Community Influence in Urban Regeneration Processes of Opportunity Areas

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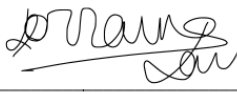(8.5M)
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Community Engagement, Opportunity Areas & Urban Regeneration: evaluating the ability for communities to influence regeneration in Opportunity Areas across London

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Being a dissertation submitted to the faculty of The Built Environment as part of the requirements for the award of the MSc Urban Regeneration 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.

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Abstract

The spatial geography of planning governance in London has changed drastically in the past three decades, with an increasing emphasis on 'localism' and the shifting of planning power to communities in regeneration processes. Whilst 'localism' is envisioned as a tool to enhance democracy, many theorists argue that it is merely a neoliberal form of governmentality in practice, used to promote economic growth. This dissertation seeks to contextualise the debate on 'localism' by exploring a particular regeneration process in London. Specifically, it examines the extent of community influence in the regeneration processes of Opportunity Areas across London.

The research involved an in-depth case study of the Earl's Court and West Kensington Opportunity Area, a critical discourse analysis of the policies governing the case study, and interviews with councillors, residents and community groups. The findings from the research suggests a notable absence of emphasis on community engagement and empowerment in policies governing the case study. Interestingly, this lack of emphasis did not translate into a lack of community engagement in practice, but engagement processes were generally tokenistic and used to promote a wider neoliberal agenda of economic growth. Despite the limited community influence in the case study's 'prescribed spaces of engagement', alternative sites of community resistance were successful in altering regeneration processes and outcomes, but such resistance was met with significant challenges that make its success exceptional in London. Furthermore, whilst the limits to community engagement observed in the case study are a London-wide phenomena, the status of Opportunity Areas as a tool for growth plays a role in further limiting the extent of community influence. Therefore overall, as explored through the Earl's Court and West Kensington Opportunity Area, only to a limited extent are communities able to influence the regeneration processes of Opportunity Areas.

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1. Introduction

The spatial geography of planning governance in the United Kingdom has changed drastically in the past three decades (Haughton et al., 2013; Tewdwr-Jones, 2005; Vigar et al., 2000; Ranciere, 2006). Notably, there has been an increasing emphasis on 'localism' and the shifting of planning functions downwards from the state, where community engagement and partnerships have been actively promoted in regeneration processes across the city (Holdon and Iveson, 2003; Savini, 2011).

Those in support of 'localism' claim a 'deepening' of democracy, through the broadening of the sphere of decision-making in regeneration (Shah, 2000; Featherstone et al., 2011). Yet critics argue that 'localism' is merely a neoliberal form of governmentality. At face value it exudes notions of civic enterprise and community ownership, but practically, it is merely a 'political manoeuvring' to promote the 'neoliberal logics' of economic growth and market-led regeneration (Haughton et al., 2013; Lemke, 2007).

Considering the various and contrasting arguments of 'localism', this study aims to narrow down and explore the ideas of community influence through the lens of one particular type of regeneration process in London— regeneration in Opportunity Areas (OA). OAs are major sites of brownfield land that are designated by the Mayor of London and seen to have significant regeneration potential. Literature written of OAs emphasise a poverty of community engagement and the top-down nature of their regeneration processes (JustSpace, 2019; JustSpace, 2018a). Beyond such criticisms however, there is limited research on community influence within OAs, despite their steady growth across London over the past decade. This highlights a gap in existing literature, and a potential focus for further study.

This dissertation therefore aims to analyse and evaluate community influence in the regeneration processes of OAs. Through studying a chosen OA in London, it will explore the concept of 'localism' and associated ideas of community empowerment in policy, community influence in 'prescribed spaces of engagement', civic involvement in alternative community 'sites of resistance', and the degree of impact that the status of OAs may have on community influence.

In doing so, this study presents an original contribution to the existing literature on OAs and localism, and will offer new insights on community influence in regeneration across London.

The following research question will be addressed in the study: "To What Extent are Communities able to Influence the Urban Regeneration Processes of Opportunity Areas designated in the London Plan?" To answer this research question, the following research objectives are pursued:

1. Critically analyse Opportunity Area policies, in relation to 'localism' and associated ideas of community engagement and empowerment.
2. Evaluate community influence in 'prescribed spaces of engagement' within Opportunity Areas
3. Analyse the role and power of community resistance within Opportunity Areas.
4. Critically explore the impact of the status and designation of Opportunity Areas on community influence within them.

Chapter 2 begins with a review of the theory and literature relevant to the research topic. In chapter 3, the methodology used to conduct the research and data analysis is outlined, before the background of the case study is detailed in chapter 4. Chapter 6 presents the main research findings and the analysis of such findings, in response to the broader research question. Finally in chapter 7, conclusions are drawn on community influence in the regeneration processes of OAs.

2. Literature Review

This chapter first explores the theoretical debates on localism and policy emphasis on community participation. It then conceptualises 'urban regeneration', before reviewing the emerging role of civic engagement in regeneration processes in London. The chapter concludes with an overview of existing literature on community engagement specific to regeneration within OAs in London.

2.1 Localism

As outlined in chapter 1, there has been an increasing policy emphasis on 'localism' in the UK in the past three decades, which— though a political concept with 'fuzzy' meanings (Clarke & Cochrane, 2013)— is generally defined as the decentralisation of planning functions to the local scale (Rodriguez-Pose & Gill, 2003; Stoker & Kings, 1996).

Common justifications for localism accentuate the "deepening" of democracy through "broadening" the sphere of decision-making beyond the elected politicians of representative democracy, and is often elided with notions of social responsibility and civic enterprise (Shah, 2000; Everingham et al., 2006; Featherstone et al, 2011). By advocating for more localised 'governance', an attack is implied on the concept of top-down power wielded at a distance (Rodriguez-Pose & Sandall, 2008).

Yet many critics of localism emphasise that community individuals participating in localism never realise complete autonomy in practice. Clarke and Cochrane (2013), for example, describe localism as a 'spatial liberalism', situated between freedom and regulation in practice. Davoudi and Madanipour (2013) similarly deems localism an attempt to 'govern at a distance', where despite more civic engagement and less direct state intervention, the level of 'government' and 'discipline' isn't reduced (Coffee and Johnston, 2005). Whilst such criticisms are insightful, they fail to contextualise localism within the increasing 'neoliberalisation' of policy agendas in the UK in the past few decades (Wacquant, 2012).

Haughton et al (2013) go further to characterise localism as a neoliberal form of governmentality by which state welfare is divested in favour of market-led individualism. In a

similar light, Ranciere (2008; 2006) argues that localism and associated 'soft spaces of governance' may alter the 'partitioning of the sensible' that dictates what actions and subjects as stakeholders are appropriate, but this disruption in planning merely safeguards the existing neoliberal order, rather than challenges or transforms it.

Responding to such criticisms, Painter et al (2010) emphasise the progressive possibilities of localism, whilst accepting that there are conditions that need to be fulfilled for localism to realise its democratic potential. Bailey and Pill (2015), Williams et al (2014) and Featherstone et al (2011) go further, highlighting the new 'ethical and political spaces' that localism has opened up, where 'progressive' actors can create 'interstitial sites of resistance' and 'outward-looking' community strategies that have the 'transformational potential' to reverse the neoliberalisation of inter and extra-local relations.

Whilst the arguments above offer useful insight on localism, given the significant spectrum of theoretical debates that they constitute, it is necessary to examine more closely how localism and associated community engagement processes are practiced in specific development processes.

2.2 Community Participation & Urban Regeneration

In particular, ideas around community empowerment and partnerships have been actively promoted in urban regeneration policy in London since at least the 1990s (Metzger, 2015). But it wasn't until the turn of the century that urban regeneration became an active vehicle for engaging communities in public decision-making. For example, programmes and new governance structures like New Labour's New Deal for Communities, the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and Local Strategic Partnerships all emphasised the central role of civic participation in constructing 'sustainable' communities (Holden and Iveson, 2003; Imrie et al, 2003; Savini, 2011). Before reviewing the debates on community influence in regeneration processes however, it is useful to first define 'urban regeneration'.

2.2.1 Understanding 'Urban Regeneration'

When the term first gained traction in policy in the mid twentieth century, it referred mainly to economic and physical renewal of degraded inner-city areas (Colanto & Dixon, 2011). In recent

decades however, a more integrated interpretation of 'urban regeneration' has been adopted, where urban regeneration 'seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change' (Couch et al, 2003; Roberts & Sykes, 2000, 17).

Whilst useful, such meanings detach urban regeneration from the national planning policy interventions and agendas that it is mobilised through (Cochrane, 2007; Dikeç; 2007; Jones & Evans, 2013). Many academics, in particular, highlight the growth-first logic adopted in recent years, where urban regeneration has been 'put to work' by politicians of an 'authoritarian liberalism' as part of a wider strategy to catalyse London's economic growth and enhance its global city status (Cochrane, 2007; Imrie et al., 2003; Dean, 2007; Jones, 1997).

As shown later, inherent tensions are created between this growth-led model of urban regeneration and the growing emphasis on localism. Thus to better evaluate community influence in OAs, this study— whilst considering Robert and Sykes (2000) integrated definition of urban regeneration— seeks to understand urban regeneration as part of a political project of active state and corporate direction (Dikec, 2007).

2.2.2 Community Engagement in Urban Regeneration Processes

Paralleling some of the theoretical debates on localism explored previously, numerous theorists argue that the new participatory spaces created in urban regeneration processes are inscribed with a neoliberal state agenda. Anastasio et al (2000), Karadimitriou et al (2013) and Brown et al (2014) argue that the rapid privatisation and financialisation of development processes in London since the 1980s, as part of a greater neoliberal agenda, has 'surreptitiously' converted state assets and services into investment spaces for private corporations and finance, enabling the dominance of private interests in regeneration processes.

This private-sector led regeneration model creates a 'clash of logics', where despite increasing policy emphasis for the devolution of power to local communities, in practice it is private companies who take the lead of 'imagining the city' (Street, 2014; Raco, 2014). Meanwhile, Swyngedouw (2009), Whitehead (2007) and Haughton et al. (2013) see the increased emphasis on community engagement as a vehicle for 'post-ideological' development processes, where

partisan conflicts are "a thing of the past" and a 'harmonious' future is achievable through a consensus-building and partnerships (Imrie & Lees, 2014). Yet they argue that in practice, community participation is merely a 'political manoeuvring' (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2015) to encourage more 'power over' to market and private sector elites (Schrijvers, 1995; Nelson and Wright, 1995).

In this light, Clarke and Newman (2006), Middens (2000), Paddison (2000) and Arnstein (1969) argue that any consultative techniques used reflect less a post-political process, but more a deliberate political attempt to maintain a 'status quo' and desired outcome, where dissent against the privatisation ideologies of neoliberalism are marginalised and displaced in the process. As such, community participants will always remain "peripheral insiders" (Maloney et al., in Taylor, 2000, 1022) unable to influence a genuine redistribution of power in regeneration processes (Marres, 2007; Metzger, 2015).

Whilst such arguments are insightful, they risk generalising regeneration processes in London. McGuire and Dowling (2009) and Savini (2011) highlight the need to sensitise regeneration to its various pathways and 'participatory endowments', where participatory outcomes may vary due to different development contexts. Jones (2002) and Hibbitt et al (2001), in particular, emphasise the need to scrutinise the quality and nature of the 'institutional supply' of political space, within which regeneration initiatives and consensus-seeking processes take place. Penny (2017) similarly suggests that effective governance arrangements are paramount in realising genuine citizen influence.

Other academics, like Cooke and Kothari (2001), Penny (2017) and (Raco, 2014b), are less optimistic about the effectiveness of consensual democracy. Instead they highlight the growing power of "activist citizens" in London who are "stepping outside of the spaces prescribed for their engagement" and asking "more fundamental questions about collective consumption, […] urban development and capitalist accumulation" (Penny, 2017, 1371). Imrie and Dolton (2014) and Oosterlynk and Swyngedouw (2010) argue that the political can never be fully foreclosed. Hence regeneration will always be a highly charged political process where "active subjects" (Kooiman, 2003, p.16) can potentially prevent the continual fruition of neoliberalising logics (Raco, 2014a, 126).

Yet, whilst such contentions are useful in developing a more nuanced understanding of regeneration processes, they risk romanticising community resistance. As Herbert (2005) notes, community resistance is often met with certain 'roadblocks' ', like state bureaucracies, lack of leadership and participatory experience, that prevent their success. Wills (2016) similarly argues that the success of community organisation is dependent on 'institutional inheritance' and 'civic capacity' to respond on the ground, reflecting the level of local interest to engage, the nature and composition of local communities, their existing organisation and activity, and the presence of key local institutions and civic leaders.

Raco (2014a) argues that even when a collective voice is articulated, it may only create a "moment of disruption" (126) in regeneration, without heralding a radical politics that provides a new basis for the production of egalitarian spaces (Imrie & Dolton, 2014). Meanwhile, other theorists question whether a 'collective voice' in the community is achievable. Friedmann et al (1973) and Davoudi and Cowie (2013) argue that individuals are primary self-interested, and so in community participation, they are not always motivated to ensure the democratic inclusion of the rest of society to achieve a greater public good (2013). Colomb (2016) and Jones (2002) contextualises this further, highlighting London's ethnic and socio-economic diversity and population mobility, and arguing that given such contexts, a homogenous and cohesive community in London that represents a 'community' voice is virtually impossible.

As shown, theoretical debates on community engagement in regeneration processes are also hugely varied, showcasing positive, negative and more neutral views on the effectiveness of community engagement in discourse and practice. Hence it is useful to unravel such processes further, looking at community engagement processes in regeneration projects of a specific nature and scale.

2.3 Community Participation in Opportunity Areas

Opportunity Areas (OA), first introduced in the 2004 London Plan, are essentially major sites of brownfield land designated by the Mayor, that are seen to have significant capacity for regeneration (GLA, 2019; JustSpace, 2019). Each OA is expected to provide a minimum of 5,000 and 2,500 new jobs and homes respectively, and is governed by its own Opportunity Area

Planning Framework (OAPF) largely conceived and written by the GLA, in tandem with the respective local boroughs (Just Space, 2019).

There are currently twenty nine OAs across London, and given the significant scale of urban regeneration that OAs constitute, a closer study of their community engagement processes is paramount. Existing literature on the subject matter often highlight a "poverty of community engagement by the Mayor's Office" (Just Space, 2019), where OAs and the sites for regeneration are often designated from above, without informing or engaging people who already live and work in the area (Just Space, 2018a). The current financial and planning models that drive regeneration within OAs are dominated by profit-seeking Volumed Developers, and so similarly disregard the aspirations of local residents and businesses who will be affected by the regeneration plans (Just Space, 2018a). Thus any community engagement procedures initiated, only represent trivial consultation on key elements of planning, like the provision of social infrastructure, and the design and densities of new development (Just Space, 2018b; Just Space, 2016b).

Whilst such arguments are insightful, they are lacking of an in-depth and comprehensive study of 'localism' within the regeneration processes of OAs. The rest of this dissertation endeavours to fill this literature gap by focusing on community influence and civic engagement in one particular OA.

3. Methodology

This chapter outlines the research methodology used to achieve the research objectives identified in chapter 1, and thus to answer the research question governing this dissertation.

3.1 Research Scope

This dissertation studies the Earl's Court and West Kensington Opportunity Area (ECWK OA) in particular. Given the significant media attention on the OA's regeneration plans and the significant community opposition against such plans, the case study will likely reveal important information on community influence in OAs and in regeneration processes across London in general.

3.2 Research Approach

To answer the broader research question, the research objectives outlined in chapter 1 and the desk work of this dissertation has been structured using Latour's (2007) framework on the 'what' and 'how' of planning issues and processes. The former explores what aspects of a planning issue or process is privileged and promoted in policy, while the latter looks at mechanisms in which a planning issue or process is mobilised and implemented in practice.

Whilst an analysis of policy reveals useful information on the political framings of planning issues and the role and impact of ideology in policy-making, they lack empirical research evaluating the mobilisation of policies and planning issues in practice (Fairclough, 2013; Sayer, 2005; Lipton & Tunstall, 2008). Hence a research methodology that looks at both policy and practice provides a particularly powerful system to understanding the dynamic processes through which planning issues, like regeneration processes, may be re-politicised or de-politicised (Kesten & Raco, 2018). It may also reveal important information on whether and how policy framings of planning processes are converted into development projects to influence the built environment (Purcell, 2013)

As such, the research methodology detailed below is characterised by two distinctive parts. The first part, responds to research objective 1, and is essentially a critical discourse analysis of the policies governing the ECWK OA, exploring whether and how communities, localism and

associated ideas of civic empowerment are framed. The second part comprises of interviews with key stakeholders, and mainly responds to objectives 2 and 3 of the study, which looks at whether and how community influence in the ECWK OA is realised in practice. To achieve research objective 4, this study will amalgamate both discourse analysis and interview findings to evaluate the extent to which the status of OAs impacts community influence in the ECWK OA.

3.3 Discourse Analysis

3.3.1 Analysis content

The dissertation will analyse the following policy documents relevant to the ECWK OA, which was first designated in the 2011 London Plan:

- 2011 London Plan
- 2016 London Plan
- Earl's Court and West Kensington Joint SPD (forms the OAPF of the area)
- London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham Core Strategy (adopted 2011)
- Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Core Strategy (adopted 2010)

3.3.1 Analysis Method

To analyse the policies governing the ECWK OA, this study has adopted Fairclough's framework on Critical Discourse Analysis, which views policy as an articulatory practice of wider social structures and institutions that creates a certain 'social world' (Grigs & Howarth, 2016; Fairclough, 2013). A close reading of the relevant excerpts of text was conducted and recorded in a word-processing software, under the headings of the different policy documents, with a focus on exploring whether and in what ways civic engagement and ideas of 'localism' are promoted (Fairclough, 2003). Patterns in the political framings of regeneration were distilled and identified, to explore the dominant political ideologies governing policy, and whether this creates tensions between various forms of policy intervention. As a useful point of comparison and given that the boundaries of OAs and Regeneration Areas (RA) often overlap, the discourse analyses also explored the policies of Regeneration Areas (RA), which are also designated sites for redevelopment in the London Plan.

3.4 Interview Method

3.4.1 Sampling Method

A total of four interviews were conducted, comprising one to two hour face-to-face interviews where possible. A total of thirty interview invitations were extended between July and August 2019, but due to the lack of response, in addition to the four interviews, research from interviews conducted in previous studies on the same case study, that were found online, have also been used. All the interviewees are listed in table 1, and as contextualised in figure 1, they comprise of different individuals and organisations who have been directly involved in the ECWK regeneration process or indirectly involved, through their expertise on the regeneration processes of OAs in general. Incorporating such a spectrum of participant groups, who have been involved in OAs to different capacities, ensures a more informed understanding of community influence within OAs. A pitfall however, is a lack of perspective from Capital and Counties Properties, Transport for London (two of the three landowners) and companies who were directly involved in producing the Earl's Court Masterplan— as they were unable to participate in this study. This is overcome in the interviews conducted, by thoroughly understanding LBHF's (the third landowner) and the community's relationship and interactions with them.

3.4.2 Interview design

The first-hand interviews conducted were all semi-structured (appendix A-D), each guided by the interviewee's role in the ECWK OA regeneration process and by the topics covered in the literature review, like community influence in community engagement processes, in alternative sites of community resistance, and the growth-logic of regeneration in relation to the logics of localism. For accurate transcribing and data analysis purposes, all interviews were recorded. It was also made sure that only open-ended questions were asked, to avoid any subjectivity in the way the interviews were structured.

The secondary interviews used were extracted from two online video documentaries, produced by West Kensington Gibbs Green Community Homes and the Earl's Court Area Action Group respectively, on the ECWK OA regeneration process.

Area of Operation	Organisation	Role/ Involvement	Type of Interview
LB Hammersmith & Fulham	Council	Planning Committee member	Phone
LB Hammersmith & Fulham	Council	Local Councillor	Secondary data (video)
RB Kensington & Chelsea	Council	Local Councillor	Face-to-face
Case Study Area	West Kensington Gibbs Green Estates (WKGGE)	Resident #1	Secondary data (video)
Case Study Area	West Kensington Gibbs Green Estates (WKGGE)	Resident #2	Secondary data (video)
Case Study Area	West Kensington Gibbs Green Community Homes (WKGGCH)	Member #1	Face-to-face
Case Study Area	West Kensington Gibbs Green Community Homes (WKGGCH)	Member #2	Secondary data (video)
London-wide	JustSpace	Member	Face-to-face

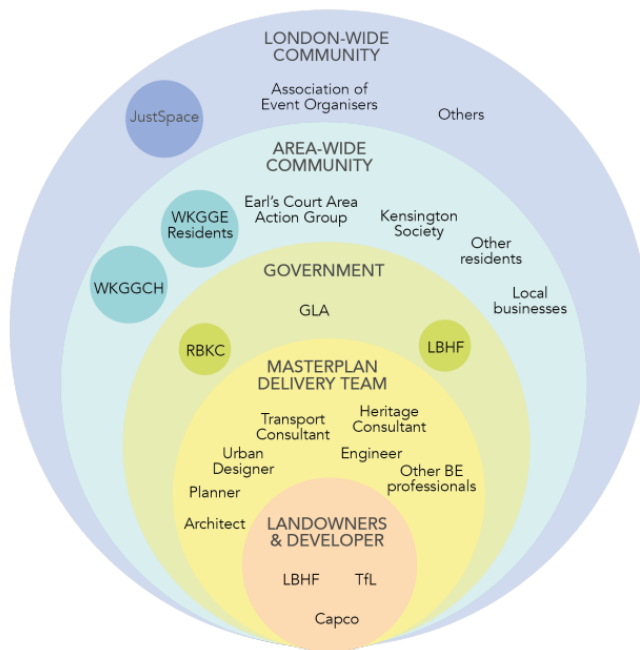Table 1 Interview Participants (primary and secondary data)

Figure 1 Key stakeholders directly and indirectly involved in regeneration of the ECWK OA (interview participants highlighted to correspond to table 1)

3.4.3 Safety and Ethical Issues

Given the research involved interviewing human participants, to avoid the safety and ethical risks of conducting lone interviews in isolated locations and disclosing sensitive information, the UCL risk assessment form (appendix E) was filled out beforehand to outline all risks and mitigation measures. All interviews were conducted in public locations, and verbal consent was always sought before recording them. It was also emphasised to participants that their identities would not be disclosed in this dissertation, to maintain the confidentiality of their responses.

3.5 Data Analysis

As part of the data analysis, the discourse analysis that was previously recorded in a word-processing software was colour coded and categorised based on key themes, such as a 'vague explanation of partnerships', 'emphasis on achieving growth-potential in regeneration', and 'community opinion subsumed by presumption in favour of growth'. Simultaneously, the four interviews conducted were transcribed into a word-tabling software, read over several times, categorised into broad themes based on the four research objective, like 'community engagement' and 'community resistance', then categorised again into more detailed themes like 'tokenistic participation' and 'civic engagement roadblocks'. Finally using the themes that they were categorised under, the policy and interview findings were presented, analysed and structured in relation to the four research objectives, to comprehensively answer this dissertation's broader research question.

4. Background of Case Study

This chapter seeks to introduce the ECWK OA, by outlining the case study's locational and socio-economic context, its regeneration history in the past decade, and the various community opposition that its regeneration has garnered.

4.1 Locational and Socio-Economic Context

Located in West London, the ECWK OA is made up of 37.2 hectares of land split between London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF; 27.8ha) and Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC; 9.4ha). It is bounded by West Cromwell Road to the north, the West London Line and Warwick Road to the east, Old Brompton Road and Lillie Road to the South and North End Road to the West. Also part of the OA is the Seagrave Road carpark, located south of Lillie Road and bounded by the West London Line and Seagrave Road (LBHF & RBKC, 2012; figure 2).
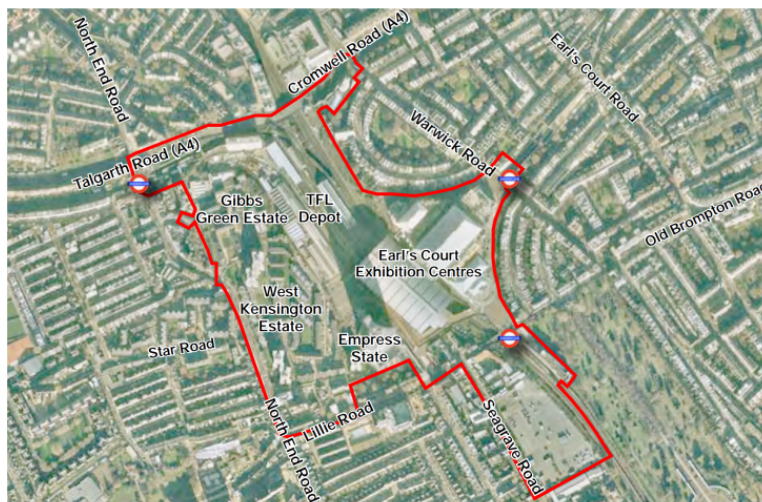
Figure 2: Location of the ECWK OA (LBHF & RBKC, 2012)

Historically, the OA and its surroundings were owned by families of nobility like the Copes, the Rich and the Edwardes families. It was largely rural— comprising mainly potteries, brickfields and market gardens throughout the eighteenth century. The mid to late nineteenth century saw a significant surge of residential development, which was further catalysed by the construction of the District and Piccadilly Lines in the area. (Capco, 2019a; Lofts, 2019) The OA also became a

notable site for exhibitions and shows, with the construction of the Empress Hall and the Empress Theatre at the turn of the twentieth century. Development of the area continued throughout the twentieth century, in which the Empress State Building and Gibbs Green Estates— landmarks still standing today— were built in 1961, whilst the West Kensington Estates was constructed around 1973 (LBHF & RBKC, 2012).

Figure 3 illustrates the current major owners of the OA. LBHF and the developer Capital and Counties (Capco), under a Conditional Land Sale Agreement between the two parties, owns the West Kensington and Gibbs Green housing estate (Capco, 2019b), which is located on the west side of the site and comprises a total of 702 homes in the form of low rise flats, maisonettes,
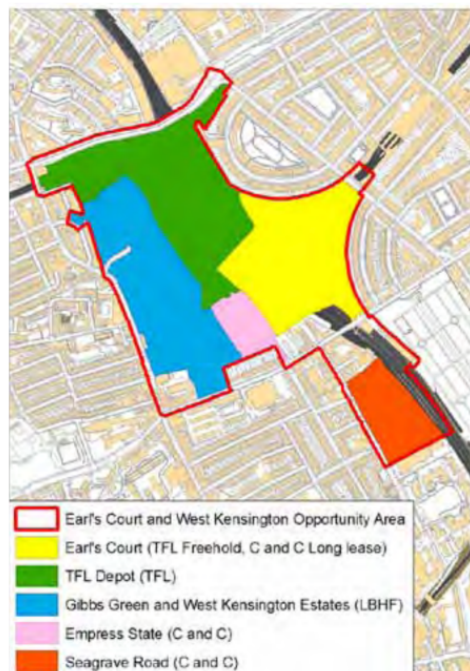
Figure 3 Landownership of Case Study (LBHF & RBKC, 2012)

terraced houses and medium-rise slab blocks. As of 2012, 78% of these homes was socially rented and 22% were purchased by residents under the 'right to buy' scheme (LBHF & RBKC, 2012).

Capco also owns the freehold of the Empress State Building— a thirty-one storey skyscraper (figure 4)— and the Seagrave Road car park, which has now been redeveloped into the

Figure 4 The Empress State Building as seen from the West Kensington & Gibbs Green Estates (REP, 2019)

Lillie Square development (figure 5). Meanwhile, the Lillie Bridge Depot, largely made up of marshalling yards and engineering workshops is under the freehold ownership of Transport for London (TfL). TfL also owns the freehold of the land on which the now demolished Earl's Court Exhibition Centres once stood, whilst Capco owns the leasehold of that area (Debord, 2011).

Figure 5 Lillie Square, formerly the Seagrave Road Carpark

Within the OA, there are also a variety of ancillary land uses within the OA, such as the Gibbs Green School and a small area of commercial and light industrial uses south of Lillie Road. The area is further dotted by heritage assets, including a number of listed buildings and

monuments, a Grade I listed 'park and garden', and nineteen conservation areas (LBHF & RBKC, 2012).

As of 2015, most of the OA fell within the thirty percent most deprived areas in England, as measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation, whilst neighbourhoods surrounding the site, like South Kensington, are notably less deprived (LBHF & RBKC, 2012). The OA particularly suffers from a higher unemployment rate than its surrounding areas, with a 2013 average of around 21% of residents from the W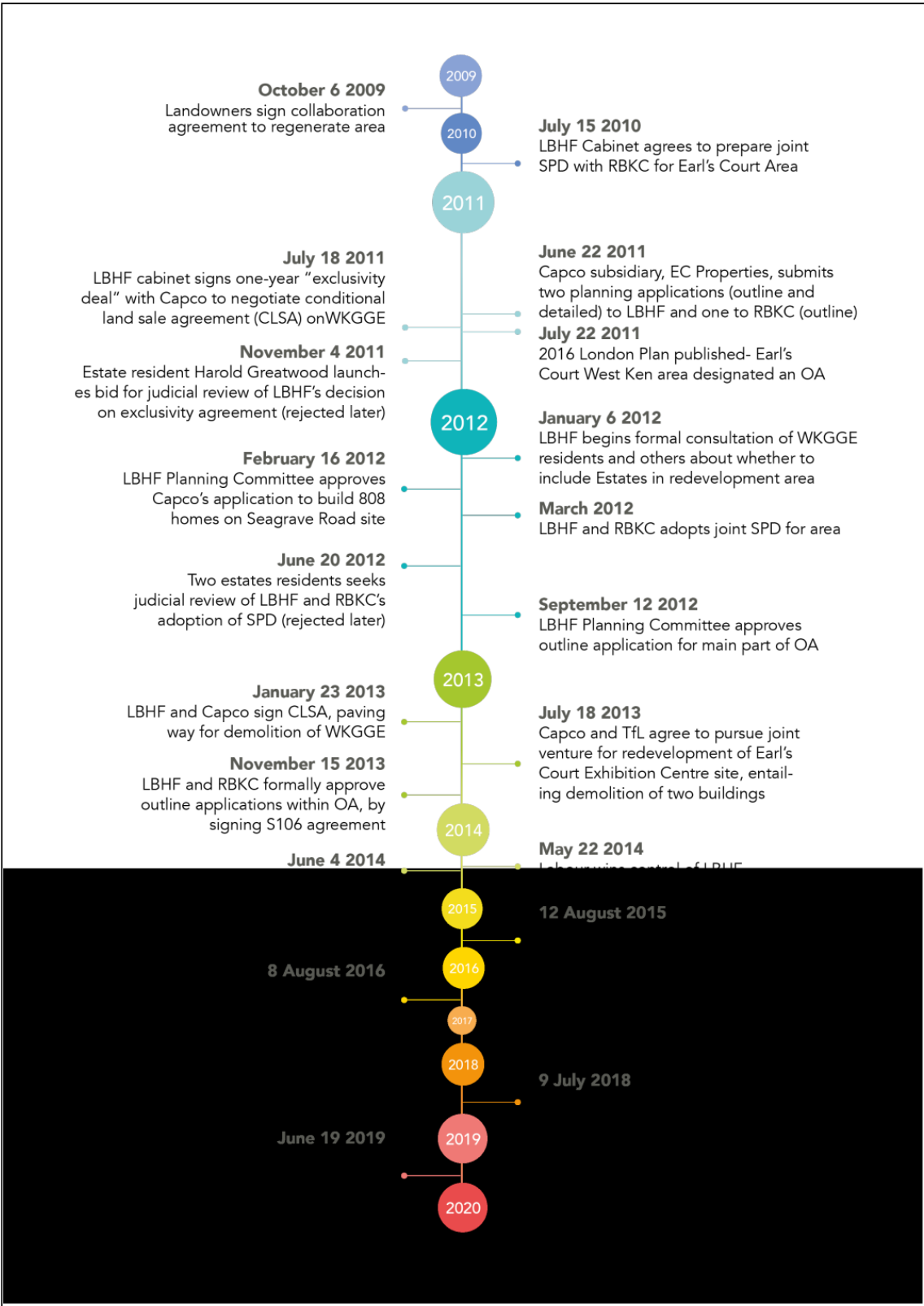KGGE claiming welfare benefits, compared to a LBHF average of roughly 8% (GLA, 2015a; GLA, 2015b). Educational attainment is also significantly lower, with around 25 percent of residents within the OA having university qualifications, whilst one third of them have no educational qualifications (LBHF & RBKC, 2012).

4.2 Regeneration & Community Engagement

Figure 6 provides a timeline of the key regeneration events of the OA over the past decade. Regeneration interest was arguably first expressed in 2009, before the site was designated an OA, when LBHF signed a collaboration agreement with TfL and Capco to redevelop the Estates, the Earls Court Centres and the Lillie Bridge London Underground depot (Hill, 2013).

This quickly led to Capco's submission of two planning applications to LBHF and one to RBKC in mid 2011, proposing the comprehensive redevelopment of the site into "7,500 new homes","10,000 jobs" contained within "four new urban villages, linked by a modern, 21st century high street with retail and dining, cultural spaces" (Capco, 2019a). The applications for the Earl's Court Project also included a community engagement report, summarising the results of numerous rounds of pre-application consultation, which concluded that while "no single clear vision" has emerged, "a number of shared aspirations" have, and the redevelopment scheme has "captured people's imagination" (Cochrane & Quigley, 2011).

Around the same time, the site was formally designated an OA in the new 2011 London Plan, and in March 2012, after rounds of preliminary and draft SPD consultation exercises, a Supplementary Planning Document jointly produced by LBHF and RBKC was formally adopted as the overarching Planning Framework for the OA (LBHF & RBKC, 2012). Simultaneously, as part of

2009

October 6 2009
Landowners sign collaboration agreement to regenerate area

2010

July 15 2010
LBHF Cabinet agrees to prepare joint SPD with RBKC for Earl's Court Area

2011

July 18 2011
LBHF cabinet signs one-year "exclusivity deal" with Capco to negotiate conditional land sale agreement (CLSA) onWKGGE

June 22 2011
Capco subsidiary, EC Properties, submits two planning applications (outline and detailed) to LBHF and one to RBKC (outline)

July 22 2011
2016 London Plan published- Earl's Court West Ken area designated an OA

November 4 2011
Estate resident Harold Greatwood launches bid for judicial review of LBHF's decision on exclusivity agreement (rejected later)

2012

January 6 2012
LBHF begins formal consultation of WKGGE residents and others about whether to include Estates in redevelopment area

February 16 2012
LBHF Planning Committee approves Capco's application to build 808 homes on Seagrave Road site

March 2012
LBHF and RBKC adopts joint SPD for area

June 20 2012
Two estates residents seeks judicial review of LBHF and RBKC's adoption of SPD (rejected later)

September 12 2012
LBHF Planning Committee approves outline application for main part of OA

2013

January 23 2013
LBHF and Capco sign CLSA, paving way for demolition of WKGGE

July 18 2013
Capco and TfL agree to pursue joint venture for redevelopment of Earl's Court Exhibition Centre site, entailing demolition of two buildings

November 15 2013
LBHF and RBKC formally approve outline applications within OA, by signing S106 agreement

2014

June 4 2014

May 22 2014
Labour wins control of LBHF

2015

12 August 2015

8 August 2016

2016

2017

2018

9 July 2018

June 19 2019

2019

2020

its vision for the site, Capco also entered into a one-year "exclusivity deal" with LBHF, for negotiating a Conditional Land Sale Agreement (CLSA) to purchase the land on which the Estates stands from the council for £15 million (Debord, 2011). This is followed by periods of informal and formal community consultation to see whether the Estates should be included in the redevelopment area, until early September 2012, when the cabinet of LBHF agrees to enter into a CLSA with Capco (Capco, 2019b). One week later, LBHF 's Planning Applications Committee approves Capco's outline application for the part of the scheme that lies within the borough's boundaries, and the redevelopment scheme is formally given the green signal one year later in November 2013, when the council and RBKC sign the Section 106 Agreements (Hill, 2013).

Just when redevelopment is seemingly guaranteed however, Labour wins control of LBHF in May 2014, vowing to renegotiate the Earls Court Project and "work with council housing tenants to give them ownership of the land their homes are on" (Peters, 2014, 7). Sadiq Khan, during his election campaign and after becoming Mayor of London in 2016, also pledged to review the Earl's Court Masterplan (Cooper, 2016). Since then, the OA has fallen into a 'meanwhile' mode, where other than the redevelopment of the Seagrave Car Park site into the Lillie Square development, the project area remains largely untouched (Hill, 2017). Land values have dropped significantly- as of June 2019, the site has lost half of its value in the past four years (Evans, 2019). Capco has now sold the Empress State Building to the Mayor of London's office, and has been in talks with various property developers to sell its holdings on site (Sidders & Cham, 2018; Nair & Deveau, 2019; Collingridge, 2019).

4.3 Community Opposition

Over its decade long regeneration process, the OA has garnered significant opposition from the local community. Many residents of the West Kensington and Gibbs Green Estates (WKGGE), in particular, have hugely opposed Capco's redevelopment plans, "campaigning since 2009 to save [their] homes from being demolished to make way for thousands of luxury flats" (WKGGCH, 2019). Notably, they founded West Kensington Gibbs Green Community Homes in March 2011, of which 600 residents from two thirds of the households are members of, in aims of transferring ownership of the Estates to a community owned housing association (WKGGCH, 2019). Despite several technical, legal and political hurdles, WKGGCH served a Right to Transfer Proposal Notice on LBHF in August 2015, and proceeded to develop the People's Plan— an

alternative Estates redevelopment plan that seeks to "keep the existing 760 homes on the Estates, provide 250 new homes in the form of infill and additional storeys to existing blocks" (WKGGCH, 2019). Finally in 2018, LBHF registered WKGGCH as the Neighbourhood Forum for the area, paving the way for the regeneration of the Estates as a Neighbourhood Area (LBHF, 2018).

Another notable opposition group is the Earl's Court Area Action Group (ECAAG— a community action group made up of "different interest groups […] affected by the redevelopment of the Earl's Court Exhibition Centres", originally formed to lobby against Capco's planning application as it proposed only a small amount of replacement exhibition space (ECAAG, 2019). Since the demolition of the Exhibition Centres in 2015, ECAAG has been campaigning for a new exhibition space that would be "the world' greenest venue […] accompanied by low rise, high density, exemplary green housing" (ECAAG, 2019).

5. Case Study Findings & Analysis

This chapter presents the findings of the research on the ECWK OA, and critically analyses such findings against existing literature and theory. This is done under four key sections, which correspond to the four research objectives identified in chapter 1 of this study, to achieve the overall research aim of exploring the extent to which communities are able to influence the regeneration processes of OAs.

5.1 Community Influence in Policy

This section responds to research objective 1, which seeks to explore whether and if so, how, localism and associated ideas of community empowerment are promoted in policies governing the ECWK OA. In doing so, this section aims to shed insight on the political framings of OAs and the dominant ideologies shaping such framings (Fairclough, 2013; Sayer, 2005; Lipton & Tunstall, 2008).

It became evident from the discourse analysis that the promotion of localism and associated ideas of community empowerment is limited in policy. The 2011 and current 2016 London Plans, for example, state that OA

"planning frameworks, investment plans and other spatial interventions […] should focus on implementation" (para 2.62, p 61, London Plan 2011 and 2016).

Yet such 'implementation' excludes community engagement, and is limited to:

"identifying both the opportunities and challenges that need resolving such as land use, access, energy requirements, spatial integration, regeneration, investment, land assembly and phasing" (para 2.62, p 61, London Plan 2011; para 2.62, p67 and 2016)

Where partnerships are promoted, the nature of the partnerships are vague, with no further emphasis of whether communities should be included. The partnerships are promoted against a backdrop of helping to realise the 'growth potential' of OAs. Policy 2.13 in the two London Plans, in particular, states that the mayor will:
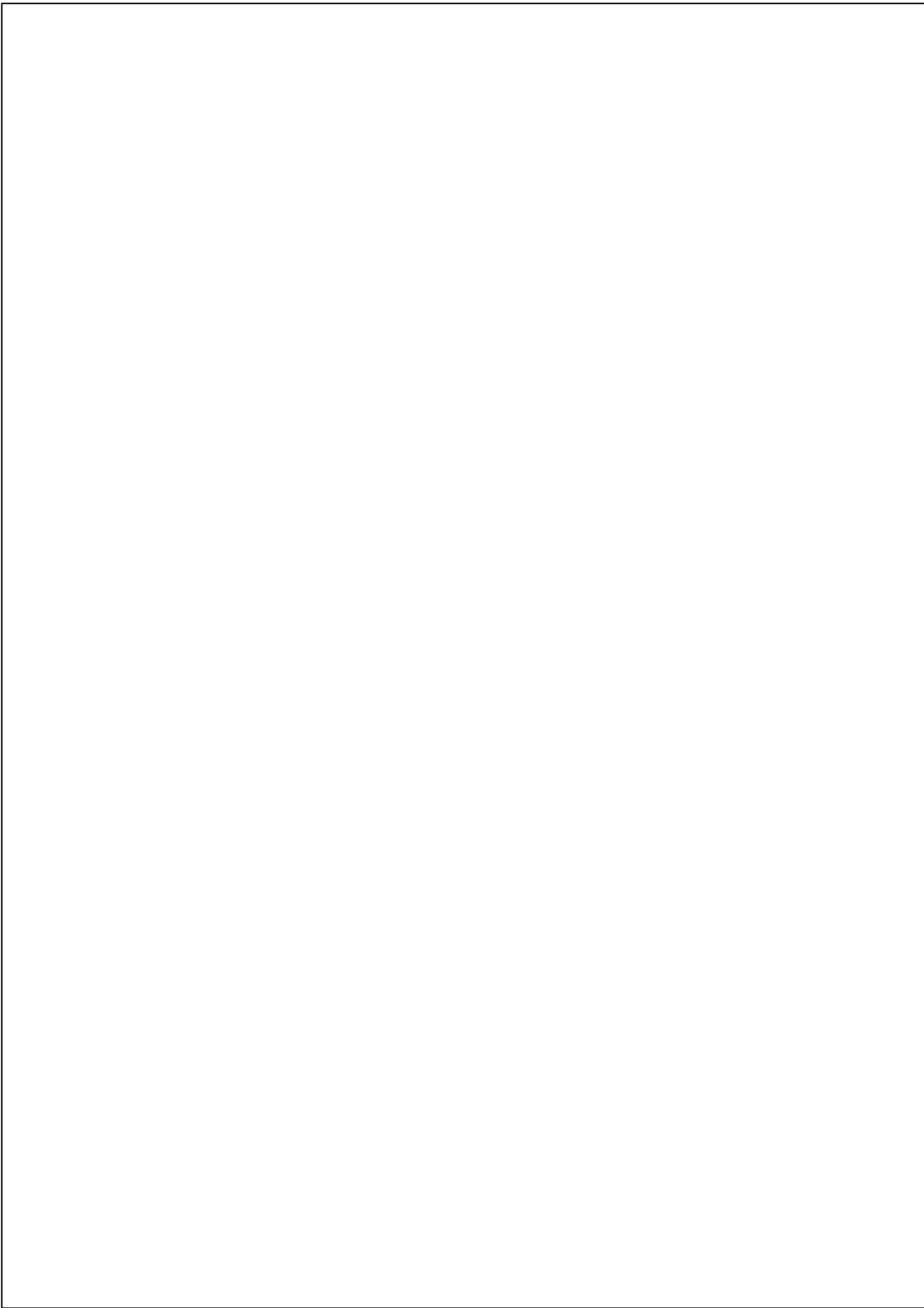
The findings outlined above indicate that there is a clear absence of localism and associated ideas of community empowerment in the content and framing of the policies governing the ECWK OA. This is contrary to the arguments of a significant amount of literature that highlights the growing emphasis of localism in regeneration policies (Allmendinger and Haughton, 2012; Holden and Iveson, 2003; Imrie et al, 2003; Tewdwr- Jones, 2002; Vigar et al, 2000). Thus, perhaps as member #1 of WKGGCH suggests, such policies governing the ECWK OA are "an anomaly in the planning system".

This 'anomaly' is likely attributable to the primary role of OAs, including the case study, as a "tool for growth" (JustSpace member). The analysis above illustrates how policies governing the case study are framed within a presumption in favour of growth,where partnerships are encouraged only to promote housing and economic growth, and the outcomes of community engagement can be invalidated where they hinder development. They are therefore reflective of what Cochrane (2007) describes as a growth-first logic in policy, and support Dean (2007) and Imrie et al's (2000) argument that regeneration policy, in the past few decades, has increasingly been 'put to work' by politicians as part of a wider neoliberal strategy to promote economic growth. Thus as Fairclough (2013) contends, discursive events are often constitutive of and constituted by neoliberal ideologies, seldom representing a coherent and comprehensive world view, and seeking rather the naturalisation of constructed identities and meanings.

Critiquing this 'growth logic' of regeneration, Raco (2014), Turok (1992) ad Karadimitriou et al (2013) further argue that such a model seeks not to empower citizens, but to enlist private sectors and enhance the 'deliverability' of development. Whilst there is broadening of actors in regeneration governance, there is simultaneously a narrowing of regeneration agendas, where agendas are increasingly exclusive of the interests of communities (Swyngedouw, 2010). It is therefore in this regard that the 'anomaly' and limited emphasis on localism observed in the policies governing the ECWK OA can be understood.

5.2 Community Engagement and Regeneration

This section relates to the second research objective, which shifts from looking at community influence in policy to that in regeneration practice. Specifically, it focuses on the

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community engagement processes conducted by LBHF, RBKC and Capco, analysing the extent of such engagement, the means of consultation adopted, and how this has affected the community's influence in decision-making within the OA.

There was a general consensus from the interviews that a notable amount of community consultation was conducted for various stages of the case study's regeneration process. Yet despite the significant engagement conducted, most interviewees were critical of the genuineness of such engagement. A resident of the Estates, for example, argues that LBHF deliberately withheld important information from residents:

> "We were told originally that it was all going to be in keeping with the area, so we were expecting long gardens, similar five storey properties here, but they're using the Empress State Building, which is thirty odd stories high, as their benchmark, and so they're lots of fifteen sixteen tower blocks"

In another instance, WKGGCH member #2 describes ways in which the council distorted consultation outcomes to favour redevelopment of the estates:

> "So in the formal consultation of the masterplan, what happened was 80% of the respondents who were residents said no. So what the Council did was, they extended the consultation to ask people who lived several miles away, whether they thought the estates should be knocked down. So they asked people for example, who lived in Parsons Green, whether they thought the West Kensington Gibbs Green Estates should be demolished."

The LBHF planning committee member viewed the engagement processes in a more positive light, but was similarly skeptical of the scope of influence that the community had in such processes and highlights a greater structural problem:

> "I don't think the engagement was lacking per se. I think it's difficult, because when you're on the inside you see all the churning and turning. But I think the weaknesses of the current planning regime is if you are a developer, if you approach the local council and say I'd like to do xyz, and the council says we'd like you to do abc, and

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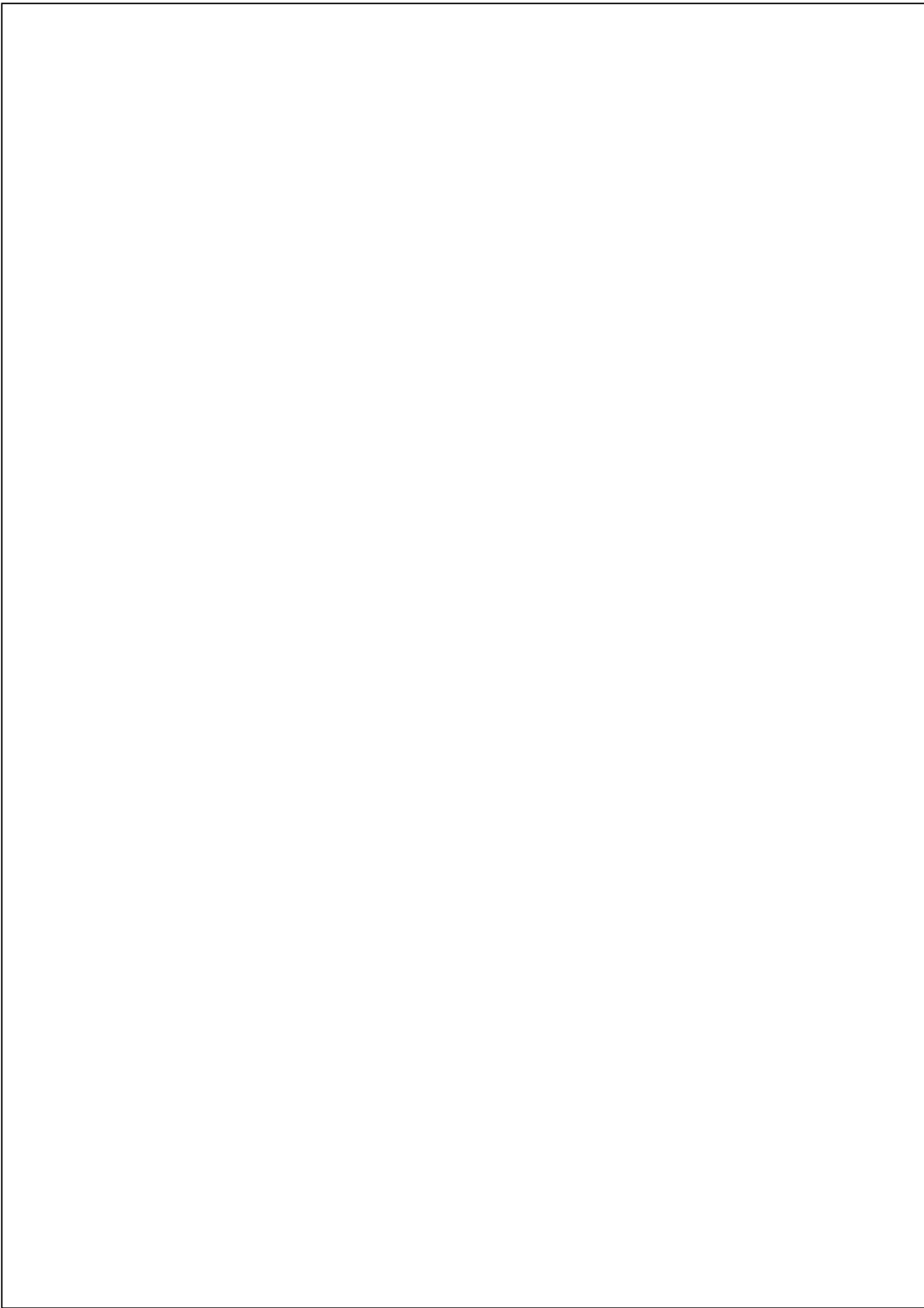
The findings outlined above reveals several important points. First, that contrary to the absence of emphasis on localism in OA policies, there was extensive engagement in practice, refuting Purcell's (2013) claim of a direct relationship between policy and practice, where political terms are converted into political projects to influence the built environment. The significant amount of engagement in ECWK OA is further reflective of what Haughton et al (2013) and Mouffe (2005) see as a wider 'post-political condition', where partnerships and dialogue with communities are increasingly emphasised as an attempt to supersede supposedly outmoded adversarial forms of politics.

The interview findings, however, highlight the level of tokenism in the consultation exercises conducted by LBHF, and suggest that such tokenism is attributable to the Council's preoccupation with demolishing the Estates for its high density redevelopment by Capco. This again highlights the 'growth-logic' of regeneration outlined in the previous section, and further reflects what Brown et al (2014) deem the 'neoliberalisation' of regeneration, where the state is actively encouraging the privatisation of regeneration processes, and resultantly converting the built environment into investment spaces for private corporations to catalyse economic growth.

Simultaneously, the findings reveal LBHF's active management of dissent against their regeneration plan and vision for the area. This reflects Middens (2000) and Paddison's (2009) argument that despite an emphasis on achieving a 'post-politics', community engagement is merely a political manoeuvring in practice to maintain a 'status quo'. Such findings also support Haughton et al's (2013), Richter (2006) and Jones (2002) view of localism as a neoliberal form governmentality, where officially sanctioned 'soft spaces' of community engagement is governed by the market ideologies of the neoliberal state, and so community influence within such spaces is limited.

Moving on, the notable impact that a change in LBHF's political control from Conservative to Labour has had on reversing the Council's original pro-growth regeneration ambitions, highlights how the state may operate in and against itself. It reflects Le Gales and Vitale's (2013) contention that the process of governing a city is never linear and is frequently subject to multiple sources of contestation. Yet, the limited influence that the change in political control has had on
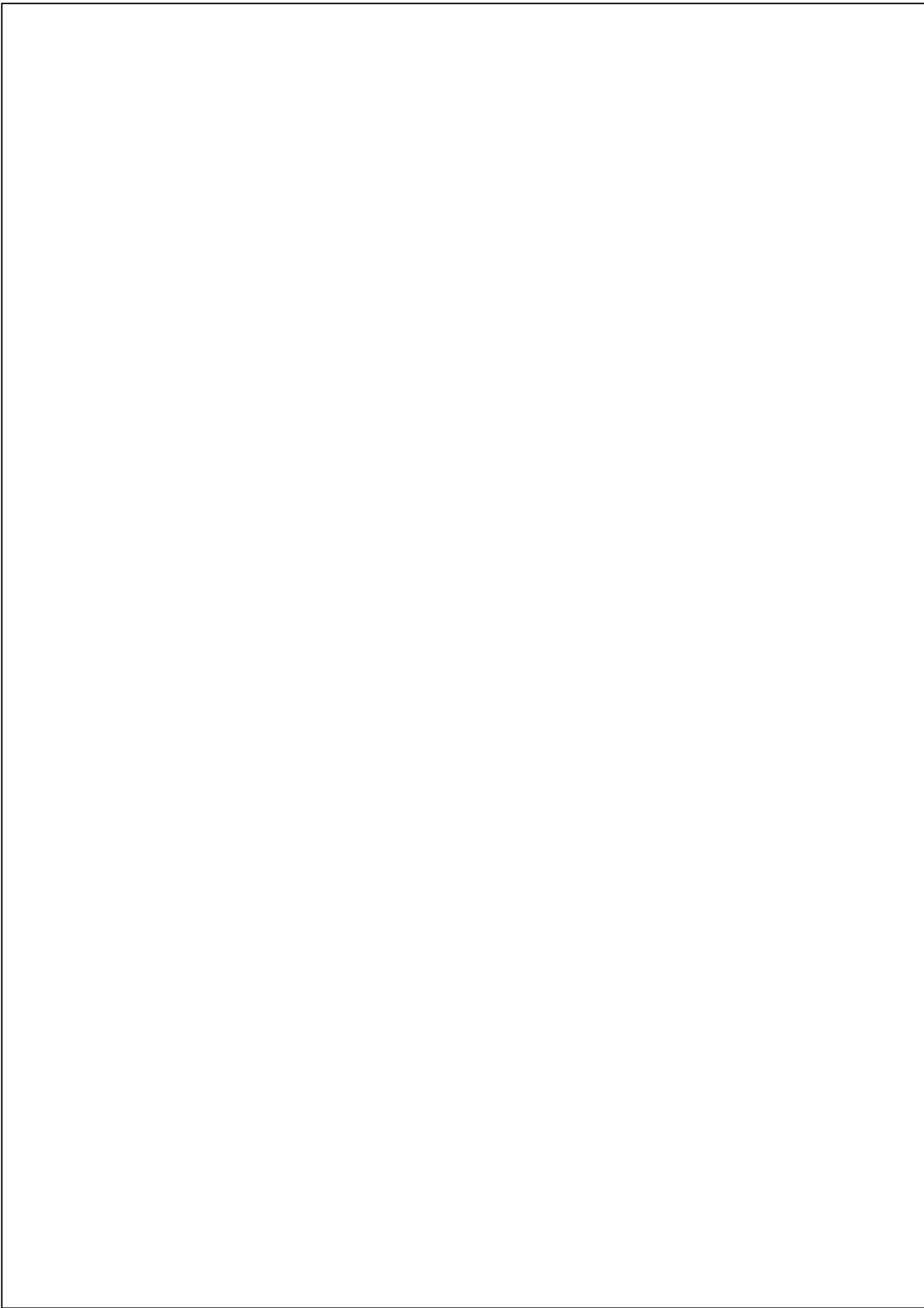
*and they have to have resources, dedication and time to win. So I mean we have
done what we've done on a shoe string, through periods of no money, which was
extremely difficult to put it mildly."*

He also emphasises the importance of leadership in organising community resistance:

*"I mean the problem is if I don't do it, nobody else will, that's the sad thing. Maybe
one or two, but it's not an easy thing to organise. Let's put it that way."*

Other interviewees, whilst commending the community's influence on regeneration
outcomes, were more critical of the benefits of such resistance in the long-run. The LBHF planning
committee member in particular, cites the limited 'public benefit' of such community resistance for
future residents:

*"What we've got at the moment on the site is 1960s early 1970s housing that is
rotting, has damp condensation issues, has these heating problems. It's not in the
state of repair that it should be. And to build modern, genuinely purpose built social
rent accommodation, which was proposed on Seagrave Road, and obviously a
significant amount of the regeneration of the existing estate— that would have be
modern quality housing. So that's what I mean by the public interest […] In the long
run, is that you hope you're delivering affordable housing not just for that
regeneration, but also affordable housing for the next two, three, five generations."*

Meanwhile, a RBKC councillor highlights the success of resistance in the ECWK OA as a unique
instance— more community opposition on a strategic-level is needed for greater structural
change:

*"I mean between residents, the developer and council, it has been a David and
Goliath battle. Community organisation is not so successful in many other places
across London. So what we need to do is try to join up the local with the strategic
and vice versa, because there is a need for localities and local points of action to
come together to challenge the strategic contexts in which they operate.The
development machine has such dominance within London now. It's so difficult for us
to change the direction of development."*

Several salient conclusions can be made from the findings described above. For example, the general consensus amongst interviewees that the community opposition within the ECWK OA has effectively prevented the fruition of Capco and LBHF's development aspirations, reflects the growing power of 'activist citizens' in London and the 'transformational potential' of such 'interstitial sites of resistance', as Penny (2017) and Featherstone et al (2011) describe. It suggests that perhaps as Oosterlynk and Swygedouw (2010) claim, the political can never be fully foreclosed, and so regeneration is often a highly charged political process where citizens may be able to prevent the catalysis of 'neoliberalising logics'.

Given that the majority of participants who actively opposed LBHF's and Capco's development plans were estate residents, the findings are contrary to Wills' and Mohan's research conclusions that most civic engagement is conducted by wealthier residents in more affluent areas. Such strong civic engagement in the ECWK OA can perhaps be reasoned with the immediate threat that Capco's masterplan posed to residents' homes. As an LBHF planning committee explained:

> "I mean, don't get me wrong, obviously there was strong opposition to the
> demolition of the Exhibition Centres, but I mean most people accepted that that
> kind of venue had passed its life span. But obviously the inclusion of the estates was
> very controversial, and that's perfect understandable if you are living on the estates,
> and you have had uncertainty over your home since 2006."

Though the findings illustrate the success of community resistance in the ECWK OA, they also highlight the extensive technical, economic and wider socio-political challenges to such resistance, and highlights the importance of leadership in community organisation. This reflects the various 'roadblocks' of community resistance that Herbert (2005) outlines, and confirms Wills' (2016) argument that the level of influence that civic engagement may have is dependent on the civic capacity and organisation of the community.

The findings also reveal greater questions about the long-term impact of the community resistance on the ECWK OA, thus highlighting Herbert's (2005) assertion of the need to avoid romanticising processes of civic engagement. In particular, the questions that the LBHF committee member raises on the 'public benefit' of community resistance to future social housing tenants

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living in the ECWK OA, are akin to Friedmann and Gans (1973) and David and Cowie's (2013) contention that individuals are primarily preference maximisers, and so the ability for them to act to secure a broader 'community interest' is limited. Yet it is difficult for this study to further validate such arguments, given the limited research conducted on the motivations of community participants and so the inconclusiveness of any analysis made.

Meanwhile, the RBKC councillor's criticism of the inability for community resistance in the ECWK OA to influence broader structural change, supports Raco (2014) and Imrie & Dolton's (2014) argument that effective community resistance only creates 'moments of disruption' in regeneration, without heralding a radical politics that provides the foundation for the production of egalitarian spaces. Indeed, whilst community resistance in the ECWK OA has reversed Capco's redevelopment plans, further regeneration of the site is still 'up in the air'. Thus as Wills (2016) emphasises, there is a need to built a territorial and institutionally networked architecture that connects 'islands of social solidarity' to create a new community that is able to influence at the scale of the city itself. Before then, as Maloney et al (2000) and Marres (2005) argue, community participants will remain unable to realise a genuine redistribution of power in regeneration processes.

5.4 Opportunity Areas and Community Influence

The previous three sections in this chapter has drawn several important conclusions. First, that there there is an evident absence of emphasis on community engagement in the policies governing the ECWK OA. Second, that surprisingly this lack of emphasis in policy is not translated into a lack of community engagement in practice. Yet most interviewees felt that the engagement exercises conducted by LBHF were merely tokenistic, and a means of supporting the council's wider growth agenda for the OA. Third, despite the limited community influence in such 'prescribed spaces of engagement', the community was able to hugely impact the regeneration process and outcomes within the OA, though numerous obstacles were met and community organisation on a more strategic-level is needed to realise more long-lasting community influence.

Whilst insightful, such conclusions have been drawn from the regeneration experience of a single case study in London. Responding to research objective 4, this fourth section therefore seeks to zoom out, exploring the extent to which the conclusions drawn from ECWK OA are

indicative of regeneration in other OAs and regeneration processes in general. It also aims to evaluate whether the status of OAs affects the extent to which communities are able to influence regeneration processes.

Many interviewees suggested that the limited community influence in 'prescribed spaces of engagement', observed in the ECWK OA, is a London-wide phenomena that is repeated in many other regeneration processes across the capital. As a JustSpace member describes:

"the lack of engagement is not perceived, they're actually deeply felt— that's one of the common issues that our members and affiliates all come around on. And that is that public participation may be effective from a managerial or planning perspective — thousands of letters may be sent out or there are consultation meetings on different aspects of the Local Plan or whatever, but from a community point of view, we don't have impact or consequence. Our views may be listened to, but they are not necessarily acted upon, that we do not necessarily change things by participating."

WKGGCH member #2 similarly contends:

"I mean generally speaking around London, when councils or developers want to redevelop council estates, they can come up with a plan and then say they work in partnership with the community, but the community hasn't actually got any power. It's never a partnership!"

As the member of JustSpace interviewed explains, such trends are again attributable to the growth-led model of regeneration adopted in the city over the past few decades:

"I supposed in the past, areas were designated for comprehensive redevelopment in the post war period, and then towards the end of the Greater London Council era, you had community areas designated where regeneration and regenerating communities was the main thrust. So that kind of area designation was to support people rather than property, but now it seems to be the other way around. You have developers dominating the arena. […] At the end of the day, if they perceive a certain development model or product as making profit, or has a high certainty of making profit on a low risk associated with it, then they will pursue that particularly

model, even though a wider community may not value or appreciate that particular
housing or development product."

This again supports the various literature describing a growth-led model of regeneration, and further highlights how, as Anastacio et al (2000) argue, the 'growth-led logic' has surreptitiously dominated regeneration processes in London and resultantly led to the diminution of the decision-making power of community participants in regeneration (Marres, 2005; Jones, 2003).

Whilst the interviews highlight the London-wide relevance of the conclusions on community engagement made of the ECWK OA, they however, also suggest that the status of OAs as a designated *"tool for focusing development"* activity (WKGGCH member #2) further hinders the extent of influence that a community can have on regeneration processes. As Just Space member states:

"The SPD or SPG for opportunity areas is only guidance, its only a material
consideration. But you will find in practice it's different. And we've had this debate in
the proceedings: I kept on saying the OAPF was only guidance, and therefore didn't
have much weight. But the planners at the development corporation was saying it's a
projection of the London Plan, so it should be weighted more. And you know, we
have found a strong link between the designation of opportunity areas and
development activity. So the local plan process is very much pre-determined by the
targets of OAPFs, especially at the early formative stage, which obviously limits the
amount of say that the community will have later on"

This reveals the way in which OAs have been adopted as, what Macleavy (2012) calls, a form of 'neoliberal statecraft', where the neoliberal priorities of economic growth and privatisation are promoted and catalysed. It further supports the contentions made in the literature of chapter 2, that community engagement is as a result heavily pre-empted in OAs, and any engagement procedures initiated, only represent trivial consultation (JustSpace, 2019).

Despite such observations, there was also a general consensus amongst interviewees that OAs should be looked at on a case by case basis. A member of WKGGCH outline factors that make the ECWK OA case study unique:

"I mean obviously, you had the economics turn against the scheme, and it's not just the economics, the politics— I don't mean just in terms of party political control, but if you think of Grenfell and the impact of that. Right, the whole thing is an almighty and expensive mess. The thing is right, it's no good coming to this scheme or OA and trying to apply notions of normality and go "Oh it's just another OA". It's not. This was a huge mistake. This one was cooked up, based on a political attitude about trying to get rid of the Estates."

Meanwhile, a JustSpace member emphasises how OAs are subject to different planning processes:

"I've suggested that OAs are subject to the limited scrutiny before, but some aren't. Like Old Oak, they embodied the OAPF into the draft Local Plan, which is subject to the full scrutiny process. But in many places they don't do the Local Plan, so the OAPFs themselves aren't subject to the same rigour as a Local Plan with examinations in public."

Such findings highlight the various factors that can shape the regeneration process and outcomes of an OA, including various economic and political conditions, non-statutory and statutory planning processes. Previous analysis also demonstrates the considerable impact that civic engagement can have. Therefore it is crucial to sensitise regeneration in OAs, as McGuire and Dowling (2009) and Savini (2011) note, various pathways and 'participatory endowments', to avoid 'all-encompassing' generalisations that lead to vague understandings of regeneration mechanisms and processes.

7. Conclusion

Through the case study of the Earl's Court and West Kensington Opportunity Area, this dissertation set out to evaluate the extent to which communities are able to influence the regeneration processes of OAs across London. It explored the extent to which community engagement and empowerment were emphasised in policy, how communities were engaged in practice by the councils and private developer, the role of community opposition in resisting the developer's regeneration plans, and whether regeneration in the case study is influenced by the development status of OAs and indicative of other regeneration experiences. The research involved critical discourse analysis on the policies governing the case study, and four in-depth interviews with a representative of WKGGCH, a member of the London-wide organisation JustSpace, a local councillor and planning committee member of LBHF, and a local councillor of RBKC. Findings were further supported by interviews with other members of WKGGCH, residents and business-owners living and working in the area, and a political representative of Hammersmith and Fulham.

In summary, the findings revealed that there is a notable absence of discourse on community engagement and empowerment in policies governing the ECWK OA, which is likely attributable to the 'growth-first' logic that the policies are framed within, emphasising the importance of economic growth over the need to involve and form partnerships with communities in regeneration processes. Surprisingly, the lack of emphasis on community engagement is not translated into practice, since there was substantial engagement of residents and businesses in various stages of the case study's regeneration process. Yet, there was a general consensus that most of the engagement was tokenistic, demonstrating deliberate attempts by the councils or developer to manoeuvre regeneration responses to support a wider pro-growth attitude and agenda for the area.

Despite the limited opportunities for genuine 'partnership' within such 'prescribed spaces of engagement', the community was able to hugely influence the regeneration outcomes and progress within and resist the pro-growth agenda for the area through alternative 'sites of community resistance. Whilst this highlights the progressive possibilities of civic engagement in regeneration, for communities to pertain greater influence in the long-run and challenge the stark

power imbalances within regeneration processes, community organisation on a strategic-level is needed to challenge fundamental structural flaws in the growth-led model of regeneration. It is also paramount that we avoid interpreting greater civic engagement as equitable with a more 'sustainable' future. Whilst the limits to genuine community engagement observed in the case study are indicative of many regeneration processes in London, the status of opportunity areas as specially designated areas for growth plays a role in further limiting the extent of community influence, highlighting the problem of OAs as a primary mechanism for growth. Simultaneously, the regeneration process of the ECWK OA is not easily conclusive of that experienced in other OAs, so there is a need for more research and to sensitise OA experiences to various 'pathways' and conditions of regeneration.

Considering the above, this dissertation has therefore argued that only to some extent are communities able to influence the regeneration processes of OAs in London.

7.1 Limitations and Further Progression

From the research and data analysis, limitations to the study became evident. In particular, the conclusions made were based on the regeneration experience of one case study, and therefore inconclusive of the regeneration experiences of all Opportunity Areas across London. Therefore for future study, more or all OAs could be studied for means of comparison and to make more informed conclusions on the extent of community influence in OAs without 'de-sensitising' community influence from each OA's unique regeneration process.

In light of my findings, further questions on the regeneration outcomes of opportunity areas and whether such outcomes allow for greater 'social sustainability', could be raised. This would likely lend important insight on the impacts of the growth-led model of regeneration and primary role of OAs as tool to concentrate development activity. An exploration of OA policies in the draft new London Plan, and how changes in policies affect the extent of community influence, the development model adopted, and the regeneration outcomes in OAs, would also make an interesting point of study.

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Appendix A

Interview Structure for WKGGCH Member

Location:

Date: 9 July 2019

Position: Member of West Kensington & Gibbs Green Community Homes

Introduction:
- interview part of postgraduate dissertation that aims to look at community engagement processes in OAs and the scope and extent of their influence
- Jonathan first person to speak to, also plan to speak to local councillors, planning committee members and if possible, Capco and TfL
- for confidentiality reasons, name will not be mentioned in write up of study
- OK for interview to be taped? (transcripts will be sent to interviewee afterwards)

West Kensington Gibbs Green Community Homes
- Can you start off by telling me a bit about West Kensington and Gibbs Green Estates?
    - When were the Estates built?
    - What is the general demographic of the area?
    - How long have residents lived there?
- When was WKGGCH established? For what reasons?
    - How is it governed?
    - What are regular activities of the company then?
- What is your role within WKGGCH?
    - What are your daily tasks as a community organiser?
    - Have you worked on any other regeneration/ development sites in London or elsewhere?
    - Are the regeneration areas in any sense similar or different to Earl's Court West Kensington area?

Opportunity Areas & Community Engagement
- This occurred before our time as community organiser, Earl's Court and West Kensington OA designated since first London Plan 2004
    - Do you know of the process involved in its designation?
    - Was the local community involved in its designation?
- In 2011—> Capco and the landowners' developed masterplan for the area: can you tell me a bit about the Earl's Court Masterplan?
    - What were the main vision and designs for the area?
    - How did WKGGCH perceive the plans for the OA?
    - Were there any engagement exercises conducted in designing the area?
    - If so, how were they engaged?
- Simultaneously was also development of Joint Supplementary Planning Document for the Opportunity Area, in which final draft was published in 2012 —> rounds of consultation exercises then --> from preliminary consultation to consultation on draft joint SPD

- Can you tell me a bit more about them? Do you know of the process involved in creation of SPD?
- Was the local community involved? If so, how were they involved?
- Has community opinion influenced visions and objectives in the SPD?
- Concluding this section:
  - Earl's Court has been a regeneration project of a decade now —> what do you perceive as strengths and weaknesses of the entire regeneration project?
  - In recent years in London—> increased emphasis on localism and community engagement in development processes across London —> do you think this has been promoted in Earl's Court OA?

Community Resistance
- Evidently, regeneration plans and process within ECWK OA has received considerable backlash from local community, hence set up of WKGGCH—> how has local councils, landowners and developer reacted to such sites of community resistance
- Especially with LB Hammersmith & Fulham, previously tory now labour, has that altered local council's view towards community engagement processes and role of local community?
- Do you think local councils have a role to play in promoting community engagement processes
- How about developers and/or landowners?
- Were there any obstacles or difficulties as a community group? Say for example, serving a Right to Transfer Notice to the local LB Hammersmith & Fulham?
- Do you think WKGGCH has managed to influence regeneration within the OA?
  - If so, how? If not, why not?

Concluding Remarks
- We're nearing the end of our interview —> some concluding questions —> What's the current status of regeneration plans for the OA?
- What do you think will happen?
- What do you perceive as the strengths, weaknesses or planning challenges facing the Earl's Court OA?
- How about OAs in general in London?
- Do you perceive any similarities or differences in regeneration processes of OAs and that of other areas in London?

Appendix B

Interview Structure for JustSpace Member

Location: Central House, Upper Woburn Place

Date: 30 July 2019

Position: Member of Just Space

Introduction
- interview part of postgraduate dissertation that aims to look at community engagement processes in OAs and the scope and extent of their influence
- Third person to speak to, have already spoken to Jonathan Rosenberg (community organiser of WKGGHC) and Councillor Thorley (former LBHF Planning Committee Chair); also plan to other planning committee members and councillors
- for confidentiality reasons, name will not be mentioned in write up of study
- OK for interview to be taped? (transcripts will be sent to interviewee afterwards)

Just Space
- tell me about yourself? your role in Just Space?
- so Just Space is an informal alliance of around 80 community groups, campaigns and independent organisations formed to act as voice for Londoners at grass roots level during formulation of London's major planning strategy
- on your website — "aim of Just Space is to improve public participation in planning, to ensure that policy if fairer towards communities"
  - can you elaborate on this further? What do you perceive as the weaknesses of public participation in London?
- onto Just Space's research on OAs —> how is the organisation involved in Opportunity Areas? What kind of research do you conduct?

Opportunity Areas- Community Consultation
- Opportunity Areas were first introduced as new regeneration model for London in 2004 London Plan and have since influenced the city's urban fabric immensely
- Just Space is largely critical of OAs and processes in which they are designated and implemented. In particular, Just Space criticises the process for being overly top-down, and for lacking sufficient public consultation especially in early stages of its implementation
  - do you mind elaborating on this further? For example how is OA designated/ boundaries, quanta decided, OAPF created
- Also highlight that OAPF is an anomaly in statutory consultation processes of UK's planning system—> do you mind elaborating on this further? What's the statutory consultation process typical of most developments?
- How much material weight do OAPF's hold in decision processes of planning applications?
- Do you think lack of consultation at such initial stages influence ways development and regeneration plans/ processes are conducted?
- How may it affect the development and future of London?

<u>OAs- Growth and Localism</u>
- Just Space also critical of use of the term regeneration, argues instead that OAs promotes redevelopment and destructive growth instead
  - in reading SPD of ECWK case study --> growth and regeneration almost synonymous
- Also Joint SPD for the area criticised for being produced retrospectively, when there was already clear growth aspirations expressed by developers —> so OA designated and planning framework produced to fulfil developer and government aspirations
  - do you agree with this view?
- When growth is such a massive priority for OAs, do you think this creates a 'clash of logics' with localism and ideas of community empowerment and consultation?

<u>Conclusion</u>
- So many problems in both policy and way in which regeneration is conducted in Opportunity Areas
- In your view, what's the way forward?
- Overall aim at Just Space is to promote more 'effective' community participation. What do you mean by 'effective' participation? How do you think this can be achieved in processes of OAs? be promoted?

Appendix C

Interview Structure for LBHF Councillor

Location: Phone

Date: 9 July 2019

Position: Councillor and Planning Committee Member

Introduction:
- interview part of postgraduate dissertation that aims to look at community engagement processes in OAs and the scope and extent of their influence
- Cllr Thorley person to speak to, have already spoken to Jonathan Rosenberg (community organiser of WKGGHC); also plan to speak to Just Space, other councillors and community activists, and if possible, Capco and TfL
- for confidentiality reasons, name will not be mentioned in write up of study
- OK for interview to be taped? (transcripts will be sent to interviewee afterwards)

LB Hammersmith & Fulham
- Let's start off with a brief introduction on your background
  - What is your position at LBHF
  - How long have you been a local councillor for?
  - What are/were your responsibilities?
  - How were/ are involved in regeneration process of Earl's Court & West Kensington Opportunity Area?

Local Area
- As councillor and local resident, what do you perceive as main problems or challenges that borough is faced with? Currently and ten years back, during your first term as local councillor

Outline Planning Application
- Rewinding back to 2011 when Capco submitted their planning applications for the redevelopment of Earl's Court area, and following planner officer's report, planning committee resolved to approve planning application in 2012
- In your view, what were the main strengths of the redevelopment proposal?
- Not long before planning approval, Earl's Court was designed an Opportunity Area in the 2011 London Plan —> Did relevant policies influence way in which planning committee assessed Capco's redevelopment plans?
- masterplan has been quite controversial, partially why significant delay between submission of planning application in 2011 and approval of it in late 2012 —> again did this influence way in which planning committee assessed Capco's redevelopment plans?
- In your personal opinion, why do you think so many people opposed the plans?
- Did this influence local council to alter approach towards redevelopment of Earl's Court area, for example greater efforts to consult the local community? (e.g. formal consultation on whether estates should be included in regeneration plans)

- Do you think such engagement exercises were effective in better understanding local opinion?

Current
- It's now been a decade since Earl's Court was proposed for redevelopment, masterplan now at a standstill?
- In your opinion, is there anything that should have or could have been done differently?

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM
FIELD / LOCATION WORK

≜UCL

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   MSC URBAN REGENERATION
LOCATION(S)   BARTLETT SCHOOL OF PLANNING
PERSONS COVERED BY THE RISK ASSESSMENT
LORRAINE LAU
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF FIELDWORK
COLLECTING PRIMARY DATA- SURVEYS

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	**The environment always represents a safety hazard. Use space below to identify and assess any risks associated with this hazard**
e.g. location, climate, terrain, neighbourhood, in outside organizations, pollution, animals.	Low- climate changes, unsafe neighbourhoods where interview take place
CONTROL MEASURES	**Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk**

	work abroad incorporates Foreign Office advice
x	participants have been trained and given all necessary information
	only accredited centres are used for rural field work
x	participants will wear appropriate clothing and footwear for the specified environment
	trained leaders accompany the trip
x	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: emergency number at hand, and phone to access emergency services

EMERGENCIES	**Where emergencies may arise use space below to identify and assess any risks**
e.g. fire, accidents	LOW- fire/ accident

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
x	contact numbers for emergency services are known to all participants
x	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:

FIELDWORK	**1**		May 2010

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?	YES	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.	MEDIUM		

CONTROL MEASURES	Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk

X	the departmental written Arrangement for lone/out of hours working for field work is followed
	lone or isolated working is not allowed

X	location, route and expected time of return of lone workers is logged daily before work commences
X	all workers have the means of raising an alarm in the event of an emergency, e.g. phone, flare, whistle
X	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.	LOW- accident, illness, personal attack

CONTROL MEASURES	Indicate which procedures are in place to control the identified risk

x	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
x	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
x	OTHER CONTROL MEASURES: please specify any other control measures you have implemented: emergency number at hand, and phone to dial emergency services

TRANSPORT	Will transport be	NO	X	Move to next hazard
	required	YES		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?			

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?		

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:

FIELDWORK   3   May 2010

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: