



POLITECNICO
DI TORINO

Honors thesis

MASTER'S DEGREE IN ARCHITECTURE FOR
SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Abstract

**The consciousness of a lack: giving light to a
brownfield area in East London**

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The aim of the dissertation is to investigate and understand, decompose and assemble and again, decompose a “lack”. It starts from the raise of awareness, moved by experiments and documentation about the negative transformation of a place, which is now evanescent and impoverished of its centuries-old function; it has lost its identity and peculiarities and it has been cut o from its proximal context. Hence, this place is now an empty piece in the city’s combinatorics and does not make any positive contribution in its neighborhood. This lack translates in a shortage of autonomy and reflective practices (which affects the place itself). Its arrangement does not create any incentive in living.

Being so close on its own, it keeps being a space of precariat, transit and individualism. Representing lack, it needs presence. Thus, the thesis reflects about the possibility that a raise of awareness develops instance and action.

The latter would be implemented in the creation of relation between spatial formations, bodies and places, expectations and offers. Indeed, it is used the concept of “giving light” with the triple meaning of highlighting, to give visibility, taking back to life, that is requalification and lighting.

The dissertation addresses issues relating to a broader context with respect to the area under study, the London-based realities and peculiarities of a single large entity with a thousand faces, discontinuous and abnormal, contrast praise. It is the story of those who have seen it as the bystander and lived it as a citizen (the students had six months eld-research in London), willing to communicate a latent chaos, the precarious balance, the significant challenges and opportunities. It gathers a number of case studies, consolidated experiences which are localized in the English capital and which show a number of features in common with the project site, and it proposes them as guidelines for the planning process. It introduces the goals-action combination which, equally taking into account the plan indications and the perceptual findings, facilitate the understanding of the lacks found in the analytical phase and it provides timely and practical solutions. Then, it translates the actions in "dramas" that have a well-defined place and time, in which actors move and establish relationships, influencing each other.

For this reason the project makes use of a series of views, 5 for the daytime and 25 for the nighttime, that revive that sense of intimacy/familiarity, of possession of the places, of in mediated and instinctive dialogue, of the eye that peered and penetrated the space, of the reiterated gaze that gets used and satisfied of a new glimpse, as well as floor plans.

The views, revelations, unexpected and sudden events of places, people and activities, trying to symbolically reconstruct the idea of the dweller who becomes conscious of itself in the space surrounding himself, are entrusted the onerous task of clarifying the design intentions, to evoke other images. It is claiming to be a methodological process of analysis and transformation, it offers, through sequences of suggestions, the illusion that the void could be filled, that the insufficiency could be covered, that the negative could become positive, the “lack of the lack”.

The aim is to restore specificity of a place, make it live again by means of new spaces, new functions, light, and unveil the other face of the two-faced London, the one of the opportunity, of the recomposition, of the unitarity, whose view is sometimes precluded by the albeit real observation of the decay.

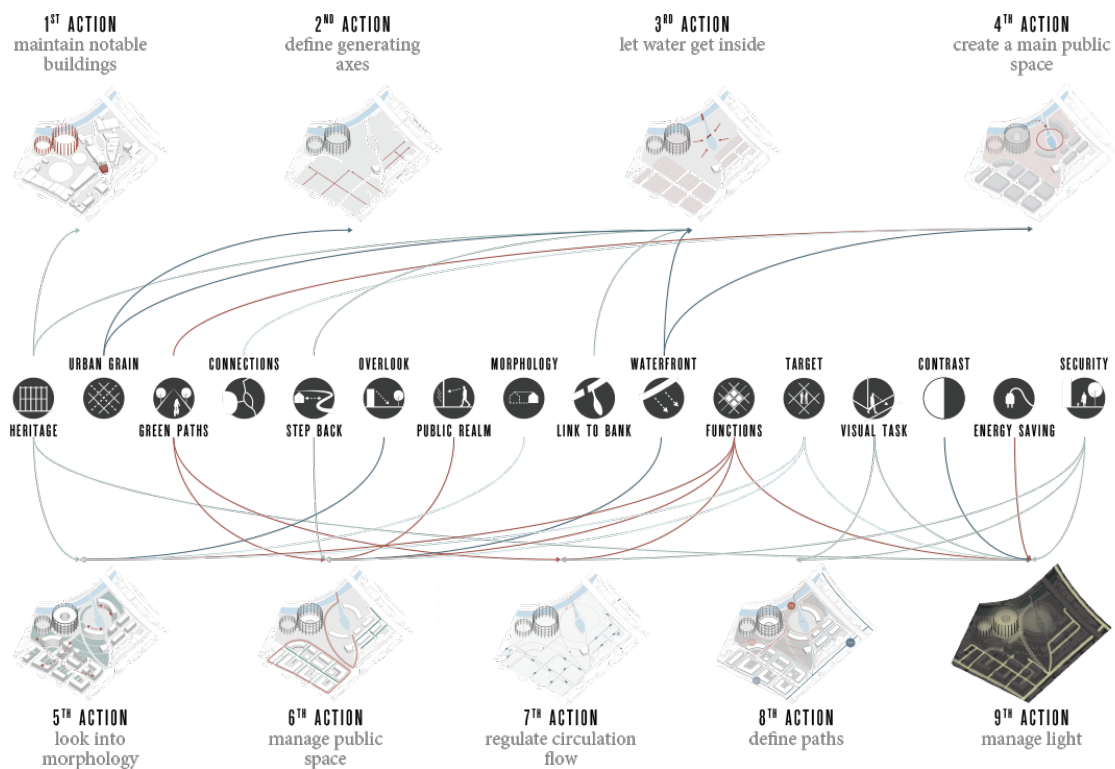


Fig.1 Goals-actions

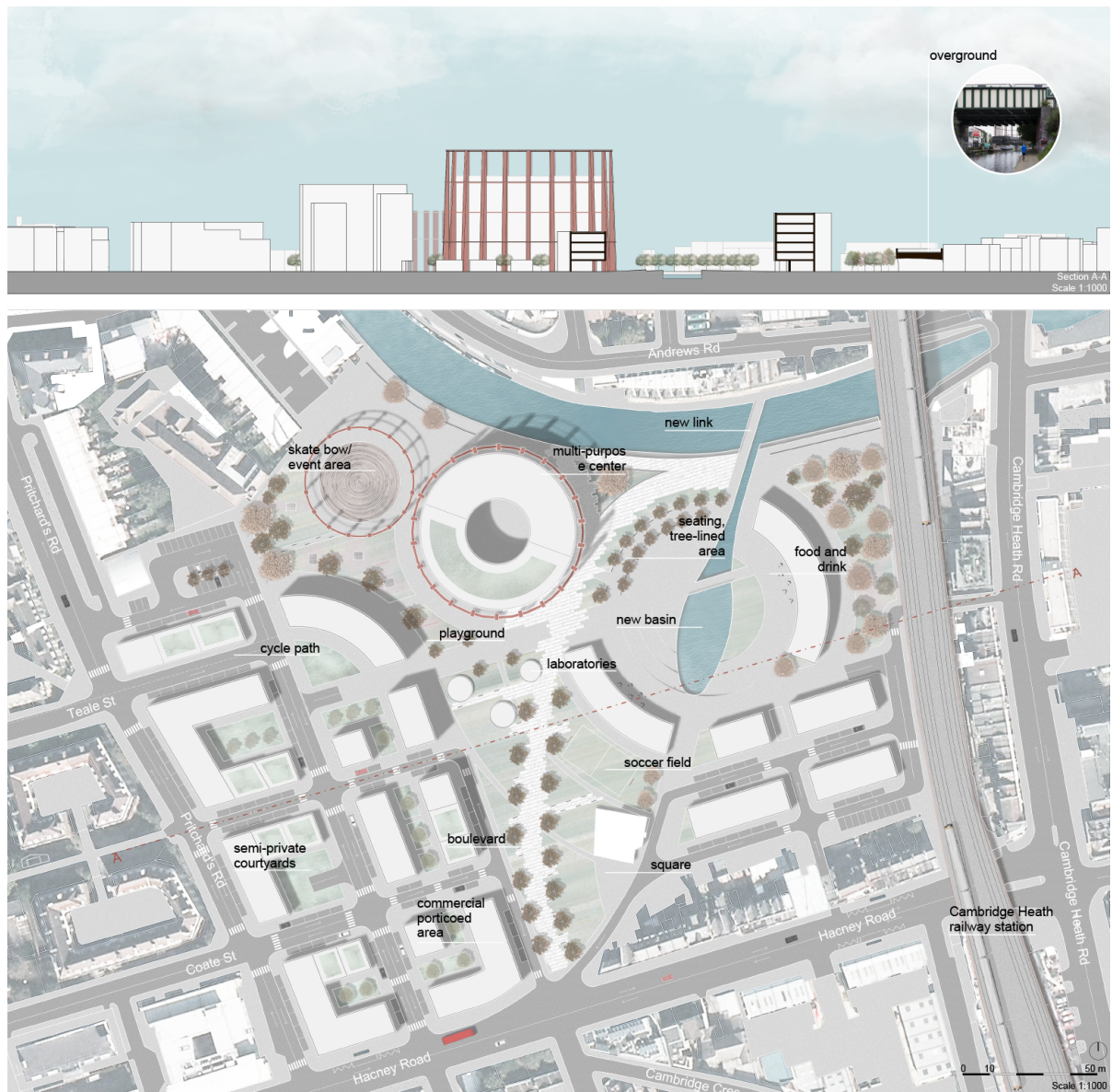


Fig.2 Urban design

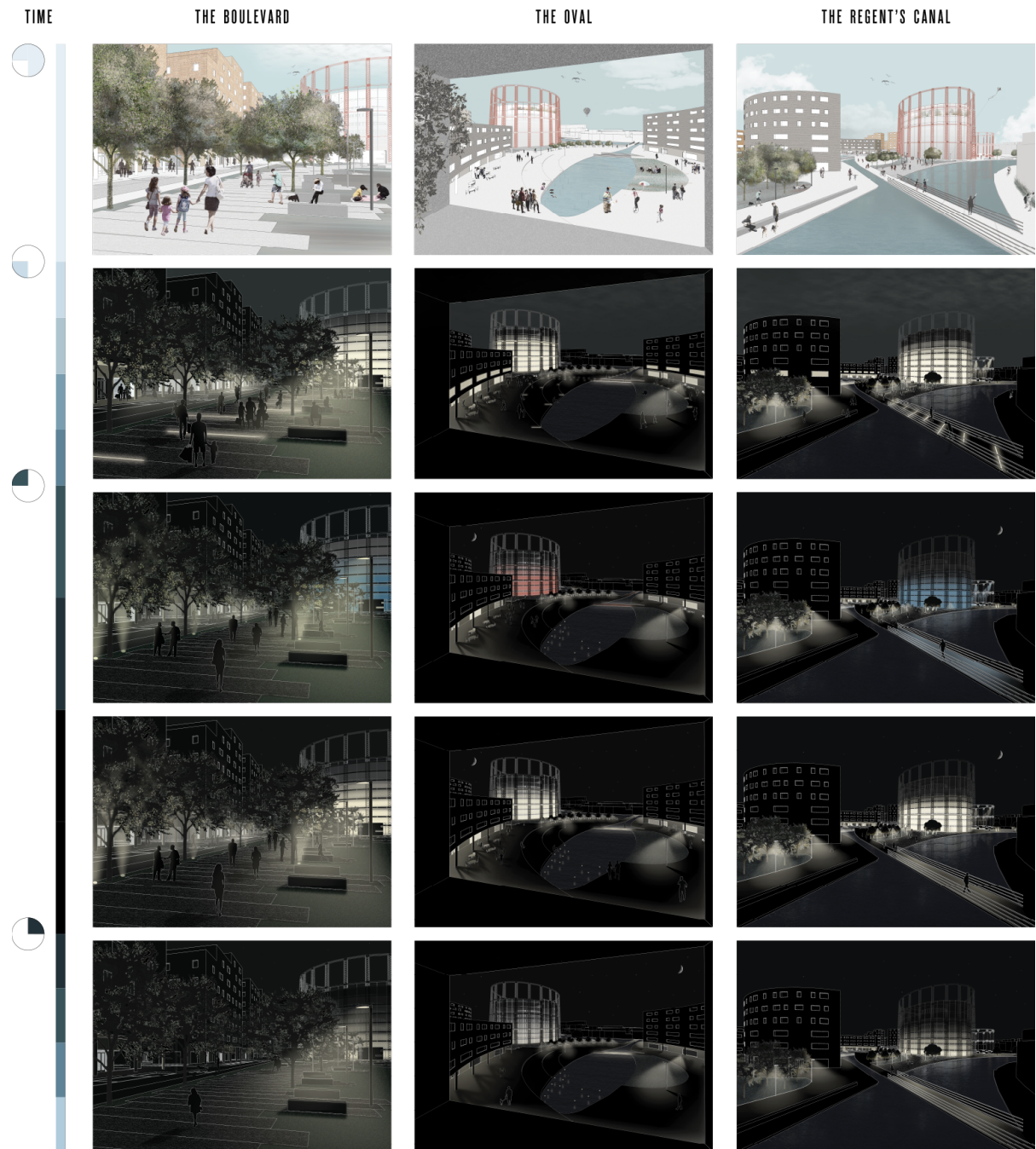


Fig.3 The light in three scenes: daily and nocturnal vision

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