Tower Hill
1. Castlemead Tower
2. Marriott Hotel
3. Brew House
4. Castle Park View Site
5. Pip n Jay Church
6. Central Health Clinic
7. St Philip's Bridge
8. Lead Shot Tower
9. Assembly site
Historically located between Bristol Castle and Old Market the area identified here as Tower Hill forms the western extent of the former parish of St Philip and St Jacob. Land to the to the south of the Castle precinct was set aside as the Kings Orchard, separated by the moat. Historic records suggest that the area was contained within a defensive wall defining the original line of Tower Hill and Passage Street.

By the 18th century the area had developed as a dense mix of uses surrounding the churchyard. Tight lanes such as Cheese Lane and Jacob Street extended to the east and the river provided a focus for the industrial manufacture of glass, iron and lead shot.

The production of lead shot, used primarily for ammunition, was revolutionised by William Watts who developed the idea of the shot tower within which molten lead is dropped through a copper sieve into water. The process was patented in 1782, the same year that Watts extended his house on Cheese Lane and built the first tower which remained until rebuilt in 1969 after a road widening scheme. The later tower is no longer used for producing lead shot but was listed in 1995 and subsequently incorporated within a waterside office development in 2005.

The area today lies to the south of the Bristol Shopping Quarter, between Old Market and Castle Park. To the north the area is characterised by the post-war highways and the Brutalist modern architecture overlooking the eastern edge of the Park.

To the south the area remains focused on ‘Pip and Jay’ and its associated churchyard, bounded by mature plain trees. The Floating Harbour and the busy inner circuit road are strong boundaries defining Tower Hill as an identifiable quarter. However they offer very contrasting environments; the waterside provides a tranquil setting for development and an opportunity for leisure and further development of quayside routes.

Tower Hill is currently an underused quarter of the city centre, particularly to the south where vacant and cleared sites add to the overly wide and open nature of Passage Street and Narrow Plain. Whilst the predominant use is offices, there are small pockets of other uses such as residential at Ferryman’s Quay, and the Marriott Hotel overlooking Castle Park. As a result the area feels relatively deserted at evenings and weekends. Increasing the mix of uses and establishing a greater residential population would bring benefits including increased use and overlooking to Castle Park.

Recent works to the Old Market roundabout junction have sought to improve the strategic cyclist and pedestrian route connecting Old Market to the Centre. The further reworking of Castle Street along the northern boundary of the former Ambulance Station site could significantly enhance the route whilst providing a stronger sense of arrival into Castle Park.
5 Tower Hill - Analysis

Challenges:
1. Conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle through traffic.
2. Poor quality public realm and street clutter.
3. Highway dominated junction constraining pedestrian movement.
4. Negative visual impact of parking.
5. Poor connectivity across heavily trafficked roads.
6. Negative townscape impact of vacant sites or poor quality buildings.
7. Poor quality ground floor relationship with the street.
8. Poor legibility for pedestrians and cyclists.
9. Imposing or out-of-scale buildings.
10. Poor condition and underused heritage assets.
11. Compromised setting and lack of public interpretation of heritage assets.
The area forms a key connection between Old Market and the City Centre. High volumes of pedestrians, cyclists, buses and vehicles move through the area, particularly at peak hours causing tensions and conflicts between users. Two key development sites within the area provide the opportunity to significantly enhance the public realm, rebalancing the allocation of space to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists. Redevelopment of key sites also provide the opportunity to create better defined street frontages, as well as providing opportunities to improve access to the water’s edge and more pleasant pedestrian connection between Temple Meads and the Centre via Castle Park.

**Issues:**
- Imbalance of street space between vehicles and pedestrians and cyclists where highway infrastructure dominates.
- Poor quality cycling connection between Jacob Street and Castle Park.
- Conflicts and tensions between pedestrians and cyclists at Tower Hill junction.
- Severance from Old Market by Temple Way and Old Market Roundabout.
- Poor relationship with Castle Park and understated park entrances.
- Maintaining key views and appropriate setting of heritage assets.
- Encouraging mixed use development to provide increased activity.

**Opportunities:**
1. Reallocate road space to reflect high volumes of pedestrian and cycling use and offer an enhanced alternative route to Temple Way.
2. Create more convenient crossing points to enhance pedestrian and cycling connections.
3. Enhance access to the Floating Harbour and opportunities for a lively new public space on the waterfront.
4. High quality public realm reflecting the importance of strategic routes in wider pedestrian and cycle networks.
5. Reinforce existing landscape and enhance with tree planting where possible.
6. Providing a mix of uses and introduction of residential population to improve activity 24/7.
7. Make efficient use of highly sustainable location.
8. Provide a positive marker for Castle Park and enhanced park edge through development along Castle Street.
Tower Hill Place Plan

Vision

Positioned with direct access to Castle Park and the Floating Harbour, Tower Hill offers a quieter and more relaxed place to live and work within the city centre. New developments will bring greater intensity of floorspace but will not generate large volumes of traffic, and investment will bring the opportunity to increase connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.

Objectives

1. Improve Tower Hill as a place to live and work.
2. Deliver high quality and sustainable development solutions to the vacant sites surrounding ‘Pip n Jay’ Church.
3. Create a better setting for Castle Park, providing buildings which better relate, contain and directly overlook the Park.
4. Reallocation of roadway in order to calm through traffic and provide a safer and more attractive environment for cyclists and pedestrians.
5. Support the role of ‘Pip n Jay’ Church as a community hub.
6. Promote the continued use and refurbishment of the Central Health Clinic building recognising its townscape contribution to the area.
7. Provide a connected and continuous access alongside the Floating Harbour.
8. Develop opportunities for providing heat and power networks and ultrafast broadband connectivity.

Supporting transport measures

Recent public realm investment associated with the Old Market roundabout has made significant improvements to crossing facilities. The key development sites within the area are expected to contribute further improvements to the walking and cycling environment, as well as ensure better connectivity to Old Market and the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone.

Public transport improvements as part of the MetroBus scheme have included dedicated bus lanes along Temple Way in order to ensure greater reliability of travel times.

Key public realm and movement projects

Castle Street - The remodelling associated with the adjacent development site to extend the segregated cycle route and enhance pedestrian space associated with the strategic link between Old Market and the city centre.

Tower Hill - Reallocation of roadway to calm through traffic and incorporate segregated cycle facilities and on-street parking.

Passage Street / Broad Plain - As above.

Cheese Lane / Harbour Walkway - Significant investment as part of the Cheese Lane development site to provide access to an extended waterside walkway linking with Temple Quarter.

Key development projects

TH01 Former Ambulance Station

The development of this prominent site directly on the edge of Castle Park will deliver an exemplar residential scheme taking full advantage of its sustainable location and accessibility to high quality public open space in the city centre. The scheme will provide a significant level of affordable housing alongside private rented sector apartments.

The form of the development will respond to the rich archeological setting of the former medieval castle and will directly help to interpret the culverted moat within the townscape. The scale of the development should be confident, responding to the tall buildings policy in a positive way to provide increased overlooking and increase the legibility of the south east corner of the Park from the wider city centre and Old Market.

The development will contribute to the management of traffic and environmental enhancement of Castle Street, Tower Hill, Marybush Lane and Queen Street. Calming through-traffic generally, and more specifically reducing traffic movements along Castle Street will enable the roadway to be enhanced as an extension to the Park, and a continuation of the strategic pedestrian and cycle route linking Old Market with Baldwin Street.

TH02 Cheese Lane

The redevelopment of the site formerly occupied by the Clerical and Medical offices has stalled in recent years leaving an open cleared site at this prominent location where Temple Way crosses the Floating Harbour. The openness of the undeveloped site has increased the visibility of the two listed buildings, the Lead Shot Tower and ‘Pip n Jay’ Church, which provide distinctive landmarks within the wider Tower Hill area.

The previous planning permission reinforced the desire to establish a waterfront link toward Temple Meads station below Temple Bridge. Furthermore there is a need to link the waterfront route through the site via an attractive and legible route in order to establish an effective pedestrian and cycling movement corridor between Temple Meads and Broadmead.

The site offers an opportunity to create a more intense commercial focus for the area with an active waterfront and strong urban edge to Temple Way. Notwithstanding that the site sits within the area identified for potential taller buildings under SPD01, development proposals should aim to provide an appropriate setting for the two landmark listed buildings, through sensitive scale and massing of new buildings.
Proposed development: restore
Proposed development: reinvent
New public spaces and improvements to existing public spaces
Active ground floor uses (cafes, restaurants, shops)
Active building frontage (regular doors and windows, balconies etc.)
Existing and potential new focal building
Key public space enhancement
Public realm improvement corridor
Pedestrian routes (primary and local)
Cycle routes
Enhanced waterside access
Enhanced existing Ferry Stop
Enhanced existing Bus Stop
MetroBus Location