

# CO-VISIONING

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*A **common**, **community**, **collaborative** vision for Silvertown Quays, Newham.*



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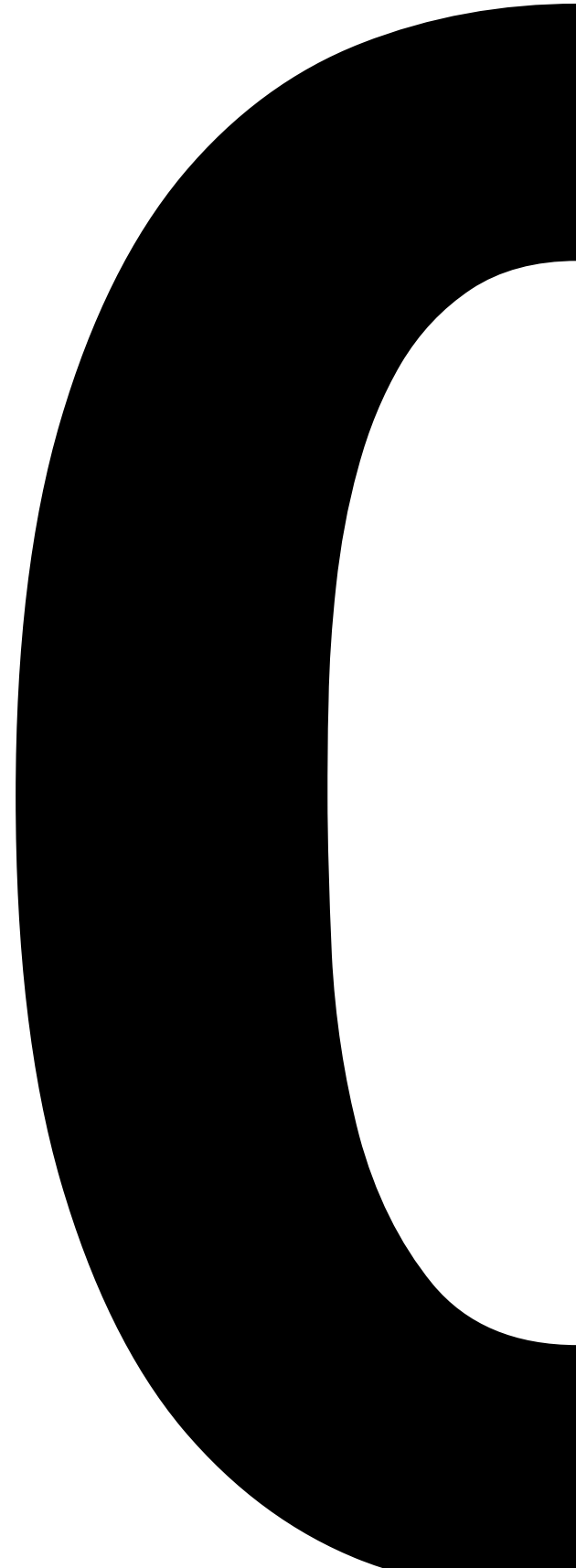
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# *INTRODUCTION*

This section presents the context and insights of the proposal.



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# SILVERTOWN QUAYS, ROYAL DOCKS

## 1.1

The Royal Docks, located at the southern part of the borough of Newham, and along the Thames river, is the area of east London is the general study area of this report. Silvertown Quays is the specific site of design intervention of the report. Silvertown Quays is one of the sites planned for redevelopment and regeneration. That process was envisioned in a master plan made by the Mayor of London and the Newham council for the Royal Docks area.

Since its construction in the 19th century, this area has been a point of connection and trade of London with the world. The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson speaks about the future vision: “We intent to transform the Royal Docks into a world class business center” (Mayor of London and Mayor of Newham, 2011). The city’s translation and integration of the area’s historical legacy into the future redevelopment omits interpretation of the history which is a heritage of ethnically diverse working-class, close-knit community and its relationship to the industrial landscape that defined livelihoods in the past.

At the heart of the Royal Docks, the Silvertown Quays today represents an important opportunity for the city to open a vibrant and dynamic space of innovation consisting of creative and technological industries from all over the world. This would boost new social and economic potentialities at the Docks. As the site is also a part of the so-called “arc of opportunity”, the area planned for a long-term regeneration vision that aims to enhance the economic and urban development of east London.

Even though this urban regeneration unarguably benefits the path towards the consolidation of London as a world-class city, it is important highlight the impact the proposals might have over the existing communities. Therefore, based on our previous stage urban analysis this report presents some of the alternative strategies adopted by our group in order to improve the future relations among the existing and newcomer communities as well as the urban dynamics that might happen on the ground.



Fig. 1 - Relationship of Silvertown Quays at different scales



Fig. 2 - *Photo of Royal Docks*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.2

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This proposal is a co-vision that appropriates the currently proposed master-plans for the Royal Docklands and nuances them to create a more sensitive, people-centred, diversified and adaptable vision. This vision is formulated out of a cumulative process of analysis; a by-product of six-lenses urban analysis (cultures and economies, landmarks and urban fabric, open and public spaces, housing, threshold and leftover spaces, infrastructure and spaces of mobility) and SWOT analysis.

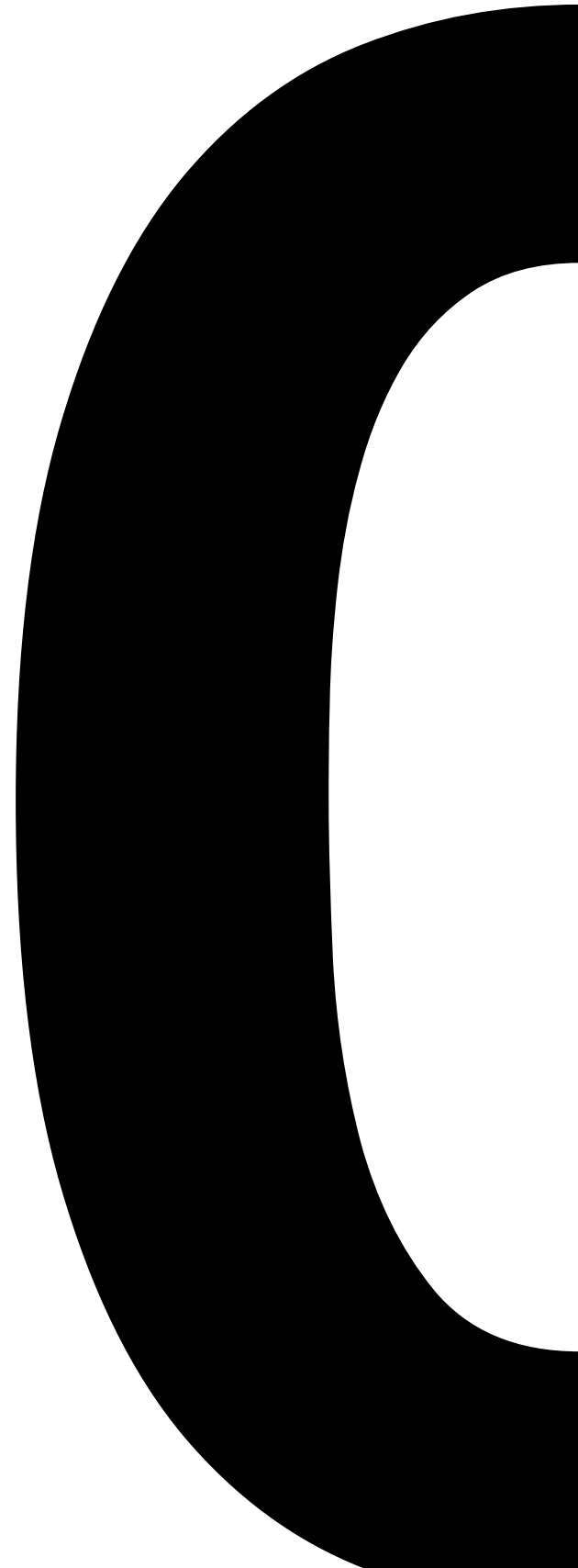
The design interventions emerged out of these analysis is embedded in the core principles of diversity and connectivity. These principles are put into practice by proposed interventions aimed at creating sense of belonging between the people of the community and various stakeholders, identifying the differences and enabling future adaptability to work towards commonly shared objective for the area. Our proposal sees beyond the dichotomy of “mainstream versus alternative”, in search of redefining elements that shape a new image for Silvertown Quays.

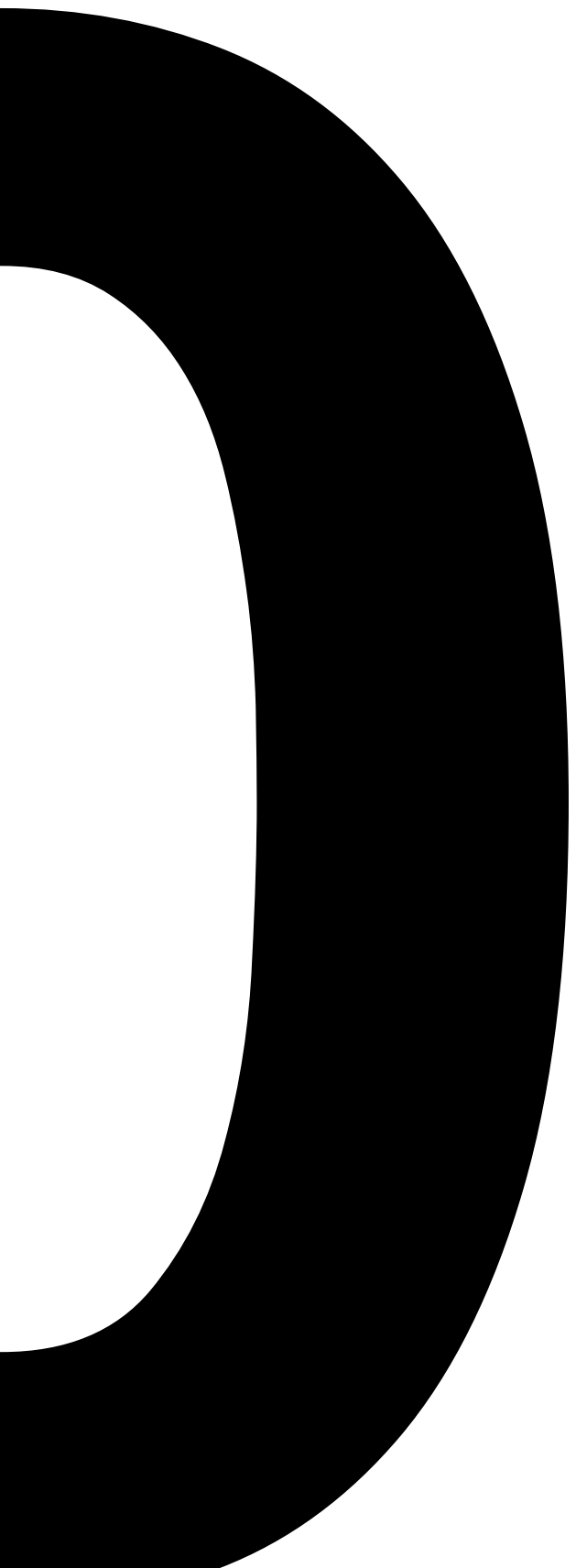




## *SITE ANALYSIS*

This section addresses the constraints and opportunities identified in different levels of analysis.





# LANDMARKS & URBAN FABRIC

## 2.1

The major disadvantage is that the area is zoned in monolithic single-type usage zones like residential, commercial, and cultural. There is a lack of mixed-use typology thus making each zone completely disconnected with one another. It obstructs vibrancy, accessibility and connectivity within the area making the everyday life harder for the residents. The opportunity for the area hence, would be to reconnect all the adjacent areas with more diverse and mixed uses, as well regenerate historical landmarks.



Fig. 3 - *Urban Fabric Study*

The presence of coarse grains around City airport & ExCel restrict walkability and pedestrian-friendly use within these areas. The fine grain is present in the new and old residential zones, where there were some traces of vibrancy in terms of activities, as Cable car, Crystal, walkway to ExCel.



In the critique of landmarks, the analysis found that there is a discrepancy between the definition of “iconic” when it comes to landmarks. Some residents consider the new buildings like Siemens Crystal and ExCel, while the others referred to something of their daily use such as infrastructure (DLR) or a local pub. The examined theoretical background like (Rossi, 1966) discern that architecture of city can be analysed as a work of engineering virtuosity and as a compilation of “urban artefacts” when the city is defined by its own history and particular form. Kaika (Kaika, 2011) on the other hand, gives an account of new corporate architecture being advertised as ‘iconic’ without actually having any communication with or use for, the general public, which she calls “autistic architecture”.

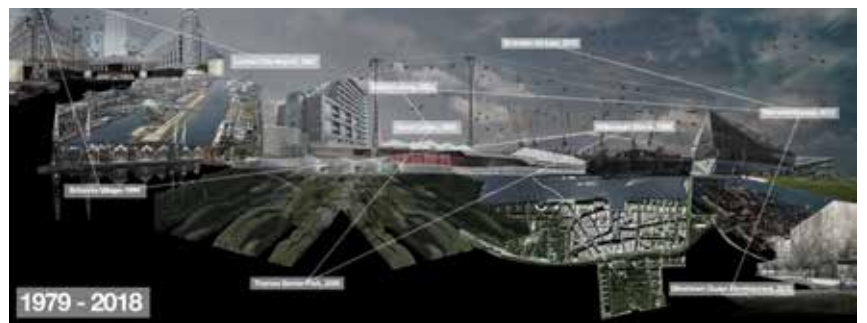


Fig. 4 - *Timeline of Transformation*

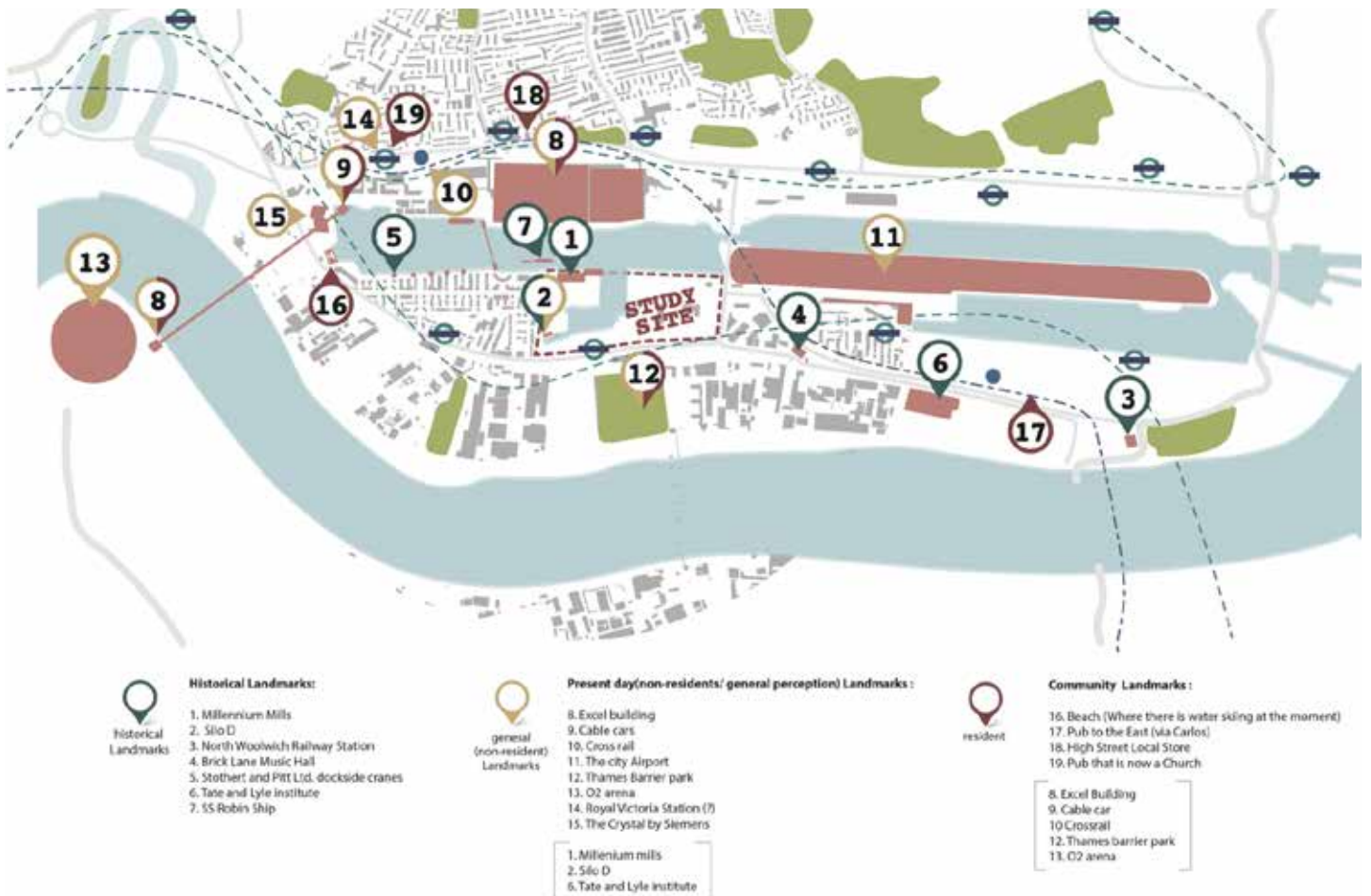


Fig. 5 - Landmark Map

# HOUSING & DWELLING

## 2.2

Housing was prevalent in the Royal docks area much before the docks were built. However, the housing pattern in the Royal Docks through the course of time have been reorganized and rebuilt mainly due to the destruction caused by the bombings in WWII. In the present scenario, four distinct residential areas can be identified and each of them having different distinct characteristics.

1: *Extension of Canning Town and Custom House*: They are mostly high-rise residential areas, mixed with commercial having ample offices and hotels. Residents in this zone are mostly rental while those working in offices commute to Canary Wharf.

2: *Britannia Village*: This is a villa-based, multi-storey high-rise apartment with mixed residential areas, which are smaller in scale and quieter compared to the other areas around, with facilities of schools and public green.

3: *Barrier Park East and West*: Surrounding the high quality landscape resources of Thames Barrier Park, a number of multi-storied middle and high-class residential buildings were and are still being built.

4: *Extension of North Woolwich*: The long-established residential and industrial character of North Woolwich limits any major development to take place around that area, although there are a number of potential residential infill sites.

From the analysis it is evident that the residential areas are not as lively as it could be mainly due to the lack of connectivity in the programs and functionality in relation to the residents. Further, the analysis revealed that the arrangement of the housing blocks are mostly enclosed; blocks facing towards inner courts with their back/side facing towards public spaces, especially in Britannia Village.

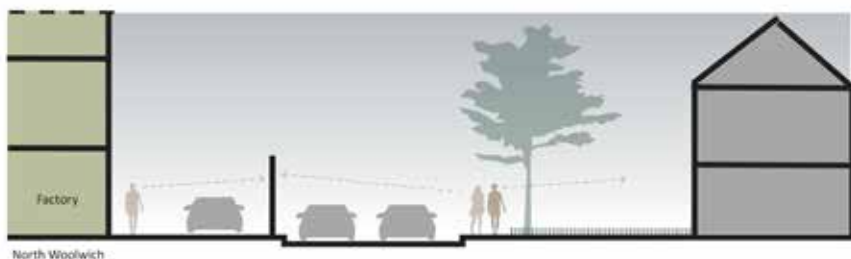
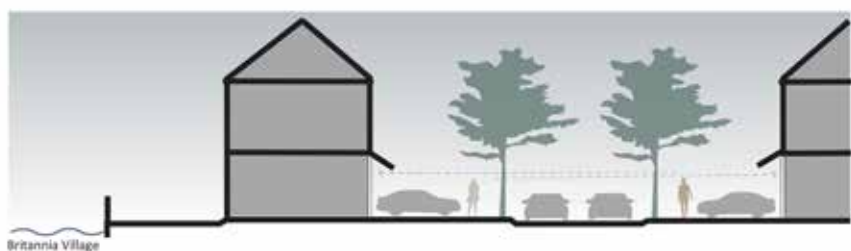
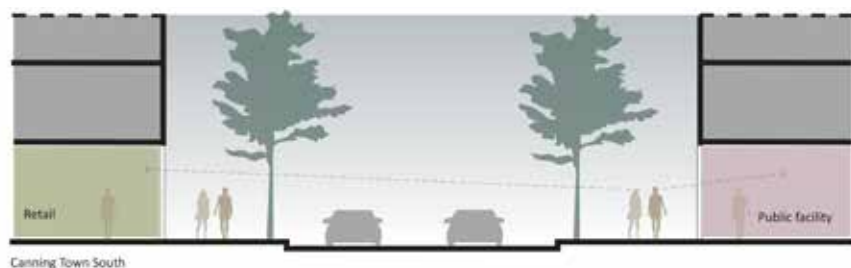


Fig. 6 - Relationship to Ground Level

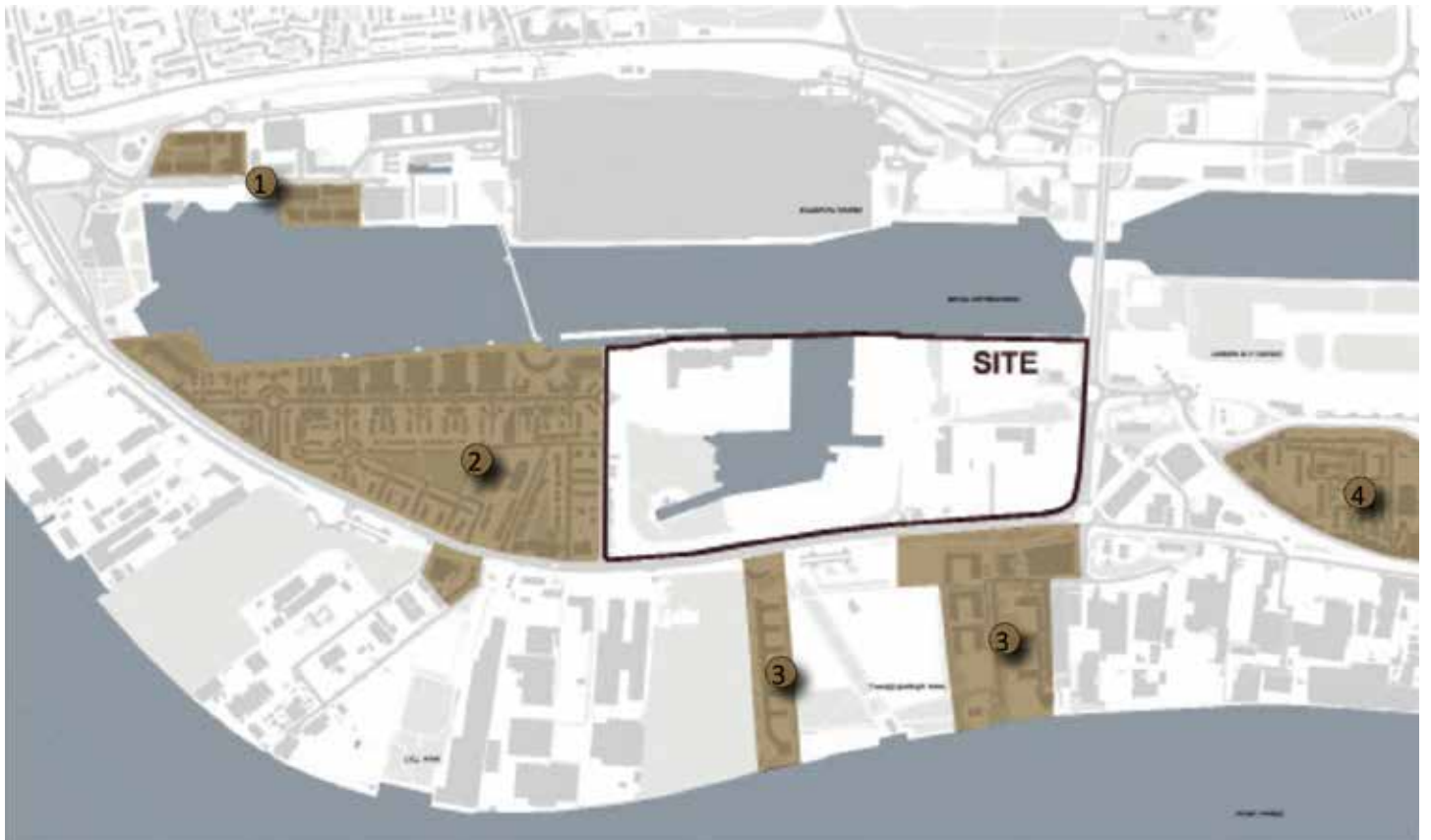


Fig. 7 - Housing Characteristics (Residential in Yellow)



# OPEN & PUBLIC SPACES

## 2.3

The analysis used definition for open and public spaces following Jones (2014, p.6) as “an empirically grounded understanding of a particular set of material spaces that are open to the public.” One category was also added for better understanding of the proposed open and public spaces: public areas between buildings (as distinguished from parks).

The Silvertown Quays area is majorly surrounded by external private spaces which are currently under refurbishment and restricted in access. Most of the accessible areas lie in the opposite side of the Quays. The connection between the two areas is weak with only two bridges linking them. The pedestrian bridge is not user friendly, and the only one public green space in the proximity, the Barriers Park, closes at dusk. Other significant open public spaces, such as the arc (next to the pedestrian bridge in the Britannia Village) is underused with no elements that attract people, which continues to be the case with the waterfront walk in front of the Village likewise. The urban ambience in the area is also suspended between the opposites of extreme noise coming from the proximity to the city airport and the deafening silence shaped by its built form and lack of all-day presence in the area (particularly in residential part). Developments currently in progress are putting too much emphasis on the design of spaces, not leaving much room for appropriation and flexibility. The biggest opportunity for reviving vibrancy and is reclamation of waterfront as functional and cultural element, and presence of large open spaces.

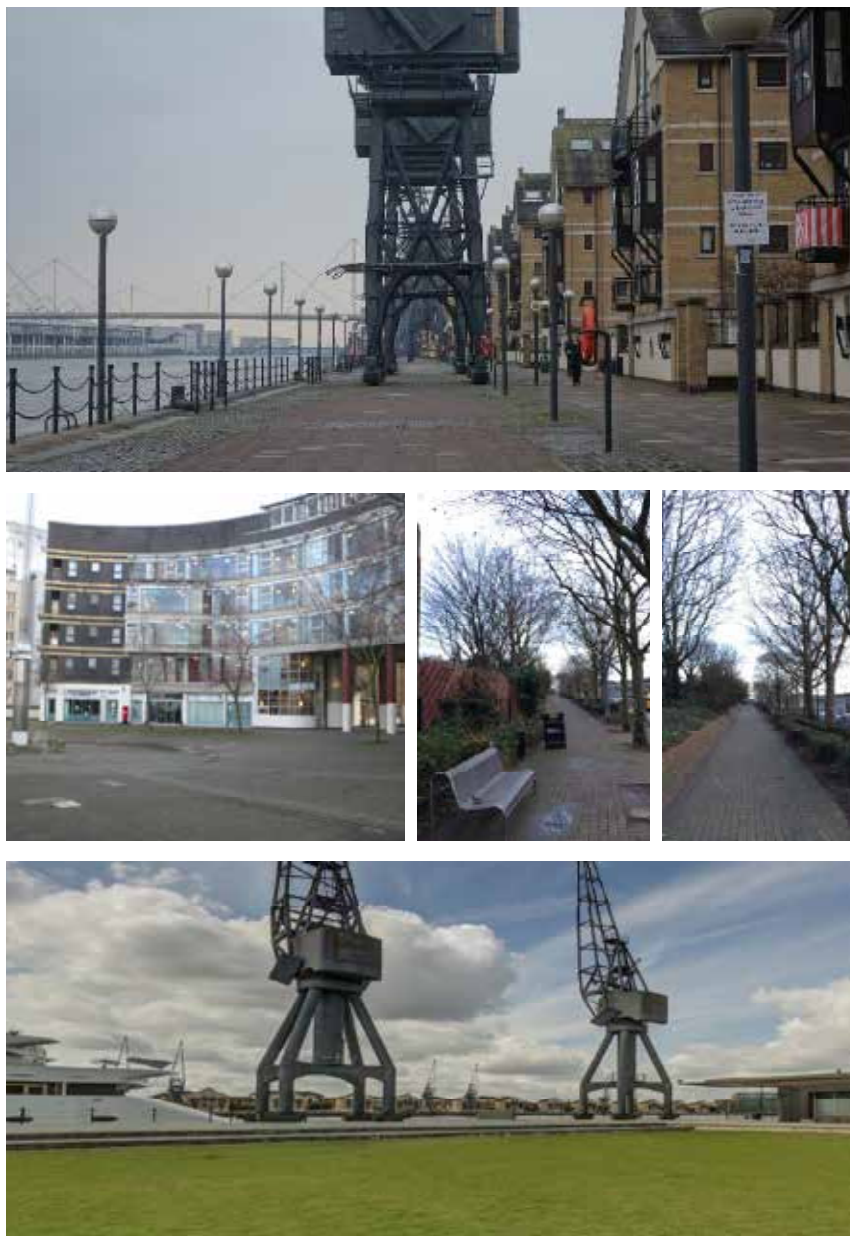


Fig. 8 - Public spaces around site





Fig. 9 - Public space study

# THRESHOLDS & LEFTOVER SPACES

## 2.4

Thresholds, as defined by Walter Benjamin (Benjamin, 1985), create permeable boundaries, which form elements of the urban fabric. The area of Silvertown Quays contains many thresholds with the potential to trigger social mobilisation, acting beyond their physical nature. These thresholds operate on a variety of scales, namely the macro, mesa and micro.

At the widest scale, the area deemed ‘the arc of opportunity’, stretching from the Olympic Site in the north to Silvertown Quays, acts as a threshold, a space between two poles. On the one hand it can be seen as an area in need for redevelopment, exciting potential investors, while on the other representing a barrier (physical, social, political, economical) existing between those on one side (the east of London) and central London. Victoria Dock road forms a threshold between the city and the site through its transportation links. Additionally Woolwich Road acts as an important threshold, dividing the site from other recent developments.

Within these scales there also exist leftover spaces: neglected unused spaces that become barriers through fear or disregard. The same spaces however provide opportunities, potentially converting thresholds from barriers into entry points. The Water Dock can be deemed a leftover due to a paucity of activities. At a micro scale, many physical thresholds exist composed of barriers and points of transitions, examples of which can be seen beside.

The key element of this analysis is identifying these spaces and envisioning their transition from a leftover or barrier into one of opportunity to those utilising these spaces.



Fig. 10 - Arc of Opportunity



Fig. 11 - Barriers & Spaces of Transition

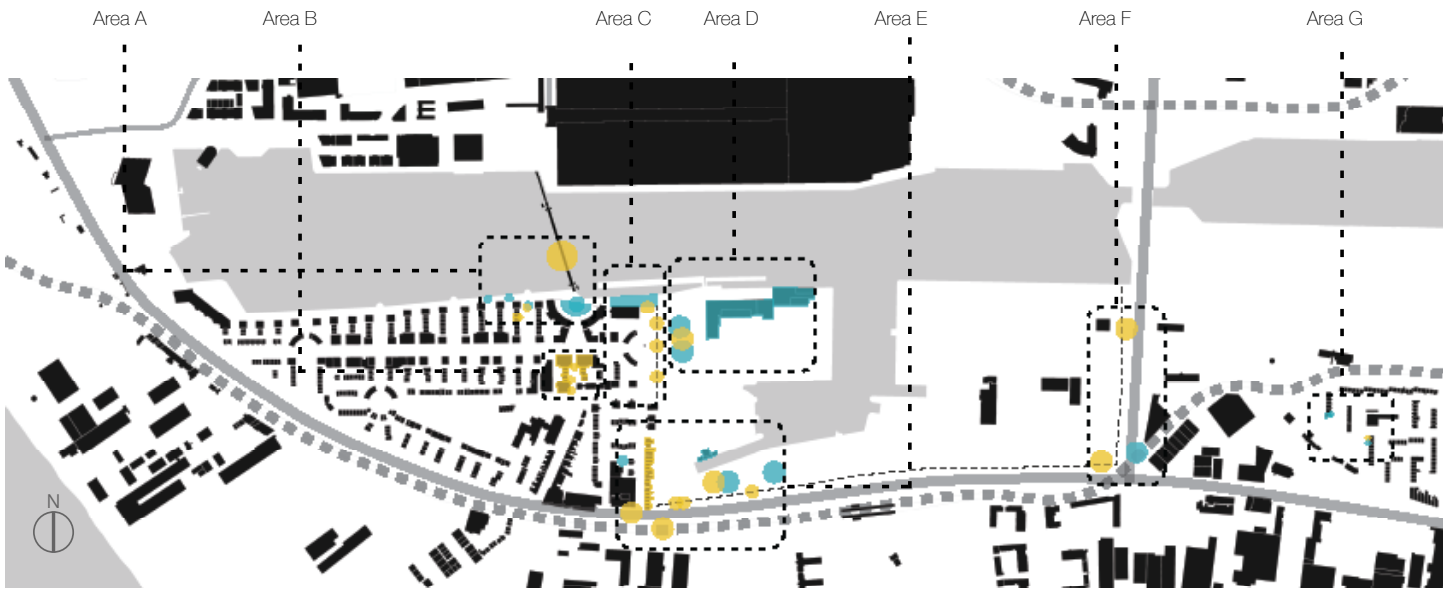
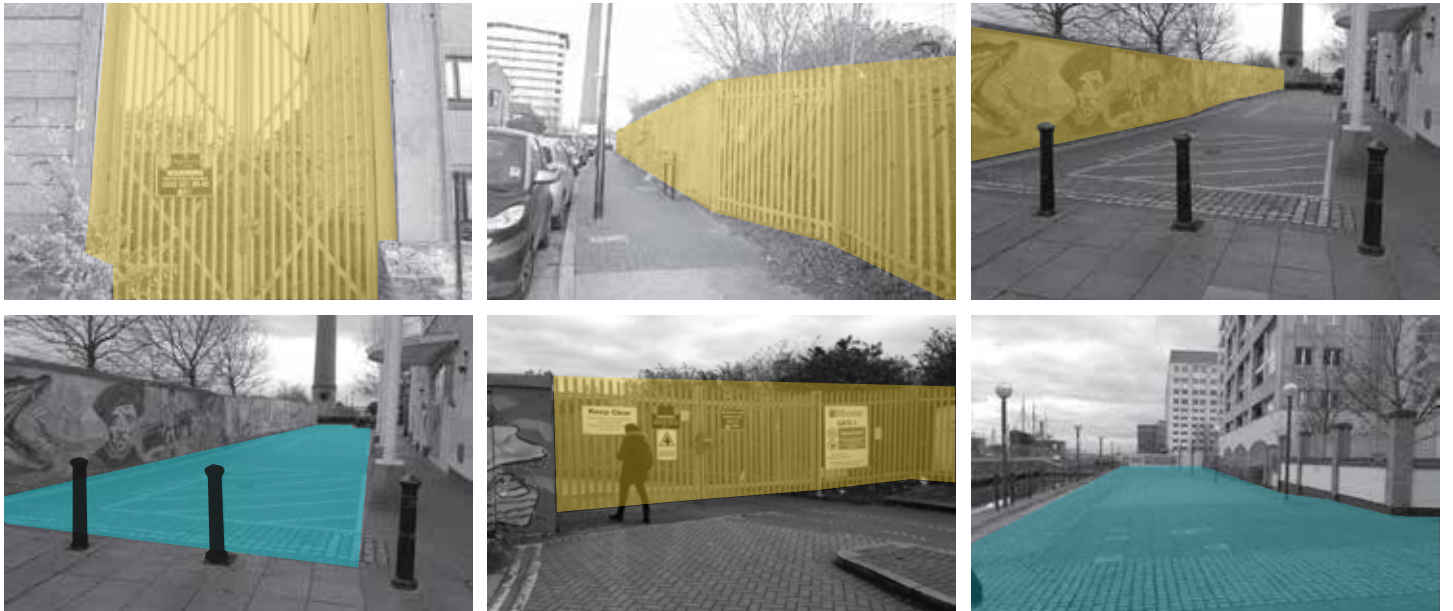


Fig. 12 - Meso Scale Analysis of Leftover Spaces





Even though 5 stations, located in walkable distance (8-12 minutes) from Silvertown Quays, enhance mobility from other parts of London, ground level mobility infrastructure is not active since the area is focused on motorized transportation. In addition, psychological barriers for pedestrians not to walk around the area derive from the dearth of safe crossings regulated by traffic lights, empty streets, security issues, and invisibility of pedestrian routes.

Airport is a contributor of neoliberal markets and international investment in the area since 64% of its users coming for the business-related trips for the financial-commercial districts such as the City and Canary Wharf. This phenomena has also created the interest of new upscale private accommodations, such as Britannia Village.

The local residents in the area have to travel more distance for their most basic requirements, such as grocery shopping. The map indicates that “the most significant space of consumption is the ExCel Center, which caters mostly to tourists and Londoners from other boroughs” and inflow of capital by the residents is limited to certain areas.

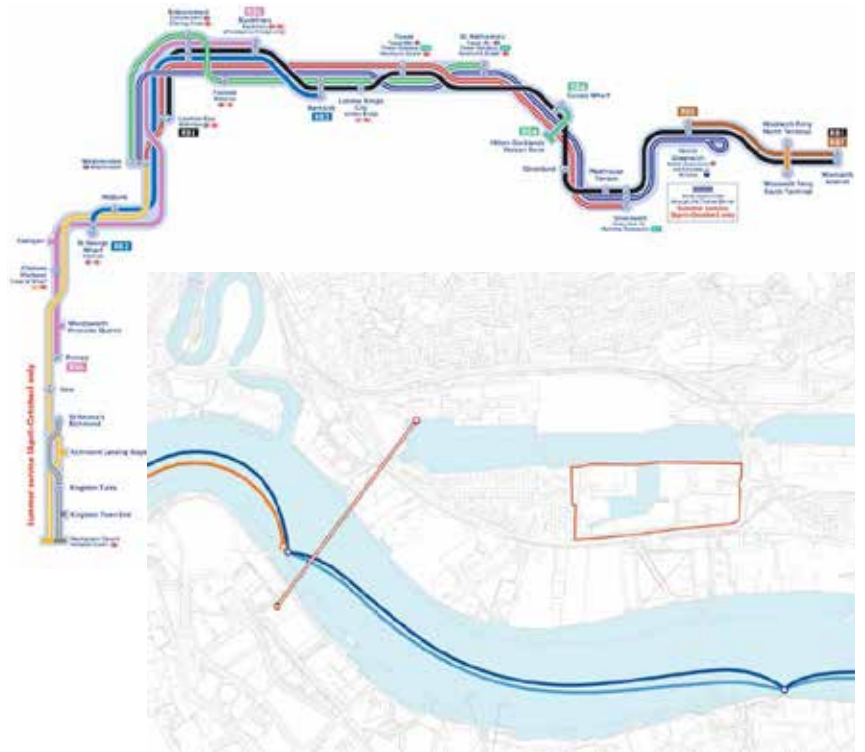


Fig. 13 - Water Network

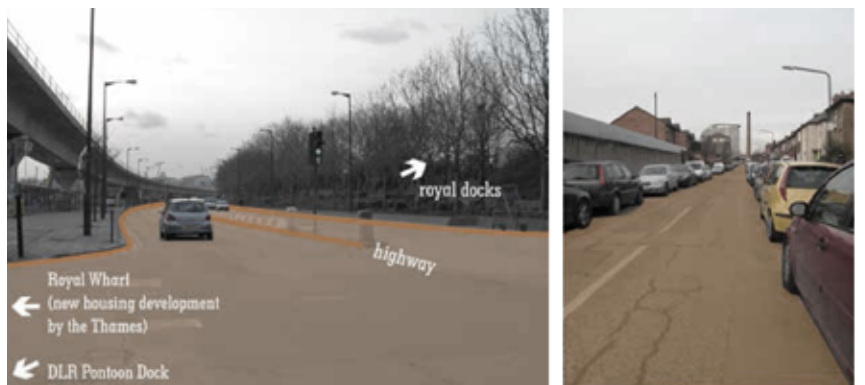


Fig. 14 - Pedestrian & Vehicular Mobility Study

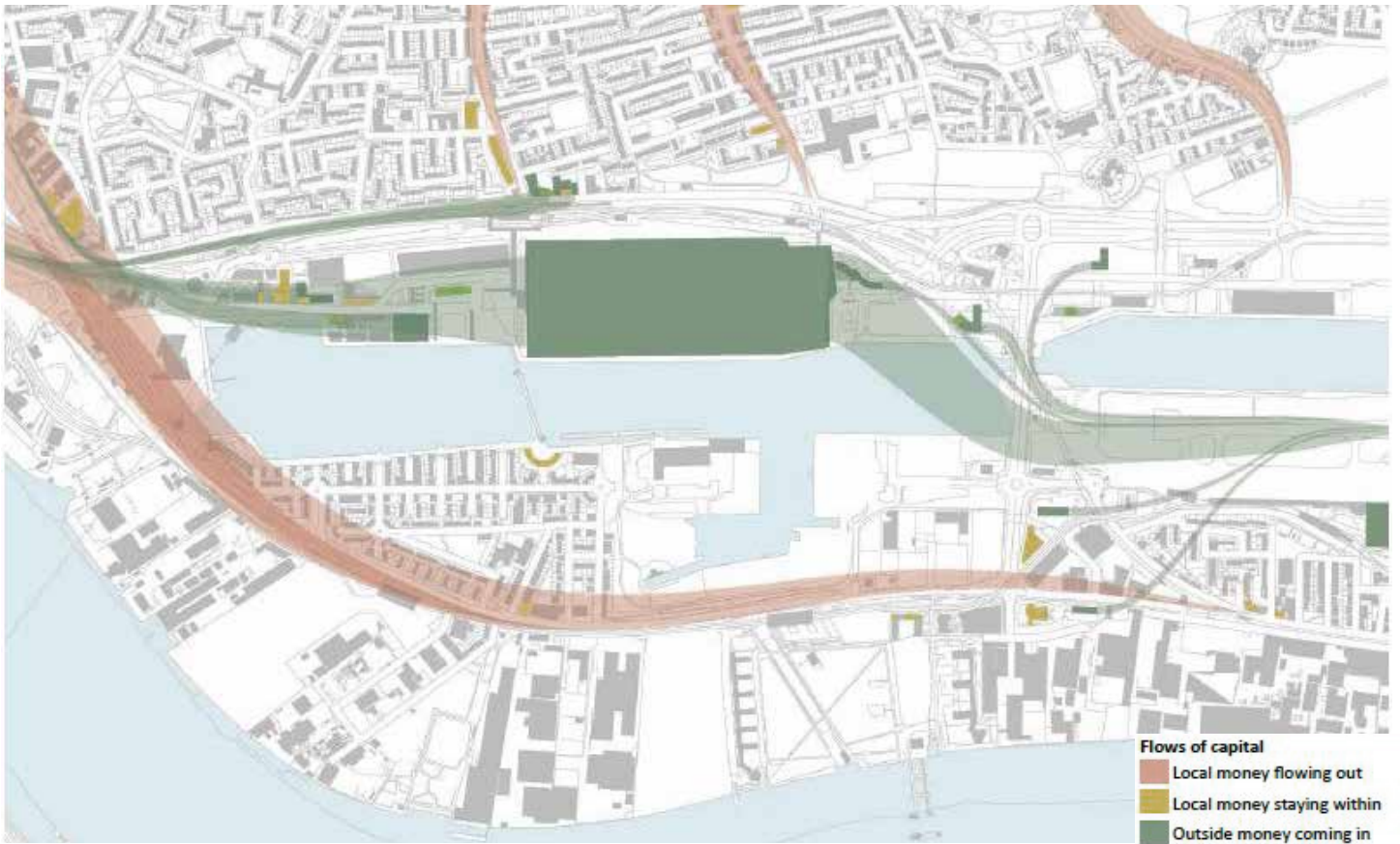


Fig. 15 - Investment Flows



The analysis of Royal Docks through the lens of economics and culture contests and challenges the current visionary proposals imposed for the site. These proposals are ignorant of the understandings of who really the people of Newham are and their needs. It seems evident that the people of Newham are either missing from global ambitions of Silvertown Quays or are narrowed to just being marginalised. The heritage and memory associated with the site is used as just a gateway of commerce and capitalism in these visions. Whereas, the people of Newham possessing great assets in terms of culture, diversity skills and experience have different expectations and needs from the area. In this process of reconstructing and redeveloping the area, it is essential for this diversity and experience to be addresses and channelised in the process of design.

The focus of the proposal should tackle the dichotomy of global versus the local thus leading to a process which reflects the type of societies people of Newham want to build or create rather than mere impositions of globalised ideas.



Fig. 16 - Actors shaping local culture

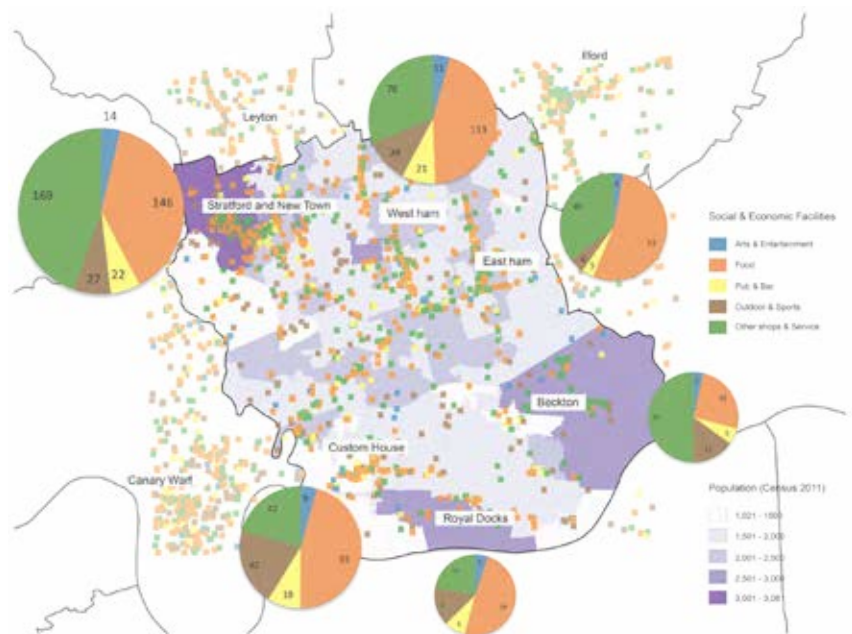


Fig. 17 - Social & Economic Facilities in Newham



Economic spaces | Industrial spaces are located along the Thames, while higher value businesses and visitor attractions are located along the internal docks.

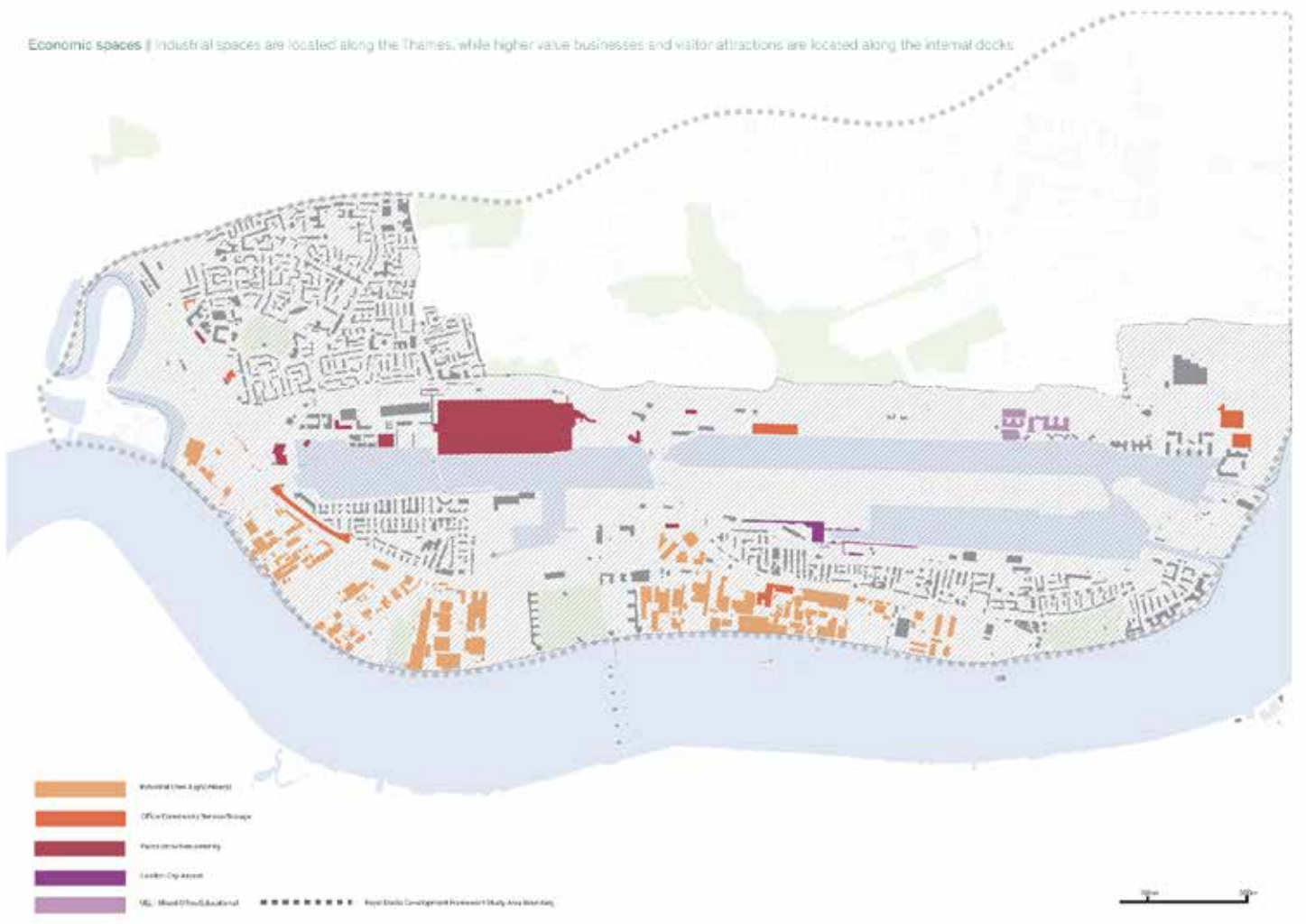


Fig. 18 - Economic Spaces

## Vision for the Royal Docks: Mayor of London and Mayor of Newham (March 2011)

As mentioned in the vision that the Royal Docks is seen as an ideal place for leisure and business destination and as stated aims to “redefine the Royal Docks not as somewhere at the edge of the city but as a place with its own centre of gravity and a clear identity of its own”. They intend to revive the vitality, entrepreneurship and wealth creation of the dock area which would play a vital role in the future economy. Expressing their visions by emphasizing on it as a business centre and visualizes the waterfront as a hub of activity which will offer as an example for a sustainable world city which would be “an outstanding place to live, work, play and stay” (Royal Docks, p.8).

In the local movement and infrastructure projects, the site specified to us is seen as a “focus on ExCel East potential hotel and leisure zone” (Royal Docks, p.45). Hence they are more focused on ExCel and highlighting it rather than using this site as an opportunity to connect and allowing the local community to prosper from the development.

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson made a deal with The Silvertown Partnerships for the development of the Silvertown Quays in the Royal Docks. They tend to transform this area into a brand destination, which will lead to new innovation, creativity and learning, hence connecting to the global world and its audience, as well as boosting UK’s economy. An outline planning application was submitted to the London Borough of Newham in July 2014 by the Silvertown Partnerships, based on the outline we found their visions and approaches for the development.



## OUR TEN-POINT VISION

Fig. 19 - Ten Point Vision for Royal Docks





### Vision for Silvertown Quays

- Silvertown Quays has the potential to become one of London's most striking new urban centres.
- Part of the city that encourage interaction, innovation and exploration
- Silvertown Quays will become a new home, workplace and destination for thousands of people, and will also become the focus for the rapidly emerging transformation of the wider Royal Docks
- Seeking to create an urban brand district for London

The approaches taken follows some key qualities for projects:

- an authentic new district of London
- incredible history as a place engaged with the world
- superb urban and global connectivity
- real part of the city
- offers more, for less
- place to perform and a destination to experience performance
- flexible and adaptable
- expresses the identity
- a place for talent
- real and happening



Fig. 20 - Illustrations of Silvertown Quays Future Development

- *Waterfront*: in summer, many visitors come for water related events and sports. Water itself attracts people.
- *Modernness of the area*: Visitors and residents say that this regenerated area is very nice.
- *Close to leisure areas and Canary Wharf*: O2 and ExCeL are the main reason of visitors and many development has been focused in the West. Visitors can use the cable car, bridge and tube to access the Royal Dock.
- *History*: the area has unique history as a dock.
- *Cable car*: many visitors say that they would not come to the area if there is not the cable car from O2. It also becomes the landmark.
- *Waterfront* : Attractive visually
- *Upcoming development of crossrail and other housing*: Most residents are happy and aware about the upcoming projects.
- *History* : The historic significance sets an identity to the place/built historical legacy
- *Transport infrastructure (connectivity)*
- *Relationship to water*

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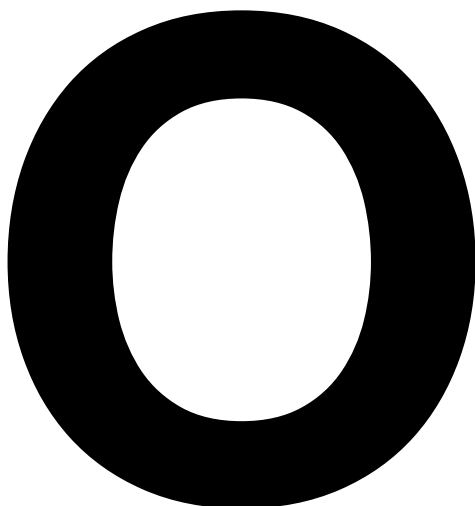
## STRENGTHS

## WEAKNESSES

# W

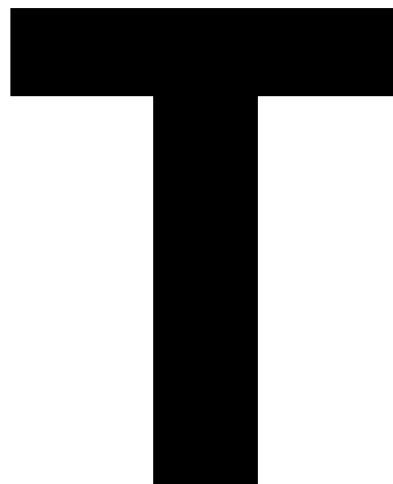
- *Fragmented spaces and usage*: Division of construction, residents and leisure area and existence of barriers create a sense of segregation.
- *Hard accessibility*: Hard to walk around the huge area and 56% of car ownership
- *Lack of Liveliness*: Not many people are around throughout the day, which discourage residents to walk around the area
- *Lack of shopping area*: There is only a Tesco shop for grocery shopping and other shop-pings.
- *Industrial area*: it disturbs landscape and does not attract people to visit
- *Lack of community sense in the area*
- *Lack of community spaces*
- *Unsafe (as complaint by few residents)*
- *Unaffordability*: People living there do not have jobs within and people working in the area cannot afford to live in that area
- *Exclusion/Segregation through physical barriers*: e.g. gates, barbed wire, fences, roads without pedestrian access.
- *Disappearance/Erosion of valued landmarks from the urban fabric*: i.e. pubs, local newsagents, take-away shops.
- *Proximity to the airport*: noise, interruption of fabric, safety issues
- *Lack of incentive for engagement and appropriation of space*

- *Airport*: 64% of user of the airport is related to business. Opportunities for bringing international investment, new residents from the world, and tourists.
- *Easy accessibility from Pontoon Dock station*: Since the study site is in front of Pontoon Dock station, if the development can start around station and the study site, it will attract more people.
- *Waterfront*: The study site faces to water land it has decks inside as well. Utilize the unique design of the study site. Reclamation of waterfront as functional and cultural element.
- *Landmarks*: the study site has three landmarks: The Mills, Silot 'D' and SS Robins. National Lottery funds and the government have been making efforts to conserve these landmarks.
- *Expanded transport opportunities via Cross Rail*.
- *Presence of open large spaces*.



## OPPORTUNITIES

## THREATS



- *Ethnic Diversity*: Less percentage of residents in Royal Dock feel that people respect ethnic differences (compared to Newham average).
- *Safety*: The main problems are identified as teenagers hanging around on the streets/intimidating group behavior (60%), litter/rubbish (44%). Less percentage of residents in Royal Dock feel safe being outside or at parks during the day and after dark.
- *Unaffordable housing*: Many employees in the area are coming from outside due to its high rent. The development of the study site may influence on price of housing rent.
- *Connection to the water being lost*: new development does not take into account the historical significance.
- *Exclusion through physical barriers*: e.g. gates, barbed wire, fences.
- *Disappearance/Erosion of valued landmarks from the urban fabric*: i.e. pubs, local newsagents, take-away shops. Also, disappearance of public space via privatisation.
- *Economic and commercial pressures on the public realm*: Developments putting too much emphasis on the design of spaces, leaving not much room for appropriation / flexibility.
- *Current fragmentation of public realm*: an issue difficult to be overcome

# SYNTHESIS & REFLECTION

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## 2.9

The six lenses of urban analysis followed by our SWOT analysis reveals a neoliberal approach to development which is capital-driven, producing a globalised imagery for the area while excluding the involvement of people in planning process.

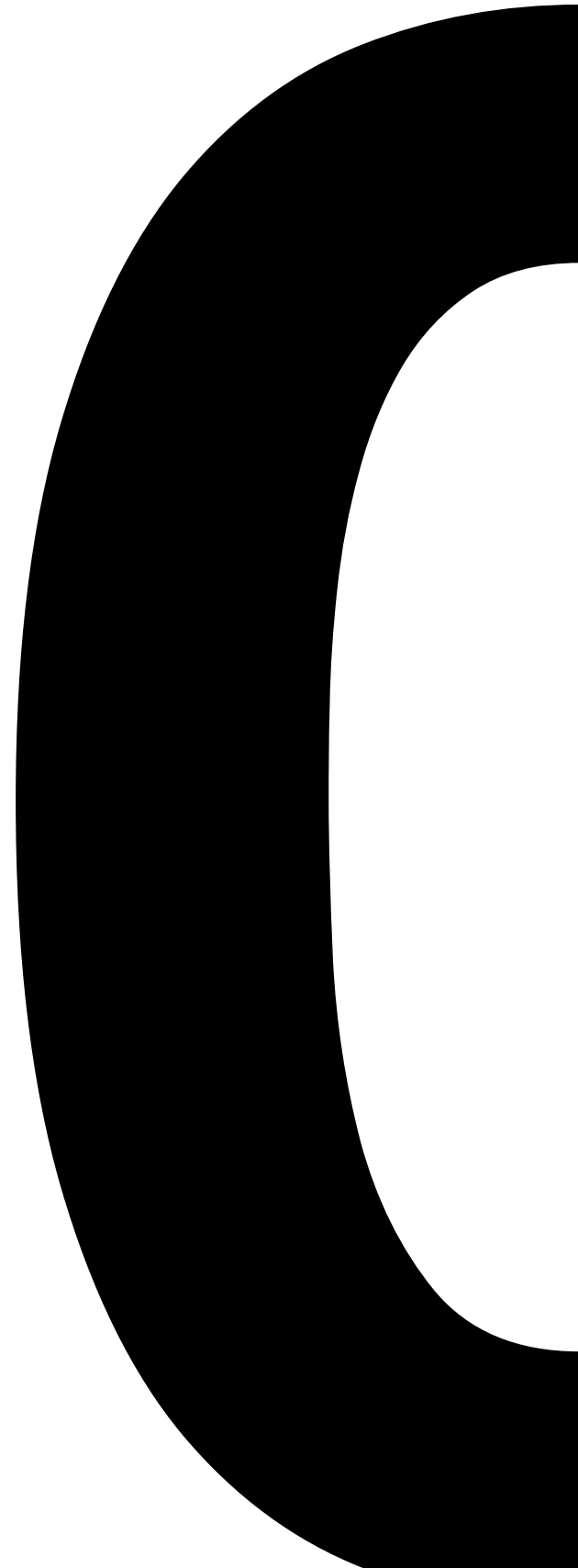
The main drawbacks in the area are erosion of community life that existed in the times when the docks were operating, the interruption of livelihoods by the noise coming from the city airport, lack of pedestrian connectivity, and a lack of local neighborhood spaces such as pubs, local newsagents and take-away shops. These drawbacks are further threatened by unpredictable changes in political mandates in municipality and council. Likewise, the government's mandates which should prioritize majority's needs are compromised by economic pressures which results in disproportionate economic benefits being delivered only to some areas. These kind of redevelopments only perpetuate Newham's underlying weaknesses, particularly its deep social inequality.

The main strength of the Royal dockyards is the historical significance associated with it and its proximity to the water. The strong connectivity of the site with the surrounding areas through public transport and upcoming projects like crossrails adds to the identity of the area. The availability of open and ground spaces can be channelised to produce diversified functions reactivating those spaces over time and integrating the fragmented zones currently existing in the area. The existing landmarks on the site have the potential to produce a historical narrative for the area and its association with water. The relationship with the waterfront is identified as a key element is shaping and appropriating a different perspective for the site.



## *STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK*

This section presents the alternative vision and principles guiding our proposal.



03

# VISION STATEMENT

## 3.1

In the light of the current mainstream plans for the Silvertown Quays that envisions to give Newham a high-tech, commercial, global and business-oriented imagery, our response tweaks that vision into one that:

- a. expresses greater sensitivity for servicing social diversity
- b. enables social cohesion
- c. integrates itself with more attention to connectivity of the urban fabric
- d. respects the meaning of local history
- e. respects human connection to natural elements in the area (i.e. the water).

Our vision mediates the current proposals and fuses certain elements from the developers' master-plans with those of the alternative, people-centred vision. We believe that Silvertown Quays can spearhead progressive and tech-savvy development while servicing diverse social groups (in terms of income, gender, ethnic background, ability, interest, age, physical ability, resident/non-resident etc) and embodying imagery that reflects the rich ethnic and industrial heritage of the docks. The creation of imagery is crucial for the redevelopment of an area because the language of architecture is more than

narrativization of the instituted power of corporations, a state and a city in general. The language and imagery of architecture is also a tool for constituting this symbolic authority as real and material, it is "a means of teaching society what to desire and how to desire it" (Žižek, 1989). Diversification of services, functions and access (i.e. range of housing affordability, mixed zoning and floor usage, small- medium-big businesses, less-prescribed spaces) will not compromise the anticipated investments and profits. Rather, the spaces and facilities will be used by not only more diverse groups, but more people in general. In this nuanced vision which sees beyond the dichotomy of "mainstream vs. alternative", Silvertown Quays is the most vibrant hub of Newham and finally, the city of London.





*Through the reflections of the SWOT analysis, there are two main issues that need to be addressed through our design response ; the issues of connectivity, both physical and social and the issue of diversity in the area.*

Connectivity refers to the creation of networks at different scales to connect the site from within as well as at the urban scale, both physically and socially. Physical connectivity relates to the linking of existing nodes and potential nodes to create network through mainly infrastructure while social connectivity refers to the creation and reconfiguration of masses(spaces) to enact social change or evoke the possibility of change. This principle can be put into practice with small interventions at different scales that build upon creating sense of belonging between the people of the community, between different communities and between stakeholders and the community.

# CONNECTIVITY

## PHYSICAL



1) Create pedestrian pathways and alter bike lanes to allow for connectivity



2) Define clear entry points for the site and develop nodes



3) Encourage temporary reuse (pop-up, events) of or around empty/unused buildings (historical/landmark).



4) Enhance accessibility of waterfront (reconnecting people to the water through leisure and recreational activities)



5) Develop ground-level activities (Strengthen existing elements, horizontal, human scale interaction with space)



6) Develop/Fortify connection to River Thames



7) Establish smoother transition between public/private spaces

## SOCIAL



1) Create community spaces/platforms where people can engage



2) Eliminate existing physical barriers that lead to social segregation where possible (limited access to riverfront, walls, barbed wire, etc.)



3) Enhance/Appropriate use of existing public spaces (through recreation, entertainment, leisure, education)



4) Provide shared facilities (sports, recreation, education, etc.) open to all.

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# DIVERSITY



1) Promote diverse opportunities for housing (typology/affordability) in relation to the master plan (income diversity)



2) Provide platform for residents to involve them in the planning processes (diversity of interest)



3) Keep flexible spaces to allow for diversity of uses (in terms of users and programs) over time.



4) Prioritize job opportunities enhancing and reconfiguring the economic dynamics.

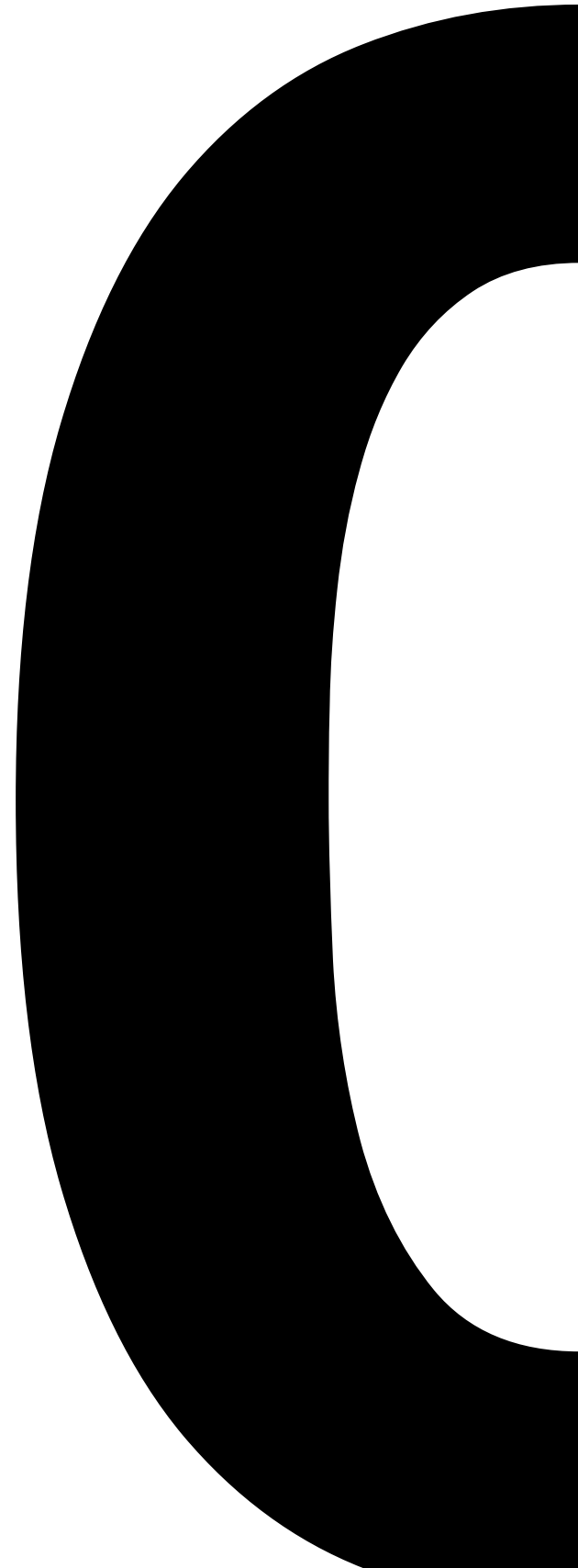


5) Support networks of local consumption and production. Create better accessibility to daily basic needs and amenities.

Embracing diversity relates to the appreciation of the diverse population and activities that exists in the area and generating the possibility of creating more opportunities to enhance this diversity. It is not just limited to population but also reflected in activities, events and job opportunities. This principle can be put into practice by interventions aimed at identifying the differences and enabling future adaptability to work towards a commonly shared goal or objective for the area.

## *DESIGN INTERVENTION*

This section presents the strategies developed for our proposal.



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One of the key issues in the redevelopment of Silvertown Quays is that it could potentially disrupt the surrounding urban fabric, and perpetuate the pattern zonal division that characterized the greater Royal Docks area by means of the massive industrial blocks and the channel that were not meant to respond the pedestrian connectivities. Therefore the plan will have to be attentive to how the new activities, pathways and spaces will attract and provide access from anyone coming and moving within the area.

Since one of the principles is connectivity, we want to underline the relevance of active nodes that the plan will bring to enhance its potentialities to integrate the multiple users. By generating links at both far and close distances taking advantage of the multiple transport connections, new patterns of displacement among the area, will possibly stimulate a diverse range of ways of living and enjoying the place.

Rather than specify where exactly the nodes should be and what kind of activity/spaces they will be, the conceptual diagram aims to visualise how the nodes will greatly contribute to the character of connectivity.

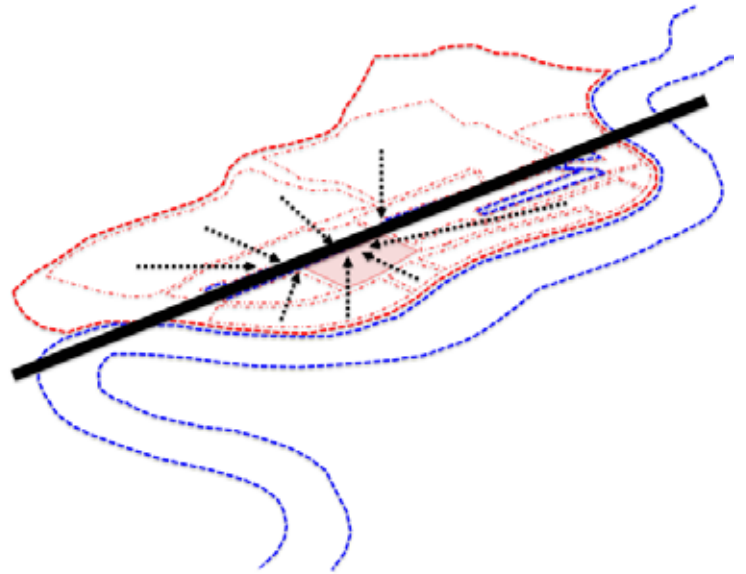


Fig. 22 - Disruption Diagram

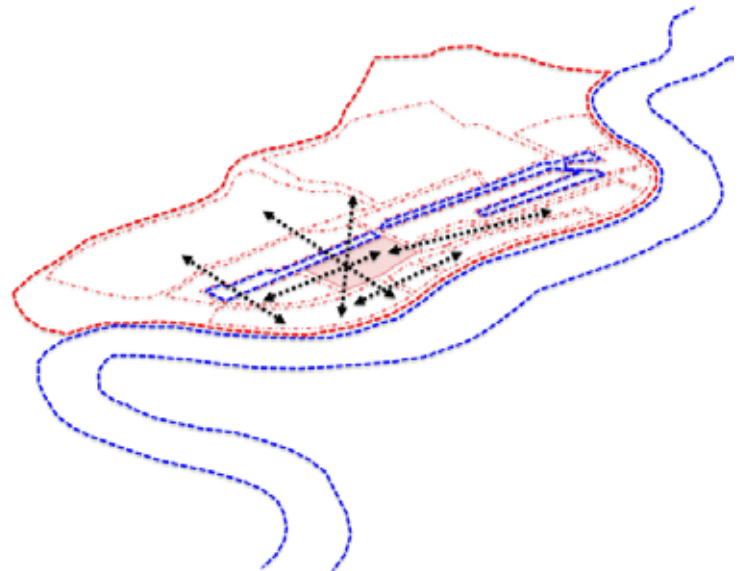


Fig. 23 - Prospective Fluxes Diagram



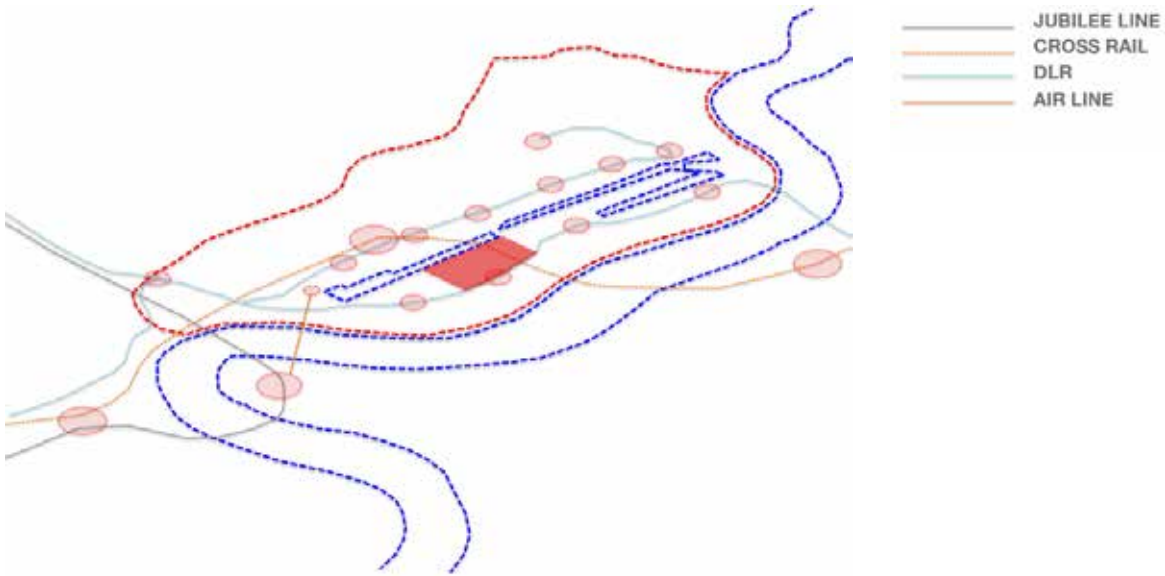
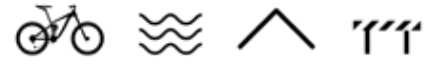


Fig. 24 - Entry Points Diagram

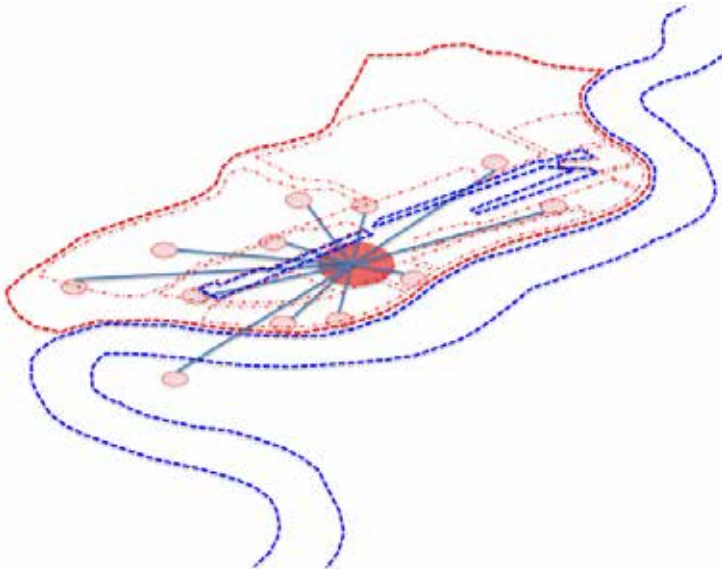


Fig. 25 - Expected Networks

## *EXISTING VISION*

The plaza is designed such that the first impressions are gained for those arriving via the bridge across Royal Victoria Dock. The plaza is welcoming, and it has elements of built and natural forms; it is a landscape where water and green are provided in continuity along the dock's edges (Silvertown partnership, 2014). However, the accessibility to the plaza is quite restricted and enclosed due to the scale and form of the surrounding buildings.

## *OUR VISION*

The intervention aims to re-dimension the use of public space integrating it to the urban fabric through improvement of pathways and functionalities around the plaza and creation of new strategic diverse connections. The intervention has dual purpose of increasing visibility and accessibility of the plaza and making it more active throughout the year .

Increasing visibility and accessibility of the plaza can be done by connecting it to the different squares and nodes within the area through walkways and pathways. This will draw people from all over the area of different ethnicities enhancing the diversity that exists in the area. The removal of the floating block around the plaza and keeping the plaza more connected to the water further increases the visibility of the plaza.

Simultaneously, the intervention looks at providing the possibility of multifunctional events such as markets, cultural festivals, fairs for the plaza to keep it activated and more inviting for different groups of residents. The linking of the plaza with the activities carried out by and for the schools and youth centres around the area through the young mayor (the school contacts the mayor and conducts activities and projects) can further make the plaza more usable.



Fig. 26 - Area of Intervention

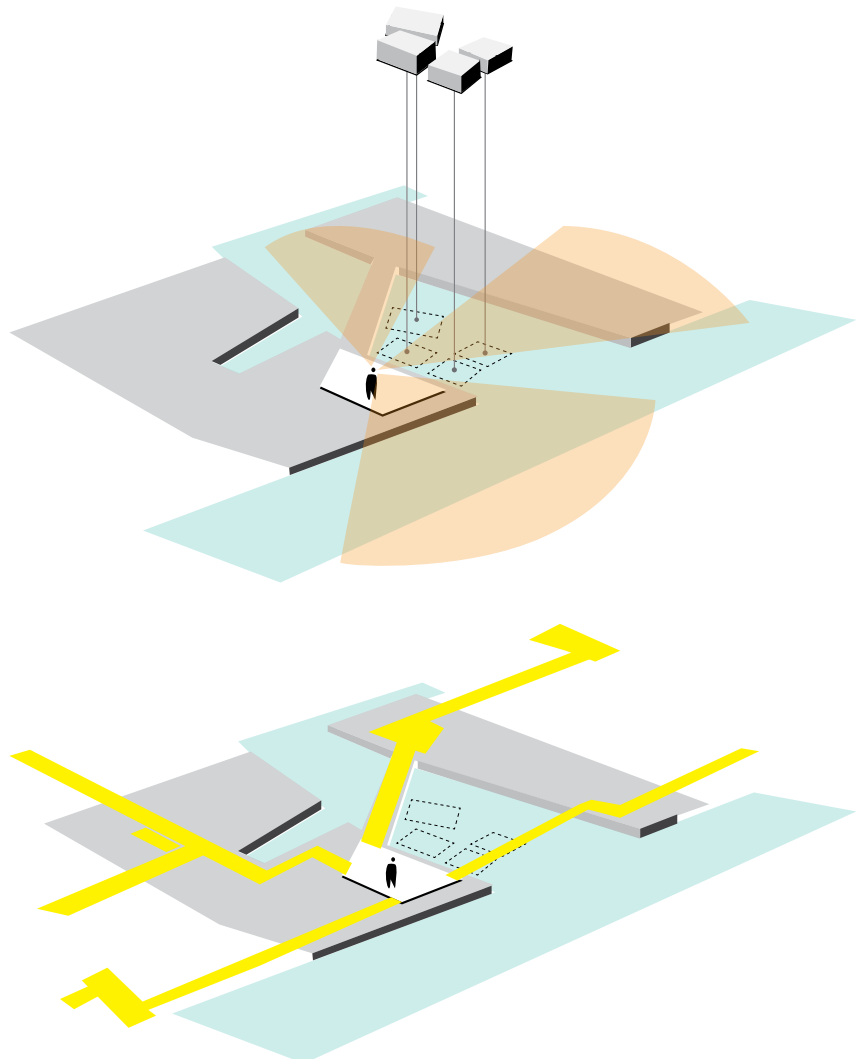


Fig. 27 - Increasing Visibility and Accessibility

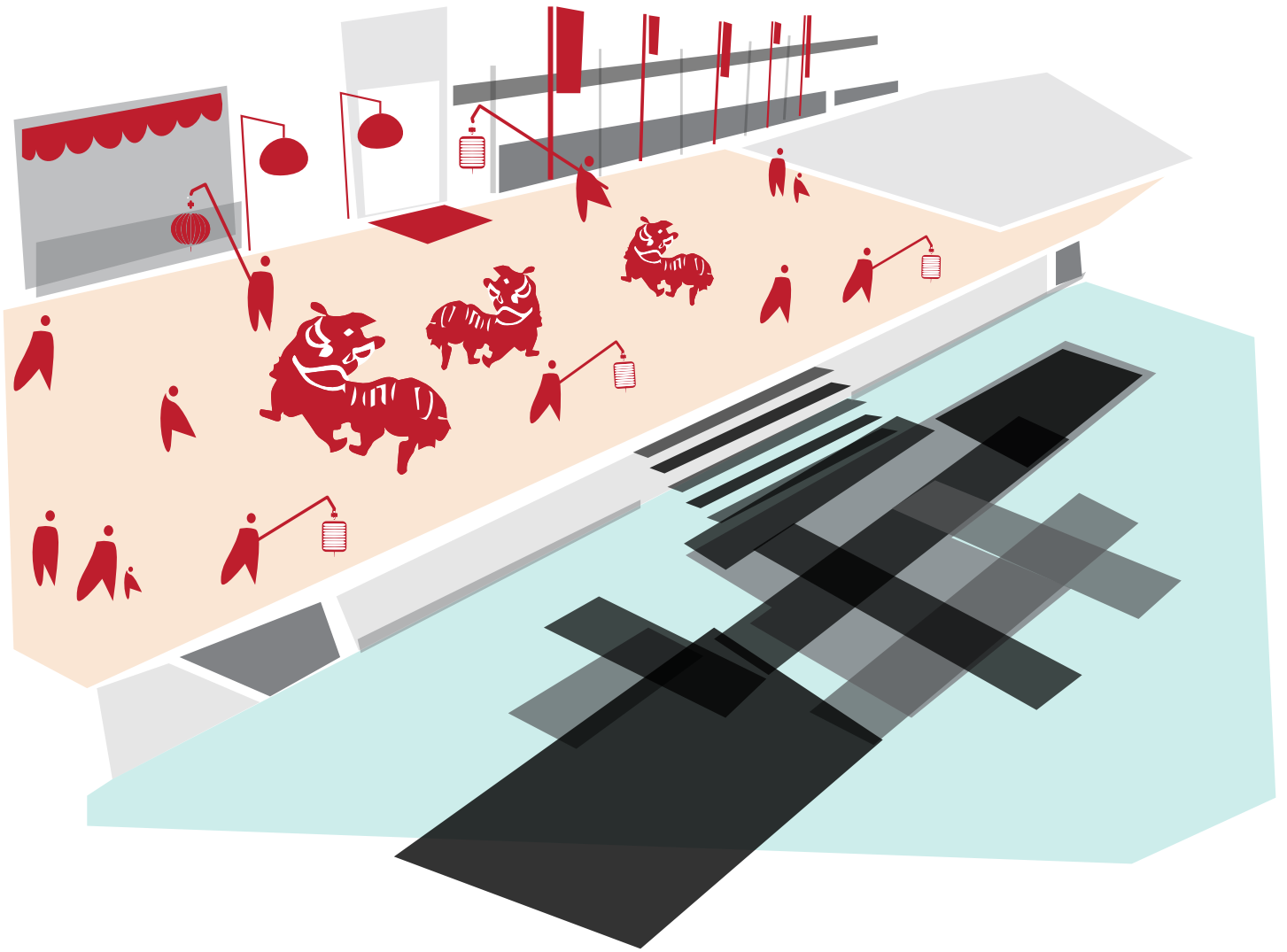


Fig. 28 - Activating the plaza through events

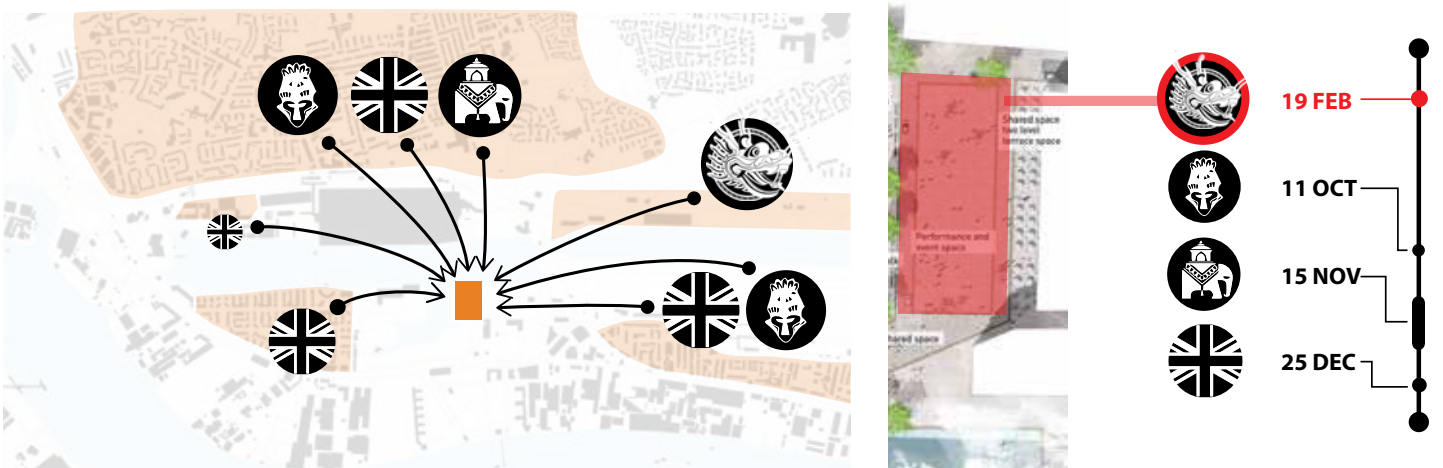


Fig. 29 - Embracing Ethnic Diversity

# STREET INTERVENTION

## 4.4

### *EXISTING VISION*

Routes and connections in the master plan are based on the principle of creating “a clear and coherent network, connecting with the surrounding pattern of streets and spaces, establishing a hierarchy of movement for pedestrians, cycles and vehicles across the site” (Silvertown partnership, 2014, p.75). As the proposed site route hierarchy map demonstrates, the site is divided by roads, which surround large buildings. Buildings along the major roads are dominated by offices and exclusive brand shops especially around Millennium Mills and D Silo area. These areas may only attract higher income groups and would deprive local residents from using the area on a daily basis.



Fig. 30 - Area of Intervention

### *OUR VISION*

Our idea is to break the monotony of high end exclusive building blocks and make it more inclusive for other users by creating side roads next to the main streets. Even though the plan considers high proportion of active ground floor use, it is mainly for brands, food and beverage facilities. We suggests to include smaller access roads to invite more small and low scale shops for local residents' daily needs and local economy to flourish. In addition, not to perish historical legacy of the Royal Dock through this development, we suggests street landscape and architecture at some parts of the site to reflect the image of a port city instead of filling with modern buildings without any connection of local context.



Fig. 31 - Existing examples of Street Activity

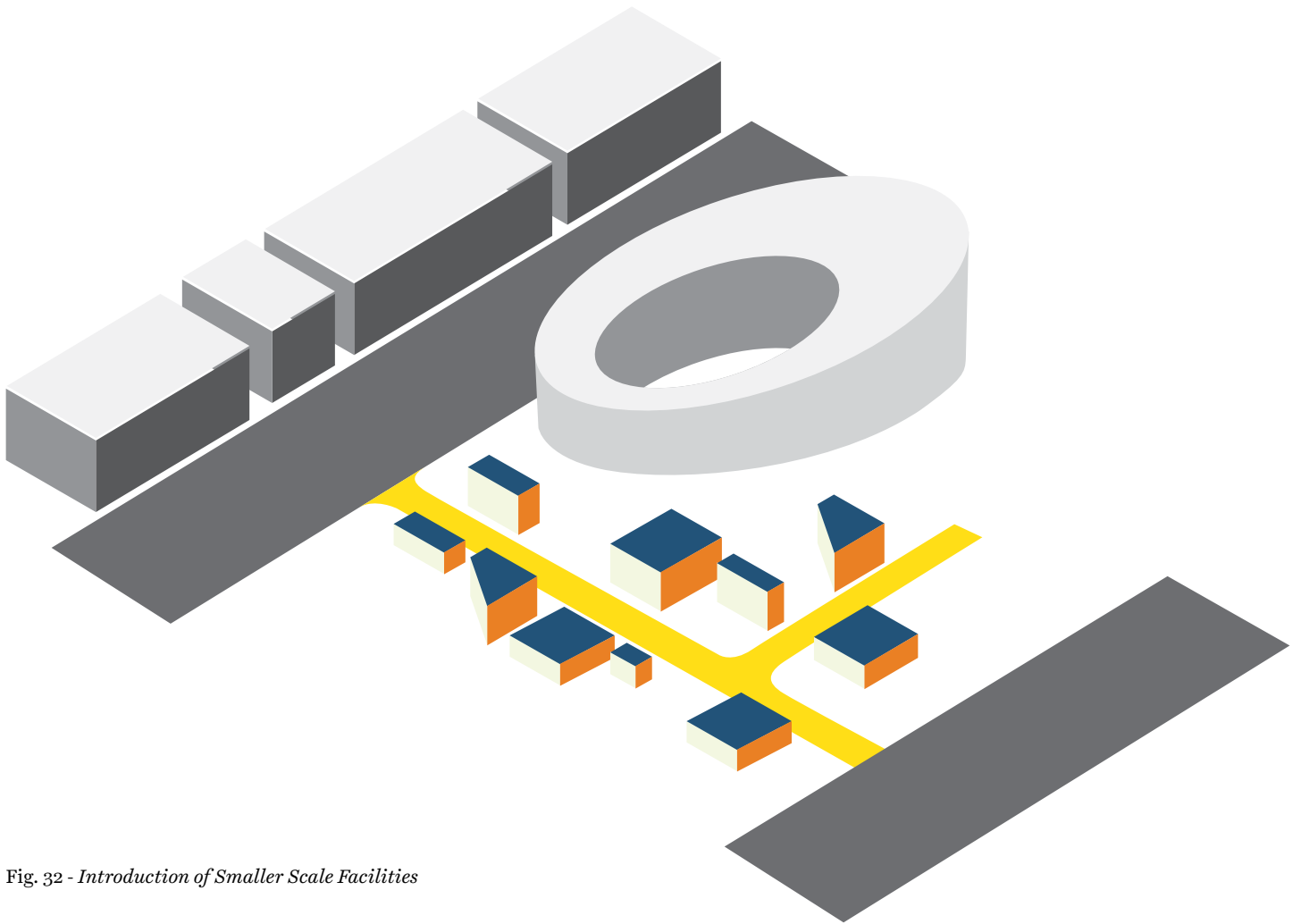


Fig. 32 - Introduction of Smaller Scale Facilities

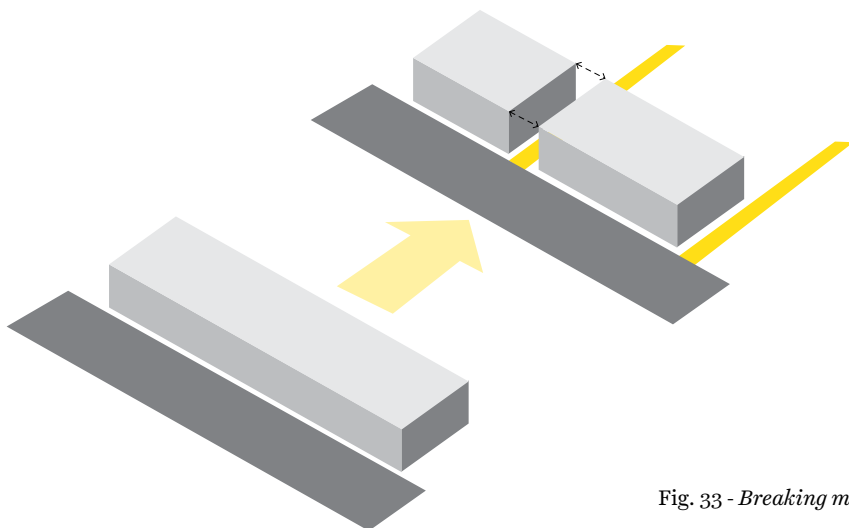


Fig. 33 - Breaking monotony of Urban Fabric



## *EXISTING VISION*

A prominent public open space is proposed to be located to the east of the waterfront aimed at generating activities that encourage ground floor public use (cafes, restaurants and bars) along with leisure and recreational activities or “cultural facilities” that could add life to the area especially in the evening (Silvertown partnership, 2014). Thus, with these designed built blocks for leisure activities, the site is anticipated to have an increased usage within the public realm. However, the defined and rigid functionality of the buildings around the plaza restricts the movement of the people outside onto the plaza. The activities proposed in those buildings would keep the people involved in closed spaces and thus leaving the people with no incentive to use open spaces.

## *OUR VISION*

Our intervention introduces small scale shops and activities along the streets, connecting the commercial hub and the plaza. This has dual purpose, as this connection on one side breaks the monotony of high end shops of the commercial hub and at the same time opens up the movement from the retail block on to the plaza. Thus, the intervention is intended to activate the plaza through the designing and introduction of these ground activities.

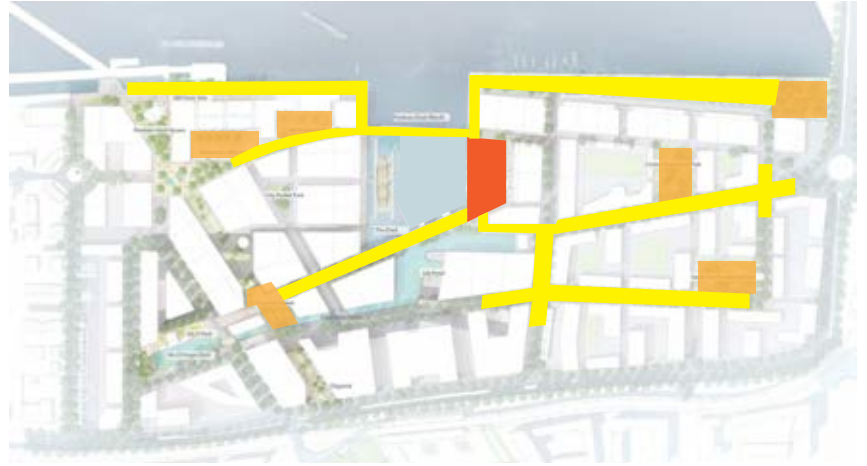
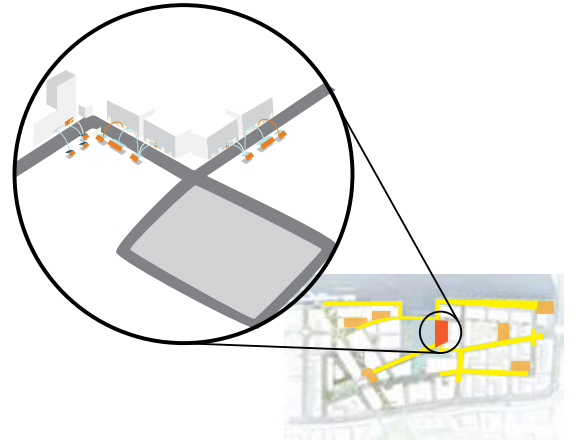


Fig. 34 - Area of Intervention



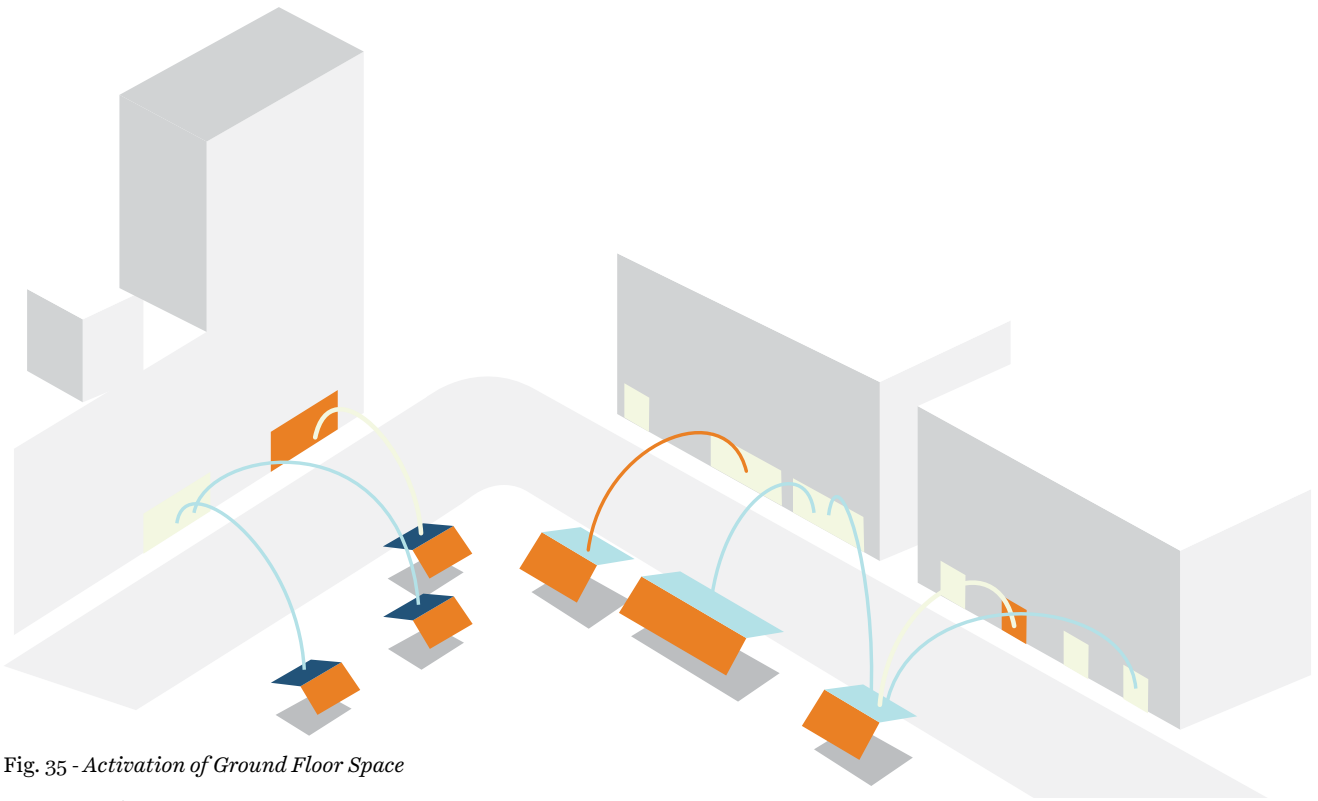


Fig. 35 - *Activation of Ground Floor Space*

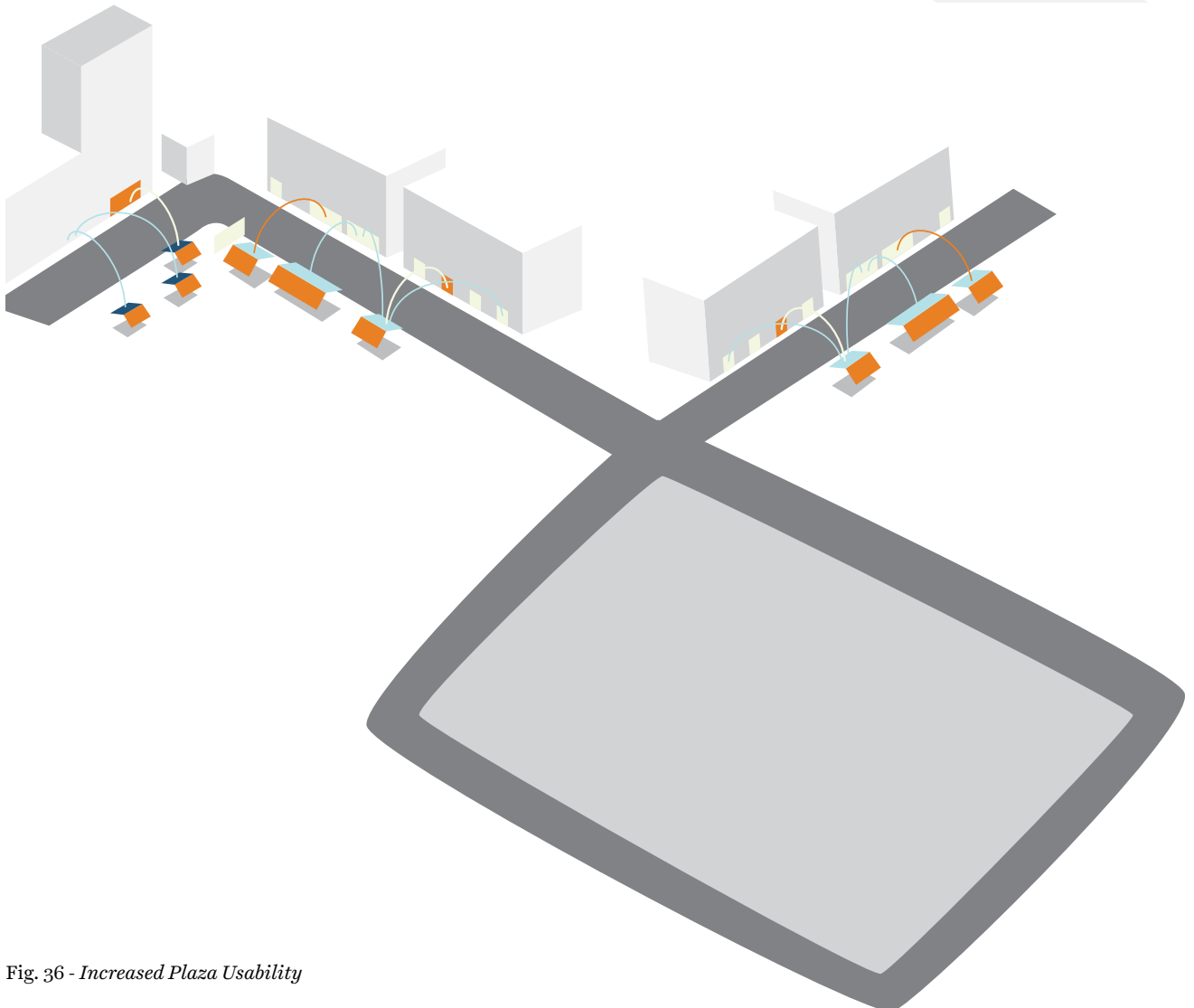


Fig. 36 - *Increased Plaza Usability*

## **EXISTING VISION**

In the masterplan, the waterfront was discussed with the residents and responded with ensuring accessibility to the public (Silvertown partnership, 2014, p.58). Even though the existing plan emphasizes the relationship to water, the idea of waterfront is exploited merely as beautification for the area, which are means for commercial usage to attract people. Similarly to the Acoustic park, which is built to attract joggers and bikers, rather than utilizing that space for more (diverse) activities. The only “activities” considered by masterplan are food and beverage facilities (Silvertown partnership, 2014, p.202, p. 209). In addition, the pavement around the water is too narrow and compact, which prevents people from developing a connection with the natural environment and generate more activity.

## **OUR VISION**

We propose a connection of the site to the wider city-wide cycle networks (London Cycle Network). There is one connecting Stratford to Aldgate, we propose a connection with the Borough of Newham. In addition, it is promoting TfL “Quietways” which are cycle routes on routes with low volumes of traffic. There are 7 “Quietways” planned, one of them Aldgate to Hainault - first phase Whitechapel to Fulwell Cross (Tower Hamlets, Newham, Redbridge, Hackney, and Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park ) (TfL, 2014) our proposal will just boom cyclists into Royal Docks.

Our vision suggests the removal of the “floating” pavillion structures and protect the existing waterfront dock area. The “floating” pavillion structures are mainly trading houses and is the focus of the Dock District with six to seven storeys in height, (Silvertown Partnership, 2014), we believe it would create a barrier and disrupt the connection of the Theatre Plaza, the water and the Millenium



Fig. 37 - Area of Intervention

Mills. We believe the Theatre Plaza can be a cultural hub and it could prove an attractive location for the site. Also based on heritage, it is important to preserve the waterbody as it is part of the historic Finger Docks and the Pontoon Dock.

Although there is a pedestrian connection from west to east, from the Millenium Mills till the end of the Acoustic Park, along the waterfronts, we suggest that there should be a continuation of the cycle routes along this path using the public footpath. Also referring again to generating more cultural activities and using the public space as a means to promote more interaction within the diverse community. The master plan and the design need to be revised to use the public space of the Millenium Mills, Dock Side, Pontoon Dock Square and the Acoustic Park to accommodate more opportunities to take place that would create a space beyond that for a walk or views. The activities would be decided based on community engagement in a larger context that would encourage people to spend more time here. The site should promote diverse cultural activities to attract people of all ages, creating more than a business brand centre.



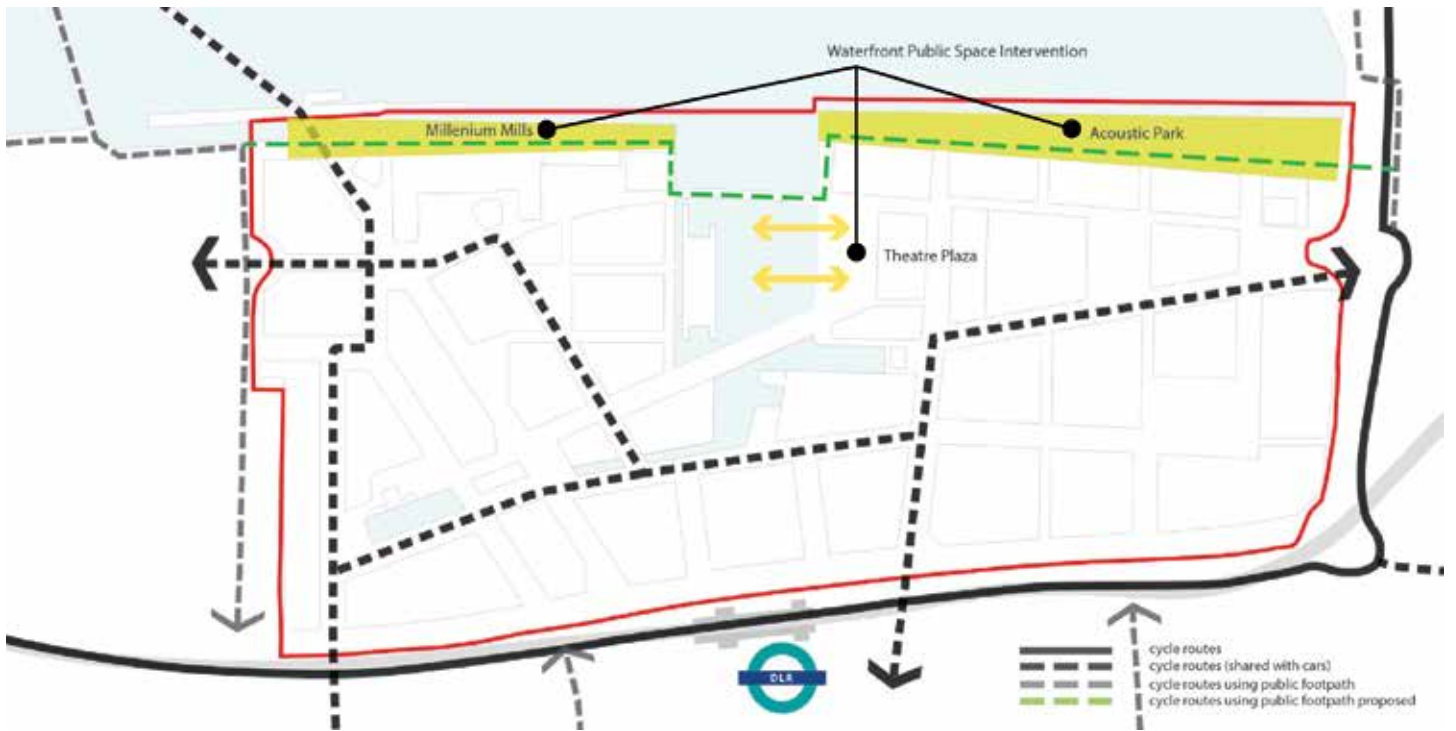


Fig. 38 - Integration to existing routes

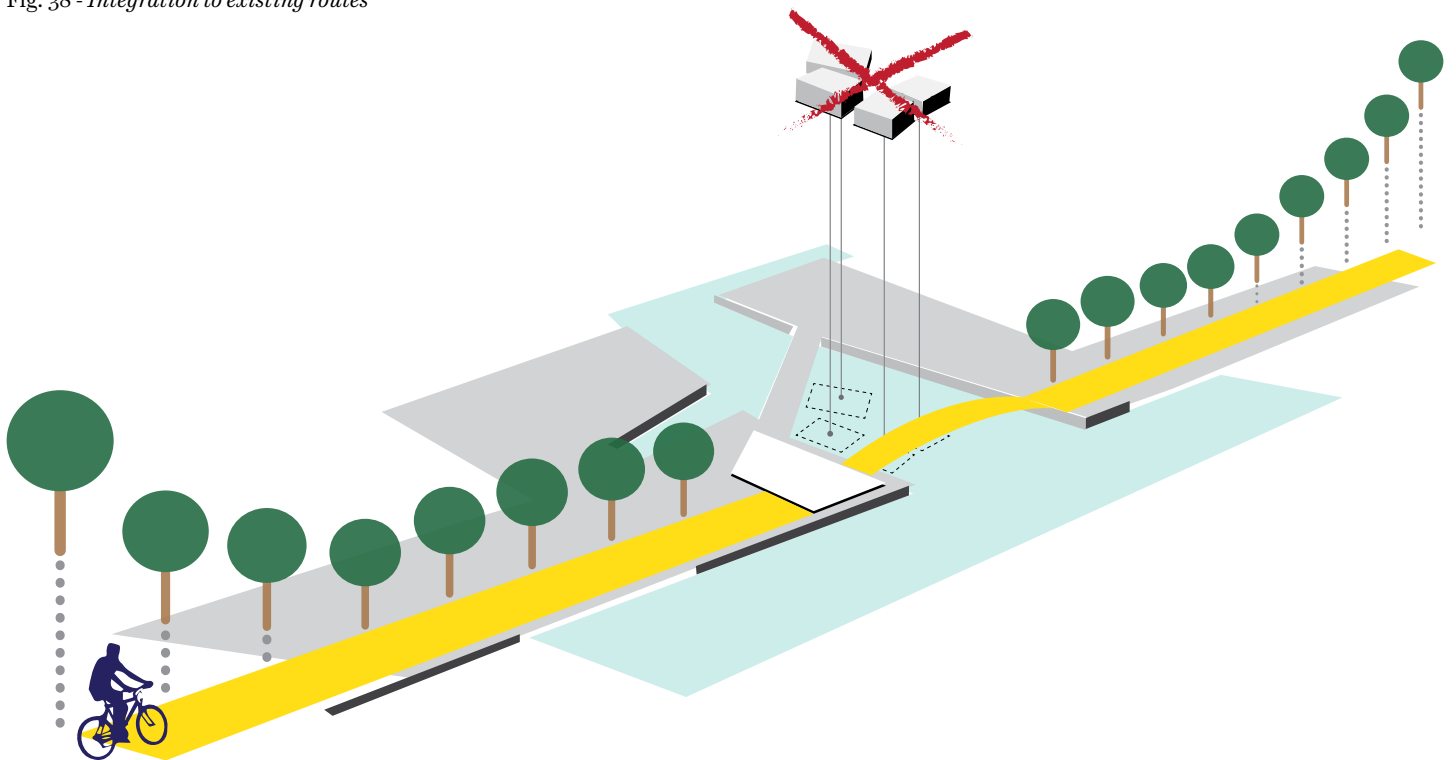


Fig. 39 - Relationship of path to waterfront

## *EXISTING VISION*

The existing plan encourages mixed-usage within buildings. For example, Millennium Mills is proposed to be used for retail on the ground floor and offices and residential on the upper floors. However, the plan keeps the problematic fragmentation of land usage, which is identified as one of weak aspects prevalent in the Royal Dock. As demonstrated by the planned zonification map, the site is divided by large blocks of trade houses, commercial and residential usage. This zonification plan might further increase fragmentation within the area disconnecting the people.



Fig. 40 - Relationship of path to waterfront

## *OUR VISION*

The aim of our intervention for this area is to break the fragmented pockets of land usage in order to integrate different usages of land in order to unify the area. Mix-land usage would motivate residents and visitors to use the area more creating liveliness in the whole area. Moreover, the design and architecture of built form should focus on creating more diverse housing forms rather than replicating typical built blocks like Britannia Village where all the residential blocks look identical. The architecture, also needs to be context- sensitive by using appropriate materials which highlights the significance and association with the river. These considerations would increase the vibrancy and redefine urban dynamics in the area.

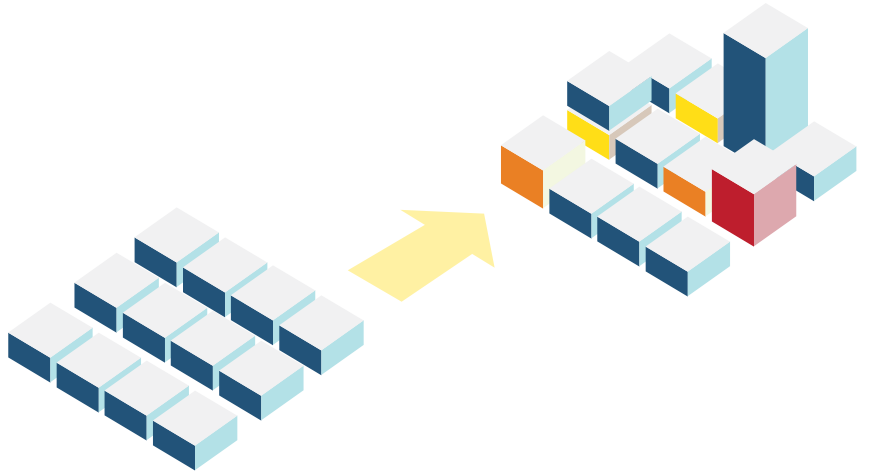


Fig. 41 - Breaking the Monotony of Land Use

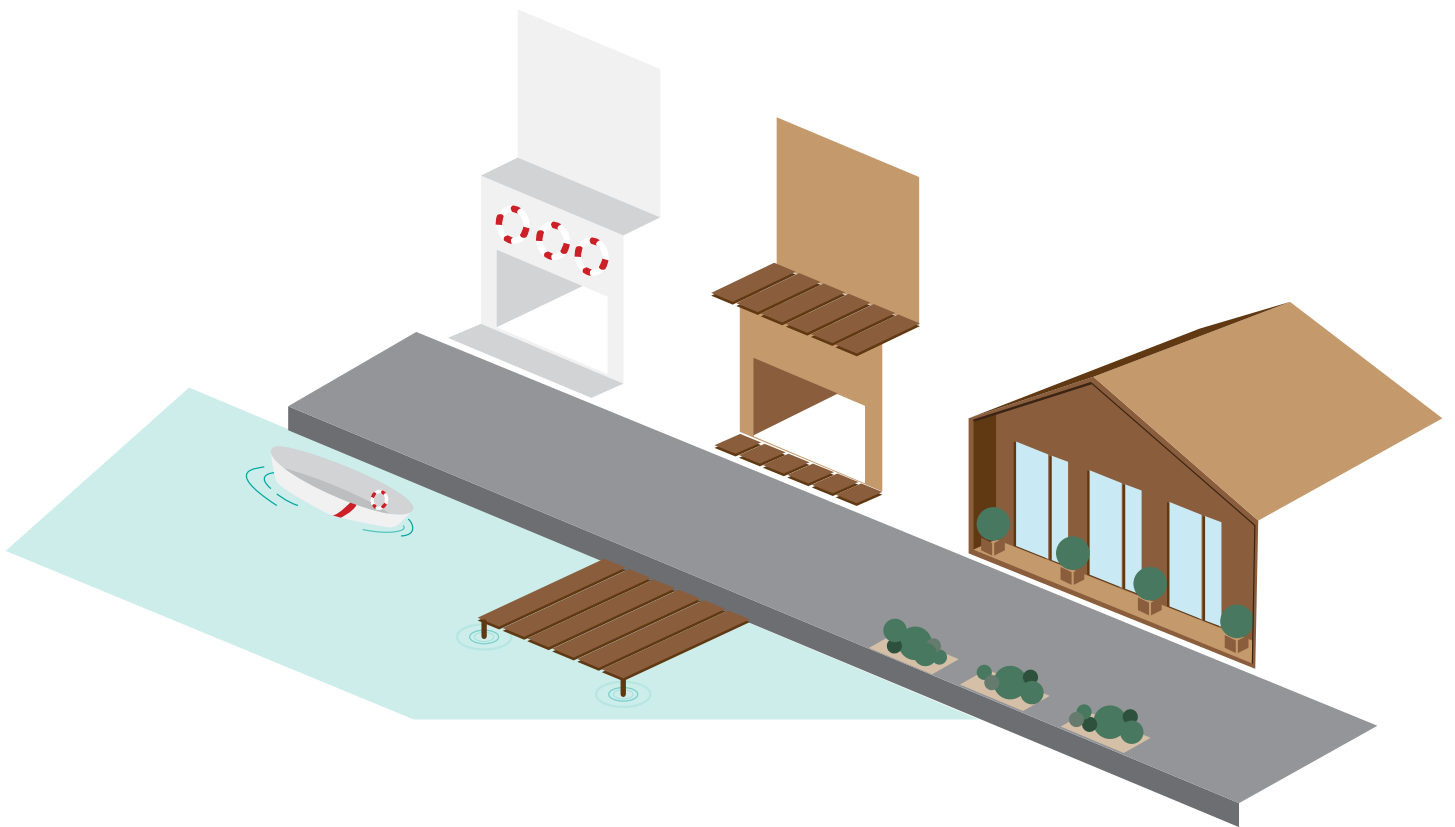


Fig. 42 - Context Sensitive Architectural Response

## ***EXISTING VISION***

The existing plan proposes 300,000 square meters of residential zone serving 3,000 residential units, and 15 -20 % of them subject to viability (Silvertown partnership, 2014). As per the vision, a variety of housing and tenure will be offered in this area. Currently, the housing analysis highlights 4 zones of residential areas, which are mainly for middle and low-income families. The Floating village project is concentrated on luxury housing, which is a part of the 'Big Vision'. Strategies will be developed to enable cosmopolitan neighbourhoods that build on the vibrancy and cultural diversity of its existing communities.

## ***OUR VISION***

Even though a wide range of housing type and prices are proposed in the existing vision, the local need of the area is to have more affordable housing( as figured through our interviews). We predict that housing price of the area will become extremely high through the redevelopment since the average housing has already increased almost 8 times from 2000 to 2014, starting from 40000£ roughly to 300000£ in the area (DPU, 2015a). Based on this analysis, we propose to reduce extensive development which results in housing price becoming affordable for only a certain group. Also, there is a need for more space for negotiation on the percentage to be reserved for affordable housing. We propose to increase the ratio of affordable housing to 20%.

One of the key element for successful negotiation for affordable housing is stronger bargaining position of the authority (Farthing and Ashley, 2010). Having affordable housing statement of Silvertown Quays does not guarantee affordable housing in the area since the actual power of the implementation of affordable housing depends on the negotiation between developers and the council. Therefore, strong position of the council needs to be maintained for affordable housing. In order to support the success of negotiation, we recommend the following actions: establishing policy which back up the negotiation, increasing the land ownership of the local authority and suggesting shared ownership of tenure with developers (Farthing and Ashley, 2010; Burgess and Monk, 2007).



**450** More people would be able to live in affordable housing approximately, by increasing 5% the existing provision.

Fig. 43- Existing vs Proposed Affordable Housing



# STAKEHOLDERS

4.9

Mayor of London  
current Mayor is Boris Johnson

Mayor of Newham  
current Mayor is Robin Wales

Greater London Authority (GLA)  
owner of the land

Newham Council  
sets parameters for development and  
tests planning applications

Sir Stuart Lipton  
leading the Silvertown Partnership

First Base  
London developer and investor

Macquarie Capital  
provider of banking, financial,  
advisory, investment and  
funds management services

Chesfield Properties  
real estate company and  
asset manager

Fletcher Priest Architects  
Master Planner/ Lead Consultant

Arup  
Infrastructure engineering and  
environmental assessment

Civic Arts  
Conceptual masterplan

Alinea  
Cost consultant

iCube  
Public transport modelling

Quod  
Planning consultant

Donald Insall Associates  
Heritage consultants

Space Syntax  
Spatial accessibility and  
pedestrian movement modelling

West 8  
Landscape architects

Millennium Mills

Royal Victoria Dock Pedestrian Bridge Master

Allford Hall Monaghan Morris  
Architect

AKTII  
Engineer

AKTII  
Engineer (lead Consultant)

Stanton Williams  
Architect

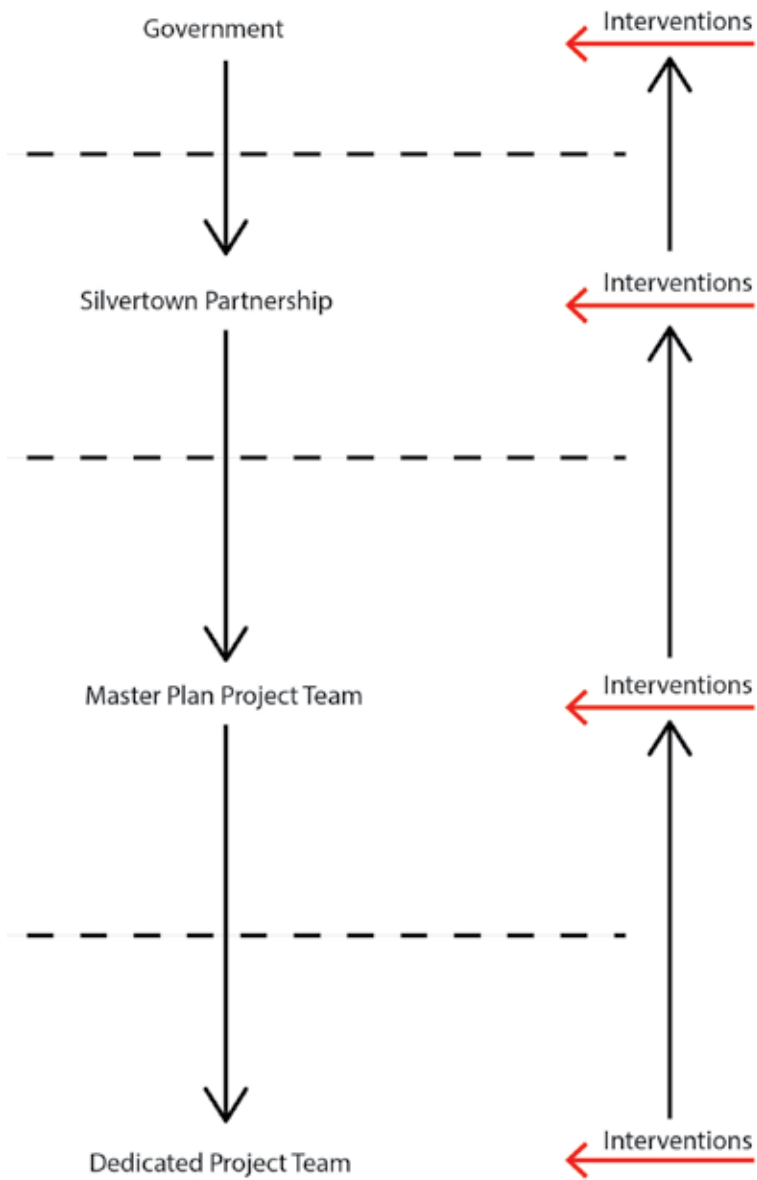
Residential design studies

Allford Hall Monaghan Morris  
Allies and Morrison

Eric Parry Architects  
Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios

Fletcher Priest Architects  
PLP Architecture

Stanton Williams  
West 8



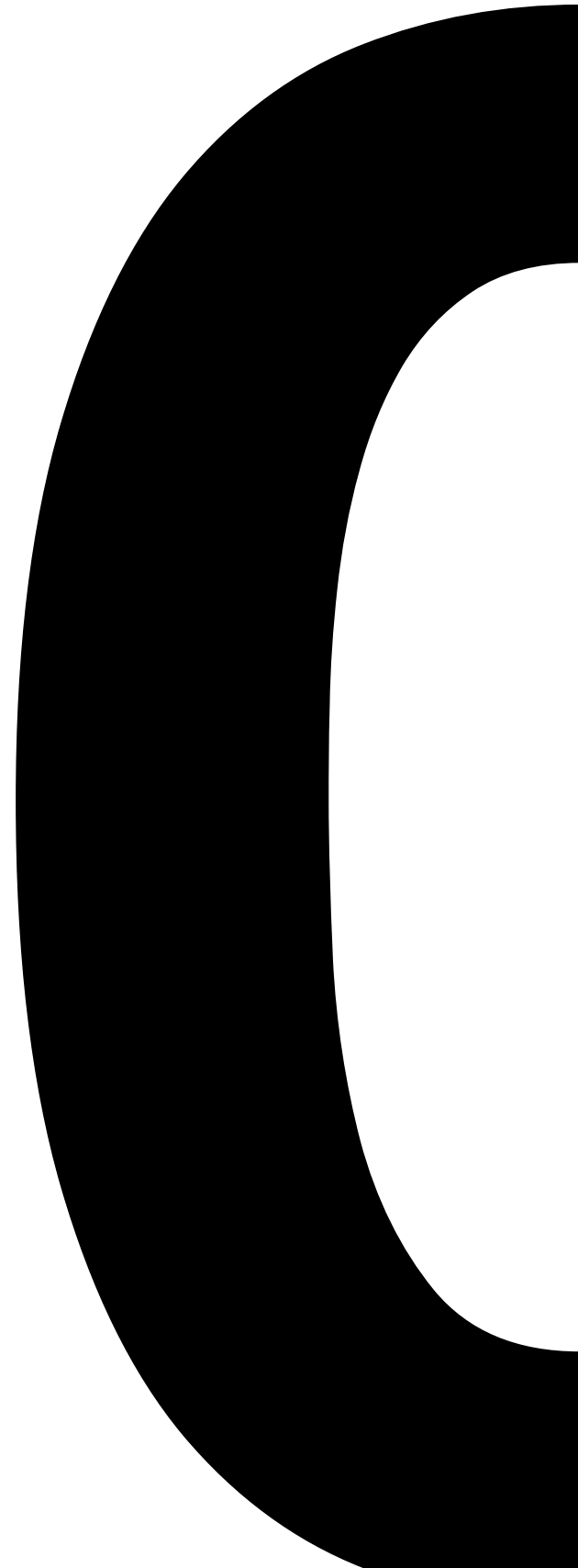


The biggest challenge in the process of designing for the area is to obtain a balance between the capital-driven approach of the developers and our understanding of the need-based design intervention for the area. The downside to this approach is that it has the potential to perpetuate the existing problem by addressing those problems rather than overcoming them. Our design intervention, emerging out of developer's shared visions, reduces the scope of more creative and bold alternative design proposals. This means that the element of experimentation and potential discovery of novel approaches is limited and reduced to a more conventional practice approach. However, we still chose this approach because we recognize the value of breaking unhelpful dichotomies of extreme alternative and mainstream approaches. The challenge is further extended by the inability to control the ongoing development projects and their implications on the area.



## *CONCLUSION*

This section reflects on our design process and proposal.



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5

# CONCLUDING REMARKS

## 5.1

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Through our analysis, it was evident that the urban regeneration projects envisioned for the Royal Docklands by the mayor of London and Newham council paves the path for London as a world class city. However, our essential concern was to appropriate and nuance these proposals towards a more sensitive, people-centered, diversified and adaptable vision with an aim to improve the future relations amongst the existing and upcoming communities as well as shaping the urban dynamics for the area.

The biggest challenge in this process is to obtain a balance between the capital-driven approach of the developers and our understanding of the need-based design intervention for the area. However, through our interventions working towards developing connectivity within communities and with the stakeholders along with embracing diversity, we can overcome these challenges to create a more diverse and livable place while generating a new imagery for the area.

Our design response, as detailed in the previous sections, is driven by the core principles of enhancing physical and social connectivity along with embracing diversity within the area. Through these proposals our aim is to develop a sense of place between the visitors, local communities and the stakeholders. These interventions channelise the development towards a new imagery for the area — not a “brand image” imposed by the developers, but a one that is emerged out of the needs of the people living and using the area, promoting diverse culture and better connectivity.



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  5. Landmarks in the area (DPU, 2015e)
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  20. Illustrations of Silvertown Quays future development
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  38. Integration to existing routes
  39. Relationship of the path to the waterfront
  40. Existing zoning
  41. Breaking the monotony of land-use
  42. Context-sensitive architectural response
  43. Existing versus proposed affordable housing



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