

EASTERN CITY PARTNERSHIP
CONTRIBUTING TO THE TRANSFORMATION OF
STREETS AND SPACES



Publica

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INTRODUCTION

The cluster of tall buildings situated on the eastern edge of the City of London is an iconic feature of the capital's skyline recognisable across the world as a calling card to London and as a symbol of economic strength and confidence. Experienced at street level the area presents an astonishing mix of old and new as these dramatic towers land amongst the medieval street pattern amidst historic churches and buildings. The cluster sits at the heart of a global city with many cultural institutions close at hand and a diverse range of communities on its doorstep.

Before the current pandemic, a period of significant growth was projected – the arrival of Crossrail and an ongoing development pipeline expected to bring an additional 100,000 workers to the area by 2026. It is too early to understand the long-term impact of the pandemic, but changes in where and when people want to work will require the Eastern Cluster to rapidly change in order to maintain and improve the vitality of the area. Given the finite quantity, the quality of the public realm will play an increasingly important role in providing better, greener and more active spaces for workers and visitors. This presents substantial opportunities for the Eastern City Partnership to contribute to these improvements.

This document compiles and illustrates a range of recommendations and potential projects through which the Eastern City Partnership can contribute to the transformation of streets and spaces within the City's Eastern Cluster. This report sits alongside a Public Realm Asset Audit that documents a comprehensive period of research and study and provides the 'evidence base' on which these recommendations were made.

The recommendations have been arranged under four themes that broadly align with the strategies of the CCV:

- Enhancing streetscapes and open spaces
- Activating the public realm
- Increasing greenery
- Maximising the potential of tall buildings



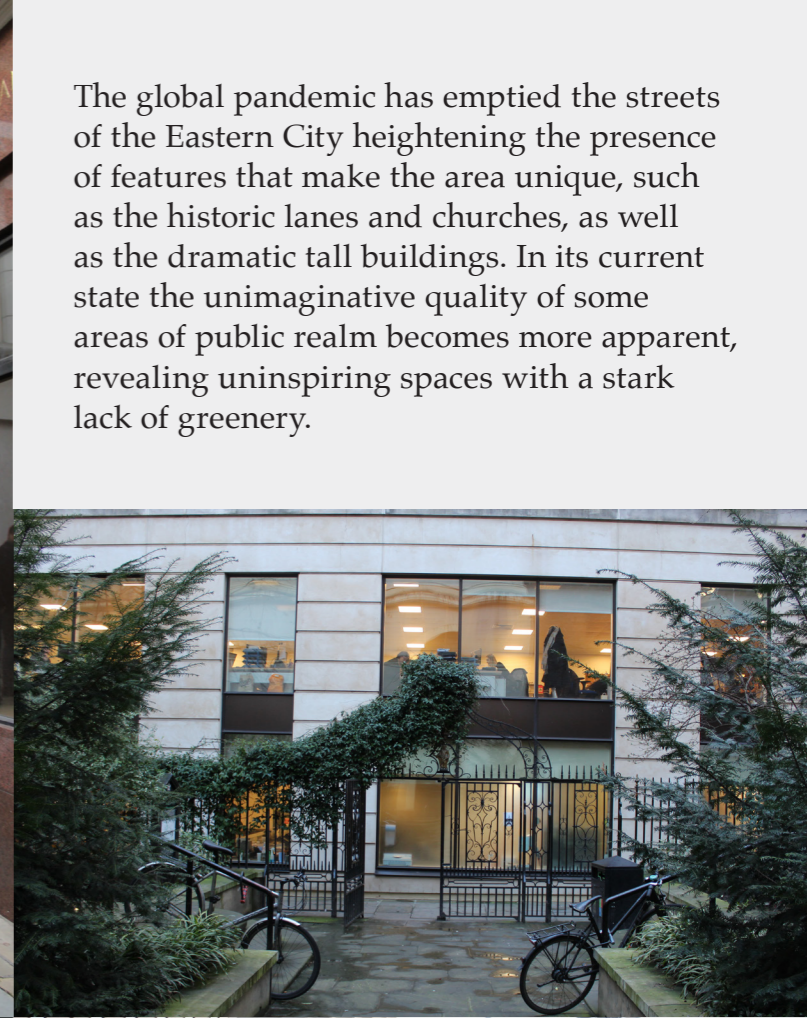


The sparsely populated public realm of the City Cluster during the Covid-19 pandemic

Long and short and long-term opportunities are identified within each of these categories. In the first section, streetscape and open space enhancement projects are identified to extend the impact of the CCV and improve connections between the cluster, river and surrounding areas of the city. A selection of these projects are illustrated to give an impression of the scope and impact of the proposals. Activating the public realm addresses the ambition to establish the cluster as a cultural attraction for London, attract a diverse workforce and bring further public life to existing spaces. Strategies to increase greenery across the area are set out in the third section. Finally, recommendations focus on the tall buildings of the cluster and how these key assets can be further integrated into the city.

SUMMARY

The City of London Corporation has already identified and responded to the forecasted growth in the Eastern Cluster with the City Cluster Vision (CCV). This Vision sets out a clear future for the public realm with the objectives of enhancing pedestrian priority, greenery and activity across the area. This Recommendations Report provides the Partnership with a clear pathway to meaningfully contribute to improvements across the area. Through their support of the City's Vision and the initiation of its own public realm improvement projects, the Eastern City Partnership can harness the benefits, and maximise the opportunities, of a galvanised public and private sector to increase investment, extend ambitions, reduce timescales and ultimately improve the urban quality of the Eastern City.



The global pandemic has emptied the streets of the Eastern City heightening the presence of features that make the area unique, such as the historic lanes and churches, as well as the dramatic tall buildings. In its current state the unimaginative quality of some areas of public realm becomes more apparent, revealing uninspiring spaces with a stark lack of greenery.



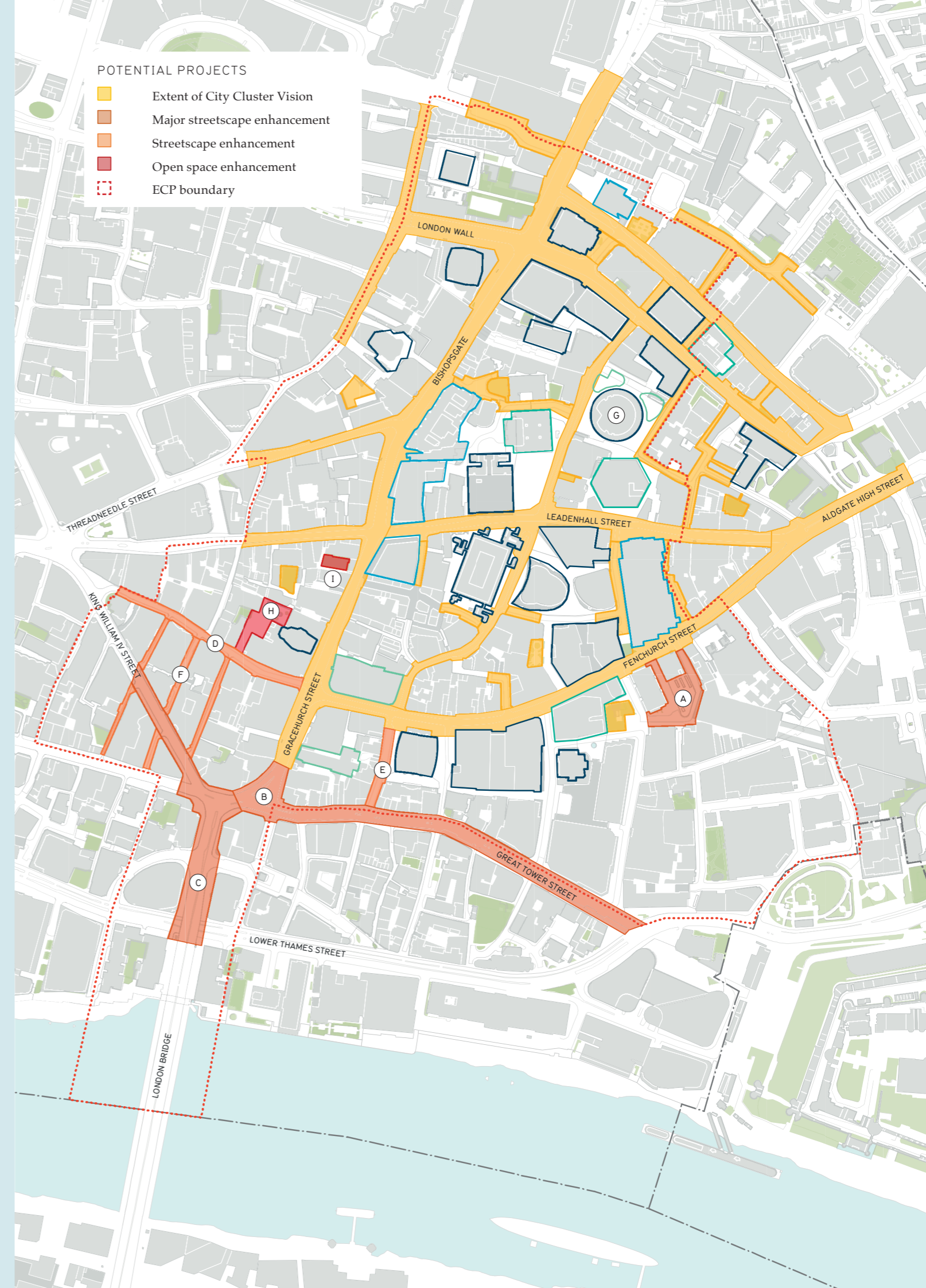
RECOMMENDATIONS

Enhancing streetscapes and open spaces

The opportunity exists to improve streets and open spaces that will extend the impact of the City Cluster Vision and strengthen the open space network of the area. The suggested projects, outlined in the table below, have been divided into three categories, depending on their scale and ambition, which are explained in the recommendations. The majority of the selected projects require major construction works that would be led by the City of London Corporation. The Eastern City Partnership can play a key role in advocating for and developing these proposals in collaboration with the local authority.

- 1 Major streetscape enhancements to improve key spaces and strategic roads aiding connections to the river and other city destinations as well as enhancing the 'gateway experience' when entering the cluster from the south. (Long term)
- 2 Streetscape enhancements to smaller streets and lanes to deliver flexible spaces able to function as places in their own right and perform a variety of roles at different times of day. (Long term)
- 3 Open space enhancements to larger open spaces to increase their potential with improvements to seating, greenery and lighting allowing for increased day to day activity and events. (Short term)
- 4 Open space enhancements to the unique smaller spaces in the area - such as alleyways, courtyards and churchyards – increasing their offer of respite and escape from the city. (Long term)
- 5 Identification of potential locations for further amenity including seating, public toilets, cycle parking, sports and play provision. (Long term)

Major Streetscape Enhancement	Description
A Fenchurch Street Station Forecourt	Enhancements to station forecourt creating a sense of arrival and providing high quality open green space.
B Eastcheap and Great Tower Street	Improvements to major street easing pedestrian connections with the river, London Bridge and the Tower of London.
C King William Street	Improvements to major street enhancing the arrival sequence to the cluster and improving the connection with Bank.
Streetscape Enhancement	
D Lombard Street	Creation of a pedestrian priority street improving connections with Bank junction.
E Philpot Street	Creation of a pedestrian priority street extending the north-south axis of Lime Street.
F Abchurch Lane, Nicholas Lane and Clements Lanes	Enhancement to narrow lanes improving connections between the cluster and the proposed Bank Station.
Open Space Enhancement	
H George Yard	Maximise potential and improve greenery of existing open space.
I St Peter-upon-Cornhill churchyard	Enhancements to small green space to offer respite.



FENCHURCH STREET STATION FORECOURT

Major streetscape enhancement

The forecourt of Fenchurch Street Station is a vital gateway space for the City Cluster with opportunities to create an improved sense of arrival and provide a setting appropriate to the heritage value of the station building. A space for respite and gathering with more trees, planting and seating would help to unlock the potential of one of the larger open spaces in the area. Proposals to pedestrianise Fenchurch Place would benefit the space allowing activity to spill-out from the station, animating the forecourt during the day and into the evening.





EASTCHEAP AND GRACECHURCH STREET JUNCTION

Major streetscape enhancement

Improvements to Eastcheap and Great Tower Street would incorporate the junction with Gracechurch Street and King William Street – a significant waypoint on the pedestrian route into the cluster from London Bridge. Enhancements to the junction would aid the connection to the Monument on Fish Street Hill and significantly upgrade the setting of the characterful Eastcheap public toilets.



EASTCHEAP AND GREAT TOWER STREET

Major streetscape enhancement

A major street connecting the southern edge of the City Cluster with London Bridge at its western end and with the Tower of London and Tower Bridge in the east. Improved crossings will ease pedestrian movement south to the river while wider footways and the planting of street trees will heighten pedestrian comfort and reduce vehicle dominance.





PHILPOT LANE

Streetscape enhancement

Adjoining the southern end of Lime Street, Philpot Lane has potential to extend important pedestrian connections through the area. A flush carriageway and increased footway widths would create a pedestrian priority street, while the possibility of a timed closure would permit spill-out activity and allow the space to function as an extension of the existing pocket park at the base of 20 Fenchurch Street. Street trees and kerbside planting could create a comfortable environment and encourage people to dwell in this location.



ST. PETER-UPON-CORNHILL

Open space enhancement

St. Peter-upon-Cornhill is one of several secluded churchyards that contributes to the unique spatial and historic character of the City Cluster. This small open space offers an opportunity for improvement with its uninspiring greenery and low provision of seating. A considered planting scheme and the addition of movable furniture would create a more welcoming space in which to rest and dwell.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Increasing greenery

The development and delivery of place-specific greening strategies will provide relief and improve pedestrian comfort in an area currently lacking in trees, planting and significant open green spaces. This will offer benefits for the wellbeing of those using the area and encourage people to spend time enjoying the public realm. In collaboration with the City of London Corporation, the Partnership has the ability to bring forward short- and longer-term initiatives that begin to address the current deficit in greenery.

- 1 *Delivery of temporary greening projects to rapidly enhance open spaces and streets. (Short term)*
- 2 *Identification of potential locations for street trees and kerbside planting throughout the area. (Long term)*
- 3 *Development of a wayfinding or a digital map to assist people in finding and accessing the open and green spaces the area has to offer. (Short term)*
- 4 *Encouragement of any opportunity to deliver new open green spaces within or close to the Eastern Cluster. (Long term)*



Temporary Greening
Floral Court, London



Kerbside planting
Marylebone Lane, London



Interior planting
Ford Foundation, New York

RECOMMENDATIONS

Activating the public realm

Increasing day-to-day activity within the public realm and bringing cultural attractions to the Eastern Cluster will increase the appeal of the area beyond the working day and attract more diverse communities. The Partnership is well placed to encourage more varied uses throughout the area and to initiate conversations with potential partners to bring visible culture and activity to the city's streets.

- 1 *Encourage restaurant, café and bar uses to promote spill-out activity in and around Leadenhall Market and along the central pedestrian spine of Lime Street and St. Mary Axe. (Long term)*
- 2 *Initiate a programme of public events which uses the distinct spatial conditions of the Eastern Cluster, marks the seasons and draws new audiences to the area. (Short term)*
- 3 *Invigorate familiar settings with new features. (Short term)*
- 4 *Strengthen and diversify the night time offer of the Eastern Cluster drawing from the surrounding areas of night time and social activity. (Long term)*
- 5 *Encourage a diversity of business types and uses to counteract the perceived homogeneity of the City. (Long term)*

Spill out activity on Heddon Street, London



Local street transformed into an outdoor dining area for Dolce & Gabbana dinner, Milan (Italy)

Nomad Cinema at the Royal Academy of Arts, London



RECOMMENDATIONS

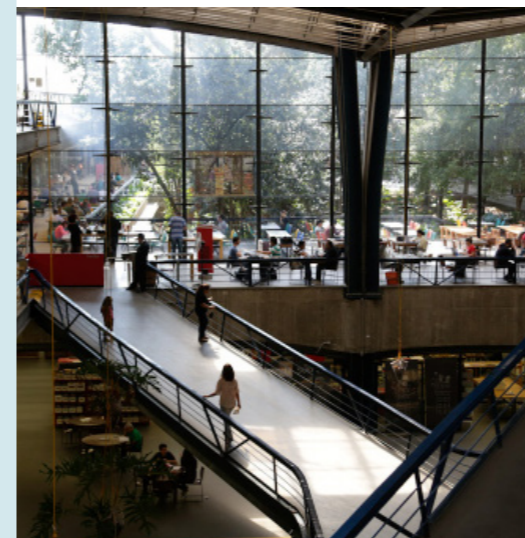
Maximising the potential of tall buildings

The towers of the Eastern Cluster are one of the capital's greatest assets yet more could be done to integrate these remarkable buildings into the public life of the City. The general perception of these buildings is that they appear inaccessible, symbolising the elite world of finance and insurance. Building on initiatives underway to tackle this issue through London-wide and local policy, the Eastern City Partnership is in a unique position to promote a more welcoming public realm by encouraging owners and landlords to make their buildings accessible and inviting to visitors.

- 1 *Encourage the meaningful integration of the private-public realm at the base of these buildings with their surroundings. (Short and long term)*
- 2 *Promote a more welcoming ground floor and lower levels able to serve a population beyond the building. (Short and long term)*
- 3 *Curate activity and uses at ground floor that enlivens and connects with the surrounding public realm. (Short term and long term)*
- 4 *Encourage external planting and the internal greening of lobbies to increase the 'green feel' of the cluster. (Short and long term)*
- 5 *Continue to promote and develop a roofscape that acts to the greatest extent possible as an extension of the public realm. (Short and long term)*

PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE AMENITY WITHIN TALL BUILDINGS

- Public elevator
- Viewing gallery
- Restaurant or bar
- Rooftop garden
- Rooftop garden (private access only)
- ECP boundary



Permeable and publicly accessible ground and upper floors at Sao Paulo Cultural Centre (Brazil)



Integrated greenery at the Whitney Museum of Modern Art, New York City (USA)



The Sky Garden at 20 Fenchurch Street. One of the clusters existing elevated public spaces

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