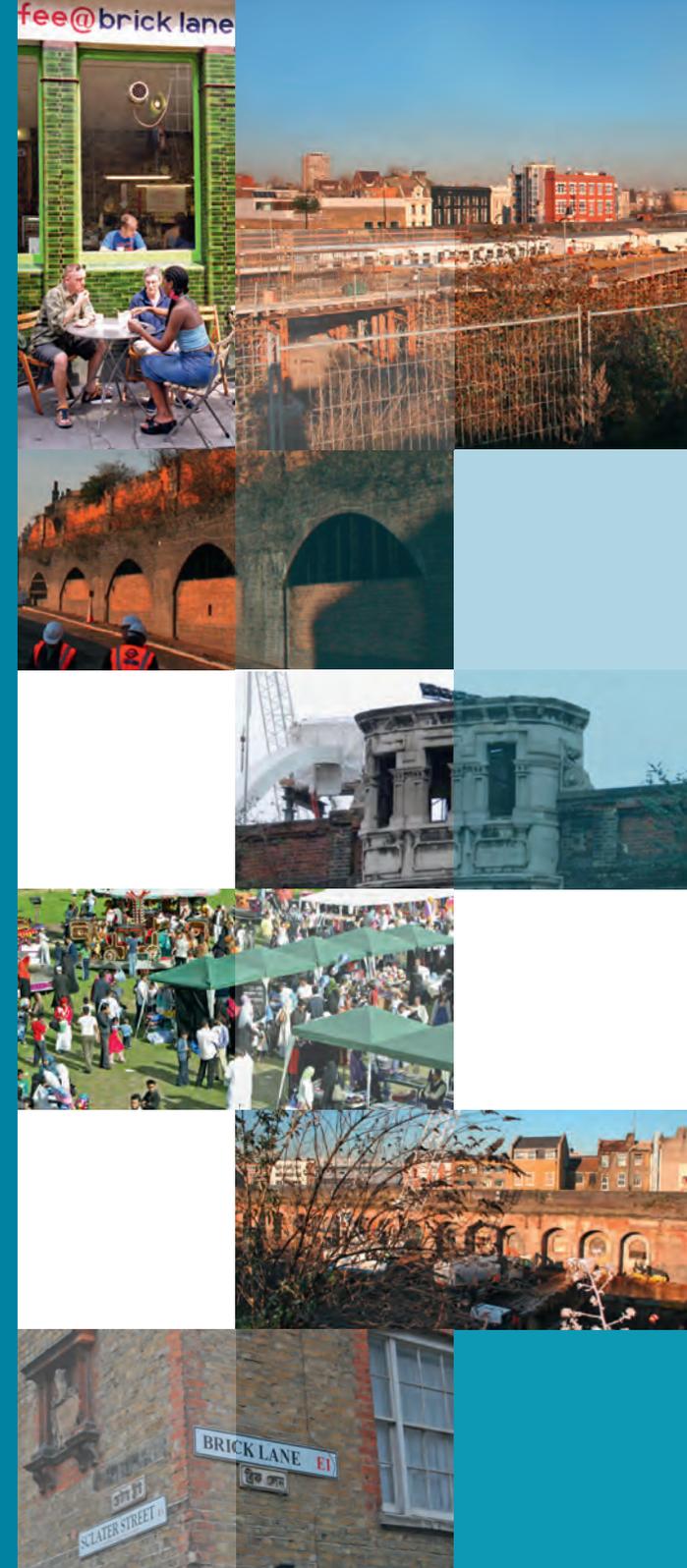


Bishopsgate Goods Yard

Planning guidance

October 2009



MAYOR OF LONDON





Fig. 1: Aerial photograph of Bishopsgate Goods Yard looking towards the north-east
Bethnal Green Road is at the top of the photograph, Shoreditch High Street is in the foreground

Bishopsgate Goods Yard is a large, important and strategic site in Shoreditch, which has been vacant for many years. The East London Line extension is now under construction and Shoreditch High Street Station will open in 2010. The improved access will create an exciting opportunity to redevelop the site in a way that re-connects the surrounding areas and contributes to on-going regeneration.

This planning guidance has been prepared jointly by the London Borough of Hackney, the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and the Greater London Authority in conjunction with Terry Farrell and Partners.

The planning guidance brings together existing planning policies, urban design guidance and place making principles to provide a framework for the future comprehensive development of the site. Key design principles include new links through the site, new public open spaces, guidance on building heights and sustainable development.

The guidance shows how re-development of the Goods Yard could deliver up to 2000 new homes, space for large offices and small business, shops and leisure facilities. Integrating historic structures such as the Braithwaite viaduct and forecourt gates into new development is an important aspect of the guidance. There are unique opportunities to deliver up to 1.7 hectares of new public open space including a new park.

Maximising benefits to the community is an important aspect of the planning guidance which includes proposals for a new health centre and priorities for negotiating planning obligations.

The guidance has been approved as planning guidance by the London Boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets by the Mayor as being consistent with the London Plan and Planning for a Better London. Ultimately the planning guidance will form part of the Local Development Frameworks for both Hackney and Tower Hamlets and will be a material consideration in determining future planning applications. It will help to provide certainty about the future of this important and historic site for the local authorities, developers and the local community.

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1 Introduction to Bishopsgate Goods Yard

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Purpose of the planning guidance

1.1 Bishopsgate Goods Yard is a large, important, and strategic development site in Shoreditch, falling across the boundaries of the London Boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets. The site is vacant and has been identified in existing planning documents as a major development opportunity that will help to regenerate surrounding areas. The site contains several historic structures that are reminders of its former role as a railway goods yard.

1.2 The new East London Line extension will pass through the site, enclosed on a raised viaduct. The new Shoreditch High Street Station will open within the site in 2010. The new public transport link will make the site suitable for future high density mixed use development, which will deliver significant benefits for the community.

1.3 The London Boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets and the Mayor of London have produced this Planning Guidance to set out clear planning and design principles for the future comprehensive development of the whole site. It will be used to inform future re-development plans and will be a material consideration when determining planning applications for the site.

1.4 This planning guidance applies solely to the Bishopsgate Goods Yard site, as shown on figure 4. The wider area already benefits from more comprehensive guidance over a larger area in the London Borough of Hackney South Shoreditch Supplementary Planning Document, the London Borough of Tower Hamlets City Fringe Area Action Plan, both borough's emerging Core Strategies and the Mayor's draft City Fringe Opportunity Area Planning Framework. This guidance is more detailed and site specific, taking into account the opportunities and constraints of the site and local context, including the relationship with nearby development sites.

1.5 Providing guidance now will help the developers, Bishopsgate Goods Yard Regeneration Limited (BGYR) who are looking to take forward proposals for the regeneration of the site, in partnership with the East London Line (TfL) and Network Rail, to understand the local authorities' and local communities aspirations.

1.6 BGYR have provided the resources of masterplanners, Farrell's, to work with the two boroughs, the Mayor and key stakeholders to prepare this document. The local community has had a key role in influencing the planning guidance through public consultation.

Opposite page:

Fig. 2: Photographs taken on and around Bishopsgate Goods Yard

1.7 The planning guidance has been subject to initial public consultation in June and July 2008 and a 10 week period of statutory public consultation from February to May 2009. The document has been amended where appropriate to reflect the comments received. The final version of the guidance will be recommended to the boroughs for approval as planning guidance and to the Mayor as being in general conformity with the London Plan and Planning for a Better London. The guidance will be a material consideration for the determination of future planning applications.

1.8 The preparation of guidance has followed a process that will enable the London Boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets to adopt it as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), forming part of the Local Development Framework, subject to the future adoption of each borough's Core Strategy.

1.9 A Sustainability Appraisal and an Equalities Impact Assessment have been undertaken in parallel with the production of the guidance to assess the potential social, economic and environmental impacts of the planning guidance and identify possible mitigation measures.

The objectives of the planning guidance

1.10 The objectives of the planning guidance are:

- to ensure new development on the site integrates with the surrounding area, taking into account local character;
- to ensure the level of development makes the best use of the site linked to excellent public transport access including the new Shoreditch High Street Station;
- to ensure that any development proposals fit within the strategic and local planning context, are sustainable and maximise benefits to the local community;
- to provide guidance on the appropriate form of new development including housing (in particular affordable and family housing), employment, shops, leisure, culture, health and community uses;
- to show how new public open spaces could be provided on the site
- to provide guidance on appropriate height and scale of new buildings;
- to provide guidance on the retention and re-use of historic structures that remain on the site;
- to ensure any development applies the best sustainable design standards and construction practices minimising carbon emissions, addressing climate change and flood risk and enhancing biodiversity; and
- to provide a framework for the submission of planning applications for the future development of the site.

Consultation and engagement

1.11 Public consultation is integral to the development process, from agreeing the principles in the Planning Guidance, to consulting on planning applications and through to the management of the final development. Community engagement has ensured that the Planning Guidance has been informed by and has taken into account community aspirations and objectives.

1.12 Both boroughs and the Mayor are committed to best practice in engaging local communities in the production of the guidance and the ongoing development process.

1.13 Each stage of the consultation process has involved exhibitions, events and discussion with a number of key stakeholders including:

- Ward and Executive Members
- Young people;
- Local businesses;
- Older people;
- Developers and landowners;
- Local residents associations;
- Local amenity and environmental groups;
- Public organisations such as Transport for London.

1.14 The statutory consultation stage followed the guidance in PPS12 Local Spatial Planning and met the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and the Statement of Community Involvement of both boroughs.

1.15 Full details of the comments made and how these have been taken into account in the planning guidance are set out in the Bishopsgate Goods Yard Consultation Report.



Fig. 3 : Community consultation events held in Hackney and Tower Hamlets, March 2009

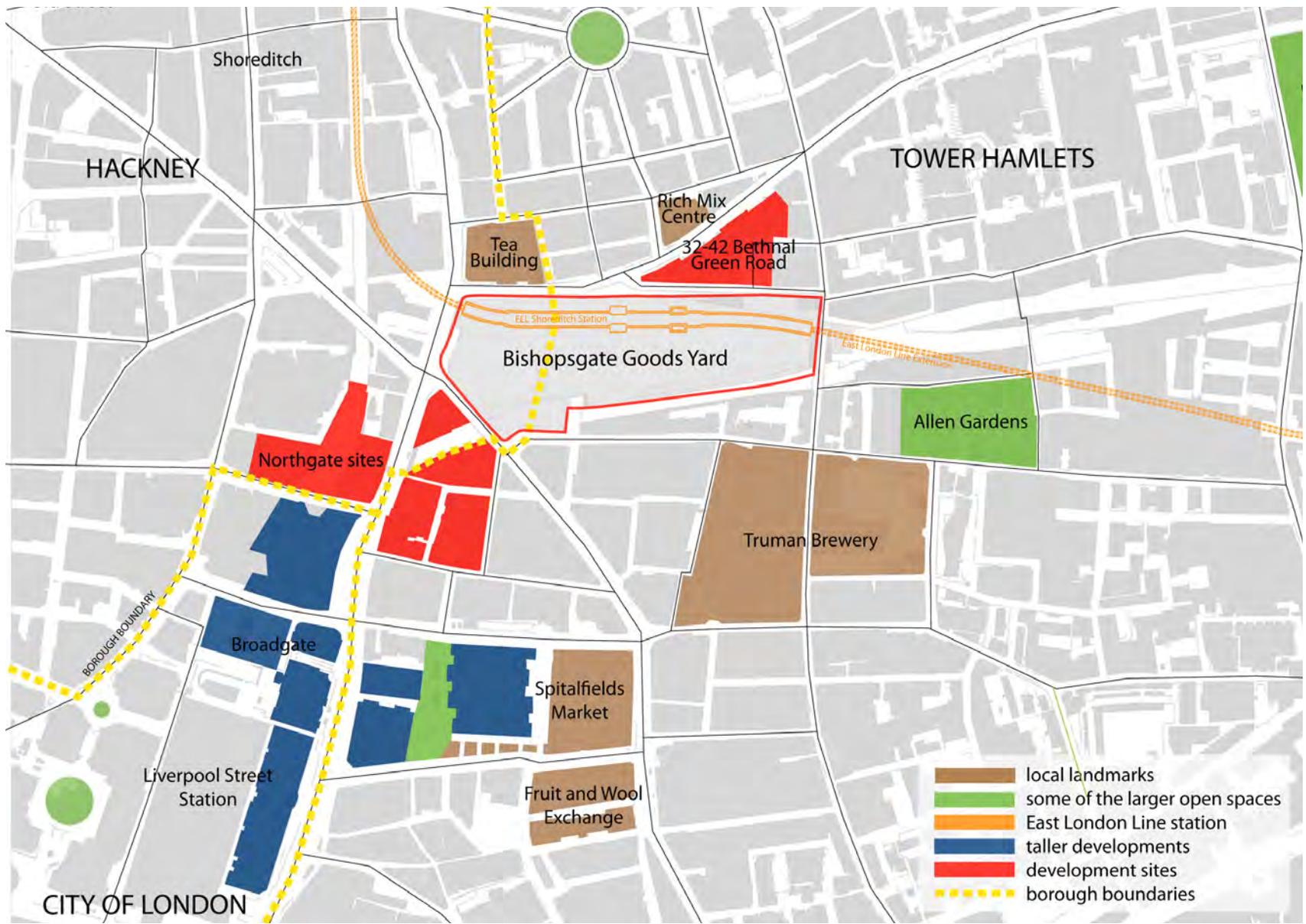


Fig. 4: Site context

The Goods Yard today

1.16 Bishopsgate Goods Yard covers an area of approximately 4.7 hectares and lies between the diverse neighbourhoods of Shoreditch, Spitalfields and Banglatown, close to the northern edge of the City of London. The site spans the boundary between the London Boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets (fig. 4).

1.17 The site is bounded by Shoreditch High Street and Commercial Street to the west, and by railway lines into Liverpool Street to the south. Brick Lane, Bethnal Green Road and Sclater Street form the north and eastern boundaries. Wheler Street (closed to traffic) runs north to south through the site.

1.18 The site is currently well served by public transport with bus routes along Bethnal Green Road, Shoreditch High Street and Commercial Street. Five main line rail and underground stations are within a short walk from the site. From 2010 the site will benefit from a new Shoreditch High Street Station on the East London Line extension, located on Wheler Street within the heart of the site and which will provide frequent overground services from Highbury and Islington to West Croydon and eventually through South London to Clapham Junction.

1.19 The area to the north of the site along Bethnal Green Road comprises a mix of former warehouses converted to new uses (such as the Tea Building), small scale industrial estates,

shops and the Rich Mix centre an important arts and cultural venue. Further north is the impressive Boundary Estate, an extensive residential area, developed in 1900 with wide residential streets focussed on a green space at Arnold Circus.

1.20 To the west of the site Shoreditch High Street and Old Street are busy main roads, with shops and commercial uses. To the south west of the site is the City of London, characterised by large scale buildings.

1.21 The area to the south of the site is characterised by a network of smaller streets comprising a mix of residential, commercial and retail uses, extending south towards Spitalfields Market. The eastern edge of the site is defined by Brick Lane, a vibrant area with a mix of small shops, popular bars and restaurants, some with residential above.

1.22 There are a number of other large development sites in the areas around the Goods Yard, shown on figure 4, including 32-42 Bethnal Green Road and 201 Bishopsgate.

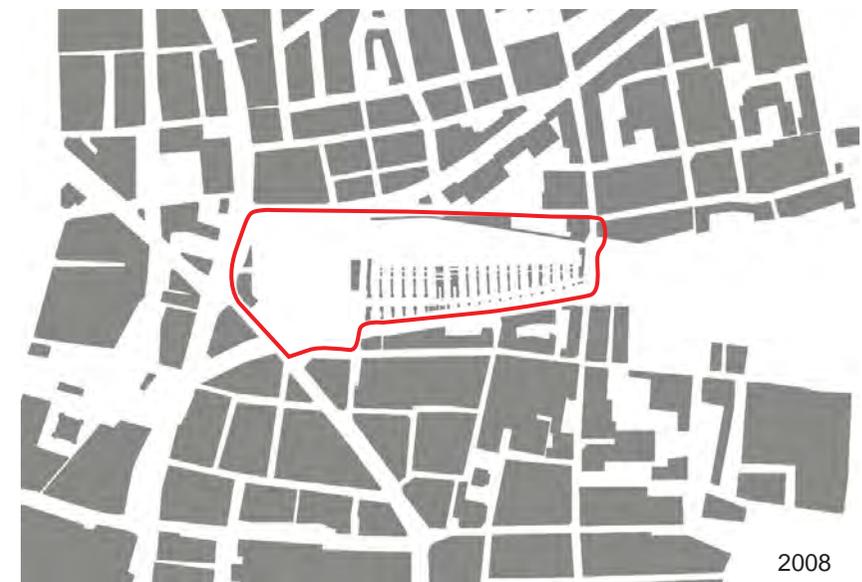
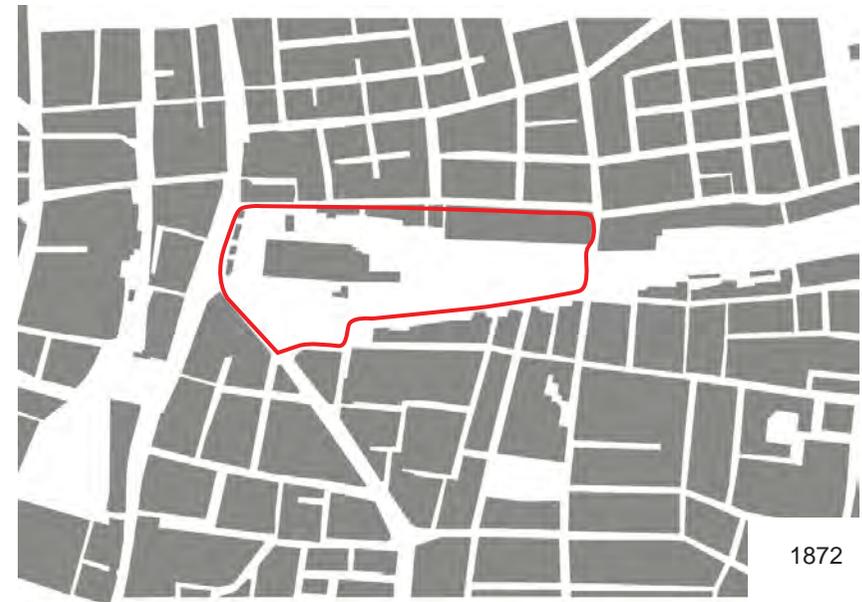
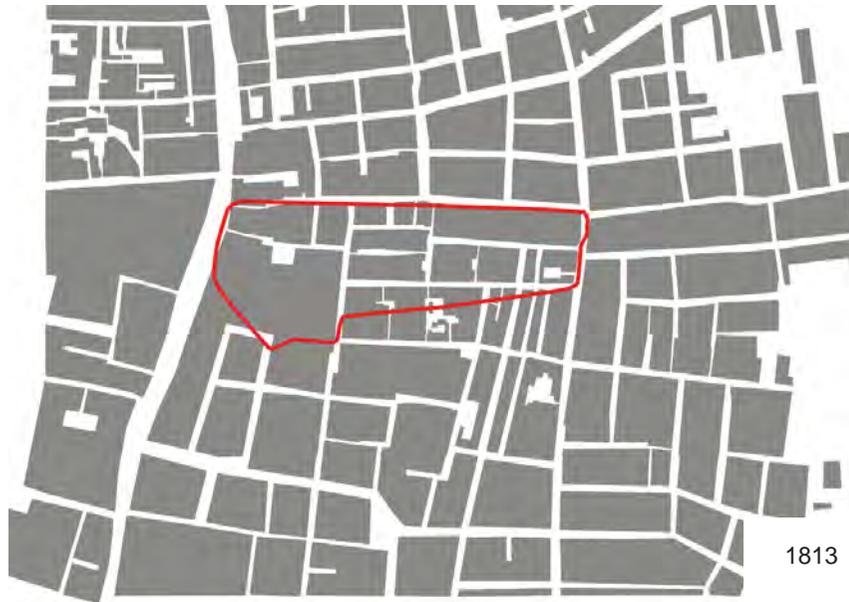


Fig. 5: Figure ground plans showing the changing urban grain and historic street pattern of the Goods Yard area
Bishopsgate Goods Yard Planning Guidance

Bishopsgate - historic context

1.23 Historically, the east side of London developed as a series of small communities along transport routes leading from the centre of London towards the north and east. During the early 1800s Shoreditch and Spitalfields developed as a network of small streets and courtyards with high density housing and small scale industries linked to warehouses. Clothing, furniture and printing were the three main trades in Shoreditch and Spitalfields.

1.24 Shoreditch Station was opened by the Eastern Counties Railway in 1840 to serve as its new permanent terminus for the railway in London and was renamed Bishopsgate on 27 July 1847. The railway lines were carried on impressive brick viaducts. Construction of the station changed the street layout of the immediate area.



Fig. 6: Exterior yard of Bishopsgate Goods Depot, London, 1924
National Media Museum / SSPL

1.25 After the opening of Liverpool Street station in 1874, Bishopsgate station was closed to passengers and was converted to a goods station which opened in 1881 and became known as Bishopsgate Goods Depot.

1.26 As a goods station Bishopsgate handled very large volumes of goods from the eastern ports and was arranged over three levels. Goods could be stored in the warehouse on site or transferred directly to road vehicles for onward transportation to their destinations.

1.27 A fire in 1964 destroyed the station, it was closed and the upper levels were demolished. Over the next thirty years much of the site became derelict.

The majority of the former goods yard buildings were demolished in 2004. Some historic structures remain. The former Forecourt Wall and Gates to Shoreditch High Street and the 260 metre long Braithwaite Viaduct are Grade II listed. The large brick arches that form part of the listed viaduct, or adjoin it have been used at various times for temporary uses, including small business accommodation, sports and leisure activities.

1.28 Other railway arches and boundary walls to Brick Lane and Sclater Street also survive, but are not listed. The Georgian weavers' cottages on Sclater Street, within the boundaries of the planning guidance, provide a reminder of the historic character of the surrounding area.

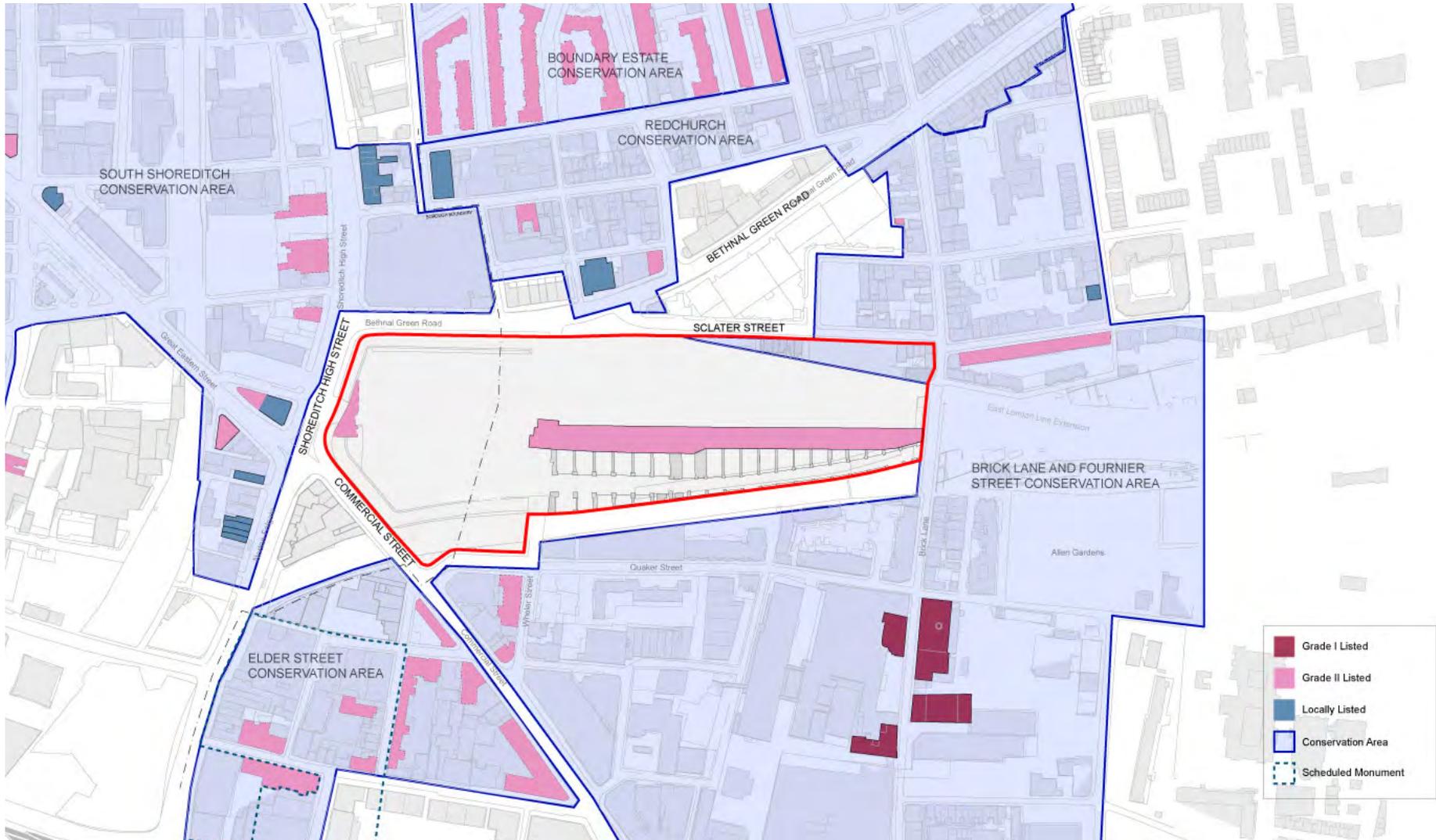


Fig. 7: Conservation Areas and listed buildings

Conservation Areas

1.29 The rich history of this part of Spitalfields and Shoreditch is acknowledged by the fact that Bishopsgate Goods Yard is surrounded by conservation areas.

1.30 The boundaries of the conservation areas extend to within or close proximity to the goods yard. Historically the use of the site as a railway terminus and later as a goods station created a physical boundary between the site and the surrounding area. There has historically been a strong commercial presence on the goods yard which continued to grow until its closure. The scale of commercial use contrasted with the finer grain mix of uses found in much of the surrounding conservation areas.

1.31 Future development of the goods yard will need to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the adjoining conservation areas. This section briefly describes the special character of the conservation areas. More detail is contained in the adopted character appraisals and management plans for each conservation area.

Brick Lane and Fournier Street Conservation Area (Tower Hamlets)

1.32 The Brick Lane and Fournier Street Conservation Area was designated in 1969 and extended in 1978 and 1998. Bishopsgate Goods Yard adjoins Brick Lane which is a long, gently winding street running from north to south. Its character is created by a general consistency of height and architecture, with a rich, fine-grain mix of land uses, including shops, bars, restaurants, arts and small businesses.

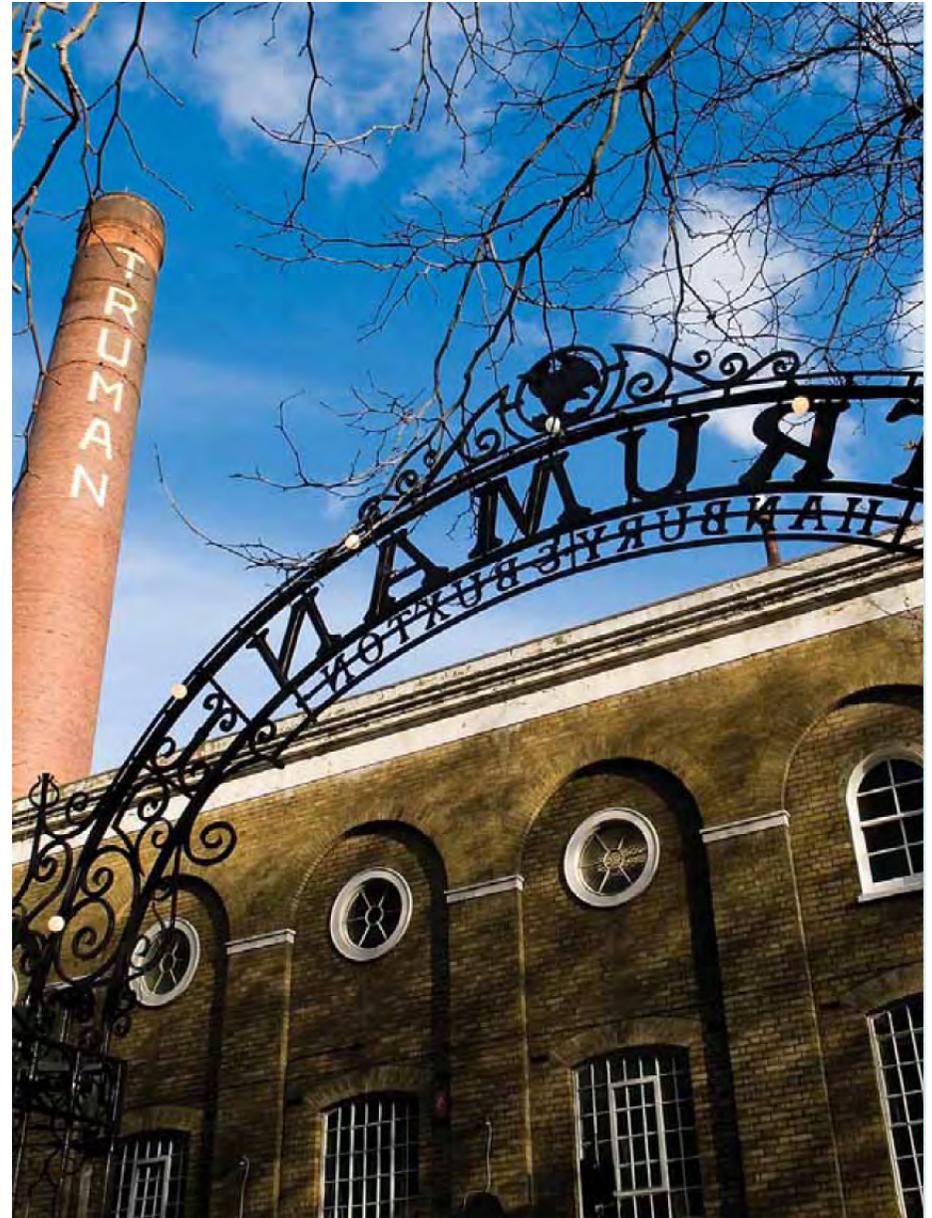
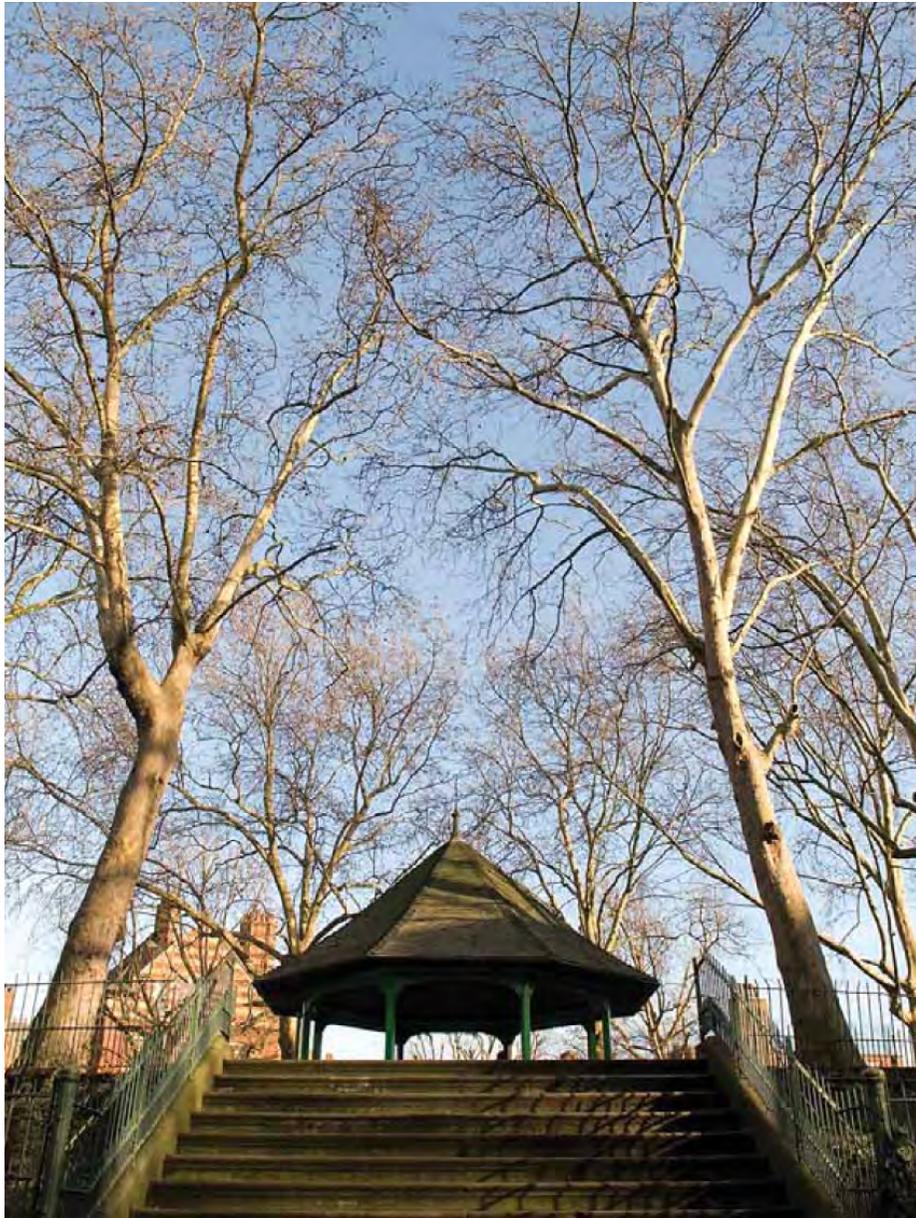
1.33 The terrace of former weaver's cottages on Sclater Street, within the boundary of the goods yard planning guidance are within the conservation area.

1.34 The Conservation Area Management Guidelines acknowledge that the goods yard is a major development site and notes that the Braithwaite Viaduct is likely to be central to any redevelopment of the site.

Elder Street Conservation Area (Tower Hamlets)

1.35 The Elder Street Conservation Area in Tower Hamlets was designated in 1969 and lies to the south west of the site. Bishopsgate Goods Yard adjoins Commercial Street which forms the north east boundary of the Conservation Area.

1.36 Elder Street and Folgate Street, at the centre of the Conservation Area, include most of the surviving eighteenth century buildings with many original three storey brick houses. Blossom Street is an important surviving piece of nineteenth century townscape with a series of high quality four storey brick warehouses built from 1886 onwards. This industrial character continues along parts of Fleur-de-Lis Street. There are important views from within the Conservation Area towards Bishopsgate Goods Yard along Commercial Street and from the southern end of Blossom Street.



Redchurch Street Conservation Area (Tower Hamlets)

1.37 The Redchurch Street conservation area was designated in 2008. The Conservation Area is characterised particularly by a tight grid of narrow streets with three to four storey buildings. The land use is generally mixed, comprising a variety of light industrial, retail and housing. There are several popular public houses and restaurants on Redchurch Street.

1.38 The concrete cladding of the East London Line box is visible in the view looking southwards from the corner of Chance & Old Nichol Streets within the conservation area. Development of the goods yard should seek to preserve or enhance this view from the conservation area.

Boundary Estate Conservation Area (Tower Hamlets)

1.39 The Boundary Estate Conservation Area was designated in 1985 and lies east of Shoreditch High Street and north of Bishopsgate Goods Yard.

1.40 The character of the Boundary Estate Conservation Area is defined by the late 19th-century housing estate, which is made up of twenty Grade-II listed, purpose-built housing blocks. The majority of the blocks are five storeys high, each individually designed to reflect its position within the estate. Boundary Gardens is the centre point of the estate, with the housing blocks arranged on seven streets radiating from this focal point.

Opposite:

Fig. 8: Boundary Estate Conservation Area

Fig. 9: Truman Brewery, Brick Lane

1.41 Development on the goods yard should be designed to preserve or where possible enhance the view from the bandstand along Club Row towards Bethnal Green Road.

South Shoreditch Conservation Area (Hackney)

1.42 The Shoreditch High Street Conservation Area and the South Shoreditch Conservation Area were both designated in 1991. In 2009, following public consultation, the two conservation areas were combined and boundary changes were made to form a single Conservation Area to be known as the South Shoreditch Conservation Area.

1.43 The special interest of the area derives from the historic concentration of the furniture trade from the mid 1850's to the mid 1950's, with a distinctive range of building types, ranging from large showroom and warehouse buildings to small workshops. The attractive scale of the streets and spaces, has helped Shoreditch to become a lively mixed use area, encompassing a range of small businesses, art galleries, restaurants and bars.

1.44 A key vista from Shoreditch High Street southwards through the eastern edge of the Conservation Area, abutting the Goods Yard, to the City Fringe, could be enhanced as a part of the future redevelopment of the Bishopsgate Goods Yard site.

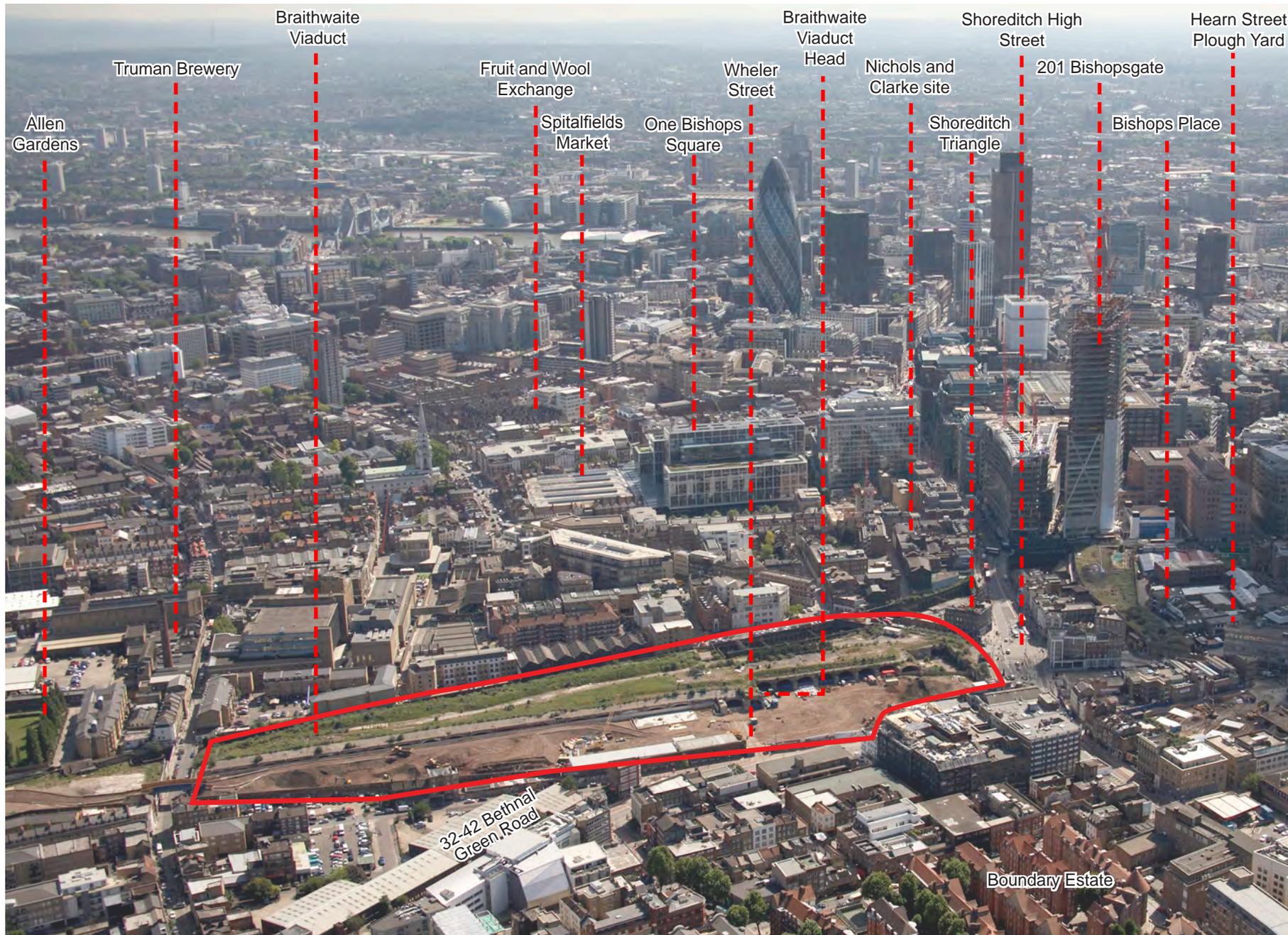
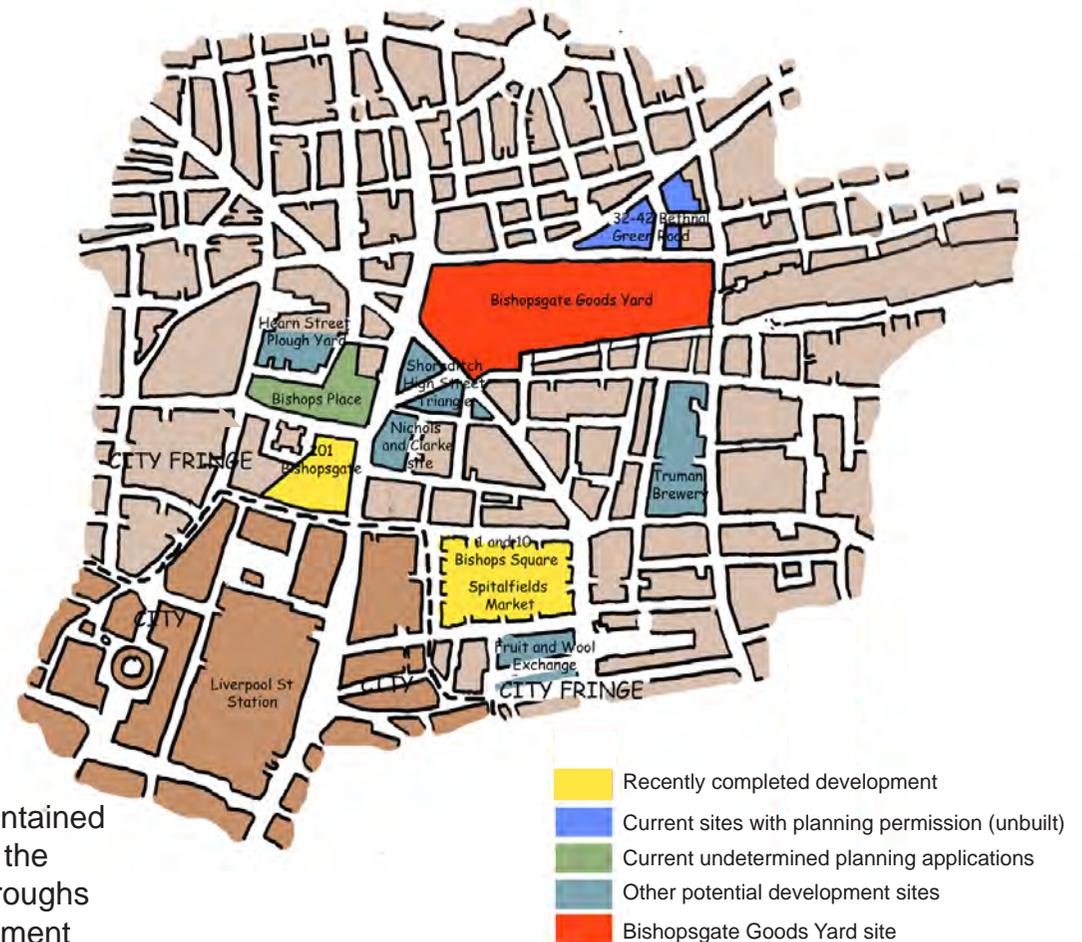


Fig. 10: Aerial view of Bishopsgate Goods Yard, looking south across the City fringe



Summary of planning policy

1.45 The statutory planning framework for the site is contained within national planning policy guidance and statements, the London Plan and the saved policies from the London Boroughs of Hackney and Tower Hamlets adopted Unitary Development Plans (UDP) (Hackney 1995 and Tower Hamlets 1998).

1.46 In addition the Mayor’s Draft City Fringe Opportunity Area Planning Framework, the South Shoreditch Supplementary Planning Document (Hackney 2006), the City Fringe Area Action Plan (Tower Hamlets 2007) and the emerging Core Strategies from both boroughs should be taken into account.

Fig. 11: Map showing sites influencing regeneration in the wider area

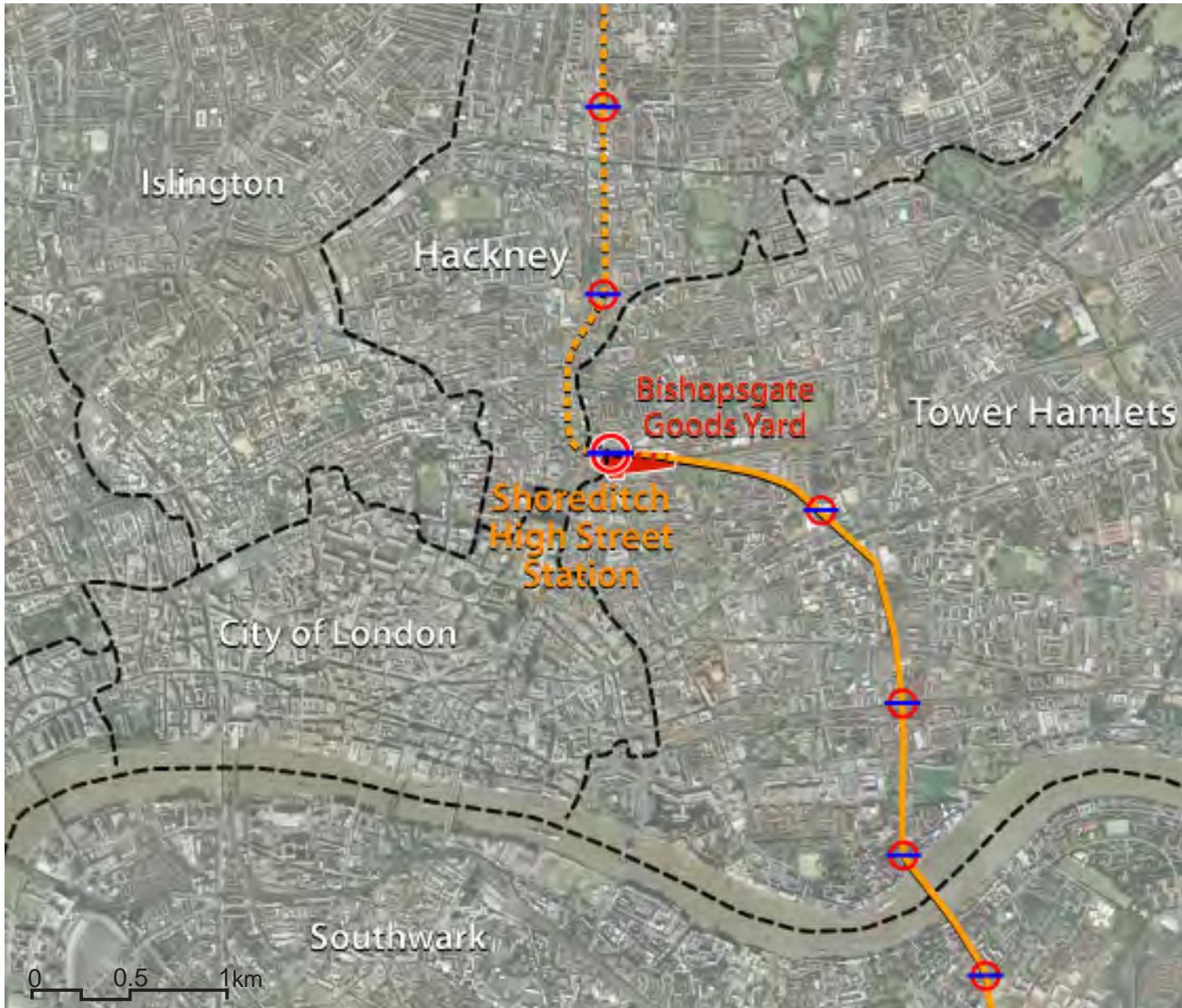


Fig. 12: Map showing borough boundaries and East London Line

- Borough Boundary
- East London Line (and extension)
- ⊖ London Overground station

1.47 This section provides a brief summary of the key points from these planning documents. It does not list all policies that would be material in determining a planning application on the site.

1.48 The London Plan and the draft City Fringe Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF) set out the general strategic policy direction for the area and identify a number of major sites, including Bishopsgate Goods Yard, as having significant development capacity both for residential and commercial uses.

1.49 London Borough of Hackney Unitary Development Plan was adopted in 1995. The western part of Bishopsgate Goods Yard is identified as suitable for major office development including provision for extension of East London Line across the site.

1.50 The emerging Hackney Core Strategy identifies Bishopsgate Goods Yard as an opportunity site for high density development, and for open space provision.

1.51 Bishopsgate Goods Yard is identified as an “opportunity site” in the adopted Hackney South Shoreditch Supplementary Planning Document (SSSPD). The western part of the site is identified as falling within a tall building opportunity area with scope for a prominent building close to the junction of Commercial Street and Shoreditch high Street.

1.52 The Hackney *Tall Buildings Strategy (2005)* recognises the site as falling within an area with potential for future development of taller buildings.

1.53 Tower Hamlets Unitary Development Plan was adopted in 1998. The eastern part of Bishopsgate Goods Yard site is allocated in the UDP saved policies as a major commitment for mixed use development

1.54 Bishopsgate Goods Yard is identified as a development site in the Tower Hamlets City Fringe Area Action Plan (adopted planning guidance). It is allocated for residential and employment development. The area action plan states that at least 0.6 hectares of open space should be provided and that this should include at least one large green public open space.

1.55 The emerging Tower Hamlets Core Strategy identifies Bishopsgate Goods Yard as a major opportunity for mixed use development within ‘Shoreditch’ (one of the identified ‘places’ within Tower Hamlets). The Core Strategy seeks to ensure that the regeneration of the Goods Yard is responsive to, and reinforces, the character and vibrancy of Shoreditch and improves connectivity with surrounding area. It also identifies the potential to link new green space on the site with the existing green space at Allen Gardens.

1.56 This Planning Guidance has been prepared to be in accordance with and to supplement existing planning policies.

The opportunities and challenges at Bishopsgate Goods Yard

1.57 The constraints derive from both existing and proposed infrastructure passing through the site, as well as existing historic structures, environmental and conservation issues, and local as well as strategic townscape views. The existing site constraints heavily influence the development of the site, necessitating a specific programme for development.

Bishopsgate Goods Yard: across two boroughs

1.58 The Bishopsgate Goods Yard site is located across the borough boundary of Hackney and Tower Hamlets. This creates challenges in reconciling the planning policies of the two boroughs. However the London Plan and the City Fringe OAPF provide the strategic planning policy framework for the site. The opportunities for redevelopment of the site as set out in planning policy are discussed throughout this document.

1.59 The proximity of the site to a diverse range of surrounding activities, its central location and excellent transport accessibility provide the context within which to promote the sustainable redevelopment of the site for a high density mix of uses.

Physical opportunities and challenges

1.60 The Bishopsgate Goods Yard site contains a number of complex pieces of physical infrastructure situated on the ground, as well as above and below it.

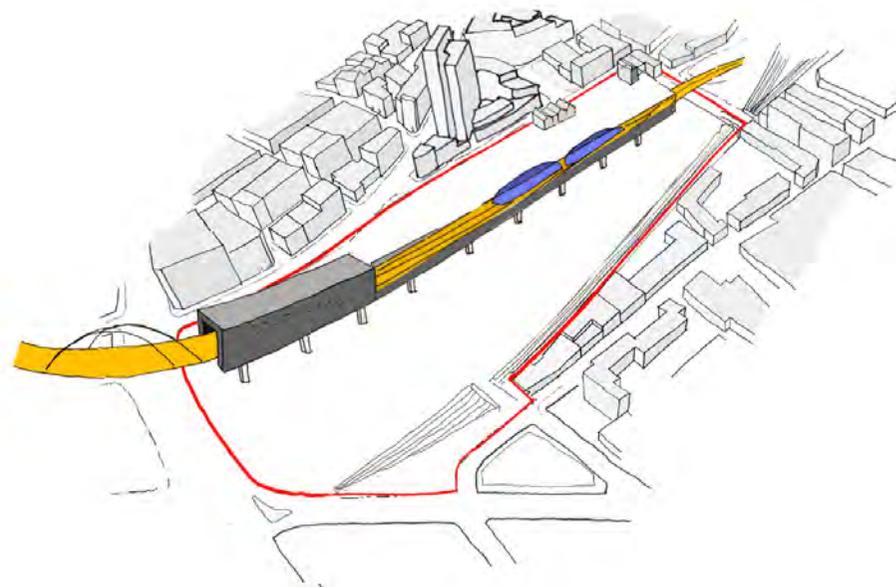


Fig. 13: East London Line Railway

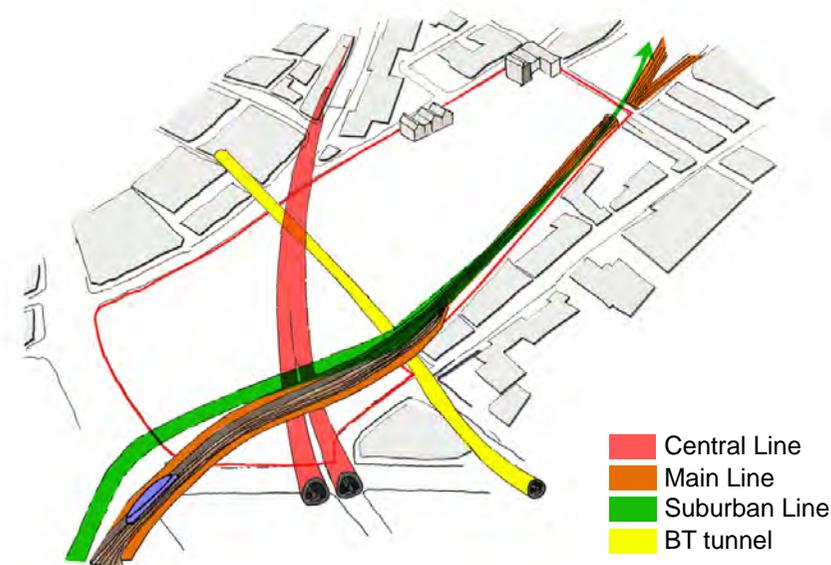


Fig. 14: Underground constraints

Introduction to Bishopsgate Goods Yard

1.61 Above ground - East London Line Railway (fig. 13)

- the East London Line extension will open in 2010.
- the new Shoreditch High Street station will improve public transport access.
- the new line has been enclosed in a box to allow for comprehensive development to take place around it and for new routes or public spaces to be created at ground level.

1.62 Below ground – rail, underground lines and BT tunnel (fig. 14)

- the main line and suburban rail tracks lead into Liverpool Street station
- the tracks run 5-6m below ground level – main line tracks are uncovered, the suburban line runs beneath the Goods Yard.
- there is potential for Network Rail to increase the number of tracks on the main line from 6 to 8.
- the London Underground Central Line runs north-east to south-west across the site and is 18 metres below ground.
- a BT telecommunications tunnel runs underground north - south, close to the alignment of Wheler Street.

1.63 historic structures on the site (fig. 15)

- re-use of the listed structures, including the Braithwaite Viaduct and forecourt wall and gates create the opportunity to enhance the quality of any future development.
- new development could improve the setting for the listed structures
- the loading capacity of the Braithwaite viaduct would make it difficult to develop above without harming it's historic character
- there is an opportunity to provide new green space on top of the Braithwaite viaduct.(fig. 16).

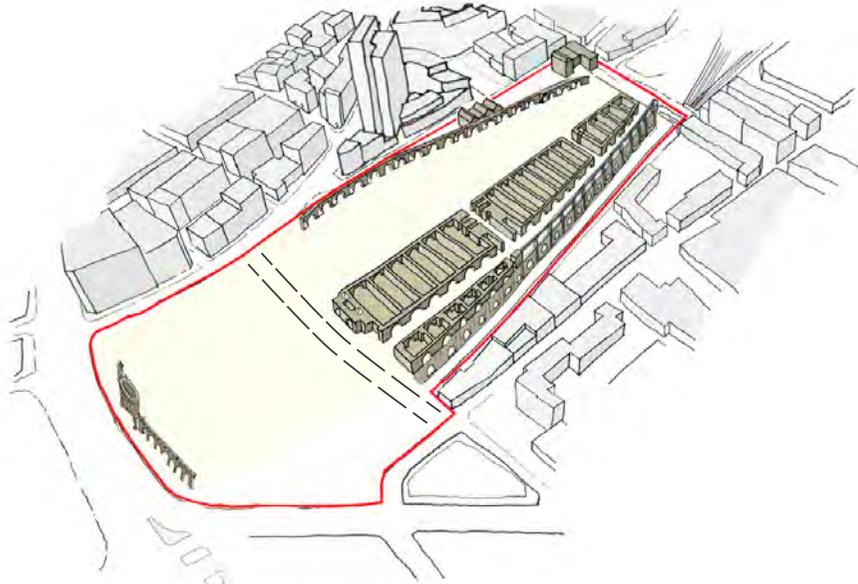


Fig. 15: Historic structures on site

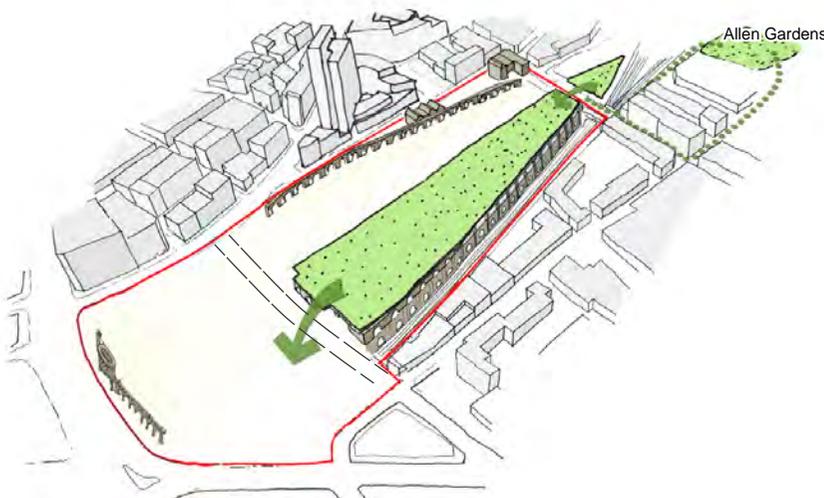


Fig. 16: Potential green space on top of the historic arches

1.64 The existing site forms a barrier to movement through the area as shown on figure 17.

1.65 As a result of the existing physical infrastructure the area of the site where deep foundations for new structures can be located is extremely limited, and amounts to around a third of the total site area (fig. 18). The underground constraints also mean that where new buildings are located; particular consideration will need to be given to construction of their foundations.

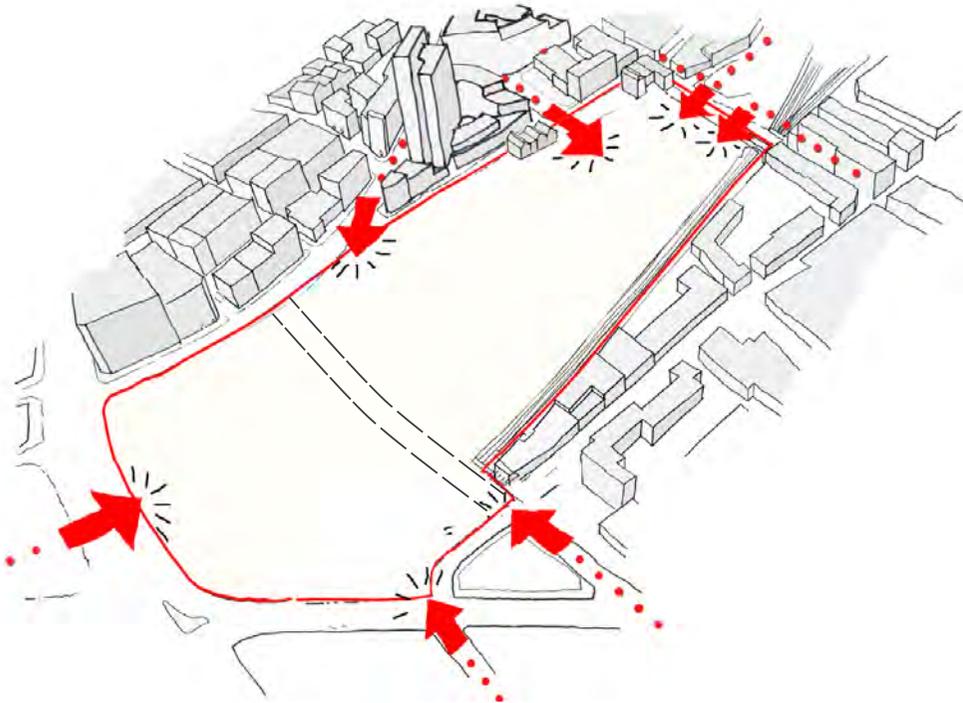


Fig. 17: A barrier to movement

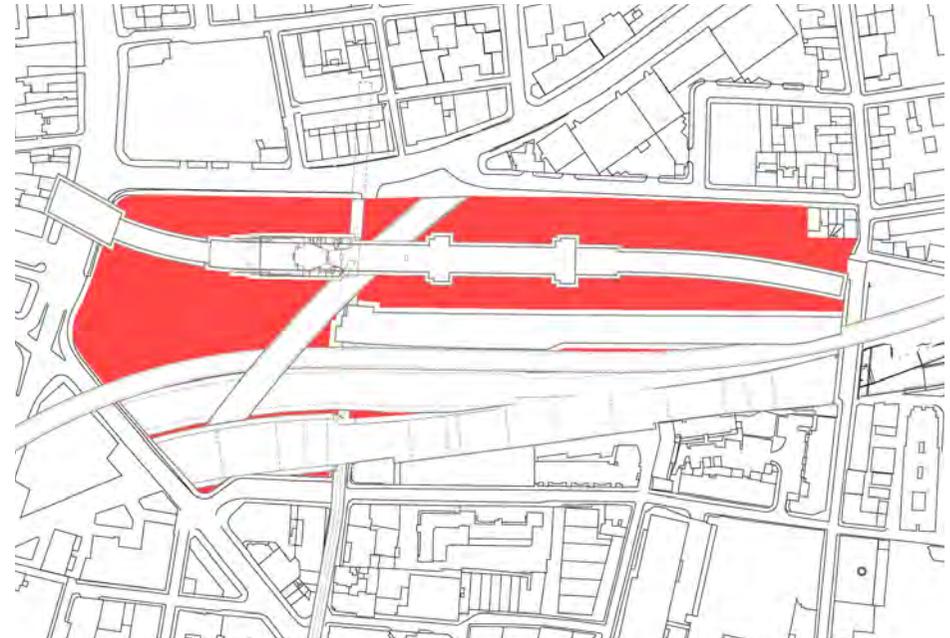


Fig. 18: Area in which foundations could be placed (indicated in red)

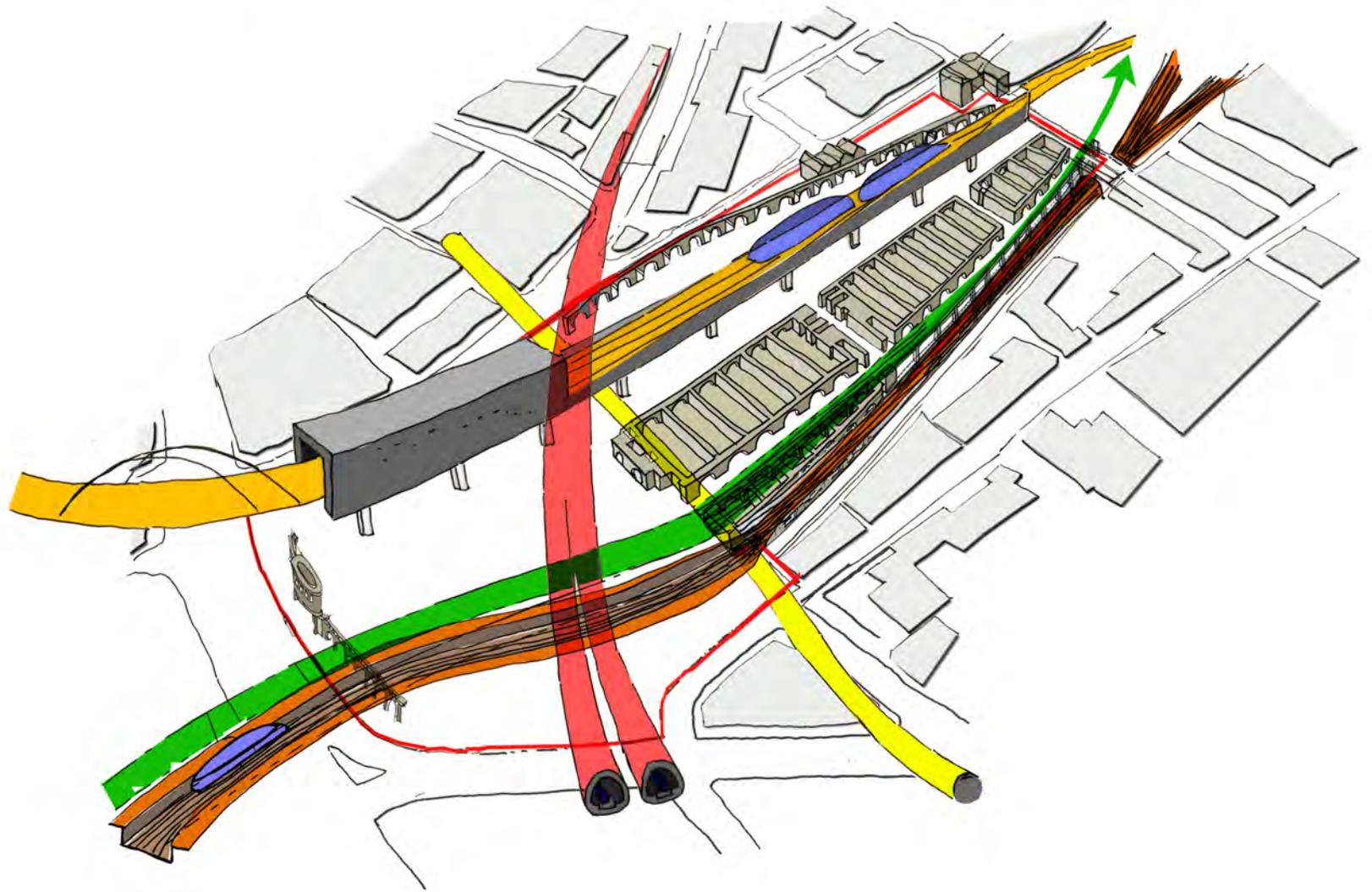


Fig. 19: Bishopsgate Goods Yard site constraints viewed together

