HOUSING

THE

CITY

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. 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, which for the first time this year is also being paired with a short film that is written and directed by students.

In 2017-2018 our Studio focused on housing in Thamesmead. This neighbourhood in outer southeast London is a key site for understanding the past, present, and future of housing in London and beyond. First planned in the 1960s as a modern New Town, a vision that was never fully realised; later subjected to stigmatisation, privatisation, and various spatial and administrative alterations; and now the target of large-scale plans for further transformation in the midst of a growing but increasingly unequal urban region, Thamesmead exemplifies many of the processes that have shaped the residential experience in twentieth and twenty-first century London. The area also has a distinctive urban character of its own, stemming from its diverse communities, its incomplete modern plan, its riverside location, and its particular variety of architectural forms, densities, and styles.

Thamesmead, in short, is a promising and challenging case for thinking about housing in the city. The six student projects presented here draw on extensive research and analysis to explore housing in Thamesmead from a variety of perspectives and concerns. In seeking both to understand the city and also to find innovative ways to reimagine it, these projects can help all of us to think again about what it means to inhabit the city.

Suzanne Hall
David Madden
Co-Directors, Cities Programme
LSE

Housing the City

An introduction to Thamesmead and the London Housing Crisis

Thamesmead is situated in outer south-east London, falling within the boroughs of Greenwich and Bexley (see figure I). The area currently houses 50 000 people. Currently undergoing phases of regeneration, it is representative of many housing challenges that London faces today. This publication serves to outline these challenges as well as to suggest possible solutions as to how the housing crisis in the city may be addressed.

Thamesmead was first constructed by the Greater London Council in the late 1960s as a modernist New Town planned in response to London's continued post-war housing shortage (see figures II and III). The management of the estate has since passed through the hands of multiple organisations. In the 1980's, prime minister, Margaret Thatcher sought to shift power away from the state and encourage private investment.[1] This brought about high housing costs in the UK. Council budgets were cut, the introduction of the "Right to Buy" encouraged tenants to buy their council homes, and councils sold their estates to housing associations.[2] With the temporary suspension of the Greater London Council in 1985, housing in London became primarily governed by
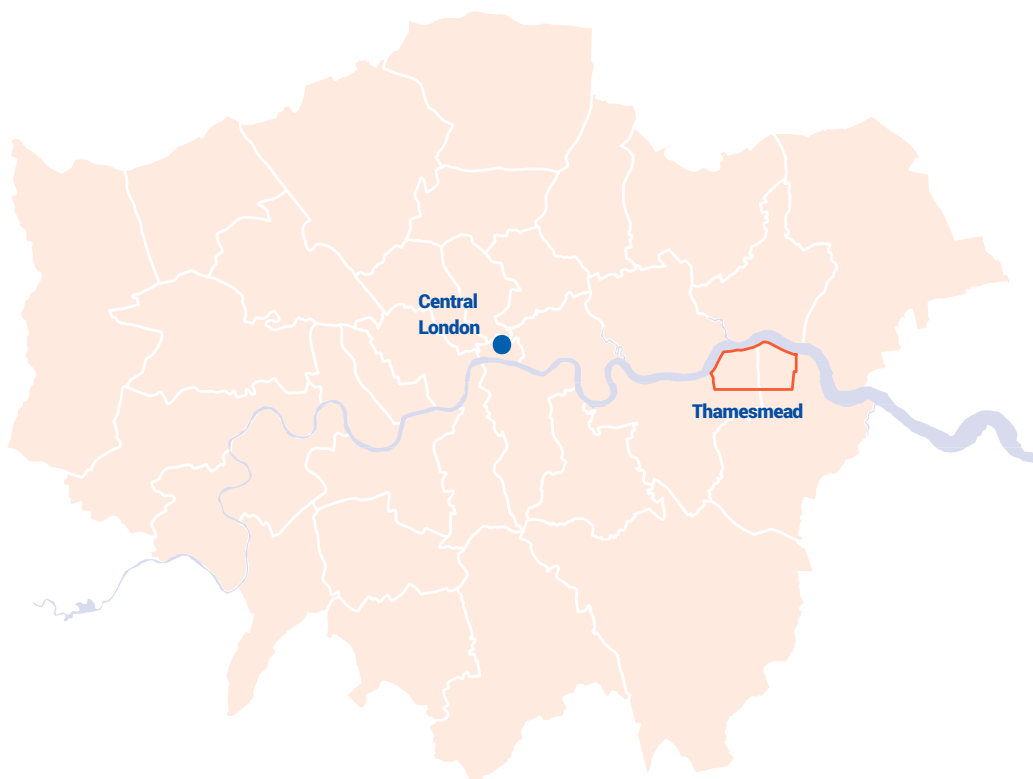

Figure I Thamesmead in the context of London

[image: authors]

Figure II and III Thamesmead in the 1960s and 1970s.
[image source: (P.95141) London Metropolitan Archives.]

the private sector. This permanently changed the nature of housing in London. Housing became more of a capital asset than a right.

Thamesmead was eventually sold by the public sector to the private sector due to additional austerity measures adopted by the U.K government to reduce housing budgets for local councils.[3] In 2014 Thamesmead housing estate was acquired by Peabody Housing association who now oversee the management and maintenance of the area. When stock transfers from councils to housing associations, tenants lose many of their rights and experience greater insecurity. One of the rights tenants lose is the right to manage their properties collectively and control spending within their estates. This is currently the case within Thamesmead as the area is undergoing regeneration with the introduction of a crossrail station at Abbey Wood nearby. Peabody has since launched a £1 billion regeneration plan to capitalise on the opportunities of the area (see figure IV).

This has left many residents in the area feeling insecure about their housing arrangements as some residents are being served with compulsory purchase orders (see figure V). Additionally, the large population of social renters in the area are also uncertain of their future as they feel the plans for regeneration excludes them. Although there have

been agreements that Peabody would rehouse those who are displaced these responses often lead to mistrust from the residents towards Peabody as they question who the regeneration project is aimed at. In the past, regeneration has been used as a tool to drive out current residents in order to foster a new identity. A large part of the regeneration plans of Peabody is to demolish and redevelop portions of the land. In addition to the historic lack of investment in the area, problems associated with the design and the quality of the buildings have been enough to justify redevelopment. The forthcoming proposals question whether demolition is the best way to regenerate considering the current environment and the negative effect this would have on the residents of Thamesmead.

The housing market in London has become increasingly difficult to access. Homes have become assets which creates a significant amount of economic and bureaucratic advantages for owners, while disadvantaging those who do not have such assets. In the current London housing climate, this has made both private and social renters increasingly vulnerable to displacement. This has made the provision of social housing and affordable housing increasingly important. What is evident in many regeneration plans throughout the city is that affordable housing is being prioritised at the expense of social housing. What we have come to find is

Figure IV Thamesmead proposed new civic centre
[image source: Peabody 2016]

this definition of 'affordable' can be questioned as it often excludes citizens within lower income brackets.

In the wake of the new London Plan, published by the Mayor of London in 2018, it is imperative to interrogate how housing is delivered in the city. The London Plan also stresses the importance of improving the existing housing stock and building strong and inclusive neighbourhoods, especially in the context of accelerated urban growth and densification.[4] The redevelopment plan of Thamesmead displays the principles of densification, but it has become increasingly apparent that challenges are arising for current residents in the face of redevelopment.

The following proposals take the aforementioned factors into account when suggesting possible alternatives for redevelopment. Essentially the proposals look at means of providing solutions to some of the more nuanced challenges that the London housing crisis poses. They look at other considerations that need to be taken into account, such as delivery mechanisms, community involvement, alternative tenure agreements as well as other necessities which will make for a healthier housing environment. By using Thamesmead as a sample area, groups were able to engage with the reality of many people who are currently facing these challenges. The proposals look at ways in which to include residents in future developments and increase their participation in their own housing environment.

The projects identify alternative means of redevelopment that aims to densify whilst increasing opportunity for both the existing and future residents. By using an array of research methods, proposals were derived through an increased understanding of both the area and the broader challenges of the housing crisis.

1 Malpass, P. and Murie, A. (1994). Housing policy and practice. 4th ed. Basing-stoke: Macmillan.

2 ibid.

3 Dorling, D. (2014) All that is solid: How the Great Housing Disaster De nes Our Times, and What We Can Do About It, London: Allen Lane.

4 GLA (2017). "London Housing Strategy Impact Assessment: Draft for public consultation". URL: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/ files/2017_draft_strategies_housing_impact_assessment_02ks_0.pdf (Accessed 26/01/2018).

Figure IV Thamesmead #NOTOCPO campaign displayed along Carlyle road
[photography: Felipe Correa]

"The housing crisis is the single biggest barrier to prosperity, growth and fairness facing Londoners today"

Sadiq Khan, The Mayor of London

Lifting the Bell Jar

Juan Pablo Corral, Saloni Parekh, Rebekah Taft, Natalie Claire Thomson

'Housing the city' is a concept impossible to understand without first understanding capital. Hernando De Soto (2001) defines capital as assets that are able to reproduce value outside of their obvious characteristics.[1] In London, as in many other contexts, homes function in this way - they are not simply places to live, but investments that generate added wealth, access to credit and security for their owners. Property owners can benefit from the capital their property produces however, renters cannot. Thus capitalism functions as a 'private club' which De Soto refers to using the metaphor of a bell jar.[2] It is commonly interpreted that until the marginalised have access to the property market through ownership, the bell jar will remain closed to them. This interpretation is reflected in Margaret Thatcher's neoliberal policies like Right to Buy which promote homeownership or The Housing Act of 1988 which entitled landlords to evict tenants after an initial fixed term without sound legal reason. However, we have an alternative interpretation, and suggest that through policy reform and a redistribution of rights, the bell jar can be lifted just enough for renters to be able to benefit from some of the financial and social benefits available to those who own a home.

Divergence & Disempowerment in Thamesmead

Thamesmead, draped in a rhetoric of 'regeneration,' reflects the story of London's capital driven housing market. In 2014, Peabody Housing Association proposed a plan to modernise this modernist estate, representative of a capital-driven market that treats homes as profit-making investments, geared towards the market rather than towards existing tenants. Instead of using the potential of existing internal and external space in Thamesmead, the plan takes to complete redevelopment decanting tenants at the same time. Thus, the remainder of tenants' reality stands in stark contrast to the shiny renderings, manicured lawns, and water features on Peabody's plan resulting in scepticism and insecurity as well as a loss of rights, such as the right to manage their properties collectively, further deepening their sense of insecurity. Our ethnographic research revealed that this insecurity directly translates into mistrust for Peabody, which led us to our first set of research questions:

How can the landlord-tenant relationship begin to converge and can the Peabody plan be a catalyst for this?

Additionally, we found that Peabody was approaching individual residents, negotiating separate deals, and encouraging them to settle as soon as possible, which was creating division amongst the resident community. With this knowledge, as well as the advice of Thamesmead housing campaign leaders, we decided that our intervention had

to bring the community together, leading to our second question: Can we unite social tenants to form a collective voice used to represent their needs?

Parkview: A Site for Intervention

Parkview, an area with 79% social tenants - one of the highest in Thamesmead - fell within the scope of our research and was thus chosen as the site for our intervention.[3] Through census data and site analysis, we found a surplus of outdoor and indoor space in Parkview, with a circulation area of 42% and approximately 1500-1800 vacant rooms. These findings led us to our third research question: How can we use the surplus internal and external space in favour of the social tenants on our site?

The Intervention: To Converge and Redistribute

Utilising surplus spaces, our intervention seeks to strengthen social renting tenure. It also takes some of Peabody's powers as the landlord and distributes them to tenants, giving them responsibly - but also the freedom - to make decisions about what happens in their community. This redistribution of power is intended to bring tenants together, making them more resilient to the changes that come with

new development and more able to create the social and spatial change they desire.

Integral to our project are three forms of agency and one spatial intervention that are intended to help redistribute the tenure scales and advantage social renters (see figure 1.1):

1. Subletting Agency

First, in the light of the surplus internal space in Parkview, we propose Peabody forms a subletting agency to help reduce tenure differences between owners and renters. This agency would legally and seamlessly allow tenants to access the economic potential of their homes by subletting their surplus bedrooms - currently a practice which is legally allowed but contractually prohibited and thus happens exploitatively both in Thamesmead and in London. If current tenants wish to do so, they can approach the subletting agency who will then recognise appropriate subtenants from the council waitlists, and upon agreement from all parties, a legal agreement can be drawn up. For tenants, the agency will present an opportunity to generate additional income, which could be a tool for economic mobility among the 42 percent of Parkview that is classified as semi-skilled labourers or
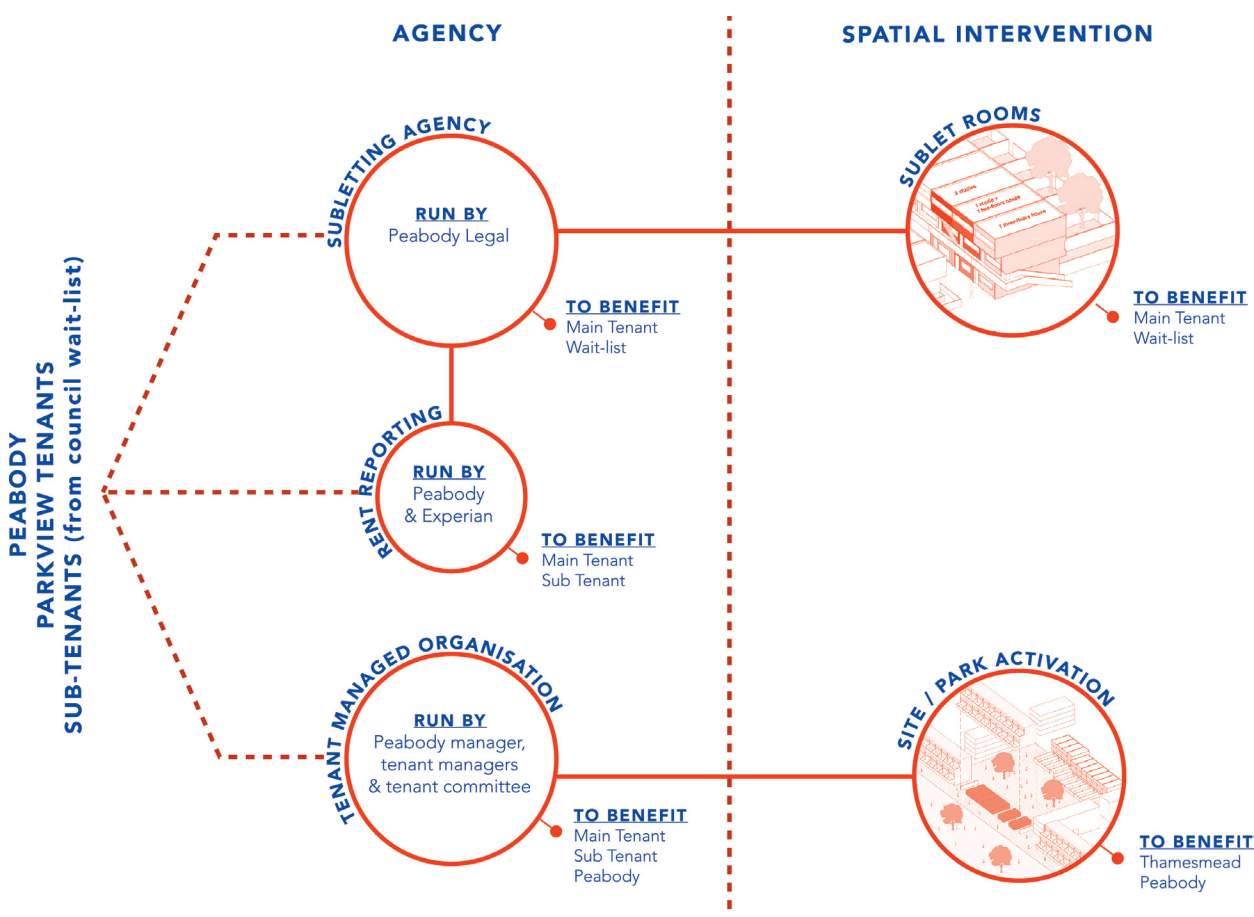

AGENCY | SPATIAL INTERVENTION

PEABODY
PARKVIEW TENANTS
SUB-TENANTS (from council wait-list)

SUBLETTING AGENCY
RUN BY
Peabody Legal

SUBLET ROOMS

TO BENEFIT
Main Tenant
Wait-list

TO BENEFIT
Main Tenant
Wait-list

RENT REPORTING
RUN BY
Peabody
& Experian

TO BENEFIT
Main Tenant
Sub Tenant

TENANT MANAGED ORGANISATION
RUN BY
Peabody manager,
tenant managers
& tenant committee

SITE / PARK ACTIVATION

TO BENEFIT
Main Tenant
Sub Tenant
Peabody

TO BENEFIT
Thamesmead
Peabody

Figure 1.1 Intervention overview

unemployed. The agency will offer a sense of security and freedom for Parkview renters, giving them the opportunity to exercise powers currently restricted to homeowners. And most importantly, the agency will provide a legal framework for subletting that allows social tenants the opportunity to decide what happens with the surplus space in their homes. Unlike the Bedroom Tax, it is a financially lucrative, fair process.

2. Rent Reporting Agency
This agency would allow Parkview renters to opt in to having their rent payments reported to the credit bureau, allowing them to build their credit rating and access more affordable credit in the long term, a privilege usually reserved for homeowners.

3. Tenant Management Organization (TMO)
We propose a policy reform to allow housing association tenants the right to manage, and then to exercise that right collectively by forming a TMO. The TMO would be responsible for management and have direct access to their budget as well as full decision-making power to decide how to activate the surplus green space in Parkview (see figure 1.2). The TMO would then take responsibility for the management, maintenance, and repair of the site.

4. Spatial Intervention
After the TMO is established, it could be involved in activating the western edge of Parkview that sits along a large public park, implementing services that are valuable to the community and connecting the site to the rest of the Peabody plan.

Conclusion
Overall, the subletting agency, rent reporting agency, and TMO will help redistribute and balance tenancy rights in Parkview, converging the relationship between landlord and tenant through regulation and trust building and uniting renters to make positive change happen in their community.

What our intervention ultimately suggests is that by giving social renters some of the rights and responsibilities that owners and landlords currently hold, we are able to lift De Soto's bell jar just enough for renters to benefit from the value of their homes. In Thamesmead and in Parkview, this does not mean encouraging renters to take advantage of access to the legal and political framework of a formalised property market through ownership, but instead to reclaim some of the powers that ownership offers with the help of Peabody, a great living environment, and the site's greatest asset: its people.

1   De Soto, H. (2001) The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else, London: Black Swan
2   ibid.
3   Office for National Statistics. (2011). Nomis: Official Labour Market Statistics. [online] Available at: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk [Accessed 27 Nov. 2017].

Figure 1.2 (top) View of garages from Parkview as it exists. [image: Google street view, 2017]
Figure 1.2 (bottom) Imagined view of garages from Parkview after intervention. [image:Google street view, 2017; edited by authors]

"When people use the word 'affordability', then which people are you referring to?"

Redefining Affordability
An infill development approach to housing

Reem Alfahad, Alireza Delpazir, Shahena Khan, Evelyn Teh, Felipe Walter

How can we provide 'genuinely' affordable housing in Thamesmead?

In this project we want to explore the notion of 'affordability' in the London housing crisis. We focus on Thamesmead, one of the 38 housing opportunity areas identified by the Mayor of London,[1] and in which the Peabody Housing Association is currently conducting a large-scale regeneration plan to address housing shortage.

First we recognise that understanding affordability merely as an empirical ratio is limiting. We, instead, call for setting a standard of affordability that focuses on social and circumstantial parameters. An affordability standard should have an independent, non-empirical, logic that can more accurately depict a household's circumstantial capacity to access housing. For this reason we have created four action oriented principles that serve as a normative framework to approach affordability. We use these to explore alternate approaches to regeneration that are more affordable to tenants, Peabody, and the council.

Principles

Principle One: Making homes economically accessible
The state defines affordable rent "according to relative property values of dwellings"[2] and controlled at "no more [than] 80% of the local market rent".[3] Affordability is thus understood in relation to the market price. However, as shown in Figure 2, the gap between market price and income is continuously expanding. So long as affordability is defined through a relationship with the market price, and not income, it is disjointed from the economic realities of the population. One possible explanation for the sharp increase in housing price in the new development is the high costs of regeneration. The revenue from the new homes is intended to recuperate the losses of demolition costs, construction costs, time-lag costs, home-loss payments and rehousing costs.

To avoid such increased costs and to establish housing prices more reflective of local income, alternative non-demolition based approaches should be considered.

Principle Two: Flexibility towards diverse needs
Figure 2.2 shows the varied household structures in London and Thamesmead. The most vulnerable households are lone parent households, and households with residents over 65 years of age. First, with their higher risk towards poverty and the diminishing social housing, there is a need to retain social rent housing for lone-parent households. Not only because of increasing single parent households in London, but because Thamesmead has a particularly high presence of single person households, which stands at 30%.[4]
As for residents over 65 years of age, it is important to consider that relocating at such a later age can have a large negative toll on health and savings. This principle seeks an intervention that accounts for this reality, and seeks to be flexible and ever- adjusting to the needs of its vulnerable and intergenerational inhabitants.

Principle Three: Avoid Displacement
Additionally, vulnerable groups are more prone to displacement during regeneration,[5] particularly one person households (29%), lone parents (19%) and lone parents with dependent children (15,6%), all of which make up a large portion of the Bexley population.[6] Additionally, the map in Figure 2.3 shows that Bexley is the least expensive borough
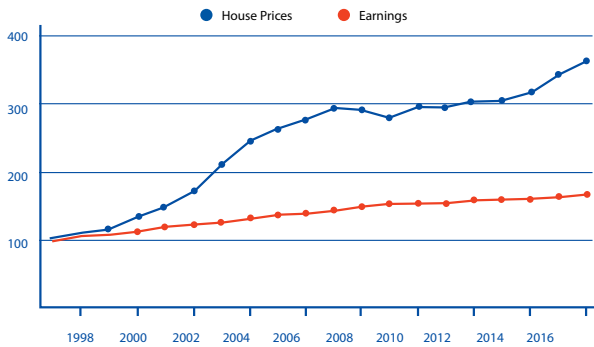
Figure 2.1 Median price paid for property and annual earning indices
[Data source: Office for National Statistics, 2017]

Figure 2.1 Household structure
[Office for National Statistics, 2011]

in London. Therefore it is unrealistic to expect Thamesmead residents to possess the economic capacity to relocate within London after being displaced from Bexley. The stakes of displacement in Thamesmead are therefore particularly high given that they do not concern displacement between boroughs but between cities. This could mean high costs not only for current residents, but for Peabody and the developers who must incur the costs of relocation.

Principle Four: Densify Gradually
The current density of Thamesmead is reported to be 20.7 du/ha whereas138.9 du/ha is the new density proposed by Peabody. To put in perspective, that is almost double the density of the densest area in central London.
Over-speculation through proposed high densities is a way to make redevelopment profitable because more units could lead to enough revenue to absorb the initial costs. To avoid these initial costs, we looked into the possibility of incremental development, a model that could allow that kind of aspirational density to build up over time, rather than at the forefront of a project.
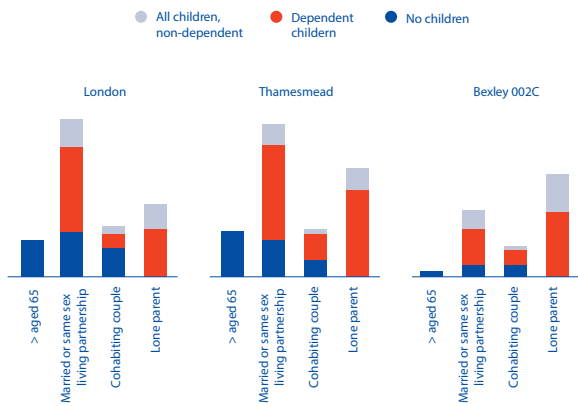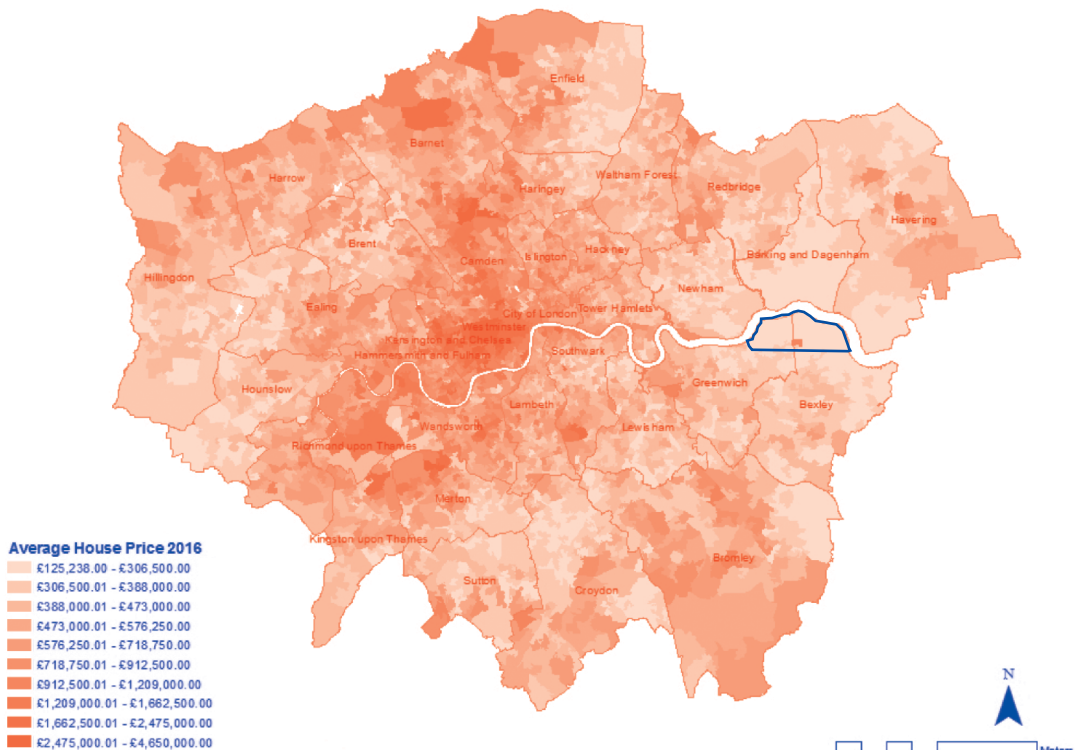

Figure 2.3 Average house prices in London
[data source: London Datastore, 2011]

Spatial Strategy

Incremental development provides a framework for affordability that allows large-scale change through small-scale steps.[7] It is an open system that provides flexibility fr changing trends to allow optimisation of space.[8] Because of the underutilised space on site and the goal to avoid displacement, we found this strategy desirable to explore for our site.

Strategy 1: House within a House (Figure 2.4)
Step 1: The underutilised ground floor of each dwelling provides an opportunity to house one-bedroom unit of 42m[2] - an extension that only takes up 33% coverage of the front yard. This would increase the social housing stock up to 227 one-bedroom units.

Step 2: Crossrail will lead to changes in mobility patterns. The dependency on private vehicles will significantly decrease, which could reduce demand for private garages. The one-bedroom unit on the ground floor could become an additional habitable room, a home-based workspace or a separate one-bedroom unit on its own, depending on different needs.
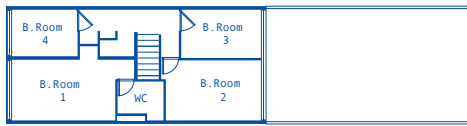
Strategy 2: Staircase Towers (Figure 2.5)
This second infill strategy focuses on effective utilisation of underutilised staircases,. This 100m[2] of space can be used to house 1/2/3 bedroom dwellings. These staircase towers can be built up to 5 storeys. The ground floor will provide space for community amenities like children day care, adult centres or co-working spaces. Construction will be made more affordable by using Core House (only structure and pipes) Naked house (adaptable shells) strategies. This can lead to a maximum density of 501 additional dwelling units, if required, over a period of time.
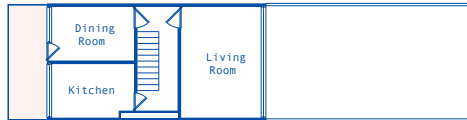
Conclusion

Infill development can potentially revolutionise how we approach the housing shortage. These strategies are built in response to rising needs through diverse typologies, with a special regard for vulnerable groups. Although this intervention was based in Thamesmead, it can be replicated and scaled up in low density areas all over London. As argued in Transforming Suburbia: "doubling the density of just 10% of the outer London Boroughs would create the capacity for one million new homes".[9]
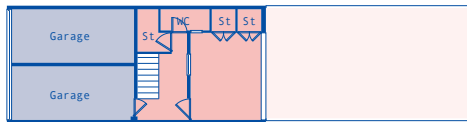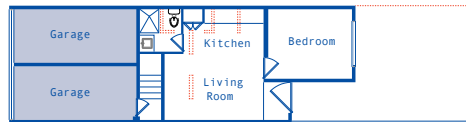
Existing Terrace House
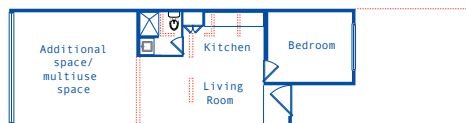

Second Floor

First Floor

Ground Floor

150m2
total house area

? 22m2
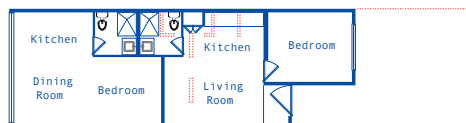underused area

28m2
garage area

43m2
frontyard area

Infill proposal: Strategies 1 and 2
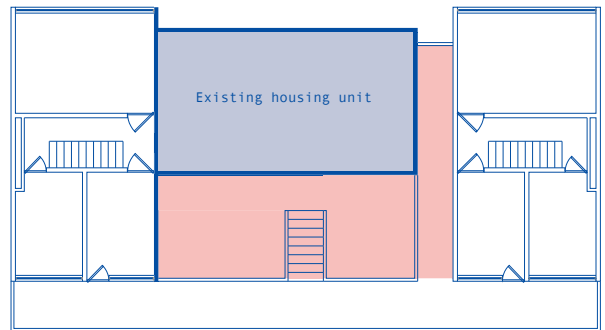

Strategy 1: House within a House, Step 1

Strategy 1: House within a House.
Step 2, housing extension

Strategy 1: House within a House.
Step 2, additional housing unit

Figure 2.4 Strategy 1: House within a house, extensions and modification on the ground floor
[image: authors]

Existing underutilised staircases
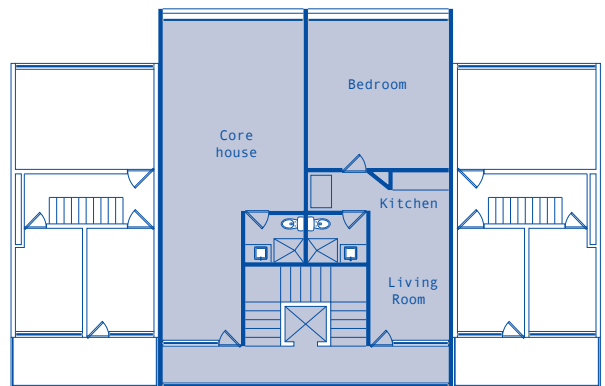

Infill proposal: Strategy 3

Figure 2.5 Strategy 2: Staircase towers
[image: authors]

1 GLA. (2016). The London Plan. Available: https://www.london.gov.uk/ sites/ default/ les/the_london_plan_2016_jan_2017_ x.pdf. [Accessed 8 Feb. 2018].

2 DETR (2001). Guide to social rent reforms. London: Dept. of the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

3 Communities and Local Government (2012). National Planning Policy Framework. London: Department for Communities and Local Government

4 ONS. (2011). O ce for National Statistics. [online] Available at: https:// www.ons.gov.uk/ [Accessed 7 Feb. 2018].

5 Tang, C. (2012). Measuring the affordability of housing association rents in England: a dual approach. International Journal of Housing Markets and Analysis, 5(3), pp.218-234.

6 Tang, 2012

7 Ho man, J. and Kullman, K. (2015). Incremental Development | Johanna Ho man and Karl Kullmann -. [online] World Landscape Architecture. Available at: http://worldlandscapearchitect.com/incremental- development-johanna-ho man-and-karl-kullmann [Accessed 7 Feb. 2018].

8 Tillner, S. (2013). Incremental Planning-Cooperative Scenario and/or Masterplan?. [online] Corp.at. Available at: http://www.corp.at/archive/ CORP2013_223.pdf [Accessed 7 Feb. 2018].

9 Pollard Thomas Edwards. (2015). TRANSFORMING SUBURBIA: SUPURBIA SEMI-PERMISSIVE. Planning Design Economics. London: Supurbia Semi-Permissive.

Reclaiming Housing

A collective against displacement

Diego Cuesy Edgar, Irene Frassoldati, Alejandro Fernandez, Anukriti Pathak, Jiani Wang

Thamesmead has been at the core of housing debates in England for the last fifty years, from its conception as a city of the future in the 60s and its abandonment in the 80s, to today's current large-scale regeneration. In our research we have first tried to understand the different dimensions of displacement among social tenants and secondly, proposed a participatory strategy to increase the agency of the inhabitants and define an alternative to current regeneration processes.

Analysis

Displacement has traditionally been understood as physical dislocation.[1] However, this phenomenon emerges not only through migration-out but also related to feelings of alienation and uncertainty.[2] We have tried to observe displacement through census data complemented by a more ethnographic and interviewed based approach (see figure 3.1).

Previous research relates displacement with high unemployment, elementary occupations as defined by the National Office for Statistics, and ethnic minorities.[3] We used these three variables to select an area in Thamesmead. As the graph in figure 3.2 shows, Wolvercote road population concentrates these socioeconomic features above Thamesmead and London's average. Furthermore, most of the households are social tenants and a third of the inhabitants are foreign born. These features are complemented by a high density and proximity to Peabody's regeneration project. There are six 12-storey towers in

Wolvercote Road (see figure 3.3). Each tower has a floor area of 350 sqm with two 2-bedrooms and two 1-bedroom apartment, connected to the central circulation core.

In order to complement this demographic data we participated in the first advocacy event of the Home at Risk Campaign. This campaign aims to resist displacement related to the current regeneration plan. The event consisted of the screening of the documentary 'Dispossession' and a Q&A panel with a journalist, a lawyer, politicians and activists. This allowed us to get an insight into the feelings of the people in the area.

Most of the questions asked during the panels revolved around two themes. First, residents were asked if there were ways to save their houses and what actions could be effective. Secondly, many questions were directed to the lawyer and manifested confusion about residents' rights and legal procedures. One of the home owners asked if there was a law that allowed someone else to build on his property and if the council could offer him protection. These conversations pointed towards the existence of an information gap.

A gap of knowledge that fostered feelings of uncertainty, insecurity and helplessness.
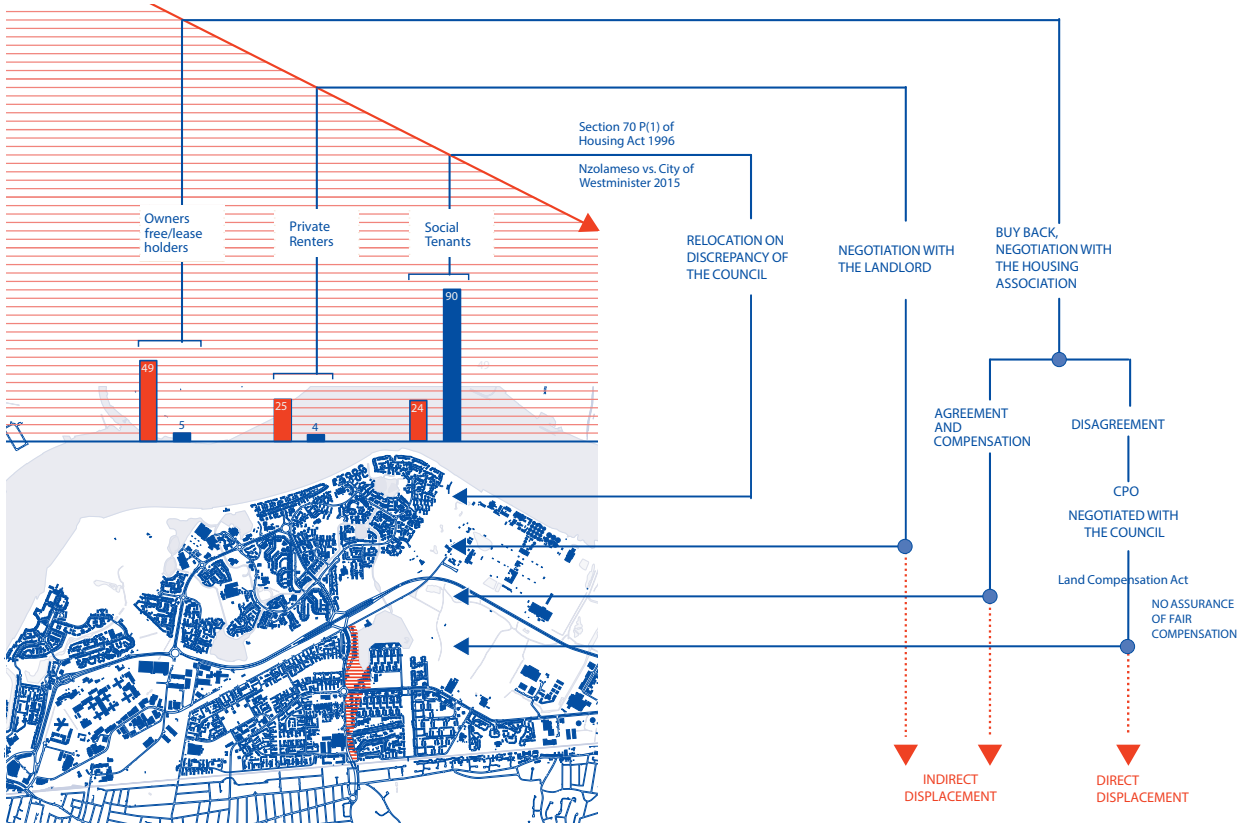
Figure 3.1 Effects of regeneration of tenure types
[image: authors]

On another visit to the area we interviewed some of the residents of the Wolvercote Road towers. The lack of information was again a common feeling among the residents. Some of them pointed out that Peabody's consultation was not in depth and that it did not fully collect the inhabitants' opinions. One of the residents, a middle aged working man, complained about the inefficient heating system. When asked about the consultations organised by Peabody, he said that he couldn't attend it because he works on weekends. The main findings were the feelings of alienation and uncertainty among an already economically fragile population. Residents have no agency to interfere, alter or influence the decisions made for them by Peabody.
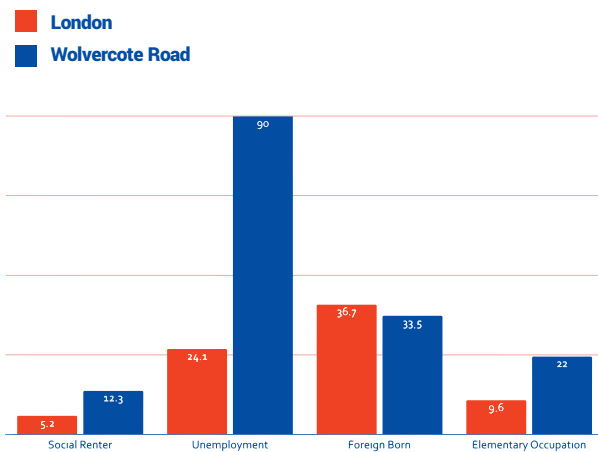
Intervention

Our question was hence: Is it possible to develop a regeneration alternative that reconciles residents security and the council's obligation to provide more housing? We proposed a participatory process with three objectives (see figure 3.4): increasing people's agency in the decisions relative to their housing, precluding displacement and increasing housing stock by densification without demolition.

The first objective aims at the construction of common knowledge. We thought of this first part as being led by a research unit or a think tank. We have understood housing knowledge as a common pool resource that enables inhabitants to apprehend their situation and allows to formulate alternatives.[4] The outcome of this step is also the formation of a Community Task Force, a group of highly motivated residents that shares housing knowledge and collaborates with the academic think tank managing the

Figure 3.2 Comparative socio-demographic characteristics of the population in Wolvercote Road and in London.
[image: prepared by the authors with census data, 2018]

Figure 3.3 Wolvercote road towers
[photography: authors]

next two steps of the participatory process.

The objective of the second step is to assess the management, financial and legal implications of different collective arrangements. In this step the facilitators invite a team of experts on management, law and architecture to accompany the meetings. The outcome is a decision on the most desired and feasible collective arrangement, meaning that there is ownership and power redistribution between Peabody and individual residents. We have thought of two collective agreements: a co-operative and a community land trust (CLT). This may be of interest for the debate later.

The third step has the objective to submit a planning application with an architectural proposal, co-created between residents and the team of experts. Adding housing units is a requirement for funding from Homes of London, as well as the Neighbourhood Planning funds. This requirement also serves to generate revenue for the collective's long term management. According to our spatial analysis, there are up to 345 m^2 of available space to increase housing units as, communal or commercial space. The increased space could include co-working facilities, shops or indoor playgrounds (see figure 3.5).
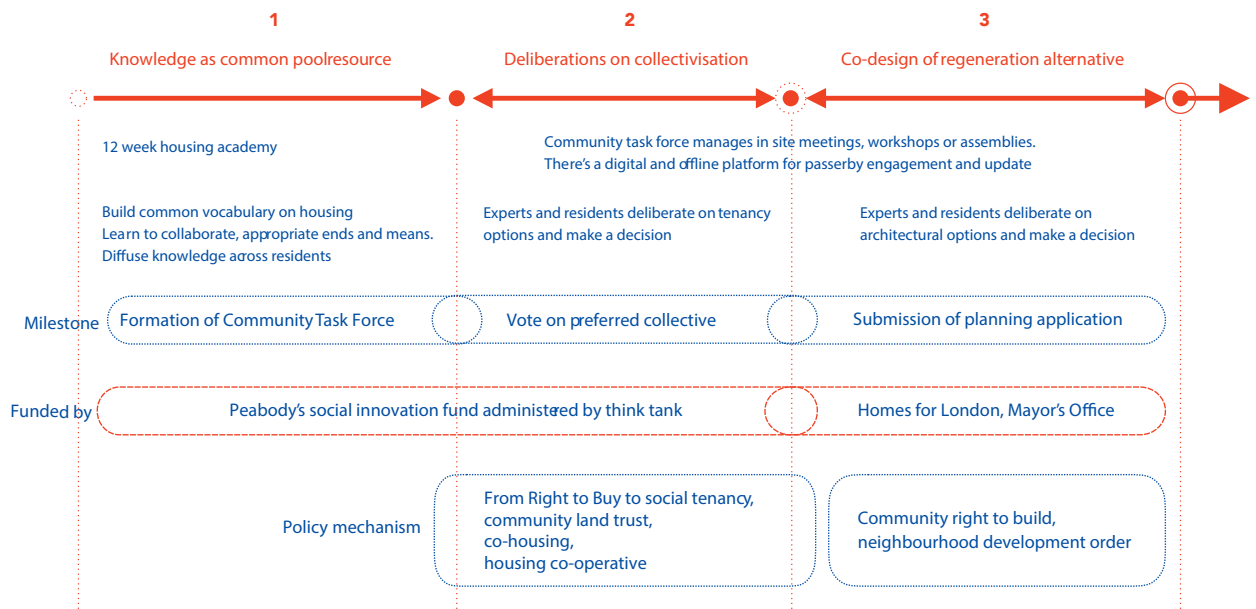

	1	2	3
	Knowledge as common poolresource	Deliberations on collectivisation	Co-design of regeneration alternative
	12 week housing academy	Community task force manages in site meetings, workshops or assemblies. There's a digital and offline platform for passerby engagement and update	
	Build common vocabulary on housing Learn to collaborate, appropriate ends and means. Diffuse knowledge across residents	Experts and residents deliberate on tenancy options and make a decision	Experts and residents deliberate on architectural options and make a decision
Milestone	Formation of Community Task Force	Vote on preferred collective	Submission of planning application
Funded by	Peabody's social innovation fund administered by think tank		Homes for London, Mayor's Office
Policy mechanism		From Right to Buy to social tenancy, community land trust, co-housing, housing co-operative	Community right to build, neighbourhood development order

Figure 3.4 Flow diagram of the process
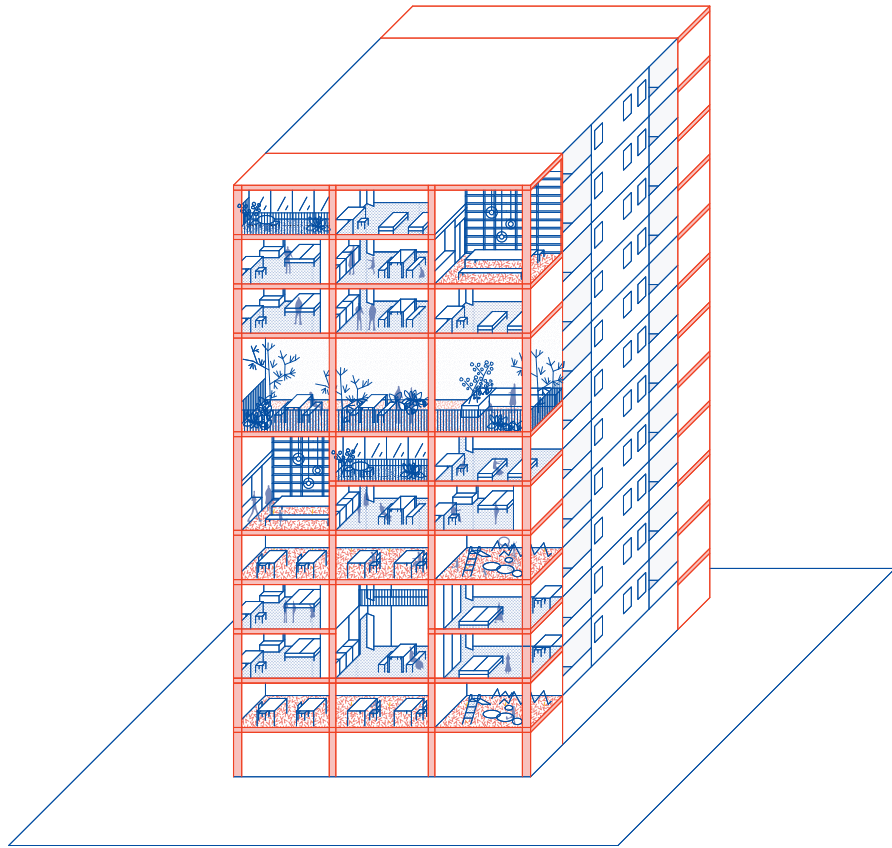[image: authors]

Figure 3.5 Infill possibility and inhabitation
[image: authors]

Conclusion

To sum up, our approach focuses on maximising the potential of an existing built resource which is enacted physically through refurbishment and densification. This is executed by a collective organisation formed by the residents. This collective organisation shifts agency and decision making power to the residents, increases tenure security and partially decommodifies housing by controlling the resale of individual units.

To replicate this process at the scale of London we propose that the Mayor of London create a Task Force that extends knowledge about housing to areas under regeneration. This task force could be established as an expansion the guidelines to estate regeneration set in the document "Better Homes for Local People" and can be incorporated with the Mayor of London's recent announcement of conducting a ballot among the residents before regeneration processes. We wanted to make a statement. The solution to housing the city cannot only have to do with adding more built stock

without considering the distribution of the existing and the future built stock. Post-war state provision and after that market initiative have failed to provide secure forms of dwelling. Collective arrangements through participatory processes can be the tool to redefine power dynamics and ultimately create a resilient system that provides certainty to city dwelling.

1 Marcuse, P. (1985) "Gentri cation, Abandonment, and Displacement: Connections, Causes, and Policy

2 Responses in New York City" Urban Law • Annual, 28 pp.195-240.

3 Grier, G. and Grier, E. (1978) Urban Displacement: A Reconnaissance.Washington D.C: US Dept. of Housing and • Urban Development.

4 Atkinson, R. (2000) "Professionalization and Displacement in Greater London" Area, 32 (2) pp. 287-295.

5 Tonkiss, F. (2017) "Commodity or commons? Knowledge, inequality, and the city" In. T. Haas and H. Westlund (eds) In the Post-urban World. London: Taylor and Francis

Dissolving Perceptions of Territorial Stigma through Communicating the Value of Social Anchors

The Dashwood case

Monica Castañeda, Cara Doherty, Rohan Patankar, Gregor Ranft, Andrea Shortell

This project sought to understand the process of territorial stigmatisation as a strategy deployed by those in power to justify measures of eviction, demolition and redevelopment across housing estates in London. We wanted to understand how the symbolic mark is felt on the ground in Thamesmead. Contrary to the negative image outlined by the media, state and developer, we came across a dynamic community in the neighbourhood.

Taking a local social club, The Dashwood, as a case study, our investigation involved a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic context. The immersive engagement with the club revealed a texture of the everyday life in Thamesmead that one may overlook at first glance. The significance of social anchors is essential for the development of community life. Yet, these places appear to be the first to face the precarity of closure in the regeneration processes.

Theoretical framework & contextual analysis

The term 'stigma' originates from the Greek language to delineate a mark given to slaves or criminals. Today, the label is described by scholars as the process of blemishing a person by discrediting their difference and thus denying their existence as free subjects.[1]

Work conducted on stigma surrounding housing estates[2] apportions the effects of this label through what has been defined territorial stigmatisation;[3] the process whereby people living in a certain housing estate become discredited and devalued because of the places they are associated with, and not necessarily because of their socio-economic status, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, etc.[4] Pointing to the ways a community might work towards self-preservation from the label of territorial stigmatisation, the action may oscillate between 'internalising', 'deflecting', recalcitrance or 'defend'/ 'resist'.[4] Guided by this idea of resistance and a willingness to challenge perceptions, we approached further visits to Thamesmead with the ambition to analyse how far residents had pursued actions in response to becoming territorially stigmatised.

Site analysis and process

During the construction of Thamesmead in the mid 1970s, the GLC gifted the housing estate with four social clubs. Over time, these social clubs were closed and subsequently not replaced. The Dashwood Social Club, the site of this project, is today, the only remaining social club.

Despite this seemingly inconspicuous appearance, The Dashwood sits figuratively at the centre of the community. In speaking with Ellie and Lorraine who co-run the club, we learnt that this club provides invaluable social interaction for residents of all ages, and especially for the elderly. Through successive conversations we discovered that for some of the residents, their outings to the club are the only medium for social exchange for the day. Such observations underscored the critical role that The Dashwood played within the immediate and broader community within Thamesmead. Urgency arose when the club came under threat of closure

in December 2017. In response to this news, we joined hands with the 'No to CPO' campaign and reached out to Ellie and Lorraine to organise a public event, acknowledging the vulnerability of the club through this key 'live' moment in the community's evolution. The Dashwood Social gathered together the local community to spread the word about the building's closure. Rather than calling for a protest, a deliberate decision was made to keep the tone as a positive 'celebration' of the spirit of The Dashwood's existence within the community over the last 40 years.

During the event, we conducted focus group interviews with residents who expressed concern over the closure of the club and the threat of regeneration to the community, aware that the process of territorially stigmatising a place like Thamesmead has had direct consequences in accelerating the process of regeneration. At the event, over sixty people from the age of two to seventy-five years were present ranging from families, adolescents, elderly men and women.

It was through our engagement and conversations with the residents that we obtained acute insights into their community - what mattered to them, and how they came to find value at The Dashwood Club. These conversations underscored the importance of social amenities play in their lives. As such, we proposed to make the case for mobilising the social value in neighbourhood amenities to create new narratives of visibility that fill the communication gap between community groups and structures of power (see figure 4.1). In the short-term, the intention is to prevent The Dashwood from closure and in the long run, it is to facilitate the robustness of its future existence with potential to connect with a wider network of social anchors across the wider site.

Intervention

The intervention at The Dashwood began with undertaking qualitative research for a comprehensive understanding of its socio-economic context. This presented both challenges and opportunities in determining what mechanisms may be proposed that would be able to advocate, facilitate, and support the financial and ongoing operation of such social amenities in areas of rapid urban-regeneration. Our proposition creates an independent 'Agency' that employs a specifically nominated suite of strategies that are used to communicate the social value of a social amenity asset to our 'clients' that are involved in the regeneration projects – namely, councils, landlords, and developers (see figure 4.2).

As a key part of our intervention was to use the Dashwood as a pilot case of demonstrating social value to advocate and support its operation as a social amenity to the residents of Thamesmead. Social Value is particularly difficult to enumerate, and we turned to the Report on High Streets for All[5] that calls for understanding how social value is captured through the economic, social and environmental strands of value.[6]

The calculations for the club were modelled on six SROIs (Social Return on Investment) outlined in other work on the value of social anchors like pubs.[7] The beneficiaries for the pub included customers, residents as well as local businesses and the total annual SROI was calculated to be approximately £200,000. Effectively, this can be viewed as savings accrued to the council on welfare/ elderly care by the sheer virtue of the club's existence.

Additionally, our 'agency' would adopt a role to support a social club operationally. This task would comprise the search for funding, as well as providing intermittent checks

RIGHTS
Informing residents about rights they may not have known about

Best when community is precarious, eg. presented with a CPO

CELEBRATION
Commemorating the positive values of the community

Best for gathering evidence about community voice

ACTIVISM
Creating an external outreach that goes beyond the site

Best when there is an urgency and people are collected

MAPPING
visualising amenities to show the context in which they exist

Best for making the invisible visible

Figure 4.1 Comparison between different communication strategies
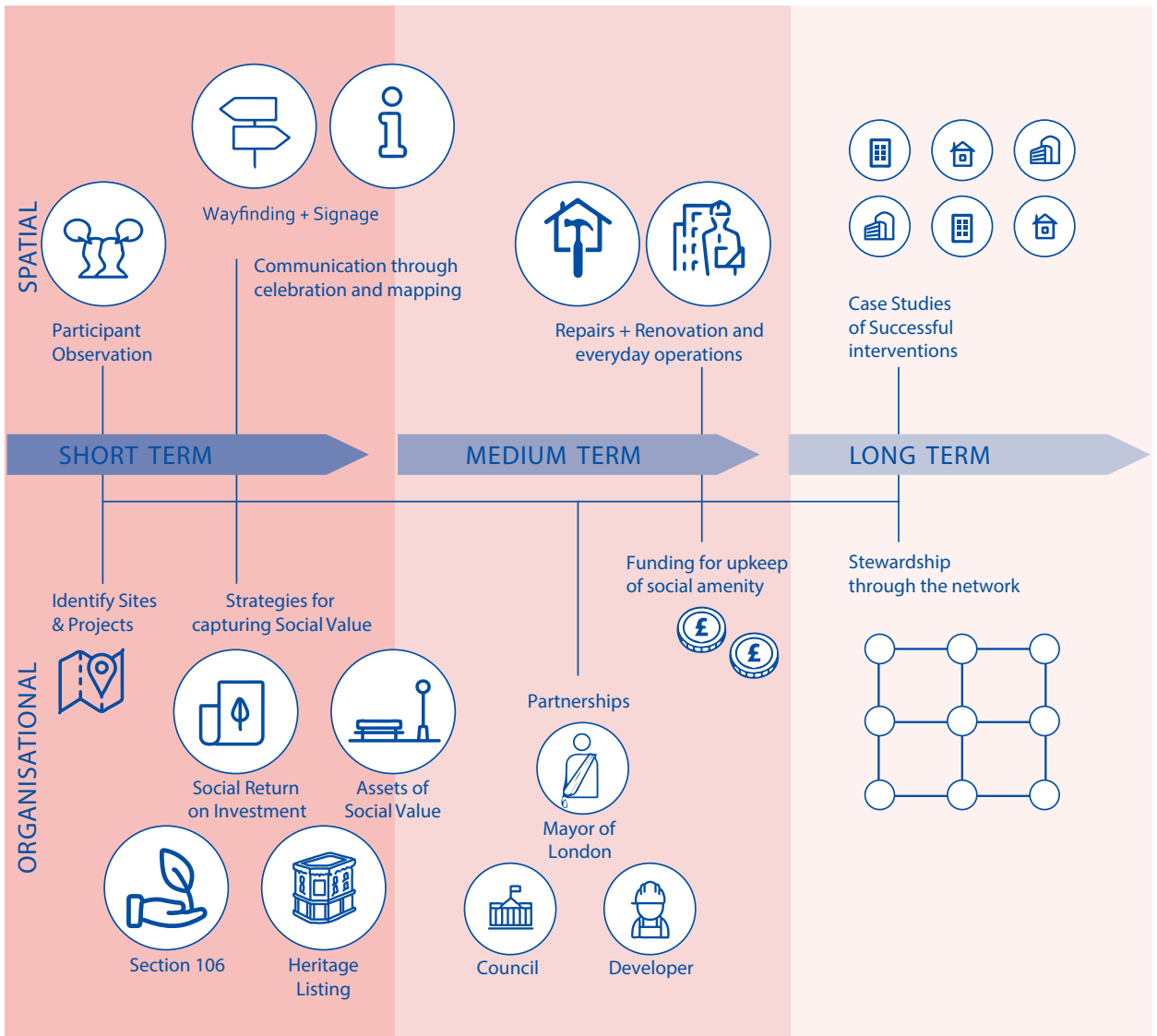[image: authors]

Figure 4.2 Delivery programme for the proposed organisation and intervention

[image: authors]

of how the money is spent, to ensure it is being used for social purposes that are aligned with the local community's objectives thus delivering the benefits to the local community over the mid to long term.

Conclusion

The process revealed the latent potential that social anchors hold to readdress how one accesses 'public space', in the context of living within rapidly changing urban regeneration areas, and the opportunity for greater socially and economically efficient alternative models of collective 'care'. The experience and on-site interventions with the community at The Dashwood were critical moments in our methodology, both to evaluate and crystallise the focus of our intervention for Thamesmead, and for London's housing challenge more broadly. Our intervention attempts

to bridge a communication gap between social anchors like The Dashwood, with the council, and the developer, thus acknowledging the complex network of the urban regeneration and ensuring that the value of social clubs to their communities remains at its core.

1 For more on the definition of stigma see Goffman, E. (1963). Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

2 Slater, T. (2015) 'Territorial Stigmatization: Symbolic Defamation and the Contemporary Metropolis', The Handbook of New Urban Studies, London: Sage Publications

3 Wacquant, L., Slater, T. and Pereira, V.B., (2014) 'Territorial stigmatisation in action', Environment and Planning A, 46: 6, 1270 – 1280[iv] (Wacquant et al., 2014: 1273)

4 Slater (2015) pg 5

5 Greater London Authority (2017). High Streets for All. London: Greater London Authority, pp.10-16

6 Mulgan, G. (2010). 'Measuring Social Value', Stanford Social Innovation Review Summer: 38-43

7 Pubs and Places: The Social Value of Community Pubs Report (2012)

"Symbolic defamation can provide the groundwork and ideological justification for a thorough class transformation of urban space, usually involving housing demolition, dispersal of residents, land clearance, and then the construction of housing and services aimed at a more affluent class of resident"

Tom Slater, 2015

[Re]Thinking Maintenance

in the context of the London housing crisis

Anees Arnold, Clémence Francotte, Anum Imtiaz, Zhongyi Shi, Ruthie Tane

Thamesmead is currently undergoing a new phase of regeneration under Peabody's direction. As previous developers set out to do in the late 1960s, Peabody is hoping to create a new town for London in which residents view it as a desirable place to live. It's clear that many things went wrong in the initial plans for Thamesmead's developments. To understand how to prevent these shortcomings from reoccurring - in Thamesmead and in similar residential developments - it's crucial to explore the current residents' environment there.

Our initial site visits highlighted the vast underutilisation of public spaces in Thamesmead. Not only are they underused but they are also under maintained and often their abandonment has created a feeling of insecurity for residents. Through some preliminary research, we learned that there are strong correlations between the lack of physical maintenance and social issues. Some of the common social issues exhibited include conditions such as antisocial behaviour, social anonymity, as well as psychological issues like anxiety. Understanding the importance of repairs and cleanliness in housing communities, it was especially concerning to see that councils have in the past used reductions in physical maintenance as a political tool to justify the demolition of social housing estates.[1]

The role of maintenance in the well-being of community members

Through further research, it became clear that the lack of physical maintenance had contributed to the public abandonment of public spaces in Thamesmead. However, after interviewing multiple people, we understood that the lack of repairs was not the sole culprit of this striking underuse of public spaces. Residents expressed concern over the lack of community cohesion and opportunities for interpersonal interactions. Additionally, we found that these issues were manifested spatially throughout the site. Thamesmead, despite its plethora of public space, offers very little as far as social amenities. There are few pubs, cafés, and entertainment facilities. In frustration with the few places to go and socialise in Thamesmead, residents are largely confined to spending time inside their homes.

These observations helped clarify that maintenance is more than just its physical tasks.[2] While the cleaning and repairing services are crucial to a housing estate's well-being, there is a strong social dimension to the maintenance of a community as well. The way in which a space is physically maintained often reflects the value that the community has assigned to it as well as the level of ownership that they feel. In order to maintain a community beyond its physical wellbeing, it's important that the social ties are nurtured. With this cohesion, a community will have the strength to think creatively about changing the institutional and built environment in their neighbourhood. This justified a collaborative model of maintenance, where maintenance represents a form of collective efficacy.[3] A cohesive community will have the opportunity to collectively make decisions, create new
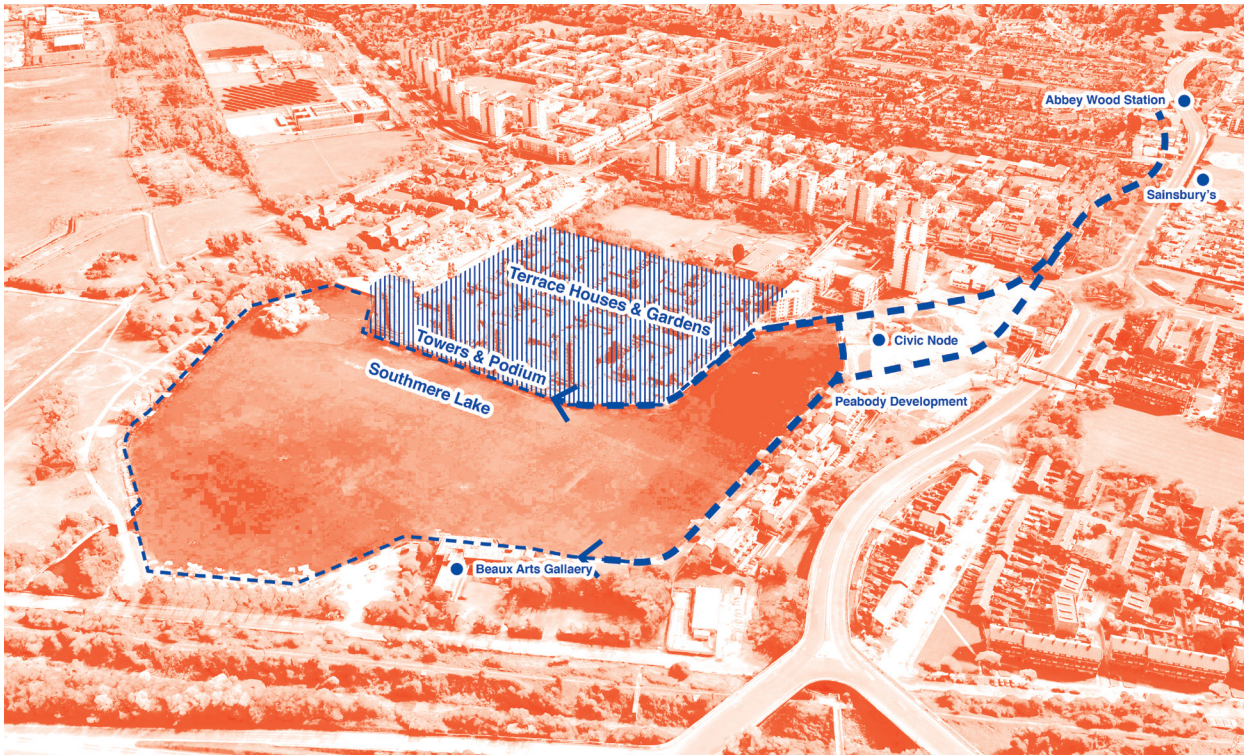
Figure 5.1 Aerial view of Southmere village and the surrounding
[image: edited by authors, Google Earth,2017]

forms of attachments,[4] as well as claim a stake in their living environment and take responsibility for the space around them.

Principles for intervention

Seeing the key role that all facets of maintenance play in a healthy community, we developed three principles to guide our proposed interventions:
1. Prioritisation of physical maintenance tasks - cleaning & repairs
2. Resident engagement through collective decision making processes
3. Add value to public spaces by activating underutilised areas

Our intervention focused on the area located by the Southmere lakefront, between the new civic node that Peabody has proposed and the recently renovated Southmere park which is loved and used by residents (see figure 5.1). The presence of different housing typologies also allowed us to experiment with interventions at different scales, with different levels of public engagement and over varying time periods.

Local Scale

Our first scale concerns the local residents that are living on the site. It speaks to the local, intimate relationship that residents and neighbours foster with the place they inhabit.

In order to prioritise maintenance in this more intimate setting, we will intervene over a five year period by activating frontages between private homes and public areas as well as creating a structure for residents' involvement.

There are 17 empty parking areas that we have identified as "opportunity spaces" throughout the site (see figure 5.2). Peabody does not generate any income from these spaces but does still allocates maintenance funds to ensure their upkeep. Our intervention will propose that these spaces be
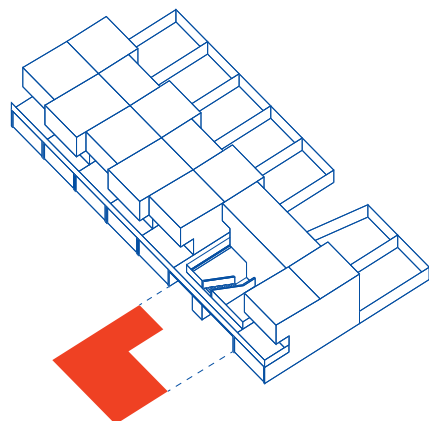

Figure 5.2 Opportunity space highlighted
[image: authors]

plugged in with activities and services that would allow for increased social interaction within the community. Their management and maintenance budgets will be placed in the hands of a board of residents of the surrounding terraced houses. This intervention, over a five year period, attempts to break down the barrier between the private terraced houses and the abundance of unused space in order to allow for residents to maintain their site and develop social ties. The purpose of these opportunity sites will be the decision of the residents, depending on their priorities as a community. They could potentially become play areas, after schools, grocery stores or new housing units see figure 5.3).

Urban Scale

Our second scale of intervention concerns the larger Thamesmead community and should appeal to anyone living in the surrounding areas. It rather speaks to the collective and civic relationship that residents foster with a the public spaces of their urban environment.

The lake promenade's physical decay and lack of operational maintenance currently deters residents from visiting the area, which has made it difficult for Peabody to justify investing in the space further. In order to prioritise the maintenance of these public spaces, our intervention will begin by introducing a series of small community participation based activities which will help redeem the image of the site and make it a place that residents want to visit (see figure 5.4). Since the area has the potential to serve the wider Thamesmead community and connect to the future civic node, a major intervention will eventually be necessary for the broader public to find value in the space.

Figure 5.3 Visualisation of potential uses for the opportunity sites
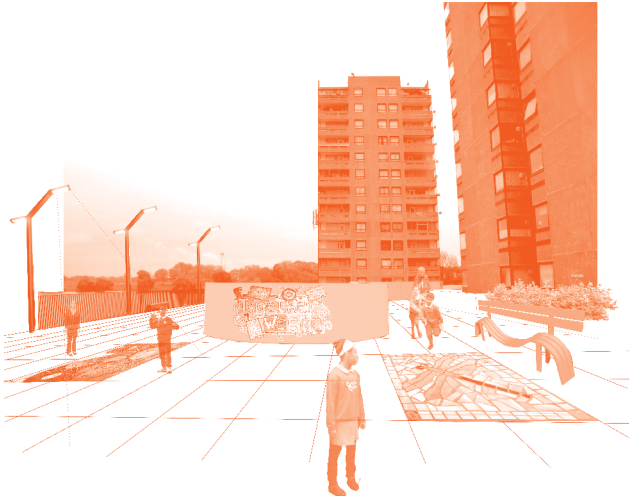[source: authors]

Figure 5.4 Visualisation of podium interventions
[image: authors]

Figure 5.5 Visualisation of garage space regeneration
[image: authors]

In order to incrementally attract residents, we will start small by converting the unused parking garages into affordable workspaces for local residents (see figure 5.5). We will ultimately introduce a more substantial development, what we have called the Lakeside Development Centre, within the parking garages and walkways to allow for an offshoot of Peabody's current community centre. Knowing the large unemployment rate as well as Peabody's growing focus on employment training within the community, we propose eventually transferring their programming to this new site. By intervening incrementally over an eight year period to ensure the eventual constant presence of people within the space, the maintenance of site will more likely be prioritised and serve as a stage for increased social interaction.

Implications

This project has argued that there is reason to value the ordinary acts of maintenance that punctuate our daily lives. We attempted to expand the definition of maintenance and frame it as an indicator of what residents or housing associations care about, and as such acknowledging its deeply social and cultural dimensions. In this perspective, it is no surprise that well-carried out acts of maintenance have been tied to thriving communities and high levels of social cohesion. Maintenance is then understood as the process of repairing, but also of activation.

1   Architects for Social Housing (2017). "The Good Practice Guide to Resisting Estate Demolition: ASH response to the GLA". Architects for Social Housing, [online] URL: https://architectsforsocialhousing.wordpress.com/2017/03/08/ash-good-practice-guide- to-resisting-estate-demolition-2/ (Accessed 7/02/2018).
2   The importance of the act of maintenance is explored in Graham, S. and Thrift, N. (2007), "Out of Order: Understanding Repair and Maintenance", Theory, Culture & Society, 24 (3), 1-25.
3   O'Brien, D. (2016). "Lamp Lighters and Sidewalk Smoothers: How Individual Residents Contribute to the Maintenance e of the Urban Commons", Am J Community Psychol, 58, 391–409.
4   Amin, A. (2002). "Ethnicity and the multicultural city: living with diversity". Environment and Planning A, 34, 959 – 980.

From Surplus to Cityness

Meg Bartholomew, Adrienne Chan, Ya Liu, Gareth Pearson, Natalie Pruett

Cityness is found in diverse connections between dense populations that are not just spatial, but also social and economic.[1] As London seeks to address housing demands, it runs the risk of squeezing out space that fosters its diverse connections and makes the city desirable, its mix of uses, its neighbourhood-specific character, its cityness.

Opportunity

The London Plan recognises the need for new housing and commercial space, driving to provide both in a way that acknowledges and supports the distinctive diversity of the city, where home and economic activity intermix.[2] This is exemplified in typical spatial typologies such as the high street and the mews. The local nature of this morphology naturally brings home and work closer together and is critical to the economy, with "more people employed on London's high streets and within 200 metres of them than in the whole of the Central Activities Zone (Central London)."[3]

Due to the demand for housing and rising property costs across London, many businesses have to relocate, move further, or even move out of the capital. However, along with the housing shortage, some estimates also state that an additional 7.5 million square metres of commercial space will be needed in London by 2036.[4]

In addition to the need for workspace, there is the changing nature of work itself - with a trend towards more self-employment and more home-based business. Work requires less physical proximity in many sectors and thus more people are working remotely or from home more often. In the UK, around a quarter of the working population is currently estimated either to live at their workplace, or work at or from home for at least eight hours a week.[5] These changes have implications for both commercial and residential property, and increases the need for smaller workspaces with lower overheads that are closer to homes.

Interventions

While home-based business is also statistically strong in our study area (see figure 6.1), Thamesmead, built as a predominantly residential area, lacks the kind of visible density and diversity of urban life that other parts of London exhibit. Surplus space abounds, which is why Thamesmead has been identified as an Opportunity Area to address London's housing shortage and drive further development. This development will result in a catchment population sizeable enough to support a District Town Centre.[6]

Our intervention aims to leverage Thamesmead's surplus space to support cityness

Figure 6.1 Evidence of invisible businesses in Thamesmead
[image: authors, data: The Cities Programme, 2017]

◎ **Non store front business**
⌇⌇⌇ **Railway**

The interventions aim to see significant opportunity in what exists in the area already, specifically its physical, social, and hidden economic infrastructure. Current development plans by Peabody Housing Association dismantle the physical form and disrupt the existing socio-economic connections in order to construct fully designed, mixed-use spaces. In contrast, our intervention proposes a process of incremental adaptation, empowerment of existing residents, and a more participatory city-making.

The area in Thamesmead under consideration is characterised by its semi-detached houses of mostly three storeys and a maze-like network of pathways. The site has a significant number of surplus spaces at the ground level. The prevalence of these spaces is largely due to by-law restrictions that prohibit residential habitation due to flooding risks. We present interventions for three different spatial typologies: undercrofts, garages, and backyard pathways that together create a new urban network of live-work opportunities.

Our first intervention typology deals with the undercrofts on the ground level below the homes. The principal objective is to enable the adaptation of these spaces for commercial and other uses. Doing so would allow residents to leverage their existing home in order to run a business or pursue other income-generating activities. Furthermore, they may sublet these spaces to other business operators, thereby generating additional income (see figure 6.2). Much like the adaptation

of the undercrofts, our second intervention typology aims to enable the adaptation of the parking garages attached to the homes. These adapted garages can be utilised for businesses and other uses that do not require high footfall. Whereas the undercrofts along the market street might accommodate retail activity, the garages can accommodate workshops, studios, or other service-oriented businesses (see figure 6.3).

While the first two interventions deal with the adaptation of enclosed interior spaces, the third intervention deals with circulation and exterior spaces. Adjacent to each lane where the garages are located, there are pedestrian pathways lined with tall wooden fences that conceal the backyards of each housing unit. Possible interventions include closing off the pathways for resident-only access, lowering backyard fences to create communal environment, conversion of private backyards into central shared gardens or community food gardens (see figure 6.4).

Implications

These adjustments draw on existing spatial patterns to create more street legibility and accentuate desire lines, reinforce public space and better grade transitions from public to private, encouraging congenial interaction, and creating a new town centre of a scale compatible with the supporting population numbers. The garages create mews that feed into the main spine along Hinksey Path which serves as a secondary side street to the new pedestrian high street in

the Peabody plan that leads up to the main train station at Abbey Wood. This establishes a hierarchy of commercial activity along natural pedestrian flows with appropriate scale to adjacent residential building fabric and enables vital local social interaction.[7]

The implementation of our interventions would follow an incremental and democratic process that is centred around the empowerment of residents, homeowners, and businesses. We propose the establishment of a community association led by local residents and businesses to provide support for new and existing businesses and to guide the phased implementation of the interventions.

Our intervention responds to the crunch in the provision of commercial and residential space that builds on the essential urbanity of London as well as the changing nature of work. By supporting Thamesmead's existing local home based and entrepreneurial ecosystem to inhabit the abundance of surplus space, the intervention provides a framework that affords planning for the unplanned.

1 Jacobs, J. (1961, reprint 1993). The Death and Life of Great American Cities. The Modern Library, pp. 196-285.
2 GLA. (2017). The London Plan: The Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London: Draft for public consultation. Greater London Authority. December 2017.
3 We Made That & LSE Cities. (2017). High Streets for All. Greater London Authority. September 2017.
4 New London Architecture. (2016). WRK/LDN: Shaping London's future workplaces.
5 Holliss, F. (2015). Beyond Live/Work: the architecture of home-based work. Routledge.
6 GLA. (2016). Annex two: London's town centre network. The London Plan 2016.
7 Francis, J. et al. (2012). Creating sense of community: The role of public space. Journal of Environmental Psychology 32, 401:409; Jones, P. Roberts
8 M. & Morris, L. (2007). Rediscovering mixed-use streets: The contribution of local high streets to sustainable communities. University of Westminster. Published for the Joseph Rowntree Foundtion by The Policy Press.

Figures 6.2 Visualisation of the 'Market Street' [image: authors]

Figures 6.3 Visualisation of adapting the garages [image: authors]

Figures 6.4 Backyards over time [image: authors]