lapa

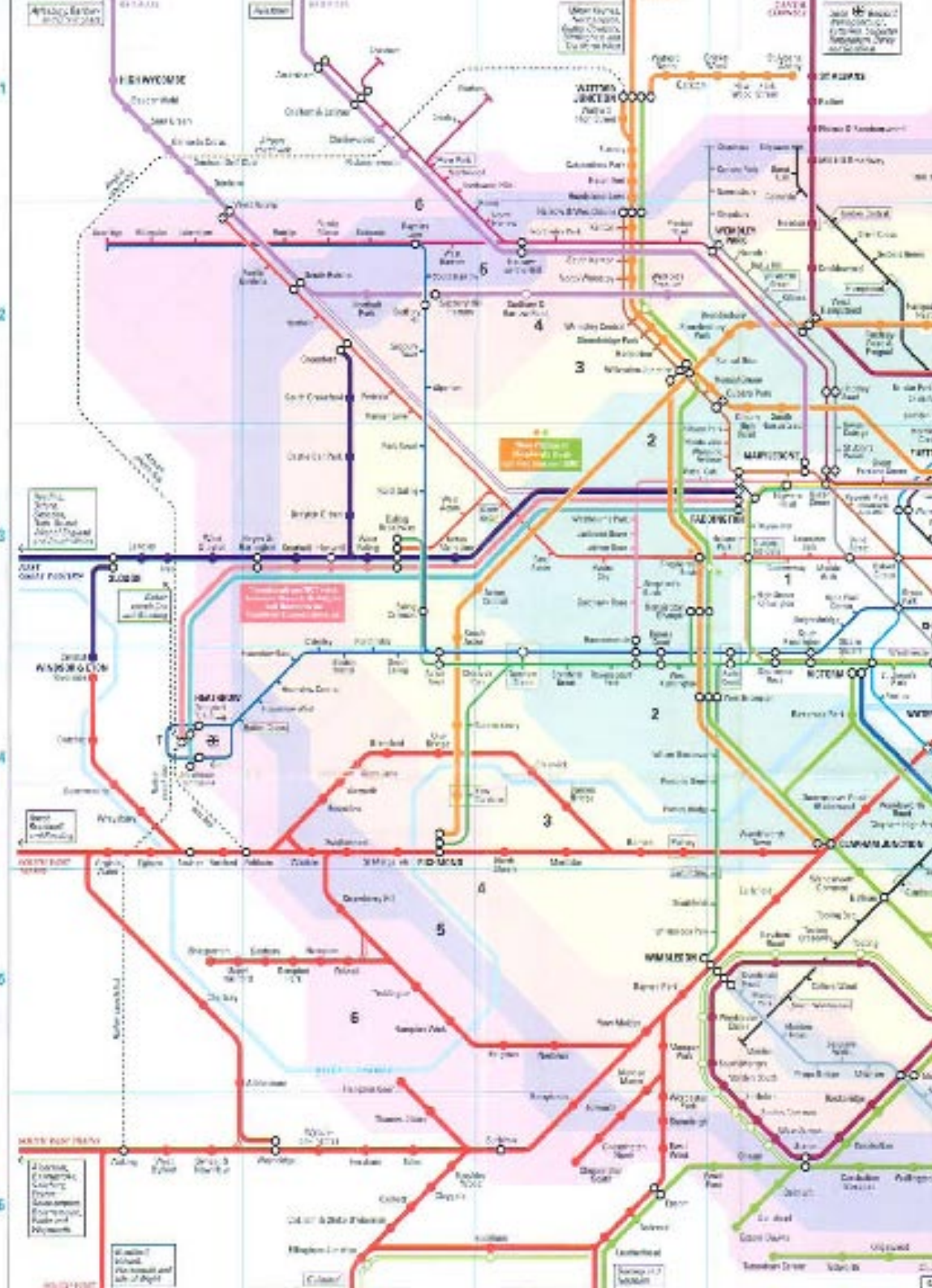
LONDON - SOUTHWARK

INSPIRATIONS FOR THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

EPFL_ENAC_LAPA

Laboratoire de la production d'architecture

Prof. Harry Gugger



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INTRODUCTION
LONDON - SOUTHWARK
INSPIRATIONS FOR THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

London: Capital of the Twenty-first Century?

London is distinguished on many levels. It is, simultaneously, Europe's only World City, the nation's capital and a city region of 1,579 km2 territory bounded by the protected green belt (initiated thru the Greater London Plan 1944). This city region contains local communities for 7.5 M residents that are defined within the structure of 33 borough councils. Reading these characteristics requires an understanding of the actors and forces tied to the production of London's spatial development.

An analysis might take the form of mapping various roles and motives of government (national/ regional/ local), private enterprises and public agencies. However, it is arguable that the implications of physical development on the environment have greater significance. In this sense, there is a provocative parallel to Walter Benjamin's essay "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century", in which the author explored C 19th Paris as the register of dynamic changes in European society. Similarly, as London's service-based economy thrives off its financial services sector and creative industries, concentrations of wealth and specialist activity are the manifestation of our contemporary society in space. Perhaps Benjamin's characterisations of the typologies of arcades, panoramas and boulevards (to name but a few) have to be re-considered through a reading of themes like exclusivity, class division and pleasure. Each expresses difference and may be measured in every part of the city, to varying degrees. The following three examples are relevant to Southwark:

Disparity

As mentioned before the city observed today is one of high social contrast. Its image is that of a place for doing business and visiting, which attracts inward flows of capital ranging from investment to spending money by tourism. Consider the fact that in the world's equity markets, the historic "Square Mile" of the City of London has a primacy that is rivalled only by Manhattan's Wall Street, or that Heathrow airport is Europe's largest transatlantic hub. Preserving this status poses the challenge to remain a relevant touchstone for capturing global flows and that is precisely why the welfare state's obstacles are constantly eased and removed. In the past twenty-five years, an underlying Thatcherite ideology has pursued de-regulation and privatisation of the state. Competitiveness and efficiency are the watchwords in a regime where there is unprecedented alignment of values between the public and the private sectors.

Even the current must have, the office tower, illustrates this point. Planning laws have recently been eased in order to allow developers to build tall (despite

Southwark from Peckham Library, photo R. Blättler

being half the height of the world's tallest skyscrapers) in locations that were once deemed to be too sensitive in conservation terms. It is no coincide that the changing skyline is being re-fashioned to accommodate the requirements of global corporations. The changing skyline symbolises that competitiveness has become a matter of survival.

By virtue of its location facing the City across the River Thames, Southwark is on the cusp of this action. For years, the division between North and South was as stark as day and night. Even today, the council is forced to balance its regulatory authority for development (spreading from the City) with its traditional role as one of London's largest social housing landlords.

The borough registers three bands, with Dulwich in the south and Bankside in the north, as the areas that generally contain the stock of the most affluent housing. The middle is the zone where Southwark, as one of London's biggest social housing landlords, has constructed thousands of mass housing units. Cheaply built during the post-war boom (1951-1970) and unfashionable, these heroic modern buildings take the form of mass estates that spread southwards from Bermondsey to Peckham.

Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Hackney top the tables of inner city areas with the nation's highest concentrations of poverty. The irony is that these places are near, or in between centres of extreme wealth at Canary Wharf and the City of London. Aside from low-skilled servicing jobs, there is little connection between these two worlds of rich and poor.

Fragmentation

London-wide representation through a directly elected Mayor and an Assembly is relatively new (2000). Its predecessor, the Greater London Council (GLC – leader 'Red' Ken Livingstone) lost a political struggle and was abolished in 1986 (by the Thatcher Government), after which there was fourteen years of power sharing amongst the national government's ministries of state and local councils. While this empowered local government, there was no single authority for co-ordinating London-wide issues. When it came to de-regulating the City's financial services sector, this was a matter for the Treasury (finance ministry), while other strategic issues like planning and transport were dealt with through stakeholder partnerships between agencies, private interests and government (locally and nationally). If this system had a tone, its thinking was strategic and negotiable. That is perhaps why Southwark succeeded in regenerating Bankside and Borough Market on the City's fringe, but has so far failed with more remote locations.

Under New Labour's political devolution, London regained its region status (as Scotland and Wales), even though its boundaries mirror those from its metropolitan incarnation. However, there are key differences. The new City Hall at Tower Bridge (Foster and Partners) is pure trophy architecture, but its form and layout are indicative of the Mayor's role as promoter of London's image but not as its key policy maker. The present Mayor (Ken Livingstone re-branded) has been superimposed on the system of local councils and his strategic powers are largely shared with central government. Take transport, which is divided between the privatised tube network versus road

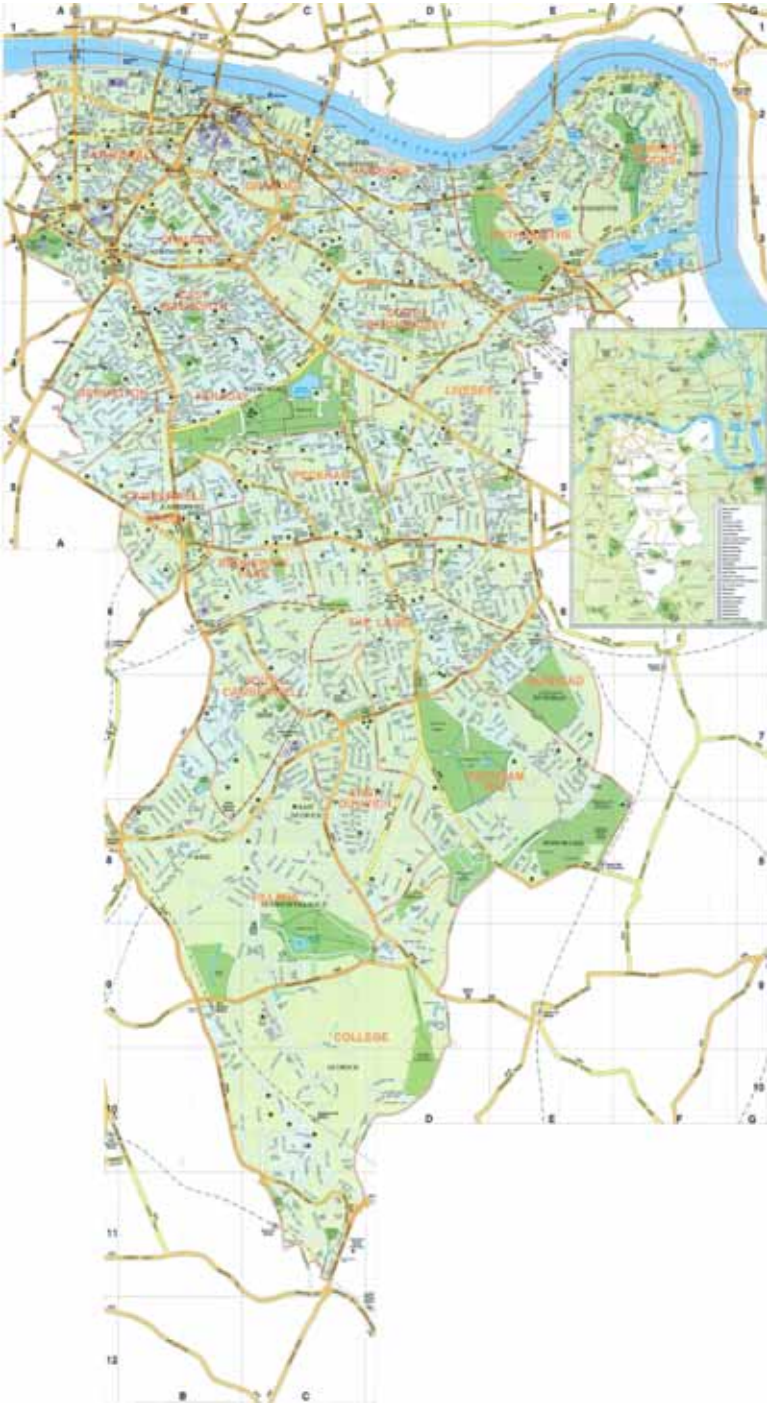
transport, where the Mayor controls congestion charging and buses. In planning too, the Mayor prepares the spatial development strategy known as the London Plan, but does not (yet) have authority to approve planning applications. Local authorities, like Southwark and the City, still determine what is best for their locality. This struggle of negotiation shapes London's spatial development through each major project and not by a comprehensive structure plan.

Urban Renaissance

Sustainable development is a broad term that finds currents in the thinking about how to produce cities for the future. In Lord Rogers and the Urban Task Force, we find their "Towards an Urban Renaissance" (1999) as a model that promotes inner city living and community as the means to achieve quality of life: decent housing, useful public space and opportunities for social exchange. This represents a holistic approach, in which high-density is concentrated around public transport nodes, optimises consumption of energy and natural resources and re-uses previously developed brownfield sites instead of green countryside.

For Southwark, the issue becomes one of adaptation. It is important to remember that there is an abundance of brownfield land for re-development and a strong measure of green and open spaces. These are nothing if we do not consider the challenges posed by spatial context and proximities: the Elephant and Castle benefits from access to two rail main lines and countless bus and cycle routes, but its regeneration has always been set back by the logistics of re-housing social housing tenants. This is compounded even further away on the large post-war housing estates, which are remote from efficient transport and are entrenched in inherited social and ethnic divisions that make mid-borough areas like Peckham less desirable for all to live in than other comparative places like Dulwich. While it is possible to realise this vision, the essence is to understand the context, situate the site and then propose interventions that work at these various urban scales.

The examples presented above are but a few where London hosts the currents in society and Southwark is the local register of change. The challenge for devising the term's "Urban Constitution" is to recognise the issues involved in producing sustainable city space before immediately thinking about architecture. Successful urban space is a consideration of the city's social, economic and environmental needs in equal measure.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The project could not have been developed without the generous support of our partners and sponsors. we are grateful for their encouragement and commitment.

Many thanks to:

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SEMESTER 01

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TRIPS
LONDON

Field Trip to London (Sept. 27-30)

Thursday, Sep. 27
Morning: arrival City Airport from Geneva + visit to the Laban Dance Center.
Afternoon: visit to the Tate Modern.

Friday, Sep. 28
Day: symposium at the Tate Modern.

Saturday, Sep. 29
Morning: trajectories through Southwark, Lewisham, Tower Hamlets, City, Westminster and Lambeth.
Afternoon: Visit the Serpentine Pavilion.

Sunday, Sep. 30
Day: field investigation to prepare the case studies.
Evening: departure from City Airport to Geneva

Review Trip to London (Dec. 6-9)

Thursday, Dec. 6
Morning: arrival at City Airport from Geneva, move to the hotel.
Afternoon: preparation for presentation

Friday, Dec. 7
Day: presentation of the Urban Constitution in Southwark.

Saturday, Dec. 8
Day: field investigation to prepare for the feasibility studies.

Sunday, Dec. 9
Day: field investigation to prepare the feasibility studies.
Evening: departure from City Airport to Geneva

Oxford Street, photo R. Blättler

SYMPOSIUM
28.09.2007 @ TATE MODERN, LONDON

9:30 Arrival and Coffee

10:00 Welcome and Introduction (**Harry Gugger**)

MORNING SESSION: INTRODUCTIONS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

10:05 **Harry Gugger** (EPFL Professor of Architectural Projects)

10:30 **Sheena Wagstaff** (Curator and Director of Exhibition at Tate Modern)

11:00 **Peter Bishop** ('Design for London' Director)

11:40 **Philipp Rode** (LSE Executive Director, Urban Age, Cities Programme)

12:20 Question and Answer Session

12:40 Lunch at the Tate

AFTERNOON SESSION: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ACTUAL PROJECTS

14:00 **Tony Travers** (LSE Director of the Greater London Group)

14:40 **Robert Tavernor** (Director of the Cities Programme at the LSE)

15:20 Break

15:30 **Alistair Huggett** (Framework and Implementation Manager of Economic Development and Strategic Partnerships)

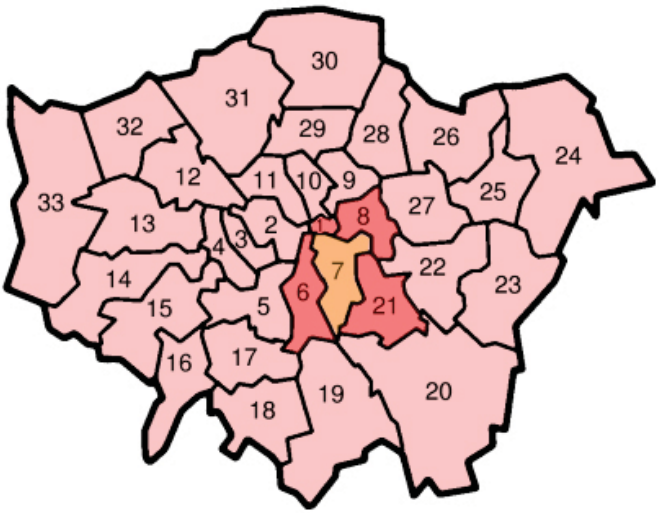
16:10 **Stephen Witherford** (WWM Architects, Winner of the Bankside Urban Park Planning Competition)

16:50 Break

17:00 Panel Discussion (Moderator: **Rowan Moore**)

17:30 Closing Remarks and Thank You Note (**Harry Gugger**)

Global Cities exhibition, Tate Modern, photo R. Blättler



1. City of London †
2. City of Westminster
3. Kensington and Chelsea
4. Hammersmith and Fulham
5. Wandsworth
6. Lambeth
7. Southwark
8. Tower Hamlets
9. Hackney
10. Islington
11. Camden
12. Brent
13. Ealing
14. Hounslow
15. Richmond upon Thames
16. Kingston upon Thames
17. Merton
18. Sutton
19. Croydon
20. Bromley
21. Lewisham
22. Greenwich
23. Bexley
24. Havering
25. Barking and Dagenham
26. Redbridge
27. Newham
28. Waltham Forest
29. Haringey
30. Enfield
31. Barnet
32. Harrow
33. Hillingdon

CASE STUDIES

PHASE 1

The first assignment will be a case study analysis of six London boroughs, including Southwark. The boroughs have been chosen as a representative set of different urban growth patterns and development policies within London.

The six chosen case studies are:
1_ Lambeth
2_ Lewisham
3_ City of London
4_ City of Westminster
5_ Tower Hamlets
6_ Southwark

Each student group will be assigned one borough and will be required to research, analyse, and document the conditions and statistics relating to five important planning themes. To do this effectively, each member of a team will become a "specialist" of one of these themes.

The 5 themes of study are:
1_ Housing
2_ Education
3_ Health
4_ Transport
5_ Environment

Task
(Individual / group work – 2 weeks)
Each group will create a case study for their assigned city.
The group will be divided into five specialists; each specialist will research their theme and show its relation to the evolution of the borough and its urban structure. The final group report will be a compilation of the individual themes, including standardized statistical and physical data, as well as an overall analysis and set of conclusions.
The conclusions for the case study should identify special and unique features and clarify the advantages and problems of the borough.

Schedule
Final presentation and review will be held on Thursday and Friday, October 11 & 12.

Deliverables
Each group is required to create a digital presentation, and a Case Study Book.
The presentation should include the results from research, statistics, and analysis of each of the themes for the city. The presentation should conclude with an overall assessment of the city and personal reflections on its qualities.
The digital presentation should be submitted in both high and low resolution digital files, so as to facilitate internet downloading by our partners in London.
The deliverable for the case study will be an A3 - Case Study Book. The Book should include all of the statistics and information from the presentation, presented as fact sheets, and graphics.
The documentation should address each of the individual specialist themes in a clear and concise format and should provide maps with coordinate scales to be used for comparison between groups.

URBAN STRATEGY

PHASE 2

The second half of the semester shifts the studio focus onto the main topic of investigation: the borough of Southwark.

An urban strategy is composed of many constituent components, each addressing a specialized interests, yet also requiring proper integration with the others to create an "intelligent tool" for the evolution of a masterplan. In this phase, participants will resume their role as "specialist" (in Housing, Education, Health, Transport, and Environment) and will develop urban strategies for the project area.

Task
(group / individual work – 3 weeks)
For this phase the specialists will work together as a Specialist Group to conduct research and analysis on Southwark and its context.
Once the base data for the area has been compiled the specialists will then work individually, in consultation with their Design Group, to develop a Urban Strategy for their topic. This assignment creates a multi-faceted foundation for the development of a full plan for Southwark.

Schedule
Final presentations of the individual work will be held on Thursday and Friday November 1 & 2.

Deliverables
Each specialized theme group is responsible for a A3 briefing booklet of ~15-20 pages. This booklet should document the basic data for each theme including statistics, history, reports, images, maps, diagrams, and should provide a list of primary planning issues to be considered for the evolution of the borough.
Each individual student is also responsible to design a "procedural based development strategy" for the future evolution of the site with respect to their specialization. The deliverable for each strategy is an A0 plan of the site (or schematic diagram for their theme) and documentation outlining the primary concerning issues. The individual strategies will form the basis for the next assignment and should already include reflections on how the thematic issues should be integrated into an overall proposal.

White Heart Pub Southwark, photo R. Blättler

ROTHERHITHE
BERMONDSEY
BOROUGH & WALWORTH
CAMBERWELL & PECKHAM
THAMHEAD & PECKHAM RYE
DULWICH

URBAN CONSTITUTION

PHASE 3

In this phase, Southwark will be divided into 6 parts that correspond to the councils or a group of councils:

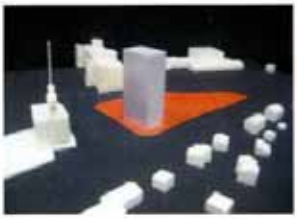
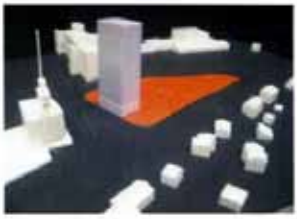
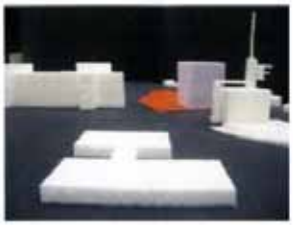
1. Walworth + Borough & Bankside, 2. Bermondsey, 3. Rotherhithe, 4. Peckham + Camberwell, 5. Nunhead + Peckham Rye and 6. Dulwich.

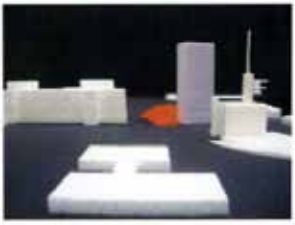
The goal of this phase is to produce an Urban Constitution: a plan that provides a logical set of guiding rules which allow for an appropriate and consistent response to urban development. The goal for the lapa Southwark urban constitution is to provide an inspiration for the new Southwark Local Development Framework. The starting basis for this work is the amalgamation of the work of the different specialists within design group projects.
The resulting "Urban Constitution" will be a designed synthesis of the individual theme strategies, combined to be flexible & responsive to future influences.
Within each constitution there should be a statement of general goals and a thesis for the development of the site.
This thesis should react to the most pertinent statistical facts and group predictions for the future development in the municipality.
The goal for this project is not to provide a typical fixed "master plan" for future building, but to provide a logical set of guiding rules to allow for an appropriate and consistent response to the changing influences on Southwark.

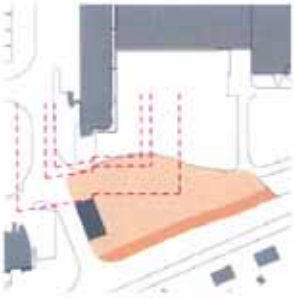
Task
(Group work – 5 weeks)
Each group is to combine their individual theme studies and create an Urban Constitution. The Urban Constitution should be a series of procedural rules that correlate to the stated goals and thesis of the group. The constitution should address the perceived needs of the borough in the short, medium, and long term, and should be represented as a schematic strategy that integrates the multiple overlaying aspects of planning with a flexible methodology.
The Urban Constitutions should demonstrate that the group understands the significant issues facing the borough, the different methodological processes used to resolve typical issues, and then state how their proposals will fit within this framework.

Schedule
Final presentations of the Urban Constitution will be held on Thursday and Friday December 6 & 7, in London.

Deliverables
Each Design Group is responsible for a Partial Urban Constitution digital presentation. The presentation should explain the constitution, through the use of maps, diagrams, models, images, graphics, and supporting reference data. Each group should also create an A3 book based on the presentation. This document should compile all graphic materials to support constitution.





11 storeys

min. distance: 22m

height: 33m

COS: 0,09

CUS: 1,23

15 storeys

min. distance: 30m

height: 45m

COS: 0,07

CUS: 1,23

20 storeys

min. distance: 40m

height: 60m

COS: 0,05

CUS: 1,23

FEASIBILITY STUDY

PHASE 4

The first phase of an architectural project is to acknowledge a client brief, and to conduct analysis to determine the feasibility of a project. A Feasibility Study should outline the current physical, infrastructural, and legal conditions and restrictions of a site and develop a "diagrammatic" approach to assessing its compatibility with the program of the client brief.

Task
For this phase participants are required to devise a project, chose a site within the given Urban Constitution of Southwark, and prepare a Feasibility Study which will guide the design project.
Once the program and site has been defined, the overall project proposal should be discussed with the tutors to ensure it is "feasible" and that the chosen site is available (only one project per site).
The students should balance the project issues of program, complexity, & size, with the resources of the team members.
The project team is then required to analyse and prepare a Feasibility Study and complete the Feasibility Study Briefing Document.

Schedule
Final presentations of the Feasibility Study will be held on Thursday and Friday December 20 & 21.

Deliverables
Feasibility Study briefing documents (Format A3, on paper and PDF)
Site model, including diagrammatic feasibility sketch model

Feasibility Study, lapa studio 05/06, students: S.Gutscher + A.Dubach

		SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL ECONOMICS			DENSITY & INFRASTRUCTURE		
	Urban strategies	Environment	Health	Education	Habitat	Transport	
							Urban Constitutions
City		student 01	student 02	student 03	student 04	student 05	Borough & Walworth
Tower Hamlets		student 06	student 07	student 08	student 09	student 10	Bermondsey
Lewisham		student 11	student 12	student 13	student 14	student 15	Rotherhithe
Lambeth		student 16	student 17	student 18	student 19	student 20	Peckham & Camberwell
Westminster		student 21	student 22	student 23	student 24	student 25	Nunhead & Peckham Rye
Southwark		student 26	student 27	student 28	student 29	student 30	Dulwich
Case Studies							

SEMESTER INFO

RESEARCH THEMES

Research themes were chosen based on their importance in London policies, and on daily life in the city. These themes are seen as broad fields of investigation, and should be analysed in both the context of their importance in daily life, and their affect on urban policy. There is a large degree of "overlap" between themes, revealing complexity in the urban issues of the case study sites, and Southwark.

Environment
Environment is becoming one of the most important issue in our globalized world. This topic includes all aspects of ecology, landscape, green-space, climate, pollution, (... etc.) and the resulting consequences and effects.

Health
Health as both business and as social infrastructural influence on the urban fabric. London is a global city, therefore health as a research theme is an important key for reading and understanding the complexity of the city.

Education
Education is a key issue in the development of community and urbanity. Education facilities are very often one of the central physical nodes of a community. The provision, location, and access to education facilities affect urban living and planning, this theme addresses education and its relation to changing society and community.

Housing
Location and society define a community, but housing is the physical foundation of urban structure of a neighbourhood. Housing should address the issues of living and dwelling in a specific area, and the resulting quality of life for the inhabitants.

Transport
Transportation is the freedom of movement of people, goods, services, and knowledge. This topic includes all aspects of movement - both public and private, vehicles, circulation, and the resulting consequences and effects upon the urban fabric and its constituents.

Standard data for all Case Studies
- Density
- Expansion of city (vertical, horizontal
- Green spaces/Air Quality /Pollution
- Municipalities/Organisation of City
- Age of Population/where lives who
- Income/ Employment/Segregation
- Cars (private, state owned)
- Public Transport
- GDP (gross Domestic Product)

More standardized data may be requested based on the progression of the studio and the results of the analyses.

GLOSSARY

This glossary is included so as to facilitate the understanding of words within the lapa project context. It is not intended to be a comprehensive dictionary of complete definitions.

Constituent
Serving as part of a whole; component: a constituent element. A resident of a district or member of a group that authorizes another to act as a representative

Constitution
The physical make up of the body, including its functions metabolic processes, reactions to stimuli, and resistance to the attack of pathogenic organisms: A written instrument containing the fundamental rules of a political or social organization

Infrastructure
An underlying base or foundation especially for an organization or system: The basic facilities, services, and installations needed for the functioning of a community or society, ex: transportation, communication, water, power, & public institutions.

Masterplan
A long-term plan for all interacting aspects of a project or defined area giving a concrete plan for development, or comprehensive guidance & instruction

Issues to consider include: Buildings, sizes, functions, local urbanity, program, style, history

Methodology
A body of practices, procedures, and rules used by those who work in a specific discipline or project; a set of working methods:

Pervasive
Spread throughout, Having the quality or tendency to pervade or permeate

Synthesis
The combining of separate elements or substances to form a coherent whole

Strategy
An adaptation or complex of adaptations of behaviour, metabolism, or structure that serves as an important function in achieving evolutionary success: An elaborate and systematic plan of action

Script
(v.) To orchestrate behaviour or an event, example as if writing a theatrical script.
(n.) An interpreted written set of instructions which interact with a given program.

Ref: www.dictionary.com

APPRAISAL

The emphasis of evaluation of the semester is on individual work. Although the scope of the semester project is executed at the group level so as to deal with the large scale of both area and complexity, the workflow is subdivided into individual work projects.
There are two specific reasons for this:

The first reason is the Bologna Declaration on the European space for Higher Education, which guides the academic programs at the Bachelors and Masters Level. This convention states: Each student work should be discernable as independent and evaluated individually.

The second reason is that architecture is a profession which relies on the cumulative work of many different disciplines to develop and support the process of architectural design and production. To work successfully as an architect there must be respect and an understanding of the other collaborative disciplines as well as other designers within the team. The mandate for the Laboratoire de la production d'architecure, is to study, evaluate, and develop the different architectural issues that combine to create projects of the highest quality.

To satisfy the criteria the evaluation of student work will be based on the following criteria:
- Understanding of the task
- Pertinence of analysis
- Quality of decisions in the evolution of analysis to proposal
- Development of logical process that relate to planning strategies and syntheses.
- Coherence of the proposal to the given assignment and defined scenario
- Quality of the potential social and physical design
- Quality of representation, graphics and content
- Individual contribution to the process of group work
- Individual contributions to presentations and discourse

Each assignment will be assessed based on a balance between the individual contribution and the logical and methodological resolution of integrating the individual work into a unified project.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Architects must study and co-design the digital technologies that are revolutionizing architectural production. Many issues of this semester topic will lend themselves well to the use of digital technologies in this study.

From a technology viewpoint, the full year project can be clearly divided into its two semesters; geographic analysis and urban planning in the first semester, and architectural design and production in the second semester. These two tasks have direct analogies in the type of digital tools and data used.

Technology Glossary

CNC - Computer Numerically Controlled
Digital control system used primarily in the controlling of CAM machines.

DRG - Digital raster graphic
A digital image that is encoded with georeferenced border information, referred to as the "map collar". Ex: ortho aerial images & scanned map images.

DTM – Digital Terrain Model
A digital surface generated by using GIS point elevation data or mapped contour line information.

FTP – File Transfer Protocol
System used to transfer individual data files using the internet or an FTP server.

GIS - Geographic Information System
A database system for the creation, management and vizualization of mapping and geo-referenced data.

Remote sensing
Technique of environmental and geographic data acquisition involving the use of instruments aboard aircraft and spacecraft.

UTM – Universal Transverse Mercator
A coordinate system based on an overlapping grid method of specifying locations on the surface of the Earth.

Visualization
The use of diagrams or three dimensional representations to represent abstract data, non-graphic, or non-spatial information in a form that facilitates human understanding.

ref: www.wikipedia.org

DTS review, R. Loveridge with lapa students, photo R. Blättler

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lapa office EPFL, photo R. Blättler

HOW TO FIND lapa?

EPFL MAP

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adjacent to Hall G

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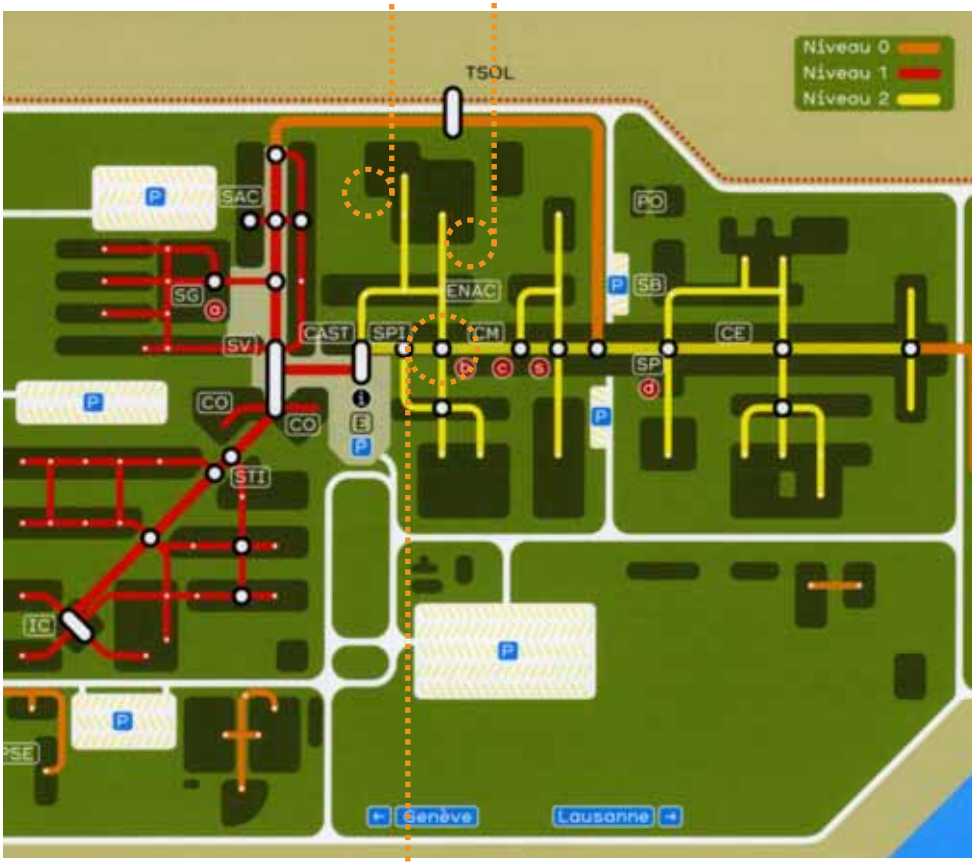
GC F1 10
Building GC, Zone F, Level 1, Room 10
adjacent to Hall F



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EPFL campus, photo R. Blättler

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Southwark's feuding neighbours

Just when you thought the debate about the importance of better public spaces in Britain was close to being won, along come the neighbours from hell. On one side of the fence is the Tate Modern – £125 million bastion of arts-led regeneration; on the other is London Town, developer of a 20-storey tower of Thames-side luxury apartments. In between them is a piece of public space which faces being wrecked by their unneighbourly dispute over the direction development in Bankside should take.

The Tate's proposal to build a wall blocking off the London Town tower from its gallery is astonishingly threatening. It has overtones of the spiteful suburban planting of fast growing conifers to keep out the rowdy neighbours. It just shouldn't happen slap bang in the heart of the capital.

This part of London is not short of agencies, experts, masterplanners and other worthies, ready to create the kind of public spaces that, in the words of Cabe chairman Stuart Lipton, "reflect the ambition and aspiration of the local community".

The Tate is the jewel in the crown for the London Borough of Southwark's regeneration plans and it has a responsibility to see that the ample spaces around the re-used power station are maximised. At least two masterplans have been drawn up for the area in recent years – by the Richard Rogers Partnership and Bennetts Associates – and now we have Cabe Space based down the road at Waterloo with its government remit to sort out these problems.

It rests on these agencies to make sure that a valid skirmish over whether a tower should be built at all on this site, does not result in a blighted site. A key problem they will face is dealing with the ownership of the land. It is in private hands. Private developers, particularly on sites of such high value must realise that they are involved for the long run and can afford to invest.

But above all, we must hope that sensible adult discussions can resume between the two parties. The idea of pumping so much public cash into the Tate was to help regeneration. The wall must not go up and both sides must talk again. Until this happens, the spat is a poor example to councils and developers up and down the country that are hoping to improve the spaces between their buildings with far fewer resources.

ROBERT BOOTH

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Miles Kington

A smidgeon of advice about UK weights and measures

Any greengrocer will tell you the British are hopeless about specifying amounts. 'Some tomatoes, please,' we say. 'Just a few'

Apart from the fact that he wrote this one quote, nobody knows anything very much about him.

It's not much to be remembered by, is it?

No, it's a snippet.

A scrap.

A shard.

A mollycun.

A trifle.

Ah, back on track now ...:

Ample

A handful

A fistful

An armful

A ballyful

Utopians

A generous helping

A muckle

Lashings

Oodles

Masses

Poss

Hoga

Plies

Enough is enough

Steady on!

Not the full Monty

Not the whole hairy shoot

Whoa there ...

Don't go mad!

Hold your horses!

Watch out, you idiot!

Now look what you've done!

It's gone all over the place

We had the kitchen repainted at last week

And now look at it

Oh, my God!

You never learn, do you?

You should have taken a lot less

A jot

A tittle ...

Back to the beginning and start again ...

It's fair to say that one of the most successful series we had always used in our educational series, "Learning English as a Third, Fourth or Fifth Language", so today we are going to look at the way the language deals with the concept of quantity.

Very vaguely, it turns out.

Any greengrocer will tell you that the British are hopeless at specifying amounts. "Some tomatoes, please," we will say. "How many?" he will say. "Oh, just a few," we will say. How much more accurate is the French housewife, with her "Quatre cents grammes de tomates, svp"!

And that is why we made the transition from Imperial to metric so easily. We don't use metric, to be honest, but we never really did use Imperial either. What we use and have always used is a combination and selection of the following ad hoc measurements, which should be memorised and used in the UK wherever possible.

A jot
A little
A dash
A whisker
A hair's breadth
A tad
A smidgeon
A gnat's crotchet
An area
A wee bit
A wee little
A wee bit/bits
A touch
A nibble
A swig
A squirt
A taste
A knob

A generous helping
The best part of ...
Enough
Stuffy-ient
An elegant sufficiency

(Hold on there a moment, Mr Kington! What's this "elegant sufficiency"? That's not a phrase I see every day. Or any day, come to that.

Well, it's a comfortable old cliché ... It's a phrase that people use when they want to indicate "Gentle contentment".

Then why don't they say "Gentle contentment"?

Well, because it is a quotation.

From who?

From the 18th-century poet James Thomson.

Who's he?

I have no idea.

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Ian Martin

LAB 06: The prospect of a metrosexual mardi-gras has Darcy reaching for the smelling salts

Monday

Go to see the *Poseidon* remake. It's even worse than the original, not least because the awful Richard Dreyfuss is in it.

If I want to spend two hours listening to a gay architect scream about how his world's been turned upside down I'll have lunch in Clerkenwell, thanks.

Tuesday

I've been asked, very discreetly, to redesign Camp X-Ray at Guantanamo Bay.

My client, an untraceable "senior specialist seconded to a globally branded management portfolio", is keen to reverse public opinion. The problem with the facility, he says, is one of perceptualisation. While most decent, law-abiding people accept the need for a large detention centre in Cuba to "process" terrorism suspects indefinitely, Guantanamo's facilities management team now concedes that more needs to be done to improve the architecture.

The recent, spiteful, suicides of three inmates — described by my client as "an act of asymmetrical architectural criticism" — demonstrate just how fiendish enemy combatants can be, even when they're dead. Now people are beginning to ask why, when a Communist regime in Havana can produce so much top-quality art deco heritage, the Cuban Free World expresses itself as a row of undistinguished interrogation sheds and a desalination plant.

My brief is to intimidate evildoers everywhere with Bilbaoic Starchitecture. We're obviously still at the sketchy stage, but I'm already thinking twisting torques and titanium wrap-n-flap. Once the dreary, squat, industrial feel of Guantanamo has been replaced with a gleaming showcase of neomodernist irony, bleating liberals might shift their attention to the vulgar contemporary design tropes of Somalia, say. Or the ghastly amateur stuff that passes for New Urbanism in Chechnya.

Gitmo Redux must be robust, as residents can theoretically be held until the end of the War on Terror, whenever that may be (as a patriot, I hope to see the forces of darkness eventually defeated by squadrons of plucky Spitfires). Perhaps I should tickle up our own intelligence agencies for a landmark detention centre, the sort of thing that would get an RIPBA award...

Actually, I'll wait a few days until it's Architecture Week. Then my proposal will be seen as mischievous, challenging and thought-provoking.

Wednesday

What a world of extremes we inhabit. Yesterday, an opportunity to design a multi-billion-dollar complex in Cuba. Today, an opportunity for an innovative urban infill at a terraced street in Forest Gate.

Thursday

Lunch with old friend Darcy Farquear'say, epic space correspondent for the *Creative on Sunday*.

The London Architecture Biennale is upon us, and he is in a state of auto-neurotic excitement. No change there, but the prospect of a metrosexual mardi-gras of architecture's rich diversity has him reaching for the smelling salts.

He's planning the next few days with millinery precision. The theme of "LAB 06" — as he insists on calling it — is Change, and he's got a different outfit for every event. A red crocodile blouson offsetting a v-neck sweater in grey cashmere for the Retroconstructivist Disco. A tapestry blazer and cowboy shirt for the Redoing London Thinkathon.

But what to wear for the World's Biggest Bishi Bashi? "It's Japanese for quickfire competitive slideshow," he explains. "Each contestant is allowed to show a slide for just two seconds and shout out a single word. It's

brilliant. Silver lame pants and a python-print jacket worn over a black, white-hemmed crop top, I think..."

He's in the grip of a sort of boneless version of World Cup Fever. Instead of quaffing lager by the bucketful, however, we have to drink only architecture-themed cocktails. After three Manhattans, we switch to bloody icons, followed by dogs' breakfasts. After that, it all goes a bit eclectic.

Friday
Cantilevered. Take the day off.

Saturday
Accompany Darcy to the World's Biggest Bishi Bashi. We all cheer as he totters up on platform heels for his 10 slides with single-word commentaries. The images are uniformly obscure. The commentaries are powerful and insightful, because they are shouted: Subtropolis! Disconnect! Genius! Ambient! Multigrain! Fatflux! Shardish! Onanotechnology! Bumping! Podcast!

It is bishi bashi at its most impenetrable, and, thus, brilliant.

Sunday
Remain in the recliner, under the general theme of Stasis.

im@spa.uk.net

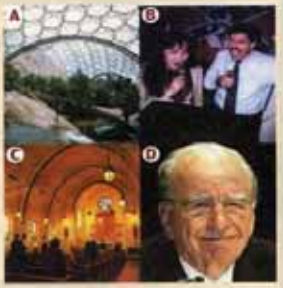
Architest

This week: Skyscrapers

1) What is planned for the very top of Renzo Piano's London Bridge Tower (see pictures)?
A An Eden project-style biome
B A karaoke bar
C A chapel
D An office for media tycoon Rupert Murdoch

2) What was the discredited claim made about the Taipei tower?
A That workers on the top 10 storeys were prone to nausea and headaches.
B That the tower had led to an increase in earthquakes
C That it had caused local windspeeds to increase by 50%
D That it had caused cancer among the local population

3) What was the problem with Ian Simpson's Beacham tower in Manchester which completed this month?
A It interfered with mobile phone signals
B It sent rogue text messages
C It whistled when the wind blew
D It transmitted repeats of Coronation Street



4) Why is Ken Shuttleworth's Vortex Tower widest at the top?
A To put most floor space where it has the greatest value
B To accommodate an airplane runway
C To accommodate Ken Shuttleworth's top-floor penthouse
D To prevent high wind speeds on the street below

5) Which region has the greatest number of skyscrapers?
A The United States
B Australia
C Europe
D Asia

Answers on page 10

Works John McAslan & Partners, Roundhouse | architect pedestrain dynamics | June 16 2006

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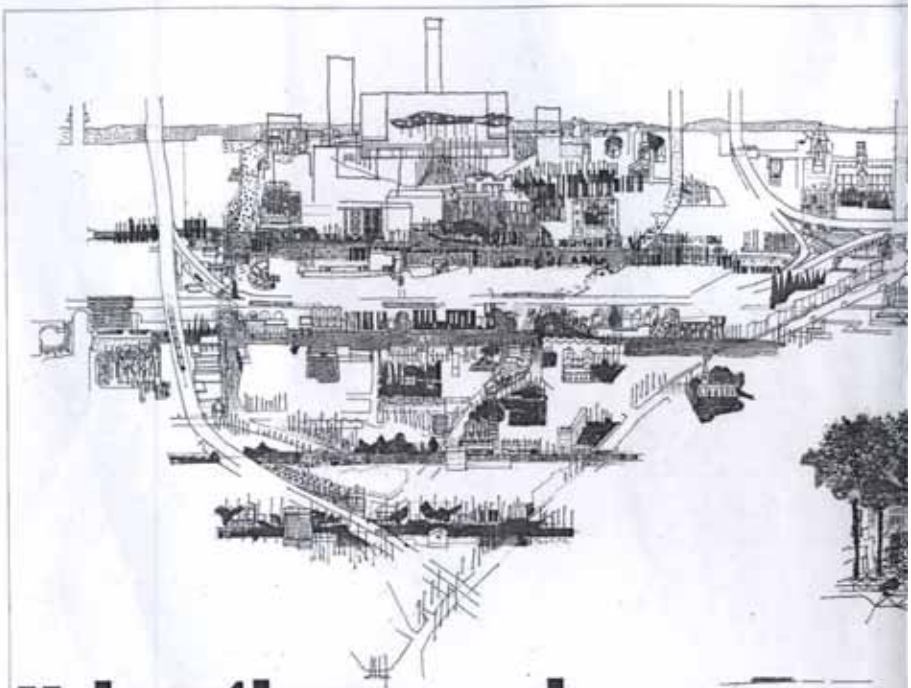

Urban theme park

Witherford Watson Mann's proposal for Bankside Urban Park shows a love of a gritty, charming but vanishing London, says Kester Rattenbury

You could tell the whole story of our society's recent beliefs about public space through London's South Bank. There's the South Bank Centre – from Festival of Britain and high social realist aspirations to female tourist hours and the current, massive, over-marked overload of generic chain eateries; the Coin Street Community developments; the ad-hoc commons of Gabriel's Wharf; and the extraordinarily powerful regeneration drifters set around Tate Modern. So keep your eyes on Bankside Urban Park, the latest strategy for the area around the Tate, for the latest in the story of how we say our public realm.

The Bankside Urban Park scheme has just been won by Witherford Watson Mann, working with Exit Wetpaint, Peter Brett, Intelligent Space Partnership, Bucknell Austin and PRP Architects. By anyone's terms, this is an impressive win for such a young practice. WWM was one of 11 invited to make submissions, and the briefing was surely on the Tate Modern's own Herzog & de Meuron, already architectural king of the area, to complete its hat-trick.

Tate Modern itself is a key part of the Better Bankside BID group, along with Southwark council and all kinds of other interests, notably the residents' group, the Architecture Foundation, GC Bankside, Land Securities, the Cross Rivers Partnership and Transport for London. "How-

One is often a bit suspicious of urban strategies that call themselves 'park' or 'forest', but in this case it seems justified

ever, Bee Bhavnani [working with Lucy Musgrave] were a very strong team," says Alistair Huggett, the client at Southwark. "It was a very difficult decision to make". But WWM made a "very very good presentation – with a really strong concept".

And the concept the team are now developing a kind of exemplar of our age. It's certainly not a masterplan, but a kind of lateral framework strategy which can loosely co-ordinate the mass of very different users, conditions and spaces in the area immediately south of the Tate. It crosses Southwark Street, which until now has been the effective boundary for the Tate's regeneration impact.

WWM's characteristic, cartoon-like, photorealistic, highly thought-out and utterly charming drawings show an approach characterised by a romantic but realistic recognition and encouragement of what's already there. It's a landscape of roads, railway viaducts, pubs and bits of old industry, the sort of rooms that follow long-vanished perimeters and are formed around by major bits of infrastructure. And it's an area most of which the bid clients don't actually own.

But by making certain levels of curating moves, WWM proposes a strategy where this might be seen as a sort of park, or forest. Its drawings show the area analysed and developed as a series of "rides", "streams" and "clearings", and this has driven an urban approach based on landscape interventions. This will be developed partly by introducing oval rows (reinforcing the characteristics of the area – picking up glazing rhythms, for example), and partly by characterising other areas as though they were bits of sublime or romantic landscapes "wild and hidden thickets" "secret worlds between the viaducts", "overgrown ruins", "boulevards" using paving, art,

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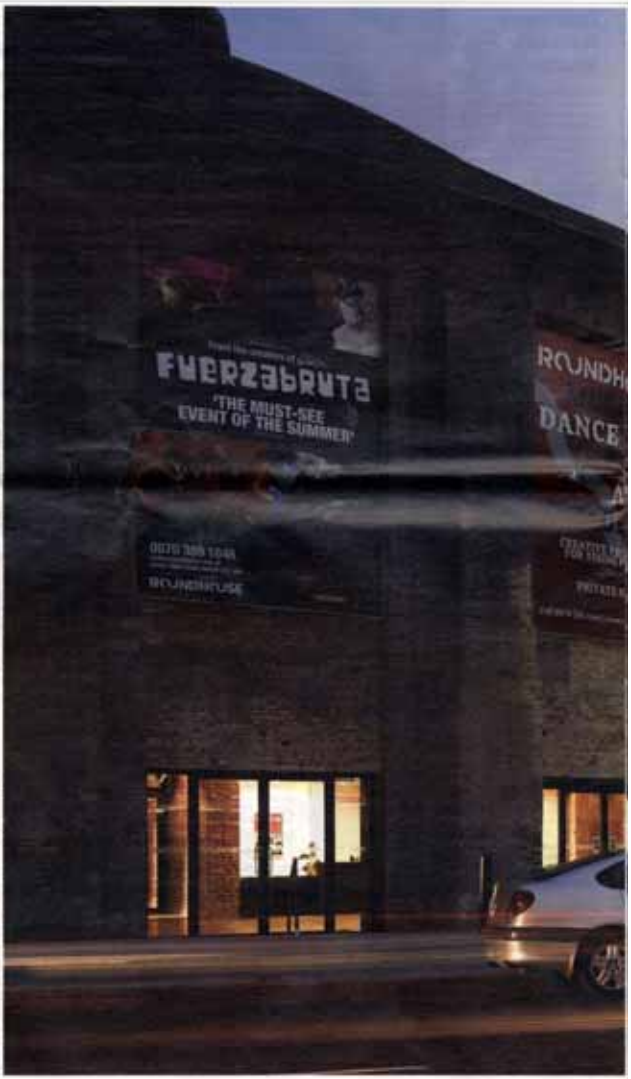
Works

Theatre in the round

John McAslan & Partners' revamp of the Roundhouse retains the building's essential drama as a venue while giving it a new lease of life, writes Kester Rattenbury



Everyone remembers their first visit to the Roundhouse, philanthropist oliver Tompall Norman explains. It's almost like the first time they had sex. It's been a seminal music and theatre venue since the 1960s — from the Rolling Stones, Hendrix and Pink Floyd, right up to the RSC, De La Guarda and Michael Hunt just a few years ago.

Norman read about the RIBA's bid to convert it for the drawings collection, and thought it was such a lousy idea he bought it himself, in 1996, for around £3 million, to run as a venue combined with a center for getting kids off the street and into the creative arts. Alongside fundraising, attempts to buy the neighbouring site and endless revisions of the brief, the problems of trying to upgrade the venue without ruining the atmosphere were well really large.

From the outside, it does indeed look — almost lovingly — like the generic theatre rebuild of our age: Careful Architect Does Minimal Makeover Of Beloved Crumbling Venue. Nor does it look exciting on plan: a big cluster of new accommodation added to one side of the existing building seems obvious, even crude.

Frankly, I was expecting to loathe the rebuilding of the Roundhouse. As a near neighbour, I've been watching its construction with deep suspicion, regret for the makeover of those thrilling, grungy theatre spaces, and increasing alarm when the next new facades with their big windows and conference-chase looking spaces first emerged.

The most interesting photos show the space — a dark, dramatic drum, filled with all kinds of theatrical stuff — an ideal version of how it's always been. But that's the point. What John McAslan & Partners and the whole train of consultants, to say nothing of Norman, have done to this building is truly amazing.

In the first place, they've successfully managed to turn a hugely charismatic, provisionally serviced, leaky brick drum sitting on a warren of ancillaries (uncontrolled to the main space and deep in rubbish) on a right awkward site, into a well-serviced venue which can hold almost 4,000 people at one time: the main venue's standing capacity is 3,300, while into plus can fit in the studio theatre and hub, part of an entirely new music, recording, broadcast and performance facility for local teenagers. And at the same time, somehow, they've managed to convince you that the original venue hasn't really changed. That's a considerable exercise of ingenuity.

The Roundhouse building was originally an 1846 steam engine repair shed, alongside the main line into Euston station, built to service trains at first-floor level, with an undercroft on to the Chalk Farm Road.

They've successfully managed to turn a hugely charismatic leaky brick drum into a well-serviced venue

Heavy equipment can now be driven straight into the first floor main space through the trackside car park, more or less where the trains would have been brought in for servicing. The curved atrium pulls you into the site, providing all the usual amenities, often roughly where they were before. There's a whole new circle gallery — a concrete structure supported off the new slab — with toilets round the auditorium, and a bar just where it was downstairs. It feels like it was just waiting to happen.

It's more of a surprise to find the undercroft — recently a site for installation art accessed off ▶

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02. DIE SHOPS:
„Shop till you drop" sagen Londoner, wenn sie einer ihrer Lieblingsbeschäftigungen nachgehen – egal, ob auf dem Flohmarkt, in teuren Modetempeln oder schrillen Vintage-Läden

GIANLUCA LONGO arbeitet als Stylingchef beim Magazin der Tageszeitung „Evening Standard" und hat irgendwann aufgehört zu zählen, wie viele Lieblingsstücke er in seinem Kleiderschrank hat.

Herr Longo, wir wollen einen maßgeschneiderten Anzug aus London. Wo müssen wir hin?

Die Savile Row ist immer noch die erste Adresse, da lohnt es sich, auch höhere Beträge zu lassen. Ich bin ein Fan von den klassischen Läden wie Gieves & Hawkes(1, Savile Row) und Kilgour (8, Savile Row), der schon der Stammladen von Cary Grant war. Wer sich traut, einen extravaganten Anzug zu tragen, muss bei der neuen Generation wie Oswald Boateng reinschauen (12, Savile Row). Er brachte ungewöhnliche Farben in diese sonst eher gediegene Branche. Rund 1500 Pfund sollte einem das schon wert sein. Und ehrlich: Für einen Anzug von Alexander McQueen legt man noch viel mehr hin!

Womit wir beim Thema wären: Welche Designer sind einen Besuch wert?

Alexander McQueen (www.alexandermcqueen.com) ist immer noch eine super Adresse, wenn man ein Faible für extravagante Schnitte hat. Für Luxusmarken wie Dior Homme oder Miu Miu ist das Nobelkaufhaus Selfridges (www.selfridges.com) super, und gute Sportswear findet man im Designerkaufhaus Harvey Nichols (www.harveynichols.com) am Hyde Park. Die Adresse für wirkliche Cutting-Edge-Mode ist der Dover Street Market (www.doverstreetmarket.com), in dem die Comme-des-Garçons-Gründerin Rei Kawakubo gleichgesinnten Designern Raum bietet. Für Fans von Avantgarde-Design wie Bernhard Wilhelm oder Bless ist B Store (www.bstorelondon.com) eine kleine Juwelenbox.

Und welche Neueröffnungen lohnen sich?

Natürlich der Abercrombie-Store (www.abercrombie.com). Als der aufmachte, fuhren Promis mit Limousinen vor, um sich den luxuriösen Shop anzuschauen. Die Mode – Poloshirts, Cargo Pants und so weiter – ist ja eher sportlich.

Auf welchen Flohmärkten finden wir die größten Schätze?

Tolle, alte Kaschmirpullover kaufe ich auf dem Spitalfields Market (www.visitspitalfields.com), aber auch auf den Klassikern Portobello (www.portobelloroad.co.uk) und Camden (www.camdenlock.net) kann man sein Lieblingsteil finden – wenn einen die Touristenmassen nicht stören. Wer Vintage mag, muss zu Steinberg and Tolkien in Chelsea (193 Kings Road). Ein perfekter Ort, um schräge, alte Hüte oder einen eleganten Morgenmantel zu finden!

03. DER FUSSBALL:
Der britische Fußball ist eine Klasse für sich, mit den besten Spielern, reichsten Vereinen und den treuherzigsten Fans

RAPHAEL HONIGSTEIN ist Autor von „Harder, better, faster, stronger. Die geheime Geschichte des englischen Fußballs" und Sportkorrespondent der „Süddeutschen Zeitung". Er erklärt, warum man in London den aufregendsten Fußball der Welt zu sehen bekommt.

„Super finde ich, dass auf dem Feld immer extrem nach vorn gespielt wird, ein bisschen so wie in B-Movies: technisch vielleicht nicht immer brillant, aber hochgradig unterhaltsam und spannend. Ich mag es, dass die meisten der Londoner Stadien mitten in Wohngegenden stehen. Man geht um zwei Häuserecken und steht plötzlich vor einem dieser Megabauten. Stadien wie das Wembley mit seinem symbolischen Bogen oder das neue Arsenal-Stadion sind schon imposant. Doch sollte man auch einmal ältere Stadien wie das Craven Cottage vom FC Fulham anschauen, das hat eine tolle, alte Tribüne. Tickets für die Spiele der Spitzenvereine zu bekommen, ist für Nichtmitglieder schwierig. Manche Reiseagenturen bieten London-Trips mit Tickets an, allerdings zu gesalzenen Preisen. Auf dem Schwarzmarkt ist auch noch einiges möglich; man bezahlt meistens das Doppelte vom normalen Preis. Wer kein Ticket hat, kann trotzdem Spaß haben: Um die Stadien herum liegen Pubs, die alles live zeigen. Dort herrscht grandiose Stimmung. Es sei denn, man gerät als Arsenal-Fan in den Chelsea-Fan-Pub."

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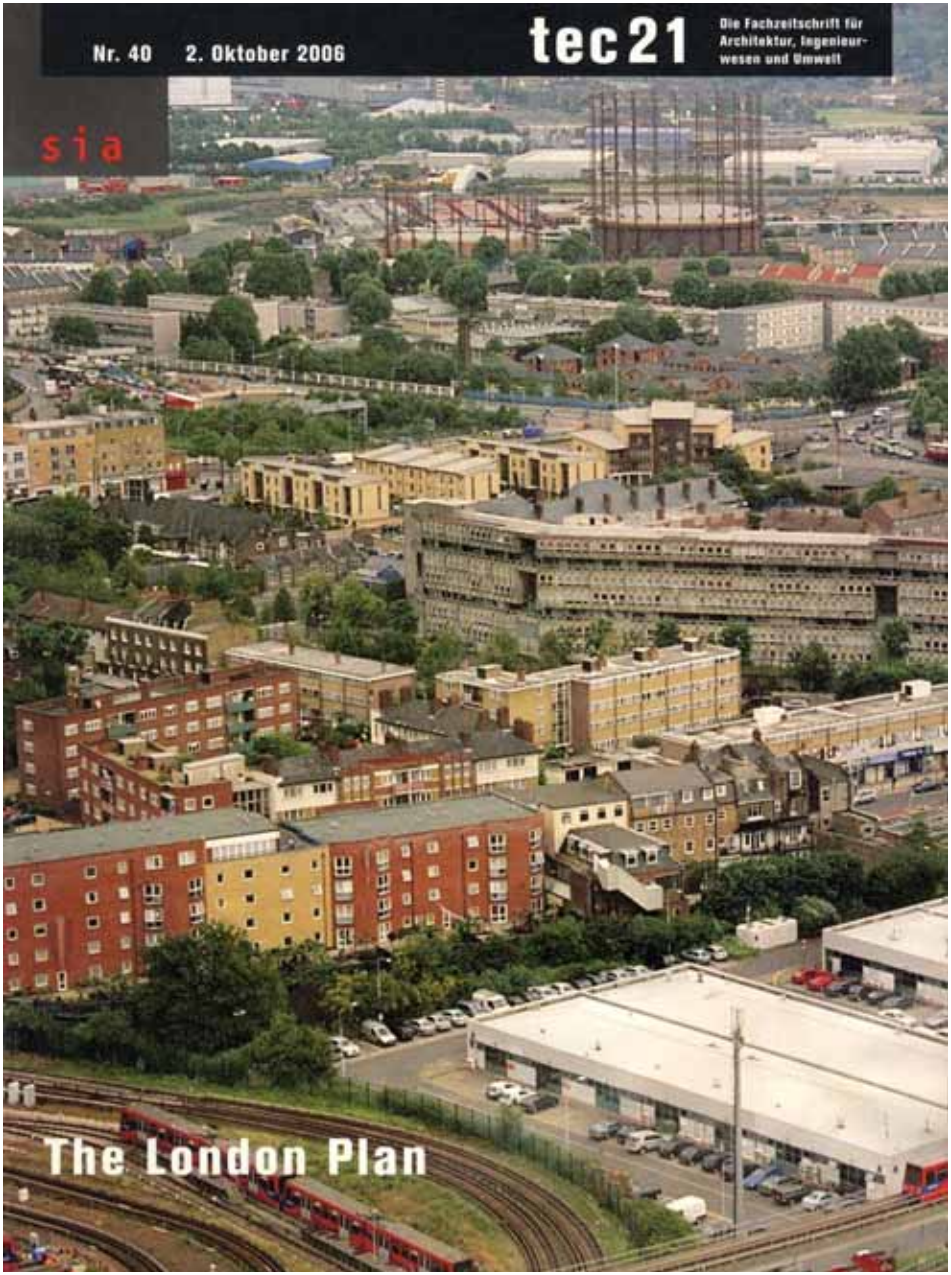

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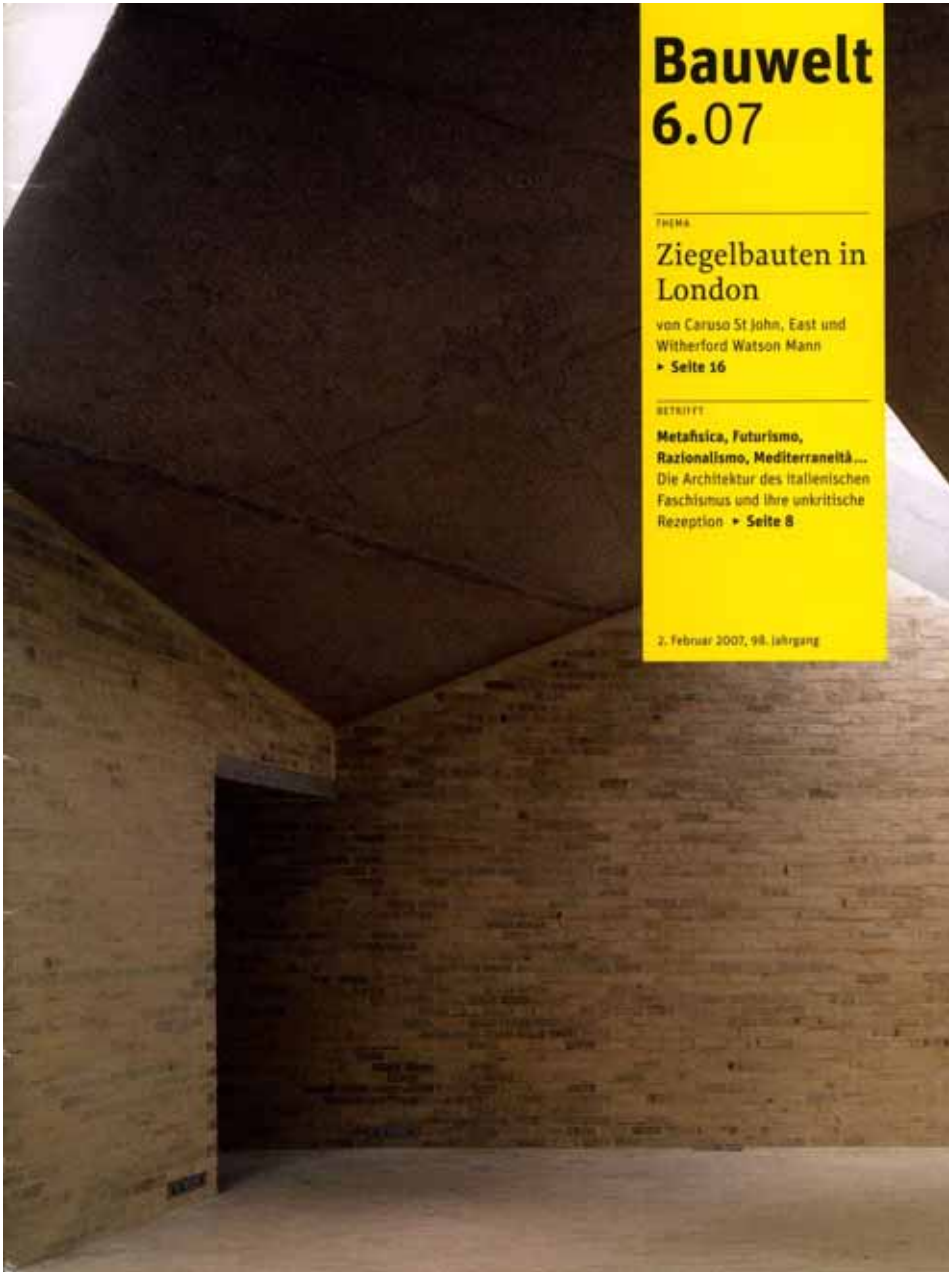

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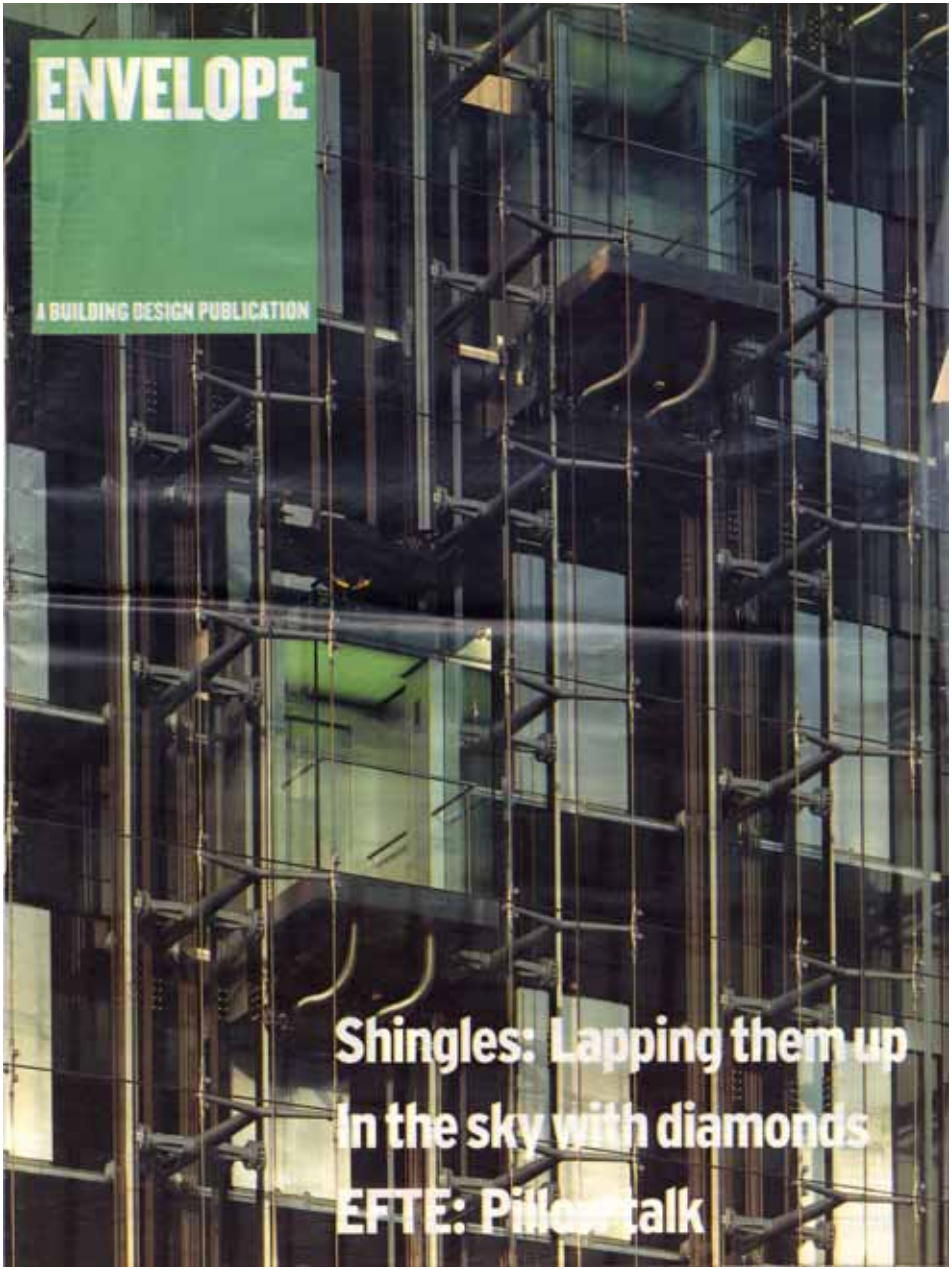

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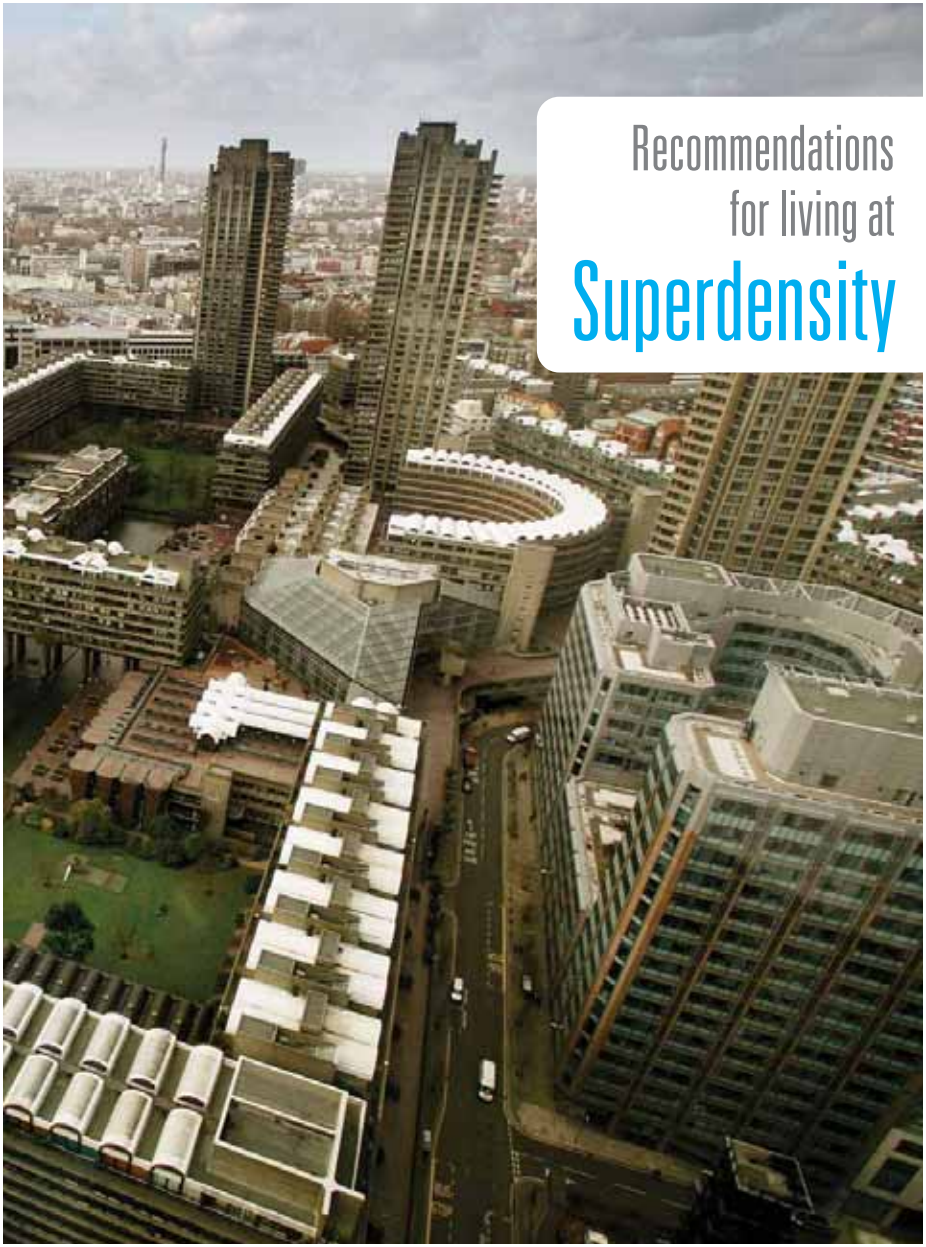

Recommendations for living at Superdensity

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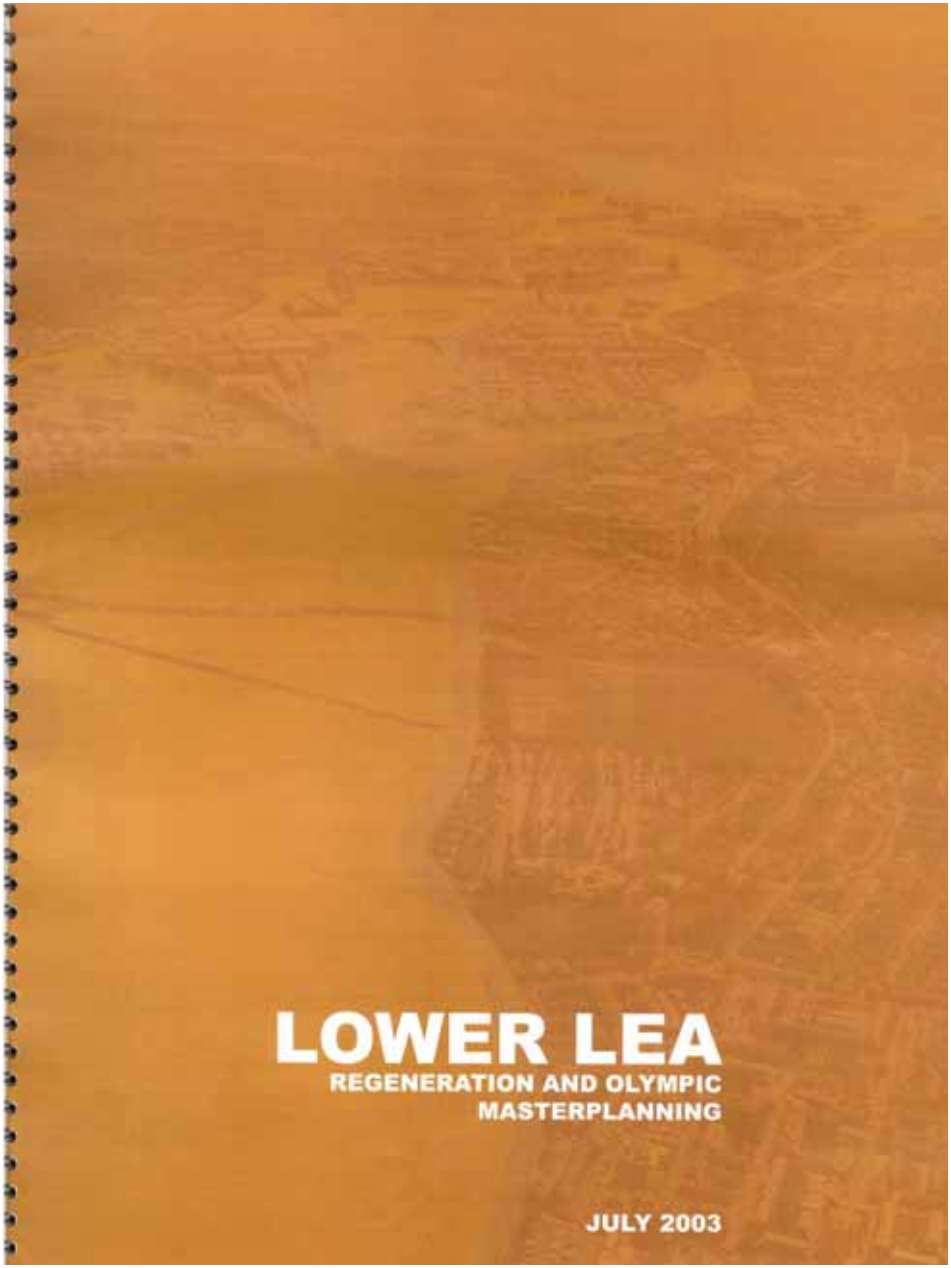

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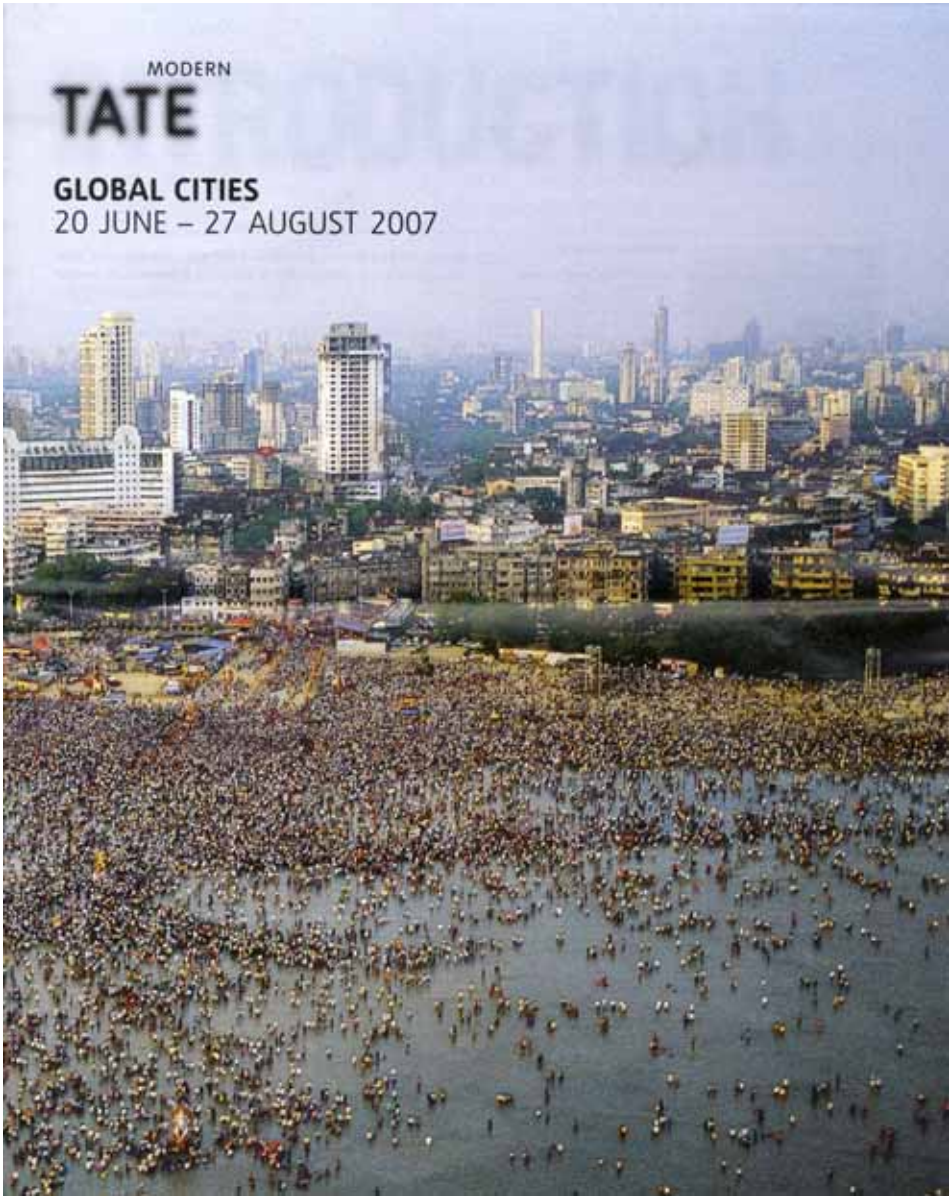

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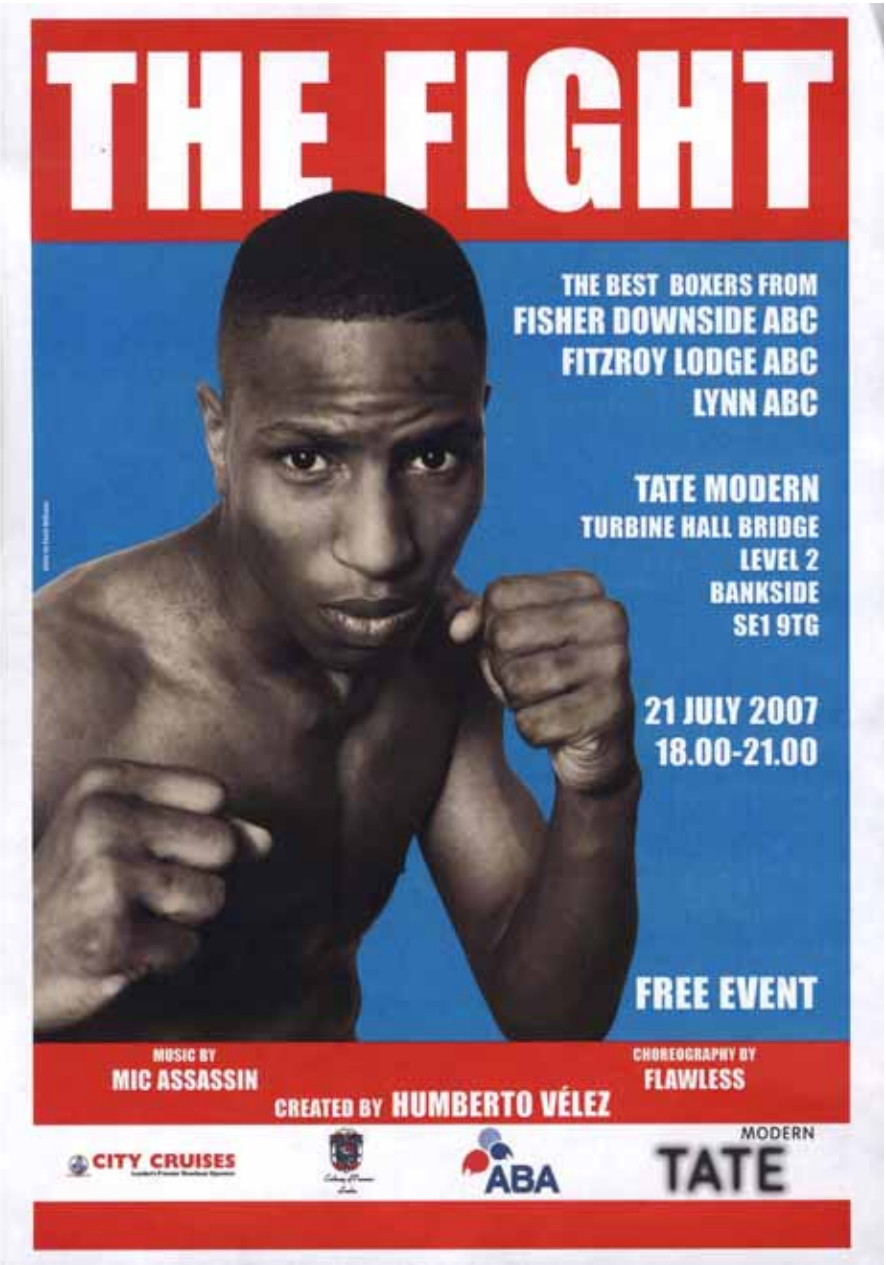

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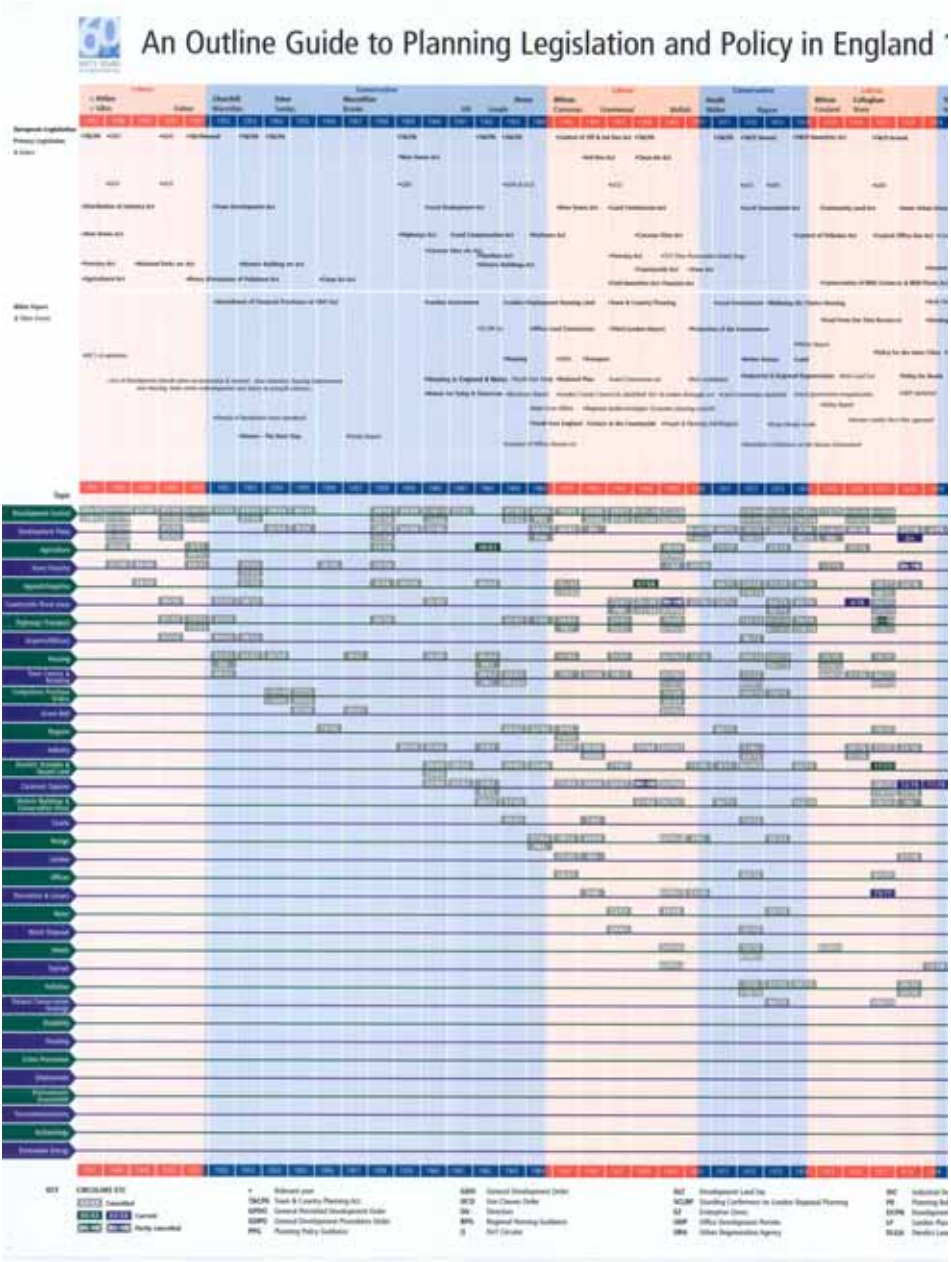
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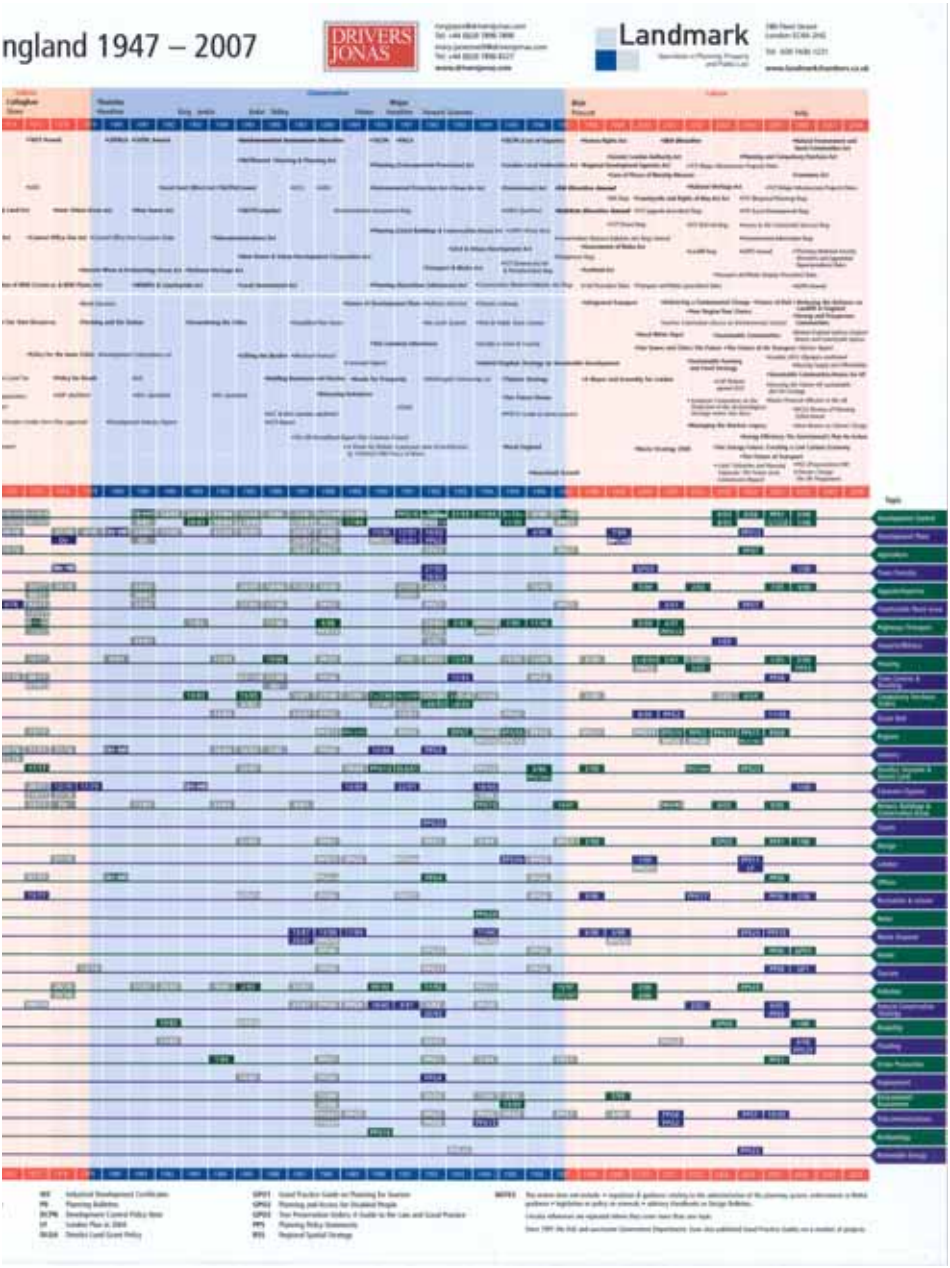

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SOURCE BOOK
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http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/cities/

http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/

http://www.designforlondon.gov.uk/

http://www.debatelondon.com/

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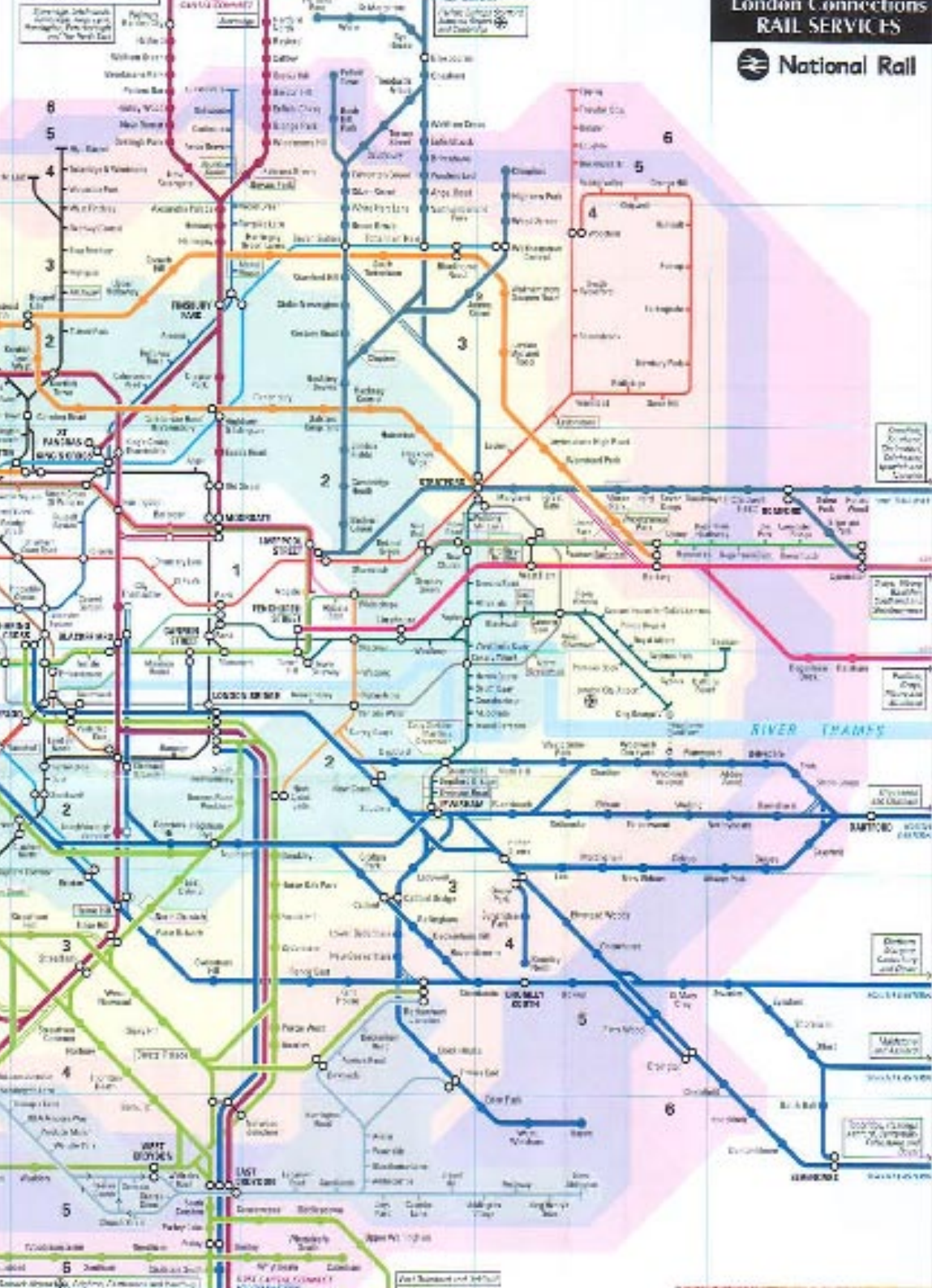
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