

London Heritage Quarter Wayfinding Strategy Executive Summary | 2024



LONDON HERITAGE QUARTER

City ID

1. Introduction



Project goals

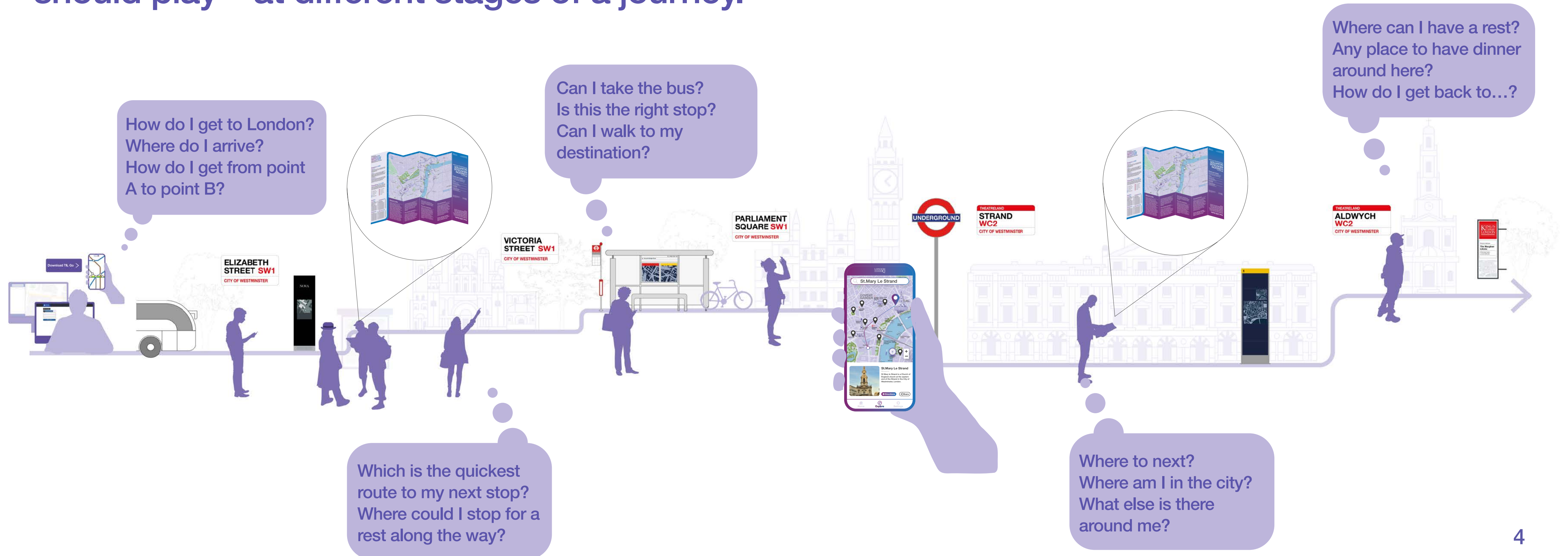
The term ‘wayfinding’ encompasses all the ways in which people comprehend physical space and navigate from place to place.

The primary project goal is to plan wayfinding enhancements that will give visitors more confidence to locate themselves, make decisions, and move around the area. Wayfinding enhancements will positively impact people’s perceptions of the area, increase vibrancy, and support economic prosperity.

- Creating a more attractive place to live, work and play
- Supporting active travel and sustainable movement
- Improving tourism offer, encouraging longer and repeat stays
- Enhancing footfall and encouraging the ‘return to the office’

Key objective

A key objective in achieving these goals is to clarify the roles various existing wayfinding systems currently play – and should play – at different stages of a journey.



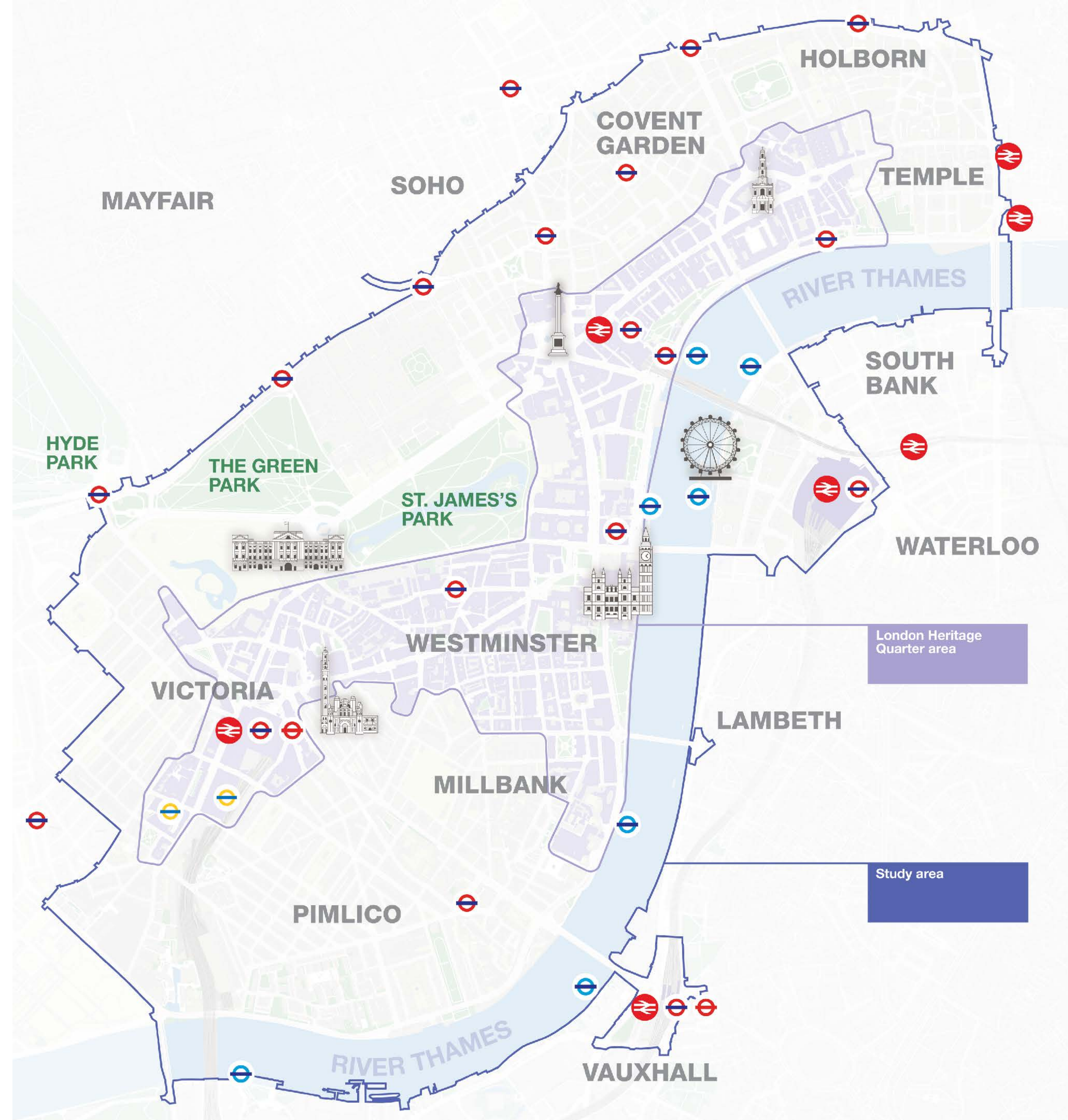
Project scope

Study area

The study area comprises of the London Heritage Quarter footprint (shown right), as well as an approximate 5–10 minute walking area around the London Heritage Quarter boundary.

The project team defined this extended study area because good wayfinding supports movement to, through and from a given focus area.

The study area shown includes adjacent neighbourhoods that border the Thames and connections to near-by areas, attractions and transport environments.



The strategy

Partnerships at different scales

The Wayfinding Strategy

This document builds upon past and ongoing work that has contributed positively to the wayfinding experience in this part of London.

- The London Plan (Greater London Authority)
- Visitor Experience Strategy (London & Partners)
- Legible London: System Architecture (TfL)
- City Plan 2019–2040 (WCC)*
- Westminster Way: Public Realm Strategy (WCC)
- Westminster Walking Strategy (WCC)
- People Wanted/Public Realm Strategies (London Heritage Quarter)
- Fairer Westminster 2022-2026 (WCC)

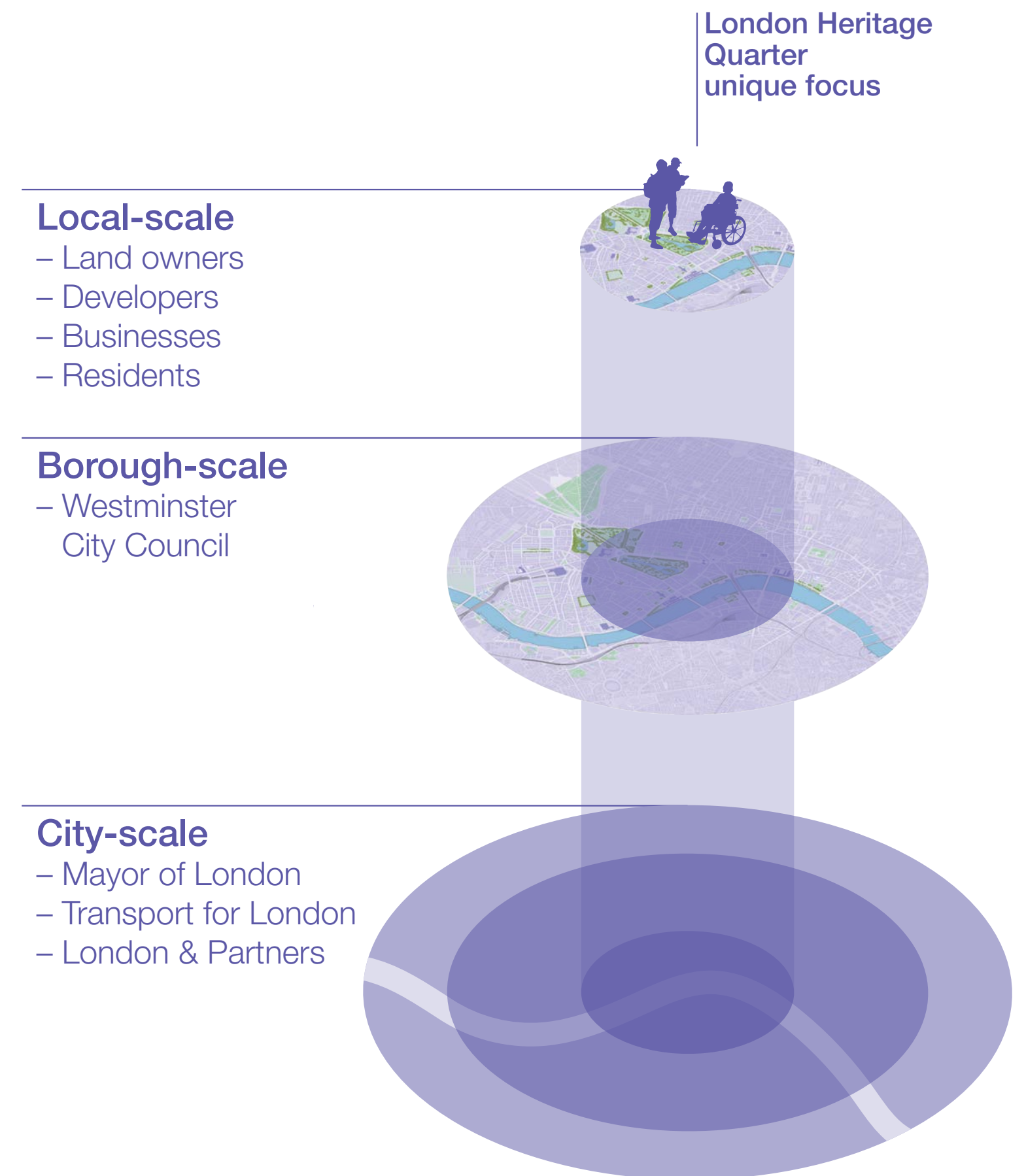
*City Plan is being updated.

Partnership

London Heritage Quarter recognises that effective partnership is critical to the success of this strategy.

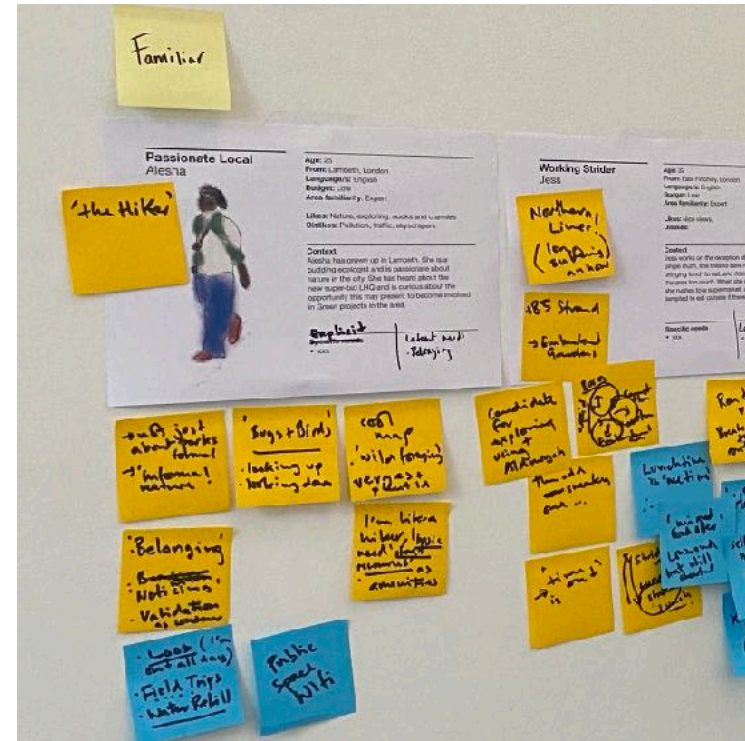
London Heritage Quarter is uniquely focussed on creating more vibrant places to live, visit and work in this part of London and supporting economic growth. This unique focus – and the strong support of the business community – underpins London Heritage Quarter’s commitment to foster partnerships with city and borough scale stakeholders, as well as with land owners and developers who can provide investment and support implementation.

This strategy recognises the need for effective partnership at different scales by structuring concepts and recommendations in a manner that reflects the partnership processes needed for delivery.

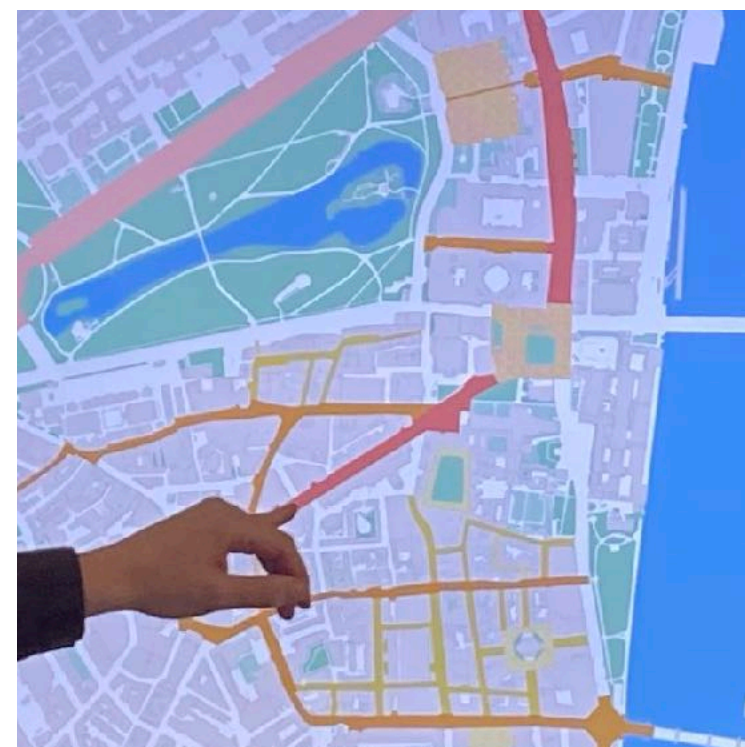
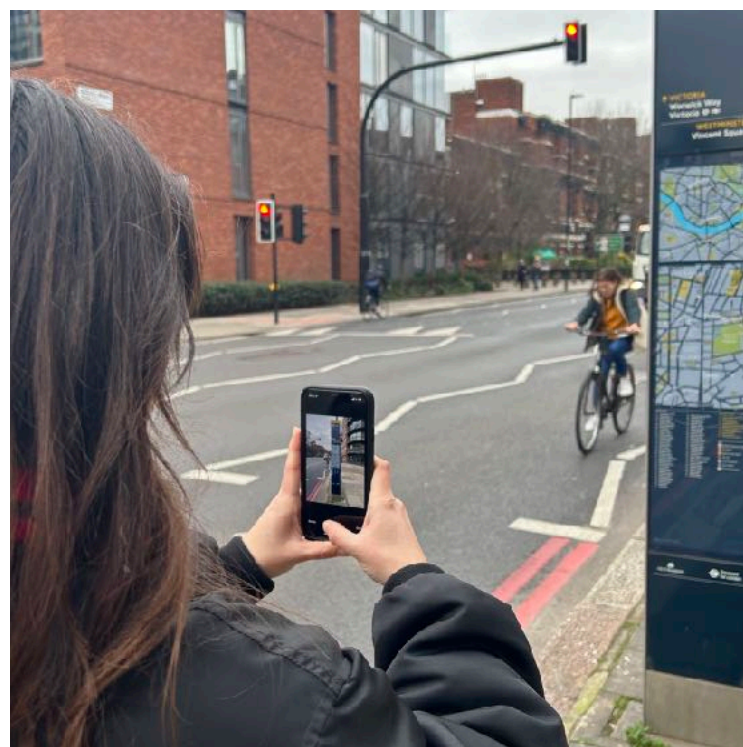
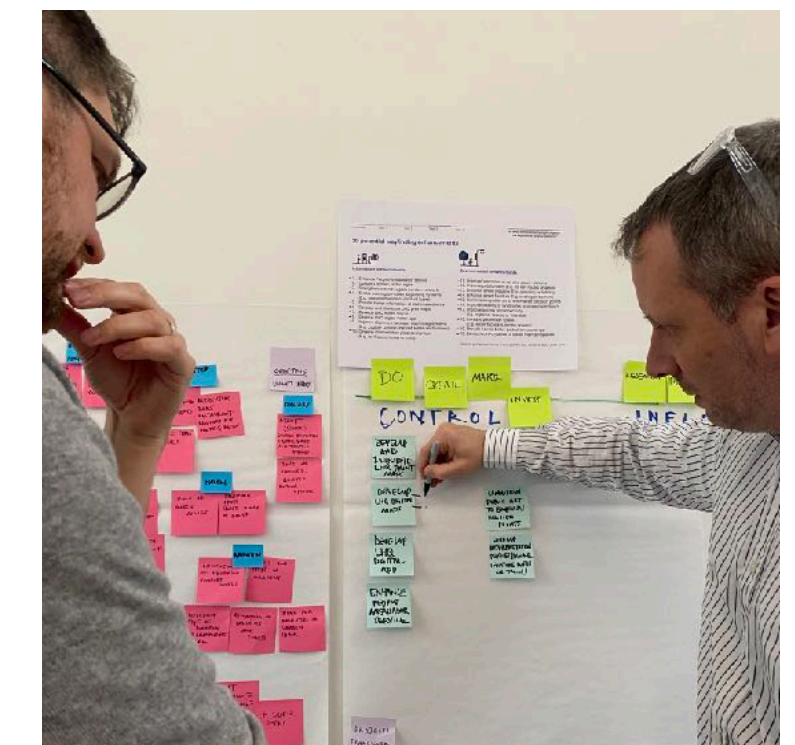
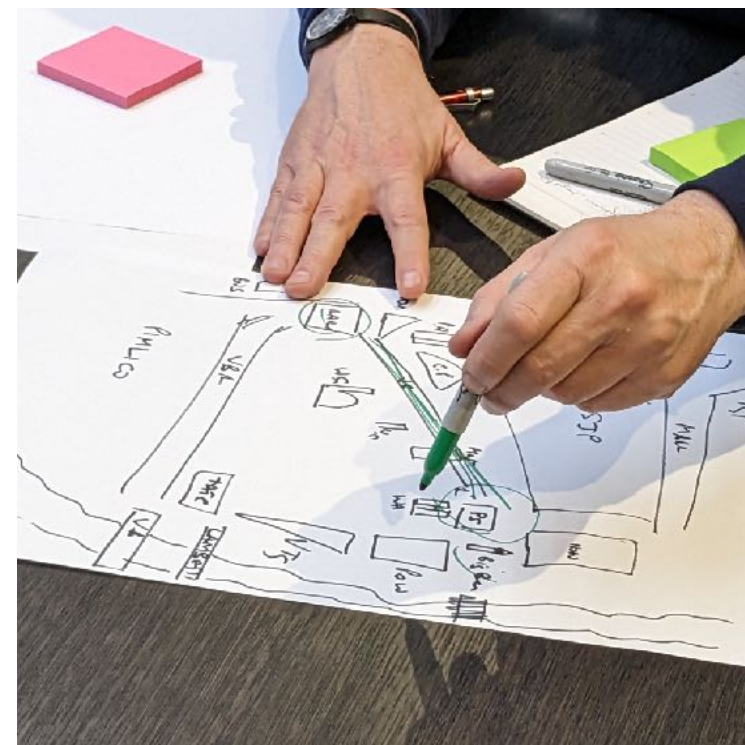


2. Assessment





- ### Assessment methods
- On-site observation
 - Information provision audits
 - Spatial analysis
 - User identification
 - Stakeholder workshops



Key findings

1. Place identity

- The area benefits from unparalleled historical significance as a centre of government, religion and monarchy, but continues to be shaped by the activities of Londoners, workers and visitors that flood the area daily.
- The London Heritage Quarter area contains a rich mix of character areas, many of which comprise distinctive architecture, historical streetscapes and historic area names.
- Enhancing the quality of information and environments has the potential to drastically enhance the identity and perception of London Heritage Quarter.
- Encouraging people to think of this area as a patchwork of character areas will encourage exploration and raise the profile of London Heritage Quarter.
- Strong partnerships, user-centric design approaches, and guiding values can help imbue all areas with a level of care and quality that helps set London Heritage Quarter apart.

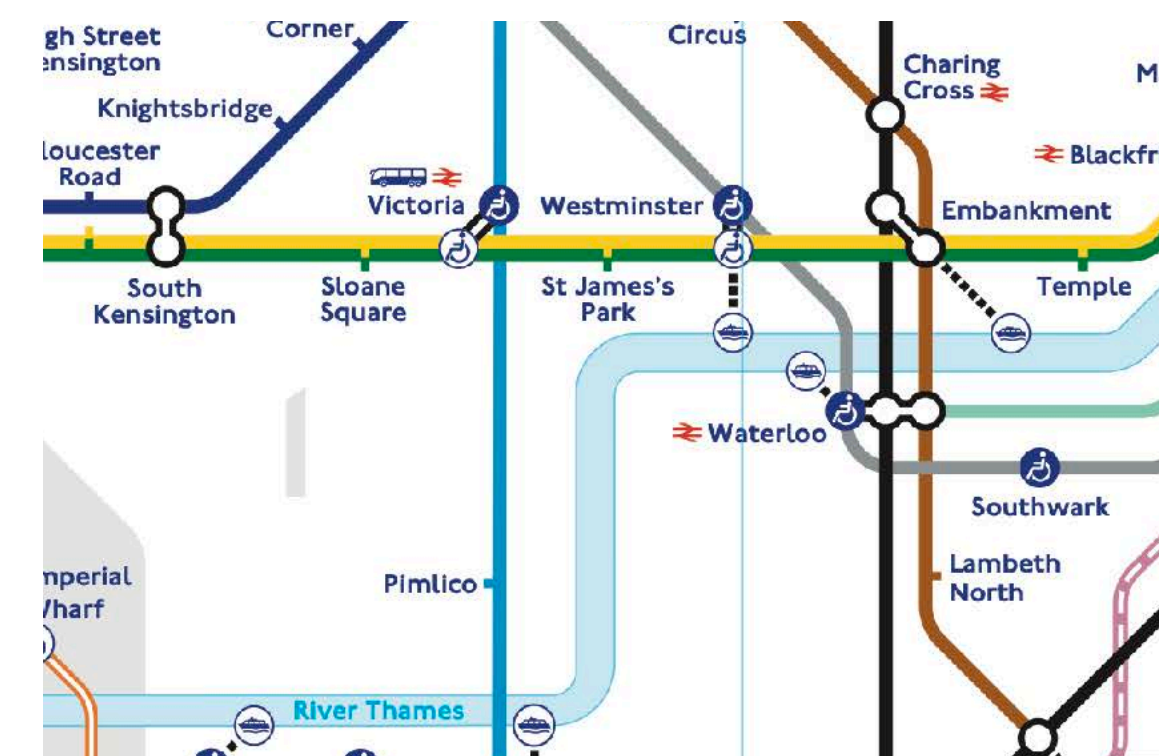
2. Welcome

- London Heritage Quarter is home to three of the busiest transport stations in London. These rail and coach stations often feel neglected, with poor information leaving visitors feeling disorientated and confused.
- The area's stations and bus terminals, welcome hundreds of millions of people to London each year, providing an urgent opportunity to provide a better 'sense of welcome' and to encourage people to spend more time in the area.
- New visitors in particular want to feel welcomed and oriented on arrival, giving them the confidence to understand their options and plan their onward journeys.
- A wide range of improvements are possible, from short-term interventions that provide essential information in appropriate locations, to the long-term re-generation of transport facilities to provide world-class arrival experiences.

3. Mental Maps

- Strengthening mental maps can give people confidence to walk more and explore an area.
- The London Heritage Quarter area contains some of the UK's most recognisable landmarks and views, yet it is challenging to form an accurate mental map due to the varied street patterns, constricted pedestrian space and constrained sightlines.
- The dominant image of the River Thames running from west to east through London, contorts perceptions as the river-side in this area runs north-south. The London Underground Map further enforces this perception and distorts the sense of distance between areas.
- As well as improving the treatment of key landmark buildings, more distinctive and memorable environmental features are required within the streetscape at key nodes to aid recognition.

- Providing better access to and along the riverside provides major opportunities for improving mental maps. In this sense, the river acts not only as a defining landmark, but as a place to view the cityscape and re-orient.
- Better representations of the area's relationship to the river are key to revealing the area's spatial structure and creating a more intuitive and rewarding place to navigate.



Key findings

4. Sharing space

- The inherent qualities of some of London Heritage Quarter's main streets and spaces have eroded or are made difficult to appreciate due to the volume of vehicle traffic.
- The competing demands of vehicles, pedestrians and micro-mobility are particularly evident on major arterial routes and in close proximity to stations, generating congestion and noise that reduces the comfort and 'walkability' of the environment.
- Walking should become the first choice for people traversing the area. Re-balancing demands, reducing vehicle priority and providing calmer spaces are all key to making visits in this area more pleasurable.
- A step-change in the proportion and quality of pedestrian space is crucial to supporting tourism and leisure activity. Enhancements can be prioritised based on areas with the greatest congestion and conflicts.

5. Connectivity and accessibility

- London Heritage Quarter has close proximity to famous parks, riverside, major arterial thoroughfares and enclosed court yards, but proximity is often unclear.
- Enhancing accessible and intuitive links to and from these spaces will provide new opportunities for walking and leisure, elevating the user experience and re-shaping perceptions of the area.
- Providing options to walk 'one street back' and get to know the area better and access amenities can provide a key attractor and spread footfall.
- More comfortable and direct pedestrian crossings alongside more permeable sites will encourage walking and exploration.
- Readily available access to toilet facilities, seating, refreshments and internet connections are key to providing more welcoming and accessible places.

6. Information and messaging

- There are multiple wayfinding systems in London Heritage Quarter that each have an important role to play.
- The most prominent system is Legible London that performs well, remains in good condition, but requires comprehensive updates.
- Consistency between Legible London and other TfL managed information is good and often cited as best practice.
- However, inconsistency between these systems and other providers, such as Network Rail, parks and destinations, makes navigating through this area more complex.
- Promotional information plays a role in strengthening the area's identity, but this information is currently lacking and some places feel uncared for.
- The London Heritage Quarter brand can help fill gaps in information, as well as endorsing and unifying a diversity of areas and destinations.

7. Expressing the offer

- Revealing the richness of what London Heritage Quarter has to offer will elevate the status of the area, help animate spaces and encourage visitors to explore a little further.
- Expressing the character and activity of the area will engender a greater sense of belonging in the streets, places and spaces that make up London Heritage Quarter.
- Existing wayfinding information systems provide a valuable and well-used service, but lack the richness of information that new visitors seek or that destinations wish to convey their location and offer.
- Raising awareness of what is nearby and what is happening when will help raise the profile of London Heritage Quarter across the city and far beyond.

3. Vision & Concept



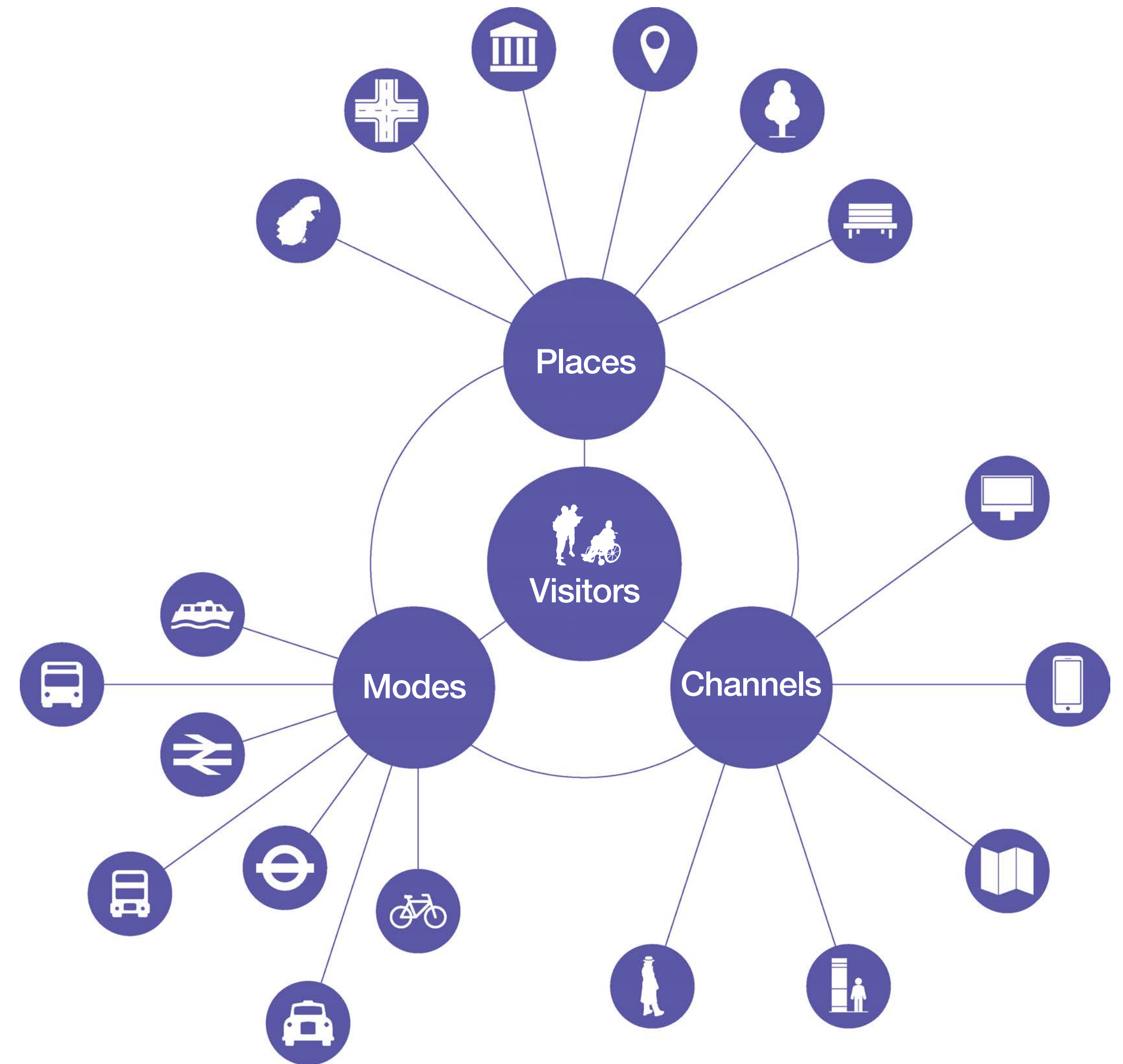
Vision

Good wayfinding is fundamental to creating a world-class visitor destination, enabling and enriching everyone's experience of a place.

London Heritage Quarter will become the most welcoming and walkable place in London – where all visitors feel oriented and confident making decisions to move to, within and from the area.

London Heritage Quarter can achieve this by taking a leadership position in understanding the visitor experience and championing a people-centric approach that connects all visitors with:

- All types of places – to aid engagement
- All transport modes – to aid mobility
- All communication channels – to aid awareness



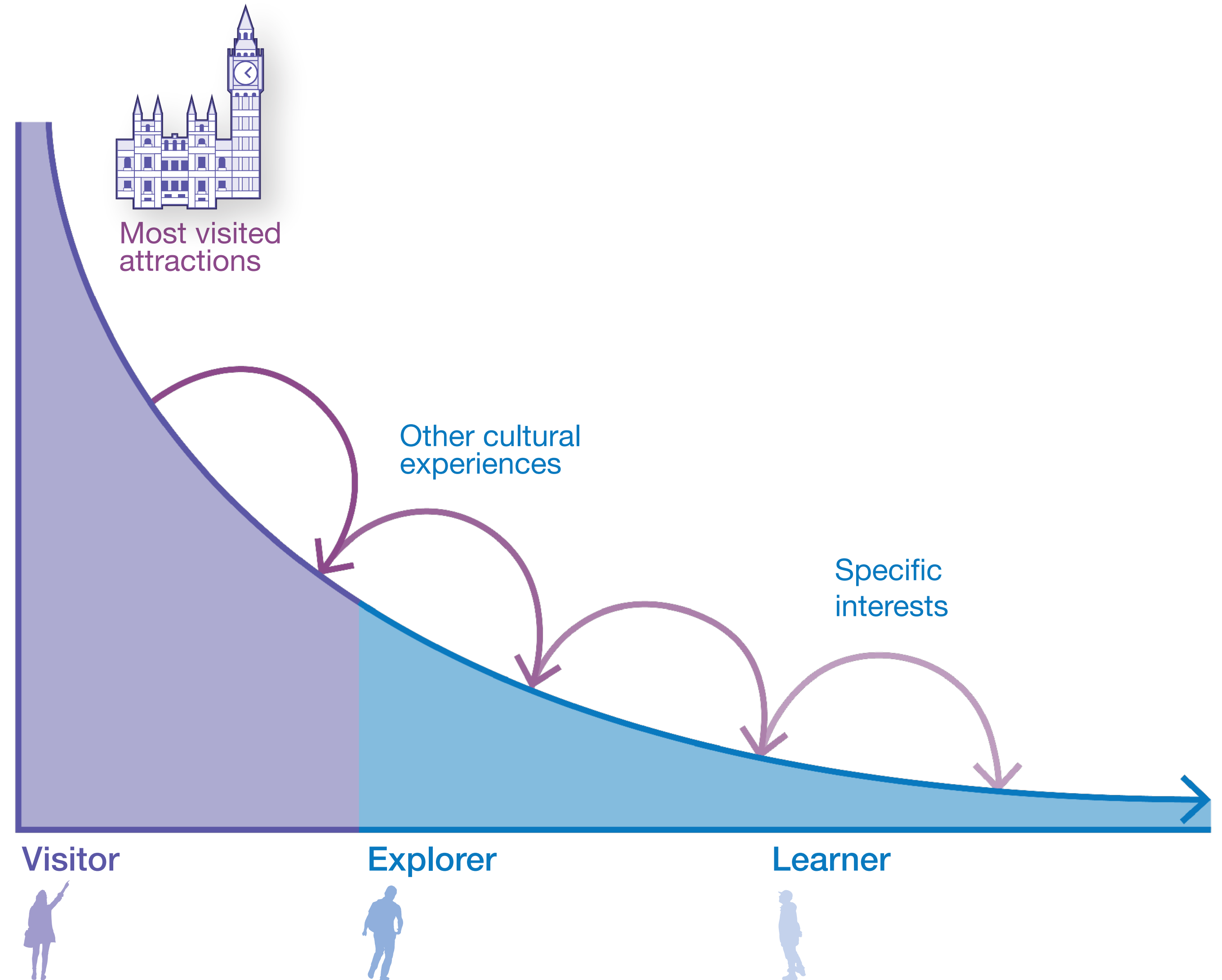
The opportunity

Major attractors

- “Cultural experiences” – including museums, galleries and attractions – is by far the most frequently cited reason for visiting London.
- London Heritage Quarter provides access to several of London’s most visited attractions – Buckingham Palace, The Houses of Parliament, National Gallery, Tate Britain and the West End.
- These attractions generate significant footfall, spend and congestion, but there is a tendency for first-time visitors to ‘pop-up and go’ without exploring further.
- The proximity to, and walkability between, near-by attractions, events and activities is often unclear to unfamiliar visitors.

Broadening the offer

- Diversifying the appeal of the area, raising awareness of cultural experiences and local heritage within walking distance, and revealing trails and other locations of specific interest will encourage exploration, help spread footfall, extend stays, and encourage repeat visits.



Information enhancements

Information provision and roles

Wayfinding information is provided through multiple communication channels and within different environments. Hard infrastructure includes on-street signs and in-situ panels or displays. Soft infrastructure includes print and digital information.

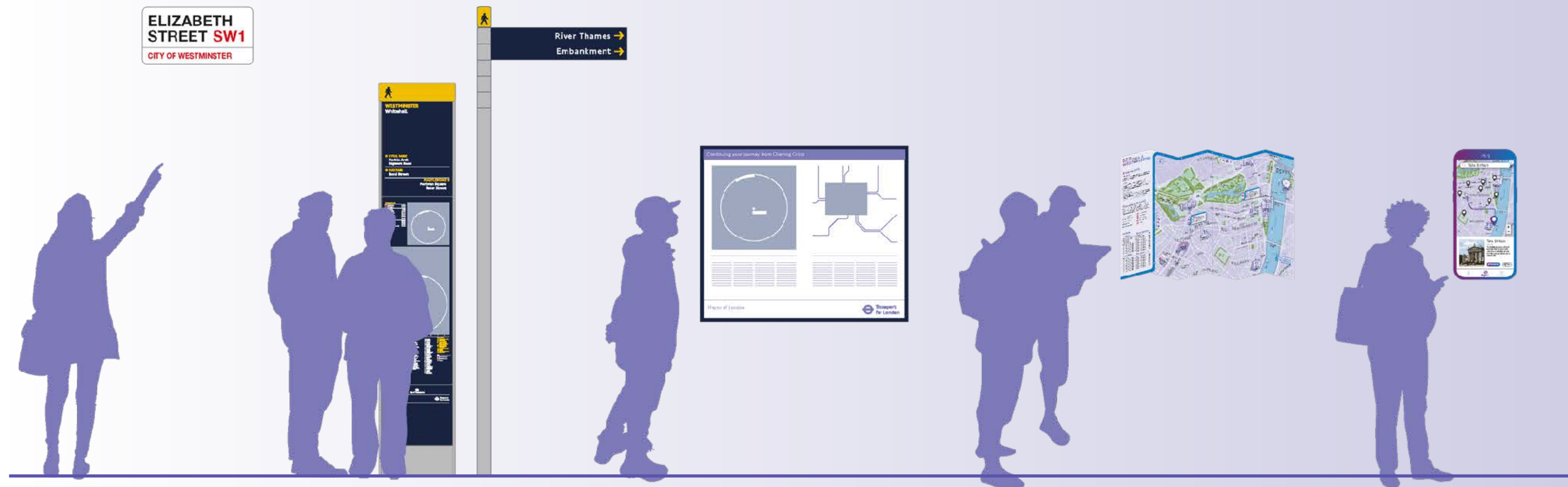
Physical infrastructure requires significant investment and a long term commitment to manage and maintain. As such, this strategy recognises the important role of partners, such as statutory authorities, facility managers and land owners in providing and maintaining this infrastructure.

However, it is typically not economically viable to update physical infrastructure frequently and so the information presented must be considered stable and likely to be relevant for months or years to come.

Hard infrastructure caters well to primary wayfinding needs, but does not address all needs as visitors are often seeking greater awareness of character areas, activity areas or interpretative information. London Heritage Quarter has the opportunity to provide this richer content, promoting businesses and encouraging footfall through soft infrastructure such as printed and digital information.

Hard infrastructure
Focus for London Heritage Quarter partners

Soft infrastructure
Focus for London Heritage Quarter



Lower frequency of update

Higher frequency of update

Stable information

Variable information

- Area and street names
- Transport connections
- Spatial structure

- Activity areas
- Events and happenings
- Heritage and interpretation

Long-term commitment

Short-term commitment

Environmental enhancements

Multiple intervention types

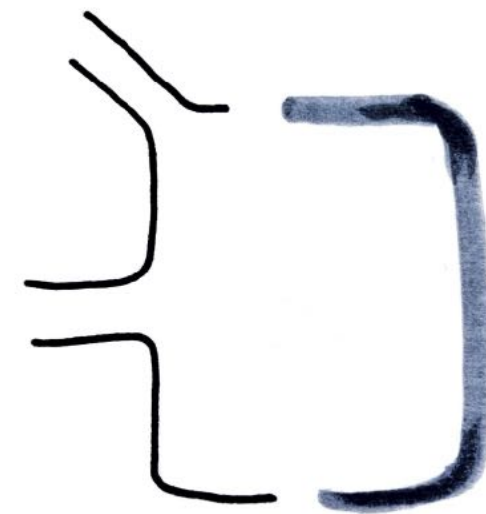
A more legible urban form gives people greater confidence to explore an area and engage with their surroundings. Planning and designing environments in a user-centric way focusses efforts on creating places that are easier to make sense of, more enticing and rewarding to use, and which encourage a diversity of activity.

A range of environmental enhancements, from major to minor interventions, can help make London Heritage Quarter the most welcoming and walkable place in London and strengthen the identity and reputation of London Heritage Quarter.

A scale of environmental enhancements are described on the following pages to provide a visitor experience perspective on future opportunities and to help inform and inspire future projects. This strategy highlights a number of opportunity areas where these enhancements could be considered.

* A schema is a collection of related environmental features that are applied spatially to create sequences (such as an art trail), strengthen patterns (such as applying street furniture pallets based on a hierarchy of routes) or to convey meaning (such as interpretative trails)

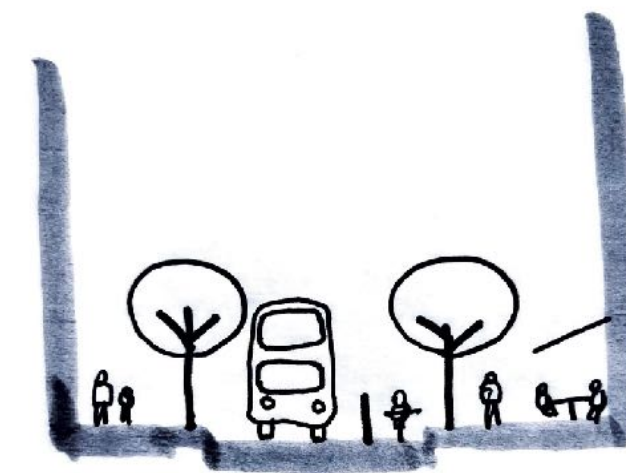
Macro enhancements



Recreate

Re-modelling of all aspects of a space based on new objectives or future priorities.

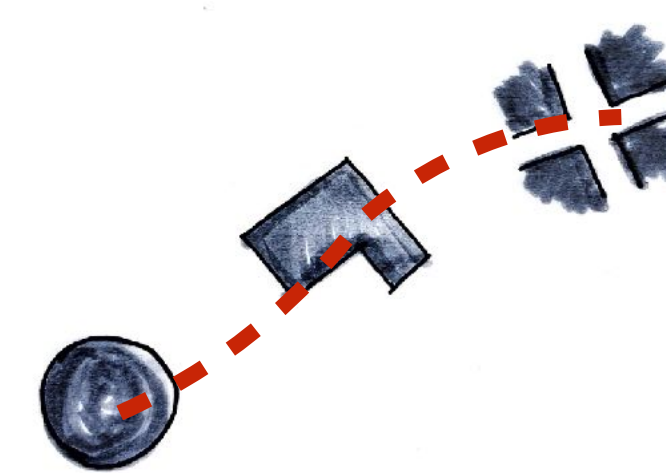
- Station masterplans
- Major public realm schemes
- Re-thinking traffic management



Rebalance

Changes to the allocation of space and the priority of road users

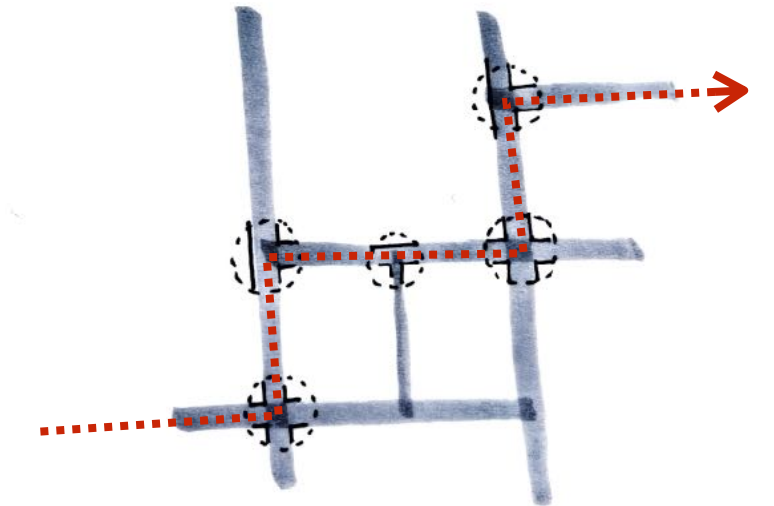
- Road surfacing
- Road markings
- Curb lines
- Curb treatments
- Shared space



Connect

Creating new or improving existing routes – allowing efficient and free movement

- Removing barriers
- Widening footways
- Providing accessible surfaces
- Commissioning 'schemas'



Entice

Creating sequences of focal points that catch attention and 'unfold' on approach

- Piquing interest
- Maintain sightline
- Serial reveal
- Building anticipation

Environmental enhancements

Micro enhancements



Offset

Providing distinctive alternative routes away from heavier vehicle traffic and pavement congestion.

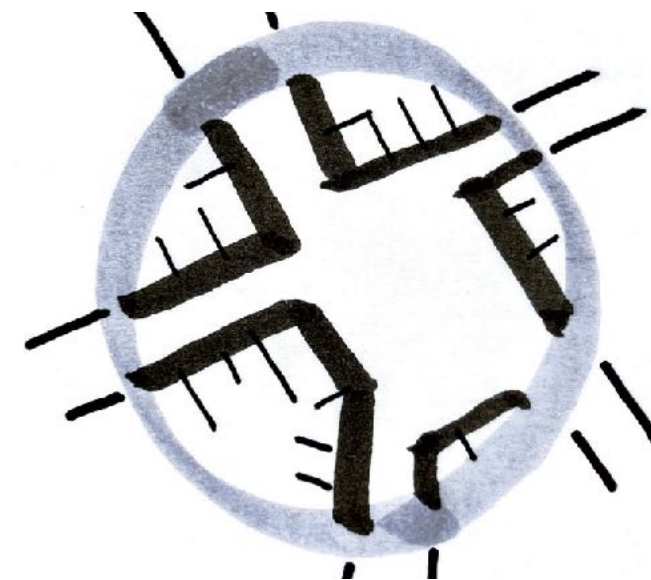
- Public realm enhancements
- Enhanced street furniture



Recompose

Providing frequent places to pause, re-think or re-confirm journeys.

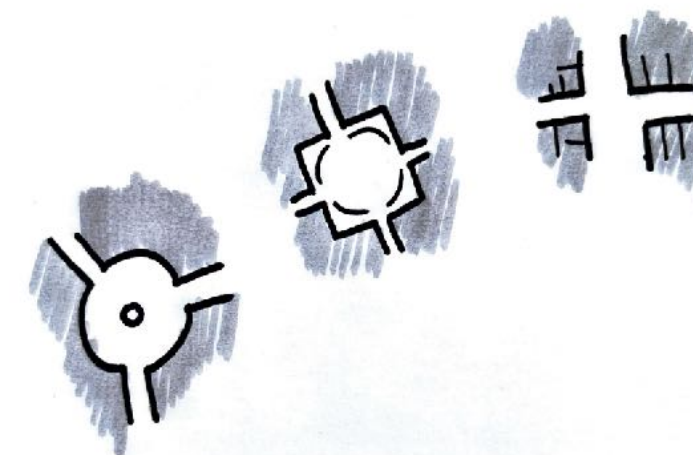
- Public realm enhancements
- Enhanced greening
- Enhanced street furniture



Unify

Strengthen the identity of distinctive character areas and routes.

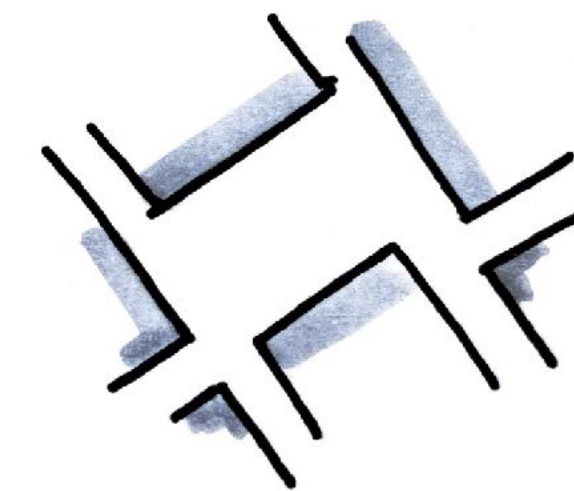
- Maintain historic streetscape
- Enhanced street furniture



Signify

Creating recognisable and memorable moments to aid recall and navigation.

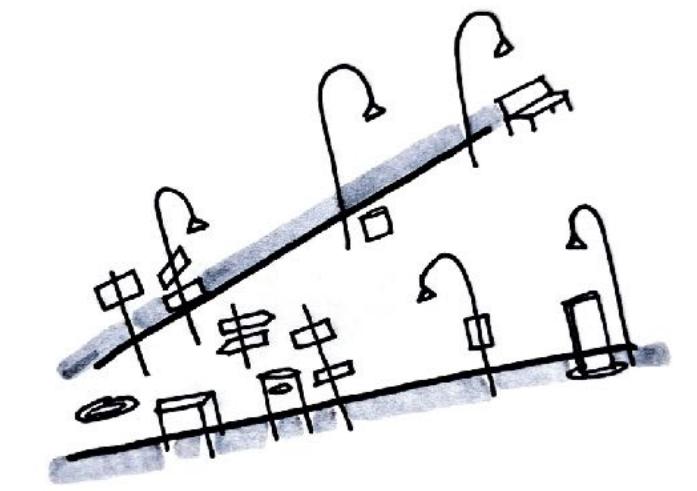
- Public art at key nodes
- Landmark lighting
- Maintain sightline



Animate

Encouraging street activity at ground level of buildings and within public spaces.

- Enhanced street level store fronts
- Kiosks and carts
- Event programming



De-clutter

Enhancing maintenance and rationalisation of street furniture.

- Clutter removal
- Re-locate or merge functions
- Re-arrange
- Deep clean

Organising concept

This strategy provides a layered concept that will help organise and locate a wide range of information and environmental enhancements across London Heritage Quarter.

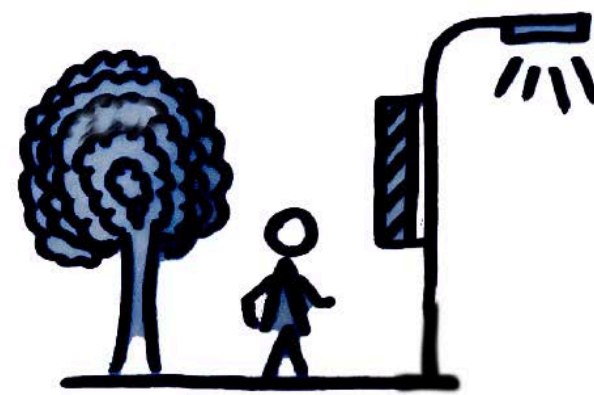
Seven organising layers

Seven component layers are described in turn on the following pages. Key information and environmental enhancements are attributed to each layer.



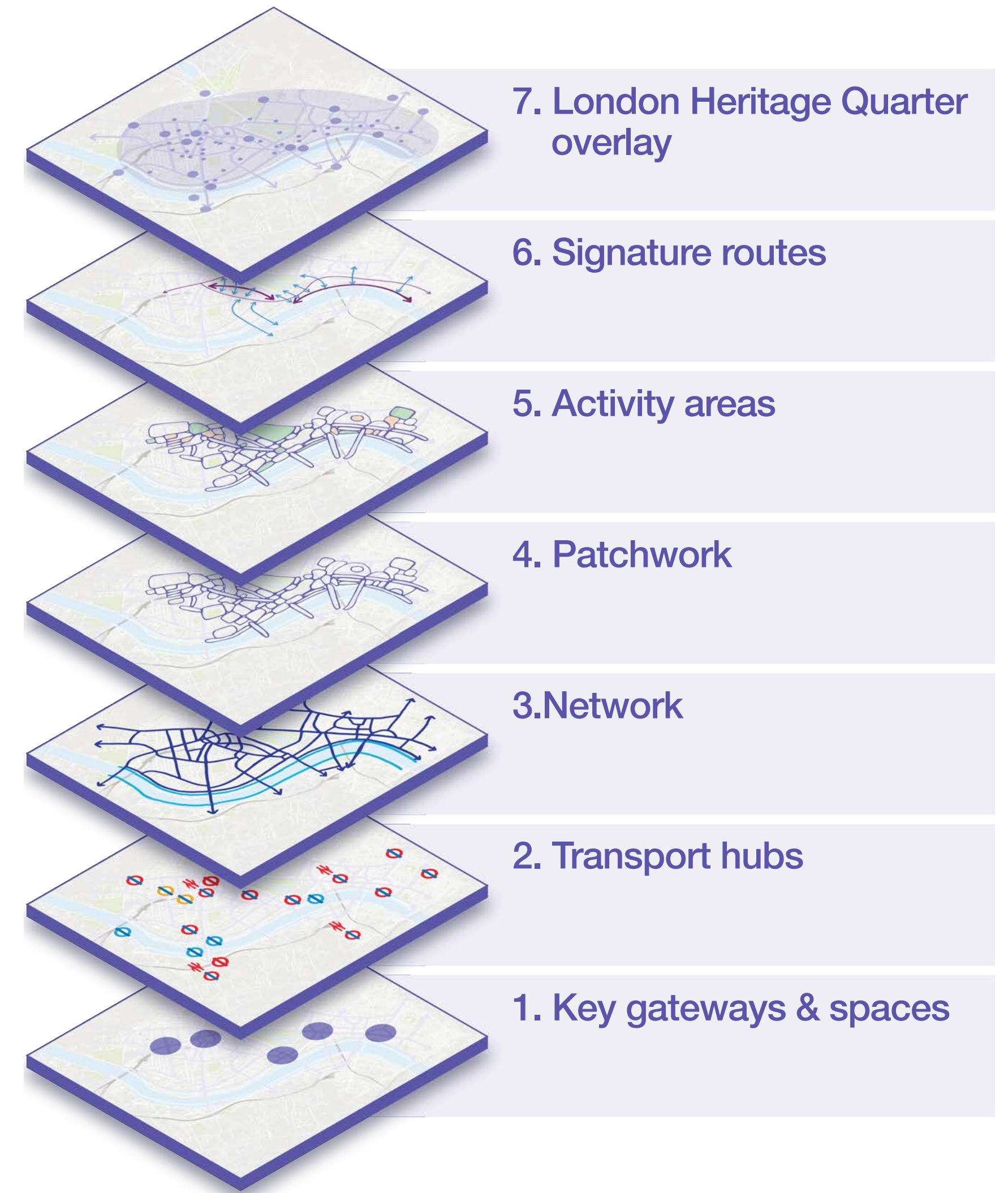
Information enhancements

Including enhancements to on-street, in-person, printed and digital information to improve the ease of wayfinding and to reveal more about the area.



Environmental enhancements

Including enhancements to buildings, streets and spaces to make the visitor experience more welcoming, attractive, interesting and enjoyable.





1. Key gateways and spaces

Victoria Coach and Rail Stations, Parliament Square, Charing Cross and Trafalgar Square, and Strand Aldwych provide a focus for improving the welcome experience.

Information enhancements

Enhanced/extended Ambassador services and 'pop-up' kiosks.

New welcome centre at Leicester Square
Enhanced welcome centre at Victoria Station.

Potential for permanent kiosks at key hotspots (E.g. London's Smallest Police Station).

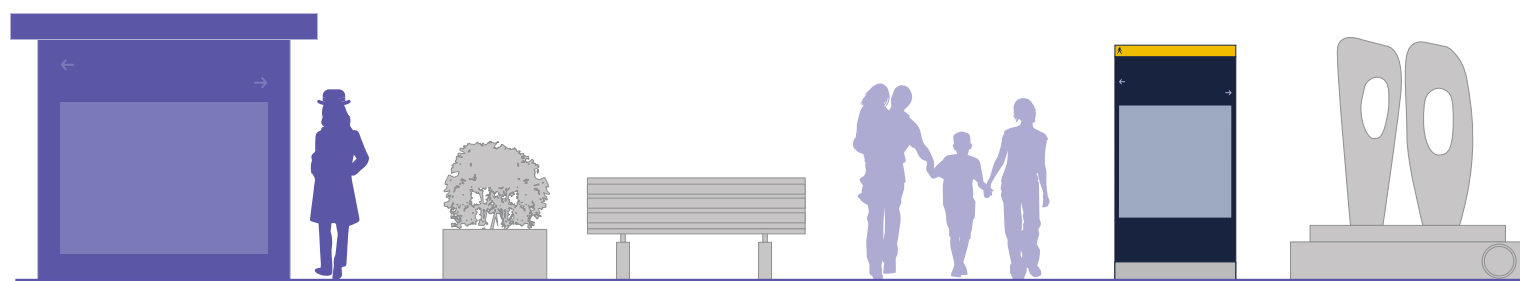
Area overview 'liths' (Legible London or LHQ).

High-level directional schemes in congested areas.

Environmental enhancements

Re-imagining spaces outside Victoria Coach Station, London Victoria Station and Charing Cross Station.

Enhanced event programming to animate spaces and improve appeal 24/7.



2. Transport Hubs

London Underground stations, bus terminals and ferry stops must be more visible and provide better onward journey information.

Information enhancements

Provide internal 'Welcome points' and better onward journey maps at Network Rail stations exits.

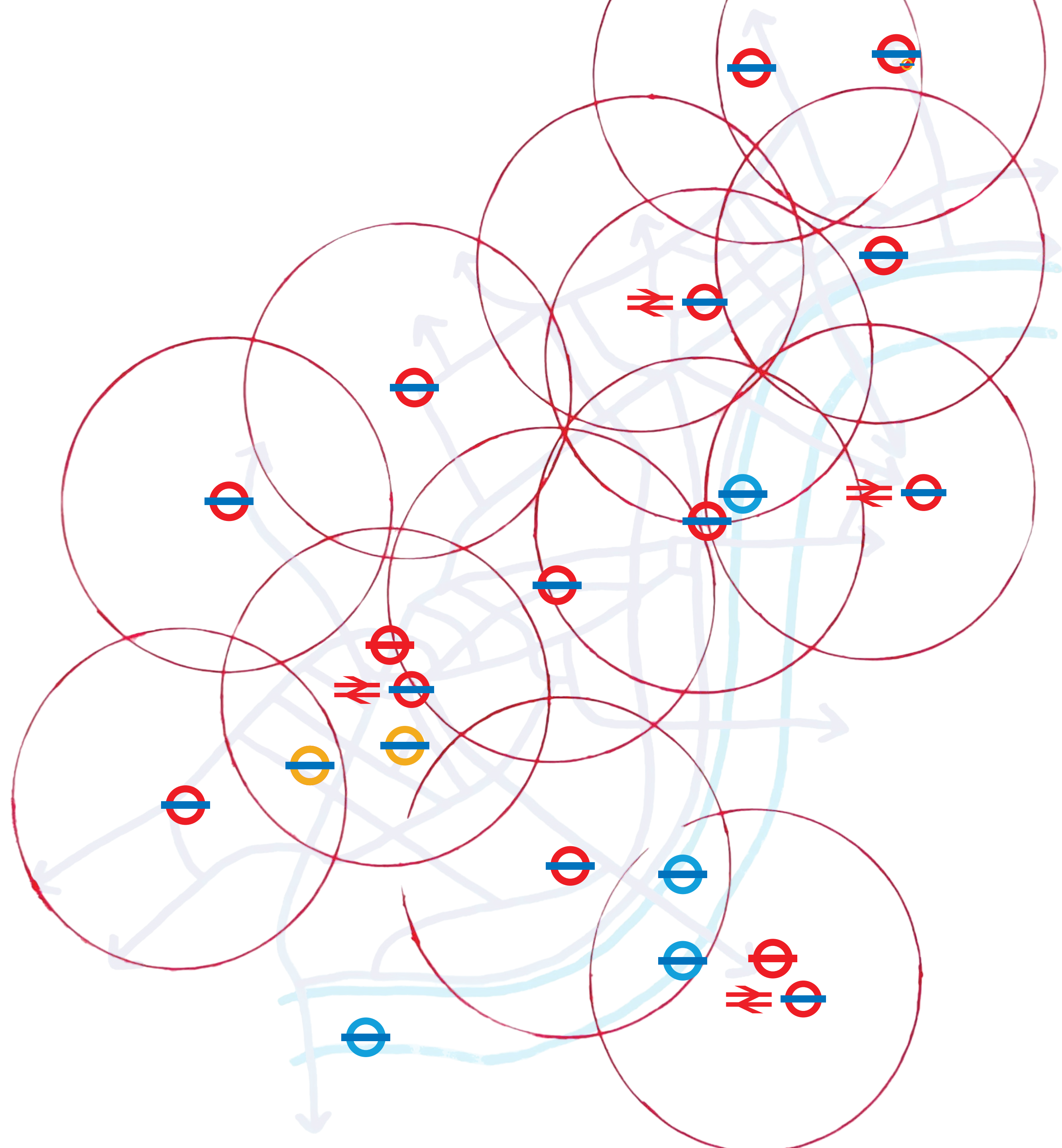
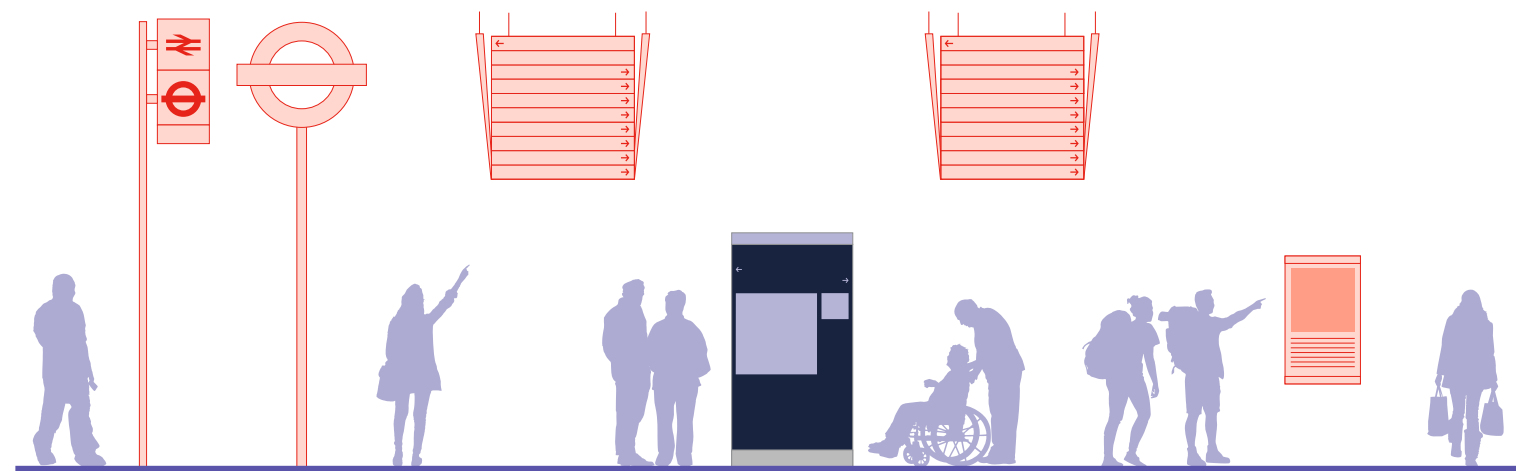
Provide onward journey maps at ferry stops.

Improve provision of station signifiers.

Environmental enhancements

Enhance public realm outside station exits – enabling people to recompose and plan next leg of their journey.

Advocate for upgrades to station environments and Victoria Coach Station.



3. Network

A network of primary and secondary pedestrian routes must be well maintained, clearly named and sign posted using existing systems.

Information enhancements

Fill gaps in Westminster Street Name Plates.

Strengthen and update Legible London in this area to reflect environmental conditions and demand.

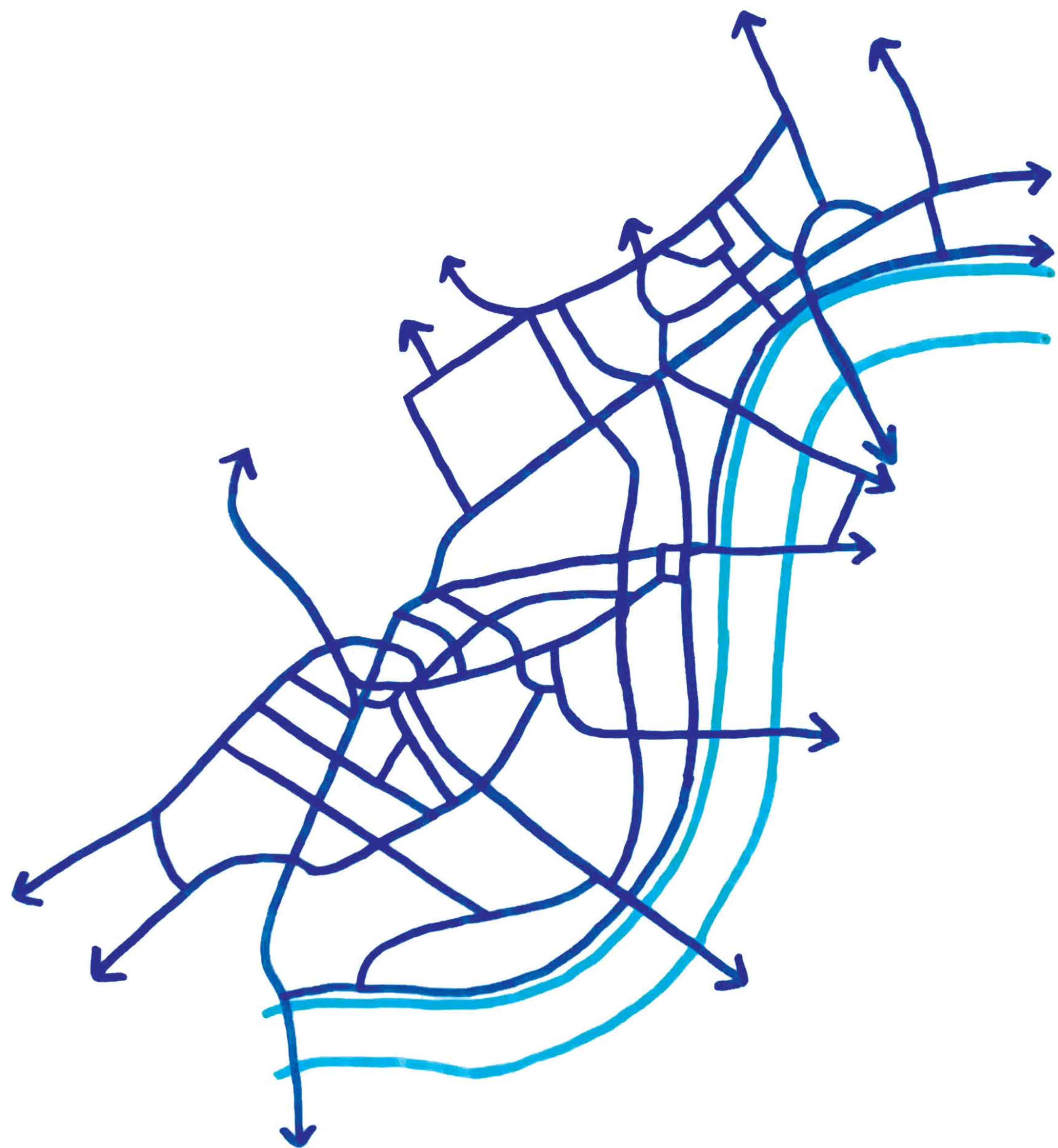
Rationalise Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) cycle signage.

Environmental enhancements

Emphasise hierarchy of streets and spaces through enhanced public realm treatments and furniture.

Make key nodes more distinctive and memorable.

Improve the comfort of streets by increasing pedestrian space and providing more amenities.



4. Patchwork

A patchwork of character areas (building on the People Wanted strategies) can be amplified to help evolve the image and appeal of the area.

Information enhancements

Provide in-situ interpretative information at key sites. Include URL/QR codes to digital trail guides.

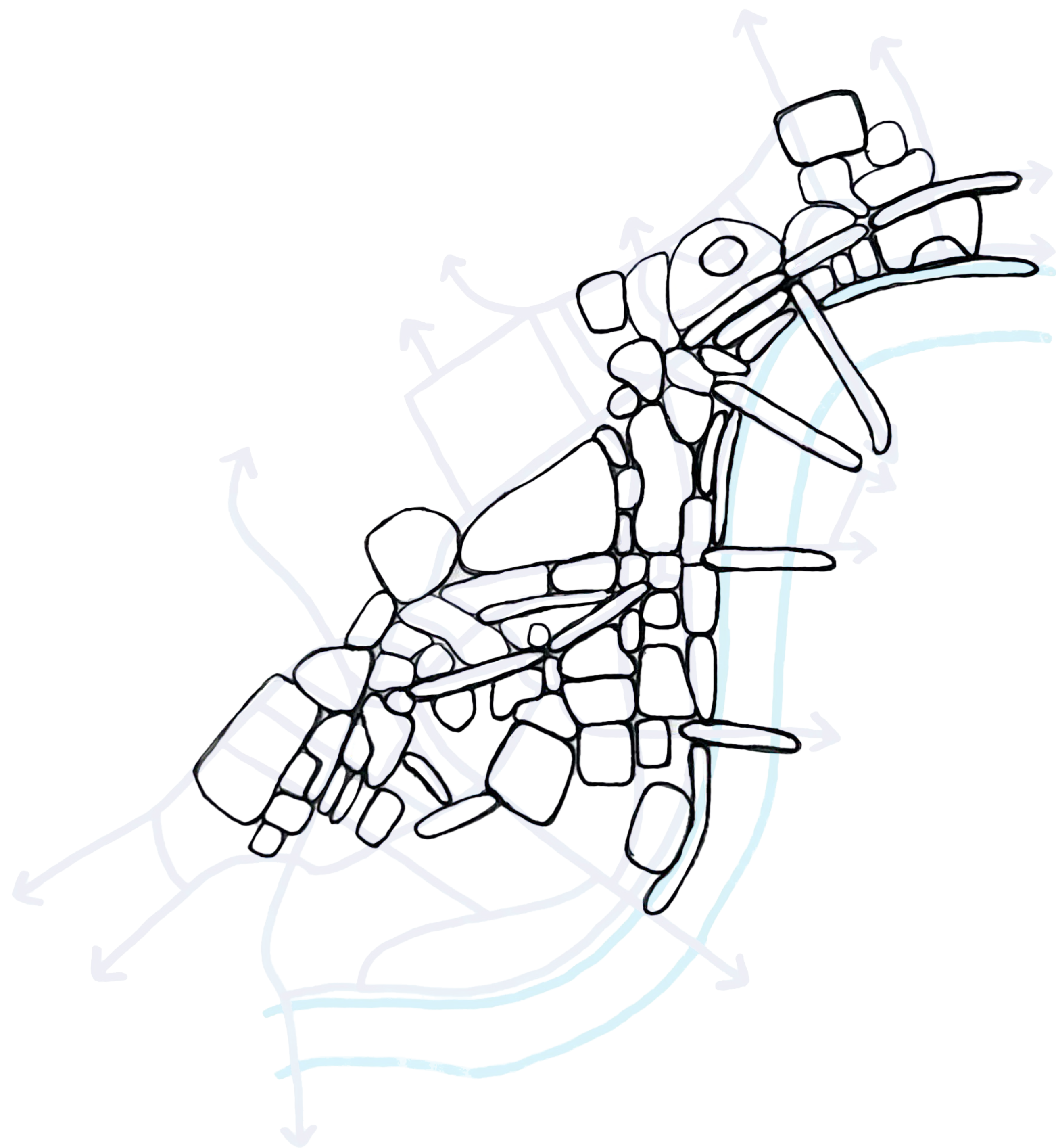
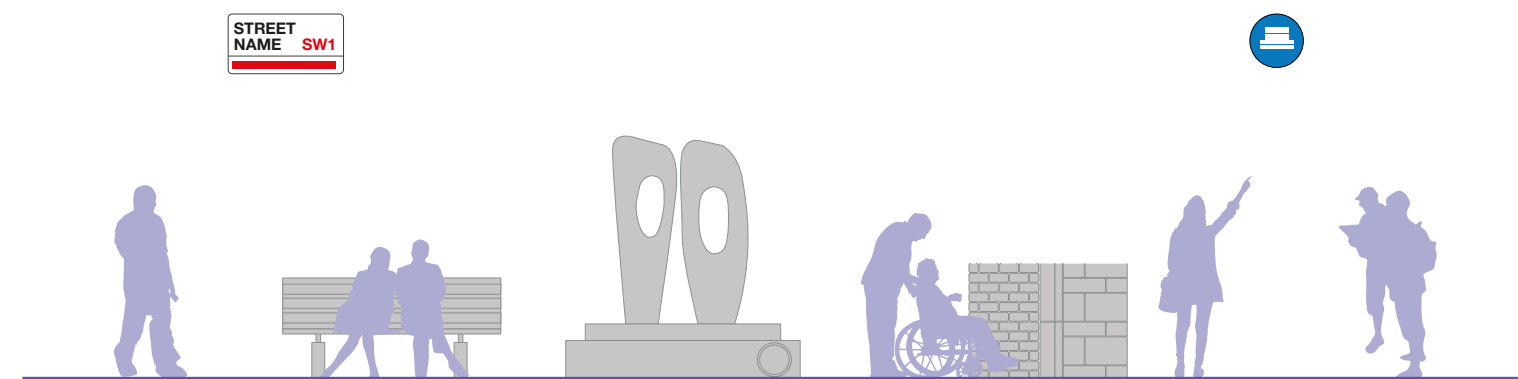
Provide heritage trails using print and digital guides.

Promote exploration of character areas through marketing and website (with URLs/QR codes).

Environmental enhancements

Emphasise character patchwork by supporting use of character area streetscape palettes.

Emphasise area 'heritage' through public art, monuments, street furniture and amenities.



5. Activity areas

Activity areas include retail clusters/centres, educational campuses and parks that require their own wayfinding and environmental treatments.

Information enhancements

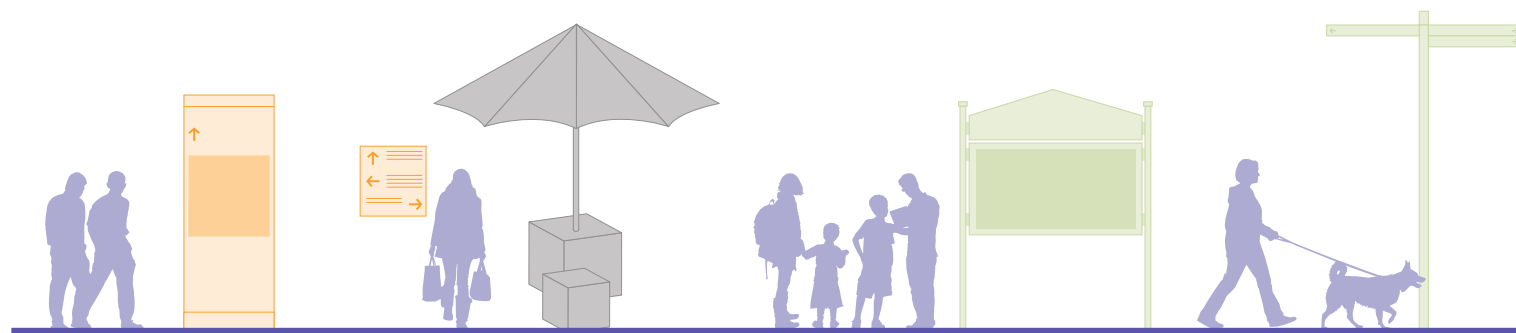
Improve consistency of area naming, terminology and messaging.

Coordinate system 'hand-overs' to improve wayfinding at thresholds.

Environmental enhancements

Support distinctive activity areas, encouraging animation of site thresholds and edges to attract footfall to and through.

Develop schema* to help strengthen and convey character of activity areas.



* A schema is a collection of related environmental features that are applied spatially to create sequences (such as a trails), strengthen patterns (such as route hierarchies) or to convey stories (such as heritage or events).



6. Signature routes

Signature routes provide a focus for enhanced streetscape and 'schema' projects that subtly strengthen the sense of a linear route.

Information enhancements

Develop banner programme to promote signature routes (E.g. Riverside Walk) & adjacent destinations.

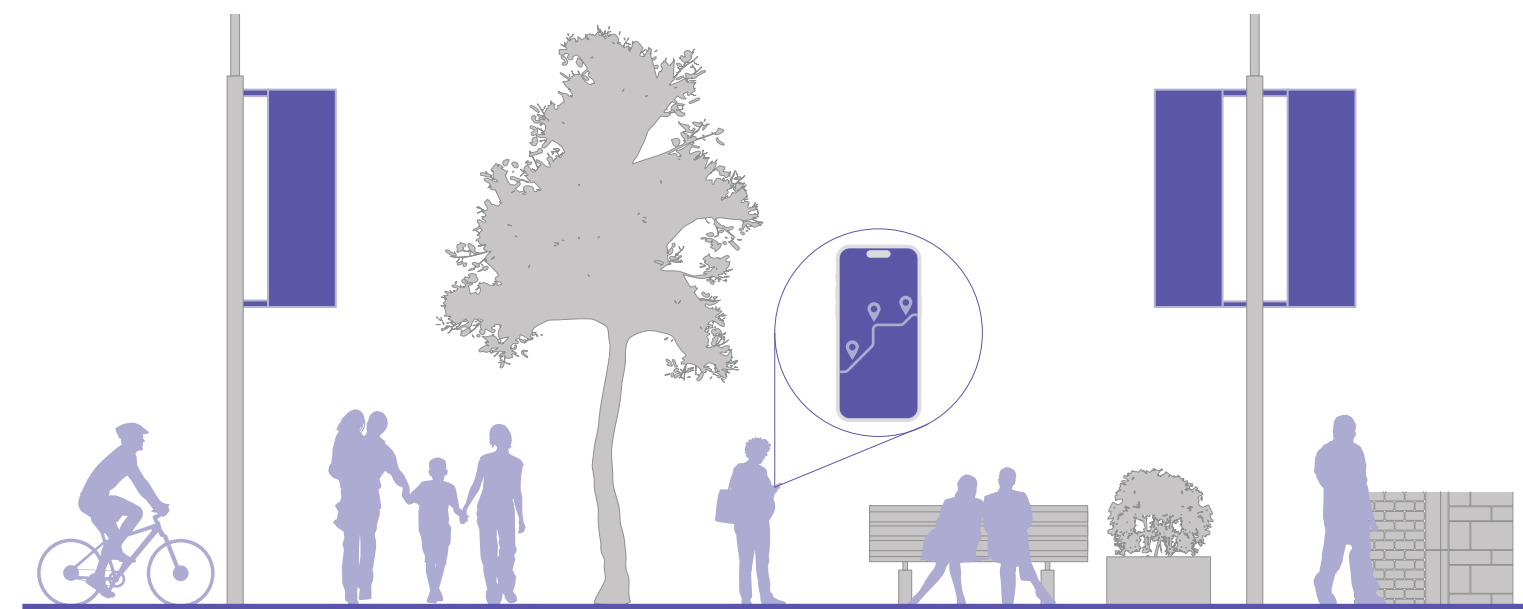
Reveal signature route trails through print and online information.

Environmental enhancements

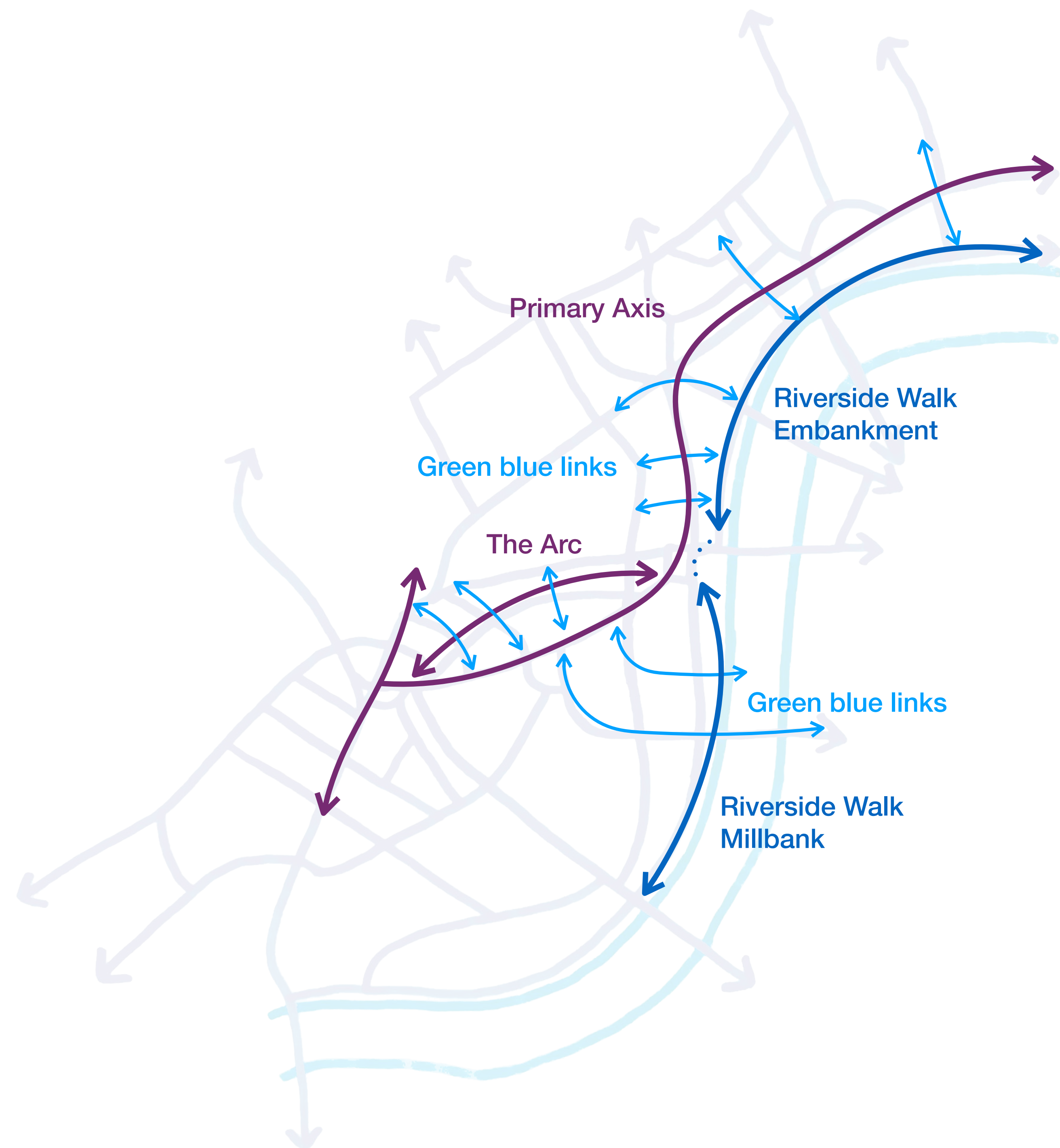
Focus enhanced pedestrian amenities on signature routes (E.g. enhanced street furniture palette).

Enhance pedestrian space and greening along Green blue links.

Develop 'schemas'* along riverside routes.



* A schema is a collection of related environmental features that are applied spatially to create sequences (such as a trails), strengthen patterns (such as route hierarchies) or to convey stories (such as heritage or events).



7. London Heritage Quarter overlay

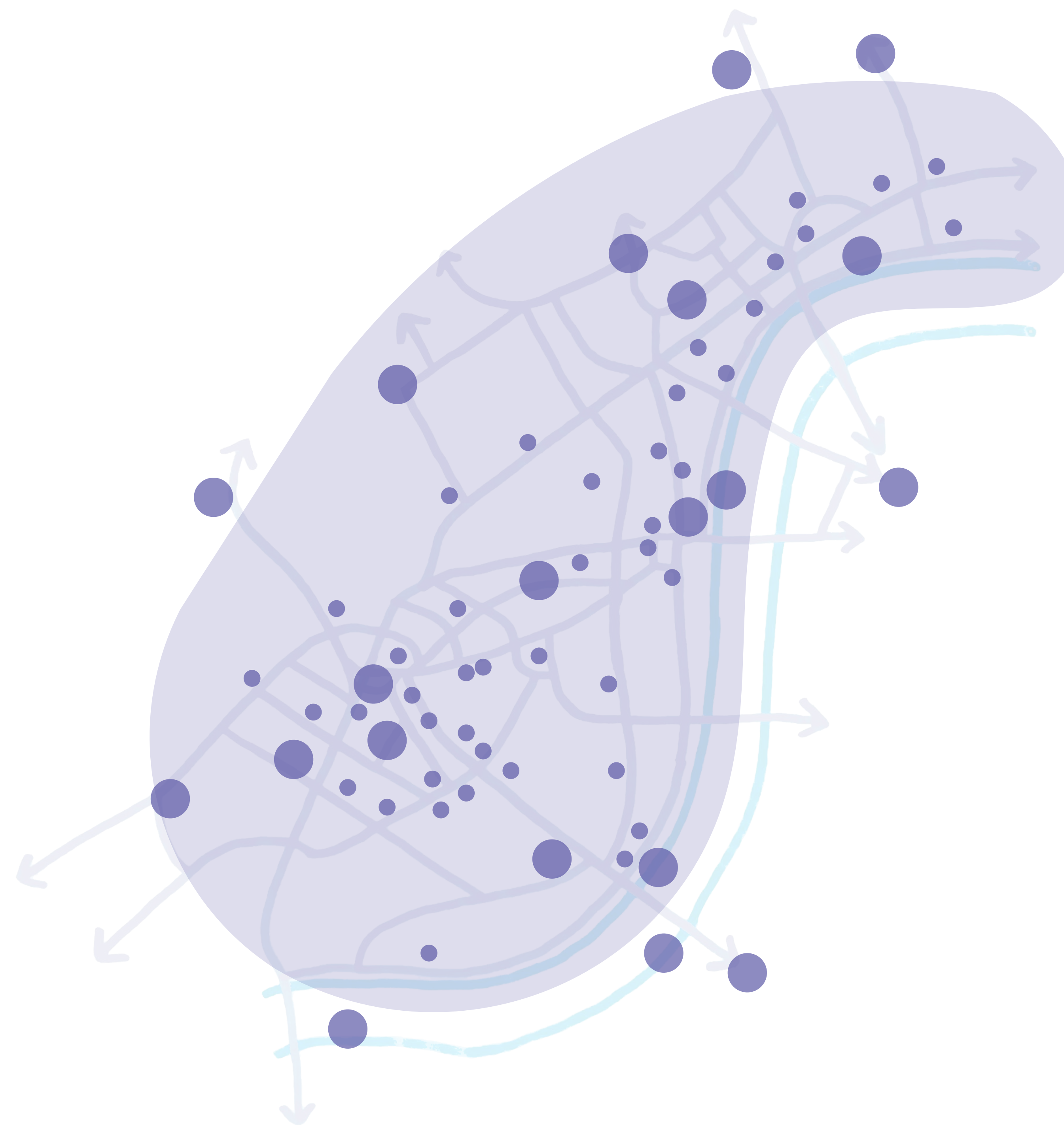
London Heritage Quarter should explore providing an 'overlay' of print and digital information that is made readily available to visitors throughout the area.

Information enhancements

Review current map offer with the opportunity to provide improved printed maps and guides distributed at airports, welcome centres, gateways, activity areas, transport hubs, hotels and visitor destinations.

Improve digital maps and promote through print, marketing and social media.

Provide Ambassadors with improved printed maps, guides and links to digital wayfinding options.



Co-planning

Wayfinding system coordination

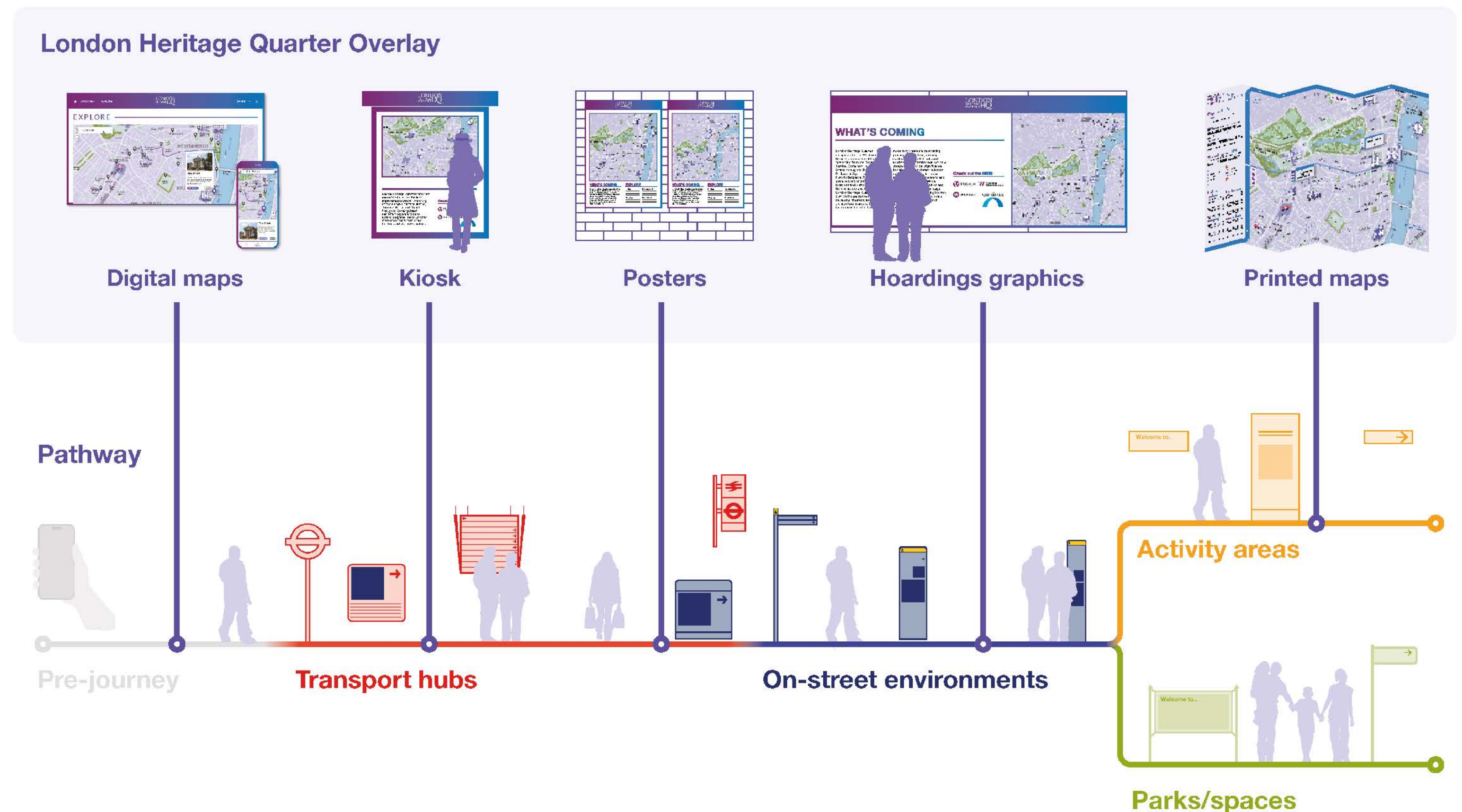
Where wayfinding systems meet or overlap geographically, co-planning between managers can help improve 'hand-overs' between systems.

This diagram highlights some of the key hand-overs that need to be co-planned between partners along a pathway, as well as showing opportunities to augment existing systems with an overlay of area specific information.

At transport hubs it is recommended to integrate internal 'welcome points' that introduce new arrivals to the whole area. Ideally, Legible London mapping would be used at these locations, similarly to how it is used within TfL managed London Underground Stations. Alternatively, BID mapping and branding could be used to provide this welcome.

Where transport hubs meet on-street environments, 'onward journey information' should be provided at exit to reveal the immediate area beyond, helping people orient and plan the next step.

Where on-street environments meet parks and privately managed activity areas, coordination between wayfinding providers is needed to ensure: areas are accurately named and presented; product locations are co-planned; and that activity areas provides a visible 'end point' at thresholds.



4. Projects Framework



Project framework

This project framework responds to the capabilities and organisational contexts of London Heritage Quarter by identifying three broad types of project.

The framework prioritises visitor experience projects that London Heritage Quarter can lead on.

This approach puts the emphasis on building the capacity, resources, partners and momentum that will support long-term projects and multiply the benefits for visitors over many years.

Leading

Projects that London Heritage Quarter can do alone

Collaborating

Projects that are delivered in partnership

Influencing

Projects that are delivered by others

Leading projects

- Projects that London Heritage Quarter can deliver alone.
- Opportunities to engage and involve partners.
- Including ‘quick wins’ over next 12 months.
- Can deliver on their outcome now.

Collaborating projects

- Projects that London Heritage Quarter can deliver through effective communication, coordination and collaboration with partners.
- Pro-active stance can lead to better outcomes in the near term future.

Influencing projects

- Projects that are delivered by others, often key partners such as Westminster City Council, TfL, land owners, or developers.
- London Heritage Quarter can actively advocate for these projects and shape outcomes.

Priority projects

1. Deliver a (priority) LHQ visitor print map
2. Deliver LHQ visitor map PDFs
3. Liaise with third party digital mapping providers to update area mapping
4. Develop banner scheme to promote feature routes
5. Deliver enhanced welcome points at key gateways
6. Deliver supergraphic area maps at opportunistic locations
7. Deliver 'Gateway Maps' at London Underground Stations, Coach Station and Rail Stations
8. Work with TfL/WCC to develop an enhanced directional wayfinding (distance fingerposts) in key areas
9. Advocate for TfL to update Legible London mapping in London HQ area

Priority projects

10. Advocate for update to London Underground Map to better reflect Victoria Coach Station
11. Enhance and coordinate with cycle wayfinding in area (TSRGD)
12. Enhance and coordinate with parks wayfinding systems
13. Provide Ambassadors with a new suite of printed maps
14. Distribute enhanced wayfinding maps/ information to front of house staff
15. Define a planning liaison role for LHQ with WCC
16. Support Network Rail station masterplans and wayfinding upgrades
17. Advocate for increased accessibility and accessibility information at London Underground stations

Further information

For further information about this strategy, please feel free to contact the client team at London Heritage Quarter or the consultant team at City ID.

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Thank you



LONDON HERITAGE QUARTER

City ID