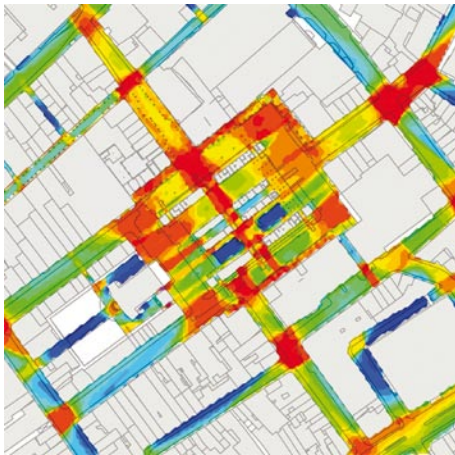


Forecasting tourist activity

Designing successful destinations

Tim Stonor
Architect & Urbanist



A

A
London, Covent Garden
Urban Baseline Study of human activity patterns and urban design characteristics at Covent Garden, leading to the generation and evaluation of design concepts for redevelopment, with KPF architects for Capital & Counties.

B
London, Millennium Bridge
Delivery of strategic spatial design advice to locate a new pedestrian link across the River Thames, for Trustees of the Tate Gallery.



B

Space matters

Space Syntax provides a unique, evidence-based approach to the planning and design of buildings and urban areas. Our aim is to help create environments that are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. Our evidence and ideas empower people to make informed decisions about the key issues concerning them.

Over the last twenty years we have contributed to the design and delivery of successful new tourist destinations throughout the world. This document summarises our experience.

www.spacesyntax.com

Service offer

We **create places** by producing visionary planning and design ideas, leading and supporting multi-disciplinary teams.

We **shape knowledge** by developing technology, undertaking research and publishing findings.

We **inform practice** by training and licensing people to use our technology as well as by contributing to the production of new planning and design policy.

We are expert, independent and widely respected for the support we provide to public, private and community-based decision takers.

Value offer

The Space Syntax approach adds value in three particular ways:

Revealing unseen opportunities and creating better ideas.

Measuring and improving the likelihood of success.

Facilitating communication on project teams and with stakeholders.

Space Syntax

Trafalgar Square, London

A world square for all

C

Vision: the new central stair, as proposed.

D

Reality: photo of new central staircase in use.



C



D

Before: disconnected & underused

The network of public spaces in central London between Trafalgar Square and Parliament Square is the heart of national government and, for many, the heart of London. A masterplan for the area was commissioned in 1996 by Westminster City Council and the Greater London Authority, calling for improvements in the quality of the public realm, which – although of supreme historic importance – was perceived to be unpleasant, unsafe, and dominated by traffic.

Our contribution: evidence-based intervention

We provided an initial analysis of pedestrian activity patterns, which highlighted two key issues: Londoners avoided the centre of Trafalgar Square and tourists failed to make the journey between Trafalgar Square and Parliament Square. Our identification of these problems underpinned Norman Foster's competition entry and helped his team secure the commission.

We then undertook an intensive observation study of pedestrians in the area and developed the most advanced pedestrian movement model of that time. This model allowed us to quickly diagnose problems throughout the masterplan area and identify design solutions. These included a major, new staircase into Trafalgar Square, selective pedestrianisation of the public realm and the re-connection of Parliament Square to the wider area.

But, given the historic importance of the context, these solutions required a very convincing technical argument. We were charged with assembling evidence for that argument.

After: increased usage & enhanced global brand

The evidence proved compelling, and permission to move forward was granted by all bodies concerned. Trafalgar Square was the first element of the masterplan to be completed in 2003 and has been a huge success, with levels of pedestrian movement in the square increasing thirteen fold.

The space is now animated throughout the day by tourists and Londoners alike, demonstrating that the UK can create great public spaces to rival those in the rest of Europe.

“I know these techniques work from the tough environment of practice. I love the world of analysis, observation, research but also of passion, imprecision, the hunch. Space Syntax is the testing of the interaction of these opposing worlds.”
Norman Foster



F

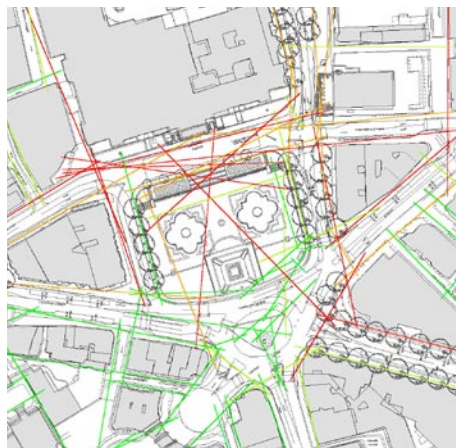
E
Before the central staircase.

F
Current pedestrian activity in the Square, from observation study (red dots - stationary pedestrians, blue lines - walking).

G
Current accessibility.



E



G

South Bank Centre, London

Re-activating the river's edge

H
Spatial accessibility model of London's South Bank showing poorly used routes in blue.

I
South Bank Centre, as proposed showing highly connected, new routes in orange and yellow, indicating high levels of natural surveillance.



H



I

The problem: disconnected from the big picture

London's South Bank hosts some of the world's premier cultural facilities and has long been frequented by many kinds of people: local residents, workers, tourists and commuters, as well as music, theatre and museum goers. Despite all these elements, however, it had never achieved the urban buzz expected of it. We were hired by the South Bank Centre management to help diagnose and treat the problem.

Strategy: reconnect globally & reanimate locally

We were able to trace the problem primarily to the area's circulation system. Our evidence showed that the spatial layout of the area directed different groups of people onto different routes. This left many spaces empty for much of the time because several groups of people were present only at certain times of day. Underused spaces were colonised by anti-social individuals or groups who deterred further use. The result was a spiral of decline in which there were relatively few locations where commercial, retail or catering outlets were viable.

The outcome: part of the tourist trail

Our recommendations have reversed the downward spiral. Many of the spaces in the South Bank Centre now feature a mix of different user groups as well as successful new catering and retail establishments.

Our recommendations largely focused on integrating the various user groups by providing new direct routes between Waterloo International Station, the Hungerford Bridge and the Riverwalk. We also sited new attractors in integrated locations, to take advantage of passing flows and added two new significant public spaces to act as attractors and orientation points.

Margate, Kent, England

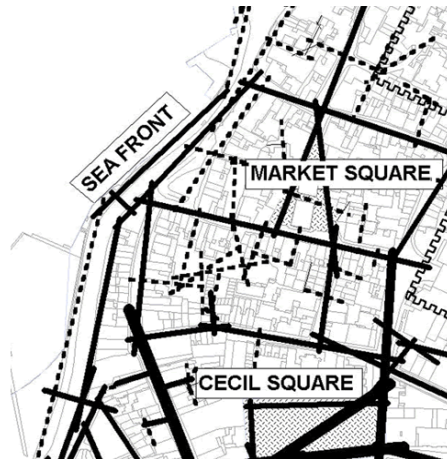
Refinding the lost heart of the town

J

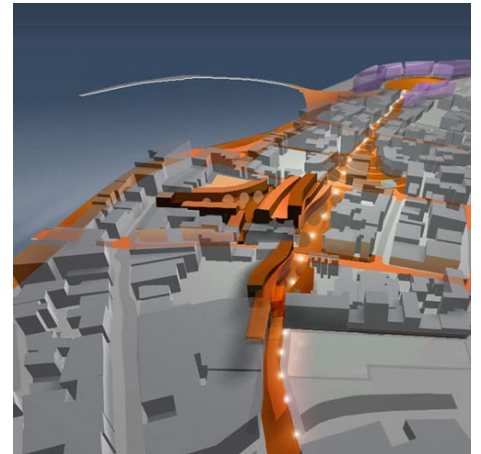
Spatial Integration Analysis - the thicker the line the greater the movement potential.

K

View of the Design Concept highlighting the route of Old Town Way, Margate, Kent.



J



K

The aim: to attract tourism investment

Margate's Old Town is a unique, historic environment but cut off from the wider town centre and under-used. Our public sector clients, Thanet District Council and Kent County Council, wanted a solution to unlock the potential of the Old Town and attract investment there.

Our input: creative reconnection & reuse

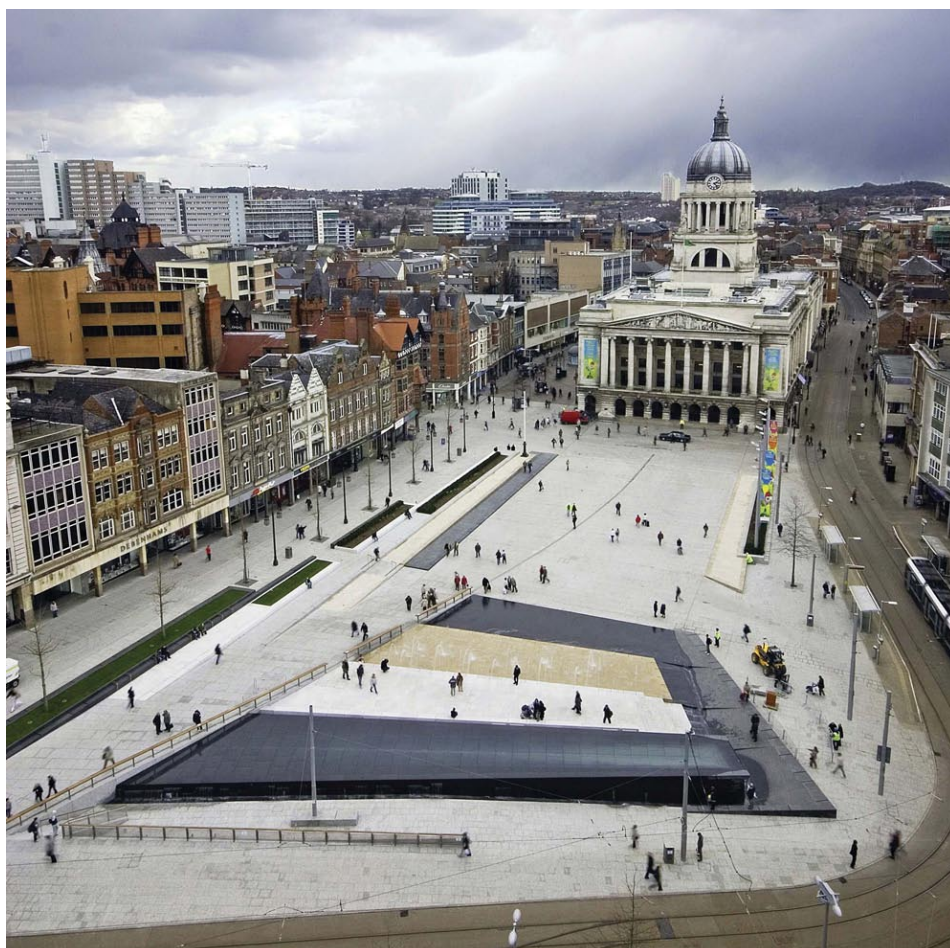
We began by identifying and illustrating the key physical constraints to social and economic regeneration in the Old Town. We based our diagnosis on a careful analysis of the historic evolution of the centre, its current patterns of economic activity and its patterns of pedestrian movement.

We found that the Old Town has a simple, usable internal layout but is largely impenetrable from the outside. Visitors to Margate simply can't find their way in. We identified a significant opportunity to create a new, highly visible route into the Old Town, which became known as "Old Town Way". We tested this route using a pedestrian movement model and found it was likely to bring substantial improvements in pedestrian flows. Old Town Way became the catalyst for the overall regeneration plan.

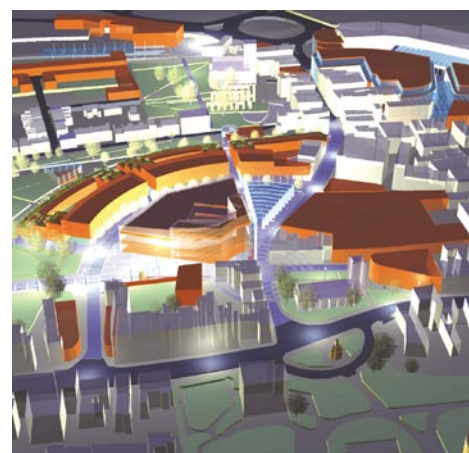
The result: confidence to continue

Our diagnosis and subsequent design vision helped to raise the profile of the Old Town in the eyes of developers and policymakers. A Margate Masterplan - which highlights the importance of drawing movement into the Old Town - has been commissioned and has received strong public support.

“Space Syntax’s analysis and design contribution helped unlock the scheme. The evidence they presented proved critical in promoting our design and convincing people that it would work.” Neil Porter of Gustafson Porter Landscape Architects, speaking about the redesign of Nottingham’s Old Market Square



M



L

L

St Botolph’s Quarter, Colchester

Development of a masterplan for the co-ordination of major development infrastructure in a historically sensitive environment, including a £15million Arts Centre, Magistrates Court and 300,000sq.ft of town centre retail for Colchester Borough Council.

M

Old Market Square, Nottingham

Site analysis and public realm design input, with Gustafson Porter for Nottingham City Council. Competition winning entry.

“We realised Space Syntax were light years ahead of everybody else. This scheme will last for 200 years. We needed the best and the best is what we’ve got.” Councillor John Jowers, Colchester Borough Council

CONTACT

Tim Stonor

Managing Director

t.stonor@spacesyntax.com

T +44 (0) 20 7422 7602

4 Huguenot Place
Heneage Street
London
E1 5LN United Kingdom

london@spacesyntax.com

www.spacesyntax.com

create space : create value

Space Syntax Limited © 2009