The opportunity
Beijing-based HYHW Architects were invited to join a design competition for the design of a culture-led regeneration masterplan at Xuhui district in Shanghai. Despite its strategic location along the Huangpu River, the industrial site is constrained by a traffic-oriented infrastructure, a lack of public transport and absence of linkages connecting it to the surrounding area. Space Syntax was appointed to carry out analysis of the site’s opportunities and constraints and to assist the team in developing the competition design.

Our contribution
By using case study analyses comparing culture-led redevelopment of waterfronts in London, Paris and New York, a set of key design principles was developed and used to assess the existing situation, the functional layout plan provided by the competition organisers and the emerging design from HYHW. This analysis led to the development of a series of design recommendations for the masterplan.

The outcome
Working closely with the HYHW team, these principles and recommendations were translated into final design proposals. Space Syntax’s advice included the introduction of a multiple level street grid, a high density mixed use development and the re-use of industrial heritage buildings as cultural landmarks set along a continuous riverfront promenade.