Monolithic Spaces

Life in the shadows of fast urbanism

lazy roads

my   authority

mislead people

to know any more."

too scared to

think
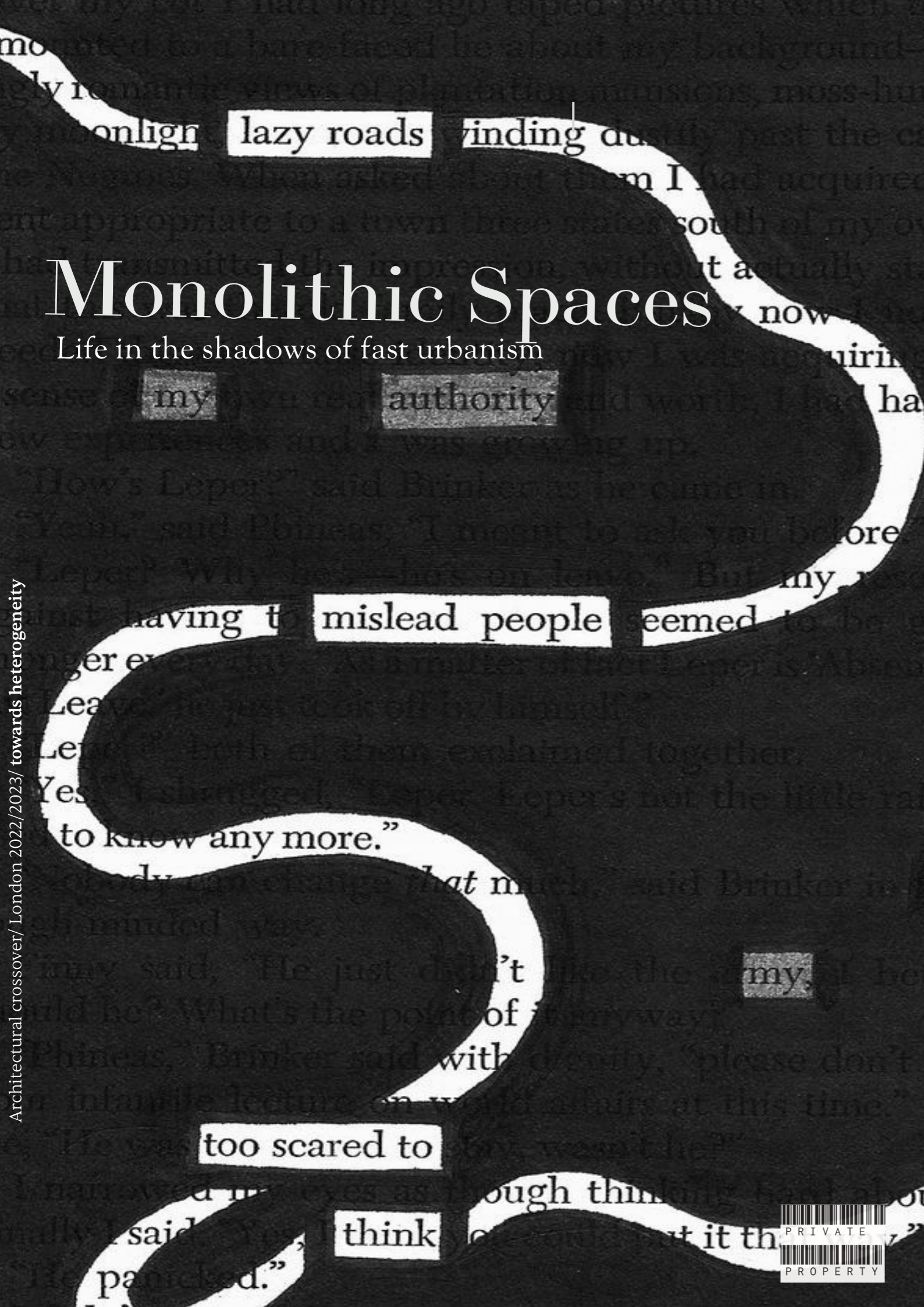
" I've always been proud to be Nigerian but in my case, it feels like I'm not allowed to be. In certain spaces I feel too Nigerian and in others - too British , it's a complex issue but I'm working of it"
- Tola

" Moving to England at a young age led to constant inner conflict regarding my identity and my sense of belonging in the two nations I called home" - Lila

" We all seek desperatley to hear our voices echoed around us, but are often left at a loss" - Dalia

Found on 'Road-to-nowhere' Instagram page

THIS IS NOT ABOUT BUILDINGS '

Figure 2: The Lodgers, 1963 by Robert Doisneau.

'IT IS ABOUT ARCHITECTURE IN ITS PERFORMATIVE FORM'

Mentalscape

The *Body* is a vehicle of sense-making and has a fundamental role in constituting the way in which humans enact and understand the world. Through the notion of embodied experiences we are able to translate the social, cultural and symbolic values tied to the urban fabric and is what I define in this research as a mentalscape. This understanding allows us to develop better models for our built environment that cater to a diverse and multifaceted audience.
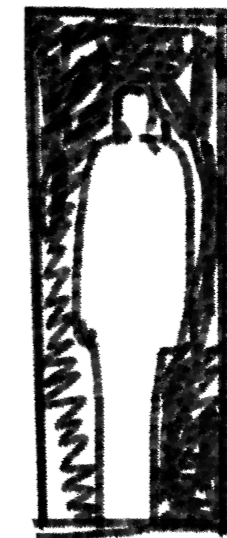
Own sketch
Exhibition 'Ground'
Voorlinden Museum
Body is an archive

Everything is connected

These reflections about different forms of spatiality and territoriality in the contemporary world bring us to the question of physical space, and its relationship to social and political space. The starting point here is that physical space partakes of our general category of space. When thinking of the notion of 'space', does one think of its scientific meaning? is it political? or is created through the merge and passage of objects?

subjectivity   *threshold*   *gentrification*

stories   *collective trauma*   *Unseen*

ecologies of care   *informal space*   *memories*

post-colonial cultural identity   *hegemony*

	SPACE????	
	SPACE	
	SPACE	
MONOLITHIC	SPACE	
OPEN	SPACE	
PUBLIC	SPACE	
	SPACE	POLICIES
	SPACE	SURVEILLANCE
PRIVATE	SPACE	
INFORMAL	SPACE	
	SPACE	OWNERSHIP
CONTESTED	SPACE	
	SPACE	APPROPRIATION
PERFORMACE	SPACE	
	SPACE	DESIGN
	SPACE	TIME
MEMORY	SPACE	
	SPACE	EMANCIPATION
POLITICAL	SPACE	
ENCLOSED	SPACE	
INBETWEEN	SPACE	
	SPACE	TIME
	SPACE	THEORY
	SPACE	DEVELOPMENT
URBAN	SPACE	
	SPACE	SUBJECTIVITY
	SPACE	REGULATION
COLLECTIVE	SPACE	
COMMONS	SPACE	
	SPACE	
	SPACE	

'I wonder whose body a lot of the public spaces relate to' - David Gissen[17]

'Prime'city areas

[17] *Sevilla-Buitrago, Alvaro. "Publicity ." The Architectural Review, 2022.*

The map is inspired by Kevin Lynch's study of the city and using GIS Data base to investigate the edges, nodes, landmarks and paths that relate to non-western centric global design references. The result being one, Warm Shores in Hackney. However, can we study a city merely in plan? what is being missed in the process?

Conclusion: *Lynch's functionalist approach reduces the city to a network of organised buildings and patterns, but forgets to render or register the social and lived layer present. Thus, lacking in truly representing the city.*

50 **areas**

Pluralist narrative on:
-Edges
-Nodes
-Landmarks
-Path

1 **green flag**

Prologue
From Genius Loci to Genius Logo

London, a city powered by three decades of growth, transformed its identity from a fading imperial capital into the epicenter of culture, finance, and technology. All that exponential growth fed a frantic construction boom that is redrawing London's historic skyline and includes several of the largest regeneration projects in Europe. Yet, the city is growing more monolithic and homogenous with a focus on branding itself more as a product than creating places - the *Bilbao Effect[1]*.

As a result, statistics have revealed the capital's loss of multicultural social infrastructure. Londoners lack access to community spaces for cultural development. In the last decade alone, the city has lost 35% of its grassroots music venues[2] and over half of its youth clubs. In the following four years, 25% of artist studios will disappear[3]. *The Greater London Authority* (GLA) has acknowledged this drastic decline and the proposed antidote has been the *2019 Cultural Infrastructure Plan[4]*. However, with interventions that grasp a narrow understanding of what constitutes genuine culture and art, impeded the plan's ability to support and produce the grassroot cultural spaces that the city needs.

The 2020 lockdown, the lack of adequate funding, the privatisation of public spaces and the continuous state-induced gentrification have reignited social movements such as Black Lives Matter that have placed a spotlight on the lack of access and ownership of community spaces. As the world awakens to spatial injustices and eurocentric narratives through the global *Decolonisation movements,* the need to cater to a multifaceted audience has grown.

The city is home to approximately 8.8 million residents. A population expansion largely fed by immigration, which despite Brexit is growing by 2 million more by 2050[5]. Statistically, 40% of the capital's population identify as non-white and 37% of its population is born outside of the UK[6]. These figures arguably recognise the necessity to understand the spatial and cultural needs of the city's pluralist demographic.

[1] Political relation theorist, Joseph Nye coined the term Softpower. A foreign policy adopted by countries to 'persuade rather than coerce' nations into investing into their economy. Within this Architecture stands as both an asset and a symbolic force that adds to a nation's attractivness and becomes part of its cultural branding framework. Hence, the Bilbao Effect.

[2] *(Saving London's music venues, n.d.)*
[3] *(Greater London Authority, 2014)*
[4] *(Sendra, Sennett and Hollis 2021)*
[5] *(Greater London Authority, 2014)*
[6] *ibid*
[7] *(McWilliams 2015)*

My experiences as a multilingual immigrant inspired my curiosity in psychology and storytelling. Objects, photographs and stories from 'back home' have been important tangible and intangible archival elements that helped embed immigrants in a new environment. Today we live in a mainstream media which controls what we see and hear, and preconditions our self-perception and our role in society. Immigrants have played a big part in the economic development of Britian. Therefore, the research lies in 'stories', 'people' and 'spaces', exploring questions such as:

Who designs new public spaces ?

Who has access to these new public spaces?

What is the cultural impact of these new public spaces?

Who is the target audience for these new public spaces?

Which communities are affected by these new public spaces?

What narratives are preserved in the designing of these new public spaces?

These guide the research question:

"How can design respond to contested urbanism by meeting material needs and competing social needs through alternative innovative models of grassroot participation by occupants and professionals"

The ability to access and produce space is essential for one's political subjectivity and its a vital precondition for one's education: *space is power*. The ability to gather and exchange meaningful ideas, stories, and memories to make decisions that shape our neighbourhoods and the wider socio-political context we live in is fundamental. Without space, we are stripped of the agency to influence change that is needed to achieve spatial equity and inclusion. This is especially important when working with individuals and communities of colour - *marginalised voices*. When unable to access and develop space which responds to the community's needs and aspirations, we result in a built environment that not only is restictive and encourages segregated lives, but delivers one-off projects that flatter to decieve with a thin, but colourful layer of culture.

'Maintaining a public space commons requires constant collective appropriation and activism, autonomous in the face both state and market control '[18] - Alvaro Sevilla-Buitrago

Public Space
The (un)seen

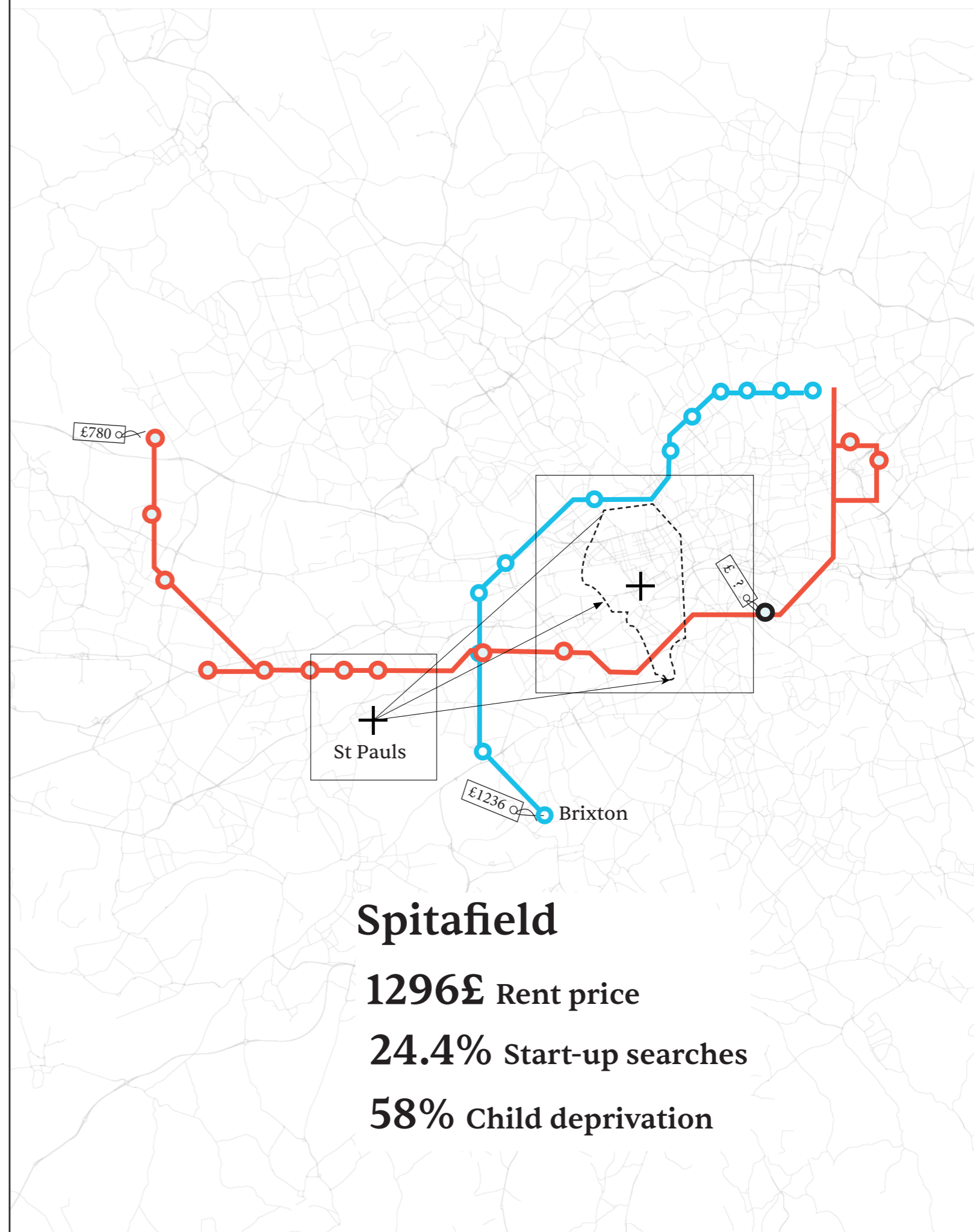[18] *Sevilla-Buitrago, Alvaro. "Publicity ." The Architectural Review, 2022.*

I define Sohofication as the ongoing process of homogenisation where neighbourhoods that previously contained a variety of amenities for its inhabitants is over run by restaurants targeting mainly tourists.

The map is an assemblage of various layer: the London underground, the rent prices, start-up location searches and migration routes. It shows a correlation between these four factors and that the heart of London - the center has shifted to the periphery (Spitafield and Brixton). Therefore, my initial analysis brought my focus to these neighbourhoods in order to understand this entanglement.

The research investigates into 'who' or 'what' constitutes the monolithic conditions. Historically, the city was studied based on physical nodes of references and orientation (p.13). Thereby, missing an important social and lived layer that appropriate and renders our city. The theoretical framework is based on Henry Lefebvre's conflation of space as *"both network and process, both place and flow"* [8] where space is not abstract, it's both mental and material. Together with Edward Soja's theory of *Thirdspace[9]* which encompasses both the built and lived environment, both intellectual and empirical, real and imagined, lends the research another lens: *the subliminal, the unseen* and inspires what I defined as a *mentalscape.*

Building on this, the research does not investigate the center, but looks into the periphery, in the border, because that's where spaces have the capacity to generate unseen situations. Here the paper looks for undercurrents that bring this phenomena into existence. *Performance theory[10]* suggests that every individual puts on a performance in our society, determined by preconditioned social codes, surveillance and media indoctrination. The relevance of this lies in Margaret Khon's statement*: "space affects how individuals and groups perceive their place in the order of things"* and function *"to initiate, maintain, or interrupt interaction";* and 'determine the form and scope of contact'.[11] Thus, the paper examines the adaptation of spaces in the periphery and its performances and stories.

With these theoretical tools, the research engages in understanding the interaction between people's lived experiences/choices and the *unseen forces* on ground. For much of the 20th century, the implementation of neoliberal urban policies and privatisation, led the theorists such as Mike Davis and Michael Sorkin to announce the end of public space, which threatens democracy. These criticisms led me to question the codes behind the categorisation of space. How is space construed and who are the involved actors seen or unseen?Not only is there significant debate about the definition of space, but also its importance for social and political analysis. The research aims to consider these disputes and develop a category of space that can inform our understanding of social and physical space. Social antagonisms,

£780

£1236

St Pauls

Brixton

Spitafield

1296£ Rent price

24.4% Start-up searches

58% Child deprivation

Figure 4: Lou's 'Border door', the metaphorical crossing of borders. However, concepts of decolonisation and spatial equity are used as analogies. The research plan recognises that we can no longer speak in metaphors and that these systemic issues can only be changed through systemic change.

The research looks into 'who' or 'what' constitutes the monolithic public. Historically, the city was studied based on physical nodes of references and orientation (p.13). Thereby, missing an important social and lived layer that appropriate and renders our city. The theoretical framework is based on Henry Lefebvre's conflation of space as *"both network and process, both place and flow"* [8] where space is not abstract, it's both mental and material. Together with Edward Soja's theory of *Thirdspace*[9] which encompasses both the built and lived environment, both intellectual and empirical, real and imagined, lends the research another lens: *the subliminal, the unseen* and inspires what I defined as a *mentalscape.*

Building on this, the research does not investigate the center, but looks into the periphery, in the border, because that's where spaces have the capacity to generate unseen situations. Here the paper looks for undercurrents that bring this phenomena into existence. *Performance theory*[10] suggests that every individual puts on a performance in our society, determined by preconditioned social codes, surveillance and media indoctrination. The relevance of this lies in Margaret Khon statement*: "space affects how individuals and groups perceive their place in the order of things"* and function *"to initiate, maintain, or interrupt interaction";* and 'determine the form and scope of contact'.[11] Thus, the paper examines the adaptation of spaces in the periphery and its performances and stories.

With these theoretical tools, the research engages in understanding the interaction between people's lived experiences/choices and the *unseen forces* on ground. For much of the 20th century, the implementation of neoliberal urban policies and privatisation, led theorists such as Mike Davis and Michael Sorkin to announce the end of public space and its threat to democracy. These criticisms led me to question the category of space. How has space been rendered? Not only is there significant debate about the definition of space, but also its importance for social and political analysis. The research aims to consider these disputes and develop a category of space that can inform our understanding of social and physical space. Social antagonisms, construction of political boundaries and media indoctrination lie in the heart of this entanglement. Therefore, how much of the outside is the inside ? Seeing the city as an elusive room.

Based on the last claim, the paper examines questions on boundaries and their political origins: as new ones are forged certain social spaces are forgotten. This concealment is often happening with a colourful layer of culture that fails to recognise the ongoing struggles to appropriate the publicness through systemic change: architecture as a conduit of political intervention. Global social street protests and occupations have revealed the collective attempt to reclaim and reimagine the public beyond economic and state control - it is not only a struggle for autonomy, but the life and reality it constitutes. In Lon-

Figure 3

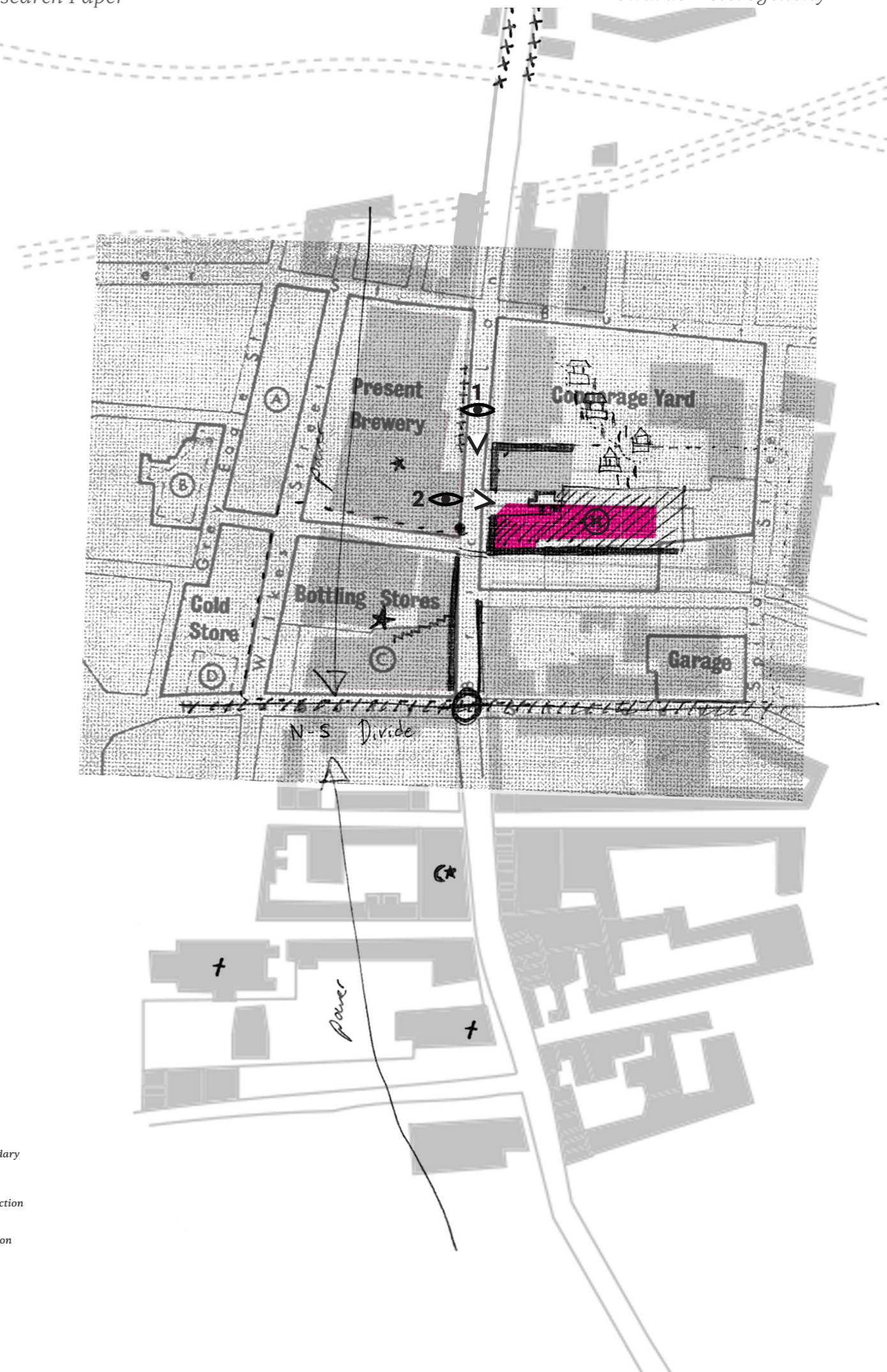*Superimposed maps of the Truman Brewery site of 1970 and current situation.*

don, this friction and negotiation between heterogeneous actors and state-forces over contested spaces that act as a vessel of communality and shared practices, is a daily reality. However, what constitutes such a power-laden space? how can architecture practices find alternative solutions.

In answering this question, the paper looks at the process of *commoning* or *collective inventiveness* coined by Stavros Stavrides[13]. It defines shared infrastructure that supports the collective lives of its community through 'cooperative appropriation' and 'creative emancipation'[14]. Based on the notions of commoning, the framekwork.. of Jil Stoner's Towards a Minor Architetcure positions what the research and ultimately the project perceives as *'collective inventiveness'*. To Stoner, there is not one author or architect in the design process. On the contrary, it is open to change and interpretation by everyday actors interacting with the building. Stoner expresses this in the following way: *"opportunities for minor architectures emerge when the soul of a society is understood as more than a singularity"[16]*. Consequently, in her own architectural work, nothing ever looks finished; Stoner's practice seeks to reverse the process of completing a building. Thus, minor interventions are likely to appear as improvised and temporary arrangements. The act of commoning in this context can be argued as an act of reclamation or *'resistance mechanisms'.* How and where can such forms in the city be found and how do they inform the design?

Case study of the Truman Brewery Site: A Power Laden Space

The case study will be Bricklane, in Spitafields, East London. More specifically the the Truman Brewery redevelopment plans; the conversion of the old H-block, a former beer warehouse to a mall, gym and restaurant. The reasoning behind selecting this site is that it fits Foucault notion of Heterotopia, *'of other space',* it accomodates the deviant and *'the other'* - representation of Bricklane's materiality and narrative. [17]A continious state of contradiction, acceptance, invisibility and recognition. In essense, it will help understand 'unseen urbanism' as a response and resistance to state-led economic development plans.

At this critique juncture, the research envisions a self-sutaining, *'know-how-machine'* to reclaiming grassroot cultural space. The project imagines the appropriation and transformation of the 1970's H-block (factory building) to celebrate marginalised voices in the area, through the design of a Creative House.
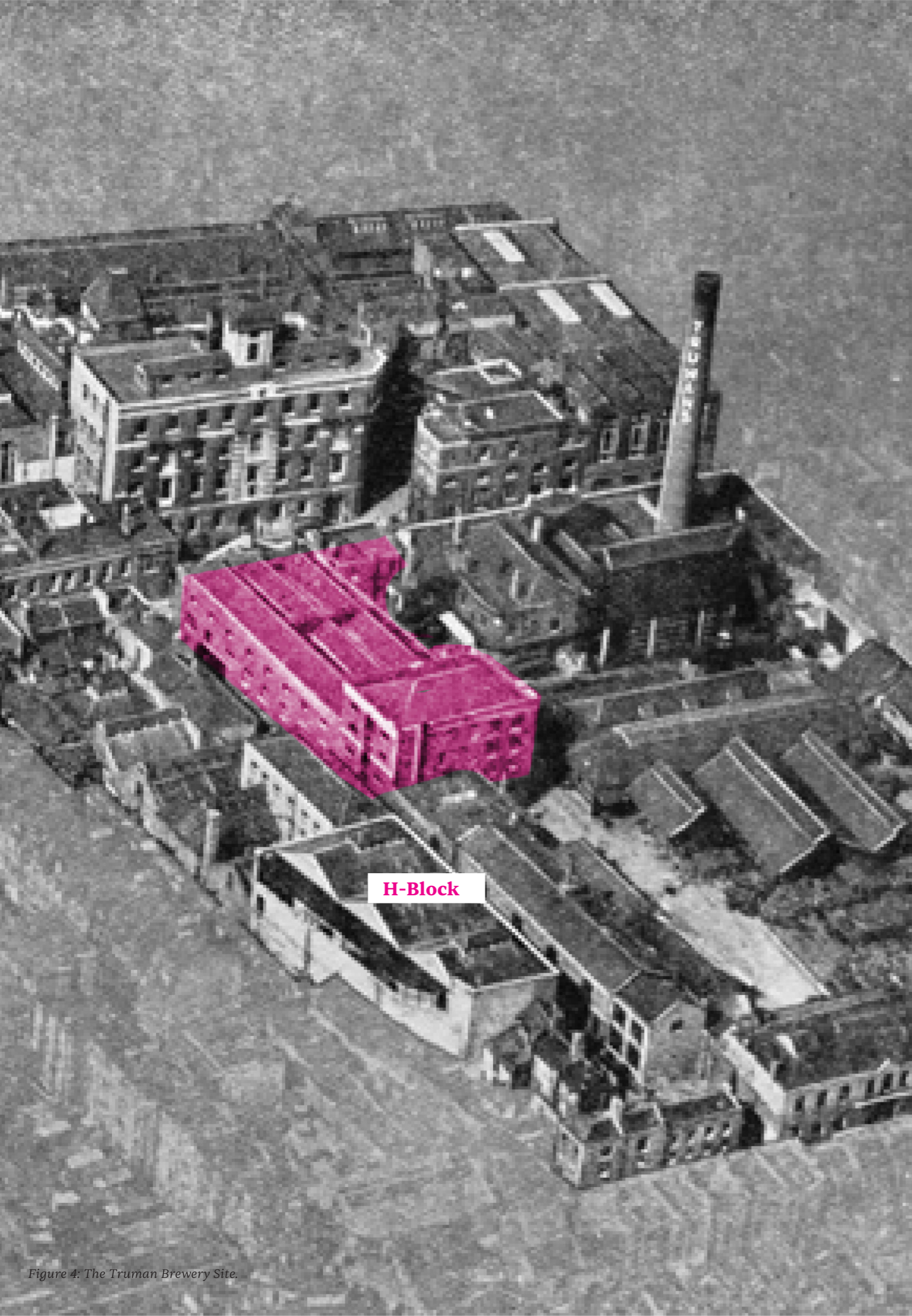

INDEX:

Truman Site

Project Boundary

Visual obstruction

Node of division

Hotspot

View

H-Block

Figure 4: The Truman Brewery Site.

the encroachment of the City of London,

driving out small businesses,

gentrification of the East End, permanently diluting its cultural vibrancy and diversity.

the pursuit of financial gain.

Apsana Begum MP

Figure 4: Letter to the borough of Tower Hamlets addressing the development plans.

loss of cultural
infrasturcture

Facilitate
social outcomes
within existing
power structures

"How can design respond to `contested urbanism` *by meeting material needs and competing social needs through alternative* `innovative models` *of grassroot participation by occupants and professionals"*

Double text
Reader's guide: mindwalks

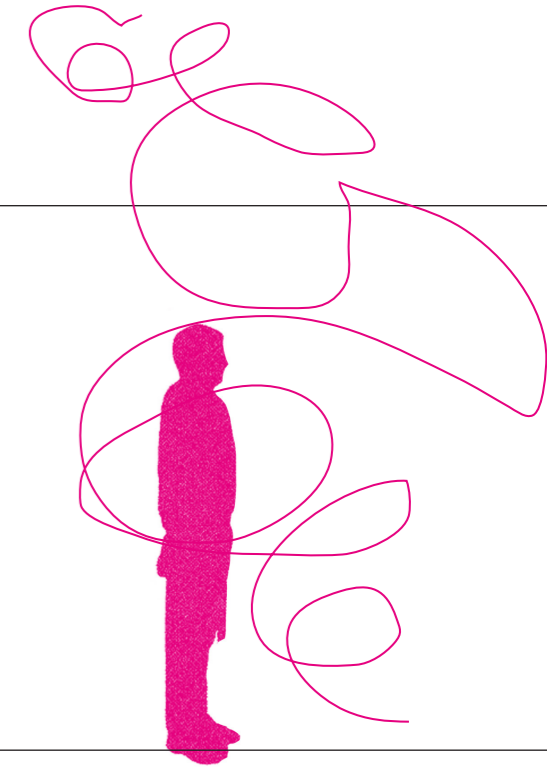Mindwalks refers to walking not as an act, but as a process of reading the city. Therefore, this part of the paper is written in the form of a double text where two personas are revealed: one being the argumentative, derivative narrator that examines the city and the other briefing on the embodied experiences and the episodic memories of the author. The paper aims to:

1 Present hegemonic, top-down discourses behind state-led interventions in the city without seeking important grassroot participation.

2 Search and analyse resistance mechanisms and materialities of place-based social movements that realise alternative spatial imaginaries.

3 Depict the importance of responding to local demands while engaging with global and climate demands- a bilateral relationship.

4 Position architecture as a responsive and locally grounded 'agent' through social entrepreneurial models moving away from the simplified understanding of architecture as buildings and a commodified object.

Persona 1

The Scientific
The Derivative

Persona 2

The Imaginary
The Observational

The Itinerary
The everyday spaces

The research unravels the everyday mundane spaces that we encounter as part of our everyday life, perceiving these spaces as main reference points that can inform our understanding of social and physical space. The everyday suspends between architecture, urban life and in-between events. The Itinerary highlights the spaces where investigations will be taken in the research process and will be executed through two ways:
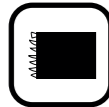
A. Prognosis: Urban Insights.

The research is conducted through probing selected parts of the city-street body, in which a series of samples are further developed, analyzed and described to reveal the everyday patterns under scrutiny: infraordinary spaces and inhabitants. Here existing knowledge is tested out/examined and new knowledge is formed through practice-based development.

B. Artistic Cross-exchange: Urban Life.

Studies of artistic precedents - George Perec, Claude Faraldo Themroc, Lawrence Weiner - defy conventional processes and build an initial framework for theoretical investigations, through their methods of cognition and visual spatial approaches to unfold and represent the infraordinary spaces and multifaceted layers in the city through literature, photography and cinema.

The everyday spaces

Street economies
[the body of the city street, apartment blocks]

Social vertices
[curry houses, mosque, tea houses]

Liminal spaces
[stairways, corridors, courtyards, car yards]

Furniture
[dining table, signages, flags, benches]
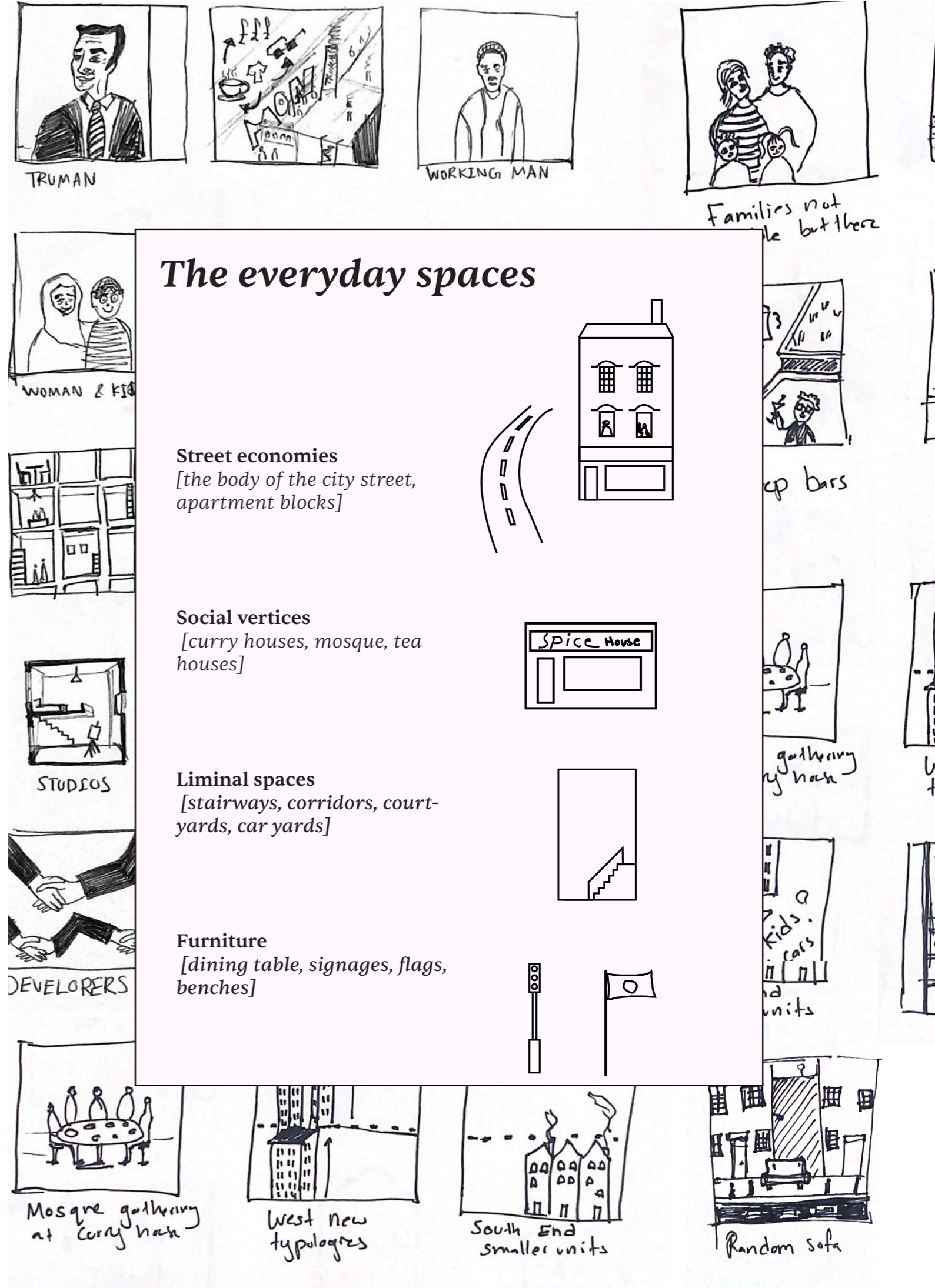
Unseen: It suggested the ignored, neglected, and marginalised spaces lying alongside or beneath the shiny new-builds of redevelopment[31]

(un)seen
The everyday

*The atlas of the infraordi-
nary, highlights the various
urban artefacts we pass un-
oticed.*

"Is the city really seen?" is at the center of my inquiry, where I try to detect the inseparable links and codes between the subjcts and the physical environment. While doing so, I also aim to avoid the pitfalls of the naiveity that the design is problem solving or design is an end on its own. On the contrary, I propose a strategy of (almost) invisibility, not in its means but as an agent of disruption. This way, architect does not step into the everyday as an author of singular narratives but she reconfigures what is already there as opposed to adding new forms and building to the urbanscape.

This part of the paper is about public space, about the street. The layer of urban artefacts that represent an in-between architecture. The figure on the right presents an atlas of things that punctuate our journeys though the city, which we have become almost blind to. They mediate between the body and buildings: streetlights, fences, signs, benches, CCTV camera poles, and bollards. The arguably frame our perception of the public realm more as direclty within our human vision than buildings. This atlas of unseen artefacts lie between the qoutidian and the sublime. The atlas is categorised in active verbs: surveilling, barring and advertising as they actively or subliminally act to repel, attract or accomodate us.

It is precisely this layer of unseen architecture, the city inbetween the street and buildings that this paper is dedicated to. This is not to say that they are special, in fact they are banal and their presence is ephemeral. Yet they are indicators of the macro forces on the ground - political agendas and community movements. These objects and inbetween architecture define the experience of moving through the city. They can inhibit our journeys throug the city and our interaction with it or sometimes making it more interesting and engaging. Although addressed by many urban theorists like Henri Lefebvre, it is not articulated or dwelled upon in depth.
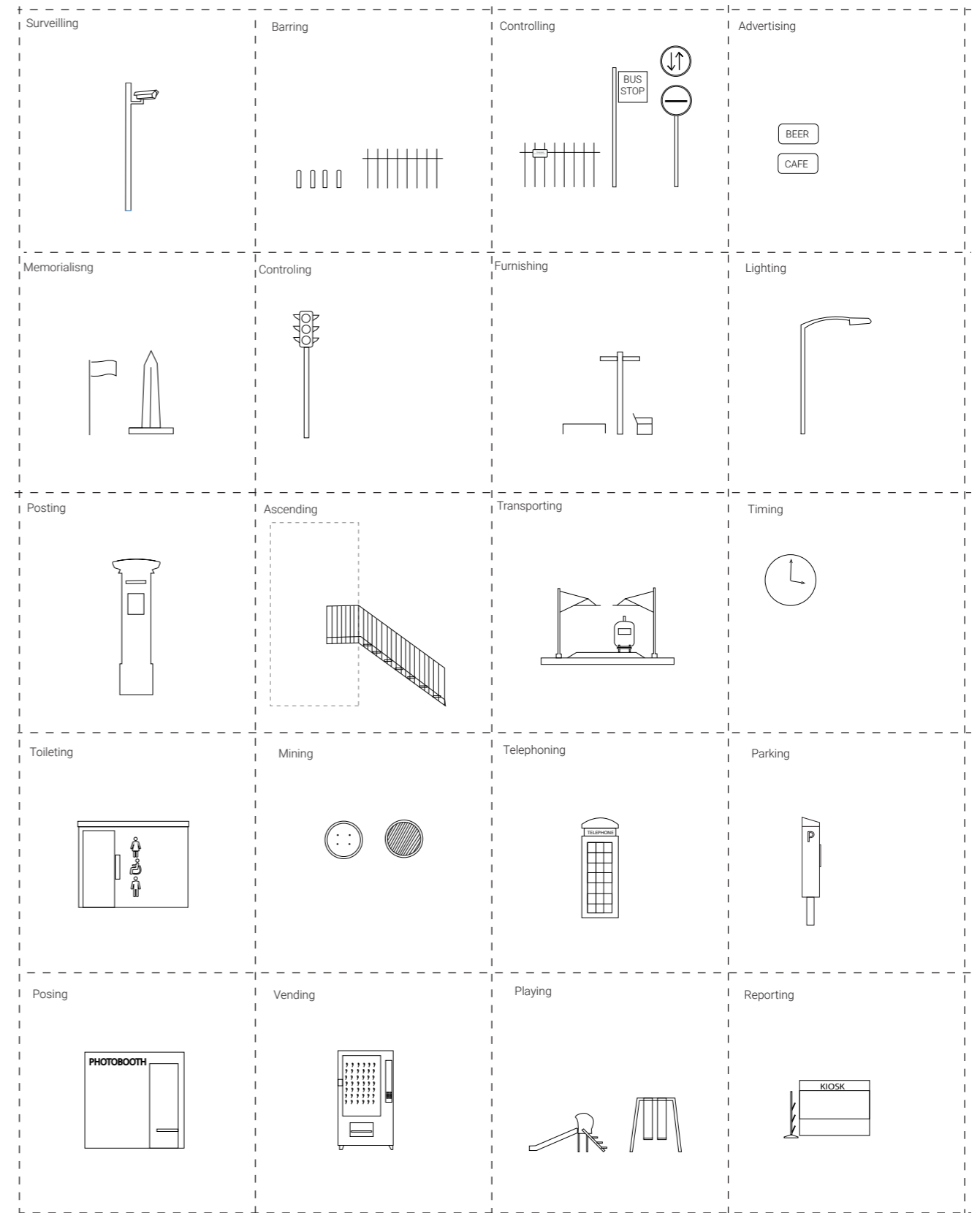
Atlas of the infraordinary

Urban Prognosis

Map highlighting the high-street along with a section drawn to compare the inbetween spaces.

Observations:
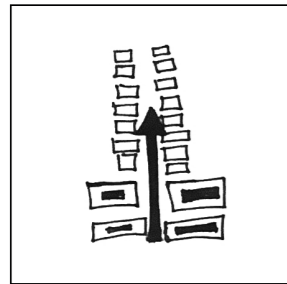
The typologies become smaller towards the North.
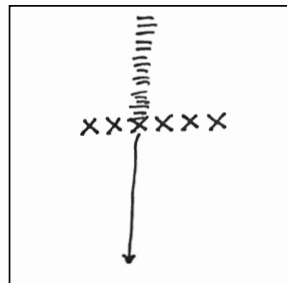
The shops are discontinuos in the North especially at the train intersection, creating a North-South divide.
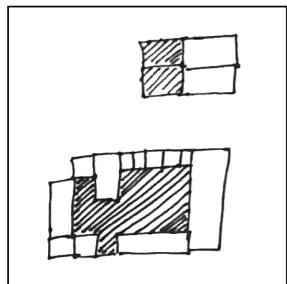
The North has back yards while the South has gated gardens and amenities shared by residents.
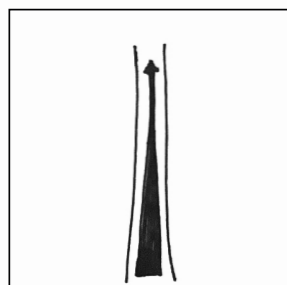
The road gets narrower towards the North.

A

B

C

A

B

C

Bricklane

■ *not accessible*

■ *empty yard*

✚ *symbolic gestures (chimney tower & miranet)*
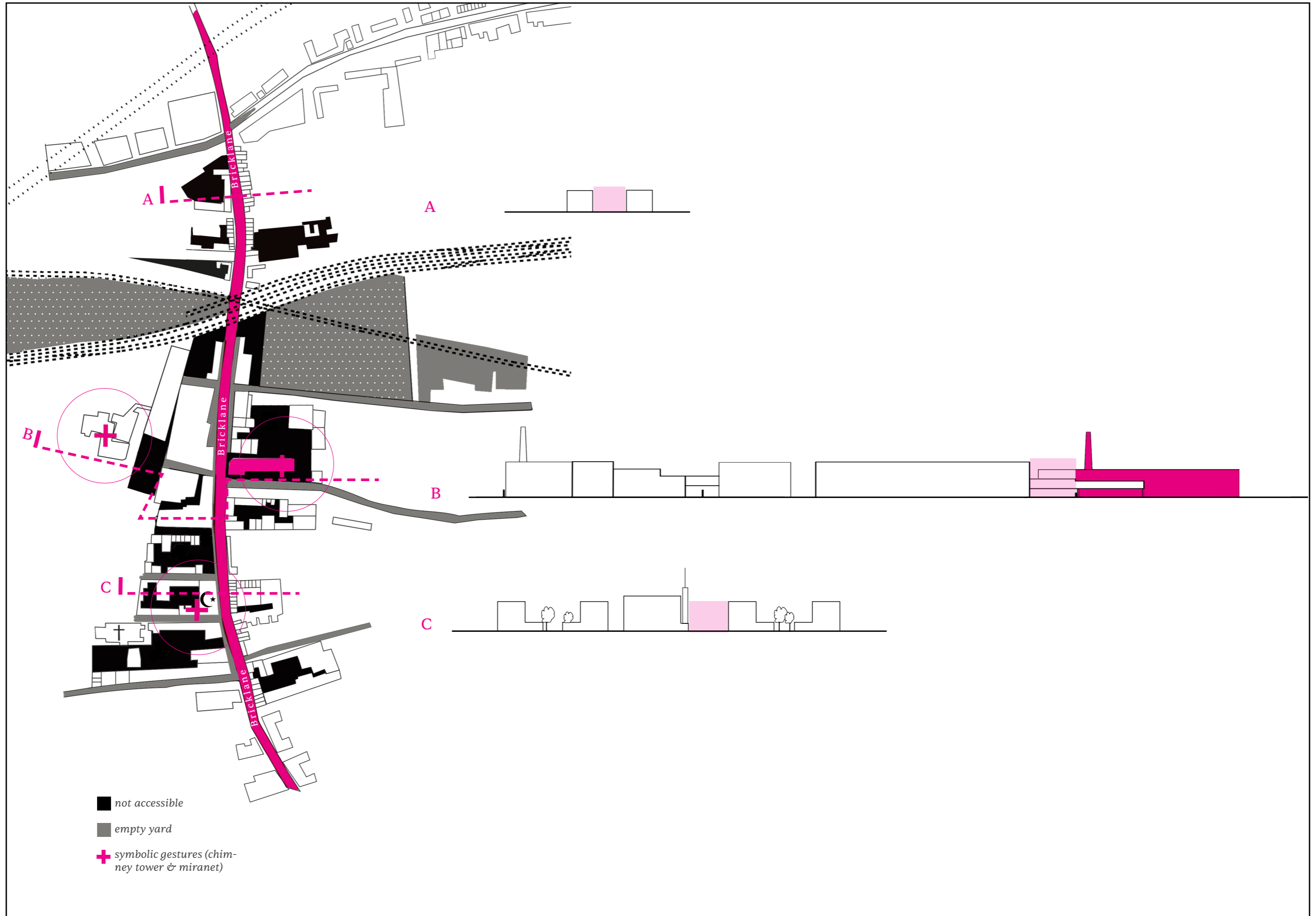
Urban Prognosis

The section drawn to compare the inbetween spaces. The sketches act as memory episodes taken of the scene. Most spaces have reminences of its industrial past. Alleys inbetween buildings are narrow and covered with grafitti. Gaps between buildings are used as car yards and in some cases has social activities occuring.There is a strong language and message sent by the opposing vertical structures: the truman Brewery chimney and the mosque's miranet.

1. Industrial buildings.

3. Retail at ground level.

5. Empty alley with grafitti.
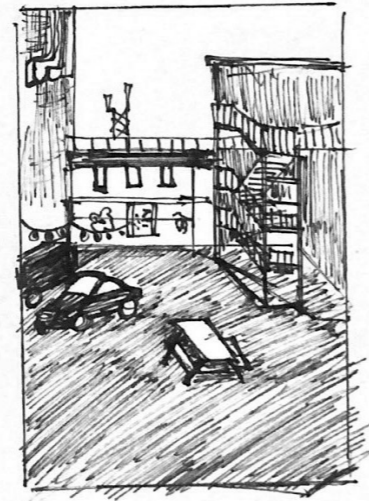
2. Empty car yard.
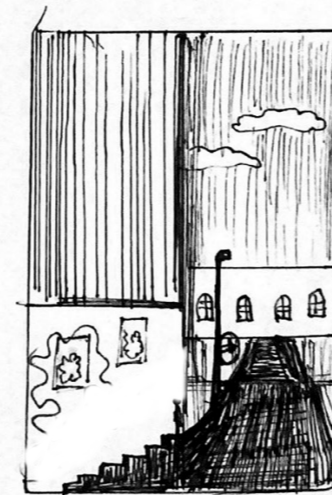
4. Bridges connecting functions of buildings like a maze.
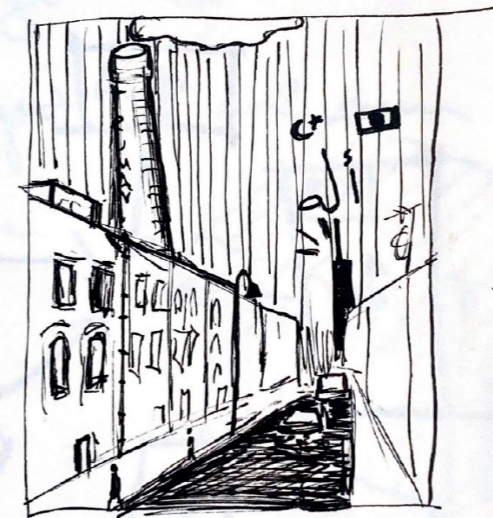
6. Vertical symbolic gesture of Industrial chimney and aluminium miranet.

H-block

Highstreet
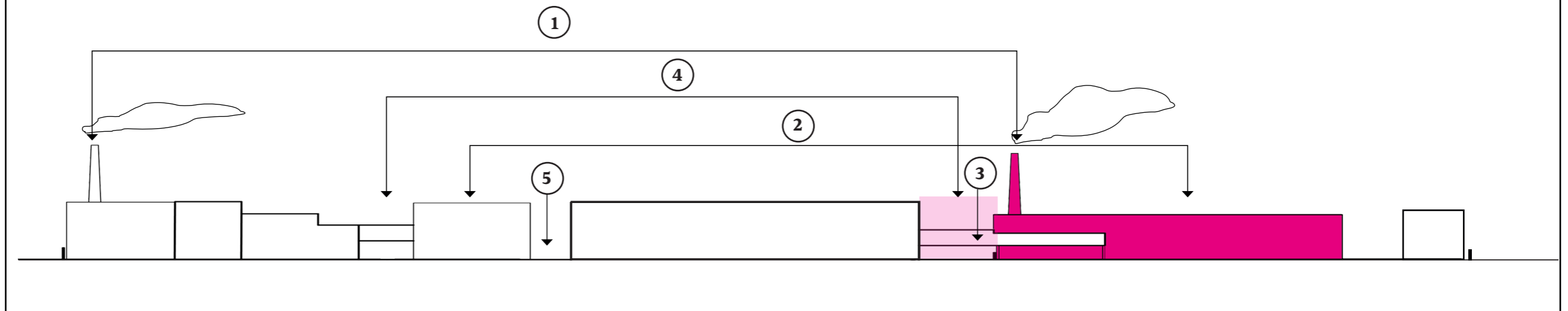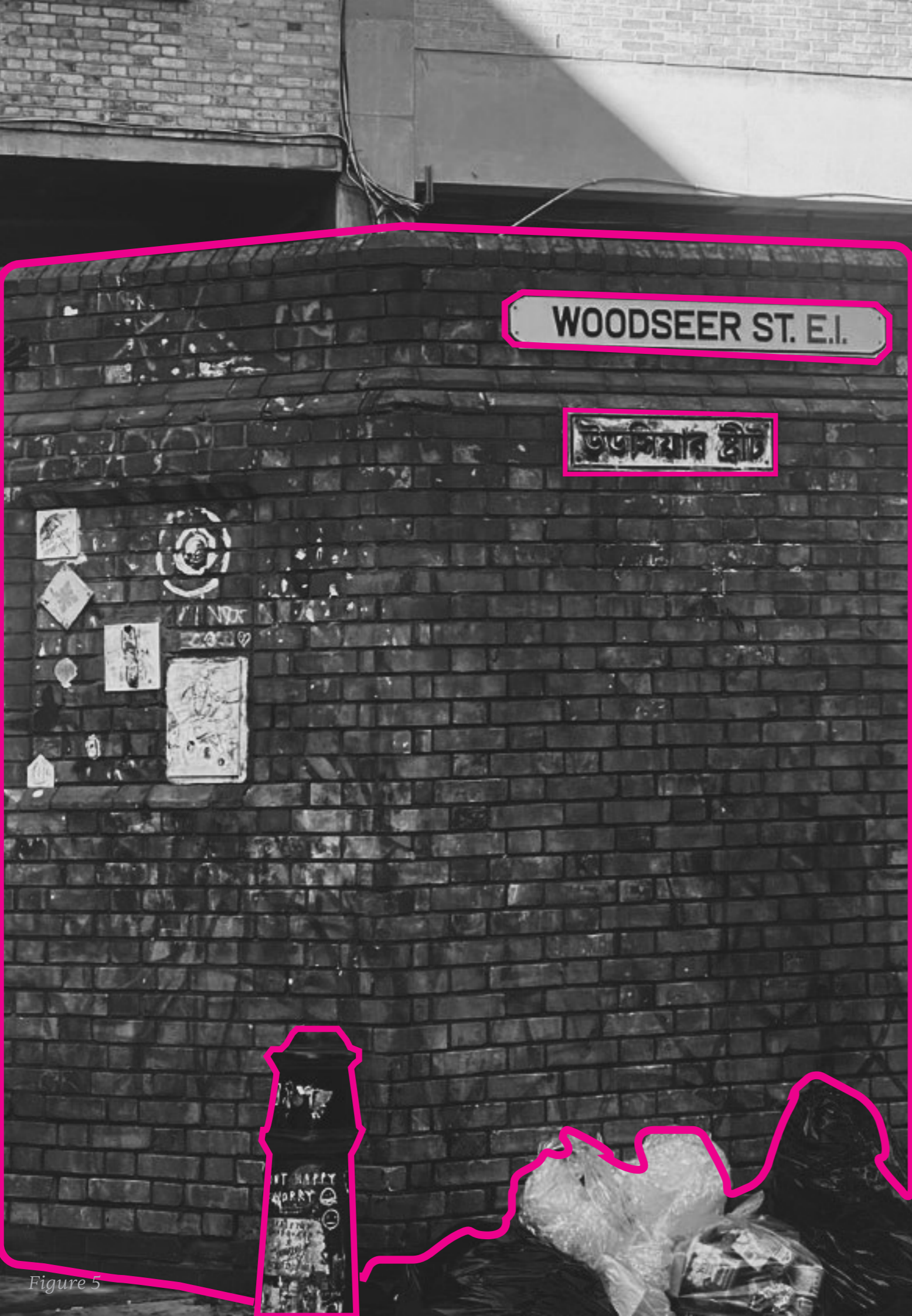
Figure 5

The Overlooked
Reclaiming the infraordinary

Bricklane is a high street found in Spitafield, East London and is part of Tower Hamlets.

Infra-ordinary a word-coined by george Perec referring to the everyday objects in our city.

[19](Perec, 2010)
[20](ibid.)

"[...] How should we take account of, question, describe what happens everyday: the banal, the quotidian, the obvious, the common, the ordinary, the infra-ordinary, the background noise, the habitual?" [19]

Bricklane is a place today that has attracted international crowds who enjoy the cosmopilitian atmosphere with the trendy cafes, art showrooms and vintage shops. Words such as culture, community, diversity and colour are mainly used to describe its personality in major blogs. The unseen layer of the city is fundamental in this, here street lamps, windows, walls, bollards and any empty spot found are collaged and painted with posters, text and drawings. These everyday objects that Perec might class as 'infra-ordinary' of social significance within the built environment are tracked down and flushed out, given a tongue to finally speak of what is, of what we are.

Theorist George Perec explains that these everyday places and objects need to a little trauma for their existence to be registered by us. *"We are seemly conditioned to recognise that behind the event there is a scandal, a fissure, a danger, as if life reveals itself only by way of the spectacular, as if what speaks, what is significant, is always abnormal: natural cataclysms or social upheavals, social unrest, political scandal"*[20].

An interesting position from which to explore a brutal context, to see the everyday as a front for a complex system as result of a great system of history, politics and technology. In the photograph (figure 5) we see the street sign in both English and Bengali, but we also notice the word itself Woodseer, which is indicative of its history of woodworks and the furniture industry. A small detail otherwise unregarded, lends a whole story of the area, an almost unimaginable, unseen material history.

Bricklane has been a place of constant transition, music and multiculturism, yet also an epicenter of immigration, unemployment, job and housing precarity, poverty, racisim driven attacks, and social movements *'white or black we fight'*. Bricklane's resistance in this brutal context is felt by these trauma marks or *'vandalisms'* on the

Photographs of spatial clues, depicting resistence mechanisms.

Appropriation:
This can include the taking of another's property for one's own purposes (either legally or illegally, short-term or long-term), or through highlighting abandoned or unoccupied space (Awan, N., Schneider, T. and Till, J. 2011).

Emancipation:
Allowing others to 'take control' over their environment, being participative without being opportunistic; something that is pro-active instead of re-active (Awan, N., Schneider, T. and Till, J. 2011).

streetscape, evidence of how the metropoli has metastasised to consume its surroundings.

In this highstreet, the street furniture as such can be used to express state power or to empower citizens. It is both deeply political and a reminder of the complex system of regulations and urban identity while at the same time being paradoxically overlooked. The act of reclaiming the public space through a *'collective'* act of *appropriation* and *emacipation* allows those with agency to take control over their environment. This form of improvised architetcure, though minor, brings the street to life.

In my ongoing urban prognosis, I continue to explore the infraordinary and the extraordinary of the build environment which lies in the everyday situations, but also in gestures of the inhabitants. Here, bricklane is seen as a stage full of heterotopic stories, spaces that have more layers of meaning and relationship to other places than immediatley visible to the eye.
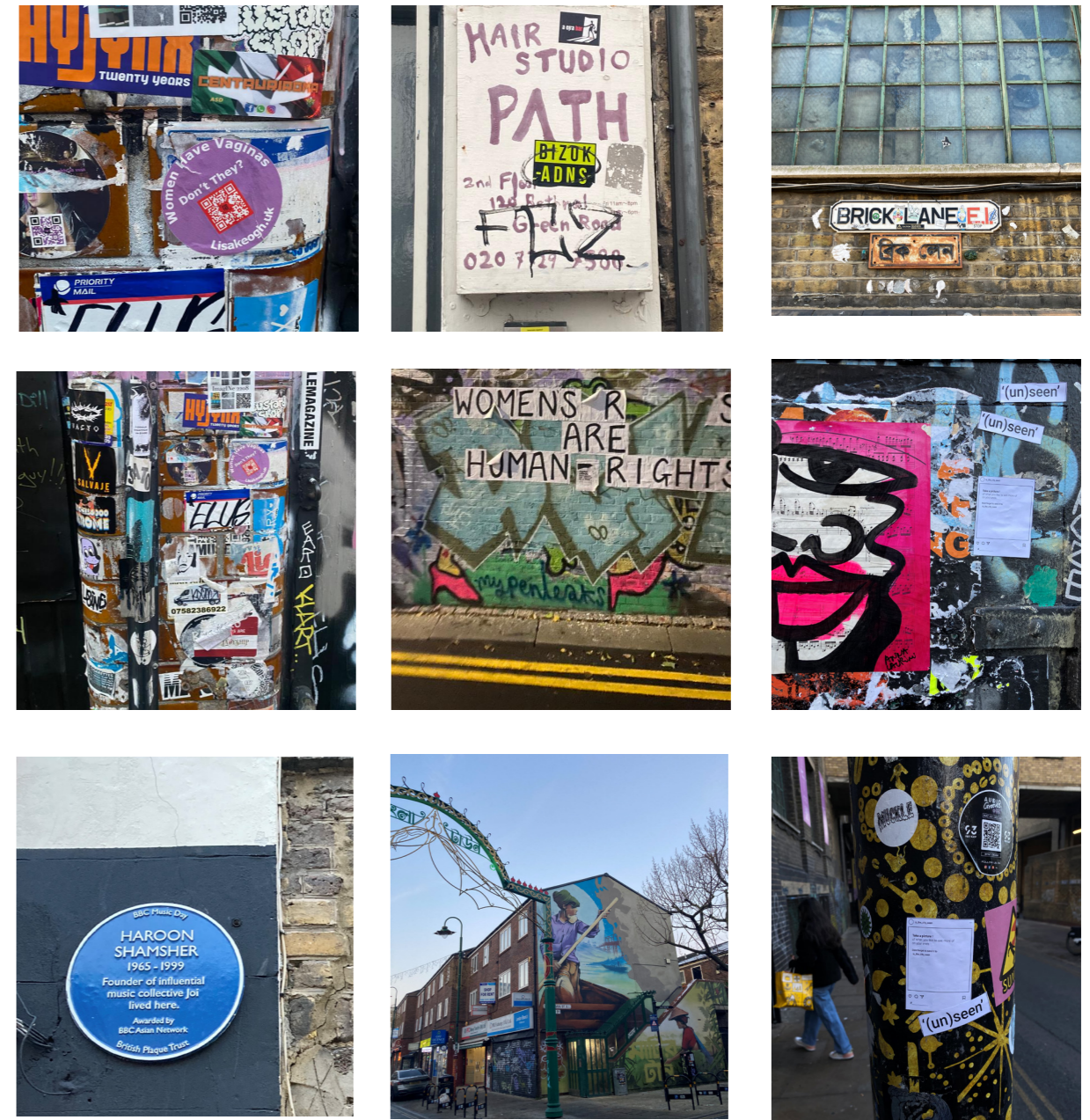
Figure 5 : pictures taken during field work.

Graffiti
Posters
Stickers   **=**   **Extraordinary**   **=**   **Improvised archiecture**
Stencil   **Not a singular author**
QR Codes   **Constantly changing**
Text

Bollard
Street Sign   **Everyday Architecture**
Wall   **=**   **Infraordinary**   **=**   **Singular author**
Fences   **Constant**

Heterotopic stories

16th December 2022

30 Minutes → 30 Minutes → 30 Minutes → 30 Minutes →

Time

Place

GROUP 1
North gateway

10:00AM   10:30AM   11:00AM   11:30AM — *Morning*

GROUP 2
Bridge gateway

12:00PM   12:30PM   13:00PM   13:30PM — *Noon*

GROUP 3
Bridge gateway

14:00PM   14:30PM   15:00PM   15:30PM — *Afternoon*

GROUP 4
South Gateway

16:00PM   16:30PM   17:00PM   17:30PM — *Evening*

1. Self-sustainable

2. North-South Divide

3. Disconnected

4. Symbolic order

5. Hybridism

Mindwalks
Contested spaces

*Juma'h prayer is an Islamic religious day translating as Friday prayer, which is a sermon held by the head of the mosque every Friday from the morning to noon.

* I define Sohofication as the ongoing process of homogenisation where neighbourhoods that previously contained a variety of amenities for its inhabitants is over run by restaurants targeting mainly tourists.

21(Born,Furján,Jencks, and Dirt. 2012)
22 (Nardi, S.D. et al. 2021)
23 (ibid.)
24 (Butler, C. 2014)

We live in our homes, but we engage with a city through its streets. The operation of walking is an everyday practice through which we travel and between the gaps of power-structures where *"traces of the past linger in mundane spaces by the side of the road to renewal, haunting the idealistic visions of planners, promoters and entrepreneurs".*[21] Mindwalks in this paper refers to *'walking-reading'* an '*act*' that suspends between the individual and collective, the present and the past. It perceives another unseen but 'lived' layer: the ignored and neglected. These are marginalised spaces and social practices laying between or along side of new redevelopment projects.

The work of Larissa Fassler *My Body is the City* reads the city through *Psychogeographies* and enables the recording of urban life, registering the subliminal, interpersonal connections to places and arbitrary routes.[22] This technique creates a method that produces a new kind of mapping of space, one that shows how geographic environments shape *'behaviours'* in public space. Mapping becomes a series of questions and answers: why space is contested? how are boundaries constantly forged and reshaped? This brings other spatial dimensions - the subaltern - to provide a proper account of social practices found in the city. The city is no longer made of known trajectories, but of memories, identites, stories and sounds revealled through the everyday traces.

Bricklane in that account is a place charged with its difficuilt stories and memories of hardship and could be described as a *'wounded place'*, a term used by Karen E. Till, which for her, such places *"are understood to be present to the pain of others and to embody difficult social pasts".*[23] Though recent artistic activity and regeneration developments took place - overpriced artist studios, offices, bars and cafes - economic and social suffering persist, as do the emotional mentalscape wrought by multi-generational marginalisation. These give rise to a kind of power play, a tug of war for space.

15/12/2023: ' walking up Bricklane from its Sorth entry. At around 10 am the street is very quiet. At around 12 the shops started opening up. The people there in the morning were South Asian men heading to the mosque for the Juma'h prayer*. Newspaper man brought stacks of Bengali newspapers and placed them on the mosque stairs and no where else. It was clear to me that the mosque played an important part in the community. I sat inside a curry house infront of the mosque and I noticed that people came to the curry houses after their prayers, predominantly men'.

15/12/2023:' the Truman Brewery site past the railway bridge is disconnected to the Bengali Spitafield as do the city developments that increasingly loom over the west edge'.

The urban insights gained, indicate a clear North-South divide with the Truman Brewery site amidst this spatial tension, making the site power laden. The powerplay between the planning developments in the North and the Bengali South is readable by the emerging *'Sohofication'** towards the South end. The resistance mechanism against this siege is not immediately visible to the casual spectator: a self-sustaining collectivist community. The close ties to each other and the local shops ensure that money circulates within the Bengali Spitafield circle. A mechanism revealling a clear struggle for autonomy. Contested spaces, therefore highlight the nuances in the battles between production of space for domination against the production of space for appropriation to serve community needs and aspirations. Amid the middle of this stands the H-block with a very delicate position to facilitate or disrupt certain productions.

With reference to Lefebvre's *Right to the City*, in domination, space is put to the service of some '*abstract'* purpose where space is carved into parcels of estate sold in the market and becomes interchangeable as commodities. As a result space represents a triumph of *"homogeneity"*[24] and becomes in its totality a *'product'* induced by a false notion of serving a common vision as seen with the redevelopment plan of H-Block to a mall.

Lefebvre also argues that planning councils need to rethink notions of ownership and how value is given to urban space. However this would require an entire restructuring of social, political and economic relations. An alternative method is offered by the existing resistance culture through self-organisation and hybridism as seen in the South. These methods of *'disruptions'* respond to the present power relations and the growing gentrification, highlighting the major issue: *'size-site-time'*, the lack of financial resource to own land (refer to p.28). Therefore, understanding what alternative strategy could be implemented to overcome this unavoidable reality and save grassroot cultural infrastructure such as the H-block.

The technocratic and top-down physical interventions looming in and around Bricklane reveal an interesting aspect of spatiology - performativity. That is that space is not just produced materially by eco-

__Deep Democracy:__ Deep Democracy is a practical method to start dialogue and discussion where we actively search for the wisdom of the minority. Alternative voices are being heard, explored and are part of decision-making.

nomic and social forces, but also in the way it is being represented through infraordinary objects - street furnitures, camera, billboards- which make the site part of the action itself. Public spaces are filled with official signs, posters, graffiti, advertisements and political messages and CCTV surveillance cameras as the reminders of our consumerist, transient roles. As part of the research, it is important to pay attention to how these sites are controlled and by whom. As well as its influence on the Truman Brewery site and around it. The forms of limitations could be:

a) Tangible-visual limit
b) Tangible-physical limit
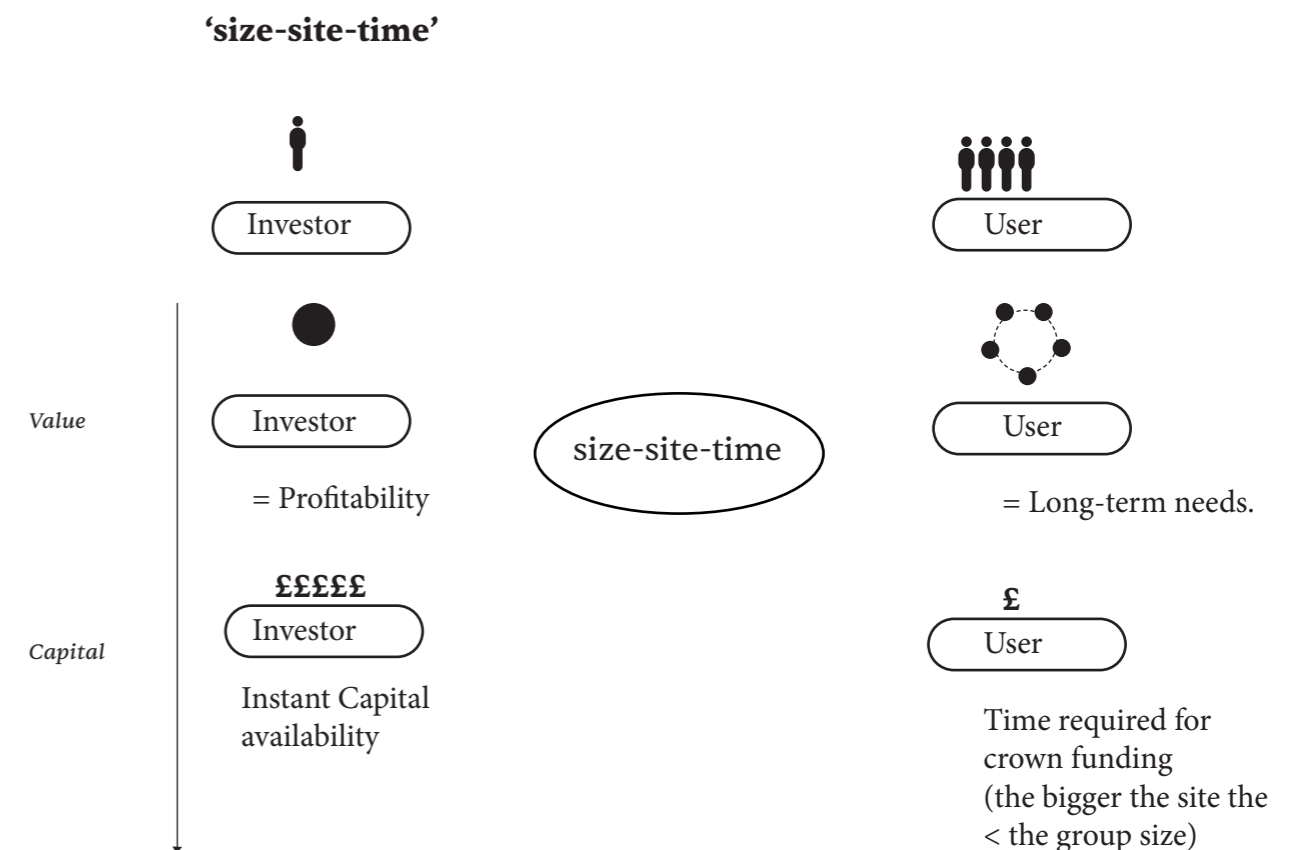**c) Intangible-sensory limit.**

15/12/2023: 'the night is saturated with words and with text. Graffiti artists they sneak through the streets like urban foxes with spirograms of colour and language. They have chosen the city as their canvas. I joint a group with my graffiti sprays and started to talk to one of them. She mentioned that it makes her feel the greatest buzz painting something all night that you have been thinking about for weeks. She said that the city feels the closest to her in that moment. It was evident to me that most graffiti writers were around 18-26 years old, with faces hidden in their scarf and hoodie spraying political statements and stencils. A CCTV camera was pointing down at us with a huge 'NO VANDALISM' sign hanging on the wall. '

Except of the tangible limits - camera and signage - there was a felt intangible limit and threat: a confrontation with surveillance and control. The night revealed a different facet to the city, one that operates on post-industrial reduntant and obsolete buildings. Perhaps, this unseen layer of the city plays a culturally imperative role. Stoner explains this with *"the perceived poverty of these buildings {that} releases us from responsibility to adhere to any laws, covenants or precedents. This is precisely what makes them vulnerable to minor experiments and valuable as another kind of 'natural' resource. Open to new intensities, these graveyards of capital are the fields, forests and quarries of our present time."*[25] The perceived potentiality of these derelict buildings as possible grassroot agents in the lived unseen fabric of the city inspires the potential of the abandoned H-block.

Moreover, an aspect of minor architecture that seems essential for 'deep democracy'* is the aspect that not one singular author nor architect is making the city: it is a collective design process. Each user is a minor architect able to alter and reappropriate the space. Consequently, for Stoner, minor architecture is positioned in the relation between the everyday user and the architect. Thereby, the aspect of 'becom-ing' is an essential theme for the project.

Ultimately, the city can be understood as a text, reading fragments

that tell about a story, where spatial fictions can be used to imagine alternative stories. The displacement of architecture into fiction offers an understanding of space through *"the temporal and social enactmnet that lie outside of the conventions of architectural representations".*[26] Thereore, the integration of spatial fiction as a tool in the research is paramount and will be explored in later parts of the paper as well.

'size-site-time'

Investor	size-site-time	User
Investor		User
Value = Profitability		= Long-term needs.
£££££ Investor		£ User
Capital Instant Capital availability		Time required for crown funding (the bigger the site the < the group size)

Spatial Fiction
If Bricklane was a stage...

Inspired by Edward Soja's Third Space, I organised a workshop titled "Is the city unseen?" asking the participants to answer a more prudent question 'are you seen?' as an attempt to shed light on people's feelings towards Bricklane and the values they felt it represented. In this workshop fiction and storytelling were the mediums used to manifest this. The results foregrounded an unseen layer of details that contributed to a greater understanding of its urban fabric - small fragments of stories creating a whole. The collected knowledge suggests a *'fourth space',* which illustrates a metaphysical articulation of space through storytelling (on page 27). This technique in practice, allows to reveal the in-between narratives that would be invisible to the casual spectator. More importantly, in practice this reveals an in-between spatiality to architecture by means of *'Einfühlung'**.

Therefore, the fourth space could lend insights on aspects of performativity: what do these unseen narratives tell about what is absent or present in the public space? How much of the outside is the inside? Perceiving the street as an elusive room provides a glance into the private lives and livelihood of the commons and blurs spatial boundaries. What happens behind closed doors? How do we act and behave when not observed? The four scales of performativity found at an urban scale are:

 a) Intersubject performativity
 b) Intercommunal performativity
 c) Racial performativity
 d) Gender performativity.

is_the_city_unseen

'(un)seen'
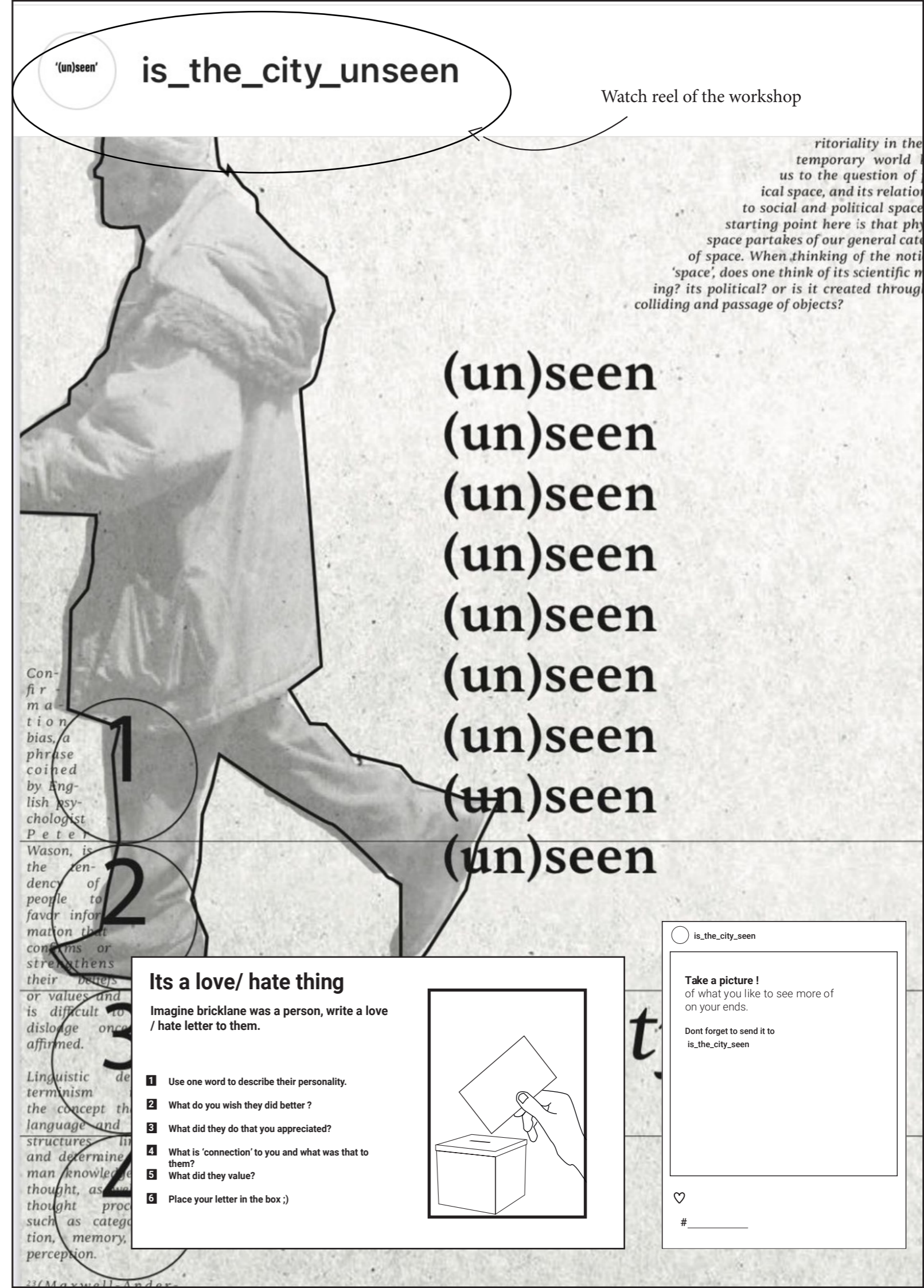
Watch reel of the workshop

(un)seen
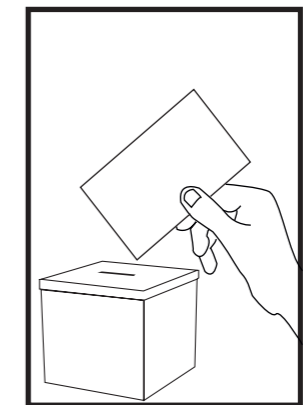(un)seen
(un)seen
(un)seen
(un)seen
(un)seen
(un)seen
(un)seen

ritoriality in the temporary world us to the question of ical space, and its relation to social and political space starting point here is that phy space partakes of our general cate of space. When thinking of the noti 'space', does one think of its scientific m ing? its political? or is it created throug colliding and passage of objects?

Its a love/ hate thing

Imagine bricklane was a person, write a love / hate letter to them.

1 Use one word to describe their personality.

2 What do you wish they did better ?

3 What did they do that you appreciated?

4 What is 'connection' to you and what was that to them?

5 What did they value?

6 Place your letter in the box ;)

is_the_city_seen

Take a picture !
of what you like to see more of on your ends.

Dont forget to send it to
 is_the_city_seen

♡

#

27 (Dehaene, 2015).
28 (Butler, C. 2014)
29 (ibid.)

31(Nardi, S.D. et al. 2021)

Figure 7 : Whats on the street? Here we have a list of active verbs that consciously or subconsiously enaged me in Bricklane:
- Advertising
- Barring
- Memorialising
- Surveilling
- Persuading

Documentations have been made in the from of sketching, sound recordings and photographs to render the audiable and olfactory stimuli such as Hindi music playing in the background and curry and greese aromas. Chit chat and laughter of people as well as the solemness in the mornings of the Friday prayers.

15/12/2023: I approached some South Asian women, but they ignored and walked off. I entered a textile shop thinking I would get the opportunity there to talk to one, only to find that there was a man. After starting a conversation about getting something traditionally tailored, did he reveal that his wife tailors at home for the ladies in the neighbourhood.

In heterotopic sites, this is especially interesting: a place that involves codes, permission or ritual to gain entry. '*It both closes itself off from the outside world, but also allows members of the outside world to enter into it*.' [27] Bricklane similarly, is made of aporetic spaces, spaces of of contraditions and paradoxes that reveal and represent something about society and its material arrangement. Bengladeshi women do not occupy much of the public realm and are restricted to private and intermediate spaces. The curry houses are not just places of gastronomy, but negotiation and diplomacy for men. Though it may seem like anyone could enter, access is limited to the dining area, whereas the Bangladeshi men sit in the male sitting room for gatherings. Moreover, the mosque is not limited to its religious function, but stands as a place of refuge, translation and legal counseling. These informal social codes and spatial 'laws' determined by gender, profession and whether one is an insider or outsider, explains the practices (activities, functions, movements) and the physical (spatial configurations) needed to engage and sustain urban life in Bricklane, while undertaking the dominance of developers and contesting the growing monotony around it - contested urbanism. Essentially, Bricklane becomes an urban stage of heterotopic stories and spaces of illusions that are not immediately visible to the eye.

The apparent connection here to Lefebvre's argumentation that *'social space is a social product'* is unavoidable. [28]He defies the notion of space as a vessel or container in which life metastasises, but as a product that is produced that cannot be inherited or passed on. It is shaped by many social classes, experts, and other competing forces. Understanding that space is determined by human intent and not spatial laws as conventionally understood, one ' *can never again see the world as a place set apart, or reduce architecture to a set of abstract forms*'.[29] However, with this in mind, 'production' implies that space is an economic good. It can be bought and sold and is a huge part of the economic world. Thus economies too can shape space. What are the unseen economies on Bricklane? and how can they inform the design process?

'We support each other where we can. The mosque plays a big role in this'

'We discuss our business and familly affairs here. It is important to us that our shops prosper and that our community is well'
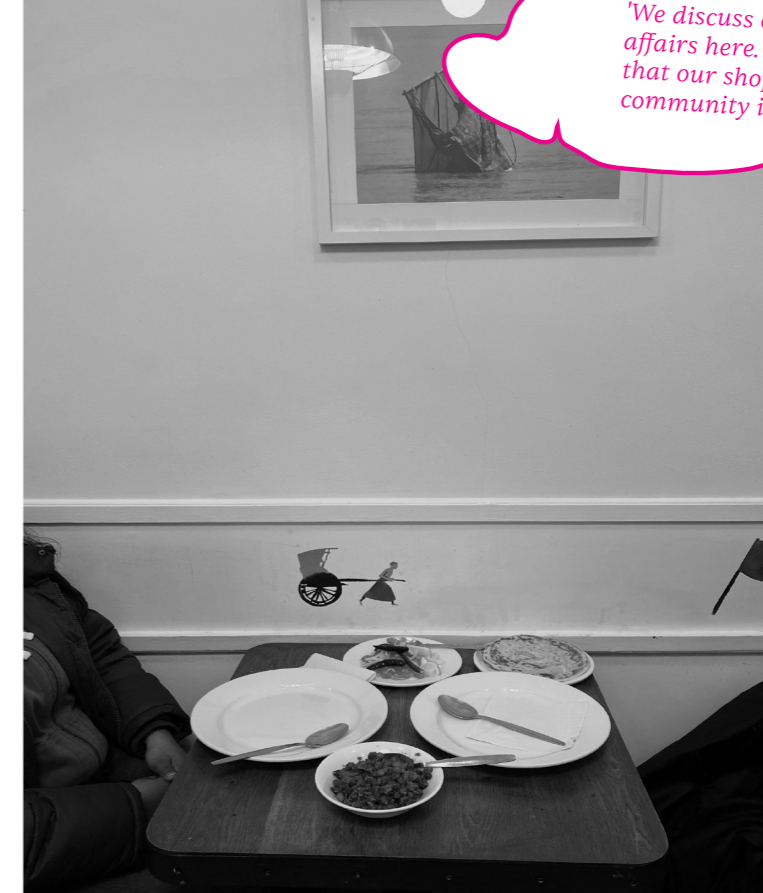

Figure 6: Interview with two Bangladeshi men in a curry house.

The scene

barring   persuading   memorialising
surveiling   advertising

Figure 7

The scene

"I like the place... it has no rules"

Map of responses to the letter activity. Key words that came out were: community, culture and diversity. The magnifying glass zooms into a letter that a young university student of South Asian descent has written stating:

"Gin Mum/Yummy Mummy

frequents the gentrified areas of East London and lives in a 4 bed 2 and a half bathroom semi-detached home in Crystal palace. She works in a tech startup on Liverpool street and drives a LEXUS. They are at dinner parties and talk a lot about their holidays to Santorini and when they went travelling in Thailand after leaving University of Bristol. They value Live Love Laugh! "

(un)seen economies
Space negotiations

14//12/2023: ' People walk in a tunnel vision: systemic, controlled by constraints, tasks, social codes and obligations lending a visceral feeling for the little everyday things in lifes..the reality of life.'

George Perec's *Life: A User's Manual* is centered around a building and its inhabitants, the storyline jumps around according to a jigsaw puzzle. Perec peels the elevation of a building and stops it in time to unravel the life of the tenants, each has a story, and many of the stories naturally overlap. What is revealled are intimate vulnerable information. Similarly, Bricklane stages characters, narratives, activities and flows. The research attempts to expose these layers of information to understand the space negotiations between different actors and their everyday events. These negotiations are in the form of of position, responsibility, power, influence and relationships.

The grid diagram of Bricklane (to the right), identifies three forms of negotiations:

a) Shared   **b) Circular**   **c) Singular**
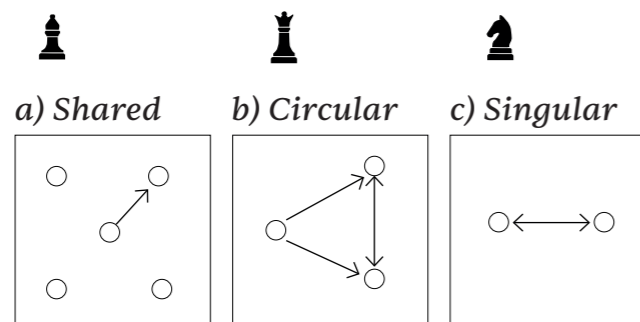
A) To the North, spaces of monetary transactions towards. Space here belongs solely to the consumerist temporary actors such as tourists. The activities are tourist traps and random souvenir stores. Their monotony reflects the growing economic forces that take over the Northern highstreet: a reminder of our transient role on public grounds.

B) The Mosque along with the curryhouses and adjacent shops respond to local demand. They run part of a circular economy: a pre-

Figure 8

Figure 9

determined arrangment of exchange and sharing.

C) The Southern end has shared spaces for people of the same position and bearing equal responsibility and power. Such spaces include courtyards and car yards. Here private life is leaked onto the public, clothes are set to dry outside and furniture is moved out extending the living spaces to the outside.

These unseen economies and powers are important to the design process and in thinking of how the H-Block can work within these undercurrents. How will heterogeneous actors negotiate space here? Are these transgressive, collective or avoidant? The project is at once, a building, a cultural landscape and an internal streetscape. Therefore acknowledging architecture beyond the conventional location theory and spatial laws, but as a performative form. The idea of self-sustainability offers a model of design that opens up space for more culturally sensitive approaches of place-making, as an attempt to blur the dualities of existing anarchies (public, private, top-down, bottom-up).

Influenced by Perec's and Saul Steinberg's sectional perspective depicting a boarding house filled with tenants surrounded by their belongings, a model of story boxes were created. Each box housing told and untold stories gathered during the field work, films, documentaries and photographs of Bricklane. As a result, adopting an abstracted representational thinking method to depict the in-between unseen performances behind closed doors.

14//12/2023: I sit in my airbnb and notice the window across from me, here a woman in her sari is preparing the dinner table for her family, the children are playing around the table and another is doing their homework. As I peek through the windows, I intrude into their private lives, observing their everyday life like a theatrical act framed by the window and the living room light.

14/12/2023: ' The discontinuity of the North is caused by the randomness of shop functions that are predominantly empty and serve as tourist traps. However there is a growing secondhand, vintage and textile trade visible where most people are.'

This element of storytelling and using imagination to receive vulnerable knowledge on life in Bricklane is an attempt to avoid falling into a pitfall of superficial and biased perspectives. Architect Juhani Pallasmaa formulates this: *"The architecture of architects usually expresses architecture's internal stylistic set of codes more than the individual ways of living of the inhabitants, whereas the milieus of artists, photographers and film-makers resonate with the characteristics and fates of their inhabitants".*[30] The research introduces architectural fiction and play at the intersection of artistic and ethnographic research that critically examines the urban and social fabric. How does the camera or the eye grapple with the unseen? and how does it reveal what the cameraman or viewer is unable to see?

Figure 10: storyboxes of Bricklane.

Figure 11: Bricklane Movie .

An Urban Stage

An urban stage that tells a story: a conceptual diagram of Bricklane that lies out the current issues and poses a set of questions and answers to further critically think about alternative visions and parameters for the future of H-block and thecnew chapter of Bricklane.
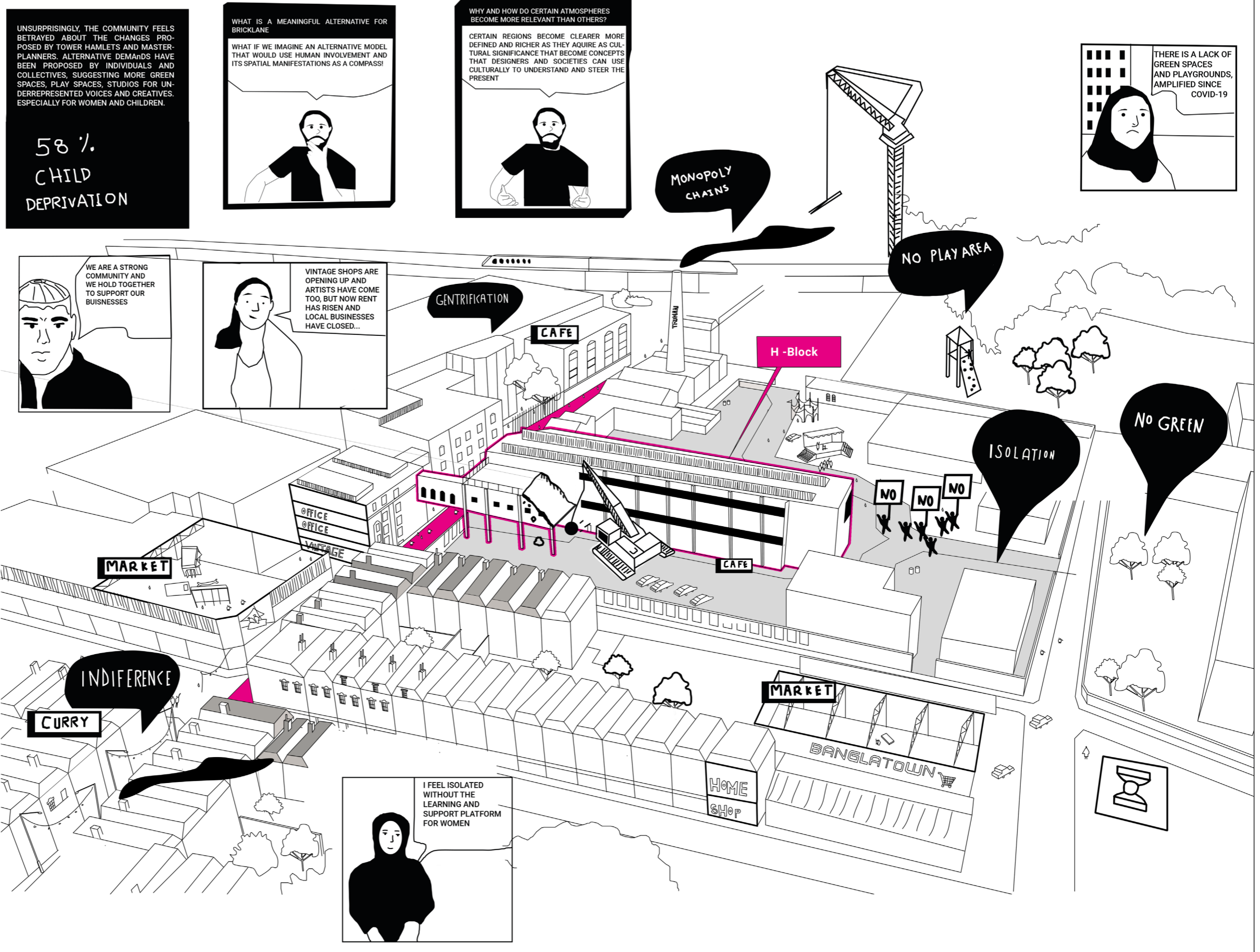
Space Negotiations

Actor Network from top-down and bottom-up perspective. Raising the question of 'where can we meet inbetween?' and what is the nature of their interaction, is it transgressive or prevented. In what way will the architecture intervene in this negotiation of space.

Top-down

Government

London Mayor   Tower Hamlets

NGO
Oitij-jo
Nijjor Manush

Funding agencies

Local Council

Truman

INBETWEEN

Mosque

Civic Society

Education Insti

Spitafield trust

Local Community

Bottom-up

Typology
Eligbility
Culture
Livelihood
Sustainability
Agree
Disagree
Could Agree
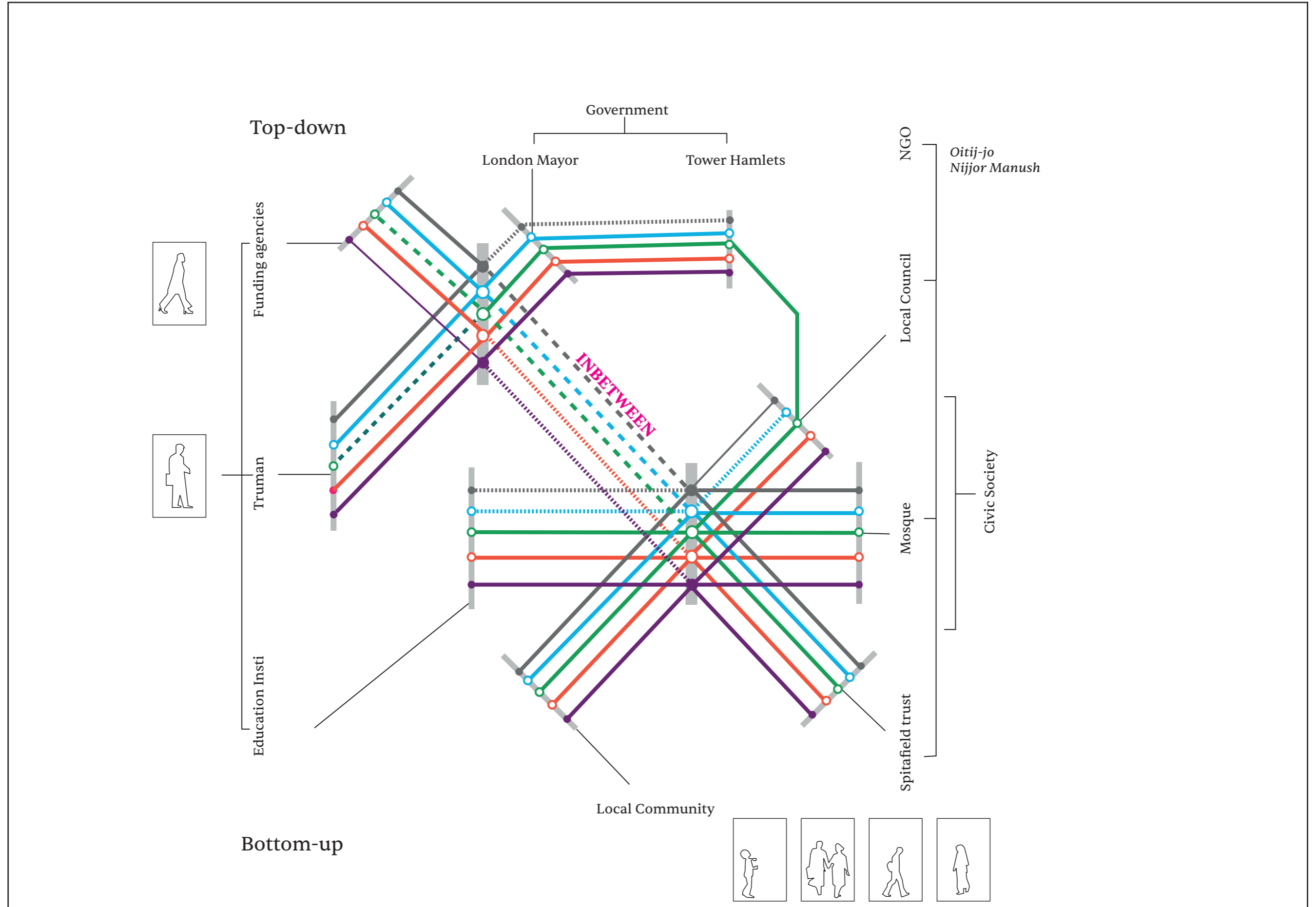
Place-making
Speculative predictions

32 (Awan, N., Schneider, T. and Till, J. 2011)
33 (Price, 2016)

Jeremy Till and Tanjia Schneider together with Nishan Awan, have reconceived the notion of 'spatial agency'[32]. They recognise the distinguishable interplay and link between agency and structure, where the external reality and limitations cannot be ignored, yet they are not oppositional forces. In the case of a contested space such as the H-block other mediums such as its programme strategy outside of architectural principles can help meet global demand while fulfilling local needs. Thinking about architecture beyond its physical boundaries, offers an alternative way of perceiving buildings and space, shifting from the architect's obsession with the object to culturally sensitive approaches. Therefore, working with what already exists materially and socially.

'Newness for the sake of newness, strangeness for the sake of strangeness may attract the eyes but not the intelligence of the heart.' [33]

The 'non-plan' by Cedric Price looks at precisely this 'refrain' of acting[34]. He argues that structural interventions are perhaps not always the answer to 'spatial' problems. Both Price and Jill Stoner perceive architecture laying between the material and other worldliness and should be a collaborative effort in which actors act with, or on behalf of others. Here the architect is not the singular author, but a participant. In fact, it could be argued that the architect should step-back to prove the project's self-sustainability post delivery. Buildings could therefore be treated as shells that accommodate the everyday life of its inhabitants, their daily experiences and events, resulting in a building that is never complete, but in a constant process of becoming and evolving with its inhabitants.

The understanding that architecture transcends its physical boundaries and acknowledging its interpretive multiplicity helps organise my design process around four distinct, but not mutually exclusive parts:

A) Minor architecture - The new programme turns this 'minor' insignificant building into a relevant cultural precinct. What are the existing cultural pulses that the project can learn from and interpret

Figure 12

Figure 17: The film roll shows scenes of the movie 'The Kiosk' directed by Alexandra Pianelli. It shows how a simple minor intervention such as a kiosk brings people from all walks of life together and creates a dialogue.

in the design?

B) Infraordinary- celebrating the everyday, remaining unseen while catering the building's programs.

C) Innovate - utilising a tactical system adapted from the resistance mechanisms in Bricklane.

D) Material - reclaiming the infraordinary and turning it into spatial poetics.

Minor architecture

The conversion of the H-Block to a shopping mall is a loss of memory and provenance engendered by the speed at which buildings are turned into monolithic commercial units, not only raising the issue of how does such a typology attempt to cater for the daily needs and aspirations of people? but also what symbolic order would it elude? Stoner's interest in disused buildings as grassroot social agents in a reality where architects are less guided by what architecture means or intends, but by 'how' it works and what it 'does' (its performativity), is an alternative attempt to tackle the practice today. *Lina* Bo Bardi employs in her architecture the idea of conserving buildings deemed as architecturally insignificant through other media such as site and programme . Design is therefore not seen as a specialised, isolated and aesthetical field, but rather an 'action' redefined as divergent and inclusive. The challenge to what design 'could be' serves as an opportunistic foundation to what the H-Block is and could be in the current time of contested developments. Bo Bardi's work teaches a few lessons on the dialectic exchange between the physical and symbolic. This is especially evident in the reinvigoration of the SESC factory. Here a building once deemed insignificant is turned into a grassroot cultural precinct. From a symbol of economic interest and exploitation to a culturally diverse community hub. This is achieved through Bo Bard's treatment of the existing structure as a cultural landscape than performing as a monolithic structure that separates the indoor and outdoor. The focus on the everyday and the ordinary through her building design down to its smaller details, encourages a more holistic understanding of the built environment and integrates the building as an integral part of the community. [35]

Minor Architecture	**=**	**The Everyday Life Margins and Peripheries Temporal and Ephemeral**
Major Architecture	**=**	**Monumental language Urban Hotspots Permenant**

Figure 13: Lina Bo Bardi SESC Factory.

Figure 14

Cultural Landscape

The diagram highlights the the cultural pulses - creative circles, cultural and educational institutions - around the highstreet.

Library

After school support.

Stepney city farm

crowdfunding for more space as land is threatened to be developed

Art Gallery

Art Galleries for high end artists and curators in London.

Community center

crowdfunding for collective of South-asian women in the community, requesting for a space of trade, startups and food.

Mosque

women spaces for learning, councelling and activities as well as gathering

Inbetween

Church

women spaces for learning, councelling and activities as well as gathering

Primary School

Wishes space for Community Gardening.

Local businesses

crowdfunding for collective of South-asian women in the community, requesting for a space of trade, startups and food.

Tati cafe

crowdfunding for collective of South-asian women in the community, requesting for a space of trade, startups and food.

University

Performance center - Kobi Nazrul

organised by locals and residents, focused on cultural dance and music.

A Network

N- entry

Gentrifiction

Local communities

S- entry

A Creative House
A model of involvement

[36] *(Paul Brickell, 2000)*
[37] *(Raco, Mike,2016)*

The diagram showing the business model of the creative House.

' The Bromley Bow center seemed more of a place of gathering and meeting focused on wellbeing and community as if it were a home. '

Innovate

In the following part, I investigate several entrepreneurial models of self-organised practices to learn from spatial resistance mechanisms and draw a series of reflections by which they achieved collective emancipation, action and structural disruptions. The Bromley Bow Centre is a reference of a community regeneration model that is anchored in community involvement. The centre is owned by its community and is partially rented out to the National Health System. Its entrepreneurial approach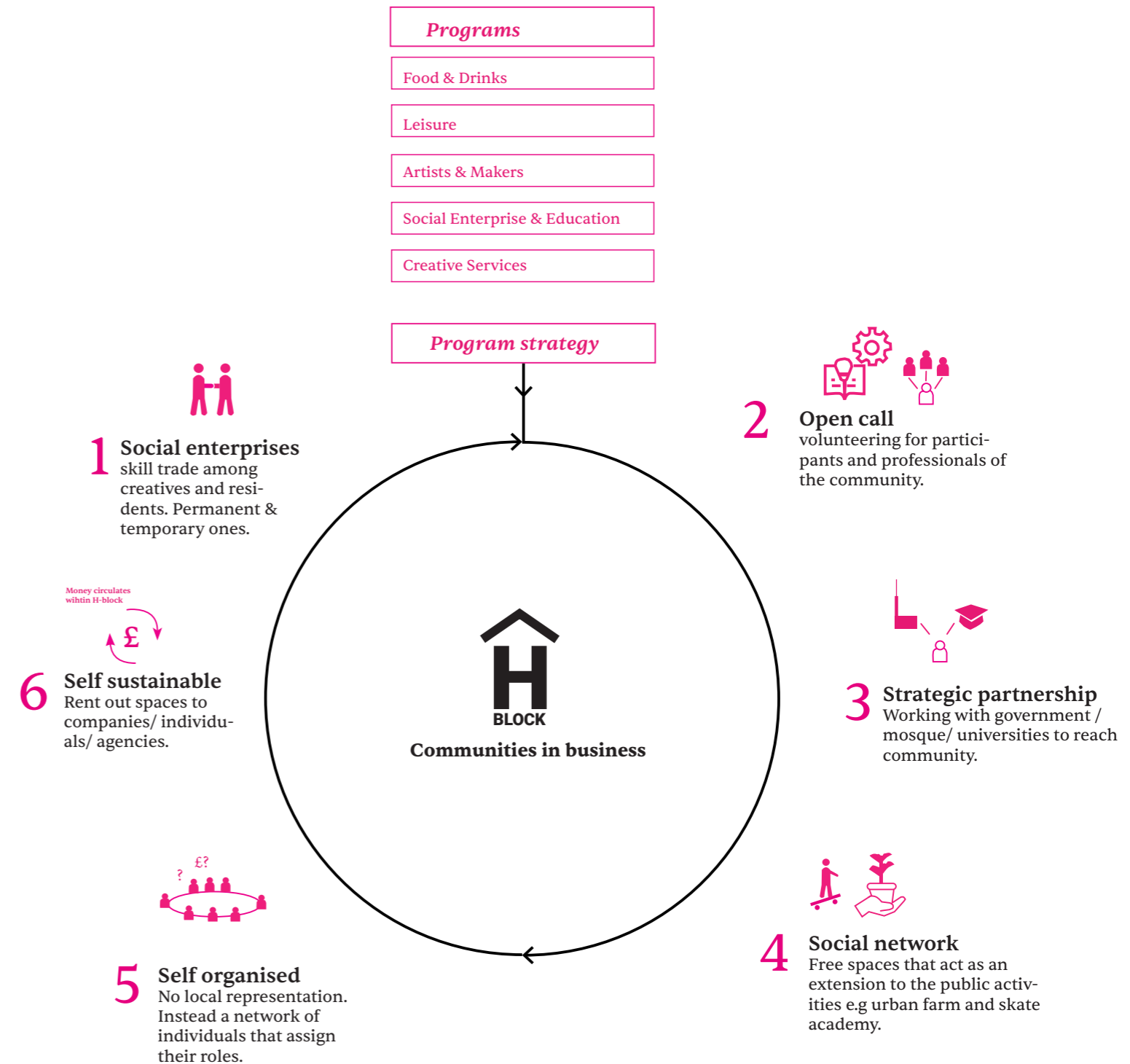 of shifting the notion of communities in 'business' allows for new innovative arrangements that do not mimic existing systemic arrangements and objectives, but aims to develop a culture built on social enterprise.[36] Through shifting the power and resources from the public sector to social entrepreneurs, effective strategies and programmes can be formed that engage communities in a dynamic, entrepreneurial and inclusive way that is both self organised and self sustainable.

In 2000, the Neighbourhood Renewal Plans announced a report highlighting the underperformance of the public sector in the UK's most deprived neighbourhood. Bricklane being one of London's most deprived neighbourhood 58%[37] yet with a rich cultural landscape, positions the H-block as an important agent to represent these underrepresented local enterprises. Similarly to the SESC Factory, the H-block can become a grassroots cultural precinct through its programme strategy. The regeneration business model is built on practical involvement (open call volunteers), local strategic partnerships - mosque, university and private entities. But in order for this entrepreneurial neighbourhood renewal plan to work, the civic and social entrepreneurs need to be involved too. The model will not be run or mediated by a local representative, but a network of people and institutions that do business with each other.

Programs

Food & Drinks

Leisure

Artists & Makers

Social Enterprise & Education

Creative Services

Program strategy

1 Social enterprises skill trade among creatives and residents. Permanent & temporary ones.

2 Open call volunteering for participants and professionals of the community.

Money circulates wihtin H-block

6 Self sustainable Rent out spaces to companies/ individuals/ agencies.

3 Strategic partnership Working with government / mosque/ universities to reach community.

H BLOCK
Communities in business

5 Self organised No local representation. Instead a network of individuals that assign their roles.

4 Social network Free spaces that act as an extension to the public activities e.g urban farm and skate academy.

38(Alys, 2004)

Figure: diagram showing the business model of the creative House.

A building once designed for labour and brewing, now brews social exchanges. The H-block is transformed into a vibrant and diverse platform of art, food, music, culture, enterprise and creativity. It is home to co-working spaces and studios for independent businesses, multiple event spaces for live music, and exhibitions. As well as a cafe, community workshops and a gardening team.

Materials

"Traces of people and actions are left behind by the half burning cigarettes on the floor, a left behind newspaper on stairs, and empty coffee cup on a bench. In the same way the buildings have traces of their post industrial history",

"Sometimes doing something poetic can become political and sometimes doing something political can become poetic"38

Acting on a surface or structure is an expression of intent and motive. It can be careful and gentle or impulsive and brutal. Regardless, it becomes a message. The Truman Brewery site has an architectural tectonic reflective of economy and necessity. A patchwork of material traces - stone, brick, concrete steel and glass- and styles. The structural intervention on the existing structure should be minimal responding tectonically to the different comfort and climate zones that its programs demand. This is a necessity to cater to the various heterogenous actors and to further embed the existing building as a transition layer in its wider context.

The additions to the existing structure should demand minimal resource and skill to encourage communities to self-build. Its connections should be simple and demountable over the years.

Infraordinary

Interiors are receptacles of things, but also support effects. The objects do not provide material support for memory, they are also commodities of display and expediency. Everyday infraordinary furniture become more than an object but a curated and composed elements part of the interior.

To expand the flexibility of the construction into the interior, the introduction of furniture that are movable and part of the negative spaces of the existing structure allows for the transformation of space. Here furniture can roll into spaces, filling it completely when needed and drawn out for use with its stored objects are isolated and presented like gems. Their use creates theatre. The experience heightens awareness of the actions of both server and the served. Minor architecture as such may be temporary or ephemeral in nature and may be overlooked, but are significant in the context of urban life.
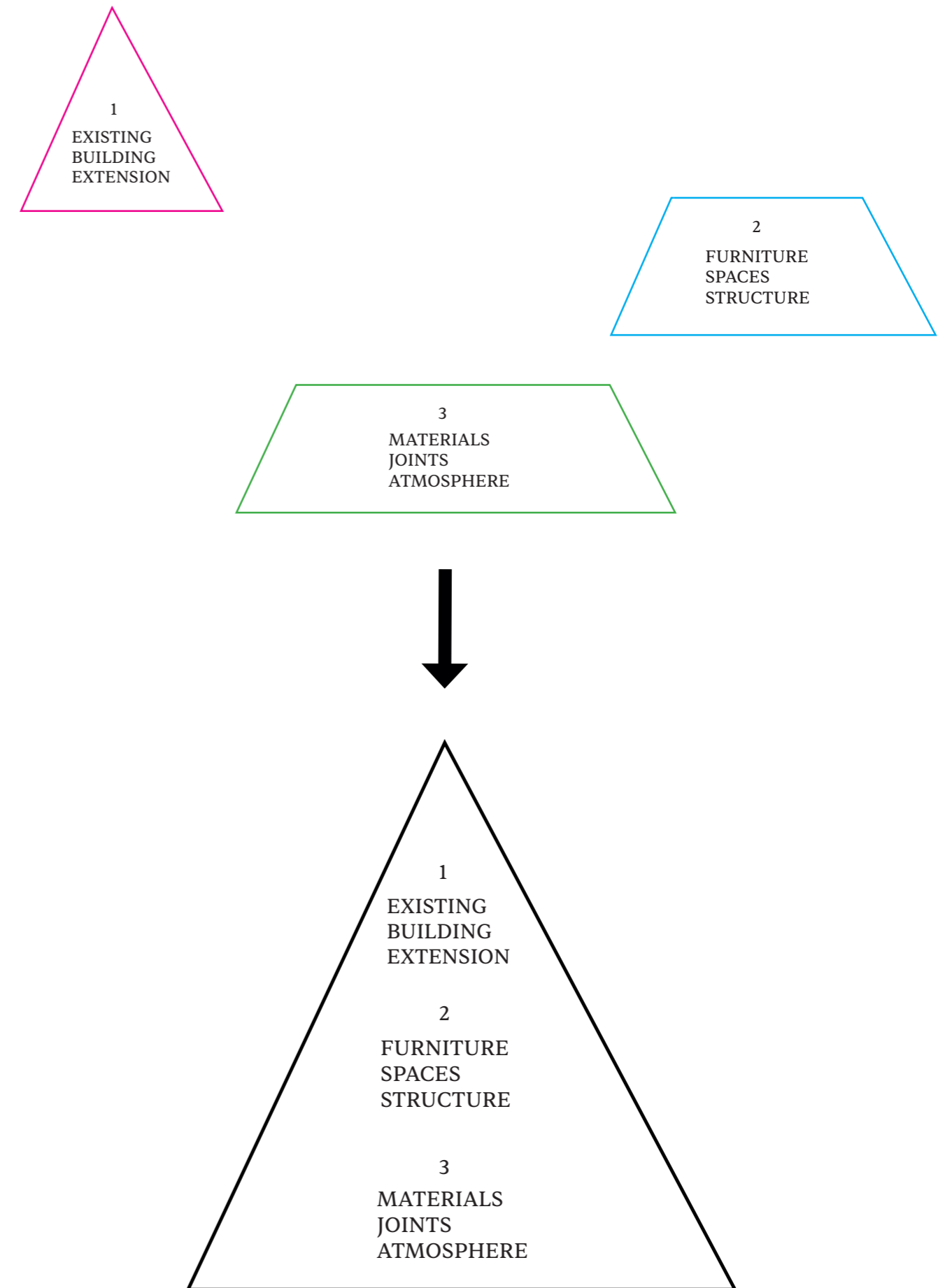
Reflection

What is the relation between your graduation project topic, your master track (Ar, Ur, BT, LA, MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

London, a multifaceted city has raised questions on the importance of recognising the unseen intangible undercurrents of the city as well as the seen physical infrastructure. In this, MSc Graduation Studio Heterogeneous City – London in Architectural Design Crossovers offers a broad approach to unravel the city through various lenses standing outside of the discipline of architecture. The theme I have chosen came out of my fascination with psychology and storytelling. The graduation topic monolithic spaces, attempts to grapple the city through artistic cross-fertilisations and scientific urban probes to grapple the wider socio-political context and ultimately imagine a bottom-down design, catering to its heterogeneous population as well as addressing issues of gentrification.

How did your research influence your design/recommendations and how did the design/recommendations influence your research?

In the first quarter of the process, I developed a tatutological research method and argumentation, setting up a methodological framework and intention behind my thesis. From this phase I developed the initial framework (refer to p54.), my research and design method. It attempted to perceive the city through separate elements that become a whole. Knowing that my framework was meant to reflect a learning process, I have integrated a feedback loop- for a continuous outcome. These have caused overlapping and disruptions in my work that have positively allowed my research to carry in depth and gain valuable knowledge through finding out new information in the production and later development of my research.

How do you assess the value of your way of working (your approach, your used methods, used methodology)?

A vital reflection point was whether my approach to the project worked. In hindsight, there was a strong start off and relevance to the issue of monolithic spaces and state-led physical interventions in the city. I believed my research approach worked and became more refined, but I should have not feared the getting 'lost' part of the process. A month before p4, I was able to connect and bring my principles of my project together: spatialisation, materialisation and programmatic scheme with my initial principles.

How do you assess the academic and societal value, scope and implication of your graduation project, including ethical aspects?

The urban and social relevance of the discourse was questioned during the first formal assessment at the P2 presentation. The mentors expressed a lack of precision in the vocabulary used to describe my methods and recommended stepping back to my research before jumping into the design phase too soon in order to ensure my narrative and approach were coherent. Post P2, I went back to London and conducted further

How do you assess the value of the transferability of your project results?

The displacement of architecture in other disciplines, is not only to analyse the urban context but also to develop strategies through programmes to create a project that can stand post delivery amid contending economic forces- an entrepreneurship model.
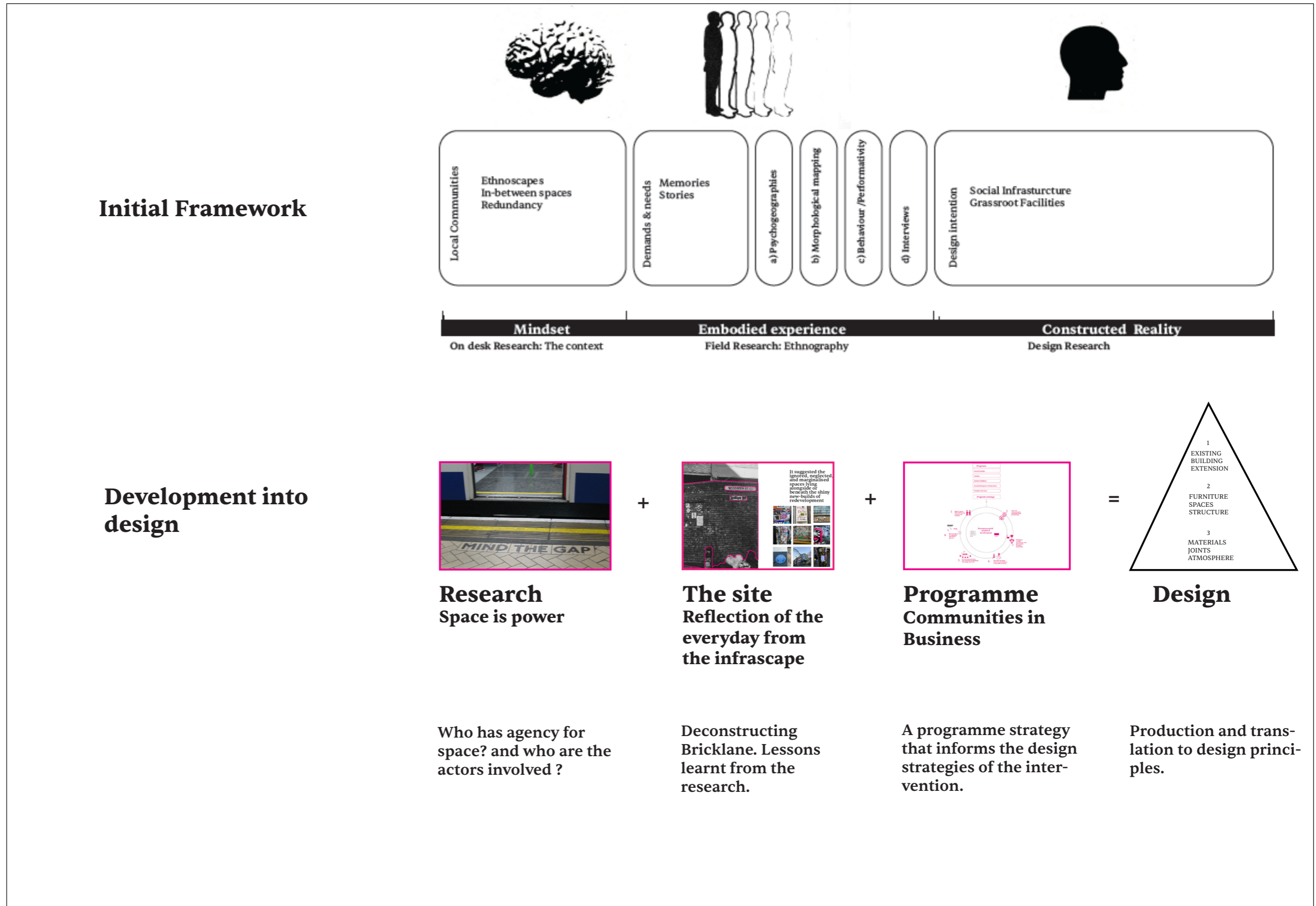
How does the project address the importance of responding to local demands while engaging with global demands?

It was important to me to position the project itself as a locally grounded agent that attempts to design, but also structure a model built on social enterprise to stand in the face of economic forces - a bilateral relationship.

How does the project address the importance of responding to environmental demands while reflecting the design principles?

The restoration project is a small city of independent pavilions. These are created of plywood with inclusions of acoustic baffles and insulation. The importance was to leave the building as is and have these pavilions meet the networks and performance requirements of the space, but also climate.

The diagram highlights the initial research framework during p1 and the development of this into the various stages leading to the design strategy.

Initial Framework

| Local Communities | Ethnoscapes In-between spaces Redundancy | Demands & needs | Memories Stories | a) Psychogeographies | b) Morphological mapping | c) Behaviour /Performativity | d) Interviews | Design intention | Social Infrasturcture Grassroot Facilities |

Mindset   **Embodied experience**   **Constructed Reality**

On desk Research: The context   Field Research: Ethnography   Design Research

Development into design

 + **+** **=**

Research
Space is power

The site
Reflection of the everyday from the infrascape

Programme
Communities in Business

Design

Who has agency for space? and who are the actors involved ?

Deconstructing Bricklane. Lessons learnt from the research.

A programme strategy that informs the design strategies of the intervention.

Production and translation to design principles.

ing, of life, of the programs of the everyday reflected in its mundane details. In the design process this is translated in the performative form of the existing structure, acting more like a transition layer than a monolithic structure that separates the indoor and outdoor environment entirely. Therefore, presenting different comfort and climate zones determined catered to the different degrees of ownership and responsibilities.

Epilogue
a state of becom-ing

Lefebvre proclaimed space as much more than an object,' static'. Instead it is 'acting' as a conduit, a goal, a means and an end. Reminiscent of Stoner's 'displacement' of architecture into the spatiality of fiction - she reimagines the project as a landscape of the 'know-how' rather than a building. Pointing to the immaterial, how the H-block will be articulated has much to do with the way alternate and subversive spatial strategies are being used.

The political essence of buildings becomes meaningful due to their relation to physicality and social processes. The unseen urbanism reinforces the notion that design involves meeting material needs and pressing social needs through innovative models of grassroot participatory/collaborative design of participants and professionals. The design process is at once, the production of a physical form, and a social, cultural and symbolic resource. Together they respond to latent, but powerful desires to disrupt structures of power.

The redevelopment of the H-block at the frontier of contested developments, becomes a representational frontier in the wider debate around the professional identity and position of individuals responsible for shaping the built, material reality in cities across the world.

Beyond the notion of Bricklane as a geographical frontline of contested urbanism, it is also a representational frontline of the people responsible for shaping it. Its not a fight for a piece of land, but the reality and life that it constitutes.

Therefore the design proposal must focus on the *minor* to design an architecture that requires minimal skill, time and resource to allow the community to be there - a protest against architecture as a commodity. Within the body of research, Jill Stoner and George Perec's investigation of the minor inspired the careful observation and documentation of commonplaces, discovering the wealth of experiences, interactions, stories and social networks present in Brick lane. Thereby shifting the focus from the tangible and material aspects that render our cities to the unseen life that inhabit it. A city of be-

THIS IS NOT ABOUT BUILDINGS '

"a vacant building vibrates with unseen intensities, ready to shed its excess, its burden of over-wrought grammars, its syntax of profitability: its closed interior and its brittle shell. If we can, let us imagine emptiness recalibrated, space unfolded toward smooch and slippery and nonconforming use." - Jill Stoner

'IT IS ABOUT ARCHITECTURE IN ITS PERFORMATIVE FORM'

Bibliography

AFTERPARTI ISSUE #01: *For the Love of Power*. London: Afterparti Collective, 2022.
Almeida., Lima, Zeuler Rocha Mello de, and Lina Bo Bardi. Lina Bo Bardi: Drawings. Princeton (N.J.): Princeton University Press, 2019.

Awan, N., Schneider, T. and Till, J. *Spatial agency: Other ways of doing architecture.* Abingdon, Oxon England: Routledge,2011

Artists' Workspace Study. London: Greater London Authority.
Cultural Infrastructure Plan.2019. London: Greater London Authority.2014

Born, Megan., Helene Mary Furján, Lily. Jencks, and Phillip M. Crosby. Dirt. 2012. Philadelphia: PennDesign.

Brickell, Paul. People before structures. S.l.: s.n., 2000.

Butler, J. *Excitable speech.* New York: Routledge,1997

Butler, C. (2014) Henri Lefebvre: *Spatial politics, Everyday Life and the right to the city.* Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Crass, Chris. *Towards Collective Liberation: Anti-Racist Organizing, Feminist Praxis, and Movement Building Strategy*. Oakland, CA: PM, 2013.

Dayer, Carolina, Ivan Rupnik, and Jacob Mans. "Interview with Jan de Vylder of Architecten Jan de Vylder Inge Vinck." Journal of Architectural Education 75, no. 1 (2021): 25–29. https://doi.org/10.1080/10464883.2021.1859882.

Dehaene, Michiel. Heterotopia and the City Public Space in a Postcivil society. London: Routledge, 2015.

De Assis, Paulo, and Paolo Giudici. *Machinic Assemblies Of Desire Deleuze And Artistic Research*. Leuven University Press.2021

Farthing, Stuart M. *Research Design in Urban Planning: A Student's Guide*. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2016.

Florida, R. *Who's your city?*. Toronto: Vintage Canada,2001

Glynn, S. *Class, ethnicity and religion in the Bengali East End*. Manchester: Manchester Univ Press, 2017

Hauck, Thomas, Regine Keller, and Volker Kleinekort. *Infrastructural Urbanism.* Berlin: DOM Publishers, 2011.

Kohn, M. *Radical space: Building the house of the people*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003.

Landa, Manuel De. A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.

Marc Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Antropology of Supermodernity*, trans. John Howe (London/New York: Verso,1995).

Manzini, E. and Coad, R. *Politics of the everyday*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.

Maxwell-Anderson, Alexander, Darcy Rankin, Yishi Wang, Beidi Ran, Hongxin Huang, and Kate Trenerry. *"Decentre: Designing for Coexistence in a Time of Crisis."* KERB, 2020.

Mayor of London. n.d. Saving London's music venues. [online] Available at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/arts-and-culture/music/saving-londons-music-venues> [Accessed 3 October 2022].

McWilliams, Douglas. *The Flat White Economy*. 1st ed. Duckworth Overlook, 2015.

Nardi, S.D. et al. *The Routledge Handbook of Memory And Place*. London ; New York: Routledge, Taylor et Francis Group, 2021.

Oliveira, Olivia de. Lina Bo Bardi: Obra Construida = built work. Barcelona: Gustavo Gili, 2010.

Pallasmaa, Juhani. The architecture of Image: Existential space in Cinema. Helsinki: Rakennustieto Oy, 2001.

Perec, Georges, and Marc Lowenthal.*A n Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris.* Cambridge, MA:Wakefield Press, 2010.

Price, Cedric, and Samantha Hardingham. Cedric Price Works 1952-2003: A forward-minded retrospective. London: Architectural Association, 2016.

Sendra, Pablo, Richard Sennett, and Leo Hollis. *Designing Disorder*.Verso, 2021

Stavrides, S., 2016. *Common space*. London: Zed Books,2016.

Schechner, Richard. *Performance Theory*. [Place of publication not identified]: Routledge.A, 2015.

Schoonderbeek, Marc. *Mapping in Architectural Discourse: Place-Time Disconti-*

nuities. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2022.

Sevilla-Buitrago, Alvaro. *"Publicity ."* The Architectural Review, 2022.

Staiger, Uta, Henriette Steiner, and Andrew Webber. *Memory Culture And The Contemporary City.* Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

The Green Line. Francis Alys, 2004. https://francisalys.com/the-green-line/.

Raco, Mike. *State-Led Privatisation and the Demise of the Democratic State.: Welfare Reform and Localism in an Era of Regulatory Capitalism.* London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016.

Zukin, S., n.d. *Naked city*. New York: Oxford University press.

Appendix I
List of illustrations

Archives	**EAST & SOUTH LONDON** Lambeth archive Dalston archive Brixton archive (black history)
Talks	**WE ARE HERE /LONDON DESIGN FESTIVAL X SOUND ADVICE SEP 2022** We Are Here was an event organised by Sound Advice for the London Design Festival, taking over the Rio Cinema during London Design Festival 2022 to celebrate migrant voices in the urban and cultural realm. **ROADTONOWHERE/ REFERENCE BAR LONDON/2022** The commodification of culture as a means to survive in today's consumer culture and the need to package immigrant aestehtics for purchase in western context.
Interview	**CARDS TOWARDS HUMANITY/JAKE OBICHERE AND PRIYA ADDANKI /2022** RIBA professional category winners of ' Coventry's Tapestry'.
Discussions	**TU DELFT PROFESSORS LEEKE REINDERS AND PHD STUDENT JOHN HANNA** Speaking to Leeke Reinders provided an anthropological lens to the research. In our discussion, he mentioned the importance of observation and to look at the city from behind walls and not to simply rely on the highstreet and so called public spaces. This in turn, inspired the chapter 'Room with a view'.
Events	**ROBINHOOD GARDENS/ARCHITECTURE FILM FESTIVAL ROTTERDAM/ 2022** The movie lent insights into East London and its great spatial transformation under political subjectification - high levels of unemployment, racism and production waste. It also reflected on the problem with relying on theory of so called 'good' and 'humane' design rather than pursuing enthographic research to understand the needs of the future tenants: a tragedy of Architects with great intentions. The documentary therefore reinforced the notion of having to not just predict great outcomes of the design but to look for clues to what would constitute this in the social fabric itself.

Acknowledgement

Life in the shadows of fast urbanism

GENTRIFICATION: Please bear with us while we tear apart your community