

Welcome

WELCOME TO OUR SECOND ROUND OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENTS ON THE DEVELOPING PROPOSALS FOR CUSTOM HOUSE.

We received a significant amount of feedback from our previous round on the sustainable, hotel-led refurbishment for Custom House and are now delighted to be engaging with you on the updated proposals.

CUSTOM
HOUSE

Heritage and History

The Custom House was first completed in 1817 and has stood on the site for over 200 years. The building has a unique history, having served as the hub for British custom duty collection in the 1800s.

During its life, Custom House has experienced the collapse and redesign of the Long Room and part of the river façade in 1825, the rebuilding of the East Wing in 1966 following damage suffered during the Blitz, and use as an office prior to being vacated by HMRC in 2021. This heritage has made Custom House one of the most prominent sites in the City of London.

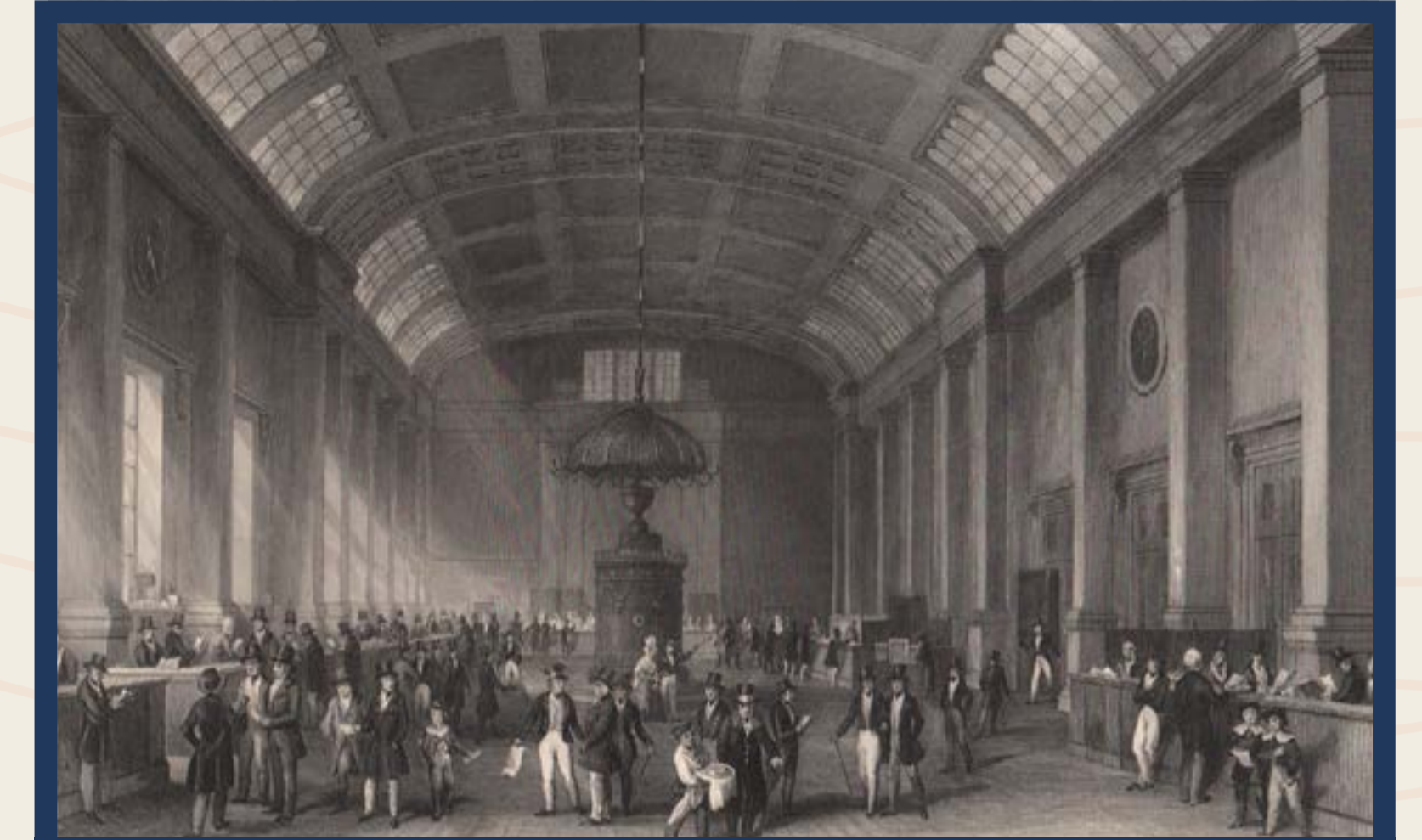
The emerging vision will bring this Grade I Heritage Listed Building back to life, providing a long-term, sustainable and vibrant use for the building to create a new chapter in its history.

Today, our vision for the cultural offer would give the public access to areas that they were previously unable to see.

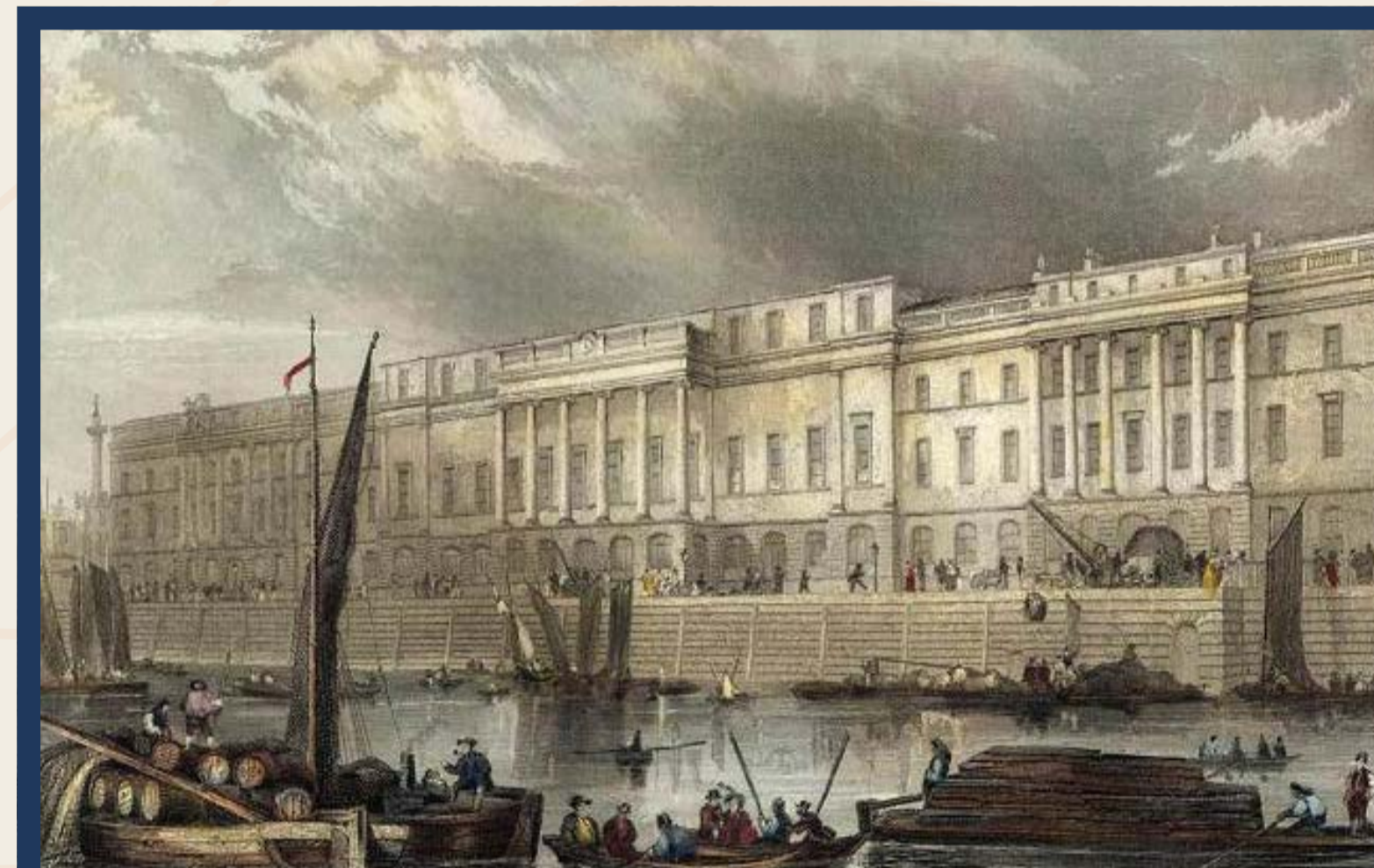
Historically significant areas such as the Long Room, King's Warehouse and basement vaults will be seamlessly incorporated into the emerging vision for the hotel and extend its offering to all that pass through.



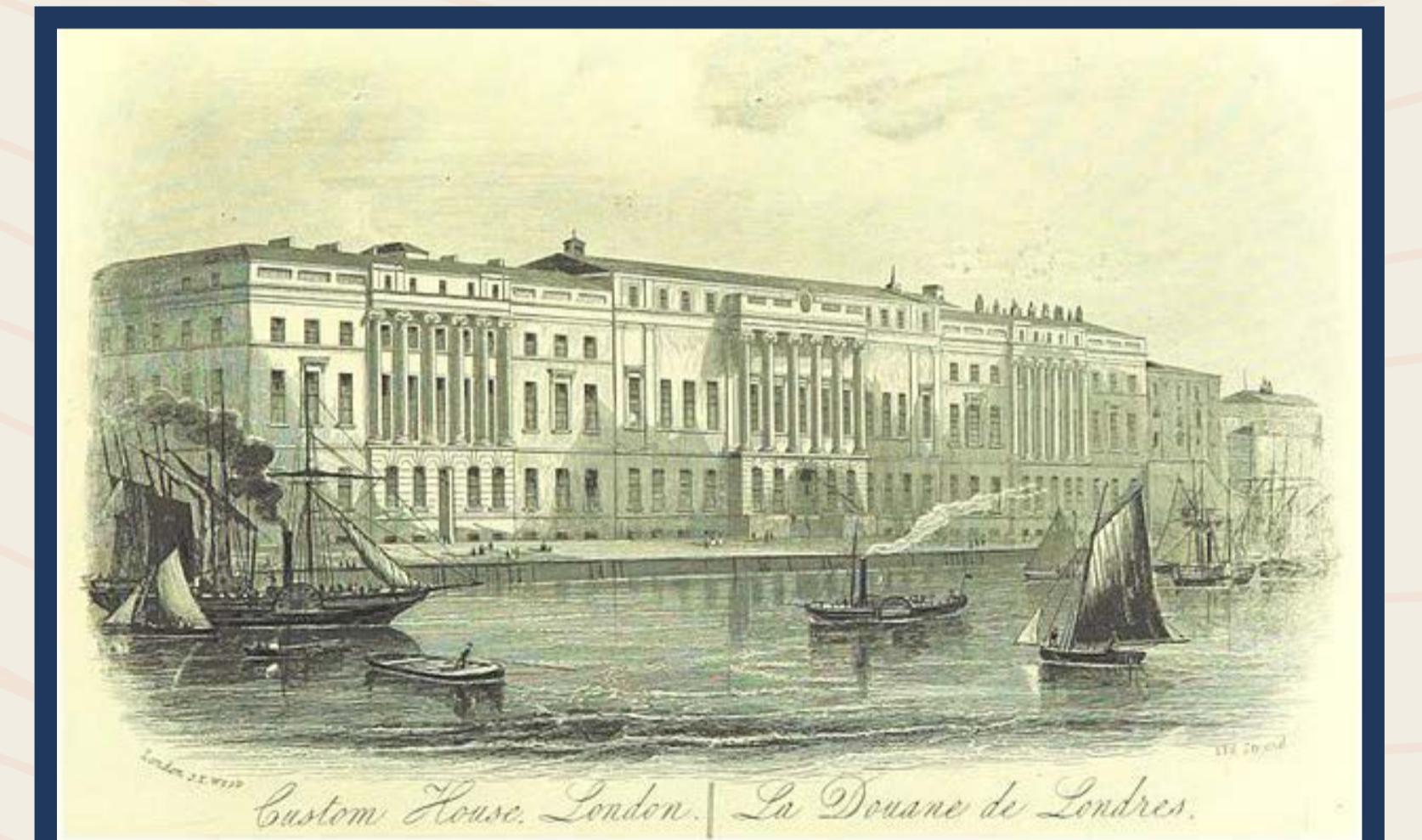
Thomas Shepherd / 1827



Thomas Shepherd / 19th century



Hablot Browne & Garland / 1837



London (illustrated), Volume 1, Page 055 / 1872

The Story So Far

A previous application was submitted for a hotel redevelopment of the site in 2020, which attracted a number of objections largely relating to heritage issues, and ultimately refused on appeal.

The new owners of the site have considered the comments and concerns raised around this previous scheme and are seeking to take a fresh, conservation-led approach to the building's future.

Our vision is to deliver a new mixed-use scheme, providing a hotel, cultural offer and public spaces including enhanced public realm and food and beverage offers.

To introduce this vision to the local community, we held a public consultation in May 2024. During this consultation, we engaged with stakeholders including local residents, businesses,

faith groups, workers, and tourists. Since then, we've continued to engage with key stakeholders and the City of London Corporation, further developing our Custom House proposals.

We are keen to keep engaging with the local community and now ask for your feedback before submitting a planning application to the City of London Corporation.

CONSULTATION SNAPSHOT MAY 2024

2,105

Social media Ad
click-throughs

1,851

Unique visitors to the website during
this consultation phase

64

People engaged at event
and street stalls

106,557

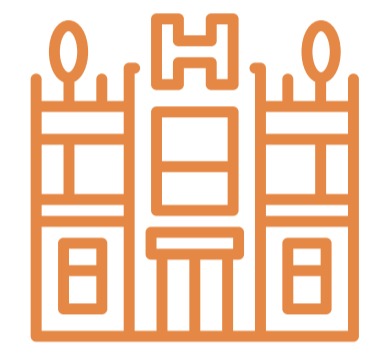
Social media reach

106

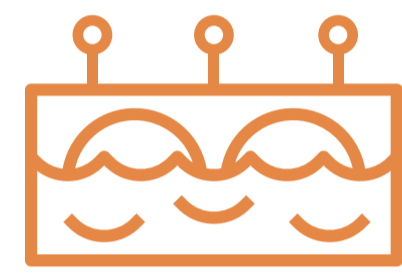
Responses to the survey

Our Vision

Through our consultation, we confirmed that key stakeholders and the local community were generally aligned with our emerging vision for Custom House.



Providing visitor accommodation through a new hotel



Opening up the site to the Thames



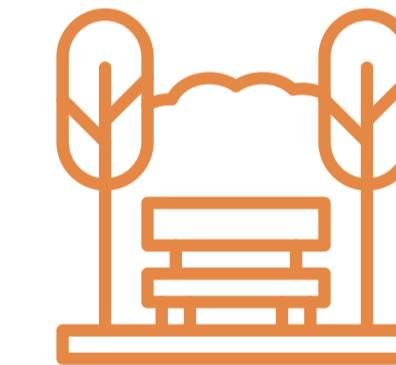
Pursuing a sustainable refurbishment



Sensitively conserving and enhancing the historical building



Developing a vibrant and fitting cultural offer at Custom House



Transforming Custom House with new public spaces



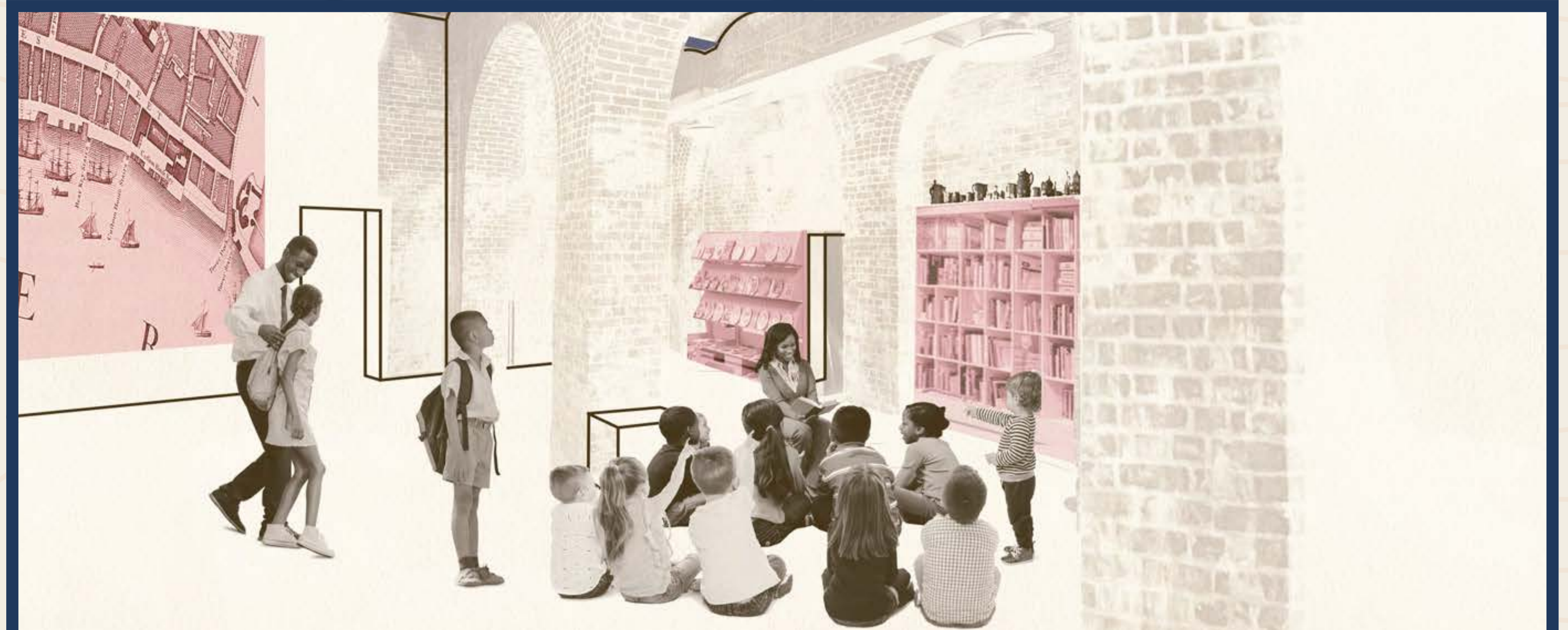
Upgrading the building to reduce its environmental impact



Creating a dynamic riverside public realm

Our Proposals: Culture and Public Access

80% of people we engaged with during our previous round of consultation said it was either important or very important that the proposals contribute to the surrounding area and local community through new public spaces and food and beverage offers.



Proposed flexible engagement space.
The space will be free to book for schools, community organisations, resident groups, charities, arts/cultural/educational organisations.



The Tide Waiters Room will house a curated reference library accessible by appointment to the public.

Our Proposals: Culture and Public Access

A **public route** through three of the key historic spaces of Custom House, featuring changing exhibits and artworks.

The public route through the building will create a **new connection** between Lower Thames Street and the Thames riverfront.

Free weekly bookable **heritage tours** (for up to 20 people) that will include the quayside, the Portico, King's Warehouse and Lobby, the Long Room and Robing Room and Tide Waiters Room.

The hotel will host small scale **public events** on the riverfront in partnership with wider cultural programmes and local festivals.

The **Long Room** will be available free of charge for community or cultural groups to book, for 24 half day booking slots per year.

A **free flexible engagement space** housed in a historic brick-vaulted room, can be used for talks, films, classes and social events.

The hotel will participate in cultural programmes at least twice a year that promote **open access** to special/unique buildings.

A cultural **café and gallery** in a series of historic rooms with views of the river, with 'family friendly' displays and artworks related to Custom House.

Our Proposals: Culture and Public Access



A display of historic images will uncover the history of Custom House in the Lobby.



Gallery spaces in the west wing will host changing exhibitions.

Our Proposals: Riverfront public realm

In the first consultation 72% of people who engaged with us wanted improved access to the river and an enhanced public realm along the riverfront with more active public spaces, such as seating areas.

Upgraded Riverfront Design

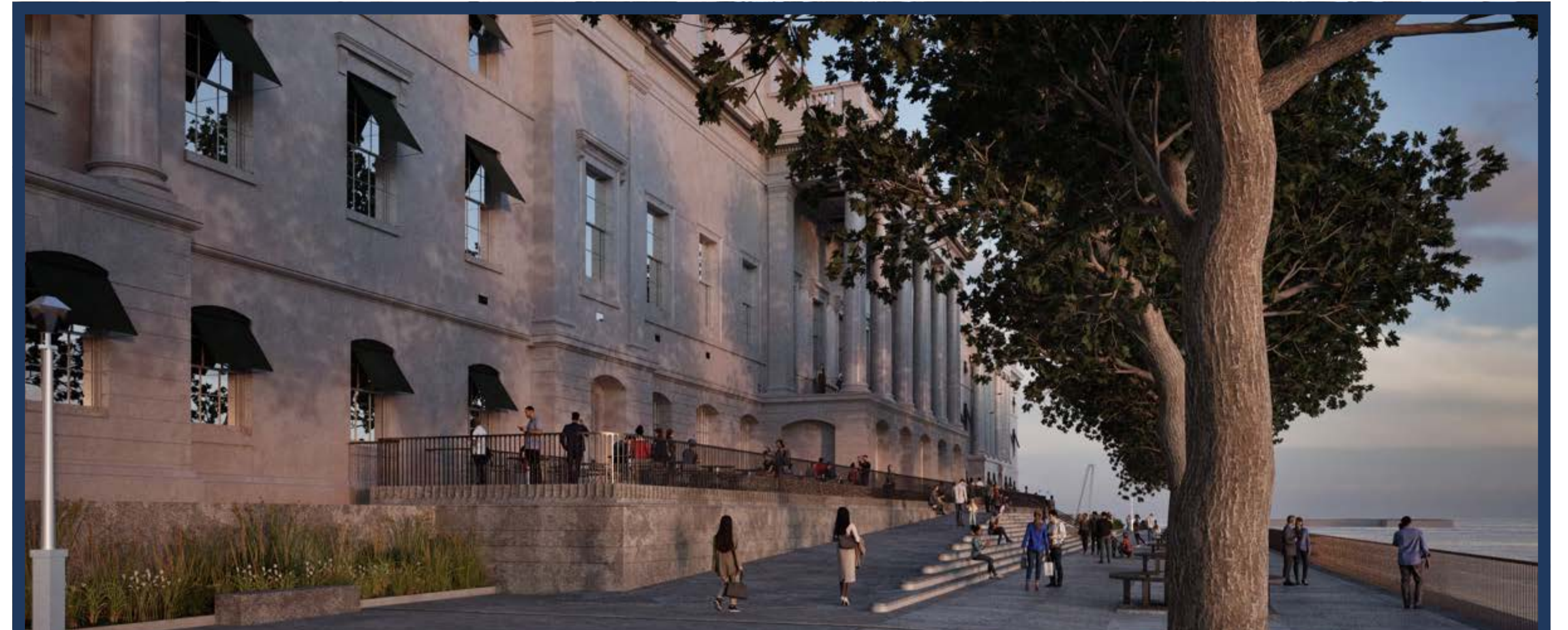
Reimagined Public Realm: The riverfront will feature lush greenery and open, relaxing spots with a range of seating options, planting and public art with views to the River Thames and Tower Bridge.

Food & Drink: In response to feedback from 80% of survey respondents, there will be a variety of food and beverage options at different price points both within and outside on the terrace of the building with seating in both areas.

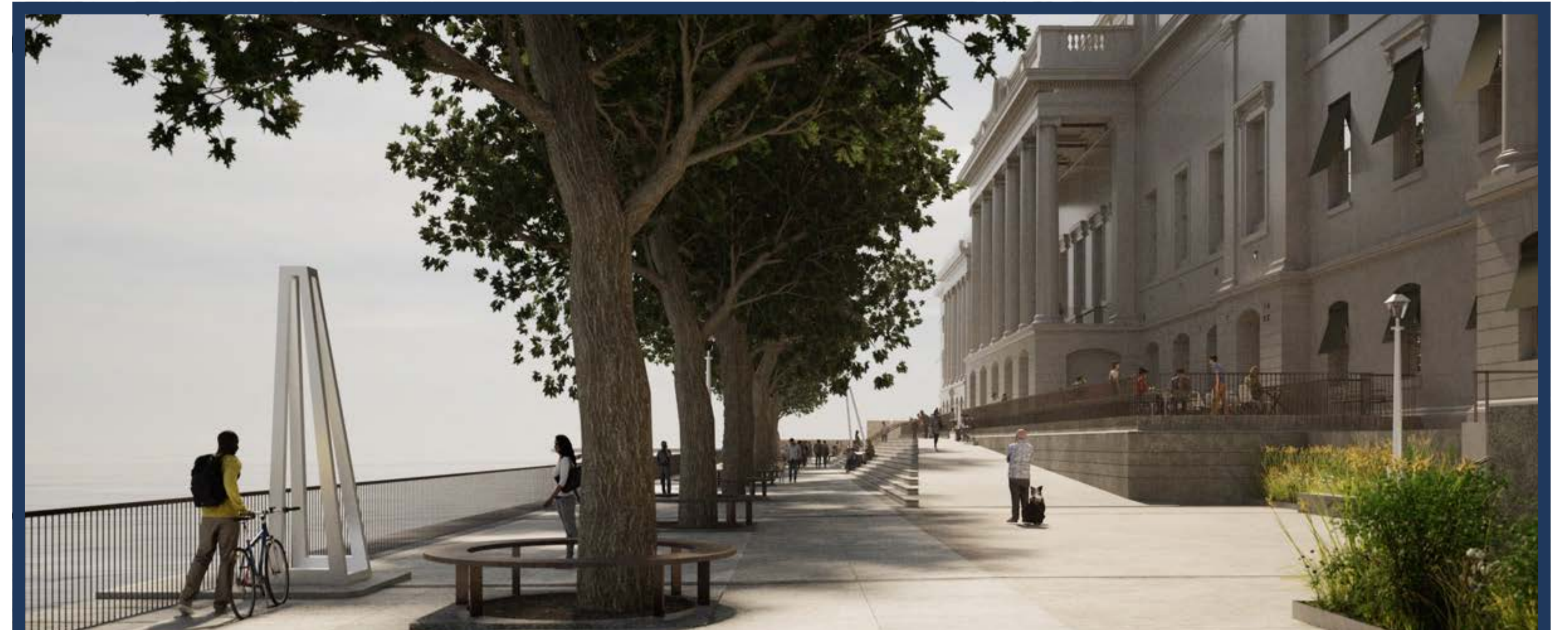
Open & Accessible

24/7 Public Access: The quayside will be open to everyone around the clock, providing a welcoming environment.

New Access Points: A new ramp and wider steps will provide easy access from Old Billingsgate Market and enhance the walking route along the river.



Indicative image of the riverfront public realm.



Indicative image of the riverfront public realm.

Our Proposals: Riverfront public realm

Enhanced Access & Public Space

Improved River Access: New steps and ramps will lead to the building, making it easier to enter and offering great spots to sit and enjoy the river.

Vibrant Public Space: A new, spacious public area will stretch along the Thames, hosting free events including performances and food markets throughout the year. Events will be organised by the hotel team in collaboration with cultural partners and local festivals.



Illustration showing the quayside public realm with paving features recording the site's history.

Our Proposals: Hotel

As the focus of our proposals are on a sensitive hotel-led refurbishment, respect for the building's history, design and significance are of the utmost importance. The cultural strategy feeds into the design of the hotel where guests can enjoy this offer within the privacy of their rooms.

Hotel rooms will be located in the East and West Wings of the building. The introduction of the hotel use will look to mimic the historic plans and prioritise conservation of the building's heritage, with rooms in the historic West Wing carefully designed to retain the existing layouts.

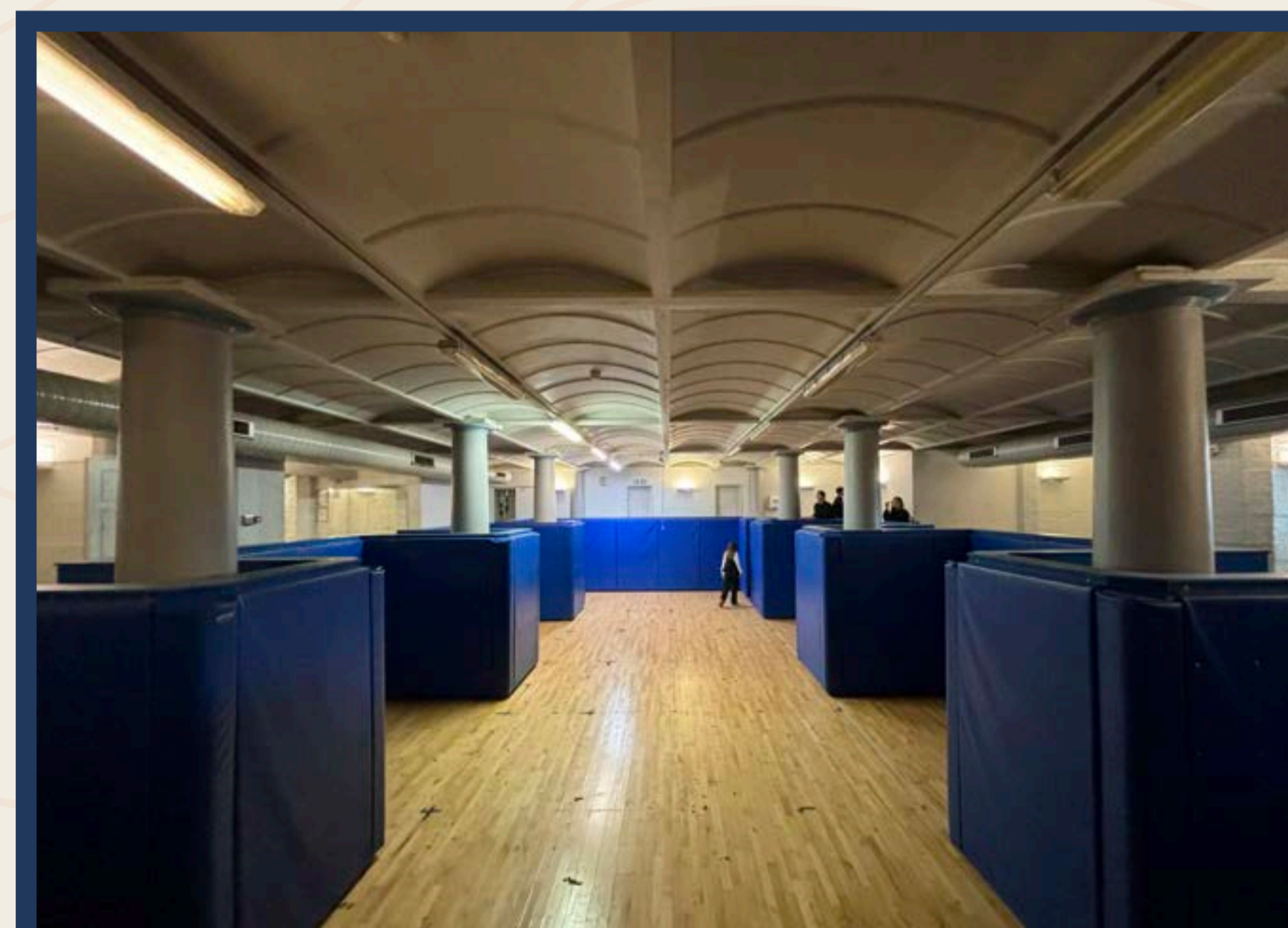
As part of the hotel, the basement will be utilised to provide a spa and health centre that will be open to the public. A swimming pool, sauna and steam room will be built and complemented by the original architecture of the building.



Example of an existing West Wing room



Indicative image of a typical West Wing bedroom suite



Existing basement space



Indicative image of proposed pool and spa

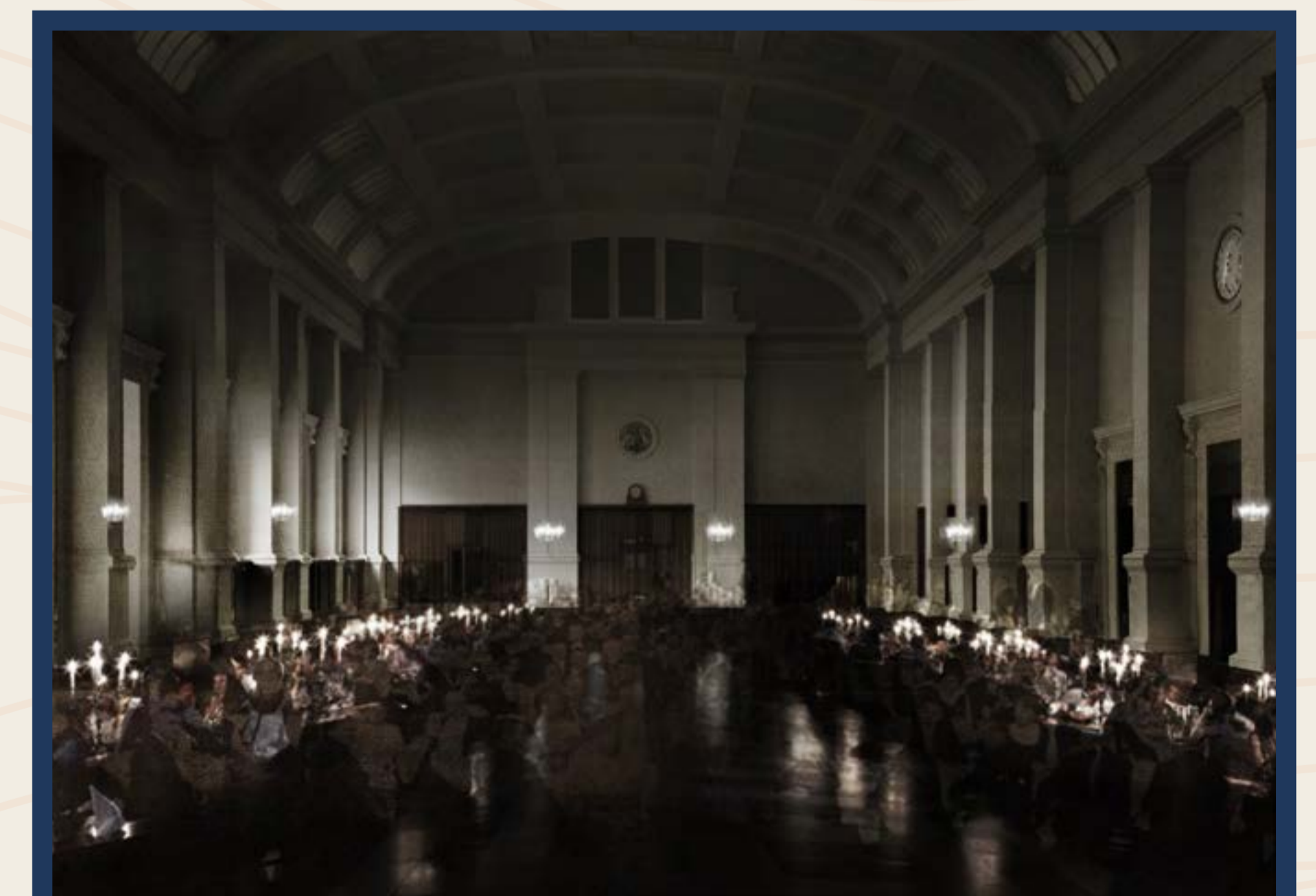
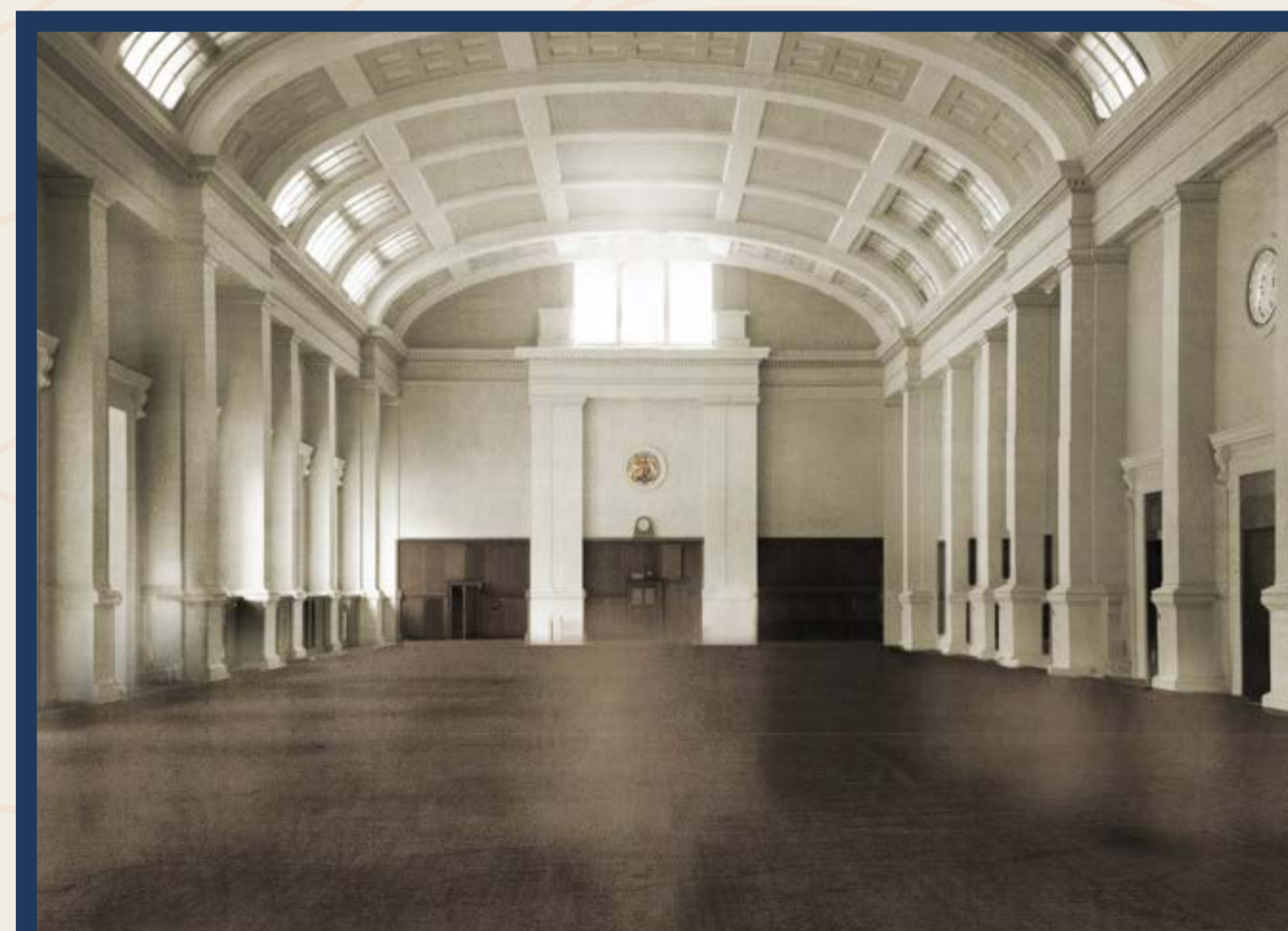
Our Proposals: Heritage

The sensitive refurbishment of the building will celebrate Custom House's heritage with significant investment into the Long Room. This is central to creating Custom House's 'golden thread' which weaves through all areas of the building allowing the public to truly explore its heritage.

The historic Long Room will be hireable by outside parties for events, free to book for community or cultural groups for 24 half day slots per year. As part of the Long Room's offer, heritage tours for the public will allow visitors to immerse themselves in the history of Custom House. Alongside the unique historic setting, this new event space will also have panoramic views of the River Thames.



The historic Long Room



Indicative images of the Long Room as proposed, including in use as an event space (Credit: RGA)

Our Vision for Custom House



Indicative image showing proposed full elevation of Custom House (trees are not included in the CGI to enable this view of the elevation)

Public Benefits

1

FREE PUBLIC ROUTE

through the building connecting Lower Thames Street to the riverside. The route passes through key historic spaces and will include permanent and changing exhibits narrating the history of Custom House.

2

GALLERY & CAFE

A cultural café and gallery in the West Wing will be used to host small scale, free exhibitions. The space will be curated by smaller organisations through a series of residencies.

3

EVENTS

The hotel will host small scale public events on the riverfront in partnership with wider cultural programmes and local festivals.

4

ACCESSIBLE LONG ROOM

The Long Room will be available for community or cultural groups to book free of charge for 24 half day slots (morning, afternoon or evening) annually.

5

NEW RIVERSIDE PUBLIC SPACE

A new public space will be accessible at all times, with steps, ramps, vibrant greenery and seating areas along the Thames.

6

FREE HISTORIC BUILDING TOURS

Regular tours with bookable slots for 20 people per tour, covering key areas like the Tide Waiters Room, King's Warehouse, Long Room, and Robing Room.

7

TIDE WAITERS ROOM

A historic room which will house a curated library with free access for academics, historians, researchers and students.

8

FLEXIBLE ENGAGEMENT SPACE

A historic room with original brick vaults available for school and community groups, talks, films, classes, and social events.

Get Involved

We want to hear your feedback on the emerging vision for Custom House.
There are lots of ways you can tell us what you think:

1 Complete a printed survey

2 Visit our website:
customhouse2024.co.uk

3 Scan the QR code



FIRST PUBLIC
CONSULTATION
May 2024

SECOND PUBLIC
CONSULTATION
October 2024

ANTICIPATED PLANNING
APPLICATION SUBMISSION
November 2024

If you would like to get in touch with a member of the project team:

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