Case study  
Snow Hill Station Interchange Plan  
Birmingham

A Land use survey revealing commercial land use of Colmore Business District and public institutions in the east.

B Pedestrian traces diagram illustrating the pedestrian desire lines from Snowhill station exits.

The opportunity
Snow Hill Station is at the heart of an established and growing business quarter in Birmingham. Diagonally opposite the key landmark of St Phillip’s Cathedral, it is one of three mainline rail stations with rail services to the Black Country, the Chilterns and London Marylebone and is the terminus for the Midland Metro.

Like other major transport hubs, Snow Hill generates high levels of pedestrian, bus, taxi and vehicular movement, all competing for the same space.

The growth of Snow Hill Station and the introduction of HS2 will increase activity in the city centre. The challenge is therefore to develop a city-wide approach to the integration of different transport modes.

Centro Midlands, Birmingham City Council and Colmore Business District appointed Space Syntax and traffic consultancy JMP to develop the Snow Hill Interchange Plan. Complementing the Masterplan Framework for the area, the project aims to enhance Snow Hill Station as a multi-mode public transport interchange hub and as a key destination in the city.
Our contribution
Space Syntax’s detailed analysis of street network connectivity and pedestrian and cycling activity used to produce a detailed Pedestrian Movement Model for the area. This model was the basis to develop, test and prioritise key intervention projects for the emerging Snow Hill Masterplan and the Interchange Plan.

Our studies demonstrated that Birmingham can only benefit from the anticipated large scale interchange activity if the right spatial strategies are implemented at the local level. These include embedding the station concourse into both the wider and local movement networks and improving the public realm around the ring road, which is currently a blockage to pedestrian movement.

The outcome
In close collaboration with the multidisciplinary consulting team, the integrated multi-mode, multi-scale forecast tools developed by Space Syntax were used to develop a strategic masterplan for a year 2030 scenario.

The strategic masterplan prioritised a set of projects according to their potential to improve active travel, transport interchange potential and in turn benefit the long term social and economic viability of Snow Hill Station and the Colmore Business District.

The creation of a pedestrian-led environment will be the key to an efficient and successful transport interchange.

Our work was used at workshop and stakeholder consultations to clearly communicate and support strategic design decisions across both the multidisciplinary design team and the three client groups.

The strategic masterplan is now being used to develop detailed proposals for Snow Hill Station.