

# *The Myth of the City*

*On broadening public access to the esoteric Square Mile*

*the City*

*by*  
*Tom Punte*

*design tutor:*  
*Roel van de Pas*

*bt tutor:*  
*Rufus van den Ban*

*research tutor:*  
*dr. Amy Thomas*

The document in front of you is a collection of studies into the mythicised City of London. The City of London, informally known as the Square Mile or the City, is the financial centre of the United Kingdom and is located in the heart of the capital. The project consists of a research component and a design component, together comprising my master's graduation year at Delft University of Technology.

All images are made by the author unless stated otherwise.

## *Introduction*

In the year 1997 Carl Laubin was commissioned to paint the Square Mile, a capriccio-styled landscape of the City's most defining institutions and structures. The painting presents the City's history and origin beneath the emerging modern office blocks, institutions and towers, with St. Paul's Cathedral's presence diminished yet proudly positioned in the centre. A place of prosperity and advancements, yet the paintings transform the City into a myth-like representation, far removed from the place itself and inaccessible to the public. As outsiders, our understanding of the City of London remains shrouded in mystery and myth, interwoven with an image deliberately or unintentionally constructed by the place itself, its character, people and pursuits. All of London emerged from the City, yet few actually live there. Hectic and busy during the working days, yet silent during afterhours, it is a place where activities have been concealed and internalised. A City centre seemingly avoided by the average Londoner, where only tourists and financial workers venture in.

This sense of inaccessibility I also experienced myself in the City of London. During my study abroad

semester, while living on the outskirts of the City of London, I noticed a tendency to avoid spending time in the City itself. Travelling only into the City to take the tube at Liverpool Street station to a café to work for the day, to a park for leisure time or to my friends who all lived further away. On rare occasions I would venture into the City, but I was always unable to find my way between glass office lobbies and the thick stone facades and never lingered for long. Even a quick glance into the interiors of public spaces within buildings would make me anxious of the person at the desk or the security guard on duty.

The City of London Corporation intends to move away from its exclusive and esoteric image, seeking to make the Square Mile more accessible and open to all. However it's unsure if the changes will truly lead to meaningful change or if they are just in place to appease the public opinion. This research will therefore be an investigation into the City of London, combining personal experience, historical research, and theoretical writing. Using various media, the work is an ongoing process aimed at making the City more accessible and rooted in its surroundings.





*The Square Mile (source: Carl Laubin, 1997)*

The end result will not be an all-compelling answer to the issues surrounding the City of London, but rather a vehicle to enable us to think about accessibility, the use and meaning of space in highly dense urban environments and the future of the City.

*A Feeling of History*

*Genius Loci Towards a Phenomenology of Place*

*London The Biography*

*Palaces for the People How to Build a More  
Equal & United Society*

*The Aesthetics of Atmospheres*

*The Buildings of England London I The City  
of London*

*The City in The City*

*The City of Londons Lost Residents*

*The Concise Townscape*

*The History of England from the Accession of  
James the Second. Vol. I*

*The Public Interior as Idea and Project*

*The Pursuit of Pleasure*

### *Reading material*

The following reading materials were used to construct arguments, analyse context and respond to various situations observed on the site. The books underlined were of particular importance.

To gain insight into the history and way of life in the City, the following works were extensively consulted in order to understand how the City has evolved into its present form: *London: The Biography*, *The City of London's Lost Residents*, *The Buildings of England: London I The City of London*, *The City in the City* and *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second, Vol. I*.

To develop a deeper understanding of the meaning of place and the concept of loss of place, texts such as *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Place*, *A Feeling of History* and *The Aesthetics of Atmospheres* were consulted. In addition, books including *The Public Interior as Idea and Project* and *Palaces for the People: How to Build a More Equal and United Society* informed thinking around how the City might become less internalised and more open to the public.

Finally, to support the design process, *The Concise Townscape* proved a valuable resource.

## 2024

In April 2024, the City of London Corporation released the City Plan 2040, a 324-page document outlining the priorities for development and future policies of the Square Mile. Priorities in the document include the economic responsibilities, sustainability goals and the social objectives of the City.

The document outlines a plan to increase office space in the City, backed by a report indicating that the Square Mile requires 1.2 million square meters of additional office space by 2040 to maintain global competitiveness. This additional office space will mostly be added to the existing and new tower clusters in the City. To say the least an interesting direction for the Square Mile, given that the city was likened to a ghost town during the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of work-from-home culture makes working in an office less attractive.<sup>1</sup> This leaves me to ask if it's not time for the city to diversify and steer away from its monofunctional landscape.

The document also sets out the plan for the development of more retail, visitor attractions and cultural buildings, to diversify the City's activities. However most of these changes will happen

at the perimeter of the City in seven key areas of change, excluding the City's centre. The only exception is the retail development around St. Paul's Cathedral. For myself, this raises two important points. Firstly, the City's centre is central to the exclusive and inaccessible image of the city. To alter this perception and enhance accessibility, this area should be included in the transformation process. It is crucial to acknowledge that the heart of the Square Mile contains significant heritage, which may account for the limited changes proposed in the 2040 plan. However, the area comprises a blend of protected and non-protected spaces, making large-scale interventions unfeasible. Nevertheless, smaller or mid-sized architectural endeavours or changes are still very much possible. Secondly, it's important to consider for whom the city is diversifying. Is the goal to attract a variety of people and communities, thereby enriching the cultural fabric of the city? Or is the primary objective to expand the tourism base, focusing on economic benefits?

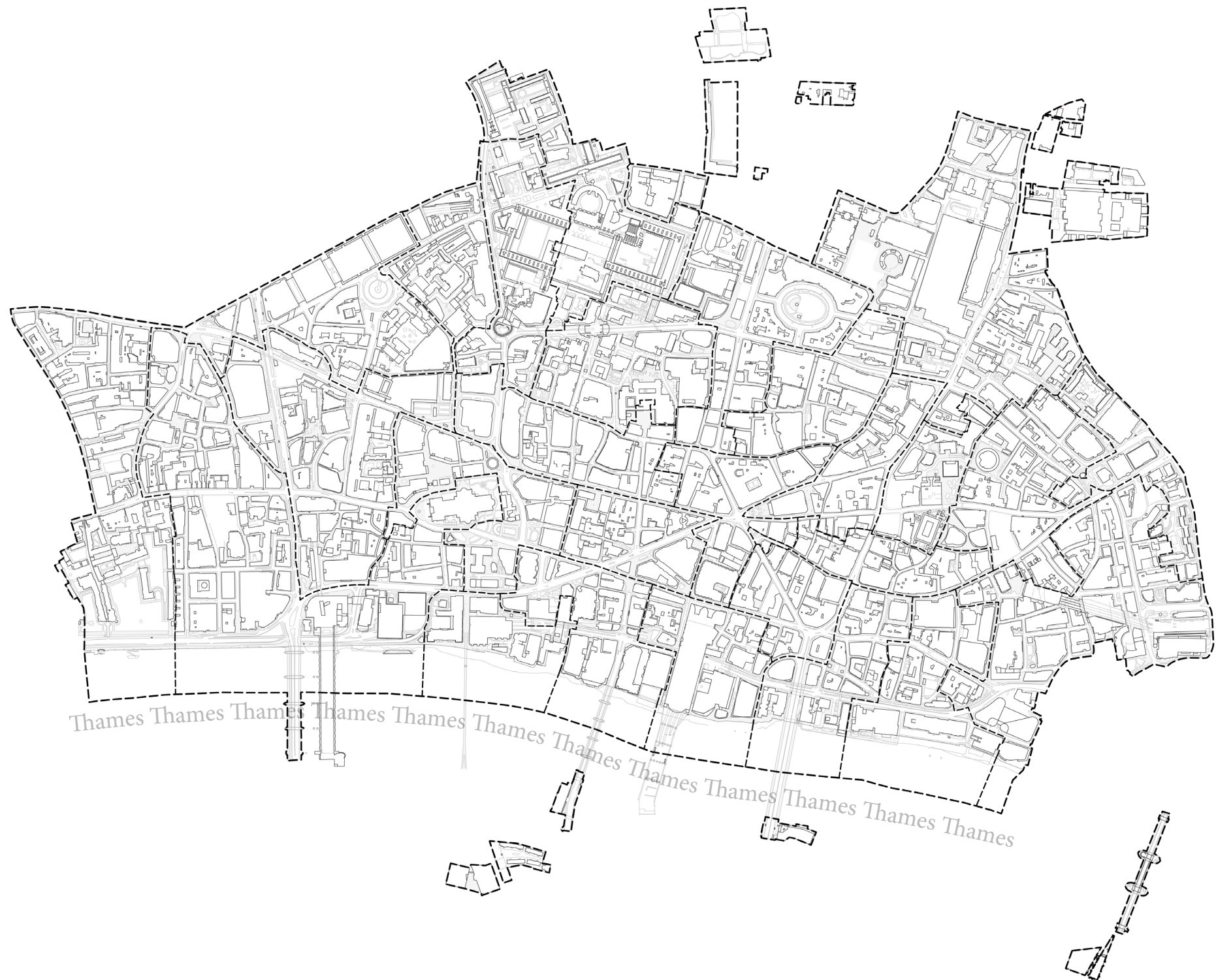
1. Armstrong, Ashley. "How London Could Become Ghost Town After Rise of Work-from-home Culture Leaves Office Blocks Empty..." *The Sun*, October 8, 2023. <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/24324961/london-ghosttown-deserted-offices-working-from-home/>.





*Satellite image of the metropolis of London (source: Google Earth)*





### *Macaulay's account of a changing City*

At first the City of London was not regarded as a place of mere business but a place some called home. However, as the City began to change, it lost its association with domestic life. Rising land values and redevelopment under the guise of sanitary improvements forced many shopkeepers, labourers and poorer residents out of the City. Entire neighbourhoods were cleared, only to be abandoned or left derelict, awaiting development that would yield the highest financial return.<sup>2</sup> As the population of the City declined, the Square Mile gradually transformed into the centre of finance and the heart of the British Empire.

After being regarded as a place of domestic affection no more, as written by Thomas Babington Macaulay, people would reside elsewhere. The English Historian, poet and of course Whig politician wrote his account of the changing City albeit from a privileged viewpoint; "It is no longer associated in their minds with domestic affection and endearments. The fireside, the nursery the social table, the quiet bed are not there. Lombard Street and Threadneedle Street are merely places where men toil and accumulate. They

go elsewhere to enjoy and to expend."<sup>3</sup> Whereas West End was a place of living and indulgence, the City became a place of self-enrichment, with all its consequences for the place itself.<sup>4</sup> "On Sunday, or in an evening after the hours of business, some courts and alleys, which a few hours before alive with hurrying feet and anxious faces, are as silent as the glades of a forest".<sup>5</sup> It is unsurprising that Macaulay's and the public perception of the City fuelled many lurid stories about the Square Mile as a sort of empty Pandæmonium of office workers, none more so than the stories of Charles Dickens. One of my personal favourite stories, *City Spectres*, likens the financier to a ghostly ghoul haunting the City in pursuit of wealth. These spectres come to life briefly when spending their riches, only to return to the City once their fortunes are gone.

Such stories linked the City's depopulation to its dark and mysterious character; shaped by soot-covered buildings, chimneys smoke, narrow streets and shadowy alleys. Yet Macaulay's experience of the empty City likely resonates with our own experience of urban life during the pandemic lockdowns. The difference is

that for Macaulay, the emptiness would become permanent and as so Laubin's painting of the Square Mile depicts no shopkeeper houses, no homely fireplaces, nor any other domestic or communal type of architecture.

2. Ross, Cathy. *Dwell I Never: the City of London's Lost Residents*. London: Quickfry Books, 2024. 60-63.
3. Macaulay, Thomas Babington. *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second*. Vol. 1. London: Longmans, Green, 1866. 167.
4. Michie, Richie. "The City of London in Literature: Place, People and Pursuits". Lecture at Gresham College, London, 16 May, 2013.
5. Macaulay, Thomas Babington. *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second*. Vol. 1. London: Longmans, Green, 1866. 168.



the springs slept in rooms hardly as good as the garrets which he lived to see occupied by footmen. The floors of the dining-rooms were uncarpeted, and were coloured brown with a wash made of soot and small beer, in order to hide the dirt. Not a wainscot was painted. Not a hearth or a chimneypiece was of marble. A slab of common freestone and fire irons which had cost from three to four shillings were thought sufficient for any fireplace. The best apartments were hung with coarse woolen stuff, and were furnished with rush-bottomed chairs. Readers who take an interest in the progress of civilisation and of the useful arts will be grateful to the humble topographer who has recorded these facts, and will perhaps wish that historians of far higher pretensions had sometimes spared a few pages from military evolutions and political intrigues, for the purpose of letting us know how the parlours and bed-chambers of our ancestors looked.\*

The position of London, relatively to the other towns of the empire, London, was, in the time of Charles the Second, far higher than at present. For at present the population of London is little more than six times the population of Manchester or of Liverpool. In the days of Charles the Second the population of London was more than seventeen times the population of Bristol or of Norwich. It may be doubted whether any other instance can be mentioned of a great kingdom in which the first city was more than seventeen times as large as the second. There is reason to believe that, in 1685, London had been, during about half a century, the most populous capital in Europe. The inhabitants, who are now at least nineteen hundred thousand, were then probably little more than half a million.† London had in the world only

\* See Wood's History of Bath, 1749; Evelyn's Diary, June 27. 1654; Pepys's Diary, June 12. 1668; Stukeley's Itinerarium Curiosum; Collinson's Somersetshire; Dr. Peirce's History and Memoirs of the Bath, 1713, Book I. chap. viii. obs. 2. 1684. I have consulted several old maps and pictures of Bath, particularly one curious map which is surrounded by views of the principal buildings. It bears the date of 1717.

† According to King, 530,000. (1848.) In

one commercial rival, now long ago outstripped, the mighty and opulent Amsterdam. English writers boasted of the forest of masts and yardarms which covered the river from the Bridge to the Tower, and of the stupendous sums which were collected at the Custom House in Thames Street. There is, indeed, no doubt that the trade of the metropolis then bore a far greater proportion than at present to the whole trade of the country; yet to our generation the honest vaunting of our ancestors must appear almost ludicrous. The shipping which they thought incredibly great appears not to have exceeded seventy thousand tons. This was, indeed, then more than a third of the whole tonnage of the kingdom, but is now less than a fourth of the tonnage of Newcastle, and is nearly equalled by the tonnage of the steam vessels of the Thames. The customs of London amounted, in 1685, to about three hundred and thirty thousand pounds a year. In our time the net duty paid annually, at the same place, exceeds ten millions.\*

Whoever examines the maps of London which were published towards the close of the reign of Charles the Second will see that only the nucleus of the present capital then existed. The town did not, as now, fade by imperceptible degrees into the country. No long avenues of villas, embowered in lilacs and laburnums, extended from the great centre of wealth and civilisation almost to the boundaries of Middlesex and far into the heart of Kent and Surrey. In the east, no part of the immense line of warehouses and artificial lakes which now stretches from the Tower to Blackwall had even been projected. On the west, scarcely one of those stately piles of building which are inhabited by the

1851 the population of London exceeded 2,300,000. (1857.)

\* Macpherson's History of Commerce; Chamberlayne's State of England, 1684. The tonnage of the steamers belonging to the port of London was, at the end of 1847, about 60,000 tons. The customs of the port, from 1842 to 1845, very nearly averaged 11,000,000*l.* (1848.) In 1854 the tonnage of the steamers of the port of London amounted to 138,000 tons, without reckoning vessels of less than fifty tons. (1857.)

noble and wealthy was in existence; and Chelsea, which is now peopled by more than forty thousand human beings, was a quiet country village with about a thousand inhabitants.\* On the north, cattle fed, and sportsmen wandered with dogs and guns, over the site of the borough of Marylebone, and over far the greater part of the space now covered by the boroughs of Finsbury and of the Tower Hamlets. Islington was almost a solitude; and poets loved to contrast its silence and repose with the din and turmoil of the monster London.† On the south the capital is now connected with its suburb by several bridges, not inferior in magnificence and solidity to the noblest works of the Cæsars. In 1685, a single line of irregular arches, overhung by piles of mean and crazy houses, and garnished, after a fashion worthy of the naked barbarians of Dahomy, with scores of mouldering heads, impeded the navigation of the river.

Of the metropolis, the City, properly so called, was the most important division. At the time of the Restoration it had been built, for the most part, of wood and plaster; the few bricks that were used were ill baked; the booths where goods were exposed to sale projected far into the streets, and were overhung by the upper stories. A few specimens of this architecture may still be seen in those districts which were not reached by the great fire. That fire had, in a few days, covered a space of little less than a square mile with the ruins of eighty-nine churches and of thirteen thousand houses. But the City had risen again with a celerity which had excited the admiration of neighbouring countries. Unfortunately, the old lines of the streets had been to a great extent preserved; and those lines, originally traced in an age when even princesses performed their journeys on horseback, were often too narrow to allow wheeled carriages to pass each other with ease, and were therefore ill adapted for the

\* Lysons's Environs of London. The baptisms at Chelsea, between 1680 and 1690, were only forty-two a year.

† Cowley, Discourse of Solitude.

residence of wealthy persons in an age when a coach and six was a fashionable luxury. The style of building was, however, far superior to that of the City which had perished. The ordinary material was brick, of much better quality than had formerly been used. On the sites of the ancient parish churches had arisen a multitude of new domes, towers, and spires which bore the mark of the fertile genius of Wren. In every place save one the traces of the great devastation had been completely effaced. But the crowds of workmen, the scaffolds, and the masses of hewn stone were still to be seen where the noblest of Protestant temples was slowly rising on the ruins of the old Cathedral of St. Paul.\*

The whole character of the City has, since that time, undergone a complete change. At present the bankers, the merchants, and the chief shopkeepers repair thither on six mornings of every week for the transaction of business: but they reside in other quarters of the metropolis, or at suburban country seats surrounded by shrubberies and flower gardens. This revolution in private habits has produced a political revolution of no small importance. The City is no longer regarded by the wealthiest traders with that attachment which every man naturally feels for his home. It is no longer associated in their minds with domestic affections and endearments. The fireside, the nursery, the social table, the quiet bed are not there. Lombard Street and Threadneedle Street are merely places where men toil and accumulate. They go elsewhere to enjoy and to expend. On a Sunday, or in an evening after the hours of business, some courts and alleys, which a few hours before had

\* The fullest and most trustworthy information about the state of the buildings of London at this time is to be derived from the maps and drawings in the British Museum and in the Pepysian Library. The badness of the bricks in the old buildings of London is particularly mentioned in the Travels of the Grand Duke Cosmo. There is an account of the works at St. Paul's in Ward's London Spy. I am almost ashamed to quote such nauseous balderdash; but I have been forced to descend even lower, if possible, in search of materials.



been alive with hurrying feet and anxious faces, are as silent as the glades of a forest. The chiefs of the mercantile interest are no longer citizens. They avoid, they almost contemn, municipal honours and duties. Those honours and duties are abandoned to men who, though useful and highly respectable, seldom belong to the princely commercial houses of which the names are renowned throughout the world.

In the seventeenth century the City was the merchant's residence. Those mansions of the great old burghers which still exist have been turned into counting houses and warehouses: but it is evident that they were originally not inferior in magnificence to the dwellings which were then inhabited by the nobility. They sometimes stand in retired and gloomy courts, and are accessible only by inconvenient passages: but their dimensions are ample, and their aspect stately. The entrances are decorated with richly carved pillars and canopies. The staircases and landing places are not wanting in grandeur. The floors are sometimes of wood, tessellated after the fashion of France. The palace of Sir Robert Clayton, in the Old Jewry, contained a superb banquetting room wainscoted with cedar, and adorned with battles of gods and giants in fresco.\* Sir Dudley North expended four thousand pounds, a sum which would then have been important to a Duke, on the rich furniture of his reception rooms in Basinghall Street.† In such abodes, under the last Stuarts, the heads of the great firms lived splendidly and hospitably. To their dwelling place they were bound by the strongest ties of interest and affection. There they had passed their youth, had made their friendships, had courted their wives, had seen their children grow up, had laid the remains of their parents in the earth, and expected that their own remains would be laid. That intense patriotism which is peculiar to the members of societies congregated within a narrow space was, in such circumstances, strongly developed. London

\* Evelyn's Diary, Sept. 20. 1672.

† Roger North's Life of Sir Dudley North.

was, to the Londoner, what Athens was to the Athenian of the age of Pericles, what Florence was to the Florentine of the fifteenth century. The citizen was proud of the grandeur of his city, punctilious about her claims to respect, ambitious of her offices, and zealous for her franchises.

At the close of the reign of Charles the Second the pride of the Londoners was smarting from a cruel mortification. The old charter had been taken away; and the magistracy had been remodelled. All the civic functionaries were Tories; and the Whigs, though in numbers and in wealth superior to their opponents, found themselves excluded from every local dignity. Nevertheless, the external splendour of the municipal government was not diminished, nay, was rather increased by this change. For, under the administration of some Puritans who had lately borne rule, the ancient fame of the City for good cheer had declined: but under the new magistrates, who belonged to a more festive party, and at whose boards guests of rank and fashion from beyond Temple Bar were often seen, the Guildhall and the halls of the great companies were enlivened by many sumptuous banquets. During these repasts, odes, composed by the poet laureate of the corporation, in praise of the King, the Duke, and the Mayor, were sung to music. The drinking was deep, the shouting loud. An observant Tory, who had often shared in these revels, has remarked that the practice of huzzaing after drinking healths dates from this joyous period.\*

The magnificence displayed by the first civic magistrate was almost regal. The gilded coach, indeed, which is now annually admired by the crowd, was not yet a part of his state. On great occasions he appeared on horseback, attended by a long cavalcade inferior in magnificence only to that which, before a coronation, escorted the sovereign from the Tower to Westminster.

\* North's Examen. This amusing writer has preserved a specimen of the sublime raptures in which the Pindar of the City indulged:—

"The worshipful Sir John Moor!  
After age that name adore!"

The Lord Mayor was never seen in public without his rich robe, his hood of black velvet, his gold chain, his jewel, and a great attendance of harbingers and guards.\* Nor did the world find anything ludicrous in the pomp which constantly surrounded him. For it was not more than became the place which, as wielding the strength and representing the dignity of the City of London, he was entitled to occupy in the state. That City, being then not only without equal in the country, but without second, had, during five and forty years, exercised almost as great an influence on the politics of England as Paris has, in our own time, exercised on the politics of France. In intelligence London was greatly in advance of every other part of the kingdom. A government, supported and trusted by London, could in a day obtain such pecuniary means as it would have taken months to collect from the rest of the island. Nor were the military resources of the capital to be despised. The power which the Lord Lieutenants exercised in other parts of the kingdom was in London entrusted to a Commission of eminent citizens. Under the orders of this Commission were twelve regiments of foot and two regiments of horse. An army of drapers' apprentices and journeymen tailors, with common councilmen for captains and aldermen for colonels, might not indeed have been able to stand its ground against regular troops; but there were then very few regular troops in the kingdom. A town, therefore, which could send forth, at an hour's notice, thousands of men, abounding in natural courage, provided with tolerable weapons, and not altogether untinctured with martial discipline, could not but be a valuable ally and a formidable enemy. It was not forgotten that Hampden and Pym had been protected from lawless tyranny by the London trainbands; that, in the great crisis of the civil war, the London trainbands had marched to raise the siege of Gloucester; or that, in the movement against the military tyrants which followed the

\* Chamberlayne's State of England, 1684; Angliæ Metropolis, 1690; Seymour's London, 1734.

downfall of Richard Cromwell, the London trainbands had borne a signal part. In truth, it is no exaggeration to say that, but for the hostility of the City, Charles the First would never have been vanquished, and that, without the help of the City, Charles the Second could scarcely have been restored.

These considerations may serve to explain why, in spite of that attraction which had, during a long course of years, gradually drawn the aristocracy westward, a few men of high rank had continued, till a very recent period, to dwell in the vicinity of the Exchange and of the Guildhall. Shaftesbury and Buckingham, while engaged in bitter and unscrupulous opposition to the government, had thought that they could nowhere carry on their intrigues so conveniently or so securely as under the protection of the City magistrates and the City militia. Shaftesbury had therefore lived in Aldersgate Street, at a house which may still be easily known by pilasters and wreaths, the graceful work of Inigo. Buckingham had ordered his mansion near Charing Cross, once the abode of the Archbishops of York, to be pulled down; and, while streets and alleys which are still named after him were rising on that site, chose to reside in Dowgate.\*

These, however, were rare exceptions. Almost all the noble families of England had long migrated beyond the walls. The district where most of their town houses stood lies between the City and the regions which are now considered as fashionable. A few great men still retained their hereditary hotels in the Strand. The stately dwellings on the south and west of Lincoln's Inn Fields, the Piazza of Covent Garden, Southampton Square, which is now called Bloomsbury Square, and King's Square in Soho Fields, which is now called Soho Square, were among the favourite spots. Foreign princes were carried to see Bloomsbury Square as one of the wonders of England.† Soho Square, which had just been built, was to our ancestors a subject of pride

\* North's Examen, 116; Wood, Ath. Ox. Shaftesbury; The Duke of B.'s Litany.  
† Travels of the Grand Duke Cosmo.



### *Harbens Dictionary of London*

Henry Harben gathered over 6000 street and place names in the City of London and noted their origin, location and specificities in his Dictionary of London. Most of the City is documented in his dictionary and thus became an extremely useful tool to explore the various places that had caught my attention. Additionally The London Archives collected photographs, paintings, sketches and other documents and sorted them alphabetically alongside the dictionary.

I visited the archive a total of two times, on 2nd December and the day after. Handing in a few slips of paper with the names of one or two places would result in boxes full of archival materials being brought out from the back. I noted down streets and buildings surrounding the edges of and within the conservation area of the City's centre (the area that has limited changes in the 2040 plan); Moorgate, London Wall, Bishopsgate, The Carpenters' Hall, Liverpool Station and more. The documents that came forth from the archive were sometimes quite unexpected but revealed how the City's architecture moved from a place viewed as a home (image 1) to a place of business (image 15).

1. Floral house at London Wall, 1810
2. Domestic house at Long Lane, 1810
3. The dismantling of Carpenters Hall, -
4. Anglo-Persian Oil board room, 1922
5. Country Life at London Wall, -
6. Home from Home, 1978
7. Crowded Throgmorton Street, -
8. Impression of the Barbican Estate, -
9. Anglo-Persian Oil building, 1922
10. Eighteen century residential quarter, 1929
11. Carter Lane, -
12. Construction of Britannic House, 1929
13. Moor House construction, around 1961
14. Development of 20 Finsbury Circus, 1965
15. Moorsfield Highwalk, 1985
16. Domestic floral house at London Wall, 1803
17. Moorgate Station, -
18. Second Carpenters Hall, 1878
19. Moorgate office brochure, -
20. London Wall after the Blitz, around 1945
21. Finsbury Circus cultivation areas, 1944
22. Application letter Finsbury Circus, 1944

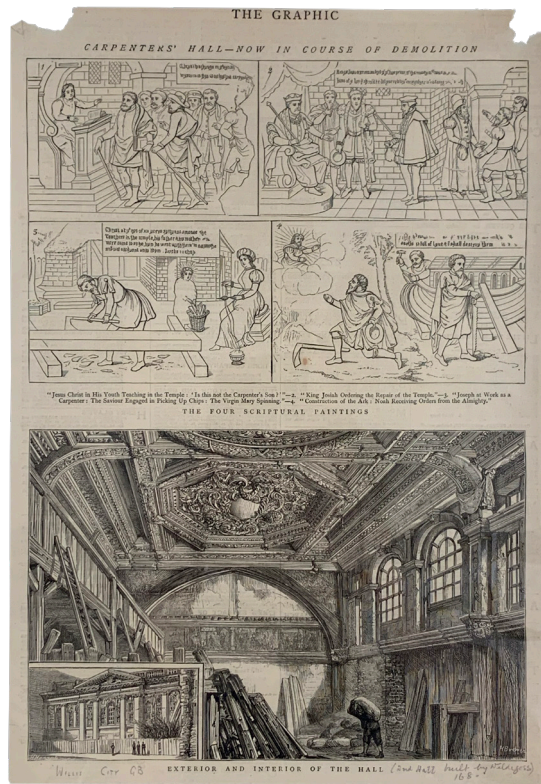




1



2



3



4



5

6

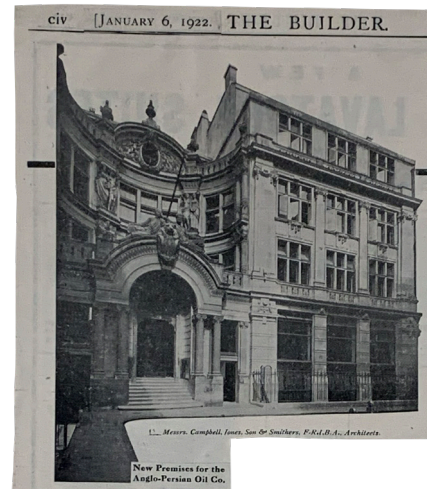


7

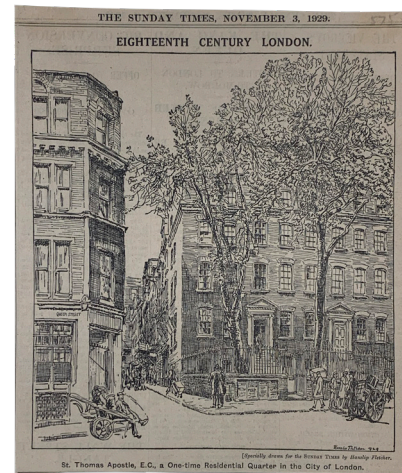


8





9



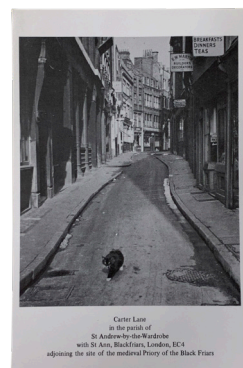
10



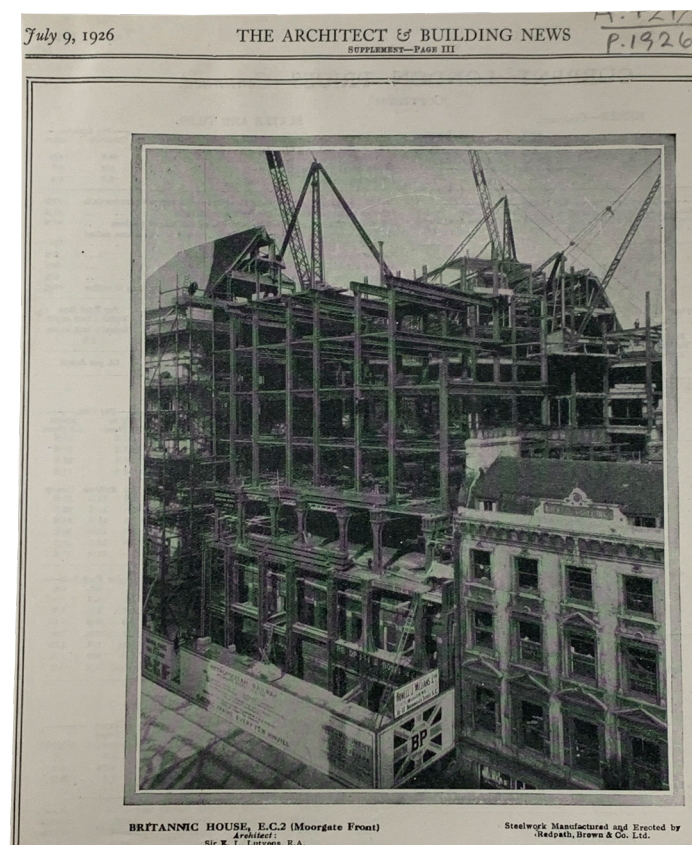
13



14



11



12



16



15

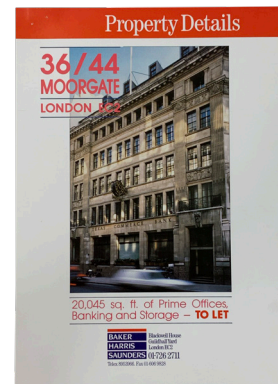




17



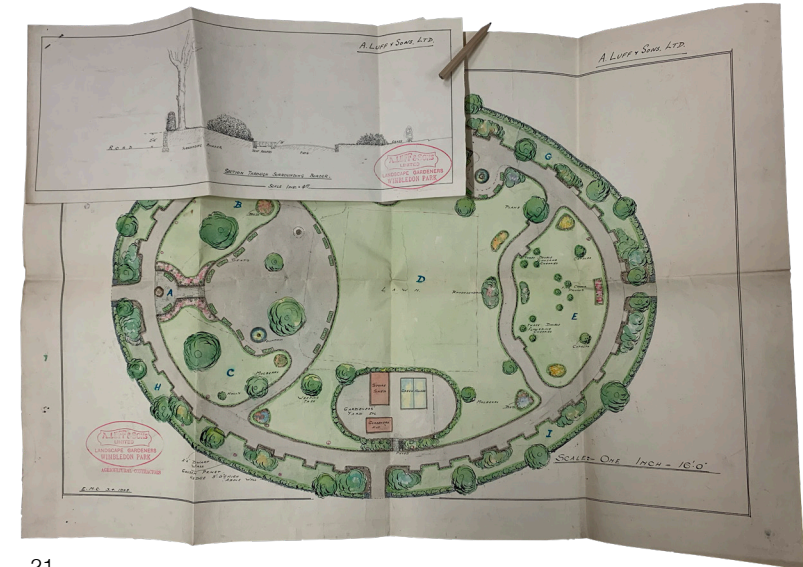
18



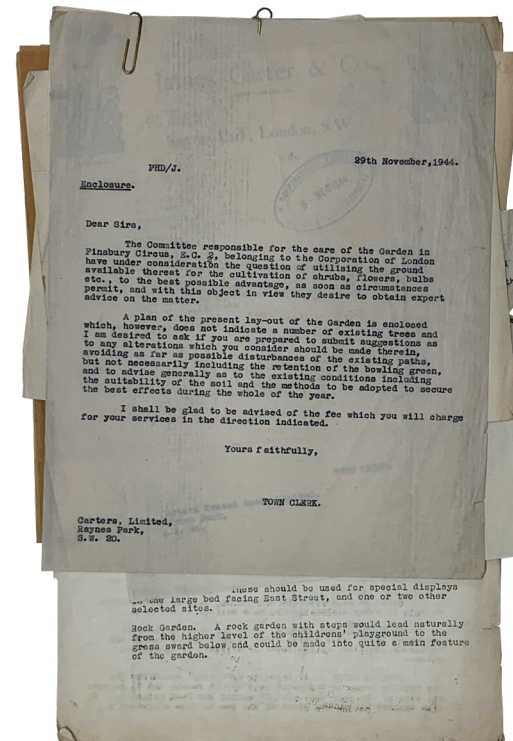
19



20



21



22

### *The Scale of the City*

The City of London is older than the United Kingdom itself. Founded by the Romans, its long existence has brought with it certain privileges. Throughout the centuries, the City has fought to preserve these privileges, along with its independence and boundaries. Its continued existence today stands as a testament to its success in safeguarding its rights, immunities and liberties, though this achievement has not come without cost. The City's boundaries remained intact, but over time it was hemmed in by the rest of the metropolis. Now unable to expand beyond its borders, the City is compelled to use space efficiently or build upwards. The construction of mega office blocks and skyscraper clusters is the architectural response to this spatial constraint.

My archival research has already shed light on the changing scale of the City. Around the 1850s, the City comprised small shop houses connected by winding, narrow streets, interspersed with institutional buildings and warehouses (archival images 1 and 2). From the 1850s onwards, these small plots were gradually consolidated to make way for increasingly larger bank and office complexes, initially only a

few storeys high (archival image 12), but later giving rise to taller towers (image 13). The rapid modernisation and vertical expansion, driven by the growing demand for office space, gave shape to the City of London as we know it today, where the image of the corporate tower has come to define the Square Mile.

The shift in scale reflects the City's response to the constant demand for office space, enabling the financial sector to continue operating effectively. However, the need for large buildings goes deeper than mere spatial requirements. The City has come to rely as much on the necessary office space as on shiny new additions to its skyline, for the construction of an office tower or mega structure sustains the myth of financial superiority in both times of prosperity and crisis.<sup>6</sup> This reliance has resulted into a destructive cycle of new construction, which doesn't necessarily contribute to the City as a whole. This cycle is best described by a quote by Sadiq Khan, the Lord Mayor of London, on the view tower named the tulip he described it as "another tower London didn't need."<sup>7</sup>

To further understand the consequences of the cycle of demolition and the merging of plots in the City to make way for ever-larger buildings, we can turn to

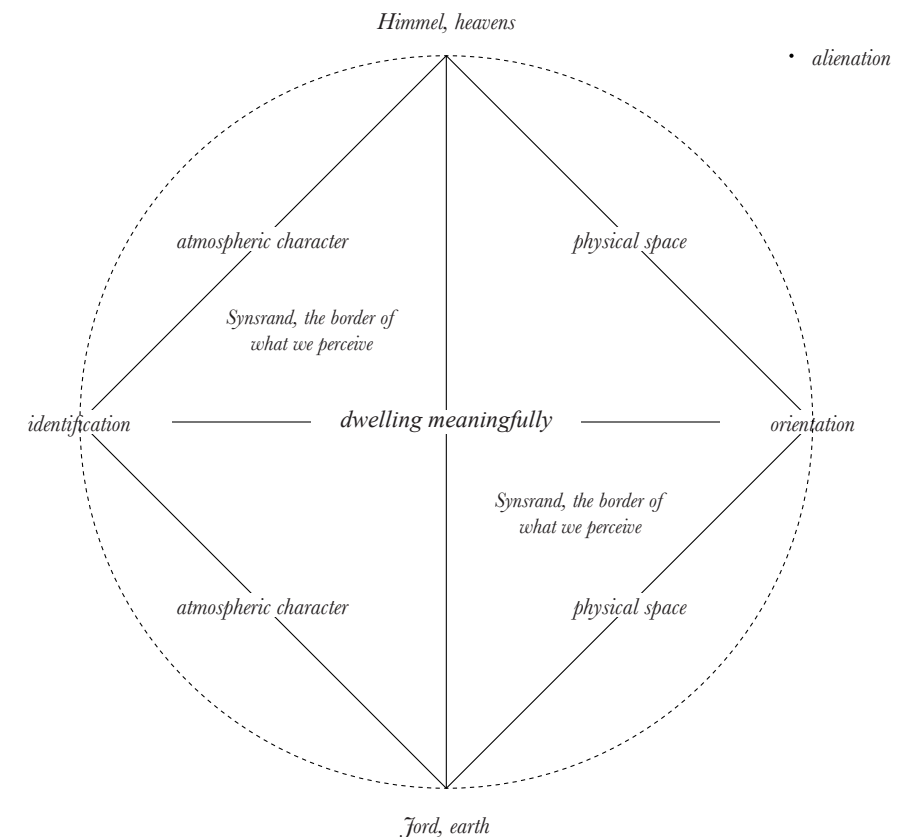
the work of Christian Norberg-Schulz. Norberg-Schulz remarks how the scale and architecture of modern high-rise buildings rupture the existing urban fabric, making it increasingly difficult to identify and orient oneself within a place.<sup>8</sup> Resulting in the loss of place, where diversity is replaced with glass curtain walls and structures displaced in their surroundings. The loss of place is an issue Norberg-Schulz deems essential to the weakening of the relation between person and environment and by extension the very act of “dwelling”. He argues that a person truly dwells in a space only when they are able to orient themselves within it and identify with their surroundings; otherwise, a sense of alienation arises.<sup>9</sup> This argumentation could explain why Thomas Babington Macaulay saw the City no longer as a place to dwell and call home. Reminiscent of my own time in the City, when any attempt to find a home away from home would result in getting lost among vast ground floor lobbies and thick stone facades, ultimately pushing me to venture far beyond the City’s limits, despite living right on its edge.

6. Kaika, Maria. “Architecture and Crisis: Re-inventing the Icon, Re-imag(in)ing London and Re-branding the City.” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 35, no. 4 (July 27, 2010): 453–74. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2010.00398.x>. 468

7. Woodman, Ellis. “Sadiq Khan Is Right – the Tulip Was Another Tower London Didn’t Need.” *The Telegraph*, July 16, 2019. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/art/architecture/sadiq-khan-right-tulip-another-tower-londondidnt-need/>.

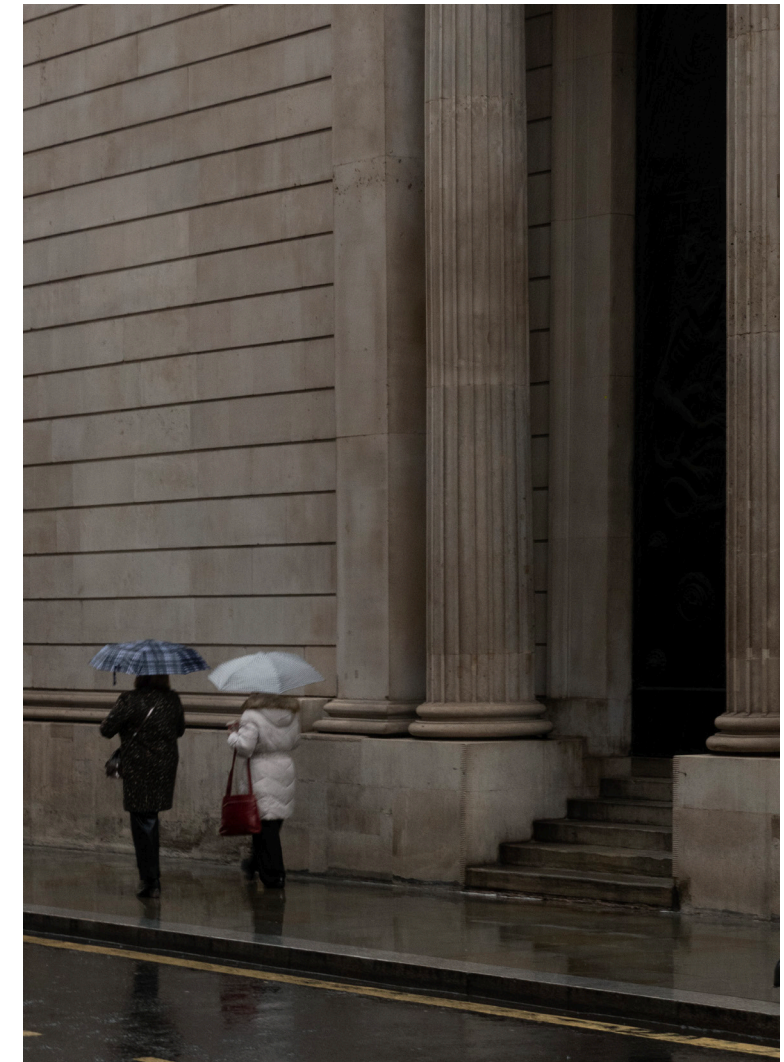
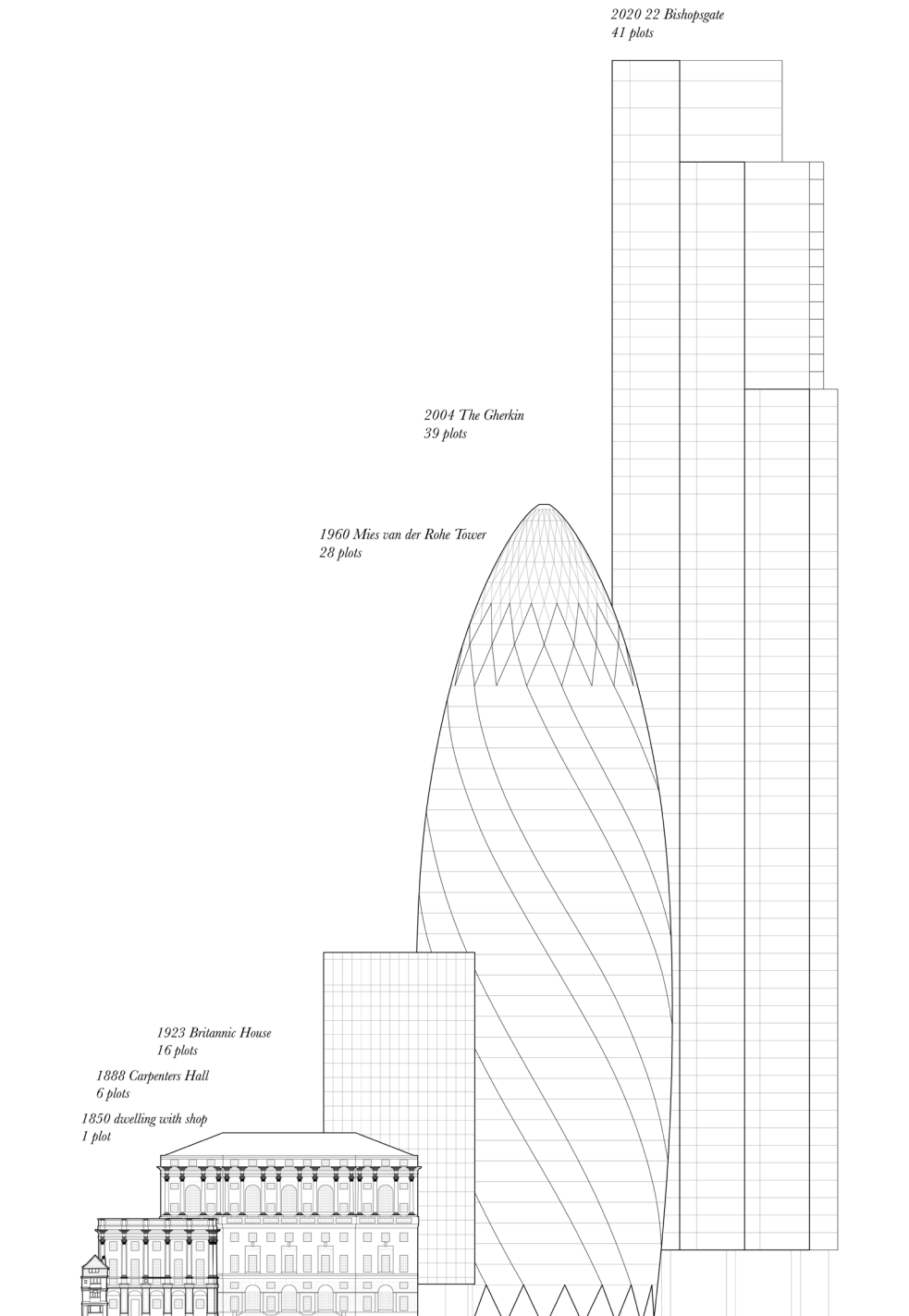
8. Norberg-Schulz, Christian. *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*. London: Academy Editions, 1979. 186–195.

9. Norberg-Schulz, Christian. *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*. London: Academy Editions, 1979. 5.



Christian Norberg-Schulz theory of place (source: author)





*The human scale in contrast to the Bank of England (source: author)*





*The scale of the bank (source: fragment of the movie Mary Poppins, 1964)*

### *Appropriation of Space*

As depopulation ran its course, the City of London became increasingly shaped around its financial activity and workforce. Concurrently, it became less accessible and less welcoming to outsiders. On one hand, features such as private roof terraces, internalised public amenities and business-centred opening hours reinforce the divide between those who belong and those who do not. Yet, on the other hand, this also sets the stage for more atypical ways of inhabiting the City and appropriating its spaces. During my visit in December, I paid close attention to this. For several days, from early morning until late at night, I wandered through streets and alleys, past the river and along the edges of the City. My method of walking was deliberately aimless, in the hope of encountering natural, unconventional uses of space and documenting them.

Along Moorgate Street, I came across a person sitting inside the windowsill of an empty bank building. It was an amusing sight, while the masses hastily traversed the busy street in both directions the person stayed undisturbed for more than an hour on their windowsill. The classical stone façade, with its deep-set windows, conveys a sense of stability

and security, yet it also allows someone to easily occupy the windowsill, quietly transforming it into an intimate shelter within the city. I documented the encounter through both a photograph and a physical model.

While walking down Queen Victoria Street from Bank Junction, I came across a staircase leading downwards, which I assumed would take me to the waterfront. However, as I descended, I found myself inside the Castle Baynard Street tunnel. Lined along one wall of the tunnel were around a dozen tents sheltered from the elements and the cold. I must admit, I was taken aback. The transition from the apparent abundance of wealth; towers, grand buildings, high-end shops and restaurants, to an encampment for rough sleepers was stark. Just outside the tunnel were clothes hanging on a makeshift washing line, a striking and unexpected glimpse of everyday domesticity in the heart of the City. This encounter highlighted a much broader issue within the City of London and indeed the wider metropolis; the stark duality of wealth and poverty, of accessibility and exclusion. It was only recently that refuse workers were seen

disposing homeless tents in a bin lorry while Suella Braverman's remarked that rough sleeping was "a lifestyle choice" sparked widespread public backlash.<sup>10</sup>

10. Townsend, Mark and Savage, Michael. "Fury as Braverman depicts homelessness as a 'lifestyle choice'." *The Guardian*, November 4, 2023. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2023/nov/04/fury-as-braverman-depicts-homelessness-as-a-lifestyle-choice>

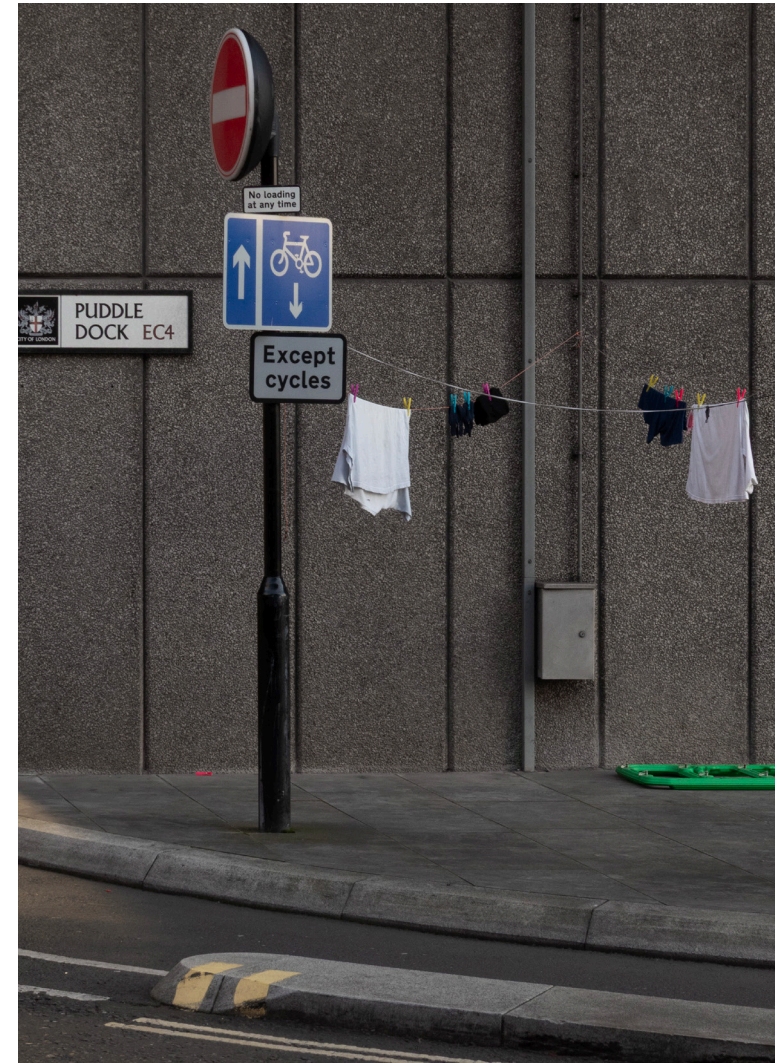


*Appropriation of a window sill (source: author)*





*Puddle Dock tunnel (source: author)*



*Puddle Dock (source: author)*

*The increasing demand for office space in the City of London puts pressure on the City's historic environment and important characteristic features. The Corporation owns land outside of the Square Mile, can this land not be utilised to construct extensions of the City or financial pockets, lowering the pressure put on the City?*

That is an interesting idea, I think the fears around it are that it would be owned and planned by the City but within another local authority so that means we would only be a decision-making body. So, there would be questions over the deliverability over a certain planning period, I would think that our politicians would want a sense of control and certainty. So I don't think we would be able to fold it into our local plan.

But it's interesting since we need to come up with solutions like deciding where to put up tall buildings and come up with a logic for that. I think Historic England criticism on that was why can't you propose a minimal extension across the whole of the City, but you can imagine how that is very impractical. But that is not to say that we haven't tried to do that as a solution.

*There are many proposals for office development and even retail in the City of London; however do you receive many proposals for public buildings or structures, such as an educational centre, a museum, a library, etc? And as a planning officer would you respond differently to proposals that aim at making the City more public?*

Yes, definitely. But it comes down to the local plan, so office development meets a need that has been set up by the local plan. It is interesting, obviously if they were to put a whole educational centre in a building everyone would love it, that is a public benefit. So you necessarily wouldn't have to do as much elsewhere, so you do try to look at things in the round and there is always a trade-off. With every planning application there are harms and benefits, ideally you try to get to a point where you support it.

### *Conversation with Fiona Williams*

Fiona Williams is a planning officer at the City of London Corporation with a background in historic buildings and heritage.

*How does the Corporation look at residential developments in the City, for example do you aim to integrate and spread out new residential construction or create more residential pockets like the Barbican?*

I think we definitely trying to put them in places where there are amenities for residents to use. The tricky thing about the City is there are not a lot of things like doctor surgeries and stuff, so we think about siting them quite carefully.

But we don't get very many applications for residential in the City at all and I think the number of residents we have been given is very low compared to other boroughs, mainly because the City is seen as a central business district.

It is interesting, that we have the two very large; Barbican and Golden Lane Estate but also Mansell Street further east and Aldgate is a bit more residential. There are lots of small residential apartments scattered throughout the City and historically there are a lot of live work models, so I wouldn't necessarily resent something coming in a certain location, depending on the merits of each individual application.

*The Corporation uses the term place-making quite frequently, though how does the City look at place-making and what makes it important for the Square Mile?*

It is like the number one most important thing for the City. I think practically the idea of a more permeable open city at ground level. The problem with massive late 20th century developments are their very defensive ground floors. So you walk past these big office lobbies, where you can't get in, it is not permeable, there is no sense of activity on the ground floor, it is one of the biggest problems we have got I would say. So it's the key focus when any designer comes in; what is the ground floor doing? How active is it? Can we get more permeable use, like a café on the ground floor or anything to make it a bit more open?

So projects have been doing that, making the ground floor theoretically accessible, but it doesn't necessarily feel like that walking past them. So it can be a bit tricky, I will show you one down there; it is a lobby with a café for the public but no one is ever in there because it doesn't look like it is public, and you feel like you don't belong.

*Then it furthermore becomes a question of for whom you are making the place; office workers, visitors or others?*

Mostly workers. Let's say we redevelop Finsbury Square, we would ask them to do a study of who uses the space, what kind of use and what time they visit all of that. A lot of the population is a transient worker, but now there are also lots of tourist visitors, and more families coming into the City they all need amenities. If you've got a new building being built you now look at for example if it's a space where someone could use the restroom. Having public amenities on the ground floor is hugely important.

### *The Myth of the City*

The mythicised City of London can, in many ways, be understood as an “old boys’ club”; for outsiders, what happens behind closed doors is left to the imagination. Cigar smoke-filled boardrooms lined with mahogany wood, glass corner offices located on top floors with god-like views over their counterparts and formal banquets held in richly decorated halls all come to mind when conjuring the image of the Square Mile. Yet none evoke this mystique more than the historic alleyways, passages and courts that cut through ancient buildings and modern office blocks alike.

If the City of London today exists in the shadow of the corporate tower, then during the Victorian era it existed in the gloom of black soot, chimney smoke and fog. The dark atmosphere of the City became so infamous it even gained the reputation as the City of Shadows.<sup>11</sup> The alleyways played a crucial role in this perception, as their narrowness repented natural daylight. The characteristic short-cuts through the Square Mile allowed inhabitants and workers to enter the buildings deep within City blocks and became passages to quickly traverse the City. The network of passages and intimate public spaces

gradually became an integral part of the City’s financial workings, which relied heavily on walkability and face-to-face contact.<sup>12</sup> The alleyways offered spaces for informal conversation and fast routes for messengers and brokers darting between institutions. At the same time, these passages became steeped in myth as places where; deals were struck in shadowy corners, private conversations were overheard and illicit behaviour took place. Nowadays, many of the alleyways remain, not used for financial activities but shortcuts for financial workers to their nearest lunch spots. The City of London Corporation has even identified the alleyways as vital to the character of the Square Mile, with plans to enhance and expand them.<sup>13</sup>

Yet the role of the network of shortcuts were deeply entangled with the City’s “old boys’ club” culture, one marked by discretion, exclusivity and informal power structures. As such the alleyways were once populated with coffeehouses, acting as specialist markets and information gathering sites outside the opening hours of the official exchanges each operating as a gatekept space.<sup>14</sup> Jane Rendell notes how this type of atmosphere is inherently present in gentlemen’s clubs and domestically controlled spaces; “The tensions between private and



public in the clubs are articulated through architectural representation of domesticity, exclusivity and secrecy. Particular kinds of architectural spaces allow aspects of privacy to be enhanced or denied by controlling the distinction between what can be seen and what remains hidden, between what can be accessed and what is kept remote.”<sup>15</sup> The tension Rendell describes is deeply present in the City, for instance the glass lobbies along Bishopsgate embody a culture of display, yet they reveal little of the building’s true inner workings. Yet I would argue that, in the case of the alleyways when they were integral to the City’s financial workings, the friction between public and private was the greatest. As the network of passages were technically part of the public realm but had been appropriated by the financial activities of the City.

In my conversations with Fiona Williams, planning officer at the City of London Corporation, an intriguing parallel emerged; nowadays the private roof terrace appears to serve a similar role to that of the historic alleys. If you want a discreet conversation, you head to the rooftops. More fascinating is the fact that both spaces share a kind of informal architecture that begins to lift the veil on the workings of the City. The machinery that keeps the buildings functioning, the



*Change Alley (source: author)*



constant rumbling of the air conditioning, the designated bins pushed against the alley walls or the cheap brick in contrast to the Portland stone facades, each is an integral element of the atmosphere and myth of these spaces and often overlooked by the façadism movement.

11. Ackroyd, Peter. *London the Biography*. London: Chatto & Windus, 2000. 109.

12. Thomas, Amy. *The City in the City: Architecture and Change in London's Financial District*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2023. 84-85.

13. Department of Planning & Transportation. *Conservation Areas in the City of London: A General Introduction to their Character*. London: City of London Corporation, 1994. 41.

14. Thomas, Amy. *The City in the City: Architecture and Change in London's Financial District*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2023. 82-83.

15. Rendell, Jane. *The Pursuit of Pleasure: Gender, Space & Architecture in Regency London*. London, New Brunswick, N.J.: Athlone Press; Rutgers University Press, 2002. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781472545831>. 64.



*Change Alley (source: author)*





*Austin Friars Passage (source: author)*



*Bull's Head Passage (source: author)*

### *The public interior of the City*

The pub may well be the most recognisable and successful form of public interior in the United Kingdom. In the City, pub culture is deeply embedded in the working culture; as the working day ends, sometimes even before, people head to the pub. I can still clearly see the groups of suits with Oxford shoes, gathered in groups inside and outside every pub in the City. In conversation with Mark Pimlott one fundamental rule was established; for a public room or interior in a private place to work it needs to be perceivable by the public, its access understood and hold some sort of meaning. The pub definitely succeeds in this, but what about other spaces in the City. Most public amenities have been internalised, accessible only to those working within specific buildings. On my first visit to the City, I spoke with a member of staff at the Bank of England, who kindly offered me a tour of her workplace. What immediately caught my attention was a fully operational gym, available for bank workers to use, as well as a library tucked away in the basement. Both amenities, however, were concealed behind multiple layers of security: checkpoints, card barriers and reception desks.

Mark Pimlott defines the public interior as spaces perceived to be public, even though they may be privately owned or operated, an environment that gives the impression that one temporarily owns the space around them, even if it is privately owned.<sup>16</sup> Pimlott views these spaces as shaped and informed by ideas that reflect the society that defines them. In his book, he outlines six themes through which to discuss the public interior. Three of these; the shed, the palace and the ruin, I observed during my visits to the City of London and will elaborate on further. The shed was the first public interior I encountered upon arriving at Liverpool Street Station. It is the most accessible of the three and the station is often the first space visitors and workers in the City come into contact with. In short the shed is defined as a tool to contain or manage complex situations raised by the metropolis by Pimlott.<sup>17</sup> Another prominent example of this type includes the various markets scattered across the City, such as Smithfield Market and Old Billingsgate.

I encountered the palace twice; the ground floor of Bank of England and within the in-between parts of the Barbican, both defined by enfilades of grand rooms. This type of space can be understood as one in which you always feel like a visitor; it does not offer a sense



of belonging but instead translates the values of society through its grandeur.<sup>18</sup>

The final type, the ruin, described by Pimlott as an inward reflection about origin and human failing, the theme prompts contemplation of a time when we were thought to be closer to our origins and the original truth.<sup>19</sup> Owing to its long existence, the City is home to many such spaces; the remnants of Roman structures above and below ground, the church ruins scattered across City and many other lost or forgotten spaces which represented different ways of life. However one public interior in particular, which could be understood as a ruin type, captured my attention; the Livery Company banquet hall. Technically still present and functioning in the City, these halls represent a way of life that stretches back centuries. Today, most of them are available to hire for a range of events or celebrations. I was fortunate enough to visit the banquet hall of the Carpenters' Company at London Wall, where William Morris kindly gave me a tour.

16. Pimlott, Mark. *The Public Interior as Idea and Project*. Heijningen: Jap Sam Books, 2016. 10.

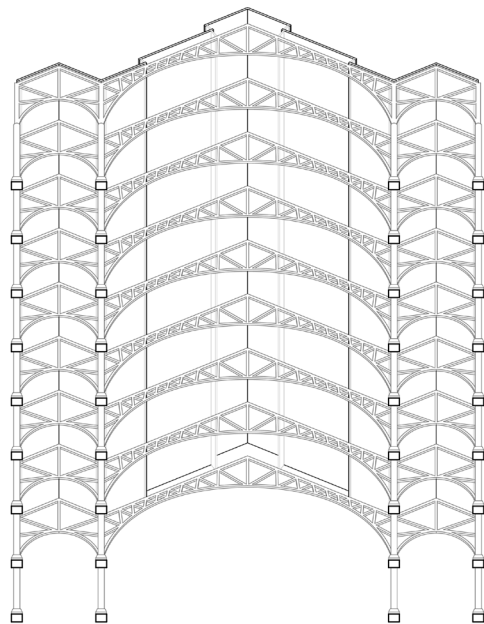
17. Pimlott, Mark. *The Public Interior as Idea and Project*. Heijningen: Jap Sam Books, 2016. 149-150.

18. Pimlott, Mark. *The Public Interior as Idea and Project*. Heijningen: Jap Sam Books, 2016. 59, 92.

19. Pimlott, Mark. *The Public Interior as Idea and Project*. Heijningen: Jap Sam Books, 2016. 99-100.



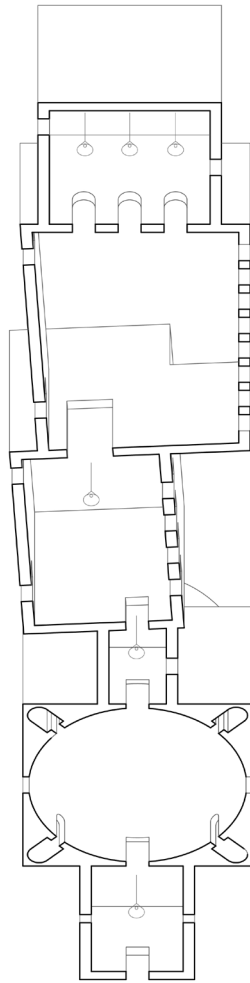
*The Globe at London Wall (source: author)*



*The shed of Liverpool Station (source: author)*



*Interior of the 1970s' trading floor (source: Mary Evans Picture Library)*

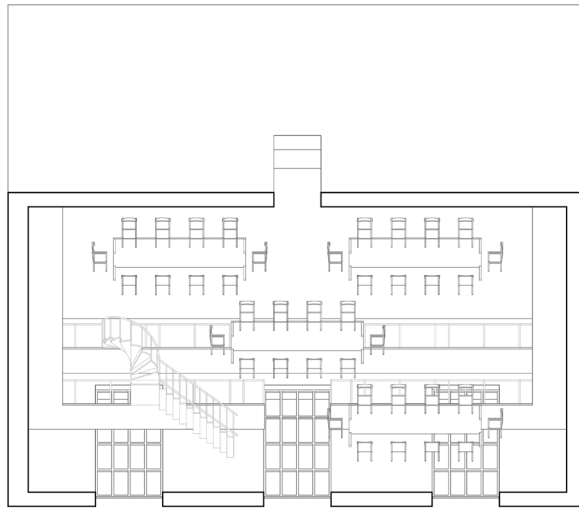


*The palace of Sir John Soane (source: author)*

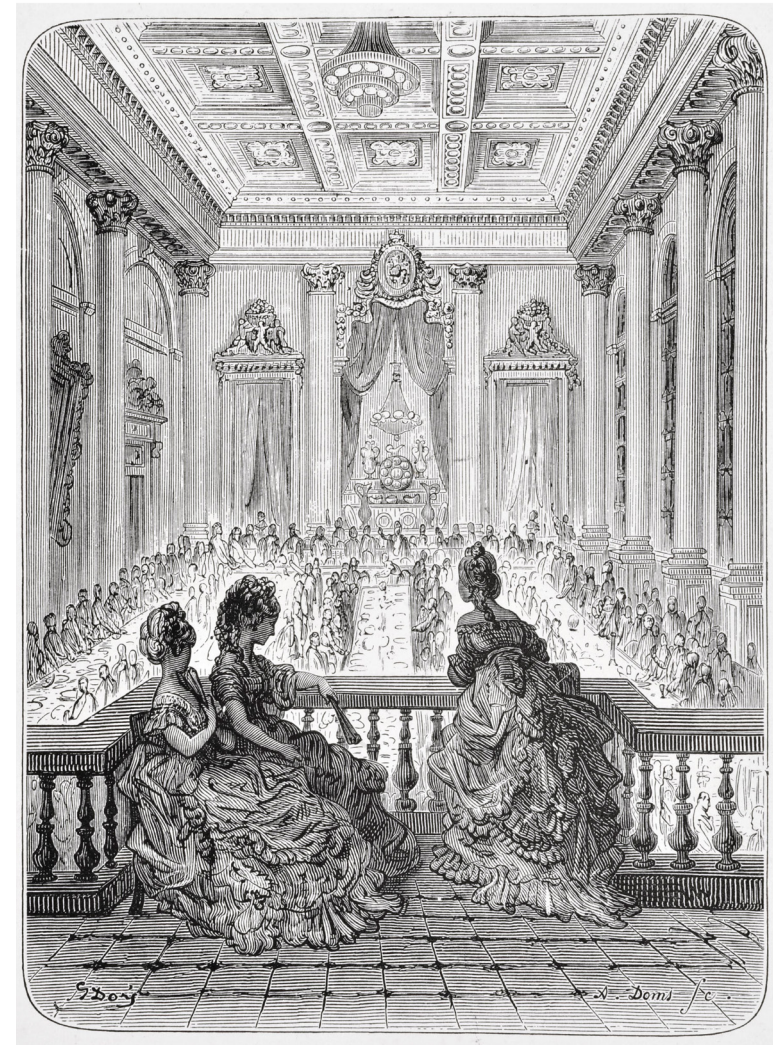


*Photograph of the foyer sculpture at the Barbican (source: Peter Bloomfield, 1981)*





*The ruin of the banquet hall (source: author)*



*The Goldsmiths at dinner by Gustav Doré (source: London Museum)*

*The City of London has quite an exclusive character, nowadays corporate towers, old institutions and monuments make up the image of the City. What are your views on the exclusive character of the City? And do you think the Carpenters' Company could take a more public role in the City?*

We are proposing to take a slightly more prominent role in opening the proposed exhibition area in the Hall. This will concentrate on explaining the role of Livery Companies both now and in the past. We also intend to concentrate on the Building Craft College and what it does. I cannot see a role for the practical side of what we are doing. There might be an interest in some of the craft aspects of what we are doing, but this would be at the 'hobby' end of the spectrum. Better I feel to get any interested 'City' people to come to Stratford to attend our short courses and to see what the College is about.

*One of the key objectives of the Carpenters' Company is managing its many charities, however most of these charities take place outside of the City's bounds, such as the craft college in Stratford. Would the Carpenters' Company be open to starting charitable activities within the City of London, contributing to the City's aims at diversifying and public engagement?*

We already do a considerable amount in the City supporting the City of London Girls school, the Boys school, the Guildhall School of Music, as well as providing scholarships for a significant number of individual children and scholars.

### *Conversation with Michael Morris OBE*

Michael Morris OBE is an architect and a member of the Carpenters' Livery Company.



*In today's society of mass production, what role do you believe woodworking crafts and crafts in general could take? And do you think craftsmanship can assume a more significant role in the City of London's architecture and activities?*

Well, it would be nice to think so, but I fear that money talks and people will want the economy that comes from mass production. We are really concentrating on giving people the skills that are always going to be necessary on all building sites and indeed in the factories preassembling things. Most of the people we are training will go onto being site carpenters and joiners. However, we do have a good cohort of people doing the fine woodwork and furniture making. There is certainly a market for purpose-built furniture and high-end interior fitting out.

*Working on the redevelopment were there along the way any thoughts on including different functions other than offices to secure the income stream of the Carpenters' Company? Think about retail, a hotel or cafés and restaurants.*

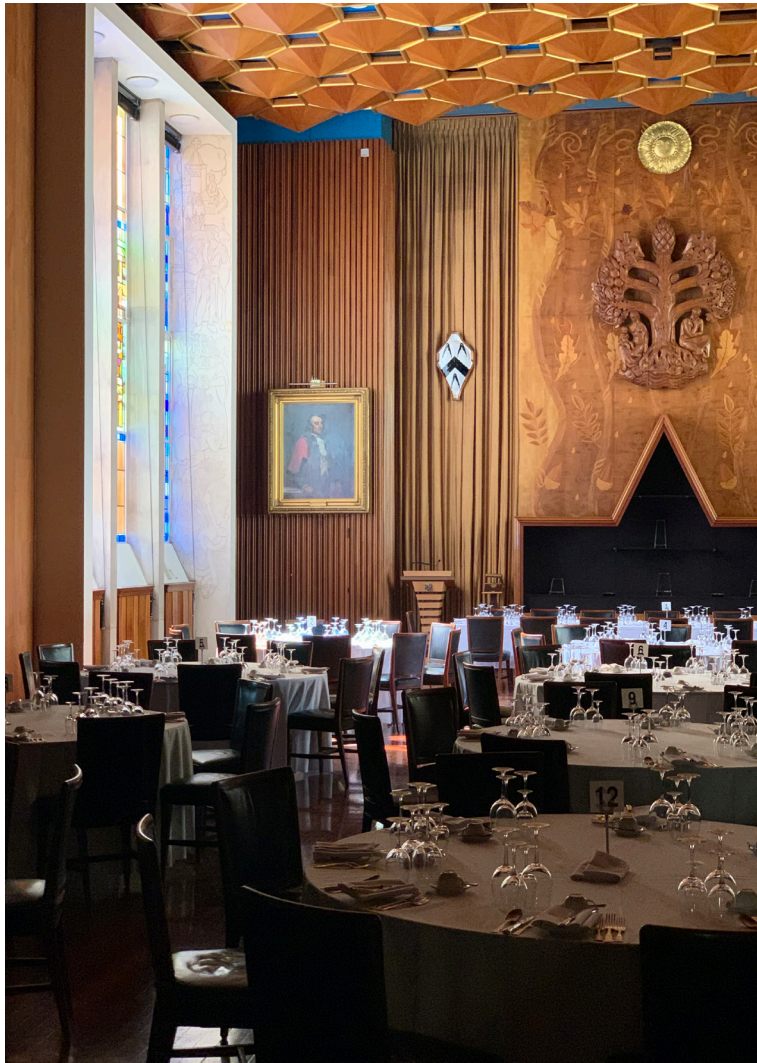
Yes, this was discussed, and discussion continues. The picture has changed considerably since the Covid epidemic. At one point we thought that demand for office space might decline and we would be better off with residential accommodation. However, demand for top quality office space in the City has bounced back. We have considered café and retail use – but there is a recent history of this sort of enterprise folding up quite fast as the marketplace is probably saturated. We did think about hotel use – but felt that this is best undertaken by people who know what they are about. We do not!

*The character of the new facades in the proposal continues the proportions, scale and materiality of the existing context, minimising the presence of the new extension. What do you think about adopting a distinct architectural expression to differentiate the new extension from its surroundings, such as making the public area of the building more prominent and perceivable?*

Our architects started from this position, but were talked out of it by the various conservation bodies.

*From your viewpoint as a member of the Carpenters' Company, what do you believe the City of London requires to preserve its character while also adapting to the needs of the future?*

Less sky-scrapers which seem to be monuments to greed and will be very difficult to adapt to changing uses in the future.



*The Carpenters' Hall (source: author)*



*The Craft College (source: author)*





*The Carpenters' Hall (source: author)*



*The Carpenters' Hall (source: author)*



### *The Power of the Office View*

Location is everything in the City of London. Historically, business in the Square Mile relied heavily on face-to-face interactions, such as sprinting messengers delivering the latest bank rates. The closer a site was to the Bank of England and its activities, the higher its land value.<sup>20</sup> However, nowadays verticality appears to have taken precedence. The taller the building, the better the view and the more office space it can accommodate, a crucial factor given the City's limited capacity for outward expansion. The City's meritocratic narrative is echoed in its vertical growth; at the top the coveted corner office with its god-like view over the metropolis. A constant contest to rise above one's peers for the most prime real estate in the Square Mile, only to be outpaced the following year. Coupled with the City's need to project an image of financial prosperity, the construction of new towers appears unending. News articles seemingly announce a new tower proposal every other week, each slightly taller than its predecessor and with the newest facilities.

The sought-after and valuable uppermost floor has also become a tool to appeal to the City of London Corporations aim

to open up and become more publicly accessible. Proposals for new towers frequently incorporate public amenities at the top, resulting in the monotonous proliferation of rooftop restaurants, sky gardens and observation platforms. Yet a closer look at these spaces reveals they remain largely inaccessible, with bookings required months in advance and a focus on short-term tourist visits, leaving the vertical hierarchy of the City largely undisturbed. It compels me to ask if this hierarchy could be truly overturned, incorporating accessible public amenities vertically? What if the person I encountered in the windowsill wasn't occupying a space on the ground floor, but instead sat in the most coveted window on the uppermost floor of a tower? Would someone relate differently to the City from a corporate workers' office view? I explored these questions through interior window models positioned at various heights across the City; the cellar, the ground floor, the historic rooftops and the uppermost floor of an office.

20. Thomas, Amy. *The City in the City: Architecture and Change in London's Financial District*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2023. 81-118.



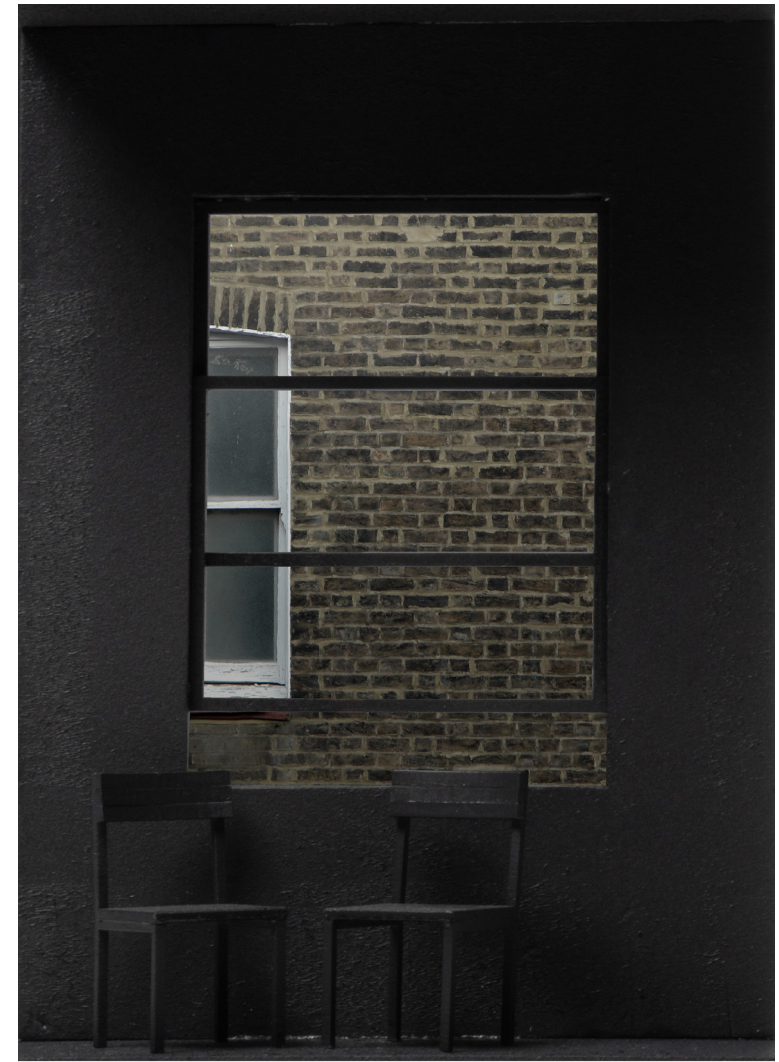
*The god-like view from the interior (source: author)*



*The between old and new view from the interior (source: author)*



*The ground view from the interior (source: author)*



*The basement view from the interior (source: author)*



### *My position*

The City of London is in its own right a unique place. Its long existence predates that of the nation that governs it, seemingly granting it a position beyond the reach of time upheld by privileges and exemptions found nowhere else. It continues to operate under these immunities and traditions, functioning like a self-governing territory that is spatially and juridically different from the rest of the metropolis. As suggested by the title of Amy Thomas's book; *The City in the City*, the divide between the capital and the financial district is stark. Something that did not evade me the number of times I visited the Square Mile, where its architecture and among other things only reinforced my sense of outsidership and inaccessibility. Leaving the outsider often no choice but to leave or appropriate the most unlikely places; much like the rough sleeper encampment in the Castle Baynard Street tunnel or the person in the windowsill. These individuals belong to a group that lies outside the majority of workers who keep the financial machine running, the very people for whom the City came to be built around. It is they who make use of the public amenities buried deep within the City's structures, shielded behind layers of checkpoints

and reception desks. Couple this with the observation that some so-called publicly accessible spaces are concealed or uninviting, such as the lobby café mentioned by Fiona Williams and the City's esoteric understanding becomes all the more evident.

Yet, at a time when urban living has become more of a privilege than a right, the City can no longer afford to maintain its insular character. Faced with increasing criticism and pressure to become more inclusive, not to mention a changing work culture, it is no longer merely a desire but a necessity to make the financial district in the heart of London more accessible to the wider public. To no extent am I advocating for the dismantling of the financial apparatus that is the Square Mile, nor a return to the domestic City longed for by Thomas Babington Macaulay. Rather, something in between.

Faced with constraints on outward expansion the City is turned to building inward and upward. Leading to the consolidation of plots for larger-scale developments, the approval of new tower construction and repurposing of vacant office space of which the former two

are utilised more often. However, both frequently overlook the opportunities and values inherent in the existing urban landscape, particularly when paired with the prominent façadism movement present in the City. A new public and accessible layer within the City should therefore embrace the very opportunity that others regard as a nuisance, with a deep regard and understanding of your surroundings and an emphasis on situated and adaptable architecture that could more easily be spread out. From this perspective, the question is no longer where to find the largest plot on which to build the next Barbican Cultural Centre, but rather where within the City the esoteric character is most strongly felt, such as in its historic core. A great starting point would be to look at the mythical alleyways within this area.

The upward ascent seems to sustain the myth of financial superiority upon which the City has come to depend both in times of crisis and in periods of prosperity. Concurrently, the City's inward-looking nature continues vertically, reflected in the seemingly endless array of inaccessible office floors. Although publicly accessible top floors and ground-floor spaces have

become more common, I believe that in most cases they are little more than a ploy to appease the City's planning department. Opening up spaces at street level is a noteworthy cause; however, it is equally necessary not to leave the floors above undisturbed if we are to truly challenge the existing hierarchies, particularly at the heights that remain connected to and visible from street level.

As for the internalised public world found within the City, I would like to return to a principle set out by Mark Pimlott; for a public room or interior in a private place to work, it needs to be perceivable by the public, its access understood and hold some sort of meaning. The public layer I'm advocating for in the City should adhere to this, or risk sharing the fate of Williams's lobby café.

To conclude, while change may appear imminent and the City Corporation seems willing to adapt, the City remains poised on the threshold of transformation. The real question is whether capitalist practices will prevent it from happening or not and if we, the outsiders, are willing to wait for it. Perhaps these things do take time and



*The Square Mile in gray-scale (source: Carl Laubin, 1997)*

I should show more patience. However, compared to the City of London, we are merely mortals and do not have an eternity to wait.



I would like to thank my mentors at Delft University of Technology, *Amy Thomas*, *Roel van de Pas* and *Rufus van den Ban*, who guided me throughout the year and with whom I have enjoyed countless insightful conversations. Their support helped me navigate challenges and moments of doubt, without them, this project and research would not have been possible.

Regarding my visits to England, I must express my gratitude to *Fiona Williams*, planning officer at the City of London Corporation and *OBE Michael Morrison*, member of the Car-penters' Company at London Wall. Both were kind enough to welcome me to the City, en-gage in discussions about my project and assist me in becoming acquainted with the different stakeholders in the Square Mile.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge the support and help of the academics, former mentors, fellow students and friends listed below.

*Mark Pimlott*  
*Lara Schrijver*

*Sereh Mandias*  
*Elise van Dooren*  
*Marie-Isabel de Monseignat*  
*William Yam*

*Adelina Garifyanova*  
*Veronica Danesin*  
*Anke van de Rijdt*



