

# THE CITY CENTRE FRAMEWORK

MARCH 2018



# A STRONGER HEART FOR BRISTOL



CITY DESIGN & STRATEGIC TRANSPORT  
GROWTH & REGENERATION



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Prepared by:

**City Design Group, Strategic Transport**

Bristol City Council

Authors: ML / CS / CM

Draft

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Section 1

# Introduction

# 1





# Introduction

**With a rich cultural heritage, prosperous economy, and world class universities, Bristol is consistently ranked as one of the best places to live in the UK.**

**Maintaining and improving Bristol's vitality and attractiveness, particularly in the city centre, will be key to its ongoing economic success, and to the social, health and wellbeing of its citizens.**

## Key Objectives

- **Creating a liveable, vibrant, safe and inclusive city centre for the benefit of people of all ages to live, work, learn and enjoy.**
- **Tackling traffic congestion; making the city centre better connected, accessible and healthier.**
- **Supporting the city centre as the core retail and cultural heart of the West of England, by enabling large scale redevelopment and improvement of the retail/leisure offer.**
- **Influencing the sustainable development of up to 2,000 new homes (within CCNE area), employment space, enhancement of heritage assets, public realm and green space.**
- **Informing inward investment, planning, property asset management and funding decisions.**

## The City Centre Framework

This framework sets out aspirations for improved patterns of movement, the potential for new development, and enhancing the public realm within the city centre. The intention is to influence change which will be beneficial to central Bristol, having regard to local character and distinctiveness whilst helping to create neighbourhoods that are interconnected so that social, economic and cultural opportunities are easily accessed by all.

The city centre is undergoing a transformation brought about by changes in how we shop and work and investment in public transport and public realm. There is growing demand for residential and student accommodation in the city centre that needs to be balanced alongside other uses. Although the city centre continues to be successful, there is a need to proactively plan for these changes and create places that can accommodate and provide for all the different needs of people living, working and visiting the city.

The document brings together recent thinking around the emerging Joint Local Transport Plan together with a focus on development potential within the area identified here as the City Centre North East (CCNE).

## City Centre Movement

For Bristol to continue to be an attractive place to work, live and visit, we need to continue to improve the movement network in the city centre. Transport needs to support the local economy and help create better places to respond to the changing role of the city centre. We need to minimise congestion and improve health and air quality, which are often worst in the most deprived areas.

The city is currently benefitting from significant transport investment. Around £800m will be invested in transport infrastructure by 2020. This includes the first three routes of a MetroBus Rapid Transport network linking the city centre to the North Fringe and South Bristol, the MetroWest scheme to improve suburban rail services, and the Cycle Ambition Fund programmes are helping to improve cycle infrastructure.

The emerging Joint Local Transport Plan and Bristol Transport Plan will set out our future aspirations for the city region as a whole, however, there is a need to consider the specific transport challenges and opportunities in the city centre in more detail.

To tackle these challenges, this framework proposes a set of transport aims and proposals for the city centre and begins the discussion on how these can be achieved. Public funding will be required to deliver many of the transport proposals in this framework, and new developments may also be expected to contribute as part of the planning process.

## City Centre North East (CCNE)

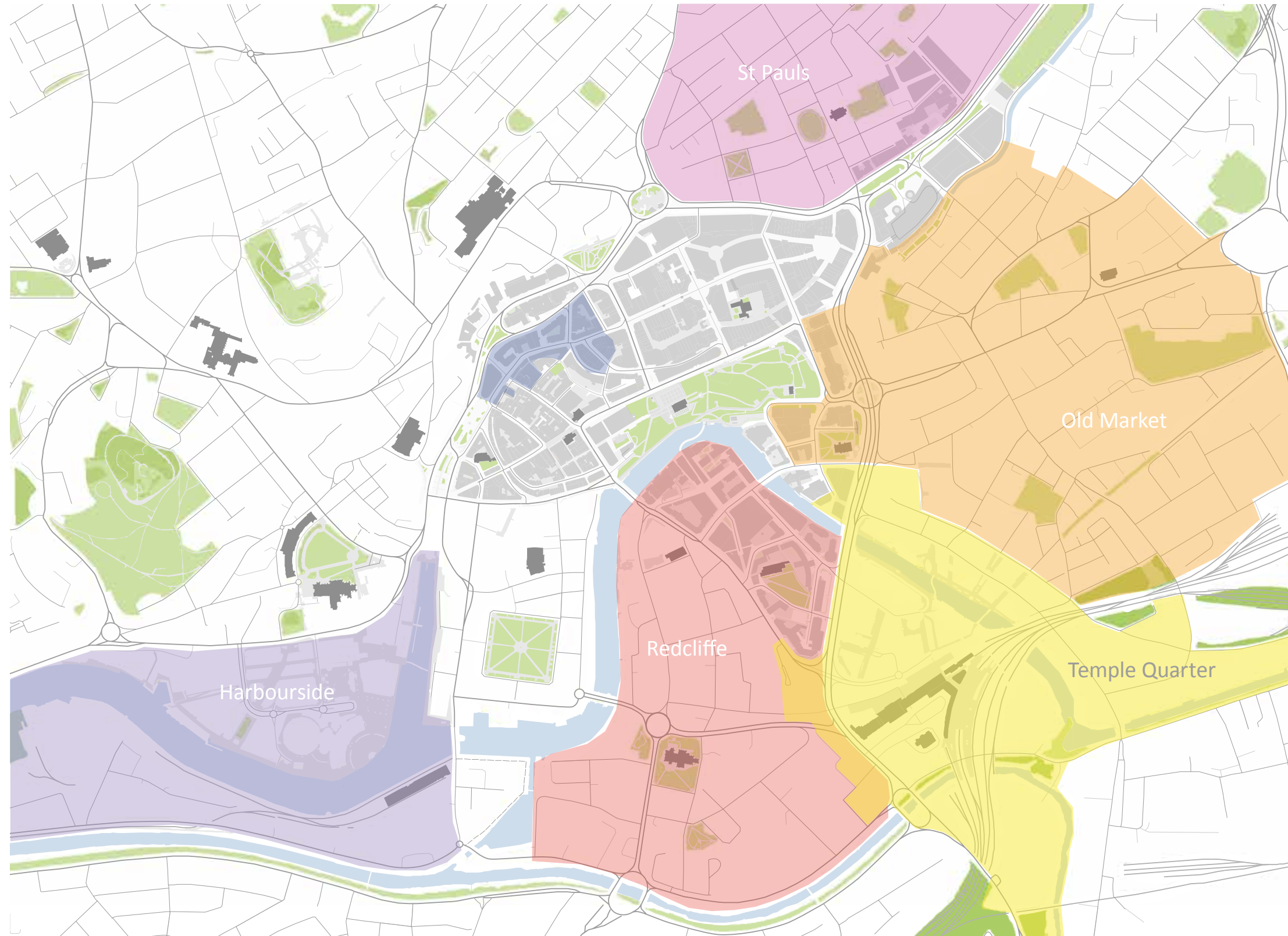
With regard to new development and public realm investment this framework includes a focus on the North East section of the city centre which includes the old medieval core, Castle Park, the established Bristol Shopping Quarter and the gateway into the city from the M32.

Planning policies play an important role in creating a vibrant and sustainable central area and this Framework is intended to increase investor confidence and certainty. In strategic terms the Framework aims to highlight planning expectations and additional benefits that are likely to be sought either directly or indirectly by the local authority and other stakeholders.

The North East of the city centre has significant development potential. This framework aims to support development here, giving the area the same attention and focus afforded by the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone, the neighbourhood plan areas of Old Market and Redcliffe, or the regeneration status of Harbourside.

In addition to this main document, seven distinct character areas have been identified which provide a range of opportunities and constraints for future placemaking. (see [www.bristol.gov.uk/citycentre](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/citycentre))





**Planning Policy background**

The CCNE Framework area is contained within the boundaries of the Bristol Central Area Plan (BCAP), and in part overlaps with a number of area based planning policy documents, the boundaries are indicated on the adjacent Plan. All development proposals will be judged against the existing statutory planning policies. These include the following citywide documents:

- The Core Strategy - June 2011
- The Bristol Central Area Plan - March 2015
- The Site Allocations and Development Management Policies - July 2014
- Statement of Community Involvement - 2015

The CCNE area incorporates a number of strategically important development sites identified. The following BCAP policies and site allocations form part of the current statutory development plan and as such are the starting point for decision making:

- BCAP30 Pedestrian Routes
- BCAP36 Bristol Shopping Quarter
- BCAP37 High Street, Wine Street and Castle Park
- BCAP38 Nelson Street and Lewins Mead
- BCAP39 Newfoundland Way
- BCAP47 Redcliffe
- SA510 Dove Street
- SA607 Fire Station, Temple Back
- SA608 Victoria Street, Temple Street

**Map Key - Existing City Centre Policy Areas**

- SPD 3 Future of Redcliffe
- SPD 8 Nelson Street Regeneration Framework
- SPD 10 Planning a Sustainable Future for St Pauls
- Old Market Quarter Neighbourhood Plan
- TQEZ Spatial Framework
- Harbourside Regeneration Area



## Key Themes

**This framework sets out aspirations associated with improved patterns of movement and potential new development within the context of the established city centre. Bristol contains a wealth of streets, buildings and public spaces that reflect its importance as an historic city, and although this has been fragmented in many areas, this provides the context within which decisions about the future city will be made.**

This Framework has four key themes:

1. To maintain a distinctive and high quality network of streets, spaces and mixed-use development, harnessing the value of a unique historic environment. Providing a resilient and adaptable low carbon and sustainable built environment.
2. To improve movement around the city centre and increase physical activity by promoting walking and cycling and encourage the use of public transport.
3. To promote and inspire, to raise ambitions and engage stakeholders in revealing the potential of key sites for bold and imaginative transformation.
4. To co-ordinate and integrate investment in the public realm that enhances the public life of the city.

### City Context

Recognising the value of the inherited environment and the contribution of historic assets

Conserving and enhancing valuable historic buildings and their settings

Promoting positive reuse of buildings and spaces that contribute to the character of the city centre

Enhance the built environment through inward investment and the creation of high quality townscape

### Improved Movement

Improve and better connect walking and cycling routes and networks

Invest in the quality and clarity of public transport systems to increase attractiveness to a wider group of users

Maintain appropriate levels of access and parking to serve a vibrant and diverse mix of city centre uses

### New Development

Add to the rich and diverse legacy of the wider built environment by delivering positive urban design solutions, that embrace excellence in architecture, landscape design and public art

Plan for a balanced mix of land-uses

Promote the efficient use of urban land, increasing site densities where appropriate

### Enhanced Public Realm

Increase legibility, accessibility and safety within the streets and public spaces

Enhance the attractiveness of the city through good public realm design

Promote healthy places by improving air quality and green infrastructure

Provide effective maintenance and management of public space



Section 2

Key Themes

2





# City Context

## Historic Environment

Bristol is one of the most historic cities in England. Founded around 1000AD, it has always had a reputation for change, economic growth and innovation. Until the First World War the city centre retained its intact medieval structure centred on the cross roads of High Street, Corn Street, Broad Street and Wine Street. This area had remained unchanged despite centuries of urban growth and densification.

Following the devastation of bombing during World War II, depopulation and the increased use of the private motor car, brought dramatic changes to the city centre during the second half of the twentieth century. Post war highway infrastructure projects to increase road capacity and achieve free flowing traffic eroded the physical coherence of the city, and reduced the mobility of other road users. More recent changes including the removal of roads from Queen Square and College Green sought to redress this balance, and are being continued with further works to reclaim public space in The Centre and at Temple Gate.

## The Evolving Place

The city centre is the focus for economic regeneration, and as such changes faster than many other parts of Bristol. There is a need to maintain a degree of continuity, particularly where this contributes to the wider identity and status of the city. Essential to this is the protection and management of a large number of significant historic buildings, streets and spaces which help to characterise the city centre and maintain its attractiveness as a place to visit, shop and enjoy.

The city is well known for its diverse programme of events and festivals, street art, and range of independent businesses, all of which help create distinctive places and attract a growing number of visitors. The number and scale of events however, need to be managed in order to maintain the quality of the city's parks and open spaces. In addition, increasing the presence of markets, street trading and meanwhile or pop-up activities are helping to animate the public realm.

## Liveability and Affordability

Bristol is viewed as one of the UK's most liveable cities. People are attracted to live in the centre due to the excellent employment opportunities, education establishments, accessibility and the amenities on offer - shopping, parks and open spaces, culture and events. The population of the centre doubled to around 30,500 between 2001 and 2014, with the largest increase in the 18-24 age group. However, a lack of housing supply and affordability is becoming an ever increasing issue. Although overall the centre is prosperous, there are parts which suffer from high levels of deprivation, especially to the east.

The city centre is home to a diverse set of communities. Traditionally, these have been business based but increasingly residential and student communities are emerging. Given the role of the city centre in providing a place of work and recreation for the wider city and beyond, the balance with regard to the influence and ownership of resident communities is a fine one. For the city centre to continue to provide a focus and identity for the whole city and its visitors, it is important that the public realm is open and accessible and the urge to privatise public space is resisted.

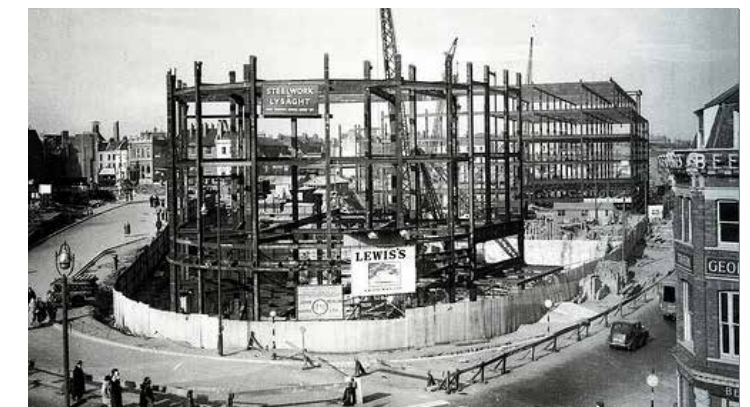
- 1
- 2
- 3

**KEY**

Image 1 Castle Street c.1900

Image 2 St Mary -le-Port Street c 1945

Image 3 Broadmead development c.1954





# Improved Movement

## The Role of Sustainable Transport

The majority of people do not travel to work in the city centre by car, but congestion impacts everyone, causing delays and unreliable bus services, and worsening conditions for walking and cycling. Many bus routes across the city travel through the central area, with delays in the centre causing knock on effects across the city.

The majority of congestion in the city centre in the morning peak is caused by commuting. The evening peak is caused by a mix of commuting and leisure trips.

The success of the city centre is generating large volumes of travel demand, that are set to increase in future, causing congestion problems during the peak periods and increasingly throughout the day.

Sustainable and healthy modes of transport such as walking, cycling, bus, and trains already play a vital role in the success of the city centre. The majority of people travelling to work in the city centre do so by sustainable and healthy modes of transport, and this is set to increase further in the future with intensified urban living and improved public transport connections.

The proposals set out in this framework are needed to help encourage a continuing shift to sustainable and healthy transport. This will make best use of the limited road space we have available and ensure the maximum number of people can reliably and efficiently move to and from the city centre. We cannot create any more land, so need to make best use of the land available. Sustainable modes of transport are much

more space efficient than the private car, allowing a larger number of people to move in the same amount of space.

Sixty percent of people driving to work in the city centre do so from other local authority areas. This highlights the need for Bristol City Council to work with our neighbouring local authorities to provide sustainable and healthy transport options across the region, as we are doing with the Joint Transport Study and other initiatives.

Transport and movement can play a substantial role in achieving better health and air quality. Around 47% of Bristol residents report being obese or overweight, and building active travel in to everyday life can play a big role in healthier lifestyles. Air pollution also has a negative impact on health, and is estimated to cause around 300 early deaths per year in the city. Emissions from diesel vehicles are the dominant factor in poor air quality, and encouraging a shift to more sustainable and healthy modes of transport will continue the reduction in harmful emissions.

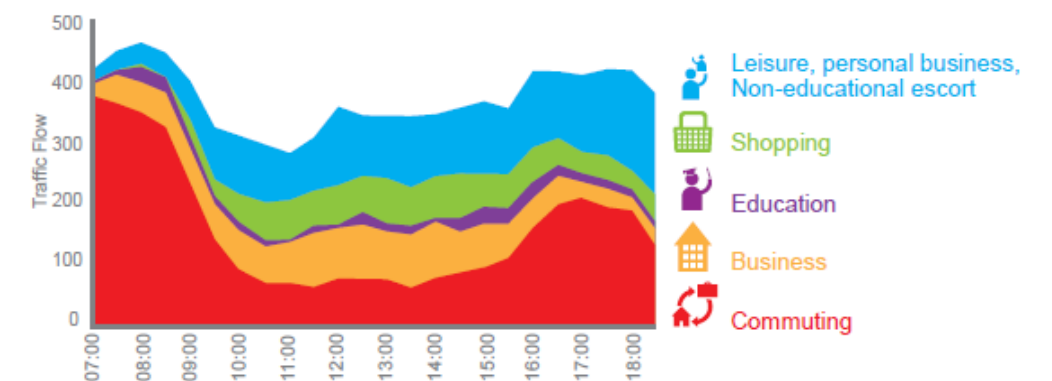
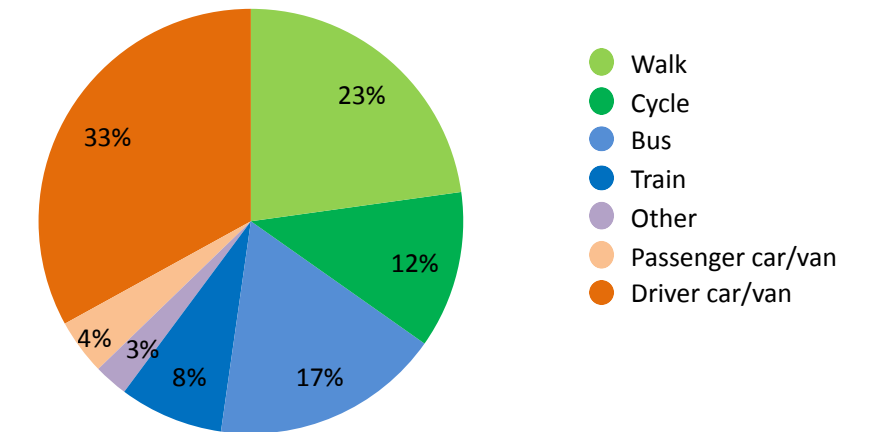
Sustainable and healthy transport also plays a key role in tackling inequality, providing access to jobs, leisure, and services. People in the most deprived areas of Bristol are far less likely to own and drive a car, and far more likely to walk or get the bus to work than people in the least deprived areas. Around 40% of jobseekers say that a lack of personal transport, or poor public transport, is a key barrier preventing them from getting a job.

**KEY**

- Table Method of travel to work / levels of deprivation (2015)
- Figure 1 Method of travel to work to Bristol City Centre (2016)
- Figure 2 Purpose of trips in central Bristol by time of day (2013)

IMD 2015 Bristol*	Don't own a car	Method of travel to work			
		Walk	Cycle	Bus	Car
<b>10% Most deprived</b>	20%	20%	6%	14%	44%
<b>10% Least deprived</b>	4%	10%	9%	5%	56%

\* The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official UK government measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England



# New Development

- 1
- 2
- 3

**KEY**

- Image 1 mixed-use development at Finzels Reach
- Image 2 retail led regeneration of Callowhill Court
- Image 3 residential scheme for Castle Park View

**Development Activity**

Bristol is a vibrant, independent and culturally rich city, and the central area continues to see significant inward investment and change. Well considered new development will contribute to the identity and vitality of the city centre whilst respecting the rich legacy of existing buildings and spaces.

44% of the city’s jobs are located in the city centre. Sectors including professional services, support services, environmental technologies and creative industries have seen recent growth, however there has been a shift in employment to new space within the Enterprise Zone. There is a need to supply quality commercial space in core areas to maintain the vibrant mix of uses that help to characterise the city centre.

Recently the city centre has experienced an increase in living accommodation, initially through the conversion of outdated offices to student housing. There is a growing demand for purpose built halls of residence, hotels and new homes. With an increasing residential population and growth in the evening economy there is a need to invest in the public realm.

The Bristol Shopping Quarter complements trading within the wider city centre. Prior to the opening of Cabot Circus in 2008, Bristol had slipped to 27th in the national retail ranking. Major retail development alongside work of the Broadmead Business Improvement District has helped improve the ranking to 12th. Continued investment is necessary to enhance Bristol’s status and attractiveness as a place to visit for shopping and leisure.

**Sustainable Development**

New developments should be designed and constructed to minimise their environmental impact, and contribute to meeting targets for reductions in carbon dioxide emissions. Environmental design and construction measures should be creatively integrated into developments in ways that are both functional, technically appropriate and aesthetically pleasing rather than as bolt-ons.

All development in Bristol must be designed to be resilient to future climate change. With summer temperatures predicted to increase significantly, developments should be designed to minimise cooling energy demand through passive measures. These could include reduced plan depths to enable natural ventilation, provision of green roofs and urban greening to provide cooling, increased thermal mass and external shading. The use of renewable energy technology to meet any cooling demands that cannot be ‘designed out’ should be investigated.

Bristol has long had a close relationship with the rivers Avon and Frome, and owes much of its prosperity to living and working around these watercourses. However, such close interaction brings with it a potential risk of flooding and new development needs to conform to a number of established constraints. A positive approach to managing water through SuDS and other measures should seek to enhance the area and reconnect people to watercourses to increase a sense of place and associated environmental benefits.

**Existing and Future Technologies**

Advances in technology increasingly affect the way we communicate, reduces the need to travel, and helps to generate efficient and affordable energy. New development needs to embrace new technology in order to maintain Bristol as a successful city.

Ultrafast broadband connectivity will improve the productivity, competitiveness and innovation of businesses in the city centre, and its availability will help attract new businesses to the area. Improved connectivity in the centre will benefit Bristol’s overall economy and help drive the transition to full fibre and ultrafast speeds in the wider city. It is important that new homes and businesses have full fibre connectivity as standard and a choice of broadband infrastructure for residents and occupants. As existing buildings are redeveloped, the opportunity should be taken to build-in fibre-to-the-premises connections to benefit new tenants and residents.

As well as requiring new development to incorporate renewable energy technologies the City Council is developing heat networks across the city. Connection to heat networks not only assist towards the city’s ambitions to be a carbon neutral city, but also benefits developers by reducing the cost and space consumed by traditional plant-rooms; and developments’ occupiers by reducing energy bills.





# Enhanced Public Realm

## Streets and Spaces

Policy BCAP30 of the Bristol Central Area Plan identifies a network of primary and secondary pedestrian routes serving the city centre. Primary routes provide high quality corridors linking key city centre destinations and reflect the areas for growth or regeneration identified by the Core Strategy.

Development on or adjacent to primary pedestrian routes will be expected to provide an appropriate level of public realm improvements.

The Framework identifies priority routes for public realm investment. These offer a further refinement of the BCAP30 network, and are influenced by current thinking around developing a clearer hierarchy and consistent quality to primarily pedestrian corridors which will provide direct and legible connectivity through the area.

These routes are largely established but are varied in terms of the quality of design and materials which lead to fragmented routes that are less attractive to users. Improvements associated with recent development, but also via the Council's own programme of improvements have led to significant enhancement in areas such as Nelson Street and Corn Street. However, the same attention is required for routes to the east of the city centre in order to establish a more coherent public realm network.

## An Attractive and Healthy City

The city's economy and liveability benefits from the attractiveness of its streets and public spaces. The design of the public realm, aimed at achieving generous, safe and uncluttered space for people to enjoy, is enhanced by an improved green spaces and landscape treatments, good quality street lighting, robust and attractive materials.

Public Art is a key component of Bristol City Council's vision for the development of high quality places and urban design. It is widely considered good practice to integrate arts programmes into major building projects and the regeneration of the urban environment. The work of artists contributes to an area's sense of place and unique identity. Interventions that focus on the public realm and public buildings create hierarchy within the townscape and create enhanced places which are memorable and enjoyable to experience.

Our overall health is influenced by much more than the health services we receive. Where we live, the air we breathe, feeling secure and connected to our local community also affects our health and wellbeing. Bristol Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2013) recognises this and the aims to create a city filled with healthy, safe, and sustainable communities and places. This framework supports those aims and recognises that enhanced green infrastructure, and opportunities for active travel, play an important role in transforming the modern city into a more sustainable and healthy place.

## A Legible and Well Managed City

Bristol Legible City (BLC) is an innovative city information and wayfinding project that has shaped the city's approach to public realm and movement since the 1990s.

The framework offers an opportunity to refine and refresh the wayfinding network to help steer pedestrians to the most attractive and convenient routes around the city centre. The considered public realm hierarchy and further development of priority routes and key spaces offers an opportunity introduce the new generation of wayfinding components in the most effective way to promote sustainable pedestrian movement.

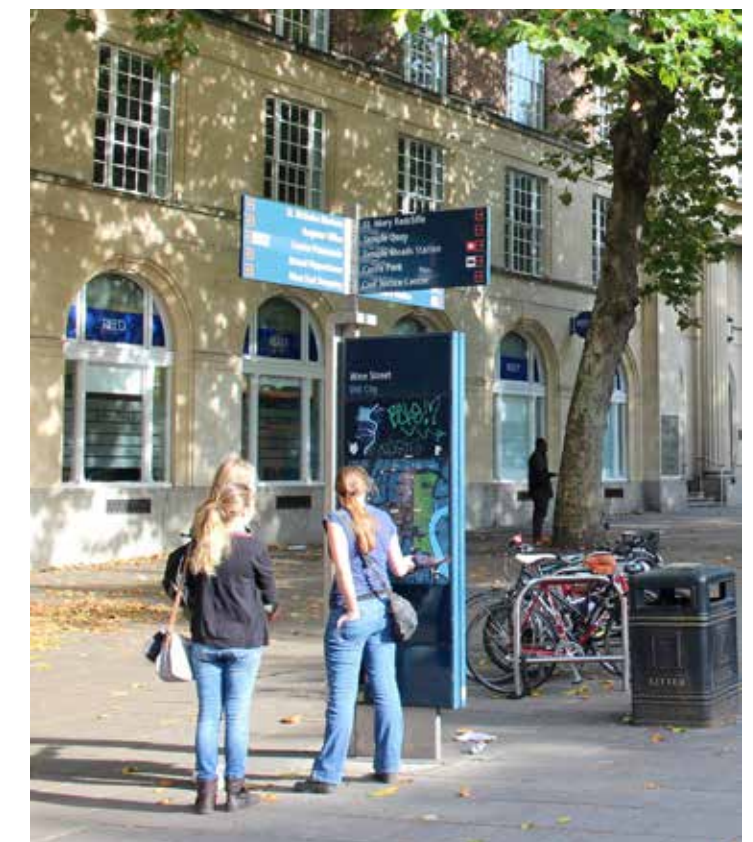
The effectiveness of any wayfinding system in the public realm relies on the ongoing management and updating of information within a changing city context, giving confidence and reliability for pedestrians. Likewise intensification of the public realm increases the need for robust and maintainable design solutions, standardisation of a high quality materials pallet, and prioritising regular maintenance along the main corridors that help people to navigate the city centre.



**KEY**

Image 1 St Nicholas Markets

Image 2 Bristol Legible City Wayfinding Information





# City Centre - The Framework - Improved Movement

# 3





## Improved Movement - Walking & Cycling

### Background - Walking

Walking is an essential part of most trips, whether it's browsing the shops, to get to the bus stop or car park, or to simply enjoy the green spaces and the harbourside. Around 1 in 4 people working in the city centre already walk to work, contributing to improved health and well-being as well as reducing congestion.

With changes to consumer shopping habits and the increasing influence of internet shopping, Bristol needs to ensure its city centre is seen as an attractive place in which to spend time and visit. Walking routes should be considered safe both during the day and at night.

Policy BCAP30 of the Bristol Central Area Plan identifies a network of primary and secondary pedestrian routes service the city centre.

### AIM 1 : New and Expanded Pedestrian Priority Areas

High quality pedestrian spaces will be enabled by the reduction and removal of motor traffic in key areas. The specification of materials and street furniture to create high quality areas where pedestrians have priority over motor traffic and bicycles, with clear delineation to assist partially sighted pedestrians.

This framework sets out key areas to create and expand pedestrian priority areas. If this is supported, further work will be undertaken to confirm the extent of change that could be achieved. Key areas include Old City and Bristol Shopping Quarter.

### AIM 2: Complete a network of High Quality Public Realm Corridors

The framework identifies priority routes for public realm investment. These offer a further refinement of the BCAP30 network. These routes are largely established but are varied in terms of the quality of design and materials which lead to fragmented routes that are less attractive to users.

### Background - Cycling

Around a third of Bristol residents regularly ride a bicycle, and cycling plays a key role in supporting the city centre economy, as well as bringing about health and environmental benefits.

There are a number of high quality segregated cycle routes throughout the city centre but the network has several missing links which discourage people who are concerned about cycling on roads in busy motor traffic and are preventing more people from cycling. Our Bike Life survey in 2015 found that 80% of Bristol residents support increasing the safety of cycling, with segregated cycle routes the most popular format.

The A38 North Street / Gloucester Road to the city centre is a key missing link in the cycle network. This is the city's busiest cycle route, busier than the Bristol and Bath Railway Path, with bikes accounting for a third of total vehicles in peak times. Upon reaching the city centre people on bikes are confronted with the St James Barton multi-lane roundabout and dual carriageways, which is a significant deterrent to many people. Other key missing links are on Union Street, Bond Street, Temple Way, Victoria Street, Whiteladies Road to the city centre, and A38 Bedminster Parade to the city centre.

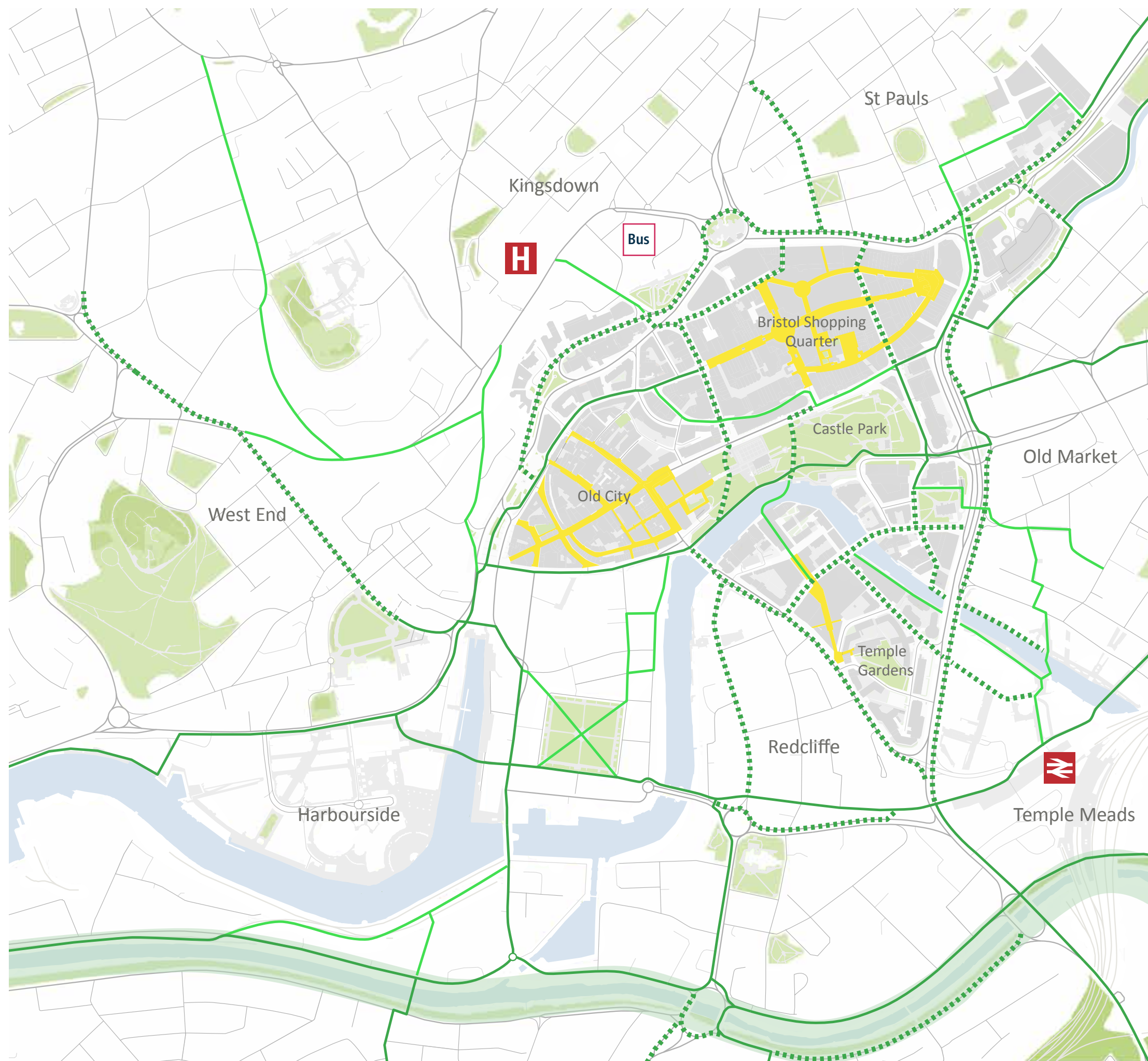
### AIM 3: Complete All Ages and Abilities (AAA) Cycle network in the city centre

This framework proposes completing the city centre cycle route network to support continuing growth in cycling in the city. Corridors for future cycle route improvements are indicated on Fig 1 - *Walking and Cycling* diagram. If the principle of improving these corridors is supported, further work will be undertaken to confirm the extent of cycle route improvements that could be delivered in each location, with the aim being to achieve fully segregated cycle routes in most locations.

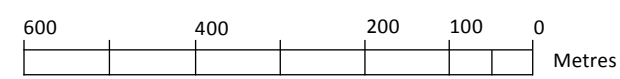
Key corridors include:

- A38 North Street to the city centre
- North South Links including Victoria Street, Temple Way, and Bedminster Bridges
- Whiteladies Road to the city centre

Fig 1: Walking and Cycling



- existing and in-development primary cycle network
- other cycle routes
- focus for new cycle route improvements
- Pedestrian Priority Areas
- Enhanced walking and cycling along New Cut
- Temple Meads station
- Bus Station
- Hospital





## Improved Movement - Public Transport Improvements

### Background

The City Council's aspiration is to continue to deliver significant improvements in public transport. This includes improving our journeys by bus, coach, and rail, improving ferry connections and access to Taxi ranks through a commonly branded city public transport offer.

Bus and rail patronage in Bristol has grown significantly in recent years and at a higher rate than the rest of the country, with Bristol now in the top ten local authorities for bus use. This growth has been enabled by new bus lanes delivered through the Greater Bristol Bus Network and other projects, which have helped services become more reliable and attractive. MetroBus is largely delivering an anti-clockwise bus lane loop in the city centre. However, there are still large sections of the city centre with no bus lanes, leading to delays and unreliability due to congestion and incidents.

The city centre is the hub of all radial bus journeys, and delays in the centre have knock on impacts across the city. Therefore, a key part of our strategy is to use bus lanes and other measures to protect buses from congestion and incidents in the city centre to make services across the city more reliable and attractive and further improve the public transport offer in the city centre.

### AIM 4: Complete the city centre bus lane network

Buses provide an affordable and space efficient form of transport. They are accessible by all and promote social inclusion and independent living, especially for younger and older generations.

If the principles of these improvements are supported, further work will be undertaken to confirm the extent of bus lanes and other bus priority measures that could be delivered in each location.

Key routes include:

- Completion of the anti-clockwise bus loop, including sections on Temple Way and Rupert Street
- Completion of a clockwise bus loop, including sections serving MetroBus services on The Haymarket, Bond Street, and the M32
- Other improvements in bus priority at The Triangle and Wine Street

### AIM 5: Enable the transformation of Broadmead

This framework includes indicative arrangements that would allow the pedestrianisation of Penn Street and The Horsefair, which will be further developed and finalised as part of the proposed Callowhill Court development. This will enable the transformation of Broadmead, improving the shopping and leisure offer, while maintaining high levels of public transport accessibility. The proposals, which include re-routing buses that currently use Penn Street and The Horsefair, and converting Union Street to a bus only street, will help insulate buses in the area from congestion and incidents, which can currently lead to bus delays of up to an hour.

### AIM 6: New and expanded Park and Ride Services

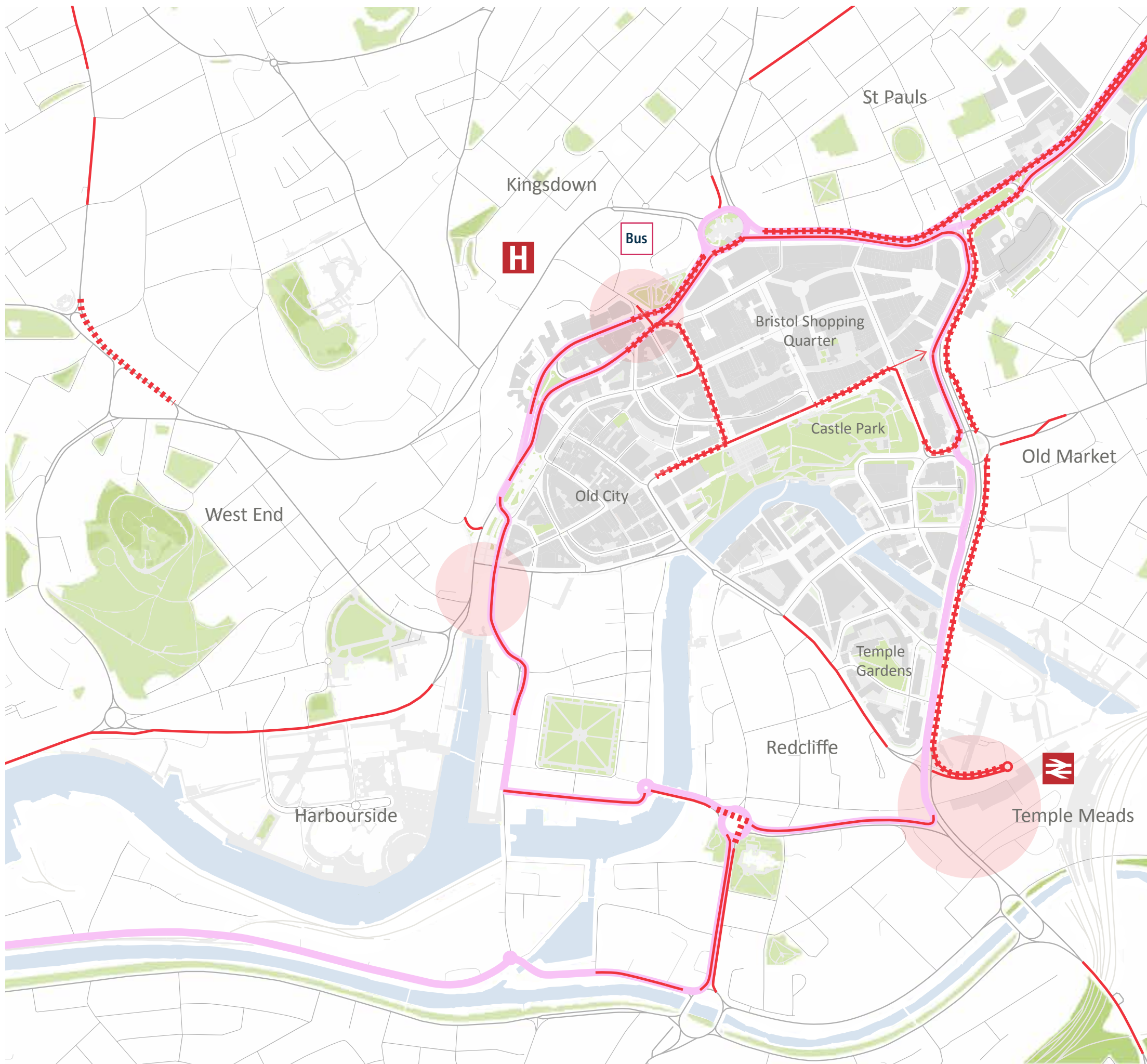
New Park & Ride sites around the city will reduce the amount of vehicles entering the city centre, as set out in the recent Joint Transport Study consultation. The focus will be on a new Park & Ride on the M32, along with expanded use of the existing Long Ashton and Portway sites, as these routes deliver the highest volumes of vehicles into the city centre. The framework proposes enhanced bus priority on the M32 and A370 corridors to serve the Park & Ride sites and provide quick and reliable public transport links for longer distance trips.

### AIM 7: Improvements to taxi ranks, ferry services, coach parking and interchange

A range of supporting public transport measures will help develop an integrated public transport offer in the city centre.

These includes:

- Interchange and wayfinding improvements, focusing on connections to key public transport interchanges including links between the bus station and city centre hospitals
- Reconfigured and better organised taxi ranks for both pick-up and drop off, with more space for laying over and better waiting facilities for passengers
- Explore opportunities to better accommodate and encourage coach travel, including additional coach parking and stopping provision
- Upgraded ferry stop at Castle Park with services to North Redcliffe and Tower Hill



**Fig 2: Public Transport**

- existing and in-progress bus lanes
- - - focus for new bus priority measures
- MetroBus route
- key public transport interchange
- M Temple Meads station
- Bus Bus Station
- H Hospital





## Improved Movement - Highway Access and Parking

### Background

Planning and transport policies including Policy BCS10 seek to minimise the need to travel, especially by private car, and maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport. It seeks proposals that create places and streets where traffic and other activities are integrated and where buildings, spaces and the needs of people shape the area.

Increased living in the central area, along with the transport measures outlined in the Joint Transport Study and this framework will continue the shift to sustainable patterns of movement. This shift will contribute to a continuing reduction in overall motor traffic volumes in the city centre, helping to reduce congestion and improve air quality.

We recognise that for some people, the private car will remain the most viable form of transport. There will also be a continuing need for servicing and freight traffic to access city centre destinations. This framework sets out a number of improvements that seek to more effectively manage the motor traffic that remains in the city centre.

In addition to the measures outlined in this framework, Bristol City Council has been awarded funding to conduct a feasibility study in to implementation of a Clean Air Zone (CAZ). Proposals for a CAZ will be consulted upon separately to this draft framework and have the potential to further improve air quality and reduce congestion in the city centre.

### AIM 8: Smarter motor traffic management

Traffic signals will continue to be used to manage vehicle flows in the city centre. The current motor traffic management system, known as SCOOT, will be improved to ensure that when congestion increases, vehicles are held outside the central area to prevent the city centre becoming gridlocked. The aim will be to create spare capacity in the city centre so that motor traffic flows more freely and more reliably and the impact of incidents and roadworks is reduced. This strategy will need to avoid creating queues on approaches to the city centre so that bus routes and air quality are not affected.

Smarter motor traffic management and reduced congestion will support delivery and servicing in the city centre. New developments that require a travel plan should include a focus on minimising these trips. We will continue to deliver and enable appropriate loading arrangements, ensuring loading bays are suitably located and have appropriate access times that help to minimise congestion impacts. Consolidation of freight, including micro consolidation using electric vans and bikes, will be explored and encouraged.

### AIM 9: Parking strategy

There are a large number of car parking spaces in the city centre, which increase demand for car travel. There are around 9,000 spaces in off-street car parks, 1,700 on-street public parking spaces and around 9,000 private workplace parking spaces within the central core.

A new parking strategy for Bristol will be produced, that will seek to balance the need to provide parking with the aims of encouraging a shift to healthier and more sustainable forms of transport.

New developments should refer to the parking standards contained within the Local Plan.

### AIM 10: Simplifying the highway network

The recent MetroBus works in the city centre have replaced the complex figure of eight gyratory, with a simpler T-Junction enabled by the Baldwin Street Link. Initial observations suggest this has improved traffic flows and the resilience of the transport network, which is now less susceptible to delays and gridlock. While some turning movements are no longer possible, the overall impact is smoother, more reliable traffic flows and improved public realm.

The Temple Gate scheme currently under construction uses the same approach, removing the old complex roundabout with a simpler design to rationalise motor traffic flows and enable public realm improvements.

This approach will be explored further in other areas of the city to help smooth traffic flows and achieve wider benefits for all users.



# City Centre - The Framework - New Development

# 3





## New Development - Sites and Layout

### Background

The framework promotes an urban structure which is considered to be in accordance with the expectations of Local Plan Policies and in particular Policy DM27: Layout and Form. DM27 sets out detailed requirements to ensure quality layout, form, pattern and arrangement of streets, open spaces, development blocks, buildings and landscapes.

The city centre area contains a significant number of historic buildings and area designations, most notably the rich historic context of Old City and Castle Park which forms part of the City and Queen Square conservation area where the majority of buildings are either nationally or locally listed. This sets a robust and clear aim for development and public realm design to preserve and enhance this setting by complementing the historic townscape. Conservation area status also covers North Redcliffe, the sites to the north of Fromesgate Park below St Michael's Hill, and the immediate setting of St James Priory including the Park.

### Aim 11: Establishing appropriate development layout

The proposed development block layout is founded upon an understanding of local character including landscape structure, the local pattern and grain of development, retained historic assets and important views.

The layout defines an inter-connected network of streets and public spaces which forms the basis of a logical and legible hierarchy of routes and intersections. The design of these routes varies depending on the movement, activities and uses supported. The proposed layout protects and enhances the existing urban grain of the city centre and aims to support the development of strategic green infrastructure, in particular along the line of the River Frome and within the context of the Floating Harbour.

Development is predominantly arranged into perimeter blocks, providing continuity of development edge that front and define the public realm whilst physically securing private space to the rear. The block structure is designed to be flexible and adaptable and to facilitate a co-ordinated approach.

Seven distinct character areas have been identified which provide a range of opportunities and constraints for future placemaking which can be found at [www.bristol.gov.uk/citycentre](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/citycentre).

### Aim 12: Public fronts/private backs

In line with Local Plan policy expectations, development will be arranged to create public/active fronts and private/passive backs.

Making frontages 'active' adds interest, life and vitality to the public realm. The framework promotes active frontages throughout including maximising the potential for building entrances and windows on to streets and public spaces, with the most public and populated internal activities focussed along these active edges.

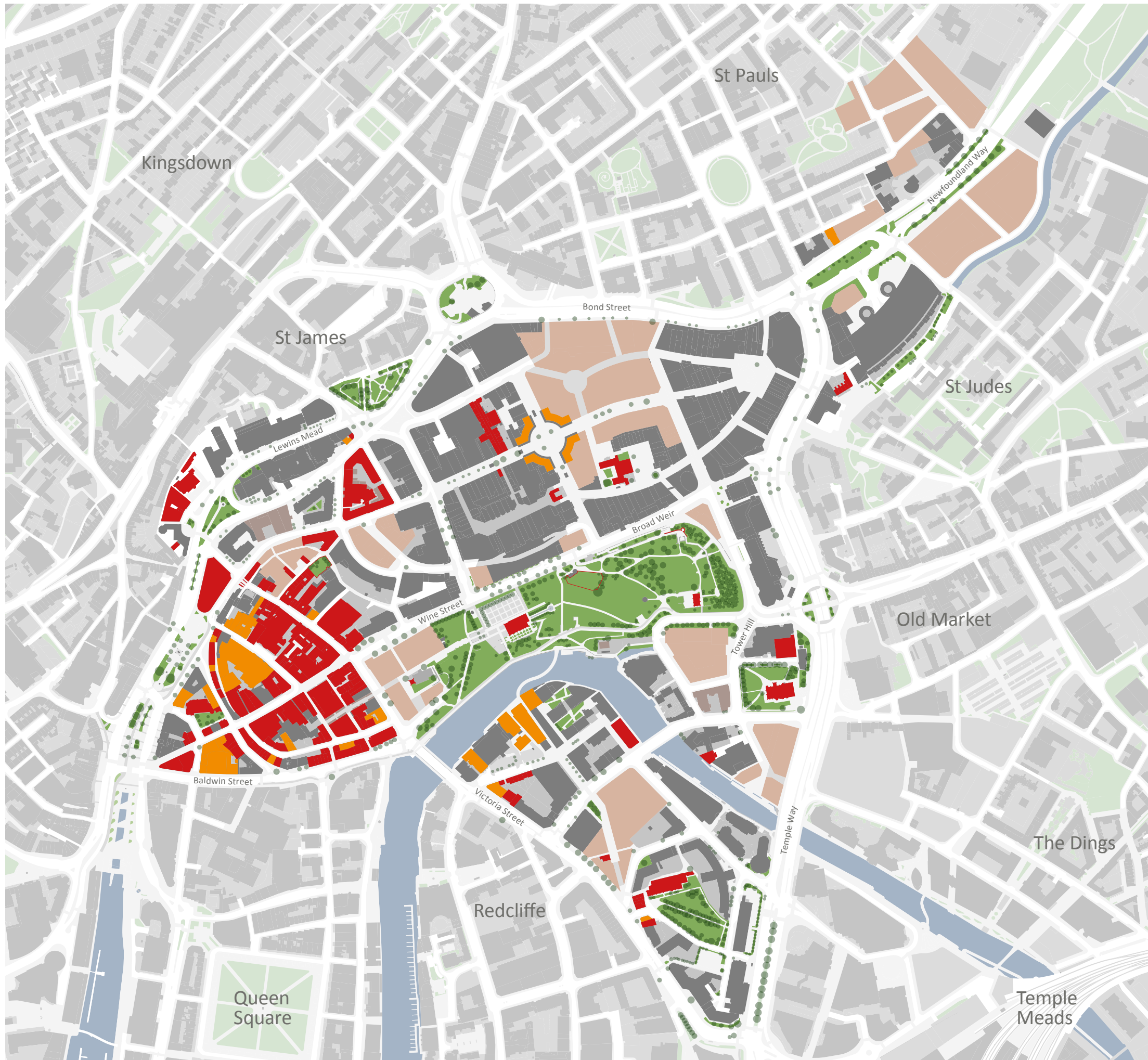
There is a significant opportunity for new development to create a new structure of urban blocks and routes, in particular within the City Gateway character sub-area. Here it is critical that the size of urban blocks is appropriate to develop a detailed layout whereby the private and public spaces are well defined and where possible separated by building forms.

### Aim 13: Building retention and reuse

The framework aims to provide an appropriate balance between protection of heritage assets and opportunities for reuse and adaption, consistent with national policy and legislation.

There are a number of key sites identified which promote the reuse of existing buildings where they contribute positively to the existing townscape. The most significant of which is perhaps St Nicholas Markets. The market areas have increased in popularity and activity, however some parts of the building group are currently vacant. Investment and creative ideas are required to bring these buildings back into use.

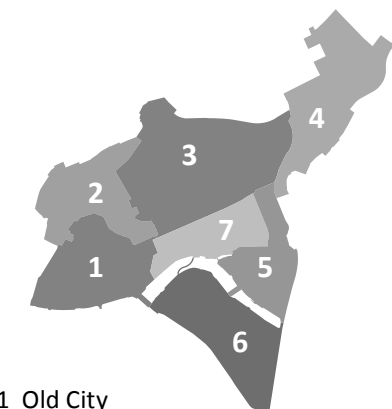
The medieval churches that contribute so much to the familiar skyline of the city centre pose a number of challenges. There is an increasing need to find a positive role for the remains of St Peters and St Mary-le-Port, to reuse the vacant St Nicholas and All Saints, and support the ongoing community initiatives at St Johns, St Stephens, 'Pip n Jay' and All Saints.



**Fig 3: Development Layout**

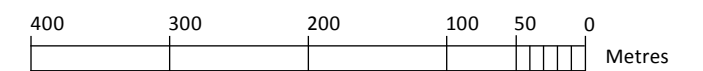
- Existing and retained buildings within CCNE area
- Existing service yards and private space
- Proposed development blocks (buildings and private space)
- Listed buildings and structures
- Locally listed buildings and currently nominated buildings considered worthy of retention within any future redevelopment schemes

**Character sub-area boundaries**



- 1 Old City
- 2 Lewins Mead
- 3 Broadmead
- 4 City Gateway
- 5 Tower Hill
- 6 Redcliffe North
- 7 Castle Park

N.B. Place Plan studies for each character sub-area have been prepared and are available separately.





## New Development - Urban Form and Building Scale

### Background

The framework promotes a height and scale of development throughout the city centre in accordance with the draft Urban Living planning guidance and Local Plan Policy requirements. Policy BCS20 (Effective and Efficient Use of Land) seeks higher densities of development in and around the city centre and along or close to main public transport routes.

### Aim 14: Promoting appropriate building height

In the right place, well-designed tall buildings can make a positive contribution to urban life, however ill-considered proposals can have a disproportionate impact on the character, appearance and enjoyment of the city. A number of potential locations have been identified for taller buildings. These are strategically located where more varied building heights are considered desirable, and a tall element would assist legibility and contribute to the wider townscape.

In central Bristol, context buildings typically tend to be between four to six storeys high. The framework offers the potential to increase building heights to make the most of its highly sustainable location. However, greater building height should only be considered where it would not be harmful to local character and distinctiveness and in particular the setting of valued historic buildings. The Framework identifies three bands of building height:

- prevailing city scale (4-6 storeys)
- amplified city scale (6-10 storeys)
- taller buildings (10+ storeys)

The majority of under-developed sites within the city centre can accommodate new buildings of the established city scale, however, there are a significant number of sites; particularly alongside major road corridors or on the edges of Castle Park where an increase in building heights can be considered.

### Aim 15: Creating new focal buildings

The city centre has a number of focal buildings within it or close by that because of their design and/or purpose act as focal points in the townscape. The spires and towers of the historic churches particularly within Old City create a significant skyline that should be protected when considering the form of new development. The area has a rich architectural legacy that contributes to the strong visual character of the city centre. Many of the buildings are valued historic assets which together form some of the most memorable and distinctive places within the city including Corn Street, Bath Street and the 1950's buildings of the Hub at the centre of Broadmead.

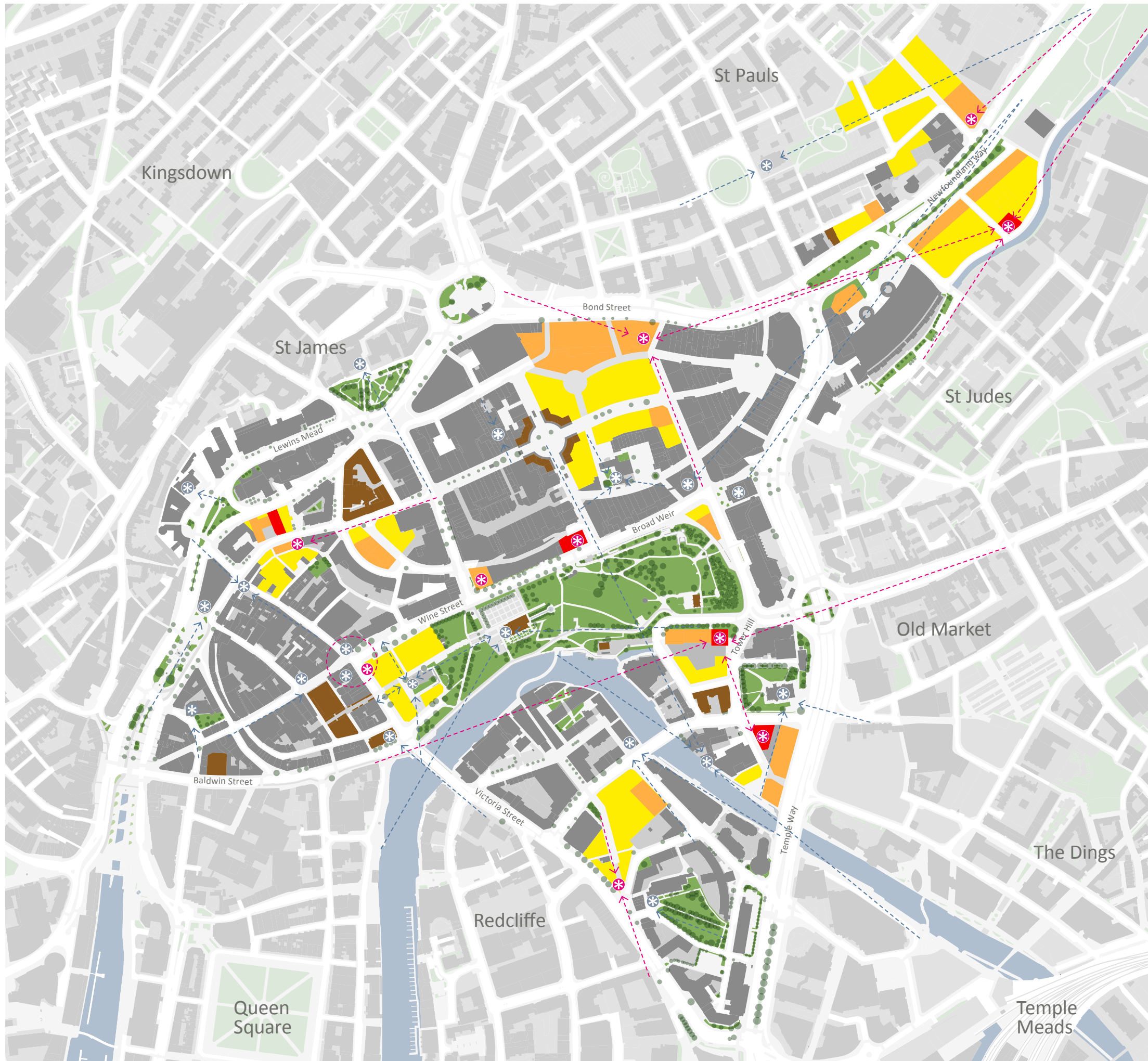
This Framework promotes the creation of a number of new focal buildings, for example on the former Bank of England/Norwich Union House and former Ambulance Station on the edges of Castle Park. In order to realise development on such prominent sites it is critical that an attractive development opportunity can be achieved, which balances the scale and extent of new buildings with the substantial environmental benefits required.

It should be noted that whilst a focal building will require visual accentuation this does not necessarily imply a tall building, and could be achieved, for example, through the employment of a particularly striking or innovative design solution.

### Aim 16: Protecting important views and vistas

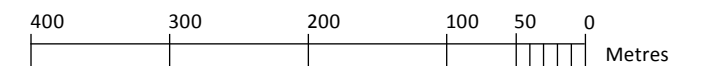
The framework identifies a number of important existing views that will require protection and possibly enhancement. These tend to be short and long range views to historic church towers and along key movement corridors which help the wider understanding and legibility of the area particularly by pedestrians. The framework also identifies new views to new focal buildings.

Applicants will also be expected to identify key views for their particular site. It is expected that these views will be explored through the Design and Access Statement accompanying any application.



**Fig 4: Development Form**

- Prevailing City Scale (4-6 storeys)  
with appropriate height within this range  
being established through pre-application
- Amplified City Scale (6-10 storeys)  
with appropriate height within this range  
being established through pre-application
- Taller Buildings (10+ storeys)  
subject to full impact assessment being  
established through pre-application
- Building refurbished at existing  
visual scale with significant design  
elements retained
- Existing CCNE retained building
- \* Existing focal building where  
existing key views require  
protection/enhancement
- \* New focal building and the key  
strategic views to them





## New Development - Land Use

### Background

The framework supports Policies BCAP36, 37, 38, 39 and 47 of the Bristol Central Area Plan. This proposes that sites within the city centre be developed for a wide range of uses as part of maintaining the diversity and vitality of the city.

The National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan policy BCS16 set out planning policies for development in areas at risk of flooding. Policies BCAP5 requires the development of sites at risk of flooding within the city centre to be supported by a flood risk sequential test taking account of all reasonably available sites in the area. The need to limit the exposure of vulnerable uses such as housing to the risk of flooding presents some challenges to the objectives for the area particularly in creating a mixed and vibrant community with Broadmead and parts of City Gateway alongside the River Frome.

### Aim 17:

#### Creating a balance and mix of uses

The city centre includes the major shopping area and a significant focus for business uses, but is also adjacent to the inner city communities of St Pauls, St Judes and Old Market. As such, it provides a fertile area for mixing of land uses, building types and character. The framework promotes the increasing contribution of residential uses alongside improved workplace, retail and leisure.

With regard to employment uses the wider Framework has identified the potential for around a quarter of a million square metres of new commercial and employment space within City Centre North East. There is also demand for additional hotel developments.

The framework promotes improvements to student housing and an increase in residential homes within the Old City and Lewins Mead sub-areas. In addition new residential uses are identified within Broadmead and City Gateway in line with the Bristol Central Area Plan.

The Council requires the provision of affordable housing as part of residential developments. The Bristol Local Plan explains the policy approach.

### Aim 18:

#### Increasing vitality and active frontages

The continued success of the city centre as a major destination for visitors will depend on the richness and diversity of its retail and leisure offer. This is the primary objective of the Callowhill Court redevelopment at the heart of Broadmead and the wider objectives of Policy BCAP36.

The Old City has seen a transformation from banking and legal chambers to an area that supports active market trading and high quality bars and restaurants. The Framework reinforces Policies BCAP37, 38 and 39 to increase the mix of uses including supporting retail and leisure within the extended Old City, Lewins Mead and City Gateway.

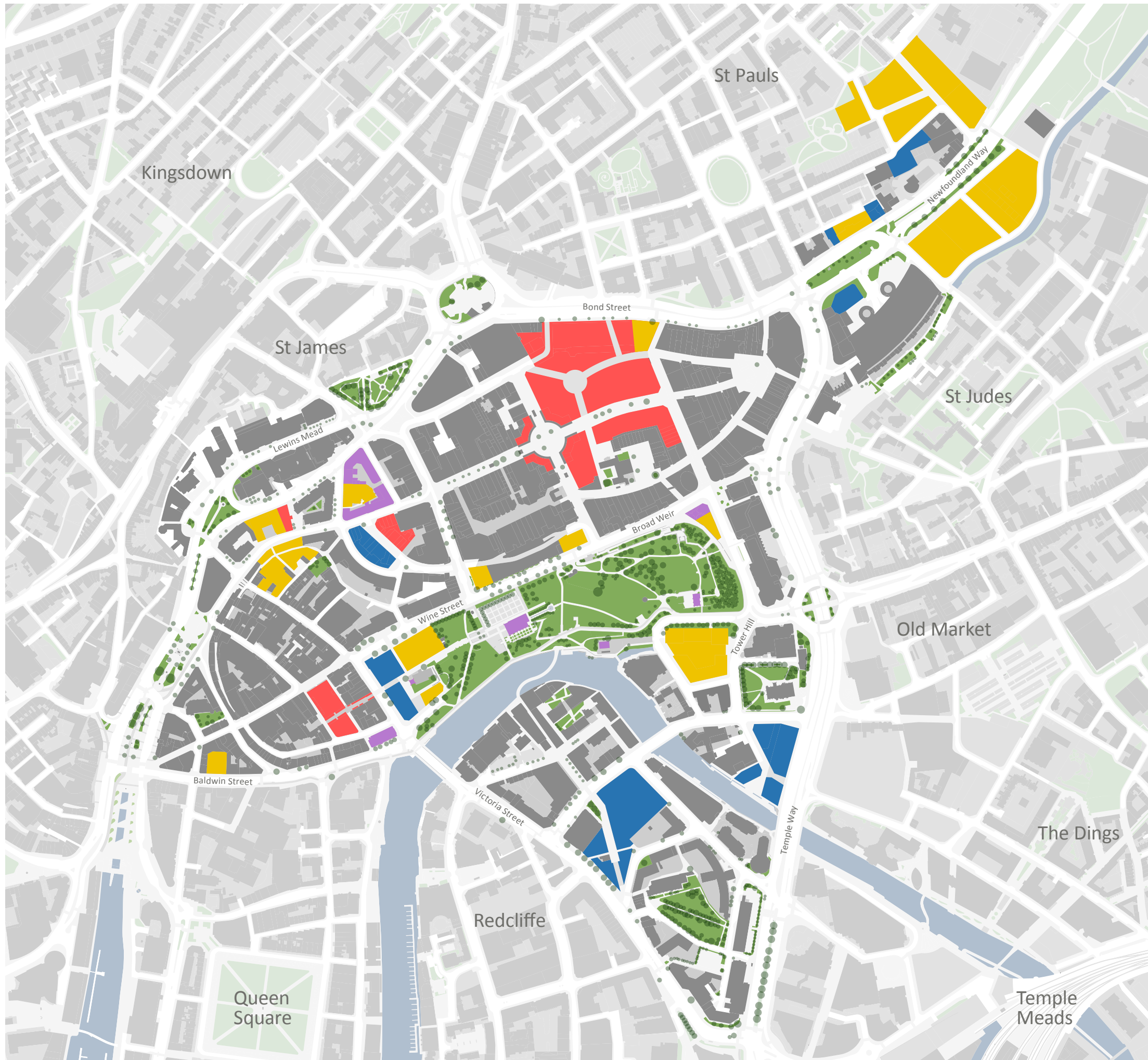
In those areas with highest footfall, the framework promotes lively internal ground floor uses visible from the outside or spilling onto the street. This is likely to mean shops, restaurants, bars and cafes, but could also include community facilities, communal student and residential space, workspace or leisure uses where there is a high degree of transparency between the inside and out, and a corresponding high degree of activity. This builds upon Local Plan Policy BCAP31 (Active Ground Floor Uses and Active Frontages in Bristol City Centre)

The framework promotes the use of 'meanwhile uses' within the city centre in line with Local Plan Policy BCAP12. A meanwhile use is defined as the temporary use of vacant buildings, spaces, streets and places until such time that they can be developed.

### Aim 19:

#### Promoting uses that support communities

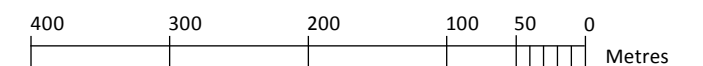
An increased residential community of upwards of 5,000 people will require access to a range of community facilities including nurseries, primary schools, health centres, local shops and community centres. Where these facilities are not currently adequately provided within a reasonable walking distance, these uses will need to be provided either within the city centre or by improving links to enhanced facilities nearby.



**Fig 5: Land Use**

- Mixed-use development parcels (employment-emphasis)
- Mixed-use development parcels (housing-emphasis)
- Mixed-use development parcels (retail-emphasis)
- Mixed-use development parcels (leisure-emphasis)

In terms of the land use, i.e. emphasis identified for each plot, it would not be appropriate to be overly prescriptive on how this is to be provided, but the starting point should be 75% of gross floorspace





## New Development - Environmental Design and Construction

### Background

New development will be required to meet BCC's adopted planning policies relating to mitigating and adapting to climate change, the use of renewable and low-carbon energy, the use of sustainable design and construction measures, and a response to the risk of flooding.

Bristol's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, together with Policy BCS16, and The West of England Sustainable Drainage Developers Guide advocate and encourage the use of sustainable drainage and water sensitive urban design to increase the city's resilience to flooding. This framework advocates this approach for all new development within the city centre. Flood Risk Assessments will be required at certain development sites to manage flood risk appropriately, in line with national and local planning policy and guidance.

A collaborative approach to implementing sustainable drainage features is encouraged to realise biodiversity, water quality and cooling benefits. This includes sustainable drainage features that contribute to a joined up network of green spaces and support resilient wildlife habitats.

### Aim 20: Ensuring sustainable developments

In line with the City Council's policies buildings within the city centre must achieve a BREEAM 'excellent' rating. Major development proposals must also carry out a BREEAM communities assessment, and large residential developments must achieve an 'excellent' rating under the scheme.

Development appraisals should consider issues related to embodied carbon and the potential for reuse of existing buildings and materials. Energy efficient retrofit can in many cases be a better option in CO2 terms over demolition and rebuild.

New buildings should be designed to achieve high energy efficiency as well as conform to the policy requirements related to the incorporation of renewable energy generation. Construction activities can have a number of adverse environmental impacts such as increased levels of dust, noise, waste and traffic congestion. These issues must be recognised, managed and co-ordinated.

To minimise the urban heat island effect and the risk of overheating, green and blue infrastructure provision should be considered. Green roofs will be strongly supported particularly in areas of previously developed land to maintain areas of open mosaic habitat to reduce impacts on existing biodiversity. Green roofs will be required on sites where minimal other green infrastructure is proposed.

### Aim 21: Promoting sustainable energy and heat networks

Bristol City Council is committed, through the Climate Change and Energy Framework (currently in preparation) to be carbon neutral by 2050. Development within the city centre must provide sufficient renewable energy generation to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from residual energy use in the buildings by at least 20% in line with Bristol City Council's planning policy BCS14.

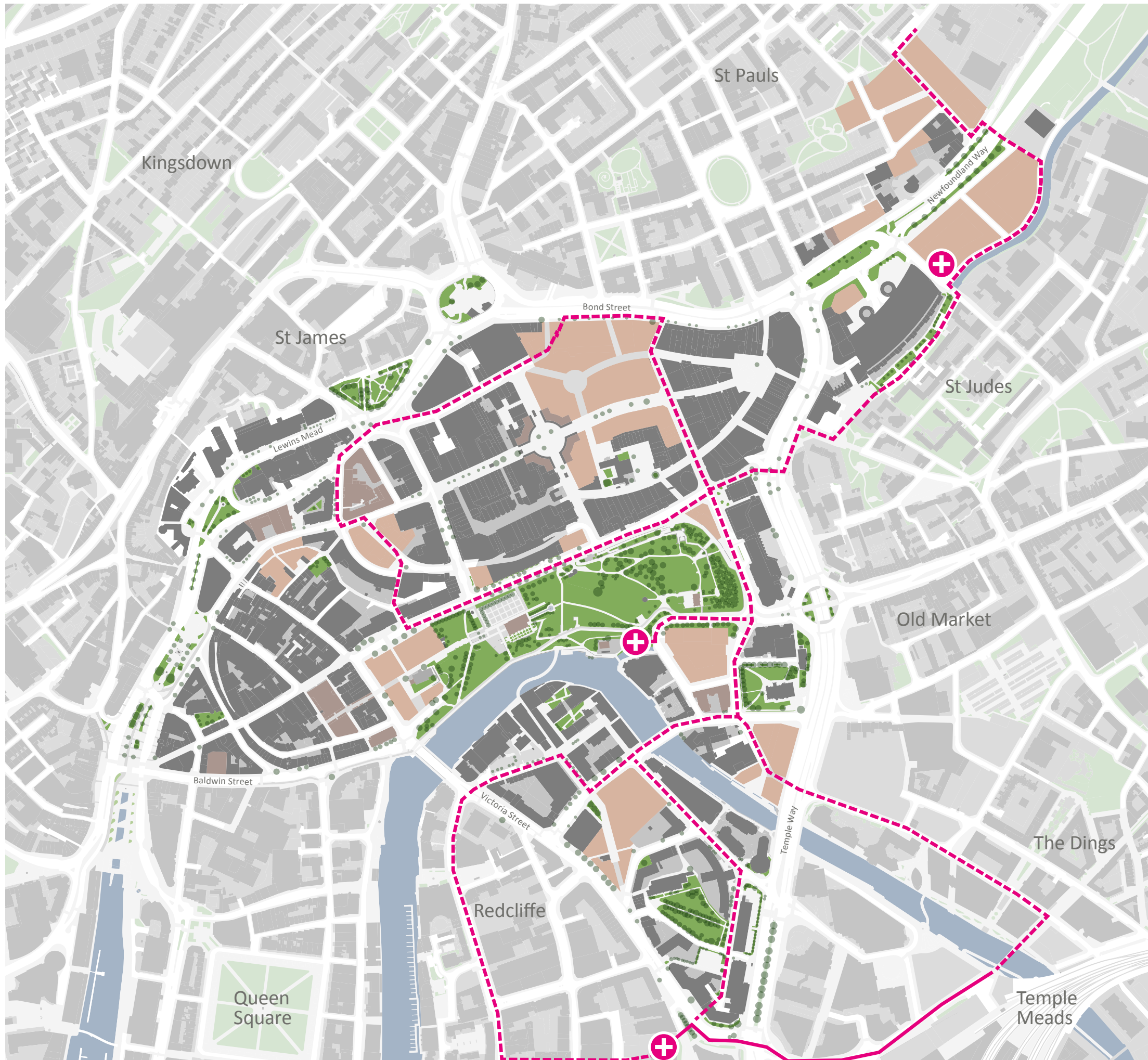
The Council are planning a citywide heat network focused initially within the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone. When connection to the heat network is not technically or commercially possible, a developer should in the short term provide its own heat network with a view to connecting to the council's network when a future opportunity arises. The Council will work with developers to ensure commercial heat networks can integrate with the city's heat network.

### Aim 22: Delivering ultrafast broadband

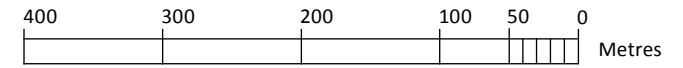
Access to ultrafast broadband (300 mbps and above) is vital to existing and future business, as well as benefitting student halls and homes. Broadband infrastructure within the city centre needs to be improved to offer ultrafast speeds and more fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) connections giving more reliable, symmetrical connections (equal up and down speeds) and future proofing. Future internet connections should be full fibre, give a consistent performance, and not be dependent on distance to local telecoms cabinets.

Through new development and public realm infrastructure improvements the City Council wants to encourage a range of fibre networks to expand to improve choice and competition; the city centre can make a significant contribution towards this objective. Full fibre is in line with OFCOM's and the UK Government's new policy objective around connectivity.

**Fig 6: Heating and Broadband Networks**



-  Potential sites for energy centre
-  General Purpose Service Trench (Phase 1)
-  Future potential routes for the General Purpose Service Trench
-  Existing and retained buildings within CCNE
-  Proposed development blocks (buildings and private space)
-  Proposed refurbishment blocks





## Enhanced Public Realm - Priorities for City Centre North East

### Investment Corridor - **A** The Centre to Cabot Circus

Recent improvements to the Centre and revitalised shopping facilities at the eastern end of Broadmead, have established stronger pedestrian desire lines along Quay Street, Nelson Street, and Broadmead.

The route has long been recognised as a flat and convenient link, but the hostile visual environment at street level has deterred pedestrians. The Nelson Street regeneration strategy published in 2008 has helped to steer significant enhancements as part of the development of student halls, but there remain areas where narrow pavements and uninviting ground floor treatments need to be improved.

The redevelopment of Callowhill Court needs to ensure that Broadmead East remains as a generous public street. The retention and enhancement of green infrastructure will contribute to the main spine through Broadmead and help to provide a more human scale within Nelson Street, whilst helping to add legibility to this key route.

The dismantling of the 1970s system of raised walkways associated with the Lewins Mead area has played a significant part in increasing the attractiveness of Nelson Street, however this has also created a need to establish better ground level links to adjacent streets. The New Bridewell student halls development has accommodated a link through to Rupert Street, and there is an opportunity to better connect with the Old City core as part any scheme to improve the St John's Court complex of buildings along Tower Lane.

### Investment Corridor - **B** Corn Street, Broad Weir, Frome Riverside

The strategic walking and cycling route along the line of the River Frome to the Centre via Broad Weir and Corn Street lacks consistency in terms of the quality of the public realm reducing the effectiveness and attractiveness of the route.

Recent public realm improvements within Corn Street have helped to achieve wider pavements improving the pedestrian environment. This has increased opportunities for the bars and restaurants which have become established within the historic banking buildings to spill out and animate the street, further establishing this part of the Old City as a focus for the evening economy. In addition this has helped to establish Corn Street as a location for weekend festivals and markets.

Investment around Newfoundland Way, Callowhill Court, Wine Street and Wellington Street will provide opportunities to enhance the route as a sequence of exemplar streets and key focal public spaces. This includes the historic High Cross junction which has long been identified as having potential to restore the heart of the historic core, and to extend the role and ambience of Corn Street further along Wine Street. An intensified focus for public transport along Broad Weir should aim to enhance connectivity with Castle Park, whilst extending the contiguous route along the River Frome should provide a focus for mixed use riverside regeneration as well as improve links to Dove Lane and St Pauls.

### Investment Corridor - **C** Baldwin Street, Castle Park, Old Market Street

The route from the Centre through to Old Market is an established one, characterised by the segregated cycle routes within Castle Park and Baldwin Street. Recent work to the Old Market roundabout aimed at better balancing pedestrian and cycle movements across the heavily trafficked junction has helped to extend the corridor to the east.

The redevelopment of the Former Ambulance Station site provides an opportunity to significantly improve Castle Street adding continuity and greater legibility to the corridor. The redevelopment project will aim to provide overlooking and animation along the route, while the design also needs to ensure that Castle Street is reinforced as part of the historic castle precinct and provide an improved entrance into the park.

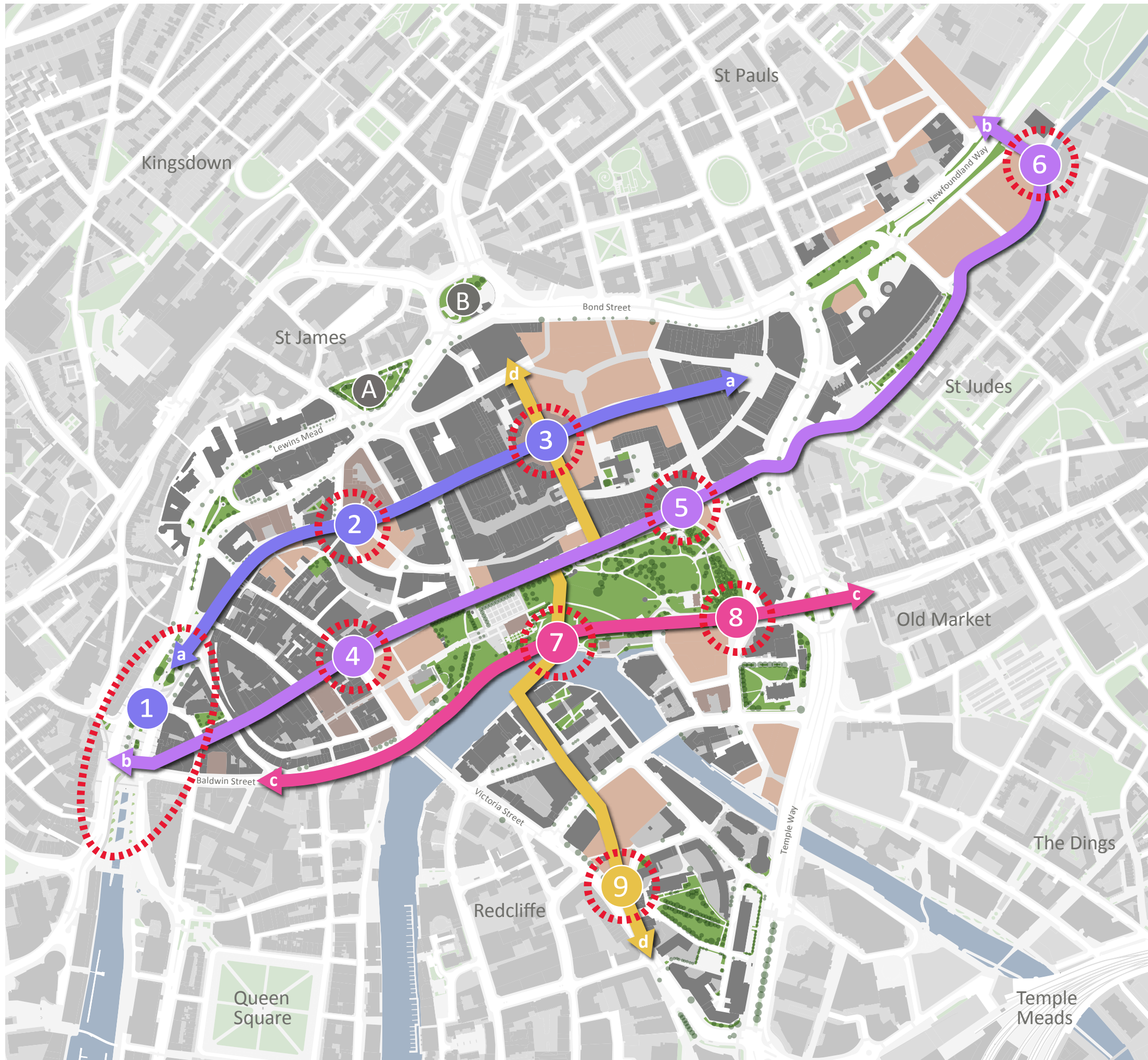
Further potential for enhancement exists as part of investment into the Castle Park depot site and the redevelopment of High Street/ Wine Street area, both of which provide opportunities to further enhance the route as it passes through the Park and improve the visual connection with the Floating Harbour.

### Investment Corridor - **D** Temple Street, Finzels Reach, Moat Walk, Merchant Street

The construction of the Finzels Reach footbridge sets up the potential for an improved walking route from Victoria Street through to Broadmead. The long standing ambition set out within SPD3 *Redcliffe Futures* and BCAP to realign Temple Street to better respond to the fragmented historic context can be realized given the redevelopment of the Central Fire Station and other outdated office buildings on Victoria Street.

In order to facilitate a more direct and desirable route from Temple Meads to the centre of Broadmead for both pedestrians and cyclists there is a need to reconsider the landscape and lighting along the Moat Walk to increase capacity for movement whilst enhancing the amenity and legibility of Castle Park.

Achieving a legible and direct public realm corridor linking Victoria Street and Temple Street will require further thinking and longer term masterplanning with a full understanding of the redevelopment potential of the existing 1970s office buildings as well as the realignment of highway space.



**Fig 7: Public Realm Investment**

**a**  
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**a**

Priority for public realm Investment linked to development schemes

**Connected Public Space**

- 1** **The Centre**  
public transport node and civic space
- 2** **Bridewell, Lewins Mead**  
creative hub and calmed traffic junction
- 3** **The Hub, Broadmead**  
shopping quarter focus and event space
- 4** **High Cross, Old City**  
public plaza and shared space
- 5** **Broad Weir, Broadmead**  
public transport node
- 6** **Riverside, City Gateway**  
gateway space to the River Frome
- 7** **Waterside, Castle Park**  
active waterside focus within the Park
- 8** **Castle Street Entrance, Castle Park**  
new gateway into the Park
- 9** **Temple Street Gateway, North Redcliffe**  
enhanced public square and historic street

**Improved Place Making**

- A** **St James Park** - landscape enhancement
- B** **St James Barton** - further improved access

