



A NEW MUSEUM FOR LONDON

We've embarked on an extraordinary journey to create a new museum for London. It will sit in these atmospheric but currently dilapidated market buildings at the heart of one of the capital's most historic and creative quarters: Smithfield.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reconceive what a museum for London can be. Ours is the most magnetic city in the world. We need a museum that's just as compelling: a shared place for Londoners who want to feel more rooted in the city and for UK and global visitors seeking authentic London experiences and insights.

We're delighted to be working with a world-class design team led by Stanton Williams Architects and Asif Khan with Julian Harrap Architects. To find out more and follow our journey, visit [museum.london](https://www.museum.london)

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Look out for old shop signs as you walk around the General Market. Which one is your favourite?

The General Market is unique in having separate shop units facing onto the street on all four sides of the market. Have you noticed how these units follow the street level down to Farringdon Street? Inside the General Market, the floor is level to help the movement of the market traders and customers between the market buildings. The road slopes down towards the River Fleet, which now flows beneath Farringdon Street.

5

The 'Japanese Village'

The General Market roof originally had a large wooden lantern-shaped structure at its centre. This looked like a Japanese pagoda, and earned the General Market its nickname the 'Japanese Village', later shortened to 'the village'. The whole design of the roof (the lantern, corner pavilions, louvres and construction materials) helped to promote natural ventilation and diffuse light that might otherwise spoil the produce. The pagoda style structure was destroyed by the same V2 rocket that hit Hart's Corner (feature 3 on this leaflet).



The General Market showing the original pagoda style roof structure and Hart's Corner, 1880 © London Metropolitan Archives

6

What animal are the boys above the entrance to this building riding?

They're dolphins! Decorating the entrance to this building are clues to its original use as a fish market. There are two statues of boys riding dolphins on the left and right, and on the keystone (the middle stone of the arch) a carved fish. In the centre of the entrance you can see the City of London Corporation's official coat of arms of two dragons with the crest of St. George on their wings, accompanied by their motto, DOMINI DIRIGE NOS – *Lord, direct us* – written on a scroll beneath.

7

Look at the old triangular building. How many chimneys can you see?

There are three! Between 1884 and 1887 the basements of the Poultry Market were converted to refrigerated storage – the first cold stores at Smithfield. These tall chimney stacks may have served as additional vents for the steam boiler from the refrigerating engine, which was located under the road. An 80ft chimney stack has since been demolished, but the three chimney stacks remain.

8

Can you spot the odd one out?

In 1958 the Poultry Market – next to the General Market – suffered a catastrophic fire that destroyed the original Victorian market building. The fire raced through the basements, growing quickly because of the fat-soaked walls. It burned for three days and over 2,150 firefighters fought to get it under control.

The extent of the damage following the fire of 1958 was such that the Poultry Market was completely demolished, redesigned and rebuilt. The architects for the new building were TP Bennett & Son, with Ove Arup and Partners as the consulting engineers and Sir Robert McAlpine and Sons Ltd as the main contractors.

At the time it was built the roof that covers the market was the largest free-span dome in Europe. The dome is covered with over 4km worth of copper sheeting, which complement the copper tiling to the corner turrets of the Victorian market building. Light is provided by 36 circular roof lights.



The view of the Poultry Market from West Smithfield, 2019

9

Can you find the old shop unit with the 'Denton Bros' sign?

I hope you found it! It's on the corner of West Poultry Avenue and West Smithfield Street. This is one of the most interesting units of the General Market, which has recently been researched by Julian Harrap Architects. It was once home to Lockharts Cocoa Rooms.



Lockharts Cocoa Rooms at Smithfield, early 20th century © Historic England

Cocoa rooms were seen as a popular, healthier alternative to public houses in the 19th century. Customers were allowed to bring their own food as long as they purchased a cocoa. Very little evidence of cocoa rooms remains, making this discovery a very special example of a forgotten chapter in London's social history. Inside, this unit has some unique Edwardian Art Nouveau tiles, manufactured by the Pilkington's Tile and Pottery Company.



Close up of the Pilkington tiles in the Cocoa Rooms, 2018 © Julian Harrap Architects LLP

EXPLORE

WEST

SMITHFIELD



THE GENERAL MARKET AND POULTRY MARKET AT SMITHFIELD

The scale and ambition of the London Central Markets (Smithfield Market) has never really received sufficient acclaim. The project to construct a modern meat market began in 1866 under the direction of Sir Horace Jones, and the first of the buildings opened in 1868. The scheme took over 30 years to complete, and at the time was the largest wholesale meat market in the UK. The General Market sits at the western end of the complex. Jones' passion was for a state of the art wholesale market where salespeople, buyers and porters could carry out their business efficiently with well-designed stalls for displaying and storing meat and other produce.

The London Central Markets at Smithfield were a reflection of the modernity of the Victorian city. The roof structures and layout of the markets contributed to a good circulation of air, keeping the interior cooler than the outside temperature.

A revolutionary aspect of the market buildings was that they were constructed over underground goods yards and railway lines. Hydraulic lifts raised the meat that arrived on railway wagons to the market floor above. For the first time ever, meat was delivered by underground railway direct to a large wholesale market in the centre of a city.

This leaflet will help you and your family explore the area around the General Market, which has been left derelict for nearly 30 years, and the Poultry Market next door. These buildings will be the future home for the Museum of London. To find out more about this exciting transformation visit museum.london

1

What fruit can you spot on top of this entrance?

It's a pineapple! That might seem a little odd for a meat market, but it's because this building was originally designed to sell fruit and vegetables. It never actually sold these though, and opened in 1883 as a fish market.

At this time the population of Victorian London was growing quickly and the demand for meat was high. The General Market quickly adapted and from 1889 onwards it only sold meat, like the rest of the main market buildings at Smithfield.

2

Can you find the Latin motto engraved on this building?

It says *Floreat Imperii Portvs*, which translates as 'May the Port of Empire Flourish' and is the motto of the Port of London Authority (PLA).

The PLA cold store on Charterhouse Street opened in 1914 as additional storage for frozen meat. This unit had the capacity to store 78,000 carcasses. Wagons brought imported meat from the docks to be stored here for selling at Smithfield. This building is now home to a Citigen generator, powering 11,300 homes in the City of London. The power plant generates enough electricity annually to boil two billion cups of tea!

3

Why do you think this corner looks so different to the rest of the General Market?

Hart's Corner was one of the many original entrances to the General Market. Together these allowed an easy flow of vehicles, traders and customers in and around the space.

In 1945 one of the last V2 rockets to hit London destroyed Hart's Corner and the railway tunnels beneath. 110 people were killed in this attack, with many more seriously injured. There were many women and children amongst the dead who had gone to the market to try to buy one of the rabbits that had gone on sale.

This corner was replaced in 1954 with a modern concrete structure – you can see how the clean lines and uncluttered appearance contrast to the rest of the Victorian market buildings.



Postcard showing Harts Corner in 1915

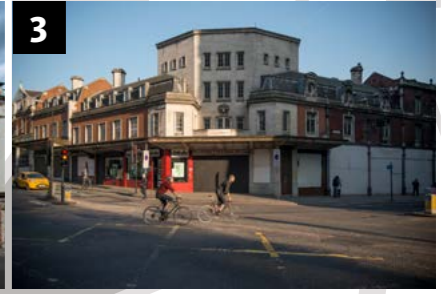
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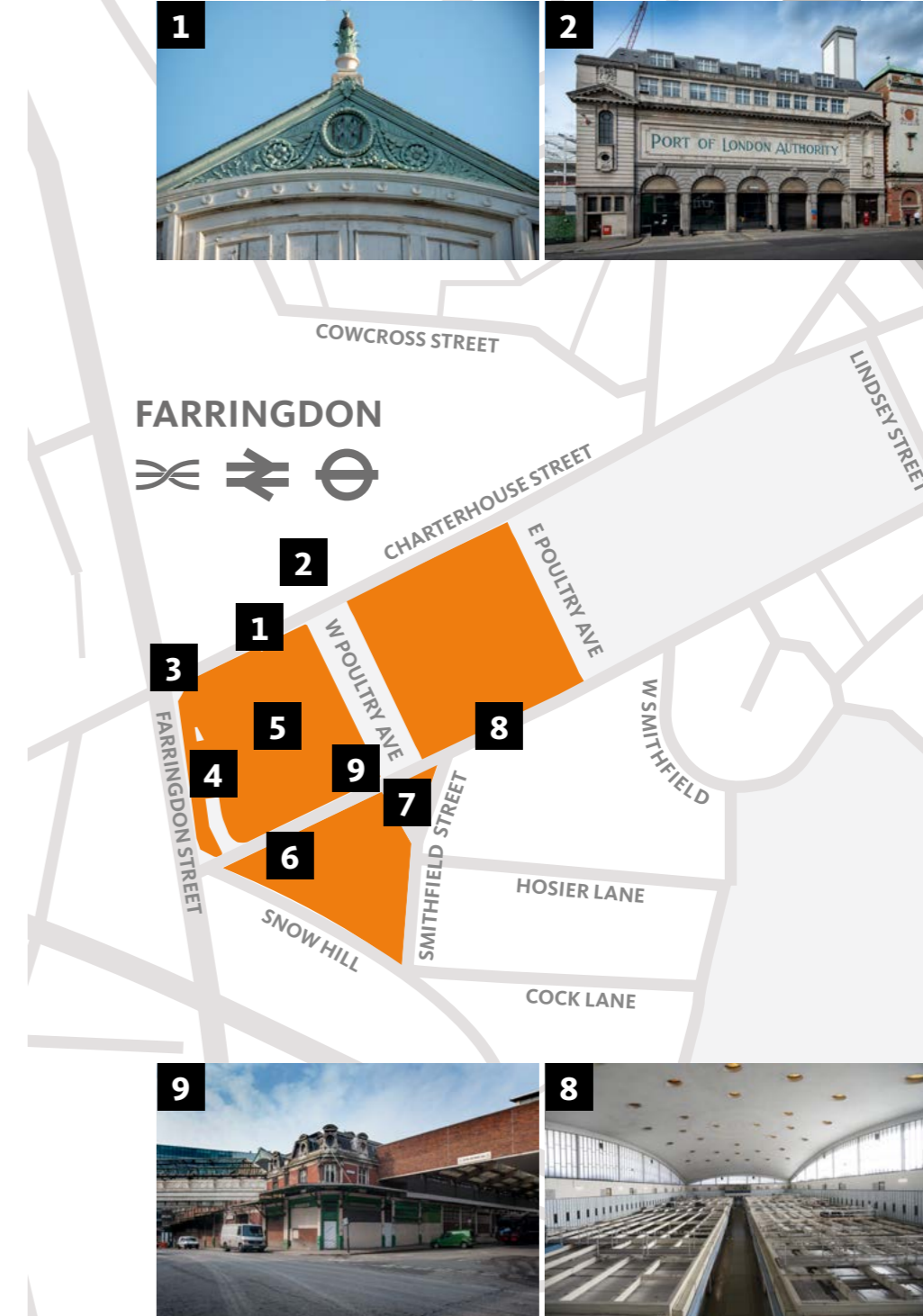
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