BEAUTY IS TRUTH
A location analysis

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thames bridge 18th century
thames bridge 21st century
This is a study about the history of bridges in central London over the river Thames. It highlights the used style in several periods of time. What stands out is the gap in time of 200 years between the end of the 18th century and the end of the 20th century, when no multifunctional bridges were built or designed.

**TIMELINE of London's bridges**

**1st London Bridge**
1st stone bridge, as an extended part of the city, due to lack of space in walled city. For exploitation houses and shops were built on top, up to seven floors high.

**2nd London Bridge**
1st stone bridge, as an extended part of the city, due to lack of space in walled city. For exploitation houses and shops were built on top, up to seven floors high.

**1209 - 1760**

**1776**

*A classical palace on piers*
John Soane, triumphal bridge with a domed temple, flanked by an avenue of corinthian colonnades. Plans remained unbuild.
1831-1967
2nd London Bridge 1st stone bridge, as an extended part of the city, due to lack of space in walled city. For exploitation houses and shops were built on top, up to seven floors high.

1996
A lavish suspended garden
French architect Antoine Grumbach designed a garden, lined with hedges, trees and an exotic "topiary cafe".

2014
Garden Bridge
Thomas Heatherwick's proposal for a garden bridge. A floating forest across the Thames in the form of two conjoined mushrooms.

1960
A multistorey pleasure bridge
Glass Age Development Committee, megastructure for Vauxhall. A vertical stack of roadways, shops, skating rinks and a hotel, a roof garden and open-air theatre.

1900-2000
Teknical Revolution

1973-now
3rd London Bridge
Lord Holford, designed the final bridge. It comprises three spans of prestressed-concrete box girders, a total of 283 m long.

1900-2000
Digital Revolution
London's Garden bridge: 'It feels like we're trying to pull off a crime'

Take one voguish designer, one national treasure and one icon-hungry mayor and what do you get? A floating forest across the Thames. But can anyone actually say what the £175m garden bridge is for?

Authors, architects and artists line up to lambast 'abyssmal' garden bridge plan

31 May 2015  177

The Observer view on the Thames garden bridge

24 May 2015  35

How Joanna Lumley charmed 'dear Boris' to back her garden bridge dream

24 May 2015  228

Legal challenge over London garden bridge plans

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London garden bridge: the Thames is now a playground for private fantasies

Oliver Wainwright

19 Dec 2014  67

Thames 'private' garden bridge could cost £3.5m a year in public money

3 Dec 2014  208

Revealed: Boris Johnson's duplicitous handling of London's garden bridge

5 Mar 2015  558

The Thames garden bridge is nothing but a wasteful blight

Rowan Moore

22 Nov 2014  242
How Joanna Lumley charmed ‘dear Boris’ to back her garden bridge dream

New details emerge of key role played by celebrity amid calls for transparency over ‘back to front’ selection of Thomas Heatherwick to design structure

Battle of the Garden Bridge: Osborne blasts Ed Balls threat to axe iconic plan

THE INDEPENDENT  MONDAY 08 JUNE 2015

Heatherwick’s London Garden Bridge bid ‘given unfair advantage’
roadplan of london 1943
missing roads in current map
roadplan of london 1943
current roadmap of London
roadplan of london 1943
current roadmap of London
morpholy: complete route
Attractions near the Thames
Rhythm of crosses
VIEWS FROM THE BRIDGE

- IBM Institute
- Inner Temple Gardens
- London TV Centre
- Bernie Spain Gardens
- OXO Restaurant
- Blackfriars Bridge
NORTHBANK

- Serious momentum to make a new public space there: potential to give public space a boost
- Calculation centre of London: temple station, tube station: underused capacity, has space on the roof which offers the perfect chance to land, and it is right on the river
  - Victoria Embankment separates the north side of the city with the river because of the roads.
- Aldwich; is suppose to be a roundabout, but got reboundabouded. But there is room to reconnect us en shed more light on the north part of the city.
- When you come down to Arundel street and, it feels like a colden sack
- If you make this route it feels like surely there has always something suppose to be there
- Victorian Architecture
- Southbank is really thriving, a lot of elements coming together.
- Green nice public space
- Touristic
- Monumental walk along the river for pedestrians.
- Brutalistic architecture
NORTH BANK
WIDTH OF THE BRIDGE

3M

4M

350M

6M
WIDTH OF THE BRIDGE

6M

10M
OLD LONDON BRIDGE
thames bridge 18th century
london bridge 16th century
section:
buildings lean beside the bridge
side view:
bUILDINGS ONLY ABOVE THE COLUMNS
London 2000

Thick slab of buildings with towers peaking out
London 1800

thick slab of buildings with towers peaking out
18th century, the Thames without the Embankments
HISTORY OF THE EMBANKMENTS

In the past, the city of London had a much closer relationship to the River Thames compare to nowadays. The introduction of the Embankments had the distancing effect of creating a zone between the river and its adjacent buildings. They were designed as a contribution to the imperial, appropriate, civilized London of the 19th century. The newly interest for the imperial power of the city had to be represented appropriately, the embankments lend themselves perfectly for this job. They represented the ordered nature, by incorporating the Thames into the city as an object of its control, while accentuating its natural beauty at the same time. As a solid, physical and firm division between culture and nature they formed a rigid enclosure of the water and embodied a firm boundary between society, the land, and the regulated liveliness of the Thames. The banks were used literally and figuratively to keep society from nature, enclosed and tamed by walls.

North Bank

As for the North Bank, the construction of the Victoria embankment started in 1865 due to congesting roads (especially the Strand and Fleet Street), the increasing population, and the need for a sewing system. The project involved
19th century construction of the Victoria Embankment
building on to the foreshore of the River Thames, narrowing the river. At

ground level, in addition to the new roads, two public gardens were laid out.
A way of giving rationalized nature back to the citizens, at a place where the
rough nature was conquered and tamed. The North Bank is also a place where
ceremonies take place, and where several memorials are housed. Think of the
memorial gardens, the Imperial Camel Corps London memorial, and a war me-
orial. The memorial I will add is a memorial to all the bereaved Londoners.

**Intention**

It is not my intention to reverse history. However, I would like to make use of

the knowledge we have of the relationship between the city and the Thames.

My ambition is to change the relationship with death to a more natural one. I

try to realize this effect in several ways. First by acknowledging the world of

the living, embodied by the bridge, and the world of the death, embodied by

the reflection of this bridge on the water.

At the time of a ceremony, the attending party arrives the bridge via the

Thames. Therefore I would like to make a docking place on each side of the

bridge. Symbolizing the new relationship with the water.

**SOURCE:** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victoria_Embankment

**SOURCE:** https://www.somersethouse.org.uk/history/since-the-18th-centu-
John Norden’s map of London in 1593: shows little development on the Southbank.
HISTORY OF THE EMBANKMENTS

South Bank
The South Bank thrived later than the North Bank, due to the lacking of a bridge to cross the water and due to its formerly waterlogged condition in winter. During the Middle ages with only one bridge (the London Bridge) leading to the South Bank, it was a place for entertainment, including theatres, prostitution and bear-baiting. Nowadays it still has this entertaining function, but with different activities, think of museums, film and restaurants. In between it flourished as a location for the industry. Mainly at in the 18th and 19th century this leaded to the growth of the area. While only recently, in the beginning of the 20th century, it regained its public function with the build of a new County Hall in 1922. From than on further developments on the Southbank added onto the public character.

SOURCE: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Bank
CHARACTER BANKS

This picture shows the atmosphere of the bridges and the embankment on my location. It shows a certain monumentality, earnest, heavyness, severity, timelessness, indestructible. A new bridge should fit in this context. A very white slim bridge would be strange. How to show of current technology and building methods while fitting into the context.
ATMOSPHERE THAMES - MONET

During the years between 1899 and 1905, Monet made several trips to London in the winter months to capture its sights from the fifth-floor balcony of the Savoy Hotel. Monet was captivated by the London fog, a notable atmospheric effect made markedly worse by the heavy pollution of the Industrial Revolution. “I love London,” Monet wrote. “It is a mass, an ensemble, and it is so simple. Then, in London, what I love, above all, is the fog.” So intent was he on capturing gradations of light as it is affected by fog that he undertook about one-hundred canvases.

source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charing_Cross_Bridge_(Monet_se-
In the London series, Monet chose to create an ensemble of urban paintings, in which the movement of pedestrians and carriages, of trains and boats, gives way to the greater rhythms of light playing, through fog and mist, upon enduring architectural forms. In the two views of Waterloo Bridge, each with its sweep of smokestacks and buildings lining the riverbank, the artist reversed the lights and darks: in one, the bridge is a band of light; in the other, its dark shape is defined by the lighter water surrounding it. In both compositions, the city’s life is indicated by dabs of paint that suggest the vague shapes and lights of a carriage, a small boat, smoke. Running through the paintings like a constant current, the city’s energy becomes timeless in this series, which, more than any other up to this time, came from the depths of Monet’s memory and imagination.

**SOURCE:** [HTTP://WWW.ARTC.EDU/AIC/RESOURCES/RESOURCE/383](http://www.artic.edu/aic/resources/resource/383)
The weather strongly influence the overall atmosphere surrounding the bridge. Here you can find some pictures illustrating this atmosphere. Most of the time the weather is not as bright and windless as the renderings of Heatherwick or other proposals for a bridge. Typical London weather involves cloudy, windy, rainy days, when the bridge dissolves as a ghost in the fog. The future bridge should take the site specific atmospheres into account.

The following illustrations depict the atmosphere in case of fog, in case of rain, in morning light, in evening light, at night, when it is cloudy and when it is clear. It does not intent to show a full spectrum of the different atmospheres in London. Instead the pictures focus on the atmosphere I found most typical for the city. The atmosphere I specifically want my design to strive in. The last pictures of these atmospheres focus on the tidal movement of the Thames and the consequences for the materials in touch with the water.

Most of the time, the atmospheres is quite grey. It is cloudy, windy rainy and a white bridge wouldn’t fit in there at all.
Positive: Designed with taking into consideration the formation of algae. The algae is intended.
Negative: Designed without taking into consideration the formation of algae. The algae is undesirable.
View from the Millennium Bridge: Tidal movement of the Thames, high tide.
View from the Millenium Bridge: Tidal movement of the Thames, low tide.