Augustin Cross

2013

3A

DRS 06

A Memomorial to Rioting

My project is a development of ideas surrounding the themes of archiving, protest, recording and memory. My initial attempts to analyze Notting Hill led me on a visual line of experiments, using light drawings as a conceptual but physical method of recording space. But this site driven interest eventually led me to Acklam Street. My research into the history of the site led me to develop an intimate relationship with rioting as a subject and as a process. Through archiving stories behind rioting in Notting Hill, I would like to design a memorial to riots as a subject incorporating the findings of my research.

I have used Unit 3A project as a foundation to experiment and research, allowing me to persue the design of my memorial to rioting in 3B.

My initial site visit consisted of walking from Ladbroke Grove Station, under the Westway for about 40 minutes towards westway roundabout. The big open spaces offer the option for numerous ideas, however my first interest comes from the amount of people that navigate these spaces. Why do people navigate these spaces, or choose not to? Is it because it is unsafe? Or that there is nothing to do? Can we bring people to these spaces?

The images reflect on the amount of people that I came across, and the pink circles are a conceptual representation of the bustle and noise that they create in each specific location. I am trying to get an understanding of the levels of human activity there is around the area. The process of representing physical activity through digital process is an interesting subject, of which I would like to continue examining.

"The process of representing physical activity through a digital process is an intreaging subject. And is a theme I continue within my research"
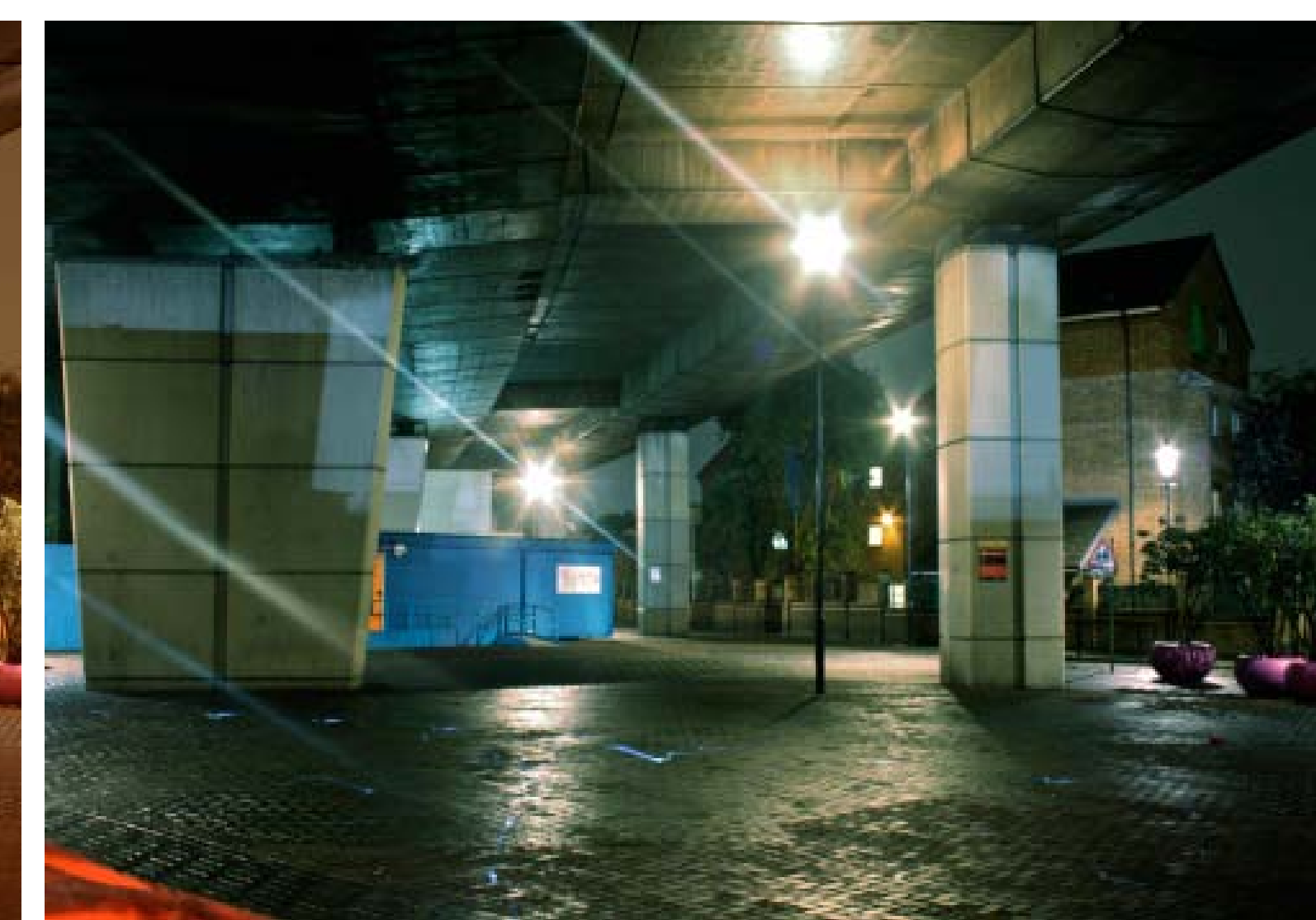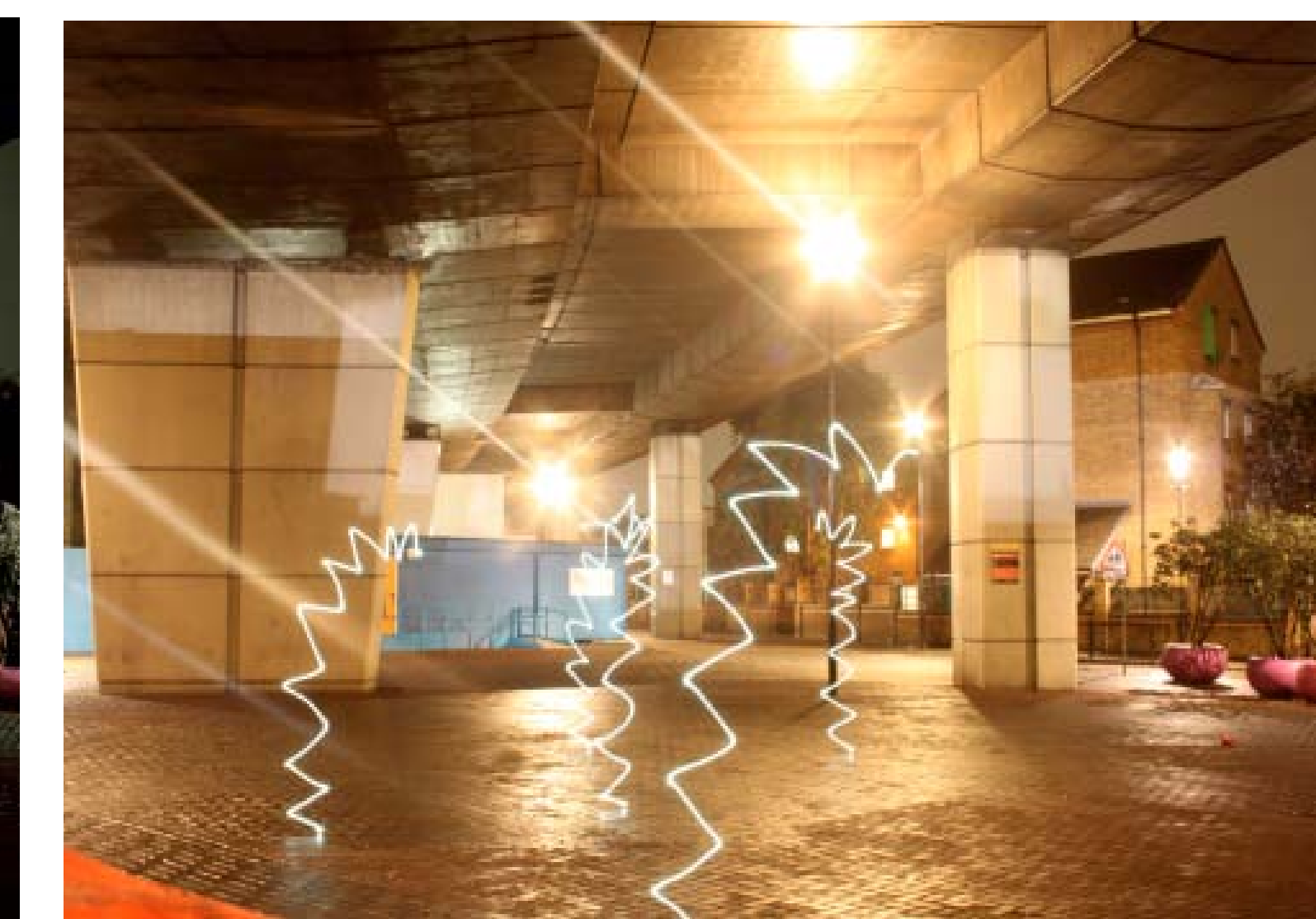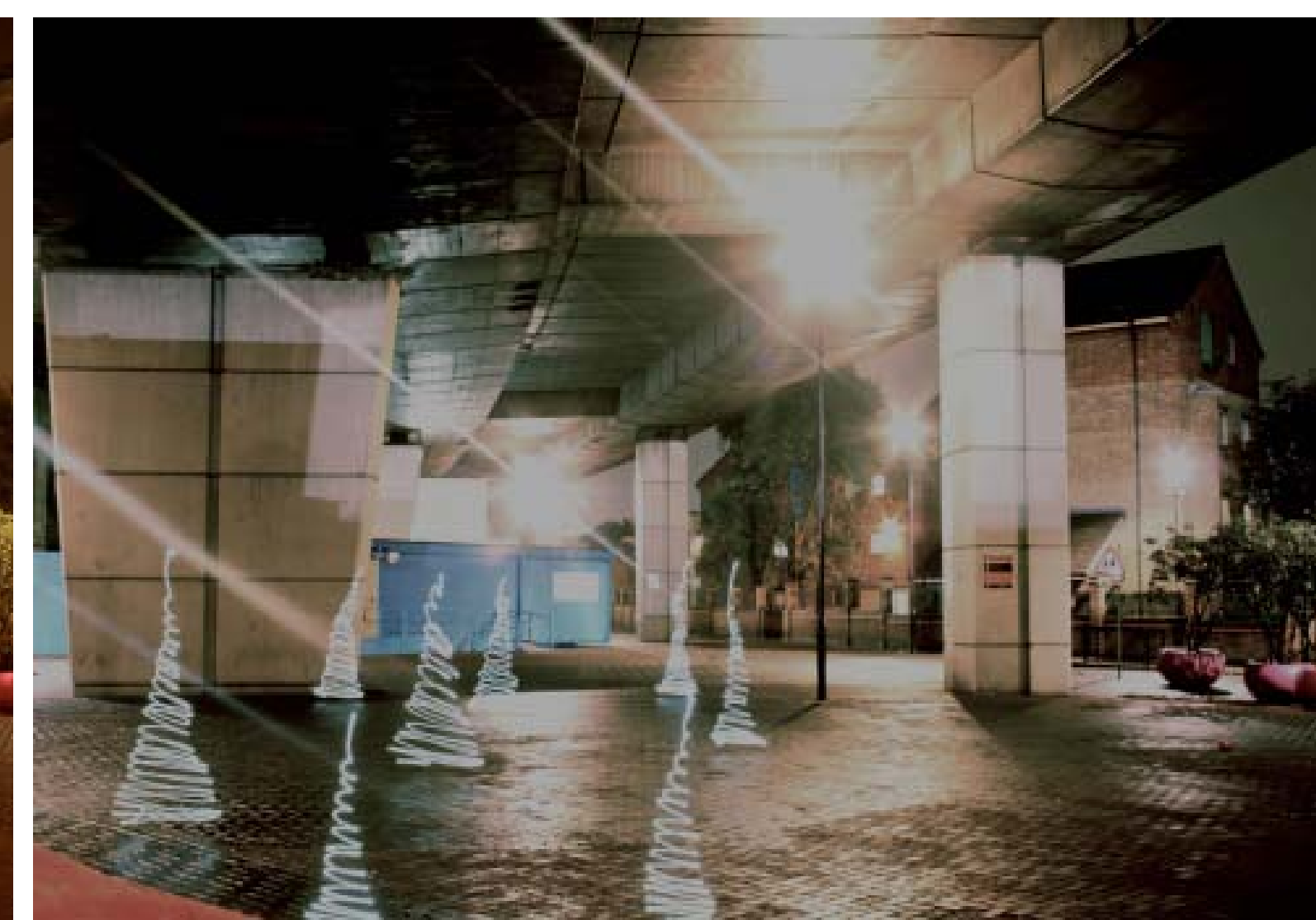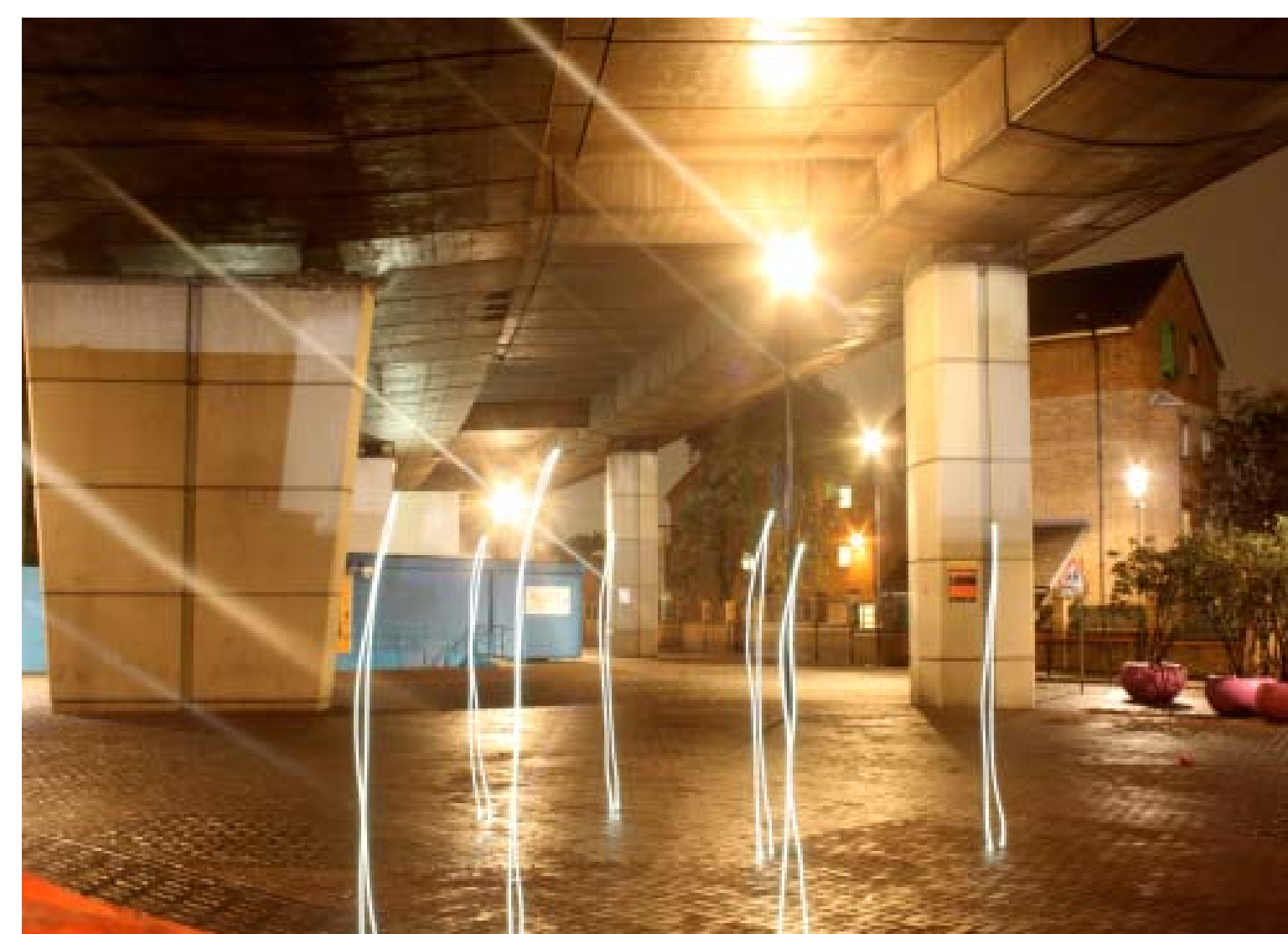
The context behind my following site visit was to explore spaces through light photography. The process allowed me to be very experimental and is a continuation on the idea of physical and digital. Whether it be the relations between the light and the space, or potentially a way of recording activity.

Figure 5 was an experiment of recording movement, as I attached a light to my ankle. The result was reasonably effective, but light power needs considering.

EXPERIMENTATION
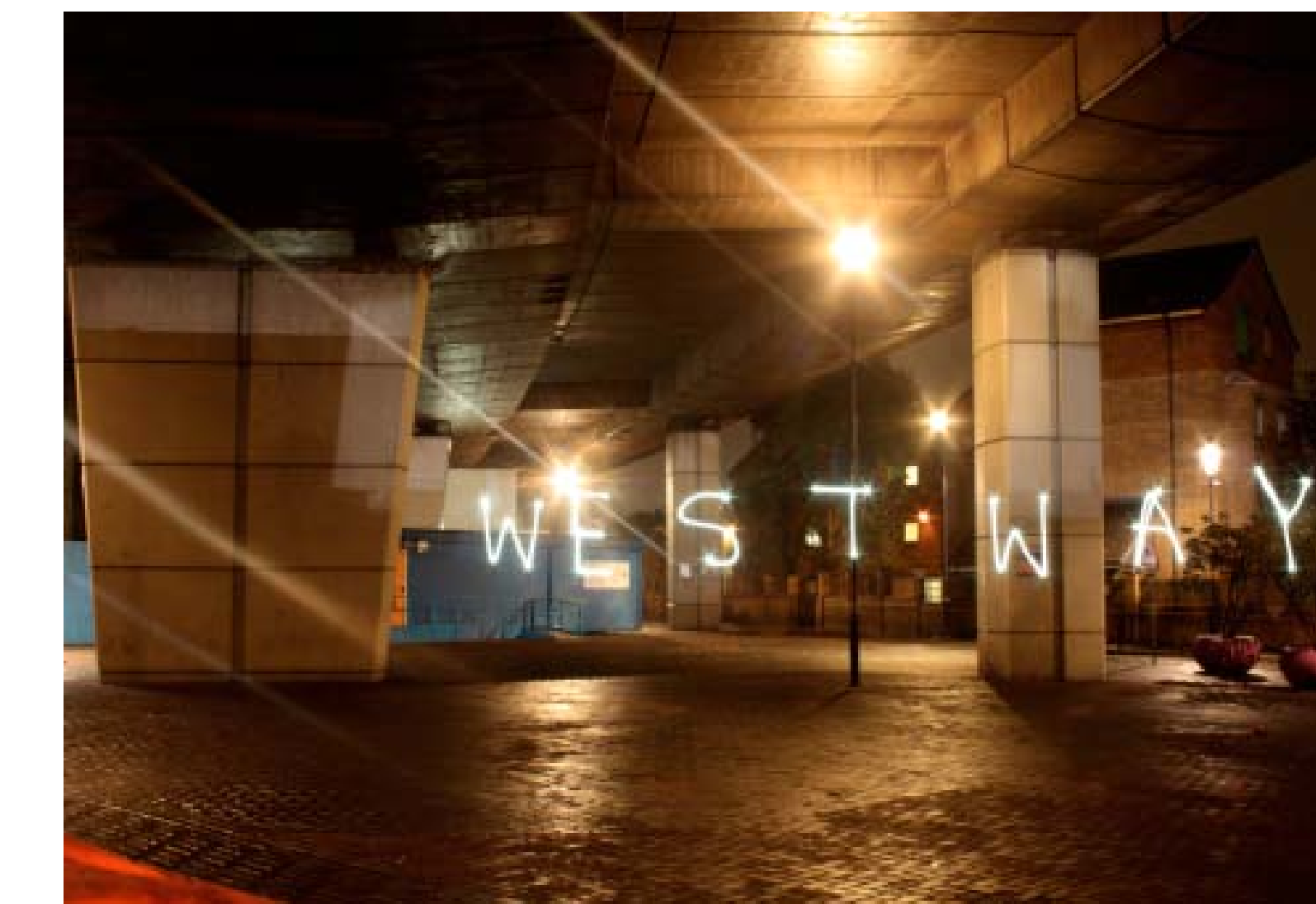
Trace Room is an installation exploring the dematerialization of architectural elements which traditionally define the boundaries of a room, the installation begins to erase and explode its thresholds; suggesting its limits through a density of stretched cord lines

"Tardis" by Mark Wallinger – The installation is a reflection on boundaries and thresholds.

Looking at work surrounding the context of physical and digital use of space. Scott Snibbe's work combines the two elements in one piece. The spatial and physical delineation of ones personal space is represented through the use of a digital installation.


I again used light photography to capture the idea of space created when digital and physical are combined. The aim was to define boundaries between person and surroundings, something that was fairly successful in my results.

The process of light photography also draws on the idea of memory, and how the trail of light is a memory of the torch that passed. Something that could pose interesting exploration.

My next site visit was oriented around my interest in bounda-
ries, and I immediatly found a relevant site at the top of
Portobello Road. I found the site interesting as it is a hidden
space, with only a few gaps to peer into. Curiosity is what
drove the interest, as I wanted to see what it was beyond the
gates / fences surrounding the site.

The pictures portray the area as a physical boundary, but not
a boundary of ones sight as one can see past it. In order to
further my project context, I will undergo research of the site
and the sites history.
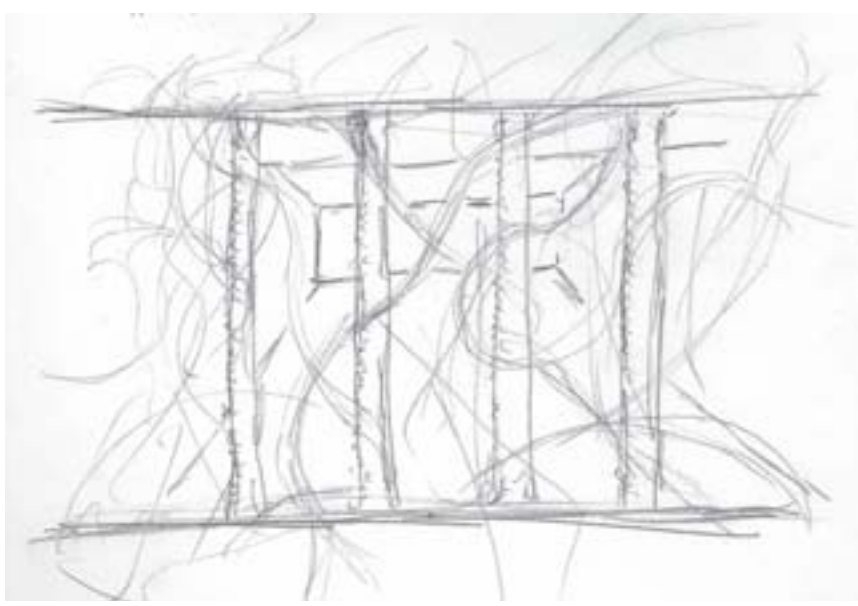
At the opening of the Westway in 1970, it was deemed the largest concrete structure in Britain. And people put up banners (on Acklam Road, expressing their opposition to the construction). "You cannot help but have sympathy for these people" - Barracked Minister, Micheal Heseltine

Acklam Road in the mid 70s is described by Jonathan Raban in Soft City as consisting of: 'locked shack with Free Shop spraygunned on it, and old shoes and sofas piled in heaps around it; a makeshift playground under the arches of the motorway with huge crayon faces drawn on the concrete pillars; slogans in whitewash, from Smash the Pigs to Keep Britain White.' 1974

As the North Kensington Amenity Trust was founded to manage the 23 acres under the Westway for the local community, Frendz made "a call to all progressive people; black people smash the racist immigration bill; workers of Britain smash the Industrial Relations bill. All progressive people unite and smash growing fascism. Rally and march July 25, Acklam Road, Ladbroke Grove 2pm. Black Unity and Freedom Party.'
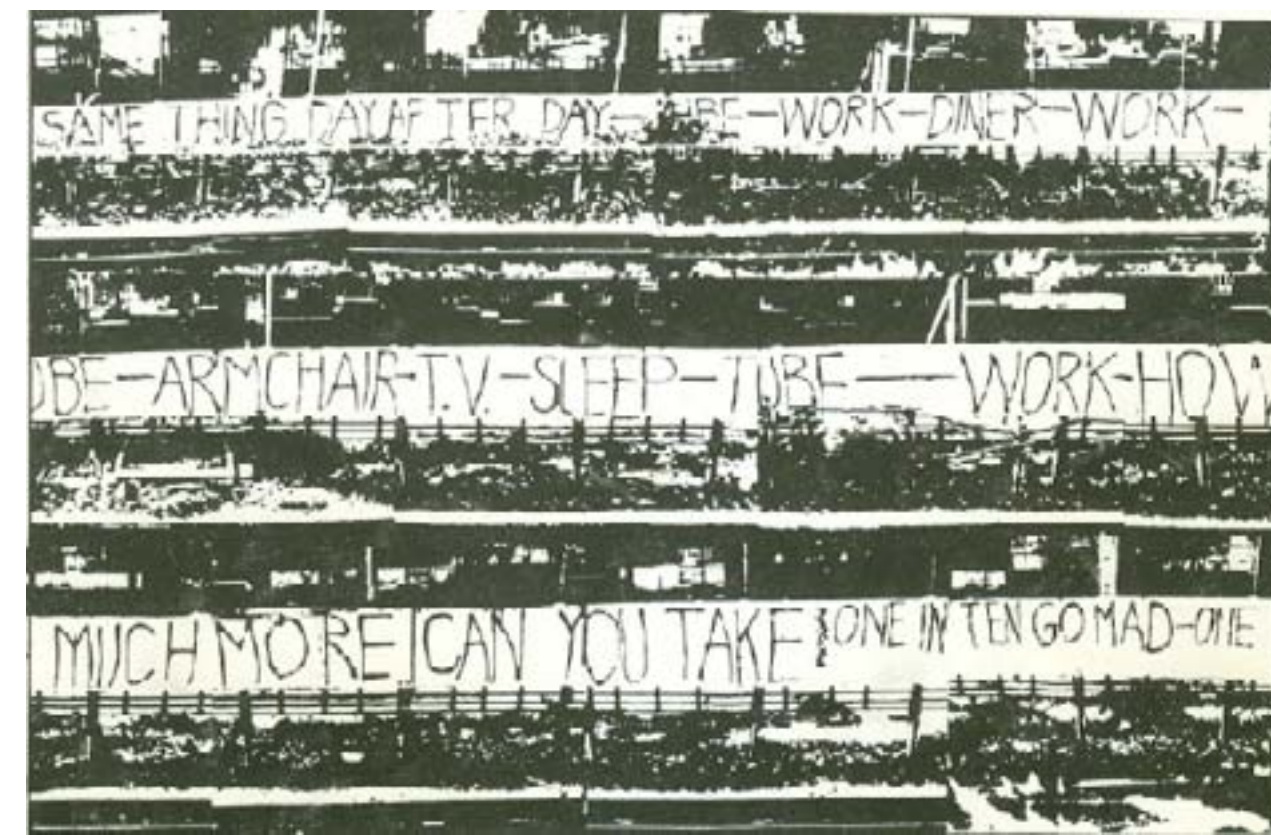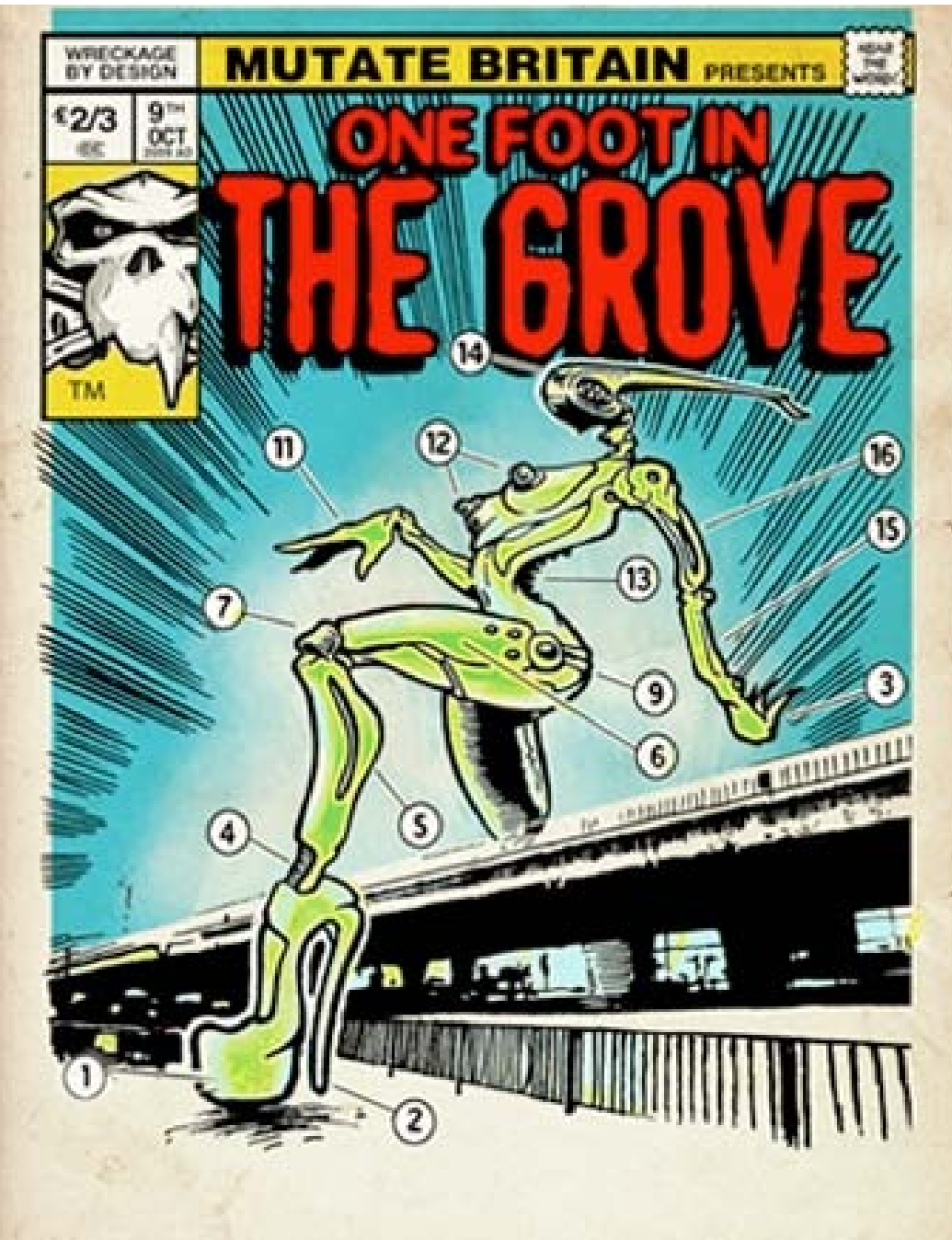

May 1968 - Situationist King Mob group, 1970's - Chris Gray - Editor

Same thing day after day- tube - work - dinner - work - tube - armchair - TV - sleep - tube - work- how much more can you take? - one in ten go mad, one in five cracks up

More specifically towards the site, I found out that an exhibition was put on in 2009 behind the area, by a team called the mutoid waste company. A company well know to me and to which inspire me greatly.

The work exhibited in the show is varied in media, from fire breathing sculptures to political posters. Work by Joe Rush, an ex punk of the 80's, and orchestrator of the Mutoid Waste Company explore the spontaneous and creative, with his vast sculptures of recycled scrap.

The work that specifically interested me was that of Jamie Reid's. As he was provocative in his posters, of which were the foundation of the Sex Pistols graphic image. He was an english artist and anarchist, related to the situation-ist movement. His concept was to simplify and relate to the general public as easily and quickly as he could.

"Accessibility is key"
For nearly four decades, the political convictions and visual narratives of Jamie Reid have successfully driven the strength of his presence in art, music, performance, politics, and publications.

Research development in response to project.

The site history research I conducted was directed towards the idea of making a statement. From the Acklam Street protest in response to the Westway construction to the situationist work of Jamie Reid all incap-sulate a purpose, to which they have acted upon in their own respec-tive ways. In light of this, I would like to delve deeper into the idea of protest, to generate a stronger narrative behind further experimenta-tions and developments.

A history of violence and race war

I wanted to expand my investigations into a wider context, and from the previous research, I have moved my attention towards the history of riots and protest in the Notting Hill area.

With this topic allows an investigation into how and why riots occur, and I have developed an arhive of events and stories surrounding Notting Hill.

The photos are a collection taken from the Notting Hill Riots, including:

1958 race riots
1976 Notting Hill Riots
1987 Notting Hill Riots
1981 Brixton Turmoil

Factory Fifteen: A company who work with graphic based films recreated the scenes of the brixton riots in a future-like fashion, by replacing the people in each scene with robots.

These images are spatially inspiring,

Throughout my research I have investigated the the history of Notting Hill and Ladbroke Grove, focusing on events, artists and work that express a feeling of opression, or moreso a general theme of making a statement. My next line of investigation is going to focus on riots themselves. I would like to examine the psychology, the structure and organisation of riots in order to try and establish what it is I would like to design upon.

Topics within the subject I would like to examine are the following:

- Riots as a statement
- Crowd Psychology / Mob Mentality
- Police - How they deal with riots, when to step in.
- Intimidation: A means of stopping the riots.

riots - contagious, chain reaction - pressure - adrenaline - disguise (hiding behind the security of the mass)
a riot does not rely on criminals or "criminality"| Freud, 1924 'mass psychology'

The most obvious way to get a riotous crowd to assemble is the occurrence of what could be called a ``Schelling incident," after Thomas Schelling, the great master of strategic theory. In The Strategy of Conflict (1960: 90) Schelling wrote,

It is usually the essence of mob formation that the potential members have to know not only where and when to meet but just when to act so that they act in concert. Overt leadership solves the problem; but leadership can often be identified and eliminated by the authority trying to prevent mob action. In this case the mob's problem is to act in unison without overt leadership, to find some common signal that makes everyone confident that, if he acts on it, he will not be acting alone. The role of ``incidents" can thus be seen as a coordinating role; it is a substitute for overt leadership and communication. Without something like an incident, it may be difficult to get action at all, since immunity requires that all know when to act together.
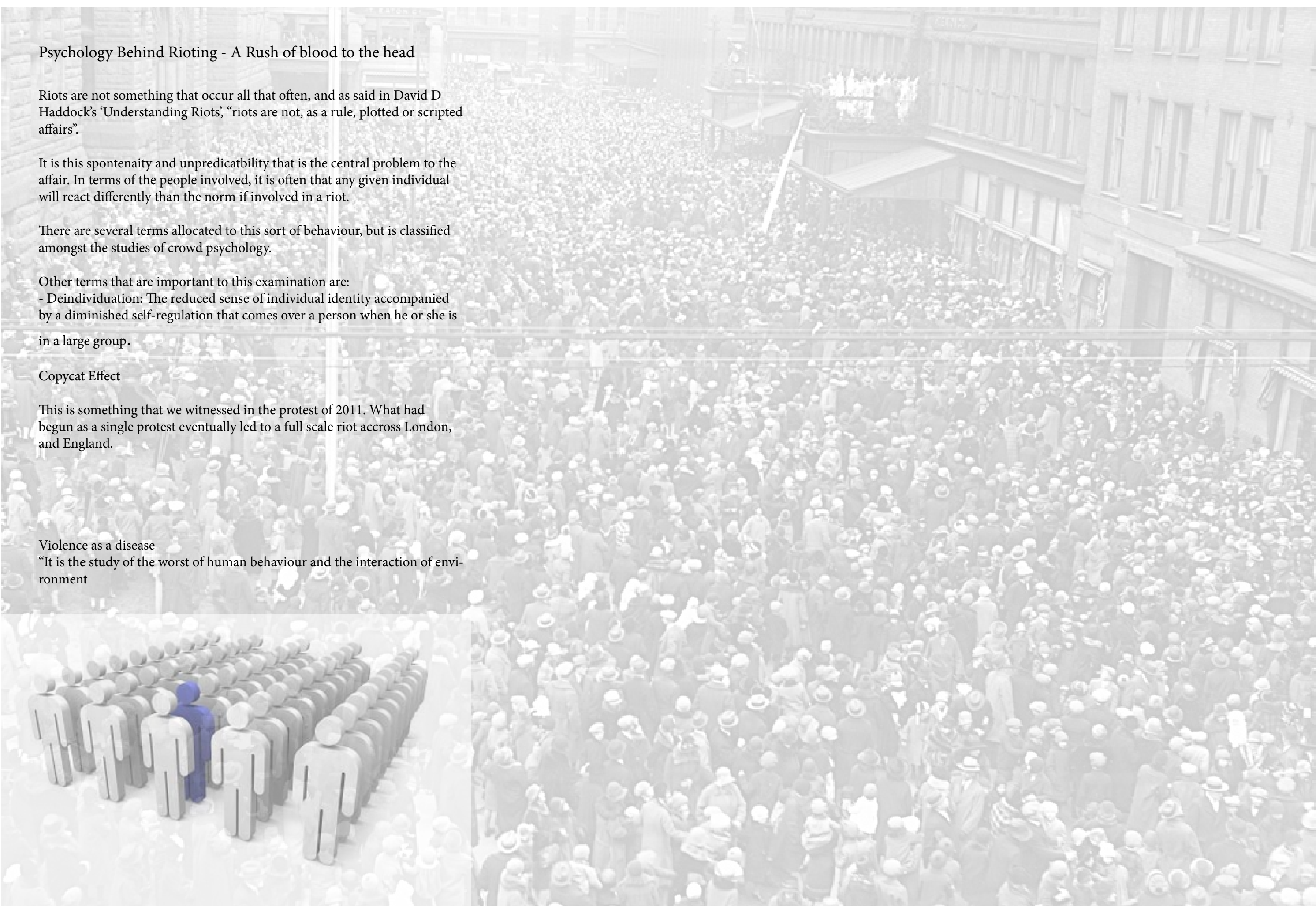
Psychology Behind Rioting - A Rush of blood to the head

Riots are not something that occur all that often, and as said in David D Haddock's 'Understanding Riots', "riots are not, as a rule, plotted or scripted affairs".

It is this spontenaity and unpredicatbility that is the central problem to the affair. In terms of the people involved, it is often that any given individual will react differently than the norm if involved in a riot.

There are several terms allocated to this sort of behaviour, but is classified amongst the studies of crowd psychology.

Other terms that are important to this examination are:
- Deindividuation: The reduced sense of individual identity accompanied by a diminished self-regulation that comes over a person when he or she is

in a large group.

Copycat Effect

This is something that we witnessed in the protest of 2011. What had begun as a single protest eventually led to a full scale riot accross London, and England.

Violence as a disease
"It is the study of the worst of human behaviour and the interaction of environment
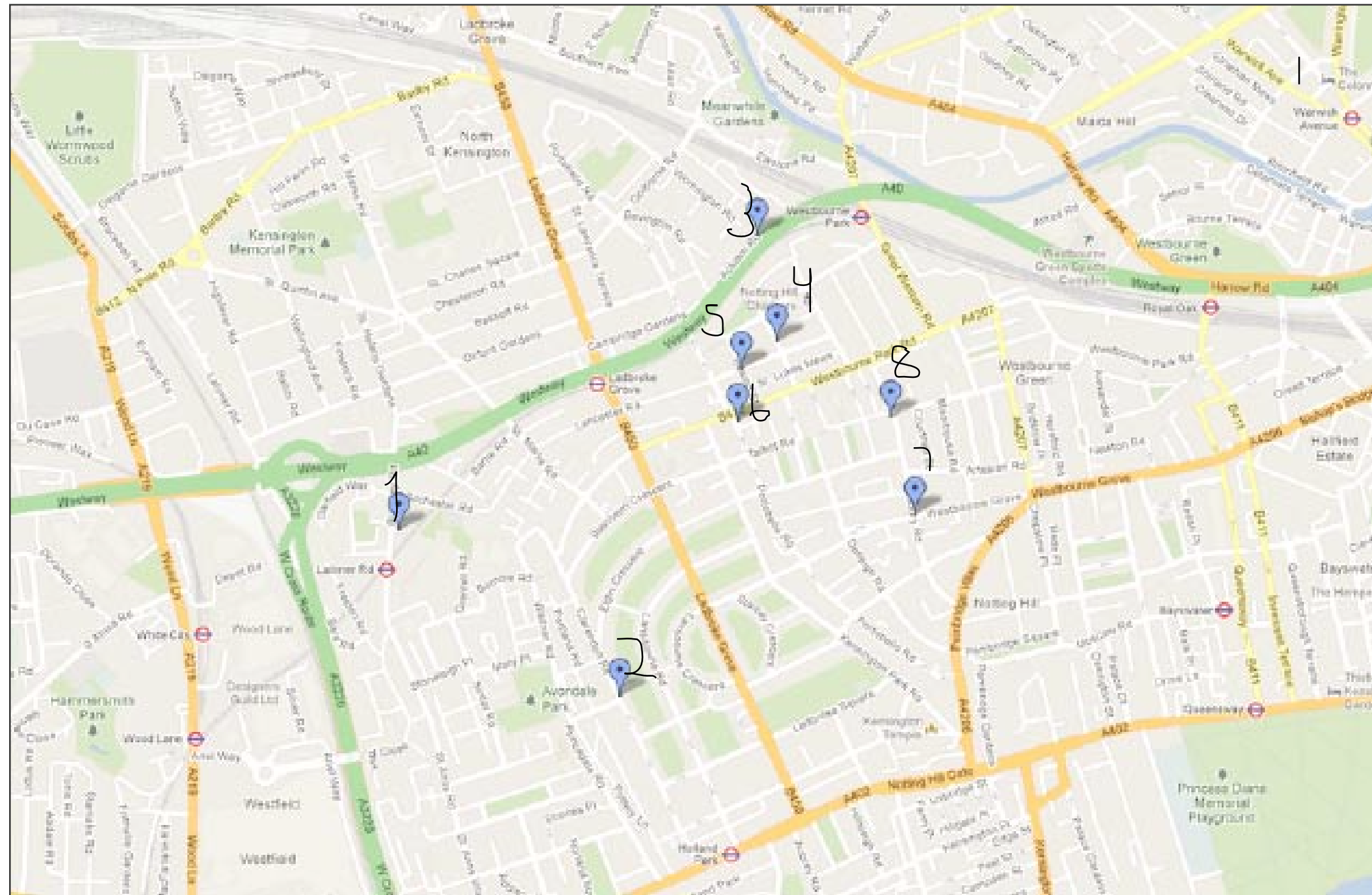
1. Blechynden Street

1958 Riots: This is where the 1958 riots initially started. It started with a domestic argument between a black man and a white woman, to which a gang got involved in. This in turn started 3 days of conflict between the Teddy Boys and Black citizens.

2. Clarendon Rd

1958 Race Riots: As part of the mob spilled into Clarendon Road, they came under fire from black youths on the roof of Notting Wood House. Following a hail of milk bottles, a petrol bomb exploded in their midst throwing them into confusion.

3. Acklam Road

1970: Protest to the opening of the Westway, hanging banners saying "Get us The hell Out of here"...The residents of Acklam Road joined together in protest to the Westway.

4. All Saints Road

1976: All Saints Road became the frontline of the 1976 riots.

Social Media's Role in our Riots and Protests of Today

This graph made by the BBC is a reflection of the twitter activity in relation to the time-scale of the London Riots 2012.

The contemporary riots are arguably fueled by social media, so I will incorporate my own method. One that somehow could feed on this 'online' world that has developed over the years.
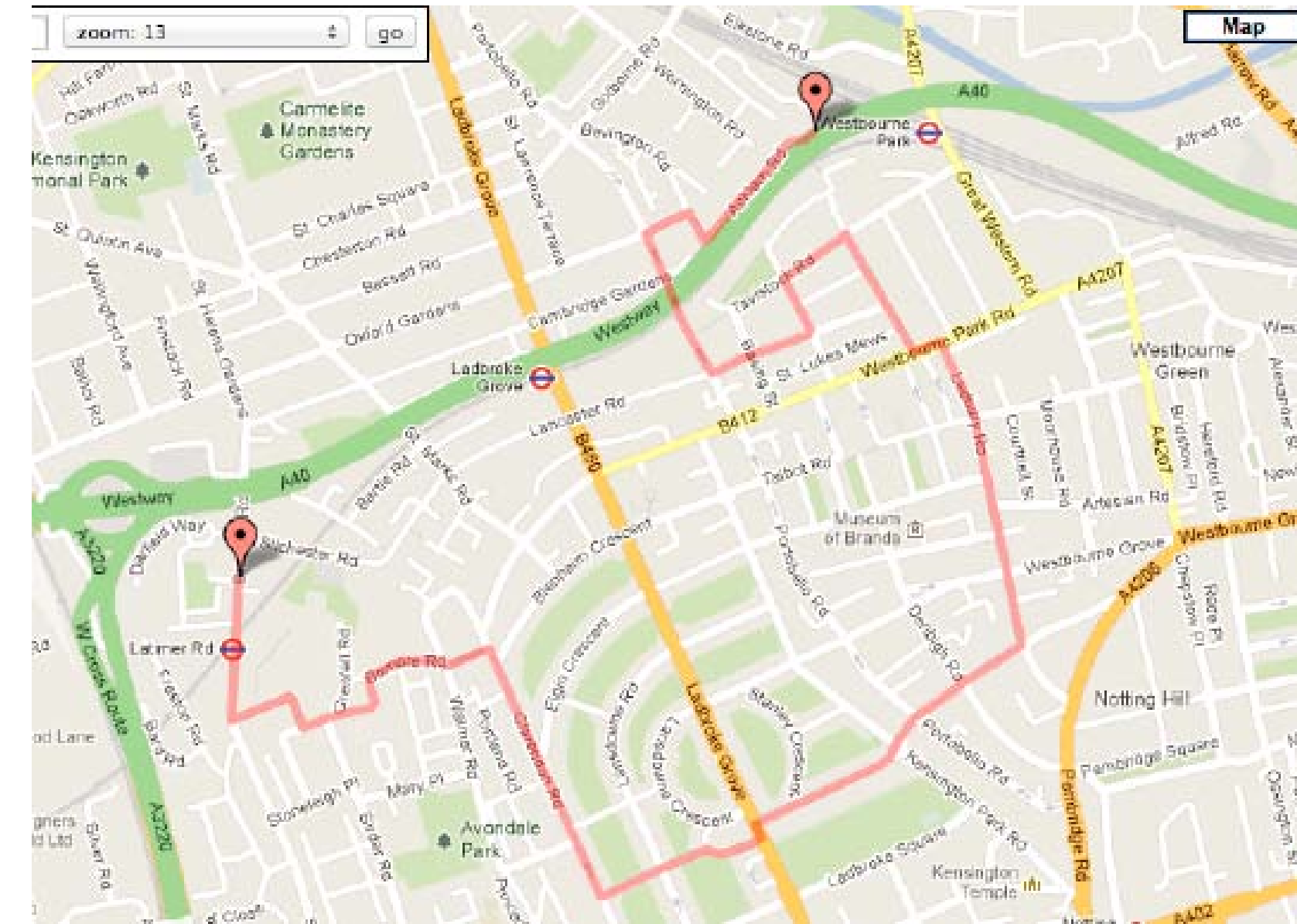
How to map my route for protest? This journey would pass through all the points in the area that have been affected by rioting in the past. But I dont feel as though it would have enough impact. I need to consider

8. The Ledbury

2011: "The restaurant staff was yelling at us to get away from the windows. Before I knew it, the front door, a solid piece of glass shattered and people came crashing in with hoodies, masks, and random weapons."
http://www.runawaysquirrels.com/2011/08/london-riots-comes-to-the-ledbury/
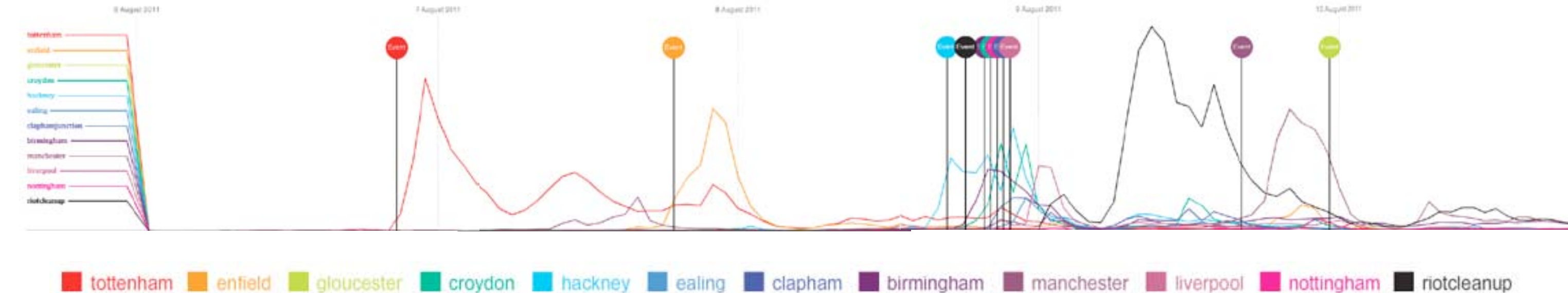
7. Ledbury Rd

2011: Hooded young men on my street right now it's Lonsdale Road in Notting Hill in W11, breaking car windows
-Twitter Post

6. Portobello Rd

2011: Patrick Wetergreen, a BBC IT technician, tells us he saw looters on Portabello Road, which is near his west London home. He says several car windows on the street were smashed, a moped was on fire and he saw about 50 people, the majority of whom had covered their faces.

5. Basing Street

1976: Where the rioting broke originally broke out after cans were being thrown at lines of policemen.

tottenham   enfield   gloucester   croydon   hackney   ealing   clapham   birmingham   manchester   liverpool   nottingham   riotcleanup

The purpose of the film was to explore two concepts, the first being the linking of digital mapping to physical surrounding, and the second being the exploration of how the 'protest' would be remembered. The film demonstrates a physical sequence of a potential journey a protest could take,. The intention of the film was for it to not have the same immediate impact any other protest would have, but for its impact to come once the event has happened.

FILM EXPERIMENT STILLS
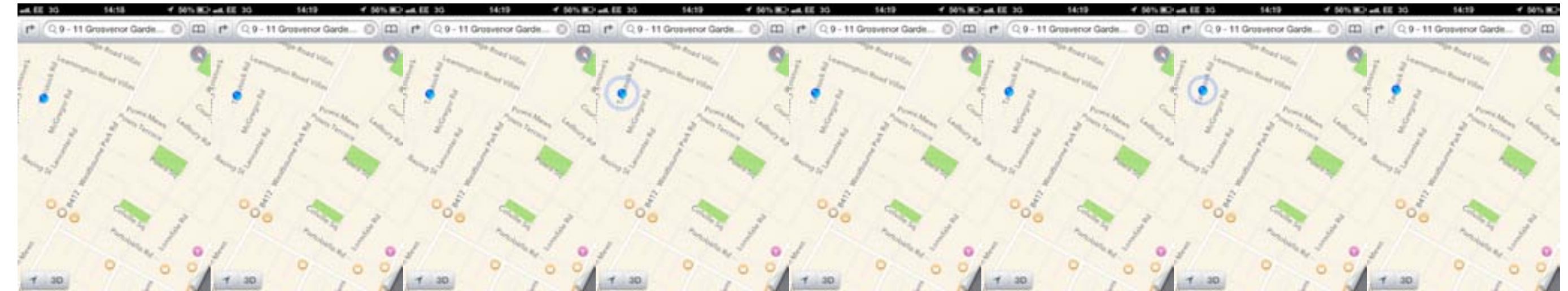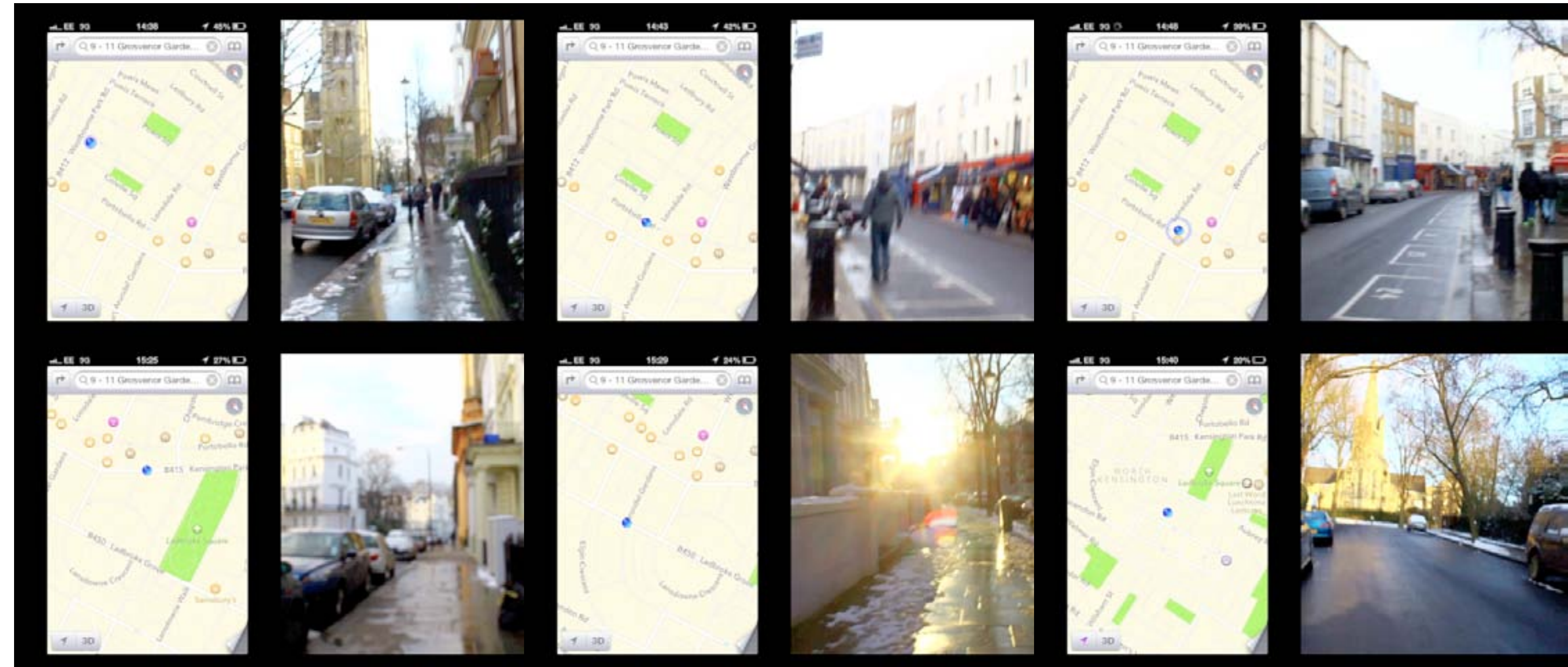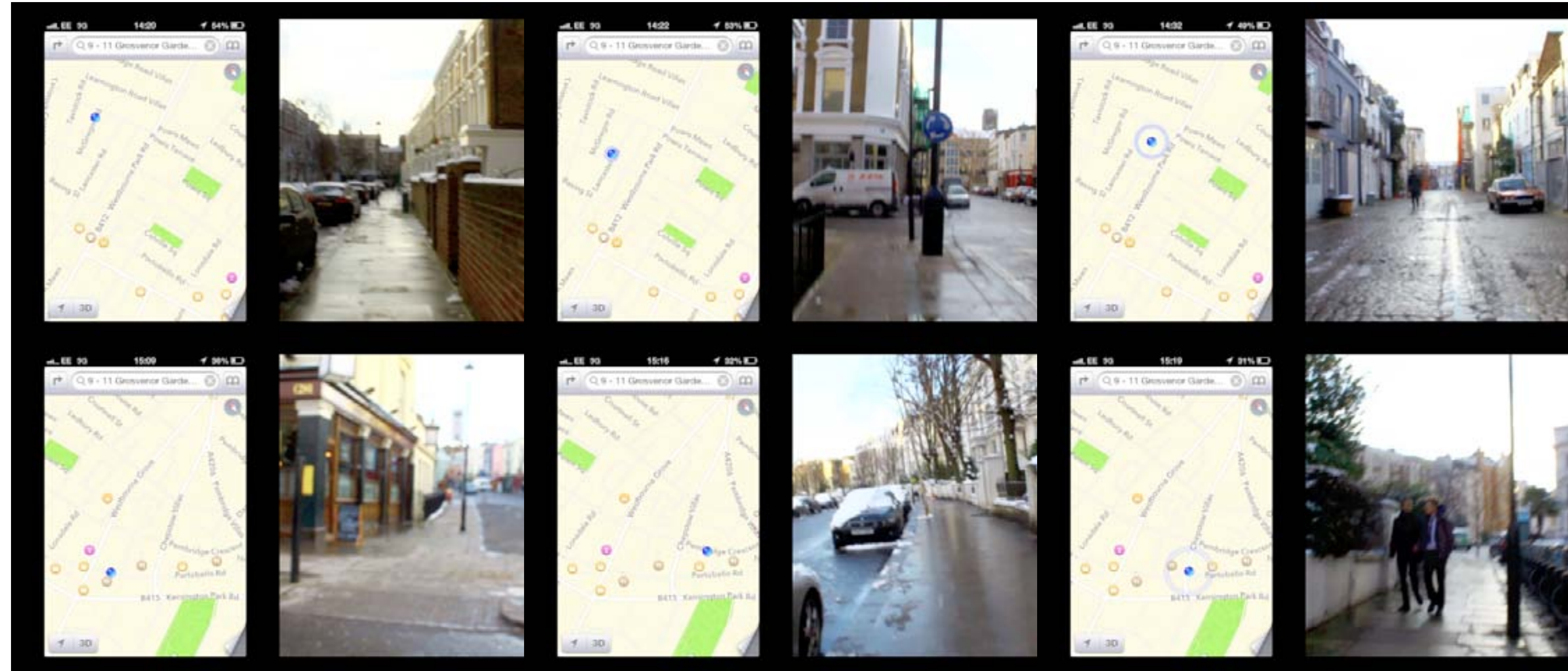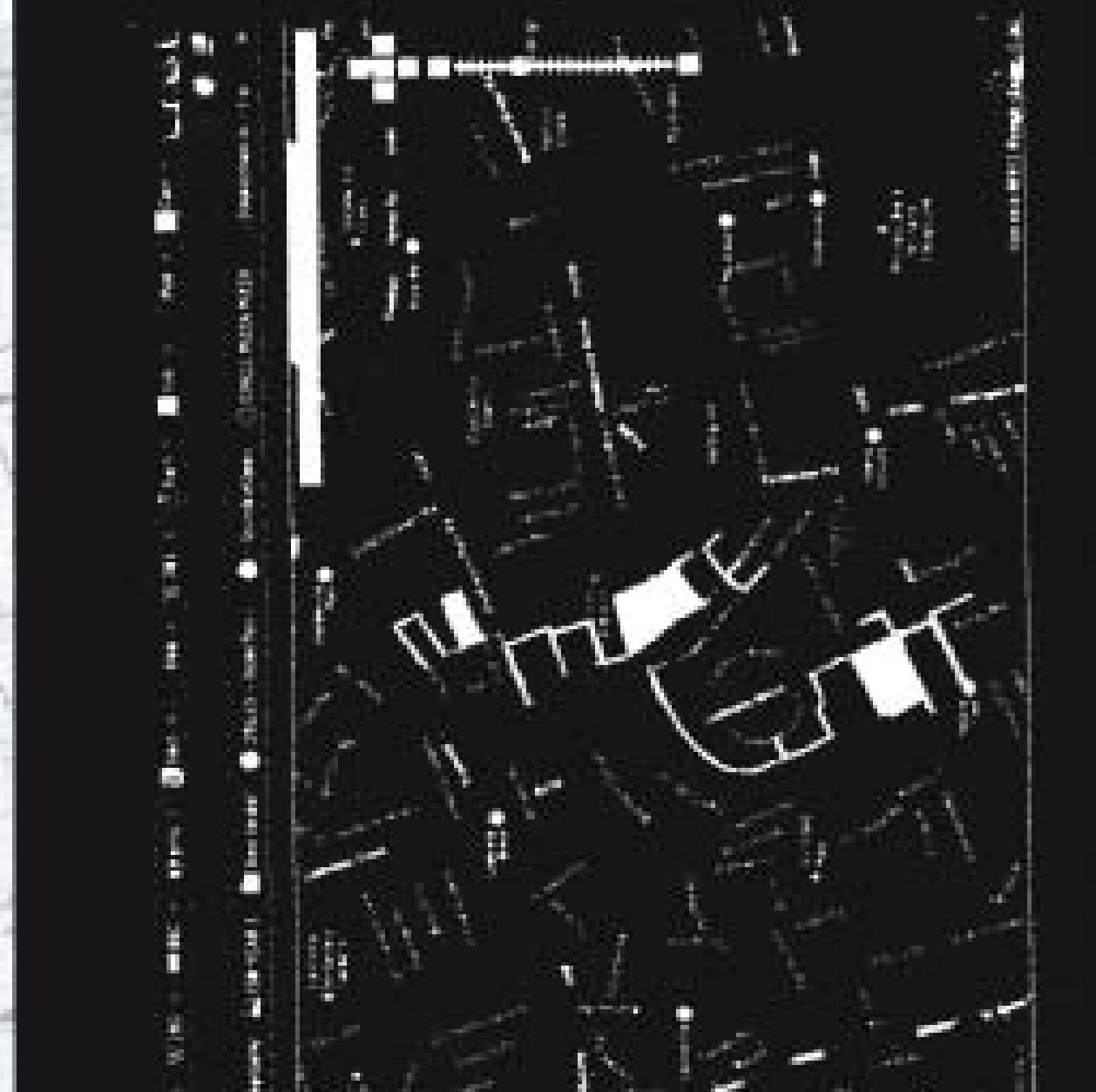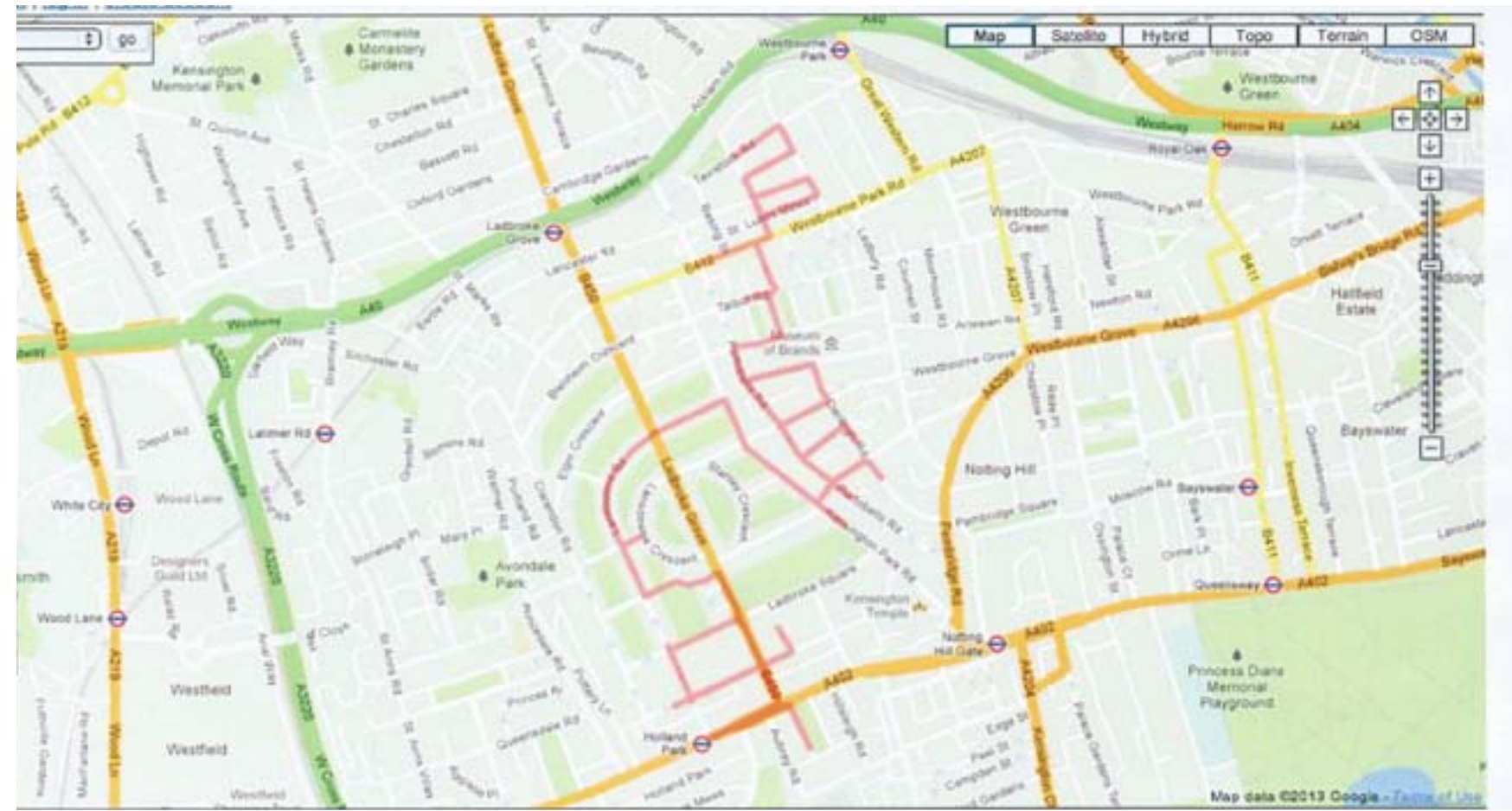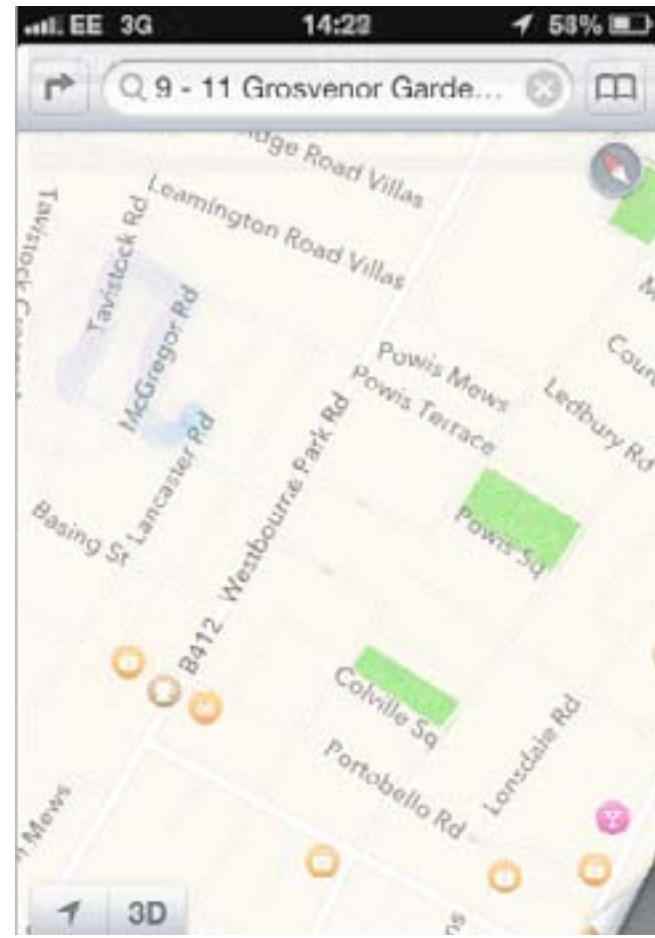
The film itself was a method I wanted to experiment with, to try and figure a way of tracking one's journey through a proposed route. The result was a success in my opinion, although live tracking should be considered.

FILM EXPERIMENT OUTCOME

Reflections and Response:

As a response to Unit 3A I would like to admit that my ideas develop very swiftly and possibly inexplicably. The unit has given a foundation of collective research, of which the design process shall follow in 3B.

The theme of recording is one that has inspired and interested me throughout Unit 3A, so I would like to go on to 3B to design a memorial dedicated to rioting and events relevent to the Notting Hill Riots that have occured over the years.

The structure will lead the user through a journey of rioting, and the development of rioting as an act. But as a site specific piece, it will incorporate memory's specific to Notting Hill and commemorate them.