

Smithfield Market - The New Museum of London

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Smithfield Market is a Victorian market building, located in central London. The site on which the market sits has been a place for trade and public gatherings for over 800 years. Out of the six buildings that historically made up the market, three are still in use as a wholesale market for meat. The remaining three has been unused since the 1990s, and their redevelopment has been a topic of debate since then. In the last year, the Museum of London - a museum dedicated to the history of London - has expressed an interest to move to the site and a competition for the redevelopment has been announced. The transformation of the old market into a museum is the topic for this master thesis.

Today, the area around Smithfield houses a large variety of activities; restaurants, clubs, offices and a large hospital are located in close connection to the market. This makes the area feel active almost 24 hours a day. It also sits strategically within the city, being in close proximity to many sights as well as being well connected within the public transportation system. This makes Smithfield an ideal location for a museum.

The question this project will focus on is how does an existing building within a historic context adapt to a new function? A series of buildings with a previously clear program will have to adopt to a new function with different needs. How can the old and the new be merged and what strategies can be used in terms of preservation and additions?