbican Centre;
- Work with the City of London to replace bollards outside the main entrance;
- Additional cycle parking;
- Potential e-scooters and e-bikes parking;
- Continuous footway;
- Feature lighting;
- Feature seating at building entrances;
- Feature gate next to GSM&D entrance.



Example of a feature seating



Example of a feature gate design



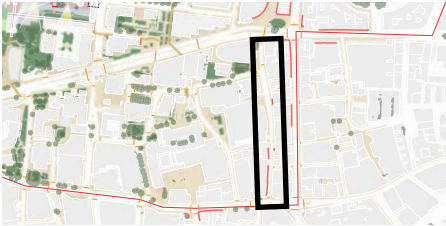
Special paving elements



Example of a continuous footway



## 8. Coleman Street



### Phase 1

Timed closure of the street to motor traffic to provide pedestrian priority, and for events and activity. Investigating potential for small-scale art and planting. The temporary changes would be used to test potential for longer-term transformation of this street, see Phase 2 →

- Timed road closures during lunchtime and in summer;
- Partially re-routed cycle traffic;
- Potential for additional temporary seating;
- Work with businesses to provide and maintain planters;
- Subtle art elements;
- Potential murals, interpretative and wayfinding;
- Collaborate with Guildhall Art Gallery and other local organisations for art delivery.



Timed street closure to traffic



Timed street closure to traffic



Temporary interpretation and wayfinding



Window planters

### Phase 2

Permanent transformation of Coleman Street to turn it into a characterful pedestrian priority street while also retaining cycle access and allowing vehicular movement for servicing.

- Extend footways;
- Explore potential to remove or relocate existing parking;
- Raise and repave carriageway;

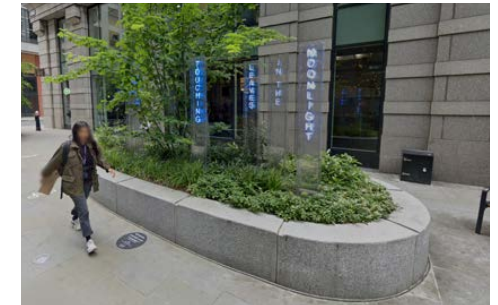
- Investigate potential to add planting;
- Install additional standalone seating, or integrate it into planters.
- Encourage occupiers to install window or cornice planters and seating;
- Potential for art activation on blank frontages and hoardings;
- Feature lighting at northern and southern entrances.



Shared surface and feature lighting



Window cafe seating



Permanent raised planter and informal seating



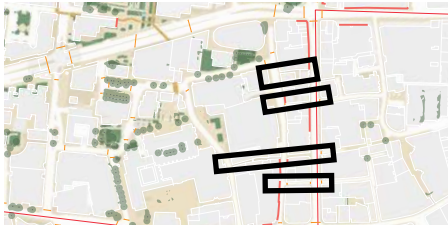
Interpretative paving insets



Cornice planter



## 9. Moorgate Yards & Alleys



Temporary (associated with Project 8 Coleman Street: Phase 1) and permanent improvements to navigation and general pedestrian experience.

- Feature paving and interpretative elements on the entrances to the alleyways;
- Localised feature lighting;
- Work with businesses to provide and maintain seating and planters;
- Seating, greening, frontage and art activation;
- Art activation on blank frontages and hoardings;
- Collaborate with Guildhall Art Gallery and other local organisations for art delivery.



Seating, active frontage and feature lighting in a narrow alley. Render



Subtle art activation example



Window cafe seating



Art activation, top: vinyl art



Feature paving and interpretative paving



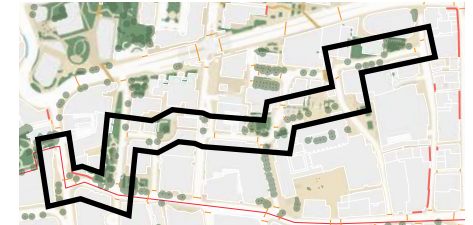
## 10. Guildhall Green Route



Creative lighting feature in green space



Bespoke surface treatment at key location



Localised interventions to promote the presence of various existing green spaces, connecting them into a green route. This would include interpretative elements to highlight presence and history of green spaces, plus wayfinding and additional street greening to encourage people to walk between them.

- Bespoke creative elements in green spaces;
- Signage, information and interpretation boards;
- Route maps, both digital and printed, for the BID to distribute and promote.
- Bespoke footway insets;
- Additional resilient street planting with integrated seating;
- Potential for raingardens;
- Built-in infrastructure to support temporary art and lighting programmes.



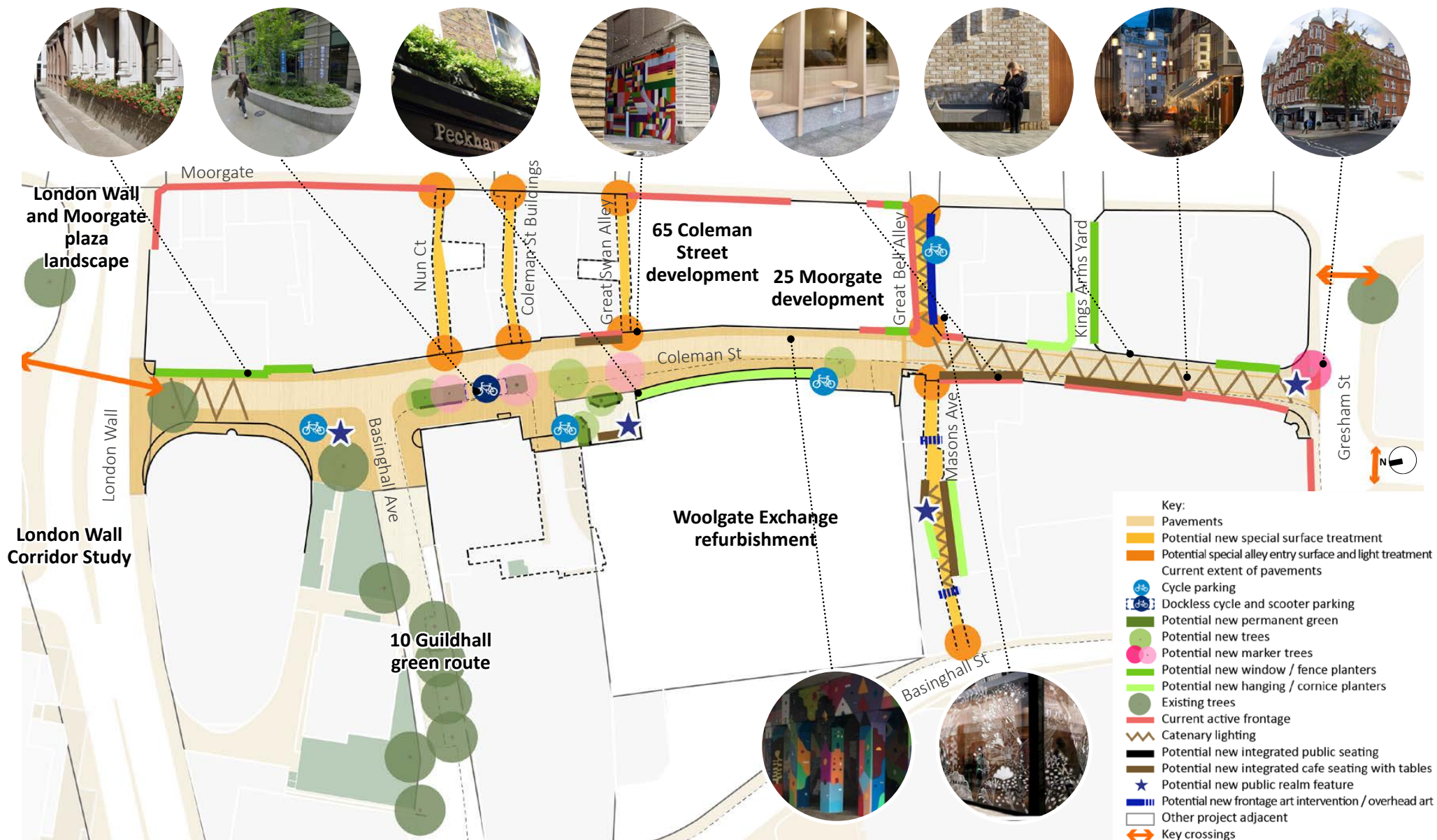
Interpretative signage



Seating integrated into landscape area



## Concept Plan: Coleman Street, Moorgate Yards & Alleys



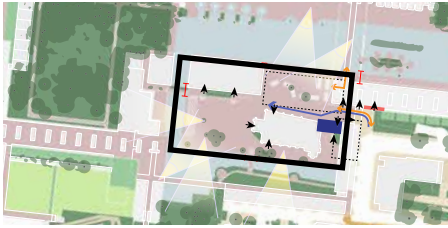




Artist's illustration of Coleman Street showing how the street might look during regular operation, looking south from Great Bell Alley and Mason's Avenue



## 11. St Giles-without-Cripplegate Terrace



### Phase 1

Small-scale and temporary interventions, sensitive to the residential character of the area, that provide limited activation of the terrace during daytime. These short-term interventions are aiming to make the space more inclusive, comfortable and welcoming for all users of the area, including local workers.

- Careful activation via small-scale events;
- Temporary seating;
- Freestanding planters, potentially moveable;
- Temporary art installations.



Space activation with temporary greening



Temporary mobile seating on the stairs



Public art installation

### Phase 2

Sensitive public realm activation, and biodiversity enhancements. The aim is to discreetly soften the underused terrace and make the space more inclusive, comfortable and welcoming for all users of the area, including local workers.

- Landscaping and specimen trees;
- Street furniture sensitive to

the unique Barbican setting;

- Improve city wall's setting and add interpretation elements;
- Provide more emphasis to the churchyard aspect of character;
- Temporary and permanent art commissions.



Physic garden near church



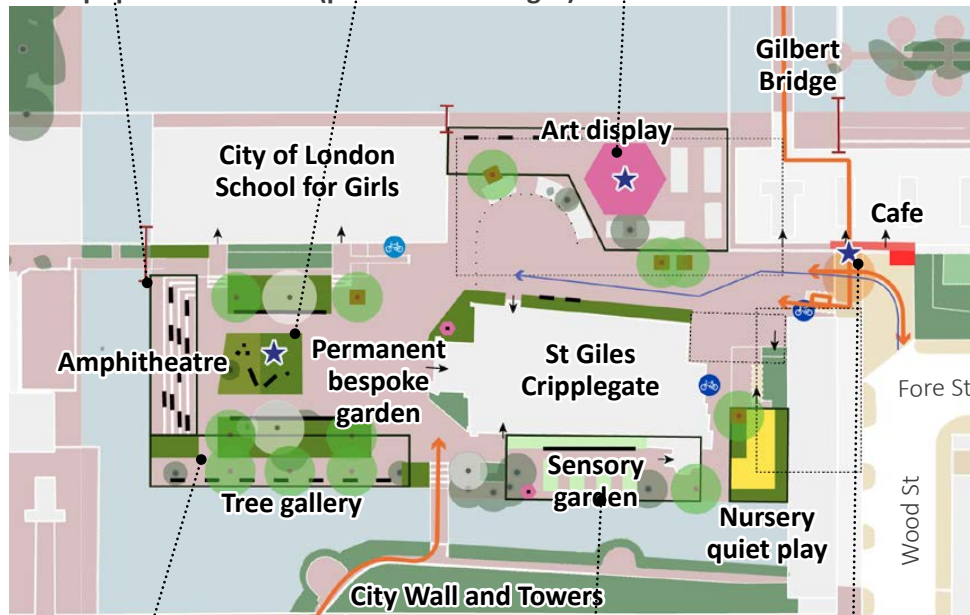
Seating on the stairs



Feature lighting



Concept plan for Phase 2 (permanent changes)



Event arrangement option



- Key:
- Potential new special treatment of the entrance to St Giles Terrace
  - Potential new green areas
  - Potential new herb/sensory garden
  - Potential new quiet play area for nursery
  - Potential new trees in moveable planters
  - Potential new specimen trees
  - Potential new trees in ground
  - Potential new area of art activation
  - Potential new public realm feature
  - Street furniture - seating, signage etc.
  - Cycle parking
  - Potential additional cycle parking
  - Access to buildings and passages
  - Key links
  - Vehicle access
  - Existing cafe frontage
  - Potential new cafe terrace



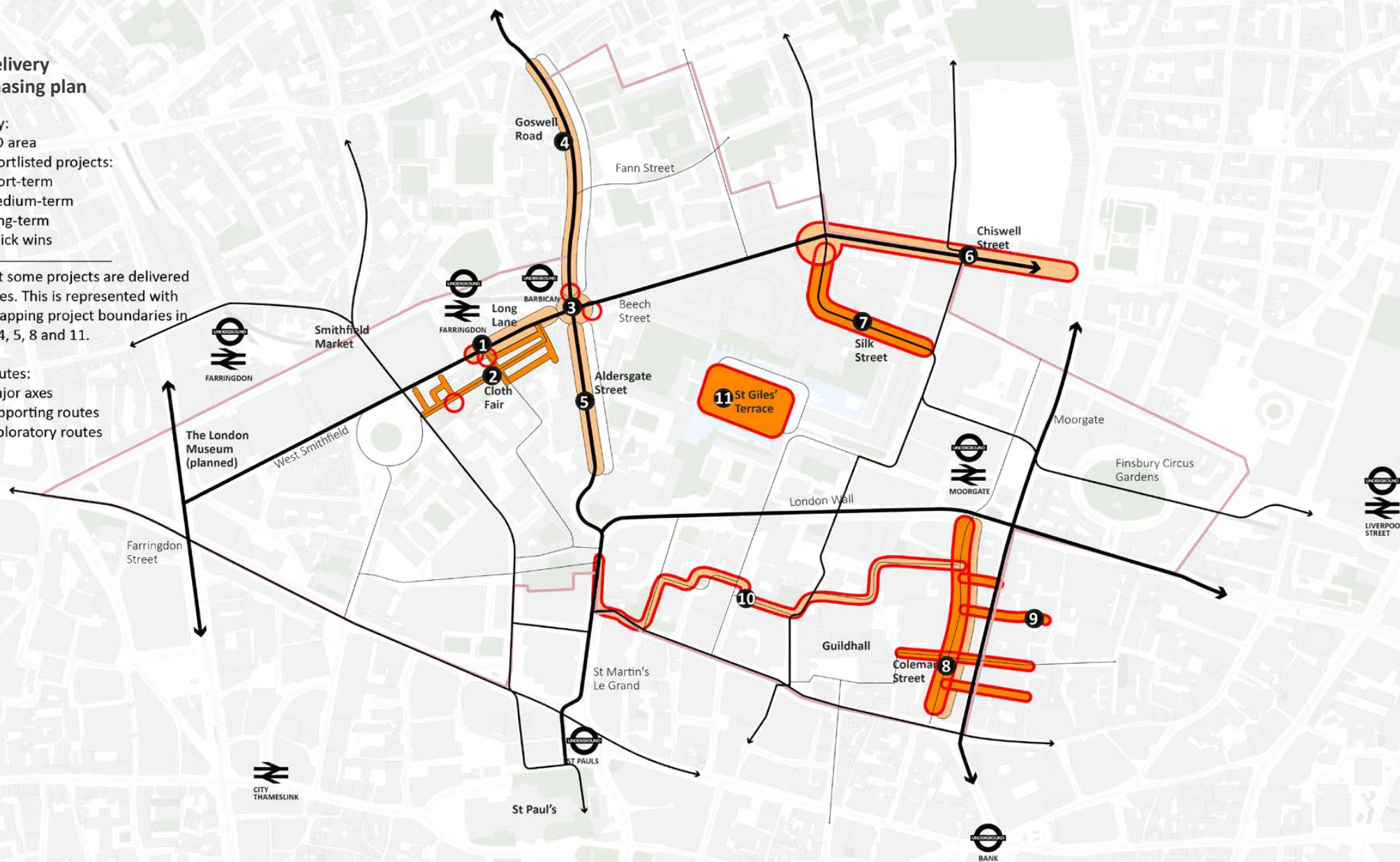


## Delivery phasing plan

- Key:
- BID area
  - Shortlisted projects:
  - Short-term
  - Medium-term
  - Long-term
  - Quick wins

Note that some projects are delivered in 2 phases. This is represented with the overlapping project boundaries in projects 4, 5, 8 and 11.

- Routes:
- Major axes
  - Supporting routes
  - Exploratory routes



# Delivery & Monitoring

## Delivery

← The map to the left shows a high level phasing plan, setting out suggested delivery of projects according to:

**Quick wins** – projects that include elements which are less complex and require smaller budgets; these elements could potentially be delivered within a very short timeframe, e.g. a year;

**Short term** – projects that have potential to be defined and taken forward in the near future, to be delivered within two years;

**Medium term** – projects with a longer lead time, may be linked to other project or require approvals from various parties, with potential to be delivered within two to four years; and

**Long term** – projects that require a series of scoping, design and approval stages, and are dependent on other projects or many stakeholders, with potential to be delivered in more than 4 years.

## Monitoring

Scheme monitoring will be undertaken using a set of key performance indicators (KPIs). These KPIs will provide specific metrics to evaluate the success and effectiveness of each scheme. We will work collaboratively with our partners on defining these KPIs on a scheme-by-scheme basis so that we can accurately measure the success of projects based on their individual objectives and goals.

The following KPIs and data collection methods will be used ↓

### Public perceptions

What people think of the schemes, understanding what they enjoy, and what they would they like to see more or less of

Data collection method: repeating the perception surveys to establish what people like and dislike, and undertaking social media monitoring to establish what is and is not gaining traction and attention



### Usage

The number of people using the streets or schemes, and how they are moving through the space

Data collection method: working with the City of London to undertake pedestrian and cycle counts to capture changes in footfall and cycle trips to the area



### Environment

The impact the schemes have had on air quality and noise pollution

Data collection method: working with the City of London to collect air quality and noise data



### Economic

The impact that the schemes have had on economic performance in the area, for example, generating more trade because of new seating or increased footfall

Data collection method: collection of economic data, including debit and credit card data, to better understand any notable changes to consumer behaviour over time







The Culture Mile BID prioritises harnessing the area's culture to deliver a vibrant streetscape and transforming the area into a major destination for visitors.