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EMERGENT PUBLICS

INTRODUCTION

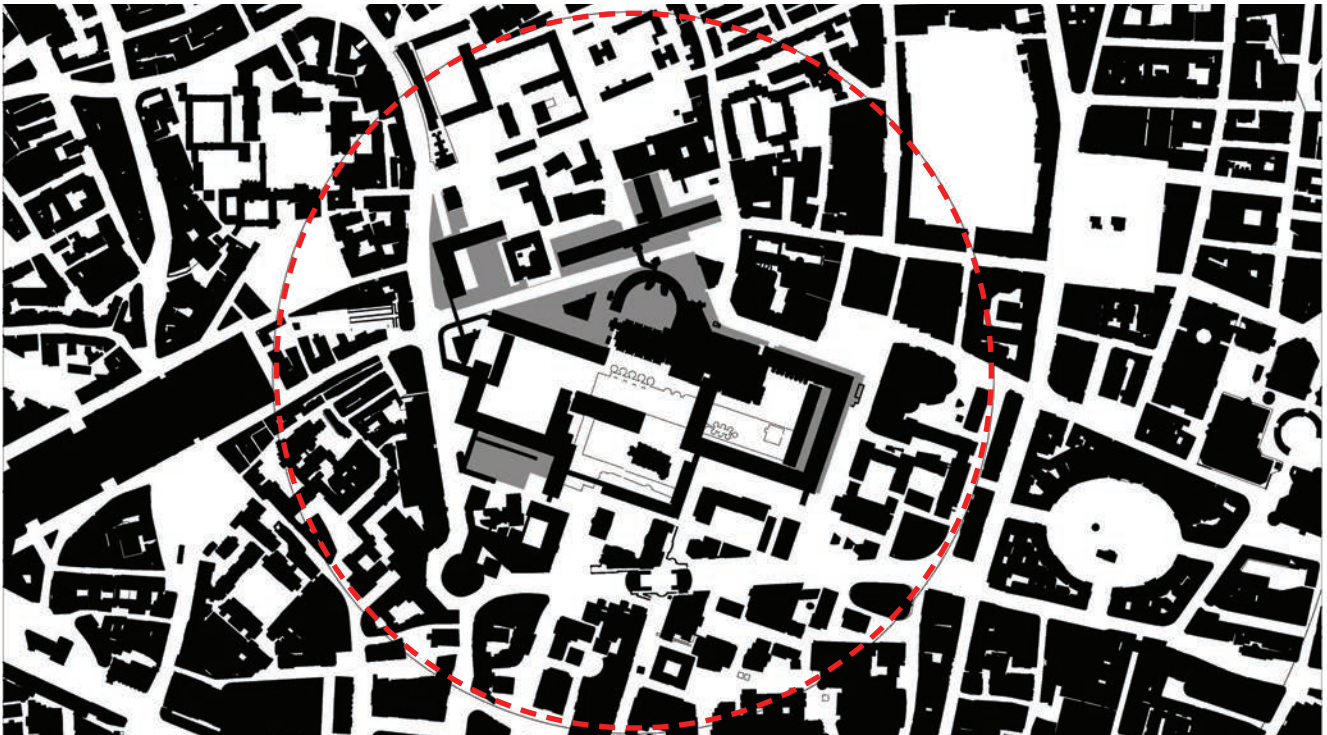
As urbanists, we believe in the 'public city' as the open milieu that can be appropriated to serve collective rather than particular, exclusive interests. In the public city spaces are not rigidly shaped or determined by fixed boundaries, for the very act of drawing boundaries prompts segregation, fracture and brittleness. Collectively upheld values are embodied in the public city, spatialised as the positive coexistence of difference and diversity, rope fibres binding and strengthening a flexible structure.

Our chosen urban site, the Barbican complex, is a super-structure remnant of modernist architecture and zoning policies, entrenched in the city's finer urban grain. It hosts a residential population and public institutions, which do not develop significant degrees of interaction with one another. As a piece of brittle city, the Barbican is rigidly set in time and space, static and distant from its rapidly evolving surroundings. The challenge for urbanists, in similar contexts, is to understand how to effect change in environments traditionally dominated by structures of power and control, recognising not only their limitations but also their potentialities.

Working with the dual nature of limitation and potential helped us to appreciate and acknowledge certain advantages to the Barbican's emplacement within the highly ordered, regulated and powerful infrastructure of the City of London. The existence of latent capacities hidden beneath a brittle exterior makes the Barbican complex a singular case study. Encompassing vast

amounts of underutilised space, it has the physical capacity to host large publics, making it a valuable and distinctive site within London. In addition to its spatial endowment, the complex accommodates a distinctive set of institutions, each with their own social capacities and capabilities, most of which are funded largely by the City of London. Together these two capacities - physical/ spatial and institutional/ social - present an interesting opportunity for re-envisioning the place of the Barbican in its wider context.

In order to engage the public imagination, our interventions are essentially programmatic, proposing disruption as a mechanism to challenge perceived norms of appropriation of space, generating new, more flexible orderings of activities, space and bodies within the complex. The proposed implementation process, conceptualises an incremental approach to cultivating public culture and space in a rapidly changing city. At every stage, the target audience for the interventions extends from the everyday user and the institutions, to the wider city. Phasing, in this sense, accounts for the time necessary to build momentum, partnerships, and a collective sense of ownership of the city at large. As urbanists, we believe that within this reimagining and reshaping of the role of power structures, the realm of public culture can be reconfigured. The project addresses the implications of the spatialisation of these processes, and attempts to incorporate contextual dimensions into the design practice, by envisioning a flexible approach to intervention and implementation.



CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Our analysis focused on understanding and problematising the Barbican in relation to distinctive structures of power and control responsible for its production and characterisation. Arguably, the complex dissociates itself from the wider city, creating inaccessible and rigidly programmed inner worlds, resulting in a segregating and exclusionary sociospatial configuration. We critically examined the underlying forces determining the Barbican's present situation within the Corporation of the City of London and the implications for the larger urban system.

Initially, the City of London's post-war redevelopment led the derelict site of the Barbican to undergo a process of re-territorialisation (Brenner et al., 2008). Bordering strategies conceived as powerful acts of drawing new site boundaries denied both physical and historical context, and worked as new structural principles. As a profound consequence, the built form was raised off the street level, symbolising its departure from the ordinary city. The design envisioned a housing solution for the average City worker where all amenities were made available within the complex, further severing its connection to the larger city. Thus the genesis of the Barbican can be seen as a social, economic and political project - the Corporation of the City of London deploying an architectural and social experiment.

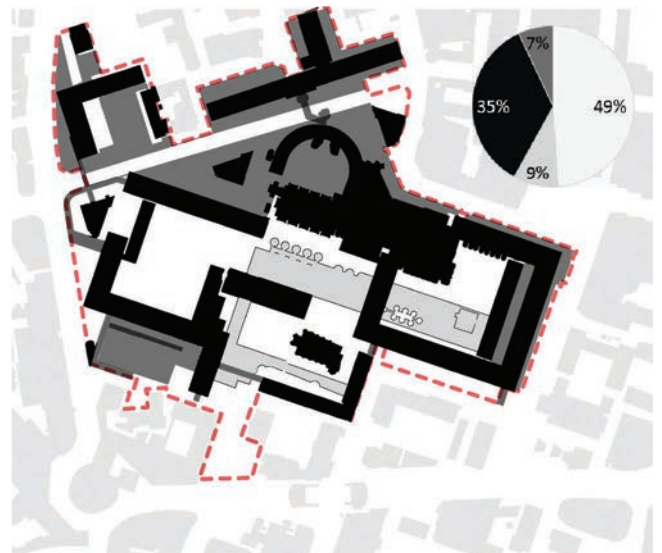
The Barbican's fortress-haven appearance and feel reflect the mentality of power and control advanced by the City of London and enforced by the ideology of modernist planning. The complex epitomises a utilitarian rationale, a logic of zoning and separation that generated fragmented purpose-built spaces to accommodate different functions and specific groups. These groups are physically segregated within separate building levels and by features such as fences and bodies of water throughout the complex. Additionally, access to the complex is restricted, as its borders are impermeable and inactive, with pedestrian movement constrained within a counter-intuitive system of highwalks. Furthermore the modernist concept of concentrating people in high density towers surrounded by large swathes of open space proves an inefficient land use model, as most of the area's footprint becomes residual and lies underutilised.

In time, stipulated norms of conduct are internalised by people who start utilising space and behaving in accordance with the intended design, rendering the physical barriers created to normalise bodies in space almost irrelevant. Further control is exerted by over prescription, rigid programming, and sanctioning of events and activities, limiting the users' interactions (Foucault et al., 1991). The resident population in particular embodies these principles of disciplinary power and control within the Barbican, as its representative body, the Barbican Association, often adopts a 'not in my backyard' attitude to new developments and activities. This association responds with concern to any initiative perceived as a



Historical Layers

In red, the 1940s street pattern, prior to the bombing of the site and subsequent construction of the complex, superimposed onto the Barbican's current footprint.



Percentages of built and open space areas within the complex

Buildings footprints in black, open space on a raised level in medium grey, bodies of water in light-grey, open spaces in white.

Opposite Page: Figure Ground

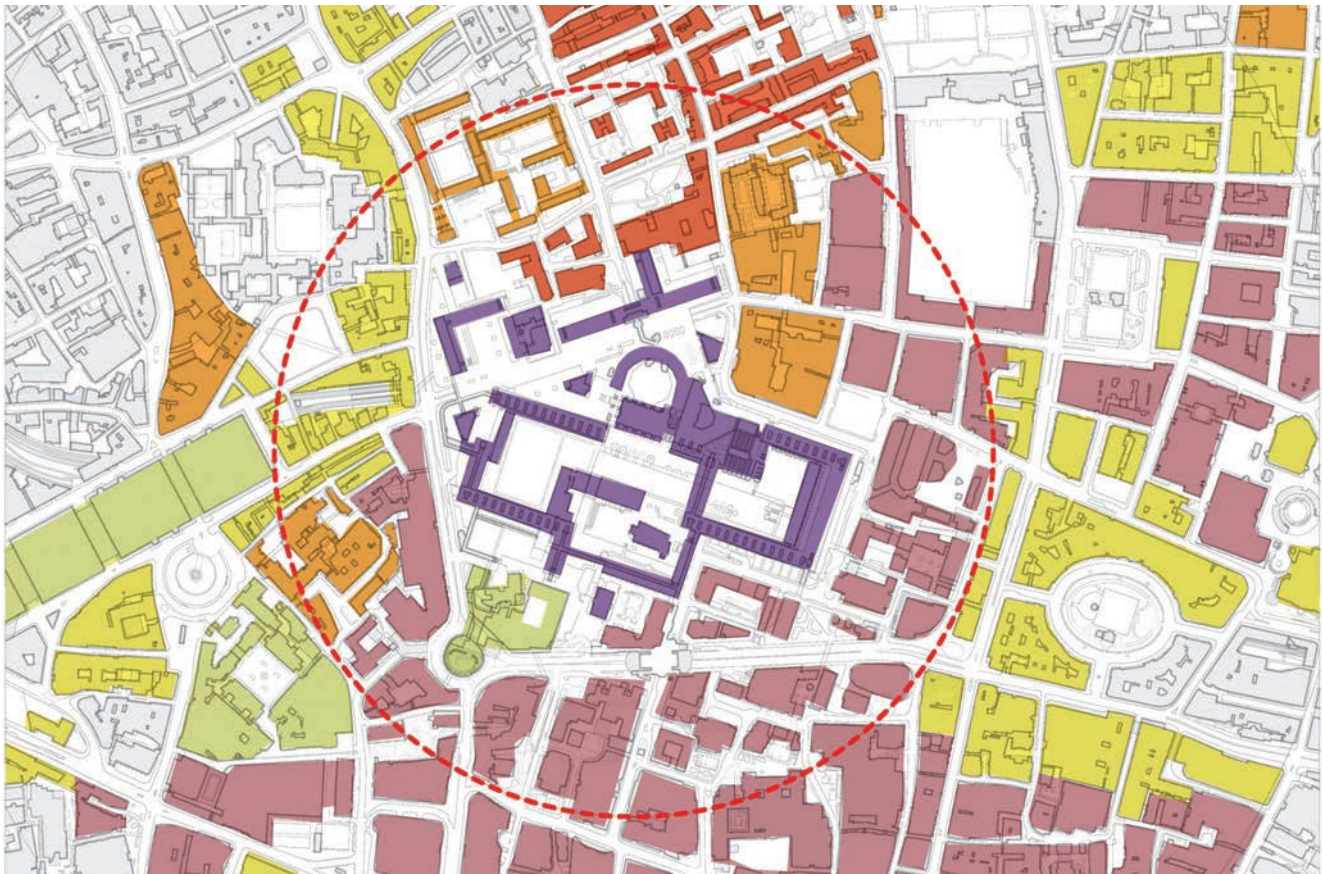
The Barbican complex and its immediate surroundings

disturbance of the peaceful environment encapsulated within the Barbican walls (Barbican Association Communications Group, 2012). The power of their often-dissenting voice in hindering change is compounded by the 2001 decision to award the status of grade II listed building to the whole Barbican complex.

As a listed building, the Barbican cannot incur any physical alterations without special permission from planning authorities. Any planning application submitted to the City of London is in effect scrutinised according to the Barbican Listed Management Guidelines, a document of standards set by the residents themselves, in collaboration with the Department of Planning and Transportation (Barrett, 2007, Bright, 2012, Corporation of the City of London Department of Planning and Transportation, 2005). Until recently, this document has served as a guideline for decisions, however, in the next year it will be integrated into the Local Development Framework as a supplementary planning

document, demonstrating the residents' significant influence on the planning process (Rees, 2011). The listing of the complex, emphasised by the unusual role of the residents in the decision-making processes, helped to fix the Barbican in place and time, halting its evolution.

The traditional view of urbanists supporting the 'local' might applaud the relationship the residents have with their planning authority, particularly in the City of London, where the working vote outweighs the residential (Gerald, 2010). However, in the context of our concern with the public city, this delegation of power and control to the residents poses a significant challenge. Altogether, the Barbican has become further isolated from its urban context by processes of territorialisation, rigid programming of space, the logic of disciplinary power and the residential politics, reinforcing an inner world beneath a brittle exterior, to the detriment of the surrounding city.



Land Use Diagram

The basic building uses surrounding the complex and its distinctive position bordering the offices of the City to the south and the housing estates of Islington to the north.

KEY

Orange	Residential Commercial	Purple	Office
Yellow	Office Commercial	Red	Residential
Green	Large Facilities		

CAPACITY AS POTENTIAL

Together these structures of power and spatial control reinforce the complex's seemingly impenetrable, exclusionary and introverted nature. Although this piece of city presents an abrasive exterior, behind its brittle walls lie two potentials: the sheer size of underutilised space and a density of public institutions with distinctive capacities.

Physical Capacity

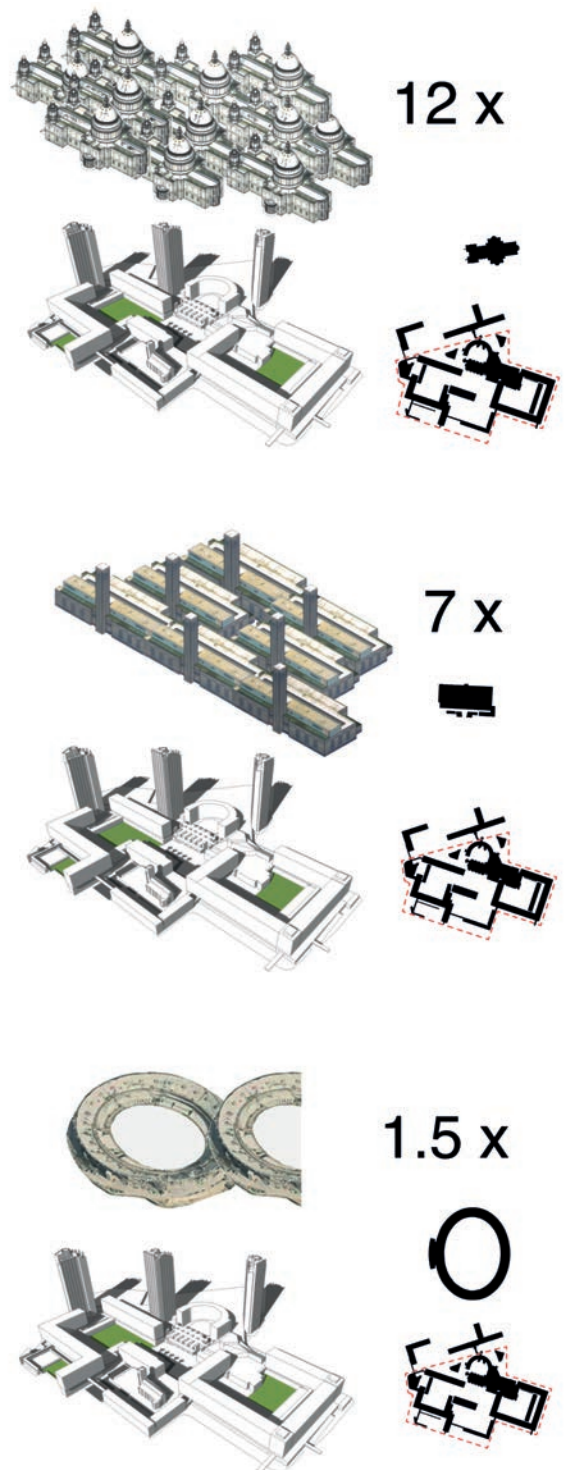
As our analysis revealed, the size and physical capacity of the Barbican are perhaps the most obvious, yet ironically underestimated and overlooked features. Our initial efforts to understand the spatial potential presented by the complex took the form of scalar analysis, in exercises comparing its area and capacity with that of other institutions or landmarks in London. We then proceeded by mapping the different uses within the Barbican and in its immediate context, alongside its connectivity to the wider city, the pedestrian movement and way-finding experience. Through these exercises we identified a series of underutilised spaces such as underground car parking areas and open green spaces with potential to be appropriated and used more optimally.

The early comparisons demonstrate that there are very few sites with such capacity for mass gatherings in the city, whilst locally, studies by City of London Department of Planning and Transportation (2008) reveal that the City has a demand for more open public space, with a current standard of less than one square metre of open space per office worker. The 93 square metres of open space for every Barbican resident, give a sense of the spatial capacity hidden within the Barbican. Given the current demand, the 20 acres (~8ha) of existing but 'restricted access' open space in the complex present an opportunity that has been disregarded by the City (Corporation of the City of London Department of Planning and Transportation, 2008).

The very particular social interaction that such large spaces can host and nurture led us to contemplate interventions that provoke awareness and a re-envisioning of the utilisation of the Barbican's physical capacity to address the needs of a wider public. As a result, we began to consider the implications of extending our initial comparative scalar analysis programmatically, investigating the complex's current institutional capacities.

Institutional Capacity

Home to a distinctive density of institutions of education and the arts, the complex has much to offer to local, national and even international audiences. We identified these institutions, both the private and the public, together with the public at large, as our stakeholders. Located within the Barbican complex, we expect these organisations to have an interest in their local context. The following brief descriptions of the 5 public and 2



Scalar Comparisons

Demonstrating how many times each of these iconic structures - St Paul's, the Tate Modern and the Olympic Stadium, could fit within the Barbican complex. Footprint areas were used in the comparisons. Base image source: Google Earth 3D model

private on-site institutions illustrate the varied spaces, reaches, audiences and programmatic capacities available within the complex.

Given their weight, access to significant funding from the City of London and varied capacities, these organisations presented themselves as inestimable assets. However, the spatial segregation of the complex and the rigid programming of the institutions' activities were identified as obstacles to overcome. Although right next to one another, the YMCA for instance, has never interacted with the Arts Centre. Similarly, albeit designed to benefit from proximity, the Guildhall School and the Arts

Centre's shared hallway has remained locked until very recently. The Arts Centre and the Guildhall School, of all the institutions, are the only two that have endeavoured to form a partnership, which has only developed in the last ten years.

At the conclusion of our analysis, we realised that our interventions should build upon the capacities of these existing institutions, which benefit from the endowments of the City of London. We posited that a reshuffling of the interior of the brittle city, alongside the addition of new elements, would yield enough energy to crack through its shell, reconnecting it to the wider urban context.



St. Giles Cripplegate
(Public institution, Diocese of London Common Fund)

Spatial Capacity

Historic location by London Wall

Large courtyard space, that it is currently not permissible to use

Social Capacity

Capacity of 200, but current congregation size of 60, mostly Barbican residents

Interest in musical training, Organ school & choir

Hopes to reinvigorate tradition of bell ringing

Existing Intra-Complex Ties

City of London School for Girls (pastoral care)

(St. Giles' Cripplegate, 2011)



Museum of London
(Public institution, City of London funded)

£20 million redevelopment led to enhanced facilities for learning and conferences

Location links to the South-West

Just shy of making list of 100 top visited museums in the world

160,000 annual participants in learning programmes

City of London School for Girls

Residents' Association

(Barbican Association, 2012; Museum of London, 2010)



YMCA
(Public institution, charity)

360 beds for students

Recreational space for youth

CityFit studio & housing for more disadvantaged youth on Whitecross St

Borders with borough of Islington





Support of the youth (16-29) of City, Tower Hamlets, Islington and Hackney

CityFit Gym, 60+ CityFit program

Sunday Brunch programme for Barbican Residents (average of 30 attend)

None

(Boyd, 2012; CityYMCA London, 2011; Faulkner, 2012)

 <p>Barbican Arts Centre (Public institution, City of London funded)</p>	<p>Spatial Capacity</p> <p>Largest Arts Complex in Europe</p> <p>Very flexible spaces</p> <p>Restaurants, cafes, public library</p> <p>Links to proposed 'Cultural Quarter' on Whitecross St.</p>	<p>Social Capacity</p> <p>Radical, diverse and international programming</p> <p>Attempting to re-adapt its latent Exhibition space as a cinema</p>	<p>Existing Intra-Complex Ties</p> <p>Guildhall School</p> <p>Barbican Association</p> <p>(Barbican Arts Centre, 2012; Jeffreys et al., 2012)</p>
 <p>Guildhall School of Music & Drama (Public institution, City of London funded)</p>	<p>41 studio/teaching rooms</p> <p>5 performance venues</p>	<p>First and largest provider of specialist music education in UK</p> <p>Reach of alumni</p> <p>900 students, majority international</p>	<p>7-8 year institutional relationship with Arts Centre through Collaborative Learning Programme, back room initiatives and some employee sharing</p> <p>1 studio located in YMCA building</p> <p>(Gaunt, 2012; Guildhall School of Music and Drama, 2010)</p>
 <p>Barbican Association (Private, resident funded)</p>	<p>Frobisher Crescent</p> <p>Private Gardens</p>	<p>Highly skilled, organised and motivated</p> <p>Represents 60% of residents</p> <p>Well linked with City of London's Resident Consultation Committee that manages and dictates policy on various 'residential' spaces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museum of London • Barbican Arts Centre <p>(Barbican Association, 2012; Barrett, 2007)</p>
 <p>City of London School for Girls (Independent school, private institution)</p>	<p>Latent courtyard space shared with the St. Giles Church</p>	<p>700 students, 7-18 yrs</p> <p>goal of integrating students into cultural life of city</p> <p>Use of City's bursaries to encourage diversity</p>	<p>St. Giles (pastoral care)</p> <p>Museum of London (student archeological club/society)</p> <p>(City of London School for Girls, 2012; Tatler Magazine, 2012)</p>

DESIGN PROCESS & STRATEGY

Intervention as Disruption

The effort to address the issues of rigidity of programme and underutilisation of spaces led us to consider programmatic interventions that would challenge conventional understandings and experiences of the Barbican complex. In his article 'Collective Culture and Urban Public Space,' Ash Amin (2008) identifies five qualities of public space, which he terms resonances, necessary to promote collective culture. Based on our analysis we inferred that the Barbican does, to some degree, have four of the five described resonances: the multiple functions within the complex could be defined as surplus; a territorialisation process is embodied in the complex's built form and the modernist ideology that brought it into being; emplacement, as the juxtaposition of multiple temporalities, is the different experiences of time in the diverse places within the Barbican; the fourth resonance of symbolic projection, is made clear by the Barbican's iconic presence within the City.

Amin suggested a fifth dynamic in public space that we did not identify in the Barbican: emergence. Within this resonance, he explains that "the interaction of bodies in public space is simultaneously a process of ordering and disruption". Amin posits that it is this simultaneous process which yields 'new rhythms' for a space out of many relational possibilities (Amin 2008, pp. 12). The rigid programming of spaces and activities within the Barbican implies the existence of a current order. However, we believe that the quality of emergence, vital for the adaptation and evolution of public space to accommodate

ever-changing needs of the city, is absent in the complex. Thus, our strategy involves two types of essentially programmatic interventions, in an attempt to nurture emergence and highlight the potential for a 'reordering', through disruption of perceived conventions, norms, rhythms and existing patterns of use of space.

Programmatic Interventions

Linking the ideas of physical and institutional capacities to the concept of disruption, we propose two categories of interventions: Re-spacing programme and Re-programming space.

1. Re-spacing programme

In this first category we hope to address the resonance of emergence through striking a cord of dissonance, challenging spaces conventionally associated with specific programmes. As a procedural device, one institution would often take its particular programme, events or activities to be hosted in another institution's space. As the following series of images exemplify, the 'space swap' has the potential to challenge the pre-existing order, but also to raise awareness of the latent spaces as well as the value of institutional relationships.

2. Re-programming space.

In the second category of initiatives, the intention is to promote emergence by re-programming underutilised space, bringing external activities, events, businesses and ultimately



Re-programming the lake

A proposed sunken bridge, wheelchair accessible, linking the northern part of the complex to its southern entrance. A direct crossing between the courtyards of the Arts Centre and the Girls' School.



Re-programming the Public Square

A proposed new use of the complex's central lake during the winter months – an ice rink with a capacity nearly 8 times that of the rink at Somerset House.

new audiences to the Barbican. The core idea is to encourage the mixing of various different user groups whilst creatively re-imagining the limits of specifically zoned and tightly programmed spaces. Although the interventions take place throughout the complex, we grouped them in five conceptual sets - *highwalks*, *water*, *gardens*, *public squares*, and *walls* - that relate direct or indirectly to their location and spatial qualities. The interventions of the first three groups intend to fundamentally transform perceptions of space, such as challenging the role of the highwalks as simple thoroughfares. The initiatives in the group called *public squares* focus on gatherings en masse, re-programming specific areas with capacity to accommodate large publics. Lastly, the group of interventions centred on *the walls* of the complex draws attention to its interface with the city, as well as to existing physical and social barriers, in hopes of eventually cracking through these divides.

Although limited in number, a few precedent cases can be found for both programmatic types of intervention within the Barbican complex. In the last year, the Arts Centre has temporarily traded rehearsal spaces with the Guildhall School, and also hosted a club night in their foyer in collaboration with an external partner. These events and partnerships demonstrate the potential leading role of the Arts Centre in our intervention process, as the most innovative and least risk-averse institution. In the following section we outline the implementation process by which the imaginative interventions proposed could come to fruition as a cohesive urban initiative.

Re-programming the Walls

'Cracking' Beech Street tunnel allowing natural light and ventilation, and replacing the walls with glass to expose the inner hidden spaces of the complex.





From Top Left:
Re-programming Space

Live-work units housing young artists along Silk Street, corresponding with the development of Barbican Arts Centre's intended 'cultural quarter' (Barbican Arts Centre, 2012).

Opening a connection from Moorgate to Barbican tube stations, allowing access to the complex from London Underground, without a change in level.

Re-spacing Programme

The Arts Centre or the Guildhall School using Frobisher Crescent, the residents' backyard, as a space for performance with 3 times the capacity of the Globe theatre.

Plots in the residents' gardens allocated for the cultivation of allotments and community gardening.

Proposed outdoor special service, making use of the churchyard underutilised space with the capacity to host a large congregation.



INTERVENTION PROCESS

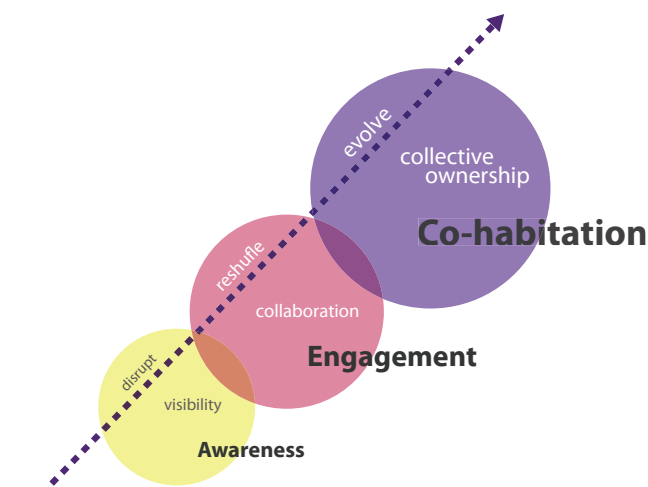
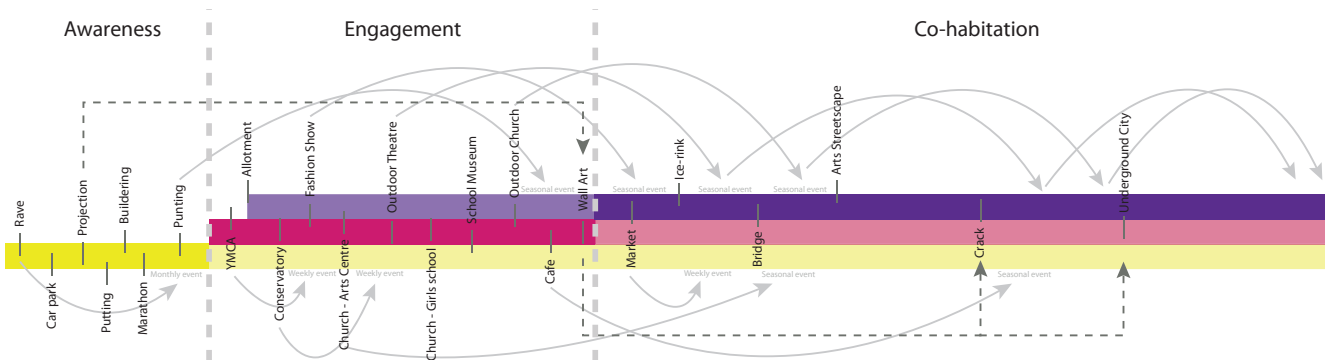
The end goal of the interventions is to disrupt existing socio-spatial rhythms and routines, allowing for new systems of order to emerge, according to our conceptualisation of public space and culture. Therefore, we designed an incremental process of intervention that acknowledges the time and resources needed to build partnerships and to raise awareness of the potentialities that lie dormant within the complex - the spatial and institutional capacities. The strategy is based on a conceptual approach to phasing, as partners capitalise on the benefits from each single intervention gradually, and significant transformations are expected in the long-term. In this manner, new institutional partnerships and changes in habits accrue over three proposed stages of 'being public': i) **Awareness**, ii) **Engagement** and lastly iii) **Co-habitation**. At each of these phases the interventions should work at both social and spatial dimensions with consideration of an audience that includes the everyday user, the various Barbican institutions and the city at large.

Awareness

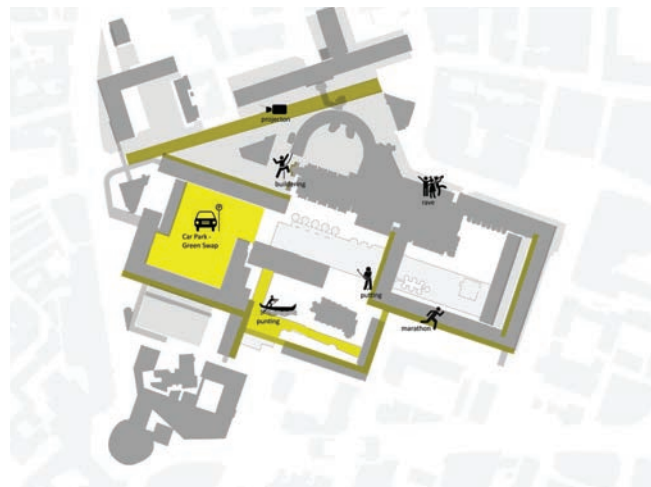
The first of these phases employs the principles of visibility and temporary activation to raise awareness of the latent potential of underutilised spaces, as well as alternative user groups and

institutional partners. Disruption of rhythms and routines incurred at this first stage is temporary and requires limited input of resources. Working with existing institutional ties, this phase draws attention to existing partnerships, whilst also challenging their form and scope.

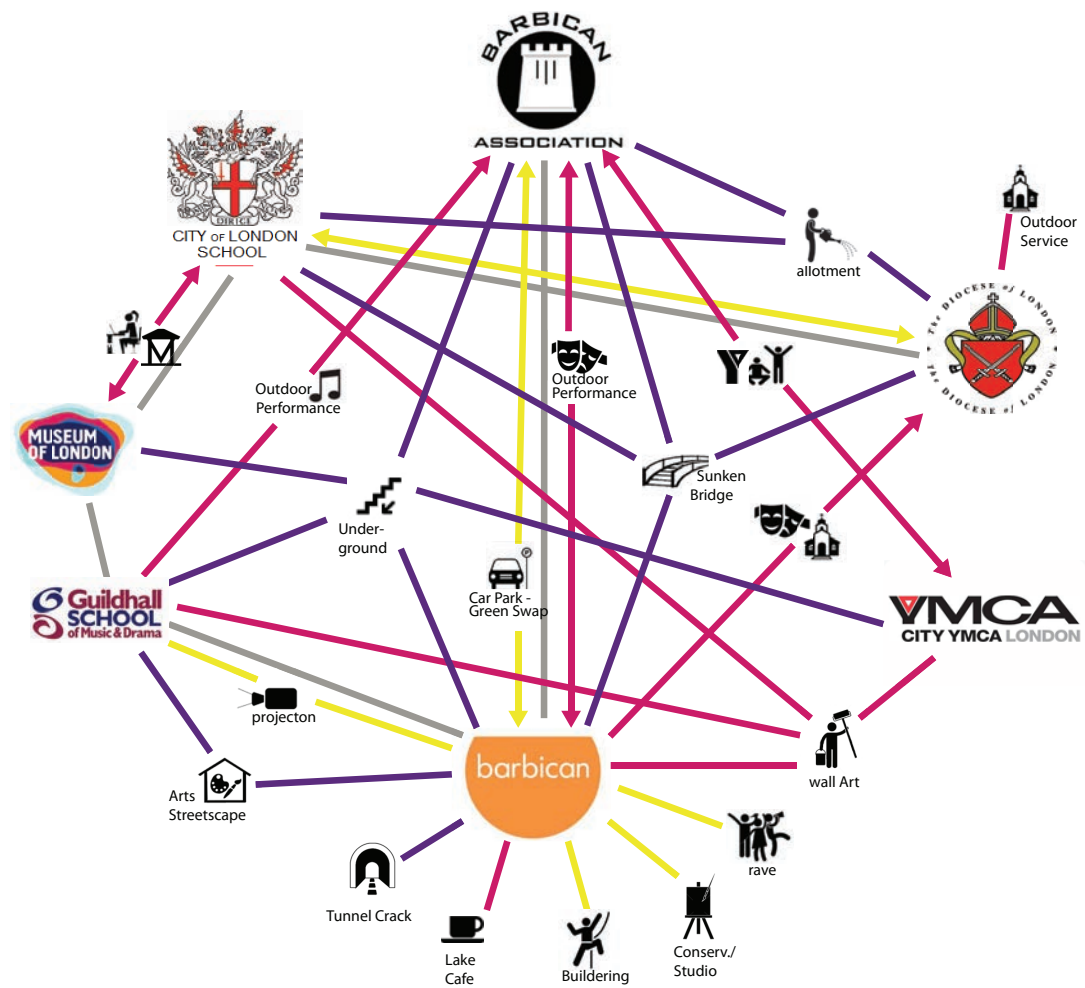
An example of an intervention in this phase, from the category of Re-spacing Programme, would be a 'swap of spaces' between the City of London School for Girls and St. Giles Church. A relationship already exists here, with the Church affiliated with the pastoral care at the School. Completing the swap, the Church could be used as a classroom for the girls, indicating how the partnership between these two institutions could evolve. A second example, from the category of Re-programming Space, is a temporary and resource-light charity event, a 'marathon' or race, taking place in the Barbican Highwalks. This intervention re-programmes the highwalks, currently seen merely as transitional spaces of circulation, re-imagining them as destinations. This initiative could be sponsored by the YMCA, as an existing charity within the complex, or by any other organisation in connection to the Barbican Arts Centre.



Conceptual framework for an incremental process

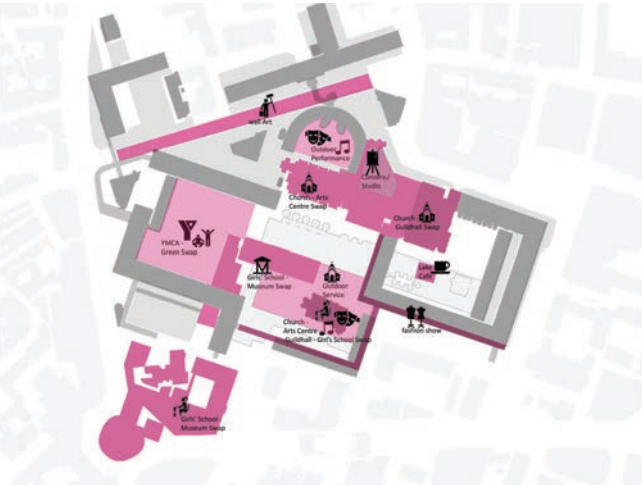


Awareness

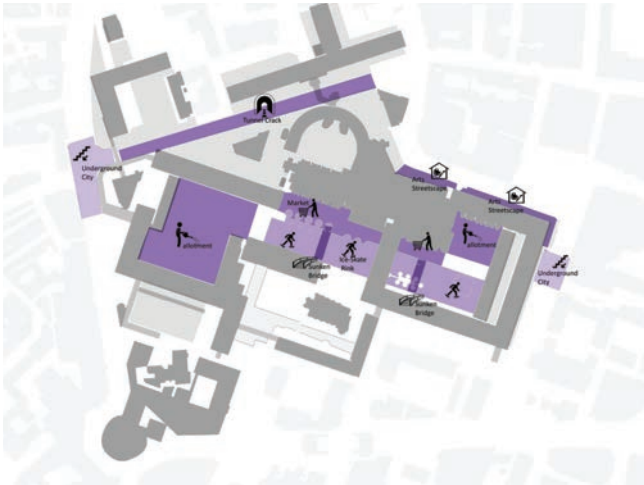


Facing Page: Phasing the Interventions in Time
The key strategy aims at momentum-building through repetition of single initiatives and the phasing of related events.

Above: Networks
Existing and developing network of institutional ties within the Barbican complex over the three phases of intervention.



Engagement



Cohabitation

Engagement

The second stage of interventions proceeds with the theme of blurring spatial and institutional boundaries in order to encourage collaboration. Building upon Awareness, and not possible without it, these initiatives further promote partnerships among user groups and institutions and the mutual exchanging of resources, capacities and knowledge. Using both the spatial swaps and the addition of new elements as procedural devices, the principle behind these interventions is to accustom partners to engaging and working comfortably with difference. Concurrently, Awareness interventions do not stop being deployed, but are continually used to reinforce the overarching process, reminding users and institutions of the physical and social capacities within the Barbican complex.

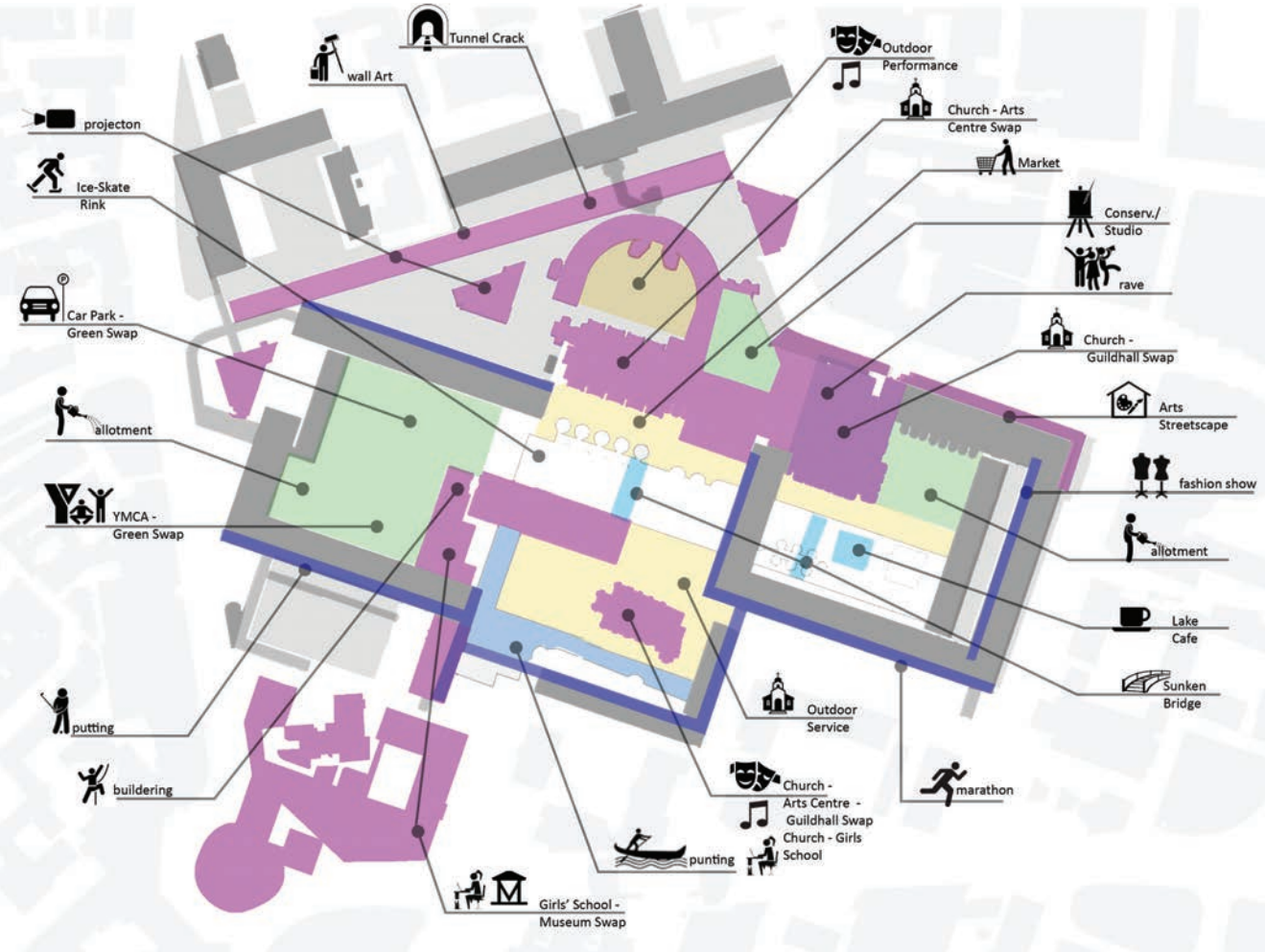
An example of Engagement would be a swap of spaces between the Museum of London and the City of London School for Girls, embodying the higher degree of exchange expected in this phase of intervention. This initiative could take many forms: the two institutions could work in joint educational programmes in which the School students are involved in exhibitions in the Museum, participating as junior museum guides, learning more about the history of London; another idea would be for the School to host exhibits of some of the items in the museum's vast collection of artefacts, to engage students and a wider audience. In order to build such a partnership, the two institutions would have to develop a significant level of trust, be challenged and encouraged to work collaboratively.

Other interventions, however, might require different user groups within the complex to engage with difference. As an example, some of St. Giles' special events, such as the Easter Service could be brought outdoors onto the churchyard. This intervention would not only raise awareness of the presence of the Church, but it would appropriate an underutilised space that has the capacity to host significant mass-gatherings, attracting potential new audiences from a larger community. Thus, underlying these initiatives is a proposed gradual shift in mentality, as different user groups would share common spaces and start engaging with one another. This phase re-envisioned internal dynamics pre-empting the next stage which is centred on the Barbican's relationships to the city at large.

Cohabitation

The final phase involves a set of more permanent interventions that require significant investment of resources, altering the physical and institutional make of the complex. These proposals build upon Awareness and Engagement, and demand a great deal of institutional collaboration and coordination, as the interventions have to be agreed upon and co-sponsored by various partners. This process promotes a sense of collective ownership and evolves into a model of stewardship, with symbolic, financial and social consequences. The partners have to embrace the notion of a 'public city' and rethink their roles as public institutions, serving the needs of the city at large. They must develop a broader sense of responsibility towards the different potential scales at which the Barbican could perform and the wider audiences it could serve. In a spirit of reciprocity, the city as a whole is invited to take ownership of the complex's space and programme.

As examples of this phase, accesses to the Barbican could be improved, and the open squares and gardens could be transformed into destination points in the city. The large courtyard adjacent to the Barbican Arts Centre's main internal entrance could host seasonal events such as a market for local vendors. It would comfortably accommodate festivals such as the current annual Whitecross Street Summer Fair. Similarly, on another initiative multiple partners could select plots within the private residents' gardens to cultivate allotments, which would yield vegetables for residents' families and potentially for a larger community. Representing a tangible gesture towards the physical and social integration of the complex and the city, a bold intervention would be a sunken bridge crossing the Barbican's central lake. Currently the lake functions as a physical barrier emphasising the segregation and distance between the Arts Centre, St. Giles Church and the Girls' School, and restricts the access to the Arts Centre for those entering the complex from the south. The proposed examples of a market, allotments and a bridge illustrate the invitation that the phase of Cohabitation would extend towards the city, embracing the complex.



	Highwalks	Water	Gardens	Public Square	Walls
					Underground City
Co-habitation		Bridge	Allotment	Ice-Skate rink Market	Crack Art Streetscape
Engagement	Fashion show	Café	YMCA – Green swap Conservatory/ studio	Outdoor Theatre - swap Outdoor service	Church – Arts Centre swap School – Museum swap Mural wall
Awareness	Marathon Putting	Punting	Car park – Green swap	Rave	Church - School swap Projection Building

* Re-spacing Programme
* Re-programming Space

Interventions Grouped in Five Sets
Interventions are proposed dispersed throughout the whole complex according to their location and spatial characteristics

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

This process of incremental evolution towards the 'public city' is premised on a holistic approach, in which each single initiative's success accrues, contributing to an overarching end-goal of reintegrating the Barbican into the city. Thus, the interventions occur dispersed throughout the entire complex, and are not restricted to particular spaces, users or institutions. The process, in three stages, is designed so that certain interventions develop as clear narratives, in succession and building upon each other, starting with simple initiatives that trigger and lead onto more complex phases. Other interventions remain distinct events that do not go through each stage, either occurring on distinctive occasions or being repeated over time. These different types of interventions give flexibility to the system, which is not dependent on a single series of rigidly programmed, sequential events, but gradually gains momentum with the cumulative effect of related occurrences.

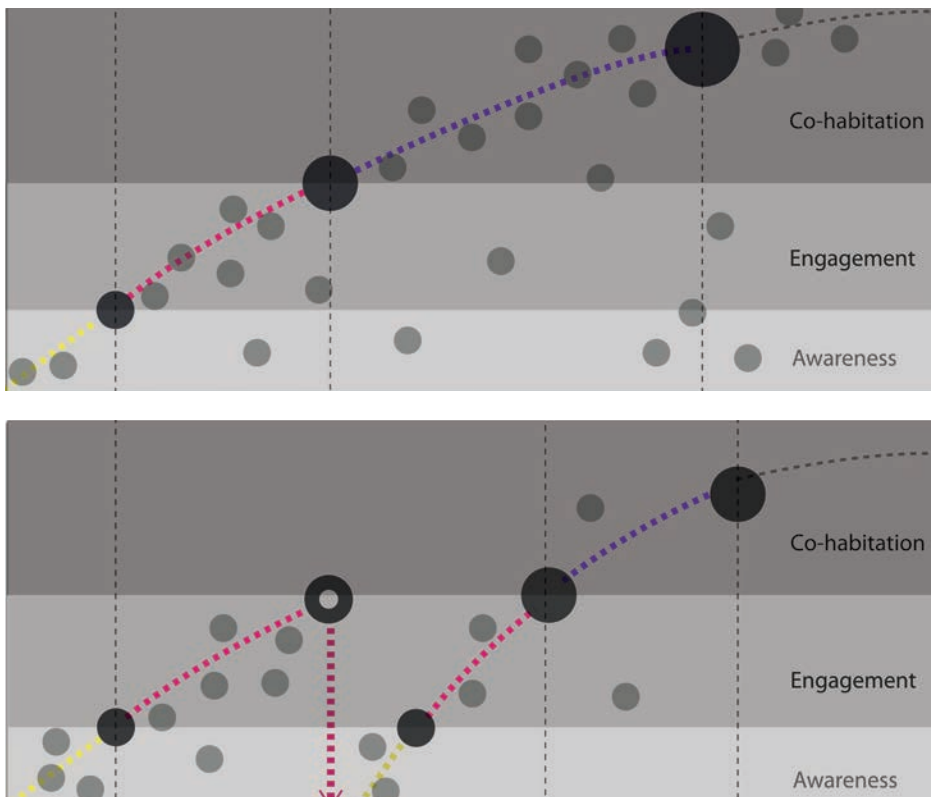
Challenges

Despite our best efforts to design a flexible system of intervention, there are inherent challenges within the Barbican's context that need to be acknowledged as they might hinder change. The first issue relates to difficulties of the decision making processes, both in terms of the internal functioning

of organisations, as well as the nature of relationships among partners such as planning departments, the Residents Association, other institutions or even the Corporation of the City of London.

Additionally, certain initiatives, even if eagerly desired by institutional leaderships, have not yet come into being simply due to lack of resources, manpower and time. In order for the profound changes suggested by the later interventions to become a reality, a significant shift must happen in the institutional mindset, especially in regards to their missions as public institutions. Moreover, the benefits generated by different interventions would need to be recognised and couched beyond exchange values.

Lastly, the politico-economic context of London, and specifically that of the City of London, poses distinctive challenges for funding and sponsorship of projects that might promote a different image of the City. The Corporation, with its traditional structure, is likely to be reluctant any process that might bring new elements and threaten to reconfigure its privileged position within London.



A flexible process of accrual

The process is dependent not on a single narrative, but a series of events allowing for flexibility in the case of failure.

CRACKING THE BRITTLE CITY

To illustrate the incremental process and implementation strategy, we have chosen to detail a series of interventions that build up as a narrative, proposing to 'crack through the brittle city'. This set of interventions is drawn from the spatial group called 'the walls', a series of projects which address the rigid physical and social barriers that make the Barbican impenetrable, inward looking and exclusionary.

Phase 1: Projection

Cost: £

Partners: Guildhall School & Arts Centre

Focusing on the Beech St. Tunnel, the process would begin with sound projection and visual installations bringing the rehearsals of the Guildhall School and the performances within the Barbican Arts Centre outside the walls of the complex, onto the tunnel. The process of using the tunnel walls as screens on which to project and expose the complex's internal functioning and activities, would redefine the role of the very physical interfaces

that separate inside and outside worlds. As this intervention would fall within the Awareness stage, it would use visibility and transparency as procedural devices, to reveal the hidden institutional richness that lies behind the walls.

In interviews, the Guildhall school expressed an interest in extending their interaction with greater London, beyond the free performances they currently offer within their facilities (Gaunt, 2012). An initiative like this would undoubtedly fit with their vision of serving the larger city, making it an attractive venture for the School. Given that the Arts Centre and the Guildhall already have a 10-year institutional relationship, acknowledged in their joint Collaborative Learning programme, this project would strive to make use of these existing organisational ties (Gaunt, 2012). Moreover, this temporary intervention would not require significant bureaucratic approval, as anticipated challenges relate mostly to a current noise curfew stipulated by the Residents Association.



Phase 1: Awareness

Sound projection and visual installation activating the tunnel walls - a partnership between the Arts Centre and Guildhall School.

Phase 2: Wall Mural

Cost: ££

Partners: CityYMCA, Arts Centre, Guildhall School

Building on the momentum generated from the first intervention, the second project, consisting of a mural project designed and executed by young artists, would involve additional partners. The CityYMCA, who expressed a keen interest in such an initiative, has extensive experience in applying for funding and orchestrating mural projects mobilising the youth it houses (Boyd, 2012). On the other hand, the Arts Centre, another partner to involve, would have access to a more international range of artists and audiences (Jeffreys et al., 2012). In promoting these partnerships and bringing this intervention to fruition, individuals that might never meet otherwise could

interact and learn from one another. Following the installation of the mural, its physical legacy would continue to engage the city at large.

The most obvious set of challenges to this intervention would be of a technical nature, as alterations to the walls would have to be carefully considered not to interfere with the tunnel's ventilation and electrical systems. Other constraints might arise from the City of London's sanctions on advertisement and the desire to promote a specific image of a 'refined urban environment' (Bright, 2010), placing restrictions on the subject, theme or technique used on the mural. Despite these constraints, the distinctive location of the Beech Street tunnel, bordering on the borough of Islington, is both strategic and advantageous in garnering the attention of a larger, mixed public.



Phase 2: Engagement

Working together for the first time, YMCA, the Arts Centre and Guildhall School collaborate on a wall mural project for youth.

Phase 3: Tunnel Crack

Cost: ££££

Partners: Barbican Arts Centre, Residents Association, City of London, TfL

The previous two interventions would serve as primers for a third, more permanent physical intervention: 'cracking' the Beech Street tunnel walls and parts of its ceiling, exposing the insides of the Arts Centre to the street and bringing natural light and ventilation into the cumbersome space. Behind those walls currently lie a pop up shop, exhibition spaces and a planned cinema, besides large underutilised car parking areas as latent space for which alternative uses could be found. We believe that the process of exposing the interior spaces to the street would force the partners to address the inherent spatial latency. However, this process would require the institutions to adopt a mentality of openness and joint stewardship of the newly created spaces. We anticipate the involvement of the Arts Centre, the Residents Association, the City of London and TfL (Transport for London), all of which would need to develop a collective sense of ownership towards the project and its

ultimate goals. The challenges posed relate primarily to the way decisions are currently made regarding physical interventions on a listed building and traffic disruptions through the city. Given the steep bureaucratic hill, such an initiative would require significant resource investment and joint commitment from the team spearheading the initiative.

Finally, the inclusion of the Lord Mayor's Show procession in the final stage of the intervention evokes the symbolic role that the Barbican could assume in London. Currently starting within a two-minute walk from the Barbican, the Lord Mayor's annual Show has historically traced its route through landmarks within the City. Some of the interventions' proposed partners already take part in the procession, establishing a precedent and an opportunity to rethink the Barbican's situation in relation to a wider context. By placing the Barbican tunnel on the route of the Lord Mayor's Show, an event which gathers a live audience of 250,000 and a total 2 million via television (Boyd, 2012), the intervention symbolically 'cracks through the brittle city', re-signifying and reconnecting it.



Phase 3: Cohabitation

A physical 'crack' in the tunnel walls and ceiling, using glass to expose the institutional potential that lies hidden behind concrete walls.

CONCLUSIONS

The idea of working with and building upon existing latent potential, prior to the introduction of new external elements, is crucial to our intervention strategy for the Barbican. Whilst current plans for the City of London ignore the rich possibilities presented by this site, our proposal aims to provoke the public imagination to reconsider the complex as an 'opportunity area', cultivating it as a resilient and flexible urban locale. The project of 'cracking the brittle city' to allow the emergence of a truly public space must engage both the everyday informal publics and the formal institutional structures. In incorporating public institutions as leading forces of intervention, the process acknowledges these organisations' importance, whilst challenging them to develop a greater sense of responsibility towards public culture, thereby promoting a paradigmatic change in institutional mindset.

However, the desired change in mentality will not be possible without long-term commitment and investment of resources. Thus, an incremental approach to urban intervention, in which the temporal aspect of emergence is appreciated and understood, is fundamental to the project. Learning from the example of the maturing partnership between the Guildhall School and the Barbican Arts Centre, the specific projects detailed in the previous pages serve as examples of a gradual process that recognises the time necessary for relationships to develop, build and gain momentum. Unlike typical large-scale masterplanning exercises, the process we put forward does not involve high upfront risks or considerable financial investment,

allowing for both individual and joint appropriation of smaller initiatives, and encouraging the development of a sense of collective ownership of projects. In a climate of austerity marked by uncertainty and volatility, a gradual and layered approach to urban intervention offers the necessary flexibility in the capture and management of resources. In order to conscientiously respond to challenges, projects that can be implemented incrementally render the evolution of the urban system less susceptible to paralysis in moments of socioeconomic turmoil.

Finally, an appreciation for the multi-layered nature of cities underlies the proposed incremental process. Often, the brittleness observed in mega-projects such as the Barbican and other large monofunctional structures, suggest that they respond to the city in a highly specialised manner, only succeeding in nurturing one dimension of the urban reality. As a result, they create an exclusive inner world, a parcel of city frequently disconnected from its surroundings. In an open and public city, these otherwise brittle places must be reinforced by multiple layers of order including the landscape of the everyday experience and imagined, symbolic dimensions. Mega-projects usually leave a mark on the urban fabric, irrevocably altering the city's fine grain. Their impact however, must extend beyond physical footprints. As integral parts of the city, these sites' social, spatial and symbolic roles must be fulfilled so that they take their place within a complex urban totality.

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