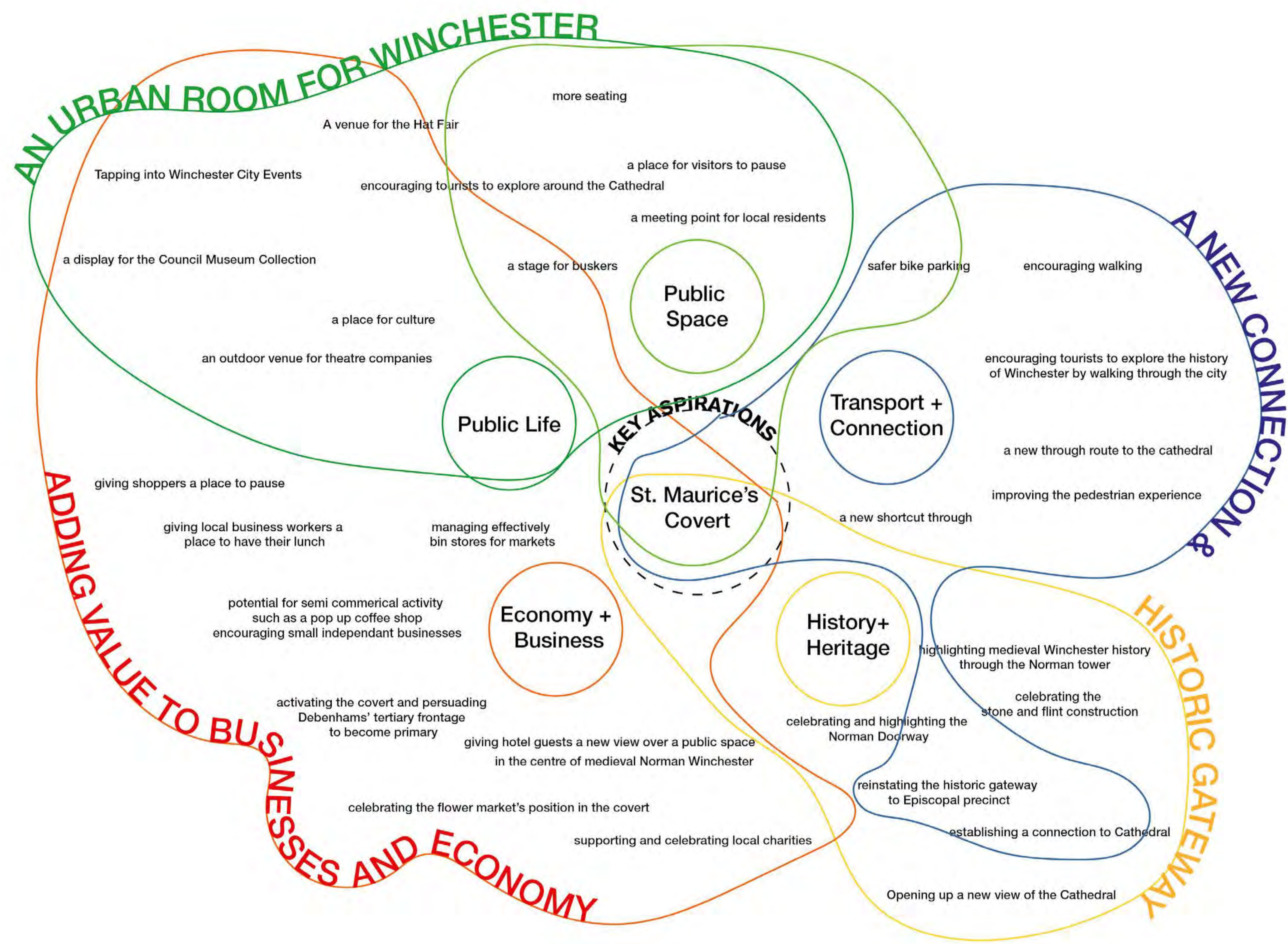




St. Maurice's Covert



This exhibition explores the potential possibilities for St. Maurice's Covert, a forgotten public space situated right in the heart of Winchester

There have been extensive discussions about the Covert over the last three years, and it has been agreed that external consultants with specialist design skills for the public realm should be engaged to develop a scheme for the site.

Following the Town Forum presentation on the 21st September 2016, this exhibition explains the design process and ideas ScottWhitbyStudio with Winchester City Council have produced.

The project sits under the auspices of Winchester Town Forum, which is the group of City Councillors who represent the six unparished wards in central Winchester. Often likened to a parish council for the city centre, the Town Forum is concerned with services, developments, policies and issues affecting the area.

Above: Diagram showing key aspirations of the project, organised by key themes



Visit www.stmauricescovert.tumblr.com to find out more and leave us your comments



Listening and Learnings



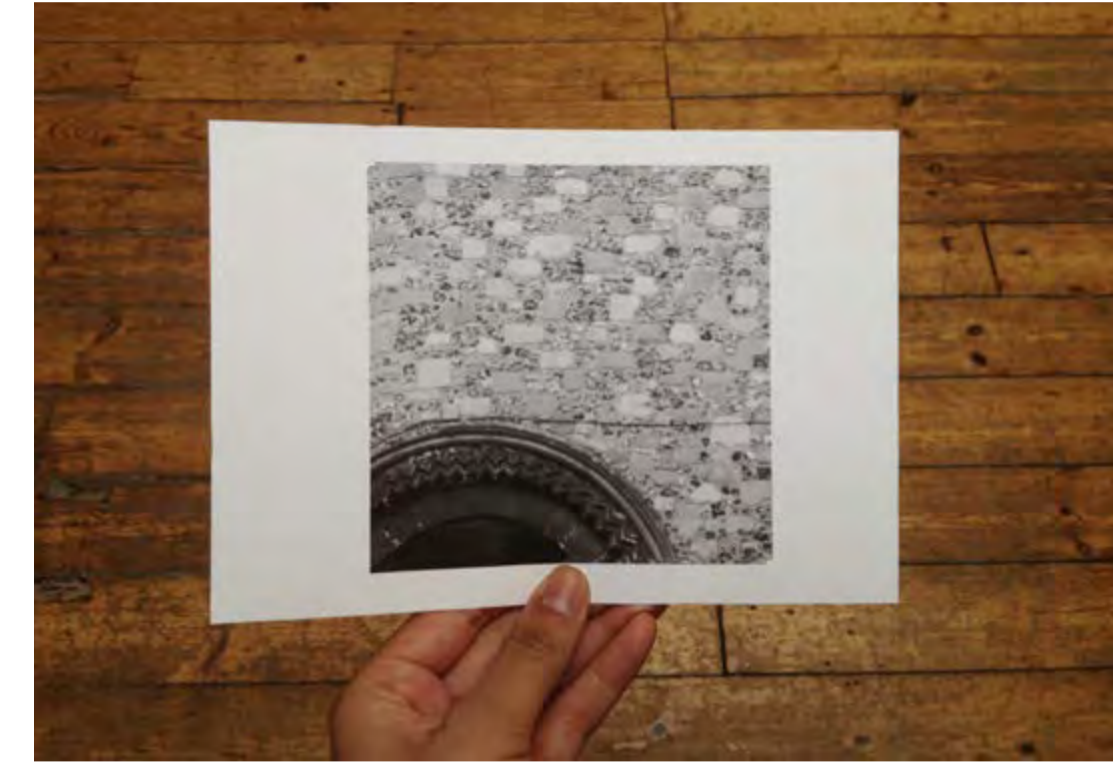
"People are always asking me. "Where is the Cathedral?"

-Dave, Flower seller



Photos From top left across:

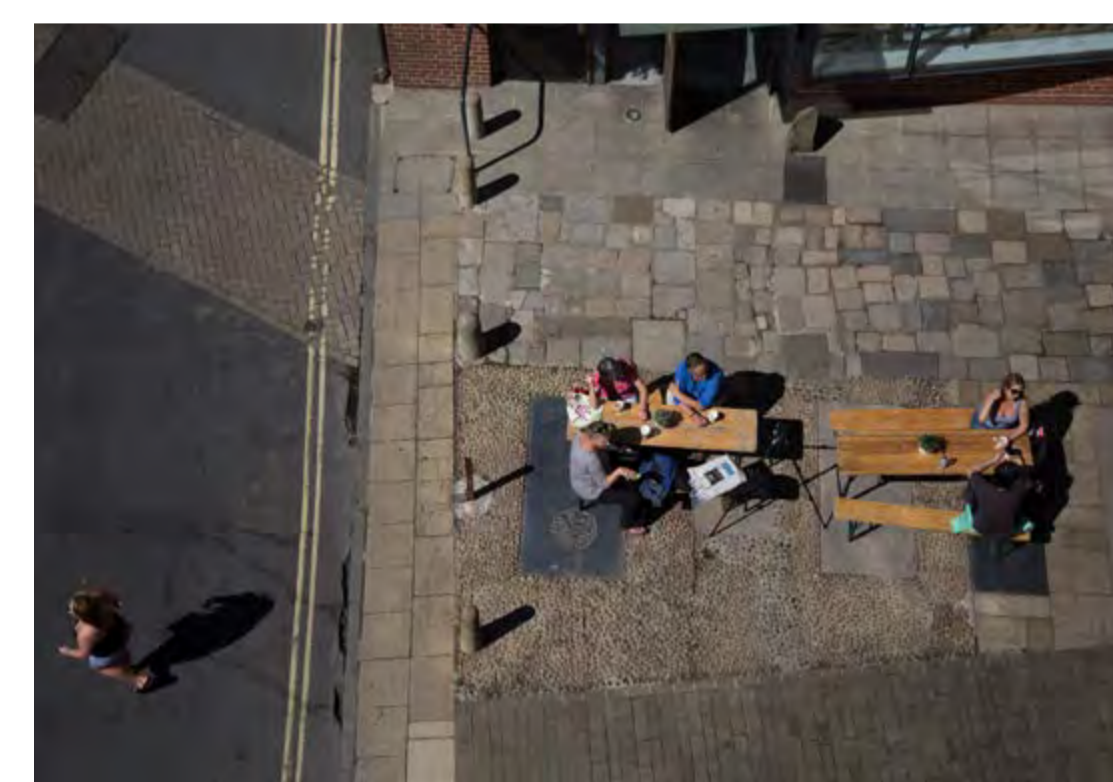
1. On-site visit with Winchester neighbourhood officer
2. Drop in session- getting views about the Covert
3. Drop in session- outcome of views
4. Drop in session- use of film to glean views about the covert
5. Drop in session- Model and drawings and group discussion
6. On site discussion with members of Incredible Edible Winchester
7. Survey postcard, asking people of Winchester to identify Norman Arch of Covert- many said Westgate
8. Talking with market sellers about their views of the Covert
9. Test Event 1 : Moving the flower seller into the middle of the Covert to test circulation of space
10. Test Event 2: Inviting pop up coffee Flat Whites' to use the space and have external seating outside- view from above
11. Screenshot of blog www.stmauricescovert.tumblr.com
12. Discussion on the roof of Debenhams- looking over at the view of the North Flank of Cathedral
13. Overt Covert Festival: Mini One day festival "Overt Covert" to test cultural activities in space and invite the public to learn about the history of the Covert.
14. Overt Covert Festival: Winchester Maintenance Team jetwashing the footprint of the former St. Maurice's Church into the stone.
15. Overt Covert Festival: Jetwashed stone
16. Overt Covert Festival: Mini exhibition in tower thoroughfare about the history of St. Maurice's Church and its relationship with the Cathedral Precinct
17. Overt Covert Festival: Tours in the medieval tower (currently a fire escape) as part of Overt Covert.



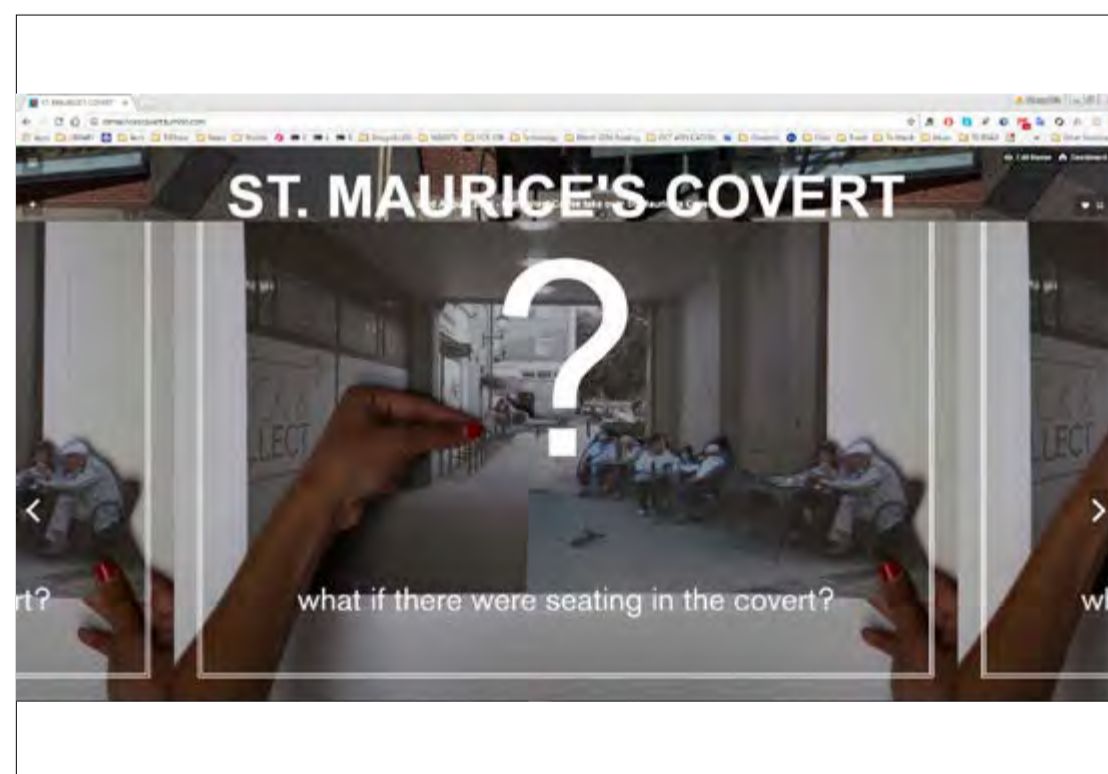
Conversations have taken place in and around Winchester, especially in the covert.

"That's from the Westgate right?"

-Member of the Public, being asked where he thought a picture of the Norman Doorway was from



The aim was to find out from the users themselves, those working locally, shopping locally, visitors etc. their thoughts on the current state of the covert and its future.



"At the moment, we direct them up the high street past monsoon because its the nicer of the options...it would be nice to direct people [through the Covert] but we don't because there are bins there..."

-Sarah Harfield, Tourist Information Centre Team Leader speaking about how the team directs tourists to the Cathedral

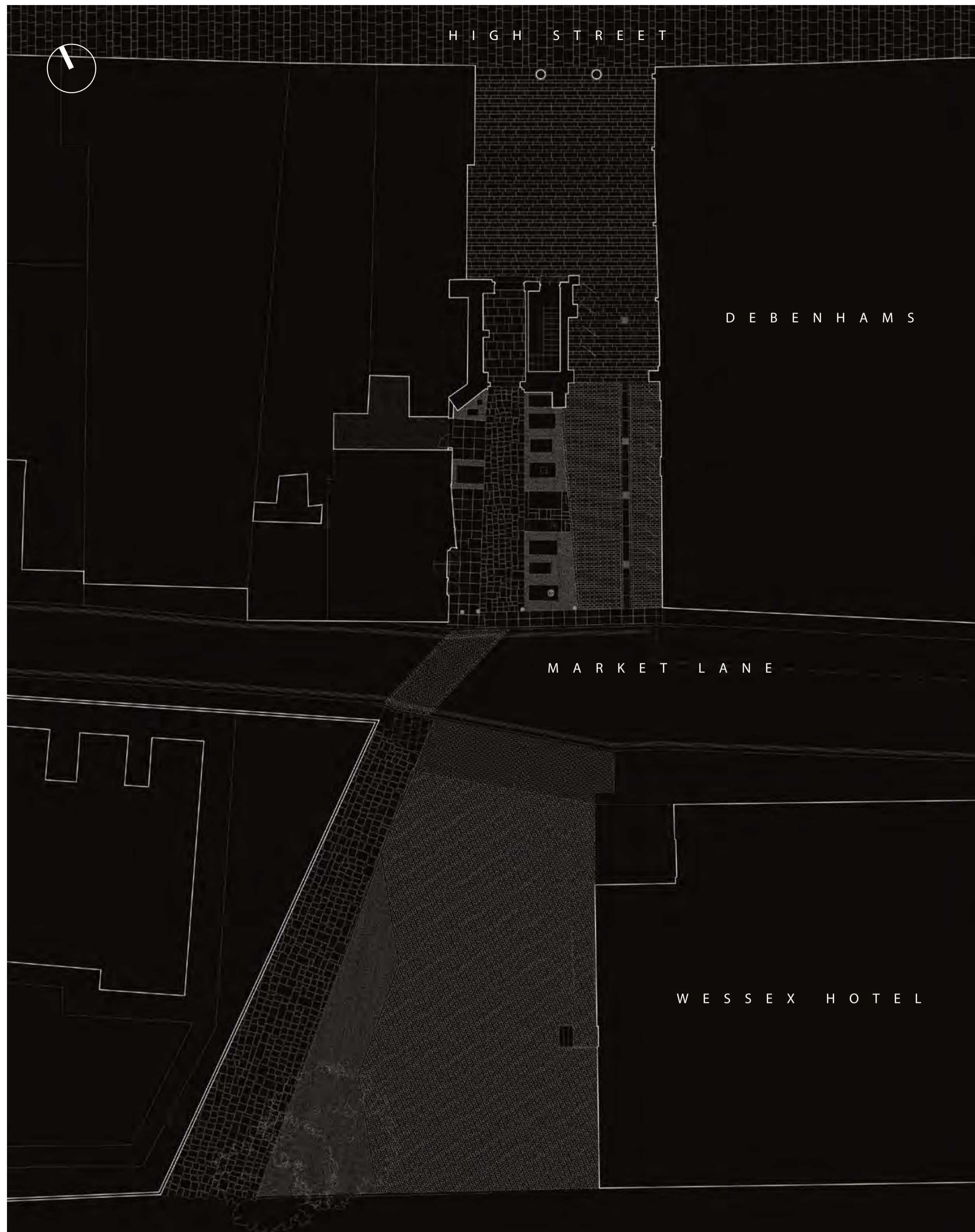


We have held temporary events to test circulation, activity and use in the covert; from moving the flower seller into the middle of the space instead of the corner, to inviting pop up coffee Flat Whites' to sell coffee in the space with outdoor seating. We have also seen some small changes happen already which transform the feel of the space- for example we noticed that it wasn't necessary to have the lights switched on during daylight hours and these are now switched off during the day.

On the 8th September 2016, we held a mini day festival to test how the space could be used as a central hub for cultural activity. Coinciding with Heritage Open Day, and titled OVERT COVERT, the festival took the opportunity to reveal the covert's history and potential as a public space.



We worked with the maintenance team to jetwash the former footprint of the old St. Maurice's Church into the stone paving, had screenings of a film made by a local artist, held an exhibition in the tower exploring the history of the church and its role as an old gateway, and opened up the medieval tower (normally a fire escape of Debenhams) for tours, revealing to many who came a new view of the Cathedral beyond.



Existing plan illustrating the many flooring materials of the Covert



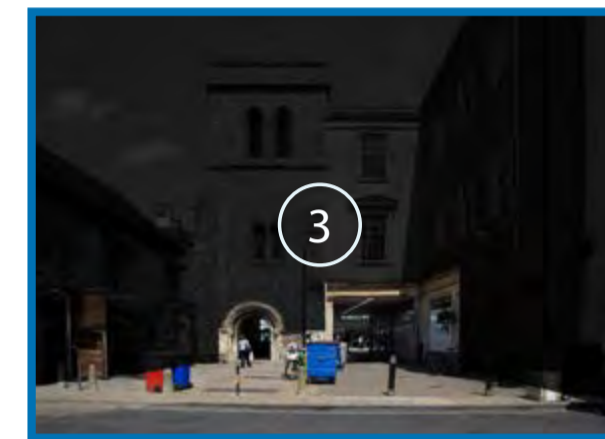
Issues and Opportunities key diagram, front and back of Covert



Disparate Elements/Clutter
There is an array of clutter and disparate elements belonging to many different stakeholders. How can we unify this situation through a shared materiality/surface/element?

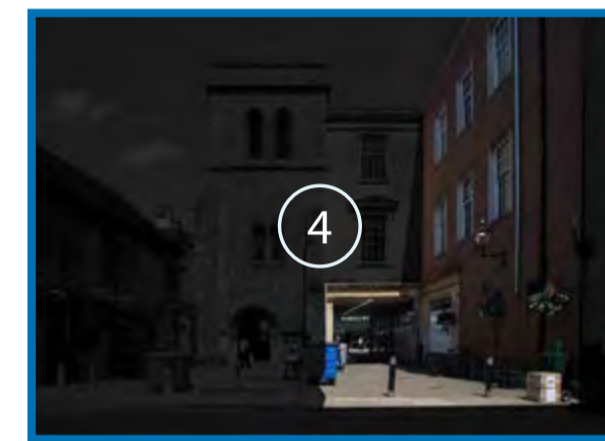


Bins in Sight
The issue of bins is a wider one than just limited to the covert. Therefore a screening strategy as well as a centralised system for bin management is what we recommend. There should be a rule that bins should not be allowed to be in view of the cathedral, and its vistas! How can we incorporate bins into the view without spoiling it?



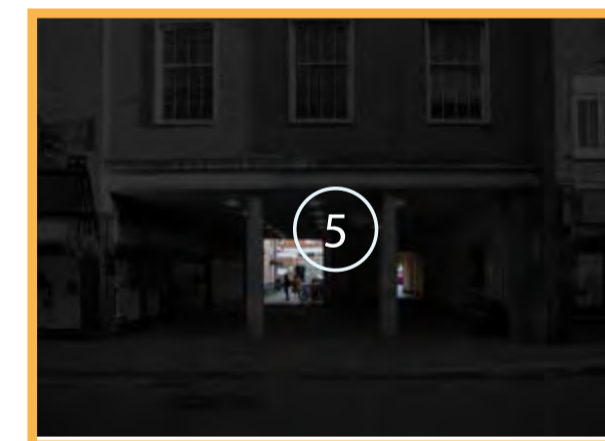
People Flow
Is there a way of channelling the movement in a more coherent way, so there is a more established through route? We moved Dave into the middle to see how that would affect the movement

How could this route be something more coherent- related to a walking or historic strategy?



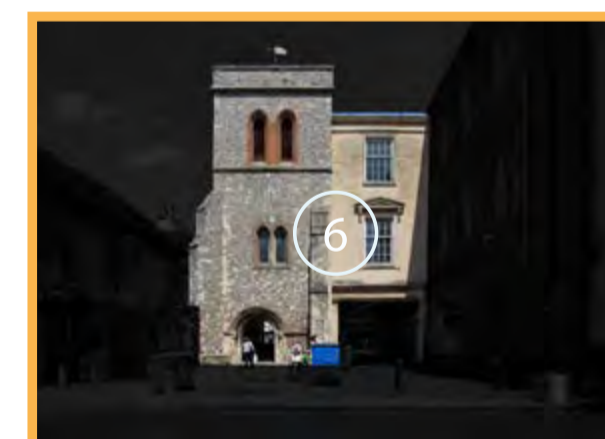
Wind Flow
Winchester has a prevailing south westerly wind, which means that the wind is funnelled through the undercroft space. In order to reduce this, something needs to be put there to mitigate the wind

What can we put there that can act as barrier but also have other uses?



Where is the Cathedral?
There is a lack of signage around the covert- when historically the covert was a significant gateway to the church precinct- How can we do a modern interpretation of a gateway to the cathedral but also to winchester's history as well as a walking trial/strategy?

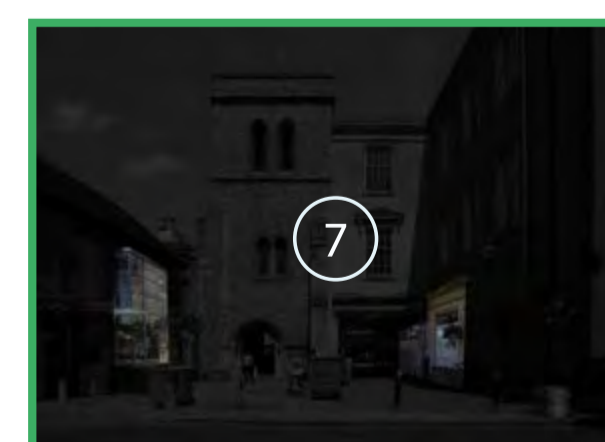
The vistas from the high street through the covert are of importance, how do we design these/work with the existing to create new end points. How can the lighting/design of flooring and material surfaces help with this ?



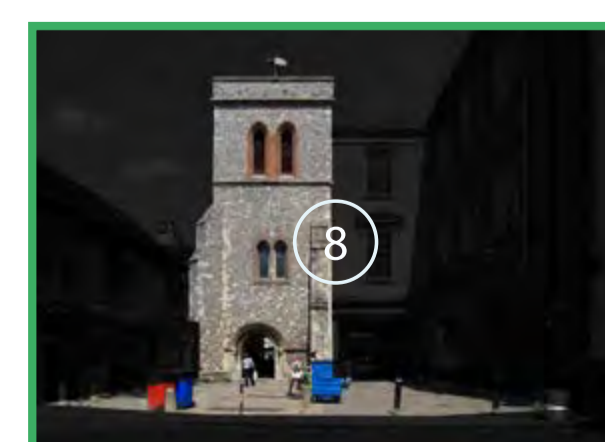
"Winchester must be the only city with a medieval tower as a fire escape"
Debenhams are currently only using it during an emergency- is there a way of opening it up for the public? Could this help with reactivating the space?

How can this medieval tower spark inspiration for other strategies that highlight Winchester's medieval past (close lanes, the old church)

How can this space be used otherwise? Camera obscura?



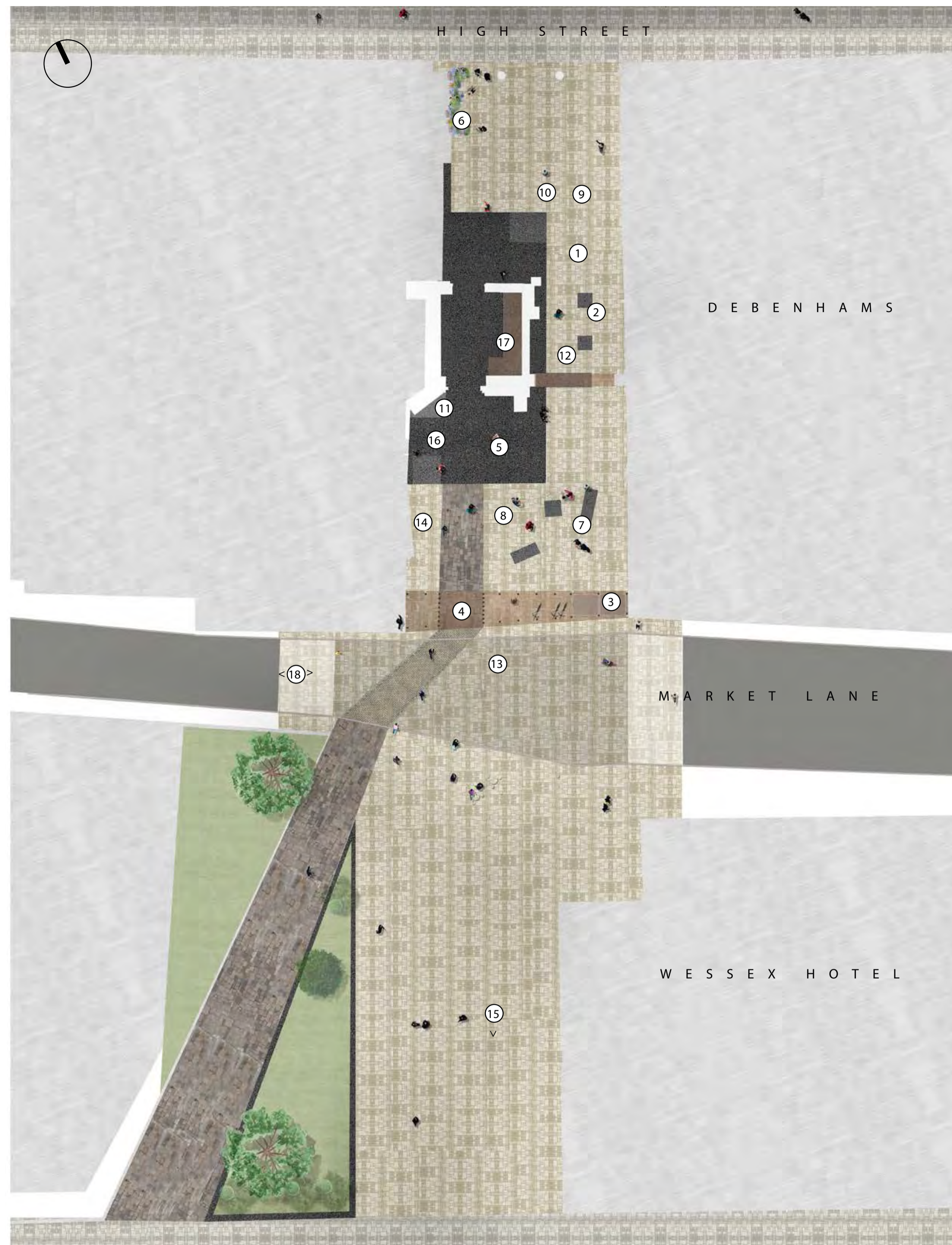
Frontages Potential
The notice board is currently hidden by the flower stall, could we relocate this notice board? Could there be a new kind of notice board? An interactive one? Could it be relocated to where the toilets are ?



Winchester as a city for performance
Winchester's creative community already make an important contribution to the creative vitality and quality of life of local people. How could this space could be seen as a venue that could host cultural activities- and how it might be possible to bring out the landmark quality of the tower, as a backdrop to this performance ?

The covert holds issues and problems that reflect larger problems within the rest of Winchester. It also however possesses latent potential to integrate itself into back into the heart of the city

Through site analysis in conjunction with the brief given and the public consultation, a collection of key issues and opportunities were derived as well as a set of key aspirations (see the introduction board for these aspirations). These possibilities for the project are hindered by many of the issues outlined on this board.



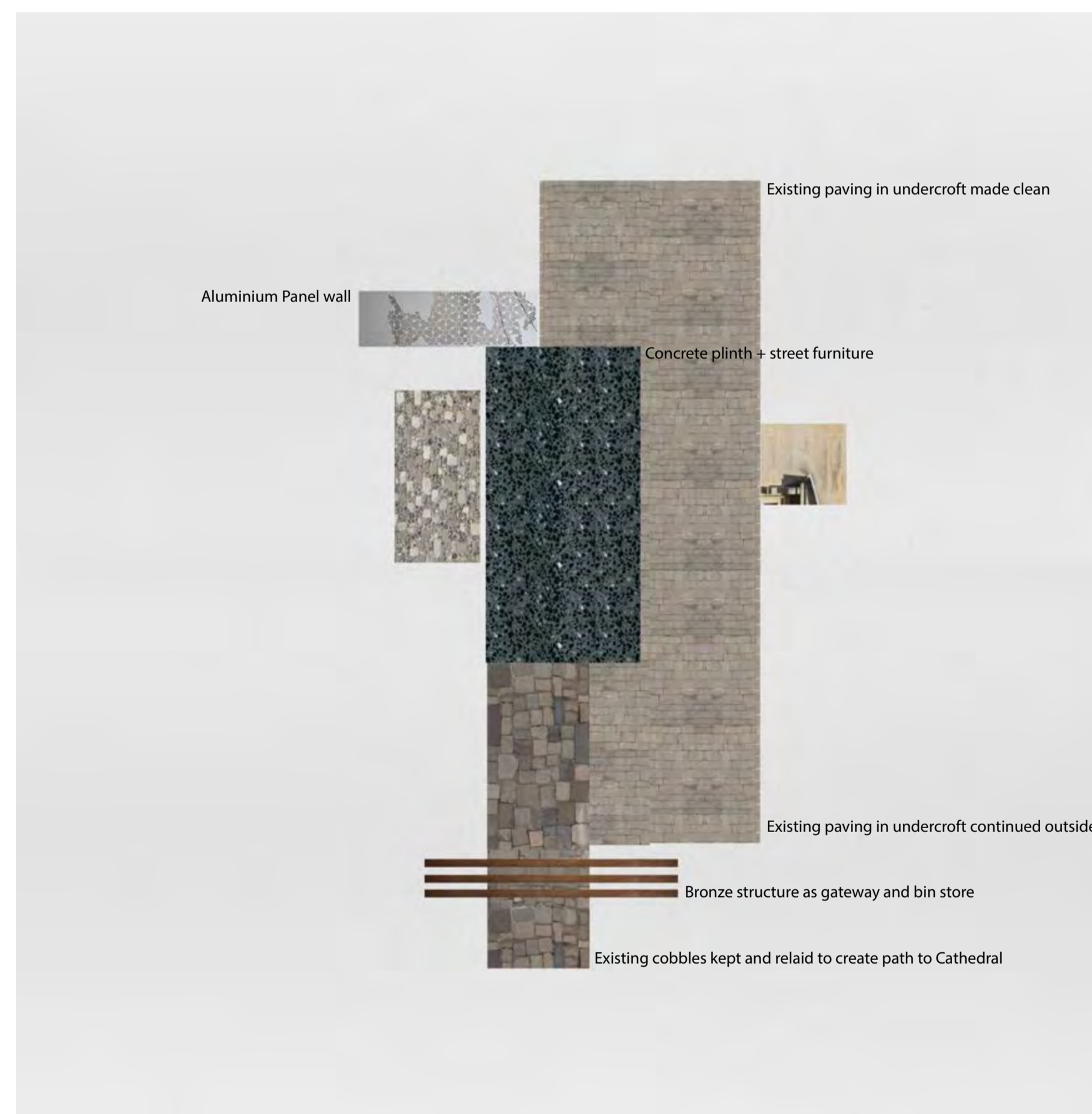
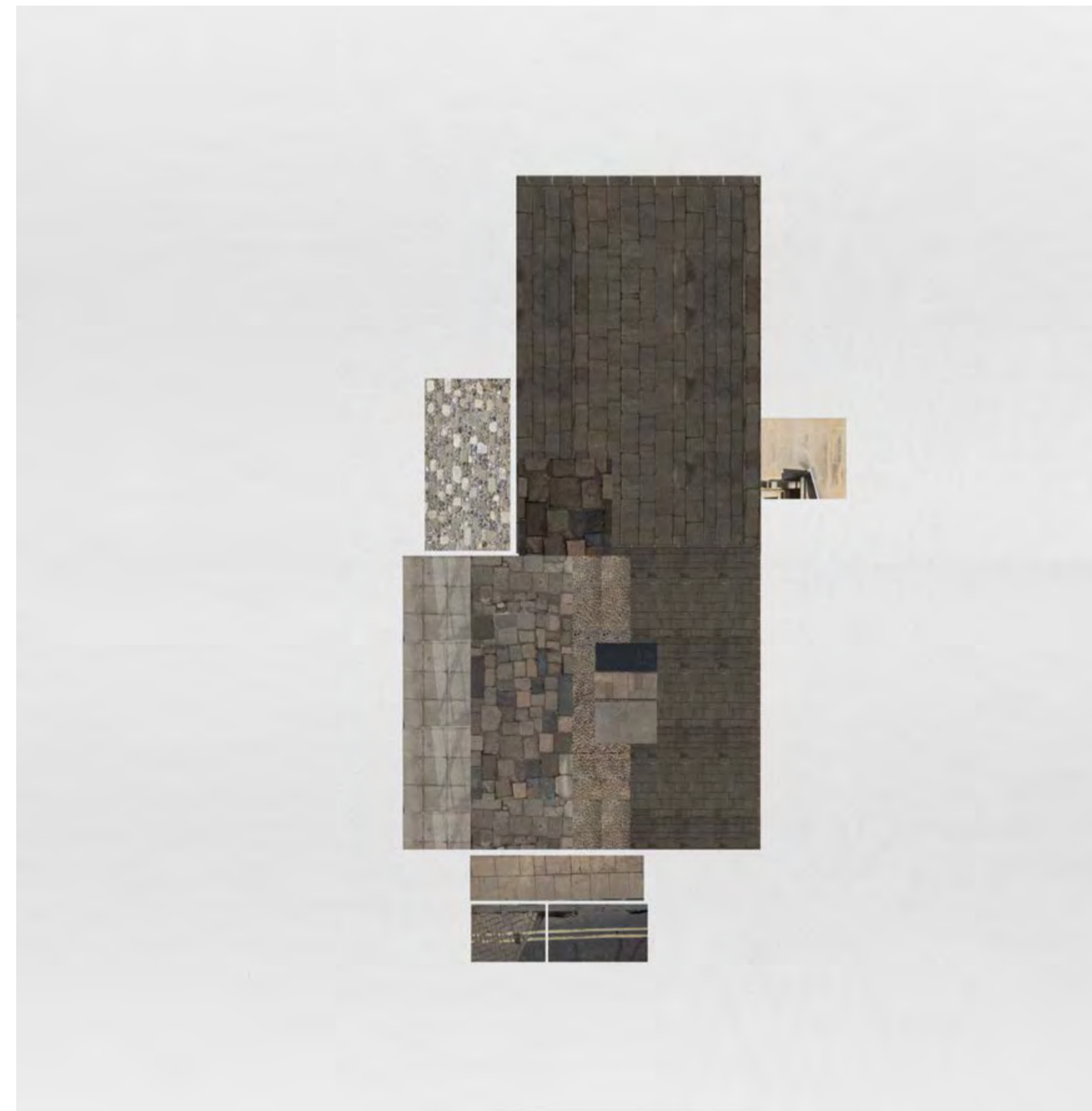
Proposed plan illustrating shared surface and each paving material given a function- See Key on right for descriptions of proposed works



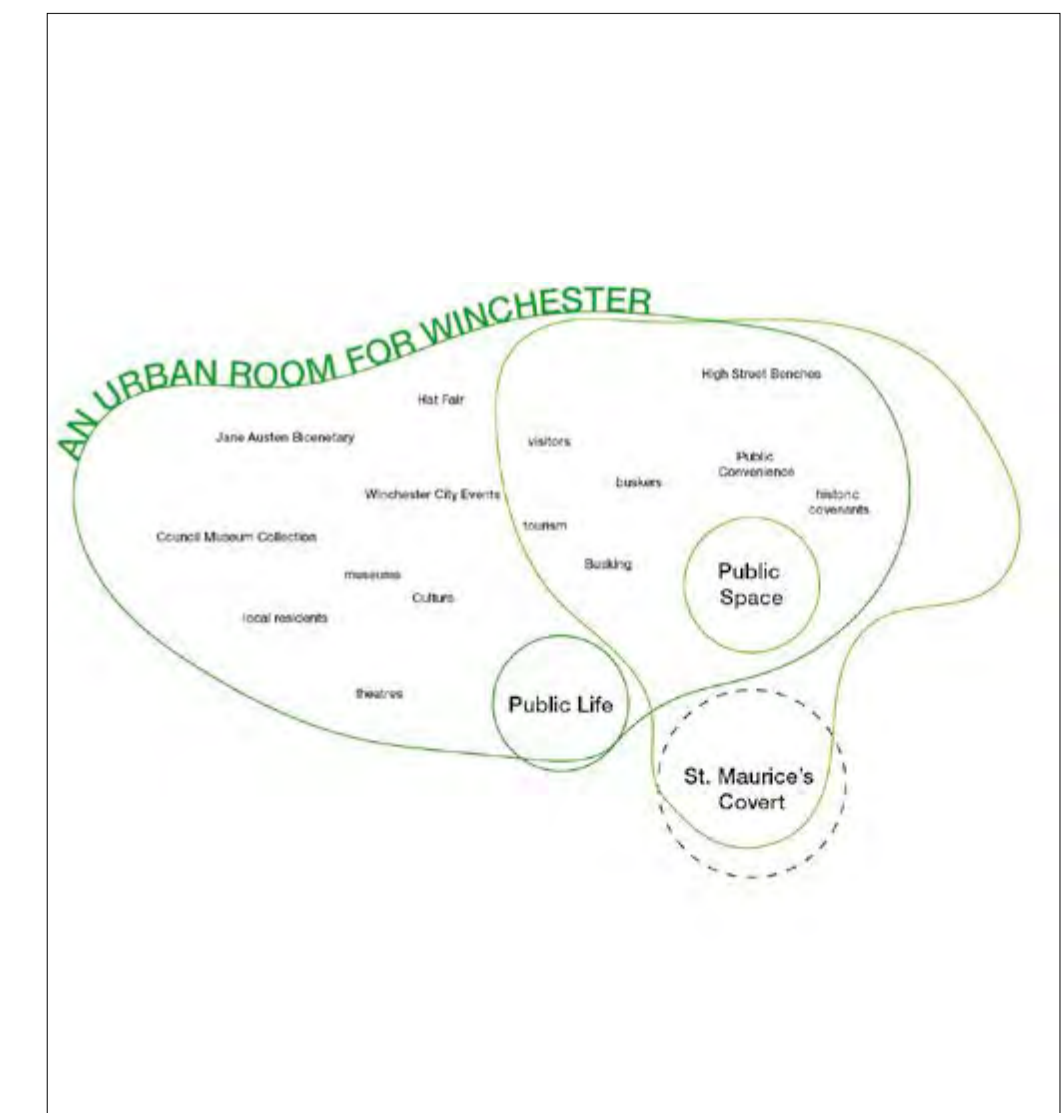
Existing covert

Highlighted elements to be removed

Decluttered space



Above: Existing material palette of the Covert
Below: Proposed material palette- new elements are simple



Key of Proposed Works (For Plan on left)

- 1 Cleaning
- 2 Decluttering existing fixed street furniture + Surfaces
- 3 Storage for Bins
- 4 New Gateway for St. Maurice's Covert
- 5 Plinth
- 6 Wall Frame/Panel system
- 7 Fixed Seating
- 8 Shared surface
- 9 Ceiling
- 10 Lighting Strategy
- 11 Plants and greening
- 12 Market furniture
- 13 Shared surface across to Wessex
- 14 WC Frontage reconfiguration/recruting
- 15 Clearing view to Cathedral from High Street
- 16 Gregg's Door
- 17 Tower open up to public
- 18 Narrowing Market Lane

There are
 8 types of paving
 7 owners of elements
 6 types of bollards
 5 architectural styles
 2 types of lighting
 2 types of bins

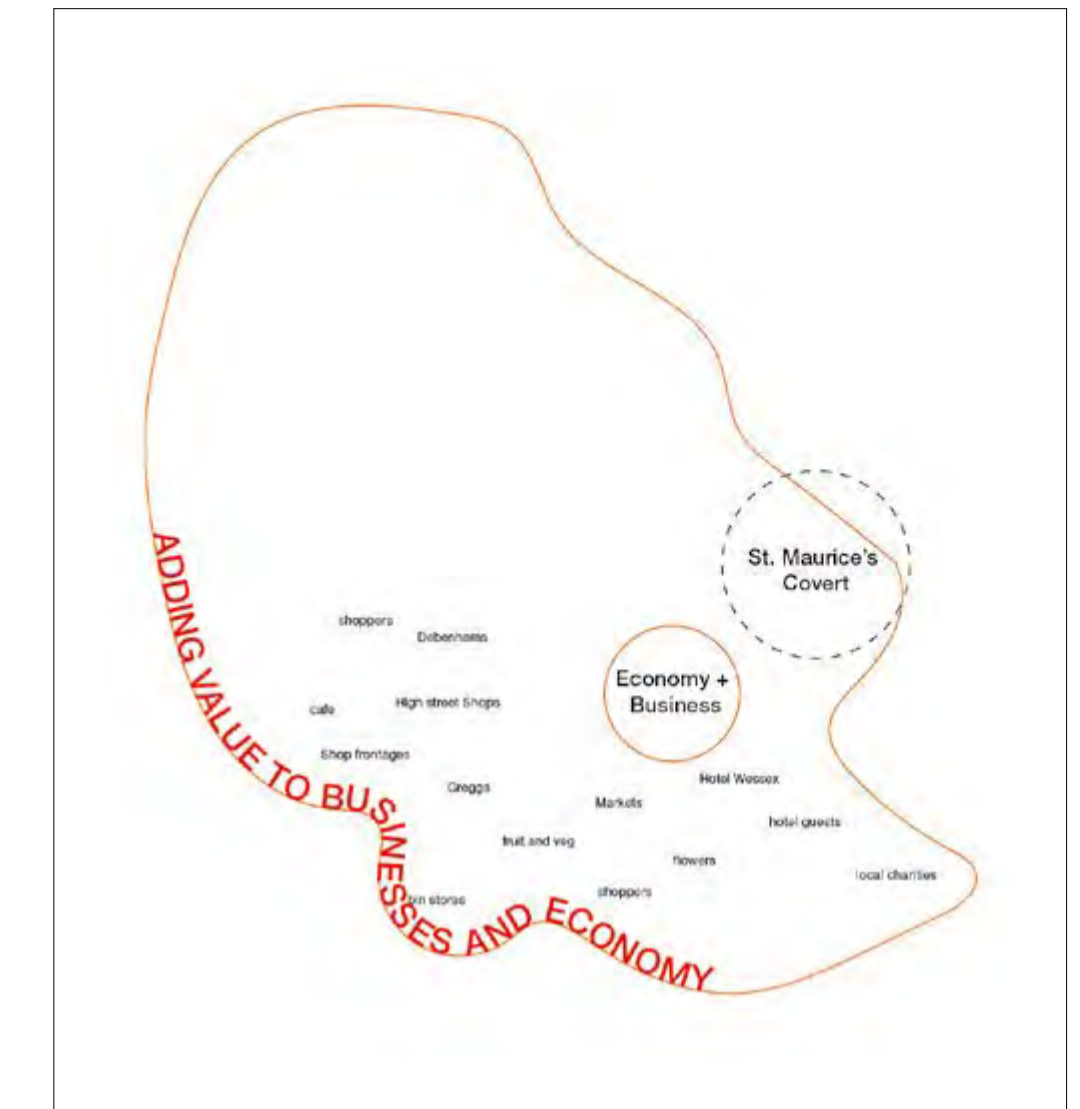
The Covert is multi-layered but currently is cluttered and requires the removal of elements such as bins, lighting. The new elements that are incorporated into the Covert to encourage activity and use will share materiality and act to unify the space. A shared surface across the whole covert will unify both the under-croft space and the open air rear part. Cast insitu concrete will form the terrazzo plinth and street furniture elements whilst a panellised wall will work with the cast objects to declutter the temporary-ness of the charity and flower markets-creating tables and shelves that celebrate and unify both these activities in the space.



Day time view, charity stall and flower seller present



Isometric view of panellised wall system, with folding platforms for flower display and storage, and plinth market furniture for charity stalls.



The covert is shared by multiple businesses and users.

The proposal will activate the wide covered area of the Covert, facing the High Street, and attract more foot traffic through the Covert. A possible way to do this is to introduce commercial or semi-commercial uses, as is already present in the form of the flower stall and temporary charity stalls, which appear there on certain days.

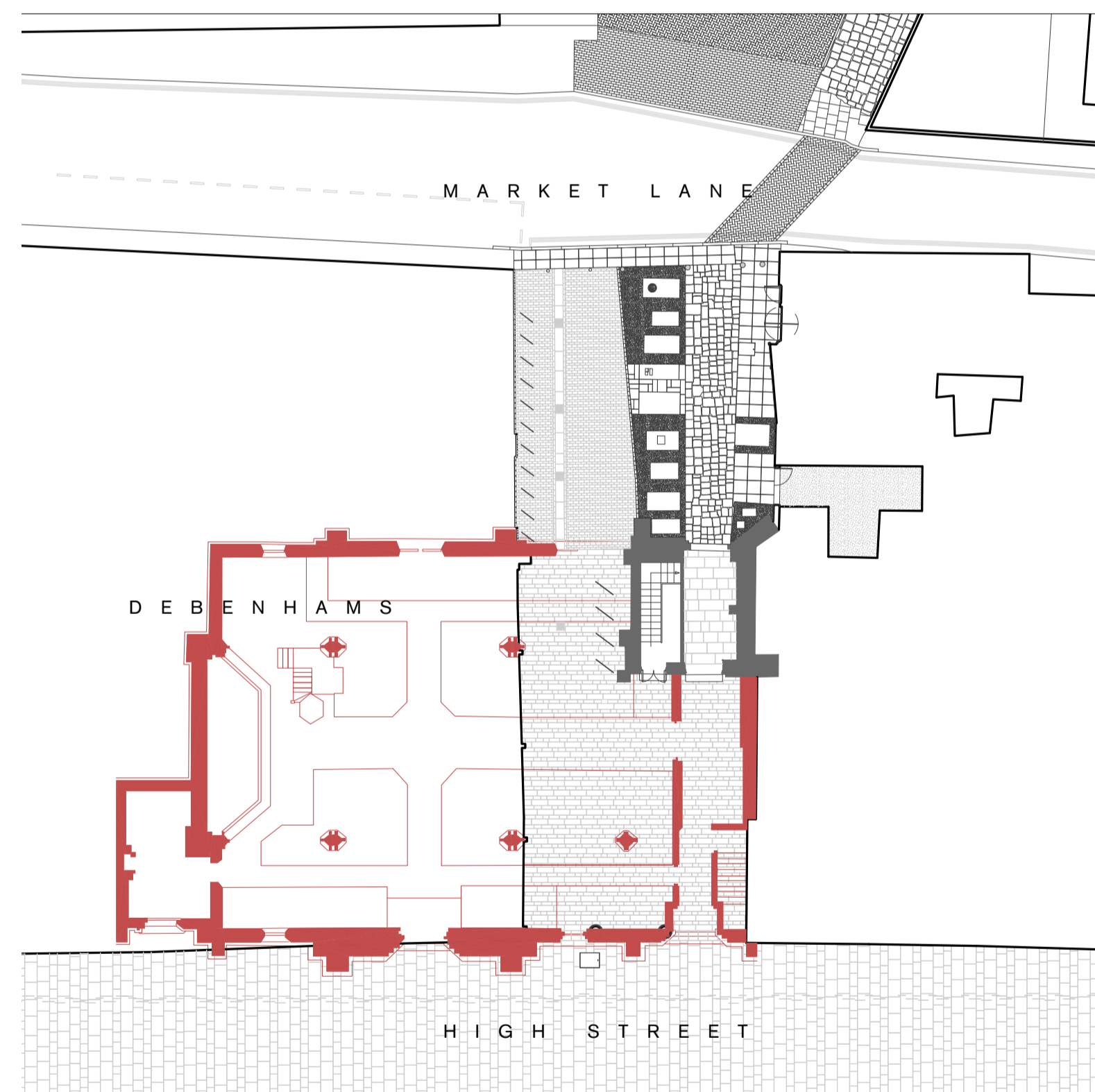
The covert will work with existing business and activities to add value to their activities. This will range from making the flower seller's and charity sellers lives easier with on-site storage and display, to understanding the future needs of local stakeholder businesses such as Wessex Hotel and Debenhams to imagine how the improvement of the covert would benefit their business.



Night time view, event occurring within the covert, and street furniture elements with integrated lighting illuminating the space



View from Cathedral, showing the former St. Maurice's Church (outlined)



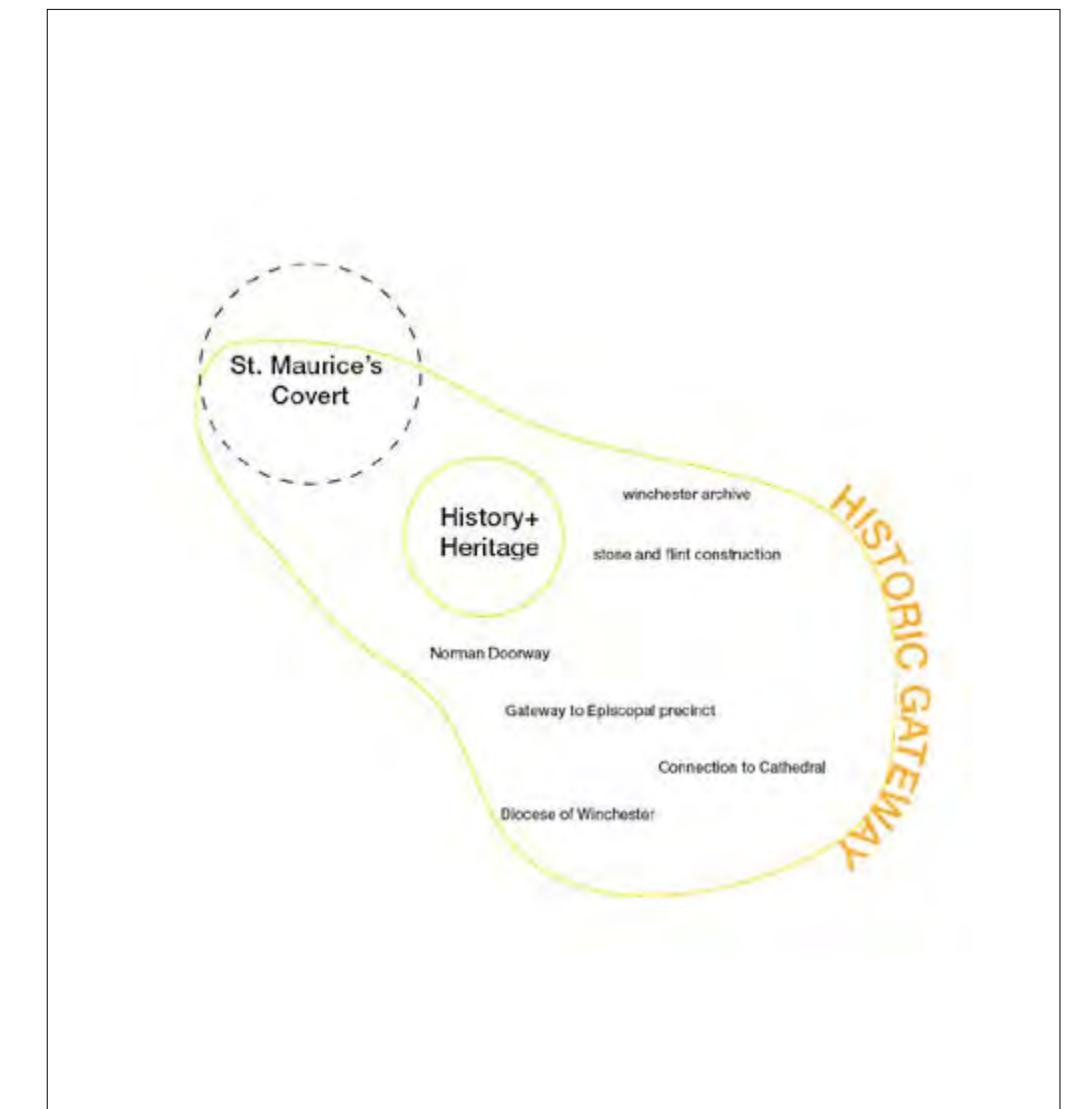
Plan of the Covert with the footprint of former church St. Maurice overlaid

“O face of my friend,
alone distinct of all that company,
you went on, you went on,
into the darkness”

Soldiers, F.S Flint



View from the rooftop of Debenhams next to St. Maurice's Tower, looking over at the Cathedral.



Interior and exterior view of former Victorian church St. Maurice.



Diagram illustrating proposed new staircase offering a new view out of St. Maurice's Tower



Overt Covert Festival Photographs, From Top:
Tour of medieval tower up fire escape stairs, view of entrance
of exhibition in tower of history of St. Maurice's Church,
Inside tower, opening talk given by Kate Macintosh.



This must be the only
medieval tower that is
used as a fire escape.

The tower and the Covert's history traces back to the Norman era when the church was used as a gateway chapel to the Cathedral Precinct as well as part of the Royal Palace. The reinstatement of a new gateway element (see next board) as well as opening up the tower will re-establish this historic relationship as a key route through, and an active public space highlighting the old urban grain and history of medieval Winchester.

What remains of St. Maurice, is the tower, standing tall amongst a mix of architectural styles. It should be celebrated and highlighted, through architectural lighting and activity.

4 | A New Connection



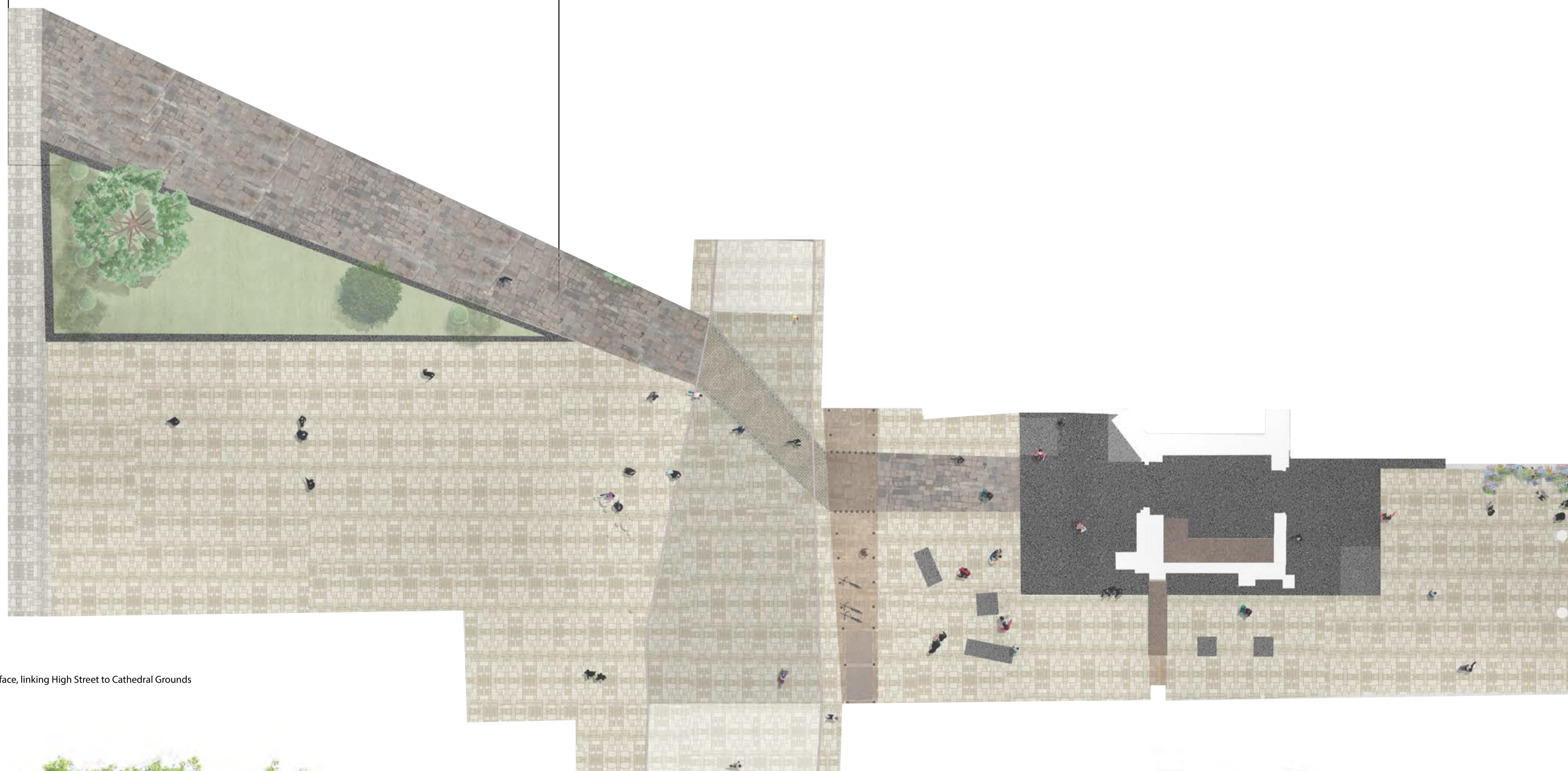
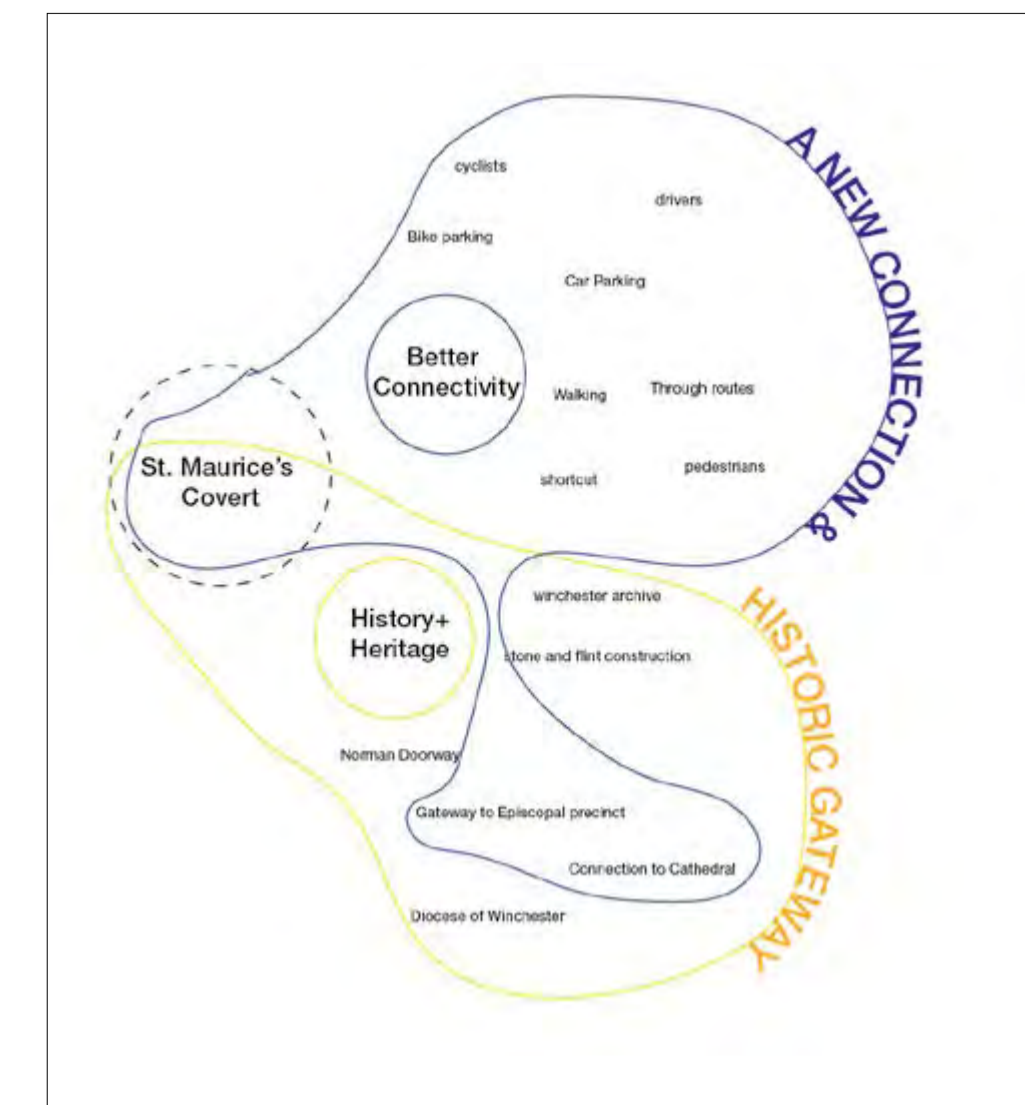
View looking from Cathedral Grounds to the Covert



View looking through the Gateway structure at the Covert



View looking from the high street through to the new space



Plan of proposed shared surface, linking High Street to Cathedral Grounds

The covert will form a clear route to the Cathedral Grounds, encouraging walking and placing the pedestrian experience as a priority

Accessibility of the Covert is of the utmost importance, it should be safe and easy for everybody to use. Tactile paving improves navigation through the site, and will be used to warn of vehicular roads and changes in level.

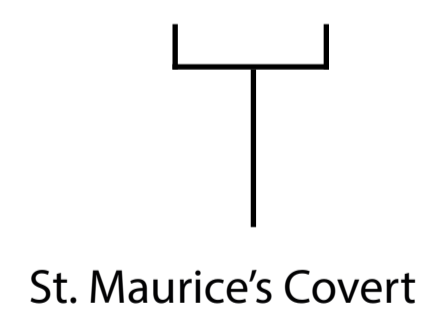
The tower is of historic importance, and all should be able to pass through, therefore there should be means of making it more accessible to all. The views through and visual connection between the High Street and Cathedral precinct should be made clearer and compelling enough to pull pedestrians through the space. Finally the covert space should take note of its surrounding environment, the Wessex car park and the extents of Market Lane.



Section and plan of proposal, illustrating new staircase up tower and new gateway structure



1:500 Model illustrating the three key routes to the Cathedral from the High Street



St. Maurice's Covert



Existing view from the high street, and view from the covert



Market Street



Existing view from the high street



The Square



Existing view from the high street



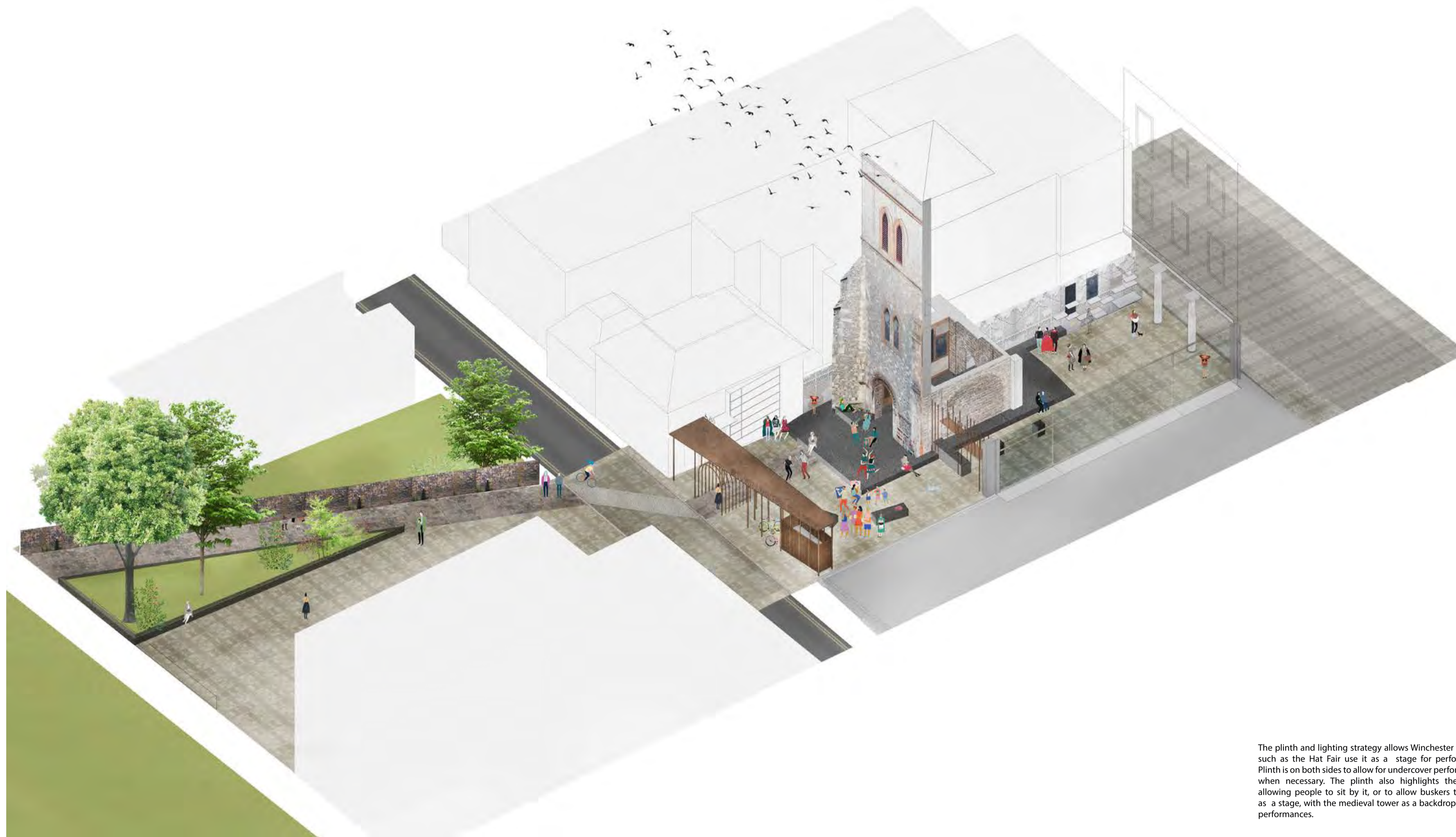
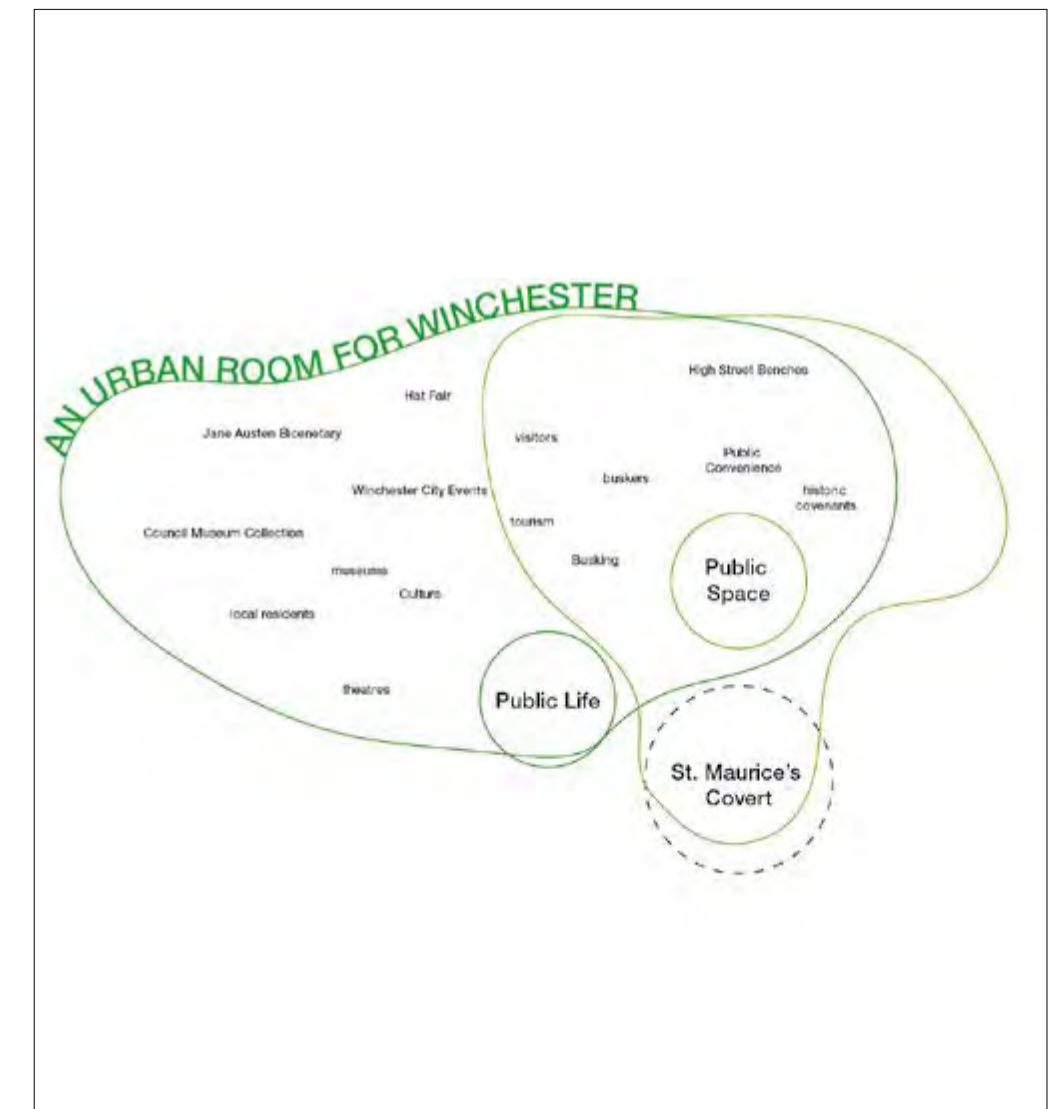
View looking down onto the covert and the Cathedral beyond

“St Maurice’s Covert is one of three routes linking the linear piazza of the High Street, Winchester’s commercial hub, with the sublime tranquillity of its world-famous cathedral close”

Kate Macintosh, speaking at Overt Covert Festival

It is by far the most generous route out of the three, offering a direct view of the North flank, and could potentially be the most historically interesting—passing through the space of a former historic gateway chapel (St. Maurice’s) and passing through the covert which was once part of the Cathedral burial grounds.

51 An Urban Room for Winchester



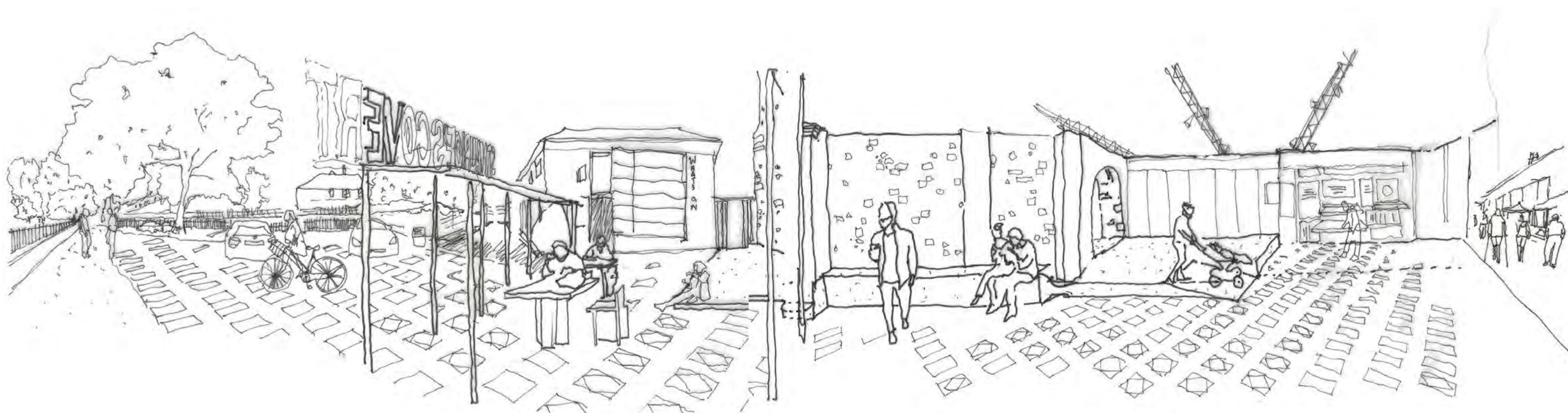
The plinth and lighting strategy allows Winchester festivals such as the Hat Fair use it as a stage for performance. Plinth is on both sides to allow for undercover performances when necessary. The plinth also highlights the tower, allowing people to sit by it, or to allow buskers to use it as a stage, with the medieval tower as a backdrop to their performances.

Isometric view illustrating the covert as a place to pause, a place for city life

The Covert is a place to appreciate the multi-layered city; where you can go through the arch or underneath the Covert, and into the public square beside the tower.

You can see the pattern of history; you feel the slowing of time, seeing a piece of Medieval city, where a Victorian church once stood, now made into a passage to a modern shopping street, to your right, with a Gothic masterpiece in the distance to the left.

We want to accentuate these three very strong, existing components in our proposal to make a small square which offers a pause for thought in the centre of Winchester. A moment to appreciate ones surroundings, which can be empty and calm, or bustling with marketplace and cultural activity. We believe that by using these already present qualities, we can make St Maurice's Covert into a place with its own character and worth.

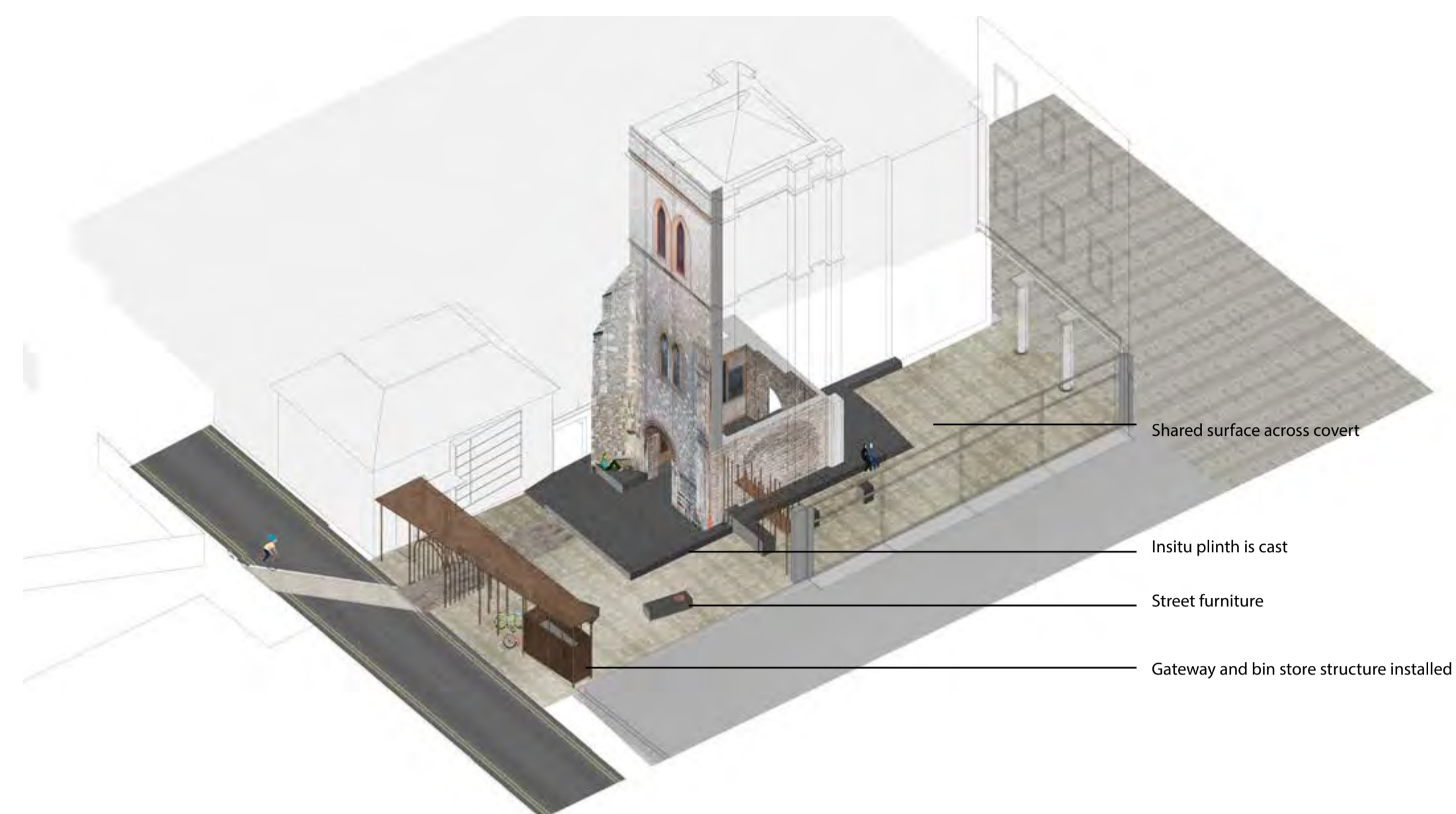


- Cathedral Grounds
- Wessex Car Park
- Shared surface
- New Gateway
Cycle Storage
Bin Store
- Stage plinth
Fixed seating
- Charity stall
- Accessible ramp
- Flower Shop
- High Street

Long perspective showing multiple activities in the covert as an urban room

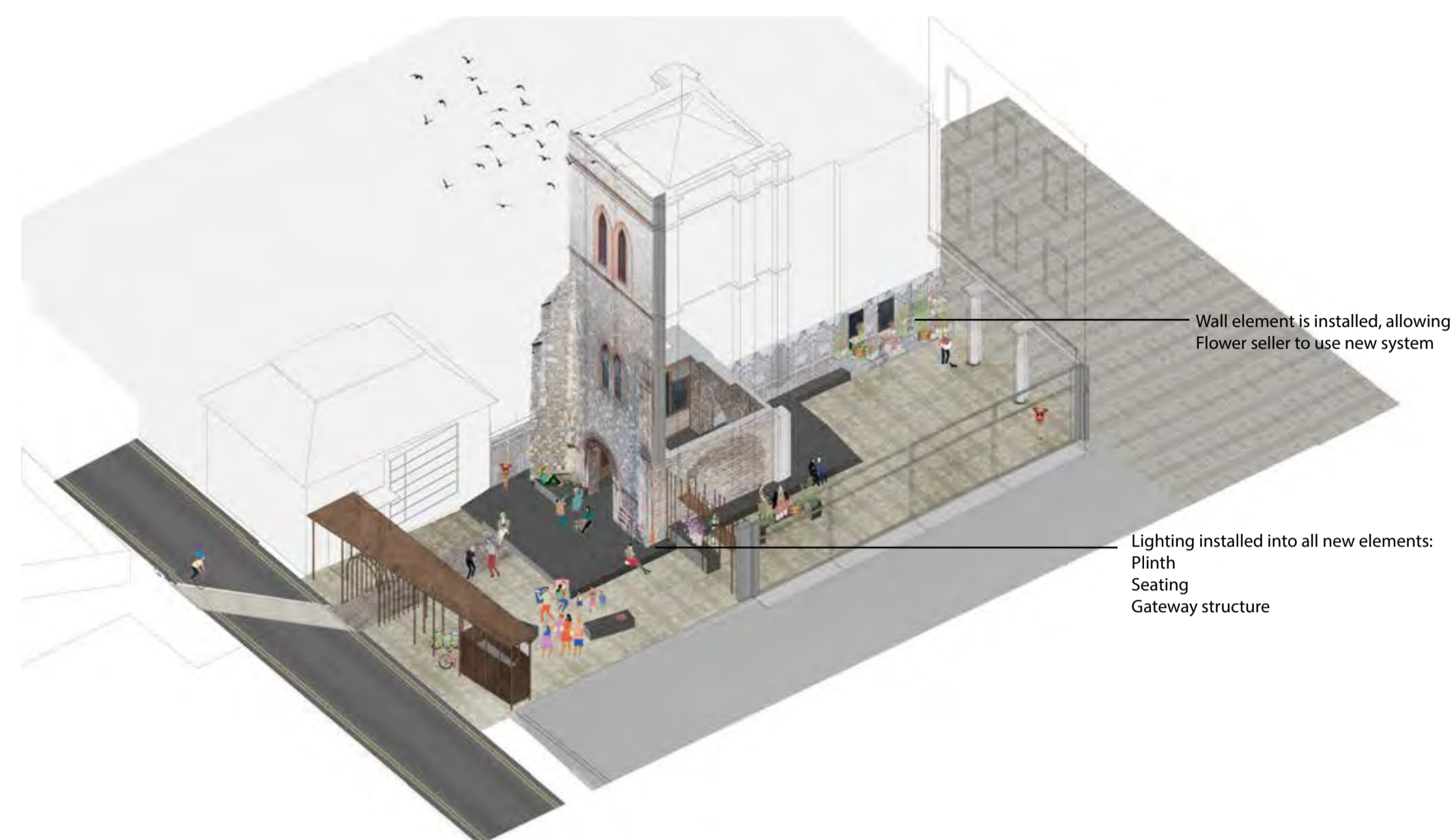
1

Declutter and Unify



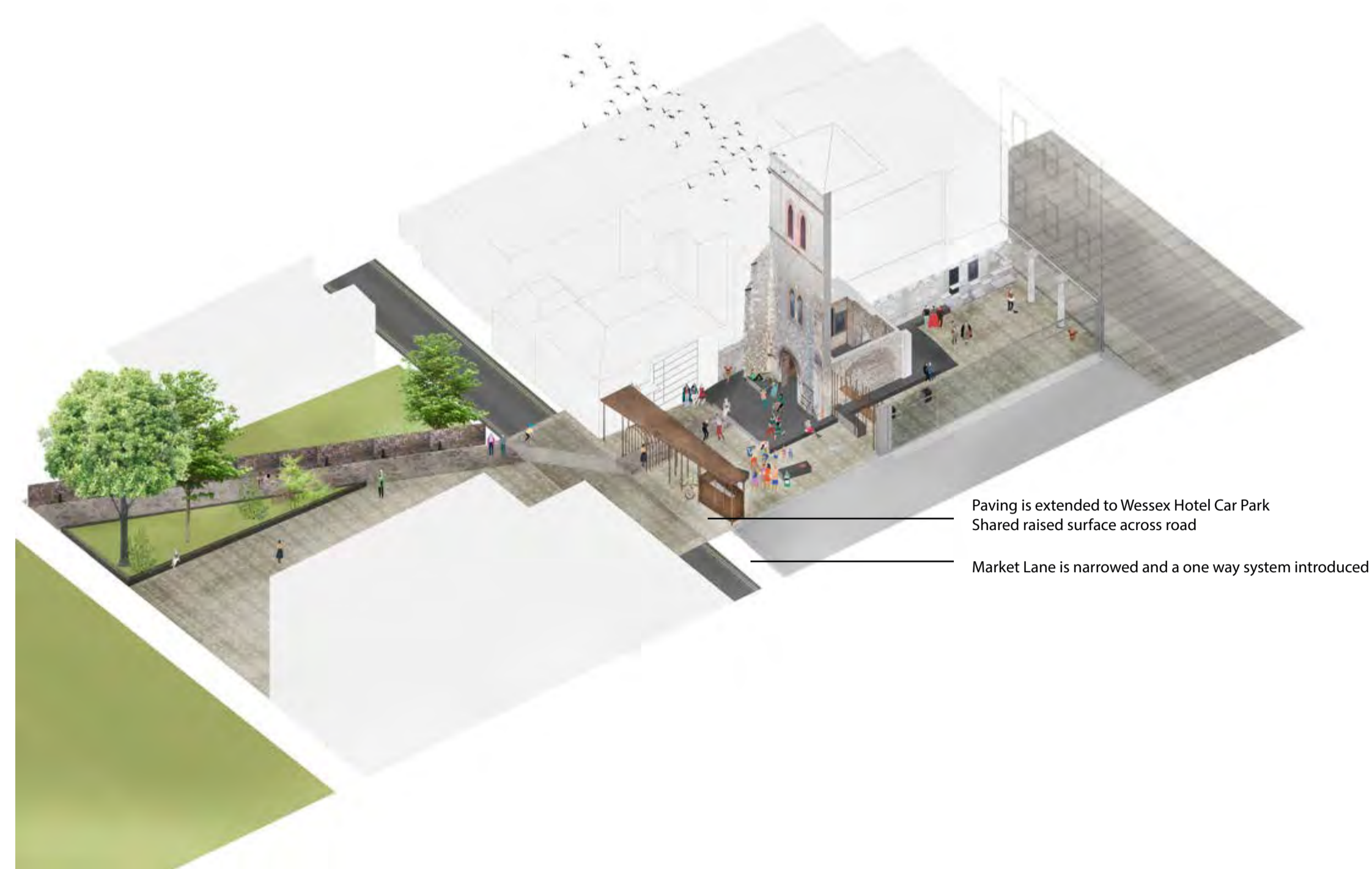
2

Wall element + Lighting



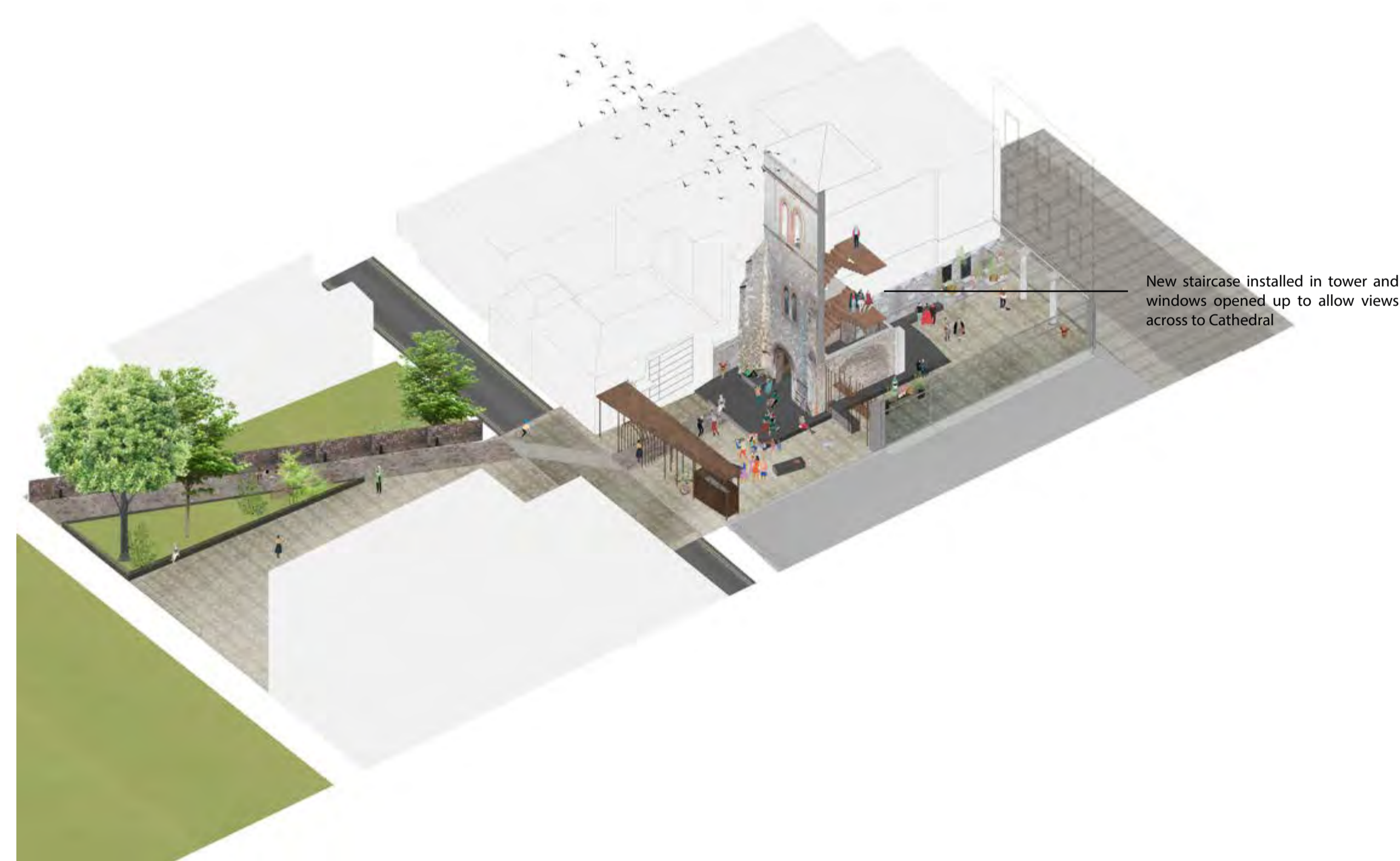
3

Shared surface and works to wider area



4

Open up tower



Phasing the design will allow the space to be kept open as much possible during the construction process

1 Declutter + Unify

The first move will involve jetwashing the floor to reveal its original stone colour, and removing existing clutter in the space such as bins, lights, bollards etc. The paving is planned to also be taken up and kept to be reused.

A section of the gateway structure will be built first that will house the market bins and declutter the site further. It is possible that this method of screening could continue across Market Lane should appropriate funds be raised.

The insitu cast terrazzo plinth and street furniture elements will be installed and most of the lighting will be incorporated within these elements to minimise visual clutter. Paving using existing York Stone and cobble stones to finish shared surface.

2 Wall System + Lighting Installation

The panel and frame system will be installed and provide a simple setup for the flower seller including storage. This frame will continue through the tower and onto the rear external side, creating a visual connection between the High Street and Market Lane

Lighting to be installed in all new elements, and also architectural lighting for the tower.

3 Shared Surface across to Wessex Car Park

The paving will continue across to Wessex Car Park and create a shared ground and connection to the Cathedral Grounds. Market Lane to also be narrowed.

4 Tower opened up to Public

The tower could be reconfigured to offer a new view of Winchester and the Cathedral as well as acting still as a fire escape for Debenhams. Stair to be reconfigured, new platform added to the third level (to enable views across) and interior of tower made good.