

# Graphic Skills Portal

Introduction Handout

1

**ANALYSING**



URBAN  
**GRAPHICS**  
SKILLS

# **BSP Graphic Skills Portal**

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BUPS – Bartlett Urban Planning Society (Established in 2012, the Bartlett Urban Planning Society (BUPS) is a student-run organisation, subsumed under the Bartlett School of Planning (BSP). BUPS represents, reinforces and protects the interests of planning students while inspiring the community-at-large of our role in the Built Environment.)

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# 1. What do we mean by Townscape Analysis?

“The term ‘**townscape**’ refers very broadly to the overall character and composition of a town (or other aspects of the built environment). It can include the range and quality of buildings in an area, the relationships between those buildings and the different types of space between and around them, and reflects the relationship between people and place.”  
(*Designingbuildings.co.uk*)

Solomon (1966) argues that “the recognition of building styles and their relation to historical periods is the key to townscape analysis”.

Therefore, we can refer to the Townscape analysis as a collection of analysis and mapping tools that graphically address the character, composition, and constraints of a specific area, whether is a city or a segment of a neighbourhood.

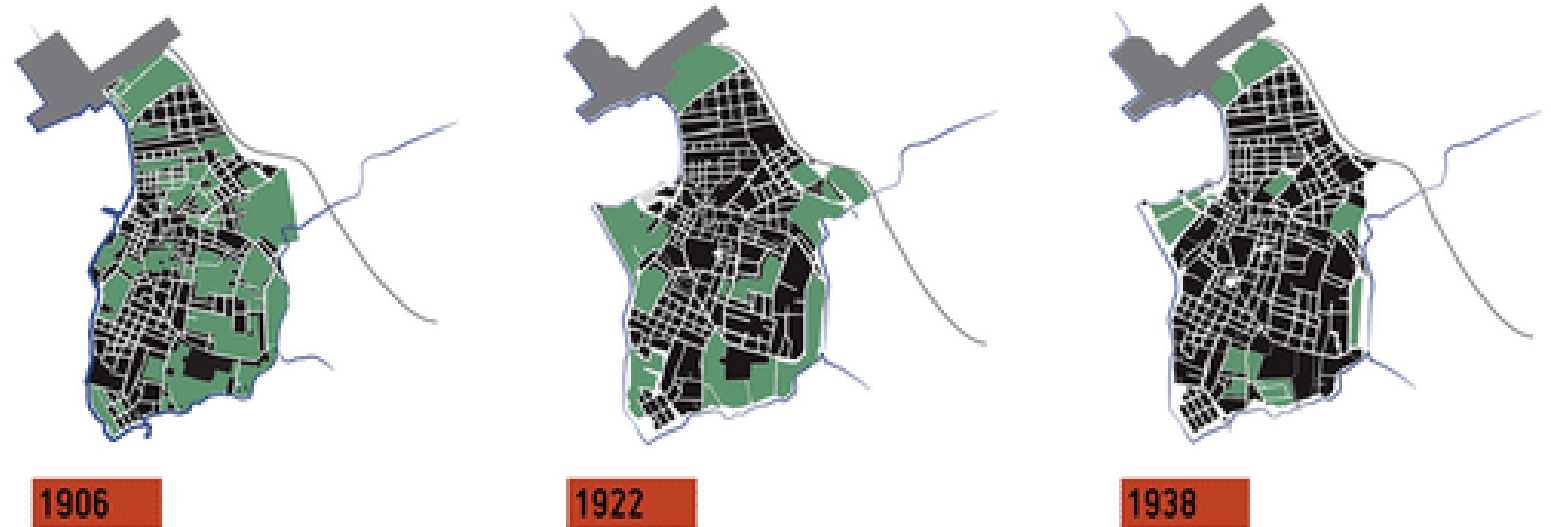
There are several types of maps that Townscape analysis includes, among the others, some are:

- Historical development
- Massing & Building heights
- Green & Open Spaces
- Access and movement map
- Building Character
- Conservation & Heritage
- Massing & Building heights
- Frontages map
- Public realm
- Wayfinding map
- Entrances
- etc.



## 1. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT MAP

A sequence of historic maps define the development of the area over time up until today. In this map is helpful to highlight any listed buildings or historic remains.

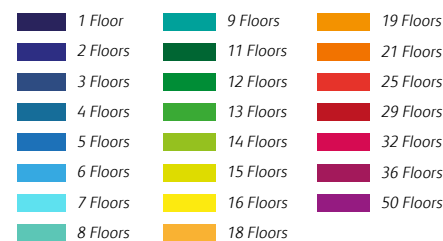
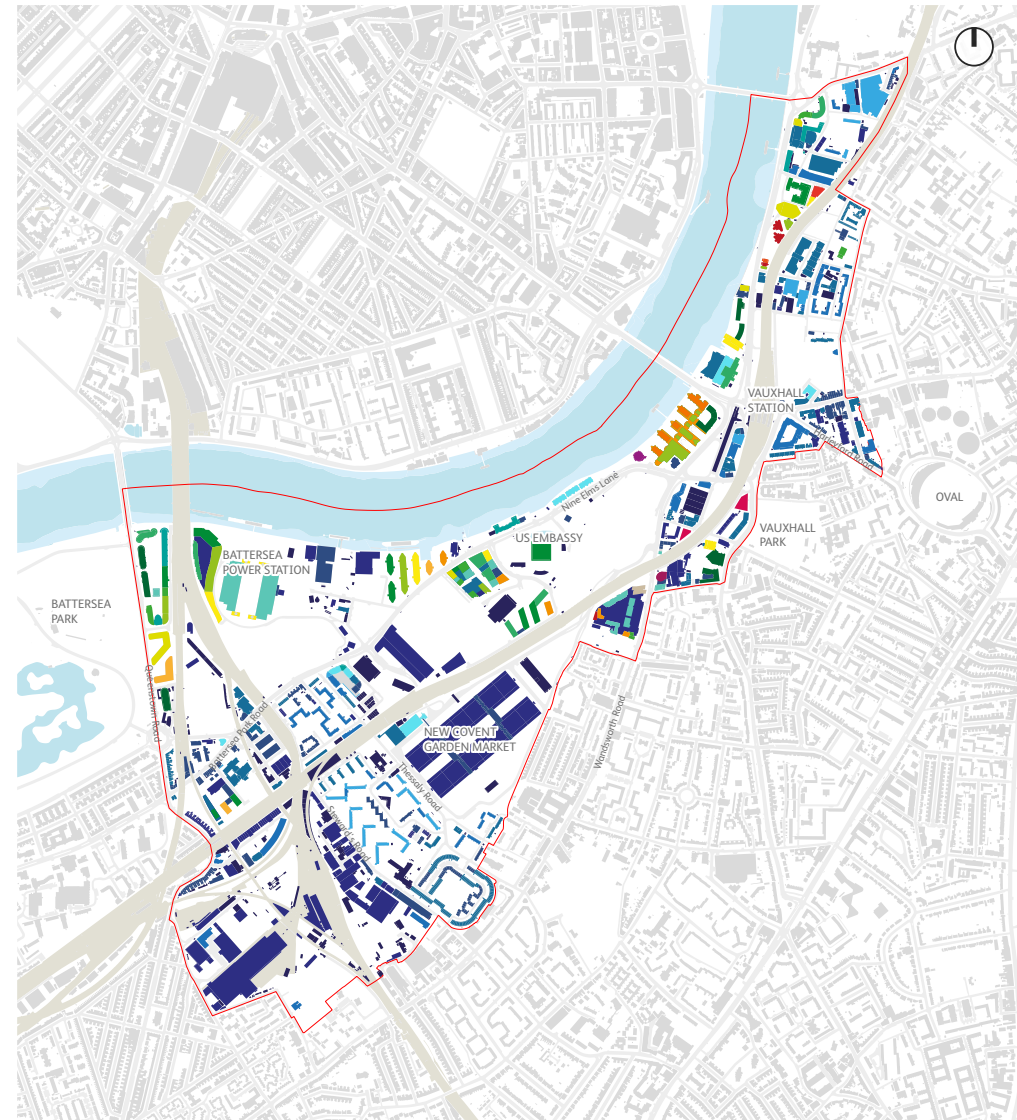


**KADIKOY, ISTANBUL**  
historical development  
of the city center

## 2. BUILDING HEIGHTS

The building height defines three spatial concepts which have an impact on the public spaces and place-making.

1. Enclosure – how the public space is defined
2. Identity – how the skyline of the area, as well as the landmarks, effect the whole perception of the place
3. Micro-climate – the degree of impact on the space as a result of its orientation, light, wind, etc.

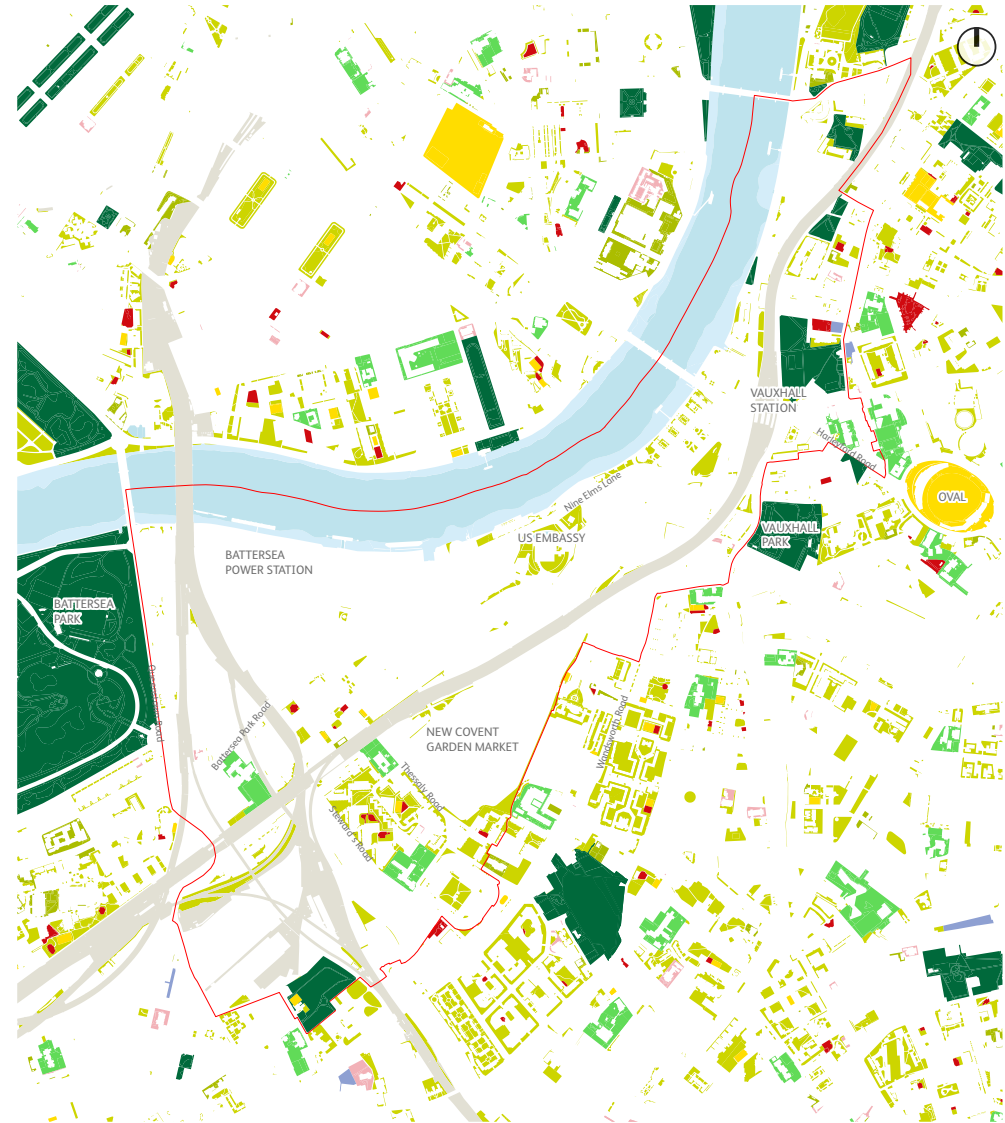


Building heights analysis of the Vauxhall and Battersea area, London.

**Nine Elms Placemaking Framework** by AR Urbanism

### 3. GREEN AND AMENITIES SPACES MAP

Green and amenities spaces define the relationship between the built form and the open space. Moreover, it gives information about the social ties and infrastructure of the area.



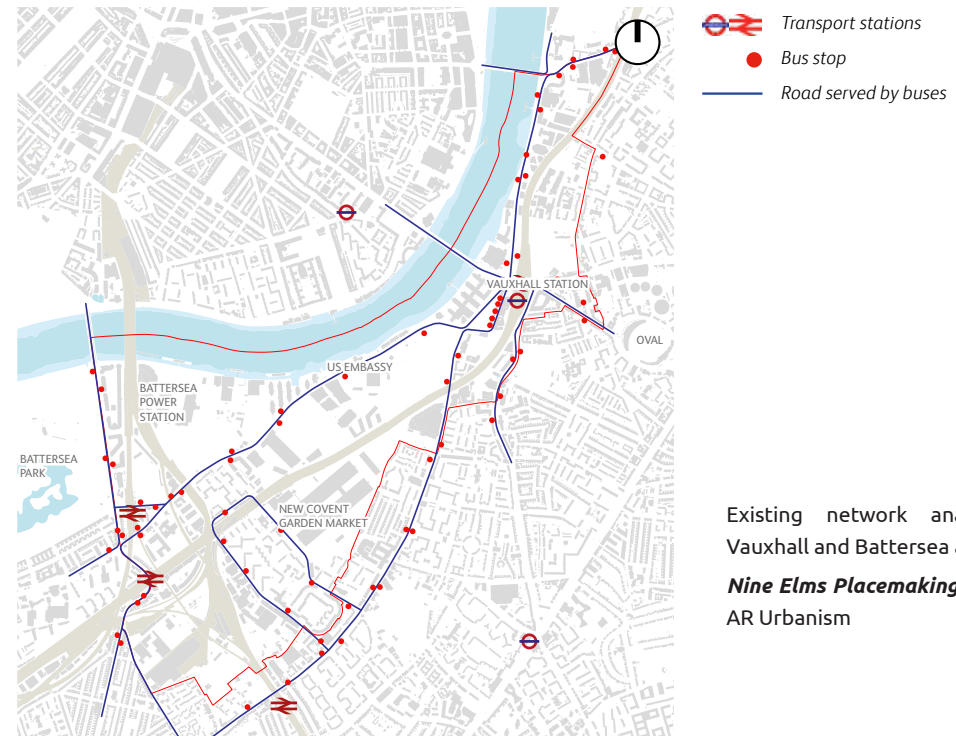
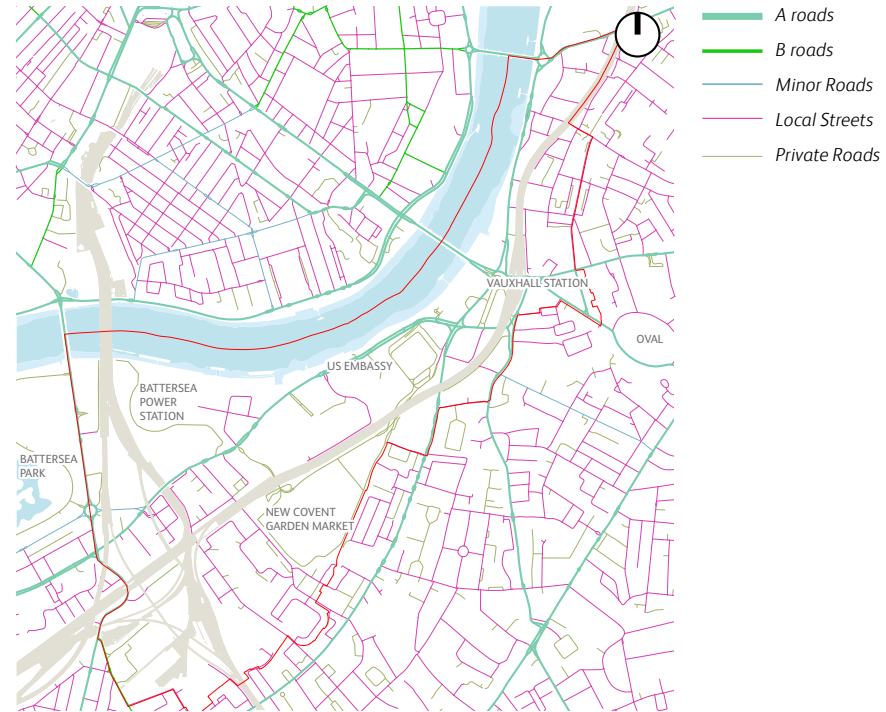
- Allotment
- Institutional grounds
- Amenity - Residential or Business
- Playing fields & sports facilities
- Play space
- Public parks
- Religious grounds
- School grounds

Open spaces analysis of the Vauxhall and Battersea area, London.

**Nine Elms Placemaking Framework** by AR Urbanism

## 4. ACCESS & MOVEMENT MAP

Existing networks can include both vehicular roads and pedestrian/cycle roads. Generally the analysis highlights crossing points on the major roads, level of permeability and physical barriers.



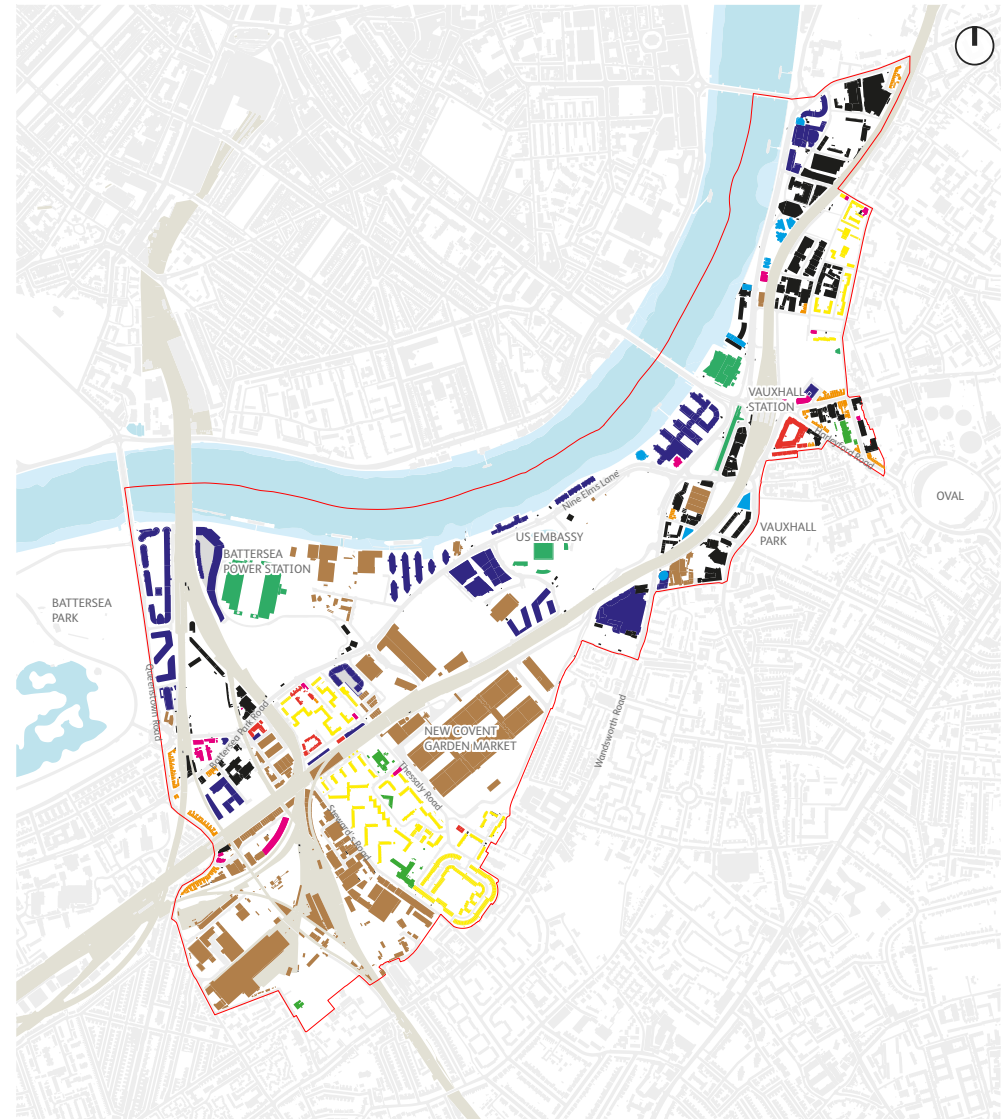
Existing network analysis of the Vauxhall and Battersea area, London.

**Nine Elms Placemaking Framework** by AR Urbanism



## 5. EXISTING BUILDING CHARACTER

Building typologies define the types of use and contribute to the specific character of a place. From the typology study, we can see how proximal public spaces relate to particular building uses to understand how this effects the spatial perception, accessibility and visual connection of these places.



- Contemporary residential block
- Heritage remnants
- Iconic architecture
- Terraced housing
- 70s-90s Pitched Roof Residential
- Industrial Big Boxes
- Post-war Flats
- One-storey island buildings
- Tall towers

Existing building character map of the Vauxhall and Battersea area, London.

**Nine Elms Placemaking Framework** by AR Urbanism

## 2. What are the types of analysis in urban design?

Beside **Townscape Analysis**, there are several other analysis that can be used to explore a specific urban space. Some are:

- Construction Sites analysis
- Access & Movement analysis (Road network; Pedestrian routes; Cycle routes; Public transport, etc.)
- Uses & Inhabitation (Ground floor uses; Upper floor uses; Evening economy; etc.)
- Major Edges
- Major Elements/landscapes

Based on **The Dimensions of Urban Design**<sup>1</sup>, urban design must be understood holistically as a joined-up activity combined by six dimensions for the purpose of clarity in exposition and analysis of each specific project:

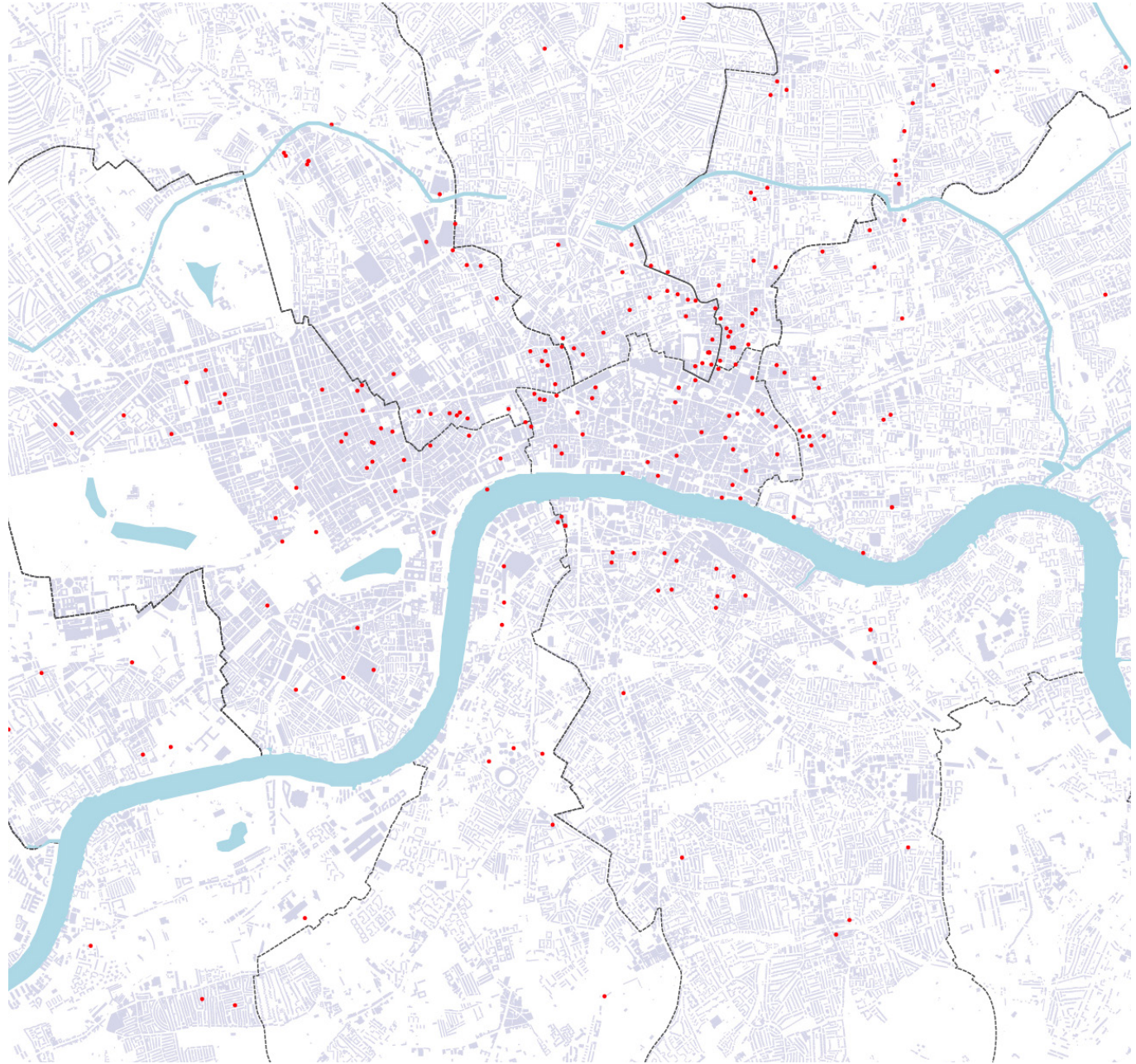
- The morphological dimension
- The perceptual dimension
- The social dimension
- The visual dimension
- The functional dimension
- The temporal dimension

<sup>1</sup>Carmona, M., (2010). *Public Place, Urban Spaces. The dimensions of urban design*. Routledge: London



Each one of the six dimensions includes specific analysis:

- **The morphological dimension:** Land uses, building structures (or built form analysis), plot pattern, and street pattern;
- **The perceptual dimension:** Sensory maps, such as sound, smell, fear, etc.;
- **The social dimension:** Community asset map, population composition, safety and security, etc.;
- **The visual dimension:** Permeability map, visual relationship map, etc.;
- **The functional dimension:** Space syntax integration map, accessibility pattern, edge conditions, etc.;
- **The temporal dimension:** Historical development, etc.



Manzini Ceinar (2022). Figure-ground map of London identifying coworking spaces around the city centre.

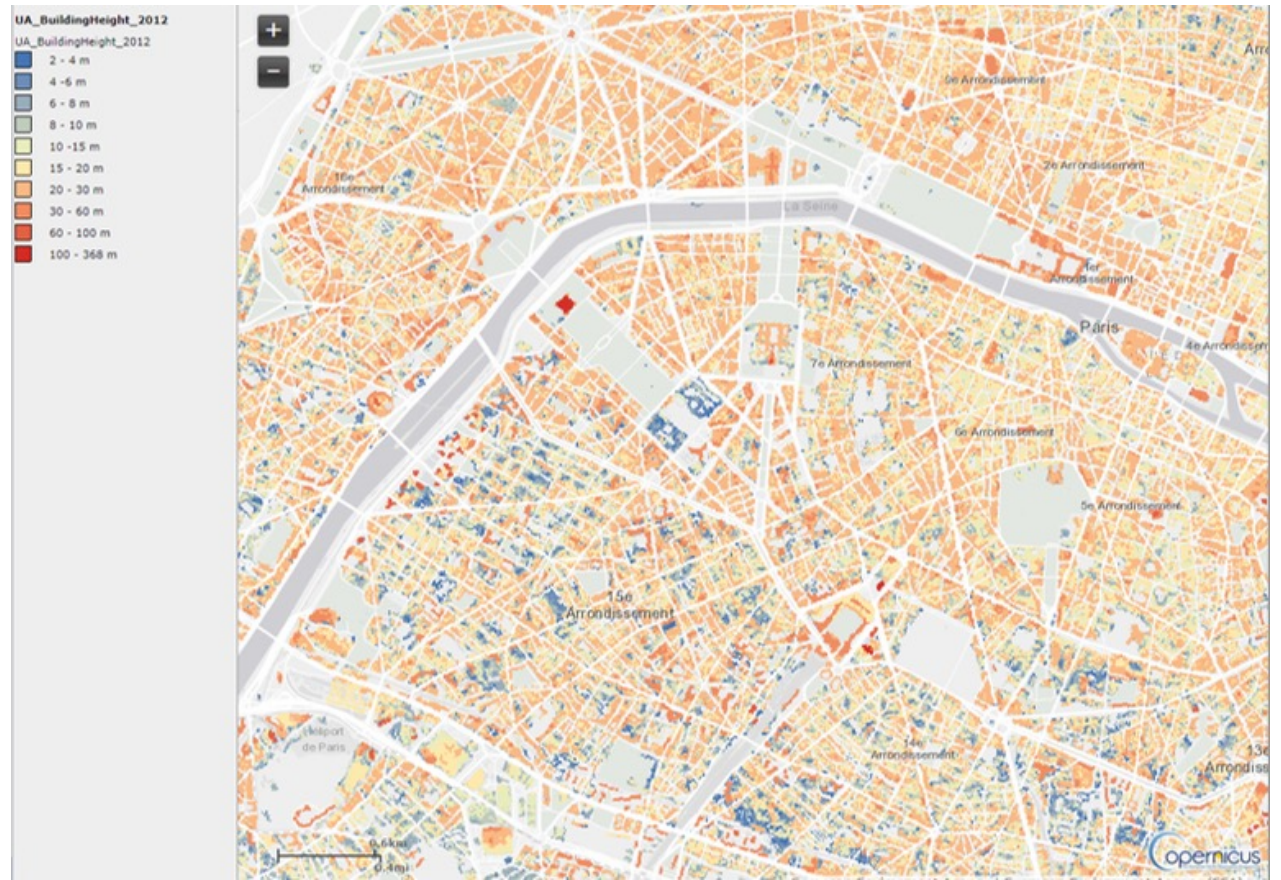


# The Morphological dimension

Land uses, building structures (or built form analysis), plot pattern, street pattern, etc.

Building heights of Paris, *Copernicus*

Land uses in Grays Town Centre, *AR Urbanism*

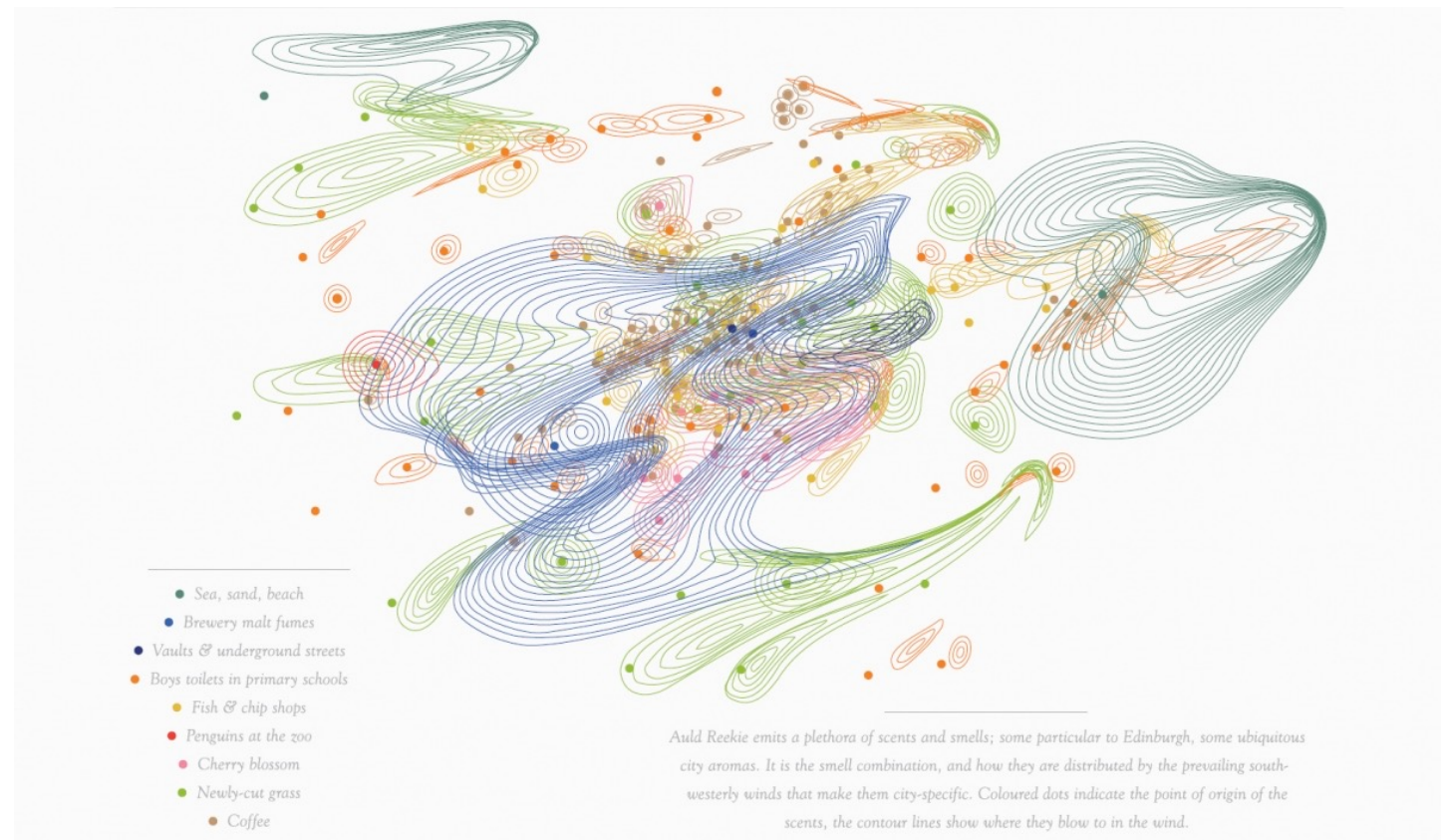




## The Perceptual dimension

Sensory maps, such as sound, smell, fear, etc.;

Smell map of Edinburgh, *Kate McLean*



## The Social dimension

Community asset map, population composition, safety and security, etc.;

Public realm analysis, *AR Urbanism*



## The Visual dimension

Permeability map, visual relationship map, etc.

Permeable spaces in Venice, *Irene Manzini Ceinar*





## The Functional dimension

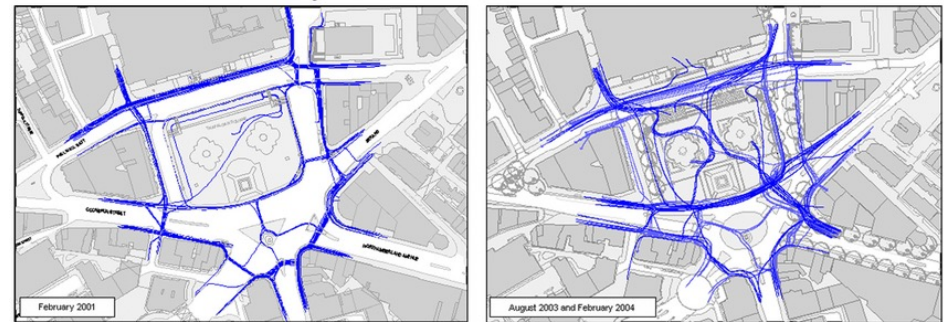
Space syntax integration map, accessibility pattern, edge conditions, etc.

Space Syntax analysis of London's Trafalgar Square, *Space Syntax Ltd.*

Edge conditions, *AR Urbanism*

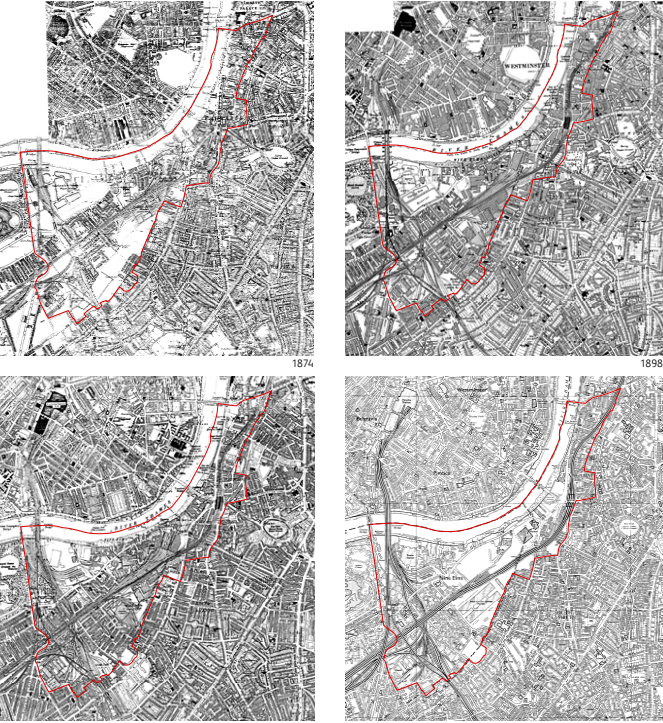


axial analyses before and after



movement traces before and after

# The Temporal dimension



Development of Nine Elms-Vauxhall area, London

before 13th Century  
Campi used for cultivation  
and pasture

after 15th Century  
Paved Campi

Layered city



Manzini Ceinar (2018). The evolution of Venice, Italy

### 3. What is a Figure-ground map?

The **figure-ground map** (or diagram) is a tool for studying urban morphology. This technique is great for illustrating ***solid-void relationships and the interplay between public and private space in urban settings.***

One of the best-known examples of a figure-ground map is **Giambattista Nolli's 1748 "Pianta Grande di Roma"**, that is a milestone in urban cartography.

During that time, cities were usually portrayed with pictorial maps.

With a focus on artistry rather than accuracy, pictorial maps provided a detailed bird's-eye-view of the city that would highlight landmark buildings and places of interest. As beautiful as they were, these maps were of little use for wayfinding and urban management.





Giambattista Nelli's 1748 "Pianta Grande di Roma"



**THE BARTLETT**