

Infrastructuring Urban Regeneration.

Reimagining regeneration practice for architects
and community organisers.

Sib Trigg

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Abstract

This practice-led research extends the concept of the embedded practitioner through proposing and developing a new role within the field of urban regeneration; the Architect_Organiser. The A_O is a new role that combines participatory practice and community organising, challenging the knowledge dichotomy of the professional versus the non-expert and demonstrating principles for a reconfiguration of urban regeneration.

Beginning from the premise that data and information form barriers to agency for non-experts in urban regeneration processes, the methodology of infrastructuring is used as a framework to incorporate the key concepts of participation and data and information infrastructures. Through critical reflection on a long-term relationship with local residents, the responsible local authority and external partners on a live regeneration project in east London, the research uses the concepts of working “within and against” to investigate conflicting relationships between participation, representative democracy and development finance.

Beginning from its geographical context in London, UK, the research demonstrates the need for the establishment of a critical and productive participatory regeneration infrastructure. Understanding that such a reconfiguration is not possible under the conditions of neoliberal capitalism, the Architect_Organiser demonstrates principles for the contemporary practitioner to bring about transformative change alongside community and non-expert groups through developing tools with which to evaluate their own practice.

Introduction

This research investigates relationships between data, information and knowledge in the context of urban regeneration, informed through my practice. My experience as an architect embedded within a community undergoing state-led regeneration formed the basis for developing my research. I argue that the role of data and information is key to understanding the pattern of limited agency experienced by so many community stakeholders in urban regeneration processes. Current participatory frameworks are inadequate to fully engage communities because they don't necessarily enable understanding of the regeneration process. As a result of this, they are unable to facilitate genuine agency by non-experts. Research shows that existing participatory frameworks replicate barriers to *access* and *use of* relevant data and information for non-experts. I have witnessed this in my practice, through the lived experience of residents undergoing a large scale regeneration process in Custom House, east London. My thesis describes the development of a new role that I have named the Architect_Organiser. Through my research I demonstrate that the Architect_Organiser has the potential to reveal the roles of data and information in relation to non-expert groups, as well as to negotiate and facilitate novel participatory frameworks. Theories of participation, infrastructuring and the concept of working simultaneously within and against are used to further develop the role of the Architect_Organiser and explore its potential through practice.

In order for the reader to better understand the narrative trajectory of my research, I will first briefly introduce myself, the researcher and Architect_Organiser. I am an Architect, registered in the UK with the Architects Registration Board. Following my architectural education and training, I worked in conventional architectural practice in London, Germany and Singapore before embarking on a self-directed programme of sustainable construction training. Upon my return to the UK, as described in the first chapter of this thesis, I was introduced to the political ramifications of urban development through attending events in London run by residents campaigning against the demolition of social housing. Having completed a Masters course in Architecture, Computing and Design I am familiar with discourse around data, and non-expert access to data seemed like an

important omission in the anti-gentrification and anti-regeneration activist community. In 2015 I was one of the founding members of Concrete Action, a whistleblowing and leaks site aimed at architects working on feasibility studies for regeneration sites that were not yet publicly announced. The proposal gained a lot of publicity and interest, however there were no professionals willing to leak information. Concrete Action did however become known to many resident groups around London, who asked for assistance in understanding developer proposals and the legal frameworks around planning and development. Concrete Action enabled me to connect with activists, academics and residents, and these connections were invaluable when it came to developing my role in a research context. Concrete Action connected me with PEACH, the resident-led group where I conducted most of my practice based research. I began working at PEACH for one day per week in 2016, and I ceased working there in 2021 in order to concentrate on writing up my research.

The People's Empowerment Alliance for Custom House (PEACH) is a resident-led community organisation, funded by The Local Trust.¹ The Local Trust was initiated in 2012 in order to run Big Local, a scheme whereby 150 neighbourhoods across the UK were given £1million each to spend in order to improve their areas. PEACH was set-up in April 2013 in Custom House, a district within the London Borough of Newham, and is organised via a resident-led steering group who employ a number of community organisers within the area. The community-organisers carry out projects that will improve Custom House in terms of housing, jobs, safety, education and health of residents. Projects have included the set-up of a cleaners workers cooperative that is owned by and employs local people, English language courses for local parents in order that they can better support the education of their children, and campaigning for residents on temporary tenancies to receive secure housing.² At the time of my research, PEACH was an incorporated community group, however at the time of writing the organisation has registered as a Community Interest Company. PEACH works with local schools, businesses, the local government, youth centres, faith organisations and individual residents.

1 Local Trust, 'Local Trust is a place-based funder supporting communities to achieve their ambitions', <https://localtrust.org.uk/about/>, accessed 8th Nov 2023

2 The People's Empowerment Alliance for Custom House, 'Current Projects', <https://peach-e16.org.uk/wpc/projects/>, accessed 8th Nov 2023

The area of Custom House has been earmarked for urban regeneration by the London Borough of Newham since 2003, with residents undergoing a series of consultations and proposals for widespread demolition of the existing housing stock.³ I began working at PEACH in 2016 as part of a team of residents and architects who worked together for a year to develop a resident-led masterplan for Custom House. Following the dissolution of the Alternative Regeneration team at PEACH, I remained working at PEACH for one day per week whilst undertaking my practice-based research. There is an important distinction to be made between my practice-based research, and the overall aims of PEACH as a resident-led organisation based in Custom House. PEACH as an organisation was and is invested in developing resident agency in relation to the proposed urban regeneration of the Custom House area. This commitment led to the organisation employing architects and urban designers and training local residents in aspects of the English urban planning and development frameworks. Initially, I was employed as an Architectural Organiser at PEACH. This role was new, and quite literally combined community organising with architectural and urban design, including participatory workshops organised with and for local residents. My initial research proposal to investigate the roles of data and information in relation to access by non-experts was based upon my experiences with PEACH and previously with Concrete Action, as documented in this thesis. However as my research progressed, the focus shifted to the development of the Architect_Organiser as a role that could implement an increase in agency for non-experts within the regeneration process, one of PEACH's original aims. The boundary where the researcher as Architect_Organiser ends and the employee Architectural Organiser at PEACH begins is difficult to define. This difficulty is an important characteristic of the role itself, and I discuss the implications of this in more depth in the second half of this introduction.

As described above, my research proposal addresses access to data and information for non-expert groups in relation to urban regeneration and existing participatory frameworks. The following research question is used to contextualise the scope of the research in the first three chapters of the thesis.

3 Building, 'Council backs £1.8bn Canning Town regeneration plan', 1st August 2003, <https://www.building.co.uk/news/council-backs-18bn-canning-town-regeneration-plan/1030144.article>, accessed 8th November 2023

What roles do data and information play in the context of architecture, planning and policy, in relation to community and non-expert groups?

I began my research with a second question that centred the role of participation in relation to data and information: What strategies and tactics can be developed to establish a critical and productive role for the use of such data and information within participatory frameworks? Over the course of the development of my research, it became clear that the participatory framework that I was developing was the role of the Architect_Organiser. Subsequently, I re-wrote the question to reflect the central position of the Architect_Organiser role.

How can the hybrid practice of the Architect_Organiser be developed to establish a critical and productive role for the use of such data and information by both experts and non-experts?

The research is structured through five chapters, using theories of participation, infrastructuring and working within and against to interrogate the barriers to access and use of data and information within urban regeneration processes. Through this interrogation, I propose that the Architect_Organiser framework enables the development of new participatory strategies involving non-experts, leading to empowerment and more agency.

The thesis is structured as follows: Chapter One introduces the context and background of urban regeneration in London in relation to data, information and existing participatory frameworks. I outline contemporary issues with urban regeneration and past attempts by communities and practitioners to alter the trajectories of problematic urban regeneration proposals and their associated practices.

Chapter Two introduces the People's Empowerment Alliance for Custom House (PEACH), where I worked for five years as a community organiser and architect. I describe the development of my practice at PEACH and how is situated in relation to past examples of embedded experts in the fields of participatory design and planning. Using the day-to-day events documented in my practice diaries, I introduce community organising as a distinguishing factor in my embedded role. I use the history of community organising and the development of community organising theory to show what might

constitute genuine empowerment and agency, and contrast that with existing participatory processes in urban regeneration. Through interrogating my day-to-day practice at PEACH and developing my skills as a community organiser, my research establishes and confirms issues with *access to* and *use of* data and information in current participatory urban regeneration practice. Learning through the lived experience of the residents in Custom House of the negative effects of urban regeneration, I highlight how community organising enables the slow accretion of embedded knowledge.

Chapter Three introduces the concept of infrastructures as a methodological framework that integrates relationships between different elements and stakeholders of the regeneration process with participatory processes. Infrastructures - as used in the study of information - and infrastructuring - as a method used in participatory design - provide established theoretical fields through which I can interrogate my research questions. My embedded practice creates infrastructures that inform and extend my role, through combining community organising, critical pedagogy and participatory practice. Infrastructuring is an active form of creating, erasing and recreating relationships which demonstrates a strong connection to the critical pedagogical practice of problematising education, enabling the critical analysis of structural power relations. I demonstrate this through examples of community organising in practice that illustrate critical pedagogical characteristics, use relevant data and information and develop knowledge with non-experts. Infrastructuring from a critical pedagogical perspective demonstrates and develops the combined role of the architect and community organiser, or what I term the Architect_Organiser. The move from practicing as an architect to the practice of an Architect_Organiser involves a shift in thinking from being an individual designer working *with* the community to being part of a collective network of practitioners with both expert and non-expert experience. Chapter Three ends with an outline of the purpose and focus of the role of the A_O, prioritising a knowledge focussed and pedagogical practice.

In Chapter Four, I then test the role of the A_O in practice, using my role as researcher to deepen my collaboration with various stakeholders in the live regeneration project in Custom House, and simultaneously gaining understanding of the hidden structures that underpin the conventional regeneration process and drive decision-making. I outline two ways of

working: “Within” and “against”. “Within” attempts to build collaboration between residents and council officers to coproduce a regeneration process, encountering representative democracy and power in knowledge. “Against” returns to the available data and information in the regeneration process, investigating the data and information that drives decision-making and exploring barriers to the development of alternative models of development. “Against” explores in depth the role of financial viability in development and exposing the inconsistencies in the financial viability narrative through two case studies: A viability report commissioned by myself and PEACH community organisers, and learning from a course on urban development viability. The issues that I encounter in these simultaneous explorations demonstrate how the development of the A_O roles problematises the role of the architect as it currently exists within urban regeneration practice. The practice examples in Chapter 4 expose how current structures within urban regeneration processes limit the agency of the Architect_Organiser and raise questions such as; who is the Architect_Organiser’s client and how is the Architect_Organiser held accountable? Chapter Four demonstrates through practice the current systems and assumptions that limit the agency and development of role of the Architect_Organiser. I argue that in order for the A_O role to reach its full potential the A_O needs to develop working models which reconfigure the relationships between the stakeholders with whom the A_O works.

Chapter Five explores how the A_O can move beyond the issues encountered in Chapter Four and gain agency to reformulate and reorganise knowledge production in practice. The A_O uses the intentional accumulation of knowledge to build relationships between the technical and the social. The A_O pushes the boundaries of current practice in the field of urban regeneration and urban change through this practice, however the role needs to develop further in order to reach its full potential. Having used my practice to show where current systems and assumptions have limited the agency of the A_O, I then established that the ability of the local authority to work in coproduction with residents in regeneration is limited by its current representative democratic structure. The investigation of available data and information within the regeneration process established restrictions, in particular to the accessing of financial data by non-experts. I establish evidence of the power of financial data to influence decision

making, and investigate in depth systems and conventions behind financial viability in regeneration. I argue that financial viability and hence the ‘unviable’ argument is based upon irregular, unsubstantiated, proprietary and inaccessible data, leading to unverifiable conclusions. I then outline the concept of the A_O working “beyond”, grounding the role in the critical pedagogical theory of hope. I reflect upon the discomfort felt by those who hold the power of knowledge within the current system at the prospect of refusal or non-participation by those who hold less power. In conclusion, I intentionally allow the dissonance within the role of the A_O to remain, outlining the difference between proposals for reform of the current system or proposals that work towards abolishing it. This tension is illustrated through a proposal for a new regeneration infrastructure, also named as “Articulations for the Architect_Organiser.”

The Atlas

One of the primary concerns of my practice is accessibility to non-experts. For this reason it was important to me to provide an opportunity for an exploratory entrance into this work. As a visual accompaniment to this thesis text, each chapter is accompanied by an A2 folded insert. When read together, the inserts form a series of mappings that can be used to explore the role of the Architect_Organiser. The mappings are inspired by atlases such as “The Atlas of Agendas” that informs “the public about socio-political power structures and activating opportunities for the self and the commons,” and the online interactive “Feral Atlas”.⁴ An atlas is not a manual, manuals being criticised for “being too directive and rather than be liberating, tending to control the participative process”.⁵ An atlas allows space for unknown territory, discovery and remapping, and also

4 Brian Holmes and Bureau d’Études, eds., *An Atlas of Agendas: Mapping the Power, Mapping the Commons*; [Released in the Aftermath of the Exhibition at Onomatopée Project Space Eindhoven, October 2013], Onomatopée 88 (London: Anagram Books [u.a.], 2014). Quote can be found at: Bureau de Etudes, ‘Mapping the power, mapping the commons’, 23rd April 2015, <https://bureaudetudes.org/2015/04/23/atlas-of-agendas-mapping-the-power-mapping-the-commons-2015/>, accessed 8th November 2023. Anna L. Tsing et al., *Feral Atlas: The More-Than-Human Anthropocene* (Stanford University Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.21627/2020fa>.

5 Emily Crompton, ‘The Library of Engagements’, in *Proceedings of the 15th Participatory Design Conference: Short Papers, Situated Actions, Workshops and Tutorial - Volume 2* (Hasselt and Genk Belgium: ACM, 2018), 1–4, <https://doi.org/10.1145/3210604.3214361>. p2.



0.01 The mappings are printed inserts that accompany each chapter of the thesis.

embodies the combination of hope and contradiction that I feel has come to represent “the ethical practice of not being co-opted” in the margins of current regeneration practice.⁶ Overall, the thesis aims to demonstrate some of the issues with agency caused by the inaccessibility of data and information on regeneration to non-experts, an issue that is compounded by the proliferation of manuals which aim to help non-experts engage or resist the regeneration process. The mappings aim to prevent this thesis from replicating these issues with accessibility to non-experts, and also prompt those with professional or expert knowledge to consider their practice from a different perspective.

To summarise, my research confirms that contemporary regeneration processes and their associated infrastructures are not fit for purpose, leading to undesirable outcomes for those residents most affected by urban regeneration schemes. I demonstrate the role of data and information as a barrier to agency for non-experts, and how this lack of agency is compounded and replicated by contemporary participatory frameworks, manuals and toolkits. I propose that regeneration practitioners have the agency to enact changes in the regeneration infrastructure, and I go on to test this agency through the development of a new role, the Architect_Organiser. The A_O brings together the knowledge of the architect and that of the community organiser, accepting the dissonance that is inevitably present in such an endeavour, and problematising the professional/non-professional divide from a novel perspective. I argue that the role can enable urban design practitioners to enact change through the development of a new social and pedagogical regeneration infrastructure. I conclude my thesis with a set of open-ended provocations aimed at Architect_Organisers, in the hope that this practice can inspire others.

Theoretical and conceptual overview.

Before entering into the main body of this thesis, in the following paragraphs I will introduce the theoretical context and conceptual landscape of my research. Due to the inherently transdisciplinary nature of my practice and research, it is natural that the thesis touches on a number of theoretical fields and areas of scholarship. Some of these fields provide background

6 J. K. Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

context, critique and inspiration, and others contribute through challenging and existing approaches and building new ones. It is through the juxtaposition of these theoretical contexts that the conceptual landscape of my practice has been developed. The compilation of the thesis allowed me to reflect further on the connections made between these fields of scholarship in order to provide a critical framework for the research.

Theories of urban regeneration form the bedrock upon which my research stands. Urban development and planning is a large field of scholarship, and the framing of urban regeneration that I chose to focus on is geographically specific to the city of London where my practice is based. Underlying my interest in urban change has always been the question over the role of the architect, and the examples from literature that I highlight in chapter 1 are those where architects have worked in collaboration with residents to effect regeneration in different ways. Literature on urban regeneration provides in depth analysis of past policies and practices as well as the theories behind them. The histories of housing design, housing policy and movements within architectural practice are intertwined with how cities have evolved and developed. The architect is however usually found alongside those with the power, money and influence to alter the physical fabric of the city.⁷ Some architectural practices such as the feminist design and build collective MATRIX or more recently MUF Architecture\Art have used their professional knowledge and experience to work alongside residents and users of the city rather than clients with more financial resources.⁸ It is these practices, as well as the explicitly activist work of the Architects Revolutionary Council and the community technical aid work of organisations such as ASSIST in Glasgow that the development of my practice builds upon. Before examining the implications of the architect aligning along social justice or even abolitionist lines, however, the theories and concepts of power and participation need to be examined.

Participation is inherently intertwined with power in the fields of design and planning and especially in relation to community organising theory.

⁷ Peter Blundell-Jones, ed., *Architecture and Participation*, Digit. print (London: Taylor & Francis, 2009).

⁸ Jane Rendell, 'Only Resist: A Feminist Approach to Critical Spatial Practice', *Architectural Review*, 19 February 2018, <https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/only-resist-a-feminist-approach-to-critical-spatial-practice> accessed 8th November 2023

Arnstein connects power and participation directly in her seminal paper “A ladder of citizen participation.”⁹ This paper, first published in 1969, is oft cited, however as John Gaber notes in his paper “Building a Ladder of Citizen Participation,” not many people know of the background of Arnstein, who had varied experiences of instigating change both on the ground with communities and at policy level.¹⁰ The ladder of participation is inherently provocative, juxtaposing the powerless citizens with those in government and other roles who would manipulate them. In my research I contrast theories of power in community organising with the existence of power within participation, specifically in relation to design and policy making. Here I draw on the work of scholars who have highlighted the role of power within the context of participation.¹¹ The concepts of “power over”, “power with” and “power to” are discussed in studies on the concept of power by community organisers and in relation to organising as a practice.¹² The concept of “power with” is, as I describe in the thesis, associated in community organising with mutual support and collective action.¹³ The understanding of power from the perspective of community organising, however, has not been introduced into the field of participatory design. My research builds on theories of participation in practice through the use of community organising principles within participatory frameworks.

This combination of community organising with participatory design is more commonly found in practice within the field of Participatory Action Research (PAR). Through the evolution of my practice, despite superficially having much in common with PAR as a method, I finally chose not to use PAR in my work. I will discuss the relationship between PAR and democracy in more

9 Sherry R. Arnstein, ‘A Ladder Of Citizen Participation’, *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35, no. 4 (July 1969): 216–24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944366908977225>.

10 John Gaber, ‘Building “A Ladder of Citizen Participation”: Sherry Arnstein, Citizen Participation, and Model Cities’, *Journal of the American Planning Association* 85, no. 3 (3 July 2019): 188–201, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2019.1612267>.

11 Fabiana Tomasini Giannini and Ingrid Mulder, ‘Towards a Power-Balanced Participatory Design Process’, in *Proceedings of the Participatory Design Conference 2022 - Volume 2* (PDC 2022: Participatory Design Conference 2022, Newcastle upon Tyne United Kingdom: ACM, 2022), 111–17, <https://doi.org/10.1145/3537797.3537819>.

12 Pamela Pansardi, ‘Power to and Power over : Two Distinct Concepts of Power?’, *Journal of Political Power* 5, no. 1 (April 2012): 73–89, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2158379X.2012.658278>.

13 Raji Hunjan et al., *Power and Making Change Happen* (Dunfermline: Carnegie UK Trust, 2010).

depth in the second half of this introduction, but one of the main criticisms of PAR is its “focus on localism and the difficulty we find in intervening in large-scale social change efforts.”¹⁴ My interest in questions around data and infrastructures led to an instinctive pivot away from participatory theories that did not address larger scale changes.

In order to establish the role of data, information and knowledge within these participatory processes, I then drew on theories of infrastructures encompass organisational systems for these aspects, as well as intersecting networks of various kinds on multiple scales. Scholarship on infrastructures incorporates the technical and social, the global and the local all aspects of which are relevant to my research.¹⁵ Understandings of the complex intersections of infrastructures within urban planning can be facilitated through existing scholarship such as the eight properties of information infrastructures outlined by Star and Ruhleder in their seminal paper “Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure: Design and Access for Large Information Spaces”.¹⁶ The verb, infrastructuring, emerged through the study of the creation and development of large scale information infrastructures and knowledge infrastructures.¹⁷ The ongoing and process-based nature of my practice lead me towards infrastructuring as a methodological framework for my research. Within the field of infrastructuring, my research builds upon the work of Agid, who undertook embedded practice-based research with the abolitionist organisation Critical Resistance as part of her PhD thesis. As a participatory design scholar, Agid has been explicit about how “all infrastructures, whether databases, roadways, or systems of bordering, build

14 Mary Brydon-Miller, Davydd Greenwood, and Patricia Maguire, ‘Why Action Research?’, *Action Research* 1, no. 1 (July 2003): 9–28, <https://doi.org/10.1177/14767503030011002>. p25.

15 Geoffrey C. Bowker et al., ‘Toward Information Infrastructure Studies: Ways of Knowing in a Networked Environment’, in *International Handbook of Internet Research*, ed. Jeremy Hunsinger, Lisbeth Klasturp, and Matthew Allen (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2009), 97–117, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-9789-8_5.

16 Star and Ruhleder, ‘Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure’.

17 Susan Leigh Star and Geoffrey C. Bowker, ‘How to Infrastructure’, in *Handbook of New Media: Social Shaping and Social Consequences of ICTs, Updated Student Edition* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2010), 230–45, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446211304>. See also Star and Ruhleder, ‘Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure,’ and Helena Karasti, ‘Infrastructuring in Participatory Design’, in *Proceedings of the 13th Participatory Design Conference on Research Papers - PDC ’14* (Windhoek, Namibia: ACM Press, 2014), 141–50, <https://doi.org/10.1145/2661435.2661450>.

ideology as social and political practice into form and webs of relationship.”¹⁸

To undertake the role of the Architect_Organiser is to practice infrastructuring. This means working to situate non-experts within urban regeneration processes and to encourage fluidity, creating, erasing and recreating connections between the technical and social infrastructures of urban change. I propose that infrastructuring enables the flexibility to rework existing regeneration infrastructures until they respond to the needs of non-experts. Through the development of the role of the Architect_Organiser, my research builds on the existing scholarship in the field of infrastructuring and participation.

The final elements in the theoretical landscape that I am outlining involve the pedagogical and activist elements of my practice. I am reluctant to single out activism as a distinct and separate element within my research. I am in agreement with Suzuki who states that ideally scholarship and activism would be the same, working together towards “a cyclical process of learning and social interventions for the betterment of the world.”¹⁹ The Architect_Organiser recognises that the infrastructures of academia are also intertwined with the infrastructures of urban redevelopment, and the categorisation of certain practices as ‘activism’ is part of the conventions that the role aims to disrupt.

Over the course of my research, I became convinced that the existing infrastructures of urban regeneration are incapable of change to the extent required to support “humane urbanism”.²⁰ Alongside the critical pedagogical theories described by Friere, I also draw on the abolitionist work of Ruth Wilson Gilmore amongst others.²¹ Abolitionist theory was crucial for

18 Shana Agid and Paula Austin, ‘Designing against Infrastructures of Harm: Introduction’, *Design and Culture* 15, no. 2 (4 May 2023): 133–43, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17547075.2023.2213094>. p135.

19 Daiyu Suzuki and Edwin Mayorga, ‘Scholar-Activism: A Twice Told Tale’, *Multicultural Perspectives* 16, no. 1 (2 January 2014): 16–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960.2013.867405>. p17.

20 Faranak Miraftab, ‘Insurgent Practices and Decolonization of Future(s)’, in *The Routledge Handbook of Planning Theory*, ed. Michael Gunder, Ali Madanipour, and Vanessa Watson, 1st ed. (New York, NY : Routledge, 2018.: Routledge, 2017), 276–88, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315696072-22>. p285.

21 Paulo Freire et al., *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2018). Rachel Kushner, ‘Is prison necessary? Ruth Wilson Gilmore might change your mind,’ *New York Times Magazine*, 17th April 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/17/magazine/prison-abolition-ruth-wilson-gilmore.html>. Accessed 8th November 2023.

developing a conclusion to my investigations. Having pursued changes in the regeneration infrastructure over the course of my research, the introduction of theories of abolition towards the end of my research period reflects the obstacles that I encountered. Rather than remain in the stasis caused by co-optation, financialisation and representative democratic structures, I chose to embrace abolitionist reform in order to provide some hope for future practitioners.

Research design, practice approach and methods

“If there is to be an ecology of practices, practices must not be defended as if they are weak. The problem for each practice is how to foster its own force, make present what causes practitioners to think and feel and act. But it is a problem which may also produce an experimental togetherness among practices, a dynamics of pragmatic learning of what works and how. This is the kind of active, fostering ‘milieu’ that practices need in order to be able to answer challenges and experiment changes, that is, to unfold their own force. This is a social technology any diplomatic practice demands and depends upon.”²²

When I began my research, I was focused on data and encounters with data and information on a daily basis. I wanted to find a way to document both the events of the regeneration process, my own learning and the decisions that were made while I was in my role at PEACH. I also wanted to record interactions with other stakeholders. I kept a weekly diary as a qualitative research tool, part of my reflexive practice documenting my day to day experience.²³ The diaries enabled me to establish a longitudinal study of my practice in relation to the ongoing regeneration project.

In order to organise the materials that I encountered in my practice, I used a combination of different database software. I experimented with RStudio, a programme used in statistical computing and graphics. I was curious about using a statistical programme to record combinations of quantitative and qualitative data, but after some experiments I realised that a simple Excel spreadsheet was sufficient to record the different types of data and information that I was encountering. Reading around relational databases as structures for holding and linking different types of information, I named my method “relational data for relational organising” as a pun on my experimentation with relational databases.

The use of diagram formed the link between the data I encountered and the infrastructures that I was describing. Diagramming is a method used

22 Isabelle Stengers, ‘Introductory Notes on an Ecology of Practices’, *Cultural Studies Review* 11, no. 1 (12 August 2013): 183–96, <https://doi.org/10.5130/csr.v11i1.3459>. p195.

23 Lauri L. Hyers, *Diary Methods*, Understanding Qualitative Research (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

to think and organise ideas. The diagram has a clear history in the field of architecture, related both to representation and to design. Downing and Hubka describe diagrammatic thinking and drawing as inviting “a healthy disregard for the rigid boundaries between academic disciplines by pushing the normal intellectual process of concept formulation into a less familiar realm-the spatial mode.”²⁴ Diagrams encompass tools, games, relationships, information, communication and design, and have the potential to transfer ideas and trigger notions.²⁵

As the Architect_Organiser is intent on problematising the role of the architect, it is important to contextualise my practice in relation to architectural practice and research. The juxtaposition of the role of the architect with that of the community organiser is explicitly political and challenges the role of the architect as it is currently understood, which I describe in more detail in chapter three of this thesis. Melanie Dodd describes in detail in her book the intricacies of “spatial practice” and its prioritisation of social issues.²⁶ I view the development of my role as described in this thesis as a form of architectural ethnography. Yaneva describes architectural ethnography as requiring a rethinking of the epistemological and ontological basis of architectural studies.²⁷ The process of questioning the roots of architectural scholarship and therefore the profession requires “infra-reflexivity, multi-temporality, sensory engagement with the world and political commitment.”²⁸ My research, as a form of ethnography is then turned into action through the methodologies of infrastructuring, through critical pedagogical activities and through the role of the Architect_Organiser. This is, in itself a form of spatial practice.

24 Frances Downing and Thomas C. Hubka, ‘Diagramming: A Visual Language’, *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture 2* (1986): 44, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3514315>. p51.

25 Jenny Miall Smith and Keith Albarn, *Diagram: The Instrument of Thought* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977).

26 Melanie Dodd, ed., *Spatial Practices: Modes of Action and Engagement with the City* (New York London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020). p12.

27 Alben Yaneva, *Five Ways to Make Architecture Political: An Introduction to the Politics of Design Practice* (London ; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017). p34

28 Ibid.. p34

“Ethnographic work is perpetually open, and the work of analysis moves between openness and momentary fixity: what will hold steady, what produces something that feels like insight.”²⁹

Ethnography describes “a set of methods for understanding and making sense of cultural and social worlds.”³⁰ Usually, ethnography involves the collection of qualitative information and researcher participation in the day-to-day activities of the place that they are researching. Pink describes the ethnographic hunch as “creating narratives and correspondences between different categories of materials” and being “ready for the materials to challenge existing theory.”³¹ My description of my research as ethnographic accepts the tension that can arise between participation in day-to-day activities and the analysis from a distance of those same activities.³² I undertook my research with the knowledge that this is only ever going to be one narrative of many. In my thesis I describe in detail the work of Agid, who was embedded within the abolitionist organisation Critical Resistance as a doctoral researcher, and writes that:

“any collaboration inevitably produces multiple narratives. These need not align or even agree; our professional narratives (such as this paper) tend to be of little (if any) interest to our collaborators. In the case of on-the-ground narratives that continue as the design does, those narratives are not ours to determine”.³³

The reflexivity of my research reflects this, that in a complex situation with the shifting and changing positions and agency of all of the various stakeholders and collaborators, I have to describe this process and these events from my own position, as well as clearly describing how my own

29 Rachel Douglas-Jones, ‘Drawing as Analysis: Thinking in Images, Writing in Words’, in *Experimenting with Ethnography*, ed. Andrea Ballesterio and Brit Ross Winthereik (Duke University Press, 2021), 94–105, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9781478013211-010>. p97.

30 Amanda Coffey, *Doing Ethnography*, The Sage Qualitative Research Kit (Los Angeles: Sage, 2018). p29

31 Sarah Pink, ‘The Ethnographic Hunch’, in *Experimenting with Ethnography*, ed. Andrea Ballesterio and Brit Ross Winthereik (Duke University Press, 2021), 30–40, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9781478013211-004>. p32.

32 Martyn Hammersley, ‘Ethnography: Problems and Prospects’, *Ethnography and Education* 1, no. 1 (March 2006): 3–14, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17457820500512697>.

33 Shana Agid and Elizabeth Chin, ‘Making and Negotiating Value: Design and Collaboration with Community Led Groups’, *CoDesign* 15, no. 1 (2 January 2019): 75–89, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710882.2018.1563191>. p86.

position also changes.

I relate to the development of the Architect_Organiser role as the cultivation of an ecology of practice. Stengers describes an ecology of practice as “a tool for thinking through what is happening”, “a non-neutral tool.”³⁴ Such a tool cannot be detached from its context, and also requires a form of diplomacy. This is reiterated by Yaneva, who states that “to view architecture as an ‘ecology of practice’ means to redefine the complicated forms of associations between all its beings: habits, skills, buildings, sites, city regulations, designer’s equipment, clients, institutions, models, images, urban visions and landscapes.”³⁵

Because of my multiple relationships with PEACH over the course of my research, and the design and evolution of my practice over time, the research does not sit easily with the definition of a case study. I was not studying PEACH as a case study of a community undergoing regeneration, rather I was challenging the existing infrastructures of regeneration and attempting to expand them through my practice. My research is also different to Participatory Action Research, although my practice does align with the three elements of Participatory Action Research. I work through action, I bring knowledge into the space that I am working in as a researcher and my work is participatory, involving many collaborators.³⁶ However, in the focus on my own role and my own agency, the participatory agency of my collaborators is less than in a Participatory Action Research project. My collaborators are not participating in designing the direction or scope of my research, nor in the execution or development of my role. The aims of PEACH to increase community agency within the regeneration overlap with my research, but I am focused on my role, the Architect_Organiser, and the relationship with the social and technical infrastructures of regeneration.

34 Isabelle Stengers, ‘Introductory Notes on an Ecology of Practices’, *Cultural Studies Review* 11, no. 1 (12 August 2013): 183–96, <https://doi.org/10.5130/csr.v11i1.3459>. p185.

35 Alben Yaneva, *Five Ways to Make Architecture Political: An Introduction to the Politics of Design Practice* (London ; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017). p33.

36 A good introduction and overview of action research can be found here: Davydd J. Greenwood and Morten Levin, *Introduction to Action Research: Social Research for Social Change*, 2nd ed (Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 2007).

Where did the data come from?

I began my research with the knowledge that I had gained from personal and professional experience in housing activism, through Concrete Action and through my existing role at PEACH. The data that I brought into my research was compiled through two processes, outlined below.

Firstly, the year prior to the start of my doctoral research, I was part of organising a workshop called “Data for Housing Justice” alongside Anna Feigenbaum from the University of Bournemouth Civic Media Lab, and Tom Sanderson from The Centre for Investigative Journalism, and other collaborators from the Concrete Action Collective. The workshop used an online survey to gather datatypes that both professionals and non-experts involved in housing activism encountered or wished they had access to on a daily basis. The aim of the workshop was to collect data and datatypes, and use that data to construct a publicly accessible database for housing justice. The database was imagined to work under five principles:

Go beyond listing data sources to interrogate data types.

Draw attention to uneven transparency and accessibility within open data.

Including qualitative data alongside quantitative, without translating it into metrics to highlight its importance

Include tools for cleaning and analysis to help share techniques and build data skills capacities

Humanise the data and the interface experience

*Keep the interface and data visualisation simple, with depth of information on exploration.*³⁷

This project fizzled out due to lack of capacity and funding, however the results from the online survey were retained in the form of an excel spreadsheet that listed the datatypes that participants had encountered. This spreadsheet formed the basis for the beginning of the development of my own database, compiled from my own collection of data encountered during my daily practice. This was both through my role at PEACH, and also through my desk-based research. This collection was stored as a library of

37 Anna Feigenbaum, Data for Housing Justice, “Principles guiding our prototype”, unpublished document, 22nd May 2017.

documents and images in my Dropbox, and access granted to others via a password. Through my desk-based research and contact with various resident-led campaigns in London, I was able to gather more information on Freedom of Information requests, particular documents that resident groups were searching for, and information that was important at various stages of the regeneration process.³⁸ The process of piecing together information and evidence alongside other resident groups was an important element of the project methodology.³⁹ The reasoning behind this methodology relates to the positionality of the researcher and the role of the Architect_Organiser. Locating the role “in-between” the various stakeholders in a regeneration project, specifying accountability towards non-experts, slow knowledge accretion and relationship building by design means piecing together an understanding of a general or typical regeneration process, as well as the specific local situation.

In chapter three of this thesis, I describe the process of development of a road-map, through the methodology of infrastructuring. The process of gathering information and creating maps and diagrams happens with the knowledge that there are gaps and blind spots. Karasti writes that infrastructuring as a methodology is a process of continuing design that “considers the past by attending to the “installed base””.⁴⁰ This is to say, that as the data and information was gathered and labelled, it became part of the “installed base” and the terminology used in the maps and diagrams became part of the community of practice that was evolving around the work of the A_O. The architectural and urban design knowledge that I brought to the role enabled me to analyse the data and information that I encountered from my own perspective. My position in relation to PEACH and the ongoing regeneration project added another dimension to that analysis. The positionality of the researcher, and of the Architect_Organiser is reiterated at the end of chapter three, where I describe how the A_O takes a feminist approach to knowledge building. This approach acknowledges the need for

38 For example, PEACH staff and residents exchanged information and details on resident ballots with Achilles Street Campaign in New Cross and the Save South Kilburn campaign in Brent.

39 Ainslie Yardley, ‘Piecing Together—A Methodological Bricolage’, *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* Vol 9 (31 May 2008): No 2 (2008): Performative Social Science, <https://doi.org/10.17169/FQS-9.2.416>.

40 Helena Karasti, ‘Infrastructuring in Participatory Design’, *Proceedings of the 13th Participatory Design Conference: Research Papers-Volume 1* 1 (n.d.): 141–50. p143.

challenging disciplinary divides and building knowledge collectively.

The primary categories that emerged through my day to day experience was that of information that is publicly available and that which remains unavailable for various reasons that I detail in my research. In collecting and classifying the data and information that I encountered as public or less-than-public, I did so knowing that through my own sorting of the data I was doing so from my specific perspective as a researcher and as part of the development of my role as the A_O. Bowker and Star describe the importance of the existence of multitudes of classification systems, and developing understanding of their fluidity and how they relate to each other.⁴¹ The development of labels, categories and classification schemes was part of developing an analysis alongside the community organisers and residents, and the conclusions derived through these analyses reflect the patchwork and pieced together nature of the data and information that was available.

Ethics

It seems important to state the following for full transparency in relation to my research. I am an ARB registered architect, and as mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, had been immersed within housing activism in London for three years before beginning this research. My doctoral research was funded by the London Doctoral Design Centre (LDoc), and up until August 2021, I was also employed for one day per week at PEACH, with the job title Architectural Organiser. I was born in London and have lived in London for most of my adult life, however before I began working with PEACH, I had never visited Custom House.

As a post-graduate educated, white middle-class professional, my knowledge and experience lent some weight to my words and opinions in the community and activist networks that I was connected to. I was conscious of this, and had made an effort to register as an architect with the ARB in order that my professional status could be recognised when I am advocating for untested approaches to resident and non-expert involvement. In relation

41 Geoffrey C Bowker and Susan Leigh Star, *Sorting Things out: Classification and Its Consequences* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999), <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=13186>.

to urban development, I have little professional experience and I was also learning throughout my involvement in PEACH and through my research.

It was understood at PEACH that my research was relevant to the organisation, and that the boundary between activities that were purely research and activities that were purely part of my role at PEACH were not always going to be straightforward. The agreement enabled me to bring elements of my research into my practice, and to develop my role as the Architect_Organiser, however the scope of my role at PEACH did not encompass the breadth and specificity of the role that I was developing through my research. This meant that the roles diverged, and in August 2021 I ceased being employed at PEACH.

When I was appearing in public roles, for example in meetings with the council or other stakeholders, I always introduced myself as a doctoral researcher and Architectural Organiser at PEACH. I stated the subject of my research, and that I brought my research to the table because it was relevant to my role at PEACH and the relationships that we were trying to cultivate within the ongoing regeneration project. There was a clear temporal division within my research project during the COVID-19 pandemic, which occurred at the half-way point of my three year funding from LDoc. During the pandemic, my research naturally became more desk-based. PEACH, a small and agile community organisation, was at the forefront of mutual aid and support efforts in Custom House. My role at PEACH therefore shifted and I worked as a delivery driver, bulk buying food for community meals and distributing activity packs for children and adults unable to leave their homes. I was able to take a step back from the day-to-day experiences of being embedded within PEACH and the Custom House regeneration and examine the aims of my research and the role of the Architectural Organiser from a distance.

While writing-up my research, I considered the implications of anonymity and confidentiality for my collaborators and other stakeholders encountered through my practice. Baez describes the discourse relating to confidentiality in qualitative research as related to four points: (1) those concerns relating to protection from “harm”; (2) those concerns relating to “privacy”; (3) those concerns relating to ensuring the “accuracy or integrity of the research”;

and (4) those concerns relating to “ethical standards”.⁴² I found these to be useful distinctions when considering the requirements for confidentiality within my practice. The role of the Architect_Organiser specifically evolved to engage with the tension that is a consequence of the combination of the role of architect and that of the organiser. The Critical Methodologies Collective raise the issue of competing or conflicting accountabilities faced by researchers, describing how “tensions might occur between accountability towards the research participants and accountability towards political struggles in which the research project is situated.”⁴³ Who the Architect_Organiser is accountable to complicates the ethics of the research. I made the decision within my thesis to remove the names of people and organisations that I wrote about in my practice diaries while embedded at PEACH. I did this because the focus of the research was not on the constellation of stakeholders themselves, but on the information and data that was being passed between them and the knowledge required to filter and parse that information. The specifics of which person was representing which organisation at which time was not relevant for the research. Neither was whether it was X consultancy or Y consultancy who were involved. Through redacting those names, I removed concerns relating to their privacy. It would be possible with some effort to identify the organisations who were involved in the Custom House regeneration, however this is all information that is within the public domain. I chose to name only the people with whom I have collaborated in the thesis, and who were a part of my day-to-day practice at PEACH and Community Led Housing London with whom I collaborated on the evaluation of the coproduction process. These people were able to consent to their participation and therefore also contribute to the integrity of the research. All of my collaborators at PEACH and at Community Led Housing London received a copy of the draft chapters of my thesis for reflection and comment.

In terms of sensitive data and information and communications, I have again chosen to redact the names of people and organisations however, due to the need to maintain the tension inherent in my role, it was not possible to

42 Benjamin Baez, ‘Confidentiality in Qualitative Research: Reflections on Secrets, Power and Agency’, *Qualitative Research* 2, no. 1 (April 2002): 35–58, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794102002001638>. p41.

43 Critical Methodologies Collective, ed., *The Politics and Ethics of Representation in Qualitative Research: Addressing Moments of Discomfort* (New York: Routledge, 2021). p3.

remove all identifiers from the research. I think that this choice strengthens the research because it aligns with the role of the educator within my practice in relation to accountability. The Architect_Organiser is committed to transparency, challenging the status quo and especially in relation to the documentation of behind-the-scenes negotiations and communication, it is essential for the research that the reader is able to follow the twists and turns of the narrative.

Positionality

The COVID-19 pandemic affected the regeneration programme and the communication between the various stakeholders involved in the project. During the enforced slow-down of successive lockdowns I was able to see how my relationship to PEACH was limiting my research capabilities. I wanted to develop my role further and deeper than the organisation had capacity for, and be more critical of the structures that I was engaging in. In engaging with imagining a different approach to regeneration that could be applicable to different scenarios geographically and temporally, I needed to re-situate myself as a researcher. The development of my role as the Architect_Organiser became separate from my involvement in the regeneration project. I have attempted to reflect this in my writing, describing my role at PEACH using the term Architectural Organiser, and my role as it developed in my research Architect_Organiser or A_O. While the Architect_Organiser role was in development, although I was no longer involved in the day to day events of the regeneration, I remained connected through the evaluation of the coproduction steering group. This was essential as it allowed me to confirm some of the analyses that were developed while I was embedded at PEACH, and also experience the regeneration process from a different perspective.

The A_O takes an abolitionist position towards the built environment, developing a framework for analysis that aims to restructure the processes of regeneration to give residents agency. This framework was only possible to develop as a researcher, as I describe in chapters five and six of this thesis.

Chapter 1

Urban Regeneration: Data, information, Knowledge.

Introducing the background of urban regeneration in London, and the role of data, information and knowledge in the context of existing participatory frameworks.

“Regeneration refers to an urban policy involving spatially targeted reinvestment in and revitalisation of physically deteriorating, economically under-resourced and socially deprived areas - in this case public/council/ social housing estates. Even though some regeneration aims can be considered laudable, the practice of regeneration in London means that it has become a “nasty word” among estate residents as they see their homes bulldozed and their communities scattered.”⁴⁴

In 2015 I had just returned to London from a few years abroad. Born in the city, whatever the reasons for my return it always felt like coming home. This time I returned as an architect, not quite qualified but newly aware of the political ramifications of spatial practice. One evening, I was invited to join a friend in Elephant and Castle, where some local artists were holding listening sessions based around the heavily contested regeneration of the Heygate and Aylesbury estates.⁴⁵ We listened to a recording of a sincere architect who was trying to express her concerns about the sizes of the commercial spaces in the new development. They were too big, and the rent would be too expensive for existing local shops to move into. But somehow the language didn't work. I could tell what she was trying to say, but it wasn't obvious to anyone else in the room. It immediately seemed clear to me that there was something that the architects weren't doing. A definite communication failure, but also an abdication of responsibility. It was too late in the project process for residents to be trying to communicate these types of problems with this proposal. The decisions had been made, the designs were technically complete. Afterwards I wondered about this, her words

44 Paul Watt, *Estate Regeneration and Its Discontents: Public Housing, Place and Inequality in London* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2021). p1

45 'Ultra-red,' Ultra-red mission statement, <http://www.ultrared.org/directory.html>. Accessed 11th April 2022. Exploring acoustic space as enunciative of social relations, Ultra-red take up the acoustic mapping of contested spaces and histories utilising sound-based research (termed Militant Sound Investigations) that directly engage the organizing and analyses of political struggles..

echoed in my mind. There was something that needed to change here, but what was it?

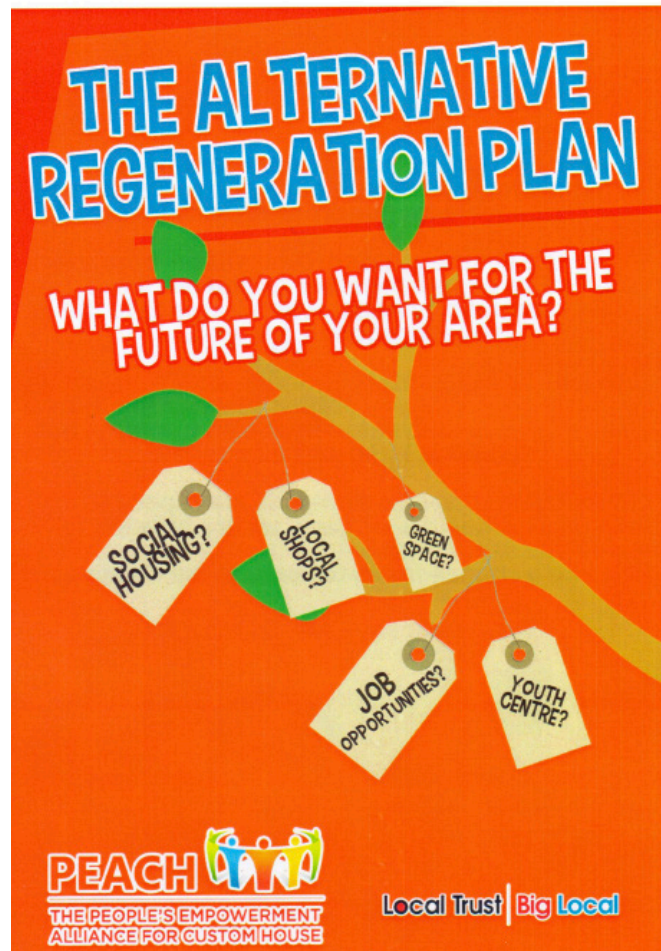
Later on that year, I was introduced to a community organiser who worked at PEACH, The People's Empowerment Alliance for Custom House.⁴⁶ They explained to me that the Custom House area had been awaiting urban regeneration since 2003. It was now 2016, and residents were still waiting for the process to begin, meaning they had been living with the potential of disruption to their lives and demolition of their homes for the past 15 years. The organisers at PEACH were looking for architects to help them create a resident-led masterplan for the area. I began to think that maybe this was an opportunity for architects to do something differently. After a few conversations with community organisers and residents on the PEACH board, as well as residents and businesses in the area, PEACH decided to create a masterplan for the area which reflected local needs and desires. Instinctively, I proposed that residents should be involved from the start and that we should create a team of residents and architects to start working together on the plan. We hoped that the masterplan could be used as political leverage with the local authority, and would also give the local residents something to fight for, to propose as a viable way forward, to take action after years of stagnation.

Together with the community organisers at PEACH, we decided on a team of ten people to carry out the project. Four architects, five local residents and one experienced union organiser, with the two full time community organisers also contributing and supervising. From October 2016 the Alternative Regeneration Team worked one day a week for a year to produce four aims and six principles for regeneration, which were then spatially represented in the Alternative Regeneration Plan and backed up with documentation of our participatory work, the evidence base.⁴⁷ The architects worked with local residents as community organisers, having one-to-one

46 'The People's Empowerment Alliance of Custom House,' PEACH, <https://peach-e16.org.uk/>. Accessed 11th April 2022 PEACH is a community organisation founded in 2013 by a group of local residents in Custom House, Newham. Funded by the National Lottery Big Local fund, PEACH aims to improve jobs, health, safety, education and housing for people living in the Custom House area. A Big Local project, funded by the National Lottery, the Big Local scheme gives £1 million over ten years to resident-led groups in areas in the UK with the highest levels of multiple indices of deprivation.

47 PEACH, 'PEACH Evidence Base and Principles,' unpublished document, https://www.dropbox.com/s/qgjomhuzlg9m5y4/180725_PEACH_EvidenceBase.pdf?dl=0.

conversations, knocking on doors, running meetings and events, and the resident organisers contributed to the design process, mapping and analysing the area, designing workshops with the architects and evaluating the results. Everyone was paid equally, demonstrating that there was no hierarchy of skills or knowledge, that all contributions to the project were equally valued, whether local or professional. This masterplan became known as the PEACH Alternative Regeneration Plan.⁴⁸ It is this plan and the work that went into its creation that instigated the research for this thesis.

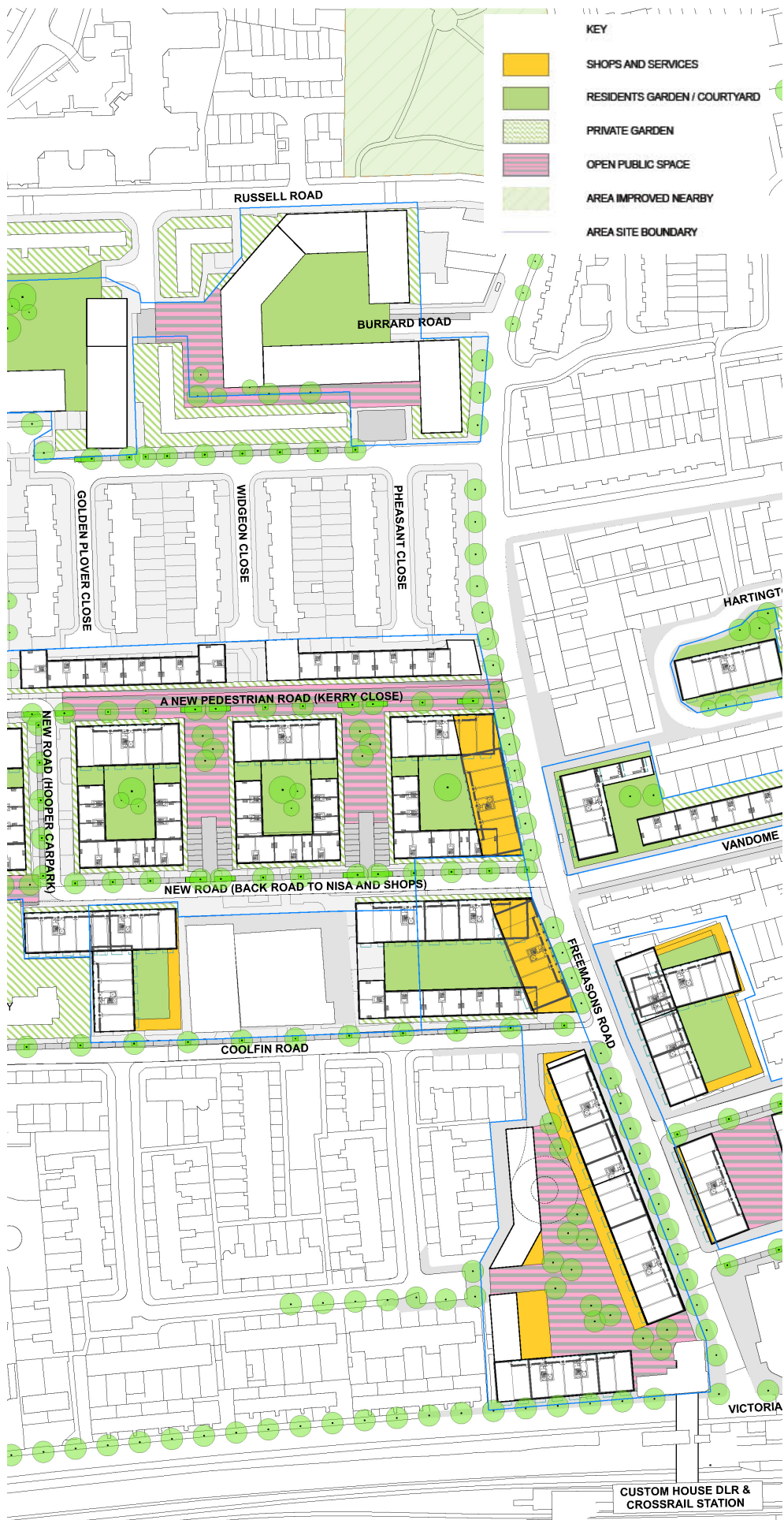


1.01 The original flyer advertising the launch of the PEACH Alternative Regeneration Plan

48 For more on the PEACH Alternative Regeneration Plan see Watt, *Estate Regeneration and Its Discontents*. Pablo Sendra, 'Community-Led Social Housing Regeneration: From Government-Led Programmes to Community Initiatives', in *Urban Renewal, Community and Participation: Theory, Policy and Practice*, ed. Julie Clark and Nicholas Wise, The Urban Book Series (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 71–87, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-72311-2_4. Bob Colenutt, *The Property Lobby: The Hidden Reality behind the Housing Crisis*, 2020.



1.02 Images of homes in Custom House taken by the Alternative Regeneration Plan team as part of a group mapping exercise.



1.03 An excerpt from the PEACH Alternative Regeneration masterplan.

Framing urban regeneration.

The encounter that I had in Elephant and Castle and the experience I describe of creating the Alternative Regeneration Plan in Custom House can be usefully contextualised within the realm of existing studies of regeneration and its associated effects. Theories and histories of urban regeneration in the UK have been well documented and researched from many different perspectives, however some have been more influential and relevant to my research than others.⁴⁹ Paul Watt is a London based academic whose work examines the effects of regeneration on residents and the history of estate regeneration policy.⁵⁰ Across London, it has become clear to many residents and diverse community groups that large scale regeneration does not benefit them, but leads to existing residents being forced out due to the new homes being unaffordable and the inevitable creep of gentrification. The displacement of low income working class residents and demolition of social housing to be replaced by new homes for sale at market prices has become a familiar narrative.⁵¹ The new homes are unaffordable to people on low or median incomes, and result in families who have lived and worked in an area for generations being forced to move to the outer reaches of the city or even further afield.⁵² Gentrification accelerates due to the increased sizes of commercial premises within new developments, new buildings leading to higher commercial rents and new homes being built for sale on the open market or for rent at market rent levels.⁵³ Contemporary research identifies negative effects of large scale urban regeneration involving demolition, including the breaking up of social networks developed

49 For a comprehensive history of regeneration in the UK see Andrew Tallon, *Urban Regeneration in the UK*, 3rd ed. (Third edition. | Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY : Routledge, 2021.: Routledge, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351030304>.

50 Watt, *Estate Regeneration and Its Discontents*.

51 Paul Watt, 'Housing Stock Transfers, Regeneration and State-Led Gentrification in London', *Urban Policy and Research* 27 (1 September 2009): 229–42, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08111140903154147>. See also Ben Campkin, *Remaking London: Decline and Regeneration in Urban Culture*, International Library of Human Geography 19 (London New York: I.B. Tauris, 2013).

52 Loretta Lees and Hannah White, 'The Social Cleansing of London Council Estates: Everyday Experiences of "Accumulative Dispossession"', *Housing Studies* 35, no. 10 (25 November 2020): 1701–22, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2019.1680814>.

53 Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin K. Wyly, *Gentrification* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008). See also Phil Hubbard, *The Battle for the High Street: Retail Gentrification, Class and Disgust* (London, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

over many years and mental health problems associated with housing insecurity.⁵⁴ The emotional impact of ‘domicide’ on the mental health of residents which can lead to early death and physical illness in older residents has also been documented.⁵⁵

In terms of bad examples of urban regeneration, the redevelopment of the Heygate and Aylesbury Estates in Elephant and Castle have become known for displacing large numbers of residents, demolishing large quantities of existing social housing and replacing the estate with houses for sale and rent at market levels, fundamentally destroying the established community of residents. The 35% campaign and Southwark Notes have maintained an extensive archive of their attempts to hold the local authority to account and the difficulties they have faced in obtaining reliable and accurate data and information on the proposed schemes.⁵⁶ The lack of accessible data and information for residents on regeneration proposals, stakeholders, and impacts was clearly an issue while I was working at PEACH developing the Alternative Regeneration Plan, and this issue became the basis for the development of my research. The limited agency of resident stakeholders in state-led redevelopment processes is not a new phenomenon, and this is clear through writing on past case studies of resident-led campaigns. Watt and Minton write about the activism which has evolved around residents resisting the destruction of their homes.⁵⁷ Faced with losing their homes, campaigns against demolition have gained publicity and support from the media, politicians, academics and professionals in the fields of geography, urbanism and more. For example, the film “Dispossession: The Great Social Housing Swindle” by Paul Sng was screened in London in 2017 followed by

54 Watt, *Estate Regeneration and Its Discontents*. See also Lees and White, ‘The Social Cleansing of London Council Estates’.

55 J. Douglas Porteous and Sandra Eileen Smith, *Domicide: The Global Destruction of Home* (Montréal ; Ithaca: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001). See also James Tracy, *Dispatches against Displacement: Field Notes from San Francisco’s Housing Wars* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2014) and Watt, *Estate Regeneration and Its Discontents*

56 35% Campaign, accessed 13th April 2020, <http://35percent.org/>. Southwark Notes, ‘Southwark Notes – whose regeneration?’ accessed 13th April 2020, <https://southwarknotes.wordpress.com/>.

57 Paul Watt and Anna Minton, ‘London’s Housing Crisis and Its Activisms’, *City* 20, no. 2 (3 March 2016): 204–21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2016.1151707>

a Q and A with Jeremy Corbyn MP, Anna Minton and others.⁵⁸ Sian Berry, member of the London Assembly has been a vocal supporter of residents living on estates, making policy makers aware of the social housing losses and proposing policy changes.⁵⁹ National newspapers such as The Guardian have written extensively on regeneration.⁶⁰ Local news sources also often cover resident campaigns such as Achilles Street in New Cross and Central Hill in Lambeth.⁶¹ PEACH actions were often covered in the Newham Recorder.⁶²

Looking at successful resident campaigns from the 1960's through to 2010's, few are still in existence today and initial grassroots success doesn't always have the intended consequences over the long term. A prime example of this is Covent Garden, which was the focus of a successful resident-led campaign against demolition and the removal of the market in the 1960's. Despite winning the campaign against demolition, the removal of the market led to many existing residents losing their livelihoods, and many were forced to move leading the area to gentrify rapidly and become the shopping district that we know today.⁶³

58 Velvet Joy Productions and Curzon, 'Dispossession - London screening + Q&A featuring Jeremy Corbyn', Facebook, 14th December 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/events/1490949887678530>, accessed 15th February 2022.

59 Sian Berry, 'Estate redevelopment in London: Have things improved under the current Mayor?', last modified 15th January 2021, https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021_01_estate_redevelopment_in_london_data_sian_berry_am.pdf, accessed 8th November 2023.

60 Diane Taylor, 'It's social cleansing': the 93-year-old fighting east London demolitions,' *The Guardian*, 28th July 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/jul/28/social-cleansing-whitechapel-east-london-fighting-demolitions>, accessed 8th November 2023

61 Nafeesa Zaman, 'Achilles Street residents raise concerns over planned demolition of their homes,' *East London Lines*, October 31st 2019, <https://www.eastlondonlines.co.uk/2019/10/achilles-street-residents-raise-concerns-over-planned-demolition-of-their-homes/> accessed 8th November 2023. Contributor, 'Greens back resident campaign to stop demolition on Lambeth's Central Hill Estate,' *Brixton Buzz*, 9th December 2020, <https://www.brixtonbuzz.com/2020/12/greens-back-resident-campaign-to-stop-demolition-on-lambeths-central-hill-estate/> accessed 8th November 2023.

62 Andrew Brookes, 'Temporary accommodation tenants in Custom House hold protest against Newham Council amid legal negotiations,' *Newham Recorder*, May 23rd 2019, <https://www.newhamrecorder.co.uk/news/peach-stage-mears-protest-3218104> accessed 8th November 2023

63 Brian Anson, *I'll Fight You for It! Behind the Struggle for Covent Garden* (London: Cape, 1981).

The known negative effects of regeneration, the lack of positive results from past completed regeneration programmes, compounded by the complexity of the contemporary regeneration process itself led me to look for genuine examples of success in opposing state-led regeneration. Research in this area is sparse, although there have been many attempts by communities to develop their own plans for contested areas. A current AHRC funded research project titled “People’s Plans” is beginning to remedy this gap. “People’s Plans” is producing “the first sustained history of community-led planning (CLP) in the UK documenting the diverse and previously hidden ways in which people have come together to care for the future of their local environments and exploring what their efforts mean for contemporary approaches to planning and participatory place-making”.⁶⁴ There is a difference between the capacity in time, information and knowledge required for a resident group to build a successful campaign or to develop a masterplan proposal, or both. Looking at examples from early campaigns, it is interesting to note where professionals were involved, what their roles were, the access the group had to government employees and also the attitudes of the local authority at the time.

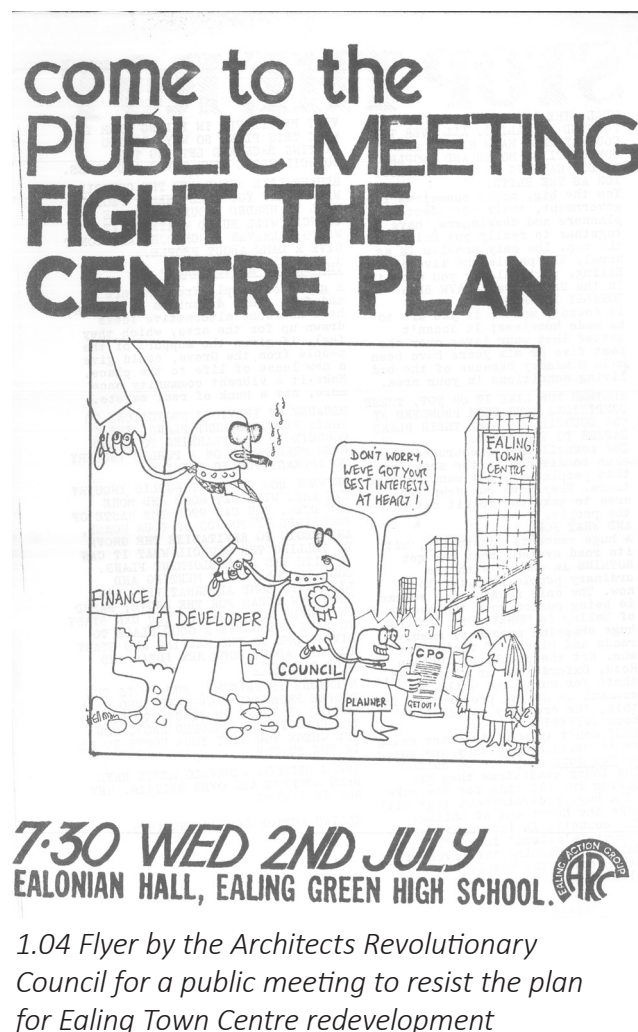
The Ealing Central Area Redevelopment Scheme was first proposed in 1974. The scheme was refused planning permission following a campaign by the Ealing Town Centre Action Group and a resident-led masterplan developed alongside the Architects Revolutionary Council (ARC).⁶⁵ The ARC were a group of architects active in the UK and Northern Ireland in the late 1960’s through to the early 1980’s. The flyers developed by the ARC to advertise community meetings show familiar themes, with finance and developers holding sway over the council and town planners. The ARC positioned themselves as fighting for residents and against the council and developers, and are known for their resident focussed approach to architectural practice.⁶⁶ The flyer

64 ‘People’s Plans’, Exploring the Hidden Histories of Community-led Planning in the UK, <https://www.peoplesplans.org/>, accessed 11th April 2022.

65 “The Revolution Comes to Ealing: Alternative Proposals for Development in the Ealing Town Centre Scheme Prepared by the Architects Revolutionary Council’, *Architects Journal*, (28)(1975): 62. ‘Mayday Rooms’ Mayday Rooms Archives hold a physical and digital archive of the work undertaken by the Architects Revolutionary Council, <https://maydayrooms.org/> accessed on 13th April 2020.

66 Albane Duvillier, ‘Brian Anson’s Architects Revolutionary Council and its Relevance today,’ https://www.academia.edu/12771040/Brian_Ansons_Architectural_Revolutionary_Council_and_its_relevance_today, accessed 7th September 2022

is explicit in who has the power in this situation, depicting finance holding sway over the developer, council and the council planners. It is unknown what influence the ARC plan had on the council at the time. Although the council-led redevelopment was initially refused planning permission by the secretary of state, the revised town centre redevelopment was eventually granted planning by the council and the new shopping centre opened ten years later.⁶⁷



Even with local authority support, resident-led masterplans can run into difficulties. The residents of the Andover Estate in Islington tried to create their own plan, this time initially with the support of Islington council. In 2012 the Andover Future Forum was established by around fifty residents on the estate in collaboration with other local stakeholders, council officers and designers from Open City. The resulting Andover Estate Development Plan

67 British Land, 'Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre: Our Local Contribution', <https://www.britishland.com/sites/british-land-corp/files/sustainability/reporting/socio-economic-reporting/2019-ealing-broadway-review.pdf>, accessed 11th April 2022.

(AEDP) proposed 140 new homes on the estate as well as new landscaping and a new health centre. Islington council initially promoted the plan as a pioneering resident-led initiative. By 2015 however the plan had been axed, allegedly over internal council arguments that it gave residents too much autonomy.⁶⁸ The concern from the council over resident agency is an indication of the complexity of such proposed partnerships, and how differences in desired outcomes and processes can derail resident-led initiatives. Once derailed, such groups rarely have the resources or stamina to regroup and the Andover Estate has now been redeveloped by the council. The new masterplan mostly avoids demolition however, prioritising infill development and the refurbishment of existing buildings.⁶⁹

Another example of a resident-led plan that was initially supported by the local authority, The People's Plan for the Royal Docks was initiated by local residents of Silvertown in 1984 as a response to the London Docklands Development Corporation's (LDDC) proposal for London City Airport. The London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC), which was created in 1981 in order to regenerate the docklands, and the Greater London Council (GLC) were already in opposition over plans for the area. The area under LDDC control had relaxed planning controls and the LDDC actively promoted market-led development. The GLC at the time wanted to demonstrate alternatives to the LDDC as well as examples of popular planning in practice, and threw support behind the People's Plan through the Popular Planning Unit (PPU). The People's Plan was then developed with support from the Greater London Council (GLC) Popular Planning Unit. To protest the role of the LLDC in promoting unwanted development in the docklands area, residents compiled petition and organised a 'People's Armada' of boats travelling down the Thames from the docks to the houses of parliament in Westminster in order to deliver it. Despite the publicity and even though a

68 Islington Tribune. 'Estate Leader Quits after Visionary Plan Revamped,' <http://archive.islingtontribune.com/news/2015/may/estate-leader-quits-after-visionary-plan-revamp-finsbury-park-estate-%E2%80%98thrown-out%E2%80%99> Islington Tribune. 'Fears over Finsbury Park Estate Regeneration,' <http://archive.islingtontribune.com/news/2015/apr/fears-over-finsbury-park-estate-regeneration-vision-high-deprivation-area-hangs-balanc>. Islington Council, 'Report of executive member for housing and development,' <https://democracy.islington.gov.uk/documents/s1391/Andover%20report%20Executive%20July%202014.pdf> accessed 6th April 2020.

69 Greater London Authority, Planning Report D&P/4301/02, 22nd January 2018, https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/public%3A/public%3A/PAWS/media_id_385203/andover_estate_report.pdf. accessed 6th April 2020.

public enquiry upheld the People's Plan, the inquiry was not legally binding and LDDC went ahead with the airport despite widespread local opposition.⁷⁰ This is now London City Airport, a source of frustration, air and noise pollution for many Newham residents. The LDDC made no pretences of being democratic, and therefore in a sense the result is not surprising, however it is important to note that even a well-resourced and publicised plan, supported by the GLC, was not able to succeed against market-driven regeneration.



1.05 *The People's Armada to Parliament as part of the People's Plan for the Royal Docks.*

In terms of relevant successes, two notable resident-led organisations did win their regeneration campaigns, and are still in existence today. In 1984, on the South Bank of the Thames, Coin Street Community Builders was created after the Coin Street Action Group successfully defeated plans for a hotel and offices. Over seven years of campaigning as well as the development of a resident-led masterplan for the area, the group eventually gained ownership of the site from the Greater London Council (GLC).⁷¹ Coin Street still exists today as a social enterprise and cooperative housing. In 1992, Watterton and Elgin Community Homes succeeded in gaining ownership of their estate after a ten year legal battle with Westminster Council. Residents used the

70 Sue Brownill, 'The People's Plan for the Royal Docks: Some Contradictions in Popular Planning', *Planning Practice and Research* 2, no. 4 (March 1988): 15–21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02697458808722693>. CSpace, 'The People's Armada to Parliament, <http://cspace.org.uk/archive/docklands-community-poster-project/armada-2/>.' accessed 11th April 2022.

71 Coin Street, 'Our Story', <https://coinstreet.org/about-us/our-story>, accessed on 6th April 2020

“tenant’s choice” clause in the 1988 Housing Act to transfer the homes to a newly formed resident owned housing association, alongside gaining £22 million from the council to compensate for the state of disrepair of the buildings at the time.⁷² Watterton and Elgin are now one of the most well-known resident-led housing organisations in London, and regularly give talks and advice to other resident groups on negotiating with local authorities. These examples are not all widely known, and increasingly financialised neoliberal policies towards housing and redevelopment have changed the landscape of regeneration and redevelopment over time which makes their achievements, particularly in the cases of Coin Street and Watterton and Elgin, appear almost utopian today.

Toolkits and handbooks

Residents, activists, architects, planners and academics across London who are either impacted by regeneration plans themselves or concerned for the fate of others have formed groups of professionals whom residents can contact for support. Groups such as Just Space, London Tenants Federation and Defend Council Housing have been active for over ten years. Newer groups such as Architects for Social Housing (ASH), Concrete Action and EstateWatch formed more recently in response to estate regeneration since 2015.⁷³ These groups have also collaborated on the production of a number of resources aimed at supporting non-experts in understanding the regeneration process and what they can do to resist regeneration and gentrification. Many websites, maps, handbooks, toolkits and other forms of guidance are now available for residents and community groups wishing to oppose demolition and regeneration in their area.

These groups and resources are important firstly because they enable a route for community groups to engage in the regeneration process, but also because they recognise that there is an issue in particular concerning the agency of residents impacted by regeneration plans. In attempts to breakdown the regeneration process into accessible or manageable

72 ‘Watterton and Elgin Community Homes’, *Community Led Homes*, March 2018, <https://www.communityledhomes.org.uk/walterton-elgin-community-homes>. Accessed 20th May 2022,

73 Architects for Social Housing, <https://architectsforsocialhousing.co.uk/>, accessed 24th June 2022, Concrete Action, <https://concreteaction.net/>, accessed 24th June 2022, Estate Watch, <https://www.estatewatch.london/>. accessed 24th June 2022.

elements, the tools also help to expose the complexity and longevity of the process.



1.06 Covers of the handbooks 'Staying Put' and 'Refurbish don't demolish.'

Notable examples of handbooks include “Staying put. An Anti-Gentrification Handbook for Residents on Estates in London”.⁷⁴ In 2014, London Tenants Federation, in association with Just Space, Loretta Lees and the Southwark Notes Action Group, put together the pamphlet documenting experiences of residents on estates undergoing demolition and gentrification. The guide offers tips and advice for those wishing to oppose the loss of their homes, including potential alternatives such as refurbishment, self-build and housing cooperatives. Also in 2014 UCL Engineering Exchange published “Demolition or Refurbishment of Social Housing? A review of the evidence”, a booklet which provides “a review of technical models, evidence and case studies for decision making relating to the retention or demolition of social housing

74 London Tenants Federation, Loretta Lees, Just Space and Southwark Notes Archive Group, 'Staying put. An Anti Gentrification Handbook for Residents on Estates in London,' <https://justspacelondon.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/staying-put-web-version-low.pdf>. accessed 6th April 2022.

stock”.⁷⁵ In 2019, Lees, Just Space and London Tenants Federation went on to work on the ERSC funded research project “Estate Watch”, a news and resources platform focussed on estate regeneration in London.⁷⁶ Estate Watch also contains research on the impact of regeneration on communities, including case studies from a number of in-progress regeneration programmes at different stages of redevelopment. Both Estate Watch and the “Housing Struggles Archive” housed at Mayday Rooms on Fleet Street in London demonstrate contemporary resistance to regeneration by resident groups across the city.⁷⁷ In 2020 Daniel Fitzpatrick and Pablo Sendra published “Community-led Regeneration”, a toolkit resulting from a two and a half year research project which “is designed for communities resisting the demolition of their homes and/or proposing their own alternative plan, and for planners, architects, professionals, scholars and volunteers providing support to those community groups.”⁷⁸ The case studies in the book include Watterton and Elgin Community Homes, West Ken Gibbs Green Community Homes, Cressingham Gardens Community, The Carpenters Estate and The People’s Empowerment Alliance for Custom House or PEACH, where I initiated my research.

Data and information, the missing elements?

The research questions which form the backbone of my PhD thesis emerged through reflecting on issues which I consistently encountered over the three years of organising around the Alternative Regeneration Plan, and my connections with other resident-led campaigns across London through the

75 UCL Urban Lab and Engineering Exchange for Just Space and the London Tenants Federation, ‘Demolition or refurbishment of social housing? A review of the evidence,’ 27th October 2014, https://www.ucl.ac.uk/engineering-exchange/sites/engineering-exchange/files/report-refurbishment-demolition-social-housing_1.pdf accessed 7th April 2022

76 Estate Watch, <https://www.estatewatch.london/>. accessed on 6th April 2022

77 The London Housing Struggles Archive, <https://maydayrooms.org/london-housing-struggles-archive/> accessed 6th April 2022. The physical archive is housed at Mayday Rooms, 88 Fleet Street, London.

78 Daniel Fitzpatrick and Pablo Sendra, *Community-Led Regeneration: A Toolkit for Residents and Planners* (UCL Press, 2020). p6.

Concrete Action Collective.⁷⁹ The issues that I encountered revolved around access to and understanding of data and information by non-experts in relation to urban regeneration processes. Throughout the development of the Alternative Regeneration Plan, the technicalities of the design process, technical language, timescales, volume of information, financial viability and the involvement of various consultants all required sifting, translating, rewriting and reassessing. It was not just the understanding of the process, but where to find information, how to deduce what was missing, to know what was important and how to transmit those questions to a wider non-expert audience that emerged as consistent problems. The amount of information needed and the knowledge of how to use it was clearly a huge barrier for many non-experts, a barrier compounded by the constant shifting sands of politics and policy. It was these gaps in the understanding of and access to data that leads to my first research question: “What roles do data and information play in the context of architecture, planning and policy, in relation to community and non-expert groups?”

I propose that the emergence of so many resources aimed at collecting strategies and tactics for non-experts facing urban regeneration is a result of the rising volumes of data and information on finance, policy, design and planning that characterise the complexity of the contemporary urban regeneration process. Obstacles to access and understanding of data are, for example the large quantities involved in policy and planning making relevance difficult to establish. Unrecorded obsolescence leading to inaccuracies, unnecessarily complicated language, intentional concealment and distortion of important figures as well as questions over confidentiality. All of these prevent access and understanding of such data and information and inhibit genuine participatory processes. These obstacles are complicated by changes in policy and procedure which produce yet more information to add to the already crowded field.

I argue that the role of data and information is key to understanding

79 Concrete Action Collective, ‘Concrete Action collective exists to support struggles for housing and spatial justice. We provide free support, architectural expertise and planning services to communities. We generate tactics based on knowledge sharing, empathy and solidarity. These range from uncovering radical architectural practices, digital mapping, whistleblowing and theatre. Based at Limehouse Town Hall in East London, we are open to collaborating with anyone interested in creating just and equitable cities,’ <https://concreteaction.net/>. accessed 24th June 2022.

the pattern of limited agency which exists for community stakeholders in urban regeneration processes. Limited agency can be seen in the restricted moments where residents are encouraged to participate in the resident engagement process and in the restricted information available to residents about the proposals, the timescale and the various outcomes already envisioned by various stakeholders. Through policy and feasibility studies, the council and other consultants often have a broad idea of what is possible under a regeneration proposal before residents are informed of its impending initiation. Many resident campaigns therefore begin too late to make a significant impact in local authority plans. Existing participatory frameworks are inadequate because they don't enable understanding of the regeneration process and don't facilitate genuine agency by non-experts. Instead, well-intentioned experts replicate existing barriers to access and use of relevant data and information through producing more information, reinforcing the knowledge hierarchy between expert and non-expert. I believe that the role of data and information is a key element that is missing from existing resources and that also has not been sufficiently explored or documented in practice.

This research therefore continues with my second research question: "How can the hybrid practice of the Architect_Organiser be developed to establish a critical and productive role for the use of such data and information by both experts and non-experts?"

Contemporary resident-led campaigns and the role of data and information

My work develops from and builds upon a number of other contemporary examples. It is the case with long term regeneration campaigns that residents who initially begin campaigning as "non-experts", over time become experts in planning and housing law and policy. Looking at contemporary campaigns against regeneration and gentrification, a range of tactics have been used to obtain access to data and information. Both the Heygate and Aylesbury estate campaigns and the Cressingham Gardens campaign have been written about in detail by academics in the fields of housing, urban studies and design. Lees and Ferreri detail the legal challenge by Heygate residents against the proposed compulsory purchase of leaseholders homes through a public inquiry in 2013. The government guidance on compulsory

purchase states that “compulsory purchase is a legal mechanism by which certain bodies (known as ‘acquiring authorities’) can acquire land without the consent of the owner.”⁸⁰ They describe resistance to the Heygate Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) as a “collective attempt to challenge the logic construed by the legal framework as a question of private property rights of individuals against the right of expropriation of the state, by turning the case into a public issue around which to articulate a series of challenges to the presumed “public interest” of the new developments.”⁸¹ The leaseholders who brought about the public inquiry were able to do so due to their long term engagement with local policy and planning frameworks, revealing previously hidden evidence of the unsuitability of the regeneration proposals in relation to local housing need, and exposing financial documentation which was deemed by the council as confidential. Lees and Ferreri note that such legal routes are “highly exclusionary processes” due to the barriers to knowledge and information access, as well as the necessary financial requirements.⁸² The legal route was also taken four years later by residents of the Aylesbury estate, with a second public inquiry into the compulsory purchase of homes by Southwark Council. Leaseholders were supported by lawyers, academics and other expert witnesses in the successful challenge.⁸³ The success was short lived however, with the council resubmitting the CPO’s one year later and winning the case. Through this lengthy and expensive process, residents obtained a change in Southwark’s housing policy which gives them a higher likelihood of being rehoused in the local area of the regeneration, however the demolition of the estate continues.⁸⁴

On another estate in London, at Cressingham Gardens, residents have recently submitted an application to the High Court for their fourth judicial

80 Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, ‘Compulsory purchase and compensation: guide 1 – procedure,’ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/compulsory-purchase-and-compensation-guide-1-procedure>, accessed 24th June 2022. p1.

81 Loretta Lees and Mara Ferreri, ‘Resisting Gentrification on Its Final Frontiers: Learning from the Heygate Estate in London (1974–2013)’, *Cities* 57 (September 2016): 14–24, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2015.12.005>. p14.

82 Lees, Slater, and Wyly, *Gentrification*. p16

83 Lesley Coffey BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI, The Planning Inspectorate, CPO Report to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, 29th January 2016, <https://southwarknotes.files.wordpress.com/2009/12/aylesbury-cpo-inspectors-report.pdf>, accessed 24th June 2022,

84 Jerry Flynn, ‘Aylesbury; the Right to a Community’, <https://www.gofundme.com/f/aylesbury-the-right-to-a-community-2uefgf2s?viewupdates=1>, accessed 24th June 2022.

review of Lambeth council's plans for the demolition of the estate.⁸⁵ As well as protesting the proposed demolition of the estate through the courts, residents worked with an architect to produce a People's Plan as an alternative to demolition. The Save Cressingham campaign has also attempted to transfer the ownership of the estate to a community-owned company through the Right to Transfer policy.⁸⁶ This request requires approval from the Secretary of State, and at the time of writing there has been no response from the government. Residents have now registered the estate as a toad migration route, emphasising the ecological importance of the low density homes adjacent to Brockwell Park.⁸⁷ The wide range of strategies and tactics adopted by the campaign demonstrates the attention to detail, amount of research and sifting of information necessary in order for the campaign to continue. Tom Keene, resident of Cressingham Gardens, has undertaken doctoral research on "the role of Lambeth's housing databases in the maintenance, repair, and regeneration of their housing stock" with the aim of making the effects of Lambeth's databases more visible and accountable to residents.⁸⁸ Keene provides templates for FOI requests on council housing repair data on his website, however with the caveat to;

"Keep in mind that any data you receive will not necessarily be a true reflection of the condition of the estate. As an example, on Cressingham Gardens we discovered that many repairs had not been completed, had been charged twice, or were of a very low standard. Yet this same 'iffy' data feeds

85 Gerlinde Gniewosz, 'Save Cressingham Fundraiser update,' 17th March 2022, <https://www.gofundme.com/f/savecressingham>, accessed 22nd April 2022.

86 Department of Communities and Local Government, 'The Housing (Right To Transfer from A Local Authority Landlord) (England) Regulations 2013,' November 2013, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/256523/The_Housing_Right_To_Transfer_from_A_Local_Authority_Landlord_England_Regulations_2013.pdf, accessed 24th June 2022,

87 Alan Slingsby, 'Cressingham campaigners to seek fourth judicial review,' *Brixton Blog*, 22nd March 2022, <https://brixtonblog.com/2022/03/cressingham-campaigners-to-seek-fourth-judicial-review/> accessed 24th June 2022.

88 Tom Keene, "Demolition Machines: Making and Thinking with Databases of Urban Regeneration" in Loes Bogers and Letizia Chiappini, eds., *The Critical Makers Reader: (Un)Learning Technology*, INC Reader 12 (Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures, 2019). p197

*into cabinet reports which determine if homes are demolished or not.*⁸⁹

Freedom of information requests (FOI) are routinely used to obtain and challenge missing data and information held by local authorities and other public organisations. The 35% campaign in particular have documented on their blog the work they have done to establish missing or vague information buried deep within documents published by the local authority and the developer.⁹⁰ Freedom of Information (FOI) requests are often returned heavily redacted, delayed, or refused due to commercial confidentiality or perceived lack of public interest.⁹¹ Local Authorities use the wording of the information request to avoid disclosure on technicalities. The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) sets out guidelines for the “public interest test”, the guidelines that public authorities use to decide whether to disclose information. The guidance states that “a public authority can only withhold the information if the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.”⁹² The public interest in disclosure can be heavily contested, none more so than in the area of financial viability. An excerpt from an FOI made by a resident of West Hendon Estate in 2015 to the London Borough of Barnet demonstrates the legal complexities of requesting such information.

“The Applicant seeks to rely on an ICO Decision (FER0461281) dated 16 July 2013 as a basis for disclosure of the requested information. However, the London Borough of Southwark appealed to the First Tier Tribunal (FTT) against that decision. The FTT decision dated 9 May 2014 acknowledges the fact that, “the courts have recognised a strong public interest in the confidentiality of those negotiations” between developers and local planning authorities in the period between the lodging of the planning application and the decision of the planning committee (paragraph 41). In the High Court decision R(Perry) v The London Borough of Hackney (2014) Justice Patterson states, “It is important not to allow a party to go on a “fishing expedition” ... The claimant has produced no expert evidence of his own to suggest that

89 Tom Keene, ‘Database (E)state’, <http://www.db-estate.co.uk/04.FOI/00.index.html>. accessed 22nd April 2022. See also ‘The Shadow Database: Activism, Art, and Aspiration within Urban Regeneration,’ Media-N|, *The Journal of the New Media*, CaucusFall 2021: Volume17, Issue2, Pages 112–126 ISSN: 1942-017X <https://iopn.library.illinois.edu/journals/median/article/view/767/715>. accessed 22nd April 2022

90 Watt and Minton, ‘London’s Housing Crisis and Its Activisms’. Also at www.35percent.org.

91 Colenutt, *The Property Lobby*.

92 The Information Commissioner’s Office, ‘The public interest test, Freedom of Information Act. https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1183/the_public_interest_test.pdf.’ accessed 22nd April 2022. p1.

*the viability assessment submitted is in error". Likewise, this request for information is considered to be a "fishing expedition". The Applicant seeks to rely on the ICO decision of 16 July 2013, and although the Council accepts that each request for information must be considered on its own facts, it is also aware of an ICO decision dated 9 July 2014 (reference FER0532771) relating to North West Leicestershire District Council. The District Council had refused to disclose a viability assessment relating to a proposed housing development and relied on regulation 12(5)(e). The ICO held that North West Leicestershire DC had correctly applied the exception and did not require the disclosure of the viability assessment."*⁹³

Over time, legal precedents have established a preference for disclosure of viability reports, due to public interest. However, these reports are still often released heavily redacted.⁹⁴

Both of these campaigns that I describe demonstrate extensive use of technical data and information. The inaccessibility of the specialist data to lay people meant that both groups had to employ lawyers and conducted fundraisers for legal fees. Both groups also had the support of respected academics and other experts including architects. The narrative of these campaigns demonstrates that, despite some legal and freedom of information success, there are powerful forces who are behind urban regeneration proposals that will repeatedly return to the courts or the planning system with what appears to be endless amounts of resources. Each stage produces yet more information to be contested. For residents, these battles can take over years of their lives, adding more stress and financial burdens to the uncertainty of the impending demolition of their homes.

The regeneration of the Heygate and Aylesbury estates are now in progress, and the 35% campaign continue to highlight the ever decreasing amount of social housing to be built as part of the scheme.⁹⁵ The Save Cressingham

93 London Borough of Barnet, 'Response to freedom of information request for viability reports on the West Hendon regeneration,' https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/247093/response/613633/attach/2/Response%20some%20exempt.pdf?cookie_passthrough=1, accessed 22nd April 2022, p4.

94 Harrison Grant Solicitors, 'Letter to be put before the PAC ahead of meeting scheduled for 9 February 2021 to consider planning application ref. 20/02406/RG3 (Cressingham Gardens Estate)' https://savecressingham.files.wordpress.com/2021/02/urgent-letter-to-be-placed-before-pac-hg-to-lc-20-02406-rg3-cressingham-gardens-community-ltd-08.02.21-final_redacx.pdf, accessed 22nd April 2022.

95 35% Campaign, 'Elephant Park - homes dumped for offices,' 17th June 2022, <https://www.35percent.org/posts/heygate-redevelopment-lendleases-final-squeeze/>, accessed 8th September 2022

campaign is still underway at the time of writing. Over the years of their campaigns, residents have been invited by local authorities, architects and resident engagement professionals to take part in various workshops, consultations, ballots and other statutory engagement processes.

It is important to contextualise the roles of data and information within participation and participatory frameworks in such regeneration processes. Kelty states the fact that “participation produces expertise is perhaps counterintuitive. It is troubling because one of the most common ways of talking about participation is to oppose it to expertise, often associated with elites”.⁹⁶ Although my practice is not focussed on the act of participation itself, participation, or challenging what often constitutes participation is woven through my work.

The role of participation and engagement

In approaching urban regeneration from the perspective of an architect, it can be argued that “at the level of the lowest common denominator, architectural participation can be defined as the involvement of the user at some stage in the design process.”⁹⁷ Over the years, the roles and methods of resident participation in urban design has received heavy scrutiny. There is a large body of scholarship dissecting the gap between desired levels of participation by non-professionals in planning, architecture and urban design and the reality. Examples abound of different approaches to resident engagement, consultation and co-design and their contrasting results. Rachel Luck has written a useful history of participatory architectural practice, which divides the last 50 years of practice in the UK into three periods: The initial participatory design (PD) surge during the 1960’s and 1970’s which was supported by the Greater London Council (GLC); the change in the 1980’s when financial support was removed and participatory design was not aligned with the socio-political climate; and the resurgence of participatory practice in the early 2000’s, typified by practices such as MUF.⁹⁸ The work of

96 Christopher M. Kelty, *The Participant: A Century of Participation in Four Stories* (Chicago ; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2019).p151.

97 Peter Blundell-Jones, ed., *Architecture and Participation*, Digit. print (London: Taylor & Francis, 2009). pxii

98 Rachael Luck, ‘Participatory Design in Architectural Practice: Changing Practices in Future Making in Uncertain Times’, *Design Studies* 59 (November 2018): 139–57, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.destud.2018.10.003>.

the architects on the PEACH Alternative Regeneration Plan was inspired by that initial surge in participatory practice and community architecture, and through employing a number freelance practitioners attempted to create a group who were more flexible and embedded in the local area than they would have been as an established practice.⁹⁹

Agid writes that the literature on participatory design can be loosely arranged into two groups: Benefits to users to input into services they will use, and the situated perspective which takes into account politics, power relations, dynamics and process.¹⁰⁰ Sanders and Stappers in their 2008 paper argue the former stance; that participation, or the co-design process should be restricted to the “front end”, whereby the user inputs ideas and then designers follow through with a conventional design process.¹⁰¹ Their reasoning is that it is too complicated to include user participation in the actual design process, but that it is useful in the idea generation stage. The design of buildings and urban space is inherently complex and the complexity is often stated as the reason for resident participation consisting primarily of the “user input into services” variety. The architecture and urban design of a regeneration proposal is usually considered as the main element of resident participation in a regeneration process. Policy and guidance on estate regeneration such as the “Estate Regeneration National Strategy” is clear that residents should be involved in “developing the vision, initial decisions, options appraisal, design, procurement and delivery of schemes.”¹⁰² The guidance is also clear that, if necessary, residents should be supported with training to “enable effective participation”.¹⁰³ The 2018 “Good Practice Guide to Estate Regeneration” states that consultation should be:

“Transparent – all the issues and options should be set out in clear, accessible and non-technical language, with information that has influenced

99 Paul Jenkins and Leslie Forsyth, eds., *Architecture, Participation and Society*, 0 ed. (Routledge, 2009), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203869499>.

100 Shana Agid, “‘...It’s Your Project, but It’s Not Necessarily Your Work...’: Infrastructuring, Situatedness, and Designing Relational Practice’, in *Proceedings of the 14th Participatory Design Conference on Full Papers - PDC ’16* (Aarhus, Denmark: ACM Press, 2016), 81–90, <https://doi.org/10.1145/2940299.2940317>.

101 Elizabeth B.-N. Sanders and Pieter Jan Stappers, ‘Co-Creation and the New Landscapes of Design’, *CoDesign* 4, no. 1 (March 2008): 5–18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710880701875068>. p6.

102 Department for Communities and Local Government. *Estate Regeneration National Strategy: Resident Engagement and Protection*. 2016. p4.

103 Ibid.. p4.

any decisions being shared as early as possible; extensive – every reasonable effort should be made to engage with as broad a range of groups as possible, including primarily the residents of an estate, and also those living and working on or near it; responsive – consultation should result in clear actions that arise directly from the views expressed by respondents; and meaningful – views expressed during the process should be considered, and, where landlords do not agree with responses, they should give explanations for the alternative course of action that they have taken.”¹⁰⁴

The terms “consultation”, “engagement” and “participation” are used interchangeably within these policy documents. What these terms mean in relation to levels of participation were raised by Arnstein in the seminal paper “A ladder of citizen participation” in 1969. Arnstein is clear on the definition of participation and its connotations.

“Citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power. It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programs are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parcelled out. In short, it is the means by which they can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society.”¹⁰⁵

Arnstein uses the example of Model Cities in the USA as a case study for the development of the “Ladder of Citizen Participation.”¹⁰⁶ The ladder demonstrates a simplified categorisation mechanism for levels of participation in situations with significant power differentials, for example between experts and non-experts, or local authorities and residents. The rungs on Arnstein’s ladder are described in the following categories: non-participation enables “powerholders to ‘educate’ or ‘cure’ participants” rather than enable participation.¹⁰⁷ The middle of the ladder comprises of degrees of tokenism, allowing “the have-nots to hear and have a voice”.¹⁰⁸

104 Mayor of London, ‘Better Homes for Local People- The Mayor’s Good Practice Guide to Estate Regeneration,’ <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/better-homes-for-local-people-the-mayors-good-practice-guide-to-estate-regeneration.pdf>. Accessed 24th June 2022. p10.

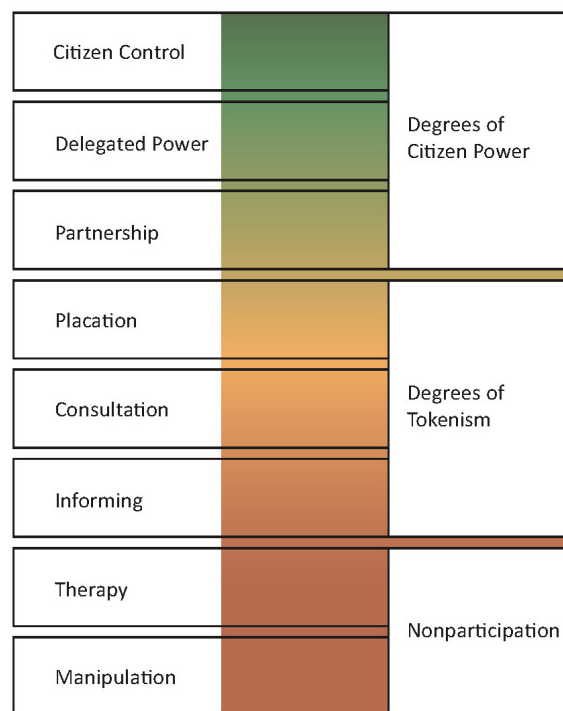
105 Sherry R. Arnstein, ‘A Ladder Of Citizen Participation’, *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35, no. 4 (July 1969): 216–24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944366908977225>. p216. I avoid using the term “citizen” in my research, preferring “resident” due to the fact that not all residents are “citizens”.

106 Arnstein, ‘A Ladder Of Citizen Participation’.

107 Ibid. p217

108 Ibid. p217

Finally at the top there are the levels of citizen power such as partnership. Arnstein wrote the paper from her experience as a special consultant in citizen participation in the Department of Housing and Urban Development in the Washington government.¹⁰⁹ The fact that the ladder stems from the Model Cities programme is relevant, as the programme was an attempt to combine participation with in urban renewal in deprived areas of cities in the United States. The experiences of the Philadelphia residents involved in the Model Cities programme contain strong echoes of the experiences of residents in Custom House, described in detail by Kelty.¹¹⁰ Residents embarked upon a collaborative approach to urban development with the district officials, only to have the administration co-opt the process, removing decision-making power from residents in the process.



1.07 Arnstein's Ladder of Participation

The work of Arnstein has attracted criticism for being unrealistic in relation to contemporary structures of local government, and for using simplistic conceptions of power which don't take into account broader considerations of social justice.¹¹¹ Lee states that Arnstein's ladder encourages "hierarchies

¹⁰⁹ Kelty, *The Participant*.

¹¹⁰ Kelty, *The Participant*.

¹¹¹ Carissa Schively Slotterback and Mickey Lauria, 'Building a Foundation for Public Engagement in Planning: 50 Years of Impact, Interpretation, and Inspiration From Arnstein's Ladder', *Journal of the American Planning Association* 85, no. 3 (3 July 2019): 183–87, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2019.1616985>.

of participation rather than [...] collaborations and interactions.”¹¹² In order to combat this, Blue et.al combine Arnstein’s ladder of participation with Fraser’s Justice Framework which aims to “seek parity- defined as the social arrangements that enable people to participate as peers in public life.”¹¹³ They demonstrate how Arnstein’s ladder doesn’t acknowledge cultural or economic barriers, and show that attention needs to be paid to cultural, political and economic parity in order to move towards genuine democratic participation.

Despite these valid criticisms, the central stages on the ladder which are described by Arnstein as “degrees of tokenism” resonated with the experiences of residents in Custom House of regeneration consultation.¹¹⁴ The regeneration of Custom House was initiated by London Borough of Newham in 2003 through a consultation process with residents, some of whom still live in the area and attended the PEACH Alternative Regeneration workshops. For the initial resident consultations a Dutch urban design practice was engaged by the council to create a masterplan for the entire area of Canning Town and Custom House. This masterplan was used as the basis for the 2008 Supplementary Planning Document which outlines the proposed regeneration areas in Custom House and Canning Town, and the design characteristics of each area. The masterplan was so badly communicated during the process that residents believed that a small river had been planned to run through an area of existing housing. The river was actually a wavy path through a park. The river caused consternation for residents as the existing housing was not going to be replaced. The council document describing this masterplan can be seen online.¹¹⁵ In response to the resident consultation process, Casey Howard, community organiser at PEACH, said “being invited to pick the colour of your front door and give feedback on the layout of houses and flats feels like manipulation when

112 Yanki Lee, ‘Design Participation Tactics: The Challenges and New Roles for Designers in the Co-Design Process’, *CoDesign* 4, no. 1 (March 2008): 31–50, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710880701875613>. p34.

113 Gwendolyn Blue, Marit Rosol, and Victoria Fast, ‘Justice as Parity of Participation’, *Journal of the American Planning Association* 85, no. 3 (3 July 2019): 363–76, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2019.1619476>. p363

114 Arnstein, ‘A Ladder Of Citizen Participation’. p217

115 Canning Town and Custom House Regeneration Project, ‘Masterplan Consultation 2007,’ <https://www.newham.gov.uk/downloads/file/663/canning-town-custom-house-regeneration-masterplan-consultation>. accessed 10th May 2020.

you know you're not going to be able to afford to live in them".¹¹⁶ Kelty's interpretation that the ladder of participation is useful in that "Arnstein's goal is not to theorize perfect participation but to attack the existing forms it has taken".¹¹⁷ Understanding the ways that residents are invited to participate in urban regeneration proposals by local authorities and consultants allows insights into the types of information which are generally available within the context of engagement and participation.

There is a huge satisfaction for residents as well as designers in seeing ideas and desires for homes and urban spaces come into life through drawings and models, however the financial and management decisions remain, for the residents, behind the scenes.¹¹⁸ A typical resident engagement timeline template is demonstrated well by the project timeline for the Carpenters Estate in Newham.¹¹⁹

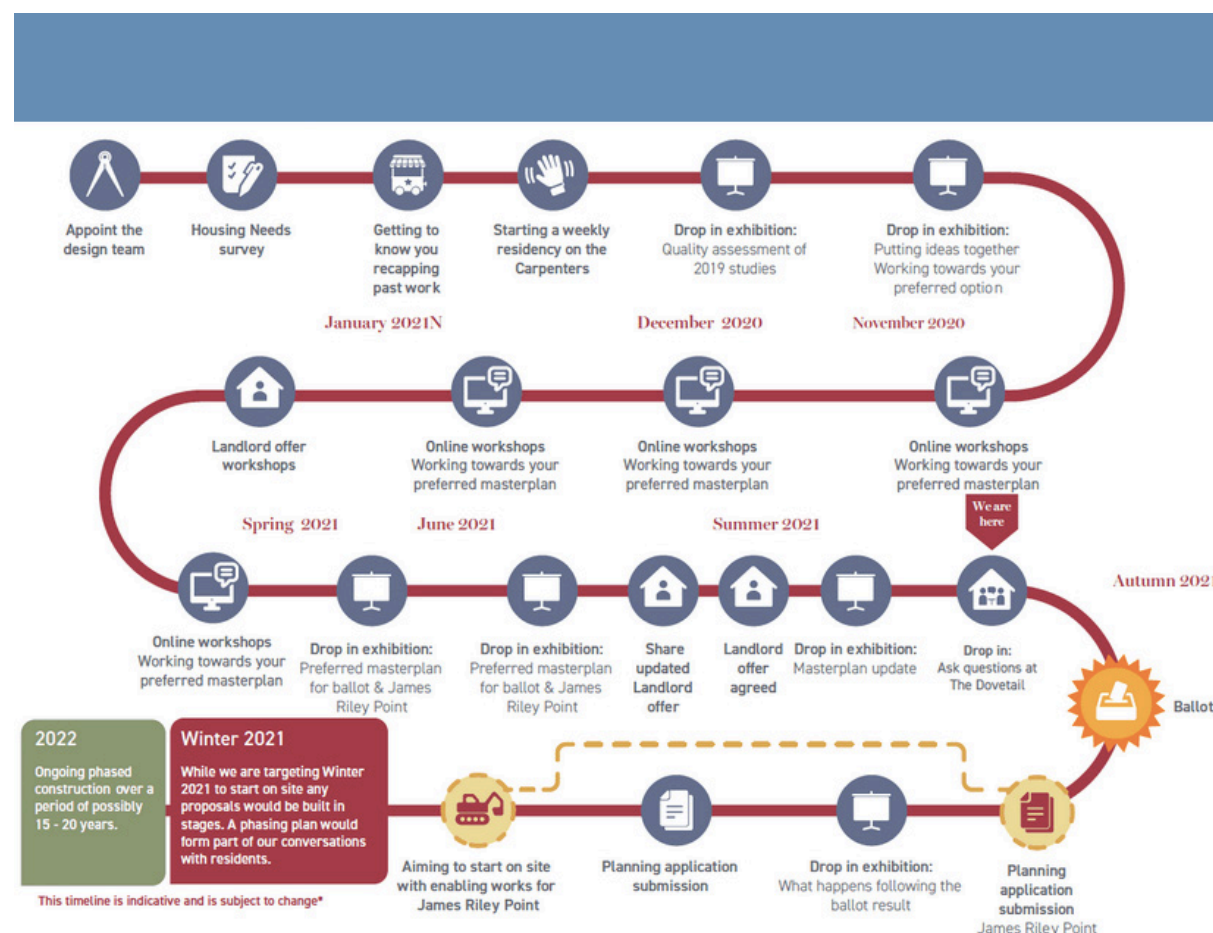
The timeline shows activities such as drop-in exhibitions, workshops, and a weekly residency on the regeneration site. The designers of the updated masterplan report have made an effort to explain some of the technical planning terms, such as the difference between full and outline planning applications. However, looking at the exhibition materials available to download from the website, the presentation reverts to accepted professional modes of representations such as architectural plans and renderings. There are the numbers of new homes and refurbished homes, landscaping, streets and community uses. The document is densely packed with information, and following the description of the outline masterplan at the beginning of the document, it seems prudent to ask how many of these illustrations will remain accurate at the end of the planning process. However this is not something that a non-professional would necessarily consider. It is also important to note that there is only one brief mention of the finance and delivery of the scheme.

116 Comment made to author at a PEACH staff team meeting where the community engagement proposals from the design team were being evaluated.

117 Kelty, *The Participant*. p169.

118 Suzy Nelson and Jane Lewis, 'Resident Engagement in the Regeneration of Social Housing: The Case of Woodberry Down, London', *International Journal of Housing Policy* 21, no. 1 (2 January 2021): 48–69, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19491247.2019.1683126>.

119 The Carpenters Estate, 'Indicative timeline,' <https://thecarpentersestate.commonplace.is/about> accessed 25th April 2022



1.08 The timeline for the Carpenters Estate Regeneration as found on the Carpenters Estate website

Draft assessment February 2022

We use a traffic light system to assess how proposals perform against these categories

- Red - does not meet this category's needs
- Amber - has the potential to meet this category's needs but could be improved
- Green - meets this category's needs



DELIVERY

How buildable is each option including the disruption to existing residents and the economic impact on existing and new local jobs



SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS

What improvements are made to the buildings and the public spaces that make them more sustainable to run and maintain whilst also supporting a local ecosystem



SOCIAL INVESTMENT

What wider physical improvements, community buildings and improvements to social housing are provided



COST

Pass or Fail



PLANNING

Does the proposal comply with national, GLA, LLDC and emerging Newham planning policy



NEW QUALITY HOMES

What is the mix of tenure blind new homes, the percentage of affordable homes provided and the mix of affordable housing



OPEN SPACE

What improvements are made to the public space including routes, parking, recreation provision and safety

1.09 The draft viability assessment as shown on the Carpenters Estate website

Following a YES vote on the ballot, a planning application will be made in Spring 2022 for outline approval of the Carpenters Estate Masterplan. This follows a full planning application that was made in November 2021 for the refurbishment of James Riley Point and the new community facility around its base.

What's the difference between full and outline planning applications?

Outline planning application

An OUTLINE application sets out the principles of what will be built. In Spring 2022 an outline application for the masterplan will be submitted that will set out the height, width length and location of key buildings and spaces, the uses on the site, how the streets and spaces will be arranged, and the types and amount of open space, play, streets and parking areas.

The OUTLINE application will be set out in a range of documents and drawings:

- The principles of how the masterplan will be arranged and how tall the buildings will be set out on PARAMETER PLANS e.g.
- The "rules" about how the buildings will be designed in detail and how they will work will be set out in a DESIGN CODE



USE:

- The uses and activities planned for the new and replacement buildings and open spaces



ACCESS:

- The roads and routes into the estate and within the new development



External areas and environmental issues:

- Types of open space and the amount of spaces allocated to each type e.g parking, play, open, communal, private
- The impact of the proposals will be tested in the ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT and a range of other documents



Our outline application will also include information on:

APPEARANCE:

- An ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN and model will set out how the scheme might look in accordance with the PARAMETER PLANS and DESIGN CODE



The masterplan will be explained in a DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT and other example detail will be included such as examples of interior layouts of new homes



If outline permission is granted more detailed and specific information for each plot or block needs to be submitted as a RESERVED MATTERS application before anything can be built.

1.10 Description of terms as shown on the Carpenters Estate Website

On page 33, the proposal is assessed according to performance in certain categories, in delivery and planning scoring amber, and cost receives a green light. But the criteria for the assessment remain hidden.¹²⁰ I will go into more detail later on in this thesis about transparency of financial information.

Such experiences of residents on estates across London support Bardzell's observation that the politics inherent within participation are easily watered down through focusing on "smooth surfaces and pleasant consumerism, while masking and ultimately furthering the interests of an undesirable and unsustainable socioeconomic order".¹²¹ In other words, by focussing on the appearance of a scheme rather than the underlying frameworks and structures, resident participation in regeneration schemes ends up replicating existing urban inequalities. This is substantiated by recent regeneration programmes that have resulted in residents being forced to move elsewhere due to the unaffordability of the new homes.¹²² Therefore despite claims towards genuine participation, conventional resident engagement practice in urban regeneration resides firmly in the middle of Arnstein's ladder, at best placation, dropping to therapy and manipulation in the worst cases. A notorious example from the Heygate Estate left residents being offered "Happiness Therapy" to mitigate the loss of their homes.¹²³ The desire to do good engagement results in neglecting the politics of the project being fully or meaningfully engaged with.¹²⁴ Complex interactions between finance, policy, design and planning lead to participation becoming

120 The Carpenters Estate, 'March 2022 JRP & Masterplan Update,' <https://thecarpentersestate.commonplace.is/proposals/march-2022-jrp-masterplan-update>. accessed 25th April 2022

121 Shaowen Bardzell, 'Utopias of Participation: Feminism, Design, and the Futures', *ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction* 25, no. 1 (28 February 2018): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.1145/3127359>. p6:7.

122 Loretta Lees and Mara Ferreri, 'Resisting Gentrification on Its Final Frontiers: Learning from the Heygate Estate in London (1974–2013)', *Cities* 57 (September 2016): 14–24, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2015.12.005>.

123 Southwark Notes, 'December 1, 2008: Heygate Happiness Therapy,' <https://southwarknotes.wordpress.com/heygate-estate/heygate-timeline/> accessed 7th April 2022

124 Karl Palmås and Otto von Busch, 'Quasi-Quisling: Co-Design and the Assembly of *Collaborateurs*', *CoDesign* 11, no. 3–4 (2 October 2015): 236–49, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710882.2015.1081247>. p4.

Also see Michael Kaethler, Seppe De Blust, and Tim Devos, 'Ambiguity as Agency: Critical Opportunists in the Neoliberal City', *CoDesign* 13, no. 3 (3 July 2017): 175–86, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710882.2017.1355002>.

a superficial exercise in omitting crucial information for the sake of perceived understandability and “reducing the likelihood of challenges and delays”.¹²⁵ Participation in this context is not about passing power to residents and so empowering them to make meaningful decisions. In fact, engagement and participatory design frameworks for urban regeneration avoid the delivery of any forms of power whatsoever. This is also clear in the emergence of “engineered experiences of participation”.¹²⁶

Lee describes the evolution of engagement consultants, or engagement experts who genuinely believe in the benefits of participation, however the participation that they create cannot exist “without the institutional contexts they claim to supersede,” and ends up being boundaried to the extent of being disempowering for participants.¹²⁷ This could be through limiting available modes of response, restricting the information available to participants or simply omitting elements of a proposal from a presentation if there is concern that those elements would create difficult conversations. This engineered experience is visible on digital engagement platforms which are being used by local authorities such as Commonplace, where the information for the Carpenters Estate regeneration is available to download. Commonplace states “our online engagement platform allows you to connect with the whole community, hear their voices and make better, more inclusive decisions about places.”¹²⁸ Many London boroughs, housing associations and developers have a presence on Commonplace, such as Camden, Waltham Forest, Lendlease and Notting Hill Genesis. Such digital platforms prioritise individual responses, use hidden metrics and assume a baseline of digital competence and access. It is important to note here the point made by Lee that those “seeking collective, not individual transformations” find such institutionally instigated participatory experiences disempowering while presenting a façade of public consultation and engagement.¹²⁹

125 Department for Communities and Local Government. *Estate Regeneration National Strategy: Resident Engagement and Protection*, 2016.

126 Christopher M. Kelty, *The Participant: A Century of Participation in Four Stories* (Chicago ; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2019).p151.

127 Caroline W. Lee, *Do-It-Yourself Democracy: The Rise of the Public Engagement Industry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). p7.

128 Commonplace, ‘Create better places together,’ <https://www.commonplace.is/> accessed 21st September 2022.

129 Lee, *Do-It-Yourself Democracy*.p7.

A brief foray into planning theory

Urban regeneration is a multi-disciplinary field, and I have found certain aspects of planning theory to be relevant to the debate around participation because they specifically address the ethics of information and communication. The idea of the public good and intentionally working *for* the public emerged from planning practice. Public Practice, the UK scheme placing architects and designers within Local Authorities, is based on the idea of “bringing the public good back into planning.”¹³⁰ The regeneration department within local councils are reliant on the planning department to approve the planning applications for regeneration schemes. Forrester describes the power that a “progressive planner” has in order to “empower affected citizens to act on their own behalf” in his paper “Planning in the Face of Power.”¹³¹ He names “structural, routine sources of misinformation” as appearing regularly within the planning process, and implies that this misinformation is used to influence the planning process by developer interests.¹³² Communicative planning theory emphasises the role that planners have in communicating information and empowering discussion, and is direct in dissecting the power of information within the planning process. Huxley notes, however, the contrast between how planners theorise their responsibility to the general public in communicating information and encouraging discussion and the way that participation in planning happens in practice.¹³³ MirafTAB is also clear that for planners advocating for communicative planning, “the professional planner is responsible for bringing all parties to a consensus through ideal speech.”¹³⁴ Despite the more defined desire to serve the public good, there remains in planning a clear boundary

130 Public Practice, ‘We are a social enterprise that places built environment practitioners within forward-thinking public authorities,’ <https://www.publicpractice.org.uk/> accessed 18th July 2022.

131 John Forester, ‘Planning in the Face of Power’, *Journal of the American Planning Association* 48, no. 1 (31 March 1982): 67–80, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944368208976167>. p68.

132 Forester, Planning in the Face of Power..p77

133 Margo Huxley, ‘The Limits to Communicative Planning’, *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 19, no. 4 (June 2000): 369–77, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X0001900406>.

134 Faranak MirafTAB, ‘Insurgent Practices and Decolonization of Future(s)’, in *The Routledge Handbook of Planning Theory*, ed. Michael Gunder, Ali Madanipour, and Vanessa Watson, 1st ed. (New York, NY : Routledge, 2018.: Routledge, 2017), 276–88, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315696072-22>. p279

between professional and non-expert knowledge, and therefore also power.

In this chapter I have introduced the contemporary context of urban regeneration in London. I have tried to give a broad outline of the role of participation in this particular context, and the efforts made by practitioners to tackle the imbalances inherent within contemporary participation and engagement processes. I will continue by describing my experience of community organising around the proposed regeneration in Custom House, and how community organising theory and practice became an essential part of my research.

Chapter 2

Introducing PEACH, the theoretical and historical background to community organising theory.

To summarise, as outlined earlier, when facing disruption and displacement through a regeneration not of their choosing, gaining some power and control over the process is desirable for many residents. Recognising what information is missing within a contemporary resident engagement process, for example, on assessment criteria for cost and delivery, exposes the lack of information available on the hidden structures which underpin the workings of the regeneration. The concepts of power and communication that I introduced in chapter one, such as those outlined by Arnstein and Forrester, integrate well with theories of power in community organising.¹³⁵ Forrester understood the role of information and information control as crucial, and also contrasted the power of planners with the greater power of those in finance and politics.¹³⁶ Arnstein understood genuine participation as a power sharing endeavour. Community organising can be described as ways of developing strategies to shift power from those who conventionally hold a lot of power in society such as governments and corporations to those who don't, such as individual citizens and community groups. This power shift is achieved by building relationships between organisations and individuals, increasing the membership of organising groups, training local leaders, developing strategies for action, and carrying out interventions or 'actions'.

Community organising is generally accepted as originating in the United States. In the 1930's in Chicago, Saul Alinsky alongside Joe Meehan became known for organising the Back of the Yards Neighbourhood Council (BYNC). The BYNC was an organisation which became a community voice, overcoming many divisions between religious and informal groups within the Chicago stockyards, an industrial area dominated by powerful meatpacking corporations.¹³⁷ Alinsky then went on to set up the Industrial

135 Arnstein, 'A Ladder Of Citizen Participation'. See also John Forester, *Planning in the Face of Power* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

136 Forester, *Planning in the Face of Power*.

137 Mike Miller, 'Alinsky for the Left: The Politics of Community Organizing,' <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/alinsky-for-the-left-the-politics-of-community-organizing>. Accessed on 10th April 2020,

Areas Foundation (IAF), an umbrella network of faith organisations such as churches and other community organisations which still exists today. What is now known as Alinsky-model organising is common in the United States and has evolved into various similar organising models in other countries. Alinsky's book "Rules for Radicals" is accepted as an influential work on community organising.¹³⁸ First published in 1971, the book examines amongst other things, ethics, power, self-interest, compromise and communication as subjects that the community organiser should be familiar with. Alinsky's book is fascinating reading for contemporary community organisers as a set of instructions based on experience, even if many of the examples now appear dated. Over the years since the publication of "Rules for Radicals", Alinsky has been criticised as being ideological and unwilling to engage with the politics of gaining community power because he didn't organise on the ground himself, but was more of a mobiliser of other organisers. McAlevy spends a chapter in her book "Organising for Power," deconstructing Alinsky's organising. She illustrates how his organising theories detached the community organising methods that he employed from the aim of altering the power structures in society.¹³⁹ The need for organisers to be working on the ground and to be invested in societal change is important to note for the purpose of this research, and implications of this will become clear as I share my experiences in practice.

Community organising as a term has become more familiar since the American election of Barack Obama in 2008, who worked as community organiser in Chicago.¹⁴⁰ Obama was a community organiser in the evolved Alinsky tradition, depicted by Michael Gecan in his book "Going Public. An Organisers Guide to Citizen Action."¹⁴¹ From a UK based perspective, the profile of community organising was raised in particular by the high profile and successful campaign for the Living Wage conducted by London Citizens

138 Saul David Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals: A Practical Primer for Realistic Radicals*, 1st ed. (New York: Random House, 1971).

139 Jane McAlevy, *No Shortcuts: Organizing for Power in the New Gilded Age*, First issued as an Oxford University Press paperback (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

140 David Moberg, The Nation, 'Obama's Community Roots,' <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/obamas-community-roots/>, accessed 8th September 2022.

141 Michael Gecan, *Going Public: An Organizer's Guide to Citizen Action*, 1st Anchor Books ed (New York: Anchor Books, 2004).

that began in 2001.¹⁴² Some PEACH organisers received their first community organising experience at London Citizens, and PEACH as an organisation is run using a model based on that Citizens UK. PEACH organising is distinct from that of Citizens, as rather than focusing purely on building relationships between institutions and local groups, PEACH builds relationships between individuals as well.¹⁴³

PEACH

When I started working at PEACH, I didn't know what community organising was. When we interviewed the other architects for the Alternative Regeneration Plan, none of them knew either. The senior community organiser organised a two-day training session for us, introducing us to community organising basics. We had to have a relational conversation with someone else in the team, where we were tasked with finding out something about them that we didn't know before, and something that we had in common. This was excruciating at first, very awkward and stilted. With practice though, it became easier to structure the conversation. In community organising, there is no conversation without an "ask", something that you can ask which will bring the person you're talking to into a meeting, or give them a reason to talk to their neighbour. We went for a walk around Custom House with the local organisers, some of whom had lived in the area for their whole lives. There was a feeling like time ran differently, temporarily slowed. Of course, Custom House wasn't immune to change and had seen a lot of changes over the years, but there was a core of people who had remained. The Ronan Point disaster in 1968, where a gas explosion killed four people in a 22 storey council tower block actually happened on Freemasons Estate in Custom House.¹⁴⁴ The estate has since been demolished, but the architects were surprised that there was no trace, no commemoration of such a well-known event in the area. Sometime after the initial day of community organising training, I held a one day workshop on architecture and planning. Residents and organisers learnt about the planning system,

142 Jane Holgate, 'Community Organising in the UK: A "New" Approach for Trade Unions?', *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 36, no. 3 (August 2015): 431–55, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X13511275>.

143 Citizens UK, 'What is Community Organising?', <https://www.citizensuk.org/about-us/what-is-community-organising/>, accessed 11th April 2022,

144 Wikipedia, 'Ronan Point,' https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronan_Point, accessed 24th June 2022

the previous masterplan and the regeneration areas that had been defined by the council. We looked at different drivers for regeneration, and who benefits from different ways of regenerating an area. For the last part of the day we went to Canning Town, and saw how the regeneration had changed the area forever. The PEACH project was going to be different we said. The PEACH project will take the council by surprise, we will try and embed knowledge in the local area, we will make our own timescale and we will negotiate with the people in power. In the end, we achieved a lot, but the Alternative Regeneration Plan has not been implemented as we hoped it could be. Working as a community organiser in Custom House for five years however, I saw how residents got skilled up, gained knowledge and began to initiate projects which previously were seen as out of their reach. I also saw how the processes of regeneration obscured and obstructed access to information that would have allowed them to fully engage with the future of the area, and how the extended timescale of the process ground people down and in some cases forced them to leave the area.

In general, organisations such as PEACH employ community organisers, focus on leadership training for local residents and critically examine existing corporate and governmental power structures. Umbrella organisations such as Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) and Citizens UK provide support, training and help build the power of smaller community groups. In the United States, some argue that community organising has “defeated urban renewal; won jobs for minorities; stopped planned freeways that would destroy working-class neighbourhoods; halted redlining; preserved neighbourhood shopping strips; defeated slum landlords; achieved education reform; negotiated policy changes in health care, transportation, recreation, and other public services; and even won national anti-redlining public policy victories”.¹⁴⁵ Some of these examples are more well-known than others, for example the victory against red-lining that was fought by community organisers in Chicago, forcing the state of Illinois to pass legislation that outlawed the practice.¹⁴⁶

145 Mike Miller, ‘Alinsky for the Left: The Politics of Community Organizing,’ <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/alinsky-for-the-left-the-politics-of-community-organizing>, accessed 10th April 2020. p1

146 Douglas Martin ‘Gale Cincotta, 72, Opponent of Biased Banking Policies,’ <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/08/17/us/gale-cincotta-72-opponent-of-biased-banking-policies.html>, accessed 8th September 2002.

Power in community organising is often described in four ways; power over, power to, power with and power within.¹⁴⁷ These distinctions are useful in order to move away from the negative connotations of “power over”, into depicting power as a positive force for action. “Power with” is associated with mutual support and collective action, building coalitions and being more powerful together.¹⁴⁸ “Power to” refers to the individual power to make a difference, that every action counts however small, and ‘power within’ is the collective sense of self-worth and dignity that is gained through increasing the capacity of individuals to imagine and fight for change.¹⁴⁹ This is important to mention, especially due to the focus on Arnstein’s concept of participation as power. I chose to state the community organising definition of power, because that is how power is understood within the practice side of my research. Community organisers use exercises such as power mapping and power analysis to build understanding of where power is located in the institutions and organisations that people interact with in their everyday lives. Power mapping could take the form of drawing a hierarchical map of the local authority, for example, identifying who is in which role, whether that role has power to make decisions, and whether the person in that role is someone who can be contacted by individual residents. It is assumed that people in positions of power have their own interests and priorities and that those interests can be aligned with those of the wider community.¹⁵⁰

Making such connections between the personal and the political is one of the key elements of organising strategy. Between community members, this is demonstrated through the relational conversation. A relational conversation is “an encounter that is face-to-face – one-to-one – for the purpose of exploring the development of a public relationship... A solid relational meeting brings up stories that reveal people’s deepest commitments and the experiences that give rise to them... stories that

147 Raji Hunjan et al., *Power and Making Change Happen* (Dunfermline: Carnegie UK Trust, 2010).

148 Raji Hunjan et al., *Power and Making Change Happen*

149 Lisa VeneKlasen and Valerie Miller, *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation* (Rugby, 2007).

150 There will be a wide spectrum of interests within any community or resident group, however through community organising there will be issues that emerge that can be supported as an aim by the group.

open a window into the passions that animate people to act.”¹⁵¹ A relational conversation is not, however, undirected. McAlevy has developed the relational conversation into a structured organising conversation through her extensive experience in union organising. The six step organising conversation has two main elements of importance; “the semantics we use (literally the word choices) and the structure of the conversation, meaning the progression of steps.”¹⁵² The six steps in the conversation can be summarised as follows:

1: The Introduction. *Introducing yourself if you don’t know the person you’re talking to. Asking them how they are, being interested and excited to hear about what is going on in their life at the moment.*

2: Understanding the Issues. *What is important to the person you are talking to.*

3: The Vision of Change. *What is the plan to initiate change on the issues that are important, specifically focussing on the issues raised in step 2.*

4: The Ask. *Asking the question, what are you prepared to do in order to start working towards the change. This will be a specific question, for example; ‘are you prepared to talk to your neighbours and get them to come to the next organising meeting?’ It is emphasised that at this point the organiser will stop talking and allow the question to sit in silence.*

5: Inoculation. *This translates as preparation for opposition. Imagine all of the reasons why someone would say no, and prepare for them.*

6: Next Steps. *Make sure that you develop a plan for the next steps that the person is going to take, and a plan for you to follow up and talk again.*

In practicing for these conversations, organisers practice “shifting word choices from *exclusive* ones to *inclusive*, and to those that attach the active participation of the person the organiser is engaging to the solution they want on issues that matter to them.”¹⁵³ Identifying common ground, building personal relationships, strategic planning and negotiation with people in positions of power are all community organising methods that PEACH utilised during and after the creation of the Alternative Regeneration Plan.

151 Edward T. Chambers and Michael A. Cowan, *Roots for Radicals: Organizing for Power, Action, and Justice* (New York: Continuum, 2003). p36.

152 Jane McAlevy, Jacobin Magazine, ‘How to organise your friends and family on Thanksgiving,’ <https://jacobin.com/2019/11/thanksgiving-organizing-activism-friends-family-conversation-presidential-election>, accessed 27th November 2020.

153 Jane McAlevy, Jacobin Magazine.

Agid and Chin state that “recent calls for designers to position them/ourselves as change leaders, overlook the kinds of organising work people already do (which often looks like what is proposed as the ‘expert’ work of design).”¹⁵⁴ This frames the relational conversation as an essential element of design work that is undertaken by community organisers. However, as an architect or designer, a relational or organising conversation is a direct challenge to conventional practice. This is demonstrated by Suchman, who describes three contrasting positions for a politics of professional design practice, “the view from nowhere, detached intimacy, and located accountability”.¹⁵⁵ In the paper, “Located Accountabilities in Technology Production”, Suchman examines the contrasting positions of the designer and the user, the role of professional knowledge in technology production and the boundaries which define institutionalised professional practice.¹⁵⁶ Suchman describes designers as “unlocatable”, their professional training giving them the license to distance themselves from the users of their designs.¹⁵⁷ For the architects working at PEACH on the Alternative Regeneration Plan, the relational conversation in community organising was a boundary crossing moment, whereby we were challenged to lose our professionally cultivated “design from nowhere” stance, and locate ourselves there, alongside the residents in Custom House. The Alternative Regeneration team, as a combination of architects and community organisers, challenged the “detached intimacy” created in conventional design practice culture, which enables a lack of identification with users and what Suchman terms a “self-referential social world, cut off from others who might challenge the community’s practice”.¹⁵⁸ Potential negative effects of an internal culture of detachment are illustrated for example by PRP design, an architectural practice employed by Lambeth council who began their consultation with residents of Central Hill estate with a photo of an

154 Shana Agid and Elizabeth Chin, ‘Making and Negotiating Value: Design and Collaboration with Community Led Groups’, *CoDesign* 15, no. 1 (2 January 2019): 75–89, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710882.2018.1563191>. p77.

155 Lucy Suchman, ‘Located accountabilities in technology production,’ *Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems*: Vol. 14 : Iss.2 , Article 7. Available at: <http://aisel.aisnet.org/sjis/vol14/iss2/7>, accessed 12th March 2022. p1

156 Lucy Suchman, ‘Located accountabilities in technology production.’

157 Ibid. p5

158 Ibid. p6

alleyway and the caption “Would you walk down this at night?”.¹⁵⁹ Residents, who did regularly walk down the alleyways of their estate at night, were understandably furious. Suchman’s descriptions of detached intimacy echo the need described by Zanotto to “unsettle detachment in planning theory and to be present – body, mind, and heart – in the field.”¹⁶⁰

The idea for intentionally embedding multiple architects at PEACH as community organisers in order to develop the Alternative Regeneration Plan came through conversations between myself and the PEACH community organisers. The idea was then presented to the PEACH steering group, comprised of local residents, for further discussion and confirmation. Of the four designers employed by PEACH on the Alternative Regeneration Plan, two were qualified architects and two were experienced architectural and urban designers. None of them had any experience of community organising before they joined PEACH, and they were employed as architects rather than organisers even though community organising was intended to be part of their role. The architects were required to bring their desires for the regeneration, their motivations for doing such work, and by association, imagine worlds that they also wanted to live in. The development of relationships that occurred between the professionals and the residents of Custom House not only blurred the boundaries between expert and non-expert knowledge, but also alongside recognising the expert knowledge that they held, community organising kept the architects accountable to the vision of the residents.¹⁶¹

159 Save Central Hill (@SaveCentralHill), ‘@PRP_Regen just like the pictures/quotes you picked to decorate your boards at the drop in today - trying to show the worst of our community,’ Twitter 7:53 PM · Mar 28, 2015, <https://twitter.com/savecentralhill/status/581906914558218241>, accessed June 20th 2020. See also Architects For Social Housing, ‘Open Garden Estates 2015’, <https://architectsfor-socialhousing.co.uk/2015/06/19/open-garden-estates/>, accessed June 20th 2020.

160 Janice Barry et al., ‘Unsettling Planning Theory’, *Planning Theory* 17, no. 3 (August 2018): 418–38, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095218763842>. p11.

161 The urban designers and architects employed by PEACH were Thom Brisco, Amy Linford, Albane Duvillier and myself.

Community organising in contrast to resident participation

Examining participation in urban regeneration from a community organising perspective, immediately brings back Arnstein's statement that "citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power."¹⁶² In developing the People's Plan for the Royal Docks, Brownill describes the pitfalls inherent in collaboration between residents and local authorities such as the "false equality trap" whereby the skills and education of residents differ from those of the local authority employees and professional consultants and cause "the agenda of the plan [to] be pushed onto a level away from local people's control."¹⁶³ Brownill goes on to describe the tension which is inherent in community-led planning when "people becoming active agents of change" come up against existing "centralised hierarchy and entrenched power structures".¹⁶⁴ The success of these projects depends on "how this contradiction is played out in practice and what emphasis is given to each aspect of the equation".¹⁶⁵ John Forrester writing in the early 1980's highlights the potential for planners to potentially spread misinformation, and the power inherent in the use of language.¹⁶⁶ Sanders and Stappers state that "co-designing threatens the existing power structures by requiring that control be relinquished and given to potential customers, consumers or end-users."¹⁶⁷ Shifts in the location of power in the design process towards non-experts are sometimes perceived as a threat by the local authority, as well as by architects and urban designers.¹⁶⁸

The premise that existing participatory frameworks are inadequate in terms of increasing resident and non-expert power enables the roles and relationships within the regeneration process to be questioned, asking whether community organising can constitute a form of design practice

162 Arnstein, 'A Ladder Of Citizen Participation'. p216

163 Brownill, 'The People's Plan for the Royal Docks'. p20.

164 Ibid. p15.

165 Ibid. p15

166 John Forester, 'Planning in the Face of Power', *Journal of the American Planning Association* 48, no. 1 (31 March 1982): 67–80, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944368208976167>.

167 Sanders and Stappers, 'Co-Creation and the New Landscapes of Design'. p9.

168 Jeremy Till, 'The Negotiation of Hope', in *Architecture and Participation*, eds. Blundell Jones, Petrescu, Till, (London: Routledge 2005), 25-44

that prioritises relational and collaborative work. Power and control can be related back to the expert-non-expert knowledge dichotomy, or the reluctance of the holders of “expert” knowledge to relinquish control, but as others have noted, participation does not have to exist in opposition to expertise. In fact, participation can develop expertise through the direct experience of a particular problem, including participation in a movement, or specific and locatable geographical knowledge.¹⁶⁹ Kelty reiterates the position of Suchman’s “unlocateable” experts, describing how participation is often offered “as a counterpoint to expertise”, whereby the experts are located at a distance using technical skills, in contrast to the kinds of expertise encountered on the ground.¹⁷⁰ But it is the two different types of expertise that are important to note in this case, because the expertise encountered on the ground is the kind of expertise that is developed over time through experience. Residents encountering the regeneration processes of the Heygate and Aylesbury estates developed expertise over the years resisting the demolition of the estates that enabled them to gather information and take the council to court multiple times.¹⁷¹

Agid writes that the relationship between design and the production of knowledge “becomes especially critical when the focus of the design work is on creating social or political change”.¹⁷² Looking at historical and contemporary community organising, there are many examples of frameworks and systems for social change that have been designed and implemented by their users. For example in London, Cooperation Town is a network of food coops owned by their local members, enabling small scale local access to affordable produce.¹⁷³ The organisation provides administrative support to community groups who want to set up their own food coop, enables access to surplus food from “The Co-op” supermarkets and connects them to the network of similar coops for further support.

169 Kelty, *The Participant*.

170 Lucy Suchman, ‘Located accountabilities in technology production,’ *Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems*: Vol. 14 : Iss.2 , Article 7. Available at: <http://aisel.aisnet.org/sjis/vol14/iss2/7> p5.

171 35% Campaign, ‘Our Blog’, <https://www.35percent.org/>, accessed 12th August 2022

172 Agid, Shana, ‘Making contested futures: a politics of designing with people,’ Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), *RMIT University*, 2016, https://researchrepository.rmit.edu.au/esploro/outputs/doctoral/Making-contested-futures-a-politics-of/9921863905901341?institution=61RMIT_INST#details, accessed 21st April 2022. p10.

173 Cooperation Town, <https://cooperation.town/>, accessed 12th September 2002.

Cooperation Town recommend that each co-op has a maximum of twenty members, all within a fifteen minute walk or bus ride of the chosen distribution and meeting point. This means each co-op has an extremely local focus. Within housing, this type of organising can be seen in the networks and support systems that residents have created in order to deal with their housing problems. For example, Housing Action Southwark and Lambeth (HASL) are “a group of Lambeth and Southwark residents who believe that decent housing is a right. We organise together to support each other with housing problems we face and to take action to ensure that everyone has decent homes.”¹⁷⁴ HASL work collectively to solve overcrowding issues, resident displacement due to gentrification and to understand and push back against changes to housing laws.¹⁷⁵ Walterton and Elgin Community Homes, mentioned earlier, evolved over two decades from a resident-led campaign into a resident-led housing association, enabling residents to own and manage their own homes.¹⁷⁶ In 2008, The East London Citizens Organisation (TELCO), which is a chapter of Citizens UK (an umbrella organisation for community organising groups) used community organising methods alongside London Community Land Trust to secure community owned and managed housing in East London. The affordable housing created through the Community Land Trust (CLT) was considered by TELCO as a potential solution to the London housing crisis through increasing resident control over their homes. In order to make this a reality, TELCO started raising awareness of the possibility of creating a CLT and evaluating potential sites with other local authorities. Bunce describes in detail the long and protracted negotiation that the East London Community Land Trust went through in order to attain the freehold for 23 units within a development at St. Clements Hospital in Mile End.¹⁷⁷ Despite being smaller than anticipated, the CLT is in existence today due to the community organising efforts initiated by TELCO. Learning from the design of both the non-housing and housing related groups, there is a commonality in the regularity of meetings and events, and the long, slow build-up of knowledge on the ground. HASL

174 HASL, ‘Housing Action Southwark and Lambeth,’ <https://housingactionsouthwarkandlambeth.wordpress.com/>, accessed 21st April 2022

175 Ibid..

176 Walterton and Elgin Community Homes, ‘How we started,’ <https://www.wech.org.uk/company/about/>, accessed 24th June 2022.

177 Susannah Bunce, ‘Pursuing Urban Commons: Politics and Alliances in Community Land Trust Activism in East London’, *Antipode* 48, no. 1 (2016): 134–50, <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12168>.

have been meeting regularly since 2013, Waltherton and Elgin Community Homes evolved over two decades. The slow and steady approaches contributes to the sustainability of knowledge creation, and the eventual success of the organisations. Cooperation Town are relative newcomers, established in 2019 but have made a large impact with their ability to make connections to surplus food providers, demonstrating the strength in numbers gained by networking many small co-ops together.

In the context of urban regeneration, organising means shifting power from local government, developers and consultants into the hands of residents in order to establish what regeneration, if any, needs to happen from the perspective of those impacted. However, it is not immediately obvious where the power sits within the constellation of stakeholders in a regeneration process, and how to make this shift happen. In order to change urban regeneration into something potentially positive for residents, my research aims to investigate how to develop and implement processes that can shift power to non-experts. Processes that enable understanding of and access to data and information on the contemporary language, context, implications and processes of urban regeneration, including construction, demolition, housing law and economics.

Being embedded at PEACH in relation to this research

Bring trained as a community organiser at PEACH and simultaneously bringing my professional architectural knowledge to the organisation set the context for the development of my research questions. The experience of my day-to-day practice in this context became a rich source of micro events which informed by research position and so allowed me to purposely develop my practice. My experience was situated between different stakeholders and consultants both within and outside the Custom House regeneration project, working with regeneration officers, consultants, expert advisors, the Independent Tenant and Resident Advisors (ITRA) and of course PEACH and the residents themselves.¹⁷⁸ Having been working with PEACH since 2015, I had built trusted relationships with residents and also had an

178 TPAS, 'How important is independent resident advice?', <https://www.tpas.org.uk/blog/regeneration-how-important-is-independent-resident-advice>, accessed 24th June 2022.

in depth knowledge of the history of the Custom House regeneration. But it was also important to recognise that I was also by no means a neutral actor. Having accumulated knowledge and expertise, both of a professional nature and through on the ground experience, my role was not a mechanical transfer of knowledge, but a political choice. I realised that the role that I was developing at PEACH had as much in common with radical educators as with participatory design. Freire is clear on the impossibility of the existence of “neutral knowledge,” and states that it is “precisely the political nature of educational practice, its helplessness to be “neutral,” that requires of the educator his or her ethicalness.”¹⁷⁹ Situating architects in the role of community organisers placed us simultaneously inside and outside of the regeneration process, immediately calling into question the different types of information and knowledge available to the various parties and how it is or isn’t presented and communicated.

PEACH as a community group had clear aims for genuine resident involvement in any regeneration process and a clear mandate to improve the local area, supported by hundreds of local residents. Community organisers were building relationships with local councillors, local authority regeneration officers and the Mayor with the hope of doing regeneration differently in Custom House. At the time the Alternative Regeneration Plan was produced, Custom House was over 50% social housing.¹⁸⁰ PEACH members were aware of the ongoing regeneration in neighbouring Canning Town, which had provided only 5% social housing in 2018.¹⁸¹ The implications for existing residents of a repeat of that process were clear. Residents in Custom House were involved in creating the Alternative Regeneration Plan *before* the local authority had re-initiated an engagement process or developed a proposal for the regeneration, following seven years of stasis. The Alternative Regeneration Plan had been noticed by other resident-led housing organisations in London, and had enabled connections with other groups attempting similar proposals. PEACH was also in the process of setting up a Community Land Trust (CLT), which was aiming to either manage or

179 Paulo Freire, Ana Maria Araújo Freire, and Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (London ; New York: Bloomsbury, 2014). p67.

180 Housing Tenure. Local Trust and Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion. Local insight report for Custom House Area, unpublished report, May 2017. p25.

181 Freedom of Information Request made by author, 25th April 2018, https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/474319/response/1148327/attach/3/Response%20E30604.pdf?cookie_passthrough=1, accessed 13th November 2023. p2

develop a small part of the regeneration area. The establishment of the CLT hoped to give residents control over their housing, beginning on a small scale. E16 CLT also enabled connections to Community Led Housing London and other support from established professionals.¹⁸² Over the course of my research, I kept a detailed diary of my day-to-day practice, documenting encounters with people and organisations and development of strategies and tactics. This evolved into a diary of a learning process, helping to map relationships between the different stakeholders and their access to data and information over time. Examining participation in the regeneration from a political organising perspective, it was impossible to avoid questioning the existing organisational hierarchies, relationships and governance structures which currently control the process.

PEACH diaries¹⁸³

Reading through my diaries from my day-to-day practice at PEACH, it is clear that in my position I had access to processes and information which would usually be confidential. Yet even with my in-depth knowledge of the area and architectural and urban design knowledge of planning and regeneration, there was a lot of which remained opaque. Together, the architects and the community organisers tried to connect the pieces of the process together through our understandings of conversations that we had with council officers, consultants, expert advisors and amongst ourselves. At the same time, we communicated our understandings to the wider Custom House community, and collectively questioned the conventional approaches that had been proposed. My diary entries are factual but interspersed with observations and local commentary. Some of the diary entries discussed here document elements of my research that are examined in more depth in chapter four of this thesis.

In November, my diary entry shows that PEACH were invited by regeneration officers to take witness the procurement process of the delivery consultants.

¹⁸² E16 Community Land Trust, <https://www.e16clt.co.uk/>, accessed 12 April 2022.

¹⁸³ The following diary entries are taken verbatim and unedited from the collection of written diaries and notes that I took during the course of the research. Due to the ongoing regeneration in Custom House and the continuous challenge by PEACH members to ensure the current residents remain in the area, I have obscured identifiable names and locations to preserve the anonymity of those involved. Various excerpts are appended in Appendix 1

The procurement meeting was full of information which could be placed within the wider landscape of urban regeneration in London.

Tuesday morning I went to [XXXX] for the second clarification interview with development consultants [XXXX]. One of the people on their team had given evidence against the leaseholders at the [XXXX] Estate, and is involved in [XXXX] Estate with [XXXX]. None of the schemes which they have been involved in have had good results for residents. The team at [XXXX] were concerned because [XXXX] had submitted a very low bid. It was hard for them to get companies to tender because [XXXX] are already working in [XXXX] and have been involved in the area for the last couple of years. However, at least one other company did tender. [XXXX] didn't appear to have prepared for the session- [XXXX] I talked to didn't know anything about the regeneration having been going on for so many years. During the clarification it also became apparent that there were mistakes in their schedule and that there was no way that their fee was going to cover the work. Afterwards [XXXX] and [XXXX] asked me what I thought and I was quite critical of their past work. I said that PEACH wanted someone who would listen to alternatives.

The diary entry is understated in response to the experience of listening to the conversation. I was shocked that the primary development consultant to interview for the job was someone with a proven track record working against residents undergoing regeneration schemes, and that the company had effectively created a monopoly over consultant contracts in the borough. The conversation illustrated that there was a potentially predefined trajectory for this regeneration proposal, defined by consultants with many years of experience in conventional regeneration schemes and therefore demolition and resident displacement.

My diary entries also document the day-to-day aspects of community organising work.

Wednesday: We had negotiation training for the meeting with [XXXX]. We practised introducing ourselves. [XXXX] and [XXXX] did a practice negotiation. [XXXX] still has sewage coming into her bathtub every day. We also tested a visioning exercise, what we see as the perfect future regeneration- it was useful but it still felt a bit contrived, we knew all of the answers that we wanted to hear already. If the answer is partnership, what is the question?

Part of the empowerment aspect of community organising work involves making sure that in any interactions with organisations holding power, residents are playing a central part and are also confident in the things they want to say and the “ask”, the request which will take us one step further

in our aim of enabling the community to gain power. The “ask” requires a response from the person in a position of power, the element of the process which keeps communication channels open for negotiation. In order to design the negotiation, the PEACH organisers, the other architects, myself and residents who wanted to participate met up to practice and refine the agenda. The visioning exercise gave a coherent picture of residents desires, including a partnership with the council. It was less straightforward to determine the question to be asked during the negotiation that would give partnership as the answer.

Some entries detail technical conversations with holders of expert knowledge. In the following paragraph I am trying to ascertain how development viability works and whether we can use viability to further our aim of maximising social housing in the regeneration. It is clear from my writing that while I am also trying to fill in the gaps in my own knowledge, I also use my diary entries to hold my surprise and confusion.

Met with [XXXX] and [XXXX] and [XXXX], [XXXX], [XXXX] about viability. [XXXX] said that their viability assessment is based on no uplift i.e no profit. That means that effectively any profit is like a bonus? And they don't have to demonstrate what they are going to spend it on? [XXXX] have overlapping models per site, and programme-wide. Some sites are more valuable than others. [XXXX] is very pro-HRA,¹⁸⁴ said also that he wasn't worried about Right to Buy (RtB) because no-one will be able to afford to buy the new homes! i.e the allocations policy is wrong if people [in social housing] could afford to buy them [new homes through right to buy]. I checked the house prices in their report and there is about a [XXXX] gap between the offered price for leaseholders and the proposed price of the new houses. They also took an average of [XXXX] for houses and got [XXXX] per unit for s106. RtB receipts can fund a max of 30% of building costs. How to get around best consideration?¹⁸⁵ Homes would have to be sold by the council back to the CLT? This is a question for the finance guys. Conclusion: We need to be the ones proposing the creative models as if we don't they won't get discussed. [XXXX] won't have time to propose creative models as they will be just looking at baseline figures.

The open approach to learning and understanding the regeneration process

184 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 'Housing Revenue Account,' Information and advice on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and consents for disposal of land from the Housing Revenue Account, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-revenue-account>, accessed 24th June 2022.

185 Great Britain and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. *Disposal of Land for Less than the Best Consideration That Can Reasonably Be Obtained: Local Government Act 1972: General Disposal Consent (England) 2003*. London: TSO, 2003.

enabled the PEACH team to try and create new models for financing, managing and designing the regeneration that suited residents without worrying about accusations of naivety. The general consensus amongst PEACH members was that the existing model for regeneration was so bad for them, that almost anything else would be better. By April, we were meeting with consultants and influencing the project timeline.

Office run through of the entire project process, using all of the key stages from the brief. The outcome of this was that we realised it's quite obvious that the programme doesn't fit into the time available. In the afternoon me and [XXXX] and [XXXX] went to [XXXX] offices to meet with [XXXX] and [XXXX]. [XXXX] and [XXXX] agreed that it was a bad idea to start a project being behind already. [XXXX] and [XXXX] came to Housing Club. We did the road map of the project- it was good, got a lot of good questions. [XXXX] were concerned about the scheme fix part – could have a good debate about when / where to simplify and what to put into these discussions- how to talk about design in the first place? Did some relational exercises which were great – had a good talk with [XXXX], [XXXX]'s neighbour.

My diary entries show that the relational aspect of community organising was a constant part of every meeting, workshop and event. The strategy adopted by the PEACH team differed from other contemporary resident groups in London under threat of regeneration. It began earlier in the regeneration process, creating the Alternative Regeneration Plan before the regeneration had been initiated by the council. It was based on a community organising approach, aiming to shift power away from the local authority into the hands of residents, and it was not inherently confrontational. There was a desire from residents to work in partnership, sharing power with the council in order to make the regeneration work. Björgvinsson, Ehn, & Hillgren write that when participatory design enters the public sphere, “the governing of public concerns generates multiple terrains that blur traditional distinctions made between public and private and the state and the market. This shift towards publics is a movement away from design projects and towards processes and strategies of aligning different contexts and their representatives”.¹⁸⁶ We did not realise at the time that the participatory processes and strategies which we needed to aid the alignment of the differing interests of residents and the local authority did not yet exist. Contact with other campaign groups and community-led housing groups

186 Erling Björgvinsson, Pelle Ehn, and Per-Anders Hillgren, ‘Agonistic Participatory Design: Working with Marginalised Social Movements’, *CoDesign* 8, no. 2–3 (June 2012): 127–44, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710882.2012.672577>.p127.

highlighted important policy changes, demonstrated social housing numbers being deliberately obfuscated within documents, showed procurement models that went badly and examples of undesirable collaborations between local authorities and developers. We believed that alignment was possible, despite not being able to find positive examples from past attempts. We believed that the approach we were developing was going to result in the dismantling of the structures which were withholding information and therefore power from residents. This research goes on to document the attempt to develop a participatory strategy that would alter the balance of power, and the structures and conventions that stood in opposition.

Training architects as organisers.

*“Regeneration, it is argued, is better conceptualised in terms of contestation between state, market and third-sector interests with better outcomes for communities prevailing when third-sector actors develop the legitimacy and power to engage politically within the context of a contested public sphere”.*¹⁸⁷

The integration of community organising into the structure of the Alternative Regeneration team, and specifically training architects in community organising methods, is what set the PEACH Alternative Regeneration strategy apart from previous community organising and participatory design and planning efforts in the fields of housing and large scale urban renewal. As I and the other architects were slowly trained as a community organisers at PEACH, we brought our professional knowledge of regeneration into residents homes, businesses and into resident-led meetings. However, without developing a regeneration-specific framework for power analysis, there remained an overwhelming amount of information, and no way of knowing what was useful or relevant, or even where it belonged in the process. The creation of the Alternative Regeneration Plan formed the beginning of the slow accretion of knowledge by residents. However, even though the structure of the team was innovative - with the plan created by a team of architects and residents working together, equality in pay for all team members, an in-depth series of workshops and individual conversations with residents - the plan itself did not significantly diverge from conventional participatory design themes and processes. The Alternative Regeneration

187 Paul Bunyan, ‘Regenerating the City: People, Politics, Power and the Public Sphere’, *Local Government Studies* 41, no. 3 (4 May 2015): 362–78, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03003930.2014.982109>.p362.

did not address the issues of access to information or the overwhelming quantities and opaque processes around the regeneration itself. For example, the plan concentrated primarily on the urban design and aesthetics of the proposal, was communicated in the conventional manner using plans and sections, and didn't directly address affordability in its design.

Where early work done with the PEACH team did begin to develop an analysis, *meaningful involvement* in regeneration for residents had more in common with participatory policy design and governance procedures than participatory design in architecture.¹⁸⁸ For example, the PEACH team ran a series of workshops to develop aims and principles for the regeneration, which would serve as a community regeneration charter.¹⁸⁹ The first principle "Custom House is Our House" states that "The community should have real control over the regeneration and have a concrete agreement about how this can happen in advance of major decisions".¹⁹⁰ "Residents should be involved in the management and maintenance of their future homes.

188 Catherine Durose and Liz Richardson, *Designing Public Policy for Co-Production: Theory, Practice and Change* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2016).

189 The PEACH aims and principles for the alternative regeneration were developed by the architects and community organisers; Hero Austin, Dan Barron, Denise Evans-Barr, Casey Howard, Amy Linford, Albane Duvillier, Thom Brisco, Mabel Aponsah, Ewa Jasiewicz, Kevin Lammas, Sarah Stewart and myself. There are four aims and six principles: Aims: 1: Regeneration should address Custom House and Newham's problems: Provide decent employment and secure affordable housing; improve safety and health. 2: Regeneration should make Custom House Function as a neighbourhood before, during and after regeneration. 3: Regeneration should work financially in the long term for the council and the community. 4: Regeneration should directly improve the lives of current local residents. Principles: 1: "Custom House is Our House". The community should have real control over the regeneration and have a concrete agreement about how this can happen in advance of major decisions. 2: "Genuine affordability". The majority of housing, shops and services should be genuinely affordable to local people. This means linked to local wages/income not to market prices. 3: "Spread the love (and the money)". The benefits of regeneration should be spread over the whole neighbourhood, not limited to demolition areas. 4: "Take Care of What's Already There". Custom House is not a blank canvas- value, support and improve what is already there, rather than wiping everything away and starting again. 5: "Protect and Grow our Community". In Custom House we look after each other: the social/ economic value of our support networks should be recognised. Our new neighbourhood must be designed to preserve our community and welcome new members. 6: "Long-term Investment". Regeneration should bring long-term financial benefit to future generations of Custom House and the Council. Keep our assets and build a stable new economy based on skills with decent wages and opportunities.

190 Ibid..

This could range from community run organisations being given funding or responsibility to beautify the area, or a resident's management board for a new block, or running a "housing swap" scheme so people can move locally. Borough services should be responsive and accountable to residents of the area through face to face regular meetings. For example, a regular forum on street cleanliness to tackle fly tipping in hidden alleyways."¹⁹¹

The aims and principles proposed both small scale changes which would show immediate impact, as well as larger structural or policy shifts that would take much longer to implement. We didn't realise the importance of having a range of proposals, including for problems such as flytipping that can have fast and concrete results.

Following the production of the Alternative Regeneration Plan, and having established the community power base in the area, residents in Custom House as members of PEACH and alongside PEACH staff, focussed on attempting to gain resident control over the regeneration process. We were inspired by little known examples of partnership and collaboration between residents and other stakeholders such as SHADA in Stepney.¹⁹² The Stepney Housing and Development Agency (SHADA) is an example of power sharing on a local level. SHADA arose from a proposal by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to regenerate the Limehouse Fields and Ocean Estates in Stepney. In 1994, the estate had many problems including poor physical condition, low space standards and overcrowding. There was a deep distrust of the local authority who were suspected of diverting funding to other neighbourhoods. The housing staff racially discriminated against residents and there were high levels of physical and mental illness. The Tenant Resident Association on the estate comprised of white elderly residents who were deeply racist, and the majority population on the

191 PEACH Alternative Regeneration Plan. Evidence Base. Unpublished Document.

192 This synopsis is derived from a short case study written by Stephen Hill, who was part of the team leading the community engagement for the regeneration, and managing the project office on the estate. Following the engagement period, he was retained to set up and run SHADA. Stephen Hill was also involved in the early stages of the Custom House Regeneration Steering Group as an independent advisor, recommended to the London Borough of Newham by PEACH. There is a more detailed evaluation that I was made aware of after the writing of this thesis which can be found online. See Michael Edwards et al, London Borough of Tower Hamlets Central Stepney SRB: Final Evaluation, September 2003, <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/5075/1/5075.pdf>, accessed 13th November 2023.

estate was young Bangladeshi families. SHADA was created as a board to oversee the regeneration of the estate with members split equally between residents, the council and housing associations, and had an independent chair to ensure trust. Over 50 outreach events were held over ten weeks and two major pieces of work were achieved: A resident charter with formal commitments from the council to the residents and a “how to do it” masterplan. The resident charter gave residents a “voice”, and enabling different sections of the community to work together on it eased some of the racial tensions. The mandatory targets contained within the charter included a ten year rent cap for housing association homes, stopping fuel poverty, community gardens and the freedom and power for SHADA to carry out the regeneration itself. The charter began as a document which helped the residents think about what they wanted to protect themselves against and through this process allowed people to visualise the things they wanted to change. The masterplan for the estate was approved in 1995 and finished in 2003. Following the completion of the regeneration by SHADA it was found that the health on the estate had increased sevenfold based on reported illness days off work, from one out of three to one out of twenty-one. Watt states in his book that the estate “looked much less run down when I last visited in 2018 compared to when I first visited in 2007,” and it is evident that the work done by SHADA in the 1990’s did not prevent the estate undergoing a further regeneration.¹⁹³

Through community organising analysis, it was clear to the PEACH staff team and to many residents who had been involved in previous engagement attempts by the council that existing participatory frameworks would not allow the level of collaboration or partnership desired by residents. Community organising theory understands that the increase in resident power indicated through real involvement in decision making threatens the council and other stakeholders such as developers and architects with a loss of control. Resident-led decision making is a politicising process.¹⁹⁴ The explicitly political stance sets the resident-led community organising approach apart from participatory design approaches led by design

193 Estate Watch, ‘The Ocean Estate,’ <https://www.estatewatch.london/casestudies/ocean/>. Accessed 24th June 2022, The OCEAN Estate also appears in Watt, *Estate Regeneration and Its Discontents*.

194 J. Diamond, ‘Local Regeneration Initiatives and Capacity Building: Whose “capacity” and “Building” for What?’, *Community Development Journal* 39, no. 2 (1 April 2004): 177–89, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/39.2.177>.

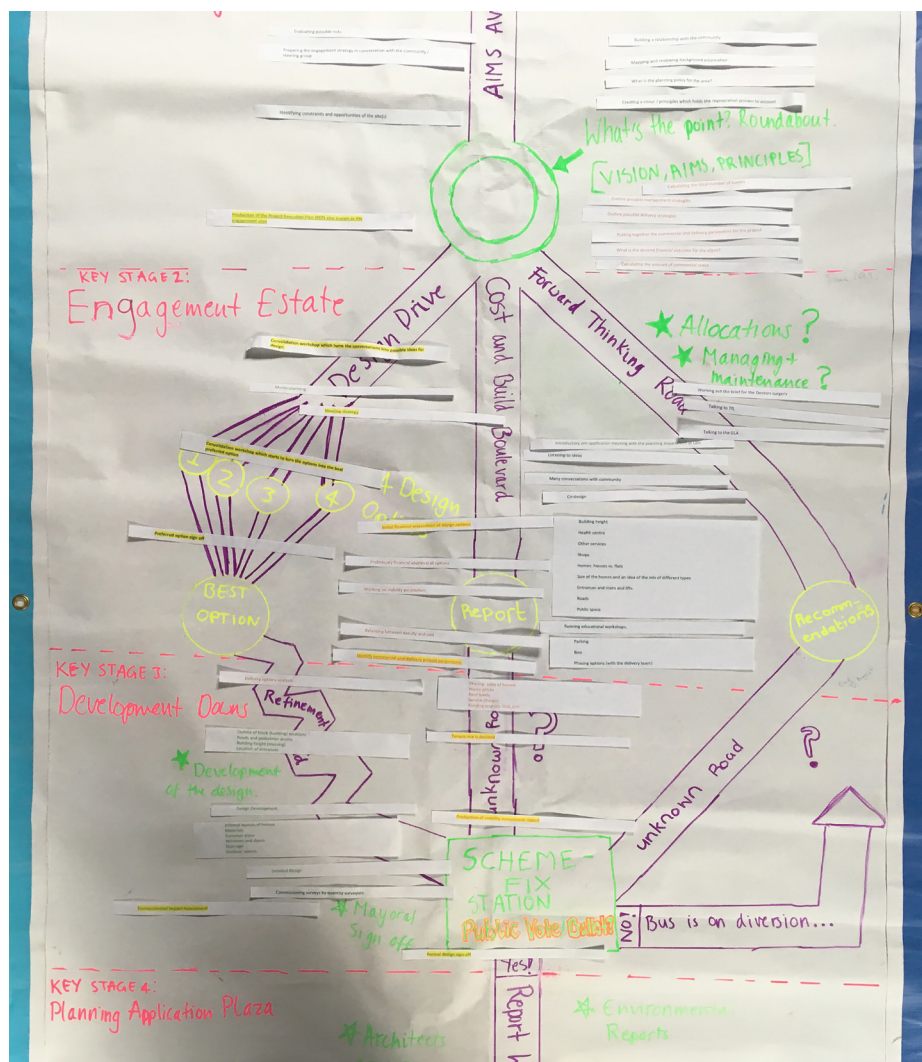
experts. Through the architects embedded at PEACH, there was access to technical information and knowledge for non-experts. The type and level of participation in the regeneration which the PEACH staff team developed along with residents in Custom House went further than many examples of participatory design in practice, because residents aimed to be integral to the design of the governance structure, the finance, delivery and future management of the regeneration as well as the design of the urban space and homes. The understanding of the regeneration process was developed over time using “The Road-Map of the Regeneration”. This became both an important process and document, which I will now describe.

Data, information and gaining community power: The road map.

The road-map of the regeneration became the name for a diagram, timeline and framework developed by the community organisers and architects at PEACH over a period of a few months. The development began organically, when the community organisers first asked the architects to talk through the regeneration process with them from start to finish. This conversation was transcribed in a text document in bullet point lists of stages in the process and the steps contained within each stage. The community organisers wanted to translate this conversation into a diagram themselves, in order to solidify their knowledge, and to ensure that the language and structure of the diagram was understandable to non-experts. The road-map emerged as an understandable analogy, a tool which situates geographically as well as a graphical representation of the different strands of the regeneration process over time.

The structure of the road-map can be described as three intersecting routes titled design, delivery and management. The routes run through the stages of the regeneration process from set-up to planning consent. The roads are named for ease of memorisation. Beginning in the “Set-up Garage”, travel down “Aim’s Avenue”, turn right onto “Design Drive”, follow the road onto “Development Downs”, past “Scheme Fix Station” and onto “Report Writing Lane”. The first iteration of the road-map described each route according to the existence of participatory strategies. The areas where the participatory process was unknown or undefined were described as “unknown road”. The main concern of residents was initially not the technicalities of the process,

each document belonged. Each revision of the road-map enabled the addition of more data and also highlighted gaps where the participatory process for resident involvement was underdeveloped. In the third iteration, residents and organisers identified weak points in the process which would enable them to sabotage, hijack creatively or implement refusal tactics. This agency was possible due to the knowledge gained over the course of the development of the map. The road-map enabled community organisers and residents to situate themselves and their own experiences within an abstract and thus far solely technical process. The evolution of the map over time allowed knowledge to build slowly. This was successful because the addition of more complex elements happened once the base structure was established. The repetition of the base structure of the regeneration process allowed residents to become familiar with it, and at all times community organisers were involved in the process. Residents also participated in council-led engagement processes during the development of the road-map, which gave them opportunities to use the knowledge gained and prove its usefulness outside of PEACH. The simultaneous experiences of the council-led engagement and the PEACH organising approach allowed residents to situate themselves temporally, knowing the steps which should happen next, and questioning what was happening when there were delays or alterations to the process.



2.02 The second iteration of the road-map

The development of a resource which evolved over time, and the enabling of sharing and reinterpretation of information and knowledge were extremely useful. However, there are also disadvantages to the process. Hillgren et al write that such flexible design processes “mean that we need to continuously plan and replan the activities according to the situation, which can become complex, with several opportunities emerging at the same time or at a moment when we lack the resources to develop them.”¹⁹⁵ The need to react to the council-led process while simultaneously developing the knowledge needed in order to gain agency in that process led to community organisers and residents feeling confused and overloaded despite the assistance of the road-map. The reactive necessity of responding to a process over which residents and PEACH organisers had no real control was exhausting. The constant suspicion that there was a piece of essential information which had

195 Per-Anders Hillgren, Anna Seravalli, and Anders Emilson, ‘Prototyping and Infrastructuring in Design for Social Innovation’, *CoDesign* 7, no. 3–4 (September 2011): 169–83, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710882.2011.630474>. p181.

AN (HISTORY OF 2008

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

CTIONS)

BRIEF GOES OUT TO TENDER TO BE COMPETED FOR

POOL OF ELIGIBLE CONSULTANTS (FISH) > GLA POOL OF ARCHITECTS
ENGINEERS
PLANNERS
URBAN DESIGNERS
COST CONSULTANTS
MARKET CONSULTANTS

TENDERS RETURNED TO COUNCIL

TENDERS EVALUATED ACCORDING TO CRITERIA

APPOINT CONSULTANTS (DESIGN TEAM)

DESIGN

CONSULTATION

CONSULTATION PEACH STYLE

BRIEF DESIGN TEAM FORMALLY

WALK ABOUT WITH DESIGN TEAM

LEASEHOLDERS UNITE

SPECIALIST CONSULTANTS TO HELP ASSESS AND ARGUE ON A "MATTER OF BASIS"

EVALUATE WITH COLLEAGUES OR

CLT BECOMES FORMAL STAKEHOLDER

ACTION EG BOAT MARCH

HOW TO HUACK CREATIVELY REPLICABLE MODEL AND CONSULTANCY

TENDER PACKAGE REPEAT FOR CONTRACTORS

GLA / MAYORAL INTERVENTION

SABOTAGE IF REQUIRED

CPO AND DECANT

PLANNING (8 TO 13 WEEKS)

PUBLIC CAN VIEW AND COMMENT THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

PLANNING CON

RIA WRITTEN BY HOW IT WILL BE QUALITY, WEIGHTING

EVALUATION CRITERIA

MARKETING STRATEGY > LOCAL PEOPLE INCLUDING TANGO PRIORITISED DEALS FOR LEASEHOLDERS (SHARE OF OWNERSHIP BUT NO RENT)

GATHER INFO FOR REPLICABILITY EVALUATE THE PROPOSALS FROM THE CONSULTANTS USING EVALUATION CRITERIA (WEIGH THE FISH)

2.03 Types of data, information and time sensitive events to be added to the road map

Deconstructing the road map



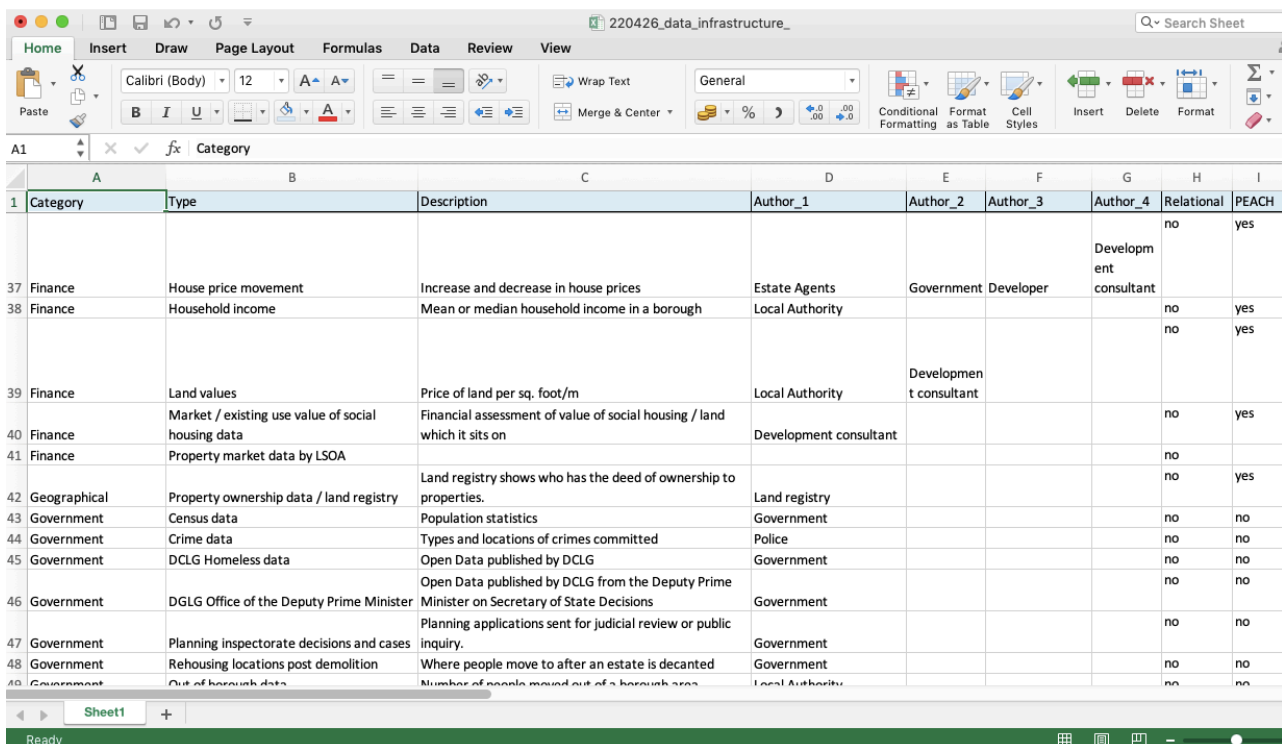
2.04 The introduction of the road-map at PEACH housing club

Early on in my research, I began using a spreadsheet to document all of the data and information which was used by the architects and organisers at PEACH during the creation of the Alternative Regeneration Plan and afterwards. The spreadsheet was based on an initial collection of data used by academics, housing activists and lawyers from the workshop “Data for Housing Justice” which took place in London in 2018, organised by Bournemouth University Media Lab, The Bureau of Investigative Journalism and Concrete Action.¹⁹⁶

The purpose of the spreadsheet was to document the types of data and information used by PEACH organisers and architects, and to ascertain

¹⁹⁶ Data for Housing Justice workshop organised by Anna Feigenbaum, Bournemouth University Media Lab alongside Tom Sanderson, Centre for Investigative Journalism and Concrete Action. Attendees included Loretta Lees, Anna Minton, Tom Keene, Jamie Burton and others. Some documentation can be seen on Tom Keene’s website, DB Estate. Tom Keene, Housing Justice London, <http://www.db-estate.co.uk/10.LondonDataJustice/00.datajustice.html>, accessed 13th November 2023.

whether there was data and information which was missing or unavailable that would be useful. As part of my research, similar to my weekly PEACH diaries, I added to the spreadsheet whenever the PEACH team encountered a new source of data or information. In order to illustrate the data infrastructure of the regeneration I began to develop the road-map for my own research. The diagram of the road-map on the right was devised from the road-map developed by the community organisers. As well as the original road-map stages, the diagram also uses the RIBA work stages, the standard classification for the development process recognised by professionals.¹⁹⁷ The three “roads” from the road-map have been altered to four, representing design, finance, policy and forward thinking. Policy has been included because it is an essential source of information. Arrows indicate potential flows of data and information between each of the “roads”.

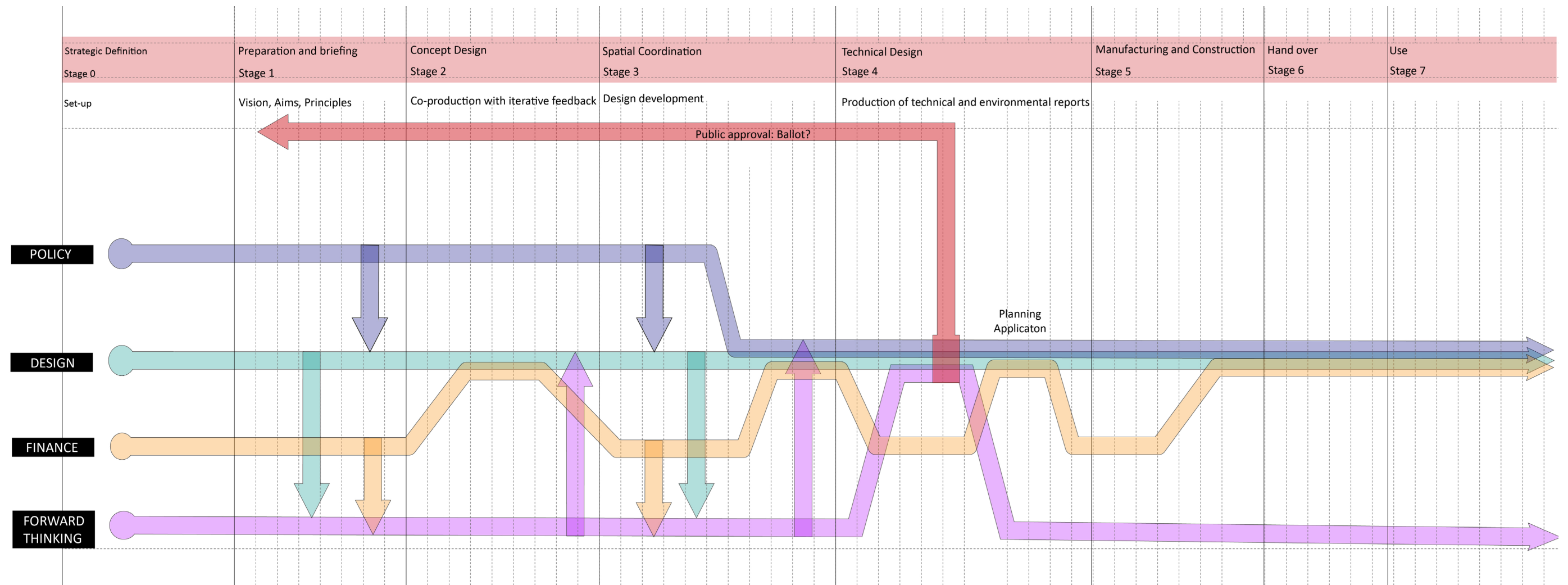


	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Category	Type	Description	Author_1	Author_2	Author_3	Author_4	Relational	PEACH
							Developm ent consultant	no	yes
37	Finance	House price movement	Increase and decrease in house prices	Estate Agents	Government	Developer			
38	Finance	Household income	Mean or median household income in a borough	Local Authority				no	yes
								no	yes
39	Finance	Land values	Price of land per sq. foot/m	Local Authority	Developmen t consultant				
40	Finance	Market / existing use value of social housing data	Financial assessment of value of social housing / land which it sits on	Development consultant				no	yes
41	Finance	Property market data by LSOA						no	
42	Geographical	Property ownership data / land registry	Land registry shows who has the deed of ownership to properties.	Land registry				no	yes
43	Government	Census data	Population statistics	Government				no	no
44	Government	Crime data	Types and locations of crimes committed	Police				no	no
45	Government	DCLG Homeless data	Open Data published by DCLG	Government				no	no
46	Government	DGLG Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	Open Data published by DCLG from the Deputy Prime Minister on Secretary of State Decisions	Government				no	no
47	Government	Planning inspectorate decisions and cases	Planning applications sent for judicial review or public inquiry.	Government				no	no
48	Government	Rehousing locations post demolition	Where people move to after an estate is decanted	Government				no	no
49	Government	Out of borough data	Number of people moved out of a borough area	Local Authority				no	no

2.05 A screenshot of the Excel spreadsheet documenting the data and information encountered during my work with PEACH.

I then cross referenced the data and information in the spreadsheet with each stage in the road-map, in order to determine a snapshot of the data and information encountered by the architects and organisers at each stage of the regeneration process. The data and information is separated into tables

197 RIBA Plan of Work, ‘The RIBA Plan of Work is the definitive model for the design and construction process of buildings,’ <https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/resources-landing-page/riba-plan-of-work>, accessed 24th June 2022



2.06 The road-map showing data and information exchanges between stakeholders in the Custom House regeneration, inspired by the roadmap developed at PEACH

that correspond with each route of the road-map. Using my own professional knowledge, I also extended the cross referencing process into future stages of the regeneration. This is not a definitive list, however as an example, the table below shows the data and information encountered in stage one of the “design route”. The table illustrates who produces the data and information or where it can be found and its status as open or closed. An open status means that the data or information is publicly accessible. A closed status means that it is either confidential, behind a paywall, or otherwise restricted or inaccessible. At this stage I have only noted whether it is publicly available, rather than attempting to assess the accessibility of the language or the technical knowledge required to understand its relevance.

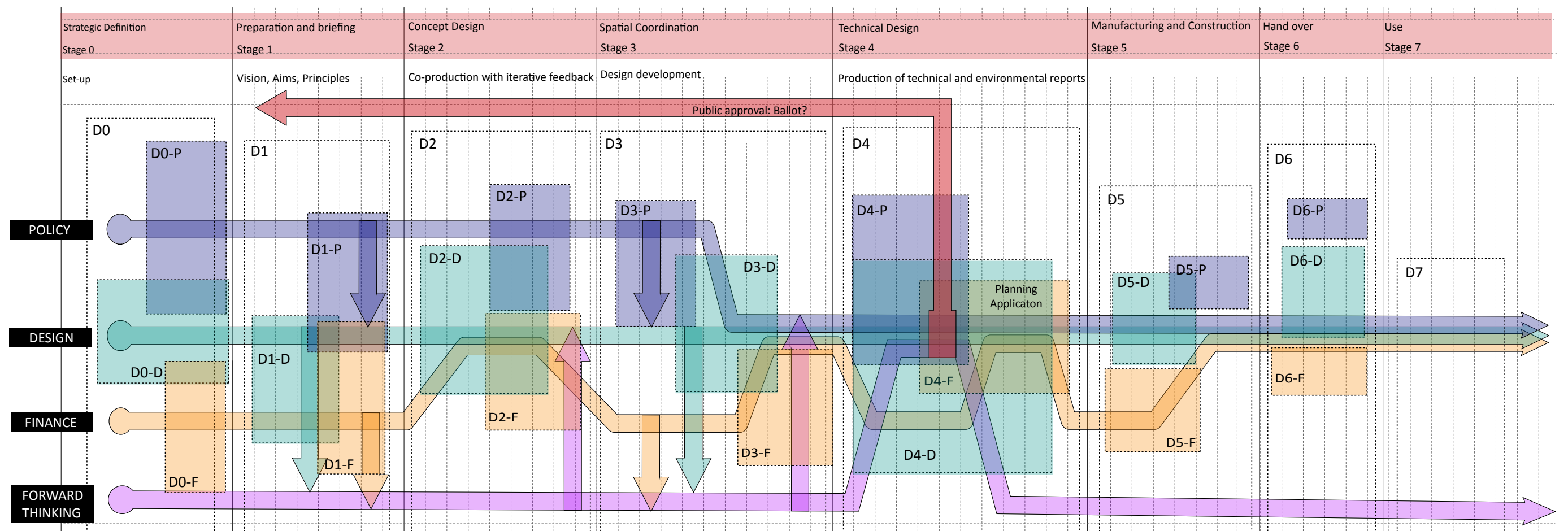
Data and information	Location or Author.	Status
Number of habitable rooms per hectare proposed	Design team / local authority	Open
Proposed no. of people per hectare	Design team / local authority	Open
Good practice guides	Various sources	Open
Proximity to public transport	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local schools	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local healthcare facilities	Maps / on site	Open
Street level photography	On site	Open
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed

Comparing the “design route” table of data with the “finance route” table of data, it is possible to begin to see a clear difference in availability. The contrast between the amount of publicly accessible design information, and the proportion of inaccessible financial information is clear.

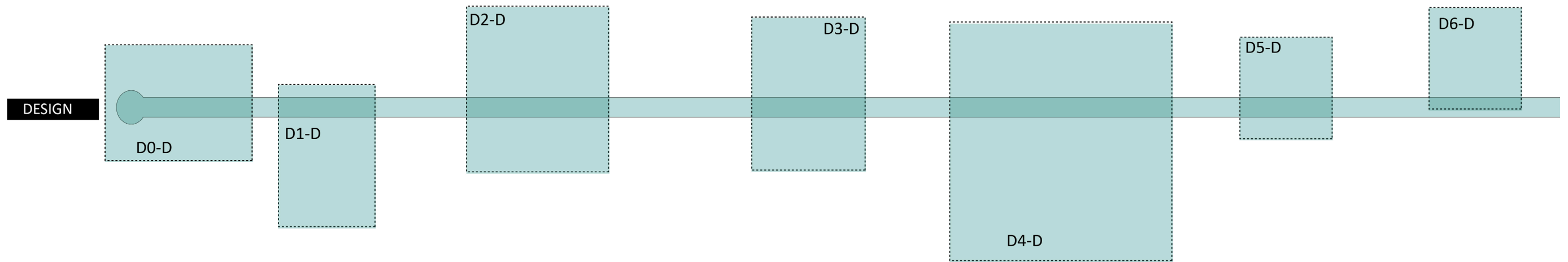
Data and information	Location or Author	Status
Recent increase and decrease in house prices and future predictions	Property developers / estate agents	Partially open
Financial assessment of value of social housing	Surveyor / viability consultant	Closed
Mean or median household income in a borough	Local authority	Open

Local section 106 and CiL financial contributions by developers	Local authority	Open in some cases
Deeds of ownership of land in England	Land registry	Paywall
Price of land per sq. foot/m	Delivery consultant	Closed
Surveyors assessment of housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Grant and loan available for construction and development of affordable homes	Government	Open

Deconstructing the road map in this way demonstrates the large quantities of information that are available and that were being accessed by the PEACH organisers and architects. The data and information contained in the spreadsheet and in the tables already include a wider variety of sources than a conventional regeneration project team may include. This reflects the needs of the community organisers and residents as stakeholders in the process to collate and cross reference data and information sources in order to build the most complete picture of the regeneration possible. Some of the sources are empirical and unquantifiable. The picture has areas that are undefined, and data and information which remain inaccessible and opaque. The original spreadsheet, also included in the appendix, attempted to score the different data and information elements using categories such as their usefulness, legitimacy, sincerity, bias, level of empathy and whether they were comprehensible or not. These categories served as an interpretive scale for the use of such data and information by PEACH organisers in the context of the regeneration process. The spreadsheet also documented data that would have been extremely useful but didn't exist, such as tracking changes to housing tenures within a block or an estate since its construction. Tracking data and information in this manner is important because it reflects the difference in priorities between the community organisers and architects at PEACH and a conventional regeneration project team. Changes in tenure within a block that was constructed as social housing gives indications to community organisers of the priorities that residents might have in a regeneration process. Leaseholders have more power than social housing tenants because they own their own homes. Some data and information is



2.07 The road-map of the regeneration with a key to the associated datatables for each stage.



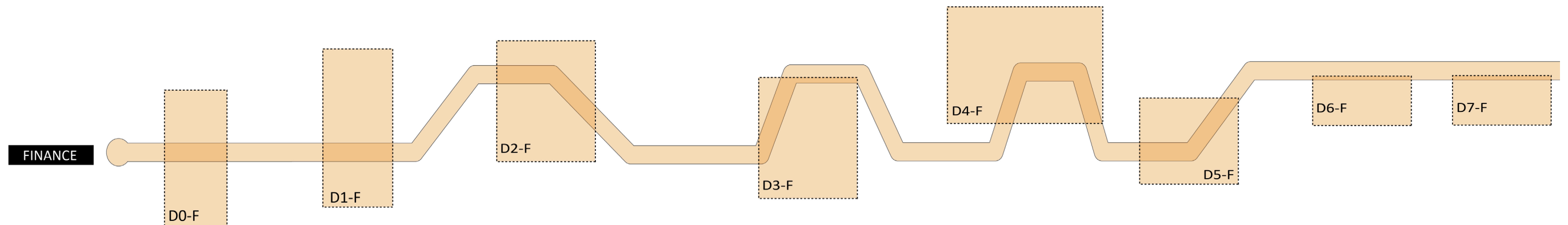
Data and information	Location	Status
Assessment of the quality of a built project by some proposed consultants / client / contractor / developer	On site	Open
Previous projects completed and the associated statistics, for example tenure types	Developer / landlord / housing association / local authority	Not available
Applications for planning submitted	Local Authority	Open
Data on estate repairs and associated costs and timescales	Local Authority	Closed

Data and information	Location	Status
Number of habitable rooms per hectare proposed	Design team / local authority	Open
Proposed no. of people per hectare	Design team / local authority	Open
Good practice guides	Various sources	Open
Proximity to public transport	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local schools	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local healthcare facilities	Maps / on site	Open
Street level photography	On site	Open
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Existing homes proposed to be demolished	Local authority	Open
Housing space standards	Various sources	Open

Data and information	Location	Status
Number of habitable rooms per hectare proposed	Design team / local authority	Open
Proposed no. of people per hectare	Design team / local authority	Open
Good practice guides	Various sources	Open
Proximity to public transport	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local schools	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local healthcare facilities	Maps / on site	Open
Street level photography	On site	Open
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Existing homes proposed to be demolished	Local authority	Open
Housing space standards	Various sources	Open
Accessibility standards	Design team	Open
Material proposals	Design team	Open

Data and information	Location	Status
Number of habitable rooms per hectare proposed	Design team / local authority	Open
Proposed no. of people per hectare	Design team / local authority	Open
Good practice guides	Various sources	Open
Proximity to public transport	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local schools	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local healthcare facilities	Maps / on site	Open
Street level photography	On site	Open
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Existing homes proposed to be demolished	Local authority	Open
Housing space standards	Various sources	Open
Accessibility standards	Design team	Open
Material proposals	Design team	Open
Environmental impact report	Environmental engineers	Open
Transport impact assessment	Transport planners	Open
Outline design proposals	Design team	Open

Data and information	Location	Status
Good practice guides	Various sources	Open
Street level photography	On site	Open
Material proposals	Design team	Open
Environmental impact report	Environmental engineers	Open
Transport impact assessment	Transport planners	Open
Detailed design proposals	Design team	Open



Data and information	Location	Status
Annual financial statement by local authority	Local Authority	Open
Community Infrastructure Levy and CIL contributions	Local Authority	Open in some cases
Local and national estate regeneration budget	Local Authority / Government	Closed
Price of land per sq. foot/m	Proprietary databases	Partially / closed
Funding for affordable homes	Local Authority / Government	Closed
Repairs costs, service charges and other expenses	Local Authority / developer / landlord / housing assoc.	Closed
House price and future market predictions	Estate agents / developers	Partially open

Data and information	Location	Status
Recent increase and decrease in house prices and future predictions	Property developers / estate agents	Partially open
Financial assessment of value of social housing	Surveyor / viability consultant	Closed
Mean or median household income in a borough	Local authority	Open
Local sector SRA and CL	Local authority	Open in some cases
Divid of ownership of land in England	Land registry	Partially
Price of land per sq. foot/m	Viability consultant	Closed
Surveyors assessment of housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Grant and loan available for construction and development of affordable homes	Government	Open

Data and information	Location	Status
Recent increase and decrease in house prices and future predictions	Property developers / estate agents	Partially open
Grant and loan available for construction and development of affordable homes	Government	Open
Assessment of the potential profit and cost of a development scheme	Delivery consultant	Closed
Price of land per sq. foot/m	Delivery consultant	Closed
Proposed tenure split	Design team	Partially open
Proposed rent levels	Delivery consultant	Closed
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Costs of refurbishment of existing buildings	Delivery consultant	Closed
Cost of decanting residents and associated legal processes	Delivery consultant	Closed
Cost of demolition	Delivery consultant	Closed
Price, number and size of homes for sale over time	Delivery consultant	Closed
Build cost estimates	Delivery consultant	Closed

Data and information	Location	Status
Recent increase and decrease in house prices and future predictions	Property developers / estate agents	Partially open
Grant and loan available for construction and development of affordable homes	Government	Open
Assessment of the potential profit and cost of a development scheme	Delivery consultant	Closed
Price of land per sq. foot/m	Delivery consultant	Closed
Proposed tenure split	Design team	Partially open
Proposed rent levels	Delivery consultant	Closed
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Costs of refurbishment of existing buildings	Delivery consultant	Closed
Cost of decanting residents and associated legal processes	Delivery consultant	Closed
Cost of demolition	Delivery consultant	Closed
Price, number and size of homes for sale over time	Delivery consultant	Closed
Build cost estimates	Delivery consultant	Closed
Viability assessment	Delivery consultant / Local authority	Partially open
Loan rates	Delivery consultant / Local authority	Partially open

Data and information	Location	Status
Recent increase and decrease in house prices and future predictions	Property developers / estate agents	Partially open
Proposed tenure split	Design team	Partially open
Proposed rent levels	Delivery consultant	Closed
Costs of refurbishment of existing buildings	Delivery consultant	Closed
Price, number and size of homes for sale over time	Delivery consultant	Closed
Build cost estimates	Delivery consultant	Closed
Viability assessment	Delivery consultant / Local authority	Partially open
Loan rates	Delivery consultant / Local authority	Partially open

Data and information	Location	Status
Recent increase and decrease in house prices and future predictions	Property developers / estate agents	Partially open
Proposed tenure split	Design team	Partially open
Proposed rent levels	Delivery consultant	Closed
Price, number and size of homes for sale over time	Delivery consultant	Closed
Build cost estimates	Delivery consultant	Closed
Viability assessment	Delivery consultant / Local authority	Partially open
Loan rates	Delivery consultant / Local authority	Partially open

2.08 The finance and design routes of the road-map with their associated data-tables.

only partially inaccessible, due to procedural barriers. For example, if you are a leaseholder living in a block of flats and you want to find out how much has been spent on repairs to the block in relation to the cost of your service charges, you must submit a written request under Section 21 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.¹⁹⁸

Visualising the accessibility of the data and information encountered on the finance route of the road-map in comparison to the design route of the road-map shows the data and information in the financial route as predominantly inaccessible. The design process distracts from this inaccessibility through participatory frameworks that focus on the material appearance and functions of the proposed development. Understanding this process begins to highlight how conventional participatory frameworks omit elements, and that these omissions lead to the obscuration of the actual data and information that is driving the regeneration process.

The gaps are also reiterated through the interrogation of my day-to-day practice at PEACH and the development of my skills as a community organiser. Community organising builds knowledge slowly. However community organising alone doesn't solve the issues surrounding data and information. This is because the learning curve is too steep within the timescale of the regeneration process; there is still too much information to begin with, and the process of building knowledge often starts once the regeneration is well underway. I argue that the proposals developed by PEACH for resident involvement were more productively and meaningfully developed because of the influence of community organising theory and practice on the alternative regeneration team, however the proposals still didn't go far enough.

Community organising increases participation through increasing community power, and the increase in community power leads to residents questioning their lack of agency. Questions arise in particular around the lack of information on financial and legal structures underpinning regeneration proposals, as these are the areas whereby information is most sparse, or completely missing. This is confirmed through evidence from other resident campaigns in London that used legal routes to expose financial structures

198 Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/70/contents>, accessed 1st October 2022.

despite resistance from local authorities and developers. Light and Akama ask “how to best bring people into the design of the invisible mediating structures around them”.¹⁹⁹ This chapter has shown some of the issues evident in the way that non-expert groups can access data and information, and begun to touch on how this affects the regeneration process. In order to address this lack, the next chapter develops a methodological framework which integrates and analyses participatory processes, connections and relationships between the different elements and stakeholders of the regeneration process.

199 Light and Akama, ‘Structuring Future Social Relations: The Politics of Care in Participatory Practice’, *Proceedings of the 13th Participatory Design Conference: Research Papers-Volume 1* 1 (2014): 151–60. p3.

Chapter 3

Methodology. Infrastructuring, critical pedagogy and deepening knowledge production practice.

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated through the interrogation of my day-to-day practice at PEACH the issues with *access to* and *use of* data and information in contemporary urban regeneration, particularly in participatory practice. I situated my practice within the context of contemporary urban regeneration, enabling me to research and interrogate the roles that data and information play in relation to community and non-expert groups. Through past case studies of embedded professionals in urban regeneration processes, I have shown that my practice has precedent within the field of participatory design. The questions that emerged through the practice elements of my work provoked me to further develop my role through the development of a theoretical perspective. I was then able to use this theoretical perspective to inform the next steps in the development of my practice role. I will now demonstrate this development through theories of infrastructures and critical pedagogy, providing a working hypothesis for my practice role.

Data, information and Knowledge

“Data exist within knowledge infrastructure – an ecology of people, practices, technologies, institutions, material objects, and relationships. All parts of the infrastructure are in flux with shifts in stakeholders, technologies, policies, and power.”²⁰⁰

The relationship between data, information and knowledge became a key element to engage with in my practice. The regeneration process involves interactions with new pieces of data and information that the community organisers and the wider community have never encountered before. For example, detailed planning policy, feasibility studies and capacity studies. It was surprising to many residents the proportion of the process which happens behind the scenes with data and information which is unavailable or inaccessible. Approaching the regeneration process through the analysis and of data and information requires a description of what is actually meant by

200 Christine L. Borgman, *Big Data, Little Data, No Data: Scholarship in the Networked World* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2015). p4.

“data and information” in this context.

Critical data scholars differentiate between data, information and knowledge. How these concepts are differentiated varies according to the field and the role of the scholar in relation to the data itself.²⁰¹ Borgman writes that “data carry little information in and of themselves. Data are subject to interpretation; their status as facts or evidence is determined by the people who produce, manage, and use those data.”²⁰² The Data-POP Alliance, a grouping of academics from Harvard Humanitarian Initiative and MIT Media Lab posit that the “data-fication” of the world could lead to everything potentially being data.²⁰³ That data is given weight through its interpretation is echoed by Kitchin who describes how, for both communities and state institutions data is used to construct “evidence-informed narratives and counter-discourses that have greater rhetorical value than anecdote or sentiment.”²⁰⁴ These narratives and discourses are used to legitimise or contest political agendas. The description of “evidence” in contrast to “anecdote or sentiment” already gives an indication as to what is valued as data. A hierarchy emerges that prioritises data that is dispassionate and objective.

In information and knowledge sciences, the relationship between data, information, knowledge and wisdom is regularly described as hierarchical, in the form of a pyramid. The DIKW pyramid as it is known, is a fundamental model that describes the relationships between data, information and knowledge and is implicitly accepted by many scholars.²⁰⁵ Frické describes the relationship between data and information as “functional not structural,” in that information is produced when someone asks a question of data, such as who, what, when or why.²⁰⁶ Data is then processed in answer to the question

201 Tracey P Lauriault, ‘Data, Infrastructures and Geographical Imaginations.’ (2013).

202 Borgman, *Scholarship in the Digital Age*. p121.

203 Data-Pop Alliance, ‘Beyond Data Literacy: Reinventing Community Engagement and Empowerment in the Age of Data,’ <https://datapopalliance.org/item/beyond-data-literacy-reinventing-community-engagement-and-empowerment-in-the-age-of-data/>, accessed 24th June 2022

204 Rob Kitchin, *The Data Revolution: Big Data, Open Data, Data Infrastructures & Their Consequences* (Los Angeles, California: SAGE Publications, 2014). p16.

205 Martin Frické, ‘The Knowledge Pyramid: A Critique of the DIKW Hierarchy’, *Journal of Information Science* 35, no. 2 (2009): 131–42, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165551508094050>.

206 Frické, ‘The Knowledge Pyramid: A Critique of the DIKW Hierarchy’. p3.

and becomes information. This resonates with Mattern's description, quoting the "philosopher and computer scientist Frederick Thompson" who describes information as "a product that results from applying the processes of organization to the raw material of experience, much like steel is obtained from iron ore."²⁰⁷ Weinberger argues that the hierarchical inclination to describe data-information-knowledge as the result of "applying finer-grained filters at each level' is a product of the information age, a desire to clean up the overwhelming flow and make it more manageable."²⁰⁸ The desire to manage the flow of data is an understandable impulse, and relevant to my questioning of the roles that data and information play in relation to community and non-expert groups. Who gets to filter the data, and who is asking the questions that filter the data? What questions can be asked to make the data relevant, and do these questions make the data more manageable as information?

The point when data becomes information is not always clear. Meadows describes many different examples of types of information that can be described as "systematically organised data," but as Borgman notes, does not provide a firm definition of the point when the data becomes organised.²⁰⁹ In terms of categorising information, Borgman goes into detail on different categories such as "information-as-process, or becoming informed, information-as-knowledge, or that which is perceived in information as process [and] information-as-thing, or an object such as a document that is informative or may impart knowledge".²¹⁰ The variety and number of these categories show the levels of detail that it is possible to go into when categorising information. In developing the road-map, the process of development was "information-as-process", the road-map contained "information-as-thing" and also involved becoming informed and information-as-knowledge. In deconstructing the road-map, the majority of the data encountered during the regeneration process had already been

207 Shannon Mattern, 'A City Is Not a Computer', *Places Journal*, no. 2017 (7 February 2017), <https://doi.org/10.22269/170207>. p10.

208 David Weinberger, 'The Problem with the Data-Information-Knowledge-Wisdom Hierarchy', *Harvard Business Review*, <https://hbr.org/2010/02/data-is-to-info-as-info-is-not>, accessed 24th June 2022. p3.

209 Arthur J. Meadows, *Understanding Information* (München: Saur, 2001). Quoted in Borgman, *Scholarship in the Digital Age*. p41.

210 Christine L. Borgman, *Scholarship in the Digital Age: Information, Infrastructure, and the Internet* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2007). p41.

processed or received, and was accessible to the public as information.

The unprocessed data that lies behind information that is publicly available can be even more inaccessible than what is eventually made available to the public. This is understood by the housing organisation Shelter, who provide both the “Shelter Housing Databank,” of “government data on housing need, supply, affordability and other issues at a local, regional and national level,” as well as reports and analysis based on the data that can be downloaded.²¹¹ Shelters website categorises the housing data as “for professionals.”²¹² Understanding that most of the documents or sources which have been encountered in my day-to-day practice would already be categorised as information leads to thinking in more detail about who has provided the information, their motivations and biases, and what might be omitted or retained accordingly. Issues pertaining to the access to and use of data and information in regeneration processes by non-experts are linked to how data and information is understood as able to impart knowledge and/or becomes knowledge. Barriers to data and information becoming knowledge could be, for example, the complexity of the regeneration process, the amount of information available, discerning what information is relevant, information being confidential, the long timescales involved or technical language preventing understanding. Returning to Weinberger, “it is the knowing process that first decides which information is relevant, and how it is to be used.”²¹³ This is a useful place to start, as the road-map was an attempt at structuring the “knowing process,” so that non-experts could also decide what information is relevant. The road-map demonstrated that in the context of the technical infrastructure surrounding large scale urban redevelopment, encounters with different types of data and information are not only defined by the characteristics of the information itself but also the literacy required for it to be interpreted and classified.²¹⁴

211 Shelter Housing Databank, https://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/housing_databank, accessed 12th August 2022.

212 Ibid.

213 David Weinberger, ‘The Problem with the Data-Information-Knowledge-Wisdom Hierarchy’, *Harvard Business Review*, <https://hbr.org/2010/02/data-is-to-info-as-info-is-not>, accessed 24th June 2022. p3.

214 Lisa Gitelman, ed., *‘Raw Data’ Is an Oxymoron*, Infrastructures Series (Cambridge, Massachusetts ; London, England: The MIT Press, 2013).

Organising data, information and knowledge: Infrastructures.

A quick glance at the folders on my computer which reside within the folder “data library” shows the following categories: Advertising, Allocations (housing), Alternative models, Ballots, Briefs, Community Led Housing and CLT’s, Consultation, Density and Massing, Finance, FOI²¹⁵, Funding, Governance, Guidance, Housing Guidance, Infill and Refurbishment, Maps, Meeting Minutes, Planning Applications, Planning Data, Policy, Proposals, Reports, Statements, Surveys, Tables and Tenders. Each folder contains a selection of PDF’s, word documents, Excel spreadsheets and image files. The files are named as they were when they were downloaded from the internet, for example, in the folder “Policy” the document; “gla_cfg_section_8._resident_ballots_-_18_july_2018.pdf” describes the GLA Capital Funding Guide, Section Eight: Resident Ballots for Estate Regeneration Projects. The chapter begins:

8.1.1. This chapter sets out the requirements for Investment Partners (IPs) in relation to a funding condition that requires them to undertake resident ballots for certain estate regeneration projects.

8.1.2. IPs are required to determine whether the Resident Ballot Requirement (RBR) applies to each project (see paragraphs 8.3.1 to 8.3.7).²¹⁶

This is the resident ballot policy document that applies to estate regeneration projects in London which are proposing to use GLA funding. In the “Reports” folder, the document “RFA_DebtandDemocracy” can be found, which when opened is titled “Debt and Democracy in Newham. A citizen audit of LOBO loans”.²¹⁷ In the folder “Housing Guidance” we find the “Housing Delivery Statement” that “sets out how the borough intends to deliver on the Mayor’s vision for housing, focused on engaging residents in decisions

215 Information Commissioners Office, ‘What is the Freedom of Information Act?’, <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/what-is-the-foi-act/>, accessed 24th June 2022,

216 GLA CAPITAL FUNDING GUIDE: SECTION EIGHT, Resident Ballots for Estate Regeneration Projects, https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_cfg_section_8._resident_ballots_-_18_july_2018.pdf, accessed 13th November 2023. p2.

217 Research for Action, Debt and Democracy in Newham. A citizen audit of LOBO loans, October 2018. <https://www.cadtm.org/Debt-Democracy-in-Newham-A-Citizen-audit-of-LOBO-loans>, accessed 13th November 2023.

about their neighbourhoods; delivering more genuinely affordable homes for local people; and clearly articulating Newham's values and ways of working to potential partners."²¹⁸ Browsing these documents immediately brings questions. Is this relevant? Do I need to know this? Who does need to know this? How do I find out if I need to know this? And how can this information be organised or processed in a way that makes it accessible, if the answer to those questions is yes? The road-map and its associated data tables were an experimental exercise in organising data and information, but how does this process relate to actual theories of organisation?

Bowker and Star describe classification systems for organising information in detail in their book "Sorting Things Out: Classification and its consequences".²¹⁹ They use infrastructure as a term to describe the systems used to organise data, information and knowledge. Larkin, writing of the "Poetics and Politics of Infrastructure" goes into the detail of the multifaceted concept of infrastructure in the fields of Science and Technology Studies (STS), anthropology and geography.²²⁰ Infrastructure can refer to the physical necessities of urban design such as roads, railways, water pipes, electricity lines and rubbish collection. Infrastructure is also used to refer to less tangible "built networks" that "facilitate the flow of goods, people, or ideas and allow for their exchange over space."²²¹ Karasti and Baker summarise the notion of infrastructure as developed by Star and Ruhleder as "a multifaceted concept referring to interrelated technical, social and organizational arrangements involving hardware and software technologies, standards, procedures, practices and policies together with digital configurations in support of human communication

218 London Borough of Newham Cabinet, Housing Delivery Statement, 15th November 2018, <https://apply.gatenbysanderson.com/download/546717-c11a22642c286bf726fe59fa75b06fab7ff1605/Housing%20Delivery%20Statement.pdf>, accessed 13th November 2023.

219 Geoffrey C Bowker and Susan Leigh Star, *Sorting Things out: Classification and Its Consequences* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999), <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=13186>.

220 Brian Larkin, 'The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 42, no. 1 (21 October 2013): 327–43, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-092412-155522>.

221 Larkin, 'The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure'. p328.

and capabilities.”²²² This description of infrastructure was the first to conceptualise infrastructure as relationships in context rather than solely physical objects or structures. Infrastructures as relationships are frameworks which enable negotiation of meaning and the involvement of different actors in a process.²²³ The term infrastructure refers to “a fundamentally relational concept. It becomes infrastructure in relation to organised practices”.²²⁴ It follows from these definitions that the decisions on what is and isn’t included in infrastructures has political ramifications for the physical environment and the people inhabiting that environment.²²⁵ The concept of an infrastructure is therefore useful to my research because it can encompass both the physical environment and the organising structures, technologies, practices and communications that bring the environment into existence and regulate it.



3.01 Image of infrastructure taken in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Stratford.

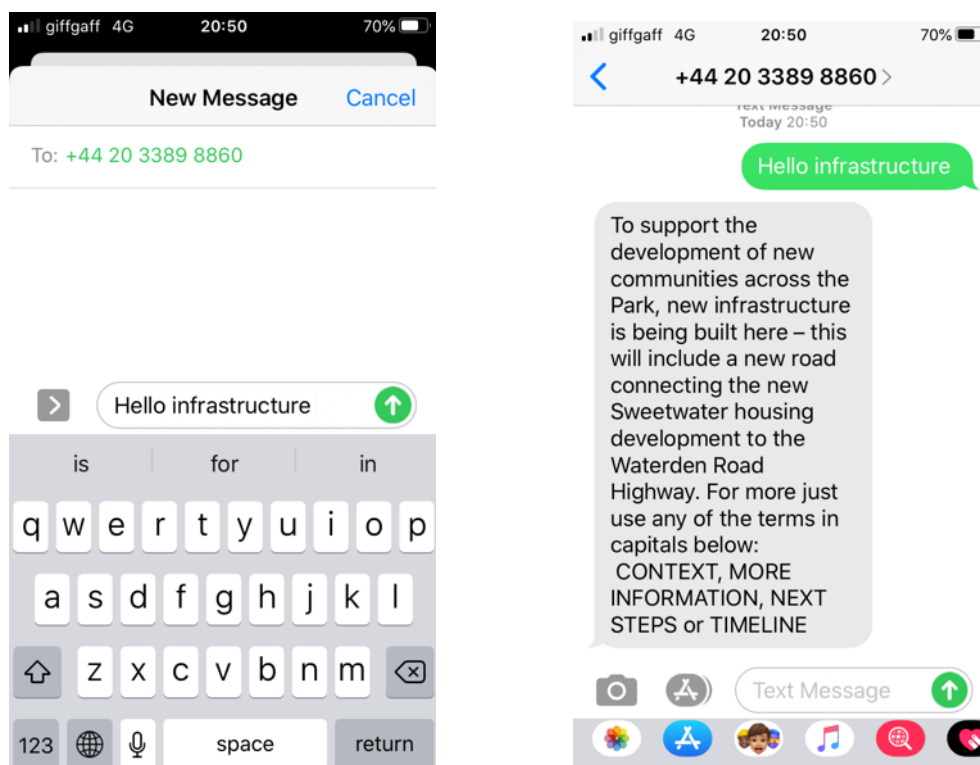
222 Helena Karasti, Karen S. Baker, and Florence Millerand, ‘Infrastructure Time: Long-Term Matters in Collaborative Development’, *Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)* 19, no. 3–4 (August 2010): 377–415, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10606-010-9113-z>. p380.

223 Borgman, *Scholarship in the Digital Age*.

224 Star and Ruhleder, ‘Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure’. p113.

225 Nikhil Anand, ‘Municipal Disconnect: On Abject Water and Its Urban Infrastructures’, *Ethnography* 13, no. 4 (December 2012): 487–509, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138111435743>.

Star and Ruhleder outlined eight properties of information infrastructures in their seminal paper “Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure: Design and Access for Large Information Spaces”.²²⁶ Looking at some of these infrastructural properties in more detail is a way to begin conceptualising relationships and structures within the regeneration process and in terms of the development of my practice. The reach or scope of an infrastructure can be spatial or temporal, but an infrastructure always reaches beyond a single site or event. The technical elements of regeneration are comparable across many regeneration sites both past and present. This is demonstrated in local authority roles replicated across projects, such as within policy, design and planning. It is also present in design and planning conventions, technical language and processes such as procurement and financial viability. These replicable elements can be named the technical regeneration infrastructure.



3.02 Response from infrastructure information message service, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Stratford.

Infrastructures are also embedded. In this context, embeddedness means “sunk into, inside of other structures, social arrangements and technologies.”²²⁷ The technical elements of the regeneration process are embedded within the structures of local government. This requires that the

²²⁶ Star and Ruhleder, ‘Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure’.

²²⁷ Star and Ruhleder, ‘Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure’.p113.

regeneration embodies standards, policies and conventions. Both expert and non-expert have to engage with the existing political and physical structures involved in the urban regeneration process, such as for example, the local government, the planning system, local development policy, procurement processes, legal processes and the existing urban fabric of the area. These structures can be engaged with both through resistance or collaboration. Infrastructures also exist as invisible supports. Star and Bowker note that working infrastructures are usually invisible, and only “become visible upon breakdown.”²²⁸ Karasti reiterates this, writing that “invisibility may refer to the invisible nature of the infrastructures themselves, the invisible work performed by actors, and the processes of making visible—or invisible—activities and related challenges.”²²⁹ This is contested by Larkin, who states that “all visibility is situated and what is background for one person is a daily object of concern for another.”²³⁰ The contested nature of what is made visible to whom within the intersecting infrastructures of regeneration is a point of power or leverage for both experts and non-experts. This applies to both the social fabric of relationships cultivated by community organisers and to the technical mechanisms behind the regeneration process.

Star and Ruhleder state that “strangers encounter infrastructure as a target object to be learned about. New participants acquire a naturalised familiarity with its objects as they become members.”²³¹ This can apply both to the technical infrastructure of regeneration and the social networks of relationships that are strengthened and encouraged by community organisers. The networks built through community organising can be conceptualised as social infrastructures that encompass relationships, knowledge and information over a geographical area.

Referencing the concept of infrastructure as a language to be learned, it is possible to name the current conventions of urban regeneration infrastructures. For example the language of regeneration includes terms with specific connotations from both the expert and non-expert domain such as density, tenure mix, displacement, social cleansing, mixed-use, retrofit, and decant. I am reminded of a resident at PEACH housing club

228 Star and Ruhleder, ‘Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure’ p113.

229 Karasti, ‘Knowledge Infrastructures: Part I’. p8.

230 Larkin, ‘The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure’. p336.

231 Star and Ruhleder, ‘Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure’. p113.

who, when asked what regeneration meant to her, she said “Well first I was regenerated from Star Lane, and I moved to Canning Town and then I was regenerated from Canning Town and now I’m in Custom House and being regenerated again”.²³²

Infrastructures are constructed upon an existing “installed base”, and therefore “inherit strengths and limitations from that base.”²³³ A limitation could be, for example, the inertia of “way we usually do things”. From a community organising perspective, a strength could be existing social networks and connections in an area. The stronger the existing social connections in an area, the more interdependent residents are, for example in terms of informal economies of childcare. It is important to note that neither the technical nor social infrastructure of a regeneration is built from scratch.

Star and Ruhleder’s work was based on research of large scale information infrastructures. There is also a large body of research on data infrastructures and knowledge infrastructures. Data infrastructures manifest themselves as the systems and processes required to collect, store and move data, as well as different modes of accessing data. There is a body of scholarship that focuses on “data infrastructure literacy” and how to “conceptualise and encourage critical inquiry, imagination, intervention and public experimentation around the infrastructures through which data is created, used and shared.”²³⁴ The Open Data Charter describes data infrastructures as “ecosystems of technology, processes and actors/organisations needed for the collection, storage, maintenance, distribution and (re)use of data.”²³⁵ Data infrastructures are encountered every day when accessing or searching for information online. In terms of regeneration processes, data infrastructures are encountered in the systems used by the local authority to store council meeting minutes and make them publicly accessible.

Knowledge infrastructures are more ephemeral , described by Karasti as

232 Comment to author made at PEACH Housing Club

233 Star and Ruhleder, ‘Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure’ p113

234 Jonathan Gray, Carolin Gerlitz, and Liliana Bounegru, ‘Data Infrastructure Literacy’, *Big Data & Society* 5, no. 2 (July 2018): 205395171878631, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951718786316>. p1.

235 Open Data Charter, What is a data infrastructure?, <https://opendatacharter.net/agriculture-open-data-package/section-2-towards-open-data-infrastructure-agriculture/what-is-a-data-infrastructure/>, accessed 13th November 2023.

ecologies of many intersecting systems that use common social practices, norms and individual behaviours to communicate and connect.²³⁶ Knowledge infrastructures evolve over long timescales, include both individuals and institutions and can be distributed both physically and digitally. All of these properties make the concept of infrastructures an ideal methodological framework for developing an embedded urban regeneration practice. The road map can now be seen as a premonition for the use of infrastructures as a theoretical framework that links the disparate elements of the regeneration process.

Technical and social infrastructures in urban regeneration

“Infrastructure building is different from more self-contained, object oriented projects in linking so many communities. In order to build on the installed base, they require more strong, tight connections to the outside world. It means making the larger network active participants, in turn resulting in more interdependency. And once again, our paradox: the end product of infrastructure projects is ideally invisible, transparent usefulness; thus the foci of infrastructure projects is often invisible and difficult to articulate, having no common language.”²³⁷

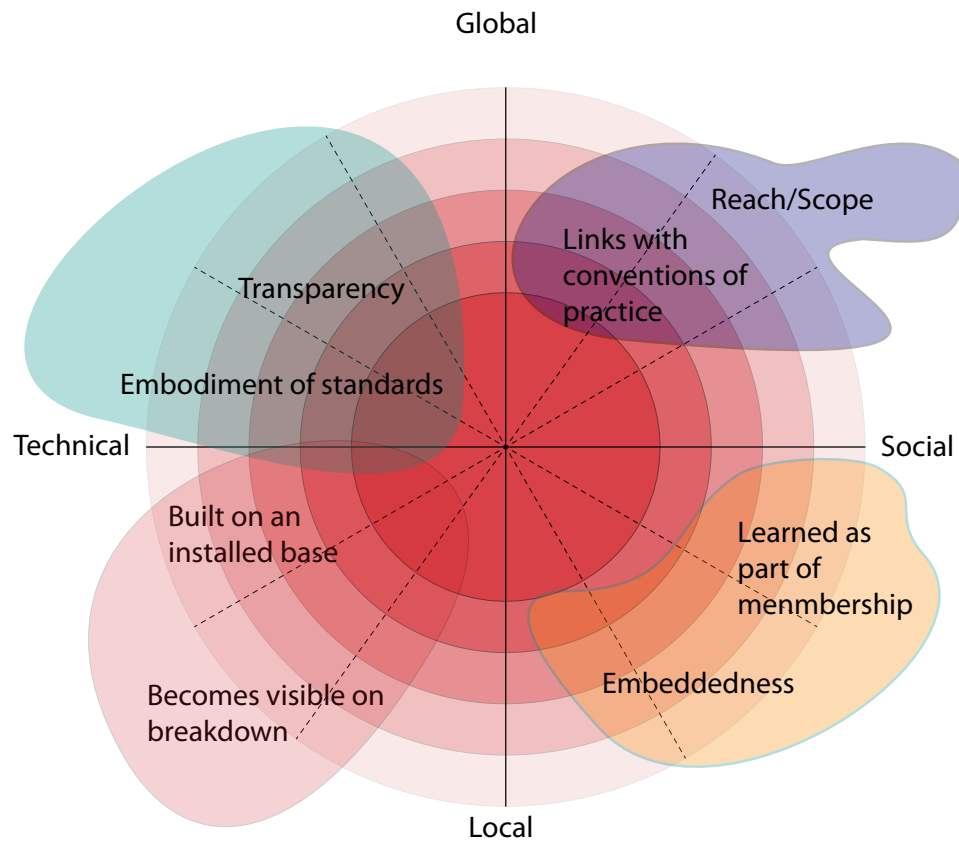
I propose that understanding the regeneration process as different intersecting technical and social infrastructures of data, information and knowledge is a useful framework for situating my embedded practice, as well as enabling understanding for non-experts. I argue that these infrastructures can inform and extend the mode in which my practice operates, a slow accretion of knowledge (or data and information) which “is social in that it is situated in a context, understood within a community, and arises from the day-to-day practices of scholarship or learning”.²³⁸ Bowker describes infrastructures as distributed along axes of technical-social and global-local.²³⁹

236 Helena Karasti, ‘Knowledge Infrastructures: Part I’, *Science and Technology Studies* 29. 2-12, no. 1 (2016): 4–14.

237 Laura J. Neumann and Susan Leigh Star, ‘Making Infrastructure: The Dream of a Common Language’, 1996.p239.

238 Borgman, *Scholarship in the Digital Age*. p43.

239 Geoffrey C. Bowker et al., ‘Toward Information Infrastructure Studies: Ways of Knowing in a Networked Environment’, in *International Handbook of Internet Research*, ed. Jeremy Hunsinger, Lisbeth Klasturp, and Matthew Allen (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2009), 97–117, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-9789-8_5.

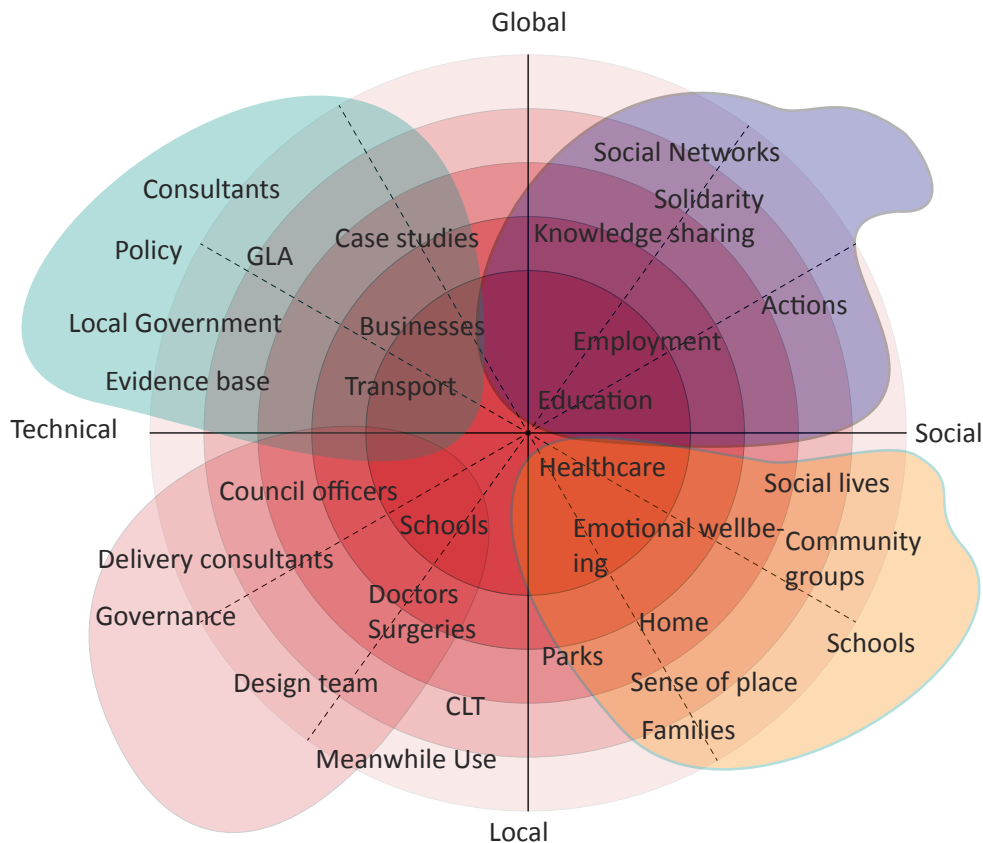


3.03 Infrastructures as distributed along axes of technical-social and global-local as outlined by Bowker.

This axis usefully encapsulates the tensions inherent in large scale urban change; a complex technical process involving the erasure and creation of buildings, roads, schools, doctors surgeries, transport systems, shops, homes, parks, benches and trees, impacting peoples social lives, spatial landscape, sense of place, families, education, employment and emotional wellbeing. Translating this diagram into an urban regeneration context, it is possible to visualise a selection of the actors and processes involved in the regeneration from an infrastructural perspective, distributed along the axis introduced by Bowker.

The understanding that infrastructures are created through my practice enables me to intentionally bring expert and local forms of information and knowledge, as well as relevant data into relationship together. From the community organiser point of view this could be conceptualised as a temporal and spatial network of multiple instances of data and information, knowledge and action. Knowledge of urban design, the institutional language of regeneration and professional conventions are brought into relationship with the human timescales of jobs, school and social occasions. These infrastructures form a network which is responsive to the needs of

non-experts, and the understanding of these infrastructures facilitates the emergence of new knowledge.



3.04 The elements of the regeneration infrastructure drawn out along the infrastructure axes

Through negotiation and strategic navigation, the infrastructure model can circumnavigate absences of knowledge, facilitate understanding, discover new connections and test new ideas in the process. In other words, the approach taken in my practice allows access to social and technical infrastructures that then open up processes and systems that would otherwise be opaque. The infrastructure aims to enable negotiation between knowing and unknowing, information and the uninformed, data and the absence of data. The infrastructural approach resonates with situated knowledge as described by Haraway: “Partial, locatable, critical knowledges sustaining the possibility of webs of connections called solidarity in politics and shared conversations in epistemology.”²⁴⁰ Can thinking in this way about infrastructures then actively lead us into more equitable processes of engagement with data and information?

240 Donna Haraway, ‘Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective’, *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 575, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3178066>. p584.

How to infrastructure

“When we talk about ‘infrastructuring’, the gerund is central. What’s in a verb? [...], it is about moving from a fixed to a process ontology. And this is the central fact about ‘infrastructuring’ – it is not that the act of building an infrastructure ever simply ratifies pre-existing relationships: the act of infrastructuring changes what it is to be a road, a unit of currency or an ecology. Infrastructures are engines of ontological change. They stand between people and technology and nature and in so doing reconfigure each simultaneously.”²⁴¹

“How to Infrastructure” or “infrastructuring” emerged through the study of the creation and development of large scale information infrastructures and knowledge infrastructures.²⁴² The use of infrastructure as a verb, “to infrastructure,” emerged as a way to describe the “integration of tools and technologies with existing people, materials and tools.”²⁴³ The term “infrastructuring” was first used by Karasti and her associates to highlight “the processual, ongoing quality of infrastructuring activities” and “the extended periods during which infrastructuring unfolds.”²⁴⁴ Infrastructuring comprises of processes of integration and negotiation, compromises and the development of technical and social resources and knowledge. Infrastructuring happens visibly, flexibly and tentatively. Infrastructuring as a methodology exists therefore within the study of information infrastructures, data infrastructures and knowledge infrastructures, as well as in

241 Helena Karasti, Volkmar Pipek, and Geoffrey C. Bowker, ‘An Afterword to “Infrastructuring and Collaborative Design”’, *Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)* 27, no. 2 (April 2018): 267–89, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10606-017-9305-x>.

242 Susan Leigh Star and Geoffrey C. Bowker, ‘How to Infrastructure’, in *Handbook of New Media: Social Shaping and Social Consequences of ICTs, Updated Student Edition* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2010), 230–45, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446211304>. Also see Star and Ruhleder, ‘Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure,’ and Helena Karasti, ‘Infrastructuring in Participatory Design’, in *Proceedings of the 13th Participatory Design Conference on Research Papers - PDC ’14* (Windhoek, Namibia: ACM Press, 2014), 141–50, <https://doi.org/10.1145/2661435.2661450>.

243 Helena Karasti and Anna-Liisa Syrjänen, ‘Artful Infrastructuring in Two Cases of Community PD’, in *Proceedings of the Eighth Conference on Participatory Design Artful Integration: Interweaving Media, Materials and Practices - PDC 04*, vol. 1 (the eighth conference, Toronto, Ontario, Canada: ACM Press, 2004), 20, <https://doi.org/10.1145/1011870.1011874>. p21.

244 Karasti, Helena. ‘Infrastructuring in Participatory Design’. In *Proceedings of the 13th Participatory Design Conference on Research Papers - PDC ’14*, 141–50. Windhoek, Namibia: ACM Press, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.1145/2661435.2661450>. p142.

participatory design theory. These pre-existing intersecting fields of inquiry aligned infrastructuring well as a methodological framework for my practice.

In the paper “It’s Your Project, but it’s Not Necessarily Your Work,” Agid expands the definition of infrastructuring from a practice of acting on socio-technical systems to a practice that specifically considers the position of the designer and the relationships that are made to enable infrastructuring to take place.²⁴⁵ Agid argues that “how we understand, contextualize, and articulate the aims of acting on infrastructures, especially those with uneven material consequences for people living with them, is critically important to what it means to do infrastructuring in different contexts, and with whom. How we infrastructure is a political concern for PD [participatory design] that includes both the structural and systemic contexts of that work and the people and relationships with and through which it happens.”²⁴⁶ To infrastructure, according to Agid, is then “to design, reveal, challenge, or theorize systems and structures with people while foregrounding their dynamic and socio-material contexts in that process.”²⁴⁷ I propose that infrastructuring in the context of urban regeneration means the process of integrating the existing technical and institutional infrastructure of the regeneration with knowledge and actions which enable non-experts and those who are materially affected by those infrastructures to gain agency and take control. This means expanding the regeneration information infrastructure to include unconventional forms of data, information and knowledge, and building relationships with a large range of diverse stakeholders. The practice of infrastructuring is therefore characterised by a continuous process of building relations with diverse actors and by a flexible allotment of time and resources.²⁴⁸

Understanding infrastructuring in this way also enables me to situate my experience with the live regeneration process in Custom House in relation to the development of my role and research practice. This is necessary because in the context of my research I am developing my role, working both as an architect and community organiser. However I am also present in PEACH outside of my research, taking part in the aim to increase resident agency in

245 Agid, ...‘...It’s Your Project, but It’s Not Necessarily Your Work...’

246 Ibid. p81

247 Ibid. p81

248 Hillgren, Seravalli, and Emilson, ‘Prototyping and Infrastructuring in Design for Social Innovation’.

the regeneration. These are a complex set of intersecting and overlapping positions. As I state in the introductory chapters, my presence within PEACH evolved alongside my practice-led research. I was not studying PEACH as a case study of a community undergoing regeneration, rather I was challenging the existing infrastructures of regeneration and attempting to expand them through my practice. As I will demonstrate through the methodologies of infrastructuring and critical pedagogy, my position enabled me to cross boundaries and build trust with residents, external organisations such as Community Led Housing London and Future of London, the regeneration officers at London Borough of Newham and consultants including architects and development consultants. This position gave me an unique insight, and was essential to the development of my role.

Understanding the implications for my role suggests that rather than working in “project time” associated with a brief, I am working over “infrastructure time.”²⁴⁹ Infrastructure time is described by Karasti and Baker when reimagining the timescales of participatory design through long-term design engagements grounded in collaboration and care.²⁵⁰ This also relates to what Puig de la Bellacasa names as “matters of care”, an approach that engages with persistent forms of exclusion, power and domination”.²⁵¹ Approaching with care implies engaging in the development of knowledge “embedded in the ongoing remaking of the world,” and the impossibility of remaining in an ‘innocent or outsider position of observation.’²⁵²

It is useful to briefly illustrate why I propose working through this understanding of infrastructuring rather than straightforward participatory design (PD) or other STS based theories such as Actor Network Theory (ANT). ANT is a theoretical sociological framework developed by Latour, Callon and

249 Shana Agid, “‘Dismantle, Change, Build’: Designing Abolition at the Intersections of Local, Large-Scale, and Imagined Infrastructures”, *Design Studies* 59 (November 2018): 95–116, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.destud.2018.05.006>. p99.

250 Helena Karasti, Karen S. Baker, and Florence Millerand, ‘Infrastructure Time: Long-Term Matters in Collaborative Development’, *Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)* 19, no. 3–4 (August 2010): 377–415, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10606-010-9113-z>.

251 Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, ‘Matters of Care in Technoscience: Assembling Neglected Things’, *Social Studies of Science* 41 (2011): 85–106. p49.

252 María Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More than Human Worlds*, Posthumanities 41 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017). p28.

others initially for the study of science and scientists, but has since been used in many fields including communication, new media, organisational studies and planning practice.²⁵³ In relation to PD, “with ANT, participants are thus considered actors configured by networks of other actors, and participation is achieved in and through this network.”²⁵⁴ Björgvinsson notes that both the processes of PD and ANT emphasise “working within established and dominant social systems through consensual processes rather than from the outside,” and that the emphasis on collaboration between those with less power and those with more power within ANT can therefore have the unwanted effect of legitimising power differentials.²⁵⁵ Anderson et al contrast the “subjective intention” found in Arnstein’s theory of participation and power with the understanding of ANT as a tool for analysing processes that is “unable to ground participation in specific actors or to prescribe certain forms of participation over others.”²⁵⁶ These considerations combined led me to conclude that ANT was not a suitable scaffolding for theorising my experiences in practice.

It seems also relevant to mention here that ANT in combination with assemblage theory has been used by planners in the field of critical urbanism.²⁵⁷ Assemblage is a term used across many fields of study to describe “some form of provisional unity across differences,” and as a theory, assemblage is used as an alternative notion to that of the network

253 Nicolas Bencherki. ‘Actor–Network Theory’. In *The International Encyclopedia of Organizational Communication*, edited by Craig R. Scott, James R. Barker, Timothy Kuhn, Joann Keyton, Paaige K. Turner, and Laurie K. Lewis, 1st ed., 1–13. Wiley, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118955567.wbieoc002>.

254 Lars Bo Andersen, Peter Danholt, Kim Halskov, Nicolai Brodersen Hansen, and Peter Lauritsen. ‘Participation as a Matter of Concern in Participatory Design’. *CoDesign* 11, no. 3–4 (2 October 2015): 250–61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710882.2015.1081246>. p253.

255 Erling Björgvinsson, ‘Managing Collaborative Critique in Times of Financialisation Capitalism’, *Parse Journal, Management*, (Spring 2017) 92–110. p110.

256 Andersen et al., ‘Participation as a Matter of Concern in Participatory Design’. p259.

257 It is possible to see in papers by Kamalipour and McFarlane that there are elements of assemblage theory that align with various analyses of urban regeneration, similar to infrastructuring in description. Hesam Kamalipour and Nastaran Peimani, ‘Assemblage Thinking and the City: Implications for Urban Studies’, *Current Urban Studies* 03, no. 04 (2015): 402–8, <https://doi.org/10.4236/cus.2015.34031>. Colin McFarlane, ‘Assemblage and Critical Urbanism’, *City* 15, no. 2 (April 2011): 204–24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2011.568715>.

in ANT to analyse socio-spatial relations.²⁵⁸ Sendra describes assemblages as “a ‘symbiosis’ where different elements work together in association rather than individually”, and uses diagrams to draw out assemblages for different resident-led campaigns for social housing in London.²⁵⁹ The study acknowledges the “opaque and slippery” theory of assemblages, but proposes diagrams of the resident-led campaigns to draw out the actors in the campaigns and their complex power relations. The diagrams aim to aid understanding of continuity and change using two-fold concepts such as the formal and the informal. Such dichotomies can elaborate on the ways in which the strategies of the state collide with the everyday tactics of the citizens.²⁶⁰

I argue that infrastructuring has an advantage over ANT or assemblage theory due to the fact that infrastructures are both visible and invisible but also include familiar objects and systems that are recognisable and in use every day, such as transport networks or phone networks. These physical infrastructures make for straightforward analogies when deconstructing complex intersecting processes. In this sense, infrastructuring is an easily accessible framework for non-experts to add their own experience. Infrastructures are also directly connected to data, information and knowledge as I have described earlier. Neuman and Star note that infrastructuring and PD can work well in tandem because “good working infrastructure is transparent to use, yet good participatory design makes the problematics of use visible.”²⁶¹ When thinking about urban regeneration this immediately prompts the question; which urban regeneration infrastructures can be made visible to non-experts using participatory processes? This resonates with my second research question; how can the hybrid practice of the Architect_Organiser be developed to establish a critical and productive role for the use of such data and information by both experts and non-

258 Ben Anderson and Colin McFarlane, ‘Assemblage and Geography: Assemblage and Geography’, *Area* 43, no. 2 (June 2011): 124–27, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4762.2011.01004.x>. p125.

259 Pablo Sendra, ‘Assemblages for Community-Led Social Housing Regeneration’, *City*, 26 November 2018, <https://rsa.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13604813.2018.1549841>. p739.

260 Kamalipour and Peimani, ‘Assemblage Thinking and the City’.

261 Laura J. Neumann and Susan Leigh Star, ‘Making Infrastructure: The Dream of a Common Language’, in J. Blomberg, F. Kensing, & E. Dykstra-Erickson (Eds.), *Proceedings of the PDC ‘96* (pp. 231-240). Palo Alto, CA: Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility. p231.

experts?

Infrastructuring as a methodology can be important to non-experts without access to necessary data and information because it enables making novel connections between different types of knowledge, information and data. Forlano emphasises that “this ability to navigate and build relations that transgress epistemological boundaries around technological expertise is particularly significant because it opens the possibility for alternative flows of knowledge.”²⁶²

Infrastructuring in practice: The Architect_Organiser

“The goal of an infrastructuring effort is usually to achieve some kind of change to an existing practice through changing the infrastructure the practice relies on.”²⁶³

“Infrastructuring is not design in a number of ways: there are no single ‘visible hand’, no clear material boundaries for either the process result or related factors, no clear locations of decision-making power, no coherent languages and terminologies and not necessarily shared perspectives among stakeholders about where the process is heading to and where they currently are.”²⁶⁴

Combining community organising with the infrastructuring of the regeneration process created the role which I have named the Architect_Organiser. The Architect_Organiser uses infrastructuring to initiate a shift in thinking from being an individual designer working *with* the community to being part of a collective network of expert and non-expert knowledge practitioners with a range of skills and embedded local relationships. In a typical week as an embedded professional my work may include translating technical documents into plain English, designing and running workshops and trainings, building relationships with residents and businesses, going to the youth centre to work with young people, organising a street party,

262 Laura Forlano, ‘Infrastructuring As Critical Feminist Technoscientific Practice’. *Spheres Journal*. #3 Unstable Infrastructures, November 13th 2017. <https://spheres-journal.org/contribution/infrastructuring-as-critical-feminist-technoscientific-practice>. p3.

263 Karasti, Pipek, and Bowker, ‘An Afterword to “Infrastructuring and Collaborative Design”’. p280.

264 Karasti, Pipek, and Bowker, ‘An Afterword to “Infrastructuring and Collaborative Design”’. p183.

participating in an action, preparing for a meeting through role play, developing design principles, turning the outcomes of workshops into spatial designs or working with experts who can provide financial and legal advice. The Architect_Organiser as a role could not be undertaken by a community organiser with no architectural training, nor by an architect without community organising training. The term architect is retained in the title of the role because the Architect_Organiser aims to intentionally work outside of the norms of professionalism and therefore also challenge the norms of expert power. The Architect_Organiser rejects the hierarchies of expert and non-expert knowledge, of professional and non-professional experience. Appending the term 'organiser' to that of 'architect' intentionally disrupts the professional resonance of the architect, and supplements it with situated knowledge.

It is worth unpacking the role of the architect here in more detail. As I mentioned in the introduction, I am registered as an architect with the Architects Registration Board (ARB) in the UK. The architect has a specific role within conventional urban design and architectural design projects, and decisions made by architects affect public safety and wellbeing. The architect undertakes specialised training and education to understand the complex intersection of legal obligations, standards, material configurations, construction information, ethics and design aesthetics. Unlike however in some other countries such as the USA, in the UK it is the title architect that is protected in law, rather than the actual work that the architect does. This means that if you call yourself an architect, you must register with the ARB, but if you are working as an architectural designer, for example, you can do the same work as an architect without breaking the law. The title architect comes with its own professional conventions that have evolved over many years, and that have in recent years caused questions around the relationship between architecture, architects and the outside forces upon which it is contingent.²⁶⁵ The knowledge contained within the field of architecture remains primarily located within the architectural profession, and the length of the education and training required has in the past put the profession out of reach for lower income and other marginalised groups. The professional title of the architect, as well as the training, education and knowledge lends weight to the work undertaken by architects. It also places the architect at a distance from their clients or from the community, in the case of an urban

265 Jeremy Till, *Architecture Depends* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2009). p1.

regeneration project where the client is the local authority or a developer. The Architect_Organiser complicates the role of the architect through repositioning architectural, design and planning knowledge. Rather than the knowledge residing in an architectural practice or local government office, the knowledge is embedded in local relationships with and between a variety of stakeholders. The A_O alters the conventional client-architect relationship, situating the relationship in the location where the A_O is embedded. This shift also changes the nature of the client-architect relationship, as the client is no longer the direct source of funding. This is a shift in accountability and enables the A_O to develop a nuanced positionality in comparison to the conventional role of the architect.

As a designer the A_O is challenged to design infrastructures over conventional built structures. Infrastructuring shifts the work of the Architect_Organiser away from conventional participatory design and resident engagement practice whereby the focus is on the physical outcomes of the process and towards the hidden axes of power behind local government processes and the data and information underlying evidence based decision making.²⁶⁶ Karasti notes that the information infrastructure behind these design objects “can be too mundane to be of any interest for the participants, too large to comprehend, or continuously in danger of disappearing into the background.”²⁶⁷

The Architect_Organiser intentionally works towards situating community organisers and community members geographically and temporally within complex and evolving combination of politics, policy, finance, design and planning. The Architect_Organiser role draws on past examples of embedded practitioners such as those recounted by Jenkins, Milner and Sharpe in their historical review of “Community Technical Aid” and “Community Architecture.”²⁶⁸ Community Technical Aid centres provided local design and feasibility services for community groups across the UK in the 1970’s and 80’s. The architects based at the Community Technical Aid Centres (CTACs) were forerunners of the Architect_Organiser role in that they aimed for

266 Nisha, Bobby, and Margaret Nelson. ‘Making a Case for Evidence-Informed Decision Making for Participatory Urban Design’. *URBAN DESIGN International* 17, no. 4 (December 2012): 336–48. <https://doi.org/10.1057/udi.2012.16>.

267 Karasti, ‘Infrastructuring in Participatory Design’. p8.

268 Paul Jenkins and Leslie Forsyth, eds., *Architecture, Participation and Society*, 0 ed. (Routledge, 2009), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203869499>.

community members to participate at all stages of the design process, and tried to “demystify technical jargon to promote better understanding of the architectural and/or planning process.”²⁶⁹ The results of the embedded professionals and architecture students involved in the CTAC movement are in many case a reflection of their process based methodologies. For example ASSIST in Glasgow began by offering free advice on tenement refurbishment, but also contributed to the setting up of a housing association, assisting residents to access government finance and negotiating with lawyers.²⁷⁰ These activities are not conventionally understood as under the remit of the architect, however are very much within the field of activities undertaken by community organisers and therefore also the Architect_Organiser.

Working closely with community organisers introduces specific data, information and knowledge from a local and political perspective. The data, information and knowledge exchanges which take place between community organisers and the Architect_Organiser are multidirectional, flexible and don't hesitate to question established norms. From a community organising perspective, the ability of residents to situate themselves within the regeneration process and to be able to see how all of the strands of policy, finance, delivery, procurement, planning and design intersect is essential in order to develop strategies for partnership, genuine participation or tactics to disrupt the process where necessary. In order to develop this broad outline of the Architect_Organiser, I now turn to critical pedagogy as an approach that can engage non-experts in what might otherwise be boring, mundane and overwhelming aspects of the regeneration process.²⁷¹ Through the active methodologies employed by critical pedagogy, knowledge infrastructures are created, non-experts gain knowledge and are empowered through a framework which evolves to be responsive to their needs. Infrastructuring from a critical pedagogical perspective illustrates how the combined role of the architect and community organiser, the Architect_Organiser, can be instrumental in the development of knowledge infrastructures around the regeneration process.

269 Jenkins and Forsyth, *Architecture, Participation and Society*. p13.

270 Jenkins and Forsyth, *Architecture, Participation and Society*.

271 Andrew Clement et al., 'Probing, Mocking and Prototyping: Participatory Approaches to Identity Infrastructuring', in *Proceedings of the 12th Participatory Design Conference on Research Papers: Volume 1 - PDC '12* (Roskilde, Denmark: ACM Press, 2012), 21, <https://doi.org/10.1145/2347635.2347639>.

Critical pedagogy

The infrastructuring of the urban regeneration process with non-experts begins from the point of their own experiences. Community organising starts with understanding and exploring the issues which are affecting the community. Deconstructing urban regeneration with non-experts in relation to the impact it has on their own lives and then understanding the possibilities and potential for agency in the process have clear resonances with a critical pedagogical approach. Infrastructuring is an active form of creating, erasing and recreating relationships that has a strong connection to the critical pedagogical practice of “problematizing education”, enabling the critical analysis of structural power relations.²⁷² Critical or radical pedagogy is the term used to describe the pedagogical method developed by Paulo Freire, documented in the book “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”.²⁷³ Initially an adult literacy program, the key to Freire’s pedagogical process is developing a critical awareness of the world and the reality in which participants live. Freire named this “problematizing education”, overcoming the divide between teachers and students, enabling the critical analysis of structural power relations and thereby gaining knowledge.²⁷⁴

Freire’s process enabled illiterate workers to read and write in three stages. The first phase begins with research which allows participants to extract themes which are relevant to them in their daily lives. The second phase encourages participants to articulate these themes and explore their wider connections. The knowledge and perception are then used in the third phase for the participant to gain agency and make change. Freire’s pedagogical model is inherently politicising. bell hooks names it “education as a practice of freedom”.²⁷⁵

Following this model, the Architect_Organiser can assume the role of an

272 Bibiana Serpa et al., ‘Political-Pedagogical Contributions to Participatory Design from Paulo Freire’, in *Proceedings of the 16th Participatory Design Conference 2020 - Participation(s) Otherwise - Volume 2* (Manizales Colombia: ACM, 2020), 170–74, <https://doi.org/10.1145/3384772.3385149>. p173.

273 Freire, Freire, and Freire, *Pedagogy of Hope*.

274 Serpa et al., ‘Political-Pedagogical Contributions to Participatory Design from Paulo Freire’. p173.

275 bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

educator, accepting that their practice is not a neutral endeavour. It is not a question of simply “transferring knowledge”, as it is clear that knowledge is never neutral.²⁷⁶ Freire was very clear that education is not a passive or mechanical process of absorbing information. He also stressed that beginning from the point of the experience and existing knowledge of those with less power is only a starting point for critical analysis which enables change. The educator expresses respect for “differences in ideas and positions”, not imposing political views upon stakeholders but allowing people to draw their own conclusions with the knowledge they have gained.²⁷⁷ Giroux, a US critical pedagogue, refers to this as “border pedagogy” which looks at “shifting the emphasis of the knowledge-power relationship away from the limited emphasis on the mapping of domination to the politically strategic issue of engaging the ways in which knowledge can be remapped, reterritorialized, and decentered”.²⁷⁸

The concept of border pedagogy aligns with the situated nature of the Architect_Organiser’s role between all of the stakeholders in the process. To contextualise this in relation to the development of my practice, the examples of toolkits and handbooks produced by experts in order that non-experts can better engage in the regeneration process are examples that provide access to the knowledge. The toolkits do not however necessarily enable the knowledge contained within them to be remapped, or decentre the knowledge-power relationship between those who are producing the handbooks and those using them. Taking the six step organising conversation developed by McAlevy as another example, it is emphasised that at “the ask,” the end of the fourth step in the conversation, the organiser will sit in silence and wait for the other person in the conversation to reach their own conclusion about the next step to take.²⁷⁹ The organiser will answer any questions that arise, but will not propose a solution. This is important because the knowledge of where to go next does not come from the

276 Freire, Freire, and Freire, *Pedagogy of Hope*. p101.

277 Ibid. p69

278 Henry A. Giroux, *Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope: Theory, Culture, and Schooling ; a Critical Reader*, The Edge: Critical Studies in Educational Theory (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997). p147.

279 Jane McAlevy, Jacobin Magazine, ‘How to organise your friends and family on Thanksgiving,’ 27th November 2019, <https://jacobin.com/2019/11/thanksgiving-organizing-activism-friends-family-conversation-presidential-election>, accessed 20th October 2023.

organiser, it comes from the other person in the conversation. The role of the Architect_Organiser as an educator is to allow the knowledge to emerge gradually through these small activities, to build layers of knowledge through each individual moment of silence and realisation.

From project time to infrastructure time = community time?

“The focus on temporal scales, particularly long-term temporalities, is a crucial dimension to study infrastructures’ development.”²⁸⁰

An issue which is frequently cited by residents attempting to come to an understanding of the regeneration process are the long timescales of large-scale development projects. Regeneration projects can be designed, planned and constructed over fifteen to thirty years. Karasti mentions the difference between project time and infrastructure time: a more inclusive approach where “the boundaries between use, design, implementation, modification, maintenance, and redesign are blurred.”²⁸¹ The concept of infrastructure time moves the practice of the Architect_Organiser away from focusing on individual regeneration or development proposals, and towards a more holistic vision of change created over time. I call this working in “community time”. Community time is a form of “constructive resistance to the dominant capitalist temporality,” in that it is opposed to the necessities demanded by capitalism in relation to urban change.²⁸² Community in this sense, refers to the relationships built between neighbours, on streets, in schools, shops and workplaces. Community refers to the coach trips organised by local resident and organiser Denise Evans-Barr, taking one hundred Custom House residents to Southend on Sea for the day.²⁸³

Adjusting to work in community time means creating the environment

280 Stefano Crabu and Paolo Magaudo, ‘Bottom-up Infrastructures: Aligning Politics and Technology in Building a Wireless Community Network’, *Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)* 27, no. 2 (April 2018): 149–76, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10606-017-9301-1>. p165.

281 Karasti, ‘Infrastructuring in Participatory Design’. p3.

282 Majken Jul Sørensen and Kristin Wiksell, ‘Constructive Resistance to the Dominant Capitalist Temporality’, *Sociologisk Forskning* 56, no. 3–4 (21 October 2019): 253–74, <https://doi.org/10.37062/sf.56.18802>. p258.

283 As advertised on the Custom House Community Bookshop Facebook Group. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/199352277942178/>, accessed 9th September 2023.

necessary for continuity and building trust.²⁸⁴ This could mean understanding that in order for some residents to have capacity for engagement with a long-term regeneration proposal there are more pressing human needs which must be met first. These needs could be dealing with housing repairs, overcrowding issues or the need for childcare. The need for housing repairs and establishing housing security may require collaborating in various forms of refusal, non-participation and direct action, in order to pressurise the organisations responsible into action. Simultaneously, the movement towards change is strengthened through building relationships, exchanging knowledge and tentatively imagining future alternatives. Returning to the Alternative Regeneration Plan, the aims and principles for the regeneration began this process of working on different timescales through understanding the need for tangible change to happen alongside the generational timescale of urban redevelopment. Suggestions such as forums to tackle flytipping and rubbish disposal give residents an immediate sense of agency and begin to improve the area with visible results. The development of these timescales has implications for “project time” or what could also be called “developer time.” The road-map originated as a more pragmatic setting out of events in the conventional regeneration process. Bringing in smaller scale projects or actions that have the potential to derail proposed timescales and provide examples of resident power or agency shows the prioritisation of community cohesion over physical development. The road-map in its initial incarnation was itself an illustration of “developer-time.” The need for the expansion of the initial stages of the process to include registering existing problems and dedicating sufficient time to develop proposals to remedy the problems reflects the limitations in working on project-based timescales. However, the road-map is a good example of a framework which allows non-experts to focus on the activities which the regeneration infrastructure supports or enables. As the first example of infrastructuring and the application of critical pedagogical principles in practice, I will now return to the development of the road map of the regeneration with PEACH community organisers.

284 Helena Karasti and Anna-Liisa Syrjänen, ‘Artful Infrastructuring in Two Cases of Community PD’, in *Proceedings of the Eighth Conference on Participatory Design Artful Integration: Interweaving Media, Materials and Practices - PDC 04*, vol. 1 (Toronto, Ontario, Canada: ACM Press, 2004), 20, <https://doi.org/10.1145/1011870.1011874>.

Infrastructural inversion and infrastructuring as knowledge production

*“Infrastructural inversion explores and inverts aspects of the accreted material environment. This is based on the idea that people produce documents and other material traces to know their communities and to act within them. Documentary practices are constitutive of distributed, large-scale collaboration.”*²⁸⁵

The road-map can also be read and used as a critical pedagogical tool which is part of the accretion of knowledge by non-experts. Studying the accretion of knowledge is challenging due to its distributed nature, both online and geographically, the fact that it evolves over time and involves many individual and institutional participants.²⁸⁶ Karasti writes of knowledge infrastructures that they “always embody some kind of political agenda, because they “grow” on a pre-existing installed base— “piggybacking” on other infrastructures—they pose multiple sources of friction, conflict, or resistance activities.”²⁸⁷ Looking at the original road-map development process from a critical pedagogical perspective, the assembling of knowledge was successful. This could be seen in the report cards that PEACH members filled out in the June 2019 housing club meeting. PEACH members were asked whether they feel that the council or the architects have engaged them in the process, and whether they understood the role that the residents wished to have in the process. The answers were generally dissatisfied with the engagement process, expressing frustration at the lack of opportunities for genuine agency and asking when the opportunity would arise to discuss affordability, tenure splits and modes of housing ownership and rental.²⁸⁸ The increased understanding of alternative models of housing was credited by the design team to the workshops and discussions held by PEACH organisers and residents. The design team employed by the council also expressed how interesting it was to work with residents in the council’s engagement process who were so well informed as to the regeneration process.

285 Helena Karasti and Jeanette Blomberg, ‘Studying Infrastructuring Ethnographically’, *Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)* 27, no. 2 (April 2018): 233–65, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10606-017-9296-7>. p20.

286 Karasti, ‘Knowledge Infrastructures: Part I’.

287 Ibid. p9.

288 Appendix 1, PEACH diaries.

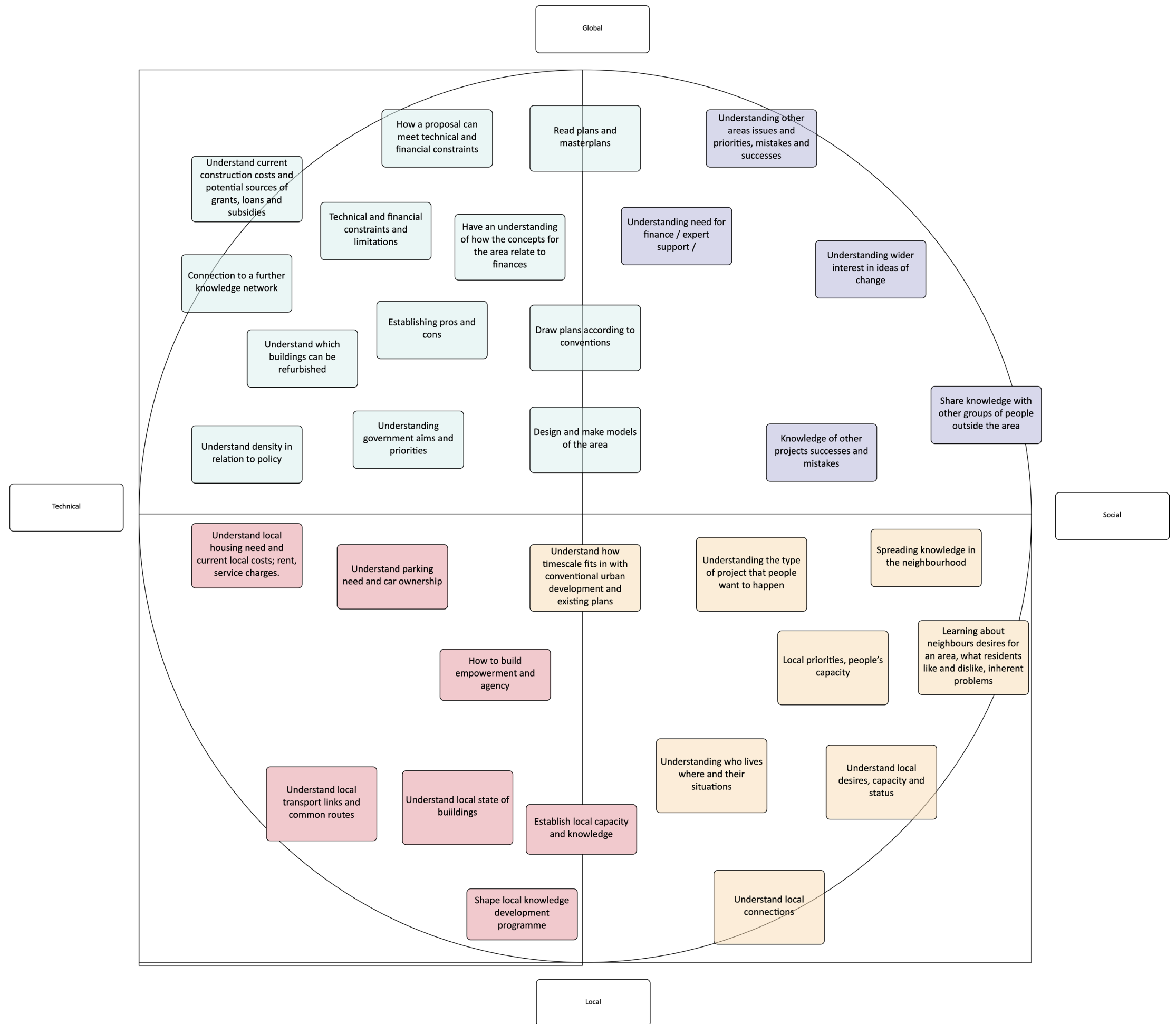
As Crabu and Magaudda note however, despite the success of the road-map, the learning process in infrastructuring “cannot be reduced to the acquisition of an abstract stock of notional knowledge.”²⁸⁹ The predetermined stages of the regeneration and the elements within those stages, as well as the complex interactions between the different stakeholders and consultants reduced the time and space available for the development of critical knowledge. Friere highlights the difference between education and training, that when there is no room for education and critical thought, there is also no room for change and therefore no possibility for hope.²⁹⁰ The original roadmap highlighted the fact that the technical regeneration infrastructure runs on a predetermined route with very little room for manoeuvre. The roadmap differed from the handbooks and guides that I mentioned earlier in that it doesn’t attempt to translate the information itself; it aims to situate the non-expert within the temporal regeneration process without adding to the amount of data and information they are obliged to absorb. The roadmap also relates the visible processes that the non-expert experiences, such as consultation and engagement, to hidden processes that drive the decisions such as policy creation or finance.

Bowker suggests tools to overcome the methodological challenge of studying knowledge infrastructures, such as “infrastructural inversion” which rather than focussing on the activities which the knowledge infrastructure supports, focus on the things which demonstrate its function, foregrounding what is making the infrastructure work such as its formation, how it is maintained, upgraded, what happens when there is breakdown, and how it is repaired.²⁹¹ In order to illustrate these functions, the diagram on the following page demonstrates activities derived from elements on the original road-map and the associated knowledge created through that activity. Focusing on activities undertaken by the Architect_Organisers and the layers of knowledge created through those activities provides a useful reframing compared with the original road-map. Rearranging the elements on the

289 Crabu and Magaudda, ‘Bottom-up Infrastructures’.

290 Freire, Paulo, Ana Maria Araújo Freire, and Paulo Freire. *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London ; New York: Bloomsbury, 2014.

291 Jesper Simonsen, Helena Karasti, and Morten Hertzum, ‘Infrastructuring and Participatory Design: Exploring Infrastructural Inversion as Analytic, Empirical and Generative’, *Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)* 29, no. 1–2 (April 2020): 115–51, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10606-019-09365-w>.

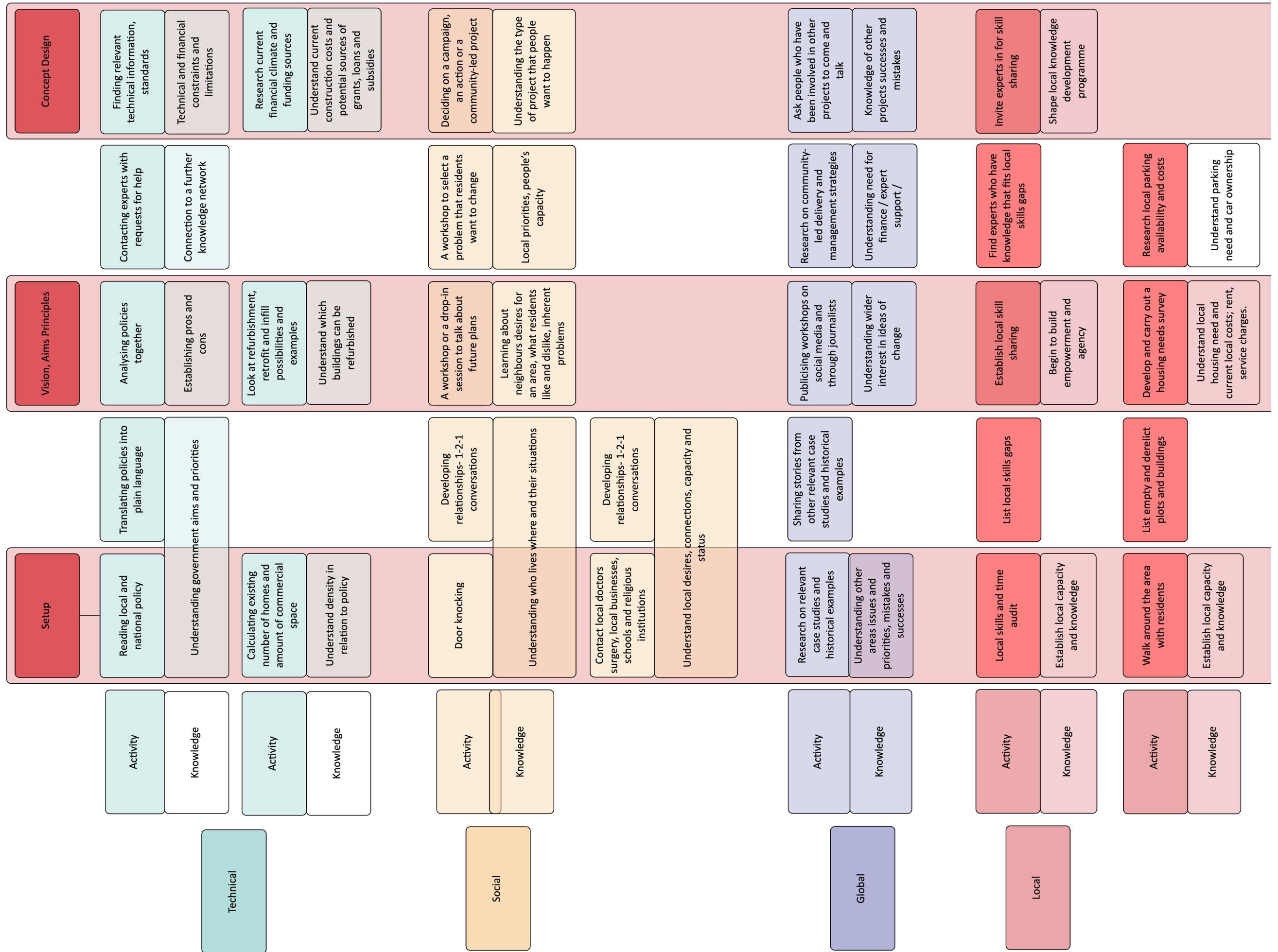


3.05 Mapping knowledge infrastructures along Bowkers axes of techical-social and global-local

road-map according to Bowker's axis of technical, social, global and local also links parts of the process that were previously on separate routes of policy, finance, design and forward thinking. This process begins to illustrate how the role of the Architect_Organiser could be an essential part of developing frameworks that alter relationships between data, information, knowledge and what a regeneration process means to those involved. Community organising develops the understanding of the technical regeneration infrastructure and contributes towards the slow development of a locally embedded knowledge infrastructure. The Architect_Organiser naturally connects and builds knowledge that traverses the different scales of global-local and technical-social.

The next step in the process of infrastructural inversion is illustrated in the following diagram. Elements initially encountered in the original road-map are reframed. For example “outlining possible delivery and management strategies” becomes “analysis of existing delivery options,” and “discussion on how to make delivery benefit local businesses.” “Outlining possible management strategies” becomes “development of training programme on building management with residents.” Expanding this thread to encompass the social infrastructure of the regeneration, the diagram also illustrates activities that represent the maintenance required to build long-term relationships and knowledge. Extending the inverse road-map shows not only the knowledge that is created, but highlights who is holding that knowledge. The Architect_Organiser works to ensure that the holders of knowledge are distributed across and between the different stakeholders and networks involved in the regeneration process.

3.06 Inverting the road-map, examining knowledge infrastructures



A working hypothesis for the practice of the Architect_Organiser

Understanding the road-map as a starting point, and then returning again to the principle of the accretion of knowledge with the aim of gaining agency, it is clear that the Architect_Organiser is invested in the directing of data and information into knowledge as a political act. All of the tactics which potentially allow more access to the data and information about the local area, and also make that information accessible and understandable, need to be experimented with and potentially cultivated.

The practice of knowledge production belongs *between* the A and the O of the Architect_Organiser, intentionally linking professional knowledge with the knowledge of the non-expert. The Architect_Organiser spans the technical and social infrastructures of the regeneration process. The knowledge infrastructure that develops through this practice is situated and specific to the context and location where it accretes. Extending the roles of both the architect and the community organiser, the Architect_Organiser draws on the following principles:

Empowers non-experts to have access to necessary data and information.

Empowerment catalysts can come from “gaining access to new information, learning new technical skills, or developing fresh political strategies.”

²⁹² This access empowerment is a form of literacy similar to the literacy that Gray et. al. describe as “data infrastructure literacy”.²⁹³ Combining community organising theory and critical pedagogy cultivates strategic participatory frameworks which allow non-experts to gain literacy in the regeneration process and its stakeholders, understanding the locations of power, timescales, speeds and decision points. Freire’s theories of critical pedagogy are useful here as they emphasise the role of the political in empowerment.²⁹⁴

292 Kirk Jalbert, ‘Building Knowledge Infrastructures for Empowerment: A Study of Grassroots Water Monitoring Networks in the Marcellus Shale’, *Science & Technology Studies* 29, no. 2 (13 May 2016): 26–43, <https://doi.org/10.23987/sts.55740>.p28.

293 Jonathan Gray, Carolin Gerlitz, and Liliana Bounegru, ‘Data Infrastructure Literacy’, *Big Data & Society* 5, no. 2 (July 2018): 205395171878631, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951718786316>.

294 Giroux, *Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope*.

Recognises the movement of data and information into knowledge as political acts.

The development of the practice of the A_O is designed to encourage the slow accretion of knowledge.²⁹⁵ Part of the role of the A_O is to build knowledge through relationships and collaboration whether it is in public or under the radar. Tactics which distribute knowledge more equitably are necessary to cultivate regardless. The A_O is intentionally building a position between the various stakeholders which connects to different forms and sources of data, information and knowledge and cultivates “the ability partially to translate knowledges among very different and power-differentiated communities”.²⁹⁶

Takes a feminist approach to knowledge building.

The Architect_Organiser reconsiders the contents and contexts of data, information and knowledge infrastructures from the perspective of non-experts and “challenges entrenched disciplinary divides”.²⁹⁷ The Architect_Organiser promotes the “collective reconstruction” of knowledge as opposed to only the “theoretical deconstruction” of knowledge.²⁹⁸ Through making possible novel flows of data, information and knowledge, the A_O brings together diverse knowledge temporalities, locations and positions.²⁹⁹ The situated nature of the A_O enables the cultivation of knowledge “in the margins”, a space of radical openness and possibility, a site of resistance.³⁰⁰ The importance of knowledge in the margins is reiterated by Gordon; “a subjugated knowledge that sometimes speaks its own language but almost always exceeds the contingent socioeconomic conditions and geopolitical locations in which it arises”, by Halberstam “we may want new rationales

295 Karasti, ‘Knowledge Infrastructures: Part I’.

296 Haraway, ‘Situated Knowledges’. p580.

297 Cyd Cipolla, Kristina Gupta, and David A. Rubin, eds., *Queer Feminist Science Studies: A Reader*, 1st Edition, Feminist Technosciences (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2017). p9.

298 Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, ‘Feminist knowledge politics in situated zones A different hi/story of knowledge construction,’ <https://women.it/cyberarchive/files/puig.htm>.p3.

299 Haraway, ‘Situated Knowledges’.

300 bell hooks, ‘Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness’ in Jane Rendell et al., *Gender Space Architecture an Interdisciplinary Introduction* (London; New York: Routledge, 2000).

for knowledge production, different aesthetic standards for ordering or disordering space, other modes of political engagement than those conjured by the liberal imagination. We may, ultimately, want more undisciplined knowledge, more questions and fewer answers” and by Moten and Harney.³⁰¹ The use of infrastructures and infrastructuring enables what Haraway argues for as the “politics and epistemologies of location, positioning, and situating, where partiality and not universality is the condition of being heard to make rational knowledge claims.”³⁰²

In this text I have argued the ways in which my embedded practice was framed using the active methodologies of infrastructuring and critical pedagogy. This framework has enabled me to develop the role of the Architect_Organiser as a practice that cultivates knowledge infrastructures. In the following section I will demonstrate how I have tested the development of the role through experimenting with how the A_O is able to operate within the existing infrastructures of the urban regeneration process. This also enables me to explore how the development of the role of the A_O problematises the architectural profession.

301 Avery Gordon, *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins*, First edition (New York: Fordham University Press, 2018). pX. Judith Halberstam, *The Queer Art of Failure* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011). p10. Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study* (Wivenhoe: Minor Compositions, 2013).

302 Haraway, ‘Situated Knowledges’. p589.

Chapter 4

Exploring the practice of the Architect_Organiser through working 'within' and 'against'.

*"Fearing implication with those in power, we become attached to guarding and demonstrating our purity rather than mucking around in everyday politics. Those who engage in such work may find themselves accused of betraying their values, sleeping with the enemy, bargaining with the devil—all manner of transgressions and betrayals."*³⁰³

In this section I describe how I develop my practice through an understanding of working simultaneously "within" and "against". Bell and Pahl use the terms "within," "against" and "beyond" to describe modes of simultaneous operation in their paper "Co-production: towards a utopian approach".³⁰⁴ They describe working within as working to maintain the open space of coproduction through "utilizing its methods, discourses" and also providing examples of the "social relations it hopes to see flourish on a larger scale."³⁰⁵ Working against is then used to articulate "the dissonance between the explicit aims of such practice and the present social order."³⁰⁶ Using the dichotomy of working "within" and "against" I am able to develop the Architect_Organiser role through two very different deep explorations of the regeneration process.

The notion of within and against allow the A_O to move between collaboration and resilience, to occupy "a fluid space of crossing borders and, as such, a contradictory one of collusion and oppositionality, complicity, and subversion".³⁰⁷ Within and against demonstrate the complexity of the practice, its strengths and weaknesses, and begin to show directions

303 J. K. Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006). p6.

304 David M. Bell and Kate Pahl, 'Co-Production: Towards a Utopian Approach', *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 21, no. 1 (2 January 2018): 105–17, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2017.1348581>.

305 Bell and Pahl, 'Co-Production'. p108.

306 Bell and Pahl, 'Co-Production'. p108.

307 Wanda Pillow, 'Confession, Catharsis, or Cure? Rethinking the Uses of Reflexivity as Methodological Power in Qualitative Research', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 16, no. 2 (March 2003): 175–96, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0951839032000060635>. p191.

in which this practice could be further developed in the future. Within is typified by collaborative and hopeful actions, and characterised by a militant optimism.³⁰⁸ Against is typified by a resilient and proactive character, unafraid of challenging conventions. Within attempts to create a genuine power and knowledge sharing arrangement between residents and council officers to coproduce the Custom House regeneration in Newham. Against identifies the data and information that is driving decision making, exposes the inconsistencies in the current system and seeks scope for innovation.

The role of the Architect_Organiser developed over time through strategies and tactics that emerged through my daily practice, initially embedded at PEACH in Custom House. The strength of the Architect_Organiser is based on the embedded and slow knowledge production practice described in section three. Embedded community organising work enabled me to develop my practice through examining how data and information or lack thereof plays a pivotal role in the agency of residents, non-experts and myself as the A_O. I used the development of my role in practice to experiment with hypotheses developed in response to my research questions: What roles do data and information play in the context of architecture, planning and policy, in relation to community and non-expert groups, and how can the hybrid practice of the Architect_Organiser be developed to establish a critical and productive role for the use of such data and information by both experts and non-experts?

Infrastructuring in practice, the Architect_Organiser attempts to rearrange relationships between stakeholders in the regeneration process. Intentionally working “within” and “against” extends infrastructuring in practice through enabling simultaneous and even conflicting strategies to be attempted. “Within” aims for a model participatory process developed by the A_O. The development of the process takes the research deeper into theories of partnership and democracy, and the common pitfalls in such approaches. “Against” aims for extensive data and information release driven by the need to expose and intervene in systems of power, aided by critical pedagogical principles. The release of previously hidden data and information attempts to close the gaps in the public data infrastructure. Despite “within” and “against” being at times in conflict with each other, there are also moments

308 Davina Cooper, *Everyday Utopias: The Conceptual Life of Promising Spaces* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

when the two practices form an uncomfortable partnership, releasing data and information usually kept confidential in order to build resident power and agency.

Within. The Context:

The following narrative follows four years of my practice from 2018 to the present, 2022. I use the narrative to illustrate the complexity, the twists and turns of the regeneration process and the changing relationships between myself as the A_O and other stakeholders. The following messy series of events allowed me to develop my role as the A_O and further define my practice. The events that are described in this chapter demonstrate the overlap between my practice-led research, and my role at PEACH, attempting to enable resident agency within the regeneration process. In this text, I have tried to show how the events that I encountered whilst representing PEACH informed my research, as well as how my research informed the background and theory behind the decisions I made at PEACH. It would not be humanly possible, and against the spirit of the role that I have created, to form an artificial barrier within my own work in order to separate the two roles. The implications of this decision become clear as the narrative unfolds.

The community as the client. Writing a coproduction brief

*“Coproduction is a relationship where professionals and citizens share power to design, plan, assess and deliver together. It recognises that everyone has a vital contribution to make in order to improve quality of life for people and communities”.*³⁰⁹

During the late summer of 2018 through to October, the Custom House regeneration was re-initiated by London Borough of Newham (LBN). A new regeneration officer was employed by LBN to kickstart the process as part of the Public Practice programme.³¹⁰ After the success of the

309 Josh Ryan-Collins and Lucie Stephens, ‘Co-production. A manifesto for growing the core economy,’ <https://neweconomics.org/2008/07/co-production/>, accessed 24th June 2022.

310 Public Practice, ‘Public Practice is a not-for-profit social enterprise with a mission to improve the quality and equality of everyday places by building the public sector’s capacity for proactive planning,’ <https://www.publicpractice.org.uk/>, accessed 13th April 2020.

Alternative Regeneration Plan as described in chapter two of this thesis, the regeneration officer approached PEACH with a proposal for resident input. She suggested PEACH could help to write the design brief and residents could participate in the design team procurement for the Custom House regeneration, which was due to take place at the beginning of 2019. At PEACH, the organising team consisted of 2-3 community organisers and two self-described Architectural Organisers.³¹¹ The PEACH organising team is the group of people who I am describing when I use the term “we” in the following narrative. We were excited by this opportunity to influence the selection of the design team and contemplated a number of ways of getting residents more involved through the writing of the design brief.³¹² If resident involvement was a key part of the brief, it would make participation in the process unavoidable, we thought. After some discussion, it was agreed to propose a “coproduction brief” to maximise resident involvement.

The term “coproduction” indicates production to include both design *and* implementation, which differentiates it from co-design, service design or participatory design, although coproduction can include all of these activities under its umbrella. It is generally agreed that the term coproduction was first used by Elinor Ostrom in the 1970’s when working on research with the police force of Chicago to demonstrate how “users” and “providers” depend each other for service results.³¹³ The concept of “users” and “providers” working together to design and implement services appropriate to “users” needs is now common across many disciplines such as social care and healthcare and has obvious intersections with the fields of co-design and participatory design. The term coproduction is vague, sometimes deliberately so, which allows scope for collaboration to expand.³¹⁴ Coproduction was seen as a participatory framework with potential for power sharing and genuine partnership between the local authority and residents of Custom House because the concept went beyond codesign and

311 At this moment in time my research and the development of my role was in its infancy, I therefore refer to my role as the Architectural Organiser, the name of the role created by PEACH, rather than Architect_Organiser as it became through my research.

312 We in this instance refers to the PEACH team of community organisers and architectural organisers.

313 Angela Filipe, Alicia Renedo, and Cicely Marston, ‘The Co-Production of What? Knowledge, Values, and Social Relations in Health Care’, ed. Claire Marris, *PLOS Biology* 15, no. 5 (3 May 2017): e2001403, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.2001403>.

314 Filipe, Renedo, and Marston, ‘The Co-Production of What?’

had the potential to influence council policy on resident engagement.

Many residents felt that they had already taken part in a codesign process for the Custom House masterplan. Some residents had taken part in design workshops or evaluations in 2003, 2008, 2015 *and* 2018.³¹⁵ Coproduction was seen as a way for residents to move up the ladder of participation into a partnership role with the council, leading to a different form of collaboration rather than a repeat of the engagement process that had happened multiple times before. It was also a way to prioritise architectural practices who had expertise in resident participation through the design of a procurement scoring matrix. The design of the scoring matrix enabled residents to insert scores for elements that they wanted to see the design teams focus on. In this case the resident engagement score was given a weighting to emphasise its importance. In the PEACH office, we saw the design brief as an opportunity to write the wider community as understood by the community organisers into the structure of the project *as a client* and ensure that there was genuine resident participation in all aspects of the process. The final specification for the design brief stated that the community would be considered part of the client team:

“As this is a process of collaborative design and engagement, the community are to be considered as part of the client team and it will be agreed collaboratively how best interested members or selected representatives will be invited to project team meetings or end of stage presentations”³¹⁶

Community elections and partnership.

Following the collaborative brief writing process between myself, the regeneration officer and PEACH community organisers, the brief was released to the GLA procurement framework for the selection of the design team.³¹⁷ There were ten practices on the GLA framework “Housing and

315 Each phase of the regeneration was accompanied by a resident engagement period, including consultations on the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Custom House and Canning Town Regeneration in 2008 and the re-initiation of the regeneration in 2015 and again in 2018.

316 London Borough of Newham, ‘Brief specification for the Architect-led Design Team for: CUSTOM HOUSE CO-DESIGN & PLANNING APPLICATION,’ unpublished document, July 2018.

317 Mayor of London, ‘Procurement: Architecture Design and Urbanism Panel,’ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/advice-and-guidance/procurement-architecture-design-and-urbanism-panel>, accessed 28th June 2022.

Mixed Use” panel. Each practice had completed a competitive process in order to be able to tender for local authority projects. The design teams submitted their tender packages to the council to bid for the job. The PEACH Alternative Regeneration Plan Evidence Base was included in the design brief as an appendix. It was agreed between the council and PEACH that the tender selection panel would include two resident representatives. The council wanted to select two residents from those who had been attending engagement events, however at PEACH we were keen to use the opportunity to publicise our emerging collaboration with the council. We met with council representatives and proposed running an election. There were concerns from officers over maintaining impartiality and confidentiality, however at PEACH we felt that this would be the best way of ensuring the legitimacy of the resident representatives.

Quick and Bryson state three essential elements of ensuring legitimacy as per theories of governance as being adequacy of participation or representation, workability of decision outcomes and procedural fairness of the process.³¹⁸ After some negotiation the council agreed to facilitate the election, held over one day in one of the empty shops on Freemasons Road. Through negotiations it was also agreed that the resident representatives would be paid for their time, using a scheme called “Reward and Recognition”,³¹⁹ which paid the representatives just under the London Living Wage. Once elected, the resident representatives were introduced to the procurement process and given the tender packages from the design teams to read and score. This proved to be a steep learning curve, the language used in the tender documents was technical and unfamiliar and the scoring method was also new. The resident representatives were supported through the process by the senior community organiser at PEACH, and everyone involved in the process was required to sign a non-disclosure agreement, although after some arguing, the representatives were allowed to take the tender documents home for extra time to read them in detail.

In the evaluation that PEACH conducted directly after the procurement had

318 Kathryn Quick and John Bryson, ‘Theories of public participation in governance’ in *Handbook on Theories of Governance*. Eds Ansell, Christopher K., and Jacob Torfing (Paperback edition. Cheltenham, UK Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2017.)

319 London Borough of Newham, ‘Getting involved in shaping services,’ <https://www.newham.gov.uk/health-adult-social-care/co-production>, accessed 28th June 2022.

finished, the resident representatives described how they felt a mixture of relieved, optimistic, worried, nervous, excited, enlivened, overwhelmed and pressured by the process.³²⁰ The process had been challenging to plan into their daily lives of work and childcare due to changing timescales, support for the representatives was only brought in at the last minute and there was some confusion as to the roles and decision making capacities of LBN officers. However, the process successfully demonstrated working in partnership with the council, doing something in a different way and learning from it, beginning to change the way that the council works in regeneration and changing the nature of the relationship between the council and residents. It was agreed by all that the residents, with support from PEACH, worked very well in partnership with the council.

Within the PEACH organising team, we remained ignorant of the depth of the challenge ahead. We felt as if we were moving towards a genuine solution for the regeneration and that the first step in the council sharing power with residents was underway. By January 2019, PEACH and in particular the Architectural Organisers had established a reliable relationship with the regeneration officers at LBN. My role as the Architectural Organiser primarily involved working with the regeneration officer responsible for Custom House, and introducing critical pedagogical elements into PEACH resident meetings. For example, one meeting involved deconstructing information given to residents of other estates undergoing regeneration in order to prepare for a ballot. The documents, generally known as the “Landlord Offer,” consist of the outline proposals for the regeneration and the question that residents will be asked to vote on in the ballot.³²¹ PEACH members questioned the information given in the landlord offers, enabling them to also put forward proposals for information that they felt should be included in the future landlord offer for Custom House.

The Architectural Organisers also maintained awareness in the community

320 See Mapping E for images of the evaluation

321 Carpenters Estate Landlord Offer, https://s3-eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/commonplace-customer-assets/thecarpentersestate/Carpenters%20Estate%20Landlord_Offer_FINAL_06102021.pdf, accessed 20th September 2022. Cambridge Road Estate Landlord Offer, https://cambridgeroadestate.com/assets/pdf/Cambridge_Road_Estate_Landlord_Offer_Document.pdf, accessed 6th October 2022. Love Lane Landlord Offer, https://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/love_lane_landlord_offer_final.pdf, accessed 6th October 2022.

of the work we were doing behind the scenes with the regeneration officers at London Borough of Newham through these resident meetings. Ideally we would have also met with residents and had 1-2-1 conversations during this time, however budget and time constraints meant that this didn't happen regularly. Later on, I regretted not having prioritised building those relationships.

A groundbreaking governance system

PEACH organisers, the Architectural Organisers and the regeneration officer began developing proposals for a coproduction steering group to manage the regeneration process with the support of Stephen Hill, a semi-retired consultant with many years expertise in coproduction (see case study of SHADA in chapter 2). The Mayor of Newham was supportive and interested in the potential of coproduction to build trust between residents in Custom House and the council. The fundamental basis for the operation of the steering group took the form of a document titled the "Terms of Reference" (TOR). This was initially drafted through a series of word document revisions and edits, led by the regeneration officer at LBN and myself at PEACH, with the help of Stephen Hill, Helen Nicol and other officers at LBN from the Adult Services department. As the TOR evolved, it included decision making structures, provisions for relationship building and accountability, membership criteria, expert advisors, training and support, information sharing, conflicts of interest, selection criteria and review processes.³²² The TOR became the battleground in the development of the coproduction process where it was decided how much power would be given to the resident representatives.

The draft TOR contained a number of clauses which were ground-breaking in terms of bringing a community organising and critical pedagogical approach into the governance of the coproduction. Understanding the role of data and information in relation to decision-making and therefore power, it was envisaged that the resident representatives would "have full and equal access to all information held by LBN, the design team and the delivery team including that classed as confidential."³²³ The release of data and information would then enable the resident representatives to

322 Appendix 3: Custom House TOR

323 Ibid.

take the data and information to “independent advisors of their choice, selected by the resident representatives.”³²⁴ The independent analysis of data and information produced by the council and consultants by resident representatives would then enable them to bring the ideas and proposals suggested to wider community forums. The responses from the wider community could then be fed back into the coproduction process. The resident representatives were imagined as community organisers themselves, and relationship building was included to ensure that they remain connected to residents throughout the process:

“Resident Reps are accountable to the community. They will:

Be elected by the community in a transparent vote

Report back to the wider community at public meetings and via other platforms

Have approximately 2x 1-2-1s with wider community members every month and 1 x 1-2-1 meeting with each other

*Regularly attend wider community engagement events and meetings.”*³²⁵

The Architectural Organisers were hopeful of being able to act as advisors to the resident representatives, supplementing the technical process underway in the steering group with political and historical context that would enable resident representatives to better analyse proposals and their effects. The understanding of the difficulty inherent in navigating the power imbalance between the council and the resident representatives led to much discussion regarding how to regulate decision making in the coproduction process. It was initially accepted that the CHSG would be comprised of two sides working together, in partnership rather than a unified body:

*“For a decision to pass through the CHSG, there must a balanced, two thirds majority. This means that two thirds of voting members of both the Community Reps and the Council Officers must agree to ensure that there is balanced support for all decisions.”*³²⁶

The TOR also addressed payment, in order to prevent a discrepancy between the officers working for the council, and residents volunteering time. This also to enabled residents who didn’t have capacity to undertake unpaid work

324 Appendix 3: Custom House TOR

325 Appendix 3: Custom House TOR

326 Ibid.

to participate in the process:

“Community Reps will be eligible to be paid for their time according to the Newham reward and recognition policy. This includes time for training and background reading preparation. This policy includes covering reasonable childcare expenses for Community Reps.”³²⁷

Once the TOR draft was relatively complete it was agreed that a second election would be held to elect the resident representatives who would sit on the steering group.³²⁸ A second hustings was arranged by PEACH, to take place at PEACH housing club. PEACH community organisers supported residents who wanted to stand as representatives to write a statement describing themselves and their role in the community. At the hustings twelve residents read out their statements, and in the following week an election was held using the same system as elected the representatives for the procurement process. The election was a success with 120 people voting over two days. The six residents with the highest numbers of votes became the resident representatives for the Custom House Steering Group (CHSG). Once the steering group had been established, it was agreed that the final format of the TOR would be decided and the TOR would be signed off by corporate council departments such as legal and finance.

On the same day as the election, I was at a Future of London workshop alongside regeneration officers from LBN and PEACH community organisers, presenting on the progress of the coproduction and taking part in an exploratory session which we presciently titled “What are we scared of?”³²⁹

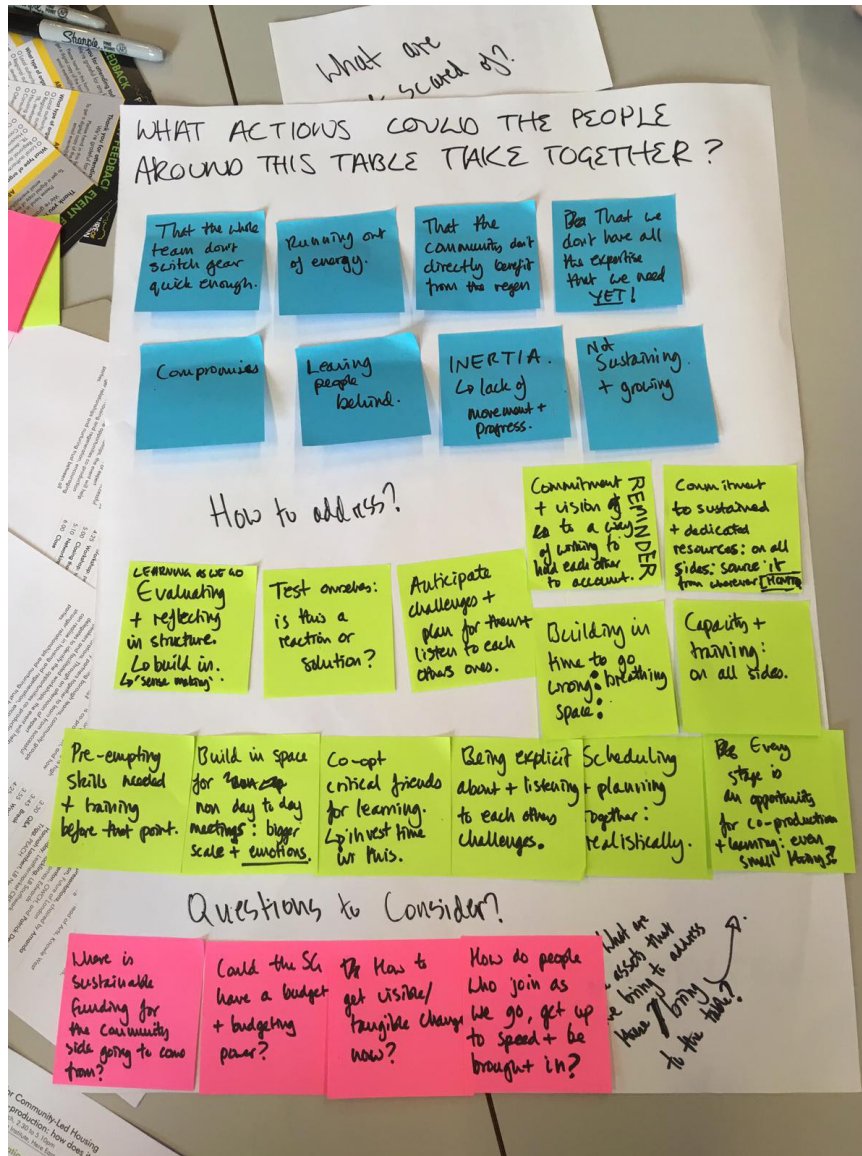
The other participants looked on enviously as we demonstrated our fledgling coproduction process, residents, organisers and officers working together. In talking about our fears, we named the anxieties which were beginning to surface at the prospect of such a large project being undertaken in ways which were new to all of us. We were scared of compromise, inertia, lack of expertise, leaving people behind and running out of energy. When we discussed how to address these fears, time for evaluating and reflecting,

327 Appendix 3: Custom House TOR

328 Ibid

329 Bristow, Charli, ‘Taking action: co-production in housing and regeneration,’ 11th April 2019, <https://www.futureoflondon.org.uk/2019/04/11/co-production-housing-and-regeneration/>, accessed 12th September 2022.

including critical friends to learn from and training for all were suggested. We realised that the learning curve for new participants remained an issue, as well as funding for the community side of the proposal, but we remained enthusiastic that we would be able to work together to solve the issues as they arose.



4.01 'What are we scared of?' Brainstorm notes from the Future of London workshop on coproduction

PEACH community organisers and myself as the Architectural Organiser, were commissioned by the council to run the first training session for the newly elected resident representatives and the council regeneration officer. This was a level of integration and trust between residents and the council that had not been seen previously. The training session was designed to focus on building confidence in residents in relation to the regeneration

process, and connecting them to the labyrinth of information that they were about to encounter. We wanted the new steering group members to build strong relationships with each other and work out the kind of support that they need for themselves.³³⁰

This was a key moment integrating the critical pedagogical theory of “problematising education” with the practice of the Architect_Organiser.³³¹ The educational session consisted of an updated and more detailed version of the roadmap of the regeneration, a jargon buster (guess the acronym), and opportunities for the representatives to connect with each other through 1-2-1 conversations, food and tea. The second iteration of the roadmap emphasised situating the non-expert residents temporally within the process, enabling them to visualise the next twelve months of work. The workshop also highlighted moments in the regeneration process which non-experts could recognise as evaluation or reflection points, and initiate their own strategies, including sabotage or refusal if necessary. This workshop was a identifiable point in the evolution of the role of the Architect_Organiser, where as a researcher, I was bringing in knowledge of the theories of education and participation that I would not have otherwise known of. The combination of people in the room, including council employees, PEACH community organisers, residents and myself was the beginning of the development of a network of people with a variety of skills who would become an embedded knowledge infrastructure on the ground in Custom House. We were full of optimism, but how much power did residents actually have in this situation?

Despite the consensual intent in the process of developing the TOR, clashes emerged that demonstrated the conflict between the coproduction process and the decision-making structures of local government. In March 2019, the draft TOR was sent through to the council legal team for sign off. It was returned with a major amendment: the steering group was not able to be a decision-making body. This was due to a legal document titled the Scheme of Delegation that “sets out how the Mayor and full Council have delegated

330 See Mapping E for more detail.

331 Serpa et al., ‘Political-Pedagogical Contributions to Participatory Design from Paulo Freire’. p3.

their executive and non-executive powers.”³³² The Scheme of Delegation ensures that only council employees are able to make decisions on behalf of the council, and specifically in Newham, the scheme only enables delegation to officers. Legal advice which I obtained was clear that there were some possibilities to navigate around this issue, such as setting up an Area Committee.³³³ However, an Area Committee would have entailed a full rewrite of the Newham Scheme of Delegation, a prospect which was ruled out by lawyers.³³⁴ The ability of the steering group to make decisions, and therefore share power, was an essential element of agency for the resident representatives. When examined through the lens of Friere, without decision making the resident representatives are “allowed merely the illusion of acting, whereas in fact they would continue to be manipulated – and in this case by the presumed foes of manipulation”, the council.³³⁵ Faced with being part of a “consultative body”, the community representatives began planning their exit strategy behind the scenes. Expert advisors, myself, PEACH organisers and the representatives tried to push back against what we saw as a demotion of the steering group to a consultative body , but despite our collective efforts the final role of the CHSG was defined as follows:

“Role and Scope

The Steering Group is a deliberative and consultative body working with the Council for the delivery of the 1st phase of the Custom House Regeneration Programme. It will:

Provide feedback, suggestions and recommendations to the Council, to fully inform its decision making, in respect of Council and other reports relating to the design, viability and delivery of the programme

332 Fenwick, Daniel, ‘Newham Scheme of Delegation,’ last modified 19th January 2021, <https://www.newham.gov.uk/downloads/file/4281/scheme-of-delegation-amended-april-2021>, accessed 15th September 2023. p2.

333 An area committee is generally made up of local councillors who have been delegated powers to make decisions on local issues including local budgeting. For example see Hull area committees, Bristol area committees and Barnet area committees. Hull City Council, ‘Area Committees,’ <https://www.hull.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/structure-and-decision-making/area-committees>. accessed 28th June 2022. Bristol City Council, ‘Bristol Area Committees,’ accessed 28th June 2022, <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/people-communities/area-committees>. London Borough of Barnet, ‘Committee Details,’ <https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=717> accessed 28th June 2022

334 Jenkins, Keith, email to author, 19th April 2019.

335 Paulo Freire et al., *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2018). p48.

Ensure the community is fully engaged and consulted in delivering the Steering Group's remit, and provide feedback to the wider community on its work

Participate in the procurement of services for the Regeneration programme

Form Sub Groups, as required, to review and discuss topics matters relating to the Regeneration programme which require a dedicated resource and/or more detailed consideration for a specified period of time to reach a consensus to be presented to the Steering Group.

*Form Working Groups, as required, to deal with routine programme management matters relating to the regeneration programme that require dedicated time outside of the Steering Group meetings.*³³⁶

Decision making by the Steering Group means the process that goes on inside the Steering Group for the purpose of reaching a conclusion in a discussion and/or making a recommendation to the Council for actions that lie outside the remit and competence of the Steering Group i.e. recommendations go to those who are identified in the Council's Scheme of Delegation.³³⁷

It is worth noting that the convoluted nature of the description of decision-making in the final document went against the clarity and directness of the original intent. The details in the definition are important to note, because these details are precisely the terms which prevent the sharing of power. My aim in going into such detail regarding the legal structures of the coproduction process is to highlight how these institutional barriers affected the development of my role as the A_O. However, these barriers are deeper than just institutional, actually moving into democratic theory. Dacombe writes of the division in democratic theory between those who recommend widespread citizen participation, and those who favour a representative model, whereby widespread participation take place primarily through the election of democratic representatives.³³⁸ The steering group ran into difficulties here because of the restriction on who is able to make decisions within the council, due to the fact that the council is run in a representative manner. The delegation of decision-making to the steering group level went

336 Appendix 3: Custom House TOR, .

337 Ibid.

338 Rod Dacombe, *Rethinking Civic Participation in Democratic Theory and Practice*, The Theories, Concepts and Practices of Democracy (London, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

against the representative democratic structures that were in place. The required structures for equitable and widespread participation in decision-making did not exist. The roots of this reoccurring issue with the concept of coproduction in a representative democracy were something that I was not aware of at the time, and that I was made aware of later through the evaluation of the coproduction process. In terms of the recommendations which the steering group was enabled to make the TOR states:

“The group will seek to reach a consensus in coming to a view on any matter. In making any recommendation, the notes will record all views, including any dissenting views from the majority consensus.”³³⁹

The lack of decision making power of the steering group itself combined with the fact that when the steering group makes a recommendation it will not require an absolute consensus reduces the necessity that the group follow the deliberative decision making process to its full conclusion. A debate whereby some people remain in disagreement could therefore suffice in order for a recommendation to be sent onwards to the council. Given the power imbalance between residents and the council, it is easy to assume that the dissenting views on recommendations are more likely to come from residents than officers.

Conflict of interest

Attempting to pinpoint the moment where the role Architectural_Organiser at PEACH becomes the Architect_Organiser is not straightforward, as I mentioned earlier. One of the first and main moments of divergence between the two roles began with the perceived conflict of interest that was initially highlighted by the council. In trying to reconfigure relationships in the regeneration process in practice, I ran into institutional barriers that I was not expecting. Reflecting this, from this point on I use both A_O and Architectural Organiser to refer to my role, understanding that the A_O is the emergence of the practitioner that is the focus of this thesis. The A_O makes move from being part of the organising team at PEACH to being a researcher turning the focus onto the role, developing the role and taking intentional positions.

The coproduction that meets the aims of the A_O as discussed in chapter

339 Appendix 3: Custom House TOR.

three is a coproduction that intentionally shares power. This would happen not only through decision making but also through transparent multi-directional exchanges of data and information between all stakeholders. “Proper political questions always involve decisions that require making a choice between conflicting alternatives”, and in order to make those decisions, all the necessary data and information needs to be available.³⁴⁰ The sharing of data and information and the resulting production of knowledge as part of the practice of the A_O adds another layer to the debate over sharing power. Bell and Pahl describe coproduction as having the potential to destabilise “privileged sites for the production and dissemination of knowledge.”³⁴¹ They state that coproduction “understands that useful and critical knowledge is dispersed throughout society and seeks to activate, expand and apply this knowledge to effect change.”³⁴²

As the A_O I was building relationships with the Custom House design team and the delivery team with the aim of integrating their knowledge as consultants into the coproduction process. The consultants were a site of knowledge production and therefore also a site where coproduction could potentially be destabilising to the advantage of non-experts. I met the consultants regularly to discuss the project program and how it was aligning with the formation of the Custom House Steering Group (CHSG), sometimes I was accompanied by PEACH community organisers and at other times I was alone. With the design team, we discussed the program of resident engagement and how PEACH and the design team could work together to get more residents to attend. With the delivery team, we discussed viability, different modes of delivery, and how previous resident engagement around viability and delivery had been nonexistent. With both sets of consultants, the discussions were exciting and despite the decision making issue, there appeared to be potential for some groundbreaking collaboration. In my role as the A_O, I was working with all parties simultaneously: Consultants, the council, residents and supported by a team of expert advisors in the form of a sympathetic developer, coproduction experts, lawyers, and local authority

340 Chantal Mouffe, *Agonistics: Thinking the World Politically*, 2013, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=729879>. p14.

341 David M. Bell and Kate Pahl, ‘Co-Production: Towards a Utopian Approach’, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 21, no. 1 (2 January 2018): 105–17, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2017.1348581>. p107.

342 Bell and Pahl, ‘Co-Production’. p107.

finance experts. The consultants employed by the council were eager for our “insider knowledge”. At PEACH we had good relationships with residents, and the Architectural Organisers were trusted people with local knowledge who also spoke the professional language of the consultants.

These experiences were enabling me to further develop my role as the A_O, understanding through practice how the role could begin to reconfigure the relationships between stakeholders in the regeneration process, and simultaneously building knowledge with all parties. However, the borders were fuzzy as to the accountability and funding sources for such a multidimensional practice, situated between all of the stakeholders but fully accountable to none. The fuzziness caused confusion and questions. I was challenged as to who my client was by the council. From an architectural perspective, the A_O is clientless which goes against the Architects Code of Practice: “You are expected to ensure that before you undertake any professional work you have entered into a written agreement with the client.”³⁴³ Residents asked why I was collaborating with the council who were untrustworthy power holders. The consultants urged me and PEACH to contractually formalise our relationship with them. However, as the negotiations around the TOR progressed, it was impossible to ignore the whisperings around me. “Conflict of interest” they muttered. You can’t subconsult with all the consultants and be embedded at PEACH. You can’t be an advisor to the resident representatives, sub-consult with design consultants, and be in unofficial conversation with all the officers on the regeneration team. That’s a conflict of interest.³⁴⁴

There was an added layer to the confusion due to the E16 Community Land Trust which was also being set up by PEACH at the same time. The E16CLT was under consideration for a pilot management contract for council-owned homes in the Custom House area, and was also in negotiation with the council to undertake its own development on a site within Custom House. My position as the A_O was not understood by the different stakeholders in the process, as all assumed that there must be some financial profit attached to my activities. The Architects Registration Board (ARB) states in the

343 Architects Registration Board, ‘The Architects Code: Standards of Professional Conduct and Practice,’ <https://arb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Architects-Code-2017.pdf>, accessed 28th June 2022. p7.

344 Appendix 1: PEACH diaries.

guidance on the Architects Code of Conduct in relation to conflict:

“A conflict of interest can arise when your ability to exercise judgement is seen to be impaired or otherwise influenced by your role in another relationship. You might have a professional duty to a number of parties, have personal interests that are affected by the delivery of your professional obligations or may receive a personal or professional benefit as a result of a relationship. Conflicts are not purely financial in nature and can be potential as well as actual.”³⁴⁵

At the time, I couldn't understand why my role could be perceived as a conflict of interest. My concern in terms of the constellation of relationships which I was nurturing as the A_O was more focussed on how these conflicts or perceived conflicts would impact and evolve the further development of the role and my research. The questioning of the A_O by the various stakeholders gave me an opportunity to step back and consider my role. As the A_O, I was trying to enable a regeneration process that would be differently accessible to those most affected, the residents on the ground. It was hoped that through establishing an equitable coproduction process, building relationships with all of the stakeholders and building an embedded knowledge infrastructure that it would be possible for the regeneration to be empowering for residents. The regeneration could be the opportunity to kickstart that business that they had wanted to start, for the creation of a homeswap scheme whereby people could upsize and downsize their homes when they need to, for introducing different routes into home ownership such as Community Land Trusts and shared equity. The tactics developed to achieve this were based on remaining active as a community organiser, while simultaneously working to release the knowledge held by professionals within the conventional regeneration process. In doing so, the role of the A_O subverts professional hierarchies and therefore needs new forms of relationships, including those that might have inherent conflicts. Part of the empowering nature of the A_O includes the need to negotiate these shifting boundaries, and therefore, rather than step back I tried to determine a resolution to the perceived conflict of interest.

Repositioning

It took six months from May 2019 to organise a meeting with the Mayor

³⁴⁵ Architects Registration Board, 'Managing Conflicts,' <https://arb.org.uk/architect-information/guidance-notes/managing-conflicts/>. accessed 28th June 2022.

and a lawyer to discuss the conflict of interest. My diary entry from the day states:

*"It was a difficult meeting, the lawyer initially tried to blame us for the fact that everyone wanted to work with me. He said that there is a perceived conflict of interest, even if I'm not being paid by PEACH and if I don't work for PEACH anymore. He also said that it has to do with my beliefs. I can kind of see that it would be difficult [for me] to be an independent advisor, but everyone seemed quite keen to find a solution to the problem."*³⁴⁶

In retrospect, I believe that the lawyer was incorrect, I could be an independent advisor. Returning to the role of the A_O as an educator and remembering that knowledge is never neutral, it would be impossible to find someone who could be truly independent. As a practitioner well versed in the politicising nature of education, the A_O as an independent advisor could begin to remap the knowledge-power dynamics between the non-experts and the other stakeholders involved in the process.

In the meeting to resolve the conflict of interest issue, the Mayor proposed that I should work with LBN to evaluate the coproduction process. It was suggested that there was a role within the council for someone who understood resident engagement and could initiate a shift in the way that resident engagement is practiced within the borough. In collaboration with Community Led Housing London, a proposal was developed to evaluate the coproduction process. This was envisaged as a series of workshops with resident representatives, officers and the other stakeholders in the coproduction. Each workshop would produce fast track recommendations to improve the working of the group, these recommendations would then feed into the council governance and policy on resident engagement. The proposal was controversial. As I could have predicted, I was being co-opted to work with the council on a placatory coproduction process which despite the best intentions could not evolve to give residents genuine agency. And then, the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

346 Appendix 1: PEACH Diaries.



4.02 Delivering care packages to Custom House residents in May 2020

The regeneration, the CHSG and PEACH were all differently affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. PEACH as a resident-led organisation responded fast to the needs of residents. After a few months, it became clear that the council was beginning work behind the scenes to get the regeneration going again. The conflict of interest, and subsequently changes in my role, had led to a change in my ability as A_O to access to data and information about the regeneration, and this was becoming a problem for residents and organisers at PEACH. Changing staff within the council meant that communication dried up, emails went unanswered and there was a lack of support from mid-level officers. The A_O's collaborative and hopeful optimism was almost entirely gone. The A_O was loose, floating between residents and the council, unable to work openly with either.

While relying on scraps gleaned from conversations with sympathetic insiders I tried to build relationships with the resident representatives. However, I had not managed to establish my role as the A_O with enough trust, there was no support or understanding from residents of what I was trying to achieve, the conflict of interest and being shut out by the council led to the A_O being seen as a suspicious interloper, attempting to organise in a vacuum. As the level of transparency decreased, other tactics became more important. The community organisers relied on leaked information and insider tip-offs. The tension between the council and residents became more explicit with an initial assumption from residents of non-cooperation rather than collaboration. Despite the increasing hostility, I still hoped that an evaluation could be used to examine my role as the A_O in relation to the infrastructures of the regeneration which I encountered whilst working "within". Encouraged by the report from the democracy commission in Newham, published in July 2020 which stated "existing coproduction initiatives must be meaningfully evaluated by the communities themselves."³⁴⁷ I decided to try to initiate the coproduction evaluation process. I wrote an email to the regeneration officers involved in the project. The response was immediate. "This is premature. You shouldn't be talking to anyone yet".³⁴⁸

347 London Borough of Newham Democracy and Civic Participation Commission, 'Final Report,' January 2020, <https://www.newham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1444/democracy-commission-report>. p61.

348 Email to author from Newham Council Officer, 6th February 2020.

Nevertheless, the coproduction process remained in progress, carrying on regardless without my involvement. It seemed important for the development of my practice and its integration with my research, to evaluate and get feedback from those involved in the process. Through including the coproduction evaluation process in my research I am not seeking the end-point, but rather attempting to address the complexity of the situation in which I have found myself through attending to and documenting the various “intentions and interpretations, power and accountabilities” from different perspectives.³⁴⁹ Orr and Bennett note that reflexivity enables them to “highlight the political dynamics” of their research on coproduction, and I have found these observations useful in thinking about how the coproduction evaluation process can be narrated and documented, and to what purpose.³⁵⁰ I hoped that the evaluation would provide a resource for my research, enabling me to look at my role in relation to the coproduction process and indicate routes for future courses of action. It would also allow me to reflect on the relationship between the coproduction process and its wider implications, not just in terms of non-expert agency, but also in relation to the development of my role. My rationale for evaluation was to uncover further clues as to the reasons why my role had been marginalised. I was aware that in working with the resident representatives and Community Led Housing London, my motives for conducting the evaluation were not necessarily the same as those of the participants or my co-facilitator. As Agid writes, “any collaboration inevitably produces multiple narratives. These need not align or even agree; our professional narratives (such as this paper) tend to be of little (if any) interest to our collaborators. In the case of on-the-ground narratives that continue as the design does, those narratives are not ours to determine”.³⁵¹ For me, the evaluation served as a testing ground for exploring the limits of the Architect_Organiser in a professional policy building context. Through undertaking the evaluation, I was tacitly supporting the process to continue despite my own lack of faith in the ability

349 Suvi Pihkala and Helena Karasti, ‘Reflexive Engagement: Enacting Reflexivity in Design and for “Participation in Plural”’, in *Proceedings of the 14th Participatory Design Conference: Full Papers - Volume 1*, PDC ’16 (Aarhus, Denmark: Association for Computing Machinery, 2016), 21–30, <https://doi.org/10.1145/2940299.2940302>. p22.

350 Kevin Orr and Mike Bennett, ‘Reflexivity in the Co-production of Academic-practitioner Research’, ed. Ann L. Cunliffe, *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal* 4, no. 1 (8 May 2009): 85–102, <https://doi.org/10.1108/17465640910951462>. p87.

351 Agid and Chin, ‘Making and Negotiating Value’. p86.

of the process to tackle the inherent structural and knowledge based issues which I have highlighted. I have embraced this contradiction as one strand of the multiple narratives which have emerged from my research.

Evaluating coproduction

The conflict of interest was raised in May 2019, in November 2019 a draft of the evaluation process was proposed by myself, with support of the regeneration officer and the Mayor. Following a conversation with Stephen Hill, independent advisor to the Custom House Steering Group, Community Led Housing London (CLH) were invited to collaborate on the evaluation work. This meant that the evaluation process could be undertaken with the support of an independent external organisation. The evaluation was designed as a standalone piece of work and the process finally began in August 2021. The aims of the evaluation workshops as taken from the brief proposal agreed with CLH and London Borough of Newham (LBN) were as follows:

To develop community engagement practice and policy at Newham from a coproduction perspective.

To evaluate and learn from the Custom House co-production process.

To identify obstacles which will have or have had a negative impact on the project programme and seek to work through the obstacles in ways that are aligned with the coproduction ethos.

To develop replicable coproduction tools for local authorities to support long term community involvement in housing and regeneration.³⁵²

At the time of writing, five evaluation workshops have taken place, two with the Custom House Steering Group (CHSG), one with the Canning Town Steering Group (CTSG) one with regeneration officers from both areas and one with senior council management. The work was undertaken collaboratively between myself and Rowan Mackay, Senior Project Advisor at Community Led Housing London. Rowan and I also ran a semi-public forum hosted by Future of London with council officers from other London boroughs. Comparing the two steering groups responses to the question “What has worked and what hasn’t worked?” already gave some new

352 Sib Trigg and Rowan Mackay, Community Led Housing Evaluation of Custom House Coproduction Process, unpublished document, 21st August 2020.

insights.

The Canning Town Steering Group (CTSG) were new to me, they had been meeting for almost two years during the pandemic, but they had never met in person. The CTSG had been set up using the “consultative” TOR which had caused the controversy with the resident representatives in Custom House. The resident representatives in CT were optimistic, enthusiastic and interested in the process. They felt supported and they were getting information on time from the council. They could see officers working for them and felt like they were working as a team. When encouraged to talk about problems, the conversation was very insightful. Firstly, the steering group didn’t feel like they were managing to communicate with the wider community. Secondly, the independent tenant resident advisors (ITRA), a private company, had run a workshop with the CTSG on the ladder of participation.³⁵³ The CTSG reflected in the evaluation that they had learnt about the ladder of participation, but despite efforts to work in partnership the group was operating in a consultative manner. The resident representatives felt that they hadn’t progressed up the ladder to partnership. Everyone agreed that partnership was the aim, but when questioned, there were no suggestions as to how to move from consultation to partnership in terms of how the group was working. The resident representatives in Canning Town had a noticeably different response to coproduction than those on the steering group in Custom House. I argue that their lack of knowledge of what would increase their agency within the steering group and also their trust in the regeneration officers stems from the fact that they were not “concientzao”.³⁵⁴ “Concientzao” is a critical pedagogical term used by Friere to describe the awakening or growing awareness that develops in people who are becoming politically conscious of their situation and their potential agency. The CTSG had not experienced the critical pedagogical practice of “problematizing education”, enabling the critical analysis of structural power relations. In contrast, Custom House residents had been in dialogue with PEACH community organisers and the Architect_Organisers for up to four years before the establishment of the steering group. The Custom House representatives were consistently dissatisfied with the level

353 Arnstein, ‘A Ladder Of Citizen Participation’.

354 Arthur S. Lloyd, ‘Freire, Conscientization, and Adult Education’, *Adult Education* 23, no. 1 (September 1972): 3–20, <https://doi.org/10.1177/074171367202300101>.

of commitment from the council to developing and implementing measures which would attempt to lessen the structural power imbalance within the group. To summarise, the residents on the Canning Town Steering Group were happy, not realising their lack of actual power, and the residents on the Custom House Steering Group were unhappy knowing that they were being denied the possibility of shared power.

Residents on the CHSG made requests for: full transparency on decision making process and timelines, sharing of all viability information and calculations, clear information sharing policies, recordings of meetings, full support and training delivered by trainers chosen by the resident representatives themselves. Training topics included regeneration timelines, viability, planning, delivery and phasing, how key decisions are made and understanding the design scheme in relation to planning and legal requirements. The representatives also requested that independent expert advisors to the steering group should be reappointed, including at least one Architect_Organiser, as well as an independent co-chair for meetings. The resident representatives were clear that the process which they were participating in was not coproduction and didn't conform to the definition which they had helped to write or meet their expectations. In fact, other than the information which was gleaned from the process, residents felt that the coproduction limited their agency, and their ability to "carve out autonomous spaces and act coercively against dominant interests influence[s] governing outcomes better than [...] collaborating with governing elites".³⁵⁵ This reinforces the perspective that coproduction and participation processes mediated by those in power will not share power in a meaningful way.³⁵⁶

Representative democratic friction and being co-opted

I have described the barriers which I encountered as the A_O attempting to work "within" and also had these issues confirmed in the evaluation process.

355 Jonathan S. Davies, 'The Limits of Partnership: An Exit-Action Strategy for Local Democratic Inclusion', *Political Studies* 55, no. 4 (December 2007): 779–800, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00677.x>. p3.

356 Karl Palmås and Otto von Busch, 'Quasi-Quisling: Co-Design and the Assembly of Collaborateurs', *CoDesign* 11, no. 3–4 (2 October 2015): 236–49, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710882.2015.1081247>.

The A_O was treated with suspicion, as having an agenda which led to the A_O being shut out of the coproduction process. The legal structure of the council, in the form of the LBN Scheme of Delegation meant that the council could not share power with the steering group and allow the CHSG to make decisions. The lack of support and training for the resident representatives, exacerbated by the COVID crisis, and combined with the working culture of the council which was unfamiliar with collaborative problem solving meant that the CHSG remained in an unsatisfactory limbo. On the other hand in Canning Town, the CTSG realised that it was working in consultation mode, but couldn't work out how to change it into a partnership. In a further conversation with the LBN regeneration officers, it was clear that there was an organisational division within the council. One officer described the division as their "mandate being out of sync with coproduction practice".³⁵⁷ Another mentioned that there was a clear division between the corporate and the officer sides of the council which affected communication. It was also clear that officers believed that the emphasis on decision making in Custom House had been oversold, and that within the existing structures of representative democracy sharing power as desired by the CHSG resident representatives and myself as the A_O was not possible or even desirable.

Learning from the fields of policy design and participatory democratic theory reveals hidden dangers in the aspirations of partnerships such as the one attempted between PEACH, residents and the local authority in Newham through the coproduction process. Referencing Ostrom, Richardson states that "designing institutional arrangements that help induce successful coproductive strategies is far more daunting than demonstrating their theoretical existence".³⁵⁸ Experiences of coproduction in other regeneration scenarios reiterates the danger. Diamond writes that whether using internal or external facilitators, marginalisation will be accentuated within groups, "local partnerships will seek to co-opt local activists" and that "existing practice is based upon 'individualizing' rather than 'collectivizing' the

357 Comment made to author during the coproduction evaluation workshop with Newham Council officers.

358 Liz Richardson, Catherine Durose, and Beth Perry, 'Coproducting Urban Governance', *Politics and Governance* 6, no. 1 (3 April 2018): 145–49, <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v6i1.1485>. p146.

experience of local community.”³⁵⁹ Davies goes so far as to suggest that communities involved in such partnerships, even deliberative scenarios, should define an exit-strategy and take up intentional non-participation instead, as a more effective way to influence outcomes and preserve their own integrity.³⁶⁰ It is therefore recognised that in participatory processes involving communities and local government, the power differential, inherent knowledge imbalance and the structures of representative democracy impact the design and implementation of coproduction.

Not only are there multiple theories of power and democracy but also multiple perspectives on participation itself. Power, democracy and participation each have their own context and fields of inquiry. As stated previously by Arnstein and others, one of the aims of partnership is to share power. In the conventional definition of power in a representative democracy, power is a zero sum resource, where a gain for one party is a loss for the other.³⁶¹ It is a common observation within participatory design literature that “co-designing threatens the existing power structures by requiring that control be relinquished and given to potential customers, consumers or end-users”, and that “challenges to power asymmetries would need to unpick a deeply rooted set of power relationships, tensions about different claims to knowledge and complex accountability and governance worlds.”³⁶² The CHSG actually met democratic expectations, insofar as DiSalvo notes, “it is implicitly accepted that democracy is a matter of pursuing consensus through activities of structured deliberation and “design for democracy” primarily involves improving the mechanisms of participation in

359 J. Diamond, ‘Local Regeneration Initiatives and Capacity Building: Whose “capacity” and “Building” for What?’, *Community Development Journal* 39, no. 2 (1 April 2004): 177–89, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/39.2.177>. p178.

360 Davies, ‘The Limits of Partnership’.

361 Durose and Richardson, *Designing Public Policy for Co-Production*.

362 Elizabeth B.-N. Sanders and Pieter Jan Stappers, ‘Co-Creation and the New Landscapes of Design’, *CoDesign* 4, no. 1 (March 2008): 5–18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710880701875068>.p9. See also Palmås and von Busch, ‘Quasi-Quisling,’ and Y. Beebejaun et al., “‘Beyond Text’: Exploring Ethos and Method in Co-Producing Research with Communities’, *Community Development Journal* 49, no. 1 (1 January 2014): 37–53, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bst008>.

politics.”³⁶³ It is a characteristic of liberal democracy to seek consensus. As Mouffe discusses in “The Democratic Paradox”, theorists such as Habermas promote “adequate deliberative procedures” with the aim of reaching consensus as “guaranteed to have reasonable outcomes”.³⁶⁴ However, this belief ignores the power relations that are inherent in any such process, and Mouffe is clear that instead of trying to “erase the traces of power and exclusion, democratic politics requires us to bring them to the fore, to make them visible so that they can enter the terrain of contestation.”³⁶⁵ This is “agonistic-pluralism” whereby the legitimacy of all participants to participate in political space is recognised.³⁶⁶

Rather than the illusion that the steering group is a trusting and collaborative team, the agonistic version is a group of respected adversaries struggling to develop and implement proposals together. The state is looking for a consensus-based version of coproduction which will placate participants without sharing power, whereas the resident representatives and the A_O are looking for an agonistic version of coproduction whereby the reality of the structural power imbalance is not swept under the carpet, and this awareness is used to develop novel proposals to remedy problems where consensus is not possible. Those novel proposals can be found, for example through the establishment of a genuine feedback system, whereby the coproduction process is not limited to the input of the steering group but that resident representatives take the issues back into the wider community for deliberation. These deliberations can establish firm boundaries from residents in terms of acceptable compromises to a proposal, and inevitably will also demonstrate the wide ranging priorities and opinions of residents in the area. In discussions of power it is easy to reduce the community to a homogenous non-expert group, however, a productive agonistic feedback process will reflect multiple potentially conflicting proposals, and will also accept that some people will disagree but nonetheless participate in the

363 Carl DiSalvo, ‘Design, Democracy and Agonistic Pluralism,’ in Durling, D., Bousbaci, R., Chen, L, Gauthier, P., Poldma, T., Roworth-Stokes, S. and Stolterman, E (eds.), *Design and Complexity - DRS International Conference (2010, 7-9 July), Montreal, Canada.* <https://dl.designresearchsociety.org/drs-conference-papers/drs2010/researchpapers/31>. p1.

364 Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox*, Repr, Radical Thinkers (London New York: Verso, 2009). p8.

365 Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox*. p33.

366 Ibid. p69.

struggle towards an acceptable solution. The emphasis on the resident representatives returning to the community for deliberation begins to acknowledge that despite the emergence of the steering group from the desire of residents to have agency, the process is inevitably controlled by those in power.

“Participation’ is invariably mediated by “power”, which implies that processes of participation serve the purpose of cementing the power of elites. Indeed, these elites seem to promote techniques of supposed co-determination, co-production and co-design as deliberate co-optive strategies.”³⁶⁷

The role of the A_O in attempting to facilitate the development of a model coproduction process led to the A_O being co-opted, invited to work within the council rather than as an independent practitioner. The concept of co-optation can be described as efforts by those in power to neutralise powerful leaders, for example within a union, by bringing them into a position of management within the organisation. McAlevy is clear in the book “No Shortcuts” that there needs to be clear boundaries between those with more power and those with less, and that those with more power will always try (whether consciously or not) to maintain their power through placatory acts.³⁶⁸ Reinforcing the ladder of participation, these placatory acts make those with less power feel powerful, but in actual fact when examined closely, there is no material difference in the result.

What next?

Could I have anticipated these issues? Why did PEACH organisers and the Architect_Organisers think it was possible to circumvent these well documented problems? My curiosity remains in determining the limits of the architect in this situation. In including the term “architect” in Architect_Organiser, I am intentionally working against the norms of professionalism and therefore also the norms of expert power. In testing the limits of my role, I became interested in what Pillow names “uncomfortable reflexivity.”³⁶⁹ Quoting Visweswaran, she writes that uncomfortable reflexivity determines “whether we can be accountable to people’s struggles for self-representation

367 Palmås and von Busch, ‘Quasi-Quisling’. p239.

368 McAlevy, *No Shortcuts*.

369 Pillow, ‘Confession, Catharsis, or Cure?’ p188.

and self-determination including our own selves.”³⁷⁰ Pillow emphasises the importance of “messy examples” of research which are not successful and “that do not seek a comfortable, transcendent end-point but leave us in the uncomfortable realities of doing engaged qualitative research.”³⁷¹ As the Architect_Organiser I intentionally positioned myself to be primarily accountable to residents, in this case in the form of the organised community, facilitated by PEACH.

Through the coproduction process, I learned a valuable lesson in realizing the central role that community organising plays in keeping the A_O legitimate and accountable. I believe that if I had maintained my relationships with the resident representatives and residents in Custom House rather than concentrating on working with officers and consultants, the perceived conflict of interest would have been overruled by the power of the community, the “power with”.³⁷² The development of the conflict of interest issue demonstrated that building the role of the A_O as an individual developing separate relationships with different stakeholders was a mistake. Existing infrastructures do not allow an individual with no documented allegiance, or no client, to operate. This mode of operation also contravenes the Architects Code of Practice.³⁷³ It was clear that the role which I was trying to create, restructuring relationships between stakeholders in the regeneration process, brought myself as the A_O into conflict with existing legal and political frameworks. In order to build trust, dismantle structural power imbalances, share information and devise alternatives to the status quo I realised that the building of the role of the A_O had to take place with the community, and the community decision to involve the A_O is the key to accountability. Working “within” as the A_O had led to me being cut off from the very infrastructure with which I was attempting to work.

Counter-governance

Following these experiences, in order to reset the role of the A-O I looked

370 Kamala Visweswaran, in Pillow, ‘Confession, Catharsis, or Cure?’ p193.

371 Pillow, ‘Confession, Catharsis, or Cure?’ p193.

372 Raji Hunjan et al., *Power and Making Change Happen* (Dunfermline: Carnegie UK Trust, 2010).

373 Architects Registration Board, ‘The Architects Code: Standards of Professional Conduct and Practice,’ <https://arb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Architects-Code-2017.pdf>, accessed 28th June 2022.

for other theories of governance which reflect the messiness and tension of what I found on the ground. As one possible solution to the problems that arose in the coproduction process, Dean proposes three modes of “counter-governance” for citizens to bring agonistic practices into participatory democratic processes.³⁷⁴ Prevention, or the power to obstruct, oversight or the power to prevent abuse and judgement, “the capacity of citizens to constrain institutional action by testing it against community norms of governing.”³⁷⁵ These proposals contain similarities to suggestions made by officers in both steering groups who recognised the need for measures that would improve accountability and assess the effectiveness of coproduction. However, It became clear to me as the A_O that even with those measures in place, the structures which are needed to build trust and dismantle structural power imbalances in order to collaborate, share information and devise alternatives to the status quo don’t exist, and existing structures and ideologies actively prevent those new structures from coming into being. It became apparent that the coproduction which I was aiming for was coming into conflict, at heart, with neoliberalism.

Bell and Pahl define neoliberalism as:

“..both an ideology and a political programme of capitalism. Its precise operation varies across space and time. It promotes the (supposed) efficiency and efficacy of ‘the market’ as the ‘natural’ and best form of organization at every conceivable level. It thus draws on populist mistrust of the state and hegemonically constructed ‘common sense’ regarding the primacy of the self-interested, competitive individual in political organization.”³⁷⁶

Neoliberal structures such as policy and processes that support market-led development oversee the stifling of non-market led alternatives. The neoliberal emphasis on competitive individualism and self-interest is in opposition to the fundamental principles of community organising. Establishing common interest enables people to work together with an understanding that they can improve conditions for all. The influence of neoliberalism on the interpretation of “coproduction” by state institutions had the effect of detaching the A_O from the coproduction process.

The role of the A_O was unintelligible to the council because it aimed to

374 Rikki John Dean, ‘Counter-Governance: Citizen Participation Beyond Collaboration’, *Politics and Governance* 6, no. 1 (3 April 2018): 180–88, <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v6i1.1221>.

375 Dean, ‘Counter-Governance’. p185.

376 Bell and Pahl, ‘Co-Production’. p107.

build trust and dismantle structural power imbalances. The coproduction process did not enable the A_O to work with residents or to create of a collective network of practitioners with a range of skills and embedded local relationships and did not do enough to question established norms. Rather, the coproduction process removed the A_O from its roots in community organising, having no platform for the CHSG to communicate with the wider community and no feedback system for responses from the community to be brought back into the steering group. Throughout the entire experience of coproduction, working within existing participatory frameworks demonstrated that those frameworks were unable or unwilling to expand towards a genuine power-sharing partnership. The coproduction did not enable the sharing of information in ways which would have enabled a deeper understanding of the process from non-experts, in fact it encouraged members of the steering group to leak confidential information to the wider community in frustration at their lack of agency. The restriction on sharing data and information on the scheme viability with residents was questioned as being particularly counterproductive. This is the focus of the next part of the narrative.

Working against

Working “against” is used to uncover in more detail how the practice of the A_O aims to counter present conventions in regeneration practice. “Against” identifies the data and information that is driving decision making, exposes the inconsistencies in the current system and seeks scope for innovation. In my analysis of data and information encountered in the regeneration process, the financial workings of the proposed redevelopment came consistently under question by non-experts. At a macro level, the overall cost of regeneration was queried, and on a more personal level, people wanted to know how regeneration would affect their rent levels, or the value of their homes. Financial viability has long been highlighted by communities and academics as a particularly opaque element of the regeneration process.³⁷⁷ In working “against”, exposing financial data and the workings of viability within the regeneration process appeared as one way of pushing back against the status quo. “Against” is used, as described by Bell and Pahl, to interrogate ways that the type of practice that I am developing is

377 Colenutt, Robert; Cochrane, Allan and Field, Martin (2015). The rise and rise of viability assessment. *Town and Country Planning*, 84(10) pp. 453–458.

inherently in dissonance “with the present social order”.³⁷⁸ From my day-to-day experience, it was clear that power and control within the regeneration infrastructure lay in the realm of finance. It was therefore also clear that the A_O would benefit from developing an in-depth understanding of how regeneration and development operates financially. Working “against” also means that the A_O, takes a position in opposition to the financial conventions that exist in current regeneration practice. The process of determining that position is described in the following text, outlining the learning and processes that I encountered while working “against”.

The financial viability of a masterplan has emerged as an essential component within neoliberal planning policy, and the layers of financing behind any development scheme are a primary source of power and control. Viability is seen as a specialist discipline, and data and information are integral to its role. Using the process of commissioning a viability report for the PEACH Alternative Regeneration Plan, supplemented by taking a course in Real Estate Development Financial Modelling, the following text explores the how an economic viability narrative is constructed. The learning from my participation in the course combined with the experience of the commissioning process enabled my investigation into what goes into making a legitimate or believable financial model, and why the data and information behind development finance remains opaque. I use this process to gain insights into the forces that are aligned in maintaining the status quo in urban regeneration, and to establish ways that the A_O alongside others can combat the dominance of these forces and their associated ideologies.

What is viability?

One specialist discipline which is integral to the question of the role of data and information in the regeneration process, and which is separated from public access, is financial viability. As part of neoliberal planning policy, financial viability has become a key political and economic driver of urban development. Required as part of a planning application, the financial viability assessment (FVA) provides a narrative for proving or disproving that a development will be profitable for the landowner or developer. This is a controversial process, with different stories being told to investors, local authorities, and residents. Colenutt and Sayce et al, note that viability

378 Bell and Pahl, ‘Co-Production’. p108.

assessments are used primarily as a negotiation tool between developer and local authority, typically to reduce the amount of affordable housing which a developer needs to provide, or challenge other planning policies which reduce developer profit or increase planning obligations, rather than a true assessment of a scheme's viability.³⁷⁹ Negotiating viability often comes down to an exchange of compromises.³⁸⁰ This research will investigate viability in its current form, which was designed in order encourage development after the financial crash of 2008.³⁸¹ The 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) included in paragraph 173 the need for developments to provide "competitive returns" as a material consideration.³⁸² A material consideration is a planning term which is defined as "a matter that should be taken into account in deciding a planning application or on an appeal against a planning decision."³⁸³ This clause enables developers to use the viability assessment as proof that a scheme will not yield enough profit due to the obligation to provide affordable housing.³⁸⁴

379 Robert Colenutt, Allan Cochrane and Martin Field. The rise and rise of viability assessment. *Town and Country Planning*, 84(10) (2015). pp. 453–458. See also London Borough of Tower Hamlets, 'Research on Viability and the Planning System: The Relationship between Economic Viability Testing, Land Values and Affordable Housing in London, January 2017, https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/London_Viability/Research_Viability_and_the_Planning_System_Research_January_2017.pdf, accessed 20th October 2020,

380 FutureGov, 'Viability Assessments Show and Tell 5,' <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/assets/attach/9886/Final-Show-Tell-17-December.pdf>, accessed 20th October 2020.

381 For a more in depth history of viability prior to 2008, 'Wild Dragons in the City' by Brett Christophers is useful. Brett Christophers, 'Wild Dragons in the City: Urban Political Economy, Affordable Housing Development and the Performative World-Making of Economic Models: Performative World-Making of Economic Models, UK Case', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 38, no. 1 (January 2014): 79–97, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12037>

382 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 'National Planning Policy Framework,' archived on 8th June 2018, <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180608095821/https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>, accessed 20th October 2020. p41.

383 Planning Portal, 'What are material considerations?' <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/services/help/faq/planning/about-the-planning-system/what-are-material-considerations>, accessed on 1st March 2022

384 London Borough of Tower Hamlets, 'Research on Viability and the Planning System: The Relationship between Economic Viability Testing, Land Values and Affordable Housing in London, January 2017. https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/London_Viability/Research_Viability_and_the_Planning_System_Research_January_2017.pdf, accessed 20th October 2020.

“The cumulative impact of the changes to the planning system since 2012 has been to shift the balance between stakeholders and re-position gains from planning more squarely in the hands of landowners whilst ensuring the developer’s profit, even if this means an erosion of value to the community.”³⁸⁵

Viability assessments are also used by developers to seek out investors for a scheme. The same scheme may therefore have multiple viability models that are used for different purposes. These problems have been recognised to some extent, and in the latest update to the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 2018 there is a new paragraph which states that “under no circumstances will the price paid for land be relevant justification for failing to accord with relevant policies in the plan”.³⁸⁶ The issues with viability, however, go deeper than solely the price paid for land.

How viability works

“As they seek to make profit, augment their income, or increase their social status, actors create imaginaries of economic futures, the achievement or avoidance of which motivates their decisions.”³⁸⁷

The UK Government planning practice guidance on viability describes the viability assessment as “a process of assessing whether a site is financially viable, by looking at whether the value generated by a development is more than the cost of developing it. This includes looking at the key elements of gross development value, costs, land value, landowner premium, and developer return.”³⁸⁸ The development cost includes a profit for the developer, the accepted norm being between 15% and 20%, as well as any planning obligations such as affordable housing.³⁸⁹ The relationship between affordable housing and viability is discussed in more detail in the case

385 London Borough of Tower Hamlets, ‘Research on Viability and the Planning System: The Relationship between Economic Viability Testing, Land Values and Affordable Housing in London, January 2017, accessed 20th October 2020. p6

386 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, ‘Guidance. Viability,’ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/viability>, accessed 20th October 2020.

387 Jens Beckett, *Imagined Futures: Fictional Expectations and Capitalist Dynamics* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2016). p2.

388 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, ‘Guidance. Viability,’ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/viability>, accessed 20th October 2020.

389 John Henneberry, ‘Development Viability’, in *Planning Gain*, by Tony Crook, John Henneberry, and Christine Whitehead (Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2015), 115–39, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119075103.ch5>.

study of the PEACH viability assessment, however it is important to note that in many cases the provision of affordable housing is the component of the viability calculation that leads a developer to state that a proposal is unviable.³⁹⁰ Developer returns remain opaque outside of the industry, and there is “little theoretical discussion of developer returns in academic literature.”³⁹¹ There are multiple methods for calculating the cost of a development to varying levels of precision. The Residual Land Value method was widely accepted as the default calculation until the publication of the above mentioned planning practice guidance, that specifies the more precise “Existing Use Value+ (EUV+)” method as a requirement for viability reporting.³⁹²

Data in viability models

The first step in deconstructing viability in relation to Custom House and PEACH was to understand what data and information was being used in viability models in general, and by whom. In particular, the site-specific nature of the construction of a viability model means that the data and information varies according to the stakeholders involved. Viability models are often built on a site-specific basis, and usually take the form of a spreadsheet such as Excel or proprietary software such as Argus.³⁹³ In both cases, data is input into the model for use in mathematical formulas. The formulas calculate, amongst other things, the price of the land, the

390 There are many examples of this argument in newspaper articles: The Guardian, ‘Affordable homes in ‘Billionaires Row’ scheme unviable, says developer,’ <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/nov/20/affordable-homes-in-billionaires-row-scheme-unviable-says-developer>, accessed 20th September 2022. The Guardian, ‘Revealed: how developers exploit flawed planning system to minimise affordable housing,’ <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/jun/25/london-developers-viability-planning-affordable-social-housing-regeneration-oliver-wainwright>, accessed 20th September 2022.

391 Neil Crosby, Steven Devaney, and Peter Wyatt, ‘The Implied Internal Rate of Return in Conventional Residual Valuations of Development Sites’, *Journal of Property Research* 35, no. 3 (3 July 2018): 234–51, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09599916.2018.1457070>. p6.

392 Crosby, Devaney, and Wyatt, ‘The Implied Internal Rate of Return in Conventional Residual Valuations of Development Sites’.

393 London Borough of Southwark, ‘Viability Assessments,’ <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/innovate/collabrative-project/viability-assessments?displaypref=large&chapter=2>, accessed 2nd March 2022.

market value of the homes, the build cost and the predicted profit. Viability assessments are not standardised and don't have a standard format. The negotiation between a developer and a local authority over viability assessments often takes the form of two sets of evidence or data proving two contrasting positions over affordable housing provision and profit. The evidence, or data used as input into the viability assessment is unregulated, however the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) recommends that "inputs into the viability appraisal should be objective and reasonable, having regard to the specific scheme being tested at the time of the assessment as well as comparable evidence."³⁹⁴ Local authorities and developers will have differing access to data, especially to market data. There are proprietary data sources such as Costar "The largest source of verified commercial real estate information, analytics and data-driven news worldwide," and Molior "the leaders in residential development research" that provide data on sites and pre-development markets.³⁹⁵ Others such as Barbour ABI "market leading provider of construction project information" and Glenigan, "the most accurate and comprehensive construction sales leads in the UK and Ireland" provide data on the construction side of the market.³⁹⁶

Access to these databases is closely guarded. Molior don't accept subscriptions from local authorities, and refused my request for access to their database despite offering to pay for a subscription because "we only accept serious investors who will subscribe for multiple years."³⁹⁷ The data entered into the viability model is used to predict future values of homes and land and these predictions form the proposed economic scenario for the development. The viability consultant uses the data as evidence to back up the narrative of what is or isn't possible. Assumptions made in a

394 Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), 'Financial viability in planning: conduct and reporting,' <https://www.rics.org/uk/upholding-professional-standards/sector-standards/land/financial-viability-in-planning-conduct-and-reporting/>, accessed 2nd March 2022.

395 Costar, 'The largest source of verified commercial real estate information, analytics and data-driven news worldwide,' <https://www.costar.com/>, accessed 2nd March 2022. Molior, 'Molior is an established market research practice. Our work concentrates on the residential development industry in four main research sectors covering all of the 33 London local authorities.' <https://www.moliorlondon.com/>, accessed 2nd March 2022.

396 Barbour ABI, <https://www.barbour-abi.com/>. Accessed 2nd March 2022. Glenigan, <https://www.glenigan.com/>, accessed 2nd March 2022,

397 Tim Craine, email to author, 20th October 2020.

viability report, for example the Internal Rate of Return (IRR) over time, may be different to the reality of the project which the data is describing, and assumptions may selectively include or omit data.³⁹⁸ The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) course on viability states:

“Companies that use loans have to configure their schemes to satisfy the lenders, usually a risk-averse bank. A lot of the appraisals that you will see comply to this ideal, as planners assume that the entirety of a project is loan financed. In fact, that is rarely the case and the assumption is simply a convention amongst valuers. This is one example of the ways in which the assumptions made in viability appraisals differ from the reality of the project they seek to describe and it is one reason why developers will often use one set of figures to present to the planners and another for their own use.”³⁹⁹

To add another layer to this complexity, there are also differences between small developers, large developers, volume housebuilders and local authority Arm’s Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) in terms of how much capital they have at their disposal, the types of loans they can access, the risks they can take and the legal restrictions that they are subject to. Different types of organisations will therefore take different approaches to viability. Viability calculations are extremely sensitive, even a 0.5% change in a data entry can cause millions of pounds of fluctuation in results. FVA reports that summarise the results are full of jargon, which makes it difficult to understand and to identify the key data used. The calculation methods and formulas used in the viability models are hidden due to commercial confidentiality clauses.⁴⁰⁰ Through beginning to understand the complexities of the world of viability, it became clear to me that in order to truly work “against”, the A_O would need to go even deeper. It was clearly necessary to examine both the local efforts to make the viability infrastructure visible, and also the way that viability is connected to the macro world of global finance.

398 Charlotte Coleman et al., ‘Development Appraisal in Practice: Some Evidence from the Planning System’, *Journal of Property Research* 30, no. 2 (June 2013): 144–65, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09599916.2012.750620>.

399 Royal Town Planning Institute, ‘Introduction to development economics,’ <https://rtpilearn.org.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=891>, P1, accessed 3rd March 2022.

400 London Borough of Southwark, ‘Viability Assessments,’ <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/innovate/collabrative-project/viability-assessments?displaypref=large&chapter=2>, accessed 2nd March 2022.

Local authorities, macroeconomics and lending in viability

Campaign groups have fought hard for transparency in viability reports, the results of which started to show when a judicial review forced Southwark council to release a heavily redacted version of the viability study for the regeneration of the Heygate estate in Elephant and Castle in 2014.⁴⁰¹ The court ruled that financial viability information was in the public interest to be released. The ruling placed viability information under the Environmental Information Request system, which differs from the Freedom of Information Request system in that there is a presumption for disclosure. In the years following this success, some London boroughs such as Greenwich, Southwark and Croydon pledged to make Financial Viability Assessments Public.⁴⁰² FutureGov, an independent consultancy company, undertook research on local authority attitudes to viability in 2018.⁴⁰³ FutureGov argues that the answer to discrepancies in the accessibility and understanding of viability data is to equip local authorities with better digital tools and better access to data, so that they can negotiate more affordable housing from developers. FutureGov began designing a public tool primarily aimed at local authority employees which aggregates viability data from verified sources. The verified data is used as an evidence base to show when proposals for land value or house prices deviate from within an expected range. FutureGov's prototype model checks prices by using two datasets: The HM Land Registry Price Paid Dataset and property square meterage from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government Energy Performance Dataset.⁴⁰⁴ This aims to provide what they call a "sense-check" to make sure that the viability assessment isn't just a bottom up data exercise, "to level the playing

401 Jerry Flynn, 'Complete Control: Developers, Financial Viability and Regeneration at the Elephant and Castle', *City* 20, no. 2 (3 March 2016): 278–86, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2016.1143685>.

402 Sophie Barnes, 'Council to force publication of viability assessments,' *Inside Housing*. <https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/council-to-force-publication-of-viability-assessments-46096>. accessed 2nd March 2022. Nathaniel Barker, 'London Borough makes viability assessments public,' *Inside Housing*, <https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/home/home/london-borough-makes-viability-assessments-public-54133> accessed 2nd March 2022.

403 FutureGov, 'Using data to improve viability assessments,' <https://wearefuturegov.com/case-study/southwark-data-viability-assessments>, accessed 2nd March 2022,

404 Now known as the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

field between local councils and developers”.⁴⁰⁵ Macroeconomic factors make viability models more sensitive. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate, inflation, social housing rent increases, earnings increases, material cost increases are expressed as percentages which multiply or divide many times throughout a viability model. This creates a cumulative effect so that the difference between a 0.1% increase and a 0.8% increase can amount to millions of pounds. These fluctuations are called sensitivities. Usually, once a viability report has been produced, it undergoes sensitivity analyses to test how changes to interest rates, lending rates and material costs will affect the project. These analyses are rarely made public. Interest rates on borrowing money can be more or less expensive depending on who is doing the borrowing. Local Authorities can get cheaper loans through the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb), a public body that lends to local authorities for capital projects. A developer with a track record will get cheaper loans, likewise a developer with more capital. These organisations are offered money cheaper because there’s less risk that they won’t pay it back. Borrowing money on a development is often done through lending at various rates at different times during the project. These types of lending are known as junior or mezzanine debt and senior debt. The junior debt or mezzanine debt will have a higher interest rate and will need to be paid back first. Also, if more equity or cash is put into the development at the beginning then less will need to be borrowed. Finding investors to put equity into the project will also reduce the amount which is borrowed, and therefore the amount of interest which needs to be paid. Aside from the interest rates, these macroeconomic elements are actually speculative predictions, the majority of which actually turn out to be wrong.⁴⁰⁶ It is not straightforward to predict rises and falls in interest rates, material costs and inflation. There are political influences and global and local trends which need to be tracked. Some of this information is available as quarterly reports from property investment companies, where experts try to predict the next quarter based on the results from

405 Britt Wood, ‘Arming councils with data to secure more affordable homes,’ <https://blog.wearefuturegov.com/arming-councils-with-data-to-secure-more-affordable-homes-a2b5e413db09>, accessed 28th February 2022. Viability Alpha, ‘Exploring the ways digital and data can improve the viability assessment process to help councils deliver more affordable homes,’ <https://viability-alpha.vercel.app/>. Accessed 28th February 2022. Viability Assessment Discovery App, ‘A tool that supports the council to better understand viability assessments,’ <https://projects.invisionapp.com/share/K6PNJFX2UX4#/screens/337316437?browse>. accessed 28th February 2022.

406 Beckert, *Imagined Futures*.

the previous quarter. Some of these reports are free to download.⁴⁰⁷ More detailed data analysis is also available on subscription as mentioned earlier.

Developing the Architect_Organiser response

Understanding that a viability model is not a purely scientific calculation, but rather a combination of data sources, contacts, friends, networks and conventions it seemed obvious that the course of action should be to subvert it. If it is so subjective, it should be possible to force the model to work for different ends. For example, if the aim of the model is to predict profit, it should also be able to turn that profit into social and affordable housing. This should be possible through the use of a different combination of data sets or using a different set of formulas.

Spreadsheets can be an intimidating format for processing data. The interface is often complex and requires a certain knowledge of mathematics. Identifying the layers of financing behind a development scheme as a primary source of power and control, I decided to attempt to transform viability into a differently useful tool. In the following text I outline two avenues of investigation. The first describes the process of commissioning, understanding and using a viability study for the PEACH Alternative Regeneration Plan. The report was commissioned by myself as the Architect_Organiser from within the PEACH organising team from three independent consultants. The outcome of the viability study includes modifiable Excel spreadsheets with an accompanying written report. The second is framed through my attendance at the “Real Estate Development and Financial Modelling” course run by Cambridge Finance, which I completed as part of my research.⁴⁰⁸ The course teaches participants how to construct the Excel spreadsheets which underpin the financial viability report using two different methodologies, the residual valuation method and the development cash flow method.

407 For example Cushman Wakefield publish “Marketbeat Reports” on different sectors of the property and development industry. <https://www.cushmanwakefield.com/en/united-kingdom/insights/uk-marketbeat>, accessed 13th November 2023. Other companies frame their reports as research, such as JLL. <https://www.jll.co.uk/en/trends-and-insights/research>, accessed 13th November 2023.

408 Cambridge Finance, ‘Certificate in Real Estate Financial Modelling,’ <https://cambridgerefinance.com/>, accessed 2nd March 2020.

These two contrasting experiences as commissioner of a viability report and a developer of excel formulas provide a basis for interrogating viability further. Working “against” therefore had multiple aims in this context. Firstly to gain understanding and expose the financial data in a way that would be accessible for non-experts. Secondly, to use the data in a way that would prioritise community needs through an increase social housing provision. Both of these aims directly countered conventional regeneration practices, and also challenged me in my role as the A_O to gain a better understanding of the development of a knowledge infrastructure around a subject that I was also in the process of learning about myself.

Doing viability with PEACH

“Orthodox economic knowledge is used to direct and justify flows of capital even when it “subversively” imagines the social.”⁴⁰⁹

As a follow up to the Alternative Regeneration Plan, I arranged for PEACH to commission a viability report to be produced by three independent consultants. The report was designed to demonstrate the viability of the Alternative Regeneration Plan. Reading through the email thread documenting the construction of the viability model and the writing of the accompanying report, I am struck by our acceptance of the power wielded by the viability system. At the time, we were convinced that if we could create a viability model that showed that our masterplan was viable, this would make the plan more likely to be accepted as the future plan for Custom House. The consultants were approached in this manner, assuming that if we provided the data, we would be able to demonstrate the result that has the best possible outcome for residents. I thought that through introducing alternative values into the system we would be able to prove that there were alternative models that could provide more social housing. I also hoped that the development of our model could prove that conventional developer models were flawed in their approaches.

Initially, the consultants requested a selection of data about the PEACH masterplan including existing rent levels, unit sizes and number of wheelchair access units, floorspace for the new health centre and floorspace for retail/ office units. The PEACH team struggled to find some of the data, even

409 Laura Bear, ‘Speculation: A Political Economy of Technologies of Imagination’, *Economy and Society* 49, no. 1 (2 January 2020): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03085147.2020.1715604>. p4.

with extensive local contacts it wasn't easy to determine local rent levels. The consultants gathered other data themselves through their contacts and previous work. They looked for Newham council rents by number of bedrooms, comparable build costs and other development costs including sustainability costs, existing local market prices, new-build sales values in adjoining neighbourhoods, census data for the local area and commercial rental rates.

The viability model was designed to allow the input of specific tenure mixes and to view the impact of the tenure mix on the cost of the development over a ten-year period. The ten-year period included decanting existing residents from buildings to be demolished, the demolition period and six to seven years of construction, sales and lettings. The model included details such as the difference in cost of internal fittings such as kitchens and bathrooms for affordable housing in comparison with market housing. The timeframe for the development was proposed according to "the fastest safe absorption rate for market sales" or how many homes the developer can guarantee to be sold each year.⁴¹⁰

At PEACH, the organising team hoped that dividing the regeneration into smaller phases would minimise the social impact by allowing changes to the area to happen incrementally. The consultants were clear that the council would require contributions from the developer in terms of infrastructure, but that those contributions would likely "become a trade off with the percentage of Affordable Housing".⁴¹¹ The first four viability scenarios proposed by the consultants comprised of varying levels of existing social rent levels, London Living Rent, Affordable rent, shared ownership and market housing.⁴¹² The aim of the viability model was to maximise social housing and affordable ownership, minimising right to buy and market housing. It was important to maintain the existing proportions of housing in the neighbourhood, avoiding a large influx of residents with much higher levels of disposable income which would lead to gentrification of the area. It was also necessary to look at ownership models which would allow existing homeowners to retain their status, rather than changing to a shared

410 Martin Field, email to author, 12th August 2018.

411 Pete Redman, email to author, 2nd March 2018.

412 Mayor of London, 'Affordable and Genuinely Affordable Housing,' https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/ad_132_affordable_and_genuinely_affordable_rents.pdf, accessed 28th June 2022.

ownership model.

A major issue that surfaced when analysing the model was that the existing homes in Custom House were valued at approximately half of the proposed sales value of the new homes, which meant that existing homeowners would not be able to replace their homes with a new build without incurring a new mortgage. The model as returned to us began to demonstrate the layers of complexity in such calculations. For example, the proposed building heights impact the build costs and the timescale. Due to the increased cost in building taller buildings, it only makes sense to do so close to the station where a higher percentage of the homes can be sold at market value.

Average council rent levels were derived from reports made by LBN to the Department of Communities and Local Government, but there were many gaps in determining existing rent levels in the area. Discussions with the PEACH team led to a desire to increase the level of detail in the model, or the granularity, in order to increase the level of control and therefore increase the accuracy.

Another point of contention was developer profit. When it came to desired profit levels within the model, the level of developer profit recommended by the consultants was 17.5%. According to developers, this percentage reflects the level of risk undertaken and the potential cost of financing the scheme. The consultants were reluctant to go under that percentage in their report, as it would undermine the believability of the model. As a compromise, it was agreed that the report would state “lower [profit] percentages are also possible with viable results”.⁴¹³

The prices of the affordable homes for sale was another point of contention. Shared equity had been identified as a potential route for enabling affordable homes for ownership, however no matter how the numbers were tweaked the prices remained stubbornly unaffordable for local residents, including those who already own a home in the area. In an email, the consultant explained the principle of shared equity and why we couldn’t reduce the price of the homes. He wrote that:

“The existing leaseholders in Custom House get a new-build home with the same area/no of bedrooms as their existing home, and they pay the market value of their existing home in return for a % of shared equity. The other

413 Martin Field, Bob Colenutt, Pete Redman, ‘PEACH Viability Report’, unpublished document, 26th April 2018.

*part of the shared equity is held by the Community Land Trust or similar. The leaseholders must cover the build-cost at a minimum, and the extra on top of that adds to their share of equity in their home. Newcomers who wish to purchase pay for a % of shared equity but if they buy below 60% of their home then they must pay rent on the remaining % up to 80%. They must also cover the build-cost at a minimum.*⁴¹⁴

Translated, in order to own their own home, residents must initially cover the construction cost. However, due to the existence of the housing market, the value of the home is much higher than the home cost to build. The part of the value of the home that is paid for initially by the purchaser is known as the equity. Shared equity therefore means that someone else, or another organisation, owns the other part of that equity. It's possible then to purchase the rest of the equity over time, however, for reasons unknown, if the purchaser owns under 60% of the home, they must then pay rent to whomever holds the rest of the equity. This arrangement often makes the home unaffordable, as the purchaser must pay for a mortgage *and* pay rent, which together is a higher cost than either one or the other.

The cross-subsidy model, whereby profits from market sale of homes are used to subsidise affordable homes, was a commonly recommended model for housing development, despite problems emerging as the housing market has become more unpredictable.⁴¹⁵ Learning about the cross-subsidy model, it seemed that it should be possible to use profit from selling homes at market rate to build more social housing. The consultants agreed that the argument for basing the viability model on construction costs rather than market values was legitimate however this came with a warning to err on the side of caution and produce a series of scenarios in order for the proposal to be taken seriously. After a period of time tweaking the numbers in the model, examining the results and some advice from two local authority finance experts, I prepared an excerpt from the viability proposal for discussion with LBN officers.⁴¹⁶ Upon examining the excerpt which was presented, the officers were sceptical. The reason for their scepticism was that the assumptions made in the model were seen as being unrealistic. Two assumptions in particular used in the model were questioned; that house

414 Martin Field, email to author, 16th October 2018.

415 Lucy Heath, 'Cross-subsidy model is 'absolutely bust', says L&Q's development director,' *Inside Housing*, 9th October 2020. <https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/news/cross-subsidy-model-is-absolutely-bust-says-lqs-development-director-63621>, accessed 10th October 2022

416 Appendix 1: PEACH Diaries. See also Mapping F.

prices would reliably continue to rise and that there would be a local uplift in house prices on top of that rise due to regeneration. There was no data to prove that regeneration would cause an uplift. Relying on economic growth is perceived as too risky, especially in order to fund social housing. The irony was clear, a model which is based on making a profit for developers cannot rely on economic growth to subsidise the construction of social home for rent or sale.

Financial modelling for development

Following this experience, I decided that I needed a better understanding of the modelling process in order to be able to build my own viability model and try out alternatives to market-led conventions. I needed some help. I enrolled on a course to learn how to build development finance models from scratch. The course took place in an office near Bank in central London. On the first day, the trainer asked us all to introduce ourselves. The other participants were a mixture of residential developers and Local Authority employees. Introducing myself as an architect and a PhD researcher immediately got some comments “You are from the other side” and “I bet your spreadsheets are very beautiful”, as if the architect was not supposed to be privy to the workings of the development industry. Over the course of the week the participants obediently made assumptions, tapped in the numbers and made their profits. Here I understood the logic of the model, and why the model that had been commissioned through PEACH was seen as flawed. There was no reliance on growth. Profit is made because the houses are sold or rented out at a higher price than it cost to build them, and the cost of finance (interest) is also passed onto the buyer. The developer asks for between 15 and 25 percent profit in return for bearing the risk of failure. Social and affordable housing can’t bear the extra costs of interest, risk, profit as there is no end-user to pass those costs onto. The rental rates and the affordable ownership prices can’t absorb those costs without becoming unaffordable for those who they are built for. To solve this problem, the government steps in with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 agreements (S106) in order to force the developer to pay for those affordable homes. The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge by the Local Authority on certain

developments at a set rate.⁴¹⁷ The CIL was introduced to replace the Section 106 agreements which are negotiated on a case-by-case basis between developers and local authorities.⁴¹⁸ The developer then passes those further costs imposed by the S106 and CIL onto the private buyers and renters.

During the course, the jokes around avoidance of affordable housing, CIL and s106 were rife, developers don't want to subsidise housing, they would like the government to take that responsibility, which is why the viability model becomes such an important element of the process. Developers use the viability process to show to local authorities that they need to reduce the amount of affordable housing which they will have to subsidise. Macroeconomic assumptions are made, proprietary market data is used, and the individual formulas and methods are kept hidden to preserve the mystery. So it is common knowledge that a development can't absorb much affordable housing, because the more affordable housing it absorbs, the more costs are passed onto the private buyers, the more it adds risk to the developer profit. The market works to make the social and affordable homes an effective loss for a developer because the value of the homes are calculated according to what they *would* be able to be sold for *if* they were sold on the market.

Over the length of the course, I began to understand that it is a relatively straightforward (if complex in terms of mathematics) process to build a construction cost model which enables homes to be built, shows how much financing will be needed for a project and for how long. This is necessary to physically construct homes. The viability models are on one level simultaneously theoretical and concrete models, predicting and making possible. There are completed projects to use for reference, and pro-forma models which are available to download from some sources, such as the National Community Land Trust Network.⁴¹⁹ Construction cost data is verifiable per square metre or per square foot, based on materials, transport

417 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 'Guidance. Community Infrastructure Levy,' <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy>, accessed 28th June 2022.

418 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 'Guidance. Planning Obligations,' <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-obligations>, accessed 28th June 2022.

419 National Community Land Trust Network, 'Guidance for Financial Appraisal Tool,' <https://web.archive.org/web/20100921200412/http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/?pid=76>, accessed 9th August 2019.

and labour, obtainable for a fee via directories such as the RICS schedule of rates or Spons construction price books.⁴²⁰ Sales and rental data is easily available online via websites such as Zoopla or Rightmove. This is how the system maintains itself, using market data to see how much a similar house or flat is worth in a similar area, making sure that after the construction cost has been calculated there is enough room in the sales value for the other costs and the developer profit. The distinction can be made here between the FVA as a planning document, required as part of the planning application to demonstrate the viability of the project and calculate or avoid planning contributions, and the construction cost model which exists as a blueprint which enables the project to be built. Superficially the models look the same, but as demonstrated, the model can be tweaked easily to show very different results if desired.

The financial modelling course enabled a different analysis of the issues that the model commissioned by PEACH had encountered. The PEACH model proposed to recycle economic growth into social housing, inadvertently questioning the basis of viability through questioning market conventions. This puts the model into a contradictory state, questioning the neoliberal capitalist system by trying to make the market undermine itself.

Narrative economic frameworks

The development finance modelling course introduced the viability model through a narrative framework. A narrative framework is effectively a story with a beginning, middle and an end. Beckert writes of narratives within economics that “the stories are embedded in calculative devices whose assumptions they govern, or the stories embed within their own structure an illusion of calculability and an understanding of causal mechanisms derived from the models they draw on.”⁴²¹ The viability is effectively designed to tell a story about the success of the future development, using the data and information available to the person building the model. Bear writes of narrative economics that:

420 The Building Cost Information Service provides subscription services for costing information including build costs and running costs. <https://bcis.co.uk/products/>, accessed 13th November 2023.

421 Jens Beckert and Richard Bronk, eds., *Uncertain Futures: Imaginaries, Narratives, and Calculation in the Economy*, First edition (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2018). p21.

“It gives [policymakers] the hope that they can rebuild legitimacy by controlling narratives that coordinate economic action to produce “growth” and increasing “productivity”. Discursive theories of the economy are seriously in danger of becoming complicit with these justifications and forms of authoritarianism unless they link narratives to questions of inequality and legitimation.”⁴²²

The viability master narrative is usually presented as having its own internal and smooth logic based on market principles. This, however, disguises the tensions and contradictions of any such process - which can then be revealed through critical pedagogical approaches.

This analysis enables non-experts to connect conventional viability narratives to common economic impacts of regeneration - for example, changes which affect the community such as rent rises on small commercial spaces, the difference between shared equity and shared ownership, and the role of Community Land Trusts and other non-market models of development. I organised a workshop with PEACH community organisers and some of the resident representatives from the CHSG, with the aim of developing a better understanding of viability for everyone. Together we examined the motives of different stakeholders in relation to a proposed development; a developer, a local authority, a group of residents in social housing and a community-led housing group.

We looked at the assumptions that each of these groups would make in order to safeguard their interests, and what barriers existed in accessing data and information regarding those assumptions. We looked at the political climate, time and risk in relation to the development.

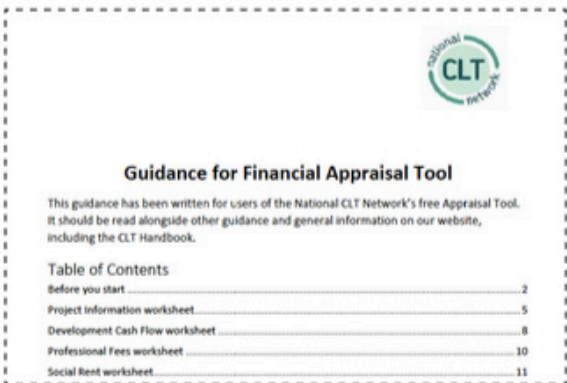
422 Bear, ‘Speculation: A Political Economy of Technologies of Imagination’. p5.

What does the council use to calculate viability?

There are different scales of viability, not only regeneration, also local plans and the London plan also are viability tested.

The council and their consultants are likely to use a version of development cash flow to work out viability

Most individual companies have their own viability modelling methods which are commercial secrets- this means that it's difficult to know what data or information they are using to make their decisions.



Deconstructing the narrative

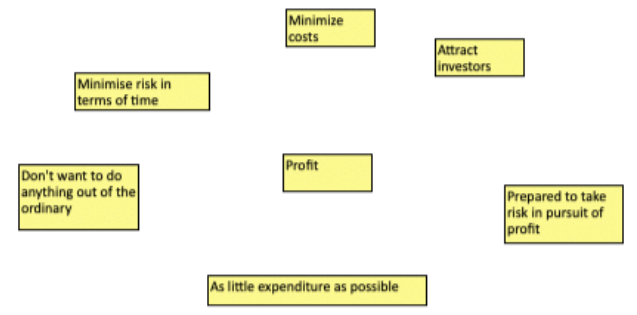
Viability has multiple faces depending on who you are talking to.

different priorities

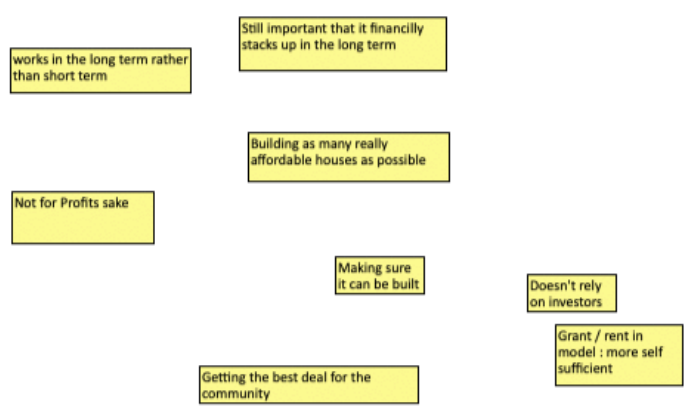
different knowledge

access to knowledge

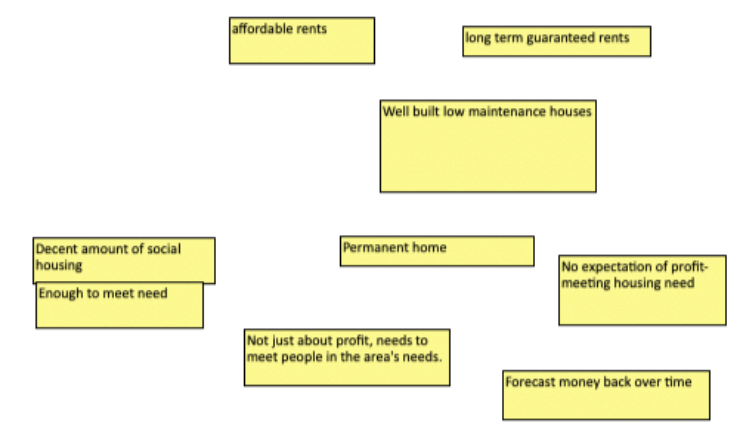
Developer



Community-led Housing Group

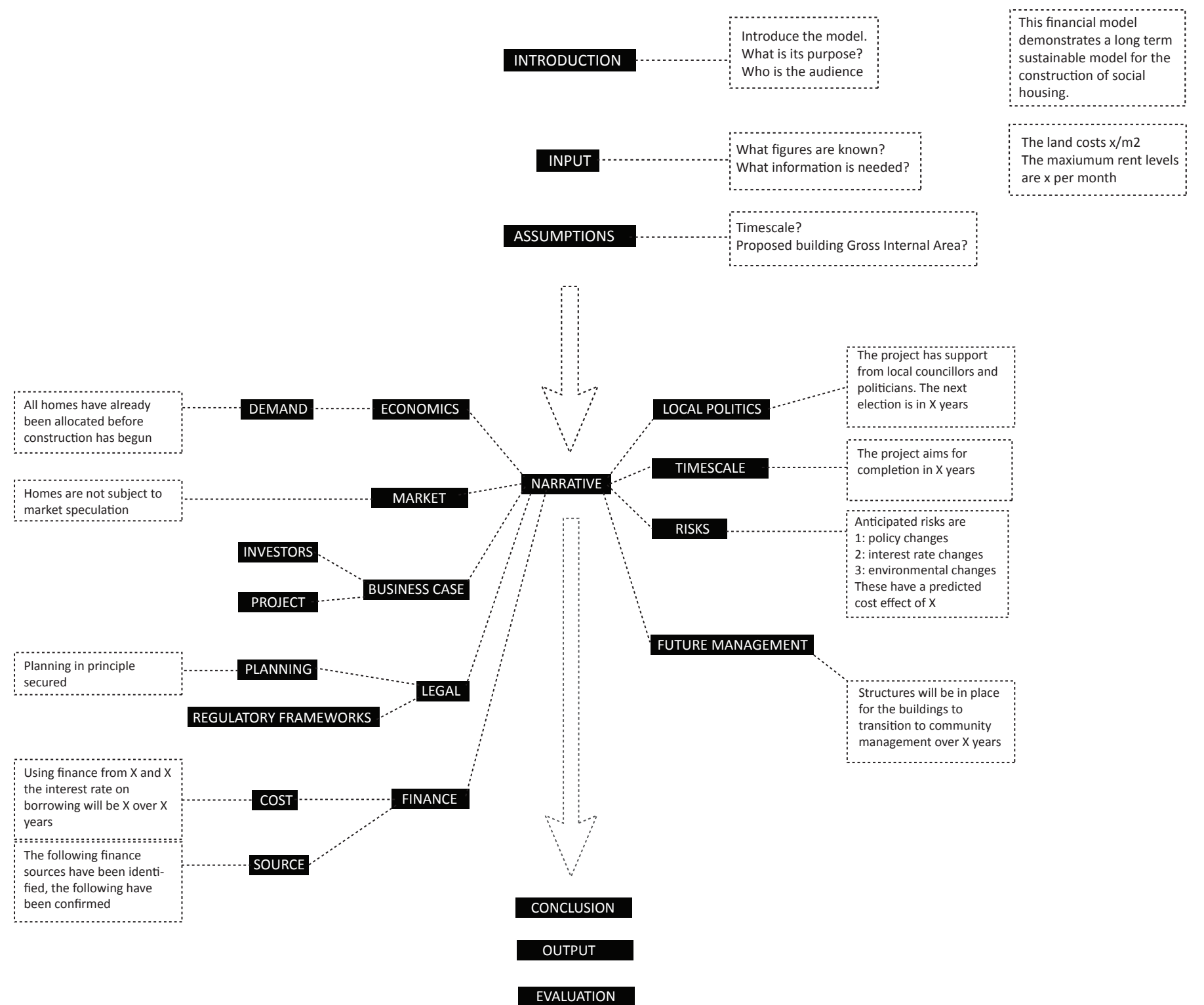


Community of residents living in social housing



4.03 (Above) Screenshots of the viability workshop introduction.

4.04 (Right) Screenshots showing the differing priorities of three different groups, as suggested by viability workshop participants.



4.05 Diagram of the narrative framework for developing a viability model.

	Is the data...	Available?	Public / Private? Paywall?	Accessible? Readable? Jargon?	What would this do to your assumption if you were a developer?	If you were a Local Authority?	As a resident?
	What do we know? (new column)				And you want to make a profit?	And you want to build social housing?	
What is the local policy on affordable housing?		Yes	Yes	unsure	Less profit possible. Compared to other councils it's less interesting. Could build more dense market housing to make up for it. Maybe can bend the rules around what is affordable. Look at subsidies available.	All the bits of the council aren't saying the same thing- some officers e.g. in charge of HRA, might be in favour of higher rents. Hoping that policy will encourage more affordable homes. Higher level of scrutiny from public / internally. Looking at grant money and money internally that they can put towards it. GLA is putting 30% towards each social home	Make sure that the policy is stuck to and it does what it says on the tin. Making sure policies are beneficial
What is the availability of local authority finance?		Possible to find out for community reps / council ppl to find out. not public.			Would want to find out. Would be part of the funding of the project		
What is the local planning policy e.g. strategic development zone		Yes	Yes	unsure	Passiv Haus standard is expensive to build and not many people can do it. Which of these policies are a bit optional / amendable		
Any major political events coming up which could affect industry?					Postponed elections, coronavirus..... economic downturn, supply chain domino effect, availability of labour		

4.06 Screenshot showing notes from online viability workshop

The workshop documentation and associated diagrams can be usefully contextualised in relation to my earlier discussions of data and infrastructures. Returning to the potential of the infrastructure model to facilitate understanding and circumnavigate absences of knowledge, the workshop attempted to open up processes and systems that would otherwise be opaque. The exercise highlighted how little concrete information there was available for those not in the development industry, as well as the influence that access to commercial and political data has on development models. The workshop also made it clear that community needs were based upon longer timescales than those of the developers. The participants emphasised that the complexity of the system discouraged them from examining potential alternatives. The approach so far focussed exclusively on examining existing conventional financial viability calculation methods. One of the main concerns was how alternative proposals would be taken seriously given that any proposal developed by residents would be constructed using the data and information that is available to them. This becomes a catch-22 situation, whereby the lack of available information leads to unbelievable viability proposals, but believable viability proposals don't meet resident needs. I became curious as to whether there were other narratives already in existence which challenged or refused the assumptions which I had encountered both with the consultants building the PEACH

model and during the development finance course. My feeling was that if working “against” genuinely meant dismantling the underlying systems that maintain the profit-driven development sector, there needed to be more evidence and examples of existing attempts to do finance differently.

The most obvious example to research was how Community Land Trusts (CLTs) model their finances.⁴²³ One of the aims of CLTs is to keep homes out of the speculative housing market, maintaining their affordability in perpetuity. However, resident-led development projects such as CLTs are often at a disadvantage in terms of resources. Attracting finance for a project relies on a business case and feasibility study, including a viability report. There are downloadable toolkits which have been developed to help local authorities and community led housing groups get to grip with viability assessments. The National CLT Network has produced a financial appraisal tool for Community Land Trusts which are developing their own homes.⁴²⁴ The tool consists of an Excel spreadsheet, an example and a guidance document. The Homes and Communities Agency have created a Development Appraisal Tool (DAT), which consists of two Excel spreadsheets, a user guide and a user manual.⁴²⁵ The toolkits are market based even when targeting community-led housing proposals. Any development proposal also requires funding for designers and other consultants, which is often raised through grants or crowdfunding. If the initial bid for a site is unsuccessful it is difficult for a resident-led group to go through the process again because those initial funds will have been spent. This is not the case for a developer who will have factored in the costs of failed feasibility or land purchase attempts into their business model. There are some projects which attempt to remedy the issue for resident-led groups by making more data publicly available in the hope that it will make it easier for them to obtain land. For example the small sites mapping project makes public some small sites which would be suitable for community led

423 Community Led Homes, ‘What is a Community Land Trust?’ <https://www.communityledhomes.org.uk/what-community-land-trust>, accessed 3rd March 2022.

424 National CLT Network, “Guidance for Financial Appraisal Tool”, https://communitylandtrusts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/475-ncltn_appraisal_tool_guidance.pdf, accessed 14th November 2023.

425 Homes England, “Development Appraisal Tool”, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-appraisal-tool>, accessed 14th November 2023.

housing.⁴²⁶ However, I have not been able to find any resources for resident-led housing groups to exist differently in relation to viability.

The second approach which I encountered I named “socially aware financial modelling”. Socially aware financial modelling encompasses projects such as the “Social Value Portal”, which provides a framework for the quantification of social value attached to a development.⁴²⁷ Social value could be the number of jobs provided for example, an “occupier satisfaction score”, or energy efficiency levels. Each of these categories is listed on an Excel spreadsheet which also gives an attached value in GBP. Information on how these disparate elements were quantified and where the data for the calculations was derived from was frustratingly vague. Social value quantification tries to reform problems with viability by introducing social elements into the calculations. This is not far from the aim of the commissioned viability report at PEACH, which attempted to make viability produce results which support more social housing, community centres, more local jobs and more sustainable development. The social value portal states that its “metrics are built using “proxy” values, informed by data from respected sources like the Office for National Statistics. It means you can quantify how much value you’re adding to communities.”⁴²⁸ However, as demonstrated through my community organising work, the data encountered by communities often differs from “respected sources” because of informal economies, lack of data literacy or that the data is not “evidence based”. Including social value in viability appeared to me to be prime territory for co-optation, as the “evidence based” data can be used to demonstrate value in an opaque manner, without including the possibility for interrogation of the data.

426 Mayor of London, Small Sites, <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/land-and-development/small-sites>, accessed 3rd March 2022. Camden Community Investment Programme, New Homes for Small Sites, <https://camdencallforideas.commonplace.is/>, accessed 28th June 2022.

427 Social Value Portal, ‘Evidence-based, local government-endorsed social value reporting,’ <https://socialvalueportal.com/>, accessed 28th June 2022.

428 Ibid.

Social Value Portal

The Social Value Portal is the market leader in social value measurement and reporting.
Our management tool helps organisations calculate their social value in terms of environmental, social and economic contributions.
We want to help you to measure, manage and maximise your broader contribution to society.

MEASUREMENT

A nationally approved accounting methodology for measuring social value in terms of economic, environmental and social impact

PROCUREMENT

A procurement platform for social value to help organisations manage the tender process and to unlock social value in the supply chain

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

An interactive solution designed to help organisations set targets and manage performance and store evidence

REPORTING

Live reporting with interactive dashboards and displays including geospatial mapping of value by area



The TOMs are mapped against the Global Goals



4 The National TOMs Workshop May 2020



4.07 Description of social value from the National TOMs workshop May 2020

Theme	Outcomes	Ref	Measures - Minimum Requirements	Units	Baseline Proxy Values	Multiplier (1-3)
Jobs: Promote Local Skills and Employment	More local people in employment	NT1	No. of local people (FTE) employed on contract	no. people FTE	£28,213.00	1
		NT2	% of local people employed on contract (FTE)	%	Record only	1
	More opportunities for disadvantaged people	NT3	No. of long term unemployed		£14,701.56	3
		NT4	No. of NEETs employed		£12,442.91	3
		NT5	No. of rehabilitating young off		£14,618.77	1
		NT6	No. of jobs (FTE) created for p		£12,769.68	3
	Improved skills for local people	NT7	No. of hours providing career	hrs	£94.28	1
		NT8	Local school and college visits		£14.43	2
	Improved employability of young people	NT9	No. of training opportunities		£235.75	2
		NT10	No. of apprenticeships on the		£168.04	2
Growth: Supporting Growth of Responsible	More opportunities for local SMEs and VCSEs	NT11	No. of hours dedicated to support young people into work	no. hrs*no. attendees	£94.28	1
		NT12	No. of weeks spent on meaningful work placements	no. weeks	£143.94	1
		NT13	Meaningful work placements that pay Minimum wage	no. weeks	£143.95	1
		NT14	Total amount (£) spent with VCSEs within your supply chain	£	£0.12	1
		NT15	Provision of expert business advice to VCSEs and SMEs	no. staff expert hours	£84.00	1
		NT16	Equipment or resources donated to VCSEs	£	£1.00	1
		NT17	Number of voluntary hours donated to support VCSEs	no. volunteering hours	£14.43	1
		NT18	Total amount (£) spent in LOCAL supply chain through contract.	£	£0.60	1
		NT19	Total amount (£) spent through contract with LOCAL SMEs	£	£0.60	1
		NT20	Improve staff wellbeing, recognise mental health	no. hrs*no. attendees	£95.95	1
and more resilient Communities	More working with the Community	NT21	Diversity training	no. hrs*no. attendees	Record only	1
		NT22	% of contracts incl. commitments to ethical procurement, & anti-slavery	% of contracts	Record only	1
		NT23	% of supply chain contracts with Social Value commitments	% of contracts	Record only	1
		NT24	Initiatives aimed at reducing crime	£ invested & staff time	£1.00	1
		NT25	Initiatives to be taken to tackle homelessness	£ invested & staff time	£1.00	1
		NT26	Initiatives to be supported to engage people in health interventions	£ invested & staff time	£1.00	1
		NT27	Initiatives to be taken to support older, disabled & vulnerable	£ invested & staff time	£1.00	1
		NT28	Donations or in-kind contributions to local community projects	£ value	£1.00	1
		NT29	No hours volunteering time provided to support local community projects	no. staff volunteering hours	£14.43	1
		NT30	Support provided to help local community draw up their own Stakeholder Plan	£ invested & staff time	£1.00	1
Environment: Protecting and Improving Our Environment	Climate Impacts are reduced	NT31	Savings in CO2 emissions on contract not from transport	tonnes CO2e	£64.66	1
	Air pollution is reduced	NT32	Car miles saved on the project (e.g. cycle to work programmes)	hundreds of miles saved	£1.53	1
	Better places to live	NT33	Number of low or no emission staff vehicles included on project	hundreds of miles driven	£0.67	1
	Sustainable Procurement is promoted	NT34	Voluntary time dedicated to management of green infrastructure	no. staff volunteering hours	£14.43	1
Innovation: Promoting Social Innovation	Other measures (TBD)	NT35	% of contracts that includes sustainable procurement commitments	% of contracts	Record only	1
		NT36	Other measures (£)	£	£1.00	1
		NT37	Other measures (hrs)	no. staff expert hours	£84.00	1
		NT38	Other measures (hrs)	no. staff volunteering hours	£14.43	1

4.08 Excerpt from National TOMs social value calculation spreadsheet

I asked myself the question, are these models working “against”, and could they provide useful insights into subverting the status quo? Despite the aim of Community Land Trusts of directly working “against” through removing land and homes from market speculation, the CLT is obliged to work “within” in order to demonstrate its viability and raise finance. This limits the impact that CLT’s are able to have as they are unable to spread widely without decoupling the concept from the need to prove their own viability against the market. The idea of social value is to deliver benefits to communities

alongside profit, which could conceivably alter elements of a regeneration scheme. However, although local authorities are including social value within a procurement processes, the social value that is included is determined by opaque national parameters and the methods used are dependent on who is doing the calculation. Similar to a viability calculation, Matthew Hall et al state that there are two factors involved in how practitioners quantify social value, firstly what they believe counts as valid data and secondly the resources that they have available to collect the data.⁴²⁹ Quantification supposedly leads to comparability, however, it also reinforces the dominance of inaccessible data and information, as well as the calculation methods themselves being opaque. Therefore, neither of these examples directly approach the issues with viability explored in the first part of this text: the use of proprietary data, the complexity of calculations and language, the analysis needed of many different factors and scales, the inaccurate and biased predictions, the use of closed networks for information, the unknown impact of political decisions, the system being based on the assumption of profit and overall the situating of the models so exclusively within a market-led framework.

What I have attempted to show in this section are the various ways by which viability data and assessment hold power over the decision-making processes in regeneration, and how the opacity of the viability process is used as a tool for developers to reduce affordable housing contributions. Now understanding these issues better, I asked myself what could combat the dominance of financial data in decision making? How could viability be approached in a way which turned it's assumptions upside down? What is community viability? Anticapitalist viability?

Weak theory

When trying to think of ways to approach viability from an anti-capitalist perspective, I found Gibson-Graham's approach described in the book "A Postcapitalist Politics" useful.⁴³⁰ Gibson-Graham ask why are "experimental

429 Matthew Hall, Yuval Millo, and Emily Barman, 'Who and What Really Counts? Stakeholder Prioritization and Accounting for Social Value: Stakeholder Prioritization and Accounting for Social Value', *Journal of Management Studies* 52, no. 7 (November 2015): 907–34, <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12146>.

430 J. K. Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

forays into building new economies, movements, and futures greeted with scepticism and suspicion?”.⁴³¹ They explain many reasons why it is difficult to propose alternatives to capitalist models, both theoretical and real, such as being co-opted, collaborating with those in power, being seen as naïve, utopian or projects that are too small or weak to demonstrate significant change.

*“We can observe how we produce our own powerlessness with respect to the economy, for example, by theorizing unfolding logics and structural formations that close off the contestable arrangements we associate with politics.”*⁴³²

Gibson-Graham propose “weak theory” as a means of reducing the reach of experimental proposals that attempt to challenge capitalism, so as not to be overwhelmed by the prospect.⁴³³ Weak theory changes the economic narrative through developing “an interest in unpredictability, contingency, experimentation, or even an attachment to the limits of understanding and the possibilities of escape.”⁴³⁴ It allows other diverse economies to come into existence, however small or seemingly insignificant. Gibson-Graham also connect their work to the theories written about by Mouffe of the importance of centralising of space for disagreement within discourse.⁴³⁵ Economic discourse that enables the space for various understandings of what constitutes the economy also has the potential to interrogate inequalities produced by neoliberal capitalism. This is in contrast to the ability of consensus to cover up power imbalances and therefore also reproduce existing inequalities. Within the context of urban regeneration, the incorporation of diverse informal economies that inevitably exist already within any urban area into the regeneration discourse has the potential to shift the focus from economic viability into social value while avoiding the pitfalls of quantification. Informal economies often emerge where, as Mattern notes, “infrastructures are absent or unreliable,” and “the gaps are filled by illegal water taps, grafted cables, pirate radio stations, backyard boreholes, shadow networks, and so forth.”⁴³⁶ These networks operate on

431 Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics*. p3.

432 Ibid. p8.

433 Ibid.

434 Ibid.p7.

435 Chantal Mouffe, *The Return of the Political*, 2. impr, Phronesis (London: Verso, 1997). p50.

436 Mattern, ‘Maintenance and Care’. p5.

the margins, developing and sharing their own knowledge infrastructures. Informal economies such as childcare, cooking for the elderly or shared cars all have associated social infrastructures that require support and maintenance. The size or influence of such economies should not deter their integration into a new regeneration infrastructure. Understanding regeneration as a process that requires the integration and support of such economies begins to alter the types of data and information that might go into an assessment of viability, and also the form that assessment may take. Refusing the conventional viability narrative in this way tries to destabilise the power of the economy in a similar manner to how coproduction has the potential to destabilise knowledge production. In working “against”, the hegemony of the status quo overwhelmed my agency as the A_O: I was not able to conclude the integration of varied economies into a new form of viability. However, through the process of building my own knowledge of development economics and applying that knowledge, the tactics of working “against” became defined and gained focus. “Against” requires a detailed understanding of the structures of neoliberal capitalism in order to search for alternatives that can exist and thrive despite its dominance. As described at the beginning of this chapter, “against” is used as a counterpoint to the collaborative optimism of working “within”. “Against” emphasises the dissonance between the idea of working “within” the present flawed infrastructures of regeneration, with a view to change, and the reality of the present social order.⁴³⁷

The Architect in the A_O

Following the exploration detailed above, I return to the term “architect”. It is important to define how the A_O differs from and extends the embedded practices that I described in chapter three; the architects who worked on Community Technical Aid, the planners who left their jobs in local government to campaign with communities against redevelopment proposals. The A_O contains within the role the potential of expert knowledge and therefore power. The knowledge that the architect has in relation to urban regeneration and development in general is essential to the role of the A_O. It would not be possible for someone without some form of architectural or urban design education to do the job of the A_O. The

437 Bell and Pahl, ‘Co-Production’.

A_O is not expecting to transfer the knowledge gained through conventional professional education to a community of non-experts. The A_O aims to overcome the professional/non-expert divide through enabling the critical analysis of structural power relations, beginning with the knowledge and experience that already exists within the community of stakeholders and enabling critical analysis with that knowledge. This approach releases the knowledge held as “professional,” all knowledge being equally useful towards developing a critical analysis of structural power relations that aims towards change. My experiences working “within” and “against” demonstrated that this is not a straightforward approach. The critical pedagogical elements of my practice enabled non-expert analysis and the building of knowledge, as demonstrated with both the Custom House Terms of Reference and the work on viability, however, the hegemony of the status quo did not enable the analysis to be transformed into actual change.

In conclusion

The investigation of the data and information infrastructures that drive decision making in the regeneration process enabled me, through my research and experience, to propose an expansion of the data and information infrastructure into the social infrastructure understood by community organisers. The expansion emphasises the role of the A_O in bridging the technical and social infrastructures of urban regeneration and begins a potential reframing of the regeneration process. Through working “within” and “against”, I tested the limits of the role of the A_O in practice, gaining an understanding of how the role extends contemporary participatory practice through the practical and theoretical barriers that I encountered in attempting to *be the Architect_Organiser* and embody the full potential of the role. In order to further understand the value of the role “in terms of how it generates capacity to make (power, alternative institutions, ways of being in the world that challenge white supremacist hetero-patriarchy and capitalism) and how that is made useful by people on the ground,” I will now return to infrastructuring as a method for investigating how to implement the potential within the role of the A_O to develop a new regeneration infrastructure.⁴³⁸

438 Agid and Chin, ‘Making and Negotiating Value’. p86.

Chapter 5

The Architect Organiser beyond. If this fails then what?

“...perhaps we have been looking in the wrong place. Perhaps we should have been looking at breakdown and failure as no longer atypical and therefore only worth addressing if they result in catastrophe and, instead, at breakdown and failure as the means by which societies learn and learn to re-produce.”⁴³⁹

In developing the Architect_Organiser role, I used critical pedagogical practice and theories of infrastructuring in an attempt to restructure relationships between stakeholders, specifically between experts and non-experts and to expand the data and information infrastructures in the regeneration process. Having demonstrated the importance of data and information to the process, I attempted to build a model participatory process in the form of coproduction alongside community organisers, residents and local authority employees. In doing so, I established that the ability of the local authority to work in coproduction with residents in a regeneration context is limited by its own representative democratic structure, by the inertia of the status quo and by the inherent power imbalance between the local authority and residents. I demonstrated that development viability is based upon irregular, unsubstantiated, proprietary and inaccessible data, leading to unverifiable conclusions. The “unviable” argument used to justify destructive urban regeneration practices is therefore unjustifiable. Despite knowing the dangers of co-optation through examining attempts at partnership in urban regeneration from the past, the A_O could not avoid becoming co-opted by the local authority. I have attempted to push the boundaries of current practice in the field of urban regeneration and urban change through the development of the role of the Architect_Organiser. The complexity of the contemporary regeneration process, however, remains a barrier to both non-experts and to myself working as the A_O in the process.

The final chapter of this thesis is an exercise in the ethical practice of not

439 Stephen Graham and Nigel Thrift, ‘Out of Order: Understanding Repair and Maintenance’, *Theory, Culture & Society* 24, no. 3 (May 2007): 1–25, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276407075954>. p5.

being co-opted. I would like to begin with an excerpt from Gibson-Graham. In their book “A post-capitalist politics,” Gibson-Graham describe a series of organisations and interventions that contain the “politics of possibility.”⁴⁴⁰ They describe how it is possible to collaborate with groups or institutions that may not share your values or goals despite the risks.

*“Each of them works with and accepts funding from governments, international agencies, foundations, or collaborating partners that may not share their values and goals. While recognizing the risk of co-optation that such relationships pose, they refuse to see co-optation as a necessary condition of consorting with power. Instead it is an ever-present danger that calls forth vigilant exercises of self-scrutiny and self-cultivation—ethical practices, one might say, of “not being co-opted.”*⁴⁴¹

The narrative of the development of the Architect_Organiser is multifaceted and complex. The Architect_Organiser encouraged residents to engage in developing the coproduction process. The necessary structures within the local representative democracy that would have enabled coproduction to happen were not in place. The Architect_Organiser came into conflict with those in positions of power for being unwilling to make concrete steps towards shared decision making agreements such as partnership. Those in power intentionally diluted the coproduction process in order to make it less powerful. The intention and the role of the Architect_Organiser was misunderstood with regards to the conflict of interest. The Architect_Organiser did not reach a point of sufficient security to propose a challenge to the conventional financial structures of the regeneration process.

The in-depth investigation of the financial viability assessment and its relationship to decision making processes led me to a desire for an exploration of experimental and alternative economic structures. However, Gibson-Graham reiterate the difficulties in embedding alternatives to capitalist structures within collaborative interventions, or in this case, novel participatory frameworks.⁴⁴² The reasons given for the difficulties in proposing alternatives to capitalist models, both theoretical and real, include being co-opted, collaborating with those in power, ideas being seen as naïve, utopian, or too small or weak to demonstrate significant change. Following the co-optation of the coproduction process, there appeared to be few options left for me to explore as the Architect_Organiser.

440 Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics*.

441 Ibid. pXXVI

442 Ibid.

At PEACH meetings, residents wanted a more confrontational approach. “Collaboration has not got us anywhere”, they said, “the council have lied, they haven’t released the information we asked for, we always knew there was no point in working with them.”⁴⁴³ Forms of refusal are important, Gordon writes that forms of refusal such as direct action against and “non-participation in liberal democratic state politics”, boycotts and occupations are gestures towards developing other, alternative forms of living.⁴⁴⁴ The role of the Architect_Organiser in these moments of refusal is complex if as in my case, relationships have been built with those in power as well as with residents. As the “expert”, there is an almost irresistible appeal towards what some scholars have described as common sense, or evidence-based scenarios.⁴⁴⁵ Structural hierarchies between expert and non-expert knowledge types in participatory and collaborative projects can lead to the “expert” holding responsibility for the participation of the “non-expert” in a process that isn’t serving them. In order to challenge conventional hierarchies of knowledge, the Architect_Organiser is required to develop an understanding of participation in refusal as a form of hope. However, in attempting to forge new paths or detours around the tried and true paths of knowledge production as described by Halberstam, the A_O runs the risk of not being taken seriously, being disqualified, risking their professional status and ultimately failure.⁴⁴⁶

Bell and Pahl describe the ability of neoliberal capitalism to capture bottom-up or community-led, grassroots optimism and make sure that it is “distorted and incorporated to the benefit of capital and the state and to the detriment of the subjects who originally produced it.”⁴⁴⁷ They give contemporary examples of captured initiatives such as workers gaining more control over their working hours being captured by the emergence of zero-hours contracts, or planning for creative districts in cities leading to the privatisation of public space.⁴⁴⁸ The seamless capture by capitalism of demands that were won through grassroots organising eventually leads to the sense that the refusal to participate is the only option to not be co-opted. Before the acceptance of refusal as the only option however, the

443 Comment to author, PEACH housing club. See Appendix 1: PEACH Diaries.

444 Gordon, *The Hawthorn Archive*. pVIII.

445 Blundell Jones, Petrescu, and Till, *Architecture and Participation*.

446 Halberstam, *The Queer Art of Failure*.

447 Bell and Pahl, ‘Co-Production’. p108.

448 Ibid.

alternative initially appears to be common sense. Common sense is objective, straightforward and indicates that solutions can be found, as opposed to refusal and non-participation which indicate a rejection of the status quo. This rejection is a source of anxiety for the holder of “expert” knowledge. The rejection contradicts the life investment in time and money that the “expert” has made in order to understand the system, even with the hope of changing it. In working towards the ethical practice of not being co-opted, rather than a rejection of expert knowledge, refusal becomes a precondition for the possibility of building something radically different. This theory allows me to develop the positioning of the A_O in order that the role can cultivate not only forms of collaboration, but also marginality as described by bell hooks, a “radical perspective from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds”.⁴⁴⁹

The modes of practice that I have described as “within” and “against” operated concurrently, engaging in a pragmatic manner with existing systems and processes. Working “within” and “against” outlined potential frameworks for change and began to understand that those frameworks could not integrate the level of change that is needed, that the change did not go far enough. Working “within” and “against” initially appeared to be two oppositional modes of practice, but through this analysis it became clear that “within” and “against” are actually complementary. It is necessary for the A_O to work both “within” and “against” simultaneously, relying on the contradictions in the role to maintain tension with those in power as well as trust and accountability within the community. However, the barriers I encountered to developing and implementing this practice are real. In my attempts at “within” and “against” as the A_O, I was led away from my working as an embedded practitioner. bell hooks notes that Friere did not advocate for awareness or “concientizao” alone, but that the critical thinking must be joined with praxis.⁴⁵⁰ The challenge of overcoming the status quo was clear in the evolution of the coproduction process and was also evident in contesting the power of finance over the development process. The tension of working “within” and “against” remains through

449 bell hooks, “CHOOSING THE MARGIN AS A SPACE OF RADICAL OPENNESS.” *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, no. 36 (1989): 15–23. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44111660>. p20.

450 bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

the following speculative and exploratory work which I call the practice of “beyond”. Beyond can be conceptualised as a form of participatory pedagogical practice of imagining the future. Beyond is required to harness the potential of “knowledge practices that refuse both the form and the content of traditional canons,” and this means not allowing “expert” knowledge or common sense to obstruct the imagination.⁴⁵¹ Allowing beyond to unfold encourages “different aesthetic standards for ordering or disordering space, other modes of political engagement than those conjured by the liberal imagination”.⁴⁵² Beyond is infrastructuring the role of the Architect_Organiser. This concept initially appears strange- what is the infrastructure that is being acted upon in this scenario? Karasti et al. write that “infrastructures are engines of ontological change. They stand between people and technology and nature and in so doing reconfigure each simultaneously”.⁴⁵³ Can the role of the A_O operate infrastructurally, not solely existing in relation to the infrastructures of regeneration? A better understanding infrastructural nature of the role can be gained from a brief look at the Architect_Organiser following Star and Ruhleder’s eight properties of infrastructures.⁴⁵⁴

<i>Embeddedness.</i>	The A_O is embedded within the physical and social structures of the local area where they work.
<i>Transparency.</i>	The A_O works using a framework that has been developed to support the role, and that framework is transparent, invisibly supporting the work.
<i>Reach or scope.</i>	The role of the A_O is applicable to and can spread to multiple local areas.
<i>Learned as part of membership.</i>	The A_O is a member of a community of practice.

451 Halberstam, *The Queer Art of Failure*. p10.

452 Ibid. p10.

453 Helena Karasti, Volkmar Pipek, and Geoffrey C. Bowker, ‘An Afterword to “Infrastructuring and Collaborative Design”’, *Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)* 27, no. 2 (April 2018): 267–89, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10606-017-9305-x>. p271.

454 Susan Leigh Star and Karen Ruhleder, ‘Steps Toward an Ecology of Infrastructure: Design and Access for Large Information Spaces’, *Information Systems Research* 7, no. 1 (1 March 1996): 111–34, <https://doi.org/10.1287/isre.7.1.111>.

<i>Links with conventions of practice.</i>	The role of the A_O is shaped and therefore limited by conventions both within architecture and community organising, even as the role tries to move beyond those conventions.
<i>Embodiment of standards.</i>	The work of the A_O is able to meet standards necessary for physical infrastructure, for example, the design of roads or transport links.
<i>Built on an installed base.</i>	The A_O wrestles with the inertia of existing urban, political and organisational infrastructures
<i>Becomes visible upon breakdown.</i>	Makes clear the difference between visibility and transparency. Visibility is situated. ⁴⁵⁵ When the A_O role is functioning correctly, the A_O will be facilitating and making possible rather than obstructing.

Understanding the development of the Architect_Organiser role as infrastructural development following my practice experience, infrastructuring the Architect_Organiser becomes a way to incorporate the learning from my experience into the role, a way of acting upon the infrastructure created through my practice. The Architect_Organiser “beyond”, is the projection of the role into the future, using speculative and exploratory scenarios and pushing against the commodification of knowledge under capitalism.⁴⁵⁶ Beyond maintains Gordon’s resolution for “living on better terms than what we’re offered, for living as if you had the necessity and the freedom to do so,” struggling against the limitations of the imagination.⁴⁵⁷ The “beyond” imagined by the A_O resonates with the description by Gordon of “a collective life without misery, deadly inequalities, mutating racisms, social abandonment, endless war, police power, authoritarian governance, heteronormative impositions, patriarchal rule, cultural conformity, and ecological destruction.”⁴⁵⁸ Beyond is a form of hope.

455 Larkin, ‘The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure’.

456 Ruth Levitas, *Utopia as Method: The Imaginary Reconstruction of Society* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

457 Gordon, *The Hawthorn Archive*. pV.

458 Ibid.vpV.

Stop asking for permission: Infrastructuring the Architect_Organiser

“The amalgam “imagination infrastructure” evokes more than the sum of its two parts. Three possible meanings arise when we bring together these two very different words. First, an infrastructure which supports the use and development of the skill and faculty of imagination; second, a process or methodology involving the use of imaginative faculties to design new infrastructure; and third, a description of the way certain forms of sociotechnical imaginaries are embodied in physical infrastructures.”⁴⁵⁹

Understanding infrastructuring as a methodology for acting on infrastructures, understanding the infrastructural nature of the role of the A_O, understanding the role of data, information and knowledge in the contemporary regeneration process and through the lens of critical pedagogy, I can now infrastructure the role of the Architect_Organiser. Community organising has its roots in societal change, in organising those with less power to challenge those in power. Bringing the community organiser role and the architect together immediately causes tension. The role of the architect in an urban regeneration context is bounded by the constellation of stakeholders that surround the role. Combining the role of the architect with that of the community organiser allows a different understanding of where knowledge and skills inherent in professional architectural experience can be used to imagine societal change. The movements for change that are interesting to the role of the Architect_Organiser are those where the demands appears naïve, utopian or unrealistic, where community organising is common and that are heavily entangled in the neoliberal capitalist system. These movements are inherently political and unapologetic.

The movement for prison abolition that exists within abolitionist theory is one such example of transformative agency. The links between theory and practice in the field of abolition are well documented by scholars such as Agid in their practice-based research with US abolitionist organisation

459 Olivia Oldham, ‘Imagination Infrastructure – What do we mean?’ <https://oliviaoldham.medium.com/imagination-infrastructure-abd96262fff6>, accessed 28th June 2022.

Critical Resistance.⁴⁶⁰ An abolitionist approach draws on the work of activists and theorists such as Ruth Wilson Gilmore and Angela Davis, inviting you to imagine a future whereby carceral institutions have been dismantled and the concepts of justice and accountability reimagined.⁴⁶¹ Abolitionist practice focuses on developing community strengths to tackle underlying social problems such as with housing, health, education and the environment. Abolition is not however against reforming current systems. Abolitionist theory makes the distinction between “reformist reforms” and “abolitionist reforms.”⁴⁶² Reformist reforms appear initially as reasonable proposals towards loosening seemingly intractable problems. For example in an urban design context, proposing to increase the number of CCTV cameras in order to reduce street crime. On initial examination, it would appear logical that CCTV discourages crime, enabling the observation of the street at all times. However upon reflection the CCTV observes the crime, the problem, rather than looking at the things which might be leading people to commit the crime, for example poverty, deprivation, lack of social welfare or lack of youth facilities. So therefore CCTV is a reformist reform. Abolitionist reforms strike at the issues lying behind the problem. An abolitionist alternative to increasing the number of CCTV cameras would be to fund local youth centres and other services that provide social support systems as institutions that Sharon Mattern defines in terms of care:

“We could imagine physical infrastructures that support ecologies of care — cities and buildings that provide the appropriate physical settings and resources for street sweepers and sanitation workers, teachers and social workers, therapists and outreach agents. How can we position “care” as an integral value within the city’s architectures and infrastructures of criminal justice, designing systems and spaces for restoration rather than retribution?”⁴⁶³

460 Shana Agid, “‘Dismantle, Change, Build’: Designing Abolition at the Intersections of Local, Large-Scale, and Imagined Infrastructures”, *Design Studies* 59 (November 2018): 95–116, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.destud.2018.05.006>.

461 Rachel Kushner, ‘Is prison necessary? Ruth Wilson Gilmore might change your mind,’ *New York Times Magazine*, 17th April 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/17/magazine/prison-abolition-ruth-wilson-gilmore.html>, accessed 28th June 2022. Angela Y. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, Open Media Book (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003).

462 Abolitionist Futures, ‘Defund the police: Reformist Reforms vs Abolitionist Steps for UK policing,’ <https://abolitionistfutures.com/defund-the-police>, accessed 28th June 2022.

463 Shannon Mattern, ‘Maintenance and Care’, *Places Journal*, no. 2018 (20 November 2018), <https://doi.org/10.22269/181120>. p10.

When examined from an abolitionist perspective, the reorganisation of stakeholder relationships through the development of a model participatory framework became in the end an attempt at a “reformist reform”.⁴⁶⁴ The urban regeneration system will never be reformed satisfactorily. The complexity of information, the power of finance and the inertia of the status quo all contribute to the urban regeneration infrastructure as a system that isn’t working. Understanding this as a community organiser, the next step is refusal to participate in the process as it will never fulfil the community’s needs.

In my role as Architect_Organiser in practice, I didn’t attain this clarity of understanding. It is only through the examination and further development of the role in a research capacity that my compromised status has become evident and theoretical routes towards a less compromised position can be explored. Identifying where the power sits that is controlling these structural issues, developing strategies for gaining support, and visions of change are standard steps in community organising. Drawing from the critical pedagogical experiences of my practice, the experience of being co-opted and taking note of the inaccessibility of data and information that is used to drive decisions, the role of the Architect_Organiser can initiate abolitionist reforms of contemporary regeneration infrastructures.

Approaching the role of the Architect_Organiser with an abolitionist mindset is understanding that, as an abolitionist, it is possible to work towards a goal which will never happen in your lifetime, but that every incremental change moves everyone closer to the goal of a more socially just world. Moten and Harney caution against abolition referring solely to elimination.⁴⁶⁵ It is not the elimination of regeneration that the A_O is aiming towards, it is a re-evaluation of the neoliberal urban design and planning ethos that enables regeneration to displace low-income and working class people, increase housing and rental prices, exacerbate urban inequalities and manipulate residents with data and information.

My research demonstrated the inertia towards change embedded in the urban regeneration process and the powers investing in retaining the

464 Abolitionist Futures, ‘Defund the police: Reformist Reforms vs Abolitionist Steps for UK policing,’ <https://abolitionistfutures.com/defund-the-police>, accessed 28th June 2022.

465 Harney and Moten, *The Undercommons*.

status quo. Abolitionist practice encourages the use of the imagination to experiment with speculative proposals. Without cultivating the imagination, attempting to redesign how regeneration happens from the ground up will recreate contemporary problems.⁴⁶⁶ It is impossible to unentangle the practice of the A_O from within the current dominant systems and processes, therefore building a different world requires experimenting “with new collective structures that enable us to take more principled action”.⁴⁶⁷ This is inspired by the work of marea brown, especially “Emergent Strategy” in the need for processes that “deepen and soften our intelligence”.⁴⁶⁸ Books of practical and not so practical inspiration and musing such as marea brown’s show a way forward that isn’t linear. Working beyond aims to build on this work through the development of a role that does experiments. This also builds on the definition of mutual aid by Dean Spade, as “collective coordination to meet each other’s needs, usually from an awareness that the systems that we have in place are not going to meet them.”⁴⁶⁹

The clarity of purpose of abolitionist politics distinguishes abolitionist thinking and practice from that of critical or speculative design, where the politics or values of future scenarios are often undefined or unspecified.⁴⁷⁰ The speculative regeneration infrastructure that has a specific place for the A_O requires that the values and principles of change are clearly defined. This exercise in speculative infrastructuring is based on creative traditions of imagination as a force for change. There is no illusion that this speculative infrastructure will itself force change, in all likelihood, this infrastructure will remain on the margins. The A_O will continue to engage others with critical pedagogical practice, and continue attempting the development of collective structures, strategies and tactics that remain insignificant in comparison to the ubiquitous structures of contemporary regeneration. The development of a practice of beyond accepts the challenge in the continuation, the maintenance of hope and action towards change.

466 Brown, *Emergent Strategy*.

467 Mariame Kaba, ‘So you’re thinking about becoming an abolitionist?’ <https://level.medium.com/so-youre-thinking-about-becoming-an-abolitionist-a436f8e31894>. Accessed 28th June 2022,

468 Brown, *Emergent Strategy*.

469 Dean Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity during This Crisis (and the Next)* (London ; New York: Verso, 2020). p7.

470 Ramia Mazé, ‘Politics of Designing Visions of the Future’, *Journal of Futures Studies* 23, no. 3 (31 March 2019), [https://doi.org/10.6531/JFS.201903_23\(3\).0003](https://doi.org/10.6531/JFS.201903_23(3).0003).

What is the role of data and information in a practice of ‘beyond’?

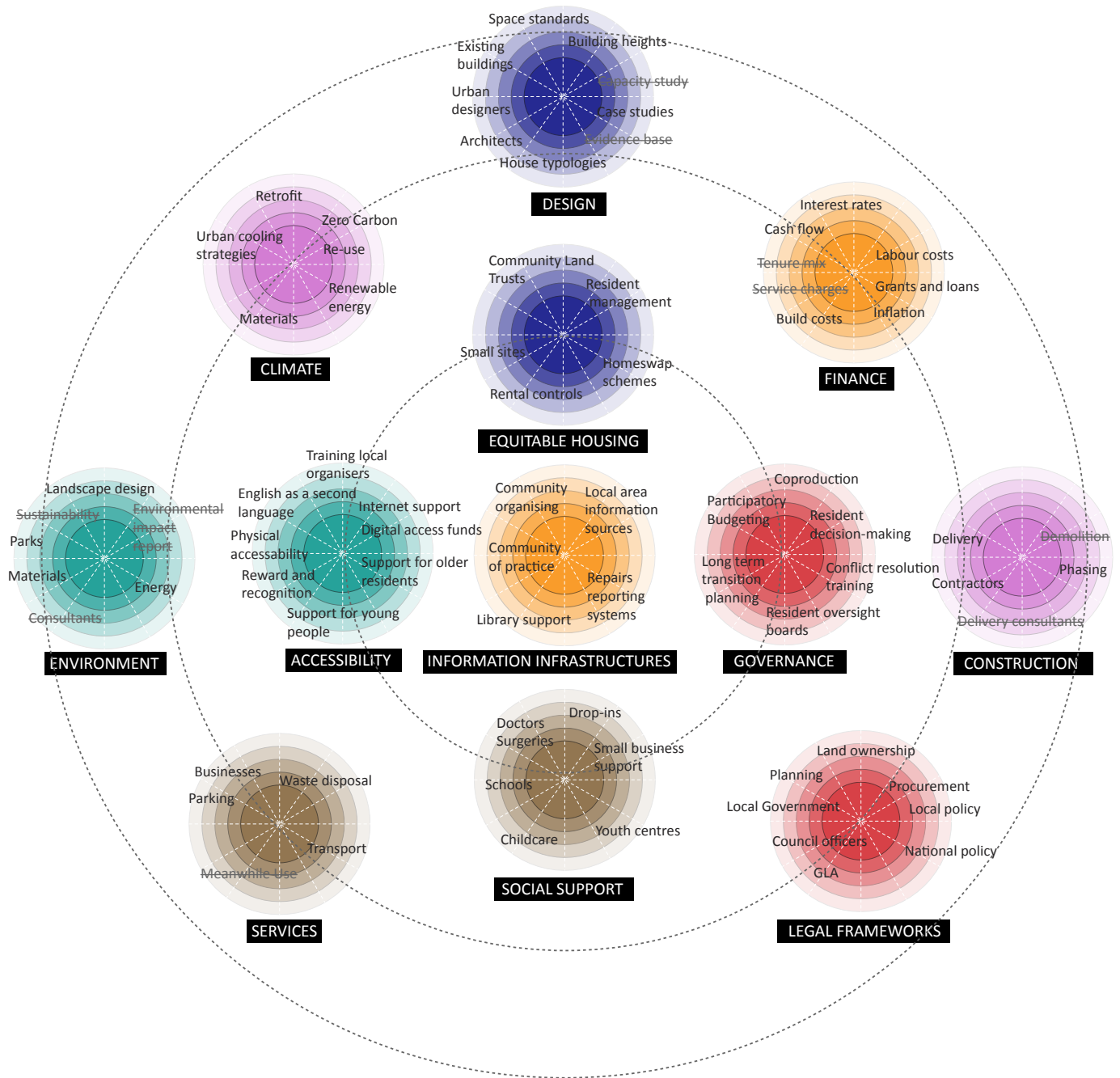
Maintaining the systems of producing and organising data and information is crucial to the maintenance of the contemporary infrastructures of regeneration. At the start of this thesis, I mentioned the proliferation of handbooks and toolkits written with the aim of helping non-experts understand, intervene and participate in regeneration processes. Having begun to develop knowledge infrastructures alongside non-experts over the course of this research, I demonstrated that the critical pedagogical approach does enable the slow accretion of knowledge, and the gaining of knowledge does empower non-experts. However, despite these small gains it was also clear that the amount and scope of information was still overwhelming and disempowering.

In developing ways of working “beyond”, the A_O needs to be able to think beyond the current proliferation of data and information and its role in supporting the regeneration infrastructure as we know it. Beyond uncovering or releasing hidden data and information, and beyond adding to or increasing its volume in order to demystify it. It is important to recognise the limits of a practice that is focused purely on increasing transparency and developing understandings of the existing regeneration process. The A_O “beyond” doesn’t cease to uncover relevant data and information, but recognises the need to supplement this with a deeper change in practice. Giroux writes of decoupling the relationship between knowledge and power through “border pedagogy”.⁴⁷¹ The relationship between knowledge and power leads those with professional or expert knowledge working on developing genuine participatory processes to repeatedly map the area of their expertise or domination in the hope that non-experts will be able to follow them into their territory. Giroux writes of rewriting these borders through “engaging the ways in which knowledge can be remapped, reterritorialized, and decentered”.⁴⁷² The act of remapping the regeneration process according to resident-led understanding and priorities leads to an expansion of the regeneration information infrastructure to include data and information produced by a wider range of stakeholders, in a wider range of forms. The

471 Giroux, *Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope*. p147.

472 Ibid. p147.

expansion is by definition unfinished and open-ended.

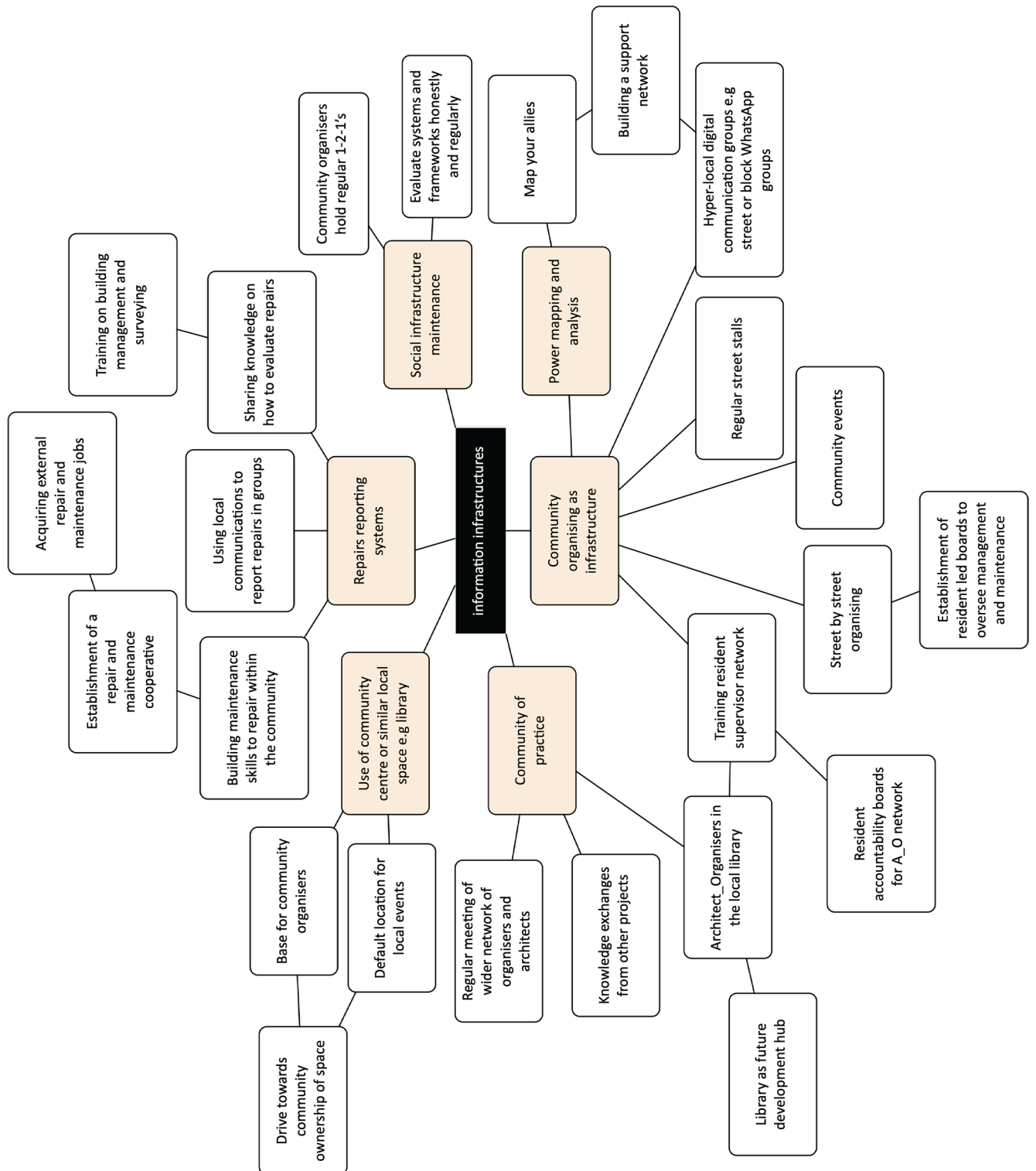


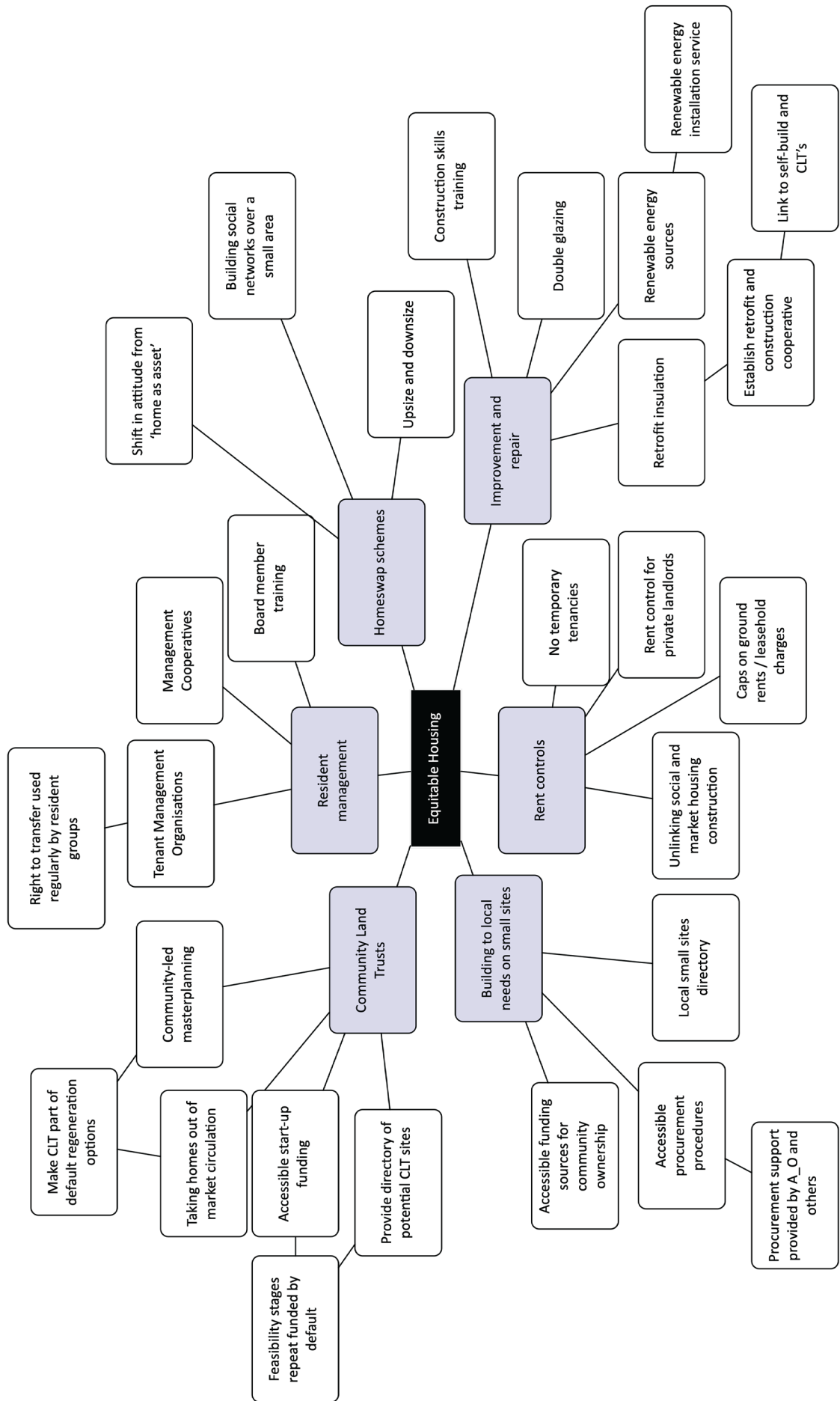
5.01 The regeneration infrastructure remapped and recentred.

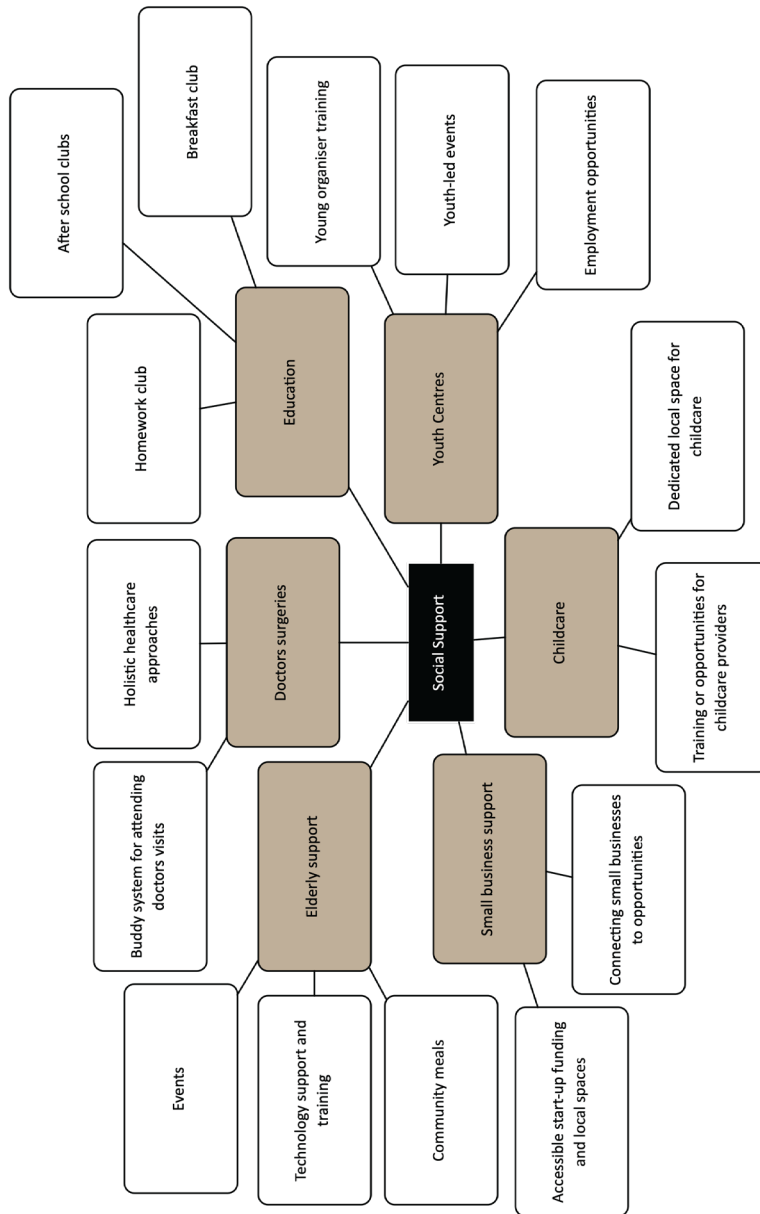
In the diagrams on the following pages, I begin to build a map of a regeneration information infrastructure that reflects the learning from my research. To begin, for example, taking the initial range of data and information I have encountered over the past five years, I can add the categories of governance, information infrastructures, accessibility, equitable housing, climate and social support. The contents of these additions specifically refer to the potential of the role of the A_O to pivot the regeneration infrastructure towards a more humane urbanism. Thinking of the centre of the diagram as the base around which the other elements

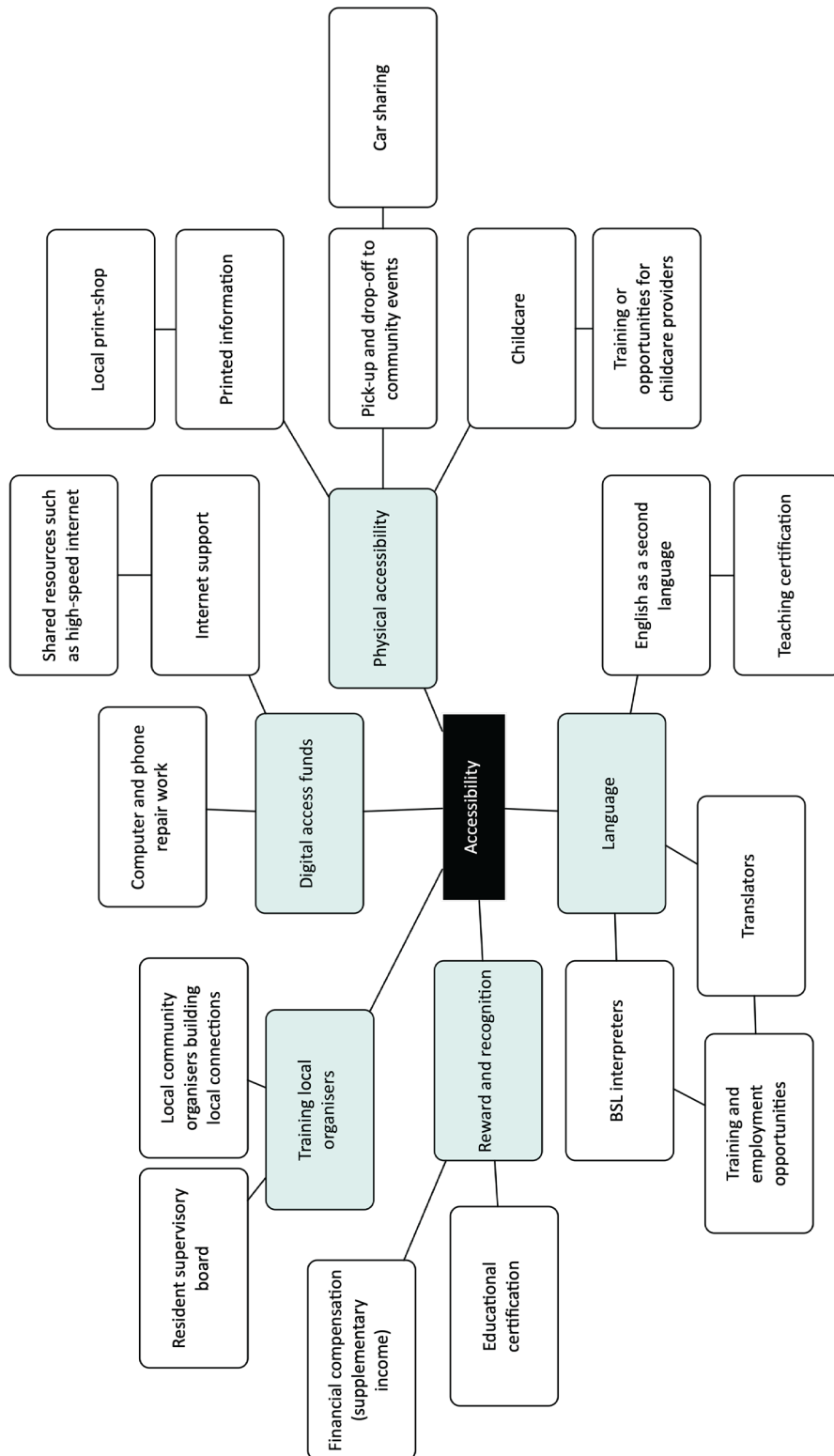
pivot, the regeneration infrastructure can be rearranged to place data and information that prioritises resident empowerment at its centre, enabling non-experts to produce information rather than respond to existing information in reactive manner. It is important to note that this diagram is drawn as a reflection of my learning following my research, and by nature it is incomplete.

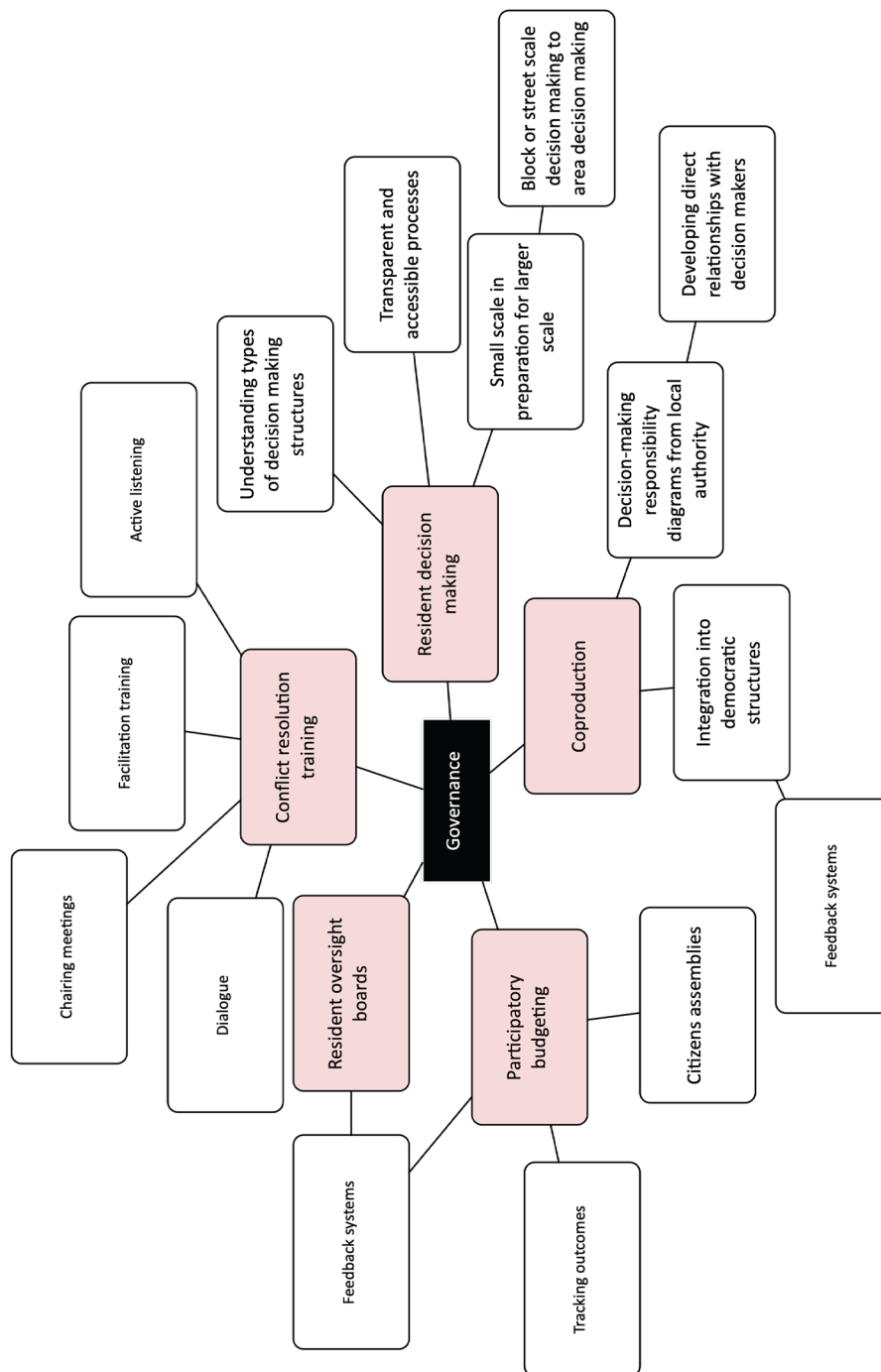
Looking at each of these categories in more detail, it is possible to begin to describe how such an infrastructure could build knowledge and opportunities from a resident-led perspective. This is illustrated in the diagrams on the following pages. The elements shown in colour are existing activities undertaken by the A_O, with future possibilities for growth shown radiating from the centre of the circles.











Diagrams are useful for describing and outlining this framework, but how can this exercise in infrastructuring move beyond the diagrammatic and into the practical? The road map was relatable because it included a simple temporal analogy to help situate the user in the process. Restructuring the regeneration infrastructure also benefits from adding a temporal frame as a locatable reference point. Infrastructure time is described by Karasti as a step beyond project based participatory processes, allowing processes to evolve alongside the infrastructure that is being designed.⁴⁷³ The infrastructural approach begins to tackle the tension that emerges between short term and long term goals in infrastructure development. However, infrastructure time does not challenge the inherently linear concept of development. Suspending linear development as a form of measurement allows the speculative regeneration infrastructure to move away from “infrastructure time” and into what I have named “community time”. As stated earlier, community time is a form of “constructive resistance to the dominant capitalist temporality,” in that it is opposed to the necessities demanded by capitalism in relation to urban change.⁴⁷⁴ Community in this sense, refers to the relationships built between neighbours, on streets, in schools, shops and workplaces. Community time allows for emergence and careful integration of a variety of narratives. Community time “moves at the speed of trust”.⁴⁷⁵ Community time in the context of an urban regeneration infrastructure can be seen in the slow accretion of knowledge that happens when critical pedagogy is combined with community organising. Taking the emergence of the E16 Community Land Trust as an example. Firstly, the idea of the community land trust was discussed within PEACH meetings. The Architect_Organisers and community organisers at PEACH developed

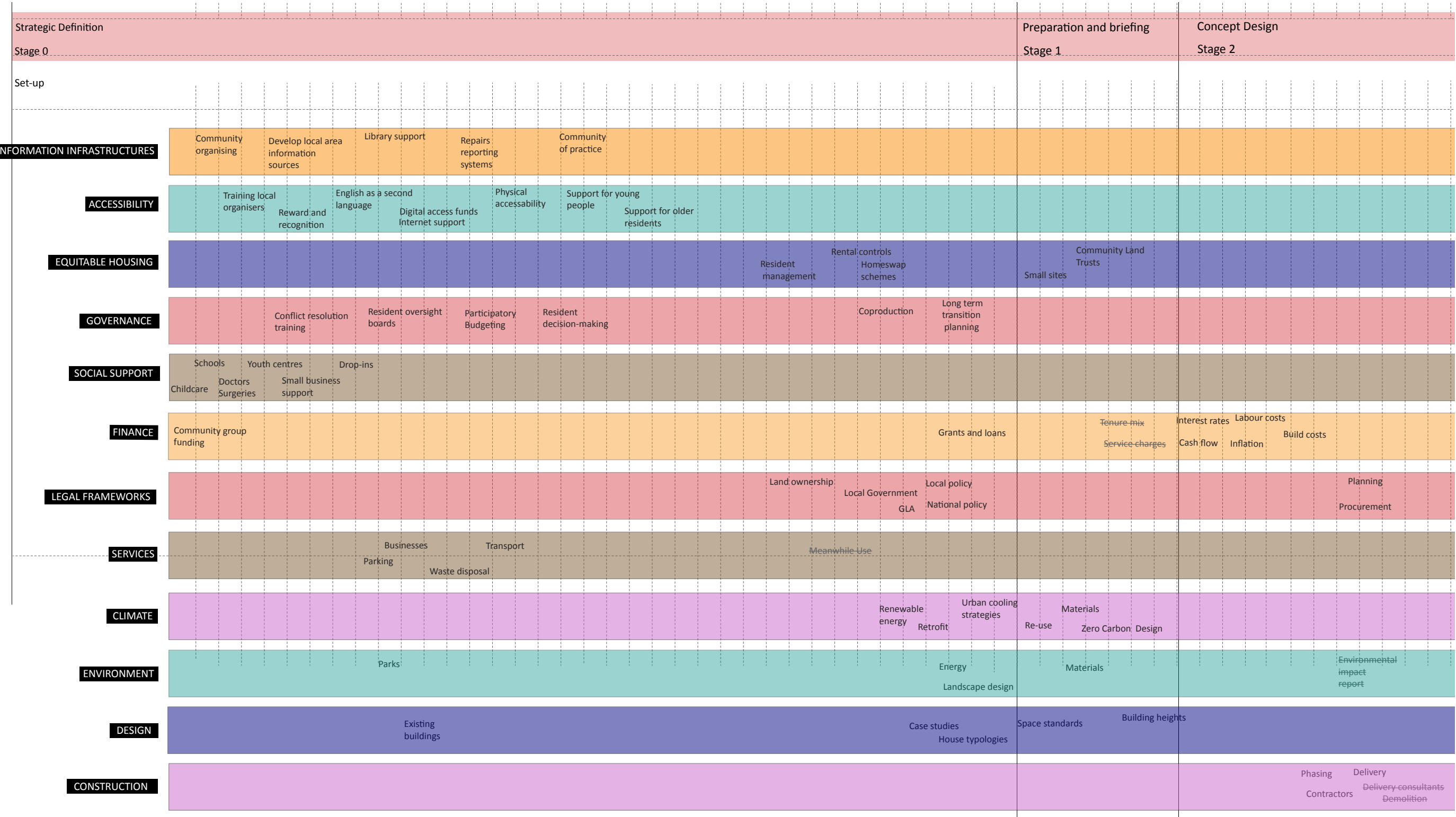
473 Karasti, Baker, and Millerand, ‘Infrastructure Time’.

474 Majken Jul Sørensen and Kristin Wiksell, ‘Constructive Resistance to the Dominant Capitalist Temporality’, *Sociologisk Forskning* 56, no. 3–4 (21 October 2019): 253–74, <https://doi.org/10.37062/sf.56.18802>.

475 Originally attributed to Stephen M. R. Covey and Rebecca R. Merrill, *The Speed of Trust: The One Thing That Changes Everything*, paperback ed (New York: Free Press, 2008). The term is also widely used in disability justice and transformative justice that both have strong links to abolitionist practice. See for example Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha and Elliott Fukui “Moving at the Speed of Trust: Disability and Transformative Justice” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TwWdv_uBGNy accessed 3rd November 2023.

an understanding with residents of what it means to take homes out of the housing market, the responsibility and effects that it will have. It took years before the knowledge and confidence was accrued that enabled the group establish themselves as an entity, form a board and employ a design team to undertake a feasibility study of a site. These years are occupied with building local support, gaining members, fundraising, as well as building knowledge. Including a variety of narratives into this timeline means accepting the desires and capacities for varying levels of responsibility. It means taking the time to build trust so that members can talk to each other about their relationships to housing as a need versus housing as an investment. It means potentially extending the development timeline with smaller scale interventions.

Extensions of time are however, for many community land trusts, the reality of land negotiations, community time therefore reframes the focus on residents, making it part of *their* agency and project timelines rather than something that they have no control over. Placing the components of the new regeneration infrastructure onto the timeline structure of the road-map indicates the amount of preparation that is required before it is possible to begin to embark on the steps necessary for a conventional project.



5.02 The regeneration infrastructure according to community time

The politics of possibility -how can we get there?

“infrastructuring offers theoretical and practice-based scaffolds for imagining the work and dynamics of designing at the interstices and points of contention that connect social justice struggles to the socio-political-material infrastructures they seek to engage, transform, or abolish.”⁴⁷⁶

The Architect_Organiser requires an uncompromising evaluation system in order to understand the effects of practice in relation to the development of a new regeneration infrastructure. This infrastructure is not going to emerge fully formed, but gradually, accreting slowly. As described in the properties of infrastructures, the old infrastructures will be seen (be visible) as obsolete and malfunctioning. Developing an evaluation framework for existing practitioners provides an accessible entry point into the re-framing of the regeneration process and its associated infrastructures. The evaluation flowchart is an attempt to construct a framework that enables analysis of the current situation, a framework for formulating of visions for the future followed by a rigorous abolitionist questioning of the emerging proposals. The questions are intentionally provocative and although the flow chart is complex, it attempts to build on answers in a way that will enable practitioners to visualise alternatives. The aim is for the process to be revisited regularly, rather than trying to brainstorm all of the answers at once, building on each stage slowly, revising and evaluating what is possible.

5.03 The Three Horizons Framework

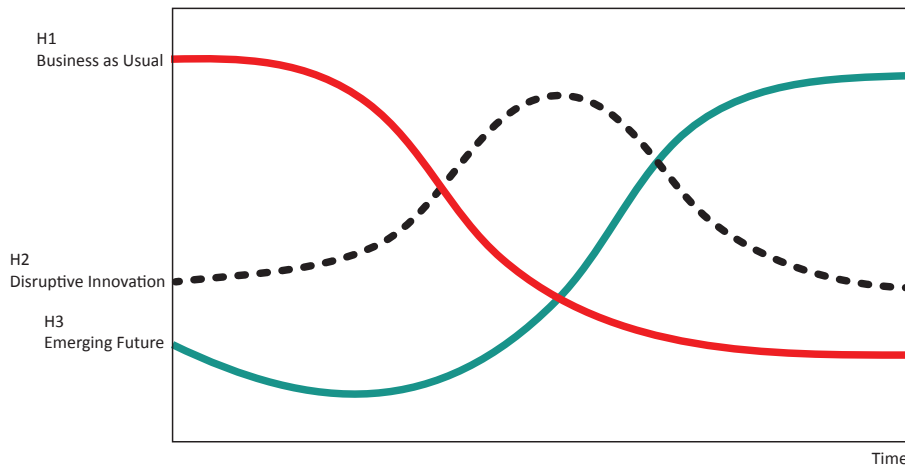
It is envisaged that a workshop using the flowchart would require at least one day-long session to complete, but ideally would be planned as a regular monthly or bi-monthly evaluation session.

The structure of the first part of the flowchart is derived using questions developed for users of the Three Horizons model of long term change.⁴⁷⁷ The Three Horizons model was developed by Bill Sharpe and Tony Hodgson as a way to conceptualise short, medium and long term change in a non-temporal manner. The first horizon represents the status quo in the present. Each of the two following horizons is then a “qualitatively different orientation to the future in the present- they describe ways people are behaving to maintain

⁴⁷⁶ Agid, ...‘...It’s Your Project, but It’s Not Necessarily Your Work...’ p89.

⁴⁷⁷ Bill Sharpe, *Three Horizons: The Patterning of Hope*, Second edition (Axminster: Triarchy Press, 2020).

the first horizon or seeking to change it.”⁴⁷⁸ This is particularly relevant to the A_O because of the inertia and resistance to change experienced in practice. The Three Horizons support abolitionist thinking through connecting the systems that are prevalent in the present and their effects to the behaviours or attitudes that maintain them, helping people to understand how to initiate change. The concept is based on the idea that dominant forms, in this case, the dominant form of urban regeneration practice, has a life-cycle of “initiation, growth, peak performance, decline and even death”.⁴⁷⁹ The dominant forms of practice can be displaced by another form of practice that, in the present, may appear marginal or even nonsensical. The three horizons are based on qualitative change rather than temporal measurement.



The first horizon is present practice, the present dominant system. The second horizon comprises of innovations which are being developed and that eventually supersede current practice. The third horizon comprises of radical innovations that appear marginal or ineffective today, and may be based on different initial premises. The activities that take place in the second horizon prepare the ground for the changes in the third horizon to take hold. The three horizons are intentionally described as qualitative and non-temporal, and the framework illustrates “how different conceptions of the future may open up for different ways of conceptualizing and constructing everyday

478 Sharpe, *Three Horizons*. Sharpe, Bill, Hodgson, Tony, ‘Three Horizons,’ <https://www.slideshare.net/grahamiff/sharpe-and-hodgson-3h-presentation>, accessed 16th May 2022. p5.

479 Three Horizons, Navigating Uncertainties, <https://www.h3uni.org/tutorial/three-horizons/>, accessed 15th November 2023.

practices in the present.”⁴⁸⁰

The questions in the flow chart were inspired in part by questions posed by Kate Raworth in her video that suggests workshop questions for using the Three Horizons framework.⁴⁸¹ In the video each question relates to a specific moment on the Three Horizons graph. I have translated the moments in the graph as the points in the flowchart, adding prompts that are related to the development of a new regeneration infrastructure. The flowchart asks the practitioner to describe the existing context of their work in relation to the categories that I described in my initial diagram of a new regeneration infrastructure; information infrastructure, governance, accessibility, social support. It then groups further categories of design, climate, environment, services and construction under the heading “equitable urbanism”. I use the term “equitable urbanism” in reference to Miraftab’s use of the term “humane urbanism,” wherein “people’s rights are real and practiced”⁴⁸² Following the initial analysis, the flowchart uses the Three Horizons framework to ask about the background context and the things that are working and not working, both in terms of the role and its context, realistic timescales for change, and the implications for retaining or scrapping parts of the existing infrastructure. This structure is repeated with the practitioner asked “what is the future you would like to see for the role and it’s context?”. Following the analysis of the current context, the aim is for the practitioner to imagine things that could change, or how the role could work without some of the barriers that I encountered in contemporary practice. This analysis is then deepened through the Three Horizons framework again, with questions such as “what are the seeds of the future visible in the present?” and “who is already working on this?.” This encourages looking around at other practices or practitioners who are already working in ways that consider the issues that I have described through my research.

The second part of the flowchart then enables the practitioner to analyse

480 Ramia Mazé and Josefin Wangel, “Future (Im)Perfect: Exploring time, becoming and difference in design and futures studies”, in Meike Schalk, Thérèse Kristiansson, and Ramia Mazé, eds., *Feminist Futures of Spatial Practice: Materialisms, Activisms, Dialogues, Pedagogies, Projections* (Baunach: AADR, Art Architecture Design Research : imprint of Spurbuchverlag, 2017). p274.

481 Kate Raworth, Doughnut Economics Action Lab, ‘Three horizons framework – a quick introduction,’ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5KfRQJqpPU, accessed 28th June 2022.

482 Miraftab, ‘Insurgent Practices and Decolonization of Future(s)’. p279.

their current and future ideas according to abolitionist principles. The questions in the second part of the flowchart are derived by a series of evaluations published by Interrupting Criminalization in the binder titled “So is this Actually an Abolitionist Proposal or Strategy?”.⁴⁸³ The binder is a compilation of resources used by Interrupting Criminalisation to think strategically about abolitionist organising. At the beginning of the binder the following list of questions to ask of each proposed reform encountered by the group:

Does it (as a whole or in part) legitimize or expand the carceral system we’re trying to dismantle?

Does it benefit parts of the Prison Industrial Complex, industries that profit from the PIC, or elected officials who sustain the PIC?

Do the effects it creates already exist in a way we have to organize against? Will we, or others, be organizing to undo its effects in five years?

Does it preserve existing power relations? Who makes the decisions about how it will be implemented and enforced?

Does it create a division between “deserving” and “undeserving” people? Does it leave out especially marginalized groups (people with criminal records, undocumented people, etc.)? Does it cherry-pick particular people or groups as a token public face?

*Does it undermine efforts to organize and mobilize the most affected for ongoing struggle? Or does it help us build power?*⁴⁸⁴

In the evaluation flowchart, the questions have been adapted for use by the future Architect_Organiser to make them relevant to the role within the urban regeneration context. The flowchart also includes examples as prompts to aid the evaluation process as shown in the table below:

483 Interrupting Criminalization, ‘So is this actually an Abolitionist Strategy or Proposal?’, <https://www.interruptingcriminalization.com/binder>, accessed 3rd August 2022.

484 Ibid p3.

Question	Examples
Does the proposal (as a whole or in part) legitimize urban development practices that have been proven to be problematic?	<p>Proposal results in an overall loss of social housing.</p> <p>Proposal results in an increase in market housing that will make social housing the minority tenure type.</p> <p>Proposal will result in enlarged commercial spaces that are unaffordable for local businesses.</p> <p>Proposal for demolition of buildings that could be retrofitted or refurbished</p> <p>Proposal results in cutting down mature trees.</p>
Who does the proposal benefit in terms of work and roles?	Who may lose work or lose their role as a result of an alternative proposal, for example: engagement consultancy, temporary accommodation provider, meanwhile use management company. Who may gain from an alternative proposal?
What is the role of elected officials in supporting the proposal?	<p>When is the next election?</p> <p>What are the safeguards in place to ensure that the elected official will follow through on any pledges made?</p>

Do the effects created by the proposal or activity already exist in a way we have to organise against?	<p>Creating more information to translate for non-experts</p> <p>Making change harder to track – e.g repairs of social housing</p> <p>Decreasing the agency of local community groups through inequitable engagement processes</p> <p>Bad design- for example lack of ventilation creating black mould problems</p>
Will we be organising to undo its effects in five years' time?	<p>Gentrification caused by increases in market housing or right-to-buy sales</p> <p>Legitimising demolition when unnecessary</p> <p>Omission of marginalised groups in engagement processes</p> <p>Privatising public space</p>
Does the proposal preserve existing power relations?	<p>Coproduction- who has the power in decision making?</p> <p>What kinds of knowledge are used and prioritised in the decision making process?</p> <p>How does it build non-expert capacity?</p> <p>Who will be making decisions about how the proposal will be implemented now?</p> <p>Who will be making decisions about how the proposal will be implemented in five years?</p>
Could the proposal create division between 'deserving' and 'undeserving' people?	<p>Who uses the existing infrastructure?</p> <p>Who might benefit from the proposal and how?</p> <p>Are there examples of such changes in other similar areas? What are the results?</p>

Does it undermine efforts to organise and mobilise the most affected?	<p>Proposals that create divisions undermine efforts to build trust and solidarity.</p> <p>Proposals that benefit those with the least will help to build community power.</p>
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The combination of the Three Horizons model and the explicitly abolitionist evaluation from Interrupting Criminalisation appeared particularly suited to further development of an evaluation system for the A_O in the context of urban regeneration. Creating the conditions for the development of a new regeneration infrastructure requires bringing in the work done by others, connecting the process to other existing frameworks for change. This became my rationale for developing the flowchart through the use of existing frameworks, as opposed to creating it from scratch. The point in selecting this particular range of thinking and practices in relation to “beyond” and the development of future scenarios is to set out a framework that is intentionally political, and that deliberately relates activities in everyday current practice to the potential systemic changes needed to create a more humane urbanism.⁴⁸⁵

The concept itself for an evaluation flowchart emerges from two perspectives. Firstly, relating to the mapping and accessibility concerns of my research, and my interest in the atlas as an exploratory format. The flowchart enables the user to be guided along a path that challenges conventional assumptions on urban regeneration. I imagine the use of the chart to be best as a facilitated workshop, but not having the opportunity to organise this I experimented with using the flowchart to examine my own practice as the A_O. Looking at the course of my research and into the future, I attempted to establish whether such questions can begin to generate a regeneration infrastructure that decentres conventional values and is explicitly political. I intentionally tried to imagine the future unrestricted by present limitations, understanding that the exercise of imagining the future is not a neutral exercise, it is also exercising power. It has been noted by feminist scholars in the field of futures studies that depictions of the future rarely include

485 Faranak Miraftab, ‘Insurgent Practices and Decolonization of Future(s)’, in *The Routledge Handbook of Planning Theory*, ed. Michael Gunder, Ali Madanipour, and Vanessa Watson, 1st ed. (New York, NY : Routledge, 2018.: Routledge, 2017), 276–88, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315696072-22>.

people from the global majority or women.⁴⁸⁶ The future can be a void where marginalised groups do not feel empowered to imagine themselves in a world that prioritises tackling issues important to them. The “exclusionary zone of tremendous magnitude” named by Gordon also makes this point while describing the void found in the overwhelmingly western, white and patriarchal definition of the utopian.⁴⁸⁷

The use of the flowchart demonstrates the emergence of moments where the Architect_Organiser can introduce “disruptive innovations” into the conversation, both as moments that exist in the present, and imagined futures.⁴⁸⁸ Both the critical pedagogical analysis of the current system and the imagination of what the future could look like can be freely explored. Community organising, remaining in the margins and the possibility of refusal provide an exit route from co-opted situations. The flowchart explicitly provides options that I didn’t have available while I was developing the role of the A_O, whether because of lack of knowledge, circumstance, experience or available examples. Upon analysis, the graphical layout of the flowchart itself is less important than the contents. Following my test of the flowchart for my own work, and feedback from other practitioners, I would like to propose the flowchart to be redesigned as a workbook, or an atlas. Thinking about each stage in the flowchart as a collection of maps, reconceptualises the journey of the practitioner into a new regeneration infrastructure as something that they can explore and evolve themselves.

The flow chart asks questions that aid the development of the A_O role in practice. For example, asking the questions “What does equitable housing look like now?” and “What could equitable housing look like in the future?” enables a critical pedagogical trajectory from an analysis of present housing conditions towards a vision of future housing. One of the questions asked of the second horizon is “what are the seeds of the future visible in the

486 Ulrika Gunnarsson-Östling, Åsa Svenfelt, and Mattias Höjer, ‘Participatory Methods for Creating Feminist Futures’, *Futures* 44, no. 10 (December 2012): 914–22, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2012.06.001>. Helena Bergman et al., ‘What about the Future? The Troubled Relationship between Futures and Feminism’, *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 22, no. 1 (2 January 2014): 63–69, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08038740.2013.854831>.

487 Gordon, *The Hawthorn Archive*. pVII.

488 Sharpe, *Three Horizons*.

present?”.⁴⁸⁹ This is the question which enables the A_O to bring in models of other ways of doing things into the remapping of the regeneration process and the imagination of a new regeneration infrastructure. Maintaining an overview of projects or concepts in development that could be introduced or tested becomes an essential part of the A_O role. In order to understand that this is not naïve, utopian theory. As mentioned earlier, the challenge in proposing alternatives to capitalist models has been articulated by Gibson-Graham, as well as others aiming to harness the power of capital in order to make change.⁴⁹⁰ These ideas range from the development of alternative value systems, units of accounting and “examples of bottom-up feminist organization [...] against economic, technical, infrastructural, and political determination from above”.⁴⁹¹

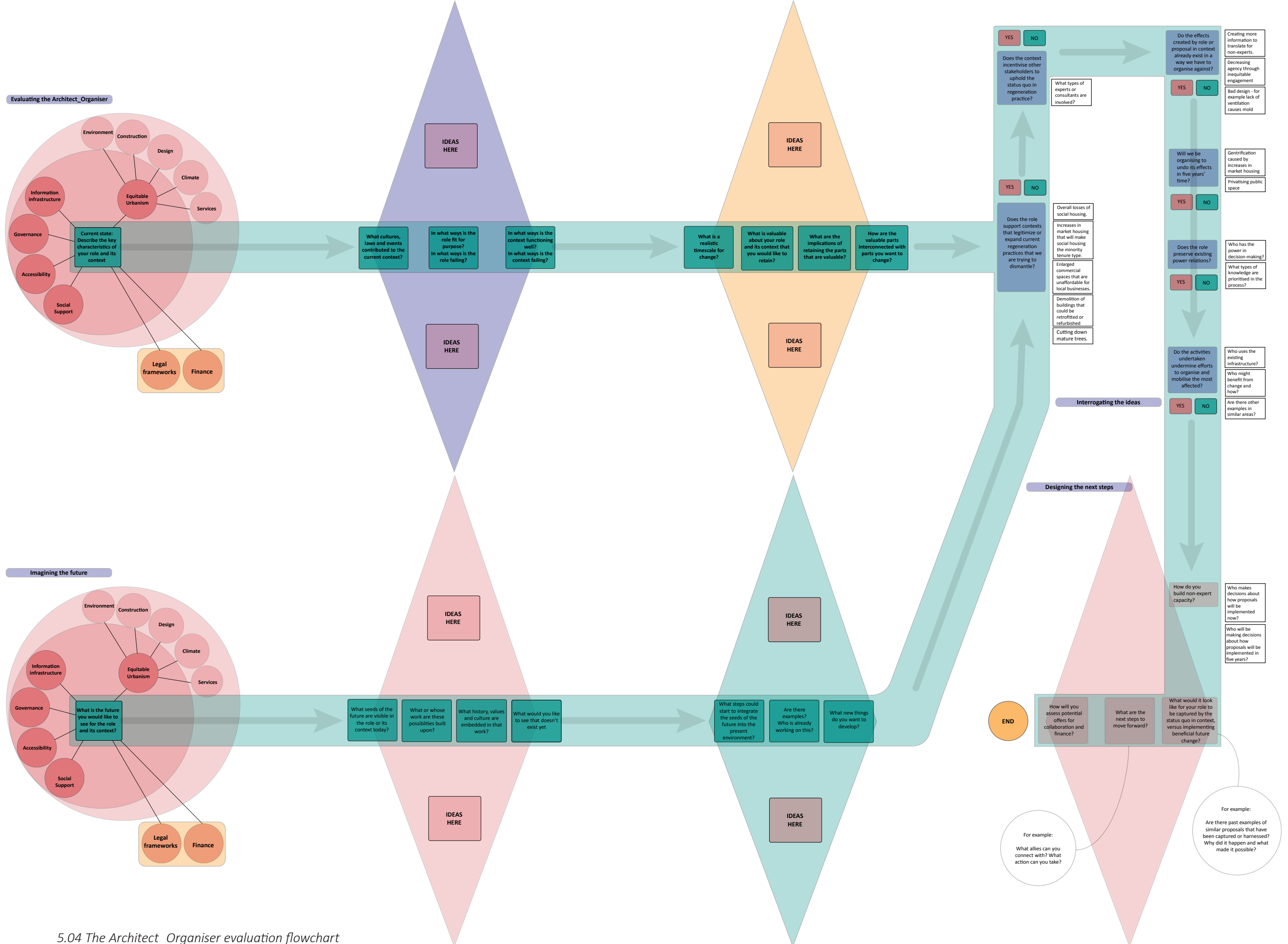
In drawing out and developing the flowchart and questions, and in using the three horizons model combined with an abolitionist framework I have tried to demonstrate the evaluation system that I would have liked to see for the Architect_Organiser role in practice. I have tried to demonstrate a framework that is uncompromising in its politics, with the knowledge that in practice, compromises will occur. I have tried to ask the questions that I was afraid to ask myself while working in practice, and used my experience to order and frame the questions in a way that is relevant within the fields of contemporary urban regeneration and participatory practice. I wanted to conclude this thesis with both practical and theoretical support that can be used to help others experiment and implement changes in their own practice.

The flowchart on the following page can be found at full size in Mapping G.

489 Kate Raworth, Doughnut Economics Action Lab, ‘Three horizons framework – a quick introduction,’ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5KfRQJqpPU, accessed 28th June 2022.

490 Dark Matter Laboratories, ‘Researching & Prototyping the Institutional Infrastructure for the Impact Economy,’ <https://provocations.darkmatterlabs.org/>, accessed 22nd May 2022

491 Institute of Network Cultures, ‘Feminist Finance Syllabus,’ <https://networkcultures.org/blog/publication/feminist-finance-syllabus/>, accessed 28th June 2022. p17.



5.04 The Architect_Organiser evaluation flowchart



Conclusion

I began my research with two research questions: What roles do data and information play in the context of architecture, planning and policy, in relation to community and non-expert groups? And secondly, what strategies and tactics can be developed to establish a critical and productive role for the use of such data and information within participatory frameworks? As I mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, as my research developed and partially in response to the shift in my practice that was prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic, I rewrote my second research question as follows: How can the hybrid practice of the Architect_Organiser be developed to establish a critical and productive role for the use of such data and information by both experts and non-experts?

I realised that the participatory frameworks that I was referring to in my initial research question did not have the potential for change that I was looking for. Building on scholarship in the field of participatory design (PD) and coproduction, I found justification for moving away from existing frameworks that have emerged from the participatory design field. Examples such as the Model Cities Programme in Philadelphia and the Royal Docks in London, as well as scholarship on democratic theory, demonstrated that the route towards genuine power and agency for non-experts in urban redevelopment had not been found within the arena of representative democracy.

This was particularly evident in relation to working “within” and the potential of coproduction for increasing resident agency. The concept of coproduction itself is important and I believe it can a useful tool for developing working relationships that explicitly aim to counteract the power imbalances inherent in expert-non-expert relationships. However, the coproduction process must be designed as such, and all parties must be invested in the dismantling of power imbalances as part of the process. The moments where we should have drawn a red line on collaboration became clear to me only after they had passed. Practice-based research initially had its limitations in that my role was also tied to the regeneration programme schedule in order to maintain and document my practice. The council-led regeneration programme and the day-to-day events at PEACH didn’t really allow for time

to digest in depth previous attempts at resident-led urban regeneration. The COVID-19 pandemic had the effect of enabling me to step back from the programme over which I had no agency and concentrate on my own role. The development of the Architect_Organiser as a role then became the focus of my research.

The Architect_Organiser contains within itself the requirement to operate beyond such participatory frameworks and their failures. Through the evaluation of the coproduction process in Custom House, I concluded that the pedagogical role of the A_O both towards non-experts *and* towards other practitioners is essential. The pedagogical practice of the A_O is needed to challenge the existing regeneration infrastructures especially in relation to the use of data and information as confirming evidence.

Overall, the research proceeded through investigations that run parallel to the research questions. Developing an understanding of the infrastructures of regeneration enabled an understanding of the roles of data and information within those infrastructures. Examining the research questions and the overall scope and trajectory of the research, I refer again to the concept of uncomfortable reflexivity.⁴⁹² I would also say that the development of the Architect_Organiser role was a direct response to my own lack of agency, and that as stated by some feminist ethnographers, the only way to describe and respond to this situation was to turn the research inwards towards my own role.⁴⁹³

Generalisability and wider applicability

While wrestling with the outcome of my research, in the landscape of the world thoroughly altered by COVID, I wrote a speculative text that imagined the Architect_Organisers in an unspecified time in the future, working in teams in their local libraries, building local narratives and implementing incremental change, held accountable by a rotating board of

492 Pillow, 'Confession, Catharsis, or Cure?'

493 Tine Davids and Karin Willemse, 'Embodied Engagements: Feminist Ethnography at the Crossing of Knowledge Production and Representation — An Introduction', *Women's Studies International Forum* 43 (March 2014): 1–4, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2014.02.001>.

local residents.⁴⁹⁴ Mattern describes the library as “a network of integrated, mutually reinforcing, evolving infrastructures — in particular, architectural, technological, social, epistemological, and ethical infrastructures”.⁴⁹⁵ Even if there is no place for a piece of speculative fiction in this thesis, the exercise in writing down a radically different framework for urban change solidified the outcome of my practice into a tangible conclusion.

Returning to my initial research questions, the investigation into the roles of data and information led me to conclude that not only the data and information itself was problematic, but also the current system of urban regeneration is not fit for purpose.⁴⁹⁶ I conclude that existing infrastructures of data and information have contributed to the patterns of limited agency in urban regeneration for non-expert stakeholders. Contemporary financial and political systems have led to entrenched roles for expert stakeholders in the urban regeneration process, including architects and urban designers. Many architects, designers, officers in local authorities and also politicians do try to improve existing participatory processes, however their attempts remain superficial as they do not or cannot tackle the underlying systemic problems with the contemporary regeneration infrastructure. The role that I have developed aims towards the development of a new regeneration infrastructure that is social and pedagogical. The Architect_Organiser role begins to outline a route for the processes of urban regeneration to evolve into social and pedagogical practices, however small in scale. The Architect_Organiser is a strategy for the establishment of a critical and productive participatory regeneration infrastructure that uses and produces a range of data and information in order to drive urban change.

In the following paragraphs I attempt to outline the key points that can be extrapolated beyond PEACH, Custom House, the London Borough of Newham and even the UK. My work with PEACH in Custom House and the ongoing regeneration of the area led by the London Borough of Newham

494 See Appendix 4

495 Shannon Mattern, ‘Library as Infrastructure’, *Places Journal*, no. 2014 (9 June 2014), <https://doi.org/10.22269/140609>. p188.

496 My initial research questions: 1: What roles do data and information play in the context of architecture, planning and policy, in relation to community and non-expert groups? 2: What strategies and tactics can be developed to establish a critical and productive role for the use of such data and information within participatory frameworks?

and its officers is specific in its geographical location, however the key issues that I encountered are generalisable and applicable to urban regeneration schemes in London and other parts of the UK. In my exploration of the role of data and information within urban regeneration, I concluded that data and information plays a key role in perpetuating urban redevelopment that increases inequalities, reduces affordable housing and displaces low income communities. In response to the research question- *what roles do data and information play in the context of architecture, planning and policy, in relation to community and non-expert groups?* I conclude that data and information, is intentionally made inaccessible on key elements that would enable non-experts to gain agency within the regeneration infrastructure, specifically the financial drivers of urban development. To be more explicit, data and information is an enabler of the current systems that comprise the urban regeneration infrastructure. This infrastructure has consistently excluded those people who do not have the expertise to challenge it. The professionals who work within the regeneration infrastructure, particularly architects because they are most likely to be involved with resident engagement processes, are therefore complicit in perpetuating these exclusions.

Since I began working with PEACH in Custom House in 2016, and since I began my research in 2018, there have been clear shifts in the culture of regeneration practice. If the Alternative Regeneration Plan had been initiated in 2021, it would probably have been a plan for retrofit and refurbishment in line with current climate thinking.⁴⁹⁷ In 2016, however, this was a political impossibility. The regeneration officers in Newham credit the coproduction programme in Custom House with shifting the regeneration from full demolition to partial demolition and refurbishment. I have been encouraged to see that as a success, despite the problems and challenges that I have outlined in this thesis. There is no place for perfection in these struggles. Viewing the Custom House regeneration as a case study, the progress of the regeneration itself can be seen as typical for a complex regeneration project in London, UK. The regeneration faced extreme delays, multiple failed resident engagement processes, displacement of existing residents,

497 Architects Journal, 'Introducing RetroFirst: a new AJ campaign championing reuse in the built environment.' <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/introducing-retrofirst-a-new-aj-campaign-championing-reuse-in-the-built-environment>, accessed 5th September 2022.

lack of upkeep of existing buildings in the area and lack of investment in other facilities such as doctors surgeries and local businesses. As I related in chapter one, these problems have been well documented and researched in other areas in London over the past few decades. The issues that were faced in relation to policy and regulation are applicable in general to other projects. In particular, the idea of access to data is commonly raised by non-experts concerned with planning in their local area, as well as resident campaign groups and even groups proposing community-led housing. The distinguishing factor in the PEACH case study was the involvement of community organisers and architects working together intentionally. The results of the involvement of the community organisers who were also local residents was evident in my evaluation of working “within”, contrasting the knowledge and expertise of the Custom House residents with those of Canning Town. The Custom House residents wanted more from the regeneration and therefore also saw the collaboration with the council as a failure. The Canning Town residents accepted the framework that they had been given, and superficially the process was smoother, but they were not aware of their lack of agency. The long term involvement of community organisers successfully embedded knowledge within the Custom House community of residents who previously had little or no knowledge of urban planning processes. The role of the A_O takes this even further, and is a role that I believe is widely applicable beyond my own research and experience in the following ways:

- Provides a blueprint for a participatory framework that bridges professional and non-expert knowledge types.
- Reorients the focus of urban development towards the local, bypassing representative democratic structures that exclude marginalised groups.
- Enables the potential emergence of a wide variety of types of urban change and the corresponding organisational processes to drive them.

Community Led Housing London is an important partner in this work, as connecting the role of the A_O with housing types that are managed, developed or in other ways in the control of the community is essential. The role of the A_O is an essential component in the development of more routes towards community control of housing and other assets.

Critical reflection on data and information:

One of the strengths of my research is the access that I had to the various elements of the regeneration infrastructure, both formally in relation to the local authority and PEACH, and informally through my own personal connections and background. I was able to gather a large amount of relevant data and information. The training in the financial aspects of property development and viability that I was able to access through my doctoral school also gave me tools to analyse and understand data and information that was previously inaccessible. However, the data and information that I was able to gather was specific to my particular situation and position in relation to the regeneration programme. This is interesting because there must be omissions and blind spots, most obviously in relation to financial data, but also potentially in other fields. The information that I was able to gather is also of such a large quantity that I was not able to read and digest all of the documents that I had access to. I was in some senses myself subject to the very issues that I was trying to investigate. This is where the feminist approach to knowledge building is most important. The cultivation of knowledge that crosses disciplinary divides and is knowingly partial is what gives the data and information that I have encountered through my research a specific relevance. It is important to reiterate that both the idea of gaining access to data is important, and that the wider dissemination of this needs to be part of the processes of regeneration. The A_O is a response to both these needs, and the role and its positionality responds to these needs specifically.

Developing a new regeneration infrastructure

“Networks of people can develop a community accountability politic by engaging in anti-violence/anti-oppression education, building relationships, based on values of safety, respect, and self-determination, and nurturing a culture of collective responsibility, connection, and liberation.”⁴⁹⁸

“Adding the role of regulations, standards setting, funding and policy formation, the “ing” terminology, including adapting, tailoring, appropriating, tuning, modifying, tweaking, making, fixing, monitoring, maintaining, repairing, hacking, vandalizing and instrumenting, points to a rich set of intentionalities that incrementally shape infrastructures”⁴⁹⁹

In order to maintain the ethos of my practice, addressing other practitioners seemed an appropriate form for communicating the conclusion to my research. The following statements can be read as further articulations in relation to my research questions. I have named these provocations at various stages of my research as a job description, a manifesto, or a call to action. I ask urban regeneration practitioners to question and reframe their relationships to data and information and their position in relation to non-experts who are involved in or affected by contemporary regeneration infrastructures. The articulations name strategies, tactics and tools for those who may think of themselves as architects, urban design practitioners, or community organisers to develop their own critical and productive knowledge infrastructures. These articulations attempt to reframe the use of data and information and the practice of regeneration as a social and pedagogical process, and through the positioning of the role, provide direction towards futures that appear impossible in the present. The articulations make it clear that changes to existing infrastructures need to be informed by and grounded in the aims of the people and organisations that you work with and will need maintenance and care.⁵⁰⁰

The articulations are structured to add context to the research context. The practice of the A_O in action is to view the articulations as learnings and as conclusions, and as contributions to knowledge. The articulations are

498 Incite, ‘Organising for Community Accountability,’ https://www.transformativejustice.eu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/6685_toolkitrev-cmt yacc.pdf. accessed 14th July 2022. p2.

499 Karasti, Helena, and Jeanette Blomberg. ‘Studying Infrastructuring Ethnographically’. *Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)* 27, no. 2 (April 2018): 233–65. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10606-017-9296-7>. p9.

500 Agid, “‘Dismantle, Change, Build’”.

addressed to my community of practice, crossing the boundary between research and practice they are designed to provoke thought through their transdisciplinarity.

Articulations for the A_O

1: Extending the roles of both the architect and the community organiser, as the Architect_Organiser, you are the facilitator of a pedagogical and knowledge-based network.

2: Combining community organising theory and critical pedagogy, you cultivate strategic participatory frameworks which allow non-experts to gain literacy in the regeneration process, understanding the locations of power, timescales, speeds and decision points. Your aim is to directly connect the action of urban change to those affected by it through infrastructuring; developing and rearranging relationships between stakeholders in the field of urban development.

3: The Architect_Organiser role is distinct from conventional architectural practice through the development of accountability frameworks with local people and organisations rather than conventional client relationships.⁵⁰¹ The A_O intentionally takes a position between the various stakeholders, connecting to different forms and sources of data, information and knowledge and cultivating “the ability partially to translate knowledges among very different and power-differentiated communities”.⁵⁰²

4: By nature, the Architect_Organiser role is one of a network or a group. It is not possible for the A_O to act without a supportive network. This means listening, dialogue and practicing learning together to develop social support infrastructures. The process of the development of support infrastructures constructs the field of relevant data and information and therefore knowledge.⁵⁰³

5: In order to resist being co-opted, the Architect_Organiser, is required to

501 Lucy Suchman, ‘Located accountabilities in technology production,’ *Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems*: Vol. 14 : Iss.2, (2002): Article 7, <http://aisel.aisnet.org/sjis/vol14/iss2/7>

502 Haraway, ‘Situated Knowledges’. p580.

503 Karasti and Blomberg, ‘Studying Infrastructuring Ethnographically’.

develop value systems that are non-quantifiable, that disrupt the knowledge/power dynamic and the expert/non-expert knowledge hierarchy. The A_O is not concerned with scaling up or replicability in the wider sense, as this makes “common sense” narratives of existing practice unavoidable. Small scales allow space for failure and success on human timescales. Small scale projects build relationships, skills and knowledge as well as a base for the emergence of larger opportunities in the future.

6: The Architect_Organiser promotes the “collective reconstruction” of knowledge as opposed to only the “theoretical deconstruction” of knowledge.⁵⁰⁴ The Architect_Organiser exercises stewardship of local knowledge and its potential.⁵⁰⁵ The systems that are developed through the organised practice of the A_O will themselves become infrastructures of information and knowledge. Therefore, as the A_O, it is important to take time to understand local infrastructures, environmental concerns and their relations to the wider, dominant systems that you are trying to change.⁵⁰⁶

7: As a community organiser you are a caretaker of the local narrative of change, a custodian of the local chain of knowledge. Build knowledge with kids, young people and elderly people. Share knowledge, and encourage sharing outside of your comfort zone. Be pragmatic, unrealistic and fantastical and enjoy the tensions between those stances. Always make the time and space to thoroughly interrogate “common sense” proposals with others, it is part of your role as the A_O to develop and propose alternatives. Understand the access needs of the people you are trying to work alongside, these might be physical, digital, temporal. Understand who is in the majority and who is in the minority (class, race, gender). Accessibility, location and the makeup of groups will affect what people feel that they can and can’t say.⁵⁰⁷

8: The Architect_Organiser uses a critical pedagogical stance to challenge “common sense” narratives that produce “inhumane urbanism” and develop knowledge through action. The A_O develops the habit of reflection,

504 Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, ‘Feminist knowledge politics in situated zones A different hi/story of knowledge construction’, <https://women.it/cyberarchive/files/puig.htm>. Accessed October 2018.

505 Mattern, ‘A City Is Not a Computer’.

506 Jalbert, ‘Building Knowledge Infrastructures for Empowerment’.

507 Rachel Kuo and Lorelei Lee, Hacking//Hustling, ‘Dis/Organizing Toolkit: How We Build Collectives Beyond Institutions,’ <https://hackinghustling.org/disorganizing-toolkit>, accessed 19th May 2022

evaluation and visioning the future. Future visions can be related to familiar timescales of urban development as an exercise in situating or grounding. Collective action and conviction lay the ground for wider policy and infrastructural change.

Evaluating the mappings

For each chapter of the thesis, I included a folded insert that I named a mapping. Initially these inserts were intended to be access points for people who were unfamiliar with academic writing to establish entry points into my thesis. As the design of the mappings progressed, I realised that they could also exist almost as standalone objects in their own right. It is important to me that they are understood as part of the development of the A_O in practice, rather than a demonstration for the purpose of this thesis. It would be contradictory to have written this thesis without attempting transparency and accessibility, as otherwise the thesis would have become another inaccessible or hidden experience only available for those with specific educational or professional knowledge. In terms of the success of this endeavour, the mappings contain the outlines of my research in a succinct manner. Beyond the thesis I see potential for the mappings to be able to be developed for a wider audience, potentially with more of a narrative and structure. The mappings demonstrate a concern for accessibility that I feel is part of the contributions to knowledge of my research, and are one of the elements of my research that I would like to progress further.

Contributions to knowledge

A key contribution of my research is the detailed long-term documentation of my experience and critical reflection on my experience as an architect embedded within a community organisation run by residents over the course of a number of years. The learnings from my experience and the data and information that document the specific case of the Custom House regeneration in detail provide a unique resource for others to draw on. My position enabled me to have a detailed level of access to the regeneration process in Custom House, the underlying systems and infrastructures that are usually hidden from public view, as well as demonstrate the impact of the process on residents.

The critical reflection on and interpretation of these experiences then demonstrate that there is a clear conflict between existing participatory frameworks and the structures of representative democracy. The fact that financial data suffers from a lack of transparency is known. However, how this lack of transparency negatively effects the participatory frameworks that are aspired to by stakeholders in the regeneration process is a key finding of my research.

The positionality that I developed through my practice-based research intentionally enabled me to traverse between settings with multiple types of stakeholders and collaborators: Local Authority employees, residents, other stakeholders such as architects and consultants and relevant organisations such as Community Led Housing London. Through this positionality I gained a unique insight into the underlying relationships that form the regeneration infrastructure. In terms of theory, my research makes contributions to the fields of participatory design and infrastructure studies. I have adapted and built on theories of infrastructuring and demonstrated their use in practice.

A key contribution to knowledge is the development of the Architect_Organiser, both in terms of the role and in terms of the actions that the A_O takes. The A_O differentiates itself from both an architect and a community organiser in the following ways:

- Repositions architectural, design and planning knowledge. Rather than the knowledge residing in an architectural practice or local government office, the knowledge is embedded in local relationships with and between a variety of stakeholders.
- Expands the role of the architect in multiple directions:
 - As a designer the A_O is challenged to design infrastructures over conventional built structures.
 - The A_O alters the conventional client-architect relationship, situating the relationship in the location where the A_O is embedded
 - Takes an explicitly political stance in comparison to the conventional role of the architect through the development of a nuanced positionality.

- Works with and through the different types of power that exist in multi-stakeholder collaborations.

- Expands the role of the community organiser through the intentional integration of professional knowledge into the role, enabling the development of relationships with a wider range of organisations.
- Connecting to a wider range of organisations changes the balance of power as it is conventionally understood in community organising theory. The building of power-with and power-to must engage power-differentiated individuals and organisations.

Beneficiaries and impacts

I envisage this research to be beneficial to non-experts and residents undergoing regeneration both in London and in other cities who are interested in participatory frameworks and power differentiated collaborations. The mappings are the first stage in being able to distribute this research publicly in an alternative format to the thesis.

The community of practice around regeneration, both professional and in local government will gain from my own experience, and I hope that this research will enable some people to attempt different forms of collaboration and avoid the pitfalls that I encountered in Custom House. I think that architects, particularly those who work in practices that take on urban regeneration schemes and resident engagement programmes would benefit from this research. I would like to publish some of this research in academic journals and magazines related to architecture.

What next

The role of A_O comes out a deep personal experience, and so can clearly be developed within other contexts and with other people, but I have attempted to set prompts for others to use. The work on coproduction alongside Community Led Housing London continues due to the widespread interest on the subject from local authorities. In mid-October 2023, Rowan Mackay and I held a workshop on coproduction and power, leading a group of local authority employees, private sector workers and community group representatives to investigate how knowledge facilitates power in relation to

urban development processes. The workshop was successful and we are now planning further collaborations with some of the participants.

As my research period winds up, I have begun to build a network of practitioners who are working in the fields of urban design, architecture, community-led housing and community organising. At the initial meeting, we discussed the types of support needed to develop these types of roles, and what a community of practice could do to provide this support. I hope to continue developing this community through regular meetings over the next year.

I also intend to further develop the mappings and diagrams with the addition of a narrative structure. I have applied for some funding in order to do this.

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Glossary

Key abbreviations and acronyms

ALMO: Arms Length Management Organisation

ANT: Actor Network Theory

A_O: Architect_Organiser

AHRC: Arts and Humanities Research Council

ARB: Architects Registration Board

ARC: Architects Revolutionary Council

BYNC: Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council

CHSG: Custom House Steering Group

CIL: Community Infrastructure Levy

CLH: Community Led Housing London

CLP: Community-Led Planning

CLT: Community Land Trust

CPI: Consumer Price Index

CPO: Compulsory Purchase Order

CT: Canning Town

CTAC: Community Technical Aid

Centre

CTSG: Canning Town Steering Group

DAT: Development Appraisal Tool

DIKW: Data, Information, Knowledge Wisdom

EUV: Existing Use Value

FOI: Freedom of Information Request
FVA: Financial Viability Assessment

HASL: Housing Action Southwark and Lambeth

ICO: Information Commissioners Office

IRR: Internal Rate of Return

ITRA: Independent Tenant and Resident Advisors

GLA: Greater London Assembly

GLC: Greater London Council

LBN: London Borough of Newham

LDDC: London Docklands Development Corporation

LOBO Loan: Lender Option Borrower Option Loan

NPPF: National Planning Policy Framework

PD: Participatory Design

PEACH: The People's Empowerment
Alliance for Custom House

PPG: Planning Practice Guidance

PPU: Popular Planning Unit

PWLB: Public Works Loan Board

RICS: Royal Institute of Chartered
Surveyors

RTPI: Royal Town Planning Institute

S106: Section 106 Agreement

SHADA: Stepney Housing and
Development Agency

STS: Science and Technology Studies

TELCO: The East London Citizens
Organisation

TOR: Terms of Reference

Appendix 1:

PEACH diaries 2018-2020

1st October 2018.

Team meeting! What is the strategy for the coming months? [REDACTED] said that there would be a vote at every stage of the regeneration process, we need a vote at the very end of the process, after planning, before construction. The GLA legislation is open to undermining (says [REDACTED]) What is the strategy for [REDACTED]? We need to do a critique of the process (Community Rep selection process) before the meeting with her, and get the message across to the councillors as well.

[REDACTED] is going to arrange an evaluation of the community rep process with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. (Peach saved the day).

Governance! We need a governance agreement- we need to push [REDACTED] on this before the meeting with [REDACTED] - produce an options paper, aim for legal agreement with CLT get the experts on board like [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Workshops with experts- [REDACTED] is proposing an action learning session about partnerships, we should get involved with this and [REDACTED] should be there too- this could be like a backstop arrangement or the beginning of the partnership agreement.

[REDACTED] met with [REDACTED]: Community Housing fund is going to be the next big thing- it might swing [REDACTED] towards the CLT, but the timing and delivery of the CLT is crucial. Need a good board with expertise. Can the CLT be a provider? How did other CLT's in London do it- need to talk to Leathermarket, how did they get their board and co-opt the expertise?

[REDACTED] have [REDACTED] - 50% social, 50% market. What is the intermediate / middle option? Is it the CLT?

5th November 2018

Tuesday morning, I went to [REDACTED] for the second clarification interview with development consultants [REDACTED]. One of the people on their team had given evidence against the leaseholders at [REDACTED] Estate, and is involved in [REDACTED] Estate with [REDACTED]. None of the schemes which they have been involved in have had good results for residents. The team at [REDACTED] were concerned because [REDACTED] had submitted a very low bid. It was hard for them to get companies to tender because [REDACTED] are already working in [REDACTED] and have been involved in the area for the last couple of years. However, at least one other company did tender. [REDACTED] didn't appear to have prepared for the session- the woman I talked to didn't know anything about the regeneration having been going on for so many years. During the clarification it also became apparent that there were mistakes in their schedule and that there was no way that their fee was going to cover the work. This would just be another anomaly except the reason why they were so laissez faire about the whole thing is because they assumed they would get it. Afterwards [REDACTED] asked me what I thought and I was quite critical of their past work. I said that PEACH wanted someone who would listen to alternatives. Felt hopeful that the council wouldn't employ them.

Went to the office and read through the Building Council Homes for Londoners Prospectus to try and work out the relationship between GLA funding and Right-to-Buy. Discovered Right-To-Acquire for Housing Association homes. What is with the obsession with home ownership (hate landlords too though).

At 4.30, [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] came back to the office to talk about governance. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and I had a discussion about co-production and partnership and what that means. [REDACTED] had brought a draft of ways of working together, we re-wrote it, and worked out a strategy for bringing the ballot to [REDACTED] for the meeting with her on the 20th of November. It feels like with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] co-production is going to be a possibility, it was great to see [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] arguing about how it was going to work without an architectural background, but also interesting to hear how [REDACTED] thought that the confidentiality agreement was a solution to community reps having access to information that can't be given out to the wider community.

Is that something that can be used as a starting point- well, maybe, but I don't have access to that information either.. Sending the notes back to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] today, so will see how the agreement goes forwards. Hopefully [REDACTED] will see that we are just happily (!) working away together.

Week 12th November 2018

Monday: I added a line about the ballot to [REDACTED] comments of the way PEACH and [REDACTED] will be working together. Also working to get a meeting planned with [REDACTED] of Future of London. Future of London are interesting because they are a network for people with professional networks! Really need to do the same thing for community groups.

Wednesday: We had negotiation training for the meeting with [REDACTED] We practised introducing ourselves. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] did a practice negotiation for the [REDACTED] tenants- the question arose, what happens if [REDACTED] don't break the contract with [REDACTED]? [REDACTED] still has sewage coming into her bathtub every day. We also tested the visioning exercise, what we see as the perfect future regeneration- it was useful but it still felt a bit contrived, we knew all of the answers that we wanted to hear already. If the answer is partnership, what is the question?

Thursday: Team meeting. There is an artist who is coming to the next Housing Club, she has a commission to design something on the end of Normandy Terrace- she wants to do something political. The team had an in-depth discussion on the relationship between the CLT and PEACH (Housing club)- more detail on this later as it's very important to describe the evolution of the different organisations.

I re-wrote the guidance on the ballot following more discussion, because [REDACTED] has released the housing delivery statement, which also mentions ballots, so we are going to assume that a ballot is actually happening... also means we can release the video of agreeing to the ballot- this is great politics in action.

Monday 10th December 2018

Meeting with [REDACTED] Had sent the viability report over on Friday- responded that actually the sales rate for market dwellings is max 70 per year, which means that if you roll that out over CH you would be doing regen for 24 years! So the answer is private rentals. If you switch the model and put private rentals instead of sales, you lose approx. 10% of the market value, but you can up the rate of occupation (to the rate of construction?)

The value of affordable home ownership (CLT option) is somewhere between social rent and council ownership. The value of the land in the current viability model is effectively 0 (not sure why this is?). Value of CLT homes therefore slightly less than the cost of building them. One option is for the CLT to do council rent- the council give money to the CLT so that the homes are community owned at council rent. Would have people co-opted onto the CLT board who have done management before, or CLT could just 'own' the homes and the council could manage. If the council or the residents(?) don't like the management / ownership then the lease could revert back to the council. The building council homes for Londoners grant won't be used in CH because of the timing. The worry for [REDACTED] is that if the value of the homes increases, the CLT could just sit on the money and not use it to build more homes (the money which the CLT has been 'given') – so [REDACTED] could lend the CLT the money @ 0% interest or the same rate which they get it from the PWLB e.g. 3% typically over 30 years. Need to construct a model to show that rents would be paid back over 30 years. In council rent, the service charge is included, so if you 'share services' with private tenants you get less rent in the end from the social tenants. This is the reason behind 'poor doors'.

Advantage of CLT = long lease, no RTB. Go for 250 years. Question to ask:

Who develops: CLT joint with council.

Who owns: CLT: no RTB.

Who manages: CLT/council.

Normally, the money for the social rented homes would sit in the HRA account, rent goes in, repairs goes out. Can borrow off that money. If owned by CLT, then funded by general fund, outside of HRA, borrow £ from PWLB.

If instead the money is loaned to the CLT, the council would pay the money off over 30 years, have to pay minimum revenue payment (MRP) from PWLB (bit of mortgage to pay off capital). Interest and MRP would come out of revenue budget of council. Puts stress on [REDACTED] because general fund pays for everything, e.g. Social services. Therefore it is easier to lend than to give because it's cost neutral. Before, when HRA was capped, councils were looking for ways to borrow outside of HRA, now is not so urgent / aggressive. Conversation we need to have with [REDACTED], how can they fund council housing? Is it [REDACTED]? Is it small sites? Officers might see council housing outside of HRA as being different- maybe not too keen. But maybe ok.

Community Led Housing fund- prospectus almost ready. Should ask [REDACTED] for a letter of support for funding for pre development costs- e.g. half of the bid cost for the consultants (who have been appointed). Say that consultants are doing plans for the first phase for the CLT to own. [REDACTED] can also push the GLA for predevelopment costs (e.g. 100million scheme, 10% of costs for professional fees, 3 million in fees) – if they can convince the GLA that they are really going to do community led housing. Big question: who would do this? I.e. who is the developer?

Wholly owned / councils are doing more development, but professionals have to take 50% pay cut, not many ppl who are up for doing this. If they outsource the delivery to development managers, can the council manage them? Effect of privatisation over 30 years.

One example: [REDACTED], changing focus to development management. Need to fix the delivery, sell the benefits of community ownership.

13th December 2018

Had a team meeting. [REDACTED] meeting was cancelled. Spent the rest of the day catching up with [REDACTED] and writing up the viability notes up properly. Started talking about the structure of the governance proposal and how to do coproduction properly with [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] is going to send over the co-production examples of things which they use already in adult services. We don't have much hope that they will be any good.

Monday 4th of Feb 2019

Supposed to meet [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] but have concussion and had to reschedule the meeting. [REDACTED] were supposed to be having an introduction to PEACH and what we do.

Wed 6th Feb 2019

Spoke to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on the phone about the viability meeting and the regen meeting tomorrow. Planned to talk about governance, but the actual work will go into the document which we've been drafting w/ [REDACTED]

Thursday 7th Feb 2019

Met with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] about viability. [REDACTED] said that their viability assessment is based on no uplift i.e. no profit. That means that effectively any profit is like a bonus? And they don't have to demonstrate what they are going to spend it on? [REDACTED] have overlapping models per site, and programme-wide. Some sites are more valuable than others. [REDACTED] is very pro- HRA, said also that he wasn't worried about RtB because effectively no-one will be able to afford to buy the new homes! i.e. the allocations policy is wrong if people could afford to buy them. [REDACTED] thought HRA was safer because of low management costs. They were sceptical about Crossrail uplift, and about regeneration uplift. Thought if there was any uplift it would only be from phase 6. Question- how do they model without surplus/uplift but still some sites are more valuable than others?? They advised us to look at our model without surplus in order to test it further. I checked the house prices in their report and there is about a 100,000 gap between the offered price for leaseholders and the proposed price of the new houses. They also took an average of 73msq for houses and got 1000 per unit for s106. RtB receipts can fund a max of 30% of building costs. How to get around best consideration? Homes would have to be sold by the council back to the CLT? This is a question for the finance guys.

Conclusion: We need to be the ones proposing the creative models as if we don't they won't get discussed. [REDACTED] won't have time to propose

creative models as they will be just looking at baseline figures.

Mon 18th March 2019

Met with [REDACTED] to catch up on viability and planning of meetings for the next weeks. Talked through what we need from the viability study and why we aren't confident enough to argue that our model works. Will ask [REDACTED] on the 25th why they included uplift in the model, and what are the arguments for and against this.

Wednesday 20th March 2019

The CLT board met in the evening to discuss the sites proposal for the community-led housing fund. [REDACTED] have offered the vandome close garage site, but it would make more sense for us to also include the [REDACTED] site. Civic want to use that for their HQ but why would you prioritise meanwhile use development over genuine community-led permanent homes... lots of good arguments and strategies for using the HRA pot (left over RtB receipts) vs the CHF. What are the pros and cons of being an RP and how can we get around it.. took detailed notes from the discussion.

Thursday 21st March 2019

Practiced FoL presentation in the office. Needed to include more of the political side – how and why what we are doing is ground-breaking..

Friday 22nd March 2019

Met with [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Question of how can they access this pool of knowledge which we have created.. this is 'How can we access the commons as outsiders' question??????? Also very interesting to see the power dynamics between them. Talked about co-producing the office space at the old post office, also got a programme off them. [REDACTED] very focussed on the second stage, [REDACTED] super-aware of the different roles within the room. We are going to meet again next week. [REDACTED] will probably be able to

pay me as consultant. In the afternoon, [REDACTED] (new person at LBN, replaces [REDACTED]), called to say weighting the vote isn't possible.

25th March AM:

Highbury Group Presentation: Introduction to PEACH with [REDACTED]. The audience was very interested in how PEACH used the viability to negotiate.

- The inclusion of uplift in a viability model appears to be a political decision: If you include uplift, the profit within the scheme is automatically recycled into (in PEACH's model) the social housing component of the scheme. If you don't include uplift, any profit is bonus, floating, and can be used with whatever
- The high level of genuinely affordable housing could potentially offset the risk from the Crossrail uplift because it is seen less risky.
- Usually viability is used to test one variable at a time, which is what makes it comparable. The PEACH tool varies everything at once which makes it more complicated.

25th March PM:

Future of London: Co-production in Housing.

[REDACTED] and I did a 15-minute presentation on PEACH. We hadn't practiced but we got the point across. Following the presentations there were two workshops, one for community groups, one for local authorities and one for delivery partners. [REDACTED] went to the one for community groups- it was badly facilitated. The second workshop PEACH had our own table. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were there along with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] in Bristol, and the new graduate at [REDACTED], as well as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. There was also a facilitator from the GLA. The initial question was: What assets can each individual bring to the table. However I rephrased it to be "What are we scared of in the upcoming project?" We had 20 mins to discuss and the outcomes were really really useful.

What are we scared of?

- That the whole team don't switch gear quick enough
- Running out of energy
- That the community don't benefit directly from the regeneration
- That we don't have all the expertise that we need YET!
- Compromises
- Leaving people behind
- INERTIA: Lack of movement and progress
- Not sustaining and growing

How can we address this?

Learning as we go:

- Evaluating and reflecting in structure.
- Build in to process
- Sense-making

Test answers ourselves:

- Is this a reaction or a solution

Anticipate challenges and plan for them. Listen to each other's challenges.

REMINDER: Commitment and vision to a way of working to hold each other to account. Commitment to sustained and dedicated resources: On all sides: source resources from wherever

- Building in time for things to go wrong: Breathing space.
- Capacity building and training on all sides.
- Pre-empting skills needed and training before that point.

- Build in space for non-day-to-day meetings to look at the bigger scale of things and emotions.
- Co-opt critical friends for learning: Invest time in this.
- Being explicit about and listening to each other's challenges.
- Scheduling and planning together: Realistically.

Every stage is an opportunity for co-production and learning: Even small things.

Questions to consider:

- Where is sustainable funding for the community side going to come from?
- Could the Steering Group have budgeting power?
- How to get visible/tangible change now?
- How do people who join as we go get up to speed and be brought in?
- What assets do we have as a team to bring to the table / address the above?
- [REDACTED] mentioned Elinor Ostrom was the originator of the term co-production.

28th March 2019

Team meeting.

Celebrated the election of the 6 community representatives.

Co-production of design / function of former post-office space will take place on the 11th April.

Steering Group chairs = [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

I proposed the idea of making things visible (infrastructuring) to the team-

we had a brief discussion about ways this could happen:

- [REDACTED] maybe good to talk to
- Is it something physical you walk through? Or something you can walk past? How do people use it?
- What about intranet / local wireless.

Spent the rest of the day doing mapping of processes in preparation for meeting [REDACTED]

29th March 2019

Meeting with [REDACTED]

Looked in detail at the calendar for the next few months. It clearly shows when someone has enough time to do full time work on process and governance! [REDACTED] had drawn some diagrams of the engagement process, I had drawn some sketches of how meetings needed to line up and how much time the SG needed to be able to digest things properly. The main difference between what I was proposing and what [REDACTED] was proposing is the order which proposals get bounced around the SG and the wider community.

- How do ideas get tested?

What is the benchmarking / measuring process? Are there material aims?

- At the end of KS1 and start of KS2 need to produce an outward facing tool for the public (who is the public?)
- Needs input from all teams
- URGENT
- Useable for community reps

What is the best format for an outward facing tool? A timeline? Needs the following components:

- Key Stage details
- Community involvement
- Steering group
- Viability/delivery
- Architects
- Council

Who is responsible for getting the SG off the ground? It was [REDACTED] but she's not there anymore, now it's [REDACTED] sn't ready. What is the role of [REDACTED]? Demystifying viability and delivery

- What to do about [REDACTED] – needs to integrate w/ phasing etc. Delivery capacity from the council is not an excuse
- What are the shared objectives and assumptions?
- What is the role of the CLT?
- Who can [REDACTED] buy in as Employers Agent (expert)?
- Can we write statements of intent for [REDACTED]

16th April

Housing Club. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] came to Housing Club. [REDACTED] did the road map of the project- it was good, got a lot of good questions. The architects were concerned about the scheme fix part – could have a good debate about when / where to simplify and what to put into these discussions- how to talk about design in the first place? Did the CLT story and played pass the parcel which felt slightly odd, did some relational exercises which were great – had a good talk with [REDACTED] neighbour.

17th April

Meeting at [REDACTED] Was nervous about going to

Mayfair to meet them. [REDACTED] also there. [REDACTED] our ally. Drank a lot of coffee beforehand. [REDACTED] presented a lot of stuff, I asked where the engagement was, why making so many assumptions without talking to people? Good response- realised that there needs to be someone doing [REDACTED] role for [REDACTED] Who is it? Us? Probably. [REDACTED] was very congratulatory afterwards. Also, some discussion about the market, and going out to market- always makes me feel weird when they talk about the market as a person. Programme remapping meeting at [REDACTED] met with [REDACTED] for lunch, went to [REDACTED] office with [REDACTED] as well, had written a tiny agenda beforehand as no-one else had. Felt nervous about this meeting as well, something not quite right, big ask- should have realised beforehand it's a negotiation.... In the end, it was [REDACTED] who were pushing back on the timing- didn't realise it should have been obvious that they can't afford to stop work. We got an extra month, with KS2 starting in June, still doesn't feel like enough time to get the SG setup- just made back the time we lost rather than actually getting more time. 2 meetings in one week where I have to be the one drawing the lines around things- what is happening.

30th April:

Meeting w/ [REDACTED] in PEACH office RE: Terms of Reference.

First comms meeting w/ [REDACTED] RE: Engagement. [REDACTED] went over the RoadMap again, for [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We did an evaluation of the first engagement which [REDACTED] did- predictably, the outcome was that PEACH should help w/ turnout- interesting that [REDACTED] keeps mentioning the people who feel excluded by PEACH- who are they and how can we get in touch w/ them. Always struck by how good the evaluation system is.

1st May- 3rd May 2019

Terms of Reference: [REDACTED] has taken the terms of reference to the legal department, who are refusing to sign it off. Wrote narrative page to explain the trajectory of the regen project, how co-production has got us to the point we are at now. [REDACTED] took the narrative to [REDACTED] (Director of Regen). This was supposed to be used as a cover page to explain how the project has built trust in order to get to the position where we are at now.

28th May 2019

In the evening met for the preparation for the [REDACTED] meeting. During the day, [REDACTED] had received an email from [REDACTED] with an agenda- usually we write the agendas for these meetings. [REDACTED] was involved in this- the council seemed to have taken major issues with the conflict of interest possibility and also the legal problems w/[REDACTED] and with the ToR. This escalated into a complete change of plan for the meeting with [REDACTED] Everyone very nervous. Feels like things are falling apart. No communication. Trying to get hold of [REDACTED] on the phone to clarify and make sure there are no surprises at the meeting. [REDACTED] met the PEACH steering group behind the scenes to ask them what was going on and what is the relationship between the steering group and the CLT and the community reps- [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were in the meeting along with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and possibly others. The background manoeuvres are exhausting.

30th May 2019

Time for the meeting with [REDACTED]. During the day talked to [REDACTED] on the phone and also [REDACTED] called for an update- he seemed to think we'd upset the legal team, definitely more things going on that he's not mentioning. He said he didn't have so much time but that he was going to try and smooth things out- not sure what he's going to smooth because can't tell what the actual problem is. [REDACTED] was on the phone to [REDACTED] and said that the blame for the legal stuff / conflict of interest is not on us. But we are still the ones who are getting the shit for it. She said she was going to haul [REDACTED] up to [REDACTED] and ask them why they thought it was ok to subconsult us (don't do that). The [REDACTED] issue has been pushed up to the top of the agenda which feels right. Also, very worried about the mental health (and physical) of the [REDACTED] tenants. Everything feels super tense.

Meeting: Went through the agenda- [REDACTED] chairing. [REDACTED] tenants crying, [REDACTED] issued apology, all of the officers apologised. But- still wouldn't commit to resolving the issue which is whether the [REDACTED] will be available to current [REDACTED] tenants. The officers were saying they were going to look at individual cases and get [REDACTED] to lower the rents. But without a firm yes on whether the houses would be available, all of the work

which they had put in to bring ██████████ to the table seemed useless and also like ██████████ were being exploited.

This is also related to the ToR because the mayor said that it isn't possible for a resident steering group to make decisions on viability and delivery, only on design. ██████████ made the point that there is no point in making decisions on design if no-one knows who is going to be able to live in the homes once they exist. Me and ██████████ explained PEACH's role, as in the way we have been working, that we are enablers not the clients ourselves. That each party to the project has asked us independently to provide the same role. There was an extremely awkward moment where ██████████ said "I asked ██████████ whether seriously in the whole of London ██████████ is the only person who can do this? He said yes" Everyone laughs. She said "I mean you are very good but in the whole of London!?". I realised I had an argument to counter this afterwards: It's not about the actual skills, it's the same reason why ██████████ asked us to do consultancy: Consistency. We need to keep all of the options on the table, that's the priority. Afterwards I realised that it's no longer possible to separate the ██████████ issue and the regeneration project. It feels so uncomfortable to be collaborating with the council at the same time as the ██████████ tenants are unable to live.

Friday 31st May 2019

Spoke to ██████████ on the phone, both of us furious at the lack of progress and commitment from ██████████. Agreement that things can't go on like this. ██████████ suggested phoning ██████████ to meet and talk with her about what ██████████ would think about stretching / stopping to accommodate these changes. Immediately realised this was a mistake. She talked about the professional and personal side of herself. How can people actually separate their professional selves and themselves!?? Ethically. Had to backtrack and make sure we were ok to arrange a meeting next week. Realised by the evening that maybe it was less bad than we thought, and it's the emotion of people which was clouding decision making. We have 4 weeks to work out the solution before we actually take some drastic action. Need to arrange some meetings with ██████████ and others. But to do this despite the ██████████ situation feels so false. But, take a deep breath.

Thursday 13th June

Housing Club Prep: We met to prepare housing club- the decision was to prepare a report card for the coproduction process for the regeneration.

How are the architects doing / how is the process going?? Can we get statistics before Tuesday?

- Do you feel engaged in the process by Council/Architects etc?
- Do you feel like you understand the communities role at this time?
- How are you feeling about the regeneration? (Hopeful, disappointed, nervous)
- Have you been to an event or workshop? If not, why?

Feedback - Take report card to SG

10th September 2019

Spoke to [REDACTED] on the phone. He is trying to get [REDACTED] to accept me as the second independent advisor to the project. She doesn't think I will be impartial enough. Fair point.

He suggested a couple of FoL facilitated workshops, and also a workshop run by PEACH on what community organising is.

We had a meeting to prepare for meeting [REDACTED]. Talked about community wealth building, how to integrate that into a strategy for how to work with the council. At the team meeting, I spoke about how it felt like for my job to evaporate because of the conflict of interest issue and how we needed to develop a strategy or rewrite our job descriptions to make it work.

2nd October 2019

Went to the drop-in at the post office. The post office had a leak in the roof so the drop-in was moved to the shop next to NISA- there wasn't much advertisement, but a few people were there from the area. [REDACTED] from [REDACTED]

and [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] - they talked a lot about what the market was saying. It always worries me when people talk about the market as a being.

[REDACTED] said that [REDACTED] have a map which shows which sites are more viable and which are less. They are talking about putting more market housing next to the station, having all blocks mixed tenure, making the family housing primarily social because it doesn't affect the market- it's not worth building family 'flats' which don't have a garden because you can buy a house with a garden for the same price a bit further away. I feel like there's more analysis that can go into this- so renter families have less access to open space? True?

Generally, the heights of everything is increasing. 16 storeys by the station, 11 storeys along freemasons. I'm not sure what the driver is for this- it's not viability, it's numbers of homes, but increasing the numbers of the homes means more affordable homes so. [REDACTED] said that eventually they will just have to go to [REDACTED] and say it's not working to fit that many homes on the site. Felt like I was being a caricature of my useful self to her.

It was really difficult to read the drawings in comparison with the model. The allotment plots are drawn as 3m x 1.5m or something tiny. The comment forms didn't really match up with the things on the wall which made it hard to work out what was going on.

17th October 2019.

Met with [REDACTED] in the morning to talk about the viability report which had been given to [REDACTED] and go over the details on how they are testing different scenarios. Afterwards met with [REDACTED] to plan the ballot public meeting. We are thinking of inviting other community groups who are in the ballot process to come and talk to us / answer questions about the ballot. There haven't been any no votes so far- is this because of the PR companies? Or is it because of misinformation? Or are the processes genuinely better?

In the evening I met with the community reps and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to talk about whether they feel supported or not. It was quite a difficult conversation because the community reps are quite torn/divided on how they feel about PEACH and what PEACH's role should be in the regen. [REDACTED] in particular really believes in the council and the process which has been

set up, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as [REDACTED] tenants are much more skeptical. What will happen if they can't guarantee the [REDACTED] tenants a home?!

31st October 2019

Had a meeting with the residents who are going to be helping with the public meeting on Ballots. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] worked out a game based on buying a car- if you buy a second hand car, what are the questions that you ask, what information is missing.

In the evening, went to meet [REDACTED] and the lawyer to finally talk about the conflict of interest issue. [REDACTED] was there as well, and the new director of regeneration, [REDACTED]. It was a difficult meeting, the lawyer initially tried to blame us for the fact that everyone wanted to work with me. He said that there is a perceived conflict of interest, even if I'm not being paid by PEACH and if I don't work for PEACH anymore. He also said that it has to do with my beliefs. I can kind of see that it would be difficult to be an independent advisor, but everyone seemed quite keen to find a solution to the problem. [REDACTED] suggested that I should come and work for [REDACTED]. That there was an opening or a need for someone who has experience in community engagement and community organising to come into [REDACTED] and show staff how to do it. We agreed to meet again the day after.

1st November 2019

Went to meet [REDACTED] again, with [REDACTED], in her office. We talked about the community engagement role, she suggested it would be an advisor to the Custom House programme, a pilot project to run over 6 months, a sort of innovation lab / round table, but it would mean, I think, that I would have access to all of the teams including the Community Reps and all of the information. Let's see.... We brainstormed closer to the idea of developing a role for an evaluator in the CH regen.

Thursday 27th Jan 2020

We brainstormed the strategy around the evaluation of co-production with

LBN and also the viability workshop. Does it make sense to have the viability workshop in Custom House? Who is it for? Can we hold it at the Crystal? The aim of the viability workshop is to ask the difficult / radical questions.

- who is asking the questions?
- who is running the workshop?
- what's the problem with viability
- who is presenting the problems

What is the balance in the room? We talked about having a standard structure for team meetings which means that not always [REDACTED] is organising them.

Me and [REDACTED] talked to [REDACTED] the housing barrister about [REDACTED] which was useful but complicated, maybe [REDACTED] aren't actually making up the problem- seems like there isn't much of a chance for [REDACTED] tenants to push unless we know what the plan is for them in the regen, and [REDACTED] aren't letting on.

Tuesday 4th Feb 2020

Me and [REDACTED] met with [REDACTED] on the South Bank to go over what's been happening. He spoke to [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] and she said they'd been warned off Custom House, that it's [REDACTED] project. He said that [REDACTED] lost control of the project and not acting as intelligent client. They need to set up an arm's length body and resource this properly - cannot recruit internally for the people.

[REDACTED] needing to make money as land has debt attached to it from past leverage, consider viability argument we are making. Is assumption to bring land value to 0 unreasonable? What is the truth? [REDACTED] said before he left that [REDACTED] had spent all of the budget for [REDACTED] on consultants and that most of the affordable homes money has gone to small sites in newham. Basically, we are coming to the conclusion that [REDACTED] has messed it up. He tried to arrange a meeting with me and [REDACTED] but we couldn't find a time to do it- specifically he wanted to meet before the steering group.

Thursday 6th Feb 2020

Think that next week at SG they are going to say something bad. We are putting together Peoples Guarantee DRAFT to put pressure on [REDACTED] for the ballot. Using Aims and Principles as a starting point and translating these into the Landlord Offer. As a document that is "The Landlord Offer" from a resident perspective and are simple are clear asks, for example [REDACTED] has a single line request? We are going to launch as a professional to bring legitimacy and spread the practice, achievable, and add pressure. Build an alliance around a peach ask.

Viability workshops. 14th March with residents in style of ballot workshop with community reps and others, not as large a group as ballot workshop. Not running to propose solutions, just to understand how viability works and what are the assumptions we can challenge. To enable SG and others to be able to question viability and other forms of housing and how viability feeds into viability.

Also, I emailed everyone about the co-production and [REDACTED] emailed me back saying this is premature and I shouldn't be talking to teams in CH yet! Should have emailed her a plan first... oh well. trying to speak to her next week

12th March 2020

I have a cough, probably from overdoing it when I was away, but now the Coronavirus has properly arrived in the UK. We had a conversation on the WhatsApp about working remotely but in the end we all went into the office on Thursday morning. I was practicing good hygiene in not coughing at people. Realised that actually lunch club is full of the most vulnerable – in fact, all of the people we work with who are broke, unable to stop work, not eating well, underlying health conditions.

I planned some of the viability workshop anyway. By the end of the day on Thursday the decision had been made to close the PEACH office to protect the vulnerable- we would all be spreading virus everywhere if we were infected. By the end of the week, everything was being cancelled and / postponed.

26th March 2020

Online team meeting again. The team have decided to do some coronavirus response activities, possible options are making activity packs for kids and elderly people, cooking hot meals. How to repurpose jobs for these times? The shift, both mentally and emotionally takes a lot of time and effort. [REDACTED] and I feel disconnected, not being in Custom House once a week means that we don't have much of a relationship with the community. I also feel like there are so many people who would benefit from my wages. But the team are committed to keep us together, even if it's unsatisfactory.

30th April 2020

Team meeting. Seems like the food delivery and cooking is going well. Lots of good feedback about the activity packs.

Some confusion about what is happening regarding the regeneration. [REDACTED] has managed with the community reps to agree with the council a programme of getting the community involved in writing the landlord offer. The people's guarantees which were made by PEACH members in February housing club kind of got lost in the lockdown. The council proposed a meeting on the 11th of May for the PEACH members to feed into the draft of the llo. However, this seemed like consultation rather than real agency. So, the PEACH members wrote to [REDACTED] to say they would propose them joining the community event rather than a separate meeting.

[REDACTED] called me to say that there is someone in the council who wants to collaborate on viability. In the team meeting I said it's difficult to propose something on viability when we don't know all of the info and also can't know, and now my position is further away from the council than ever before. I haven't met most of the people in the regeneration team now. So, [REDACTED] is going to try and ask the questions on the viability material. Apparently, it's going to be discussed in the next steering group meeting. Once they have more material, then we can talk about it and try and make a plan. I'm going to call [REDACTED] later today. There is definitely a link between the landlord offer and the viability- if the landlord offer is a legal document,

then what does that mean for what they are going to be willing to promise. Feel like the radical nature of what we are proposing may have been lost somewhat.

2nd July 2020

Big restructure week: I need to change the way I work at PEACH so that I can concentrate on the viability / co-production aspect of the work. We had a good talk about the upcoming ballot and what will happen if PEACH needs to campaign for a no vote. It seems to me like there isn't really another option- the steering group is not performing as it should. If PEACH openly campaigns for a no vote and loses then we are nobody- we will lose our relationship with the council. If we don't campaign will it look suspicious? We talked about doing a comparison with the council's proposals- need to find out which parts of these are public.

Tuesday 30th June 2020

Spoke to [REDACTED] from the Community Housing Hub about the co-production evaluation proposal. He mentioned that the aim of the Hub is to encourage other forms of 'community-led' housing, including within larger regeneration schemes. This could be different forms of community control rather than people getting together to build their own homes. We decided that I should re-write the proposal for the evaluation to reflect the aims of the hub, and that we could arrange a scoping meeting with [REDACTED] and maybe [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] to plan how it could work. Timewise, because of the ballot / planning application, rather than having one meeting every 2 months the meetings should be restricted to 6 until the submission of the planning application- or something similar. [REDACTED] is also still trying to get in on the regeneration. The council is worried about [REDACTED] doing a feasibility study for [REDACTED] which they don't own and which the council is planning to use the affordable homes funding for. I'm going to message [REDACTED] after the event on the 11th of July and see if we can kickstart the process in September. The ballot is in September/October

Wednesday 1st July 2020

Spoke to [REDACTED] she is the architect of the restructuring of the steering group. She has no desire to be part of a co-production evaluation, because I don't think that she actually wants to do co-production! The chain of knowledge on the project has been broken at the council- no-one is around from [REDACTED] times, there is no desire to change the way that they work.

She said that they need to change the structure of the steering group because there are no representatives there from phase one- I replied that the representatives from phase one were temporary tenants and had been moved out by the council! She had no idea about that.

She also mentioned that they are getting more staff and maybe she'll get one of the new staff to lead on it. I said to [REDACTED] that the co-production evaluation won't take more than an afternoon of her time and that it's something that [REDACTED] wanted to happen- she said I should email her again and we'll see how it goes.

11th July 2020

Our Futures, People's Guarantees meeting. When the community reps were asked to provide a design update, I assumed that meant a numbers update, density, height etc. But when [REDACTED] mentioned the numbers [REDACTED] said that they were out of date, but not incorrect. [REDACTED] sent an update which gave NO information whatsoever. An axo rendering with lots of windows. London vernacular. The numbers have moved on. What does transparency mean- it means being able to see everything. When are they going to be clear on the numbers...?? What does this mean for me and my research? How can the failure of co-production be articulated and to who? Will it have any impact? What are the points which need to be made?

- Be clear on the aim to provide 50% council homes- what does [REDACTED] mean by council homes? Does that mean social housing or affordable homes? On the design team blog, it says 50% social housing- this is confusing messaging.

- How are [REDACTED] working towards this aim of 50% council homes. Is this in every phase?
- Does the area north of [REDACTED] count within the regeneration? How are the community being engaged on this area?
- What is the role of the community reps and the steering group? Does the steering group have a way to report back to the community?
- (need to interview community reps and talk about training / support- evidence on feeling enabled to stand as a rep, rather than just having a website you can sign up on)

15th October 2020

[REDACTED] have got their viability and feasibility study back. We had a meeting to discuss, the viability is shared over [REDACTED] [REDACTED] including a community centre. It's always surprising the small number of homes which are possible to build when it's being done sensitively.

The community reps are writing a letter to send to the council. They want the council to address the following points:

- Training provided to Reps
- Further discussion on holding one ballot for a regeneration which will last for 20 years- one vote on all the phases is an unpopular idea with residents as it means quite a loss of control following the vote
- Freedom for Reps to feedback to the community, led by the Reps not Officers- possibly using PEACH housing club to feedback to the community
- Knowledge of the phasing plan and viability of the scheme and access to all viability information. We need clear justifications for what is being proposed, especially the tower. There is a new development manager at [REDACTED]. His name is [REDACTED] Apparently, he is working on the viability.
- Clarity on future service charges

- Clarity over tenure mix and specifically % of social housing in the first phase. The Council needs to provide figures showing the “net gain” of social housing in the first phase
- ‘Aspirations’ and ‘aims’ in the Offer may not be the same as clear commitments (e.g.) an aspiration/aim to provide houses in Phase 2). We need clear commitments in the Landlord Offer and assurance that the Council will keep to these commitments.
- We need more clarity over the whole engagement process around the Landlord Offer and ballot and how CHSG/Reps will be involved at every stage
- Clarity about how the regeneration will be delivered – are [REDACTED] considering a development partner?
- We would like to request a date when the full draft Offer will be made available to the wider community so that they can share their views. We maintain that without the designs, only half the Offer (the commitments from the Council) has been presented and we feel that it is difficult to sign up to the Offer without more information about the detailed designs.

29th October 2020

[REDACTED] responded to the questions which were asked in the Mayoral meeting:

Cut-off date for commenting on the Landlord Offer /Housing Offer.

[REDACTED] are currently working with the CH Steering Group and [REDACTED] our grant funding partner to discuss the detail of what they expect to see in a Landlords Offer document. In addition, the team is also reviewing landlord offers from other councils who have had successful ballots so we have more indicators on the level of design detail that was acceptable to secure their Yes votes. These activities and on-going discussions are important because we want to ensure that we are able to provide sufficient level of design and masterplan detail to residents to help

you make an informed decision on your vote. The dates below are moveable however provides an indication. It is currently proposed that a Cabinet paper for the Housing Offer will be published [REDACTED] in advance of Cabinet meeting on [REDACTED]. We will be seeking approval to continue to seek residents views whilst we finalise the full Landlord Offer. We are planning to have an information stand at Custom House 31st October and 1st November to continue the dialogue with residents.

When will the final Landlord Offer document be made available?

The final document will be available when the steering group and [REDACTED] are comfortable that the offer contains the right level of information to allow residents to make an informed decision. We will come back to the group with updates as the design process develops. The Housing Offer is available for residents to view.

How will residents know that their views have been taken into account?

[REDACTED] will produce a Landlord Offer consultation feedback document which will capture all questions and responses/actions taken. This document will be made public and available on line and sent to residents on request.

When will housing numbers on the first phase be available?

The information on housing numbers will be available when the masterplan process is complete. The regeneration team are working with the [REDACTED] to agree our [REDACTED], this will inform the phasing of the scheme and subsequently the number of homes which will be in the first phase. We will continue to engage and seek residents involvement in the scheme development process, and will update the group as the masterplan develops.

When will the masterplan be available?

A draft masterplan for phase 1 has been shared with residents as part of the scheme development process at various events. We will continue to consult with residents throughout the process until we freeze the designs. Once designs are complete the design proposals will be made available to all residents.

[REDACTED] called this Waffle. There is also a conversation between the housing

team and the regen team about the buildings in Custom House. There is a lack of communication between the two teams so the housing team has been trying to find out the regen schedule so that they can work out if the buildings can be refurbished. the regen team don't seem to have a schedule yet! This affects the ability of residents to be rehoused (esp. temp tenants).

17th December 2020

The first meeting with [REDACTED] about coproduction goes ahead after months of rescheduling and cancellations. The call was supposed to be 15mins but we spoke for an hour about trust, PEACH, the aspirations of [REDACTED] in the council, the problems with council officers [REDACTED] the coproduction process. We agreed that I'd send her a new proposal and that we'd meet again in January to discuss her comments.

22nd February 2021

[REDACTED] have come back with their coproduction definition following the workshop which they held at the beginning of Feb:

"A commitment to work together, to listen to, and value each other, and to help each other to plan and implement change for the benefit of All. Based from the very beginning on an understanding of each other's needs, and on an open, trusting and respectful relationship and meaningful resident involvement. Recognising that both residents and officers have a shared responsibility and vital contributions to achieving the best possible outcomes for all Custom House residents and Community"

This definition doesn't include anything about sharing power or decision making.

I found the previous definitions of coproduction which had been used in Custom House and sent them to [REDACTED]

2019: [REDACTED] Coproduction is a process that creates change. It is a way of working with, rather than doing to, people and communities to achieve better outcomes. Coproduction is a relationship where professionals and citizens share power to design, plan, assess and deliver together. It recognises

that everyone has a vital contribution to make in order to improve quality of life for people and communities’.

NEF (housing offer): The New Economics Foundation (NEF) working definition of Co-production is “A relationship where professionals and citizens share power to plan and deliver support together, recognising that both partners have vital contributions to make in order to improve quality of life for people and communities”.

Both of these definitions are clear about sharing power. It also came up in the meeting but wasn’t included by [REDACTED] in the definition.

1st March 2021

Team meeting week! We talked about the Alternative Regeneration Project Plan- still not finished. Difficult to work out how to separate the projects into different feasible parts. Me and [REDACTED] are carrying on working on the Alt Regen 2.0- infill and refurb version. I started designing a flyer to give to residents to invite them to housing club, explain why an infill and refurb version of the alt-regen is useful, and look at the original principles which we developed.

Talked with [REDACTED] about the coproduction process. They thought that the coproduction is a waste of time- the process is too coopted and doesn’t give the community enough power or build power. I don’t agree with this- the council isn’t going anywhere- and they will always hold the decision-making power, so what you get with coproduction is going to be better than otherwise- residents can still vote no in a ballot. In the end, we decided on four things which the coproduction process needs to include:

- Pro-active not reactive: community can put its own ideas on the table.
- Information shared transparently and decision-making process open with whole community.
- No restrictions on community platforms as places to feedback and get input from wider community- Loads of Reps say this!
- Reps able to get support they want and need from who they want.

These things should go into the review process, and come out of the review process in practical ways. We didn't have time to talk about this in the team meeting which was a shame because I'd have liked to hear other people's opinions on pro vs against coproduction. Also talked a bit about housing club. This is going to be the first housing club this year, and probably the first since the summer.

8th March 2021

Arranged a meeting with [REDACTED] to talk about [REDACTED] proposals for the evaluation of the coproduction process with the Community Reps. In the meeting, [REDACTED] mentioned that there was an issue with something that [REDACTED] had done, but didn't go into what it was. In hindsight I now know that it was that the housing offer had been sent through to cabinet without being taken back to the steering group first. This is a major set-back for the coproduction as the housing offer is the main thing which residents get to vote on in the ballot. It was a main part of the coproduction process. Had a quick chat to [REDACTED] about letting the community reps know what my plans are for the evaluation, need to contact them all directly.

26th April 2021

This week was supposed to be the first coproduction workshop with [REDACTED] officers and the CH steering group. [REDACTED] cancelled the workshop on Monday because they'd actually paused their work while they sorted out the grievance that the community reps had raised. They didn't actually tell me that though. So, [REDACTED] and I have prepared the workshop but we don't have a date to run it yet.

Thursday will be the Refurb and Infill workshop. We have about 6 or 8 residents who are coming. Me and [REDACTED] don't know what the plan is for the refurb plan though. Is this the architect organiser? Working on both sides of the problem. Another kid died on Freemasons Road.

May-June 2021

Taking a sabbatical from PEACH. Trying to run the coproduction workshops with [REDACTED] but the officers have stopped replying to my emails. What does that mean? No contact with the community reps means it's difficult to say. Both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have been in touch trying to work out how to get this thing to move. [REDACTED] threatens to remove the funding- but maybe we can take it somewhere else. [REDACTED] is disappointed but had no idea that it wasn't happening.

What actually is the structure inside the council?! It's SO WEIRD. Why don't they talk to each other- what is the hierarchy??

Had a meeting with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to talk about the coproduction process stalling. [REDACTED] read out an email where [REDACTED] just lied! She said she'd let me know that there would be a delay to the process and they'd be in touch in about 6 weeks. THERE HAS BEEN NO CONTACT. She didn't mention that she hadn't responded to ANY OF THE EMAILS. NOTHING. That is what we are dealing with. Barefaced lies.

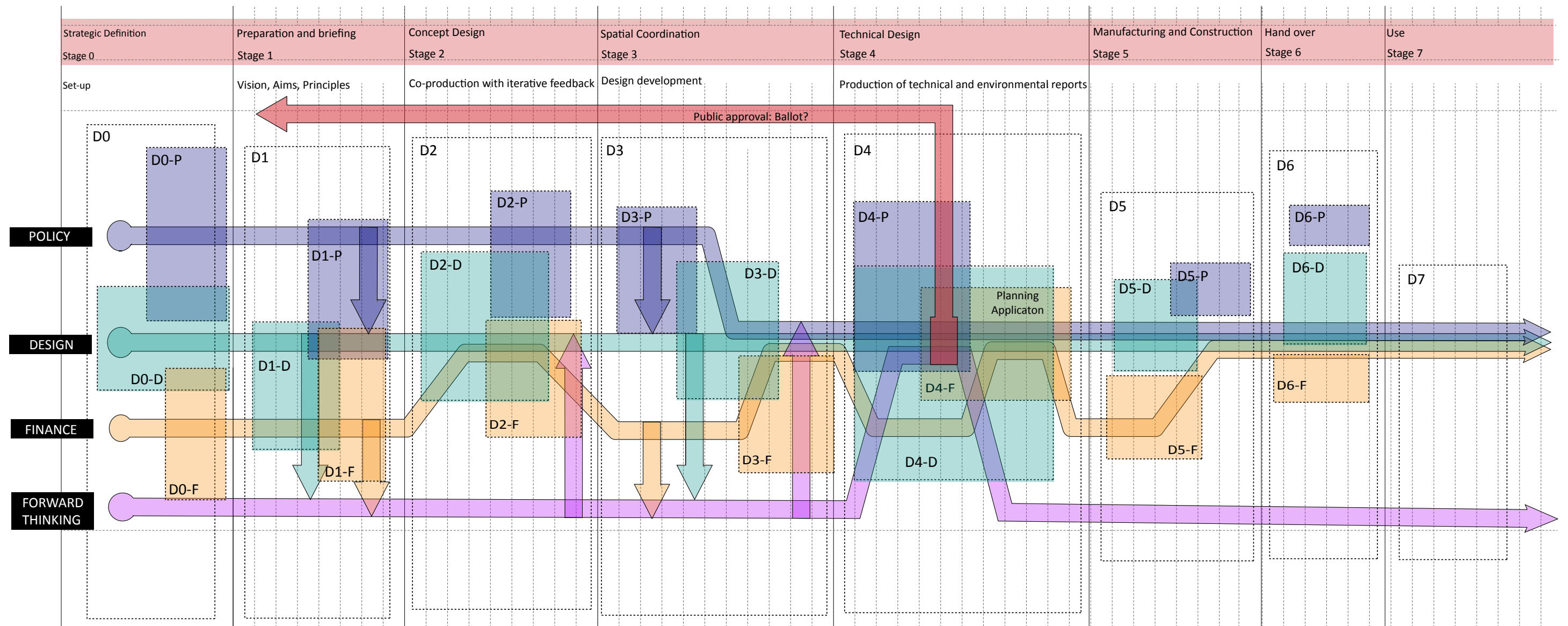
Appendix 2:

Data tables

The following data tables illustrate a snapshot of the data and information encountered by the architects and organisers at each stage of the regeneration process. The tables are organised firstly by stages according to the RIBA work stages, and secondly by route, according to the road-map of the regeneration. The routes on the road map are: Policy, design, finance and forward thinking.

The data tables are colour coded according to the accessibility of the data. White is accessible, yellow partially accessible and orange inaccessible. Inaccessible data means that it is either confidential, behind a paywall, or otherwise restricted. I have only noted whether it is publicly available, rather than attempting to assess the accessibility of the language or the technical knowledge required to understand its relevance.

The table numbers correspond to the road-map diagram on the following page. Therefore, D0-P is stage 0, policy route, D3-F is Stage 3, finance route etc. It is also important to note that this is not a definitive list, but a list that was encountered through my own personal and professional experience. The data and information contained in the spreadsheet and in the tables already include a wider variety of sources than a conventional regeneration project team may include. This reflects the needs of the community organisers and residents as stakeholders in the process to collate and cross reference data and information sources in order to build the most complete picture of the regeneration possible. Some of the sources are empirical and unquantifiable. The picture has areas that are undefined, and data and information which remain inaccessible and opaque.



Stage 0: Strategic definition: D0

Data and information	Location	Status
Local historical information	Borough archives	Open
Local planning applications	London Development Database	Open
Historical maps over time	Borough archives	Open
Local housing waiting list statistics	Local authority	FOI
Local Housing campaigns	Social media	Open
Local population demographics	Government open data	Open
Borough register of landlords	Local Authority	Open if collected
Ward homeless statistics	Local Authority	Open
Locations of empty buildings		Not tracked
Location and status of surrounding estates	Multiple locations	Can be collated
New housing or mixed use developments in the borough	Local Authority planning database, Local newspapers	Can be collated
Comparable feasibility studies	Architects, developers, local authorities	Closed
Local Doctor and hospital waiting lists	NHS waiting times are online, local GP's are not.	Open
Borough social housing eligibility criteria	Local Authority	Open
Changes to local tenure mix over time	Freedom of information request	Not tracked, can be partially calculated via Right To Buy statistics
Local gain or loss of social housing over time	Local Authority	Does not exist in accessible format
Documentation of resident experiences under regeneration		

Impact of regeneration on social networks and lives of residents		
Topic specific discussions with residents in regeneration areas		
Interviews with residents in regeneration areas		
Documentation of resident experiences of social housing		
Effect of redevelopment on people's health		Not collected
Location and rates of space available for community meetings / events	Local authority, local organisations	Open
Data on number of new homes started and completed	Government	Open
List of properties held by the council	Local authority	Closed
Legal procedure to acquire property in regeneration areas	Property lawyer	Closed

Stage 0: Strategic definition: D0-Policy

Data and information	Location	Status
Data on housing from every local authority in the UK	Shelter	Open
Ownership of local properties	Land registry	Paywall
Local Planning and Housing policy	Local Authority	Open
National Planning and Housing policy	National Government	Open
Number of homes lost to Right To Buy	Open Data published by DCLG	Open
Waiting lists for social housing	Local Authority	FOI
Right To Buy data	Local Authority	FOI
Numbers of homes classified as affordable in an area	Mixed sources	Collatable
Transport policy	TFL and Local Authority	Open
Government Statistics	Open Data published by DCLG	Open

Stage 0: Strategic definition: D0-Design

Data and information	Location	Status
Assessment of the quality of a built project by same proposed consultants / client / contractor / developer	On site	Open
Previous projects completed and the associated statistics, for example tenure types	Developer / landlord / housing association / local authority	Not available
Applications for planning submitted	Local Authority	Open
Data on estate repairs and associated costs and timescales	Local Authority	Closed

Stage 0: Strategic definition: D0-Finance

Data and information	Location	Status
Annual financial statement by local authority	Local Authority	Open
Community Infrastructure Levy and S106 contributions	Local Authority	Open in some cases
Local and national estate regeneration budget	Local Authority / Government	Closed
Price of land per sq. foot/m	Proprietary databases	Paywall / closed
Funding for affordable homes	Local Authority / Government	Closed
Repairs costs, service charges and other expenses	Local Authority / developer / landlord / housing assoc.	Closed
House prices and future market predictions	Estate agents / developers	Partially open

Stage 1: Preparation and briefing / Vision, aims and principles: D1

Data and information	Location	Status
Timeline for regeneration	Local Authority	Partially open
Advertising placed around regeneration sites promoting future schemes	On site	Open
Regeneration professionals	Local Authority	Partially open
Contract tender call-outs and documentation	Local Authority	Partially open
Business connections of elected councillors		Closed
Local housing related legal cases, including CPO, evictions	Housing lawyers	Closed

Stage 1: Preparation and briefing / Vision, aims and principles: D1-Policy

Data and information	Location	Status
Local plan	Local Authority	Open
Strategic planning documents	Local Authority	Open
Community engagement strategy	Local Authority	Open
Grant and loan available for construction and development of affordable homes	Government	Open
Committee and council meeting minutes	Local Authority	Open

Stage 1: Preparation and briefing / Vision, aims and principles: D1-Desig

Data and information	Location	Status
Number of habitable rooms per hectare proposed	Design team / local authority	Open
Proposed no. of people per hectare	Design team / local authority	Open
Good practice guides	Various sources	Open
Proximity to public transport	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local schools	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local healthcare facilities	Maps / on site	Open
Street level photography	On site	Open
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed

Stage 1: Preparation and briefing / Vision, aims and principles: D1-Finance

Data and information	Location	Status
Recent increase and decrease in house prices and future predictions	Property developers / estate agents	Partially open
Financial assessment of value of social housing	Surveyor / viability consultant	Closed
Mean or median household income in a borough	Local authority	Open
Local section 106 and CiL financial contributions by developers	Local authority	Open in some cases
Deeds of ownership of land in England	Land registry	Paywall
Price of land per sq. foot/m	Delivery consultant	Closed
Surveyors assessment of housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Grant and loan available for construction and development of affordable homes	Government	Open

Stage 2: Concept Design / Coproduction with iterative feedback: D2

Data and information	Location	Status
Committee and council meeting minutes	Local Authority	Open
Timeline for regeneration	Local Authority	Open
Deeds of ownership of land	Land registry	Paywall
Advertising placed around regeneration sites promoting future scheme	On site	Open
Regeneration Professionals	Local Authority	Open
Invitation to bid (tender) for a contract	Local Authority	Partially open
Street level photography	On site	Open
Housing related legal cases, including CPO, evictions	Housing lawyers	Closed

Stage 2: Concept Design / Coproduction with iterative feedback: D2- Policy

Data and information	Location	Status
Local plan	Local Authority	Open
Strategic planning documents	Local Authority	Open
Community engagement strategy	Local Authority	Open
Grant and loan available for construction and development of affordable homes	Government	Open
Committee and council meeting minutes	Local Authority	Open

Stage 2: Concept Design / Coproduction with iterative feedback: D2- Design

Data and information	Location	Status
Number of habitable rooms per hectare proposed	Design team / local authority	Open
Proposed no. of people per hectare	Design team / local authority	Open
Good practice guides	Various sources	Open
Proximity to public transport	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local schools	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local healthcare facilities	Maps / on site	Open
Street level photography	On site	Open
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Existing homes proposed to be demolished	Local authority	Open

Stage 2: Concept Design / Coproduction with iterative feedback: D2- Finance

Data and information	Location	Status
Recent increase and decrease in house prices and future predictions	Property developers / estate agents	Partially open
Grant and loan available for construction and development of affordable homes	Government	Open
Assessment of the potential profit and cost of a development scheme	Delivery consultant	Closed
Price of land per sq. foot/m	Delivery consultant	Closed
Proposed tenure split	Design team	Partially open
Proposed rent levels	Delivery consultant	Closed
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Costs of refurbishment of existing buildings	Delivery consultant	Closed
Cost of decanting residents and associated legal processes	Delivery consultant	Closed
Cost of demolition	Delivery consultant	Closed

Stage 3: Spatial co-ordination / Design development: D3

Data and information	Location	Status
Committee and council meeting minutes	Local authority	Open
Timeline for regeneration	Local authority	Open
Invitation to bid (tender) for a contract	Local authority	Partially open

Stage 3: Spatial co-ordination / Design development: D3- Finance

Data and information	Location	Status
Recent increase and decrease in house prices and future predictions	Property developers / estate agents	Partially open
Grant and loan available for construction and development of affordable homes	Government	Open
Assessment of the potential profit and cost of a development scheme	Delivery consultant	Closed
Price of land per sq. foot/m	Delivery consultant	Closed
Proposed tenure split	Design team	Partially open
Proposed rent levels	Delivery consultant	Closed
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Costs of refurbishment of existing buildings	Delivery consultant	Closed
Cost of decanting residents and associated legal processes	Delivery consultant	Closed
Cost of demolition	Delivery consultant	Closed
Price, number and size of homes for sale over time	Delivery consultant	Closed
Build cost estimates	Delivery consultant	Closed

Stage 3: Spatial co-ordination / Design development: D3- Design

Data and information	Location	Status
Number of habitable rooms per hectare proposed	Design team / local authority	Open
Proposed no. of people per hectare	Design team / local authority	Open
Good practice guides	Various sources	Open
Proximity to public transport	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local schools	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local healthcare facilities	Maps / on site	Open
Street level photography	On site	Open
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Existing homes proposed to be demolished	Local authority	Open
Housing space standards	Various sources	Open
Accessibility standards	Design team	Open
Material proposals	Design team	Open

Stage 4 Technical design / Planning application: D4

Data and information	Location	Status
Committee and council meeting minutes	Local authority	Open
Timeline for regeneration	Local authority	Open
Invitation to bid (tender) for a contract	Local authority	Partially open
Procurement of contractors for housing repairs / construction	Local authority	Partially open

Stage 4 Technical design / Planning application: D4-Finance

Data and information	Location	Status
Recent increase and decrease in house prices and future predictions	Property developers / estate agents	Partially open
Grant and loan available for construction and development of affordable homes	Government	Open
Assessment of the potential profit and cost of a development scheme	Delivery consultant	Closed
Price of land per sq. foot/m	Delivery consultant	Closed
Proposed tenure split	Design team	Partially open
Proposed rent levels	Delivery consultant	Closed
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Costs of refurbishment of existing buildings	Delivery consultant	Closed
Cost of decanting residents and associated legal processes	Delivery consultant	Closed
Cost of demolition	Delivery consultant	Closed
Price, number and size of homes for sale over time	Delivery consultant	Closed
Build cost estimates	Delivery consultant	Closed
Viability assessment	Delivery consultant / Local authority	Partially open
Loan rates	Delivery consultant / Local authority	Partially open

Stage 4 Technical design / Planning application: D4-Design

Data and information	Location	Status
Number of habitable rooms per hectare proposed	Design team / local authority	Open
Proposed no. of people per hectare	Design team / local authority	Open
Good practice guides	Various sources	Open
Proximity to public transport	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local schools	Maps / on site	Open
Location of local healthcare facilities	Maps / on site	Open
Street level photography	On site	Open
Surveyors assessment of social housing condition	Surveyor / local authority	Closed
Existing homes proposed to be demolished	Local authority	Open
Housing space standards	Various sources	Open
Accessibility standards	Design team	Open
Material proposals	Design team	Open
Environmental impact report	Environmental engineers	Open
Transport impact assessment	Transport planners	Open
Outline design proposals	Design team	Open

Appendix 3

Custom House Coproduction Steering Group Terms of Reference

**Custom House Regeneration
Co-Production Steering Group
-Terms of Reference-**

DRAFT 02/05/19

THIS IS A DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE DOCUMENT TO BE REVIEWED, AGREED AND
UPDATED BY THE STEERING GROUP

'Co-production' refers to a way of working whereby citizens and decision makers work together to create a decision or service which works for them all. The approach is value driven and built on the principle that those who use a service are best placed to help design it.

1: Vision & Values

The Custom House Regeneration Co-Production Steering Group [CHRCSG - *note: working title*] will make sure that the regeneration delivers the vision and values set out for the project.

The principles below establish a baseline vision, drawn from work already undertaken by the community and London Borough of Newham.

Custom House Regeneration will **be an innovative model of progressive, inclusive and high quality place making which delivers:**

- **A radical regeneration;** directly improving the lives of local residents and addressing Custom House's/Newham's problems: creating decent training and employment opportunities, increasing secure affordable housing, improving safety and health.
- **A beautiful and sustainable place;** creating a high quality neighbourhood to be proud of long into the future which feels welcoming and well connected.
- **A flagship co-production process** where power is shared between the community and the council and where expertise from both parties is respected in partnership working; where trust is built by inclusive and transparent engagement.
- **Responsible development that address inequality;** by maximising the delivery of social housing and other forms of genuinely affordable housing, ensuring that shops and services are financially accessible to local people/local businesses and protecting public assets into the future, whilst being deliverable and financially viable in the long term.
- **A positive process of change;** which builds on the unique and valuable aspects of the existing area and community; make sure that Custom House functions as a neighbourhood, before during and after regeneration and the benefits spread beyond the regeneration boundary.

All members of the Steering Group are expected to follow the CHRCSG values and *Code of Conduct*.

2: Remit

The Custom House Regeneration Co-Production Steering Group (CHRCSG) is a **decision making body (subject to the Newham Scheme of Delegation)** for the design and delivery of the 1st phase of the Custom House Regeneration Programme', starting in **May 2019**. The CHRCSG will:

1. Make **decisions** throughout the project relating to both design and delivery.
2. Receive **all project information relevant to the project to enable all members to make informed decisions.**

Commented [REDACTED] CHSG is a Decision Making body until Key stage 2- and then the groups role shall be reviewed.

Commented [REDACTED] Will need to including wording about a review and the flexibility needed around this in the CHSG future role.

Commented [REDACTED] Please provide Guidance on this specific things

3. Shape each stage of the project through discussion with the Design Teamⁱⁱ, the Delivery/Viability Teamⁱⁱⁱ and the wider community
4. **Provide** sign off each project stage and agree recommendations for the design and delivery teams in preparation for a binding **GLA** ballot on the final regeneration plans.
5. The CHRCSG will be aware of all work programme activities that happen in between meetings. They will receive reports from these meetings and decision making will take place in the Steering Group.

3: Membership:

Voting members of the CHRCSG will be made up of 6 Community Reps and 6 Council Officers from the London Borough of Newham. A minimum of 1 year commitment is expected of all members.

Of the Community Reps up to 2 can have an 'indirect link'^{iv} to the regeneration area and at least 4 must have a 'direct link'^v to the regeneration area. Community members will be elected by eligible members^{vi} of the Custom House community **as defined in the glossary.**

The council officer representatives should include **e** senior decision making officers to ensure efficient council governance and decision making is supported. Deleted: ing

Chairing responsibilities will be shared by 2 Co-chairs. Initially, Community Reps will be supported by an external facilitator/ chair and LBN Officers **will recommend** a Local Councillor from the Custom House/Canning Town South Wards. This arrangement can be reviewed. Chairs must have facilitation and chairing experience. Chairs must follow the *Chairing Code of Conduct* and the CHRCSG values.

Both LBN Officers and the Community Reps can appoint **a** non-voting Advisory Member each who provide support to members/bring helpful co-production expertise to the meetings. Co-opted Members must abide by the *Advisory Members Code of Conduct* and will be reviewed every 6 months. Commented [REDACTED] I agree with Hero that appointing two advisory members on each side might be useful to get a wider range of experience in the room.

The CHRCSG can decide to invite other attendees to specific meetings where helpful. Invitations must be agreed by the CHRCSG as a whole and an expected list of attendees must be circulated a week in advance of all meetings.

If a Community Rep stands down, the person who received the next highest number of votes in the community vote can be asked to stand in.

If the Community Reps feel that specific and important representation is missing from their team, they can decide to nominate a community member to join the Steering Group by unanimous **vote**. Commented [REDACTED] Is this a vote only by the Community Representatives? I would think yes?

4: Meetings:

Meetings/trainings of the CHRCSG will be hosted by LBN 1-2 times a month; a planned schedule of all compulsory trainings and meetings will be agreed in advance at the beginning of the project. Any requests to change the agreed schedule have to be made to the Co-chairs with at least **2** full weeks' notice.

Meeting agendas and background reading will be sent out to all members 1 week in advance. Agenda items can be submitted by any voting member and will be sent to the Co-chairs at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting.

5: Decision Making:

For a decision to pass through the CHSG, there must be a balanced, two thirds majority. This means that two thirds of voting members of both the Community Reps and the Council Officers must agree to ensure that there is balanced support for all decisions.

The decisions undertaken by the CHSG will be subject to wider community engagement and feedback before being considered by the CHSG. This includes major changes to the project brief programme or agreed engagement plan.

For the CHSG to be quorate, at least 50% (tbc) of Community Reps and 50% (tbc) of Council Officers must be present.

Only Elected voted members of the community and nominated officers shall be able to vote.

A proposal will be developed by to resolve any instance of deadlock in the case of a split vote.

Before making a decision, the following steps will be taken:

Stage 1: Preparation

- Background training in the decision, its context and its implications
- Presentation of information and options in plain English
- Time given for digestion of ideas and information, questions and answers

Stage 2: Discussion and Feedback

- Open discussion to share opinions, propose changes if necessary
- Time given to incorporate any changes if necessary
- Re-presentation of amended options in plain English
- Time given for digestion of new options, questions and answers

Stage 3: Decision

- Final open discussion
- Decision

6: Accountability of CHRCSG members:

Community Reps are accountable to the Community. They will:

- Be elected by the Community in a transparent vote
- Report back to the wider community at public meetings and via other platforms
- Have approximately 2x 1-2-1s with wider community members every month and 1 1-2-1 meeting with each other [note: tbc. for early discussion/agreement by steering group as constitutes an additional requirement on steering group members]
- Regularly attend wider community engagement events and meetings

Community Reps can be asked to stand down if:

- The wider community raises a serious issue re a member with the Co-Chairs, and it has been unable to be resolved through the Resolution Process
- The wider community collects XX signatures (tbc) to say that they don't believe the rep is representing their interests properly
- They regularly miss compulsory meetings or trainings (more than 3 in a 3-month period). This will be a matter for the CHRCSG to decide internally.

LBN Officers are also accountable. They will:

Commented [OV5]: So is this a 4/6 for each or a total of 66% overall?

Requires clarification

please comment on this process to ensure accountable and clear voting that is deliberate obstruction- as stated below.

Commented [] Agree that there should be at least 3 people from each side present for a vote on decisions.

Deleted: RC

Deleted: RC

Commented [] This allows either side to prevent progress being taken by 4 people staying away.

-Requires safeguards

Commented [] Non-attendance at 2 meetings where decisions are being taken, without explanation/apology, would exclude members from the group. This applies to both sides. This would also require that, particularly on the Council's side where membership appears more fluid, that named delegates only be used to replace group members and that delegates be used only twice before that member is replaced.

Commented [] Include a recommended way of resolving conflict and also link this to a time-frame (i.e. what happens after 3 months of deadlock-revert back to Newham?

Can we recommend an external facilitator- approved by both? Then if that fails then powers refer back after a period? (Possibly- As Central govt would do to local government)

to comment

Commented [] As the group has a co-production ethos, all decision-making should be done via deliberation so that all positions are presented in a balanced way (ie providing clarity on the pros and cons of each option). A common approach in a deadlock scenario is to use deliberation/discussion following the first deadlocked vote (talking through the positions). If after a second vote there is still deadlock, participatory inquiry using an independent facilitator can be used to reach a consensus on the approach. That approach would then be taken to a third vote. There are no further options so the facilitator and group would be responsible for ensuring consensus. This functions in the same way as jury duty.

- Regularly attend wider community engagement events and meetings and support engagement and reporting back to the community. Feedback from council updates to the steering group
- Ensure regular updates on council website and in newsletters
- Keep the community informed of how they can be involved in the regeneration of the area.

All members are accountable to each other for upholding the *Code of Conduct*, Vision and Values of the group.

- In order for the CHRCSG to carry out its duties effectively there will be
- A confidentiality agreement covering the steering group members which will protect the commercial confidentiality of LBN.
- A commitment to review capacity and capabilities in order for the CHRCSG to be an effective part of the future governance of the project.
- A commitment to an action learning protocol the project to develop knowledge / new skills.

7: Support and Accessibility

Training and development opportunities for Community Reps and LBN Officers will be provided so that they can carry out their duties adequately. Training is a part of membership of the CHRCSG.

Meetings will be held in venues and at times which are accessible to all members.

All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that the meetings and resources are accessible to members.

8: Confidentiality, transparency & Information sharing

Community Representatives, Advisory Members and Co-chairs, should have access to information on the project from the Council, Design and Delivery team. To enable the CHSG to make informed decisions each steering group member.

Deleted:

CHRCSG meetings are not an open to the public but agendas, minutes and papers will be public (minus confidential or embargoed information).

Commercially sensitive information can be kept confidential where its publicity would prejudice the market engagement, personal financial negotiation and best value delivery of the scheme.

Papers or minutes which are confidential or embargoed must be clearly marked and respected by members and cannot be circulated to a wider audience.

Every effort will be made to make sure that this process is transparent to the wider community; ways of communicating sensitive information without compromising will be explored, for example summaries/paraphrasing of confidential information can be agreed in order to obtain wider community feedback if necessary.

All members will sign and uphold the terms of the *Confidentiality Agreement*.

9: Conflicts of interest

Steering group members must have no conflict of interest with the appointed consultants or have personal commercial interests in the regeneration (beyond a family home or business).

All members will follow the *Conflict of Interest Commitment* and **sign a declaration of interest**.

10: Reward & Recognition

Community Reps will be **eligible to be paid** for their time according to the Newham *reward and recognition policy*. This includes time for training and background reading preparation.

This policy includes covering **reasonable** childcare expenses for Community Reps.

11: Terms of Reference review

The CHSG will be responsive to the needs of the project. The appropriate form and structure for the CHRCSG will be established in response to the development of the delivery and procurement strategy for the project. There will be reviews at key stages in the project.

The CHSG will be informed by:

- Residents Charter
- Shop Keepers charter
- Newham Local Plan (2018)
- Newham Housing Design Standards (2019)
- Canning Town and Custom House SPD (2008)
- GLA ballot vote to secure funding and start on site prior to March 2022.
- Programme (v0.2)
- Viability Scope document
- Newham Scheme of Delegation- November 2018

Commented [OV11]: With assistance from Steven Hill- Need to define key points in the programme would be ideal for the CHSG role to be reviewed.

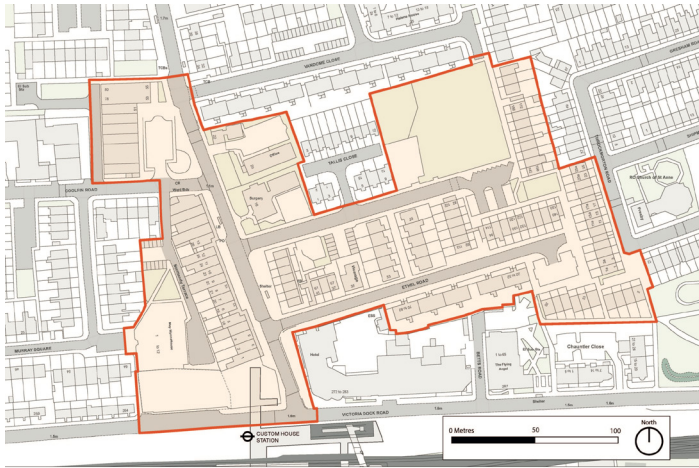
Commented [OV12]: Formerly know and the known and unknown document.

Supporting Documents:

- Project Key Milestones/Programme and Decision Stages document (first phase) – **to be agreed kept up to date**
- Confidentiality Agreement
- Conflict of Interest **Document**.
- Code of Conduct (inc. resolution process definition)
- Chairing Code of Conduct
- Advisory Members Code of Conduct
- Reward and Recognition Policy

Glossary:

ⁱ **1st phase of the Custom House Regeneration Programme:** Freemasons Rd, Ethel Rd, Leslie Rd, Throckmorton Rd as shown in map below:



- ii **Design Team:** [REDACTED] and associated partners
- iii **Delivery/Viability Advisors:** [REDACTED] and associated partners
- iv **Direct link:** Stands to lose a home in the regeneration area (is currently living or has family home in the area) OR stands to lose a business in the regeneration area
- v **Indirect link:** has a genuine and strong link to the area, for example
 - direct family currently living in/next to the regeneration area
 - lives close to the regeneration area and uses the local shops/services
 - is part of a religious institution/community organisation/works in the area
 - has children who go to school in the area
 - any other genuine/strong link to the area that they can demonstrate (being a landlord in the area does not count)
- vi **Eligible voting members:** residents that live within the following boundaries: North- A13, East- Prince Regent Lane, South- Victoria Dock Rd, West- Butchers Rd/Munday Rd

CUSTOM HOUSE CO-PRODUCTION STEERING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Introduction

These terms of reference have been prepared taking into account the Mayor of London's guidance document *"Better Homes for Local People – The Mayor's Good Practice Guide to Estate Regeneration"* (February 2018).

The Custom House Steering Group was established in April 2019 to work with the Council through "Co-Production" to deliver the regeneration plans for the Custom House area.

"Co-Production" is our collaborative practice of ensuring that a wide range of people within our communities can co-create, contribute and participate with the council in the design development of their estate regeneration. Share problems, find solutions and supporting our community "experts" in using their experience to be central to the design process of delivering new homes that meet the needs of the community and creates a place where our community feels proud to live.

Keeping people at the heart of everything we do!

The selection of the members to the Steering Group followed a rigorous election process involving the Custom House community. Fourteen candidates stood for election to the Custom House Co-Production Steering Group, and six representatives were elected from these. Four are living within the regeneration area and two living outside the regeneration area. Over 110 residents voted for their community representatives.

2. Visions and Values

The Custom House Regeneration will co-produce an innovative model of progressive, inclusive and high quality place making which delivers:

- A development that addresses inequality and a positive process of change
- Radical regeneration directly improving the lives of current and future residents
- A beautiful and sustainable place
- A flagship co-production process

3. Role and Scope

The Steering Group is a deliberative and consultative body working with the Council for the delivery of the 1st phase of the Custom House Regeneration Programme. It will:

- Provide feedback, suggestions and recommendations to the Council, to fully inform its decision making, in respect of Council and other reports relating to the design, viability and delivery of the programme
- Ensure the community is fully engaged and consulted in delivering the Steering Group's remit, and provide feedback to the wider community on its work

- Participate in the procurement of services for the Regeneration programme
- Form Sub Groups, as required, to review and discuss topics matters relating to the Regeneration programme which require a dedicated resource and/or more detailed consideration for a specified period of time to reach a consensus to be presented to the Steering Group.
- Form Working Groups, as required, to deal with routine programme management matters relating to the regeneration programme that require dedicated time outside of the Steering Group meetings.

Decision making by the Steering Group means the process that goes on inside the Steering Group for the purpose of reaching a conclusion in a discussion and/or making a recommendation to the Council for actions that lie outside the remit and competence of the Steering Group i.e. recommendations go to those who are identified in the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

4. Membership

The membership of the Group will consist of six community representatives, up to three council representatives, no less than two, at each meeting and a local ward Councillor.

The current structure of the Group is that it has a Chair, a local ward Councillor and Co-Chair working in the capacity as an advisor to the Group.

The composition of the Group and Chair structure will be reviewed annually with the Members required to renew their membership on an annual basis. Extensions to the term will be made following demonstration of a track record of past commitments of the members which will be at the discretion of the Chair and consideration by the Council.

The Group may appoint advisors to assist in its work for one or more meeting or on a standing basis, subject to the Council approval of any budgetary implications.

The Group members will uphold the Code of Conduct (appendix 1).

Should any issues arise which require a member of the Steering Group's conduct to be questioned the Steering Group as a whole will discuss and agree in consultation with the Council the appropriate measure/s to be taken to resolve the issue which could result in the member being asked to stand down from their position.

All members will sign and uphold the terms of the Confidentiality Agreement (appendix 2).

All members will sign a declaration of interest form on an annual basis and must comply with the terms of the Declaration of Interest Procedure (appendix 3) in that they have a duty to report any conflict of interests as and when they arise.

The quorum will be at least three community representatives, two Council representatives and a Councillor.

5. Sub-groups and Co-opting

Sub-groups can be formed at any time during the lifetime of the Group subject to the Council's approval and a majority vote of the Co-Production Steering Group members.

Sub-group meetings will be used to provide additional information and opinions for the Group to consider.

Each sub-group should meet at least quarterly and may be convened to provide and gain feedback on specific issues.

The Group will have the ability to co-opt other community representatives to the Sub-group subject to the Council's approval and a majority vote of the Co-Production Steering Group members.

6. Meeting arrangements

The Group will agree a schedule of meetings but should hold at least one meeting per month.

The Group may agree to hold additional meetings where, in theirs or the Council's view, urgent views are required from the Group to inform the Council's decision making.

Meetings will have the following mandatory agenda items:

- a) Apologies for absence
- b) Declaration of interest
- c) Approval of notes of previous meeting
- d) Substantive agenda items
- e) Forward plan

The meetings will be held at a venue owned, managed or hired by the Council and in close proximity to the Custom House Regeneration if a facility is unable to be found within the local area.

The meetings will be held between 6.30pm – 8.30pm on the designated meeting date. The agenda will be circulated in advance of the meetings to enable members to suggest any topics/matters that should be considered by the Chair as an agenda item.

7. Discussion

The group will seek to reach a consensus in coming to a view on any matter. In making any recommendation, the notes will record all views, including any dissenting views from the majority consensus.

The Group can request that their views will be recorded in any documents that will be used to make decisions under the Scheme of Delegation, including papers to Cabinet.

Any decisions arising from these matters should be reported back to the Steering Group at the earliest opportunity following the Cabinet accompanied by an explanation as to how the final decision had been taken and the rationale behind it.

Where the decision relates to a complex matter the reporting Officer must consider whether a detailed report should be provided to the Group.

Certain items may need to be treated as confidential, (examples shown in appendix 2) due to their commercial sensitivity, data or other reasons. In this case members will be made aware beforehand and will be required to treat information as confidential.

In such situations officer, members or report presenters will need to be clear why the information/item is confidential and if the information will be made public at a later date.

Reporting

The Council will provide administrative support to the Group including the preparation of agendas, reports and notes.

Papers for the meeting will be circulated at least one week before the meeting date.

The Council will propose a forward plan on matters to consider for the Group at an appropriate meeting with the purpose of ensuring that the Group's views on any regeneration proposals are considered in accordance with the Council's timetable. The forward plan will be reviewed and updated on a monthly basis.

Items for each meeting agenda will need to be with the Chair at least two weeks before the date of the next meeting if they are not included on the forward plan.

The Council will liaise with members of the group to obtain views on items to be agreed by the Chair and Co-Chair for inclusion on the next meeting agenda.

Notes of meetings will be available to all residents who want them minus confidential or embargoed information. Requests for notes should be made to the [REDACTED] email address. The notes will be provided within 5 working days of receipt of the email.

8. Public meetings

Public meetings will only be held at the explicit request of the Chair in response to a matter that will have a direct long term bearing on the community.

9. Reward and recognition

Members of the Group will be entitled to reward and recognition for their commitment in line with the Council's policy.

10. Training and development

Training and development opportunities for the Group community representatives will be provided so that they can carry out their duties adequately.

Appendix 4:

Speculating on the future of the A_O

Making regeneration obsolete?

Sib: Hello, I'm Sib the interviewer, would you like to introduce yourself?

Sib T: Hello, I'm Sib the Architect, community organiser and practice based PhD student at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London.

Sib: Great to have you here. So we are here today to talk about the manifesto titled 'A manifesto for the abolition of regeneration'. It seems that the manifesto emerged from your practice based research and the role which you named 'The Architect_Organiser'. The text makes a bold claim about the future of urban regeneration- in fact, it states that 'looking to the future, it is clear that urban regeneration needs to be named for what it has always been; a failed structural concept'. The manifesto sets out a completely different infrastructure for the development of cities, based on the role of 'Architect_Organisers' or 'The Custodians'. Do you want to start by explaining a bit about this manifesto and how it relates to your research?

Sib T: Sure. So I wrote the manifesto in order to begin to imagine what would happen if the direction which my practice was going actually was able to be carried through to a future scenario. The idea makes the A_O central to local urban development in that there is always a team of A_O working in each urban area, community organising and planning- a combination of local in-house designers, community organisers, ecologists, whatever else you can imagine is necessary. They would be based at the local library, which would maintain a kind of knowledge repository of their work. Visualising local needs and holding / maintaining a local common vision- as custodians. The A_O then become the custodians of the process of urban change, the keepers of the chain of knowledge, the narrative. The A_O being required to work as community organisers as well as urban planners holds them accountable to local people and organisations rather than the local authority. Rather than being situated between the council and the community on a project-by-project basis, there is a whole new pedagogical and knowledge-based

layer to the way that local areas and even cities are designed and developed. This proposal situates the A_O as the facilitators of that layer, and through that placement sets up a challenge to conventional architectural and urban design practice. Less red line boundaries and aerial views, more work on the ground with all generations of city residents. The manifesto also calls into question the role of participation and community engagement by changing the point from which development is initiated, so the question of 'how to do participation' which has plagued participatory design in relation to urban redevelopment actually becomes a 'how to do community organising' question.

Sib: Ok, right. Let's try and fill in some of the gaps. So how did this manifesto emerge from your Architect_Organiser practice?

Sib T: Well, in my practice I've been working with PEACH (The People's Empowerment Alliance for Custom House) and simultaneously with the London Borough of Newham and the Community Housing Hub London, developing the role of the combined Architect and Community Organiser [This is written about in detail in my PhD]. I recently stopped working as a community organiser with PEACH because over the course of the last year and a half the community organising strategy there had changed. I'd been working on developing coproduction methods with residents and regeneration officers working for the local authority. Looking at coproduction as a way for residents to be genuinely involved in the regeneration process. Over time, however, the idea of coproduction became discredited at PEACH because organisers think that there is no real possibility for residents to get what they want or be empowered through that process. There are many valid reasons for this; it takes too long, there is a lack of accountability within the process itself, the coproduction process co-opts residents into thinking like the council, removes resident's agency. There is no protocol for resident steering group representatives to bring the wider community into the process. This is partly because of the way that the process was set up, but also because of a longstanding lack of trust between the council and PEACH and a lack of support and training for steering group representatives. This has led to the distrust being passed onto the steering group representatives who then became confused as to their roles- they were asking questions to the regeneration officers such as 'What should I say if a resident asks me X?', 'Can we be briefed on what to say?', rather than the coproduction

process enabling residents to form opinions and being able to bring those opinions back to the steering group to then move the regeneration process in a direction desired by the community. So the coproduction process has been struggling for the last two years and been quite stressful for all of those involved. That's a bit of the background.

The manifesto emerged as I've been trying to work out what my role is in this situation, and actually then what the role of the Architect_Organiser is. Working with both residents and the council simultaneously but independently has been difficult in Newham and in Custom House. In an ideal situation, it would have been possible to work transparently and consistently with both residents and officers, both together and separately. This hasn't been possible yet. But over the last few months, Alongside Rowan Mackay from the Community Housing Hub London, I've been running workshops with the resident steering group representatives and London Borough of Newham regeneration officers with the aim of evaluating the coproduction process so far, and putting together a set best practice principles for future coproduction in the borough. In the last workshop which we held with residents from the Canning Town Coproduction Steering Group, there was a discussion around what it means to work in partnership. I hadn't actually met any of the residents involved in that coproduction process until the meeting, but they'd been working together with officers for over a year. There was a general consensus that they weren't working in partnership yet, that the coproduction has been consultative so far, but when asked what they thought would help to move the collaboration forwards they had no real ideas of what partnership actually meant. The resident representatives in Custom House who have been members of PEACH and working with community organisers for a number of years have much clearer ideas of what it means to work in partnership and to share power, and are much more vocal in communicating that to the council. They have had a political education, in the sense described by Freire, they are 'concientizao', they have awareness. So I realised that part of my role is to develop that awareness, to cultivate the conditions for that awareness to develop. And then hopefully that will result in more equitable development happening. In terms of within the institution or the state or government, my aim as the A_O was to begin to instigate changes in the working culture which might allow spaces to open for other solutions to emerge, more community driven solutions. I

suppose I was looking for a way to question the status quo, and trying to build questions into best practice principles for working with residents. Also suggesting examples of different models of development- for example, CLT's are the obvious ones, but what about Social Value Accounting, Zero Carbon development, or more radical ideas such as P2P economies? It's hard to bring these things into a room when there are many experienced officers who aren't necessarily invested in changing the way that development is done within local authorities. So this information needs to come in through independent channels, such as the A_O.

What I realised though was that at the moment in my role as A_O I have very little agency for change. Actually the first version of this idea was a state-led project based version, where the first step in a regeneration process becomes that the council employ the A_O team. Maybe as a sort of arms-length organisation, or there is a separate funding pot from the national government (similar to the Community Housing Hub or Public Practice) which specifically funds these roles. This has to happen a few years before the start of any regeneration process (before the design team comes on board). Maybe there are similarities here to how some local authority architects used to practice, but the emphasis less project oriented. In those first years, the A_O works on developing the vision, building relationships with residents, organisations, officers in the council, expanding knowledge (their own and local), putting together infrastructures which can hold the process (from templates) e.g information repository, a space in the local area where people can go, and where they can be based, understanding local problems, concerns. The A_O can work with community organisers in this time, and existing organisations- there is no need to reinvent the wheel, but the A_O must be invested in the framework or structure for this project to move forward. This isn't that different to what we were aiming for in Custom House, just that there was no precedent for such an independent approach. I think that in the end I realised that this problem of how and when to introduce other ideas and ways of working as someone with little agency is a problem of reform- trying to reform something which isn't working, will never be reformed satisfactorily, and that's where the manifesto comes in.

Sib: In your proposal, the A_O becomes a central figure. Who is the A_O responsible to? Who holds the A_O accountable?

Sib T: The A_O is the keeper of the process, the custodian of the common vision. The A_O is responsible for making sure that the local development process is consistently oriented towards the common vision. The process holds the A_O accountable. This means that the common vision needs to be defined through the A_O's community organising practice. The team of A_O's work at different scales simultaneously and form a bridge between the timescales of community and that of the institution / development. The A_O's would be part of the design team, and part of the delivery team. They could develop future management scenarios. Be the glue which knits the teams together, resisting the compartmentalisation of knowledge. There would need to be a framework for how the A_O's work, and probably some kind of supervisory system- all community organisers have a supervisor with whom they can talk through issues. But actually I don't think that the A_O role itself is that radical. Stephen Hill, the independent advisor for the Custom House coproduction process suggested the A_O role as being necessary, as well as his own role as independent advisor. There are some people who have been involved in the CH regeneration over the years who have carried out parts of these roles of A_O and independent advisor to the process, but only parts and with resistance from other stakeholders. I have definitely pitched for this role to exist in the Custom House regeneration process (to the design team, the delivery team, the council), but there was no structure for the A_O role to exist within. But in the end, to answer the question, I think that the setting up of the community organising process in a way in which there is a rotating board of residents, and a supervisory role for someone out of the area, would deal with accountability issues.

Sib: Can you give examples of a common vision which is in existence already?

Sib T: The 'Alternative Regeneration Plan' and 'The People's Guarantees' were both common visions developed by residents with the input of the Architect_Organisers at PEACH. Maybe common vision isn't quite the right description though. Both were developed over months of work with residents and community organisers, but each has a different emphasis. Obviously we are talking about ideas developed under the current regeneration system- but the 'People's Guarantees' were a set of requirements developed by residents for the housing offer (the offer which the council provides to residents in the ballot which decides whether the regeneration will go ahead or not). These requirements were the baseline for the needs of residents in the

regeneration. The good thing about 'The People's Guarantees' was that it encompassed residents needs from all different tenures. It did actually result in a pretty good housing offer from the council, developed alongside the coproduction steering group. There is also a long history of community-led masterplans. But I think what I'm imagining is something which encompasses green space, growing plans, like what kind of plants, where the benches are, as well as where is potential meanwhile use, what buildings are currently empty. When do homes need to be refurbished, how should they be refurbished, what is the plan for the area to transition to a carbon neutral or post carbon society. And of course there can be masterplanning elements in there, but no large scale demolition. So something more holistic than anything which exists today as far as I know.

Sib: Is it only the A_O who needs to be held accountable? What about residents?

Sib T: Well, through the work which I've been doing on the existing coproduction process I've been thinking a lot about the question of accountability in terms of resident representation and how conflict and disagreement are dealt with. Currently there are naturally differing interests amongst residents in relation to the area being regenerated. For example, if you are a homeowner, your house will likely increase in value, but may be compulsorily purchased. If you are a council tenant, you may have to move house more than once, potentially out of the area. If you are a temporary tenant, you may lose your home and be moved out of the area. Shopkeepers face disruption to their business. Kids have to move schools. But there is the potential of new homes, new facilities, new shops and parks on the horizon. This causes conflict. Even in the situation where the A_O are developing a different kind of common vision for incremental change, there will be conflict. But I hope that doing everything in public and making information public would help. That the accessibility and relational nature of the work would help. There are lots of protocols in existence for collective organising and collective working which could be used, but I'm not sure if accountability is the right phrase in terms of residents- actually people need to participate, to meet with the A_O, to go to the library, and that's the responsibility of the A_O to get people involved and invested!

Sib: Talking about conflict- what happens when there is conflict between the

local authority and residents in terms of what each party thinks needs to happen in an area?

Sib T: This is interesting. Take for example neighbourhood plans- they are encouraged as a way for communities to make a plan for an area. But the organisational requirements mean that they take years to set up, be recognised by the local authority and then the plan needs to be developed and submitted. And then the plan can't be used as a tool to contest the local plan, or unwanted neighbourhood development. It is just supplementary. So it becomes almost a placebo rather than something with agency. I think the A_O manifesto aims to legitimise change in a different way. At the moment there is a lot of push-back against much state-led development because it is not seen as being beneficial to the local community. Whether it is councils building on green spaces, large scale demolition of social housing and replacement with market housing, threats to local markets, none of these are going to bode well for low income residents. But assuming that people don't want change or can't see the benefit in *any* development is patronising. There will be conflict, but the aim of the proposal is that the change is brought by the community rather than the other way around. There also has to be an acceptance that there will not be a consensus in these matters. I'm inspired here by the theorist Chantal Mouffe's work on agonism and the difference between politics and the political.

Sib: How do you avoid replicating the power imbalances inherent in urban design now (i.e only people with time / resources are able to participate, visit the library etc?)

Sib T: I think that the answer to this lies in community organising and putting the time in to develop local leaders and bring those leaders into paid positions. It's not a question of putting out a job advertisement and waiting, and it's not a question of only voluntary work. There needs to be clear channels open for local people to be paid for their time. I can also imagine this system branching out into things like meanwhile use and local start-up businesses. Even having a local list of empty council owned buildings would be a really useful resource for people looking to start a business. The A_O's also need to be properly resourced. It's also a very different way of building knowledge when working as an organiser with kids, young people, elderly people- being specific and intergenerational, using different ways of sharing

knowledge such as games and theatre, visualising using video, animation.
Avoiding text-based domination.

Sib: Why are you so interested in theatre as a mode of communication and discussion?

Sib T: Because I think that the constant prioritisation of the written and spoken forms of information leaves out huge areas of potential for communication of knowledge and ideas. Formats for participation such as workshops and meetings whether in public or in smaller groups require a certain kind of confidence in order for people to participate. Things like the way you speak, vocabulary you use, the conventions of 'professional' ways of working, not believing that local knowledge is comparable, or valued- all of these things change when theatre is the mode of communication. There is more potential for variety of expression. I experienced this in workshops I participated in with You Should See The Other Guy. I also wanted to try running Theatre of the Oppressed workshops in Newham, but the pressure which residents are under meant that introducing another new way of working on top of all of the information and time required to put together the alternative regeneration plan, develop coproduction processes with the council, fight for better housing conditions for temporary tenants- it just wasn't possible. The time to introduce it wasn't there. But from evidence from other places, it does work and is useful. So I would like to think that in this proposal there would be a chance to build in TO techniques and other physical techniques into the working process.

Sib: How would this proposal relate to current initiatives by local authorities to broaden community participation- for example the participatory democracy and 'citizen assemblies' at Newham, or other participatory budgeting trials in other cities?

Sib T: I think these are slightly different. The primary difference goes back to Freire and critical pedagogical awareness. There is no definite commitment to education or knowledge sharing in the development of a participatory local democracy. The experiences that I've had with residents in Newham have indicated that without a critical pedagogical approach full participation in urban development processes is not possible- it looks like participation but it isn't actually- because of the complexity of the process, the time

involved, you never begin to shift the power imbalances because there is no awareness of what else is possible. It is also a different because the practice of the A_O is based in community organising- because that way you do make connections with people, you build community power.

Sib: What about land ownership and private developments? How does the manifesto relate to the planning system?

Sib T: I think that in this scenario the planning system will still exist, and will still exist within the council. It's almost the opposite of the proposed planning white paper- there are quite a lot of straightforward decisions which don't need extensive community involvement. House extensions, change of use, conversions etc. But when there is an application which would currently go to the strategic development committee or be displayed somewhere in an exhibition, maybe that would go to the library and a first level of approval and conditions would come from the local residents rather than the officers. It would also change the process for objecting to a planning application. For sure there would be conflict- I really enjoy thinking about the lack of consensus in these situations and how that might actually lead to more interesting discussions and maybe even being able to bring other ways of discussing issues into more common use. I think that if you haven't been in a meeting with good community organisers facilitating that imagining such a meeting is probably quite painful. But it can happen. In terms of planning, I think that the part which could change would potentially be the local plan and area specific supplementary planning documents (SPDs). But I want to emphasise the focus of the A_O on actual changes, even on a mundane level, like fixing potholes- that proposals begin at that level and build up from there. I can start to see a point where there is an overlap, or where there are elements which come from the local plan or other relevant local planning document at a council level into the A_O space. Those elements are then debated, reworked, accepted or rejected. It's quite hard to imagine because we aren't used to thinking like that, to accept that each proposal will be taken seriously, wherever it emerges from.

Sib: How do you think that this proposal relates to the financialisation of development?

Sib T: It is important not to ignore the power of finance. The emphasis is on changing the system- situating this manifesto within the current system leads to problems of agency as I have experienced in my practice. Part of my research on development viability examines why and how organisations lend money, and to whom. One of the problems which community-led groups encounter is that they have no development experience and no capital, which makes them a risk to lend money to. Case studies such as Granby Four Streets in Liverpool show that the CLT was only taken seriously by the local authority once it had secured private financial backing. Community Led Housing gives grants out to groups and provides support in order for them to get the necessary development expertise on board, conduct feasibility studies and finally convince the landowner that doing a deal for the land will result in community-led homes. However, as the Custom House CLT has experienced, if the local authority then decides that the initial site isn't suitable, that feasibility money is gone and that initial injection of funding is extremely difficult to repeat. Or Brixton Green where the council were not able to secure the freehold of part of the site so the scheme had to be redesigned, and the scheme became financially impossible to complete. And that's after ten years of campaigning and working to make it happen. So there are a couple of problems there which I think the A_O could help to solve. Firstly, the experience issue. The A_O team would have that development experience and therefore that risk over lending money or being resourced would be lessened. Secondly, access to land- I would hope that the development of a common vision would help to release some plots for community-led housing- especially local authority owned plots. The important thing is that with CLT's, homes are taken out of market circulation- the homes to buy are for sale through the CLT, there is no speculation there. So the idea is that the increase in knowledge through the building of local leaders, the development of paid roles for those leaders, apprenticeships etc, would gradually lead to more estates or blocks or streets transitioning to community ownership, or community management models such as TMO's. I also looked into the relationship between finance and 'green' building- how lenders are providing financial incentives such as lower interest rates on loans when the buildings being constructed are more sustainable. I found it interesting because it's a 'nudge' which the occupier of the building has no say in whatsoever- they just get a slightly greener home out of it. But this is going on at a different level, in the macro world of finance, and no-

one outside of the industry or government is aware of it. So there are many scales where things can be shifted.

Sib: How do you see the A_O's role in terms of the ecological future of urban areas?

Sib T: It would be much more powerful if there were not only architects involved in this manifesto. It seems particularly important in the climate crisis to do the things necessary to stop buildings being major emitters of CO2 and also to increase the biodiversity of urban areas. Improving energy efficiency of buildings is one way, insulating, looking at other sources of power generation, not undertaking unnecessary demolition. It's useful to have different sources of expertise working together, it's not just about structural and material shifts but also cultural. For example, there are also already existing initiatives within libraries – the library of things, which lend tools and give short tutorials on how to repair household goods so that people don't have to go out and buy something new, preventing waste.

Sib: Community organising theory talks about 'organising for power'- do the A_O organise for power?

Sib T: Yes, and no.. it's different. The A_O is a new model of practice and knowledge production. The role of the A_O intentionally combines community organising theory with critical pedagogy, and situates the practice at a physical location recognised for providing social infrastructure. The A_O bridges between the working timescales of individuals, communities and institutions, specifically in the urban environment. Community organisers organise for power in order that people can get behind a common goal, often to make a demand from a person or organisation in a position of power. The aim for the A_O and the creation of a common vision is to disrupt that power imbalance. So organising for power in the sense that there is something for people to feel invested in and get behind, yes definitely. Being able to have the power in numbers to demand something is always useful as a back-up though!

Sib: Can you say a bit more about the timescales which you mentioned?

Sib T: Because two of the problems which have been obvious with the current system are firstly how long the development process takes, and secondly the capacity of residents to maintain commitment on that process which could be going on for 5-10 years. So the organiser part of the A_O is necessary to be bringing people in, building structures which help that knowledge to spread out, training people up. In an ideal scenario, the framework which the A_O would work to would mean that the library would become a sort of repository and archive of information, constantly kept up to date but with records of past decisions, processes and events. The A_O is the custodian of the vision, of the process, and the archivist essentially. The records could be in audio, video or some other visual or physical format. It would be great if the knowledge production in a local area happens almost like many simultaneously overlapping relay runners- getting lots of people involved. So that there isn't a reliance on one person, one form of knowledge, and people can avoid being overloaded (both in time and responsibility). Maybe this framework would also allow the institution to move faster, because the kind of large scale, long term development associated with regeneration wouldn't exist- it would be replaced by incremental and smaller scale changes. It would also allow people to move with the change and see it happen slowly, rather than the change causing a rupture, a break in the environment. That sounds a bit like a contradiction but I don't think that it is actually! Helena Karasti has written about infrastructure time and project time in the context of large scale information infrastructures, there's a table in one of her papers, that compares temporal scales from each perspective which I found useful. In that paper they recommend moving away from project time - that project based participation doesn't really work, and instead moving into infrastructure time in the form of long term collaborative participatory design. But the concept of community time is different to project time. Because project time has an end, whereas community time doesn't have an end, but it has a different texture to infrastructure time. Even if the collaboration is over the same long timescale, the impact of urban change is on a different, longer, temporal rhythm.

Sib: The role of data and information is central to your research. How do you see data and information relating to this proposal for the A_O?

Sib T: The movement of data and information into knowledge is a political act which the A_O is invested in. All of the tactics which potentially allow more access to the data and information about the local area and make that information accessible and understandable need to be investigated and cultivated. I have detailed records of types and existing locations (if it's publicly available) of data and information which is produced or used in an urban development project- not only plans, drawings, timelines, also procurement, delivery briefs, contracts, legal documents. It becomes quite overwhelming quite quickly. But there are some inspirational projects which visualise and personalise data – such as the anti-eviction mapping project in San Francisco- who manage to fit a lot of information into quite a compact but dense format. Building the roadmap of the regeneration timeline with community organisers, residents and the A_O at PEACH was another way that we organised different types of information in strands over time.

Sib: You use the term 'abolition' in the title of the manifesto. What is an abolitionist approach to regeneration? Can you talk a bit about how you came to use this terminology?

Sib T: Yeah, so I was trying to think of a title for this proposal, this argument for a complete change in how urban change happens and who makes it possible, and I realised that in my practice as the A_O, I was constantly trying to reconcile the tension between working on the ground, community organising with residents, and working with the council. It has often felt like building something with one hand and taking it down with the other. I think deep down I've realised that it's not possible to reconcile the competing interests of residents and the local authority. For clarity I am talking specifically about the neoliberal state in relation to urban development here. I think once I started to realise that in building critical awareness, in deepening the pedagogical practice of the A_O, the interests of residents in these areas which are undergoing regeneration and the interests of local council will predominantly be in conflict. The more people understand about what the regeneration entails and what is possible under current financialised urban development models, the more they are not going to want that to happen to their community- the evidence for this is everywhere in London at the moment and has been for a long time now. So I was trying to reconcile that tension for myself by looking at ways of moving beyond it. The abolition of regeneration succeeds in eliminating that tension, by placing

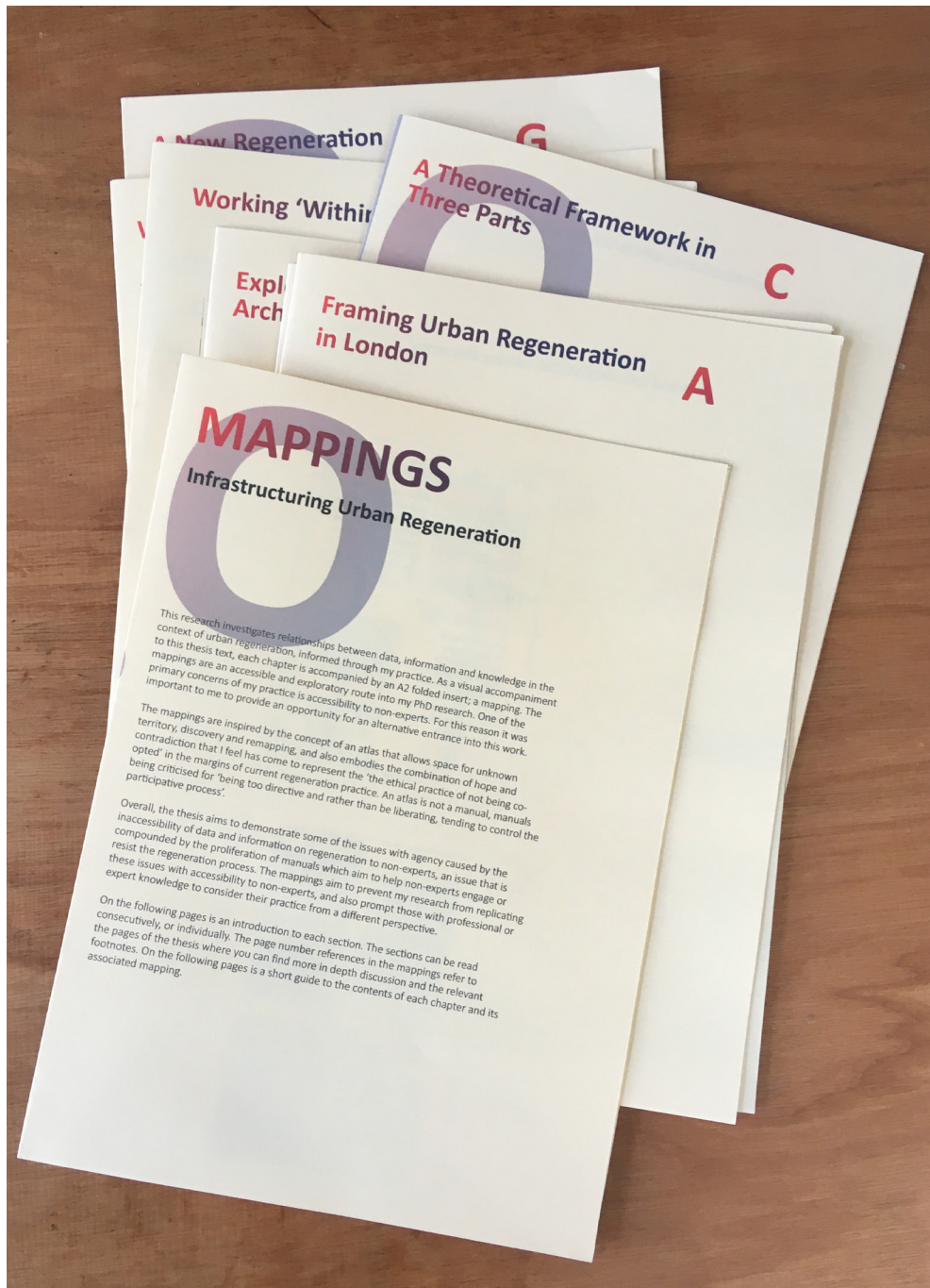
regeneration into the same category as other violent state institutions. And it is violent- displacement of communities, manipulation of residents, gatekeeping of knowledge, the way that regeneration affects primarily low income and global majority communities. Once I'd made that move in my head, it made sense, some space opened up around the idea - why try to reform something which is damaging - socially and ecologically- actually the whole system needs to be rethought. An abolitionist approach draws on the work of activists and theorists such as Ruth Wilson Gilmore, Angela Davis and W.E.B. Du Bois amongst many many others. Abolition invites you to imagine a future where the institutions have been dismantled and rebuilt in other forms. Abolition focuses on dismantling the structures which are causing the problems.

Sib: Thanks for taking the time to answer these questions. Next time, I'd like to ask what you think are the steps we need to take in order to make this manifesto a reality?

Appendix 5:

Mappings.

For those encountering this work in a digital form, I have photographed each mapping. Not all of the images in the mappings appear in the thesis, and vice versa, therefore the optimal experience of this work is in its physical form.



Framing Urban Regeneration in London

A

Regeneration refers to an urban policy involving spatially targeted reinvestment in and revitalisation of physically deteriorating, economically under-resourced and socially deprived areas - in this case public/council/social housing estates. Even though some regeneration aims can be considered laudable, the practice of regeneration in London means that it has become a 'nasty word' among estate residents as they see their homes bulldozed and their communities scattered.

In 2015 I had just returned to London as an architect, newly aware of the political ramifications of spatial practice. One evening, I was invited to join a friend in Elephant and Castle, where some local artists were holding listening sessions based on the contested regeneration of the Heygate and Aylesbury estates. We listened to a recording of an architect who was trying to express her concerns about the sizes of the commercial spaces in the new development. They were too big, and the rent would be too expensive for existing local shops to move into. I could tell what she was trying to say, but it wasn't obvious to anyone else in the room. There was something that the architects weren't doing. A communication failure, but also an abdication of responsibility. It was too late in the project process for residents to be trying to communicate these types of problems with this proposal. Afterwards I wondered about this, her words echoed in my mind. There was something that needed to change here, but what was it?

Later on that year, I was introduced to a community organiser who worked at PEACH, The People's Empowerment Alliance for Custom House. They explained to me that the Custom House area had been awaiting urban regeneration since 2003. It was now 2016, and residents were still waiting for the process to begin, meaning they had been living with the potential of disruption to their lives and demolition of their homes for the past 15 years. The organisers at PEACH were looking for architects to help them create a community masterplan. I began to think that maybe this was an opportunity for architects to do something differently. After conversations with community organisers and residents, PEACH decided to create a masterplan for the area which reflected local needs and desires. I proposed that residents should be involved from the start in a team with architects who would work together on the plan. We hoped that the masterplan could be used as political leverage with the local authority, and would also give the community something to fight for. We decided on a team of ten to carry out the project. Four architects, five local residents and one experienced union organiser, with the two full time community organisers at PEACH also contributing. From October 2016 the Alternative Regeneration Team worked one day a week for a year to produce four aims and six principles for regeneration, which were then spatially represented in the Alternative Regeneration Plan. The architects worked with local residents as community organisers, having one-to-one conversations, knocking on doors, doing community events, and the resident organisers contributed to the design process, mapping and analysing the area, designing workshops with the architects and evaluating the results. Everyone was paid equally, demonstrating that there was no hierarchy of skills or knowledge, that all contributions to the project were equally valued. This masterplan became known as the PEACH Alternative Regeneration Plan. It is this plan and the work that went into its creation that instigated this research.

Data and information, the missing elements?

My research focus emerged through reflecting on issues which I consistently encountered over the three years of organising around the Alternative Regeneration Plan, and my connections with other community campaigns across London through the Concrete Action Collective. The issues that encountered revolved around access to and understanding of data and information by non-experts in relation to urban regeneration processes. Throughout the development of the Alternative Regeneration Plan, the technicalities of the design process, technical language, timescales, volume of information, financial viability and the involvement of various consultants all required sifting, translating, rewriting and reassessing. It was not just the understanding of the process, but where to find information, how to deduce what was missing, to know what was important and how to transmit those questions to a wider non-expert audience that emerged as consistent problems. The amount of information needed and the knowledge of how to use it was clearly a huge barrier for many non-experts, a barrier compounded by the constant shifting sands of politics and policy. The gaps in the understanding of and access to data lead me to my first research question.

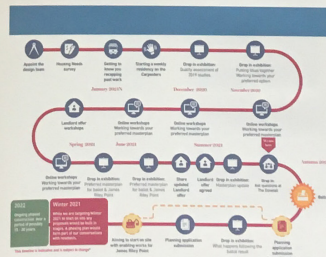


What strategies and tactics can be developed to establish a critical and productive role for the use of such data and information within participatory frameworks?

Regeneration timeline as seen on the Corporation Estate Regeneration website
See page 45 of the thesis

What roles do data and information play in the context of architecture, planning and policy, in relation to community and non-expert groups?

I propose that the emergence of so many resources aimed at collecting strategies and tactics for non-experts facing urban regeneration is a result of the rising volumes of data and information on finance, policy, design and planning that characterise the complexity of the contemporary urban regeneration process. Obstacles such as large quantities, obsolescence, language, concealment, distortion and questions over confidentiality prevent access and understanding of such data and information and inhibit genuine participatory processes. These obstacles are complicated by changes in policy and procedure which produce yet more information to add to the already crowded field. I argue that the role of data and information is key to understanding the pattern of limited agency which exists for community stakeholders in urban regeneration processes. Limited agency can be seen in the restricted moments where residents are encouraged to participate in the community engagement process and in the restricted information available to residents about the proposals, the timescale and the various outcomes already envisioned by various stakeholders. Through policy and feasibility studies, the council and other consultants often have a broad idea of what is possible under a regeneration proposal before the community is informed of its impending initiation. Many community campaigns therefore begin too late to make a significant impact in local authority plans. Existing participatory frameworks are inadequate because they don't enable understanding of the regeneration process and don't facilitate genuine agency by non-experts. Instead, well-intentioned experts replicate existing barriers to access and use of relevant data and information through producing more information, reinforcing the knowledge hierarchy between expert and non-expert. I believe that the role of data and information is a key element that is missing from existing resources and that also has not been sufficiently explored or documented in practice. I therefore ask for my second research question.



An Introduction to Community Organising

B

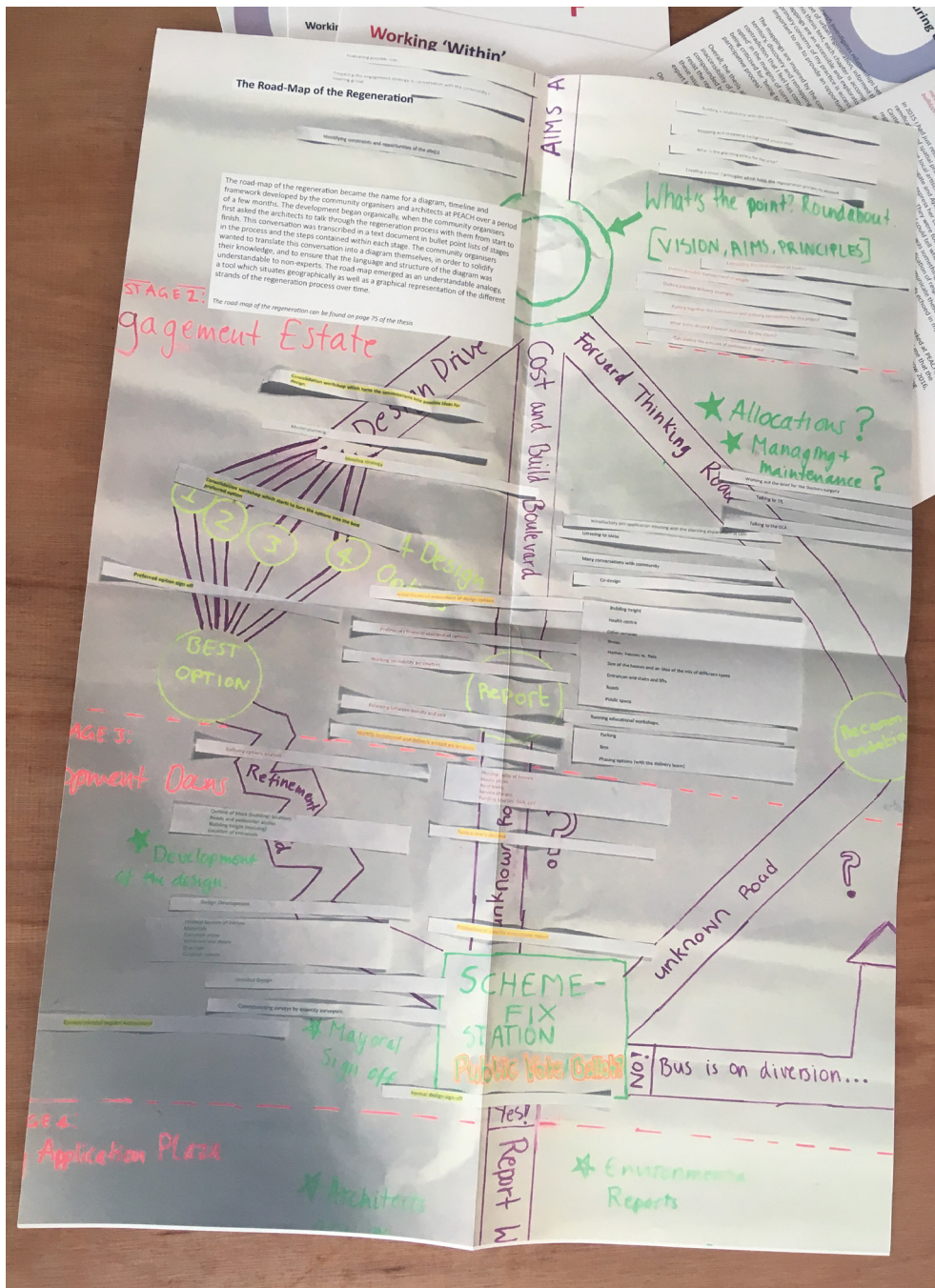
In the context of urban regeneration, community organising means shifting power from local government, developers and consultants into the hands of residents in order to establish what regeneration, if any, needs to happen from the perspective of those impacted. However, it is not immediately obvious where the power sits within the constellation of stakeholders in a regeneration process, and how to make this shift happen.

When I started working at PEACH, I didn't know what community organising was. When we interviewed the other architects for the Alternative Regeneration Plan, none of them knew either. The senior community organiser organised a two-day training session for us, introducing us to community organising basics. We had to have a relational conversation with someone else in the team, where we were tasked with finding out something about them that we didn't know before, and something that we had in common. This was excruciating at first, very awkward and stilted. With practice though, it became easier to structure the conversation. In community organising, there is no conversation without an 'ask', something that you can ask which will bring the person you're talking to into a meeting, or give them a reason to talk to their neighbour. We went for a walk around Custom House with the local organisers, some of whom had lived in the area for their whole lives. There was a feeling like time ran differently, temporarily slowed. Of course, Custom House wasn't immune to change and had seen a lot of changes over the years, but there was a core of people who had remained. The Ronan Point disaster in 1968, where a gas explosion killed four people in a 22 storey council tower block actually happened on Freemasons Estate in Custom House. The estate has since been demolished, but the architects were surprised that there was no trace, no commemoration of such a well known event in the area. Some time after the initial day of community organising training, I held a one day workshop on architecture and planning. Residents and organisers learnt about the planning system, the previous masterplan and the regeneration areas that had been defined by the council. We looked at different drivers for regeneration, and who benefits from different ways of regenerating an area. For the last part of the day we went to Canning Town, and saw how the regeneration had changed the area forever. The PEACH project was going to be different we said. The PEACH project will take the council by surprise, we will try and embed knowledge in the local area, we will make our own timescale and we will negotiate with the people in power. In the end, we achieved a lot, but the Alternative Regeneration Plan has not been implemented as we hoped it could be. Working as a community organiser in Custom House for five years however, I saw how members of the community got skilled up, gained knowledge and began to initiate projects which previously were seen as out of their reach. I also saw how the processes of regeneration obscured and obstructed access to information that would have allowed them to fully engage with the future of the area, and how the extended timescale of the process ground people down and in some cases forced them to leave the area.

Community organising theory understands that the increase in resident power indicated through involvement in decision making weakens the council and other stakeholders such as developers and architects with a loss of control. Resident-led decision making is a messy process. The explicit stance sets the resident-led community organising approach apart from participatory design approaches and experts.

Every event is evaluated according to whether there it resulted in an increase in power for the community.

[illegible][illegible]



C

Data, information and knowledge

Issues pertaining to the access to and use of data and information in regeneration processes by non-experts are linked to how data and information is understood as able to impart knowledge and/or becomes knowledge. Barriers to data and information becoming knowledge could be, for example, the complexity of the regeneration process, the amount of information available, discerning what information is relevant, information being confidential, the long timescales involved or technical language preventing understanding. Weinberger states that 'it is the knowing process that first decides which information is relevant, and how it is to be used'. This is a useful place to start. The road-map of the regeneration was an attempt at structuring the 'knowing process', so that non-experts could decide what information is relevant. The road-map demonstrated that in the context of the technical infrastructure surrounding large scale urban redevelopment, encounters with different types of data and information are not only defined by the characteristics of the information itself but also the literacy required for it to be interpreted and classified.

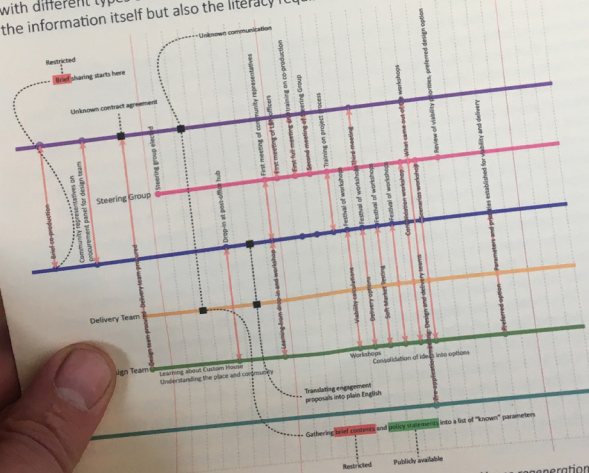
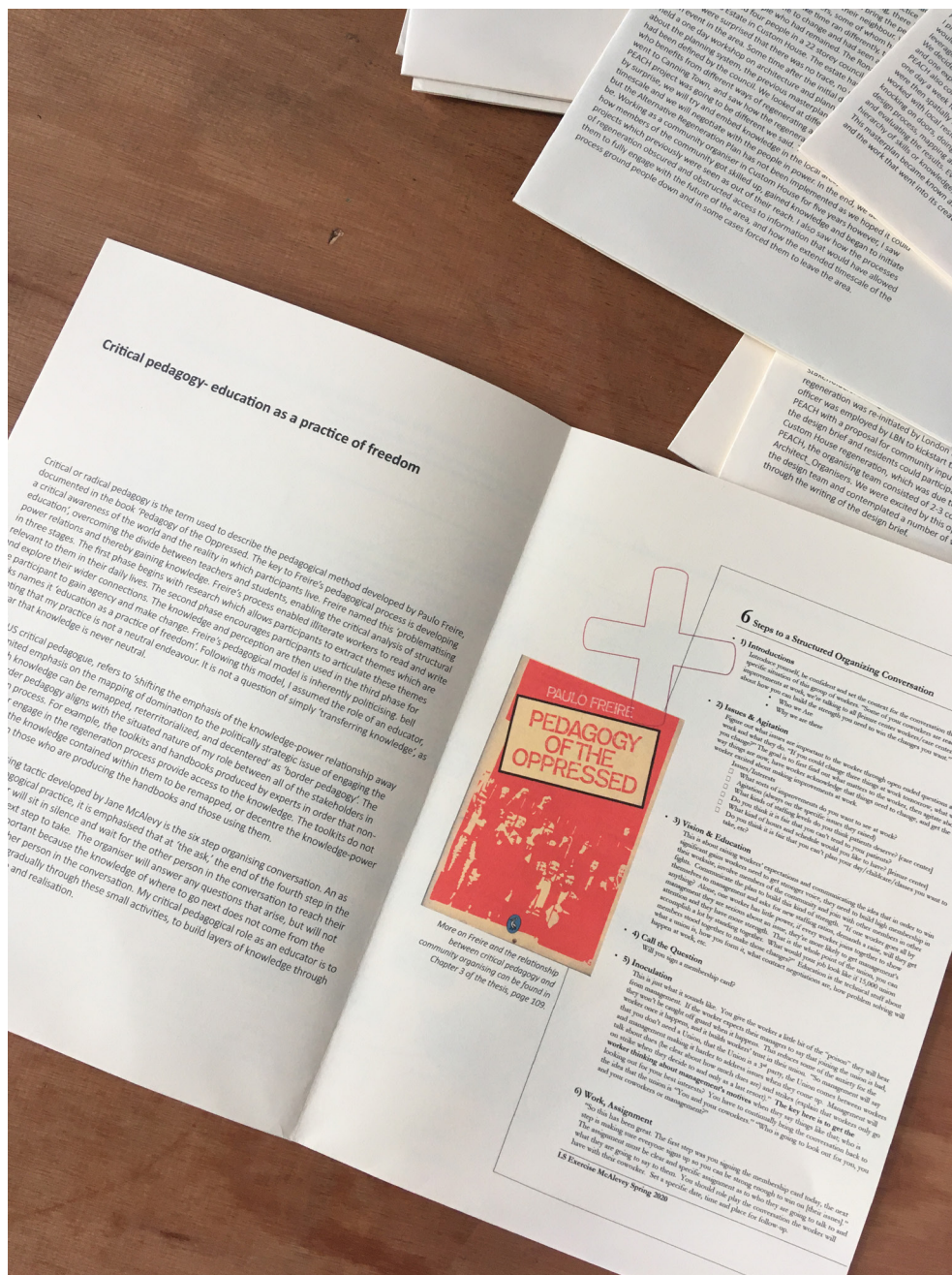


Diagram illustrating proposed data and information exchanges in the Custom House regeneration programme. More information can be found on page 87 of the thesis.





In developing the **Architect_Organiser** role, I use critical pedagogical practice and theories of infrastructuring in an attempt to restructure relationships between stakeholders in the regeneration process, specifically between experts and non-experts. The complexity of the contemporary regeneration process, however, remains a barrier to both non-experts and to myself working as the **A_O** in the process. The narrative of the development of the **A_O** is multifaceted and complex. The **A_O** encouraged residents to engage in developing the coproduction process. The necessary structures within the local representative democracy that would have enabled coproduction to happen were not in place. The **A_O** came into conflict with those in positions of power for being unwilling to make concrete steps towards shared decision making agreements such as partnership. Those in power intentionally diluted the coproduction process in order to make it less powerful. The intention and the role of the **A_O** was misunderstood with regards to conflicts of interest. The **A_O** did not reach a point of sufficient security to propose a challenge to conventional financial structures of urban regeneration. The in-depth investigation of finance and its relationship to decision making processes undertaken whilst working 'against' led me to a desire for experimental and alternative economic structures. However, Gibson-Graham reiterates the difficulties in embedding alternatives to capitalist structures within collaborative interventions, or in this case, novel participatory frameworks. The reasons given for the difficulties in proposing alternatives to capitalist models, both theoretical and real, include being co-opted, collaborating with those in power, being seen as naïve, utopian, or proposals being too small or weak to demonstrate significant change. The modes of practice that I have described as 'within' and 'against' operated concurrently, engaging in a pragmatic manner with existing systems and processes. Working 'within' and 'against' outlined potential frameworks for change and began to understand that those frameworks could not meet the level of change that is needed. Working 'within' and 'against' initially appeared to be two oppositional modes of practice, but through this analysis it became clear that 'within' and 'against' are actually complementary. It is necessary for the **A_O** to work both 'within' and 'against' simultaneously, relying on the contradictions in the role to maintain tension with those in power as well as trust and accountability within the community. However, the barriers I encountered to developing and implementing this practice are real. In my attempts at 'within' and 'against' I was led away from my working as an embedded community practitioner, bell hooks notes that Friere did not advocate for awareness or 'concientizao' alone, but that the critical thinking must be joined with praxis.

Forms of refusal are important, Gordon writes that forms of refusal such as direct action against and 'non-participation in liberal democratic state politics', boycotts and occupations are gestures towards developing other, alternative forms of living. The role of the **A_O** in these moments of refusal is complex if as in my case, relationships have been built with those in power as well as with the community. As the 'expert', there is an appeal towards what some scholars have described as common sense, or evidence-based scenarios. Structural hierarchies between expert and non-expert knowledge types in participatory and collaborative projects can lead to the 'expert' holding responsibility for the participation of the 'non-expert' in a process that isn't serving them. In order to challenge conventional hierarchies of knowledge, the **A_O** is required to develop an understanding of refusal as a form of hope. However, in attempting to forge new paths or detours around the tested paths of knowledge production as described by Halberstam, the **A_O** runs the risk of not being taken seriously, being disqualified, risking their professional status and ultimately failure.

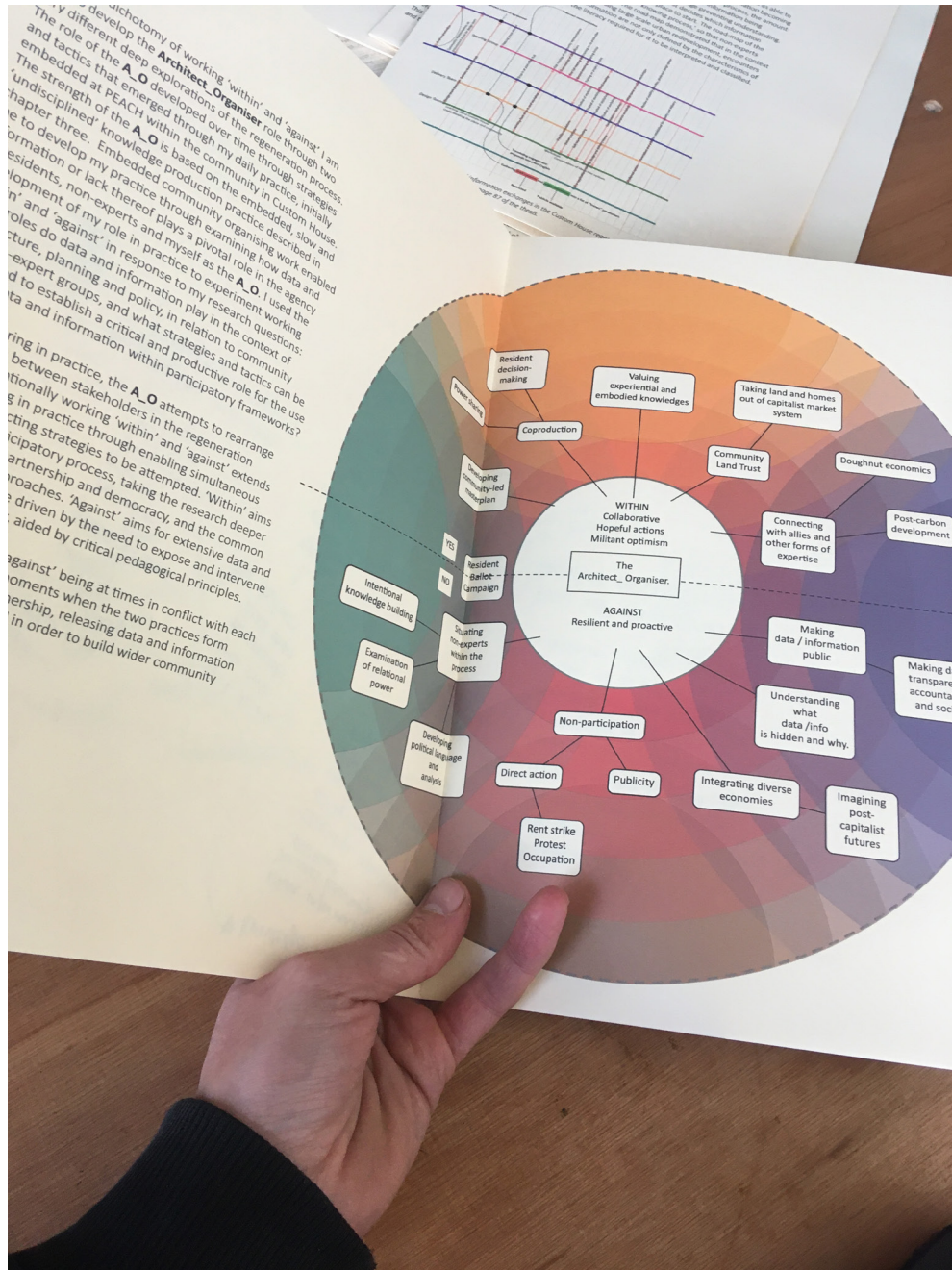
Exploring the practice of the Architect_Organiser

D

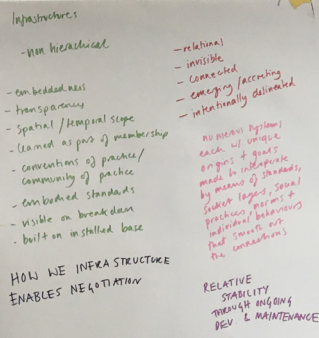
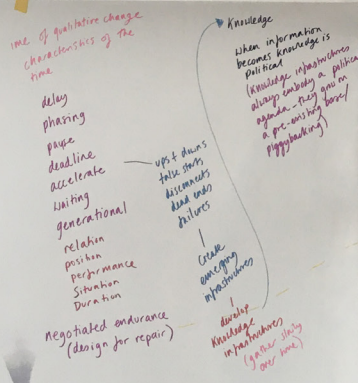
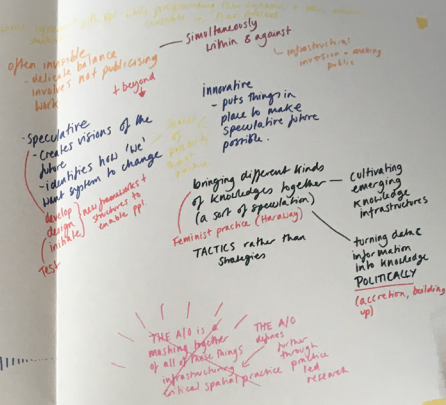
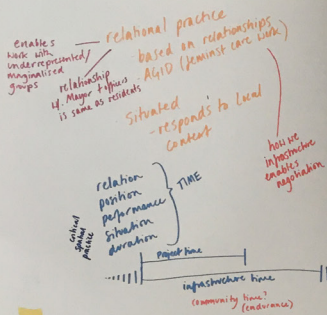
A_O V 2.0

The following three mappings describe how I develop my practice through using two approaches simultaneously. I describe these approaches as working 'within' and 'against'. The terms 'within' and 'against' are used by Bell and Pahl to describe modes of simultaneous operation in their paper 'Co-production: towards a utopian approach'. They describe working 'within' as working to maintain the open space of coproduction through providing examples of the 'social relations it hopes to see flourish on a larger scale.' Working 'against' articulates 'the dissonance between the explicit aims of such practice and the present social order,' or demonstrates the obstacles to genuine coproduction that exist in the way society is currently organised.

The notion of within and against allow the Architect_Organiser to move between collaboration and resilience, to occupy 'a fluid space of crossing borders and, as such, a contradictory one of collusion and oppositionality, complicity, and subversion'. 'Within' and 'against' demonstrate the complexity of the practice, its strengths and weaknesses, and begin to show directions in which this practice could be further developed in the future. 'Within' is typified by collaborative and hopeful actions, and characterised by a militant optimism. 'Against' is typified by a resilient and proactive character, unafraid of challenging conventions. 'Within' attempts to create a genuine power and knowledge sharing arrangement between residents and council officers to coproduce the Custom House regeneration in Newham. 'Against' identifies the data and information that is driving decision making, exposes the inconsistencies in the current system and seeks scope for innovation.



INFRASTRUCTURING THE ARCHITECT / ORGANISER



Introducing the Architect_Organiser

The **Architect_Organiser** is invested in the movement of data and information into knowledge as a political act. The space between the A and the O of the **Architect_Organiser**, intentionally links professional knowledge with the so called non-expert knowledge. The **Architect_Organiser** spans the technical and social infrastructures of the regeneration process. Extending the roles of both the architect and the community organiser, the **A_O** draws on the following principles:

Empowers non-experts to have access to necessary data and information.

Empowerment catalysts can come from 'gaining access to new information, learning new technical skills, or developing fresh political strategies.'¹ This access empowerment is a form of literacy similar to the literacy that Gray et. al. describe as 'data infrastructure literacy'.² Combining community organising theory and critical pedagogy cultivates strategic participatory frameworks which allow non-experts to gain literacy in the regeneration process and its stakeholders, understanding the locations of power, timescales, speeds and decision points. Freire's theories of critical pedagogy are useful here as they emphasise the role of the political in empowerment.

Recognises the movement of data and information into knowledge as political acts.

The development of the practice of the **A_O** is designed to encourage the slow accretion of knowledge. Part of the role of the **A_O** is to build knowledge through relationships and collaboration whether it is in public or under the radar. Tactics which distribute knowledge more equitably are necessary to cultivate regardless. The **A_O** is intentionally building a position between the various stakeholders which connects to different forms and sources of data, information and knowledge and cultivates 'the ability partially to translate knowledges among very different and power-differentiated communities'.³

Takes a feminist approach to knowledge building.

The **A_O** reconsiders the contents and contexts of data, information and knowledge infrastructures from the perspective of non-experts and 'challenges entrenched disciplinary divides'.⁴ The **A_O** promotes the 'collective reconstruction' of knowledge as opposed to only the 'theoretical deconstruction' of knowledge.⁵ Through making possible novel flows of data, information and knowledge, the **A_O** brings together diverse knowledge temporalities, locations and positions.⁶ The situated nature of the **A_O** enables the cultivation of knowledge 'in the margins', a space of radical openness and possibility, a site of resistance.⁷ The importance of knowledge in the margins is reiterated by Gordon; 'a subjugated knowledge that sometimes speaks its own language but almost always exceeds the contingent socioeconomic conditions and geopolitical locations in which it arises', by Halberstam 'we may want new rationales for knowledge production, different aesthetic standards for ordering or disordering space, other modes of political engagement than those conjured by the liberal imagination. We may, ultimately, want more undisciplined knowledge, more questions and fewer answers'.⁸ The use of infrastructures and infrastructuring enables what Haraway argues for as the 'politics and epistemologies of location, positioning, and situating, where partiality and not universality is the condition of being heard to make rational knowledge claims'.⁹

References for quoted material can be found on page 119-121 of the thesis.

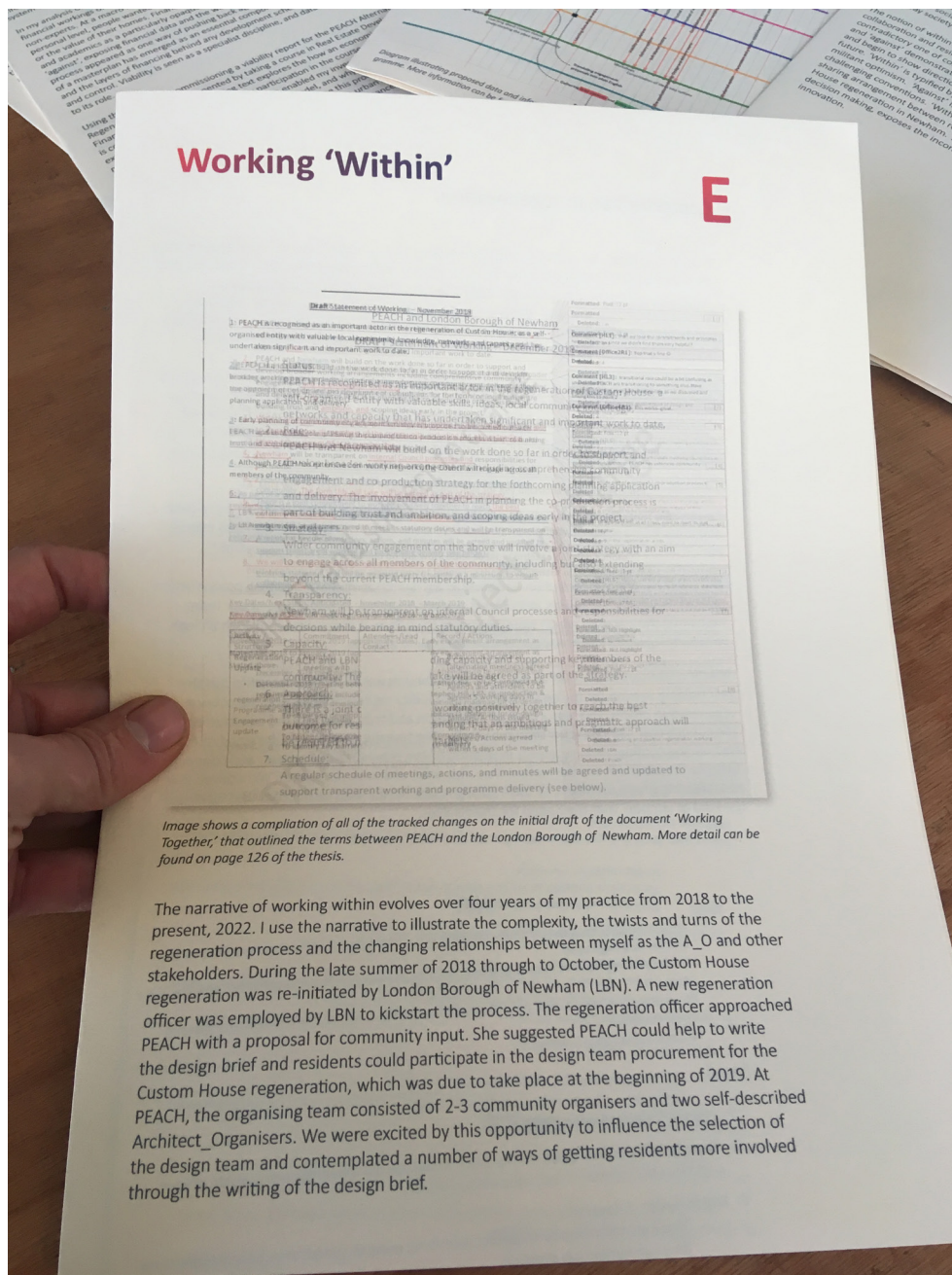
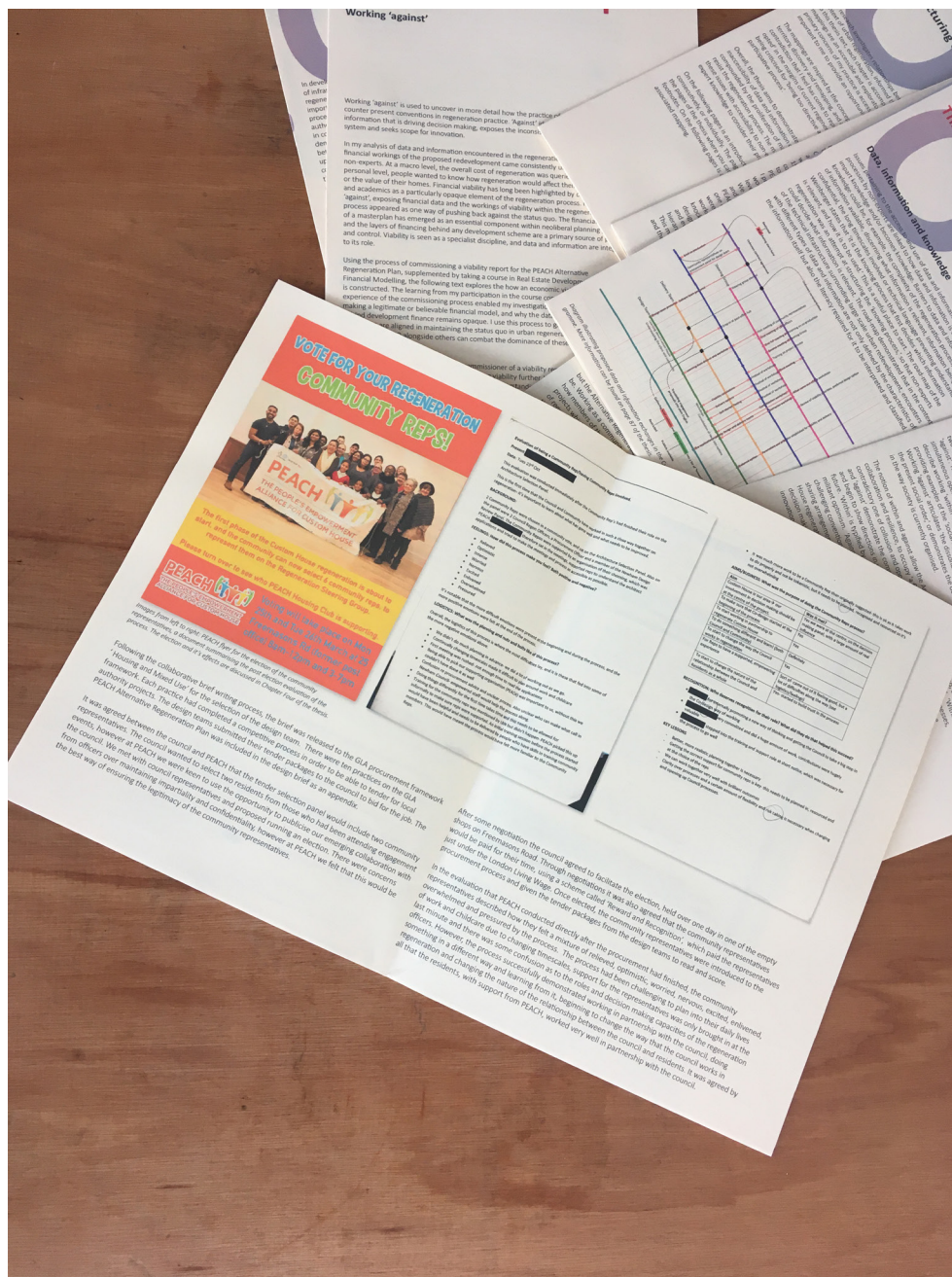


Image shows a compilation of all of the tracked changes on the initial draft of the document 'Working Together,' that outlined the terms between PEACH and the London Borough of Newham. More detail can be found on page 126 of the thesis.

The narrative of working within evolves over four years of my practice from 2018 to the present, 2022. I use the narrative to illustrate the complexity, the twists and turns of the regeneration process and the changing relationships between myself as the A_O and other stakeholders. During the late summer of 2018 through to October, the Custom House regeneration was re-initiated by London Borough of Newham (LBN). A new regeneration officer was employed by LBN to kickstart the process. The regeneration officer approached PEACH with a proposal for community input. She suggested PEACH could help to write the design brief and residents could participate in the design team procurement for the Custom House regeneration, which was due to take place at the beginning of 2019. At PEACH, the organising team consisted of 2-3 community organisers and two self-described Architect_Organisers. We were excited by this opportunity to influence the selection of the design team and contemplated a number of ways of getting residents more involved through the writing of the design brief.



PEACH organisers, the A/O's and the regeneration officer began developing proposals for a coproduction steering group to manage the regeneration process. The term 'coproduction' indicates production to include both design and implementation, or production, which differentiates it from co-design, service design or participatory design, although coproduction can include all of these activities under its umbrella. The term coproduction is vague, sometimes deliberately so, which allows scope for collaboration to expand.

I attended a workshop at Future of London alongside the regeneration officers from LBN and other PEACH organisers, presenting on the progress of the coproduction and taking part in an exploratory session which we presciently titled 'What are we scared of?'

PEACH organisers and myself as the A.O, were commissioned by the council to run the first training session for the newly elected community representatives and the council regeneration officer. This was a level of integration and trust between the community and the council that had not been seen previously. The training session was designed to focus on building confidence in residents in relation to the regeneration process, and connecting them to the labyrinth of information that they were about to encounter. We wanted the new steering group members to build strong relationships with each other and work out the kind of support that they need for themselves.

- For Community to have begun to build strong relationships with each other and feel like a team
- For everyone to have a clear idea of what is happening in the next few weeks and ideas of support needed
- To have a good time together :)

1. **Intro to Training:** 5 mins
2. **Rounds:** 10 mins **Everyone:** Tell us about a time you did something new outside of your comfort zone? How did it feel, what did you learn?
3. **Jargon Buster:** 1 hour 50 mins

4. **Relationship Building: 30 mins**

- We need to be a team with strong relationships between everyone: 1-2-1s time!

5. **LUNCH BREAK: 30 mins**

- Brain food is essential

Looking at the next year in much more detail: what decisions are made and when?
What is happening at each stage of the project?

7. QUICK BREAK: 5 mins

8. Looking Ahead Discussion: 40 mins

10. Evaluation of today: 10 mins: [redacted]
- We need to [redacted]

HOMEWORK** To learn 'Who's Who?' in the Council, so we can play 'Guess Who?' Next Time
(give out info on this)

How are we feeling?

Feel more informed
 Lack of clarity, feel overwhelmed
 Enjoyed working on a Saturday
 More deeper understanding of engagement causes concern

learn a lot, overwhelming, a lot to take in, but enjoying it, its exciting to take on a project

negative because the council don't take our knowledge seriously, we keep having this conversation over and over because we know what needs to happen for this project to be a success

That the side panels don't bulge past flush enough	Waxing and oil of eucaly	That the interior don't stretch longer than the exterior	Use that the door line will the exterior that is, and SET!
Conspicuous	Leaking plugs backed	INERTIA to lack of door mass + flexible	With softening + yielding

Build in space for transitions
non-rigid to day
managing: lumpy
scale + smoothing

Co-opt critical friends
for peer review.
Lynette: What
for Pub.

Along exposure
about + intensity
to each other
challenges.

Scheduling
+ planning
together:
realistically.

The Every
Step in
the
process
for co-opting
+ learning and
"small" steps

Questions to Consider?

More on the coproduction process can be found on page 126 and onwards of the thesis.

In my role as the *Q*, I was working with all parties simultaneously: Consultants, the client, residents and supported by a team of expert advisors in the form of a sympathetic developer, coproduction experts, lawyers, and local authority finance experts. I was also working with the residents, the *A*'s, through their knowledge. At PEACH we had good relationships with the residents, and the *A*'s were trained in their professional knowledge of the professional language of the consultants. These experiences were enabling me to develop a devolved relationship, understanding through practice how the role could be shared. I was also developing a relationship with the consultants, so that we began to reconfigure the relationships between all parties. However, the borders were and simultaneously building knowledge with all parties. However, the borders were situated between all of the stakeholders but fully permeable for such a multidimensional practice, and confusion and questions. It was impossible to ignore the whistlers around me. Colleagues of the *Q* were also involved in the work, and I was not able to be embedded at PEACH. You can't be an advisor to the consultant with all the consultants and be a consultant, and you can't be in a unofficial conversation with all the officers on the regeneration team and not be a consultant. In conclusion, I proposed that it would be useful for me to evaluate the coproduction process as a facilitator.

Subject: for F&B Co-production school

my progress in this. I'm starting to talk to the teams involved at Customs House and elect themes for the first session. The second
which is going out to the people involved in the Customs House project you can read below.

All the best
Gib

Dear XXXX

Alongside the Mayor of Northam, regeneration and policy officers, as well as members of the *consensus project* teams and the *Custom House residents*, the aim is to evaluate the *Custom House co-production process* and *introduction of innovation potential*, with the lessons learned feeding into policy and other areas of co-production, as well as into the *Custom House* itself.

Please let me know a time you are available to talk to us the next two to three weeks and we can meet.

All the best

From [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, February 5, 2020 2:24 AM
To: 'Wing' <wings@stakeholder.eu>
[redacted]
[redacted]


Subject: SC: PM: Co-production school

Hi,

Please wait until we have spoken and agreed the final format and who is to be invited.

I think it premature for you to be sending out any emails until the process and who does

Best wishes,



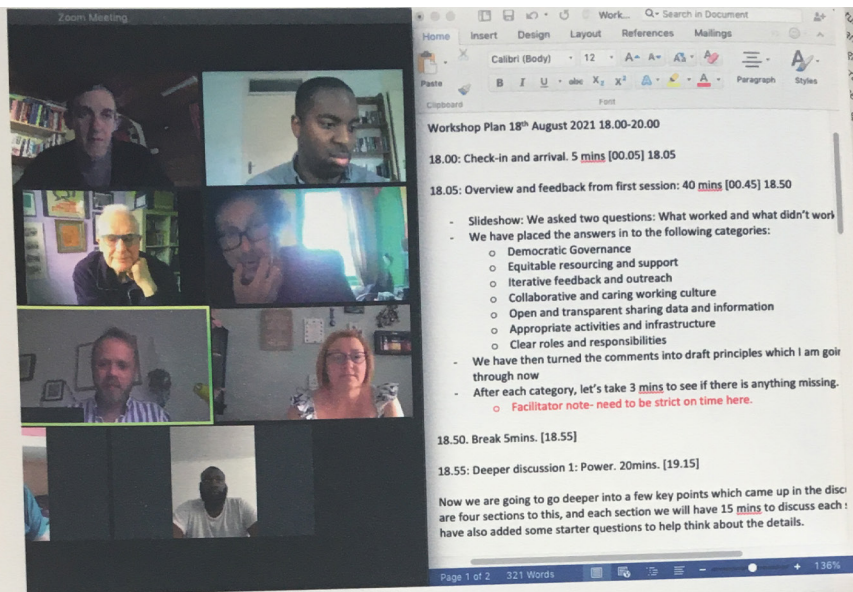


Image shows a screenshot of the initial evaluation of the Custom House Steering Group coproduction process, undertaken with Rowan Mackay of Community Led Housing London. The evaluation process is discussed on page 144 of the thesis.

Evaluating Coproduction

The barriers and issues which I encountered as the A_O attempting to work 'within' were confirmed in the coproduction evaluation process. The A_O was treated with suspicion, as having an agenda which led to the A_O being shut out. The legal structure of the council meant that the council could not share power with the steering group and allow the Custom House Steering Group (CHSG) to make decisions. The lack of support and training for the community representatives, exacerbated by the COVID crisis, and combined with the working culture of the council which was unfamiliar with collaborative problem solving meant that the CHSG remained in an unsatisfactory limbo.

The state is looking for a consensus-based version of coproduction which will placate participants without sharing power, whereas the community representatives and the A_O are looking for an agonistic version of coproduction whereby the reality of the structural power imbalance is not swept under the carpet, and this awareness is used to develop novel solutions to problems where consensus is not possible.

Referencing Ostrom, Richardson states that 'designing institutional arrangements that help induce successful coproductive strategies is far more daunting than demonstrating their theoretical existence'. Experiences of coproduction in other regeneration scenarios reiterates the danger. Diamond writes that whether using internal or external facilitators, coproduction will accentuate marginalisation within groups, 'local partnerships will seek to co-opt local activists' and that 'existing practice is based upon 'individualizing' rather than 'collectivizing' the experience of local community.' Davies goes so far as to suggest that communities involved in such partnerships even deliberative scenarios, should define an exit-strategy and take up intentional non-participation instead, a more effective way to influence outcomes and preserve their own integrity.

Working 'Against'

F

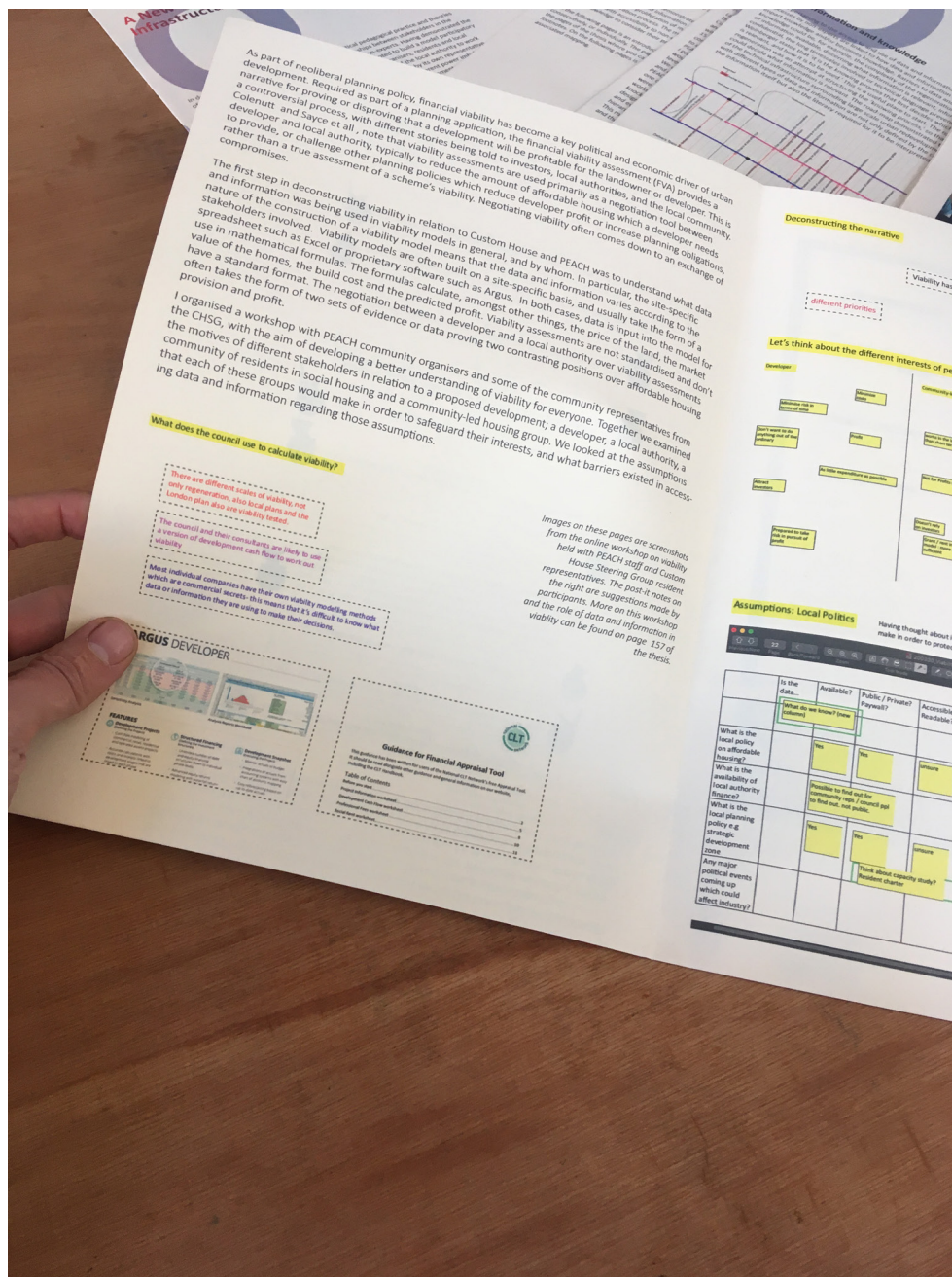
Working 'against'

Working 'against' is used to uncover in more detail how the practice of the A_O aims to counter present conventions in regeneration practice. 'Against' identifies the data and information that is driving decision making, exposes the inconsistencies in the current system and seeks scope for innovation.

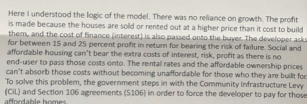
In my analysis of data and information encountered in the regeneration process, the financial workings of the proposed redevelopment came consistently under question by non-experts. At a macro level, the overall cost of regeneration was queried, and on a more personal level, people wanted to know how regeneration would affect their rent levels, or the value of their homes. Financial viability has long been highlighted by communities and academics as a particularly opaque element of the regeneration process. In working 'against', exposing financial data and the workings of viability within the regeneration process appeared as one way of pushing back against the status quo. The financial viability of a masterplan has emerged as an essential component within neoliberal planning policy, and the layers of financing behind any development scheme are a primary source of power and control. Viability is seen as a specialist discipline, and data and information are integral to its role.

Using the process of commissioning a viability report for the PEACH Alternative Regeneration Plan, supplemented by taking a course in Real Estate Development Financial Modelling, the following text explores the how an economic viability narrative is constructed. The learning from my participation in the course combined with the experience of the commissioning process enabled my investigation into what goes into making a legitimate or believable financial model, and why the data and information behind development finance remains opaque. I use this process to gain insights into the forces that are aligned in maintaining the status quo in urban regeneration, and to establish ways that the A_O alongside others can combat the dominance of these forces and their associated ideologies.

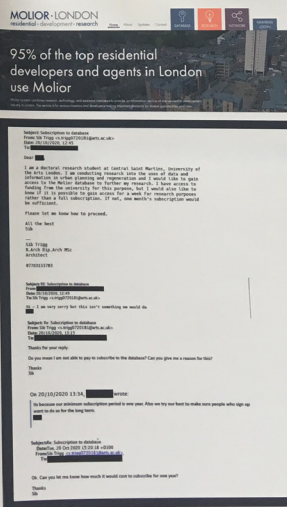
These two contrasting experiences as commissioner of a viability report and a developer of excel formulas provide a basis for interrogating viability further. Working 'against' therefore had multiple aims in this context. Firstly to gain understanding and expose the financial data in a way that would be accessible for non-experts. Secondly, to use the data in a way that would prioritise community needs through an increase social housing provision. Thirdly, these aims directly countered conventional regeneration practices, and also challenged me in my role as the A_O to gain a better understanding of the development of knowledge infrastructure around a subject that I was also in the process of learning about myself.

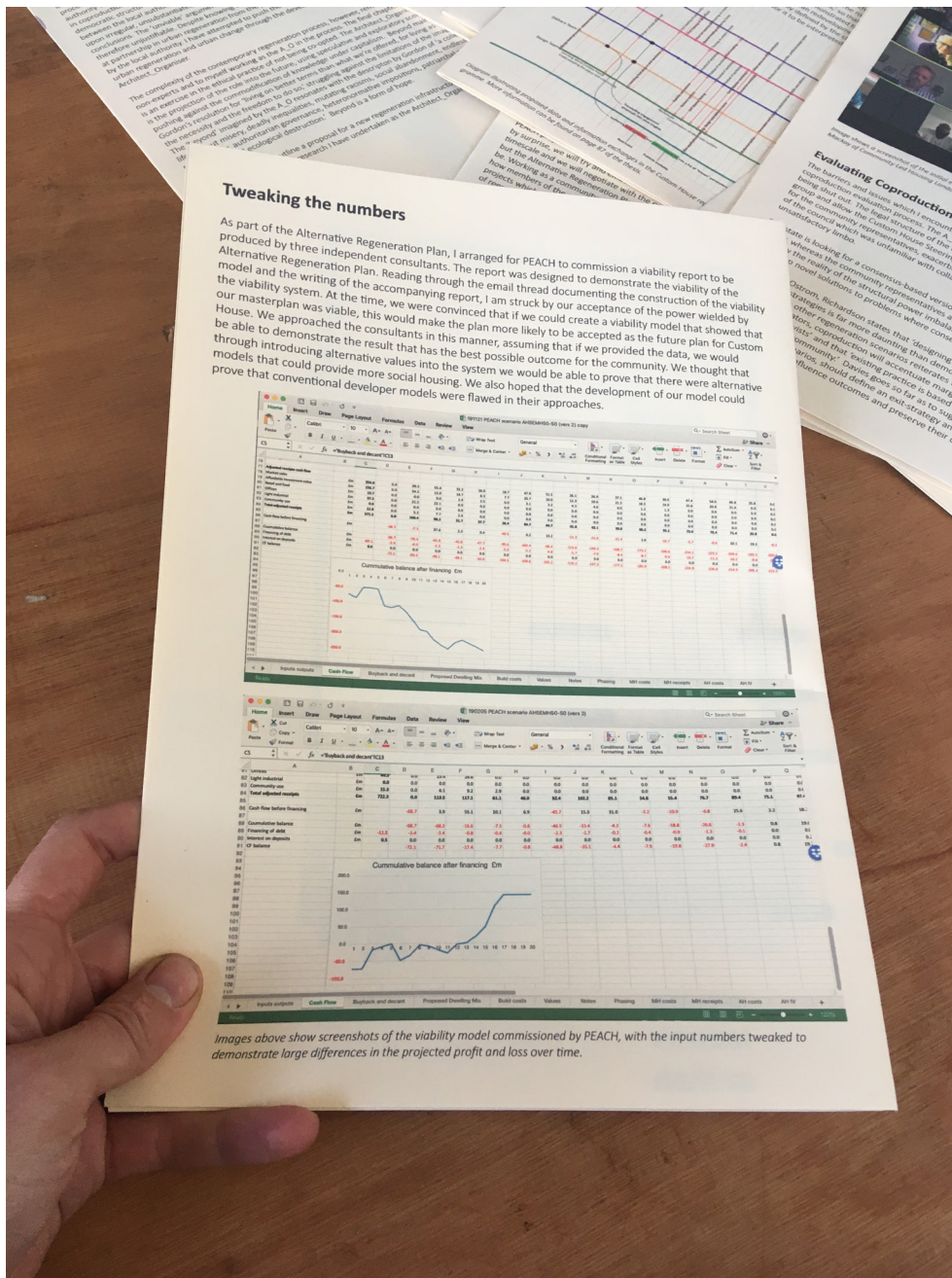


The diagram on the right shows the narrative framework of a viability model, adapted from the Real Estate Development and Financial Modelling course run by Cambridge Finance. The course is discussed in more detail on page 167 of the thesis.



Above quotes taken from the participants of the Real Estate Development and Financial Modelling course run by Cambridge Finance. The image on the right shows correspondence between myself and MOUJOR, a real estate data and information provider, who would not let me access their database for research purposes.





A New Regeneration Infrastructure

G

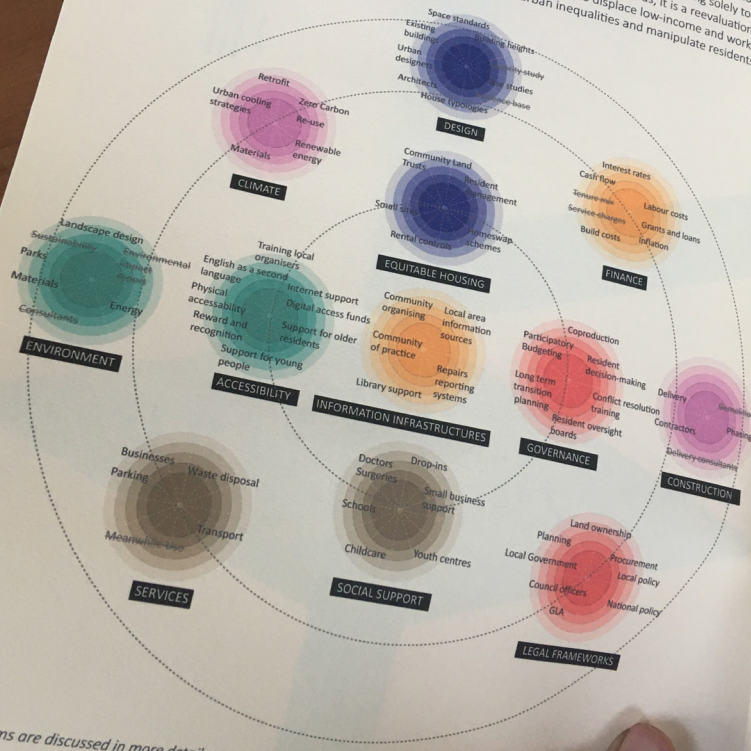
In developing the Architect_Organiser role, I used critical pedagogical practice and theories of infrastructuring in an attempt to restructure relationships between stakeholders in the regeneration process, specifically between experts and non-experts. Having demonstrated the importance of data and information to the process, I attempted to build a model participatory process in the form of coproduction alongside community organisers, residents and local authority employees. In doing so, I established that the ability of the local authority to work in coproduction with residents in a regeneration context is limited by its own representative democratic structure, by the inertia of the status quo and by the inherent power imbalance between the local authority and residents. I demonstrated that development viability is based upon irregular, unsubstantiated, proprietary and inaccessible data, leading to unverifiable conclusions. The 'unviable' argument used to justify destructive urban regeneration practices is therefore unjustifiable. Despite knowing the dangers of co-optation through examining attempts at partnership in urban regeneration from the past, the A_O could not avoid becoming co-opted by the local authority. I have attempted to push the boundaries of current practice in the field of urban regeneration and urban change through the development of the role of the Architect_Organiser.

The complexity of the contemporary regeneration process, however, remains a barrier to both non-experts and to myself working as the A_O in the process. The final chapter of this thesis is an exercise in the ethical practice of not being co-opted. The Architect_Organiser 'beyond', is the projection of the role into the future, using speculative and exploratory scenarios and pushing against the commodification of knowledge under capitalism. Beyond maintains Gordon's resolution for 'living on better terms than what we're offered, for living as if you had the necessity and the freedom to do so,' struggling against the limitations of the imagination. The 'beyond' imagined by the A_O resonates with the description by Gordon of 'a collective life without misery, deadly inequalities, mutating racisms, social abandonment, endless war, police power, authoritarian governance, heteronormative impositions, patriarchal rule, cultural conformity, and ecological destruction.' Beyond is a form of hope.

The following pages outline a proposal for a new regeneration infrastructure, based on the experience, practice and research I have undertaken as the Architect_Organiser.

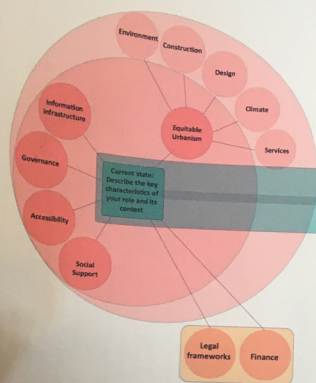
A practice of support infrastructures

Drawing from the critical pedagogical experiences of my practice, the experience of being co-opted and taking note of the inaccessibility of data and information that is used to drive decisions, the role of the **Architect_Organiser** can initiate abolitionist reforms of contemporary regeneration infrastructures. The new regeneration infrastructure is arranged to place data and information that prioritises resident empowerment at its centre, enabling non-experts to produce information rather than respond to existing information in a reactive manner. The diagrams below demonstrate how the initiation of the new regeneration infrastructure can prompt a variety of different education, training and employment opportunities. Approaching the role of the **A.O.** with an abolitionist mindset is understanding that, as an abolitionist, it is possible to work towards a goal which will never happen in your lifetime, but that every incremental change moves everyone closer to the goal of a more socially just world. Moten and Harney caution against change referring solely to elimination. It is not the elimination of regeneration that the **A.O.** is aiming towards, it is a reevaluation of the neoliberal urban design and planning ethos that enables regeneration to displace low-income and working class people, increase housing and rental prices, exacerbate urban inequalities and manipulate residents with data and information.



diagrams are discussed in more detail on page 196 and onwards of the thesis.

Evaluating the Architect_Organiser



What cultures, laws and events contributed to the current state of

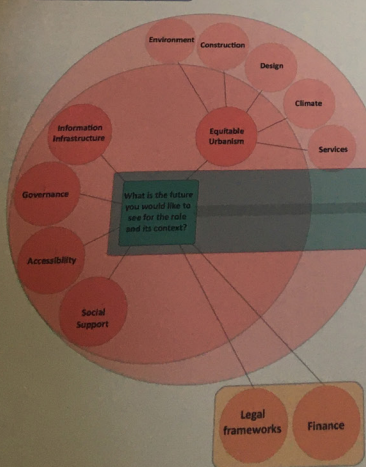
In what ways is the role fit for purpose?



IDEAS
HERE



Imagining the future



What seeds of the future are visible in the role of the

What would you
to see that do



1



To the Architect_Organisers

'Networks of people can develop a community accountability politic by engaging in anti-violence/anti-oppression education, building relationships, based on values of safety, respect, and self-determination, and nurturing a culture of collective responsibility, connection, and liberation.'

As the Architect_Organiser, you are the facilitator of a pedagogical and knowledge-based network that enables the design and development of urban areas to take place. Your aim is to directly connect the action of urban change to those affected by it through developing and rearranging relationships between stakeholders in the field of urban development.

The Architect_Organiser role is distinct from conventional architectural practice through the development of accountability frameworks with local people and organisations rather than conventional client relationships.

The Architect_Organiser uses a critical pedagogical stance to challenge 'common sense' narratives that produce 'inhumane urbanism' and develop knowledge through action. Collective action and conviction lay the ground for wider policy and infrastructural change. There are existing frameworks that are useful for developing the habit of reflection, evaluation and visioning the future. Future visions can be related to familiar timescales of urban development as an exercise in situating or grounding. Through the positioning of your role, you, as the Architect_Organiser provide direction towards futures that appear as impossible in the present.

By nature, the Architect_Organiser role is one of a network or a group. It is not possible for the A_O to act without a supportive network. This means listening, dialogue and practicing learning together to develop support infrastructures. The process of the development of support infrastructures 'constructs the field' of relevant data and information and therefore knowledge.

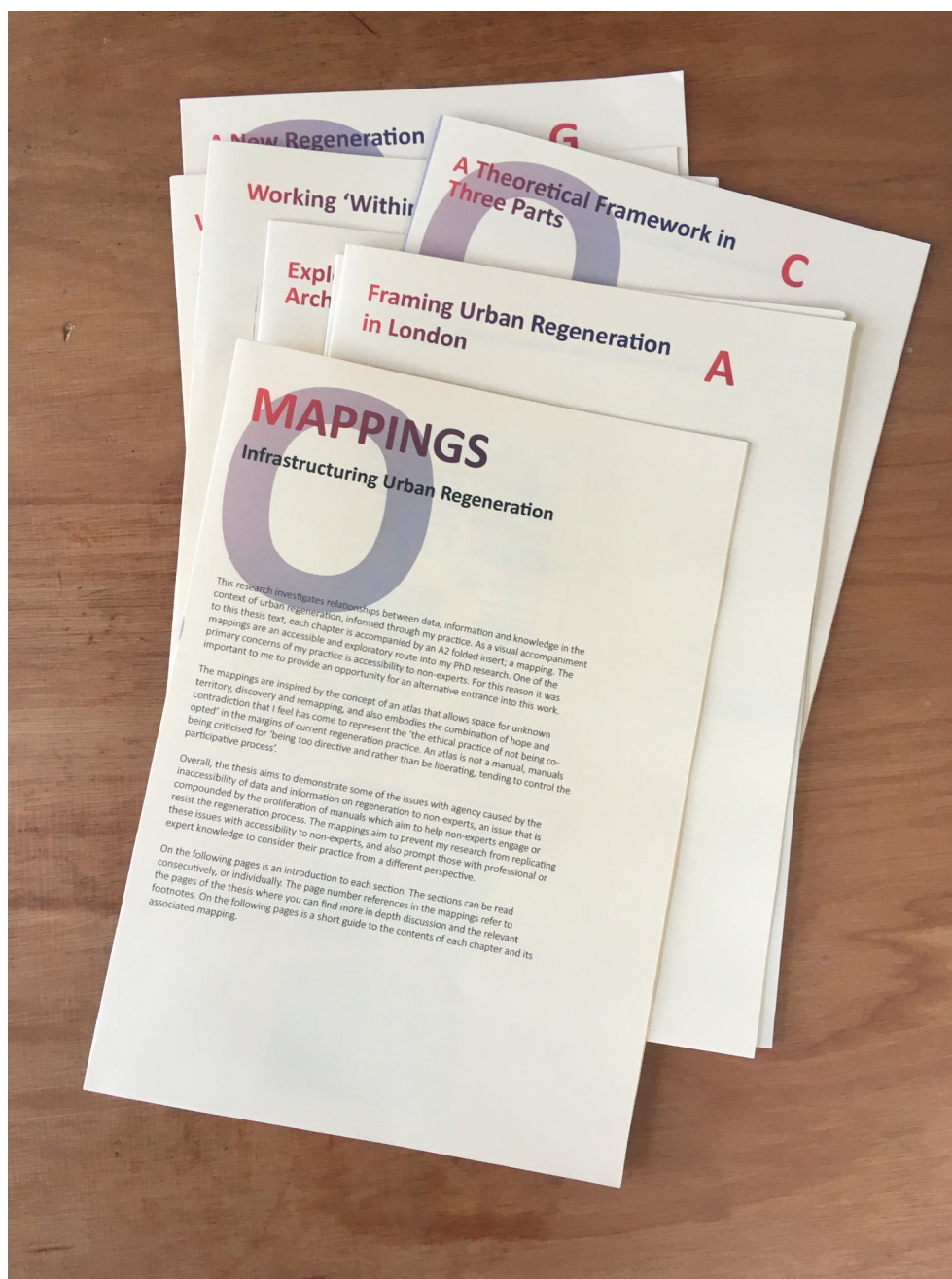
Different processes will value things in different ways. In order to resist being co-opted as the Architect_Organiser, you are required to develop value systems that are non-quantifiable, that disrupt the knowledge/power dynamic and the expert/non-expert knowledge hierarchy.

Do not concern yourself with scaling up or replicability in the wider sense, as this drags you into 'common sense' narratives of existing practice. Small scales allow space for failure and success on human timescales. Small scale projects build relationships, skills and knowledge as well as a base for the emergence of larger opportunities in the future.

As the Architect_Organiser, part of your role is to exercise stewardship of local knowledge and its potential. As a community organiser you are a caretaker of the local narrative of change, a custodian of the local chain of knowledge. Build knowledge with kids, young people and elderly people. Share knowledge, and encourage sharing outside of your comfort zone. Be pragmatic, unrealistic and fantastical. Always make the time and space to thoroughly interrogate 'common sense' proposals with others, it is part of your role as the A_O to develop and propose alternatives. Understand the access needs of the people you are trying to work alongside, these might be physical, digital, temporal. Understand who is in the majority and who is in the minority (class, race, gender). Accessibility, location and the makeup of groups will affect what people feel that they can and can't say.

The systems that are developed through your organised practice as the A_O will themselves become infrastructures of information and knowledge. Therefore, as the A_O, it is important to take time to understand local infrastructures, environmental concerns and their relations to the wider, dominant systems that you are trying to change.

Changes to existing infrastructures need to be 'informed by and grounded in' the aims of the people and organisations that you work with and will need maintenance and care. As the A_O, you are not central to the regeneration infrastructure itself, but a caretaker, a maintainer.





MAPPINGS

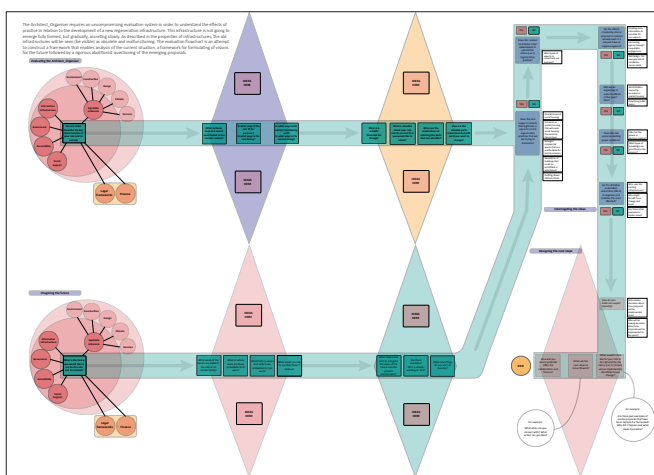
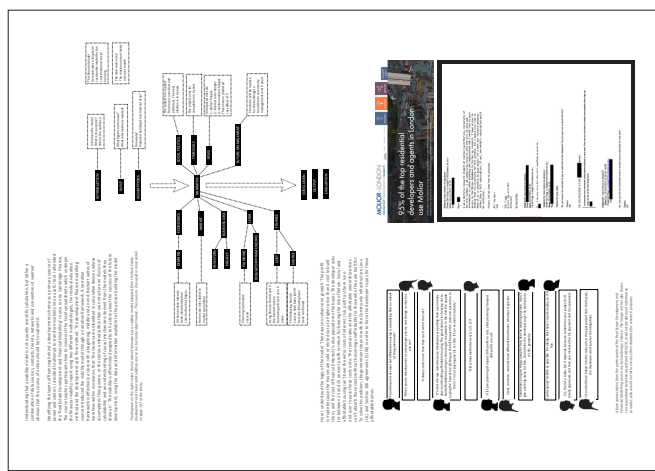
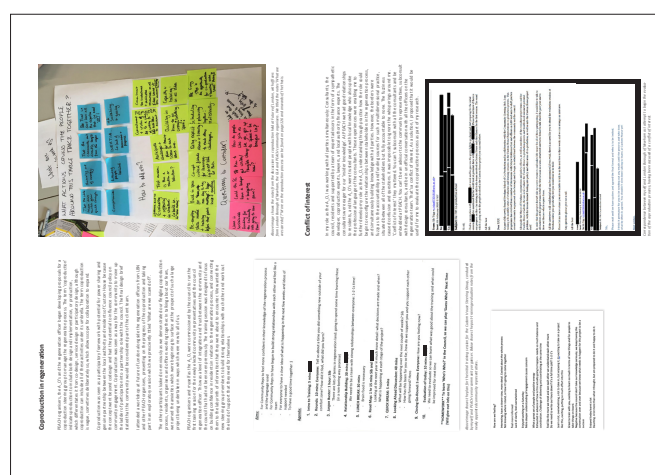
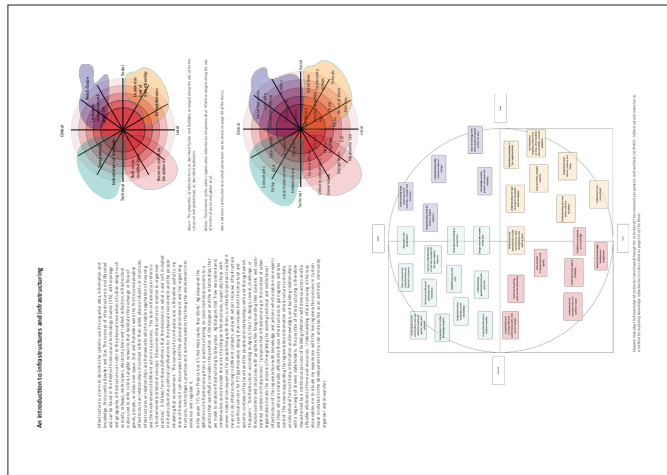
Infrastructuring Urban Regeneration

This research investigates relationships between data, information and knowledge in the context of urban regeneration, informed through my practice. As a visual accompaniment to this thesis text, each chapter is accompanied by an A2 folded insert; a mapping. The mappings are an accessible and exploratory route into my PhD research. One of the primary concerns of my practice is accessibility to non-experts. For this reason it was important to me to provide an opportunity for an alternative entrance into this work.

The mappings are inspired by the concept of an atlas that allows space for unknown territory, discovery and remapping, and also embodies the combination of hope and contradiction that I feel has come to represent the 'the ethical practice of not being co-opted' in the margins of current regeneration practice. An atlas is not a manual, manuals being criticised for 'being too directive and rather than be liberating, tending to control the participative process'.

Overall, the thesis aims to demonstrate some of the issues with agency caused by the inaccessibility of data and information on regeneration to non-experts, an issue that is compounded by the proliferation of manuals which aim to help non-experts engage or resist the regeneration process. The mappings aim to prevent my research from replicating these issues with accessibility to non-experts, and also prompt those with professional or expert knowledge to consider their practice from a different perspective.

On the following pages is an introduction to each section. The sections can be read consecutively, or individually. The page number references in the mappings refer to the pages of the thesis where you can find more in depth discussion and the relevant footnotes. On the following pages is a short guide to the contents of each chapter and its associated mapping.



A



O



Framing Urban Regeneration in London



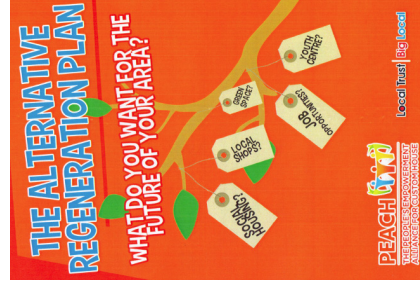
Regeneration refers to an urban policy involving spatially targeted reinvestment in and revitalisation of physically deteriorating, economically under-resourced and socially deprived areas - in this case public/council/social housing estates. Even though some regeneration aims can be considered laudable, the practice of regeneration in London means that it has become a 'nasty word' among estate residents as they see their homes bulldozed and their communities scattered.

In 2015 I had just returned to London as an architect, newly aware of the political ramifications of spatial practice. One evening, I was invited to join a friend in Elephant and Castle, where some local artists were holding listening sessions based on the contested regeneration of the Heygate and Aylesbury estates. We listened to a recording of an architect who was trying to express her concerns about the sizes of the commercial spaces in the new development. They were too big, and the rent would be too expensive for existing local shops to move into. I could tell what she was trying to say, but it wasn't obvious to anyone else in the room. There was something that the architects weren't doing. A communication failure, but also an abdication of responsibility. It was too late in the project process for residents to be trying to communicate these types of problems with this proposal. Afterwards I wondered about this, her words echoed in my mind. There was something that needed to change here, but what was it?

Later on that year, I was introduced to a community organiser who worked at PEACH, The People's Empowerment Alliance for Custom House. They explained to me that the Custom House area had been awaiting urban regeneration since 2003. It was now 2016, and residents were still waiting for the process to begin, meaning they had been living with the potential of disruption to their lives and demolition of their homes for the past 15 years. The organisers at PEACH were looking for architects to help them create a community masterplan. I began to think that maybe this was an opportunity for architects to do something differently. After conversations with community organisers and residents, PEACH decided to create a masterplan for the area which reflected local needs and desires. I proposed that residents should be involved from the start in a team with architects who would work together on the plan. We hoped that the masterplan could be used as political leverage with the local authority, and would also give the community something to fight for. We decided on a team of ten to carry out the project. Four architects, five local residents and one experienced union organiser, with the two full time community organisers at PEACH also contributing. From October 2016 the Alternative Regeneration Team worked one day a week for a year to produce four aims and six principles for regeneration, which were then spatially represented in the Alternative Regeneration Plan. The architects worked with local residents as community organisers, having one-to-one conversations, knocking on doors, doing community events, and the resident organisers contributed to the design process, mapping and analysing the area, designing workshops with the architects and evaluating the results. Everyone was paid equally, demonstrating that there was no hierarchy of skills or knowledge, that all contributions to the project were equally valued. This masterplan became known as the PEACH Alternative Regeneration Plan. It is this plan and the work that went into its creation that instigated this research.

Data and information, the missing elements?

My research focus emerged through reflecting on issues which I consistently encountered over the three years of organising around the Alternative Regeneration Plan, and my connections with other community campaigns across London through the Concrete Action Collective. The issues that I encountered revolved around access to and understanding of data and information by non-experts in relation to urban regeneration processes. Throughout the development of the Alternative Regeneration Plan, the technicalities of the design process, technical language, timescales, volume of information, financial viability and the involvement of various consultants all required sifting, translating, rewriting and reassessing. It was not just the understanding of the process, but where to find information, how to deduce what was missing, to know what was important and how to transmit those questions to a wider non-expert audience that emerged as consistent problems. The amount of information needed and the knowledge of how to use it was clearly a huge barrier for many non-experts, a barrier compounded by the constant shifting sands of politics and policy. The gaps in the understanding of and access to data lead me to my first research question.



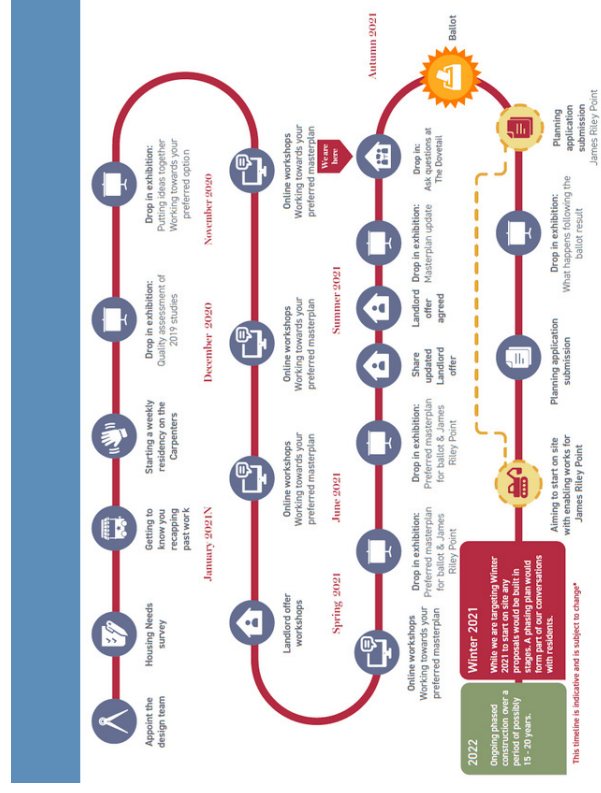
PEACH flyers for the Alternative Regeneration Plan and election of the Regeneration Community Reps. The election process is covered in detail in chapter 4 of the thesis.

What strategies and tactics can be developed to establish a critical and productive role for the use of such data and information within participatory frameworks?

Regeneration timeline as seen on the Carpenters Estate Regeneration website. See page 45 of the thesis

What roles do data and information play in the context of architecture, planning and policy, in relation to community and non-expert groups?

I propose that the emergence of so many resources aimed at collecting strategies and tactics for non-experts facing urban regeneration is a result of the rising volumes of data and information on finance, policy, design and planning that characterise the complexity of the contemporary urban regeneration process. Obstacles such as large quantities, obsolescence, language, concealment, distortion and questions over confidentiality prevent access and understanding of such data and information and inhibit genuine participatory processes. These obstacles are complicated by changes in policy and procedure which produce yet more information to add to the already crowded field. I argue that the role of data and information is key to understanding the pattern of limited agency which exists for community stakeholders in urban regeneration processes. Limited agency can be seen in the restricted moments where residents are encouraged to participate in the community engagement process and in the restricted information available to residents about the proposals, the timescale and the various outcomes already envisioned by various stakeholders. Through policy and feasibility studies, the council and other consultants often have a broad idea of what is possible under a regeneration proposal before the community is informed of its impending initiation. Many community campaigns therefore begin too late to make a significant impact in local authority plans. Existing participatory frameworks are inadequate because they don't enable understanding of the regeneration process and don't facilitate genuine agency by non-experts. Instead, well-intentioned experts replicate existing barriers to access and use of relevant data and information through producing more information, reinforcing the knowledge hierarchy between expert and non-expert. I believe that the role of data and information is a key element that is missing from existing resources and that also has not been sufficiently explored or documented in practice. I therefore ask for my second research question:



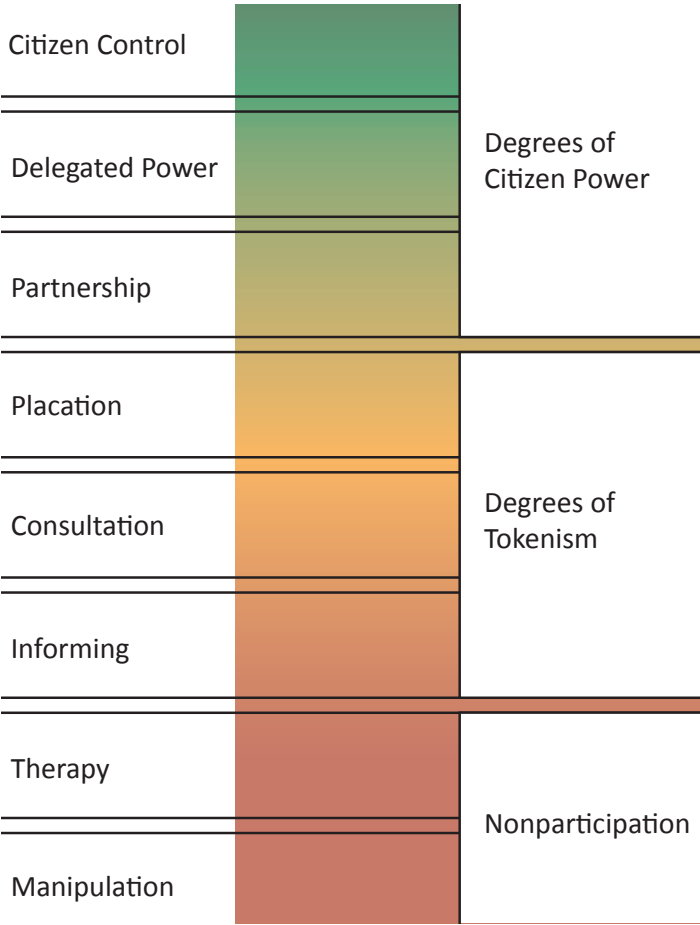
The role of participation

‘Citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power. It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programs are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parceled out. In short, it is the means by which they can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society.’

In approaching urban regeneration from the perspective of an architect, it can be argued that ‘at the level of the lowest common denominator, architectural participation can be defined as the involvement of the user at some stage in the design process.’ Over the years, the role and method of community participation in urban design has received heavy scrutiny. There is a large body of scholarship dissecting the gap between desired levels of participation by non-professionals in planning, architecture and urban design and the reality.

Sherry Arnstein, an American consultant working in the late 1960’s, developed the ‘Ladder of Citizen Participation’ to categorise levels of participation in situations with significant power differentials between participants. In urban regeneration, this could be for example between experts and non-experts, or local authorities and residents.

Despite claims towards genuine participation, conventional community engagement practice in urban regeneration resides firmly in the middle of Arnstein’s ladder, at best placation, dropping to therapy and manipulation in the worst cases.



An Introduction to Community Organising

B

In the context of urban regeneration, community organising means shifting power from local government, developers and consultants into the hands of residents in order to establish what regeneration, if any, needs to happen from the perspective of those impacted. However, it is not immediately obvious where the power sits within the constellation of stakeholders in a regeneration process, and how to make this shift happen.

When I started working at PEACH, I didn't know what community organising was. When we interviewed the other architects for the Alternative Regeneration Plan, none of them knew either. The senior community organiser organised a two-day training session for us, introducing us to community organising basics. We had to have a relational conversation with someone else in the team, where we were tasked with finding out something about them that we didn't know before, and something that we had in common. This was excruciating at first, very awkward and stilted. With practice though, it became easier to structure the conversation. In community organising, there is no conversation without an 'ask', something that you can ask which will bring the person you're talking to into a meeting, or give them a reason to talk to their neighbour. We went for a walk around Custom House with the local organisers, some of whom had lived in the area for their whole lives. There was a feeling like time ran differently, temporarily slowed. Of course, Custom House wasn't immune to change and had seen a lot of changes over the years, but there was a core of people who had remained. The Ronan Point disaster in 1968, where a gas explosion killed four people in a 22 storey council tower block actually happened on Freemasons Estate in Custom House. The estate has since been demolished, but the architects were surprised that there was no trace, no commemoration of such a well known event in the area. Some time after the initial day of community organising training, I held a one day workshop on architecture and planning. Residents and organisers learnt about the planning system, the previous masterplan and the regeneration areas that had been defined by the council. We looked at different drivers for regeneration, and who benefits from different ways of regenerating an area. For the last part of the day we went to Canning Town, and saw how the regeneration had changed the area forever. The PEACH project was going to be different we said. The PEACH project will take the council by surprise, we will try and embed knowledge in the local area, we will make our own timescale and we will negotiate with the people in power. In the end, we achieved a lot, but the Alternative Regeneration Plan has not been implemented as we hoped it could be. Working as a community organiser in Custom House for five years however, I saw how members of the community got skilled up, gained knowledge and began to initiate projects which previously were seen as out of their reach. I also saw how the processes of regeneration obscured and obstructed access to information that would have allowed them to fully engage with the future of the area, and how the extended timescale of the process ground people down and in some cases forced them to leave the area.

Evaluating possible risks

Preparing the engagement strategy in conversation with the community / steering group

Identifying constraints and opportunities of the site(s)

The Road-Map of the Regeneration

The road-map of the regeneration became the name for a diagram, timeline and framework developed by the community organisers and architects at PEACH over a period of a few months. The development began organically, when the community organisers first asked the architects to talk through the regeneration process with them from start to finish. This conversation was transcribed in a text document in bullet point lists of stages in the process and the steps contained within each stage. The community organisers wanted to translate this conversation into a diagram themselves, in order to solidify their knowledge, and to ensure that the language and structure of the diagram was understandable to non-experts. The road-map emerged as an understandable analogy, a tool which situates geographically as well as a graphical representation of the different strands of the regeneration process over time.

The road-map of the regeneration can be found on page 75 of the thesis

STAGE 2:

Engagement Estate

Consolidation workshop which turns the conversations into possible ideas for design.

Masterplanning

Masterplanning

Consolidation workshop which starts to turn the options into the best preferred option

1 2 3 4

4 Design Options

Initial financial assessment of design options

Preferred option sign off

BEST OPTION

AGE 3:

Development Dams

Refinement

Development of the design.

Design Development

Initial reports of business
Masterplan
Workflows and doors
Drainage
Outdoor spaces

Detailed Design

Commissioning survey by quantity surveyors

Environmental Impact Assessment

Mayoral Sign off

AGE 4:

Application Plaza

Yes!

Report W

Architects

Environmental Reports

Bus is on diversion...

UNKNOWN Road

EndoComm

Forward Thinking Road

★ Allocations?
★ Managing+ maintenance?

What's the point? Roundabout.

[VISION, AIMS, PRINCIPLES]

Calculating the ideal number of lanes

Outline possible management strategies

Outline possible delivery strategies

Putting together the commercial and delivery parameters for the project

What is the desired financial outcome for the client?

Calculating the amount of commercial space

Working out the bid for the Doctors surgery

Talking to TfL

Talking to the GLA

Introductory pre-application meeting with the planning department at TfL

Listening to ideas

Many conversations with community

Co-design

Building height

Health centre

Other services

Shops

Homes, houses vs. flats

Size of the houses and an idea of the mix of different types

Entrances and stairs and lifts

Roads

Public space

Running educational workshops

Parking

Bins

Phasing options, (with the delivery team)

Phasing: sales of houses

Phasing: prices

Phasing: charges

Phasing: losses

GLA, QH

Phasing: risk to delivery

Production of reality assessment report

Final design sign-off

SCHEME- FIX STATION

Public Vote/Ballot?

Local schools are improving. Only primary schools.

Cleanliness is expensive, young people can't afford it.

There is a concentration of central and south of the city.

None of the good ones were taking place. Normal service resumed three days after the rubbish and litter.

Being broken up, I feel as there's no clear plan, have respect or interaction from policy makers / lawmakers to actual people's needs. If cleanliness is rare to see, few people are considering rubbish hasn't got the bins, some shops bags of rubbish, but what appointment is nearby.

Cleanliness is rare to see, few people are considering rubbish hasn't got the bins, some shops bags of rubbish, but what appointment is nearby.

Cleanliness is rare to see, few people are considering rubbish hasn't got the bins, some shops bags of rubbish, but what appointment is nearby.

Listening exercises run by community organisers at PEACH established areas of concern for residents.

A Theoretical Framework in Three Parts

C

Data, information and knowledge

Issues pertaining to the access to and use of data and information in regeneration processes by non-experts are linked to how data and information is understood as able to impart knowledge and/or becomes knowledge. Barriers to data and information becoming knowledge could be, for example, the complexity of the regeneration process, the amount of information available, discerning what information is relevant, information being confidential, the long timescales involved or technical language preventing understanding. Weinberger states that 'it is the knowing process that first decides which information is relevant, and how it is to be used.' This is a useful place to start. The road-map of the regeneration was an attempt at structuring the 'knowing process,' so that non-experts could decide what information is relevant. The road-map demonstrated that in the context of the technical infrastructure surrounding large scale urban redevelopment, encounters with different types of data and information are not only defined by the characteristics of the information itself but also the literacy required for it to be interpreted and classified.

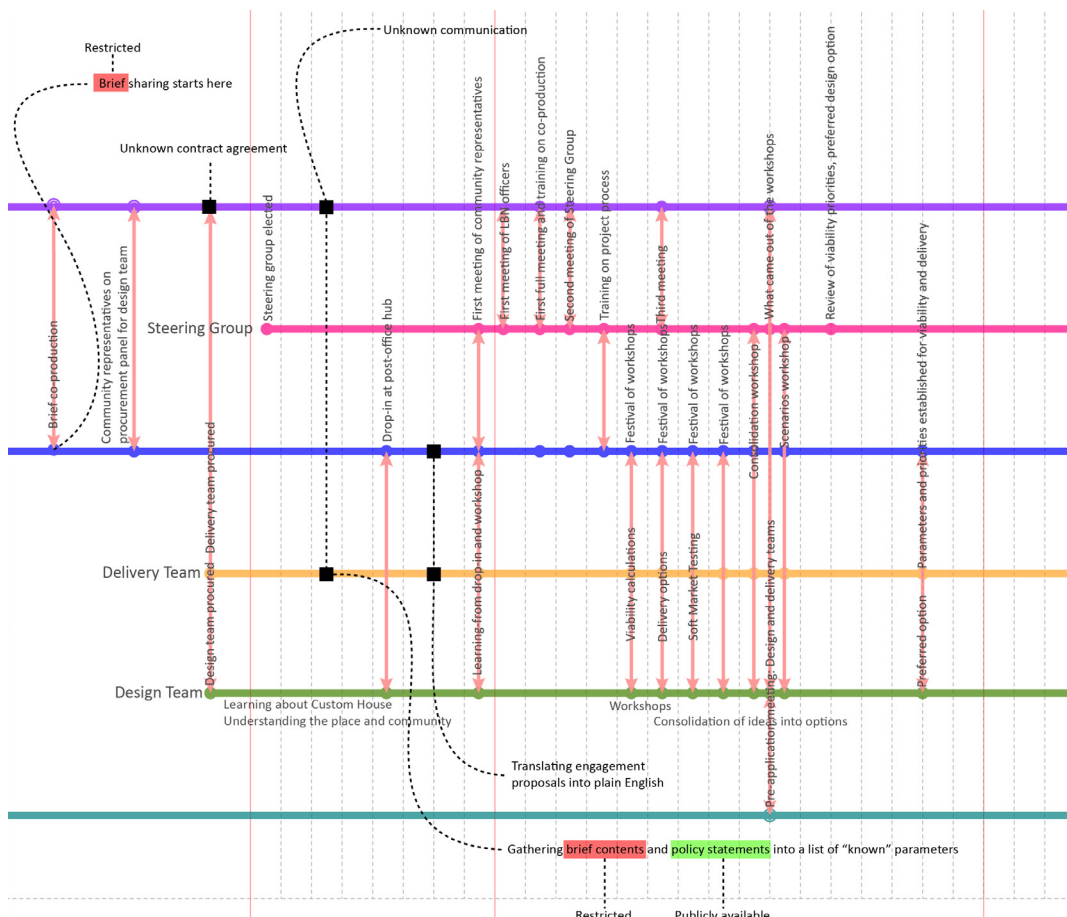
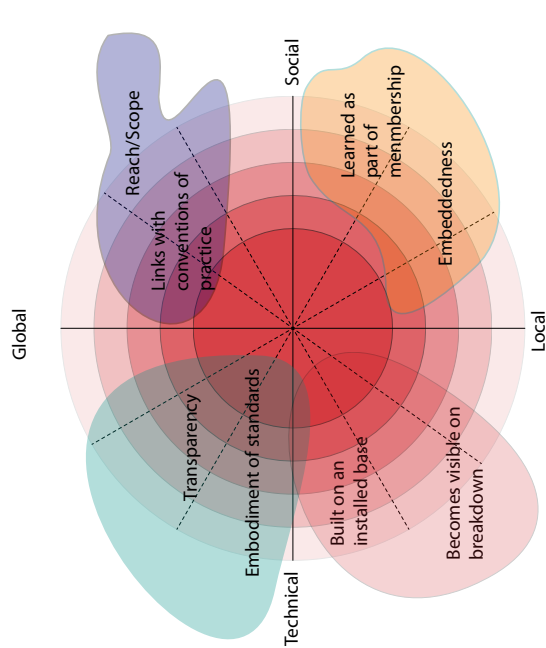


Diagram illustrating proposed data and information exchanges in the Custom House regeneration programme. More information can be found on page 87 of the thesis.

An introduction to infrastructures and infrastructuring

Infrastructure is a term to describe the systems used to organise data, information and knowledge, first used by Bowker and Star. The concept of infrastructure is multifaceted and can be found in the fields of Science and Technology Studies (STS), anthropology and geography. Infrastructure can refer to the physical necessities of urban design such as roads, railways, water pipes, electricity lines and rubbish collection. Infrastructure is also used to refer to less tangible networks that facilitate the exchange or flow of goods, people, or ideas over space. Star and Ruhleder were the first to conceptualise infrastructure as relationships in context rather than solely physical objects or structures. Infrastructures as relationships are frameworks which enable negotiation of meaning and the involvement of different actors in a process. The term infrastructure refers to 'a fundamentally relational concept. It becomes infrastructure in relation to organised practices'. It follows from these definitions that the decisions on what is and isn't included in infrastructures has political ramifications for the physical environment and the people inhabiting that environment. The concept of an infrastructure is therefore useful to my research because it can encompass both the physical environment and the organising structures, technologies, practices and communications that bring the environment into existence and regulate it.

In the paper 'It's Your Project, but it's Not Necessarily Your Work', Agid expands the definition of infrastructuring from a practice of acting on socio-technical systems to a practice that specifically considers the position of the designer and the relationships that are made to enable infrastructuring to take place. Agid argues that 'how we understand, contextualize, and articulate the aims of acting on infrastructures, especially those with uneven material consequences for people living with them, is critically important to what it means to do infrastructuring in different contexts, and with whom. How we infrastructure is a political concern for PD [participatory design] that includes both the structural and systemic contexts of that work and the people and relationships with and through which it happens.' To infrastructure, according to Agid, is then 'to design, reveal, challenge, or theorize systems and structures with people while foregrounding their dynamic and socio-material contexts in that process.' I propose that infrastructuring in the context of urban regeneration means the process of integrating the existing technical and institutional infrastructure of the regeneration with knowledge and actions which enable non-experts and those who are materially affected by those infrastructures to gain agency and take control. This means expanding the regeneration information infrastructure to include unconventional forms of data, information and knowledge, and building relationships with a large range of diverse stakeholders. The practice of infrastructuring is therefore characterised by a continuous process of building relations with diverse actors and by a flexible allotment of time and resources. Understanding infrastructuring in this way also enables me to situate my experience with the live regeneration process in Custom House in relation to the development of my role and practice as an architect, community organiser and researcher.



Above: The properties of infrastructures as described by Star and Ruhleder, arranged along the axis of technical-social and global-local, as described by Bowker.

Below: The elements of the urban regeneration infrastructure experienced at PEACH arranged along the axis of technical-social and global-local.

More detail on technical and social infrastructures can be found on page 99 of the thesis.

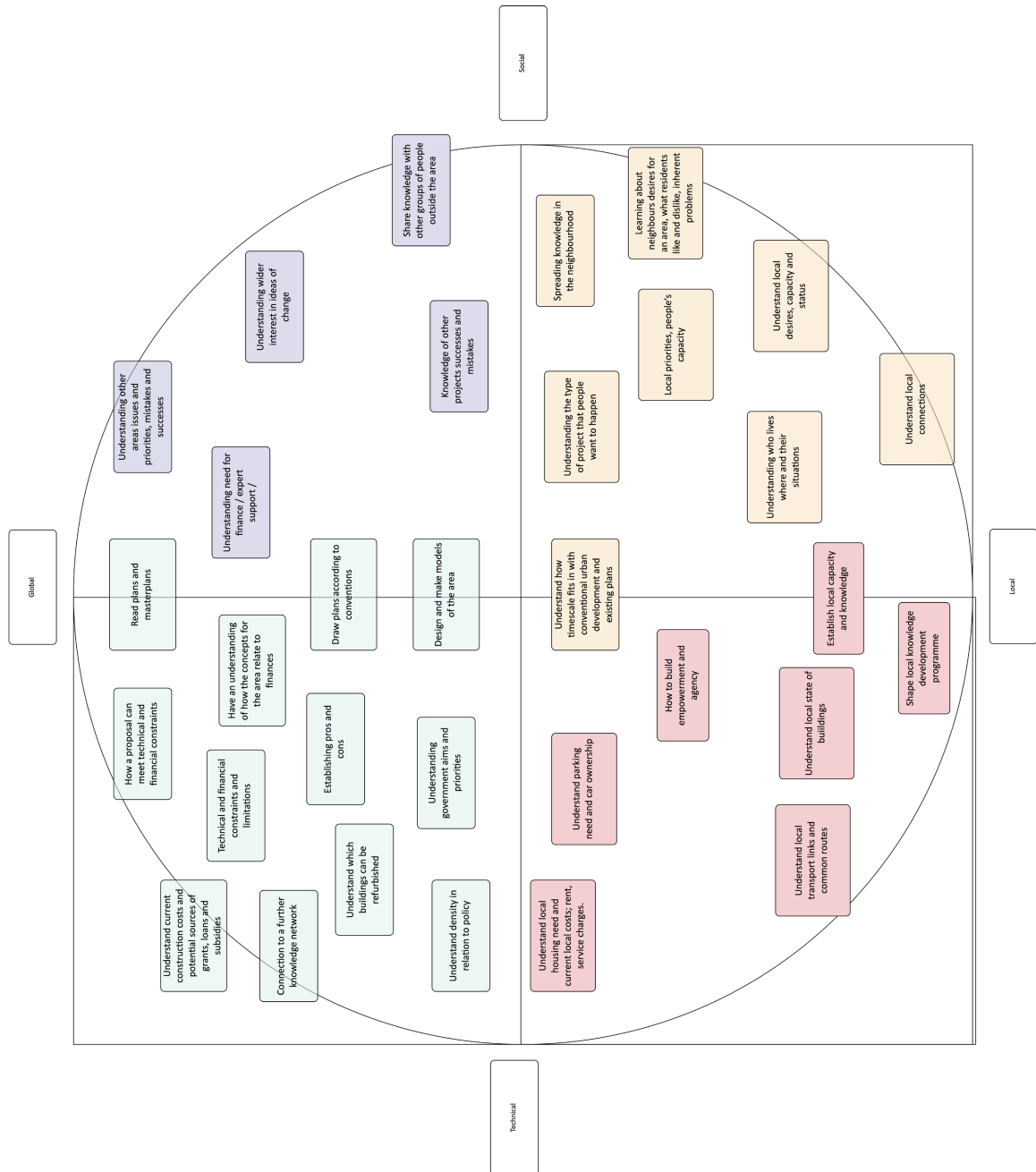
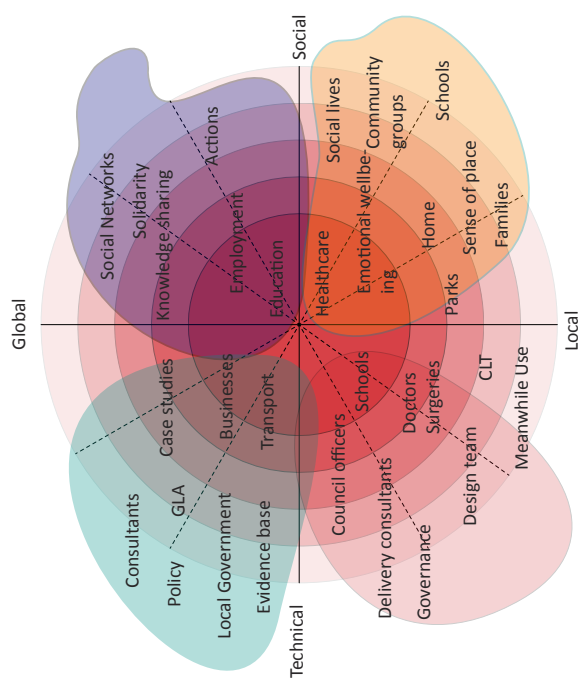


Diagram mapping the knowledge infrastructure developed through the activities of the community organisers and architects at PEACH. Infrastructural Inversion as a method for exploring infrastructures is described on page 113 of the thesis.

Introducing the Architect_Organiser

The **Architect_Organiser** is invested in the movement of data and information into knowledge as a political act. The space between the A and the O of the **Architect_Organiser**, intentionally links professional knowledge with the so called non-expert knowledge. The **Architect_Organiser** spans the technical and social infrastructures of the regeneration process. Extending the roles of both the architect and the community organiser, the **A_O** draws on the following principles:

Empowers non-experts to have access to necessary data and information.

Empowerment catalysts can come from 'gaining access to new information, learning new technical skills, or developing fresh political strategies.'¹ This access empowerment is a form of literacy similar to the literacy that Gray et. al. describe as 'data infrastructure literacy'.² Combining community organising theory and critical pedagogy cultivates strategic participatory frameworks which allow non-experts to gain literacy in the regeneration process and its stakeholders, understanding the locations of power, timescales, speeds and decision points. Freire's theories of critical pedagogy are useful here as they emphasise the role of the political in empowerment.

Recognises the movement of data and information into knowledge as political acts.

The development of the practice of the **A_O** is designed to encourage the slow accretion of knowledge. Part of the role of the **A_O** is to build knowledge through relationships and collaboration whether it is in public or under the radar. Tactics which distribute knowledge more equitably are necessary to cultivate regardless. The **A_O** is intentionally building a position between the various stakeholders which connects to different forms and sources of data, information and knowledge and cultivates 'the ability partially to translate knowledges among very different and power-differentiated communities'.⁵

Takes a feminist approach to knowledge building.

The **A_O** reconsiders the contents and contexts of data, information and knowledge infrastructures from the perspective of non-experts and 'challenges entrenched disciplinary divides'.⁶ The **A_O** promotes the 'collective reconstruction' of knowledge as opposed to only the 'theoretical deconstruction' of knowledge'.⁷ Through making possible novel flows of data, information and knowledge, the **A_O** brings together diverse knowledge temporalities, locations and positions.¹ The situated nature of the **A_O** enables the cultivation of knowledge 'in the margins', a space of radical openness and possibility, a site of resistance.⁸ The importance of knowledge in the margins is reiterated by Gordon; 'a subjugated knowledge that sometimes speaks its own language but almost always exceeds the contingent socioeconomic conditions and geopolitical locations in which it arises', by Halberstam 'we may want new rationales for knowledge production, different aesthetic standards for ordering or disordering space, other modes of political engagement than those conjured by the liberal imagination. We may, ultimately, want more undisciplined knowledge, more questions and fewer answers'.² The use of infrastructures and infrastructuring enables what Haraway argues for as the 'politics and epistemologies of location, positioning, and situating, where partiality and not universality is the condition of being heard to make rational knowledge claims'.⁹

Exploring the practice of the Architect_Organiser

D

A_O V 2.0

The following three mappings describe how I develop my practice through using two approaches simultaneously. I describe these approaches as working 'within' and 'against'. The terms 'within' and 'against' are used by Bell and Pahl to describe modes of simultaneous operation in their paper 'Co-production: towards a utopian approach'. They describe working 'within' as working to maintain the open space of coproduction through providing examples of the 'social relations it hopes to see flourish on a larger scale.' Working 'against' articulates 'the dissonance between the explicit aims of such practice and the present social order,' or demonstrates the obstacles to genuine coproduction that exist in the way society is currently organised.

The notion of within and against allow the Architect_Organiser to move between collaboration and resilience, to occupy 'a fluid space of crossing borders and, as such, a contradictory one of collusion and oppositionality, complicity, and subversion'. 'Within' and 'against' demonstrate the complexity of the practice, its strengths and weaknesses, and begin to show directions in which this practice could be further developed in the future. 'Within' is typified by collaborative and hopeful actions, and characterised by a militant optimism. 'Against' is typified by a resilient and proactive character, unafraid of challenging conventions. 'Within' attempts to create a genuine power and knowledge sharing arrangement between residents and council officers to coproduce the Custom House regeneration in Newham. 'Against' identifies the data and information that is driving decision making, exposes the inconsistencies in the current system and seeks scope for innovation.

In developing the **Architect_Organiser** role, I use critical pedagogical practice and theories of infrastructuring in an attempt to restructure relationships between stakeholders in the regeneration process, specifically between experts and non-experts. The complexity of the contemporary regeneration process, however, remains a barrier to both non-experts and to myself working as the **A_O** in the process. The narrative of the development of the **A_O** is multifaceted and complex. The **A_O** encouraged residents to engage in developing the coproduction process. The necessary structures within the local representative democracy that would have enabled coproduction to happen were not in place. The **A_O** came into conflict with those in positions of power for being unwilling to make concrete steps towards shared decision making agreements such as partnership. Those in power intentionally diluted the coproduction process in order to make it less powerful. The intention and the role of the **A_O** was misunderstood with regards to conflicts of interest. The **A_O** did not reach a point of sufficient security to propose a challenge to conventional financial structures of urban regeneration. The in-depth investigation of finance and its relationship to decision making processes undertaken whilst working 'against' led me to a desire for experimental and alternative economic structures. However, Gibson-Graham reiterate the difficulties in embedding alternatives to capitalist structures within collaborative interventions, or in this case, novel participatory frameworks. The reasons given for the difficulties in proposing alternatives to capitalist models, both theoretical and real, include being co-opted, collaborating with those in power, being seen as naïve, utopian, or proposals being too small or weak to demonstrate significant change. The modes of practice that I have described as 'within' and 'against' operated concurrently, engaging in a pragmatic manner with existing systems and processes. Working 'within' and 'against' outlined potential frameworks for change and began to understand that those frameworks could not meet the level of change that is needed. Working 'within' and 'against' initially appeared to be two oppositional modes of practice, but through this analysis it became clear that 'within' and 'against' are actually complementary. It is necessary for the **A_O** to work both 'within' and 'against' simultaneously, relying on the contradictions in the role to maintain tension with those in power as well as trust and accountability within the community. However, the barriers I encountered to developing and implementing this practice are real. In my attempts at 'within' and 'against' I was led away from my working as an embedded community practitioner. bell hooks notes that Friere did not advocate for awareness or 'concientizao' alone, but that the critical thinking must be joined with praxis.

Forms of refusal are important, Gordon writes that forms of refusal such as direct action against and 'non-participation in liberal democratic state politics', boycotts and occupations are gestures towards developing other, alternative forms of living. The role of the **A_O** in these moments of refusal is complex if as in my case, relationships have been built with those in power as well as with the community. As the 'expert', there is an appeal towards what some scholars have described as common sense, or evidence-based scenarios. Structural hierarchies between expert and non-expert knowledge types in participatory and collaborative projects can lead to the 'expert' holding responsibility for the participation of the 'non-expert' in a process that isn't serving them. In order to challenge conventional hierarchies of knowledge, the **A_O** is required to develop an understanding of refusal as a form of hope. However, in attempting to forge new paths or detours around the tested paths of knowledge production as described by Halberstam, the **A_O** runs the risk of not being taken seriously, being disqualified, risking their professional status and ultimately failure.

Working 'Within'

E

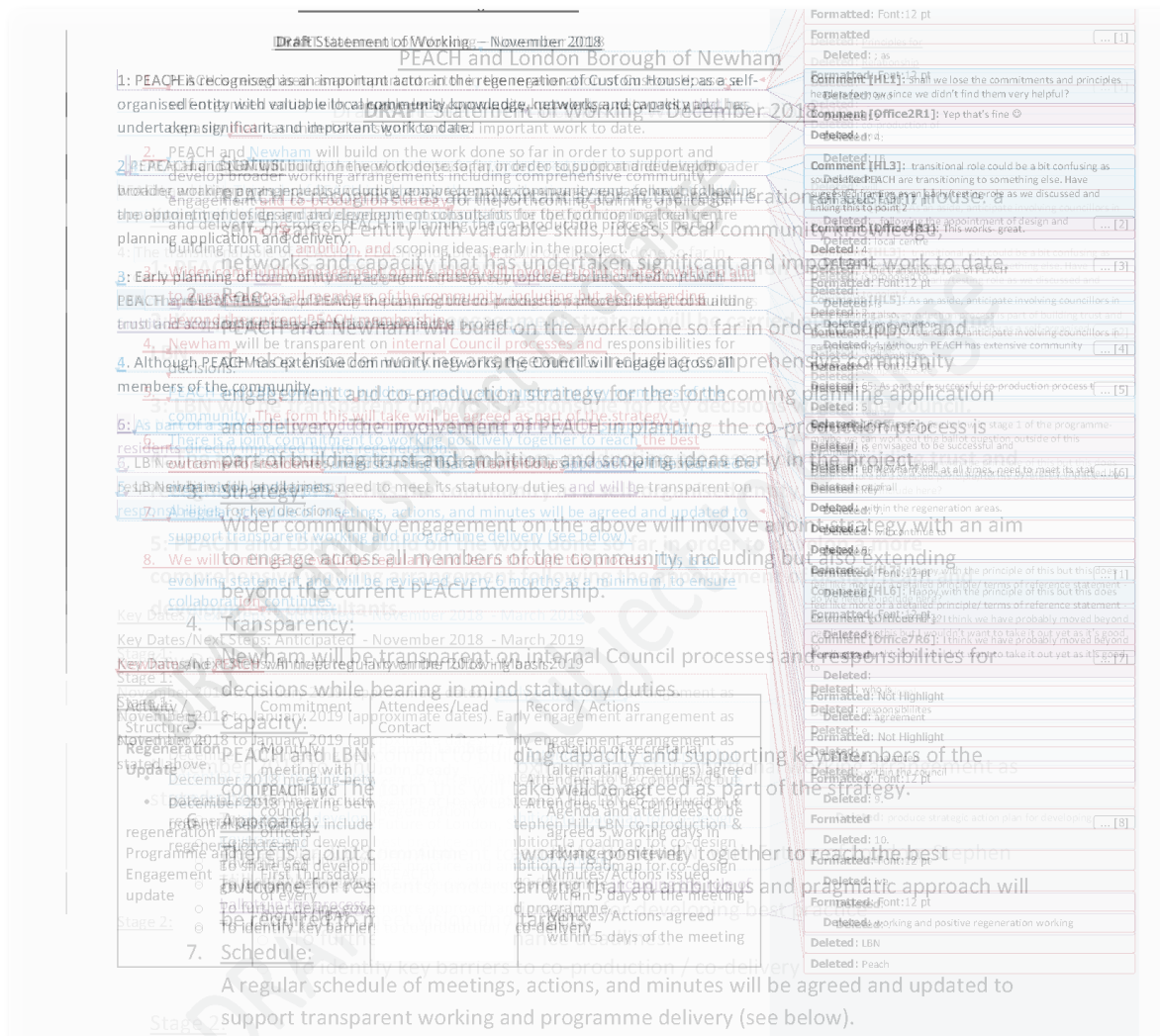


Image shows a compilation of all of the tracked changes on the initial draft of the document 'Working Together,' that outlined the terms between PEACH and the London Borough of Newham. More detail can be found on page 126 of the thesis.

The narrative of working within evolves over four years of my practice from 2018 to the present, 2022. I use the narrative to illustrate the complexity, the twists and turns of the regeneration process and the changing relationships between myself as the A_O and other stakeholders. During the late summer of 2018 through to October, the Custom House regeneration was re-initiated by London Borough of Newham (LBN). A new regeneration officer was employed by LBN to kickstart the process. The regeneration officer approached PEACH with a proposal for community input. She suggested PEACH could help to write the design brief and residents could participate in the design team procurement for the Custom House regeneration, which was due to take place at the beginning of 2019. At PEACH, the organising team consisted of 2-3 community organisers and two self-described Architect_Organisers. We were excited by this opportunity to influence the selection of the design team and contemplated a number of ways of getting residents more involved through the writing of the design brief.

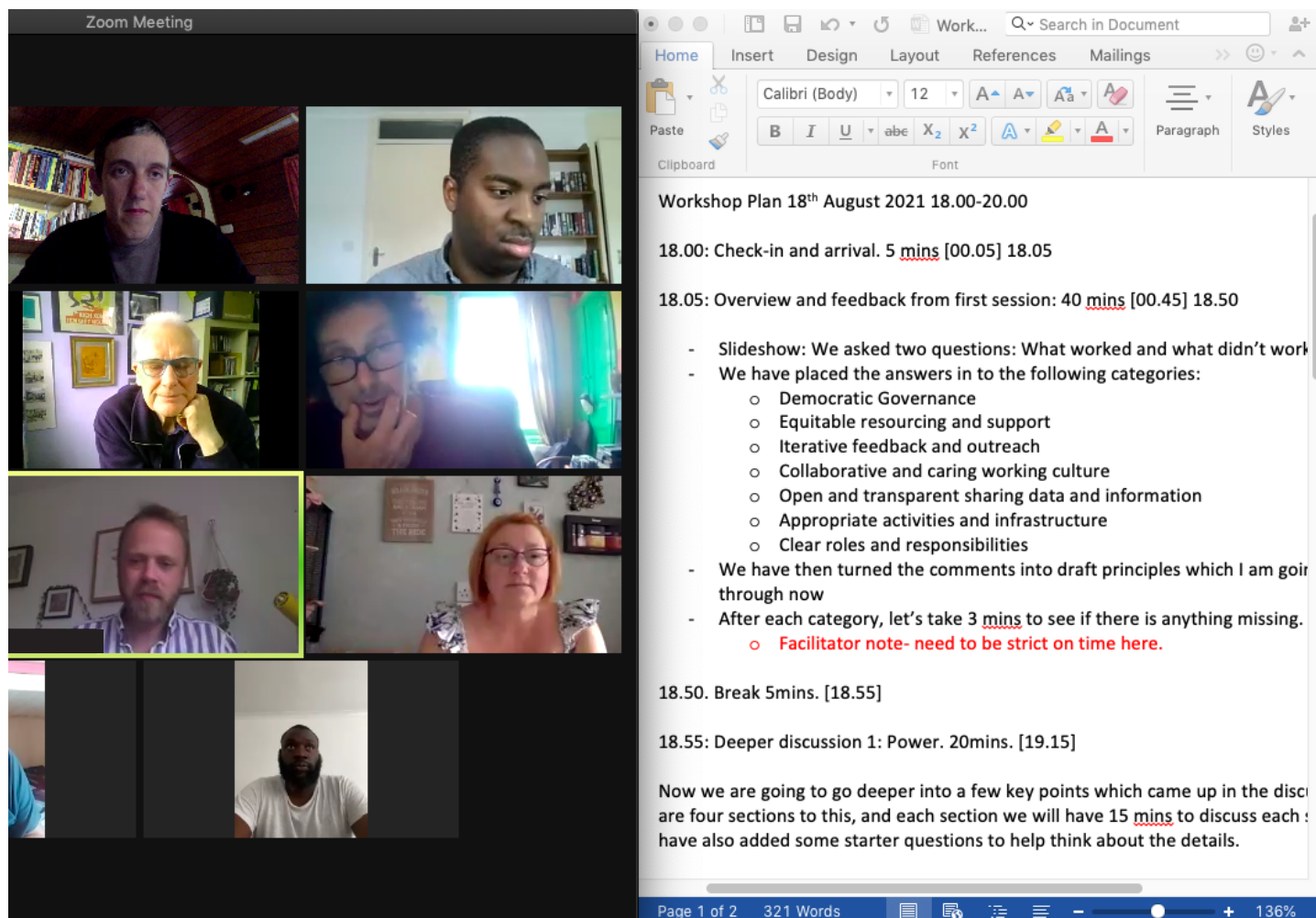


Image shows a screenshot of the initial evaluation of the Custom House Steering Group coproduction process, undertaken with Rowan Mackay of Community Led Housing London. The evaluation process is discussed on page 144 of the thesis.

Evaluating Coproduction

The barriers and issues which I encountered as the A_O attempting to work 'within' were confirmed in the coproduction evaluation process. The A_O was treated with suspicion, as having an agenda which led to the A_O being shut out. The legal structure of the council meant that the council could not share power with the steering group and allow the Custom House Steering Group (CHSG) to make decisions. The lack of support and training for the community representatives, exacerbated by the COVID crisis, and combined with the working culture of the council which was unfamiliar with collaborative problem solving meant that the CHSG remained in an unsatisfactory limbo.

The state is looking for a consensus-based version of coproduction which will placate participants without sharing power, whereas the community representatives and the A_O are looking for an agonistic version of coproduction whereby the reality of the structural power imbalance is not swept under the carpet, and this awareness is used to develop novel solutions to problems where consensus is not possible.

Referencing Ostrom, Richardson states that 'designing institutional arrangements that help induce successful coproductive strategies is far more daunting than demonstrating their theoretical existence'. Experiences of coproduction in other regeneration scenarios reiterates the danger. Diamond writes that whether using internal or external facilitators, coproduction will accentuate marginalisation within groups, 'local partnerships will seek to co-opt local activists' and that 'existing practice is based upon 'individualizing' rather than 'collectivizing' the experience of local community.' Davies goes so far as to suggest that communities involved in such partnerships, even deliberative scenarios, should define an exit-strategy and take up intentional non-participation instead, as a more effective way to influence outcomes and preserve their own integrity.

Working 'against'

Working 'against' is used to uncover in more detail how the practice of the A_O aims to counter present conventions in regeneration practice. 'Against' identifies the data and information that is driving decision making, exposes the inconsistencies in the current system and seeks scope for innovation.

In my analysis of data and information encountered in the regeneration process, the financial workings of the proposed redevelopment came consistently under question by non-experts. At a macro level, the overall cost of regeneration was queried, and on a more personal level, people wanted to know how regeneration would affect their rent levels, or the value of their homes. Financial viability has long been highlighted by communities and academics as a particularly opaque element of the regeneration process. In working 'against', exposing financial data and the workings of viability within the regeneration process appeared as one way of pushing back against the status quo. The financial viability of a masterplan has emerged as an essential component within neoliberal planning policy, and the layers of financing behind any development scheme are a primary source of power and control. Viability is seen as a specialist discipline, and data and information are integral to its role.

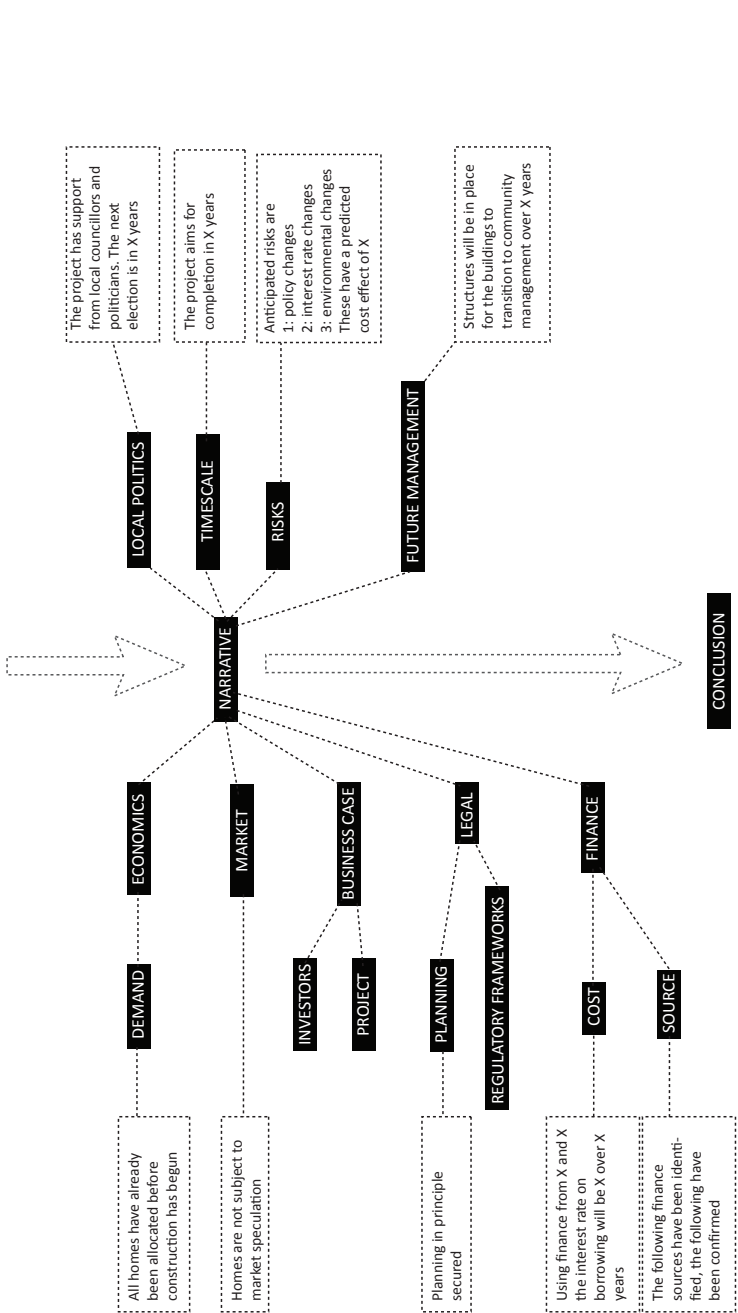
Using the process of commissioning a viability report for the PEACH Alternative Regeneration Plan, supplemented by taking a course in Real Estate Development Financial Modelling, the following text explores the how an economic viability narrative is constructed. The learning from my participation in the course combined with the experience of the commissioning process enabled my investigation into what goes into making a legitimate or believable financial model, and why the data and information behind development finance remains opaque. I use this process to gain insights into the forces that are aligned in maintaining the status quo in urban regeneration, and to establish ways that the A_O alongside others can combat the dominance of these forces and their associated ideologies.

These two contrasting experiences as commissioner of a viability report and a developer of excel formulas provide a basis for interrogating viability further. Working 'against' therefore had multiple aims in this context. Firstly to gain understanding and expose the financial data in a way that would be accessible for non-experts. Secondly, to use the data in a way that would prioritise community needs through an increase social housing provision. Both of these aims directly countered conventional regeneration practices, and also challenged me in my role as the A_O to gain a better understanding of the development of a knowledge infrastructure around a subject that I was also in the process of learning about myself.

Understanding that a viability model is not a purely scientific calculation, but rather a combination of data sources, contacts, friends, networks and conventions it seemed obvious that the course of action should be to subvert it:

Identifying the layers of financing behind a development scheme as a primary source of power and control, I decided to attempt to transform viability into a useful tool. I attended the 'Real Estate Development and Financial Modelling' course run by Cambridge Finance. The course teaches participants how to construct the Excel spreadsheets which underpin the financial viability report using two different methodologies, the residual valuation method and the development cash flow method. The development finance modelling course introduced the viability model through a narrative framework. A narrative framework is effectively a story with a beginning, middle and an end. Beckett writes of narratives within economics that 'the stories are embedded in calculative devices whose assumptions they govern, or the stories embed within their own structure an illusion of calculability and an understanding of causal mechanisms derived from the models they draw on.' The viability is effectively designed to tell a story about the success of the future development, using the data and information available to the person building the model.

The diagram on the right shows the narrative framework of a viability model, adapted from the Real Estate Development and Financial Modelling course run by Cambridge Finance. The course is discussed in more detail on page 167 of the thesis.



Here I understood the logic of the model. There was no reliance on growth. The profit is made because the houses are sold or rented out at a higher price than it cost to build them, and the cost of finance (interest) is also passed onto the buyer. The developer asks for between 15 and 25 percent profit in return for bearing the risk of failure. Social and affordable housing can't bear the extra costs of interest, risk, profit as there is no end-user to pass those costs onto. The rental rates and the affordable ownership prices can't absorb those costs without becoming unaffordable for those who they are built for. To solve this problem, the government steps in with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 agreements (£106) in order to force the developer to pay for those affordable homes.

'From the point of view that affordable housing is subsidising flats on behalf of the government'

'When you do development as a developer you try and charge as much as you can'

'It always costs more than they say it will at the start'

'It's a bit of a raw nerve because developers are putting their own money down and building affordable housing. The government is choosing not to build affordable housing it's choosing to tax people. In the end the people buying the houses are picking up the bill because the costs are passed on to them. I'm not paying any CIL or £106. It's an economic subsidy'

'Old school method was 1/3, 1/3, 1/3'

'If it's pre-planning I'd expect 50% profit on cost, after planning I'd expect 30% profit on cost'

Steel, concrete, modular have different timeframes. Modular is quicker.

Sometimes you give things away for free, like the washing machine. I don't give anything away for free. Sometimes the developer pays the stamp duty. It's 5%, generally.

Landscaping? As little as possible. I'm joking. But there's a park nearby, so it'd fine.

CIL, there's a table, but it depends, because sometimes your project isn't totally approved, and then you increase the CIL payment and it is approved.

CIL and s106 are baked into the sales price- they get passed onto the buyers, the developer won't pay for the obligations

Above quotes taken from the participants of the Real Estate Development and Financial Modelling course run by Cambridge Finance. The image on the right shows correspondence between myself and MOLIOR, a real estate data and information provider, who would not let me access their database for research purposes.

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95% of the top residential developers and agents in London use Molior

Molior is the leading research, technology and analytics platform for the residential real estate industry in London. The service is owned, written and developed by former senior planning and research professionals from the industry.

Subject: Subscription to database
From: Sib Trigg <s.trigg@20181@arts.ac.uk>
Date: 20/10/2020, 12:45
To: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],
I am a doctoral research student at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. I am conducting research into the uses of data and information in urban planning and regeneration and I would like to gain access to the Molior database to further my research. I have access to the database via my university email address. I would like to know if it is possible to gain access for a week for research purposes rather than a full subscription. If not, one month's subscription would be sufficient.
Please let me know how to proceed.
All the best
Sib
Sib Trigg
B.Arch BIP, Arch NSC
Architect
07783133783

Subject: RE: Subscription to database
From: [REDACTED]
Date: 20/10/2020, 12:45
To: Sib Trigg <s.trigg@20181@arts.ac.uk>
Hi - I am very sorry but this isn't something we would do

Subject: Re: Subscription to database
From: Sib Trigg <s.trigg@20181@arts.ac.uk>
Date: 20/10/2020, 13:15
To: [REDACTED]
Thank for your reply.
Do you mean I am not able to pay to subscribe to the database? Can you give me a reason for this?
Thanks
Sib

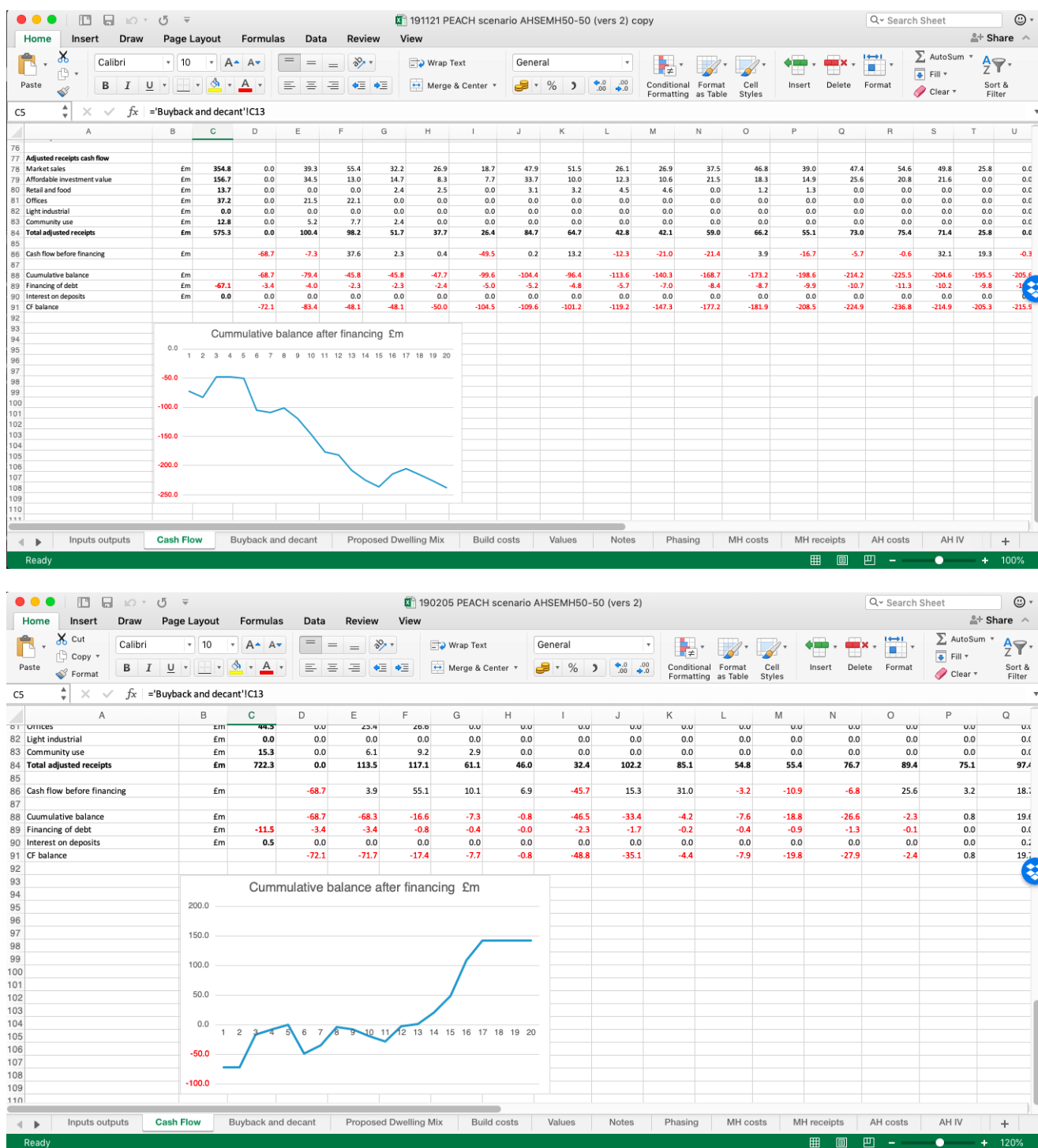
On 20/10/2020 13:34, [REDACTED] wrote:
It's because our minimum subscription period is one year. Also we try our best to make sure people who sign up want to do so for the long term.
[REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Subscription to database
Date/Tue, 20 Oct 2020 13:20:18 +0100
From: Sib Trigg <s.trigg@20181@arts.ac.uk>
To: [REDACTED]

Ok. Can you let me know how much it would cost to subscribe for one year?
Thanks
Sib

Tweaking the numbers

As part of the Alternative Regeneration Plan, I arranged for PEACH to commission a viability report to be produced by three independent consultants. The report was designed to demonstrate the viability of the Alternative Regeneration Plan. Reading through the email thread documenting the construction of the viability model and the writing of the accompanying report, I am struck by our acceptance of the power wielded by the viability system. At the time, we were convinced that if we could create a viability model that showed that our masterplan was viable, this would make the plan more likely to be accepted as the future plan for Custom House. We approached the consultants in this manner, assuming that if we provided the data, we would be able to demonstrate the result that has the best possible outcome for the community. We thought that through introducing alternative values into the system we would be able to prove that there were alternative models that could provide more social housing. We also hoped that the development of our model could prove that conventional developer models were flawed in their approaches.



Images above show screenshots of the viability model commissioned by PEACH, with the input numbers tweaked to demonstrate large differences in the projected profit and loss over time.

A New Regeneration Infrastructure



In developing the Architect_Organiser role, I used critical pedagogical practice and theories of infrastructuring in an attempt to restructure relationships between stakeholders in the regeneration process, specifically between experts and non-experts. Having demonstrated the importance of data and information to the process, I attempted to build a model participatory process in the form of coproduction alongside community organisers, residents and local authority employees. In doing so, I established that the ability of the local authority to work in coproduction with residents in a regeneration context is limited by its own representative democratic structure, by the inertia of the status quo and by the inherent power imbalance between the local authority and residents. I demonstrated that development viability is based upon irregular, unsubstantiated, proprietary and inaccessible data, leading to unverifiable conclusions. The 'unviable' argument used to justify destructive urban regeneration practices is therefore unjustifiable. Despite knowing the dangers of co-optation through examining attempts at partnership in urban regeneration from the past, the A_O could not avoid becoming co-opted by the local authority. I have attempted to push the boundaries of current practice in the field of urban regeneration and urban change through the development of the role of the Architect_Organiser.

The complexity of the contemporary regeneration process, however, remains a barrier to both non-experts and to myself working as the A_O in the process. The final chapter of this thesis is an exercise in the ethical practice of not being co-opted. The Architect_Organiser 'beyond', is the projection of the role into the future, using speculative and exploratory scenarios and pushing against the commodification of knowledge under capitalism. Beyond maintains Gordon's resolution for 'living on better terms than what we're offered, for living as if you had the necessity and the freedom to do so,' struggling against the limitations of the imagination. The 'beyond' imagined by the A_O resonates with the description by Gordon of 'a collective life without misery, deadly inequalities, mutating racisms, social abandonment, endless war, police power, authoritarian governance, heteronormative impositions, patriarchal rule, cultural conformity, and ecological destruction.' Beyond is a form of hope.

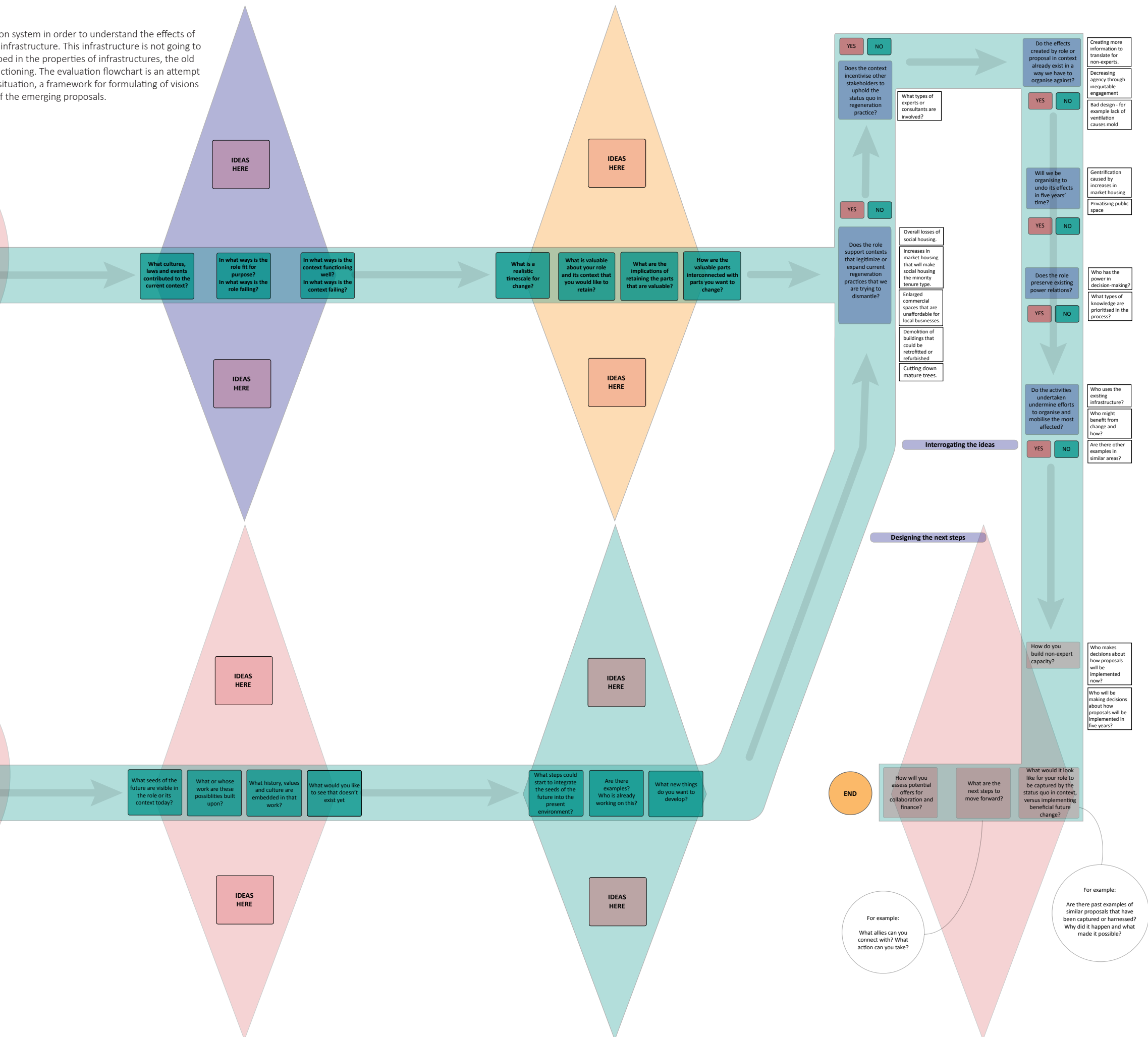
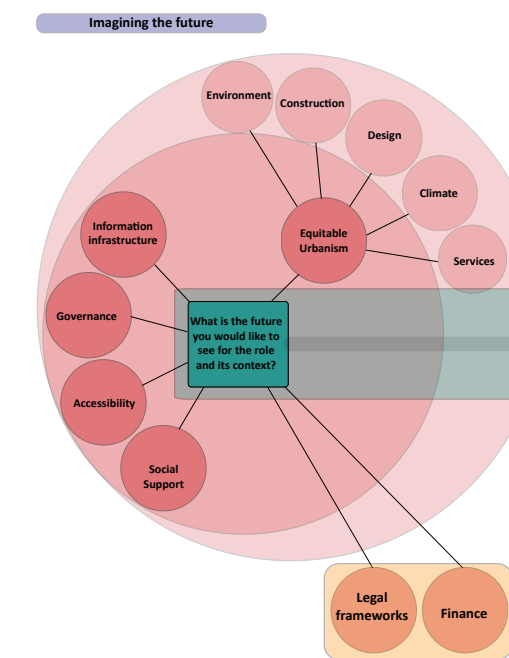
The following pages outline a proposal for a new regeneration infrastructure, based on the experience, practice and research I have undertaken as the Architect_Organiser.

Evaluating the Architect Organiser

The diagram illustrates the central role of an Architect Organiser in the current state, surrounded by various interconnected domains. The central teal box is labeled "Current state: Describe the key characteristics of your role and its context".

The domains connected to the central box are:

- Environment
- Construction
- Design
- Climate
- Services
- Equitable Urbanism
- Information Infrastructure
- Governance
- Accessibility
- Social Support
- Legal frameworks
- Finance



To the Architect_Organisers

'Networks of people can develop a community accountability politic by engaging in anti-violence/anti-oppression education, building relationships, based on values of safety, respect, and self-determination, and nurturing a culture of collective responsibility, connection, and liberation.'

As the Architect_Organiser, you are the facilitator of a pedagogical and knowledge-based network that enables the design and development of urban areas to take place. Your aim is to directly connect the action of urban change to those affected by it through developing and rearranging relationships between stakeholders in the field of urban development.

The Architect_Organiser role is distinct from conventional architectural practice through the development of accountability frameworks with local people and organisations rather than conventional client relationships.

The Architect_Organiser uses a critical pedagogical stance to challenge 'common sense' narratives that produce 'inhumane urbanism' and develop knowledge through action. Collective action and conviction lay the ground for wider policy and infrastructural change. There are existing frameworks that are useful for developing the habit of reflection, evaluation and visioning the future. Future visions can be related to familiar timescales of urban development as an exercise in situating or grounding. Through the positioning of your role, you, as the Architect_Organiser provide direction towards futures that appear as impossible in the present.

By nature, the Architect_Organiser role is one of a network or a group. It is not possible for the A_O to act without a supportive network. This means listening, dialogue and practicing learning together to develop support infrastructures. The process of the development of support infrastructures 'constructs the field' of relevant data and information and therefore knowledge.

Different processes will value things in different ways. In order to resist being co-opted as the Architect_Organiser, you are required to develop value systems that are non-quantifiable, that disrupt the knowledge/power dynamic and the expert/non-expert knowledge hierarchy.

Do not concern yourself with scaling up or replicability in the wider sense, as this drags you into 'common sense' narratives of existing practice. Small scales allow space for failure and success on human timescales. Small scale projects build relationships, skills and knowledge as well as a base for the emergence of larger opportunities in the future.

As the Architect_Organiser, part of your role is to exercise stewardship of local knowledge and its potential. As a community organiser you are a caretaker of the local narrative of change, a custodian of the local chain of knowledge. Build knowledge with kids, young people and elderly people. Share knowledge, and encourage sharing outside of your comfort zone. Be pragmatic, unrealistic and fantastical. Always make the time and space to thoroughly interrogate 'common sense' proposals with others, it is part of your role as the A_O to develop and propose alternatives. Understand the access needs of the people you are trying to work alongside, these might be physical, digital, temporal. Understand who is in the majority and who is in the minority (class, race, gender). Accessibility, location and the makeup of groups will affect what people feel that they can and can't say.

The systems that are developed through your organised practice as the A_O will themselves become infrastructures of information and knowledge. Therefore, as the A_O, it is important to take time to understand local infrastructures, environmental concerns and their relations to the wider, dominant systems that you are trying to change.

Changes to existing infrastructures need to be 'informed by and grounded in' the aims of the people and organisations that you work with and will need maintenance and care. As the A_O, you are not central to the regeneration infrastructure itself, but a caretaker, a maintainer.

Appendix 6:

Sample participant consent form

Participant Information and Consent Form:

PhD: Knowledge and agency in contemporary community responses to urban regeneration.

Sib Trigg. Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London.

E: s.trigg0720181@arts.ac.uk T: [REDACTED]

As one of my colleagues at PEACH (The People's Empowerment Alliance for Custom House) I would like to formalise our collaborative relationship in the context of my research. I would like to invite you to collaborate in the development and testing and evaluation of strategies and tactics for the use of data and information within community-led regeneration.

Please read the following information on the project and what it would involve for you before you decide if you want to participate. I can go through this information with you and answer any questions you have.

Why am I doing this? Data and information related to urban regeneration is often overwhelming, confusing and incomprehensible to lay people. The PhD allows me time to reflect and evaluate the work we have been doing at PEACH, and use the processes and knowledge which we have been through to develop further tools that will help PEACH and other non-expert groups affected by regeneration.

Why am I asking you this? I need to formally notify you of my research intentions so that it is clear to PEACH and to UAL what parts of our work together I am using in my research and why.

What is expected from you? Occasionally I will ask you to take part in some activities which are directly related to my research, such as interviews or workshops. In these activities you may be identifiable by name, if you would prefer to remain anonymous, please let me know. I will use our work together as the basis for documenting and reflecting on the everyday obstacles which we face in the regeneration process. If there is something which you don't want me to mention as part of my research, also let me know.

Access to the research: I will be maintaining an online public record of my research and the development of this project. Any information which you do not want to be made public, or in which you would like to remain anonymous, please let me know. I will make it clear what I am putting online and when, with plenty of time for consideration. You can request for any data or personal information which you have provided to be anonymised at any point during or after the project. The level of anonymisation required will be agreed individually with each participant.

Expenses: If you are required to travel to any interview location, your travel expenses will be reimbursed.

End of the research: My PhD is scheduled to finish in October 2021.

How to withdraw from the research: If you no longer wish to be a part of this research or if you wish your data to be removed from the study please let me know. If it is not feasible for me to remove your data entirely, I will anonymise any relevant parts of the research.

Complaints: If you wish to make a complaint you can contact me directly by email on s.trigg0720181@arts.ac.uk, or by phone on [REDACTED] Alternatively you can contact the University of the Arts Research Management at researchethics@arts.ac.uk

Privacy and confidentiality: You will have the right to check the accuracy of any data held about you and to correct any errors. Your data will be stored securely on the University of the Arts servers (OneDrive). The data will be retained for archiving and research purposes. Information which you feel is confidential will be anonymised for the purposes of this study.

Consent form B:

PhD: Knowledge and agency in contemporary community responses to urban regeneration.

Sib Trigg, Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London.

E: s.trigg0720181@arts.ac.uk T: [REDACTED]

Thank you for taking part in this research project. Your contribution to this research will be preserved permanently. It may be used in research, publication, exhibition, education, lectures, broadcasting and on the Internet. The purpose of this Agreement is to ensure that your contribution is added to the collection in accordance with your wishes. This Agreement is made between Sib Trigg ("the Researcher") and you ("the Participant", "I"):

Your name:

Your address:

In regard to the collaboration which begins on: Date/s: This collaboration will end upon the completion of the PhD or the request of the participant, whichever comes first.

Declaration:

I, the participant confirm that I consented to take part in this work and hereby confirm that all material derived from this collaboration will be made available under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike (CC BY-NC-SA) license for use in all and any media. More information about the Creative Commons License can be found here:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

I confirm that I have read, understand and have been given a copy of the information provided dated [-] for the research study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

If you wish to add any stipulations to the agreement, please state these conditions here:

.....
.....

This Agreement will be governed by and construed in accordance with English law and the jurisdiction of the English courts.

Both parties shall, by signing below, indicate acceptance of the Agreement.

By or on behalf of the participant:

Signed:

Name in block capitals:

Date:

By the Researcher:

Signed:

Name(s) in block capitals:

Date:

In order to contact the University of the Arts regarding this research please email the Research Management and Administration at researchethics@arts.ac.uk

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