

# BRISTOL HARBOUR PLACE SHAPING STRATEGY

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# PLACE PLAN: WAPPING WHARF

April 2024

Draft | Confidential



DK-CM



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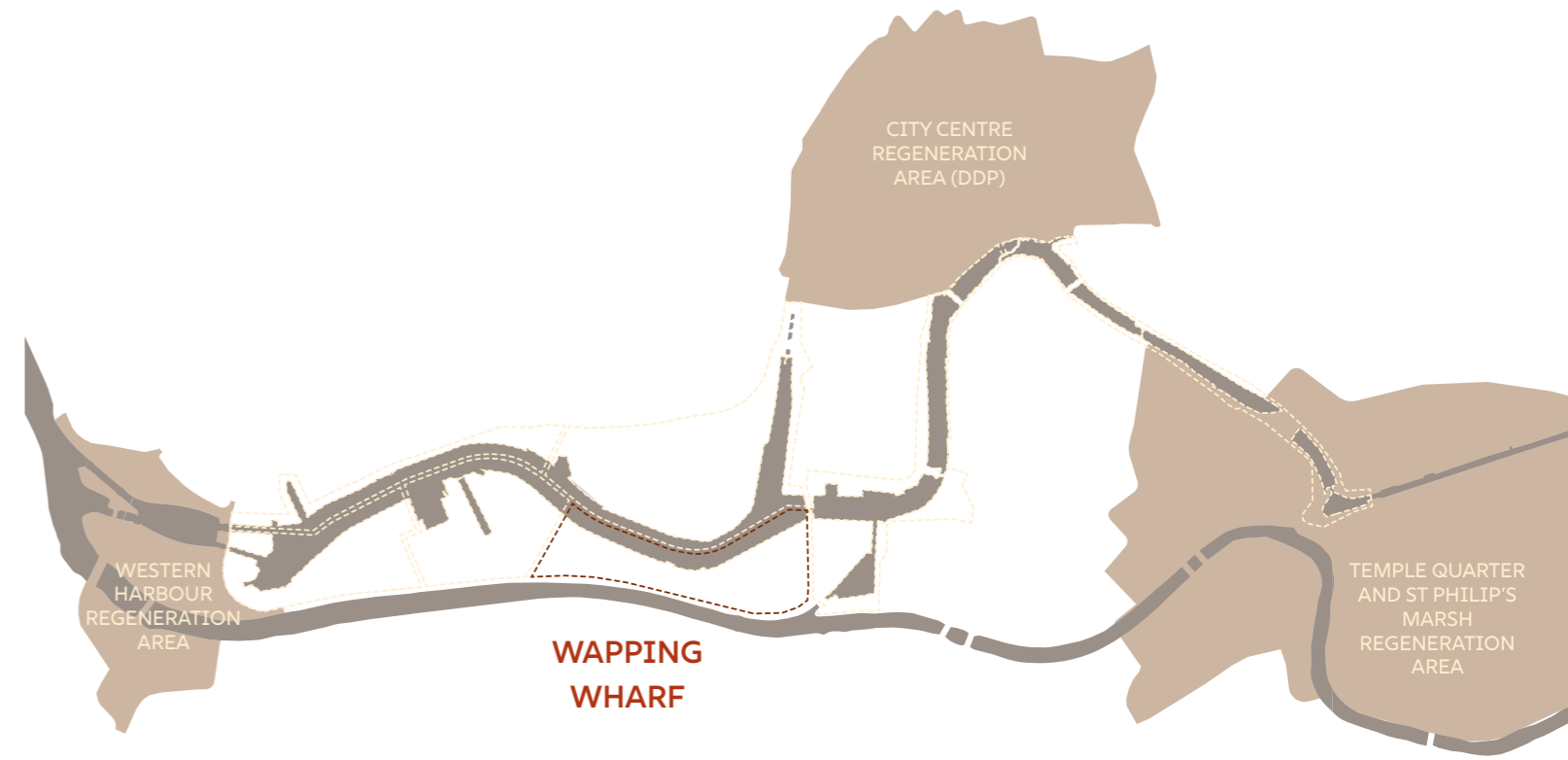
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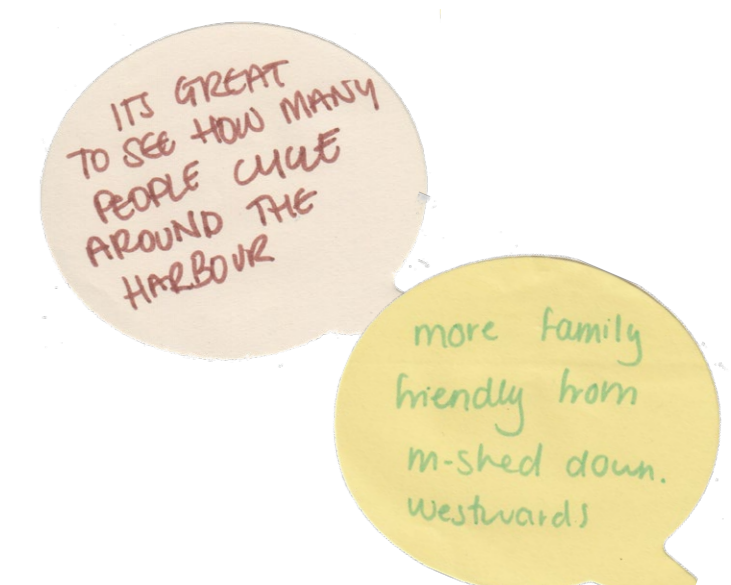
# WAPPING WHARF TODAY

Wapping Wharf, long home to M Shed (formerly Bristol Industrial Museum) and the Harbour Railway, is increasingly a destination for food and leisure uses and a point of access to the wider harbour. This has been achieved by the development of Wapping Wharf itself as a mixed-use area, which offers well-used bars and restaurants (especially at Cargo) and an independent bookshop.

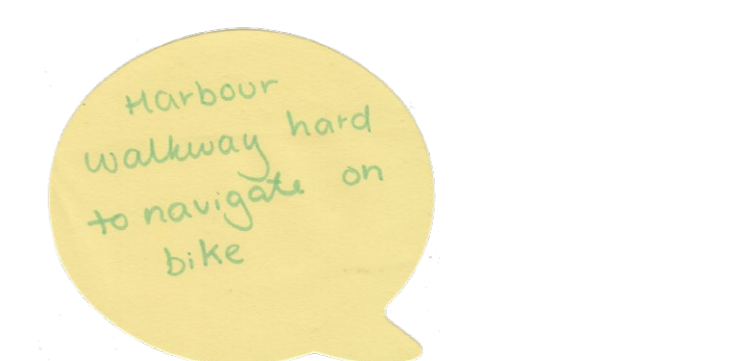


## SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT

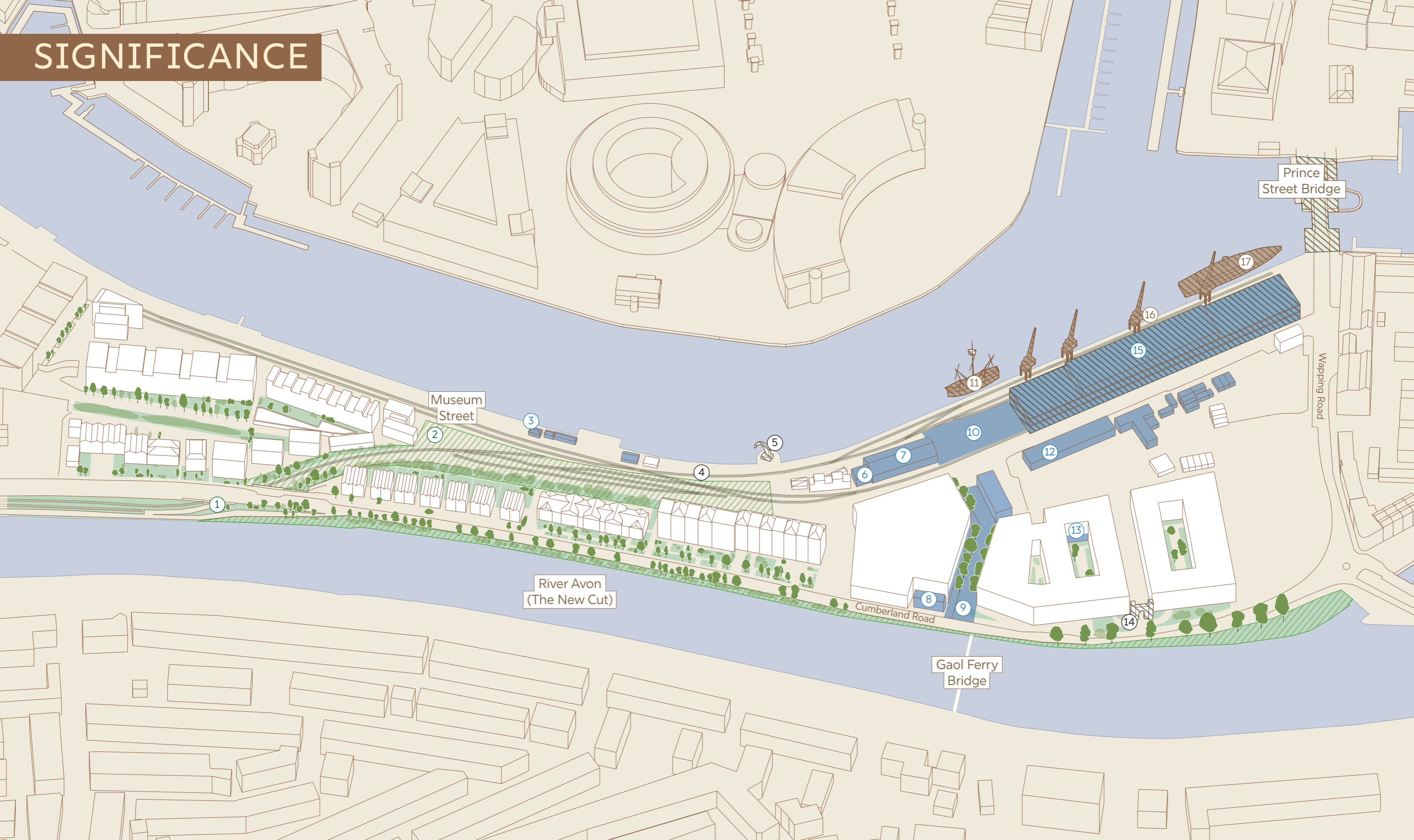
Well-loved by locals for its diverse offer of independent eateries, Wapping Wharf is recognised as a social hub to visit and engage in the food and drink culture. Museum Street, in particular, was highlighted as a popular leisure destination due to open views of the harbour, houseboats and historic remnants of cranes and railway tracks. Key opportunities were raised around activating the public realm through event programming in Museum Square and improving signage between attractions such as M-Shed, CARGO, and historic moorings. People also felt the Wapping Wharf area could better celebrate its historic infrastructure and attractions whilst providing an accessible and welcoming public realm for pedestrians and cyclists.







'I love Wapping Wharf because it's full of really innovative, independent, creative pop-up shops that are locally run and it's a safe place for people to hang out at night-time'



# SIGNIFICANCE



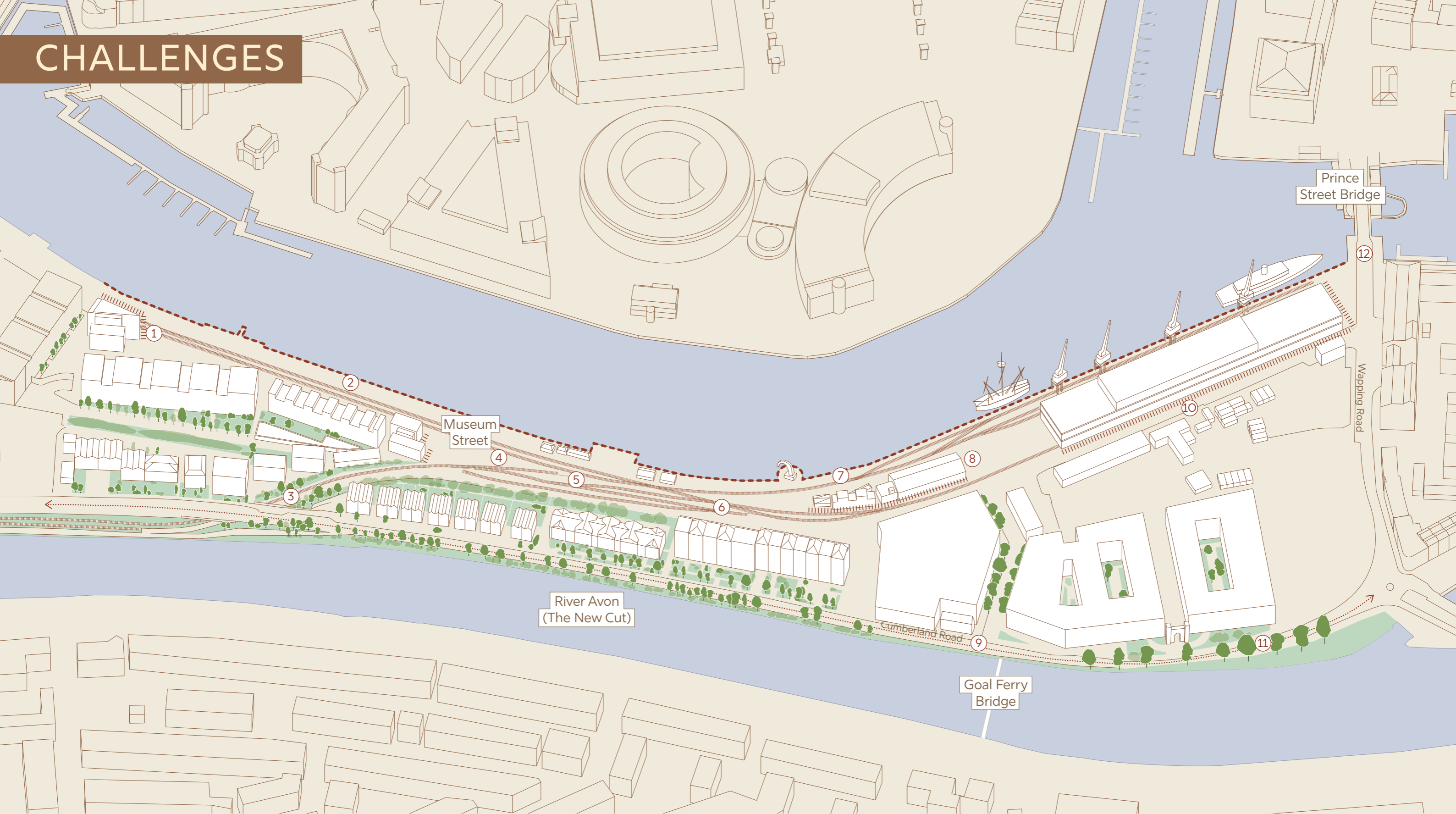
-  Heritage significance
-  Maritime significance
-  Social / cultural significance
-  Ecological significance

- ① Chocolate Path
- ② Site of outstanding biodiversity interest
- ③ Brunel's Buttery
- ④ Bristol's Old Harbour Railway
- ⑤ Fairbairn Steam Crane
- ⑥ The Olive Shed
- ⑦ The Art Warehouse

- ⑧ Bertha's Pizza
- ⑨ Gaol Ferry Steps
- ⑩ Museum Square
- ⑪ The Matthew of Bristol
- ⑫ CARGO Eateries
- ⑬ Bookhaus Bookshop
- ⑭ The Gateway

- ⑮ M Shed
- ⑯ Historic Cargo Cranes
- ⑰ MV Balmoral

# CHALLENGES



- Inconsistent water edge safety
- ..... Poor transport services
- ||||| Inactive frontages

- ① Narrow path with blind corners leading to Maritime car park
- ② Harbourside parking restricts pedestrian routes along Quayside walkway
- ③ Isolated / unwelcoming path joining Chocolate Path
- ④ No playspace, public green space or planting along Museum Street / Princes Wharf
- ⑤ Railway tracks are a hazard for pedestrians, cyclists and those with visual or physical impairments
- ⑥ North to south of Wapping Wharf disconnected / interrupted by roads and railway tracks
- ⑦ Precarious water edge safety
- ⑧ Competing needs in Museum Square inhibits public accessibility
- ⑨ Limited bus stops / coach drop-off along Cumberland Road
- ⑩ South side of M Shed lacks activation towards CARGO and Wapping Wharf development
- ⑪ Coach drop off along Cumberland Road to access M-Shed has limited parking in immediate area
- ⑫ Bottleneck of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians

# SIGNIFICANCE

## HERITAGE / MARITIME

Wapping Wharf has a strong association with ship building dating back to the 18th century, as the location of a dry dock and the most important shipyard in the city. Historic remnants can be found all around the area including old Bristol Harbour Railway lines and the gaol gatehouse, now a ruin following its closure in 1883. Original industrial structures such as Fairbairn steam crane and Prince Street hydraulic swing bridge have also been retained and are in working order. Wapping Wharf is also home to the M-shed museum, a Bristol City Council-run space housing Bristol focused exhibits in a 1950s dockside transit shed. Historic moorings can be found on the harbourside including MV Balmoral and a reconstruction of a 15th century caravel, the Matthew of Bristol.

## BIODIVERSITY

Wapping Wharf has two sites of outstanding biodiversity interest. The first site lines Museum street and the steep green banks of the old Bristol Harbour Railway. Dense vegetation along the railroad leads under Cumberland Road and onto the second site of ecological significance; the Chocolate path. The Chocolate path is a site of rich vegetation along the New Cut bank.

## SOCIAL / CULTURAL

Largely as a result of recent developments, Wapping Wharf has evolved to become an increasingly popular destination for food and leisure. It is a hub of thriving independent business such as the Bookhaus Bookshop and is especially recognised for CARGO, a meanwhile-site used during wider development to provide space for independent eateries, shops and bars in converted shipping containers. Due to its favourable location by the harbourside and growing new neighbourhoods, Wapping Wharf offers a vibrant community to live, work and dwell in with locally cherished institutions like Brunel's Buttery holding the fort as a cultural mainstay.

# CHALLENGES

## PUBLIC REALM

Public Realm in Wapping Wharf is challenging around Museum Street and Princes Wharf as, although it functions as a pedestrian quayside path, the railway tracks, safety infrastructure and vehicle routes create obstacles to accessibility. There is a lack of public playspace and greening which is required in an area of increasing housing provision and attractions. To the west of M-shed, Museum Square is underutilised due to competing needs which inhibit public accessibility.

## TRANSPORT

Public transport in the Wapping Wharf area is limited due to the lack of bus stops and coach drop-off points along Cumberland Road, affecting local and visitor accessibility. The width of Prince Street Bridge also creates a bottleneck for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, restricting the flow of traffic.

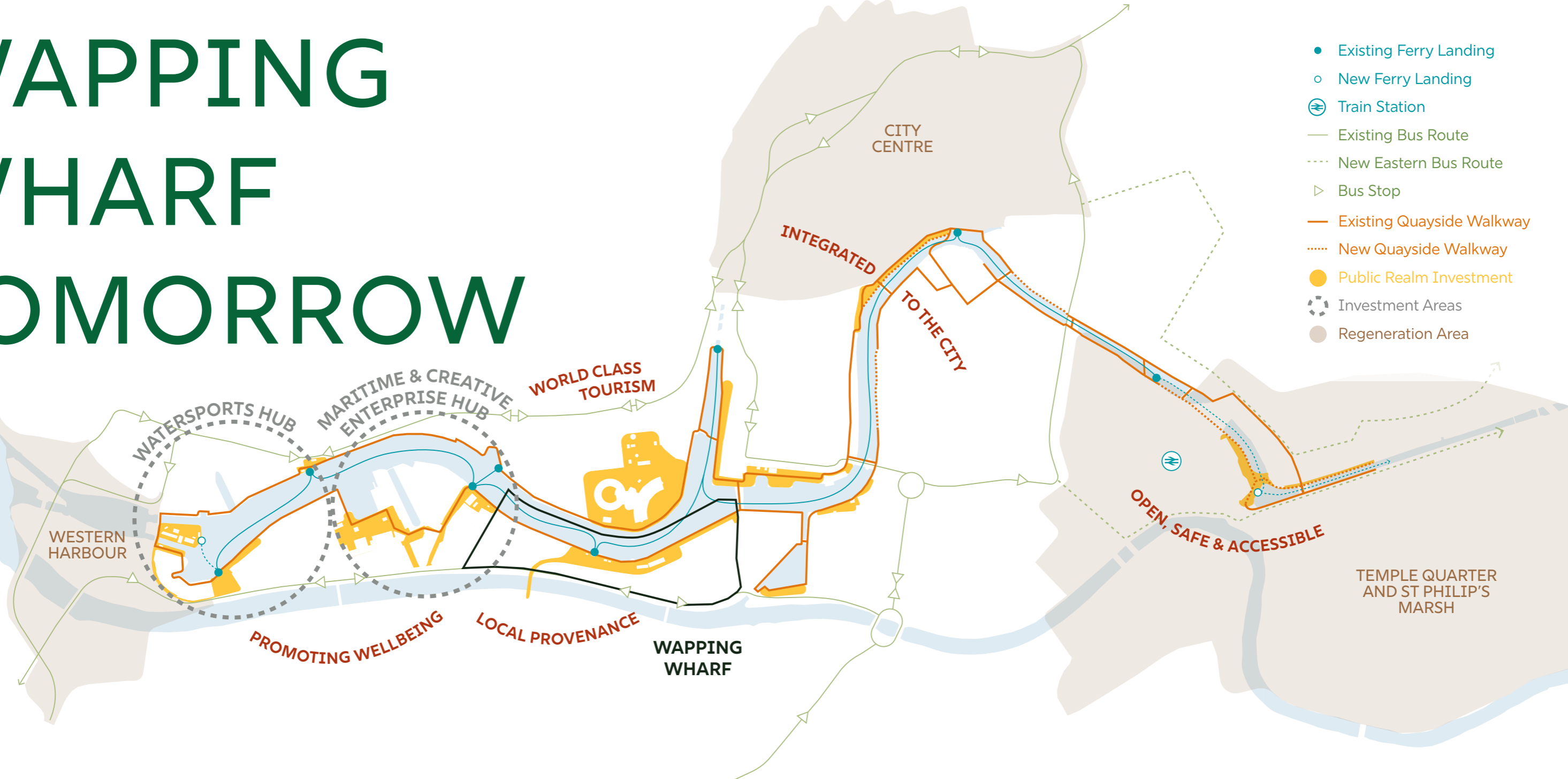
## SAFETY

The route connecting Museum street to the Chocolate path is isolated and unwelcoming with poor lighting and surveillance. The water edge protection along the quayside walkway of Museum Street and Princes Wharf is inconsistent with areas of no railings along a narrow path.

## CAR PARKING

The Wapping Wharf Harbourside car park is distributed inefficiently along the quayside and restricts pedestrian access and creates a narrow path with blind corners.

# WAPPING WHARF TOMORROW



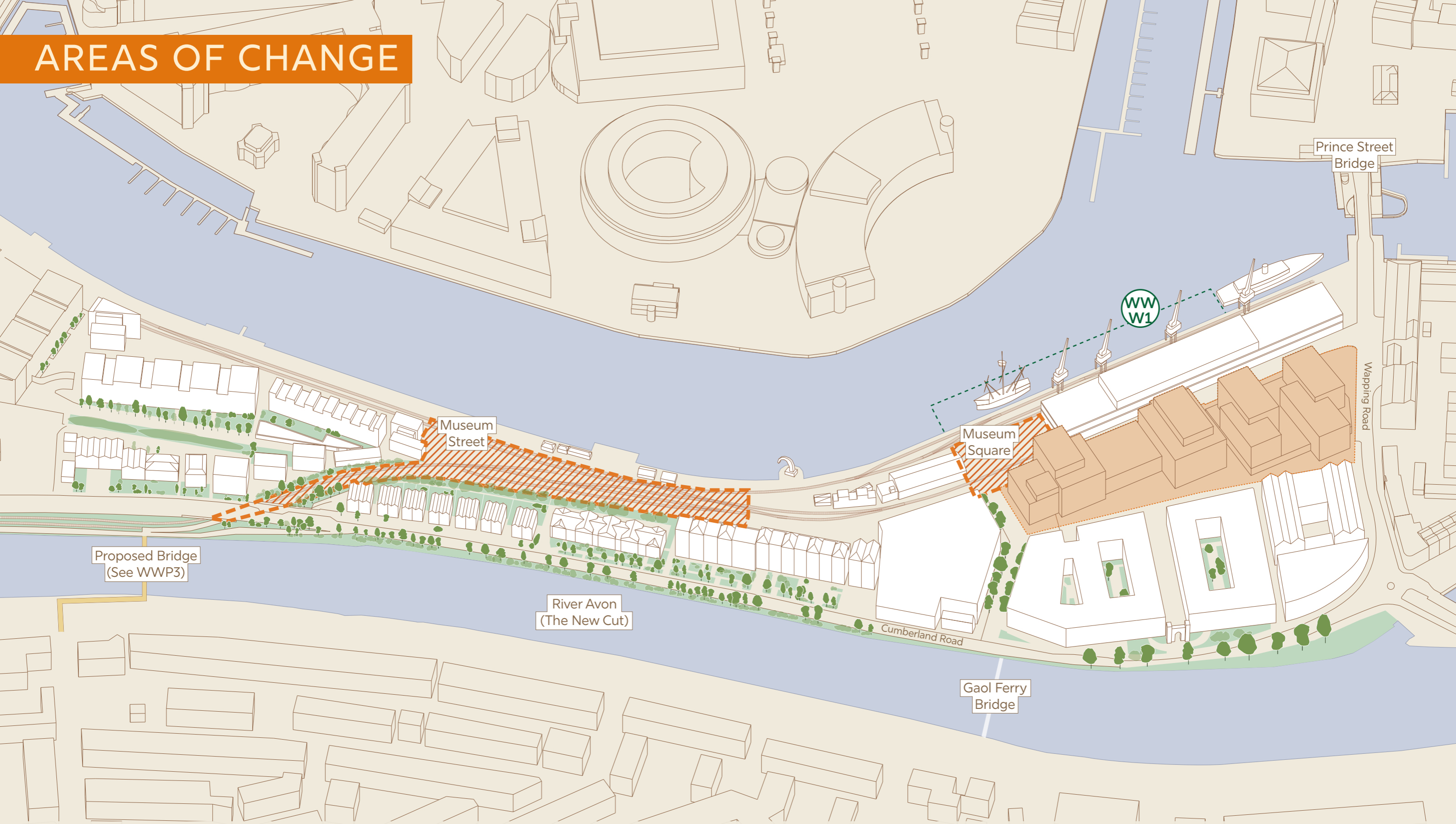
## VISION

Wapping Wharf will become Bristol's South Bank, a go-to place for culture, play and hanging-out. Museum Square is rejuvenated as the area's principle meeting space, where working exhibits and heritage vessels sit comfortably alongside outdoor film screenings and picnicking school parties. The mix of uses will grow and diversify, with trends visible today expected to intensify - a more permanent good quality food offer for example, capable of drawing customers from across the city. Thanks to its central location, its offer, and venues like M Shed, as well as a much-enlivened public realm and waterspace, the Wapping Wharf area will be reinforced as the gateway to the wider harbour, a place from which the wider harbour.

## KEY MOVES

- Delivery of final phases of Wapping Wharf development to ensure ongoing provision of high-quality independent businesses, especially but not limited to food & drink uses.
- M Shed to become more 'public-facing' along south-facing elevation addressing Museum Street in order to reflect public life on adjacent site.
- Public realm enhancements to (a) increase accessibility and porosity across the harbour at critical intersections (connection to Chocolate Path, Prince Street Bridge) and (b) create a clear 'centre' to the harbour at Museum Square, a place of orientation.

# AREAS OF CHANGE



**Key**

- Area of potential change
- Underutilised site with potential for increased activity
- Confirmed key development site
- Waterspace change

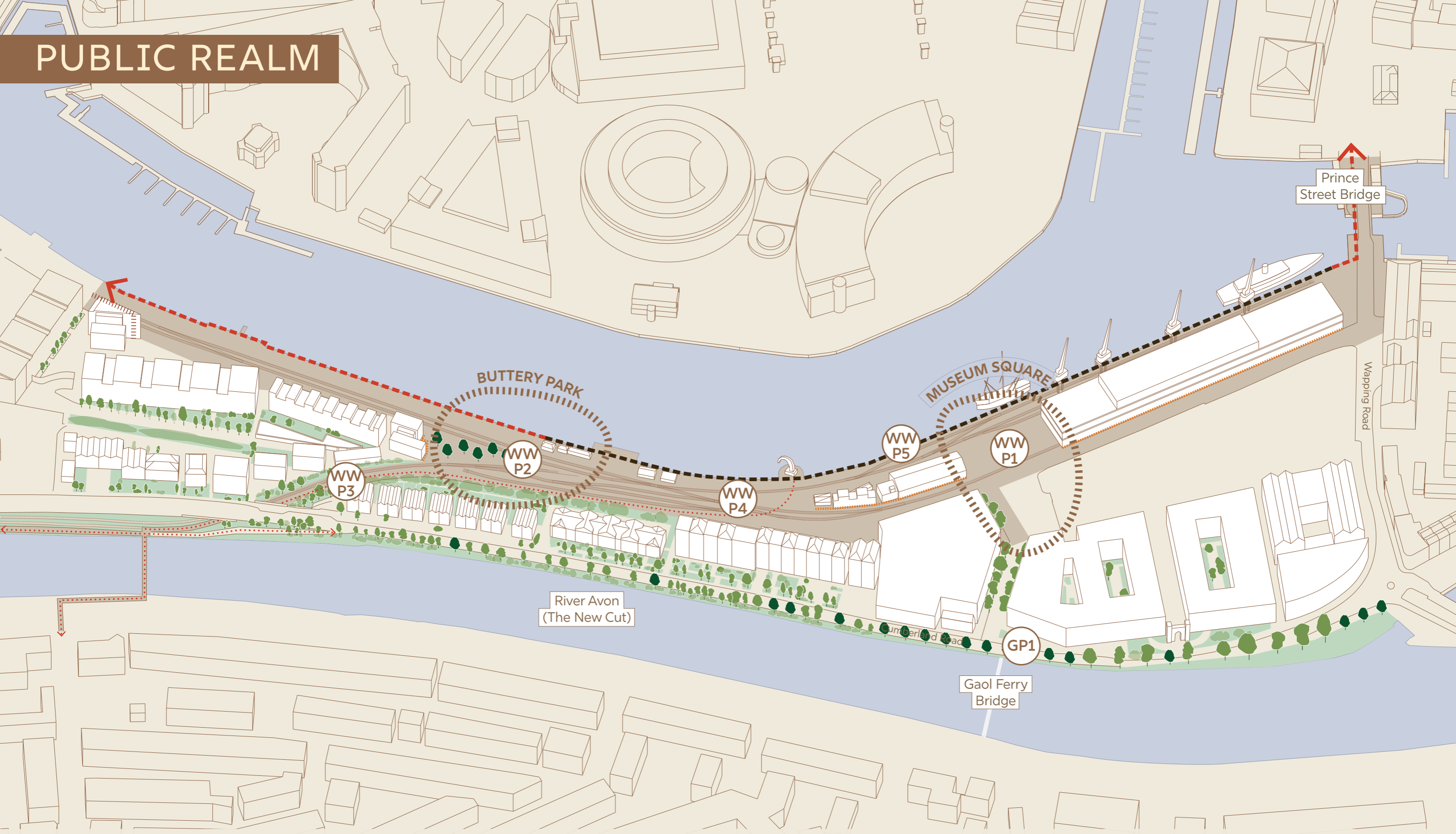
**Waterspace Interventions** (refer to Waterspace Plan)

WW  
W1 WWW1: Princes Wharf Heritage Moorings

Tomorrow

Tomorrow

# PUBLIC REALM



## Key

- Priority for public realm improvement
- Enhanced greening
- Active frontages
- Key public paces

- Existing Quayside Walkway
- Improved Quayside Walkway
- Improved secondary routes

## Place Specific Interventions

- WW  
P1 WWP1: Museum Square
- WW  
P2 WWP2: Buttery Park
- WW  
P3 WWP3: Chocolate Path Connection
- WW  
P4 WWP4: Railway Tracks

- WW  
P5 WWP5: Safety Measures

## Overarching Interventions

- GP1 GP1: Cumberland Road Tree Planting

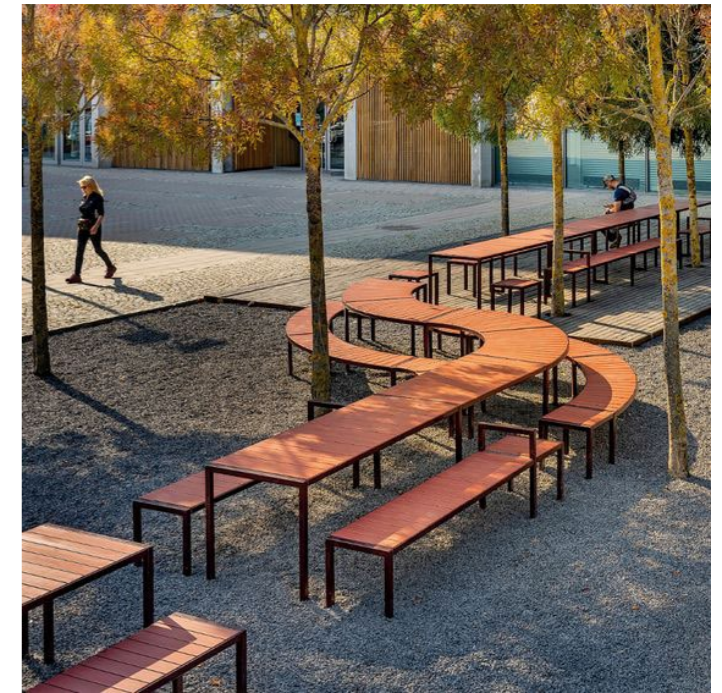
# Public Realm Interventions

Museum Square will be refocused as the public heart of the area, and as a host for cultural and culinary events. Buttery Park - an established space with a new focus on play and leisure - will humanise a key part of the Quayside Walkway. And the vital north/south connection through to the Chocolate Path will be reimagined as a safe, accessible public route. The historic character of the public realm will be properly respected but modified appropriately to boost safety and accessibility.

**Below: Museum Square is reimagined as an activated public realm for cultural activities, taking advantage of adjacent and nearby independent retailers.**



*Darling Square, Sydney - informal seating and greening in support of a space intended for public activity.*



*Långbordet public dining tables, designed by White Arkitekter*

## **WWP1: Museum Square**

Museum Square was originally intended to serve as an outdoor event space programmed by M Shed adjacent. The promise of this idea should be realised but in a way that acknowledges the wider diversity of actors and agents that now have a stake in the space, not least the wide array of independent businesses immediately adjacent, the heritage railway and the local creatives who would love a chance to boost their audience. Public realm transformations should involve creating greater visual harmony in the ground plane whilst respecting historic in-ground elements like the tracks; increased greening and shelter to respond to a general lack of places to rest, pause and eat in the area; a reduction in clutter whilst preserving safety and operational requirements; and lastly a pro-active approach to expanding the programmes of local organisations into the space, including but not limited to M Shed. As a subsidiary area of change, a more 'open' and lively M Shed presence along Museum Street would contribute to consolidating the idea of Wapping Wharf as 'Bristol's South Bank.'

### WWP2: Buttery Park

Creation of green playspace within characterful public realm along Museum Street focussing on improvements to the green space adjacent to Landmark Court and the utilisation of defunct railway sidings for interventions to create a new public realm space. Opportunities to encourage play and movement for all ages through equipment and outdoor gyms. The Buttery is an acknowledged local institution and could play a stronger placemaking role here, with expanded under-cover dining areas addressing active play elements and through routes.



*A public realm that promotes clarity but also which provokes play and engagement whilst not preventing more formal uses taking place.*



*Durable but flexible play and dwell equipment set in a landscape, by Sasaki Associates.*



*Covered dining and social space, by Jesse Lecavalier*

### WWP3: Chocolate Path Connection

Improved path between Museum Street and the Chocolate Path to create a more generous, well-lit and navigable route for pedestrians and cyclists. Integration with wider ambition to install a new bridge across the River Avon from the Chocolate Path to Camden Road.

### WWP4: Railway Tracks

Create level surfaces around historic railway tracks to improve accessibility and safety. Retention of industrial and gritty character.

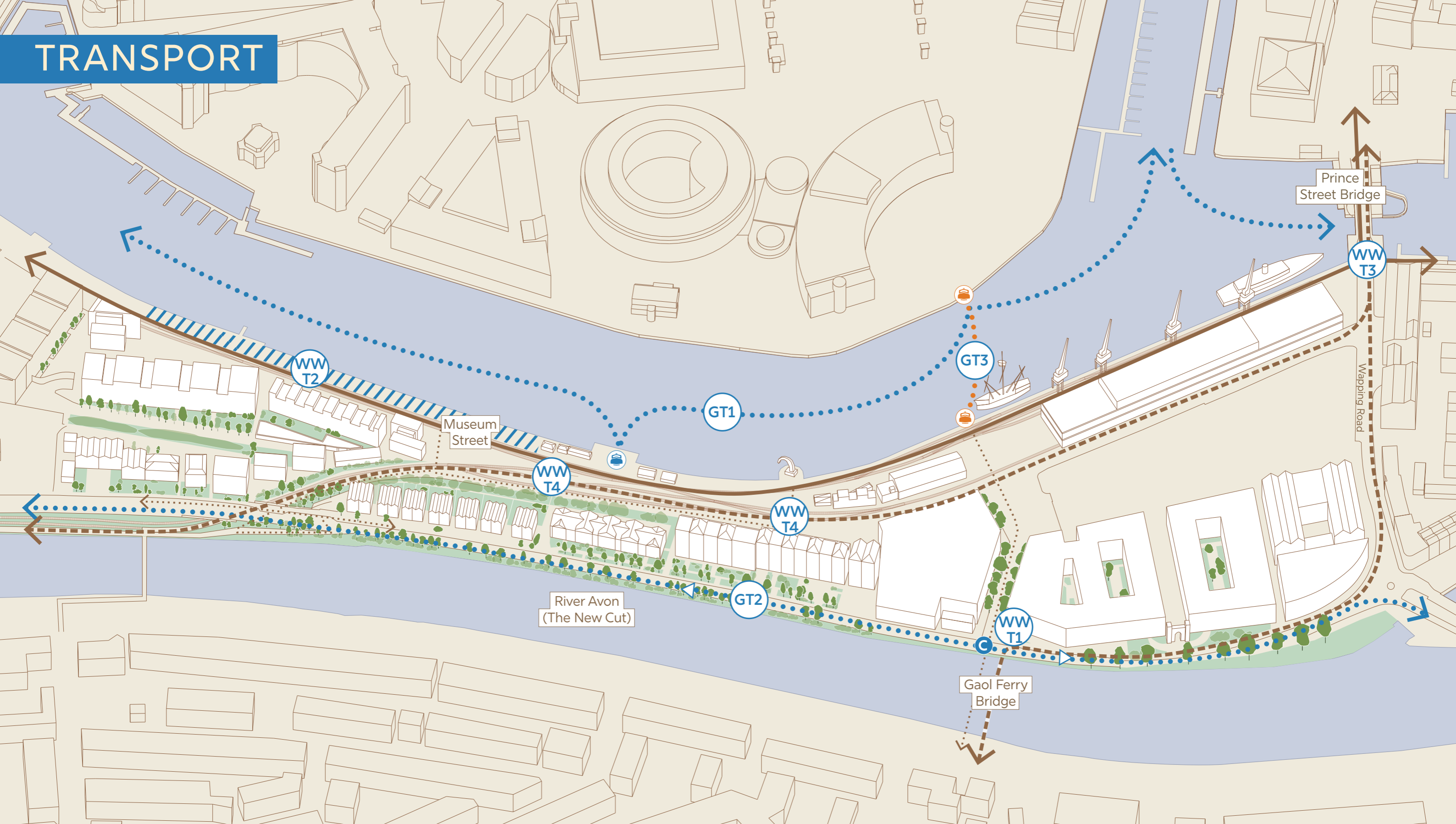
### WWP5: Safety Measures

Review of existing safety measures in place for the harbour and heritage railway operations. New safety strategy to be integrated into the wider public realm with well-designed, robust and accessible interventions.



*Metro do Porto has achieved careful integration of rails with hard and soft landscaping.*

# TRANSPORT



## Key

- Bus stop
- Coach parking
- Existing ferry landing
- Improved transport service
- More efficient land use

- Cycle route
- Primary pedestrian route
- Secondary pedestrian route
- New / reinstated ferry landing
- New transport service

## Place Specific Interventions

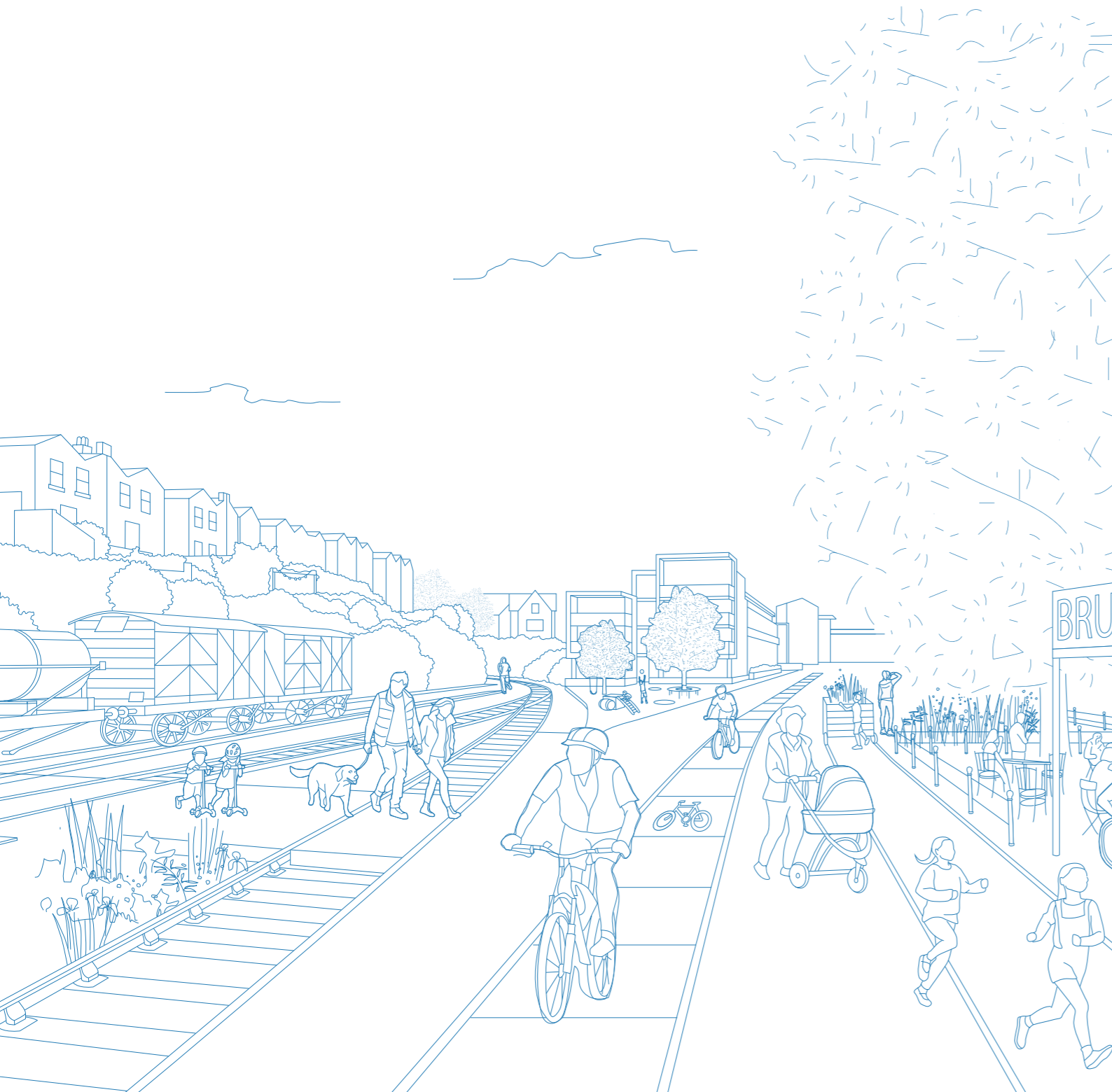
- WWT1: Coach Provision
- WWT2: Wapping Wharf Harbourside Car Park
- WWT3: Prince Street Bridge
- WWT4: Museum Street Restrictions

## Overarching Interventions

- GT1: Enhanced Ferry Provision
- GT2: Enhanced Metrobus Provision
- GT3: Chain Link Crossing

# Transport Interventions

In transport terms, work is needed to rationalise, rebalance and clarify a set of public spaces in order to achieve a truly safe, legible and accessible public realm. Work in this direction, given Wapping Wharf's centrality to the Harbour, will have huge impacts on the accessibility of the Harbour as whole.



**Left: Museum Street, as a wide, lively Quayside walkway with commercial activity, designated cycle lanes, clear sightlines and retained railway lines.**

## **WWT1: Coach Provision**

Relocation of M-Shed's coach drop-off to Cumberland Road with excellent connections via Gaol Ferry Steps. Expanded coach parking at the Western end of Cumberland Road: refer *Baltic Wharf Place Plan*.

## **WWT2: Wapping Wharf Harbourside Car Park**

Rationalised layout and enforcement of harbourside parking to allow wider Quayside Walkway and designated cycle lane. Retain railway lines and industrial character/materiality of the space whilst enhancing access.

## **WWT3: Prince Street Bridge**

Recommendation to close Prince Street Bridge to regular vehicular traffic.

Improved designations between pedestrians, cyclists and cars along Prince Street Bridge to make a safer junction and entrance experience into Wapping Wharf from the north.

## **WWT4: Museum Street Restrictions**

Reduced traffic along this stretch of Museum Street, allowing access for residents, deliveries and emergency vehicles only, to reduce car/pedestrian conflicts.

# TABLE OF INTERVENTIONS & INITIATIVES

- Transport
- Public Realm
- Areas of Change
- Waterspace
- Initiatives
- Quick Wins

CODE	PROJECT	WHAT	VISION OUTCOMES	LEAD / OTHER PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME 1 - short (2 yrs) 2 - medium (2-5 yrs) 3 - long (5+ yrs)	DEPENDENCIES which projects need completing / are dependent upon others	COST £ - below £500K ££ - £500K - £2 million £££ - £2million +	FUNDING OPTIONS
GP1	Cumberland Road Tree Planting	Avenue tree planting along the length of Cumberland Road where possible to deliver biodiversity net gain and provide shade along key pedestrian routes.						
WWP1	Museum Square	Public realm transformations should involve creating greater visual harmony in the ground plane whilst respecting historic in-ground elements like the tracks; increased greening and shelter.						
WWP2	Buttery Park	Creation of green playspace within characterful public realm along Museum Street focussing on improvements to the green space adjacent to Landmark Court and the utilisation of defunct railway sidings for interventions to create a new public realm space. Opportunities to encourage play and movement for all ages through equipment and outdoor gyms. The Buttery is an acknowledged local institution and could play a stronger placemaking role here, with expanded under-cover dining areas addressing active play elements and through routes.						

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WWP3	Chocolate Path Connection	Improved path between Museum Street and the Chocolate Path to create a more generous, well-lit and navigable route for pedestrians and cyclists. Integration with wider ambition to install a new bridge across the River Avon from the Chocolate Path to Camden Road.						
WWP4	Railway Tracks	Create level surfaces around historic railway tracks to improve accessibility and safety. Retention of industrial and gritty character.						
WWP5	Safety Measures	Review of existing safety measures in place for the harbour and heritage railway operations. New safety strategy to be integrated into the wider public realm with well-designed, robust and accessible interventions.						
GT1	Enhanced Ferry Provision	An enhanced and consolidated ferry service with additional capacity and extended services being provided. Route to zig zag along harbour to better connect north and south. Improvements to ferry landing locations including seating, shelter, signage and safety. Opportunity to extend ferry services beyond the floating harbour to serve the Western Harbour and the Feeder Canal.						
GT2	Enhanced Metrobus Provision	Enhanced Metrobus service along Cumberland Road with service expanded to Sundays and evenings. Improved bus connections around the harbour that connect to coach drop-off points and Temple Meads Train Station.						

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CODE	PROJECT	WHAT	VISION OUTCOMES	LEAD / OTHER PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME 1 - short (2 yrs) 2 - medium (2-5 yrs) 3 - long (5+ yrs)	DEPENDENCIES which projects need completing / are dependent upon others	COST £ - below £500K ££ - £500K - £2 million £££ - £2million +	FUNDING OPTIONS
GT3	Chain Link Crossing	Installation of two continuous chain link crossings to provide north / south connection across the harbour. Located between SS Great Britain and the Harbour Inlet; and between M-Shed and the Amphitheatre.						
WWT1	Coach Provision	Relocation of M-Shed's coach drop-off to Cumberland Road with excellent connections via Gaol Ferry Steps. Expanded coach parking at the Western end of Cumberland Road: refer Baltic Wharf Place Plan.						
WWT2	Wapping Wharf Harbourside Car Park	Rationalised layout and enforcement of harbourside parking to allow wider Quayside Walkway and designated cycle lane. Retain railway lines and industrial character/materiality of the space whilst enhancing access.						
WWT3	Prince Street Bridge	Recommendation to close Prince Street Bridge to regular vehicular traffic. Improved designations between pedestrians, cyclists and cars along Prince Street Bridge to make a safer junction and entrance experience into Wapping Wharf from the north.						
WWT4	Museum Street Restrictions	Reduced traffic along this stretch of Museum Street, allowing access for residents, deliveries and emergency vehicles only, to reduce car/ pedestrian conflicts.						

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