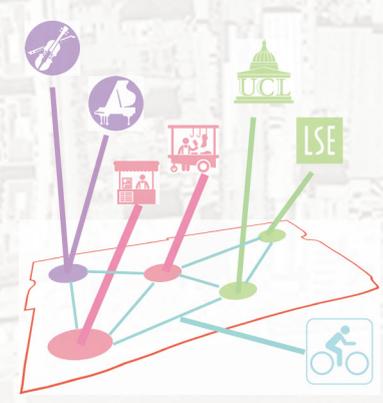
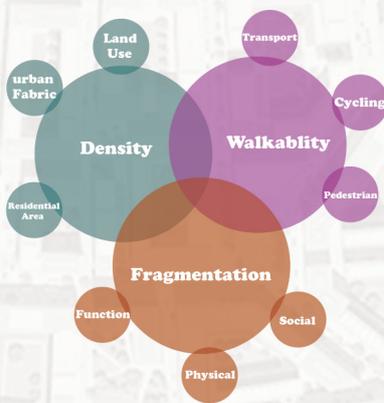


# Silvertown Quays

## *link & place*



BU1 -  
Transforming Local Areas

Term 2 | Stage 2

**Critical Design Response**

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# Executive summary

This document aims to cater for the morphological transformation of Silvertown Quays. It intends to put forward some observations to be considered in future developments in the area. It unfolds as a critical design response and comprises an analytical and a prophylactic part.

The analytical part consists of a summarised interlacement of the findings presented in previous reports which focused on six lenses: housing and dwelling, leftovers and thresholds, urban fabrics and landmarks, public and open spaces, culture and economies and infrastructure and mobility.

The prophylactic part is referred to as such to reflect an era in which much attention needs to be given to the prevention of problems as a way to avoid the need to solve them a posteriori. A prophylactic approach applies to urban issues as it advocates protection “against the debilitating effects of urbanization” while still attempting to “strengthen the cohesion of local communities” (Pyle apud Hanes, 2002, p.185). An aspect of this prophylaxis is present in this critical response and relates to the way weaknesses and potentialities are approached, since acknowledging the former may avoid its worsen and facilitate its transformation into the later. The prophylactic part of this work is composed of vision, principles and guidelines to foment this transformation.

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Fig. 1: Silvertown Quays in its surroundings

source: authors



# 1. Introduction

Silvertown Quays is located in east London's Borough of Newham and over the northern riverside of the Thames. According to The Museum of London Docklands (2014), it is part of an area which history is rich in relations with the river, the Royal Docks and the London Docklands. Surrounded by the Pontoon Dock, the story of Silvertown Quays can be divided into two eras of industry: ship repairs and flour milling. In the beginning of 19th century the Pontoon Dock was an innovative ship repair facility designed to serve its cargo-handling neighbour. Later in 1897 the Pontoon Dock experienced a swift in ownership and had a new purpose—a grain handling centre; one of the most famous granaries was the Millennium Mills complex which was opened in 1905. As a nexus of flour production, shipping and transport the area was of national importance; however, the area was target of heavy bombardments during World War II. The closure of the Royal Docks in the early 80s brought hardship into the local area. Taking this into account, the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) was placed in charge of the area with the responsibility of regeneration. The City Airport, the London Barrier Park and Docklands Light Railway Stations are some examples. Some private initiatives in the neighbourhood produced residential developments (Britannia Village, for example) and others, including a cable car (Emirates Cable Car), an international exhibition and convention centre (ExCeL London), The Crystal (Siemens exhibition centre), and some hotels (Ramada, Ibis, Crowne Plaza).

The immediate surrounding area of the Silvertown Quays includes Britannia Village, the residential neighbourhood lying directly

west of the Silvertown Quays. Britannia Village comprises low rise residential units, a primary school and community centre. To the east of Connaught Bridge is where the London City Airport is located; to the south of the site there is Thames Barrier Park as well as Barrier Park East, a residential development project. The ExCeL Centre is located to the north of Silvertown Quays, on the other side of the Royal Docks with a pedestrian, high level footbridge as the connection. The remaining neighbouring area is made up of limited residential development and industrial uses such as the Tate & Lyle Factory located near the City Airport DLR Station. Vast areas of vacant land exist in the area in which most of them are protected as Strategic Industrial Locations (SILs) (fig. 1).

Assigned to outline a critical design response for the area, this group organized it in five steps: analysis, reflections upon weaknesses and potentialities, vision, design principles and guidelines and identification of strategic sites/opportunities for intervention. In the analysis, information was gathered from what was produced by the other groups to elaborate the reflections, visions and design principles, as well as for the identification of sites in need of requalification.

## 2. Context and urban analysis

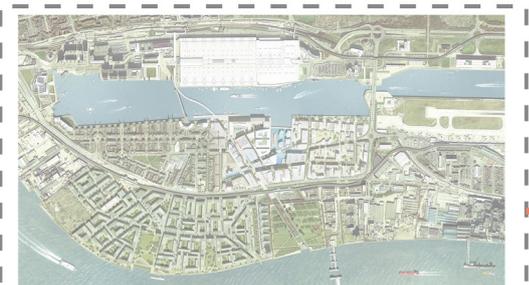
The Borough of Newham is known to be one of the most ethnically diverse areas in London. According to a Newham report in 2010, 64.6% of the population is reported as being non-white. Within the borough, different ethnic groups are also divided spatially. South Asians, particularly Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, tend to inhabit the northern part of the borough, far away from the Royal Docks. Black residents are widely distributed throughout the whole of Newham. Around the Royal Docks, black residents tend to be concentrated near Beckton and North Woolwich. White residents live primarily in the Southern part of Newham, a number of which reside in Britannia Village. The Royal Docks then is largely mixed between black and white residents. Further, the Newham area has a higher proportion of working aged persons [aged 16-64] than the London average with about 72 per cent of the local population are between the ages of 16-64, compared to 69 per cent in London as a whole.

Despite being culturally rich, economically Newham is one of the most deprived areas in the UK, and the third most deprived borough in London. Deprivation—including economic deprivation, crime and poor health—is high. Much of Newham falls within the top 20 per cent most deprived neighbourhoods in England; the site, Silvertown Quays, falls within an area with very high deprivation, amongst the top 10 per cent in the country.

The majority of the site is now derelict and overgrown, with fragments of machinery and concrete footings. The Millennium Mills, once the centre of grain-handling, is now vacant with occasional use for television and movie filming. The remains of the unsuccessful London Pleasure Gardens could be seen at the southern end of Silvertown Quays. Surrounding the site area there is a mixture of land uses, including residential, industrial, convention centre and airport-related activities. However, there seems to be a lack of local retail and community facilities serving the population and the use of public and open spaces is often categorised as being under-used.



**current situation**



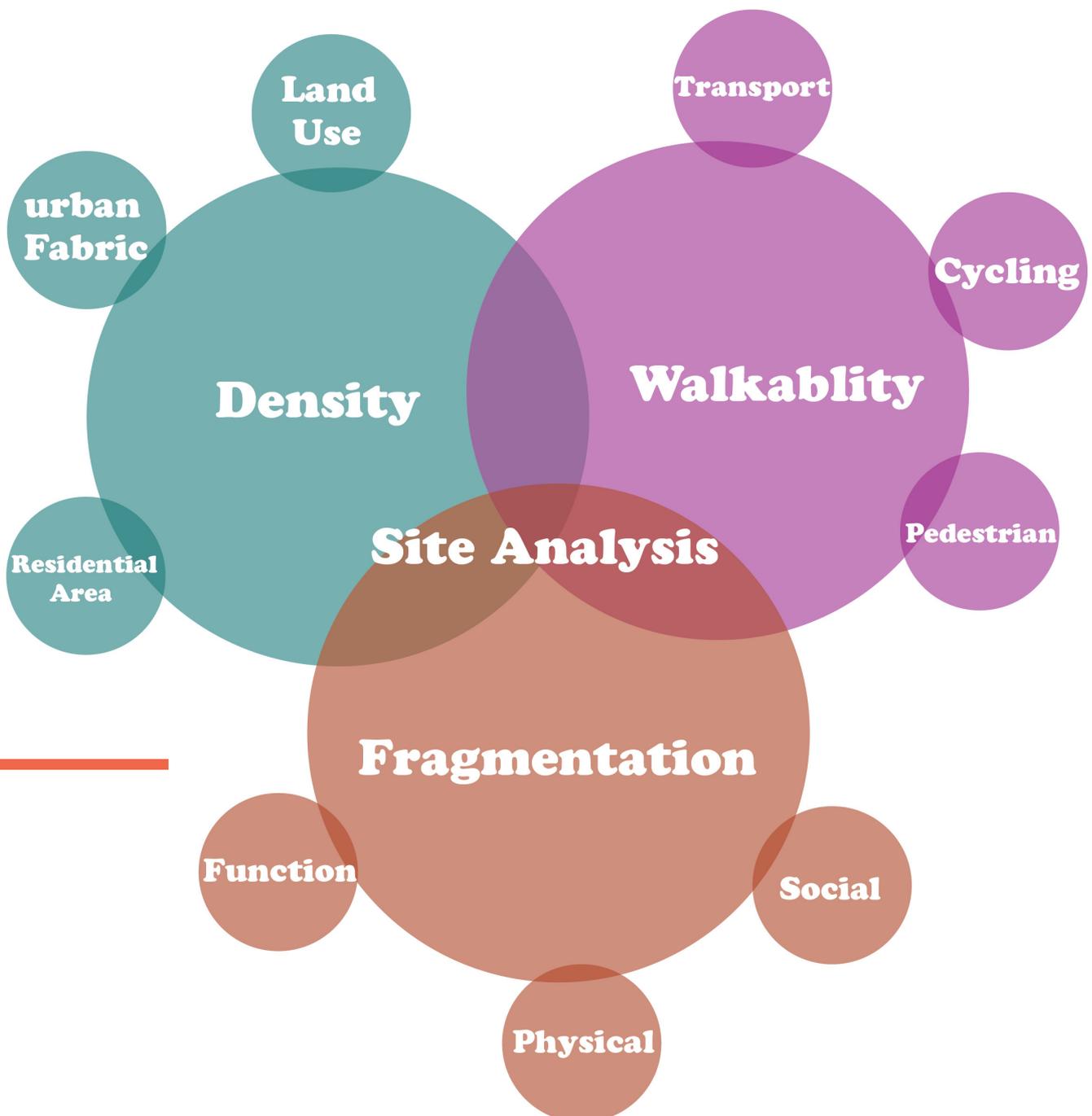
**Future Development Proposal**

Our analysis, based on the class reports produced and shared, can be synthesised as a three-fold reflection upon the issues and virtues of Silvertown Quays and its immediate surroundings. As shown in the concept diagram (Fig. 2), the three dimensions of our reflections are density, mobility and

fragmentation. These dimensions permeate this work both in the analysis of the area's present condition and in the elaboration of a critical design response.

Fig. 2: Dimensions of analysis.

source: authors, with adaptations from Google Maps and "Silvertown Quays Outline Planning Application Design and Access Statement, 2014"



The first of the dimensions, the idea of density, includes three perspectives. The perspective of density relates firstly to the use of land for building purposes, and as such implies the second perspective: the density of the urban fabric. In addition, a third perspective of density was identified and we called it “use of space”. The idea of density in the use of space regards “place” as a social product created and shared by a certain number of people in the very act of using it; something that the Danish architect Jan Gehl (2006), among others, refers to as “placemaking”. However, the importance of use was already highlighted by the Italian architect from the Renaissance, Leon Battista Alberti ([1452], 1755), who considered “use” what assigns dignity to the built environment. To illustrate his claim, he presented an analogy between the city and a ship, saying that either should be too empty nor too loaded:

*[...] the ancients lay it down for a rule, that cities and ships should by no means be either so big as to look empty nor so little as to be crowded. Others are for having their towns full and close, believing that it adds to their safety; others, feeding themselves with great hopes of times to come, delight having a vast deal of room; others, perhaps, have an eye to the fame and honour of posterity.*

(Alberti, 1755, Book IV, p.71, Image 89)

Following Alberti, it is possible to approach the perception of emptiness in Silvertown Quays, the perception of a shortage in the “use of space”, as something implicated in its performance as a place, as target for investment, in its sense of security and in the pleasantness embedded in its appropriation by visitors and dwellers. If the concern about emptiness permeates these four aspects, attention needs to be devoted to attracting people and to offering them an agreeable en-

vironment to enjoy. A balance between the conditions offered by the built environment and the amount of people making use of it was highlighted by the German philosopher Walter Benjamin, in his *Reflections*, when he praises the pavements along which he wandered in Moscow:

*[...] here at last one may stop without compunction in front of shop windows and go on one's way without partaking in the loitering serpentine gait to which the narrow pavements have accustomed most people.*

(Benjamin, 2007, p.98)

In this extract, Benjamin alludes both to the width and to the uncrowdedness of the pavements in Moscow, as opposed to the ones in Berlin at his time. In Silvertown Quays, not rarely the issue is precisely the opposite: the narrowness of some pavements together with the shortage of people using it do not incentive the “use of space”. According to Alberti (1755), such shortage in use compromises the convenience and, hence, the dignity of the built environment. The combination of these two elements (use and convenience) produces effects on the second domain of our analysis: mobility.

Building on the reports presented in the first phase of this work, our analysis acknowledges the good-enough condition of the area in terms of public transport and reasserts the shortage in the network of cycle paths. However, our approach to mobility is focused on the area's “walkability”. According to the French historian Michel de Certeau, intertwined paths shape spaces. “They weave places together.” (Certeau, 1984, p.97). In this sense, it is also possible to understand the production of places as a plural effect of the act of walking.

*The networks of these moving, intersecting writings compose a manifold story that has neither author nor spectator, shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces: in relation to representations, it remains daily and indefinitely other.*

(Certeau, 1984, p.93)

In our fieldwork at Silvertown Quays, the lack of incentive for walking was perceived as an important drawback. The scarcity of favourable conditions in some areas, reinforced by the occurrence of strongly evident borders, can render the act of walking unpleasant and eventually unjustified. With respect to favourable conditions, it is important to elicit that this predicament is due not only by a matter of physical conditions, but also by usage per se. According to Jan Gehl (2006), the presence of people is the factor that most attracts people to places. Thus, empty environments would be less effective in attracting people, while their physical conditions would tend to play a secondary role in the phenomenon of densification by use. This phenomena of attraction and enjoyment was summarized by Gehl (2006) as “liveability” and is very clear in some streets:

*When we make use of a street, this does not mean necessarily that we are using a store or an office on this street, but rather that we are using the street inasmuch as it is a street, and this amounts to saying that we penetrate into the taking place of the other things during our travel along this street. The life of the street is made up of surprises and discoveries, and the street itself therefore is an “environment of possibilities”.*

(Norberg-Schulz, 1985, p. 34)

The idea of liveability (Gehl, 2006) and of the street and other communal spaces as an “environment of possibilities” (Norberg-

Schulz, 1985) can only happen if there is enough people in the place to render enjoyable the experience of being there using it. In 2001, Tony Blair considered the street the more constantly used public service, of which quality depends not only a better vitality for people, but also for business. (Boujenko; Jones; Marschall, 2007). Inspired by what streets and footpaths can represent in a neighbourhood, it is easy to understand how borders can compromise walkability, and still contribute to the fragmentation of space.

Finally, our understanding of the study area as remarkably fragmented is nurtured by the perception of segregation in form and in function. Cropped as a consequence of the provision of infrastructure, the urban fabric very often hosts the symptoms of its own fate. Moreover, the effects of a fragmented urban shape are not restricted to what can be cartographically represented. The cognitive map of our perception of space around Silvertown Quays “maps time as well as space; it measures quality as well as quantity; and distances are charted not only in terms of movement through real topography, but [also] of emotional or affective intensity.” (Peters apud Vidler, 2011, p.335). This affective bond established with the space becomes more evident as one approaches the Barrier Park; an unanimous element of delightfulness in the more arid environment that surrounds it. What the Thames Barrier materializes in function can metaphorically cater for the idea of the Park as a watershed linking and at the same time distinguishing the weaknesses and the potentialities perceived in Silvertown Quays.

### 3. Critical identification of potentialities and weaknesses

Our reflections upon weaknesses and potentialities are grounded in a tactic decision. The challenge of interpreting the situation in Silvertown Quays was tackled having in mind the analogy of the glass filled with water up to its half. We decided to see it half-full instead of half-empty, thus, when discussing about the prognostics for the area in study, the group opts for recognizing and reasserting the value embedded in the presence of ambiguity. We grounded this decision in the assumption that when there is ambiguity there might be hope, and if there is hope, there might be meaning and value. In this work, ambiguity plays the role of an operand, helping to increase value from other input values. As such, ambiguity is applied to precisely three elements in this analysis:

street, land use, and social interaction. First of them, the operand ambiguity is applied to understand streets both as link and as place; a condition considered fundamental for the improvement of liveability in the area.

*As a Link, a street is designed for users to pass through it as quickly and conveniently as possible, in order to minimise travel time. As a Place, the street is a destination in its own right, where people are encouraged to spend time. The Place function seeks to enhance the street’s social, economic and community functions, to varying degrees.*

(Boujenko; Jones; Marschall, 2007, p. 6)

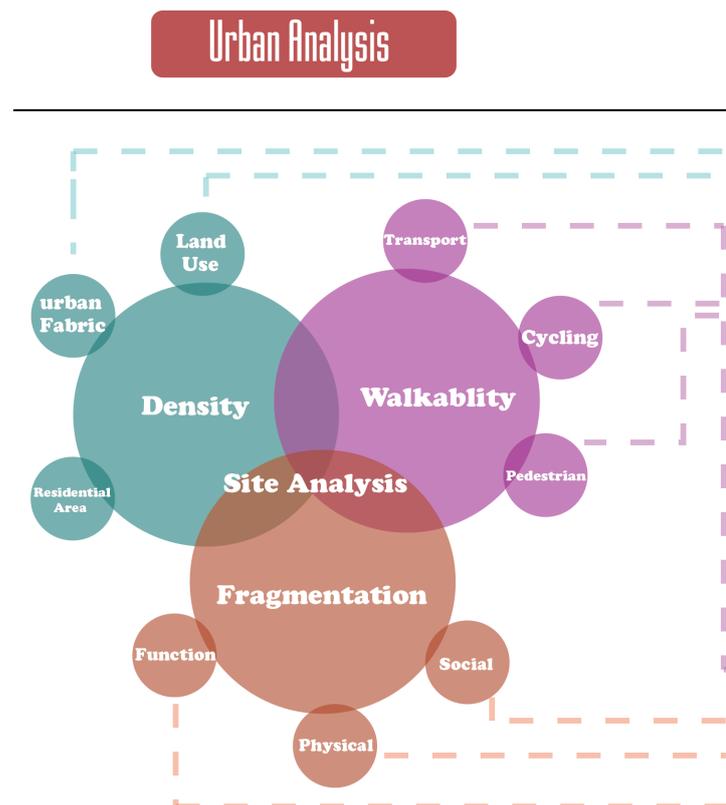


Fig. 3: From analysis to weaknesses / opportunities

source: authors

Concerning the use of land, the operand ambiguity represents the mergence between negotiation and regulation, through which a potential balance in form and function can be attained. A similar role is played by the operand ambiguity concerning the conception and provision of iconic and civic spaces and buildings. A third and fundamental application of this operand caters for ambiguity between uses of land and spaces, producing mixed used buildings and areas. A balance in these pairs of elements seems to contribute to better-for-people results in the production of the built environment.

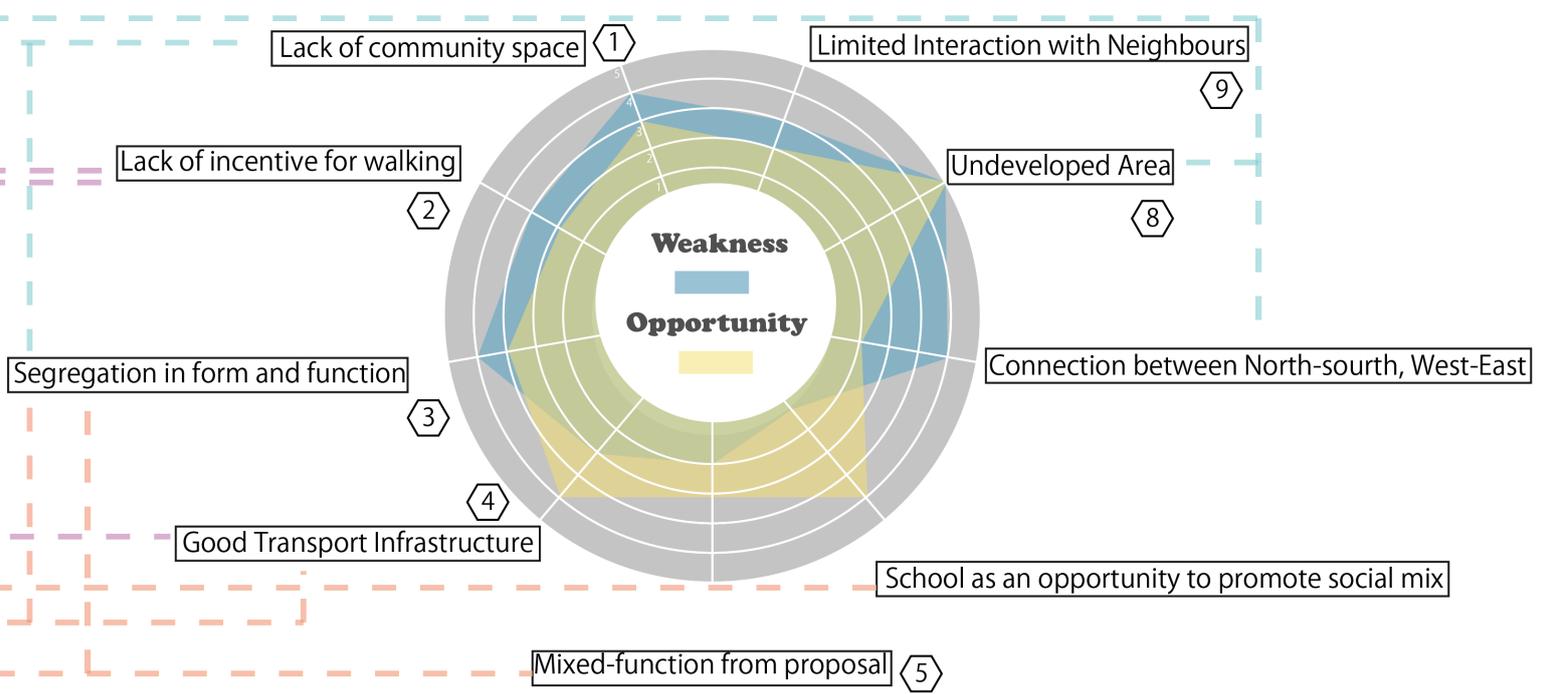
In the first potential pair of elements mentioned above, an increased balance between negotiation and regulation can produce alternatives to the constraints and imaginaries imposed by the market. These alternatives can be seen as opportunities to critically approach the dynamics of urbanism by supply through approaches of urbanism by joint endeavours of specialists, dwellers and stakeholders.

Effective planning should recognize that while the market is not always right, an aggregation of individual decisions is generally closer to the mark than the plans of wilful urban visionaries, however exciting those plans appear on paper. (Rybczynski, 2010, p. 198)

This claim by Witold Rybczynski resonates with Jeremy Till's (Jones et. al., 2005) reflections on the need to narrow the gap between architects and dwellers in the act of planning interventions.

Contrary to a strong tendency in the contemporary production of space, the advocacy of balance, in this sense ambiguity, between the production of iconic and civic spaces can be sustained by an eloquent statement by Hal Foster (2011, p.33): "To design a public space is not, ipso facto, to work for the public good, and to offer an iconic building is not, ipso facto, to play a civic role."

## Weakness and Opportunity



What Foster criticizes about iconic buildings and urban spaces confronts the “experience” that, according to him, many architects intend to offer through their implementations. Foster understands that some buildings aim to affect people through a miscellany of real and virtual, or even through feelings estranged and imposed to the spectator, whose transformation through this experience cannot be taken for granted. Whatever improved the special effects, these attempts are not prone to engage the active spectator.

*In this way the phenomenological reflexivity of “seing oneself see” approaches its opposite: a space (an installation, a building) that seems to do the perceiving for us. This is a new version of the old problem of fetishization, for it takes our thoughts and sensations, processes them as images and effects, and delivers them back to us for our appreciative amazement.*

(Foster, 2011, p.12)

In Silvertown Quays, the predicament described by Foster (2011) can be extended to the waterfront. Our critical design response points to the defetishization of the waterfront through the regeneration of its use as link and as place, therefore to its potential in the requalification of the quays. This under-

standing is detailed in the hereafter section entitled “Vision”.

Another similar predicament was identified in the site opposite to Silvertown Quays, since the Asian Business Port is in planning (Fig. 4). The Asian Business Port will include 4.7million square feet of floor space in the Royal Docks area, to the east of Canary Wharf, on a site previously owned by the public sector. It aims to attract Asian companies to open European offices in east London. Then we can see that the whole area will become quite commercial and there will be a dramatic change in the profile of its workers. This prognosis suggests a potential increase in the number of international workers at Royal Docks in the upcoming years. How to link the new workers with the current residences will be a problem. Workers of these new private companies will probably bring new culture, new life style to the Royal Docks. Their backgrounds might be quite different from those of the current dwellers. Hence, conflict might happen, representing a threat to be tackled by old and newcomers. This situation leads to the understanding that some areas need to be proposed to facilitate the establishment and maintenance of their social and political relations.

Fig. 4: the Asian Business Port in the context of projects in the area

source: <http://abp-london.co.uk/>



## 4. Vision

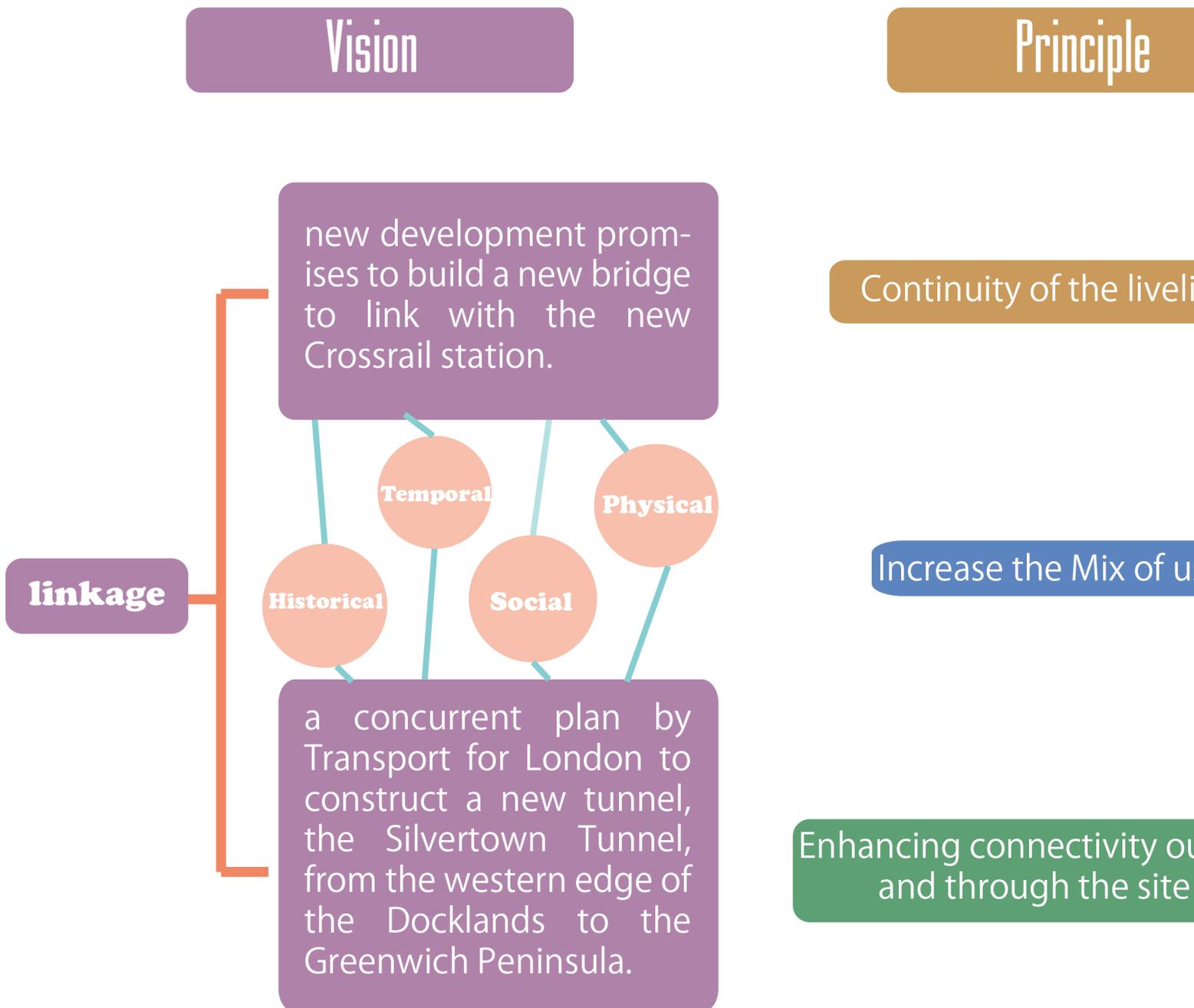
Based on the way we approached the weaknesses / potentialities question, as described above, our vision for the Silvertown Quays is structured around the theme of linkage, in both the physical and the social sense. Our view is to contend linkages from historical, temporary, social and physical perspectives towards the attempt to revive this area and to ensure that it is not developed as an isolated “island”, as seems likely. Therefore we are working within the framework of the proposed redevelopment, specifying ways in which its material and social boundaries could be challenged.

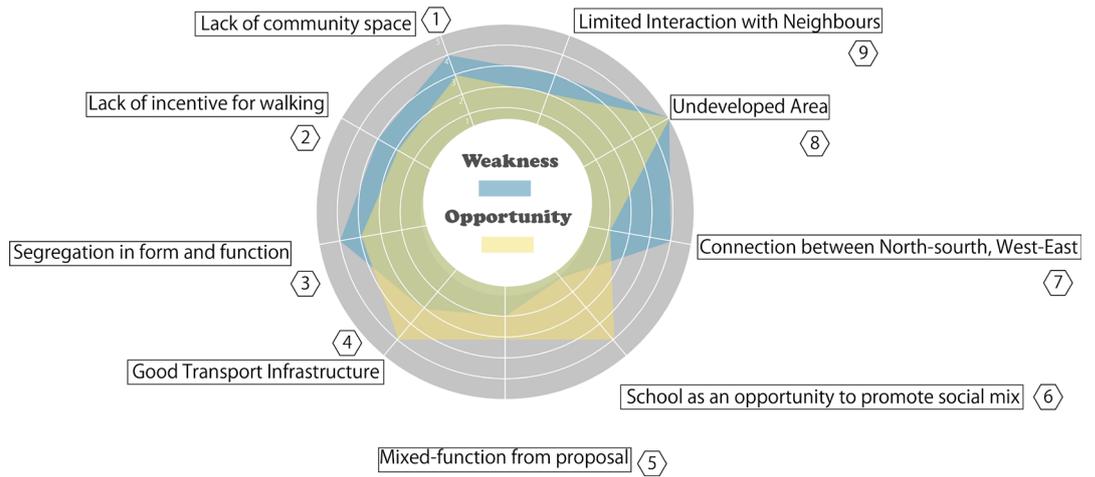
On the one hand, then, the concept of linkage refers to the way the outer limits of the site function as urban elements - and particularly the waterfront, since it is the defining element of the Docklands. Reactivating the waterfront, not only as an element enhancing public space but also as a transport resource, is the key - together with more detailed consideration of the other limits.

Beyond that, it is crucial to attempt to revitalise the area from the start of the development and to try to ensure a continuously lively place throughout the process. This would mean to invite people in and motivate them to stay, while also increasing the area's density. Apart from creating attractors for visitors, meaningful ties need to be encouraged between new and current residents. Taking into account the richness of ethnicities and cultures, spatial and temporal strategies can be employed to promote encounters and dialogue, producing more opportunity for interaction in the short term and more social cohesion in the long term. The acknowledgement of the value of this cultural multiplicity and its implication in the local dialogues could be seen as an effect of the operand ambiguity in the everyday life of Silvertown Quays.

Fig. 5: Vision - Principles - Guidelines

source: authors





# Guideline

ness	rethink the phasing	1	8	6
	extended temporary projects and activities	5	8	3
ses	wider variety of working models and commercial typologies	3	8	
	breaking down the scale, regarding size and uses	4	8	
	waterfront as both leisure and transportation asset	5	8	
utwards	the permeability of borders	2	8	
	livelihood of the "internal" public spaces	1	6	9
	strengthen both North/South and East/West axes of movement.	7	8	4

## 5. Design principles and guidelines

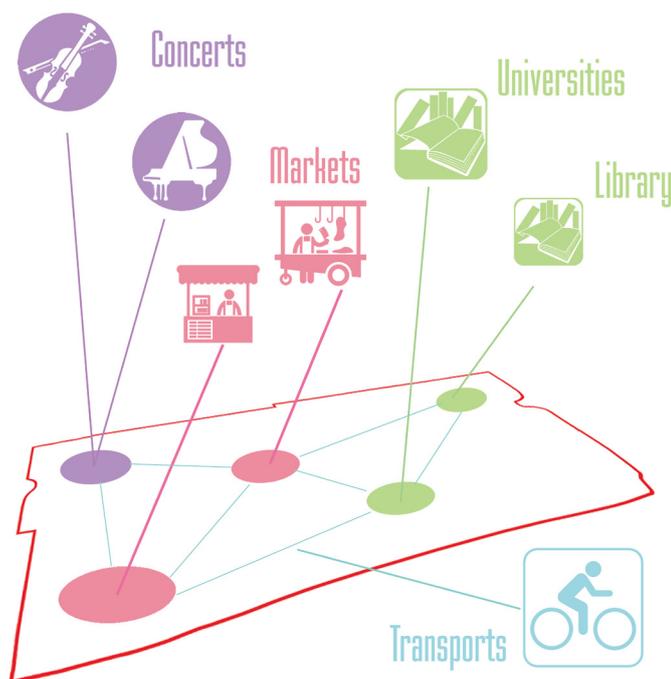
We identify three basic principles that specify our vision of linkage, and which are then broken down into guidelines for our proposal for design interventions (fig. 5): ensuring the **continuity of liveliness** of Silvertown Quays throughout the development process, promoting a more **integrated mixing of uses** in a wide sense, and **enhancing the connectivity both outwards and through site**, creating a better relationship with the surrounding areas.

### A. Continuity of liveliness

The first step towards a better development process is to **rethink the phasing** of the project. This will be further detailed in the next session, but in general the idea is to avoid having large areas fenced off or isolated for a long time, and to try to build up stronger linkages with neighbouring areas gradually from the start of the project. Complementary to that, we propose to introduce **extended temporary projects** and activities in the “gaps” available between phases, to encourage residents and visitors to create stronger relationship with each other and with the area (fig. 6). Such a plan could include, for example:

Fig. 6: Introducing interim uses / events / activities

source: authors



- concerts performed by local residents;

- holiday markets with booths that residents can sell foods or handmade crafts (it could also be a way to share the cultures);

- the use of neglected space for residential gathering or exhibitions (e.g. art, photography...etc.);

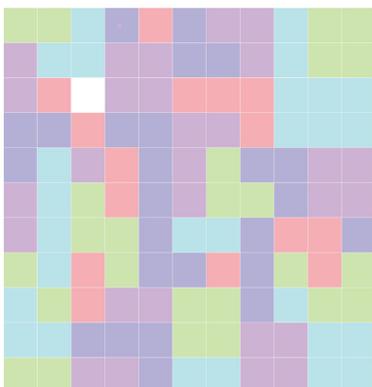
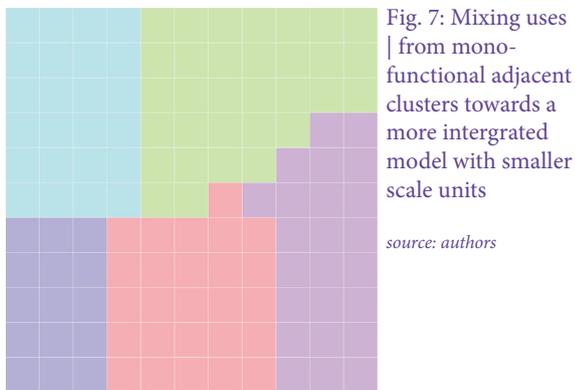
- collaboration with the University of East London to design workshops/ events involving local residents.

- attracting people who attend exhibitions at Excel London to visit the area, as an opportunity to increase the use of its facilities and services and hopefully offer them a more people-friendly environment.

## B. Increasing the mix of uses

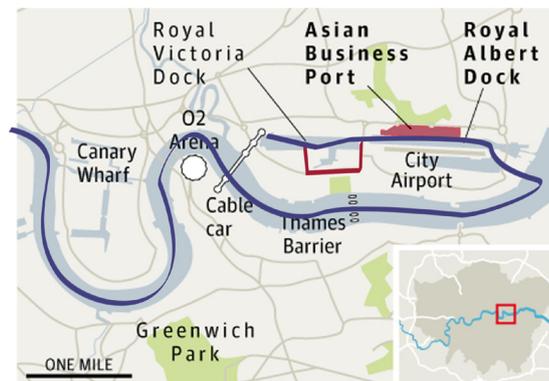
While the proposed plan for Silvertown Quays does bring commercial and leisure activities to the site, the spectrum of types of workplaces and commercial spaces envisioned is rather limited to large-scale, high-end establishments—which is in turn indicative of the kind of social life promoted in the area.

To counteract that, we propose that a **wider variety of working models and commercial typologies** is introduced and supported - for example small businesses, spaces for small-scale manufacturing etc. Closely related to this is the guideline of **breaking down the scale in regard with size and uses** (fig. 7). Furthermore, diverse uses could be introduced vertically inside the buildings, on the ground floors and above. A final aspect of mixing uses refers to the **waterfront as both leisure and transportation asset** (fig. 8). In this aspect the water possesses the potential to introduce local or perhaps city-wide water transportation schemes.



## C. Enhancing connectivity outwards and through the site

One of the crucial elements that can either segregate the site or connect the site across scales is the **permeability of its borders** - which can be improved by examining the streetscape along the outer borders. Complementary to that is the **livelihood of the “internal” public spaces** - this is connected to the street pattern, which is already being addressed in the proposal; however, it is the ground floor uses that could be re-examined. In general, the idea is to **strengthen both North/South and East/West axes of movement** (fig. 9).



## 6. Intervention sites and design responses

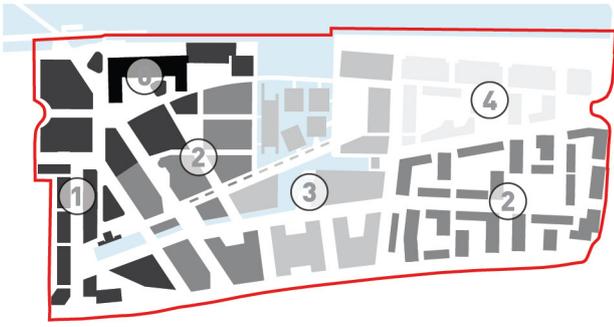
### A. Phasing

The proposed phasing for the development of Silvertown Quays follows a rather linear, west-to-east approach, beginning around the Millennium Mills (restored in “phase 0”) and along the western border of the site. This first phase introduces residential and “trading house / brand” typologies. The next phases, however, work much more with a monofunctional logic, where clusters of typologies are developed independently. This is particularly problematic for the eastern part of the site, where residential blocks are developed in two distinct phases (2 and 4)- leaving the first cluster isolated for a long time and having the second one appear only after the rest of the scheme has been completed. This is a strategy that seems heavily oriented towards the “global dimension” of the project, as suggested by the large scale of the proposed division of plots and by the emphasis placed on the central core around the water front and the new diagonal axis, a core designed to have a corporate / high-end commercial character. The spatial isolation of the residential areas and their apparent dependency on that core seriously impede possibilities of connections at the local scale: instead of working towards better integrating the new residents in the area and creating meaningful and lively places, it seems more likely that this strategy is creating new gated communities.

As an alternative, we propose a phasing strategy that works from the border towards the inside and leaves for last the development of the inner core of iconic pavilions in the water (fig.10). While it is true that this model is a more fragmented one, we believe that fragmentation is in this case positive: by breaking down the scale of the plots and by better mixing uses in each phase, different areas of the site are simultaneously activated with residents and office workers coming in. Furthermore, this also results in smaller “gaps” between construction phases, arrayed in close connection to the water. This, in combination with a scheme for temporary interim uses, provides a better possibility for those spaces to start being appropriated from the beginning of development and to act as facilitators of social life in the area - providing of course that those temporary uses are appropriately selected to have a community- rather than commercial-oriented character (for example spaces for play, music / sports events, local open air markets, lightweight pavilions with meeting spaces etc. - fig. 11).

Fig. 10: Currently proposed and alternative phasing

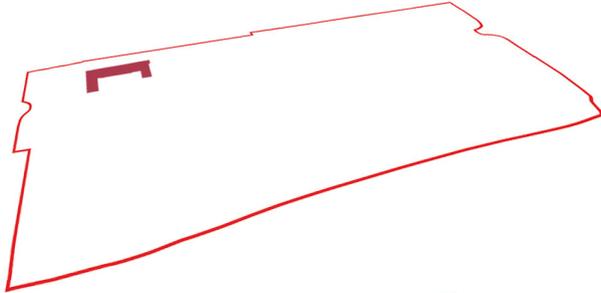
*source: authors, with adaptations from “Silvertown Quays Outline Planning Application Design and Access Statement, 2014”*



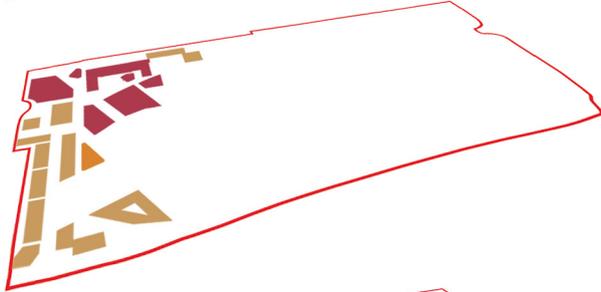
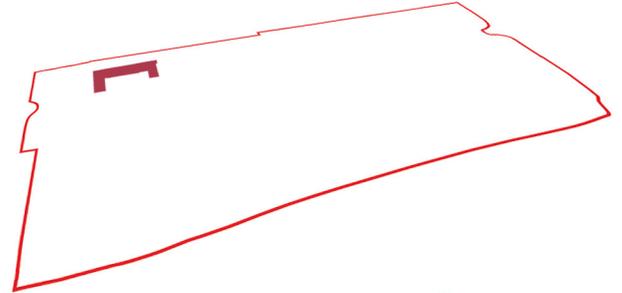
proposed phasing



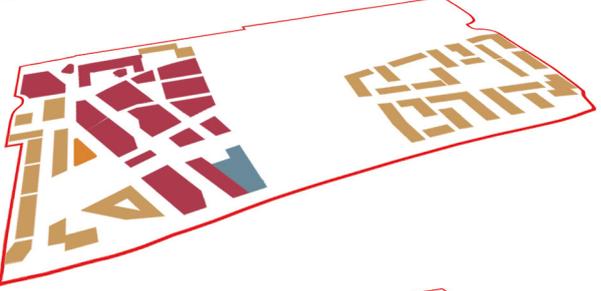
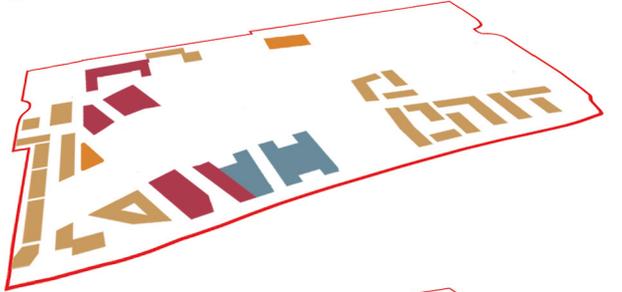
alternative phasing



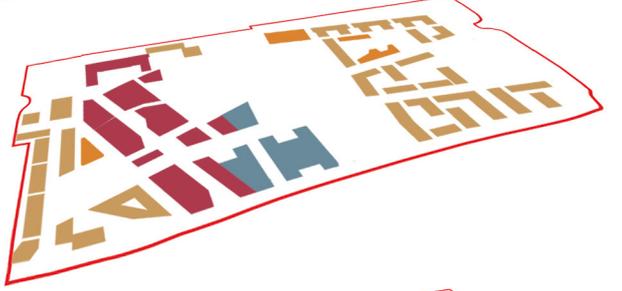
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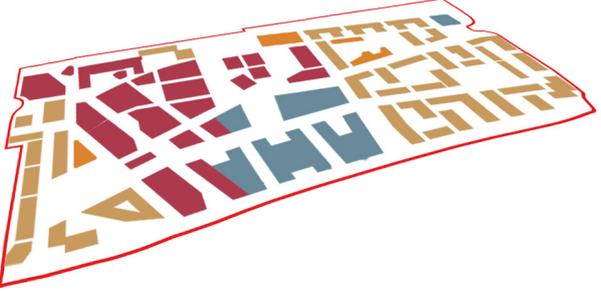
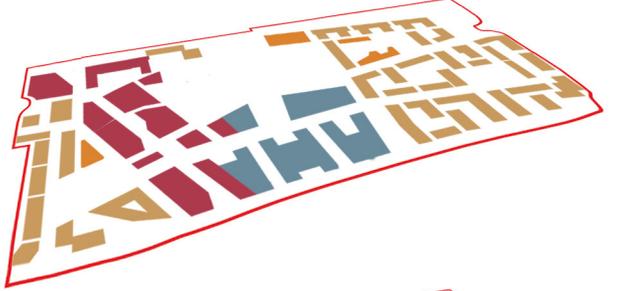
ph. 1



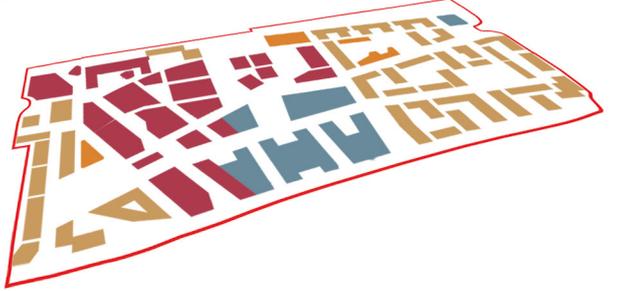
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ph. 3



ph. 4



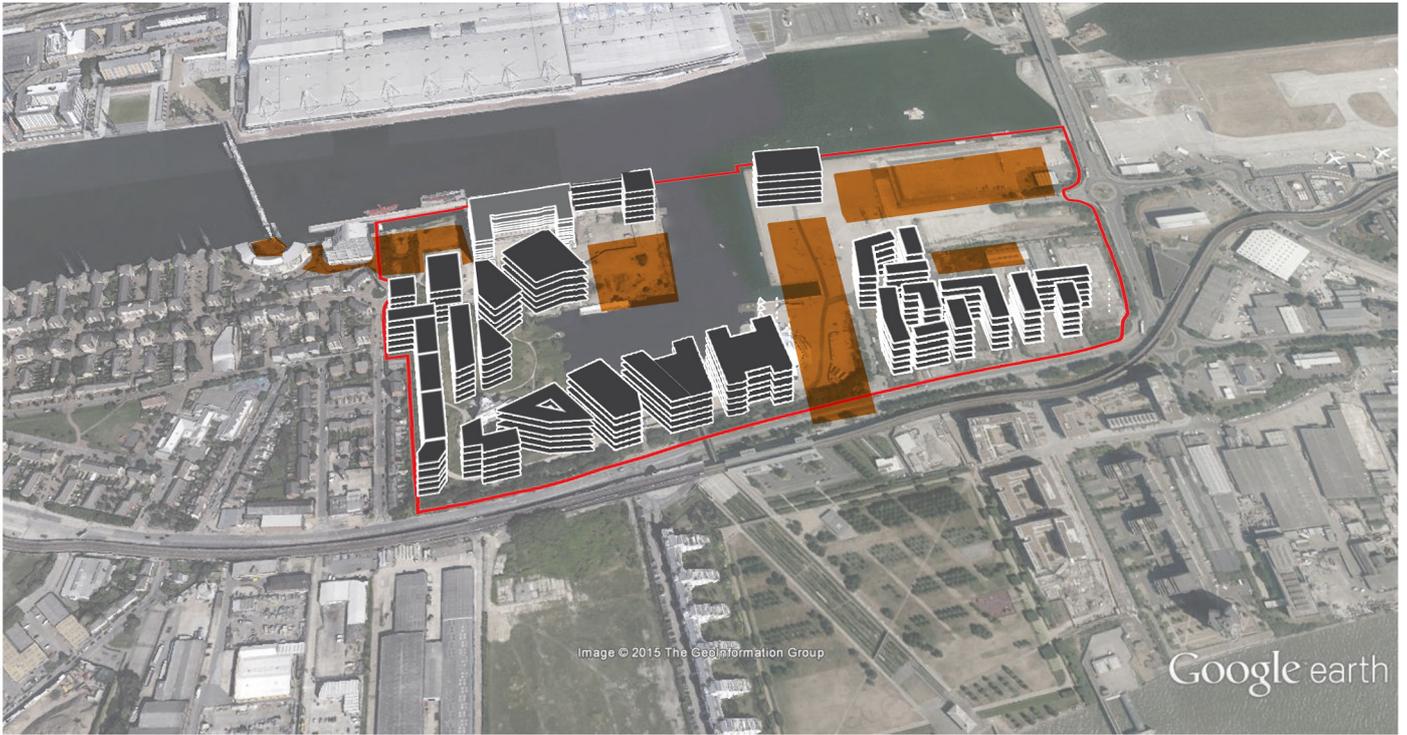
typologies

residential

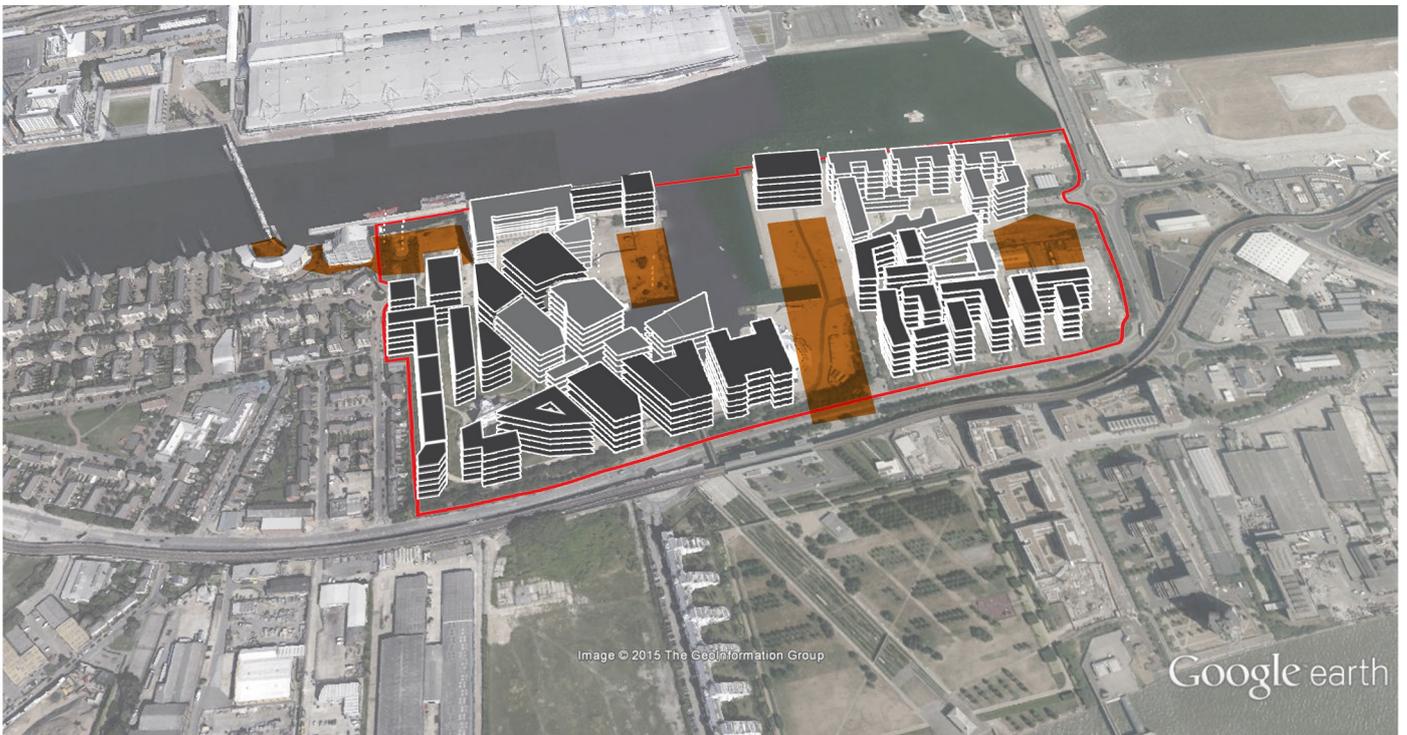
"trading house" / brands

office

community, leisure and education



alternative phasing - phase 1



alternative phasing - phase 2

spaces for temporary uses / activities



Fig. 11: Alternative phases 1 & 2 - indicative spaces for temporary uses and activities

source: authors, with adaptations from Google Earth

## B. Ground floor uses

The same principle of breaking down the scale of the development to make it more locally integrated is also applied to the way the ground floor of the buildings is structured in terms of assigned use. We are proposing a greater number and variety of retail and community / education spaces, scaled down in size to make them an affordable option for local businesses and for public authorities - so as to promote the inclusion of more local shops and social infrastructure (libraries, multifunctional spaces for arts, education etc.), spread across the site and particularly activating the south border as well as the waterfront. In addition, we propose that a typology of “(work)shops” be integrated

in the scheme: flexible spaces that allow for small scale manufacturing and selling of products, or studio - exhibition space for example (fig.12). This typology would provide the opportunity for a wider variety of local businesses and independent professionals to be part of Silvertown Quays, counteracting the exclusively “nine-to-five” office work culture that prevails in the current proposal - especially when those are mixed instead of kept apart (in separate “studio space” buildings for example). This of course can only be effective under the provision of (true) affordability - which is perhaps a more tricky issue; however the distribution of spaces on the site and their varied size provides a better basis for negotiation.



Fig. 12: Currently proposed and alternative ground floor uses

source: adapted from “Silvertown Quays Outline Planning Application Design and Access Statement, 2014”



### C. Refocusing on the border

Finally, as part of the goal to enhance the site's linkage with surrounding areas, we argue that greater attention should be paid to the way the limits of the site are designed (fig. 13). Apart from the temporal (developing the border gradually from the beginning) and use-mixing (activating the ground floors) aspects mentioned above, the permeability of the border should be ensured at the spatial and material level, especially concerning pedestrian mobility. On the southern limit, we propose that the street design be rethought to facilitate movement both along and across North Woolwich Road, including measures such as the widening of the sidewalks, the introduction of traffic calming elements, the provision of street furniture etc. (fig. 14-15). The "catchment area" of those designs should also be extended to cover at least part of the intersecting streets, both within the site and on the side of the Barrier Park, while special attention needs to be given to the presence of the DLR line above street level.

Apart from that, we identify two key sites slightly outside the site limit that can function both as attractors and joints that enhance connectivity. The first is the bit of leftover space under the highway bridge on the eastern limit (on the border with City airport). The particularities of this space (closeness to water, passage under a highway) combined with the visual connection to our site present a variety of potentials for this small opening - the most important move though would be to open up the passage along the water directly into the new development. This would generate pedestrian movement along the waterfront at Sil-

vertown Quays, particularly creating a much needed link between the residential edge and the city to the north (fig. 16-17).

A similar site with much potential is identified at the Royal Victoria Place (the crescent-shaped building at the edge of Britannia Village and the open space in front). As there are already commercial uses there, and it is situated at the landing point of the bridge to the other side of the basin, placing a focus on this space is crucial for creating spatial and functional links between the new development and the neighbouring sites. For the same reason, we propose designing the connection across the water not as a new pedestrian bridge directly extending the diagonal axis at Silvertown, but rather as a redesigned path along the water and the existing bridge, using Royal Victoria Place as a catalyst for generating and facilitating movement (fig. 18).

Royal Victoria Place

leftover space

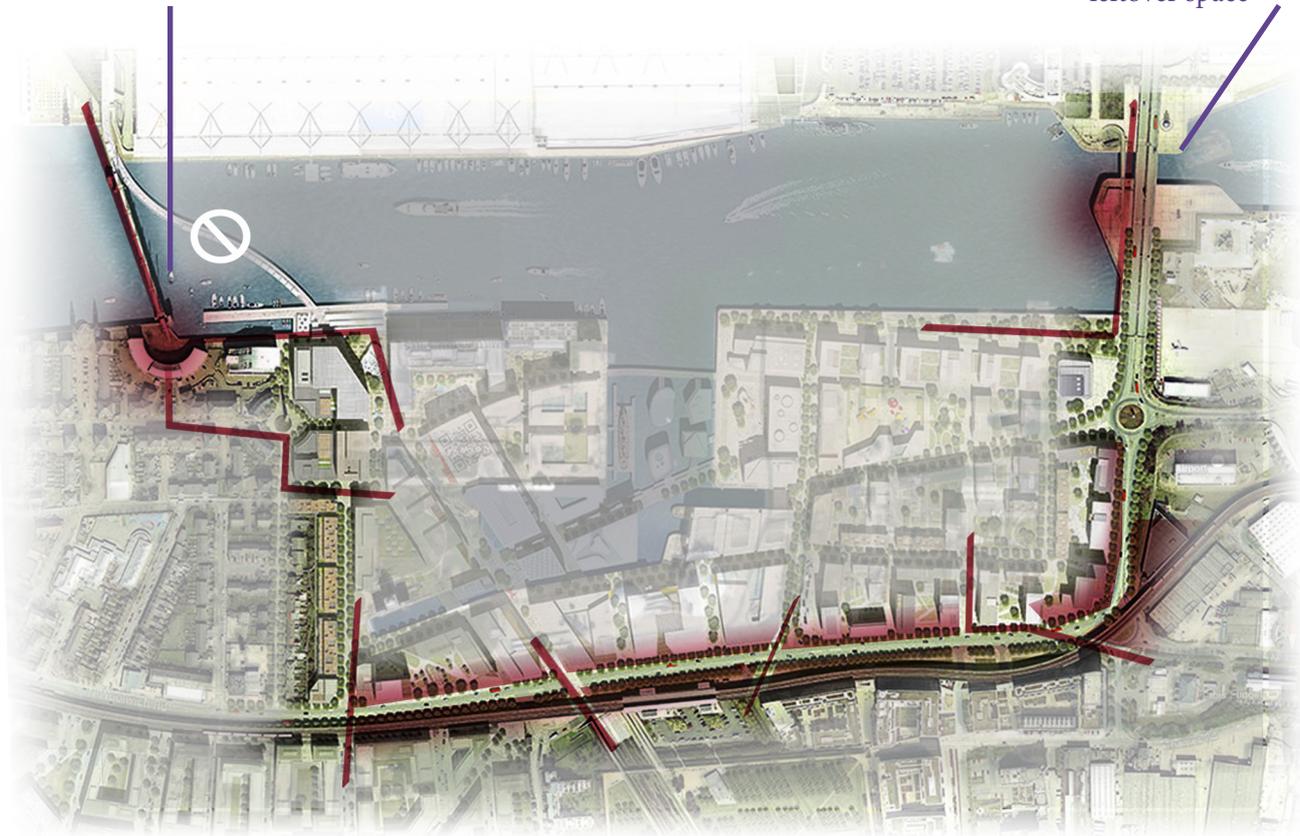


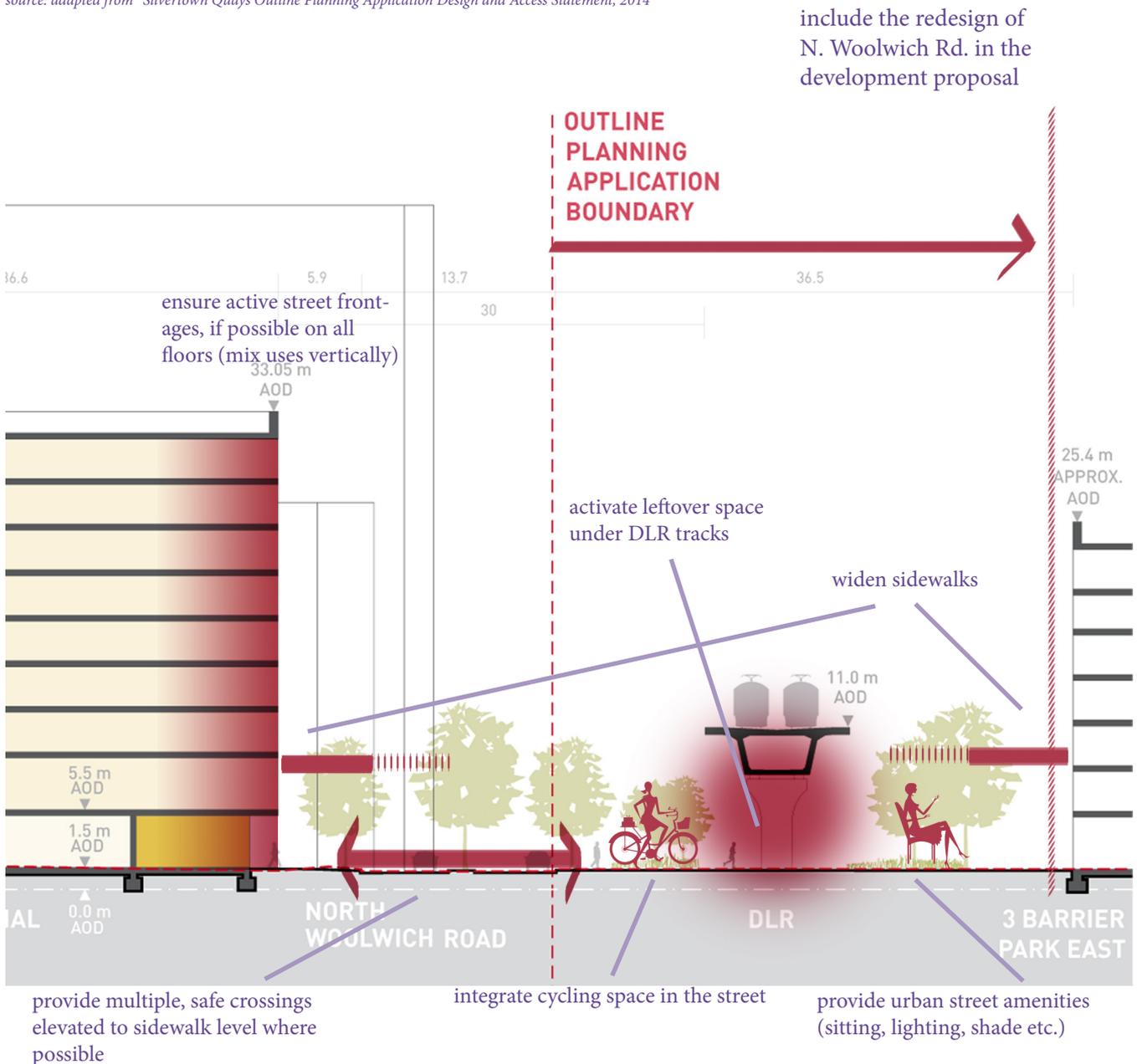
Fig. 13: Focusing on the site borders

source: authors, with adaptations from Google Maps and "Silvertown Quays Outline Planning Application Design and Access Statement, 2014"



Fig. 14: North Woolwich Road | intervention area  
 source: adapted from Bing Maps

Fig. 15: North Woolwich Road | intervention guidelines  
 source: adapted from "Silvertown Quays Outline Planning Application Design and Access Statement, 2014"



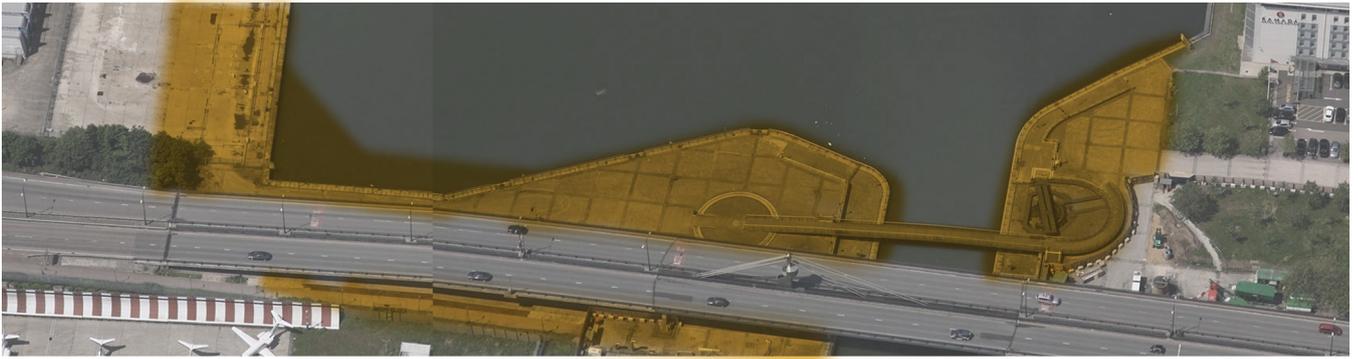


Fig. 16: Leftover space on the eastern border | intervention area  
source: adapted from Bing Maps

Fig. 17: Leftover space on the eastern border | intervention impression  
source: authors

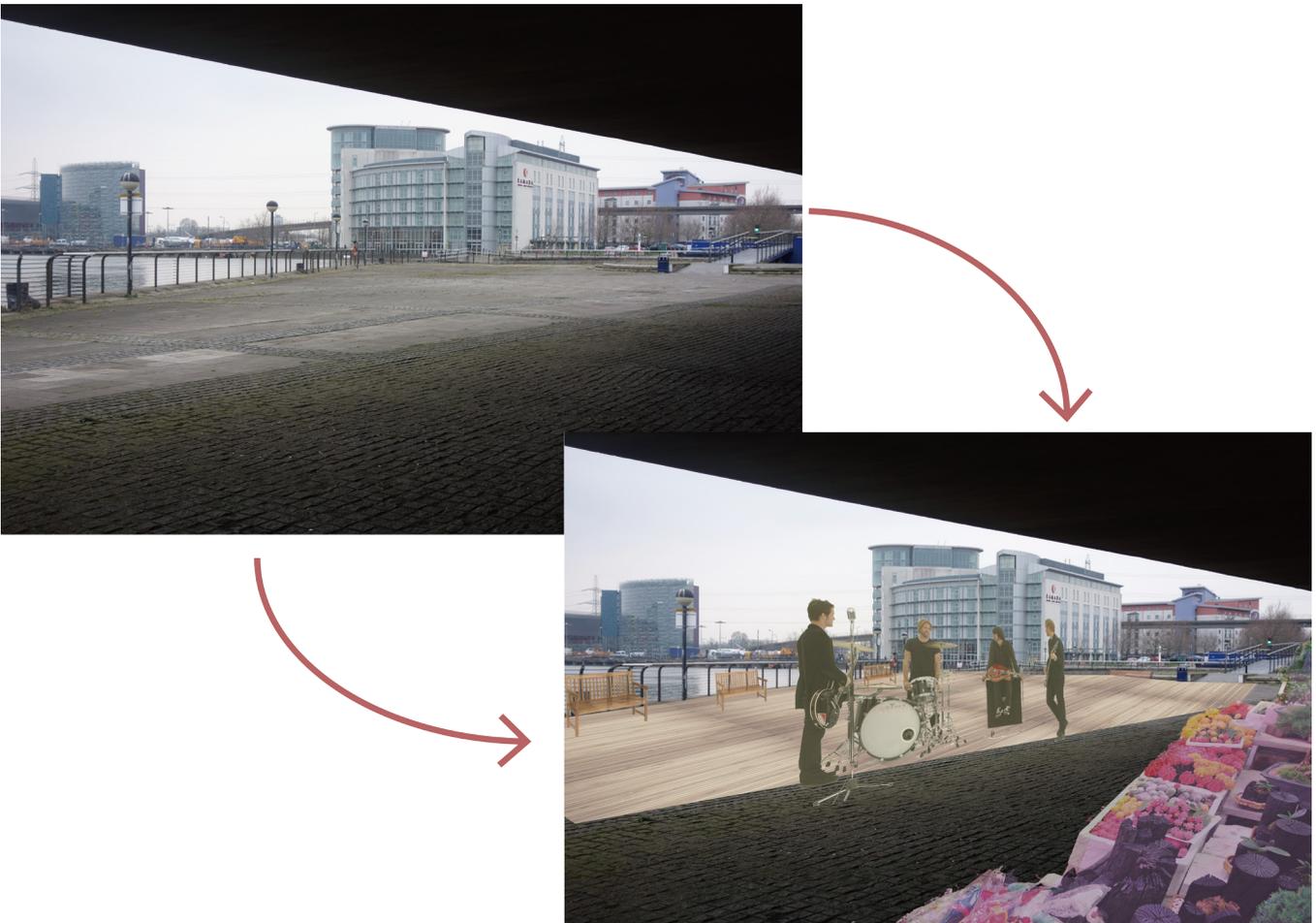
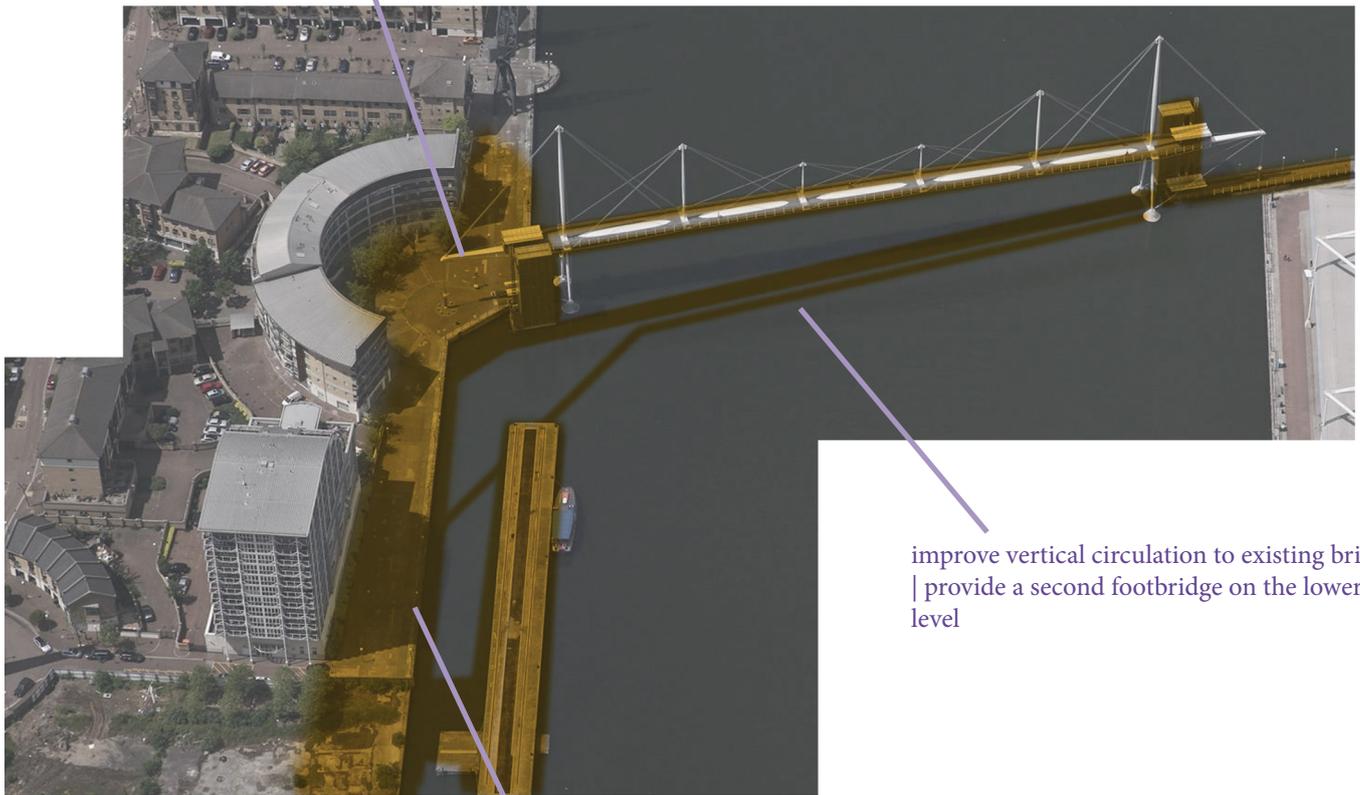


Fig. 18: Royal Victoria Place - Bridge | intervention area and guidelines  
source: adapted from Bing Maps

program open air markets / events to stimulate movement and vibrancy | use public art / temporary pavillions



improve vertical circulation to existing bridge | provide a second footbridge on the lower level

work with paving materials, street furniture and other visual elements to enhance the link with Silvertown Quays

## 7. Final considerations

Using the analysis as a critical and theoretical framework, as well as a reminder of the traps and potentialities on the way towards development, our group produced a set of visions and design principles explained and detailed in this document. The visions outlined can be understood as a synthesis of our observations, and consists of the perception of Silvertown Quays as potentially playing the twofold role of Link & Place for the area where it is located.

While Link, it needs to have reinforced the connection through East-West and North-South axis. While Place, this report elucidates two elements. First, there is a need for mixed use solutions for the use of space which turns out to be one of the proposed design principles. Second, the attention that needs to be devoted to the historical and social elements in the making of space. Our group raises the question whether approaches restricted to elements of built and landscape design are enough to the transmission of historical richness and the maintenance and strengthen of social bonds through time.

Our last consideration unfolds in the form of a provocative doubt. The proposal submitted to public appreciation grounds some of its claims on the argument of the production of a “piece of city”. According to our analysis, it seems to be delivering a barely new edition of a city in pieces. Howsoever, our concern reflects the need to avoid these pieces to be developed as heterotopias more than as biotopes, in other words, as habitats for human and historical contemporary subjects.

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