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URBAN PLANNING AND THE PROTECTION OF LIVE MUSIC VENUES
IN THE LONDON BOROUGHES OF HACKNEY AND THE CITY OF
WESTMINSTER

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18155536

Being a dissertation submitted to the faculty of The Built Environment as part of the requirements for the award of MSc Spatial Planning at University College London:

I declare that this dissertation is entirely my own work and that ideas, data and images, as well as direct quotations, drawn from elsewhere are identified and referenced.

Signature: Benjamin James

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Abstract

'Grassroots' music venues play a critical role within the UK's music industry and are a key component of the social and cultural offer and night-time economy of many of the UK's towns and cities. In response to a 35% reduction in London's grassroots venues between 2007 and 2016, a series of measures have been introduced to address the challenges facing the sector in London and across the UK. This research explores how the planning system currently impacts and interacts with grassroots venues in London in light of these measures through a comparative analysis of the London Boroughs of Hackney and the City of Westminster.

It was found that though significant progress has been made at the city level in acknowledging the value of London's grassroots sector and providing more protection for these venues through planning policy, this is not reflected in planning at the local level. Additionally, the evidence gathered in this investigation indicates that though planning interventions may help protect the grassroots sector, factors beyond the remit of the planning system may be more critical in reversing the decline of these venues in the London context.

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

Ranging from the back rooms of independently run pubs to the largest corporate arenas; venues hosting live music can be found in every town and city in the United Kingdom (MVT, 2015). However, a sharp decline in the number of these spaces, particularly of small independent or ‘grassroots’ venues (see figure 1), has been the subject of widespread media coverage in recent years (Webster et al., 2018). News articles abound lamenting the loss of iconic venues across the country over the last two decades (Behr et al., 2014), typically citing gentrification, planning and property development among the key factors behind their loss (e.g. Pollock, 2015; Garvan, 2015; Gleeson, 2016; Wilson, 2018; O’Connor, 2018; Munro, 2019).

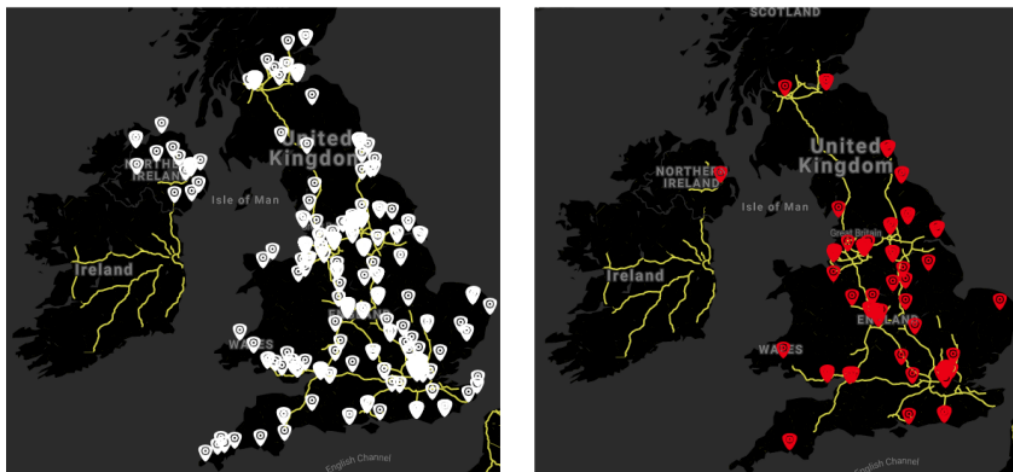


Figure 1: Map of the UK showing the geographic distribution of grassroots venues trading (left panel) and the distribution of venues that have closed up to 2018 (right panel) (Insure4Music, 2018).

Paradoxically, the decline of grassroots venues has occurred alongside consistent reports of the “staggering success” (UK Music, 2016b:11) of the UK’s live music sector, and the increasing significance of live music in urban policymaking in recognition of its

considerable economic (see table 1), social and cultural value (e.g. Cohen, 2012; Frith, 2013; Behr et al., 2014; van der Hoevena and Hittersb, 2019; Shapiro et al., 2019; Shapiro, 2019; UK Music 2013-2019). However, the economic success of live music and the attention it has received in urban policymaking has been dominated by the top end of the sector (i.e. festivals and large arena concerts), which has often overshadowed the less encouraging picture of a grassroots sector in crisis (e.g. Behr, 2014; MVT, 2015a; Webster et al., 2018; DCMSC, 2019).

Year	Music Industry Total GVA	GVA of Live Music	Employment FTE	Number of Music Tourists	Total Spend of Music Tourists
2013	£3.8 billion	£789 million	21,600	6.5 million	£1.7 billion
2014	£4.1 billion	£924 million	25,100	9.5 million	£1.9 billion
2015	£4.1 billion	£904 million	25,150	10.4 million	£2.3 billion
2016	£4.4 billion	£1 billion	28,538	12.5 million	£2.5 billion
2017	£4.5 billion	991 million	28,659	10.9 million	£2.5 billion
2018	£5.2 billion	£1.1 billion	30,529	11.2 million	£2.8 billion

Table 1: A summary of the economic data published by UK Music demonstrating the economic strength of the UK's live music industry between 2013 and 2018 (adapted from UK Music, 2013-2019).

Prompted by consistent reports of struggling grassroots venues (GMVs), the Mayor of London launched an investigation into the decline of the grassroots sector in the city and its causes. The report that followed found that the capital had lost 35% of its GMVs between 2007 and 2015 and identified the impact of the planning and licensing framework among the key factors causing this loss (Mayor of London's Music Venues Taskforce, 2015). Moreover, studies undertaken beyond the London context have also identified the planning system's role in the decline of GMVs across the UK (e.g. MVT, 2015a; Webster et al., 2018; DCMSC, 2019).

As a result of these investigations a series of measures have been introduced to reverse the decline of GMVs in London and the UK (Mayor of London's Music Venues Taskforce, 2017). Arguably the most significant of which has been the introduction of the Agent of Change (AoC) principle into national planning policy for England in July 2018 (MHCLG, 2018), which aims to address the issue of residential encroachment associated noise complaints.

Since the implementation of these measures, the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, published a statement in July 2019 praising the first increase in the number of GMVs in the city for nearly a decade (Mayor of London, 2019a). Despite this apparent progress, GMVs are still considered to be under threat (e.g. MVT, 2018; DCMSC, 2019) and in August 2019 media reports again bemoaned the loss of the Borderline, the most recent in a succession of iconic grassroots venues to close in London's world-renowned music district of Soho (e.g. Busby, 2019). This presents an opportunity to critically assess how planning currently interacts with GMVs in London, in light of the measures taken to better protect and support GMVs through the planning system, and thereby contribute toward the growing body of work on the connections between live music and urban planning.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

This research aims to contribute toward a critical understanding of how the planning system currently interacts with GMVs in London and the impact of measures introduced to better protect and support GMVs in the city through the planning system. This will be achieved through a comparative analysis of planning policy and its application, along with the experience of individuals actively involved in the grassroots sector of the London Boroughs of Hackney and the City of Westminster, two of the most active areas for live music in the capital.

To do so, this research aims to answer the following key research question:

How has planning policy and its application impacted and interacted with GMVs in the London Boroughs of Hackney and the City of Westminster?

In order to investigate this research question, the following objectives will be achieved:

- 1. Investigate and compare how Hackney and Westminster local authorities interact with GMVs through planning policy and its application.*
- 2. Investigate and compare the experience of GMVs and planners in Hackney and Westminster.*
- 3. Identify strengths and weaknesses of how the planning system interacts with GMVs in Hackney and Westminster and derive a series of recommendations for improvement.*

The following paper begins by setting out the existing literature on GMVs and urban planning relevant to this research (Chapter 2). Chapter 3 then outlines the methodological approach and ethical considerations of the research. Chapter 4 consists of the analysis of primary research findings derived from the experience of questionnaire/interview participants, planning documentation and existing literature that aims to answer the research question outlined above. Finally, chapter 5 works towards a conclusion and a series of recommendations to take forward.

2. Literature Review



Figure 2: Photograph of the punk band Touts performing at the Borderline, an iconic grassroots venue located in Soho, London that closed down in 2019 (©Nicholas O'Donnell Photography).

2.1 Understanding Grassroots Venues

The increasingly difficult conditions facing UK GMVs has led to the rise of advocacy groups and initiatives endeavouring to promote the interests of the grassroots sector and raise awareness of the difficulties they face (e.g. Webster et al., 2018). These have produced a number of studies which document how this often-opaque sector of the industry works, its considerable socio-cultural value and its critical role within the wider music industry (e.g. Behr et al., 2014; EKOS, 2014; Mayor of London’s Music Venues Taskforce, 2015/2017; Behr et al., 2015; MVT, 2015a; MVT, 2015c; Bucks New University/MAP/UK Music 2016; Webster, et al., 2018; Vasquez de Lara Padilla, and Kasikov, 2018; DCMSC, 2019).

2.1.1 Defining Grassroots Venues

The current widely accepted definition of a GMV is one developed by the Music Venue Trust (MVT), a registered charity established in 2014 that represents the collective interests of UK GMVs (DCMSC, 2019). The MVT defines GMVs as such if they meet certain criteria in terms of their cultural and social role, economic activity and provision of amenities and infrastructure (MVT, 2015b – see Appendix A for a complete copy of the MVT definition of a GMV).

The MVT classifies grassroots venues into three bands based on their economic profile, which is determined by a venue’s capacity, activity, employment and profitability. These bands are flexible and the final definition of a GMV within these bands will take variable factors such as location, economic climate, competition, or programming into consideration.

	Small GMVs	Medium GMVs	Large GMVs
Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • < 350 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 351 - 650 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 651+
Live Music Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • > 144 live music events per year, providing opportunities for > 180 bands. • Entry level musicians, limited activity in established acts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • > 96 live music events per year, providing opportunities for > 144 bands. • Mix of new and established acts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • > 72 live music events per year, providing opportunities for > 108 bands. • Programme of mainly established acts.
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 – 5 FTE jobs. • Significant number of unpaid roles/volunteers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 - 15 direct FTE jobs. • Some unpaid roles/volunteers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 - 20 direct FTE jobs. • Offers internships and apprenticeships.
Profitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High running cost to capacity ratio. • Little if any profit potential. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium to high running cost to capacity ratio. • Limited potential for profit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be profitable dependent upon external factors (location, additional uses, ownership).

Table 2: Breakdown of the economic characteristics of small, medium and large grassroots venues (adapted from MVT 2015b).

A GMV will also exhibit a significant cultural and social importance to the town/borough/city in which it is located, regardless of its economic profile. This is assessed by testing a venues reputation, role and activity against the following six criteria. Musicians and audiences in the town/borough/city think that the venue is a GMV (known as the elephant test); the venue's main activity is the programming of music; it is primarily a music business, run by music experts; it takes risks with its cultural programme, programming artists that deserve audiences with no expectation of direct financial reward; it is a generator of night-time economic activity; and it occupies an important role within its local community. A GMV will display some or all of these characteristics, depending on factors such as location, economic climate, or seasonal variations.

Finally, a GMV will also provide the amenities, infrastructure and equipment required for live music performance. Including: a fixed stage, temporary stage, or area defined as a stage and at least one other structural hallmark conducive to live music; a mixing desk, PA system, and at least one other piece of equipment to facilitate live music; a sound engineer, booker, promoter, cashier, stage manager and security personnel; it will also apply a cover charge to some performances and promote events.

2.1.2 The Role and Value of Grassroots Venues

GMVs represent a diverse sector made up of a wide range of businesses, for whom live music is typically one of a range of revenue streams (e.g. MVT, 2015a; Webster et al., 2018). However, these spaces fulfil a vital role within what is now understood as the live music ecology – the network of venues, festivals and social actors that constitute live music performances (Behr et al., 2016). It is at GMVs where professional musicians typically begin their careers, develop their performance skills and build an audience before scaling up to larger

venues. GMVs therefore play a vital role in nurturing a talent pipeline that supports the continued success of the UK music industry (e.g. Behr et al., 2014; MVT, 2015a; Mayor of London's Music Venues Taskforce, 2015; Webster et al., 2018; UK Music, 2019; DCMSC, 2019).

In carrying out this talent development function, GMVs also directly feed into an area's night-time economy, local character and musical history. This can often be the seedbed from which a town or city's musical reputation grows, directly contributing to the production of a rich cultural environment which in turn is marketed to residents and tourists and used to support urban regeneration schemes (e.g. Behr et al., 2014). GMVs also play host to a variety of other cultural activities and a wide community of users. They therefore serve a wider social function within the infrastructure of their local communities that goes beyond live music, which is often overlooked by policymakers in favour of the economic contribution of the top end of the live music sector (e.g. MVT, 2015a; Webster et al., 2018). The loss of the GMV sector would therefore threaten both the sustainability of the UK's live music sector but also the musical heritage, cultural reputation and social fabric of many of the UK's towns and cities, a commodity that would be difficult to replace (e.g. Behr et al., 2014; UK Music, 2014c; Mayor of London's Music Venues Taskforce, 2015; UK Music, 2019; DCMSC, 2019).

It is important to note here that there is an under-representation of some genres, such as rap, grime and opera in the research published on the grassroots sector. Researchers have also identified a relatively low proportion of BAME (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic) participants in the data collected on GMVs and recognise the need to address this in future studies. Despite these failings, researchers maintain that their findings are common to all music venues and are largely independent of genre (Webster et al., 2018).

2.2 Factors Influencing the Decline of Grassroots Venues

Despite the critical role they fulfil, GMVs are considered to be the weakest part of the live music ecology and are vulnerable to a range of external factors that have led to their decline (e.g. Webster et al., 2018). This is because GMVs, as small businesses that typically do not turn a profit, do not have the political or commercial means of larger businesses, and are therefore particularly susceptible to the vagaries of national and local policy and its application (e.g. Behr et al., 2014; MVT, 2015a; DCMSC, 2019). This is perhaps most acutely felt in relation to ever-increasing value of residential property due to the housing shortage currently experienced across the UK. This along with business rates, planning, licensing, policing, poor public perception, gentrification, competition and diminishing audiences have formed a “perfect storm” leading to the sharp decline of GMVs in London and across the country (e.g. Behr et al., 2014; MVT, 2015a; Mayor of London’s Music Venues Taskforce, 2015; Webster et al., 2018; DCMSC, 2019). Figure 3 illustrates the alarming decline of 35% of GMVs across London between 2007 and 2016, much of which has occurred within central London where the impact of rising property prices has been particularly acute (Mayor of London’s Music Venues Taskforce, 2017).

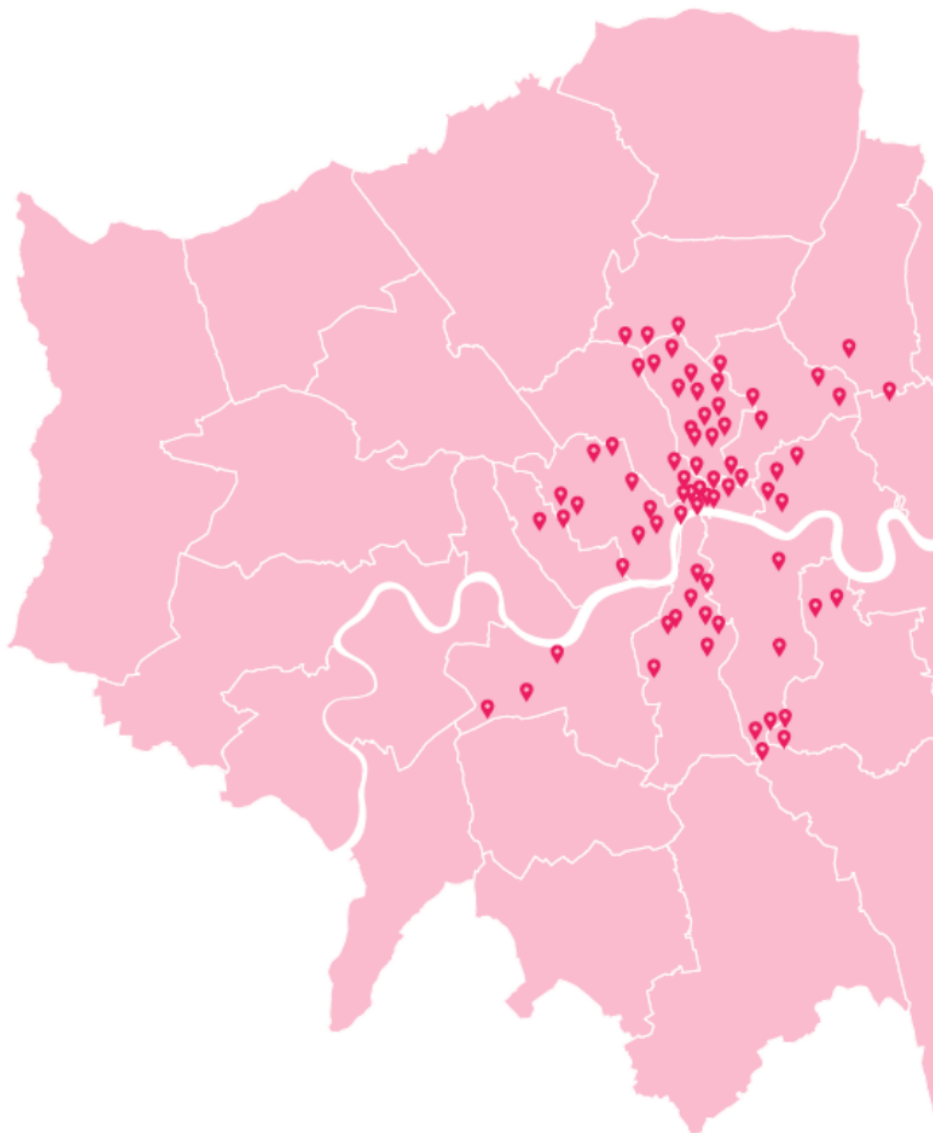


Figure 3: Map of London showing the geographic distribution of grassroots venues that closed in the city between 2007 and 2016 (Mayor of London's Music Venues Taskforce, 2017).

2.2.1 Property Values

GMVs are particularly vulnerable to the impact of increasing property values. In the UK context, the combination of a growing population and a shortage of housing has resulted in an urgent need for new housing. This demand for accommodation has led to ever increasing land values and rents, which in turn has tempted many landlords to sell their properties to developers. Many GMVs have therefore been demolished to make space for new residential properties or have been forced to close due to escalating rents (e.g. MVT, 2015a; Webster et al., 2018; DCMSC, 2019). This is particularly prevalent in London and other desirable locations where demand for accommodation has become exceptionally high (Mayor of London's Music Venue Taskforce, 2015). Adding to this issue in the London context is the need to develop new infrastructure to accommodate growth in the population. For example, the arrival of Crossrail, led to the closure of the Astoria, an iconic music venue located in Soho London (Mayor of London's Music Venue Taskforce, 2015).

In addition to rising rents, increasing property values has also caused business rates to increase significantly (e.g. MVT, 2015a; Mayor of London's Music Venue Taskforce, 2015; Webster et al., 2018; DCMSC, 2019). Again, this has been particularly acute in London where property values have increased exponentially so that a small venue may be paying tens of thousands of pounds per year in business rates. For example, the 100 Club, a long established GMV located in Soho, was paying £50,000 per year in business rates on top of £180,000 in rent and service charges in 2015 (Mayor of London's Music Venue Taskforce, 2015). The combination of dramatically increasing rents and business rates has led to the loss of many GMVs in London as they became economically unviable. For example, the management team of the Borderline, another iconic venue located in London's Soho district, which closed down

in August 2019 cited the cost of rising business rates as the key reason that led to their decision to close the venue (Busby, 2019).

2.2.2 Development, Planning and Licensing

The demand for housing in London has led to a huge increase in residential development, often leading to residential encroachment onto industrial land or commercial and entertainment districts of cities (e.g. Webster et al., 2018; Lotinga et al., 2019). Consequently, residents are increasingly in close proximity to night-time and entertainment activities, which has led to an increase in noise complaints and abatement orders filed against pre-existing noise generating premises such as GMVs (e.g. MVT, 2015a; Mayor of London's Music Venues Taskforce, 2015; Webster et al., 2018; DCMSC, 2019). In addition, the UK Government introduced a temporary Permitted Development Right (GPDO) in 2013 allowing offices to be converted into homes without the need to apply for full planning permission (The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2013). As a consequence, GMVs that had existed alongside office space without issue for many years have again been faced by residential encroachment (Mayor of London's Music Venues Taskforce, 2015). As the GPDO 2013 failed to include any protections for pre-existing noise generating commercial premises against encroachment of new, noise sensitive residential developments, it has had the impact of exacerbating the problem of noise abatement action against GMVs (Lotinga et al., 2019).

Noise complaints have also led local planning authorities to restrict the opening hours of some venues' licenses to limit the potential noise impact on residents. The subordination of GMVs to residential development within the planning and licensing framework has therefore put significant pressure on venues who cannot absorb the cost of noise complaint procedures

or the loss of revenue from license restrictions (e.g. MVT, 2015a; Mayor of London's Music Venues Taskforce, 2015; Webster et al., 2018; DCMSC, 2019).

Closely related to the issue of noise and licensing is the poor public perception that GMVs often carry. Colloquially known as the 'toilet circuit' GMVs have a reputation for being a nuisance and a source of anti-social behaviour despite their significant socio-cultural value. This means that GMVs are often assumed to be the cause of unwanted noise and are therefore burdened with overly restrictive licensing conditions, such as limited audience capacities and expensive environmental and security requirements that simultaneously increase their running costs while decreasing their potential revenue (e.g. Behr et al., 2014; MVT, 2015a; Mayor of London's Music Venues Taskforce, 2015; Webster et al., 2018).

2.2.3 Gentrification

Gentrification, particularly in desirable locations such as London, has also negatively impacted GMVs in the UK (Skret, 2020). Gentrification is typically defined as a social and economic process whereby a neighbourhood undergoes gradual change due to investment of private capital and rehabilitation of its housing stock resulting in a reconfiguration of the neighbourhood landscape and its patterns of consumption (Perez, 2004). This leads to the displacement of lower income residents and businesses who are replaced by higher income residents and businesses catering to a higher income population group (Perez, 2004). This is because gentrification again leads to increasing property values, rents and taxes and therefore, pre-existing businesses such as GMVs who cannot adapt to the developing 'gentrified' environment are often forced to close (Behr et al., 2014; MVT, 2015a; Heide and Ajslev, 2016; Live DMA, 2019; Skret, 2020). This process has particularly affected certain (in)famous neighbourhoods of cities that have developed a particularly imagined bohemian or artistic

reputation, such as the Soho district of London, which becomes attractive to people of higher income wishing to display cultural affinity (Krätke, 2012; Barrel, 2019).

2.2.4 Competition and Diminishing Audiences

Finally, GMVs have also experienced a trend toward diminishing audiences and an increase in competition associated with changes in licensing laws. The Live Music Act 2012 changed licensing laws to allow many more spaces to be used for live music across the country. Though this was greeted with much enthusiasm across the music industry, the Act has resulted in a significant increase in competition for GMVs as more businesses, such as cafes, bars and restaurants are able to put on live music (e.g. Behr, 2014; MVT, 2015a; Mayor of London's Music Venues Taskforce, 2015; Webster et al., 2018). Alongside this pressure of increased competition, studies of the grassroots sector have found that audience numbers, particularly among the student population have decreased over the last decade or so, due to a lack of disposable income associated with the 2008 economic crisis (e.g. MVT, 2015a).

2.2.5 Uncertainty

It is important to note that despite evidence showing the factors detailed above negatively impact the grassroots sector, no longitudinal data currently exists that proves whether the recent decline of GMVs is unusual for the sector. For example, statistics show that up to 50% of small businesses do not survive their first five years of trading (Adams, 2016). Webster et al. (2018) identify this limitation in the existing literature, and recommend research be undertaken to build a historical understanding of what constitutes a normal rate of attrition in the live music sector.

2.3 Reversing the Decline of Grassroots Venues in London

In response to the plight of the grassroots sector and in recognition of its value, a series of measures have been introduced at the national and city levels to address the range of factors that are adversely affecting the long-term viability of GMVs in London.

2.3.1 Planning, Licensing and Business Rates

Perhaps the most significant of these measures has been the Agent of Change (AoC) principle. In response to the threat of noise abatement action associated with residential encroachment, a campaign represented by the MVT was launched to introduce the AoC principle into the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for England (Lotinga et al., 2019). The AoC principle, which had already proven successful in protecting music venues from the threat of residential encroachment in parts of Australia (e.g. McArdle et al., 2014; Lee, 2016; Castle, 2019), effectively puts the responsibility, including the financial burden, for noise management measures on the party responsible for introducing a change of use (e.g. Mayor of London's Music Venues Taskforce, 2015). The MVT campaign resulted in the inclusion of commercial noise as a consideration in the revised GPDO 2016 (The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2016) and inclusion of the AoC principle in the revised NPPF, published in July 2018 (MHCLG, 2018: Paragraph 182).¹

At the city level, the Mayor of London has committed to including the AoC principle in the New London Plan, which is due to be published in the summer of 2020 (Mayor of

¹ See Appendix B for the complete AoC principle as it exists in the NPPF.

London, 2020a), and is encouraging local authorities to adopt the AoC principle in noise complaint procedures. The Mayor has also published new Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs), which now make direct reference to live music venues and how they can be supported through planning policy, and is encouraging local authorities to make direct reference to music venues in local development plans; encouraging police and local authorities to cut excessive licensing requirements and restrictions; promoting greater use of the Asset of Community Value and the Deed of Easement of noise processes to protect existing GMVs; and inviting developers to work with local authorities to create new grassroots venues and set-up zones for grassroots music activities (Mayor of London's Music Venue Taskforce, 2017).

The Mayor is also supporting local authorities to implement business rates relief for existing GMVs (Mayor of London's Music Venue Taskforce, 2017). The first local authority to do so has been Westminster City Council, who published a statement in January 2020 outlining plans to implement 100% business rates relief for eligible GMVs and celebrating the 100 Club as the first venue set to benefit from this relief (Westminster City Council, 2020).

2.3.2 The Night Czar and London Cultural Infrastructure Map

In 2016 the Mayor appointed Amy Lamé as London's first Night Czar (Mayor of London's Music Venue Taskforce, 2017). Working in partnership with the night-time industries, local authorities, the Metropolitan Police, Transport for London and the public, the Night Czar's role is to champion London's nightlife both in the UK and internationally, and this includes safeguarding venues across the city (Mayor of London, 2020b).

Finally, the Mayor has also led development of the London Cultural Infrastructure Map, a freely available online interactive map launched in March 2019 that tracks all cultural

facilities across the city (see figure 4), including GMVs and other live music venues, to better highlight where GMVs and cultural facilities are disappearing or at risk (Mayor of London, 2019b).

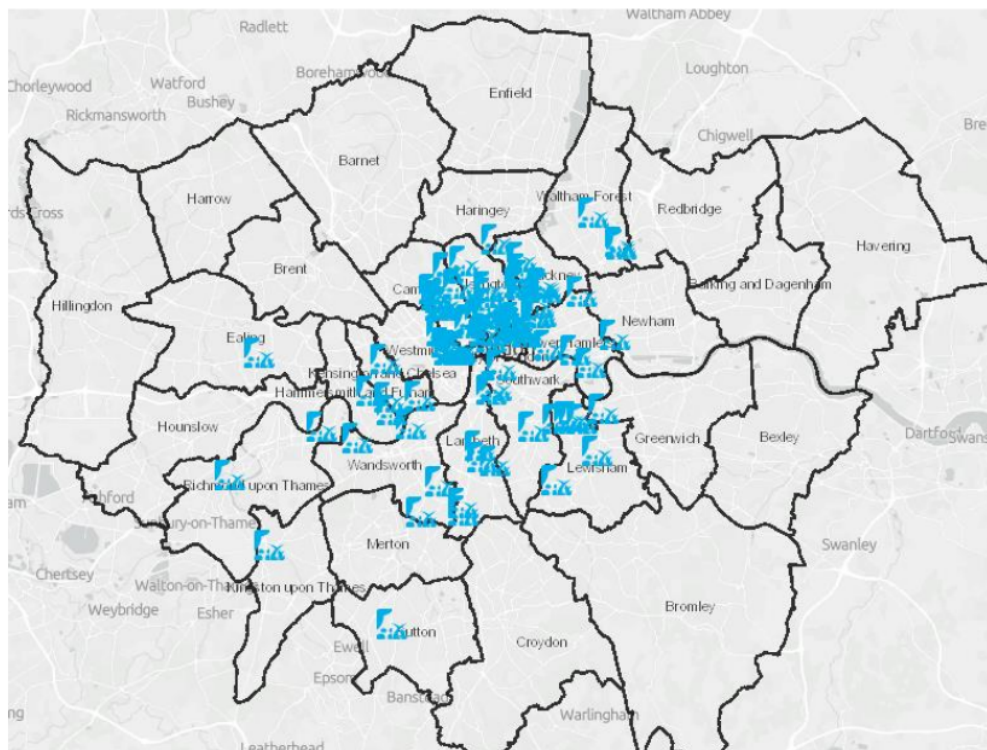


Figure 4: Map of London showing the geographic distribution of grassroots music venues (blue markers) produced using the London Cultural Infrastructure Map.

2.4 Evaluation and Moving Forward

With the implementation of this range of measures designed to reverse the decline of GMVs, the next logical step is to evaluate whether these interventions are working as hoped and that they are having the desired impact on London’s grassroots sector. To date, few researchers have attempted such a study from a planning perspective or otherwise, and no studies comparing the approach of different local authorities to the protection of GMVs have

been undertaken. Although Lotinga et al. (2019) have published a detailed study of the AoC principle in practise in the London context, their study doesn't go beyond the issue of noise complaints in its analysis. This research project aims to fill this gap by undertaking a comparative study of Hackney and Westminster City Council's approach to the protection of GMVs through the planning system, since the introduction of the AoC principle and the other measures outlined above.

2.5 The London Boroughs of Hackney and the City of Westminster

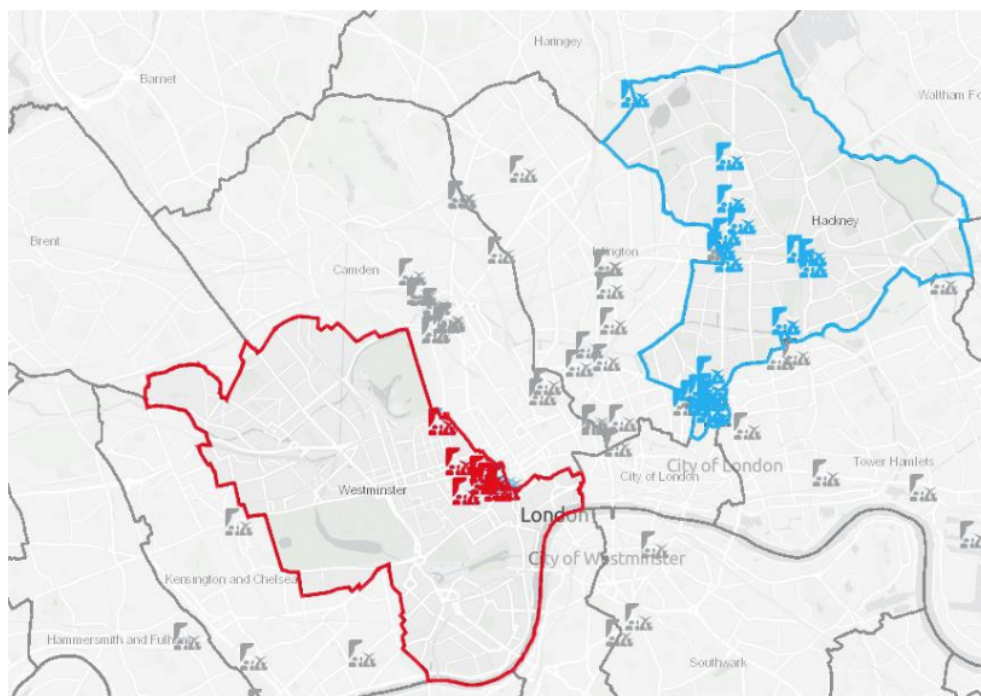


Figure 5: Map of London showing the geographic distribution of grassroots venues in the London Boroughs of Hackney (outlined in blue) and the City of Westminster (outlined in red) (London Cultural Infrastructure Map).

The centrally located City of Westminster (outlined in red on figures 5 and 7) is internationally renowned as a vibrant site of live music and iconic music heritage. Soho and

Denmark Street in particular are hubs of live music history and activity, ranging from small pub rooms to larger capacity venues (Behr, et al., 2014). The City of Westminster has traditionally been home to one of the greatest densities of live music venues and GMVs in London, which has allowed the Borough to develop an international reputation for live music heritage (e.g. Barrel, 2019). However, the decline of live music venues and GMVs in London has been felt particularly strongly in Westminster, which has seen the closure of a succession of iconic venues over the last two decades, including the Astoria, the Borderline, the 12 Bar Club, Madame Jojo's and the Marquee Club (Mayor of London Music Venues Taskforce, 2015). The East London Borough of Hackney on the other hand has emerged in recent years as the new music district of London (outlined in blue on figures 5 and 6) and is now home to the greatest number of live music venues in the city (e.g. Parker, 2019).

As two of the most active live music Boroughs in London, the City of Westminster and Hackney are ideal candidates for a comparative analysis of approaches to the protection of GMVs through the planning system. An additional draw is the apparent trend of decline in Westminster compared to growth in Hackney, suggesting a different set of circumstances and factors impacted GMVs and perhaps different approaches to their protection.

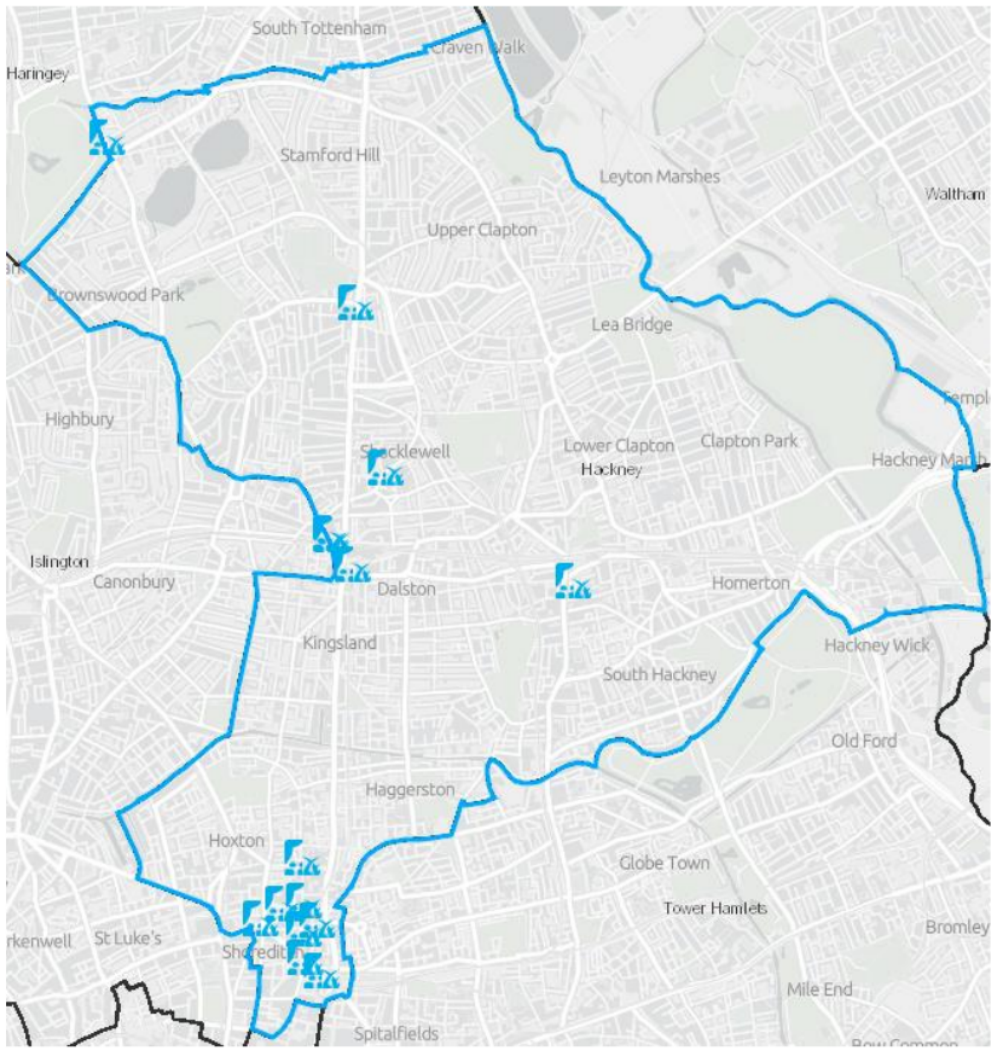


Figure 6: Map of London showing the geographic distribution of grassroots venues in the London Borough of Hackney (outlined in blue) (London Cultural Infrastructure Map).

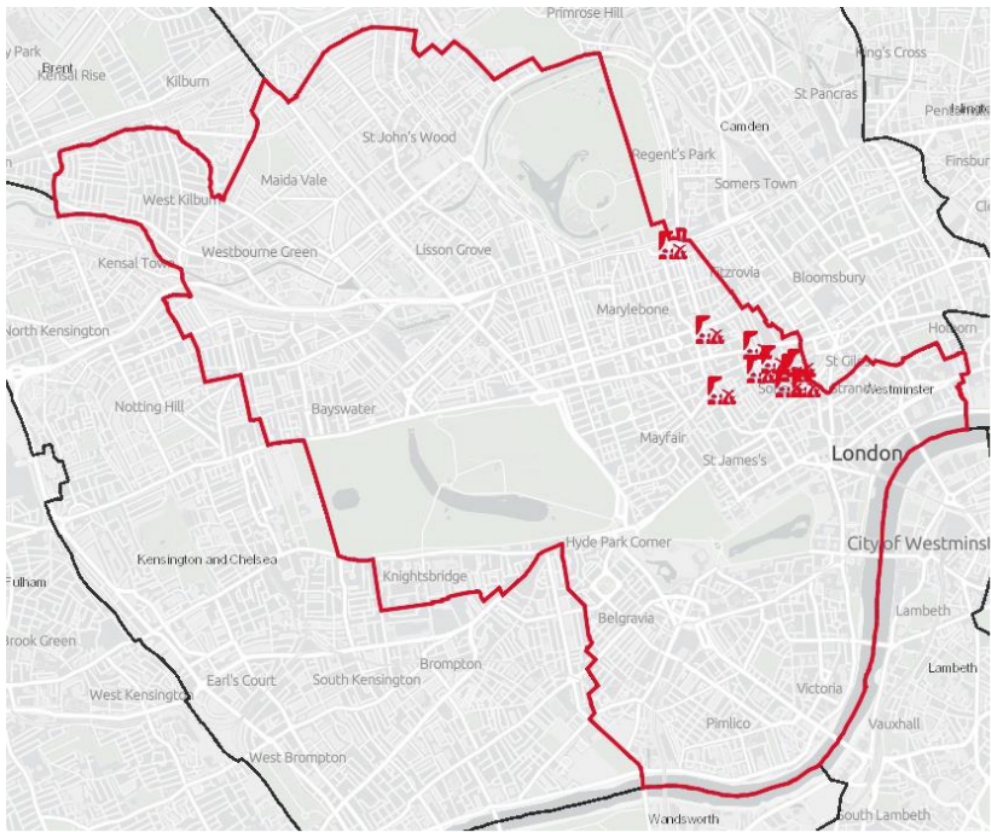


Figure 7: Map of London showing the geographic distribution of grassroots venues in the City of Westminster (outlined in red) (London Cultural Infrastructure Map).

3. Methodology

The aim of this research was to investigate how the planning system impacts and interacts with GMVs in London, in light of measures taken to reverse the decline of GMVs in the city, through a comparative analysis of the London Boroughs of Hackney and the City of Westminster. A comparative approach was chosen as this method allows a phenomenon to be studied, in this case, the impact of planning on GMVs in London, by analysing the similarities and differences of multiple instances of that phenomenon (Tilly, 1984). By doing so a greater understanding of the phenomenon in question can be gained as it allows the impact of different settings and factors to be considered within the analysis. Moreover, a comparative approach can test the limits to the validity of existing knowledge by applying current theories to different circumstances (Azarian, 2011).

3.1 Methods

The comparative analysis of Hackney and the City of Westminster was based on both primary and secondary qualitative data. Primary data collection was planned to take the form of interviews with individual planning officers and GMV business owners actively involved in the grassroots sector of the boroughs. Researchers generally consider interviews alone to be an insufficient form of data to study social life (e.g. Walford, 2007). Therefore, primary analysis of secondary data, in the form of existing literature, planning policy documentation, planning applications, enforcement notices and media reports, was undertaken to compliment the subjective data collected in interviews, ensuring reliable and valid conclusions were drawn from the research.

3.1.1 Secondary Research

Secondary research took the form of a desktop-based comparative analysis of planning policy and its application in Hackney and the City of Westminster, regarding its interaction with GMVs and live music venues, all of which is publicly available online. This began with an analysis of the adopted London Plan, Draft New London Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) published by the Mayor of London. As all local development plans must be consistent with the London Plan, it was important to establish what implications policies implemented at the London level may have for local authority level planning policy and its interaction with GMVs. Plans and policy documents were read through, searching for references to GMVs and live music venues, and policies that may directly or indirectly impact venues.

Following the London level analysis, the same method was used to investigate the adopted and draft new local development plans for Hackney and the City of Westminster. At this stage it was possible to introduce the comparison element of the analysis, identifying similarities and differences between the plans and policies of Hackney and the City of Westminster to infer a more nuanced understanding of the GMV sector in these boroughs, the impact of their setting on the factors impacting GMVs and how they are supported through the planning system.

Building on this analysis of planning policy the second step of secondary research was to investigate how this policy has been applied in practise. This was achieved by utilising the online planning databases of Hackney and the City of Westminster, available on their websites. These databases were searched for any accepted or refused planning applications that had relevance to or may have impacted GMVs in the boroughs. This involved a key word search

of all planning applications for references to live music, GMVs, the Agent of Change Principle, noise and residential since 2018 (i.e. since the introduction of the AoC principle). The databases were also searched for any enforcement notices against GMVs in the boroughs using the full address of each GMV premises, which was taken from the information available on the London Cultural Infrastructure Map. Finally, a search for any media reports about GMVs in the boroughs was also undertaken using Google to compliment this investigation. The findings of this research were again compared for similarities and differences between the boroughs in how policy is applied and its impact on GMVs to further develop an understanding of the grassroots sector and how GMVs are supported through the planning system.

3.1.2 Interviews and Questionnaires

Due to the lockdown and social distancing measures introduced by the UK government to control the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, interviews could not be conducted face-to-face during this research project. Therefore, potential participants were contacted via email, social media and telephone and given the choice of participating in the study by completing a questionnaire in their own time or an interview over the telephone. Questions were pre-prepared and kept consistent between both formats to ensure valid and reliable results were produced from the method.

Two distinct sets of participants were sought during data collection; planning officers from the local planning authorities in Westminster and Hackney and GMV business owners in the boroughs. This was done in order to gather a primary data set which included the viewpoints of individuals on opposing sides of the urban planning and GMV relationship, ensuring rich and detailed data were obtained. Two sets of questions were developed for the interviews, the first relevant to planning officers and the second to GMV business owners. See Appendix C

and D for a complete copy of interview questions/questionnaire sent to participants of the study.

Questions for the interviews/questionnaires were developed based on the findings of the secondary research outlined above and in part directed to gain further insight into questions that arose from this stage of the research. The interviews/questionnaires were organised into three main sections. Only the first section differed between the two versions of the questions. For planning officers, initial questions sought to gain an understanding of their experience of working with GMVs. Whereas for GMV business owners, initial questions sought to gain an understanding of their business activities. The second section then aimed to gain an insight into the participants viewpoint on the decline of GMVs and threats to the grassroots sector, and the final section consisted of more detailed questions concerned with how planning interacts with GMVs and the participants viewpoints on this.

The results were then analysed by thematically coding participant answers for recurring themes. The role (i.e. planner or GMV business owner) of each participant and the borough they were from was also recorded so that a comparison could then be drawn between results from the two boroughs by analysing any similarities and differences that emerged.

3.2 Ethical Considerations

Prior to data collection, ethical clearance was sought to ensure the research complied with University College London (UCL's) Risks, Ethics and Data Protection requirements. The ethical risk associated with this research was considered to be low as it did not require the use of any protected data characteristics or interaction with any vulnerable groups or persons. Informed consent was sought from all participants via an information and consent form (see

Appendix E). Participants were informed that their contribution was entirely voluntary, and that they had the right to withdraw at any time. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, personal data recorded to facilitate analysis of the collected data were anonymised.

3.3 Limitations

The interview element of this research was very limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Firstly, the inability to undertake face-to-face interviews meant that interviews were planned to be done over the telephone or in a questionnaire format to suit the needs of individual participants. Researchers assert that questionnaires do not produce the same level of rich and detailed information that would be accessible using face-to-face interview techniques (e.g. Blaxter et al., 2006; Kitchin and Tate, 2013).

Furthermore, COVID-19 resulted in the temporary closure of all GMV's in England, causing an instant crisis for the live music sector. This meant that it wasn't possible to contact GMVs in Hackney and Westminster during the time available for research as they were no longer staffed. Therefore, a small sample size of only one questionnaire participant (a planning officer from Westminster Council) was achieved during data collection, likely impacting the validity and reliability of the results of the research.

Finally, this research was impacted by the relatively short period of time that has passed since the introduction of measures to reverse the decline of GMVs in London. For example, the AoC principle wasn't introduced until 2018. It can take a significant amount of time to see the impact of policies and interventions in practise and to reliably assess their effectiveness. A similar study should be undertaken after 5-10 years has passed since the introduction of measures to reverse the decline of GMVs to produce a complete picture of their impact. Despite

these limitations, there has been significant change in the way planning interacts with GMVs in London since the implementation of the AoC, which enabled the objectives of this research project to be successfully achieved.

4. Discussion

This chapter will investigate how the planning system interacts with GMVs in the London Boroughs of Hackney and the City of Westminster through an analysis of planning policy and its application in the two boroughs, supported by the responses of a questionnaire participant (a planning officer from Westminster Council).

4.1 Current/Outgoing Planning Policy

In the London context, local development plans, produced by the local planning authority (LPA) of a particular borough, outline the planning policy for that borough. These local development plans must be in conformance with the London Plan (DCLG, 2015), which outlines planning policy for the entire Greater London area and is produced by the Mayor of London and Greater London Authority (GLA). Therefore, to assess the policies of a given local development plan it is important to first understand how the policies of the London Plan may influence it.

The current London Plan, adopted in 2011 under the previous Mayor of London Boris Johnson, contains no reference to GMVs, other live music venues or any policies targeting the live music sector (Mayor of London, 2016). The lack of direct reference to live music venues suggests that they were not considered to be in need of planning intervention at the time of writing. This is not surprising as the current London Plan was developed and implemented before policymakers became aware of the precarious position of the grassroots sector. This highlights how planners and policymakers have traditionally not considered or understood the impact of planning on grassroots venues, which may in part have allowed planning policy to negatively impact GMVs in London.

The current local development plan for the London Borough of Hackney, adopted in 2010, similarly contains no direct reference to the protection of GMVs (London Borough of Hackney, 2010). This is again likely due to a lack of awareness of the decline of GMVs and the impact of planning on music venues when this plan was developed. In contrast, the current local development plan for the City of Westminster, adopted in 2016, does contain direct references to live music venues within policy S22 – Tourism, arts and culture (see S22 - City of Westminster, 2016:98-100). Policy S22 states that “*Existing tourist attractions and arts and cultural uses will be protected*” (see S22 - City of Westminster, 2016:99). Live music venues are clearly included within the definition of cultural uses provided in paragraph 4.35 of the plan (see S22, 4.35 - City of Westminster, 2016:99). This suggests that in contrast to Hackney, Westminster have already attempted to protect live music venues through planning policy. However, the language of policy S22 appears to contain a subtle bias toward venues and cultural uses that have national and international significance, and an underlying connection to tourism. This likely allowed smaller venues, such as GMVs, that don’t operate on a scale that attracts significant national and international tourism to be overlooked when assessing applications against this policy, and hence it has proved ineffective in combating the decline of GMVs in the borough. This demonstrates that GMVs and their considerable social and cultural role has largely been overlooked by planners, which is something that was also highlighted in the questionnaire response. The participant noted that small venues such as nightclubs have been overlooked in policies aimed at protecting cultural uses as they were generally not considered to provide any cultural offer (see Appendix F, Section 1, Question 3).

4.2 Emerging Planning Policy at the City Level

The policies of the New London Plan, due to be adopted in the summer of 2020 (Mayor of London, 2020a), demonstrate that the grassroots crisis has now been considered during its

development. Policy HC5 - Supporting London's culture and creative industries, clearly states that protecting and supporting cultural venues is a priority of the New London Plan and live music venues are explicitly included within this catch-all phrase (see HC5, Mayor of London, 2019c:248-252). Moreover, policy HC6 – Supporting the night-time economy, emphasises the value of the night-time economy and aims to promote its growth (see HC6, Mayor of London, 2019c:252-256). Though there is no direct reference to live music within this policy, the definition of night-time economy in paragraph 7.6.1 is clearly inclusive of the live music sector (see HC6, 7.6.1 Mayor of London, 2019c:253). The introduction of these policies in the New London Plan is significant for the relationship between planning and GMVs as it represents the first-time the protection of live music venues has been a clear objective of planning policy at the London level. It demonstrates an understanding that planning impacts music venues and indicates a shift away from the view of the night-time economy as a nuisance to a sector with value for London's economy.

The observation that the New London Plan demonstrates a significant effort to address the decline of GMVs through London level planning policy was also echoed by the questionnaire participant (a planning officer from Westminster Council). They noted that the *“policies within the emerging London Plan and guidance from the Mayor that afford protection for the night-time economy and cultural/visitor offer of live music venues. Have given officers greater tools to protect such venues and a greater appreciation of the contribution they make to central London's economy and cultural diversity”* (see Appendix F, Section 1, Question 2 and 3).

The New London Plan also contains a dedicated Agent of Change (AoC) policy that clearly *“places the responsibility for mitigating the impact of noise and other nuisances firmly*

on the new development” (see D12, 3.12.2 - Mayor of London, 2019c:116). Within this policy there is explicit reference to the need to protect cultural venues, including live music venues. (see D12, 3.12.4 - Mayor of London, 2019c:117). Though a key aim of the AoC policy is to ensure venues are protected from the impact of residential encroachment related noise complaints, with the protection of live music venues as a desired outcome, most of policy D12 is dedicated to encouraging the wider application of the AoC. For example, paragraph 3.12.2 states that *“the Agent of Change principle works both ways”* (see D12, 3.12.2 - Mayor of London, 2019c:116), and paragraph 3.12.4A states that *“the Agent of Change principle should be applied to all noise-generating uses and activities”* (see D12, Paragraph 3.12.4A – Mayor of London, 2019c:117). The result is that the New London Plan doesn’t clearly make the protection of live music venues the priority of the AoC principle in planning policy. Instead the emphasis of policy D12 is on its wider application to other sectors and even the protection of residential developments. This may lead to less protection for GMVs than expected as it leaves them open to being overlooked by policymakers in favour of the other sectors policy D12 references.

In addition to the London Plan, the Mayor of London and GLA publish Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs). These provide further advice for local authority planning officers on specific topics, such as town centres and social infrastructure. The Town Centres, Central Activity Zone, and Culture and the Night-time Economy SPGs all directly discuss the challenges facing small to medium sized music venues (i.e. GMVs) and their importance for London (see Mayor of London, 2014:25; Mayor of London, 2016:33; Mayor of London:2017). The SPGs also explicitly encourage local planning authorities to provide support and protection for live music venues (see Mayor of London, 2014:25; Mayor of London:2017). Advising local authorities to improve their understanding of the live music activities within their borough

when preparing local plans and to ensure live music venues are not excluded from the definition of cultural venues when applying planning policies (see Mayor of London, 2014:25; Mayor of London, 2016:32). The content of these SPGs provides further evidence that the struggle of the grassroots sector and the negative impact planning can have on GMVs is now being considered in planning policy at the London level. It is also further evidence of a willingness to acknowledge the value of the GMV sector and the wider night-time economy.

4.3 Emerging Planning Policy at the Local Level in Hackney and Westminster

The draft new local development plans for Hackney and the City of Westminster demonstrate surprisingly little positive change in the relationship between GMVs and planning at the local or borough level than may be expected considering the apparent push for greater support for live music venues through planning policy at the London level. Both the draft new plans for Hackney and Westminster again contain no references to GMVs or their decline, and they do not explicitly state that the protection of live music venues is a priority or objective of the plan, which is somewhat of a step backwards for Westminster. Furthermore, both plans adopt the AoC principle, but they do so in a manner that does not make it clear that it will be used to protect live music venues.

The draft new Westminster City Plan implements the AoC principle in the context of managing the impacts of new development on the quality of the local environment (see 7.4 - City of Westminster, 2019:51). Westminster's AoC policy doesn't explicitly reference the protection of live music venues and therefore does not make it clear that it can be used to do

so. Instead it articulates a concern with concentrations of night-time uses, clearly stating that the AoC principle will be used to protect residential amenity.

“The cumulative impact of multiple food, drink and entertainment uses in a particular area can have a negative impact on the functioning and use of an area and can negatively impact residential amenity. We will therefore prevent the over-concentration of these uses and require proposals to make sure any negative impacts are managed (applying the Agent of Change principle)” (see 17.3 - City of Westminster, 2019:87).

The AoC principle therefore appears to have been implemented in a form that flips its original purpose as a tool for protecting live music venues against residential encroachment to a tool for protecting residential amenity from night-time uses, which live music venues are included within. Despite this, the language of Westminster’s policy is very broad, which should enable it to be applied to a wide range of sectors, including live music venues. However, the concern remains that if it isn’t made clear in planning policy that supporting live music venues is a priority for Westminster LPA and that the AoC will be used to protect them, the impact of new development on existing GMVs may be overlooked.

Interestingly, the questionnaire participant argued that there has been a significant change in emphasis away from the protection of the amenity of existing residents in central Westminster. *“I think that there is a greater appreciation that the West End has a number of roles to play and the night-time economy is part of this role. It may be that this is sometimes in conflict with residential amenity, but I think that the balance has shifted in favour of the economic and cultural benefits that such venues generate”* (see Appendix F, Section 3, Question 6 and 7). The participant’s comments suggest that the efforts made to foster a greater

appreciation of the value of the grassroots sector and wider night-time economy in planning policy at the London level has led to a significant change in planners' approach to GMVs. However, the analysis of the Draft New Westminster City Plan appears to suggest that this is still not reflected in the policies produced by Westminster LPA.

Hackney also introduces the AoC principle in its draft new local development plan, but it is even more removed from the protection of live music venues. Hackney explicitly targets the protection of industrial space with the AoC (see LP28, London Borough of Hackney, 2019:101-102), as well as residential amenity (see LP38, 9.24 - London Borough of Hackney, 2019:121), but it doesn't actually refer to its use in protecting live music venues. Hackney's plan also appears to demonstrate an even greater concern with the negative impacts of concentrations of night-time uses and states that the AoC principle will be used to limit its growth.

“There is, however, an over-emphasis in certain parts of the Borough on evening and night-time venues which encourage alcohol consumption amongst young people, particularly bars and clubs. Concentrations of these types of evening and night-time economy uses in an area can have negative impacts on local communities and residents including noise and disturbance, anti-social behaviour, fear of crime, and environmental degradation” (see LP38, 9.22 - London Borough of Hackney, 2019:121).

This emphasis on the negative impacts of the night-time economy and lack of support for live music venues in Hackney's planning policy may indicate that compared to residential

amenity there is an underlying lack of value ascribed to GMVs and other live music venues and that they are seen as more of a nuisance than positive for the borough.

In both the new plans for Hackney and Westminster but particularly in the case of Hackney, there is an overriding emphasis on the protection of residential amenity and a concern with the negative impacts of the night-time economy. The plans contain almost no positive language referring to night-time uses, and no policies clearly aimed at supporting and protecting GMVs and other live music venues. In addition, the AoC has been implemented in a way that almost completely alters its original purpose and obscures its application in the protection of live music venues behind policies aimed at limiting the growth of night-time uses, protecting residential amenity and even protecting other sectors such as industrial uses before live music venues. This may suggest that the effort to acknowledge the value of the grassroots sector and the attempt to address its decline in planning policy at the city level, demonstrated by the New London Plan, has not been successfully distributed down to the local or borough level of the planning system in London. Currently live music venues appear to be subordinate to residential amenity and there appears to be a strong negative conception of the night-time economy, in which GMVs and other live music venues are included.

4.4 Application of Planning Policy in Hackney and Westminster

An analysis of all planning applications submitted to Hackney LPA since 2018 (i.e. since the introduction of the AoC principle) found an absence of the AoC principle or applications that considered the impact of proposed new developments on existing GMVs and other live music venues in the borough. Moreover, no enforcement notices were found served to GMVs due to noise complaints. This would seem to suggest that residential encroachment and noise complaints are not a major factor impacting GMVs in Hackney. However, a search

of media reports using Google found a single case of noise complaints against a GMV. Hackney Council received a number of complaints against the Macbeth, a GMV located in the borough from its residential neighbours regarding noise and anti-social behaviour in 2019 (Sheridan, 2019). According to the account given in the article, the issue was resolved between the Macbeth and Hackney Council through the restriction of the venue's licensed opening hours and therefore did not require an enforcement notice. The example of the Macbeth may indicate that residential encroachment related noise complaints are not necessarily an issue for GMVs in Hackney but that noise complaints in general are. This perhaps calls into question the usefulness of the AoC principle in protecting GMVs in the borough as the policy cannot be used to protect venues from noise complaints from existing residential neighbours, only those associated with new development. In addition, the approach of Hackney Council may demonstrate that the health and viability of GMV businesses is not a priority compared to the protection residential amenity in the borough.

Furthermore, only one planning application was found where a change to planning permission was approved to allow live music on the premise. This combined with the approach taken by the council in the Macbeth example appears to indicate a restrictive attitude toward live music in the borough and is further indication of an underlying negative view of night-time uses in Hackney. In addition, a number of planning applications for new residential developments were found where planning permission had been given on the condition that measures be taken by the applicant to mitigate the impact of a loss of amenity on existing residents due to increased noise (e.g. London Borough of Hackney, 2017/2018). This demonstrates that Hackney LPA have used the mechanisms available to them to protect existing uses from the negative impacts of new developments and that there is a precedent within the borough of doing so. However, these are exclusively directed toward the protection

of existing residents and residential amenity and appear to have never been used to support and protect GMVs or other live music venues. This seems to be further evidence of an emphasis on the protection of residential amenity and an underlying negative conception of live music venues and the night-time economy in the borough.

Though an analysis of planning applications submitted to the City of Westminster since 2018 also found no accepted or refused applications that applied the AoC principle in the assessment, and no applications that were refused due to unacceptable impacts on existing GMVs or other live music venues. Two accepted applications were found where planning permission was given on the condition that pre-existing nightclubs were re-provided in the redevelopment of the sites (City of Westminster, 2018a/2018b), and these were also highlighted by the questionnaire participant (Appendix F, Section 1, Question 1). Despite the observed lack of use of the AoC principle in planning applications submitted to Westminster, which could be attributed to the relatively short period of time it has been available in planning. There is clear evidence of the consideration of pre-existing venues in planning applications in Westminster, which demonstrates an awareness of the issues facing GMVs and a real effort to protect them through the planning process.

In addition, a relatively large number of applications (ten) were found where Westminster LPA had permitted a change of conditions to planning permissions, allowing live music to be played on the premises. This suggests that the council are also open to growth of the live music sector in the borough. However, this may actually be negatively impacting GMV businesses as the premises that have been given permission to play live music are businesses such as restaurants and cafes that do not meet the definition of a GMV. By giving permission for these businesses to provide live music the council has likely increased local competition

for GMVs in the borough, which may have exacerbated their already challenging operating environment.

The analysis of planning applications submitted to Westminster Council again found no enforcement notices served to GMVs by the Council due to noise complaints. This is surprising as previous research on the challenges facing the grassroots sector in London has consistently identified noise complaints against GMVs as a key factor causing the sector's decline. Moreover, this is what led to the introduction of the AoC principle into national planning policy and its subsequent implementation into the London Plan. Evidence from the City of Westminster appears to indicate that the issue of noise complaints and residential encroachment is not a major influence on the decline of GMVs in the borough. An observation that was corroborated by the questionnaire participant (see Appendix F, Section 3, Question 2). Further evidence supporting this can be seen from venues such as the Astoria, which closed due to the need for space for the Crossrail development (e.g. Mayor of London's Music Venues Taskforce, 2015:8) and the Borderline, which closed due to the escalating costs of rent and business rates (e.g. Busby, 2019).

The absence of residential encroachment related noise complaints in Westminster again calls into question the usefulness of the AoC principle in addressing the decline of GMVs in Westminster and perhaps other areas of London. Instead the evidence, including the questionnaire participant's responses (see Appendix F), indicates that increasing property prices and the impact of gentrification and redevelopment have had a greater influence on the sector's decline. Therefore, interventions such as business rates relief, which Westminster City Council have recently introduced (Westminster City Council, 2020) may be more applicable to the situation and have greater impact on the borough's grassroots sector. Despite this, the

questionnaire participant maintains that the AoC principle is very useful, affording the right amount of protection for GMVs from a planning perspective (see Appendix F, Section 3, Question 5).

4.5 The Impact of COVID-19 on Grassroots Venues in London

As a final note, the COVID-19 pandemic that hit the world this year (2019/2020) has had a huge impact on the GMV sector in London and the UK (e.g. Chant, 2020; Cooke, 2020). The lockdown and social distancing measures introduced by the UK government to limit the spread of the virus has placed extreme pressure on the creative industries, with those based around live performance being the hardest hit (CIF, 2020). All GMVs and other live music venues have been temporarily closed throughout the COVID-19 shutdown and they are likely to be some of the last businesses to reopen. These pressures appear to be having a catastrophic effect on the UK's grassroots sector, with 90% of venues and festivals facing imminent permanent closure, according to the MVT. This threatens to not only further entrench the decline of GMVs in London and across the UK but to cause a total collapse of the sector. Many independent music businesses, including GMVs, have not been able to access the general financial support schemes made available during the COVID-19 shutdown, and those that have are afraid that support will dry up before their businesses are able to reopen. The UK government has therefore faced increasing pressure to provide significant and specific support to the creative industries, with the MVT petitioning for a £50 million cash injection to prevent the closure of a plethora of venue businesses (MVT, 2020; Cooke, 2020).

Though the mitigation of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are clearly beyond the remit of planning policy and the planning system, the impact of COVID-19 on GMVs in London demonstrates just how vulnerable these businesses are to external factors that are

beyond their control. It therefore serves as a reminder that unless local planning authorities deliberately make efforts to understand and acknowledge the impact planning policies and decisions can have on GMVs in their boroughs and provide direct support for them in local plans. These venues which play a significant role within the UK music industry and wider night-time economy are at significant risk of disappearing.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Summary and Conclusions

This research critically assesses how urban planning impacts and interacts with GMVs in the London Boroughs of Hackney and the City of Westminster, in the context of measures taken to address the decline of GMVs across London. The conclusions and recommendations of this research are based upon an analysis of planning policy and its application in the two boroughs of interest, along with the first-hand account of a questionnaire participant (planning officer from Westminster Council). The evidence gathered during this investigation provides insights into the current relationship between urban planning and GMVs in Hackney and Westminster, and how this has changed in response to growing awareness of the considerable social, cultural and economic value of the UK's grassroots sector and the challenges it faces.

Analysis of planning policy and its application in the London Boroughs of Hackney and the City of Westminster suggests that noise complaints resulting from residential encroachment may not be as significant negatively impacting GMVs in central London when compared with other factors such as business rates, licensing, redevelopment and recently, COVID-19, particularly in Westminster. This calls into question the efficacy of measures taken to address the decline of GMVs in London through the planning system, such as the Agent of Change principle. Though the questionnaire participant considers the AoC principle to be a useful tool to protect live music venues through planning, they believe that these other factors all pose a much greater threat to London's grassroots sector (see Appendix F, Section 3, Question 9). This suggests that planning interventions may have a limited potential in addressing and reversing the decline of GMVs and that more progress could be made by intervening in areas that are outside the remit of planning. This research also revealed that the

factors influencing GMVs and their significance vary between different locations, highlighting the need to first understand the GMV sector and the factors impacting it within a borough before developing policy or attempting to influence its grassroots sector.

In addition, the investigation indicates that despite the efforts of advocacy groups such as the MVT to promote the value of the grassroots sector and the apparent uptake of this rhetoric in planning policy at the city level in London, this has not necessarily been translated to planning at the local level. The evidence from Hackney demonstrates a strong underlying negative perception of live music venues and the night-time economy and a clear prioritisation of the protection of residential amenity. This has translated into a lack of support for GMVs in Hackney's planning policy, with almost no positive language referring to live music venues, no policies clearly aimed at supporting and protecting GMVs and other live music venues, and the use of planning mechanisms such as the AoC to protect residential amenity over live music venues.

Though there is evidence that planners in Westminster are now considering the impact of development on GMVs in the assessment of planning applications, this change in attitude is not yet reflected in Westminster's latest, draft local plan, which also fails to provide explicit protection of GMVs and other live music venues. It also articulates a negative view of live music venues and the night-time economy, placing an emphasis on the protection of residential amenity. The apparent failure of Hackney and Westminster planning authorities to demonstrate a greater appreciation for the value of the live music sector and wider night-time economy in planning policy is concerning for the future of GMVs as most decisions that affect small and medium sized music venues are taken locally (Mayor of London, 2014). If it isn't made clear

in planning policy that support for live music venues is a priority and that the AoC will be used to protect them, new development will likely continue to negatively impact existing GMVs.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions outlined above, the following series of recommendations are suggested to improve the relationship between urban planning and grassroots music venues.

Local planning authorities must fully understand the nature of the grassroots sector in their borough and the factors influencing it in order to inform policy making. The factors impacting GMVs and their significance vary from place to place, therefore, it is important to develop an understanding of these to ensure policies will achieve desired results.

It is critical that the body of knowledge from such studies is passed on to relevant departments within the local council so that factors beyond the remit of planning that are negatively impacting GMVs, such as business rates and licensing might be addressed. The findings of this research suggest that communication between departments might well be crucial in reversing the decline of the grassroots sector in London, as many factors outside of planning appear to pose a greater threat to GMV businesses in Hackney and Westminster.

In addition, local planning authorities should ensure that the protection of GMVs is an explicit objective for their local development plans, with direct references to the sector in policy. Though there is clear evidence that planners are now aware of the challenges facing the grassroots sector and are striving to address them, this doesn't appear to be reflected in the emerging plans of Hackney and Westminster. For example, Hackney and Westminster both introduce the Agent of Change principle and make direct reference to its use in the protection

of residential amenity but don't explicitly state that it will be used to protect GMVs. To ensure grassroots venues do not continue to be overlooked in the planning system it is critical that plans and policy make direct reference to the protection of GMVs.

Finally, more work needs to be done to promote the considerable social and cultural value of the grassroots sector and the wider night-time economy. Though there has been progress at the city level cultivated by the Mayor of London the findings of this research indicate that the night-time economy continues to be subordinate to residential development. Unless a balance is found, London's grassroots sector will continue to be at risk from the planning system.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Definition of a Grassroots Venue

GRASSROOTS MUSIC VENUES (GMVs) – DEFINITION

This definition is the one contained in the Mayor of London's Music Venues Rescue Plan (October 2015) and agreed at Venues Day 2015 (October 2015) by leading figures from within the music industry and from government. The definition is being used by Arts Council England and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport in discussions surrounding the future of music venues. It is based upon extensive audits and surveys of UK music venues, and is comparable to the EU-wide definition of similar music venues implemented by Live DMA in more than a dozen European countries. The definition of Grassroots Music Venues contained in this document comprises the only widely accepted measures and parameters for describing dedicated music venues, and its creation in 2015 was welcomed by the Culture Minister Ed Vaizey and the head of the BPI Geoff Taylor. We are not aware of any other definition of this sector.

DEFINING GMVs - CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ROLE

We define the cultural and social importance of a grassroots music venue (GMV) by testing its reputation, role and activity against six criteria:

- 1. The elephant test**

Musicians and audiences in the town/borough/city think that is the grassroots music venue.

- 2. Focus on cultural activity as its main purpose and its outcomes**

The venue's raison d'être is the music it programmes.

- 3. It is a music business, run by music experts**

An organisational focus on music. Other ancillary services (alcohol, food, merchandise) subsidiary or dependent upon music activity.

4. It takes risks with its cultural programme, and that risk taking is the ignition system of the engine that is the UK music industry

Programmes artists that deserve audiences with no expectation of direct financial reward; as a result of this loss-making activity, significant economic returns become available to the UK music industry.

5. A Beacon of Music and key generator of night-time economic activity

The presence of a grassroots music venue (or venues) provides a central beacon of music activity that inspires towns/ boroughs/cities to be musical, and the absence of one causes a dearth of music activity. By programming and reputation, GMVs attract audiences who add significant value to other aspects of the night-time economy (restaurants, pubs, bars, clubs, transport).

6. Plays nicely with others

Occupies an important role within its local community and is open to further networking.

A Grassroots Music Venue displays some or all of these characteristics, dependent upon factors such as location, economic climate, or seasonal variations.

DEFINING GMVs - ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

We use capacity, activity, employment and financial return to seek to categorise GMVs in three bands:

SMALL GMV:

- less than 350 capacity
- over 144 live music events per year, providing opportunities for more than 180 micro-businesses (bands)
- entry level musicians, some limited activity in established acts
- 3 to 10 direct FTE jobs (programming, lighting, sound, bar, security etc)
- significant number of unpaid roles/volunteers
- high running cost to capacity ratio
- little if any profit potential

MEDIUM GMV:

- 351 to 650 capacity
- over 96 live music events per year, providing opportunities for more than 144 micro-businesses (bands)
- mix of new and established acts
- 5 to 15 direct FTE jobs (programming, lighting, sound, bar, security etc)
- some unpaid roles/volunteers
- medium to high running cost to capacity ratio
- propensity to programme non-live music (such as club nights) to support live music programme
- limited potential for profit

LARGE GMV:

- 651 plus capacity
- over 72 live music events per year, providing opportunities for more than 108 micro-businesses (bands)

- programme of mainly established acts
- 10 to 20 direct FTE jobs (programming, lighting, sound, bar, security etc)
- internships and apprenticeships
- may be profitable dependent upon external factors (location, additional uses, ownership)

These bands and activities are flexible. Final definition of a GMV within these bands should include variable factors such as location, economic climate, competition, or programming.

DEFINING GMVs – AMENITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Has a fixed or temporary stage, or as a minimum an area defined as a stage, and exhibits at least one other structural hallmark conducive to live music, such as:

Defined audience space, sound booth, ticket hatch, sound proofing, room adapted to enhance acoustics, stage facing or elevated seating, dressing room, photo pit, external poster frames for advertising gigs, overnight band accommodation

2. Possess a mixing desk, PA system, and at least one other piece of equipment to facilitate live music, such as:

Stage monitors, lighting rig, drum kit, back line, stage microphones, stage box & snake, spare instruments, instrument consumables, signal processors, recording rig, smoke machine

3. Employs or otherwise utilises at least two of the following (they may be the same person):

Sound engineer, booker, promoter, cashier, stage manager, security personnel

4. Applies a cover charge to some live music performances and incorporates promotion within its activities, such as:

Publishes printed or electronic gig listings, issues printed tickets, utilises on-line ticketing, produces displays and distributes posters, advertises gigs involving original music via local media

Appendix B: The Agent of Change Principle

182. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or ‘agent of change’) should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.

Extracted from MHCLG (2018) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), London:
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

Appendix C: Interview Questions/Questionnaire for Planning Officers

Please type your answer to each question below. There is no space or word limit, please type as much or little as you want. If a question isn't applicable to you or your role, please type N/A.

Section 1: Role

1. As a planning officer are you/have you been involved with live music venues, including grassroots music venues (GMVs)?
2. In your opinion, are officers in your local authority aware of the challenges facing GMVs and do they understand the tools available to them to support and protect these businesses?
3. In your opinion are there any knowledge gaps among planning professionals with regards to how planning and licensing impacts GMVs and how GMVs can be supported and protected through the planning system?

Section 2: Threats to Grassroots Music Venue

1. The sharp decline of GMVs in London has been widely reported by the media in recent years. Are you aware of such a decline in your borough?

Section 3: Planning

1. The planning and licensing system have been identified as a key factor negatively impacting upon GMVs in London. What has your experience with GMVs been?
2. Residential encroachment and resulting noise complaints has been identified as a key aspect of the negative impact of planning upon GMVs in London. What has your experience of residential encroachment and noise complaints been?
3. To better protect GMVs from the threat of residential encroachment and noise complaints the Agent of Change Principle was introduced in national planning policy in 2018. What has your experience of applying the Agent of Change principle been? Do you consider it to be a useful planning framework for the protection of GMVs?
4. Do you consider the issue of residential encroachment and noise complaints to be a threat to GMVs in your borough? Has this changed at all over the last 10 years?
5. Do you feel the Agent of Change principle affords GMVs with the right amount of protection from the issue of residential encroachment related noise complaints? Do you have any suggestions for how it might be changed to better support and protect GMVs?
6. As a planning officer what relationship do you have with GMVs in your borough? Has this relationship changed at all over the last 10 years?
7. Do you feel there is greater emphasis given to protecting the welfare of residents and residential development over businesses such as GMVs in your borough? Has this changed at all over the last 10 years?

8. Other than the issues already discussed, are there any other issues that fall within the remit of planning that in your opinion are negatively impacting upon GMVs in your borough?
How would you suggest they could be dealt with to better support these businesses?

9. In your opinion are there factors negatively impacting GMV businesses in your borough that are beyond the remit of planning? Do you believe these to be a greater threat to GMVs than those within the planning system?

Appendix D: Interview Questions/Questionnaire for GMV Business Owners

Please type your answer to each question below. There is no space or word limit, please type as much or as little as you want. If a question isn't applicable to you or your business, please type N/A.

Section 1: Business Activities

1. Your business is currently categorised as a 'Grassroots Music Venue' (GMV) and is included on the London Cultural Infrastructure Map which the Mayor and Greater London Authority (GLA) use to track the number of GMVs operating in London every year.

Were you aware of the GMV definition and that your business is currently considered a GMV?

2. When was your business established and has hosting live music always been a core activity of the business?
3. Is hosting live music currently the main activity of your business? Roughly what proportion of your revenue is generated by live music? E.g. 50%, 90%.

Section 2: Threats to Grassroots Music Venue

1. The sharp decline of GMVs in London has been widely reported by the media in recent years. How have you experienced this decline?

2. Studies have identified a range of factors that negatively impact upon GMVs, such as, planning and licensing, business rates, property development, gentrification and competition. Have any of these factors impacted your business? Are there any other factors impacting your business not listed here?
3. Would you say that other GMVs in your local area are equally impacted by these same factors?
4. In your experience have these factors and/or their significance to your business changed over time?
5. Other than COVID-19, what in your opinion is the single greatest threat to your business?
Do you believe that this threat comes under the remit of planning?
6. Do you consider your business to be under threat today?

Section 3: Planning

1. The planning and licensing system have been identified as a key factor negatively impacting upon GMVs in London. What has your experience of the planning and licensing system been?
2. Residential encroachment (development of residential property in areas traditionally dominated by commercial uses, such as entertainment and night-time activities) and

resulting noise complaints has been identified as a key aspect of the negative impact of planning upon GMVs in London.

What has your experience of residential encroachment and noise complaints been?

3. To better protect GMVs from the threat of residential encroachment and noise complaints the Agent of Change Principle was introduced in national planning policy in 2018. The Agent of Change principle places the responsibility and cost for mitigating any negative impacts of a change of use with the developer. *For example, if a developer wanted to construct a new residential property near to a pre-existing noise generating business, such as a live music venue. The developer would have to manage the potential negative impacts of their development on that business, including the financial cost.*

Were you aware of the Agent of Change principle and that it can be used to protect your business from noise complaints associated with residential encroachment?

4. What has your experience of the Agent of Change principle been?
5. Do you consider the issue of residential encroachment and noise complaints to be a threat to your business? Has this always been the case?
6. In your opinion does the Agent of Change principle afford grassroots businesses with the right amount of protection from noise complaints? Do you have any suggestions for how it might be changed to better support and protect your business?

7. In your opinion is planning and licensing a positive or negative factor for your business?
Do you have any suggestions for how it might be changed to better support and protect your business?

8. As a business what relationship do you have with your local planning authority? Has this relationship changed at all over the last 10 years?

9. In your opinion do your local authority prioritise the welfare of residents and residential development over businesses like yours? Has this changed at all over the last 10 years?

10. Other than the issues already discussed, are there any other issues that you believe fall within the remit of planning that are having a negative impact on your business? Do you have any suggestions for how they could be dealt with to better support your business?

Appendix E: Information and Consent Form

Information and consent form

Project Title Urban Planning and the Protection of Grassroots Music Venues in the
London Boroughs of Hackney and the City of Westminster

Researcher Benjamin James

Introduction

You are being invited to take part in a research project being undertaken by a Masters student from the Bartlett School of Planning, University College London (UCL).

Before you decide whether or not to participate it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what participation will involve. Please read the following information carefully, feel free to discuss it with others if you wish, or ask the research team for clarification or further information. Please take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Why is this research being conducted?

The aim of this project is to gain a better understanding of how the planning system – meaning planning regulations and policy, and their application – is supporting and protecting grassroots music venues in London. The decline of the grassroots sector over the last two decades has prompted much discourse and action to improve the protection available for grassroots venues. For example, the introduction of the Agent of Change principle to protect venues against the impacts of residential encroachment associated noise complaints. This research project aims to

determine if the measures taken to provide better support and protection for grassroots venues through the planning system have had the desired impact or if more needs to be done.

Why am I being asked to participate?

You are being invited to take part due to your involvement in the grassroots sector either as a planner, business owner or individual actively involved in the sector.

Do I have to participate?

Participation is entirely voluntary. If you do choose to participate and then change your mind, you may withdraw from the research at any time with no consequences and without having to give a reason.

What will happen if I choose to take part?

If you do choose to participate, you will be invited to complete a questionnaire or interview along with this consent form. The answers provided will be analysed as part of a larger dataset of survey respondents with the aim to draw conclusions regarding the current relationship between urban planning and grassroots music venues from the answers provided.

What are the advantages of taking part?

There are no immediate benefits for participating in this project and no financial incentive or reward is offered, however it is hoped that this project will inform an understanding of the current relationship between grassroots venues and planning in London, with an aim to identify where improvements can be made to benefit grassroots businesses.

If I choose to take part, what will happen to the data?

The questionnaire/interview data will be anonymised at the point of transcription and identified by a general identifier (e.g. 'Planning officer A' or 'Grassroots business owner B' or a suitable pseudonym). A record of participant identities and any notes will be kept separately and securely from the anonymised data. All data and information affiliated with this project will be securely stored on an encrypted computer drive and physical documents will be stored securely on University property.

The data will be only used for the purposes of this research and relevant outputs and will not be shared with any third party. The anonymised data may be utilised in the written dissertation produced at the end of this project, and this dissertation may then be made publicly available via the University Library's Open Access Portal, however no identifiable or commercial sensitive information will be accessible in this way.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

It is anticipated that the data collected in this project will be included in the dissertation produced at the end of this project, submitted for the award of a Masters degree at University College London (UCL). You will not be personally identified in any of the outputs from this work, and attributions and quotations will be anonymised. If you would like to receive an electronic copy of any outputs stemming from this project, please ask the contact below who will be happy to provide this.

Contact Details

If you would like more information or have any questions or concerns about the project or your participation, please use the contact details below:

Primary contact Benjamin James
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Telephone +44 (0) 739 735 7375

Concerns and / or Complaints

If you have concerns about any aspect of this research project please contact the MSc student contact the student in the first instance, then escalate to the supervisor.

Informed Consent Sheet

**Urban Planning and the Protection of Live Music Venues in the London Boroughs of
Hackney and the City of Westminster**

If you are happy to participate, please complete this consent form by ticking the boxes to acknowledge the following statements and signing your name at the bottom of the page.

Please return the signed form to the researcher (contact details are printed above on page 2) via email. They will also be able to explain this consent form further with you, if required.

1.	I have read and understood the information sheet.	✓
2.	I agree to participate in the above research by attending a face-to-face interview as described on the Information Sheet.	✓
3.	I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary.	✓
4.	I understand that I may withdraw at any time without giving a reason and with no consequences.	✓
5.	I agree for the interview to be audio recorded.	✓
6.	I understand that I may see a copy of the interview transcript after it has been transcribed and agree any amendments with the researcher.	✓
7.	I understand that the intention is that interviews are anonymised and that if any of my words are used in a research output that they will not be directly attributed to me unless otherwise agreed by all parties.	✓
8.	I understand the data from this project will be considered for repository in the UCL Open Access repository as described on the Information Sheet but that this will be anonymised data only.	✓
9.	I understand that I can contact the student who interviewed me at any time using the email address they contacted me on to arrange the interview, or the dissertation supervisor using the contact details provided on page 2 of the information sheet.	✓

Participant name:

Signature:

Date:

Researcher name: Benjamin James

Signature: Benjamin James

Date: 28th

May 2020

Appendix F: Questionnaire

Please type your answer to each question below. There is no space or word limit, please type as much or little as you want. If a question isn't applicable to you or your role, please type N/A.

Section 1: Role

1. As a planning officer are you/have you been involved with live music venues, including grassroots music venues (GMVs)?

Yes, I was the planning officer for the redevelopment of two sites where the City Council secured the re-provision of nightclubs that were capable of offering live music. These sites were:

- 127-143 Oxford Street, 53-55 Berwick Street and 201-205 Wardour Street (Ref: 18/00175/FULL); and

- Wells House (134-144 Oxford Street and 77-84 Wells Street (Ref: 18/03229/FULL)).

2. In your opinion, are officers in your local authority aware of the challenges facing GMVs and do they understand the tools available to them to support and protect these businesses?

Yes, increasingly so.

3. In your opinion are there any knowledge gaps among planning professionals with regards to how planning and licensing impacts GMVs and how GMVs can be supported and protected through the planning system?

Yes. We have previously taken the view that we have no policies to protect nightclubs but policies within the emerging London Plan and guidance from the Mayor (Culture and the night-time economy SPG, for example) that afford protection for the night time economy and the cultural / visitor offer that live music venues provide have given officers greater tools to protect such venues and a greater appreciation of the contribution that they make to central London's economy and cultural diversity. Officers would not normally have considered that nightclubs really provided any 'cultural offer' but the Major is clear in his guidance that we should not be narrow or snobbish in what we consider contributes to London's culture. I am sure that there are a number of officers who do not fully appreciate these issues; potentially because they have not dealt with applications that involve live music venues or GMVs, but it is becoming more widely appreciate and understood.

Section 2: Threats to Grassroots Music Venue

1. The sharp decline of GMVs in London has been widely reported by the media in recent years. Are you aware of such a decline in your borough?

I don't really have any first-hand knowledge of the rate of decline, but it is obvious that they are under threat when sites come forward for redevelopment. In dealing with the above planning applications, it was clear that the applicant did not really want a potentially problematic nightclub on their site and were forced into retaining them in their applications through pressure from the Mayor and from officers at the City Council.

Section 3: Planning

1. The planning and licensing system have been identified as a key factor negatively impacting upon GMVs in London. What has your experience with GMVs been?

I have no involvement in licensing, but I have tried to be as flexible as possible with opening times for re-provided night clubs. The ‘agent of change’ principle within the London Plan and NPPF have helped in this regard.

2. Residential encroachment and resulting noise complaints has been identified as a key aspect of the negative impact of planning upon GMVs in London. What has your experience of residential encroachment and noise complaints been?

I have no direct experience in residential encroachment as, in recent years, the City Council’s policies protecting offices from being converted to flats has meant that I have dealt with very few applications for new residential units within central Westminster. However, as set out above, the agent of change principle allows officers to take a commonsense approach when assessing applications for new sensitive uses such as flats near entertainment uses.

3. To better protect GMVs from the threat of residential encroachment and noise complaints the Agent of Change Principle was introduced in national planning policy in 2018.

What has your experience of applying the Agent of Change principle been? Do you consider it to be a useful planning framework for the protection of GMVs?

As set out above, I have dealt with very few applications for new residential units in central Westminster, but I do agree that the agent of change principle is useful.

4. Do you consider the issue of residential encroachment and noise complaints to be a threat to GMVs in your borough? Has this changed at all over the last 10 years?

I am not sure. I think that the main threat is that, when site's come forward for redevelopment, applicants are often reluctant to re-provide such venues.

5. Do you feel the Agent of Change principle affords GMVs with the right amount of protection from the issue of residential encroachment related noise complaints? Do you have any suggestions for how it might be changed to better support and protect GMVs?

Yes, I do think that it offers the right amount of protection.

6. As a planning officer what relationship do you have with GMVs in your borough? Has this relationship changed at all over the last 10 years?

Yes, there has been an enormous change in approach. Please see my answer to Question 3.

7. Do you feel there is greater emphasis given to protecting the welfare of residents and residential development over businesses such as GMVs in your borough? Has this changed at all over the last 10 years?

Yes, I do think that there has been a change in emphasis, both from officers and from Members. Previously, there was a real emphasis on encouraging new residents and protecting the amenity of existing residents within central Westminster. I think that there is a great appreciation that the West End has a number of roles to play and the night-time economy is part of this role. It may be that this is sometimes in conflict with residential amenity, but I think that the balance has shifted in favour of the economic and cultural benefits that such venues generate.

8. Other than the issues already discussed, are there any other issues that fall within the remit of planning that in your opinion are negatively impacting upon GMVs in your borough? How would you suggest they could be dealt with to better support these businesses?

Nothing to add.

9. In your opinion are there factors negatively impacting GMV businesses in your borough that are beyond the remit of planning? Do you believe these to be a greater threat to GMVs than those within the planning system?

Yes. I believe that COVID-19, business rates and licensing are all a greater threat than planning.

Appendix G: Risk Assessment

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

FIELD / LOCATION WORK



The Approved Code of Practice - Management of Fieldwork should be referred to when completing this form
<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/safetynet/guidance/fieldwork/acop.pdf>

DEPARTMENT/SECTION BARTLETT SCHOOL OF PLANNING
LOCATION(S) LONDON
PERSONS COVERED BY THE RISK ASSESSMENT Benjamin James

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF FIELDWORK Interviews with planning officers and local business owners in the London Boroughs of Westminster and Hackney. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, interviews are planned to be undertaken remotely over the telephone or online via email.

Consider, in turn, each hazard (white on black). If **NO** hazard exists select **NO** and move to next hazard section. If a hazard does exist select **YES** and assess the risks that could arise from that hazard in the risk assessment box. **Where risks are identified that are not adequately controlled they must be brought to the attention of your Departmental Management who should put temporary control measures in place or stop the work. Detail such risks in the final section.**

ENVIRONMENT

e.g. location, climate, terrain, neighbourhood, in outside organizations, pollution, animals.

The environment always represents a safety hazard. Use space below to identify and assess any risks associated with this hazard

Examples of risk: adverse weather, illness, hypothermia, assault, getting lost.
Is the risk high / medium / low ?

Currently interviews are planned to be undertaken remotely. However, if interviews are able to be conducted face-to-face, environmental hazards will represent very minor risk as interviews will be undertaken in well populated, central London Boroughs (Westminster and Hackney), during daylight hours, where the risk of environmental hazards is no greater to day-to-day life in the city.

CONTROL MEASURES

Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk

- work abroad incorporates Foreign Office advice
- participants have been trained and given all necessary information
- only accredited centres are used for rural field work
- participants will wear appropriate clothing and footwear for the specified environment
- trained leaders accompany the trip
- refuge is available
- work in outside organisations is subject to their having satisfactory H&S procedures in place
- OTHER CONTROL MEASURES: please specify any other control measures you have implemented:

EMERGENCIES

e.g. fire, accidents

Where emergencies may arise use space below to identify and assess any risks

Examples of risk: loss of property, loss of life

Again interviews are currently planned to be completed remotely. However, if interviews are able to be conducted face-to-face, there will be a very minor risk of emergencies as again interviews will be undertaken in well populated, central London Boroughs, during daylight hours, where the risk of emergency is no greater than usual day-to-day life in the city.

CONTROL MEASURES

Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk

- participants have registered with LOCATE at <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/>
- fire fighting equipment is carried on the trip and participants know how to use it
- contact numbers for emergency services are known to all participants
- participants have means of contacting emergency services
- participants have been trained and given all necessary information
- a plan for rescue has been formulated, all parties understand the procedure
- the plan for rescue /emergency has a reciprocal element
- OTHER CONTROL MEASURES: please specify any other control measures you have implemented:

EQUIPMENT

Is equipment used?

No

If 'No' move to next hazard
If 'Yes' use space below to identify and assess any risks*e.g. clothing, outboard motors.*

Examples of risk: inappropriate, failure, insufficient training to use or repair, injury. Is the risk high / medium / low ?

CONTROL MEASURES

Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk

- the departmental written Arrangement for equipment is followed
- participants have been provided with any necessary equipment appropriate for the work
- all equipment has been inspected, before issue, by a competent person
- all users have been advised of correct use
- special equipment is only issued to persons trained in its use by a competent person
- OTHER CONTROL MEASURES: please specify any other control measures you have implemented:

LONE WORKING

Is lone working a possibility?

No

If 'No' move to next hazard
If 'Yes' use space below to identify and assess any risks*e.g. alone or in isolation lone interviews.*

Examples of risk: difficult to summon help. Is the risk high / medium / low?

Low risk

CONTROL MEASURES

Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk

- the departmental written Arrangement for lone/out of hours working for field work is followed
- lone or isolated working is not allowed
- location, route and expected time of return of lone workers is logged daily before work commences
- all workers have the means of raising an alarm in the event of an emergency, e.g. phone, flare, whistle
- all workers are fully familiar with emergency procedures
- OTHER CONTROL MEASURES: please specify any other control measures you have implemented:

ILL HEALTH

The possibility of ill health always represents a safety hazard. Use space below to identify and assess any risks associated with this Hazard.

e.g. accident, illness, personal attack, special personal considerations or vulnerabilities.

Examples of risk: injury, asthma, allergies. Is the risk high / medium / low?

Low risk

CONTROL MEASURES

Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk

- an appropriate number of trained first-aiders and first aid kits are present on the field trip
- all participants have had the necessary inoculations/ carry appropriate prophylactics
- participants have been advised of the physical demands of the trip and are deemed to be physically suited
- participants have been adequate advice on harmful plants, animals and substances they may encounter
- participants who require medication have advised the leader of this and carry sufficient medication for their needs
- OTHER CONTROL MEASURES: please specify any other control measures you have implemented:

TRANSPORT

Will transport be required

NO

YES

Move to next hazard

Use space below to identify and assess any risks

e.g. hired vehicles

Examples of risk: accidents arising from lack of maintenance, suitability or training

Is the risk high / medium / low?

As interviews are currently planned to be completed remotely, no transport will be required. However, in the case that face-to-face interviews are possible there will be a very minor risk of accidents etc. posed by the use of transport. Only public transport methods will be utilised such as trains and buses. Again, the risk of accidents whilst using transportation is no greater than day-today life in the London.

CONTROL MEASURES

Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk

- only public transport will be used
- the vehicle will be hired from a reputable supplier
- transport must be properly maintained in compliance with relevant national regulations
- drivers comply with UCL Policy on Drivers http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/college_drivers.php
- drivers have been trained and hold the appropriate licence
- there will be more than one driver to prevent driver/operator fatigue, and there will be adequate rest periods
- sufficient spare parts carried to meet foreseeable emergencies
- OTHER CONTROL MEASURES: please specify any other control measures you have implemented:

DEALING WITH THE PUBLIC

Will people be dealing with public

No

If 'No' move to next hazard

If 'Yes' use space below to identify and assess any risks

e.g. interviews, observing

Examples of risk: personal attack, causing offence, being misinterpreted. Is the risk high / medium / low?

Low risk

CONTROL MEASURES

Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk

- all participants are trained in interviewing techniques
- interviews are contracted out to a third party
- advice and support from local groups has been sought
- participants do not wear clothes that might cause offence or attract unwanted attention
- interviews are conducted at neutral locations or where neither party could be at risk
- OTHER CONTROL MEASURES: please specify any other control measures you have implemented:

**WORKING ON OR
NEAR WATER**Will people work on
or near water?

No

If 'No' move to next hazard
If 'Yes' use space below to identify and assess any
risks*e.g. rivers, marshland,
sea.*

Examples of risk: drowning, malaria, hepatitis A, parasites. Is the risk high / medium / low?

CONTROL MEASURES

Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk

- lone working on or near water will not be allowed
- coastguard information is understood; all work takes place outside those times when tides could prove a threat
- all participants are competent swimmers
- participants always wear adequate protective equipment, e.g. buoyancy aids, wellingtons
- boat is operated by a competent person
- all boats are equipped with an alternative means of propulsion e.g. oars
- participants have received any appropriate inoculations
- OTHER CONTROL MEASURES: please specify any other control measures you have implemented:

**MANUAL HANDLING
(MH)**Do MH activities
take place?

No

If 'No' move to next hazard
If 'Yes' use space below to identify and assess any
risks*e.g. lifting, carrying,
moving large or heavy
equipment, physical
unsuitability for the task.*

Examples of risk: strain, cuts, broken bones. Is the risk high / medium / low?

CONTROL MEASURES

Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk

- the departmental written Arrangement for MH is followed
- the supervisor has attended a MH risk assessment course
- all tasks are within reasonable limits, persons physically unsuited to the MH task are prohibited from such activities
- all persons performing MH tasks are adequately trained
- equipment components will be assembled on site
- any MH task outside the competence of staff will be done by contractors
- OTHER CONTROL MEASURES: please specify any other control measures you have implemented:

SUBSTANCES

Will participants work with substances

No

If 'No' move to next hazard
If 'Yes' use space below to identify and assess any risks

e.g. plants, chemical, biohazard, waste

Examples of risk: ill health - poisoning, infection, illness, burns, cuts. Is the risk high / medium / low?

CONTROL MEASURES

Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk

- the departmental written Arrangements for dealing with hazardous substances and waste are followed
- all participants are given information, training and protective equipment for hazardous substances they may encounter
- participants who have allergies have advised the leader of this and carry sufficient medication for their needs
- waste is disposed of in a responsible manner
- suitable containers are provided for hazardous waste
- OTHER CONTROL MEASURES: please specify any other control measures you have implemented:

OTHER HAZARDS

Have you identified any other hazards?

No

If 'No' move to next section
If 'Yes' use space below to identify and assess any risks

i.e. any other hazards must be noted and assessed here.

Hazard:

Risk: is the risk

CONTROL MEASURES

Give details of control measures in place to control the identified risks

Have you identified any risks that are not adequately controlled?

NO

Move to Declaration

YES

Use space below to identify the risk and what action was taken

Is this project subject to the UCL requirements on the ethics of Non-NHS Human Research?

No

If yes, please state your Project ID Number

For more information, please refer to: <http://ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk/>

DECLARATION

The work will be reassessed whenever there is a significant change and at least annually. Those participating in the work have read the assessment.

Select the appropriate statement:

- I the undersigned have assessed the activity and associated risks and declare that there is no significant residual risk
- I the undersigned have assessed the activity and associated risks and declare that the risk will be controlled by the method(s) listed above

NAME OF SUPERVISOR Dimitrios Panayotopoulos-Tsiros

SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR



DATE 5/05/2020

18155536_Dissertation

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

GENERAL COMMENTS

/100

Instructor

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