

RECLAIMING

RECOMMONING

REIMAGINING

REPROGRAMMING



The London School of Economics and Political Science
Cities Programme 2019 - 2020

**REGENERATION AT
WOODBERRY DOWN**

Studio Conveners

Dr. Suzanne Hall
Dr. David Madden
Dr. Julia King
Dr. Fran Tonkiss

Editing, Design & Layout

Noah Powers
Armando Salvador-Delgado

2020 The Cities Programme, The London School of Economics and Political Science and authors all rights reserved. No part of the publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

All image credits are by authors, unless otherwise indicated.

The Cities Programme
The London School of Economics and Political Science
Houghton Street
London WC2A 2AE
United Kingdom
www.lse.ac.uk/collections/cities

We would like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their valuable contributions to the Studio:

Ricky Burdett, LSE Cities
Nuno Ferreira da Cruz, LSE Cities
Alex Gomes, LSE Cities
Gemma Holyoak, Community-led Housing London
Jane Lewis, London Metropolitan University
Kylie Patterson, MSc Programme Manager
Glyn Robbins, LSE Cities
Phillip Rode, LSE Cities
Sarah Sackman, Francis Taylor Building
Kath Scanlon, LSE London
Tim White, LSE Cities

FOREWORD

City Design Research Studio Cities Programme, LSE

This publication has been created by MSc students in the Cities Programme at the London School of Economics and Political Science. The Cities Programme examines the urban experience in its social, spatial, and political dimensions. We pursue an interdisciplinary approach to urban studies, aiming to foster practitioners and academics who engage with city life in a critical way and who use this engagement to help understand and shape today’s complex urban conditions.

Design is explored as a field of research and practice that shapes urban space, responds to urban problems, and opens possibilities for social transformation and urban justice. Our interdisciplinary master’s degree draws in students from across the design disciplines, social and economic sciences, natural sciences, and humanities. As part of their work towards the degree of MSc City Design and Social Science, students are encouraged to see urban design as a broad field of knowledge and practice—as an object of critical inquiry as well as a tool for research and intervention.

The centrepiece of our master’s programme is the City Design Research Studio. In this course, groups of students engage with specific places in London as sites for social scientific analysis and design propositions. The Studio comprises interdisciplinary urban research at its broadest, as students draw on a vast range of methods, data, and perspectives in order to understand an urban site and imagine ways to address some of the issues faced by its residents and users. The central output of the Research Studio is the present publication.

In 2019-2020 our Studio focused on the redevelopment of Woodbury Down one of London’s largest estate redevelopment projects, located in

the northwest corner of the London Borough of Hackney. In its original form, the estate comprised somewhere between 1,500 and 1,980 council houses, as well as a variety of shared amenities. Like many large London council estates, through the 1970s and 1980s, Woodberry Down was subjected to disinvestment and stigmatisation and is currently undergoing wholesale change through redevelopment.

Woodberry Down exemplifies many of the processes that have shaped residential experience in twentieth and twenty-first century London. It has been a contested project which itself has undergone a number of different iterations. It is unclear how many social-rented homes will remain in the new estate. Council tenants have been promised a right to return, but they will be given new tenancies in a reconfigured community. In addition to new buildings and tenures, the project also includes a new park, new waterfronts, and several other social and natural features. The entire project is not scheduled for completion until 2030.

Woodbury Down asks us to consider the goals and costs of urban redevelopment, as well as the ways in which redevelopment changes and unfolds over time. It is thus a promising case for thinking about on-going social and spatial transformation in the city. The four student projects presented here draw on extensive research and analysis to explore urban redevelopment from a variety of perspectives and concerns. In seeking both to understand urban change and also to find innovative ways to reinvent it, these projects can help all of us to think again about the development and redevelopment of the city.

Suzanne Hall, Julia King,
and David Madden
Cities Programme
LSE



Matthew DesLauriers

USA

Interdisciplinary Studies



Haroun Khalid

USA

Geography



Ramsés Alejandro Grande Fraile

Spain

Architecture / Urban Studies



Alexandra Zisser

USA

Political Science



José Armando Salvador Delgado

México

Architecture / Urban & Social Policy



Noah Powers

Canada

Urban Geography / Psychology



Lukas Sturm

Germany

International Bussiness / Art History



Joel Engler

Switzerland

Landscape Architecture



Hannah Wilson

USA

Sociology / Well-being



Didem Ertem

Turkey

Architecture



Eliza Daeschler

USA

Sustainability



Woon Wei Look

Singapore

Urban Studies



Kyja Kutnick

USA

Comms Designer / Digital Urbanism



Erin Gleason

USA

Architecture / Urban Planning



Amalie Dybvik

Norway

Geography / Management



Arushi Malhortra

India

Architecture

THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE WOODBERRY DOWN ESTATE: AN INTRODUCTION

Noah Powers

Since the 1970s, council estates in London have faced increasing development-related pressures due to disinvestment and stigmatization efforts. This has stemmed from long-standing neoliberal governmental policies that have eroded the capacity of local authorities to provide housing. These policies included the loss of funding for new council homes, the introduction of Right to Buy, and the transfer of council homes to housing associations (Malpass and Victory, 2010). Due to this, local authorities have increasingly sought to partner with private developers to redevelop council estates into new mixed-tenure developments with socially-rented, shared ownership, and private market housing for sale and for rent (Nelson and Lewis, 2019). As Pipe and Glanville, the then Mayor of Hackney and cabinet member for Housing, respectively, state:

“Given the squeeze on capital budgets, local authorities in London cannot build homes for social renting without cross-subsidising them by also building private sale properties. In Hackney, delivering shared ownership pays for itself, but to finance a social rent home demands the construction and sale of one and a half private homes’ (Pipe and Glanville in Adonis and Davies, 2015, p. 82).“

As a result of the overall decline in the capacity of local authorities to build council housing, redeveloping council estates into new mixed-tenure neighbourhoods has become increasingly common and has garnered widespread support across political parties (Cameron 2016; Adonis and Davies, 2015). Supporters of these schemes promote them as reducing poverty and deprivation, with new incoming middle class residents forming a more socially-mixed community, and as improving the quality of council housing stock. Council estate redevelopments are especially popular in the UK’s larger cities, where housing demand, especially for affordable homes, is high, and large swathes of land are occupied by estates (Watt, 2013).

In London, the London Assembly estimates that approximately 50 estates have received planning permission for partial or total demolition, with replacement with high densities over the past ten years (London Assembly, 2015). One of these estates, Woodberry Down, claims to be one of the largest redevelopment project in Europe (Hackney Council, 2020), and is the focus of this City Design Research Studio publication.

Woodberry Down is located in the northwest corner of the London Borough of Hackney, closest to Manor House station (Figure 0.1). The origins of the estate can be traced to the 1930s, when the London County Council Housing Committee submitted a report identifying the Woodberry Down site as “suitable for rehousing operations and for use in connection with the relief of overcrowding under the Housing Acts“ (Parker, 1999, p. 56). The original 185 properties located on the site were subject to a compulsory purchase order and construction began in the 1940s, and continued until 1955 with the completion of newer 8-storey blocks as well as the Woodberry Down Secondary School, one of the first comprehensive schools in Britain. In total, between 1,500 and 1,980 council housing units existed on the original estate, as well as a health centre, public spaces, and other shared amenities.

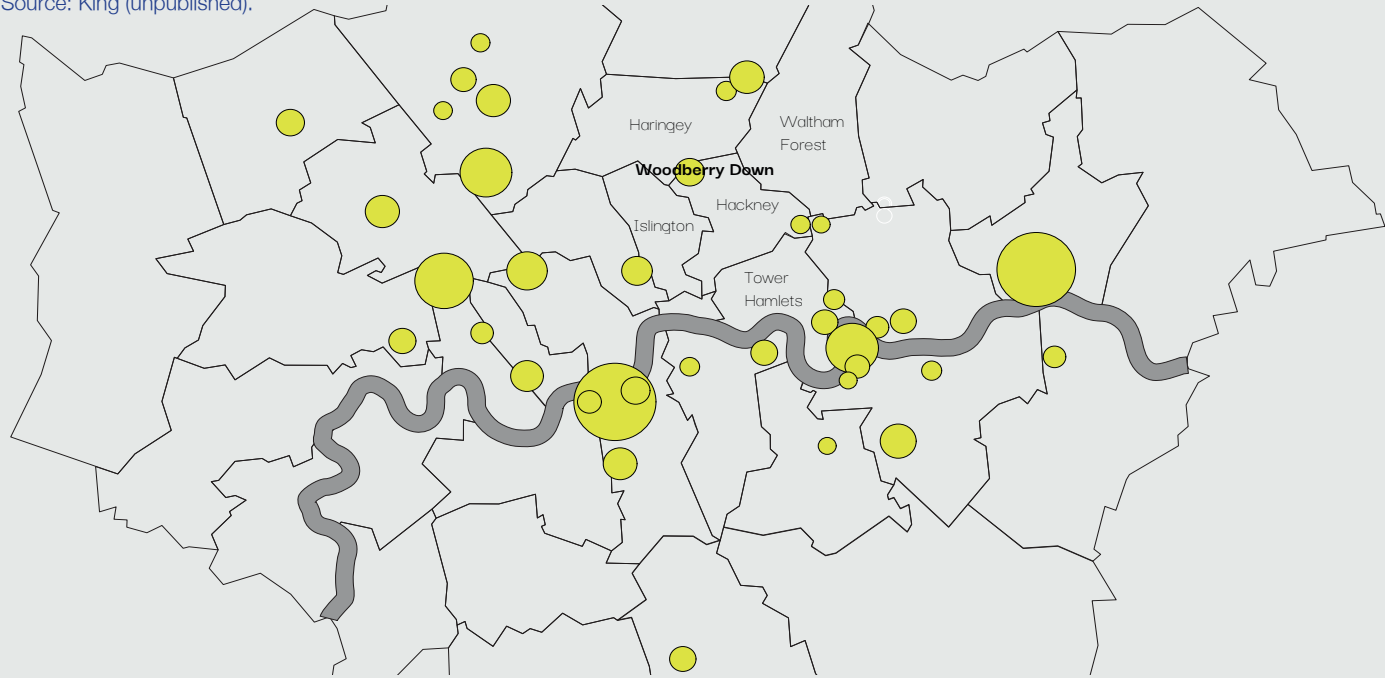
Despite a tight-knit community at Woodberry Down, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the estate faced increasing disinvestment and stigmatization, similar to other council estates across the country. In the 1990s and 2000s, Hackney Council began investigating the possibility of redeveloping the estate, with a Structural Evaluation Report concluding that 31 of the 57 buildings on the estate were ‘beyond repair’ (Nelson and Lewis, 2019). In 2009, after forming a partnership between the Council, the developer Berkeley Homes, the housing association Notting Hill Genesis and the Manor House Development Trust, work on the redevelopment began. To date, around 2,100 new housing units have been constructed, and over the course of the development timeline (lasting until 2030), the original council estate will be entirely demolished and replaced with a mixed-tenure development with 5,500 new units, redeveloped public and commercial spaces, and a permanent community centre (Nelson and Lewis, 2019). Hackney Council states that around 41% of the final units will be ‘affordable’ housing, including socially-rented homes and shared ownership units and original council tenants have been promised a right-to-return.

This case presents a variety of different issues to tackle and the four studio groups from the 2019-2020 CDSS cohort approached the site from varied angles, with the aim to uncover some of the unsaid truths and implications of council redevelopment schemes in London.

Bibliography

- Cameron, D. (2016). Prime Minister pledges to transform sink estates. [Online] Gov.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-pledges-to-transform-sink-estates> [Accessed 17 June 2020].
- Gardiner, J. (2014). Berkeley gets go-ahead for massive London scheme. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.building.co.uk/news/berkeley-gets-go-ahead-for-massivelondon-scheme/5066521.article>. [Accessed 10 February 2020].
- Hackney Council, (2020). Helping others to build. [Online] Hackney Council Building Help. Available at: <https://hackney.gov.uk/building-help> [Accessed 17 June 2020].
- London Assembly, (2015). Knock it Down or Do it Up? The Challenge of Estate Regeneration. [Online] London Assembly Housing Committee. Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_migrate_files_destination/KnockItDownOrDoItUp_0.pdf [Accessed 17 June 2020].
- Malpass, P., and Victory, C. (2010). The Modernisation of social housing in England. International Journal of Housing Policy, 10(1), p. 3-18.
- Nelson, S., and Lewis, J. (2019). Resident engagement in the regeneration of social housing: The case of Woodberry Down, London. International Journal of Housing Policy.
- Parker, S. (1999). From the Slums to the Suburbs: Labour Party Policy, the LCC, and the Woodberry Down Estate, Stoke Newington 1934-1961. The London Journal, 24(2), p. 51-69.
- Pipe, J., and Glanville, P. (2015). Hackney city villages. In A. Adonis, & B. Davies (Eds.), City villages. London: Institute for Public Policy Research.
- Watt, P. (2013). “It’s not for us.” Regeneration, the 2012 Olympics and the Gentrification of East London City. 17(1), p. 99-118

0.1 Map of large scale council estate redevelopments (yellow circles, scaled by area) in London, highlighting Woodbury Down, Hackney and surrounding local authorities. Source: King (unpublished).



0.2 An aerial photograph showing Woodberry Down's mix of redeveloped and existing council housing in the foreground. Source: Gardiner (2014).



RECLAIMING THE ORDINARY PUBLIC REALM

Eliza Daeschler, Joel Engler, Arushi Malhotra, and Lukas Sturm

Introduction

Woodberry Down is the site of one of London's many large-scale redevelopment projects. These development projects are often focused on profit and financial viability, and accompanied by processes of displacement of former tenants and rising economic inequality (Minton, 2017). In the face of these problematic processes, the importance of the public realm becomes increasingly prevalent. As a site for ordinary everyday-life, accessible for everybody, it is particularly significant for the otherwise vulnerable and excluded. However, the public realm in Woodberry Down faces challenges through the redevelopment:

- **Densification:** The redevelopment replaces the mostly five-storey council estate with high-rise tower blocks, up to 30 floors. This increases the number of dwellings from 2,000 to 5,500 and the population density by 175% to 288 inhabitants per hectare, which is far beyond London's average of 40 inhabitants per hectare (Office for National Statistics, 2019).
- **Privatisation of Public Space:** While the old estates provided generous public space, the redevelopment reduces publicly

accessible space by 69%, with focus on a few over-designed parks with restricted usages and exclusive access for residents.

- **Increasing Inequality:** London's housing prices are rapidly outgrowing incomes, especially for those in the lower-income quartile (Trust for London, 2019) – the Woodberry Down redevelopment is not an exception. Consequently, the redevelopment brings gentrification, a new 'gentry' replacing many of the neighbourhood's initial inhabitants. With a more unequal crowd, the "identical rights to ordinary and crucial public spaces" (Tonkiss, 2005, p.68) become a potential field of contestation and conflict.

Against this backdrop, this project's ambition is to reimagine the planning process for public space design in large-scale redevelopments and its potential spatial outcomes. It is proposing an approach to care for and recognise the value of everyday practises, and to reclaim the public realm as a democratic and inclusive entity.



1.1 Pivotal challenges of the public realm in Woodbury Down caused by redevelopment
 1.2 Images of ordinary public life in Woodberry Down



Context & Conceptual Framework

Public realm, as defined by Richard Sennett (2018), is the space where strangers meet. It is a space for interaction and dialogue, for political engagement, social reproduction, but also the material site of publicly accessible resources (Toolis, 2017). The ordinary public realm includes places that comprise everyday life, such as parks and playgrounds, gyms, schoolyards, bus stops, community centres or the local supermarket, which Ash Amin (2002) refers to as 'micro-publics.' Moreover, it includes the spaces between the supermarket and the street, between the bus stop and the school, or the 'leftovers,' and 'odds and ends of space' (Whyte, 1980).

Throughout its history, Woodberry Down has had a community culture built on an ample network of public space (WDCO, 2015). These spaces are significant for regular meetings and ephemeral day-to-day encounters (Whyte, 1980; Tonkiss, 2005), and thereby create 'social capital' (Jacobs, 1961), and 'place attachment' (Altman and Low, 1992). This is especially relevant in the economically and ethnically diverse neighbourhood of Woodberry Down with various

religious communities and institutions present (Office for National Statistics, 2011). Here, the common public space is a potential site for "everyday lived experiences and local negotiations of difference, on microcultures of place" (Amin, 2002, p. 967).

However, this slowly grown network of public space and social capital is being disrupted by the current redevelopment. Moreover, the approach to public realm design employed by the developer is based on an oversimplified understanding of the existing space leading to overdetermined spatial results. As the planners intervene from a relative distance, the masterplan is based on a lack of contextual understanding (Hall, 2012).

This materialises in a new public realm which is overprescribed, sanitised, and imposes excess control, thereby discouraging appropriation by varied users.

This can be understood as a natural outcome of generic guidelines

1.3. Fragmented public life





1.7 The Skeleton of Public Life (SoPL)

Design Intervention: The Skeleton of Public Life (SoPL)

In order to consolidate our analysis, we summarised all our information in one map called the Skeleton of Public Life (SoPL). The map reflects crucial areas where daily life takes place and thereby represents a careful consideration of everyday life often ignored in conventional planning approaches.

Building up on our observations, this intervention is an approach for public realm design in redevelopments, which is rooted in recognition of the ordinary. We propose to institutionalise The Skeleton of Public Life (Figure 1.7) in public realm planning to ensure implementation at scale. This can be done by translating the SoPL into site-specific spatial codes that are respected by various stakeholders and serve as the foundation for development and negotiations.

Intervention Framework

The framework (Figure 1.8) consists of three steps: Recognise, Revisit and Reclaim. All three stages contain institutional interventions and their spatial manifestations. The spatial interventions are selected examples for potential outcomes of the proposed changes to the redevelopment process.

1. Recognise

This process involves the recognition and visualisation of the existing SoPL. The patterns of everyday life need to be observed throughout the day. Movements, day-to-day social institutions and gathering spaces need to be mapped. This project proposes

regular recognition runs in large-scale redevelopment sites, conducted by site-specific committees consisting of employees of the GLA planning department, the respective local authority, and members of local neighbourhood organisations.

2. Revisit

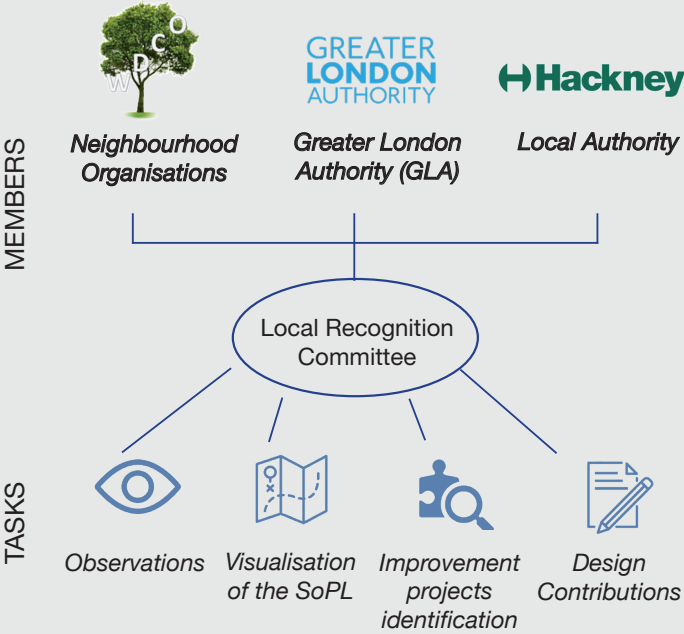
Specific areas of the redevelopment are identified for incremental changes to the existing SoPL. The committee identifies reclamation zones, key spaces of everyday life, which have the potential for improvement, as well as underutilised spaces. These minor interventions and tweaks are to be designed and carried out by the local authority.

3. Reclaim

This aims at incorporating the recognition of ordinary public life into the masterplanning of large-scale redevelopment processes. In the negotiation of planning permissions for new redevelopments, the GLA will be able to base requirements around strategic land retention and compensation through existing instruments, the SoPL and on the identified reclamation zones.

1.8. Intervention framework





1.9 Structure and roles of the Local Recognition Committee

	GLA	Council	Community Organisation	Developer	Others (TfL etc.)
Observation & Mapping					
Identification of Reclamation Zones					
Execution of Revisit Interventions					
Execution of Reclaim interventions					
Financing of Interventions					
Consecutive Maintenance					

1.10 Roles and Responsibilities

Institutional Intervention

In order to implement this framework, the drivers and mechanisms of the three stages need to be identified. Essential for the institutional intervention is the set-up of small site-specific committees which conduct regular recognition runs in the neighbourhoods of large-scale redevelopments. These Local Recognition Committees (LRCs) need a direct connection and knowledge of the site as well as the expertise, authority and reach. Thus, they need to include at least one member of each: the local authority (Hackney Council), the local neighbourhood organisation (Woodberry Down Community Organisation), and the GLA. The LRCs fulfil several functions:

- Observation: Recognition runs are conducted over five to fifteen days, depending on the size and complexity of the site. Every run includes the observation of the neighbourhood, identification of foot traffic, people’s movements, gatherings and key social institutions of everyday life.
- Visualisation: The committee visualises the observations in the form of the SoPL. This document is then published through official channels.
- Identification: By revisiting the site and engaging with the local community, key reclamation projects are identified. These projects can enhance the heavily used spaces or increase access to new space.
- Design Contribution: The LRC reviews the purpose and key elements of the interventions

For the small-scale Revisit projects, the respective local authority’s planning department is responsible for designing and implementing changes. This can involve small initiatives like changing parking restrictions or facilitating access to formerly inaccessible spaces. Minor budgets (approximately £10,000) would need to be allocated by the local authority for these interventions.

In the Reclaim context, the SoPL document serves as a spatial code for masterplanning in large-scale redevelopment and its compliance is ensured by the GLA and the local authority, in the planning application process. It would ensure that major changes to the SoPL caused by the redevelopment are justified and compensated by the developer. This could also include claims for strategic land retention in masterplans for expected demographic shifts. Also, existing tools such as Section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) could be leveraged.

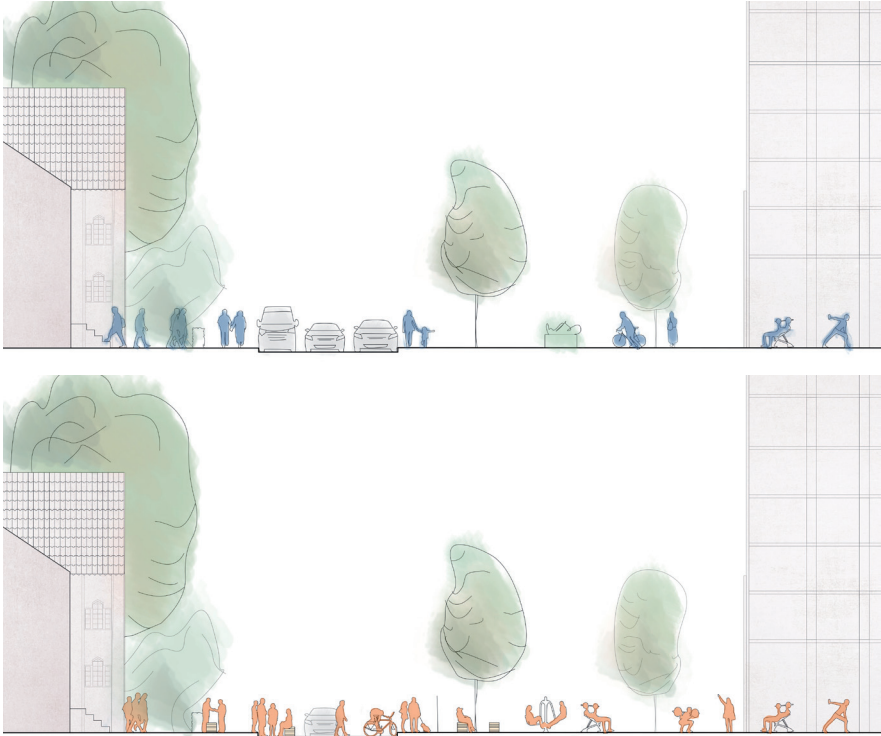
This institutional framework also aids in achieving more important goals of local capacity building and connections to London-wide public realm strategies. As the GLA acts as a critical stakeholder for ensuring enforcement and facilitating expertise and resources, this framework helps in establishing a city-wide network of initiatives, strategies and redevelopment plans.

Spatial Interventions

In this section, we propose a set of spatial interventions in Woodberry Down based on our observations. These interventions are not comprehensive for the site but serve as examples for potential outcomes of the institutionalisation of the SoPL.

Revisit - Gym and Church Interface

One of those identified sites lies between St. Olave’s Church and The Gym. These are frequently used institutions currently separated by Woodberry Down Road. Gatherings in front of the church are hardly possible, as the main entrance is on a narrow sidewalk with parked cars forming a barrier between the two institutions (Figure 1.11). We see the street realm as a place where people from the church community, gym-goers and people of Woodberry Down can assemble. This minor intervention includes the removal of parking lots on both sides of the street. Additionally, the colour of the street surface could be changed to emphasise the connection and signal drivers to slow down. Simple street furniture and fitness equipment could be installed which allow extended stays and active engagement.



1.11 Current and envisioned interface of “The Gym” and St. Olave’s church

Revisit - Gym and Church Interface

Other bustling places are the bus stops. Numerous people and particularly schoolchildren are waiting here every day, close to the noise and air pollution producing Seven Sisters Road. These bus stops are places where people of different backgrounds encounter each other; often repetitively and regularly. Nonetheless, little attention is given to these ‘mobile spaces’ as a crucial part of everyday life and encounter (Purifoye, 2014).

Opening up the fenced-off space behind the bus stop provides amenable waiting spaces with benches and trees, making the waiting time more pleasant and safe (Figure 1.12). Further amenities like job boards, WiFi and drinking water could be included. This proposition would need cooperation between the residents, TfL, Hackney and private landowners.



1.12 Current and envisioned Bus stop

Spatial Intervention - Reclaim

Based on the SoPL, we identified several zones for the public reclamation of space. These are located in underutilised areas with strategic value. These interventions require changes to the masterplan and financing from the developer through existing instruments such as Section 106 or the CIL.

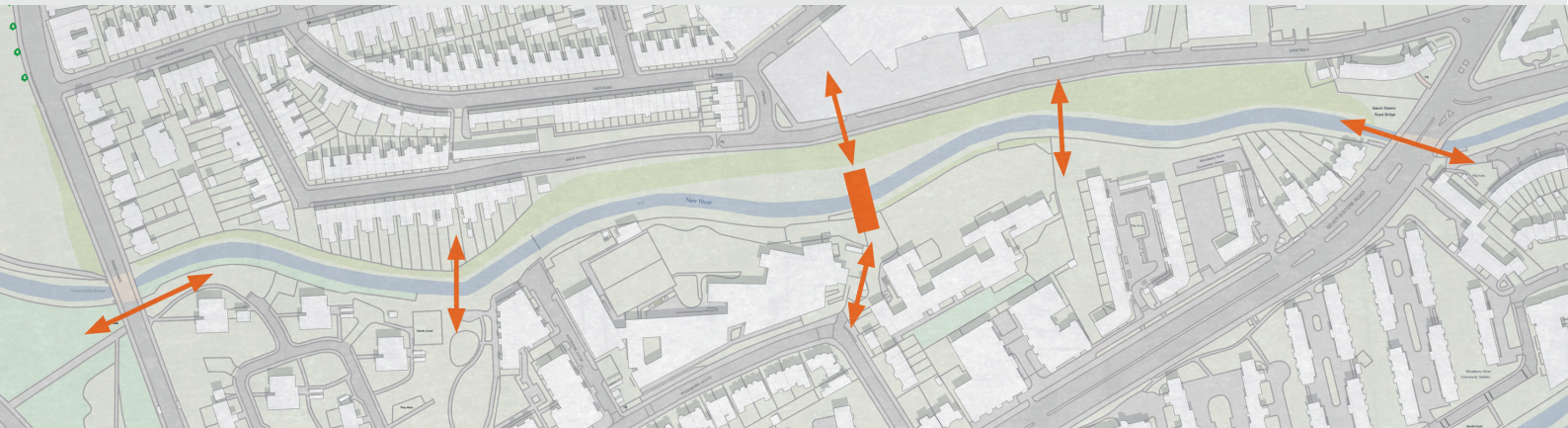
Reclaim - New River Connection

The observations showed that residents of the northern part of Woodberry Down barely visit the reservoirs in the south, mainly due to the barrier of Seven Sisters Road. There is an existing resource,

The New River, that meanders through Woodberry Down. However, the river is scarcely accessible.

This intervention proposes that the GLA and Hackney Council require the developer to incorporate the New River as public space into their masterplan. The GLA could facilitate the collaboration of Hackney, Haringey and Thameswater to enhance the accessibility to the New River. A paved walkway, benches and potentially bridges to better tie Woodberry Down into its broader context are proposed here.

1.13 Envisioning of the New River



2025: Open space for public usage
1.14 Dynamic Central Public Square.



2030: Woodberry Down weekly market



2035: Space for a new medical centre

Reclaim - Central Public Square

Demographic trends and an ageing society will create new necessities over time. Spaces need to be adaptable to changing societal needs. In Woodberry Down, commercial spaces are in private hands and unlikely to react to necessities of everyday life. Cllr Jon Burke of Hackney criticises the developer's retail strategy as homogeneous and emphasised the need for flexibility and adaptability, but the local government has little power to influence it (Burke, 2020).

Our intervention proposes strategic retention of land in the centre of Woodberry Down. This land could be used to create a new public square, owned and managed by Hackney Council. An open platform for diverse users and uses that can accommodate changing needs and provide room for temporary usages such as markets or small-scale entrepreneurs. Partial development of the square would be conceivable in order to react to more general needs in the future, such as a medical centre or a nursery.

Bibliography

- Altman, I. & Low, S. M., (1992). Place Attachment. In: I. Altman & S. M. Low, eds. Place Attachment. Human Behavior and Environment (Advances in Theory and Research). Boston, MA: Springer, p. 1-17.
- Amin, A. (2002). Ethnicity and the Multicultural City: Living with Diversity. Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space, 34(6), pp. 959-980.
- Hackney, (2012). Public Realm Strategy. London: Hackney Council.
- Hall, S., (2012). City, Street and Citizen: The measure of the ordinary. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Mattern, S., (2018). Maintenance and Care. Places Journal.
- Jacobs, J., (1961). Death and Life of Great American Cities. New York: Random House.
- Minton, A., (2017). Big Capital: Who is London for?. London: Random House.
- Office for National Statistics, (2019). Population Estimates for UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: Mid-2018, using April 2019 local authority district codes, London: s.n.
- Office for National Statistics, (2019). Ratio of House Prices to Earnings, Borough, London: Office for National Statistics (ONS).
- Office for National Statistics; 2011 Census aggregate data. UK Data Service (Edition: June 2016).
- Puig de la Bellacasa, M., (2011). Matters of Care in Technoscience: Assembling Neglected Things. Social Studies of Science, 41(1), p. 100.
- Purifoye, G. Y., (2014). Moving Social Spaces: Public Transportation, Material Differences, and the Power of Mobile Communities in Chicago. Chicago: Loyola University Chicago.
- Sennett, R., (2006). The Open City. Berlin: Housing and Urban Neighbourhoods.
- Sennett, R., (2018b) The Public Realm. In: S. Hall & R. Burdett, eds. The SAGE Handbook of the 21st Century City. London: SAGE Publications, pp. 585-601.
- Tonkiss, F., (2005). Space, the City and Social Theory. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Toolis, E. E., (2017). Theorizing Critical Placemaking as a Tool for Reclaiming Public Space. American Journal of Community Psychology, Volume 59, pp. 184-199.
- Trust for London, (2019). trustforlondon.org.uk. [Online] Available at: <https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/data/topics/inequality/> [Accessed 29 01 2020].
- Whyte, W. H. (1980). The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces. New York: Project for Public Spaces.
- Woodberry Down Community Organisation, (2015). Woodberry Down: The People's Story. London: Woodberry Down Community Organisation and Eastside Community Heritage.
- Centre For London, Supported by the Mayor of London (2019). Public London: the regulation, management and use of public spaces. London: Centre for London.

Interviews

- Rode, P., 2019. Interview with Daeschler, E., Malhotra, A. and Sturm, L. 16 December, London.
- Burke, J., 2020. Interview with Daeschler, E., Engler, J., Malhotra, A., and Sturm, L. 17 January, London.

Conclusion

The key themes of our research are the importance of ordinary life and why it should be cared for and recognised while designing the public realm. By building on the existing theoretical framework of care, recognition, and micro-publics, this project proposes a new vocabulary for public realm design. One that moves beyond the rhetoric of aesthetics and marketability and focuses on everyday activity by varied users. Our intervention shows that when the ordinary is listened to, the public becomes part of the design narrative, creating more inclusive and unique spaces. The project also highlights the importance of fieldwork, site observation, and socio-spatial analysis as a process for understanding local contexts. It is crucial that this process of recognition is not voluntary, but gets institutionalised to ensure application. This can be done by translating on-site analysis into site-specific spatial codes that are respected by various stakeholders and serve as the foundation for development and negotiations.

This recognition and care should be spread to every redevelopment in London and beyond. Continuous revisits and improvements to the SoPL further capture the imaginations of the everyday users making the community a part of an organic process of city making. The proposed institutional framework promotes local capacity-building and empowers the local authorities and community organisations to have better and more meaningful negotiations with the developer to reclaim the public realm. With these meaningful changes, we hope to create an adaptable and democratic ordinary public realm.

RECOMMONNING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Didem Ertem, Haroun Khalid, Armando Salvador, and Alexandra Zisser

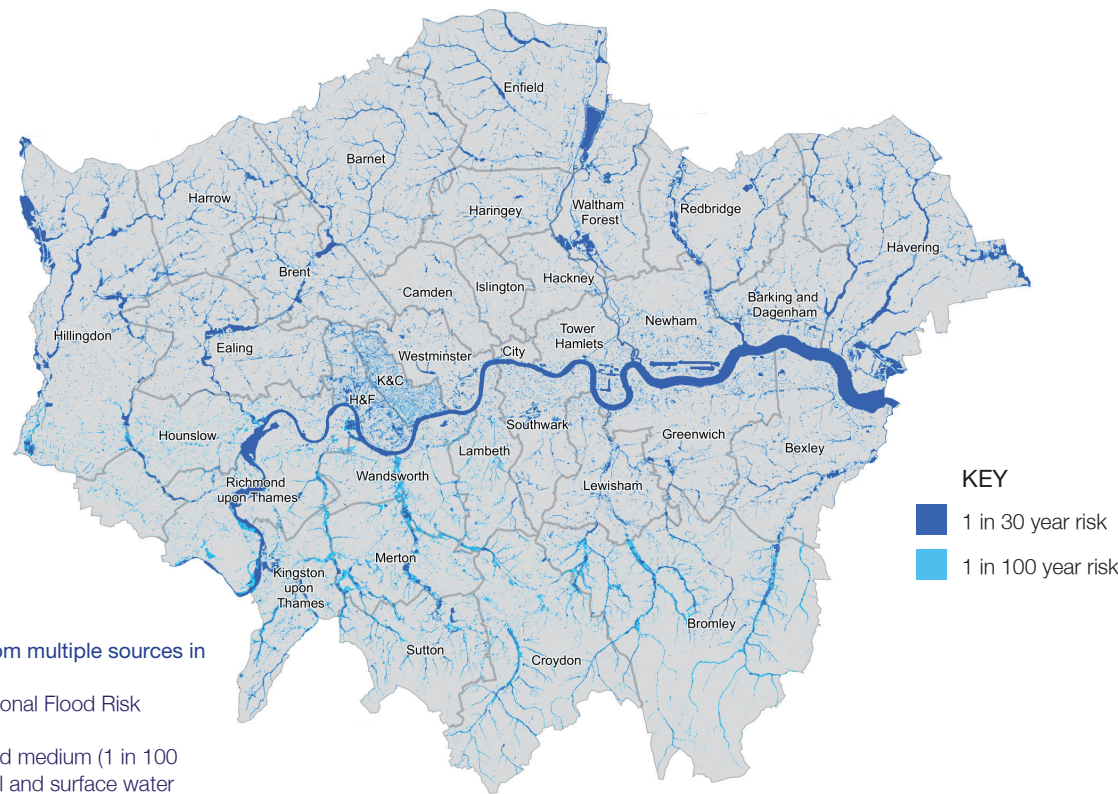
Water Politics and Ideology in Regeneration

Nature and cities have long been thought of as binary conditions. Over the course of London’s development, processes of urbanisation have been framed as a conquest of nature, taking an adversarial position which necessitates the domination of the existing ecological systems in the name of progress. This mindset goes hand in hand with privatisation, elite capture, and social exclusion, a familiar trajectory in London which is evident today.

Woodberry Down is a site that embodies many of the tensions that define the current state of development in London and raises important questions about the direction of London’s continuous reinvention: what does ‘regeneration’ mean? How is the current climate emergency shaping the physical and social development of the city? Who has a claim to urban space and assets?

Our project sits at the intersection of these questions and focuses on Woodberry Down’s most striking physical feature, the Woodberry Down Reservoirs, as the subject of our investigation. Today, these reservoirs primarily serve private interests: capitalised as marketing material for luxury flats, quasi-exclusive recreational spaces, and enclosed for ecological protection.

Yet despite, or indeed because, of their highly privatised state, the reservoirs offer an exemplary opportunity to reimagine an urban landscape in London that embodies more democratic values. This opens the space for us to rethink urban development and its relationship to nature, particularly in the context of the impending global climate emergency.



2.1 Flooding map from multiple sources in Greater London
Source: London Regional Flood Risk Appraisal (2017).
High (1 in 30 year) and medium (1 in 100 year) risk of river, tidal and surface water flooding combined.

This is Not a Drill Climate emergency and risk in London

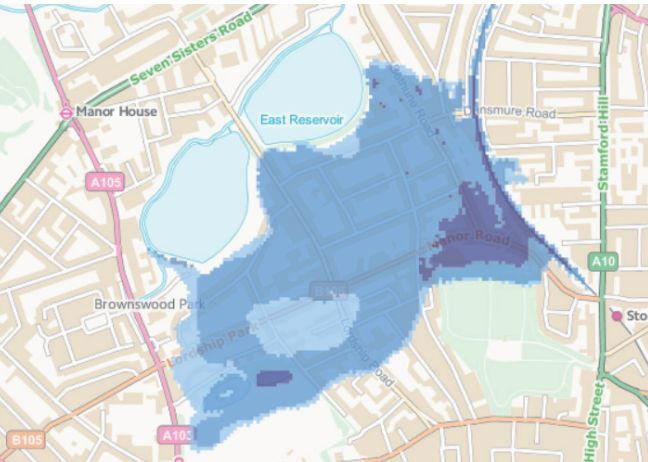
Today, it is no longer provocative to claim that the world is on the brink of a catastrophic climate emergency. Global climate emergency has shifted from a spectre of the future to a looming reality.

Climate emergency has become increasingly threatening in London, which is situated within river basins and floodplains at high or moderate risks of flooding (Mayor of London, 2019). The Thames is the largest and best-known water asset in London and has received billions of pounds of investment in flood mitigation since the 1980s. However, it is by no means the only source of risk. Woodberry Down is situated within the Lea River Valley, a ribbon of tidal and freshwater wetlands which runs from Hertfordshire to the Thames (Lea Valley Regional Park Authority, 2011; Mayor of London, 2018).

Examining the urban and ecological topography of the Woodberry Reservoirs we can see that they sit within a connected, ecological system that does not conform to bureaucratic borders and risk is inequitably distributed and disproportionately borne by certain areas and groups (Dalton, 2019).

London’s precarious position towards global climate emergency and flood risk is not merely a technical challenge. More than a question of hydraulic engineering, any attempt to fully address this complex issue must be firmly rooted in ecological, political, and social analyses of Woodberry Down’s specific context.

2.2 Berkeley Homes marketing scheme featuring Woodberry Down Reservoirs
Source: Berkeley Group (Retrieved 2020).



2.3 Woodberry Down Reservoirs flood risk map
Source: Crown Copyright (2020).
The neighbourhoods south of the reservoirs are most at risk of flooding.

Flood water depth

- Over 2 m
- 0.3 - 2 m
- Below 0.3 m

Theorising the Site More than a technical challenge

Political Ecology
Our analysis of the Woodberry Down Reservoirs stems from the theoretical framework of Political Ecology which examines how different constellations of power consider the interplay between human society and the environment (Heynen, Kaika & Swyngedouw, 2006). Considering the intricate interrelationship between politics, economics, culture, and biology, political ecology challenges us to consider how the environment both shapes and is shaped by human society.

Through a political-ecological lens we have contextualised the site in terms of its network actors, their impacts, and their diverse and contrasting conceptualisations of nature (Figure 2.4).

Thereby, we have identified the following issues that are characteristic to Woodberry Down and also emblematic of London more generally:

- The inequitable division of environmental risk;
- Noxious and traffic-heavy streets effectively blocking access to green space;
- Spatial fragmentation and social disconnection between neighbourhoods;
- Elite capture of green space corresponding to market-oriented housing regeneration projects;
- A lack of local residents’ capacity to make change stemming from a top-down approach to planning.

These trends infringe upon the assumed public nature of the reservoirs, leading to spatial fragmentation, asymmetrical claims to water resources, and social inequity.

The Commons

The theoretical conception of The Commons offers a framework for democratic practices to address these inequities. Since the impacts of water management are strongly felt on the local level, the “protection of ecological and public health will only occur if communities are mobilized and enabled to govern their own resources” (Bakker, 2007, p. 441)

The Commons is conventionally thought of as anything that is not privately held and is publicly accessible, often set against the contrasting forces of enclosure and elite capture. Crucially, commonage entails a processional relationship between space and the communities that make use of it (Amin & Howell, 2016). Ultimately though, the Commons is an object yet to be defined.

A ‘pure commons’ is inherently contradictory to the reality of implementing commonage—particularly in a market-driven, privatised London. Considering the complex reality of urban power structures, we have taken this ideal framing of The Commons as a guiding principle upon which we can model a process of incremental commonage in London.

Commonage of risk

Such an approach would similarly entail an active and continual political relationship between local communities, urban institutions, and the impacts of climate change in order to more equitably distribute the burden of environmental risk.

To achieve this relationship, we envision a two-pronged approach that creates political and physical space for commonage to emerge, devolving autonomy over risk infrastructure to the local level, thus unlocking physical urban assets from their current constellation of national-scale state regulation and market-driven commercial privatisation.

Considering these multi-scalar issues, we call for the introduction of a mechanism that combines social and environmental resilience under the banner of flood mitigation. This would entail changing the planning culture around environmental risk in London to democratise waterfront space, complement existing environmental protection measures, and empower users of public water resources through stewardship.

2.4 Political-ecological Actor Analysis

Actors	Role	Classification	Perception of Nature
Woodberry Down Redevelopment	Redeveloping Woodberry Down housing estate	Private	Nature as a lifestyle to be marketed
Woodberry Wetlands	Managing the Woodberry Wetlands	Non-governmental organisation	Nature as a condition to be protected
Greenwich Leisure (West Reservoir Centre)	Operating the West Reservoir Centre	Private	Nature as a platform for privatised recreation
Stamford Hill West	N/A	Residential neighbourhood	Excluding commodity
Public Facilities	Health centre, school, community/religious centre	Varied	Adjacent without meaningful connection
Lincoln Court Estate	Existing council housing	Governmental	Adjacent without meaningful connection

2.5 Design Principles for Socio-enviromental Resilience

Problematic	Solution Aims
Inequitable distribution of environmental risk	Nature as a lifestyle to be marketed
Noxious, traffic-heavy streets block access to green space	Nature as a condition to be protected
Spatial fragmentation and social disconnection between neighbourhoods	Spatial and visual connectedness
Elite capture of green space by market-oriented housing regeneration projects	Democratisation of space
Top-down planning approach leading to lack of local residents' changemaking authority	Provision for mechanisms to devolve power to local groups

Institutional & Policy Configuration Mapping contemporary water management

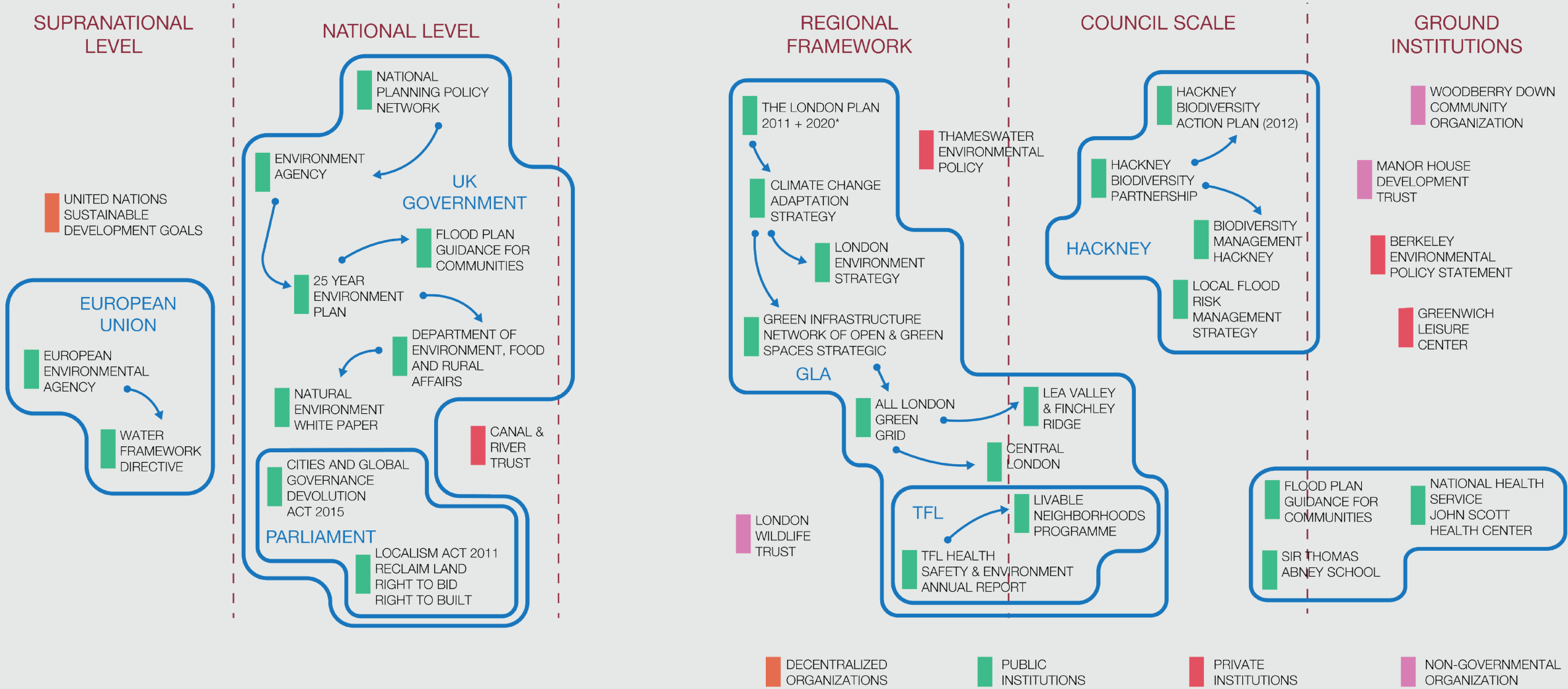
Considering water is an essential element to human survival, health, and sanitation, it is unsurprising that water is highly politicised.

It’s immediately clear from the institutional actor map, in Figure 2.6, that the political and regulatory system in which the reservoirs are situated is complex. Our analysis revealed four key findings:

1. Supranational governance offers only loose, non-binding guidance;
2. Water governance, planning, and enforcement is centralised at the Central Government level;
3. The Greater London Authority (GLA) has undertaken limited, isolated initiatives around water and greenspace coordination;
4. Ground-level institutions and citizen organisations have no role in the governance or oversight of the reservoirs.

In synthesis, the policies and regulatory bodies around water in London, and the Woodberry Down Reservoirs specifically, are disconnected and lack a clear role for local authorities, ground institutions, or citizens.

2.6 Diagram of Institutional and Regulatory Frameworks Sources: DEFRA (2018), Mayor of London (2019) and Ministry of Housing (2019).



Intervention:
A Networked Approach

Multiscalar Policy Intervention

The first prong of our proposal reconfigures the political power flows governing water in London by introducing a coordinating regional-level body to act as a mediator between residents and the Central Government. Through this body, cross-level connections are made which maintain the necessary health and safety oversight powers of the National Government while democratising use practices and daily management to local actors.

Under this new configuration, DEFRA will retain its authority to undertake large-scale infrastructure projects as well as regulatory oversight on key matters such as health and sanitation; but devolve site management and decision-making authority to residents, along with funding.

This is embodied by the Water Governance Collective (WGC), operated by the GLA, which will consist of citizens, government officials, technical experts, and ground institutions to influence higher levels of power. This body will oversee special planning permissions for any commercial development bordering urban water assets, protecting against privatisation and elite capture. Planning permission in these cases will be predicated on a financial contribution to the WGC ensuring financial viability and co-participation from commercial developers.

Residents will be the architects of strategic direction and vision for areas of water commonage by holding the majority of seats in the WGC. Strategic planning and agenda setting will flow upwards from the community to the WGC, which in turn offers citizens the technical expertise, funding, and political legitimacy needed to achieve those strategic aims (Figure 2.8).

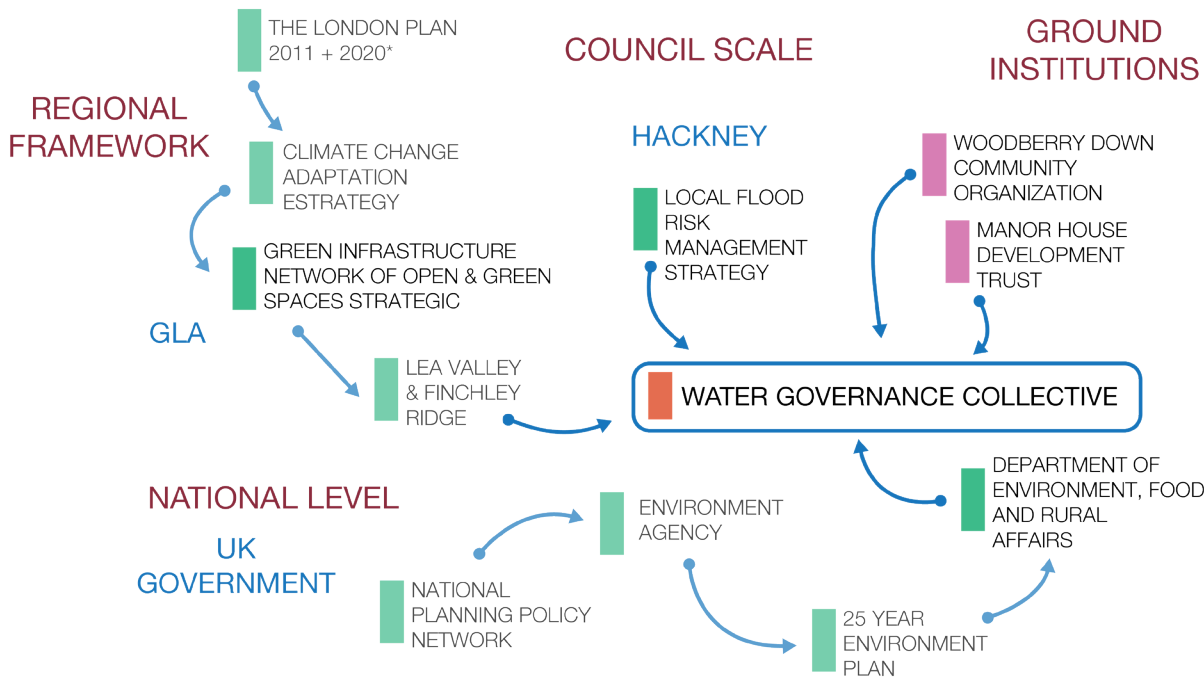
Physical Intervention: Stitching Together London’s Watershed

The creation of a Water Governance Collective vested with the authority to impact the built environment frees up policy space for the implementation of a physical intervention that:

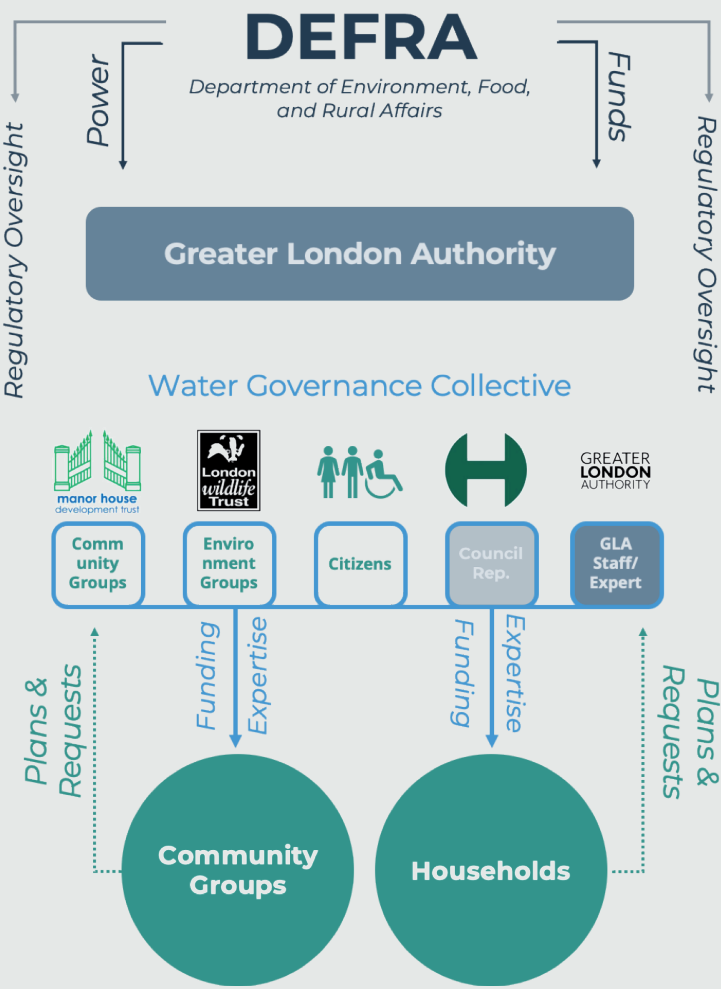
- Brings environmental and social resilience together as a mutually reliant mechanism to address environmental risk in London;
- Promotes the full physical integration of the surrounding residential areas;
- Democratises waterfront space as a platform for commonage;
- Complements existing environmental preservation measures;
- Empowers the users of the waterfront with its stewardship;

Complementary to our policy interventions, we propose a dual-level spatial intervention which uses infrastructure projects as a platform for democratising space and creating a physical and social scaffolding for processes of commonage around water in London.

2.7 Diagram of Institutional and Regulatory Frameworks



2.8 Woodberry Down Water Governance Collective Process Diagram



2.9 Roles of key institutions in the Woodberry Down Water Governance Collective



State-led Interventions

Rain Garden Canal System

We propose a large-scale flood mitigation infrastructure project spearheaded by DEFRA to create an urban water system that is responsive to large-scale flooding, and simultaneously unlocks spaces for commonage.

This first element of our spatial intervention works to connect the reservoirs with the existing ecological system of the Lea River Valley, in order to create a cohesive catchment network that mitigates the impact of flooding. This entails the creation of ‘rain garden’ canals consisting of native shrubs and flowers on drainage surfaces, that can take in water overflow and reallocate it to nearby retention ponds to alleviate surface flooding (Figure 2.10). In the case of the Woodberry Reservoirs, overflow water would be redistributed via canals linking Clissold Park, Abney Park, and Finsbury Park (Figure 2.13).

This green infrastructure fits with evolving processes of pedestrianization and an expanding network of integrated public spaces. In this way we will improve community resource accessibility, thereby promoting social integration and commoning the burden of flood risk.

2.10 Visualisation of Lordship Road with future complementary pedestrianisation efforts
Source: Google Earth (Retrieved 2019).



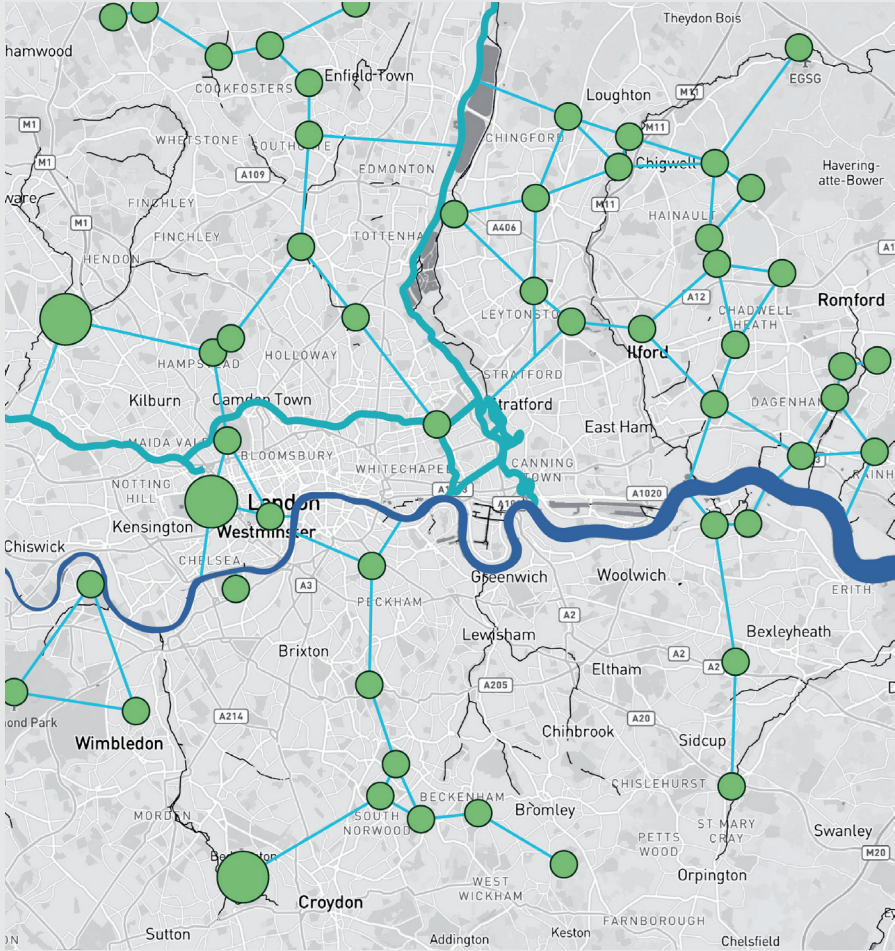
The London Sponge

To further address the risk of flooding at a city-wide scale we propose a radical approach to flood alleviation in London, one that retools the urban structure and hydro-ecological features to transform risk factors into tools for risk management. Our proposal calls for a city-wide green sponge network as a national-level strategy, dispersed throughout London to relieve pressure on existing infrastructure on a daily basis and serve as catchment basins to prevent more serious flooding in times of crisis (Figure 2.11). This approach would reconfigure water assets into a single interwoven system. Micro-sponge infrastructure and rain garden networks would coordinate to safely channel excess water through the city into existing large-scale drainage infrastructure.

In the case of Woodberry Down, Stamford Hill West bears the highest burden of flood risk. Here is where we will insert our green sponge. During a flooding event, this could absorb rising waters. This green space also integrates both sides of the reservoirs, providing a public space with public amenities. The insertion of a green sponge should be considered as a radical measure in the face of severe flooding.

The full implementation of effective sponge infrastructure would entail a compulsory purchase order on the houses in the most precarious position in the impending climate crisis. The unfortunate reality of our current global trajectory will necessitate using the drastic measure of a CPO to protect the wider neighbourhood and to repurpose the land to enhance environmental resilience.

2.11 Wide-scale Sponge Infrastructure creates a cohesive system



In order to mitigate the considerable consequences of this approach, displacement should come with a provision that planning permission for large-scale development in flood-prone areas be contingent on the ability to give first priority to those displaced by environmental mitigation interventions on the site of new developments.

Implemented as one part of a city-wide re-adaptation, no single site would bear the brunt of massive flooding, making this retooling of the city the best approach to flood mitigation.

Citizen-led Interventions

Elevated Platform

Our proposed institutional and large-scale infrastructure interventions together build the physical and social spaces for community stewardship and ongoing oversight and commonage. Here we can begin to imagine the ways in which the Woodberry Down Water Governance Collective might take advantage of the reclaimed water assets.

In the case of the social fragmentation around the reservoirs, we can use the power and funding of the WGC to build a local intervention of an elevated platform over Lordship Road, connected with Pedestrian Walkways which further extend into the surrounding neighbourhoods.

This elevated platform is envisioned as an elevated park and deck which serves as common space for the community, promotes greater physical and visual connections to the surrounding areas, and properly democratises access to the reservoirs, which are currently monopolised by the new Woodberry Down development.

Moreover, the network of Pedestrian Walkways will further enhance the democratisation of both visual and physical access to the reservoirs while creating additional access points in connection with the existing public facilities in surrounding neighbourhoods. Importantly, the design of these walkways will be sensitive to the existing ecological realities of the area, primarily occupying space on the recreational West Reservoir, with a smaller footprint on the East Reservoir in deference to the existing nature preserve. Visible from major roads such as Seven Sisters, the walkways also create a visually symbolic connection that promotes the reservoirs and platform as convenient and welcoming for all, regardless of housing or ownership status.

Street Level Individual Scale Interventions

To comprehensively reconfigure London to respond to the reality of frequent and severe flooding, the national-scale infrastructure project will be integrated with a proliferation of small-scale interventions along secondary streets. On the level of side streets down to individual property owners, citizen groups should inform the actualisation of rainwater management systems from the ground up. Such micro-interventions could consist of rain garden extensions, the propagation of bioswale planters, or permeable pavement that allows the ground to hold and soak in runoff from roads and driveways. These small-scale interventions connect into the central infrastructure of the rain garden canals and serve to stitch together the currently disconnected watershed, creating an integrated network that works in accordance with London’s ecological topography while specifically responding to the local context in which residents reside.

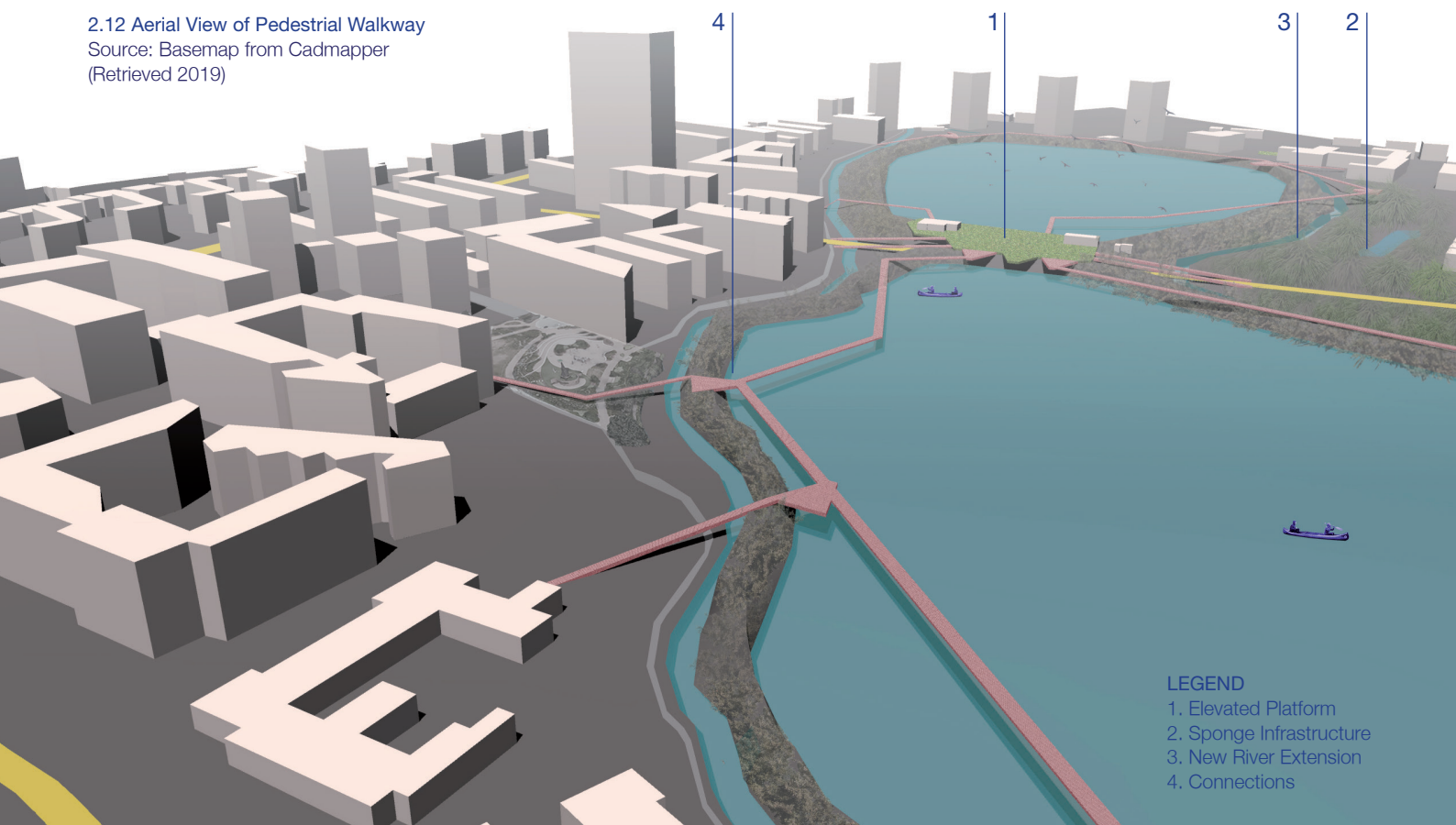
While we have introduced three very different interventions in response to the problematisation of water in London, they come together to work as a cohesive whole. Altogether, the final outlook of these interventions will be an integrated community with institutional facilities orbiting around the waterfront with fully transparent access to water features around the reservoirs, while promoting community governance of resilient urban assets that are commonly developed, overseen, and enjoyed.

Conclusion

Over the course of this report we have outlined an ambitious but necessary undertaking to strengthen the ecological and social resilience of areas of urban water resources, driven by dual imperatives of protecting against catastrophic flood events and reclaiming urban spaces in a moment characterised by elite enclosure and privatisation in London.

In the face of the climate emergency, it falls to us to imagine a radical structural readjustment of our cities. Given what we know about the intimate interrelationship between social and environmental resilience, the two must be addressed via a reciprocal approach. This entails unfurling flood mitigation infrastructure that works to reverse the converging trends of elite capture and spatial fragmentation in addition to equitably distributing environmental risk. Such an approach adapts our city to existing natural systems, a departure from the antagonistic posture that urbanisation has conventionally held towards the natural world. In doing so, we unlock space to enact an urban future that commons risk and safeguards the capacity to pursue our collective wants, needs, and potential.

2.12 Aerial View of Pedestrian Walkway
Source: Basemap from Cadmapper
(Retrieved 2019)



LEGEND
1. Elevated Platform
2. Sponge Infrastructure
3. New River Extension
4. Connections



2.13 Integrated plan view of proposed interventions: State-led + Citizen-driven
The result is an interconnected water system that serves as an interface of social activities around the waterfront of the Woodberry Down Area.

Bibliography

- Amin, A. and Howell, P. (2016) *Releasing the Commons*. Edited by A. Amin and P. Howell. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY : Routledge, 2016. | Series: Routledge studies in human geography: Routledge.
- Bakker, K. (2007) *The "Commons" Versus the "Commodity": Alter-Globalization, Anti-Privatization and the Human Right to Water in the Global South*. *Antipode* 39(3):430 - 455
- Berkeley Group (2019) *Woodberry Down, Apartments in Finsbury Park*. Available at: <https://www.berkeleygroup.co.uk/developments/london/finsbury-park/woodberry-down> (Accessed: 13 February 2020).
- CadMapper (2019). Available at: <https://cadmapper.com/pro/home> (Accessed: 5 February 2020).
- Crown Copyright (2019) *Flood map for planning*. Gov.Uk. Available at: https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/confirm-location?eastng=531605&no_rthing=188249&placeOrPostcode=n4 (Accessed: 13 February 2020).
- Dalton, J. (2019) *Amount of flood-prone land used for new houses in England doubles in a year, figures reveal*, *The Independent*. Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/flood-land-homes-houses-insurance-development-cpre-a9243001.html> (Accessed: 31 January 2020).
- DEFRA (2018) *Annual Report and Accounts 2018-19*. London: British Government. Available at: www.gov.uk/official-documents (Accessed: 29 January 2020).
- Heynen, N., Kaika, M. and Swyngedouw, E. (eds) (2006) *In the Nature of Cities-Urban Political Ecology and The Politics of Urban Metabolism*. Taylor & Francis.
- Lea Valley Regional Park Authority (2011) *Lea Valley & Finchley Ridge Area Framework*. London.
- Mayor of London (2018) *London Regional Flood Risk Appraisal 2018*. London.
- Mayor of London (2019) *The London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London*. London. Available at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/intend-publish-london-plan-2019> (Accessed: 13 February 2020).
- Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (2019) *National Planning Policy Framework*.

REIMAGINING REGENERATION: AFFORDABILITY, SECURITY, AND POWER

Ramses Grande, Kyja Kutnick, Noah Powers, and Hannah Wilson

Introduction

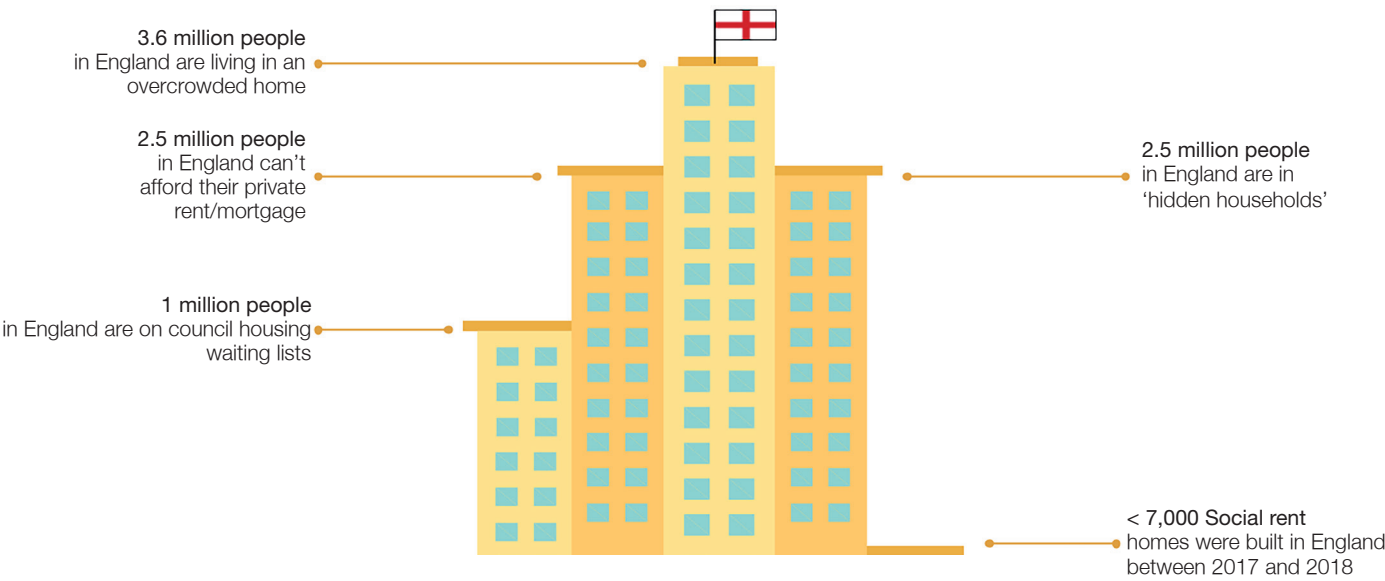
Through our initial site visits and further research into the redevelopment of Woodberry Down, it became clear that the provision of housing and affordability is at the heart of this contentious project. In response to this crisis, local authorities have relied on private developers and increasingly profit-driven housing associations to act as the main providers of ‘affordable’ housing. This report aims to investigate how the housing crisis plays out through Woodberry Down’s redevelopment by analyzing its effectiveness in delivering truly affordable housing and the resulting spatial implications.

Woodberry Down’s redevelopment has been praised for its approach to community engagement, place-making, and design. Through semi-structured interviews with experts and secondary research, we concluded that four pain points exist that prevent Woodberry Down’s redevelopment from addressing the housing crisis to the fullest extent. These four pain points, shown in Figure 3.2, can be distilled further into three themes: 1) lack of genuinely affordable tenure options; 2) insecurity and displacement and; 3) a stark power imbalance between stakeholders.

3.1 England’s housing crisis in numbers

Source: Harris (2019).

Note: not to scale



Theoretical Framework

This report uses Critical Urban Theory (CUT) to frame our analysis and interventions. Marcuse (2012) outlines three steps where CUT can be used to critically analyze and explore alternatives to the current market-driven approach to urbanism: expose, propose, and politicize. These three steps will be used to frame our report, by first exposing the housing crisis and how it plays out at Woodberry Down before moving onto proposing our onsite intervention, and lastly, politicizing our intervention through a wider policy framework to enact systemic change in the housing delivery model.

Analysis

Using CUT as a theoretical framework, the following sections will ‘expose’ the housing crisis in London and Woodberry Down. This analysis was based on primary research, through interviews with experts, and secondary research.

Affordability

In the context of London’s housing delivery system, ‘affordable’ no longer has a clear-cut definition (Adams et al., 2018). This overall vagueness leads ‘affordable housing’ to become an empty signifier in the UK’s housing policy. Hence, we will use the term ‘truly affordable’ to reference rents aligned with social rent levels.

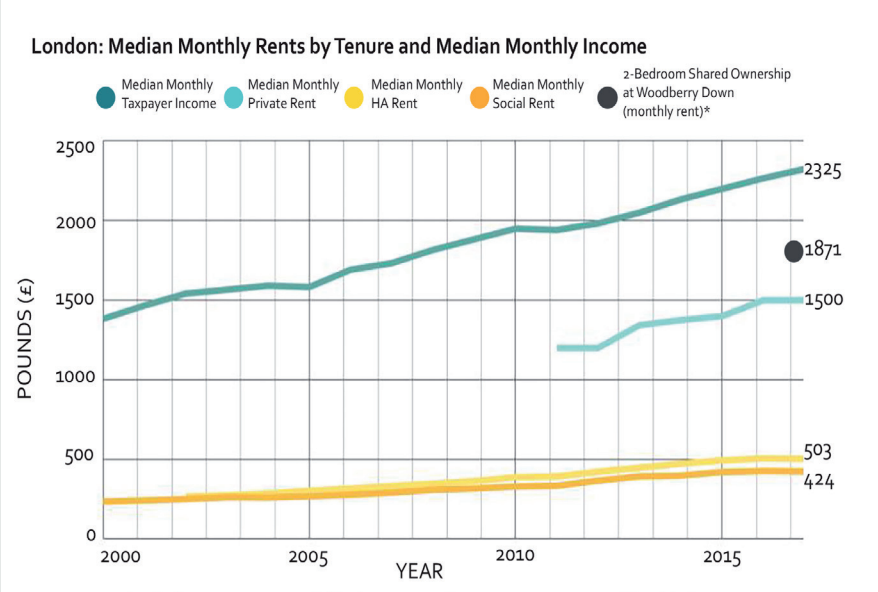
The overall trends in affordable housing tenures over time help to reveal the affordability crisis today. Due to a steady decline of truly affordable tenures delivered in the capital, more people are driven to privately-rented accommodations. However, privately-rented accommodations are often extremely expensive, with median monthly private rents rising steadily since 2011, landing at 64.5% of median income in 2018 (Figure 3).

This compares with the truly affordable rents of housing associations and social housing, at around 22% of median taxpayer income in 2018. These private rent prices are extremely unaffordable for most of London’s population, but especially a core group of ‘low’ and ‘intermediate’ skilled workers where private rents are 100% and 50%, respectively, of their median income (Gander, 2015).

3.2 Four main pain points and potential solutions identified through preliminary research

LAND PRICE	AFFORDABILITY POLICY	FINANCIAL MODEL	MODEL OF PPPs
More core funding for councils to cross subsidize land cost	One, clear and enforced definition for each tenure type that all actors in housing delivery system use	Council should also conduct a viability assessment	External mediator for legal and planning negotiations for initial contract
Mandate that money saved from cross subsidy goes to social homes	Spatial equity: social homes delivered first, no restrictions on shared amenities	Non-negotiable amount of council homes delivered in first phase	State as guarantor for a balanced partnership to shift power dynamic
	Mandated protections for current tenants and Right to Buy homeowners	Static vs. non-static viability assessment - decision on how to adjust for market while still being held accountable	Truly affordable housing should be managed by non-profit bodies

3.3 Median monthly rents by tenure and median income in London, including a 2 bedroom shared ownership unit at Woodberry Down, with a monthly estimated cost of £1,871 per month
Source: Share to Buy (2019).



The disparity between incomes and private rents have economic impacts that go beyond the individual. Approximately £14.5bn of economic growth has been lost by diverting money from more productive business expenditures (Consultancy.uk, 2016). In total, around 11,000 more jobs could have been created in 2015 if businesses paid no wage premiums related to housing, which are expected to reach £6.1bn in 2020 (Gander, 2015).

When analyzing Woodberry Down through London’s history of unaffordability, it is clear that the redevelopment falls into similar trends. Woodberry Down’s pre-regeneration tenure mix was 1/3 private tenures and 2/3 council housing tenures. This is in comparison to post-regeneration tenures, that expects 3/5 private tenures, and 2/5 ‘affordable’ tenures, broken down into 20% social rent and 20% shared ownership (Nelson and Lewis, 2019). Through this, we see pre-regeneration council tenants squeezed into a smaller proportion of new tenures. Additionally, as shown in Figure 3.3, shared ownership is not affordable, with findings revealing that monthly costs associated with a two-bedroom shared ownership unit at Woodberry Down is 80% of median monthly taxpayer income (Share to Buy, 2019). When you consider that around 50% of the total ‘affordable’ units at Woodberry Down are shared ownership flats, is this a genuinely affordable redevelopment scheme?

Security

In council estate redevelopment projects across London, there is a lack of security for existing tenants in the face of powerful public-private partnerships (PPPs). To start, those living on the council estate (existing council tenants, Right to Buy homeowners, private leaseholders, and off-lease tenants) all face varying amounts of displacement risks resulting from insecurity and non-guaranteed tenure in redevelopment schemes. Overall, those at risk of displacement face three main types in the face of council estate redevelopments: physical displacement to peripheral urban areas, relocation within the development, and socio-cultural displacement.

Woodberry Down’s PPP is proud of its commitment to rehouse all council tenants into social homes on the redeveloped estate (Sheridan, 2019). However, we found that the rehousing scheme only accounts for council tenants that have lived in the estate from 2006 or earlier (Nelson and Lewis, 2019). Given that this project is set to finish in 2035, we can only assume this claim to rehouse all tenants relies on a reduction in the total number of people (through death or voluntary relocation). Moreover, the completed phases have under-delivered their expected social homes by 7%, further threatening the final number of social homes available for council tenants (Architects for Social Housing, 2017).

Those that have never been promised a new home in the redevelopment and are thus at a high risk of physical displacement are Right to Buy owners. The amount offered for old council flats via compulsory purchase is less than 70% of the value of new flats, making ownership in the redevelopment unfeasible for most (Nelson and Lewis, 2019). This displacement is significant, as Right to Buy owners consist of 1/3 of the current residents on the estate, about 660 homes. However, only three of the 660 Right to Buy owners have been rehoused in the redevelopment (Nelson and Lewis, 2019). The remaining 657 Right to Buy homes, in addition to the 194 social homes (at least), totals to 851 non-reported displaced households at Woodberry Down.

Lastly, socio-cultural displacement occurs within the redevelopment at Woodberry Down through the incorporation of upscale retail spaces in the new development. A Social Impact Study conducted in October 2019 by the development partnership, noted that some new retail businesses price out residents with lower incomes (Woodberry Down Community Organization News, 2019).

Power

Though conceptualisations of power incorporate a multitude of factors, when focusing on the relationships between actors within

the housing delivery model at Woodberry Down, our focus was drawn to the imbalances in political power. These power dynamics mainly focus on the overarching role that private developers play in this system and the lack of power other actors, like the Greater London Authority (GLA) and residents, have in return. The Central Government offers subsidies and low tax rates to private developers while concurrently limiting the capacity that local authorities have to build council housing through reducing funding and strict regulations. The overall strong influence that the Central Government holds over local authorities is juxtaposed with the GLA’s relatively weak institutional power to enforce regulations and non-existent tax raising abilities. This relationship renders private developers at the top of the hierarchy, with strong political power. These relationships leave local authorities beholden to private developers to deliver housing at the rates recommended by the GLA, due to their overall limited capacity. To provide developers with land, local authorities use their strong compulsory purchase power to decant council estates and rehouse existing residents. Though residents have some power with their democratic right to vote, the view of housing as a social good is currently not recognized by the elected governments of the United Kingdom and as such, residents have little influence when it comes to the provision of truly affordable housing.

The Woodberry Down Community Organisation (WDCO), as a member of the PPP that represents the community, is unique for council estate redevelopment projects. The WDCO successfully mediated a small reciprocal power relation between existing residents and the developer, Berkeley Homes. This has resulted in minor concessions made by the developer, including the halting of preferential views being given to private units over social rent units (Nelson and Lewis, 2019). While this redevelopment has been praised, multiple areas for improvement exist to truly make this redevelopment affordable, equitable, and secure for all.

Our Intervention at Woodberry Down: Synergistic Housing

What is Synergistic Housing and who is it for?

Our intervention, called Synergistic Housing, is a new type of delivery system and tenure, based on community-led housing schemes, that aims to address the immediate problems of unaffordability, insecurity, and unbalanced power dynamics within large scale council estate redevelopments. The concept of synergy, defined as ‘the interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations or agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects,’ will be the foundation of this model (Cambridge English Dictionary, 2020).

Synergistic Housing’s mission

Where would Synergistic Housing exist at Woodberry Down? We evaluated each redevelopment phase left of the project against site selection criteria to minimize the impact on the redevelopment master plan. We decided to intervene on the site of Phase VII, which currently houses three buildings that proved suitable for repair and already contain a high level of spatial quality. How does Synergistic Housing work?

Step 1: Acquiring land

A key undermining issue of London’s housing crisis that manifests spatially is the acquisition of land at a reasonable price, to provide truly affordable homes and maintaining affordability in perpetuity. Community Land Trusts (CLTs) have emerged as a viable alternative to the ceding of land to private developers, and as such, will provide the basis for our intervention to provide housing as a public good. The CLT would purchase the land from Hackney Council through pooled Right to Buy owner capital from the council’s Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO), grants, and bank loans, secured through the backing of the PPP’s housing association, Notting Hill Genesis (NHG). Renovation would be financed through grants reserved for building genuinely affordable homes in London.

Step 2: Affordable financial structure

Pegging rent to market pricing as the current ‘affordable’ housing definition is not sustainable as the rent-wage gap continues to increase. Conversely, to maintain affordability of Synergistic Housing, residents will pay a monthly fee that is pegged to income rather than market prices. These fees will be between 30-35% of income and will first go towards ongoing maintenance and repair of the buildings and community areas, with the rest going towards the respective resident’s equity in the Synergistic Housing Body (SHB). Using a below median income of £2,000 per month, these fees would equate to a truly affordable fee of £650 per month per home, for a total of £84,500 per month in fee revenue to the SHB. When, and if, members choose to leave, the member receives their equity stake in return. This equity will not appreciate in value (to maintain the affordability of Synergistic Housing), but still offers exiting members capital to take with them, rather than sunk costs through paying private rents to a landlord.

Step 3: Equitable governance through restructured power dynamics

Synergistic Housing will follow a community-owned structure whereby the members of the board may include people who live in the homes but also includes people or organizations from the wider community (Wrigleys Solicitors, 2017). The board and committees would continually serve as a checks and balances system to ensure decisions maintain affordability and security for residents and the larger community, as well as offering people the opportunity to gain valuable life and career skills through community engagement.

Step 4: Spatializing to physically and socio-culturally support residents (Figure 3.6)

Synergistic Housing most explicitly combats the issue of security by providing housing for those displaced, repairing and densifying three residential buildings with two underutilized inner courtyards in the northeast corner of the Woodberry Down Redevelopment plan (Figure 3.5). There are currently 135 units in our three selected buildings composed of two- and three-bedroom apartments of varying sizes (40-70 sq. metres), with often small and poorly-designed rooms. Through our range of spatial typologies including co-living apartments with multiple individual bedrooms, a newly-built building section, and the extension of current buildings with pre-fabricated enclosed balcony spaces, we aim to provide viable densification options. These options cater to different residents and will explicitly combat displacement through accommodating more people. We estimate that through our densification efforts, the site can accommodate up to 1.5 times more residents.

Synergistic Housing's spatial intervention also seeks to improve power structures and affordability. Affordability will be promoted by repairing existing buildings rather than demolition, as repair is more cost effective than demolition (Power, 2010). Synergistic Housing will also leverage local labour, both during the repair phase and through a variety of community-owned and operated small businesses on the ground floor of our refurbished buildings. Synergistic Housing will rebalance the power dynamics in PPP models by giving power back to the residents through DIY (do-it-yourself) design. The design of multi-functional and flexible indoor and outdoor spaces will be undertaken by the Synergistic Housing board and committees, with the goal to create iterative spaces that adjust with the changing needs of the community.

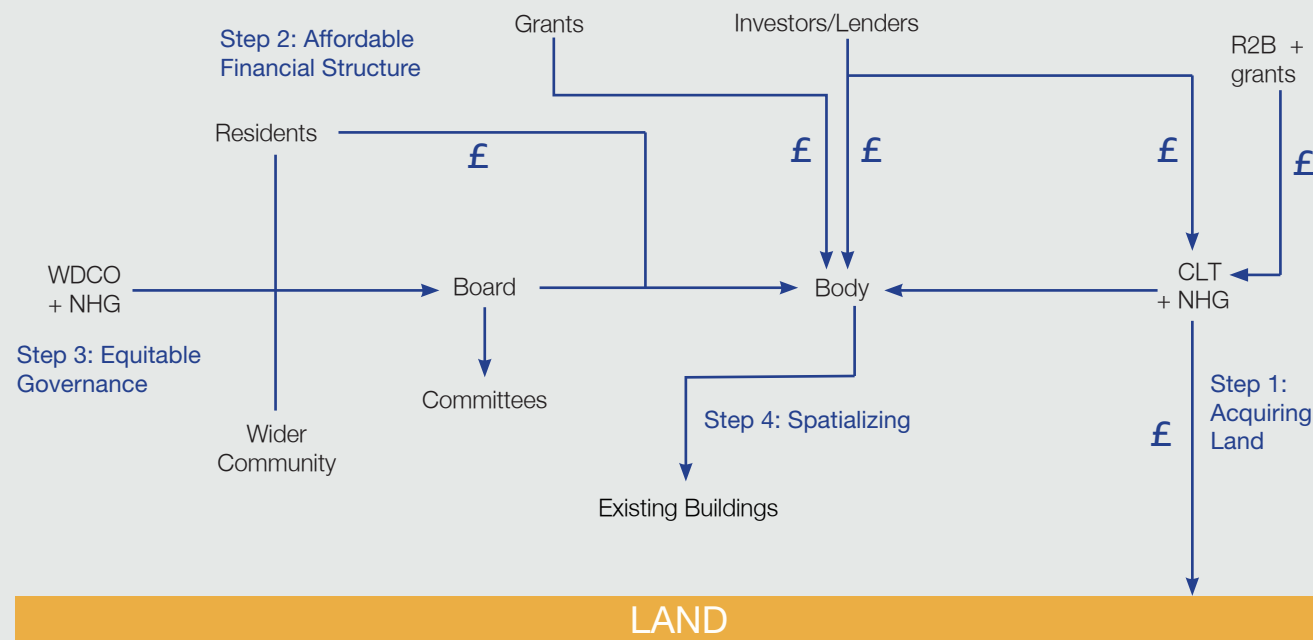
Our Policy Intervention: Shifting Political Power Dynamics Through Synergistic Housing

Our vision for Synergistic Housing at Woodberry Down is for it to act as a precedent by starting to reconfigure power dynamics in large scale, council estate redevelopments and re-establish housing as a collaborative, public good.

To start, our wider intervention and policy framework rests on increased regulatory powers vested in the GLA, pulling the local authorities, private developers, housing associations, and the Synergistic Housing Body onto a level playing field over time:

1. If a new council estate redevelopment project includes any physical displacement of current residents by way of unaffordable or insecure tenures, the GLA will require that the PPP must reallocate and release land suitable for repair to Synergistic Housing. The private developer would then reperform their viability assessment with fewer social homes to cross-subsidize and maintain profitability.
2. Through the use of a CLT, the Synergistic Housing model will use the released land to maintain affordability in perpetuity. Where possible, repair, local materials, and local labour must be used to further improve affordability, reduce environmental impacts, and provide local economic benefits to the community.

3.4 Our financing model for Synergistic Housing

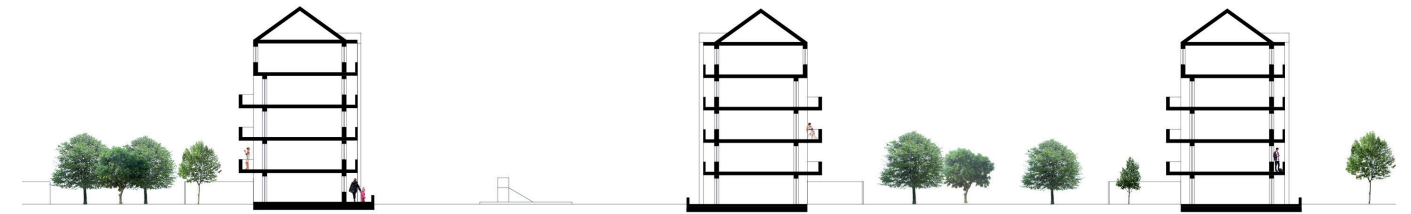


3.5 The diagrams below include a sectional and a birds eye view of the current site

Sources: Hidden London (2020), Google Street View (2018).

Within the three pop-outs are the key themes identified as indicative of the housing crisis in the UK.

Current



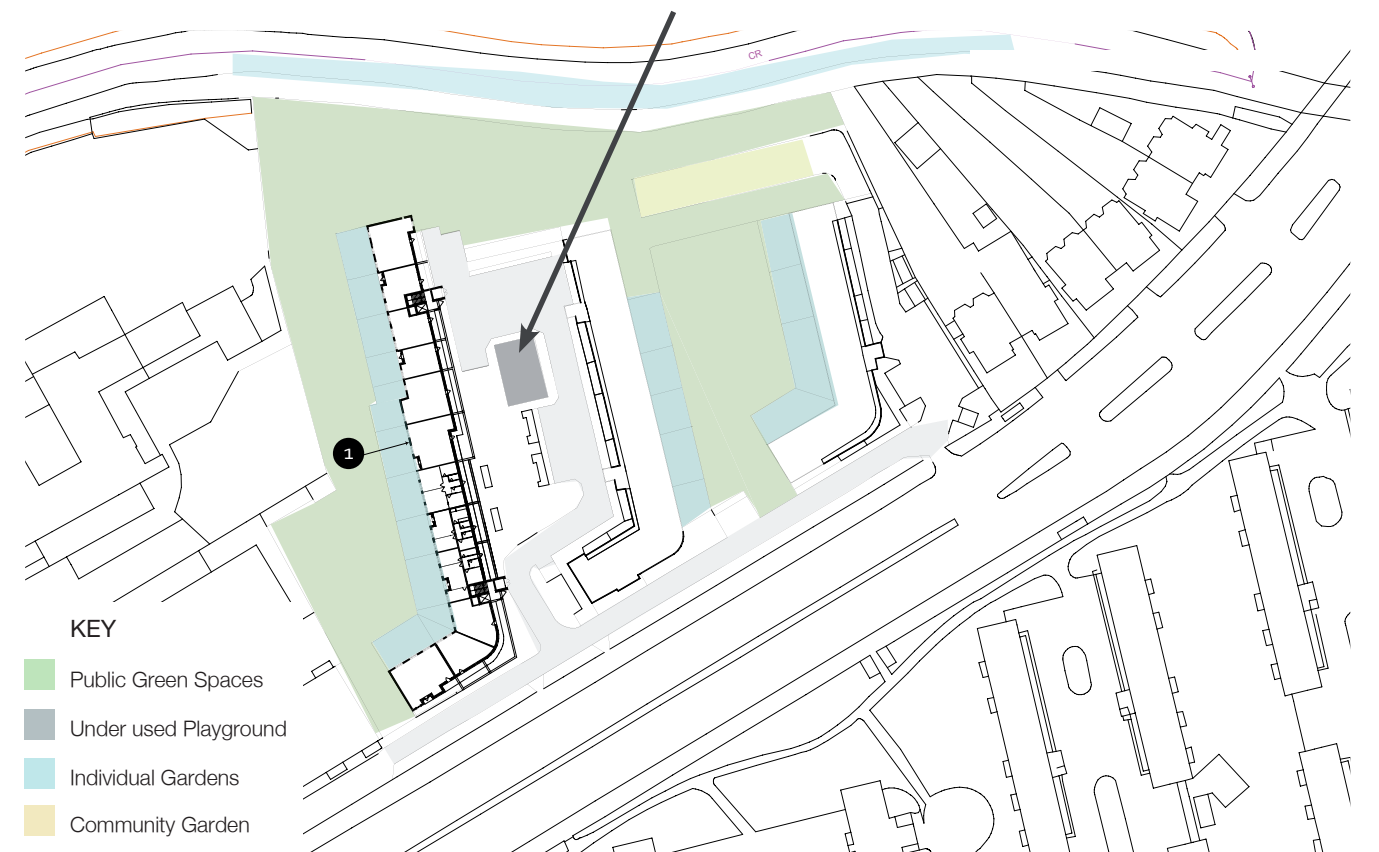
UNAFFORDABILITY:
DUE TO COMMODIFICATION
OF HOUSING



LACK OF SPATIAL AGENCY:
UNDERUSED & FENCED
COURTYARD SPACES



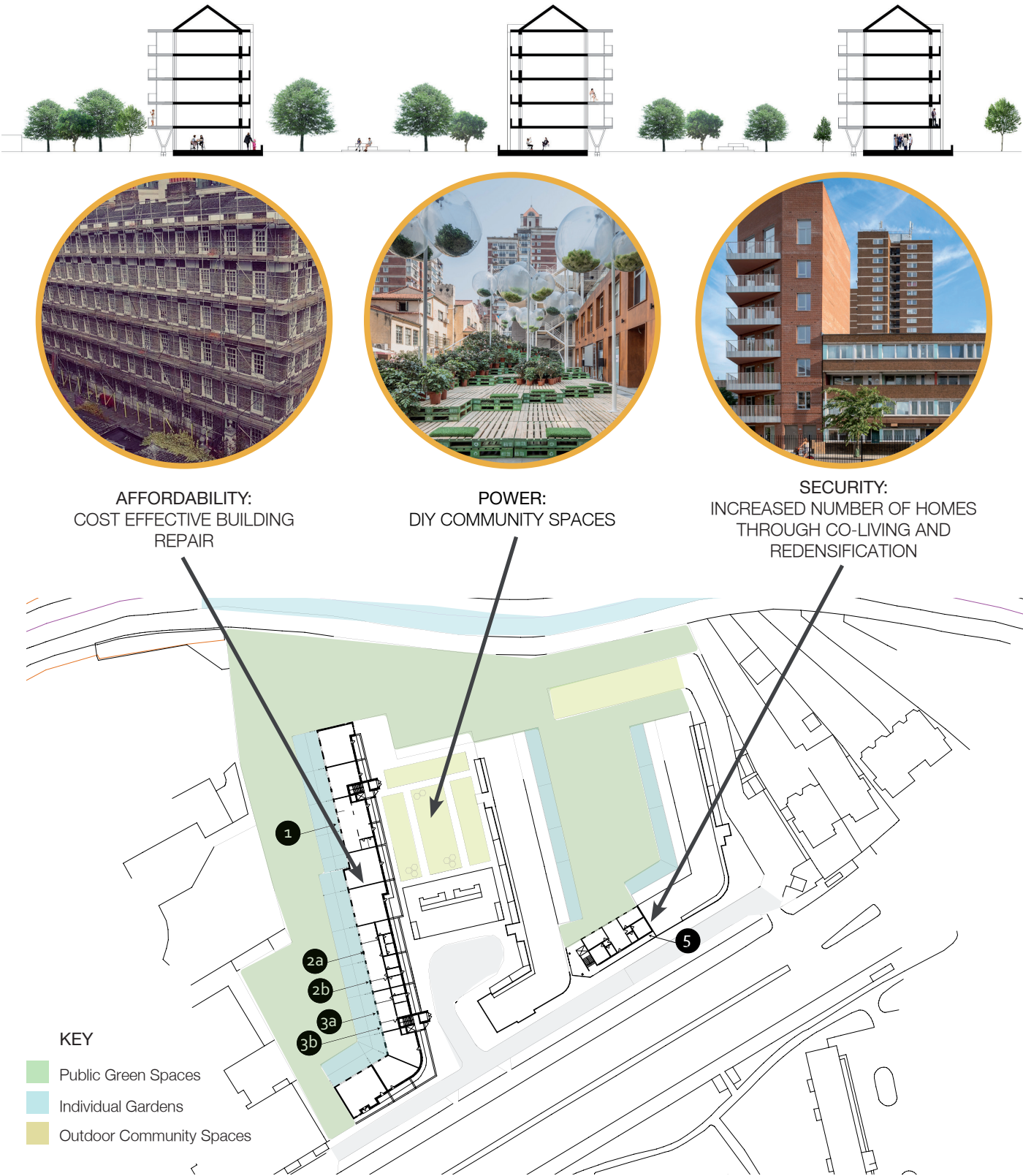
DISPLACEMENT:
UNSECURE TENANCIES



3.6 Intervention with proposals for a community café, co-living, spatially upgraded apartments; a balcony extension, a new-build section, and a rearrangement of courtyard space with outdoor do-it-yourself community spaces

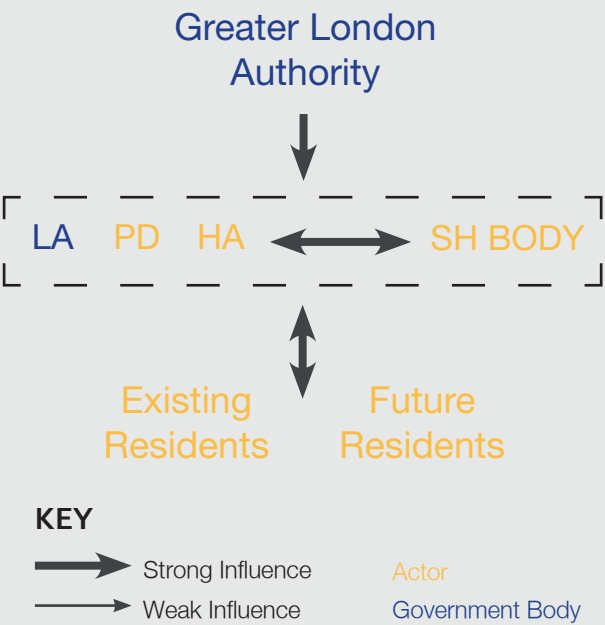
Source: Embassy site services (2020), ArchDaily (2018), O'Sullivan (2018).

Intervention



3.7 Reconfigured power dynamics within London's housing delivery system through the Synergistic Housing Body and policy interventions

Proposed Intervention



Local Authority = LA
Private Developer = PD
Housing Association = HA
Synergistic Housing Body = SH BODY

Conclusion

As shown throughout our analysis of the housing crisis in London, the redevelopment of Woodberry Down, through a lack of truly affordable tenures, prevalent insecurity, and a developer-led PPP, does little to address the root causes of this crisis. While these implications have wide-reaching benefits, our intervention remains aspirational and there are certain limitations that exist that our model fails to fully address. Indeed, our model reduces the number of displaced residents, but our intervention fails to accommodate everyone due to the sheer number of Right to Buy owners being displaced. As well, our model is hard to scale to address the housing crisis at large, due to the extreme amount of housing required to meet current demand. Recognising these limitations, moving forward, future work on similar community-led housing schemes could work to address them.

Overall, Synergistic Housing aims to act as a step towards a more community-led, collaborative housing tenure that rebalances power dynamics within PPPs, is truly affordable in perpetuity, and minimizes displacement in large-scale council redevelopment projects. As envisioned through CUT, Synergistic Housing de-commodifies housing, enacts stricter regulations on housing provision through the state, and reframes housing as a social good, rather than part of an investment portfolio.

Bibliography

Adam, S., Chandler, D., Hood, A. and Joyce, R. (2018). Social Rent Policy: Choices and Trade-Offs – IFS Report R108. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/comms/R108.pdf>. [Accessed 10 February 2020].

ArchDaily, 2018. Urban Bloom / AIM Architecture + URBAN MATTERS. [Online] Available at: <http://www.archdaily.com/891819/urban-bloom-aim-architecture-plus-urbanmatters>. [Accessed 20 February 2020].

Architects for Social Housing, (2017). Class War on Woodberry Down: A National Strategy. [Online]. Available at: <https://architectsforsocialhousing.co.uk/2017/05/12/class-war-on-woodberry-down-anational-strategy/>. [Accessed 10 February 2020].

Cambridge English Dictionary, (2020). SYNERGY | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. [Online]. Available at: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/synergy>. [Accessed 13 February 2020].

Consultancy.uk, (2016). Consulting firms supporting Fifty Thousand Homes campaign. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.consultancy.uk/news/12040/consulting-firms-supporting-fifty-thousand-homes-campaign> [Accessed 7 December 2019].

Embassy Site Services, (2020). City West Homes. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.embassysiteservices.co.uk/citywest-homes/>. [Accessed 20 Feb 2020].

Gander, K. (2015). Housing crisis stripping billions out of London's economy, study shows. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/housing-crisis-stripping-billions-out-of-londons-economyeach-year-study-shows-a6691426.html>. [Accessed 7 December 2019].

Google Street View, (2018). Cannock House courtyard. [Online] Available at: <https://www.google.es/maps/@51.573903,-0.0890195,3a,75y,133.91h,83.64t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1sduyFpUXShG2GMfIRbKuB1g2e0I716384I8I8192> [Accessed 20 Feb 2020].

Harris, J. (2016). The end of council housing. The Guardian. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jan/04/end-of-council-housing-bill-securitytenancies-pay-to-stay> [Accessed 14 Feb. 2020].

Hidden London, (2020). Woodberry Down, Hackney. [Online] Available at: <https://hidden-london.com/gazetteer/woodberry-down/> [Accessed 20 Feb 2020].

Marcuse, P. (2012). A critical approach to solving the housing problem. In: N. Brenner, P. Marcuse and M. Mayer, eds. Cities for People, Not for Profit: Critical Urban Theory and the Right to the City. London: Routledge, pp. 215-231.

Nelson, S. and Lewis, J. (2019). Resident engagement in the regeneration of social housing: The case of Woodberry down, London. International Journal of Housing Policy, p.1-22.

O'Sullivan, K. (2018). Bell Phillips adds red brick social housing block to south London estate. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.dezeen.com/2018/10/25/bell-phillips-marklake-court-kipling-estate-londons-social-housing-architecture/>. [Accessed 20 Feb 2020].

Power, A. (2010). Housing and sustainability: demolition or refurbishment? Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers - Urban Design and Planning, 163(4), pp. 205-216.

Share to Buy, (2019). Woodberry Down - 2 bed apartment in Hackney. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.sharetobuy.com/properties/30942/> [Accessed 7 December 2019].

Sheridan, E. (2019). Handful of leaseholders resist council plans for Woodberry Down redevelopment. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hackneycitizen.co.uk/2019/08/20/handfulleaseholders-council-plans-woodberry-downredevelopment/>. [Accessed 9 February 2020].

WDCO, (2019). Woodberry Down Community Organisation News. Woodberry Down Community Organization. [Online]. Available at: <https://woodberrydowncommu.wixsite.com/wdco/news> [Accessed December 9, 2019].

Wringleys Solicitors, (2018). A Guide to Legal Structures to Community-led housing. [Online]. Available at: <https://bhclt.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Guide-to-Legal-Structures-2017.pdf>. [Accessed 10 February 2020].

THE SHORE PROGRAMME

Matthew DesLauriers, Amalie Dybvik, Erin Gleason, and Woon Wei Look

Introduction

The regeneration of Woodberry Down is not unique but an indicative example of the current process of en masse demolition and new construction on London council estates, where, under the guise of providing more housing, council housing tenancies are replaced with generally more expensive private housing. These redevelopments have been driven by masterplans produced through public-private partnerships, where private developers have a central and powerful role in the regeneration process, from planning through to construction.

The masterplans present these spatial visions of regeneration and their economic rationality as ‘fixed,’ erasing not only homes, but the lived experiences of long-time residents of these council estates. However, other elements, such as social housing tenancies and environmental protections, are often subject to change, becoming ‘unfixed.’ Certain elements are changeable whilst others are

allowed to endure as a strong framework for authorities to hold the actors involved in regeneration processes accountable does not currently exist.

In this state of (un)fixity, our proposal argues that large-scale council estate regeneration schemes bring about two main deleterious effects: the loss of social housing and damage to the environment that tabula rasa demolition and construction inflicts. On these grounds, we propose a policy intervention, the SHoRe Programme, to address and remedy these two interlinked issues founded on the principles of a ‘radical right to housing’ and environmental justice (Madden and Marcuse, 2016). We conclude by exploring the implications this intervention would have on stakeholders involved in large-scale council estate regeneration schemes across London and imagine how this intervention would manifest itself at Woodberry Down.

Conceptual Framework

The Loss of Social Housing

In the initial regeneration brief produced by the London Borough of Hackney’s Woodberry Down Regeneration Team, there was a strong focus on maintaining the housing rights of existing residents (Woodberry Down Regeneration Team, 2000). However, the current masterplan includes the demolition of 1,981 existing dwellings – mostly social housing – in favour of building 5,500 new homes, where only 40 percent are ‘affordable housing’ split into 20 percent shared ownership and 20 percent socially-rented housing. This plan will lead to a loss of approximately 200 social housing dwellings in Woodberry Down. ‘Affordable housing’ describes a range of housing options below current market rates such as social housing which is set at 50 to 60 percent of market rent (MHCLG, 2018). The demolition of social housing is not isolated to Woodberry Down, but can be witnessed across London and the United Kingdom.

Since the 1980s, there has been a clear loss of social housing due to a wave of policies introduced by the Thatcher government, aimed at rolling back state responsibility and liberating the planning system (Minton, 2017). The ‘Right to Buy’ was introduced as part of the 1980 Housing Act which gave council tenants the opportunity to buy their dwellings at discounted prices. Since its implementation, almost two million dwellings have been sold, dramatically reducing the available number of social housing units (MHCLG, 2019). This Act also crippled the financing and borrowing capabilities of local authorities, which has led many to voluntarily transfer their social housing stock to housing associations. In Woodberry Down, social

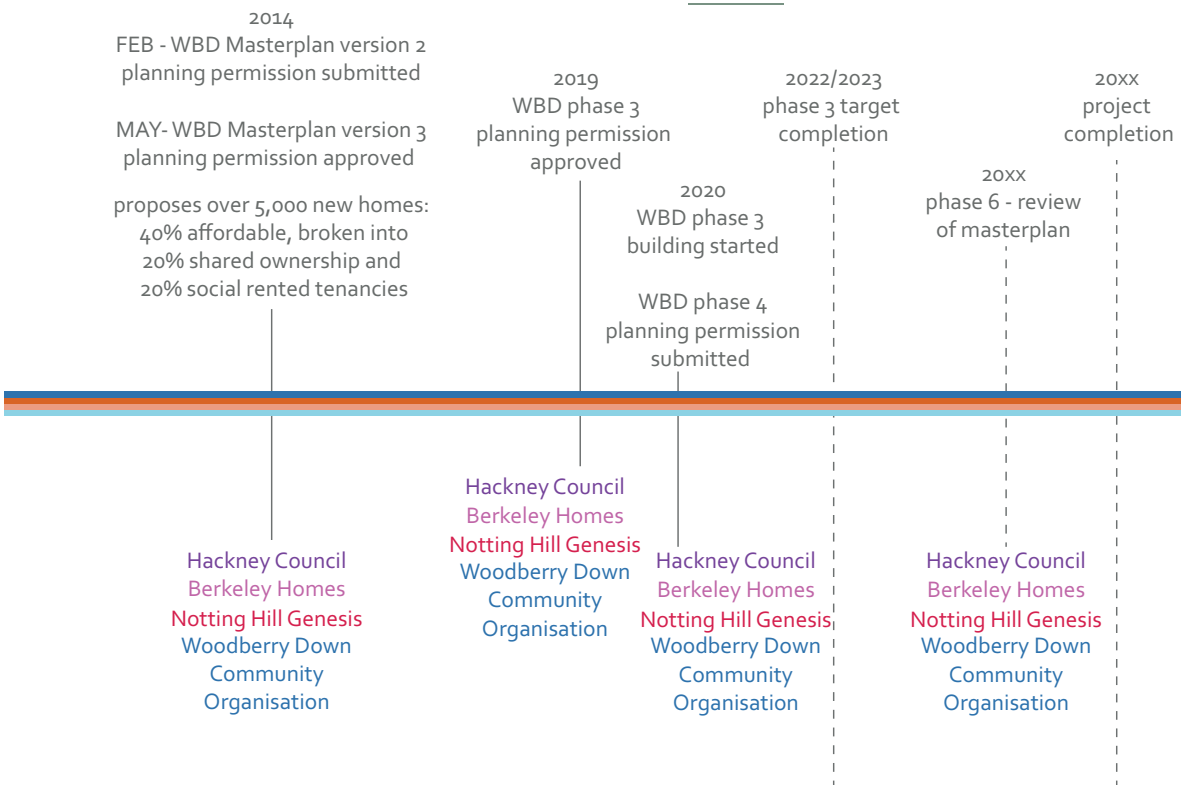
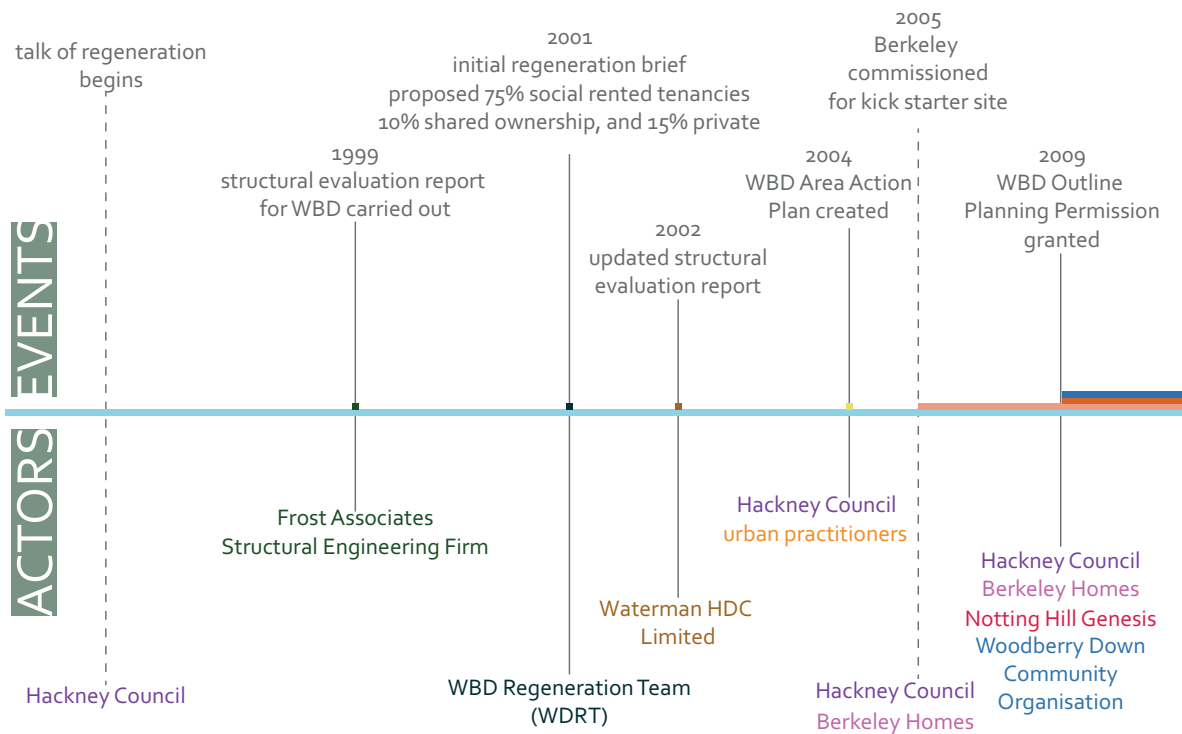
housing is being transferred from the London Borough of Hackney to the housing association Notting Hill Genesis.

The ongoing regeneration of Woodberry Down has led to many residents being displaced due to the demolition of social housing. Furthermore, the loss of social housing denies lower-income populations the opportunity to move into the neighbourhood, adding to the local authorities’ social housing waiting list. The loss of social housing is emblematic of a larger problem: how a ‘right to housing’ is conceptualised. We underpin our critique with Madden and Marcuse’s (2016) articulation of a “radical right to housing” which proposes a right to a transformed housing system, and the right to transform it (Madden and Marcuse 2016, p. 197). This implies a reconsideration of what political demands are needed to reorient the way large-scale regeneration project affect social and physical environments.

The Environmental Costs of Demolition and Construction

Structural evaluation reports of Woodberry Down produced prior to regeneration recommended the refurbishment of numerous buildings on the estate. At great environmental cost, the current regeneration plan for Woodberry Down involves the demolition of every building on the site, and the construction of over 5,500 new units. Here, we focus on four ways this process is contributing to the climate crisis in addition to the housing crisis.

4.1 Timeline of actors and events through regeneration process at Woodberry Down



Climate Change Objectives

The Mayor of London (2018a) published a London Environment Strategy, outlining the need for energy efficient new buildings. Yet it fails to take into account the benefits of refurbishment, despite "evidence...[that] counters the suggestion that large-scale and accelerated demolition would either help us meet our energy and climate change targets or respond to our social needs" (Power, 2008, p. 4487).

Embodied/Operational Energy

Embodied energy is composed of all the processes associated

with the production of a building. These processes are often not taken into account in reports of new construction projects, and "unlike operational carbon, there is no embodied carbon regulation or policy" (Crawford et al., 2014, p. 34). Large-scale demolition and construction produces large amounts of embodied energy and carbon.

Economic and Social Costs

Power (2008) finds that, economically, demolition and construction would "rarely be justified...since repair and upgrading would normally cost far less than the total cost of demolition and replacement

housing" (p. 4495). Beyond mere economic savings, refurbishment also "[offers] considerable opportunities for local development and community engagement, which in turn can lead to local regeneration...generation of local income, and improved trust" (Crawford et al., 2014, p. 64). *Tabula rasa* redevelopment does not just demolish physical buildings. It also demolishes the social capital and networks that exist within these communities and between these residents.

Environmental Justice

This regeneration process blatantly ignores the existing residents' right to housing and violates claims to environmental justice, which London et al. (2011) define as "a model of sustainable development that integrates

economic development, poverty alleviation, and environmental protection" (p. 1). Walker (2010) notes that "in the UK attention is only rarely given to the social distribution of environmental outcomes in impact assessment processes" (p. 318), meaning such inequitably distributed effects are often not considered when approving regeneration plans.

By promoting refurbishment over demolition, we are not condemning people to live in poor and inadequate housing, but rather that developers and local authorities must be held accountable for the refurbishment recommendations of structural evaluation reports, and the detrimental effects that demolition and construction produce.

WOODBERRY DOWN ESTATE REGENERATION
STRUCTURAL EVALUATION REPORT

EVALUATION OF REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Blocks / Estate	Comments	Recommendations
Rowley Gardens	High rise construction (10 storey) Low rise slab blocks	Refurbish. Refurbish.
Woodberry Grove North	5 storey loadbearing masonry Cracking & foundation problems	Demolish.
Seven Sisters Road, NW	5 storey loadbearing masonry Considerable dilapidation	Consider demolition
Seven Sisters Road, NW	5 storey loadbearing masonry	Refurbish
Vivian	Loadbearing masonry (considered to be in relatively good condition)	Refurbish
Seven Sisters Road, NW	5 storey loadbearing masonry	Refurbish
Ashdale, Burtonwood, Needwood & Nicholl	In situ concrete blocks	Consider demolition
Peak, Penthernton & Pewsham	Loadbearing masonry	Refurbish
Spring Park Drive	Loadbearing masonry	Refurbish
Seven Sisters Road SE	Loadbearing masonry Part of estate consists of flats over shops	Demolish (Consideration should be given to refurbishment of flats over shops to prevent loss of local amenity)
Newnton Close	Loadbearing masonry Part of estate consists of flats over shops	Demolish
Dovedale	Loadbearing masonry Part of estate consists of flats over shops	Refurbish
Lordship North	Loadbearing masonry Part of estate consists of flats over shops. Considered to be in relatively good condition structurally	Refurbish
Hill Court	Loadbearing masonry	Refurbish
Hill Court	Loadbearing masonry	Refurbish
Holmleigh Road	3 storey loadbearing masonry consisting of 2 storey flats over garages	Refurbish (Some limited demolition may be advisable to improve the over-dense environment of the estate)

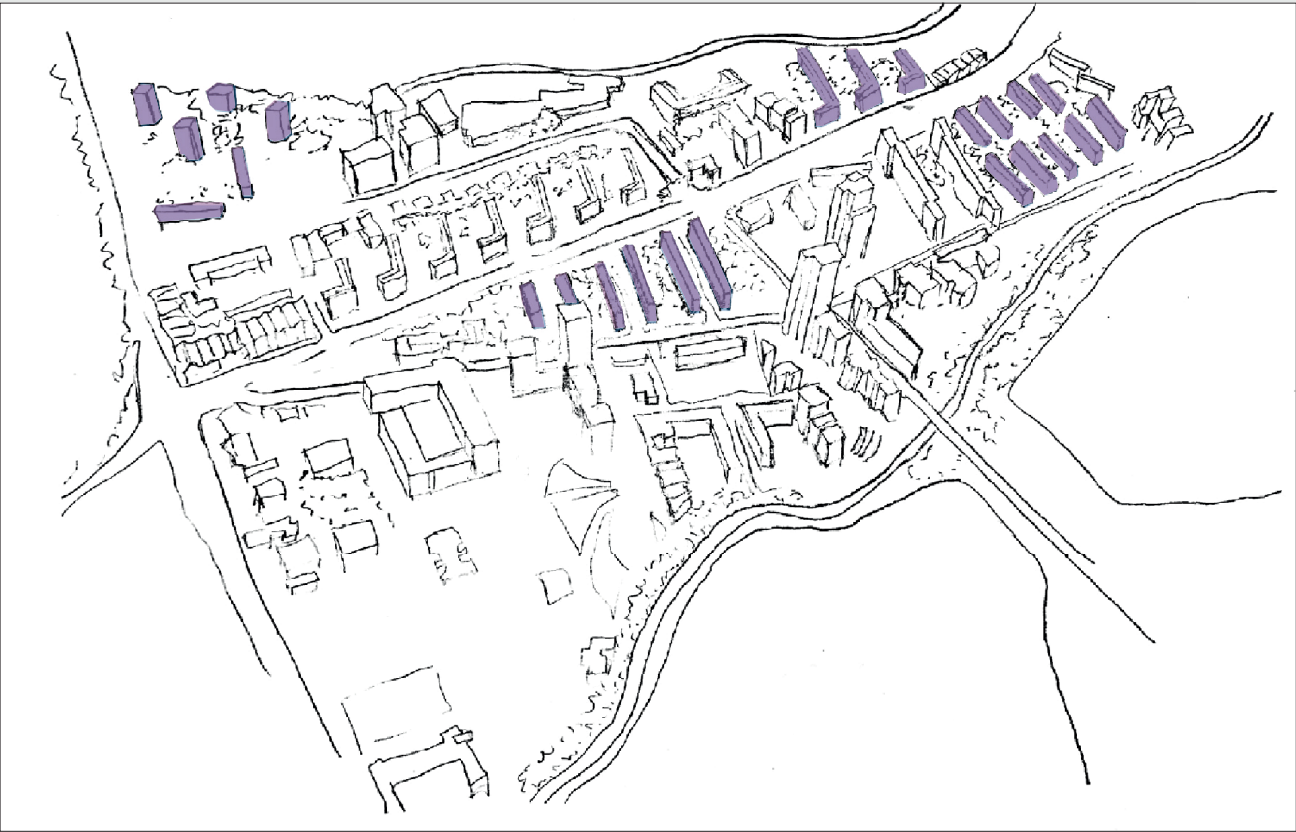
4.4 1999 Woodberry Down structural
evaluation report

Blocks/estates recommended for
refurbishment highlighted

Source: Waterman HDC Ltd (2002).

4.3 Sketch of Woodberry Down at present

Existing buildings recommended for
refurbishment highlighted



4.2 Images of existing buildings
recommended for refurbishment

Source: Google (2020).



Proposal
The Shore Programme + Non-Negotiable Framework

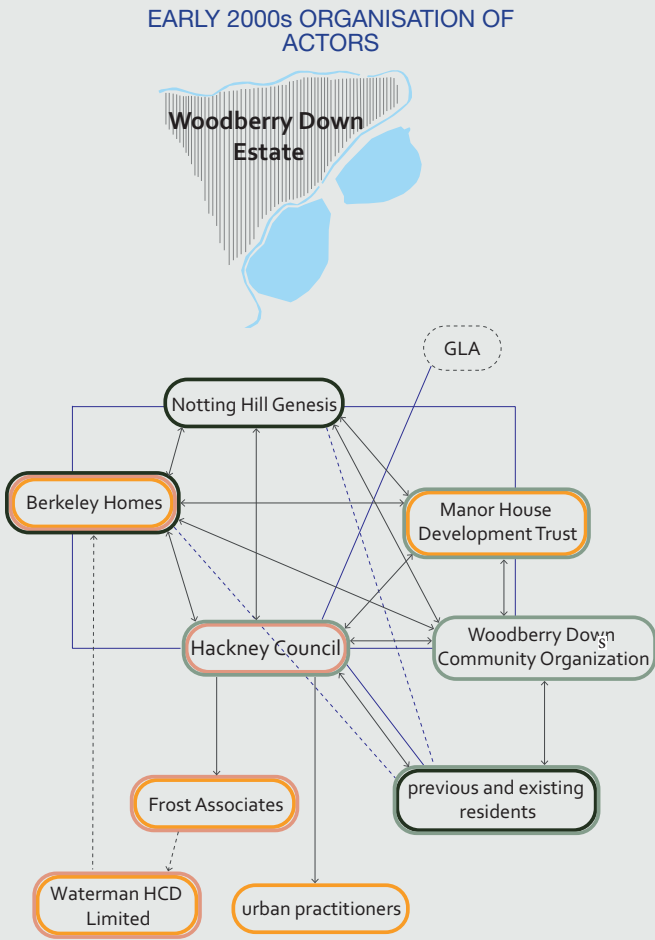
Large-scale council estate regeneration brings about two main consequences: the loss of social housing and the environmental costs of large-scale demolition. Guided by our research, we have set out the dual goals of maintaining social housing tenancies while reducing the environmental impact of council estate regeneration projects. Founded on these principles, we have created the SHoRe (Social Housing Refurbishment) Programme as a policy intervention that consists of two non-negotiable estate regeneration principles paired with an enforcement mechanism. The Programme will have an impact on future phases of regeneration on Woodberry Down as well as on council estate regeneration projects across London. Central to the SHoRe Programme are two principles for council estate regeneration schemes. Narrowly defined and fixed, we refer to these planning principles as non-negotiables

1. In council estate regeneration schemes, the current number of existing social housing dwellings must be maintained as social housing on the development site.
2. If a building is recommended for refurbishment in an independent structural evaluation report it must be refurbished.

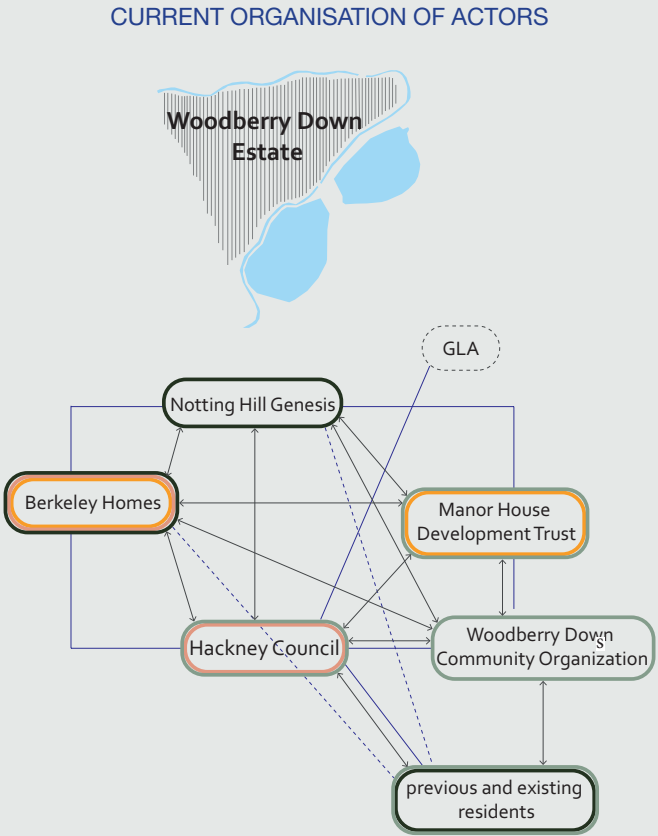
The first non-negotiable aims to ensure that existing social housing tenancies are maintained at their current levels throughout estate regeneration processes. While this non-negotiable does not address other types of tenure, such as leaseholders who purchased through Right to Buy and private renters on council estates, it ensures that the stock of social housing does not decrease nor is replaced by other forms of ‘affordable’ tenure. The second non-negotiable ensures that environmental concerns of demolition and new construction are considered more strongly by mandating refurbishment of all suitable buildings. This non-negotiable does not prohibit new construction but requires existing structurally-sound buildings to be maintained.

These non-negotiable principles are only as strong as their enforcement. Though we would like local authorities and private partners to self-enforce, we expect that adherence will need to be enforced by a higher-level authority to ensure consistency across London’s local authorities and ensure the framework is not ignored altogether to secure developer investment. As such, we look to the Greater London Authority (GLA) and their planning review

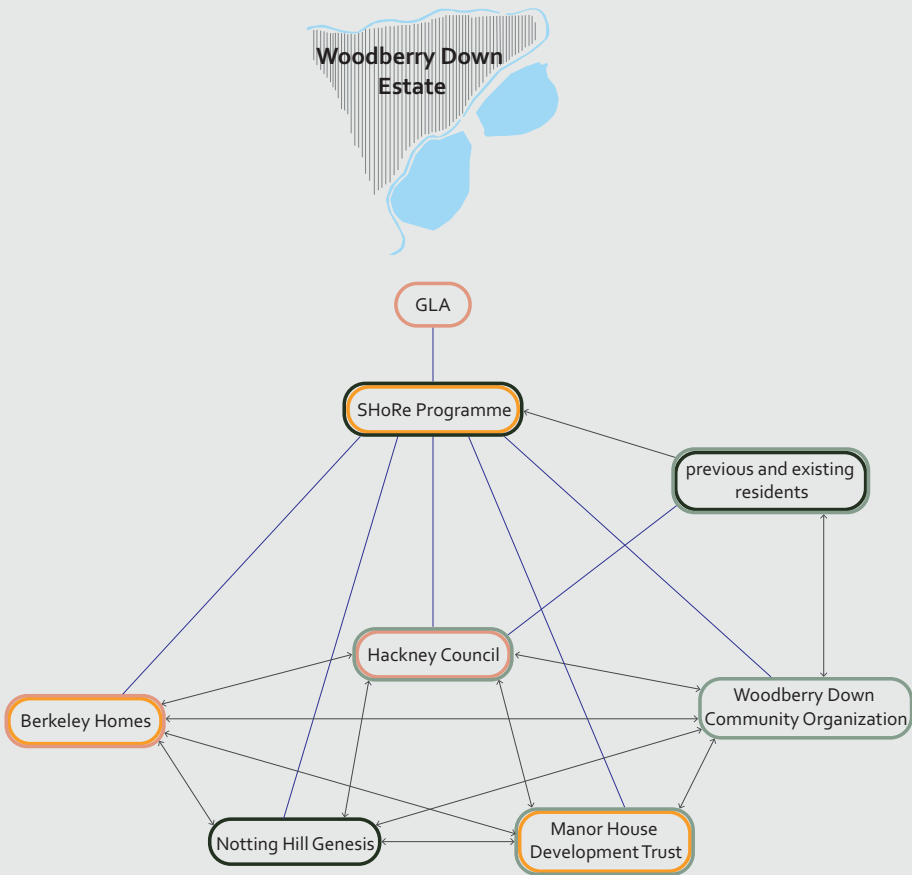
4.5 Early 2000s organisation of actors
Original. No hierarchy in accountability.



4.6 Current organisation of actors
Still no hierarchy.



INTERVENTION REORGANISATION OF ACTORS



accountability between actors	impact on Woodberry Down regeneration
"direct" accountability —	spatial
"indirect" accountability - - - - -	people
relationship between actors	management
direct collaborative <—>	social
indirect non-collaborative - - - - ->	
direct non-collaborative —>	

4.7 Intervention reorganisation of actors
Implementation of SHoRe Programm
that reorganises structure and provides
hierarchy through accountability

process as a way to ensure compliance with these standards. We propose a new body, likely a new committee, to be created within the GLA to ensure proper resourcing for this oversight of council estate regeneration planning applications. This body will, leveraging existing GLA planning review processes and authority, ensure that all council estate regeneration plans and projects across Greater London adhere to this non-negotiable framework, the core proponent of the SHoRe Programme.

Why the GLA

The GLA is the best vehicle to enforce our non-negotiable framework, compared to local authorities and the central government. As a regional authority, the GLA was created through the Greater London Authority Act in 1999, and has been amended by other Acts that have vested authority and power into the GLA to enforce our framework.

In particular, section 30 (2) of the GLA Act notes that the principal purposes of the GLA are to:

1. Promote the economic development and wealth creation of Greater London;
2. Promote the social development of Greater London; and
3. Promote the improvement of the environment of Greater London.

This clause makes clear that the GLA has a legal duty to ensure that policies implemented are aligned with these goals. Our framework demands that the GLA strengthens its commitment to accomplishing these principle purposes. Local authorities are often challenged with a lack of government funding and are constrained in their borrowing capabilities which deepens power asymmetries between authorities and private developers, the latter becoming the primary source of funding in the absence of available government budget. This constraint makes local authorities more willing to consider developer-led regeneration schemes.

Attempting implementation at the central government level will be unlikely to bring us closer to realising a ‘radical right to housing’ as well. This is primarily an issue of political will: The Conservative Party’s election

manifesto gave scant attention to social housing (Conservative Party, 2019). Though not necessarily definite, it gives an indicative direction that the Party - now a significant majority in Parliament - is unlikely to pass legislation that will improve social housing conditions.

Through the London Plan, which gives the GLA authority to review certain types of planning applications, including council estate regeneration schemes, the GLA can enforce, through the local authorities, that regeneration schemes comply with the proposed non-negotiable framework. This gives local authorities a stronger negotiating position with private developers, as the new review body in the GLA will reject planning applications that are non-compliant and private developers will have little choice but to comply if they want to develop in the city.

The GLA also has, at various points in both the London Housing Strategy and the London Plan, called for a diversification of building methods and buildings to support London’s shift to a low carbon future (Mayor of London, 2018b; 2019). As such, with this clear indication that there is political will to not only tackle the lack of affordable housing, but also the climate crisis, the GLA is the best vehicle to implement our non-negotiable framework.

Potential Future Implications

As an enforced regulatory framework of non-negotiables, the SHoRe Programme can be expected to have a number of implications for various stakeholders.

Implications for the GLA

For the Greater London Authority, we would expect a department-group-committee within the Authority to uphold the framework within the existing planning review processes. Review of project compliance with the non-negotiables would need to be incorporated into Authority operating procedures. In the short-term, the Authority would need to dedicate resources to support the Programme. This could come from existing Authority resources, which would require organisational changes within the Authority, or from the hiring of additional personnel. With adequate resourcing, we would expect the review process for council estate regeneration projects adhering to the non-negotiables to become firmly established and require limited on-going support, beyond ensuring adequate resourcing.

Implications for Local Authorities

In the near-term, once incorporated into GLA processes, the Programme provides local authorities with a strong partner who can assist them in supporting private sector adherence to the Programme’s non-negotiables on in-progress council estate regeneration projects. In the long-term, on sites that local authorities are targeting for council estate regeneration, the Programme acts as a framework to underpin new approaches to estate regeneration, providing guidance to local authorities as they consider options and potentially seek private-sector partners. Finally, the Programme will begin to shift thinking and approaches to council estates, likely resulting in both considering council estate regeneration at smaller sites and prioritising maintenance and repair of existing council housing.

Implications for Council Tenants

For current council tenants living in council housing not covered by an approved planning application for estate regeneration, several immediate benefits can be expected. First, reduced displacement should be expected both in the near- and long-term. With the second non-negotiable preserving refurbishable council housing, more individual units will be maintained, and all existing tenancies will be preserved. Second, council tenants as well as leaseholders should expect more long-term stability in their housing situations as a result of the prioritisation of refurbishment and lower levels of displacement. The potential of better maintenance regimes of existing council housing as a consequence of the Programme will bring benefits to all residents.

Implications for Public Discourse

This Programme provides a framework that individuals, community, and advocacy groups can use to argue for a different approach to council estate regeneration. The expectation is that these groups can leverage these standards to hold both the GLA and local authorities accountable. In the long-term, this should both strengthen public-government discourse around housing and this increased pressure may continue to shift the larger public discourse towards the right to housing.

Implications for Private Sector

The SHoRe Programme has substantial implications for the private sector. Foremost, the programme will demand innovation from the private sector both economically and spatially. For developers, business models will likely need to be adjusted to build new housing on council estates while preserving existing tenancies and refurbishing existing structures. Profit margins could be negatively impacted, but the social and environmental benefits outweigh potential decreases in developer profits. Architects may also need to adjust their spatial approaches to council estate regenerations to incorporate old with new within close proximity.

We would also expect to see some growth in local economies through both smaller contracts to developers on smaller plots of land. Increased emphasis on maintenance and repair of existing council housing is also expected, with the option to demolish being considerably limited with the SHoRe Programme in effect.

Implications for the Environment

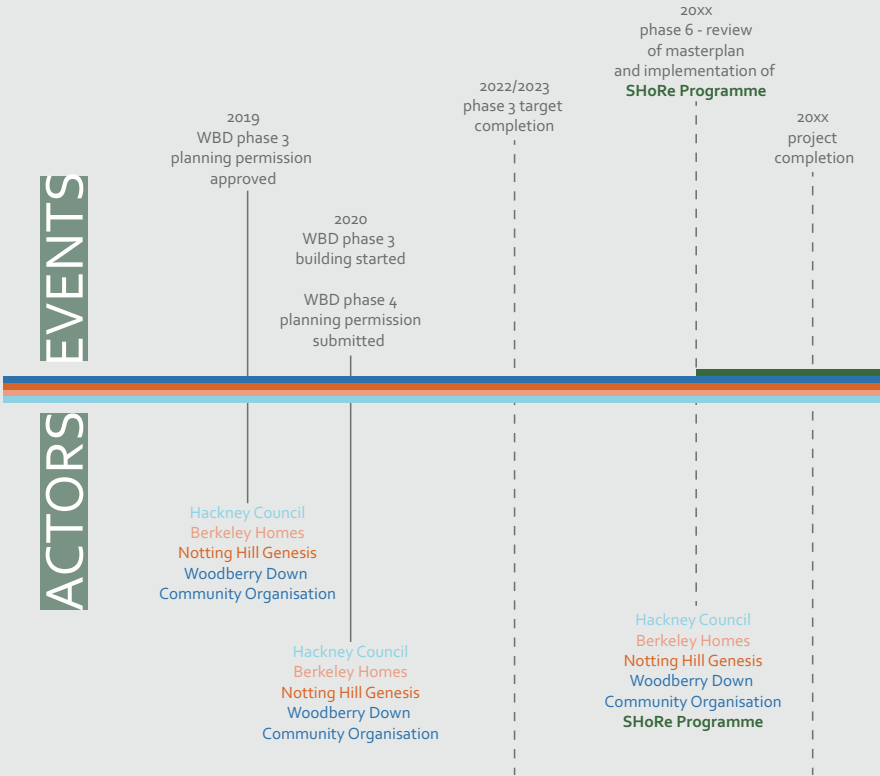
Lastly, the environmental benefits are significant with an overall decrease in the embodied energy produced from the reduction in large-scale demolition and new construction projects, as well as the expected improvements in the energy efficiency of the existing structures that undergo refurbishment.

Conclusion

Woodberry Down sits at the intersection of two intimately linked crises: the housing crisis and the climate crisis. Private developers strong-arm local authorities into demolishing council estates to erect more expensive houses catered mostly to private sale and shared ownership tenancies, while generating immense pollution and waste, and few of the promised economic benefits. This disproportionately and inequitably affects individuals; often, it is the residents of the extant council estates that bear the brunt of economic and environmental injustice.

The SHoRe Programme aims to articulate demands that are both actionable and realistic in the present, but also transformative in the way we address these crises. It demands that social housing tenancies remain fixed and not subject to negotiation and brings into serious consideration refurbishment and repair.

Our project acknowledges that realistic but transformative actions need to be taken as quickly as possible. With a strong framework for authorities to hold all the stakeholders involved in regeneration processes accountable, we can begin to (un)fix elements to ensure estate regeneration is more environmentally-responsible and socially-inclusive.



4.8 Future timeline with intervention
The SHoRe Programme would alter development at Woodberry Down beginning with phase 6.

Bibliography

Crawford, K., Johnson, C.E., Davies, F., Joo, S. & Bell, S. (2014) 'Demolition or Refurbishment of Social Housing? A review of the evidence,' UCL Urban Lab and Engineering Exchange. Available at: <http://www.engineering.ucl.ac.uk/engineering-exchange/files/2014/10/Report-Refurbishment-Demolition-Social-Housing.pdf> (Accessed 30 January 2020).

Greater London Authority Act 1999, c. 29. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1999/29/contents> (Accessed 30 January 2020).

Greater London Authority Act 2007, c. 24. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/24/contents> (Accessed 30 January 2020).

London, L., Joshi, T.K., Cairncross, E. & Claudio, L. (2011) 'Environmental Justice: An International Perspective', in Encyclopedia of Environmental Health, Elsevier, 441-448.

Madden, D. J., & Marcuse, P. (2016) In defense of housing: the politics of crisis, London ; New York: Verso.

Mayor of London (2018a) London Environment Strategy, May. Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018_lhs_london_housing_strategy.pdf (accessed February 2020).

Mayor of London (2018b) London Housing Strategy, May. Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_environment_strategy_0.pdf (accessed February 2020).

Mayor of London (2019) Intend to Publish London Plan, December. Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Intend_to_publish_-_clean.pdf (accessed February 2020).

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018) A New Deal for Social Housing, London: Crown copyright.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2019) Social Housing Sales: Annual Sales by Scheme for England: 1980-81 to 2018-19, London: Crown Copyright.

Minton, A. (2017) Big capital: who is London for?, UK: Penguin Books.

Power, A. (2008) 'Does demolition or refurbishment of old and inefficient homes help to increase our environmental, social and economic viability?', Energy Policy, 36, 4487-4501.

The Conservative Party (2019) Conservative Manifesto 2019. Available at: <https://vote.conservatives.com/our-plan> (accessed February 2020).

Walker, G. (2010) 'Environmental justice, impact assessment and the politics of knowledge: The implications of assessing the social distribution of environmental outcomes', Environmental Impact Assessment Review, 30, 312-318.

Woodberry Down Regeneration Team (2000) London-Hackney: Woodberry Down Estate, London: London Borough of Hackney.



REGENERATION AT WOODBERRY DOWN

The London School of Economics and
Political Science
Cities Programme 2019 - 2020