

SOUNDSCAPE

How can soundscape design create good places?



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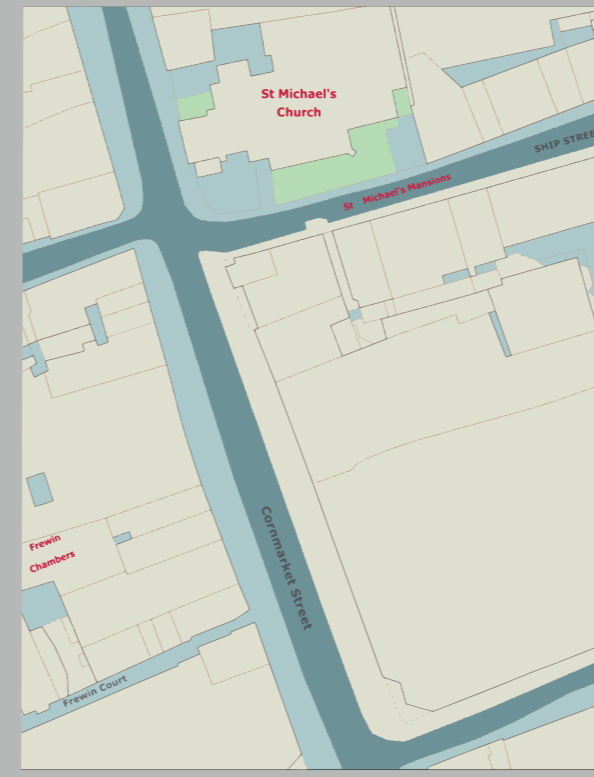
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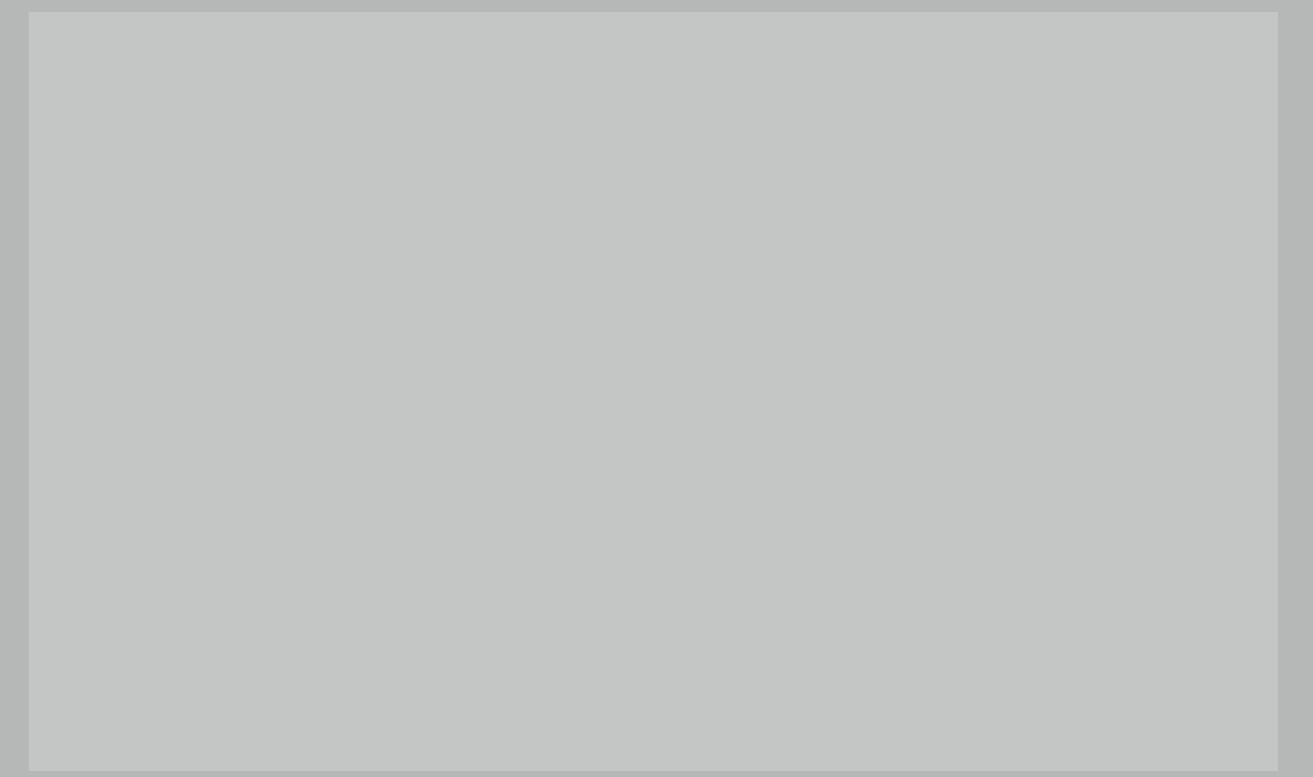
1 Radcliffe Square



2 Broad Street



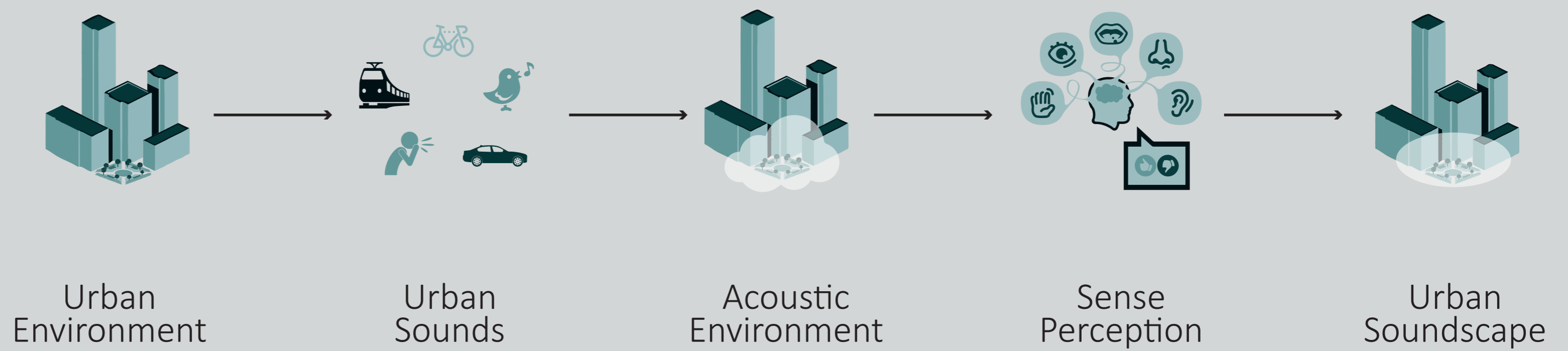
3 Cornmarket Street



Grab the headphones. Listen to the sounds from the different locations. Post your thoughts.

BACKGROUND

The main concept of soundscape being studied in this research project deals with people's perception of the acoustic environment in urban areas. The aim of the work is to identify what makes a positive soundscape. This entails understanding how people perceive their surrounding environment in terms of sound sources.



Cities have multiple urban environments in which we move through on a daily basis. We use our senses in order to help us navigate and paint an opinion of the environment we stand in.

In every urban environment, a variety of sounds are produced from different sources. These can range from natural sounds to manmade ones.

The acoustic environment is the accumulation of a variety of different sounds in the built environment which can evoke specific emotions to urban users (Botteldooren, De Coensel and De Muer, 2005).

We use our senses on a daily basis to move around in cities. But we also use them to form an opinion of our surroundings.

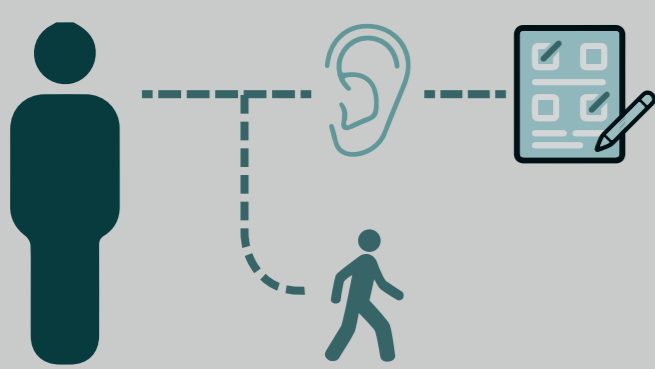
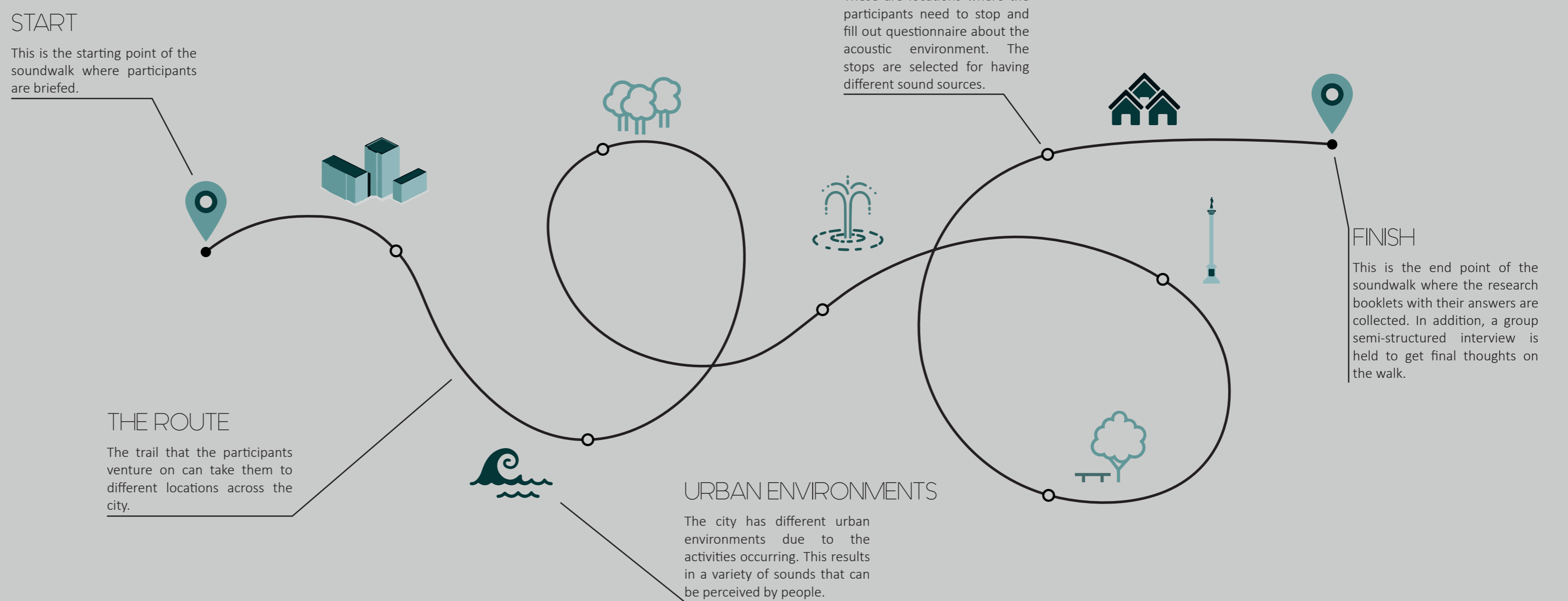
Soundscape is the totality of all sounds in a place with additional focus on how people perceive, understand and interact with the acoustic environment around them (Payne, Davies and Adams, 2009).



Sensory experience in the built environment.

SOUNDWALK

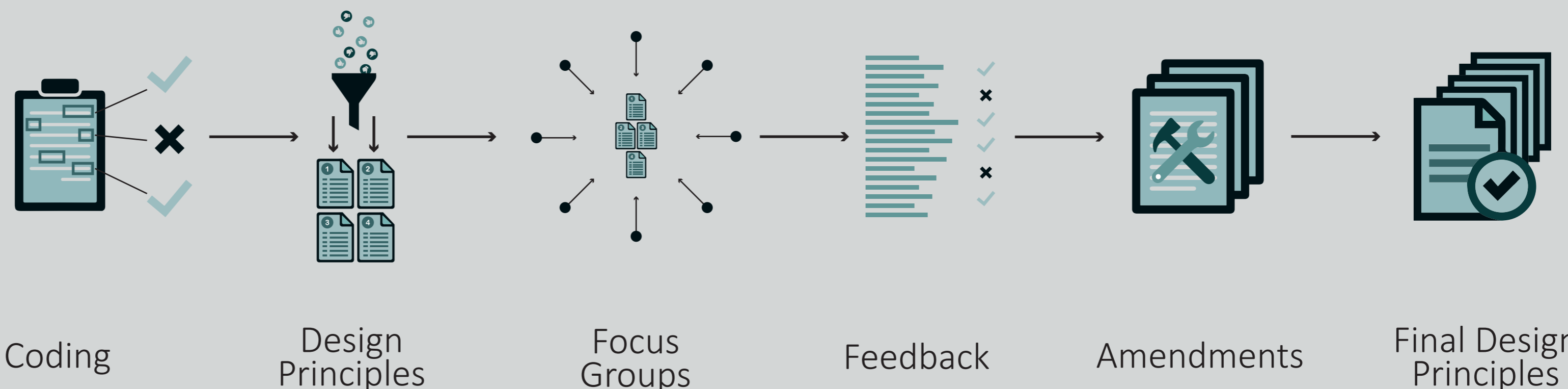
The principle method used for this research project was the soundwalk. The aim of the soundwalk is to get participants to listen closely to an acoustic environment and to make judgments on it (Kang and Zhang, 2009). The soundwalk started off at Oxford Brookes University and stopped at Headington Road, Rectory Road, Cowley Road and Southpark. Each participant had to answer questions at each evaluation position about the sounds they heard.



Participants walk and listen to the soundscape.

ANALYSIS

The research project is still ongoing. This section illustrates what the next steps are for design of soundscapes to create good places.



The participant's answers are reviewed and coded into categories.

The coded responses are analysed and enables the creation of a set of basic design principles.

The design principles are tested through discussions in focus groups.

From the focus group's deliberations, the positive and negative feedback are recorded.

Alterations are made to the original design principles in order to strengthen their results in urban design.

The final design principles can now be used as a basis for implementing design objectives that improve the soundscape in the urban environment.

REFERENCES

Botteldooren, D., De Coensel, B. and De Muer, T. (2005). The temporal structure of urban soundscapes. *Journal of Sound and Vibration*, 292(1-2), pp.105-123.

Kang, J. and Zhang, M. (2009). Semantic differential analysis of the soundscape in urban open public spaces. *Building and Environment*, 45(1), pp.150-157.

Payne, S., Davies, W. and Adams, M. (2009). Research into the Practical and Policy Applications of Soundscape Concepts and Techniques in Urban Areas (NANR 200). [online] London: Local Environment Protection, p.2. Available at: http://usir.salford.ac.uk/27343/1/Payne_et_al_Soundscapes_Defra_2009.pdf [Accessed 22 Nov. 2016].

