Fragile state(s): lines, walls and the possibility of interrupting processes of privatisation

Freya Spencer-Wood
1. Lines: fragile nation state

   Brexit
   Ancient lines
   Glasgow's branded timelines
   Glasgow's branded trajectory

2. Walls: finding tangible moments of fragility

   Fragile walls: inhabiting infrastructure
   Flows of capital and water: wetness and fragility

3. Interruptions: intervening at moments of fragility

   Fragile infrastructural network: processes of unprivatisation
   Fragile infrastructure
   Fragile floor plans
   Fragile edges and landscapes

4. Detailed fragile states

   Inhabitation
   Appropriation
   Deterioration

5. Fragile edges and landscapes
1. Lines: fragile nation state

Brexit
UK and Europe
62.0% remain

53.4% leave

Scotland and England
MAKE SCOTLAND INDEPENDENT AGAIN
Ancient lines
Geological Map of Scotland by Archibald Geikie, topography by T.B. Johnston, 1876
Highland Boundary Fault line
Matthew Paris' map of Great Britain, 13th century
Water
Historical map of Roman Britain, circa 400
Caledonian orogeny
390-490 million years ago
What is the role of architecture in unfixing the lines that make concrete or rooted our perception of identity?

fixing    unfixing    lines    identity
The Clyde / the Forth and Clyde canal

Glasgow

Edinburgh

Dynamic line as connector
Glasgow’s branded timelines

- *A legacy of generic identities*
Role of the Clyde

North Atlantic Ocean

Glasgow

Firth of Clyde
MAKE GLASGOW INTERNATIONAL AGAIN AND AGAIN
Glasgow Harbour, 1828
Clyde shipyards, 1957
Govan Dry Docks, built between 1869-1875
Finnieston cantilever crane, built in 1931
Glasgow Harbour Tunnel Rotundas, built between 1890 and 1896 (vehicular and pedestrian access)
Glasgow’s branded trajectories

- Brexit privatisation of global Glasgow
Clydeside Renegeration project as a case study of Brexit
MAKE GLASGOW GLOBAL AGAIN
'Metropolitan skyline', fragmented developments
‘Vibrant’, ‘creative’ waterfront
Inactive public realm
Cafe culture at SECC with a view of the Clyde Arc

View all projects
Semi-private spaces
Large scale private development
How, by embracing and inhabiting Glasgow’s climate and leftover infrastructure, could market forces and privatisation be challenged?

By finding ways to subvert the neoliberalist transformations of the city, producing a set of realms that are able to support local communities and evolving relations between people and place, how can the relationship between politics and the city be made more visible, and in turn, accessible?

What is the role of architecture in unfixing predetermined identities that are imposed on the city?

What is the role of architecture in disrupting regeneration timelines that aim to rebrand places as generic and economically exclusive?
2. Walls: acting within moments of fragility

Fragile walls: inhabiting infrastructure
Windmillcroft maintenance plan, Clyde Navigation Trust, 1834

-Mitchell archive
Glasgow pledges £50m to fix crumbling Clyde quay walls

A section of the Clyde Walkway collapsed at Anderston Quay in February 2013. Glasgow councillors now plan to spend 50 million to secure other quay walls along the river. Picture: Robert Perry/TSPL

By
CHRIS MCCALL

Published: 12:25
Thursday 17 August 2017
TOWARDS RIVER CLYDE 2050 | STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES
1. Glasgow Harbour Masterplan
2. Redevelopment of Yorkhill Hospital
3. Western Infirmary / Glasgow University Campus Expansion. Education, research and ancillary commercial
4. Future SEC expansion and redevelopment with ancillary diversification. Including hotel and commercial space
5. Anderston Quay, Cheapside Street, Warroch St. Multiple residential schemes
6. James Watt St -‘The Grid’. Major office development
7. Customhouse Quay. Mixed use, including two major hotel proposals.
8. Candleriggs—former Goldberg Site. Mixed use
9. St Enoch Centre Expansion. Commercial and Cinema
10. Buchanan Wharf. Major office development
11. Pacific Drive East. Residential
12. Pacific Quay West. Mixed use
13. Water Row Masterplan
14. East Govan and Ibrox TRA
15. Laurieston TRA
16. City Centre Avenues Project
17. Junction 19 / Anderston Cross improvements.
18. Quay Wall Improvements

COMMITTED PUBLIC SECTOR INVESTMENT
13. Water Row Masterplan
14. East Govan and Ibrox TRA
15. Laurieston TRA
16. City Centre Avenues Project
17. Junction 19 / Anderston Cross improvements.
18. Quay Wall Improvements

River Corridor Strategy, November 2018 (officially published Feb 2019)
Claiming public land / common space
How can we act within these moments of fragility and disrupt bigger processes of political violence that are made visible through the built environment?

What kind of architecture can disrupt regeneration timelines that rebrand places as generic and exclusive?

How, by unfixing and disrupting, can architecture facilitate the accumulation of truly public spaces in the city that are characterised by an evolving and relational identity?
Unfixing the line of the wall
Public wall as an inhabitable space
Flows of capital and water: wetness and fragility
MAKE GLASGOW WET AGAIN
3. Interruptions: intervening within moments of fragility

_Fragile infrastructural network: processes of unprivatisation_
PRIVATISING SPACE

INFRASTRUCTURE:
TECHNICAL:
SUSTAINABILITY

CITY:
LANDSCAPE:
PRODUCTIVITY

BUILDING:
(INTERIOR) SPACE:
SOCIAL ACTIVITY

scales
FRAGILE NATION STATE

UNPRIVATISING SPACE
UNPRIVATISING SPACE

FRAGILE INFRASTRUCTURE

FRAGILE EDGES & LANDSCAPES

FRAGILE FLOOR PLANS
UNPRIVATISING SPACE

INHABITATION

DETERIORATION

APPROPRIATION
UNPRIVATISING SPACE

COLLECTIVITY

SHARING KNOWLEDGE

INTIMACY

relational characteristics
UNPRIVATISING SPACE

INHABITATION

SHARING KNOWLEDGE

FRAGILE NATION STATE

FRAGILE EDGES & LANDSCAPES

COLLECTIVITY

APPROPRIATION

FRAGILE INFRASTRUCTURE

DETERIORATION

FRAGILE FLOOR PLANS

INTIMACY
Collapse
Fragile infrastructure
1. Sites of deteriorating quay walls

- Govan Dry Docks
- Lancefield quay
- Windmillcroft quay
2. Prospective / ongoing private development threatened by state of walls
3. Local histories and surrounding community buildings

- Bakeries, 1880s
- Ship repair workshop and pottery, 19th century
- SWG3 club and artist studios
- Anderston Primary School
- Public baths and washing green, 1850
- Govanhill Baths and community centre
Govan Dry Docks
Developers claim Govan Graving Docks plan is ‘worth £150m’ to city economy

Govan graving docks was built in stages from 1869-1894 by the Clyde Navigation Trust to cater for the huge demand for ship repair services. Picture: John Devlin/TSPL
Post Office map of Glasgow, Clyde Navigation Trust, 1889-90
- Mitchell Library archive
Windmillcroft quay
Windmillecroft quay washing green and baths, 1850
- Mitchell Library archive
Lancefield quay
John Napier’s fitting out basin, Lancefield quay (Broomielaw), 19th century
- Mitchell Library archive
Pottery, OS map 1888-1913
4. Inhabiting the wall at moments of fragility, claiming public space.
5. Deflecting / diffusing private edges
Waste disposal and plant rooms creating hostile private edges on water’s edge
Fences and walls defining public from private
6. Inhabiting infrastructure and creating public access
Finnieston crane, 1954
Tunnel
Dry docks
7. Destabilising edges and landscapes
4. Detailed fragile states

Inhabitation
Appropriation
Deterioration
Inhabitation
Pottery / ceramic studio

Plastics sorting basin

salt water

fresh water
Water recycling tower / plastics studio spaces

Rainwater collection / look-out tower
Appropriation
1. 2000mm diameter pipe
2. Turbine
3. Generator
2. 1000mm diameter bypass pipe
Deterioration
1. Rammed earth tile facade
25 / 40 / 600mm rammed earth tiles (overlapping in a way that allows for the top edge to deteriorate)
56 / 38mm timber battens
50 / 25mm counter battens
roofing felt sealing layer
19mm plywood panel
25mm back ventilation
190mm cavity (190mm battens)
350mm cellulose thermal insulation
275mm studding
19mm plywood panel

2. Rammed earth cast flashing - preventing water penetrating the facade temporarily (deteriorates at a similar rate to the tiles)

3. Rammed earth block facade
50mm rammed earth facing that washes away before sections of the facade begin breaking down
350mm rammed earth (cast in uneven segments in order to unstabilise the wall)
350mm cellulose thermal insulation
275mm studding
19mm plywood panel

4. 20mm earth mortar joint with 150/60mm reinforced trans-lime-mortar peripheral tie strip that allows for the wall to deteriorate in sections

5. Point fixing to studding
1. 19mm plywood panel
275mm studding
350mm cellulose thermal insulation
190mm cavity (190mm battons)
25mm back ventilation
19mm plywood panel
roofing felt sealing layer
50 / 25mm counter battons
56 / 38mm timber battons
25 / 400 / 600mm rammed earth tiles (overlapping in a way that allows for the top edge to deteriorate)
5. Fragile edges and landscapes
8. Emerging fragile edges and landscapes