

at the City's heart
CHEAPSIDE

Cheapside Business Alliance Public Realm Vision & Strategy

October 2026

Gensler NRP AuthenticFutures



Foreword



Charlotte Fletcher, Chair of Cheapside Business Alliance

As Chair of Cheapside Business Alliance, I am delighted to introduce our ambitious Public Realm Vision & Strategy for Cheapside. Cheapside has long been one of London's most significant and historic areas, continually evolving to meet the changing needs of the City while retaining its distinctive character and heritage. This document sets out a shared ambition for the future of Cheapside, identifying opportunities to enhance and shape the area so that it remains an attractive and resilient destination for businesses, workers, residents, and visitors alike.

A high-quality public realm is integral to the success and welcoming nature of the district. Streets and public spaces shape how people experience Cheapside, with placemaking and other interventions leading to increased dwell time, attracting investment, and helping to create a sense of identity and place. Investing in attractive and inclusive spaces is therefore not only an investment in the environment, but an investment in Cheapside's future prosperity and identity.

This effort sets out a clear vision for Cheapside's public realm, alongside a strategy for how this can be achieved, identifying key priorities including strengthening local character, improving connectivity, enhancing public spaces, and creating a more vibrant, inclusive, and welcoming destination seven days a week.

Collaboration lies at the heart of this vision, aligning closely with the City of London's draft City Plan 2040 and their ongoing investment in the Cheapside area. Developed through extensive engagement with the public, businesses, and stakeholders, the Vision & Strategy reflects the need for a coordinated approach to shaping Cheapside's future. We recognise that lasting change can only be achieved through a collaborative approach and shared commitment. As the area's Business Improvement District, Cheapside Business Alliance is committed to working in partnership with the City of London Corporation, local property owners, businesses, and the wider community to realise this vision.

I am proud to present this Public Realm Vision & Strategy, as both a statement of ambition and a framework for delivery. By working together, we can deliver this shared, long-term success and start a new chapter for Cheapside, continuing its evolution as one of the City's most iconic and distinctive destinations.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of this document, and I look forward to working collaboratively to bring its vision to life.



Statement from the City of London Corporation

The City of London Corporation welcomes Cheapside Business Alliance's Public Realm Vision & Strategy and recognises its contribution to shaping the future of the area, alongside the ongoing delivery of our Enhancing Cheapside Programme. The proposals provide inspiration, complement the City Corporation's ongoing investment in the public realm, and align closely with key strategic priorities, including the City Plan 2040, the Transport Strategy, the Climate Action Strategy, and our flagship Destination City policy.

We recognise the ambition of the businesses and workers within the Cheapside BID area. As Cheapside continues to evolve through significant growth and transformation, the Vision offers valuable ideas for enhancing the quality, accessibility, and character of the public spaces that connect and enrich this thriving area.

Through meaningful engagement with the City Corporation and the City's diverse stakeholders, Cheapside Business Alliance has demonstrated a commitment to fostering a more dynamic, inclusive, safer, cleaner, and greener public realm for residents, businesses, and visitors alike. By continuing to engage with stakeholders across the City, the BID is helping to shape a public realm that meets the needs of a dynamic and evolving urban centre.

We support the efforts of Cheapside Business Alliance and other City Business Improvement Districts and look forward to their continued contribution to the City's growth and success.



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Executive Summary

Public Realm Vision & Strategy

A Unique District at the Heart of the City

Established over a decade ago, Cheapside Business Alliance (CBA) is the Square Mile's first Business Improvement District (BID), representing the historic Cheapside district at the heart of London's financial centre. Anchored by St Paul's Cathedral, the Bank of England, and the Royal Exchange, the area combines rich heritage with the City's premier retail high street and a vibrant, seven-day business and leisure offer. Working with the City of London Corporation (CoL) and a wide range of stakeholders, CBA supports local businesses, enhances public spaces, and promotes this distinctive part of the capital.

Cheapside is a place of significant change and opportunity. Its public realm is central to how the district is experienced, providing the setting for its landmarks, supporting its retail, business, cultural, and leisure offer, and connecting the people and places that make it distinctive.

A Public Realm Under Pressure — and an Opportunity for Change

From its origins as a medieval market street to its role today as a centre of commerce and culture, Cheapside has developed a rich and layered identity expressed through its streets and spaces. These spaces are increasingly accommodating more users and activities, alongside growing footfall, expanding leisure and cultural activity, changing movement and servicing patterns, and an evolving programme of events. Significant investment is also transforming the wider area. Projects including All Change at Bank and the creation of Greyfriars Square from the former St Paul's Gyratory demonstrate the potential

for ambitious public realm change and new opportunities to improve connections across the district.

Together, these changes provide an opportunity for a more coordinated and strategic approach to Cheapside's public realm — building on investment already underway and identifying where future interventions can have the greatest impact. The Vision & Strategy provides a long-term framework for this change.

Cheapside Reimagined

The Public Realm Vision & Strategy brings together baseline analysis, stakeholder engagement, spatial thinking, and strategic prioritisation to establish a shared vision for the district's future. Building on earlier project findings and engagement, it identifies Key Strategic Insights that shape a cohesive, forward-looking vision for Cheapside. Together, these position Cheapside as one of London's great urban connectors: a civic spine, a cultural crossroads, and a destination in its own right.

The Vision is underpinned by a spatial strategy that considers the district's key routes, connections, streets and spaces, identifying opportunities to strengthen relationships between them. It provides a framework of potential interventions to improve connectivity, animate public life, strengthen identity, and enhance the experience of moving through and spending time in Cheapside.

Successful transformation will depend on collaboration between CBA, the City of London Corporation, businesses, property owners, developers, cultural and civic organisations, local communities, and other delivery partners. The Strategy provides a shared framework to align priorities, coordinate investment, and explore opportunities for change. In doing so, it supports the City of London's Destination City ambitions while strengthening the long-term vitality and distinctiveness of Cheapside BID area.

The development of the Public Realm Vision & Strategy has been undertaken in three stages:



Role of Cheapside Business Alliance



Cheapside Business Alliance plays a pivotal role as a partner, convener, and catalyst for change, bringing together businesses, landowners, the City of London Corporation, and other stakeholders to deliver a shared vision for Cheapside. Through collaboration, knowledge sharing, and coordinated action, the BID helps build consensus, align investment, and create the partnerships needed to deliver meaningful and lasting improvements to the area.

This Public Realm Vision & Strategy builds on existing relationships and strengthens a positive partnership

for long-term collaboration, establishing a shared framework for investment, placemaking, and public realm enhancement. The BID will play an important role in supporting the implementation of the Vision & Strategy by delivering and funding targeted small-scale initiatives that improve the quality, identity, and experience of Cheapside. These projects, including public realm enhancements, temporary activations, greening, events, wayfinding, and pilot interventions, can be delivered quickly to demonstrate change, strengthen the area's sense of place, and test ideas that inform future investment.

Alongside these early actions, the BID will commission research, feasibility studies, and business cases that help establish the evidence base for more ambitious public realm improvements. Acting as a trusted partner and facilitator, the BID will convene stakeholders, share knowledge, and advocate for coordinated investment,

helping to unlock opportunities that extend beyond its own resources and remit.

Many of the Vision & Strategy's larger transformational projects as outlined in the priority projects will require sustained collaboration between the City of London Corporation, landowners, developers, transport authorities, and local businesses. While these schemes will be delivered through wider partnerships, the BID will continue to play a central role in championing the Vision & Strategy, building momentum, fostering collaboration, and ensuring that projects remain aligned with the shared aspirations of businesses and stakeholders. By combining early, tangible improvements with long-term strategic partnerships, Cheapside Business Alliance will help shape a more distinctive, vibrant, inclusive, and resilient City of London over the coming years.

The Project Team

Gensler

Gensler is a global architecture, design, and planning firm with offices in London, working with our clients across the UK and the world towards creating better places through the power of design. Gensler's innovative approach combines traditional placemaking expertise with experiential activation and branding capabilities, that allow for an elevated user experience and place identity. We bring our proven ability to interweave placemaking, urban design, landscape design, and experience strategy requirements into thoughtful projects that create inclusive experiences for all visitors and residents.



Norman Rourke Pryme offers a multi-disciplinary service across building, highways and infrastructure, and transportation sectors. Our Traffic and Transportation team has considerable experience in undertaking a diverse range of urban active travel, traffic engineering, scheme design, traffic modelling, and transport planning projects, both in the UK and overseas. We have a proven track record of developing innovative, effective, and sustainable solutions to complex and high-profile traffic and transportation challenges, and we are proud of our reputation for high-quality and cost-effective delivery.

AuthenticFutures

Authentic Futures is a heritage consultancy with as much enthusiasm for contemporary design as for the historic environment, a rarity in a field concerned with static preservation rather than the creative layering of buildings and places that keeps towns and cities dynamic and relevant. The practice has expertise in area-based work, including characterisation studies, impact assessments, and urban design proposals in sensitive historic settings. Its services include the assessment of heritage assets, listed buildings, and historic townscapes, alongside advice on their conservation, adaptation, and sensitive reuse.

Executive Summary

Public Realm Vision & Strategy

The Framework: From Vision to Action

The Public Realm Vision & Strategy brings together analysis, engagement, visioning, and prioritisation to create a coordinated framework for Cheapside's future. It reflects the priorities and perspectives of workers, neighbours, visitors, businesses, property owners, the development community, and the City of London Corporation, recognising the different roles each can play in shaping a more welcoming and connected place.

The process moves from understanding how Cheapside works today to establishing a shared ambition for how it can evolve. Drawing on the area's character and history, the Public Realm Vision & Strategy develops place narratives, tests interventions, and establishes priorities for projects capable of creating change and unlocking investment. The result is a clear framework for action: 39 key opportunities and catalyst projects, alongside 6 Priority Projects that provide a focused basis for delivery. Together, these establish a roadmap for strengthening Cheapside's identity, enhancing its public realm, and strengthening connections between people and place. The framework is designed to enable visible and achievable change in the near term, while building momentum for longer-term transformation.

Above all, the Vision & Strategy seeks to align the priorities of those who live, work, visit, invest in, and shape Cheapside. CBA will champion this partnership approach, recognising that lasting change depends on the collective contribution of stakeholders. By providing a shared direction, the strategy creates the foundations for a more connected, vibrant, and distinctive Cheapside, with a public realm capable of supporting the district's next chapter.

ANALYSE & ENGAGE

Understand the place.
Listen to its people.

Site walks, analysis, interviews, and surveys established a shared understanding of Cheapside's history, character, movement, challenges, and opportunities.

Multiple
site walks

16
Interviews

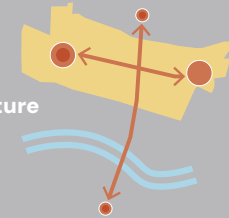
226
Respondents

DEFINE & DEVELOP

Turn insight into a shared vision.

The findings were translated into Key Strategic Insights, a clear ambition for Cheapside, and four Drivers of Change that will guide the future interventions.

Rooted in History,
Renewed for the Future



CURATE & STRATEGISE

Translate the vision into place
narratives.

Five Place Narratives connect Cheapside's historic identity with stakeholder insight, policy priorities, and emerging opportunities to shape a distinctive future vision.

Reviving:
Festival of
Cheapside

Reclaiming:
Ceremonial
London

Reinventing:
The "Cheap"

Revealing:
Hidden
History

Redefining:
City Socials

DEFINE THE DELIVERY ROADMAP

From ideas to a programme & projects
for future.

The process culminates in a coordinated plan of work with 39 key opportunities and catalyst projects, alongside 6 Priority Projects that provide a clear focus for delivery.

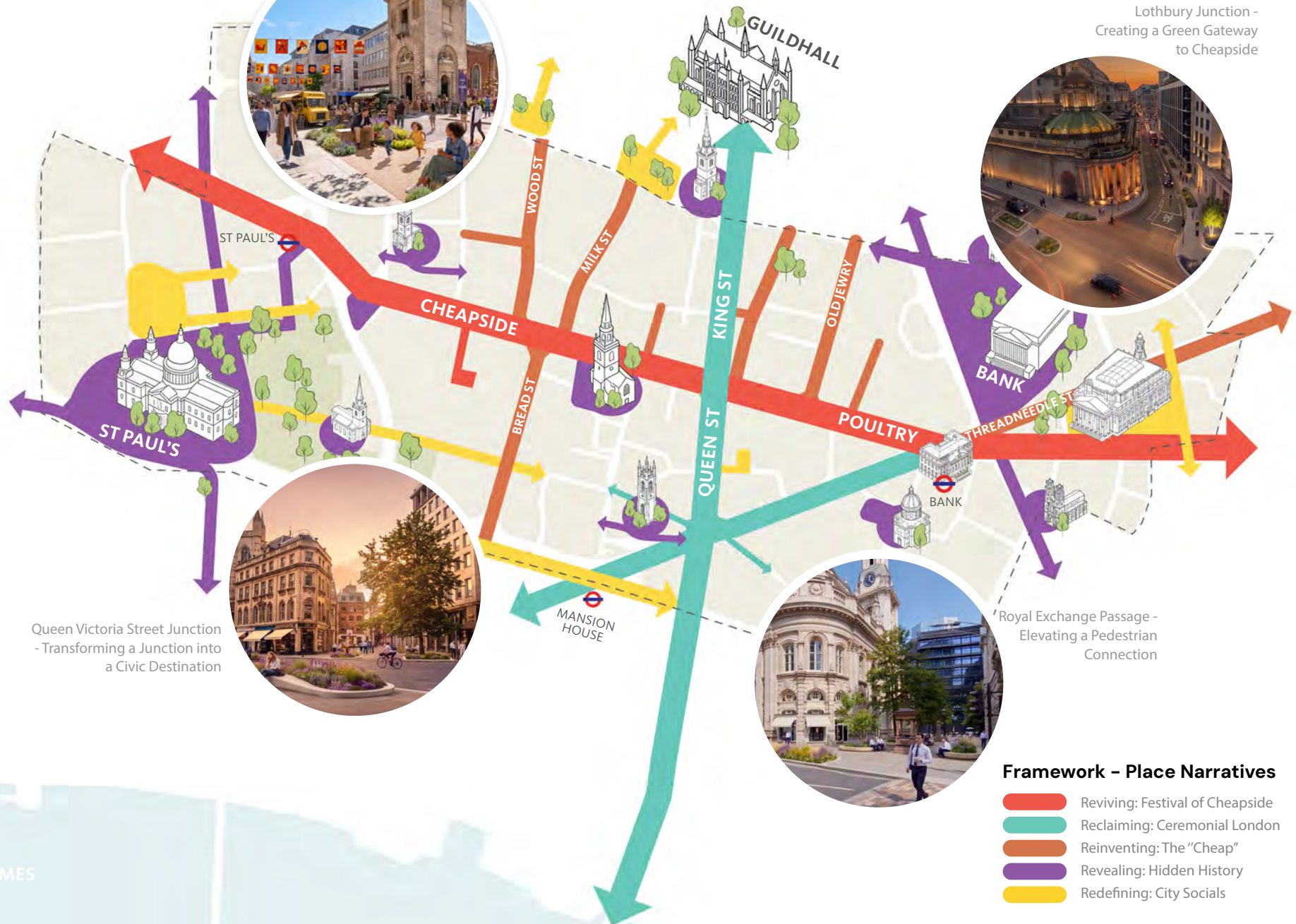
39
Opportunities

6
Priority Projects

Cheapside - Reclaiming London's Historic High Street



Lothbury Junction - Creating a Green Gateway to Cheapside



Queen Victoria Street Junction - Transforming a Junction into a Civic Destination



Royal Exchange Passage - Elevating a Pedestrian Connection



Framework - Place Narratives

- Reviving: Festival of Cheapside
- Reclaiming: Ceremonial London
- Reinventing: The "Cheap"
- Revealing: Hidden History
- Redefining: City Socials

RIVER THAMES



CONDITVM · ANNO · VICTORIAE · R · VIII · RESTAVRATVM

01

Understanding Context

1.1. The Historic Heart of London

For almost two millennia, Cheapside has occupied a central role in London's story. Situated within the ancient core of the City, the area evolved from a Roman settlement into one of medieval Europe's most important marketplaces, where commerce, civic life, and public gathering were intrinsically linked.

The historic street pattern visible today reflects centuries of adaptation and resilience. Narrow lanes, churchyards, market routes, and civic institutions create a rich urban fabric that continues to define the character of the area. Cheapside's public spaces have long acted as stages for trade, ceremony, protest, and celebration, shaping a unique identity rooted in collective activity and exchange.

This legacy provides the foundation for the future vision of the public realm. By recognising Cheapside as both a historic place and a living city centre, the Public Realm Vision & Strategy seeks to strengthen its role as London's civic heart. It celebrates heritage while creating welcoming, adaptable, and inclusive spaces that support contemporary life, work, and culture.

St Mary-le-Bow: Wren's new church of the time, the balcony has often been considered a reference to the medieval balcony from which jousts in Cheapside were viewed.
Engraving (1754) by Sutton Nicholls



“ Cheapside remains now what it was five centuries ago, the greatest thoroughfare in the City of London. Other localities have had their day, have risen, become fashionable, and have sunk into obscurity and neglect, but Cheapside has maintained its place, and may boast of being the busiest thoroughfare in the world, with the sole exception perhaps of London-bridge.

Charles Dickens Jr., 1879, Dickens's Dictionary of London



Historic Map of London 1741, John Rocque (— Cheapside Business Alliance area)

1.2. The Street of Exchange

1000 Years of Exchange, Spectacle & Civic Life

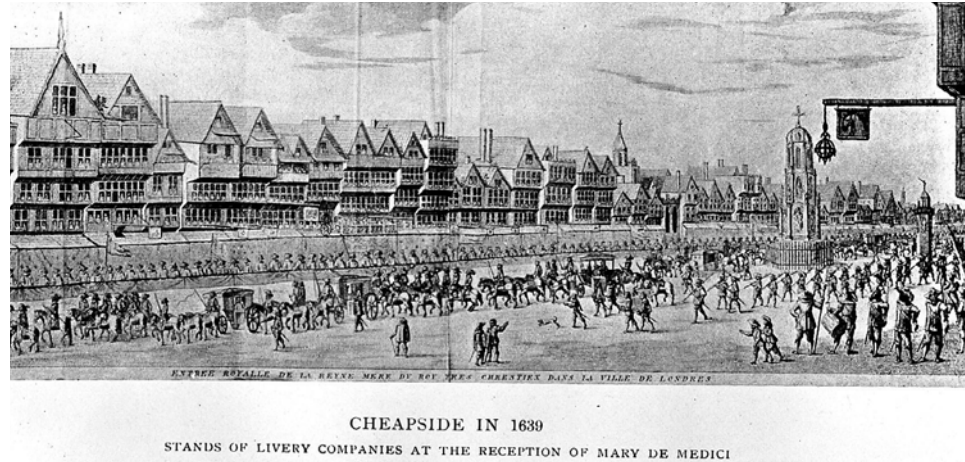
Cheapside has never been simply a street of movement; it has always been a stage for London's civic, cultural, and commercial life. From medieval markets and royal processions to guild ceremonies, public gatherings, and retail spectacle, its history is defined by exchange, celebration, and urban energy.

This timeline explores how Cheapside evolved through centuries of activation and public life, revealing an important truth: the future opportunity for Cheapside is not just to improve movement through the City, but to reawaken its role as one of London's great civic destinations.



900s–1200s The Street of Trade

Cheapside emerges as London's primary marketplace.



1500s–1700s The Guild City

The street becomes a showcase of London's economic identity.



1200s–1500s London's Processional Spine

Cheapside becomes London's great ceremonial route.



1666 City of Revival

The Great Fire devastates Cheapside and the City rebuilds itself.



**1800s–1950s
The Commercial
Capital**
Cheapside becomes one
of the busiest commercial
streets in Europe.



**Today --> Future
Rediscovering
Public Life**
Cheapside has the
opportunity to become:
London's civic living
room.



**1950s–2000s
The Mobility
Era**
Post-war planning
transforms Cheapside
into vehicle
infrastructure and an
office district.

1.3. The City Today

Today, Cheapside occupies a unique position at the geographic and economic heart of the City of London. Stretching between St Paul's Cathedral and Bank Junction, it forms one of the Square Mile's most important east-west corridors, connecting major destinations, transport hubs, workplaces, cultural institutions, and civic landmarks.

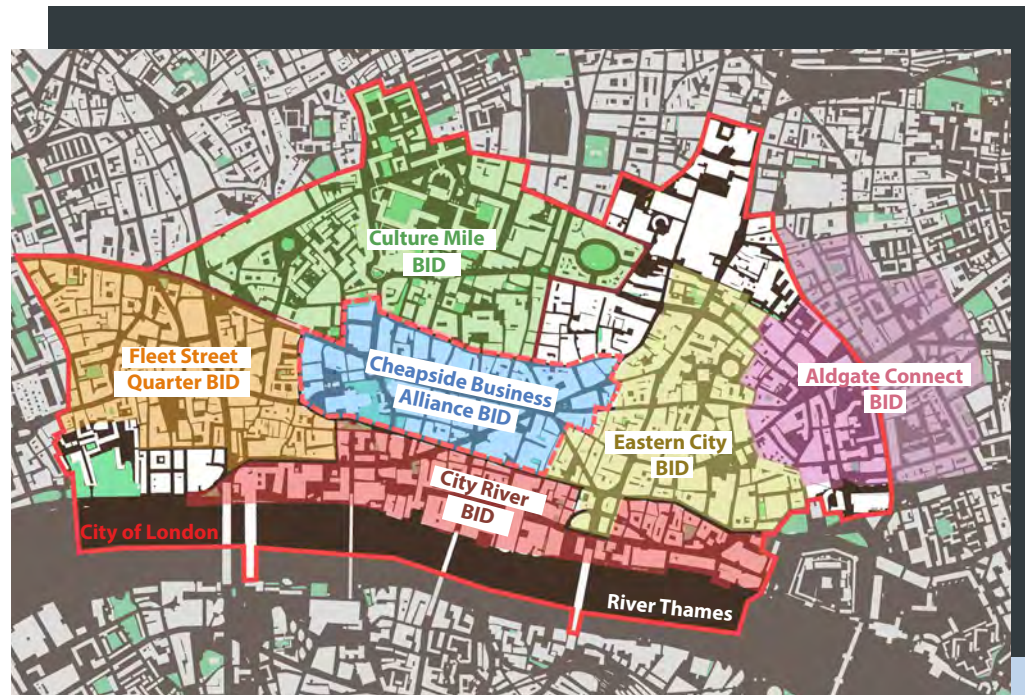
Cheapside Business Alliance also sits at the heart of a wider network of six BIDs that collectively cover much of the City of London. Its central location means that it both benefits from and contributes to the ambitions of neighbouring BIDs. This creates opportunities for greater collaboration and a more coordinated approach to connectivity and place-making across the Square Mile.

As a focal point within one of the world's leading financial districts, Cheapside supports a diverse mix of uses. Global businesses, retail destinations, hospitality venues, historic churches, cultural attractions, and public spaces combine to create a district that serves workers, residents, and visitors throughout the day. Its central location places it at the intersection of key movement routes, making it one of the most heavily used and strategically significant parts of the City.

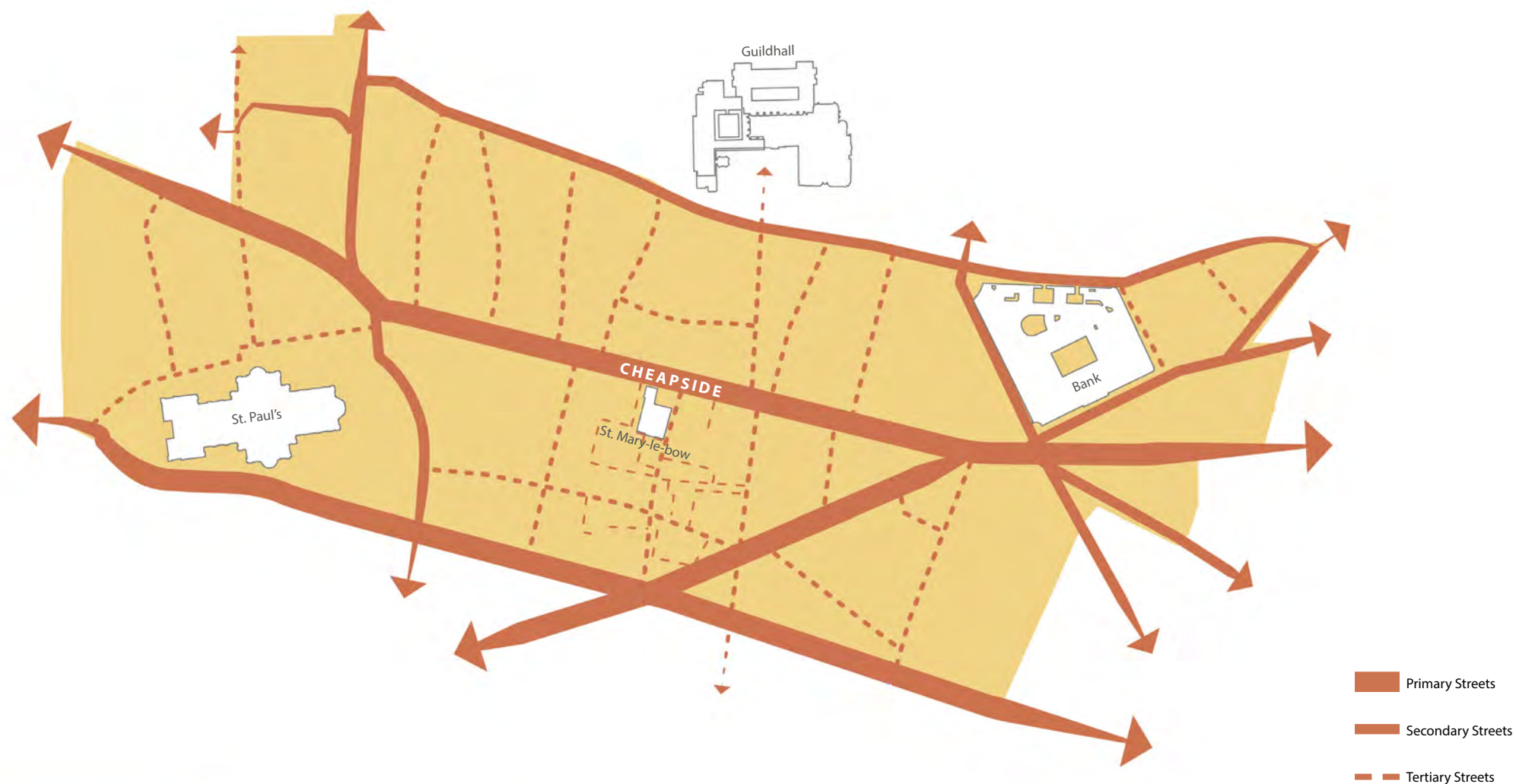
The area functions as both a destination and a connector. Large volumes of pedestrians pass through Cheapside daily, travelling between transport interchanges, workplaces, retail centres, and landmark destinations. Routes converge on major civic anchors such as St Paul's Cathedral, Bank Junction, and Guildhall, while a finer network of streets, lanes, and churchyards provides permeability, character, and opportunities for discovery.

This concentration of activity brings both opportunities and challenges. Cheapside benefits from exceptional accessibility and economic vitality, yet its streets and public spaces must balance high levels of movement with opportunities to pause, meet, rest, and experience the City. The public realm therefore plays a critical role in balancing movement with experience, ensuring that streets function not only as routes through the City but as destinations in their own right.

As the City of London evolves into a more diverse, experience-led destination, Cheapside is increasingly at the forefront of this transformation. Investment in public realm, culture, and visitor experience is helping to strengthen its role as a vibrant seven-day destination. This supports a balance between heritage and contemporary city life while reinforcing its role as the connective heart of the Square Mile.



City of London BID network map

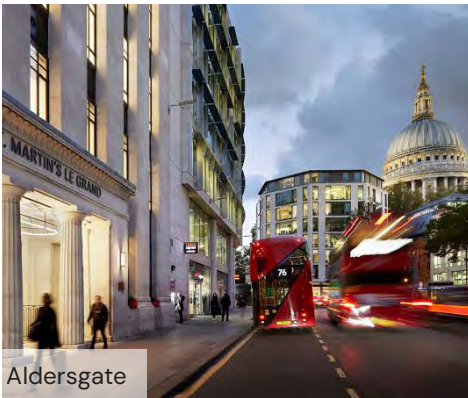


1.4. Distinct Places, One Cheapside

Cheapside is not a single place, but a sequence of urban characters, each contributing to a rich and layered identity. From the civic grandeur of St Paul's and the intensity of Bank Junction, to the intimate lanes of South Cheap and the evolving gateways of Aldersgate, these places together form the distinctive character of the area.

Together, these places create a rich and layered urban experience by combining commerce, culture, heritage, and everyday city life within a highly walkable and interconnected district. While each character area has its own spatial qualities, patterns of activity, and challenges, their collective strength lies in how they function as one connected destination at the heart of the City of London.

Understanding these distinct places provides the foundation for a public realm strategy that responds to local character while strengthening the overall experience of Cheapside as a coherent, legible, and vibrant urban quarter.



Aldersgate



North Cheap

Cathedral Quarter (west)

Centered on St Paul's Cathedral, this is the most civic and ceremonial part of the area. Large open spaces, long views, and heritage-led public realm prioritise visitors, culture, and contemplation, with calmer activity focused around the cathedral and Paternoster Square.

Bank Junction Quarter (east)

Anchored by the financial core around the Bank of England, this area is defined by intense movement and high footfall around the major institutional buildings. It is a fast-paced, highly legible interchange where heritage architecture meets constant commercial activity.

North Cheap

A quieter, business-focused hinterland between Aldersgate and Guildhall, characterised by larger post-war buildings and service functions. It plays an important supporting role but has limited active frontages, reducing footfall, and permeability outside core working hours.

South Cheap

A fine-grained historic network of streets between Cheapside and the Thames, including Bow Lane and Watling Street, characterised by strong food, drink, and retail activity. Landmarks such as St Mary-le-Bow Church help structure a distinctive and legible environment, although some alleys remain underused.



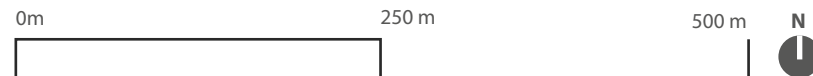
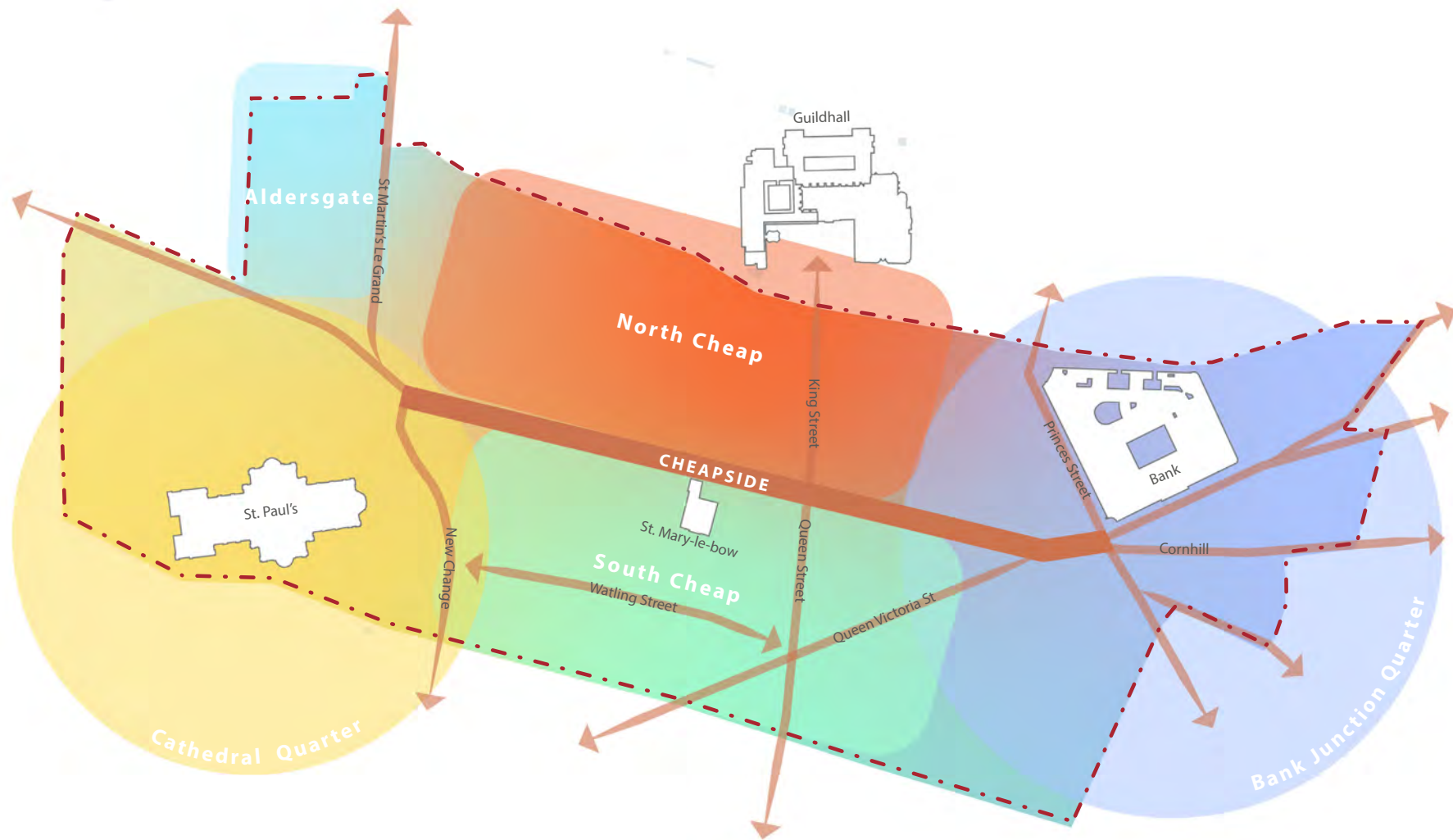
Cathedral Quarter



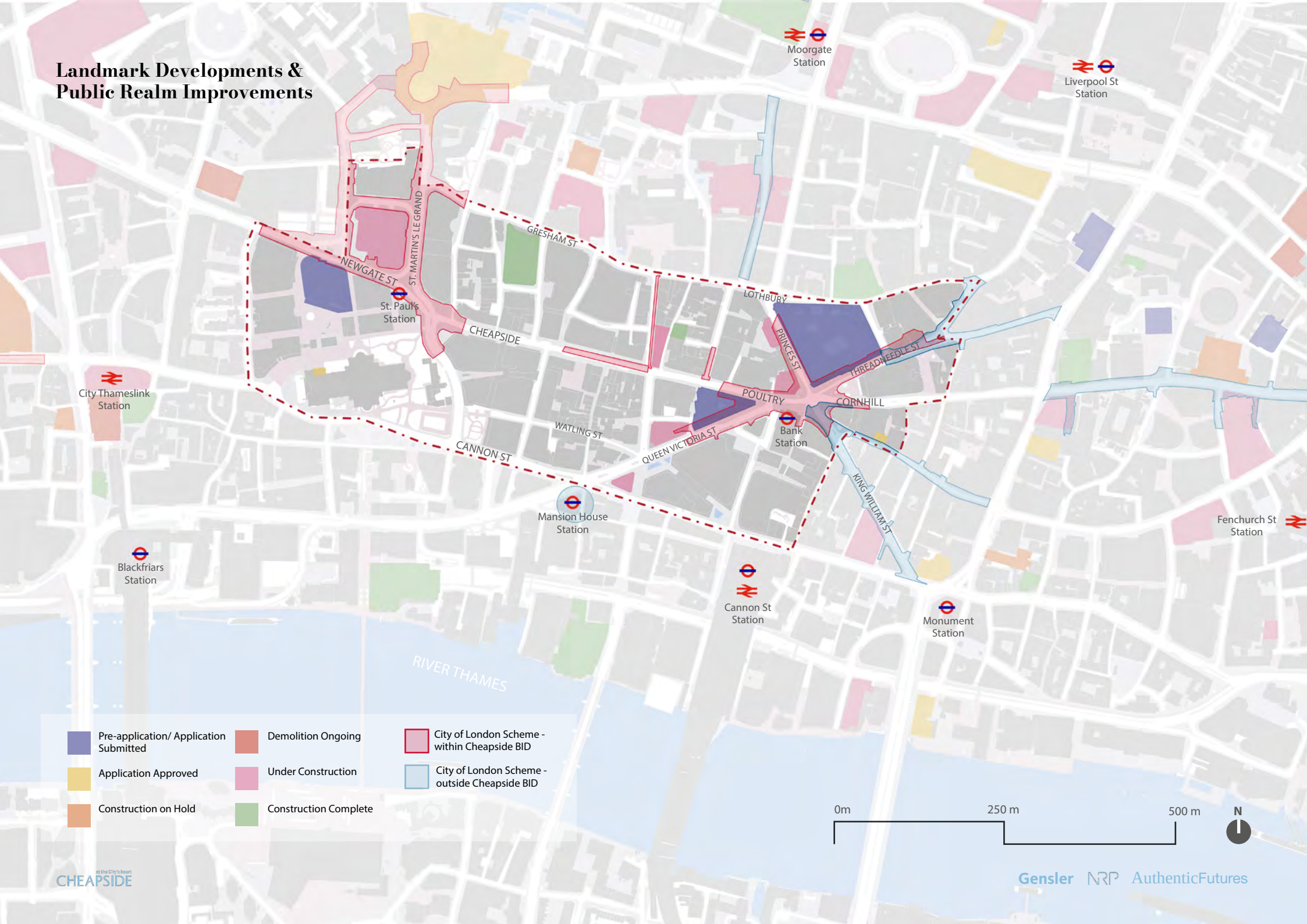
South Cheap



Bank Junction Quarter

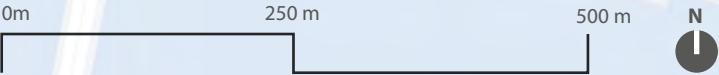


Landmark Developments & Public Realm Improvements



- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Pre-application/ Application Submitted | Demolition Ongoing |
| Application Approved | Under Construction |
| Construction on Hold | Construction Complete |

- | |
|---|
| City of London Scheme - within Cheapside BID |
| City of London Scheme - outside Cheapside BID |



1.5. Building on the City's Momentum

Change in Motion

Cheapside sits within a rapidly evolving part of the City, with a growing pipeline of development, and public realm investment reshaping the streets, spaces, and connections around the area. Together, these projects represent a significant opportunity to build momentum, strengthen connections, and ensure that improvements across the wider City contribute to a more coherent experience within Cheapside.

Within the BID area, a number of developments are already contributing to this transformation. The refurbishment of 10 Gresham Street introduces new planting and a stepped landscaped edge, while 68 Lombard Street will bring a new hotel and ground-floor café into the existing urban fabric. At 60 Queen Victoria Street, new planting and improved paving will enhance the building's relationship with the street. Most significantly, the redevelopment of 81 Newgate Street is being delivered alongside the St Paul's Gyratory transformation, creating a major opportunity to improve the pedestrian environment and establish Greyfriars Square as a new civic space around Christchurch Greyfriars.

Beyond the BID's boundary, a wider network of investment is reinforcing this momentum. London Wall West proposes substantial changes to the highway network and new public spaces, gardens, and planting around the former Museum of London site. Woolgate Exchange has strengthened the pedestrian environment along Basinghall and Coleman Streets, while Millennium Bridge House has delivered improvements across Peter's Hill, Lambeth Hill, Trig Lane, and Paul's Walk. Further investment around Bank, Threadneedle Street, Leadenhall Street, Lombard

Street, and King William Street is progressively improving key east-west and north-south corridors in and around Cheapside.

A series of smaller projects is also adding to this transformation; from footway widening and cycling improvements around Mansion House to pedestrian improvements on Coleman Street, and enhancements to Bow Churchyard and St Peter West Cheap Churchyard. While individually modest, together these interventions are helping to shift the character of the City towards greener, safer, and more people-focused streets.

The renewal of 1 Poultry and the planned refurbishment of the Bank of England further demonstrate the continued investment in some of Cheapside's most important and recognisable buildings. While these projects may have a more limited direct impact on the public realm, they reinforce a broader sense of renewal across the area.

For Cheapside, the opportunity is to build on this momentum. The BID area can act as the connective layer between individual developments and public realm schemes. By understanding the wider programme as a network, Cheapside can amplify the impact of investment already underway, close gaps between individual schemes, and ensure that new interventions contribute to a distinctive, connected, and greener public realm.

The next chapter for Cheapside is not about starting again; it is about connecting what is already happening and using the City's momentum to accelerate change.



Ongoing development. Clockwise from top left: St Paul's Gyratory, Millennium Bridge House, Cheapside Bus Gate, and London Wall West

1.6. The Opportunity

The analysis highlights a series of key opportunities and challenges that shape how Cheapside functions today. While the area benefits from a rich historic character, strong connectivity, and significant daily activity, its public realm does not always fully support the diversity of experiences the City demands. The following insights distill the findings of the baseline analysis and identify the critical themes that will inform the future evolution of Cheapside's streets and spaces.



Cheapside is policy-designated as a place, not just a route

Cheapside is formally defined as a Principal Shopping Centre, cultural destination, and high-street of strategic importance, with strong policy support for active frontages, evening economy, greening, and high-quality public realm. Yet much of the street still behaves as a movement corridor rather than a destination.



Pedestrians already lead the space - how can it be taken further?

Walking is the main mode of movement across the area, with the highest flows on Cheapside, Queen Victoria Street and towards Bank and St Paul's. There is opportunity for the public realm to work harder to provide improved comfort and places to stop.



The most successful places are the smallest

Fine-grain streets like Watling Street, Bow Lane, Bloomberg Arcade, and New Change attract high footfall because of their human scale, active edges, and intimacy. These qualities are missing from the district's primary routes.



Clustered open space, hidden connections

Large civic and green spaces cluster around St Paul's Cathedral, while the rest of the area relies on small churchyards, courtyards, and fragments. These spaces are valuable and connected, but weak wayfinding means those links are not clearly perceived or easily used.



Everyday public infrastructure is uneven

Beyond St Paul's Cathedral, there are very limited publicly accessible toilets, seating, drinking water, and rest areas. As a result, shopping precincts like One New Change, cafés, and pubs informally fill these gaps, which in turn limits how long people can comfortably stay in the area.



The east-west spine is powerful but doesn't encourage people to stay

Cheapside, Queen Victoria Street, and Cannon Street move huge numbers of people, buses, and bikes, but their public realm is largely transitional rather than experiential.



Heritage gives the area legibility but not always presence

Churches, halls, and landmarks give the area its structure, yet many are concealed with poor wayfinding, limiting both visibility and public access for visitors.



The area already has a spatial hierarchy, it just needs design to match

The BID area already has a clear spatial hierarchy, with primary streets for movement, secondary streets for a mix of movement and activity, and tertiary lanes for intimacy and exploration. Each layer should be designed to match its role: primary routes for clarity and flow, secondary routes for cafés, seating, and social life, and tertiary routes for calm, texture, and discovery.

1.7. From Policy to Place

Cheapside is at a pivotal moment. City-wide investment and changing patterns of work and activity are creating new opportunities across the City. This presents a clear opportunity for Cheapside to strengthen its role as one of the City of London's most distinctive retail, cultural, and civic destinations.

The strategy is grounded in the ambitions of the Draft City Plan 2040, Destination City, Healthy Streets for London (TfL), City of London Transport Strategy, Climate Action Strategy, and Enhancing Cheapside Programme. Together, these policies establish a shared direction for a more vibrant, inclusive, sustainable, and people-focused City; prioritising walking and public life, strengthening cultural and visitor experiences, supporting the evening and weekend economy, improving environmental quality, and embedding climate resilience into the urban environment.

Within this wider policy context, the strategy seeks to move beyond individual interventions towards a coordinated vision for Cheapside. It responds to the area's role as a Principal Shopping Centre and historic civic corridor while recognising the opportunity to diversify its identity through culture, events, markets, hospitality, green infrastructure, and everyday social activity. Public realm is therefore treated not simply as infrastructure, but as a platform for commerce, culture, community, and climate resilience.

The strategy translates this policy direction into four design drivers that provide a clear framework for future investment and development across the Cheapside BID area. These drivers ensure that both short-term projects and longer-term interventions contribute to a coherent and ambitious identity for Cheapside.



Drivers of Change

Shaped by policy and the voices of businesses, workers, residents, and visitors, the following Drivers of Change respond directly to the ambitions identified through engagement. Stakeholders consistently called for a Cheapside that is more than a place of work – a destination with a stronger sense of identity, a richer and more varied public life, and streets that are designed around people rather than movement alone.

There is a clear desire to build on the area's unique heritage and character, create reasons for people to stay longer and return more often, and introduce more greenery and opportunities for social interaction throughout the year.



Distinctly Cheapside

Celebrating the heritage, stories, and unique identities that make Cheapside distinctive.



The Extraordinary Everyday

Elevating everyday experiences by supporting culture, commerce, and social activity throughout the day, week, and year.



A People's Place

Prioritising people in the design and use of space, creating a city centre that supports staying, meeting, and belonging.



The City in Bloom

Bringing nature into the heart of the urban environment through greening, planting, and seasonal change that softens and enlivens the streetscape.

Supporting Policy



Principal Shopping Centre

Supporting the Draft City Plan 2040 ambitions by strengthening Cheapside as a vibrant, distinctive Principal Shopping Centre and destination for retail, culture, and public life.



Destination City

Recurring cultural, immersive public realm and event-led activation support the policy's ambitions to create a more vibrant, experience-led cultural destination beyond traditional office hours.



Walking & Healthy Streets

Pedestrian-focused improvements support Healthy Streets by enhancing comfort, accessibility, and the walking experience along key civic routes.



Climate Action & Resilience

Supporting London's climate action ambitions through urban greening, biodiversity, and climate-resilient public realm.



Round
Retail

LA ROCHE POSAY
LABORATOIRES DERMATOLOGIQUES

JANIK SCHNEIDER
TENNIS CHAMPION

Landsec
Experience



ONE NEW
CHANGE
Play in the City



02

Understanding Perspectives

2.1. Listening to Cheapside

To ensure the Cheapside Public Realm Vision & Strategy is rooted in real experience, insight, and evidence, a three-part engagement and research approach was used. This brought together first-hand observation, expert and local knowledge, and lived user experience to build a rounded understanding of how the area works today; and how it could work better in the future.

By combining site-based analysis, direct conversations, and stakeholder feedback, the process captured both the physical qualities of the place and the human stories behind it. This integrated approach ensures that the strategy is not only technically robust but also grounded in the needs, aspirations, and behaviours of the people who use the Cheapside area.

Multiple
site walks

16
interviews

226
respondents

Experiencing the Site

Site walks were undertaken with the wider design team and the CBA client team at different times of day and throughout the week. This helped build an understanding of how the BID area changes over time, from weekday commuter flows to weekend leisure use and evening activity.

These walks focused on:

- How people move through and dwell in the area
- The character, atmosphere, and comfort of streets and spaces
- Key constraints, barriers, and opportunities
- The relationship between buildings, streets, and public life

This first-hand experience created a shared baseline understanding of how the BID works as a place, not just a plan.

Stakeholder Interviews

Gensler facilitated a series of stakeholder meetings and 1-2-1 interviews to gather observational data and insights informed by people's experience of the area.

These conversations provided:

- Knowledge of how the area is used, managed, and experienced
- Perspectives on challenges, from servicing and footfall to safety and identity
- Ideas, ambitions, and priorities
- Insight into how different parts of the BID area connect or conflict

This qualitative layer added nuance and local intelligence that cannot be captured through observation alone.

On Street and Online Survey

To complement the interviews, an on-street and online survey gathered responses from 226 people who use the BID area, including workers, visitors, shoppers, and passers-by.

The survey explored:

- How often people visit and why
- What works well and what does not
- How safe, welcoming, and comfortable the area feels
- What would encourage people to stay longer or visit more often

This provided a robust, data-led picture of how the BID area is perceived, helping to validate themes emerging from the site walks and interviews.

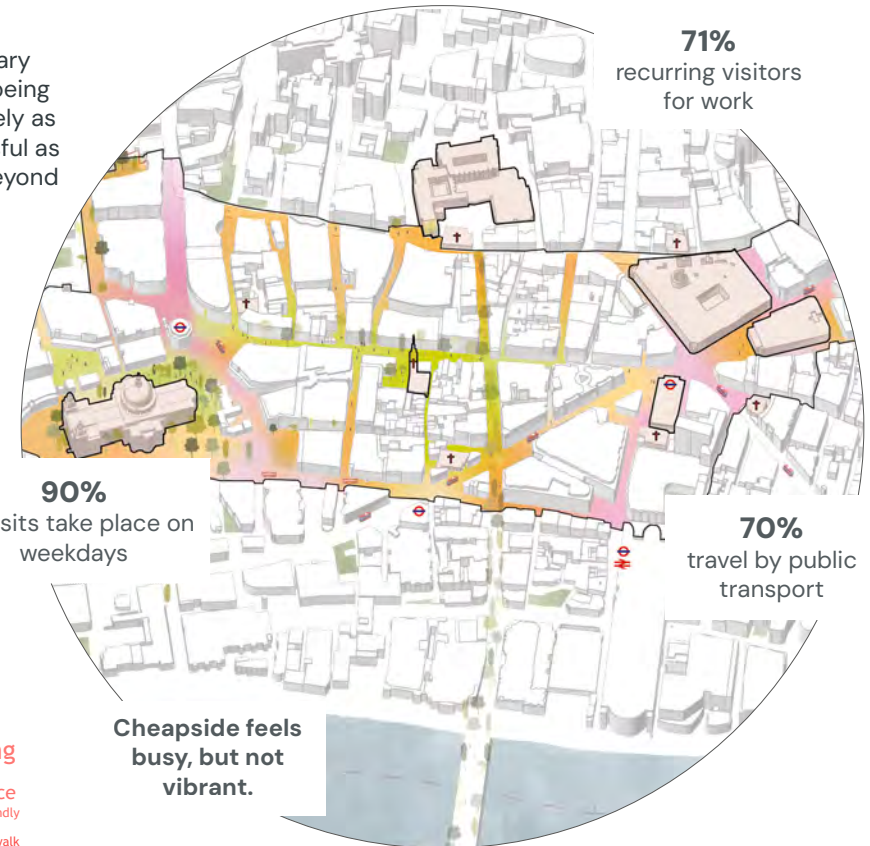
“Cheapside has incredible history, but much of it remains hidden.”

What We Heard

Behind every street, square, and building are the people who use them every day. Through stakeholder engagement, surveys, and conversations with workers, businesses, visitors, and local organisations, a consistent picture emerged of what makes Cheapside unique and where opportunities exist for improvement.

People value Cheapside's rich history, central location, and strong sense of identity. The area's churches, historic lanes, civic landmarks, and proximity to St Paul's Cathedral create a distinctive character that sets it apart from other parts of the City. Many participants described the area as one of London's most recognisable and memorable urban environments.

However, respondents also highlighted a disconnect between the area's extraordinary heritage and the everyday experience of being there. While Cheapside functions effectively as a place to move through, it is less successful as a place to linger, explore, or spend time beyond work-related activity.



Note: All data retrieved from Gensler's on-street and online survey.

The area needs more moments of surprise, discovery, and delight

What's working:



What's not working:



2.2. Aspirations for the Future

Engagement with stakeholders, businesses, and partners revealed a strong and consistent ambition for Cheapside's future. While the area is recognised as a successful commercial centre at the heart of the City of London, there is a shared desire to build on these strengths and create a destination that is more distinctive, welcoming, and vibrant throughout the week.

Participants consistently highlighted the importance of reinforcing Cheapside's role as a thriving commercial heart of the City, supporting business growth, investment, and innovation while enhancing the quality of the everyday experience for workers, visitors, and residents. Alongside its economic role, stakeholders expressed a desire for a stronger and more distinctive identity. This identity should celebrate Cheapside's unique blend of heritage, culture, and commerce while clearly differentiating it from other parts of the Square Mile.

Cheapside must feel fabulous and inspirational! The streetscape is key to this.



There was also a clear aspiration to create a more people-focused environment, with high-quality public spaces, improved walkability, and a richer programme of activity that encourages longer dwell times and supports a broader range of users. By building on its exceptional connectivity, historic assets, and strategic location, Cheapside has the opportunity to become not only a place people pass through, but a destination people actively choose to visit and explore.

Together, these aspirations point towards a future where Cheapside is recognised as both the commercial heart of the City and one of its most distinctive and memorable places – defined by a compelling identity, a vibrant public realm, and a strong sense of belonging.

Too little open at weekends, more events needed.



“A compelling place narrative and identity.”



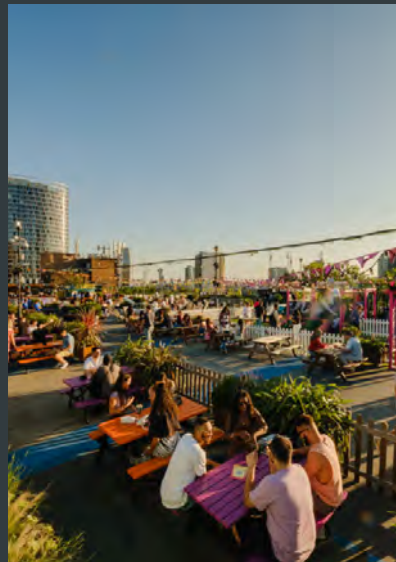
Key Strategic Insights

These stakeholder engagement results strongly support a future vision built around:



From workplace to neighbourhood

Cheapside must evolve from a 9–5 business zone into a seven-day City quarter.



From movement to staying

It currently works as a route; it must become a destination.



From heritage backdrop to lived experience

The history and landmarks are powerful but need storytelling and activity.



From traffic corridor to people-first streets

Public realm, greenery, and pedestrian comfort are fundamental.





03

Guiding Ambition

3.1. Shaping the Next Chapter of Cheapside

From Corridor to Urban Theatre

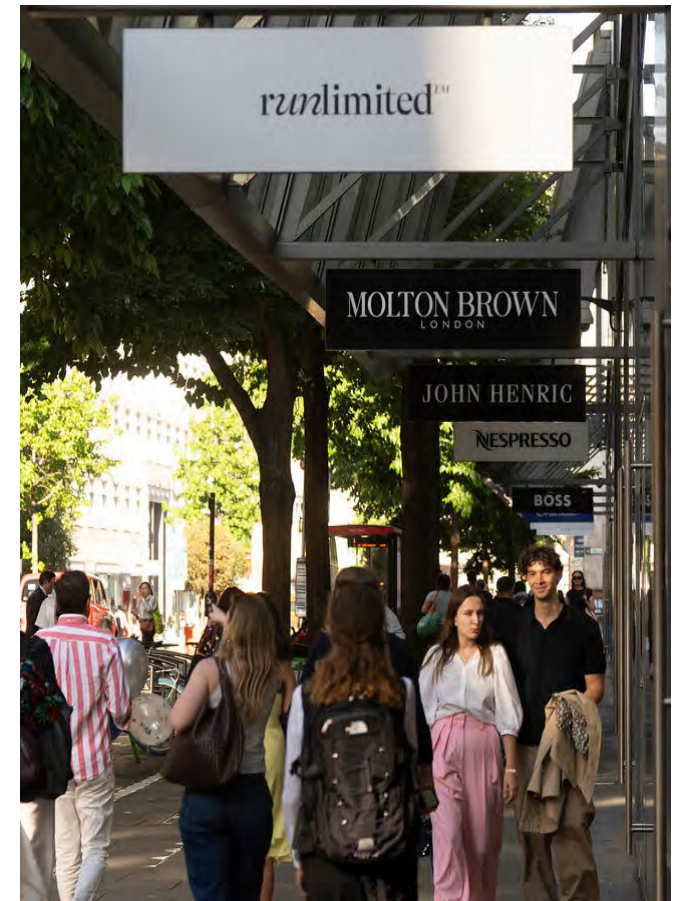
The historical evolution of Cheapside reveals a series of enduring place narratives that continue to define its identity today. Over the centuries, the street has served as London's principal marketplace, a ceremonial processional route, a centre of guild activity, and one of the city's most important commercial destinations. While the physical form of the street has changed, these functions have established a set of cultural and spatial qualities that can be understood as the DNA of historic Cheapside: exchange, spectacle, procession, civic gathering, commerce, and social interaction.

Rather than viewing these historic layers as isolated moments in time, they can be reinterpreted as opportunities for shaping a contemporary public realm of the future. The vibrant market culture that once characterised Cheapside suggests opportunities for flexible and adaptable spaces that support pop-up retail, cultural events, seasonal markets, and local enterprise. Historic traditions of trade and exchange can be translated into a more active and engaging street environment, encouraging interaction between businesses, visitors, workers, and residents.

Similarly, Cheapside's role as a ceremonial route and civic stage offers inspiration for creating a richer sequence of public experiences along the corridor. Through enhanced pedestrian priority, improved spatial legibility, and the introduction of programmed gathering spaces, the

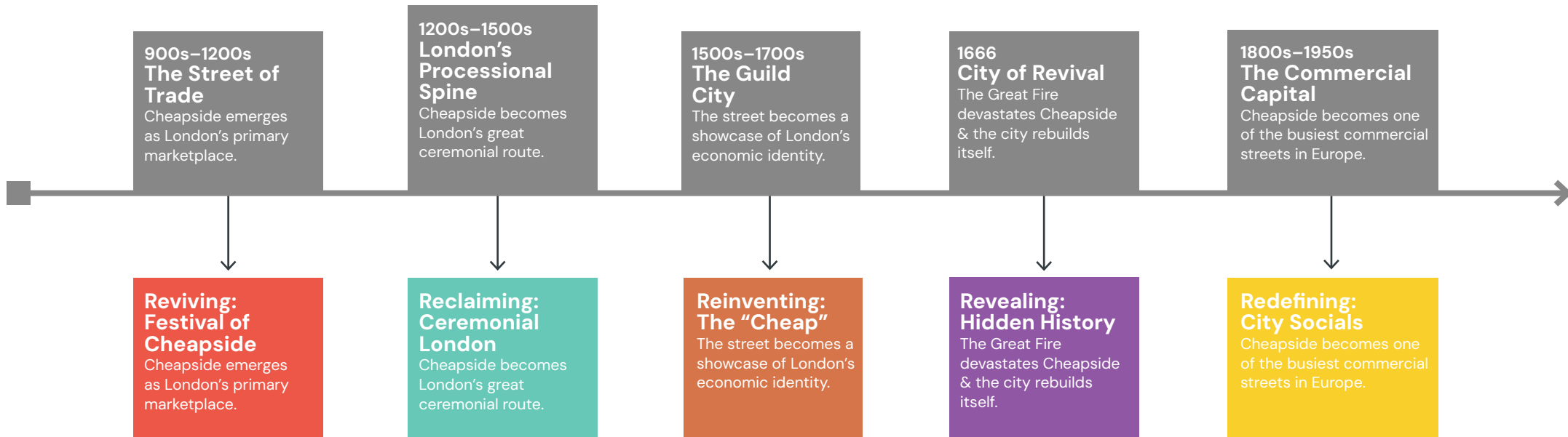
street can once again become a setting for public life and collective experience. Moments of arrival, pause, performance, and celebration can transform movement through the street into a more memorable urban journey. The historic guilds, institutions, and civic activities that once animated the area also highlight the importance of social connectivity and community identity. New public spaces, storytelling interventions, and integrated heritage interpretation can reveal these hidden histories while creating opportunities for contemporary participation. In doing so, history becomes an active layer of the public realm rather than simply a backdrop to it.

These historic threads collectively point towards a vision of Cheapside as an urban theatre: a place where everyday activity, commerce, culture, and civic life are visible and celebrated. This ambition is captured through **Cheapside Reimagined**, the overarching framework for the Cheapside Public Realm Vision & Strategy, which translates the street's historic DNA into a clear and coordinated programme for future transformation. Through a series of place narratives, priority projects, and spatial interventions, the framework reinterprets Cheapside's legacy of exchange, spectacle, procession, and civic gathering for a contemporary city. Together, these interventions support a more distinctive and vibrant city experience. They respect Cheapside's historic character while creating new opportunities for interaction, discovery, and urban life.



Place Narratives

Place Narratives have been identified through an exploration of Cheapside's historic evolution. Each captures an enduring aspect of the area's identity, translating its history, character, and patterns of use into a set of ideas that inform the Public Realm Vision & Strategy. Together, they establish the foundations of **Cheapside Reimagined**, shaping a future vision that builds on the area's unique heritage, character, and civic role.



3.2. Cheapside Reimagined: A Vision for Cheapside's Future

Cheapside Reimagined sets a bold new role for the BID area: **to become one of London's great urban connectors**, linking the City north to south, east to west, and people to place.

This is about more than streets. It is about giving the Cheapside Business Alliance district a **clear identity and civic weight** within the wider City.

North–South: The City's Civic Spine

The BID area sits on a powerful yet understated north–south corridor, running from Guildhall and the historic City, through Cheapside, to the Thames, and onward to Borough.

Cheapside Reimagined strengthens this as a continuous civic route: a sequence of distinctive streets, welcoming spaces, and memorable landmarks that link business, culture, and everyday life across the river.

This becomes a living spine through the City, connecting the medieval core to the contemporary, creative south, and turning movement into an experience shaped by comfort, character, and discovery.

East–West: The Capital's Street of Exchange & Encounter

Cheapside sits between two of London's most powerful civic constellations: to the east, the Bank Junction Quarter – formed by the Bank of England, the Royal Exchange and Mansion House; to the west, the Cathedral Quarter – anchored by St Paul's, Paternoster Square, and One New Change.

Cheapside Reimagined strengthens this east–west axis as a people–first civic street, binding these two quarters into a single, legible, and animated journey.

Here, movement and staying, commerce and culture, everyday life and ceremony are brought together. By giving further priority to walking, lingering, and social life, the street becomes more than a route between landmarks; it becomes a continuous sequence of urban rooms, where London meets, gathers, and belongs.

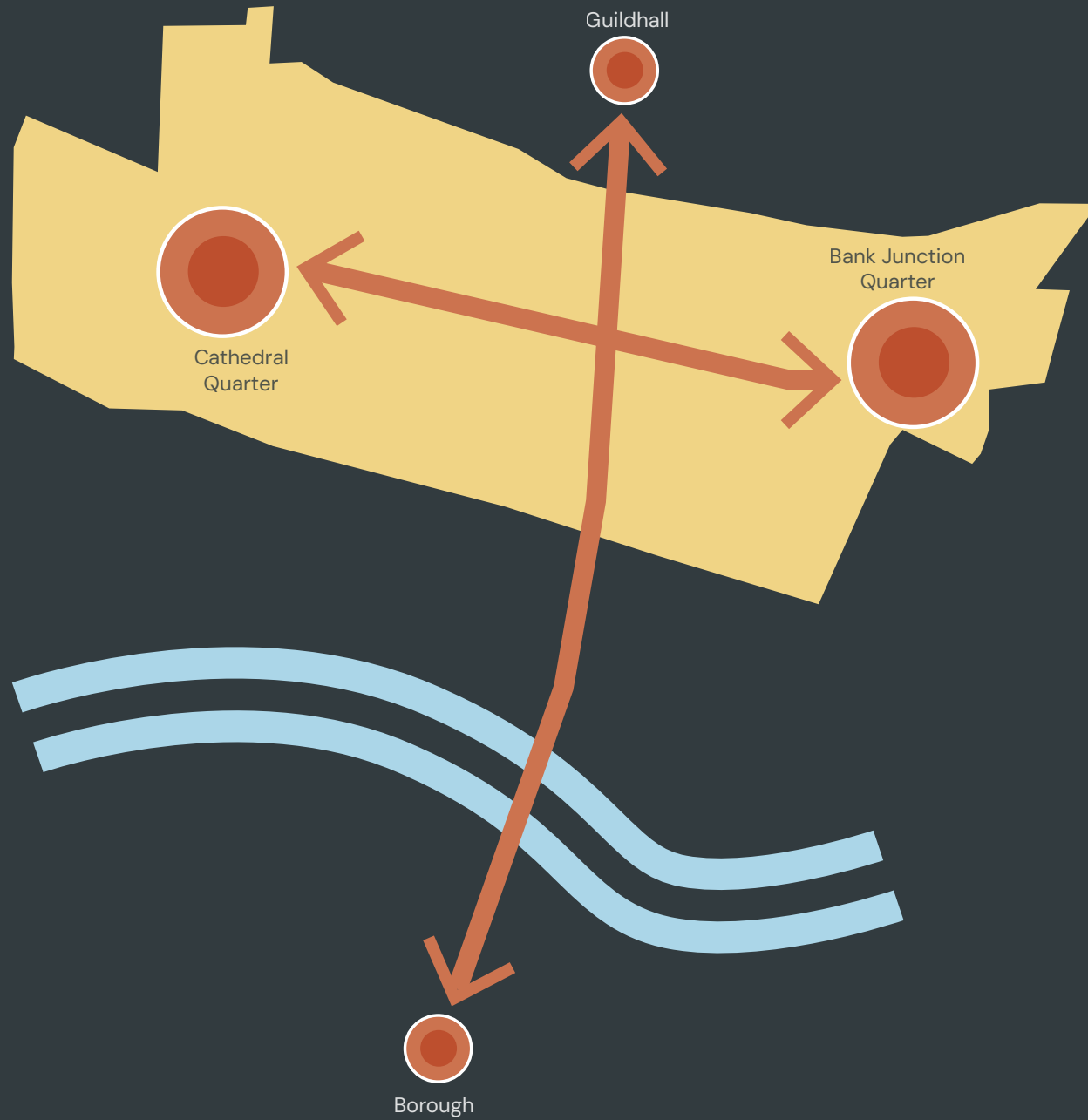
Rooted in History, Renewed for the Future

A District with a Clear Identity

Together, these connections anchor the BID area firmly within London's mental map, transforming it from a route people pass through into a place they actively recognise, navigate towards, and remember.

Cheapside is no longer just “in between”; it becomes the place that connects. As London's historic heart, it links old and new, bridges north and south, and brings together commerce, culture, and everyday city life.

Cheapside Reimagined gives the district a strong and recognisable role within the City. It becomes a civic spine that structures movement and activity, a cultural crossroads where different audiences and experiences intersect, and a destination in its own right that is distinctive, legible, and full of character.



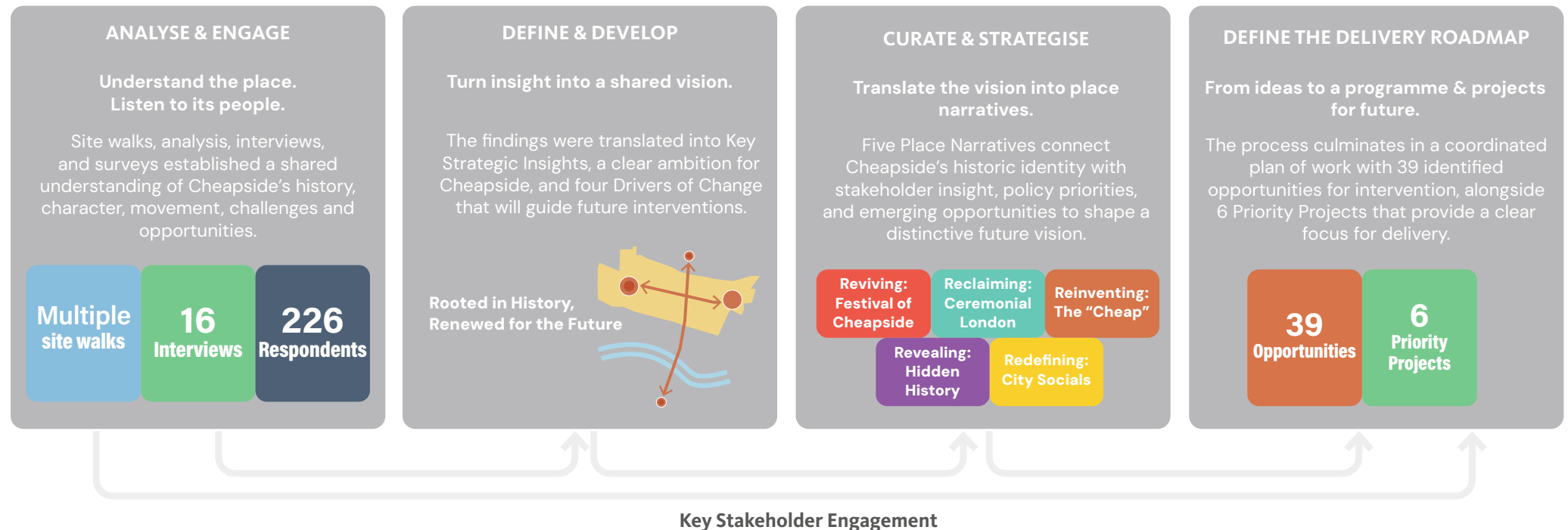
3.3. The Vision in Action

The Public Realm Vision & Strategy brings together analysis, engagement, visioning, and prioritisation to establish a coordinated programme for Cheapside. The process moves from understanding how the area functions today to defining a shared ambition, testing opportunities for change, and identifying the interventions with the greatest potential to deliver lasting impact.

The result is a clear framework for action: a connected network of interventions shaped by a series of place narratives, 39 identified opportunities for intervention, 6 priority projects, and a coordinated programme of investment. The place narratives define Cheapside's future role as a civic spine, cultural crossroads, and destination at the heart of the City, while the priority projects focus

investment on the areas with the greatest potential to unlock change, improve connectivity, and enhance the experience of its streets and spaces. Together, these create a clear and deliverable roadmap, combining near-term interventions that can demonstrate visible progress with longer-term opportunities that support the district's ongoing transformation.

The Process: Our Journey



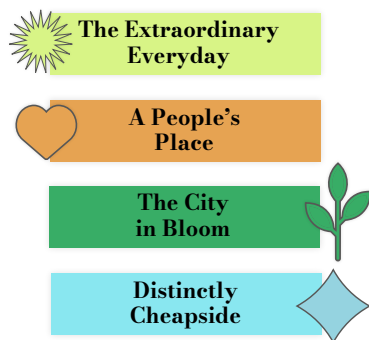
The Outcomes: One Network of Opportunities

39 PRIORITIES, OPPORTUNITIES & CATALYST PROJECTS

A coordinated programme of interventions across Cheapside, responding to unique Place Narratives, different character areas, and opportunities while contributing to the wider vision.

4 DRIVERS OF CHANGE

These four drivers translate policy ambition and what people want from Cheapside into a clear direction for the area. Together, they respond to the City's priorities for a greener, more inclusive, experience-led centre while reflecting the desire for more character, more places to pause and meet, better everyday journeys, and a stronger connection to nature.

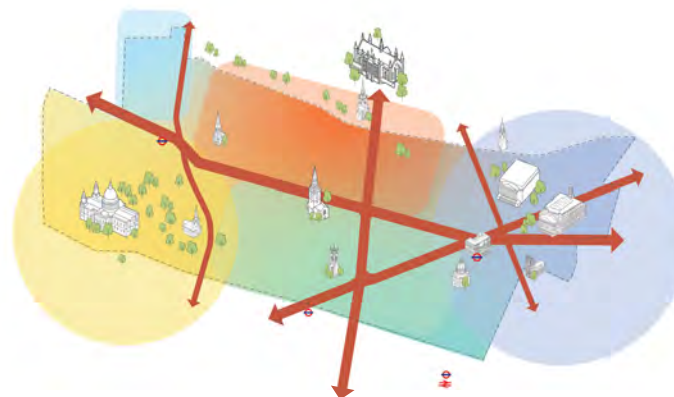


6 PRIORITY PROJECTS

Six catalytic projects identified as the focus for delivery, with the potential to deliver visible improvements, strengthen connections, and enhance the experience of Cheapside.

5 CHARACTER AREAS

Five character areas capture the unique identity, role, and opportunities of different parts of Cheapside, while ensuring they work together as part of a wider public realm network.



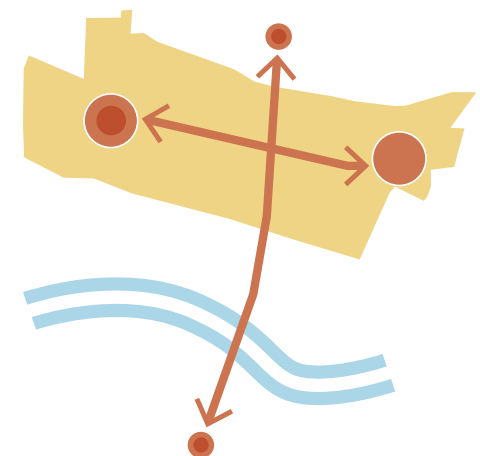
3 DELIVERY HORIZONS

A phased programme of short-, medium-, and long-term actions, balancing early visible change with more complex projects requiring further study, consultation, funding, and approvals.

1 CONNECTED VISION

One shared vision, linking places, projects, and people.

The vision brings together people's experiences, stakeholder insight, policy priorities, and delivery realities to create a shared direction for Cheapside. It turns diverse perspectives into a coordinated framework for action, focused on what matters most and where change can have the greatest impact.



3.4. The 5 Place Narratives

Guiding Future Intervention

The five Place Narratives translate Cheapside's historic DNA into a contemporary framework for shaping its future. Each one captures a distinct aspect of the area's identity, character, and patterns of use, providing a lens through which to understand its potential and guide change. Together, they create a shared language for connecting Cheapside's history with its future, helping to ensure that new interventions build on what makes the place distinctive.

The narratives are not intended as fixed identities or standalone themes, but as principles that can inform the design, programming, and activation of the public realm. They guide where and how interventions can strengthen character, create new experiences, support activity, and improve connections across the area. Together, they help shape a public realm that is distinctive, adaptable, and responsive to the needs and opportunities of Cheapside's future.

**Reviving:
Festival of
Cheapside**
Cheapside emerges
as London's primary
marketplace.



Cheapside - Reclaiming London's Historic High Street

A vibrant setting for gathering, exchange, and celebration, with flexible public spaces supporting markets, festivals, and seasonal events. These interventions can bring activity and people together, creating a more animated and engaging experience throughout the year.

**Reclaiming:
Ceremonial
London**
Cheapside becomes
London's great
ceremonial route.



Queen Victoria Street - Transforming a Junction into a Civic Destination

A distinctive, civic route that celebrates movement, arrival, and spectacle, with improved pedestrian connections and spaces for gathering, performance, and public events. These interventions can create a stronger sequence of experiences, transforming movement through Cheapside into a more memorable journey.

Reinventing: The “Cheap”

The street becomes a showcase of London’s economic identity.



Bread Street - Bringing History to Life

A dynamic and creative showcase of enterprise, innovation, and exchange, with spaces that support business and everyday activity. These interventions can strengthen Cheapside’s commercial identity while creating a more engaging experience for workers, visitors, and businesses.

Revealing: Hidden History

The Great Fire devastates Cheapside & the City rebuilds itself.



Lothbury Junction - Creating a Green Gateway to Cheapside

A richer, more legible public realm that reveals Cheapside’s hidden stories through interpretation, art, and storytelling. These interventions can create moments of discovery, connecting people with the layers of history beneath the streets and buildings.

Redefining: City Socials

Cheapside becomes one of the busiest commercial streets in Europe.



Royal Exchange Passage - Elevating a Pedestrian Connection

A lively setting for social interaction, with spaces that encourage people to pause, meet, and spend time beyond the working day. These interventions can bring more life to the street, supporting a stronger sense of community and activity throughout the day and evening.

3.5. Plan of Work

The Plan of Work provides a flexible roadmap for delivering improvements, identifying 39 key priorities, opportunities, and catalyst projects that are organised around the place narratives introduced in the previous section. Together, these narratives provide a clear spatial and thematic structure for the strategy, helping to connect individual interventions to the wider vision for Cheapside. Developed through collaboration with Cheapside Business Alliance and key stakeholders, the strategy establishes a coordinated framework for future investment and delivery, ensuring that public realm interventions support Cheapside's continued evolution and contribute to a more vibrant, accessible, and resilient civic heart of the City.

Reviving: Festival of Cheapside

- F1** Western Gateway
- F2** Eastern Gateway
- F3** New Change
- F4** Cheapside/King–Queen Street Jct
- F5** Cheapside Civic Spine

Reclaiming: Ceremonial London

- R1** King–Queen Street Corridor
- R2** Potential Extension to River
- R3** Queen Victoria Street Jct

Reinventing: The “Cheap”

- C1** Wood Street
- C2** Goldsmith Street
- C3** Milk Street
- C4** Bread Street
- C5** Honey Lane
- C6** Ironmonger Lane
- C7** Old Jewry
- C8** Grocers’ Hall Court

Revealing: Hidden History

- H1** Civic Threshold of St Paul’s Cathedral
- H2** North/South Route
- H3** St Paul’s Station Experience
- H4** Moorgate/Lothbury/Princes Street Jct
- H5** St Augustine
- H6** St Vedast–alias–Foster
- H7** St Mary–le–Bow
- H8** St Lawrence Jewry

- H9** St Mary Aldermary
- H10** St Stephen Walbrook
- H11** St Mary Woolnoth*
- H12** St Margaret Lothbury*
- H13** Cheapside Hoard
- H14** Great Conduit/Mithraeum/London Stone etc

Redefining: City Socials

- S1** Gresham Street Western Entrance
- S2** New Change/Watling Street Jct
- S3** Watling Street
- S4** Queen Victoria Street/Cannon Street
- S5** Paternoster Square
- S6** Wood Street Jct
- S7** Aldermanbury Jct
- S8** St Pancras Church Garden
- S9** Royal Exchange Passage

Note: *Outside the CBA boundary; delivery of proposed strategy interventions to be coordinated with adjacent BIDs and stakeholders.



3.6. Priority Projects

Identifying priority projects within the Cheapside BID area involved a thorough assessment of the area's existing conditions, opportunities for enhancement, stakeholder aspirations, and the wider objectives for improving the public realm. Through a process of analysis, consultation, and collaborative review with the client team, 6 priority projects have been identified as the focus for delivery.

These projects represent strategic interventions with the potential to deliver visible improvements, strengthen connections, and enhance the experience of Cheapside. Responding to the distinct character and needs of different parts of the area, the strategy identifies a clear framework of priority interventions while remaining flexible to future opportunities through ongoing collaboration with key stakeholders.

Together, these catalytic projects will help unlock wider regeneration, maximise long-term benefits, and support Cheapside's evolution as a vibrant, welcoming, and resilient destination within the City of London.



Cheapside Civic Spine

The Cheapside Civic Spine provides the strategic framework for a coordinated programme of public realm improvements, establishing Cheapside as a distinctive destination active throughout the day and evening. Events, markets, street dining, and lighting programmes will create a vibrant cultural corridor, supported by shopfront enhancements and seasonal interventions. Bow Churchyard presents an opportunity for greening, landscape improvements, and stronger connections to the Civic Spine, reinforcing its role as a civic and cultural space that supports year-round activity.



Queen Victoria Street Jct

Enhanced pedestrian crossings will strengthen east-west and north-south connections, improving accessibility and links between Cheapside, the River Thames, and the wider City. A coordinated programme of lighting, seating, greening, public art, and wayfinding will reinforce the route's ceremonial character, creating a legible and memorable public realm that supports movement and civic identity.



Reinventing: The "Cheap" Strategy

The Reinventing: The "Cheap" Strategy reimagines Cheapside as a contemporary street of power and craft, celebrating its historic role as a place of exchange, making, and civic influence. A flexible framework of public realm elements, cultural programming, and heritage interpretation will animate the street and create a distinct identity across the BID area.



Moorgate/Lothbury/Princes Street Jct

The transformation of the Lothbury, Moorgate, and Princes Street junction presents an opportunity to rebalance this key gateway in favour of pedestrians, creating a more coherent and accessible public realm. Rationalising the road layout and simplifying crossings would improve connectivity while creating space for wider footways, greening, tree planting, and seating. Heritage interpretation and markers could reinforce the area's identity, celebrating its banking heritage and the legacy of the Bank of England.



Wren City Strategy

The Wren City Strategy celebrates the City's collection of Wren churches and churchyards, revealing their significance through a coordinated palette of public realm interventions. Applied across Cheapside and beyond, the strategy creates a recognisable heritage network while allowing each church and churchyard to express its unique history and character, supported through collaboration with neighbouring BIDs and stakeholders.



Royal Exchange Passage

The proposal transforms Royal Exchange Passage into a high-quality pedestrian corridor through decluttering, enhanced greening, seating, and cultural programming that supports year-round activity. Improved crossings to Cornhill and stronger links between Cheapside and Leadenhall Market will create a more seamless route between key retail destinations. Together, these interventions will establish a vibrant civic space that enhances the pedestrian experience and celebrates the City's commercial heritage.





The background image shows a modern glass-fronted building on the right, with interior lights glowing through the windows. To the left is a historic stone church tower with a tall, ornate spire topped with a cross. The scene is set at dusk, with a deep blue sky. A large, light blue number '04' is overlaid on the right side of the image.

04

Proposed Interventions

Framework

A Framework for a Connected Public Realm

The Public Realm Vision & Strategy is rooted in the historic DNA of Cheapside, translating the street's layered history, character, and patterns of activity into a contemporary framework for future intervention. Rather than proposing a series of isolated projects, the strategy establishes a network of public spaces, movement corridors, and activity nodes. These are intended to strengthen Cheapside's role as one of the City's principal destinations. This approach is shaped by the five place narratives derived from the historic DNA. They provide a lens through which to understand and respond to the distinct identities and qualities of the places that make up Cheapside.

The strategy identifies a series of complementary spatial layers, including movement, public life, green infrastructure, cultural destinations, and gateways, which together create a more legible, inclusive, and resilient urban environment. These layers are informed by the place narratives and help translate their defining qualities into opportunities for change. They guide investment and intervention towards areas where they can have the greatest impact, strengthening connections between key destinations. In doing so, they create opportunities for gathering, exchange, events, and everyday social interaction.

The proposed interventions have also been assessed against their potential impact, delivery timescale, cost, and overall feasibility, helping to identify priorities and establish a realistic pathway for delivery. This assessment supports the development of a phased programme of investment, highlighting opportunities that can deliver early improvements while laying the foundations for longer-term transformation.

Initial recommendations on potential funding sources, delivery mechanisms, stewardship models, and long-term maintenance responsibilities are also identified within the strategy to support implementation. However, these recommendations should be considered indicative at this stage and will require more detailed testing, stakeholder engagement, and business case appraisal as part of the next phase of work.

Central to the strategy is the recognition that Cheapside is not a singular place, but a sequence of distinct character areas, each with its own identity, heritage, and patterns of public life. From the civic heart of St Paul's and the institutional presence of Guildhall, through to the commercial intensity of Bank, the five place narratives capture these differences while identifying the connections and shared qualities that bind the corridor together. The proposed interventions therefore respond to the specific context of each place, reinforcing its unique qualities, and historic identity while establishing a consistent and connected public realm language across the wider corridor.

In this way, the Public Realm Vision & Strategy provides a direct link between Cheapside's historic DNA, its five place narratives, and its future public realm, using the past not as a constraint but as a foundation for creating distinctive, connected, and resilient places for the future.

Reviving: Festival of Cheapside

Cheapside emerges
as London's primary
marketplace.

Reclaiming: Ceremonial London

Cheapside becomes
London's great
ceremonial route.

Reinventing: the "Cheap"

The street becomes a
showcase of London's
economic identity.

Revealing: Hidden History

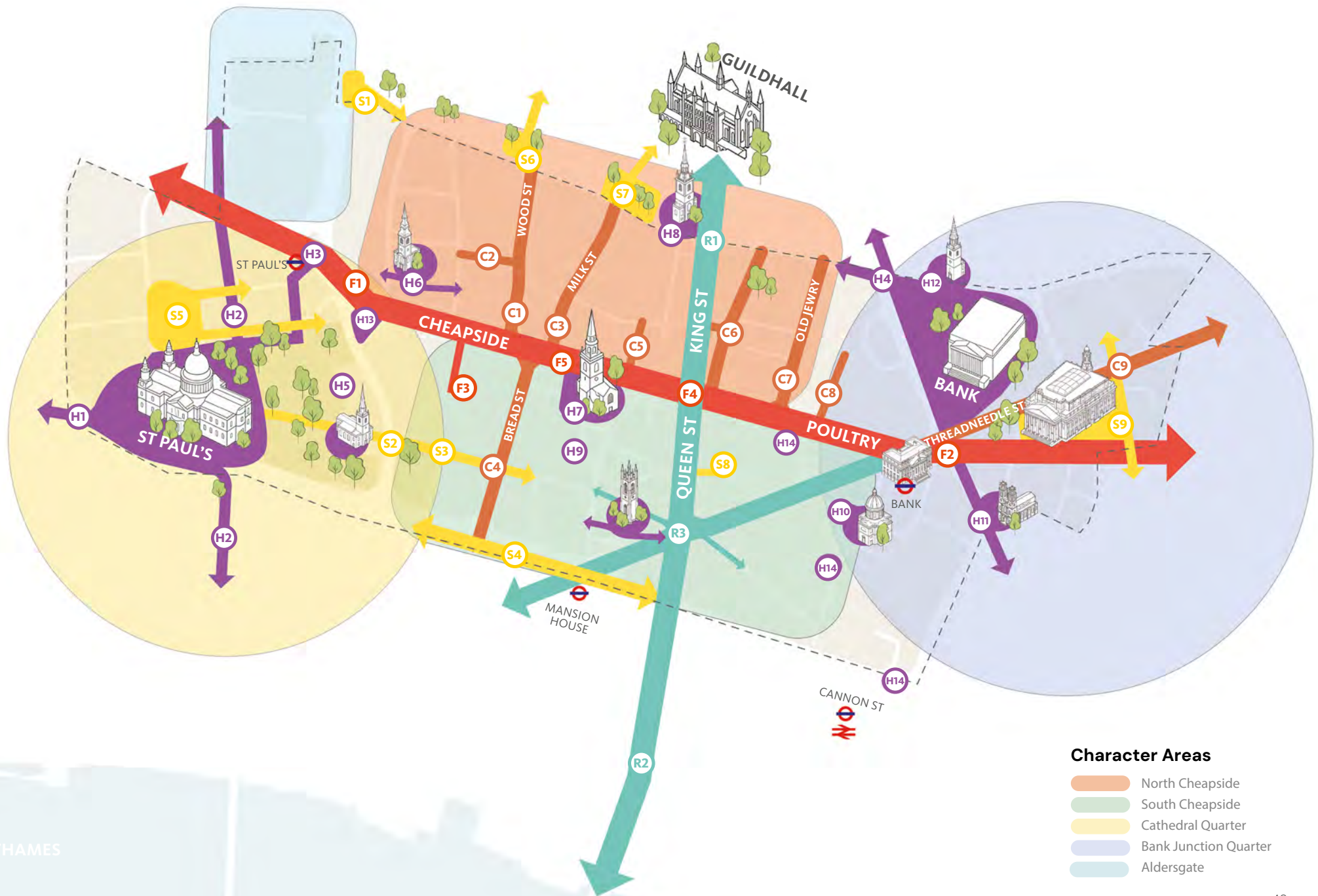
The Great Fire
devastates Cheapside
& the city rebuilds
itself.

Redefining: City Socials

Cheapside becomes
one of the busiest
commercial streets in
Europe.

Character Areas

- North Cheapside
- South Cheapside
- Cathedral Quarter
- Bank Junction Quarter
- Aldersgate



4.1. Reviving: Festival of Cheapside

Spatial Challenge

Cheapside sits at the heart of the City of London, yet it is experienced primarily as a route rather than a place. It works hard carrying people, buses, servicing, and commerce but it does not yet work well as a civic or social space.

Survey responses and stakeholder engagement tell a consistent story: Cheapside is efficient, safe, and well-used during the working day, but it lacks energy, identity, and invitation beyond lunchtime. People pass through, but few stay.

As a result, the BID area feels:

- Fast, but not welcoming
- Busy, but not lively
- Central, but not distinctive
- Historic, but not expressive

Yet the stakeholder engagement shows a clear appetite for something more. The challenge is not about repair, but about unlocking the BID area's full potential.

From Movement Corridor



to Civic Destination



People's Ask

Insights from the survey, stakeholder engagement, and the Ground Floor Use Study revealed a clear challenge, opportunity, and aspiration for Cheapside. Feedback highlighted that although Cheapside remains one of the City's most important movement corridors, it lacks a strong place narrative. The Ground Floor Use Study also highlights limited opportunities for activation, dwell, and social experience outside weekday peak hours, despite its historic role as London's principal marketplace. Stakeholders noted strong potential for seasonal activation and temporary interventions to transform Cheapside into a place with a stronger narrative and a more dynamic, experience-led civic destination throughout the week and across the seasons.

Proposal

Reviving: Festival of Cheapside positions the corridor as London's contemporary civic marketplace; a destination where culture, commerce, heritage, and public life converge through a layered activation strategy. Drawing on Cheapside's historic role as the City's primary market street, the proposal transforms the corridor into an experiential civic spine animated through festivals, seasonal food stalls, public art, markets, and pedestrian-first public realm interventions.

The approach introduces a sequence of memorable gateways, cultural pause points, and activated public spaces that reconnect Cheapside to St Paul's Cathedral, Bank Junction, and the surrounding network of churchyards, alleyways, and civic destinations. Through temporary and permanent interventions, the corridor becomes a living urban stage that supports everyday activity alongside ceremonial and city-wide events.

Curated programming and spatial activation create a more resilient and inclusive public realm that strengthens local identity, support economic vitality, and reposition Cheapside as a destination rather than simply a route through the City.

Challenge



Lack of Coherent Place Narrative

Opportunity



Activated Streets, Churchyards & Public Realm

Aspiration



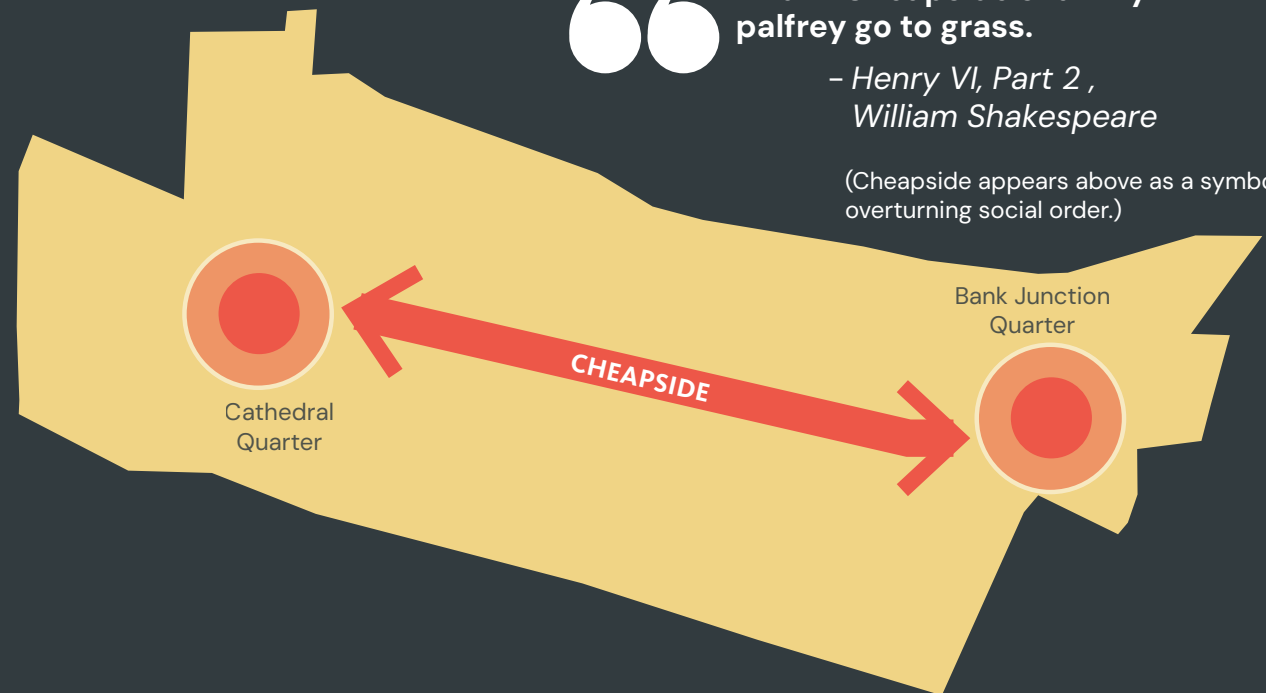
Consistently lively and animated ground floor experience



And in Cheapside shall my palfrey go to grass.

– Henry VI, Part 2,
William Shakespeare

(Cheapside appears above as a symbol of overturning social order.)



Proposals

Interventions

The *Reviving: Festival of Cheapside* place narrative adopts a layered approach to public realm activation, combining gateway interventions, festival streets, cultural pause spaces, and everyday activation to create a more vibrant and experience-led civic destination. Rather than relying on a single intervention, the strategy establishes a connected network of spaces that support seasonal programming, temporary activation, markets, public art, and social activity across Cheapside.

Key gateways announce arrival into Cheapside through lighting, installations, and enhanced public realm, while the civic spine supports temporary pedestrian-first activation and city-wide events. Building on activity already taking place across Cheapside, including Nocturne, Christmas celebrations, and live music, the strategy strengthens the area's cultural offer throughout the year. Churchyards, lanes, and local public spaces are reimagined as flexible destinations supporting markets, performances, spill-out uses, and informal gathering. Together, these interventions reposition Cheapside as a living civic stage where culture, commerce, heritage, and everyday public life are continuously woven into the experience of the City.

The Extraordinary
Everyday



A People's
Place



The City
in Bloom



Distinctly
Cheapside



CHEAPSIDE
at the City's heart

F1 F2 Western & Eastern Gateway

A distinctive overhead canopy of lighting and suspended installations that celebrates Cheapside's evolving identity as a civic and cultural destination. Spanning between building frontages and framing key junctions along the route from St Paul's to Bank, the installations create a strong visual identity, enhance the public realm, and

reinforce the street as a connected festival corridor. Designed to accommodate seasonal lighting, cultural events, public art, and temporary installations, the canopy transforms the experience of the street throughout the year while improving wayfinding, creating moments of spectacle, and encouraging longer dwell times.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●○○○	Short-term	●●○○○	●●●●○	CoL / Private Owners
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / BID	CoL / BID funded	◆	F1: Cathedral Quarter & South Cheap	F2: Bank Jnc Quarter & North Cheap

Case Studies

Walala Lounge, South Molton Street, London: A bold, colourful installation transforms the street into a distinctive visual landmark and creates an engaging gateway experience.



Walala Lounge installation by Camille Walala, South Molton St, London

Greenwich Peninsula Art Trail, London: A curated programme of public art creates moments of discovery and strengthens the identity of the wider destination.

Greenwich Peninsula Art Trail, London

MASSIVart, Guildford Town Centre: Art-led interventions animate key arrival points and public spaces, using creativity to build identity, footfall, and civic experience.



Artistic Activation of Guildford Town Centre by MASSIVart, Vancouver



Gensler NRP AuthenticFutures



Proposals



New Change

The ground floor public realm is activated through flexible spaces for lunchtime performances, supported by partnerships with local retailers to enable spill-out seating, outdoor displays, and temporary activations that animate the street throughout the day. A dedicated area for a weekly pop-up food market provides a regular destination, increasing footfall, supporting local businesses, and creating a vibrant civic atmosphere that extends the appeal of One New Change beyond traditional shopping hours.

Impact



Timescale

Short-term

Cost



Feasibility



Owner

CoL / Private

Funding Source

CoL / BID

Maintenance

Private / BID funded

Design Driver



Character Area

South Cheap

Case Studies

Case studies shown right and below demonstrate how flexible event spaces and markets can bring commercial streets to life.

Leather Lane Market, London: A long-established weekday market brings food, independent traders, and social activity into the street, creating a lively and distinctive destination throughout the day.

Strand Aldwych, Temporary Event Space, London: Useful for demonstrating how flexible public realm can accommodate events and changing programmes.



Leather Lane Market,
London



Strand Aldwych, London

F4 Cheapside/King–Queen Street Jct

Celebrate the King Street–Queen Street route by strengthening its identity and improving legibility at its junction with Cheapside. Creative wayfinding, public art, and distinctive gateway markers reveal the historic route and the key destinations it connects, encouraging movement through the corridor and making it a more visible and memorable part of the wider City network.

Impact	Timescale	Cost
●●●●○	Medium-term	●●●○○
Feasibility	Owner	Funding Source
●●●●○	CoL	CoL / BID / Private
Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area
CoL / BID funded	♥	South Cheap

Case Studies

The King–Queen Street junction can become a distinctive threshold into the wider Cheapside network, using creative wayfinding, public art, and gateway markers to reveal its historic character and improve legibility. These interventions can highlight key destinations, encourage movement along the route, and create a more memorable connection between Cheapside and the surrounding City.

Seven Dials, London: Distinctive signage, public realm, and heritage cues strengthen the identity of a historic junction and make it a memorable destination.

Carnaby, London: Creative wayfinding, signage, and visual identity transform a network of streets into a recognisable, characterful destination.



Seven Dials, London



Carnaby Street, London

Priority Project 1: Cheapside Civic Spine F5

Reviving London's Historic High Street

Reclaiming Cheapside as a place to gather, celebrate, and exchange: A flexible public realm intervention creates a stronger everyday identity for Cheapside, while allowing the street to transform when the occasion demands it.

01. Everyday Cheapside

Coordinated lighting, greening, seating, and shopfront enhancements create a more welcoming and distinctive street that is active throughout the day and into the evening. Improved pedestrian connections, planting, and places to pause better integrate Bow Churchyard into this experience, building on planned improvements to the churchyard and the City of London Bus Gate scheme.

02. Festival Cheapside

On selected festival days and major events, the street can temporarily close to traffic, allowing the full width of Cheapside to be reclaimed for people. Markets, performances, dining, art, and cultural events can spill into the street, celebrating Cheapside in its own right as a historic place of exchange, gathering, and civic life.

Impact	Timescale	Cost
●●●●●	Medium-term	●●○○○
Feasibility	Owner	Funding Source
●●●●○	CoL / Private Owners / CoE	CoL / BID
Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area
CoL / BID funded	  	South Cheap & North Cheap



Current Image



Future Proposal: 01. Everyday Cheapside

* Repurposes part of the existing loading bay to enhance the public realm, subject to detailed review of servicing requirements and operational feasibility.



Lighting of the Church
Celebrate Cheapside's heritage through Wren City Strategy

Celebrate Cheapside
Celebrate Cheapside's heritage & create identity

Sculpture & Green
Celebrate the heritage of Bow Bells in a creative way & opportunity to green the churchyard.

Anchor in Identity
Create & anchor Cheapside in its festival identity

Festival Day Market
Temporary closure of the street to recreate a contemporary re-telling of the "Cheap" identity via a vibrant market

Place for Exchange
Introduce seating & greening across from the churchyard to strengthen connections and celebrate the street*

4.2. Reclaiming: Ceremonial London

Spatial Challenge

Cheapside occupies a pivotal position within the historic core of the City of London, yet its ceremonial relationship to the River Thames and London's civic traditions has become fragmented over time. Today, this historic narrative is no longer legible within the public realm. The connection between Cheapside and the river has weakened, ceremonial routes are experienced primarily as movement corridors, and many of the spaces that once supported gathering and spectacle now function predominantly as spaces of circulation.

As a result, the Cheapside BID area feels:

- Historically significant, but disconnected from its ceremonial identity
- Central, but detached from the Thames
- Active during working hours, but lacking experiential depth
- Rich in heritage, but limited in collective civic expression



For centuries, London's civic identity was not confined to monuments or institutions alone, but performed through movement across the city. The earliest Lord Mayor's processions began on the River Thames, where the newly elected Mayor would travel by ceremonial barge before continuing north through the city streets toward Guildhall and St Paul's Cathedral. This journey established a powerful spatial sequence – from river to market, from commerce to ceremony – embedding movement into the identity of London itself.

The procession connected the Thames, Queen Street, Cheapside, Guildhall, and St Paul's in a gradual intensification of spectacle and gathering. Streets became stages for collective experience, lined with crowds, performances, and temporary installations that transformed everyday routes into civic theatre.



People's Ask

The vision for *Reclaiming: Ceremonial London* was shaped through site walks, stakeholder interviews, and public surveys across the Cheapside BID area.

Engagement revealed a corridor rich in civic and heritage assets, but where vehicle movement, underused spaces, weak wayfinding, and limited cultural activity often dilute the experience. Many historic routes, stories, and ceremonial moments also remain hidden or under-celebrated.

There is a clear opportunity to reconnect and reveal this heritage through a more legible, celebrated corridor – using public realm improvements, cultural programming, and recurring events to strengthen Cheapside's ceremonial identity and public life.

Proposal

Reclaiming: Ceremonial London reinterprets this historic journey for the contemporary city. By reconnecting the Cheapside BID area to the river through processional routes, public realm improvements, and a richer cultural offer, the strategy restores the lost relationship between the City and the Thames. Movement through Cheapside becomes more than circulation; it becomes an experience of arrival, storytelling, and civic identity.

Rather than relying solely on static heritage markers, the proposal reactivates streets through recurring events and immersive public spaces that encourage participation and collective memory. In doing so, Cheapside can once again function as a ceremonial landscape that connects London's historic core back to its river origins.

Challenge



**A Movement Corridor
not Destination**

Opportunity



**Improved legibility
and places for dwell**

Aspiration

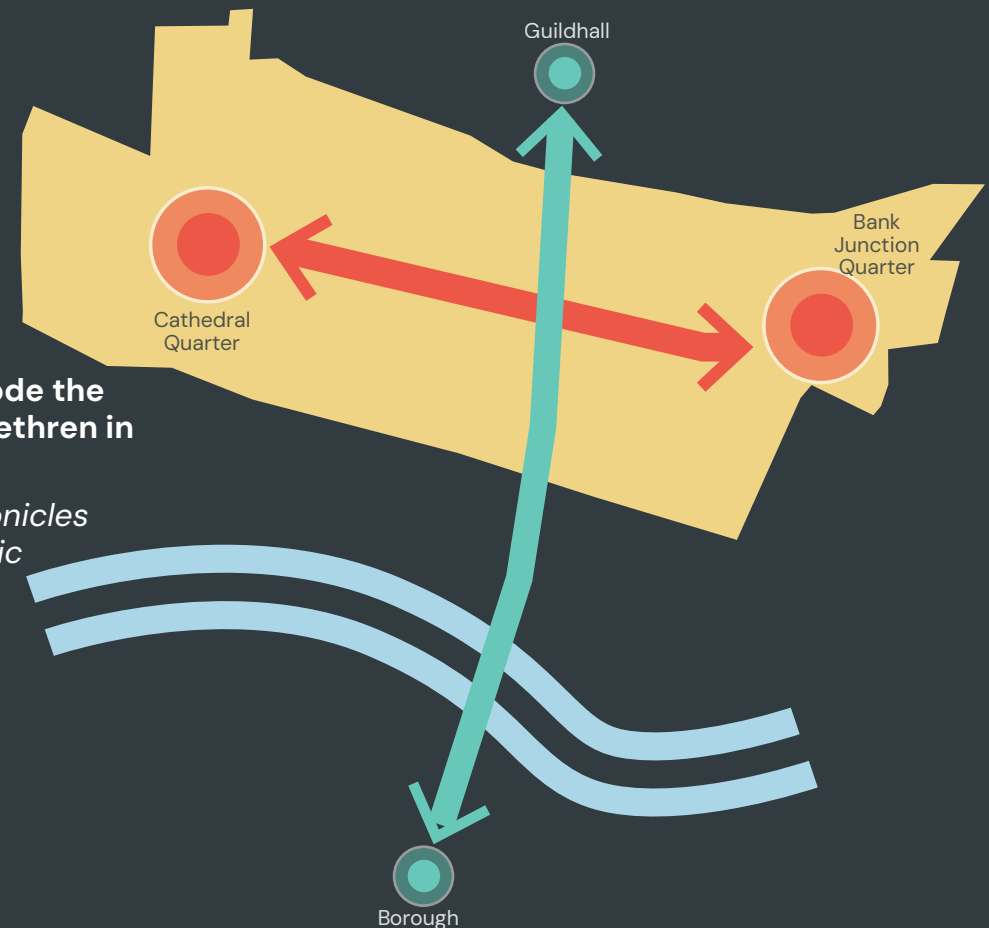


**A Living Ceremonial
Corridor**



**Through Chepe rode the
mayor with his brethren in
scarlet.**

*– Medieval chronicles
of London civic
processions*



Proposals

Interventions

The Ceremonial Corridor strengthens the historic civic connection between the Thames, Queen Street, King Street, Cheapside, and the Guildhall through coordinated public realm improvements, cultural programming, and immersive civic experiences. The strategy focuses on enhancing the corridor as a contemporary civic procession route through temporary pedestrian-first activation, coordinated lighting, wayfinding, public art and seasonal installations that support festivals, civic events, and the Lord Mayor's Show.

Key junctions and pause points are enhanced through improved crossings, paving, seating, and storytelling that strengthen identity and pedestrian experience along the route. Existing pedestrianised spaces become flexible cultural pause points supporting performances, markets, and everyday social activity, while the potential for enhanced connections towards Southwark Bridge will help reconnect Cheapside to the Thames.

The Extraordinary
Everyday



A People's
Place



The City
in Bloom



Distinctly
Cheapside



King-Queen Street Corridor

Install permanent wayfinding and civic storytelling elements along the western edge of King Street to reveal its historic connection to the River Thames and London's ceremonial landscape, strengthening the legibility of this important route within the wider public realm. A

continuous tree planting strategy along King Street and Queen Street will provide shade, improve the pedestrian experience, and strengthen the green connection between Cheapside, the river, and surrounding civic destinations.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●●●○	Medium-term	●●●●○	●●●●○	CoL
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / BID / Private	CoL / BID funded	◆ ◆	North Cheap	

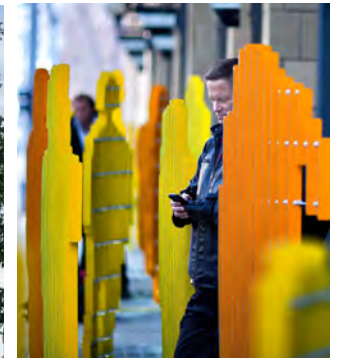
Case Studies

Coordinated Banners, Norwich Castle, UK: A coordinated banner programme creates a strong visual identity across the surrounding streets, improving visibility, reinforcing the destination, and drawing visitors towards a key cultural landmark.

TransitStory Public Art Installation by Jill Anholt, Calgary, Canada: An integrated public art installation transforms everyday movement through the city into an experience of discovery, using storytelling, and interpretation to reveal local histories and strengthen people's connection to place.



Coordinated Banners, Norwich Castle, UK



TransitStory public art installation by Jill Anholt, Calgary, Canada



RIVER THAMES

Proposals

R2

Potential Extension to River

Coordinated wayfinding, lighting, and a distinctive corridor identity strengthen the ceremonial route towards the River Thames. New seating and targeted permanent and temporary public realm enhancements create a more welcoming arrival experience, improving connections to the riverfront, and encouraging people to pause and dwell.

Impact



Timescale

Long-term

Cost



Feasibility



Owner

CoL

Funding Source

CoL / BID

Maintenance

CoL / BID
funded

Design Driver



Character Area

South Cheap



'City Clusters' tactile street furniture by Butler Wiltshire

Case Studies

Case studies shown right demonstrate how coordinated wayfinding, lighting, and public realm interventions can strengthen key movement corridors, create memorable arrival experiences, and encourage people to pause and dwell.

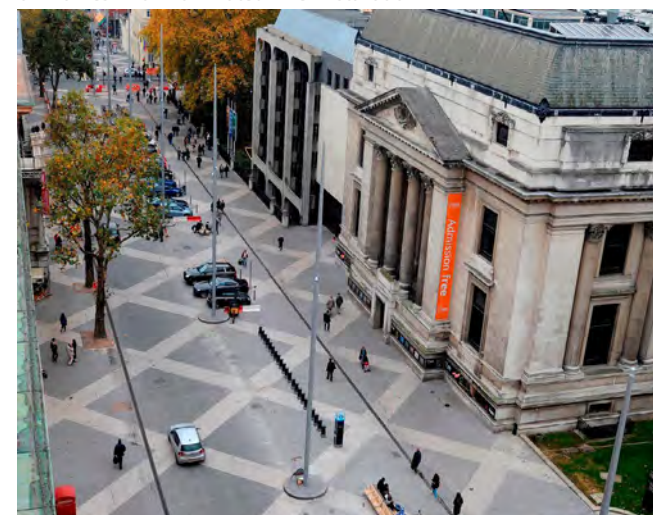
The Illuminated River, London, UK: A coordinated lighting strategy transforms London's bridges into a connected public artwork, strengthening the identity and experience of the Thames as a defining civic and ceremonial landscape.

Exhibition Road, London, UK: A redesigned shared public realm prioritises pedestrians through integrated lighting, seating, and high-quality streetscape improvements, creating a more welcoming civic corridor that encourages movement, pause, and dwell.

'City Clusters' Tactile Street Furniture by Butler Wiltshire: A distinctive family of tactile street furniture creates inviting places to pause, sit, and interact, demonstrating how bespoke public realm elements can strengthen corridor identity while encouraging people to dwell and engage with their surroundings.



Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands and Leo Villareal "enliven the atmosphere of Thames" with Illuminated River installation



Exhibition Road, London



Priority Project 2: Queen Victoria Street Junction [®]

Transforming a Junction into a Civic Destination

This vision reimagines the junction as more than a point of movement; it becomes a memorable gateway to Cheapside and a vibrant public space that reflects the area's heritage, character, and evolving identity. By reclaiming space from vehicles, introducing greenery, and celebrating the surrounding architecture, the proposal creates a safer, greener, and more welcoming place that encourages people to linger rather than simply pass through.

The combination of widened footways, new planting, high-quality seating, and enhanced lighting fundamentally shifts the balance of the street towards pedestrians. Together, these interventions strengthen local identity, improve the public realm experience, and establish the junction as an attractive arrival point connecting the Cathedral Quarter, Cheapside, and the wider City.

Impact



Feasibility



Maintenance

CoL / BID funded

Timescale

Medium-term

Owner

CoL

Design Driver



Cost



Funding Source

CoL

Character Area

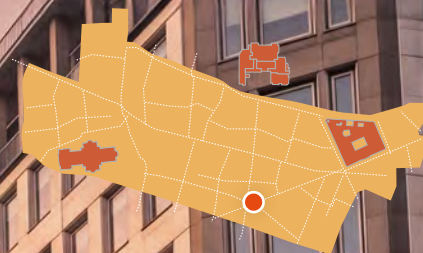
South Cheap



Current Image



Lighting of the Church
Celebrate Cheapside's heritage through Wren City Strategy



Celebrating Identity
Celebrate Watling Street's historic identity through art & greening

Greening & Seating
Opportunity to have more greening & seating

Place for Pause
Pavement widening providing an opportunity to provide seating & planting

Pedestrian Comfort
Opportunity to increase footway by removing traffic island & widening by approx. 3m on either side

4.3. Reinventing: The “Cheap”

Spatial Challenge

Although Cheapside remains one of the most historically significant streets within the City of London, much of its identity as a place of making, exchange, and production has faded from the contemporary public realm. Historically derived from the Old English ‘ceap’, meaning market, Cheapside functioned not as a singular marketplace but as a dense network of specialised trades, guild activity, and civic interaction that shaped both the economic and social life of the city.

The street once operated as a dynamic centre of commerce where makers, merchants, and livery companies occupied and animated the public realm. Craft, trade, and performance spilled visibly into the street, creating an environment defined by production, exchange, and spectacle rather than passive consumption.

Today, however, this identity is far less legible. While Cheapside continues to function as an important commercial corridor, many of its spaces are experienced primarily through movement, retail frontage, and office activity, with limited opportunities for interaction, creativity, or cultural participation.

As a result, the Cheapside BID area feels:

- Commercial, but not experiential
- Active, but lacking visible creativity and making
- Historically rich, but disconnected from its trading identity
- Economically important, but culturally under-expressed



People's Ask

The *Reinventing: The "Cheap"* place narrative is informed by urban analysis, site observations, stakeholder engagement, and cultural research, exploring how Cheapside can re-establish itself as a contemporary destination for making, exchange, creativity, and public life.

Stakeholder engagement highlighted opportunities to introduce maker-led activation, markets, seasonal events, and temporary creative uses, diversifying activity throughout the day and reconnecting the area with its heritage of guilds, craftsmanship, and commerce.

The opportunity is to establish a contemporary identity for Cheapside, where making, culture, innovation, and commerce are brought visibly into the public realm.

Proposal

Reinventing: The "Cheap" reinterprets Cheapside's legacy through a contemporary culture of making, creativity, and exchange. Markets, workshops, live demonstrations, and temporary installations transform the street from a route of movement into a destination for participation.

Building on its artisan and livery heritage, rotating craft markets and maker-led events could establish Cheapside as London's contemporary craft exchange, connecting historic traditions with emerging creative talent. Initiatives such as Guild Week could see different organisations curate the street, creating a living showcase of London's creative economy.

Ultimately, Cheapside becomes a contemporary Street of Power & Craft, where commerce, culture, and creativity come together.

Challenge



Lack of Coherent Place Narrative & Hidden Heritage

Opportunity

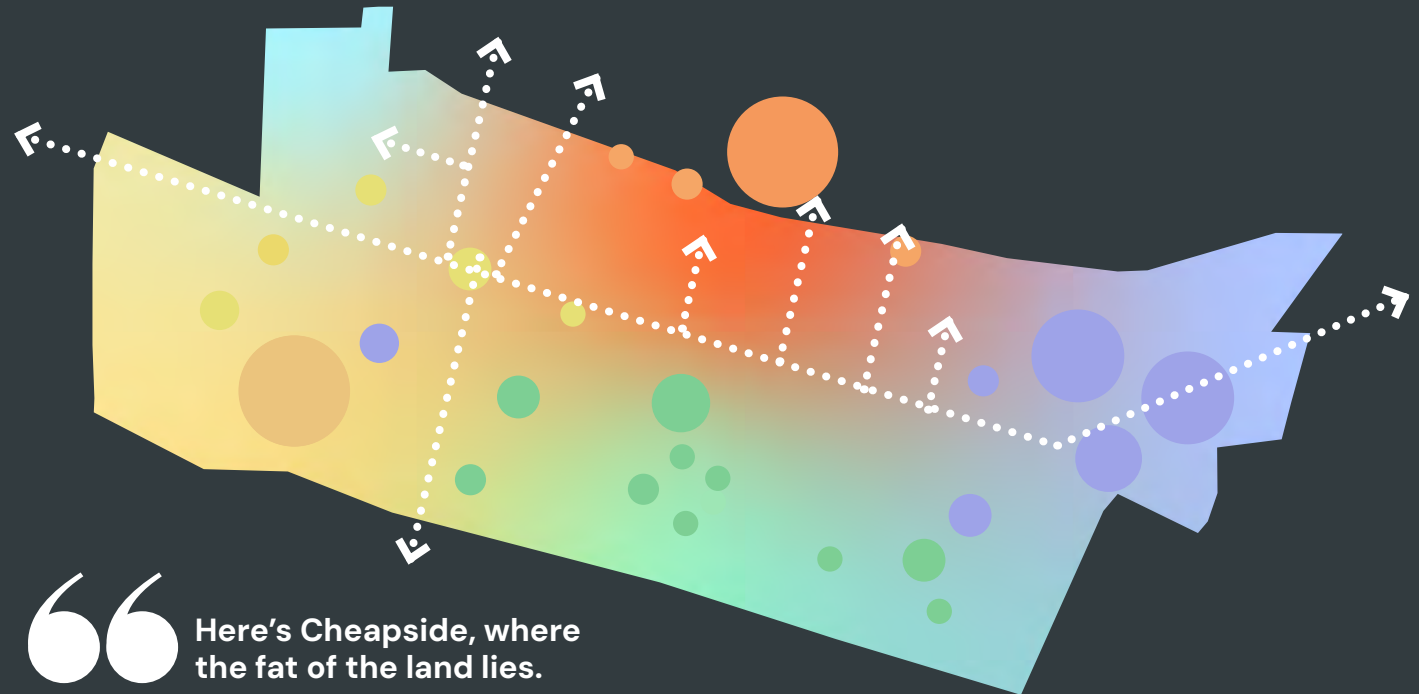


Celebrated & Visible Identity

Aspiration



A Compelling Place Narrative



Here's Cheapside, where the fat of the land lies.

*– A Chaste Maid in Cheapside,
Thomas Middleton*

Middleton's 1613 satire portrays Cheapside as bustling, wealthy, crowded, and commercially driven, and the energetic centre of London life.

Proposals

Interventions

These interventions draw on the rich historic identity of the “Cheap”, the medieval market spine of the City of London, to create a more legible, engaging, and culturally rooted public realm. Historically, streets branching from Cheapside were organised by trade and craft, with each lane reflecting a distinct economic activity that shaped the character and growth of the City.

The proposed interventions celebrate this layered heritage through markers, lighting, planting, public art, and digital storytelling installations along key historic streets, including Wood Street, Goldsmith Street, Milk Street, Bread Street, Honey Lane, Ironmonger Lane, Old Jewry, Grocers’ Hall Court, and Threadneedle Street. Collectively, they form a heritage trail that brings to life the stories of the merchants, markets, guilds, and trading networks that shaped the “Cheap” and the wider City.

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Place



The City
in Bloom



Distinctly
Cheapside



Wood Street

Introduce a distinctive heritage marker at the entrance to Wood Street as a civic gateway, celebrating the street’s historic trade identity. Extend this narrative into the adjacent pocket park, transforming it into a flexible heritage and cultural destination that interprets Wood Street’s legacy through contemporary means. This could

include public art or sculptural installations inspired by the street’s historic trades, integrated storytelling within the landscape, projections, and opportunities for curated craft markets, artisan demonstrations, and seasonal cultural events that reflect the area’s tradition of craftsmanship and commerce.

Impact



Timescale

Medium-term

Cost



Feasibility



Owner

CoL/Private

Funding Source

CoL / Private /
BID

Maintenance

CoL / BID
funded

Design Driver



Character Area

North Cheap

Case Studies

The Golden Boy of Pye Corner, London: A small but highly distinctive landmark uses sculpture and storytelling to commemorate a specific piece of local history, demonstrating how a single object can become a memorable place marker.

SoLo Craft Fair, South Bank, London: A curated craft market brings independent makers selling jewellery, art, and homeware into the riverside public realm, complemented by creative workshops and informal activity.



The Golden Boy of Pye Corner,
London



SoLo Craft Fair, South London



RIVER THAMES

Proposals



Goldsmith Street, Milk Street, Old Jewry, Grocers' Hall Court

Introduce a coordinated series of heritage gateway markers at the entrances to the respective streets, celebrating the unique trade history and origins of each while reinforcing their individual identities within the wider Cheapside network. Complement these markers

with a cohesive lighting strategy that highlights key architectural features, historic sightlines, and points of arrival, creating a stronger sense of place throughout the day and into the evening.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●○○○	Medium-term	●●○○○	●●●●○	CoL
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / BID	CoL / BID funded	☀️	North Cheap	

Case Studies

City of London Dragon Boundary Markers, London: Distinctive sculptural markers identify key entrances into the City, creating recognisable points of arrival while reinforcing the historic identity and boundaries of the area.

Covent Garden Heritage Lighting, London: Carefully integrated lighting draws attention to historic architecture and key arrival points, helping extend the character of the public realm into the evening while reinforcing the area's distinctive identity.



City of London Dragon Boundary Markers



Covent Garden Heritage Lighting



Bread Street

Enhance the junction of Bread Street and Watling Street with the introduction of a feature tree framed by a planting palette inspired by the area's historic association with bread making, including ornamental wheat and meadow grasses that subtly reference the site's heritage. A distinctive heritage marker integrated within the landscape would celebrate the significance of this historic intersection through thoughtful interpretation and storytelling.

Impact	Timescale	Cost
●●●○○	Medium-term	●●●○○
Feasibility	Owner	Funding Source
●●●●○	CoL	CoL / BID
Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area
CoL / BID funded	☀️ 🌱	South Cheap

Case Studies

Dalston Mill, London: A temporary wheat field was planted as part of the Dalston Mill project, directly referencing grain, milling, and bread-making. The wheat became both a landscape feature and a vehicle for storytelling, workshops and community activity.



Dalston Mill, London

C5 Honey Lane

Transform Honey Lane into a distinctive cultural corridor through the introduction of a curated mural that celebrates the street's rich history and identity. Drawing inspiration from its historic associations, the artwork could interpret local stories, former trades, and

the evolution of the area through a contemporary artistic expression. Integrated with subtle lighting and complementary public realm enhancements, the mural would create a memorable visual landmark.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●○○○	Short-term	●●○○○	●●●○○	CoL
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / BID	CoL / BID funded	☀️	North Cheap	

C6 Ironmonger Lane

Introduce a distinctive heritage marker and enhanced lighting at the entrance to Ironmonger Lane to celebrate the street's historic identity and create a stronger sense of arrival. Extend this character into Prudent Passage through integrated lighting and a curated public art installation inspired by the area's historic ironmongery

trade, interpreting themes of craftsmanship, metalwork, and commerce in a contemporary way. Together, these interventions would improve the pedestrian experience and enliven the passage throughout the day and evening.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●○○○	Medium-term	●●●○○	●●●●○	CoL
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / BID	CoL / BID funded	☀️	North Cheap	

C9 Threadneedle Street

Introduce a distinctive heritage marker at the rear of the Royal Exchange to celebrate the history and significance of Threadneedle Street, while creating a stronger sense of arrival into the passage. Integrated with high-quality

public realm enhancements, lighting, and opportunities for heritage interpretation, the intervention would activate the Royal Exchange passage.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●●○○	Medium-term	●●●○○	●●●●○	CoL
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / BID	CoL / BID funded	☀️	North Cheap	

Case Studies

Public Art Mural Honoring the River and City's Heritage, Cuyahoga, Ohio: A mural celebrates the area's relationship with the river and its industrial heritage, using contemporary artwork to make local history visible.



Conduit Court, Covent Garden, London: A narrow historic passage has been given a distinctive contemporary identity through a mirrored, illuminated installation, transforming an otherwise overlooked route into a memorable experience.



Three-Dimensional Map of the Mount Royal Heritage Site, Montreal, Canada: A tactile map brings the landscape, topography and key heritage features of Mount Royal into a single installation, allowing visitors to understand the site spatially and discover its layers of history.



Priority Project 3:

The “Cheap” Kit-of-Parts

A Contemporary Street for Power & Craft

A flexible family of public realm elements, cultural interventions, and heritage interpretation can be deployed individually or combined to animate Cheapside’s historic streets, celebrate making and exchange, and create a distinct identity across the BID area.

SPATIAL INFRASTRUCTURE KIT



Pocket Park

Greening & pause spaces that support biodiversity, wellbeing, and respite.



Social Seating

Flexible seating for rest, conversation, and informal gathering.



Heritage Lighting

Thoughtful lighting that celebrates heritage and activates streets after dark.



Heritage Marker

Markers that reveal the stories of historic trade, guilds, and people.



Wayfinding

Clear and consistent wayfinding that connects people to places and stories.



Rain Garden

Sustainable drainage interventions that manage rainwater and cool the city.

EXPERIENCE & PROGRAMMING KIT



Craft Markets

Rotating markets that celebrate local makers, traders, and artisans.



Live Making

Workshops and demonstrations that bring making into the street.



Performances

Music, theatre, and performances that animate and engage.



Projection Mapping

Light and media projections that transform heritage buildings.



Digital Heritage Trail

Digital and AR experiences that reveal hidden stories and histories.



Seasonal Food Market

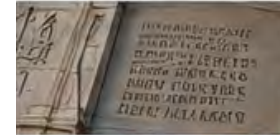
Seasonal food and drink markets that activate streets all year around.

CULTURAL IDENTITY KIT



Guild Stories

Celebrating livery companies, guilds, and their historic influence.



Trade Narratives

Interpreting historic trade and the culture of exchange.



Public Art

Artworks that reflect making, craft, and innovation.



Seasonal Planting

Planting palettes that change with the seasons and celebrate craft.



Historic Gateways

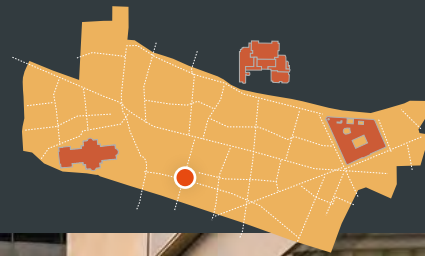
Gateway moments that mark entrances and key historic routes.



Temporary Installations

Creative and playful installations that encourage discovery.

The image below shows an example of the application of part of the Cheap Kit-of-Parts strategy; revealing trade heritage, inviting people in, and connecting Cheapside's extraordinary historical assets through a comprehensive approach.



Bread Street & Watling Street Intersection

- 1 Planting of wheat on Bread Street to showcase its heritage in the public realm
- 2 Heritage & narrative interpretation of Bread Street & its historical relevance to the City
- 3 Appropriate seating to support pause & dwell time
- 4 Opportunity to have more greening & support resilience in the City

4.4. Revealing: Hidden History

Spatial Challenge

Cheapside and the surrounding City of London contain centuries of layered history embedded beneath the contemporary streetscape. Roman trading routes, medieval markets, buried rivers, vanished churches, guild halls, and fragments of historic infrastructure continue to shape the city invisibly, yet much of this history remains unreadable within the everyday experience of the public realm.

Although the area is rich in heritage assets and historic significance, much of its interpretation relies on static markers, isolated monuments, or institutional knowledge that can feel disconnected from the movement and life of the street itself. As a result, many of the stories, rituals, and spatial histories that once defined Cheapside are no longer experienced collectively or emotionally within the city.

As a result, the Cheapside BID area feels:

- Historically layered, but visually disconnected from its past
- Rich in heritage, but lacking immersive interpretation
- Active during the day, but limited in evening cultural experience
- Dense with stories, but absent of collective discovery and participation



Barnsley Bright Nights is a free annual light art festival held in Barnsley town centre



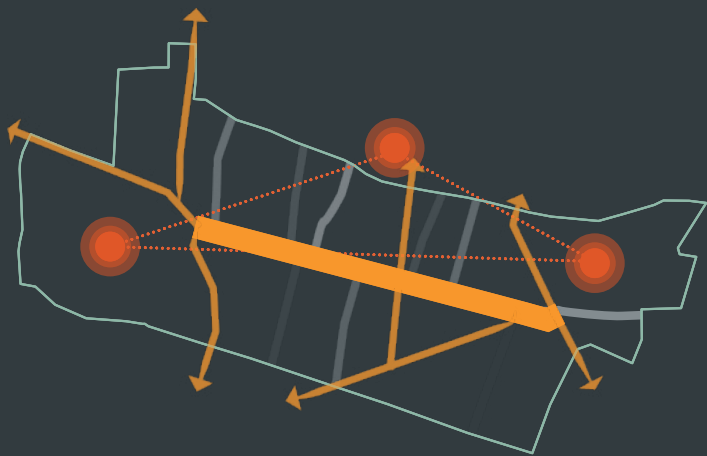
The ancient way through Chepe has carried merchants, monarchs, pilgrims and protest alike.

– Adapted from historical descriptions of Cheapside



Part of print of 1770 showing some of the spires of the City churches





Challenge



Hidden Cultural & Heritage Assets

Opportunity



Visible Identity & A Destination to Dwell

Aspiration



Engaging & Curated Experiences



People's Ask

The *Revealing: Hidden History* place narrative for Cheapside emerged from stakeholder and user engagement, cultural mapping, and observation of how the district is used across the day, alongside testing how public realm interventions can re-activate it as a place of discovery and civic encounter.

Despite sitting on one of London's most historically layered routes — Roman, medieval, commercial — little of this is visible today, leaving a gap between place identity, and lived experience. Stakeholders saw a clear potential to surface these hidden histories through light, sound, performance, and digital augmentation, turning the street into a living archive rather than a static passageway.

There's also a strong appetite to reframe Cheapside around its historic role as a place of exchange, memory, and movement — where trade, markets, and civic life once converged. The public realm offers an untapped canvas to reconnect people with this past in ways that feel contemporary and participatory.

Proposal

Revealing: Hidden History turns Cheapside into a living archive — where London's buried past resurfaces through movement, light, sound, and performance, not plaques.

Beneath the everyday street lie Roman trading routes, medieval markets, lost rivers, and vanished civic spaces. This proposal brings them back to life through immersive installations, projections, soundscapes, and seasonal activations. "City Bells" synchronises church bells, light, and sound across the Quarter, reviving the historic rhythm of the City and marking ceremonial moments in real time.

Drawing on historic market spectacle and firelight processions, evening events transform Cheapside after dark — illuminated art, performers, traders, food, and music spilling into churchyards and alleyways, drawing people beyond the 9-to-5.

The result: fragmented heritage woven into one continuous civic story. Cheapside becomes more than a route through the City — it becomes a participatory cultural landscape, giving this historic core a bolder, more distinctive identity for today.

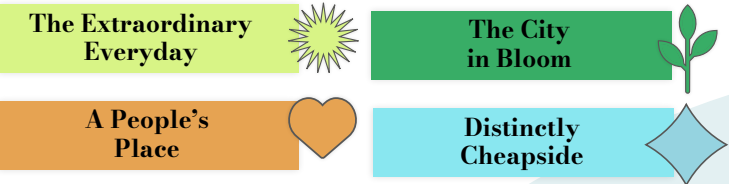
Proposals

Interventions

Recognising that Cheapside is layered with centuries of history, the strategy takes a comprehensive approach to revealing and interpreting its heritage. Through storytelling, public art, digital interpretation, and place-specific installations, it celebrates archaeological remains, historic routes, and forgotten landmarks, including the Cheapside Hoard, London Stone, the Mithraeum, and the Great Conduit. Embedding these narratives within the everyday public realm creates a more legible, engaging, and distinctive city experience.

Central to this is the Wren City Strategy, celebrating the area's extraordinary collection of Christopher Wren churches. Coordinated public realm improvements such as lighting, greening, and interpretation enhance the setting, visibility, and accessibility of each church to form a connected heritage trail that reveals their collective significance and draws exploration beyond Cheapside's main routes.

Overlooked churchyards, lanes, and adjoining spaces are transformed into places to pause and reflect, with seating, rain gardens, and biodiversity enhancements, while architectural lighting celebrates the churches' presence on the skyline day and night. Together, these interventions connect individual sites into a coherent network of storytelling and public space, uncovering Wren City's layered history and strengthening the identity of this unique historic quarter.



Civic Threshold of St Paul's Cathedral

Transform the approach along Ludgate Hill into a high-quality civic gateway that enhances the arrival experience to St Paul's Cathedral through improved pedestrian crossings, widened footways, and a more legible, pedestrian-prioritised streetscape. Create opportunities for high-quality F&B to spill out into the public realm, contributing to a vibrant destination that encourages

people to pause and dwell while framing views towards the cathedral. Public realm enhancements, coordinated planting, lighting, and bespoke paving should reinforce the ceremonial character of the route, creating a memorable threshold experience.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●●●●	Long-term	●●●●●	●●●○○	CoL/CoE
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / CoE / BID	CoL / BID funded	🍷 🌿	Cathedral Quarter	

Case Studies

Place Pey-Berland, Bordeaux, France: A major public-realm transformation removed traffic from the cathedral's immediate setting and introduced a unified granite-paved square, restoring the cathedral's civic presence while creating a flexible pedestrian space for movement and events.

Cathedral Gardens, Leicester, UK: A pedestrian-focused public realm frames the cathedral with new green space, high-quality paving, seating, and feature lighting, while connecting the cathedral to surrounding historic streets and destinations.



Place Pey-Berland, Bordeaux, France



Cathedral Gardens, Leicester



Proposals

H2

North/South Route

Create a vibrant and engaging north-south cultural route linking Peters Hill and the Thames in the south to Queen's Head Passage and the future Museum of London in the north, establishing a clear and memorable pedestrian spine through the City. Introduce a

coordinated strategy of wayfinding, public art, lighting, and playful interpretive installations that celebrate the area's rich history while guiding visitors between key destinations and urban nodes.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●●●●	Medium-term	●●●●○	●●●●○	CoL
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / BID	CoL / BID funded		Cathedral Quarter	

Case Studies

London Wall Walk, City of London, UK: A self-guided heritage trail follows the line of the Roman and medieval city wall, using plaques, interpretation, and surviving archaeological remains to connect a series of historic sites across the City. By turning dispersed heritage assets into a coherent walking experience, the route demonstrates how wayfinding, storytelling, and points of discovery can create a memorable cultural spine through the city.



London Wall Walk



Southwark Gateway, London

H3

St Paul's Station Experience

Create a high-quality ceremonial gateway that frames the setting of St Paul's Cathedral while significantly enhancing the arrival experience from St Paul's Station. Building on the substantial public realm improvements being delivered as part of the St Paul's Gyratory redevelopment, this intervention would further strengthen the station forecourt and surrounding streets as a cohesive, pedestrian-focused civic destination. Improved crossings, widened and decluttered footways, coordinated paving, planting, lighting, and integrated wayfinding would create a clear and legible route towards the cathedral, reinforcing the sense of arrival and providing a welcoming, memorable threshold that reflects the significance of one of the City's most iconic landmarks.

Impact	Timescale	Cost
●●●●○	Long-term	●●●●●
Feasibility	Owner	Funding Source
●●●●○	CoL/TfL	CoL / TfL / BID
Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area
CoL / BID funded		Cathedral Quarter

Case Studies

Southwark Gateway, London, UK: Small but highly focused interventions between London Bridge Station and the surrounding cultural destinations use a distinctive stone obelisk, improved landscaping, and activated undercrofts to create a stronger sense of arrival. The project demonstrates how a few carefully positioned interventions can establish a gateway without requiring significant streetscape change.

H13

Cheapside Hoard

Create an immersive night-time public realm installation at the western end of Cheapside, inspired by the Cheapside Hoard, transforming this key threshold space into a vibrant cultural destination. A series of jewel-like sculptural interventions, embedded light features, and projected storytelling elements would animate the public realm after dark, revealing fragments of the Hoard's

history as people move through the space. This intervention would activate the public realm at the western gateway, drawing people in, encouraging dwell time and evening activity, and strengthening visual and narrative connections to the New Museum of London display, extending the museum experience into the city streets.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●●○○	Short-term	●●●○○	●●●○○	CoL
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / BID	CoL / BID funded	☀️	South Cheap	

H14

Great Conduit/Mithraeum/ London Stone etc

Create a coordinated series of QR-enabled heritage storytelling points and distinctive branded interpretation signage celebrating the rich history of the Great Conduit, the London Mithraeum, and the London Stone etc.

Integrated seamlessly into the public realm, these interventions would provide visitors with access to layered digital content, revealing the significance of each landmark in an engaging and accessible way.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●●○○	Short-term	●○○○○	●●●○○	Private
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
Private / CoL / BID	CoL / BID funded	☀️	South Cheap	

Case Studies

City Alleyways – Gobo Projections, City of London, UK:

Artist-led projections animate historic alleyways with light, pattern, and site-specific storytelling, creating an atmospheric trail that encourages curiosity and discovery while revealing the cultural heritage embedded in the streetscape.



Digital Heritage Trail, Aylesbury, UK: A 2.5km self-guided trail uses digital mapping, historic photographs, audio clips, and local stories to connect heritage sites across Aylesbury town centre. The trail demonstrates how digital storytelling can turn dispersed heritage assets into a coherent walking experience, allowing visitors to uncover layers of history as they move through the city.



Digital Heritage Trail, Aylesbury, UK

Priority Project 4:

Lothbury Junction ^{H4}

Creating a Green Gateway to Cheapside

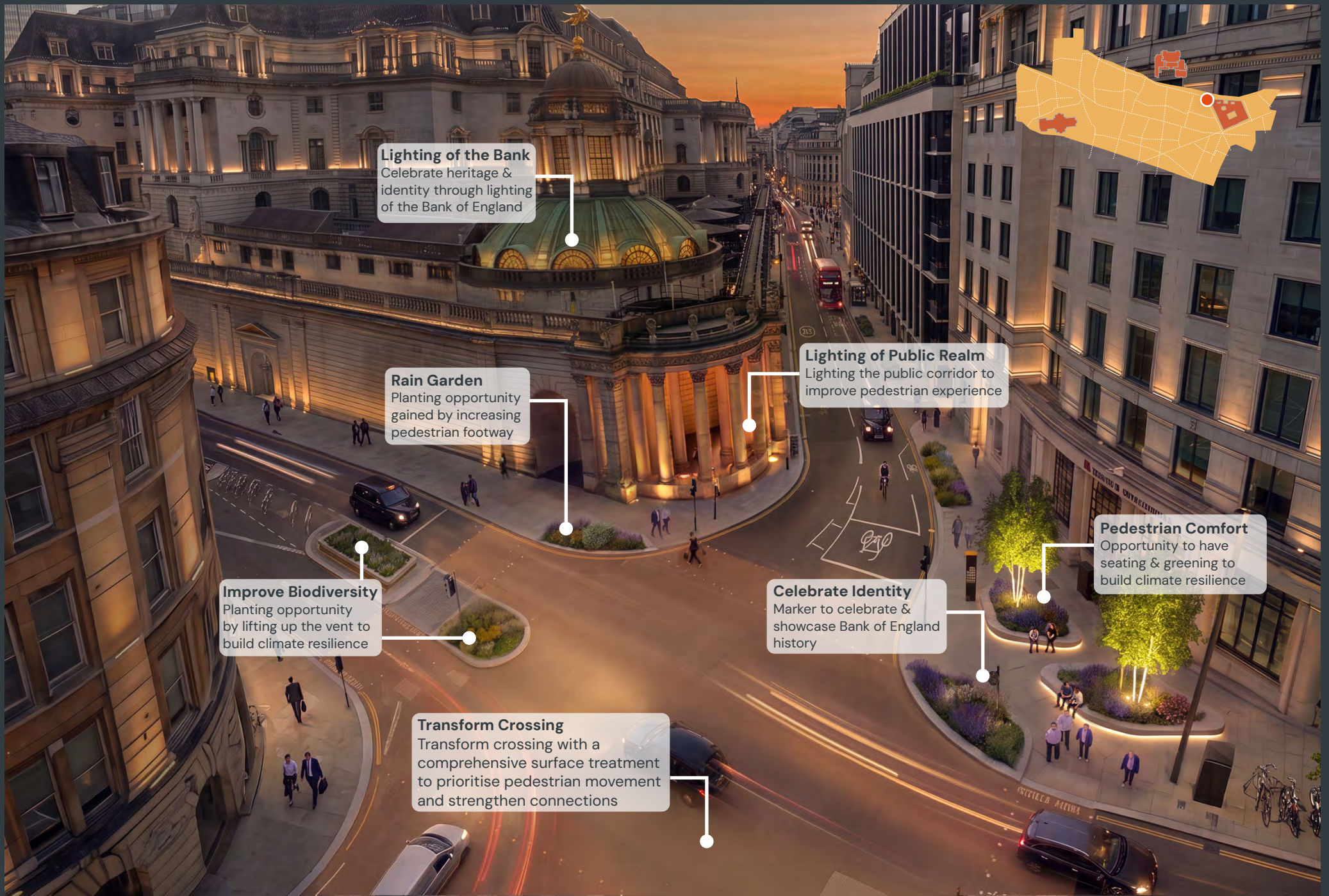
This vision transforms the approach to Cheapside into more than a transport junction; it becomes a welcoming green gateway that announces arrival into one of London's most historic neighbourhoods. By reclaiming space from vehicles and introducing planting, seating, and enhanced pedestrian connections, the proposal creates a more inviting threshold that celebrates the heritage and evolving identity of the City.

The intervention establishes a stronger relationship between the Bank of England and the wider Cheapside neighbourhood. New planting opportunities, rain gardens, and climate-resilient landscapes soften the streetscape, improve biodiversity, and create moments of pause. Enhanced lighting and heritage-led interventions reveal the character of the surrounding architecture, creating identity and legibility.

Impact	Timescale	Cost
●●●○○	Short-term	●●●○○
Feasibility	Owner	Funding Source
●●●○○	CoL	CoL / BID
Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area
CoL / BID funded	🍷 💎 🌱	South Cheap



Current Image



Lighting of the Bank
Celebrate heritage & identity through lighting of the Bank of England

Rain Garden
Planting opportunity gained by increasing pedestrian footway

Improve Biodiversity
Planting opportunity by lifting up the vent to build climate resilience

Transform Crossing
Transform crossing with a comprehensive surface treatment to prioritise pedestrian movement and strengthen connections

Lighting of Public Realm
Lighting the public corridor to improve pedestrian experience

Celebrate Identity
Marker to celebrate & showcase Bank of England history

Pedestrian Comfort
Opportunity to have seating & greening to build climate resilience

Proposals

H5 H8 H12

St Augustine / St Lawrence Jewry / St Margaret Lothbury*

Celebrate the historic Wren skyline by illuminating the spires of St Augustine, St Lawrence Jewry, and St Margaret Lothbury as part of the wider Wren City Churches Lighting Strategy, reinforcing their collective presence within the City's distinctive night-time skyline. Complement the lighting with integrated heritage markers that interpret the history, architecture, and significance of each church, creating moments of discovery within the public realm.

Together, these interventions would strengthen the visibility of these historic landmarks, enrich the pedestrian experience, contribute to a connected heritage trail, and celebrate the enduring legacy of Sir Christopher Wren's churches across the City.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●●●○	Short-term	●●●○○	●●●○○	CoE
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / BID / CoE	CoL / BID funded		H5: Cathedral Quarter	H8 & 12: North Cheap

H6

St Vedast-alias-Foster

Transform the Foster Lane-Gutter Lane alleyway into a welcoming, heritage-rich pedestrian route through enhanced lighting, high-quality paving, and a distinctive heritage marker celebrating the history of St Vedast-alias Foster. Illuminating the church spire as part of the wider Wren Churches lighting strategy would elevate

its prominence within the City's historic skyline, creating a safer, more inviting, and memorable connection that reveals the church as a hidden heritage destination.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●○○○	Short-term	●●○○○	●●●●○	CoE
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / BID / CoE	CoL / BID funded		North Cheap	

H7

St Mary-le-Bow

Celebrate the historic skyline by illuminating the iconic spire of St Mary-le-Bow, reinforcing its role as one of the City's defining landmarks. Introduce an interactive sound-based public art installation within the churchyard, inspired by the legendary Bow Bells. The installation will create an engaging public space that celebrates the church's association with Cockney London while encouraging pause, play, and cultural discovery through a contemporary interpretation of its heritage.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●●○○	Short-term	●●○○○	●●●○○	CoL
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / BID	CoL / BID funded		South Cheap	

Case Studies

St John's Churchyard, Edinburgh, UK: The church forecourt and surrounding public realm incorporate sculpture, planting, and seating to create a pedestrian-friendly civic space. The combination of art, landscape, and the historic church setting creates a more engaging threshold and gives visitors reasons to pause.



St. John's Churchyard Branch Sculpture, Edinburgh

H9 St Mary Aldermary

Improve the pedestrian passage connecting St Mary Aldermary to Bow Lane through enhanced lighting, high-quality public realm upgrades, and a heritage marker celebrating the church's unique history. Illuminating

the church spire as part of the wider Wren Churches strategy would strengthen its visibility within the historic skyline, transforming the route into a more welcoming, legible, and characterful connection.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●●○○	Short-term	●●○○○	●●●●○	CoL / CoE
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoE / BID	CoL / BID funded	☀️❤️	South Cheap	

H10 St Stephen Walbrook

Create a high-quality civic space in front of St Stephen Walbrook through the introduction of generous seating, enhanced planting, and a rain garden that improves biodiversity while managing surface water. A heritage marker celebrating the church's significance, combined

with illumination of the church spire, would reinforce its role as one of Sir Christopher Wren's architectural masterpieces and establish a welcoming destination within the City's public realm.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●●○○	Medium-term	●●●●○	●●●○○	CoL
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / BID	CoL / BID funded	☀️❤️🌱	South Cheap	

H11 St Mary Woolnoth*

Building on the public realm enhancements proposed through the King William Street Pedestrian Priority Scheme, introduce new seating and a heritage marker to celebrate the significance of St Mary Woolnoth. Illuminating the church spire would highlight its

architectural importance as Nicholas Hawksmoor's only church in the City of London, reinforcing its contribution to the historic skyline while creating a more welcoming and engaging civic setting.

Impact	Timescale	Cost	Feasibility	Owner
●●●○○	Medium-term	●●●○○	●●●○○	CoL / CoE
Funding Source	Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area	
CoL / CoE / BID	CoL / BID funded	☀️❤️	South Cheap	

Note: *Outside the CBA boundary; delivery of proposed strategy interventions to be coordinated with adjacent BIDs and stakeholders.

Case Studies

St Mary's Church, Warwick, UK: Subtle architectural lighting and improvements to the surrounding public realm strengthen the church's presence within the townscape. The interventions help define the character of the area after dark while creating a more welcoming pedestrian environment.



St Mary's Church, Nottingham, UK: Improvements around the historic church use public realm, interpretation, and landscape to strengthen its role within the surrounding city, demonstrating how a heritage marker can connect architectural significance with everyday pedestrian experience.



Priority Project 5: Wren City Strategy

A Connected Heritage Network

A coordinated palette of public realm interventions that reveals, connects, and celebrates the City's collection of Wren churches. Applied consistently across Cheapside, the kit-of-parts creates a recognisable heritage identity while allowing each church and churchyard to express its unique history and character.

1. Heritage Markers



Distinctive paving or inlays that identify each church & create recognisable Wren City trail

2. Church Gardens



Biodiverse planting & soft landscape that transform churchyards into places to pause

3. Seating & Pause



Seating integrated into churchyards & adjoining spaces to encourage dwell time

4. Architectural Lighting



Coordinated lighting that celebrates church facades & spires, creating night-time identity

5. Storytelling



Physical & digital interpretation, revealing the history of Wren's churches and their communities

6. Public Art



Contemporary commissions inspired by Wren's architecture & London's heritage

7. Wayfinding



Consistent directional signage linking heritage trails & nearby churches

8. Street Greening



Greening interventions within lanes & adjacent streets that strengthen ecological connectivity

9. Threshold Treatments



Special paving, planting, & gateway features that announce arrival at each churchyard

10. Cultural Programme



Coordinated seasonal events, music, exhibitions, & heritage walks that activate churches

11. Digital Layer



QR codes, augmented reality, or audio trails providing deeper interpretation without cluttering public realm

12. View Frames



Public realm improvements that preserve & highlight views towards church towers & spires



The image to the left shows how part of the of the Wren City Kit-of-Parts strategy can be applied; revealing heritage, inviting people in, and connecting Cheapside's extraordinary historical assets through a comprehensive approach. This is building on the proposed enhancements to Bow Churchyard led by the City of London Corporation.

- 1 A Bell sculpture evoking the memory of the Cockney Bow Bells of London
- 2 Green intervention softening the churchyard and increasing public realm resilience
- 3 Physical & digital interpretation of St Mary-le-Bow & its relevance to the historic City
- 4 Lighting of the church spire to create night-time legibility & identity
- 5 Seating integrated into the churchyard to encourage dwell time



Proposed Bow Churchyard Enhancement, due to commence in 2027

4.5. Redefining: City Socials

Spatial Challenge

Cheapside and the wider City of London possess a dense network of lanes, courts, pocket parks, and overlooked thresholds that historically supported everyday civic life, exchange, and social interaction. Yet over time, many of these smaller urban spaces have become secondary to movement and circulation, functioning primarily as shortcuts, service routes, or transitional corridors rather than meaningful places to gather, pause, or connect.

While the area benefits from a strong concentration of workers, visitors, and cultural assets, much of the public realm lacks the social infrastructure needed to support lingering, interaction, and informal community life beyond peak working hours. Large streets accommodate movement efficiently, but many of the smaller spaces remain underprogrammed, visually disconnected, and inactive for significant parts of the day and evening.

As a result, the Cheapside BID area feels:

- Movement-oriented, but lacking places to dwell and socialise
- Rich in urban spaces, but fragmented in social experience
- Highly active during work hours, but quieter and less engaging in the evening
- Dense and connected physically, but limited in everyday civic interaction

Proposal

Redefining: City Socials transforms Cheapside into a network of outdoor “Exchange Rooms” — small, flexible urban spaces designed for gathering, culture, and everyday social interaction. Rather than relying on a single corridor or destination, the strategy activates these lanes, courtyards, churchyards, and pocket parks as connected social environments distributed across the City.

Each Exchange Room offers a distinct experience, from quiet planted retreats and reading spaces to lively hubs for cafés, markets, performances, and evening events. Flexible seating, lighting, planting, and temporary installations allow spaces to adapt throughout the day and seasons, encouraging people to pause, meet, and explore beyond the main streets.

The proposal creates a more human-scaled and sociable public realm by transforming overlooked spaces into platforms for civic life, cultural activity, and shared experience. Together, the Exchange Rooms form a connected network that supports a more vibrant, inclusive, and experience-led identity for Cheapside both day and night.



Bryant Park Reading Room, NYC



Songzhuang Micro Community Park

People's Ask

The development of *Reviving: City Socials* was informed by site walks, stakeholder interviews, and public surveys across the Cheapside BID area. Engagement highlighted that many of the area's distinctive lanes, churchyards, and courtyards remain underutilised, often lacking the seating, lighting, and activation needed to encourage dwell and social interaction.

The strategy identifies an opportunity to transform these overlooked spaces into a connected network of flexible social destinations, supporting everyday gathering, outdoor dining, cultural activity, markets, and community events throughout the day and evening.

Challenge



Underutilised Social Spaces

Opportunity



Targeted Public Realm Improvements & Activation

Aspiration



A Network of Exchange Rooms



“Bright volumes of vapour
through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through
the vale of Cheapside.

– *The Reverie of Poor Susan*
(1797), William Wordsworth

Wordsworth imagines traces of nature breaking through the dense commercial city. This transforms Cheapside from a marketplace into a dreamscape, revealing the emotional and sensory life hidden beneath London commerce.

Proposals

Interventions

Social connectors are public realm interventions that enhance pedestrian experience along key corridors by improving dwell time, visual continuity, and opportunities for incidental social interaction.

Social courtyard and exchange spaces operate as larger civic nodes that support cultural events and gatherings, acting as key activity hubs within the wider network.

Pocket parks and pause spaces introduce small-scale greenery and resting points throughout the public realm, encouraging brief moments of pause, informal encounter, and everyday socialisation within the urban fabric.

The Extraordinary
Everyday



A People's
Place



The City
in Bloom



Distinctly
Cheapside



S1

Gresham Street Western Entrance

Build on the public realm improvements delivered through the St Paul's Gyratory Scheme by introducing additional tree planting, seating, and high-quality landscape enhancements. Integrated wayfinding and public realm upgrades would strengthen this important gateway, creating a greener and more welcoming arrival that improves pedestrian comfort.

Impact



Feasibility



Maintenance

CoL / BID
funded

Timescale

Medium-term

Owner

CoL

Design Driver



Cost



Funding Source

CoL / BID

Character Area

North Cheap

S2

New Change/ Watling Street Jnc

Enhance the New Change-Watling Street junction by improving pedestrian crossings and strengthening connections between Festival Gardens, Reflection Garden, and Watling Street. Shared surface treatments, tree planting, and coordinated wayfinding would reinforce the boulevard character, creating a greener, more pedestrian-focused gateway that extends the Cathedral Quarter experience.

Impact



Feasibility



Maintenance

CoL / BID
funded

Timescale

Short-term

Owner

CoL

Design Driver



Cost



Funding Source

CoL / BID

Character Area

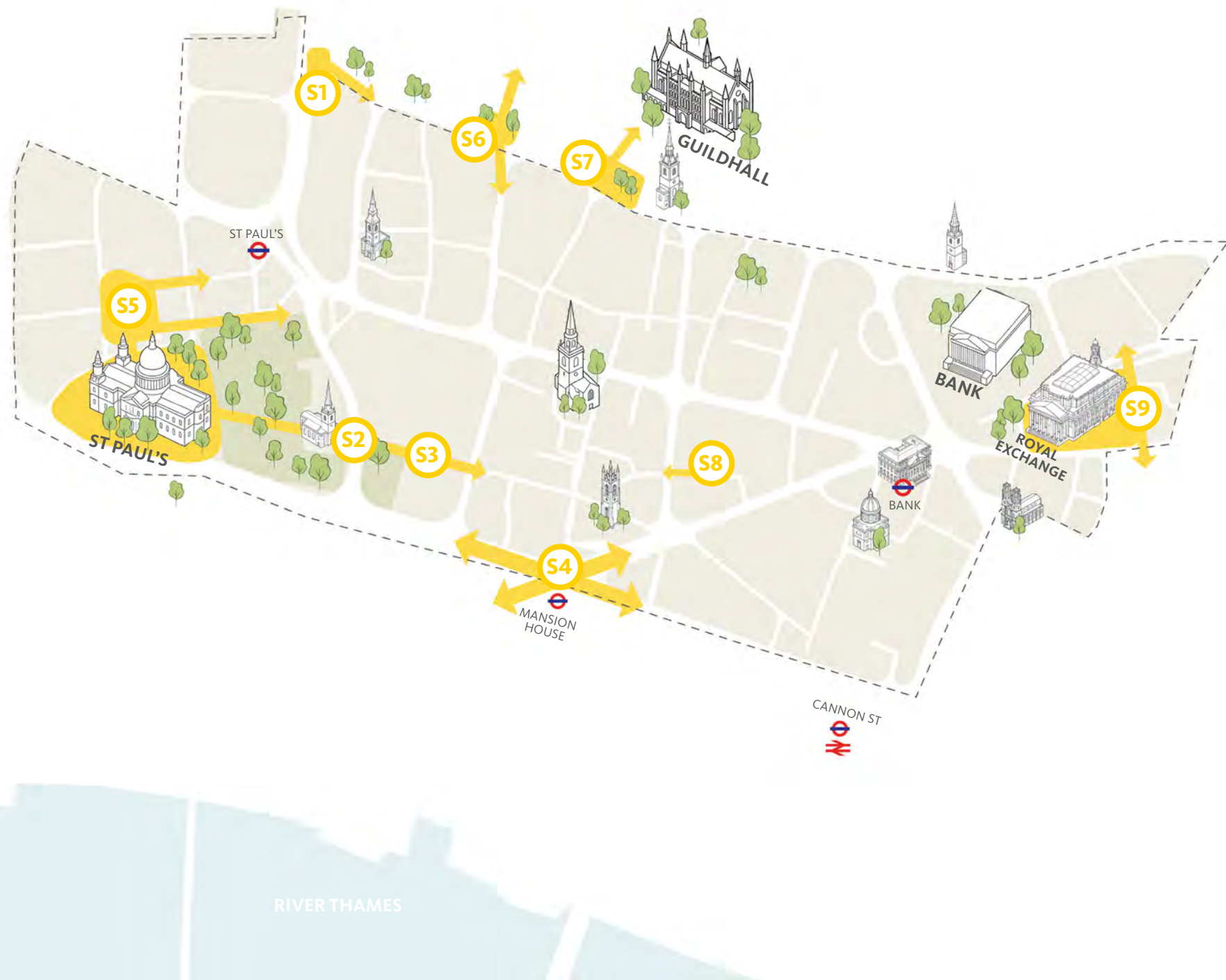
North Cheap

Case Studies

Cathedral Gardens, Leicester, UK: New pedestrian crossings and improved connections around the cathedral create a more accessible and coherent civic setting, helping pedestrians move comfortably between the cathedral gardens and surrounding streets.



Leicester Cathedral Gardens crossing & seating



Proposals

S3

Watling Street

Introduce permanent seating and flexible public realm infrastructure to support the future introduction of a curated food market and outdoor dining along Watling Street.

Impact	Timescale	Cost
●●●●○	Short-term	●●●○○
Feasibility	Owner	Funding Source
●●●○○	CoL	CoL / BID
Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area
CoL / BID funded	♥	South Cheap

S4

Queen Victoria Street/ Cannon Street

Reallocate road space to widen footways and improve pedestrian comfort, creating a more generous and accessible public realm along this important east-west corridor. New seating, tree planting, and greening would enhance the arrival experience at Mansion House while framing and celebrating key views towards St Paul's Cathedral, establishing a more attractive civic boulevard.

Impact	Timescale	Cost
●●●●○	Medium-term	●●●●○
Feasibility	Owner	Funding Source
●●●○○	CoL	CoL / BID
Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area
CoL / BID funded	♥	South Cheap

Case Studies

Weekly Salsa Class & Lumiere London, Coal Drops Yard, London, UK: Regular dance classes and temporary light installations animate the public realm through recurring and seasonal cultural programming. Together, they demonstrate how music, movement, and light can attract diverse audiences and create memorable experiences. They extend activity into the evening and provide new reasons for people to visit, stay, and engage with the space.



Weekly salsa class at Coal Drops Yard, London



Temporary installation at Coal Drops Yard as part of Lumiere London light festival, London

S5

Paternoster Square

Opportunity to further coordinate Paternoster Square and St Paul's Cathedral through cultural programming, events, and shared activation. Celebrating the Cathedral's rich history and civic legacy can strengthen the identity of the square, enhance the visitor experience, and create a stronger sense of connection between these complementary destinations.

Impact	Timescale	Cost
●●●○○	Short-term	●●●○○
Feasibility	Owner	Funding Source
●●●○○	CoL	CoL / BID
Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area
CoL / BID funded	☀	Cathedral Quarter

S6 Wood Street Jct

Introduce new seating, tree planting, and landscape enhancements to transform Wood Street junction into a welcoming pocket space for rest and informal gathering.

Impact	Timescale	Cost
●●●○○	Short-term	●●●○○
Feasibility	Owner	Funding Source
●●●○○	CoL	CoL / BID
Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area
CoL / BID funded	♥️ 🌱	North Cheap

S7 Aldermanbury Jct

Build on the future potential closure of Aldermanbury through traffic by transforming the junction into a vibrant green civic space, with generous seating, high-quality planting, and a flexible public realm capable of supporting a variety of activities while enhancing the setting of the Guildhall area. Seasonal public art installations and cultural programming could animate the space throughout the year, creating an inviting destination that celebrates the threshold of Guildhall while encouraging people to pause, gather, and engage with the area's rich civic and cultural heritage.

Impact	Timescale	Cost
●●●●○	Medium-term	●●●●○
Feasibility	Owner	Funding Source
●●●○○	CoL	CoL / BID
Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area
CoL / BID funded	♥️ 🌞	North Cheap

Case Studies

Derbyshire Street Pocket Park Improvement Scheme, London, UK: A small-scale public realm transformation turned an underused street space into a greener, more welcoming pocket park through new planting, seating, play, and community-focused improvements. The scheme demonstrates how targeted landscape and public realm interventions can transform a modest urban space into a place for gathering, activity, and everyday community life.



Derbyshire Street Pocket Park Improvement Scheme, London

Playful Wayfinding, Lyon-Perrache Station, Lyon, France: Playful, colourful wayfinding elements enhance navigation and create a more engaging arrival experience, helping passengers orientate themselves while reinforcing the station's identity. The project demonstrates how wayfinding can move beyond functional signage to create moments of character, discovery, and delight.

Temporary 'Swivel' Public Art & Seating Installation by Sabine Marcelis, London, UK: A sculptural installation combines art and functional seating to create a playful focal point within the public realm. Its temporary nature demonstrates how creative interventions can introduce colour, activity, and opportunities to pause, transforming everyday spaces into engaging destinations.

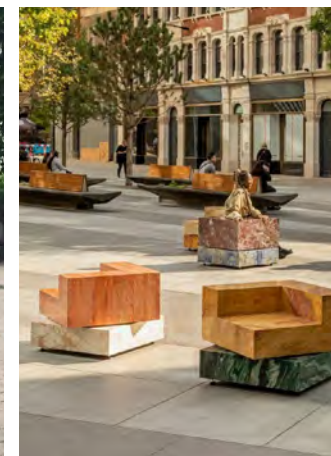
S8 St Pancras Church Garden

Enhance the setting of St Pancras Church Garden through improved wayfinding, lighting, and carefully considered landscape interventions that increase its visibility and accessibility from Queen Street. These enhancements will encourage greater use of this hidden green space, improve its sense of safety and welcome, and strengthen its role as an attractive public amenity for residents, workers, and visitors.

Impact	Timescale	Cost
●●●●○	Short-term	●○○○○
Feasibility	Owner	Funding Source
●●●○○	CoL	CoL / BID
Maintenance	Design Driver	Character Area
CoL / BID funded	♥️	South Cheap



Playful Wayfinding, Lyon-Perrache Station, Lyon, France



Temporary 'Swivel' public art & seating installation by Sabine Marcelis, London

Priority Project 6: Royal Exchange Passage ⁵⁹

Elevating a Pedestrian Connection

This proposal transforms Cornhill into a seamless pedestrian connection, unlocking one of the City's most important east-west routes. By enhancing the public realm and prioritising walking, the intervention strengthens the relationship between Cheapside, Royal Exchange Passage, and Leadenhall Market, creating a continuous sequence of high-quality public spaces through the historic heart of the City.

Building on the success of the Royal Exchange as one of London's most elegant pedestrian destinations, the proposal extends its character across Cornhill, allowing the experience to flow naturally towards Leadenhall Market. The public realm continues seamlessly, reinforcing this route as one of the City's premier walking corridors.

Impact



Feasibility



Maintenance

CoL / BID funded

Timescale

Medium-term

Owner

CoL / Private

Design Driver



Cost



Funding Source

CoL / BID (teams)

Character Area

North Cheap



Current Image



Planting of Trees

Opportunity to have more trees in space gained from footway widening

Rain Garden

Support resilience & uplift public realm by creating a rain garden

Comprehensive Organisation

Opportunity to remove clutter & have custom public realm seating & greening that supports the elevated experience

Shared Surface Crossing

Improved crossing with shared surface, improving connection across Cornhill



A group of people, including adults and children, are gathered on a grassy lawn in front of a large, light-colored building. Some people are standing, while others are sitting on the grass. A woman in a black dress and green cap is prominent in the foreground. A child in a white jersey with the number 4 is sitting on the grass. A man in a black shirt is standing with his back to the camera. The scene is outdoors with large trees in the background. Large blue text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

05

Conclusion & Next Steps

Conclusion & Next Steps

Conclusion

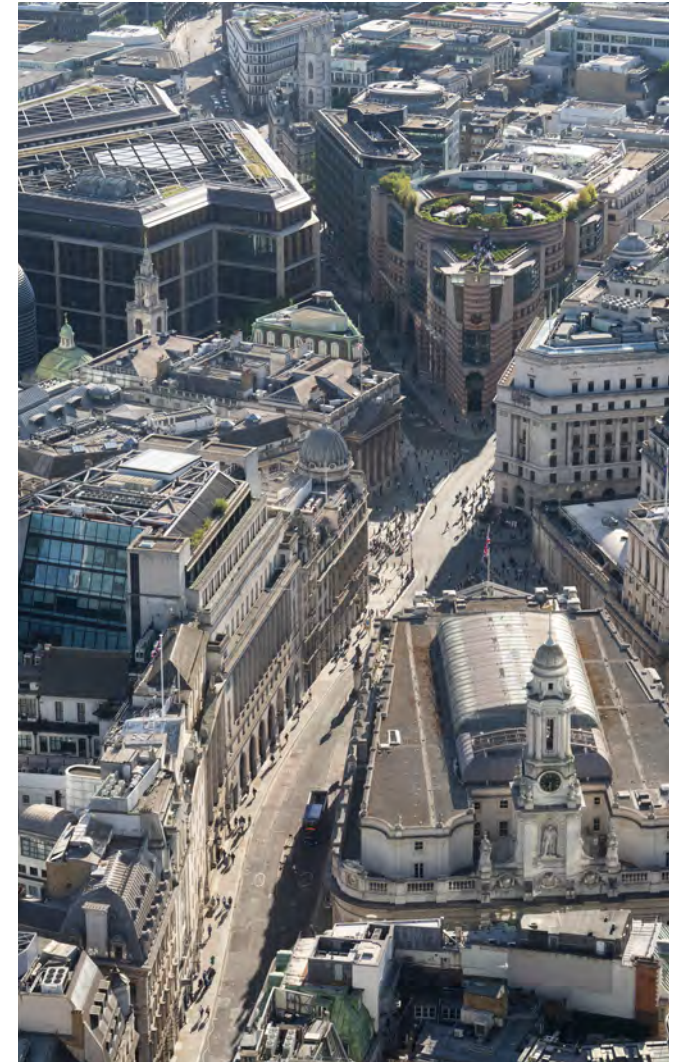
This Public Realm Vision & Strategy represents a key step in a long-term programme of collaboration, partnership, and investment in Cheapside. Realising the ambition of **Cheapside Reimagined** will require the collective commitment of businesses, landowners, the City of London Corporation, and wider public and private sector partners. The transformation of an area of such historic significance and strategic importance can only be achieved through shared ambition, strong leadership, and a coordinated approach to delivery.

Cheapside Business Alliance plays a pivotal role as a partner, convener, and catalyst for change, bringing together businesses, landowners, the City of London Corporation, and other stakeholders to build consensus around a shared vision for the area. Through collaboration, knowledge sharing, and coordinated action, the BID will help align investment, strengthen partnerships, and create the conditions needed to deliver meaningful and lasting improvements to Cheapside.

The Vision & Strategy identifies a programme of interventions across different timescales, from early opportunities that can demonstrate visible change through to longer-term transformational projects that will redefine the character and experience of the area. The BID will support implementation by delivering targeted initiatives and seed funding for early opportunities that enhance the quality, identity, and vibrancy of Cheapside. This includes public realm enhancements, temporary activations, greening, events, wayfinding, and pilot projects that can test ideas, animate the area, and demonstrate the potential of the wider vision. Through these early actions, the BID will help build momentum, strengthen partnerships, and create confidence in the future of Cheapside.

Alongside these early actions, the BID will support the development of more ambitious projects by commissioning research, feasibility studies, and business cases that help establish the evidence base and delivery pathways for future investment. Acting as a trusted partner and facilitator, the BID will convene stakeholders, advocate for coordinated action, and help unlock opportunities that extend beyond its own resources and remit. Many of the larger-scale priority and transformational projects identified through this strategy will require sustained collaboration between the City of London Corporation, landowners, developers, transport authorities, and local businesses. While these projects will be delivered through wider partnerships, the BID will continue to play a central role in championing the vision, maintaining momentum, and ensuring that future investment remains aligned with the shared aspirations of stakeholders.

The momentum generated through the preparation of this Vision & Strategy provides a foundation for the next phase of Cheapside's evolution. As a partner, convener, and catalyst for change, Cheapside Business Alliance will help translate the shared ambition for Cheapside into action, bringing together stakeholders, aligning investment, and supporting coordinated delivery. By combining early, tangible improvements with long-term partnerships, the BID and its partners can help shape a public realm that strengthens Cheapside's identity, enhances its role as a civic and cultural destination, and creates a more vibrant, connected, and resilient part of the City.



Next Steps

To progress the vision from strategy to delivery, the following priorities will guide the next phase of work:

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND MAINTAINING MOMENTUM



Establish focused working groups around priority projects to encourage collaboration, coordinate activity, and champion progress.



Develop a communications and engagement programme to promote the Vision & Strategy, celebrate achievements, and encourage wider participation.

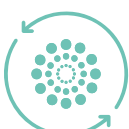


Continue engagement with key stakeholders, including businesses, landowners, the City of London Corporation, Transport for London, and community partners, to build shared ownership and support delivery.

DEVELOPING PROJECTS AND DELIVERY PATHWAY



Undertake further feasibility, design development, and technical studies to test the deliverability of priority interventions.



Identify opportunities for short-term projects, meanwhile uses, and activation initiatives that can provide early visible improvements and demonstrate the potential of the Vision & Strategy.



Work with development partners to ensure future investment contributes positively to the wider public realm strategy.

FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION



Develop cost plans, delivery strategies, and maintenance considerations for priority projects to support decision-making and investment planning.



Explore potential funding mechanisms and partnership opportunities across public and private sector stakeholders.



Establish a phased delivery programme that balances ambition with available resources and supports implementation over the short-, medium-, and long-term.



An aerial photograph of a city street. On the left is a modern building with a glass facade and a green roof. On the right is a classical building with a stone facade and many windows. The text '06' is overlaid in a large, light blue font on the right side of the image.

06

Appendix

Appendix 01

Assessment Matrix

The Assessment Matrix was used as a key tool in the prioritisation process, providing a clear and consistent method for assessing and comparing the proposed interventions within the Public Realm Vision & Strategy. It ensured that recommendations were evaluated not only on design ambition, but also on how realistically and effectively they could be delivered.

The matrix was structured around four key criteria: Timescale, Impact, Cost, and Feasibility. Together, these considered how quickly a project could be delivered, the scale of change it could achieve, the level of investment required, and how practical it would be to implement.

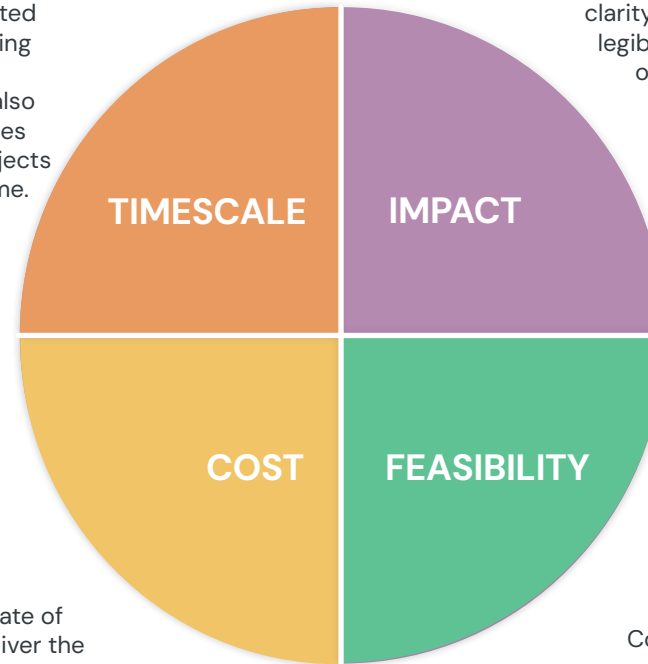
This framework enabled a balanced comparison of different interventions, helping to identify early opportunities alongside longer-term strategic projects. The assessment informed the prioritisation of the proposed interventions, establishing a clear framework for phased delivery and helping to direct investment towards projects with the greatest potential impact.

The timing and delivery of projects will depend on a range of factors, with funding being a key consideration. Associated infrastructure works, planning requirements, stakeholder alignment and buy-in will also influence delivery timescales and the sequencing of projects across the wider programme.

Cost is a preliminary estimate of the funding required to deliver the proposed projects. These estimates are indicative and will be subject to further review. More detailed cost assessment will be required based on project complexity, detailed surveys, deliverables, and specific project requirements.

Impact considerations may include usability, potential for activation, diversity of offering, aesthetic quality, clarity of wayfinding and public realm legibility, changes in perception, and other project-specific outcomes relevant to individual proposals.

Feasibility assesses the complexity of delivering public realm improvements. Considerations include the extent of consultation and stakeholder engagement required, the nature of the project and its location, and the level of risk involved. Feasibility is also closely related to the factors considered within the Timescale assessment.



TIMESCALE

Short-term projects could be defined and pursued immediately and have a suitable scale, simplicity, and stakeholder interest that make them possible within one or two years.

Medium-term projects may have a longer lead time and are generally linked to adjacent developments. They typically require approval from multiple parties and greater coordination to progress to delivery.

Long-term projects require a series of analysis, modelling, testing, design, consultation, and approvals. Despite this, these projects may be progressed through their earlier stages in order to establish feasibility, but wider delivery may require more complex studies and funding across multiple government agencies.

COST

●●●●● E.g. minor interventions and straightforward improvements that can be delivered with minimal physical works.

●●●●● E.g. small-scale projects requiring limited collaboration, stakeholder engagement, or design development.

●●●●● E.g. projects involving upgrades to existing public realm features, new planting, lighting, or street furniture.

●●●●● E.g. projects requiring substantial landscape or infrastructure works, potentially supported through Section 106 contributions or other funding sources.

●●●●● E.g. major public realm or streetscape projects requiring extensive highway interventions, significant capital investment, and public sector funding.

IMPACT

●●●●● E.g. small-scale projects with potential cumulative effect on changing perceptions of Cheapside.

●●●●● E.g. local improvements that enhance the character, atmosphere, or experience of a street, space, or neighbourhood.

●●●●● E.g. projects that improve connectivity, usability, or the quality of the public realm across a wider area of Cheapside.

●●●●● E.g. transformative projects that significantly change perceptions of Cheapside and strengthen its identity as a destination.

●●●●● E.g. major projects with city-wide significance that attract new visitors, elevate Cheapside's profile, and establish it as a destination of significance.

FEASIBILITY

●●●●● E.g. straightforward projects requiring limited consultation and approvals, with minimal technical or delivery constraints.

●●●●● E.g. projects requiring consultation with multiple stakeholders and modest levels of coordination, design development, or approvals.

●●●●● E.g. projects involving changes to traffic management, public access, or temporary traffic orders, requiring more detailed review and stakeholder engagement.

●●●●● E.g. projects involving significant streetscape, landscape, or architectural works, requiring extensive coordination, approvals, and stakeholder alignment.

●●●●● E.g. complex projects affecting the wider strategic transport network or critical infrastructure, requiring multiple approvals, significant stakeholder coordination, and long-term delivery planning.

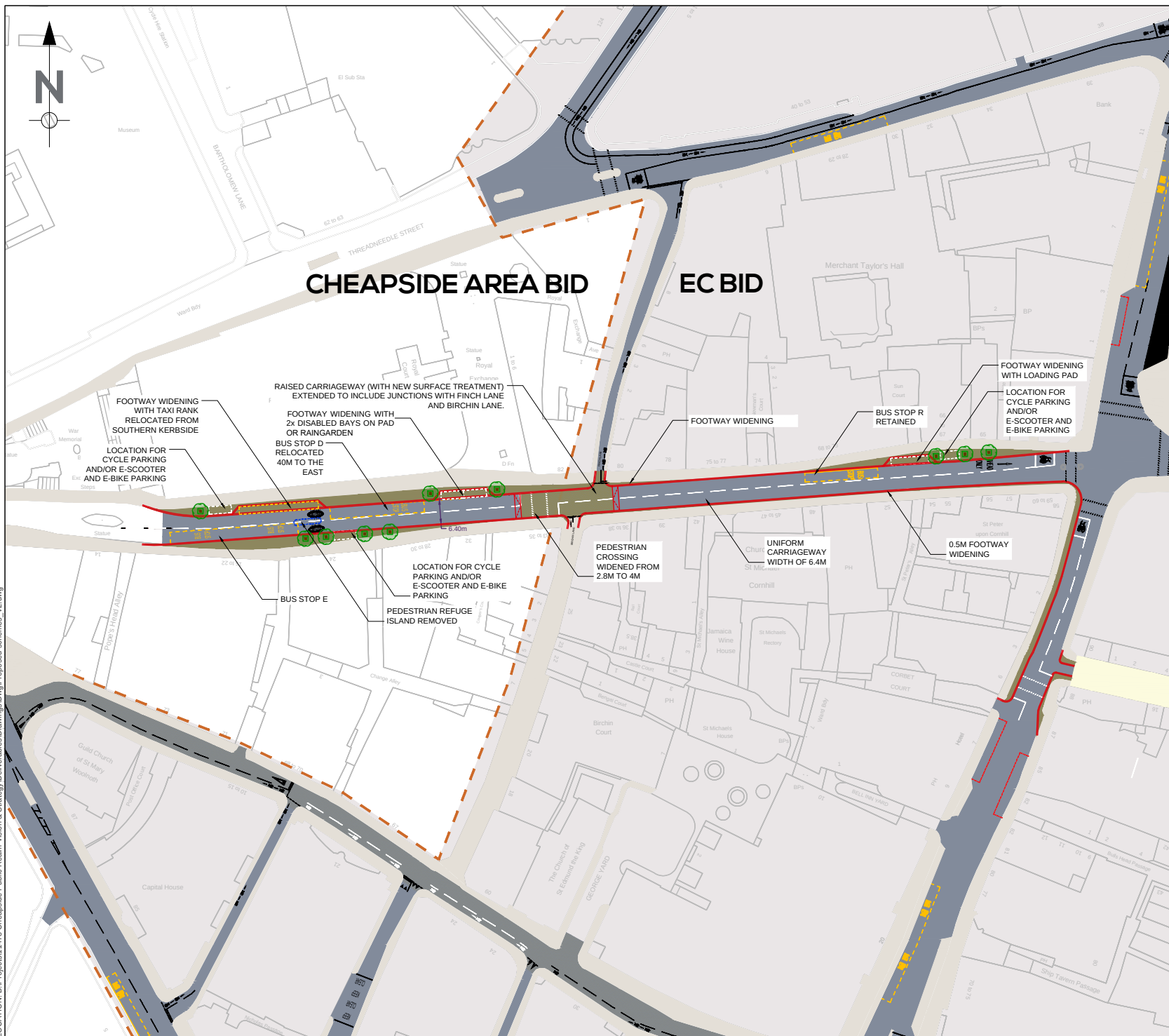
Appendix 02

Transport & Mobility Considerations

We worked closely with our transport consultant NRP throughout the process to understand the transport priorities and implications of the proposed interventions within the Public Realm Vision & Strategy. This collaboration helped inform the assessment and prioritisation process, ensuring that the recommended projects responded to wider movement and transport considerations.

As part of this work, NRP developed more detailed public realm proposals for three priority sites, which are illustrated on the following pages:

- Cornhill
- Queen Victoria Street / Queen Street
- Moorgate / Princes Street / Gresham Street / Lothbury



NOTES:

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THIS DRAWING IS ONLY APPLICABLE TO THE PROJECT STATED BELOW.
THIS DRAWING IS ONLY TO BE USED AT THE SIZE AND SCALE STATED BELOW.
ANY DISCREPANCIES ARE TO BE REPORTED TO THE DESIGNER NAMED BELOW.

REV	DATE	DRAWN	REV'D	APP'D	NOTES

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CLIENT

CHEAPSIDE AREA BID

PROJECT

CHEAPSIDE ARE PUBLIC REALM VISION

DRAWN	DESIGNED	REVIEWED	DATE	APPROVED	DATE
CA	CA	KF	JUL 26	KF	JUL 26

TITLE

CORNHILL

PUBLIC REALM VISION PROPOSAL

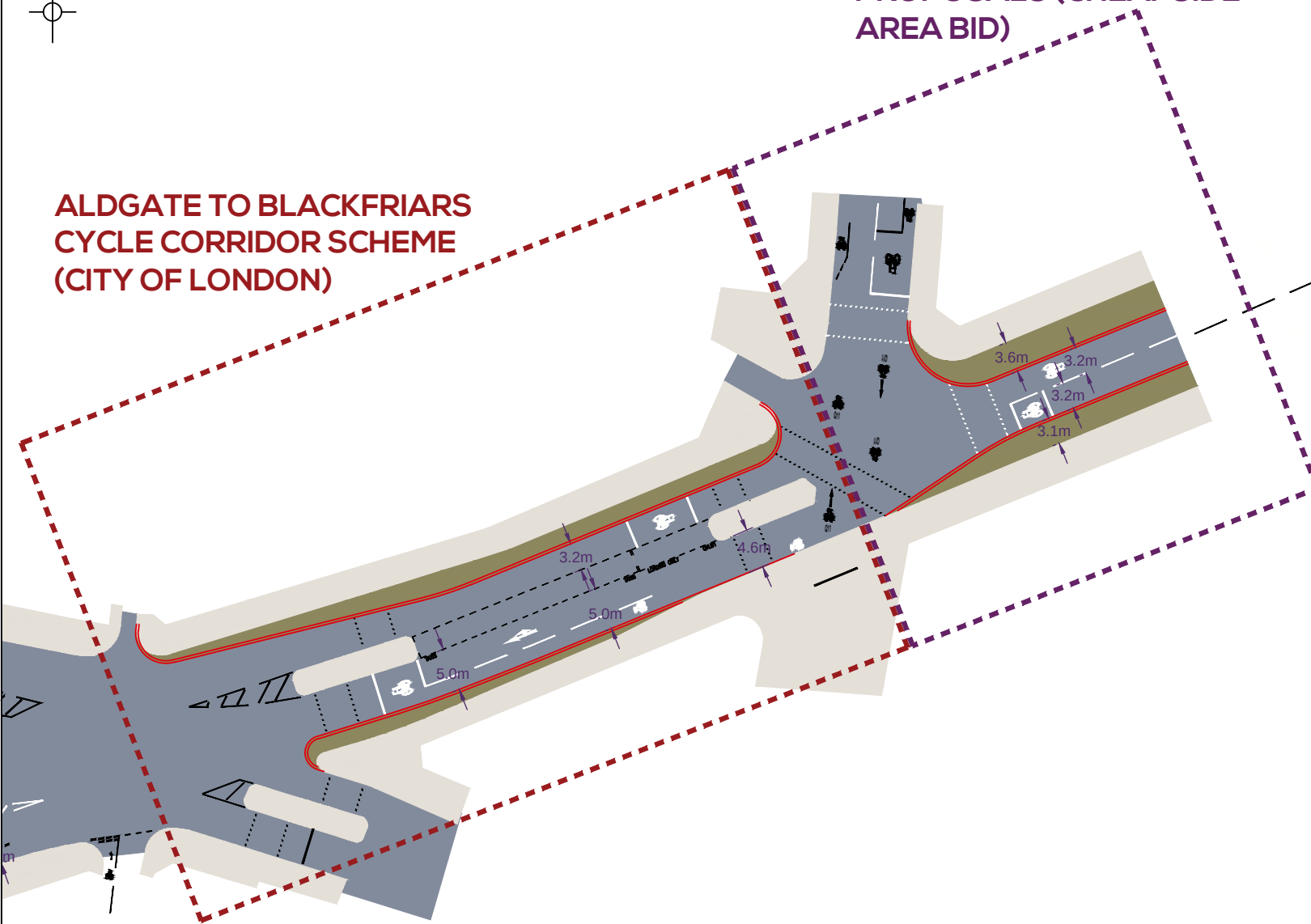
SCALE	DRAWING No	REV
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LOG IN NAME: CHRIS ATTWOOD
LOCATION: E:\Projects\1178 Cheapside Public Realm Vision & Strategy\Deliverables\Drawings\Drawings\Public Dock Option 5_V4_Healthy Streets.dwg



ALDGATE TO BLACKFRIARS CYCLE CORRIDOR SCHEME (CITY OF LONDON)

PUBLIC REALM VISION PROPOSALS (CHEAPSIDE AREA BID)



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KEY

- CARRIAGEWAY
- EXISTING FOOTWAY
- NEW FOOTWAY
- EXISTING KERBLINE TO BE REMOVED
- PROPOSED KERBLINE
- EXISTING ROAD MARKING
- PROPOSED ROAD MARKING
- ITEM TO BE RELOCATED

REV	DATE	DRAWN	REV'D	APP'D	NOTES
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CLIENT

CHEAPSIDE AREA BID

PROJECT

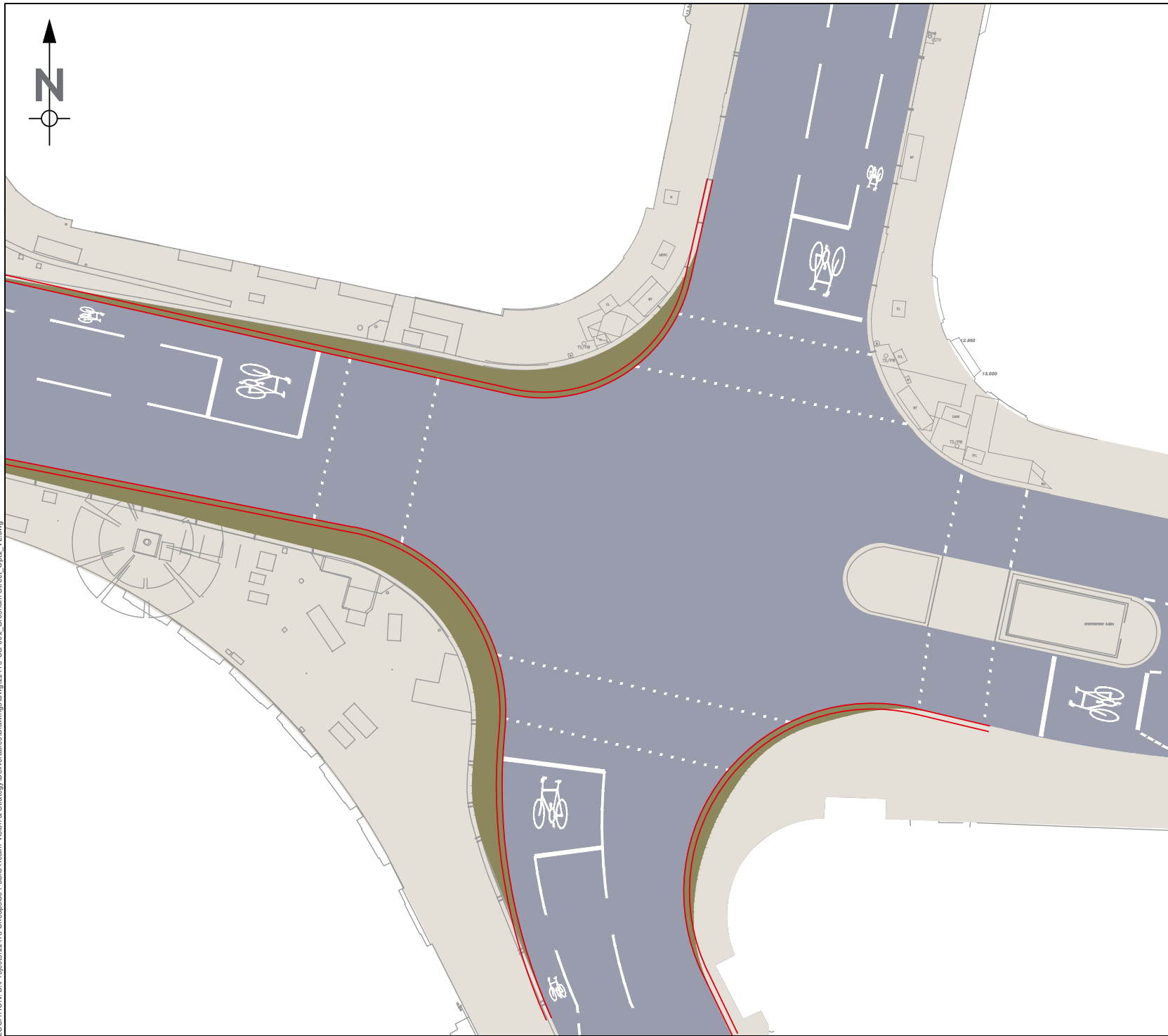
CHEAPSIDE AREA PUBLIC REALM VISION

DRAWN	DESIGNED	REVIEWED	DATE	APPROVED	DATE
CA	CA	CA	JUL 26		

TITLE

QUEEN VICTORIA STREET/ QUEEN STREET
PUBLIC REALM VISION PROPOSAL

SCALE	DRAWING No	REV
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REV	DATE	DRAWN	REV'D	APP'D	NOTES

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CLIENT

CHEAPSIDE AREA BID

PROJECT

CHEAPSIDE AREA PUBLIC REALM VISION

DRAWN	DESIGNED	REVIEWED	DATE	APPROVED	DATE
CA	CA	CA	FEB 26	CA	FEB 26

TITLE

MOORGATE/ PRINCE'S STREET/
GRESHAM STREET/ LOTHBURY

INDICATIVE PROPOSAL

SCALE	DRAWING No	REV
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