

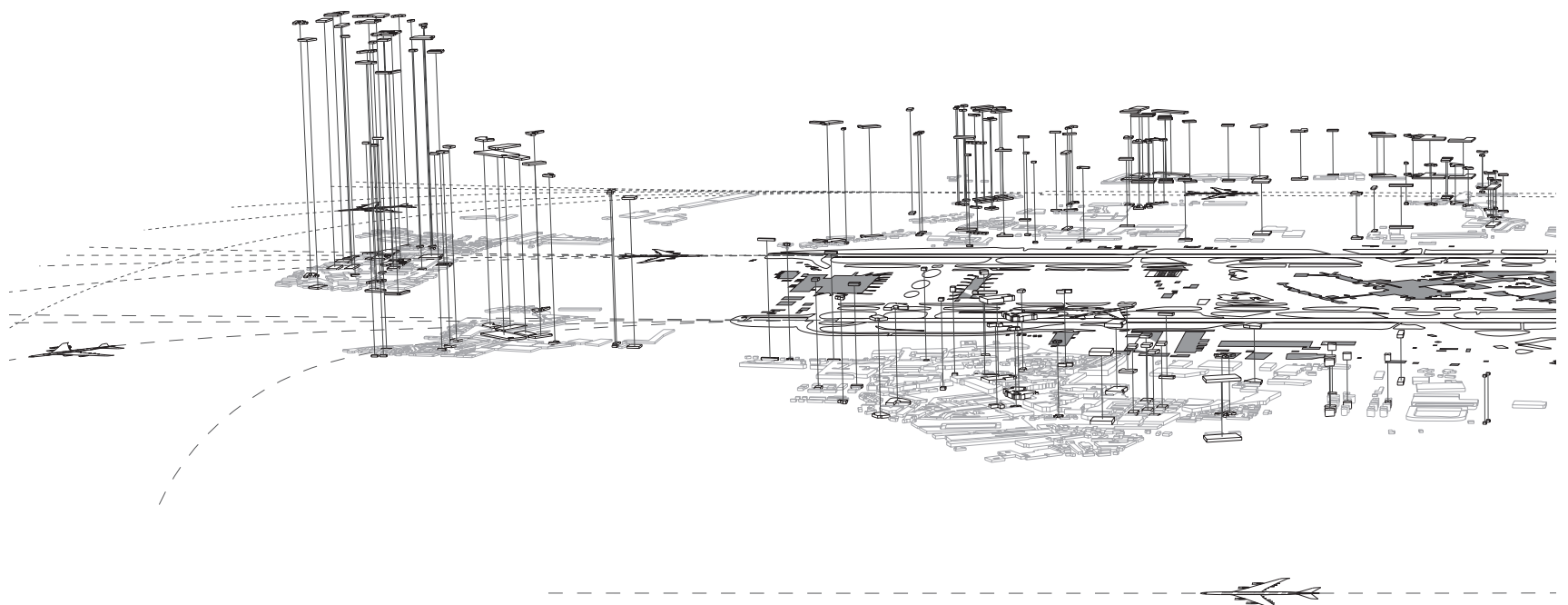
WEIGHTLESS CITY

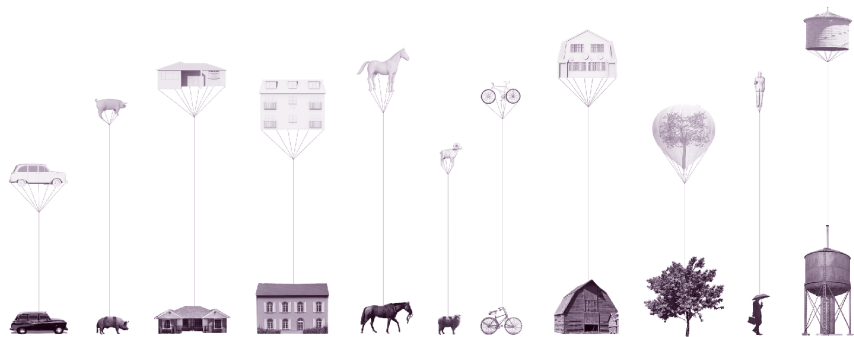
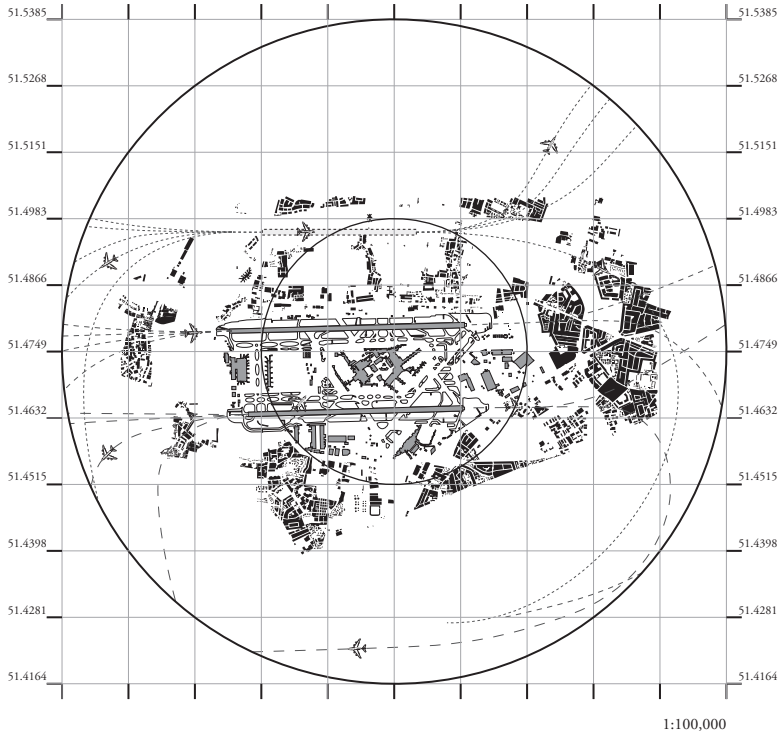
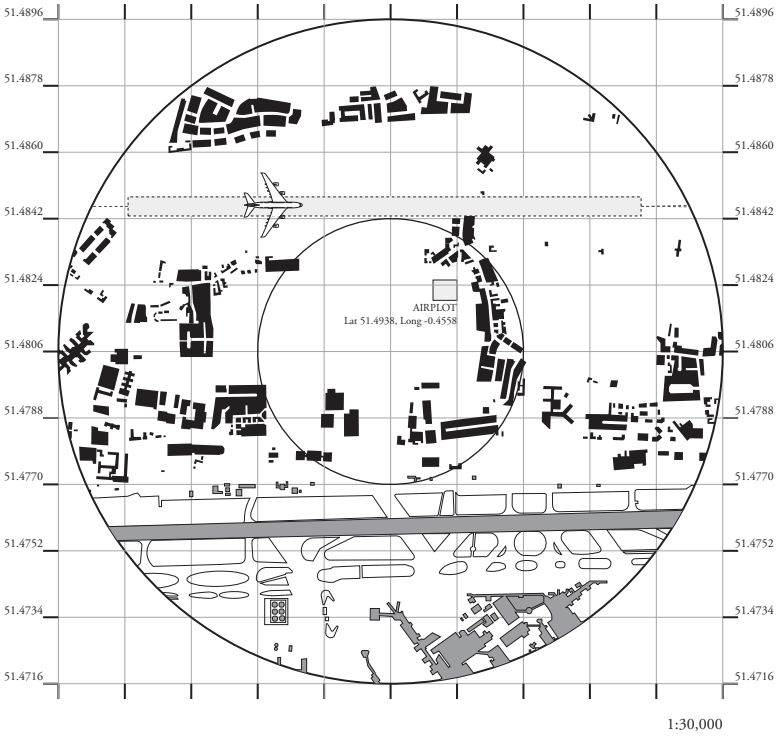
PAISAJES EMERGENTES

For several years environmentalists mounted fierce opposition to a governmental proposal to add a third runway at Heathrow, voicing concerns about the potentially negative impacts on carbon emissions, noise, and migration patterns. In 2009, in an effort to block the proposed expansion, Greenpeace UK purchased land that would have been necessary to complete the third runway and launched an ideas competition to enhance the effectiveness of their land in blocking the project. *Weightless City*, the entry by the Columbia based firm Paisajes Emergentes, proposed an aerial blockade on this land that expanded the protest to adjacent properties through the voluntary participation of the owners. Working within the legal codes, the installation would interrupt flight patterns through the exploitation of a provision that allows property owners the right to use an amount of airspace in connection with their enjoyment of the underlying land even if it interferes with aircraft overflying the land.

In lieu of heavy bunkers, fortresses, or towers imagined by the competition organizers, *Weightless* blocks air traffic through the deployment of a series of helium balloons shaped to represent the ground-based objects to which they are attached. The design proposal permits active participation in the protest movement by anyone, anywhere in the city and effectively expands the demonstration beyond the small Greenpeace site to any site located below a flight path.

—ALAYNA FRASER





above: Analysis of daily flight patterns above existing runways and surrounding buildings as a means of determining the most effective location for floating objects.
middle: Hypothetical floating objects; participants in the proposed aerial blockade.
bottom: Axonometric demonstrating the potential configuration, density, and height of floating objects necessary to interrupt daily flight patterns at Heathrow Airport.

