

Civic Design UCL Summer School. July 2018

Coordinator of the course: Pablo Sendra

Developed in collaboration with the campaigns: Save Wornington College, Friends of North Kensington Library and Westway23

Coordination of the campaigns: Toby Laurent Belson

Collaborators in the course: CivicWise

Students: André Alves Goncalves, Kay Thi Kyin and Wang Hui Liu, Yihan Shi, Kyra Chen Ying, Suming Miao, Shang-Fang Yu, Xingchan Wang, Lingjie Jiao, Zhangpan Hu



Collaboration between communities and universities

Pablo Sendra (UCL) met Toby Laurent Belson (Westway23) during a walk along the Westway organised by Civicwise, a network that works on civic engagement. From the walk came out the short film “Westway: Four decades of community activism”. From this initial encounter, Pablo and Toby decided to start collaborating.

The UCL Summer School was a good framework for this collaboration. Students from all around the world would come to take an intensive 3-week course at University College London. Civicwise had previously run ‘Civic Design’ online courses, so they were also involved in the planning and teaching of this summer school. The aim of this course is to provide students with skills for working in collaboration with community groups. Given the importance of genuinely involving communities in decision-making process, this skill is now key for urban planning professionals. During the course, students work in a brief that has been previously agreed with the community. From this collaboration, students learn to respond to the community needs and the community groups receive a useful document for their campaigns.



Planning the course together

When planning the format of the collaboration, Toby proposed working with three local campaigns: Westway23, Friends of North Kensington Library and Save Wornington College. These three campaigns are dealing with local struggles, opposing the privatisation of community assets, the management of educational facilities, and the commercialisation of a community space.

Collaboratively, universities and community developed the brief. During the first half of the course, students be first researching how decisions are currently being made about these three places (Westway, North Kensington Library, Wornington College), who are making these decisions, and to what extent these decisions take into account the needs and demands of the community. Once the students have done these analysis, during the second part of the course, students propose how decisions could be made in a way that the community is at the centre of the decision-making process, and how these three different places could work alternatively.

Teaching with communities

During the delivery of the course, students were in contact with community groups since week 1. On the first week, guided by community activists, they visited North Kensington, including the college, the library and different spaces under the Westway. At the end of the tour, students and communities had a discussion session at the Maxilla Hall Social Club.

On week two, after the students had done the analysis work, students and communities met at Acklam Village to discuss the work already done and share ideas for the proposals.

At the end of the course, on week three, students presented their work to the community in Acklam Village. This was a great opportunity to generate a discussion on the collaboration between universities and community groups. Pablo and Toby also presented this collaboration at the Tate Exchange at the Tate Modern. Once the course was finished, the students gave their reports to the community groups. The work done on the summer school is presented in this exhibition.



WORNINGTON COLLEGE

André Alves Goncalves, Kay Thi Kyin and Wang Hui Liu

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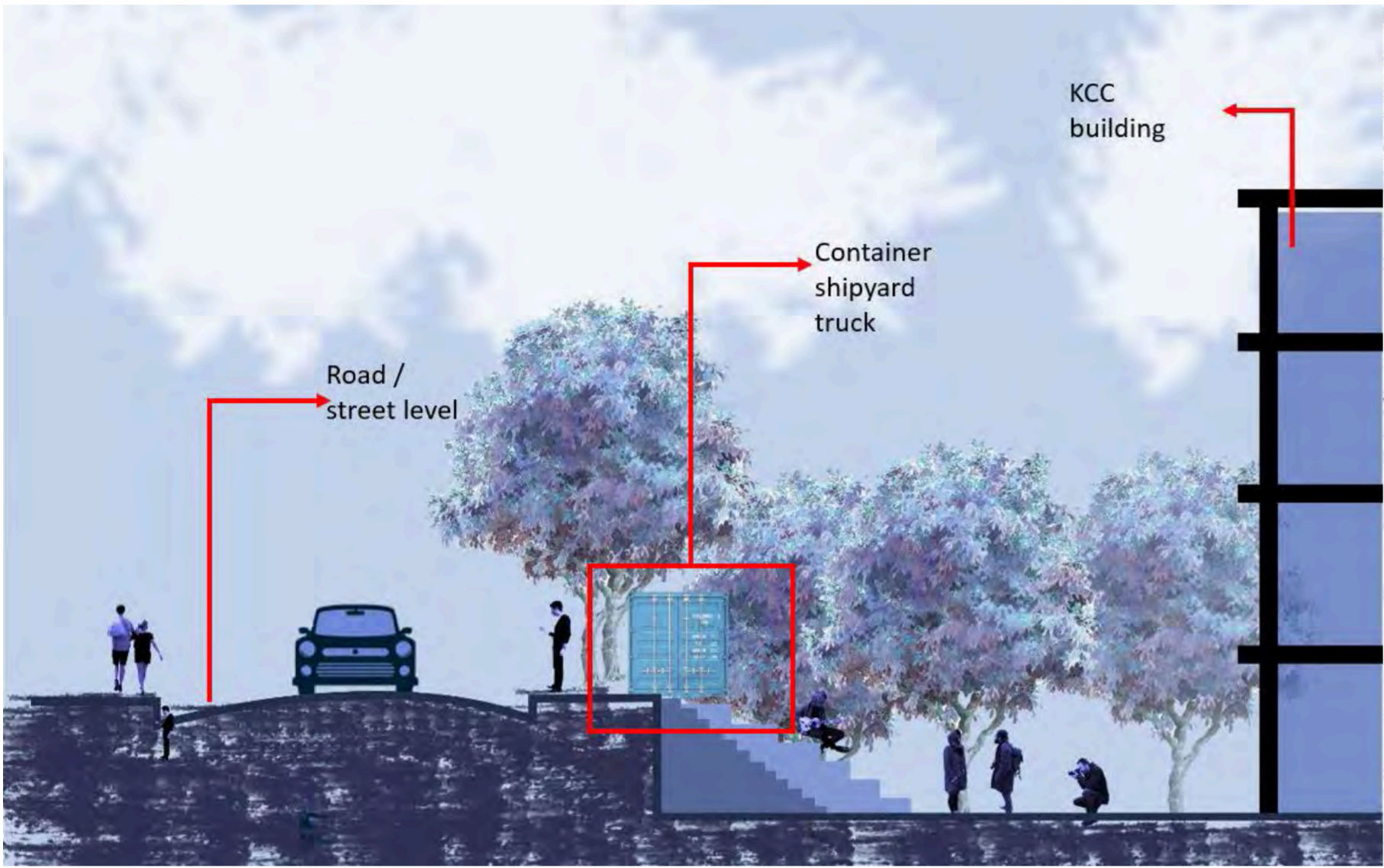


Fig 1. Artist's impression of side view of school and street outside the school

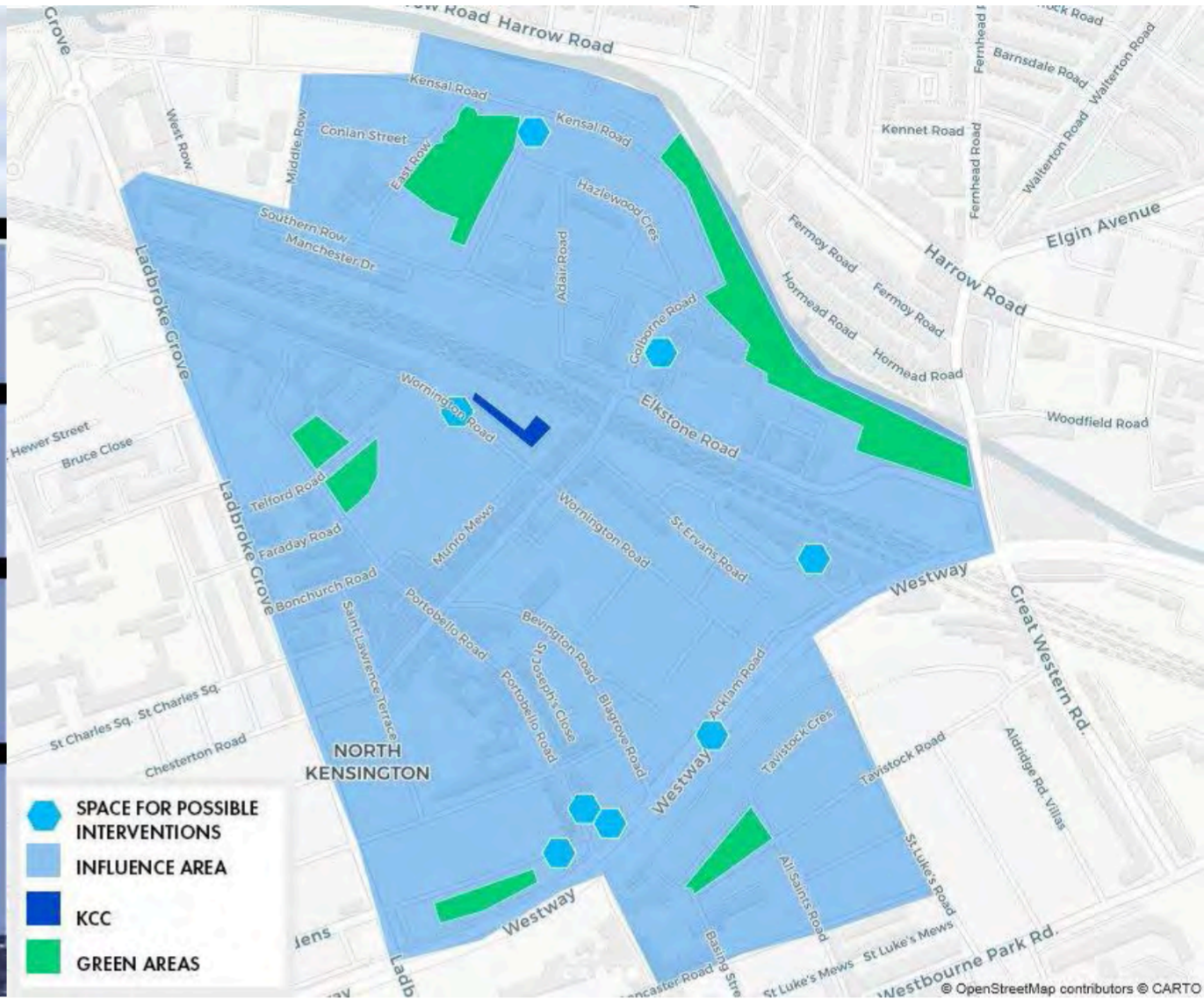


Fig 2. Map of the North Kensington showing how physical spaces can be used as social spaces

Save Wornington Campaign

Save Wornington College Campaign was set up in October 2016 to achieve the following aims:

1. Call on RBKC to “ensure that the entire site of the college remains in educational use”
2. Propose to RBKC and the KCC management four alternatives on the future of KCC:
 - a. Merge with Morley College, a Specialist Designated Institution (SDI) providing adult education OR

- b. Buy back the land from RBKC at a cheaper price than the price it was sold for OR
- c. Rent the college site to KCC on a 99 year lease at a cheaper rent than the current rent of £1 million per annum, which the college is struggling to afford OR
- d. Change the governance of KCC and start anew, allowing KCC to be an independent college as it is today.

Proposal - KCC 2.0 The College at Heart

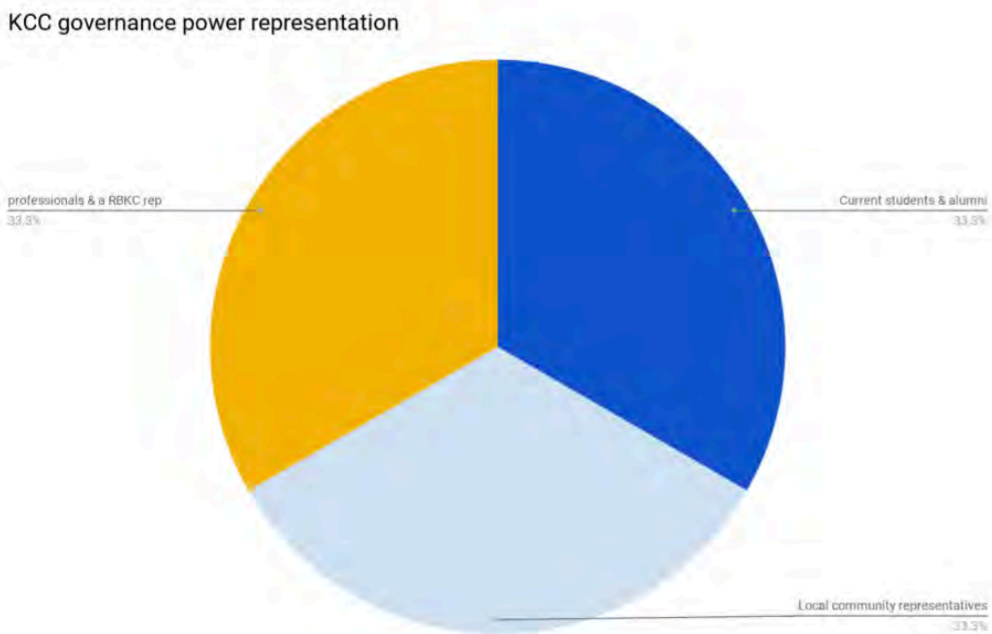
The proposal and, ultimately, aim of this project is to suggest ways in which KCC can better work towards its main aims of providing education for all in the community, be financially sustainable and create stronger ties with the community. The proposal is a two pronged approach, very much like a 2 pin plug that can re-connect KCC with the community.

The first “prong” of the proposal is a suggestion in which the governance structure of the KCC management can be tweaked to better represent the needs of the community and the creation of a Residents’ Committee, based on case study from Singapore, all of which will be explained in section 8.1. On the other hand, the second “prong” of the proposal is to expand and improve the physical space of the college through several suggestions.

Change in KCC governance structure and creation of Residents’ Committee

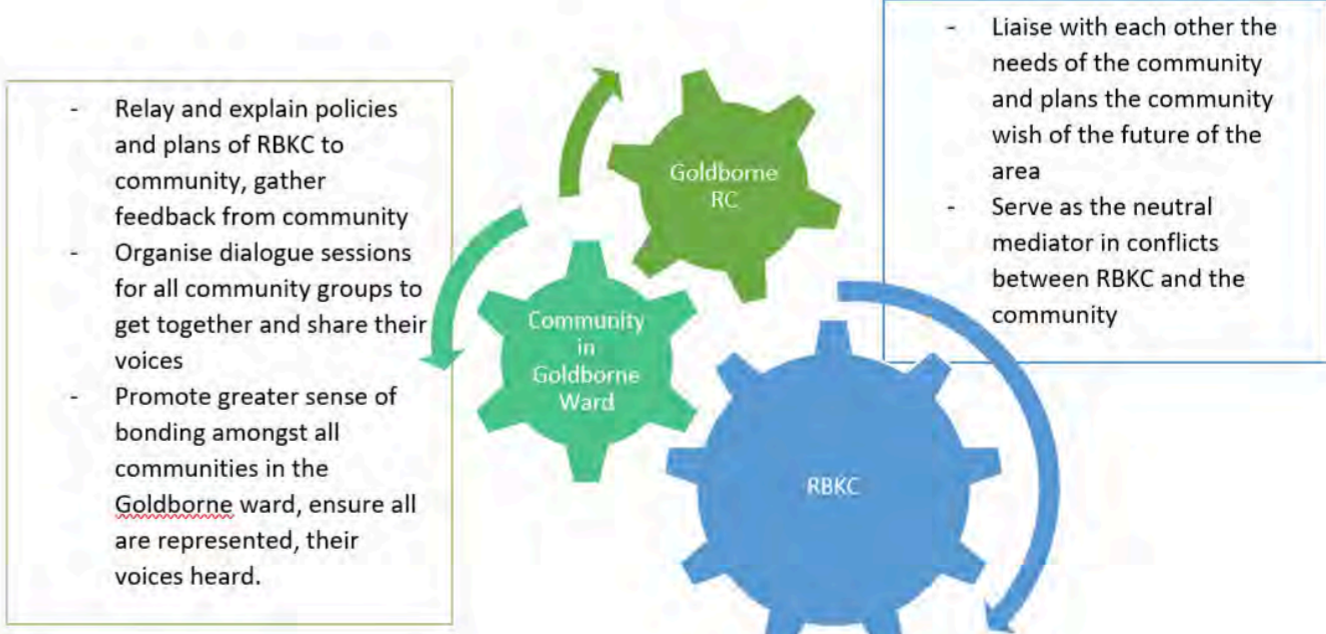
Proposed updated governance structure of KCC

The current governance structure of KCC does not have an equal proportion of current students and alumni, local community representatives and professionals like lawyers, urban planners and civil engineers that could provide transparent expertise on the development of the school. Hence, the pie chart (fig 6) below suggests a “one-third” power sharing rule in the KCC governance structure.



Residents’ Committee (RC) case study - creating a Golborne Ward RC

Since 1978 in Singapore, there are 572 Residents’ committees spread across all the Housing Board Estates (Ong, 2013)¹¹. RCs were introduced to promote “neighbourliness, harmony and community cohesiveness among residents living in HDB flats” (Teo et al., 1992). RCs also organise activities for the residents and work with government agencies to improve the living environment in the neighbourhood (Teo et al., 1992).



Expanding the physical space of the college

The proposals that will be presented, seek to establish through the physical space, a connection between the North Kensington community and KCC, so as to improve the “sense of belonging” of the community to the college space.

The changes start with the removal of the wall that separates the college and the street (Figure 1). And replace it with something more permeable or put in place the shipyard containers. The shipyard containers can then be a space of entrepreneurship or social hubs for the students to experiment with. For instance, they could set up small street shops or fashion boutiques

in the container trucks, with financing assisted by the finance professionals in the KCC board of governors.

In parallel to the improvement of the building, the projects aims for the development of the community. To do so, the students will focus their projects in areas of North Kensington (Figure 2, helping to develop those areas or engage with the community. Some examples of this service are designing the landscape of parks, planning the interior of the stores, selling pottery products in Portobello Market or even making shows in public spaces.

NORTH KENSINGTON LIBRARY

Yihan Shi, Kyra Chen Ying, Suming Miao

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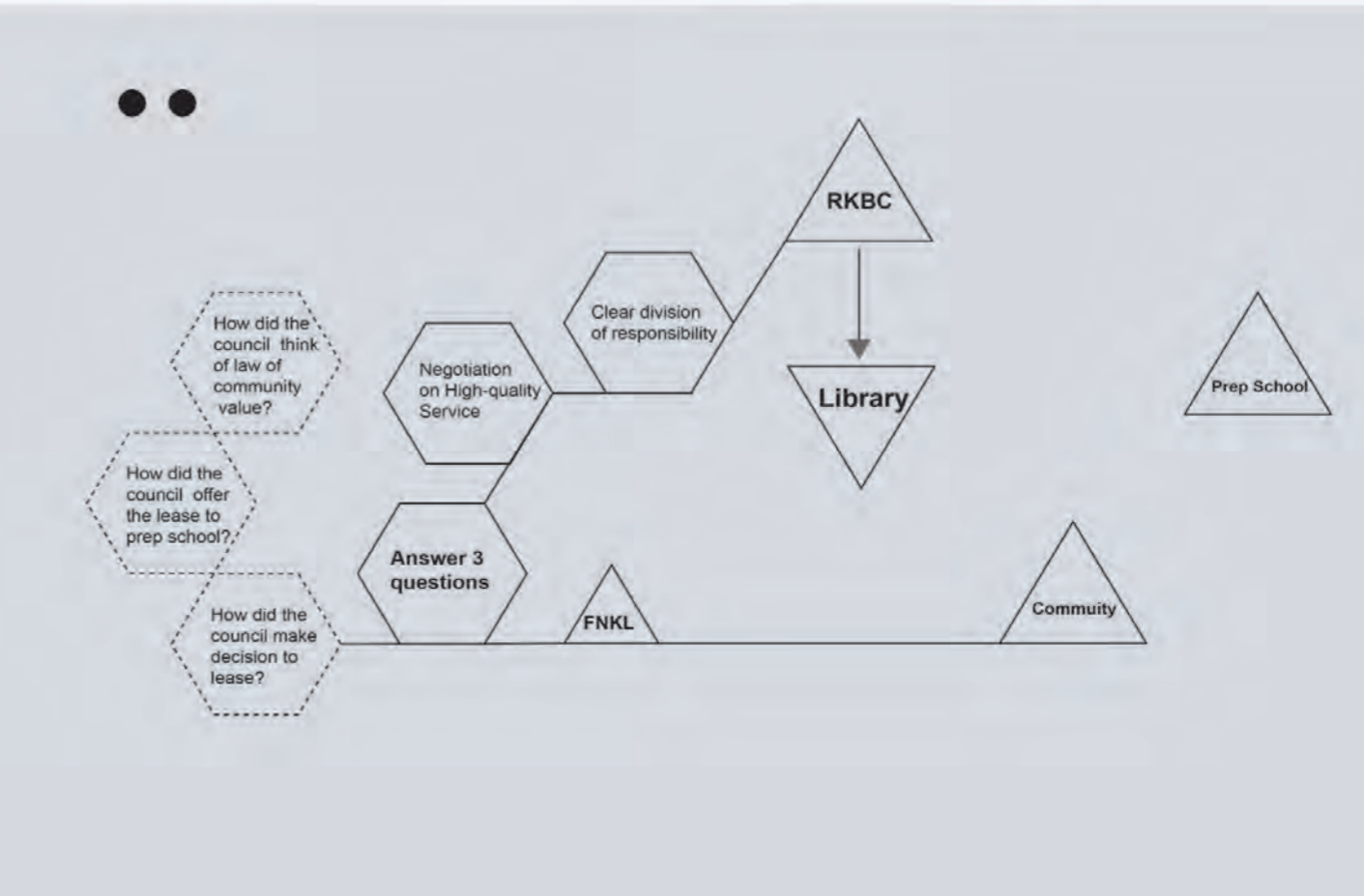
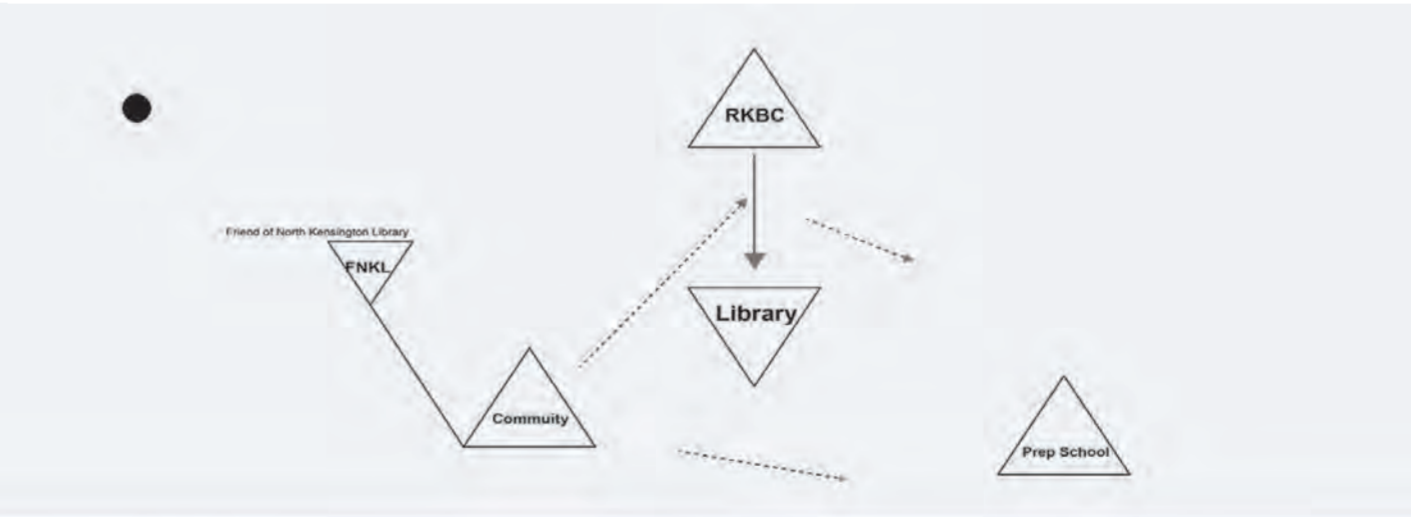
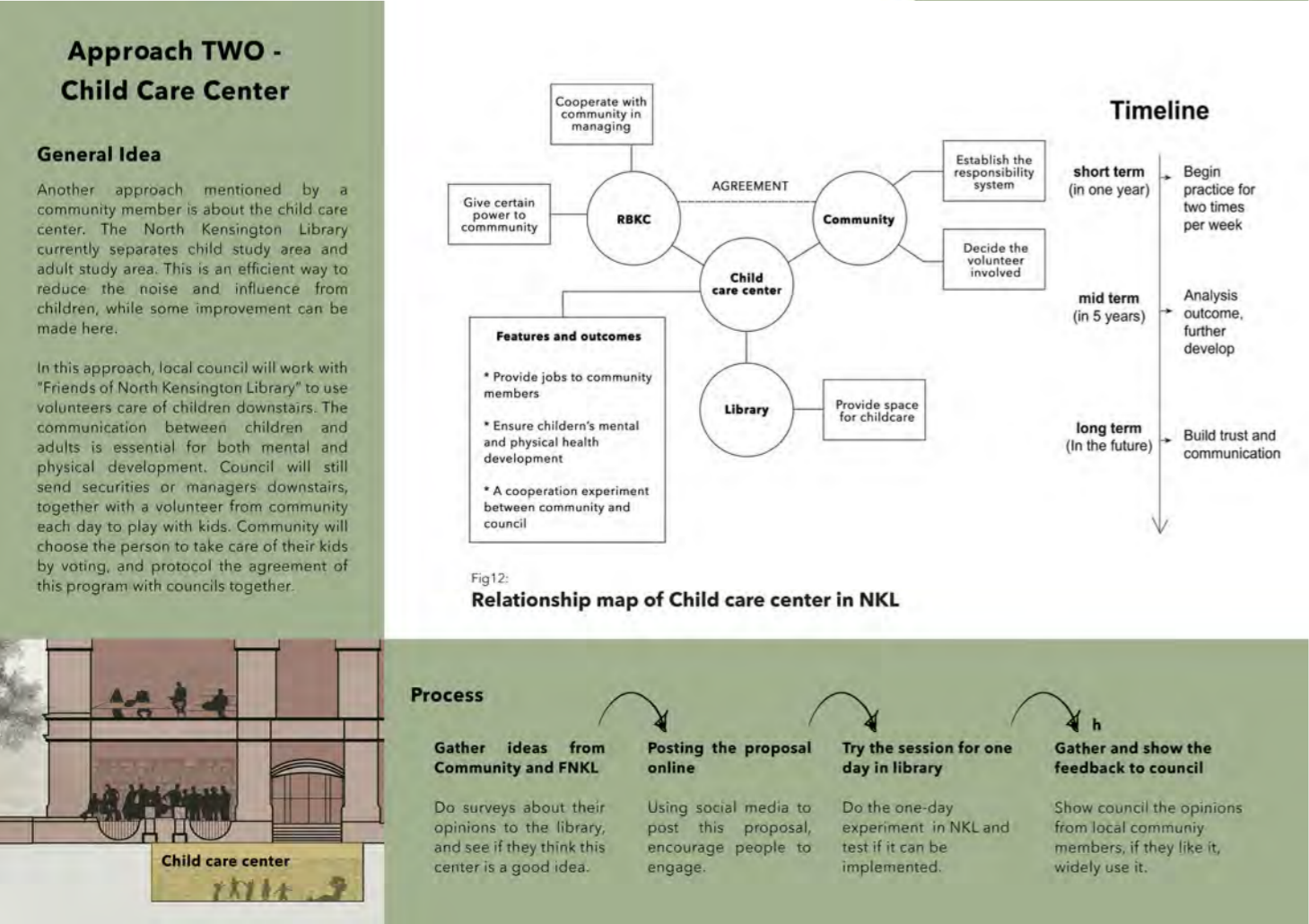
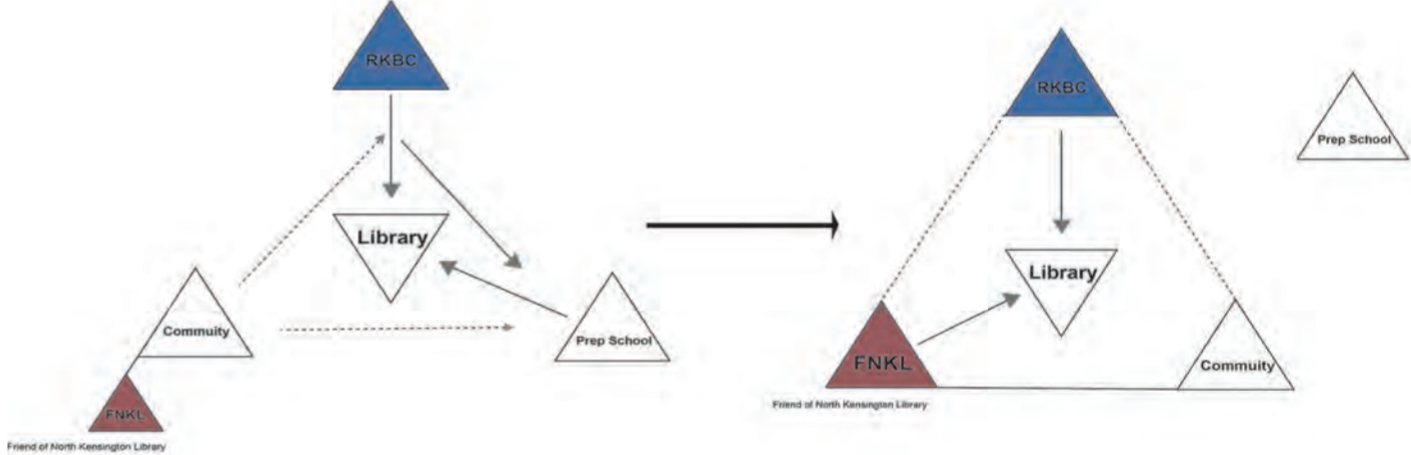
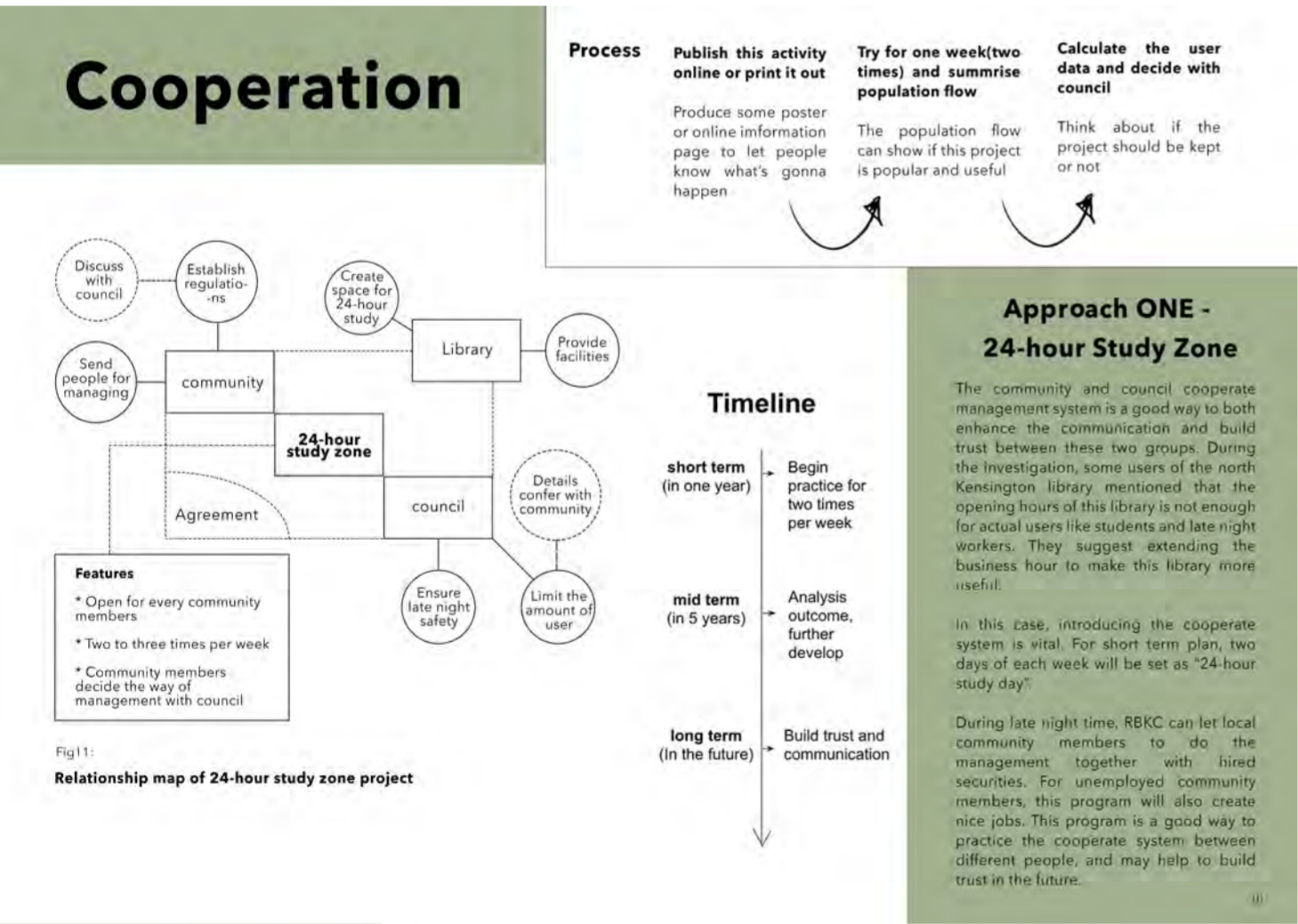


Importance of the library to the community

- * Deep connection between community members and this library.
- * Important for local school students and workers to use.
- * A memorable place for a whole generation of local residents
- * It is important to be kept as a public use heritage building

New relationship

Decision maker 1: Friends of North Kensington Library
Decision maker 2: Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Partner & Users & Beneficiary: community

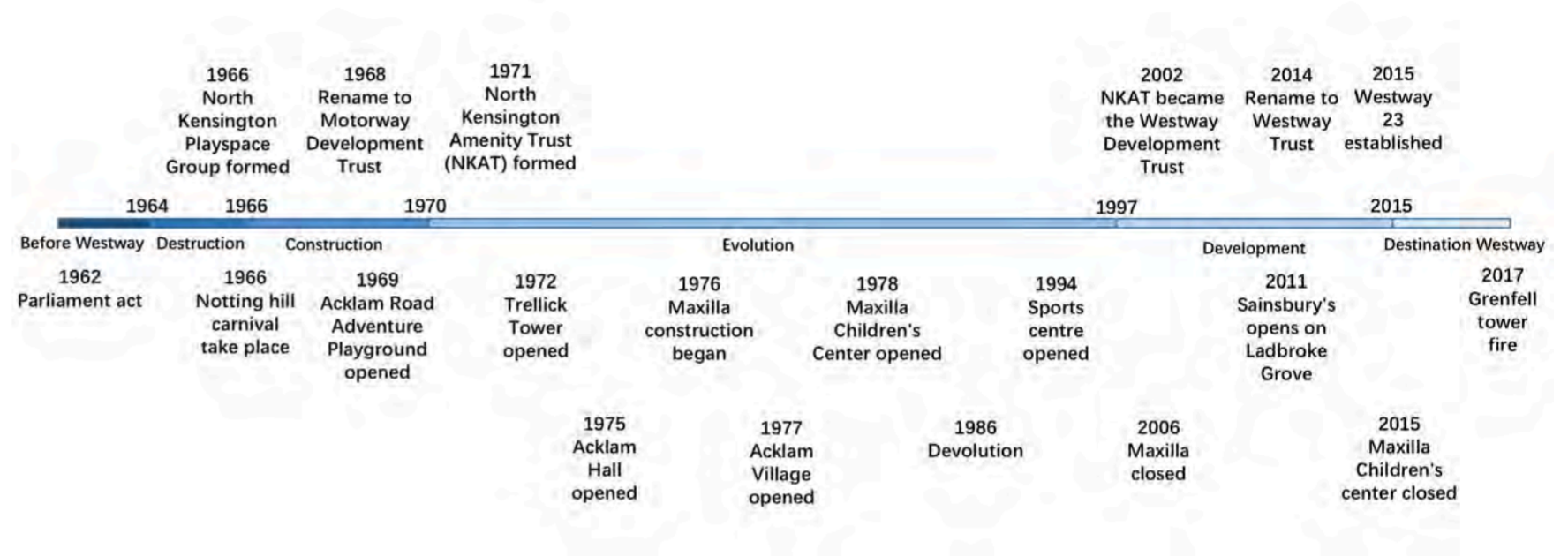
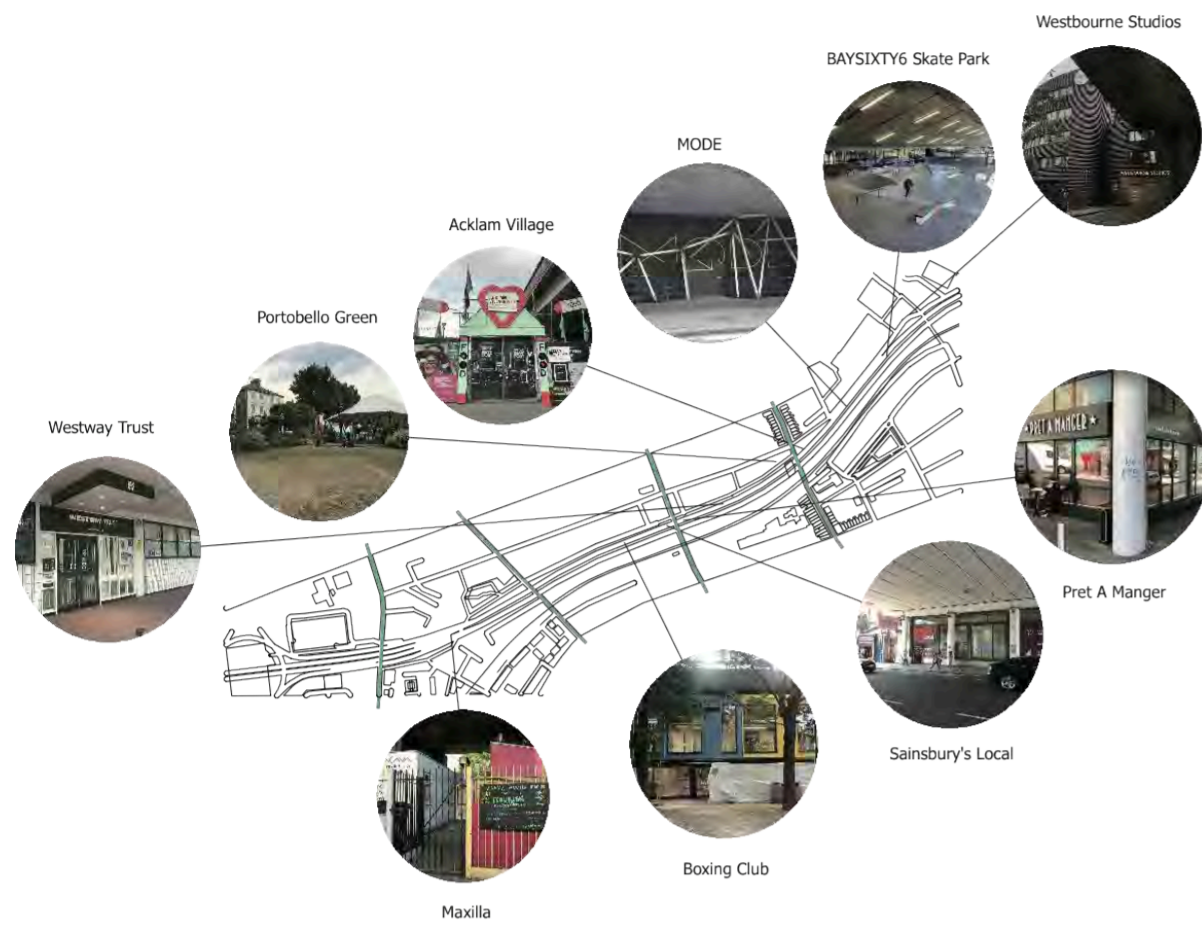


WESTWAY

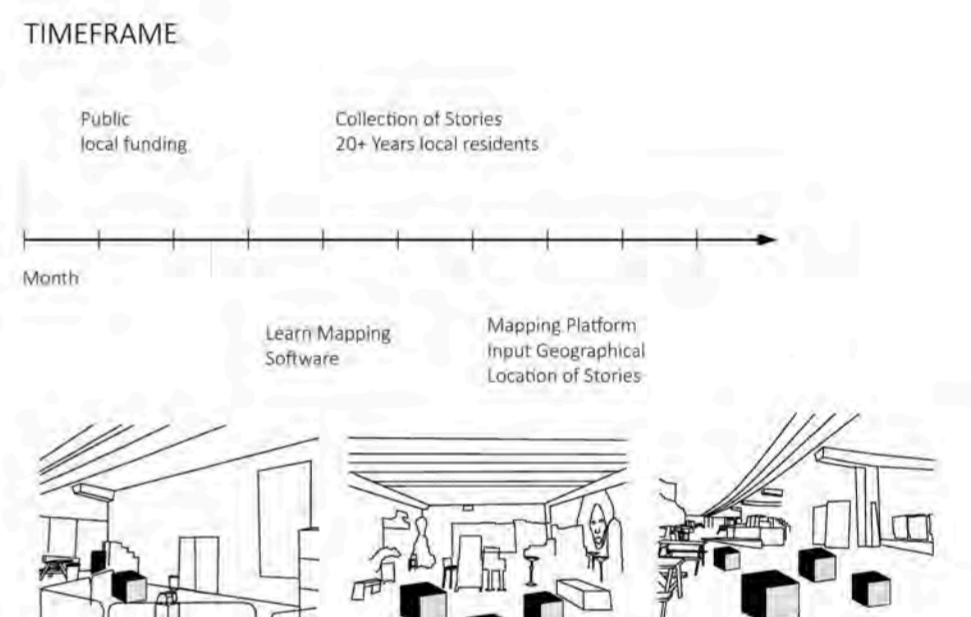
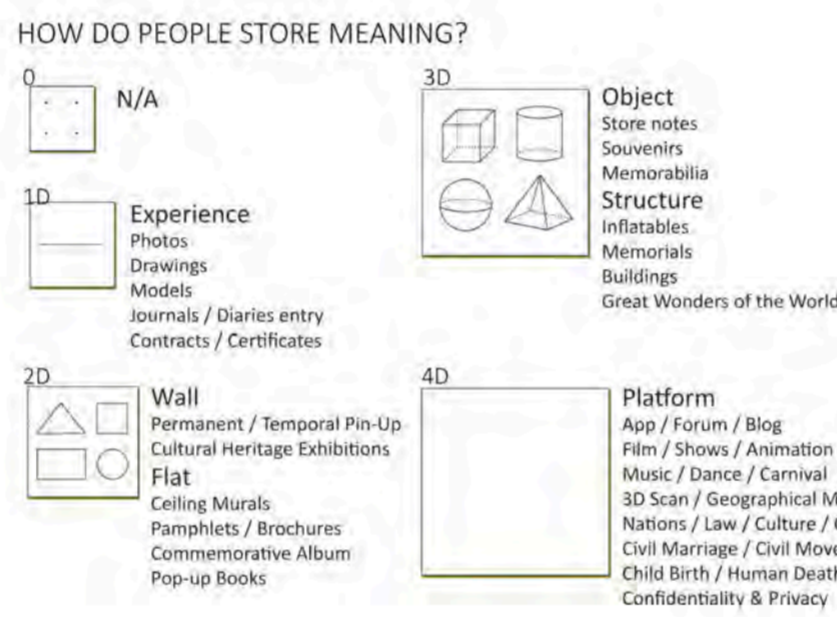
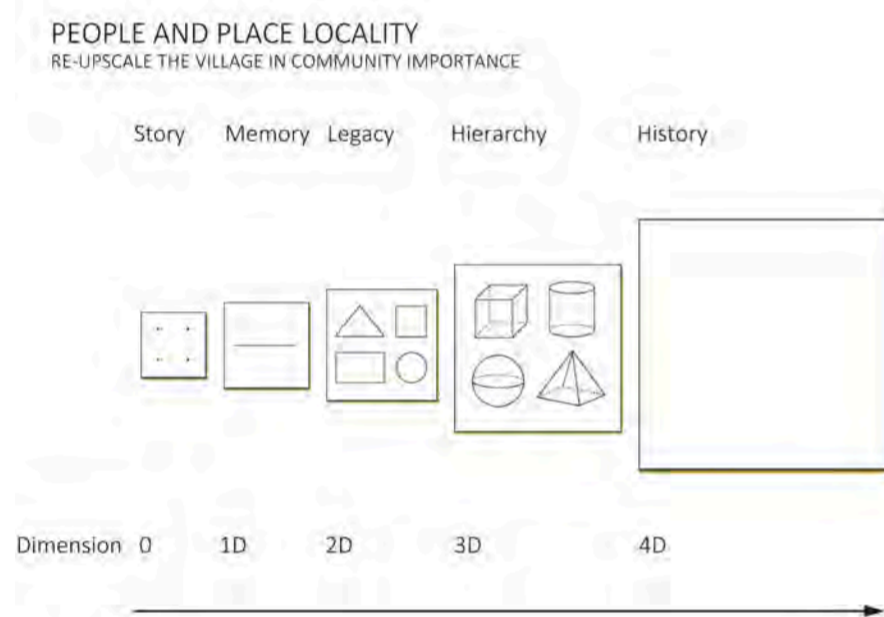
Shang-Fang Yu, Xingchan Wang, Lingjie Jiao, Zhangpan Hu

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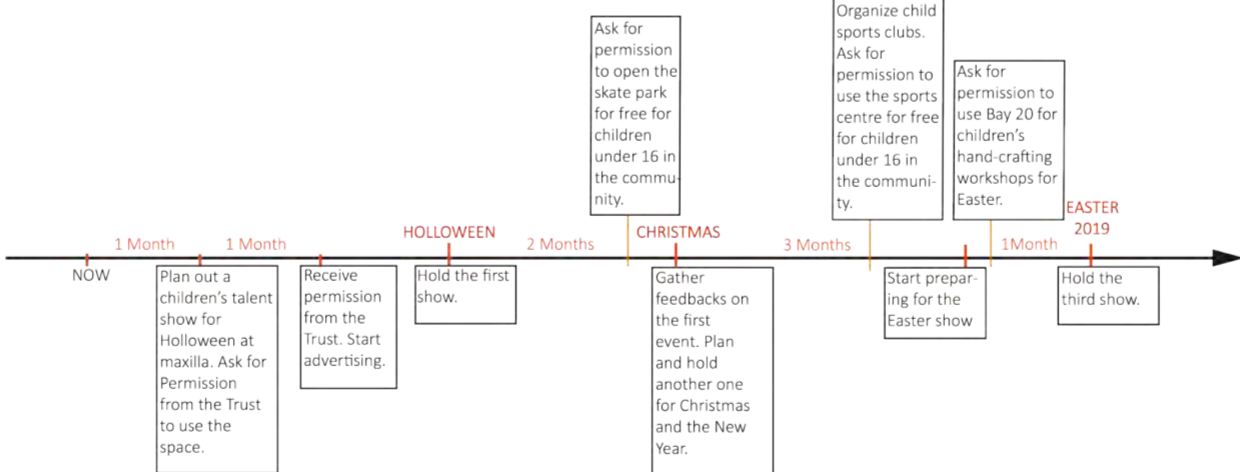


Westway Stories Archive



ChILDream

The idea of this proposal comes from the rich culture of children's playfulness, with the famous Maxilla nursery and Acklam adventure playground that they once had. The aim of this proposal is to revive this culture through the improvement of the 4 places listed on the map, to co-design pop-up events and transform the processes from a top-down (government-led) one to a bottom-up (community-led) one. The timeline below shows the process of how to achieve this goal.



Mutual relationship. Rebuild trust

The relationship between Westway 23 and Westway Trust are identified to be in tension. The main cause of this tense relationship is the lack of trust. The community's real demands are overlooked. What the community is concerned about is not development but improvement. They want more accessible space. Westway23 believes that the community is the root value, and all the other values such as cultural values, commercial values, social values, and environmental values, are the derivative of the community value. Without the community, the other values become unnecessary and meaningless. The objective of this proposal is to rebuild trust and collaboration between these two groups, and provide a solution reference for future similar conflicts. The organic relationship will benefit both Westway 23 and Westway Trust, and it will provide harmonious futures for Westway community. To improve the relationship, involving a third party is introduced as an effective solution. Only the third party could act as a pacifier to ease tense relationships, particularly when sincere communication is not possible. As a third party, considering the mutual benefits before taking any action is the key to success. Identifying what each group has, and what each group could offer is crucial as well.

The Third Party

- Requirements:**
- 1. Not for profitable purpose**
 - Educational institutions
 - Social charities
 - 2. Have no existed relationships with both**
 - Urban planners
 - Civic designers
 - Media persons

