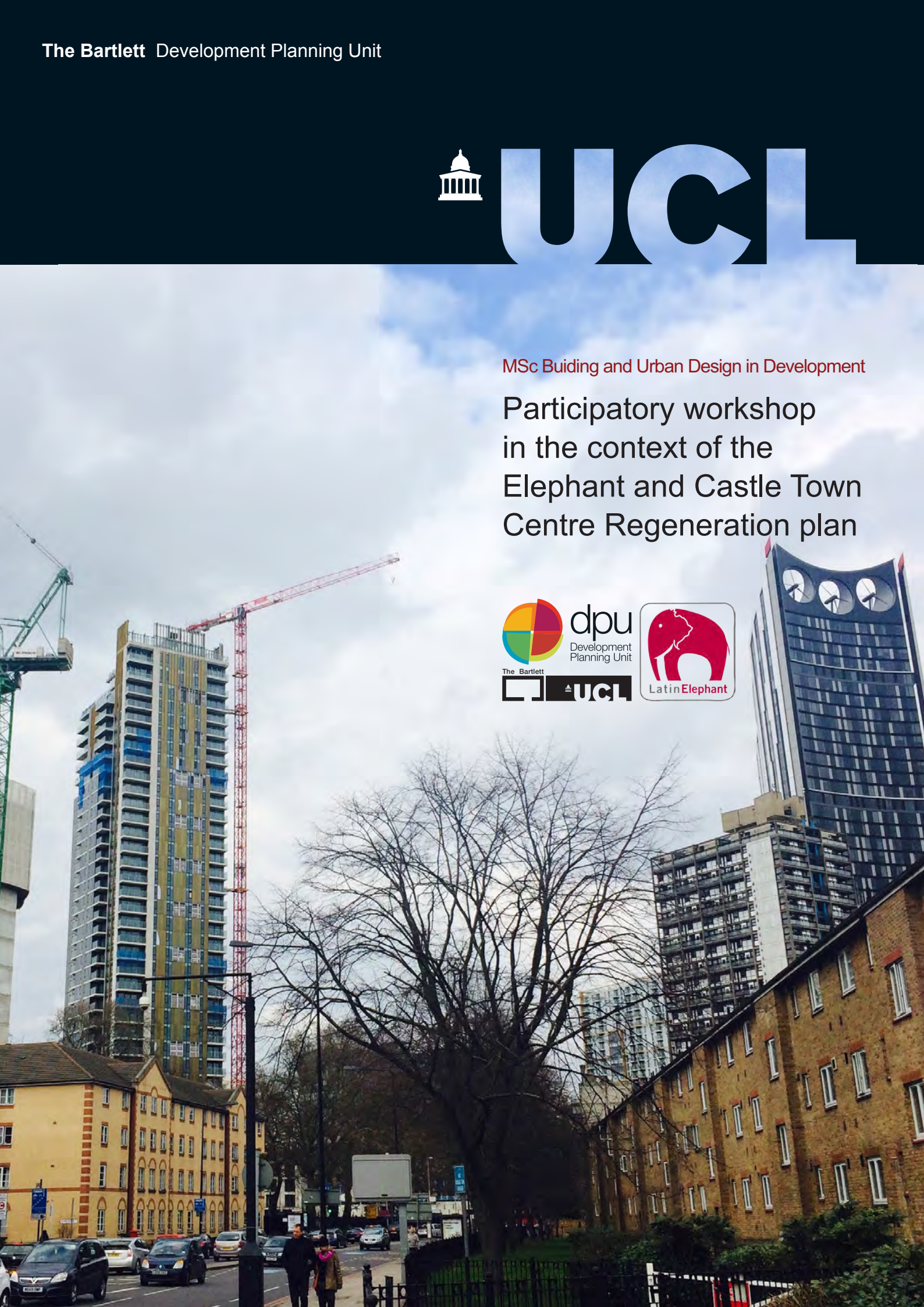




UCL

MSc Building and Urban Design in Development

Participatory workshop
in the context of the
Elephant and Castle Town
Centre Regeneration plan





The Bartlett



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MSc Building and Urban Design in Development

Participatory workshop in the context of the Elephant and Castle Town Centre Regeneration plan

April 2016

Abstract

This report presents the results of a workshop conducted on the 8th March 2016 by students of the module Participatory Processes: Building for Development, as part of the programme MSc Building and Urban Design in Development, of The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London.

The workshop was organised and conducted in coordination with the charity Latin Elephant and representatives of the local Council of Southwark. In the context of the

Elephant and Castle (EC) Regeneration Town Plan, the workshop worked with part of the Latin American community of traders and business owners of the EC area, in order to identify their main needs and demands. This report presents an introduction with background information about the case, followed by reports prepared by the students about the two workshops conducted: One to envision temporal relocation alternatives, and the other one to explore future spatial alternatives.

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We would like also to thank to all the UCL students who actively engaged in the workshop; and particularly, to the Elephant and Castle retailers and community who took the time to participate in this activity: Luz Villamizar, María Teresa Soliman, Sandra Guida, Diana Sach, Luz María, Emad Myalud, Mayada Hemdan, Memih Chad, Jhon Vargas, Luis Castaño, Ana Castro, David Perez, Lina Usma, Tony Linforth, Diana Cuaces, Carlos Cuaces, Germán, Jamal Uddin, Soledad Gómez, Vivian Barranco, Adriana Hoyos, Juan Carlos Quintero and Councillor Maria Linforth-Hall.

The workshop and its outputs were done thanks to the funding provided by DPU Training and Advisory Services.

Forewords by Latin Elephant

Patria Roman-Velazquez
Chair, Latin Elephant

Regeneration schemes in London are taking place in deprived boroughs where there is a high proportion of diverse ethnic populations. Minority ethnic groups and migrant and ethnic businesses are disproportionately affected by regeneration schemes in London. For this reason, Latin Elephant has been advocating for greater inclusion and participation of migrant and ethnic economies in urban policy frameworks as well as encouraging greater participation of Latin Americans in processes of urban change in London, with particular focus in Elephant and Castle.

Latin Elephant has been working with the Latin American retailers in Elephant and Castle (EC) in London for over four years to highlight its contribution to the local economy and its community value. During this period we have engaged in research and consultations with retailers, community groups, community members, developers, network rail and Southwark Council to present the case for formal recognition of the existing Latin business cluster as London's Latin Quarter whilst also supporting the case for its retention, growth and sustainability.

A great proportion of Latin American retailers in Elephant and Castle are at the centre of the proposed Elephant and Castle Town Centre development. The proposed development will see demolition of the existing shopping centre. In these proposals it is envisaged development of the railway arches along Elephant Road, where many Latin American shops are also located.

Within this context and as part of our ongoing work with retailers we identified as a matter of urgency the need for further consultation to identify needs and find solutions and alternatives for relocation. It is within this context that the collaboration with The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London developed. In the spirit of this collaboration the workshops were aimed at providing students with a unique learning experience by engaging with the community of retailers that were eager to make the most of the process.

In exchange the students were able provide us with expert knowledge and practice on participatory urban design methodologies.

This report addresses pressing needs and alternatives for relocation of existing traders in Elephant and Castle Shopping Centre within the context of the proposed Elephant and Castle Town Centre Development. The report also addresses questions about future spatial alternatives for the community of traders in the shopping centre and the railway arches along Elephant Road.

In addition to thanking all retailers, students and volunteers who took part in the workshops, we are extremely grateful to Catalina Ortiz and Camila Cociña, lecturers of 'Participatory Processes: Building for Development' with whom the idea for this workshop has been devised and who worked endlessly to see this project come to fruition.

Introduction

Camila Cociña and Catalina Ortiz
The Bartlett Development Unit

Retaining the cultural diversity of ethnic minorities in regeneration strategies constitutes a key urban challenge for London and many cities nowadays. In particular, a diverse Latin American community has risen fourfold in the last decade, yet a systematic understanding of their role in regeneration processes remains to be understood. The Elephant and Castle Shopping Centre and its surroundings have been for decades a cultural hub for Latin Americans in London. Today, the area is facing a massive transformation process as a product of the Elephant and Castle Town Centre Regeneration plan, bringing increasing uncertainties to the retailers' community. Often times under represented minorities suffer disproportional negative impacts of this type of urban transformation initiatives. In this context and continuing with DPU's engagement with London based local initiatives, a partnership with the charity Latin Elephant took place in order to support its mission of generating a platform of community exchange for Latin American traders and business owners. In particular, the partnership seeks to contribute to the ongoing Latin Elephant efforts to protect current minorities' cultural and economic assets, and their ongoing argument about the disconnect between urban policy and migrant and ethnic economies in London. Thus, the support to Latin Elephant furthers UCL initiatives of liaising the voluntary sector and academia as means to promote social equity in London.

Responding directly to an acute lack of minority ethnic voices (and specifically Latin American ones) on academic and policy debates about urban regeneration in London the resulting report and the upcoming joint activities seek to contribute to the ongoing consultation process of the regeneration process. The most salient results highlighted the need to organise a collective bargaining strategy to impact the consultation process for securing a fair relocation strategy that ensures retaining the economic cluster in conditions of affordability, visibility, accessibility and connectivity to the public transit in the area; as well as, the strong need to claim to the developers and the right to return once the Elephant and Castle Town Centre is completed as a way to protect current minorities' cultural and economic assets.

This project constitutes the departing point of a longer-term collaboration with the charity and the community involved in exploring participatory urban design potentials to enhance the engagement of minority ethnic groups in the negotiation of regeneration schemes. Therefore, this type of initiatives strength DPU connected curriculum by increasing DPU students' exposure to participatory practices of minority ethnic groups in urban regeneration strategies.

How participatory urban design can contribute to envision alternatives for preserving the cluster of migrant ethnic business in Elephant and Castle? The MSc in Building and Urban Design and Development in its module '*Participatory Processes: Building for development*' explored the socio-spatial impacts of regeneration projects in communities of the Latin American Diaspora. This report captures the main findings of a participatory workshop held March 8th in partnership with the charity Latin Elephant and the support of representatives of the Southwark Council. The objective of the workshop was to explore possibilities for retaining the economic cluster in conditions of affordability, visibility, accessibility and connectivity to the public transit in the area. The workshop was conducted by students using participatory methodologies to work with more than 20 retailers of the area, who engaged in the workshop sharing their needs and aspirations and coming up with spatial alternatives for the future.

The report is divided in three parts, the first one depicts the participants discussion about fair relocations options; the second part, portrays participants' views on the scenarios to return to the site once the regeneration project is completed; the final part, summarises the challenges and recommendations for configuring a strategy to impact the consultation process.

This valuable experience provided the possibility to DPU students to directly engage with local organisations and put into practice their learning from their master programme in a concrete initiative.



Workshop 1: Envisioning temporal relocation alternatives

This was the first of the two participatory workshops developed by the MSc BUDD students. Considering that the transformation of the area will last for many years, it results key to think about the options for retailers during the period before the new shopping mall and new commercial space is open. The aim of this workshop was to envision and explore the main spatial needs and requirements for the temporal relocation of the business owners of the Elephant and Castle area that will be affected by the regeneration plan.

Group members:

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1. Introduction

The EC opportunity area is undergoing a large-scale regeneration. This will bring benefits and opportunities to the area, but also challenges and threats to local residents and businesses. The Latin retailers within the EC Shopping Centre will need to relocate during the reconstruction of the shopping centre and do not have security that they will be able to return afterwards. Traders and retailers around the shopping centre, in the Draper building or in the arches, face uncertainty about how and when the redevelopment of the area will affect them. Nonetheless, increasing rents will probably affect everyone.

There are multiple concerns regarding the future of the business area as a result of the transformation process, not just because of the imminent relocation, but also given the competition from the arrival of high street chain

stores and the loss of customers' base due to a shifting of the demographic towards high-income residents. Since this is one of the last cheap places in central London, the dismissing of Latin retailers might also impact the current diversity and vibrancy of the area. The proposal of a "Latin Quarter" put forward by Latin Elephant, is an important attempt to gain recognition for the dynamic and resilient Latin community that have brought much cultural and economic value to the EC area and contributed to its development from a run-down dangerous area to a new strategic zone in the London plan.

The objective of this workshop was to facilitate a dialogue in which the participants become more familiar with the spatial conditions of the regeneration and can articulate their spatial needs and options, in order to sustain their commercial cluster in the face of the gentrification currently affecting south-central London.

The workshop intended to address the temporary spatial needs and options for relocation for the Latin retailers. The EC Shopping Centre is set to be vacated in the short term, at which time the retailers will need to find new spaces if they want to continue with their businesses. It is actually difficult to distinguish between temporary and permanent plans: there is great uncertainty about the timing and final plans, e.g. how many small affordable commercial units will actually be made available. This means that it is difficult to know how "permanent" the temporary solutions will be. Perhaps the relocation spaces could also evolve into permanent solutions if it is not possible for all the retailers to return to the new Shopping Centre to form a Latin Quarter.

Apart from the main area involved in the regeneration project, the available retail space is very limited in the surrounding area. Prior to the workshop, Latin Elephant proposed three surrounding streets as potential areas for relocation: Walworth Road, East Street and New Kent Road. Even where there are vacant units, the number of available spaces cannot match what the shopping centre and arches offer nowadays. Also, the affordability policy of the council in new commercial spaces is limited to discounted rents for maximum of 5 years as well as being subject to competition, leaving the retailers facing a major rent gap between their current situation and the rising market rents of the EC area.

2. Workshop methods design

This workshop was approached with the idea of bringing to the table the particular area of expertise of the facilitators (the spatial dimension), in the hope that it could be useful to the participants.

The ongoing discussions and debates around the EC regeneration project have of course increased the anxiety and apprehensiveness of the retailers for the near future. There is uncertainty regarding the temporary and permanent relocation of the business owners. The exercise was meant to analyse the spatial needs and requirements of the retailers who are under the threat of evictions. The workshop also envisioned to bring the community together in a space for them to formulate their own arguments in order to further negotiate with the council and developers in the future. The participation process was aimed to spatialise the needs and wishes of the community along with discussing possibilities for relocation. The one-hour workshop was broke into three parts in order to address three questions:

2.1. What is now?

The first part of the workshop, lasting for about 15 minutes was intended to get the basic first-hand information about the people and their business present in the workshop.

Various sub-questions like ‘where are you located? What kind of business do you own? Why did you locate here?’ were decided beforehand to moderate this segment. It was also intended to be an icebreaker between the community and the students. The participants were asked to mark their location on the shopping mall map using pens and post-its.

2.2. What is needed?

The segment of the workshop required the participants to reflect upon what they valued in the place. It was meant to assess the positives and negatives of the neighbourhood. This needed to be understood in order delineate qualities/ prerequisite for the relocation sites. It was intended to last for about 20-25 minutes. The participants were encouraged to mark them with two different colours flags on the map in order to spatially represent the points.

2.3. What is possible?

There was a need to discuss the various alternatives for temporary relocation. Five alternatives with their pros and cons were proposed by the facilitators in order to engage and familiarise the participants with the various options.



3. Main outputs & results

Hereinafter a series of key observations that emerged from the workshop are highlighted, first presenting the main reflections related to the current situation and spatial needs, and then those related to the futures aspirations and requirements.

3.1. Now: Current situation and spatial needs

- Developer's subtle strategies

Before the workshop started, one of the retailers from the Shopping Centre pointed out that Delancey had increased the rents of the retailers by 50% already. He considered this a strategy by the real estate developer to keep the retailers occupied internally with the survival of their business, preventing them from realising the bigger picture and organising collectively to advocate for their interests within the regeneration process. Another concern was the diversity of tenures within the Shopping Centre. Many retailers do not have contracts with Delancey directly but with other property companies, such as Elephant & Castle Property Limited, whose two listed directors are registered in the Caribbean. On top of that Delancey emphasises in their communication with the retailers that they are a "portfolio manager" and not a landlord. Obviously, this is worrying for the traders as they do not know if this will enable Delancey to 'get rid of them' without being

obliged to relocate them or allowing them to return after the rebuilding. Responding to these concerns, representatives of the Southwark Council's Local Economy Team said "we aim to try to hold the developer accountable to relocate all businesses, regardless of tenure."

- Moving or remaining: Always together

As the retailers got involved in the workshop, it was clear that the majority of participants like the EC area because of good transport links, but above all because of the presence of the Latin community. One participant strongly stated: "if the whole community moves, I will move too. But I want be involved in improving the Latin Quarter". They understand that they have a role to play staying in the area; as one retailer stated: "I stayed when it was ugly and now I want to stay when it's pretty".

- Few retail opportunities in the vicinity

Another participant pointed out that there is no other retail space available since much of the surrounded area has been taken over by Delancey, the developer of the EC Shopping Centre, and LendLease - another of the developers in the surrounding area that is developing the former Heygate Estate area. The retailers also said they would only move if there is an opportunity to do business in the new area.

- Good for the business, good for me

One of the ladies who runs a restaurant in the arches



area was not sure about whether the arches area would stay or be demolished; but she knew these changes would affect her business anyway, so she had started looking for an alternative location. She was not interested in the proposals for temporary solutions and merely wanted to know whether she could get information about locations that were permanent. Interestingly, her attitude was not as community-oriented as some of the other participants. She said she would move if it would be good for her business.

- The situation in the arches

According to an individual conversation with one business owner in the arches area, the rents of the different retail units in the arches are determined historically. Because his business has been there for many years, he pays £18,000 per year for two units (100-110m2). However, newer businesses pay £18,000 or even £22,500 per year for only a single unit. The retailers in the arches have rolling contracts, that are renewed and renegotiated every three years, but can be cancelled with 6 months notice. The landlord of the arches, Network Rail, has outsourced the property management to a different private company. Both companies have failed to communicate clearly with the retailers regarding the time scale and actual changes that will be affecting the retailers as Network Rail seeks to refurbish the arches in the near future.

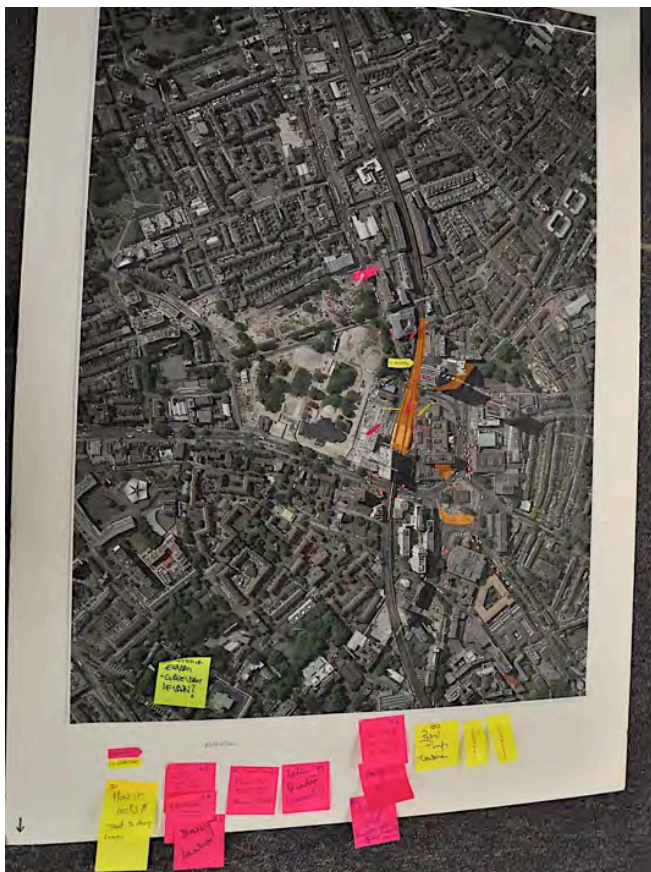
3.2. Next steps: Future Aspirations/requirements

a- Latin transient village

One of the temporary solutions proposed by the facilitators during the workshop was to set up a transient containers village similar to the one that LandLease has set up ("The Artworks"). From all the alternatives proposed, this seemed to be the most interesting for the participants for a series of reasons. A retailer who rents an arch unit in Elephant Road, for instance, pointed out the potential of the containers village for making more visible the businesses community and build a strong and collective visual identity. He did not see the temporal condition as a problem, as long as the village allows them to stay in the same area and has a strong visual identity. He also saw it as a possible strategy to "impose" the temporary solution as a definitive one.

Other retailer were very critical of all other temporary proposals, pointing out that the use of tents (as a "market") is weather dependent and offers limited opening hours while being only suitable for certain types of businesses. Likely, food trucks would be absolutely impossible due to the parking rules. Even if the containers also would only suit certain sizes and kinds of businesses, they were perceived as more feasible and strategic.

The idea of a transient Latin village of containers – that moves around the different development sites as the re-



generation of the larger E&C area is realised – should be investigated more deeply, in particular its cost and spatial organisation. It would allow the community to have a minimal basic solution to deal with the Council and the developers, while remaining together and increasing their visual presence.

b- Reinforce the community and include workers and customers

The participants were obviously conscious that the priority is how to organise themselves as a group and work collectively. The more the community is organised and stronger it is, the more they will have a scope of action.

As one of the assistant to the workshop pointed out, *“there is still a possibility for the businesses community to stay if they can demonstrate their cohesion and a defined project. Councillors can impose things to developers; they give the planning permission at the end. If voters support the Latin community plan then the councillors will also support it and will try to persuade the developers.”*

So there is hope to create an alternative path, if the community organises itself and is convinced of the value they represent for the area. However, there are enormous challenges in strengthening the community bounds, bringing together smaller and bigger businesses, Latin


workers, employees and customers. Only if this diversity of voices is combined, the different needs can take part of the discussion and raise requirements and concerns of different nature, improving the conditions and security of the business owners, but at the time contributing to the consolidation of EC as a vibrant and authentic place in London, as nobody wants a commodification of the Latin businesses. Any plan emerged from this effort will be sustainable and work only if it includes the whole Latin community. This is a difficult process but efforts should be done to reach this objective.

c- Organise regular events and focus on carnivals

Through the interviews and discussions, most of the participants were clear about what they want and that they just had problem about how to get that. And most of the ideas proposed by the participants were already mentioned in a previous document published by Latin Elephant in January 2015 (Latin Elephant report: LE-community vision): Make the business community more visible and more open to non-Latin people, reinforce the community network, promote Latin culture through events, festivals, food, street signs, etc.

Based on these observations, it would be interesting to organise a monthly event combining discussion/debates, workshops and party (food, drinks, music and dance). These events would allow to prepare a bigger one during the

CONTAINERS PARKS




- Occupying parking lots or empty or in-development plots on a longer time-span manner.
- Moves from site to site during the EC regeneration and can be moved elsewhere when the last new EC building is finally built

PRO:
Moderate price/could be subsidized

CONS:
Difficult to host all involved/ availability of suitable plots.

Notes
*affordability?
For how long?*

TRUCKS



- Located in parking lots and open areas on a regular basis

PRO:
Specific for food, but model could be expanded for other activities.
Could open new opportunities ex: try different location (local promotion), expanding business
Temporal use of land, could overlap with other neighbourhood activities.

CONS:
Higher price / initial investment.

Notes
It is not useful for me, but looks very attractive for a number of business

carnivals. These opportunities are fantastic to give visibility to the community plans and are a good moment to include more people in the plan making (workers and customers). It is also the opportunity to include the Council and the non-Latin residents that are essential and need to be convinced of the interest of keeping this positive Latin energy in EC.

All the ideas from the 2015 report should be worked over during these regular events, perhaps including the

idea of the transient Latin village mentioned in this report, as it seems to be a feasible and affordable project to keep the retailers together and within the EC area in the short term. It also has the potential to strengthen community links and it could be a strategy for more visibility and imposing a definitive solution. Other ideas could also be debated at these periodic gatherings, such as collective funding, sharing spaces and other new ideas, which will reinforce community links.

*"if latin community disperses, there is no community"
"I don't like to move"*

"There is no other place to go"

"This meeting is important because tonight we realize the importance of getting together & being prepared"

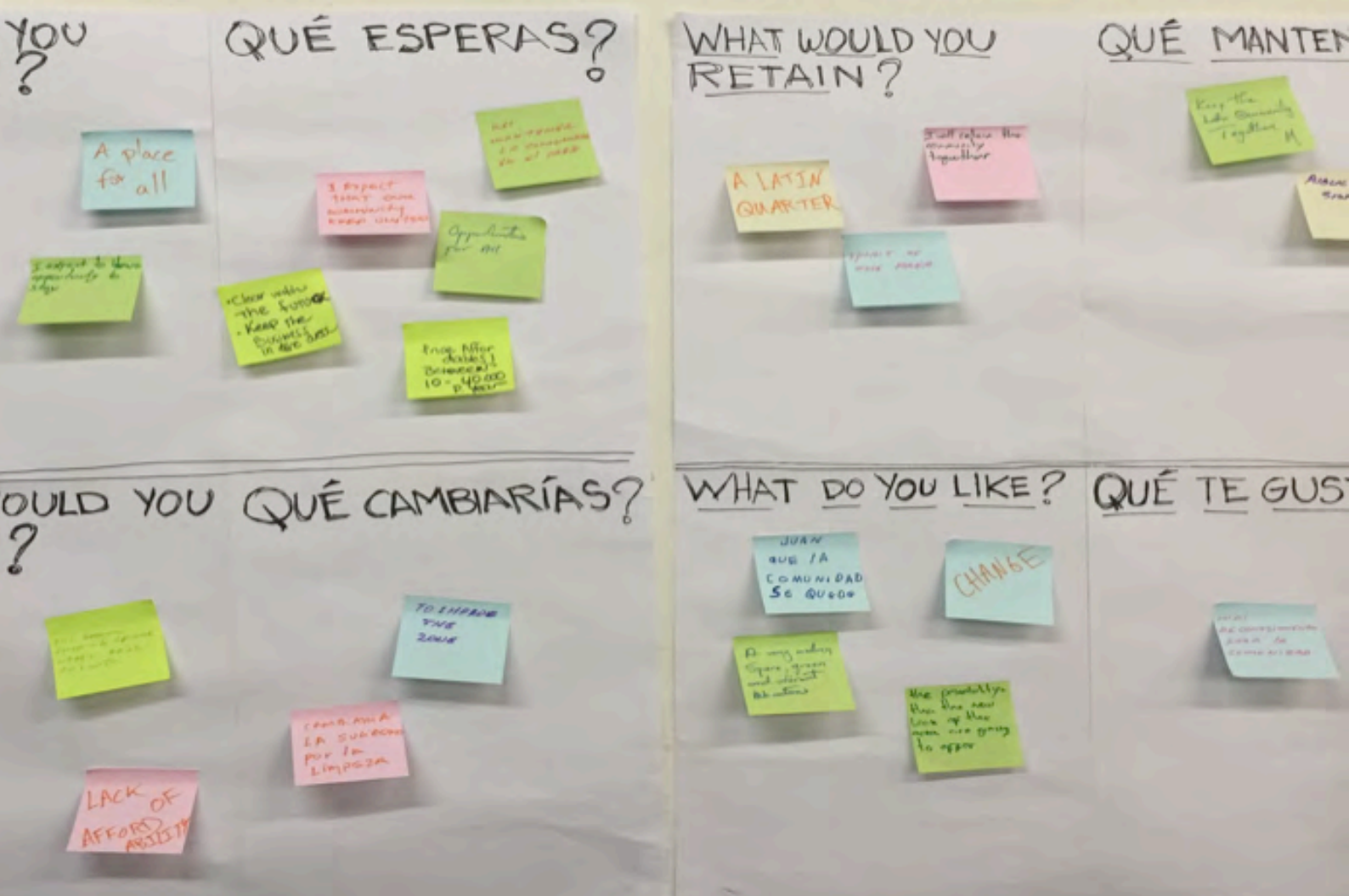
"I stayed when it was ugly, now I want to stay when its pretty"

"Delancey says they are "portfolio manager" and not a "landlord". This means that when our tenancies (with property companies registered overseas) run out, we will not have any rights to claim from Delancey."

"Together, within the law, we need to grow up to what this city is"







Workshop 2: Envisioning future spatial alternatives

The second workshop developed by the MSc BUDD students focused particularly on envisioning future spatial alternatives for the Latin Quarter once the regeneration EC Town regeneration plan is concluded, including the transformation of the Shopping Centre and its surrounding areas. The aim of this workshop was to envision and explore the main spatial needs and requirements of these businesses, as they might be affected by expulsions during the regeneration process, but they can still struggle and claim for returning to the area in a permanent base.

Group members:

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Tracy Yan

1. Introduction and context

London's Latin Quarter existed since the 1990s providing both economic value and social value to the area of Elephant and Castle and to London as a whole. The Latin Quarter started out with only a few shops and today has over 90 businesses and small shops that are currently located in the Elephant and Castle Shopping Centre and along Elephant Road and Walworth Road (see LE's website with map and information <http://latinelephant.org/519-2/>).

Many of these shops are local, independent start ups that are small scale and employ between one to five people. As recent Latin Elephant research shows, the shops are currently located in the arches along Elephant Road, a site for redevelopment. As the redevelopment plans move forward the current business owners are left feeling be-

hind since there is uncertainty over the affordability of commercial spaces after the project completion.

The workshop held Tuesday, March 8th, 2016 was in coordination with the business owners from the Latin Quarter in Elephant and Castle, the charity Latin Elephant and representatives of the Southwark Council. The objective of this workshop was to identify the shop owners' spatial needs to create alternative solutions for these businesses once the project is completed.

2. Methodology & Methods

This workshop was focused on envisioning future spatial alternatives for relocation once the regeneration plan is built. As a group, we aimed to get the business leaders to give us a sense of their ideal future, a utopian "blue skies" approach. Considering our time constraints and this being our particular input as part of a major process within the Latin Elephant community, we decided to get an idea about the participants' ideal scenarios, in order to find their common needs and yearnings, aligning those main objectives and hopefully creating a momentum that could influence their organisation beyond this workshop.

Consequently, we structured the workshop in two sections. First, we addressed what we called "Field of Dreams", which was a large paper pinned to the wall into four categories:

- (1) What do you want to retain from your current situation?
- (2) What do you expect from the process of relocation?
- (3) What do you like about the plan put forward?
- (4) What would you change about the plan put forward?

The second section of the workshop focused on visualising those 'dreams' in a spatial dimension. The aim of this exercise was to visualise which of the previously mentioned common objectives could be joined, to eventually transform these wants in a proposal that could be presented - as a group - to negotiate with the developers.

In terms of register, we had different and complementary approaches. On one hand, general notes, voice record-

ing and pictures were taken throughout the introductory presentations and both workshops. Particularly during our workshop, part of the facilitators carried a schematic drawn representation of the process and the ideas that emerged from the participants as a parallel exercise. The idea was to synthesize the information and represent it graphically, in order to have a better understanding of the participants' desires and doubts.

3. Workshop Implementation

We conducted the workshop partially bilingually in English and Spanish to break the ice between participants and students. Before we began the workshop exercises both participants and students introduced ourselves giving our first names and our countries of origin.

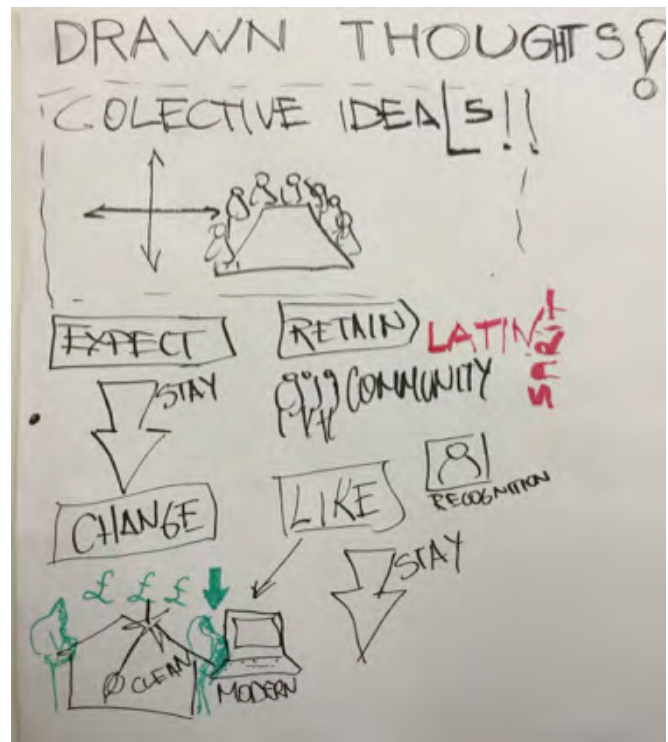
The workshop included two main exercises; the first exercise was the "Field of Dreams" and the second exercise was "Mapping the Future." In the "Field of Dreams" exercise we asked participants to write at least one answer on a post-it and place it in the appropriate category; A. What do you expect? B. What would you retain? C. What would you change? D. What do you like? Prior to the start of the workshop, we made a few post-its of our own based on our observations of the "future" workshop. We invited the participants to write in Eng-

lish or Spanish or to draw, though everyone opted to write on the post-its. After a few minutes, we quickly ran through the answers and pointed out some of the recurring themes which were then recorded and drawn on the visual notetaking poster.

In the second half of the workshop, we did the "Mapping the Future" (Mapeando el Futuro) exercise. In this exercise we worked with the participants to spatialise their vision for a future Latin Quarter and to tease out some more specific information. We placed a large map of present day Elephant and Castle mounted on foam board with black dashed lines outlining the proposed areas for relocation in the middle of the table so people could use coloured push-pins, post-its and write directly on the map. From this exercise we identified the area where the business leaders would like to relocate, where they needed extra spaces or services (e.g. parking areas, child care), and where they would put place-making and way-finding features (e.g. art-work by Botero, a gateway marking the entrance to the Latin Quarter, signs indicating the direction of each shop).

Logistics

The main point of concern was the spatial arrangement for the presentation and group workshops, all of which took place in different smaller spaces within the overall space so participants could actively contribute to the workshop exercises.



The results of the four questions- "field of dreams"

This spatial arrangement took into account the following points which considered the experience of the first workshop:

- 1) A visual access to the presented boards should be provided for each individual.
- 2) The required materials (post notes-pens-pushpins etc.) are distributed over the tables to be easy accessible to each individual.
- 3) Providing a first-row seat for each individual (stressing the importance of each participant) which led to make U-shape arrangement.
- 4) As a team we tried to be always around the participants and the moderators in order to answer any questions and document information from the participants.

4. Main Outputs & Results

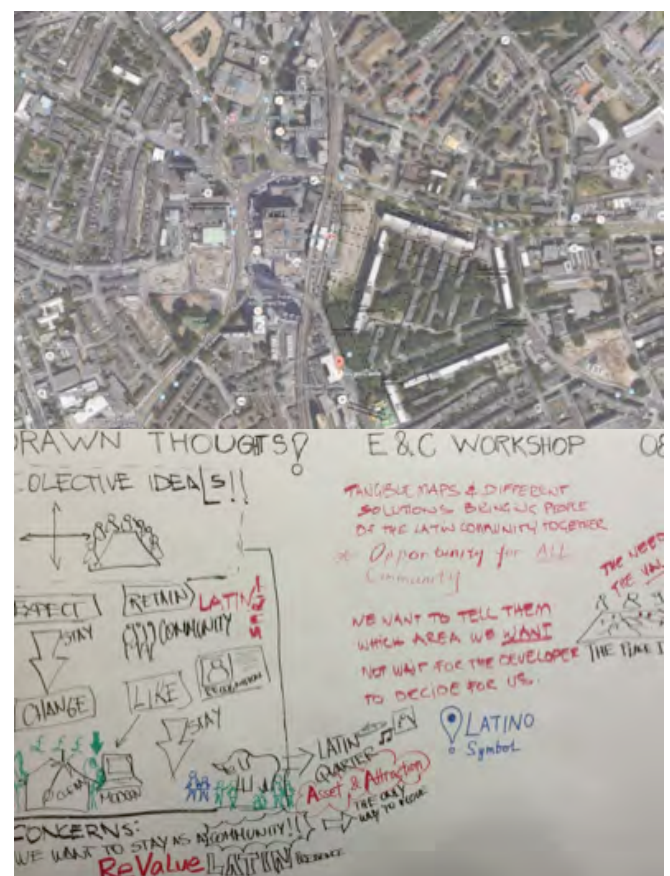
The business owners—seemingly relieved to sit down at our table—appeared interested to hear what we—as bright young students—might have to offer them. It was immediately apparent that they were expecting a presentation from us—as if we had a proposal for them. Instead, we asked many questions and we handed pens and paper to them to write, to draw and to map—which they did but cautiously and entirely through words, not pictures.

Their eagerness to stake a claim on a Latin Quarter in E&C was made clear by one business owner who delivered a harrowing speech mid-workshop that almost deserved a round of applause. She saw the imperative for her fellow business owners to band together and not succumb to the divisiveness of self-interest. Rather, it was important for all to have self-interest in a collective negotiation for a shared space. We agreed, but we were not equipped to tell them how to do it.

'I don't want anyone to go: one corner here, one corner there, because we are not gonna get anywhere!'
Colombian business woman

It was important for us to take note that those business owners who sat with us were almost exclusively of Colombian origin—as those from other ethnicities had left following the first session. This simply meant that we heard a specific voice over others within a wider picture. It could have been easy to appeal explicitly to their desires. We could have run the risk of “getting their hopes up” through semi-utopia style thinking. Would visioning grandiose be irresponsible of our team?

'We would like to be closer to the main area, which would be helpful for them, helpful for us, and keep feeling at home'
Colombian business woman



Regarding the identity as a community within London, some relevant comments were made. Some of them referred to the need of the council to recognise their value as a Latin community, and some other to how to materialise this in space, with ideas such as establishing a Latin Quarter centre, or having wayfinding in the area with a symbolic threshold (hopefully close to the underground station) that indicates the entrance to the zone.

*“It’s a good idea if we can start getting those signs [wayfinding] everywhere, pointing to E&C-Latin quarter, because no one knows this is a Latin Quarter!”
Colombian businesswoman*

*“We have very important internationally known names, artists. We can bring for example one Botero, one Latino that identifies our culture. We have so many things to show! [...] We would have it in the middle of the green area”
Colombian businessman*

Regarding their ideal location in the map, there was a general consensus about not being in the main mall, as there would be other type of shops (larger scale, less affordable). They agreed on the area indicated in the map with green pins. When asked about the places they would not like to be, the general answer was to avoid the congestion charge zone, which was therefore indicated in the map with red pins. Regarding the way they would like to

be clustered, there was a strong agreement on preferring to be mixed, both in terms of type of business and different communities.

Presently, Southwark Council is mediating between the developers and Latin Elephant, whereas Latin Elephant is mediating between the business owners, Southwark Council, Developers and Network Rail. Latin Elephant has made an important effort in facilitating the direct exchange and conversation between different actors, and these efforts should be strengthened and supported to ensure that business owners and developers communicate directly. This important observation from the workshop highlights the need for all of the actors to come together to discuss the redevelopment projects at Elephant and Castle.

*‘[...] Specially tonight, that we have the Council here, we need them to recognise the presence of the Latin community. [...] We can be an attractive point in London City, [...] like Chinatown.[...] Southwark cannot leave us out!’
Colombian journalist*

We have learned that urban design stems from asking the right questions and perhaps some of what we asked got them to think further upon what they wanted for their futures. At the very least, an opportunity for them to be together in one room and to see interest from those on the outside was what we could offer in that short period of time.



Although the final result of this activity was not observed by the majority of the participants, it was documented by the organizers of the meeting through photographs. It constitutes a product that could help the planners and authorities to have an overall idea of the general concerns, and to consider those on the next phases of their work. Also, it can be used in future meetings with the participants to recapitulate the last one. The

product was collected by the organizers at the end of the meeting.

At the end of the session, one Colombian business woman approached a Colombian businessman, and gave him her card, saying: "I really liked what you said". They stayed talking for a few minutes afterwards. Hopefully, we helped them to start joining forces.

Map with ideal locations indicated by colour-coded pins.

Green: Ideal location / Yellow: Assets / Blue: People & paths / White: Wildcard / Red: NO!



Final comments

The experience of this workshop was an opportunity to engage with an urgent problem, and to explore some of the most critical problems that the retailers are facing; particularly, it allowed to visualise how the members of a minority ethnic groups will be affected in the context of the regeneration project. It is clear that as a relatively small actor in this process, this community will need to make a bigger effort in order to have a voice in shaping the urban future of the area, securing their livelihoods and contributing to the identity of the area.

This short activity showed that a series of points were particularly key in order to raise the voices and needs of minority ethnic groups in the Elephant and Castle area, that are summarised below:

- There is an urgent need to organise a collective bargaining strategy to impact the consultation process. This is key in order to secure a fair relocation strategy that ensures retaining the economic Latin cluster in conditions of affordability, visibility, accessibility and connectivity to the public transit in the area. As individual actors, there is not much that can be done, and the evidence shows already that only bigger retailers have been able to find a space in the new scheme; for smaller business' owners there is particularly critical to organise and find a collective strategy that can be presented as an alternative in the consultation process.
- It's clear that the main asset that this community has today is based on the cluster-condition they have. Therefore, any strategy developed should focus on strengthening the collective identity; using artistic and cultural elements, marks in the public space, and keeping united, could constitute tools and assets for this group. There is a strong need to claim to the developers the right to return once the Elephant and Castle Town Centre is completed as a way to protect current minorities' cultural and economic assets, but also to ensure that the identity of these groups is considered as an asset for the new project.
- Longer-term collaboration with different actors will be key for the success of this group in proposing

alternatives: from the academia, political actors, NGOs, other minority groups, etc., can contribute with specific skills and assets that are crucial in strengthening the negotiation capacity in the regeneration scheme.

These challenges might require from the retailers an effort in order to formalise their organisation into a legal entity, as well as the development of a decision-making scheme that ensures that different voices take part of the proposals and claims emerged from them. Definitely, this constitutes by itself a massive challenge. From our perspective, however, it is worth to focus on it as it might be the only way to ensure an inclusive urban development path in this area.

The Bartlett Development Planning Unit

The Development Planning Unit, University College London (UCL), is an international centre specialising in academic teaching, research, training and consultancy in the field of urban and regional development, with a focus on policy, planning, management and design. It is concerned with understanding the multi-faceted and uneven process of contemporary urbanisation, and strengthening more socially just and innovative approaches to policy, planning, management and design, especially in the contexts of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East as well as countries in transition.

The central purpose of the DPU is to strengthen the professional and institutional capacity of governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to deal with the wide range of development issues that are emerging at local, national and global levels. In London, the DPU runs postgraduate programmes of study, including a research degree (MPhil/PhD) programme, six one-year Masters Degree courses and specialist short courses in a range of fields addressing urban and rural development policy, planning, management and design.

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The academic staff of the DPU are a multi-disciplinary and multi-national group with extensive and on-going research and professional experience in various fields of urban and international development throughout the world. DPU Associates are a body of professionals who work closely with the Unit both in London and overseas. Every year the student body embraces more than 45 different nationalities.

To find out more about us and the courses we run, please visit our website: www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk/dpu



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About Latin Elephant

Latin Elephant is a charity that promotes alternative and innovative ways of engaging and incorporating migrant and ethnic groups into processes of urban change in London, in particular Latin Americans.

Latin Elephant is currently working to support retention and growth of existing small migrant and ethnic businesses in Elephant and Castle, taking into account conditions for relocation, affordability and future sustainability.

Latin Elephant Priority Actions

Research and Policy. To respond to urban policy frameworks in support of migrant and ethnic economies in London.

Business Readiness. To ensure the right mechanisms are in place to support existing migrant and ethnic businesses maintain stability and sustained growth throughout processes of urban change.

Increasing Participation. To increase participation of retailers and community members in the transformation of Elephant and Castle and of projects relating to the Latin Quarter.



Latin Elephant, CIO - Charity N 1158554 (Registered in England and Wales)
www.latinelephant.org | [www.twitter.com/latinelephant](https://twitter.com/latinelephant) | www.facebook.com/latinelephant