# 3.2

# Public realm strategy

3.2 PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY

# Public realm strategy

## Vision & character

This masterplan for the Milsom Quarter is taking place within a very well established and highly protected area of the city. The aim of the urban design framework is therefore not to redefine or be radical but to sensitively complement and complete the urban form, including the public spaces and streetscape.

The area is characterised by strong north-south streets, including Milsom Street, Broad Street and Walcot Street. It is defined north and south by George Street and New Bond Street but also threaded through with a series of smaller lanes and connections, including some, such as the short-cut through Jollys which are really only known to a few locals.

# Public realm strategy

## Activating the streets

A key benefit of reducing the traffic flowing through the city centre streets is that they can be reclaimed for the benefit of people. It makes them more attractive and safe for pedestrians and cyclists and also means that activities and events can be a more common feature.

Events like the Great Bath Feast in 2021 demonstrate the appetite for the kind of social events that the street can host, including space for pop-up market stalls and food stalls, as well as additional seating brought in.

Accommodating events of this scale and intensity requires that the street be as simple and clear in its layout as possible, whilst also retaining a clear access through the middle of the street for emergencies. The pattern already established of placing stalls in the existing car parking bays achieves this very well, enabling the street to change repeatedly to respond to different events.

# Public realm strategy

## George Street, Edinburgh case study

The proposal for George Street in Edinburgh provides a fitting precedent for Milsom Quarter's public realm strategy. Designed as part of Edinburgh's 2025 Vision, the project enhances the environment, while protecting the historic street, located within a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The symmetry of the street is retained, while street clutter is cleared and the pavements are significantly widened to make space for greening. Planters integrate seating and create more enclosed spaces within the streetscape for play and relaxation. The broad pavement also allows the street to be animated with activity and a reduction in vehicle access creates a safer cycle thoroughfare.







Design and visuals by LDA Design, 2021

# Public realm strategy
## Addressing the climate crisis

Bath's streets and spaces have an important role to play in addressing the liveability of the city centre as we face the likely warming of the planet and greater extremes of heat and rainfall. However, significant changes to the public realm need to be weighed alongside significant policy and practical considerations.

Planting street trees has undoubted benefits for helping to manage the temperature of the spaces in the summer and creating liveable spaces. Whilst there are many precedents for important historic streets with existing trees, introducing new trees into significant historic streets needs to be considered in careful juxtaposition with the value of the architecture and the composition of key views.

Other public realm features such as raingardens can provide several layers of benefit, including improved biodiversity and enhanced appearance as well as helping to attenuate rainwater runoff and mitigate some of the impacts of climate change.
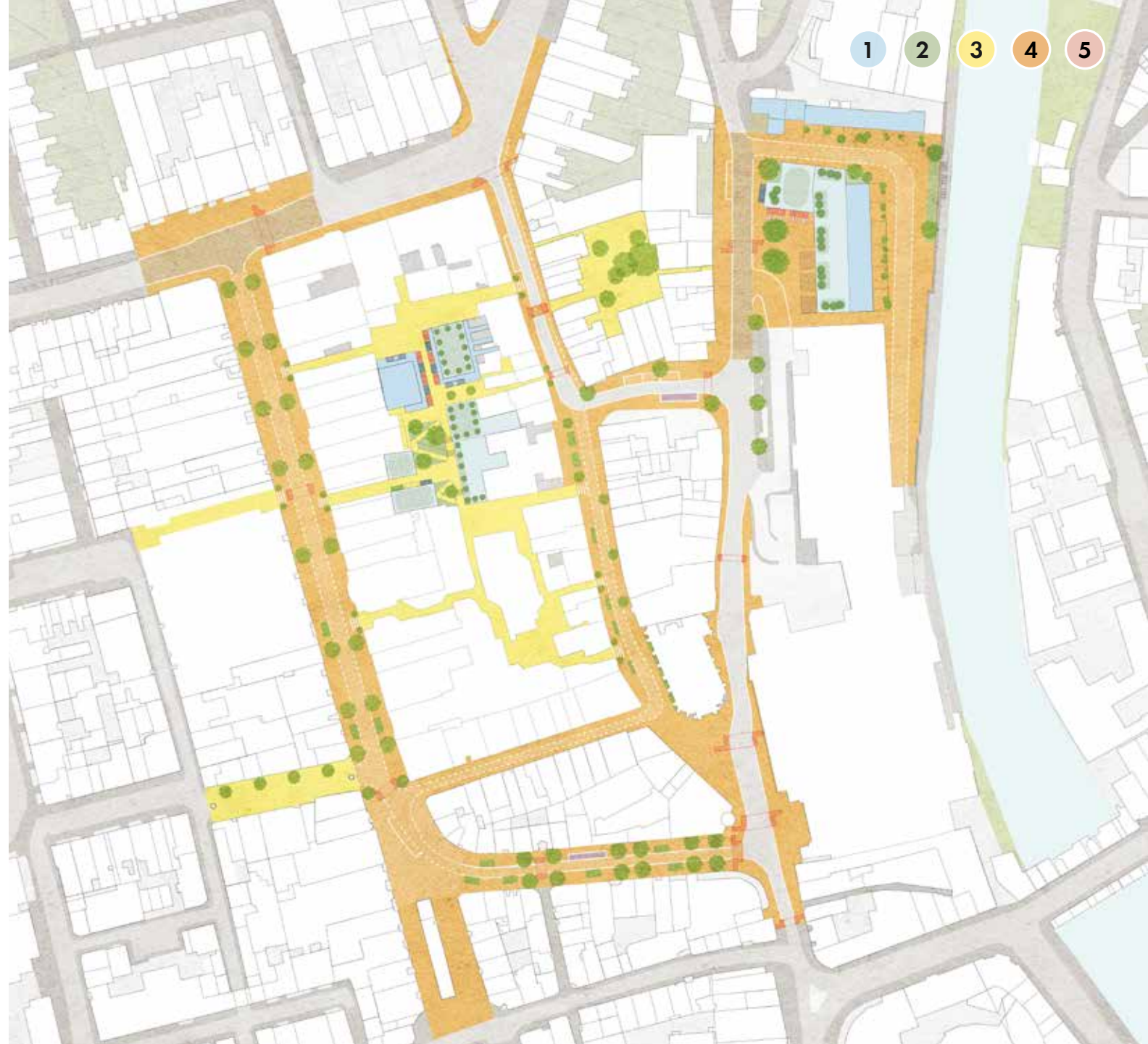
# Public realm strategy
## Preferred strategy

Improvements to the public realm have been designed in response to alternations in highway management and traffic flow in Milsom Quarter. The public realm strategy therefore follows on from the movement strategy in this urban design framework chapter. The key principles of the strategy are increasing greening, prioritising pedestrians and enhancing east to west connections, with the ambition of reclaiming the streets for people and businesses to thrive.

**Key**

- Pedestrian only public realm & movement area
- Pedestrian movement area
- Vehicular movement area shared with pedestrians
- Primary vehicular movement with improved public realm
- Loading bay
- Layby for buses
- Curb indication Bollard
- Bollards
- SuDS
- Green public realm
- Tree
- Pedestrian crossing
- Proposed buildings
- Proposed roof terrace

# Public realm strategy

## A layout to accommodate events

The challenge of delivering a street layout which is both populated with green infrastructure and useful street furniture, but also remains clear and open for events requires careful consideration. Whilst elements of street furniture might be moved as needed, this can make the staging of events more complex and laborious, making them less likely to happen.

A key response to this should be considering how to focus street furniture and planting into discrete areas, maximising areas of clear pavement which can be used for activities rather than sprinkling bins, benches and other paraphernalia more widely. The position of these clustered elements of planting and street furniture can then also be used to define a series of zones or rooms along the street, responding to the character and function of key buildings such as the Fashion Museum.
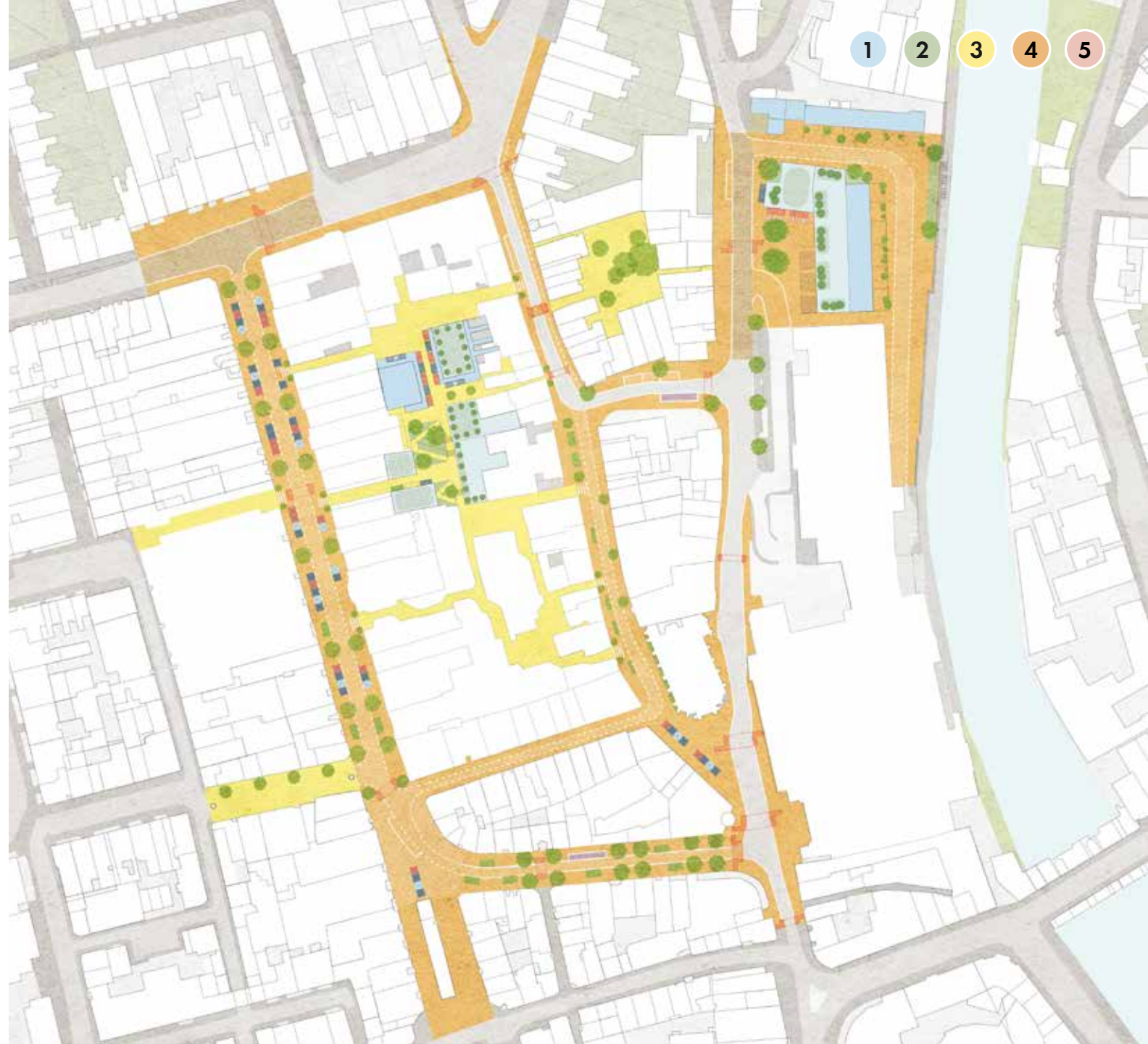
# Public realm strategy

## Full event model

Plan indicating maximum capacity on Milsom street in full event mode- 44 stalls at 3x3m.

### Key

| | |
|---|---|
| 🟨 | Pedestrian only public realm & movement area |
| 🟧 | Pedestrian movement area |
| | Vehicular movement area shared with pedestrians |
| | Primary vehicular movement with improved public realm |
| | Loading bay |
| | Layby for buses |
| | Market stalls |
| | Curb indication Bollard |
| ⊙ | Bollards |
| ▬ | SuDS |
| 🟩 | Green public realm |
| 🟢 | Tree |
| 🟥 | Pedestrian crossing |
| 🟦 | Proposed buildings |
| | Proposed roof terrace |

# Public realm strategy
## Small event model

Plan indicating capacity on Milsom street in small event mode- 24 stalls at 3x3m.

### Key

| | |
|---|---|
| ▨ (yellow) | Pedestrian only public realm & movement area |
| ▨ (orange) | Pedestrian movement area |
| ▨ (hatched) | Vehicular movement area shared with pedestrians |
| ▨ (hatched) | Primary vehicular movement with improved public realm |
| ▨ | Loading bay |
| ▨ | Layby for buses |
| ▧ | Market stalls |
| ▨ | Curb indication Bollard |
| ⊙ | Bollards |
| ▬ | SuDS |
| ▬ | Green public realm |
| ● | Tree |
| ▬ | Pedestrian crossing |
| ▬ | Proposed buildings |
| ▬ | Proposed roof terrace |
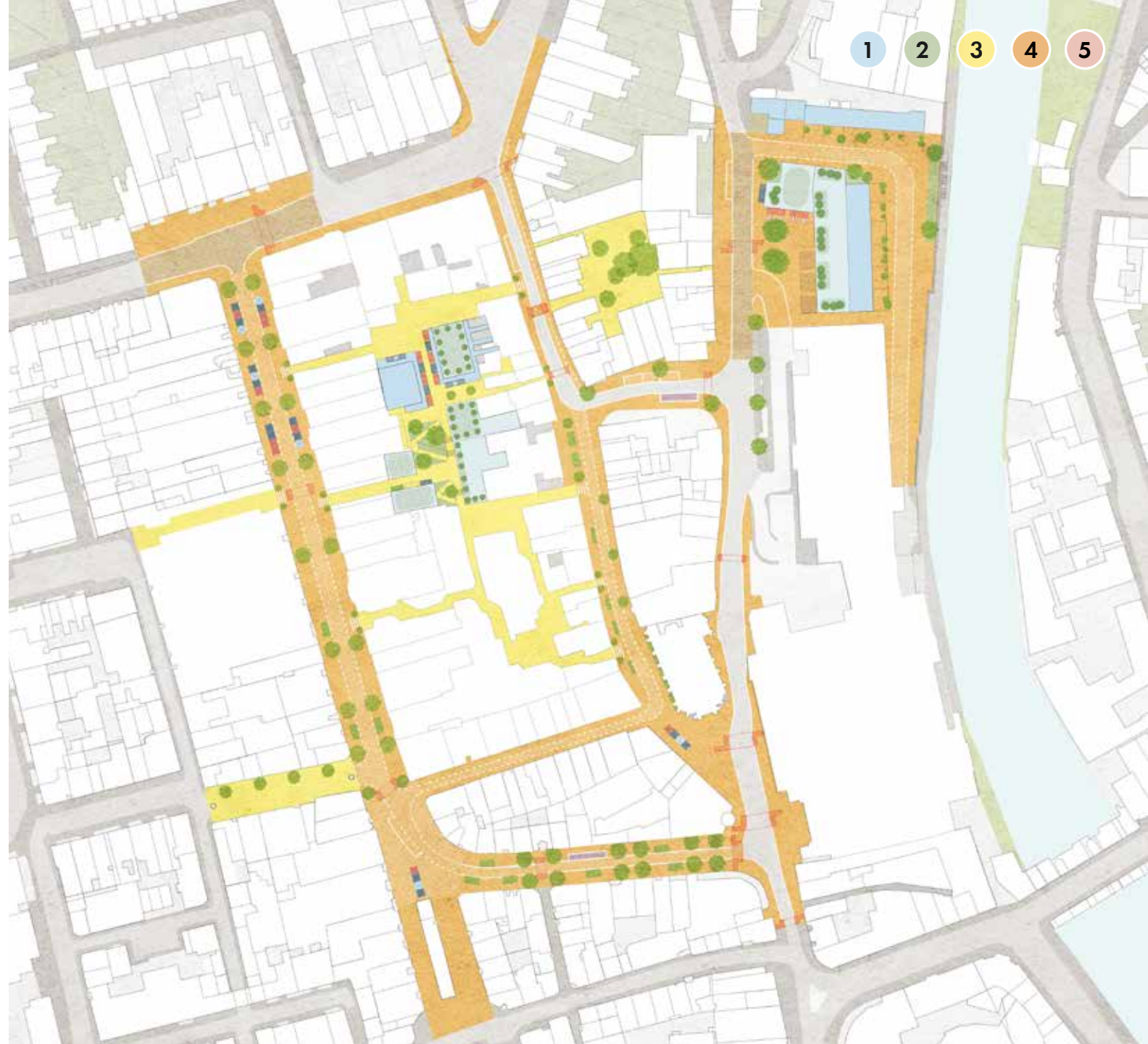
# Public realm strategy
## Street furniture precedents

These precedents of street furniture provide suggestions for elements along Milsom Street, which could integrate planting, cycle racks and seating.

Interventions should align with the Council's adopted Pattern Book and Public Realm and Movement Strategy.
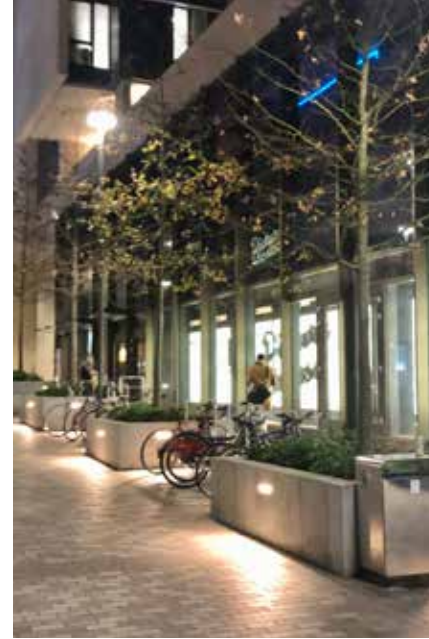


Allies and Morrison planters combining seating, greening and bike racks London



Rough&Ready planters (images from streetlife.nl)

# Public realm strategy

## Street furniture, planting & cycle rack element

The permanent street furniture allows for public space to be comfortably circulated, with the market stalls at full capacity. The elevation below suggests the difference in scale between trees in planters and those in tree pits. Both options would be situated in the parking bay zone of the street and therefore would not reduce pavement space for pedestrians.
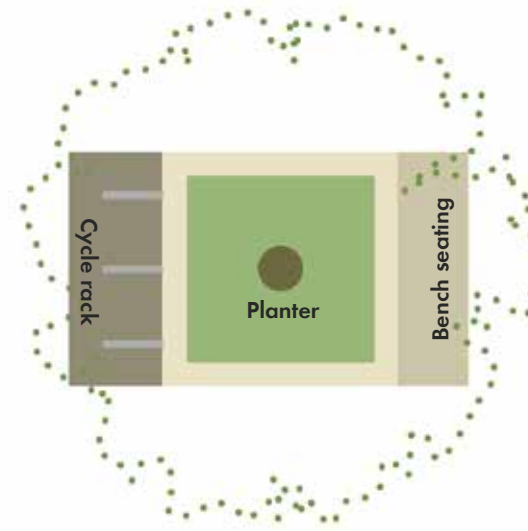


Cycle rack

Planter

Bench seating



Use of vaults would be subject to listed building consent

111



Potential design for street furntiure shown in plan and elevation
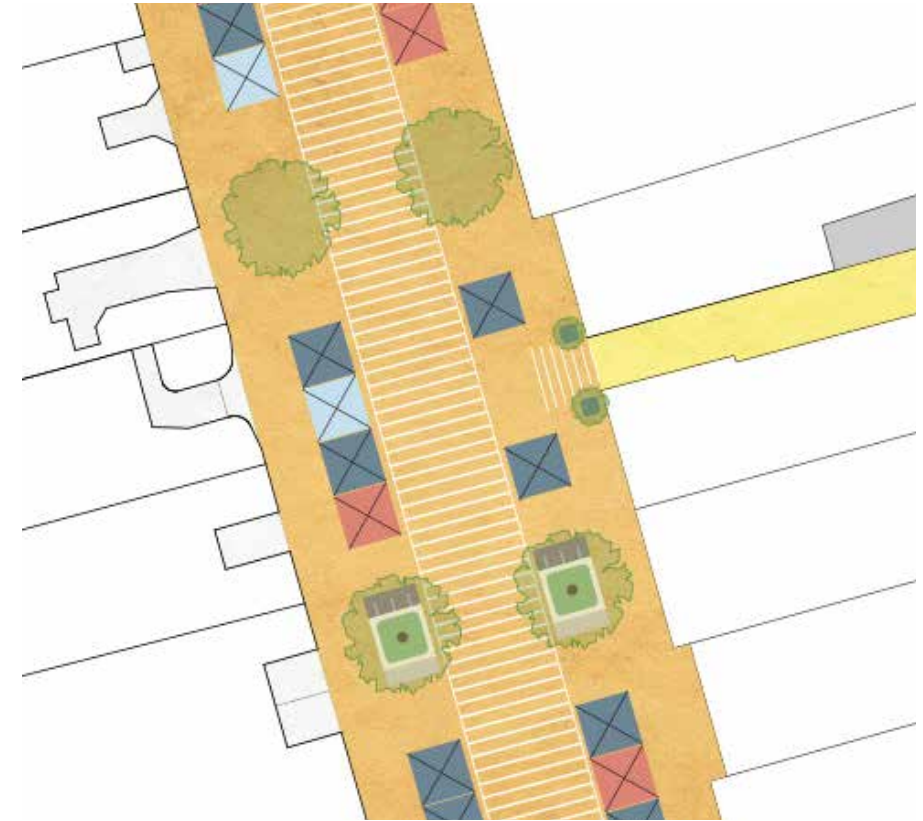


Plan highlighting the scale of the planters on Milsom street and their potential positioning between market stalls in the parking bays.

**Key**

Pedestrian only public realm & movement area

Pedestrian movement area

Vehicular movement area shared with pedestrians

Market stalls (assuming TRO access restriction in place during market events)

# Public realm strategy

## St Michael's Square existing design work

Extract from Bath Pattern Book of tools to achieve the vision:
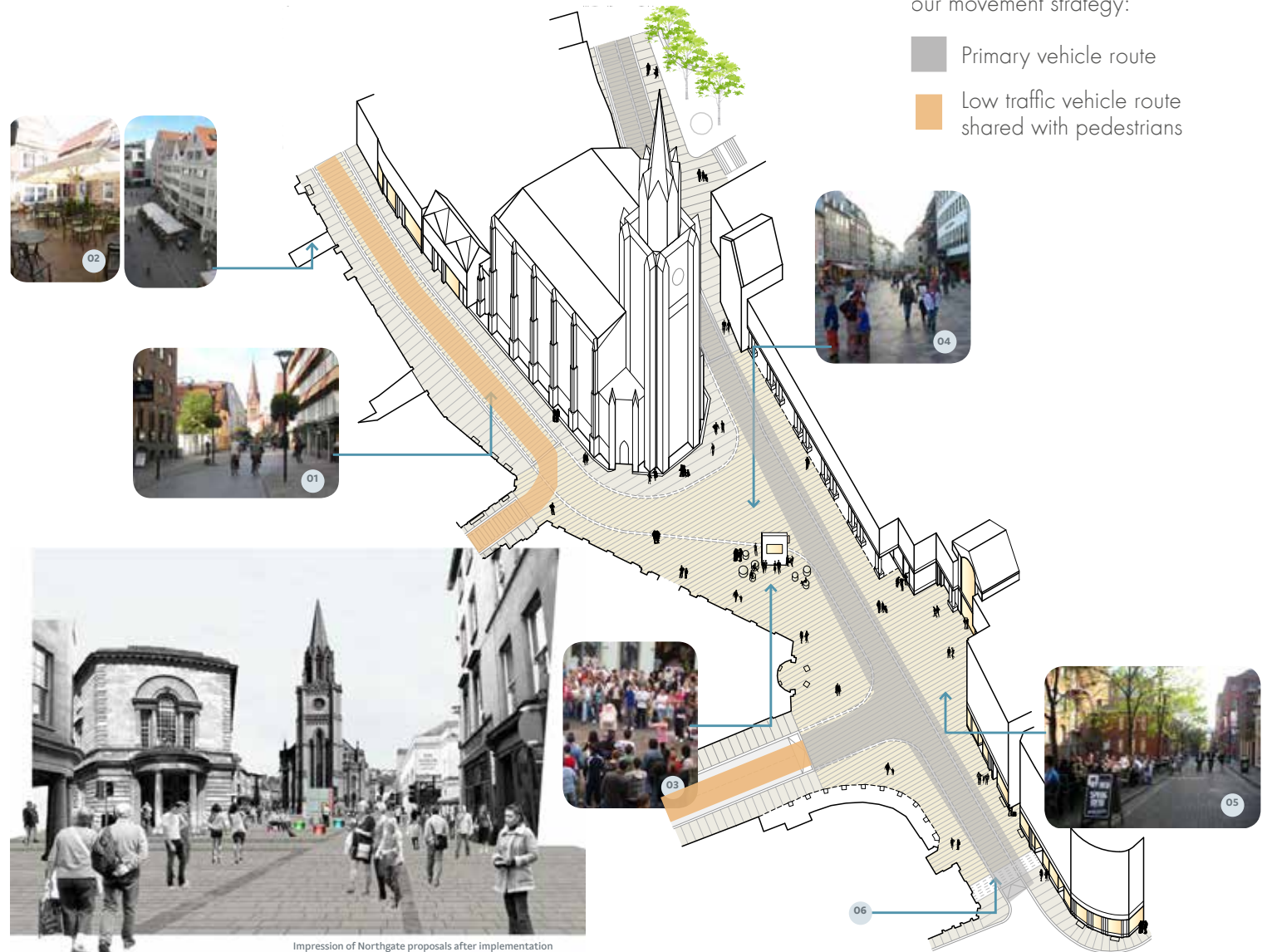
1. Flush paved surface- draw pedestrian movement up Broad Street and towards Walcot Street.

2. Hidden courtyard spaces

3. Gathering/ events space- meeting point feature/ kiosk with informal seating opportunities.

4. Continuous paved surface pattern- continuous surface pattern to unify space as one large space which is capable of hosting events. parades for the City/ Guild Hall etc. Route for vehicles to be marked with continuous surface pattern.

5. Areas for retail activity to spill onto street: Opportunity for cafe seating to be encouraged to create vibrant space.

6. Opportunity to mark the line of the historic city walls.

Lines overlaid to indicate the latest proposed vehicle routes, in line with our movement strategy:

Primary vehicle route

Low traffic vehicle route shared with pedestrians



Impression of Northgate proposals after implementation

Drawing extract from Bath Pattern Book

# Public realm strategy

## Broad Street Place existing design work

Starting on site in 2022 investment is planned in Broad Street Place to improve the appearance of this public space and garden.

Designs have been prepared working closely with local businesses and key stakeholders.



**1. Enabling and restoration works**
- 1.1 Cleaning of all hard surfaces
- 1.2 Cleaning of facades of buildings
- 1.3 Removal of weeds and litter to soft landscape
- 1.4 Parking restrictions to entrances to the place
- 1.5 Painting timber framework
- 1.6 Update city centre wayfinding boards

**2. Hard landscape**
- 2.1 Repair of uneven and broken hard surfaces
- 2.2 Repair of coping to raised planter wall
- 2.3 Removal of step with ramp
- 2.4 Hand rails to Walcot street steps
- 2.5 Cleaning/repairs to drainage and pipes
- 2.6 Natural stone boulders
- 2.7 Handrails to central steps

**3. Street furniture**
- 3.1 Relocate existing litter bin
- 3.2 Provide temporary 'bistro' seating
- 3.3 Restore and relocate 2no. Existing benches
- 3.4 Restore/paint existing timber picnic benches
- 3.5 Provide umbrellas for picnic benches
- 3.6 Cycle stands
- 3.7 Group and up cycle existing plant pots
- 3.8 'Giant' plant pots
- 3.9 Playful bird, bat and insect houses
- 3.10 Bar bench and stools fixed to existing wall
- 3.11 2no. Fallen log bench
- 3.12 Fallen log stepping stone bench

**4. Soft landscape**
- 4.1 Retain and protect the existing trees
- 4.2 Understorey woodland mix
- 4.3 Biodiversity green/brown roof to the YMCA
- 4.4 Hanging baskets
- 4.5 Giant plant pots container planting
- 4.6 New planting to existing plant pots
- 4.7 Replant the existing raised planter
- 4.8 Window boxes
- 4.9 Bark mulch under the trees

**4. Art works**
- 5.1 Restore the existing water feature
- 5.2 Mural to YMCA facade
- 5.3 Vinyl artworks to southern shop front windows
- 5.4 Broad Street Place banners/signs
- 5.5 Broad Street/Walcot Street surface artworks
- 5.6 Open Canvas
- 5.7 I love Broad Street Place branding

**6. Lighting and security**
- 6.1 Repaint the existing lighting column
- 6.2 Strengthen catenary lighting
- 6.3 Feature lighting to specimen tree
- 6.4 Illuminate shop windows
- 6.5 Strengthen CCTV Network
- 6.6 Strengthen building mounted lighting
- 6.7 Pop up power supply

Broad Street Place Design Concept 2021