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Identity and the Experience of Public Space The Bishopsgate - Wormwood Street Walkway

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Abstract:

This paper is an analysis of the experiential quality of the Bishopsgate - Wormwood Street walkway in the City of London. Building an argument on spatiality, phenomenology and linguistic theory, it proposes a general framework for the analysis of experience based on the ability of the environment to foster identity through the intersubjective nature of the material world. The framework is used to analyse the walkway in a specific sense, relating to one encounter, and in a general sense, relating to the way that drawings indicate it might have been built if original intentions had been successful.

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Introduction

The Bishopsgate - Wormwood Street Walkway (my own title for the otherwise unnamed entity shown in figure 1) is a fragment of a high-level pedestrian walkway system planned in the 1950s and 60s for the whole of the City of London, but only partially realized. It runs parallel to Bishopsgate, then crosses it and runs through the centre of the area between Bishopsgate and Old Broad Street, finally crossing Wormwood Street and ending abruptly a little further on. It is a public space, but entering it is a peculiar experience. Something about it - perhaps the unfamiliar contact with the buildings it passes through, or its separation from the bustle of the street (there are rarely many other people there), or perhaps the lack of street furniture in its familiar haphazard clutter - makes one question not only one's right to be there, but also one's identity within and relationship to the space.

It is this peculiar experience that I intend to analyse in this paper. However, not knowing of a theoretical framework that precisely matches my particular line of enquiry, I have started from a set of 'first principles', or at least areas of established discussion, through which I may be able to trace a way of identifying and explaining the nature of this experience. I have therefore titled the paper 'Identity and The Experience of Public Space', since before returning to the experience of the walkway, I will attempt a general theoretical framework.

My argument will be that the sense of identity that a public space fosters is the basis for one's experience of it. I will examine how it is that identity, something which is essentially a product of social relationships, can be affected by the physical environment. The theory that results from this will then be applied to the walkway, firstly to explain my own particular experience of it as it is now, and secondly in a more general sense to analyse it as it would have been if it had been built as intended.

The argument will develop through the following stages:

Section 1: Historical Background.

The genesis of the walkway in theories that emerged after the Second World War, especially those of Charles Holden, William Holford and Colin Buchanan.

Section 2: An Identity-Based Theory of Experience.

2.1: Buchanan and Jacobs: objective views.

Urban theories at the time that the walkway was planned; an explanation of the objectivity of these theories in contrast to a theory of subjective experience.

2.2: Edward Soja: spatiality.

A discussion of space as a dynamic, socially produced entity in contrast to the geometric view expressed in the more traditional theories of Buchanan and Jacobs.

2.3: Sartre and Merleau-Ponty: phenomenology.

An examination of how phenomenological theories can build on the more abstract, large-scale concept of spatiality to explain the social production of space at a personal level ('micro-spatiality'), how such personal production of space rests upon the structure of subjective consciousness, and how it can be seen to have an intersubjective, communicative role.

2.4: Bucholtz and Hall: identity.

Using theories originally formulated in the field of linguistics, an examination of how identity emerges out of intersubjective relationships, and how such linguistic theories can be extended into the physical environment.

2.5: Summary.

Synthesizing a theory from the stages above, a proposal for identifying the way in which identity is fostered by the physical environment and how an environment might be analysed in terms of its ability to foster identity.

Section 3: The Walkway.

3.1: My experience of the walkway.

A description of the particular section of walkway that forms the subject of enquiry, an analysis of it using the theory formed in Section 2, and a re-evaluation of my experience of it in terms of identity.

3.2: The walkway as intended.

The theory extended as a general analysis of the section of walkway as it was intended to have been, using information from original drawings.

Section 1: Historical background

The Blitz of 1940-41, like the Great Fire three centuries previously, gave within its cataclysmic destruction the opportunity for a fundamental re-planning of the City of London. It happened just when city planning theories from the continent were gaining a foothold in Britain, and prompted a vigorous discussion, expressed through many different schemes and ideas, about a proper way forward. The first twenty years of the post-war period, until the mid-1960s, were marked by an uncomfortable relationship between the progressive, modernist ideas of the London County Council, and the more traditional, pragmatic views of the City Corporation. The LCC and the Corporation held competing and overlapping responsibilities for the City: the LCC having a strategic role and (in theory) an overall control of City development; the Corporation having, through the department of the City Engineer, responsibility for actual planning decisions, something which the LCC rarely interfered with.

There were areas, however, in which the LCC successfully insisted on a particular policy, and it is these which paved the way towards the adoption of a plan for a City-wide system of raised pedestrian walkways. In 1944 the City Engineer, F J Forty, put forward a scheme for the reconstruction of the City along what were then considered conventional lines; a rebuilding of the fabric according to rules governing cornice heights, within a new ring road (City of London, 1944; see also figure 2). The scheme was condemned by the LCC and the Ministry of Town and Country Planning as a failure to grasp the full potential of the situation, and the City commissioned a new report by Charles Holden and William Holford (1951). The Holden/Holford plan had two radical features. The first, which was not adopted, was the horizontal segregation of the City into relatively traffic-free cells within a network of new arterial routes. The second, which was largely adopted and which was important for the future development of a walkway system, was the replacement of cornice heights as a regulating system for building density with 'plot ratios' - a system which freed the architect of a building to design any shape within a limiting ratio of floor space to plot area (see figure 3). As Hebbert paraphrases Holden and Holford:

Its (the City's) corridor streets were to be burst open, letting in air and daylight. The substitution of plot ratio for cornice regulation was intended to force an architectural revolution, based on an aesthetic of three-dimensional volumes, of 'mass and silhouette', and free form, instead of the repetitive two-dimensional, stone-faced street façade.
(Hebbert 1993 p439)

It was the LCC who persuaded a conservative and reluctant City Corporation to adopt the plot ratio system with a number of new developments in the early 1950s; first Bucklersbury House between Queen Victoria and Cannon Streets, then the much larger developments at the Barbican and London Wall, and at Paternoster Square. The plot ratio, as Hebbert explains, "encouraged developers to shift to a tower-and-podium format well suited to accommodate walkways." (Hebbert 1993 p443).

There was, however, no plan at this stage to build a City-wide walkway system. The principle that the LCC was promoting was still one of horizontal rather than vertical separation, in the manner of the Holden/Holford report. But the proposals for both the Barbican/London Wall and the Paternoster Square developments incorporated pedestrian walkways within them, and towards the end of the 1950s, largely through the influence of traffic engineer Colin Buchanan and his publication in 1958 of 'A Mixed Blessing: The Motor Car in Britain' the idea of joining The Barbican with Paternoster Square and extending the resulting network had begun to take hold. On November 11, 1959, the Court of Common Council resolved to segregate pedestrians from vehicular traffic as a matter of general policy (Hebbert 1993 p443).

What cemented the idea of segregation, and gave it physical form in the shape of a walkway system, was the further publication in 1963 by a committee headed by Colin Buchanan of 'Traffic in Towns', in Hebbert's words "one of the most persuasive of all modernist tracts (which) swayed a whole generation of policymakers against the conventional multipurpose street." Buchanan had, in 1960, been appointed adviser on urban road planning by Ernest Marples, the then Minister of Transport, and his influence ran not only through government and the LCC, but also into the Corporation of London.

The vision that Buchanan communicated was utopian; a completely new urban structure which could gradually replace the existing one, in which 'functional' operations - vehicular transport and services - were separated vertically from the pedestrian arena (see figure 4). With projections for greatly increased traffic flow in the City, Buchanan's idea seemed a logical solution as well as providing the basis for a radical reconstruction which would put the City in the vanguard of contemporary urban theory. The plan for a raised walkway was made in conjunction with the highway plan, which envisaged extensive road widening. Both were shrouded in secrecy because of their commercial implications, and detailed proposals for the walkway network were never published, but an outline plan was made in 1965 for a 30-mile network.

In the event nothing like this was ever built. In spite of an Act of Parliament in 1967 giving wide powers to the City to demand provision for walkways as a condition of planning approval, the subsequent history of the network is one of uncoordinated and disorganised development. An initial euphoria gave way to gloomy determination, as the two quotations below about the Barbican indicate. The first is from The LCC's Administrative County of London Development Plan First Review of 1960, p169:

Here at last a vision will come true: right in the centre of the metropolis thousands of people will live near their jobs. They will not have to travel during the rush hour, they will be able to move in complete safety throughout the area, where there will be many shops, restaurants, etc. on elevated walkways away from the noise and fumes of motor cars. People living and working in this area will have the opportunity of leading a full life.

The second is from a report of 1976 by the City Engineer and Architect (included as Appendix 1):

"In all pioneering work lessons tend to be learnt the hard way. Few would deny that some areas in the Barbican are bleak, draughty and uninviting when the weather is inclement. On the other hand, they are generally safe and are becoming less forbidding as more people find it convenient to use them. In fine weather, and particularly at lunchtime, the podium pubs are popular. As in Paternoster, it takes time for new habits to become established and accepted (....)"

By this time the grand design of the mid-1960s had been replaced with a scaled-down 'minimum walkway network' (figure 5), an admission that for the most part, the physical structure of London would remain essentially as it had been before the war, and in many ways as it had been since medieval times. The extracts from UDPs (Unitary Development Plans) in figures 6-8 illustrate the slow process of withdrawal from the idea of an elevated network.

The Bishopsgate - Wormwood Street walkway, the subject of this paper, was one of the four main components of the minimum network, and was the last to be begun. It will also be the first to be removed. Paradoxically, its short life will have been more eventful than the other fragments: due partly to refurbishment and replacement of its host buildings, and partly to the IRA bomb of 1993, its fabric has undergone a steady process of change. This change, and the changing environmental experience that it represents, will be the subject of Section 3.

Section 2: An Identity-Based Theory of Experience.

'Experience' is a difficult term to define. It is often used in an aesthetic sense: the experience of colour, shape, temperature; the qualities of the world as it appears to us. But such phenomena are only part of the totality of subjective experience.

Phenomenology, the philosophy of subjective experience, first breaks apart, then re-synthesizes, this totality. The qualitative nature of the perceived world is only constituted, or made what it is, by the subject of consciousness, the Self; and vice versa. Synthesis takes place in this mutual constitution of subject and object: without a subject, the qualities of the world are empty and meaningless; without an object, the perceiving Self cannot be said to exist. Both are necessary for conscious experience. In the social sense, where the object of consciousness is another consciousness, recent linguistic theory (discussed later in this section) suggests that identity is this mutually constitutive relationship. Identity, in this view, lies at the heart of conscious experience. My contention in this section is that if a way can be found to describe how the physical environment affects and fosters identity, the result in effect will be an analysis of the experience of that environment.

An investigation into the relationship between conscious experience and the physical environment suggests, first of all, a reappraisal of the nature of 'space'. The geometrical space of conventional architectural description is not flexible enough to articulate relationships that exist in consciousness and sociality before they emerge into the physical world. In what follows I will first address concepts of spatiality before going on to set out a relationship between subjective consciousness, intersubjectivity, identity, and the space of the physical world.

Section 2.1: Buchanan and Jacobs: objective views

In the Section 1 I introduced Colin Buchanan and his committee's 1963 report 'Traffic in Towns' as the theoretical basis behind the proposals for London's walkway system. Here I will bring it in as an introduction to an alternative theoretical approach; one which takes the analysis of the experience of public urban space as its basis, and which will hopefully shed some light on the end result of the process that Buchanan began.

The following two extracts illustrate the underlying rationale and vision of Buchanan's proposals:

The design problem, essentially, is a matter of rationalising the arrangement of buildings and access ways... the problem is no different in its essentials from the circulation problem that arises every day in the design of buildings, where the subject is well understood. The basic principle is the simple one of circulation, and is illustrated by the familiar case of corridors and rooms.
(Buchanan 1963 p41)

On the deck it would be possible to re-create, in an even better form, the things that have delighted man for generations in towns - the snug, close, varied atmosphere, the narrow alleys, the contrasting open squares, the effects of light and shade, and the fountains and sculpture.
(Buchanan 1963 p46)

The separation of vehicular and pedestrian circulation that Buchanan proposes is echoed in the language that he uses to describe his scheme, where the idea of 'function' and the idea of 'experience' are similarly separated: one adopts a 'rational' mode to 'circulate', and a 'delight' mode to experience the 'atmosphere'. It is a false division: the functional, purposive aspects of life are integral with the experiential, reflective aspects, and as I shall argue later, range and variety of functional interaction with the world enriches and enhances experience. It is now accepted that the ideas expressed in Buchanan's report were wrong: not wrong in the sense that they could not produce the functional benefits that they promised, but wrong in that the type of

environment suggested by Buchanan's lyrical language could not come about. The counter-argument to visions of the type that Buchanan advocated began almost contemporaneously, with the publication in 1961 of Jane Jacob's book 'The Death and Life of Great American Cities'. Most striking from a current viewpoint is the book's apparently common-sense approach, but in the 1960s it was almost revolutionary in its rejection of contemporary rationalist urban theories. It is a celebration of the social qualities of what Jacobs called 'the old city', championing the busy, sometimes chaotic, always complex street life of the inner-city neighbourhoods:

Under the seeming disorder of the old city, wherever the old city is working successfully, is a marvelous order for maintaining the safety of the streets and the freedom of the city. It is a complex order. Its essence is intricacy of sidewalk use, bringing with it a constant succession of eyes. This order is composed of movement and change, and although it is life, not art, we may fancifully call it the art form of the city and liken it to the dance - not to a simple-minded precision dance with everyone kicking up at the same time, twirling in unison and bowing off en masse, but to an intricate ballet in which the individual dancers and ensembles all have distinctive parts which miraculously reinforce each other and compose an orderly whole.
(Jacobs 1961)

This change of focus from a functional and aesthetic approach to one in which the less predictable, more fluid nature of human activity has centre stage has been reflected in a gradual shift in planning policy in Britain over recent years, to something in which Jacobs' 'street ballet' is seen as a valuable quality, at least in a carefully controlled form. The following is an extract from a City of London consultative document; 'Core Strategy; Issues and Options' of May 2006:

If further pedestrian areas are created then should their use be restricted to pedestrians only, or should they be designed as 'shared spaces', for example where pedal cyclists are also permitted? Is the concept of shared space for cars and pedestrians a useful one? Should the City design streets with less clear demarcation between pedestrian and vehicle space with the aim of encouraging 'negotiation' between different users rather than the more formal arrangements of traditional road layouts? Are shared spaces acceptable having regard to the needs of disabled people?

The approaches of Buchanan and Jacobs may be seen as two poles; one in which the environment is analysed as an abstract entity, and one in which it is analysed in terms of its effect on human activity. The second, humanist, view and its corollary in current planning policy may seem similar in effect to my own analysis, but there is an essential difference: for all her human-centeredness, Jacobs still views human activity from an objective viewpoint. In finding order and pattern she is describing an abstract model of social behaviour, and does not manage to get inside the nature of public experience itself. My aim in the following sections is to do precisely that; to find a basic position from which a 'public experience' may be both explained and defined.

Section 2.2: Soja: spatiality

Both Buchanan and Jacob's discussion takes place within a conventional, geometric view of space. Space, for them, is the neutral and inactive environment within which the physical substance and human bodies which are the subject of their study are arranged. This seems natural, and this view of space is the normal one, used in day-to-day conversation. The problem with it is that it tends to separate the terms of analysis into different conceptual categories. Buchanan's 'quality of environment' and Jacob's 'street ballet', despite their differences, are both concepts which reside in physical materiality. They are of a different type from the social and ideological factors that produce them and from the way that they are experienced.

There is another view of space, however, which allows it an active role in social relations. Instead of being the stage on which such relations are acted, it becomes something which is produced as their result, and which affects them directly. This concept is given the term 'spatiality' by Edward Soja in 'Postmodern Geographies' (1989), taking his inspiration from a theory originally developed by Henri Lefebvre in 'The Production of Space' (1974). Soja describes this altered view of space in opposition to the natural view:

(...) physical space has been a misleading epistemological foundation upon which to analyse the concrete and subjective meaning of human spatiality. Space in itself may be primordially given, but the organization, and meaning of space is a product of social translation, transformation, and experience. (Soja 1989 p79)

Soja criticises the view of space which sees it as a 'collection of things', suggesting that this produces a theoretical opaqueness which hides from view the social and ideological forces that created the space and which the space represents. By concentrating on space as physical fact we are led away from a true understanding of it as part of human culture, and (insidiously) led into an acceptance of it as something outside culture, within which cultural acts are played out.

Spatiality is a metaphysical concept. It lies directly neither in the area of empirical practicality nor in phenomenological experience; nor is it, like the concept of 'culture' to which it is attached in many frames of thought, an aggregate or combination of products or experiences. It hovers somewhere between and above all these areas. It is, at a certain level of existence, a thing in its own right; a conceptual object rather than a quality:

As socially produced space, spatiality can be distinguished from the physical space of material nature, and the mental space of cognition and representation, each of which is used and incorporated into the social construction of spatiality but cannot be conceptualized as its equivalent. (Soja 1989 p120)

In this form, it is useful to the cultural geographer as a tool for the analysis of the relationship between ideology and social experience: "space visible again as a fundamental referent of social being" (Soja 1989 p119). In the next section I will build on Soja's description of spatiality at a 'macro' level to form a theory of 'micro-spatiality', where space can be seen as something which is produced by individual action within intersubjective relationships.

Section 2.3: Sartre and Merleau-Ponty: phenomenology

Both Lefebvre and Soja touch on, but do not particularly amplify, a concept of spatiality acting in a local and specific rather than a broad and general sense. Each takes their cue from phenomenology, though from a different area. Soja, explicitly, discusses an idea most clearly expressed originally by Husserl, and then developed by Buber and Sartre, that the 'intentional' state that links the subject of consciousness (the ego) with its object (the phenomena of experience) implies a spatiality at the very point of being. Lefebvre, on the other hand, expresses (rather tangentially) an idea that spatiality emerges from the human body; something which, at least superficially, seems similar to the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty.

The 'micro-spatiality' that I introduced above is something that can be discussed through several levels of depth, and the phenomenological explorations of Soja and Lefebvre seem to provide a good starting point for this discussion. Phenomenology reveals that as soon as we try to describe our experience we tend to fly off into some other area, driven away by some inbuilt centripetal force, in which we can only describe what the conditions are which might produce or explain that experience. It tries to resist that force - staying with the experience in the hope of understanding what it is in itself. Phenomenology provides a counter-argument to what is called (in phenomenological terms) the 'natural attitude' - the objective/scientific viewpoint which treats the material world as more fundamentally real than the consciousness that perceives it, and therefore tends to explain conscious experience in terms of external causes. The 'natural' viewpoints of both Buchanan and Jacobs, even where they appear to be describing or discussing experience, are not phenomenological, and do not make a real case for what might constitute the experience itself.

Spatiality is also not a phenomenological concept or philosophy in itself. Lefebvre takes pains to distance himself from Husserl's phenomenology, in his words the "none-too-scrupulous postulation of a (quasi-tautologous) identity of knowing Subject and conceived Essence" (Lefebvre 1991 p8). Soja criticises the "confusing myopia"

which masks the social agency of spatiality by making objects only knowable as "things-in-themselves"; the "essentially empiricist but also occasionally phenomenological interpretation of space (which) reflects the substantive-attributive structure that has dominated scientific thought since the philosophy of the Enlightenment." (Soja 1989 p122) It is certainly true that the phenomenology of Husserl, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, in seeking a fundamental relationship between the individual and the world, avoids the areas of ideology and social agency which Lefebvre and Soja draw out in their work. Nevertheless, the conceptual environment that spatiality generates in which the production of space and social 'being' operate in conjunction with each other makes a powerful partner with phenomenology. While spatiality does not primarily address individual experience, and phenomenology does not primarily address the production of space as a social activity, the forays that writers within each discipline make into the other fosters what seems to be a fruitful engagement in the analysis of spatial experience.

Some way into 'Postmodern Geographies', Edward Soja turns to the ontological basis of spatiality in the phenomenology of Buber and Sartre, and in particular in the 'intentional' relationship between the subject and object of consciousness:

It is in this sense that spatiality is present at the origin of human consciousness for it permits - indeed it presupposes - the fundamental existential distinction between being-in-itself (the being of non-conscious reality; of inanimate objects, of things) and being-for-itself, the being of the conscious human person.

(...) how is the relation between place and being to be understood? As separate spheres? As interdependencies? As shaped entirely by the forcefulness of the absolute ego? As shaped entirely by the materiality of place? I suggest that these are the ontological interrogations from which all social theory springs.
(Soja 1989 p135)

Intentionality is the term given in phenomenology to the relationship - neither exactly a mental nor a physical relationship - between the part of 'being' that is being perceived (the object of consciousness, or that which for Sartre has existence 'en-soi' or in-itself) and that which is doing the perceiving (the subject of consciousness, existence 'pour-soi' or for-itself). It is one of the principles of phenomenology that

being, or conscious existence, does not lie precisely either in the subject or object of consciousness, but in the relationship between the two. Intentionality, which in this sense derives from the Latin for 'reaching out', describes this relationship. It is in this context that spatiality can be said to exist at the point of being, for in phenomenology conscious existence is never a singularity, but a relationship between two things; and a relationship implies (at some level of being) a space. For Husserl this intentional 'space' was something that existed purely within consciousness, but for the later phenomenologists; Heidegger, Sartre, Buber and Merleau-Ponty, it was more ambiguous; simultaneously of consciousness and of the world.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty saw a choice between viewing space in a conventional, physical manner, or in an intentional sense in which it is the relationship generated by a 'constituting mind'; a mind which in itself gives meaning to things:

Is it true that we are faced with the alternative either of perceiving things in space, or (if we reflect and try to discover the significance of our own experiences) of conceiving space as the indivisible system governing the acts of unification performed by a constituting mind? Does not the experience of space provide a basis for its unity by means of an entirely different kind of synthesis?
(Merleau-Ponty 1962 p284)

In the second sense of Merleau-Ponty's view space is what gives unity to the subjective world of the individual; the 'glue' which binds and defines all the parts of a world. The situation becomes much more complex, however, when one considers more than one objective world; my world and (as it is termed by phenomenologists) an Other's world. I cannot take my spatial relationship with the Other in simple terms, since I have to realise that I am also an object in the Other's view. If space is the intentional relationship of the contents of my subjective world, then it cannot be the same for each of us. This is a space which must be negotiated. It is something that links myself with the Other; unifies us, even, in a temporary mutual world while we are aware of each other. Yet at the same time it is something essentially different for each of us. This is the origin of spatiality as a socially generated entity: something profoundly ambiguous, fundamental to the mutual recognition of other

subjectivities; something which, as a result, forms a basis for communication between subjectivities.

This spatiality (as I have described, 'micro-spatiality') hovers on the boundary of the choice described by Merleau-Ponty above. It is a structure of consciousness, but it is also manifested in physical space. Intentional space emerges into physical space through the presence of our bodies in gestures and spatial relationships. In a complex but unspoken process of negotiation we demand, concede, acquire and promise, appropriate and relinquish space. Spatiality in this form is in essence the same as the macro-spatiality discussed by Soja: it is a dynamic space, indivisible from the social action that informs it, it has specific links both to subjective experience and to the objective materiality of the world, but it is observed at the level of individual interaction.

The material world is an intersubjective stage set of shared props. For each of us it is 'the world', and it is ours exclusively as a subjective experience. At the same time, others have the ability to manipulate it. As Merleau-Ponty puts it in his discussion of the Other's body:

Round the perceived body a vortex forms, towards which my world is drawn and, so to speak, sucked in ... Already the other body has ceased to be a mere fragment of the world, and become the theatre of certain processes of elaboration, and, as it were, a certain 'view' of the world. There is taking place over there a certain manipulation of things hitherto my property. Someone is making use of my familiar objects.
(Merleau-Ponty 1962 p412)

This relationship, not exactly a sharing, more an overlap of quite separate existences some of whose aspects appear to coincide, gives to material objects the potential to infer some intention on the part of an Other, and to represent points of particular contact between my world and the Other's. Individual objects need not have the same or even a remotely equivalent status in everyone's subjective world. However, by some mutual agreement they may take on a status that has a shared relevance in my world and an Other's, and in doing so they take on a role within an intersubjective act of micro-spatiality that joins us. It is the intersubjective potential of objects in the

material world that gives them a communicative role, and by extension a role in the formation of identity.

Section 2.4: Bucholtz and Hall: communication and identity

The term 'communication' is a difficult one to introduce, as it brings with it linguistic and literary connotations and the subsequent potential for misinterpretation and false assumption. It would be difficult to assert that interaction with the material world can transmit structured logical meaning in a linguistic manner. However, the fact that material objects exist simultaneously as part of the fabric of different subjective worlds - in other words, the fact that they exist intersubjectively - does give them a communicative quality, and some of the analytical methods that can be applied to linguistic communication may also be applicable to the physical environment when it is viewed in this particular way.

I have said that the basis of the quality of experience generated by a particular environment lies in the effect that it has on perception of identity. Recent study of the relationship between linguistic communication and identity formation seems to offer potential for a parallel analysis in terms of the physical environment. In the following paragraphs, I will draw on ideas expressed in a paper published in 2005 by Mary Bucholtz and Kira Hall: 'Identity and Interaction: a sociocultural linguistic approach'. The central theme of Bucholtz and Hall's paper is that identity is not a psychologically fixed entity, but something that 'emerges' through (primarily linguistic) social interaction:

... our definition of identity is deliberately broad and open-ended: Identity is the social positioning of self and other ... a discursive construct that emerges in interaction ... an intersubjective accomplishment.
(Bucholtz and Hall 2005 p586)

Bucholtz and Hall establish five principles that determine the relationship between identity and interaction:

1. Emergence: identity is not the cause of social behaviour, but emerges out of it: "identity ... not simply as a psychological mechanism of self-classification that is reflected in peoples' social behaviour but rather as something which is constituted through social action, and especially through language." (Bucholtz and Hall 2005 p588)

2. Positionality: identity as something which "is shaped from moment to moment in interaction" and which "emerges in discourse through the temporary roles and or orientations assumed by participants" involving "interactional positions that social actors briefly occupy and then abandon as they respond to the contingencies of the unfolding discourse ..." (Bucholtz and Hall 2005 p591)

3. Indexicality: the establishment of bases - the fundamental cultural beliefs and values - on which micro- and macro-identity positions are built. Indexicality shows "how even in the most fleeting of interactional moves, speakers position themselves and others as particular kinds of people." (Bucholtz and Hall 2005 p595)

4. Relationality: the principle that "identities are never autonomous or independent but always acquire social meaning in relation to other identity positions and other social actors" (Bucholtz and Hall 2005 p598)

5. Partialness: the principle that identity can never be whole, complete or simple. Partialness captures "the entire multitude of ways in which identity exceeds the individual self." (Bucholtz and Hall 2005 p605)

The picture that emerges from this is of identity as something which is almost (but not quite) a property of the situation rather than of the actor. If one includes the other side of the equation, that identity is a fundamental part of self-awareness, then self-awareness itself is brought out of the confines of the psychological self and into the public arena.

As I suggested above, although Bucholtz and Hall present their version of identity as primarily a linguistic phenomenon, it is quite possible to imagine the concept translated into the primarily spatial, non-linguistic world of the physical environment, in the context of the communicative intersubjective relationships that I have drawn

out in the preceding sections. Bucholtz and Hall's theories do not depend on the technical structure of the communication of information, though their examples are naturally of spoken language. The identity positions that they describe are built on a broader communicative base; something that runs parallel to the function of information flow, and there is an equivalent communicative base in spatial relationships.

I have suggested that intersubjectivity in the physical environment occurs through the medium of what I termed 'micro-spatiality'. The most fundamental level of intersubjective micro-spatiality in the physical environment - the expression through bodily gesture of the intentional space between ego and the world - is reflected in a quality of 'micro-identity'; what Bucholtz and Hall describe as "temporary and interactionally specific stances" (Bucholtz and Hall 2005 p585). In expressing myself spatially in a social situation - perhaps something as simple as indicating which side of another pedestrian I will pass on, or giving way for someone at a door - I am adopting the identity of that action; the person who is passing on the right or the person who is giving way. In Bucholtz and Hall's terms, these interactions are 'positional'; a briefly occupied and then abandoned position of identity that is defined in relation to another actor. They describe something similar in a linguistic situation: a "joke teller or engaged listener" (Bucholtz and Hall 2005 p591). These simple spatial actions, for their duration, define part of my existence for me: in creating for me an identity in relation to other people, they become temporarily my experience of the twin poles of existence whose relationship identity is: my Self and my environment.

However, these interactions are between bodies, and involve the environment itself only as a structuring element for bodily movement. More complex environmental interactions involve a functional relationship with an element of the environment, such as a bus stop or a road kerb. As in the previous case, in entering such a relationship I am also adopting an interactional position as a road-crosser or a bus-waiter, but here the presence of the object is necessary for the identity. The functional relationship is with the object, but the positional relationship of identity is with other actors.

A functional relationship is a potentially much broader thing than a simple spatial relationship, extending the word 'occupation' from its briefest to its longest sense. I may be occupied in crossing the road only for a short time, though while it lasts it gives me a kind of 'right' - an accepted role in the public context - which temporarily supersedes all others. Other occupations, such as shopping (or window shopping) are more amorphous though longer-lasting. On the broadest scale, not exactly within the boundaries of my discussion although affecting its parameters from the outside, is 'occupation' as employment.

In this model of identity formation in a physical environment, identity is a continuously 'emergent' entity, generated by interaction with it in different ways. At an immediate level, whether in conjunction with other actors or not, identity is formed as a result of proxemic or functional interaction involving elements of the environment. Identities formed this way may in themselves be fleeting and changeable, but their formation is in itself an important part of a more general identity. In this environment of micro-spatial interaction, the established cultural environment is not as important as the agreements, understandings and correspondences that arise in the *melée* of public interaction, and in fact it is out of this that culture emerges. For the individual on the forward edge of this public narrative, the continual formation of identity is itself experience.

Section 2.6: Summary

My argument has so far been presented in a way that tries to demonstrate the logical progression and connection between ideas derived from writers of different disciplines and persuasions. In order to show how they can contribute to a generally coherent theory of spatial experience, I will summarise what I have discussed above, but in a slightly different order.

1. Space of Intentionality

Space is present at the 'origin of existence' in the form of the relationship between the subject and object of consciousness. The spatial relationship between me and the objects around me can be perceived either in geometric terms or as the ordering of ego and objects within my subjective world.

2. Micro-spatiality

The space of intentionality emerges into objective geometric space through body bodily movements and gestures - the production of 'social space' as the intersubjective medium of physical interaction at an individual 'micro-spatial' level.

3. Physical environment

The physical environment is brought into social-spatial relationships through acts of appropriation at various levels. Elements of the physical environment have structural, functional and cultural roles within the subjective worlds of all the actors in a social situation, and they also form points of connection between worlds - they have a key intersubjective role.

4. Intersubjective communication

The way that we produce and perceive space, and the way that we appropriate elements of the physical environment, have an intersubjective communicative function - micro-spatial interaction carries some kind of meaning in social relationships.

5. Self and Identity

Identity, the relationship between Self and Other, emerges as a continuously changing entity out of micro-spatial interaction with the environment. The physical environment fosters identity as a structure for simple spatial relationships and as the site of functional relationships.

While the development above illustrates a framework within which it can be argued that the material environment can operate as an intersubjective medium, it does not indicate how it can happen successfully. The underlying purpose of this paper is to try to find an explanation for the particular experiential quality of the Bishopsgate - Wormwood Street walkway, and to do that I need to extend what has so far been a set of linked theories - a synthesis of external ideas - into a framework within which an object may be analysed.

The first demand of an environment is that it contains elements which can be appropriated by me. The simple intentional relationship between subject and objects through which Self is defined is taken for granted, but the more complex relationships that build on this, and out of which Identity emerges, do not necessarily occur in any environment. In the same way that identity emerges out of a linguistic structure whose components I recognise, I need to be able to understand and recognise the elements of the environment before I can incorporate them into my own world and build my identity on them. The areas of the environmental fostering of identity - as a structure for simple spatial relationships, as the site of functional relationships - both have, in their own way, potentially recognisable facets. For an element to be capable of appropriation in any of these ways, it must signal that capability.

At the most basic level, for me to be able, as Bucholtz and Hall put it, to "briefly occupy and then abandon" an identity as I just move around a space, the structuring elements of the space must be capable of an equivalent brief appropriation and relinquishment. The requirements for this are quite informal; all that is necessary is that I and another actor can agree on what will provide an adequate structure for the primary event, which is our mutual socio-spatial interaction. A simple example can show how this happens: I walk along a street. Ahead of me there is a lamp post in the middle of the pavement. A little further on, someone is walking in the other direction, towards me. Deciding on a whim to pass it on one side, I persuade him to pass it on the other. I managed to appropriate the lamp post a little before the other pedestrian, and signalled that I had done so with a subtle shift in my walking pattern. We would in any case have had to pass each other, but the lamp post became the temporary structure, or in another view, the hinge point between our two subjective worlds, that

crystallised the interaction between us. At the same time, my actual experience of this public encounter was in my 'micro-identity' in relation to the other pedestrian. This was, after all, a social encounter, and as with a linguistic encounter a communication occurred between us which positioned us socially in relation to each other. That social position - the relationship between Self and Other - is, as Bucholtz and Hall have pointed out, the generator of identity.

The requirements for functional interaction are more specific. Apart from being indicated by the object in a comprehensible manner, the function should be something that appears relevant in a social sense. For that part of the public experience which involves just 'being in public' rather than having a specific task, one might find it difficult to see the relevance of any particular functional item. However, establishing an identity is itself part of the public experience, and to achieve that requires the continual establishment of micro-identities in small-scale interactions. This is the equivalent of what Roman Jakobson termed 'phatic' communication in his Formalist linguistic theory; a communicative act concerned with social acceptance rather than with the transmission of logical information. Terry Eagleton describes phatic communication with an example:

A pub conversation may well transmit information, but what also bulks large in such dialogue is a strong element of what linguists call 'phatic', a concern with the act of communication itself. In chatting to you about the weather I am also signalling that I regard conversation with you as valuable (...)
(Eagleton 1983 p13)

Establishing a valid identity within the social/spatial environment involves, to put it crudely, having 'something to do'. The nature of the physical environment is critical in this, and a successful environment must incorporate enough opportunities for small-scale functional interactions, each in themselves unimportant, but which can build up to something that at least appears or feels like the establishment of a coherent larger-scale identity.

In both of these areas, simple spatial and functional, the physical environment can provide a structure. It is important to emphasize that (from this point of view) the

environment does not dictate or even promote particular identity relationships, but that it can make such relationships easier to establish. The structure itself depends on the social actors themselves for its relevance; they inhabit it and appropriate parts of it according to their own subjective intentions. A successful environment will foster inhabitation and appropriation, and through them the opportunity for a wide variety of identity formation, both micro and macro, fleeting and long-term.

Section 3: The Walkway.

In this section I will apply the theory developed in Section 2 in two ways: firstly to address the specific phenomenon that prompted the discussion, my own experience of the walkway at a particular time; and secondly in a more general sense to apply to the walkway as it might have been. These two uses of theory are quite different. The first application is, to use Bill Hillier's terms in his discussion of architectural theory at the beginning of 'Space is the Machine', essentially 'analytic'; something which describes an architectural phenomenon as it actually is. The second is speculative, and given that it applies qualitative judgements to a scheme on the basis of drawings, is close to what Hillier would term 'normative' (Hillier 1996 p2). Hillier suggests a sequence from one to the other:

An architectural theory, as we see it, should deepen our grasp of architectural phenomena, and only subsequently and with great modesty, suggest possible principles on which to base speculation and innovation in design. Such theory is analytic before it is normative.
(Hillier 1996 p3)

But an analytic theory without a suggestion of principles would be purely descriptive. In Section 2 I have tried to develop a principled argument which can be applied in both directions; towards the analytical and towards the normative. Although I began with a specific experience, what has resulted is a theory of how the physical environment can foster identity in general, and this makes it transferable from one environment to another. It enables not only a description of a particular situation, but a prediction for other situations and by inference a qualitative assessment of them.

3.1: My experience of the walkway.

Having moved to an analytic theory which might be used to investigate a physical subject, it is possible to test it in relation to my actual experience of the Bishopsgate - Wormwood Street Walkway. The physical environment provides clues and prompts which guide the formation of an identity structure, which includes short-term identities of movement and longer-term functional identities. The identities themselves represent the basis of experience. My particular experience in this case rests on the fact that I found it impossible to establish a socially valid identity on the walkway, and without one I was left, in a sense, abandoned.

The question is, then, what it is that was present or absent in this environment that prevented me from establishing an identity in the normal way. The stretch of the walkway that I concentrate on - the part that lies between Bishopsgate and Wormwood Street - is a composite entity formed by several buildings whose designers have each interpreted 'walkway' in their own way, within the parameters set by the City Corporation. There are four discrete sections. From the Bishopsgate Bridge (photo 1), a sinuously curving concrete path wraps its way round the granite shaft of Seifert's NatWest Tower (now Tower 42, photos 2-5). To the South of this, the walkway ends abruptly in a wide, open space overlooking Fountain Court and the back of the City of London Club (photo 6 and Appendix 2). To the North, on the other side of the Tower, it enters a late 80s building by Fitzroy Robinson, 55 Bishopsgate, in a heavily neo-classical granite-lined corridor (photos 7-10). Where 55 Bishopsgate meets 99 Bishopsgate, a tower designed by Seifert in partnership with Ley Colbeck but refurbished in 1993, the corridor takes on a more lightweight note, with walls of painted metal panels and windows looking on to broad computer-filled office areas (photos 11,12). Finally, passing the turn on to the bridge over Wormwood Street (photos 13,14), a spur of the walkway forms a narrow escape route from the top floor of the 'Wall' bar (photos 15,16).

As a series of sensory events the walkway is varied and interesting; stimulating, even, to those who can put their sense of unease to one side and concentrate on its aesthetic

qualities. It is an unusual architectural promenade, revealing aspects and bringing contact with parts of buildings that would normally be hidden. There is a picturesque quality about the dramatic changes of scenery; the perspective of the NatWest tower, the strangely tight concentration of buildings around its base, the sombre tunnel of the 55 Bishopsgate corridor, the startlingly bright light well between 55 and 99 Bishopsgate. At the same time each section has a slightly dangerous feeling of the illicit or inappropriate encounter. A sense of intrusion, both enticing and repellent, lingers around every element; entrances that seem to turn away, paths that push back instead of pull forward; and hovering over all of this a strong feeling of separation from the 'normality' of street life below, only emphasised by its visibility at the bridges over Bishopsgate and Wormwood Street.

But the entrance does not actually turn away, nor the path push back. These perceptions are symptomatic of my own unease of identity, something which, though fostered by the environment, emerges out of quite different qualities; and an analysis of these is essentially one of what the walkway lacks. In the broadest sense, the most noticeably absent quality is purpose. Because the walkway system never took over from the road and pavement system in a complete way, it is now has little point as a means of travelling around the City. The lack of such an over-arching reason for being there, something which in itself would provide a strong social identity, would be mitigated if there were opportunities to establish more local functional identities; for instance office entry, shopping, or even window shopping. These are also denied: the only office doorways are locked means of escape, and rather perversely the only windows are onto private office areas, something which makes them (to someone sensitive to privacy) gaze-averting rather than gaze-attracting. Even the lack of these functions would not create such a complete vacuum of identity if it were possible to engage in the micro-spatial activities of public intercourse; crossing the road or dodging cars, but it is these specifically which have been removed from the scene.

The absence of purposive and functional qualities inevitably leads to a lack of population. Not only are there very few people on the walkway, but there is little sign that there is ever anyone there. The city-street detritus that marks the 'presence of absent others' does not exist on the walkway: no litter; no graffiti; none of those things

which, though usually considered untidy or offensive, engage with our subjective world as the signal of the presence of other subjective worlds. With the absence of other people comes the lack of opportunity to engage in the most micro-spatial of intersubjective behaviour, the proxemic negotiation of space; the appropriation and relinquishment of objects during ordinary public interaction.

The establishment of a social identity is a fundamental act in any public situation and, as I have argued, the bedrock on which experience is based. The walkway seems to deny almost all of the normal routes for the formation of identity. When faced with this environment I am forced into a question of who I am in relation to it; I am looking for some reflection from it or interaction with it, but I find none. It is the difficulty that arises from this which forms my experience: not that particular factors within the environment force me into a certain identity, but that it offers few opportunities for me to construct my own.

3.2: The walkway as intended.

The question arises: would I have had such an experience if it had been built as it was originally intended? As I explained in Section 1, the current walkway is a shadow of the original plan. If it is possible to analyse the walkway's ability to foster identity as it stands, it may also be possible to analyse it in the state that was intended through an examination of drawings.

Drawings 1-4 at the end of this section are a composite picture of how the Bishopsgate - Wormwood Street section could have been if the overall City Walkway programme had been followed through to completion. Drawing 1 is one of Seifert's original planning application drawings of 1970 for the NatWest Tower and associated buildings, designed within the plot ratio method of controlling development area (see page 5 and figure 3). It shows an extensive commitment to the walkway idea, a good example of what Hebbert described as the "tower-and-podium format well suited to accommodate walkways" (Hebbert 1993 p443; see also page 6). The drawing shows bridge links to other sites; two across Old Broad Street to the West, one through the adjoining site to the South-West, and one (the only one eventually to be built, in 1986) across Bishopsgate to the East, as well as the walkway through the rest of the block North-East towards Wormwood Street. At the centre of this web of links is an extensive and complex podium arrangement with covered and open spaces, shops, and the major entrance to the tower itself. Very little of this was built: the listing of the City of London Club, which would have been demolished to make way for the square building at the top left of the plan, together with the change of heart over the whole walkway network during the NatWest Tower's very long development period (it was completed in 198-) meant that its purpose had evaporated before it was begun. Over this section, what was built is more or less what is there today; a relatively narrow walkway serving escape exits, with no shops, and the main office entrance at ground level.

Drawing 2 shows the neighbouring building to the North-West, 55 Bishopsgate, as it was at that stage before its complete demolition and replacement with the current

Fitzroy Robinson building in 1989. The drawing is for the refurbishment by Ley Colbeck of the then existing building, and indicates a rather pragmatic accommodation of the walkway as a connection between Seifert's plans for the NatWest Tower and his and Ley Colbeck's planned tower on the other side at 99 Bishopsgate. Basic though it is, with low-specification finishes (see drawing 5), this connection has incident and variety; open sections joining enclosed sections with frequent changes of width and direction. Fitzroy Robinson's new corridor may be more regular and have considerably more expensive materials, but it seems less engaging than the original (drawing 6 and photo 9).

Drawing 3 shows 99 Bishopsgate for the most part as it was until 1993, though the second walkway bridge over Bishopsgate shown on the plan was never built. The walkway itself wraps round the tower, and includes (as with the NatWest building) its main entry point. There is provision for a restaurant on the other side of the section of walkway leading to Wormwood Street which, when later constructed, was a staff canteen. Following the 1993 bomb and the recladding and alteration of the building, all the walkway except the connection to Wormwood Street was removed, the restaurant removed, and the office entrance restricted to the ground floor. A light well marks the position of the old walkway level entrance (photo 10).

Drawing 4 is of a narrow site known as the 'Western Spur' of 99 Bishopsgate which, at the time of the drawing (1981, and see also the photograph of 1976, photo 20), formed part of a route to a staircase on the Wormwood Street / Old Broad Street corner. There was a wine bar at walkway level, with a seating terrace extending onto the walkway area itself. Since then, with the building of the Wormwood Street bridge, the staircase became redundant and was removed. The wine bar enclosure has been extended over the terrace, which has narrowed into an escape route (photo 15).

This environment that these drawings show is significantly more complete than the one the walkway presents today. They clearly demonstrate the ambition to move most pedestrian activity to the walkway level, and for the network to be the primary public surface. The experience of this environment would also clearly be different.

but the way in which it would be different is not obvious. The main intention of the walkway system was the separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and the micro-spatial interaction lost through this separation would have been just as severe as in the current situation. At the same time, what is currently the most significant absence, the overall purpose of the system, would have been very strong; a purpose of office-worker circulation intensified by the restriction of other large-scale functional activity to the ground level. Within the consideration of these two identity-forming elements, it is apparent that a valid over-arching social identity could easily be formed only if one were connected in some way to the offices that form the main component at walkway level. Because the opportunity to form small-scale functional identities would have been as lacking as it is now, the need for an office-worker identity would not be tempered, as it is in a 'normal' environment, by the myriad of emergent identities involved in public spatial intercourse. The mid-range functional identities of shopper or wine-bar visitor are certainly there, but in a limited form, and it would be unlikely that one could comfortably exist in this environment with an identity only as a shopper. One could say that in a macro-spatial sense, the already prevalent mono-functional environment of the City would have been intensified through the control of identity formation at a micro-spatial level. Although ostensibly 'public', this new city structure would have a tendency to restrict involvement to those prepared and able to adopt the right identity.

On the other hand, within these restrictions of functional identity the opportunities for micro-spatial proxemic identity formation are multiple and varied. Assuming that the walkway would be heavily populated, the drawings show a range of objects, accidental corners and informal spaces of the type that can be appropriated in normal public interaction. The erosion of these features is quite marked in a comparison of the intended scheme with the present walkway, and the attitude of designers to the value of informal elements is apparent in Fitzroy Robinson's corridor in 55 Bishopsgate: a long and evidently carefully designed section which substitutes an abstract aesthetic quality for the haphazard variety of the earlier building; the happy walkers of the architects' drawing (figure -) seemingly emphasizing the bleakness of their environment.

Conclusion

There is nothing new in criticism of urban theory and practice from the 1950s to the 1970s, nor in the realization that raised pedestrian walkway systems are often unsatisfactory environments. Jane Jacobs seemed already to have said it all, two years before Colin Buchanan's 'Traffic in Towns' was published, in her persuasive description of the 'street ballet' of her New York neighbourhood. The conclusions that I have reached about the nature of the built environment may be similar to those generally established through objective analysis, but it has been my ambition to reach them by a different route. The objectivisation and abstraction of experiential quality into broader areas of study leads to types of analysis which pertain to the broader, artificial and abstract 'object' rather than to experience itself as the immediate object. It is possible to argue that by identifying 'identity' as the pivot of experience I have abstracted it in exactly the same way. The point is, though, that I have tried to start with the experience itself and expand from that into the physical world. 'Identity', by virtue of being (as Bucholtz and Hall have said) the relationship between self and other is, in phenomenological terms, put in an equivalence with experience itself. In this particular way of looking at things, the sense of identity that arises in all its complexity out of an engagement with the environment is the experience of it: to find the structure of the identity is to find the structure of the experience.

The question of whether it is possible to find experience itself as the immediate object of a speculative scheme is more difficult. It might seem that experience is something which can only be conceived of in relation to actuality. However, in arriving at a description of one particular experience of the walkway, I had already had to develop an explanation of the environmental factors that contributed to it, and in that analysis the ability to carry it further into the speculative realm is already implicit. If one can consider the environment as a structuring element of identity and experience, then an analysis can bridge the immediate and the speculative. The ability of an environment to foster identity from a micro-spatial level upwards is something that is present not just in its physical being, but as a potential being indicated in drawings. In this sense it has been possible to analyse the walkway as it is, and the walkway as a concept, as if they were equivalent entities.

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Figure 1

The Bishopsgate -
Wormwood Street
Walkway





Figure 2

Part of the 'Bird's-eye General View from the South' in F J Forty's 'Reconstruction in the City of London' (City of London 1944 opp.p1), showing the Bishopsgate-Wormwood Street site. A new roundabout is shown at the junction of the two roads. Wormwood Street was part of the intended ring road.



Figure 3

Illustration of the application of Holden and Holford's 'plot ratio' system.
(Holden and Holford 1951)





Figure 4

Buchanan's vision: A scheme for the development of the area to the South of Fitzroy Square; an illustration of his more general urban theory.

(Buchanan 1963 p139, 143)



Figure 5

The 1976 'Minimum Walkway Network' from the 1978 Development Plan

The Bishopsgate - Wormwood Street walkway is shown as a proposal within the plan, although it is (for the most part) the same as the schemes of the early 1970s shown in Section 3, drawings 1-4.

PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

11.80 Ease of pedestrian movement has always been of great importance to the City's activities. The City has a well developed network of alleys and lanes which greatly assists pedestrian movement. In addition, these are of great historical and environmental importance. They supplement its main streets and afford alternative traffic free routes across much of the City. The conflict between the needs of the pedestrian and vehicular traffic can be mitigated by the provision of bridges, subways and pedestrian crossings. However, since these tend to provide only a limited opportunity for overall improvement, the Corporation sought a more comprehensive concept designed to provide for improved ease of movement and safety for pedestrians.

11.81 Such an approach was afforded by the reconstruction of the City following the extensive bomb damage after the 2nd World War. At that time it was possible to assemble sites for large scale comprehensive developments, and it was envisaged that the greater part of the City would be rebuilt, thus enabling a network of City-wide upper level walkways to be developed. However, during the last decade, this concept has had to be modified because of the trend away from comprehensive development to that of conservation in many parts of the City.

11.82 Besides the provision of walkway facilities greater emphasis is now placed on pedestrian convenience and safety at street level, and more importance is afforded to such considerations in proposals for development and highway improvements.

11.83 The Corporation therefore wishes to improve the priority given to pedestrians and has adopted the following objective:

"To improve facilities for pedestrians at street level, while also consolidating existing provision for existing pedestrian movement on upper level walkway."

Retention of Pedestrian Routes and the Upper Level Walkway*

11.87 The concept of a City wide network of walkways has changed and the Corporation now seeks a more modest upper level system to link the main pedestrian areas and existing walkway developments. Many developments have incorporated the walkway concept and some have substantial walkway areas, bridge links and abutments. A number of isolated sections of walkway exist, and if they lie along useful pedestrian routes the Corporation will press for their completion when redevelopment takes place. (See Map 7). In addition, walkways around public transport interchanges and other important pedestrian areas will be encouraged. To facilitate this, a number of footbridges will be required and proposals for these are included on the proposals map.

Figure 6

Extracts from the 1984 Draft Local Plan

Despite reference to a 'more modest upper level system', the Bishopsgate-Wormwood Street section is shown with planned extensions.

PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

10.38

Ease of pedestrian movement has always been of great importance to the City's activities. The relatively short walking distances between firms, institutions and other services located in the 'Square Mile' form a unique and valued feature of the City's business environment. The increasing use of information technology has not reduced the importance of face to face meetings. Many business journeys within the City are made on foot. Journeys to the City using other forms of transport are completed on foot. Although the City has a well developed network of alleys and lanes, which greatly assists pedestrian movement, there are many other routes where pedestrian and vehicular movements conflict. It is important to reduce pedestrian and vehicular conflict and to establish and maintain a safe, convenient and pleasant environment for pedestrians.

10.40

Formerly, the Corporation had extensive proposals for upper level walkways in the City. Although there are still a limited number of proposals to consolidate existing provision, far greater emphasis will, in future, be placed on pedestrian convenience and safety at street level. Consequently, the Corporation will give due consideration to the improvement of pedestrian facilities at street level within the proposed highway improvements and traffic management schemes, and as individual initiatives elsewhere.

10.50

Although the Corporation's commitment to a City-wide upper level walkway network has diminished over the years, the Corporation will complete the upper walkway network in certain areas by constructing the necessary bridge links between existing abutments (see Map 3). These proposed walkway bridges facilitate the connection of isolated sections of walkway areas, secure a greater accessibility to the Barbican complex and generally provide a safe pedestrian route across the Secondary Road Network. The Corporation has produced guidelines for the design and specification of City Walkways (see Chapter 16, Standards).

10.51

The walkway network is shown on Map 3. It will generally be required that existing walkway links forming part of the network should be retained if the buildings in which they are accommodated are redeveloped (although not necessarily on the same alignment). However, where walkway links through buildings exist which no longer form part of the network, applications for their change of use or redevelopment will normally be considered favourably.

Figure 7

Extracts from the 1991 Unitary Development Plan

Although with a 'diminished commitment', the text indicates an intention by the City to rationalise and complete what had been built. The intended second bridge over Bishopsgate is indicated as deleted (see Section 3, drawing 3).

PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

9.31

The density of activities in the City makes walking the most convenient way to travel around the City. Walking also has virtually no damaging effect on the environment, can be enjoyable, relaxing and has health benefits. The relatively short walking distances between firms, institutions and other services located in the "Square Mile" form a unique and valued feature of the City's business environment. Many business journeys within the City are made on foot, and journeys to the City using other forms of transport are completed on foot.

Pedestrians

POLICY TRANS 6

To improve the environment for pedestrians, particularly at street level, by:

- i. providing facilities to enhance safety and convenience;
- ii. ensuring that there is adequate provision for pedestrians when new developments are proposed; and
- iii. encouraging wayfinding and signage that takes into account the needs of disabled people.

9.34

Emphasis is placed on pedestrian facilities at street level, where routes are most convenient and there is a greater sense of security, although in parts of the City upper level walkways and subways form essential pedestrian routes. The Corporation will give due consideration to the improvement of pedestrian facilities at street level within highway improvements and traffic management schemes, and as part of the Traffic and Environmental Zone. Improvement of wayfinding and signage might, for example, include the use of colour, contrast, texture, or sound. Further information can be obtained from the City Access Officer.

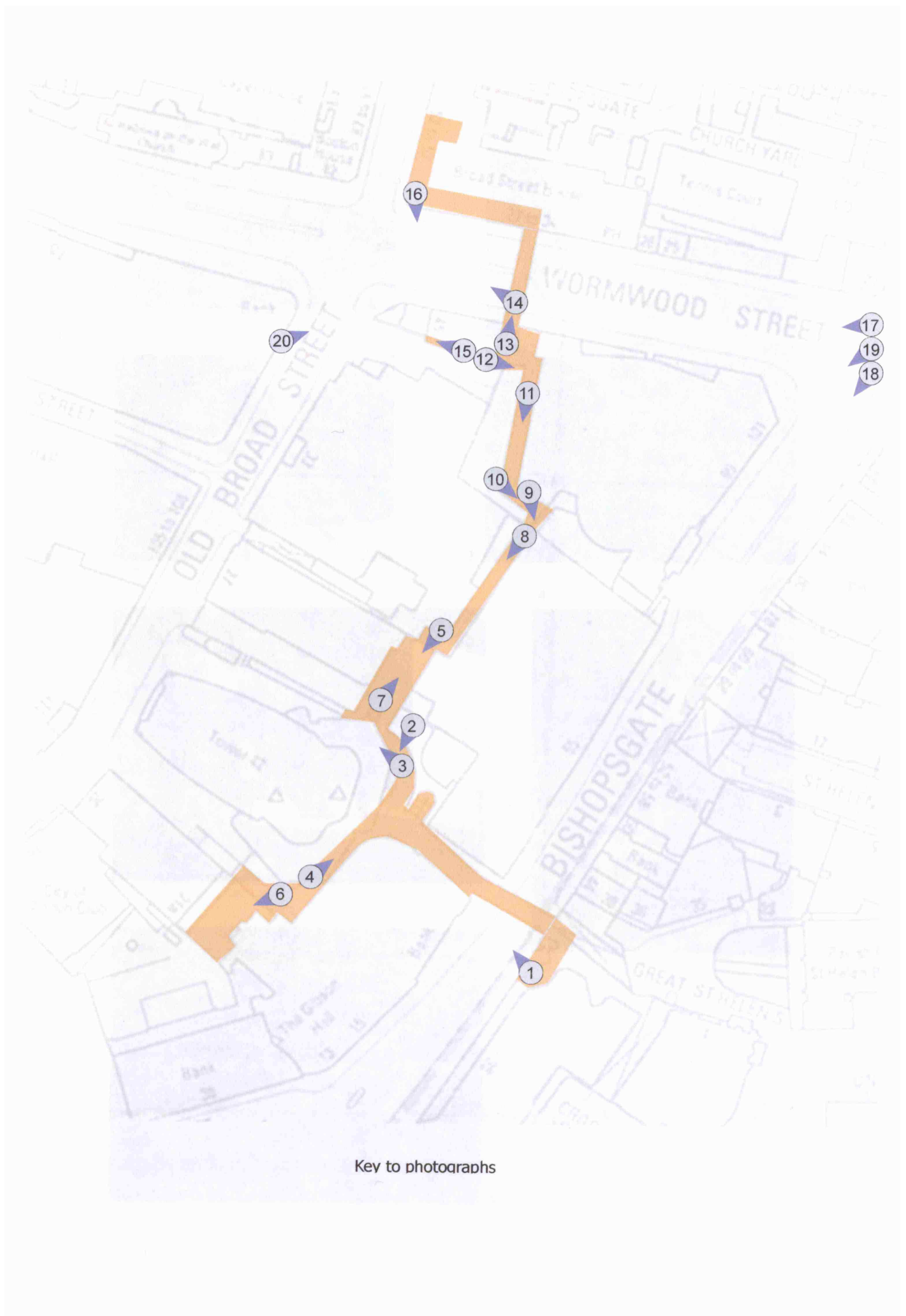
9.39

The City Walkway network is a series of dedicated pedestrian routes which have been created by the Corporation to aid pedestrian movement through the City. The walkway network is shown on Map 9.5. It will generally be required that existing walkway links forming part of the network should be retained if the buildings in which they are accommodated are redeveloped (although not necessarily on the same alignment). In order to facilitate 24 hour access to the walkway network for disabled people, the Corporation will seek the provision of suitable lifts and ramps for disabled access should any development remove, replace or amend the City Walkway network, or otherwise provide opportunities for improved access. Further details can be obtained from the City Access Officer. Where upper level walkway links through buildings exist which no longer form part of the network, applications for their change of use or redevelopment will normally be considered favourably. Where appropriate, proposals should provide for adequate alternative emergency escape routes for buildings which may use the walkway for that purpose.

Figure 8

Extracts from the 2000 Unitary Development Plan

The entire Bishopsgate - Wormwood Street walkway is marked for 'deletion'.



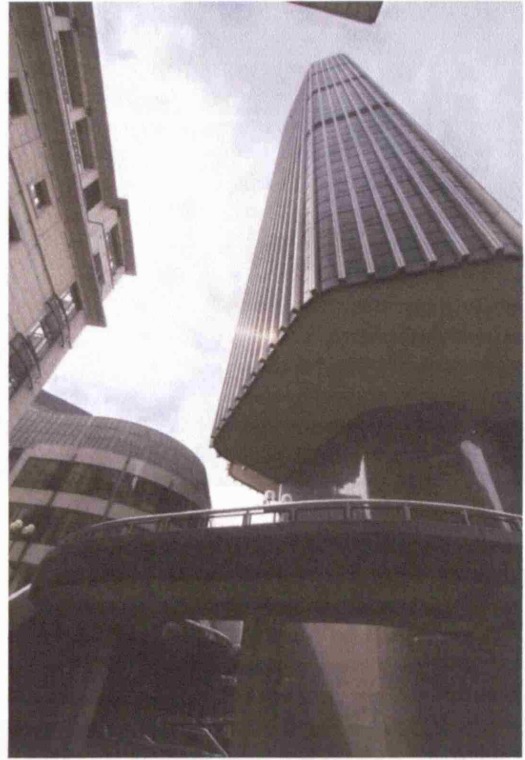
Key to photographs



1



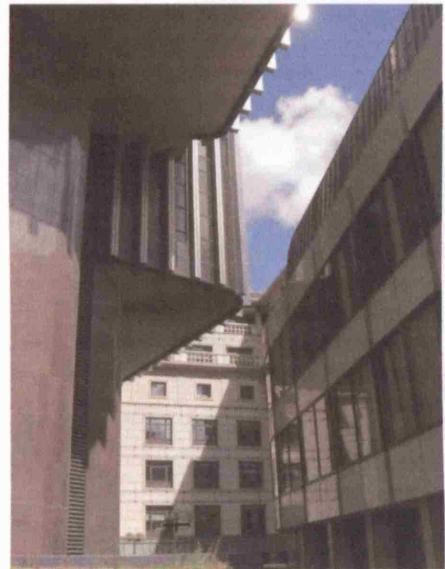
3



2



5



4



6



7



8

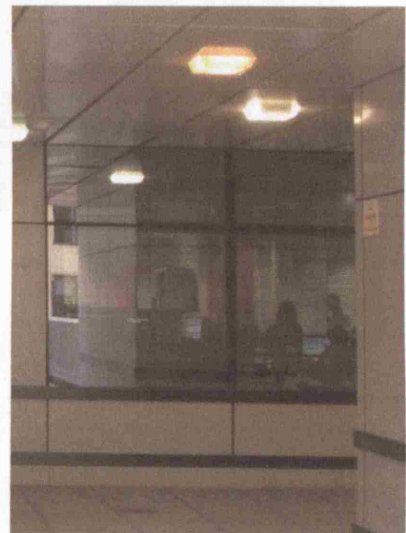


9

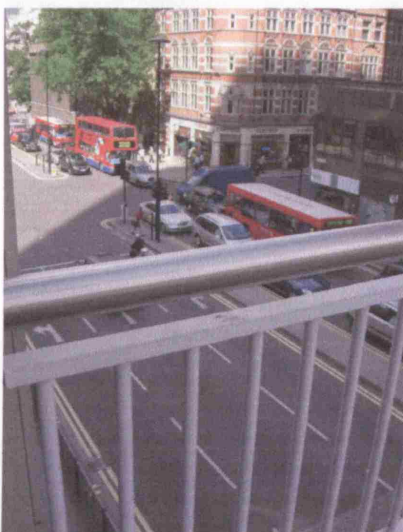
10



11

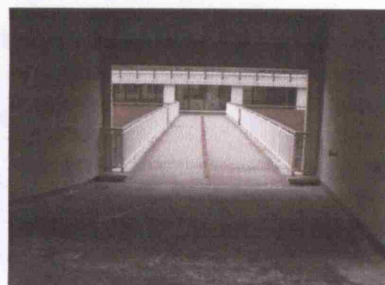


12



14

13





15



16



17



18

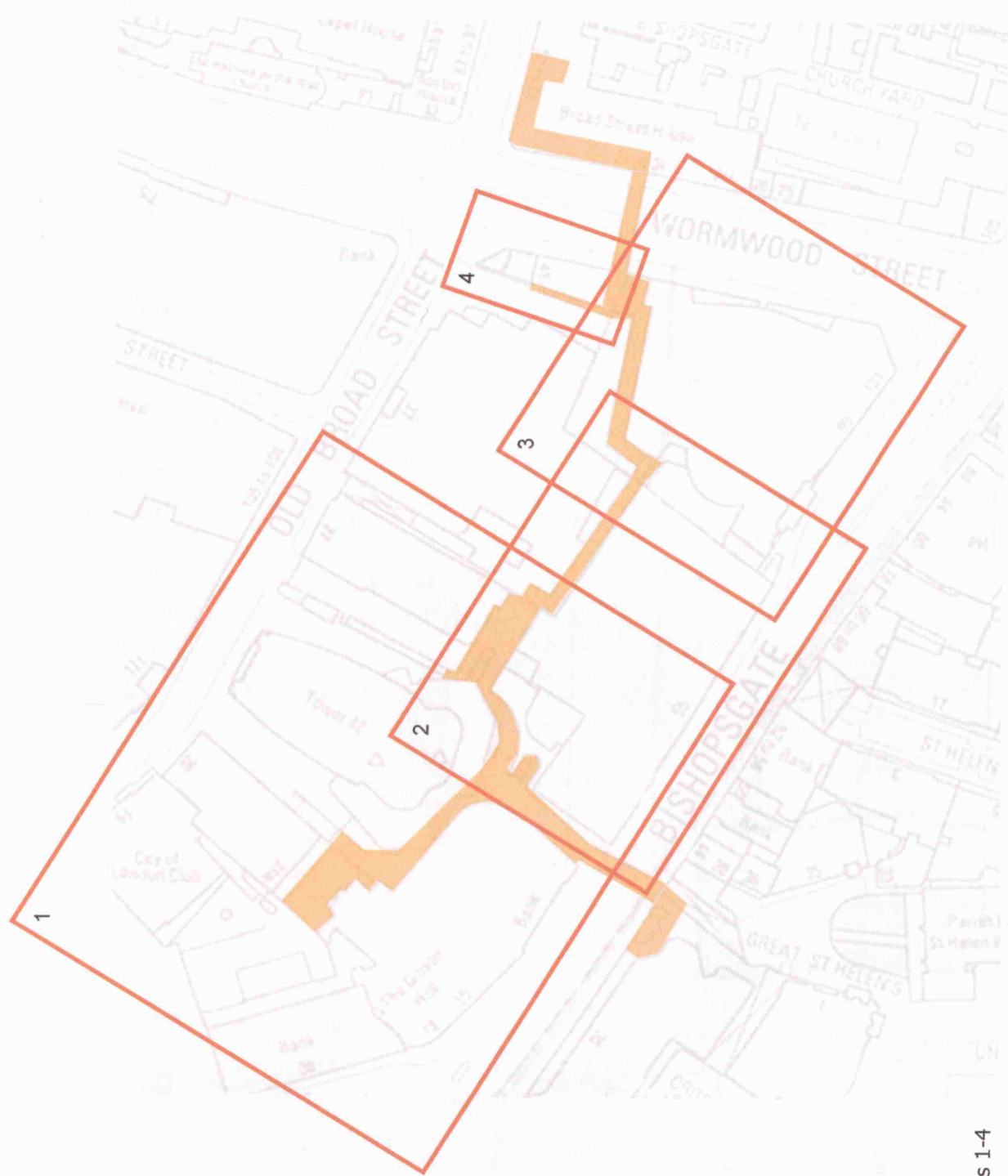


19

20

A view across Old Broad Street towards Wormwood Street in 1976, showing the staircase at the end of the 'Western Spur'. Compare with 16, above.

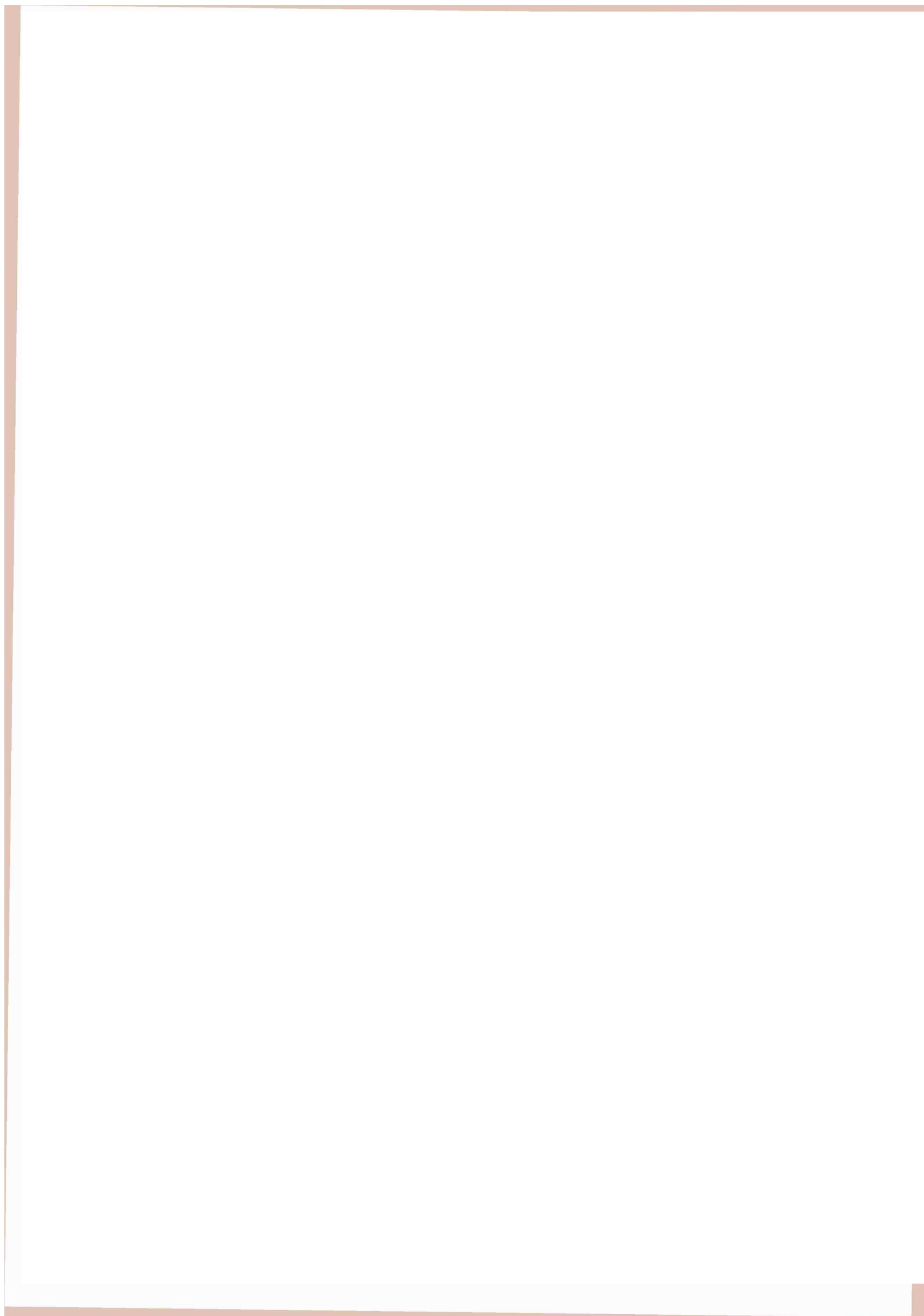
source: Corporation of London Planning Department
planning ref. 3264 AO

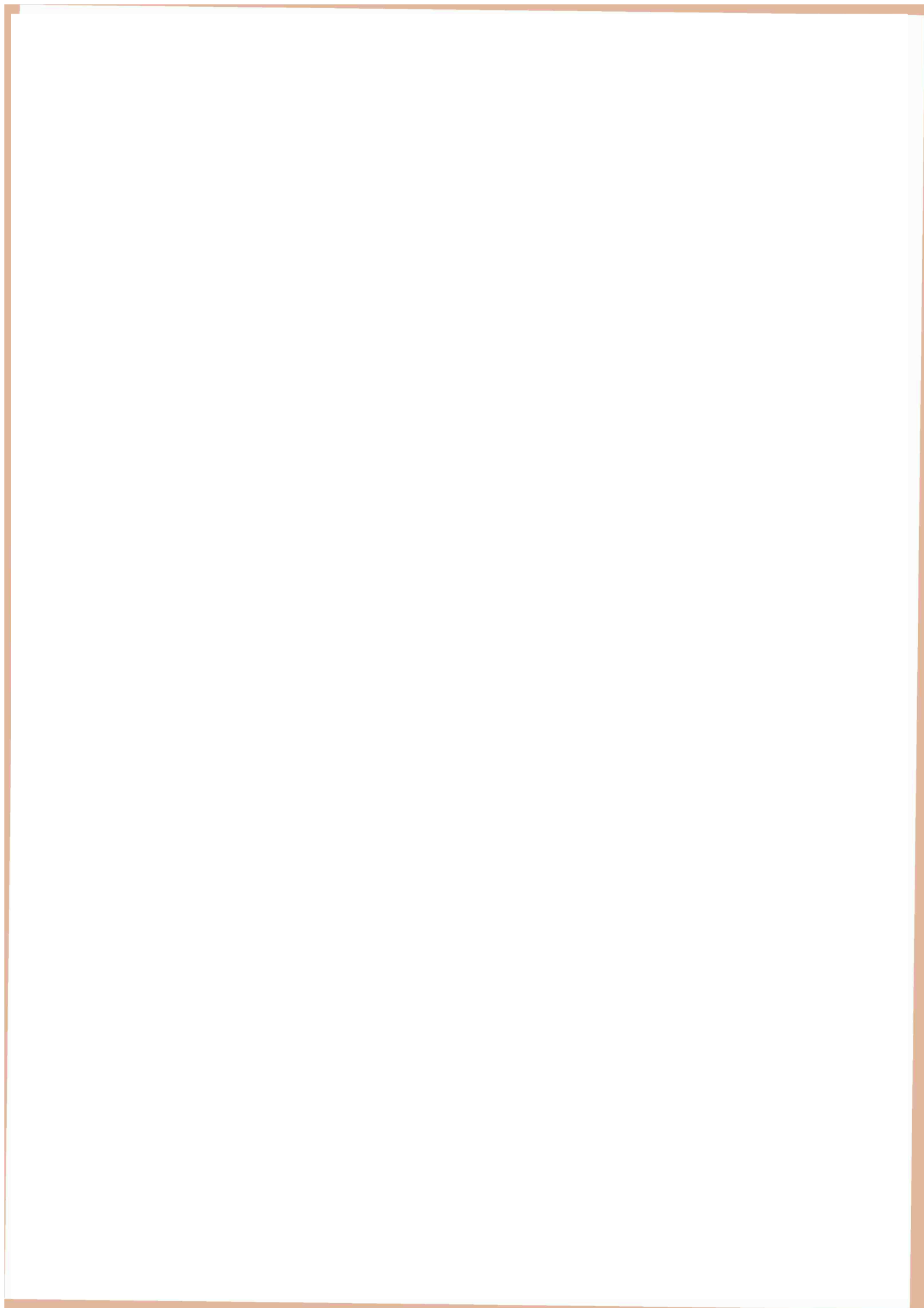


Key to drawings 1-4

First floor plan of 99 Bishopsgate 'Western
Spur' by C Keam-George and Associates,
July 1981

source: Corporation of London Planning
Department.
planning ref. 3264 BF





Page 1 of a report on City Walkways by the City Engineer and City Architect and Planning Officer, December 1976 (later reprinted in the 1978 Development Plan). The report is cited in section 1.

source:

Corporation of London Records Office ref: COL/CC/22/095



Appendix 2

Photo and plan of City of London Club and Fountain Court in May 1957. The drawing includes a sketch looking towards what is now the NatWest Tower (Tower 42).

source: Corporation of London Planning
Department.
planning ref. 0073 D