

CONFIGURING LIGHT

staging the social

Place des Fetes / Paris

Report

01.09.2017

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01

SOCIAL RESEARCH IN DESIGN

01

Configuring Light Team

Light is fundamental to our lives

All social life happens in some degree of light and darkness. Light structures the kinds of social practices and interactions we enter into at home or on the street, how safe we feel and how well we can navigate through social spaces. Today, fuelled by new technologies and urgent social and environmental concerns, light is increasingly taking centre stage in many urban discussions, especially around economic and environmental costs, safety and well-being, aesthetics and city branding. And yet, despite this centrality, there is very little knowledge and research on what lighting means to people and how they incorporate it into their daily lives and practices. And even less on how lighting designers can build social knowledges to inform their professional practices.

Configuring Light/Staging the Social is an interdisciplinary research programme based in the Sociology Department at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). It explores the role lighting plays in our everyday life to help build a better social knowledge basis for lighting design interventions. It was founded in 2012 by the sociologists Dr Joanne Entwistle (King's College London) and Dr Don Slater and is supported by the LSE and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). Dr. Elettra Bordonaro joined the team in 2015 as Visiting Fellow, bringing with her the lighting design and architectural skills.

Past and current collaborators of Configuring Light include Ove Arup, Derby City Council, Speirs+Major, Lend Lease, the Wellcome Collection and the London Science Museum.

All Configuring Light projects explore how lighting is configured into social life: as infrastructure, as technology, as ambiance or as a particular kind of material that we make and shape through our everyday practices and professional expertise. Configuring Light is committed to developing an empirically grounded social understanding that can work with engineering, psychology and architecture but contributes something distinctive: the 'social' refers to the various social groups that use a space and through which individuals relate to the spaces that designers design. Since individual identity is shaped through membership of these groups, for example families, genders, ethnicities, communities (local, urban, national) but also subcultures and other groups, so is the understanding and use of light. Looking at light as important 'stuff' within social life allows us to explore how professional practitioners – from lighting designers to architects, planners and regulators – 'work' this material into the urban fabric.

Configuring Light/Staging the Social is located in the higher education sector and aims to foster and explore innovative and interdisciplinary practitioner-academic collaborations. As a programme, Configuring Light runs a range of projects and activities that range from research to education and knowledge exchange and impact. For example, since early 2014, it has been hosting an ESRC-funded seminar series that brings together academics and practitioners concerned with contemporary lighting issues. A particular research focus within the programme is a concern with public lighting in the urban realm, previous research projects looked at public lighting in, for example, Derby (UK) and Cartagena (Colombia).



01



Cartagena Project
Colombia 2015-2017



Muscat Workshop
Oman 2016



Whitecross Project
London, UK, 2014-2017



Whitecross Workshop
London, UK, 2014



School Project
UK 2016



Rome Workshop
Italy 2017

01

Social Research

Methodology

Aims and methodology

Social lighting research in the Place des Fêtes was commissioned and designed as a very short and intensive investigation of the uses and understandings of Place des Fêtes in order to identify issues and make recommendations for lighting and activating the site after dark. The primarily qualitative research (supplemented by background documents provided by various stakeholders) was conducted from 27-29 July 2017. It therefore included weekday and weekend daytime observation, a market day, and two evenings, including a Friday night.

Two provisos:

- The research was conducted at the height of summer: it is clear that use of the Place, particularly in early evening, changes seasonally in relation to both weather and hour of sunset. We cannot comment on precisely how it changes, and would recommend further research. This report is confined to the season we observed.
- The original brief was strongly focused on studying the Place after dark. In fact, there was almost no social activity to observe (though we offer an analysis of the lighting itself in Part 2). Moreover, the research clearly indicated that the crucial time for activating the square was in fact early evening and dusk. We therefore focused our research on the lead-up to darkness, as discussed below.

Research activities included:

- Semi-structured interviews (20-45 minutes long): We conducted 30 interviews (which included over 50 people, as several were group discussions). People were selected

to include all the major stakeholders that were identified before and during the research, including residents and non-residents, retailers and consumers, and with a reasonable coverage of gender, age, ethnicity and social class.*

Background interviews and documentation: group discussions, briefings and material from local organizations and city

- Observation of the square, including additional informal interactions, over two days and two evenings
- Photographic documentation of social activities and spatial distribution during day and early evening; photographic documentation during night for lighting analysis.
- Nightwalks: Because dusk was very late (sunset at 21.35, but civil twilight and full darkness after 22.15), proper nightwalks with residents were not feasible. We conducted one nightwalk with Jean-Claude Convert, resident and member of a local association.

* Rough breakdown of stakeholders: Retailers and market traders – 10 interviews/14 people; Local residents (including children, families and teenagers in the Place) – 14 interviews, approx. 40 people; non-local residents (either interviewed in the market or in surrounding areas) – 6 interviews, 13 people.



01



Introduction

In general, there was an impressive consensus amongst interviewees: Place des Fêtes is perceived by locals as a safe and unthreatening space that gathers diverse and multi-cultural users without conflict. This is a matter of some pride and public identity for most people, and is often represented in terms of the social dynamism of the market and the market crowd.

At the same time, most users regard the Place as shabby, badly cared for and symbolising unkept civic promises: renovation has been long delayed, resulting in a sense of cynicism and marginalization.

This perception covers the daytime and early (summer) evening. By contrast, as a night-time space, Place des Fêtes has virtually no identity, atmosphere or spatial coherence for locals, and it virtually disappears for non-locals, for whom, Place des Fêtes exists solely during the three mornings of the market.

It is not regarded as particularly risky or dangerous but it is used solely by some young men who hang out there till the early hours (and who definitely are viewed with suspicion), and by the few stragglers using the short route between the Metro and the northwest entrance to the square.

Given this context, our research stresses the importance of extending the socially diverse and dynamic activities of the daytime and early evening into the night, building on the already existing, and positive, uses of the space.

The following analysis extracts from interviews, observation and visual/spatial analysis several themes that allow us

to identify opportunities for extending the diverse social activities and identity of the day-time square into the evening and night-time, and for ways in which lighting and other material fabric can support this extension.

01

Social Research

Methodology

1. Distribution of sociality

There is a specific, and routine, spatial distribution of social groups and activities that gives a certain structure to the square. We focus on the period from late afternoon (after school) to early evening.

- The wall along the northern edge of the square, at its juncture with the Rue Compans entrance: This is an important gathering space for African women; they are able to sell some food out of coolers both to passing pedestrians from the Metro and to children. This position also works as a vantage point from which they can keep an eye on their children who are playing in the open spaces of the square. Further along the wall, there is more of a mixture of gender and ethnicity.
- Commuters and through traffic: the overwhelming majority of pedestrians are those walking between the Metro and the northwestern entrance. There are people walking to the northeastern entrance, far fewer coming through the smaller entrances to the south. However, it is mainly the northwestern passage that gives a sense of critical mass and dynamism.
- The playground area is attractive, well cared for and ethnically mixed. However, it offers nothing for children over five years old. From that age to early teens, kids occupy the large and empty central spaces of the square, including the Pyramid and platform around it. They can be surveilled, and can gather, but there is little provision for sitting let alone for supporting activities.
- Groups of young lads, hanging out and playing cards, routinely gather under the canopy in front of Picard and

Kolyom Market. Aside from some banter with younger teenagers, they are quite separate from all other regulars yet are the only continuity between daytime and night-time use of the square.

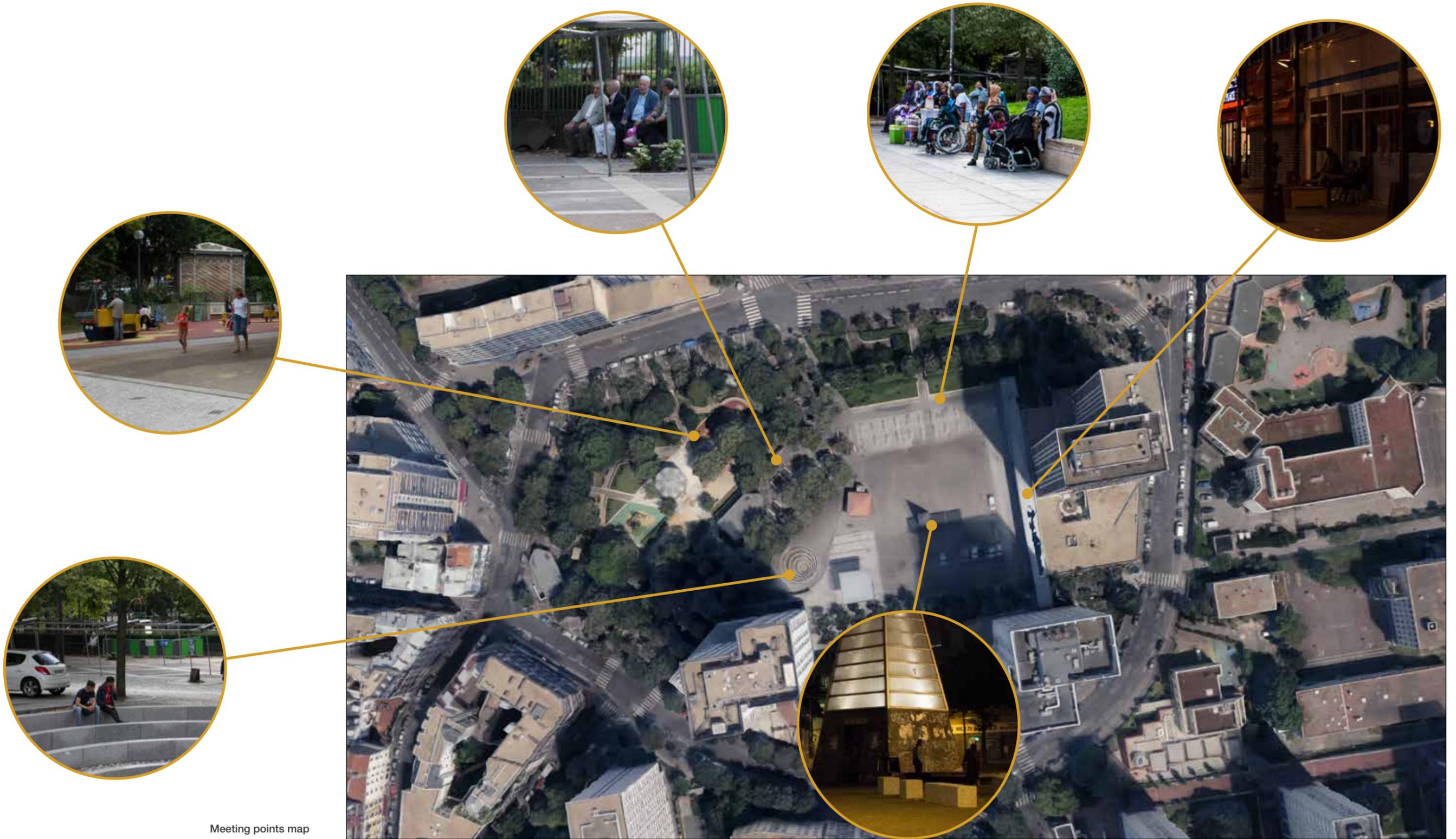
- Most notable is the very large amount of space that is scarcely used and that is not identified with any kind of user: above all, the area defined by the large canopy and the labyrinth fountain, and large sections of the central 'square'. Unused space also includes the two walkways that front the few shops in the square: despite being lit and designed as sidewalks for a shopping precinct, they do not correspond to any significant through traffic or social grouping.

Two main points:

1. Crucially, most of what makes up the visible social life of the square – activity other than people simply passing through it, mainly to and from the Metro – comprises quite poor people (mainly African women and their children) for whom the square is more an extension of their private living space than a public space: they use it as their own garden or living room.
2. Most of the visibly activity in the square is on its perimeter. The large central areas are largely unused, and are ill-defined both socially and spatially. For example, the existing lighting masts delineate a literal 'square' (a vast equilateral space) that does not correspond to the way the space is perceived by users (either perimeters or paths to the entrances/exits).



01



Meeting points map

01

Social Research

2. Temporalities

If you work with a simple distinction between day and night in the Place des Fetes, the perceived contrast is stark: the day is characterised by vibrant activity (the market days) and the night-time square is empty aside from a few young lads in gangs.

However, there are clearly many more time shifts or phases. Aside from day and night, there are:

- the after-school period, as different ages of kids (and mothers) come to hang out over several hours;
- the main evening commuting periods, with a diverse social mix of returning workers and people leaving for evening entertainments;
- finally there are dwindling numbers of remaining stragglers, many – but not all – teenagers and young people.

NB: this research was done in mid-July. It is strongly recommended to carry out comparable research, even at a very small scale, to look at these temporal shifts in different seasons with different hours of dusk and different weather conditions.

By focusing on supporting existing activities in earlier time phases – through lighting as well as a furniture and spatial definition – they can be extended later into the evening to make a more socially vibrant space: eg, providing task lighting trained on the area for women sellers, or lighting a play area for pre-teen children.



3. Symbolism and identity

There is widespread attachment to Place des Fetes as a valued local amenity that fits the cultural diversity of the neighbourhood. This does not mean that it has a strong identity (and it is widely perceived to have absolutely no identity at night). The various historical attempts at symbolising a spatial identity are not particularly convincing to people: the pyramid, fountain and canopy area do not seem to have an intrinsic meaning for any of the stakeholders interviewed.

Nonetheless, the strong attachment of many people to the pyramid in the centre of the square is an important example of a more practical sense of spatial identity: interviewees suggested that while they did not care what shape of object was at the centre of the square, but they wanted *something* there, and something that would glow in the dark. They wanted this for wayfinding (eg, people coming out of the Metro), for meeting and gathering (children and teenagers), and for giving some structure to an enormous space in which they were trying to track their children from afar (mothers).

The platform surrounding the pyramid was similarly crucial for young users of the space: it was also deeply meaningful to them because it was useful in defining their space.

By contrast, the labyrinth fountain and the canopy structure meant nothing to interviewees in defining an identity for the square; and this seemed integrally connected to the fact that they also played no practical role in the distribution of sociality we described above. They were not significant to people because they did not use them.

We can extend the logic of the glowing pyramid: eg, the playground, largely for little children, could be lit to signify its existing use (with playful sparkling lights), while the area that African women use could be lit to suggest the identity that they have given that space (and their identification with it) through their practical activities.

01

4. Localness: residents and non-residents

We stress that locals characterised Place des Fetes in terms of the peaceful coexistence of social diversity that they believe marks the whole area. The Place des Fetes market both exemplifies this character and publicises it to a wider Paris: residents were proud that people came a long way to their famous market, and that it is a popular, relatively cheap market rather than one for gentrifiers and Bobos.

On the other hand, when we interviewed people away from central Belleville, Place des Fetes was *only* the market place. It had no other character, associations or reasons to draw anyone to visit; and it was not meaningfully associated with a defined neighbourhood or community. If Place des Fetes was entirely synonymous with its market then, firstly, it had no existence whatsoever as a night-time venue – no one had anything to say about it outside of the market hours; and, secondly, the idea of moving the market out of the square struck most people as bizarre – there would simply be nothing in the square if there was no market.

We generally had the same response to the moving of the market from residents that we interviewed.

This relationship between residents and non-residents, mediated through the market, links to a wider issue that is extremely ambiguous and open: the market draws on a very wide social diversity but one that includes new gentrifiers, students, ‘bobos’ coming into the wider area. A few local retailers in and very near the square are beginning to cater to this clientele, but otherwise the retail offer is too downmarket to either attract these populations

after dark yet is also unable to cater adequately to the more daily needs of existing residents.

Night time design – including here both lighting and retail planning – needs to attend to these shifting and negotiated demographics.



5. Care and citizenship

As in many public spaces, broken lights are interpreted as lack of care on the part of authorities and as indicating second class citizenship. People may attribute some broken lights to vandals, but the overall story we were told was about civic neglect. This issue is independent of any specific use of the Place des Fetes after dark: effective maintenance itself is significant.

In this context, the clearest demand was not for sophisticated or innovative design but for improvements and maintenance that demonstrated basic care.

While residents have a positive view of the Place des Fetes (and non-residents like the market, at least), there is considerable anxiety and anger about its dilapidation: many lights are broken, the fountain doesn't work, the paving is broken in places, the remaining stumps of dead trees have been left behind to line main thoroughfares; the pyramid is a ruin; and the main sitting area is infested with rats.

Moreover, people were vocal and angry about the gap between years of consultations and promises and the absence of any re-development.

An interesting example was a demand for ‘shelters’ from various social groups: ‘we like to hang out here, particularly in summer, but what would really be useful would be a shelter we can hang out in that would protect us from sun, wind or rain’. This was sometimes articulated in the very shadow of the large canopy next to the fountain (which looks like a shelter but provides none).

6. Atmosphere

As already stressed, interviewees of all types characterised Place des Fetes as a diverse yet safe and conflict-free zone that reflected a positive view of the neighbourhood. Non-residents saw this entirely in terms of the daytime market. Apart from this spatial identity, people did not perceive Place des Fetes as possessing any atmosphere at all, in the sense of a coherent visual form or feeling. This was particularly the case for night-time: without people to give the place an atmosphere, the physical infrastructure was experienced as without character or coherence.

The important issue is less about atmosphere and more about ensuring that those who divide up and use the space in different ways are supported in their sense of access and belonging, and that overlapping activities can be accommodated without conflict. This includes both the relationship between market and community, and between those living in apartments on the Place itself and those using the Place but living elsewhere.

Finally, atmosphere is defined by people in relation to the kind of space they perceive. In this sense, interviewees were unclear what – other than a marketplace – the Place is, and whether it is a ‘square’ in any sense. In many descriptions, and uses, the Place des Fetes feels more like an internal courtyard than a public square: closed to the outside and focused inwardly, used by many of its most frequent users as an extension of their domestic childcare arrangements, and with most activity at the perimeter rather than the centre and with the vast majority of people simply emerging from the Metro to exit at the closest convenient point.

02

LIGHTING ANALYSIS

02

Lighting analysis

Socia/spatial issues by night

1. Emptiness by night

Place des Fetes by night is actually empty. This is largely the result, as mentioned above, of the lack of activities and urban furniture in the square.

Except for access to the metro station, there is little reason to enter the centre of Place des Fetes. Social activity is limited to on group of lads hanging around in front of Picard and one on the opposite corner to Santa Monica Pizzeria.

NB: not one of our interviewees could describe the square by night in any detail. Of course, this made it difficult to study how the square is perceived by night other than to say that it is not a successful urban space. Aside from lack of activity, the “prison light effect” of the central lighting masts, and the lack of atmosphere and intimacy, does not help in attracting people, either residents or non-residents.



2. Fragmentation of space, activities and light

The overall space of Place des Fetes is very fragmented, both socially and spatially. Lighting for spatial legibility is practically impossible without decisions as to how the space should be structured by night.

Our social analysis indicates that the square (in the evening) is subdivided into areas with different uses and users: it is a mix of various public spaces, rather than a single square.

While this differentiation is socially and spatially evident by day, by night the lack of light planning renders the space incoherent. Moreover, the lighting is random, inconsistent, a mix of old and new equipment and entirely misses some areas. Lighting (and urban furniture) could positively enhance the differences, while also unifying the overall image of Place des Fetes.



3. The Pyramid

The Pyramid is a symbol, or better is the only recognisable symbol of Place des Fetes by night. By night it is lit up and creates a soft glow around the area: possibly the only “comfortable” light effect in the square. It is also the central monument and therefore helps to define and to read the empty squared space as a Square. It also references other historical squares in Paris where it is common to have a central monument. The platform of the Pyramid is also the only “urban furniture” where residents can sit, play, perform under some light.

Affection for the Pyramid is not related to the symbol, shape or design itself, but to the use as urban structure and - in lighting terms - to its function as “lighthouse” of the square.



02

4. The Fountain and the Light feature

The two features (besides the Pyramid) that define the central square are forgotten, empty and inappropriately lit. The canopy structure is not used yet is massively overlit, creating a glare that impacts residents. This also creates a very hot spot in terms of lighting, producing a disturbing perception of darkness in the adjacent areas due to the high contrast.

The fountain too is not used by night it appears as a dark hole in the square with no function. This increases spatial fragmentation, disrupts wayfinding and creates a threatening impression.



5. Entrances and passages

The entrances and passages to reach Place des Fetes are not legible either by day or by night.

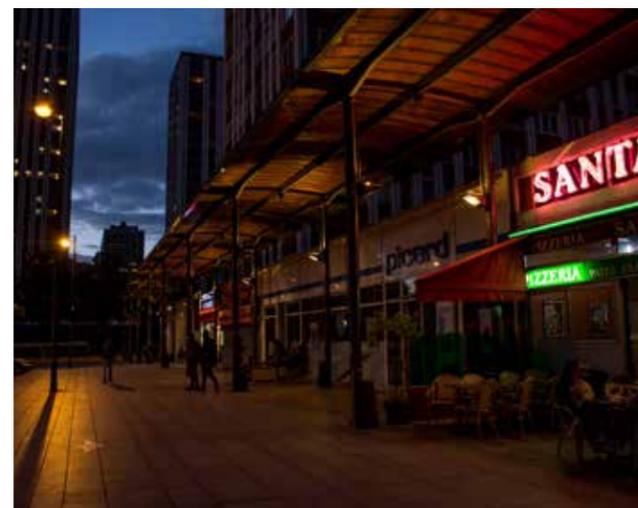
By night, there is no enhancement of entrances and the lighting of the passages are not maintained. Most of the lighting fixtures are broken and are all different from passage to passage. The quality of lighting is also very low. Therefore, they are not inviting or welcoming. Perhaps as a result there is little foot traffic at night through any of the exit ways other than the northwest corner of the square.



6. Retail and signage

One of the main problems of the physical heart of Place des Fete is the lack of consistency and boundaries. We already analysed the conditions of the existing retail, but the lighting and signage as well by night are not coherent, maintained and some of them are switched off. This of course is creating a dull space by night and is lowering the legibility of the arcade and boundaries of the square itself, limiting the possibilities to enhance a more active atmosphere.

The arcade is creating a pleasant lighting atmosphere and a soft glow, even if it is not well maintained.



7. Weather conditions, light and shadows

Many residents complained about the extreme weather conditions in Place des Fetes, with strong cold wind in winter and very hot sun in summer. This clearly impacts on activation by day (shadow is as important as light during the summer day) and by night (particularly outside of high summer, shelters, with seating furniture, are needed to protect against wind and rain).

The only shelter at present is the big steel canopy structure: it creates some shadow but has only one small bench, and the perforated roof lets in rain. It is hardly used.



02

Lighting analysis

Main technical issues

1. Quality of light

The quality of light, generally, is not good. Except for the pathway adjacent the playground, newly refurbished, the rest of the lighting fixtures are old, and the light is mainly low-pressure sodium ("orange light"). This kind of light, in use in the past, provides no colour rendering (the capability to reproduce the actual colours of objects). This means that the few things that are lit in Place des Fetes, are not recognisable by night.

Moreover, the lighting atmosphere is very poor. All the light comes from high points above the square, except for the Pyramid and the Arcade. This creates a lack of legibility of the vertical surfaces and landmarks by night (for example: trees, fountain, urban furniture, ...) and a complete lack of vertical illuminance to recognise peoples' faces.



2. Contrast

The horizontal lighting level in Place des Fetes is not bad. The average is a good one for pedestrian spaces, considering the Standard EN13201 for Outdoor Lighting. The main issue is the high contrast. In fact, in some areas (the big steel canopy structure and the metro entrance) the lighting level is excessively high. By contrast with these levels, the square is perceived as very dark in some points.



3. Extreme diversity of lighting fixtures

There is a lack of lighting planning in Place des Fetes. Instead there is a rather wild mix of lighting fixtures, with different height, aesthetic, bulb, colour and CRI. This of course doesn't help to create a coherent image for the square.

At the same time this lighting diversity is also entirely unrelated to the social distribution of activities, or zoning, that we mentioned previously, and does not support or enhance it. The main square is spatially structured and defined by very high columns, while there is nothing to frame. Entrance and passages are not legible.



4. Maintenance

Maintenance is a big issue and not just lighting related. But focusing on lighting, there are quite a few fixtures broken (even some of the new ones).

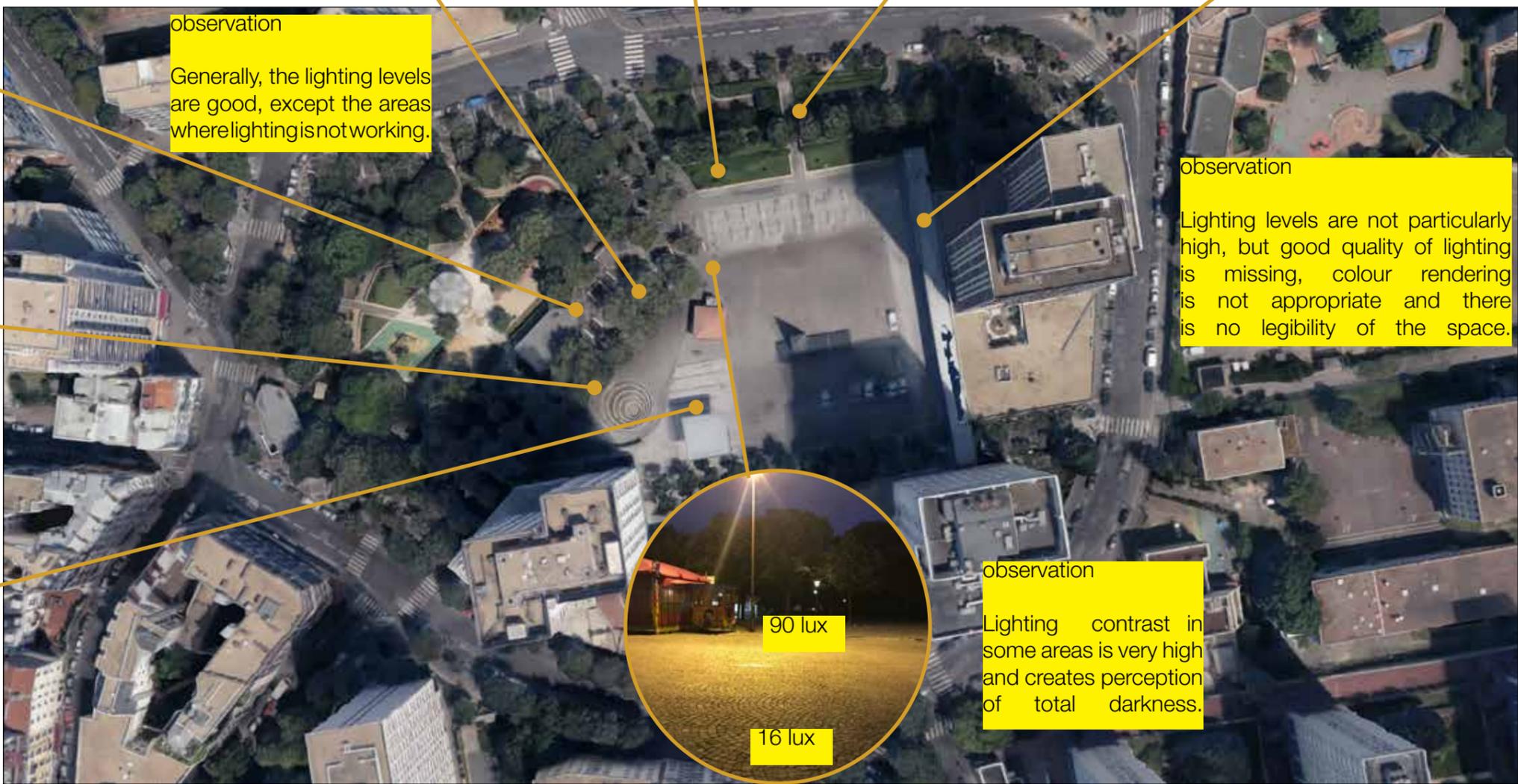
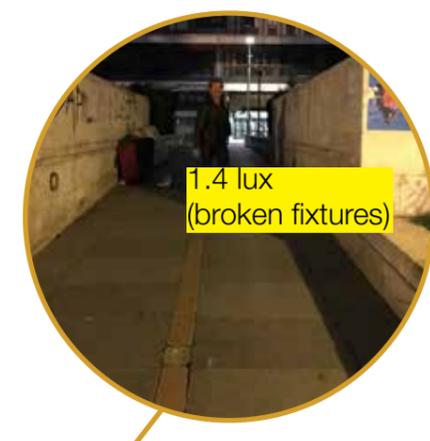
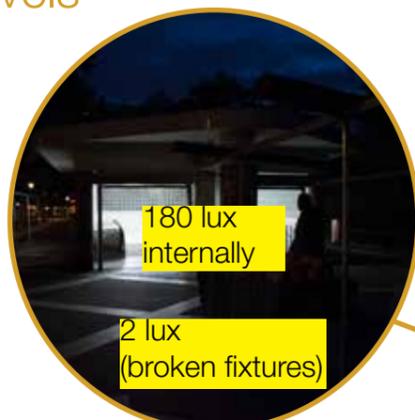
This has social impact on the users but also a technical impact on the overall lighting scheme. For example, in front of the exit from the Metro the high contrast mentioned previously is also caused by darkness resulting from the two adjacent lamp posts being broken.

All the fixtures in the passages are half broken or in bad condition, creating dark spots and not a welcoming atmosphere, adding to the sense of neglect and lack of care by the City.



02

Lighting levels



03

DESIGN/SOCIAL/LIGHTING INPUT

03

Recommendations for light and night in Place des Fetes

1.
The over-riding concern in lighting the Place des Fetes at night is to ensure a basic coherence and basic maintenance of lighting fixtures, rather than achieving a strong statement of atmospheric design. The random melange of different (and often broken) fixtures, lights and schemes could be simply and quickly ordered to deliver a message of care and concern.

2.
However, lighting alone will not activate the area, and focusing on a lighting scheme that delivers atmosphere but that is not tied into existing social practices is likely to be not only ineffective but regarded with local cynicism. Above all, lighting will not activate the square because there is nothing to do there at night. We would encourage a lighting scheme that emphasises the existing arcade-like passageways and canopy that front the retail offering – but only if policies are put in place to upgrade the night-time retail offering.

- NB: retail strategy – which we strongly recommend – would require strong focus on shifting demographics, particularly the balance between poorer current users and incoming gentrifiers.
- This would also require political and material attention to reconciling the needs of both night-time users and people who live in the tower blocks that overlook the Place.)

3.
To help activate Place des Fetes further into the evening hours, we recommend focusing on extending the more dynamic social activity of the early evening hours later into the night.

- Connecting night to day: work backwards from the night to the day, trying to extend the life of earlier hours further into the night. By 10.00 the square is empty, except for a few young lads. Before this, there were some teenagers and straggling commuters. Earlier there were mother and children, commuters, shoppers.
- Rather than impose a spatial structure through lighting (as at present, with masts defining a central square), the lighting should mirror and support the ways in which existing users and uses are mapped out, the ‘zoning’ carried out by users of the square: eg, the sellers and sitters along the northern wall; the use of the pyramid and some open space by pre-teens and teens; the use of southern perimeter areas by young men, the main walkways from Metro to exit from Place.

This could be very proactive:

1. Eg, task lights could be used to turn the informal gathering space of the African women into a recognised zone, and connected to the footfall that routinely passes them. This could be extended further into promoting occasional night-time markets in the early evening.
2. Eg, the pre-teens’ current use of the platform around the pyramid (with its popular red uplights and glow) could be not only retained and repaired but extended by using interactive lighting systems that the children could play with.

4.
Although we emphasise lighting existing social activities and claims on the Place, there are two major exceptions: There are two large unused areas which distort all experiences of the Place and need to be properly defined and lit:

1. The large canopy structure does not function for anyone, and the massively overlit spotlights are both obtrusive to the surrounding area and render the structure itself unusable (and there is inadequate seating). It needs to be removed or redefined.
2. The labyrinth fountain is an attractive but largely unused structure that makes a rather threatening night-time space.

5.
Given that most people identify Place des Fetes as a marketplace, and its social activation in terms of market activity, there is widespread bafflement as to why the market is to be moved out of the Place, and what will be left of the Place once it is moved. We share that confusion.

Most of our research points in the other direction, including for night-time design: it would make more sense to develop an activation strategy that draws on the main identity that the Place has for most people, and to include this in any night-time activation strategy. Electric outlets or task lighting for a small early evening market area, or occasional night markets, kept to perimeters away from residential buildings, could be very effective and in keeping with the identity of the place.



03

Phase 1: Easy fix (while waiting for full project development)

Easy fix: Lighting

1. Replace broken lights

This will immediately reduce the problem of contrast and dark spots and give a sense of “something is happening” to the residents

2. Replace light sources

Where is possible, replace the low-pressure sodium (orange light) with a compatible source with better colour rendering.

3. Add festoon lighting to trees of the playground

This will start creating an easy and atmospheric “zoning”

4. Informal lighting for the market wall

Ask the associations to think of an easy way to give light to the “market wall” (it could be individual lighting system or festoon lighting from column to column).

5. Big steel structure/Canopy

It is possible to reduce the amount of light (with large energy saving), change the light source and switch off some of the projectors. Mock-up of site is required.



Easy fix: Various

1. Cleaning

A very deep and good cleaning of the entire square can give immediately a sense of “relief” to the mistrust we came across. This can be organised also with adjacent schools and associations. Cleaning the Pyramid would also be quite important.

2. Eliminate rats

Particularly on the back of the market wall, rats are a huge problem also in terms of social separation among different groups of users.

3. Fix broken benches

Again something easy that can be done as part of some activities running already in the square.

4. Replace dead trees

In the main pathway, there are many dead trees. Those can be replaced or retained and used to create informal seating.

5. Give a second life to the fountain

The fountain, if it cannot be reactivated as fountain or lit by night (this would require some proper electrical work), could be temporarily the object of one of the workshop to reactivate the space.

6. Add free wi-fi to the central square

This came out from some interviews with teenagers and it is a good way of attracting people anytime of the day or night. A lot of kids around the square don't have internet at home.



03

Longer term input

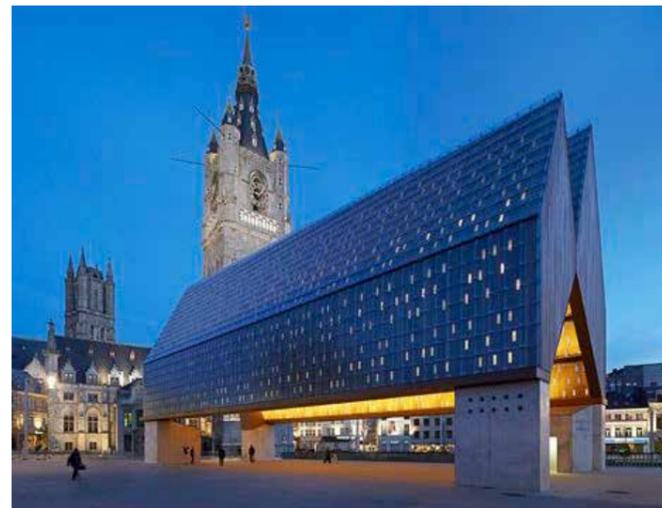
Multiple squares within a square

The main point is to find or extend activities that can activate the space by night. Place des Fetes is recognised by the presence of the Market, therefore market-type night activities are worth exploring.

One idea to implement infrastructures for the informal wall market, making this space a unique and recognizable feature of the Place des Fetes from early evening until later at night.

Place des fetes as the 'Place of Markets', from the more traditional to more quirky ones.

Further than that, use lighting plus furniture to clarify or create meaningful zoned spaces such as: the playground, the pathway to metro, the central square, the side square, the market wall - essentially creating a number of different but overlapping squares within the square that reflect, support and activate real social uses.



Pyramid, fountain and symbols

The decision of removing the Pyramid is already taken and we don't claim that the Pyramid itself is essential. However, it definitely needs to be replaced with another landmark with some possible added functions as a platform, seating, informal play space. By night, it needs to glow or to reflect light in order to become a focal point in the centre of the square. We suggest a competition with a very clear brief. This would be an occasion to commission an object to attract people from other areas as well.

The fountain needs a second life. If the water reactivation is not possible (City to confirm this), it will need some special light (it could be maybe projection of water?) and a new use of the space itself. For example, small benches could be integrated on the structure, or the space would need total rethinking.

Please consider that water is an element missing from the square, an important element in hot weather when the square is most used, particularly by children.



03

Creating large spaces and shadows: urban furniture, planters and “islands of light”

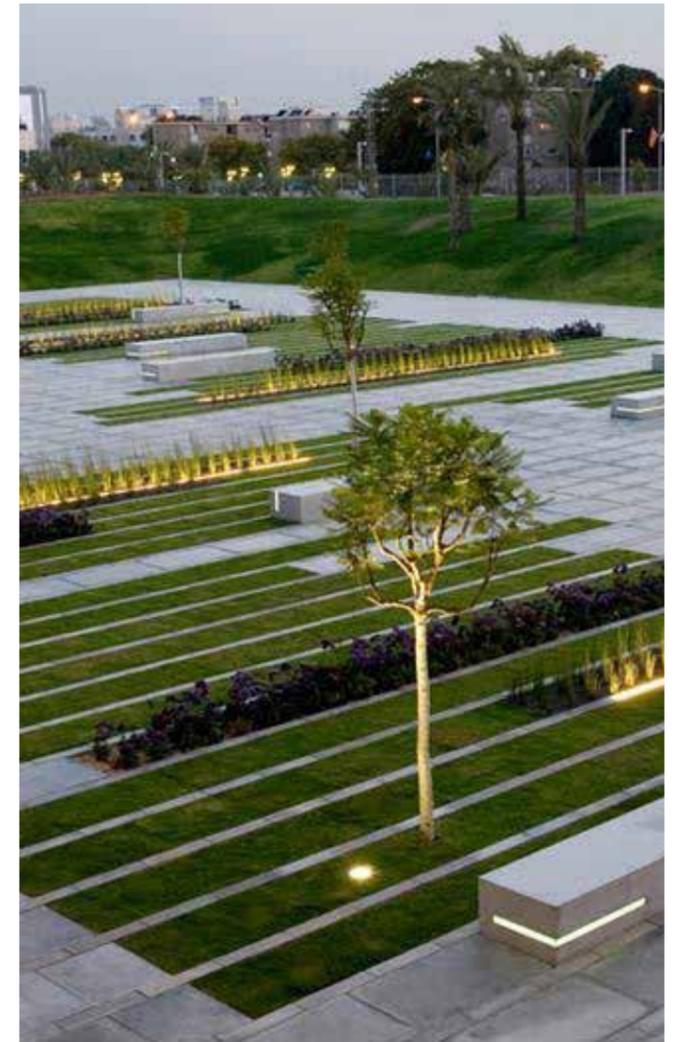
Good suggestion is trying to integrate as much as possible lighting into furniture such as benches, planters.

This is a good way to avoid other visible lighting elements and fixtures.

Depending on the final bench and planters design, lighting will be detailed in order to have all lighting elements hidden, not visible and therefore not glary.

There are many ways to integrate lighting in benches or planters depending on the final design of the furniture element itself.

Even if Place des Fetes central square can not host trees due to the carpark below, it should be possible to add layers of grass, planters with trees and small shelters.



03

Longer term input

Arcade, Retail and Signage

The central square is characterized by the arcade and the signage. These characteristics need to be improved and enhanced.

Lighting under the arcade is recessed/surfaced mounted to create more contrast.

Warm light, 3000K and CRI 85 would be required.

Spill light from arcade contributes to the lighting level on the square.

The centre of the square could be kept darker, to enhance the integration of lighting into future furniture and greenery.

Signage contributes to the general lighting level: After closing time the shop shutters could have the same design - pattern perforation creating a unique look - to continue maintaining the commercial area of the square as a lively place.



Signage

A signage system should be investigated and designed in collaboration with the architects.

The idea is to use the signage also as a functional lighting element both on boundaries.

Integrating a LED linear fixture with asymmetric optic into the signage box, would provide functional lighting onto the street.

Light colour is warm white 3000K, with CRI 85.

03

Creating shelters and revisiting the steel structure

The existing steel structure ('Canopy') needs rethinking. It has a great visual impact, by day and by night, but basically no function. Residents complain about extreme weather conditions and the necessity of having some sort of shelter, for summer and winter. The steel structure could become a proper shelter, with more seating, or swings!

Also elements of urban furniture with planters could become more "sheltery" and be spread across the entire Place des Fetes to create a consistent recognisable element.



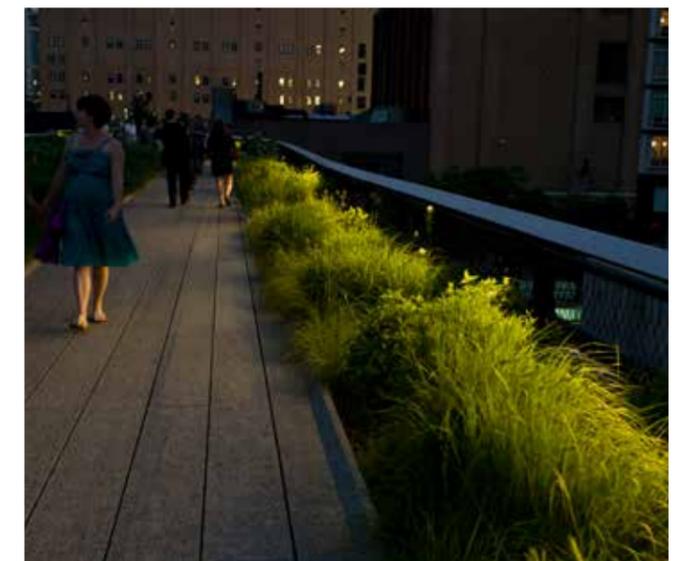
Entrances and passages

The different types of entrances throughout the entire Place des Fetes should be treated with a site-specific approach, enhancing their individual characteristics and features and creating a unique night time identity.

Big signage could be used to announce the square, lighting in the evening can stress the entrance point to welcome the visitor and give him/her a reason to enter.

The pathway and passages leading to the square need to be well lit, with possibly a higher level of lighting in comparison to the other spaces.

They also need to lit with the same lighting system, and same typology of light, to make them legible and easy to recognise.



03

Longer term input

Vertical lighting: a chance with trees and greenery

Illuminating the greenery is an important lighting opportunity to enhance the squares and meeting spaces and to emphasise the main path axes.

All the types of greenery should be treated consistently throughout the development.

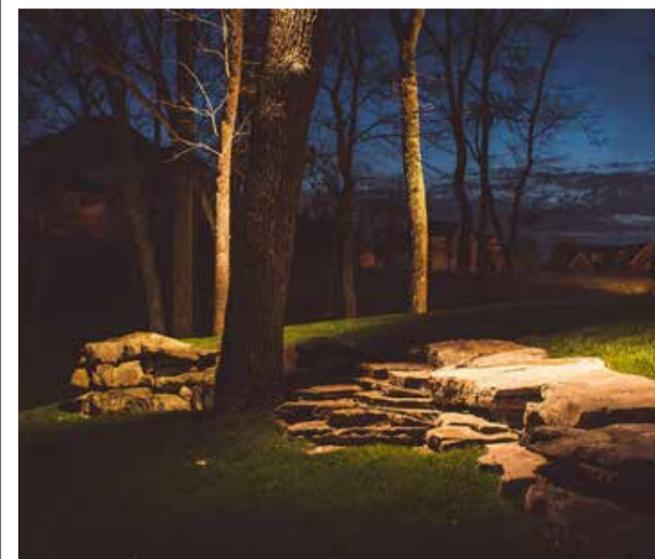
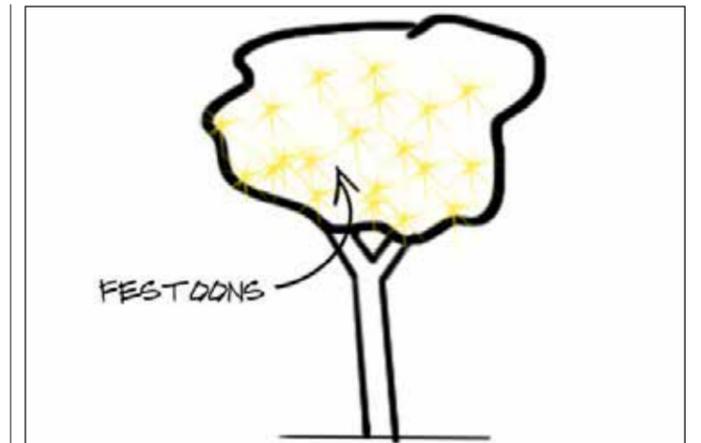
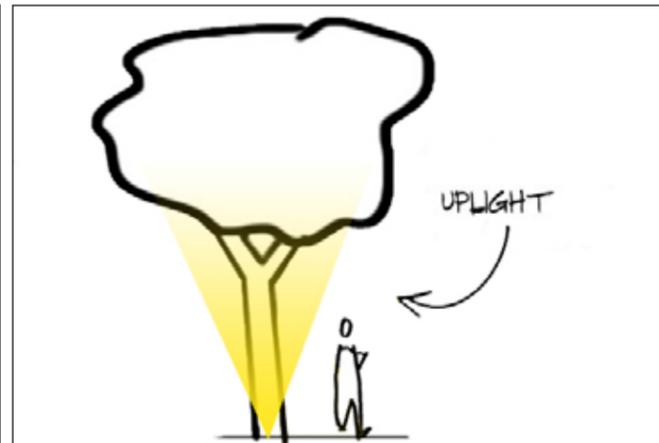
Key trees could be uplit (eg, at the entrances), as they have by their nature a strong impact on the appearance of the space.

The other types of trees that are positioned in a regular grid or axis could be uplit or have special lighting enhancements (festoon, moonlight effect, etc.) according to the species and location.

Some trees could have a downlight component to illuminate the ground and encourage safe night time use of the space, especially in corner areas.

Vertical greenery could be illuminated when and where appropriate to enhance the space.

Special planting, flower beds, climbers could be illuminated according to their location and characteristics.



03

Adding playground for different ages

The attraction of light allows the playground to be used after dusk, particularly in wintertime.

Colourful light intervention and light projections are welcome in these areas.

Light is also integrated wherever possible into furniture and urban elements. Key trees could have festoon lighting.

Light plays through different media and “games”, with the use of interactive systems and colours. A site specific approach gives unique and fun experience for children, families and adults whilst also being one of the key night time elements of that part of the town.

The empty space of Place des Fetes, the Pyramid, The Fountain could become element of play not just for small children, but for teenagers and young people. We saw people playing cards and doing some knitting. It would be good to think of elements that can become tables, chairs, movable furniture depending on the season...

