



4.1

**Building repurposing
& re-use**



4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Context

The redevelopment of larger sites and buildings within the quarter will undoubtedly have a large impact on its character and prosperity, however, the vast majority of the area consists of existing buildings, some of which are fully occupied and others which are either partially or wholly vacant.

As part of the masterplan, the project team were asked to consider the potential for bringing back into use the upper floors to buildings which are either vacant or are underutilised in their current form. This would allow new uses to be integrated or existing uses to be strengthened in support of the economic and character development of the quarter as set out within other sections of this report.

The methodology for understanding the opportunities for redevelopment has been two-fold. Initially a series of 4 case studies were looked at to understand where and how alterations may be possible, and the typical constraints and opportunities which may exist in different building types and locations. Following this, a series of 9 strategic

intervention sites were identified with the project team to understand in further detail the impact that a new identified use may have on the building fabric and allow a high level cost of development and return to be established.

Following this exercise a summary of the opportunities and constraints was established to highlight where there are barriers to redevelopment, or where opportunities could be exploited. This has further allowed us to highlight where further areas of work are required to fill gaps in knowledge or to potentially overcome the identified obstacles.



— Milsom Quarter Boundary
— Strategic Re-purposing Studies
— Case Study Buildings

Map showing location of case study and strategic intervention properties

4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Methodology

To assess the opportunity for repurposing, the following approach was taken, focussing primarily on the B&NES portfolio for which more data was available:

- Review of relevant B&NES datasets held on their properties
- Identifying opportunities for repurposing based on identification of properties that are underperforming (currently vacant) or have a lease break in the next 3 years with views from the B&NES client team added to ensure this was not a purely data-driven process
- High level analysis of the repurposing opportunities at a site visit attended by the consultancy team and client group in order to identify commercial repurposing potential and heritage and other opportunities and constraints
- Splitting the repurposing opportunities into two groups:
- Strategic repurposing interventions – key properties on a range of streets which by virtue of their scale, location and/or typical structure for that street would significantly

help to progress regeneration on their street. These were examined in more detail based on any available floor plans and estimates of repurposed floorspace.

- Other repurposing opportunities – less significant opportunities, subject to higher level analysis where more generic assumptions were made regarding the opportunity to repurpose space above ground floor retail units.

In terms of the scale of opportunity presented by these repurposing initiatives, whilst ground floors were proposed to remain in commercial (retail, food and beverage or business space) use it is estimated that there is capacity on upper floors to deliver approximately 170 residential units.

The opportunities presented by the Strategic repurposing interventions are set out in this section of the Masterplan.



4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

Introduction

For each building the following pieces of work were undertaken:

- Discussions with the project team to identify the most appropriate use for the building based upon location, character area, size of building, existing use and existing plan form
- Preliminary research and/or site visits where the building is open to the public to understand the existing plan form
- Concept designs for each building to understand the level of impact on the existing plan form in relation to a new identified use
- A residual appraisal of each with consideration of viability principles.



9 Green Street



14 Broad Street



38-41 Broad Street

4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

Case Study Sites

The 9 identified buildings are as follows;

- 9 Green Street (Belushis)
- 14 Broad Street (Audience)
- 38-41 Broad Street (Rossiters)
- King Edwards School, Broad Street (vacant)
- The Old Post Office (vacant)
- 17-18 Milsom Street (Former GAP)
- 24 Milsom Street (Loch Fyne)
- 45 Milsom Street (Former HSBC)
- 47 Milsom Street (Lloyds bank)

The following scenarios are high level studies only and it is not expected that these be used as developed design proposals. Site visits were not possible for the majority of these buildings, the exception being where there were publicly accessible areas. Therefore, the proposals have

been developed from drawings only, and in many cases, these are not up to date survey drawings. It is noted in each case the date of the plans which have been referenced when preparing the proposals.

The starting point for the proposed use for each building has been to support the masterplan character areas. Where the plan form does not suit the chosen concept, due to the level of alteration required, or other issues such as a lack of natural daylight to habitable rooms, alternative uses have been discussed and proposed.

The heritage opportunities and constraints for each proposal are drawn in the main from a recognition of historic plan form and the level of alteration which may be required to this in order to re-purpose the space. As site visits have not been possible, they do not recognise the impact on internal fabric such as original finishes and fittings. As and when proposals come forward for these properties, a detailed site survey and historic building assessment will need to be undertaken to understand the full heritage impact.

Even in acknowledgement of these restrictions, these scenarios have allowed high level conclusions to be made regarding the potential for re-purposing these buildings, building upon the work carried out within Stage 2 of the masterplan.



King Edwards School



The Post Office



17-18 Milsom Street



4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

9 Green Street

Current Use: Public house at ground and basement with a hostel to upper floors

Proposed Use: Food and beverage at ground and basement with offices above

The existing plan form adapts quite readily to a new office use, with 2 means of escape and independent access from the street already in place. A few minor alterations are proposed on the adjoining plans (coloured red) which would provide increased flexibility in use, allowing whole floors, single rooms or multiple rooms to be rented by separate occupants. Amendments include a secondary means of escape from the third floor, blocking or re-opening former entrances and a new partition at first floor level to allow flexibility in use. Residential accommodation would also be possible with minor alterations to the existing plan form. Office space was identified as the preferred approach in this case as opposed to residential as workspaces could be better configured within the spaces available on upper floors.



- Ancillary space
- Food and beverage
- Workspace
- External terrace
- Access routes



Development Concept for 9 Green Street
Proposals based upon drawings dated October 1979 (plans were not available for the third floor)

4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

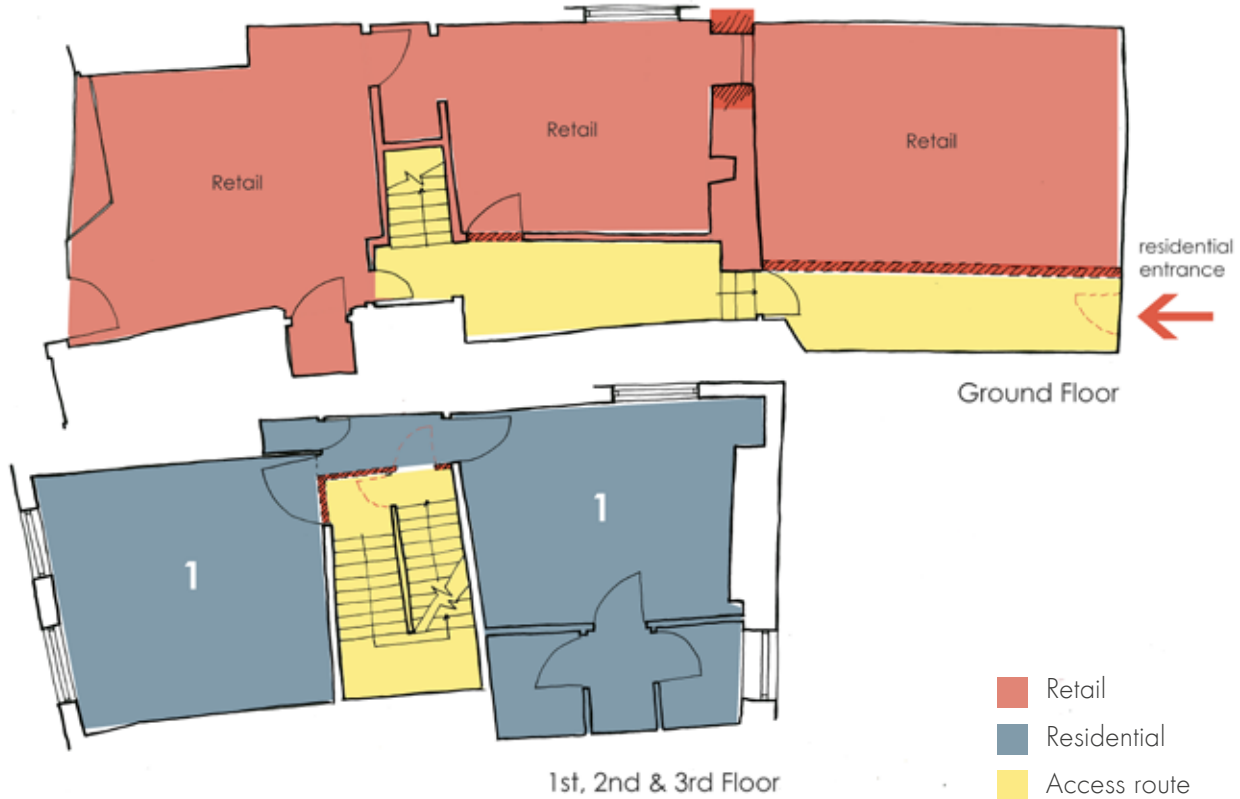
14 Broad Street



Current Use: Retail at ground. Upper storeys unknown

Proposed Use: Retail at ground floor with residential at upper floors

The rear of the building faces Broad Street carpark and therefore it would be possible to create independent access here to avoid impacting the high quality shopfront and retail unit to Broad Street. A further shopfront or publicly accessible retail unit/ maker space could be created to Broad Street carpark in support of the new proposed uses here. A series of 3 apartments could be created with limited alteration to the existing plan form, although there would be no secondary means of escape from the upper storeys.



Development Concept for 14 Broad Street
Proposals based upon drawings dated January 1985 (plans were not available for the second and third floors)



4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

38-41 Broad Street

Current Use: Retail to all floors

Proposed Use: Retail at ground floor and basement with residential at upper floors

Rossiters is a complex building which is formed from 3 separate buildings. As such there are a number of plan form alterations which create a complex and interdependent series of spaces. However, it also provides a number of opportunities; existing independent access from Broad Street and Milsom Street, a series of 3 staircases providing access to all floors, a number of 'internal' flat roofs which could provide outside amenity space to 3 apartments, the potential for a third floor extension to the south where this has been demolished previously.

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Development Concept for 38-41 Broad Street (lower floors)

Ground floor drawing early 21st century (all other floors assumed from site survey)

4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

38-41 Broad Street



The proposal seeks to create a series of 1 bed apartments, resulting in a number of internal alterations to create lobby spaces for independent access. An internal corridor between the rear and front staircases would also be required at first floor level to provide a safe and accessible secondary means of escape. Further internal alterations would also be likely to create kitchens and bathrooms, although these could be designed sympathetically to respect any surviving fabric. To limit the alterations required, 4 larger apartments could be created, although these may not be as desirable in relation to its location and lack of exterior amenity space. It may be possible to use the existing retail unit which faces Walcot Street as an amenity space for bike and bin storage. This would result in the loss of income but would avoid street clutter.



Development Concept for 38-41 Broad Street (upper floors)

Proposals based upon drawings dated January 1985 (plans were not available for the second and third floors)

4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE



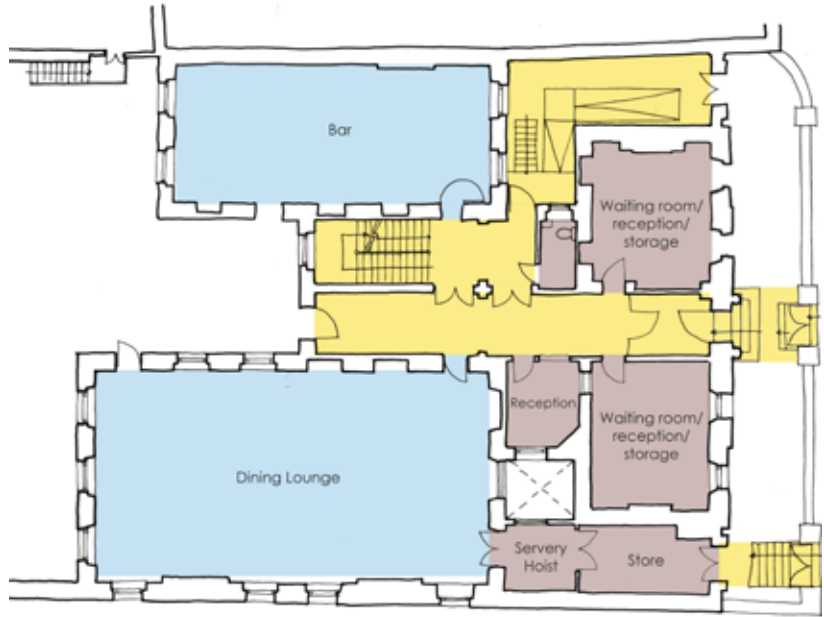
Strategic Re-Purposing

King Edwards School, Broad Street

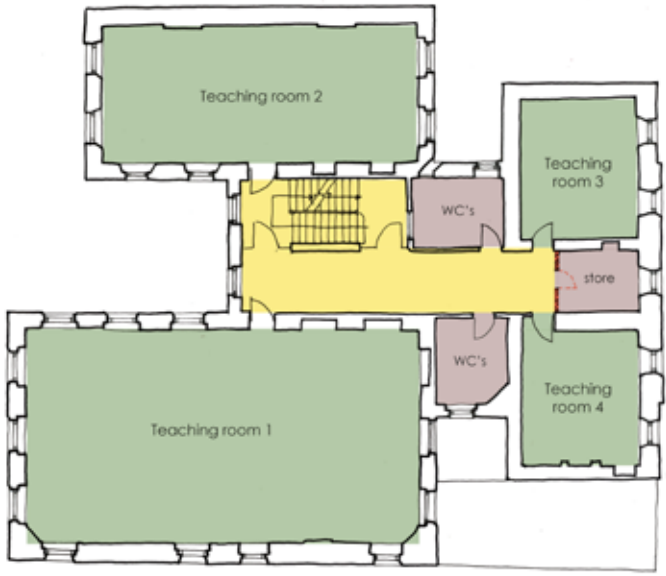
Current Use: Vacant. LBC and planning consent for food and beverage at ground floor with hotel use above

Proposed Use: Food and beverage at ground floor with 'teaching' space above for cookery school, craft school or other

King Edwards School was closed in 1986 and is currently on the Historic England At Risk Register. A consented scheme has been agreed to convert the building into a bar and lounge restaurant at ground floor, with kitchen and servicing space within the basement, and 12 hotel rooms over the first and second floors. At the time of writing this scheme has yet to be implemented. If the current scheme does not come to fruition a series of alternative uses have been discussed, although hotel and restaurant remains a viable option with regard to the building form.



Ground Floor



First Floor

- Food and beverage
- Ancillary space
- Access route
- Teaching/event space

Development Concept for St Edwards School (lower floor)
Proposals based upon proposal drawings dated June 2009

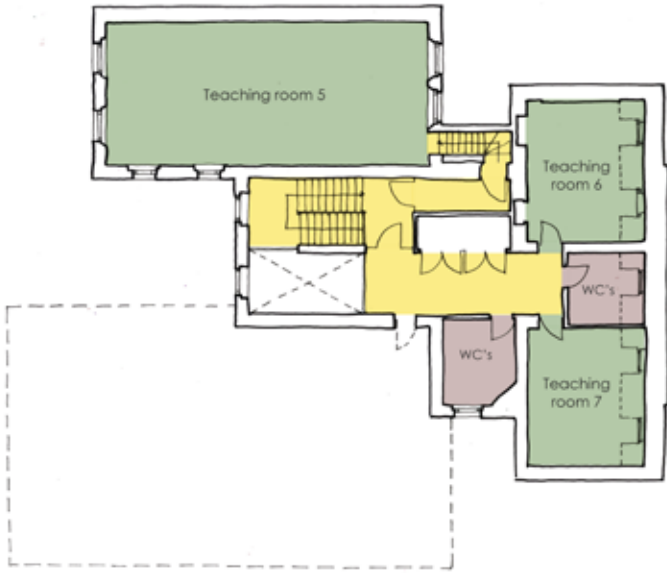
4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE



Strategic Re-Purposing

King Edwards School, Broad Street

The former school plan was based around two large teaching rooms to the flanking wings, with 2 smaller teaching rooms facing Broad Street. A teaching function would allow these spaces to be re-purposed as per their original intent and proportions. This could include, for example, a cookery school linked to the restaurant below. The existing consented scheme illustrates that some division of these principle rooms could be considered acceptable if it bought the building back into a viable use. As such, the building provides a degree of flexibility to approach. It may also be possible to consider a second floor extension to raise the lower wing to the same height as that to the north if this supported the viability of a proposal.



Second Floor

- Ancillary space
- Access route
- Teaching/event space

Development Concept for St Edwards School (upper floor)
 Proposals based upon proposal drawings dated June 2009



4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

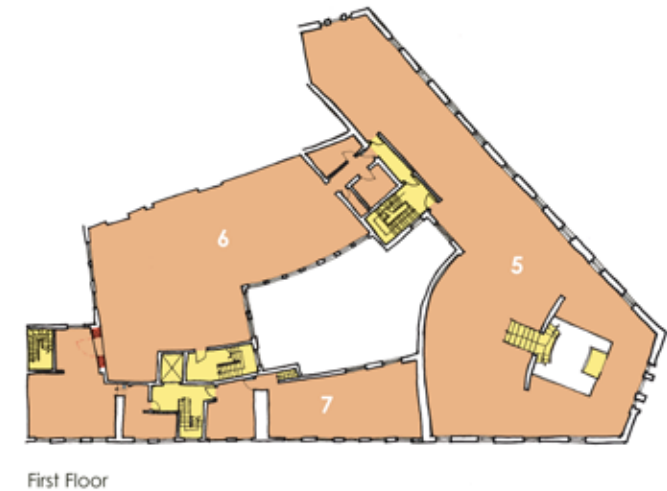
The Old Post Office

As well as the potential for the Old Post Office to house a relocated Fashion Museum as shown in Section 4, a further potential future concept for the building is shown below

Current Use: Vacant. Former use; Post office with retail units at ground floor. Retail use at first floor to the corner unit.

Proposed Use: Retail at ground floor to New Bond Street. Workspace to remaining ground floor and upper storeys

The post office is an early 20th Century purpose built building incorporating large open plan spaces around a central courtyard, with retail spaces to New Bond Street. As such, the plan form provides a great deal of flexibility, with multiple accesses internally and from street level. There is the addition of lift access as well as the internal courtyard, which has been roofed over in recent years, to provide off street bike and bin store plus amenity space.



- Ancillary space
- Retail
- Workspace
- Access route

Development Concept for the Post Office (lower floors)

Proposals based upon drawings dated April 1991



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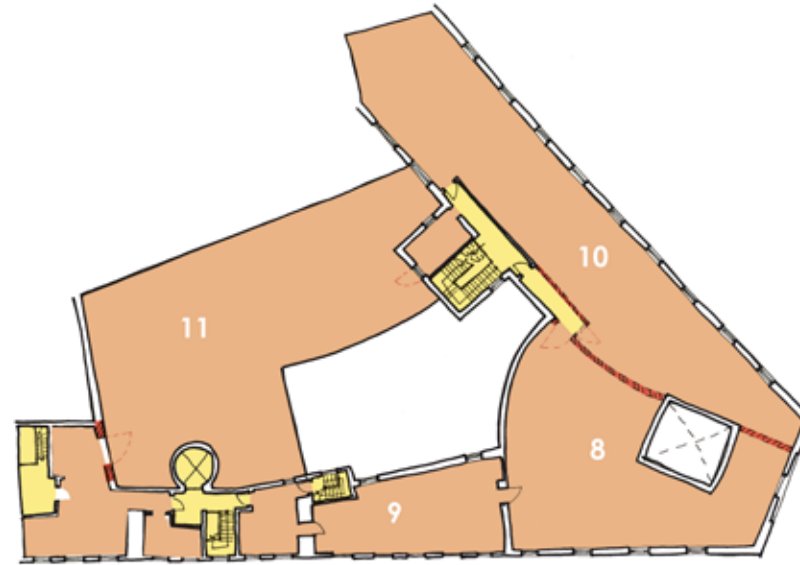


4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

The Old Post Office

A number of small alterations to the existing plan would provide 9 spaces of varying size which could be used independently, in combination with other units or further subdivided. A second floor extension could also be considered to the north which is a storey height lower than the blocks facing New Bond Street and Northgate Street (labelled unit 11). A third floor attic extension may also be considered to Northgate Street.



Second Floor

- Workspace
- Access route

Development Concept for the Post Office (upper floor)

Proposals based upon proposal drawings dated April 1991



4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

17-18 Milsom Street

Current Use: Vacant. Former use; Retail to ground floor. Vacant upper storeys

Proposed Use: Retail at ground floor with residential to upper storeys

17-18 Milsom Street were joined at ground and second floor level in the mid 20th Century, with the current entrance arrangements dating from 1986. The upper storeys retain much of their original form and fabric, including staircases, cornices and joinery to the first and second floors. The creation of 7no 1 bed flats would be possible with little alteration to the current building, with the flat roofs to the rear providing potential external amenity space. A new entrance door could be incorporated within the existing shopfront with limited impact, although an internal corridor at ground floor would be required to provide access to the southern upper storeys.



Development Concept for 17/18 Milsom Street

Proposals based upon drawings dated November 1991



4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

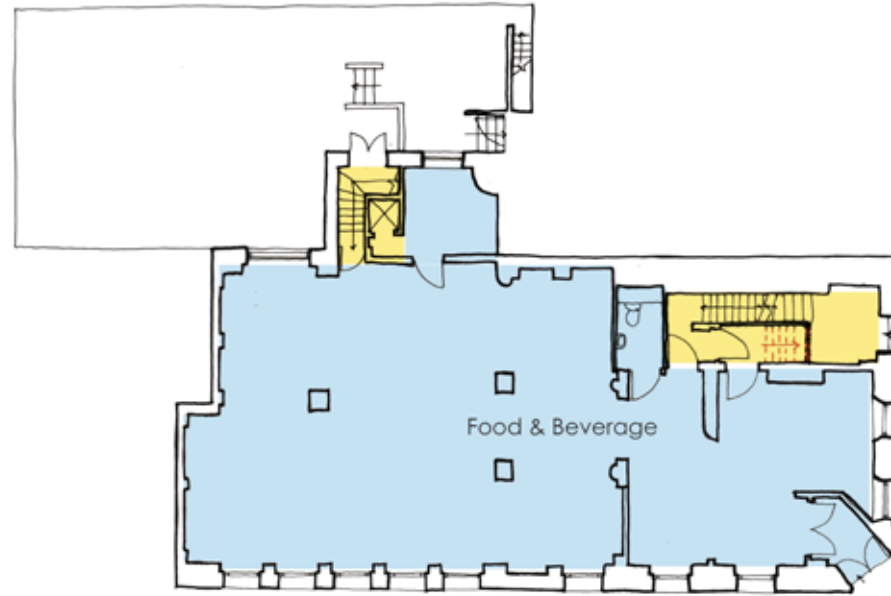
Strategic Re-Purposing

24 Milsom Street

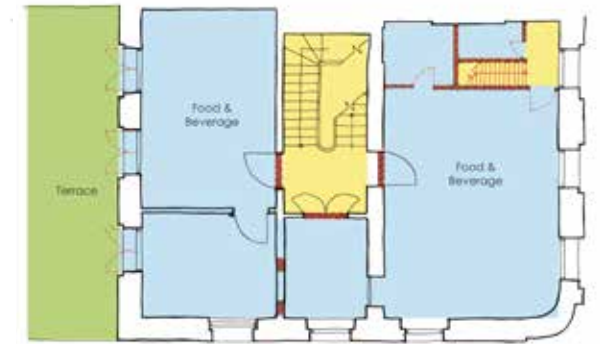
Current Use: Vacant. Former use; Food and beverage to ground floor and hotel to upper storeys

Proposed Use: Food and beverage to ground and first floor with residential at second and third

The existing building offers a three storey corner block with single storey wing to the east. The conversion of the first floor into additional restaurant space would allow the terrace to be used for exterior dining, however, this would require an additional staircase to be created to maintain independent access to the upper storeys from street level. Residential use could also be incorporated at first floor level to reduce the heritage impact. The existing use of the upper storeys as hotel use lends itself to residential conversion, with 2no 1 bed flats to each floor, although there would be no secondary means of escape without a large impact on the existing fabric.



Ground Floor



First Floor

- Food and beverage
- External terrace
- Access route

Development Concept for 24 Milsom Street (lower floors)

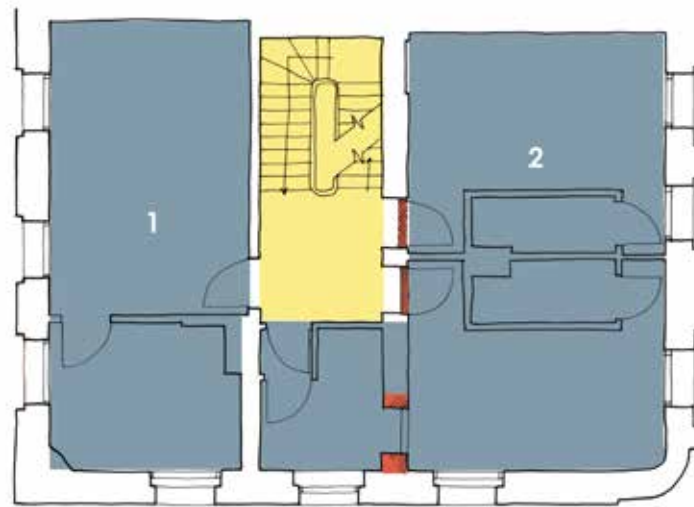
Proposals based upon drawings dated August 2014



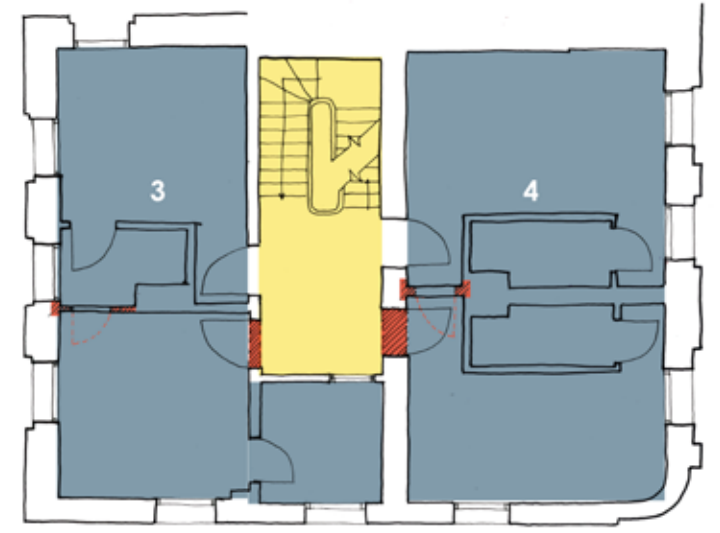
Strategic Re-Purposing

24 Milsom Street

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Second Floor



Third Floor

- Residential
- Access route

Development Concept for 24 Milsom Street (upper floors)
Proposals based upon proposal drawings dated August 2014

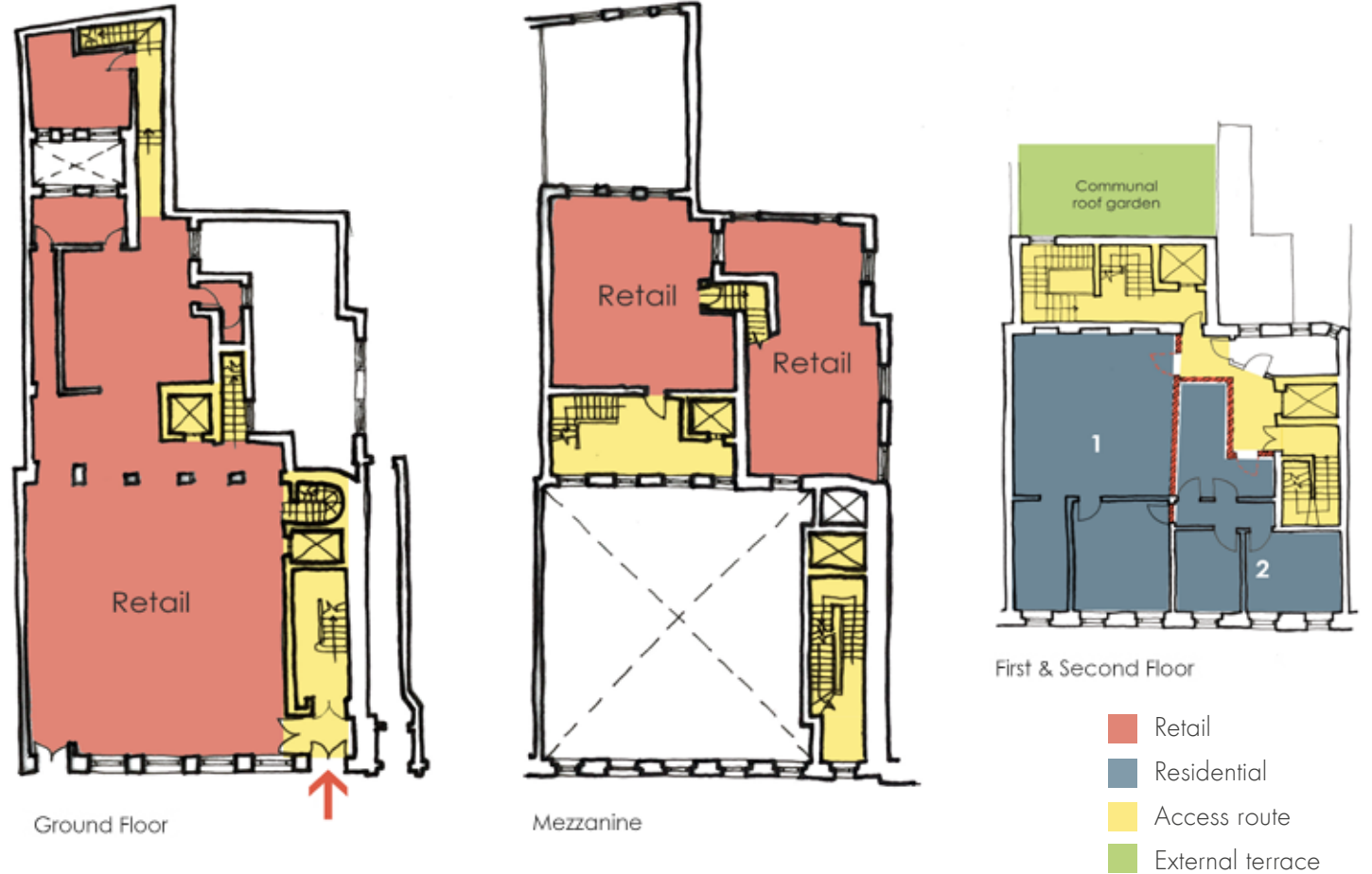
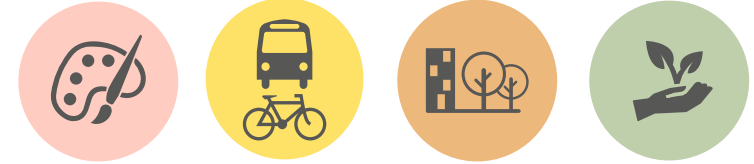
Strategic Re-Purposing

45 Milsom Street

Current Use: Vacant. Former use; Bank

Proposed Use: Retail to ground and mezzanine with residential or office at upper storeys

The 1979 drawings indicate that the first and second floors are primarily open plan floor plates which have been subdivided. There are 2 existing staircases, 2 lifts and independent street access, although an internal corridor would be required at the upper floors to provide 2 means of escape from these floors. Additional internal partitions would be required to create 2no 1 bed apartments at each floor. As a less impactful alternative, an office use would be able to utilise the open floor plan. The flat roof to the rear may be adaptable to provide external amenity space, although provision for bin and bike storage would need to be considered.

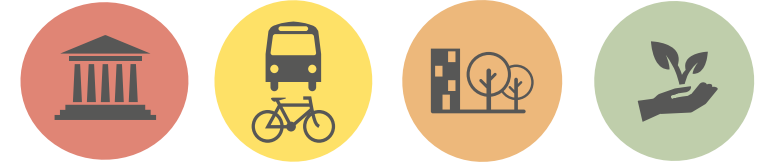


Development Concept for 45 Milsom Street
Proposals based upon drawings dated November 1979

4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

47 Milsom Street



Current Use: Bank

Proposed Use: Hotel or food and beverage at ground floor with residential above

The existing building benefits from 2 separate staircases and lift access to all floors, as well as independent street access, although there is no external amenity space which would need to be considered within any forthcoming proposals. As can be seen by the corresponding sketches, hotel use would have a large impact on the existing building, although it is assumed that limited amounts of the plan form and fabric survive. The deep plan also does not lend itself easily to this use. Residential use would have a more limited impact and may allow some of the historic plan form to be recreated.



- Hotel
- Residential
- Access route

Development Concept for 47 Milsom Street
 Proposals based upon drawings dated June 2019

4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

Heritage constraints and opportunities

Although high level, the building studies undertaken on the key strategic sites, as well as those studied within stage 2, allow us to understand common opportunities and constraints that present themselves when considering re-use. These may be used to quickly understand where new uses may be appropriate when reviewing existing buildings, although this should always be supplemented by detailed site surveys and historic building research to underpin detailed design proposals.

Heritage Opportunities

- From the limited number of buildings which were surveyed during the course of this masterplan the majority of these have seen some degree of amendment, with over half having seemingly lost their historic plan form in its entirety, and it is assumed, a similar amount of heritage fabric with this. This could indicate that there would be a high proportion of buildings within the quarter which could offer capacity for change. If uses are linked, where

possible, to the degree of remaining fabric, this would offer the highest potential for re-utilising redundant spaces. As such, some flexibility with regard to use would be beneficial, with the form of the building informing the use, rather than uses being imposed on spaces where they may not be appropriate.

- Where historic plan forms have been lost, there may be opportunity to recreate or be inspired by these to bring back lost character.



17-18 Milsom Street; Subdivision of original plan



29 Milsom Street; Contemporary interior lining



20 New Bond Street; Subdivision of original plan

4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

Heritage constraints and opportunities

- Where historic plan form and fabric has been lost, this presents opportunities for uses which require open plan spaces which may be difficult to achieve in more 'in-tact' buildings, such as shared office space, commercial activities and maker spaces.
- Although only 10% of the shopfronts have been analysed as green, this does not mean that there is only 10% capacity for alteration. Where amendments to significant shopfronts might unlock the reuse of otherwise redundant space, this could be considered of larger public benefit.
- The use of ground floor retail space which provides an active frontage to the street should be retained to ensure the character of the area is not diminished. However, uses which provide this activity but allow for a more varied use of these spaces may circumnavigate issues such as shared access. For example, making spaces and office space which could use a whole building including the ground floor retail space could be considered.
- Although there is limited potential for large scale redevelopment and extensions, the majority of the buildings surveyed have flat roofs which are internally facing and could be re-purposed to provide amenity space where this is otherwise unavailable.
- The retrofitting of underused assets offers a huge opportunity for supporting climate change activities.
- Although existing vaults may not naturally support habitable uses, there is potential for this largely underused system of spaces to provide ancillary uses, supporting a more intensive use of space whilst alleviating pressure upon the public realm.
- The storey heights of some buildings means that there are often double height ground floor spaces which may offer scope for the introduction of a mezzanine floor.



17-18 Milsom Street; Historic lateral conversion



Series of flat roofs to the rear of New Bond Street



Un-used vault beneath New Bond Street

4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

Heritage constraints and opportunities

Heritage Constraints

- Where significant heritage fabric and plan form exists, this may limit the re-use of buildings.
- Where separate residential units are proposed at upper storeys, the lack of a 'lobby' space at the top of a shared staircase which allows for access into individual units would require potential large scale intervention to internal partitions.
- Providing different uses between ground and upper storeys requires independent access from street level. This may require an unacceptable level of intervention where their are narrow or significant shopfronts.
- Buildings within the quarter are typically a minimum of three storeys, which in most circumstances would need to provide a secondary means of escape from upper storeys.
- Lateral conversions could be considered in cases where independent access from street level, or secondary

means of escape, could be shared between neighbouring buildings. However, this may not always be possible due to the topography of the area and varying floor levels. The sloping nature of the site also makes full accessibility difficult to achieve, also compounded by buildings being directly on the pavement, limiting the space available for external ramps.

- There are areas where historic narrow burbage plots still exist, particularly seen within Green Street, Broad Street and Walcot Street. This can limit possibilities for separate access from street level as it may result in even narrower ground floor units which could be undesirable.
- Due to the density of the area, there are few buildings which provide amenity space, be it for bin or bike storage or external green space. This may result in additional pressure on the public realm to deal with increased waste and transport measures and/ or poor quality residential units.



Narrow plots to Green Street



Bin store within public realm in Broad Street



17-18 Milsom Street; Surviving plan form and fabric

4.1 BUILDING REPURPOSING & RE-USE

Strategic Re-Purposing

Heritage constraints and opportunities

Further Work

It is important to understand where there are existing conflicts in terms of policy or where further guidance is required to support the reuse of existing buildings. From the work undertaken through this masterplan, the following conflicts have been identified;

1. A more flexible use of ground floor retail units would ensure the reuse of upper storeys is not hampered by maintaining a retail use at ground floor.
2. Would shared access ever be deemed acceptable where the introduction of an independent access or additional vertical circulation would cause a large degree of harm to a heritage asset.
3. The viable re-use of buildings must be balanced with the preservation of heritage fabric and this balance can sometimes be difficult to achieve.

4. There is an inherent conflict between conservation and energy efficiency which is written into policy and practice and it will be important to establish priorities within local planning policy to understand how these two strategies can coexist.

5. Exemplar developments which illustrate how sensitive retrofitting and reuse can be integrated into existing buildings may help promote a higher quality of design and further understanding where certain scenarios of building form may lend themselves to differing uses more sensitively. Equally, pop-up uses within retail uses which test a series of alternative uses may provide greater evidence as to what uses may be deemed acceptable.

Further study around the vaults would help develop proposals for using this valuable and underused resource

The lack of space to support reuse, such as bike and bin storage, plant equipment and green space, may be able to be supported through development within the public realm or as part of larger scale developments as a centralised or networked system.



Series of interconnected vaults beneath Milsom Street



29 Milsom Street pop up display