

Pool of London, London

City of London

The selected site is located in central London and is one of the most prominent sections of Thames Frontage, running from London Bridge to below Limehouse.

The site has one of the most diverse backdrops of any site in the UK. For example, the heritage of the Tower of London and many other historic buildings, as well as a square mile backdrop full of landmark skyscrapers and the highest land values anywhere in Western Europe. Today, despite its central location and proximity to major tourist attractions (e.g. the Tower of London World Heritage Site) the space is underused.

Lower Thames Street plays a key role in isolating the area from the rest of the City, and there are no tube or train stations within the area. Still, there is well-served public transport just outside the area.

These include London Bridge Station, Tower Hill and Monument Underground Stations, Tower Gateway DLR Station and the bus route along Eastcheap. River passenger services operate from Tower Pier.

The Pool of London provides a visual gateway to the City of London from the Thames and is the historic port of London. Several key existing buildings are likely to become vacant in the short term and this provides an opportunity to enhance and renew the area to provide a high-quality environment for businesses, visitors and residents.

Given its huge commercial & recreational potential, the area has been defined as a 'Key Areas of Change' in London's City Plan for 2036. The real challenge is how can this area be used, to add value to London without detracting from its many assets.



Figure 1) Pool of London

Approx. site area:
3 Ha.

Key Information:

The area is commercial in character, with some residential and hotel use, and small-scale retail adjacent to the Tower of London.

Priority areas & main expectations:

1) Develop new & innovative cultural uses for the site, whilst continuing to encourage office-led commercial development in the area.

2) Activate ground floors to provide publicly accessible retail, cultural and leisure uses

3) Improve pedestrian access to the area via existing crossing points, and create new ones.

4) Where possible, historic routes between the river and other areas of the City will be reinstated through the redevelopment and refurbishment of buildings.

5) Boost public access to historic interiors.

6) Boost open public space, including publicly accessible roof terraces & open spaces.

7) Develop the riverside walk and routes to and along Lower Thames Street.

Site Presentation & Development Expectations

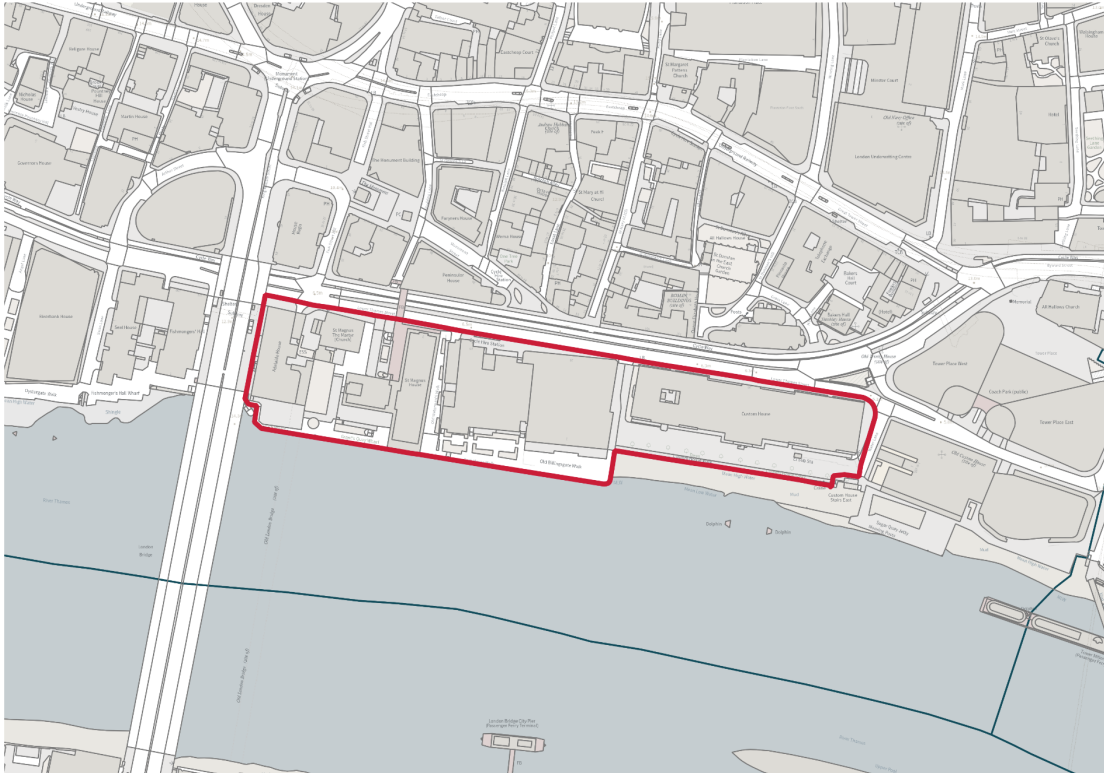


Figure 2) Image of the area

Many of the heritage assets in the area are known across the world, and thus special care needs to be taken to protect their value. However, this may also need to be balanced with multiple other considerations. For example, Lower Thames Street historically was a busy road and acted as a barrier between the site and the city. Now it is a much quieter route, and although busy at times, the relationship between the road and the site can now be reviewed and improved.

The riverfrontage is one of the key assets of the site, and proposals must maintain this valuable tourist asset. The Thames Path crosses the front of the site and must also be maintained to protect access to the area. At present, the north side of the river isn't as popular as the south side of the river and sees significantly less footfall. Projects may want to consider how tourism and footfall in the project area can be improved.

How would you address some of the obvious challenges that the site has, to enable it to come forward for development? How could these challenges be addressed in a way that supports London's future vision as one of the economic centres of the world? Proposals should therefore consider the following:

Develop Office Space & encourage other commercial development

Existing post-war buildings could be redeveloped or refurbished to provide high-quality office space or other commercial activities where these are compatible with the business City. Consideration might be given to how these can be adapted and changed to meet the changing expectations of users, as well as their relationship to Lower Thames Street and the Riverside addressed.

Public Realm & Public Spaces

- i. Enhance the Riverside Walk to create a continuous publicly accessible walkway free of cars between London Bridge and Tower Bridge which is accessible to all.
- ii. Identify opportunities for pollution reduction measures and additional greening and planting within the public realm and buildings on redevelopment.
- iii. Seeking additional public space and play facilities.

Lower Thames Street

- i. Improve pedestrian access to the area by redeveloping the riverside walk and routes to and along Lower Thames Street, which currently presents a significant barrier to pedestrian movement.
- ii. Create new crossing points to encourage greater movement between the riverside and the rest of the City.
- iii. Explore how other uses, such as roof terraces, can make the area more accessible for all users.

Revive the area's historical significance

- i. Where possible, reinstate historic routes between the river and other areas of the City through the redevelopment and refurbishment of buildings.
- ii. Enhance the immediate surroundings of the World Heritage Site, as set out in [existing policy](#), via greening and public areas.
- iii. Improve the area's relationship with the original site of London Bridge. Considering the significance of the riverside and the special interest of heritage assets to encourage interpretation and public access to historic interiors.
- iv. Protect views. The height of new buildings is limited by strategic and locally protected views.

Develop creative & innovative new uses for the site

- i. Preserve existing commercial uses as well as add new, more vibrant uses to the site.
- ii. Publicly accessible retail, cultural and leisure uses will be encouraged at the ground floor level throughout the Pool of London to increase vibrancy and provide active frontages.
- iii. Any new uses should be compatible with the area's history and should safeguard existing protected views

City climate priorities and specific environmental challenges

Climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme weather and water-related hazards. [In the summer of 2021](#), we saw extreme surface water flooding events in London, closing hospitals, affecting train and tube services and flooding homes and businesses. [The Environment Agency](#) has warned that we need to 'adapt or die', warning of more extreme weather that will lead to increased flooding and drought in the UK, and sea level rises of up to 78cm by the 2080s.

The Mayor of London is committed to delivering a [net zero](#) city that is Cleaner, Safer and Fairer for all Londoners. To do this is complex, however, all aspects of how we plan our city are central to delivering this.

Sites such as this have the opportunity to explore new ways of tackling the climate crisis. For example, innovative retrofit options can redesign and repackage sites to address existing challenges, or more specific interventions can deliver more targeted outcomes.

You will need to demonstrate how your proposal responds to this challenge and contributes to the wider outcomes.

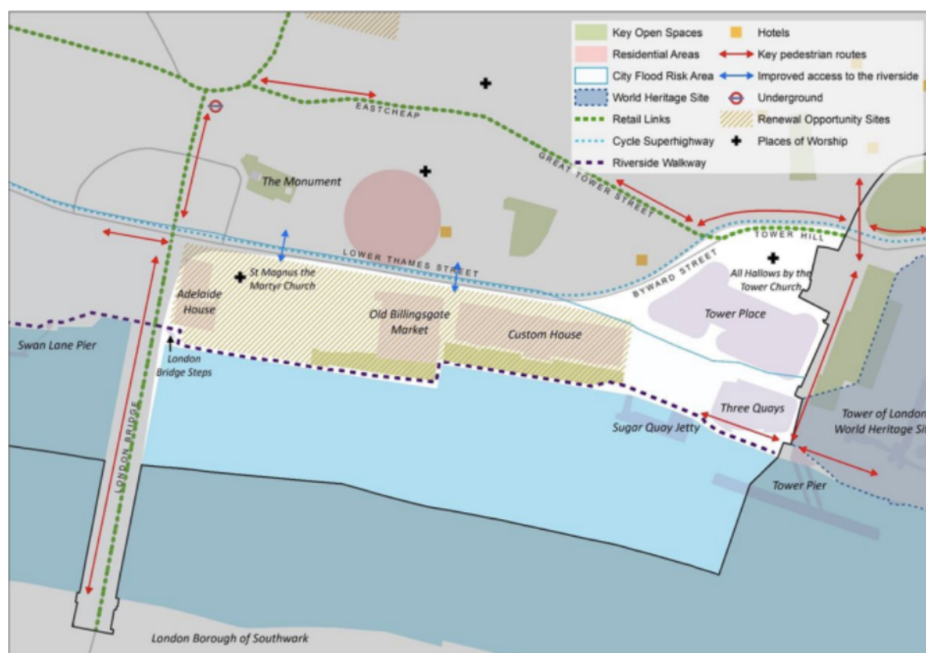


Figure 3) Area of Study

Planning Regulations

There are [many planning constraints](#) on the site that students must consider in their proposals. The site falls inside the City of London Corporation area, which is the local planning authority. To view their plans for the area please view their [Local Plan](#), which is currently under review.

Language requirements

Proposals must be submitted in English.

City-specific awards

The competition is open to local, national and international students. As such, there will be two winners. This may be the same team in case the winning team is London-based.

- ❖ A Design Future London Winner - based in London only
- ❖ Students Reinventing Cities Winner - national or international

Winners based in London will have the opportunity to attend an awards event at City Hall in London, where the Mayor (or deputy Mayor) will present the prizes.

Each year there are prizes, sponsored by the industry, in the form of vouchers. However, the event provides a key opportunity to connect with key industries. Winning teams will have the opportunity to present their work and learn from influential members of the sector.

Winners not located in London are welcome to attend provided they can make their own way to City Hall. For those unable to attend, prizes will be sent to you.

Competition calendar

The Students Reinventing Cities competition in London will run on a slightly different timeline to other cities. See the key dates below

Tuesday 9 January 2024	Deadline to register your team
Thursday 15 February 2024	Deadline to submit your project
Mid-March 2024	Announcement of winners & celebration event